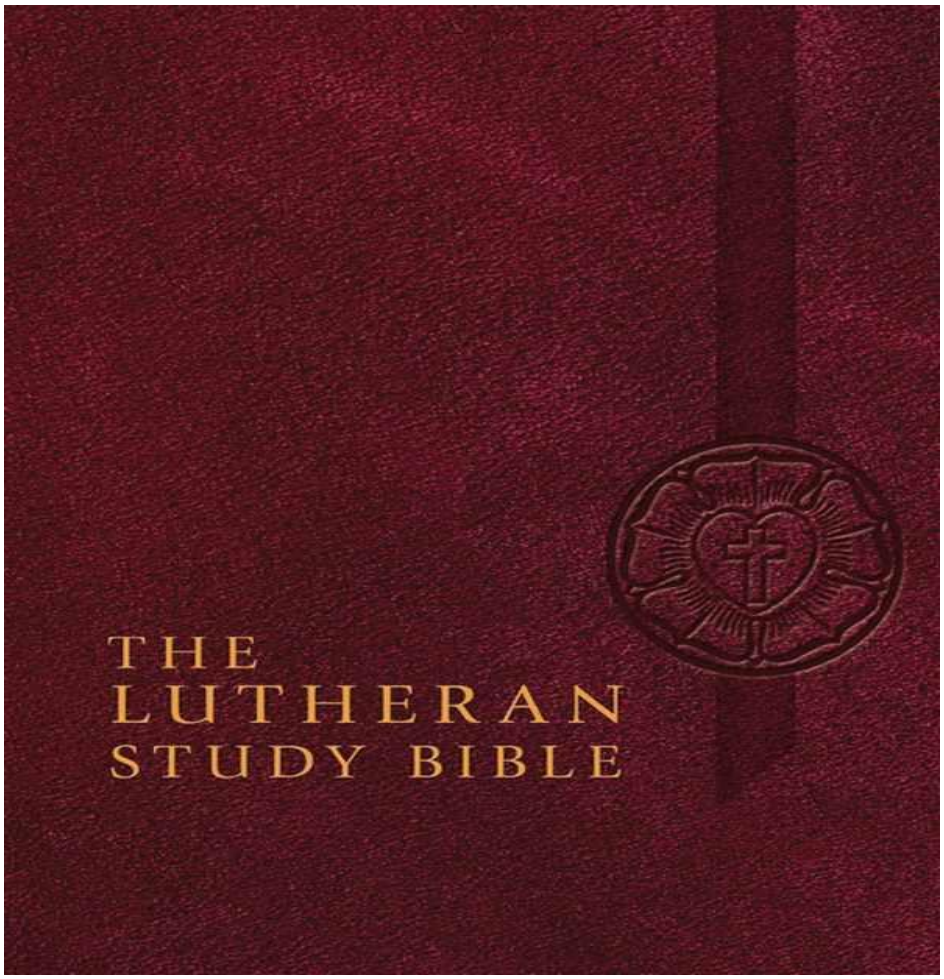
THE LUTHERAN STUDY BIBLE


THE
LUTHERAN
STUDY BIBLE

THE LUTHERAN STUDY BIBLE

The story of the salvation of

_____

Presented by

_____

Date

_____

Family Records

Births/Adoptions

Marriages

Baptisms

Special Events

Confirmations

Deaths

Color Map 1

Old Testament Israel
Cities
Cities of Refuge
50 KM.
30 MI.
Great Sea
Sidon
Tyre
Dan
Kedesh
Hazor
Acco
Golan
Dor
Megiddo
Jezreel
Ramoth-gilead
Beth-shan
Jabesh-gilead
Dothan
Samaria
Shechem
Succoth
Penuel
Joppa
Shiloh
Mahanaim
Bethel
Gilgal
Rabbah
Gezer
Aijalon
Gibeon
Jericho
Heshbon
Ashdod
Ekron
Jerusalem
Bezer
Gath
Ashkelon
Bethlehem
Lachish
Gaza
Hebron
[Kiriath-arba]
Dibon
Gerar
Dohir
Arad
Beersheba
Salt Sea
Litani R.
Lebanon Mts.
Valley of Lebanon
Mount Hermon
Lake Huleh
Sea of Chinnereth
Yarmuk R.
Kishon R.
Mount Carmel
Mount Tabor
Mount Gilboa
Jordan R.
Kanah R.
Mount Ebal
Mount Gerizim
Jabbok R.
Kidron R.
Mount Nebo
Arnon R.
Brook of Egypt
Brook of Zered

Color Map 2

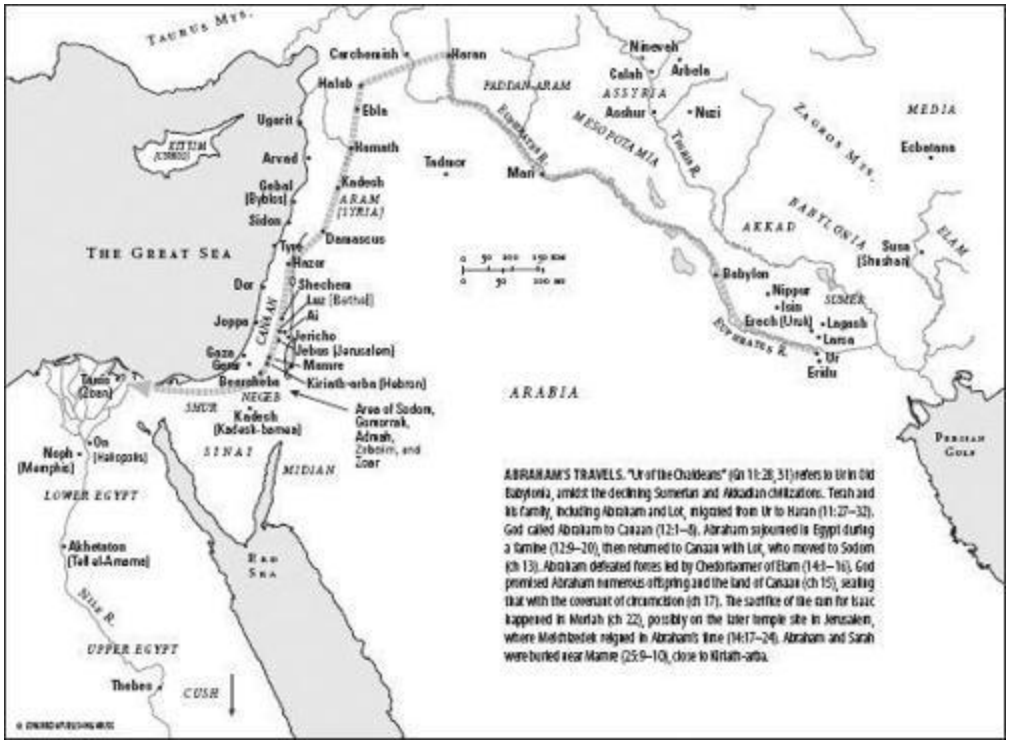
OLD TESTAMENT REGIONS
50 KM.
30 MI.
Sidon
Tyre
PHOENICIA
Damascus
PLAIN OF DAMASCUS
ARAM [SYRIA]
Mount Hermon
Dan
Lake Huleh
GESHUR
BASHAN
Acco
Sea of Chinnereth
Yarmuk R.
Mount Carmel
Mount Tabor
Dor
PLAIN OF MEGIDDO
Jezreel
VALLEY OF JEZREEL
Mount Gilboa
GREAT SEA
PLAIN OF SHARON
ARABAH
Jordan R.
GILEAD
Mount Ebal
Mount Gerizim
Jabbok R.
Joppa
HILL COUNTRY OF EPHRAIM
Rabbah
AMMON
THE DESERT
Heshbon
PLAIN OF PHILISTIA
PHILISTIA
Ashdod
Jerusalem
Ashkelon
Mount Nebo
SHEPHELAH
HILL COUNTRY OF JUDAH
WILDERNESS OF JUDAH
Salt Sea
Kerioth
Dibon
Gaza
Arnon R.
Beersheba
MOAB
NEGEB
EDOM

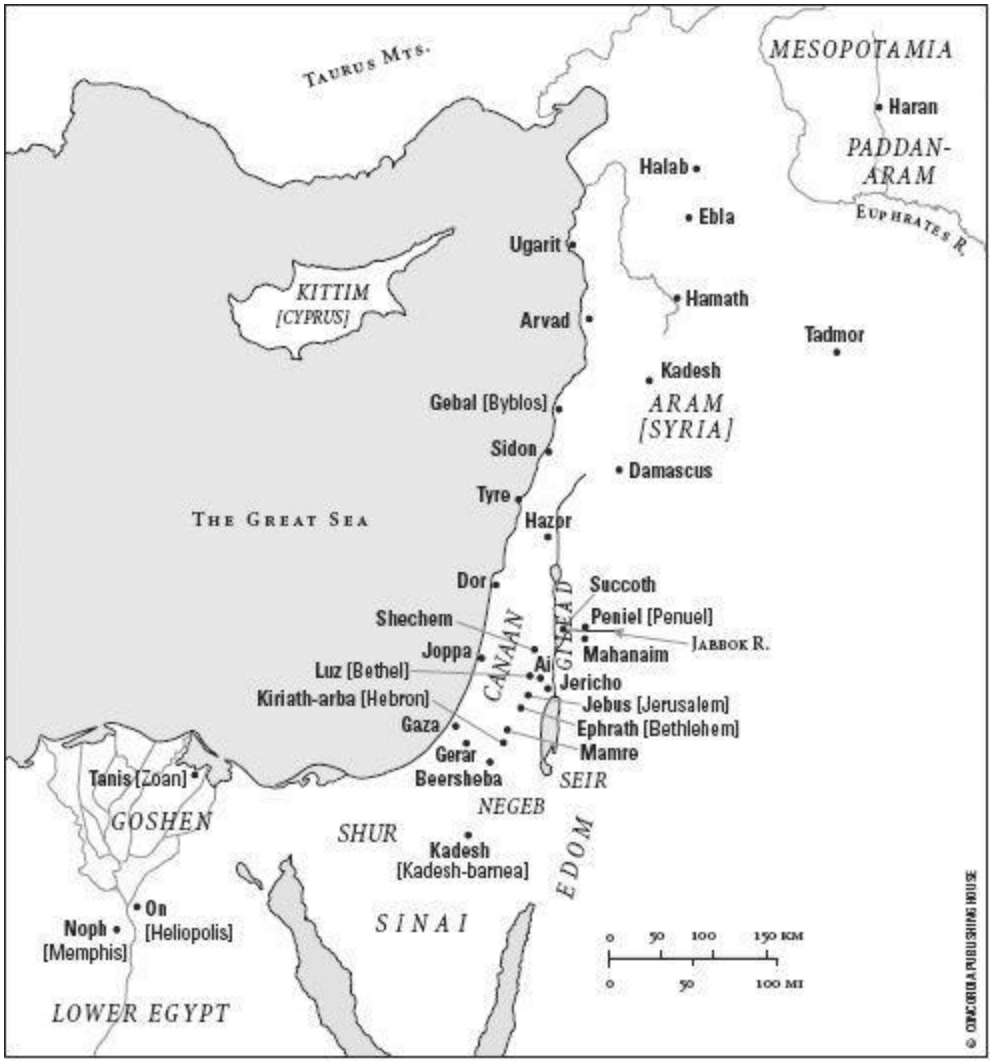
Color Map 3
HITTITES
UNITED KINGDOM PERIOD
KITTIM
Carchemish
Haran
Aleppo
Euphrates R.
Tiphsah
Ugarit
Hamath
Arvad
Kadesh
Tadmor
Byblos
PHOENICIA
Sidon
Damascus
GREAT SEA
Tyre
Dan
ARAM
Hazor
Acco
Megiddo
Dor
Ramoth-gilead
Beth-shan
Jabesh-gilead
Shechem
AMMON
THE DESERT
PHILISTIA
Joppa
Shiloh
Gibeah
Rabbah
Ashdod
Heshbon
Ashkelon
Jerusalem
Gaza
Hebron
WILDERNESS OF JUDAH
NEGEB
MOAB
WILDERNESS OF ZIN
Tamar
EGYPT
WILDERNESS OF SHUR
Kadesh-barnea
EDOM
On (Heliopolis)
Noph (Memphis)
WILDERNESS OF PARAN
Ezion-geber
NILE R.
GULF OF SUEZ
GULF OF AQABA
WILDERNESS OF SINAI
CUSH
RED SEA
KINGDOM OF SAUL
KINGDOM OF DAVID AND SOLOMON
CONTROLLED BY SOLOMON
0 50 KM
0 30 MI.

Color Map 4

New Testament Cities
50 KM.
30 MI.
Sidon
Damascus
PHOENICIA
SYRIA
ITURAEA
Tyre
Caesarea Philippi
TRACHONITIS
Ptolemais
GALILEE
Capernaum
Bethsaida
Cana
Sepphoris
Nazareth
Nain
Dora
Caesarea Maritima
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
DECAPOLIS
Sychar
SAMARIA
Joppa
Lydda
Jericho
Emmaus
Heshbon
Azotus
Jerusalem
Bethany
Ashkelon
Bethlehem
JUDEA
PEREA
Hebron
Gaza
IDUMEA
Masada
NABATEA
EGYPT

	How Scripture Builds on Scripture	Examples of Unity and Continuity in Teaching
The Promise and Blessing	The Lord repeats promises to the patriarchs, so that these words of the covenant become the key reference point of OT revelation.	Cf Gn 12:2–3; 15; 17; 22:15–18; 27:27–29; 28:13–15; 35:9–12; 48:15–16.
Books of Moses	The Lord confirms the covenant through Moses, who records it as the first body of Scripture, the Torah (Hbr "law" or "instruction").	Cf Ex 2:24; 3:6, 13–17; 6:2–4; 32:13; 33:1; Lv 26:42; Nu 3:1; Dt 1:8; 6:10; 9:5; 29:13; 30:20; 34:4. See p 127.
First Books of History (Joshua and Judges)	The first Books of History refer to the Law of Moses as a unified teaching and apply it for the people in their day. They set the precedent for all the Books of History, which compare the people's faith and deeds with the faith and deeds taught and commanded in the covenant confirmed through Moses.	Cf Jsh 1:7, 13–17; 4:10; 8:30–35; 22–24; Jgs 2:16–23; 3:4. See pp 335–37. See CC Jsh, 42, 804–5.
The Promise to David's House (Samuel, Kings, Chronicles)	God confirmed the covenant and promise with David and his descendants. These books often refer back to the Law of Moses and the history of the people under the covenant. Consider also the focus on the ark of the covenant throughout.	Cf 1Sm 2:10; 12:6–25; 2Sm 7; 22:1–23:7; 1Kgs 2:1–4; 8; 2Kgs 14:6; 18:4–6, 12; 17; 21:8; 22; 23:25. Note also how Chronicles is built on Samuel and Kings. See pp 628–31.
The Books of the Prophets before the Exile	These books act like sermons on the Books of Moses, applying their content for the people and prophesying what God would do in the future. In particular, they warn against disobeying the covenant and prophesy the coming of the Savior from David's house.	See p 1245. See "Amos' Use of Earlier Biblical Texts," CC Am, 289–92. On connections between Jonah and the Psalms, see CC Jnh, 210.
Psalms	In poetry and song, the Psalms record God's work with the patriarchs and their descendants, commenting on the history and its application. They also affirm the promise God made to David and his descendants.	Cf Ps 78; 99; 105; 106; 135; 136.
Prophets during the Exile	Ezekiel and Daniel describe the downfall of Israel in view of the covenant confirmed through Moses. They continue to expound and apply the Law.	Cf Ezk 14:14, 20; 16:59; 22; 23; Dn 9:11, 13. See CC Ezk 1, 458; CC Ezk 2, 682–84, 692; CC Dn, 438–39.
The Books of History and the Prophets after the Exile	Priests and prophets work together to reestablish God's people in the life to which He called them in the covenant. Scribes collected the texts of earlier prophets and psalmists.	Cf Ezr 3:2; 6:18; 7:6; Ne 1:7–8; 8:1, 14; 13:1.
The Time between the Testaments	Writers refer to the collected writings of Moses and the Prophets as more than a national body of literature. They are the consistent revelation of God to His people.	Cf, e.g., Ecclus Prologue; 24:23; Bar 1:21; 2:2, 24, 28; Sus 3, 62; 2Macc 2:13; 7:30; 15:9; Tob 14:5.
The New Testament	Jesus, the apostles, and their disciples have the Law, Psalms, and Prophets as their Holy Scripture and place special emphasis on OT prophecies that are fulfilled in the coming of Christ.	The NT cites the OT over 250 times. Apart from some weak allusions to Esther, NT writers cite or allude to every other OT book as Sacred Scripture. On the persistent theme of prophecy and fulfillment, see p 1245.

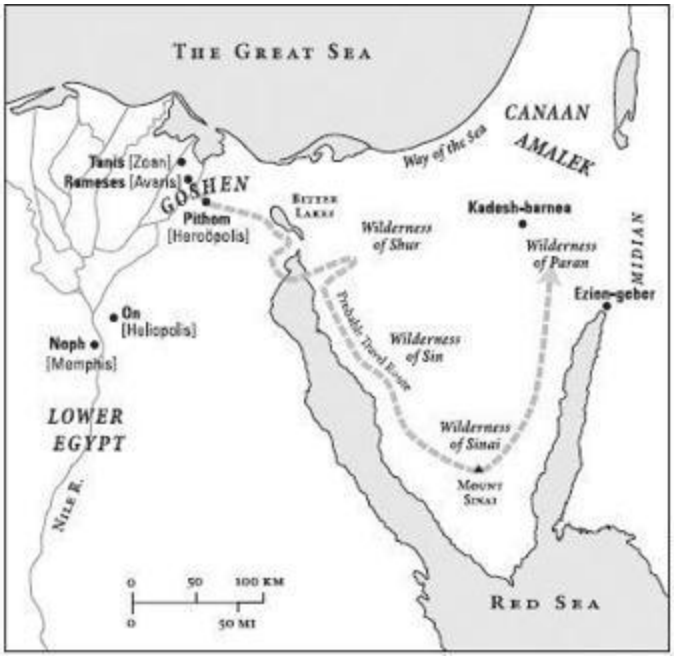

TAURUS MTS.
Carchemish
Haran
Nineveh
Calah
Arbela
Halab
PADDAN-ARAM
ASSYRIA
Ebla
Ugarit
Aashur
Nuzi
MESOPOTAMIA
ZAGROS MTS.
MEDIA
HITTITE EMPIRE
Hamath
Ecbatana
Tadmor
Mari
Euphrates R.
Tigris R.
Arvad
Kadesh
Gebal (Byblos)
ARAM (SYRIA)
BABYLONIA
AKKAD
Sidon
Damascus
Susa (Shushan)
ELAM
THE GREAT SEA
Tyre
Hazor
Babylon
Dor
Shechem
Nippur
Isin
SUMER
Luz (Bethel)
CANAAN
Joppa
Ai
Erech (Uruk)
Lagash
Larsa
Jericho
Gaza
Jebus (Jerusalem)
Ur
Eridu
Mamre
Beersheba
Kiriath-arba (Hebron)
Tanis (Zoan)
NEGEB
SHUR
ARABIA
Area of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboiim, and Zoar
Kadesh (Kadesh-barnea)
PERSIAN GULF
On (Heliopolis)
Noph (Memphis)
SINAI
MIDIAN
LOWER EGYPT
Akhetaton (Tell el-Amarna)
RED SEA
NILE R.
UPPER EGYPT
Thebes
CUSH
ABRAHAM'S TRAVELS. "Ur of the Chaldeans" (Gn 11:28, 31) refers to Ur in Old Babylonia, amidst the declining Sumerian and Akkadian civilizations. Terah and his family, including Abraham and Lot, migrated from Ur to Haran (11:27–32). God called Abraham to Canaan (12:1–9). Abraham sojourned in Egypt during a famine (12:9–20), then returned to Canaan with Lot, who moved to Sodom (ch 13). Abraham defeated forces led by Chedorlaomer of Elam (14:8–16). God promised Abraham numerous offspring and the land of Canaan (ch 15), sealing that with the covenant of circumcision (ch 17). The sacrifice of the ram for Isaac happened in Moriah (ch 22), possibly on the later temple site in Jerusalem, where Melchizedek reigned in Abraham's time (14:17–24). Abraham and Sarah were buried near Mamre (25:9–10), close to Kiriath-arba.



JACOB'S TRAVELS. Jacob's mother, Rebekah, was from Paddan-aram (Gn 25:20). Jacob went from Beersheba to his uncle's home in Haran (28:10). On the way, God spoke to Jacob in a dream at Bethel (28:11–22). In Haran, Jacob married Leah and Rachel, the daughters of Laban, Rebekah's brother (29:1–30). Later, on his way back to Canaan, Jacob settled matters with Laban in Gilead (ch 31). He camped at Mahanaim (32:1–2), then wrestled with God at Peniel (32:22–32). Esau went to Seir, but Jacob went to Succoth and Shechem (33:16–20), then to Bethel (35:1). Rachel died near Ephrath (35:16–20). Isaac was buried at Mamre (35:27–29), and Jacob's son Joseph rose to administer all Egypt, bringing his father and his brothers to Goshen (37:12–36; 39:1–47:12). Jacob died in Egypt and was buried at Mamre (49:28–50:14).

Dreamer	Revelation/Fulfillment
Abimelech (20:3–7)	God reveals that Sarah is Abraham's wife and threatens death to Abimelech. As a result, Abimelech returns Sarah to Abraham.
Jacob (28:12–15)	Jacob dreams of a stairway reaching to heaven, from which God promises that He will bless all people and will watch over Jacob. Years later, Jacob returned to this site to thank God for His blessings.
Jacob (31:10–13)	A method of breeding goats that would bring prosperity is revealed to Jacob. In the same dream, the angel of God tells Jacob to return to his homeland. Jacob obeyed and returned home in great prosperity.
Laban (31:24)	God warns Laban not to speak either good or bad to Jacob. Laban grudgingly complied.
Joseph (37:5–8)	Joseph dreams his brothers will bow down to him. This is fulfilled in 42:6–9.
Joseph (37:9–10)	Joseph dreams his family will bow down to him.
Chief cupbearer (40:8–15)	The chief cupbearer will be restored to his former position. This is fulfilled in 40:20–21.
Chief baker (40:16–19)	The chief baker will be hanged. This is fulfilled in 40:22.
Pharaoh (41:1–4)	Seven years of bounty will be followed by seven years of famine. This is fulfilled in 41:53–54.

THE EXODUS. God led His people through the wilderness, not by the Way of the Sea (Ex 13:17–18). Many sites on their route cannot be located with certainty. The Israelites journeyed from Rameses in Goshen to Succoth (12:37), which may be Pithom. They marched to Etham, on the edge of the wilderness (13:20). God ordered them to Pi-hahiroth to bait a trap for Pharaoh (14:1–4). Then God led His people through the Red Sea, trapping the Egyptians under the waters (14:5–31); see Jos, *Ant* 2:315, 324–25. The Israelites traveled into the Wilderness of Shur to Marah (15:22–25) and Elim (15:27). They came via Dophkah and Alush to Rephidim (Nu 33:13–14; Ex 17:1), where they defeated the Amalekites (Ex 17:8–16). Through the Wilderness of Sinai, they came to Mount Sinai (Ex 19–40). Israel went to Kibroth-hattaavah, Hazeroth (Nu 11:34–35), and then into the Wilderness of Paran (12:16). God commanded Israel to remain in the wilderness for 40 years (Nu 14:20–35).

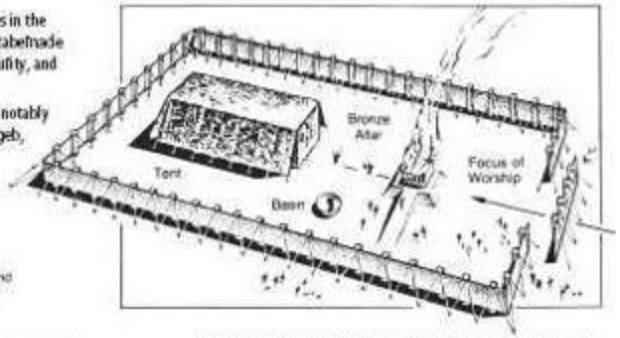


Divisions	Elements	Notes on Ex 19–24
Preparation	Summons	19:1–9. After rescuing Israel from Egypt, God calls them into a special covenant relationship. He promises to make them a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.
	Consecration	19:10–25. The Lord emphasizes that He differs from every other ruler.
Book of the Covenant	Title Cf Dt 1:1–5; Jsh 24:2a	20:1. The Hbr term *debarim* ("words") is used technically here to mean the stipulations of the covenant.
	Historic prologue Cf Dt 1:6–3:29; Jsh 24:2b–13	20:2. The Lord reminds Israel of their enslavement in Egypt and how He delivered them.
	Moral stipulations Cf Dt 4–11; Jsh 24:14–15	20:3–17. The most basic set of rules, later distinguished as the 10 *debarim*, "words" (usually translated "commandments"; Ex 34:28). Grammatically, these words are not commands but statements describing God's holy people. In 20:18–26, we have an interlude. The people express their fear, and Moses explains that God appears so fearsome in order to test them. God wants them to know for certain that they are hearing from heaven. He emphasizes again that idols can have no place in His covenant.
	Civil stipulations Cf Dt 19–25	21:1–23:9. Specifics on relationships among the Israelites.
	Ceremonial stipulations Cf Dt 12–18, 26	23:10–19. Specifics on the way the Israelites will worship God.
	Promise of a guardian	23:20–33. Through His messenger, God promises protection, health, defeat of enemies, and a land grant. The covenant is not a new one, but a renewal of God's promises to Abraham and his descendants (Gn 15).
Confirmation	Deposit/Witness Cf Dt 31:9, 19–22, 24–26; Jsh 24:22, 27	24:1–4. Moses gets an initial commitment from the people and sets up monuments as a physical demonstration of their part in the covenant.
	Sacrifices	24:5–6. A covenant was "cut" (usually translated "made") between two parties. This involved sacrifice, cutting animals as representatives of the parties involved. This seems to have symbolized that if the covenant was not kept by the people, they could end up like the sacrificed animals (cf Gn 15:9–18, where Abram divides animals in half and God passes between the halves of the animals to show His commitment to the covenant). God demonstrates His commitment to this covenant through the death of His Son in the NT (Heb 9:19–28).
	Oath Cf Dt 29:12–15	24:7–8. The people formalize their agreement, and Moses seals them in the covenant with the blood of the sacrifices. This washing foreshadows the washing Christians receive through Baptism (Heb 10:22–23).
	Meal	24:9–11. The two parties gather for an intimate meal and eat the meat from the sacrifices. This meal foreshadows the Lord's Supper.
	Testimony	24:12–18. God gives Moses a memorial edition of the Torah ("teaching," often translated "law") and commands its instruction.

THE TABERNACLE

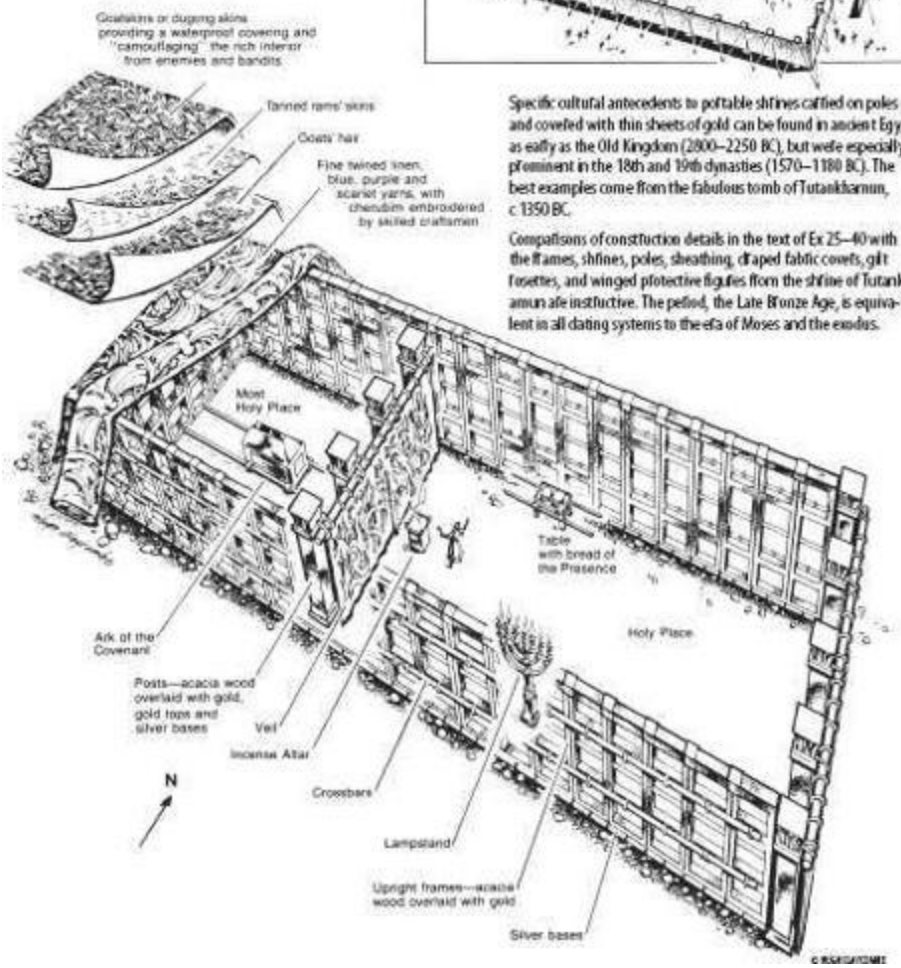
The new religious observances taught by Moses in the desert centered on rituals connected with the tabernacle and amplified Israel's sense of separateness, purity, and oneness under the lordship of Yahweh.

A few desert shrines have been found in Sinai, notably at Serabit el-Khadem and at Timnah in the Negeb, and show marked Egyptian influence.



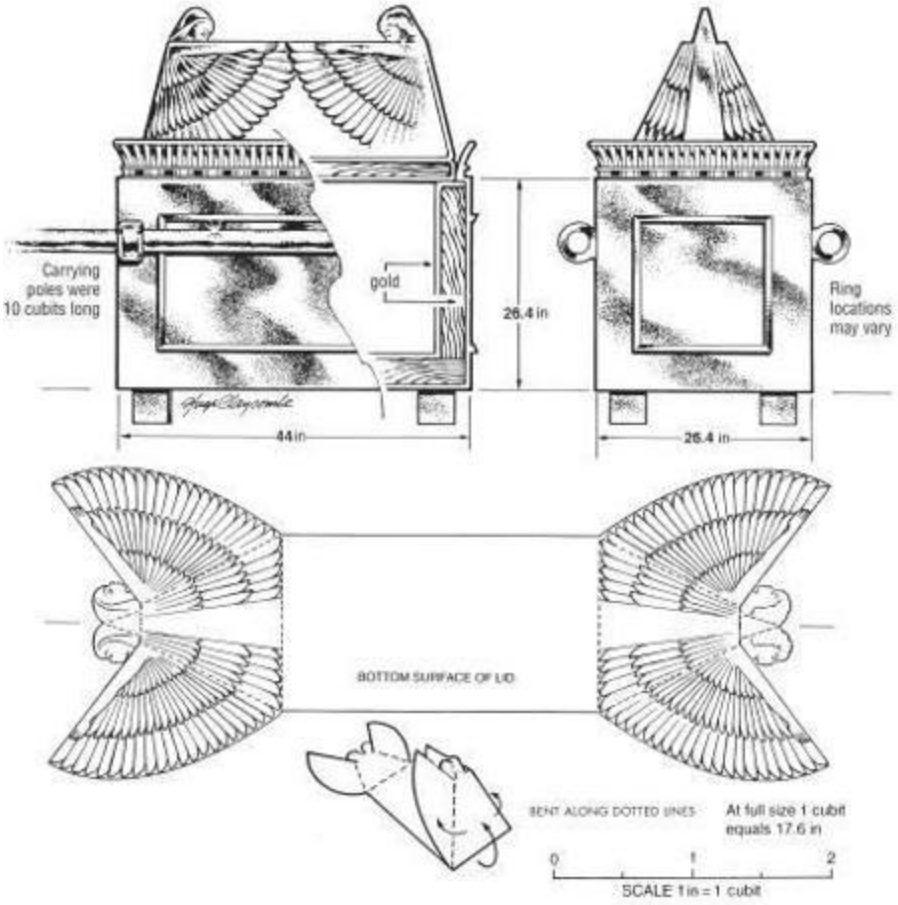
Specific cultural antecedents to portable shrines carried on poles and covered with thin sheets of gold can be found in ancient Egypt as early as the Old Kingdom (2800–2250 BC), but were especially prominent in the 18th and 19th dynasties (1570–1180 BC). The best examples come from the fabulous tomb of Tutankhamun, c 1350 BC.

Comparisons of construction details in the text of Ex 25–40 with the frames, shrines, poles, sheathing, draped fabric covers, gilt rosettes, and winged protective figures from the shrine of Tutankhamun are instructive. The period, the Late Bronze Age, is equivalent in all dating systems to the era of Moses and the exodus.



	Materials	Uses	Notes on Culture and Symbolism
METALS	Gold	Ark; table; lampstand; clasps; gold hooks; frames and crossbars; ephod; chains for breastpiece; bells; plate; altar of incense	Symbol of wealth and authority (Gn 41:42); used for money and for making precious items, such as idols.
	Silver	Bases for curtain frames; curtain hooks	Represented wealth (Pr 3:13–14); used for money and making idols.
	Bronze	Clasps; altar utensils; curtain bases; basin	Represented strength (Dt 33:25); used for weapons and tools (Gn 4:22; 1Ki 14:27).
CLOTH	Blue yarn	Curtain decoration; courtyard curtain; ephod; breastpiece; robe; cord	The coast of Canaan was known for the production of blue and purple dyes, which derived from mollusk shells and were expensive to produce. Therefore, these colors were associated with wealth and royalty.
	Purple yarn	Curtain decoration; courtyard curtain; ephod; breastpiece	
	Scarlet yarn	Curtain decoration; courtyard curtain; ephod; breastpiece	Color derived from the body of the female cochineal insect. This vigorous dye is known for its staining power. Scarlet became a symbol of sin (Is 1:18). However, in Moses' day, scarlet wool was used in ritual cleansing from sin and sickness (Lv 14:1–7, 48–53). The color probably represented the cleansing power of blood.
	Fine linen	Curtains; courtyard curtains; ephod; breastpiece; tunic; turban; undergarments	The term for fine linen comes from the word for "white." Linen was the clothing of authority (Gn 41:42). White cloth also suggested purity and refinement.
	Goats' hair	Curtains	An animal of sacrifice. The curtains made from its hair enclosed the tabernacle.
HIDES	Rams' skins	Tent roof	An animal of sacrifice. The scarlet dye may have symbolized the blood of the sacrifices, which covered the sanctuary.
	Goatskins or dugong skins	Tent roof	The dugong is a slow-moving sea mammal, 7–11 ft in length, found in the Red Sea. It is valued for its meat, oil, and waterproof hide. Goatskins were also used; Ex 26:14.
PLANTS	Acacia wood	Ark; table; curtain frames; crossbars; altar; altar of incense	A hardwood tree that grows in desert valleys. Such trees were more plentiful in ancient times, growing in groves. The wood is still used for cabinetmaking today.
	Olives	Oil for the lampstand	As a fuel, food, and medicine, olive oil was one of the staple resources of the ancient Near East. It symbolizes plenty (Gn 8:11; Dt 32:13; 33:24).
	Spices	For incense and anointing oil	Spices provided a necessary perfume in the desert climate of the ancient Near East. As incense, the spices would help to cover up the smell of the animals and smoke that were found in the court of the tabernacle each day.
MINERALS	Onyx stones	Shoulder pieces	A precious stone made of fine-grained silica in black-and-white layers. By carving through the layers, an artist can produce sharp black-and-white contrasts, ideal for lettering.
	Gems	Breastpiece	Precious stones covered the heart of the high priest, who bore them before God. They showed how God regarded the tribes of Israel as precious.

CONSTRUCTION OF THE ARK
Ex 37:1–9



Ex 37:6–9 states that the cherubim were "of one piece with the mercy seat" and that they were "hammered" as in flat sheets, not a casting. It would be difficult for a goldsmith to hammer large sculpturelike figures from the flat surface of the mercy seat as artists commonly show. This proposal suggests that the mercy seat and the cherubim were formed from one single gold sheet folded upward at the ends, probably over wooden forms for support. Therefore, the place of the presence of Yahweh (God) was surrounded by a continuous sheet of gold both below and above. Overshadowing wings (Ex 25:20; 37:9), along with incense (Lv 16:13), helped cover the throne on the Day of Atonement.

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THE OFFERINGS OF ISRAELITE LAYPEOPLE

Type of Offering	Offering	Focus of Enactment	Purpose
Burnt offering	• Young bull (Lv 1:3–9) • Male sheep or goat (1:10–13) • Turtledove or pigeon (1:14–17)	• Production of a pleasing aroma with the smoke from the whole animal	• Access to God's favor • Acceptance by God
Grain offering	• Fine flour with olive oil and frankincense (Lv 2:1–3) • Unleavened bread with olive oil (2:4–10) • Roasted fresh grain with olive oil and frankincense (2:14–16)	• Production of a pleasing aroma with the smoke from the token portion	• Provision of most holy bread for the sanctification of the priests • Acceptance by God
Peace offering	• Bull or cow (Lv 3:1–5) • Sheep (3:6–11) • Goat (3:12–16)	• Production of a pleasing aroma with the smoke from the fat, the kidneys, and the lobe of the liver	• Provision of holy meat for the priest's family and the Israelite family for holy communion with God as His guests • Acceptance by God
Sin offering for unintentional sins	• Young bull for the congregation (Lv 4:1–21)	• Atonement with blood in the Holy Place	• Cleansing of the unclean congregation and forgiveness by God for admission into His presence
	• Male goat for a leader (Lv 4:22–26) • Female goat or sheep for other layperson (4:27–35)	• Atonement with blood on the altar for burnt offering	• Cleansing of the unclean sinner and forgiveness by God for admission into His presence
Graded sin offering for some intentional sins	• Female sheep or goat (Lv 5:1–6) • Two turtledoves or pigeons for a poor person (5:7–10)	• Atonement by confession of sins and application of blood to the altar for burnt offering	• Cleansing of the unclean sinner and forgiveness by God for admission into His presence
	• 10th of an ephah of flour for an impoverished person (5:11–13)	• Atonement by confession of sins and production of smoke from the token portion	
Guilt offering	• Ram for unintentional or suspected acts of desecration (Lv 5:14–19)	• Restitution to God by the rite of atonement	• Forgiveness by God for an act of desecration
	• Ram for the desecration of God's name by a perjured thief (6:1–7)	• Restitution to God by the rite of atonement	• Forgiveness by God for the desecration of His holy name

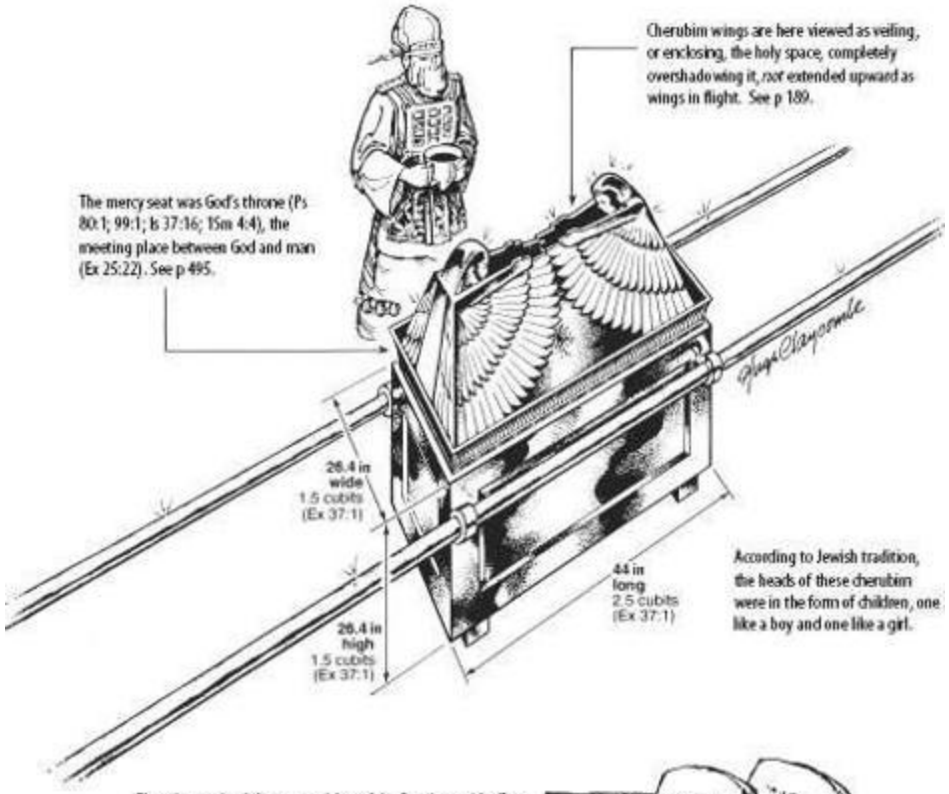
Reference	Date	Occasion	Lay Observance	Work Prohibition	Offerings/Gifts to the Lord
23:3	Sabbath			Total	
23:5	14th day of first month	Passover			
23:6, 8	15th–21st days of first month	Feast of Unleavened Bread	Eating of unleavened bread		Yes
23:6–8	15th day of first month	First day of Feast of Unleavened Bread, a holy day	Eating of unleavened bread	Partial	Yes
23:8	21st day of first month	Last day of Feast of Unleavened Bread, a holy day	Eating of unleavened bread	Partial	Yes
23:9–14	16th day of first month	Feast of Firstfruits	Presenting the first sheaf of barley harvest		Yes
23:15–21	50th day after elevation of first sheaf	Feast of Weeks, a holy day (Day of Pentecost)		Partial	Yes
23:24–25	First day of seventh month	Feast of Trumpets, a holy day		Partial	Yes
23:27–32	10th day of seventh month	Day of Atonement, a holy day	Fasting	Total	Yes
23:34–43	15th–21st days of seventh month	Feast of Booths, Feast of the Lord, holy days	Going on pilgrimage, residing in booths, rejoicing		Yes
23:35	15th day of seventh month	First day of Feast of Booths, a holy day	Going on pilgrimage, residing in booths, rejoicing	Partial	Yes
23:36	22nd day of seventh month	Closing ceremony of Feast of Booths, a holy day		Partial	Yes

OT and Jewish Feasts	Celebration	Season	Church Year	Celebration
Start of Israelite year Rosh Hashanah Lv 23:23–25; Nu 29:1–6	Completion of agricultural year and beginning of new year	Sept/Oct	Sundays after Pentecost	During the "Half-Year of the Church" (Semester Ecclesiae), worship focuses on the teachings of Jesus for the Church.
Day of Atonement/Yom Kippur Lv 16; 23:26–32; Nu 29:7–11	A day of national fasting and sacrifice during which the high priest entered the Most Holy Place in the tabernacle	Sept/Oct		
Booths/Tabernacles/Ingathering Ex 23:16; Lv 23:33–43; Nu 29:12–39; Dt 16:13–17	Harvest and commemoration of Israelite wanderings	Sept/Oct		
Hanukkah Mentioned in Jn 10:22 as the Feast of Dedication	Purification of the temple from Seleucid rulers (165–164 BC)	Dec	Start of Church Year Advent/Christmas	The "Half-Year of the Lord" (Semester Domini) focuses on the life of Jesus.
Purim Est 9:18–32	National deliverance through Queen Esther at time of Babylonian exile	Feb/Mar	Epiphany	
Passover/Unleavened Bread Ex 12; 23:15; Nu 9; Dt 16:1–8	National redemption from Egypt	Mar/Apr	Lent/Easter	
Weeks/Pentecost/Harvest Lv 23:15–22; Nu 28:26–31; Dt 16:9–12	Firstfruits of the wheat harvest	May/June	Ascension/Pentecost	

THE ARK OF THE COVENANT

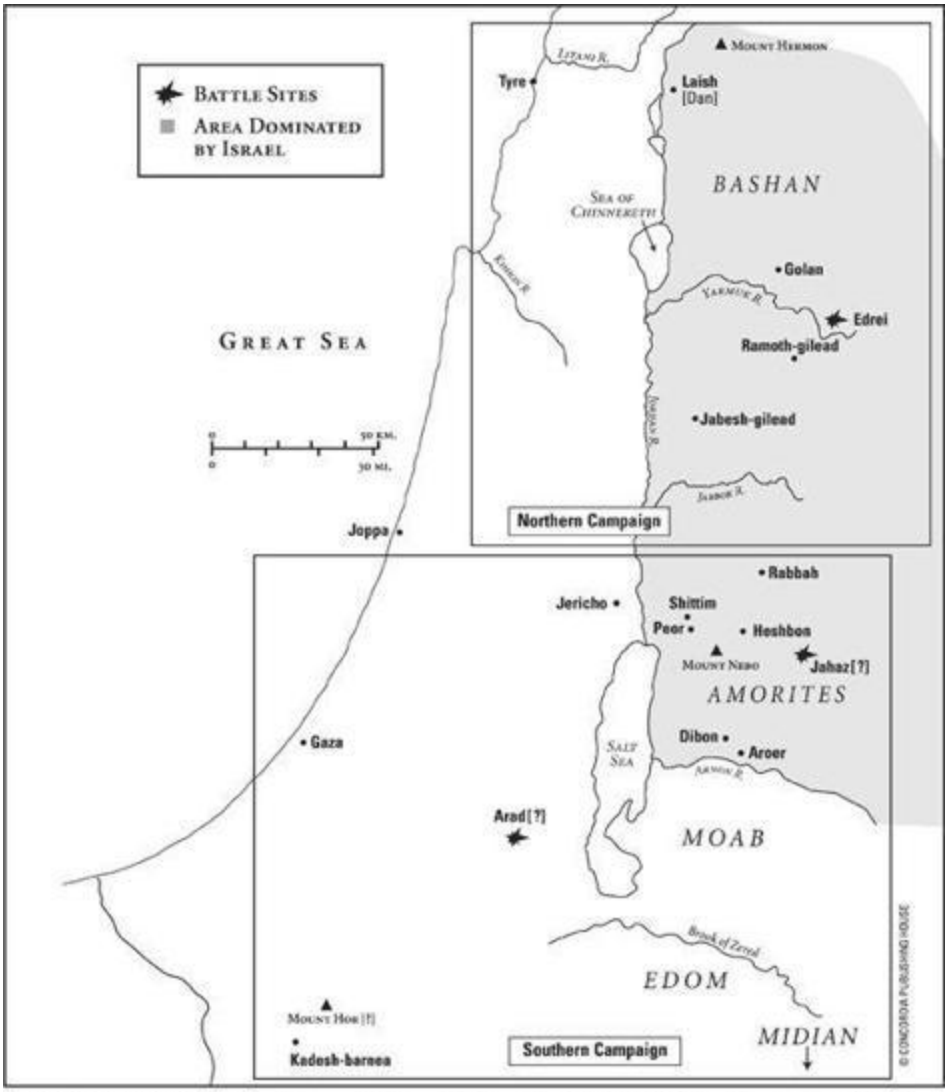
The ark of the covenant was the centerpiece of the Israelite tabernacle. The ark was a box covered with gold, 44 in. long by 26.4 in. wide and high, with carrying poles for the wilderness journey to the Promised Land. Centered within the tabernacle (portable temple), the ark was later placed within Solomon's permanent temple.

Once a year, the high priest entered the Most Holy Place to appear before the Lord (Lv 16:34). This part of the Day of Atonement ceremony included sprinkling of the blood from animals upon the cover of the ark of the covenant (Lv 16:14). Israelite people prayed over animals to be sacrificed, placing on them their own sin and guilt (Lv 16:21). Blood was a substance that embodied both physical and spiritual life, and it was sprinkled on the sacred space between the cherubim.



The ark contained the stone tablets of the Decalogue (the Ten Commandments), prompting the name "ark of the covenant" (Dt 10:5). The tablets of God's Law delivered to Moses at Mount Sinai functioned as the constitution for the Israelite nation. Later, a jar of manna from the desert wandering (Ex 16:33) and Aaron's rod (Nu 17:10) were stored in the ark as symbols of God's deliverance.

Domestic Foods	Uses	Meanings
Grain *Wheat, barley, millet, spelt*	Wheat flour formed the basis of Israelite meals ("daily bread"). The Bible refers to bread more than 300 times. Barley was raised primarily to feed cattle but was also eaten by the poor.	The aroma of daily bread filled the Holy Place of the temple (Ex 25:30) and surrounded Israelite homes with a reminder that their food came from their heavenly Father (Mt 6:9–11). At the feeding of the 5,000, Jesus blessed a poor boy's barley loaves in order to feed the crowd (Jn 6:9). When Jesus said, "I am the bread of life," He declared Himself the source of sustenance of life for everyone who received Him (Jn 6:35).
Fruit *Grapes, olives, figs, pomegranates, dates, apples*	Olives and grapes, along with wheat, were the most important foods. Olive oil was mixed with flour to make bread. Wine was a common beverage. Pressed "raisin cakes" were also common.	Oil was valued as a food ingredient and as a soothing skin treatment; wine brought joy and served as an antiseptic (Ps 23:5; 104:15; Lk 10:34). Negatively, oil and wine were also associated with excesses (Pr 21:17).
Dairy Products *Sheep's milk, goats' milk, cottage cheese, curds, aged cheese, butter*	Fresh milk was the basis of the herder's diet and a common beverage at meals. Poor urban families probably did not have fresh milk regularly since they could not keep herd animals. Many Jewish people today still avoid eating dairy products with meat, based on Ex 23:19.	Canaan flowed "with milk and honey" (Ex 3:8), a description of its abundance. Milk also represented the food of the immature (1Co 3:2).
Legumes *Beans, lentils, pulse*	Stews prepared from legumes were often served at the main meal of the day. The Israelites scooped the stew up with pieces of bread.	Esau craved the red lentil soup prepared by Jacob and sold his birthright for so meager a meal (Gn 25:29–34). Such a diet represented subsistence living (Ezk 4:9–17).
Meat *Beef, lamb, goat, fish, dove, quail, chicken, eggs, locusts*	Fish was probably a common form of meat in the Israelite diet. It was dried with salt and could also be ground to form "fish flour" for use in stews. Oxen, sheep, and goats were slaughtered for festivals or temple sacrifices. They were too valuable as sources of milk, wool, and farm labor to be eaten regularly.	The blood of oxen, sheep, goats, and doves made atonement for sin (Lv 4:1–5:13). Slaughtering an animal evoked the joy of feasting (Lk 15:23–27). Early on, the fish became a symbol for Christianity because so many disciples were fishermen. Also, the letters of the Gk word for fish (*ichthus*) were used as an acronym for "Jesus Christ, God's Son, Savior."
Vegetables *Melons, cucumbers, onions, garlic, leeks, parsley, celery, lettuce, cabbage, endive, chicory*	Vegetables were available based on the season and local climate. They were eaten raw or in stews.	The Israelites craved the variety of fresh vegetables they enjoyed in Egypt (Nu 11:5). God commanded them to eat bitter herbs during Passover to remind them of their bitter slavery under the Egyptians (Ex 12:8).
Nuts *Almonds, walnuts, pistachios, carob pods*	Just as today, nuts made convenient travel food. They were given as gifts (Gn 43:11). Carob pods were normally fed to animals but were also eaten by the poor (Lk 15:16).	Almond trees are one of the first trees to blossom in Israel. The shape of the blossoms ornamented the golden lampstand of the tabernacle (Ex 25:33–36). God caused Aaron's staff to bud and produce almonds to show His support for the Levites (Nu 17).
Seasonings and Spices *Salt, black cumin, cumin, dill, mustard, coriander, cassia, mint, anise, saffron*	Salt was most valued because of its flavor and usefulness in drying fish. Other spices were used in stews, etc. Some were given as gifts (Ge 43:11).	Salt symbolized goodness (Mt 5:13). Spices were valued for their pleasing taste or aroma. Some were used for perfume (Sg 4:14). They represented the finer things in life, since only prosperous people could afford them.
Sweeteners *Honey, grape honey*	Honeycomb was eaten directly or used to sweeten "cakes," similar in size to cookies. Grape honey was made from boiled and condensed grape juice.	Canaan flowed "with milk and honey" (Ex 3:8), a description of its abundance. Solomon refers to honey often and associates it with pleasure (Pr 24:13), excess (Pr 25:16), and sensuality (Sg 4:11).

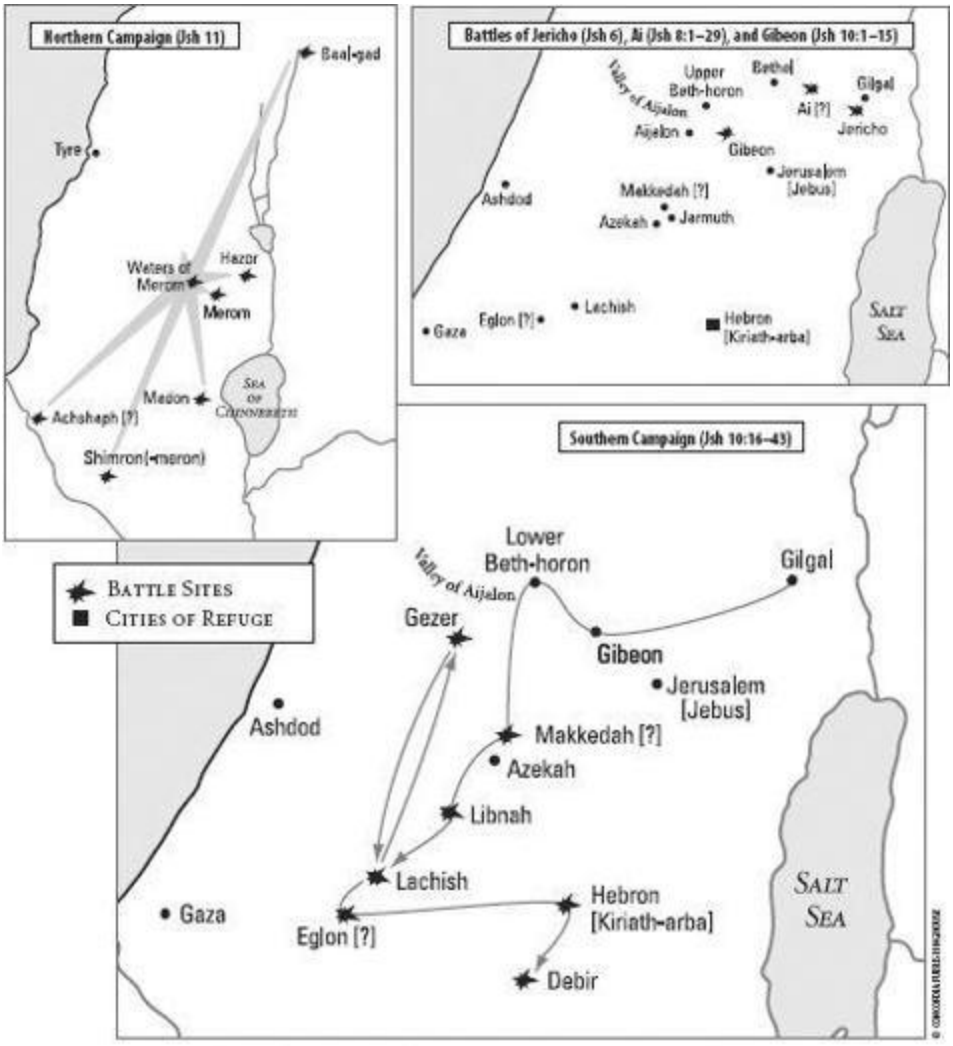


WILDERNESS WANDERINGS. God delayed the conquest of Canaan for 40 years (Nu 13–14; Dt 1:19–46). Israel often stayed near Kadesh-barnea (Nu 33:36). Aaron died on Mount Hor (Nu 20:22–29; 33:37–39). Israel destroyed Arad and surrounding cities (Nu 21:1–3). Edom refused passage to the east (Nu 20:14–21), so the Israelites went perhaps as far south as Ezion-geber to skirt Edom (Nu 21:4; Dt 2:8; see color map 3). They camped in the Valley of Zered and along the Arnon River (Nu 21:12–13). At Jahaz, they defeated the Amorites who had occupied part of Moab (Nu 21:21–30; Dt 2:24–37). They defeated Bashan at Edrei (Nu 21:31–35; Dt 3:1–7). Next they camped east of Jericho at Shittim (Nu 25). After they defeated the Midianites (Nu 31), Israel controlled the Transjordan from the Valley of the Arnon to Mount Hermon (Dt 3:8–10). Moses died on Mount Nebo (Dt 34).

Months (Lunar Calendar)	Religious Festivals (Biblical and Jewish Titles)	Social Festivals	Agricultural Events	Climate
Abib/Nisan (Mar/Apr)	• Passover (pilgrimage) • Unleavened Bread • Firstfruits		• Grain growth and maturation	• Rainy season • Safe sailing begins; battle season
Ziv/Iyyar (Apr/May)		• Shearing festival (cf 1Sm 25:2)	• Early figs • New lambs, kids • Barley harvest	• Latter rain
Sivan (May/June)	• Weeks (Pentecost)		•Wheat harvest	• Dry season (only moisture is dew)
Tammuz (June/July)				
Ab (July/Aug)				
Elul (Aug/Sept)		• Wine festival (Jgs 21)	• Olive harvest • Summer figs • Grape harvest	• Flies multiply • Wadis dry
Ethanim/Tishri (Sept/Oct)	• Trumpets • Atonement • New Moon (seventh month) • Booths (pilgrimage)	• Clan offering? (cf 1Sm 20)		• Safe sailing ends
Bul/Heshvan (Oct/Nov)			• Plowing after early rains • Sheep/goats rutting	• Rainy season • Wadis fill
Chisley (Nov/Dec)	• Hanukkah		• Sowing grain • Winter figs • Germination and slow growth	• All sailing ends
Tebeth (Dec/Jan)				
Shebat (Jan/Feb)				• Heaviest rain; chilly
Adar (Feb/Mar)			• Almonds blossom • Hoeing flax	
	• Purim			

	Principles	Notes
Genesis	"You shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood." (9:4)	See further explanation in Lv 17:10–16.
	"To this day the people of Israel do not eat the sinew of the thigh that is on the hip socket, because He touched the socket of Jacob's hip on the sinew of the thigh." (32:32)	An Israelite custom
Exodus	"They shall eat the flesh [of the lambs] that night, roasted on the fire; with unleavened bread and bitter herbs they shall eat it. Do not eat any of it raw or boiled in water, but roasted, its head with its legs and its inner parts. And you shall let none of it remain until the morning; anything that remains until the morning you shall burn" (12:8–10)	Regulations for Passover
	"You shall not boil a young goat in its mother's milk." (23:19; cf 34:26; Dt 14:21)	An unusual law, which may speak against a regional custom. See note, Ex 23:19.
Leviticus	"Whatever parts the hoof and is cloven-footed and chews the cud, among the animals, you may eat." (11:3)	The attention Moses gives to food shows its importance to the holiness of God's people. See "holy," p 7. He establishes the important principles of "clean" and "unclean" in great detail. See p 6.
	"Everything in the waters that has fins and scales, whether in the seas or in the rivers, you may eat." (11:9)	
	"These you shall detest among the birds." (List follows in 11:13–19)	
	"Among the winged insects that go on all fours you may eat those that have jointed legs above their feet, with which to hop on the ground." (11:21)	
	"If any animal which you may eat dies, whoever touches its carcass shall be unclean until the evening." (11:39)	
	"Every swarming thing that swarms on the ground is detestable; it shall not be eaten." (11:41)	
Deuteronomy	"You shall not eat any abomination." (14:3–21)	A repetition of thoughts from Leviticus

Predictor	Failed Predictions
William Miller (1782–1849); farmer; founder of Adventist movement	Miller predicted that Christ would return in 1843; he then proposed Oct 1844. After this date failed, many abandoned Miller, but other followers formed the Seventh-day Adventists.
John Nelson Darby (1800–82); clergyman; founder of Plymouth Brethren	Creator of the rapture doctrine and dispensationalism. Darby's views developed from his struggle with Bible prophecy and the prophetic utterances of Margaret McDonald, a 15-year-old follower of the Scottish preacher Edward Irving. Darby's views have encouraged numerous failed predictions.
Joseph Smith (1805–44); founder of the Latter-day Saints (Mormons)	Smith made numerous false predictions about his generation (e.g., that they would build the New Jerusalem in western Missouri, and that the lost tribes of Israel would be restored). Other Mormon leaders have made similar fruitless predictions.
Charles Taze Russell (1852–1916); founder of Jehovah's Witnesses	Russell predicted that the world would end in the battle of Armageddon in 1914. His followers have proposed numerous other dates.
Lester Sumrall (1913–96); pentecostal missionary; television preacher	Authored a book called *I Predict 2000 A.D.* Taught that Christ would return by the year 2000.
Jeane Dixon (1918–97); Realtor; Roman Catholic; psychic	Dixon gained attention when she correctly predicted the assassination of a new president (Kennedy). Most of her predictions have proven false. For example, she predicted that a comet would devastate the earth in the 1980s.
Hal Lindsey (b. 1929); evangelical speaker and popular author	Wrote *The Late Great Planet Earth*. Predicted the rapture would take place in 1981 and the world would end in 1988. Lindsey continues to propose dates.
Pat Robertson (b. 1930); charismatic; founder of Christian Broadcasting Network; 1988 U.S. presidential candidate	Taught that Christ would return in 1982.
Benny Hinn (b. 1953); television preacher	Predicted Christ would return in 1993.

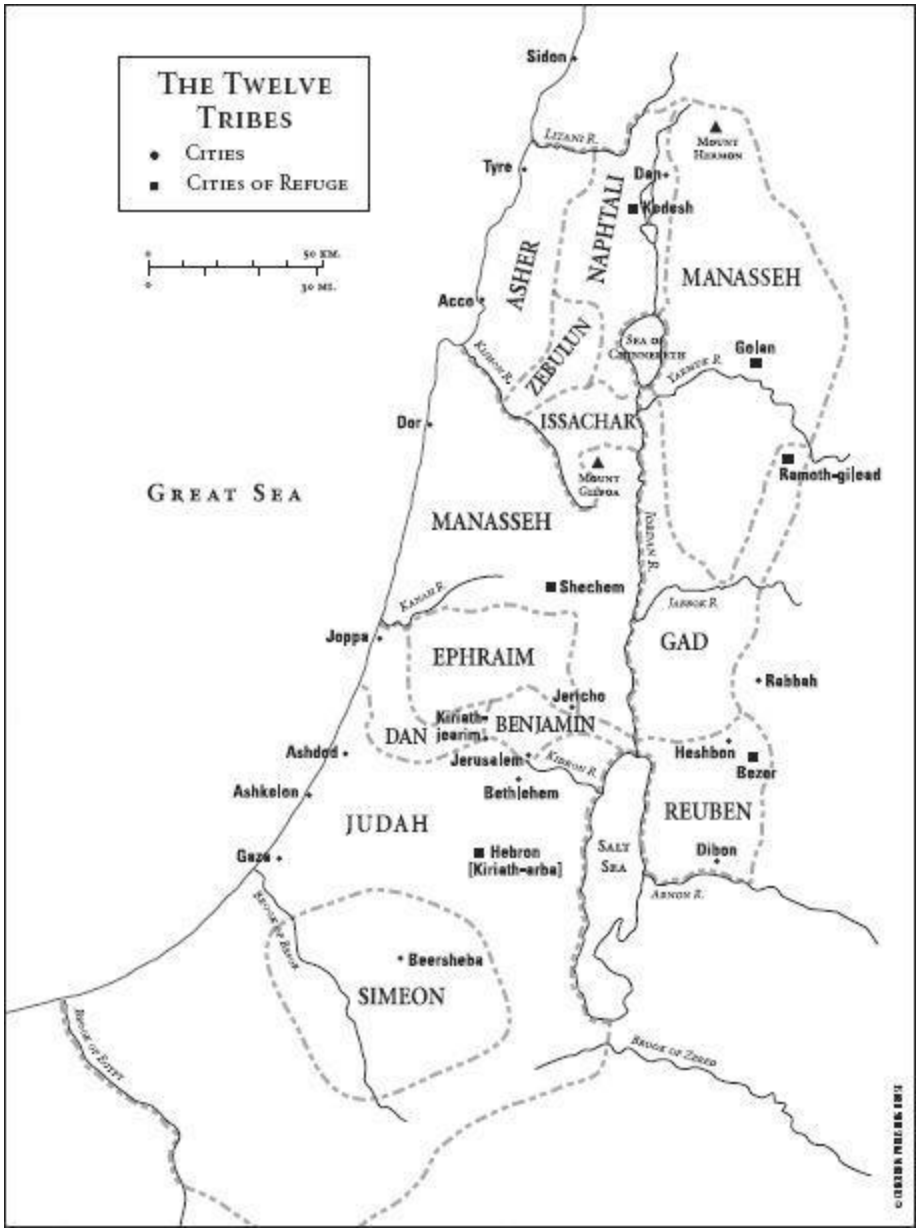


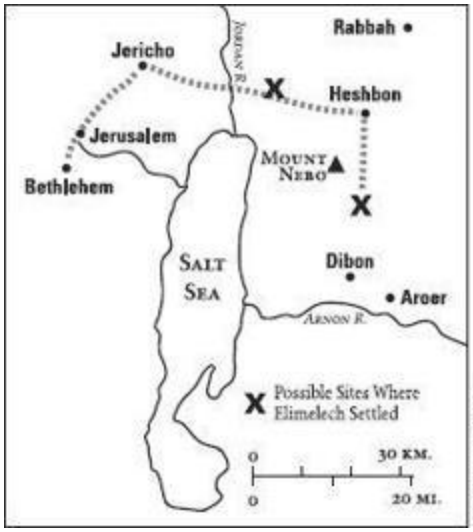
THE CONQUEST OF CANAAN. Joshua succeeded Moses for the conquest of Canaan (Nu 27:12; Dt 31:14), yet the real general was the Lord (Jsh 5:13–15). God delivered Jericho (Jsh 6) and Ai (Jsh 8) into Israel's hand. God permitted the Gibeonites to become the servants of Israel at Gilgal (Jsh 9). Five kings attacked Gibeon, and God gave Israel victory at Gibeon and in the Valley of Aijalon when the sun stood still (Jsh 10).

After defeating the northern alliance under Hazor at the Waters of Merom, Israel destroyed those cities allied against it (Jsh 11). Israel systematically destroyed the southern towns in the hill country and slopes (Jsh 10:16–43).

Other cities conquered included Arad, Adullam, Aphek, Carmel, Dor, Geder, Goim, Hepher, Hormah, Jokneam, Kedesh, Lasharon, Makkedah, Megiddo, Tappuah, Taanach, and Tirzah.

Cities that the Israelites failed to take were Jerusalem, which David would later conquer, and the five Philistine cities: Ashdod, Ashkelon, Ekron, Gath, and Gaza.

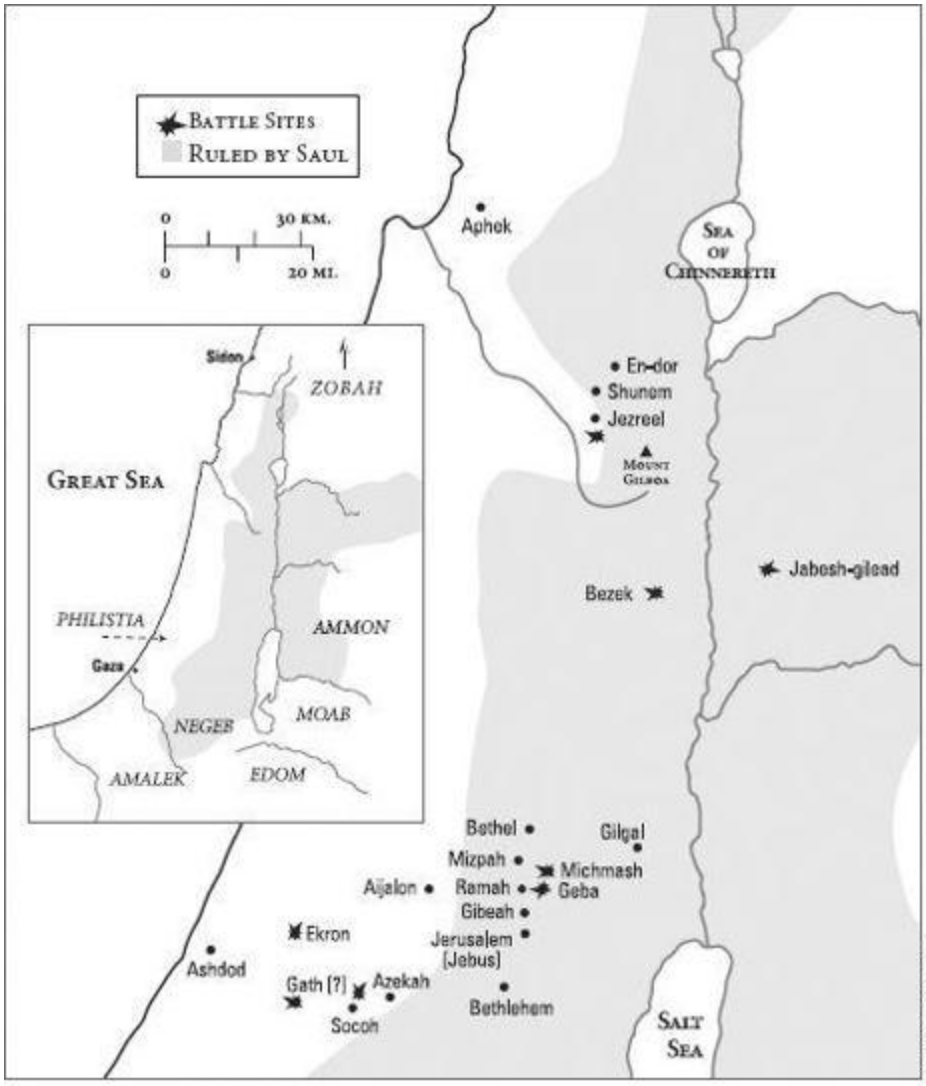

THE TWELVE TRIBES
CITIES
CITIES OF REFUGE
50 KM.
30 MI.
Sidon
Litani R.
Mount Hermon
Tyre
Dan
Kedesh
ASHER
NAPHTALI
MANASSEH
Acco
Kishon R.
ZEBULUN
Sea of Chinnereth
Golan
Jabbok R.
ISSACHAR
Dor
Mount Gilboa
Ramoth-gilead
GREAT SEA
MANASSEH
Jordan R.
Shechem
Kanah R.
Jabbok R.
Joppa
EPHRAIM
GAD
Rabbah
Jericho
Kiriath-jearim
DAN
BENJAMIN
Heshbon
Ashdod
Jerusalem
Kidron R.
Bezer
Ashkelon
Bethlehem
REUBEN
JUDAH
Salt Sea
Dibon
Gaza
Hebron [Kiriath-arba]
Arnon R.
Brook of Egypt
Beersheba
SIMEON
Brook of Zered



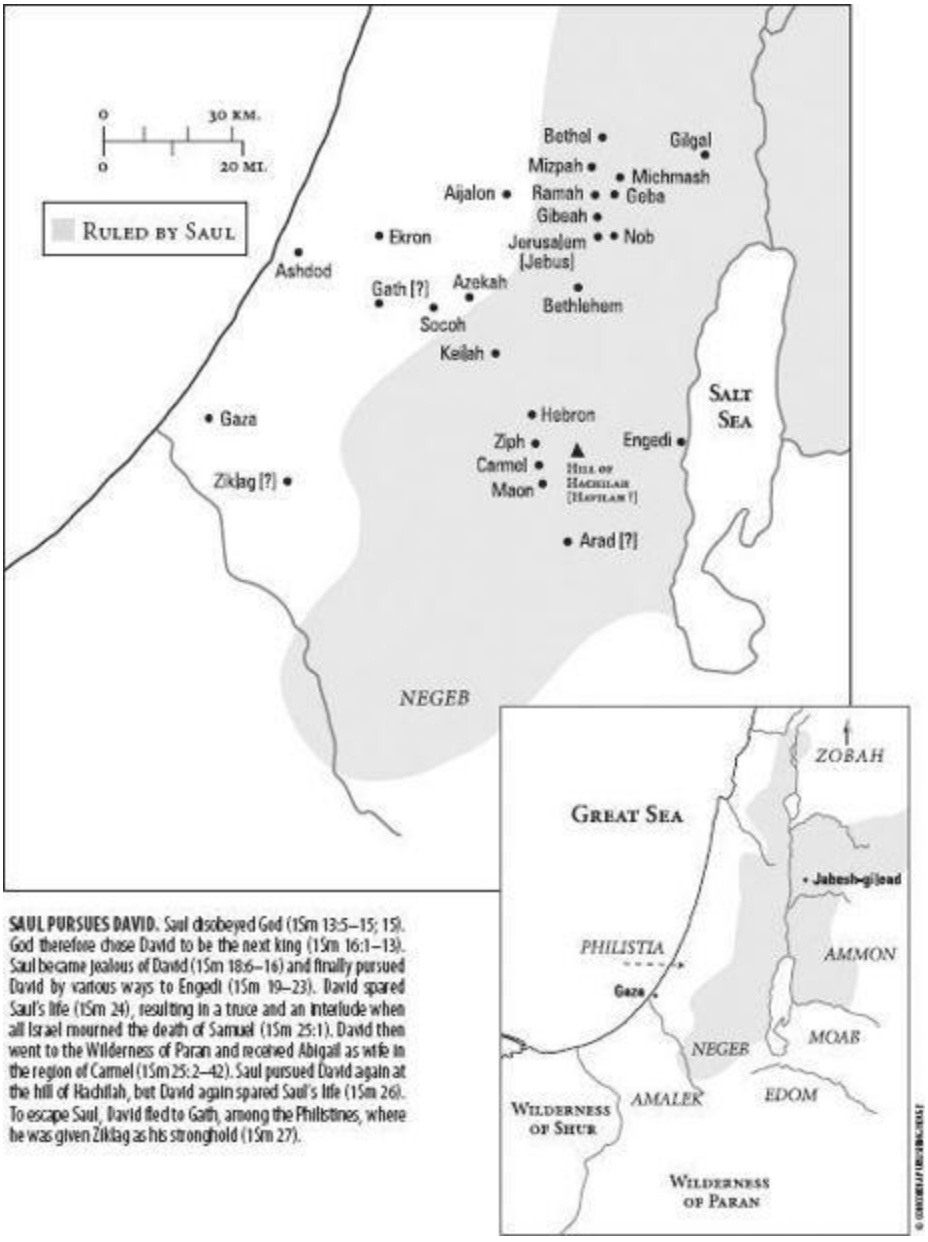
JOURNEYS OF NAOMI AND RUTH. An Israelite would not usually leave his inheritance, because it was really on loan from the Lord (Lv 25:23). Such a move would normally result in punishment or condemnation. The Book of Ruth, however, does not condemn Elimelech and his family, who probably exhausted all other resources before leaving for Moab.

Moab had become Israel's enemy (Nu 22–24). Yet, at this time, no specific ban on marrying Moabite women existed, as it did later in the Old Testament (Ezr 9:1–15; Ne 13:23–28).

At times, the Lord encouraged the patriarchs to seek refuge in a foreign land (Abraham and Jacob in Egypt; Isaac and David among the Philistines). As He did for these others, God delivered Naomi and Ruth, the forefather of David and Jesus.



KINGDOM AND BATTLES OF SAUL. Saul defeated Nahash, leader of the Ammonites, at Jabesh-gilead (1Sm 11:1–12). Jonathan routed the Philistines at Geba, but they reassembled with a great force at Michmash (1Sm 13:1–7). God gave Jonathan the victory at Michmash, and Saul pursued them beyond Aijalon (1Sm 14:1–46). David slew Goliath near Azekah and Socoh, whereafter the Israelites pursued the Philistines to Gath and Ekron (1Sm 17). Israel's enemies included Philistia, Zobah, Ammon, Moab, Edom, and Amalek (1Sm 14:47; 15:1–9). Saul fought against all of them. He and his sons, except Ish-bosheth, died on Mt. Gilboa in battle against the Philistines (1Sm 31).

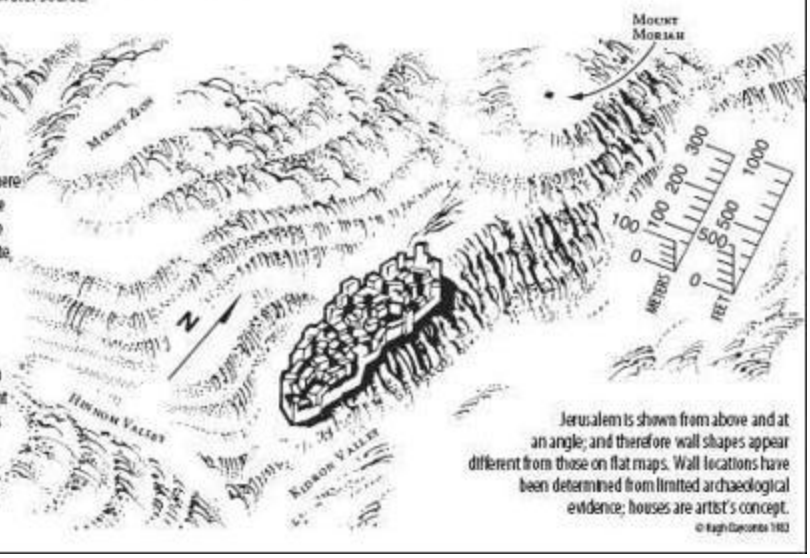


SAUL PURSUES DAVID. Saul disobeyed God (1Sm 13:5–15; 15). God therefore chose David to be the next king (1Sm 16:1–13). Saul became jealous of David (1Sm 18:6–16) and finally pursued David by various ways to Engedi (1Sm 19–23). David spared Saul's life (1Sm 24), resulting in a truce and an interlude when all Israel mourned the death of Samuel (1Sm 25:1). David then went to the Wilderness of Paran and received Abigail as wife in the region of Carmel (1Sm 25:2–42). Saul pursued David again at the hill of Hachilah, but David again spared Saul's life (1Sm 26). To escape Saul, David fled to Gath, among the Philistines, where he was given Ziklag as his stronghold (1Sm 27).

The City of the Jebusites
Barely 12 acres in size, Jebus, a Canaanite city, could well defend itself against attack, with walls atop steep canyons and shafts reaching an underground water source.

David's Jerusalem
David captured the stronghold and made it his capital.

Substantial historical evidence, both biblical and extra-biblical, places the temple of Herod (and before it the temples of Zerubbabel and of Solomon) on the holy spot where King David built an altar to the Lord. David had purchased the land from Araunah the Jebusite, who was using the exposed bedrock as a threshing floor (2Sm 24:18–25). Tradition claims a much older sanctity for the site, associating it with the altar of Abraham on Mount Moriah (Gn 22:1–19). Genesis equates Moriah with "the mount of the LORD," and other OT shrines originated in altars erected by Abraham.



Jerusalem is shown from above and at an angle; and therefore wall shapes appear different from those on flat maps. Wall locations have been determined from limited archaeological evidence; houses are artist's concept.

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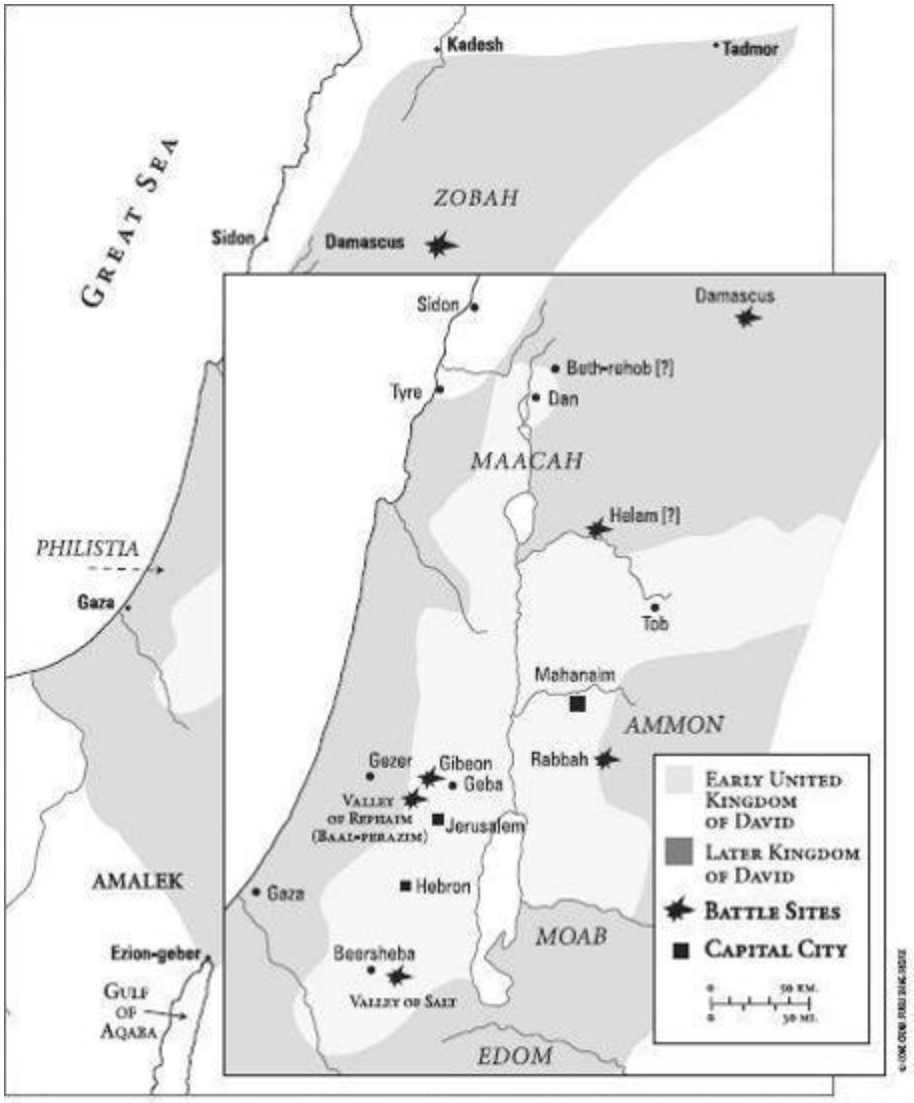
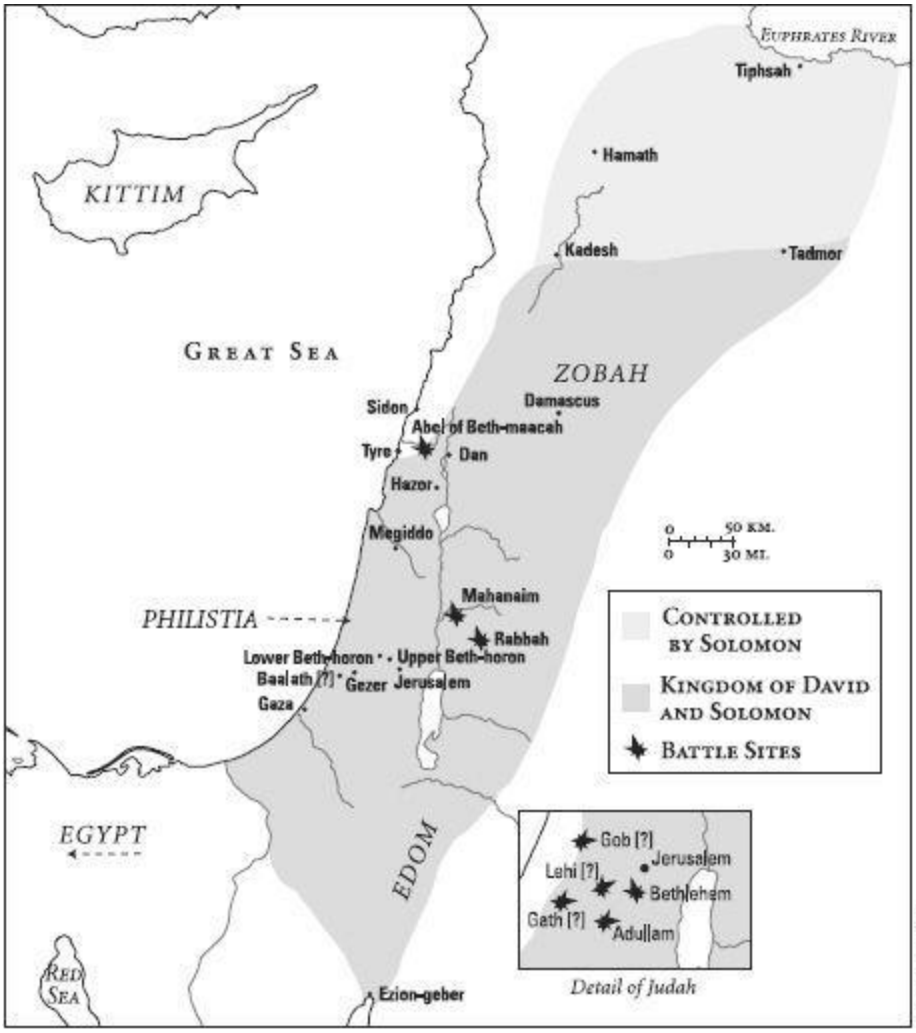


KINGDOM OF DAVID. David ruled Judah for seven years at Hebron (2Sm 5:5; 1Ch 29:27). Saul's son Ish-bosheth ruled Israel from Mahanaim for two years (2Sm 2:10). David's men scored a victory over Ish-bosheth's force at Gibeon (2Sm 2:10–3:1). David conquered Jerusalem and ruled all Israel from there for 33 years (2Sm 5:1–10; 1Ch 11:1–9). He defeated the Philistines at Baal-perazim and routed them from Geba to Gezer (2Sm 5:17–25; 1Ch 14:8–16). David had victories against the Philistines at Metheg-ammah (location uncertain); against Edom in the Valley of Salt; and against Moab, Zobah, Damascus, and Amalek (2Sm 8; 1Ch 18). He also defeated the Syrians and the Ammonites at Helam (2Sm 10; 1Ch 19) and the Ammonites at Rabbah (2Sm 12:26–31; 1Ch 20:1–3).

Prophets of Judah	Kings of Judah	Reigns in Judah (BC)		Reigns in Israel (BC)	Kings of Israel	Prophets of Israel
Shemaiah	Rehoboam	931–914	10th century BC	931–910	Jeroboam	Ahijah
	Abijam	914–911				
Azariah	Asa*	911–870		910–909	Nadab	
Hanani						
Jehu						
				909–887	Baasha	
			9th century BC	886–885	Elah	
				885	Zimri	
				885–880	Tibni	
				885–874	Omri	
Jahaziel	Jehoshaphat*	873–848		874–853	Ahab	Elijah
Eliezer						Micaiah
				853–852	Ahaziah	Elisha
Obadiah	Jehoram	853–841		852–841	Jeh)oram	
	Ahaziah	841				
Priest Jehoiada	Athaliah	841–835		841–814	Jehu	
Zechariah	Joash*	835–796		814–796	Jehoahaz	
Joel						
	Amaziah	796–767	8th century BC	798–782	Jehoash	*Jonah*
	Azariah (Uzziah)	792–740		793–753	Jeroboam II	*Amos*
Isaiah						
Micah	Jotham	750–735		753	Zechariah	
				752	Shallum	
				752–742	Menahem	
				742–732	Pekah	
	Ahaz	735–715		742–740	Pekahiah	Oded
				732–722	Hoshea	*Hosea*
Nahum	Hezekiah*	715–686		722	Fall of Samaria	
	Manasseh	696–642	7th century BC	The Assyrians deported people from Galilee and Transjordan as early as 733 BC. They crushed Syria in 732 BC. God permitted Assyria finally to destroy idolatrous Israel in 722 BC. Much of the Israelite population was deported and assimilated into upper Mesopotamia (2Ki 15:8–17:23). Assyria resettled other peoples in Israel (2Ki 17:24–41).		
Habakkuk	Amon	642–640				
Zephaniah	Josiah*	640–609				
Huldah						
Jeremiah						
	Jehoahaz	609				
Daniel	Jehoiakim	609–598				
Ezekiel	Jehoiachin	598–597	6th century BC	Nebuchadnezzar became king of Babylon in 605 BC. He deported Jehoiachin of Judah and others in 597 BC (2Ki 24:8–17; 2Ch 36:9–10). More deportations occurred in 587 BC after Jerusalem was destroyed (2Ki 25:1–25; 2Ch 36:11–21). Other Judeans escaped to Egypt after further unrest (2Ki 25:22–26), which resulted in a further deportation c 582 BC. The Judeans lived in refugee colonies in the vicinity of Babylon and were not assimilated. In 539 BC, Cyrus of Persia triumphed over the Babylonians. In 538 BC, he approved the return of the Judeans to their homeland.		
	Zedekiah	597–587				
	Fall of Jerusalem	587				
	Restoration	537 BC				



KINGDOM OF DAVID AND SOLOMON. David experienced civil war in his later years. His army defeated his rebel son Absalom at Mahanaim (2Sm 17:24–18:18) and the rebel Sheba at Abel of Beth-maacah (2Sm 20).

David and his men undertook campaigns against the Philistines at Gob and Gath (2Sm 21:15–22; 1Ch 20:4–8) and at Lehi, Adullam, and Bethlehem (2Sm 23:11–17; 1Ch 11:12–19).

Solomon secured what David had won, taking Hamath and building Hazor, Megiddo, Gezer, Upper and Lower Beth-horon, Baalath, and Tadmor (1Ki 9:15–19; 2Ch 8:3–6). He built a fleet at Ezion-geber (1Ki 9:26; 2Ch 20:36) and sealed pacts with Tyre (1Ki 5:1–12; 10:22; 2Ch 2:3–16; 9:21). Solomon's kingdom stretched from Tiphsah on the Euphrates in the north to Gaza in the south (1Ki 4:24).

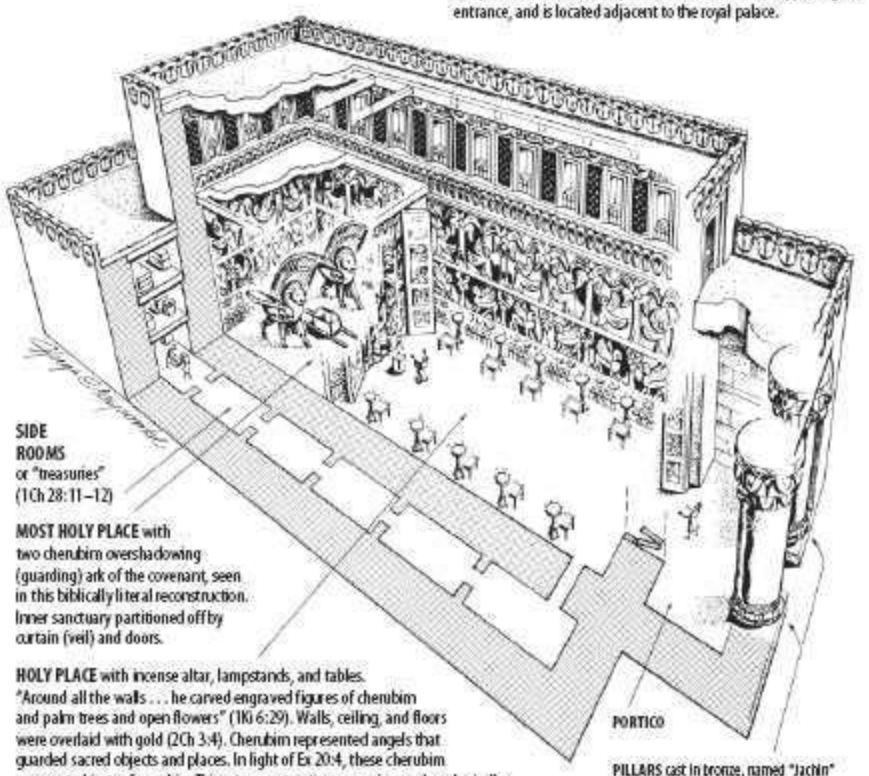
Solomon's later apostasy caused God to raise adversaries in Hadad of Edom; Rezon of Damascus and Zobah; Pharaoh Shishak of Egypt; and finally Jeroboam, who would rule Israel over against Rehoboam, Solomon's son, who would rule Judah (1Ki 11).

SOLOMON'S TEMPLE

960–587 BC

The temple of Solomon, located adjacent to the king's palace, functioned as God's royal palace and Israel's national center of worship. By its symbolism, the sanctuary taught the rule of the Lord over the whole creation and His special headship over Israel.

The floor plan is a type that has a long history in Semitic religion, particularly among the West Semites. An early example of the tripartite division into *'ulam*, *hekal*, and *debir* (portico, main hall, and inner sanctuary) has been found at Syrian Ebla (c 2300 BC) and, much later but more contemporaneous with Solomon, at Tell Ta'yinat in the Orontes basin (c 900 BC). Like Solomon's, the latter temple has three divisions, contains two columns supporting the entrance, and is located adjacent to the royal palace.



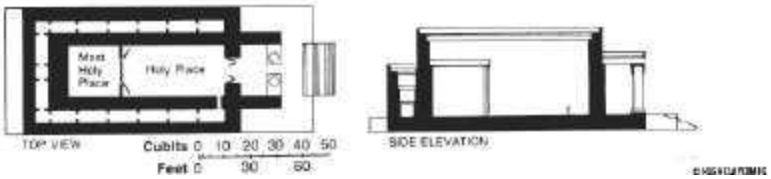
SIDE ROOMS or "treasuries" (1Ch 28:11–12)

MOST HOLY PLACE with two cherubim overshadowing (guarding) ark of the covenant, seen in this biblically literal reconstruction. Inner sanctuary partitioned off by curtain (veil) and doors.

HOLY PLACE with incense altar, lampstands, and tables. "Around all the walls . . . he carved engraved figures of cherubim and palm trees and open flowers" (1Ki 6:29). Walls, ceiling, and floors were overlaid with gold (2Ch 3:4). Cherubim represented angels that guarded sacred objects and places. In light of Ex 20:4, these cherubim were not objects of worship. This art reconstruction recognizes archaeologically attested Near Eastern art forms of Solomon's historical period and general region.

PORTICO

PILLARS cast in bronze, named "Jachin" and "Boaz."



ART FORMS OF SOLOMON'S HISTORICAL PERIOD

Complete biblical descriptions of Solomon's temple are presented in 1Ki 6; 7:13–51; 8:1–20; 1Ch 28–29; 2Ch 3–5.

Did Solomon's temple look like this?

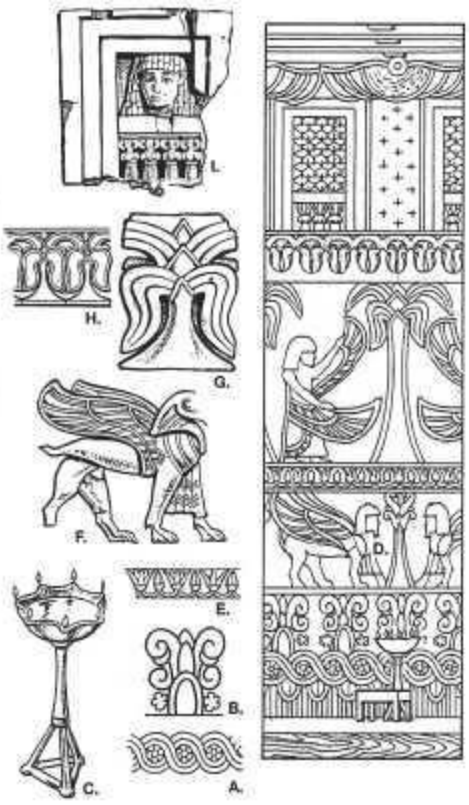
This art only depicts how Solomon's artists might have expressed themselves within their vision and times. The temple was destroyed in 587 BC by the Babylonians, and not one decorative stone has been found. Yet the word pictures of Scripture cannot be rejected. Though inadequate to the task, this selection of artifacts from Solomon's time period provided the artist with, at best, acceptable illustration copy. For example, a small carved ivory from Arslan Tash, Syria, became the model for the large cherubim that guarded the ark; costume decor was followed in detail, but the wings were changed, rolling forward and outward to match the sculptured cherubim of the Most Holy Place (2Ch 3:10).

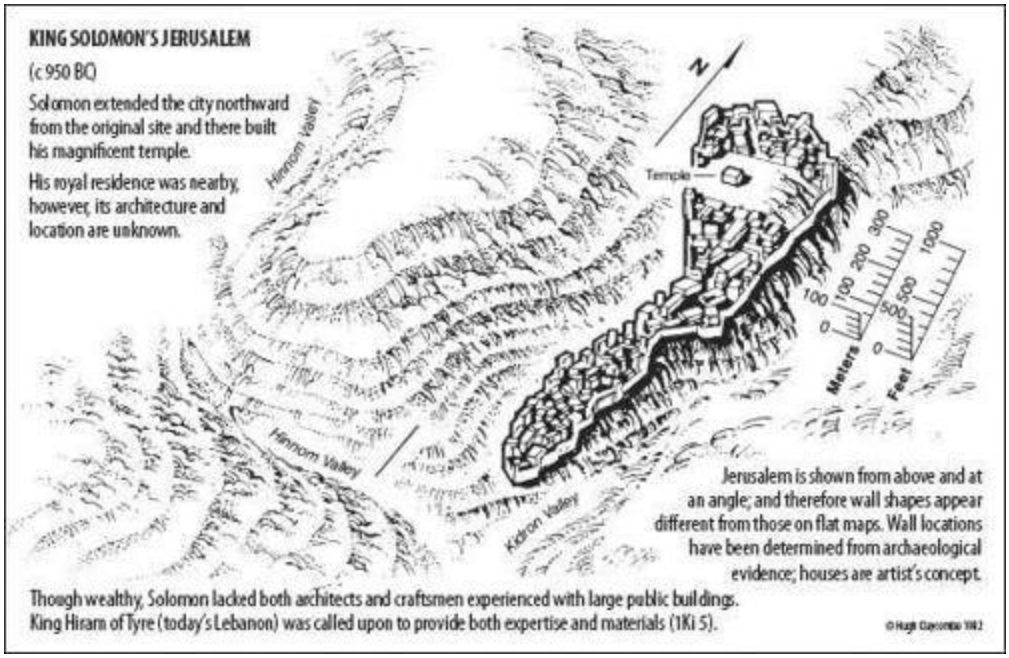
Artifacts (from the floor up) A. Ribbonlike design found at the 'Ain Dara temple may have symbolized the endless roll of seasons and years. B. Seedpod design from a column base at Tell Ta'yinat. C. Lampstand modeled on artifacts from Megiddo and Hazor. D. Winged guardian and sacred tree, Nimrud ivories. E. Lotus blossoms, Egyptian theme. F. Winged guardian, Arslan Tash. G. Stylized palm tree featuring heart of new palm growth, new life, Samaria. H. Frieze of palm trees, Arslan Tash. I. Window sash and railing styles, Nimrud ivories.

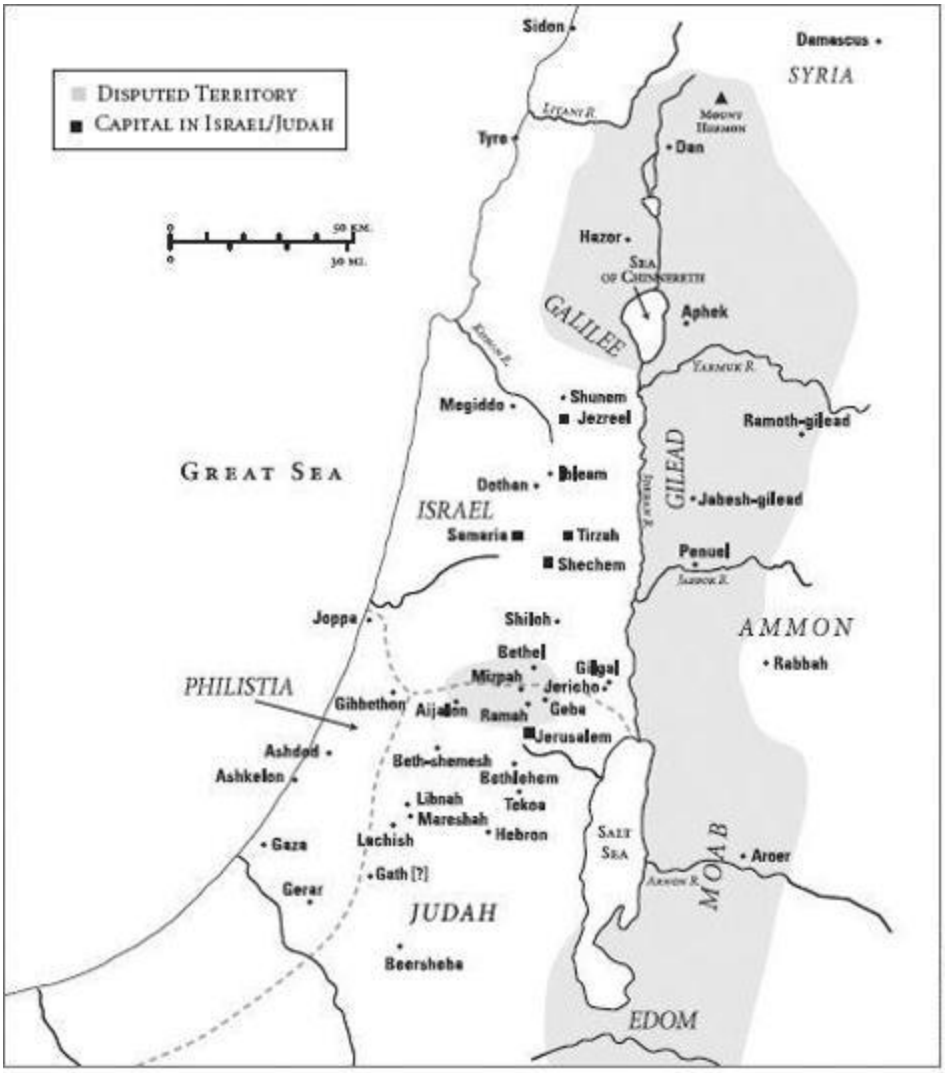
Gold overlaid the floor (1Ki 6:30) and the beams, thresholds, walls, and doors (2Ch 3:7). This sounds extravagant, yet not within its time. Inscriptions of Assyrian kings exclaim, "I covered the walls of [my] temple so it shone like the sun"; another king claims to have applied gold "like plaster, slapping it on." In recent times, sheets of gold were discovered all over large objects in the tomb of King Tutankhamun. Solomon had trade monopolies and also may have benefited from a "gold rush." Lavish gold for the house of God! It was the ancient norm.

Were Solomon and his temple a myth?

Archaeologists have now found temple foundations that bear strong architectural parallels to Solomon's as described in the Bible, notably at Tell Ta'yinat, discovered in 1936, and at 'Ain Dara, excavated between 1980 and 1985, both in northern Syria. They share what is known as the "long room plan." Since Solomon relied on the architects of King Hiram of Tyre, his temple is indeed an expression of the Syrian long room style and anchors itself in that region and period of history.



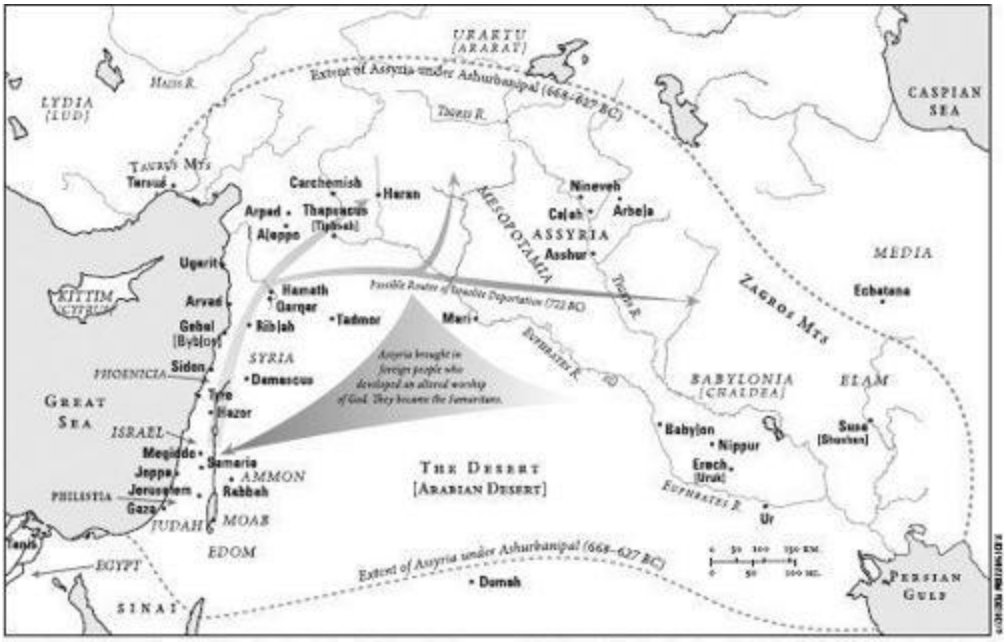

KING SOLOMON'S JERUSALEM
(c 950 BC)
Solomon extended the city northward from the original site and there built his magnificent temple.
His royal residence was nearby, however, its architecture and location are unknown.
Hinnom Valley
Temple
N
Meters
Feet
Hinnom Valley
Kidron Valley
Jerusalem is shown from above and at an angle; and therefore wall shapes appear different from those on flat maps. Wall locations have been determined from archaeological evidence; houses are artist's concept.
Though wealthy, Solomon lacked both architects and craftsmen experienced with large public buildings.
King Hiram of Tyre (today's Lebanon) was called upon to provide both expertise and materials (1Ki 5).



ISRAEL AND JUDAH. Solomon's son Rehoboam caused Israel to split from Judah; Israel then made Jeroboam its king (1Ki 12:1–24; 2Ch 10:1–11:4). Jeroboam established Israel's capital first at Shechem (1Ki 12:25), but later apparently moved it to Tirzah (1Ki 14:17). Jerusalem remained the capital of Judah (1Ki 12:18). Periodic coups in Israel destroyed the dynasties of Jeroboam (1Ki 15:27–30), Baasha (1Ki 16:8–13), Zimri (1Ki 16:15–22), Omri (2Ki 9:14–10:14), and Jehu (2Ki 15:8–12). Omri moved Israel's capital to Samaria (1Ki 16:23–24); Jezreel apparently served as a secondary capital (1Ki 21:1). Moab, and then Edom and Libnah, rebelled against Judah (2Ki 3; 8:20–22). Control of territory east of the Jordan passed back and forth between Israel and Syria (2Ki 10:32–33; 13:14–25; 14:23–29). A chaotic succession of kings heralded the fall of Israel to Assyria in 722 BC (2Ki 15:8–17:23).

Elijah lived in Tishbe (1Ki 17:1); proclaimed a famine and dwelt by Brook Cherith (1Ki 17:1–7); performed miracles in Zarephath (1Ki 17:8–24); defeated 450 prophets of Baal at Mount Carmel and slaughtered them at Brook Kishon (1Ki 18:20–40); outpaced Ahab's chariot to Jezreel (1Ki 18:41–46); escaped to the wilderness near Beersheba (1Ki 19:1–7); met the Lord at Mount Horeb, as did Moses (1Ki 19:8–18); called Elisha near Abel-meholah (1Ki 19:16–21); confronted Ahab in Samaria (1Ki 21:17–24) and cursed Ahaziа there (2Ki 1); journeyed with Elisha from Gilgal to Bethel to Jericho and then across the Jordan, where he was taken up to heaven (2Ki 2:1–12).

Elisha lived in Abel-meholah (1Ki 19:16, 19–21); journeyed with Elijah from Gilgal to Bethel to Jericho and across the Jordan (2Ki 2:1–12); returned to Jericho (2Ki 2:13–22); went to Bethel, Mount Carmel, and Samaria (2Ki 2:23–25); traveled to Edom to deliver an oracle against Moab (2Ki 3:4–20); passed through Shunem at various times (2Ki 4:8–37); performed food miracles at Gilgal (2Ki 4:38–44); healed Naaman and recovered an axe head near the Jordan (2Ki 5:1–6:7); led the blinded Syrian army from Dothan to Samaria (2Ki 6:8–23), where he later promised food during a siege (2Ki 6:24–7:20); anointed Hazael at Damascus (2Ki 8:7–15; cf 1Ki 19:15); sent a prophet to Ramoth-gilead to anoint Jehu (2Ki 9:1–13; cf 1Ki: 19:16); died at home near the Jordan (2Ki 13:14–21).



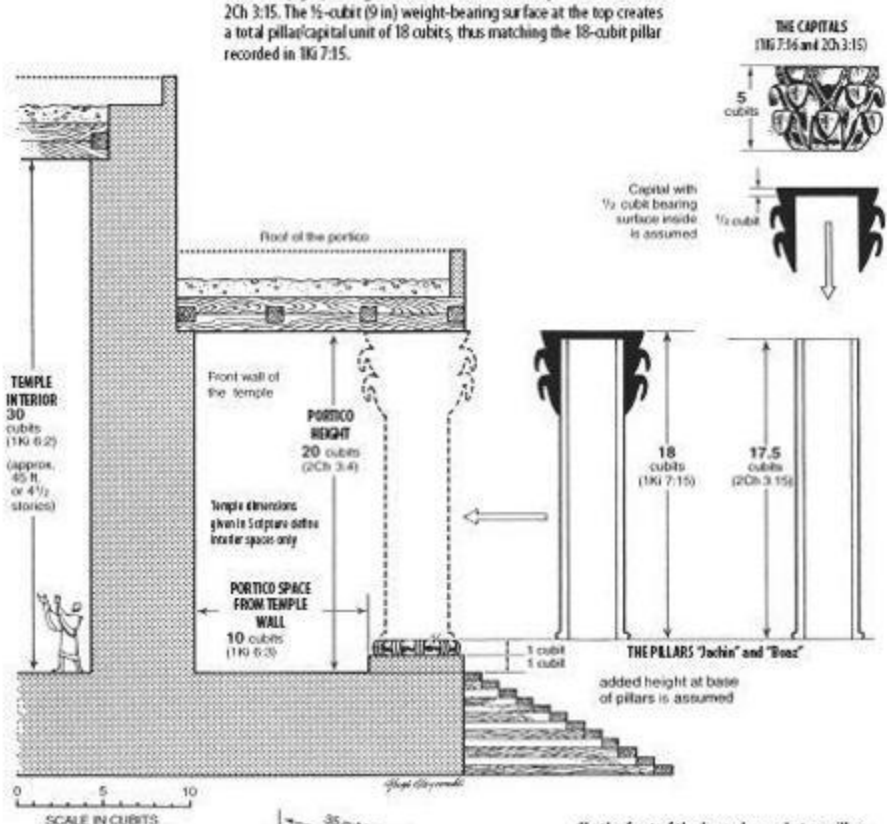
ASSYRIAN EXILE OF ISRAEL. Assyria was the largest empire since the Old Babylonian dominance of Sumer and Akkad before Abraham. It deported people from Galilee and east of the Jordan as early as 733 BC and crushed Syria in 732 BC. God permitted Assyria to destroy idolatrous Israel in 722 BC; Israelites were deported and assimilated into upper Mesopotamia (2Ki 15:8–17:23). Assyria resettled other peoples into Israel (2Ki 17:24–41). Assyria menaced the entire Near East, at times exacting tribute from the Phoenician cities, Judah, Edom, Moab, and Ammon, and crushing Israel and Philistia. Assyria checked the power of Egypt and even incorporated Egypt into its empire for a time. Borders fluctuated with the power of the kings. Ashurbanipal held a great area, yet Assyria fell to Babylon about 25 years after his death.

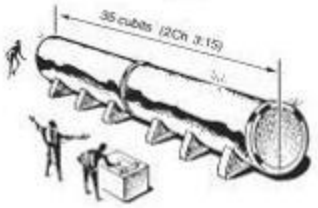
JUDAH (2Ki 16–25). Under Ahaz, Judah paid tribute to Assyria after Israel fell in 722 BC (2Ki 16:7–20). Hezekiah trusted in the Lord, undertook a spiritual reform, and resisted Sennacherib of Assyria (18:1–7), who captured Judah's fortified cities; but God delivered Jerusalem (18:13–19:37). Manasseh and Amon returned to idolatry (ch 21). Manasseh's insidious evil ensured Judah's end (23:26–27), even though Josiah turned back to the Lord, reformed worship more than any king since David (22:1–23:25), and—because of Assyria's decline—controlled an area similar to David's (2Chr 34:6–7). Egyptian Pharaoh Neco killed Josiah in battle (2Ki 23:29–30), then captured Jehoahaz and established Jehoiakim as a puppet (23:31–37). Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon defeated Neco. Jehoiakim first served him, then rebelled, then died (24:1–6). Nebuchadnezzar deported Jehoiachin, the new king, and some of the population, and made Zedekiah a puppet (24:8–17). Zedekiah rebelled, and in 587 BC, Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem and took Judah into exile (24:18–25:21). Further unrest caused many who had remained in Judah to flee to Egypt (25:22–26).

THE BRONZE PILLARS

Comparing 1Ki 7:15–16 with 2Ch 3:15

The decorative 5-cubit capital (7½ ft) in the shape of lilies (1Ki 7:19) is shown (right) fitting down over the 17½-cubit pillar described in 2Ch 3:15. The ½-cubit (9 in) weight-bearing surface at the top creates a total pillar/capital unit of 18 cubits, thus matching the 18-cubit pillar recorded in 1Ki 7:15.





"In the front of the house he made two pillars thirty-five cubits high" (2Ch 3:15). This unusual way of expressing the 17½-cubit length of each pillar may have occurred during the construction phase when the pillars were lying end to end.

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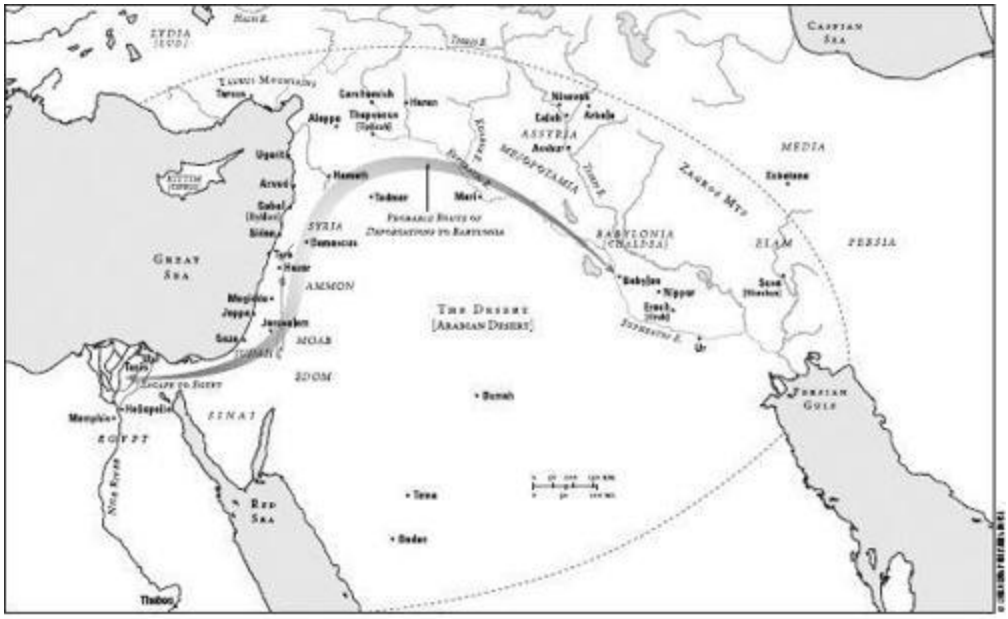


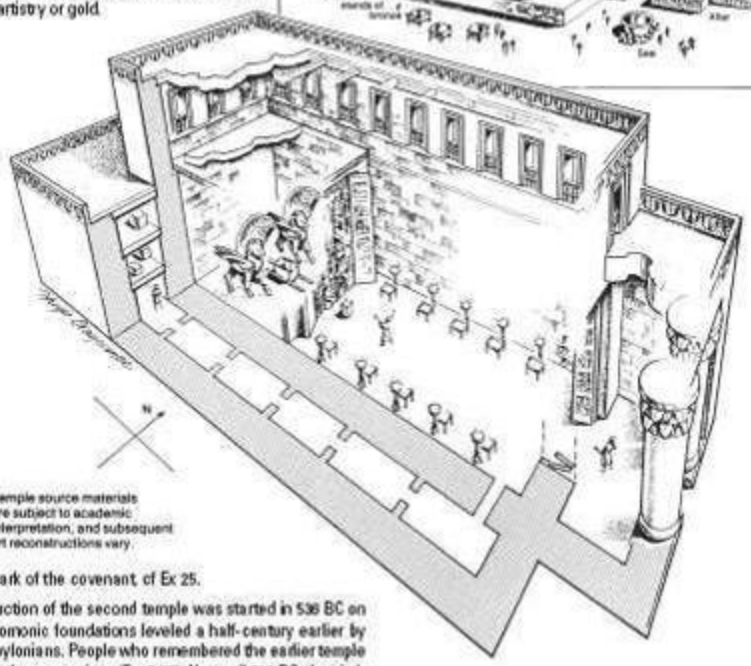
BABYLONIAN EXILE OF JUDAH. Babylon rebelled against Assyria under Nabopolassar in 626 BC. He and his son Nebuchadnezzar crushed opposition, leading to decisive victories at Carchemish and Hamath in 605 BC, which firmly established the Neo-Babylonian Empire. In that year, Nebuchadnezzar also besieged Jerusalem, deporting Daniel and other Judeans (Dn 1:1–7). After his father's death in 604 BC, King Nebuchadnezzar solidified his gains against Egypt, marked by the deportation of Jehoiachin and other Judeans in 597 BC (2Ki 24:8–17; 2Ch 36:9–10). A third deportation occurred in 587 BC, after Jerusalem was destroyed (2Ki 24:18–25:21; 2Ch 36:11–21). Other Judeans escaped to Egypt after further unrest (2Ki 25:22–26), which resulted in a further deportation to Babylonia around 582 BC. The Judeans lived in refugee colonies near Babylon and were not assimilated. The increasing corruption of Babylonia's King Nabonidus—who moved to the Arabian oasis town of Tema, leaving his son Belshazzar as regent (Dn 5:1–4)—hastened its fall to the Persians in 539 BC.

ZERUBBABEL'S TEMPLE

516–20 BC

Shown here is a much more modest reconstruction of Solomon's magnificent temple, destroyed by the Babylonians in 587 BC. It is assumed that this "second temple" followed the original floor plan, but funds were limited, craftsmanship was compromised, and its glory was in a spiritual sense only (Hg 1:6–7).

Reconstructed cherubim here guard the ark as before, along with barrier tapestry (curtain or veil), lampstands, tables, and portico pillars. But the walls are plain, with no hint of lavish artistry or gold.



Temple source materials are subject to academic interpretation, and subsequent art reconstructions vary.

On the ark of the covenant, cf Ex 25.

Construction of the second temple was started in 536 BC on the Solomonic foundations leveled a half-century earlier by the Babylonians. People who remembered the earlier temple wept at the comparison (Ezr 3:12). Not until 516 BC, the sixth year of the Persian emperor Darius I (522–486 BC), was the temple finally completed at the urging of Haggai and Zechariah (Ezr 6:13–15).

Archaeological evidence confirms that the Persian period in Judea was a comparatively impoverished one in terms of material culture. Later Aramaic documents from Elephantine in Upper Egypt illustrate the official process of gaining permission to construct a Judean place of worship and the opposition engendered by the presence of various foes during this period.

Of the temple and its construction, little is known. Among the few contemporary buildings, the Persian palace at Lachish and the Tobiad monument at Iraq el-Amir may be compared in terms of technique.

Unlike the more famous structures razed in 587 BC and AD 70, the temple begun by Zerubbabel suffered no major hostile destruction, but was gradually repaired and reconstructed over a long period. Eventually, it was replaced entirely by Herod's magnificent edifice.

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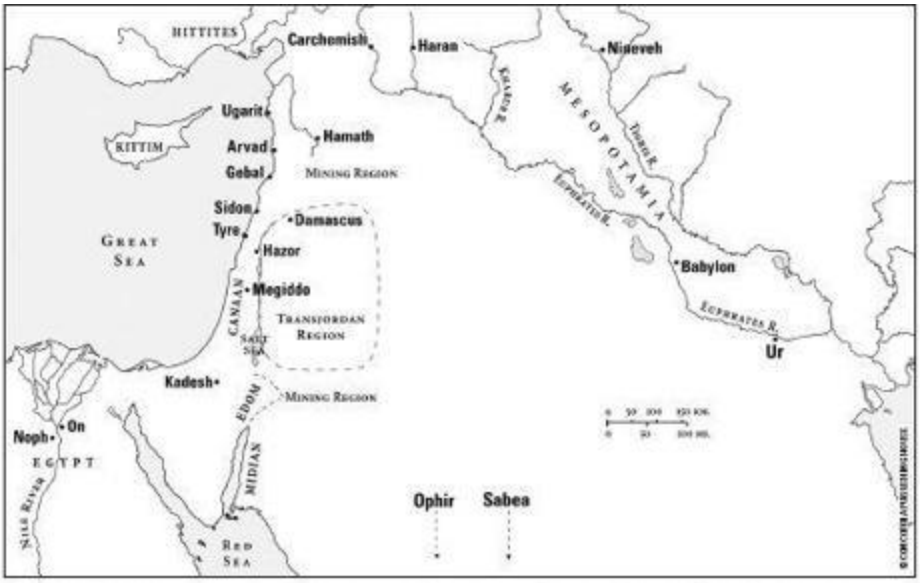
WISDOM IN THE BIBLE AND THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST

Historic Eras	Egyptian/Western Hellenism	Israel/Judaism/Christianity	Mesopotamian/Eastern Hellenism
Creation to the Time of Abraham	Instruction of the Vizier Ptah-Hotep	Genesis opens with the wise distinction between good and evil, life and death.	Sumerian Wisdom Literature
Patriarchal Period		Job	"I Will Praise the Lord" Wisdom
Israelite Kingdom Era	Wisdom of Amenemope	Psalms (esp 1; 19; 37; 104; 107; 147; and 148); Proverbs; Ecclesiastes; Song of Solomon	Ahiqar (Assyrian)
Between the Testaments	Hermetic Literature	Wisdom of Solomon; Ecclesiasticus (Sirach); Wisdom fragments from Qumran Cave 4 (4Q184; 185; 510; 511); Two Ways theme in the Community Rule (1QS)	
NT Era		Sayings of Jesus in the canonical Gospels; James; Two Ways theme in the Didache	
Early Christian/ Rabbinic Era	Western Gnosticism	Rabbinic Pirke Aboth poetry; Sayings of the Desert Fathers	Syriac Menander; Eastern Gnosticism

Genesis begins with God creating life and contrasting the way of life and the way of death. From this theme, first presented by God to Adam under the trees in Eden, comes all biblical wisdom. It is also a major theme in ancient Near East Wisdom Literature. The righteous, who are wise, walk in the way of life as God created it. The wicked, who are foolish, walk in the way of death, which is contrary to God's created order.



The exact location of Job's home is uncertain. Associations can be drawn with regions east of the Jordan based on other references to "Uz" in Scripture. Uz was the name of the son of Aram and grandson of Shem (Gn 10:22–23; 1Ch 1:17), of Abraham's nephew (Gn 22:21), and of an Edomite, one of the sons of Dishan the Horite (Gn 36:28; 1Ch 1:42). Jer 25:20 notes that "all the kings of the land of Uz" were forced to drink the cup of God's wrath. Lm 4:21 mentions Uz with Edom. These references look toward the south. Jb 1:3, "people of the east," encompasses people living beyond the Jordan River (from Midian in the south [Jgs 6:3] to Aram-naharaim in the north [also called Mesopotamia; Gn 24:10]). Therefore, Uz is vast. Josephus and early tradition supported a northern location as best suited for the manner of Job's life and the general background of the Book of Job. The Transjordan region was less arid in ancient times. See note, Jsh 17:15.

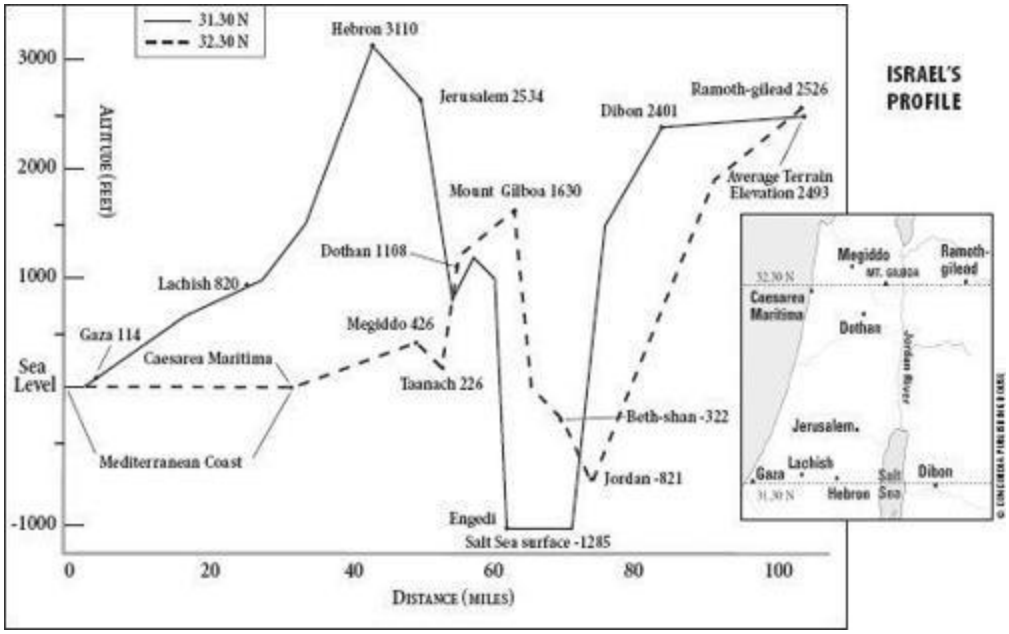
Name	Psalm Association	Contribution
Moses: d c 1406 BC. Prophet who led Israel out of Egypt and received God's Law.	90	Moses led or provided for leadership in worship at the beginning of Israel's independence (Ex 15).
David: 1040–970 BC. Second king of Israel; warrior, prophet, and poet.	3–9; 10?; 11–32; 34–41; 51–65; 68–70; 86; 101; 103; 108–10; 122; 124; 131; 133; 138–45	David appointed 4,000 singers and musicians for the tabernacle. About half of all the psalms are attributed to David.
Jeduthun (Ethan): Time of David; family of Merari?	39	Levites/prophets appointed by David for praise at the tabernacle (1Ch 25:1–3, 6). They used harps, lyres, and cymbals as accompaniment. Different family groups cast lots to determine when they would serve.
Heman: Time of David; family of Kohath.	88	
Asaph: Time of David and Solomon; family of Gershon.	50; 73–83	
Sons of Korah: Time of David and Solomon.	42; 44–49; 84–85; 87–88	Doorkeepers and musicians of the tabernacle and temple.
Solomon: d 931 BC. Israel's third king; wrote Proverbs, Song of Solomon, and Ecclesiastes.	72; 127	Builder of the first temple; 3,000 proverbs and 1,005 songs, but very few psalms, are attributed to Solomon.
Ethan: Time of Solomon.	89	An Ezrahite, renowned for wisdom (1Ki 4:31).
Anonymous: Some of these psalms connect with the psalm that precedes them. Most anonymous psalms are in Book Five of the Psalter.	1–2; 10?; 33; 43; 66–67; 71; 91–100; 102; 104–7; 111–21; 123; 125–26; 128–30; 132; 134–37; 146–50	Ps 113–18 form the "Egyptian Hallel" of later Jewish liturgy, used at festivals. Ps 120–36 form the "Great Hallel."

Table of Psalms for Daily Prayer

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
LENT							
Morning	84	119:73–80	34	5	38	22	43
Evening	42; 32	121; 6	25; 91	27; 51	126; 102	107; 130	31; 143
EASTER							
Morning	93	97	98	99	47	96	92
Evening	136; 117	124; 115	66; 116	8; 118	68; 113	50; 138	23;114
GENERAL							
Week 1							
Morning	103	5	42	89:1–18	97	51	104
Evening	117;139	84; 29	102; 133	1; 33	16; 62	142; 65	118; 111
Week 2							
Morning	19	136	123	15	36	130	56
Evening	81; 113	97; 112	30; 86	48; 4	80; 27	32; 139	100; 62
Week 3							
Morning	67	51	54	65	143	86	122
Evening	46; 93	85; 47	29; 99	125; 91	81; 116	6; 19	141; 90
Week 4							
Morning	110	62	13	96	116	85	61
Evening	66; 23	73; 8	36; 5	132; 134	26; 130	25; 40	138; 98 (NOTE: Begin again at Week 1.)
ADVENT							
Morning	24	122	33	50	18:1–20	102	90
Evening	25; 110	40; 67	85; 91	14; 16	126; 62	130; 16	80; 72
CHRISTMAS		Morning	Evening		Morning	Evening	
	December 24	19	132; 114	*December 31*	98	45; 96	
	December 25	2	98; 96	*January 1*	97	99; 8	
	December 26	116	119:1–24; 27	*January 2*	48	45; 29	
	December 27	34	19; 121	*January 3*	111	107; 15	
	December 28	2	110; 111	*January 4*	103	93; 97	
	December 29	96	132; 97	*January 5*	99	96; 110	
	December 30	93	89:1–18, 19–52	*January 6*	72	100; 67	
EPIPHANY	See GENERAL above.						

Eighty-four psalms are prayed in a cycle in the "General" weeks above. This table does not include all the imprecatory, or curse, psalms, which present special challenges for interpretation and application. For more on the imprecatory psalms, see p 879.

From *Lutheran Service Book* (St. Louis: Concordia, 2006), p 304.


31.30 N
32.30 N
Hebron 3110
Jerusalem 2534
Ramoth-gilead 2526
Dibon 2401
Mount Gilboa 1630
Average Terrain Elevation 2493
Dothan 1108
Lachish 820
Megiddo 426
Gaza 114
Caesarea Maritima
Tsanach 226
Beth-shan -322
Jordan -821
Mediterranean Coast
Engedi
Salt Sea surface -1285
3000
2000
1000
Sea Level
-1000
0
20
40
60
80
100
Altitude (feet)
Distance (miles)
ISRAEL'S PROFILE
Megiddo
mt. gilboa
Ramoth-gilead
32.30 N
Caesarea Maritima
Dothan
Jordan River
Jerusalem
Lachish
Gaza
Hebron
Salt Sea
Dibon
31.30 N

Ancient History and Patriarchs

Prophet and Date	References	Notes
Enoch, ancient history	Gn 5:21–24; Jude 14	Early on, the prophets focused on leadership of their clan or nation. The Bible describes them more as leaders for God's people than as spokesmen for God. Although other ancient cultures had people who predicted the future or served as divinely inspired guides for kings (e.g., the "diviners" or "nabu" of the Mari texts found along the Euphrates River dated to the 18th century BC), the Israelites esp emphasized leaders who heard from and spoke to God.
Job, 3rd or 2nd millennium BC	Jb 7:14	
Abraham, c 2100 BC	Gn 20:7	
Jacob, 1876 BC	Gn 46:2	

Exodus and Conquest

Prophet and Date	References	Notes
Moses, 1446 BC	Dt 18:18	Moses is perhaps the consummate example of a prophet. He is called by God to lead His people. He speaks for God and works His miracles. These features define the role of later prophets, whose ministries often conflict with the people God calls them to lead.
Aaron, 1446 BC	Ex 7:1	
Seventy elders, 1445 BC	Nu 11:25	
Elders Eldad and Medad, 1445 BC	Nu 11:26–29	
Unnamed prophet, c 1175 BC	Jgs 6:8	

Kingdom of Israel

Prophet and Date	References	Notes
Priest *Samuel*, 1160 BC	1Sm 3:1–4:1	As Israel becomes a kingdom, the prophets often serve as advisers to the king (court prophets). The great prophet of this era is Samuel, who shares many characteristics with Moses. Samuel seems to lead the "sons of the prophets." Perhaps a formal training for prophets exists at this time. See p 555. This period of Israel's history also highlights the prophets' role in worship and song. Musical instruments accompany the prophesying. David, himself a prophet and composer, lavishly supports the musical offerings of the Levites at the tabernacle. This connection between prophecy and music may help explain why so many of the prophets write poetry (song lyrics). See also p 389.
Procession of prophets, 1048 BC	1Sm 10:10; 19:18–24	
Saul, 1048 BC	1Sm 10:9–13	
Court prophet Gad, 1010 BC	1Sm 22:5	
Court prophet Nathan, 1000 BC	2Sm 7:1–17	
King *David*, 1000 BC	1Sm 16–1Ki 1	
High priest and seer Zadok, 1000 BC	2Sm 15:27	
Court prophets and Levite musicians, 1000 BC	1Ch 25:1–5	
Asaph the seer, 1000 BC	2Ch 29:30	
Agur	Pr 30:1	
King *Lemuel*	Pr 31:1	

The Kingdom Divided

Prophet and Date	References	Notes
Ahijah the Shilonite, c 931 BC	1Ki 11:29	When Israel divides into the Northern and Southern Kingdoms, the prophets have the special task of calling the people to repentance. The kings continue to seek prophetic approval by introducing and supporting false prophets. The great prophetic figure of this era is Elijah, whose showdown with the prophets of Baal demonstrates the important role both true and false prophets play in ancient Israel. Few writing prophets stem from this period. Early on, few people would have had the skill for such work. Government officials may have practiced writing almost exclusively for administrative reasons. For example, Moses probably learned to read and write in Egypt and may have passed that skill to Joshua (Jsh 1:8). Samuel is the next prophet described as writing, more than 300 years later (1Sm 10:25). However, by the time of Hezekiah, the king could issue an edict and expect that it would be read throughout the land (2Ch 30:6).
Shemaiah, 931 BC	1Ki 12:22–24; 2Ch 11:2–4; 12:5–7, 15	
Iddo the seer, c 931 BC	2Ch 9:29; 12:15; 13:22	
Old prophet in Bethel	1Ki 13:11–32	
Unnamed prophet in Judah	1Ki 13:1–32	
Unnamed prophet in Israel	1Ki 20:13–30	
Azariah, son of Oded, 911 BC	2Ch 15:1–8	
Hanani the seer, 870 BC	2Ch 16:7	
Micaiah, 863 BC	1Ki 22:1–28; 2Ch 18:6–27	
Elijah, c 875 BC	1Ki 17–19	
Elisha, c 870 BC	1Ki 19:16–21	
A son of the prophets	1Ki 20:35–43	
Jehu, son of Hanani, 853 BC	2Ch 19:2	
Levite Jahaziel, c 850 BC	2Ch 20:14–20	
Eliezer, son of Dodavahu, c 850 BC	2Ch 20:37	
Sons of the prophets at Bethel, c 855 BC	2Ki 2:3	
Sons of the prophets at Jericho, c 855 BC	2Ki 2:5	

Collapse of Israel and Judah

Prophet and Date	References	Notes
Young prophet	2Ki 9:1–13	As the spiritual and political threat of Assyria and Babylon grows, so do the activities of the prophets. The abundance of prophetic writing seems to correspond with the growth of literacy during the rise and decline of Israel as a nation. In other words, God leads the prophets to use this new means of communicating His Word. After the Judeans returned from exile in Babylon, they gathered the Prophetic Books together with the Law of Moses. In these centuries after the exile, the Jewish synagogue formed, where the Judeans read the Law and the Prophets and sang the Psalms wherever they settled. Synagogues started first among the Judeans who lived farther from the temple (the Diaspora). According to the Palestinian Talmud, 480 synagogues existed in Jerusalem alone by the first century AD, the time of Jesus' earthly ministry.
Joel, 9th century BC	Book of Joel	
Zechariah, son of Jehoiada, c.800 BC	2Ch 24:20–22; Mt 23:35; Lk 11:51	
Jonah, c.790 BC	2Ki 14:23–25; Book of Jonah	
Unnamed prophet	2Ch 25:15	
Amos, 8th century BC	Book of Amos	
Hosea, 8th century BC	Book of Hosea	
Isaiah, 8th century BC	Book of Isaiah	
Micah, 8th century BC	Book of Micah	
Priest *Jeremiah*, 7th century BC	Book of Jeremiah	
Nahum, 7th century BC	Book of Nahum	
Zephaniah, 7th century BC	Book of Zephaniah	
Hananiah (false prophet)	Jer 28	
Habakkuk, 7th century BC	Book of Habakkuk	
Uriah	Jer 26:20	
Ahab, son of Kolaiah (false prophet)	Jer 29:21	
Zedekiah, son of Maaseiah (false prophet)	Jer 29:21	
Shemaiah the Nehelamite (false prophet)	Jer 29:31	
Daniel, 605 BC	Book of Daniel	
Priest *Ezekiel*, 593 BC	Book of Ezekiel	
Obadiah, 6th century	Book of Obadiah	
Haggai, 520 BC	Book of Haggai	
Priest *Zechariah*, grandson of Iddo, 520 BC	Book of Zechariah	
Malachi, c.430 BC	Book of Malachi	

New Testament

Prophet and Date	References	Notes
Priest Zechariah, 4 BC	Lk 1	John the Baptist represents the last prophet of the OT. His work of preparing the way for Christ is itself a matter of prophecy (Mal 3:1; 4:5; Mt 11:11–14). A significant difference between OT and NT prophets is that the NT prophets do not serve or seek to serve as advisers to kings. Their preaching and teaching about the kingdom of God transcends national boundaries and organizes people around Scripture rather than a political figure. Although some early Christian writings mention prophets (e.g., the *Didache*), God seems to have called prophets—like apostles—to found the Church but not to guide it forever (Eph 2:20; 2Co 12:12). During the first century, elders and pastors became the regular spokesmen for God. When Paul left the Church at Ephesus, he did not appoint a new apostle or prophet but entrusted these ministries to the elders and shepherds (Ac 20:28). The last prophets mentioned in Scripture are the two witnesses of Rv 11, who will appear before the return of Christ. See note, Rv 11:3; see also application note, 11:1–14.
John the Baptist, AD 29	Mt 3:1–12	
Jesus, AD 29	Mt 3:13–17; Mk 1:9–11; Lk 3:21–22; Jn 1:29–34	
Caiaphas, AD 32	Jn 11:49–53	
Ananias, AD 36	Ac 9:10–19	
Paul, AD 36	Ac 9:1–19; 16:9–10; 18:9; 26:19	
Peter, AD 36	Ac 10:9–11:18	
Prophets of Antioch, AD 47	Ac 13:1	
Bar-Jesus, AD 47 (false prophet)	Ac 13:6–11	
Judas and Silas, AD 49	Ac 15:22–41	
Disciples at Ephesus, c AD 54	Ac 19:6	
Agabus, AD 55	Ac 21:10	
The Body of Elders, AD 66	1Tm 1:18; 4:14	
Apostle *John*, c AD 90	Rv 1:3	
Two Witnesses of Revelation	Rv 11:3	

THE PRESS OF MIGHTY EMPIRES

By the grace of God, Israel and Judah existed between two giants.

Egypt boasted a land area of c 1,000,000 km^2 and a population that ranged from c 4,000,000 in Moses' time to c 6,000,000 in Jesus' time. It had three harvests each year, was very urbanized, and could quickly raise and supply armies.

It is estimated that at the height of the Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian Empires, each controlled c 1,400,000 km^2 of territory. Assyrian and Babylonian armies were immense, but their supply lines were long. Assyrian and Babylonian rulers always had to fear revolution from occupied territories, powerful cities, and ambitious nobility.

In contrast, at its height, the Divided Kingdom of Israel controlled a land area of c 24,000 km^2, and Judah was c 9,000 km^2 in size, making both countries much smaller than their powerful neighbors.

Under Solomon, the United Kingdom of Israel was influential enough to form a marriage alliance with Egypt (1Ki 3:1; 2Ch 8:11). But when the kingdom divided under Solomon's son Rehoboam, the region became subject to attack from powerful neighbors. Already in 927 BC, Pharaoh Shishak invaded Judah and attacked Jerusalem (1Ki 14:25–28; 2Ch 12:2–12).

From 927 to 539 BC, Egyptian pharaohs and Assyrian or Babylonian emperors fought over Israel and Judah. God's work in and through these events is explained in 1 and 2 Ki (e.g., see note, 2Ki 17:7). Here are some other major conflicts mentioned in Scripture:

- So of Egypt vs Shalmaneser V of Assyria. In 722 BC, Assyria destroyed and deported Israel (2Ki 17:1–18).
- Tirhakah of Cush vs Sennacherib of Assyria. In 701 BC, God destroyed Sennacherib and rescued Judah (2Ki 19:9–37; Is 37:9–38).
- Neco of Egypt vs Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. In 587 BC, Babylon destroyed and deported Judah (2Ki 23:29–25:21; 2Ch 35:20–36:21; Jer 46:2–28; 52:1–30).

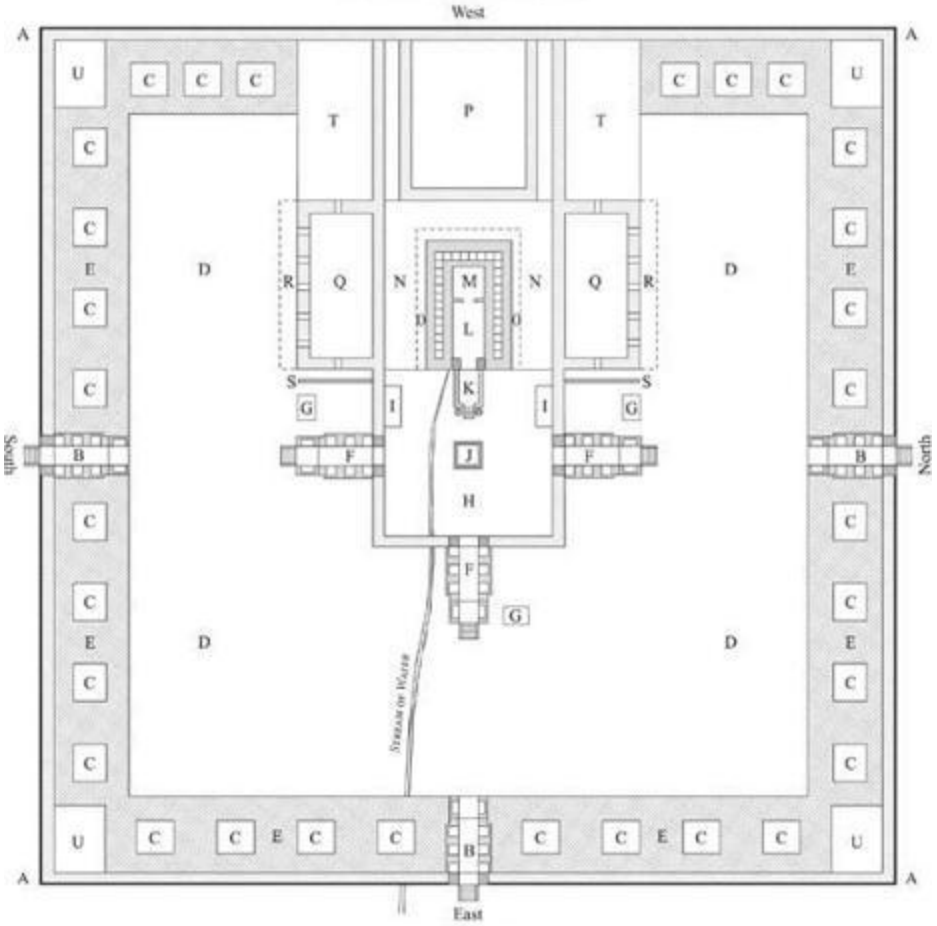
OT Reference	The Messiah's Heritage	NT Fulfillment
Gn 3:15	Would be the "Seed" of a woman	Gal 4:4
Gn 18:18	Promised Seed of Abraham	Ac 3:25
Gn 17:19	Promised Seed of Isaac	Mt 1:2
Nu 24:17	Promised Seed of Jacob	Lk 3:34
Gn 49:10	Would descend from the tribe of Judah	Lk 3:33
Is 9:7	Heir to the throne of David	Mt 1:1

OT Reference	The Messiah's Birth and Infancy	NT Fulfillment
Mi 5:2	Place of birth	Mt 2:1, 5–6
Dn 9:25	Time of birth	Lk 2:1–2
Is 7:14	Born of a virgin	Mt 1:18, 23
Jer 31:15	Massacre of infants	Mt 2:16
Hos 11:1	Flight into Egypt	Mt 2:14–15

OT Reference	The Messiah's Life and Ministry	NT Fulfillment
Is 9:1–2	Ministry in Galilee	Mt 4:12–16
Dt 18:15	As a Prophet	Jn 6:14
Ps 110:4	As a Priest, like Melchizedek	Heb 6:20
Is 53:3	His rejection by the people	Jn 1:11
Is 11:2	Some of His characteristics	Lk 2:52

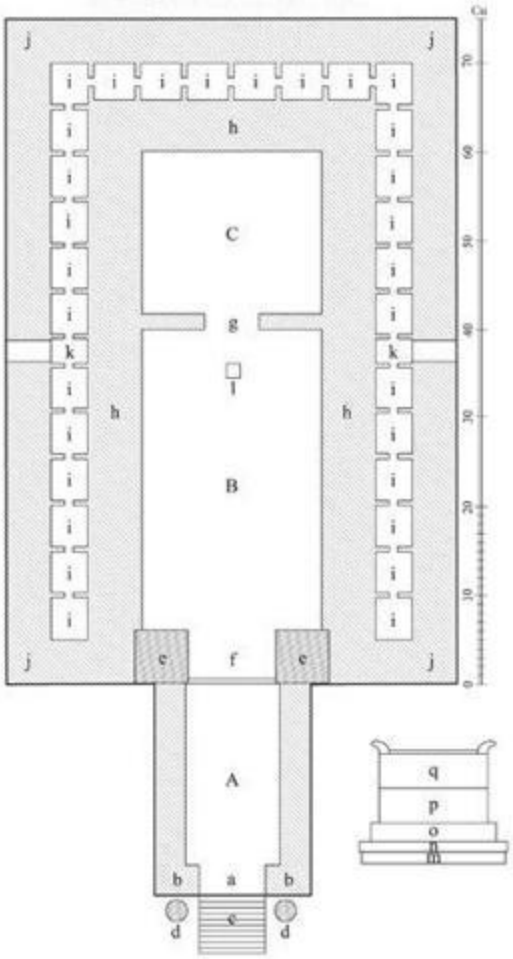
OT Reference	The Messiah's Suffering and Death	NT Fulfillment
Zec 9:9	His triumphal entry	Jn 12:13–15
Ps 41:9	Betrayed by a friend	Jn 13:18
Zec 11:12	Sold for 30 pieces of silver	Mt 26:15
Zec 11:13	Money returned for a potter's field	Mt 27:6–7
Ps 109:7–8	Judas's office taken by another	Ac 1:18–20
Ps 27:12	False witnesses accuse Him	Mt 26:60–61
Is 53:7	Silent when accused	Mt 26:62–63
Is 50:6	Smitten and spat upon	Mk 14:65
Ps 69:4	Hated without cause	Jn 15:23–25
Is 53:4–5	Suffered as a sacrifice	Mt 8:16–17
Is 53:12	Crucified with sinners	Mt 27:38
Ps 22:16	Hands and feet pierced	Jn 20:27
Ps 22:6–8	Mocked and insulted	Mt 27:39–40
Ps 69:21	Given gall and vinegar	Mt 27:34
Ps 22:8	Hears prophetic words repeated in mockery	Mt 27:43
Ps 109:4	Prays for His enemies	Lk 23:34
Zec 12:10	His side to be pierced	Jn 19:34, 37
Ps 22:18	Soldiers cast lots for His coat	Mk 15:24
Ps 34:20	Not a bone to be broken	Jn 19:33
Is 53:9	To be buried with the rich	Mt 27:57–60

THE TEMPLE COMPOUND IN EZEKIEL



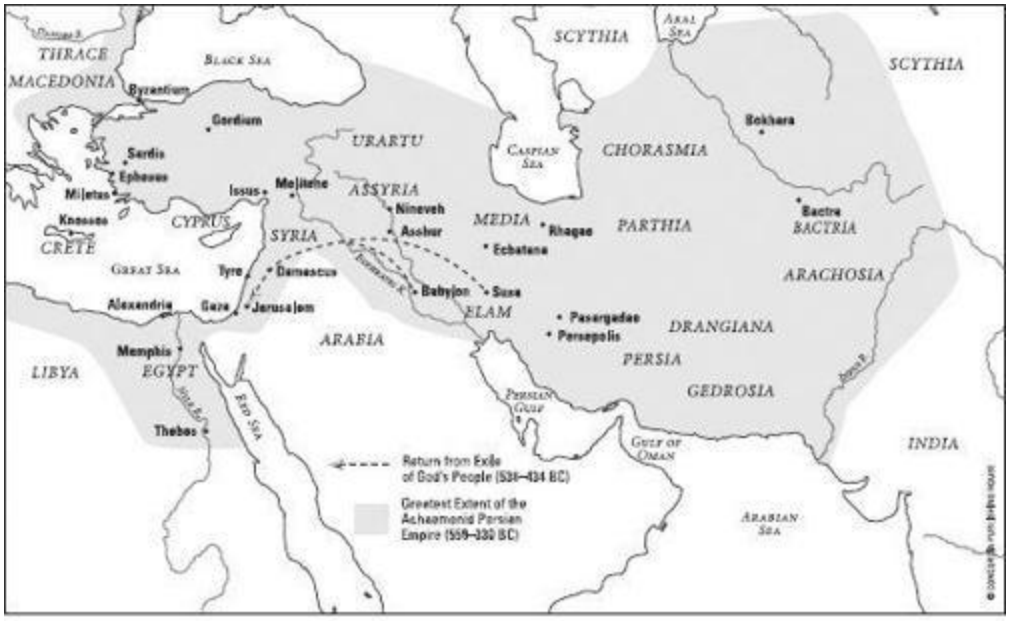
A Outer wall (40:5)
B Outer gates (40:6–16, 20–27)
C Worshipers' rooms (40:17)
D Outer court (40:17–19)
E Lower pavement (40:17–18)
F Inner gates (40:28–37)
G Rooms for washing sacrifices (40:38)
H Inner court (40:44, 47)
I Priests' guard rooms (40:44–46)
J Altar (40:47; 43:13–17)
K Vestibule of the temple (40:48–49)
L Nave of the temple (41:1–2)
M Holy of Holies (41:3–4)
N Large open area around the temple (41:9b–10)
O Small open area around the temple (41:11)
P West building (41:12)
Q Priests' sacristies (42:1–14; 44:19; 46:19; perhaps also 41:10)
R Walkway (42:4, 11–12)
S Wall (42:7)
T Kitchens (46:19–20)
U Kitchens (46:21–24)

THE TEMPLE AND THE ALTAR IN EZEKIEL



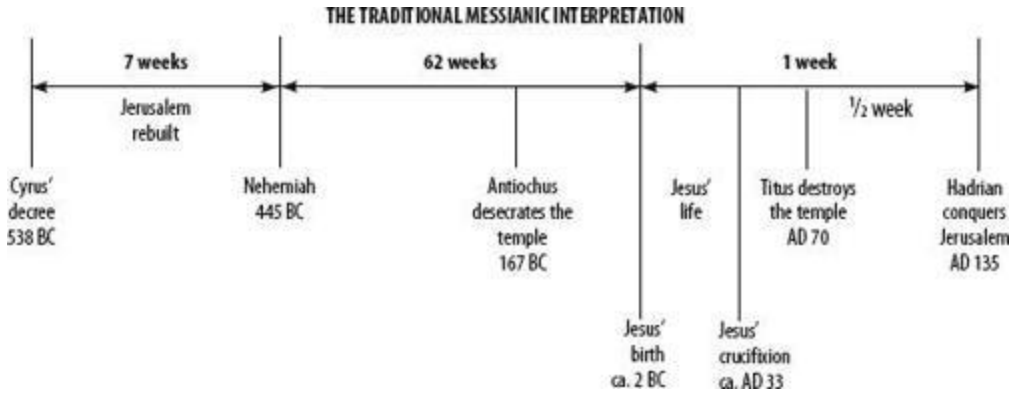
A Vestibule (40:48–49)
B Nave (41:1–2)
C Holy of Holies (41:3–4)
a Doorway of the vestibule (40:48)
b Doorposts of the vestibule (40:48–49)
c Steps (40:49)
d Pillars (40:49)
e Doorposts of the nave (41:1)
f Entrance of the nave (41:2)
g Entrance of the Holy of Holies (41:3)
h Wall of the temple (41:5)
i Side rooms (41:5–7)
j Outer wall of side rooms (41:9)
k Entrance of the side rooms
l Table (41:22)
m Gutter (43:13–14; perhaps also 43:17)
n Ridge (43:13; perhaps also 43:17)
o Smaller, lower ledge (43:14; perhaps also 43:17)
p Larger, upper ledge (43:14; perhaps also 43:17)
q Hearth (43:15–16)

Section	Reference	Literary Type	Language
Prologue	Ch 1	Story	Hbr
First Structure			
A. Nebuchadnezzar dreams of four kingdoms and God's kingdom	Ch 2	Dream Story	Aram
B. Nebuchadnezzar sees God's servants rescued	Ch 3	Story	Aram
C. Judgment on Nebuchadnezzar	Ch 4	Dream Story	Aram
C′. Judgment on Belshazzar	Ch 5	Vision Story	Aram
B′. Darius sees Daniel rescued	Ch 6	Story	Aram
A′. Daniel has a vision of four kingdoms and God's kingdom	Ch 7	Vision	Aram
Second Structure			
D. Details on the post-Babylonian kingdoms	Ch 8	Vision	Hbr
E. Jerusalem restored	Ch 9	Vision	Hbr
D′. More details on the post-Babylonian kingdoms	Chs 10–12	Vision	Hbr

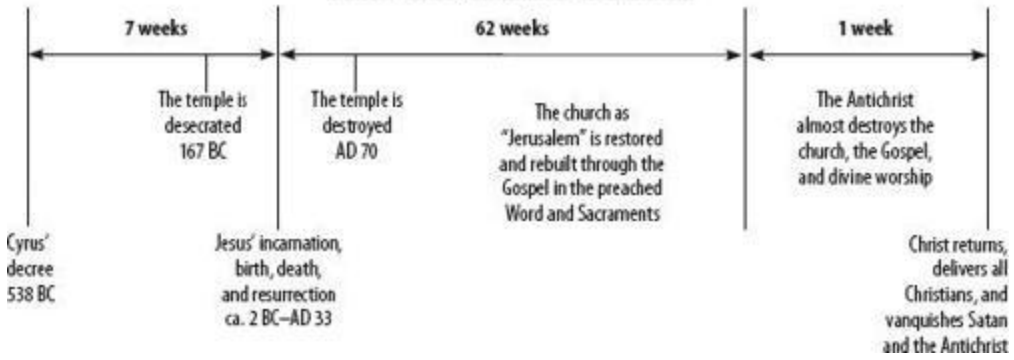


THE PERSIAN EMPIRE. The empire founded by Cyrus II "the Great" is called the Achaemenid Persian Empire to distinguish it from the later Parthians and Sassanids, also based in Persia. This was one of the largest empires of the ancient world, exceeding both the Roman Empire and the empire of Alexander. Persia had been subject to Media. Cyrus defeated Media, Lydia, and Babylon, casting himself as the savior of conquered nations and allowing religious tolerance. Cyrus also allowed exiles from Judah to return to their homeland.

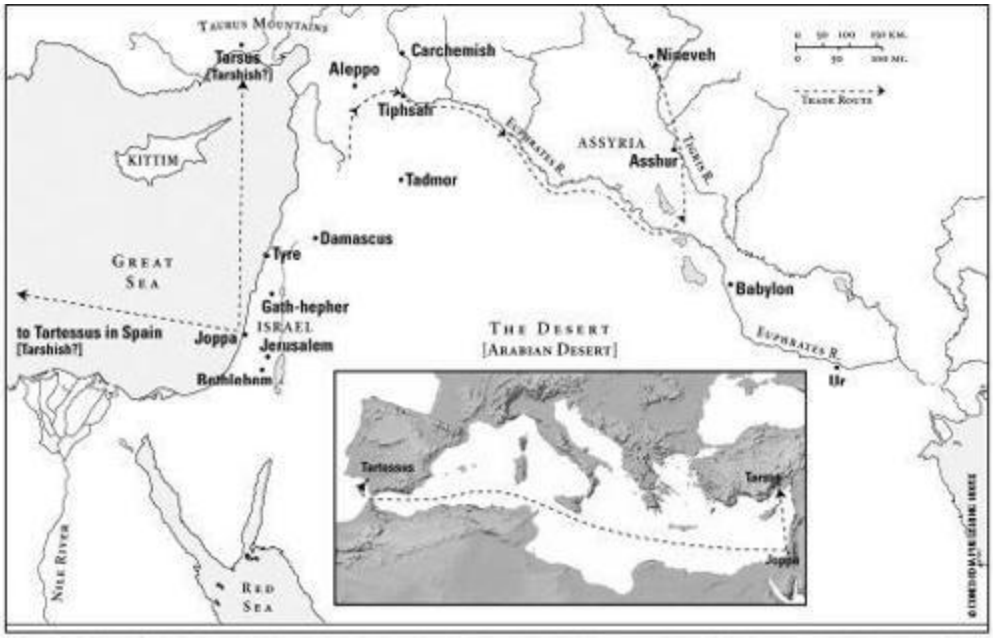
The early period of the Persian Empire (559–485 BC) consisted of expansion under Cyrus II, Cambyses II, and Darius I "the Great," including the annexation of Egypt. The middle period (485–358 BC) saw culture flourish under Xerxes I, Artaxerxes I, Darius II, and Artaxerxes II. During this time, the Persians fought the Greeks in the Greco-Persian Wars and then alternately supported feuding Greek city-states in the Peloponnesian War. The decline of the Persian Empire (358–330 BC) came under Artaxerxes III and Darius III.


THE TRADITIONAL MESSIANIC INTERPRETATION
7 weeks
62 weeks
1 week
Jerusalem rebuilt
½ week
Cyrus' decree 538 BC
Nehemiah 445 BC
Antiochus desecrates the temple 167 BC
Jesus' birth ca. 2 BC
Jesus' life
Jesus' crucifixion ca. AD 33
Titus destroys the temple AD 70
Hadrian conquers Jerusalem AD 135

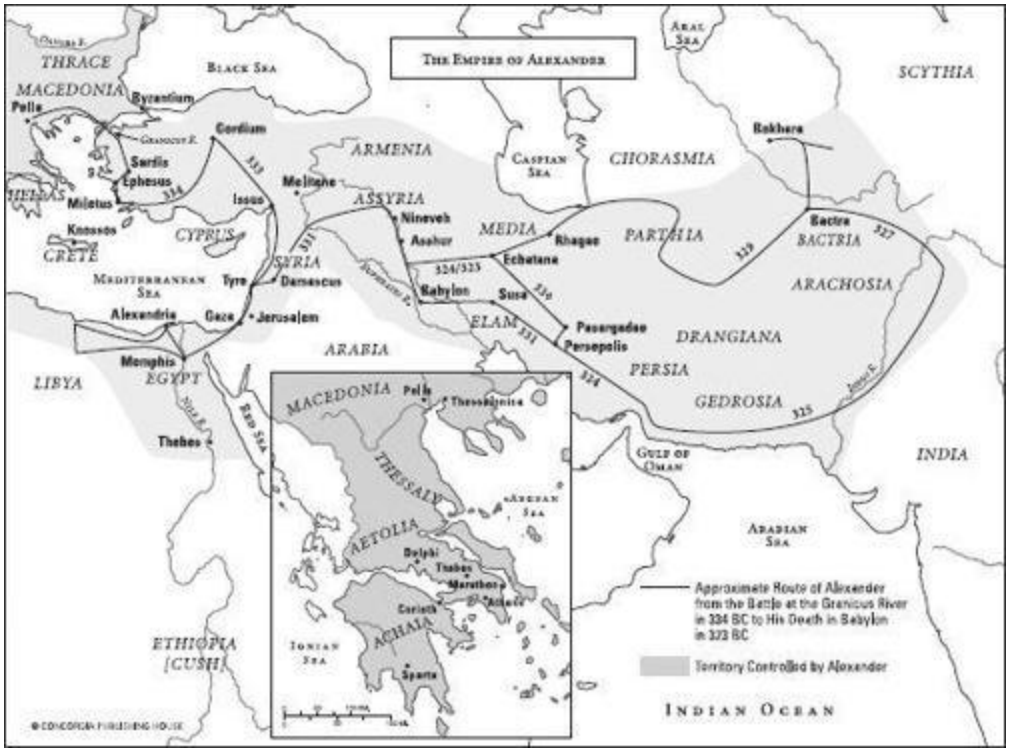
THE TYPOLOGICAL MESSIANIC INTERPRETATION



	Bible	Christian Piety	Bible	Works of Love	Christian Heritage
Foundational Topics ↓ Deeper Topics	How to Use the Bible: A Law and Gospel Overview	Baptism and Confession in Daily Life	Matthew, Mark, or Luke	The Christian Household	The Ecumenical Creeds
	Romans or Galatians	Holy Communion	Genesis	How a Congregation Works	The Large Catechism
	The Book of Acts	Praying the Psalms	Exodus	The Christian in Society	The Augsburg Confession
	1 Corinthians or 2 Corinthians	The Example of the Saints: Old Testament	Joshua or Judges	Being a Christian Mentor	The Apology of the Augsburg Confession
	Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, or Thessalonians	The Example of the Saints: New Testament	Samuel, Kings, or Chronicles	How to Lead a Bible Study Discussion	The Smalcald Articles and the Treatise
	John	The Example of the Saints: Church History	Isaiah or Select Minor Prophets: Obadiah, Jonah, Joel, Amos, Hosea, Micah	Understanding World Missions	The Formula of Concord: Epitome
	Paul's Pastoral Epistles	Facing Pain and Loss	Job	Works of Mercy	The Formula of Concord: Solid Declaration
	1 Peter, James, or the Epistles of John	Intercessory Prayer	Ezra, Nehemiah, or Esther	Understanding Stewardship	Early Church History
	Leviticus and Numbers or Hebrews	Worship: Past and Present	Jeremiah and Lamentations or Select Minor Prophets: Nahum, Zephaniah, Habakkuk, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi	Servant Leadership in the Congregation	Medieval Church History
	2 Peter and Jude or Deuteronomy	My Vocation as a Christian	Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, or Song of Solomon	Participation in a Mission Trip	Reformation Church History
	Ezekiel or Daniel	Justification and Sanctification in My Life	Revelation	Other Service, as Fits with the Goals of the Congregation	Modern Church History



TRAVELS OF JONAH. The text of Jonah does not indicate where Tarshish is. Some have suggested Tarsus in Asia Minor. Others have suggested the Phoenician colony of Tartessus in Spain. In the story, the conflict between God's will and Jonah's will is reflected in the conflicting regions and directions: Israel versus Assyria, West versus East, travel by water versus travel by land.


The Empire of Alexander
THRACE
MACEDONIA
Pella
Byzantium
Black Sea
Granicus R.
Cordium
333
Sardis
Ephesus
334
Miletus
HELLAS
Issus
Melitene
ARMENIA
ASSYRIA
Nineveh
Asahur
MEDIA
Rhages
Ecbatane
331
324/323
Euphrates R.
Babylon
Susa
330
ELAM
331
Pasargadae
Persepolis
PARTHIA
329
Caspian Sea
CHORASMIA
Rakhera
Bactra
327
BACTRIA
ARACHOSIA
DRANGIANA
PERSIA
324
GEDROSIA
325
Indus R.
SCYTHIA
Aral Sea
INDIA
Gulf of Oman
Arabian Sea
CYPRUS
CRETE
SYRIA
Mediterranean Sea
Tyre
Damascus
Alexandria
Gaza
Jerusalem
ARABIA
Memphis
EGYPT
LIBYA
Nile R.
Red Sea
Thebes
ETHIOPIA (CUSH)
MACEDONIA
Pella
Thessalonica
THESSALY
Aegean Sea
AETOLIA
Delphi
Thebes
Marathon
Athens
Corinth
ACHAIA
Ionian Sea
Sparta
Approximate Route of Alexander from the Battle at the Granicus River in 334 BC to His Death in Babylon in 323 BC
Territory Controlled by Alexander
Indian Ocean

THE HASMONEAN CONQUEST. The Seleucid ruler Antiochus IV Epiphanes annexed Judea in c 175 BC and persecuted the Jews (1Macc 1:10–63). The Hasmonean priest Mattathias and then his son Judas Maccabeus organized an insurgency (1Macc 2:1–3:1). Judas reclaimed Jerusalem in 164 BC (1Macc 3–4), from whence the feast of Hanukkah dates.

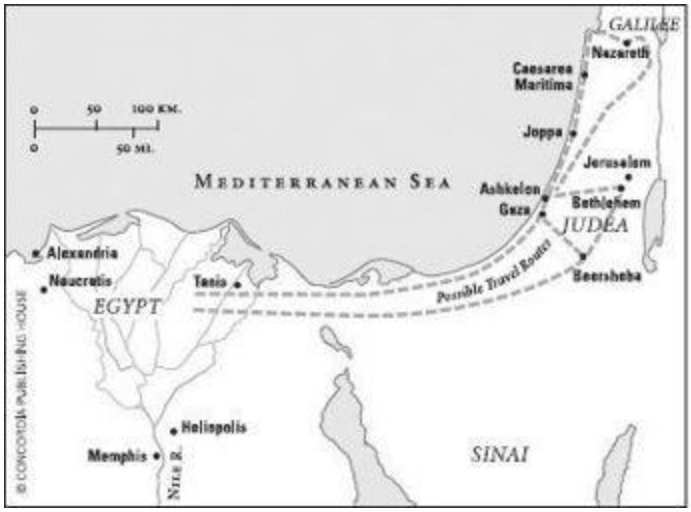
After Judas died in battle (1Macc 9), his brother Jonathan was named ethnarch and high priest (1Macc 10–12). After Jonathan was killed, his brother Simon succeeded him, gaining complete independence for Judea in 142 BC (1Macc 13–14). Simon's remaining son, John Hyrcanus, expanded Hasmonean control after Simon's death. John's son Aristobulus established the Hasmonean kingdom. Aristobulus's brother Alexander Jannaeus reigned after him, expanding the kingdom to its greatest boundaries.

Alexander's son Hyrcanus II lost the kingship to his brother Aristobulus II, who in turn lost control of Judea to the Roman general Pompey in 63 BC.

THE KINGDOM OF HEROD. Appointed as King of Judea by the Romans, Herod the Great was staunchly loyal to Rome during his reign (37–1 BC). By c 20 BC, Herod controlled the shaded area on this map. He rebuilt some 22 cities and fortresses, including Caesarea Maritima, Sebaste, Herodium, and Masada. His greatest monument was the Jerusalem temple.

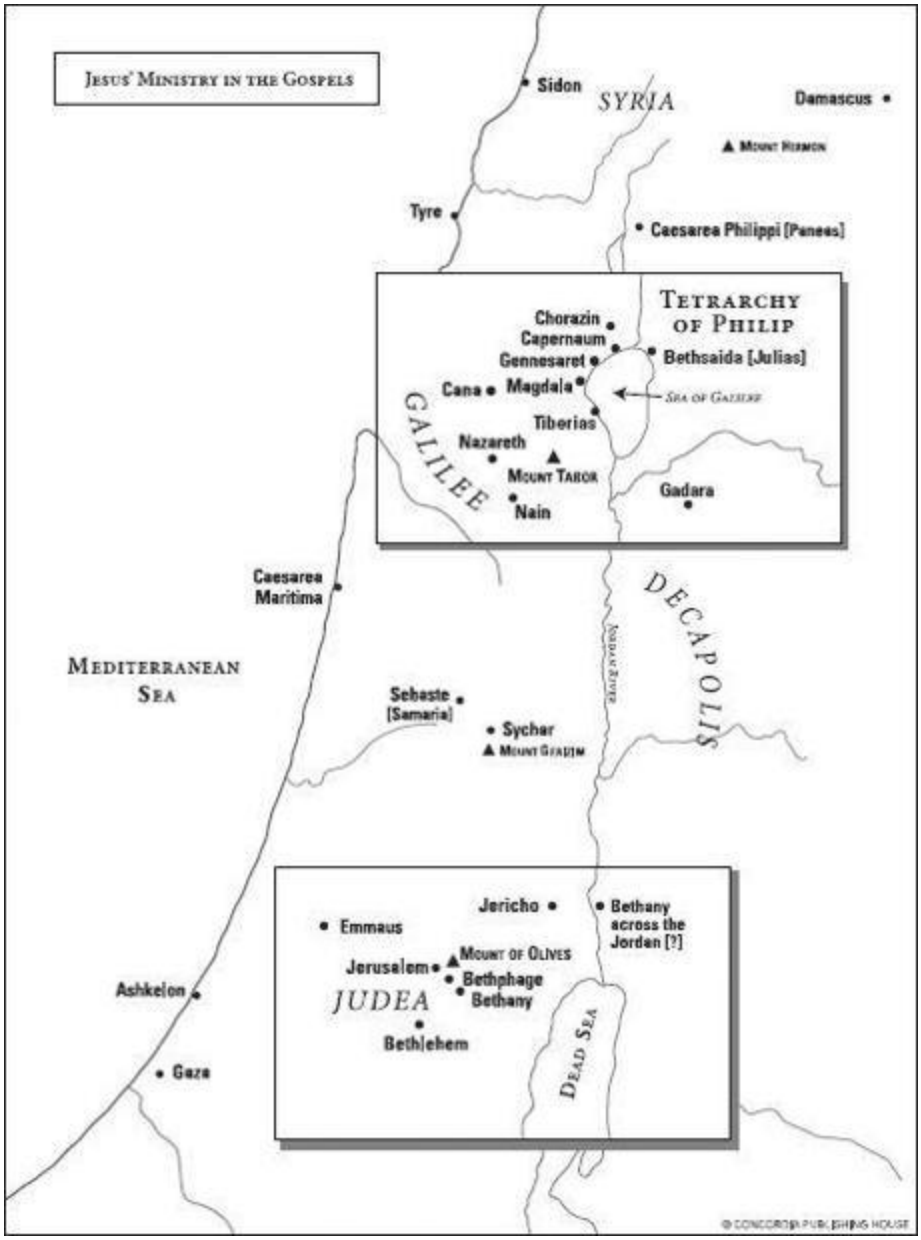
After Herod's death, the bulk of his kingdom was divided among three of his sons. Archelaus succeeded him in Judea, Idumea, and Samaria. Antipas became tetrarch of Galilee and Perea. Philip received Ituraea, Gaulanitis, Batanea, Trachonitis, and Auranitis. Archelaus was deposed in AD 6, and his lands became a Roman imperial province governed from Caesarea Maritima and Jerusalem.

Agrippa I (Herod's grandson) would rule almost all of Herod's former lands through the favor of Gaius Caesar (Caligula) and, later, Claudius Caesar. Agrippa II ruled some of this territory, but not Judea. Paul appeared before Agrippa II on his way to Rome (Ac 25:13–26:32).



TRAVELS OF THE HOLY FAMILY

Mt 2:13–23 describes the flight of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph to Egypt. Only the endpoints of the journey are known: Bethlehem to Egypt; Egypt to Nazareth. One possible route to Egypt passed south over the Judean hills from Bethlehem to Beersheba. From there it went either by an inland route or via Gaza and then to Egypt on the main caravan route near the sea. Another route involved going to Ashkelon and thence on the caravan route to Gaza and Egypt. Perhaps Jesus and His family joined one of the Jewish communities in the Nile Delta or the Nile Valley. After leaving Egypt, Jesus' family settled in the Galilean town of Nazareth.


Jesus' Ministry in the Gospels
Sidon
SYRIA
Damascus
Mount Hermon
Tyre
Caesarea Philippi [Paneas]
Tetrarchy of Philip
Chorazin
Capernaum
Gennesaret
Bethsaida [Julias]
Cana
Magdala
Sea of Galilee
Tiberias
Nazareth
Mount Tabor
Nain
Gadara
GALILEE
Caesarea Maritima
DECAPOLIS
Jordan River
Mediterranean Sea
Sebaste [Samaria]
Sychar
Mount Gerizim
Jericho
Bethany across the Jordan [?]
Emmaus
Mount of Olives
Jerusalem
Bethphage
Bethany
JUDEA
Bethlehem
Ashkelon
Gaza
Dead Sea
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	Parabolic Sayings	Matthew	Mark	Luke
1.	The wedding guests	9:15	2:19–20	5:34–35
2.	A new patch on an old garment	9:16	2:21	5:36
3.	New wine in old wineskins	9:17	2:22	5:37–39
4.	The blind leading the blind			6:39
5.	The speck and the log	7:3–5		6:41–42
6.	The light of the world	5:14–16	4:21–22	8:16–17
7.	The salt of the earth	5:13	9:50	14:34–35
8.	The wise and foolish builders	7:24–27		6:47–49
9.	The children in the marketplaces	11:16–17		7:31–35
10.	The two debtors			7:40–48
11.	Satan's kingdom	12:25–29	3:23–27	
12.	The return of the unclean spirit	12:43–45		
13.	The sower	13:3–9	4:3–20	8:5–15
14.	The seed growing of itself		4:26–29	
15.	The weeds*	13:24–30		
16.	The mustard seed	13:31–32	4:30–32	13:18–19
17.	The leaven	13:33		13:20–21
18.	The hidden treasure	13:44		
19.	The pearl of great value	13:45–46		
20.	The net*	13:47–50		
21.	The master of a house	13:51–53		
22.	Things defiling a person	15:10–20	7:14–23	
23.	The unforgiving servant	18:23–35		
24.	The good Samaritan			10:30–37
25.	The impudent friend			11:5–10
26.	The rich fool			12:16–21
27.	The waiting servants			12:35–40
28.	The wise manager			12:41–48
29.	The barren fig tree			13:6–9
30.	Seats at the wedding feast			14:7–11
31.	Banquet for the poor			14:12–14
32.	The great banquet			14:15–24
33.	Building a tower			14:28–30
34.	A king going to war			14:31–33
35.	The lost sheep*	18:12–14		15:3–7
36.	The lost coin*			15:8–10
37.	The prodigal son			15:11–32
38.	The dishonest manager			16:1–13
39.	The rich man and Lazarus*			16:19–31
40.	The unworthy servants			17:7–10
41.	The persistent widow			18:1–8
42.	The Pharisee and the tax collector			18:9–14
43.	The laborers in the vineyard	20:1–16		
44.	The 10 minas			19:11–27
45.	The two sons	21:28–32		
46.	The wicked tenants	21:33–44	12:1–9	20:9–16
47.	The rejected building stone	21:42–45	12:10–11	20:17–18
48.	The wedding feast	22:1–14		
49.	The fig tree	24:32–34	13:28–30	21:29–32
50.	The doorkeeper		13:32–37	
51.	The master and the thief	24:43–44		
52.	The two servants	24:45–51		
53.	The 10 virgins	25:1–13		
54.	The talents	25:14–30		
55.	The sheep and the goats*	25:31–46		

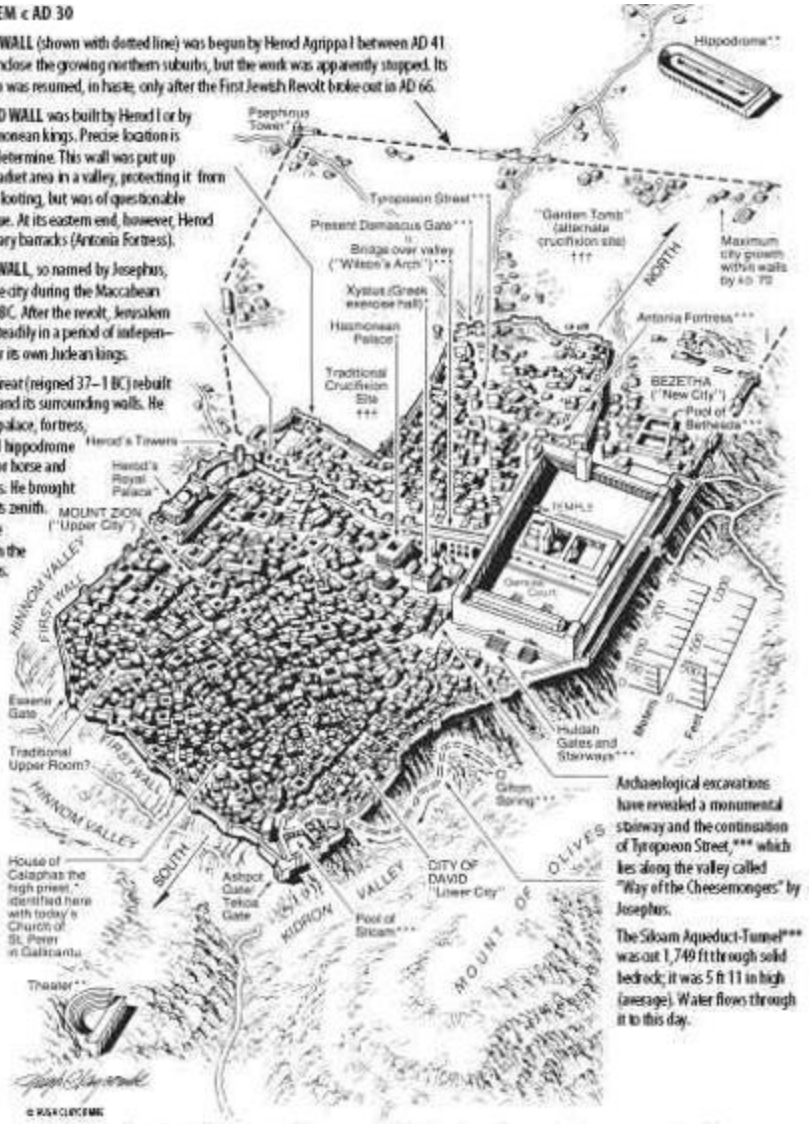
JERUSALEM c AD 30

The **THIRD WALL** (shown with dotted line) was begun by Herod Agrippa I between AD 41 and 44 to enclose the growing northern suburbs, but the work was apparently stopped. Its construction was resumed, in haste, only after the First Jewish Revolt broke out in AD 66.

The **SECOND WALL** was built by Herod I or by earlier Hasmonean kings. Precise location is difficult to determine. This wall was put up around a market area in a valley, protecting it from raiding and looting, but was of questionable military value. At its eastern end, however, Herod built a military barracks (Antonia Fortress).

The **FIRST WALL**, so named by Josephus, encircled the city during the Maccabean Revolt, 167 BC. After the revolt, Jerusalem expanded steadily in a period of independence under its own Judean kings.

Herod the Great (reigned 37–1 BC) rebuilt the temple and its surrounding walls. He also built a palace, fortress, theater, and hippodrome (stadium) for horse and chariot races. He brought the city to its zenith. This became Jerusalem in the time of Jesus.



Archaeological excavations have revealed a monumental stairway and the continuation of Tyropoeon Street,*** which lies along the valley called "Way of the Cheesemongers" by Josephus.

The Siloam Aqueduct-Tunnel*** was cut 1,749 ft through solid bedrock; it was 5 ft 11 in high (average). Water flows through it to this day.

* Location generally known, but style of architecture is unknown; artist's concept only, and Roman architecture is assumed.

** Location and architecture unknown, but referred to in written history; shown here for illustrative purposes.

*** Ancient feature has remained, or appearance has been determined from evidence.

Buildings, streets, and roads shown here are artist's concept only unless otherwise named and located. Wall heights remain generally unknown, except for those surrounding the Temple Mount.

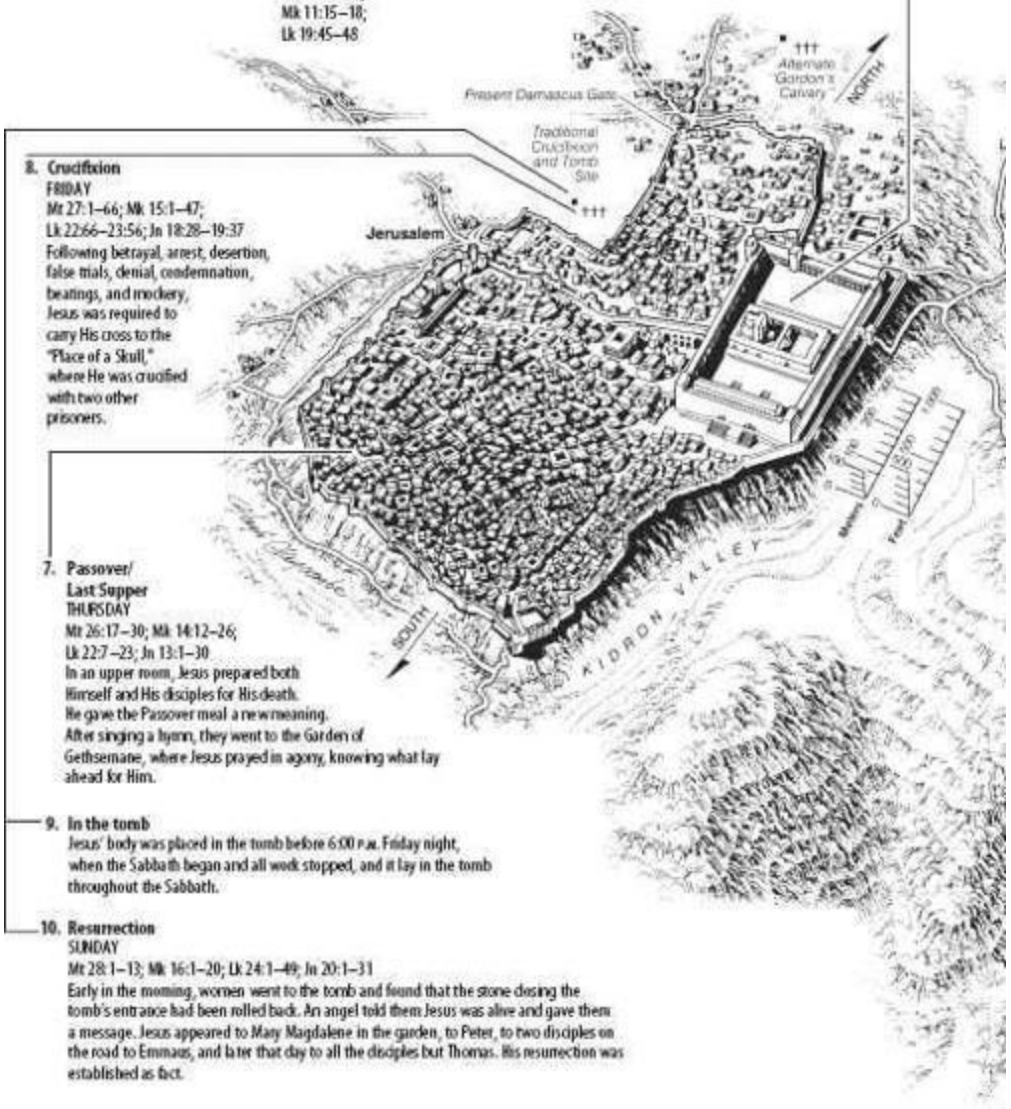
Examples	History	Meaning
Attendance at Passover (Lk 2:41–50)	Jesus faithfully attended the feasts instituted by the heavenly Father in the OT. John mentions three Passovers observed by Jesus during His ministry (Jn 2:13; 6:4; 11:55). He also mentions the Feast of Booths (7:2), Feast of Dedication (10:22), and an unnamed feast (5:1).	Jesus kept the Jewish feasts, not only for personal devotion, but more important to fulfill the Law of the old covenant. By faithfully keeping the Law, He prepared the way for the new covenant and salvation through Him.
Jews and Samaritans (Jn 4:7–9)	John points out for his Gentile readers that Jews and Samaritans did not associate with one another. This was because the Samaritans had intermarried with the Gentiles and taken up pagan practices; therefore, the Jews considered them unclean.	Jesus freely associated with the Samaritan woman, breaking Jewish custom. He did this out of loving concern for her, calling her to repentance and to faith in Him as the Messiah.
Fasting (Mk 2:18–22; Lk 5:33–39)	Fasting was an important part of Pharisaic devotion. They usually fasted twice a week, on Mondays and Thursdays (Lk 18:12). John the Baptist encouraged similar devotion among his disciples.	The Pharisees questioned the devotion of Jesus' disciples because they did not fast like other devout Jews. Jesus' reply to them shows that He expected fasting to be a part of later Christian devotion. However, He used the example of His feasting to show that He was God's special Servant who brought the joy and comfort of God's kingdom.
Picking Grain on the Sabbath (Mt 12:1–8; Mk 2:23–28; Lk 6:1–5)	In contrast to the Pharisees, Jesus applies Dt 23:25 to the Sabbath. The disciples were permitted to satisfy their hunger on the Sabbath by picking a little grain.	Jesus' interpretation of the OT and the story about King David reveal that the Sabbath was intended as a blessing and relief, not a painful rigor.
Clean Hands (Mt 15:1–20; Mk 7:1–23)	Jesus broke with the tradition of the Jewish elders because He did not require the disciples to wash their hands before they ate.	Jesus uses these incidents to point out the importance of keeping God's Law over keeping traditions. Notice that Jesus does not tell the Pharisees and teachers of the law that they have to break tradition. The problem was that they were breaking God's commands and failing to show mercy.
Washing Cups (Mt 23:25–26; Lk 11:39)	Another tradition of the Jewish elders. Jesus rebukes the Pharisees for their zeal for traditions rather than for mercy and repentance.	
Seating at a Wedding Feast (Mk 12:38–39; Lk 14:7–11)	The seating at feasts illustrated people's social ranking. People competed for the "spotlight," as they do today.	Jesus' illustration and parable reveal the upside-down character of God's kingdom. For God's people, the honor is in humility, not social rank. Jesus' parable undermined the socially acceptable rules about feasting. He emphasized that one should use a feast as an opportunity to show mercy.
Invitations to a Feast (Lk 14:12–14)	Feasting and gift giving in most cultures are dominated by "reciprocal giving." I.e., if you give a gift to someone, you can anticipate a gift in return. Such giving solidifies social relationships among people of rank but isolates the poor.	
Not Entering a Gentile's House (Jn 18:28)	Entering a Gentile's house brought uncleanness to a Jewish person, which made it impossible for that person to partake of the Passover.	Jesus also kept the holiness laws of the OT, but He looked forward to a new order and a new standard of holiness based on faithfulness and mercy rather than ceremonial law.

Setting of Miracle	Conflict or Crisis	What We Learn about Jesus
Exorcism Jesus sends many demons into a herd of pigs (Mk 5:1–20). Jesus heals a boy with an unclean spirit, which the disciples could not cast out (Lk 9:37–43).	Struggle with powers of evil. Conflict against Satan and the demonic world.	Jesus is confidently in control over violently evil forces. He triumphs over the power of the devil.
Controversy A woman bent over for 18 years is healed on the Sabbath (Lk 13:10–17). Sight is given to a man born blind (Jn 9:1–11).	Conflict over some issue with those in the religious establishment, usually healing on the Sabbath.	Jesus is in authority and helps us see a way out of the controversy (e.g., the Sabbath was made for people).
Petition A woman with a hemorrhage fights through the crowds to touch Jesus' garments (Lk 8:42b–48). Blind Bartimaeus keeps asking, even though others tell him to be quiet (Mk 10:46–52).	Some obstacle to wholeness is placed before the one needing the miracle.	Jesus celebrates the faith that overcomes obstacles and brings the needy to Him.
Provision Feeding the 5,000 (Jn 6:5–13). The huge catch of fish (Lk 5:4–7).	People have some basic need.	Jesus provides more than enough to meet physical needs.
Rescue Calming the storm (Mk 4:37–41). Walking on water (Mk 6:45–52).	Hostile forces of nature threaten human life.	Jesus is the Lord of creation and controls even the most violent storms.
Appearances Jesus appears to His disciples on Easter evening (Jn 20:19–23). Jesus walks with the disciples on the road to Emmaus (Lk 24:13–35).	Struggle with doubt, fear, or grief.	Jesus suddenly and unexpectedly appears to give joy, peace, and direction. His transfiguration and resurrection appearances assure us of our glorious future, a bodily resurrection from the dead on the Last Day.

PASSION WEEK

4. Clearing of the temple
MONDAY
Mt 21:10–17; Mk 11:15–18; Lk 19:45–48

The next day, Jesus returned to the temple and found the court of the Gentiles full of traders and money-changers making a large profit as they gave out Jewish coins in exchange for "pagan" money. Jesus drove them out and overturned their tables.

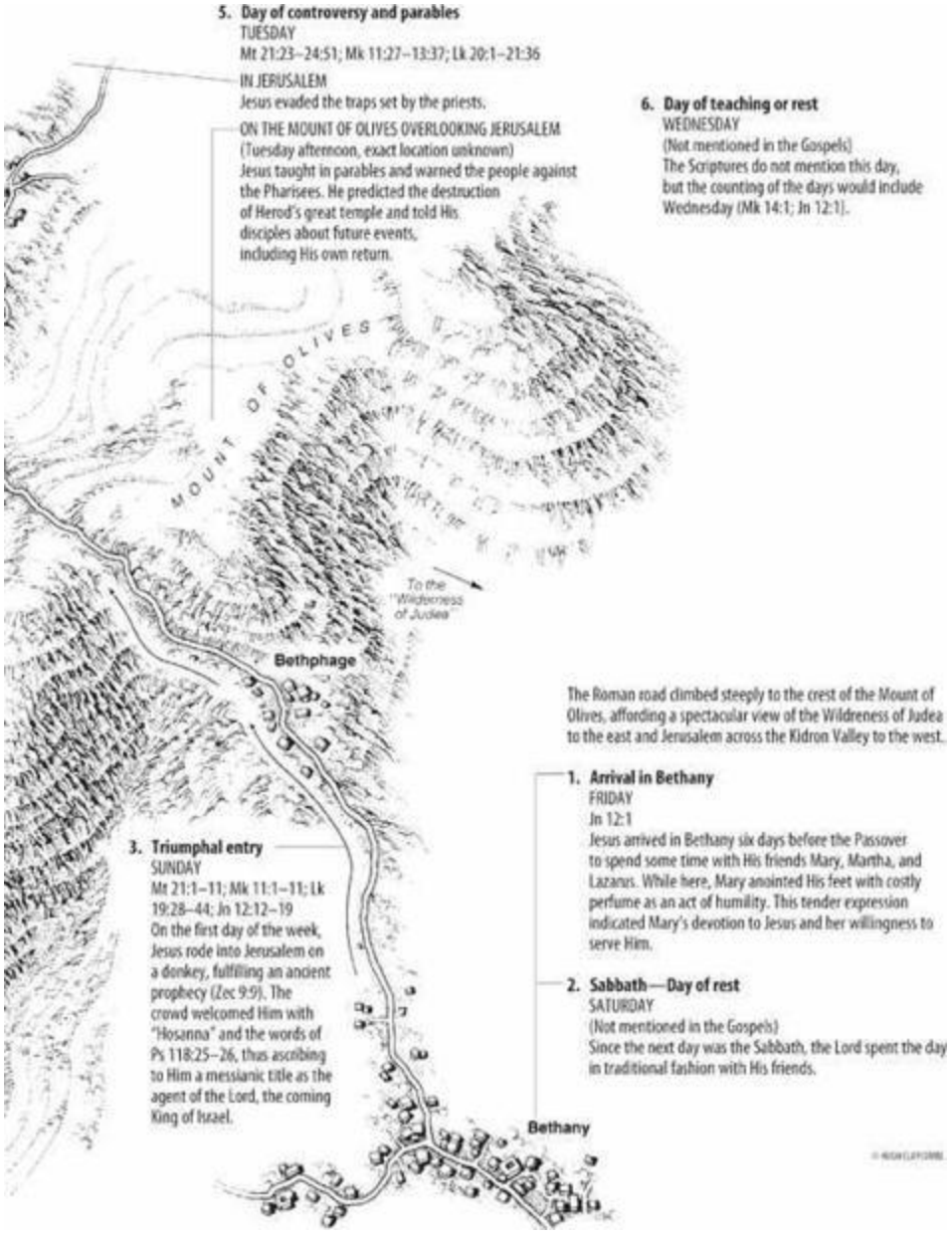


8. Crucifixion
FRIDAY
Mt 27:1–66; Mk 15:1–47; Lk 22:66–23:56; Jn 18:28–19:37
Following betrayal, arrest, desertion, false trials, denial, condemnation, beatings, and mockery, Jesus was required to carry His cross to the "Place of a Skull," where He was crucified with two other prisoners.

7. Passover/ Last Supper
THURSDAY
Mt 26:17–30; Mk 14:12–26; Lk 22:7–23; Jn 13:1–30
In an upper room, Jesus prepared both Himself and His disciples for His death. He gave the Passover meal a new meaning. After singing a hymn, they went to the Garden of Gethsemane, where Jesus prayed in agony, knowing what lay ahead for Him.

9. In the tomb
Jesus' body was placed in the tomb before 6:00 P.M. Friday night, when the Sabbath began and all work stopped, and it lay in the tomb throughout the Sabbath.

10. Resurrection
SUNDAY
Mt 28:1–13; Mk 16:1–20; Lk 24:1–49; Jn 20:1–31
Early in the morning, women went to the tomb and found that the stone closing the tomb's entrance had been rolled back. An angel told them Jesus was alive and gave them a message. Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene in the garden, to Peter, to two disciples on the road to Emmaus, and later that day to all the disciples but Thomas. His resurrection was established as fact.

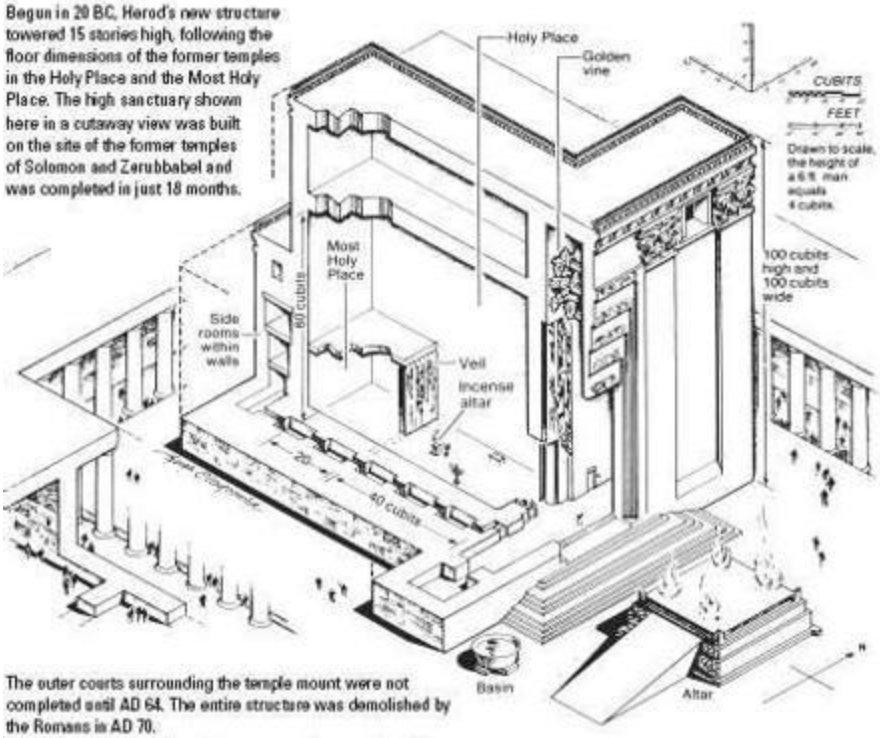

5. Day of controversy and parables
TUESDAY
Mt 21:23–24:51; Mk 11:27–13:37; Lk 20:1–21:36
IN JERUSALEM
Jesus evaded the traps set by the priests.
ON THE MOUNT OF OLIVES OVERLOOKING JERUSALEM
(Tuesday afternoon, exact location unknown)
Jesus taught in parables and warned the people against the Pharisees. He predicted the destruction of Herod's great temple and told His disciples about future events, including His own return.
6. Day of teaching or rest
WEDNESDAY
(Not mentioned in the Gospels)
The Scriptures do not mention this day, but the counting of the days would include Wednesday (Mk 14:1; Jn 12:1).
MOUNT OF OLIVES
To the Wilderness of Judea
Bethphage
The Roman road climbed steeply to the crest of the Mount of Olives, affording a spectacular view of the Wildreness of Judea to the east and Jerusalem across the Kidron Valley to the west.
1. Arrival in Bethany
FRIDAY
Jn 12:1
Jesus arrived in Bethany six days before the Passover to spend some time with His friends Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. While here, Mary anointed His feet with costly perfume as an act of humility. This tender expression indicated Mary's devotion to Jesus and her willingness to serve Him.
2. Sabbath—Day of rest
SATURDAY
(Not mentioned in the Gospels)
Since the next day was the Sabbath, the Lord spent the day in traditional fashion with His friends.
3. Triumphal entry
SUNDAY
Mt 21:1–11; Mk 11:1–11; Lk 19:28–44; Jn 12:12–19
On the first day of the week, Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey, fulfilling an ancient prophecy (Zec 9:9). The crowd welcomed Him with "Hosanna" and the words of Ps 118:25–26, thus ascribing to Him a messianic title as the agent of the Lord, the coming King of Israel.
Bethany

	Passages	Sayings, Parables, and Events	Insights
Birth Narratives	1:1–4	Luke's Prologue	Luke carefully details the events surrounding the births of John and Jesus. He writes from Mary's perspective and perhaps bases his presentation on interviews with Mary (Lk 1:2).
	1:5–25	Event: An Angel of the Lord Visits Zechariah	
	1:26–38	Event: Gabriel Visits Mary	
	1:39–56	Event: Mary Visits Elizabeth	
	1:57–80	Event: The Birth of John the Baptist	
	2:1–7	Event: The Birth of Jesus	
	2:8–21	Event: An Angel of the Lord Visits the Shepherds	
	2:22–40	Event: Jesus Presented at the Temple	
	2:41–52	Event: The Boy Jesus at the Temple	
Preparation for Ministry	3:10–14	Saying: John the Baptist Answers the Crowds	Luke records this unique example of John the Baptist's teaching.
Galilean Ministry	4:16–30	Event: The Synagogue at Nazareth	These sayings and events broaden the picture of Jesus' early ministry.
	6:24–26	Saying: Four Woes	
	7:11–17	Event: Raising of the Widow's Son	
Journey to Jerusalem	9:52–56	Event: Rejection by the Samaritans	In this portion of the Gospel, Luke presents events and sayings of Jesus in a unique way, focusing on the journey toward the Passion in Jerusalem. He records several parables not found in the other Gospels, as well as numerous sayings.
	10:29–37	Parable: The Good Samaritan	
	10:38–42	Event: Visit with Mary and Martha	
	11:5–8	Parable: The Inconsiderate Friend	
	11:27–28	Saying: True Blessedness	
	12:13–15	Saying: Warning about Greed	
	12:16–21	Parable: The Rich Fool	
	13:1–5	Saying: Murder of the Galileans	
	13:6–9	Parable: The Fruitless Fig Tree	
	13:10–17	Event: Healing of a Disabled Woman	
	13:22–30	Event: Teaching on Road to Jerusalem	
	14:28–33	Saying: Teaching about Commitment	
	15:8–10	Parable: The Lost Coin	
	15:11–32	Parable: The Prodigal Son	
	16:1–12	Parable: The Dishonest Manager	
	16:14–15	Saying: Rebuke of the Pharisees	
	16:19–31	Saying: The Rich Man and Lazarus	
	17:7–10	Saying: Unworthy Servants	
	17:11–19	Event: The Cleansing of 10 Lepers	
	18:1–8	Parable: The Undighteous Judge	
	18:9–14	Parable: The Pharisee and the Tax Collector	
	19:1–10	Event: The Salvation of Zacchaeus	
Jerusalem Ministry	21:37–38	Event: Ministry in Jerusalem	Luke reminds his readers of Jesus' popularity and that he has not recorded everything Jesus taught during that week.
Passion	22:35–38	Saying: Two Swords	Luke records these details from the hours before Jesus' death.
	23:13–16	Event: Pilate Declares Jesus Innocent	
Resurrection and Ascension	24:13–35	Event: Journey to Emmaus	Luke not only records unique information about the events following the resurrection, but he also prepares his readers for the next part of the story, which he covers in Acts.
	24:44–49	Saying: Final Instructions	
	24:50–53	Event: The Ascension	

Outline	Passages	Events	Comment
Birth and Boyhood of Jesus	1:5–25	Angel of the Lord appears to Zechariah	A major theme in the birth narratives is the shift in location of God's presence from the temple to the body of Jesus as God's temple (cf Jn 2:19–22; see CC Lk 2, p 681).
	2:21–35	Jesus presented at the temple	
	2:25–35	Simeon blesses Jesus	
	2:36–38	Anna blesses Jesus	
	2:41–52	Visit to the temple at age 12	
Preparation for Ministry	4:9–11	Satan tempts Jesus to cast Himself down from the temple	We know from other Gospels that Jesus continued to visit the temple for various feasts. However, Luke contrasts Jesus' commitment to teaching outside Jerusalem and the temple with the role of the temple at the beginning and end of Jesus' life.
Ministry	13:1–3	Jesus reminds His followers about deaths at the temple	In these accounts, Jesus refers to tensions and struggles that have taken place at the temple. He would soon confront the political and self-righteous powers that gathered at the temple.
	18:9–14	Parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector at the temple	
Passion	19:45–48	Cleansing of the temple	Jesus cleansed the temple and made it once again the site of His teaching.
	20–21	Jesus' teaching at the temple and prophesying of its destruction	
	22:3–4, 52–53	Jesus arrested by leaders from the temple	
Exaltation	23:45	Curtain of the temple torn	When Jesus died, the temple's curtain tore open, showing that the separation between God and mankind ended through the death of Christ.
	24:53	Disciples continue to pray at the temple	After the resurrection, the disciples continued to gather at the temple for worship.

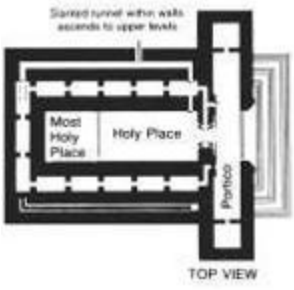
HEROD'S TEMPLE
20 BC–AD 70

Begun in 20 BC, Herod's new structure towered 15 stories high, following the floor dimensions of the former temples in the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place. The high sanctuary shown here in a cutaway view was built on the site of the former temples of Solomon and Zerubbabel and was completed in just 18 months.



The outer courts surrounding the temple mount were not completed until AD 64. The entire structure was demolished by the Romans in AD 70.

Dimension of rooms, steps, doorways, cornices, and exterior measurements are mentioned in history (Josephus and the Mishnah) but are subject to interpretation, and all drawings vary.



TOP VIEW

SIDE ELEVATION

Was the ark still present during the Roman period? Josephus describes the Most Holy Place as having "nothing at all," which was accurate on the day he wrote it. The Mishnah hints that the ark was hidden (Shekalim 6:12). On the ark of the covenant, cf Ex 25.

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Location	People Present	Meaning in the Meals
Passover in Jerusalem (Lk 2:41–50)	Mary, Joseph, and possibly other members of their extended family	Jesus faithfully kept the laws of the covenant with His family.
Wedding feast at Cana (Jn 2:1–11)	Mary, Jesus' disciples, wedding guests, and servants	Jesus did His first miraculous sign at this meal, revealing His glory and encouraging the disciples to believe in Him.
Peter's house in Capernaum (Mt 8:14–15; Mk 1:29–31; Lk 4:38–39)	Peter, Peter's mother-in-law, Andrew, James, John, visitors including the sick and demon-possessed	Peter described himself as a sinful man (Lk 5:8). However, Jesus insisted on associating with Peter, as this visit to his home indicates. By staying with a man like Peter, Jesus showed that He was different from the Pharisees.
Dinner at Matthew's house (Mt 9:10–13; Mk 2:15–17; Lk 5:29–32)	Matthew, the disciples, tax collectors, and "sinners"	By eating with tax collectors and "sinners," Jesus crossed an important social boundary within Israel and drew sharp criticism from the Pharisees and scribes. Jesus' answer to them reveals His mission: to restore the fallen through repentance and forgiveness.
A house in Galilee (Mk 3:20)	The disciples and a crowd	The healing provided by Jesus as well as His remarkable teachings drew large crowds. He and His disciples were so overwhelmed by the crowds that they did not even have time to eat. Cf Mk 6:31.
Simon the Pharisee's house (Lk 7:36–50)	Simon, a sinful woman, and other guests	Pharisees still invited Jesus into their homes, but their motive may have been to entrap Him rather than support Him. The woman was probably a repentant prostitute.
Feeding of the 5,000 (Mt 14:13–21; Mk 6:30–44; Lk 9:10–17; Jn 6:1–15)	The 12 disciples, a boy, and a great crowd of men, women, and children	John notes that this miracle took place when Passover was near (Jn 6:4). Jesus used these circumstances to test His disciples (6:6). Their responses show that they did not yet understand who Jesus was. The response of the disciples may have been similar to the response of the crowds, who wanted to make Jesus their king (6:15). In Jn 6:25–40, Jesus explains the miracle and reveals who He is: the bread of life. He shocks the crowd by describing Himself as a sacrifice that they must eat (the new Passover).
Feeding of the 4,000 (Mt 15:29–39; Mk 8:1–10)	The 12 disciples, a large crowd including many sick people	This miracle gives another example of Jesus' compassion for His followers.
Mary and Martha's house in Bethany (Lk 10:38–42)	Mary, Martha, and the disciples	Jesus' commendation to Mary shows that, for Him, the most important part of the meal was the teaching and conversation that accompanied the gathering.
A Pharisee's house in Judea (Lk 11:37–54)	A Pharisee, an expert in the law	When Jesus did not wash His hands before eating, conflict developed. Jesus pronounced six woes against the Pharisees and experts in the law.
Simon the leper's house in Bethany (Mt 26:6–13; Mk 14:3–9; Jn 12:1–8)	Mary (a woman with an alabaster flask), Martha, Lazarus, Simon, and the disciples	Simon's nickname shows that he had been unclean (perhaps Jesus had healed him). Lepers typically lived in isolation, but Jesus and His disciples recline at the table with Simon. Strangely, the leprosy does not cause a scandal, but Mary's expensive act of devotion does.
The Last Supper in Jerusalem (Mt 26:17–30; Mk 14:12–26; Lk 22:7–38; Jn 13)	The 12 disciples	Jesus transforms the commemoration of the Passover into a meal of forgiveness and salvation for His disciples through His body and blood. Unlike at public meals Jesus hosted, here He celebrated the Lord's Supper with the disciples alone, in keeping with the boundaries of Passover.
Meal at Emmaus (Lk 24:30–35)	Cleopas and a traveling companion	Jesus uses the words and actions reminiscent of the Lord's Supper. The two disciples recognize Him when He breaks the bread.
Jerusalem visit (Lk 24:36–43)	Cleopas, his traveling companion, the 11 disciples, and others	Jesus ate broiled fish in front of His disciples to demonstrate that He was physically resurrected from the dead.
Breakfast by the Sea of Galilee (Jn 21:1–14)	Simon Peter, Thomas, Nathanael, James, John, two other disciples	Jesus hosted a meal of fish for His disciples and encouraged them to remain in the ministry.

Woman	Social Status	Relationship to Jesus
Elizabeth (Lk 1:5–25, 36–45, 56–66)	Mother of John the Baptist. She was a descendant of the high priest Aaron, wife of the priest Zechariah, and a relative of Mary.	We do not know for certain whether Elizabeth was a great aunt of a cousin to Jesus. She encouraged Mary while she was pregnant with Jesus. Given Elizabeth's advanced age (1:7), she probably did not live long enough to witness the ministry of John and Jesus.
Mary of Nazareth (Mt 1:18–25; 2:11, 13–23; 12:46–50; Mk 3:31–35; 6:3; Lk 1:26–56; 2:4–7, 16–19, 22–24, 33–35, 41–51; 8:19–21; Jn 2:1–5; 19:26–27; Ac 1:14)	The wife of Joseph the carpenter and the mother of Jesus, James, Jude, and other children.	Mary was Jesus' mother. She respected Him and knew He was special (Jn 2:1–5) but was confused by His calling (Lk 2:48–49). She did not agree with Jesus' decision to leave the carpentry trade and live as a rabbi (Mk 3:21; Lk 8:19–21). Jesus downplayed the suggestion that Mary was especially blessed because of their earthly relationship (Lk 11:27–28). At the crucifixion, He showed kindness to her by entrusting her to the care of the apostle John (Jn 19:26–27). She gathered with the apostles after Jesus' resurrection (Ac 1:14). Rv 12 may memorialize her special role in history as a representative of Israel and as the mother of the Christ.
Anna the Prophetess (Lk 2:36–38)	Daughter of Phanuel of the tribe of Asher. She probably lived and served in the temple courts.	Anna (Hbf *Hannah*) gave thanks for Jesus and spread the news of His birth. Her name reminds readers of the thanks offered by Hannah in 1Sm 2.
Mother-in-law of Simon Peter (Mt 8:14–15; Mk 1:30–31; Lk 4:38–39)	A resident of Capernaum on the shore of the Sea of Galilee.	Jesus healed Peter's mother-in-law, and she waited on Him and His disciples.
A sinful woman (Lk 7:36–50)	A sinner unwelcome in the social circles of religious men.	Jesus welcomed this woman's act of repentance and devotion. He used this opportunity to reveal His authority as God's Son and to illustrate the blessings of God's kingdom available to all sinners.
Mary Magdalene (Mt 27:56, 61; 28:1; Mk 15:40, 47; 16:1, 9–11; Lk 8:2; 24:10; Jn 19:25; 20:1–2, 11–18)	A woman from Magdala, a town on the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee.	Jesus cast seven demons out of Mary. She followed Him, supported His ministry, and witnessed His crucifixion. She lingered at Jesus' tomb and was the first person to see Him after the resurrection, addressing Him as "Teacher" (Jn 20:16). He forbade her to cling to Him and sent her to tell the other disciples about His resurrection.
Joanna (Lk 8:3; 24:10)	The wife of Chuza, who managed the household of Herod (Antipas?).	Joanna supported Jesus' ministry and witnessed His resurrection.
Susanna (Lk 8:3)	No other information.	Susanna supported Jesus' ministry.
Woman with hemorrhage (Lk 8:43–48)	A ceremonially unclean woman whose health problem restricted her participation at the temple and in the community.	Jesus fondly refers to this woman as "daughter" and commends her great faith.
Daughter of Jairus (Mt 9:18–19, 23–26; Mk 5:22–24, 35–43; Lk 8:40–42, 49–56)	Her father was ruler of a synagogue in Galilee. She was his only daughter.	She died from sickness at the age of 12. At the request of her father, Jesus raised her from the dead by taking her hand and calling out, "Little girl, ... arise" (Mk 5:41). He also made sure she had something to eat.
Mary and Martha (Mt 26:6–13; Mk 14:3–9; Lk 10:38–42; Jn 11:1–44; 12:1–8)	Residents of Bethany in Judea, sisters to Lazarus. They were probably wealthy.	Martha welcomed Jesus (and probably His disciples) into her home. Jesus taught there. He drew attention to the different actions of the sisters to emphasize the value of His teaching. Jesus grieved with the sisters over the death of Lazarus and comforted them by raising him from the dead. During a feast at Simon the leper's house, Mary poured an expensive perfume on Jesus' feet and wiped them with her hair. (This action anticipated Jesus' death and burial a week later.) Jesus defended Mary when the disciples complained that she was wasteful.
A woman in the crowd (Lk 11:27–28)	No other information.	Some challenged Jesus' power to cast out demons. This woman apparently spoke up to express her admiration for Jesus' miracles and teachings. Jesus used her blessing to draw attention to God's Word and obedience in contrast to the lack of faith demonstrated by those who questioned Him.
A disabled woman (Lk 13:10–17)	She had suffered this affliction for 18 years.	Through this healing, Jesus showed the Sabbath to be a day of salvation, not bondage.
A poor widow (Mk 12:41–44; Lk 21:1–4)	No other information.	Jesus commends her extreme generosity. Widows who did not have a son to provide for them were exceptionally vulnerable to poverty. The apostles later made special provision for such widows (Ac 4:34–35; 6:1–7).
A servant girl (Lk 22:56–57)	No other information.	This girl correctly identified Peter on the night he betrayed Jesus.
Daughters of Jerusalem (Lk 23:27–31)	Local disciples, not women who had followed Jesus from Galilee.	"Daughters of Jerusalem" evokes the prophet's words to the "daughters of Zion," who publicly mourned or rejoiced over the state of their city (cf Sg 3:11). See p 1079.
Galilean Women (Lk 23:55–24:11)	Among the women mentioned in Lk 8:1–2.	These faithful disciples cared for the body of Jesus like family members.
Mary from Galilee (Lk 24:10)	The mother of James, probably the wife of Zebedee.	One of the first witnesses of the resurrection. In a reversal of typical social order, Jesus appeared first to His female disciples.

Statement	Hearer	Application
1:51: "You will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man."	Nathanael	Jesus prophesies that His display of divine power (recognizing Nathanael before He meets him) is only the beginning of His heaven-sent ministry.
3:3: "Unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."	Nicodemus	This leader of the people wants to believe Jesus but does not quite understand who Jesus is. The Lord interrupts Nicodemus three times and quickly points out his spiritual need: he must be born again.
3:5: "Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God."		
3:11: "We speak of what we know, and bear witness to what we have seen."		
5:19: "The Son can do nothing of His own accord, but only what He sees the Father doing."	The crowds	As Jesus explains His mission and ministry among the Jewish people, many challenge Him or misunderstand His message. With each "Amen, amen" statement, He confronts these challenges and misunderstandings, calling people to faith.
5:24: "Whoever hears My word and believes Him who sent Me has eternal life."		
5:25: "An hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God."		
6:26: "You are seeking Me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves."		
6:47: "Whoever believes has eternal life."		
6:53: "Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you."		
8:34: "Everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin."		
8:51: "If anyone keeps My word, he will never see death."		
8:58: "Before Abraham was, I am."		
10:1: "He who does not enter the sheepfold by the door but climbs in by another way, that man is a thief and a robber."	The Pharisees	Jesus' harsh words toward the Pharisees demonstrate His growing frustration with their unbelief.
10:7: "I am the door of the sheep."		

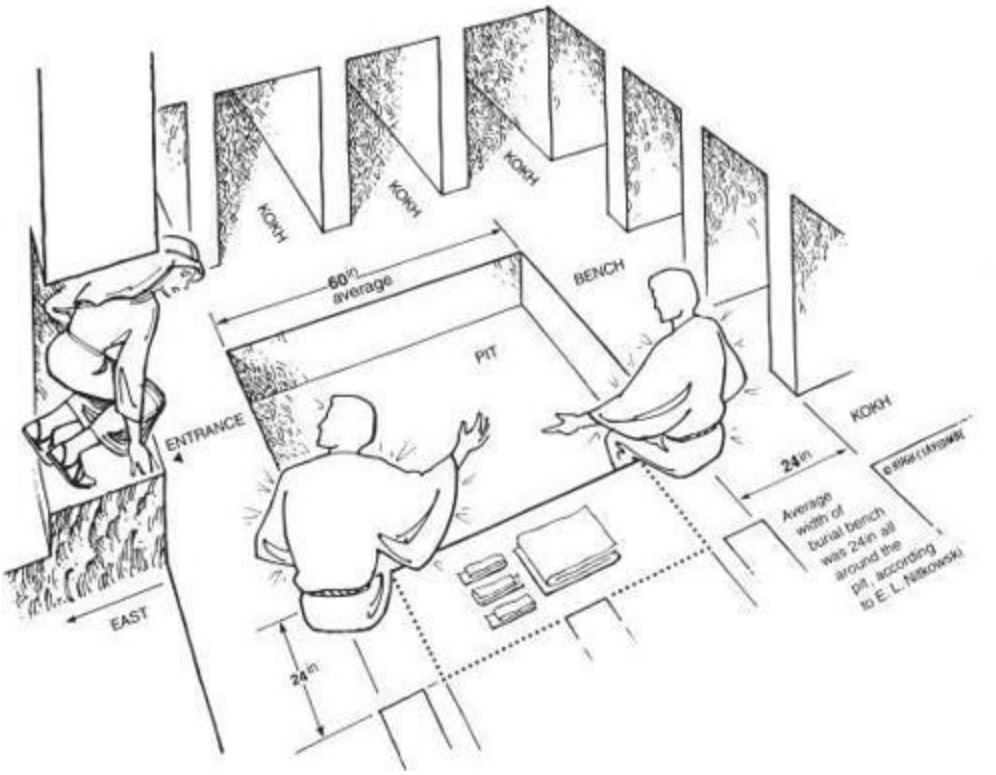
Description	Meaning
Dove (1:32)	Doves (pigeons) were sacrificed in the temple as part of the cleansing rituals of the OT (Lv 5:5–10; 15:13–15). Christ gives you the Spirit in Baptism, which cleanses you from all sin (Ti 3:4–7).
Wind (3:8)	The Spirit hovered over the face of the waters at the beginning of creation (Gn 1:2) and through God's Word brought forth life. Just as wind moves invisibly and uncontrollably, the Spirit works when and where He pleases through God's Word and Baptism to give life to you and all believers in Christ.
God (4:24)	The Spirit is not a thing or a power but God Himself (notice how Jesus uses the personal pronoun *He* to refer to the Spirit: 14:26 [based on Gk text]; 15:26; 16:13). You worship the triune God in and through the Spirit of God.
Words (6:63)	At the beginning of the Gospel, John used *Word* to describe Jesus. Now Jesus uses words to describe the Spirit, through whom He gives life. The Spirit of Jesus works in your life through the Word of God.
Rivers of Living Water (7:38–39)	Jesus refers to the promise given through Isaiah that God would satisfy the thirst of His people (Is 58:11). Because you are a believer, the Spirit dwells in and flows from you, welling up to eternal life (Jn 4:10, 13–14).
Helper (14:16, 26; 15:26)	The Spirit sent by the Father and Jesus will teach the disciples and remind them of Jesus' words. This would include the way the Spirit guided the apostles and inspired them to record the books of the NT. These passages also describe the inner workings of the Holy Trinity on your behalf.
Spirit of Truth (15:26; 16:13)	The spirit of falsehood, at work in the sinful hearts of humanity, would deceive the disciples. Therefore, Jesus sends the Spirit of truth to guide the disciples into all truth. Note well that the Spirit does not speak on His own. He speaks on behalf of the Father and Jesus and testifies about Jesus. Note again that Jesus binds the work of the Spirit to His Word.
Holy (20:22)	The Spirit makes you holy through the forgiveness of sins you receive in the Gospel. Just as Christ called and sent the apostles to proclaim this forgiveness, He calls and sends pastors to proclaim publicly forgiveness of sins (Absolution).

BURIAL BENCH

This diagram is based on average measurements of more than 60 tombs. Though drawn precisely, it is meant only to suggest a design concept. (A kokh is a long, narrow burial vault.)

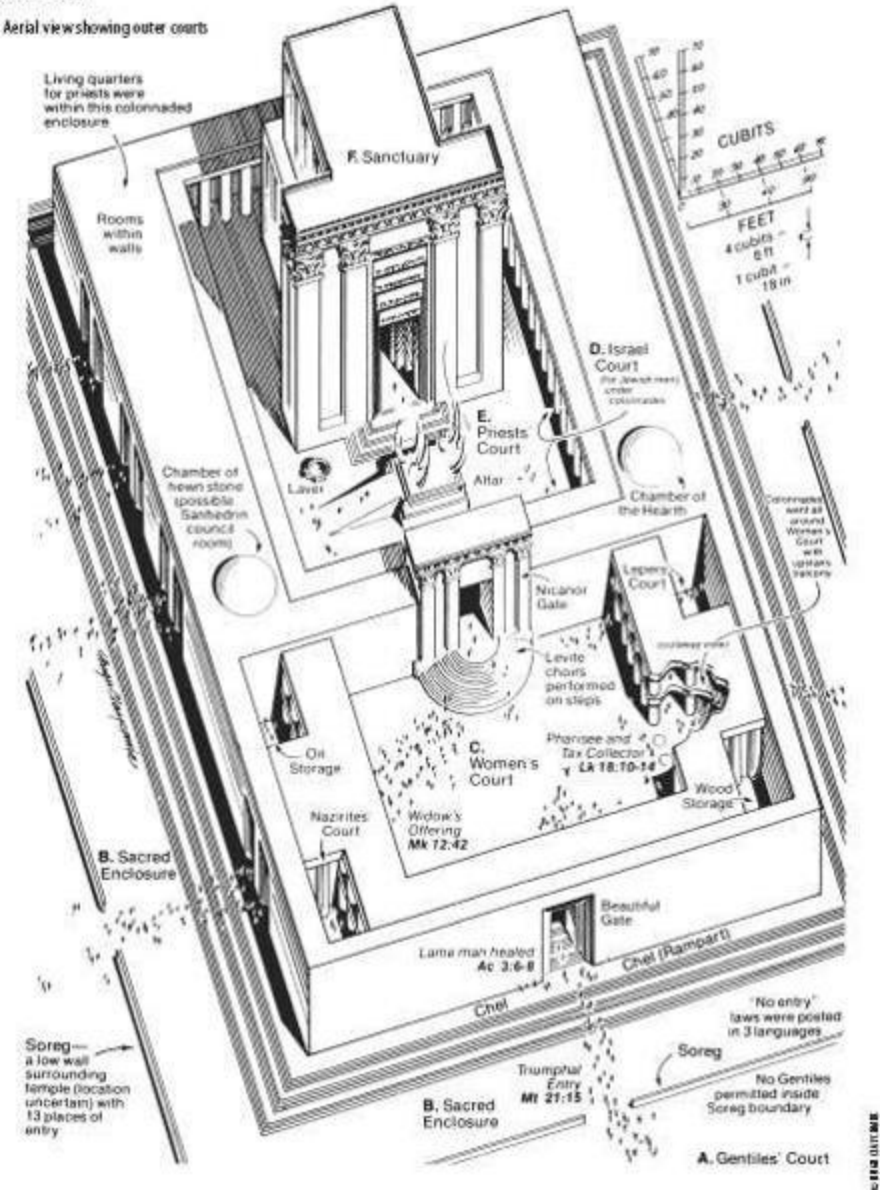
"But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb, and as she wept she stooped to look into the tomb. And she saw two angels in white, *sitting where the body of Jesus had lain, one at the head and one at the feet*" (Jn 20:11–12, emphasis added).

In John's Gospel, Mary Magdalene observed two seated angelic beings. On the prior Friday, the body of Jesus had been hurriedly wrapped in linen and brought to the tomb. On the morning that the resurrection was discovered, the burial cloth was found neatly folded on the burial bench (Jn 20:6–7).



HEROD'S TEMPLE
20 BC–AD 70

Aerial view showing outer courts



Action	Human Actor	Divine Actor
Choosing an apostle to replace Judas (1:12–26)	The 11 apostles	The Lord: "You, Lord, who know the hearts of all, show which one of these two You have chosen" (1:24).
Speaking in tongues (foreign languages) (2:1–21)	The 12 apostles	The Holy Spirit: "They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance" (2:4).
Healing a lame beggar (3:1–4:10)	Peter	Jesus Christ: "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk!" (3:6). "Why do you stare at us, as though by our own power or piety we had made him walk?" (3:12). "[Jesus'] name . . . and the faith that is through Jesus has given the man this perfect health" (3:16). "By the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead—by Him this man is standing before you well" (4:10).
Speaking God's Word boldly (4:29–31)	Peter, John, and the believers	The Lord: "Now, Lord, look upon their threats and grant to Your servants to continue to speak your word with all boldness" (4:29). The Spirit: "They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness" (4:31).
Increasing the numbers of believers	The apostles and other disciples	The Lord: "The Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved" (2:47). "The hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number who believed turned to the Lord" (11:21). God: "If this plan or this undertaking is of man, it will fail; but if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them. You might even be found opposing God!" (5:38–39). The Spirit: "Walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, [the church] multiplied" (9:31).
Speaking wisely (6:8–7:53)	Stephen	The Spirit: "[These men] rose up and disputed with Stephen. But they could not withstand the wisdom and the Spirit with which he was speaking" (6:9–10).
Bestowing the Holy Spirit (8:9–24)	Peter and John: "They laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit" (8:17)	God: Peter calls this ability "the gift of God" (8:20).
Deciding where to evangelize (8:26–40)	Philip	The Spirit: "The Spirit said to Philip, 'Go over and join this chariot' " (8:29). "When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord carried Philip away" (8:39).
Healing the paralytic Aeneas (9:32–35)	Peter	Jesus Christ: "Peter said to him, 'Aeneas, Jesus Christ heals you' " (9:34).

THE APOSTLES' MINISTRY (ACTS 1–12)

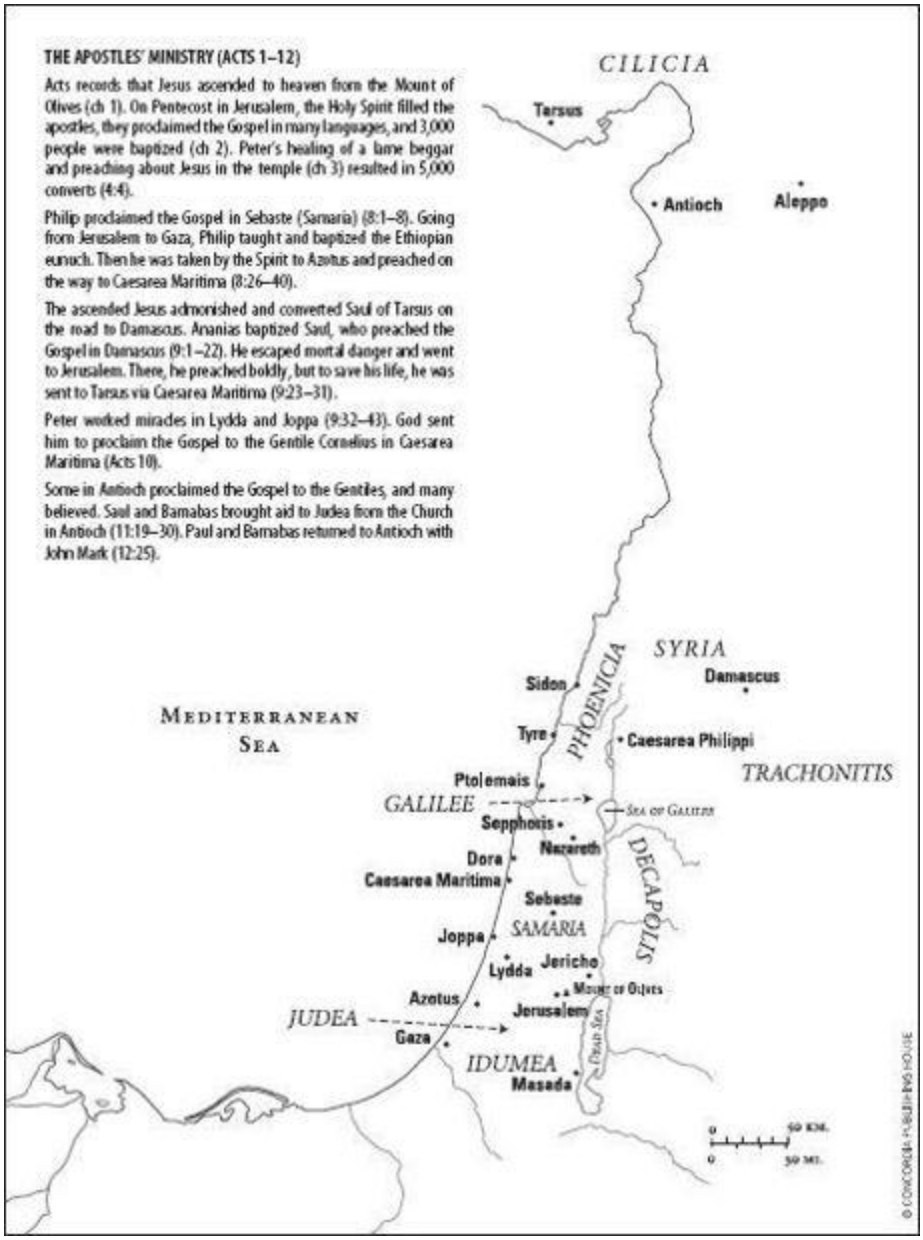
Acts records that Jesus ascended to heaven from the Mount of Olives (ch 1). On Pentecost in Jerusalem, the Holy Spirit filled the apostles, they proclaimed the Gospel in many languages, and 3,000 people were baptized (ch 2). Peter's healing of a lame beggar and preaching about Jesus in the temple (ch 3) resulted in 5,000 converts (4:4).

Philip proclaimed the Gospel in Sebaste (Samaria) (8:1–8). Going from Jerusalem to Gaza, Philip taught and baptized the Ethiopian eunuch. Then he was taken by the Spirit to Azotus and preached on the way to Caesarea Maritima (8:26–40).

The ascended Jesus admonished and converted Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus. Ananias baptized Saul, who preached the Gospel in Damascus (9:1–22). He escaped mortal danger and went to Jerusalem. There, he preached boldly, but to save his life, he was sent to Tarsus via Caesarea Maritima (9:23–31).

Peter worked miracles in Lydda and Joppa (9:32–43). God sent him to proclaim the Gospel to the Gentile Cornelius in Caesarea Maritima (Acts 10).

Some in Antioch proclaimed the Gospel to the Gentiles, and many believed. Saul and Barnabas brought aid to Judea from the Church in Antioch (11:19–30). Paul and Barnabas returned to Antioch with John Mark (12:25).



Filled with the Holy Spirit

Person(s)	Setting	Blessings
John the Baptist (Lk 1:15)	Prophecy spoken by the angel Gabriel to Zechariah	The Spirit would fill John his entire life and distinguish him as a holy man.
Elizabeth (Lk 1:41)	Mary, the mother of Jesus, greets Elizabeth	God shows Elizabeth that Mary will give birth to a special child. She boldly encourages Mary.
Zechariah (Lk 1:67)	Naming of John the Baptist at his circumcision	Zechariah had lost his ability to speak because he doubted that God would give him a son. Now the Spirit restores Zechariah's ability to speak. He praises God and prophesies about the ministry of his son, John.
Jesus (Lk 4:1)	Baptism at the Jordan River	The Holy Spirit had descended on Jesus at His Baptism. The Spirit now leads Jesus into the wilderness for a time of fasting.
The 11 apostles (and other disciples?) (Ac 2:4)	The Feast of Pentecost	The apostles and probably other believers praised God and spoke in a variety of languages, bearing witness to the Jewish people who had gathered for the festival.
Peter (Ac 4:8)	Sermon before the Council	Peter boldly proclaimed salvation through Christ.
Peter, John, and other disciples (Ac 4:31)	Prayer following the release of Peter and John by the Council	The disciples spoke the Word of God boldly.
Stephen and the first deacons (Ac 6:3, 5)	The choosing of the deacons	The deacons were recognized as men full of the Spirit. They took responsibility for serving the widows of the church, freeing up the apostles for prayer and ministry of the Word. As a result, God's Word spread.
Stephen (Ac 7:55)	Stephen's martyrdom before the Jewish Council	Stephen received a vision of God's glory. Before a crowd, he proclaimed the exalted position of Christ.
Saul (Paul) (Ac 9:17–18)	Ananias explains Paul's mission and baptizes him	Ananias was sent by Jesus to pray for Paul's healing and to baptize him so that he might receive the Spirit.
Barnabas (Ac 11:24)	Barnabas's visit to Antioch	Barnabas encouraged the believers. Many people were brought to the Lord.
Saul/Paul (Ac 13:9)	Visit with Sergius Paulus, the proconsul of Paphos	Saul exposed the evil deeds of a Jewish sorcerer (Bar-Jesus, aka Elymas) and warned that God would blind him. God's action led the proconsul to believe in the Lord.

Teaching about the Gift(s) of the Holy Spirit

Person	Setting	Blessings
John the Baptist (Lk 3:16)	Preaching at the Jordan River	John prophesies that Jesus would come. He explains that Jesus' ministry and Baptism will supersede his own.
Jesus (Ac 1:5)	A meal after the resurrection	Jesus reminds the apostles about John the Baptist's prophecy (Mt 3:11), which would soon be fulfilled.
Peter (Ac 11:16)	The Jerusalem Church	Peter explains the events he witnessed at Cornelius's house in Caesarea. The Jerusalem Church accepts Peter's testimony that the Gentiles could also repent and receive the Gospel.

Speaking in Tongues

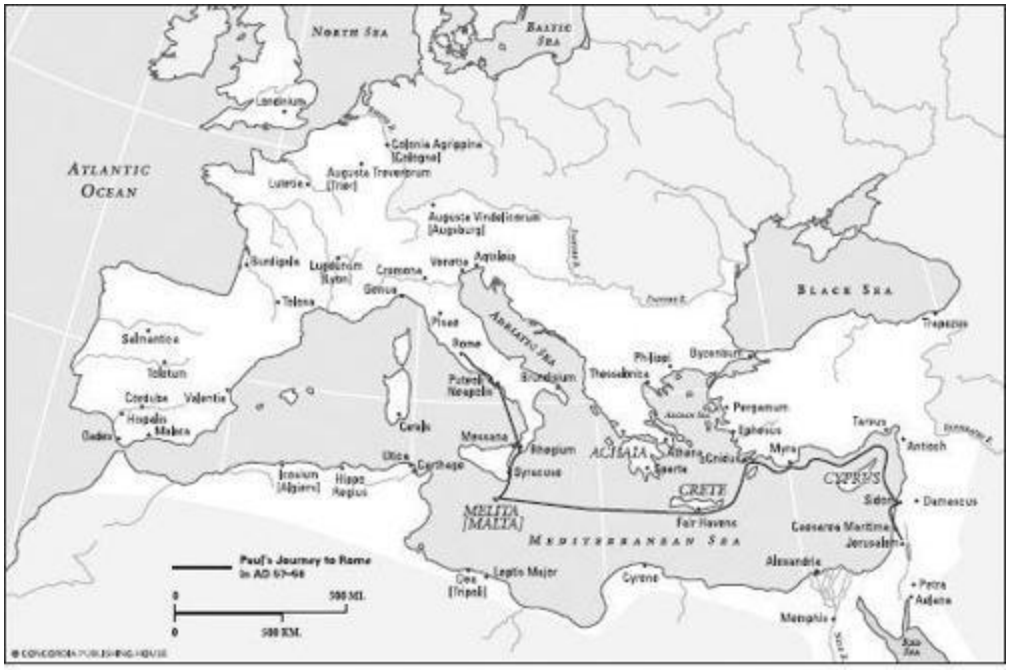
Person(s)	Setting	Blessings
The 11 apostles (and other disciples?) (Ac 2:4)	The Feast of Pentecost	God fulfilled the prophecy of Jl 2:28–32 about the Spirit's work. The crowd heard God's Word in their own languages.
Gentiles (Ac 10:46)	Cornelius's house in Caesarea	The Gentiles praised God in other languages, demonstrating that they, too, could receive God's blessings and be baptized. The Jewish believers recognized that God was calling uncircumcised people into the Church.
Disciples of John the Baptist (Ac 19:6)	Ephesus	The disciples of John learned that his teaching about the coming Savior was fulfilled in Jesus Christ. They were baptized into Christ.

PAUL'S MISSIONARY JOURNEYS (ACTS 13–21)

First journey (AD 47–48): The Holy Spirit sent Saul, Barnabas, and John Mark from Antioch in Syria via Seleucia to Salamis, then overland to Paphos (Ac 13:1–12). The three continued to Perga, where John Mark left them for Jerusalem (13:13). Saul, also called Paul (13:9), and Barnabas continued to Antioch in Pisidia (13:14–50), Iconium (13:51–14:6a), Lystra, and Derbe (14:6b–20), from whence they retraced their steps back to Pisidian Antioch, then went to Attalia and Syrian Antioch (14:21–28).

Second journey (AD 49–51): Paul and Barnabas separated (15:36–39) while in Syrian Antioch. Paul and Silas went through Syria and Cilicia (15:40–41). They came to Derbe and Lystra, where Timothy joined them (16:1–5). The Spirit led them throughout Galatia and Phrygia to Troas, where they continued, via the island of Samothrace (not shown), to Macedonia; then they traveled to Neapolis and Philippi (16:6–40). They continued via Amphipolis and Apollonia to Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, and Corinth (17:1–18:17). Paul stayed 18 months there (18:11). He journeyed via Cenchreae and Ephesus to Caesarea Maritima, Jerusalem, and Syrian Antioch (18:18–22).

Third journey (AD 52–55): Paul took the inland route from Syrian Antioch and eventually arrived in Ephesus, where he stayed for two years and three months (18:23–19:41). He visited Macedonia and Achaia, and then sailed from Philippi to Troas (19:21; 20:1–12) on his way to Jerusalem. From Troas, he sailed via Assos, Mitylene, Miletus (where he met the Ephesian elders), Rhodes, and Patara to Tyre (20:13–21:6). He sailed to Ptolemais and Caesarea Maritima, and went on foot from there to Jerusalem (21:7–17).



THE ROMAN EMPIRE AND PAUL'S JOURNEY TO ROME. The Roman Empire formed the backdrop for the ministries of Jesus and the apostles. Jesus was born during the reign of Caesar Augustus (27 BC–AD 14; Lk 2:1). He carried out His earthly ministry, was crucified, and rose from the dead during the reign of Tiberius (AD 14–37; Lk 3:1). Claudius (AD 41–54) expelled Jews (and Jewish Christians) from Rome (Ac 18:2). Under Nero (AD 54–68), Paul journeyed to Rome to make his appeal to Caesar and bear witness to Christ there (AD 57–58; Acts 27–28). Later, Nero persecuted Christians, and in AD 68, Paul and Peter were martyred in Rome.

Unwritten Law	Written Law
Law of nature (*physis*): God's universal order evident in the physical creation (1:26; 2:14, 27)	**The Law (*nomos*):** moral, civil, and ceremonial law given through Moses in the Torah, the first five books of the OT (2:12–13, 17–27; 3:19–21, 27–31; 4:13–15; 5:15, 20; 6:14–15; 7:4–6)
A law for themselves: the influence of God's created order continues in all cultures (2:14)	**The written code:** the scroll of the Mosaic Law and its literal interpretation (2:27, 29; 7:6)
The law of marriage: a particular example of God's order found in all cultures (7:1–3)	**The Law's requirements:** the spirit or intent of the Mosaic Law (2:26; 8:4)
	The Commandments: the Ten Commandments that make up the heart of the Mosaic Law (7:7–13)

Concern	Romans
Children are not accountable for sin until they reach the "age of accountability."	"The wages of sin is death" (6:23). The fact that children die shows that they are subject to sin just like adults. The Bible never mentions an age of accountability. Instead, it teaches that "the whole world [is] held accountable to God" (3:19). Cf Ps 51:5; Eph 2:3.
The Bible never explicitly commands that infants should be baptized.	The Bible never sets an age limit for Baptism or salvation. It teaches that "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (3:23). All people from birth need the new life God offers in Christ. Rm 6:3 states that "all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus" receive the benefits of His death and life. Cf Mt 19:14; 28:19–20 (note the "all"). Mt 18:6 teaches that little ones can receive the blessing of faith. Ac 2:38–39 explicitly includes children among those who inherit God's promised gift of the Holy Spirit (cf Lk 1:15).
A child must first understand and make a personal commitment before Baptism.	Paul warns that the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not and cannot submit to God's Law (8:7). This is true of children and adults. We are born enemies of God and slaves to sin. But in Baptism, "our old self was crucified with Him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin" (6:6). Cf Gal 3:26–27; 4:3–7.
Baptism only symbolizes the washing away of sin.	Paul does not describe Baptism as a mere symbol. It is a spiritual death to sin. It produces new life that leads to eternal life (6:3–5). Cf Lk 3:3; Jn 3:5; Ti 3:5–7; 1Pt 3:21–22.

Work of the Holy Spirit	Meaning for You
Hallowing or sanctifying **1:4; 8:13**	Holiness, like salvation, is not something you attain by your own efforts. Holiness is God's gift to you, begun and completed through the work of the Holy Spirit. As you struggle to overcome sin, pray to the "Spirit of holiness" for strength and comfort.
Leading **8:1–5, 14**	Every moment of your life as a Christian is intimately tied up in the work of the Spirit. Through the Word and witness of other believers, the Spirit leads you to greater faith and certainty.
Renewing **7:6**	When you condemn yourself for your failures by beating yourself up with the Law, remember that God wants to renew your life with His Holy Spirit. The Law of God is good, but it has no power to renew. Certainly repent of your sins when you recognize them. In view of the Gospel, joyfully confess your sins and live in the new life God gives.
Life-giving **8:2, 10**	Life, whether physical or spiritual, always comes as a gift. Begin each day like a newborn child resting in the Father's care, for He gives you life by His Spirit.
Indwelling **8:9**	The Holy Spirit of God is with believers always. God actually makes our hearts His home!
Bearing witness **8:15–16**	When you have moments of doubt, the Holy Spirit will bring God's Word to your mind and comfort you with the enduring promise of your heavenly Father's love.
Interceding **8:26–27**	The Spirit of God prays for you! When you do not know what to pray, depend on the Holy Spirit to express your heart's deepest needs and burdens before the throne of heaven.
Working miracles **15:19**	The Spirit of God is no passive passenger in the life of a believer. He works miracles in accordance with God's mercy.
Fostering love **15:30**	Many new believers (and not a few mature ones!) are overwhelmed by the love expressed between Christians. This is the Spirit's work among God's people.

View of Faith	Source	Explanation	What Is the Difference?
Faith in faith *(Fideism)*	Existentialism	You should trust in something or someone, whether Christ, Buddha, or anything else. Your commitment itself saves you, not what you commit to.	If you are drowning in the ocean, will it matter what you cling to (life preserver, passing shark, anchor, etc.)? Faith in faith is misguided. Saving faith trusts in Jesus Christ, the only Savior.
Faith in feelings *(Emotionalism)*	Revivalism	You can confirm your salvation through an emotional or religious experience. If you have a positive feeling toward God, God will have a positive feeling toward you.	Feeling safe does not make you safe. E.g., if you were drowning in the ocean but convinced yourself that you would be rescued, would that save you? Feelings do not always grasp the true nature of a situation. However, God's Word and promise of salvation are faithful. Feelings should follow God's Word and faith (Rm 5:1; Eph 3:12).
Faith as work offered to God *(Synergism)*	Heresy of Pelagius (c 354–420) and others	God does most of the work in salvation, but you must do your part by putting your faith in Him and living a good life.	If you drowned and died in the ocean, you would obviously have no power to cooperate with a rescuer. In a similar way, the Bible declares you dead in your sins (Rm 5:12; Eph 2:1). Unless God rescues you and resuscitates you through the Gospel, you are surely lost.
Faith as God's gift	Scriptural truth taught by Christ, the apostles, Church Fathers, and Martin Luther	God's promise of salvation creates faith, or trust, in your heart. Faith is a gift you receive through the Gospel of forgiveness in Christ (Rm 1:16; Eph 2:8–9).	Just as a dead person in the midst of the ocean is lost without the help of a rescuer, you are utterly lost unless God rescues you. God finds you dead in your sins (Rm 3:10–18; Eph 2:5). He sends His Son to rescue you (Rm 5:6–9; Eph 1:5). Through the Gospel, Christ resuscitates you—then you believe (Rm 10:14, 17; Eph 1:13)!

Events	Overview	Application for You
A sincere Jewish family Mt 1:21–14 c AD 30	We first hear about James and Jude because of their opposition to Jesus' teaching ministry in Galilee. The criticism spoken by Jesus' family mingled with the accusations of the teachers from Jerusalem, who asserted that Jesus was demon-possessed. The family seems to have conscientiously followed the customs of first-century Judaism and respected such teachers of the Law based in Jerusalem (cf Lk 2:21–24, 39, 41–42). They probably regarded Jesus' appointing of disciples and His outspoken teachings as a rebellion against religious authority. When they tried to take charge of Jesus (Mk 3:21), they may have sought to protect Him from the authorities (cf Mk 3:6).	Joseph and Mary did their best to raise their family. Yet this did not prevent them from experiencing conflict. The same is true for your family. So much of who you are depends on what you have learned and experienced in your family of nurturing relationships. Learn from the Lord's Word and do your best for your family. When you make mistakes, forgive yourself and also lead your children to sincere faith (Jas 3:16–18).
Sons of a carpenter Mt 13:55; Mk 6:3 c AD 30	We next hear about James and Jude (Judas) from the lips of their neighbors in Nazareth. They describe the ordinary character of the family, uneducated descendants of a carpenter. "Carpenter" (*tekhtōn*) could mean a wood craftsman, a stonemason, or a metalworker. In the Gospels, Jesus frequently refers to stonework (Mt 7:24–27; 16:18; 21:42–44; 24:1–2), perhaps indicating that the family trade was stone construction instead of woodwork.	Whether you stem from peasants or kings, God has purpose for your life (Jas 2:1–5; 4:13–17). Whatever the Lord gives you to do, do it with all your might.
Family jealousy Jn 7:1–5 AD 32	The sarcasm of Jesus' brothers reveals jealousy and resentment over His popularity. It may also express fear, because Jesus was endangering Himself and His family. Jesus did not attend the Feast of Booths with His family that year but went up to Jerusalem secretly with His disciples.	When angry words divide your family, do not give up hope. Jesus knows the pain of such divisions. Seek your healing in His life-giving words of peace (Jas 1:19–21).
Witness of the resurrection 1Co 15:7 AD 33	According to St Paul, James was one of the first people to whom Jesus appeared after His resurrection. Jude does not seem to have held the same leadership role that James held. Jude is rarely mentioned.	If members of your family attain prominence or status, do not resent them (Jas 1:9–10). Thank God for their service and prayerfully support them.
Reconciled to Jesus before Pentecost Ac 1:14 AD 33	After the resurrection, Jesus' mother and brothers waited in Jerusalem with the early believers (Lk 24:52–53; Ac 1:13). At this time, Peter seems to have been the leader of the Church in Jerusalem.	Jesus sought out His brothers and mother. Despite their sinful disputes, they were reconciled to one another. When disputes arise in your family, pray for reconciliation through Christ (Jas 3:17–18).
James meets Paul Gal 1:19 c AD 38	A few years after Paul's conversion, he met James in Jerusalem. James would later become an important advocate for Paul in the dispute over the mission to the Gentiles.	Recognize the importance of relationships for the work of the Church (Jas 2:8–13). Reach out to one another with encouragement.
James leads in Jerusalem Ac 12:17 c AD 44	After Peter escaped from prison, he mentioned James distinctly from the other disciples, marking James's rise as a leader in the Jerusalem Church. Note: The name James (Hebrew Jacob) was popular for first-century Jewish people. Do not confuse James the brother of Jesus with James the brother of John (Ac 12:2) or James the son of Alphaeus (Mt 10:3; Ac 1:13).	Leaders will come and go in your congregation. Appreciate the strengths of each and forgive their weaknesses (Jas 1:1–2).
James's strict Jewish representatives Gal 2:1–12 c AD 49	Paul described another visit to Jerusalem, where he met with James, James, Peter, and John—regarded as pillars of the Church—welcomed Paul. They encouraged him to preach to the Gentiles and collect alms for the poor in Jerusalem. When James sent representatives to the Jewish/Gentile congregation in Antioch, the strict Jewish purity practices of the representatives divided the Antioch congregation. This sparked a confrontation between Peter and Paul. It also led to the first Church Council in Jerusalem.	If you have not experienced division in your congregation, know with certainty that you will. Because of sin, members of every congregation harbor sinful attitudes. When a division arises, do not panic. Turn to Jesus for help (Jas 4:6–10). Base your decisions on God's Word and love for your brothers and sisters in Christ.
Jerusalem Council Ac 15:1–20 c AD 49	James accepted Peter's report about faith among the Gentiles. He also accepted Paul and Barnabas's report about the progress of the Gentile mission. These decisions by James were key events at the first Jerusalem Council of the Church. James's judgment seems to have been instrumental in ending the dispute about the practices of the Gentile mission.	Understand your authority and role in your congregation as a voice of a leader. Exercise your calling for the good of the church and the support of God's mission (Jas 5:7–11).
Joy over the Gentile mission Ac 21:18–26 AD 55	When Paul visited Jerusalem before his arrest, he made a presentation to James and the elders of the Jerusalem Church about the progress of the mission to the Gentiles. They praised God for the conversion of the Gentiles and warned Paul that false reports were circulating in Jerusalem about his mission activities. They encouraged Paul to purify himself, according to Jewish custom, in order to quiet his critics.	Support and encourage other servants of the Word (Jas 5:13–16). When you hear about good things happening in another congregation, do not resent. Rejoice!

Calling and Training as an Apostle

Dates	Events	References
c AD 30	Testimony of Andrew	Jn 1:40–44
	Calling	Mt 4:18–20; Lk 5:1–11
	Healing of mother-in-law	Mt 8:14–17
	Called apostle	Mt 10:1–2; Mk 3:16; Lk 6:14
	Feeding of the 5,000	Jn 6:8–14
	Walks on water	Mt 14:22–36
	Parable	Mt 15:12–20
	Confession	Mt 16:13–20; Mk 8:27–30; Lk 9:18–22; Jn 6:66–70
	Transfiguration	Mt 17:1–9; Mk 9:2–13; Lk 9:28–36
	Taxes	Mt 17:24–27
	Forgive	Mt 18:21
	Left all	Mt 19:27–30; Mk 10:28–31; Lk 18:28–30

The Passion and Resurrection

Dates	Events	References
AD 33	Passover	Lk 22:7–13; Jn 13:18–28
	Boast	Mt 26:31–35; Mk 14:29; Lk 22:31–34; Jn 13:31–38
	Gethsemane	Mt 26:36–45; Mk 14:32–42
	Trial and denial	Mt 26:57–58, 69–75; Mk 14:53–54, 66–72; Lk 22:54–62; Jn 18:15–18, 25–27
	Resurrection	Mk 16:6–7; Lk 24:9–12; Jn 20:2–9
	Miraculous catch of fish	Jn 21:1–14
	Peter's call affirmed and death predicted	Jn 21:15–22

Apostolic Work

Dates	Events	References
c AD 33	Leader among apostles	Ac 1:12–26
	Pentecost sermon	Ac 2:14–41
	Healing at the temple	Ac 3
	Trial by Jewish Council	Ac 4:1–22
	Prayer with apostles	Ac 4:23–31
	Ananias and Sapphira	Ac 5:1–11
	Healings by Peter's shadow	Ac 5:15–16
	Apostles arrested by Jewish Council	Ac 5:17–42
c AD 35	Samaria visitation	Ac 8:14–25
c AD 36–41	Healing of Aeneas and Dorcas	Ac 9:32–43
	Cornelius's house	Ac 10:5–11:13
c AD 39	Visit with Paul	Gal 1:18
AD 41	Imprisonment by Herod Agrippa I	Ac 12:1–19
AD 49	Confrontation with Paul	Gal 2:11–21
	Jerusalem Council	Ac 15:5–11
AD 55	Influence at Corinth	1Co 1:12; 3:22
AD 67–68	Epistles	1Pt; 2Pt
AD 68	Martyrdom	Tradition

Example	Summary	Application
Exodus from Egypt Jude 5a; Ex 3–14	Jude begins with a positive example: how God rescued His people from Egypt.	Our lives as Christians begin with God's decisive action, rescuing us through His Son, Jesus Christ. He then calls us to lead honorable lives as we await the fullness of His mercy (Jude 21).
Wilderness Rebellion Jude 5b; Ex 15:22–17:7; 32:1–33:6; Nu 11–12; 14; 16; 20:1–13; Dt 1:26–46	Jude reminds his readers of how God did not fail to condemn and punish the sins of His chosen people.	Just because we are God's people does not mean we are immune from His judgment or discipline. In fact, because we are God's people, we can count on receiving His discipline! The Lord desires that we encourage and sustain one another until He comes again (Jude 22–23).
Rebellion of the Angels Jude 6; Mt 25:41; Lk 10:17–20; 2 Pt 2:4; Rv 12	God punished Satan and the other fallen angels (demons) for rebelling against Him. Scripture does not give us many details about this rebellion. Jude 6 may describe Satan's temptation of Adam and Eve (Gn 3) or an earlier event.	If God punishes angels for abandoning their callings, will He spare others when they rebel against Him? (Consider God's punishment for the ruler of Babylon in Is 14:3–21, which prefigures the punishment of the beast or Satan on the Last Day.)
Sodom and Gomorrah Jude 7; Gn 18:16–19:29	The wickedness of these cities brought their destruction.	God's punishment of these cities for sexual immorality serves as a warning for us. The Lord calls us to faithfulness, modesty, and mercy (Jude 22–23).
Burial of Moses Jude 9; Dt 34	God did not allow Moses to enter the Promised Land because he rebelled. Jude refers to a Jewish account about the spiritual battle surrounding Moses and rebukes the false teachers for their abusive talk.	A spiritual battle surrounds you today. Yet the Lord can keep you faithful through Christ (Jude 1). God grant you the faith of Moses and the modest words of Michael.
Cain's Way Jude 11; Gn 4:1–16	Cain murdered his brother and became a lasting example of those who profess care but harbor hatred (1 Jn 2:9–11; 3:11–15).	God grant you love for your brothers and sisters in the Gospel. He will keep you from falling (Jude 24).
Balaam's Error Jude 11; 2 Pt 2:15; Nu 22–24	Balaam sought financial gain through false teaching. Jude recognizes the same motive in the hearts of the false teachers in his day (Jude 17–19).	Christian, mind how you exercise your life's calling. Do not support false teachers with your dollars. (Think esp of the outrageous profits people make from false predictions about the end of the world.)
Korah's Rebellion Jude 11; Nu 16:1–3, 31–35	Korah stirred up other Israelites against Moses and Aaron because they were experiencing hard times. Note Jude's description of the false teachers in his day (Jude 16).	An important aspect of Moses' leadership was humility (Nu 16:4). Look for this attribute in the leadership at your congregation. Pray for your leaders and support them (Heb 13:17).
Enoch's Prophecy Jude 14–15; Gn 5:18–24	Note the fourfold repetition of "ungodly." Enoch's prophecy emphasizes God's call to holiness in contrast to the "ungodly" false teachers.	The One who calls you to holiness will also present you before the heavenly Father "blameless" (Jude 24). By the cross, He has removed all your guilt.

THE SETTING OF REVELATION

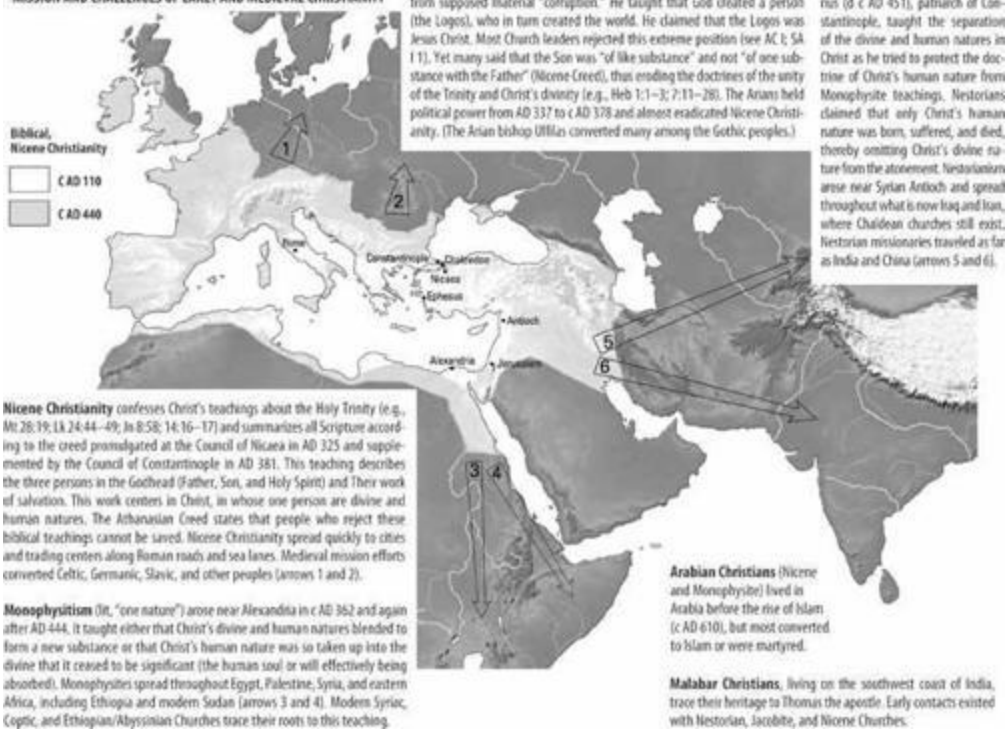
When John received his revelation, he "was on the island called Patmos on account of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus" (Rv 1:9). Patmos is a small island off the coast of Miletus.

Revelation is addressed to the seven churches in the cities marked with squares: *Ephesus* was an important stop on Paul's second and third missionary journeys (Ac 18:19–21; 19). It successfully vied with *Smyrna* and *Pergamum* to be the chief city of Asia Minor. Like Smyrna and the other cities mentioned by John, Ephesus embraced the emperor cult. It also held the temple of Artemis. Pergamum boasted of a great library and many pagan temples. *Thyatira* was known for its cloth dyers (Ac 16:14) and for general worldliness. *Sardis* lived to recall its past glory. *Philadelphia* was known for its pagan temples. *Laodicea*, located at an important trade-route junction, was a wool producer and a center of medicine (cf Col 4:13–16).

THE LORD'S SUPPER AFFIRMS USEFUL AND COMFORTING TEACHING

Teaching Affirmed	Basis in Christ's Words (emphases added)	For Reflection
1. Christ is our neighbor, kinsman, and brother who makes us His own people.	Take, eat. . . . Drink of it, *all of you*, for this is My blood of *the covenant* (Mt 26:26–28).	Php 3:12; Heb 2:11, 17
2. The eternal God deals with us through the human nature of His Son, who is one of us.	This is *My body* . . . *My blood* (Mt 26:26–27).	Jn 1:1, 14; 1Co 11:27–29; Php 2:5–11
3. In Christ's own person, human nature is sanctified, restored, and blessed.	I [will] drink it *new in the kingdom* of God (Mk 14:25).	1Co 15:22, 45, 49
4. By the bread and wine, Christ provides us an effective physical sign and seal of the promise and grace applied to us in the Lord's Supper.	Take, eat. . . . Drink of it, all of you . . . for the *forgiveness* of sins (Mt 26:26–28).	1Co 10:16
5. The exalted body and blood of Jesus offer to us a seal of our own coming glorification.	I [will] drink it *new in the kingdom* of God (Mk 14:25).	1Co 10:16–17; 15:20–23; 1Jn 2:28–3:3
6. Christ strongly wills to preserve us in the new covenant.	This is *My blood* of the covenant (Mt 26:28).	Jer 31:33–34; 1Co 11:25
7. The Lord's Supper is an antidote against the frailty of our faith and the forgetfulness of our nature.	Do this in *remembrance of Me* (Lk 22:19; 1Co 11:24).	1Co 11:26; 2Pt 1:9
8. Christ our Head is with us at the Lord's Supper and makes us members of His body and of one another.	My body . . . My blood of the covenant, which is *poured out for many* (Mt 26:26–28).	1Co 10:17

MISSION AND CHALLENGES OF EARLY AND MEDIEVAL CHRISTIANITY



Arianism began when a priest named Arius (d AD 336) wanted to protect God from supposed material "corruption." He taught that God created a person (the Logos), who in turn created the world. He claimed that the Logos was Jesus Christ. Most Church leaders rejected this extreme position (see AC I; SA I 1). Yet many said that the Son was "of like substance" and not "of one substance with the Father" (Nicene Creed), thus eroding the doctrines of the unity of the Trinity and Christ's divinity (e.g., Heb 1:1–3; 7:11–28). The Arians held political power from AD 337 to c AD 378 and almost eradicated Nicene Christianity. (The Arian bishop Ulfilas converted many among the Gothic peoples.)

Nestorianism began when Nestorius (d c AD 451), patriarch of Constantinople, taught the separation of the divine and human natures in Christ as he tried to protect the doctrine of Christ's human nature from Monophysite teachings. Nestorians claimed that only Christ's human nature was born, suffered, and died, thereby omitting Christ's divine nature from the atonement. Nestorianism arose near Syrian Antioch and spread throughout what is now Iraq and Iran, where Chaldean churches still exist. Nestorian missionaries traveled as far as India and China (arrows 5 and 6).

Nicene Christianity confesses Christ's teachings about the Holy Trinity (e.g., Mt 28:19; Lk 24:44–49; Jn 8:58; 14:16–17) and summarizes all Scripture according to the creed promulgated at the Council of Nicaea in AD 325 and supplemented by the Council of Constantinople in AD 381. This teaching describes the three persons in the Godhead (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) and Their work of salvation. This work centers in Christ, in whose one person are divine and human natures. The Athanasian Creed states that people who reject these biblical teachings cannot be saved. Nicene Christianity spread quickly to cities and trading centers along Roman roads and sea lanes. Medieval mission efforts converted Celtic, Germanic, Slavic, and other peoples (arrows 1 and 2).

Monophysitism (lit, "one nature") arose near Alexandria in c AD 362 and again after AD 444. It taught either that Christ's divine and human natures blended to form a new substance or that Christ's human nature was so taken up into the divine that it ceased to be significant (the human soul or will effectively being absorbed). Monophysites spread throughout Egypt, Palestine, Syria, and eastern Africa, including Ethiopia and modern Sudan (arrows 3 and 4). Modern Syriac, Coptic, and Ethiopian/Abyssinian Churches trace their roots to this teaching.

Arabian Christians (Nicene and Monophysite) lived in Arabia before the rise of Islam (c AD 610), but most converted to Islam or were martyred.

Malabar Christians, living on the southwest coast of India, trace their heritage to Thomas the apostle. Early contacts existed with Nestorian, Jacobite, and Nicene Churches.

THE SPREAD OF LUTHERAN MISSION WORK

At the close of the Reformation, the famous Lutheran preacher and hymn writer Philip Nicolai wrote *A Commentary on the Reign of Christ* (1597). Nicolai's work provided a geographical survey of regions reached by the Gospel. He stirred Lutherans to increase foreign mission work.

Lutheran mission work spread in three basic ways: (1) publications of Gospel literature; (2) missionaries sent by Lutheran rulers, churches, and mission societies; and (3) Lutheran congregations established by immigrants. The map here highlights five centuries of work by Lutheran missionaries—only a sampling—which we hope will stir you to support further mission work.

1523—Luther writes *Jesus Christ Was a Jew by Birth* as a missionary tract; in 1529, he publishes the Small Catechism to support the instruction of converts to Christianity.

1557—Primus Truber translates and publishes the Gospels, the Catechism, and other resources for the Croats and the Wends.

1558—Estonian, Latvian, and Livonian Lutheran peasants are resettled in Russia.

1559—Swedish King Gustav Wasa begins and supports mission work among the Lapplanders.

1634—Peter Heyling begins mission work in Egypt and Ethiopia.

1648—John Campanius translates the Catechism for the Delaware Indians.

1706—Bartholomäus Ziegenbalg and Heinrich Plütschau begin mission work in Tranquebar (Thatangambadi), India.

1721—Hans Egede serves as missionary to the Eskimos in Greenland.

1742—Johann Philipp Fabricius begins mission work with the Tamil in Madras (Chennai), India.

1749—German Lutheran immigrants land at Halifax, Nova Scotia.

1762—Christian Frederick Schwartz conducts mission work at Trichinopoly (Tiruchirapalli) and, later, Tanjore (Thanjavur), India.

1839—August L. C. Kavel and congregation arrive in Adelaide, Australia.

1844—John Ludwig Krapf begins mission work in Zanzibar, Tanzania.

1845—August Crämer founds missionary colony in Frankenmuth, MI, to work with American Indians.

1851—Theodor Fliedner and four deaconesses begin relief work among Arab people in Jerusalem.

1854—The mission ship "Candace" (Hermannsberger Mission) reaches Port Natal (Durban), South Africa.

1861—St Martin's Church organized in Cape Town, South Africa.

1864—Ludwig I. Nommensen begins mission work with the Bataks of Indonesia.

1866—John Engh and Nils Nilsen begin mission work in Madagascar.

1877—Synodical Conference begins mission work among African Americans.

1883—Daniel Landsmann begins mission work among the Jews in New York.

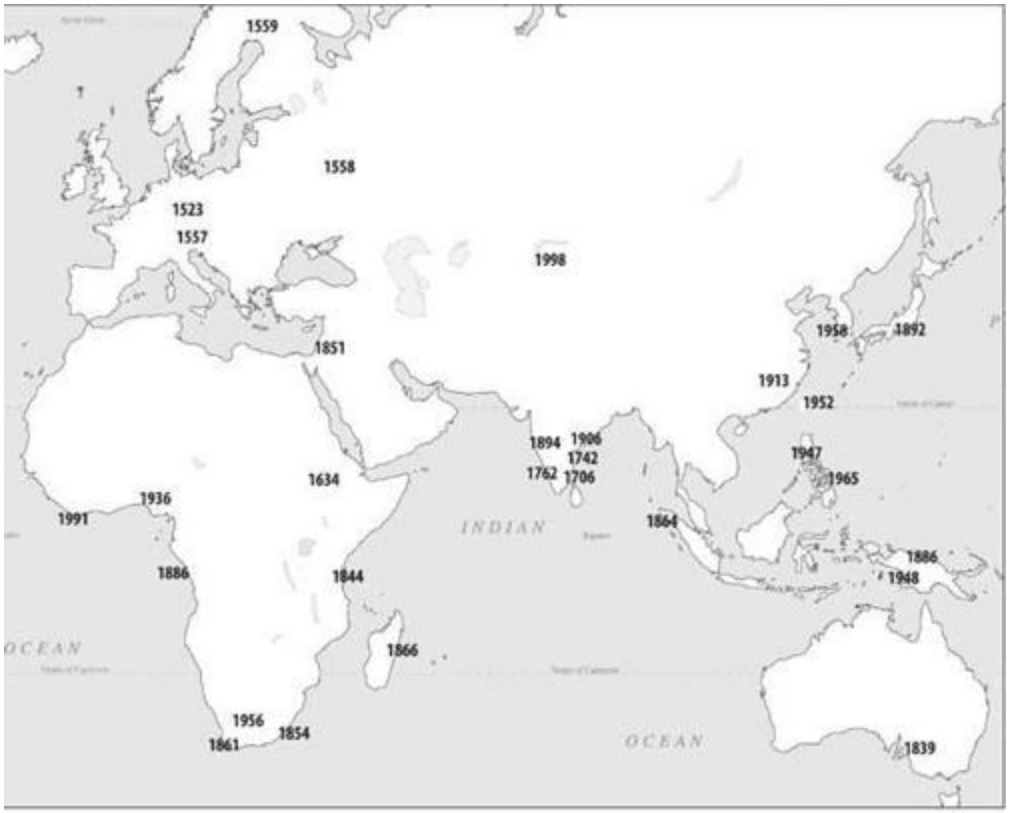
1886—Johan Flierl begins mission work in New Guinea. Missionary Union of Sweden begins work in Congo, Africa.

1887—Theodore Schmidt organizes congregation in Valdivia, Chile. H. J. B. Gelltruyden serves a congregation in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

1892—James A. B. Sherer begins mission work in Japan.

1894—K. G. T. Naether begins mission work in Krishnagiri, India. T. F. Mohn starts a mission station in Ambur, India.

1901—Christian J. Broders and then William Mahler organize mission work in Brazil.



1913—Edward L. Arndt begins mission work in Hankow, China.

1936—Henry Nau and Jonathan Udo Ekong begin mission work in Calabar Province, Nigeria.

1947—Alvaro Carino and Herman Mayer begin mission work in Manila, Philippines. Lutheran World Federation (LWF) organized in Lund, Sweden.

1948—Willard Burce and Otto Hintze begin mission work in New Guinea.

1950—LCMS Texas District sends pastors to Mexico City.

1952—Taiwan Lutheran Mission organized.

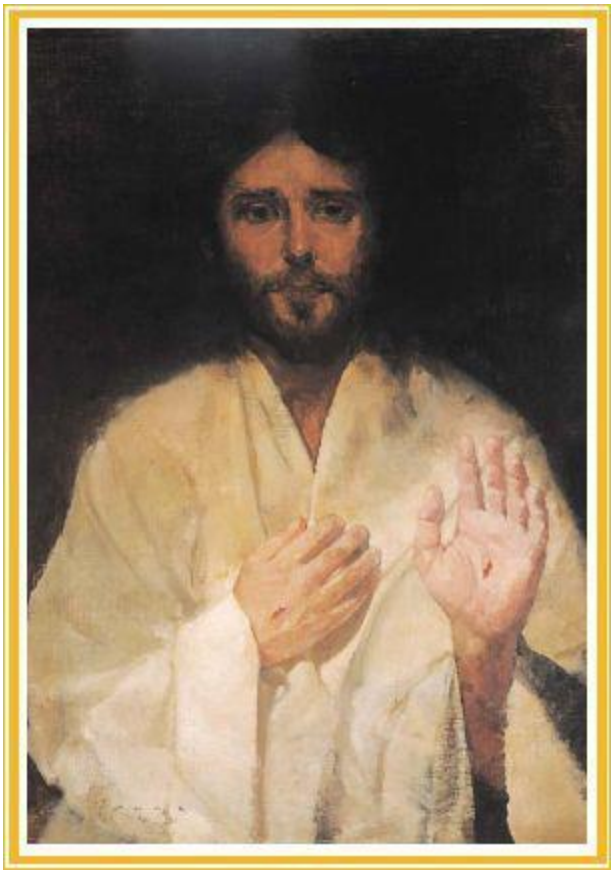
1956—The Bleckmar Mission (Hannover) begins work among Indians living in South Africa. The Norwegian Lutheran Mission founds its radio mission, Norea Mediemisjon.

1958—Lutheran mission work organized in South Korea.

1965—Lutheran Bible Translators (originally, "Messengers of Christ") send Don and Mary Murray to the Philippines.

The Cold War (1948–91) interfered with the development of new mission work. Since the collapse of communism, Lutheran mission work has begun anew in parts of Eastern Europe and Asia (e.g., Kyrgyzstan, 1998), as well as in Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea in Africa. In 1993, the International Lutheran Council (ILC) was organized at Antigua, Guatemala, and is strengthening the bonds of confessional Lutheran Churches worldwide.

As Scripture and the Nicene Creed teach, Jesus Christ "will come again with glory . . . whose kingdom will have no end." Therefore, we boldly pray the words of Luther's mission hymn, "O let the people praise Thy worth, In all good works increasing; The land shall plenteous fruit bring forth, Thy Word is rich in blessing. May God the Father, God the Son, And God the Spirit bless us! Let all the world praise Him alone, Let solemn awe possess us. Now let our hearts say, 'Amen!'" (*LSB* 823:3).



Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, “Peace be with you.” John 20:19

THE LUTHERAN STUDY BIBLE

English Standard Version

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—Martin Luther
(WA 48:155)

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Articles and Resources

Genesis

- Feasting and Fellowship with God in Eden
- The History of Humanity
- Theophanies in Genesis
- Peace and Blessing
- Family Life in Israel
- Genesis, Book of Dreams
- Cords of Love

Exodus

- Slavery in the Bible
- The Book of the Covenant
- The Blood of the Covenant
- The Materials of the Tabernacle
- No Graven Images?

Leviticus

- A Wrong Understanding of Freedom
- Eating the Offerings
- Outmoded or Relevant?
- When You Fast
- Feasts Appointed by the Lord
- The Lamb of God
- The Heart of the Atonement
- Freedom, Rest, and Redemption

Numbers

- Number Symbolism
- Leadership and Service in Israel
- The Israelite Diet
- The Israelite Calendar

Deuteronomy

- Meditating on God's Word
- Meals as Boundaries
- False Prophets Then and Now
- The Pattern of the Prophets

Joshua

- The Peoples of Canaan
- Divine Warfare

Judges

- Prophetesses in the Bible
- Israel's Identity Crisis
- Savior and Judge

2 Samuel

- The Lord’s Dwelling Place and Throne

1 Kings

- Kings and Prophets of Judah and Israel
- Making a Prophet

Nehemiah

- Passion for the Prophets

Job

- The Meaning of *Sheol*
- Legal Language in Job
- Job's Wisdom and His Knowledge of the Creator
- The Countenance of Job

Psalms

- Names in the Psalms
- Table of Psalms for Daily Prayer
- Categories of the Psalms
- Violence in the Psalms
- Complaining to God
- Ancient Use of Psalms in Worship
- Types of Sin
- God’s Word in Psalm 119
- Life’s God-Given Value
- Music and Instruments in Israel

Proverb

- The Fear of the Lord
- Christ as Wisdom
- Fools in Proverbs

Isaiah

- The Isaiah Scroll
- Isaiah's City of God
- Five Reasons to Give Tithes and Offerings
- Holy, Holy, Holy
- Isaiah's Triptych of Christ
- The Joy of Deliverance
- Teach History, Illustrate by Allegory
- The Wrath of God
- God's Remnant
- Walking with the Lord
- The Suffering Servant King
- A New Eden

Jeremiah

- Witnessing to the Weary
- Proclaiming the Word in Every Way
- Old Testament Names for God
- Prophecies about the Coming Messiah
- Prophetic Perspective
- Postures and Gestures
- The LORD of Hosts

Ezekiel

- God’s Throne
- Humor and Comedy in the Bible
- New Life through Baptism
- The Final Battle and the Defeat of Gog

Daniel

- Simple Ways to Witness
- Maturing in Faith and Service
- The Ptolemies and the Seleucids
- The Seventy Weeks (Dn 9:24–27)
- The Messiah’s Enthronement

Micah

- Justice and Poverty
- Prophecy Foreshadows the Appearing of Christ
- The Bible, Reformation, and Mission

Matthew

- The Miracles of Jesus
- The Parables of Our Lord
- The Keys of the Kingdom
- Faithful to Christ—and to Caesar
- God’s Reliable Word
- Which Tomb?

Mark

- Including the Gentiles
- God’s Care and Miracles
- Biblical Miracles at Work Today
- The Heavenly Banquet
- The Preaching and Teaching of Christ

Luke

- Luke's Unique Contribution
- Life, Lyrics, and the Lord's First Steps
- The Temple in Luke
- Be Our Guest
- Women Disciples
- What Happens When We Die?
- The New Sabbath

John

- A Simple Fisherman
- Jesus' Words "Amen, Amen"
- The Witness of "I Am"
- God's Work in Healing and Suffering
- Love: Inclusive or Exclusive?
- Love for the Vineyard
- The Spirit in John's Gospel
- God Is Three-in-One

Acts

- A Blessed Life
- Pentecost
- The Acts of Whom?
- Grace, Power, and Martyrdom
- Conflict among Christians
- The Work of the Spirit
- The Empire in Acts
- Sea Travel in Paul’s Day
- Beyond the Temple
- The Office of the Public Ministry

Romans

- Boundaries for the Church
- God's Law
- Homosexuality and Biblical Teaching
- Baptized into Christ
- The Life-Giving Spirit in Romans
- God's Unfailing Promise
- Chosen in Christ
- Living Sacrifices … in View of God's Mercy
- Controversies over Romans

1 Corinthians

- Preparing for the Lord’s Supper
- Baptized into One Body
- Speaking in Tongues
- Men and Women in the Church
- Jesus, the New Testament, and the Creeds

Galatians

- Legalism Then and Now
- True Christianity versus Three Distortions

Ephesians

- Saving Faith
- The Unity of the Church
- Law and Gospel Parenting

Philippians

- Urban Christianity

Colossians

- The Image of God
- Persecuted for the Faith
- The Meaning of Deliverance

1 Timothy

- The “New Woman”
- God’s Desire in Prayer

2 Timothy

- Qualifications for Pastors
- Strength for Spreading the Gospel

Philemon

- Slavery
- New Testament Names for God
- The Lord Sustains Creation

Hebrews

- A Blood Covering
- A Pure Conscience
- God Blessed Marriage
- The Faith of Noah
- A Tale of Two Mountains

James

- Brothers in Ministry
- Living the Wholly Christian Life
- Faith and Works
- Effectual, Fervent Prayer

1 Peter

- Peter’s Life and Ministry
- The Church as God’s Crew

2 Peter

- Old Testament Examples in 1 and 2 Peter
- Pastor and Priesthood of Believers
- Be Holy, for I Am Holy
- God and Time

1, 2, and 3 John

- John’s Reasoning
- Sin That Leads to Death

Jude

- Beware of False Teachers

Revelation

- Revelation’s Colorful Character
- The End Times in Revelation
- The Letters to the Churches
- I Know Your Works
- Grace and Merits
- The Kingdom, the Church, and Israel
- The Mystery of the Church
- God’s Mission and Revelation
- The Movement of the Gospel
- The Lord’s Supper
- The Marriage Feast of the Lamb
- The Sacrament and the Church
- Christ in Revelation
- Jesus’ Human Nature
- An Outline of Church History

Contents

Articles and Resources
Front Matter
Contributors
Acknowledgments
Foreword
The Engravings
Preface to the English Standard Version
The Lutheran Study Bible - Kindle Edition
Reading, Understanding, and Applying the Bible
  How to Read and Study the Holy Bible
  Law and Gospel: Identifying God's Ways with Mankind
  Luther's Small Catechism
  The Unity of Scripture
  The Lectionaries
  A Two-Year Reading Plan
Reference Guide
  Abbreviations
  Transliteration Guidelines
  Articles and Charts
  Maps
  Place-Names of the Bible and Ancient Empires

Biblical Topics
Biblical Chronology and World History
Weights and Measures

The Old Testament
Introduction to the Books of Moses
Genesis
Exodus
Leviticus
Numbers
Deuteronomy
Introduction to the Books of History
Joshua
Judges
Ruth
1 Samuel
2 Samuel
1 Kings
2 Kings
1 Chronicles
2 Chronicles
Ezra
Nehemiah
Esther
Introduction to the Books of Wisdom and Poetry

- Job
- Psalms
- Proverbs
- Ecclesiastes
- Song of Solomon

Introduction to the Books of the Prophets

- Isaiah
- Jeremiah
- Lamentations
- Ezekiel
- Daniel
- Hosea
- Joel
- Amos
- Obadiah
- Jonah
- Micah
- Nahum
- Habakkuk
- Zephaniah
- Haggai
- Zecharaiah
- Malachi

The Time between the Testaments and the Apocrypha

The New Testament

- Introduction to the Gospels
  - Matthew
  - Mark
  - Luke
  - John
  - Acts
- Introduction to the Pauline Epistles
  - Romans
  - 1 Corinthians
  - 2 Corinthians
  - Galatians
  - Ephesians
  - Philippians
  - Colossians
  - 1 Thessalonians
  - 2 Thessalonians
  - 1 Timothy
  - 2 Timothy
  - Titus
  - Philemon
- Introduction to the General Epistles
  - Hebrews
  - James

1 Peter
2 Peter
1 John
2 John
3 John
Jude
Revelation

End Matter

Mission and Challenges for Early Christianity
The Spread of Lutheran Mission Work
Additional Prayers

Contributors

Around 600 laypeople, church workers, and scholars contributed to the development of *The Lutheran Study Bible*, including people from Lutheran churches in Australia, Brazil, Canada, Czech Republic, England, Ethiopia, Finland, Germany, Ghana, Haiti, India, Kenya, Korea, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Russia, South Africa, Ukraine, and the United States. The editors wish to thank God for the service of each person. Because of the number of contributors, the material needed to be edited for consistency of content and presentation. The general editor finalized the text in consultation with colleagues and reviewers.

Grow in His Word Research Project

The development team believed that it was most important to seek input from people who would actually use the Study Bible day-by-day. To begin development, we invited more than 400 laypeople and church workers to read portions of the ESV translation and submit their questions about the readings. We carefully studied the nearly 1,500 questions people submitted. Then we prepared our notes to answer the kinds of questions people asked. The result is a very thorough set of notes that presents both insight and application.

Consultants

The following scholars served as consultants for books of Scripture, introductions, and biblical chronology.

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The task of writing study notes was divided into more than 200 assignments prepared by professors, pastors, commissioned ministers, and laymen. Many writers contributed on more than one assignment.

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Rev. Michael P. Walther
Rev. Dr. Karl A. Weber
Rev. Dr. Thomas M. Winger
Dr. Jesse L. Yow Jr.

Articles, Charts, and Maps in *TLSB*

TLSB includes numerous articles that draw together important historical and doctrinal themes in Scripture and apply them to current issues. Many articles were prepared especially for this publication. Others are cited or adapted from existing publications. Rev. Paul T. McCain contributed to this work by helping the general editor adapt articles from the *LifeLight* In-Depth Bible Study Series. Authors for articles include the following:

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The support of CPH President Dr. Bruce G. Kintz, Vice President Jonathan D. Schultz, and Publisher and Executive Director Rev. Paul T. McCain was likewise essential. They cleared the way so that others at CPH could focus on this project. We praise God for their united service and coordination of staff.

Special thanks are due to my editorial assistant, Caryn M. Hill, who managed the Grow in His Word Research Project, assignments, and correspondence for *TLSB*. She also drew cross-references from the Luther Bible tradition as found in *Das Altenburger Bibelwerk*. Debb Andrus led the team of CPH copy editors who contributed so greatly to the project. Their careful attention to factual details and style greatly improved the readability of the notes. This work would not have been completed without their important team effort. For example, besides the usual copyediting responsibilities, Debb reviewed all dates to ensure consistency and consolidated our notes in the Synoptic Gospels.

Laura L. Lane bravely volunteered to supplement the Concordance in *TLSB* and to review additions to the cross-reference system. She also helped develop the Reference Guide. In addition to her copyediting responsibilities, Laine Rosin and her husband, Rev. Dr. Robert Rosin, offered excellent help in identifying potential international contributors. Proofreader Dr. Kari Vo compiled the extensive list of place-names. Thanks are also due to our production coordinators, Karen Capps and Pam Burgdorf, as well as to so many other members of the CPH team.

We are grateful to the libraries of Concordia Seminary and Concordia Theological Seminary for supporting the project by making various resources available to the contributors. Concordia Seminary also allowed us to scan artwork from *Die Bibel in Bildern*, which included the etchings of Julius Schnorr von Carlsfeld (see p xiii). Some faculty members at

Concordia Seminary provided helpful insights that contributed to the writing of “How to Read and Study the Holy Bible” (pp xxvi–xxx).

Foreword

The Reformation started from a man studying the Bible: Martin Luther. It grew from an educational setting: Wittenberg University. As these facts show, biblical studies and Christian education had the greatest importance for early Lutherans. Everywhere the Reformation spread, Bible reading and Christian education followed. Lutheran congregations, schools, missions, colleges, and universities still place great importance on study of Holy Scripture.

But there is another, perhaps even more important, factor binding the Lutheran Church to the careful study of Scripture, something that distinguished the Lutheran Reformation from other movements—its beliefs about God's Word.

In contrast with what Luther learned about the Word in his youth, he came to believe that the Word was not lifeless and passive but was truly lively and life-giving. He saw that, through His Word, God worked to bless and guide His Church. Therefore, Luther viewed the Gospel of God's Word as a means of grace, as he described it in the Large Catechism:

> You must always have God's Word in your heart, upon your lips, and in your ears. But where the heart is idle and the Word does not sound, the devil breaks in and has done the damage before we are aware [Matthew 13:24–30]. On the other hand, the Word is so effective that whenever it is seriously contemplated, heard, and used, it is bound never to be without fruit [Isaiah 55:11; Mark 4:20]. It always awakens new understanding, pleasure, and devoutness and produces a pure heart and pure thoughts [Philippians 4:8]. For these words are not lazy or dead, but are creative, living words [Hebrews 4:12]. (LC 1:100–101)

For Lutherans, studying the Bible is never merely an intellectual exercise. Study is meditation on God's Word (*meditatio*), an act of devotion. The form and content of earlier Lutheran study Bibles bears this out, including not simply commentary notes but also prayers based on each portion of Scripture or notes on the practical application of the text. By opening the Bible and turning its pages, we petition heaven for mercy,

wisdom, and strength. This prayerful study at the heart of Lutheran doctrine and practice was also the chief motive for editors and writers of this study Bible.

What's "Lutheran" about This Study Bible?

When describing *The Lutheran Study Bible* project to the CPH Board of Directors, to CPH staff, and to potential contributors, we included six goals for the work. We sought to create a study Bible that does the following:

1. Presents justification by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, as the chief teaching of Scripture (Lk 24:44–47; Jn 5:39; SA II I 1–4)
2. Properly distinguishes and applies Law and Gospel (reading the Bible as a book about justification; Jn 1:17; Gal 3:21–22; Ap XIIA 53–54)
3. Emphasizes God's work through the means of grace (Mt 26:26–29; Jn 3:5; 20:22–23; Rm 10:17; SA III IV)
4. Functions from a "Scripture alone" point of view and presents a "Scripture interprets Scripture" approach to using the Bible (Ps 119; 1Tm 6:3; 2Tm 3:16–17; FC Ep Sum)
5. Equips the laity for works of service, with a particular focus on evangelism in their various vocations/callings in life (Ps 145:4–13; Eph 2; Ap XV 41–42)
6. Presents a uniquely Lutheran study Bible that features genuinely Lutheran notes and comments throughout, references to the Lutheran Confessions where appropriate, focus on the Small Catechism for helps and explanations, citations from Luther throughout, and materials to aid daily devotion and prayer

In the Lutheran Church, a broad range of readers use study Bibles. Users vary in age from thirteen-year-old confirmation students, who may be reading the Bible for the first time, to mature pastors with a master's degree in theology. We have tried to provide a resource that could offer help to this broad readership. For example, readers who are new to the Bible will likely appreciate the overviews that appear on the first page of each introduction to a biblical book. Mature students of Scripture may appreciate the citations of Luther and other Church Fathers that appear in the introductions and notes. We pray that all readers may grow in faith and in confidence in

applying Scripture by growing in the use of the various helps provided. See pp xx–xxiii.

We should also add a brief comment about including quotations from Luther and other Church Fathers. The *Concordia Self-Study Bible* included some such material. We decided to offer more citations in *TLSB* to illustrate our continuity with faithful Christian teachers across the ages and to introduce people to the richness of their insights. We do not intend to suggest that the Church Fathers should become a source of doctrine or that their authority equals or rivals the Bible. We receive their faithful statements like the good counsel of faithful older pastors who serve among us today, imparting their wisdom and refreshing us by their encouragement and example. Martin Chemnitz, a major Lutheran theologian with extensive knowledge of the Church Fathers, commends their use with many helpful cautions in his "Treatise on the Reading of the Fathers or Doctors of the Church" (*LTh* 1:27–33).

Our first reflections on *The Lutheran Study Bible* project began in 2003 when Interim President Paul T. McCain contacted me about how CPH might accomplish such a large project. Development began in earnest in 2004 with the Grow in His Word Research Project in the Adult Bible Study area.

We at CPH are very grateful to the Lord and to His faithful servants who contributed in so many ways to this work. We pray that it may lead you to meditate with joy on God's life-giving Word.

Rev. Edward A. Engelbrecht
Concordia Publishing House
Senior Editor, Professional and Academic Books and Bible Resources
General Editor, *The Lutheran Study Bible*

The Engravings

In 1860, artist Julius Schnorr von Carlsfeld (1794–1872) published a monumental collection of 240 biblical illustrations for an edition of Luther's translation of the Bible. Schnorr was a member of the artistic Guild, or Brotherhood, of St Luke (tradition held that St Luke was a painter; the brotherhood was also called the Nazarene Movement). These artists focused on religious subjects, admired Medieval and Renaissance art, and inspired the Pre-Raphaelite Movement in England.

As an expression of their Christian faith, the Brotherhood of St Luke set a goal of fully illustrating the Bible. Several members started on the project but never produced many illustrations. Schnorr, as a Lutheran artist inspired by the graphic illustrations of Albrecht Dürer and Hans Holbein the Younger, dedicated himself fully to the Bible illustration project, which he completed. Schnorr's style is realist with a Romantic touch. His cross-hatching is influenced by Dürer, but the illustrations have Holbein's quality of draftsmanship.

Portions of Schnorr's engravings in this Bible are drawn from *Die Bibel in Bildern* (Leipzig: Georg Wigand, [1860]).

Preface to the English Standard Version

The Bible

"This Book [is] the most valuable thing that this world affords. Here is Wisdom; this is the royal Law; these are the lively Oracles of God." With these words the Moderator of the Church of Scotland hands a Bible to the new monarch in Britain's coronation service. These words echo the King James Bible translators, who wrote in 1611: "God's sacred Word … is that inestimable treasure that excelleth all the riches of the earth." This assessment of the Bible is the motivating force behind the publication of the English Standard Version.

Translation Legacy

The English Standard Version (ESV) stands in the classic mainstream of English Bible translations over the past half-millennium. The fountainhead of that stream was William Tyndale's New Testament of 1526; marking its course were the King James Version of 1611 (KJV), the English Revised Version of 1885 (RV), the American Standard Version of 1901 (ASV), and the Revised Standard Version of 1952 and 1971 (RSV). In that stream, faithfulness to the text and vigorous pursuit of accuracy were combined with simplicity, beauty, and dignity of expression. Our goal has been to carry forward this legacy for a new century.

To this end each word and phrase in the ESV has been carefully weighed against the original Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek, to ensure the fullest accuracy and clarity and to avoid under-translating or overlooking any nuance of the original text. The words and phrases themselves grow out of the Tyndale–King James legacy, and most recently out of the RSV, with the 1971 RSV text providing the starting point for our work. Archaic language has been brought to current usage and significant corrections have been made in the translation of key texts. But throughout, our goal has been to retain the depth of meaning and enduring language that have made their indelible mark on the English-speaking world and have defined the life and doctrine of the church over the last four centuries.

Translation Philosophy

The ESV is an "essentially literal" translation that seeks as far as possible to capture the precise wording of the original text and the personal style of each Bible writer. As such, its emphasis is on "word-for-word" correspondence, at the same time taking into account differences of grammar, syntax, and idiom between current literary English and the original languages. Thus it seeks to be transparent to the original text, letting the reader see as directly as possible the structure and meaning of the original.

In contrast to the ESV, some Bible versions have followed a "thought-for-thought" rather than "word-for-word" translation philosophy, emphasizing "dynamic equivalence" rather than the "essentially literal" meaning of the original. A "thought-for-thought" translation is of necessity more inclined to reflect the interpretive opinions of the translator and the influences of contemporary culture.

Every translation is at many points a trade-off between literal precision and readability, between "formal equivalence" in expression and "functional equivalence" in communication, and the ESV is no exception. Within this framework we have sought to be "as literal as possible" while maintaining clarity of expression and literary excellence. Therefore, to the extent that plain English permits and the meaning in each case allows, we have sought to use the same English word for important recurring words in the original; and, as far as grammar and syntax allow, we have rendered Old Testament passages cited in the New in ways that show their correspondence. Thus in each of these areas, as well as throughout the Bible as a whole, we have sought to capture the echoes and overtones of meaning that are so abundantly present in the original texts.

As an essentially literal translation, then, the ESV seeks to carry over every possible nuance of meaning in the original words of Scripture into our own language. As such, it is ideally suited for in-depth study of the Bible. Indeed, with its emphasis on literary excellence, the ESV is equally suited for public reading and preaching, for private reading and reflection, for both academic and devotional study, and for Scripture memorization.

Translation Style

The ESV also carries forward classic translation principles in its literary style. Accordingly it retains theological terminology—words such as grace, faith, justification, sanctification, redemption, regeneration, reconciliation, propitiation—because of their central importance for Christian doctrine and also because the underlying Greek words were already becoming key words and technical terms in New Testament times.

The ESV lets the stylistic variety of the biblical writers fully express itself—from the exalted prose that opens Genesis, to the flowing narratives of the historical books, to the rich metaphors and dramatic imagery of the poetic books, to the ringing rhetorical indictments in the prophetic books, to the smooth elegance of Luke, to the profound simplicities of John, and the closely reasoned logic of Paul.

In punctuating, paragraphing, dividing long sentences, and rendering connectives, the ESV follows the path that seems to make the ongoing flow of thought clearest in English. The biblical languages regularly connect sentences by frequent repetition of words such as "and," "but," and "for," in a way that goes beyond the conventions of literary English. Effective translation, however, requires that these links in the original be reproduced so that the flow of the argument will be transparent to the reader. We have therefore normally translated these connectives, though occasionally we have varied the rendering by using alternatives (such as "also," "however," "now," "so," "then," or "thus") when they better capture the sense in specific instances.

In the area of gender language, the goal of the ESV is to render literally what is in the original. For example, "anyone" replaces "any man" where there is no word corresponding to "man" in the original languages, and "people" rather than "men" is regularly used where the original languages refer to both men and women. But the words "man" and "men" are retained where a male meaning component is part of the original Greek or Hebrew. Likewise, the word "man" has been retained where the original text intends to convey a clear contrast between "God" on the one hand and "man" on the other hand, with "man" being used in the collective sense of the whole human race (see Luke 2:52). Similarly, the English word "brothers" (translating the Greek word *adelphoi*) is retained as an important familial

form of address between fellow-Jews and fellow-Christians in the first century. A recurring note is included to indicate that the term "brothers" (*adelphoi*) was often used in Greek to refer to both men and women, and to indicate the specific instances in the text where this is the case. In addition, the English word "sons" (translating the Greek word *huioi*) is retained in specific instances because the underlying Greek term usually includes a male meaning component and it was used as a legal term in the adoption and inheritance laws of first-century Rome. As used by the apostle Paul, this term refers to the status of all Christians, both men and women, who, having been adopted into God's family, now enjoy all the privileges, obligations, and inheritance rights of God's children.

The inclusive use of the generic "he" has also regularly been retained, because this is consistent with similar usage in the original languages and because an essentially literal translation would be impossible without it. Similarly, where God and man are compared or contrasted in the original, the ESV retains the generic use of "man" as the clearest way to express the contrast within the framework of essentially literal translation.

In each case the objective has been transparency to the original text, allowing the reader to understand the original on its own terms rather than on the terms of our present-day culture.

The Translation of Specialized Terms

In the translation of biblical terms referring to God, the ESV takes great care to convey the specific nuances of meaning of the original Hebrew and Greek terms. First, concerning terms that refer to God in the Old Testament: God, the Maker of heaven and earth, introduced himself to the people of Israel with the special, personal name, whose consonants are YHWH (see Exodus 3:14–15). Scholars call this the "Tetragrammaton," a Greek term referring to the four Hebrew letters YHWH. The exact pronunciation of YHWH is uncertain, because the Jewish people considered the personal name of God to be so holy that it should never be spoken aloud. Instead of reading the word YHWH, they would normally read the Hebrew word *adonai* ("Lord"), and the ancient translations into Greek, Syriac, and Aramaic also followed suit. When the vowels of the word *adonai* are placed with the consonants of YHWH, this results in the familiar word Jehovah that was used in some earlier English Bible translations. As is common among English translations today, the ESV usually renders the personal name of God (YHWH) with the word LORD (printed in small capitals). An exception to this is when the Hebrew word *adonai* appears together with YHWH, in which case the two words are rendered together as "the Lord [in lower case] GOD [in small capitals]." In contrast to the personal name for God (YHWH), the more general name for God in Old Testament Hebrew is *'elohim* and its related forms of *'el* or *'eloah*, all of which are normally translated "God" (in lower case letters). The use of these different ways to translate the Hebrew words for God is especially beneficial to the English reader, enabling the reader to see and understand the different ways that the *personal* name and the *general* name for God are both used to refer to the *One True God* of the Old Testament.

Second, in the New Testament, the Greek word *Christos* has been translated consistently as "Christ." Although the term originally meant "anointed," among Jews in New Testament times the term came to designate the Messiah, the great Savior that God had promised to raise up. In other New Testament contexts, however, especially among Gentiles, *Christos* ("Christ") was on its way to becoming a proper name. It is important, therefore, to keep the context in mind in understanding the various ways that *Christos* ("Christ") is used in the New Testament. At the

same time, in accord with its "essentially literal" translation philosophy, the ESV has retained consistency and concordance in the translation of *Christos* ("Christ") throughout the New Testament.

A third specialized term, the word "behold," usually has been retained as the most common translation for the Hebrew word *hinneh* and the Greek word *idou*. Both of these words mean something like "Pay careful attention to what follows! This is important!" Other than the word "behold," there is no single word in English that fits well in most contexts. Although "Look!" and "See!" and "Listen!" would be workable in some contexts, in many others these words lack sufficient weight and dignity. Given the principles of "essentially literal" translation, it is important not to leave *hinneh* and *idou* completely untranslated, and so to lose the intended emphasis in the original languages. The older and more formal word "behold" has usually been retained, therefore, as the best available option for conveying the original sense of meaning.

Textual Basis

The ESV is based on the Masoretic text of the Hebrew Bible as found in *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (2nd ed., 1983), and on the Greek text in the 1993 editions of the *Greek New Testament* (4th corrected ed.), published by the United Bible Societies (UBS), and *Novum Testamentum Graece* (27th ed.), edited by Nestle and Aland. The currently renewed respect among Old Testament scholars for the Masoretic text is reflected in the ESV's attempt, wherever possible, to translate difficult Hebrew passages as they stand in the Masoretic text rather than resorting to emendations or to finding an alternative reading in the ancient versions. In exceptional, difficult cases, the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Septuagint, the Samaritan Pentateuch, the Syriac Peshitta, the Latin Vulgate, and other sources were consulted to shed possible light on the text, or, if necessary, to support a divergence from the Masoretic text. Similarly, in a few difficult cases in the New Testament, the ESV has followed a Greek text different from the text given preference in the UBS/Nestle-Aland 27th edition. In this regard the footnotes that accompany the ESV text are an integral part of the ESV translation, informing the reader of textual variations and difficulties and showing how these have been resolved by the ESV translation team. In addition to this, the footnotes indicate significant alternative readings and occasionally provide an explanation for technical terms or for a difficult reading in the text. Throughout, the translation team has benefited greatly from the massive textual resources that have become readily available recently, from new insights into biblical laws and culture, and from current advances in Hebrew and Greek lexicography and grammatical understanding.

Publishing Team

The ESV publishing team includes more than a hundred people. The fourteen-member Translation Oversight Committee has benefited from the work of fifty biblical experts serving as Translation Review Scholars and from the comments of the more than fifty members of the Advisory Council, all of which has been carried out under the auspices of the Good News Publishers Board of Directors. This hundred-member team, which shares a common commitment to the truth of God's Word and to historic Christian orthodoxy, is international in scope and includes leaders in many denominations.

To God's Honor and Praise

We know that no Bible translation is perfect or final; but we also know that God uses imperfect and inadequate things to his honor and praise. So to our triune God and to his people we offer what we have done, with our prayers that it may prove useful, with gratitude for much help given, and with ongoing wonder that our God should ever have entrusted to us so momentous a task.

Soli Deo Gloria!—To God alone be the glory!

The Translation Oversight Committee[*]

[*]A complete list of the Translation Oversight Committee, the Translation Review Scholars, and the Advisory Council, is available upon request from Crossway Bibles, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers.

The Lutheran Study Bible - Kindle Edition

Introduction

The Kindle edition of The Lutheran Study Bible is slightly different than the print edition in the way that one navigates through the text and resources. Because the Kindle uses content which allows for the text to reflow based upon preferences and selections, The Lutheran Study Bible has been optimized to do the same.

While the Kindle Edition of the Lutheran Study Bible does not include cross-references to parallel passages, the content has been reorganized to include a Table of Contents for each book of the Bible. The Table of Contents for each book contains links to each chapter of the book, the introduction to the book, ESV Footnotes and the study notes for that book.

Articles, maps and charts have been collected at the beginning of the Bible to be accessed via the main Table of Contents or from links within the study notes where they may be referenced.

Tips for using The Lutheran Study Bible on your Kindle

- Start with the Table of Contents!
    - The Table of Contents is your quick-access link to both the navigation of the Scriptures and the rich collection of articles, maps, charts and notes included in The Lutheran Study Bible.
    - Access the Table of Contents by pressing the select wheel (for Kindle 1/Kindle 2 users) or by pressing the directional pad (for Kindle 3 users) and then navigate to the article, map, chart or a book of the Bible you wish to read.
    - After selecting a book of the Bible, you will find that each book of the Bible has its own Table of Contents allowing you to quickly jump to the chapter you wish to read. In each Book's Table of Contents, you will also discover links to the additional resources that have been included for that book.

For example, Table of Contents for John looks like this:

John 1 John 2 John 3 John 4 John 5 John 6 John 7 John 8 John 9 John 10 John 11 John 12 John 13 John 14 John 15 John 16 John 17 John 18 John 19 John 20 John 21

Introduction to John
- Author and Title
- Date and Place of Writing
- Theme
- Purpose, Occasion, and Background
- Key Themes
- History of Salvation Summary
- Literary Features
- Timeline
- Outline

Footnotes
Study Notes

Each entry in that Table of Contents is linked to its respective content so the reader can simply select the link to move to that point in the text. Note that the Bible text appears first in the Table of Contents even though it appears after all introductory material in the flow of the text.

- Access the Notes!

When reading through the Scriptures, take note of the symbols linking to notes. These may be accessed by pressing the select wheel (for Kindle 1/Kindle 2 users) or by pressing the directional pad (for Kindle 3 users).

. The dagger symbol (†) represents a link to a study note for that verse. On your Kindle, select the verse with the dagger symbol by pressing the select wheel (for Kindle 1/Kindle 2 users) or by pressing the directional pad (for Kindle 3 users) and you will be taken to the study notes for that verse. To return to the Bible text, just tap your "back" button.

. The two-dagger symbol (‡) represents a link to a study note for multiple verses. On your Kindle, select the verse with the two-dagger symbol by pressing the select wheel (for Kindle 1/Kindle 2 users) or by pressing the directional pad (for Kindle 3 users) and you will be taken to the study notes for that passage of Scripture. To

return to the Bible text, just tap your “back” button.

. A bracketed number [1] indicates a textual footnote from the ESV translation. On your Kindle, select the verse with the bracketed number by pressing the select wheel (for Kindle 1/Kindle 2 users) or by pressing the directional pad (for Kindle 3 users) and you will be taken to the textual footnote. To return to the Bible text, just tap your “back” button.

Here is an example of linking in the first chapter of John:

1‡†In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. [2]He was in the beginning with God. [3]†All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. [4]‡In him was life, [1] and the life was the light of men.

- Now, put this information to work:

- Say you wished to **read** Psalm 23. Here are the steps:

. Access the Table of Contents by pressing the select wheel (for Kindle 1/Kindle 2 users) or by pressing the directional pad (for Kindle 3 users) on “menu” and scrolling up to “Table of Contents” and selecting it.

. Navigate to Psalms by using the “Next Page” button on your Kindle until you see Psalms displayed in the list.

. Select Psalms.

. Select the line with Psalm 23.

. Choose Psalm 23 from the menu.

. You are ready to read Psalm 23!

- What if you wanted to **study** Romans 3:24? Here are the steps:

. Access the Table of Contents by pressing the select wheel (for Kindle 1/Kindle 2 users) or by pressing the directional pad (for Kindle 3 users) on “menu” and scrolling up to “Table of Contents” and selecting it.

. Navigate to Romans by using the “Next Page” button on your Kindle until you see Romans displayed in the list.

. Select Romans.

. Select the line with Romans 3.

. Choose Romans 3 from the menu.

. Begin reading Romans 3 and advance through the chapter to verse 24. Notice the dagger symbol (t) on verse 24. Use your Kindle to select this verseby pressing the select wheel (for Kindle 1/Kindle 2 users) or by pressing the directional pad (for Kindle 3 users) and you will see the link

to the study note for verse 24. Select this link in the menu and you will be able to read the study note.

. While there, you will see a link to page 1904 where you can read about the Greek word being discussed, so access that linkby pressing the select wheel (for Kindle 1/Kindle 2 users) or by pressing the directional pad (for Kindle 3 users) to jump to the article. When finished, tap the “back” button to return the study note and tap the “back” button again to return to Romans 3.

Changes to Book Introductions from the Print Edition

The introductions to each book and various related articles have been reformatted for easy reading on your Kindle. In the case of book introductions, sidebar information is contained within the flow of the body of the book introduction.

The outline at the end of each introduction has been reflowed to be single-column, and the citations at the end of each outline point should be linked to the appropriate start points in the Scripture text.

Changes to Articles from the Print Edition

Articles containing tabular data included in the Print Edition have been reformatted in order to view properly on your Kindle. References to other articles or to Scripture citations from these articles now include links to their respective targets to aid in ease-of-use and navigation.

Reading, Understanding, and Applying the Bible

How to Read and Study the Holy Bible

As you open your Bible to read and study, begin with this little prayer, drawn directly from Scripture passages.

Pray

Speak, Lord, for Your servant hears.

Please show me now Your ways,

that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the Law, but that which comes through faith in Christ.

Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. Give me life, O Lord, according to Your Word,

and I will declare Your greatness. Amen.

Remember

1Sm 3:9; the Lord speaks to us through His Word.

Ex 33:13; the Lord speaks to us in two basic ways: Law and Gospel.

Php 3:8–9; Scripture teaches us about Christ and His righteousness.

Ps 119:105, 107; Scripture faithfully guides our lives.

Ps 145:6; Scripture leads us to declare the Lord's ways to others.

Read the following essay to deepen your understanding of what the Bible is and how to read and study it.

An Introduction to Studying the Holy Bible

For thousands of years, people have turned to the Bible for wisdom, comfort, and hope; the Bible has changed their lives. Lutherans read the Bible, or hear it read at church, because they believe that through Holy Scripture God answers essential questions about life, death, and eternal life. They believe that God works through the message of the Scripture to call them to repentance and take away their sins. However, those who read and study the Bible may also feel challenged and, at times, confused by what the Bible says.

Learning from a Challenging Passage

The first recorded example of someone publicly reading the text of the Bible (Ex 24) illustrates important truths about the Bible as well as challenges in understanding it and applying it. After the Lord rescued the Israelites from Egypt, He spoke certain laws and promises to the prophet Moses. Moses began to write down God's Word, the first person named as doing so. The first things Moses recorded and read to the people are now part of the Book of Exodus.

> Moses wrote down all the words of the LORD. … And he sent young men of the people of Israel, who offered burnt offerings and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen to the LORD. … *Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read it in the hearing of the people*. And they said, "All that the LORD has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient." And Moses took the blood [of the sacrifices] and threw it on the people and said, "Behold the blood of the covenant that the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words." (Ex 24:4–8, emphasis added)

This first known example of Bible reading introduces many of the truths and the challenges (throwing blood?) you will meet when you read the Bible. This essay will prepare you to study such truths and challenging texts. It will also show how all of Holy Scripture (including Ex 24) continually points to the most important truth: the Lord grants you forgiveness, life, and salvation through the blood of His Son, Jesus Christ. For Jesus taught:

> Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears My word and believes Him who sent Me has eternal life. … I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. … The Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you. (Jn 5:24; 14:6, 26)

I. The Lord Works through His Word

A. The Lord Speaks through His Word, Jesus Christ

From eternity, Jesus Christ is "the Word" of God (Jn 1:1; cf Heb 1:1–2). All other words from God truly come through Christ.

B. The Lord Speaks through the Words of the Bible

The meaning and use of the Bible ultimately belong to the One who first guided the writing of the words: the Lord. The first texts of the Bible came from the Lord speaking and from Moses writing down the Lord's Word for our sake, as Ex 24:4 shows.

At the time of the exodus, Moses recorded that the children of Israel did not truly know Him (Ex 3:13–15). They had lost His earlier promises to Abraham (e.g., Gn 12:1–3) and could not know the Lord's mind or His gracious heart toward them (1Co 2:9–12). They could not love Him or trust in Him, even if they were religious. For the people to know the Lord's gracious heart, they had to hear from the Lord. So He introduced Himself, revealing and bestowing His grace through the Word. (The Gospel of God's Word is a *means of grace*.)

The apostle John also writes that this communication from the Lord was essential:

> The law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God [the Father]; the only God [the Son], who is at the Father's side, He has made [the Father] known. (Jn 1:17–18)

In Exodus, the Lord introduced Himself to the people by giving them the Law through Moses. Yet, as John explains, the Lord was not finished revealing who He was. John calls Jesus "the Word" (Jn 1:1, 14) and explains that we most fully know the Father through the revelation of His Son—the Gospel of Jesus Christ.[1]

C. The Lord Works in Two Ways: Law and Gospel

When the Lord speaks His Word, He reveals that He works with people in two basic ways, or teachings (e.g., God's self-revelation in Ex 34:5–7).

Lutherans call these two ways *Law* and *Gospel*, though they may be described with other terms, as biblical and Christian history show (see p xxxi). These ways, or teachings, appear throughout Scripture. The Law and the Gospel show God's ways of working with us as a Father. They help us focus on His purpose for Scripture.

We need to focus on Law and Gospel and distinguish them because people come to the Bible with so many different interests and demands. These often interfere with interpreting and applying the Father's Word. For example, the Bible includes history, but it was not written just to be a history book. The Bible includes poetry, but it was not written as a guide to fine literature. It includes a coherent worldview, but it was not written as a book of philosophy. Focusing on Law and Gospel helps us use the Bible for what it truly is: a book about the heavenly Father's gift of salvation through Jesus Christ.

When the heavenly Father spoke to Moses in Ex 24, He spoke laws, or rules, for the people to obey. In view of these laws, He spoke threats and punishments if the people did not obey. Just as an earthly father has rules for his household, the heavenly Father has laws for His creation. Passages that command good works or threaten punishment for sin are passages of God's *Law*. This is God's first way of working with people.

In Exodus, the Father also promises mercy for the people (e.g., 34:6–7a). The people have peace with God through the blood of the offerings (24:5). He will be their God and care for them. Just as a loving earthly father has mercy on his children, so the heavenly Father is gracious and merciful. All His promises reach fulfillment in Jesus Christ, through whom the Father created the world and bestows blessings, life, and salvation (Jn 1:1–4). Passages that declare God's forgiveness, life, and salvation in Christ are passages of the *Gospel* (e.g., Jn 3:16–17). Such passages appear in both the Old Testament and the New Testament (see below). The Gospel is God's second way of working with people, the way by which He saves them.

As you discover the Law and the Gospel throughout the Scripture, bear in mind how they work together. The Law cannot save sinners. But the Law has essential functions. For example, through the Law, the Lord shows us our sins and drives us to repentance. In this way, the Law serves the central and most important message of the Bible: the Gospel, through which God saves us. The entire pattern of biblical history describes God commanding and condemning through the Law and then forgiving and saving through the

Gospel. Though parts of Scripture proclaim nothing but the Law, the Gospel still predominates, because the Law serves the purpose of the Gospel. (See p 320.)

D. The Lord Makes Promises and Fulfills His Word

The Bible is divided into two testaments. The Old Testament describes the creation of the universe and the creation of a special nation, Israel. The Lord established Israel as His chosen people by giving them the Law and the Gospel-promises (Ex 19:5–6; 24). Just as God works through means to accomplish His purposes, He chose to work through Israel to fulfill His promises of salvation.

The New Testament describes how the Lord fulfills the Law and Gospel-promises of the Old Testament through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It also reveals how the Lord sends His Word of salvation to all nations. Through the preaching of the Gospel, the Lord created His Church —all who trust in Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins. The Church is the "new Israel," promised in the Old Testament and fulfilled in the New Testament.

E. The Lord Does Not Lie

After the Lord spoke to His people and His Spirit moved the prophets and apostles to preach and write, their words were collected into books. (The Bible is not a single book but a collection of books. See pp 1559–61.) Just as God works through means, such as Baptism and the Word, to accomplish our salvation, He worked through the prophets and apostles, who "spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit" (2Pt 1:21).

> The Bible is the "Holy Scripture" because God the Holy Spirit gave to His chosen writers the thoughts that they expressed and the words that they wrote (verbal inspiration). Therefore, the Bible is God's own Word and truth, without error (inerrancy). (*Luther's Small Catechism with Explanation*, question 3; see also p 1646)

At times, people have assumed that the books of Scripture must contain errors, falsehoods, or useless materials because human beings wrote them down. However, Martin Luther continually pointed out that "God cannot lie" (cf Nu 23:19; Ti 1:2; Ps 12:6; 18:30; Pr 30:5; Jn 3:31–33). Because

God's Spirit worked through the writers of Scripture, it is God's infallible Word and is completely reliable.

Over the centuries, people copied the books of Scripture with great care because they recognized them as God's Word. Although we no longer have the original documents written by Moses, Peter, or others, we do have the text faithfully preserved. For example, scholars have carefully studied the thousands of handmade copies of the New Testament. They have recognized that, though minor differences exist between the copies, the books of Scripture were so faithfully recorded that no doctrine has been lost.

The English Standard Version is an excellent and reliable translation of the Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek texts of the Bible (see p xvii). Just as we call the writings of the prophets and apostles "God's Word," we call reliable translations of the Bible "God's Word."

II. Scripture Interprets Scripture

As our reflection on Ex 24 has shown, helpful principles of interpretation flow from the Law and Gospel teachings of Scripture.

A. The Scripture Focuses on Jesus Christ

As stated above, the Gospel of Jesus Christ is the most important teaching of Holy Scripture. Although many passages do not explicitly refer to Jesus, all the books of Holy Scripture serve the saving purpose of Jesus. For this reason, Jesus said, "You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about Me" (Jn 5:39). Jesus explained that He and His saving work were the true focus of all God's Word (Lk 24:44–48). So no matter what part of Scripture you read, understand it in view of Jesus Christ and His work (see pp xlv–xlvii).

B. The Scripture Agrees within Itself

Because Jesus is the focus of all of God's Word, the books of Scripture have remarkable agreement. The stories, proverbs, teachings, and other passages present the Law, which drives us to Christ, and the Gospel, which proclaims Christ.

When readers miss the Law and Gospel distinction in Scripture, the Scripture may appear contradictory to them. For example, one might read Ex 24 and conclude that the Israelites were to save themselves by their obedience to the Law and not through faith in the promised Christ. However, the purpose of the Law is to reveal sin so that people will see their need for the Savior (Gal 3:21–22). At first, the Law seems to contradict the Gospel. In fact, the Law serves the Gospel, and Jesus Christ stands forth as the focus.

C. The Scripture Is Understood through Context

The focus of the books of Scripture on Christ and His work and their agreement with one another do not destroy the particular experiences, struggles, and concerns of the biblical writers. Although some passages speak about humanity in general, the prophets and apostles most often wrote for a particular group of people at a particular moment in history. As a result, to fully understand Scripture and to treasure the breadth of the

ways it proclaims the Law and the Gospel of Jesus, each passage must be considered in its historical context.

No book or passage should have an alien meaning forced on it. For example, when reading that Moses "took the blood [of the sacrifices] and threw it on the people" (Ex 24:8), a reader should not conclude that God wants us to sacrifice animals today so that we, too, can pour blood on one another. Nor should one shy away from the historical and grammatical meaning of Moses' words because they seem offensive to one's ideas about cleanliness or animal rights. A reader should not spiritualize the words, as though Moses only showed the blood to the people and then poured it on the altar on their behalf (e.g., the Rabbinic Midrash Tanna'im).

Instead, an interpreter should diligently compare the text with other passages of Scripture, beginning with the book of Scripture the text appears in or books by the same writer (in this case, Moses). For example, in Ex 29, blood is applied to the priests as a means of consecration (vv 19–20; cf Lv 8:22–30). The Epistle to the Hebrews tells us that Moses mingled the blood with water before sprinkling it on the people (9:19). In view of these passages, Ex 24:8 grows clearer. The sacrificial blood was diluted with water, which was sprinkled on the people for their consecration.

Because the people were unclean (sinful, as pointed out by the Law), they needed atonement for their sins and consecration through the sacrifices (blessings of God's mercy, which pointed forward to the sacrificial death of Jesus—the Gospel). In this way, the particular historic message of the passage is respected and more fully understood in view of God's work of salvation.

At times, even with careful study, a passage of Scripture will remain unclear. In such cases, readers should not fall into endless speculation or try to resolve every mystery. Instead, they should let the clearest passages of Scripture guide their understanding of biblical doctrine.

III. The Holy Spirit Blesses the Use of God's Word through Faith

A. The Holy Spirit Opens Scripture to Us through Faith

Since Holy Scripture is a book of salvation, we can understand it only through faith (1Co 2:12–16). Reason certainly has its place in reading Scripture (e.g., considering the grammar and history). But reason alone is never enough, for reason cannot grasp the spiritual truths of God's Word (cf Jn 3:1–8).

Likewise, our own reason, experiences, interests, and opinions are distorted by the effects of sin, which cloud and confuse us about the meaning and use of God's Word (Jn 3:9–10). This is one reason why people will read the same passage but arrive at vastly different interpretations. The Holy Spirit must open the Scripture for us through faith (Jn 3:31–36).

B. The Holy Spirit Creates the Congregation of the Faithful through the Word

Faith is not something that people naturally possess and offer to God (Jn 1:9–13). For someone to believe in Jesus and understand Scripture, the Holy Spirit must create faith in that person's heart (Jn 3:5–6).

The word *trust*, a synonym for faith, can help us understand how this takes place. You can't have genuine trust in someone you've never met or interacted with. Trust is created through the words and actions of one person toward another. The Holy Spirit creates faith, or trust, in Jesus when God speaks and interacts with that person through His Word, Holy Baptism, and the Lord's Supper (God's means of grace), which are administered by the Church. Through these means, a person comes to know God, to trust Him, and to belong to Him in the congregation of the faithful.

C. The Holy Spirit Leads Us to Confession of Faith with the Church

Never imagine that believers exist without the Church. Someone may object to this by asserting that a person could come to faith while reading the Bible at home, without ever going to a church. But how would that person receive a copy of the Bible? Of course, he or she would receive it from someone else. God called someone to prepare that Bible and distribute

that Bible, work carried on by the Church! In other words, the Holy Spirit is always working through the Church—through believers like you—to spread the Word to other people. The Lord has entrusted His Word to the Church for this purpose (Ps 145:4–13). Luther wrote:

> The Spirit has His own congregation in the world, which is the mother that conceives and bears every Christian through God's Word [Galatians 4:26]. Through the Word He reveals and preaches, He illumines and enkindles hearts, so that they understand, accept, cling to, and persevere in the Word. (LC II 42)

When the Holy Spirit calls someone to faith, He likewise calls that person to serve in the congregation of the faithful (2Tm 3:16–17). A Christian should not set out to interpret Scripture for himself, in isolation from other believers. God's people meditate on Scripture together (1Tm 4:13) and interpret Scripture in view of Scripture.

Life together in the Church requires unity, because people cannot dwell together long without agreement (1Co 1:9–10). Holy Scripture is the basis of Christian unity (Jn 17:17–21). However, for centuries, most people did not have a personal copy of the Bible. The length of the Scripture makes it difficult for most people to commit it to heart in its entirety. Likewise, false teachers clouded the faithful interpretation of Scripture, as noted above. Each of these factors threatened the unity of the faithful, which the Holy Spirit had created through the Word.

For these reasons, the early Christians prepared short confessions of faith (e.g., "No one can say 'Jesus is Lord' except in the Holy Spirit" [1Co 12:3]; the Apostles' Creed, based on 1Co 15:3–4 and other passages). They also prepared longer confessions based on Scripture in order to distinguish truth from falsehood (e.g., the Nicene Creed and the Athanasian Creed). The Lutheran reformers did the same when they prepared their confessions to address medieval abuse and neglect of Scripture. Lutherans treasure these faithful creeds and confessions because they support and encourage the unity of the Church and stand as examples of faithful reading of Scripture (e.g., SC, pp xxxiii–xliv).

The need for these "rules of faith" should call us to humility, to acknowledge that our own reason, experiences, interests, and opinions are distorted by the effects of sin. Just as surely as a child needs the faithful

guidance of parents and teachers to learn how to read, new believers also need the community of faith to learn how to read the Holy Scripture. Even Jesus—the Word of God in the flesh—humbly listened to the teachers at the temple in Jerusalem (Lk 2:46). The creeds and confessions are a written record of how God's people faithfully interpret Scripture.

Parents nurture their children in the faith when they read Bible stories to them and bring them to church. Adult converts grow in the faith when they gather with the faithful, where God's Word is publicly read and studied (2Tm 1:13–14).

Conclusion

When Moses first read God's Word to the people of Israel (Ex 24), the Holy Spirit worked through the Law and the Gospel of the Word to create and consecrate a community of faith. The Lord entrusted His life-giving Word to the community and still leads it today through the Word. The Holy Spirit adds to this community all who are baptized into Christ, trusting in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins, which is the central message of Scripture.

> From the Lord,
> through the prophets and apostles,
> in the community of faith that confesses God's Word,
> we receive the Gospel-promise of our salvation in Christ and
> return to the Lord our heartfelt service, prayers, and praise.

General Editor

[1]For example, various OT passages point forward to the truth that God is three in one (triune). However, the persons of the Trinity are more fully revealed only later, in the NT, at the announcement of Jesus' birth (Lk 1:35) and Baptism (Mt 3:16–17). With Jesus—the Word—comes the fullest revelation of who the Lord is.

Law and Gospel: Identifying God's Ways with Mankind

In the sixteenth century, the great reformer Martin Luther wrote the first treatise on distinguishing Law and Gospel. However, Luther's work was hardly new, since Scripture and its interpreters had always made this distinction. The following quotations show the long history of distinguishing God's two ways. These examples will help you recognize terms of Law and Gospel and apply His ways in your life as you read the Scripture.

Examples from Scripture

The Lord Commands and Promises, Curses and Blesses (c 2090 BC)

> Now the Lord said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." (Gn 12:1–3)

The Lord Reveals His Two Ways (c 1446 BC)

> "Now therefore, if I have found favor in Your sight, please show me now Your ways, that I may know You in order to find favor in Your sight. Consider too that this nation is Your people." … The Lord passed before him and proclaimed, "The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love … for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children's children, to the third and the fourth generation." (Ex 33:13; 34:6–7)

Jesus Preaches Repentance and Forgiveness (c AD 28)

> Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel." (Mk 1:14–15)

> He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem." (Lk 24:45–47)

The Apostle Paul Distinguished the Work of Law and Gospel (c AD 53)

The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham. … Is the law then contrary to the promises of God? Certainly not! For if a law had been given that could give life, then righteousness would indeed be by the law. But the Scripture imprisoned everything under sin, so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. (Gal 3:8, 21–22)

Examples from the Early Church

The Creator's Twofold Power (c 207)

> Both [testaments] belong to [God] who says: "I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal" (Deuteronomy 32:39). We have already made good the Creator's claim to this twofold character of judgment and goodness, "killing in the letter" through the law, and "quickening in the Spirit" through the Gospel (2 Corinthians 3:6). (Ter, *ANF* 3:452–53)

The Law and the Promise Cannot Be Mixed (c 380)

> The [Gospel's] promise was distinguished from the Law, and since it is different it cannot be mixed [with the Law], for a condition [of the Law] invalidates the promise. (Tyc, Rule 3)

The Law Kills and the Gospel Gives Life (c 386–98)

> In the Law, he that has sin is punished; here, he that has sins comes and is baptized and is made righteous, and being made righteous, he lives, being delivered from the death of sin. The Law, if it lay hold on a murderer, puts him to death; the Gospel, if it lay hold on a murderer, enlightens, and gives him life. (Chrys, *NPNF* 1 12:307)

The Old Testament Proclaimed Righteousness through Christ (c 412)

> His words are, "The righteousness of God is manifested" (Romans 3:21). … This is witnessed by the law and the prophets; in other words, the law and the prophets each testify about it. The law, indeed, does this by issuing its commands and threats, and by justifying no one. It shows well enough that it is by God's gift, through the help of the Spirit, that a person is justified. The prophets [show this righteousness] because it was what they predicted that Christ accomplished at His coming. (Aug, *NPNF* 1 5:88–89)

Examples from the Medieval and Reformation Eras

Confess the Lord in Two Ways (Twelfth Century)

> Let [your works] confess Him in two ways, let them be clad, as it were, in a double robe of confession. That is: confession of your own sins, and of the praise of God. … Let the humility of confession of your imperfection supply what is lacking in your daily life. For that imperfection is not hidden from God's eyes. If He has commanded that His precepts should be diligently kept (Psalm 119:4) it is in order that, seeing our constant imperfection and our inability to fulfill the duty that we ought to do, we may fly to His mercy, and say, "Your steadfast love is better than life" (Psalm 63:3a). And not being able to appear clad in innocence or righteousness, we may at least be covered in the robe of confession. (Bern, *The Life and Works of St Bernard of Clairvaux: The Advent and Christmas Sermons* [London: John Hodges, 1889–96])

The Law Demands, the Gospel Gives (1540)

> The Gospel proclaims repentance and the promise of grace and eternal life. The promise should be diligently distinguished from the Law. And although the Law has certain promises of its own, nevertheless, these differ from the unique promise of the Gospel. Moreover, the promises of the Law require the condition of perfect obedience as is said in the first commandment: "I will do good to those who love me" [cf. Deut. 5:10]. But the evangelical [Gospel] promise—about remission of sins, justification, and the gift of eternal life—is gratuitous, offered on account of Christ, without a condition of our merits or our worthiness. (Mel, *Romans*, p 22)

Why We Distinguish Law and Gospel (1580)

> The distinction between the Law and the Gospel is a particularly brilliant light. It serves the purpose of rightly dividing God's Word [2

> Timothy 2:15] and properly explaining and understanding the Scriptures of the holy prophets and apostles. We must guard this distinction with special care, so that these two doctrines may not be mixed with each other, or a law be made out of the Gospel. When that happens, Christ's merit is hidden and troubled consciences are robbed of comfort, which they otherwise have in the Holy Gospel when it is preached genuinely and purely. For by the Gospel they can support themselves in their most difficult trials against the Law's terrors. (FC SD V 1)

From these examples, one can easily see why the preacher and writer C. F. W. Walther concluded, "Only he is an orthodox teacher who not only presents all the articles of faith in accordance with Scripture, but also rightly distinguishes from each other the Law and the Gospel" (*L & G*, p 1; Concordia Publishing House will release a Reader's Edition of Walther's *Law and Gospel* in 2010).

Luther's Small Catechism

"A Short and Brief Summary of All the Holy Scriptures" (LC Preface 18)

In 1529, Martin Luther published his now famous Small Catechism, one of the most enduring and widely used summaries of biblical teaching. Beginning with the Ten Commandments, Lutherans study and memorize the catechism's summary of Scripture as a guide to understanding the Bible and as a guide for faith and life.

Luther's Preface to the Small Catechism

Luther included this preface to the Small Catechism, which addresses particular issues of his day. Headings are added for the convenience of the reader.

Martin Luther, to all faithful and godly pastors and preachers; grace, mercy, and peace be yours in Jesus Christ, our Lord.

The deplorable, miserable conditions which I recently observed when visiting the parishes have constrained and pressed me to put this catechism of Christian doctrine into this brief, plain, and simple form. How pitiable, so help me God, were the things I saw; the common man, especially in the villages, knows practically nothing of Christian doctrine, and many of the pastors are almost entirely incompetent and unable to teach. Yet all the people are supposed to be Christians, have been baptized, and receive the Holy Sacrament even though they do not know the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, or the Ten Commandments and live like poor animals of the barnyard and pigpen. What these people have mastered, however, is the fine art of tearing all Christian liberty to shreds.

Oh, you bishops! How will you ever answer to Christ for letting the people carry on so disgracefully and not attending to the duties of your office even for a moment? One can only hope judgment does not strike you! You command the Sacrament in one kind only, insist on the observance of your human ways, and yet are unconcerned whether the people know the

Lord's Prayer, the Creed, the Ten Commandments, or indeed any of God's Word. Woe, woe to you forever!

[Word for Word]

Therefore dear brothers, for God's sake, I beg all of you who are pastors and preachers to devote yourselves sincerely to the duties of your office, that you feel compassion for the people entrusted to your care, and that you help us accordingly to inculcate this catechism in the people, especially the young. If you cannot do more, at least take the tables and charts for catechism instruction and drill the people in them word for word, in the following way:

First, the pastor should most carefully avoid teaching the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, the sacraments, etc., according to various texts and differing forms. Let him adopt one version, stay with it, and from one year to the next keep using it unchanged. Young and inexperienced persons must be taught a single fixed form or they will easily become confused, and the result will be that all previous effort and labor will be lost. There should be no change, even though one may wish to improve them.

The honored fathers understood this well, and therefore they all consistently used one form of the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments. We should do as they did by teaching these materials to the young and the common man without altering a single syllable and by never varying their wording when presenting or quoting them year after year.

So adopt whatever form you wish and then stick with it at all times. If, however, you happen to be preaching to some sophisticated, learned audience, then you certainly may demonstrate your skill with words by turning phrases as colorfully and masterfully as you can. But with young persons keep to a single, fixed, and permanent form and wording, and teach them first of all the Ten Commandments, the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, etc., according to the text, word for word, so that they can repeat it after you and commit it to memory.

[Rude Persons]

But those who refuse to learn are to be told that they are denying Christ and do not belong to Him. They are not to be admitted to the Sacrament, accepted as sponsors at Baptism, or allowed to exercise Christian liberty in any way. They should instead be simply directed back to the pope and his functionaries, yes, even to Satan himself. Moreover, their parents and superiors should refuse them food and drink, telling them that the prince is of a mind to expel such rude persons from his realm, and so on.

Of course we cannot, and we should not try to, force the Christian faith on anyone. Yet we should steadily keep on urging people toward it and help them know what is considered right and wrong in the society in which they want to live and earn their living. A person who wants to live in a certain city and enjoy its privileges should know and observe its laws, no matter whether he believes in them or is at heart a rogue or scoundrel.

[Explain the Meaning]

Second, after they have well memorized the text (of the catechism), then explain the meaning so that they understand what they are saying. Do so again with the help of these charts or some other brief uniform method of your choosing; adhere to it and do not change a single syllable, as said above concerning the text, taking your time with it. For it is not necessary to teach everything at once, but one thing after the other. After they understand well the meaning of the First Commandment, proceed to the Second, and so on, otherwise they will be too overwhelmed to the point of remembering nothing.

[The Large Catechism]

Third, after you have so taught them this short catechism, take up the Large Catechism and use it to give them a broader and richer understanding. Here enlarge on every individual commandment, petition, segment, explaining in each case the various words, uses, benefits, dangers, and hurts involved, as you will find them amply described in many a book dealing with these topics. Stress specially that commandment or any other specific part of the catechism doctrine which your people neglect most. For example, among craftsmen and merchants, farmers and employees, you must powerfully stress the Seventh Commandment, which forbids stealing, because among such people many kinds of dishonesty and thievery occur. Also, for young persons and the common man you must stress the Fourth Commandment, urging them to be orderly, faithful, obedient, and peaceable, always bringing in many Bible examples of how God punished or blessed such people.

You should particularly urge those in authority and parents to govern the young well and to send them to school. Show them why it is their duty to do this and explain what a damnable sin it is if they fail to do so. For by such neglect they ruin and destroy both the kingdom of God and that of this world and prove themselves to be the worst enemies of both God and man. Thoroughly underscore what terrible harm they do by not helping train children to become pastors, preachers, writers, and the like, and how God will punish them for it. There is a great need to preach about these things. For parents and those in authority are guilty beyond words in this regard, and the devil has horrible things in mind.

[Highly Prize the Sacrament]

Finally, now that the pope's tyranny is over, people no longer want to go to the Sacrament but despise it. Here again urging is necessary, however, with the understanding that we are not to force anyone into the faith or to the Sacrament, nor set any law, time, or place for it. Our preaching should instead be such that of their own accord and without our command, people feel constrained themselves and press us pastors to serve the Sacrament. The way to go about this is to tell them that if anyone does not seek or desire the Lord's Supper at the very least four times a year, it is to be feared that he despises the Sacrament and is not Christian, just as no one is a Christian who does not believe or hear the Gospel. For Christ did not say, "Omit this" or "Despise this," but "This do, as often as you drink it," etc. He most certainly wants it done and does not want it left undone and despised. "This do," he says.

For a person not to prize highly the Sacrament is tantamount to saying that he has no sin, no flesh, no devil, no world, no death, no danger, no hell. That is to say, he believes in none of these although he is overwhelmed by them and is the devil's possession twice over. On the other hand, he needs no grace, life, paradise, kingdom of heaven, Christ, God, or any good thing. Surely, if he recognized how much evil is in him and how much he needs all the good things he lacks, he would not neglect the Sacrament, which gives help against such evil and bestows so much goodness. He will not need to be forced by law to the Sacrament but will himself come running in a hurry to the Lord's Table, constrained within himself and pressing you to give him the Sacrament.

Therefore do not set up any law concerning it, as the pope does. Only emphasize clearly the benefit, need, usefulness, and blessing connected with the Sacrament, and also the harm and danger of neglecting it. The people will then come of themselves without your using compulsion. But if they still do not come, then let them go their way and tell them that all who are insensitive or unaware of their great need and God's gracious help belong to the devil. But if you fail to urge these things or if you make it into law and bitterness, then the fault will be yours if they despise the Sacrament. Why should they not be lazy if you are asleep and silent?

[A Saving Responsibility]

So look to it, you pastors and preachers. Our ministry today is something else than it was under the pope. It has become a serious and saving responsibility. Consequently it now involves much more trouble and labor, danger and trial, and in addition it brings you little of the world's gratitude and rewards. But Christ Himself will be our reward if we labor faithfully. The Father of all grace help us to do just that. To Him be praise and thanks forever through Christ our Lord. Amen.

SECTION 1

The Ten Commandments

As the head of the family should teach them in a simple way to his household

[The text of the commandments is from Ex 20:3, 7, 8, 12–17.]

The First Commandment

You shall have no other gods.
What does this mean? We should fear, love, and trust in God above all things.

The Second Commandment

You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God.
What does this mean? We should fear and love God so that we do not curse, swear, use satanic arts, lie, or deceive by His name, but call upon it in every trouble, pray, praise, and give thanks.

The Third Commandment

Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.
What does this mean? We should fear and love God so that we do not despise preaching and His Word, but hold it sacred and gladly hear and

learn it.

The Fourth Commandment

Honor your father and your mother.

What does this mean? We should fear and love God so that we do not despise or anger our parents and other authorities, but honor them, serve and obey them, love and cherish them.

The Fifth Commandment

You shall not murder.

What does this mean? We should fear and love God so that we do not hurt or harm our neighbor in his body, but help and support him in every physical need.

The Sixth Commandment

You shall not commit adultery.

What does this mean? We should fear and love God so that we lead a sexually pure and decent life in what we say and do, and husband and wife love and honor each other.

The Seventh Commandment

You shall not steal.

What does this mean? We should fear and love God so that we do not take our neighbor's money or possessions, or get them in any dishonest way, but help him to improve and protect his possessions and income.

The Eighth Commandment

You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.

What does this mean? We should fear and love God so that we do not tell lies about our neighbor, betray him, slander him, or hurt his reputation, but defend him, speak well of him, and explain everything in the kindest way.

The Ninth Commandment

You shall not covet your neighbor's house.

What does this mean? We should fear and love God so that we do not scheme to get our neighbor's inheritance or house, or get it in a way which only appears right, but help and be of service to him in keeping it.

The Tenth Commandment

You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

What does this mean? We should fear and love God so that we do not entice or force away our neighbor's wife, workers, or animals, or turn them against him, but urge them to stay and do their duty.

The Close of the Commandments

What does God say about all these commandments? He says: "I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate Me, but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love Me and keep My commandments."

[Ex 20:5–6]

What does this mean? God threatens to punish all who break these commandments. Therefore, we should fear His wrath and not do anything against them. But He promises grace and every blessing to all who keep these commandments. Therefore, we should also love and trust in Him and gladly do what He commands.

The Creed

As the head of the family should teach them in a simple way to his household

The First Article—Creation

[The text of the creed is from Mt 28:19; Gn 1:1; 1Co 15:3–4; etc.]

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

What does this mean? I believe that God has made me and all creatures; that He has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my reason and all my senses, and still takes care of them.

He also gives me clothing and shoes, food and drink, house and home, wife and children, land, animals, and all I have. He richly and daily provides me with all that I need to support this body and life.

He defends me against all danger and guards and protects me from all evil.
All this He does only out of fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in me. For all this it is my duty to thank and praise, serve and obey Him.
This is most certainly true.

The Second Article—Redemption

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.
What does this mean? I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary, is my Lord,
who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil; not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death,
that I may be His own and live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness,
just as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity.
This is most certainly true.

The Third Article—Sanctification

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.
What does this mean? I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith.
In the same way He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith.

In this Christian church He daily and richly forgives all my sins and the sins of all believers.
On the Last Day He will raise me and all the dead, and give eternal life to me and all believers in Christ.
This is most certainly true.

The Lord's Prayer

As the head of the family should teach them in a simple way to his household

[The text of the prayer is from Mt 6:9–13.]
Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.
Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name, Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are Yours now and forever. Amen.

The Introduction

Our Father who art in heaven.
Our Father in heaven.
What does this mean? With these words God tenderly invites us to believe that He is our true Father and that we are His true children, so that with all boldness and confidence we may ask Him as dear children ask their dear father.

The First Petition

Hallowed be Thy name.
Hallowed be Your name.

What does this mean? God's name is certainly holy in itself, but we pray in this petition that it may be kept holy among us also.
How is God's name kept holy? God's name is kept holy when the Word of God is taught in its truth and purity, and we, as the children of God, also lead holy lives according to it. Help us to do this, dear Father in heaven! But anyone who teaches or lives contrary to God's Word profanes the name of God among us. Protect us from this, heavenly Father!

The Second Petition

Thy kingdom come.

Your kingdom come.
What does this mean? The kingdom of God certainly comes by itself without our prayer, but we pray in this petition that it may come to us also.
How does God's kingdom come? God's kingdom comes when our heavenly Father gives us His Holy Spirit, so that by His grace we believe His holy Word and lead godly lives here in time and there in eternity.

The Third Petition

Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Your will be done on earth as in heaven.
What does this mean? The good and gracious will of God is done even without our prayer, but we pray in this petition that it may be done among us also.
How is God's will done? God's will is done when He breaks and hinders every evil plan and purpose of the devil, the world, and our sinful nature, which do not want us to hallow God's name or let His kingdom come; and when He strengthens and keeps us firm in His Word and faith until we die. This is His good and gracious will.

The Fourth Petition

Give us this day our daily bread.

Give us today our daily bread.
What does this mean? God certainly gives daily bread to everyone without our prayers, even to all evil people, but we pray in this petition that God would lead us to realize this and to receive our daily bread with thanksgiving.

What is meant by daily bread? Daily bread includes everything that has to do with the support and needs of the body, such as food, drink, clothing, shoes, house, home, land, animals, money, goods, a devout husband or wife, devout children, devout workers, devout and faithful rulers, good government, good weather, peace, health, self-control, good reputation, good friends, faithful neighbors, and the like.

The Fifth Petition

And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.

Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

What does this mean? We pray in this petition that our Father in heaven would not look at our sins, or deny our prayer because of them. We are neither worthy of the things for which we pray, nor have we deserved them, but we ask that He would give them all to us by grace, for we daily sin much and surely deserve nothing but punishment. So we too will sincerely forgive and gladly do good to those who sin against us.

The Sixth Petition

And lead us not into temptation.

Lead us not into temptation.

What does this mean? God tempts no one. We pray in this petition that God would guard and keep us so that the devil, the world, and our sinful nature may not deceive us or mislead us into false belief, despair, and other great shame and vice. Although we are attacked by these things, we pray that we may finally overcome them and win the victory.

The Seventh Petition

But deliver us from evil.

But deliver us from evil.

What does this mean? We pray in this petition, in summary, that our Father in heaven would rescue us from every evil of body and soul, possessions and reputation, and finally, when our last hour comes, give us a blessed end, and graciously take us from this valley of sorrow to Himself in heaven.

The Conclusion

For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever.* Amen.

*For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are Yours now and forever.** *Amen.*
What does this mean? This means that I should be certain that these petitions are pleasing to our Father in heaven, and are heard by Him; for He Himself has commanded us to pray in this way and has promised to hear us. Amen, amen means "yes, yes, it shall be so."
* These words were not in Luther's Small Catechism.

The Sacrament of Holy Baptism

As the head of the family should teach it in a simple way to his household

First
What is Baptism?
Baptism is not just plain water, but it is the water included in God's command and combined with God's word.
Which is that word of God?
Christ our Lord says in the last chapter of Matthew: **"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."** [Mt 28:19]

Second
What benefits does Baptism give?
It works forgiveness of sins, rescues from death and the devil, and gives eternal salvation to all who believe this, as the words and promises of God declare.
Which are these words and promises of God?
Christ our Lord says in the last chapter of Mark: **"Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned."** [Mk 16:16]

Third
How can water do such great things?
Certainly not just water, but the word of God in and with the water does these things, along with the faith which trusts this word of God in the water.

For without God's word the water is plain water and no Baptism. But with the word of God it is a Baptism, that is, a life-giving water, rich in grace, and a washing of the new birth in the Holy Spirit, as St. Paul says in Titus, chapter three:
"He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by His grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life. This is a trustworthy saying." [Ti 3:5–8]

Fourth
What does such baptizing with water indicate?
It indicates that the Old Adam in us should by daily contrition and repentance be drowned and die with all sins and evil desires, and that a new man should daily emerge and arise to live before God in righteousness and purity forever.
Where is this written?
St. Paul writes in Romans chapter six: **"We were therefore buried with Him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life."** [Rm 6:4]

Confession

How Christians should be taught to confess

[The practice of Confession and Absolution is from Mt 16:19; 18:15; etc.]
What is Confession?
Confession has two parts.
First, that we confess our sins, and second, that we receive absolution, that is, forgiveness, from the pastor as from God Himself, not doubting, but firmly believing that by it our sins are forgiven before God in heaven.
What sins should we confess?
Before God we should plead guilty of all sins, even those we are not aware of, as we do in the Lord's Prayer; but before the pastor we should confess only those sins which we know and feel in our hearts.

Which are these?
Consider your place in life according to the Ten Commandments: Are you a father, mother, son, daughter, husband, wife, or worker? Have you been disobedient, unfaithful, or lazy? Have you been hot-tempered, rude, or quarrelsome? Have you hurt someone by your words or deeds? Have you stolen, been negligent, wasted anything, or done any harm?
*What is the Office of the Keys?**
The Office of the Keys is that special authority which Christ has given to His church on earth to forgive the sins of repentant sinners, but to withhold forgiveness from the unrepentant as long as they do not repent.
*Where is this written?**
This is what St. John the Evangelist writes in chapter twenty: The Lord Jesus breathed on His disciples and said, **"Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."** [Jn 20:22–23]
What do you believe according to these words?
I believe that when the called ministers of Christ deal with us by His divine command, in particular when they exclude openly unrepentant sinners from the Christian congregation and absolve those who repent of their sins and want to do better, this is just as valid and certain, even in heaven, as if Christ our dear Lord dealt with us Himself.
*This question may not have been composed by Luther himself but reflects his teaching and was included in editions of the catechism during his lifetime.

The Sacrament of the Altar

As the head of the family should teach it in a simple way to his household

What is the Sacrament of the Altar?
It is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ under the bread and wine, instituted by Christ Himself for us Christians to eat and to drink.
Where is this written?
The holy Evangelists Matthew, Mark, Luke, and St. Paul write:

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."
In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."
What is the benefit of this eating and drinking?
These words, "Given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins," show us that in the Sacrament forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation are given us through these words. For where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation.
How can bodily eating and drinking do such great things?
Certainly not just eating and drinking do these things, but the words written here: "Given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins." These words, along with the bodily eating and drinking, are the main thing in the Sacrament. Whoever believes these words has exactly what they say: "forgiveness of sins."
Who receives this sacrament worthily?
Fasting and bodily preparation are certainly fine outward training. But that person is truly worthy and well prepared who has faith in these words: "Given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins."
But anyone who does not believe these words or doubts them is unworthy and unprepared, for the words "for you" require all hearts to believe.

SECTION 2

Daily Prayers

How the head of the family should teach his household to pray morning and evening

Morning Prayer

In the morning when you get up, make the sign of the holy cross and say: In the name of the Father and of the ✣ Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.
Then, kneeling or standing, repeat the Creed and the Lord's Prayer. If you choose, you may also say this little prayer:

> I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that You would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

Then go joyfully to your work, singing a hymn, like that of the Ten Commandments, or whatever your devotion may suggest.

Evening Prayer

In the evening when you go to bed, make the sign of the holy cross and say: In the name of the Father and of the ✣ Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.
Then kneeling or standing, repeat the Creed and the Lord's Prayer. If you choose, you may also say this little prayer:

> I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have graciously kept me this day; and I pray that You would forgive me all my sins where I have done wrong, and graciously keep me this night. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

Then go to sleep at once and in good cheer.

How the head of the family should teach his household to ask a blessing and return thanks

Asking a Blessing

The children and members of the household shall go to the table reverently, fold their hands, and say:

> The eyes of all look to You, [O Lord,] and You give them their food at the proper time. You open Your hand and satisfy the desires of every living thing. [Ps 145:15–16]

Then shall be said the Lord's Prayer and the following:

> Lord God, heavenly Father, bless us and these Your gifts which we receive from Your bountiful goodness, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Returning Thanks

Also, after eating, they shall, in like manner, reverently and with folded hands say:

> Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good. His love endures forever. [He] gives food to every creature. He provides food for the cattle and for the young ravens when they call. His pleasure is not in the strength of the horse, nor His delight in the legs of a man; the Lord delights in those who fear Him, who put their hope in His unfailing love. [Ps 136:1, 25; 147:9–11]

Then shall be said the Lord's Prayer and the following:

> We thank You, Lord God, heavenly Father, for all Your benefits, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit forever and ever. Amen.

SECTION 3

Table of Duties

Certain passages of Scripture for various holy orders and positions, admonishing them about their duties and responsibilities

To Bishops, Pastors, and Preachers

The overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. 1Tm 3:2–4

He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. 1Tm 3:6

He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it. Ti 1:9

What the Hearers Owe Their Pastors

The Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel. 1Co 9:14

Anyone who receives instruction in the word must share all good things with his instructor. Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. Gal 6:6–7

The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, "Do not muzzle the ox while it is treading out the grain," and "The worker deserves his wages." 1Tm 5:17–18

We ask you, brothers, to respect those who work hard among you, who are over you in the Lord and who admonish you. Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work. Live in peace with each other. 1Th 5:12–13

Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you. Heb 13:17

Of Civil Government

Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, he who rebels against the

authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and he will commend you. For he is God's servant to do you good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God's servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer. Rm 13:1–4

Of Citizens

Give to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's. Mt 22:21

It is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also because of conscience. This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants, who give their full time to governing. Give everyone what you owe him: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor. Rm 13:5–7

I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone—for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Savior. 1Tm 2:1–3

Remind the people to be subject to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready to do whatever is good. Ti 3:1

Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every authority instituted among men: whether to the king, as the supreme authority, or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right. 1Pt 2:13–14

To Husbands

Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers. 1Pt 3:7

Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them. Col 3:19

To Wives

Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. Eph 5:22

They were submissive to their own husbands, like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her master. You are her daughters if you do what is right and do not give way to fear. 1Pt 3:5–6

To Parents

Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord. Eph 6:4

To Children

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honor your father and mother"—which is the first commandment with a promise—"that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth." Eph 6:1–3

To Workers of All Kinds

Slaves, obey your earthly masters with respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ. Obey them not only to win their favor when their eye is on you, but like slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from your heart. Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men, because you know that the Lord will reward everyone for whatever good he does, whether he is slave or free. Eph 6:5–8

To Employers and Supervisors

Masters, treat your slaves in the same way. Do not threaten them, since you know that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no favoritism with Him. Eph 6:9

To Youth

Young men, in the same way be submissive to those who are older. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble." Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that He may lift you up in due time. 1Pt 5:5–6

To Widows

The widow who is really in need and left all alone puts her hope in God and continues night and day to pray and to ask God for help. But the widow who lives for pleasure is dead even while she lives. 1Tm 5:5–6

To Everyone

The commandments … are summed up in this one rule: "Love your neighbor as yourself." Rm 13:9

I urge … that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone. 1Tm 2:1

Let each his lesson learn with care, and all the household well shall fare.

The Unity of Scripture

The unity of Scripture is not imposed upon Scripture but found there.

—Robert D. Preus, *Doctrine Is Life*

Our English word *Bible* comes from the Greek word for "a book." It came into English by way of medieval Latin, when book technology allowed all the Sacred Scripture to be gathered under one cover—the Bible as we think of it today. But the idea that the Sacred Scripture is unified and, indeed, one book is hardly a medieval or modern notion. The unity of Scripture is already taught in the Scripture itself as the following points will reveal.

The Chief Character of the Scripture

While teaching beside the Bethesda pool in Jerusalem, Jesus told a group of Judeans, “You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about Me” (Jn 5:39). Like other rabbis, Jesus spoke of the Old Testament Scripture as a united testimony.[1] But unlike other rabbis, Jesus joined the purpose of the Scripture—salvation for eternal life—to the key character of the Scripture, Himself as the promised Savior (cf Lk 24:44–47). Since all the Scripture bears witness to Jesus, Jesus understood and taught that the Scripture was unified.

The One Author of the Scripture

St Paul also taught this unity of Scripture. Shortly before his execution under Emperor Nero (AD 68), Paul wrote to his son in the faith, Timothy, a younger Christian leader:

> From childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work. (2Tm 3:15–17)

Paul attributes all the Sacred Scripture to the work of God and understands the Scripture as focused on salvation through Jesus. He demonstrates the early Christian belief that the Scripture is unified in its teaching (cf 2Tm 1:13–14 about Christian doctrine generally).

The Fulfillment of Prophecy

The unity of the Scripture is graphically illustrated by the way it is interconnected through promises and fulfillments as well as commentary on earlier texts. The chart on p xlvii lists places where the Scripture builds on other passages of Scripture. The sheer number of such examples speaks to the unity of the Scripture. The writers saw themselves as teaching in continuity with what God had previously revealed (cf 2Tm 3:15–17).

The Unity of the Covenants

Scripture itself teaches that the revelation of God was delivered under a "covenant," or "testament," first given to Abraham and confirmed/renewed through Moses (Gn 17:9; Ex 2:24; chs 3–6; Lv 26:42; Dt 1:8; 29:12–13; Jsh 24; see p 127). Although many covenants are described in the Old Testament, Jeremiah saw the covenant given to Abraham and confirmed through Moses as *the* covenant (Jer 31:32), which the people of Israel broke. He then prophesied a second covenant, or "new covenant" (Jer 31:31–33; cf Is 59:20–21; Gal 3:17).

When Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper, He proclaimed the establishment of this new covenant (Mt 26:28; Mk 14:24; Lk 22:20). Paul refers explicitly to an old covenant (2Co 3:14) and a new covenant established in Christ (1Co 11:25; 2Co 3:6). The writer to the Hebrews affirms this understanding of God's revelation by citing Jeremiah (Heb 8:8; 9:15; 12:24; cf Jn 1:17).

The two great covenants of Scripture—the old and the new—relate to each other as prophecy and fulfillment. The first covenant pointed forward to the second, which would fulfill God's plan of redemption. This relationship of old and new, of prophecy and fulfillment, likewise reveals the unity of the Scripture.

A comment should be added about the enduring usefulness of the Old Testament. What is true and good always applies. When Jesus fulfilled the laws and promises of the Old Testament, He did not abolish them (Mt 5:17–18; Rm 3:31). They are not now useless to us, for God still uses them for our instruction (1Co 10:11).

In Christ, our relationship to the Old Testament has changed. Christ fulfilled the laws and the ordinances so that they can no longer condemn those who live by faith in Christ (Rm 7:6; Gal 3:23–26; see note, Rm 10:4). The ministry of the new covenant outshines the glory of the old (2Co 3:7–18). The civil and ceremonial laws and ordinances of the Old Testament no longer apply to us as laws and ordinances (Eph 2:11–22; see note, Eph 2:15), but they still stand as testimonies of God's holiness and mercy. They teach us about the goal, or "end," of the ministry of salvation: the deliverance from evil that God brought about in Christ.

Law and Gospel

Interpreting and applying the Scripture as a unified body of teaching is perhaps best understood through the study of Law and Gospel (see pp xxxi–xxxii). God's Law condemns our sin and drives us to despair of our own righteousness. Yet this harsh message of the Law prepares us for God's other great message: the forgiveness of sins in Christ. Although the Law and the Gospel are very different teachings and must be distinguished, they drive toward a unified purpose: our salvation.

As demonstrated in our notes on Ex 34:6–7, Law and Gospel are the enduring themes of all the Scripture. They are the ways of God with mankind. Their constant use unifies the Scripture (see p 320).

Speak, Lord, for Your Servant Hears

Whenever you study a passage of Scripture, keep these broad truths and themes in mind. They will help you understand the meaning of the passage and how it applies to your life. Treasure the Holy Bible as God's dear gift to you. It is His message of your personal salvation.

Scripture Written in View of Scripture

Some ancient and modern teachers have been confused about the relationship between the books of Scripture. For example, Marcion of Sinope (c 110–c 160) taught that the God of the Old Testament was a different God from that proclaimed by the New Testament. He and his followers did not regard the Old Testament as applying to them. The controversy Marcion raised was an important factor in driving early Christians to list carefully which books they regarded as Holy Scripture and which they rejected (see pp 1559–61).

Modern critics of the Bible have regarded the Old Testament as a diffuse collection of national literature, one that lacks true unity. For example, the History of Religions School (nineteenth and twentieth centuries) was an approach to the Bible that compared the beliefs and practices of ancient Israel with the beliefs and practices of other ancient religions. It argued that the religion of Israel more or less developed out of the religions of the ancient Near East. In this view, the Scripture is just part of the evolution of religion. This view has greatly undermined biblical teaching among liberal Christians, who increasingly pick and choose which parts of Scripture they will believe and follow.

The modern evangelical preacher Alexander Campbell (1788–1866) held that the Old Testament was valuable to read but no longer applied to Christians. Other writers have similarly dismissed one part of the Old Testament or another as alien to the Christian faith (e.g., C. S. Lewis).

Scripture Interprets Scripture

Each view described above has failed to understand how the Bible was written and how the Early Christians viewed the Old Testament. The Old Testament was the Holy Scripture of the New Testament Church, what they turned to and looked to when seeking God's will, since the New Testament was not yet written. Early Christians did not typically ask, "Does the Old Testament still apply?" Instead, they asked, "How does it apply?" assuming it was fully relevant to their lives. In many ways, the New Testament is a commentary on that truth.

The following chart draws together examples from Scripture that demonstrate Scripture's surpassing unity. This is only a sampling of the evidence.

[1] Collection and canonization of Scripture began already in the OT with the Law of Moses (see pp 335–37). The Law, Psalms, and Prophets were read, studied, and explained together at the temple and in Jewish synagogues, as early Jewish and Christian testimony shows (e.g., 1Macc 12:9; 2Macc 2:13; 15:9; 4 Maccabees 18:10; Ecclus Prologue; Jos, *Ag Ap* 1:38–40; Philo, *On the Contemplative Life* 75, 78; Mishnah Yadayim 3:5; *Letter of Aristeas* 155, 317–18; Mt 22:23–46; Lk 24:44; Ac 13:15; 28:23). Jesus and the disciples continued this practice, focusing on the fulfillment of OT prophecies in the person and work of Jesus (Mt 5:17; 11:13–15; Lk 16:16; Jn 1:45; Ac 13:15; Rm 3:21–22). The NT teachers and writers assumed the unity of the OT Scripture. The NT is more or less a commentary on the OT in view of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. For more on the transition from early Judaism to early Christianity, see Oskar Skarsaune, *In the Shadow of the Temple: Jewish Influences on Early Christianity* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2002), 279–93.

The Lectionaries

The following lectionaries are drawn from *Lutheran Service Book*, pp xiv–xxiii, and include Bible Readings from Sundays, festivals, and occasions. A lectionary may be read devotionally in the following manner:
Monday: OT/First Reading
Tuesday: Epistle/Second Reading
Wednesday: Holy Gospel
Thursday: OT/First Reading
Friday: Epistle/Second Reading
Saturday: Holy Gospel

In this way, a person would hear/read the appointed readings three times during the week in a meditative way, a good approach for those who are new to reading and studying the Bible (see p xxx). (Pastors may wish to read the lectionary devotionally a week or two in advance to facilitate their preparation for preaching.)

Three-Year Lectionary[1]: Series A

Sunday/Festival: Advent 1
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 2:1–5
Epistle/Second Reading: Rm 13:(8–10) 11–14
Holy Gospel: Mt 21:1–11
or Mt 24:36–44
Sunday/Festival: Advent 2
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 11:1–10
Epistle/Second Reading: Rm 15:4–13
Holy Gospel: Mt 3:1–12
Sunday/Festival: Advent 3
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 35:1–10
Epistle/Second Reading: Jas 5:7–11
Holy Gospel: Mt 11:2–15
Sunday/Festival: Advent 4
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 7:10–17
Epistle/Second Reading: Rm 1:1–7
Holy Gospel: Mt 1:18–25

Sunday/Festival: Christmas Eve
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 7:10–14
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Jn 4:7–16
Holy Gospel: Mt 1:18–25
Sunday/Festival: Christmas Midnight
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 9:2–7
Epistle/Second Reading: Ti 2:11–14
Holy Gospel: Lk 2:1–14 (15–20)
Sunday/Festival: Christmas Dawn
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 62:10–12
Epistle/Second Reading: Ti 3:4–7
Holy Gospel: Lk 2:(1–14) 15–20
Sunday/Festival: Christmas Day
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 52:7–10
Epistle/Second Reading: Heb 1:1–6 (7–12)
Holy Gospel: Jn 1:1–14 (15–18)
Sunday/Festival: Christmas 1
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 63:7–14
Epistle/Second Reading: Gal 4:4–7
Holy Gospel: Mt 2:13–23
Sunday/Festival: Christmas 2
Old Testament/First Reading: 1Ki 3:4–15
Epistle/Second Reading: Eph 1:3–14
Holy Gospel: Lk 2:40–52
Sunday/Festival: Epiphany
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 60:1–6
Epistle/Second Reading: Eph 3:1–12
Holy Gospel: Mt 2:1–12
Sunday/Festival: Baptism of Our Lord
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 42:1–9
Epistle/Second Reading: Rm 6:1–11
Holy Gospel: Mt 3:13–17
Sunday/Festival: Epiphany 2
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 49:1–7
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Co 1:1–9
Holy Gospel: Jn 1:29–42a
Sunday/Festival: Epiphany 3

Old Testament/First Reading: Is 9:1–4
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Co 1:10–18
Holy Gospel: Mt 4:12–25
Sunday/Festival: Epiphany 4
Old Testament/First Reading: Mi 6:1–8
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Co 1:18–31
Holy Gospel: Mt 5:1–12
Sunday/Festival: Epiphany 5
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 58:3–9a
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Co 2:1–12 (13–16)
Holy Gospel: Mt 5:13–20
Sunday/Festival: Epiphany 6
Old Testament/First Reading: Dt 30:15–20
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Co 3:1–9
Holy Gospel: Mt 5:21–37
Sunday/Festival: Epiphany 7
Old Testament/First Reading: Lv 19:1–2, 9–18
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Co 3:10–23
Holy Gospel: Mt 5:38–48
Sunday/Festival: Epiphany 8
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 49:8–16a
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Co 4:1–13
Holy Gospel: Mt 6:24–34
Sunday/Festival: Transfiguration
Old Testament/First Reading: Ex 24:8–18
Epistle/Second Reading: 2Pt 1:16–21
Holy Gospel: Mt 17:1–9
Sunday/Festival: Ash Wednesday
Old Testament/First Reading: Jl 2:12–19
Epistle/Second Reading: 2Co 5:20b—6:10
Holy Gospel: Mt 6:1–6, 16–21
Sunday/Festival: Lent 1
Old Testament/First Reading: Gn 3:1–21
Epistle/Second Reading: Rm 5:12–19
Holy Gospel: Mt 4:1–11
Sunday/Festival: Lent 2
Old Testament/First Reading: Gn 12:1–9

Epistle/Second Reading: Rm 4:1–8, 13–17
Holy Gospel: Jn 3:1–17
Sunday/Festival: Lent 3
Old Testament/First Reading: Ex 17:1–7
Epistle/Second Reading: Rm 5:1–8
Holy Gospel: Jn 4:5–26 (27–30, 39–42)
Sunday/Festival: Lent 4
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 42:14–21
Epistle/Second Reading: Eph 5:8–14
Holy Gospel: Jn 9:1–41
or Jn 9:1–7, 13–17, 34–39
Sunday/Festival: Lent 5
Old Testament/First Reading: Ezk 37:1–14
Epistle/Second Reading: Rm 8:1–11
Holy Gospel: Jn 11:1–45 (46–53)
or Jn 11:17–27, 38–53
Sunday/Festival: Palm Sunday Procession
Holy Gospel: Jn 12:12–19
Sunday/Festival: Sunday of the Passion
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 50:4–9a
Epistle/Second Reading: Php 2:5–11
Holy Gospel: Mt 26:1—27:66
or Mt 27:11–66
or Jn 12:20–43
Sunday/Festival: Monday in Holy Week
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 50:5–10
Epistle/Second Reading: Heb 9:11–15
Holy Gospel: Mt 26:1—27:66
or Jn 12:1–23
Sunday/Festival: Tuesday in Holy Week
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 49:1–7
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Co 1:18–25 (26–31)
Holy Gospel: Mk 14:1—15:47
or Jn 12:23–50
Sunday/Festival: Wednesday in Holy Week
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 62:11—63:7
Epistle/Second Reading: Rm 5:6–11

Holy Gospel: Lk 22:1—23:56
or Jn 13:16–38
Sunday/Festival: Holy Thursday
Old Testament/First Reading: Ex 24:3–11
Epistle/Second Reading: Heb 9:11–22
Holy Gospel: Mt 26:17–30
Sunday/Festival: Holy Thursday (alt)
Old Testament/First Reading: Ex 12:1–14
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Co 11:23–32
Holy Gospel: Jn 13:1–17, 31b–35
Sunday/Festival: Good Friday
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 52:13—53:12
Epistle/Second Reading: Heb 4:14–16; 5:7–9
Holy Gospel: Jn 18:1—19:42
or Jn 19:17–30
Sunday/Festival: Holy Saturday
Old Testament/First Reading: Dn 6:1–24
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Pt 4:1–8
Holy Gospel: Mt 27:57–66
Sunday/Festival: Vigil of Easter
Old Testament/First Reading: Selected Readings
Sunday/Festival: Easter Sunrise
Old Testament/First Reading: Ex 14:10—15:1
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Co 15:1–11
Holy Gospel: Jn 20:1–18
Sunday/Festival: Easter Day
Old Testament/First Reading: Ac 10:34–43
or Jer 31:1–6
Epistle/Second Reading: Col 3:1–4
Holy Gospel: Mt 28:1–10
Sunday/Festival: Easter Evening/Monday
Old Testament/First Reading: Ex 15:1–18
or Dn 12:1c–3
Epistle/Second Reading: Ac 10:34–43
or 1Co 5:6b–8
Holy Gospel: Lk 24:13–35 (36–49)
Sunday/Festival: Easter Tuesday

Old Testament/First Reading: Dn 3:8–28
Epistle/Second Reading: Ac 13:26–33
Holy Gospel: Lk 24:36–49
Sunday/Festival: Easter Wednesday
Old Testament/First Reading: Ac 3:13–15, 17–19
Epistle/Second Reading: Col 3:1–7
or 1Co 11:23–26
Holy Gospel: Jn 21:1–14
Sunday/Festival: Easter 2
Old Testament/First Reading: Ac 5:29–42
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Pt 1:3–9
Holy Gospel: Jn 20:19–31
Sunday/Festival: Easter 3
Old Testament/First Reading: Ac 2:14a, 36–41
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Pt 1:17–25
Holy Gospel: Lk 24:13–35
Sunday/Festival: Easter 4
Old Testament/First Reading: Ac 2:42–47
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Pt 2:19–25
Holy Gospel: Jn 10:1–10
Sunday/Festival: Easter 5
Old Testament/First Reading: Ac 6:1–9; 7:2a, 51–60
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Pt 2:2–10
Holy Gospel: Jn 14:1–14
Sunday/Festival: Easter 6
Old Testament/First Reading: Ac 17:16–31
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Pt 3:13–22
Holy Gospel: Jn 14:15–21
Sunday/Festival: Ascension
Old Testament/First Reading: Ac 1:1–11
Epistle/Second Reading: Eph 1:15–23
Holy Gospel: Lk 24:44–53
Sunday/Festival: Easter 7
Old Testament/First Reading: Ac 1:12–26
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Pt 4:12–19; 5:6–11
Holy Gospel: Jn 17:1–11
Sunday/Festival: Pentecost Eve

Old Testament/First Reading: Ex 19:1–9
Epistle/Second Reading: Rm 8:12–17 (22–27)
Holy Gospel: Jn 14:8–21
Sunday/Festival: Day of Pentecost
Old Testament/First Reading: Nu 11:24–30
Epistle/Second Reading: Ac 2:1–21
Holy Gospel: Jn 7:37–39
Sunday/Festival: Pentecost Evening/Monday
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 57:15–21
Epistle/Second Reading: Ac 10:34a, 42–48
Holy Gospel: Jn 3:16–21
Sunday/Festival: Pentecost Tuesday
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 32:14–20
Epistle/Second Reading: Ac 8:14–17
Holy Gospel: Jn 10:1–10
Sunday/Festival: Holy Trinity
Old Testament/First Reading: Gn 1:1—2:4a
Epistle/Second Reading: Ac 2:14a, 22–36
Holy Gospel: Mt 28:16–20
Sunday/Festival: Proper 3 (May 24–28)
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 49:8–16a
Epistle/Second Reading: Rm 1:8–17
Holy Gospel: Mt 6:24–34
Sunday/Festival: Proper 4 (May 29—June 4)
Old Testament/First Reading: Dt 11:18–21, 26–28
Epistle/Second Reading: Rm 3:21–28
Holy Gospel: Mt 7:15–29
Sunday/Festival: Proper 5 (June 5–11)
Old Testament/First Reading: Hos 5:15—6:6
Epistle/Second Reading: Rm 4:13–25
Holy Gospel: Mt 9:9–13
Sunday/Festival: Proper 6 (June 12–18)
Old Testament/First Reading: Ex 19:2–8
Epistle/Second Reading: Rm 5:6–15
Holy Gospel: Mt 9:35—10:8 (9–20)
Sunday/Festival: Proper 7 (June 19–25)
Old Testament/First Reading: Jer 20:7–13

Epistle/Second Reading: Rm 6:12–23
Holy Gospel: Mt 10:5a, 21–33
Sunday/Festival: Proper 8 (June 26—July 2)
Old Testament/First Reading: Jer 28:5–9
Epistle/Second Reading: Rm 7:1–13
Holy Gospel: Mt 10:34–42
Sunday/Festival: Proper 9 (July 3–9)
Old Testament/First Reading: Zec 9:9–12
Epistle/Second Reading: Rm 7:14–25a
Holy Gospel: Mt 11:25–30
Sunday/Festival: Proper 10 (July 10–16)
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 55:10–13
Epistle/Second Reading: Rm 8:12–17
Holy Gospel: Mt 13:1–9, 18–23
Sunday/Festival: Proper 11 (July 17–23)
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 44:6–8
Epistle/Second Reading: Rm 8:18–27
Holy Gospel: Mt 13:24–30, 36–43
Sunday/Festival: Proper 12 (July 24–30)
Old Testament/First Reading: Dt 7:6–9
Epistle/Second Reading: Rm 8:28–39
Holy Gospel: Mt 13:44–52
Sunday/Festival: Proper 13 (July 31—Aug 6)
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 55:1–5
Epistle/Second Reading: Rm 9:1–5 (6–13)
Holy Gospel: Mt 14:13–21
Sunday/Festival: Proper 14 (Aug 7–13)
Old Testament/First Reading: Jb 38:4–18
Epistle/Second Reading: Rm 10:5–17
Holy Gospel: Mt 14:22–33
Sunday/Festival: Proper 15 (Aug 14–20)
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 56:1, 6–8
Epistle/Second Reading: Rm 11:1–2a, 13–15, 28–32
Holy Gospel: Mt 15:21–28
Sunday/Festival: Proper 16 (Aug 21–27)
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 51:1–6
Epistle/Second Reading: Rm 11:33—12:8

Holy Gospel: Mt 16:13–20
Sunday/Festival: Proper 17 (Aug 28—Sept 3)
Old Testament/First Reading: Jer 15:15–21
Epistle/Second Reading: Rm 12:9–21
Holy Gospel: Mt 16:21–28
Sunday/Festival: Proper 18 (Sept 4–10)
Old Testament/First Reading: Ezk 33:7–9
Epistle/Second Reading: Rm 13:1–10
Holy Gospel: Mt 18:1–20
Sunday/Festival: Proper 19 (Sept 11–17)
Old Testament/First Reading: Gn 50:15–21
Epistle/Second Reading: Rm 14:1–12
Holy Gospel: Mt 18:21–35
Sunday/Festival: Proper 20 (Sept 18–24)
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 55:6–9
Epistle/Second Reading: Php 1:12–14, 19–30
Holy Gospel: Mt 20:1–16
Sunday/Festival: Proper 21 (Sept 25—Oct 1)
Old Testament/First Reading: Ezk 18:1–4, 25–32
Epistle/Second Reading: Php 2:1–4 (5–13) 14–18
Holy Gospel: Mt 21:23–27 (28–32)
Sunday/Festival: Proper 22 (Oct 2–8)
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 5:1–7
Epistle/Second Reading: Php 3:4b–14
Holy Gospel: Mt 21:33–46
Sunday/Festival: Proper 23 (Oct 9–15)
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 25:6–9
Epistle/Second Reading: Php 4:4–13
Holy Gospel: Mt 22:1–14
Sunday/Festival: Proper 24 (Oct 16–22)
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 45:1–7
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Th 1:1–10
Holy Gospel: Mt 22:15–22
Sunday/Festival: Proper 25 (Oct 23–29)
Old Testament/First Reading: Lv 19:1–2, 15–18
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Th 2:1–13
Holy Gospel: Mt 22:34–46

Sunday/Festival: Proper 26 (Oct 30—Nov 5)
Old Testament/First Reading: Mi 3:5–12
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Th 4:1–12
Holy Gospel: Mt 23:1–12
Sunday/Festival: Proper 27 (Nov 6–12)
Old Testament/First Reading: Am 5:18–24
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Th 4:13–18
Holy Gospel: Mt 25:1–13
Sunday/Festival: Proper 28 (Nov 13–19)
Old Testament/First Reading: Zep 1:7–16
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Th 5:1–11
Holy Gospel: Mt 25:14–30
Sunday/Festival: Proper 29 (Nov 20–26)
Old Testament/First Reading: Ezk 34:11–16, 20–24
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Co 15:20–28
Holy Gospel: Mt 25:31–46

Three-Year Lectionary: Series B

Sunday/Festival: Advent 1
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 64:1–9
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Co 1:3–9
Holy Gospel: Mk 11:1–10
or Mk 13:24–37
Sunday/Festival: Advent 2
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 40:1–11
Epistle/Second Reading: 2Pt 3:8–14
Holy Gospel: Mk 1:1–8
Sunday/Festival: Advent 3
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 61:1–4, 8–11
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Th 5:16–24
Holy Gospel: Jn 1:6–8, 19–28
Sunday/Festival: Advent 4
Old Testament/First Reading: 2Sm 7:1–11, 16
Epistle/Second Reading: Rm 16:25–27
Holy Gospel: Lk 1:26–38
Sunday/Festival: Christmas Eve
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 7:10–14
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Jn 4:7–16
Holy Gospel: Mt 1:18–25
Sunday/Festival: Christmas Midnight
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 9:2–7
Epistle/Second Reading: Ti 2:11–14
Holy Gospel: Lk 2:1–14 (15–20)
Sunday/Festival: Christmas Dawn
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 62:10–12
Epistle/Second Reading: Ti 3:4–7
Holy Gospel: Lk 2:(1–14) 15–20
Sunday/Festival: Christmas Day
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 52:7–10
Epistle/Second Reading: Heb 1:1–6 (7–12)
Holy Gospel: Jn 1:1–14 (15–18)
Sunday/Festival: Christmas 1
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 61:10—62:3
Epistle/Second Reading: Gal 4:4–7

Holy Gospel: Lk 2:22–40
Sunday/Festival: Christmas 2
Old Testament/First Reading: 1Ki 3:4–15
Epistle/Second Reading: Eph 1:3–14
Holy Gospel: Lk 2:40–52
Sunday/Festival: Epiphany
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 60:1–6
Epistle/Second Reading: Eph 3:1–12
Holy Gospel: Mt 2:1–12
Sunday/Festival: Baptism of Our Lord
Old Testament/First Reading: Gn 1:1–5
Epistle/Second Reading: Rm 6:1–11
Holy Gospel: Mk 1:4–11
Sunday/Festival: Epiphany 2
Old Testament/First Reading: 1Sm 3:1–10 (11–20)
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Co 6:12–20
Holy Gospel: Jn 1:43–51
Sunday/Festival: Epiphany 3
Old Testament/First Reading: Jnh 3:1–5, 10
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Co 7:29–31 (32–35)
Holy Gospel: Mk 1:14–20
Sunday/Festival: Epiphany 4
Old Testament/First Reading: Dt 18:15–20
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Co 8:1–13
Holy Gospel: Mk 1:21–28
Sunday/Festival: Epiphany 5
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 40:21–31
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Co 9:16–27
Holy Gospel: Mk 1:29–39
Sunday/Festival: Epiphany 6
Old Testament/First Reading: 2Ki 5:1–14
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Co 10:(19–30) 10:31—11:1
Holy Gospel: Mk 1:40–45
Sunday/Festival: Epiphany 7
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 43:18–25
Epistle/Second Reading: 2Co 1:18–22
Holy Gospel: Mk 2:1–12

Sunday/Festival: Epiphany 8
Old Testament/First Reading: Hos 2:14–20
Epistle/Second Reading: 2Co 2:12—3:6
Holy Gospel: Mk 2:(13–17) 18–22
Sunday/Festival: Transfiguration
Old Testament/First Reading: 2Ki 2:1–12
or Ex 34:29–35
Epistle/Second Reading: 2Co 3:12–13 (14–18); 4:1–6
Holy Gospel: Mk 9:2–9
Sunday/Festival: Ash Wednesday
Old Testament/First Reading: Jl 2:12–19
Epistle/Second Reading: 2Co 5:20b—6:10
Holy Gospel: Mt 6:1–6, 16–21
Sunday/Festival: Lent 1
Old Testament/First Reading: Gn 22:1–18
Epistle/Second Reading: Jas 1:12–18
Holy Gospel: Mk 1:9–15
Sunday/Festival: Lent 2
Old Testament/First Reading: Gn 17:1–7, 15–16
Epistle/Second Reading: Rm 5:1–11
Holy Gospel: Mk 8:27–38
Sunday/Festival: Lent 3
Old Testament/First Reading: Ex 20:1–17
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Co 1:18–31
Holy Gospel: Jn 2:13–22 (23–25)
Sunday/Festival: Lent 4
Old Testament/First Reading: Nu 21:4–9
Epistle/Second Reading: Eph 2:1–10
Holy Gospel: Jn 3:14–21
Sunday/Festival: Lent 5
Old Testament/First Reading: Jer 31:31–34
Epistle/Second Reading: Heb 5:1–10
Holy Gospel: Mk 10:(32–34) 35–45
Sunday/Festival: Palm Sunday Procession
Holy Gospel: Jn 12:12–19
Sunday/Festival: Sunday of the Passion
Old Testament/First Reading: Zec 9:9–12

Epistle/Second Reading: Php 2:5–11
Holy Gospel: Mk 14:1—15:47
or Mk 15:1–47
or Jn 12:20–43
Sunday/Festival: Monday in Holy Week
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 50:5–10
Epistle/Second Reading: Heb 9:11–15
Holy Gospel: Mt 26:1—27:66
or Jn 12:1–23
Sunday/Festival: Tuesday in Holy Week
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 49:1–7
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Co 1:18–25 (26–31)
Holy Gospel: Mk 14:1—15:47
or Jn 12:23–50
Sunday/Festival: Wednesday in Holy Week
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 62:11—63:7
Epistle/Second Reading: Rm 5:6–11
Holy Gospel: Lk 22:1—23:56
or Jn 13:16–38
Sunday/Festival: Holy Thursday
Old Testament/First Reading: Ex 24:3–11
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Co 10:16–17
Holy Gospel: Mk 14:12–26
Sunday/Festival: Holy Thursday (alt)
Old Testament/First Reading: Ex 12:1–14
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Co 11:23–32
Holy Gospel: Jn 13:1–17, 31b–35
Sunday/Festival: Good Friday
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 52:13—53:12
Epistle/Second Reading: Heb 4:14–16; 5:7–9
Holy Gospel: Jn 18:1—19:42
or Jn 19:17–30
Sunday/Festival: Holy Saturday
Old Testament/First Reading: Dn 6:1–24
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Pt 4:1–8
Holy Gospel: Mt 27:57–66
Sunday/Festival: Vigil of Easter

Old Testament/First Reading: Selected Readings
Sunday/Festival: Easter Sunrise
Old Testament/First Reading: Ex 15:1–11
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Co 5:6b–8
Holy Gospel: Jn 20:1–18
Sunday/Festival: Easter Day
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 25:6–9
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Co 15:1–11
Holy Gospel: Mk 16:1–8
Sunday/Festival: Easter Evening/Monday
Old Testament/First Reading: Ex 15:1–18
or Dn 12:1c–3
Epistle/Second Reading: Ac 10:34–43
or 1Co 5:6b–8
Holy Gospel: Lk 24:13–35 (36–49)
Sunday/Festival: Easter Tuesday
Old Testament/First Reading: Dn 3:8–28
Epistle/Second Reading: Ac 13:26–33
Holy Gospel: Lk 24:36–49
Sunday/Festival: Easter Wednesday
Old Testament/First Reading: Ac 3:13–15, 17–19
Epistle/Second Reading: Col 3:1–7
or 1Co 11:23–26
Holy Gospel: Jn 21:1–14
Sunday/Festival: Easter 2
Old Testament/First Reading: Ac 4:32–35
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Jn 1:1—2:2
Holy Gospel: Jn 20:19–31
Sunday/Festival: Easter 3
Old Testament/First Reading: Ac 3:11–21
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Jn 3:1–7
Holy Gospel: Lk 24:36–49
Sunday/Festival: Easter 4
Old Testament/First Reading: Ac 4:1–12
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Jn 3:16–24
Holy Gospel: Jn 10:11–18
Sunday/Festival: Easter 5

Old Testament/First Reading: Ac 8:26–40
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Jn 4:1–11 (12–21)
Holy Gospel: Jn 15:1–8
Sunday/Festival: Easter 6
Old Testament/First Reading: Ac 10:34–48
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Jn 5:1–8
Holy Gospel: Jn 15:9–17
Sunday/Festival: Ascension
Old Testament/First Reading: Ac 1:1–11
Epistle/Second Reading: Eph 1:15–23
Holy Gospel: Lk 24:44–53
Sunday/Festival: Easter 7
Old Testament/First Reading: Ac 1:12–26
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Jn 5:9–15
Holy Gospel: Jn 17:11b–19
Sunday/Festival: Pentecost Eve
Old Testament/First Reading: Ex 19:1–9
Epistle/Second Reading: Rm 8:12–17 (22–27)
Holy Gospel: Jn 14:8–21
Sunday/Festival: Day of Pentecost
Old Testament/First Reading: Ezk 37:1–14
Epistle/Second Reading: Ac 2:1–21
Holy Gospel: Jn 15:26–27; 16:4b–15
Sunday/Festival: Pentecost Evening/Monday
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 57:15–21
Epistle/Second Reading: Ac 10:34a, 42–48
Holy Gospel: Jn 3:16–21
Sunday/Festival: Pentecost Tuesday
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 32:14–20
Epistle/Second Reading: Ac 8:14–17
Holy Gospel: Jn 10:1–10
Sunday/Festival: Holy Trinity
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 6:1–8
Epistle/Second Reading: Ac 2:14a, 22–36
Holy Gospel: Jn 3:1–17
Sunday/Festival: Proper 3 (May 24–28)
Old Testament/First Reading: Hos 2:14–20

Epistle/Second Reading: Ac 2:14a, 36–47
Holy Gospel: Mk 2:(13–17) 18–22
Sunday/Festival: Proper 4 (May 29—June 4)
Old Testament/First Reading: Dt 5:12–15
Epistle/Second Reading: 2Co 4:5–12
Holy Gospel: Mk 2:23–28 (3:1–6)
Sunday/Festival: Proper 5 (June 5–11)
Old Testament/First Reading: Gn 3:8–15
Epistle/Second Reading: 2Co 4:13—5:1
Holy Gospel: Mk 3:20–35
Sunday/Festival: Proper 6 (June 12–18)
Old Testament/First Reading: Ezk 17:22–24
Epistle/Second Reading: 2Co 5:1–10 (11–17)
Holy Gospel: Mk 4:26–34
Sunday/Festival: Proper 7 (June 19–25)
Old Testament/First Reading: Jb 38:1–11
Epistle/Second Reading: 2Co 6:1–13
Holy Gospel: Mk 4:35–41
Sunday/Festival: Proper 8 (June 26—July 2)
Old Testament/First Reading: Lm 3:22–33
Epistle/Second Reading: 2Co 8:1–9, 13–15
Holy Gospel: Mk 5:21–43
Sunday/Festival: Proper 9 (July 3–9)
Old Testament/First Reading: Ezk 2:1–5
Epistle/Second Reading: 2Co 12:1–10
Holy Gospel: Mk 6:1–13
Sunday/Festival: Proper 10 (July 10–16)
Old Testament/First Reading: Am 7:7–15
Epistle/Second Reading: Eph 1:3–14
Holy Gospel: Mk 6:14–29
Sunday/Festival: Proper 11 (July 17–23)
Old Testament/First Reading: Jer 23:1–6
Epistle/Second Reading: Eph 2:11–22
Holy Gospel: Mk 6:30–44
Sunday/Festival: Proper 12 (July 24–30)
Old Testament/First Reading: Gn 9:8–17
Epistle/Second Reading: Eph 3:14–21

Holy Gospel: Mk 6:45–56
Sunday/Festival: Proper 13 (July 31—Aug 6)
Old Testament/First Reading: Ex 16:2–15
Epistle/Second Reading: Eph 4:1–16
Holy Gospel: Jn 6:22–35
Sunday/Festival: Proper 14 (Aug 7–13)
Old Testament/First Reading: 1Ki 19:1–8
Epistle/Second Reading: Eph 4:17—5:2
Holy Gospel: Jn 6:35–51
Sunday/Festival: Proper 15 (Aug 14–20)
Old Testament/First Reading: Pr 9:1–10
or Jsh 24:1–2a, 14–18
Epistle/Second Reading: Eph 5:6–21
Holy Gospel: Jn 6:51–69
Sunday/Festival: Proper 16 (Aug 21–27)
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 29:11–19
Epistle/Second Reading: Eph 5:22–33
Holy Gospel: Mk 7:1–13
Sunday/Festival: Proper 17 (Aug 28—Sept 3)
Old Testament/First Reading: Dt 4:1–2, 6–9
Epistle/Second Reading: Eph 6:10–20
Holy Gospel: Mk 7:14–23
Sunday/Festival: Proper 18 (Sept 4–10)
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 35:4–7a
Epistle/Second Reading: Jas 2:1–10, 14–18
Holy Gospel: Mk 7:(24–30) 31–37
Sunday/Festival: Proper 19 (Sept 11–17)
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 50:4–10
Epistle/Second Reading: Jas 3:1–12
Holy Gospel: Mk 9:14–29
Sunday/Festival: Proper 20 (Sept 18–24)
Old Testament/First Reading: Jer 11:18–20
Epistle/Second Reading: Jas 3:13—4:10
Holy Gospel: Mk 9:30–37
Sunday/Festival: Proper 21 (Sept 25—Oct 1)
Old Testament/First Reading: Nu 11:4–6, 10–16, 24–29
Epistle/Second Reading: Jas 5:(1–12) 13–20

Holy Gospel: Mk 9:38–50
Sunday/Festival: Proper 22 (Oct 2–8)
Old Testament/First Reading: Gn 2:18–25
Epistle/Second Reading: Heb 2:1–13 (14–18)
Holy Gospel: Mk 10:2–16
Sunday/Festival: Proper 23 (Oct 9–15)
Old Testament/First Reading: Am 5:6–7, 10–15
Epistle/Second Reading: Heb 3:12–19
Holy Gospel: Mk 10:17–22
Sunday/Festival: Proper 24 (Oct 16–22)
Old Testament/First Reading: Ec 5:10–20
Epistle/Second Reading: Heb 4:1–13 (14–16)
Holy Gospel: Mk 10:23–31
Sunday/Festival: Proper 25 (Oct 23–29)
Old Testament/First Reading: Jer 31:7–9
Epistle/Second Reading: Heb 7:23–28
Holy Gospel: Mk 10:46–52
Sunday/Festival: Proper 26 (Oct 30—Nov 5)
Old Testament/First Reading: Dt 6:1–9
Epistle/Second Reading: Heb 9:11–14 (15–22)
Holy Gospel: Mk 12:28–37
Sunday/Festival: Proper 27 (Nov 6–12)
Old Testament/First Reading: 1Ki 17:8–16
Epistle/Second Reading: Heb 9:24–28
Holy Gospel: Mk 12:38–44
Sunday/Festival: Proper 28 (Nov 13–19)
Old Testament/First Reading: Dn 12:1–3
Epistle/Second Reading: Heb 10:11–25
Holy Gospel: Mk 13:1–13
Sunday/Festival: Proper 29 (Nov 20–26)
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 51:4–6
or Dn 7:9–10, 13–14
Epistle/Second Reading: Jude 20–25
or Rv 1:4b–8
Holy Gospel: Mk 13:24–37
or Jn 18:33–37

Three-Year Lectionary: Series C

Sunday/Festival: Advent 1
Old Testament/First Reading: Jer 33:14–16
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Th 3:9–13
Holy Gospel: Lk 19:28–40
or Lk 21:25–36
Sunday/Festival: Advent 2
Old Testament/First Reading: Mal 3:1–7b
Epistle/Second Reading: Php 1:2–11
Holy Gospel: Lk 3:1–14 (15–20)
Sunday/Festival: Advent 3
Old Testament/First Reading: Zep 3:14–20
Epistle/Second Reading: Php 4:4–7
Holy Gospel: Lk 7:18–28 (29–35)
Sunday/Festival: Advent 4
Old Testament/First Reading: Mi 5:2–5a
Epistle/Second Reading: Heb 10:5–10
Holy Gospel: Lk 1:39–45 (46–56)
Sunday/Festival: Christmas Eve
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 7:10–14
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Jn 4:7–16
Holy Gospel: Mt 1:18–25
Sunday/Festival: Christmas Midnight
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 9:2–7
Epistle/Second Reading: Ti 2:11–14
Holy Gospel: Lk 2:1–14 (15–20)
Sunday/Festival: Christmas Dawn
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 62:10–12
Epistle/Second Reading: Ti 3:4–7
Holy Gospel: Lk 2:(1–14) 15–20
Sunday/Festival: Christmas Day
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 52:7–10
Epistle/Second Reading: Heb 1:1–6 (7–12)
Holy Gospel: Jn 1:1–14 (15–18)
Sunday/Festival: Christmas 1
Old Testament/First Reading: Ex 13:1–3a, 11–15

Epistle/Second Reading: Col 3:12–17
Holy Gospel: Lk 2:22–40
Sunday/Festival: Christmas 2
Old Testament/First Reading: 1Ki 3:4–15
Epistle/Second Reading: Eph 1:3–14
Holy Gospel: Lk 2:40–52
Sunday/Festival: Epiphany
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 60:1–6
Epistle/Second Reading: Eph 3:1–12
Holy Gospel: Mt 2:1–12
Sunday/Festival: Baptism of Our Lord
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 43:1–7
Epistle/Second Reading: Rm 6:1–11
Holy Gospel: Lk 3:15–22
Sunday/Festival: Epiphany 2
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 62:1–5
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Co 12:1–11
Holy Gospel: Jn 2:1–11
Sunday/Festival: Epiphany 3
Old Testament/First Reading: Ne 8:1–3, 5–6, 8–10
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Co 12:12–31a
Holy Gospel: Lk 4:16–30
Sunday/Festival: Epiphany 4
Old Testament/First Reading: Jer 1:4–10 (17–19)
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Co 12:31b—13:13
Holy Gospel: Lk 4:31–44
Sunday/Festival: Epiphany 5
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 6:1–8 (9–13)
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Co 14:12b–20
Holy Gospel: Lk 5:1–11
Sunday/Festival: Epiphany 6
Old Testament/First Reading: Jer 17:5–8
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Co 15:(1–11) 12–20
Holy Gospel: Lk 6:17–26
Sunday/Festival: Epiphany 7
Old Testament/First Reading: Gn 45:3–15
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Co 15:21–26, 30–42

Holy Gospel: Lk 6:27–38
Sunday/Festival: Epiphany 8
Old Testament/First Reading: Jer 7:1–7 (8–15)
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Co 15:42–52 (53–58)
Holy Gospel: Lk 6:39–49
Sunday/Festival: Transfiguration
Old Testament/First Reading: Dt 34:1–12
Epistle/Second Reading: Heb 3:1–6
Holy Gospel: Lk 9:28–36
Sunday/Festival: Ash Wednesday
Old Testament/First Reading: Jl 2:12–19
Epistle/Second Reading: 2Co 5:20b—6:10
Holy Gospel: Mt 6:1–6, 16–21
Sunday/Festival: Lent 1
Old Testament/First Reading: Dt 26:1–11
Epistle/Second Reading: Rm 10:8b–13
Holy Gospel: Lk 4:1–13
Sunday/Festival: Lent 2
Old Testament/First Reading: Jer 26:8–15
Epistle/Second Reading: Php 3:17—4:1
Holy Gospel: Lk 13:31–35
Sunday/Festival: Lent 3
Old Testament/First Reading: Ezk 33:7–20
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Co 10:1–13
Holy Gospel: Lk 13:1–9
Sunday/Festival: Lent 4
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 12:1–6
Epistle/Second Reading: 2Co 5:16–21
Holy Gospel: Lk 15:1–3, 11–32
Sunday/Festival: Lent 5
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 43:16–21
Epistle/Second Reading: Php 3:(4b–7) 8–14
Holy Gospel: Lk 20:9–20
Sunday/Festival: Palm Sunday Procession
Holy Gospel: Jn 12:12–19
Sunday/Festival: Sunday of the Passion
Old Testament/First Reading: Dt 32:36–39

Epistle/Second Reading: Php 2:5–11
Holy Gospel: Lk 22:1—23:56
or Lk 23:1–56
or Jn 12:20–43
Sunday/Festival: Monday in Holy Week
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 50:5–10
Epistle/Second Reading: Heb 9:11–15
Holy Gospel: Mt 26:1—27:66
or Jn 12:1–23
Sunday/Festival: Tuesday in Holy Week
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 49:1–7
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Co 1:18–25 (26–31)
Holy Gospel: Mk 14:1—15:47
or Jn 12:23–50
Sunday/Festival: Wednesday in Holy Week
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 62:11—63:7
Epistle/Second Reading: Rm 5:6–11
Holy Gospel: Lk 22:1—23:56
or Jn 13:16–38
Sunday/Festival: Holy Thursday
Old Testament/First Reading: Jer 31:31–34
Epistle/Second Reading: Heb 10:15–25
Holy Gospel: Lk 22:7–20
Sunday/Festival: Holy Thursday (alt)
Old Testament/First Reading: Ex 12:1–14
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Co 11:23–32
Holy Gospel: Jn 13:1–17, 31b–35
Sunday/Festival: Good Friday
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 52:13—53:12
Epistle/Second Reading: Heb 4:14–16; 5:7–9
Holy Gospel: Jn 18:1—19:42
or Jn 19:17–30
Sunday/Festival: Holy Saturday
Old Testament/First Reading: Dn 6:1–24
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Pt 4:1–8
Holy Gospel: Mt 27:57–66
Sunday/Festival: Vigil of Easter

Old Testament/First Reading: Selected Readings
Sunday/Festival: Easter Sunrise
Old Testament/First Reading: Jb 19:23–27
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Co 15:51–57
Holy Gospel: Jn 20:1–18
Sunday/Festival: Easter Day
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 65:17–25
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Co 15:19–26
Holy Gospel: Lk 24:1–12
Sunday/Festival: Easter Evening/Monday
Old Testament/First Reading: Ex 15:1–18
or Dn 12:1c–3
Epistle/Second Reading: Ac 10:34–43
or 1Co 5:6b–8
Holy Gospel: Lk 24:13–35 (36–49)
Sunday/Festival: Easter Tuesday
Old Testament/First Reading: Dn 3:8–28
Epistle/Second Reading: Ac 13:26–33
Holy Gospel: Lk 24:36–49
Sunday/Festival: Easter Wednesday
Old Testament/First Reading: Ac 3:13–15, 17–19
Epistle/Second Reading: Col 3:1–7
or 1Co 11:23–26
Holy Gospel: Jn 21:1–14
Sunday/Festival: Easter 2
Old Testament/First Reading: Ac 5:12–20 (21–32)
Epistle/Second Reading: Rv 1:4–18
Holy Gospel: Jn 20:19–31
Sunday/Festival: Easter 3
Old Testament/First Reading: Ac 9:1–22
Epistle/Second Reading: Rv 5:(1–7) 8–14
Holy Gospel: Jn 21:1–14 (15–19)
Sunday/Festival: Easter 4
Old Testament/First Reading: Ac 20:17–35
Epistle/Second Reading: Rv 7:9–17
Holy Gospel: Jn 10:22–30
Sunday/Festival: Easter 5

Old Testament/First Reading: Ac 11:1–18
Epistle/Second Reading: Rv 21:1–7
Holy Gospel: Jn 16:12–22
or Jn 13:31–35
Sunday/Festival: Easter 6
Old Testament/First Reading: Ac 16:9–15
Epistle/Second Reading: Rv 21:9–14, 21–27
Holy Gospel: Jn 16:23–33
or Jn 5:1–9
Sunday/Festival: Ascension
Old Testament/First Reading: Ac 1:1–11
Epistle/Second Reading: Eph 1:15–23
Holy Gospel: Lk 24:44–53
Sunday/Festival: Easter 7
Old Testament/First Reading: Ac 1:12–26
Epistle/Second Reading: Rv 22:1–6 (7–11) 12–20
Holy Gospel: Jn 17:20–26
Sunday/Festival: Pentecost Eve
Old Testament/First Reading: Ex 19:1–9
Epistle/Second Reading: Rm 8:12–17 (22–27)
Holy Gospel: Jn 14:8–21
Sunday/Festival: Day of Pentecost
Old Testament/First Reading: Gn 11:1–9
Epistle/Second Reading: Ac 2:1–21
Holy Gospel: Jn 14:23–31
Sunday/Festival: Pentecost Evening/Monday
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 57:15–21
Epistle/Second Reading: Ac 10:34a, 42–48
Holy Gospel: Jn 3:16–21
Sunday/Festival: Pentecost Tuesday
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 32:14–20
Epistle/Second Reading: Ac 8:14–17
Holy Gospel: Jn 10:1–10
Sunday/Festival: Holy Trinity
Old Testament/First Reading: Pr 8:1–4, 22–31
Epistle/Second Reading: Ac 2:14a, 22–36
Holy Gospel: Jn 8:48–59

Sunday/Festival: Proper 3 (May 24–28)
Old Testament/First Reading: Gn 50:15–21
Epistle/Second Reading: Ac 2:14a, 36–47
Holy Gospel: Lk 6:(20–26) 27–42
Sunday/Festival: Proper 4 (May 29—June 4)
Old Testament/First Reading: 1Ki 8:22–24, 27–29, 41–43
Epistle/Second Reading: Gal 1:1–12
Holy Gospel: Lk 7:1–10
Sunday/Festival: Proper 5 (June 5–11)
Old Testament/First Reading: 1Ki 17:17–24
Epistle/Second Reading: Gal 1:11–24
Holy Gospel: Lk 7:11–17
Sunday/Festival: Proper 6 (June 12–18)
Old Testament/First Reading: 2Sm 11:26—12:10, 13–14
Epistle/Second Reading: Gal 2:15–21; 3:10–14
Holy Gospel: Lk 7:36—8:3
Sunday/Festival: Proper 7 (June 19–25)
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 65:1–9
Epistle/Second Reading: Gal 3:23—4:7
Holy Gospel: Lk 8:26–39
Sunday/Festival: Proper 8 (June 26—July 2)
Old Testament/First Reading: 1Ki 19:9b–21
Epistle/Second Reading: Gal 5:1, 13–25
Holy Gospel: Lk 9:51–62
Sunday/Festival: Proper 9 (July 3–9)
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 66:10–14
Epistle/Second Reading: Gal 6:1–10, 14–18
Holy Gospel: Lk 10:1–20
Sunday/Festival: Proper 10 (July 10–16)
Old Testament/First Reading: Lv (18:1–5) 19:9–18
Epistle/Second Reading: Col 1:1–14
Holy Gospel: Lk 10:25–37
Sunday/Festival: Proper 11 (July 17–23)
Old Testament/First Reading: Gn 18:1–10a (10b–14)
Epistle/Second Reading: Col 1:21–29
Holy Gospel: Lk 10:38–42
Sunday/Festival: Proper 12 (July 24–30)

Old Testament/First Reading: Gn 18:(17–19) 20–33
Epistle/Second Reading: Col 2:6–15 (16–19)
Holy Gospel: Lk 11:1–13
Sunday/Festival: Proper 13 (July 31—Aug 6)
Old Testament/First Reading: Ec 1:2, 12–14; 2:18–26
Epistle/Second Reading: Col 3:1–11
Holy Gospel: Lk 12:13–21
Sunday/Festival: Proper 14 (Aug 7–13)
Old Testament/First Reading: Gn 15:1–6
Epistle/Second Reading: Heb 11:1–16
Holy Gospel: Lk 12:22–34 (35–40)
Sunday/Festival: Proper 15 (Aug 14–20)
Old Testament/First Reading: Jer 23:16–29
Epistle/Second Reading: Heb 11:17–31 (32–40); 12:1–3
Holy Gospel: Lk 12:49–53 (54–56)
Sunday/Festival: Proper 16 (Aug 21–27)
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 66:18–23
Epistle/Second Reading: Heb 12:4–24 (25–29)
Holy Gospel: Lk 13:22–30
Sunday/Festival: Proper 17 (Aug 28—Sept 3)
Old Testament/First Reading: Pr 25:2–10
Epistle/Second Reading: Heb 13:1–17
Holy Gospel: Lk 14:1–14
Sunday/Festival: Proper 18 (Sept 4–10)
Old Testament/First Reading: Dt 30:15–20
Epistle/Second Reading: Phm 1–21
Holy Gospel: Lk 14:25–35
Sunday/Festival: Proper 19 (Sept 11–17)
Old Testament/First Reading: Ezk 34:11–24
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Tm 1:(5–11) 12–17
Holy Gospel: Lk 15:1–10
Sunday/Festival: Proper 20 (Sept 18–24)
Old Testament/First Reading: Am 8:4–7
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Tm 2:1–15
Holy Gospel: Lk 16:1–15
Sunday/Festival: Proper 21 (Sept 25—Oct 1)

Old Testament/First Reading: Am 6:1–7
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Tm 3:1–13
or 1Tm 6:6–19
Holy Gospel: Lk 16:19–31
Sunday/Festival: Proper 22 (Oct 2–8)
Old Testament/First Reading: Hab 1:1–4; 2:1–4
Epistle/Second Reading: 2Tm 1:1–14
Holy Gospel: Lk 17:1–10
Sunday/Festival: Proper 23 (Oct 9–15)
Old Testament/First Reading: Ru 1:1–19a
Epistle/Second Reading: 2Tm 2:1–13
Holy Gospel: Lk 17:11–19
Sunday/Festival: Proper 24 (Oct 16–22)
Old Testament/First Reading: Gn 32:22–30
Epistle/Second Reading: 2Tm 3:14—4:5
Holy Gospel: Lk 18:1–8
Sunday/Festival: Proper 25 (Oct 23–29)
Old Testament/First Reading: Gn 4:1–15
Epistle/Second Reading: 2Tm 4:6–8, 16–18
Holy Gospel: Lk 18:9–17
Sunday/Festival: Proper 26 (Oct 30—Nov 5)
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 1:10–18
Epistle/Second Reading: 2Th 1:1–5 (6–10) 11–12
Holy Gospel: Lk 19:1–10
Sunday/Festival: Proper 27 (Nov 6–12)
Old Testament/First Reading: Ex 3:1–15
Epistle/Second Reading: 2Th 2:1–8, 13–17
Holy Gospel: Lk 20:27–40
Sunday/Festival: Proper 28 (Nov 13–19)
Old Testament/First Reading: Mal 4:1–6
Epistle/Second Reading: 2Th 3:(1–5) 6–13
Holy Gospel: Lk 21:5–28 (29–36)
Sunday/Festival: Proper 29 (Nov 20–26)
Old Testament/First Reading: Mal 3:13–18
Epistle/Second Reading: Col 1:13–20
Holy Gospel: Lk 23:27–43

One-Year Lectionary

Sunday/Festival: Advent 1
Old Testament: Jer 23:5–8
Epistle: Rm 13:(8–10) 11–14
Holy Gospel: Mt 21:1–9
Sunday/Festival: Advent 2
Old Testament: Mal 4:1–6
Epistle: Rm 15:4–13
Holy Gospel: Lk 21:25–36
Sunday/Festival: Advent 3
Old Testament: Is 40:1–8 (9–11)
Epistle: 1Co 4:1–5
Holy Gospel: Mt 11:2–10 (11)
Sunday/Festival: Advent 4
Old Testament: Dt 18:15–19
Epistle: Php 4:4–7
Holy Gospel: Jn 1:19–28
or Lk 1:39–56
Sunday/Festival: Christmas Eve
Old Testament: Is 7:10–14
Epistle: 1Jn 4:7–16
Holy Gospel: Mt 1:18–25
Sunday/Festival: Christmas Midnight
Old Testament: Is 9:2–7
Epistle: Ti 2:11–14
Holy Gospel: Lk 2:1–14 (15–20)
Sunday/Festival: Christmas Dawn
Old Testament: Mi 5:2–5a
Epistle: Ti 3:4–7
Holy Gospel: Lk 2:(1–14) 15–20
Sunday/Festival: Christmas Day
Old Testament: Ex 40:17–21, 34–38
Epistle: Ti 3:4–7
Holy Gospel: Jn 1:1–14 (15–18)
Sunday/Festival: Christmas 1

Old Testament: Is 11:1–5
or 2Sm 7:1–16
Epistle: Gal 4:1–7
Holy Gospel: Lk 2:(22–32) 33–40
Sunday/Festival: Christmas 2
Old Testament: Gn 46:1–7
Epistle: 1Pt 4:12–19
Holy Gospel: Mt 2:13–23
Sunday/Festival: Epiphany
Old Testament: Is 60:1–6
Epistle: Eph 3:1–12
Holy Gospel: Mt 2:1–12
Sunday/Festival: Epiphany 1
Old Testament: 1Ki 8:6–13
Epistle: Rm 12:1–5
Holy Gospel: Lk 2:41–52
Sunday/Festival: *or* Baptism of Our Lord
Old Testament: Jsh 3:1–3, 7–8, 13–17
or Is 42:1–7
Epistle: 1Co 1:26–31
Holy Gospel: Mt 3:13–17
Sunday/Festival: Epiphany 2
Old Testament: Ex 33:12–23
or Am 9:11–15
Epistle: Eph 5:22–33
or Rm 12:6–16
Holy Gospel: Jn 2:1–11
Sunday/Festival: Epiphany 3
Old Testament: 2Ki 5:1–15a
Epistle: Rm 1:8–17
or Rm 12:16–21
Holy Gospel: Mt 8:1–13
Sunday/Festival: Epiphany 4
Old Testament: Jnh 1:1–17
Epistle: Rm 8:18–23
or Rm 13:8–10
Holy Gospel: Mt 8:23–27

Sunday/Festival: Epiphany 5
Old Testament: Gn 18:20–33
Epistle: Col 3:12–17
Holy Gospel: Mt 13:24–30 (36–43)
Sunday/Festival: Transfiguration
Old Testament: Ex 34:29–35
or Ex 3:1–14
Epistle: 2Pt 1:16–21
Holy Gospel: Mt 17:1–9
Sunday/Festival: Septuagesima
Old Testament: Ex 17:1–7
Epistle: 1Co 9:24—10:5
Holy Gospel: Mt 20:1–16
Sunday/Festival: Sexagesima
Old Testament: Is 55:10–13
Epistle: 2Co 11:19—12:9
or Heb 4:9–13
Holy Gospel: Lk 8:4–15
Sunday/Festival: Quinquagesima
Old Testament: 1Sm 16:1–13
or Is 35:3–7
Epistle: 1Co 13:1–13
Holy Gospel: Lk 18:31–43
Sunday/Festival: Ash Wednesday
Old Testament: Jl 2:12–19
or Jnh 3:1–10
Epistle: 2Pt 1:2–11
Holy Gospel: Mt 6:(1–6) 16–21
Sunday/Festival: Lent 1
Old Testament: Gn 3:1–21
or 1Sm 17:40–51
Epistle: 2Co 6:1–10
or Heb 4:14–16
Holy Gospel: Mt 4:1–11
Sunday/Festival: Lent 2
Old Testament: Gn 32:22–32

Epistle: 1Th 4:1–7
or Rm 5:1–5
Holy Gospel: Mt 15:21–28
Sunday/Festival: Lent 3
Old Testament: Ex 8:16–24
or Jer 26:1–15
Epistle: Eph 5:1–9
Holy Gospel: Lk 11:14–28
Sunday/Festival: Lent 4
Old Testament: Ex 16:2–21
or Is 49:8–13
Epistle: Gal 4:21–31
or Ac 2:41–47
Holy Gospel: Jn 6:1–15
Sunday/Festival: Lent 5
Old Testament: Gn 22:1–14
Epistle: Heb 9:11–15
Holy Gospel: Jn 8:(42–45) 46–59
Sunday/Festival: Palm Sunday Procession
Holy Gospel: Mt 21:1–9
or Jn 12:12–19
Sunday/Festival: Sunday of the Passion
Old Testament: Zec 9:9–12
Epistle: Php 2:5–11
Holy Gospel: Mt 26:1—27:66
or Mt 27:11–54
Sunday/Festival: Monday in Holy Week
Old Testament: Is 50:5–10
Epistle: 1Pt 2:21–24
Holy Gospel: Jn 12:1–36 (37–43)
Sunday/Festival: Tuesday in Holy Week
Old Testament: Jer 11:18–20
Epistle: 1Tm 6:12–14
Holy Gospel: Mk 14:1—15:47
Sunday/Festival: Wednesday in Holy Week
Old Testament: Is 62:11—63:7
Epistle: Rv 1:5b–7

Holy Gospel: Lk 22:1—23:56
Sunday/Festival: Holy Thursday
Old Testament: Ex 12:1–14
or Ex 24:3–11
Epistle: 1Co 11:23–32
Holy Gospel: Jn 13:1–15 (34–35)
Sunday/Festival: Good Friday
Old Testament: Is 52:13—53:12
Epistle: 2Co 5:14–21
Holy Gospel: Jn 18:1—19:42
Sunday/Festival: Holy Saturday
Old Testament: Dn 6:1–24
Epistle: 1Pt 3:17–22
Holy Gospel: Mt 27:57–66
Sunday/Festival: Vigil of Easter
Old Testament: Selected Readings
Sunday/Festival: Easter Sunrise
Old Testament: Is 25:6–9
or Ex 14:10—15:1
Epistle: 1Co 15:1–11
or 1Co 15:12–25
Holy Gospel: Jn 20:1–18
Sunday/Festival: Easter Day
Old Testament: Jb 19:23–27
Epistle: 1Co 5:6–8
or 1Co 15:51–57
Holy Gospel: Mk 16:1–8
Sunday/Festival: Easter Evening/Monday
Old Testament: Ex 15:1–18
Epistle: Ac 10:34–43
Holy Gospel: Lk 24:13–35
Sunday/Festival: Easter Tuesday
Old Testament: Dn 3:8–28
Epistle: Ac 13:26–33
Holy Gospel: Lk 24:36–48 (49)
Sunday/Festival: Easter Wednesday
Old Testament: Ac 3:13–15, 17–19

Epistle: Col 3:1–7
or 1Co 11:23–26
Holy Gospel: Jn 21:1–14
Sunday/Festival: Easter 2
Old Testament: Ezk 37:1–14
Epistle: 1Jn 5:4–10
Holy Gospel: Jn 20:19–31
Sunday/Festival: Easter 3
Old Testament: Ezk 34:11–16
Epistle: 1Pt 2:21–25
Holy Gospel: Jn 10:11–16
Sunday/Festival: Easter 4
Old Testament: Is 40:25–31
or Lm 3:22–33
Epistle: 1Pt 2:11–20
or 1Jn 3:1–3
Holy Gospel: Jn 16:16–22
Sunday/Festival: Easter 5
Old Testament: Is 12:1–6
Epistle: Jas 1:16–21
Holy Gospel: Jn 16:5–15
Sunday/Festival: Easter 6
Old Testament: Nu 21:4–9
Epistle: 1Tm 2:1–6
or Jas 1:22–27
Holy Gospel: Jn 16:23–30 (31–33)
Sunday/Festival: Ascension
Old Testament: 2Ki 2:5–15
Epistle: Ac 1:1–11
Holy Gospel: Mk 16:14–20
or Lk 24:44–53
Sunday/Festival: Easter 7
Old Testament: Ezk 36:22–28
Epistle: 1Pt 4:7–11 (12–14)
Holy Gospel: Jn 15:26—16:4
Sunday/Festival: Pentecost Eve
Old Testament: Jl 3:1–5

Epistle: Rm 8:12–17
Holy Gospel: Jn 14:15–21
Sunday/Festival: Day of Pentecost
Old Testament: Gn 11:1–9
Epistle: Ac 2:1–21
Holy Gospel: Jn 14:23–31
Sunday/Festival: Pentecost Evening/Monday
Old Testament: Is 57:15–21
Epistle: Ac 10:34a, 42–48
Holy Gospel: Jn 3:16–21
Sunday/Festival: Pentecost Tuesday
Old Testament: Is 32:14–20
Epistle: Ac 8:14–17
Holy Gospel: Jn 10:1–10
Sunday/Festival: Holy Trinity
Old Testament: Is 6:1–7
Epistle: Rm 11:33–36
Holy Gospel: Jn 3:1–15 (16–17)
Sunday/Festival: Trinity 1
Old Testament: Gn 15:1–6
Epistle: 1Jn 4:16–21
Holy Gospel: Lk 16:19–31
Sunday/Festival: Trinity 2
Old Testament: Pr 9:1–10
Epistle: Eph 2:13–22
or 1Jn 3:13–18
Holy Gospel: Lk 14:15–24
Sunday/Festival: Trinity 3
Old Testament: Mi 7:18–20
Epistle: 1Tm 1:12–17
or 1Pt 5:6–11
Holy Gospel: Lk 15:1–10
or Lk 15:11–32
Sunday/Festival: Trinity 4
Old Testament: Gn 50:15–21
Epistle: Rm 12:14–21
or Rm 8:18–23

Holy Gospel: Lk 6:36–42
Sunday/Festival: Trinity 5
Old Testament: 1Ki 19:11–21
Epistle: 1Co 1:18–25
or 1Pt 3:8–15
Holy Gospel: Lk 5:1–11
Sunday/Festival: Trinity 6
Old Testament: Ex 20:1–17
Epistle: Rm 6:(1–2) 3–11
Holy Gospel: Mt 5:(17–19) 20–26
Sunday/Festival: Trinity 7
Old Testament: Gn 2:7–17
Epistle: Rm 6:19–23
Holy Gospel: Mk 8:1–9
Sunday/Festival: Trinity 8
Old Testament: Jer 23:16–29
Epistle: Ac 20:27–38
or Rm 8:12–17
Holy Gospel: Mt 7:15–23
Sunday/Festival: Trinity 9
Old Testament: 2Sm 22:26–34
Epistle: 1Co 10:6–13
Holy Gospel: Lk 16:1–9 (10–13)
Sunday/Festival: Trinity 10
Old Testament: Jer 8:4–12
or Jer 7:1–11
Epistle: Rm 9:30—10:4
or 1Co 12:1–11
Holy Gospel: Lk 19:41–48
Sunday/Festival: Trinity 11
Old Testament: Gn 4:1–15
Epistle: Eph 2:1–10
or 1Co 15:1–10
Holy Gospel: Lk 18:9–14
Sunday/Festival: Trinity 12
Old Testament: Is 29:17–24

Epistle: 2Co 3:4–11
or Rm 10:9–17
Holy Gospel: Mk 7:31–37
Sunday/Festival: Trinity 13
Old Testament: 2Ch 28:8–15
Epistle: Gal 3:15–22
Holy Gospel: Lk 10:23–37
Sunday/Festival: Trinity 14
Old Testament: Pr 4:10–23
Epistle: Gal 5:16–24
Holy Gospel: Lk 17:11–19
Sunday/Festival: Trinity 15
Old Testament: 1Ki 17:8–16
Epistle: Gal 5:25—6:10
Holy Gospel: Mt 6:24–34
Sunday/Festival: Trinity 16
Old Testament: 1Ki 17:17–24
Epistle: Eph 3:13–21
Holy Gospel: Lk 7:11–17
Sunday/Festival: Trinity 17
Old Testament: Pr 25:6–14
Epistle: Eph 4:1–6
Holy Gospel: Lk 14:1–11
Sunday/Festival: Trinity 18
Old Testament: Dt 10:12–21
Epistle: 1Co 1:(1–3) 4–9
Holy Gospel: Mt 22:34–46
Sunday/Festival: Trinity 19
Old Testament: Gn 28:10–17
Epistle: Eph 4:22–28
Holy Gospel: Mt 9:1–8
Sunday/Festival: Trinity 20
Old Testament: Is 55:1–9
Epistle: Eph 5:15–21
Holy Gospel: Mt 22:1–14
or Mt 21:33–44
Sunday/Festival: Trinity 21

Old Testament: Gn 1:1—2:3
Epistle: Eph 6:10–17
Holy Gospel: Jn 4:46–54
Sunday/Festival: Trinity 22
Old Testament: Mi 6:6–8
Epistle: Php 1:3–11
Holy Gospel: Mt 18:21–35
Sunday/Festival: Trinity 23
Old Testament: Pr 8:11–22
Epistle: Php 3:17–21
Holy Gospel: Mt 22:15–22
Sunday/Festival: Trinity 24
Old Testament: Is 51:9–16
Epistle: Col 1:9–14
Holy Gospel: Mt 9:18–26
Sunday/Festival: Trinity 25
Old Testament: Ex 32:1–20
or Jb 14:1–6
Epistle: 1Th 4:13–18
Holy Gospel: Mt 24:15–28
or Lk 17:20–30
Sunday/Festival: Trinity 26
Old Testament: Dn 7:9–14
Epistle: 2Pt 3:3–14
Holy Gospel: Mt 25:31–46
Sunday/Festival: Last Sunday
Old Testament: Is 65:17–25
Epistle: 1Th 5:1–11
Holy Gospel: Mt 25:1–13

Feasts and Festivals

Sunday/Festival: St. Andrew
November 30
Old Testament/First Reading: Ezk 3:16–21
Epistle/Second Reading: Rm 10:8b–18
Holy Gospel: Jn 1:35–42a
Sunday/Festival: St. Thomas
December 21
Old Testament/First Reading: Jgs 6:36–40
Epistle/Second Reading: Eph 4:7, 11–16
Holy Gospel: Jn 20:24–29
Sunday/Festival: St. Stephen
December 26
Old Testament/First Reading: 2Ch 24:17–22
Epistle/Second Reading: Ac 6:8—7:2a, 51–60
Holy Gospel: Mt 23:34–39
Sunday/Festival: St. John
December 27
Old Testament/First Reading: Rv 1:1–6
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Jn 1:1—2:2
Holy Gospel: Jn 21:20–25
Sunday/Festival: Holy Innocents
December 28
Old Testament/First Reading: Jer 31:15–17
Epistle/Second Reading: Rv 14:1–5
Holy Gospel: Mt 2:13–18
Sunday/Festival: New Year's Eve
December 31
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 30:(8–14) 15–17
Epistle/Second Reading: Rm 8:31b–39
Holy Gospel: Lk 12:35–40
Sunday/Festival: Circumcision and
Name of Jesus
January 1
Old Testament/First Reading: Nu 6:22–27
Epistle/Second Reading: Gal 3:23–29
Holy Gospel: Lk 2:21

Sunday/Festival: Confession of St. Peter
January 18
Old Testament/First Reading: Ac 4:8–13
Epistle/Second Reading: 2Pt 1:1–15
Holy Gospel: Mk 8:27–35 (36—9:1)
Sunday/Festival: St. Timothy
January 24
Old Testament/First Reading: Ac 16:1–5
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Tm 6:11–16
Holy Gospel: Mt 24:42–47
Sunday/Festival: Conversion of St. Paul
January 25
Old Testament/First Reading: Ac 9:1–22
Epistle/Second Reading: Gal 1:11–24
Holy Gospel: Mt 19:27–30
Sunday/Festival: St. Titus
January 26
Old Testament/First Reading: Ac 20:28–35
Epistle/Second Reading: Ti 1:1–9
Holy Gospel: Lk 10:1–9
Sunday/Festival: Purification of Mary and
Presentation of Our Lord
February 2
Old Testament/First Reading: 1Sm 1:21–28
Epistle/Second Reading: Heb 2:14–18
Holy Gospel: Lk 2:22–32 (33–40)
Sunday/Festival: St. Matthias
February 24
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 66:1–2
Epistle/Second Reading: Ac 1:15–26
Holy Gospel: Mt 11:25–30
Sunday/Festival: St. Joseph
March 19
Old Testament/First Reading: 2Sm 7:4–16
Epistle/Second Reading: Rm 4:13–18
Holy Gospel: Mt 2:13–15, 19–23

Sunday/Festival: Annunciation of Our Lord
March 25
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 7:10–14
Epistle/Second Reading: Heb 10:4–10
Holy Gospel: Lk 1:26–38
Sunday/Festival: St. Mark
April 25
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 52:7–10
Epistle/Second Reading: 2Tm 4:5–18
Holy Gospel: Mk 16:14–20
Sunday/Festival: St. Philip and St. James
May 1
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 30:18–21
Epistle/Second Reading: Eph 2:19–22
Holy Gospel: Jn 14:1–14
Sunday/Festival: The Visitation
May 31 (3-Yr. Lect.)
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 11:1–5
Epistle/Second Reading: Rm 12:9–16
Holy Gospel: Lk 1:39–45 (46–56)
Sunday/Festival: St. Barnabas
June 11
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 42:5–12
Epistle/Second Reading: Ac 11:19–30; 13:1–3
Holy Gospel: Mk 6:7–13
Sunday/Festival: Nativity of St. John the Baptist
June 24
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 40:1–5
Epistle/Second Reading: Ac 13:13–26
Holy Gospel: Lk 1:57–80
Sunday/Festival: St. Peter and St. Paul
June 29
Old Testament/First Reading: Ac 15:1–12 (13–21)
Epistle/Second Reading: Gal 2:1–10
Holy Gospel: Mt 16:13–19
Sunday/Festival: The Visitation
July 2 (1-Yr. Lect.)

Old Testament/First Reading: Is 11:1–5
Epistle/Second Reading: Rm 12:9–16
Holy Gospel: Lk 1:39–45 (46–56)
Sunday/Festival: St. Mary Magdalene
July 22
Old Testament/First Reading: Pr 31:10–31
Epistle/Second Reading: Ac 13:26–31
Holy Gospel: Jn 20:1–2, 10–18
Sunday/Festival: St. James the Elder
July 25
Old Testament/First Reading: Ac 11:27—12:5
Epistle/Second Reading: Rm 8:28–39
Holy Gospel: Mk 10:35–45
Sunday/Festival: St. Mary, Mother of Our Lord
August 15
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 61:7–11
Epistle/Second Reading: Gal 4:4–7
Holy Gospel: Lk 1:(39–45) 46–55
Sunday/Festival: St. Bartholomew
August 24
Old Testament/First Reading: Pr 3:1–8
Epistle/Second Reading: 2Co 4:7–10
Holy Gospel: Lk 22:24–30
or Jn 1:43–51
Sunday/Festival: Martyrdom of St. John the Baptist
August 29
Old Testament/First Reading: Rv 6:9–11
Epistle/Second Reading: Rm 6:1–5
Holy Gospel: Mk 6:14–29
Sunday/Festival: Holy Cross Day
September 14
Old Testament/First Reading: Nu 21:4–9
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Co 1:18–25
Holy Gospel: Jn 12:20–33
Sunday/Festival: St. Matthew
September 21

Old Testament/First Reading: Ezk 2:8—3:11
Epistle/Second Reading: Eph 4:7–16
Holy Gospel: Mt 9:9–13
Sunday/Festival: St. Michael and All Angels
September 29
Old Testament/First Reading: Dn 10:10–14; 12:1–3
Epistle/Second Reading: Rv 12:7–12
Holy Gospel: Mt 18:1–11
or Lk 10:17–20
Sunday/Festival: St. Luke
October 18
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 35:5–8
Epistle/Second Reading: 2Tm 4:5–18
Holy Gospel: Lk 10:1–9
Sunday/Festival: St. James of Jerusalem
October 23
Old Testament/First Reading: Ac 15:12–22a
Epistle/Second Reading: Jas 1:1–12
Holy Gospel: Mt 13:54–58
Sunday/Festival: St. Simon and St. Jude
October 28
Old Testament/First Reading: Jer 26:1–16
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Pt 1:3–9
Holy Gospel: Jn 15:(12–16) 17–21
Sunday/Festival: Reformation Day
October 31
Old Testament/First Reading: Rv 14:6–7
Epistle/Second Reading: Rm 3:19–28
Holy Gospel: Jn 8:31–36
or Mt 11:12–19
Sunday/Festival: All Saints' Day
November 1
Old Testament/First Reading: Rv 7:(2–8) 9–17
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Jn 3:1–3
Holy Gospel: Mt 5:1–12

Occasions

Occasion: Anniversary of a Congregation
Old Testament/First Reading: 1Ki 8:22–30
Epistle/Second Reading: Rv 21:1–5
Holy Gospel: Lk 19:1–10
Occasion: Mission Observance
Old Testament/First Reading: Is 62:1–7
Epistle/Second Reading: Rm 10:11–17
Holy Gospel: Lk 24:44–53
Occasion: Christian Education
Old Testament/First Reading: Dt 6:4–15
Epistle/Second Reading: Ac 2:37–41
Holy Gospel: Lk 18:15–17
Occasion: Harvest Observance
Old Testament/First Reading: Dt 26:1–11
Epistle/Second Reading: 2Co 9:6–15
Holy Gospel: Lk 12:13–21
Occasion: Day of Thanksgiving
Old Testament/First Reading: Dt 8:1–10
Epistle/Second Reading: Php 4:6–20
or 1Tm 2:1–4
Holy Gospel: Lk 17:11–19
Occasion: Day of Supplication and Prayer
Old Testament/First Reading: Jl 2:12–19
Epistle/Second Reading: 1Jn 1:5–2:2
Holy Gospel: Mt 6:16–21
Occasion: Day of National or Local Tragedy
Old Testament/First Reading: Jb 30:16–24
or Rv 7:13–17
Epistle/Second Reading: Rm 8:31–39
or Heb 12:4–13
Holy Gospel: Lk 13:1–9
or Mt 24:32–35

Dates of Easter

Easter Day is always the Sunday after the full moon that occurs on or after the spring equinox on March 21. This full moon may happen on any date between March 21 and April 18 inclusive. If the full moon falls on a Sunday, Easter Day is the Sunday following. Easter Day cannot be earlier than March 22 or later than April 25.

Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent, falls in the seventh week before Easter. The Ascension of Our Lord occurs on a Thursday, forty days after Easter Day. The Day of Pentecost is seven weeks, or the fiftieth day, after Easter Day.

2010—April 4
2011—April 24
2012—April 8
2013—March 31
2014—April 20
2015—April 5
2016—March 27
2017—April 16
2018—April 1
2019—April 21
2020—April 12
2021—April 4
2022—April 17
2023—April 9
2024—March 31
2025—April 20
2026—April 5
2027—March 28
2028—April 16
2029—April 1
2030—April 21

[1] Because the date of Easter changes from year to year, its place on the calendar during a particular year determines whether there will be a greater or lesser number of Sundays during the season after Pentecost.

For the Three-Year Lectionary, each set of appointed readings is assigned to a specific seven-day period during the season after Pentecost and given a "proper" number. When Easter falls late, the proper numbers immediately following Trinity Sunday are skipped, and the readings resume with the proper number appropriate to the seven-day period. For the One-Year Lectionary, the propers appointed for the Trinity Season follow immediately after Trinity Sunday, and the Sundays immediately prior to the Last Sunday of the Church Year are skipped.

A Two-Year Reading Plan

A life goal for every mature Christian should be to read the entire Holy Bible. To read *The Lutheran Study Bible* devotionally, bookmark this page and adopt the steps below:

1. Recite the "Prayer to Abide by God's Revealed Will" or another prayer about God's Word (see the inside front and back covers or pp 2374–77).
2. Read the assigned Bible passage in the reading plan below.
3. Read the Law and Gospel Application Note(s) for the assigned passage.
4. Add your daily prayer concerns, beginning with the brief prayer(s) in the application notes.

Options:

- Supplement your readings with a psalm as described on p 845.
- Read the Bible passages in conjunction with other devotional resources.
- Journal your insights and prayer concerns.

Using this devotional plan will guide you through the entire Bible in two years. (You do not have to start at the beginning of the year; you can start immediately with Week 1.)

Week 1

- ❑ Mon Gn 1:1–2:25
- ❑ Tues Gn 3:1–24
- ❑ Wed Gn 4:1–6:8
- ❑ Thurs Gn 6:9–8:22
- ❑ Fri Gn 9:1–10:32
- ❑ Sat Gn 11:1–12:9

Week 2

- Mon Gn 12:10–13:18
- Tues Gn 14:1–15:21
- Wed Gn 16:1–17:27
- Thurs Gn 18:1–19:38
- Fri Gn 20:1–21:34
- Sat Gn 22:1–24

Week 3

- Mon Gn 23:1–24:67
- Tues Gn 25:1–26:35
- Wed Gn 27:1–28:22
- Thurs Gn 29:1–30:43
- Fri Gn 31:1–33:20
- Sat Gn 34:1–35:29

Week 4

- Mon Gn 36:1–37:36
- Tues Gn 38:1–39:23
- Wed Gn 40:1–23
- Thurs Gn 41:1–40
- Fri Gn 41:41–57
- Sat Gn 42:1–44:34

Week 5

- Mon Gn 45:1–46:34
- Tues Gn 47:1–48:22
- Wed Gn 49:1–50:26
- Thurs Ex 1:1–22
- Fri Ex 2:1–25
- Sat Ex 3:1–4:31

Week 6

- Mon Ex 5:1–6:30
- Tues Ex 7:1–25
- Wed Ex 8:1–9:35
- Thurs Ex 10:1–29

- Fri Ex 11:1–12:51
- Sat Ex 13:1–22

Week 7

- Mon Ex 14:1–31
- Tues Ex 15:1–27
- Wed Ex 16:1–17:16
- Thurs Ex 18:1–27
- Fri Ex 19:1–20:26
- Sat Ex 21:1–22:31

Week 8

- Mon Ex 23:1–24:18
- Tues Ex 25:1–27:21
- Wed Ex 28:1–29:46
- Thurs Ex 30:1–31:18
- Fri Ex 32:1–35
- Sat Ex 33:1–23

Week 9

- Mon Ex 34:1–35
- Tues Ex 35:1–36:38
- Wed Ex 37:1–38:31
- Thurs Ex 39:1–40:38
- Fri Lv 1:1–17
- Sat Lv 2:1–3:17

Week 10

- Mon Lv 4:1–6:30
- Tues Lv 7:1–9:24
- Wed Lv 10:1–11:47
- Thurs Lv 12:1–15:33
- Fri Lv 16:1–17:16
- Sat Lv 18:1–19:37

Week 11

- Mon Lv 20:1–22:33

- Tues Lv 23:1–25:55
- Wed Lv 26:1–27:34
- Thurs Nu 1:1–3:51
- Fri Nu 4:1–6:27
- Sat Nu 7:1–8:26

Week 12

- Mon Nu 9:1–10:36
- Tues Nu 11:1–12:16
- Wed Nu 13:1–15:41
- Thurs Nu 16:1–18:32
- Fri Nu 19:1–20:29
- Sat Nu 21:1–35

Week 13

- Mon Nu 22:1–25:18
- Tues Nu 26:1–27:23
- Wed Nu 28:1–30:16
- Thurs Nu 31:1–54
- Fri Nu 32:1–34:29
- Sat Nu 35:1–36:13

Week 14

- Mon Dt 1:1–46
- Tues Dt 2:1–37
- Wed Dt 3:1–29
- Thurs Dt 4:1–49
- Fri Dt 5:1–33
- Sat Dt 6:1–25

Week 15

- Mon Dt 7:1–26
- Tues Dt 8:1–20
- Wed Dt 9:1–10:22
- Thurs Dt 11:1–12:32
- Fri Dt 13:1–18

- Sat Dt 14:1–15:23

Week 16

- Mon Dt 16:1–17:20
- Tues Dt 18:1–19:21
- Wed Dt 20:1–21:23
- Thurs Dt 22:1–23:25
- Fri Dt 24:1–22
- Sat Dt 25:1–26:19

Week 17

- Mon Dt 27:1–26
- Tues Dt 28:1–68
- Wed Dt 29:1–29
- Thurs Dt 30:1–20
- Fri Dt 31:1–29
- Sat Dt 31:30–32:52

Week 18

- Mon Dt 33:1–29
- Tues Dt 34:1–12
- Wed Jsh 1:1–18
- Thurs Jsh 2:1–3:17
- Fri Jsh 4:1–5:12
- Sat Jsh 5:13–7:26

Week 19

- Mon Jsh 8:1–9:27
- Tues Jsh 10:1–43
- Wed Jsh 11:1–12:24
- Thurs Jsh 13:1–15:63
- Fri Jsh 16:1–17:18
- Sat Jsh 18:1–19:51

Week 20

- Mon Jsh 20:1–21:45
- Tues Jsh 22:1–34

- Wed Jsh 23:1–16
- Thurs Jsh 24:1–33
- Fri Jgs 1:1–36
- Sat Jgs 2:1–23

Week 21

- Mon Jgs 3:1–31
- Tues Jgs 4:1–5:31
- Wed Jgs 6:1–8:35
- Thurs Jgs 9:1–10:18
- Fri Jgs 11:1–12:15
- Sat Jgs 13:1–16:31

Week 22

- Mon Jgs 17:1–18:31
- Tues Jgs 19:1–20:48
- Wed Jgs 21:1–25
- Thurs Ru 1:1–2:23
- Fri Ru 3:1–4:22
- Sat 1Sm 1:1–28

Week 23

- Mon 1Sm 2:1–36
- Tues 1Sm 3:1–21
- Wed 1Sm 4:1–22
- Thurs 1Sm 5:1–7:2
- Fri 1Sm 7:3–17
- Sat 1Sm 8:1–22

Week 24

- Mon 1Sm 9:1–10:27
- Tues 1Sm 11:1–15
- Wed 1Sm 12:1–25
- Thurs 1Sm 13:1–23
- Fri 1Sm 14:1–52
- Sat 1Sm 15:1–35

Week 25

- Mon 1Sm 16:1–23
- Tues 1Sm 17:1–58
- Wed 1Sm 18:1–19:24
- Thurs 1Sm 20:1–21:15
- Fri 1Sm 22:1–23
- Sat 1Sm 23:1–29

Week 26

- Mon 1Sm 24:1–22
- Tues 1Sm 25:1–44
- Wed 1Sm 26:1–25
- Thurs 1Sm 27:1–29:11
- Fri 1Sm 30:1–31
- Sat 1Sm 31:1–13

Week 27

- Mon 2Sm 1:1–2:32
- Tues 2Sm 3:1–4:12
- Wed 2Sm 5:1–25
- Thurs 2Sm 6:1–23
- Fri 2Sm 7:1–29
- Sat 2Sm 8:1–10:19

Week 28

- Mon 2Sm 11:1–12:31
- Tues 2Sm 13:1–14:24
- Wed 2Sm 14:25–16:23
- Thurs 2Sm 17:1–18:33
- Fri 2Sm 19:1–20:26
- Sat 2Sm 21:1–22:51

Week 29

- Mon 2Sm 23:1–39
- Tues 2Sm 24:1–25
- Wed 1Ki 1:1–2:46

- Thurs 1Ki 3:1–4:34
- Fri 1Ki 5:1–7:51
- Sat 1Ki 8:1–66

Week 30

- Mon 1Ki 9:1–10:29
- Tues 1Ki 11:1–43
- Wed 1Ki 12:1–33
- Thurs 1Ki 13:1–14:31
- Fri 1Ki 15:1–16:34
- Sat 1Ki 17:1–18:46

Week 31

- Mon 1Ki 19:1–21
- Tues 1Ki 20:1–43
- Wed 1Ki 21:1–22:53
- Thurs 2Ki 1:1–2:25
- Fri 2Ki 3:1–4:44
- Sat 2Ki 5:1–27

Week 32

- Mon 2Ki 6:1–7:20
- Tues 2Ki 8:1–29
- Wed 2Ki 9:1–10:36
- Thurs 2Ki 11:1–12:21
- Fri 2Ki 13:1–14:29
- Sat 2Ki 15:1–16:20

Week 33

- Mon 2Ki 17:1–41
- Tues 2Ki 18:1–19:37
- Wed 2Ki 20:1–21
- Thurs 2Ki 21:1–26
- Fri 2Ki 22:1–23:37
- Sat 2Ki 24:1–25:30

Week 34

- Mon 1Ch 1:1–4:43
- Tues 1Ch 5:1–8:40
- Wed 1Ch 9:1–12:40
- Thurs 1Ch 13:1–14:17
- Fri 1Ch 15:1–16:43
- Sat 1Ch 17:1–27

Week 35

- Mon 1Ch 18:1–20:8
- Tues 1Ch 21:1–30
- Wed 1Ch 22:1–19
- Thurs 1Ch 23:1–27:34
- Fri 1Ch 28:1–21
- Sat 1Ch 29:1–30

Week 36

- Mon 2Ch 1:1–2:18
- Tues 2Ch 3:1–5:14
- Wed 2Ch 6:1–7:22
- Thurs 2Ch 8:1–9:31
- Fri 2Ch 10:1–11:23
- Sat 2Ch 12:1–16

Week 37

- Mon 2Ch 13:1–14:15
- Tues 2Ch 15:1–16:14
- Wed 2Ch 17:1–18:34
- Thurs 2Ch 19:1–20:37
- Fri 2Ch 21:1–22:12
- Sat 2Ch 23:1–24:27

Week 38

- Mon 2Ch 25:1–26:23
- Tues 2Ch 27:1–28:27
- Wed 2Ch 29:1–36
- Thurs 2Ch 30:1–31:21

- Fri 2Ch 32:1–33
- Sat 2Ch 33:1–25

Week 39

- Mon 2Ch 34:1–35:27
- Tues 2Ch 36:1–23
- Wed Ezr 1:1–2:70
- Thurs Ezr 3:1–4:24
- Fri Ezr 5:1–6:22
- Sat Ezr 7:1–8:36

Week 40

- Mon Ezr 9:1–10:44
- Tues Ne 1:1–11
- Wed Ne 2:1–3:32
- Thurs Ne 4:1–6:19
- Fri Ne 7:1–8:18
- Sat Ne 9:1–10:39

Week 41

- Mon Ne 11:1–13:31
- Tues Est 1:1–2:23
- Wed Est 3:1–4:17
- Thurs Est 5:1–7:10
- Fri Est 8:1–10:3
- Sat Jb 1:1–22

Week 42

- Mon Jb 2:1–3:26
- Tues Jb 4:1–5:27
- Wed Jb 6:1–7:21
- Thurs Jb 8:1–10:22
- Fri Jb 11:1–12:25
- Sat Jb 13:1–14:22

Week 43

- Mon Jb 15:1–17:16

- Tues Jb 18:1–19:29
- Wed Jb 20:1–21:34
- Thurs Jb 22:1–24:25
- Fri Jb 25:1–28:28
- Sat Jb 29:1–31:40

Week 44

- Mon Jb 32:1–34:37
- Tues Jb 35:1–37:24
- Wed Jb 38:1–41:34
- Thurs Jb 42:1–17
- Fri Ps 1:1–6:10
- Sat Ps 7:1–11:7

Week 45

- Mon Ps 12:1–17:15
- Tues Ps 18:1–22:31
- Wed Ps 23:1–28:9
- Thurs Ps 29:1–34:22
- Fri Ps 35:1–41:13
- Sat Ps 42:1–47:9

Week 46

- Mon Ps 48:1–53:6
- Tues Ps 54:1–60:12
- Wed Ps 61:1–66:20
- Thurs Ps 67:1–72:20
- Fri Ps 73:1–77:20
- Sat Ps 78:1–82:8

Week 47

- Mon Ps 83:1–89:52
- Tues Ps 90:1–95:11
- Wed Ps 96:1–101:8
- Thurs Ps 102:1–106:48
- Fri Ps 107:1–113:9

- Sat Ps 114:1–118:29

Week 48

- Mon Ps 119:1–176
- Tues Ps 120:1–125:5
- Wed Ps 126:1–134:3
- Thurs Ps 135:1–137:9
- Fri Ps 138:1–143:12
- Sat Ps 144:1–150:6

Week 49

- Mon Pr 1:1–3:35
- Tues Pr 4:1–27
- Wed Pr 5:1–6:35
- Thurs Pr 7:1–27
- Fri Pr 8:1–36
- Sat Pr 9:1–18

Week 50

- Mon Pr 10:1–11:31
- Tues Pr 12:1–13:25
- Wed Pr 14:1–15:33
- Thurs Pr 16:1–17:28
- Fri Pr 18:1–19:29
- Sat Pr 20:1–21:31

Week 51

- Mon Pr 22:1–23:35
- Tues Pr 24:1–25:28
- Wed Pr 26:1–27:27
- Thurs Pr 28:1–29:27
- Fri Pr 30:1–31:31
- Sat Ec 1:1–2:26

Week 52

- Mon Ec 3:1–4:16
- Tues Ec 5:1–6:12

- Wed Ec 7:1–8:17
- Thurs Ec 9:1–10:20
- Fri Ec 11:1–12:14
- Sat Sg 1:1–3:11

Week 53

- Mon Sg 4:1–6:13
- Tues Sg 7:1–8:14
- Wed Is 1:1–2:22
- Thurs Is 3:1–4:6
- Fri Is 5:1–30
- Sat Is 6:1–13

Week 54

- Mon Is 7:1–8:22
- Tues Is 9:1–10:34
- Wed Is 11:1–12:6
- Thurs Is 13:1–20:6
- Fri Is 21:1–23:18
- Sat Is 24:1–25:12

Week 55

- Mon Is 26:1–27:13
- Tues Is 28:1–29:24
- Wed Is 30:1–31:9
- Thurs Is 32:1–20
- Fri Is 33:1–35:10
- Sat Is 36:1–39:8

Week 56

- Mon Is 40:1–41:29
- Tues Is 42:1–43:28
- Wed Is 44:1–45:25
- Thurs Is 46:1–47:15
- Fri Is 48:1–49:26
- Sat Is 50:1–52:15

Week 57

- Mon Is 53:1-12
- Tues Is 54:1–57:21
- Wed Is 58:1–59:21
- Thurs Is 60:1–62:12
- Fri Is 63:1–66:24
- Sat Jer 1:1–2:37

Week 58

- Mon Jer 3:1–4:31
- Tues Jer 5:1–6:30
- Wed Jer 7:1–8:22
- Thurs Jer 9:1–10:25
- Fri Jer 11:1–12:17
- Sat Jer 13:1–14:22

Week 59

- Mon Jer 15:1–17:27
- Tues Jer 18:1–19:15
- Wed Jer 20:1–22:30
- Thurs Jer 23:1–40
- Fri Jer 24:1–25:38
- Sat Jer 26:1–28:17

Week 60

- Mon Jer 29:1–32
- Tues Jer 30:1–32:44
- Wed Jer 33:1–26
- Thurs Jer 34:1–35:19
- Fri Jer 36:1–37:21
- Sat Jer 38:1–40:16

Week 61

- Mon Jer 41:1–43:13
- Tues Jer 44:1–45:5
- Wed Jer 46:1–49:39

- Thurs Jer 50:1–51:64
- Fri Jer 52:1–34
- Sat Lm 1:1–22

Week 62

- Mon Lm 2:1–3:66
- Tues Lm 4:1–5:22
- Wed Ezk 1:1–2:10
- Thurs Ezk 3:1–5:17
- Fri Ezk 6:1–7:27
- Sat Ezk 8:1–9:11

Week 63

- Mon Ezk 10:1–11:25
- Tues Ezk 12:1–13:23
- Wed Ezk 14:1–15:8
- Thurs Ezk 16:1–17:24
- Fri Ezk 18:1–19:14
- Sat Ezk 20:1–21:32

Week 64

- Mon Ezk 22:1–23:49
- Tues Ezk 24:1–27
- Wed Ezk 25:1–27:36
- Thurs Ezk 28:1–26
- Fri Ezk 29:1–32:32
- Sat Ezk 33:1–34:31

Week 65

- Mon Ezk 35:1–36:38
- Tues Ezk 37:1–39:29
- Wed Ezk 40:1–42:20
- Thurs Ezk 43:1–27
- Fri Ezk 44:1–31
- Sat Ezk 45:1–46:24

Week 66

- Mon Ezk 47:1–48:35
- Tues Dn 1:1–21
- Wed Dn 2:1–49
- Thurs Dn 3:1–4:37
- Fri Dn 5:1–31
- Sat Dn 6:1–28

Week 67

- Mon Dn 7:1–8:27
- Tues Dn 9:1–27
- Wed Dn 10:1–12:13
- Thurs Hos 1:1–2:23
- Fri Hos 3:1–4:19
- Sat Hos 5:1–6:11

Week 68

- Mon Hos 7:1–8:14
- Tues Hos 9:1–10:15
- Wed Hos 11:1–12:14
- Thurs Hos 13:1–16
- Fri Hos 14:1–9
- Sat Jl 1:1–20

Week 69

- Mon Jl 2:1–32
- Tues Jl 3:1–21
- Wed Am 1:1–2:16
- Thurs Am 3:1–15
- Fri Am 4:1–5:27
- Sat Am 6:1–14

Week 70

- Mon Am 7:1–17
- Tues Am 8:1–14
- Wed Am 9:1–15
- Thurs Ob 1–21

- Fri Jnh 1:1–2:10
- Sat Jnh 3:1–4:11

Week 71

- Mon Mi 1:1–2:13
- Tues Mi 3:1–4:13
- Wed Mi 5:1–15
- Thurs Mi 6:1–16
- Fri Mi 7:1–20
- Sat Na 1:1–3:19

Week 72

- Mon Hab 1:1–2:20
- Tues Hab 3:1–19
- Wed Zep 1:1–2:15
- Thurs Zep 3:1–20
- Fri Hg 1:1–2:23
- Sat Zec 1:1–2:13

Week 73

- Mon Zec 3:1–10
- Tues Zec 4:1–14
- Wed Zec 5:1–11
- Thurs Zec 6:1–15
- Fri Zec 7:1–14
- Sat Zec 8:1–23

Week 74

- Mon Zec 9:1–10:12
- Tues Zec 11:1–12:14
- Wed Zec 13:1–9
- Thurs Zec 14:1–21
- Fri Mal 1:1–2:17
- Sat Mal 3:1–4:6

Week 75

- Mon Mt 1:1–2:23

- Tues Mt 3:1–4:25
- Wed Mt 5:1–7:29
- Thurs Mt 8:1–9:38
- Fri Mt 10:1–11:30
- Sat Mt 12:1–13:58

Week 76

- Mon Mt 14:1–15:39
- Tues Mt 16:1–17:27
- Wed Mt 18:1–19:30
- Thurs Mt 20:1–21:46
- Fri Mt 22:1–23:39
- Sat Mt 24:1–25:46

Week 77

- Mon Mt 26:1–27:66
- Tues Mt 28:1–20
- Wed Mk 1:1–2:28
- Thurs Mk 3:1–4:41
- Fri Mk 5:1–6:56
- Sat Mk 7:1–8:38

Week 78

- Mon Mk 9:1–50
- Tues Mk 10:1–52
- Wed Mk 11:1–33
- Thurs Mk 12:1–13:37
- Fri Mk 14:1–72
- Sat Mk 15:1–47

Week 79

- Mon Mk 16:1–20
- Tues Lk 1:1–80
- Wed Lk 2:1–3:38
- Thurs Lk 4:1–5:39
- Fri Lk 6:1–49

- Sat Lk 7:1–8:56

Week 80

- Mon Lk 9:1–62
- Tues Lk 10:1–42
- Wed Lk 11:1–12:59
- Thurs Lk 13:1–35
- Fri Lk 14:1–35
- Sat Lk 15:1–16:31

Week 81

- Mon Lk 17:1–18:43
- Tues Lk 19:1–20:47
- Wed Lk 21:1–22:71
- Thurs Lk 23:1–24:53
- Fri Jn 1:1–2:25
- Sat Jn 3:1–36

Week 82

- Mon Jn 4:1–54
- Tues Jn 5:1–6:71
- Wed Jn 7:1–8:59
- Thurs Jn 9:1–10:42
- Fri Jn 11:1–12:50
- Sat Jn 13:1–14:31

Week 83

- Mon Jn 15:1–16:33
- Tues Jn 17:1–26
- Wed Jn 18:1–19:42
- Thurs Jn 20:1–21:25
- Fri Ac 1:1–26
- Sat Ac 2:1–47

Week 84

- Mon Ac 3:1–4:37
- Tues Ac 5:1–42

- Wed Ac 6:1–8:40
- Thurs Ac 9:1–43
- Fri Ac 10:1–11:30
- Sat Ac 12:1–25

Week 85

- Mon Ac 13:1–14:28
- Tues Ac 15:1–35
- Wed Ac 15:36–16:40
- Thurs Ac 17:1–18:23
- Fri Ac 18:24–21:16
- Sat Ac 21:17–23:35

Week 86

- Mon Ac 24:1–26:32
- Tues Ac 27:1–28:31
- Wed Rm 1:1–2:29
- Thurs Rm 3:1–4:25
- Fri Rm 5:1–21
- Sat Rm 6:1–23

Week 87

- Mon Rm 7:1–25
- Tues Rm 8:1–39
- Wed Rm 9:1–11:36
- Thurs Rm 12:1–21
- Fri Rm 13:1–14:23
- Sat Rm 15:1–16:27

Week 88

- Mon 1Co 1:1–2:16
- Tues 1Co 3:1–4:21
- Wed 1Co 5:1–6:20
- Thurs 1Co 7:1–40
- Fri 1Co 8:1–9:27
- Sat 1Co 10:1–33

Week 89

- Mon 1Co 11:1–12:31
- Tues 1Co 13:1–14:40
- Wed 1Co 15:1–58
- Thurs 1Co 16:1–24
- Fri 2Co 1:1–2:17
- Sat 2Co 3:1–4:18

Week 90

- Mon 2Co 5:1–21
- Tues 2Co 6:1–7:16
- Wed 2Co 8:1–9:15
- Thurs 2Co 10:1–11:33
- Fri 2Co 12:1–13:14
- Sat Gal 1:1–2:21

Week 91

- Mon Gal 3:1–29
- Tues Gal 4:1–31
- Wed Gal 5:1–6:18
- Thurs Eph 1:1–23
- Fri Eph 2:1–22
- Sat Eph 3:1–21

Week 92

- Mon Eph 4:1–32
- Tues Eph 5:1–6:24
- Wed Php 1:1–30
- Thurs Php 2:1–30
- Fri Php 3:1–4:1
- Sat Php 4:2–23

Week 93

- Mon Col 1:1–29
- Tues Col 2:1–23
- Wed Col 3:1–4:18

- Thurs 1Th 1:1–10
- Fri 1Th 2:1–20
- Sat 1Th 3:1–13

Week 94

- Mon 1Th 4:1–18
- Tues 1Th 5:1–28
- Wed 2Th 1:1–12
- Thurs 2Th 2:1–3:18
- Fri 1Tm 1:1–20
- Sat 1Tm 2:1–15

Week 95

- Mon 1Tm 3:1–16
- Tues 1Tm 4:1–16
- Wed 1Tm 5:1–25
- Thurs 1Tm 6:1–21
- Fri 2Tm 1:1–18
- Sat 2Tm 2:1–26

Week 96

- Mon 2Tm 3:1–4:22
- Tues Ti 1:1–16
- Wed Ti 2:1–15
- Thurs Ti 3:1–15
- Fri Phm 1–25
- Sat Heb 1:1–14

Week 97

- Mon Heb 2:1–18
- Tues Heb 3:1–19
- Wed Heb 4:1–16
- Thurs Heb 5:1–14
- Fri Heb 6:1–20
- Sat Heb 7:1–28

Week 98

- Mon Heb 8:1–13
- Tues Heb 9:1–28
- Wed Heb 10:1–18
- Thurs Heb 10:19–39
- Fri Heb 11:1–40
- Sat Heb 12:1–29

Week 99

- Mon Heb 13:1–25
- Tues Jas 1:1–27
- Wed Jas 2:1–26
- Thurs Jas 3:1–18
- Fri Jas 4:1–17
- Sat Jas 5:1–20

Week 100

- Mon 1Pt 1:1–25
- Tues 1Pt 2:1–25
- Wed 1Pt 3:1–4:19
- Thurs 1Pt 5:1–14
- Fri 2Pt 1:1–2:22
- Sat 2Pt 3:1–18

Week 101

- Mon 1Jn 1:1–10
- Tues 1Jn 2:1–27
- Wed 1Jn 2:28–3:24
- Thurs 1Jn 4:1–21
- Fri 1Jn 5:1–21
- Sat 2Jn 1–13

Week 102

- Mon 3Jn 1–15
- Tues Jude 1–25
- Wed Rv 1:1–20
- Thurs Rv 2:1–29

- Fri Rv 3:1–22
- Sat Rv 4:1–5:14

Week 103

- Mon Rv 6:1–8:5
- Tues Rv 8:6–9:21
- Wed Rv 10:1–11
- Thurs Rv 11:1–19
- Fri Rv 12:1–17
- Sat Rv 13:1–18

Week 104

- Mon Rv 14:1–20
- Tues Rv 15:1–8
- Wed Rv 16:1–21
- Thurs Rv 17:1–18:8
- Fri Rv 18:9–24
- Sat Rv 19:1–21

Week 105

- Mon Rv 20:1–15
- Tues Rv 21:1–27
- Wed Rv 22:1–21

Reference Guide

This reference guide will lead you to Bible passages and study resources about faith, life, and eternal life in Christ. When you have questions about the Christian faith or face adversity, use the topical portion of this reference guide to lead you to biblical answers and comfort (pp lxxix–xci). The reference guide also includes abbreviations; Greek and Hebrew transliteration guidelines; complete lists of articles and charts, maps, and place-names; and a biblical chronology.

As a one-volume reference work, a study Bible contains an overwhelming wealth of information. Based on discussions with study Bible users, we placed this reference guide and other material prominently at the beginning of the book so that they are easier to discover and access. The concordance is at the end of the book (pp 2243–2372), as in other Bibles.

Abbreviations

AD	anno Domini (in the year of [our] Lord)
Aram	Aramaic
BC	before Christ
c	circa
cf	confer
ch	chapter
chs	chapters
Eng	English
esp	especially
Gk	Greek
Hbr	Hebrew
Lat	Latin
lit	literally
NT	New Testament
OT	Old Testament
p	page
pp	pages
St	Saint
v	verse
vv	verses

Scripture

Gn	Genesis
Ex	Exodus
Lv	Leviticus
Nu	Numbers
Dt	Deuteronomy
Jsh	Joshua
Jgs	Judges
Ru	Ruth
1Sm	1 Samuel
2Sm	2 Samuel
1Ki	1 Kings
2Ki	2 Kings
1Ch	1 Chronicles
2Ch	2 Chronicles
Ezr	Ezra
Ne	Nehemiah
Est	Esther
Jb	Job
Ps	Psalms
Pr	Proverbs
Ec	Ecclesiastes
Sg	Song of Solomon
Is	Isaiah
Jer	Jeremiah
Lm	Lamentations
Ezk	Ezekiel
Dn	Daniel
Hos	Hosea
Jl	Joel

Am Amos
Ob Obadiah
Jnh Jonah
Mi Micah
Na Nahum
Hab Habakkuk
Zep Zephaniah
Hg Haggai
Zec Zechariah
Mal Malachi

Mt Matthew
Mk Mark
Lk Luke
Jn John
Ac Acts
Rm Romans
1Co 1 Corinthians
2Co 2 Corinthians
Gal Galatians
Eph Ephesians
Php Philippians
Col Colossians
1Th 1 Thessalonians
2Th 2 Thessalonians
1Tm 1 Timothy
2Tm 2 Timothy
Ti Titus
Phm Philemon
Heb Hebrews
Jas James
1Pt 1 Peter

2Pt 2 Peter
1Jn 1 John
2Jn 2 John
3Jn 3 John
Jude Jude
Rv Revelation

The Apocrypha

Jth	Judith
Wisd of Sol	The Wisdom of Solomon
Tob	Tobit
Ecclus	Ecclesiasticus (aka Sirach)
Bar	Baruch
1Macc	1 Maccabees
2Macc	2 Maccabees
Rest of Esther	The Rest of Esther
Sus	Susanna
Bel and Dragon	Bel and the Dragon
Pr of Azar	Prayer of Azariah
Song of Three Children	
The Song of the Three Holy Children	Pr of Man
Prayer of Manasses (or Manasseh)	

Church Fathers and Other Quoted Authors

Ambr	Ambrose
Ap Const	Apostolic Constitutions
Aph	Aphrahat
Ath	Athanasius
Aug	Augustine
Bach	Johann Sebastian Bach
Bas	Basil the Great
Bede	Bede, the Venerable
Bern	St Bernard of Clairvaux
Calov	Abraham Calov
Chem	Martin Chemnitz
Chrys	John Chrysostom
1 Clem	Clement of Rome (1st Epistle)
Cypr	Cyprian
Cyr Al	Cyril of Alexandria
Cyr Jer	Cyril of Jerusalem
Did	*Didache*
Ephr	Ephraim Syrus
Eus	Eusebius of Caesarea
Fran	St Francis of Assisi
Ger	Johann Gerhard
Greg	Gregory the Great
Gr Naz	Gregory of Nazianzus
Gr Nys	Gregory of Nyssa
Hdt	Herodotus
Hil	Hilary of Poitiers
Hipp	Hippolytus
Hus	John Hus
Ign	Ignatius of Antioch

Iren	Irenaeus of Lyons
Jerome	Jerome
Jn D	John of Damascus
Jos	Flavius Josephus
Just	Justin Martyr
Leo	Leo the Great
Luth	Martin Luther
Mel	Philip Melanchthon
Nv	Novatian
Pol	Polycarp
Sav	Savonarola
Sulp	Sulpitius Severus
Ter	Tertullian
Thom K	Thomas à Kempis
Tyc	Tyconius
Walth	C. F. W. Walther
Wycl	John Wycliffe

Commonly Cited Books and Works

AC	Augsburg Confession. From *Concordia*.
AE	Luther, Martin. *Luther's Works*. American Edition. General editors Jaroslav Pelikan and Helmut T. Lehmann. 56 vols. St. Louis: Concordia, and Philadelphia: Muhlenberg and Fortress, 1955–86.
Ag Ap	Josephus, Flavius. *Against Apion*. In *The Works of Josephus*. Translated by William Whiston. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1987.
ALF	Pusey, E. B., et al., eds. *A Library of Fathers of the Holy Catholic Church Anterior to the Division of the East and West.* 39 vols. Oxford: John Henry Parker, 1838–81.
ANF	Roberts, Alexander, and James Donaldson, eds. *The Ante-Nicene Fathers: The Writings of the Fathers Down to AD 325*. 10 vols. Buffalo: The Christian Literature Publishing Company, 1885–96. Reprint, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2001.
Ant	Josephus, Flavius. *Antiquities of the Jews*. In *The Works of Josephus*. Translated by William Whiston. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1987.
Ap	Apology of the Augsburg Confession. From *Concordia*.
BEC	Brief Exhortation to Confession. From *Concordia*, Appendix B.
CC	Concordia Commentary series. St. Louis: Concordia, 1996–.
CC 1Co	Lockwood, Gregory J. *1 Corinthians.* CC. St. Louis: Concordia, 2000.
CC Am	Lessing, R. Reed. *Amos*. CC. St. Louis: Concordia, 2009.
CC Col	Deterding, Paul E. *Colossians.* CC. St. Louis: Concordia, 2003.
CC Dn	Steinmann, Andrew E. *Daniel*. CC. St. Louis: Concordia, 2009.
CC Ezk1	Hummel, Horace D. *Ezekiel 1–20*. CC. St. Louis: Concordia, 2005.
CC Ezk2	Hummel, Horace D. *Ezekiel 21–48*. CC. St. Louis: Concordia, 2007.

CC Jnh	Lessing, R. Reed. *Jonah*. CC. St. Louis: Concordia, 2007.
CC Jsh	Harstad, Adolph L. *Joshua.* CC. St. Louis: Concordia, 2004.
CC Lk1	Just, Arthur A. *Luke 1:1–9:50.* CC. St. Louis: Concordia, 1996.
CC Lk2	Just, Arthur A. *Luke 9:51–24:53.* CC. St. Louis: Concordia, 1997.
CC Lv	Kleinig, John W. *Leviticus.* CC. St. Louis: Concordia, 2003.
CC Mt1	Gibbs, Jeffrey A. *Matthew 1:1–11.* CC. St. Louis: Concordia, 2006.
CC Phm	Nordling, John G. *Philemon.* CC. St. Louis: Concordia, 2004.
CC Ru	Wilch, John R. *Ruth*. CC. St. Louis: Concordia, 2006.
CC Rv	Brighton, Louis A. *Revelation*. CC. St. Louis: Concordia, 1999.
CC Sg	Mitchell, Christopher W. *The Song of Songs.* CC. St. Louis: Concordia, 2003.
Concordia	McCain, Paul Timothy, ed. *Concordia: The Lutheran Confessions.* 2nd ed. St. Louis: Concordia, 2006.
CS	Hallo, William W., and K. Lawson Younger Jr., eds. *The Context of Scripture.* 3 vols. Leiden: Brill, 2003.
CSSC	Roehrs, Walter R. (OT), and Martin H. Franzmann (NT). *Concordia Self-Study Commentary.* St. Louis: Concordia, 1971, 1979.
CT	Catalog of Testimonies. From *Concordia*, Appendix A.
CTCR	Commission on Theology and Church Relations of The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod.
CTQ	*Concordia Theological Quarterly.* Published by the faculty of Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, IN.
Ep	Epitome of the Formula of Concord. From *Concordia*.
FC	Formula of Concord. From *Concordia*.
Franzmann	Franzmann, Martin H. *Concordia Commentary: Romans.* St. Louis: Concordia, 1968.
FSEP	Macleane, Douglas, ed. *Famous Sermons by English Preachers*. London: Pitman, 1911.
Hdt	Herodotus. *The History*. Translated by David Grene. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1987.

Hummel	Hummel, Horace D. *The Word Becoming Flesh.* St. Louis: Concordia, 1979.
JSBS	Leaver, Robin A., ed. *J. S. Bach and Scripture: Glosses from the Calov Bible Commentary.* St. Louis: Concordia, 1985.
Kitchen	Kitchen, K. A. *On the Reliability of the Old Testament.* Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003.
KJV	King James Version of Scripture.
L & G	Walther, C. F. W. *The Proper Distinction between Law and Gospel.* St. Louis: Concordia, 1929, 1986.
LC	Large Catechism of Martin Luther. From *Concordia*.
Life	Josephus, Flavius. *The Life of Flavius Josephus*. In *The Works of Josephus*. Translated by William Whiston. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1987.
LSB	Commission on Worship of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. *Lutheran Service Book.* St. Louis: Concordia, 2006.
LSB Altar Book	Commission on Worship of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. *Lutheran Service Book Altar Book.* St. Louis: Concordia, 2006.
LTh	Chemnitz, Martin. *Loci Theologici.* Edited by J. A. O. Preus. 2 vols. St. Louis: Concordia, 1989.
LW	Commission on Worship of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. *Lutheran Worship.* St. Louis: Concordia, 1982.
LXX	Septuagint. Koine Greek Old Testament.
MPG	Migne, Jacques-Paul, ed. *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Graece*. 161 vols. Paris and Turnhout, 1857–66.
MPL	Migne, Jacques-Paul, ed. *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Latina*. 221 vols. Paris, 1844–80.
NJV	New Jewish Version of Scripture (Old Testament only).
NPNF 1	Schaff, Philip, ed. *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church,* Series 1. 14 vols. New York: The Christian Literature Series, 1886–89. Reprint, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1956.
NPNF 2	Schaff, Philip, and Henry Wace, ed. *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church,* Series 2. 14

vols. New York: The Christian Literature Series, 1890–99. Reprint, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1952, 1961.

PIML Cameron, Bruce A., trans. *Psalms with Introductions by Martin Luther.* St. Louis: Concordia, 1993.

Preus Preus, Robert D. *The Theology of Post-Reformation Lutheranism.* 2 vols. St. Louis: Concordia, 1970.

Romans Melanchthon, Philip. *Commentary on Romans*. Translated by Fred Kramer.
St. Louis: Concordia, 1992.

SA Smalcald Articles. From *Concordia*.

Sasse Sasse, Hermann. *The Lonely Way*. Translated by Matthew C. Harrison. 2 vols. St. Louis: Concordia, 2001, 2002.

SC Luther, Martin. Luther's Small Catechism.
St. Louis: Concordia, 1986.

SD Solid Declaration of the Formula of Concord. From *Concordia*.

SLSB Eales, Samuel J., trans. and ed. *Some Letters of St. Bernard, Abbot of Clairvaux.* Vol. 1, *The Complete Works of S. Bernard, Abbot of Clairvaux*. London: John Hodges, 1904.

Starck Starck, Johann F. *Starck's Prayer-Book.* Translated and edited by W. H. T. Dau.
St. Louis: Concordia, 1921.

StL Luther, Martin. *Dr. Martin Luthers Sämmtliche Schriften.* Herausgegeben von Dr. Joh. Georg Walch. Neue revidirte Sterotypausgabe. St. Louis: Concordia, 1880–1910.

ThC E2 Gerhard, Johann. *Theological Commonplaces*. Exegesis 2,*On the Nature of God.* Edited with annotations by Benjamin T. G. Mayes. Translated by Richard J. Dinda.
St. Louis: Concordia, 2007.

The Church Hus, John. *The Church.* Translated by David S. Schaff. New York: Scribner's, 1915.

TLH The Evangelical Lutheran Synodical Conference of North America. *The Lutheran Hymnal.* St. Louis: Concordia, 1941.

TLWA Engelbrecht, Edward, comp. and ed. *The Lord Will Answer: A Daily Prayer Catechism Drawn from Holy Scripture, the Church Fathers, and Luther's Small Catechism with*

Explanation. St. Louis:
Concordia, 2004.

Tr — Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope. From *Concordia*.

TT — Wycliffe, John De. *Tracts and Treatises.* Edited by Robert Vaughan. London: Wycliffe Society, 1845.

Tyc — Burkitt, B. C. *The Book of Rules of Tyconius, Texts and Studies.* Vol. 3, no. 1. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1894. Translated for *TLSB* by Edward Engelbrecht.

VB — Browne, G. F. *The Venerable Bede.* The Fathers for English Readers. London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1891.

Vulg — Vulgate. Latin Bible.

WA DB — *D. Martin Luthers Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe: Die Deutsche Bibel* [Luther's Works, Weimar Edition: German Bible]. Weimar: Hermann Böhlaus Nachfolger, 1906–.

War — Josephus, Flavius. *The Wars of the Jews*. In *The Works of Josephus*. Translated by William Whiston. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1987.

WDC — Scott, Robert, and George W. Gilmore, eds. *Selections from the World's Devotional Classics*. 10 vols. New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1916.

WGS — Kleiser, Grenville, comp. *The World's Great Sermons.* 10 vols. New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1908.

WLS — Plass, Ewald M., comp. *What Luther Says.* St. Louis: Concordia, 1959.

WSFA — Robinson, Pascal, trans. *The Writings of St. Francis of Assisi.* Philadelphia: Dolphin, 1906.

Dead Sea Scrolls:

1QIsa[a]	Great Isaiah Scroll of Qumran
4QJer[b]	Jeremiah
4QJer[a]	Jeremiah
1QS 1.4	Matthew
3Q15	The Copper Scroll from Qumran
4Q184; 185; 510–11	Wisdom Fragments from Qumran Cave 4
1QS	Two Ways

Transliteration Guidelines

HEBREW AND ARAMAIC TRANSLITERATION

Hebrew Consonants	English Consonants
א : alef	ʼ
ב : bet	b
ג : gimel	g
ד : dalet	d
ה : he	h
ו : waw	w
ז : zayin	z
ח : chet	ch
ט : tet	t
י : yod	y
ך or כ : kaph	k
ל : lamed	l
ם or מ : mem	m
ן or נ : nun	n
ס : samek	s
ע : ayin	ʻ
ף or פ : pe	p; f; or ph
ץ or צ : tsade	ts
ק : qof	q
ר : resh	r
ש : sin/shin	s; sh
ת : taw	t; th

Hebrew Vowels	English Vowels
patach	a
furtive patach	a
qamets	a
final qamets he	ah
seghol	e
tsere	e
tsere yod	e
short hireq	i
long hireq	i
hireq yod	i
qamets chatuph	o
holem	o
full holem	o
short qibbuts	u
long qibbuts	u
shureq	u
chatef qamets	o
chatef patach	a

References to the Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek texts of the Bible appear at various places in *TLSB*, especially in the key terms lists. Transliterated terms were included to support indepth study of the text. Readers who do not desire to study a foreign term or phrase may skip over it just as one may skip over etymological information in an English dictionary.

A transliterated word in *TLSB* is usually a lexical form, but may also be (1) a form in a specific text, or (2) a form found in English usage (e.g., Baal).

GREEK TRANSLITERATION

Greek Letters	English Letters
α : alpha	a
β : beta	b
γ : gamma	g
γ : gamma nasal (before γ, κ, ξ, χ)	n
δ : delta	d
ε : epsilon	e
ζ : zeta	z
η : eta	e
θ : theta	th
ι : iota	i
κ : kappa	k
λ : lambda	l
μ : mu	m
ν : nu	n

Greek Letters	English Letters
ξ : xi	x
ο : omicron	o
π : pi	p
ρ : rho	r
ῥ : initial rho (or in medial double rho)	rh
σ and ς : sigma	s
τ : tau	t
υ : upsilon (not in diphthong)	y
υ : upsilon (in diphthong)	u
φ : phi	ph
χ : chi	ch
ψ : psi	ps
ω : omega	o
῾ : rough breathing mark	h

Adapted from *The SBL Handbook of Style* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers), 1999, 28–29.

Articles and Charts List

Many articles include material that applies to more than one book of the Bible. You may also access article and chart information by consulting the Biblical Topics (pp lxxix–xci).

FRONT MATTER

Features of *The Lutheran Study Bible*
How to Read and Study the Holy Bible
Law and Gospel: Identifying God's Ways with Mankind
Luther's Small Catechism
The Unity of Scripture
Biblical Chronology and World History
Weights and Measures

BOOKS OF MOSES

Evidence of Sources in the Bible
Key Terms and Phrases in the Books of Moses

GENESIS

Genesis and Theories of Evolution
Feasting and Fellowship with God in Eden
The History of Humanity
Theophanies in Genesis
Peace and Blessing
Family Life in Israel
Genesis, Book of Dreams
Cords of Love

EXODUS

Slavery in the Bible
The Book of the Covenant
The Blood of the Covenant
The Tabernacle
The Materials of the Tabernacle
No Graven Images?
Construction of the Ark

LEVITICUS

- A Wrong Understanding of Freedom
- Eating the Offerings
- Outmoded or Relevant?
- When You Fast
- Feasts Appointed by the Lord
- The Lamb of God
- The Heart of the Atonement
- The Ark of the Covenant
- Freedom, Rest, and Redemption

NUMBERS

- Number Symbolism
- Leadership and Service in Israel
- The Israelite Diet
- The Israelite Calendar

DEUTERONOMY

- Meditating on God's Word
- Meals as Boundaries
- False Prophets Then and Now
- The Pattern of the Prophets

JOSHUA

- The Peoples of Canaan
- Divine Warfare

JUDGES

- Prophetesses in the Bible
- Israel's Identity Crisis
- Savior and Judge

2 SAMUEL

- The City of the Jebusites/David's Jerusalem
- The Lord's Dwelling Place and Throne

1 KINGS

- Kings and Prophets of Judah and Israel

Solomon's Temple
Art Forms of Solomon's Historical Period
King Solomon's Jerusalem
Making a Prophet

2 CHRONICLES
The Bronze Pillars

EZRA
Zerubbabel's Temple

NEHEMIAH
Passion for the Prophets

BOOKS OF WISDOM AND POETRY
Wisdom in the Bible and the Ancient Near East

JOB
The Meaning of *Sheol*
Legal Language in Job
Job's Wisdom and His Knowledge of the Creator
The Countenance of Job

PSALMS
Names in the Psalms
Hebrew Names for Psalms
Key Terms and Phrases in the Psalms
Table of Psalms for Daily Prayer
Categories of the Psalms
Violence in the Psalms
Complaining to God
Ancient Use of Psalms in Worship
Types of Sin
God's Word in Psalm 119
Life's God-Given Value
Music and Instruments in Israel

PROVERBS

The Fear of the Lord
Christ as Wisdom
Fools in Proverbs

BOOKS OF THE PROPHETS

Key Terms and Phrases in the Books of the Prophets
All the Prophets

ISAIAH

The Isaiah Scroll
Isaiah's City of God
Five Reasons to Give Tithes and Offerings
Holy, Holy, Holy
Isaiah's Triptych of Christ
The Joy of Deliverance
Teach History, Illustrate by Allegory
The Wrath of God
God's Remnant
Walking with the Lord
The Suffering Servant King
A New Eden

JEREMIAH

Witnessing to the Weary
Proclaiming the Word in Every Way
Old Testament Names for God
Prophecies about the Coming Messiah
Prophetic Perspective
Postures and Gestures
The Lord of Hosts

EZEKIEL

God's Throne
Humor and Comedy in the Bible
New Life through Baptism
When to Baptize
The Final Battle and the Defeat of Gog

The Temple Compound in Ezekiel
The Temple and the Altar in Ezekiel

DANIEL
The Messiah's Enthronement
The Seventy Weeks (Dn 9:24–27)
The Ptolemies and the Seleucids
Simple Ways to Witness
Maturing in Faith and Service

MICAH
Justice and Poverty
Prophecy Foreshadows the Appearing of Christ
The Bible, Reformation, and Mission

THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS AND THE APOCRYPHA
When the Prophets Ceased to Speak
Persons and Groups of Early Judaism and Christianity
The Holy Scripture and Other Ancient Writings
Luther's Prefaces to the Apocrypha
Longing for a Kingdom
Time Reckoning in the Bible

MATTHEW
The Miracles of Jesus
Parables of Our Lord
The Keys of the Kingdom
Jerusalem c AD 30
Faithful to Christ—And to Caesar
God's Reliable Word
WHICH TOMB?

MARK
Including the Gentiles
God's Care and Miracles

Biblical Miracles at Work Today
The Heavenly Banquet
Passion Week
The Preaching and Teaching of Christ

LUKE

Luke's Unique Contribution
Life, Lyrics, and the Lord's First Steps
The Temple in Luke
Herod's Temple
Be Our Guest
Women Disciples
What Happens When We Die?
The New Sabbath
The Passover Seder

JOHN

A Simple Fisherman
Jesus' Words "Amen, Amen"
The Witness of "I Am"
God's Work in Healing and Suffering
Love: Inclusive or Exclusive?
Love for the Vineyard
The Spirit in John's Gospel
God Is Three-in-One
Burial Bench

ACTS

A Blessed Life
Pentecost
Herod's Temple
The Acts of Whom?
Grace, Power, and Martyrdom
Conflict among Christians
The Work of the Spirit
The Empire in Acts
Sea Travel in Paul's Day

Beyond the Temple
The Office of the Public Ministry

INTRODUCTION TO THE PAULINE EPISTLES
Key Terms and Phrases in Paul's Epistles

ROMANS
Boundaries for the Church
God's Law
Homosexuality and Biblical Teaching
Baptized into Christ
The Life-Giving Spirit in Romans
God's Unfailing Promise
Chosen in Christ
Living Sacrifices … in View of God's Mercy
Controversies over Romans

1 CORINTHIANS
Preparing for the Lord's Supper
Baptized into One Body
Speaking in Tongues
Men and Women in the Church
Jesus, the New Testament, and the Creeds

GALATIANS
Legalism Then and Now
True Christianity versus Three Distortions

EPHESIANS
Saving Faith
The Unity of the Church
Law and Gospel Parenting

PHILIPPIANS
Urban Christianity

COLOSSIANS
The Image of God

Persecuted for the Faith
The Meaning of Deliverance

1 TIMOTHY
The "New Woman"
God's Desire in Prayer

2 TIMOTHY
Qualifications for Pastors
Strength for Spreading the Gospel

PHILEMON
Slavery

GENERAL EPISTLES
New Testament Names for God
The Lord Sustains Creation

HEBREWS
A Blood Covering
A Pure Conscience
God Blessed Marriage
The Faith of Noah
A Tale of Two Mountains

JAMES
Brothers in Ministry
Living the Wholly Christian Life
Faith and Works
Effectual, Fervent Prayer

1 PETER
Peter's Life and Ministry
The Church as God's Crew

2 PETER
Old Testament Examples in 1 and 2 Peter
Pastor and Priesthood of Believers

Be Holy, for I Am Holy
God and Time

1 JOHN

John's Reasoning
Sin That Leads to Death

JUDE

Beware of False Teachers

REVELATION

Revelation's Colorful Character
The End Times in Revelation
The Letters to the Churches
I Know Your Works
Grace and Merits
The Kingdom, the Church, and Israel
The Mystery of the Church
God's Mission and Revelation
The Movement of the Gospel
The Lord's Supper
The Marriage Feast of the Lamb
The Sacrament and the Church
Christ in Revelation
Jesus' Human Nature

END MATTER

An Outline of Church History

Maps

COLOR MAPS
- Old Testament Israel
- Old Testament Regions
- United Kingdom Period
- New Testament Cities

GENESIS
- Abraham's Travels
- Jacob's Travels

EXODUS
- The Exodus

NUMBERS
- Wilderness Wanderings

JOSHUA
- The Conquest of Canaan
- The Twelve Tribes

RUTH
- Journeys of Naomi and Ruth

1 SAMUEL
- Kingdom and Battles of Saul
- Saul Pursues David

2 SAMUEL
- The City of the Jebusites/David's Jerusalem
- Kingdom of David

1 KINGS
- Kingdom of David and Solomon
- King Solomon's Jerusalem
- Israel and Judah

2 KINGS

Travels of Elijah/Elisha
Assyrian Exile of Israel
Judah (2Ki 16–25)

2 CHRONICLES

Babylonian Exile of Judah

JOB

Location of Job

PSALMS

Israel's Profile

JEREMIAH

The Press of Mighty Empires

DANIEL

The Persian Empire

JONAH

Travels of Jonah

INTERTESTAMENTAL

The Empire of Alexander
The Hasmonean Conquest

MATTHEW

The Kingdom of Herod
Travels of the Holy Family
Jesus' Ministry in the Gospels

ACTS

The Apostles' Ministry (Acts 1–12)
Paul's Missionary Journeys (Acts 13–21)
The Roman Empire
and Paul's Journey to Rome

REVELATION

The Setting of Revelation

END MATTER

Mission and Challenges of Early and Medieval Christianity

The Spread of Lutheran Mission Work

Place-Names of the Bible and Ancient Empires

The place-names below are found on one or more maps in *TLSB*. However, this list provides only a selection of references in most cases, with preference for the general color maps at the beginning of the book.

More than 880 references to maps and their captions are also found throughout the introductions, study notes, and articles. (We used cross-referencing rather than more maps so that we would have more space for commentary.) In some cases, archaeologists cannot locate places in the Bible with certainty. This may be due to general references in the Bible, lack of inscriptions at a site, or disruption of a site. For those desiring more geographical information, we recommend the *Oxford Bible Atlas*, 4th ed. (Oxford University Press, 2007).

Abel of Beth-maacah, p 534
Abel-meholah, p 581
Abila, p 1576
Abilene, p 1576
Accaron [Ekron], p 1555
Acco, color map 1
Achaia, p 1886
Achshaph [?], p 357
Adriatic Sea, p 1895
Adullam, p 534
Aegean Sea, p 1895
Aelana, p 1895
Aetolia, p 1554
Ai, also Ai [?], p 357
Aijalon, color map 1
Akhetaton [Tell el-Amarna], p 33
Akkad, p 33
Aleppo, color map 3
Alexandria, pp 1554, 1581, 2238
Amalek, pp 120, 451
Ammon, color map 2
Amorites, p 250

Amphipolis, p 1886
Anathoth, p 615
Antioch [Pisidian], p 1886
Antioch [Syrian], p 1886
Aphek, pp 451, 558
Apollonia (Macedonia), p 1886
Apollonia (Israel), p 1555
Aquileia, p 1895
Arabah (valley), color map 2
Arabia, pp 1396, 1554
Arabian Sea, pp 1396, 1554
Arachosia, pp 1396, 1554
Arad, color map 1
Aral Sea, pp 1396, 1554
Aram [Syria], color map 2
Ararat, see Urartu [Ararat], p 609
Arbela, p 33
Area of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboiim, and Zoar, p 33
Armenia, p 1554
Arnon R., color map 2
Aroer, pp 250, 425
Arpad, p 609
Arvad, color map 3
Ashdod, color map 1
Asher, p 365
Ashkelon, color map 1
Asia, p 1886
Asor [Hazor], p 1555
Asshur, pp 609, 1396, 1479, 1554
Assos, pp 1886, 2197
Assyria, pp 609, 1479, 1554
Assyrian Province of Ashdod, p 615
Assyrian Province of Dor, p 615
Assyrian Province of Gilead, p 615
Assyrian Province of Megiddo (Galilee), p 615
Assyrian Province of Samaria, p 615
Assyrian Provinces in Syria, p 615

Athens, pp 1554, 1886
Atlantic Ocean, p 1895
Attalia, pp 1886, 2197
Augusta Treverorum [Trier], p 1895
Augusta Vindelicorum [Augsburg], p 1895
Auranitis [Hauran], p 1576
Azekah, pp 357, 468
Azotus [Ashdod], pp 1555, 1576
Baalath [?], p 534
Baal-gad, p 357
Babylon, pp 33, 717, 780, 1554
Babylonia [Chaldea], pp 33, 717
Bactra, pp 1396, 1554
Bactria, pp 1396, 1554
Baltic Sea, p 1895
Bashan, color map 2
Batanea [Bashan], p 1576
Beersheba, color map 1
Benjamin, p 365
Berea, p 1886
Bethany, p 1584
Bethany across the Jordan [?], p 1584
Bethel, color map 1; see also Luz [Bethel]
Bethlehem, color maps 1, 4
Bethphage, p 1584
Beth-rehob [?], p 500
Bethsaida [Julias], p 1576
Beth-shan, color map 1
Beth-shemesh, p 558
Bezer, p 365
Bithynia and Pontus, p 1886
Bitter Lakes, p 120
Black Sea, pp 1396, 1554, 1886
Bokhara, pp 1396, 1554
Brook Cherith, p 581
Brook Kishon, p 581
Brook of Besor, color map 1

Brook of Egypt, color map 1
Brook of Zered, color map 1
Brundisium, p 1895
Burdigala, p 1895
Byblos, color map 3; see also Gebal [Byblos]
Byzantium, pp 1396, 1554, 1895
Caesarea Maritima, color map 4
Caesarea Philippi, color map 4
Calah, p 33, 609, 717
Cana, p 1576
Canaan, pp 33, 780
Capernaum, color map 4
Cappadocia, pp 1886, 2197
Caralis, p 1895
Carchemish, color map 3
Carmel, p 468
Carthage, p 1895
Caspian Sea, pp 1396, 1554
Cenchreae, p 1886
Chalcedon, p 2238
Chios, p 1886
Chorasmia, pp 1396, 1554
Chorazin, p 1584
Cilicia, pp 1857, 2197
Cnidus, p 1895
Coele-Syria, p 1555
Colonia Agrippina [Cologne], p 1895
Colossae, p 2197
Constantinople, p 2238
Corduba, p 1895
Corinth, pp 1554, 1886
Cremona, p 1895
Crete, pp 1396, 1895
Cush, color map 3; see also Ethiopia [Cush]
Cyprus, pp 1396, 1886, 2197
Cyrene, p 1895
Damascus, color map 3

Dan, color map 1; see also Laish [Dan]
Danube R., p 1396
Dead Sea, color map 4; see also Dead Sea [Asphalt Lake], p 1576
Debir, color map 1
Decapolis, color map 4
Dedan, p 717
Delphi, p 1554
Derbe, pp 1886, 2197
Desert, the [Arabian Desert], color map 2, p 609
Dibon, color map 1
Dor, color map 1; see also Dora
Dora, color map 4; see also Dor
Dothan, color map 1
Drangiana, pp 1396, 1554
Dumah, pp 609, 717
Ebla, pp 33, 60
Ecbatana, pp 609, 1396, 1554
Edom, color map 2
Edrei, p 250
Eglon [?], p 357
Egypt, color maps 3, 4
Ekron, color map 1
Elam, pp 609, 1396, 1554
Emmaus, pp 1576, 1584
En-dor, p 451
Engedi, pp 468, 971, 1555
Ephesus, pp 1396, 1886, 1895, 2197, 2238
Ephraim, p 365
Ephrath [Bethlehem], p 60; see also Bethlehem
Erech [Uruk], pp 33, 609
Eridu, p 33
Ethiopia [Cush], p 1554; see also Cush
Euphrates R., color map 3
Ezion-geber, color map 3
Fair Havens, p 1895
Gad, p 365
Gadara (northern), p 1576; see also Gedor [Gadara]

Gadara (southern), p 1576; see also Gedor [Gadara]
Gades, p 1895
Galatia, pp 1886, 2197
Galilee, color map 4
Gath, color map 1
Gath-hepher, p 1479
Gaulanitis, p 1576
Gaza, color maps 1, 4
Gazara [Gezer], p 1555
Geba, p 615
Gebal [Byblos], p 609; see also Byblos
Gedor [Gadara], p 1555
Gedrosia, pp 1396, 1554
Gennesaret, pp 1555, 1584
Genua, p 1895
Gerar, color map 1
Gerasa, p 1576; see also Gerasa [Jerash], p 1555
Geshur, color map 2
Gezer, color map 1
Gibbethon, p 558
Gibeah, color map 3
Gibeon, color map 1
Gilead, color map 2
Gilgal, color map 1
Gob [?], p 534
Golan, pp 250, 365
Gordium, pp 1396, 1554
Goshen, pp 60, 120
Granicus R., p 1554
Great Sea, color map 1
Gulf of Aqaba, color map 3
Gulf of Oman, pp 1396, 1554
Gulf of Suez, color map 3
Hachilah [Havilah?], p 468
Halab, p 60
Halys R., p 609
Hamath, color map 3, p 780

Haran, color map 3
Hazor, color map 1
Hebron, color map 4, p 971
Hebron [Kiriath-arba], pp 357, 365; see also Kiriath-arba [Hebron]
Helam [?], p 500
Heliopolis, pp 717, 1581; see also On [Heliopolis]
Hellas, p 1554
Herodium, p 1576
Heshbon, color map 1
Hill country of Ephraim, color map 2
Hill country of Judah, color map 2
Hinnom Valley, pp 493, 548
Hippo Regius, p 1895
Hispalis, p 1895
Hittites, color map 3
Ibleam, p 558
Iconium, pp 1886, 2197
Icosium [Algiers], p 1895
Idumea, color map 4
India, pp 1396, 1554
Indian Ocean, p 1554
Indus R., pp 1396, 1554
Ionian Sea, p 1554
Isin, p 33
Israel, pp 558, 609, 1205, 1479
Issachar, p 365
Issus, pp 1396, 1554
Ituraea, color map 4
Jabbok R., color map 2
Jabesh-gilead, color map 1
Jahaz [?], p 250
Jamnia, p 1555
Jarmuth, p 357
Jebus [Jerusalem], pp 33, 60, 493
Jericho, color maps 1, 4
Jerusalem, color maps 1, 4, pp 493, 548
Jezreel, color map 1

Joppa, color maps 1, 4
Jordan R., color map 2
Judah, pp 365, 558, 615, 1205
Judea, color map 4
Kadesh, color map 3; see also Kadesh-barnea
Kadesh-barnea, color map 3
Kanah B., color map 1
Kedesh, p 365
Keilah, p 468
Kerioth, color map 2
Khabur R., p 717
Kidron R., color map 1
Kidron Valley, p 548
Kiriath-arba [Hebron], p 33; see also Hebron
Kiriath-jearim, p 365
Kishon R., color map 2
Kittim (OT Name for Cyprus), color map 3
Knossos, pp 1396, 1554
Lachish, color map 1
Lagash, p 33
Laish [Dan], p 250; see also Dan
Lake Huleh, color map 2
Laodicea, p 2197
Larsa, p 33
Lebanon Mts., color map 2
Lehi [?], p 534
Leontes R., color map 4; also called Litani R., color map 2
Leptis Major, p 1895
Libnah, pp 357, 558, 615
Libya, pp 1396, 1554
Litani R., color map 2; also called Leontes R., color map 4
Londinium, p 1895
Lower Beth-horon, pp 357, 534
Lower Egypt, pp 33, 60, 120
Lugdunum [Lyon], p 1895
Lutetia, p 1895
Luz [Bethel], p 60; for Bethel see color map 1

Lycia, pp 1886, 2197
Lydda, p 1857
Lydia, pp 1886, 2197
Lydia [Lud], pp 609, 717
Lystra, pp 1886, 2197
Maacah, p 500
Macedonia, pp 1396, 1554, 1886
Machaerus, pp 1555, 1576
Madon, p 357
Magdala, p 1584
Mahanaim, color map 1
Makkedah [?], p 357
Malaca, p 1895
Mamre, p 60
Manasseh, p 365
Maon, p 468
Marathon, p 1554
Mareshah, pp 558, 615
Mari, pp 33, 609
Masada, color map 4
Medeba, p 1555
Media, pp 609, 1396, 1554
Mediterranean Sea, color map 4; see also Mediterranean Sea [Internal Sea], p 1576; see also Mediterranean Coast, p 971; see also Great Sea, color map 2
Megiddo, color maps 1, 3
Melita [Malta], p 1895
Melitene, pp 1396, 1554
Memphis, pp 717, 1396, 1554; see also Noph [Memphis]
Merom, p 357
Mesopotamia, pp 33, 60, 609, 717, 780
Messana, p 1895
Michmash, pp 451, 1555
Midian, pp 33, 120, 780
Miletus, pp 1396, 2197
Mitylene, pp 1886, 2197
Mizpah, pp 451, 558, 1555

Moab, color map 2
Modein, p 1555
Mount Carmel, color map 2
Mount Ebal, color map 2
Mount Gerazim, color map 1
Mount Gilboa, color map 2
Mount Hermon, color map 2
Mount Hor [?], p 250
Mount Moriah, p 493
Mount Nebo, color map 2
Mount of Olives, p 1584
Mount Sinai, p 120; see also Sinai
Mount Tabor, color map 2
Mount Zion, p 493
Myra, p 1895
Mysia, pp 1886, 2197
Nabatea, color map 4
Nain, p 1584
Naphtali, p 365
Naucratis, p 1581
Nazareth, color map 4
Neapolis, p 1886
Negeb, color map 2
Nicaea, p 2238
Nile River, color map 3
Nineveh, pp 609, 780, 1396, 1554
Nippur, pp 33, 609
Nob, p 468
Noph [Memphis], color map 3
North Sea, p 1895
Nuzi, p 33
Oea [Tripoli], p 1895
On [Heliopolis], color map 3
Ophir, p 780
Paddan-aram, pp 33, 60
Pamphylia, pp 1886, 2197
Paneas, p 1555

Paphos, pp 1886, 2197
Parthia, pp 1396, 1554
Pasargadae, pp 1396, 1554
Patara, pp 1886, 2197
Patmos, p 2197
Pella (Israel), pp 1555, 1576
Pella (Macedonia), p 1554
Peniel [Penuel], p 60; see also Penuel
Penuel, color map 1; see also Peniel [Penuel]
Peor, p 250
Perea, p 1576
Perga, pp 1886, 2197
Pergamum, pp 1895, 2197
Persepolis, pp 1396, 1554
Persia, pp 717, 1396, 1554
Persian Gulf, pp 717, 1396
Petra, p 1895
Philadelphia (Asia), p 2197; see also Philadelphia [Rabbath-ammon]
Philadelphia [Rabbath-ammon], p 1576; see also Philadelphia (Asia)
Philippi, pp 1886, 1895, 2197
Philistia, color map 2
Phoenicia, color maps 2, 4
Phrygia, pp 1886, 2197
Pisae, p 1895
Pisidia, pp 1886, 2197
Pithom [Heroöpolis], p 120
Plain of Damascus, color map 2
Plain of Megiddo, color map 2
Plain of Philistia, color map 2
Plain of Sharon, color map 2
Ptolemais, color map 4, p 1555
Puteoli, p 1895
Qarqar, p 609
Rabbah, color map 2
Ramah, pp 451, 558
Rameses [Avaris], p 120
Ramoth-gilead, color map 3

Raphia, p 1555
Red Sea, color map 3
Reuben, p 365
Rhagae, pp 1396, 1554
Rhegium, p 1895
Rhine R., p 1895
Rhodes (island and city), p 2197
Riblah, p 609
Rome, pp 1895, 2238
Sabea, p 780
Salamis, pp 1886, 2197
Salmantica, p 1895
Salt Sea, color map 2
Salt Sea Surface, p 971
Samaria, color maps 1, 4
Sardis, pp 1396, 2197
Scythia, pp 1396, 1554
Scythopolis [Beth-shan], pp 1555, 1576
Sea of Chinnereth, color map 2
Sea of Galilee, color map 4
Sebaste [Samaria], p 1576
Seir, p 60
Seleucia (OT), p 1555
Seleucia (NT), p 1886
Sepphoris, pp 1555, 1576, 1857
Shechem, color map 3
Shephelah, color map 2
Shiloh, color map 1
Shimron (-meron), p 357
Shittim, p 250
Shunem, pp 451, 558
Shur, p 33, 60
Sidon, color maps 1, 4
Simeon, p 365
Sinai, pp 33, 609, 1581
Smyrna, p 2197
Socoh, p 451

Sparta, pp 1554, 1895
Strato's Tower, p 1555
Succoth, color map 1
Sumer, p 33
Susa [Shushan], pp 33, 609
Sychar, p 1584
Syracuse, p 1895
Syria, color map 4
Taanach, p 971
Tadmor, color map 3
Tamar, color map 3
Tanis [Zoan], pp 33, 120
Tarsus [Tarshish?], p 1479; see also Tarsus, pp 609, 1857; see also Tartessus in Spain [Tarshish?]
Tartessus in Spain [Tarshish?], p 1479; see also Tarsus [Tarshish?]
Taurus Mountains, pp 33, 717, 1479
Tekoa, pp 558, 1205, 1555
Tema, p 717
Temple, p 548
Tetrarchy of Philip, p 1584
Thapsacus [Tiphsah], p 609; see also Tiphsah
Thebes, pp 717, 1396, 1554
Thessalonica, pp 1554, 1886, 1895
Thessaly, p 1554
Thrace, pp 1396, 1554, 1886
Thyatira, p 2197
Tiberias, pp 1576, 1584
Tigris R., pp 33, 609, 780
Tiphsah, color map 3; see also Thapsacus [Tiphsah]
Tirzah, pp 558, 1205
Tishbe, p 581
Tob, p 500
Toletum, p 1895
Tolosa, p 1895
Trachonitis, color map 4
Trapezus, p 1895
Troas, pp 1886, 2197

Tyre, color maps 1, 4
Ugarit, color map 3
Upper Beth-horon, p 534
Upper Egypt, p 33
Ur, pp 33, 609, 780
Urartu, p 1396; see also Urartu [Ararat]
Urartu [Ararat], p 609; see also Urartu
Utica, p 1895
Valentia, p 1895
Valley of Aijalon, p 357
Valley of Rephaim [Baal-perazim], p 500
Valley of Salt, p 500
Venetia, p 1895
Waters of Merom, p 357
Way of the Sea, p 120
Wilderness of Judah, color map 2
Wilderness of Paran, color map 3
Wilderness of Shur, color map 3
Wilderness of Sin, p 120
Wilderness of Sinai, color map 3
Wilderness of Zin, color map 3
Yarmuk R., color map 2
Zagros Mts., pp 33, 609
Zarephath, p 581
Zebulun, p 365
Ziklag [?], p 468
Ziph, p 468
Zobah, pp 451, 534

Biblical Topics

Use the entries below to discover answers and comfort from the teachings of Holy Scripture. Entries are ordered by references to (a) key Bible passages, (b) study notes, (c) application notes, and (d) articles, charts, and maps.

AARON
death of, Nu 20:22–29
the golden calf, Ex 32
as Moses' representative, Ex 4:14–16; 27–31; 7
opposes Moses, Nu 12
as priest, Lv 8; see note, Jsh 3:3
AARONIC BENEDICTION
Nu 6:24–27; see notes, Nu 6:22–27; Ps 67:1
ABANDONMENT
Ps 88–89:8
ABORTION
Ps 139:16; Jer 1:5; Lk 1:41–44; 1Co 6:19–20; see ⛪ notes, Lv 20:10–21; Ps 139; see pp 376, 983
ABRAHAM (ABRAM)
Gn 12:1–25:18; see note, Mt 1:1; see ⛪ note, Heb 6:13–20; see chronology, pp xciii–xciv; see map, p 33
Abrahamic Covenant, Gn 12:1–3
ABSOLUTION
Ps 32; Is 1:18; see notes, Gn 27:33; Lv 26:40; see ⛪ notes, Lv 4:1–5:13; Mt 9:1–8; see p 1617
ABSTINENCE
See Sexuality
ABUSE
See ⛪ note, Jer 7:30–8:3; see p 403
ACHAN
Jsh 7
ADAM
Gn 2–3; 1Co 15:45; 1Tm 2:13–14; see note, Gn 1:26
ADOPTION

Ps 68:4–6; see note, Eph 1:5; see p 1901
ADULTERY
Gn 39:7–10; Ex 20:14; Mk 10:6–9; Heb 13:4; see notes, Nu 5:31; Pr 6:30–31; Mt 5:32
AHAZ
2Ki 16; 2Ch 28; Is 7–14
ALCOHOL
Rm 14:21; see notes, Pr 20:1; 23:33; 31:6–7; *see also* Drunkenness
ALONENESS
See notes, Gn 2:18; 2Ki 6:17; Php 4:4; Heb 12:1; see note, Ps 22
ALPHA AND OMEGA
Rv 1:17; 21:6; 22:13, see notes, Rm 11:36; Rv 1:8; see p 2237
ALTARS
Ex 20:22–26; see note, Ex 27:1–8
AMEN
See note Mt 5:18; see p 1784
ANGEL OF THE LORD
Ex 3:2; 23:20–21; Nu 22:22–35; Lk 1:5–25; 2:8–21; see notes, 2Ki 19:35; Ps 34:7; see p 1227
ANGELS
Ps 91:11–12; Lk 2:13; Heb 1; 2Pt 2:4; see note, Lk 1:19; see p 5
ANGER
Gn 4:6–7; Jn 2:13–17; Eph 4:25–32; see note, Eph 4:27; see note, Php 4:10–20
ANIMALS
Gn 1:20–25; 9; Lv 11; Dt 14; Ac 10:9–16; see note, Gn 2:20; see p 300
ANTICHRIST
Dn 7; 2Th 2; see pp 2060, 2170
ANXIETY/NERVOUSNESS
Ps 37; Jer 29:11; Mt 6:25–34; Php 4:6–7
APOCALYPSE
See note, Rv 1:1; see p 1395
APOCRYPHA
See pp 1551, 1562–64
APOSTLES
Mt 10; see notes, Mt 5:1; Lk 6:13; see pp 1841, 1901; see map, p 1857
ARK OF THE COVENANT

Ex 25:10–22; see p 495; see diagram, p 203
ARMOR OF GOD
Eph 6:10–18
ASCENSION
See Jesus Christ
ASHERAH (ASHTORETH)
See note, Ex 34:13
ASSURANCE
Ps 37; Jer 29:11; see notes, Mt 5:6; Heb 10:22; see p 1206
ASSYRIA
2Ki 17; see notes, Gn 2:14; Ezk 32:22; see map, p 609
ATONEMENT
Is 53:4–5; 2Co 5:21; see notes, Ex 12:7; Lk 23:45; see p 5
BAAL
Jgs 2:11–15; 1Ki 18:20–40; see notes, Gn 28:19; Nu 25:3
BABYLON/BABYLONIAN EXILE
Ps 137; see notes, Is 13:1; Zec 6:10; Mt 2:18; Rv 14:18; see map, p 717
BALAAM
Nu 22–24; see note, Rv 2:14; see p 307
BAPTISM
Mt 28:19–20; Mk 16:16; Ac 2:28–39; Rm 6:3–4; Gal 3:26–27; see notes, 1Co 15:29; Col 2:11, 12; Heb 6:2; 1Pt 3:21; see pp 1369, 1920
BARRENNESS
1Sm 2:1–10; see notes, Is 49:20; 51:2
BEATITUDES
Mt 5:1–12; Lk 6:20–23; see note, Rv 1:3; see p 842
BENJAMIN
Gn 35:16–18; see notes, 1Ch 8; Rm 11:1
BETHLEHEM
Mi 5:2; Mt 2; see note, Ru 1:1; see color maps 1, 4
BETRAYAL
Ps 41; see ⛪ notes, Gn 37:12–36; Mt 26:17–25; Ac 7:54–60
BLASPHEMY
Lv 24:10–16; Mt 26:74; 27:39–44; see note, Mt 9:3; 12:31; Mk 3:29–30; see ⛪ note, Ps 13
BLESSINGS

Ps 145:14–16; 1Tm 4:4–5; see notes, Gn 12:3; Jb 42:10–17; Mt 5:3–11; Lk 6:20–22; see p 842
BODY OF CHRIST (THE CHURCH)
1Co 12:12–31; Eph 2:19–22; 4:1–15; see note, Ti 1:6; see pp 1901, 1965
BOOK OF THE LAW
See pp 5, 338–40
BRAGGING
See notes, Gn 4:23–24; Jb 25:6
BROKENNESS
See note, Ex 12:10; see note,
Is 61
BURIAL CUSTOMS
See notes, Gn 50:1–3; Jgs 8:32; 1Ki 2:10; Mt 27:60; see diagram,
p 1823
BURNING BUSH
See Moses
CAIAPHAS
Mt 26:57–68; see notes, Lk 3:1–2; Jn 11:49; 19:11
CAIN AND ABEL
Gn 4; see notes, Gn 5:3; Heb 11:6; Jude 11
CANAAN
See notes, Gn 10:6; Lv 14:34; 18:3; see p 345; see map, p 120
CANON
See pp xlv–xlvii, 1559–61
CAPTIVITY
See p 1079; *see also* Babylon/Babylonian Exile
CENSUS
Ex 30:11–16; Nu 26; 2Sm 24; 1Ch 21; Lk 2:1–7; see p 213
CHANGES
Is 40:6–8; Heb 13:8; Jas 1:16–18
CHERUBIM AND SERAPHIM
Gn 3:24; Ex 25:18–22; see notes, Ps 80:1; Is 6:2; Ezk 10:1; see p 141; see diagram, p 159
CHILDBEARING
See notes, Gn 1:28; 1Tm 2:15
CHILDREN

Dt 11:18–21; Mk 10:13–16; Eph 6:1–4; see notes, Pr 1:8; 22:15; Ti 1:6; see ⛪ note, Pr 17:1–6; see p 2025; *see also* Family
CHOICES
See notes, Pr 20:24; 1Co 6:12; see ⛪ note, Gn 46; *see also* Free Will; Election, Divine
CHRIST
See Jesus Christ
CHURCH
See Body of Christ
discipline, Mt 18:15–17; 2Co 2:5–11; see note, 1Co 5:13
CHURCH AND STATE
Rm 13:1–7; see notes, 2Ch 19:11; Mt 22:21; see ⛪ notes, Gn 21:22–34; Ezr 5:6–17; see pp 432, 2128
CIRCUMCISION
Gn 17:1–14; Rm 2:25–29; Col 2:11–14; see notes, Ex 4:25; Eph 1:13; see p 127
CITIZENSHIP
See notes, Gn 17:8; Mt 22:21; Php 3:20; see p 1632
COMFORT
Ps 23; Jn 14:16; see notes, Is 40:1; Mt 5:4; see ⛪ note, Gn 18:22–33
COMMUNION, HOLY
See Lord's Supper
COMPASSION
See notes, Ex 22:27; Mt 9:36; see "mercy," pp 842–43, 1903
COMPLAINING
Nu 14; see note, 1Sm 30:6; see ⛪ notes, Nu 11:1–15; Jb 35; see p 879
CONFESSING/CONFESSION
Ps 51; see notes, Lv 26:40; Pr 28:13; Mt 3:6; Jas 5:16
CONFIRMATION
Mt 10:32–33; Rv 2:10; see note, Ex 29:4–9, 31–33
CONFLICT
See note, Gn 3:15; see ⛪ notes, 2Ki 6:8–23; Mt 10:34–39; see pp 376, 1867
CONTENTMENT
Ps 63; Php 4:11–13; 1Tm 6:3–10; see note, Ec 6:9; see ⛪ note, 1Sm 18:6–16
COURAGE

Jsh 1:1–9; 2Co 5:6–8; see note, 2Ch 15
COVENANT
See notes, Gn 15:9–10; Col 2:11; see pp 6, 136
COVETOUSNESS
1Ki 21; Lk 12:13–21; see notes, Ex 20:17; Rm 7:8; 1Jn 2:16
CREATION
Gn 1–2; Col 1:16; see note, Heb 11:3; see pp 8–11; see chronology, p xcii
CREEDS
See note, Dt 6:4; see p 1975
CROSS
1Co 1:17–25; see notes, Mt 10:38; Jn 19:17; see note, Nu 21:4–9
CULTS
See notes, Ezk 8:10; Ti 1:10; *see also* False Prophets
CURSE
Ex 20:7; see notes, Jb 1:5; Ps 10:3; see note, Ex 6:1–13; see pp 6, 879
CYRUS
2Ch 36:22–23; see notes, Ezr 1:1; Is 44:28; see chronology, p cii
DAMASCUS
Ac 9; see note, 2Ki 16:10; see color maps 2, 4
DANIEL
See pp 1393–96
DARKNESS
1Pt 2:9; see notes, Gn 15:12; Jb 24:13–15; Ps 27:1; see note, Mt 4:12–25
DAVID
1Sm 16; 1Ch 11; see note, 2Sm 7:13; see map, p 500
and Absalom, 2Sm 15–18
and Goliath, 1Sm 17
and Jonathan, 1Sm 18:1–5
DAY OF ATONEMENT
Lv 16; see note, Lk 23:45; see pp 200–201; see calendar, p 262
DAY OF THE LORD
Jl 2:1–11; see p 1079
DEAD SEA
See color map 4
DEAD SEA SCROLLS
See “Qumran community,” p 1557; see pp 1087, 1553–56

DEATH
Ps 23; 1Th 4:13–18; see notes, Gn 2:17; Ec 12:7; see p 1750; *see also* Burial Customs
DEBORAH
Jgs 4–5; see pp 389, 1972
DEBT
Mt 6:19–34; see notes, Ps 50:10; 1Tm 6:10; see note, Ru 1:1–5
DECEPTION
Ps 55; Pr 6:12–19
DECISION MAKING
See notes, Pr 2:11; 18:18
DELIVERANCE
Ps 54; see notes, Gn 19:1–22; Jn 1:1–18; see "salvation," p 843; see pp 101, 1112
DEMON POSSESSION
Mt 8:28–34; 17:14–20; see note, Mt 12:44
DEPRESSION
1Pt 5:8–9; see note, 1Sm 16:14–23; see p 779–82
DISCIPLES
Mt 28:19–20; see notes, Is 8:16; Mt 5:1; see "Sons of the Prophets," p 555
DISCIPLESHIP
Mk 8:34–9:1; see note, Lk 9:23–24
DISCIPLINE
Heb 12:5–11; see notes, Pr 3:11, 12; 10:13; 19:18; 22:15
DISCOURAGEMENT
See note, Is 45:14–25; see "Close Ranks," p 2212
DISOBEDIENCE
Gn 3; Lv 10; 26; see notes, Dt 28:15–68; Rm 1:27; see notes, Lv 26:14–46; Ezk 25:1–7
DISPERSION
See p 1556; *see also* Exile
DIVIDED KINGDOM
See notes, 1Ki 12:15; Is 31:12; see note, 1Ki 12:16–24; see p 529; see map, p 558
DIVISIONS IN THE CHURCH
Ac 15; *see also* Church

DIVORCE
Mt 19:1–12; 1Co 7; see note, Mt 19:8; see notes, Dt 24:1–4; Mt 19:1–12
DOUBT
Ps 13; 73; Jn 20:24–29; see note, Ps 6
DREAMS
See notes, Gn 37:5; 40:8; see p 74
DRUG ABUSE
See "sorcerers" in note, Rv 21:8; *see also* Drunkenness
DRUNKENNESS
Rm 13:11–14; see notes, Pr 23:20–21; 23:29–35; Zec 12:2; Eph 5:18; see note, Gn 9:18–29
EARLY CHURCH
See pp 1553–58; see map, p 2239
ECONOMY
See Debt; Money
EDEN, GARDEN OF
See note, Gn 2:10–14; see p 19
EDOM
Nu 20:14–21; Ps 137; Is 21:11–17; see notes, Gn 27:39–40; Jl 3:19; see color map 2
EDUCATION
See notes, Pr 1:2, 8; 31:1; see note, 2Ki 22:1–2; see pp 1424–25
EGYPT
See notes, Gn 47:21; Ex 1:11; Jer 46; Jl 3:19; see color map 3
ELDERLY
See notes, Lv 19:32; Dt 32:7; see note, Ec 12:1–8
ELDERS
Nu 11:16–30; see notes, Ex 3:16; Ti 1:6; see p 1556
ELECTION, DIVINE
Rm 9–11; see notes, 1Sm 16:6–13; Jer 31:18–19; Mt 16:18; Lk 16:31; Jn 10:28; Ac 4:28; Rm 8:29; Eph 1:4, 11; Rv 21:21; 22:11; see p 1929
ELI
1Sm 1–4; see pp 170–71
ELIJAH
1Ki 17–19; see notes, Mal 4:5; Mk 1:6
ELISHA

1Ki 19:16–21; 2Ki 2:13–25
ELIZABETH
Lk 1:5–25, 39–45, 57–80; see p 1726
EMMAUS
Lk 24:13–35
ENCOURAGEMENT
Ps 91; Col 4:2–6; Heb 10:19–25; see "be with," p 5
END TIMES
Lk 13:22–14:24; 21:5–38; see note, Mk 13; see pp 1375, 2195–98, 2199
ENVY
Ps 73; Pr 14:30; Rm 1:28–32; see notes, Ec 4:4; Ac 5:17; Jas 4:2; see note, 1Sm 18:6–16
EPHESUS
Ac 19; see p 2014–16; see map, p 1895
ESAU
Gn 25:19–34; 27; 36; Rm 9:13; see notes, Ob 6; Mal 1:3; see p 1929
ESCHATOLOGY
See End Times
ESTHER
See pp 760–61
ETERNAL LIFE
Jn 3:16, 36; 5:24; 11:17–27; see note, Jn 17:3
EUCHARIST
See Lord's Supper
EVANGELISM
See notes, Jsh 4:24; Ps 96:2–3; see note, Ac 22:30–23:11; see pp 1206, 1424
EVANGELISTS
See pp 1571–74
EVE
Gn 2:18–3:24
EVERLASTING LIFE
See Eternal Life
EVIL
2Tm 4:18; see notes, Gn 1:1; Dt 32:39; see "devote to destruction," p 6
EVOLUTION
Heb 11:3; see note, Gn 1:2; see pp 9–10

EXCOMMUNICATION
1Co 5:12–13; Ti 3:10–11; see notes, Jn 9:22; Rm 5; 1Tm 1:20; see p 1617
EXILE
2Ki 17:6–23; 25; Ps 137; see notes, 2Ch 36:21; Is 45:13; see ✝ note, Lm 2; see map, p 717
EXODUS, THE
Ex 12–18; see pp 94–96; see map, p 120
EZRA
See pp 719–21
FAITH
Eph 2:1–10; Rm 4; 10:17; Heb 11; see notes, Ru 2:12; Mt 9:24; see pp 1902, 2014–16
maturing of, see pp 1424–25
FAITHFULNESS
See p 842; *see also* Faith
FALL, THE
Gn 3; Rm 5:14–19
FALSE PROPHETS
See notes, Dt 18:22; Mt 24:23–24; see pp 307, 389
FAMILY
See note, Pr 17:6; see ✝ notes, Gn 31; Nu 20:14–21; Ru 1:1–5; 2Ki 11:1–3; Mt 10:34–39; see pp 54–55, 2134; *see also* Parents/Parenting; Childbearing; Children
FAMINE
Gn 41:53–57; see notes, Ru 1:1; Ps 33:19; Ac 7:11–13; Gal 2:4
FASTING
See notes, Mt 6:16; Mk 2:18; see p 189
FAVORITISM
Gn 37:3–4; see notes, Gn 25:28; Pr 24:23; Col 3:25; see ✝ note, Eph 2:11–22; see "Children of the Patriarchs," p 55
FEAR
See ✝ notes, Ex 32; Jsh 11; 1Sm 18:17–30
FEAR OF THE LORD
See p 1001
FEASTS
See pp 19, 200–201, 1764

FEEDING THE FIVE THOUSAND
Mt 14:13–21; Mk 6:30–44; Lk 9:10–17
FELLOWSHIP
Ac 2:42–47; see notes, Is 31:12; 1Jn 1:3; see pp 19, 1902
FIRSTBORN
See notes, Gn 27:19; Ex 4:22; Col 1:15; Heb 1:6; see p 6
FLOOD
Gn 6–9; see notes, Is 54:9; 1Pt 3:21
FOLLOWING GOD
Mt 4:18–22; 16:24–28
FOOD
See pp 19, 235, 300, 1718
FOOLISHNESS
Pr 17:7–22:16; see note, Ec 2:14; see note, Pr 12:12–15:19; see pp 1016, 1335
FORGIVENESS
Ps 51; 130; Mt 6:14–15; 18:15–35; Eph 1:7; 4:32; see note, Ru 2:12; see note, Ac 7:54–60; see p 2042; *see also* Justification
FORNICATION
See note, Pr 6:30–31; see note, Gn 39; see pp 2128–29
FREEDOM
Gal 5; see pp 101, 170, 206, 1902
FREE WILL
See notes, Ex 35:29; Ac 4:28; *see also* Choices; Election, Divine
FRIENDS/FRIENDSHIP
1Sm 18:1–5; see notes, Ex 22:27; Pr 17:17; 19:4; Ec 4:9
FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT
Gal 5:22–23; see "Grafted into the Vine," p 1810
FUTURE
Ps 139; Mt 6:34; 24:36; see notes, Nu 24:15–25; 2Ki 4:1–7; Jn 21:20–25
GALILEE
See notes, Mt 2:22; 10:5; Mk 16:7; see color map 4
Jesus' ministry in, Mk 1:14–15; Lk 4:14–9:50
Sea of, Mt 4:18–22; Mk 4:35–5:43; see color map 4
GENEALOGY
See "Form and Use of Genealogies," p 629

GENEROSITY
Mt 5:40–42; see notes, 1Ch 29:14; Mt 19:21; see note, Dt 14:22–29; *see also* Hospitality
GENTILES
See notes, 1Sm 17:43; 1Ki 8:43; Rm 1:13; see pp 1671, 1828–30
GENTLENESS
1Tm 6:11; see note, 1Pt 3:15
GETHSEMANE, GARDEN OF
Mt 26:36–46; Mk 14:32–42; Lk 22:39–46
GIBEON
Jsh 9–10; 2Sm 2:12–28; 1Ki 3:3–15; 2Ch 1:1–6; see color map 1
GIVING
Mt 6:1–4; 2Co 9:7; see p 1092; *see also* Generosity
GLORY
See p 1902
GLUTTONY
See note, Pr 23:20–21
GOD
as Father, Is 63:16; Mt 6:5–14
is eternal, Ps 90:1–2; 1Tm 1:17
is faithful, 2Tm 2:13
is good, Ps 118:1
is gracious, Ex 34:6–7
is holy, Lv 19:2; Is 6:3
is just, Dt 32:4
is love, Jn 3:16; 1Jn 4:8
is merciful, Jer 3:12; Ti 3:5
is omnipotent, Gn 1; Mt 19:26
is omnipresent, Jer 23:23–24; Mt 28:20
is omniscient, Ps 139:1–4; Jn 21:17
is spirit, see note, Jn 4:24
is unchangeable, Mal 3:6; Jas 1:17
will of, see notes, Lv 11:44; Rm 12:2; Heb 10:36
wrath of, Na 1; see notes, Ex 4:14; Is 63:2
GODS, FALSE
See Idolatry
GOLDEN CALF

Ex 32; Dt 9:13–21
GOLDEN RULE
Mt 7:12; see note, Dt 24:5–25:4
GOOD SAMARITAN
Lk 10:25–37; see note, Pr 24:12
GOOD SHEPHERD
Ps 23; Ezk 34; Jn 10:1–21; see note, Ex 12:1–28; see "I Am the Good Shepherd," p 1785
GOOD WORKS
Gal 2:15–3:29; see notes, Gn 12:1; Rm 4; Jas 2:14–26
GOSPEL
Jn 3:16, Rm 1:16; see note, Php 1:7; see pp 1571–74, 1902
GOSSIP
See notes, Ps 27:2; Pr 6:12; 16:28; see note, Ps 140
GOVERNMENT
Rm 13; Mt 22:21; see note, Ps 11:3–7; see notes, Gn 21:22–34; Ac 25:1–12; see p 1632
GRACE
Eph 2:1–10; see notes, Gn 12:1; 25:23; Rm 5:2; see p 1902
GREAT COMMANDMENT
Mt 22:34–40
GREAT COMMISSION
Mt 28:16–20
GREAT EXCHANGE
2Co 5:16–21; 8:9
GREED
Lk 12:13–15; 16:1–13; see note, Nu 22:18
GRIEF
Jn 11:1–44; 2Co 1:3–7; see notes, Jb 1:20; 16:15; *see also* Death
GUILT
Ps 51; Heb 12:1–2; see note, Lv 4:20; see note, Mt 9:1–8
HABITS
See notes, Ps 31:5; Rm 15; 2Tm 3:13
HAGAR
Gn 16; 21:8–21; Gal 4:21–31; see pp 54–55
HAPPINESS
See notes, Ec 2:1; Jn 15:11; see note, 2Sm 15:1–12

HATRED
See notes, Lv 19:17; Rm 7:25; 1Jn 2:9–11; see ⛪ notes, Gn 37:1–11; 1Sm 19; Jn 15:18–16:4a; Ac 8:1–3; see p 376
HEALTH
2Co 4:16–5:9; see notes, Ex15:26; Ps 41:3; Mt 4:23
HEAVEN
Rv 22:3–5; see note, Ps 33:13–14; see p 1689
HELL
See notes, Ps 33:13–14; Mt 24:51; 1Pt 3:19; see p 1750; *see also* Sheol
HERESY
See notes, Ac 24:5; 2Pt 2:1; see pp 307, 1012, 2040–42
HEROD ANTIPAS
Mk 6:14–29; see note, Lk 23:7
HEROD THE GREAT
See note, Lk 21:5; see "Herodians," p 1557
HEROES
Heb 11; see ⛪ note, Is 5:8–30
HEZEKIAH
2Ki 18–20
HIGH PRIEST
See note, Jn 11:49; see ⛪ note, Nu 3:1–4; see p 228
HOLINESS
See ⛪ note, Ac 10:9–33; see "holy," p 7
HOLY SPIRIT
See pp 1815, 1920
HOMOSEXUALITY
Lv 18:22; 1Co 6:9–10; 2Pt 2:4–10a; see notes, Gn 19:5; Rm 1:26–27; see p 1911
HONESTY
See ⛪ notes, Gn 30:25–43; 2Ki 22:3–7; Pr 24:23–34
HOPE
See p 1903
HOSPITALITY
See notes, Gn 18:4; Mt 25:38; Rm 12:13
HUMILITY
Mt 18:1–6; Jas 4:10; see notes, 1Sm 9:21; Jb 25:6; Ps 76:7–9; see ⛪ notes, Is 10:5–19; Am 4:6–13

of Christ, see "The Humility of Christ," p 2030
HUNGER
Mt 4:1–4; see note, Is 49:10; see p 19
HYPOCRISY
Mt 23; see notes, Mt 6:2; Ac 5:2; see ⛪ notes, Is 29; Gal 2:11–14
IDOLATRY
Ex 20:3–6; 32; Lv 26:1–2; Ps 115; Is 42:8; 1Co 10:1–22; see notes, Gn 46:34; Ex 4:3; see ⛪ note, Zec 13:2–6; see p 141
ILLNESS
See Sickness
IMAGE OF GOD
Gn 1:26–27; see notes, Col 1:15; 3:10; see p 2041
IMMORALITY
Rm 1:18–32; 1Co 6:9–11; see note, Rv 17:2; see ⛪ note, Jer 1:4–19
INCEST
Gn 19:30–38; Lv 18:6–16
INFERTILITY
See Barrenness
INHERITANCE
See note, Lk 18:16; see "firstborn" and "portion," pp 6, 7; see "heir," p 1902
INJUSTICE
Gn 39; Am 5:14–15, 21–24; see notes, Jb 9:24; Is 1:27; 1Pt 2:19; see ⛪ notes, 2Sm 3:26–30; Jb 21
ISAAC
Gn 21–22; Mt 1:1–2; see note, Gn 17:19
JACOB
Gn 25:19–34; 35:9–12; 49
JEALOUSY
See Envy
JEHOSHAPHAT
1Ki 22:41–50; see note, 2Ch 17
JERICHO
Jsh 6; see notes, Jsh 2:1; Mk 10:26; see color maps 1, 4
JEROBOAM
1Ki 12–14; see note, 1Ki 11:38
JERUSALEM

Mt 21:1–11; see notes, Dt 12:5; Ru 2:12, Is 60:19–20; see p 1898; see color maps 1, 4
JERUSALEM COUNCIL
Ac 15:1–35; see p 1867
JESSE
See notes, Is 11:1; Rm 15:12
JESUS CHRIST
See pp 1571–74, 2098
arrest, Mt 26:47–56; Mk 14:43–50; Lk 22:47–53; Jn 18:3–14
ascension, Mk 16:19–20; Lk 24:51; Ac 1:6–11; Rv 4–5; see chronology, p cvii
Baptism, Mt 3:13–17; Mk 1:9–11; Lk 3:21–22
birth, Is 7:14; Mt 1:18–25; Lk 1:26–38; 2:1–21; Gal 4:4–5
boyhood, Lk 2:41–52
as the Bridegroom, see notes, Dt 21:10–14; Mt 9:14–17; 2Co 11:2
burial, Mt 27:57–61; Mk 15:42–47; Lk 23:50–56
crucifixion, Mt 27:32–55; Mk 10:45; 15:21–42; Lk 23:26–49; Jn 19:17–37
enters Jerusalem, Mt 21:1–11; Mk 11:1–11; Lk 19:28–40; Jn 12:12–19
Last Supper, Mt 26:26–30; Mk 14:22–26; Lk 22:14–38
miracles, see p 1596
resurrection, Mt 28:1–15; Mk 16:1–13; Lk 24:1–12; Jn 20:1–18
temptation, Mt 4:1–11; Mk 1:12–13; Lk 4:1–13; Heb 4:15
transfiguration, Mt 17:1–13; Mk 9:2–13; Lk 1:5–25; 9:28–36
two natures, see note, 2Co 4:4
JEZEBEL
See note, 1Ki 16:32; see p 389
JOHN THE BAPTIST
Mt 3:1–12; 14:1–23; Mk 1:1–8; Lk 3:1–20; Jn 1:19–28
JORDAN RIVER
See color maps 1, 4
JOSEPH (OT)

and his brothers, Gn 37; 43–45
JOSEPH (NT)
Jesus' earthly father, Mt 1:18–25; 2:13–23
JOY
Php 4:4; see p 1903
JUDAH
Gn 29:35; see note, Gn 37:26; see "Prostitution," p 55; see p 1079
JUDAS ISCARIOT
Mt 26:14–25, 47–56; 27:3–10
JUDGMENT DAY
Mt 25:1–13, 31–46; 1Th 4:13–18; see "day of the LORD," p 1079
JUSTICE
See note, Gn 4:24; see ✝ notes, Jsh 6; Mt 12:15–21; see "righteousness," p 843; see "Luther on Job," pp 779–81; *see also* Injustice
JUSTIFICATION
Rm 3:23–26; 4; see "justify," p 1903
KEYS OF THE KINGDOM
See notes, Mt 16:19; 18:18, 20; see p 1617
KINDNESS
See note, Zec 7:9
KINGDOM OF GOD
See pp 1565–66
KNOWING GOD
See notes, Hos 13:4; Lk 11:52; Gal 4:9
LAST DAYS
Mt 24:36–51; 2Tm 3; see notes, Ac 2:17; Heb 1:2; Rv 1:3
LAW
Rm 2:14–15; 3:20; Gal 3:10–11; see notes, Jb 33:16; Mt 19:18–19; see p 1911
LAZARUS
Jn 11:1–44; see ✝ note, Jn 12:9–11; see "I Am the Resurrection and the Life," p 1785
LEADERS/LEADERSHIP
See ✝ notes, Nu 17; Jsh 1:10–18; Mk 12:38–40; Lk 12:35–48; see p 228
LEGALISM
See notes, Lk 11:39; 12:1; see pp 2005, 2132
LEPERS/LEPROSY

Lv 13–14; Mt 8:1–4; Mk 1:40–44; Lk 5:12–16
LEVITES
Nu 3; 1Ch 23; see note, Ex 32:29; see p 228
LIES/LYING
Pr 6:12–19; 14:5
LIFE
See note, Zec 8:4; see p 983
LIGHT
1Pt 2:9; see notes, Gn 1:3; Nu 1–4; Jb 24:13–15; Ps 27:1; Mt 4:12–25
LIVING TOGETHER
See pp 2120–21
LONELINESS
Jer 29:11; Ps 88; see note, Ps 22:1
LORD';S PRAYER
Mt 6:5–14; Lk 11:1–4
LORD';S SUPPER
Mt 26:17–29; Mk 14:12–25; Lk 22:7–23; 1Co 11:17–34; see pp 1965, 2230
LOVE
Dt 7:6–13; Jn 3:16; 1Co 13; see pp 1065–67, 1810
LOYALTY
See note, Pr 20:6; see notes, Lv 20:1–9; Mk 3:31–35; see "steadfast love," p 843
LUST
Mt 5:27–28; see notes, Gn 39:7; Heb 12:10; 2Pt 2:10, 16; see note, 2Sm 13:1–22
MAGI
See Wise Men
MAGIC (FORTUNE-TELLING, ETC.)
See Occult
MANAGEMENT
Gn 41:25–57; Ex 35:30–36:2; 1Co 12:27–31; see note, Ec 7:12; see p 228; *see also* Leaders/Leadership
MANIPULATION
Jgs 14; see note, 2Sm 19:8d–15
MARRIAGE

Gn 2:24–25; Mk 10:6–9; 1Co 7; 1Pt 3:5–7; see notes, Jsh 23:12; Jb 31:11; Ec 9:9; see p 54–55; *see also* Wedding
MARTHA
Lk 10:38–42; Jn 11:1–44
MARTYRDOM
Ac 6:1–8:1; see notes, Mk 10:38; Jn 21:18–19; Ac 9:25; see p 1850
MARY
Jesus' mother, Lk 1:26–56; Jn 19:26–27
MARY MAGDALENE
Jn 20:11–18; see p 1726
MATERIALISM
See notes, Jsh 5:10–12; Jgs 17; 1Ki 12:25–33; Est 1:1–9
MEANS OF GRACE
See notes, Dt 12:5; Ac 9:3–9; 1Jn 4:9; see notes, Gn 27; Lv 19:1–9; *see also* Absolution; Baptism; Gospel; Lord's Supper; Word of God
MEDITATION
Ps 1; see note, Jb 15:4; see p 289
MELCHIZEDEK
Heb 4:14–7:29; see note, Gn 14:18; see p 2103
MERCY
Rm 9:18; Ti 3:5–6; see note, Jsh 6:22; see note, Ex 34:1–9; see pp 842–43, 1903, 1934
MINISTERS
1Co 3–4; see notes, Gn 50:21; Ps 78:71–72; Lk 10:16; see note, Nu 4; see "minister," p 1903; *see also* Pastors; Leaders/Leadership
MINISTRY
Eph 4:11–16; see notes, 1Ch 6; Ac 1:25; see pp 555, 2080
MISSIONS
Ps 145; 2Th 3:1–5; see p 1493; see also the mission icons throughout the study notes
MOAB
See color map 2
MONEY
Ec 5:10; 1Tm 6:10; Heb 13:5; see notes, Ps 49:5; Lk 16:13; see note, Ps 62; see p 1092; *see also* Wealth
MOSES
Jn 1:17

birth, Ex 2:1–10
and the burning bush, Ex 3
death, Ex 34
given powerful signs, Ex 4
service of, Nu 12
MOUNT OF OLIVES
See notes, Mt 24:3; Lk 19:37; see map, p 1584; *see also* Gethsemane, Garden of
MOUNT OF TRANSFIGURATION
See notes, Mt 28:16; 2Pt 1:18
MOUNT SINAI
Ex 19–24; see p 2124; see map, p 120
MOUNT ZION
See "Zion," p 844; see p 2124
MOURNING
See notes, Jsh 7:6; Jb 2:13; 1Co 7:30; see note, Gn 35:16–29; *see also* Grief
MURDER
Gn 4; Ex 20:13; Rm 1:28–32; see note, Jas 4:2
MUSIC
See note, 1Ch 25; see pp 993, 1220
NAMES OF GOD
See pp 1227, 2098
NAOMI
Ru 1
NATIONS (THE SEVEN NATIONS)
See p 345
NAZARETH
See color map 4
NAZIRITES
See notes, Nu 6:2; Jgs 13:7; 14:9
NEBUCHADNEZZAR
2Ki 25:1–17; see chronology, p ci; see map, p 615
NEW BIRTH
Jn 3:1–17; Ti 3:5–8; see note, Is 66:7–14; see p 1369
NEW HEAVENS AND NEW EARTH
Is 66:22; see notes, Ps 96:11–12; 2Pt 3:13; Rv 12:6

NEW LIFE
Rm 6; Eph 4:17–32; *see also* New Birth
NILE RIVER
See notes, Gn 41:2; Ex 1:22; 7:20; Is 19:5–7; see color map 3
NINEVEH
See note, Jnh 1:2; see pp 1498–99; see map, p 1479
NOAH
Gn 6–9; see notes, Is 24:5; 54:9; 1Pt 3:21
NON-CHRISTIANS
See note, Ac 18:25
NUMBERS IN THE BIBLE
See p 217
OATH
Ex 20:7; Nu 30; Mt 5:33–37; see notes, Nu 6:1–21; see p 7; *see also* Vow
OBEDIENCE
Lv 26; Is 50; Rm 5:19; Heb 13:7; see notes, 1Sm 15:22–23; Pr 3:16; Jn 15:14; Ac 5:29; Rm 1:5; Heb 5:8; 1Pt 3:6; see "obey," p 1903
OCCULT
1Sm 28; Ec 7:14; see notes, Gn 41:8; Dt 18:10–11; 1Sm 15:23; Is 47:11; see ⛪ note, Ac 19:11–20
OFFERINGS
See pp 170–71
ORACLES
See note, Rm 3:2; see "burden," p 1079
ORDER OF CREATION
See notes, Gn 2:18; 3:16; 29:31–30:24; 1Tm 2:13; 1Pt 3:1; see p 1291
OVERWHELMED
Ps 91; 130; Mt 11:28–30; see ⛪ notes, Jgs 3:7–11; Lk 8:22–25; 1Co 2:12–17
PAIN
See note, Ps 147:3; see ⛪ notes, Nu 11:1–15; Jb 3; see p 1800
PALM SUNDAY
Mt 21:1–11
PARABLES OF JESUS
See p 1609
PARENTS/PARENTING
Pr 22:6; Eph 6:1–4; see notes, Dt 31:13; Pr 1:8; 3:11; 17:1–6; see p 2025

PASSOVER
Ex 12:1–30; Mt 26:17–30; see note, Lv 23:4–8; see p 1764
PASTORS
1Tm 3:1–7; see notes, Ps 78:71–72; Eph 4:11; see note, Ezr 2; see p 2080; *see also* Ministers
PATIENCE
Ps 27:14; see notes, Ec 7:8; 1Th 5:14; see note, Gn 8:1–19
PAUL
See pp 1828–30, 1899–1904
conversion, Ac 9:1–19
missionary journeys, see map, p 1886
PEACE
Jn 14:27; see notes, Mt 10:40–42; Rm 5:1; see pp 7, 1903
PEER PRESSURE
See note, Mk 15:6–15
PENTECOST
Ac 2; see p 1835
PERSECUTION
Ps 54; see note, Mk 4:16–17; see note, Mt 10:16–25; see p 2042
PERSEVERANCE
Jude 17–23; see note, Ec 7:8; see note, Mk 9:42–50
PETER
Mt 16:13–20; 26:30–35, 69–75; see note, Mk 3:16; see p 2148
PHARAOH
Ex 1:8–22; 5–14
PHARISEES
Mt 23:1–36; see note, Mk 2:18; see pp 1557, 1671
PHILISTINES
See note, Gn 10:14; see p 345
PLAGUES
Ex 7:14–11:10; Ps 105
POETRY
See p 777–78
POLITICS
Ps 146; Rm 13; see note, Ne 5:1–13
PONTIUS PILATE
Mt 27:1–2, 11–26; see note, Jn 18:29

POOR
Lv 26:35–46; Jas 2:1–7; see note, Ex 22:27; see p 1486
POPULARITY
See notes, Pr 18:24; Col 3:1–17; see note, 1Jn 2:15–17
POSSESSIONS
Lk 12:33; see notes, Mt 6:19–24; 13:44–46
PRAISE
2Ch 5:11–13; see note, Ex 15:2; see "Praise the Lord," p 843; see "lift up hands," p 1276; see p 959; *see also* Prayer; Worship
PRAYER
See notes, Mt 6:8; Eph 1:3–14; 1Th 5:17; see pp xli–xlii, 2071, 2142; see also the prayers on the inside covers or pp 2374–77
confession, see note, Nu 5:1–4
intercessory, see notes, Dt 9:25; Jb 22:30; Hab 3:1; 2Th 3:1; Heb 5:7
Psalms, see note, Hab 3:1; see p 845
thanksgiving, Ps 118; see note, 1Co 14:16–17
PREACHING
See note, Ac 14:1; see pp 320, 1220
PREDESTINATION
See Election, Divine
PRIDE
Lk 14:7–11; see notes, Ec 11:2; Is 16:6; see note, Rm 2:12–29
PRIESTS
Mal 2:7
consecration, Lv 8; Ex 28–29
holiness, Lv 21
property, see Levites
priesthood of believers, see note, 1Pt 2:9
PRIORITIES
See notes, Jsh 5:10–12; Ps 61; Rm 2:12–29
PROMISED LAND
Gn 12; Nu 34:1–15; Jsh 3–4; see notes, Jsh 5:10; Ac 7:4, 5; see "portion," p 7
PROMISES
2Co 1:20; see note, Heb 4:2; see note, Jsh 1:1–9
PROPHECY
1Th 5:21–21; see pp 1077–83

PROPHETESSES
See p 389
PROPHETS
See pp 1077–83
PROSPERITY
Jer 29:11; see note, Php 4:19; see notes, Gn 50:22–26; 1Sm 30:16–31
PROSTITUTION
Lv 19:29; 1Co 6:15–17; see notes, 1Ki 14:24; Eph 5:5; see "Prostitution," p 55
PROTECTION
Ex 14:14; Ps 91; see notes, Is 30:2; Lk 10:19–20; see "rock," p 843
PURITY
Lv 11–15; see notes, Ps 24:4; Rm 1:24; see notes, Gn 39; Ti 1:5–16
QUALIFICATIONS FOR ELDERS AND DEACONS
1Tm 3:8–13; Ti 1:5–16; 1Pt 5:1–4; see notes, Ac 6:3, 4; Ti 1:5; see "deacon," p 1902
QUESTIONING GOD
Ps 13; see note, Jb 38:1–40:2
RACES OF PEOPLE
See note, Gn 10:32
RAPTURE, THE
false doctrine of, see p 2199
false prophets and, see p 307
REBEKAH
Gn 24–27; see note, Is 51:2
REBELLION
Nu 14, 16; see notes, Is 53:6; Rm 1:29–31; 2Th 2:3; see notes, Gn 11:1–9; Pr 10:1–22:16
RECONCILIATION
Rm 5; see notes, Jn 14:27; 2Co 5:18; Col 1:22; see notes, 2Sm 2:1–7; Mt 5:21–26; see "atonement," p 5
REDEMPTION
Ex 12–13; 1Co 1:30; Eph 1:7–10; see notes, Jb 6:22–23; Lk 24:21; see notes, Nu 3:40–51; Jn 19:31–37; see p 1904
RED SEA
Ex 13:17–14:31; see note, 1Pt 3:8–22; see color map 3
REHOBOAM

1Ki 12; 14:21–31; 2Ch 10–12; see note, 1Ki 11:12; see map, p 558
REJECTION
Ps 118:22; Rm 11:2; see note, 2Ki 15:27–31
REMNANT, THE
Rm 11:1–10; see note, Ex 23:20–33; see p 1080
RENEWAL
Rm 12:1–2; Ti 3:4–7; *see also* Baptism
REPENTANCE
Ac 3:19–21; 2Pt 3:9; see notes, Pr 1:23; Rm 10:17; see notes, Ex 33:1–6; Lv 23:26–32; see "turn," p 1080
RESPONSIBILITIES
See note, 1Sm 10:17–27
REST
Mt 11:25–30; see note, Ps 94:13; see notes, Gn 2:1–3; Is 28:1–13; see p 206
RESTORATION
Ps 23; 1Pt 5:2; *see also* Renewal
REWARDS
Mt 6:19–24; see notes, Mt 5:12; 1Co 3:8; see note, 2Ki 4:8–17
REVENGE
Mt 5:38–42; see notes, Gn 4:24; 9:6; Est 8:13; 1Pt 3:9
RIGHTEOUS BRANCH
Jer 33:15; see notes, Jer 21–38; Zec 3:8; 6:12
RIGHTEOUSNESS
Ps 5; see notes, Gn 15:6; Jb 33:26; Mt 5:20; Ac 17:31; see pp 1904, 1905–7; *see also* Justification
RIVALRY
Php 1:15–18; see note, Nu 20:14–21; *see also* Envy
ROME
See pp 1632, 1892; see map, p 1895
RUTH
See pp 422–23
SABBATH
Gn 2:1–3; Ex 20:8–11; Lv 23:3; Ps 92; Mt 12:1–14; Mk 2:23–28; see note, Ex 16:23; see note, Ex 23:10–19; see "Sabbath Rest," p 2103; see p 1764
SACRAMENT

Mt 28:19; Jn 20:23; 1Co 11:23–26; *see also* Baptism; Lord's Supper
SACRIFICE
See pp 1934, 2117
Old Testament, Ps 51:16–17; see notes, 1Sm 15:22–23; Ps 50:8–9; Hos 6:6; Am 5:25
New Testament, Heb 7:26–27; 8:1–10:18; see notes, Lk 23:45; Jn 2:21; see ⛪ notes, Mk 14:12–21
SADNESS
Lk 19:41–44; Jn 11:35; see note, Jn 36:24; see "woe," p 1080
SADDUCEES
Mt 22:23–33; see p 1557
SAINTS
See "Martyrs and Saints," p 2104; see p 1904
SALVATION
Mt 1:21; Ac 4:12; Rm 1:16; 2Tm 3:15; see note, Dt 30:3; see "Salvation History," p 9; see p 843
SAMARIA
Is 28; see note, 1Ki 13:32; see color maps 1, 4
SAMSON
Jgs 13–16
SAMUEL
See pp 431–33
SANCTIFICATION
Rm 6; 1Co 1:30; 6:11; see note, 1Th 5:23; see "holy," p 1902; see SC, Third Article, p xxxvii
SARAH
Gn 12–23; Gal 4:21–5:1; see notes, Is 51:2; 1Pt 3:6
SATAN
Jb 1:6–2:10; Mt 4:1–11; 1Pt 5:8–11; Rv 12:7–17; see note, 1Ch 21:1; see ⛪ notes, Mt 14:1–12; Mk 3:22–30; see p 376
SAUL
Old Testament, 1Sm 9–31
New Testament, *see* Paul
SAVIOR
Mt 1:21; Jn 4:42; Ac 4:12; 2Tm 1:8–10; see p 415; *see also* Jesus Christ
SCAPEGOAT
See notes, Lv 10:17; 16:8, 21; Jn 1:29

SCRIBE
See notes, Ezr 7:6; Jer 36:10; Mt 2:4; see p 719–20
SCRIPTURE, HOLY
Ps 119; Jn 5:39; 20:31; 2Ti 3:14–17; see pp xxvi–xxx, xlv–xlvii, 1559–61, 1646
SECOND COMING
See note, Rv 1:7; see ✝ notes, Mt 24:29–31; 2Th 1:5–12; *see also* Judgment Day
SELF-ESTEEM
Ps 139; 2Co 5:17; Php 4:10–13
SELF-EXAMINATION
See ✝ notes, Mt 5:38–42; 7:1–6
SELFISHNESS
Jas 3:13–18; see ✝ note, Am 2:6–16
SEPTUAGINT
See "Literature," p 1556
SERMON ON THE MOUNT
Mt 5–7
SERVANTHOOD
See "servant," p 1904
SEVEN
See p 217
SEVEN CHURCHES IN ASIA
Rv 2–3; see note, Rv 1:4; see p 2204
SEXUALITY
Pr 5:15–19; Rm 13:11–14; see note, Gn 1:28; see ✝ note, Lv 18
abstinence, See notes 1Co 7:5, 6; 1Tm 4:3
SEXUAL SIN
Rm 1:24–27; 1Co 6:9–20; see ✝ notes, Gn 39; Lv 18; Nu 5:11–31; Pr 7
SHADRACH, MESHACH, AND ABEDNEGO
Dn 1–3
SHARING
Gal 6:1–10; see notes, 2Ki 7:9; Sg 4:8; see ✝ notes, Gn 41:37–57; Is 58
SHEBA, QUEEN OF
1Ki 10:1–13; 2Ch 9:1–12; see note, Lk 11:31
SHEOL
See p 792

SICKNESS
Mt 4:23–24; 8:14–17; 2Co 5:1–5; see note, Jas 5:15; see p 1800
SIGNS
Mt 16:1–4; see notes, Ex 7:3; Jgs 6:39; Rm 15:19; *see also* Jesus Christ, miracles
SIN
Ps 51; Mt 15:19; Rm 3:23–25; Jas 1:15; see notes, Ps 38:4; 1Jn 5:16, 17; see ✝ note, Ex 34:1–9; see pp 959, 2181
original, See notes, Ps 19:12–13; 51:5; Hos 11:7; Mt 15:19; Rm 5:12
SINAI
Ex 3, 19–24; see color map 3
SINGING
See notes, Ps 87:7; Col 3:16; see ✝ note, 1Ch 25; see p 993
SINGLENESS
Mt 19:10–12; 1Co 7:25–40; see note, 1Co 7:8; see ✝ note, Sg 5:10–6:1
SLAVERY
See note, Ti 2:9; see ✝ note, Ex 1:8–22; see pp 206, 2095
SOCIAL JUSTICE
Ex 22:16–23:9; see p 1486
SODOM AND GOMORRAH
Gn 18:16–19:29; Mt 11:23–24
SOLOMON
2Sm 12:14; 1Ki 1–11; 2Ch 1–9; see notes, 2Ch 1:11–12; Lk 11:31; see pp 995–97, 1065–66; see map, p 534
SOLOMON';S TEMPLE
See notes, 2Sm 7:13; 1Ki 5–8; see ✝ notes, 1Ki 5; 2Ki 25:8–17; see diagram, p 541
SOUND DOCTRINE
1Tm 3–11; Ti 2; see notes, Pr 17:24; 1Tm 6:12
SPIRITUAL GIFTS
1Co 12:1–11; see note, Mk 12:40; see p 1902
SPIRITUAL GROWTH
Mt 13:1–23; see notes, Mt 6:30; Jn 15:2–3; 1Co 3:2
SPIRITUAL WARFARE
Eph 6:10–20; see notes, Zec 9:13; Lk 10:19–20; see ✝ note, 1Ch 19:1–9; see p 376
STEADFAST LOVE OF THE LORD

Ps 36; Lm 3:22–23; see notes, Dt 7:9; Est 2:9; Hos 6:6; see p 843
STEADFASTNESS
1Tm 6:11–16; Jas 1:2–18; 2Pt 1:3–15; see note, Mt 26:41; see note, Lk 6:20–23
STEPHEN
Ac 6–7; see p 1850
STEWARDSHIP
Ps 116; 2Co 9; see notes, Dt 25:4; 1Ch 29:9; 2Co 8:5; Col 1:25; see note, Lv 27
STRESS
Mt 11:28–30; *see also* Anxiety/Nervousness; Worrying
SUBMISSION
Rm 13:1–7; see notes, 1Sm 8:21; Jb 4:6; Eph 5:22; Jas 4:7; 1Pt 3:1
in marriage, Eph 5:22–24; Col 3:18
SUFFERING
Ps 88; see note, Jb 8; Rm 5:1–11; see "suffer," p 1904; see p 1800
SUFFERING SERVANT
See p 1178
TABERNACLE, THE
Ex 25–28, 35–40; Heb 9; see note, Jn 1:14; see p 141; see diagram, p 139
TAXES
See Government
TEACHERS
Dt 6:4–9; see note, Pr 1:8; see notes, 2Ki 22:1–2; 2Ch 23:16–21; see "teach," p 1904
TEAMWORK
See note, Col 3:18–4:1
TEMPTATION
Pr 1:8–19; Mt 6:9–13; Mk 14:38; 1Co 10:12–13; Gal 5:16–26; see notes, Gn 3:5, 6; 1Sm 16:14–23
TEN COMMANDMENTS
Ex 20:1–17; Dt 5:1–22; see SC, pp xxxv–xxxvi
TERRORISM
See note, Ps 10; see "Witnesses True and False," p 1850
TESTING
Ex 17:1–7; Jas 1; see notes, Gn 22:1; Pr 17:3; see notes, Jb 1:6–12; Ps 54; Jer 8:18–9:26

THANKFULNESS
See note, Col 3:16; see notes, Dt 23:15–25; Lk 17:11–19
THANKSGIVING
Ps 18; 136; Php 4:4–7; see notes, Pr 10:22; 1Th 5:16–18; see p 1904
THEOPHANY
See p 39
TIME RECKONING
See p 1567; see calendar, p 262
TITHE
Dt 14:22–29; see p 7
TONGUES
See p 1969
TOWER OF BABEL
Gn 11:1–9
TRAGEDY
See note, Lk 13:1–5
TRANSFIGURATION
Mt 17:1–13; Mk 9:2–13; Lk 9:28–36
TRANSGRESSION
See note, Ex 34:7; *see also* Sin
TRINITY, THE
Mt 28:19; Jn 14:16–17; see notes, Gn 1:2; Nu 6:22–27; Ps 33:6; Is 6:3; Mt 3:16–17; 1Co 12:4–6; 2Co 13:14; Eph 4:4–6; see p 1815
TRUST
Ps 56; *see also* Faith
TWELVE TRIBES
Gn 35:22c–26; 49; see note, 1Ch 1:1–4; see "twelve," p 217; see p 228
distribution of land, See map, p 365
census, Nu 1
UNBELIEF
Jn 11:37–50; Rm 1:18–32; 2Pt 2:22; see notes, Ex 9:12; Dt 7:19; Hos 11:7
UNCERTAINTY
See note, 1Th 1:5; see notes, Ec 9:1–6; Jer 31:1–30; Lk 21:25–28
UNCLEANNESS
Lv 11–15; see notes, Gn 7:2; Zec 13:1; Mt 19:18–19; see notes, Is 63:15–64:12; Lk 4:31–37; see "Clean and Unclean," p 1653

UNFAITHFULNESS
Jgs 2:11–15; Jas 4:4–12; see notes, Jsh 7:1; Mt 24:51; see ⛪ notes, Is 62; Hos 1:2–11
UNITY, CHRISTIAN
Ps 133; Ac 4:32–35; Rm 12:9–21; 1Co 1:10; Eph 4:1–16; see notes, 2Ki 15:23–26; 1Ch 13:1–4; Sg 6:9; Jn 17:11; see ⛪ note, Jas 5:12–20; see pp xxvi–xxx, 1671, 1965, 2016
UNPARDONABLE SIN
Mt 12:22–32; Mk 3:22–30; see notes, Pr 1:28; Ac 7:51; Heb 10:29; see p 2181; *see also* Blasphemy
USURY
See notes, Pr 28:8; Ezk 18:8; *see also* Debt
UZ
Jb 1:1; see map, p 780
VICTORY
1Co 15:54–56; see notes, Jsh 21:44; Jgs 11:23; 1Jn 5:5; Rv 12:9; see ⛪ notes, Ex 15:1–21; Dt 20; 2Sm 8:1–14; 2Ch 20:24–34; Ps 138; Jer 49:23–27; Mt 8:28–34; see p 376
VIGILANCE
Pr 4:23; Mt 25:1–12; Mk 13:32–37; see note, Mk 14:34; see ⛪ note, Mk 13:32–37
VINEYARD
1Ki 21:1–16; Ps 80:8–19; Is 5:1–7; 27:2–6; Mt 20:1–16; Mk 12:1–11; Lk 20:9–18; see note, Is 5:5; see p 1810
VIOLENCE
Gn 6:11–13; see notes, Jer 1:19; Mi 3:2–3; Mt 26:52; see ⛪ note, Mk 6:14–29; see pp 376, 879
VISIONS
See notes, Nu 12:6; Pr 29:18; Is 6:1; 2Co 12:1; Rv 1:10; see pp 39, 2195–96; *see also* Dreams
VOCATION
See note, 1Co 7:17; see ⛪ notes, Jgs 12:8–15; 2Ki 22:3–7; Eph 6:1–9
VOW
See notes, Nu 30:3; Ps 116:14; Pr 20:25; Is 19:21; Mt 23:16–22; see p 7; *see also* Oath
WAITING

Lk 12:35–40; see notes, Ps 37:9; 130:5; Is 40:31; Hab 2:3; see ⛪ note, Hab 1:12–2:1

WAR

Jsh 5:13–12:24; Jgs 1; 1Sm 13–14; 2Sm 2:8–4:12; 5:6–25; 10:6–19; 12:26–31; 18:1–18; 1Ki 20:1–30; 22:29–36; 2Ki 16:5–9; 18:9–13; 25:1–21; see notes, 1Ch 5:18–22; Ps 149:6–9; Mi 4:3; 2Co 10:3; see ⛪ note, Dn 11; see p 376

WEALTH

Mt 19:16–29; Mk 10:17–30; 12:41–44; Lk 18:18–30; 21:1–4; see notes, Gn 30:43; Ps 23:1; Pr 10:16; Ec 6:2; Lk 12:21; Jas 1:9–10; see ⛪ notes, 1Ki 10:14–29; Ps 49; Am 6; Jas 5:1–6

WEDDING

Ps 45; Sg 1:2–5:1; Mt 22:1–14; Lk 14:7–11; Jn 2:1–11; *see also* Marriage

customs, see notes, Dt 21:10–14; Jgs 14:10, 11; Ti 2:4; see pp 54–55

WIFE

Gn 2; Pr 31:10–31; Eph 5:22–33; 1Pt 3:1–7; see notes, Gn 1:27; Ru 3:9; Pr 18:22; 19:14

WILDERNESS

Ex 16–19; Nu 14:20–38; 20–21; 33; Dt 1–3; Mt 4:1–11; Mk 1:12–13; Lk 4:1–13; see notes, Ex 15:22; 19:2; Mt 4:1; Mk 1:4; Lk 1:80; Rv 12:6; see maps, pp 120, 250

WISDOM

1Ki 3:3–15; Ps 1; 19:8–15; 34; 37; 49; 73; 78; 111; 112; 119; 127; 128; 133; 139; Pr 1:8–17:6; 22:17–24:22; Ec 7:1–12:8; 1Co 1:18–31; Jas 3:13–18; see notes, Jb 5:13; 28:27; Col 1:9; see ⛪ notes, Pr 30; Is 47; see pp 775–78, 792, 995–98, 1012

WISE MEN

Mt 2:1–12; see note, Nu 24:17

WITNESSING

Ps 71:15–24; Mt 5:14–16; Ac 1:6–8; 1Pt 3:13–17; see notes, Ob 19–21; Mk 16:8; see "witness," p 1904; see pp 1424, 1493, 1850; *see also* Evangelism

WOMEN

as disciples, Lk 8:1–3; 1Tm 2:11–15; Ti 2:3–4; see pp 1726, 1972

creation, Gn 2:18–25; see note, 1Tm 2:13; see ⛪ note, 1Tm 2

service, Nu 30:3–16; Pr 31:10–31; see notes, Jgs 4:4; Pr 14:1; Ac 16:11–15; 1Tm 3:11

WORD OF GOD

Gn 1:3–31; Is 40:6–8; Lk 8:4–15; Jn 1:1–18; Eph 6:17; Heb 4:12; Rv 19:11–16; see pp 289, 1646, 1559–61

WORKS RIGHTEOUSNESS

Is 64:6; Rm 3:9–31; 11:5–6; Gal 2:16–3:9; Ti 3:4–7; see notes, Mt 25:35–36; 2Co 5:10; Eph 2:10; Php 3:7; Jas 2:14–26; Rv 20:12; see notes, Jb 33; Mt 5:43–48; Rm 5; see pp 1571–72

WORRYING

Ps 27; 56; Mt 6:25–34; Lk 12:4–7, 22–34; Php 4:6; see notes, Pr 12:25; Mt 14:22–33; Eph 1:3–14

WORSHIP

Ex 4:31; 26; 33:10; Dt 12:4; Ps 96; Jn 4:23; 20:7; 1Co 14:26–40; see note, Rv 1:10; see notes, Gn 2:1–3; Ex 26; see p 959; see SC, Third Commandment, p xxxv

WRATH OF GOD

Rm 1:18–32; Rv 15–16; see notes, Zep 1:15; Zec 12:2; Jn 3:36; Rm 1; Col 3:6; see note, Na 3; see "wrath," p 1904; see pp 136, 1134

YOUTH

Ec 11:9–12:8; Jas 5:5; see notes, 1Sm 17:33; Pr 29:15; 1Tm 4:12

ZACCHAEUS

Lk 19:1–10

ZION

See notes, Ps 20:2; 43:3; 133:3; Ezk 5:5; Jl 3:17; Am 1:2; Gal 4:26; Heb 12:22; see notes, Ps 53; Is 14:28–32; see pp 844, 1565–66, 1092

Biblical Chronology and World History

Calculations based on the biblical record make it possible to date many events and the lives of people who participated in those events. Biblical history did not merely occur "once upon a time" as storytellers say. Biblical and Christian religion is historical, since God's supernatural revelation entered ordinary space and time. (See "History and God's People," pp 336–37.)

Stone Age culture shows some evidence of record keeping. (See the interesting overview of research in Richard Rudgley, *The Lost Civilizations of the Stone Age* [New York: The Free Press, 1999].) However, historians and archaeologists typically date the development of writing as we know and use it today to the end of the fourth millennium BC and associate early writing with Mesopotamia and Egypt. The genealogies of Genesis 5; 10–11 are incomplete, so historians cannot effectively calculate dates from them (see p 9). The first dateable person in the Bible is Abram (Abraham), who was born in Mesopotamia near the end of the third millennium BC and later traveled to Egypt (Gn 12).

Calculating Dates

The following chronology allows the reader to compare the biblical record of events with parallel records of events in world history, with special attention to the civilizations that most often interacted with the people of Israel. Users should be aware that scholars of history may differ considerably when dating specific kings and events (e.g., dates proposed for the early dynasties of Egypt often differ by as much as 50 years). Although historians may fix some dates on the basis of astronomical events described in ancient texts, they estimate most dates by comparing lists of kings and events.

Historians sometimes have difficulty determining the dates for biblical persons and events after Abram. (E.g., dates for the exodus and conquest are hotly debated in academic circles.) Dating usually grows easier and clearer as one moves forward in history (e.g., for Israel, dates from the kingdom period and forward are more easily calculated). The editors of *TLSB* are grateful to Andrew Steinmann, whose research on the dates of biblical persons and events was especially helpful for the development of the tables below. Bracketed notes represent a proposed construction based on biblical and historical contexts.

EVENTS FROM CREATION TO THE FLOOD

BIBLICAL RECORD: Creation in six days (Gn 1–2)

EVENTS FROM CREATION TO THE FLOOD

RECORDS OF OTHER CIVILIZATIONS: Creation accounts in Mesopotamia and other cultures have similarities with biblical themes but differ markedly in theology.

EVENTS FROM CREATION TO THE FLOOD

BIBLICAL RECORD: Fall into sin (Gn 3)

EVENTS FROM CREATION TO THE FLOOD

BIBLICAL RECORD: Children of Adam and Eve (Gn 4–5; 10). Moses may refer to an earlier resource for his information: *The Book of the Generations of Adam* (see note, Gn 5:1; see also pp 3–4).

EVENTS FROM CREATION TO THE FLOOD

BIBLICAL RECORD: Noah called to build the ark (Gn 6)

The flood (Gn 7–8)

God's promise to Noah (Gn 9)

EVENTS FROM CREATION TO THE FLOOD

RECORDS OF OTHER CIVILIZATIONS: Flood accounts in various world cultures describe a great worldwide flood during which a hero rescues animals and mankind (e.g., *Sumerian Kings List*, *Atrahasis Epic*, *Eridu Flood Story*, and *Epic of Gilgamesh*). Such flood accounts are not limited to Mesopotamia.

EVENTS FROM CREATION TO THE FLOOD

BIBLICAL RECORD: The tower of Babel (Gn 11)

EVENTS FROM CREATION TO THE FLOOD

RECORDS OF OTHER CIVILIZATIONS: The *Sumerian Epic of Enmerkar* refers to a common language spoken by all people.

Although writing began at an earlier date (e.g., Sumerian records of commerce may date to c 3300 BC), recorded history began when the Egyptians used hieroglyphs to describe the unification of Upper and Lower Egypt under Menes in c 3100 BC. After this point, it becomes possible to calculate dates for persons and events, though many difficulties still result because of the variety of calendars, writing systems, and styles used by ancient people.

DATEABLE, RECORDED HISTORY

Egypt and Africa: Menes unites Upper and Lower Egypt; 1st Egyptian Dynasty

Dates: c 3100 BC

Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Gebal/Byblos serves as an important trade center with Egypt; Jericho is a long-established city

DATEABLE, RECORDED HISTORY

Egypt and Africa: 2nd Dynasty begins

Dates: 2890

Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Temple gifts at Gebal/Byblos bear the name of Egyptian ruler Khasekhemui

DATEABLE, RECORDED HISTORY

Dates: c 2700

Syria, Canaan, and Israel:

Mesopotamia and Persia: Sumerian royal inscriptions begin; early dynasty of Sumerians emerging; name of ruler Enmebaragesi found in archaeological remains from this time

DATEABLE, RECORDED HISTORY

Egypt and Africa: Djoser reigns; 3rd Dynasty; Imhotep builds step pyramid

Dates: 2686
DATEABLE, RECORDED HISTORY
Dates: c 2500
Mesopotamia and Persia: Writings in Mari
DATEABLE, RECORDED HISTORY
Egypt and Africa: 5th Dynasty
Dates: c 2494
DATEABLE, RECORDED HISTORY
Dates: c 2400
Mesopotamia and Persia: Writings in Assyria
DATEABLE, RECORDED HISTORY
Egypt and Africa: 6th Dynasty
Dates: c 2345
DATEABLE, RECORDED HISTORY
Dates: c 2334
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Sargon conquers Syrian states; they yield various goods to him
Mesopotamia and Persia: Sargon I of Akkad; followed by Akkadian Dynasty
DATEABLE, RECORDED HISTORY
Dates: c 2290–2250
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Ebla flourishes as trade center between Mediterranean region and Mesopotamia
THE PATRIARCHS OF ISRAEL
See pp 8–11.
Dates: 2166 BC
Mesopotamia and Persia: Abram born (Gn 11:27–32)
THE PATRIARCHS OF ISRAEL
See pp 8–11.
Egypt and Africa: Intermediate period; invaders divide and disrupt Egypt
Dates: c 2160–2040
THE PATRIARCHS OF ISRAEL
See pp 8–11.
Dates: c 2150
Mesopotamia and Persia: Gutians invade and disrupt Ur
THE PATRIARCHS OF ISRAEL
See pp 8–11.

Dates: c 2156
Mesopotamia and Persia: Sarai born (Gn 17:17)
THE PATRIARCHS OF ISRAEL
See pp 8–11.
Dates: c 2112–c 2095
Mesopotamia and Persia: Ur-Nammu, founder of the 3rd Sumerian Dynasty of Ur and the Sumerian legal code, builds step pyramid
THE PATRIARCHS OF ISRAEL
See pp 8–11.
Dates: c 2100
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Amorite invasion destroys Gebal/Byblos
THE PATRIARCHS OF ISRAEL
See pp 8–11.
Dates: 2091
Mesopotamia and Persia: Abram moves from Haran to Canaan (Gn 12:4)
THE PATRIARCHS OF ISRAEL
See pp 8–11.
Dates: 2067
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Abram given the name Abraham, circumcised with Ishmael (Gn 17:1–6, 24–25)
THE PATRIARCHS OF ISRAEL
See pp 8–11.
Egypt and Africa: Egyptian Middle Kingdom
Dates: c 2040–1786
THE PATRIARCHS OF ISRAEL
See pp 8–11.
Dates: c 2030
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Sarah dies (Gn 23:1–2)
THE PATRIARCHS OF ISRAEL
See pp 8–11.
Dates: 2026
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Isaac marries Rebekah (Gn 25:20)
THE PATRIARCHS OF ISRAEL
See pp 8–11.
Dates: 2006
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Jacob and Esau born (Gn 25:24–26)

THE PATRIARCHS OF ISRAEL
See pp 8–11.
Dates: 2004
Mesopotamia and Persia: Dynasty of Ur-Nammu ends
THE PATRIARCHS OF ISRAEL
See pp 8–11.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Minoan culture builds palaces on Crete
Dates: c 2000
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Pottery imported from Cyprus reaches Canaan
THE PATRIARCHS OF ISRAEL
See pp 8–11.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome:
Egypt and Africa: Mentuhotep unites Egypt; 12th Dynasty begins with powerful pharaohs
Dates: 1991
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Abraham dies (Gn 25:7)
THE PATRIARCHS OF ISRAEL
See pp 8–11.
Dates: 1966
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Esau marries Judith (Gn 26:34)
THE PATRIARCHS OF ISRAEL
See pp 8–11.
Dates: 1943
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Ishmael dies (Gn 25:17)
THE PATRIARCHS OF ISRAEL
See pp 8–11.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Hittites emerging in Anatolia; Greek pottery uses hieroglyphic script
Dates: c 1900
THE PATRIARCHS OF ISRAEL
See pp 8–11.
Egypt and Africa: [Joseph sold into slavery in Egypt (Gn 37:2, 12–28)]
Dates: inter 1901–1897
THE PATRIARCHS OF ISRAEL
See pp 8–11.
Dates: 1894

Mesopotamia and Persia: Sumuabum establishes Amorite Dynasty at Babylon
THE PATRIARCHS OF ISRAEL
See pp 8–11.
Dates: 1886
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Isaac dies (Gn 35:28–29)
THE PATRIARCHS OF ISRAEL
See pp 8–11.
Egypt and Africa: [Joseph enters service in Pharaoh's court (Gn 41:46)]
Dates: inter 1888–1884
THE PATRIARCHS OF ISRAEL
See pp 8–11.
Egypt and Africa: Jacob goes to Egypt (Apr; Gn 47:9, 28; Ex 12:40–41)
Dates: 1876
THE PATRIARCHS OF ISRAEL
See pp 8–11.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Jacob dies (Gn 47:28)
Dates: 1859
THE PATRIARCHS OF ISRAEL
See pp 8–11.
Dates: c 1830
Mesopotamia and Persia: Iakhdunlim strengthens Mari
THE PATRIARCHS OF ISRAEL
See pp 8–11.
Egypt and Africa: [Joseph dies (Gn 50:22, 26)]
Dates: inter 1808–1804
Mesopotamia and Persia: Assyrians build temple to Sumerian god Enlil
ISRAEL IN EGYPT
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Linear A script at Crete
Dates: c 1800–1450 BC
Mesopotamia and Persia: Hurrians spreading influence
ISRAEL IN EGYPT
Dates: 1792–1750
Mesopotamia and Persia: Hammurabi of Babylon
ISRAEL IN EGYPT
Egypt and Africa: 2nd Intermediate Period
Dates: 1786–1567

ISRAEL IN EGYPT
Dates: c 1775
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Aleppo, an important trade center under the ruler Iarimlim
Mesopotamia and Persia: Mari flourishes as a trade center, as recorded in the archives of Alalakh
ISRAEL IN EGYPT
Dates: 1756
Mesopotamia and Persia: Hammurabi destroys Mari
ISRAEL IN EGYPT
Egypt and Africa: Hyksos invade and dominate Egypt
Dates: c 1750
ISRAEL IN EGYPT
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Labarnas founds Hittite Empire
Dates: c 1680
ISRAEL IN EGYPT
Dates: c 1670
Mesopotamia and Persia: Ashur (Akkadian/Assyrian) Dynasty emerges
ISRAEL IN EGYPT
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Hattusilis I expands Hittite Empire
Egypt and Africa: 17th Dynasty established at Thebes
Dates: c 1650
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: N. Syria falls to the Hittites
Mesopotamia and Persia: Kassite Dynasty emerges in Babylon
ISRAEL IN EGYPT
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Mursilis I leads Hittites to victory over Aleppo and Babylon
Dates: c 1590
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Aleppo defeated
Mesopotamia and Persia: Hittites defeat Amorite Dynasty of Babylon
ISRAEL IN EGYPT
Egypt and Africa: Hyksos expelled
Dates: c 1580–1570
ISRAEL IN EGYPT
Egypt and Africa: Ahmose begins New Kingdom; 18th Dynasty
Dates: c 1570

Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Fleeing Hyksos occupy Sharuhen, Egyptians destroy the city
Mesopotamia and Persia:
ISRAEL IN EGYPT
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Telipinus issues edict regulating Hittite succession and courts
Dates: 1530
ISRAEL IN EGYPT
Egypt and Africa: Moses born (Ex 7:7; Dt 34:7); Thutmose I claims Syria
Dates: 1526
ISRAEL IN EGYPT
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Mycenaeans trade with Canaanites
Egypt and Africa:
Dates: c 1500
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Mycenaean designs influence Canaanites
Mesopotamia and Persia: Mitanni Empire emerges in N. Mesopotamia under Saustatar
ISRAEL IN EGYPT
Egypt and Africa: Amenhotep II quells rebellion in Orontes Valley
Dates: 1488
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Cities of the Orontes Valley revolt against Egyptian rule
THE EXODUS AND THE CONQUEST
See pp 94–96, 338–40.
Egypt and Africa: Thutmose III destroys coalition at Megiddo
Dates: c 1468 BC
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Canaanite Prince of Kadesh coalition defeated
THE EXODUS AND THE CONQUEST
See pp 94–96, 338–40.
Egypt and Africa: Thutmose III co-regent with Amenhotep II, who campaigns in Asia
Dates: c 1450
THE EXODUS AND THE CONQUEST
See pp 94–96, 338–40.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Destruction of Greek palaces (e.g., Knossos)
Egypt and Africa: 1st Passover; exodus (Apr; Ex 12:6; 1Ki 6:1; Nu 33:3)
Dates: 1446

Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Passover in Sinai (Apr; Nu 9:1); Israel arrives at Wilderness of Sin (May; Ex 16:1) and Wilderness of Sinai (May/June; Ex 19:1)

THE EXODUS AND THE CONQUEST

See pp 94–96, 338–40.

Dates: 1445

Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Tabernacle set up (Mar/Apr; Ex 40:2,17); census taken (Apr/May; Nu 1:1–2, 18); Israel leaves Wilderness of Sinai (May; Nu 10:11)

THE EXODUS AND THE CONQUEST

See pp 94–96, 338–40.

Dates: 1444

Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Israel leaves Kadesh (Dt 2:14)

THE EXODUS AND THE CONQUEST

See pp 94–96, 338–40.

Egypt and Africa: Thutmose IV makes peace with Mitanni Empire; Amarna Letters

Dates: c 1425

Mesopotamia and Persia: Mitanni and Egyptians cease long struggle over Syria

THE EXODUS AND THE CONQUEST

See pp 94–96, 338–40.

Dates: 1407

Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Israel arrives at Wilderness of Zin (Apr/May; Nu 20:1); Aaron dies (July/Aug; Nu 33:38)

THE EXODUS AND THE CONQUEST

See pp 94–96, 338–40.

Dates: 1407/1406

Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Moses addresses Israel (Dec/Jan; Dt 1:3)

THE EXODUS AND THE CONQUEST

See pp 94–96, 338–40.

Dates: 1406

Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Israel crosses the Jordan (Apr; Jsh 4:19); 1st Passover in the land (Jsh 5:10)

THE EXODUS AND THE CONQUEST

See pp 94–96, 338–40.

Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Hittite New Kingdom emerges

Dates: 1400
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Joshua gives Hebron to Caleb (Jsh 14:10)
THE EXODUS AND THE CONQUEST
See pp 94–96, 338–40.
Dates: 1399–1375
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Death of Joshua and the elders (Jgs 2:6–10)
THE JUDGES OF ISRAEL
See pp 380–81.
Egypt and Africa: Akhenaton (Amenhotep IV) introduces monotheistic religious reforms
Dates: c 1379 BC
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Judges lead Israel c 300 years
THE JUDGES OF ISRAEL
See pp 380–81.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Hittite expansion under Suppiluliumus I
Dates: c 1375
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Hittites retake Syria
THE JUDGES OF ISRAEL
See pp 380–81.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Hittites defeat Mitanni
Dates: c 1360
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Cities of Syria ally with Mitanni and suffer defeat from the Hittites
Mesopotamia and Persia: Hittites and Ashur-uballit I defeat Mitanni ruler Tushratta; Mitanni becomes part of Hittite Empire
THE JUDGES OF ISRAEL
See pp 380–81.
Egypt and Africa: Ramses I begins 19th Dynasty
Dates: 1332
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Eglon oppresses Israel
THE JUDGES OF ISRAEL
See pp 380–81.
Dates: c 1307–1275
Mesopotamia and Persia: Adad-nirari I of Assyria defeats Kassites and Mitanni
THE JUDGES OF ISRAEL
See pp 380–81.

Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Battle of Kadesh between Hittites and Egyptians
Egypt and Africa: Ramses II defeated at Kadesh
Dates: 1286
THE JUDGES OF ISRAEL
See pp 380–81.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Troy violently destroyed
Dates: c 1275
Mesopotamia and Persia: Shalmaneser I defeats Mitanni; builds 2nd capital at Calah
THE JUDGES OF ISRAEL
See pp 380–81.
Dates: 1236
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Jabin oppresses Israel
THE JUDGES OF ISRAEL
See pp 380–81.
Dates: 1234
Mesopotamia and Persia: Tukulti-ninurta I defeats Kassite Dynasty of Babylon; however, Kassites regain control
THE JUDGES OF ISRAEL
See pp 380–81.
Egypt and Africa: Sea Peoples invade Egypt
Dates: 1230
THE JUDGES OF ISRAEL
See pp 380–81.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Hattusus burned; Hittite Empire collapses
Egypt and Africa: Senakht begins 20th Dynasty
Dates: c 1200
THE JUDGES OF ISRAEL
See pp 380–81.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Sea Peoples (Philistines?) invade coast of Canaan
Egypt and Africa: Egyptian influence diminished
Dates: 1190
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Philistine cities emerging in Gaza
THE JUDGES OF ISRAEL
See pp 380–81.

Dates: 1124–1103
Mesopotamia and Persia: Nebuchadrezzar I (Assyrian) makes Babylon his capital
THE JUDGES OF ISRAEL
See pp 380–81.
Dates: c 1114–c 1076
Mesopotamia and Persia: Tiglath-pileser I of Assyria expands empire and wins victories against Babylon
THE JUDGES OF ISRAEL
See pp 380–81.
Egypt and Africa: 21st Dynasty (Tanite); Egyptian weakness
Dates: 1085
THE JUDGES OF ISRAEL
See pp 380–81.
Dates: 1099–1060
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Eli, priest and judge (1Sm 4:15, 18); on Samuel, see pp 431–34, Jos, *Ant* 6:294
THE JUDGES OF ISRAEL
See pp 380–81.
Dates: 1060
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Ark in Philistine territory (1Sm 6:1)
THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL
See pp 431–34.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Collapse of Mycenaean culture; Linear B script no longer used
Dates: c 1050 BC
THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL
See pp 431–34.
Dates: 1048–1009
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Saul reigns over Israel (1Sm 13:1; Ac 13:21)
THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL
See pp 431–34.
Dates: 1039
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: David born (2Sm 5:1–5)
THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL
See pp 431–34.
Dates: 1010–1009

Syria, Canaan, and Israel: David lives in Philistine territory (1Sm 27:7)
THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL
See pp 431–34.
Dates: 1009–970
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: David reigns seven years in Hebron, then over all Israel in Jerusalem (2Sm 5:5; 1Ki 2:11)
THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL
See pp 431–34.
Egypt and Africa: Pharaoh's daughter marries Solomon
Dates: 970–931
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Reign of Solomon (1Ki 12:42)
THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL
See pp 431–34.
Dates: 967–960
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Temple built and dedicated (1Ki 6:1; 2Ch 3:1–2; 2Ch 7:7–10)
THE DIVIDED KINGDOMS: ISRAEL AND JUDAH
For the reigns of individual kings, see p 529.
Egypt and Africa: Shoshenq I founds 22nd Dynasty
Dates: 945 BC
THE DIVIDED KINGDOMS: ISRAEL AND JUDAH
For the reigns of individual kings, see p 529.
Dates: 931
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Israel divided under Rehoboam
THE DIVIDED KINGDOMS: ISRAEL AND JUDAH
For the reigns of individual kings, see p 529.
Dates: 927
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Shishak (Shoshenq I) invades Israel (1Ki 14:25; 2Ch 12:2)
Mesopotamia and Persia: Ashur-dan II revives Assyria
THE DIVIDED KINGDOMS: ISRAEL AND JUDAH
For the reigns of individual kings, see p 529.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Phoenician temple built on Crete; Etruscans emerging in Italy
Dates: c 900
THE DIVIDED KINGDOMS: ISRAEL AND JUDAH
For the reigns of individual kings, see p 529.

Dates: 898
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Asa's reform/covenant (May/June; 2Ch 15:10–12)
THE DIVIDED KINGDOMS: ISRAEL AND JUDAH
For the reigns of individual kings, see p 529.
Dates: 883–859
Mesopotamia and Persia: Ashurnasirpal II of Assyria expands his\ empire, slaughtering prisoners and deporting conquered people
THE DIVIDED KINGDOMS: ISRAEL AND JUDAH
For the reigns of individual kings, see p 529.
Dates: 871
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Jehoshaphat sends teachers throughout Israel (2Ch 17:7)
THE DIVIDED KINGDOMS: ISRAEL AND JUDAH
For the reigns of individual kings, see p 529.
Dates: 858–824
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: N. Syria falls to Shalmaneser; Damascus besieged
Mesopotamia and Persia: Shalmaneser III of Assyria
THE DIVIDED KINGDOMS: ISRAEL AND JUDAH
For the reigns of individual kings, see p 529.
Dates: 855–853
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: No war between Israel and the Arameans (1Ki 22:1)
THE DIVIDED KINGDOMS: ISRAEL AND JUDAH
For the reigns of individual kings, see p 529.
Dates: 853
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Battle of Qarqar between Aramean kings and Assyrians
THE DIVIDED KINGDOMS: ISRAEL AND JUDAH
For the reigns of individual kings, see p 529.
Dates: 841–835
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Athaliah rules Judah; Joash hidden in temple
THE DIVIDED KINGDOMS: ISRAEL AND JUDAH
For the reigns of individual kings, see p 529.
Dates: c 828–824

Mesopotamia and Persia: Rebellion complicates Assyrian succession; Shamshi-Adad emerges as ruler with help of Babylonians
THE DIVIDED KINGDOMS: ISRAEL AND JUDAH
For the reigns of individual kings, see p 529.
Egypt and Africa: 23rd Dynasty begins
Dates: 817
THE DIVIDED KINGDOMS: ISRAEL AND JUDAH
For the reigns of individual kings, see p 529.
Egypt and Africa: Tyrians found Carthage
Dates: c 813
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Jerusalem temple repaired (2Ki 12:6–7)
THE DIVIDED KINGDOMS: ISRAEL AND JUDAH
For the reigns of individual kings, see p 529.
Dates: 804
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Damascus conquered
Mesopotamia and Persia: Adad-nirari III of Assyria takes over Syria
THE DIVIDED KINGDOMS: ISRAEL AND JUDAH
For the reigns of individual kings, see p 529.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Etruscan city-states emerge in central Italy
Dates: c 800
THE DIVIDED KINGDOMS: ISRAEL AND JUDAH
For the reigns of individual kings, see p 529.
Dates: c 783–773
Mesopotamia and Persia: Shalmaneser IV of Assyria
THE DIVIDED KINGDOMS: ISRAEL AND JUDAH
For the reigns of individual kings, see p 529.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: 1st Olympiad
Dates: 775
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Jotham born (2Ki 15:32–33; 2Ch 27:1)
THE DIVIDED KINGDOMS: ISRAEL AND JUDAH
For the reigns of individual kings, see p 529.
Dates: 773
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Shalmaneser IV leads unsuccessful campaign against Damascus
THE DIVIDED KINGDOMS: ISRAEL AND JUDAH
For the reigns of individual kings, see p 529.
Dates: 744–727

Mesopotamia and Persia: Tiglath-pileser III of Assyria
THE DIVIDED KINGDOMS: ISRAEL AND JUDAH
For the reigns of individual kings, see p 529.
Dates: 740
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Hezekiah born (2Ki 18:1–2; 2Ch 29:1); Isaiah's vision (Is 6)
THE DIVIDED KINGDOMS: ISRAEL AND JUDAH
For the reigns of individual kings, see p 529.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Greeks colonize locations around the Mediterranean
Dates: c 734–580
THE DIVIDED KINGDOMS: ISRAEL AND JUDAH
For the reigns of individual kings, see p 529.
Dates: 724–722
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Samaria besieged (2Ki 18:9–10)
ISRAEL IN EXILE
See map, p 609.
Dates: 722 BC
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Fall of Samaria to Assyrians
ISRAEL IN EXILE
See map, p 609.
Dates: 721–705
Mesopotamia and Persia: Sargon II of Assyria
ISRAEL IN EXILE
See map, p 609.
Egypt and Africa: 25th Dynasty of Shabaka (Cushite)
Dates: 716
ISRAEL IN EXILE
See map, p 609.
Dates: 715
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Hezekiah repairs temple (2Ch 29:3; Is 14:28–32)
ISRAEL IN EXILE
See map, p 609.
Dates: 704–681
Mesopotamia and Persia: Sennacherib of Assyria
ISRAEL IN EXILE
See map, p 609.

Dates: c 701
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Sennacherib besieges Jerusalem (2Ki 18:13; Is 36:1); Hezekiah's sickness; Hezekiah pays tribute to Sennacherib
ISRAEL IN EXILE
See map, p 609.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Carchemish preserves Hittite script and culture to this point
Dates: 700
ISRAEL IN EXILE
See map, p 609.
Egypt and Africa: Assyrians occupy Egypt
Dates: 671
Mesopotamia and Persia: Esarhaddon takes Egypt; height of Assyrian Empire
ISRAEL IN EXILE
See map, p 609.
Dates: 668–c 627
Mesopotamia and Persia: Ashurbanipal, last great ruler of Assyria
ISRAEL IN EXILE
See map, p 609.
Egypt and Africa: 26th Dynasty begins; Psamtik expels Assyrians
Dates: 664–663
ISRAEL IN EXILE
See map, p 609.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: 2nd Messenian War
Dates: 650
ISRAEL IN EXILE
See map, p 609.
Dates: 633
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Jehoiakim born (2Ki 23:36; 2Ch 36:5); Josiah seeks the Lord
ISRAEL IN EXILE
See map, p 609.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Cylon attempts coup in Athens
Dates: c 630
ISRAEL IN EXILE
See map, p 609.

Dates: 629
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Josiah purges high places (2Ch 34:3)
ISRAEL IN EXILE
See map, p 609.
Dates: 628
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Jeremiah called to be a prophet (Jer 1:1–2)
ISRAEL IN EXILE
See map, p 609.
Dates: 625–605
Mesopotamia and Persia: Nabopolassar of Neo-Babylonia
ISRAEL IN EXILE
See map, p 609.
Dates: 623
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Book of the Law found in the temple; Josiah's Passover (Apr 15; 2Ch 35:1, 19)
ISRAEL IN EXILE
See map, p 609.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Etruscan Dynasty of Tarquius begins
Dates: 616
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Jehoiachin born (2Ki 24:8; 2Ch 36:9)
ISRAEL IN EXILE
See map, p 609.
Dates: c 612–609
Mesopotamia and Persia: Chaldeans and Medes destroy Assyrian rule
ISRAEL IN EXILE
See map, p 609.
Egypt and Africa: Pharaoh Neco defeated at Carchemish
Dates: 605
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Nebuchadnezzar besieges Jerusalem (2Ki 24:1); Judeans first removed from Judah (Jer 24, 36, 45–46; Dn 1)
ISRAEL IN EXILE
See map, p 609.
Dates: 604–562
Mesopotamia and Persia: Nebuchadnezzar of Neo-Babylonia
ISRAEL IN EXILE
See map, p 609.
Dates: 604

Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Fast proclaimed; Baruch reads scroll (inter Nov 24–Dec 23; Jer 36:9–10, 22)
ISRAEL IN EXILE
See map, p 609.
Egypt and Africa: Egyptians repel Babylonians
Dates: 601
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Jehoiakim rebels against Nebuchadnezzar
Mesopotamia and Persia: Babylonians turned back near Gaza
ISRAEL IN EXILE
See map, p 609.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Phocaea Greeks colonize Spain
Dates: 600
ISRAEL IN EXILE
See map, p 609.
Dates: 599
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Nebuchadnezzar takes captives (Jer 52:28)
ISRAEL IN EXILE
See map, p 609.
Dates: 597
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Nebuchadnezzar besieges Jerusalem (2Ki 24:10; 2Ch 36:10)
ISRAEL IN EXILE
See map, p 609.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Solon's reforms in Athens
Dates: 594
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Hananiah confronts Jeremiah (Jer 28:1); Hananiah dies (Jer 28:17)
ISRAEL IN EXILE
See map, p 609.
Dates: 593
Mesopotamia and Persia: Ezekiel's 1st vision (July 31; Ezk 1:1–2)
ISRAEL IN EXILE
See map, p 609.
Dates: 589
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Siege of Jerusalem (Jer 32:1–2; 39:1; 52:4; Ezk 24–25)

ISRAEL IN EXILE
See map, p 609.
Dates: 587
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Final siege of Jerusalem begins (2Ki 25:1; Ezk 24:1–2)
Mesopotamia and Persia: Oracles against Egypt (Ezk 29:1–2) and Pharaoh (Ezk 30:20–22; 31:1–2)
JUDAH IN EXILE
See map, p 717.
Dates: 587 BC
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Wall of Jerusalem breached (July 29; 2Ki 25:3–4; Jer 39:2; 52:6–7); Nebuzaradan burns the temple (Aug 28; Jer 52:12–13); Gedaliah killed (2Ki 25:25; Jer 41:1–2)
JUDAH IN EXILE
See map, p 717.
Dates: 573
Mesopotamia and Persia: Ezekiel's vision of a new Jerusalem (Ezk 40–48)
JUDAH IN EXILE
See map, p 717.
Dates: inter 573–569
Mesopotamia and Persia: Nebuchadnezzar's 2nd dream and humiliation (Dn 4)
JUDAH IN EXILE
See map, p 717.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Croesus of Lydia
Dates: 561
Mesopotamia and Persia: Evil-merodach of Neo-Babylonia; Jehoiachin freed from prison (2Ki 25:27; Jer 52:31)
JUDAH IN EXILE
See map, p 717.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Homer's poems set down in writing
Dates: c 560
Mesopotamia and Persia: Nergal Shar Usur of Neo-Babylonia
JUDAH IN EXILE
See map, p 717.
Dates: 559–529
Mesopotamia and Persia: Rise of Persian Empire under Cyrus II

JUDAH IN EXILE
See map, p 717.
Dates: 553
Mesopotamia and Persia: Ancient of Days vision (Dn 7)
JUDAH IN EXILE
See map, p 717.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Cyrus defeats Lydians; Persian pressure drives Phocaeans west to Italy and Spain
Dates: 551
Mesopotamia and Persia: Goat and ram vision (Dn 8); Cyrus II of Persia defeats Croesus of Lydia; Ionian Greeks become Persian subjects
JUDEANS RETURN FROM EXILE
See pp 719–21, 738–39.
Dates: 538 BC
Mesopotamia and Persia: Cyrus rules Babylon; Cyrus's decree (Ezr 1:1; 5:13; 6:3)
JUDEANS RETURN FROM EXILE
See pp 719–21, 738–39.
Dates: 537
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Altar in Jerusalem rebuilt (Ezr 3)
JUDEANS RETURN FROM EXILE
See pp 719–21, 738–39.
Dates: 536
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: 2nd temple begun (inter Apr 29–May 28; Ezr 3:8)
Mesopotamia and Persia: Daniel in mourning; prince of Persia opposes angel (Apr 3–23; Dn 10:2, 13)
JUDEANS RETURN FROM EXILE
See pp 719–21, 738–39.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Greeks attempt westward expansion
Egypt and Africa: Carthage and Etruscans halt Greek expansion
Dates: c 535
JUDEANS RETURN FROM EXILE
See pp 719–21, 738–39.
Dates: 530
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Work on temple halted (Ezr 4:24)
JUDEANS RETURN FROM EXILE
See pp 719–21, 738–39.

Egypt and Africa: Achaemenid 27th Dynasty under Cambyses
Dates: 525
Mesopotamia and Persia: Cambyses II of Persia (528–523 BC)
JUDEANS RETURN FROM EXILE
See pp 719–21, 738–39.
Dates: 522–486
Mesopotamia and Persia: Darius I of Persia
JUDEANS RETURN FROM EXILE
See pp 719–21, 738–39.
Dates: 520
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Messages of Haggai and Zechariah (Hg 1–2; Zec 1)
JUDEANS RETURN FROM EXILE
See pp 719–21, 738–39.
Dates: 516
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: 2nd temple finished (Feb 21; Ezr 6:15)
Mesopotamia and Persia: Darius campaigns against Scythians
JUDEANS RETURN FROM EXILE
See pp 719–21, 738–39.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Roman republic founded
Dates: 509
JUDEANS RETURN FROM EXILE
See pp 719–21, 738–39.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Cleisthenes reforms Athenian constitution toward democracy
Egypt and Africa: Carthage concludes peace treaty with Rome
Dates: c 508
JUDEANS RETURN FROM EXILE
See pp 719–21, 738–39.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Ionian revolt against Persia
Dates: 499
Mesopotamia and Persia: Persians mobilize against Ionian tyrants
JUDEANS RETURN FROM EXILE
See pp 719–21, 738–39.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Battle of Marathon; Greeks defeat Persians
Dates: 490
Mesopotamia and Persia: Darius defeated at Marathon

JUDEANS RETURN FROM EXILE
See pp 719–21, 738–39.
Dates: 486
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Letter written to Xerxes (Ezr 4:6)
JUDEANS RETURN FROM EXILE
See pp 719–21, 738–39.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Greeks defeat Persians at Thermopylae, Artemisium, Salamis
Dates: 480
Mesopotamia and Persia: Greeks defeat huge Persian force
JUDEANS RETURN FROM EXILE
See pp 719–21, 738–39.
Dates: 478
Mesopotamia and Persia: Xerxes of Persia marries Esther (Est 2:16–17)
JUDEANS RETURN FROM EXILE
See pp 719–21, 738–39.
Dates: 474
Mesopotamia and Persia: Haman issues edict about Jews (Apr 17; Est 3:12); Mordecai issues counter-edict (July 23; Est 8:9)
JUDEANS RETURN FROM EXILE
See pp 719–21, 738–39.
Dates: 464–424
Mesopotamia and Persia: Artaxerxes I of Persia
JUDEANS RETURN FROM EXILE
See pp 719–21, 738–39.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: 1st Peloponnesian War
Dates: 460–446
JUDEANS RETURN FROM EXILE
See pp 719–21, 738–39.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Athenians support Inaros's revolt
Egypt and Africa: Lybian Prince Inaros revolts against Persians
Dates: 459
JUDEANS RETURN FROM EXILE
See pp 719–21, 738–39.
Dates: 458
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Ezra arrives in Jerusalem (Oct 31; Ezr 7:8–9)

Mesopotamia and Persia: Ezra leaves Babylon (Apr 8; Ezr 7:9); Ezra leaves Ahava River (Apr 19; Ezr 8:31)
JUDEANS RETURN FROM EXILE
See pp 719–21, 738–39.
Egypt and Africa: Herodotus in Egypt
Dates: c 450
JUDEANS RETURN FROM EXILE
See pp 719–21, 738–39.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Athens makes peace with Persia
Dates: 449
JUDEANS RETURN FROM EXILE
See pp 719–21, 738–39.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Canuleian Law (Roman)
Dates: 445
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Walls of Jerusalem completed (Oct 3; Ne 6:15); Nehemiah holds convocation (Oct 8; Ne 7:73; 8:2)
Mesopotamia and Persia: Nehemiah requests leave to go to Jerusalem (inter Apr 13–May 11; Ne 2:1–5)
JUDEANS RETURN FROM EXILE
See pp 719–21, 738–39.
Dates: 433/432
Mesopotamia and Persia: Nehemiah returns to Susa (Ne 13:6)
JUDEANS RETURN FROM EXILE
See pp 719–21, 738–39.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Great Peloponnesian War
Dates: 431–404
THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS
See pp 1553–58.
Dates: 423–405 BC
Mesopotamia and Persia: Darius II of Persia
THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS
See pp 1553–58.
Egypt and Africa: Priests of Khnum and Persians destroy Jewish temple in Egypt
Dates: 410
THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS
See pp 1553–58.

Egypt and Africa: Amyrtaeus rebels, establishes Saite 28th Dynasty
Dates: c 405
THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS
See pp 1553–58.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Peloponnesian War ends
Dates: 404
THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS
See pp 1553–58.
Dates: 404–359/358
Mesopotamia and Persia: Artaxerxes II of Persia
THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS
See pp 1553–58.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Gauls capture Rome
Dates: 390
THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS
See pp 1553–58.
Egypt and Africa: 30th Dynasty
Dates: 380
THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS
See pp 1553–58.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Philip II of Macedon
Dates: 359–336
THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS
See pp 1553–58.
Dates: 358–338
Mesopotamia and Persia: Artaxerxes III of Persia
THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS
See pp 1553–58.
Egypt and Africa: Carthage concludes treaty with Rome
Dates: 348
THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS
See pp 1553–58.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: 1st Samnite War begins; Roman power expands
Egypt and Africa: 31st Dynasty under Artaxerxes III
Dates: 343
Mesopotamia and Persia: Persians attack at Pelusium

THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS
See pp 1553–58.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Rome wins Latin War
Dates: 341
THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS
See pp 1553–58.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Dissolution of Latin League
Dates: 338
Mesopotamia and Persia: Artaxerxes III murdered; Arses (Xerxes II) rules Persia
THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS
See pp 1553–58.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Alexander rules Macedonia
Dates: 336
THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS
See pp 1553–58.
Egypt and Africa: Darius III takes Egypt
Dates: 335
Mesopotamia and Persia: Darius III rules Persia until 331
THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS
See pp 1553–58.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Alexander defeats Persians at Issus
Dates: 333
THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS
See pp 1553–58.
Egypt and Africa: Alexander proclaimed pharaoh
Dates: 332
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Alexander takes Judea away from Persians
THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS
See pp 1553–58.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Alexander the Great dies at Babylon
Dates: 323
THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS
See pp 1553–58.
Egypt and Africa: Ptolemy I founds Ptolemaic Dynasty (Greek)
Dates: 305

Mesopotamia and Persia: Seleucus I Nicator founds Seleucid Dynasty (Greek)

THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS

See pp 1553–58.

Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: 1st Punic War; Roman power expands

Egypt and Africa: Carthaginians lose territory to Rome

Dates: 264–241

THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS

See pp 1553–58.

Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: 2nd Punic War

Dates: 218–202

THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS

See pp 1553–58.

Egypt and Africa: Ptolemy IV defeats Antiochus III

Dates: 217

Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Battle of Raphia secures Ptolemaic rule of Judea

Mesopotamia and Persia: Antiochus III defeated at Raphia

THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS

See pp 1553–58.

Egypt and Africa: Scopus defeated; Ptolemies lose Judea, make peace with Seleucids

Dates: 198

Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Battle of Panias; Jews in Egypt and Judea are separated from one another politically

Mesopotamia and Persia: Antiochus III takes over Judea

THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS

See pp 1553–58.

Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Romans defeat Antiochus III at Smyrna

Dates: 190

Mesopotamia and Persia: Antiochus III loses much of Asia Minor to Rome, faces financial trouble

THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS

See pp 1553–58.

Dates: 174

Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Jason bribes Antiochus III to secure the high priesthood at the Jerusalem temple

THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS
See pp 1553–58.
Dates: 171
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Menelaus, a non-Levite, purchases the priesthood at Jerusalem; Jason removed
THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS
See pp 1553–58.
Dates: c 168
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Mattathias dies
THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS
See pp 1553–58.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Romans conquer Macedonia
Egypt and Africa: Antiochus IV Epiphanes engaged in war with Egypt
Dates: 167
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Antiochus IV orders pigs to be sacrificed to Olympian Zeus at the Jerusalem temple, leading to the Maccabean revolt; sacrilege continues for 2½ years
Mesopotamia and Persia: Antiochus IV Epiphanes forces Syrian laws on Judeans
THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS
See pp 1553–58.
Dates: 166
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Battle of Beth-horon
THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS
See pp 1553–58.
Dates: 165
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Judas Maccabeus leads rebellion against Seleucids
THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS
See pp 1553–58.
Dates: 164
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Maccabees retake and purify Jerusalem; Hanukkah established
THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS
See pp 1553–58.
Dates: 153

Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Jonathan officiates as high priest at Feast of Booths
Mesopotamia and Persia: Syrian conflict between Demetrius I and Alexander Balas; Seleucid Kingdom declines; knowledge of cuneiform script is lost
THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS
See pp 1553–58.
Dates: 147
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Battle of Jamnia
THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS
See pp 1553–58.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: 3rd Punic War; Romans destroy Corinth
Egypt and Africa: Romans destroy Carthage
Dates: 146
THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS
See pp 1553–58.
Egypt and Africa: Infighting divides Ptolemies
Dates: 145
THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS
See pp 1553–58.
Dates: 141
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Simon takes Akra, enters Jerusalem
Mesopotamia and Persia: Parthians begin to take over Mesopotamia
THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS
See pp 1553–58.
Dates: 135
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Ptolemy murders Simon, last son of Mattathias; John Hyrcanus accepts Syrian rule
Mesopotamia and Persia: Antiochus VII Sidetes besieges Jerusalem
THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS
See pp 1553–58.
Dates: 104–103
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Aristobulus rules
THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS
See pp 1553–58.
Dates: 103–76
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Alexander Jannaeus rules

THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS
See pp 1553–58.
Dates: 76–67
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Alexandra rules
THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS
See pp 1553–58.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Romans fight slave war with Spartacus
Dates: 73–71
THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS
See pp 1553–58.
Dates: 67–63
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Aristobulus II rules
THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS
See pp 1553–58.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Romans establish Idumean Dynasty under Antipater
Dates: 63
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Idumean Dynasty under Antipater
THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS
See pp 1553–58.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Caesar’s Gallic Wars
Dates: 59–51
THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS
See pp 1553–58.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Crassus defeated at Carrhae
Dates: 53
Mesopotamia and Persia: Battle of Carrhae; Parthians defeat Romans
THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS
See pp 1553–58.
Egypt and Africa: Cleopatra VII and Ptolemy XIII enthroned
Dates: 52
THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS
See pp 1553–58.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Julius Caesar crosses the Rubicon and becomes Roman dictator
Dates: 49–44

THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS
See pp 1553–58.
Egypt and Africa: Cleopatra's son Caesarion born
Dates: 47
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Herod made tetrarch of Galilee
THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS
See pp 1553–58.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Caesar assassinated
Dates: 44
THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS
See pp 1553–58.
Dates: 43
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Malchus poisons Antipater
THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS
See pp 1553–58.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Octavian (Augustus) and Antony defeat Cassius and Brutus at Philippi
Dates: 42
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Herod the Great and Phasael made tetrarchs of Judea
THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS
See pp 1553–58.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Octavian appoints Herod ruler of Judea
Dates: 40
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Herod flees from Parthians to Rome, returns as ruler
Mesopotamia and Persia: Parthians invade Judea but later withdraw
THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS
See pp 1553–58.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Battle of Actium; Egyptians withdraw
Egypt and Africa: Egyptians claim victory at Actium
Dates: 31
THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS
See pp 1553–58.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Rome rules Egypt until AD 642
Egypt and Africa: Antony and Cleopatra commit suicide
Dates: 30

THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS
See pp 1553–58.
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Augustus, 1st Roman emperor
Dates: 27 BC–AD 14
THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS
See pp 1553–58.
Dates: 14–4 BC
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Family feuds trouble Herod
THE NEW TESTAMENT
Dates: 4 BC
Angel appears to Zechariah (c Nov 15; Lk 1:8–22)
THE NEW TESTAMENT
Dates: 3 BC
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: The annunciation (inter Apr 17–May 16; Lk 1:26–38); John the Baptist born (Aug; Lk 1:57–66)
THE NEW TESTAMENT
Dates: 2 BC
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Jesus born (mid Jan to early Feb; Mt 1:25; Lk 2:1–7); Magi visit; flight to Egypt (mid to late in the year; Mt 2)
THE NEW TESTAMENT
Dates: 1 BC
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Death of Herod the Great (after Jan 10; Mt 2:19); return to Nazareth (Mt 2:19–23)
THE NEW TESTAMENT
Dates: AD 6
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Judas the Galilean leads revolt against Rome; Judea, Samaria, and Idumaea combined to form the Roman province of Judea
THE NEW TESTAMENT
Dates: c 10
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Rabbi Hillel dies
THE NEW TESTAMENT
Dates: 11
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Jesus in temple before the elders (c Apr 8–22; Lk 2:42)
THE NEW TESTAMENT
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Tiberius, Roman emperor

Dates: 14–37
THE NEW TESTAMENT
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Revolt in Gaul; grain shortages cause unrest in Rome
Dates: 21
THE NEW TESTAMENT
Dates: 29
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Baptism of Jesus (Fall; Lk 3:1–2)
THE NEW TESTAMENT
Dates: 30
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Jesus at Passover (c Apr 8; Jn 2:20)
THE NEW TESTAMENT
Dates: 32
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Jesus at Passover (c Apr 15; Jn 6:4); Jesus arrives at Feast of Booths (c Oct 14; Jn 7:14); Feast of Booths (Oct 17 or 18; Jn 7:37)
THE NEW TESTAMENT
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Roman Senators unable to pay debts; subsidized by Emperor Tiberius
Dates: 33
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Triumphal entry (Sun, Mar 29); Last Supper (Thurs eve, Apr 2); crucifixion (Fri, Apr 3); resurrection (Sun, Apr 5); ascension (May 14; Lk 24:51; Ac 1:9); Pentecost (May 24)
THE NEW TESTAMENT
Dates: 36
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Paul's conversion (Ac 9:1–31)
THE NEW TESTAMENT
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Caligula (Gaius), Roman emperor
Dates: 37–41
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Josephus, Jewish historian, born
THE NEW TESTAMENT
Egypt and Africa: Philo of Alexandria leads Jewish delegation to Rome
Dates: c 39
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Caligula attempts to place statue of himself in Jerusalem temple
THE NEW TESTAMENT
Dates: 41

Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Martyrdom of James (late Mar; Ac 12:2); Peter in prison (Apr; Ac 12:3–4); Passover (May 4; Ac 12:4); Peter leaves Jerusalem (May; Gal 2:11)
THE NEW TESTAMENT
Dates: 41–44
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Herod Agrippa I rules Judea
THE NEW TESTAMENT
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Claudius, Roman emperor
Dates: 41–54
THE NEW TESTAMENT
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Peter on mission in Asia Minor (Spr/Sum; 1Pt 1:1–2); [in Corinth (Fall); at Rome (mid Nov)]
Dates: 42
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Peter in Antioch (May 41–Apr 42; Gal 2:11)
THE NEW TESTAMENT
Dates: 44
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Herod Agrippa at festival in Caesarea (Mar 5; Ac 12:19); death of Herod Agrippa (Mar 10; Ac 12:21–23)
THE NEW TESTAMENT
Dates: 47–48
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Paul's 1st missionary journey (Ac 13:1–14:28)
THE NEW TESTAMENT
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Paul goes to Macedonia; Barnabas and John Mark go to Cyprus (mid May; Ac 15:36–16:10)
Dates: 49
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Conference in Jerusalem (Ac 15:1–35); Peter goes to Antioch (Feb; Gal 2:11); Paul confronts Peter (Apr; Gal 2:11)
THE NEW TESTAMENT
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Paul's 2nd missionary journey (Ac 15:39–18:22)
Dates: 49–51
THE NEW TESTAMENT
Dates: 49–56
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: [Peter in Antioch (seven years)]
THE NEW TESTAMENT
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Paul's 3rd missionary journey (Ac 18:23–21:17)

Dates: 52–55
THE NEW TESTAMENT
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Nero, Roman emperor
Dates: 54–68
THE NEW TESTAMENT
Dates: 55–57
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Paul imprisoned in Caesarea (Ac 23:23–26:32)
THE NEW TESTAMENT
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Paul's journey to Rome (Ac 27:1–28:16)
Dates: 57–58
THE NEW TESTAMENT
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Paul in custody in Rome (Ac 28:17–31)
Dates: 58–60
THE NEW TESTAMENT
Dates: 62
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Martyrdom of James, the Lord's brother
THE NEW TESTAMENT
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Paul assigns Titus at Crete (Ti 1:5)
Dates: 64–65
THE NEW TESTAMENT
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Paul in Ephesus, where he leaves Timothy (Spr–Sum; 1Tm 1:3)
Dates: 65
THE NEW TESTAMENT
Dates: 66–70
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Jewish revolt against Romans
THE NEW TESTAMENT
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Peter and Paul martyred
Dates: 68
THE NEW TESTAMENT
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Emperor Vespasian
Dates: 69–79
THE NEW TESTAMENT
Dates: 70
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Titus destroys Jerusalem temple; Rabbon Yohanan ben Zakkai at Yavneh Academy
THE NEW TESTAMENT

Dates: c 73
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Fall of Masada
THE NEW TESTAMENT
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Emperor Titus
Dates: 79–81
THE NEW TESTAMENT
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Emperor Domitian
Dates: 81–96
THE NEW TESTAMENT
Dates: c 90–115
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Rabbon Gamaliel II at Yavneh Academy
THE NEW TESTAMENT
Anatolia, Greece, and Rome: Jews revolt in Cyprus
Egypt and Africa: Jews revolt in Egypt and Cyrene
Dates: 115–17
Mesopotamia and Persia: Jews revolt in Mesopotamia
THE NEW TESTAMENT
Dates: 132–35
Syria, Canaan, and Israel: Bar Kokhba revolt; death of Rabbi Akiva, Yavneh Academy leader who hailed Bar Kokhba as the messiah

TABLE OF
WEIGHTS AND MEASURES
AND MONETARY UNITS

The following table is based on the best generally accepted information available for biblical weights, measures, and monetary units. All equivalents are approximate. Weights and measures also varied somewhat in different times and places in the ancient world. Most weights, measures, and monetary units are also explained in footnotes on the pages where they occur in the ESV text.

Biblical Unit: bath
Approximate American and Metric Equivalents Equivalent: A *bath* was about 6 gallons or 22 liters
Biblical Equivalent: 1 ephah

Biblical Unit: beka
Approximate American and Metric Equivalents Equivalent: A *beka* was about 1/5 ounce or 5.5 grams
Biblical Equivalent: 10 gerahs

Biblical Unit: cor
Approximate American and Metric Equivalents Equivalent: A *cor* was about 6 bushels or 220 liters
Biblical Equivalent: 10 ephahs

Biblical Unit: cubit
Approximate American and Metric Equivalents Equivalent: A *cubit* was about 18 inches or 45 centimeters
Biblical Equivalent: 6 handbreadths

Biblical Unit: denarius
Approximate American and Metric Equivalents Equivalent: A *denarius* was a day's wage for a laborer

Biblical Unit: daric
Approximate American and Metric Equivalents Equivalent: A *daric* was a coin of about 1/4 ounce or 8.5 grams

Biblical Unit: emphah
Approximate American and Metric Equivalents Equivalent: An *ephah* was about 3/5 bushel or 22 liters

Biblical Equivalent: 10 omers
Biblical Unit: gerah
Approximate American and Metric Equivalents Equivalent: A *gerah* was about 1/50 ounce or 0.6 gram
Biblical Equivalent: 1/10 beka
Biblical Unit: handbreadth
Approximate American and Metric Equivalents Equivalent: A *handbreadth* was about 3 inches or 7.5 centimeters
Biblical Equivalent: 1/6 cubit
Biblical Unit: hin
Approximate American and Metric Equivalents Equivalent: A *hin* was about 4 quarts or 3.5 liters
Biblical Equivalent: 1/6 bath
Biblical Unit: homer
Approximate American and Metric Equivalents Equivalent: A *homer* was about 6 bushels or 220 liters
Biblical Equivalent: 10 ephahs
Biblical Unit: kab
Approximate American and Metric Equivalents Equivalent: A *kab* was about 1 quart or 1 liter
Biblical Equivalent: 1/22 ephah
Biblical Unit: lethech
Approximate American and Metric Equivalents Equivalent: A *lethech* was about 3 bushels or 110 liters
Biblical Equivalent: 5 ephahs
Biblical Unit: log
Approximate American and Metric Equivalents Equivalent: A *log* was about 1/3 quart or 0.3 liter
Biblical Equivalent: 1/72 bath
Biblical Unit: mina
Approximate American and Metric Equivalents Equivalent: A *mina* was about 1 1/4 pounds or 0.6 kilogram
Biblical Equivalent: 50 shekels
Biblical Unit: omer
Approximate American and Metric Equivalents Equivalent: An *omer* was about 2 quarts or 2 liters
Biblical Equivalent: 1/10 ephah

Biblical Unit: pim
Approximate American and Metric Equivalents Equivalent: A *pim* was about 1/3 ounce or 7.5 grams
Biblical Equivalent: 2/3 shekel
Biblical Unit: seah
Approximate American and Metric Equivalents Equivalent: A *seah* was about 7 quarts or 7.3 liters
Biblical Equivalent: 1/3 ephah
Biblical Unit: shekel
Approximate American and Metric Equivalents Equivalent: A *shekel* was about 2/5 ounce or 11 grams
Biblical Equivalent: 2 bekas
Biblical Unit: span
Approximate American and Metric Equivalents Equivalent: A *span* was about 9 inches or 22 centimeters
Biblical Equivalent: 3 handbreadths
Biblical Unit: stadion
Approximate American and Metric Equivalents Equivalent: A *stadion* was about 607 feet or 185 meters
Biblical Unit: talent
Approximate American and Metric Equivalents Equivalent: A *talent* was about 75 pounds or 34 kilograms
Biblical Equivalent: 60 minas

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THE OLD TESTAMENT

The righteous in Israel were simply called from faith to the same faith. For the same Spirit, the same faith, the same grace was always given through Christ. … What was given before differed only in measure, not in kind, from what was to come.

—Tyconius, *The Book of Rules*

The New Testament is hidden in the Old Testament, and the Old Testament is made clear in the New Testament.

—Augustine, *Questions on the Seven Books*

The deeds of the Old Testament have shown those things that are accomplished in the New Testament, just as the apostle says in 1 Corinthians 10, "All of these things happened as examples."

—Nicholas of Lyra, *Prolog to the Glossa Ordinaria*

There are some who have little regard for the Old Testament. … But Christ says in John 5[:39], "Search the Scriptures, for it is they that bear witness to me." … The Scriptures of the Old Testament are not to be despised, but diligently read. For [the apostles] base the New Testament upon them mightily.

—Martin Luther, *Prefaces to the Old Testament*

The Old Testament is the basis of the New. … The fathers and teachers of the Church in all ages have studied the Old Testament Scriptures, and have expounded the revelations of God under the Old Covenant in learned and edifying works, unfolding to the Christian community the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God which they contain, and impressing them upon the heart, for doctrine, for reproof, for improvement, for instruction in righteousness.

—C. F. Keil, *Commentary on the Old Testament*

On the unity of Scripture, see pp xlv–xlvii.

GENESIS THROUGH DEUTERONOMY

The Books of Moses

According to long-standing tradition in Judaism and Christianity, the first five books of Holy Scripture (Gn; Ex; Lv; Nu; Dt) are attributed to the prophet Moses. In fact, Jesus attributed these books to Moses (Mt 19:8; Mk 7:10; 12:26; Jn 7:19). In Luther's Bible translation, he titled them "the Books of Moses."

Critical Views of the Books of Moses

In the eighteenth century, scholars such as Richard Simon (1638–1712) began to wonder whether Moses simply edited these books, wrote parts of them, or perhaps did not write them at all. A French scholar, Jean Astruc (1685–1766), noticed that in some parts of Genesis a certain Hebrew word for "God" is used (*Elohim*), but in other parts a word for "Lord" is used (*Yahweh*; see p 1227). Astruc proposed that this hap-pened because Moses used different sources, which had different names for God. Biblical critic J. G. Eichhorn (1752–1827) and other German scholars (e.g., K. H. Graf and J. Wellhausen) developed Astruc's ideas more radically. Their documentary hypothesis, or JEDP theory, assumed that Moses did not write the books. They concluded that a much later editor drew the books together from four sources: the Jahwist, Elohist, Deuteronomist, and Priestly writers. Their views became standard in liberal schools of theology and are still taught today.

However, in the twentieth century, scholars such as J. F. H. Gunkel (1862–1932) began to question aspects of the JEDP theory. Others rejected it altogether. Now, in the twenty-first century, most scholars have abandoned the JEDP theory in favor of methods that interpret large sections or entire books as whole literary compositions. Conservative biblical

scholars have always attributed these five books to Moses. Archaeology and study of the texts have affirmed the antiquity of the books.

Evidence of Sources in the Bible

The Bible itself clearly teaches that Moses used other sources—written and oral—for composing the first five books of Scripture. Moses' most important source was God Himself; God dictated portions of the books to him (cf Ex 24:3). But Moses also mentioned or quoted the following potential sources:

The Book of the Generations of Adam (Gn 5:1)
The Saying about Nimrod (Gn 10:9)
The Saying about the Mount of the Lord (Gn 22:14)
The Tradition of the Sinew (Gn 32:32)
The Statute of Joseph (Gn 47:26)
The Song of Moses (Ex 15:1–18)
The Song of Miriam (Ex 15:20–21)
The Memorial for Joshua (Ex 17:14)
The Book of the Covenant (Ex 24:7)
The Tablets of the Testimony (Ex 24:12; 25:16)
The Registration of Elders (Nu 11:26)
The Book of the Wars of the Lord (Nu 21:14–15)
The Song of the Well (Nu 21:17–18)
The Song of Heshbon (Nu 21:27–30)
The Book of the Law (Dt 29:21; 30:10; 31:26)

When giving place-names, Moses also may have drawn on written or oral sources (cf Gn 11:9; 16:14; 26:33; 33:17; 35:20; Dt 3:14). A few passages possibly indicate later editing to provide clarity (see notes, Gn 14:14; 36:31).

Luther believed God's people always passed down teachings across the generations. He wrote,

> Can there be any doubt that the holy fathers always had their gatherings and meetings, where they instructed the youth, where they preached, prayed, prophesied, and praised God? The church cannot exist without the constant use of the Word. … Thus Abel and Cain … [and] Shem had meetings, sermons, forms of worship, sacrifices, and other ceremonies, which continued in existence up to the time of Abraham. (AE 2:197)

Moses did not fully explain the nature of his potential sources or how he used them (see notes for the references above). A number of Moses' sources are poetic, which interests historians. Since poems in Genesis "retain more archaic forms of the Hebrew language" (Hummel, p 55), this has led some scholars to conclude that Moses created portions of Genesis by recasting earlier Israelite poems or stories. This is possible but certainly not proven (see p 777; see also Luther's comment on the writing of Job, AE 54:79).

Moses Wrote God's Word

That Moses used other sources for writing the first five books of Scripture is not surprising. In fact, the evangelist Luke mentioned using sources (Lk 1:1–4), and the apostle Paul commonly quoted earlier Christian hymns and even Greek poets in his letters and sermons. The Holy Spirit blessed, guided, and directed the "research" of Moses just as surely as He guided the writers of the New Testament (see notes, Lk 1:2; 2Pt 1:21).

Because the evidence for Moses' sources is so fragmentary, scholars will no doubt continue to debate this issue. However, faithful students of Scripture should resist the urge to discover "new sources" that Moses did not explicitly reference, as advocates of the discredited JEDP theory attempted to do.

Literary Styles in the Books of Moses

As noted previously, Moses included a broad variety of literary styles in his books. Of particular note is the well-plotted account of the patriarch Joseph (Gn 37–50), which must be regarded as one of the greatest compositions of world literature. Consider also the following literary styles:

1. Genealogies (see p 9)
2. Historical accounts of people cursed and blessed (see pp 335–37)
3. Covenants of laws and promises (see p 127)
4. Construction plans (see diagram, p 159)
5. Censuses (see p 213)
6. Sermons (see pp 274–75)
7. Songs, poems, and liturgical texts (see pp 777–78)

Joshua, Moses' assistant, or others may have helped Moses in organizing, writing, and compiling this broad variety of materials (see note, Ex 24:13).

The Purpose of the Books of Moses

The broad array of literary styles Moses used within his writings and the traditional name for his books have led to confusion about the books' character and purpose. Though the Books of Moses are commonly called the "Law of Moses," they are much more than Law. The Hebrew term translated "law" (*torah*) embraces things such as rules and commandments but has a much broader meaning. The confusion arose when the Bible was translated into Greek (LXX) and the translators chose the Greek *nomos* to translate the Hebrew *torah*. The Greek term greatly narrowed the understanding and use of Moses' writings.

Torah is "instruction" (see "Law," p 971), which includes God's Law, His covenant promises, and the history of His people as examples. St Paul often noted the importance of the Books of Moses as instruction.

> I want you to know, brothers, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. … Now these things took place as examples for us, that we might not desire evil as they did. (1Co 10:1–2, 6)
>
> For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. (Rm 15:4)
>
> Continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work. (2Tm 3:14–17)

As you read and study the Books of Moses, certainly look for the Law they proclaim, but recognize also how they proclaim the encouragement, hope, and promise of the Gospel, which the apostle Paul describes.

Despite the great variety of styles, at the heart of the Books of Moses is a running historical record of God's ways with His people, admonishing them through His Law and blessing them through His Gospel promises. In these two ways, Moses' prophetic ministry anticipates and announces the ministry of a greater prophet (Dt 18:18), which is fulfilled in the appearing of Jesus of Nazareth (cf Ac 7:37). Jesus came to fulfill the Law of Moses (Mt 5:17), to remove the curse of the Law (Gal 3:13), and to impart the blessings of God's gracious promises in the Gospel for all nations (2Co 1:20).

Ritual and Devotion

The Books of Moses demonstrate close unity between the ritual acts of religion and sincere devotion. The ritual *is* devotion. For example, consider the close relationships between the following: (1) covenant ritual with loyalty, love, and trust; (2) ritual vows with peace; (3) ritual sacrifices with forgiveness and atonement; and (4) ritual cleanliness with holiness. These features illustrate the unity and antiquity of the Books of Moses as well as their relationship to later biblical writings. (The Books of Moses do not raise great concerns about empty ritual, later raised by Joshua [24:15–25] and decried by the prophets [e.g., Is 1:10–17; 29:13; 66:3–4; Am 4:4–5; 5:21–24; Mal 1:6–14].)

Radical criticism of the Books of Moses, which chopped them up into primitive religion and later, priestly religion, failed to recognize this essential unity between ritual and devotion. In part, the critical approach can be traced to extreme Protestant revulsion toward ritual, tradition, and legalism. The attitude that attacked medieval Christianity for its outward, ritual expressions of faith became secularized during the Enlightenment. This critical attitude was then turned on the Scriptures, giving birth to radical criticism of the Bible and the destruction of Christianity in much of Europe. (See Hummel, pp 19–31, 156–62.)

Sincere Christians should recognize the roots and the dangers of radically dividing between outward expressions of faith and inward devotion. God made us body and soul, and His Word applies to us body and soul. God's people need both sincere faith and sincere ways to express that faith in the services of the Church. They likewise always need both of God's messages: Law and Gospel.

Key Terms and Phrases in the Books of Moses

The Lutheran Study Bible contains lists of terms used in the Books of Moses, the Psalms (see pp 842–44), the Prophets (see pp 1078–80), and the Pauline Epistles (see pp 1901–4). These terms were compiled on the basis of frequency of use, importance, and precedence. The definitions are general, not comprehensive. The terms are rarely exclusive to one biblical author or type of literature. Therefore, references to these lists appear throughout all notes.

angel. Hbr *mal'ak*, "messenger." A spiritual being that serves God (e.g., Gn 19:1; 28:12), often as a messenger or warrior. The OT speaks most often of good angels but does refer to evil angels or spirits (e.g., Lv 16:8; 17:7; Dt 32:17). Moses uses the term most often for the "angel of the LORD." See p 1227; see also the note at Ezk 10:1 regarding cherubim.

atone. See *atonement*.

atonement. Hbr *kaphar*, "ransom, reconciliation." The word may be related to the idea of covering something, a sense that appears in other Semitic languages. However, Moses closely relates atonement to the idea of redemption (see "redeem," p 843), where an innocent life is offered as a substitute for a guilty life (e.g., the transfer of guilt to the sacrificial animal in Lv 1:4; 4:4; 16:21). Also, Jacob is described as reconciling with his brother, Esau, by offering him a gift as atonement (Gn 32:20). Atonement brought cleansing (Lv 16:30). It was the focus of a major annual ritual, the Day of Atonement (see p 136), when the blood of a sacrifice was sprinkled on the "place of atonement," the cover of the ark of the covenant. See diagram, p 203.

be with. Found in numerous Hbr expressions of encouragement for God's people, which often also threaten defeat or punishment for enemies of God's people. See p 495. In biblical theology, God fills the whole universe with His presence (Jer 23:23) and providential goodness (Mt 5:45; Ac 17:24–28; Rm 1:20). However, God is specially present with His saving power and grace where He promises to be present, in His Word (Ex 3:12; cf Jsh 1:5). These promises anticipate the greater day of Immanuel, which means "God with us" (Is 7:14; Mt 1:23; cf Mt 28:20). Jesus is present according to His grace wherever His Gospel and Sacraments are present.

bless. See p 842.

Book of the Law. Used at the close of Deuteronomy, referring to all or part of that Book (Dt 29:21). However, in later Scripture, it may refer to the five books written by Moses. See pp 3–4; see also "Law," p 971.

choose. Hbr *bachar*, "select." Root may mean "to look at carefully." Moses uses this term often in Deuteronomy, where the Lord explains that He chose Israel to be His holy people (Dt 14:2; see note, Gn 12:1). His choice was based on His great love, not on Israel's merits (Dt 7:6–8). See "chosen," p 1901.

clean. Hbr *tahor*, "pure, genuine." The Lord gave Israel specific laws, customs, and rituals that distinguished it from other nations. These practices often involved washing or eating things that were regarded as clean and avoiding things that were regarded as unclean. However, the laws were not exclusively devoted to hygiene. These matters receive special attention in Lv 11–15. See *holy*; see also p 300. (Modern Hbr uses "kosher" ["legal, permitted"] to describe this idea.)

congregation. See "great congregation," p 842.

consecrate. See *holy*.

covenant. Hbr *berith*. Root term never appears as a verb in the OT. The noun commonly appears with the verb "cut." The idea of covenant has been falsely associated with "dispensations," as though God worked differently with people at different times in history. Although the OT covenants with God have different stipulations, they are always based on God's two ways with mankind: Law and Gospel (see note, Ex 34:6–7; see also pp xxi–xxii). See p 127.

curse. Translated from several Hbr terms, two in particular: (1) Hbr *'arar*, "to bind" or "restrict," as with a law or spell. This term pronounces punishments, threats, and restrictions. (2) Hbr *qelalah*, from a word for "light" or "slight," which describes lowering of status from favored or blessed to cursed. All ancient people used curses (e.g., 1Sm 17:43) but typically regarded them as magic formulas that, if pronounced properly, would obligate the gods to harm someone. The Lord uses the curse terms especially to describe applications of His Law and its penalties. See p 127.

devote to destruction. Hbr *charam*, "to give over to the Lord by totally destroying" (Nu 21:2–3; Dt 7:2–6; 13:12–15). The related noun is *cherem*, "that which is to be given over to the Lord by destruction." The Lord declared the idolatrous Canaanites and some of their cities as *cherem*. The idea is related to but not the same as holiness (Lv 27:28–29) because both

involve bans and restrictions. Things and persons associated with evil are forbidden to Israel and therefore destroyed; holy things may also be forbidden to Israel generally, yet are preserved for the priests and Levites. See *holy*. The command to devote the Canaanites to destruction has offended many modern interpreters who insist that a God of love would never give such a command. Such interpreters usually falsely conclude that the Bible does not describe real history at this point and must be interpreted allegorically, or the OT promotes bad ethics and should not be believed or followed. To be sure, war raises the greatest ethical issues, involving battle, refugees, prisoners, and occupation of conquered communities. See the issues raised by Midianite prisoners in Nu 31 (see esp note, Nu 31:15–16). Every modern military or police force wrestles with these issues. However, readers should also note that "pure" pacificism raises similar ethical issues, such as toleration for tyranny, murder, abuse, slavery, and moral compromise. Biblical history shows God advocating proactive resistance of evil, including the use of force at times. (Note that alongside the command to destroy the Canaanites, God also promises to drive out the Canaanites. So the command to destroy also services the purpose of driving the Canaanites away [cf Ex 23:27–31]). Interpreters who proudly dismiss the OT accounts fail to appreciate the depth of the issues and responsibilities for delivering people from evil. See p 376.

favor. Hbr *chen*, "approval" or "affection," related to the idea of grace (see "grace," p 1902; see also "gracious," p 842). Often used in the Hbr expression "found favor in someone's eyes" (cf Gn 6:8; 39:21; Ex 3:21; 11:3; 12:36; 33:12). Common also in the writings of Solomon, especially Proverbs. See *choose*.

firstborn. The firstborn son was privileged to receive a double portion of the inheritance (Dt 21:16–17) and leadership over the family. In Abraham's family, the blessing to carry on the covenant promise was also a matter of inheritance (Gn 27:4, 27–29; 28:4). During the exodus, Israel is called God's firstborn (see note, Ex 4:22), and firstborn Israelites and the firstborn of their cattle had to be redeemed by sacrifice (Ex 12:5; 13:2, 13; Dt 15:19). Among the Israelites, the Lord designated the Levites as His firstborn (Nu 3:12). The privileges and service of the firstborn provide important background for NT teaching about Jesus (see note, Rm 8:29.) See *portion*.

firstfruits. The first produce harvested each year was offered to the Lord with thanksgiving (Ex 23:16; 34:22; Lv 19:23–25; Nu 15:20–21; Dt 18:4;

2Ch 31:5). The presentation of the firstfruits during the Feast of Weeks (Pentecost) included a liturgy (Dt 26:1–11). See pp 200–201, 1835.

flowing with milk and honey. Common OT expression encompassing both animal husbandry and agriculture. Describes the Promised Land as having every good quality in abundance.

freewill. See note, Ex 35:29.

glory of the LORD. Hbr *kebod yahweh*. The term *kebod* refers to the "weight" or "weightiness" of something, and thereby its impressive appearance or "honor." Moses introduces the expression during the exodus (Ex 16:7) to contrast the Lord's majesty with that of Pharaoh and Egypt. It comes to describe the visible manifestation of God's presence in the cloud and fire of the exodus. See p 39. It is the splendor of God's presence that belongs *now* to believers in the promise, and that by His advanced preparation *will be* revealed to them and in them.

heritage. See *portion*.

holy. Hbr *qodesh*, "set apart." God, uncreated and unique, is the only source of holiness. He hallows time (feasts), place (tabernacle/temple), people (priests/Levites/Israel), and the things and rituals that belong to them. In other words, these things belong to God because He selects them, not because of their own qualities. In the OT, there are degrees of holiness; what stands closest to God is "most holy" (see note, Lv 2:3). What is not holy is "common" or "unclean." These truths stand behind NT teaching about salvation as (1) purification from sin and (2) election by grace. See "holy" and "chosen," pp 1902, 1901.

inherit. See *portion*.

Israel. See note, Gn 32:28. See also p 1079.

know. Verb used in a polite Hbr expression for sexual intercourse (e.g., Gn 4:1).

law. Hbr *torah*; commonly translated "law," but in many passages that translation is inadequate and "instruction" is preferable. See pp 4–5, 971.

oath. Hbr *'alah*; typically a solemn promise (Gn 24:41; 26:28; Lv 5:1; Nu 5:21); became a part of the covenant (Dt 29:12, 14–21). See *curse* and *vow*.

offering. See pp 170–71.

peace. Hbr *shalom*; a state of wholeness and unity; may include reconciliation (Gn 15:15; 26:29; cf Ps 50:14). Most often this is a blessing from God (cf Nu 6:26; 25:12). See "Peace offering," p 171.

portion. The tribes of Israel were each given a portion of the Promised Land, though the priestly clan of the Levites was given God Himself, not land, as their inheritance (Dt 10:9; see note, Ps 119:57). Inheritance is an important expression of God's graciousness in the OT. He gives lovingly and freely to His people as a father lovingly provides for his children. God's chosen people are His portion and treasured possession (Dt 32:9).

purified. See *holy*.

sanctuary. Lit, "holy place." See diagram, p 139.

servant of the LORD. A title, more than a description of someone's function. Based on Nu 12:7–8, where God speaks of Moses' office. Other "servants of the LORD" include Abraham, David, and the prophets. Most significantly, the title belongs to the Messiah in the Servant Songs in Isaiah (Is 42:1–9; 49:1–13; 50:4–11; 52:13–53:12).

set apart. See *holy*.

swear. See *vow*.

tabernacle. See diagram, p 139.

tithe. Ten percent of a person's harvest or income, the OT standard for yearly donations to the tabernacle/temple (Lv 27:30–32). These offerings supported the services of the priests and Levites (Nu 18:21–28) and were regarded as their inheritance (see *portion*). See p 1092.

vow. Hbr *neder*; a peace offering (Lv 7:16; Nu 30:3–4) by which a worshiper is bound to God with a promise; a thank offering (Nu 21:1–3; cf Na 1:15) requesting God's favor and praising Him for success in fulfilling a promise (Ps 22:25; 50:14; 116:17–18). A vow and its offering are not distinguished (see concluding paragraphs). See pp 170–71. Clean animals or even service was offered with a vow. Both men and women made such vows (Nu 30). Related vows include the Nazirite vow (Nu 6) and "devotion to destruction" (see above). See *oath*.

walk. Hbr *halak*, a common term that can describe one's life or way of life (Gn 17:1). See "way," p 844.

Genesis

Genesis 1 | Genesis 2 | Genesis 3 | Genesis 4 | Genesis 5 | Genesis 6 | Genesis 7 | Genesis 8 | Genesis 9 | Genesis 10 | Genesis 11 | Genesis 12 | Genesis 13 | Genesis 14 | Genesis 15 | Genesis 16 | Genesis 17 | Genesis 18 | Genesis 19 | Genesis 20 | Genesis 21 | Genesis 22 | Genesis 23 | Genesis 24 | Genesis 25 | Genesis 26 | Genesis 27 | Genesis 28 | Genesis 29 | Genesis 30 | Genesis 31 | Genesis 32 | Genesis 33 | Genesis 34 | Genesis 35 | Genesis 36 | Genesis 37 | Genesis 38 | Genesis 39 | Genesis 40 | Genesis 41 | Genesis 42 | Genesis 43 | Genesis 44 | Genesis 45 | Genesis 46 | Genesis 47 | Genesis 48 | Genesis 49 | Genesis 50

- Introduction to Genesis
  - Overview
  - Reading Genesis
  - Luther on Genesis
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Genesis and Theories of Evolution
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

The Creation of the World

1 [1]†‡† In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.
[2]†‡† The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face
of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.
[3]† And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. [4]† And God saw
that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness.
[5]† God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was
evening and there was morning, the first day.
[6]† And God said, “Let there be an expanse[1] in the midst of the waters,
and let it separate the waters from the waters.” [7]† And God made[2] the
expanse and separated the waters that were under the expanse from the
waters that were above the expanse. And it was so. [8]† And God called the
expanse Heaven.[3] And there was evening and there was morning, the
second day.
[9]†† And God said, “Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together
into one place, and let the dry land appear.” And it was so. [10]† God called the
dry land Earth,[4] and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas.
And God saw that it was good.
[11]† And God said, “Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants[5] yielding seed,
and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its
kind, on the earth.” And it was so. [12]† The earth brought forth vegetation,
plants yielding seed according to their own kinds, and trees bearing fruit in
which is their seed, each according to its kind. And God saw that it was
good. [13]And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.
[14]† And God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to
separate the day from the night. And let them be for signs and for seasons,[6]
and for days and years, [15]and let them be lights in the expanse of the
heavens to give light upon the earth.” And it was so. [16]† And God made the
two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule
the night—and the stars. [17]And God set them in the expanse of the heavens
to give light on the earth, [18]to rule over the day and over the night, and to

separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. [19]And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.

[20]†And God said, “Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures, and let birds[7] fly above the earth across the expanse of the heavens.” [21]†So God created the great sea creatures and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarm, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. [22]†And God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.” [23]And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.

[24]†And God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds—livestock and creeping things and beasts of the earth according to their kinds.” And it was so. [25]And God made the beasts of the earth according to their kinds and the livestock according to their kinds, and everything that creeps on the ground according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

[26]†Then God said, “Let us make man[1] in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

[27]† So God created man in his own image,
in the image of God he created him;
male and female he created them.

[28]†And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” [29]†And God said, “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. [30]†And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so. [31]† And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

The Seventh Day, God Rests

2 [1]†††Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host
of them. [2]†And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done,
and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done. [3]†So
God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested
from all his work that he had done in creation.

The Creation of Man and Woman

4 ‡†† These are the generations
of the heavens and the earth when they were
created,
in the day that the Lord God made the earth
and the heavens.

5 †When no bush of the field[1] was yet in the land[2] and no small plant of
the field had yet sprung up—for the Lord God had not caused it to rain on
the land, and there was no man to work the ground, 6 †and a mist[1] was
going up from the land and was watering the whole face of the ground—
7 †then the Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed
into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.
8 †And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put
the man whom he had formed. 9 †And out of the ground the Lord God made
to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The
tree of life was in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of
good and evil.

10 ‡A river flowed out of Eden to water the garden, and there it divided
and became four rivers. 11 †The name of the first is the Pishon. It is the one
that flowed around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. 12 †And
the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there. 13 †The
name of the second river is the Gihon. It is the one that flowed around the
whole land of Cush. 14 †And the name of the third river is the Tigris, which
flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.

15 †The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work
it and keep it. 16 †And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, “You may
surely eat of every tree of the garden, 17 †but of the tree of the knowledge of
good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat[1] of it you shall
surely die.”

18 †Then the Lord God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I
will make him a helper fit for[2] him.” 19 † Now out of the ground the Lord
God had formed[3] every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and

brought them to the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. [20]†The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam[4] there was not found a helper fit for him. [21]†So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. [22]†And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made[5] into a woman and brought her to the man. [23]†Then the man said,

> “This at last is bone of my bones
> and flesh of my flesh;
> she shall be called Woman,
> because she was taken out of Man.”[6]

[24]† Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. [25]†And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.

The Fall

3 [1]†Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field
that the Lord God had made.
He said to the woman, “Did God actually say, ‘You[7] shall not eat of any
tree in the garden’?” [2]And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of
the fruit of the trees in the garden, [3]†but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the
fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it,
lest you die.’” [4]† But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely
die. [5]†For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and
you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” [6]†So when the woman saw
that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that
the tree was to be desired to make one wise,[1] she took of its fruit and ate,
and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. [7]†
Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked.
And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.
[8]†And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the
cool[2] of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the
presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. [9]†But the Lord God
called to the man and said to him, “Where are you?”[3] [10]†And he said, “I
heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked,
and I hid myself.” [11]†He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have
you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?” [12]†The man
said, “The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the
tree, and I ate.” [13]†Then the Lord God said to the woman, “What is this that
you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”
[14]†The Lord God said to the serpent,

> “Because you have done this,
> cursed are you above all livestock
> and above all beasts of the field;
> on your belly you shall go,

and dust you shall eat
all the days of your life.
15† I will put enmity between you and the
woman,
and between your offspring[1] and her
offspring;
he shall bruise your head,
and you shall bruise his heel.”

16†To the woman he said,

“I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing;
in pain you shall bring forth children.
Your desire shall be for[2] your husband,
and he shall rule over you.”

17†And to Adam he said,

“Because you have listened to the voice of your
wife
and have eaten of the tree
of which I commanded you,
‘You shall not eat of it,’
cursed is the ground because of you;
in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your
life;
18 thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you;
and you shall eat the plants of the field.
19† By the sweat of your face
you shall eat bread,
till you return to the ground,
for out of it you were taken;
for you are dust,
and to dust you shall return.”

20†The man called his wife’s name Eve, because she was the mother of all living.[3] 21†And the Lord God made for Adam and for his wife garments of

skins and clothed them.

22 † Then the Lord God said, “Behold, the man has become like one of us
in knowing good and evil. Now, lest he reach out his hand and take also of
the tree of life and eat, and live forever—” 23 † therefore the Lord God sent
him out from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was
taken. 24 † He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he
placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the
way to the tree of life.

Cain and Abel

4 [1]†Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain,
saying, “I have gotten[1] a man with the help of the Lord.” [2]†And again, she
bore his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, and Cain a worker
of the ground. [3]†In the course of time Cain brought to the Lord an offering
of the fruit of the ground, [4]†and Abel also brought of the firstborn of his
flock and of their fat portions. And the Lord had regard for Abel and his
offering, [5]†but for Cain and his offering he had no regard. So Cain was very
angry, and his face fell. [6]†The Lord said to Cain, “Why are you angry, and
why has your face fallen? [7]† If you do well, will you not be accepted?[2] And
if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is for[3] you, but
you must rule over it.”

[8]†Cain spoke to Abel his brother.[4] And when they were in the field, Cain
rose up against his brother Abel and killed him. [9]†Then the Lord said to
Cain, “Where is Abel your brother?” He said, “I do not know; am I my
brother’s keeper?” [10]And the Lord said, “What have you done? The voice of
your brother’s blood is crying to me from the ground. [11]†And now you are
cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your
brother’s blood from your hand. [12]†When you work the ground, it shall no
longer yield to you its strength. You shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on
the earth.” [13]†Cain said to the Lord, “My punishment is greater than I can
bear.[1] [14]†Behold, you have driven me today away from the ground, and
from your face I shall be hidden. I shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the
earth, and whoever finds me will kill me.” [15]†Then the Lord said to him,
“Not so! If anyone kills Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold.”
And the Lord put a mark on Cain, lest any who found him should attack
him. [16]†Then Cain went away from the presence of the Lord and settled in
the land of Nod,[2] east of Eden.

[17]†Cain knew his wife, and she conceived and bore Enoch. When he built
a city, he called the name of the city after the name of his son, Enoch. [18]To
Enoch was born Irad, and Irad fathered Mehujael, and Mehujael fathered
Methushael, and Methushael fathered Lamech. [19]†And Lamech took two

wives. The name of the one was Adah, and the name of the other Zillah.
20 †Adah bore Jabal; he was the father of those who dwell in tents and have
livestock. 21 †His brother's name was Jubal; he was the father of all those
who play the lyre and pipe. 22 †Zillah also bore Tubal-cain; he was the forger
of all instruments of bronze and iron. The sister of Tubal-cain was Naamah.
23 ††Lamech said to his wives:

"Adah and Zillah, hear my voice;
you wives of Lamech, listen to what I say:
I have killed a man for wounding me,
a young man for striking me.

24 † If Cain's revenge is sevenfold,
then Lamech's is seventy-sevenfold."

25 †And Adam knew his wife again, and she bore a son and called his
name Seth, for she said, "God has appointed[1] for me another offspring
instead of Abel, for Cain killed him." 26 †To Seth also a son was born, and he
called his name Enosh. At that time people began to call upon the name of
the LORD.

Adam's Descendants to Noah

5 [1]†This is the book of the generations of Adam. When God created
man, he made him in the likeness of God. [2]†Male and female he created
them, and he blessed them and named them Man[2] when they were created.
[3]†When Adam had lived 130 years, he fathered a son in his own likeness,
after his image, and named him Seth. [4]† The days of Adam after he fathered
Seth were 800 years; and he had other sons and daughters. [5]†Thus all the
days that Adam lived were 930 years, and he died.

[6]When Seth had lived 105 years, he fathered Enosh. [7]Seth lived after he
fathered Enosh 807 years and had other sons and daughters. [8]Thus all the
days of Seth were 912 years, and he died.

[9]†When Enosh had lived 90 years, he fathered Kenan. [10]Enosh lived after
he fathered Kenan 815 years and had other sons and daughters. [11]Thus all
the days of Enosh were 905 years, and he died.

[12]When Kenan had lived 70 years, he fathered Mahalalel. [13]Kenan lived
after he fathered Mahalalel 840 years and had other sons and daughters.
[14]Thus all the days of Kenan were 910 years, and he died.

[15]When Mahalalel had lived 65 years, he fathered Jared. [16]Mahalalel lived
after he fathered Jared 830 years and had other sons and daughters. [17]Thus
all the days of Mahalalel were 895 years, and he died.

[18]†When Jared had lived 162 years he fathered Enoch. [19]Jared lived after
he fathered Enoch 800 years and had other sons and daughters. [20]Thus all
the days of Jared were 962 years, and he died.

[21]When Enoch had lived 65 years, he fathered Methuselah. [22]†Enoch
walked with God[3] after he fathered Methuselah 300 years and had other
sons and daughters. [23]Thus all the days of Enoch were 365 years. [24]† Enoch
walked with God, and he was not,[4] for God took him.

[25] † When Methuselah had lived 187 years, he fathered Lamech.
[26]Methuselah lived after he fathered Lamech 782 years and had other sons
and daughters. [27]†Thus all the days of Methuselah were 969 years, and he
died.

[28]When Lamech had lived 182 years, he fathered a son [29]† and called his
name Noah, saying, “Out of the ground that the Lord has cursed this one
shall bring us relief[1] from our work and from the painful toil of our hands.”
[30]Lamech lived after he fathered Noah 595 years and had other sons and
daughters. [31]Thus all the days of Lamech were 777 years, and he died.

[32] † After Noah was 500 years old, Noah fathered Shem, Ham, and
Japheth.

Increasing Corruption on Earth

6 [1] When man began to multiply on the face of the land and daughters were born to them, [2] the sons of God saw that the daughters of man were attractive. And they took as their wives any they chose. [3] Then the Lord said, “My Spirit shall not abide in[2] man forever, for he is flesh: his days shall be 120 years.” [4] The Nephilim[3] were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of man and they bore children to them. These were the mighty men who were of old, the men of renown.

[5] The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. [6] And the Lord was sorry that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart. [7] So the Lord said, “I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens, for I am sorry that I have made them.” [8] But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord.

Noah and the Flood

9 ‡ † These are the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man,
blameless in his generation. Noah walked with God. 10 †And Noah had three
sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.
11 ‡ †Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight, and the earth was filled
with violence. 12 †And God saw the earth, and behold, it was corrupt, for all
flesh had corrupted their way on the earth. 13 †And God said to Noah, "I
have determined to make an end of all flesh,[1] for the earth is filled with
violence through them. Behold, I will destroy them with the earth. 14 †Make
yourself an ark of gopher wood.[2] Make rooms in the ark, and cover it
inside and out with pitch. 15 †This is how you are to make it: the length of
the ark 300 cubits,[3] its breadth 50 cubits, and its height 30 cubits. 16 †Make
a roof[4] for the ark, and finish it to a cubit above, and set the door of the ark
in its side. Make it with lower, second, and third decks. 17 † For behold, I
will bring a flood of waters upon the earth to destroy all flesh in which is
the breath of life under heaven. Everything that is on the earth shall die.
18 †But I will establish my covenant with you, and you shall come into the
ark, you, your sons, your wife, and your sons' wives with you. 19 ‡ †And of
every living thing of all flesh, you shall bring two of every sort into the ark
to keep them alive with you. They shall be male and female. 20 †Of the birds
according to their kinds, and of the animals according to their kinds, of
every creeping thing of the ground, according to its kind, two of every sort
shall come in to you to keep them alive. 21 †Also take with you every sort of
food that is eaten, and store it up. It shall serve as food for you and for
them." 22 † Noah did this; he did all that God commanded him.

7 1 †Then the Lord said to Noah, "Go into the ark, you and all your
household, for I have seen that you are righteous before me in this
generation. 2 †Take with you seven pairs of all clean animals,[5] the male and
his mate, and a pair of the animals that are not clean, the male and his mate,
3 †and seven pairs[6] of the birds of the heavens also, male and female, to
keep their offspring alive on the face of all the earth. 4 †For in seven days I
will send rain on the earth forty days and forty nights, and every living

thing[7] that I have made I will blot out from the face of the ground.” 5† And Noah did all that the Lord had commanded him.

6†Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters came upon the earth. 7†And Noah and his sons and his wife and his sons’ wives with him went into the ark to escape the waters of the flood. 8†Of clean animals, and of animals that are not clean, and of birds, and of everything that creeps on the ground, 9† two and two, male and female, went into the ark with Noah, as God had commanded Noah. 10†And after seven days the waters of the flood came upon the earth.

11†In the six hundredth year of Noah’s life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep burst forth, and the windows of the heavens were opened. 12†And rain fell upon the earth forty days and forty nights. 13†On the very same day Noah and his sons, Shem and Ham and Japheth, and Noah’s wife and the three wives of his sons with them entered the ark, 14† they and every beast, according to its kind, and all the livestock according to their kinds, and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, according to its kind, and every bird, according to its kind, every winged creature. 15†They went into the ark with Noah, two and two of all flesh in which there was the breath of life. 16†And those that entered, male and female of all flesh, went in as God had commanded him. And the Lord shut him in.

17The flood continued forty days on the earth. The waters increased and bore up the ark, and it rose high above the earth. 18†The waters prevailed and increased greatly on the earth, and the ark floated on the face of the waters. 19†And the waters prevailed so mightily on the earth that all the high mountains under the whole heaven were covered. 20†The waters prevailed above the mountains, covering them fifteen cubits[1] deep. 21†And all flesh died that moved on the earth, birds, livestock, beasts, all swarming creatures that swarm on the earth, and all mankind. 22†Everything on the dry land in whose nostrils was the breath of life died. 23†He blotted out every living thing that was on the face of the ground, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens. They were blotted out from the earth. Only Noah was left, and those who were with him in the ark. 24†And the waters prevailed on the earth 150 days.

The Flood Subsides

8 [1] ‡ † But God remembered Noah and all the beasts and all the
livestock that were with him in the ark. And God made a wind blow over
the earth, and the waters subsided. [2] † The fountains of the deep and the
windows of the heavens were closed, the rain from the heavens was
restrained, [3] ‡ and the waters receded from the earth continually. At the end
of 150 days the waters had abated, [4] † and in the seventh month, on the
seventeenth day of the month, the ark came to rest on the mountains of
Ararat. [5] † And the waters continued to abate until the tenth month; in the
tenth month, on the first day of the month, the tops of the mountains were
seen.

[6] † At the end of forty days Noah opened the window of the ark that he had
made [7] † and sent forth a raven. It went to and fro until the waters were dried
up from the earth. [8] † Then he sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters
had subsided from the face of the ground. [9] † But the dove found no place to
set her foot, and she returned to him to the ark, for the waters were still on
the face of the whole earth. So he put out his hand and took her and brought
her into the ark with him. [10] † He waited another seven days, and again he
sent forth the dove out of the ark. [11] † And the dove came back to him in the
evening, and behold, in her mouth was a freshly plucked olive leaf. So
Noah knew that the waters had subsided from the earth. [12] † Then he waited
another seven days and sent forth the dove, and she did not return to him
anymore.

[13] † In the six hundred and first year, in the first month, the first day of the
month, the waters were dried from off the earth. And Noah removed the
covering of the ark and looked, and behold, the face of the ground was dry.
[14] † In the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the earth
had dried out. [15] † Then God said to Noah, [16] † "Go out from the ark, you and
your wife, and your sons and your sons' wives with you. [17] † Bring out with
you every living thing that is with you of all flesh—birds and animals and
every creeping thing that creeps on the earth—that they may swarm on the
earth, and be fruitful and multiply on the earth." [18] So Noah went out, and

his sons and his wife and his sons' wives with him. [19]† Every beast, every creeping thing, and every bird, everything that moves on the earth, went out by families from the ark.

God's Covenant with Noah

20 ‡ † Then Noah built an altar to the Lord and took some of every clean
animal and some of every clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar.
21 † And when the Lord smelled the pleasing aroma, the Lord said in his
heart, "I will never again curse[1] the ground because of man, for the
intention of man's heart is evil from his youth. Neither will I ever again
strike down every living creature as I have done. 22 † While the earth
remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and
night, shall not cease."

9 1 † And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, "Be fruitful
and multiply and fill the earth. 2 † The fear of you and the dread of you shall
be upon every beast of the earth and upon every bird of the heavens, upon
everything that creeps on the ground and all the fish of the sea. Into your
hand they are delivered. 3 ‡ † Every moving thing that lives shall be food for
you. And as I gave you the green plants, I give you everything. 4 † But you
shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood. 5 † And for your lifeblood I
will require a reckoning: from every beast I will require it and from man.
From his fellow man I will require a reckoning for the life of man.

6 † "Whoever sheds the blood of man,
by man shall his blood be shed,
for God made man in his own image.

7 † And you,[1] be fruitful and multiply, teem on the earth and multiply in it."
8 † Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, 9 † "Behold, I establish
my covenant with you and your offspring after you, 10 † and with every living
creature that is with you, the birds, the livestock, and every beast of the
earth with you, as many as came out of the ark; it is for every beast of the
earth. 11 † I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh
be cut off by the waters of the flood, and never again shall there be a flood
to destroy the earth." 12 † And God said, "This is the sign of the covenant that
I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for
all future generations: 13 † I have set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be a

sign of the covenant between me and the earth. 14 †When I bring clouds over
the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, 15 † I will remember my
covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh.
And the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh.
16 †When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting
covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the
earth." 17 †God said to Noah, "This is the sign of the covenant that I have
established between me and all flesh that is on the earth."

Noah's Descendants

18 ‡ † The sons of Noah who went forth from the ark were Shem, Ham, and
Japheth. (Ham was the father of Canaan.) 19 These three were the sons of
Noah, and from these the people of the whole earth were dispersed.[1]
20 † Noah began to be a man of the soil, and he planted a vineyard.[2] 21 † He
drank of the wine and became drunk and lay uncovered in his tent. 22 † And
Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father and told his two
brothers outside. 23 † Then Shem and Japheth took a garment, laid it on both
their shoulders, and walked backward and covered the nakedness of their
father. Their faces were turned backward, and they did not see their father's
nakedness. 24 † When Noah awoke from his wine and knew what his
youngest son had done to him, 25 † he said,

"Cursed be Canaan;
a servant of servants shall he be to his
brothers."

26 † He also said,

"Blessed be the Lord, the God of Shem;
and let Canaan be his servant.
27 † May God enlarge Japheth,[3]
and let him dwell in the tents of Shem,
and let Canaan be his servant."

28 ‡ † After the flood Noah lived 350 years. 29 † All the days of Noah were
950 years, and he died.

Nations Descended from Noah

10 [1]†These are the generations of the sons of Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Sons were born to them after the flood.

[2]‡† The sons of Japheth: Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras. [3]†The sons of Gomer: Ashkenaz, Riphath, and Togarmah. [4]†The sons of Javan: Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim. [5]† From these the coastland peoples spread in their lands, each with his own language, by their clans, in their nations.

[6]‡† The sons of Ham: Cush, Egypt, Put, and Canaan. [7]†The sons of Cush: Seba, Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah, and Sabteca. The sons of Raamah: Sheba and Dedan. [8]† Cush fathered Nimrod; he was the first on earth to be a mighty man.[1] [9]† He was a mighty hunter before the Lord. Therefore it is said, “Like Nimrod a mighty hunter before the Lord.” [10]†The beginning of his kingdom was Babel, Erech, Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. [11]† From that land he went into Assyria and built Nineveh, Rehoboth-Ir, Calah, and [12]†Resen between Nineveh and Calah; that is the great city. [13]† Egypt fathered Ludim, Anamim, Lehabim, Naphtuhim, [14]† Pathrusim, Casluhim (from whom[2] the Philistines came), and Caphtorim.

[15]† Canaan fathered Sidon his firstborn and Heth, [16]†and the Jebusites, the Amorites, the Girgashites, [17]‡ the Hivites, the Arkites, the Sinites, [18]the Arvadites, the Zemarites, and the Hamathites. Afterward the clans of the Canaanites dispersed. [19]†And the territory of the Canaanites extended from Sidon in the direction of Gerar as far as Gaza, and in the direction of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim, as far as Lasha. [20]†These are the sons of Ham, by their clans, their languages, their lands, and their nations.

[21]†To Shem also, the father of all the children of Eber, the elder brother of Japheth, children were born. [22]† The sons of Shem: Elam, Asshur, Arpachshad, Lud, and Aram. [23]†The sons of Aram: Uz, Hul, Gether, and Mash. [24]†Arpachshad fathered Shelah; and Shelah fathered Eber. [25]† To Eber were born two sons: the name of the one was Peleg,[3] for in his days the earth was divided, and his brother’s name was Joktan. [26]Joktan fathered Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah, [27]Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, [28]†Obal,

Abimael, Sheba, [29]† Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab; all these were the sons of Joktan. [30]†The territory in which they lived extended from Mesha in the direction of Sephar to the hill country of the east. [31]†These are the sons of Shem, by their clans, their languages, their lands, and their nations.

[32] † These are the clans of the sons of Noah, according to their genealogies, in their nations, and from these the nations spread abroad on the earth after the flood.

The Tower of Babel

11 [1]†† Now the whole earth had one language and the same words.
[2]† And as people migrated from the east, they found a plain in the land of
Shinar and settled there. [3]† And they said to one another, “Come, let us
make bricks, and burn them thoroughly.” And they had brick for stone, and
bitumen for mortar. [4]† Then they said, “Come, let us build ourselves a city
and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for
ourselves, lest we be dispersed over the face of the whole earth.” [5]† And the
Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of man
had built. [6]† And the Lord said, “Behold, they are one people, and they have
all one language, and this is only the beginning of what they will do. And
nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them. [7]† Come,
let us go down and there confuse their language, so that they may not
understand one another’s speech.” [8]† So the Lord dispersed them from there
over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city. [9]† Therefore
its name was called Babel, because there the Lord confused[1] the language
of all the earth. And from there the Lord dispersed them over the face of all
the earth.

Shem’s Descendants

10 ‡†† These are the generations of Shem. When Shem was 100 years old,
he fathered Arpachshad two years after the flood. 11 †And Shem lived after
he fathered Arpachshad 500 years and had other sons and daughters.
12 †When Arpachshad had lived 35 years, he fathered Shelah. 13 †And
Arpachshad lived after he fathered Shelah 403 years and had other sons and
daughters.
14 †When Shelah had lived 30 years, he fathered Eber. 15 And Shelah lived
after he fathered Eber 403 years and had other sons and daughters.
16 When Eber had lived 34 years, he fathered Peleg. 17 And Eber lived after
he fathered Peleg 430 years and had other sons and daughters.
18 When Peleg had lived 30 years, he fathered Reu. 19 And Peleg lived after
he fathered Reu 209 years and had other sons and daughters.
20 When Reu had lived 32 years, he fathered Serug. 21 And Reu lived after
he fathered Serug 207 years and had other sons and daughters.
22 When Serug had lived 30 years, he fathered Nahor. 23 And Serug lived
after he fathered Nahor 200 years and had other sons and daughters.
24 When Nahor had lived 29 years, he fathered Terah. 25 And Nahor lived
after he fathered Terah 119 years and had other sons and daughters.
26 †When Terah had lived 70 years, he fathered Abram, Nahor, and Haran.

Terah’s Descendants

27 Now these are the generations of Terah. Terah fathered Abram,
Nahor, and Haran; and Haran fathered Lot. 28 Haran died in the presence of
his father Terah in the land of his kindred, in Ur of the Chaldeans. 29 And
Abram and Nahor took wives. The name of Abram’s wife was Sarai, and
the name of Nahor’s wife, Milcah, the daughter of Haran the father of
Milcah and Iscah. 30 Now Sarai was barren; she had no child.

31 Terah took Abram his son and Lot the son of Haran, his grandson, and
Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram’s wife, and they went forth
together from Ur of the Chaldeans to go into the land of Canaan, but when
they came to Haran, they settled there. 32 The days of Terah were 205 years,
and Terah died in Haran.

The Call of Abram

12 [1]†‡Now the Lord said[1] to Abram, “Go from your country and
your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. [2]†
And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your
name great, so that you will be a blessing. [3]† I will bless those who bless
you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of
the earth shall be blessed.”[1]

[4]†So Abram went, as the Lord had told him, and Lot went with him.
Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. [5]†And
Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother’s son, and all their
possessions that they had gathered, and the people that they had acquired in
Haran, and they set out to go to the land of Canaan. When they came to the
land of Canaan, [6]†Abram passed through the land to the place at Shechem,
to the oak[2] of Moreh. At that time the Canaanites were in the land. [7]†Then
the Lord appeared to Abram and said, “To your offspring I will give this
land.” So he built there an altar to the Lord, who had appeared to him.
[8]†From there he moved to the hill country on the east of Bethel and pitched
his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east. And there he built an
altar to the Lord and called upon the name of the Lord. [9]And Abram
journeyed on, still going toward the Negeb.

Abram and Sarai in Egypt

10 ‡ † Now there was a famine in the land. So Abram went down to Egypt
to sojourn there, for the famine was severe in the land. 11 † When he was
about to enter Egypt, he said to Sarai his wife, “I know that you are a
woman beautiful in appearance, 12 and when the Egyptians see you, they will
say, ‘This is his wife.’ Then they will kill me, but they will let you live.
13 † Say you are my sister, that it may go well with me because of you, and
that my life may be spared for your sake.” 14 When Abram entered Egypt,
the Egyptians saw that the woman was very beautiful. 15 † And when the
princes of Pharaoh saw her, they praised her to Pharaoh. And the woman
was taken into Pharaoh’s house. 16 † And for her sake he dealt well with
Abram; and he had sheep, oxen, male donkeys, male servants, female
servants, female donkeys, and camels.

17 † But the Lord afflicted Pharaoh and his house with great plagues
because of Sarai, Abram’s wife. 18 So Pharaoh called Abram and said, “What
is this you have done to me? Why did you not tell me that she was your
wife? 19 † Why did you say, ‘She is my sister,’ so that I took her for my wife?
Now then, here is your wife; take her, and go.” 20 And Pharaoh gave men
orders concerning him, and they sent him away with his wife and all that he
had.

Abram and Lot Separate

13 [1]So Abram went up from Egypt, he and his wife and all that he had, and Lot with him, into the Negeb.

[2]† Now Abram was very rich in livestock, in silver, and in gold. [3]And he journeyed on from the Negeb as far as Bethel to the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Ai, [4]†to the place where he had made an altar at the first. And there Abram called upon the name of the Lord. [5]And Lot, who went with Abram, also had flocks and herds and tents, [6]† so that the land could not support both of them dwelling together; for their possessions were so great that they could not dwell together, [7]† and there was strife between the herdsmen of Abram's livestock and the herdsmen of Lot's livestock. At that time the Canaanites and the Perizzites were dwelling in the land.

[8]†Then Abram said to Lot, "Let there be no strife between you and me, and between your herdsmen and my herdsmen, for we are kinsmen.[1] [9] Is not the whole land before you? Separate yourself from me. If you take the left hand, then I will go to the right, or if you take the right hand, then I will go to the left." [10]†And Lot lifted up his eyes and saw that the Jordan Valley was well watered everywhere like the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt, in the direction of Zoar. (This was before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.) [11]So Lot chose for himself all the Jordan Valley, and Lot journeyed east. Thus they separated from each other. [12]Abram settled in the land of Canaan, while Lot settled among the cities of the valley and moved his tent as far as Sodom. [13]Now the men of Sodom were wicked, great sinners against the Lord.

[14]†The Lord said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him, "Lift up your eyes and look from the place where you are, northward and southward and eastward and westward, [15]for all the land that you see I will give to you and to your offspring forever. [16] I will make your offspring as the dust of the earth, so that if one can count the dust of the earth, your offspring also can be counted. [17]Arise, walk through the length and the breadth of the land, for I will give it to you." [18]†So Abram moved his tent and came and settled by

the oaks[2] of Mamre, which are at Hebron, and there he built an altar to the LORD.

Abram Rescues Lot

14 [1]In the days of Amraphel king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of Goiim, [2]these kings made war with Bera king of Sodom, Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, Shemeber king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar). [3]And all these joined forces in the Valley of Siddim (that is, the Salt Sea). [4]Twelve years they had served Chedorlaomer, but in the thirteenth year they rebelled. [5]In the fourteenth year Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him came and defeated the Rephaim in Ashteroth-karnaim, the Zuzim in Ham, the Emim in Shaveh-kiriathaim, [6]and the Horites in their hill country of Seir as far as El-paran on the border of the wilderness. [7]Then they turned back and came to En-mishpat (that is, Kadesh) and defeated all the country of the Amalekites, and also the Amorites who were dwelling in Hazazon-tamar.

[8]Then the king of Sodom, the king of Gomorrah, the king of Admah, the king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar) went out, and they joined battle in the Valley of Siddim [9]with Chedorlaomer king of Elam, Tidal king of Goiim, Amraphel king of Shinar, and Arioch king of Ellasar, four kings against five. [10]Now the Valley of Siddim was full of bitumen pits, and as the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, some fell into them, and the rest fled to the hill country. [11]So the enemy took all the possessions of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their provisions, and went their way. [12]They also took Lot, the son of Abram's brother, who was dwelling in Sodom, and his possessions, and went their way.

[13]Then one who had escaped came and told Abram the Hebrew, who was living by the oaks[1] of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol and of Aner. These were allies of Abram. [14]When Abram heard that his kinsman had been taken captive, he led forth his trained men, born in his house, 318 of them, and went in pursuit as far as Dan. [15]And he divided his forces against them by night, he and his servants, and defeated them and pursued them to Hobah, north of Damascus. [16]Then he brought back all the

possessions, and also brought back his kinsman Lot with his possessions, and the women and the people.

Abram Blessed by Melchizedek

17 ‡† After his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who
were with him, the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the Valley of
Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley). 18 † And Melchizedek king of Salem
brought out bread and wine. (He was priest of God Most High.) 19 † And he
blessed him and said,

"Blessed be Abram by God Most High,
Possessor[1] of heaven and earth;
20 ‡ and blessed be God Most High,
who has delivered your enemies into your
hand!"

And Abram gave him a tenth of everything. 21 And the king of Sodom said
to Abram, "Give me the persons, but take the goods for yourself." 22 † But
Abram said to the king of Sodom, "I have lifted my hand[2] to the LORD, God
Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth, 23 † that I would not take a thread
or a sandal strap or anything that is yours, lest you should say, 'I have made
Abram rich.' 24 † I will take nothing but what the young men have eaten, and
the share of the men who went with me. Let Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre take
their share."

God's Covenant with Abram

15 [1] †After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a
vision: "Fear not, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very
great." [2] †But Abram said, "O Lord God, what will you give me, for I
continue[3] childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?"
[3] †And Abram said, "Behold, you have given me no offspring, and a
member of my household will be my heir." [4] †And behold, the word of the
Lord came to him: "This man shall not be your heir; your very own son[4]
shall be your heir." [5] †And he brought him outside and said, "Look toward
heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them." Then he said
to him, "So shall your offspring be." [6] †And he believed the Lord, and he
counted it to him as righteousness.

[7] And he said to him, "I am the Lord who brought you out from Ur of the
Chaldeans to give you this land to possess." [8] †But he said, "O Lord God,
how am I to know that I shall possess it?" [9] ‡He said to him, "Bring me a
heifer three years old, a female goat three years old, a ram three years old, a
turtledove, and a young pigeon." [10] And he brought him all these, cut them
in half, and laid each half over against the other. But he did not cut the birds
in half. [11] And when birds of prey came down on the carcasses, Abram drove
them away.

[12] †As the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell on Abram. And behold,
dreadful and great darkness fell upon him. [13] ‡Then the Lord said to Abram,
"Know for certain that your offspring will be sojourners in a land that is not
theirs and will be servants there, and they will be afflicted for four hundred
years. [14] But I will bring judgment on the nation that they serve, and
afterward they shall come out with great possessions. [15] †As for yourself,
you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried in a good old age.
[16] †And they shall come back here in the fourth generation, for the iniquity
of the Amorites is not yet complete."

[17] †When the sun had gone down and it was dark, behold, a smoking fire
pot and a flaming torch passed between these pieces. [18] †On that day the
Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, "To your offspring I give[1] this

land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates, [19] the land of the Kenites, the Kenizzites, the Kadmonites, [20] the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, [21] the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites and the Jebusites."

Sarai and Hagar

16 [1]†Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. She had a female Egyptian servant whose name was Hagar. [2]† And Sarai said to Abram, "Behold now, the Lord has prevented me from bearing children. Go in to my servant; it may be that I shall obtain children[2] by her." And Abram listened to the voice of Sarai. [3]†So, after Abram had lived ten years in the land of Canaan, Sarai, Abram's wife, took Hagar the Egyptian, her servant, and gave her to Abram her husband as a wife. [4]†And he went in to Hagar, and she conceived. And when she saw that she had conceived, she looked with contempt on her mistress.[1] [5]† And Sarai said to Abram, "May the wrong done to me be on you! I gave my servant to your embrace, and when she saw that she had conceived, she looked on me with contempt. May the Lord judge between you and me!" [6]†But Abram said to Sarai, "Behold, your servant is in your power; do to her as you please." Then Sarai dealt harshly with her, and she fled from her.

[7]†The angel of the Lord found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, the spring on the way to Shur. [8]And he said, "Hagar, servant of Sarai, where have you come from and where are you going?" She said, "I am fleeing from my mistress Sarai." [9]† The angel of the Lord said to her, "Return to your mistress and submit to her." [10]†The angel of the Lord also said to her, "I will surely multiply your offspring so that they cannot be numbered for multitude." [11]And the angel of the Lord said to her,

"Behold, you are pregnant
and shall bear a son.
You shall call his name Ishmael,[2]
because the Lord has listened to your
affliction.
[12]† He shall be a wild donkey of a man,
his hand against everyone
and everyone's hand against him,
and he shall dwell over against all his
kinsmen."

13 † So she called the name of the Lord who spoke to her, “You are a God of
seeing,”[3] for she said, “Truly here I have seen him who looks after me.”[4]
14 Therefore the well was called Beer-lahai-roi;[5] it lies between Kadesh and
Bered.

15 And Hagar bore Abram a son, and Abram called the name of his son,
whom Hagar bore, Ishmael. 16 Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar
bore Ishmael to Abram.

Abraham and the Covenant of Circumcision

17 [1]‡†When Abram was ninety-nine years old the Lord appeared to
Abram and said to him, “I am God Almighty;[6] walk before me, and be
blameless, [2]†that I may make my covenant between me and you, and may
multiply you greatly.” [3]†Then Abram fell on his face. And God said to him,
[4]“Behold, my covenant is with you, and you shall be the father of a
multitude of nations. [5]†No longer shall your name be called Abram,[7] but
your name shall be Abraham,[8] for I have made you the father of a
multitude of nations. [6]I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make
you into nations, and kings shall come from you. [7]†And I will establish my
covenant between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their
generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your
offspring after you. [8]†And I will give to you and to your offspring after you
the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting
possession, and I will be their God.”

[9]And God said to Abraham, “As for you, you shall keep my covenant,
you and your offspring after you throughout their generations. [10]†This is my
covenant, which you shall keep, between me and you and your offspring
after you: Every male among you shall be circumcised. [11]† You shall be
circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the
covenant between me and you. [12]†He who is eight days old among you shall
be circumcised. Every male throughout your generations, whether born in
your house or bought with your money from any foreigner who is not of
your offspring, [13]†both he who is born in your house and he who is bought
with your money, shall surely be circumcised. So shall my covenant be in
your flesh an everlasting covenant. [14]†Any uncircumcised male who is not
circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin shall be cut off from his people; he
has broken my covenant.”

Isaac's Birth Promised

15 ††And God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call
her name Sarai, but Sarah[1] shall be her name. 16 †I will bless her, and
moreover, I will give[2] you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall
become nations; kings of peoples shall come from her." 17 †Then Abraham
fell on his face and laughed and said to himself, "Shall a child be born to a
man who is a hundred years old? Shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear
a child?" 18 †And Abraham said to God, "Oh that Ishmael might live before
you!" 19 †God said, "No, but Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you
shall call his name Isaac.[3] I will establish my covenant with him as an
everlasting covenant for his offspring after him. 20 †As for Ishmael, I have
heard you; behold, I have blessed him and will make him fruitful and
multiply him greatly. He shall father twelve princes, and I will make him
into a great nation. 21 But I will establish my covenant with Isaac, whom
Sarah shall bear to you at this time next year."

22 When he had finished talking with him, God went up from Abraham.
23 †Then Abraham took Ishmael his son and all those born in his house or
bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's house,
and he circumcised the flesh of their foreskins that very day, as God had
said to him. 24 Abraham was ninety-nine years old when he was circumcised
in the flesh of his foreskin. 25 And Ishmael his son was thirteen years old
when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. 26 That very day
Abraham and his son Ishmael were circumcised. 27 And all the men of his
house, those born in the house and those bought with money from a
foreigner, were circumcised with him.

18 1 And the Lord appeared to him by the oaks[1] of Mamre, as he sat
at the door of his tent in the heat of the day. 2 †He lifted up his eyes and
looked, and behold, three men were standing in front of him. When he saw
them, he ran from the tent door to meet them and bowed himself to the
earth 3 †and said, "O Lord,[2] if I have found favor in your sight, do not pass
by your servant. 4 †Let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest
yourselves under the tree, 5 †while I bring a morsel of bread, that you may

refresh yourselves, and after that you may pass on— since you have come to your servant." So they said, "Do as you have said." 6 †And Abraham went quickly into the tent to Sarah and said, "Quick! Three seahs[3] of fine flour! Knead it, and make cakes." 7 †And Abraham ran to the herd and took a calf, tender and good, and gave it to a young man, who prepared it quickly. 8 †Then he took curds and milk and the calf that he had prepared, and set it before them. And he stood by them under the tree while they ate.

9 †They said to him, "Where is Sarah your wife?" And he said, "She is in the tent." 10 The Lord said, "I will surely return to you about this time next year, and Sarah your wife shall have a son." And Sarah was listening at the tent door behind him. 11 †Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in years. The way of women had ceased to be with Sarah. 12 † So Sarah laughed to herself, saying, "After I am worn out, and my lord is old, shall I have pleasure?" 13 The Lord said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh and say, 'Shall I indeed bear a child, now that I am old?' 14 † Is anything too hard[4] for the Lord? At the appointed time I will return to you, about this time next year, and Sarah shall have a son." 15 †But Sarah denied it,[5] saying, "I did not laugh," for she was afraid. He said, "No, but you did laugh."

16 † Then the men set out from there, and they looked down toward Sodom. And Abraham went with them to set them on their way. 17 The Lord said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do, 18 ††seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? 19 For I have chosen[6] him, that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Lord by doing righteousness and justice, so that the Lord may bring to Abraham what he has promised him." 20 †Then the Lord said, "Because the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is great and their sin is very grave, 21 † I will go down to see whether they have done altogether[1] according to the outcry that has come to me. And if not, I will know."

Abraham Intercedes for Sodom

22 So the men turned from there and went toward Sodom, but Abraham
still stood before the Lord. 23 Then Abraham drew near and said, “Will you
indeed sweep away the righteous with the wicked? 24 Suppose there are
fifty righteous within the city. Will you then sweep away the place and not
spare it for the fifty righteous who are in it? 25 Far be it from you to do such
a thing, to put the righteous to death with the wicked, so that the righteous
fare as the wicked! Far be that from you! Shall not the Judge of all the earth
do what is just?” 26 And the Lord said, “If I find at Sodom fifty righteous in
the city, I will spare the whole place for their sake.”

27 Abraham answered and said, “Behold, I have undertaken to speak to
the Lord, I who am but dust and ashes. 28 Suppose five of the fifty righteous
are lacking. Will you destroy the whole city for lack of five?” And he said,
“I will not destroy it if I find forty-five there.” 29 Again he spoke to him and
said, “Suppose forty are found there.” He answered, “For the sake of forty I
will not do it.” 30 Then he said, “Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will
speak. Suppose thirty are found there.” He answered, “I will not do it, if I
find thirty there.” 31 He said, “Behold, I have undertaken to speak to the
Lord. Suppose twenty are found there.” He answered, “For the sake of
twenty I will not destroy it.” 32 Then he said, “Oh let not the Lord be angry,
and I will speak again but this once. Suppose ten are found there.” He
answered, “For the sake of ten I will not destroy it.” 33 And the Lord went his
way, when he had finished speaking to Abraham, and Abraham returned to
his place.

God Rescues Lot

19 [1]‡† The two angels came to Sodom in the evening, and Lot was
sitting in the gate of Sodom. When Lot saw them, he rose to meet them and
bowed himself with his face to the earth [2]† and said, “My lords, please turn
aside to your servant’s house and spend the night and wash your feet. Then
you may rise up early and go on your way.” They said, “No; we will spend
the night in the town square.” [3]† But he pressed them strongly; so they
turned aside to him and entered his house. And he made them a feast and
baked unleavened bread, and they ate.

[4]But before they lay down, the men of the city, the men of Sodom, both
young and old, all the people to the last man, surrounded the house. [5]† And
they called to Lot, “Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring
them out to us, that we may know them.” [6]Lot went out to the men at the
entrance, shut the door after him, [7]and said, “I beg you, my brothers, do not
act so wickedly. [8]† Behold, I have two daughters who have not known any
man. Let me bring them out to you, and do to them as you please. Only do
nothing to these men, for they have come under the shelter of my roof.”
[9]†But they said, “Stand back!” And they said, “This fellow came to sojourn,
and he has become the judge! Now we will deal worse with you than with
them.” Then they pressed hard against the man Lot, and drew near to break
the door down. [10]But the men reached out their hands and brought Lot into
the house with them and shut the door. [11]And they struck with blindness the
men who were at the entrance of the house, both small and great, so that
they wore themselves out groping for the door.

[12]Then the men said to Lot, “Have you anyone else here? Sons-in-law,
sons, daughters, or anyone you have in the city, bring them out of the place.
[13]† For we are about to destroy this place, because the outcry against its
people has become great before the Lord, and the Lord has sent us to
destroy it.” [14]† So Lot went out and said to his sons-in-law, who were to
marry his daughters, “Up! Get out of this place, for the Lord is about to
destroy the city.” But he seemed to his sons-in-law to be jesting.

15 As morning dawned, the angels urged Lot, saying, “Up! Take your wife
and your two daughters who are here, lest you be swept away in the
punishment of the city.” 16 † But he lingered. So the men seized him and his
wife and his two daughters by the hand, the Lord being merciful to him, and
they brought him out and set him outside the city. 17 † And as they brought
them out, one said, “Escape for your life. Do not look back or stop
anywhere in the valley. Escape to the hills, lest you be swept away.” 18 And
Lot said to them, “Oh, no, my lords. 19 Behold, your servant has found favor
in your sight, and you have shown me great kindness in saving my life. But
I cannot escape to the hills, lest the disaster overtake me and I die.
20 † Behold, this city is near enough to flee to, and it is a little one. Let me
escape there—is it not a little one?—and my life will be saved!” 21 † He said
to him, “Behold, I grant you this favor also, that I will not overthrow the
city of which you have spoken. 22 Escape there quickly, for I can do nothing
till you arrive there.” Therefore the name of the city was called Zoar.[1]

God Destroys Sodom

23 †The sun had risen on the earth when Lot came to Zoar. 24 †Then the Lord rained on Sodom and Gomorrah sulfur and fire from the Lord out of heaven. 25 †And he overthrew those cities, and all the valley, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground. 26 †But Lot's wife, behind him, looked back, and she became a pillar of salt.

27 †And Abraham went early in the morning to the place where he had stood before the Lord. 28 And he looked down toward Sodom and Gomorrah and toward all the land of the valley, and he looked and, behold, the smoke of the land went up like the smoke of a furnace.

29 †So it was that, when God destroyed the cities of the valley, God remembered Abraham and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow when he overthrew the cities in which Lot had lived.

Lot and His Daughters

30 ‡ † Now Lot went up out of Zoar and lived in the hills with his two
daughters, for he was afraid to live in Zoar. So he lived in a cave with his
two daughters. 31 † And the firstborn said to the younger, “Our father is old,
and there is not a man on earth to come in to us after the manner of all the
earth. 32 † Come, let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him,
that we may preserve offspring from our father.” 33 † So they made their
father drink wine that night. And the firstborn went in and lay with her
father. He did not know when she lay down or when she arose.

34 The next day, the firstborn said to the younger, “Behold, I lay last night
with my father. Let us make him drink wine tonight also. Then you go in
and lie with him, that we may preserve offspring from our father.” 35 So they
made their father drink wine that night also. And the younger arose and lay
with him, and he did not know when she lay down or when she arose.
36 ‡ Thus both the daughters of Lot became pregnant by their father. 37 † The
firstborn bore a son and called his name Moab.[1] He is the father of the
Moabites to this day. 38 † The younger also bore a son and called his name
Ben-ammi.[2] He is the father of the Ammonites to this day.

Abraham and Abimelech

20 [1] † From there Abraham journeyed toward the territory of the
Negeb and lived between Kadesh and Shur; and he sojourned in Gerar.
[2] † And Abraham said of Sarah his wife, “She is my sister.” And Abimelech
king of Gerar sent and took Sarah. [3] † But God came to Abimelech in a
dream by night and said to him, “Behold, you are a dead man because of the
woman whom you have taken, for she is a man’s wife.” [4] † Now Abimelech
had not approached her. So he said, “Lord, will you kill an innocent people?
[5] Did he not himself say to me, ‘She is my sister’? And she herself said, ‘He
is my brother.’ In the integrity of my heart and the innocence of my hands I
have done this.” [6] † Then God said to him in the dream, “Yes, I know that
you have done this in the integrity of your heart, and it was I who kept you
from sinning against me. Therefore I did not let you touch her. [7] † Now then,
return the man’s wife, for he is a prophet, so that he will pray for you, and
you shall live. But if you do not return her, know that you shall surely die,
you and all who are yours.”

[8] So Abimelech rose early in the morning and called all his servants and
told them all these things. And the men were very much afraid. [9] Then
Abimelech called Abraham and said to him, “What have you done to us?
And how have I sinned against you, that you have brought on me and my
kingdom a great sin? You have done to me things that ought not to be
done.” [10] And Abimelech said to Abraham, “What did you see, that you did
this thing?” [11] † Abraham said, “I did it because I thought, There is no fear of
God at all in this place, and they will kill me because of my wife.
[12] † Besides, she is indeed my sister, the daughter of my father though not the
daughter of my mother, and she became my wife. [13] And when God caused
me to wander from my father’s house, I said to her, ‘This is the kindness
you must do me: at every place to which we come, say of me, He is my
brother.’”

[14] † Then Abimelech took sheep and oxen, and male servants and female
servants, and gave them to Abraham, and returned Sarah his wife to him.
[15] And Abimelech said, “Behold, my land is before you; dwell where it

pleases you.” [16] † To Sarah he said, “Behold, I have given your brother a thousand pieces of silver. It is a sign of your innocence in the eyes of all[1] who are with you, and before everyone you are vindicated.” [17] ‡ Then Abraham prayed to God, and God healed Abimelech, and also healed his wife and female slaves so that they bore children. [18] For the Lord had closed all the wombs of the house of Abimelech because of Sarah, Abraham’s wife.

The Birth of Isaac

21 [1] ‡ ‡The Lord visited Sarah as he had said, and the Lord did to
Sarah as he had promised. [2] †And Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a son
in his old age at the time of which God had spoken to him. [3] †Abraham
called the name of his son who was born to him, whom Sarah bore him,
Isaac.[2] [4] †And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac when he was eight days
old, as God had commanded him. [5] † Abraham was a hundred years old
when his son Isaac was born to him. [6] †And Sarah said, “God has made
laughter for me; everyone who hears will laugh over me.” [7]And she said,
“Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? Yet I
have borne him a son in his old age.”

God Protects Hagar and Ishmael

8 ‡† And the child grew and was weaned. And Abraham made a great feast
on the day that Isaac was weaned. 9 † But Sarah saw the son of Hagar the
Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, laughing.[3] 10 † So she said to
Abraham, “Cast out this slave woman with her son, for the son of this slave
woman shall not be heir with my son Isaac.” 11 And the thing was very
displeasing to Abraham on account of his son. 12 † But God said to Abraham,
“Be not displeased because of the boy and because of your slave woman.
Whatever Sarah says to you, do as she tells you, for through Isaac shall
your offspring be named. 13 † And I will make a nation of the son of the slave
woman also, because he is your offspring.” 14 † So Abraham rose early in the
morning and took bread and a skin of water and gave it to Hagar, putting it
on her shoulder, along with the child, and sent her away. And she departed
and wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba.

15 † When the water in the skin was gone, she put the child under one of
the bushes. 16 Then she went and sat down opposite him a good way off,
about the distance of a bowshot, for she said, “Let me not look on the death
of the child.” And as she sat opposite him, she lifted up her voice and wept.
17 † And God heard the voice of the boy, and the angel of God called to
Hagar from heaven and said to her, “What troubles you, Hagar? Fear not,
for God has heard the voice of the boy where he is. 18 Up! Lift up the boy,
and hold him fast with your hand, for I will make him into a great nation.”
19 † Then God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water. And she went
and filled the skin with water and gave the boy a drink. 20 † And God was
with the boy, and he grew up. He lived in the wilderness and became an
expert with the bow. 21 He lived in the wilderness of Paran, and his mother
took a wife for him from the land of Egypt.

A Treaty with Abimelech

22 ‡ † At that time Abimelech and Phicol the commander of his army said
to Abraham, “God is with you in all that you do. 23 † Now therefore swear to
me here by God that you will not deal falsely with me or with my
descendants or with my posterity, but as I have dealt kindly with you, so
you will deal with me and with the land where you have sojourned.” 24 And
Abraham said, “I will swear.”

25 When Abraham reproved Abimelech about a well of water that
Abimelech’s servants had seized, 26 Abimelech said, “I do not know who has
done this thing; you did not tell me, and I have not heard of it until today.”
27 So Abraham took sheep and oxen and gave them to Abimelech, and the
two men made a covenant. 28 Abraham set seven ewe lambs of the flock
apart. 29 And Abimelech said to Abraham, “What is the meaning of these
seven ewe lambs that you have set apart?” 30 † He said, “These seven ewe
lambs you will take from my hand, that this[1] may be a witness for me that I
dug this well.” 31 Therefore that place was called Beersheba,[2] because there
both of them swore an oath. 32 † So they made a covenant at Beersheba. Then
Abimelech and Phicol the commander of his army rose up and returned to
the land of the Philistines. 33 † Abraham planted a tamarisk tree in Beersheba
and called there on the name of the Lord, the Everlasting God. 34 And
Abraham sojourned many days in the land of the Philistines.

The Sacrifice of Isaac

22 [1] † After these things God tested Abraham and said to him,
"Abraham!" And he said, "Here am I." [2] † He said, "Take your son, your
only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him
there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you."
[3] † So Abraham rose early in the morning, saddled his donkey, and took two
of his young men with him, and his son Isaac. And he cut the wood for the
burnt offering and arose and went to the place of which God had told him.
[4] On the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the place from afar.
[5] † Then Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey; I and
the boy[1] will go over there and worship and come again to you." [6] † And
Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son.
And he took in his hand the fire and the knife. So they went both of them
together. [7] And Isaac said to his father Abraham, "My father!" And he said,
"Here am I, my son." He said, "Behold, the fire and the wood, but where is
the lamb for a burnt offering?" [8] † Abraham said, "God will provide for
himself the lamb for a burnt offering, my son." So they went both of them
together.

[9] When they came to the place of which God had told him, Abraham built
the altar there and laid the wood in order and bound Isaac his son and laid
him on the altar, on top of the wood. [10] Then Abraham reached out his hand
and took the knife to slaughter his son. [11] † But the angel of the Lord called to
him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" And he said, Here am I."
[12] † He said, "Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him, for
now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your
only son, from me." [13] † And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and
behold, behind him was a ram, caught in a thicket by his horns. And
Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead
of his son. [14] † So Abraham called the name of that place, "The Lord will
provide";[2] as it is said to this day, "On the mount of the Lord it shall be
provided."[3]

15 And the angel of the Lord called to Abraham a second time from heaven
16 † and said, “By myself I have sworn, declares the Lord, because you have
done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, 17 † I will surely
bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven
and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the
gate of his[4] enemies, 18 † and in your offspring shall all the nations of the
earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice.” 19 So Abraham
returned to his young men, and they arose and went together to Beersheba.
And Abraham lived at Beer-
sheba.

20 Now after these things it was told to Abraham, “Behold, Milcah also
has borne children to your brother Nahor: 21 Uz his firstborn, Buz his
brother, Kemuel the father of Aram, 22 Chesed, Hazo, Pildash, Jidlaph, and
Bethuel.” 23 † (Bethuel fathered Rebekah.) These eight Milcah bore to Nahor,
Abraham’s brother. 24 † Moreover, his concubine, whose name was Reumah,
bore Tebah, Gaham, Tahash, and Maacah.

Sarah’s Death and Burial

23 [1]†Sarah lived 127 years; these were the years of the life of Sarah.
[2]And Sarah died at Kiriath-arba (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan, and
Abraham went in to mourn for Sarah and to weep for her. [3]†And Abraham
rose up from before his dead and said to the Hittites,[1] [4]† “I am a sojourner
and foreigner among you; give me property among you for a burying place,
that I may bury my dead out of my sight.” [5]The Hittites answered Abraham,
[6]†“Hear us, my lord; you are a prince of God[2] among us. Bury your dead in
the choicest of our tombs. None of us will withhold from you his tomb to
hinder you from burying your dead.” [7]Abraham rose and bowed to the
Hittites, the people of the land. [8]†And he said to them, “If you are willing
that I should bury my dead out of my sight, hear me and entreat for me
Ephron the son of Zohar, [9]that he may give me the cave of Machpelah,
which he owns; it is at the end of his field. For the full price let him give it
to me in your presence as property for a burying place.”

[10]†Now Ephron was sitting among the Hittites, and Ephron the Hittite
answered Abraham in the hearing of the Hittites, of all who went in at the
gate of his city, [11]†“No, my lord, hear me: I give you the field, and I give
you the cave that is in it. In the sight of the sons of my people I give it to
you. Bury your dead.” [12]Then Abraham bowed down before the people of
the land. [13]And he said to Ephron in the hearing of the people of the land,
“But if you will, hear me: I give the price of the field. Accept it from me,
that I may bury my dead there.” [14]Ephron answered Abraham, [15]†“My lord,
listen to me: a piece of land worth four hundred shekels[3] of silver, what is
that between you and me? Bury your dead.” [16]Abraham listened to Ephron,
and Abraham weighed out for Ephron the silver that he had named in the
hearing of the Hittites, four hundred shekels of silver, according to the
weights current among the merchants.

[17]†So the field of Ephron in Machpelah, which was to the east of Mamre,
the field with the cave that was in it and all the trees that were in the field,
throughout its whole area, was made over [18]†to Abraham as a possession in
the presence of the Hittites, before all who went in at the gate of his city.

[19] † After this, Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah east of Mamre (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan. [20] The field and the cave that is in it were made over to Abraham as property for a burying place by the Hittites.

Isaac and Rebekah

24 [1]†Now Abraham was old, well advanced in years. And the Lord had blessed Abraham in all things. [2]†And Abraham said to his servant, the oldest of his household, who had charge of all that he had, "Put your hand under my thigh, [3]† that I may make you swear by the Lord, the God of heaven and God of the earth, that you will not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell, [4]† but will go to my country and to my kindred, and take a wife for my son Isaac." [5]The servant said to him, "Perhaps the woman may not be willing to follow me to this land. Must I then take your son back to the land from which you came?" [6]Abraham said to him, "See to it that you do not take my son back there. [7]†The Lord, the God of heaven, who took me from my father's house and from the land of my kindred, and who spoke to me and swore to me, 'To your offspring I will give this land,' he will send his angel before you, and you shall take a wife for my son from there. [8]But if the woman is not willing to follow you, then you will be free from this oath of mine; only you must not take my son back there." [9]So the servant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master and swore to him concerning this matter.

[10]†Then the servant took ten of his master's camels and departed, taking all sorts of choice gifts from his master; and he arose and went to Mesopotamia[1] to the city of Nahor. [11]And he made the camels kneel down outside the city by the well of water at the time of evening, the time when women go out to draw water. [12]†And he said, "O Lord, God of my master Abraham, please grant me success today and show steadfast love to my master Abraham. [13]Behold, I am standing by the spring of water, and the daughters of the men of the city are coming out to draw water. [14]†Let the young woman to whom I shall say, 'Please let down your jar that I may drink,' and who shall say, 'Drink, and I will water your camels'—let her be the one whom you have appointed for your servant Isaac. By this[2] I shall know that you have shown steadfast love to my master."

[15]†Before he had finished speaking, behold, Rebekah, who was born to Bethuel the son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, came out

with her water jar on her shoulder. [16]†The young woman was very attractive in appearance, a maiden[3] whom no man had known. She went down to the spring and filled her jar and came up. [17]Then the servant ran to meet her and said, “Please give me a little water to drink from your jar.” [18]She said, “Drink, my lord.” And she quickly let down her jar upon her hand and gave him a drink. [19]When she had finished giving him a drink, she said, “I will draw water for your camels also, until they have finished drinking.” [20]So she quickly emptied her jar into the trough and ran again to the well to draw water, and she drew for all his camels. [21]The man gazed at her in silence to learn whether the Lord had prospered his journey or not.

[22]When the camels had finished drinking, the man took a gold ring weighing a half shekel,[4] and two bracelets for her arms weighing ten gold shekels, [23]†and said, “Please tell me whose daughter you are. Is there room in your father’s house for us to spend the night?” [24]She said to him, “I am the daughter of Bethuel the son of Milcah, whom she bore to Nahor.” [25]She added, “We have plenty of both straw and fodder, and room to spend the night.” [26] The man bowed his head and worshiped the Lord [27]†and said, “Blessed be the Lord, the God of my master Abraham, who has not forsaken his steadfast love and his faithfulness toward my master. As for me, the Lord has led me in the way to the house of my master’s kinsmen.” [28]†Then the young woman ran and told her mother’s household about these things.

[29]Rebekah had a brother whose name was Laban. Laban ran out toward the man, to the spring. [30]As soon as he saw the ring and the bracelets on his sister’s arms, and heard the words of Rebekah his sister, “Thus the man spoke to me,” he went to the man. And behold, he was standing by the camels at the spring. [31]†He said, “Come in, O blessed of the Lord. Why do you stand outside? For I have prepared the house and a place for the camels.” [32]So the man came to the house and unharnessed the camels, and gave straw and fodder to the camels, and there was water to wash his feet and the feet of the men who were with him. [33]†Then food was set before him to eat. But he said, “I will not eat until I have said what I have to say.” He said, “Speak on.”

[34]So he said, “I am Abraham’s servant. [35]†The Lord has greatly blessed my master, and he has become great. He has given him flocks and herds, silver and gold, male servants and female servants, camels and donkeys.

[36]And Sarah my master's wife bore a son to my master when she was old,
and to him he has given all that he has. [37] My master made me swear,
saying, 'You shall not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the
Canaanites, in whose land I dwell, [38]† but you shall go to my father's house
and to my clan and take a wife for my son.' [39]I said to my master, 'Perhaps
the woman will not follow me.' [40]But he said to me, 'The Lord, before
whom I have walked, will send his angel with you and prosper your way.
You shall take a wife for my son from my clan and from my father's house.
[41]Then you will be free from my oath, when you come to my clan. And if
they will not give her to you, you will be free from my oath.'

[42]†"I came today to the spring and said, 'O Lord, the God of my master
Abraham, if now you are prospering the way that I go, [43]behold, I am
standing by the spring of water. Let the virgin who comes out to draw
water, to whom I shall say, "Please give me a little water from your jar to
drink," [44] and who will say to me, "Drink, and I will draw for your camels
also," let her be the woman whom the Lord has appointed for my master's
son.'

[45]"Before I had finished speaking in my heart, behold, Rebekah came out
with her water jar on her shoulder, and she went down to the spring and
drew water. I said to her, 'Please let me drink.' [46]She quickly let down her
jar from her shoulder and said, 'Drink, and I will give your camels drink
also.' So I drank, and she gave the camels drink also. [47]Then I asked her,
'Whose daughter are you?' She said, 'The daughter of Bethuel, Nahor's
son, whom Milcah bore to him.' So I put the ring on her nose and the
bracelets on her arms. [48] Then I bowed my head and worshiped the Lord
and blessed the Lord, the God of my master Abraham, who had led me by the
right way[1] to take the daughter of my master's kinsman for his son. [49]Now
then, if you are going to show steadfast love and faithfulness to my master,
tell me; and if not, tell me, that I may turn to the right hand or to the left."

[50]†Then Laban and Bethuel answered and said, "The thing has come from
the Lord; we cannot speak to you bad or good. [51]Behold, Rebekah is before
you; take her and go, and let her be the wife of your master's son, as the
Lord has spoken."

[52]†When Abraham's servant heard their words, he bowed himself to the
earth before the Lord. [53]†And the servant brought out jewelry of silver and

of gold, and garments, and gave them to Rebekah. He also gave to her brother and to her mother costly ornaments. 54And he and the men who were with him ate and drank, and they spent the night there. When they arose in the morning, he said, “Send me away to my master.” 55Her brother and her mother said, “Let the young woman remain with us a while, at least ten days; after that she may go.” 56But he said to them, “Do not delay me, since the Lord has prospered my way. Send me away that I may go to my master.” 57They said, “Let us call the young woman and ask her.” 58† And they called Rebekah and said to her, “Will you go with this man?” She said, “I will go.” 59† So they sent away Rebekah their sister and her nurse, and Abraham’s servant and his men. 60† And they blessed Rebekah and said to her,

“Our sister, may you become
thousands of ten thousands,
and may your offspring possess
the gate of those who hate him!”[2]

61† Then Rebekah and her young women arose and rode on the camels and followed the man. Thus the servant took Rebekah and went his way.

62Now Isaac had returned from Beer-lahai-roi and was dwelling in the Negeb. 63And Isaac went out to meditate in the field toward evening. And he lifted up his eyes and saw, and behold, there were camels coming. 64And Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac, she dismounted from the camel 65† and said to the servant, “Who is that man, walking in the field to meet us?” The servant said, “It is my master.” So she took her veil and covered herself. 66And the servant told Isaac all the things that he had done. 67Then Isaac brought her into the tent of Sarah his mother and took Rebekah, and she became his wife, and he loved her. So Isaac was comforted after his mother’s death.

Abraham's Death and His Descendants

25 [1]‡†Abraham took another wife, whose name was Keturah. [2] She bore him Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah. [3]Jokshan fathered Sheba and Dedan. The sons of Dedan were Asshurim, Letushim, and Leummim. [4]The sons of Midian were Ephah, Epher, Hanoch, Abida, and Eldaah. All these were the children of Keturah. [5]† Abraham gave all he had to Isaac. [6]†But to the sons of his concubines Abraham gave gifts, and while he was still living he sent them away from his son Isaac, eastward to the east country.

[7]These are the days of the years of Abraham's life, 175 years. [8]†Abraham breathed his last and died in a good old age, an old man and full of years, and was gathered to his people. [9]Isaac and Ishmael his sons buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron the son of Zohar the Hittite, east of Mamre, [10]the field that Abraham purchased from the Hittites. There Abraham was buried, with Sarah his wife. [11]After the death of Abraham, God blessed Isaac his son. And Isaac settled at Beer-lahai-roi.

[12]†These are the generations of Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's servant, bore to Abraham. [13] These are the names of the sons of Ishmael, named in the order of their birth: Nebaioth, the firstborn of Ishmael; and Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, [14]Mishma, Dumah, Massa, [15]Hadad, Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah. [16]†These are the sons of Ishmael and these are their names, by their villages and by their encampments, twelve princes according to their tribes. [17] † (These are the years of the life of Ishmael: 137 years. He breathed his last and died, and was gathered to his people.) [18]† They settled from Havilah to Shur, which is opposite Egypt in the direction of Assyria. He settled[1] over against all his kinsmen.

The Birth of Esau and Jacob

19 ‡†These are the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham fathered
Isaac, 20 and Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah, the daughter
of Bethuel the Aramean of Paddan-aram, the sister of Laban the Aramean,
to be his wife. 21 †And Isaac prayed to the Lord for his wife, because she was
barren. And the Lord granted his prayer, and Rebekah his wife conceived.
22 †The children struggled together within her, and she said, "If it is thus,
why is this happening to me?"[1] So she went to inquire of the Lord. 23 †And
the Lord said to her,

"Two nations are in your womb,
and two peoples from within you[2] shall be
divided;
the one shall be stronger than the other,
the older shall serve the younger."

24 When her days to give birth were completed, behold, there were twins in
her womb. 25 †The first came out red, all his body like a hairy cloak, so they
called his name Esau. 26 † Afterward his brother came out with his hand
holding Esau's heel, so his name was called Jacob.[3] Isaac was sixty years
old when she bore them.

27 †When the boys grew up, Esau was a skillful hunter, a man of the field,
while Jacob was a quiet man, dwelling in tents. 28 †Isaac loved Esau because
he ate of his game, but Rebekah loved Jacob.

Esau Sells His Birthright

29 ‡†Once when Jacob was cooking stew, Esau came in from the field, and
he was exhausted. 30 †And Esau said to Jacob, “Let me eat some of that red
stew, for I am exhausted!” (Therefore his name was called Edom.[4])
31 †Jacob said, “Sell me your birthright now.” 32 †Esau said, “I am about to
die; of what use is a birthright to me?” 33 Jacob said, “Swear to me now.” So
he swore to him and sold his birthright to Jacob. 34 †Then Jacob gave Esau
bread and lentil stew, and he ate and drank and rose and went his way. Thus
Esau despised his birthright.

God’s Promise to Isaac

26 [1]‡‡Now there was a famine in the land, besides the former famine
that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went to Gerar to Abimelech
king of the Philistines. [2]And the Lord appeared to him and said, “Do not go
down to Egypt; dwell in the land of which I shall tell you. [3]‡ Sojourn in this
land, and I will be with you and will bless you, for to you and to your
offspring I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath that I swore
to Abraham your father. [4] I will multiply your offspring as the stars of
heaven and will give to your offspring all these lands. And in your offspring
all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, [5]because Abraham obeyed my
voice and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.”

Isaac and Abimelech

6 ‡So Isaac settled in Gerar. 7 †When the men of the place asked him about
his wife, he said, “She is my sister,” for he feared to say, “My wife,”
thinking, “lest the men of the place should kill me because of Rebekah,”
because she was attractive in appearance. 8 †When he had been there a long
time, Abimelech king of the Philistines looked out of a window and saw
Isaac laughing with[1] Rebekah his wife. 9 So Abimelech called Isaac and
said, “Behold, she is your wife. How then could you say, ‘She is my
sister’?” Isaac said to him, “Because I thought, ‘Lest I die because of her.’”
10 †Abimelech said, “What is this you have done to us? One of the people
might easily have lain with your wife, and you would have brought guilt
upon us.” 11 So Abimelech warned all the people, saying, “Whoever touches
this man or his wife shall surely be put to death.”

12 † And Isaac sowed in that land and reaped in the same year a
hundredfold. The Lord blessed him, 13 †and the man became rich, and gained
more and more until he became very wealthy. 14 He had possessions of
flocks and herds and many servants, so that the Philistines envied him.
15 †(Now the Philistines had stopped and filled with earth all the wells that
his father’s servants had dug in the days of Abraham his father.) 16 And
Abimelech said to Isaac, “Go away from us, for you are much mightier than
we.”

17 So Isaac departed from there and encamped in the Valley of Gerar and
settled there. 18 †And Isaac dug again the wells of water that had been dug in
the days of Abraham his father, which the Philistines had stopped after the
death of Abraham. And he gave them the names that his father had given
them. 19 But when Isaac’s servants dug in the valley and found there a well
of spring water, 20 †the herdsmen of Gerar quarreled with Isaac’s herdsmen,
saying, “The water is ours.” So he called the name of the well Esek,[2]
because they contended with him. 21 Then they dug another well, and they
quarreled over that also, so he called its name Sitnah.[3] 22 And he moved
from there and dug another well, and they did not quarrel over it. So he
called its name Rehoboth,[4] saying, “For now the Lord has made room for
us, and we shall be fruitful in the land.”

[23]From there he went up to Beersheba. [24]†And the Lord appeared to him
the same night and said, “I am the God of Abraham your father. Fear not,
for I am with you and will bless you and multiply your offspring for my
servant Abraham’s sake.” [25]†So he built an altar there and called upon the
name of the Lord and pitched his tent there. And there Isaac’s servants dug a
well.

[26]†When Abimelech went to him from Gerar with Ahuzzath his adviser
and Phicol the commander of his army, [27]†Isaac said to them, “Why have
you come to me, seeing that you hate me and have sent me away from
you?” [28]††They said, “We see plainly that the Lord has been with you. So
we said, let there be a sworn pact between us, between you and us, and let
us make a covenant with you, [29]†that you will do us no harm, just as we
have not touched you and have done to you nothing but good and have sent
you away in peace. You are now the blessed of the Lord.” [30]†So he made
them a feast, and they ate and drank. [31]In the morning they rose early and
exchanged oaths. And Isaac sent them on their way, and they departed from
him in peace. [32]That same day Isaac’s servants came and told him about the
well that they had dug and said to him, “We have found water.” [33]He called
it Shibah;[1] therefore the name of the city is Beersheba to this day.

[34]†When Esau was forty years old, he took Judith the daughter of Beeri
the Hittite to be his wife, and Basemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite,
[35]†and they made life bitter[2] for Isaac and Rebekah.

Isaac Blesses Jacob

27 [1]When Isaac was old and his eyes were dim so that he could not
see, he called Esau his older son and said to him, “My son”; and he
answered, “Here I am.” [2]He said, “Behold, I am old; I do not know the day
of my death. [3] Now then, take your weapons, your quiver and your bow, and
go out to the field and hunt game for me, [4]† and prepare for me delicious
food, such as I love, and bring it to me so that I may eat, that my soul may
bless you before I die.”

[5]Now Rebekah was listening when Isaac spoke to his son Esau. So when
Esau went to the field to hunt for game and bring it, [6]Rebekah said to her
son Jacob, “I heard your father speak to your brother Esau, [7]‘Bring me
game and prepare for me delicious food, that I may eat it and bless you
before the Lord before I die.’ [8]†Now therefore, my son, obey my voice as I
command you. [9]Go to the flock and bring me two good young goats, so that
I may prepare from them delicious food for your father, such as he loves.
[10]And you shall bring it to your father to eat, so that he may bless you
before he dies.” [11]But Jacob said to Rebekah his mother, “Behold, my
brother Esau is a hairy man, and I am a smooth man. [12]Perhaps my father
will feel me, and I shall seem to be mocking him and bring a curse upon
myself and not a blessing.” [13]†His mother said to him, “Let your curse be on
me, my son; only obey my voice, and go, bring them to me.”

[14]So he went and took them and brought them to his mother, and his
mother prepared delicious food, such as his father loved. [15]†Then Rebekah
took the best garments of Esau her older son, which were with her in the
house, and put them on Jacob her younger son. [16]And the skins of the young
goats she put on his hands and on the smooth part of his neck. [17]And she put
the delicious food and the bread, which she had prepared, into the hand of
her son Jacob.

[18]So he went in to his father and said, “My father.” And he said, “Here I
am. Who are you, my son?” [19]†Jacob said to his father, “I am Esau your
firstborn. I have done as you told me; now sit up and eat of my game, that
your soul may bless me.” [20]†But Isaac said to his son, “How is it that you

have found it so quickly, my son?" He answered, "Because the LORD your God granted me success." [21]Then Isaac said to Jacob, "Please come near, that I may feel you, my son, to know whether you are really my son Esau or not." [22]So Jacob went near to Isaac his father, who felt him and said, "The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau." [23]†And he did not recognize him, because his hands were hairy like his brother Esau's hands. So he blessed him. [24]He said, "Are you really my son Esau?" He answered, "I am." [25]Then he said, "Bring it near to me, that I may eat of my son's game and bless you." So he brought it near to him, and he ate; and he brought him wine, and he drank.

[26]†Then his father Isaac said to him, "Come near and kiss me, my son." [27]‡†So he came near and kissed him. And Isaac smelled the smell of his garments and blessed him and said,

"See, the smell of my son
is as the smell of a field that the LORD has
blessed!
[28]† May God give you of the dew of heaven
and of the fatness of the earth
and plenty of grain and wine.
[29]† Let peoples serve you,
and nations bow down to you.
Be lord over your brothers,
and may your mother's sons bow down to
you.
Cursed be everyone who curses you,
and blessed be everyone who blesses
you!"

[30]As soon as Isaac had finished blessing Jacob, when Jacob had scarcely gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, Esau his brother came in from his hunting. [31]He also prepared delicious food and brought it to his father. And he said to his father, "Let my father arise and eat of his son's game, that you may bless me." [32]†His father Isaac said to him, "Who are you?" He answered, "I am your son, your firstborn, Esau." [33]†Then Isaac trembled very violently and said, "Who was it then that hunted game and

brought it to me, and I ate it all before you came, and I have blessed him? Yes, and he shall be blessed.” 34As soon as Esau heard the words of his father, he cried out with an exceedingly great and bitter cry and said to his father, “Bless me, even me also, O my father!” 35 ‡ But he said, “Your brother came deceitfully, and he has taken away your blessing.” 36 † Esau said, “Is he not rightly named Jacob?[1] For he has cheated me these two times. He took away my birthright, and behold, now he has taken away my blessing.” Then he said, “Have you not reserved a blessing for me?” 37 † Isaac answered and said to Esau, “Behold, I have made him lord over you, and all his brothers I have given to him for servants, and with grain and wine I have sustained him. What then can I do for you, my son?” 38Esau said to his father, “Have you but one blessing, my father? Bless me, even me also, O my father.” And Esau lifted up his voice and wept.

39 ‡ Then Isaac his father answered and said to him:

“Behold, away from[2] the fatness of the earth
shall your dwelling be,
and away from[3] the dew of heaven on high.
40 By your sword you shall live,
and you shall serve your brother;
but when you grow restless
you shall break his yoke from your neck.”

41 † Now Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing with which his father had blessed him, and Esau said to himself, “The days of mourning for my father are approaching; then I will kill my brother Jacob.” 42But the words of Esau her older son were told to Rebekah. So she sent and called Jacob her younger son and said to him, “Behold, your brother Esau comforts himself about you by planning to kill you. 43Now therefore, my son, obey my voice. Arise, flee to Laban my brother in Haran 44 † and stay with him a while, until your brother’s fury turns away— 45 † until your brother’s anger turns away from you, and he forgets what you have done to him. Then I will send and bring you from there. Why should I be bereft of you both in one day?”

46 † Then Rebekah said to Isaac, “I loathe my life because of the Hittite
women.[1] If Jacob marries one of the Hittite women like these, one of the
women of the land, what good will my life be to me?”

Jacob Sent to Laban

28 [1] ‡ † Then Isaac called Jacob and blessed him and directed him,
“You must not take a wife from the Canaanite women. [2] Arise, go to
Paddan-aram to the house of Bethuel your mother’s father, and take as your
wife from there one of the daughters of Laban your mother’s brother. [3] †
God Almighty[2] bless you and make you fruitful and multiply you, that you
may become a company of peoples. [4] † May he give the blessing of Abraham
to you and to your offspring with you, that you may take possession of the
land of your sojournings that God gave to Abraham!” [5] Thus Isaac sent
Jacob away. And he went to Paddan-aram, to Laban, the son of Bethuel the
Aramean, the brother of Rebekah, Jacob’s and Esau’s mother.

Esau Marries an Ishmaelite

6 ✝✝Now Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob and sent him away to
Paddan-aram to take a wife from there, and that as he blessed him he
directed him, “You must not take a wife from the Canaanite women,” 7and
that Jacob had obeyed his father and his mother and gone to Paddan-aram.
8So when Esau saw that the Canaanite women did not please Isaac his
father, 9✝Esau went to Ishmael and took as his wife, besides the wives he
had, Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael, Abraham’s son, the sister of
Nebaioth.

Jacob’s Dream

10 ✝ Jacob left Beersheba and went toward Haran. 11 And he came to a
certain place and stayed there that night, because the sun had set. Taking
one of the stones of the place, he put it under his head and lay down in that
place to sleep. 12 ✝ And he dreamed, and behold, there was a ladder[3] set up
on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven. And behold, the angels of
God were ascending and descending on it! 13 ✝ ✝ And behold, the Lord stood
above it[1] and said, “I am the Lord, the God of Abraham your father and the
God of Isaac. The land on which you lie I will give to you and to your
offspring. 14 ✝ Your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall
spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south,
and in you and your offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed.
15 Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring
you back to this land. For I will not leave you until I have done what I have
promised you.” 16 ✝ Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, “Surely the
Lord is in this place, and I did not know it.” 17 ✝ And he was afraid and said,
“How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and
this is the gate of heaven.”

18 ✝ So early in the morning Jacob took the stone that he had put under his
head and set it up for a pillar and poured oil on the top of it. 19 ✝ He called the
name of that place Bethel,[2] but the name of the city was Luz at the first.
20 Then Jacob made a vow, saying, “If God will be with me and will keep me
in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat and clothing to wear, 21
so that I come again to my father’s house in peace, then the Lord shall be
my God, 22 ✝ and this stone, which I have set up for a pillar, shall be God’s
house. And of all that you give me I will give a full tenth to you.”

Jacob Marries Leah and Rachel

29 [1]‡†Then Jacob went on his journey and came to the land of the
people of the east. [2]As he looked, he saw a well in the field, and behold,
three flocks of sheep lying beside it, for out of that well the flocks were
watered. The stone on the well's mouth was large, [3]and when all the flocks
were gathered there, the shepherds would roll the stone from the mouth of
the well and water the sheep, and put the stone back in its place over the
mouth of the well.

[4]† Jacob said to them, "My brothers, where do you come from?" They
said, "We are from Haran." [5]He said to them, "Do you know Laban the son
of Nahor?" They said, "We know him." [6]He said to them, "Is it well with
him?" They said, "It is well; and see, Rachel his daughter is coming with
the sheep!" [7]He said, "Behold, it is still high day; it is not time for the
livestock to be gathered together. Water the sheep and go, pasture them."
[8]But they said, "We cannot until all the flocks are gathered together and the
stone is rolled from the mouth of the well; then we water the sheep."

[9]While he was still speaking with them, Rachel came with her father's
sheep, for she was a shepherdess. [10]†Now as soon as Jacob saw Rachel the
daughter of Laban his mother's brother, and the sheep of Laban his
mother's brother, Jacob came near and rolled the stone from the well's
mouth and watered the flock of Laban his mother's brother. [11]†Then Jacob
kissed Rachel and wept aloud. [12]And Jacob told Rachel that he was her
father's kinsman, and that he was Rebekah's son, and she ran and told her
father.

[13]As soon as Laban heard the news about Jacob, his sister's son, he ran to
meet him and embraced him and kissed him and brought him to his house.
Jacob told Laban all these things, [14]†and Laban said to him, "Surely you are
my bone and my flesh!" And he stayed with him a month.

[15]Then Laban said to Jacob, "Because you are my kinsman, should you
therefore serve me for nothing? Tell me, what shall your wages be?" [16]Now
Laban had two daughters. The name of the older was Leah, and the name of
the younger was Rachel. [17]† Leah's eyes were weak,[1] but Rachel was

beautiful in form and appearance. 18 †Jacob loved Rachel. And he said, “I will serve you seven years for your younger daughter Rachel.” 19Laban said, “It is better that I give her to you than that I should give her to any other man; stay with me.” 20 †So Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed to him but a few days because of the love he had for her.

21 †Then Jacob said to Laban, “Give me my wife that I may go in to her, for my time is completed.” 22So Laban gathered together all the people of the place and made a feast. 23 †But in the evening he took his daughter Leah and brought her to Jacob, and he went in to her. 24 †(Laban gave[2] his female servant Zilpah to his daughter Leah to be her servant.) 25 † And in the morning, behold, it was Leah! And Jacob said to Laban, “What is this you have done to me? Did I not serve with you for Rachel? Why then have you deceived me?” 26Laban said, “It is not so done in our country, to give the younger before the firstborn. 27 † Complete the week of this one, and we will give you the other also in return for serving me another seven years.” 28 † Jacob did so, and completed her week. Then Laban gave him his daughter Rachel to be his wife. 29(Laban gave his female servant Bilhah to his daughter Rachel to be her servant.) 30So Jacob went in to Rachel also, and he loved Rachel more than Leah, and served Laban for another seven years.

Jacob's Children

31 ‡ † When the Lord saw that Leah was hated, he opened her womb, but
Rachel was barren. 32 And Leah conceived and bore a son, and she called his
name Reuben,[3] for she said, "Because the Lord has looked upon my
affliction; for now my husband will love me." 33 She conceived again and
bore a son, and said, "Because the Lord has heard that I am hated, he has
given me this son also." And she called his name Simeon.[4] 34 Again she
conceived and bore a son, and said, "Now this time my husband will be
attached to me, because I have borne him three sons." Therefore his name
was called Levi.[5] 35 And she conceived again and bore a son, and said,
"This time I will praise the Lord." Therefore she called his name Judah.[6]
Then she ceased bearing.

30 1 † When Rachel saw that she bore Jacob no children, she envied
her sister. She said to Jacob, "Give me children, or I shall die!" 2 Jacob's
anger was kindled against Rachel, and he said, "Am I in the place of God,
who has withheld from you the fruit of the womb?" 3 † Then she said, "Here
is my servant Bilhah; go in to her, so that she may give birth on my behalf,
[1] that even I may have children[2] through her." 4 † So she gave him her
servant Bilhah as a wife, and Jacob went in to her. 5 And Bilhah conceived
and bore Jacob a son. 6 † Then Rachel said, "God has judged me, and has
also heard my voice and given me a son." Therefore she called his name
Dan.[3] 7 Rachel's servant Bilhah conceived again and bore Jacob a second
son. 8 † Then Rachel said, "With mighty wrestlings[4] I have wrestled with
my sister and have prevailed." So she called his name Naphtali.[5]

9 † When Leah saw that she had ceased bearing children, she took her
servant Zilpah and gave her to Jacob as a wife. 10 Then Leah's servant Zilpah
bore Jacob a son. 11 And Leah said, "Good fortune has come!" so she called
his name Gad.[6] 12 Leah's servant Zilpah bore Jacob a second son. 13 And
Leah said, "Happy am I! For women have called me happy." So she called
his name Asher.[7]

14 † In the days of wheat harvest Reuben went and found mandrakes in the
field and brought them to his mother Leah. Then Rachel said to Leah,

“Please give me some of your son’s mandrakes.” 15†But she said to her, “Is
it a small matter that you have taken away my husband? Would you take
away my son’s mandrakes also?” Rachel said, “Then he may lie with you
tonight in exchange for your son’s mandrakes.” 16When Jacob came from
the field in the evening, Leah went out to meet him and said, “You must
come in to me, for I have hired you with my son’s mandrakes.” So he lay
with her that night. 17And God listened to Leah, and she conceived and bore
Jacob a fifth son. 18Leah said, “God has given me my wages because I gave
my servant to my husband.” So she called his name Issachar.[8]

19And Leah conceived again, and she bore Jacob a sixth son. 20†Then
Leah said, “God has endowed me with a good endowment; now my
husband will honor me, because I have borne him six sons.” So she called
his name Zebulun.[9] 21†Afterward she bore a daughter and called her name
Dinah.

22†Then God remembered Rachel, and God listened to her and opened
her womb. 23She conceived and bore a son and said, “God has taken away
my reproach.” 24And she called his name Joseph,[10] saying, “May the Lord
add to me another son!”

Jacob’s Prosperity

25 † As soon as Rachel had borne Joseph, Jacob said to Laban, “Send me
away, that I may go to my own home and country. 26 † Give me my wives
and my children for whom I have served you, that I may go, for you know
the service that I have given you.” 27 † But Laban said to him, “If I have
found favor in your sight, I have learned by divination that[11] the Lord has
blessed me because of you. 28 Name your wages, and I will give it.” 29 Jacob
said to him, “You yourself know how I have served you, and how your
livestock has fared with me. 30 † For you had little before I came, and it has
increased abundantly, and the Lord has blessed you wherever I turned. But
now when shall I provide for my own household also?” 31 He said, “What
shall I give you?” Jacob said, “You shall not give me anything. If you will
do this for me, I will again pasture your flock and keep it: 32 † let me pass
through all your flock today, removing from it every speckled and spotted
sheep and every black lamb, and the spotted and speckled among the goats,
and they shall be my wages. 33 † So my honesty will answer for me later,
when you come to look into my wages with you. Every one that is not
speckled and spotted among the goats and black among the lambs, if found
with me, shall be counted stolen.” 34 Laban said, “Good! Let it be as you
have said.” 35 † But that day Laban removed the male goats that were striped
and spotted, and all the female goats that were speckled and spotted, every
one that had white on it, and every lamb that was black, and put them in the
charge of his sons. 36 And he set a distance of three days’ journey between
himself and Jacob, and Jacob pastured the rest of Laban’s flock.

37 Then Jacob took fresh sticks of poplar and almond and plane trees, and
peeled white streaks in them, exposing the white of the sticks. 38 He set the
sticks that he had peeled in front of the flocks in the troughs, that is, the
watering places, where the flocks came to drink. And since they bred when
they came to drink, 39 † the flocks bred in front of the sticks and so the flocks
brought forth striped, speckled, and spotted. 40 † And Jacob separated the
lambs and set the faces of the flocks toward the striped and all the black in
the flock of Laban. He put his own droves apart and did not put them with
Laban’s flock. 41 † Whenever the stronger of the flock were breeding, Jacob

would lay the sticks in the troughs before the eyes of the flock, that they might breed among the sticks, [42]but for the feebler of the flock he would not lay them there. So the feebler would be Laban's, and the stronger Jacob's. [43]†Thus the man increased greatly and had large flocks, female servants and male servants, and camels and donkeys.

Jacob Flees from Laban

31 [1]Now Jacob heard that the sons of Laban were saying, “Jacob has
taken all that was our father’s, and from what was our father’s he has
gained all this wealth.” [2]†And Jacob saw that Laban did not regard him with
favor as before. [3]†Then the Lord said to Jacob, “Return to the land of your
fathers and to your kindred, and I will be with you.”

[4]†So Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah into the field where his flock
was [5]and said to them, “I see that your father does not regard me with favor
as he did before. But the God of my father has been with me. [6] You know
that I have served your father with all my strength, [7]†yet your father has
cheated me and changed my wages ten times. But God did not permit him
to harm me. [8]If he said, ‘The spotted shall be your wages,’ then all the flock
bore spotted; and if he said, ‘The striped shall be your wages,’ then all the
flock bore striped. [9]†Thus God has taken away the livestock of your father
and given them to me. [10]†In the breeding season of the flock I lifted up my
eyes and saw in a dream that the goats that mated with the flock were
striped, spotted, and mottled. [11]†Then the angel of God said to me in the
dream, ‘Jacob,’ and I said, ‘Here I am!’ [12]And he said, ‘Lift up your eyes
and see, all the goats that mate with the flock are striped, spotted, and
mottled, for I have seen all that Laban is doing to you. [13]†I am the God of
Bethel, where you anointed a pillar and made a vow to me. Now arise, go
out from this land and return to the land of your kindred.’” [14]†Then Rachel
and Leah answered and said to him, “Is there any portion or inheritance left
to us in our father’s house? [15]†Are we not regarded by him as foreigners?
For he has sold us, and he has indeed devoured our money. [16]All the wealth
that God has taken away from our father belongs to us and to our children.
Now then, whatever God has said to you, do.”

[17]So Jacob arose and set his sons and his wives on camels. [18]He drove
away all his livestock, all his property that he had gained, the livestock in
his possession that he had acquired in Paddan-aram, to go to the land of
Canaan to his father Isaac. [19]† Laban had gone to shear his sheep, and
Rachel stole her father’s household gods. [20]And Jacob tricked[1] Laban the

Aramean, by not telling him that he intended to flee. 21 †He fled with all that
he had and arose and crossed the Euphrates, and set his face toward the hill
country of Gilead.
22 When it was told Laban on the third day that Jacob had fled, 23 he took
his kinsmen with him and pursued him for seven days and followed close
after him into the hill country of Gilead. 24 † But God came to Laban the
Aramean in a dream by night and said to him, “Be careful not to say
anything to Jacob, either good or bad.”
25 And Laban overtook Jacob. Now Jacob had pitched his tent in the hill
country, and Laban with his kinsmen pitched tents in the hill country of
Gilead. 26 † And Laban said to Jacob, “What have you done, that you have
tricked me and driven away my daughters like captives of the sword?
27 † Why did you flee secretly and trick me, and did not tell me, so that I
might have sent you away with mirth and songs, with tambourine and lyre?
28 † And why did you not permit me to kiss my sons and my daughters
farewell? Now you have done foolishly. 29 It is in my power to do you harm.
But the God of your[2] father spoke to me last night, saying, ‘Be careful not
to say anything to Jacob, either good or bad.’ 30 And now you have gone
away because you longed greatly for your father’s house, but why did you
steal my gods?” 31 Jacob answered and said to Laban, “Because I was afraid,
for I thought that you would take your daughters from me by force. 32 †
Anyone with whom you find your gods shall not live. In the presence of our
kinsmen point out what I have that is yours, and take it.” Now Jacob did not
know that Rachel had stolen them.
33 So Laban went into Jacob’s tent and into Leah’s tent and into the tent of
the two female servants, but he did not find them. And he went out of
Leah’s tent and entered Rachel’s. 34 † Now Rachel had taken the household
gods and put them in the camel’s saddle and sat on them. Laban felt all
about the tent, but did not find them. 35 † And she said to her father, “Let not
my lord be angry that I cannot rise before you, for the way of women is
upon me.” So he searched but did not find the household gods.
36 Then Jacob became angry and berated Laban. Jacob said to Laban,
“What is my offense? What is my sin, that you have hotly pursued me?
37 For you have felt through all my goods; what have you found of all your
household goods? Set it here before my kinsmen and your kinsmen, that

they may decide between us two. 38These twenty years I have been with you. Your ewes and your female goats have not miscarried, and I have not eaten the rams of your flocks. 39 † What was torn by wild beasts I did not bring to you. I bore the loss of it myself. From my hand you required it, whether stolen by day or stolen by night. 40 † There I was: by day the heat consumed me, and the cold by night, and my sleep fled from my eyes. 41These twenty years I have been in your house. I served you fourteen years for your two daughters, and six years for your flock, and you have changed my wages ten times. 42 † If the God of my father, the God of Abraham and the Fear of Isaac, had not been on my side, surely now you would have sent me away empty-handed. God saw my affliction and the labor of my hands and rebuked you last night."

43 † Then Laban answered and said to Jacob, "The daughters are my daughters, the children are my children, the flocks are my flocks, and all that you see is mine. But what can I do this day for these my daughters or for their children whom they have borne? 44 † Come now, let us make a covenant, you and I. And let it be a witness between you and me." 45 † So Jacob took a stone and set it up as a pillar. 46And Jacob said to his kinsmen, "Gather stones." And they took stones and made a heap, and they ate there by the heap. 47 † Laban called it Jegar-sahadutha,[1] but Jacob called it Galeed.[2] 48Laban said, "This heap is a witness between you and me today." Therefore he named it Galeed, 49 † and Mizpah,[3] for he said, "The Lord watch between you and me, when we are out of one another's sight. 50If you oppress my daughters, or if you take wives besides my daughters, although no one is with us, see, God is witness between you and me."

51Then Laban said to Jacob, "See this heap and the pillar, which I have set between you and me. 52 † This heap is a witness, and the pillar is a witness, that I will not pass over this heap to you, and you will not pass over this heap and this pillar to me, to do harm. 53 † The God of Abraham and the God of Nahor, the God of their father, judge between us." So Jacob swore by the Fear of his father Isaac, 54 † and Jacob offered a sacrifice in the hill country and called his kinsmen to eat bread. They ate bread and spent the night in the hill country.

55 [4] Early in the morning Laban arose and kissed his grandchildren and his daughters and blessed them. Then Laban departed and returned home.

Jacob Fears Esau

32 [1]†Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him. [2]†And when Jacob saw them he said, “This is God’s camp!” So he called the name of that place Mahanaim.[5]

[3]†And Jacob sent[6] messengers before him to Esau his brother in the land of Seir, the country of Edom, [4]instructing them, “Thus you shall say to my lord Esau: Thus says your servant Jacob, ‘I have sojourned with Laban and stayed until now. [5]I have oxen, donkeys, flocks, male servants, and female servants. I have sent to tell my lord, in order that I may find favor in your sight.’”

[6]And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, “We came to your brother Esau, and he is coming to meet you, and there are four hundred men with him.” [7]†Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed. He divided the people who were with him, and the flocks and herds and camels, into two camps, [8]thinking, “If Esau comes to the one camp and attacks it, then the camp that is left will escape.”

[9]And Jacob said, “O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, O Lord who said to me, ‘Return to your country and to your kindred, that I may do you good,’ [10] I am not worthy of the least of all the deeds of steadfast love and all the faithfulness that you have shown to your servant, for with only my staff I crossed this Jordan, and now I have become two camps. [11]Please deliver me from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau, for I fear him, that he may come and attack me, the mothers with the children. [12]† But you said, ‘I will surely do you good, and make your offspring as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.’”

[13]†So he stayed there that night, and from what he had with him he took a present for his brother Esau, [14]two hundred female goats and twenty male goats, two hundred ewes and twenty rams, [15]thirty milking camels and their calves, forty cows and ten bulls, twenty female donkeys and ten male donkeys. [16]†These he handed over to his servants, every drove by itself, and said to his servants, “Pass on ahead of me and put a space between drove and drove.” [17]He instructed the first, “When Esau my brother meets you and

asks you, ‘To whom do you belong? Where are you going? And whose are these ahead of you?’ 18then you shall say, ‘They belong to your servant Jacob. They are a present sent to my lord Esau. And moreover, he is behind us.’” 19He likewise instructed the second and the third and all who followed the droves, “You shall say the same thing to Esau when you find him, 20† and you shall say, ‘Moreover, your servant Jacob is behind us.’” For he thought, “I may appease him[1] with the present that goes ahead of me, and afterward I shall see his face. Perhaps he will accept me.”[2] 21So the present passed on ahead of him, and he himself stayed that night in the camp.

Jacob Wrestles with God

22 ‡ † The same night he arose and took his two wives, his two female
servants, and his eleven children,[3] and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. 23 He
took them and sent them across the stream, and everything else that he had.
24 † And Jacob was left alone. And a man wrestled with him until the
breaking of the day. 25 † When the man saw that he did not prevail against
Jacob, he touched his hip socket, and Jacob's hip was put out of joint as he
wrestled with him. 26 † Then he said, "Let me go, for the day has broken."
But Jacob said, "I will not let you go unless you bless me." 27 † And he said
to him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Jacob." 28 † Then he said, "Your
name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel,[4] for you have striven with
God and with men, and have prevailed." 29 † Then Jacob asked him, "Please
tell me your name." But he said, "Why is it that you ask my name?" And
there he blessed him. 30 † So Jacob called the name of the place Peniel,[5]
saying, "For I have seen God face to face, and yet my life has been
delivered." 31 † The sun rose upon him as he passed Penuel, limping because
of his hip. 32 † Therefore to this day the people of Israel do not eat the sinew
of the thigh that is on the hip socket, because he touched the socket of
Jacob's hip on the sinew of the thigh.

Jacob Meets Esau

33 [1]And Jacob lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, Esau was coming, and four hundred men with him. So he divided the children among Leah and Rachel and the two female servants. [2]And he put the servants with their children in front, then Leah with her children, and Rachel and Joseph last of all. [3]†He himself went on before them, bowing himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother.

[4]† But Esau ran to meet him and embraced him and fell on his neck and kissed him, and they wept. [5]And when Esau lifted up his eyes and saw the women and children, he said, "Who are these with you?" Jacob said, "The children whom God has graciously given your servant." [6]Then the servants drew near, they and their children, and bowed down. [7]Leah likewise and her children drew near and bowed down. And last Joseph and Rachel drew near, and they bowed down. [8] † Esau said, "What do you mean by all this company[1] that I met?" Jacob answered, "To find favor in the sight of my lord." [9]But Esau said, "I have enough, my brother; keep what you have for yourself." [10]†Jacob said, "No, please, if I have found favor in your sight, then accept my present from my hand. For I have seen your face, which is like seeing the face of God, and you have accepted me. [11]†Please accept my blessing that is brought to you, because God has dealt graciously with me, and because I have enough." Thus he urged him, and he took it.

[12]†Then Esau said, "Let us journey on our way, and I will go ahead of[2] you." [13]†But Jacob said to him, "My lord knows that the children are frail, and that the nursing flocks and herds are a care to me. If they are driven hard for one day, all the flocks will die. [14]†Let my lord pass on ahead of his servant, and I will lead on slowly, at the pace of the livestock that are ahead of me and at the pace of the children, until I come to my lord in Seir."

[15]So Esau said, "Let me leave with you some of the people who are with me." But he said, "What need is there? Let me find favor in the sight of my lord." [16]So Esau returned that day on his way to Seir. [17] † But Jacob journeyed to Succoth, and built himself a house and made booths for his livestock. Therefore the name of the place is called Succoth.[3]

18 † And Jacob came safely[4] to the city of Shechem, which is in the land
of Canaan, on his way from Paddan-aram, and he camped before the city.
19 † And from the sons of Hamor, Shechem's father, he bought for a hundred
pieces of money[5] the piece of land on which he had pitched his tent.
20 † There he erected an altar and called it El-Elohe-Israel.[6]

The Defiling of Dinah

34 [1]Now Dinah the daughter of Leah, whom she had borne to Jacob,
went out to see the women of the land. [2]†And when Shechem the son of
Hamor the Hivite, the prince of the land, saw her, he seized her and lay with
her and humiliated her. [3]And his soul was drawn to Dinah the daughter of
Jacob. He loved the young woman and spoke tenderly to her. [4]†So Shechem
spoke to his father Hamor, saying, "Get me this girl for my wife."

[5]Now Jacob heard that he had defiled his daughter Dinah. But his sons
were with his livestock in the field, so Jacob held his peace until they came.
[6]And Hamor the father of Shechem went out to Jacob to speak with him.
[7]The sons of Jacob had come in from the field as soon as they heard of it,
and the men were indignant and very angry, because he had done an
outrageous thing in Israel by lying with Jacob's daughter, for such a thing
must not be done.

[8]But Hamor spoke with them, saying, "The soul of my son Shechem
longs for your[1] daughter. Please give her to him to be his wife. [9]†Make
marriages with us. Give your daughters to us, and take our daughters for
yourselves. [10]You shall dwell with us, and the land shall be open to you.
Dwell and trade in it, and get property in it." [11]Shechem also said to her
father and to her brothers, "Let me find favor in your eyes, and whatever
you say to me I will give. [12]†Ask me for as great a bride price[2] and gift as
you will, and I will give whatever you say to me. Only give me the young
woman to be my wife."

[13] † The sons of Jacob answered Shechem and his father Hamor
deceitfully, because he had defiled their sister Dinah. [14]†They said to them,
"We cannot do this thing, to give our sister to one who is uncircumcised, for
that would be a disgrace to us. [15]†Only on this condition will we agree with
you—that you will become as we are by every male among you being
circumcised. [16]Then we will give our daughters to you, and we will take
your daughters to ourselves, and we will dwell with you and become one
people. [17]†But if you will not listen to us and be circumcised, then we will
take our daughter, and we will be gone."

[18]Their words pleased Hamor and Hamor's son Shechem. [19]And the young man did not delay to do the thing, because he delighted in Jacob's daughter. Now he was the most honored of all his father's house. [20]† So Hamor and his son Shechem came to the gate of their city and spoke to the men of their city, saying, [21]"These men are at peace with us; let them dwell in the land and trade in it, for behold, the land is large enough for them. Let us take their daughters as wives, and let us give them our daughters. [22]Only on this condition will the men agree to dwell with us to become one people —when every male among us is circumcised as they are circumcised. [23]† Will not their livestock, their property and all their beasts be ours? Only let us agree with them, and they will dwell with us." [24]And all who went out of the gate of his city listened to Hamor and his son Shechem, and every male was circumcised, all who went out of the gate of his city.

[25]† On the third day, when they were sore, two of the sons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brothers, took their swords and came against the city while it felt secure and killed all the males. [26]They killed Hamor and his son Shechem with the sword and took Dinah out of Shechem's house and went away. [27]The sons of Jacob came upon the slain and plundered the city, because they had defiled their sister. [28]They took their flocks and their herds, their donkeys, and whatever was in the city and in the field. [29]† All their wealth, all their little ones and their wives, all that was in the houses, they captured and plundered.

[30]† Then Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, "You have brought trouble on me by making me stink to the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites and the Perizzites. My numbers are few, and if they gather themselves against me and attack me, I shall be destroyed, both I and my household." [31]† But they said, "Should he treat our sister like a prostitute?"

God Blesses and Renames Jacob

35 [1]†† God said to Jacob, “Arise, go up to Bethel and dwell there. Make an altar there to the God who appeared to you when you fled from your brother Esau.” [2]† So Jacob said to his household and to all who were with him, “Put away the foreign gods that are among you and purify yourselves and change your garments. [3]Then let us arise and go up to Bethel, so that I may make there an altar to the God who answers me in the day of my distress and has been with me wherever I have gone.” [4]† So they gave to Jacob all the foreign gods that they had, and the rings that were in their ears. Jacob hid them under the terebinth tree that was near Shechem.

[5]† And as they journeyed, a terror from God fell upon the cities that were around them, so that they did not pursue the sons of Jacob. [6]And Jacob came to Luz (that is, Bethel), which is in the land of Canaan, he and all the people who were with him, [7]† and there he built an altar and called the place El-bethel,[1] because there God had revealed himself to him when he fled from his brother. [8]And Deborah, Rebekah’s nurse, died, and she was buried under an oak below Bethel. So he called its name Allon-bacuth.[2]

[9]God appeared[3] to Jacob again, when he came from Paddan-aram, and blessed him. [10]† And God said to him, “Your name is Jacob; no longer shall your name be called Jacob, but Israel shall be your name.” So he called his name Israel. [11]† And God said to him, “I am God Almighty:[4] be fruitful and multiply. A nation and a company of nations shall come from you, and kings shall come from your own body.[5] [12]† The land that I gave to Abraham and Isaac I will give to you, and I will give the land to your offspring after you.” [13]Then God went up from him in the place where he had spoken with him. [14]† And Jacob set up a pillar in the place where he had spoken with him, a pillar of stone. He poured out a drink offering on it and poured oil on it. [15]So Jacob called the name of the place where God had spoken with him Bethel.

The Deaths of Rachel and Isaac

16 † Then they journeyed from Bethel. When they were still some
distance[6] from Ephrath, Rachel went into labor, and she had hard labor.
17 †And when her labor was at its hardest, the midwife said to her, “Do not
fear, for you have another son.” 18 †And as her soul was departing (for she
was dying), she called his name Ben-oni;[7] but his father called him
Benjamin.[8] 19 †So Rachel died, and she was buried on the way to Ephrath
(that is, Bethlehem), 20 †and Jacob set up a pillar over her tomb. It is the
pillar of Rachel’s tomb, which is there to this day. 21 †Israel journeyed on
and pitched his tent beyond the tower of Eder.

22 †While Israel lived in that land, Reuben went and lay with Bilhah his
father’s concubine. And Israel heard of it.

Now the sons of Jacob were twelve. 23The sons of Leah: Reuben (Jacob’s
firstborn), Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun. 24The sons of
Rachel: Joseph and Benjamin. 25The sons of Bilhah, Rachel’s servant: Dan
and Naphtali. 26The sons of Zilpah, Leah’s servant: Gad and Asher. These
were the sons of Jacob who were born to him in Paddan-aram.

27 †And Jacob came to his father Isaac at Mamre, or Kiriath-arba (that is,
Hebron), where Abraham and Isaac had sojourned. 28Now the days of Isaac
were 180 years. 29 † And Isaac breathed his last, and he died and was
gathered to his people, old and full of days. And his sons Esau and Jacob
buried him.

Esau’s Descendants

36 [1]†These are the generations of Esau (that is, Edom). [2]†Esau took
his wives from the Canaanites: Adah the daughter of Elon the Hittite,
Oholibamah the daughter of Anah the daughter[1] of Zibeon the Hivite, [3]and
Basemath, Ishmael’s daughter, the sister of Nebaioth. [4]And Adah bore to
Esau, Eliphaz; Basemath bore Reuel; [5]and Oholibamah bore Jeush, Jalam,
and Korah. These are the sons of Esau who were born to him in the land of
Canaan.

[6]Then Esau took his wives, his sons, his daughters, and all the members
of his household, his livestock, all his beasts, and all his property that he
had acquired in the land of Canaan. He went into a land away from his
brother Jacob. [7] For their possessions were too great for them to dwell
together. The land of their sojournings could not support them because of
their livestock. [8]†So Esau settled in the hill country of Seir. (Esau is Edom.)

[9]These are the generations of Esau the father of the Edomites in the hill
country of Seir. [10]These are the names of Esau’s sons: Eliphaz the son of
Adah the wife of Esau, Reuel the son of Basemath the wife of Esau. [11]The
sons of Eliphaz were Teman, Omar, Zepho, Gatam, and Kenaz. [12](Timna
was a concubine of Eliphaz, Esau’s son; she bore Amalek to Eliphaz.) These
are the sons of Adah, Esau’s wife. [13]These are the sons of Reuel: Nahath,
Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah. These are the sons of Basemath, Esau’s wife.
[14]These are the sons of Oholibamah the daughter of Anah the daughter of
Zibeon, Esau’s wife: she bore to Esau Jeush, Jalam, and Korah.

[15]These are the chiefs of the sons of Esau. The sons of Eliphaz the
firstborn of Esau: the chiefs Teman, Omar, Zepho, Kenaz, [16]Korah, Gatam,
and Amalek; these are the chiefs of Eliphaz in the land of Edom; these are
the sons of Adah. [17]These are the sons of Reuel, Esau’s son: the chiefs
Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah; these are the chiefs of Reuel in the
land of Edom; these are the sons of Basemath, Esau’s wife. [18]These are the
sons of Oholibamah, Esau’s wife: the chiefs Jeush, Jalam, and Korah; these
are the chiefs born of Oholibamah the daughter of Anah, Esau’s wife.
[19]These are the sons of Esau (that is, Edom), and these are their chiefs.

[20] These are the sons of Seir the Horite, the inhabitants of the land: Lotan,
Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, [21]Dishon, Ezer, and Dishan; these are the chiefs of
the Horites, the sons of Seir in the land of Edom. [22]The sons of Lotan were
Hori and Hemam; and Lotan's sister was Timna. [23]These are the sons of
Shobal: Alvan, Manahath, Ebal, Shepho, and Onam. [24]These are the sons of
Zibeon: Aiah and Anah; he is the Anah who found the hot springs in the
wilderness, as he pastured the donkeys of Zibeon his father. [25]These are the
children of Anah: Dishon and Oholibamah the daughter of Anah. [26]These
are the sons of Dishon: Hemdan, Eshban, Ithran, and Cheran. [27]These are
the sons of Ezer: Bilhan, Zaavan, and Akan. [28]These are the sons of Dishan:
Uz and Aran. [29]These are the chiefs of the Horites: the chiefs Lotan, Shobal,
Zibeon, Anah, [30]Dishon, Ezer, and Dishan; these are the chiefs of the
Horites, chief by chief in the land of Seir.

[31]† These are the kings who reigned in the land of Edom, before any king
reigned over the Israelites. [32]Bela the son of Beor reigned in Edom, the
name of his city being Dinhabah. [33]Bela died, and Jobab the son of Zerah of
Bozrah reigned in his place. [34]Jobab died, and Husham of the land of the
Temanites reigned in his place. [35]Husham died, and Hadad the son of
Bedad, who defeated Midian in the country of Moab, reigned in his place,
the name of his city being Avith. [36]Hadad died, and Samlah of Masrekah
reigned in his place. [37] † Samlah died, and Shaul of Rehoboth on the
Euphrates[1] reigned in his place. [38] Shaul died, and Baal-hanan the son of
Achbor reigned in his place. [39]Baal-hanan the son of Achbor died, and
Hadar reigned in his place, the name of his city being Pau; his wife's name
was Mehetabel, the daughter of Matred, daughter of Mezahab.

[40]These are the names of the chiefs of Esau, according to their clans and
their dwelling places, by their names: the chiefs Timna, Alvah, Jetheth,
[41]Oholibamah, Elah, Pinon, [42]Kenaz, Teman, Mibzar, [43]Magdiel, and Iram;
these are the chiefs of Edom (that is, Esau, the father of Edom), according
to their dwelling places in the land of their possession.

Joseph’s Dreams

37 [1]†Jacob lived in the land of his father’s sojournings, in the land of Canaan.

[2]†These are the generations of Jacob.

Joseph, being seventeen years old, was pasturing the flock with his brothers. He was a boy with the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah, his father’s wives. And Joseph brought a bad report of them to their father. [3]†Now Israel loved Joseph more than any other of his sons, because he was the son of his old age. And he made him a robe of many colors.[2] [4]But when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him and could not speak peacefully to him.

[5]†Now Joseph had a dream, and when he told it to his brothers they hated him even more. [6]He said to them, “Hear this dream that I have dreamed: [7]†Behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and behold, my sheaf arose and stood upright. And behold, your sheaves gathered around it and bowed down to my sheaf.” [8]His brothers said to him, “Are you indeed to reign over us? Or are you indeed to rule over us?” So they hated him even more for his dreams and for his words.

[9]†Then he dreamed another dream and told it to his brothers and said, “Behold, I have dreamed another dream. Behold, the sun, the moon, and eleven stars were bowing down to me.” [10]†But when he told it to his father and to his brothers, his father rebuked him and said to him, “What is this dream that you have dreamed? Shall I and your mother and your brothers indeed come to bow ourselves to the ground before you?” [11]And his brothers were jealous of him, but his father kept the saying in mind.

Joseph Sold by His Brothers

12 ‡ † Now his brothers went to pasture their father's flock near Shechem.
13 And Israel said to Joseph, "Are not your brothers pasturing the flock at
Shechem? Come, I will send you to them." And he said to him, "Here I
am." 14 † So he said to him, "Go now, see if it is well with your brothers and
with the flock, and bring me word." So he sent him from the Valley of
Hebron, and he came to Shechem. 15 And a man found him wandering in the
fields. And the man asked him, "What are you seeking?" 16 † "I am seeking
my brothers," he said. "Tell me, please, where they are pasturing the flock."
17 † And the man said, "They have gone away, for I heard them say, 'Let us
go to Dothan.'" So Joseph went after his brothers and found them at
Dothan.

18 † They saw him from afar, and before he came near to them they
conspired against him to kill him. 19 † They said to one another, "Here comes
this dreamer. 20 † Come now, let us kill him and throw him into one of the
pits.[1] Then we will say that a fierce animal has devoured him, and we will
see what will become of his dreams." 21 † But when Reuben heard it, he
rescued him out of their hands, saying, "Let us not take his life." 22 And
Reuben said to them, "Shed no blood; throw him into this pit here in the
wilderness, but do not lay a hand on him"— that he might rescue him out of
their hand to restore him to his father. 23 So when Joseph came to his
brothers, they stripped him of his robe, the robe of many colors that he
wore. 24 † And they took him and threw him into a pit. The pit was empty;
there was no water in it.

25 † Then they sat down to eat. And looking up they saw a caravan of
Ishmaelites coming from Gilead, with their camels bearing gum, balm, and
myrrh, on their way to carry it down to Egypt. 26 † Then Judah said to his
brothers, "What profit is it if we kill our brother and conceal his blood?
27 Come, let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and let not our hand be upon him,
for he is our brother, our own flesh." And his brothers listened to him.
28 † Then Midianite traders passed by. And they drew Joseph up and lifted
him out of the pit, and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty shekels[2] of
silver. They took Joseph to Egypt.

[29] † When Reuben returned to the pit and saw that Joseph was not in the
pit, he tore his clothes [30] † and returned to his brothers and said, “The boy is
gone, and I, where shall I go?” [31] Then they took Joseph’s robe and
slaughtered a goat and dipped the robe in the blood. [32] And they sent the
robe of many colors and brought it to their father and said, “This we have
found; please identify whether it is your son’s robe or not.” [33] And he
identified it and said, “It is my son’s robe. A fierce animal has devoured
him. Joseph is without doubt torn to pieces.” [34] † Then Jacob tore his
garments and put sackcloth on his loins and mourned for his son many
days. [35] † All his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him, but he
refused to be comforted and said, “No, I shall go down to Sheol to my son,
mourning.” Thus his father wept for him. [36] † Meanwhile the Midianites had
sold him in Egypt to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, the captain of the
guard.

Judah and Tamar

38 [1]†It happened at that time that Judah went down from his brothers
and turned aside to a certain Adullamite, whose name was Hirah. [2]†There
Judah saw the daughter of a certain Canaanite whose name was Shua. He
took her and went in to her, [3]†and she conceived and bore a son, and he
called his name Er. [4]She conceived again and bore a son, and she called his
name Onan. [5]†Yet again she bore a son, and she called his name Shelah.
Judah[1] was in Chezib when she bore him.

[6]†And Judah took a wife for Er his firstborn, and her name was Tamar.
[7]†But Er, Judah's firstborn, was wicked in the sight of the Lord, and the
Lord put him to death. [8]†Then Judah said to Onan, "Go in to your brother's
wife and perform the duty of a brother-in-law to her, and raise up offspring
for your brother." [9]†But Onan knew that the offspring would not be his. So
whenever he went in to his brother's wife he would waste the semen on the
ground, so as not to give offspring to his brother. [10]And what he did was
wicked in the sight of the Lord, and he put him to death also. [11]†Then Judah
said to Tamar his daughter-in-law, "Remain a widow in your father's house,
till Shelah my son grows up"—for he feared that he would die, like his
brothers. So Tamar went and remained in her father's house.

[12]†In the course of time the wife of Judah, Shua's daughter, died. When
Judah was comforted, he went up to Timnah to his sheepshearers, he and his
friend Hirah the Adullamite. [13]And when Tamar was told, "Your father-in-
law is going up to Timnah to shear his sheep," [14]†she took off her widow's
garments and covered herself with a veil, wrapping herself up, and sat at the
entrance to Enaim, which is on the road to Timnah. For she saw that Shelah
was grown up, and she had not been given to him in marriage. [15]†When
Judah saw her, he thought she was a prostitute, for she had covered her face.
[16]He turned to her at the roadside and said, "Come, let me come in to you,"
for he did not know that she was his daughter-in-law. She said, "What will
you give me, that you may come in to me?" [17]†He answered, "I will send
you a young goat from the flock." And she said, "If you give me a pledge,
until you send it—" [18]†He said, "What pledge shall I give you?" She

replied, “Your signet and your cord and your staff that is in your hand.” So he gave them to her and went in to her, and she conceived by him. 19Then she arose and went away, and taking off her veil she put on the garments of her widowhood.

20†When Judah sent the young goat by his friend the Adullamite to take back the pledge from the woman’s hand, he did not find her. 21†And he asked the men of the place, “Where is the cult prostitute[1] who was at Enaim at the roadside?” And they said, “No cult prostitute has been here.” 22So he returned to Judah and said, “I have not found her. Also, the men of the place said, ‘No cult prostitute has been here.’” 23†And Judah replied, “Let her keep the things as her own, or we shall be laughed at. You see, I sent this young goat, and you did not find her.”

24†About three months later Judah was told, “Tamar your daughter-in-law has been immoral.[2] Moreover, she is pregnant by immorality.”[3] And Judah said, “Bring her out, and let her be burned.” 25†As she was being brought out, she sent word to her father-in-law, “By the man to whom these belong, I am pregnant.” And she said, “Please identify whose these are, the signet and the cord and the staff.” 26†Then Judah identified them and said, “She is more righteous than I, since I did not give her to my son Shelah.” And he did not know her again.

27†When the time of her labor came, there were twins in her womb. 28†And when she was in labor, one put out a hand, and the midwife took and tied a scarlet thread on his hand, saying, “This one came out first.” 29†But as he drew back his hand, behold, his brother came out. And she said, “What a breach you have made for yourself!” Therefore his name was called Perez. [4] 30†Afterward his brother came out with the scarlet thread on his hand, and his name was called Zerah.

Joseph and Potiphar's Wife

39 [1]†Now Joseph had been brought down to Egypt, and Potiphar, an
officer of Pharaoh, the captain of the guard, an Egyptian, had bought him
from the Ishmaelites who had brought him down there. [2]† The Lord was
with Joseph, and he became a successful man, and he was in the house of
his Egyptian master. [3]†His master saw that the Lord was with him and that
the Lord caused all that he did to succeed in his hands. [4]So Joseph found
favor in his sight and attended him, and he made him overseer of his house
and put him in charge of all that he had. [5]From the time that he made him
overseer in his house and over all that he had the Lord blessed the
Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; the blessing of the Lord was on all that
he had, in house and field. [6]†So he left all that he had in Joseph's charge,
and because of him he had no concern about anything but the food he ate.

Now Joseph was handsome in form and appearance. [7]†And after a time
his master's wife cast her eyes on Joseph and said, "Lie with me." [8]†But he
refused and said to his master's wife, "Behold, because of me my master
has no concern about anything in the house, and he has put everything that
he has in my charge. [9]†He is not greater in this house than I am, nor has he
kept back anything from me except yourself, because you are his wife. How
then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?" [10]And as she
spoke to Joseph day after day, he would not listen to her, to lie beside her or
to be with her.

[11]†But one day, when he went into the house to do his work and none of
the men of the house was there in the house, [12]† she caught him by his
garment, saying, "Lie with me." But he left his garment in her hand and fled
and got out of the house. [13]†And as soon as she saw that he had left his
garment in her hand and had fled out of the house, [14]†she called to the men
of her household and said to them, "See, he has brought among us a
Hebrew to laugh at us. He came in to me to lie with me, and I cried out with
a loud voice. [15]And as soon as he heard that I lifted up my voice and cried
out, he left his garment beside me and fled and got out of the house." [16]Then
she laid up his garment by her until his master came home, [17]and she told

him the same story, saying, “The Hebrew servant, whom you have brought among us, came in to me to laugh at me. 18But as soon as I lifted up my voice and cried, he left his garment beside me and fled out of the house.”

19 † As soon as his master heard the words that his wife spoke to him, “This is the way your servant treated me,” his anger was kindled. 20 † And Joseph’s master took him and put him into the prison, the place where the king’s prisoners were confined, and he was there in prison. 21 † But the Lord was with Joseph and showed him steadfast love and gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison. 22And the keeper of the prison put Joseph in charge of all the prisoners who were in the prison. Whatever was done there, he was the one who did it. 23 † The keeper of the prison paid no attention to anything that was in Joseph’s charge, because the Lord was with him. And whatever he did, the Lord made it succeed.

Joseph Interprets Two Prisoners' Dreams

40 [1]†Some time after this, the cupbearer of the king of Egypt and his baker committed an offense against their lord the king of Egypt. [2]And Pharaoh was angry with his two officers, the chief cupbearer and the chief baker, [3]† and he put them in custody in the house of the captain of the guard, in the prison where Joseph was confined. [4]†The captain of the guard appointed Joseph to be with them, and he attended them. They continued for some time in custody.

[5]†And one night they both dreamed—the cupbearer and the baker of the king of Egypt, who were confined in the prison—each his own dream, and each dream with its own interpretation. [6]†When Joseph came to them in the morning, he saw that they were troubled. [7]So he asked Pharaoh's officers who were with him in custody in his master's house, "Why are your faces downcast today?" [8]†They said to him, "We have had dreams, and there is no one to interpret them." And Joseph said to them, "Do not interpretations belong to God? Please tell them to me."

[9]So the chief cupbearer told his dream to Joseph and said to him, "In my dream there was a vine before me, [10]and on the vine there were three branches. As soon as it budded, its blossoms shot forth, and the clusters ripened into grapes. [11]†Pharaoh's cup was in my hand, and I took the grapes and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup and placed the cup in Pharaoh's hand." [12]Then Joseph said to him, "This is its interpretation: the three branches are three days. [13]In three days Pharaoh will lift up your head and restore you to your office, and you shall place Pharaoh's cup in his hand as formerly, when you were his cupbearer. [14]Only remember me, when it is well with you, and please do me the kindness to mention me to Pharaoh, and so get me out of this house. [15]†For I was indeed stolen out of the land of the Hebrews, and here also I have done nothing that they should put me into the pit."

[16]When the chief baker saw that the interpretation was favorable, he said to Joseph, "I also had a dream: there were three cake baskets on my head, [17]† and in the uppermost basket there were all sorts of baked food for

Pharaoh, but the birds were eating it out of the basket on my head.” [18]And Joseph answered and said, “This is its interpretation: the three baskets are three days. [19]† In three days Pharaoh will lift up your head—from you!—and hang you on a tree. And the birds will eat the flesh from you.”

[20]†On the third day, which was Pharaoh’s birthday, he made a feast for all his servants and lifted up the head of the chief cupbearer and the head of the chief baker among his servants. [21] He restored the chief cupbearer to his position, and he placed the cup in Pharaoh’s hand. [22]But he hanged the chief baker, as Joseph had interpreted to them. [23]Yet the chief cupbearer did not remember Joseph, but forgot him.

Joseph Interprets Pharaoh's Dreams

41 [1]After two whole years, Pharaoh dreamed that he was standing
by the Nile, [2] and behold, there came up out of the Nile seven cows
attractive and plump, and they fed in the reed grass. [3]And behold, seven
other cows, ugly and thin, came up out of the Nile after them, and stood by
the other cows on the bank of the Nile. [4]And the ugly, thin cows ate up the
seven attractive, plump cows. And Pharaoh awoke. [5]And he fell asleep and
dreamed a second time. And behold, seven ears of grain, plump and good,
were growing on one stalk. [6]And behold, after them sprouted seven ears,
thin and blighted by the east wind. [7]And the thin ears swallowed up the
seven plump, full ears. And Pharaoh awoke, and behold, it was a dream.
[8]So in the morning his spirit was troubled, and he sent and called for all
the magicians of Egypt and all its wise men. Pharaoh told them his dreams,
but there was none who could interpret them to Pharaoh.

[9]Then the chief cupbearer said to Pharaoh, "I remember my offenses
today. [10]When Pharaoh was angry with his servants and put me and the
chief baker in custody in the house of the captain of the guard, [11] we
dreamed on the same night, he and I, each having a dream with its own
interpretation. [12] A young Hebrew was there with us, a servant of the
captain of the guard. When we told him, he interpreted our dreams to us,
giving an interpretation to each man according to his dream. [13]And as he
interpreted to us, so it came about. I was restored to my office, and the
baker was hanged."

[14] Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they quickly brought him
out of the pit. And when he had shaved himself and changed his clothes, he
came in before Pharaoh. [15]And Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I have had a dream,
and there is no one who can interpret it. I have heard it said of you that
when you hear a dream you can interpret it." [16]Joseph answered Pharaoh,
"It is not in me; God will give Pharaoh a favorable answer."[1] [17]Then
Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Behold, in my dream I was standing on the banks
of the Nile. [18]Seven cows, plump and attractive, came up out of the Nile and
fed in the reed grass. [19]Seven other cows came up after them, poor and very

ugly and thin, such as I had never seen in all the land of Egypt. [20]And the thin, ugly cows ate up the first seven plump cows, [21]but when they had eaten them no one would have known that they had eaten them, for they were still as ugly as at the beginning. Then I awoke. [22]I also saw in my dream seven ears growing on one stalk, full and good. [23]Seven ears, withered, thin, and blighted by the east wind, sprouted after them, [24]and the thin ears swallowed up the seven good ears. And I told it to the magicians, but there was no one who could explain it to me."

[25]† Then Joseph said to Pharaoh, "The dreams of Pharaoh are one; God has revealed to Pharaoh what he is about to do. [26]The seven good cows are seven years, and the seven good ears are seven years; the dreams are one. [27]† The seven lean and ugly cows that came up after them are seven years, and the seven empty ears blighted by the east wind are also seven years of famine. [28]It is as I told Pharaoh; God has shown to Pharaoh what he is about to do. [29]There will come seven years of great plenty throughout all the land of Egypt, [30]† but after them there will arise seven years of famine, and all the plenty will be forgotten in the land of Egypt. The famine will consume the land, [31]and the plenty will be unknown in the land by reason of the famine that will follow, for it will be very severe. [32]And the doubling of Pharaoh's dream means that the thing is fixed by God, and God will shortly bring it about. [33]Now therefore let Pharaoh select a discerning and wise man, and set him over the land of Egypt. [34]Let Pharaoh proceed to appoint overseers over the land and take one-fifth of the produce of the land[2] of Egypt during the seven plentiful years. [35]And let them gather all the food of these good years that are coming and store up grain under the authority of Pharaoh for food in the cities, and let them keep it. [36]That food shall be a reserve for the land against the seven years of famine that are to occur in the land of Egypt, so that the land may not perish through the famine."

Joseph Rises to Power

37 ‡This proposal pleased Pharaoh and all his servants. 38 ‡And Pharaoh
said to his servants, “Can we find a man like this, in whom is the Spirit of
God?”[1] 39Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, “Since God has shown you all this,
there is none so discerning and wise as you are. 40 † You shall be over my
house, and all my people shall order themselves as you command.[2] Only as
regards the throne will I be greater than you.” 41And Pharaoh said to Joseph,
“See, I have set you over all the land of Egypt.” 42 †Then Pharaoh took his
signet ring from his hand and put it on Joseph’s hand, and clothed him in
garments of fine linen and put a gold chain about his neck. 43 †And he made
him ride in his second chariot. And they called out before him, “Bow the
knee!”[3] Thus he set him over all the land of Egypt. 44 †Moreover, Pharaoh
said to Joseph, “I am Pharaoh, and without your consent no one shall lift up
hand or foot in all the land of Egypt.” 45 †And Pharaoh called Joseph’s name
Zaphenath-paneah. And he gave him in marriage Asenath, the daughter of
Potiphera priest of On. So Joseph went out over the land of Egypt.

46 †Joseph was thirty years old when he entered the service of Pharaoh
king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh and went
through all the land of Egypt. 47During the seven plentiful years the earth
produced abundantly, 48 †and he gathered up all the food of these seven
years, which occurred in the land of Egypt, and put the food in the cities.
He put in every city the food from the fields around it. 49And Joseph stored
up grain in great abundance, like the sand of the sea, until he ceased to
measure it, for it could not be measured.

50Before the year of famine came, two sons were born to Joseph. Asenath,
the daughter of Potiphera priest of On, bore them to him. 51Joseph called the
name of the firstborn Manasseh. “For,” he said, “God has made me forget
all my hardship and all my father’s house.”[4] 52 †The name of the second he
called Ephraim, “For God has made me fruitful in the land of my
affliction.”[5]

53The seven years of plenty that occurred in the land of Egypt came to an
end, 54 †and the seven years of famine began to come, as Joseph had said.
There was famine in all lands, but in all the land of Egypt there was bread.

[55]When all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread. Pharaoh said to all the Egyptians, “Go to Joseph. What he says to you, do.”

[56]So when the famine had spread over all the land, Joseph opened all the storehouses[6] and sold to the Egyptians, for the famine was severe in the land of Egypt. [57]Moreover, all the earth came to Egypt to Joseph to buy grain, because the famine was severe over all the earth.

Joseph's Brothers Go to Egypt

42 [1]†When Jacob learned that there was grain for sale in Egypt, he said to his sons, "Why do you look at one another?" [2]And he said, "Behold, I have heard that there is grain for sale in Egypt. Go down and buy grain for us there, that we may live and not die." [3]So ten of Joseph's brothers went down to buy grain in Egypt. [4]†But Jacob did not send Benjamin, Joseph's brother, with his brothers, for he feared that harm might happen to him. [5]†Thus the sons of Israel came to buy among the others who came, for the famine was in the land of Canaan.

[6]†Now Joseph was governor over the land. He was the one who sold to all the people of the land. And Joseph's brothers came and bowed themselves before him with their faces to the ground. [7]Joseph saw his brothers and recognized them, but he treated them like strangers and spoke roughly to them. "Where do you come from?" he said. They said, "From the land of Canaan, to buy food." [8]†And Joseph recognized his brothers, but they did not recognize him. [9]†And Joseph remembered the dreams that he had dreamed of them. And he said to them, "You are spies; you have come to see the nakedness of the land." [10]They said to him, "No, my lord, your servants have come to buy food. [11]†We are all sons of one man. We are honest men. Your servants have never been spies."

[12]He said to them, "No, it is the nakedness of the land that you have come to see." [13]†And they said, "We, your servants, are twelve brothers, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan, and behold, the youngest is this day with our father, and one is no more." [14]But Joseph said to them, "It is as I said to you. You are spies. [15]†By this you shall be tested: by the life of Pharaoh, you shall not go from this place unless your youngest brother comes here. [16]Send one of you, and let him bring your brother, while you remain confined, that your words may be tested, whether there is truth in you. Or else, by the life of Pharaoh, surely you are spies." [17]†And he put them all together in custody for three days.

[18]†On the third day Joseph said to them, "Do this and you will live, for I fear God: [19]if you are honest men, let one of your brothers remain confined

where you are in custody, and let the rest go and carry grain for the famine of your households, [20] † and bring your youngest brother to me. So your words will be verified, and you shall not die." And they did so. [21] † Then they said to one another, "In truth we are guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the distress of his soul, when he begged us and we did not listen. That is why this distress has come upon us." [22] † And Reuben answered them, "Did I not tell you not to sin against the boy? But you did not listen. So now there comes a reckoning for his blood." [23] They did not know that Joseph understood them, for there was an interpreter between them. [24] † Then he turned away from them and wept. And he returned to them and spoke to them. And he took Simeon from them and bound him before their eyes. [25] † And Joseph gave orders to fill their bags with grain, and to replace every man's money in his sack, and to give them provisions for the journey. This was done for them.

[26] Then they loaded their donkeys with their grain and departed. [27] † And as one of them opened his sack to give his donkey fodder at the lodging place, he saw his money in the mouth of his sack. [28] † He said to his brothers, "My money has been put back; here it is in the mouth of my sack!" At this their hearts failed them, and they turned trembling to one another, saying, "What is this that God has done to us?"

[29] When they came to Jacob their father in the land of Canaan, they told him all that had happened to them, saying, [30] "The man, the lord of the land, spoke roughly to us and took us to be spies of the land. [31] But we said to him, 'We are honest men; we have never been spies. [32] We are twelve brothers, sons of our father. One is no more, and the youngest is this day with our father in the land of Canaan.' [33] Then the man, the lord of the land, said to us, 'By this I shall know that you are honest men: leave one of your brothers with me, and take grain for the famine of your households, and go your way. [34] † Bring your youngest brother to me. Then I shall know that you are not spies but honest men, and I will deliver your brother to you, and you shall trade in the land.'"

[35] † As they emptied their sacks, behold, every man's bundle of money was in his sack. And when they and their father saw their bundles of money, they were afraid. [36] † And Jacob their father said to them, "You have bereaved me of my children: Joseph is no more, and Simeon is no more,

and now you would take Benjamin. All this has come against me.” [37]†Then Reuben said to his father, “Kill my two sons if I do not bring him back to you. Put him in my hands, and I will bring him back to you.” [38]†But he said, “My son shall not go down with you, for his brother is dead, and he is the only one left. If harm should happen to him on the journey that you are to make, you would bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to Sheol.”

Joseph's Brothers Return to Egypt

43 [1]Now the famine was severe in the land. [2]And when they had eaten the grain that they had brought from Egypt, their father said to them, "Go again, buy us a little food." [3]† But Judah said to him, "The man solemnly warned us, saying, 'You shall not see my face unless your brother is with you.' [4]If you will send our brother with us, we will go down and buy you food. [5]But if you will not send him, we will not go down, for the man said to us, 'You shall not see my face, unless your brother is with you.'" [6]Israel said, "Why did you treat me so badly as to tell the man that you had another brother?" [7]They replied, "The man questioned us carefully about ourselves and our kindred, saying, 'Is your father still alive? Do you have another brother?' What we told him was in answer to these questions. Could we in any way know that he would say, 'Bring your brother down'?" [8]†And Judah said to Israel his father, "Send the boy with me, and we will arise and go, that we may live and not die, both we and you and also our little ones. [9]†I will be a pledge of his safety. From my hand you shall require him. If I do not bring him back to you and set him before you, then let me bear the blame forever. [10]† If we had not delayed, we would now have returned twice."

[11]†Then their father Israel said to them, "If it must be so, then do this: take some of the choice fruits of the land in your bags, and carry a present down to the man, a little balm and a little honey, gum, myrrh, pistachio nuts, and almonds. [12]†Take double the money with you. Carry back with you the money that was returned in the mouth of your sacks. Perhaps it was an oversight. [13]Take also your brother, and arise, go again to the man. [14]†May God Almighty[1] grant you mercy before the man, and may he send back your other brother and Benjamin. And as for me, if I am bereaved of my children, I am bereaved."

[15]†So the men took this present, and they took double the money with them, and Benjamin. They arose and went down to Egypt and stood before Joseph.

16 † When Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the steward of his
house, “Bring the men into the house, and slaughter an animal and make
ready, for the men are to dine with me at noon.” 17 The man did as Joseph
told him and brought the men to Joseph’s house. 18 And the men were afraid
because they were brought to Joseph’s house, and they said, “It is because
of the money, which was replaced in our sacks the first time, that we are
brought in, so that he may assault us and fall upon us to make us servants
and seize our donkeys.” 19 So they went up to the steward of Joseph’s house
and spoke with him at the door of the house, 20 and said, “Oh, my lord, we
came down the first time to buy food. 21 † And when we came to the lodging
place we opened our sacks, and there was each man’s money in the mouth
of his sack, our money in full weight. So we have brought it again with us,
22 and we have brought other money down with us to buy food. We do not
know who put our money in our sacks.” 23 † He replied, “Peace to you, do
not be afraid. Your God and the God of your father has put treasure in your
sacks for you. I received your money.” Then he brought Simeon out to
them. 24 And when the man had brought the men into Joseph’s house and
given them water, and they had washed their feet, and when he had given
their donkeys fodder, 25 † they prepared the present for Joseph’s coming at
noon, for they heard that they should eat bread there.

26 † When Joseph came home, they brought into the house to him the
present that they had with them and bowed down to him to the ground.
27 And he inquired about their welfare and said, “Is your father well, the old
man of whom you spoke? Is he still alive?” 28 They said, “Your servant our
father is well; he is still alive.” And they bowed their heads and prostrated
themselves. 29 † And he lifted up his eyes and saw his brother Benjamin, his
mother’s son, and said, “Is this your youngest brother, of whom you spoke
to me? God be gracious to you, my son!” 30 Then Joseph hurried out, for his
compassion grew warm for his brother, and he sought a place to weep. And
he entered his chamber and wept there. 31 Then he washed his face and came
out. And controlling himself he said, “Serve the food.” 32 † They served him
by himself, and them by themselves, and the Egyptians who ate with him by
themselves, because the Egyptians could not eat with the Hebrews, for that
is an abomination to the Egyptians. 33 † And they sat before him, the firstborn
according to his birthright and the youngest according to his youth. And the

men looked at one another in amazement. [34]† Portions were taken to them
from Joseph's table, but Benjamin's portion was five times as much as any
of theirs. And they drank and were merry[2] with him.

Joseph Tests His Brothers

44 [1]†Then he commanded the steward of his house, “Fill the men’s
sacks with food, as much as they can carry, and put each man’s money in
the mouth of his sack, [2]†and put my cup, the silver cup, in the mouth of the
sack of the youngest, with his money for the grain.” And he did as Joseph
told him.

[3]As soon as the morning was light, the men were sent away with their
donkeys. [4]†They had gone only a short distance from the city. Now Joseph
said to his steward, “Up, follow after the men, and when you overtake them,
say to them, ‘Why have you repaid evil for good?[1] [5]†Is it not from this that
my lord drinks, and by this that he practices divination? You have done evil
in doing this.’”

[6]When he overtook them, he spoke to them these words. [7]†They said to
him, “Why does my lord speak such words as these? Far be it from your
servants to do such a thing! [8]†Behold, the money that we found in the
mouths of our sacks we brought back to you from the land of Canaan. How
then could we steal silver or gold from your lord’s house? [9] Whichever of
your servants is found with it shall die, and we also will be my lord’s
servants.” [10]†He said, “Let it be as you say: he who is found with it shall be
my servant, and the rest of you shall be innocent.” [11]Then each man quickly
lowered his sack to the ground, and each man opened his sack. [12]And he
searched, beginning with the eldest and ending with the youngest. And the
cup was found in Benjamin’s sack. [13]†Then they tore their clothes, and
every man loaded his donkey, and they returned to the city.

[14]†When Judah and his brothers came to Joseph’s house, he was still
there. They fell before him to the ground. [15]†Joseph said to them, “What
deed is this that you have done? Do you not know that a man like me can
indeed practice divination?” [16]†And Judah said, “What shall we say to my
lord? What shall we speak? Or how can we clear ourselves? God has found
out the guilt of your servants; behold, we are my lord’s servants, both we
and he also in whose hand the cup has been found.” [17]But he said, “Far be it

from me that I should do so! Only the man in whose hand the cup was found shall be my servant. But as for you, go up in peace to your father."

18 †Then Judah went up to him and said, "Oh, my lord, please let your servant speak a word in my lord's ears, and let not your anger burn against your servant, for you are like Pharaoh himself. 19My lord asked his servants, saying, 'Have you a father, or a brother?' 20†And we said to my lord, 'We have a father, an old man, and a young brother, the child of his old age. His brother is dead, and he alone is left of his mother's children, and his father loves him.' 21Then you said to your servants, 'Bring him down to me, that I may set my eyes on him.' 22We said to my lord, 'The boy cannot leave his father, for if he should leave his father, his father would die.' 23Then you said to your servants, 'Unless your youngest brother comes down with you, you shall not see my face again.'

24"When we went back to your servant my father, we told him the words of my lord. 25And when our father said, 'Go again, buy us a little food,' 26we said, 'We cannot go down. If our youngest brother goes with us, then we will go down. For we cannot see the man's face unless our youngest brother is with us.' 27Then your servant my father said to us, 'You know that my wife bore me two sons. 28†One left me, and I said, Surely he has been torn to pieces, and I have never seen him since. 29†If you take this one also from me, and harm happens to him, you will bring down my gray hairs in evil to Sheol.'

30†"Now therefore, as soon as I come to your servant my father, and the boy is not with us, then, as his life is bound up in the boy's life, 31as soon as he sees that the boy is not with us, he will die, and your servants will bring down the gray hairs of your servant our father with sorrow to Sheol. 32For your servant became a pledge of safety for the boy to my father, saying, 'If I do not bring him back to you, then I shall bear the blame before my father all my life.' 33†Now therefore, please let your servant remain instead of the boy as a servant to my lord, and let the boy go back with his brothers. 34†For how can I go back to my father if the boy is not with me? I fear to see the evil that would find my father."

Joseph Provides for His Brothers and Family

45 [1]†Then Joseph could not control himself before all those who stood by him. He cried, “Make everyone go out from me.” So no one stayed with him when Joseph made himself known to his brothers. [2]And he wept aloud, so that the Egyptians heard it, and the household of Pharaoh heard it. [3]†And Joseph said to his brothers, “I am Joseph! Is my father still alive?” But his brothers could not answer him, for they were dismayed at his presence.

[4]So Joseph said to his brothers, “Come near to me, please.” And they came near. And he said, “I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. [5]†And now do not be distressed or angry with yourselves because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life. [6]For the famine has been in the land these two years, and there are yet five years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvest. [7]And God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors. [8]†So it was not you who sent me here, but God. He has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt. [9]†Hurry and go up to my father and say to him, ‘Thus says your son Joseph, God has made me lord of all Egypt. Come down to me; do not tarry. [10]† You shall dwell in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your children’s children, and your flocks, your herds, and all that you have. [11] There I will provide for you, for there are yet five years of famine to come, so that you and your household, and all that you have, do not come to poverty.’ [12]And now your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin see, that it is my mouth that speaks to you. [13]You must tell my father of all my honor in Egypt, and of all that you have seen. Hurry and bring my father down here.” [14]†Then he fell upon his brother Benjamin’s neck and wept, and Benjamin wept upon his neck. [15]†And he kissed all his brothers and wept upon them. After that his brothers talked with him.

[16]When the report was heard in Pharaoh’s house, “Joseph’s brothers have come,” it pleased Pharaoh and his servants. [17]And Pharaoh said to Joseph, “Say to your brothers, ‘Do this: load your beasts and go back to the land of

Canaan, [18]†and take your father and your households, and come to me, and I will give you the best of the land of Egypt, and you shall eat the fat of the land.' [19]†And you, Joseph, are commanded to say, 'Do this: take wagons from the land of Egypt for your little ones and for your wives, and bring your father, and come. [20]†Have no concern for[1] your goods, for the best of all the land of Egypt is yours.'"

[21]The sons of Israel did so: and Joseph gave them wagons, according to the command of Pharaoh, and gave them provisions for the journey. [22]†To each and all of them he gave a change of clothes, but to Benjamin he gave three hundred shekels[2] of silver and five changes of clothes. [23]To his father he sent as follows: ten donkeys loaded with the good things of Egypt, and ten female donkeys loaded with grain, bread, and provision for his father on the journey. [24]†Then he sent his brothers away, and as they departed, he said to them, "Do not quarrel on the way."

[25]So they went up out of Egypt and came to the land of Canaan to their father Jacob. [26]†And they told him, "Joseph is still alive, and he is ruler over all the land of Egypt." And his heart became numb, for he did not believe them. [27]†But when they told him all the words of Joseph, which he had said to them, and when he saw the wagons that Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of their father Jacob revived. [28]†And Israel said, "It is enough; Joseph my son is still alive. I will go and see him before I die."

Joseph Brings His Family to Egypt

46 [1]†So Israel took his journey with all that he had and came to Beersheba, and offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac. [2]†And God spoke to Israel in visions of the night and said, "Jacob, Jacob." And he said, "Here am I." [3]†Then he said, "I am God, the God of your father. Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for there I will make you into a great nation. [4]†I myself will go down with you to Egypt, and I will also bring you up again, and Joseph's hand shall close your eyes."

[5]Then Jacob set out from Beersheba. The sons of Israel carried Jacob their father, their little ones, and their wives, in the wagons that Pharaoh had sent to carry him. [6]They also took their livestock and their goods, which they had gained in the land of Canaan, and came into Egypt, Jacob and all his offspring with him, [7]his sons, and his sons' sons with him, his daughters, and his sons' daughters. All his offspring he brought with him into Egypt.

[8]† Now these are the names of the descendants of Israel, who came into Egypt, Jacob and his sons. Reuben, Jacob's firstborn, [9]and the sons of Reuben: Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi. [10]The sons of Simeon: Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jachin, Zohar, and Shaul, the son of a Canaanite woman. [11]The sons of Levi: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. [12]The sons of Judah: Er, Onan, Shelah, Perez, and Zerah (but Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan); and the sons of Perez were Hezron and Hamul. [13] The sons of Issachar: Tola, Puvah, Yob, and Shimron. [14]The sons of Zebulun: Sered, Elon, and Jahleel. [15]These are the sons of Leah, whom she bore to Jacob in Paddan-aram, together with his daughter Dinah; altogether his sons and his daughters numbered thirty-three.

[16]The sons of Gad: Ziphion, Haggi, Shuni, Ezbon, Eri, Arodi, and Areli. [17] The sons of Asher: Imnah, Ishvah, Ishvi, Beriah, with Serah their sister. And the sons of Beriah: Heber and Malchiel. [18]† These are the sons of Zilpah, whom Laban gave to Leah his daughter; and these she bore to Jacob—sixteen persons.

[19]†The sons of Rachel, Jacob's wife: Joseph and Benjamin. [20]†And to Joseph in the land of Egypt were born Manasseh and Ephraim, whom

Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera the priest of On, bore to him. [21]And the sons of Benjamin: Bela, Becher, Ashbel, Gera, Naaman, Ehi, Rosh, Muppim, Huppim, and Ard. [22]These are the sons of Rachel, who were born to Jacob—fourteen persons in all.

[23]The sons of Dan: Hushim. [24] The sons of Naphtali: Jahzeel, Guni, Jezer, and Shillem. [25] These are the sons of Bilhah, whom Laban gave to Rachel his daughter, and these she bore to Jacob—seven persons in all.

[26]All the persons belonging to Jacob who came into Egypt, who were his own descendants, not including Jacob's sons' wives, were sixty-six persons in all. [27]†And the sons of Joseph, who were born to him in Egypt, were two. All the persons of the house of Jacob who came into Egypt were seventy.

Jacob and Joseph Reunited

[28] †He had sent Judah ahead of him to Joseph to show the way before him
in Goshen, and they came into the land of Goshen. [29] †Then Joseph prepared
his chariot and went up to meet Israel his father in Goshen. He presented
himself to him and fell on his neck and wept on his neck a good while.
[30] †Israel said to Joseph, “Now let me die, since I have seen your face and
know that you are still alive.” [31] Joseph said to his brothers and to his
father’s household, “I will go up and tell Pharaoh and will say to him, ‘My
brothers and my father’s household, who were in the land of Canaan, have
come to me. [32] And the men are shepherds, for they have been keepers of
livestock, and they have brought their flocks and their herds and all that
they have.’ [33] When Pharaoh calls you and says, ‘What is your occupation?’
[34] †you shall say, ‘Your servants have been keepers of livestock from our
youth even until now, both we and our fathers,’ in order that you may dwell
in the land of Goshen, for every shepherd is an abomination to the
Egyptians.”

Jacob's Family Settles in Goshen

47 [1]So Joseph went in and told Pharaoh, "My father and my brothers,
with their flocks and herds and all that they possess, have come from the
land of Canaan. They are now in the land of Goshen." [2]And from among his
brothers he took five men and presented them to Pharaoh. [3]Pharaoh said to
his brothers, "What is your occupation?" And they said to Pharaoh, "Your
servants are shepherds, as our fathers were." [4]†They said to Pharaoh, "We
have come to sojourn in the land, for there is no pasture for your servants'
flocks, for the famine is severe in the land of Canaan. And now, please let
your servants dwell in the land of Goshen." [5]Then Pharaoh said to Joseph,
"Your father and your brothers have come to you. [6]†The land of Egypt is
before you. Settle your father and your brothers in the best of the land. Let
them settle in the land of Goshen, and if you know any able men among
them, put them in charge of my livestock."

[7]†Then Joseph brought in Jacob his father and stood him before Pharaoh,
and Jacob blessed Pharaoh. [8]And Pharaoh said to Jacob, "How many are the
days of the years of your life?" [9]†And Jacob said to Pharaoh, "The days of
the years of my sojourning are 130 years. Few and evil have been the days
of the years of my life, and they have not attained to the days of the years of
the life of my fathers in the days of their sojourning." [10]And Jacob blessed
Pharaoh and went out from the presence of Pharaoh. [11]†Then Joseph settled
his father and his brothers and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt,
in the best of the land, in the land of Rameses, as Pharaoh had commanded.
[12]And Joseph provided his father, his brothers, and all his father's household
with food, according to the number of their dependents.

Joseph and the Famine

13 †Now there was no food in all the land, for the famine was very severe,
so that the land of Egypt and the land of Canaan languished by reason of the
famine. 14† And Joseph gathered up all the money that was found in the land
of Egypt and in the land of Canaan, in exchange for the grain that they
bought. And Joseph brought the money into Pharaoh's house. 15And when
the money was all spent in the land of Egypt and in the land of Canaan, all
the Egyptians came to Joseph and said, "Give us food. Why should we die
before your eyes? For our money is gone." 16†And Joseph answered, "Give
your livestock, and I will give you food in exchange for your livestock, if
your money is gone." 17So they brought their livestock to Joseph, and
Joseph gave them food in exchange for the horses, the flocks, the herds, and
the donkeys. He supplied them with food in exchange for all their livestock
that year. 18†And when that year was ended, they came to him the following
year and said to him, "We will not hide from my lord that our money is all
spent. The herds of livestock are my lord's. There is nothing left in the sight
of my lord but our bodies and our land. 19†Why should we die before your
eyes, both we and our land? Buy us and our land for food, and we with our
land will be servants to Pharaoh. And give us seed that we may live and not
die, and that the land may not be desolate."

20So Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh, for all the
Egyptians sold their fields, because the famine was severe on them. The
land became Pharaoh's. 21†As for the people, he made servants of them[1]
from one end of Egypt to the other. 22† Only the land of the priests he did
not buy, for the priests had a fixed allowance from Pharaoh and lived on the
allowance that Pharaoh gave them; therefore they did not sell their land.

23Then Joseph said to the people, "Behold, I have this day bought you
and your land for Pharaoh. Now here is seed for you, and you shall sow the
land. 24†And at the harvests you shall give a fifth to Pharaoh, and four fifths
shall be your own, as seed for the field and as food for yourselves and your
households, and as food for your little ones." 25†And they said, "You have
saved our lives; may it please my lord, we will be servants to Pharaoh."
26†So Joseph made it a statute concerning the land of Egypt, and it stands to

this day, that Pharaoh should have the fifth; the land of the priests alone did not become Pharaoh's.

27 Thus Israel settled in the land of Egypt, in the land of Goshen. And they gained possessions in it, and were fruitful and multiplied greatly. 28 And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years. So the days of Jacob, the years of his life, were 147 years.

29 † And when the time drew near that Israel must die, he called his son Joseph and said to him, "If now I have found favor in your sight, put your hand under my thigh and promise to deal kindly and truly with me. Do not bury me in Egypt, 30 † but let me lie with my fathers. Carry me out of Egypt and bury me in their burying place." He answered, "I will do as you have said." 31 † And he said, "Swear to me"; and he swore to him. Then Israel bowed himself upon the head of his bed.[1]

Jacob Blesses Ephraim and Manasseh

48 [1]After this, Joseph was told, “Behold, your father is ill.” So he took with him his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim. [2]And it was told to Jacob, “Your son Joseph has come to you.” Then Israel summoned his strength and sat up in bed. [3]† And Jacob said to Joseph, “God Almighty[2] appeared to me at Luz in the land of Canaan and blessed me, [4]and said to me, ‘Behold, I will make you fruitful and multiply you, and I will make of you a company of peoples and will give this land to your offspring after you for an everlasting possession.’ [5]† And now your two sons, who were born to you in the land of Egypt before I came to you in Egypt, are mine; Ephraim and Manasseh shall be mine, as Reuben and Simeon are. [6]† And the children that you fathered after them shall be yours. They shall be called by the name of their brothers in their inheritance. [7]As for me, when I came from Paddan, to my sorrow Rachel died in the land of Canaan on the way, when there was still some distance[3] to go to Ephrath, and I buried her there on the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem).”

[8]When Israel saw Joseph’s sons, he said, “Who are these?” [9]Joseph said to his father, “They are my sons, whom God has given me here.” And he said, “Bring them to me, please, that I may bless them.” [10]Now the eyes of Israel were dim with age, so that he could not see. So Joseph brought them near him, and he kissed them and embraced them. [11]And Israel said to Joseph, “I never expected to see your face; and behold, God has let me see your offspring also.” [12]† Then Joseph removed them from his knees, and he bowed himself with his face to the earth. [13]† And Joseph took them both, Ephraim in his right hand toward Israel’s left hand, and Manasseh in his left hand toward Israel’s right hand, and brought them near him. [14]† And Israel stretched out his right hand and laid it on the head of Ephraim, who was the younger, and his left hand on the head of Manasseh, crossing his hands (for Manasseh was the firstborn). [15]† And he blessed Joseph and said,

“The God before whom my fathers Abraham
and Isaac walked,
the God who has been my shepherd all my

life long to this day,
16 † the angel who has redeemed me from all
evil, bless the boys;
and in them let my name be carried on, and
the name of my fathers Abraham and
Isaac;
and let them grow into a multitude[4] in the
midst of the earth.”

17 When Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand on the head of
Ephraim, it displeased him, and he took his father’s hand to move it from
Ephraim’s head to Manasseh’s head. 18 And Joseph said to his father, “Not
this way, my father; since this one is the firstborn, put your right hand on
his head.” 19 But his father refused and said, “I know, my son, I know. He
also shall become a people, and he also shall be great. Nevertheless, his
younger brother shall be greater than he, and his offspring shall become a
multitude[5] of nations.” 20 So he blessed them that day, saying,

“By you Israel will pronounce blessings, saying,
‘God make you as Ephraim and as Manasseh.’”

Thus he put Ephraim before Manasseh. 21 † Then Israel said to Joseph,
“Behold, I am about to die, but God will be with you and will bring you
again to the land of your fathers. 22 † Moreover, I have given to you rather
than to your brothers one mountain slope[1] that I took from the hand of the
Amorites with my sword and with my bow.”

Jacob Blesses His Sons

49 [1] ‡ ‡ † Then Jacob called his sons and said, Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you what shall happen to you in days to come.

[2] “Assemble and listen, O sons of Jacob,
listen to Israel your father.

[3] ‡ ‡ “Reuben, you are my firstborn,
my might, and the firstfruits of my strength,
preeminent in dignity and preeminent in power.
[4] † Unstable as water, you shall not have preeminence,
because you went up to your father’s bed;
then you defiled it—he went up to my couch!
[5] † “Simeon and Levi are brothers;
weapons of violence are their swords.
[6] † Let my soul come not into their council;
O my glory, be not joined to their company.
For in their anger they killed men,
and in their willfulness they hamstrung oxen.
[7] † Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce,
and their wrath, for it is cruel!
I will divide them in Jacob
and scatter them in Israel.

[8] ‡ ‡ “Judah, your brothers shall praise you;
your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies;
your father’s sons shall bow down before you.
[9] † Judah is a lion’s cub;

from the prey, my son, you have gone up.
He stooped down; he crouched as a lion
and as a lioness; who dares rouse him?
10 The scepter shall not depart from Judah,
nor the ruler's staff from between his feet,
until tribute comes to him;[1]
and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples.
11 Binding his foal to the vine
and his donkey's colt to the choice vine,
he has washed his garments in wine
and his vesture in the blood of grapes.
12 His eyes are darker than wine,
and his teeth whiter than milk.

13 "Zebulun shall dwell at the shore of the sea;
he shall become a haven for ships,
and his border shall be at Sidon.

14 "Issachar is a strong donkey,
crouching between the sheepfolds.[2]
15 He saw that a resting place was good,
and that the land was pleasant,
so he bowed his shoulder to bear,
and became a servant at forced labor.

16 "Dan shall judge his people
as one of the tribes of Israel.
17 Dan shall be a serpent in the way,
a viper by the path,
that bites the horse's heels
so that his rider falls backward.
18 I wait for your salvation, O Lord.

19† “Raiders shall raid Gad,[3]
but he shall raid at their heels.

20† “Asher’s food shall be rich,
and he shall yield royal delicacies.

21† “Naphtali is a doe let loose
that bears beautiful fawns.[4]

22† “Joseph is a fruitful bough,
a fruitful bough by a spring;
his branches run over the wall.[5]
23† The archers bitterly attacked him,
shot at him, and harassed him severely,
24† yet his bow remained unmoved;
his arms[6] were made agile
by the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob
(from there is the Shepherd,[7] the Stone of
Israel),
25 by the God of your father who will help you,
by the Almighty[1] who will bless you
with blessings of heaven above,
blessings of the deep that crouches beneath,
blessings of the breasts and of the womb.
26† The blessings of your father
are mighty beyond the blessings of my
parents,
up to the bounties of the everlasting hills.[2]
May they be on the head of Joseph,
and on the brow of him who was set apart
from his brothers.

27 † “Benjamin is a ravenous wolf,
in the morning devouring the prey
and at evening dividing the spoil.”

Jacob's Death and Burial

28 All these are the twelve tribes of Israel. This is what their father said to
them as he blessed them, blessing each with the blessing suitable to him.
29 Then he commanded them and said to them, "I am to be gathered to my
people; bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron
the Hittite, 30 in the cave that is in the field at Machpelah, to the east of
Mamre, in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought with the field from
Ephron the Hittite to possess as a burying place. 31 There they buried
Abraham and Sarah his wife. There they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife,
and there I buried Leah— 32 the field and the cave that is in it were bought
from the Hittites." 33 When Jacob finished commanding his sons, he drew up
his feet into the bed and breathed his last and was gathered to his people.

50 1 Then Joseph fell on his father's face and wept over him and
kissed him. 2 And Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm
his father. So the physicians embalmed Israel. 3 Forty days were required for
it, for that is how many are required for embalming. And the Egyptians
wept for him seventy days.

4 And when the days of weeping for him were past, Joseph spoke to the
household of Pharaoh, saying, "If now I have found favor in your eyes,
please speak in the ears of Pharaoh, saying, 5 My father made me swear,
saying, 'I am about to die: in my tomb that I hewed out for myself in the
land of Canaan, there shall you bury me.' Now therefore, let me please go
up and bury my father. Then I will return." 6 And Pharaoh answered, "Go
up, and bury your father, as he made you swear." 7 So Joseph went up to
bury his father. With him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of
his household, and all the elders of the land of Egypt, 8 as well as all the
household of Joseph, his brothers, and his father's household. Only their
children, their flocks, and their herds were left in the land of Goshen. 9 And
there went up with him both chariots and horsemen. It was a very great
company. 10 When they came to the threshing floor of Atad, which is
beyond the Jordan, they lamented there with a very great and grievous
lamentation, and he made a mourning for his father seven days. 11 When the

inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, saw the mourning on the threshing floor of Atad, they said, “This is a grievous mourning by the Egyptians.” Therefore the place was named Abel-mizraim;[3] it is beyond the Jordan. 12Thus his sons did for him as he had commanded them, 13for his sons carried him to the land of Canaan and buried him in the cave of the field at Machpelah, to the east of Mamre, which Abraham bought with the field from Ephron the Hittite to possess as a burying place. 14After he had buried his father, Joseph returned to Egypt with his brothers and all who had gone up with him to bury his father.

God’s Good Purposes

15 ‡† When Joseph’s brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, “It
may be that Joseph will hate us and pay us back for all the evil that we did
to him.” 16 † So they sent a message to Joseph, saying, “Your father gave this
command before he died, 17 ‘Say to Joseph, Please forgive the transgression
of your brothers and their sin, because they did evil to you.’ And now,
please forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of your father.”
Joseph wept when they spoke to him. 18 † His brothers also came and fell
down before him and said, “Behold, we are your servants.” 19 † But Joseph
said to them, “Do not fear, for am I in the place of God? 20 † As for you, you
meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that
many people[1] should be kept alive, as they are today. 21 † So do not fear; I
will provide for you and your little ones.” Thus he comforted them and
spoke kindly to them.

The Death of Joseph

22 †So Joseph remained in Egypt, he and his father's house. Joseph lived
110 years. 23 †And Joseph saw Ephraim's children of the third generation.
The children also of Machir the son of Manasseh were counted as Joseph's
own.[2] 24 †And Joseph said to his brothers, "I am about to die, but God will
visit you and bring you up out of this land to the land that he swore to
Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob." 25 †Then Joseph made the sons of Israel
swear, saying, "God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones
from here." 26 †So Joseph died, being 110 years old. They embalmed him,
and he was put in a coffin in Egypt.

Genesis

Overview

Author
Moses the prophet

Date
Written c 1446–1406 BC

Places
See maps, pp 33, 60.

People
Adam; Eve; Cain; Abel; Seth; Noah; Shem; Canaan; Abraham; Sarah; Lot; Melchizedek; Hagar; Ishmael; Abimelech; Isaac; Rebekah; Laban; Jacob (Israel); Esau; Rachel; Leah; sons of Israel; Dinah; Tamar; Potiphar; Manasseh; Ephraim

Purpose
To trace the passing of the promise of God's Savior from generation to generation, to all Israel and to all nations

Law Themes
The curse and death that come with sin and disobedience; humankind's slavery to evil; families divided by sin

Gospel Themes
The promise of a Savior; God gives blessings, life, and freedom; God's goodness and covenant promise for the faithful

Memory Verses
The image of God (1:26–27); the trees of Eden (2:16–17); the promised Deliverer (3:15); man's heart is evil (6:5; 8:21); all families blessed through

Abraham (12:3; 18:18; 26:4); righteous through faith (15:6); scepter of Judah (49:10–12)

Introduction to Genesis

Reading Genesis

Bright orange, purple, and red fruit droop from branches like heavy drops of morning dew. The trees bow with the weight, welcoming the glorious face of the sun. Light glimmers through the branches stirring in the breeze, which rouses two figures: Adam and Eve. For our first parents, eating is as easy as reaching up. They simply take and eat the fruit given by the Lord, who sheds His love upon them and pours out His grace each day. The trees of Eden nourish Adam and Eve like sacraments of creation, mediating God's blessing, a never-ending feast for the first family.

However, the feast did end. After the fall into sin, the ground dried up. Thorns raked the brows and pierced the hands and feet of our first parents (3:17–19). Cherubim and a flaming sword blocked the way to the garden, lest they eat of the "tree of life" and live in this way forever (3:22–24). The family suffered lasting heartbreak (4:1–16) as families have ever since. As you read Genesis—the book of generations—consider how it focuses on family life, the struggle for daily bread, and the hope of salvation. These are the very things that occupy our hearts and lives today.

Luther on Genesis

In his first book [Genesis] Moses teaches how all creatures were created, and (as the chief cause for his writing) whence sin and death came, namely by Adam's fall, through the devil's wickedness. But immediately thereafter, before the coming of the law of Moses, he teaches whence help is to come for the driving out of sin and death, namely, not by the law or men's own works (since there was no law as yet), but by "the seed of the woman," Christ, promised to Adam and Abraham, in order that throughout the Scriptures from the beginning faith may be praised above all works and laws and merits. Genesis, therefore, is made up almost entirely of illustrations of faith and unbelief, and of the fruits that faith and unbelief bear. It is an exceedingly evangelical book. (AE 35:237)

We assert that Moses spoke in the literal sense, not allegorically or figuratively [about the creation], i.e., that the world, with all its creatures, was created within six days, as the words read. If we do not comprehend the reason for this, let us remain pupils and leave the job of teacher to the Holy Spirit. (AE 1:5)

The line of descent was traced from Adam, through many patriarchs, down to Noah, and from there down to Abraham. During this time the church suffered great damage, for ungodliness had increased to such an extent that even the descendants of the saints were carried away into error. Therefore it was necessary for Moses to point out how in this great peril God accomplished the rebirth of the church, lest it collapse entirely and true religion be utterly blotted out.

This account deserves our attention as an extraordinary example of mercy. It should encourage and persuade us that God will preserve the church also in our own time, when everything is threatening religion with destruction. Despite the great importance of their content the preceding accounts are very brief [chs 1–11]. In these which follow, however, the Holy Spirit will speak at greater length and will discuss everything in greater detail. Accordingly, up to this point the church looks like a brook that is flowing along peacefully; but now it receives accessions and rushes along with the roar of a real river until, through the marvelous blessing of God, the holy nation expands into a vast ocean and fills the world with its name. (AE 2:245)

For more of Luther's insights on this Book, see *Lectures on Genesis* (AE 1–8).

Challenges for Readers

Dating in Chs 1–11. The events described before the time of Abraham (2166 BC) cannot be dated. Well-intentioned efforts to date the creation of the world, the flood, and other historical events by adding up the years recorded in chs 5 and 11 have failed to appreciate the character of Israelite genealogies, which do not necessarily provide complete information from generation to generation. (See "Genealogies and Ages," below.) Also, attempts to discover when the world came into existence by using carbon dating, radioactive depletion dating, and geological theories are likewise unsatisfactory. Such methods assume that natural processes have not changed over time (uniformitarianism), a theory that cannot be falsified or proven. This leads to conflict with basic scientific method. Moses describes what may be called a "young" earth, but little can be said beyond this.

Creation versus Evolution. See pp 9–10.

Source Criticism. See pp 3–5.

Form Criticism. Scholars have noticed that storytelling and forms of literature repeat themselves (e.g., basic plots, poetic styles, literary types). Similar events may be described in similar ways (e.g., Gn 12:10–20; 20:1–18; 26:6–11). In the early twentieth century, attempts were made to determine the supposed history behind the accounts in Genesis and other parts of the Bible by studying the forms of various passages. Though careful comparison of passages can reveal helpful points about an author's consistency or distinctive style, such study has proved unhelpful for learning the sources or ages of biblical passages. The problem is that history tends to repeat itself just as storytellers tend to repeat one another.

Salvation History. Some modern interpreters regard Genesis as an apology, or defense, for the existence and territorial rights of ancient Israel. They read Genesis as justifying Israel's efforts to eliminate, expel, or dominate the Canaanites, Edomites, Moabites, and Ammonites who likewise struggled in the region. Though the struggles between the patriarchs and their neighbors do feature prominently in Genesis, readers must thoughtfully consider why this is so. The struggles in Genesis—as demonstrated by the earliest chapters—are never simply tribal. Genesis describes the appearance of good and evil and the struggle that develops as good and evil manifest themselves in people's lives. Special emphasis is

placed throughout on God's promise of creating, delivering, and sustaining a good people through faith in His redemption. In this way, Genesis constantly points to the appearing of Christ, the Savior, who will bless all nations.

Genealogies and Ages. Some ages in chs 5 and 11 appear to have symbolic significance (e.g., Enoch's 365 years [5:23] are the number of days in a year). Some interpreters have suggested that the numbers of years should be understood symbolically. However, this is unlikely because most of the numbers are specific and lack any obvious and consistent pattern for symbolism. Also, while the life span of these patriarchs exceeds that of humans today, it is far shorter than some of the very large ages given in other ancient Near Eastern genealogical lists (see note, 5:27). For these reasons, it seems best to understand these numbers in the normal literal sense. Another question is whether the genealogies given in chs 5 and 11 make it possible to calculate the date (or at least the year) of creation. The most famous effort to use the text this way is the Lightfoot/Ussher chronology, which dates the creation of the world to 4004 BC. The fact that each of the genealogical lists in these chapters contains exactly 10 generations suggests that these lists have been arranged for effect rather than to document a continuous chronology. This arrangement implies that there are gaps between some of the generations in the list, which would make the date of creation earlier than 4004 BC. See notes, Ru 4:18–22; 1Ch 1:4; 2:15–3:24. Some scholars suggest that the figures describe clans and not individuals. But there is no clear means of deciding or demonstrating such a suggestion.

Genesis and Theories of Evolution

Tension exists between what Moses recorded in Genesis and some modern theories about the origins of life. Many physicists, mathematicians, and chemists remain creationists of one type or another. However, since the nineteenth century, some biologists and anthropologists have rejected belief in a powerful or all-powerful being who created all things. This rejection has happened because of two influential theories in those fields of study: methodological naturalism and the theory of evolution.

Modern Theories

Methodological naturalism assumes that the modern scientific method, which considers only natural causes and effects, can capably describe the origin of life and events in the world. This theory leaves no place for describing supernatural events such as miracles or acts of God.

Theories of evolution assume that life developed over long periods of time through natural selection. In other words, living things with favorable traits tended to survive and to develop into newer, more advanced, and better-adapted species of life.

Evolution and other attempts to explain life apart from faith have led to horrible, murderous, and even genocidal practices. Modern theories of eugenics and racial superiority—based on evolutionary ideas—contributed in shocking ways to the debasement and destruction of human life in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (e.g., the genocidal beliefs of National Socialists; the decimation of Tasmanian Aborigines, who were regarded as an inferior species of humans, and whose skeletons were collected by naturalists in their search for the "missing link").

Moses' Teaching

God's acts of creation, as described by Moses, directly conflict with the above theories and the worldviews they assume. Please note the following:

God exists. Moses begins with the belief that there is a God and that He made all things. Moses does not offer arguments for God's existence. Instead, he describes personal encounters with God, who revealed His Word to Moses (e.g., Ex 3).

Kinds. Though Moses observed that selective breeding changes animals (see notes, Gn 30:40–41), he also observed that creatures breed only with members of their own kind (cf 2:18–24). Each kind of life reproduces itself (1:11–12) without developing into other kinds of life. "Kind" as Moses used it (Hbr *min*) is far broader than the modern biological term "species," since the modern term often describes unique breeds of creatures. (For Moses, the "kinds" that entered the ark in Gn 6 are breeding pairs from which all present varieties have descended. See notes, 6:19–20.)

Sin corrupted creation. Unlike Moses, evolutionists consider death as natural and the means by which living things advance—unfit varieties die out, and fit varieties successfully breed and survive. In other words, evolutionists often view life as "progressing." Moses' descriptions take changes and varieties of life into account but do not show life as progressing. Moses describes death as a consequence and curse brought by sin. He sees life growing worse and more difficult as sin advances in corrupting life, leading human beings and animals to attack and destroy one another (see notes, 2:17; 4:8).

Notes in TLSB

The notes for Genesis are written from the perspective that Moses accurately described the events of creation based on God's revelations to him. The scientific method of "observe, analyze, and report" is a helpful but limited tool for understanding the world. Scientists should certainly exercise sound reason in investigating God's world. But spiritual matters and the events of creation are beyond the scope of modern scientific observation and investigation (whether by creationists or evolutionists).

The notes in *TLSB* make no attempt to reconcile Moses' teaching with modern theories, which are constantly changing and can never be proven satisfactorily. Instead, the notes emphasize that faith in God, which He creates and sustains in us by His Word, remains the most relevant way to approach the issues of life and its origin.

Blessings for Readers

Genesis lays the foundation for all the events and doctrines of Holy Scripture. Studying its characters and events will prepare you for a much broader understanding of God's ways with humankind. Throughout Genesis, Moses emphasizes that these records apply not simply to Israel but to all nations and families of the earth. See in the patriarchs' weaknesses, struggles, and joys a mirror of families today. The Lord, through promise and faith, makes all the difference for the patriarchs, and He will likewise bless and lead you.

OUTLINE

Genesis is the prologue for the central story of the exodus in the Books of Moses. The Book is unified and also divided by the tenfold repetition of the Hebrew *toledoth*, "generations." This term, uniquely used by Moses, introduces each new section of the Book by recounting the history of generations or families. Only the genealogy of Israel is carried forward through Genesis to Ex 1:1–5.

I. The Book of the Ancients (1:1–11:26)
- A. Beginnings (chs 1–4)
  - 1. Setting: creation of the heavens and the earth (1:1–2:3)
  - 2. The fall and God's judgment (2:4–3:24)
  - 3. Aftermath of the fall (ch 4)
- B. Descendants of Adam (ch 5)
- C. The Flood (chs 6–9)
  - 1. Setting of the flood (6:1–8)
  - 2. The flood (6:9–8:22)
  - 3. Aftermath of the flood (ch 9)
- D. Table of Nations (ch 10)
- E. Tower of Babel (11:1–9)
- F. Descendants of Shem (11:10–26)

II. The Book of the Patriarchs (11:27–37:1)
- A. Descendants of Terah (11:27–32)
- B. Story of Abraham (12:1–25:18)
  - 1. God calls Abram (ch 12)

2. Abram receives a blessing (chs 13–14)
3. God makes a covenant with Abra(ha)m (chs 15–17)
4. Abraham intercedes for Sodom before its destruction (chs 18–19)
5. An heir for Abraham (chs 20–24)
6. Conclusion of the story of Abraham (25:1–18)

C. Story of Jacob (25:19–37:1)
1. Jacob and Esau (25:19–34)
2. Isaac as Abraham's heir (ch 26)
3. Jacob receives the blessing (27:1–40)
4. Jacob flees Esau's vengeance (27:41–33:20)
a. Esau's anger (27:41–28:9)
b. Jacob at Bethel (28:10–22)
c. Jacob in Paddan-aram (29:1–30:43)
d. Jacob returns to Canaan (31:1–33:20)
5. Conflict with the Shechemites (ch 34)
6. Jacob fulfills his vow (35:1–15)
7. Transitionary material (35:16–37:1)
a. Deaths of Rachel and Isaac (35:16–29)
b. Generations of Esau (ch 36)

III. The Book of Joseph (37:2–50:26)

A. Joseph and His Brothers (37:2–36)
1. Introductory note (37:2a)
2. Joseph sold into slavery (37:2b–36)

B. Excursus—Judah and Tamar (ch 38)
1. Judah's family (38:1–5)
2. Tamar's situation (38:6–11)
3. Tamar and Judah (38:12–30)

C. Joseph Prospers Despite Injustice (ch 39)
1. Joseph at Potiphar's house (39:1)
2. Joseph prospers (39:2–6a)
3. Potiphar's wife (39:6b–18)
4. Joseph imprisoned (39:19–23)

D. Joseph Interprets Dreams in Prison (ch 40)
1. Joseph, the cupbearer, and the baker (40:1–8)
2. The cupbearer's dream (40:9–15)
3. The baker's dream (40:16–19)
4. The cupbearer and the baker are judged (40:20–23)

E. Joseph Interprets Pharaoh's Dream (41:1–45)
   1. Pharaoh's dream (41:1–8)
   2. The cupbearer remembers Joseph (41:9–13)
   3. Pharaoh reveals his dream (41:14–24)
   4. Joseph interprets Pharaoh's dream (41:25–36)
   5. Joseph is rewarded (41:37–45)
F. Joseph Serves Pharaoh (41:46–57)
   1. Seven years of plenty (41:46–49)
   2. Joseph's sons (41:50–52)
   3. Seven years of famine (41:53–57)
G. Sons of Jacob Come to Egypt (ch 42)
   1. Jacob sends his sons to buy grain (42:1–5)
   2. Joseph accuses his brothers of spying (42:6–17)
   3. Joseph offers a deal and plays a trick (42:18–25)
   4. The brothers discover the trick (42:26–28)
   5. The brothers return home (42:29–38)
H. The Brothers Go to Egypt a Second Time (chs 43–45)
   1. Jacob sends his sons for grain again (43:1–15)
   2. Joseph's steward receives the brothers (43:16–25)
   3. Joseph receives the brothers (43:26–34)
   4. Joseph plays a second trick (44:1–13)
   5. Interview: Joseph reveals himself (44:14–45:15)
   6. Pharaoh hears of Joseph's brothers (45:16–20)
   7. The brothers return to Jacob (45:21–28)
I. Jacob Goes to Egypt (46:1–47:12)
   1. Jacob sets out for Egypt (46:1–7)
   2. Genealogy of Jacob's descendants (46:8–27)
   3. Joseph meets Jacob (46:28–34)
   4. Pharaoh welcomes Joseph's family (47:1–10)
   5. Joseph's family settles in Egypt (47:11–12)
J. The Hebrews in Egypt (47:13–31)
   1. Joseph acquires lands for Pharaoh (47:13–26)
   2. Summary note on the Hebrews in Egypt (47:27–28)
   3. Joseph swears to return Jacob's body to Canaan (47:29–31)
K. Jacob Blesses Ephraim and Manasseh (ch 48)
   1. Jacob adopts Ephraim and Manasseh (48:1–7)
   2. Jacob blesses Ephraim and Manasseh (48:8–22)

L. Jacob Blesses His Sons (49:1–28)
   1. Introduction (49:1–2)
   2. Blessings on the sons of Jacob (49:3–27)
   3. Conclusion (49:28)
M. Deaths of Jacob and Joseph (49:29–50:26)
   1. Death of Jacob (49:29–33)
   2. Embalming of Jacob (50:1–3)
   3. Burial of Jacob (50:4–14)
   4. Joseph's brothers fear vengeance (50:15–21)
   5. Death of Joseph (50:22–26)

Articles and Resources Related to Genesis

- Feasting and Fellowship with God in Eden
- The History of Humanity
- Theophanies in Genesis
- Peace and Blessing
- Family Life in Israel
- Genesis, Book of Dreams
- Cords of Love

Feasting and Fellowship with God in Eden

Think of the place of food in human life and culture. In the most basic way, food sustains life. But it also provides much more. When people want to get to know one another, they go out to eat. They cut business deals while they cut their entrees. They mark moments of joy, like birthdays and weddings, by eating. They console one another at funeral dinners. Human life depends on and revolves around eating.

God's first recorded words to Adam in Gn 2 were about food, what he should eat and what he should not eat (vv 16–17). No doubt curiosity and craving drove Adam to explore his new home, to eat his way through Eden. God prepared a banquet for Adam and gave him the freedom to eat "of every tree of the garden."

Forbidden Fruit

However, God also set a boundary for Adam. He reserved one tree from which Adam could not eat: “the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.” This tree has perplexed interpreters through the centuries. Some have wondered whether its fruit was poison. Others have wondered why a loving God would create an obvious temptation. Still others have asked why eating fruit should cause so great a rift between Adam and Eve and their Maker.

A closer look at the name of the tree may help us answer these questions. Another way to translate the name of the tree is “the tree by which good and evil are known.” In other words, the tree stood as a testimony to show what was good (eating from the trees God provided) and what was evil (eating from the forbidden tree). The tree marked a boundary between obedience and rebellion, between life as the Creator intended it and existence without His blessing.

There was much more at stake than a mouthful of food. God created Adam and Eve for fellowship with Him. He gave them the garden and its fruit to sustain them. Eating the forbidden fruit spurned God’s generosity and poisoned every relationship in the garden. A curse fell upon the food supply, and God warned Adam and Eve that the ground would one day devour them (Gn 3:19).

Hunger and Thirst

Today, the pursuit of daily bread still pits people and nations against one another. We live under Charles Darwin's vicious doctrine: survival of the fittest. The feasts that bring our families together also whet the appetites of those who hunger for what we have. In some ways, technology has distanced us from the thorns and dust of the curse in Gn 3. The modern farm makes food readily available in ways that would make the ancients salivate. But even the most wholesome food cannot rescue us from envy or from the earth's hungry jaws. Sin still corrupts every man-made paradise.

As Jesus broke bread with His disciples, He urged them to hunger and thirst for something more (Mt 5:6). As you study the Bible, anticipate this blessing from the Lord. Your gracious Savior—the bread of life—will satisfy your every need. By His holy, precious blood and His innocent suffering and death, Jesus has made the cross into a tree of life for you. Its fruit is righteousness. In the Sacrament of the Altar, you enjoy a special feast as your Lord and Savior provides you with His own true body and blood (Mt 26:26; Ps 34:8) under the bread and wine, for the forgiveness of your sins and the strengthening of your faith. All the feasting recorded in the Scriptures brings to mind the ultimate feast in heaven, where we will enjoy eternal fellowship with God—an experience our Lord Jesus describes frequently as a great banquet (cf Lk 14:7–24).

The History of Humanity

Genesis 1, in its comprehensive presentation of the origin of the entire universe, includes the creation of human beings. This sets the stage for the history of humanity, which begins in Gn 2:4. The remaining verses of chapter 2 elaborate on the creation of humanity as male and female (1:27) and delineate the relationship of the created earth and animals to human beings, who have "dominion … over all the earth" (1:26).

But above all, humanity's relationship to the Creator is clearly set forth in chapter 2. Adam's communion with the life-giving God will continue unless he oversteps the bounds of his creatureliness by disobedience to God and aspires to be equal with God.

Chapter 3 tells the sad story of the first couple's rebellion against their Creator. It is not an abstract treatise on the origin of evil per se. Rather, it tells us that Adam and Eve *did* evil and so became subject to death. The eating of the forbidden fruit was the declaration and the signal of their rebellion against the limitations of their creatureliness. It was their attempt to be like the omniscient God, "knowing good and evil." This baleful act the Bible later calls "sin." It disrupted Adam's and Eve's blissful relationship with God, with each other, with the animals, and with nature itself. This total corruption and estrangement, an uncontrollable disposition to defy God and His will, we call original sin, because every offspring of Adam is like Seth, the son of Adam, begotten "in his [Adam's] own likeness, after his image" (Gn 5:3).

Genesis 3 shows the need for all subsequent chapters and books of the Bible, where (as already in Gn 3:15) God promises to deliver us from sin and death and records what He did to remove these barriers that exclude us from life with Him. The message of all Scripture is that God Himself, in the Seed of the woman, will crush the head of "that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world" (Rv 12:9).

Walter R. Roehrs, *Survey of Covenant History: A Historical Overview of the Old Testament* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1989), 39–40; Scripture quotations changed to ESV.

Theophanies in Genesis

When the Lord visited Adam and Eve, they heard God "walking in the garden" (Gn 3:8). Later we read that "the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision" (Gn 15:1). When we read such passages, it is only natural for us to wonder what the prophets heard, saw, or felt in these encounters with God. Also, Scripture passages like "No one has ever seen God" (Jn 1:18) leap to mind.

These special appearances of God among human beings are called "theophanies," which means "manifestations of God." These theophanies try to describe for us what the prophets experienced in God's presence. Theophanies remind us that God sustains His creation and that His personal, active participation in human history continued after the fall.

Although God's involvement with creation was often subtle (through nature, historic events, and people), God sometimes revealed Himself in a more personal way. The ultimate theophany was the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh; He "is at the Father's side, [and] has made Him known" (Jn 1:18). The following table summarizes types of theophanies found in Genesis.

References: 3:8–19
Cf 6:9–22; 28:13
Manifestation: Walking and speaking
Notes on Examples: God came to the Garden of Eden to visit Adam and Eve after they sinned. They tried to hide, but God sought them out.

References: 5:22–24
Manifestation: Walking
Notes on Examples: Enoch "walked with God," which reflects an unusually close relationship.

References: 11:5–9
Cf 35:13
Manifestation: Coming down
Notes on Examples: God visited Babel to inspect the construction of the city and its tower. By confusing the people's language, He directly intervened and condemned their work.

References: 12:1–7
Cf 16:7–13; 21:12; 22:1; 24:7; 25:23; 31:3; 35:1, 10–11
Manifestation: Speaking
Notes on Examples: The Lord spoke to Abram and directed him to leave his homeland to travel to a new land, the Promised Land. This marked the beginning of God's promises of land, blessing, and offspring for Abram and his descendants.
References: Ch 15
Manifestation: Coming in a vision and burning fire
Notes on Examples: God came to Abram in a vision to renew His promises and to provide additional details about how they would be fulfilled. Early Christians often considered the angel or "messenger" of the Lord mentioned in the OT to be Jesus, not an angel. See p 1227.
References: 17:1–22
Cf 26:2, 24; 35:9; 48:3
Manifestation: Appearing
Notes on Examples: God appeared to Abram to reassure him about His promises and to institute circumcision as the sign of His covenant.
References: Ch 18
Cf 32:30
Manifestation: Coming in human form
Notes on Examples: God and two angels appeared to Abraham and ate with him while revealing the impending judgment against Sodom and Gomorrah.
References: 20:3–7
Cf 46:2–3
Manifestation: Speaking in a dream or vision of the night
Notes on Examples: God came to Abimelech in a dream and warned him not to violate Abraham's wife, Sarah, upon penalty of death. See p 74.

Peace and Blessing

The Gospel proclaims the biblical term "shalom" as holistic blessing. The starting point of the biblical conception of blessing is as a gift of God. … Blessing, beginning with creation (Gen. 1:22, 28), encompasses the Noahic (Gen. 9:1) and Abrahamic covenants (Gen. 12:1–3), and culminates in the Cross of Jesus Christ as the gift of grace (Eph. 2:5–8). … The God of blessing asks proper worship, not because this worship manipulates God as in Shamanistic worship but because worship itself is one manifestation of God's blessing. The word *brk* [*barak*, Hbr "bless"] in the sense of worship is an acknowledgement of God's lordship and power as well as His benefaction. …

The New Testament affirms that the most blessed of all is the Messiah Himself. The people welcome Him with jubilant cries of His entry into Zion in Mk. 11:9 f; Mt. 21:9; Lk. 19:38; Jn. 12:13. It means that blessing basically relates to the Messianic redemption. He who comes and His kingdom are blessed by God to whom they belong.

One of the most conspicuous characteristics of Jesus' ministry on the earth is that Jesus Himself is the One who blesses His people directly, like the children in Mk. 10:16 or the disciples at the ascension. … Paul, too, can journey to Rome in the fullness of the blessing brought by Christ (Rom. 15:29). While the curse brings eternal death, the blessed will enjoy life and entry into the kingdom of God.

Paul's view of blessing can be found in its new decisive Christological form. In Gal. 3:8 Paul cites Gen. 12:3b: "All nations shall be blessed in you." For Paul the fulfillment of the blessing promised to Abraham is now seen as God's redeeming act in Christ.

Chul Hwan Kim, "Central Issues in Proclaiming the Gospel to Korean Shamanists" (doctoral dissertation, Concordia Theological Seminary, 1999), 101, 103–5.

Family Life in Israel

The word *family* used to be easily defined: a father, a mother, and their children. But today we talk about nuclear families, cohabiting families, single-parent families, blended families, and foster families. The family situation seems to become more complicated with each generation! The ancient Israelites did not talk about "family" as we do today. They thought in terms of the household, which included not only blood relatives but also servants.

As you read the Book of Genesis, you may expect to see a clear picture of family values and caring relationships. However, Genesis shows the opposite! Like many households today, family life for the patriarchs and Israelites could be confusing and dysfunctional. (Though this article cites examples from throughout Scripture, it focuses primarily on Genesis.)

Israelite Marriage Customs

Marriage, the foundation of family in all cultures, appears quite different in the Bible than it does for people today. Western marriage customs owe more to ancient Rome than to ancient Israel. For example: June, named after Juno, the Roman queen of heaven and goddess of femininity and marriage, was for the Romans the most popular month for marriages. The exchange of rings is not biblical, but Roman. When a young woman and her family accepted a man's offer of marriage, she would receive gifts and a ring for the third finger of her left hand. Joining of right hands and kissing go back to the Romans, not the Bible. Even holding marriage ceremonies in a place of worship, with the exchange of vows, goes back to Rome and not to biblical customs.

Parents almost always arranged marriages in ancient Israel, as Abraham arranged the marriage of Isaac (Gn 24). When Isaac's son Jacob left home, Isaac emphasized the importance of marrying within his own clan or tribe: "You must not take a wife from the Canaanite women. … Take as your wife … one of the daughters of Laban your mother's brother" (28:1–2). Isaac intentionally sent Jacob to seek a wife among his first cousins!

Although we might find the practice of arranged marriages odd or even cold, in fact, such marriages often lead to love. This is what could be expected, since loving parents would choose the best spouse for their child. In Isaac's case, we read, "[Rebekah] became his wife, and he loved her" (24:67). Love came after the marriage.

Courtship or marriage on the basis of "love" was not part of normal life at the time of the patriarchs. Parents from different families did not leave boys and girls alone together. However, young people might meet in the early morning or late afternoon, when girls went to the village well to get water for their families (Jacob met Rachel at the well, ch 29). Although many of the patriarchs married late in life, it was common for people to marry in their midteens.

Marriage as Contract

The contract of marriage, or betrothal, was as binding as marriage itself. Once the families agreed on that commitment, the couple was considered married. The New Testament story of Joseph and Mary provides an example of this. Although they were only pledged to be married, Joseph would have had to "divorce" Mary to break off the relationship (Mt 1:18–19).

Ancient Israelites also had a practice called *mohar*, that is, a price paid to the bride's father to compensate him for the loss of his daughter. A common fee was 50 silver shekels, but in some cases the *mohar* was not paid in money. For example, Jacob exchanged 14 years of labor to obtain Leah and Rachel from their father, Laban (Gn 29:20, 27, 30). On occasion, the bride would receive some of the *mohar* as a gift from her parents; this was called the *mattan*, or dowry.

Israelite Weddings

On the wedding day, the bridegroom would dress in wedding garments, and his friends would escort him to the house of the bride (cf Gn 2:24). The bride would come out to meet them with her friends. The Song of Solomon beautifully depicts a wedding procession and the meeting of a bride and groom (Sg 3:6–5:1; this is the context of Jesus' parable of the 10 virgins in Mt 25:1–13).

The whole group would joyously parade to the home that the groom had prepared. Jesus used this imagery to describe His relationship to the Church: "In My Father's house are many rooms. … I go to prepare a place for you. … If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to Myself" (Jn 14:2–3). The Christian life is like a betrothal. Heaven will be like marriage!

Whereas marriage in the patriarchal period would have been arranged by oral agreement, later in Israelite history, the fathers of the two families and the groom would sign a marriage document. The couple would drink wine from a common cup to seal the marriage covenant and to signify the joy of their new life together. This may have taken place under a marriage canopy, the *chuppah*. The term occurs in Jl 2:16, where it is translated "chamber." A weeklong marriage feast often followed the ceremony (e.g., Jn 2). The meals were as elaborate as the family could afford.

In some of these ancient customs, we might trace present-day practices. Though customs come and go, God's ideal remains constant. Based on the creation and union of Adam and Eve in Eden, the essence of marriage remains the same. It is a commitment wherein a man and a woman become one (Gn 2:20–25; Mt 19:4–6).

Aberrations from God's Ideal

Adam and Eve's sin forever altered the loving commitment of marriage and the full blessing of family life that God intended for us. Counselors today speak of "dysfunctional" marriages or families. Because of sin, every human relationship is more or less dysfunctional. In Genesis, we see three aberrations by which the dysfunction of sin severed the bonds of love:

Polygamy. Not trusting fully in God's promise, Abraham agreed to take Sarah's servant Hagar and have a child by her. From this union came Ishmael—and a great deal of discord. Hagar eventually despised Sarah, and Sarah had her dismissed (Gn 16:1–6). Strictly speaking, this was not polygamy because Hagar was a concubine and did not have the full status of a wife. Yet both women were rivals within the same household.

Isaac led a relatively quiet life, married to only one woman. But with the next generation, it was an entirely different matter. Jacob had two wives and two concubines. He loved Rachel most of all, and this became a source of unending pain for her sister, Leah. When Leah was able to have children and Rachel could not, Rachel became jealous. Both women ended up giving their maidservants to Jacob in what became a contest to see who could provide the most heirs.

Polygamy was the source of a great deal of rivalry, jealousy, and hurt. In modern times, groups such as the Mormons have tried to revive the practice. Today's easy divorce and remarriage laws make polygamy a frequent reality, though we may not recognize it as such. Tiring of one spouse, people quickly move on to the next.

Prostitution. The second aberration in patriarchal times was prostitution. The most famous case involved Judah and Tamar. This unhappy incident came about because of unusual circumstances involving ancient familial rights and obligations.

Judah had married Shua, a Canaanite woman to whom three sons were born: Er, Onan, and Shelah (38:1–5). Er married Tamar, but God put Er to death for his wickedness. Judah then told Onan to fulfill his "duty of a brother-in-law to [Tamar], and raise up offspring for your brother" (38:8).

In later Israelite history, the practice of a man conceiving children for his deceased brother was known as "levirate marriage." Legally, the offspring were considered the children of the dead brother and would inherit his

property. When Onan refused to carry out his duty, God put him to death also. This may have been because Onan wanted to keep his brother's property and not pass it on to any heirs.

Judah then urged Tamar to wait for the third son to grow up. But when it became clear that Judah would prevent her from marrying the third son, Tamar devised a plan. Disguising herself as a prostitute, Tamar seduced Judah himself. (According to Hittite law, when there was no brother-in-law to perform the levirate duty, the father-in-law was responsible to do so.) As a pledge of future payment, Judah gave her his seal and staff. When news of Tamar's pregnancy reached Judah, he hypocritcally demanded that she be burned to death (38:24). At that time, promiscuity by men was tolerated but promiscuity by women was not.

Tamar quickly exposed Judah's hypocrisy by producing his seal and staff. Judah could only reply, "She is more righteous than I, since I did not give her to my son Shelah" (38:26).

Despite this knot of sins, God was gracious. Tamar gave birth to twin boys, Perez and Zerah. Perez fathered the leading clan in Judah, thus becoming an ancestor of King David (Ru 4:18–22) and of Jesus (Mt 1:1–16). Human sin and weakness could not prevent God from fulfilling His promise of sending the Savior into the world for you!

Intermarriage. A third aberration from God's ideal was intermarriage with unbelievers. Genesis stresses the passing along of God's precious promises, especially the promise of the Savior, from one generation to the next. The patriarchs recognized that faith in God would not survive if God's chosen people married spouses who cared nothing about God's promises. Still, intermarriage with pagans happened on many occasions. For example, Ishmael's mother, Hagar, "took a wife for him from the land of Egypt" (Gn 21:21). "Esau took his wives from the Canaanites" (36:2). Judah married a Canaanite. And Joseph married "Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera priest of On" (41:50), who bore him two sons.

The spiritual attitude of one's spouse is vitally important, especially when it comes to the training of children. Although many of God's people in ancient Israel were indifferent to the faith (or lack of faith) of their spouses, God kept His chosen nation intact. He still works wonders for divided families today. He can loose every knot of sin that binds us.

This brings us to our last comparison between family life then and now—the gift of children.

Children of the Patriarchs

The Bible says that "children are a heritage from the Lord … a reward" (Ps 127:3). The Lord "gives the barren woman a home, making her the joyous mother of children" (Ps 113:9). Not surprisingly, women in ancient Israel who bore no children experienced severe emotional distress, as evidenced by Sarah and Rachel before God gave them children.

Today, we often consider companionship as the first, and frequently the only, purpose of marriage. But in the ancient Near East, people tended to look at marriage chiefly as the means to secure the survival of the family by providing male descendants. This is evident in the practice of levirate marriage, discussed above. Moreover, some ancient marriage contracts would contain the stipulation that a childless wife must provide a maidservant for her husband. Both Sarah and Rachel followed this practice. Although a mother might welcome the birth of a daughter as a blessing, she was especially happy when she could present her husband with his firstborn son. This boy would continue the family line as well as provide strength and support for his parents in their old age.

As with every blessing, the gift of children—both girls and boys—was also misused. As noted above, children could become the pawns of feuding wives and concubines. Another fault among the patriarchal families was showing favoritism. Isaac "loved Esau … but Rebekah loved Jacob" (Gn 25:28). This resulted in strife and, eventually, in Esau's desire to kill his brother. Similarly, Jacob's favoring of Joseph led to hatred between brothers.

Children of God

At the end of Genesis, Joseph looked back on the sinful decisions that had affected his family. Despite the many bad memories, Joseph saw God at work. “You meant evil against me,” Joseph explained to his brothers, “but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive” (50:20).

By God’s grace, Joseph and his family found forgiveness and reconciliation. Ishmael and Isaac came together for the burial of their father, Abraham (25:9). Esau and Jacob met in a tearful reunion (33:4). Despite their many problems, God worked with them and through them, even sending His Son, Jesus, to be one of their descendants and the Savior of all families.

Your family needs to experience this same grace, which is found only in Christ. Because He loves and forgives us, we can love and forgive one another. Through Christ, we live as God’s dearly loved children.

Genesis, Book of Dreams

The following chart lists the numerous dreams recorded in Genesis by which God communicated with patriarchs, tribal leaders, and kings. They show how God met people at their level of understanding, revealing His Word in ways they recognized.

You will have many dreams during your life. Be careful about interpreting them. In Genesis, God used dreams especially to reveal His will. But today, we have God's will recorded in the Bible for us. While interpreting the Book of Genesis, Luther noted, "I, too, at times have dreams that move me somewhat, but I despise them and have come to this understanding with my Lord God that I will believe Moses and the prophets" (*WLS* § 1278).

Cords of Love

Tent cords literally held together the households of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. What holds your household together? What binds your family members together? As you care for your household, consider the following examples from Genesis.

Examples: Loving commitment of Isaac and Rebekah (24:62–67)

Application: Unlike some of the other marriages in Genesis, the relationship between Isaac and Rebekah was largely one of genuine love and commitment. They did not complicate their relationship by adding other spouses or concubines. In marriage today, God calls us to a life of loving commitment and lasting devotion. Just as God bound the hearts of Isaac and Rebekah together for life, through the love of Christ He will bind your heart to your spouse and family.

Examples: Calling on God in prayer by Isaac's household (26:16–25)

Application: In times of transition and difficulty, Isaac prayerfully led his household by calling on the name of the Lord. No matter where life takes you, you can joyfully and confidently take your concerns to your heavenly Father and lead your family in prayer.

Examples: Making peace between Jacob and Esau (33:1–11)

Application: When Jacob and Esau last saw each other, Esau held a death grudge against his brother. However, by God's grace, the two brothers were able to make peace.

Examples: Purification of Jacob's household (35:1–5)

Application: At God's command, Jacob purified his household of everything that dishonored God, especially false religious practices. Through the Holy Spirit's call of repentance today, God cleanses our households and prepares us for greater service to Him and one another.

Examples: Forgiveness by Joseph (45:1–5; 50:15–21)

Application: When Joseph recognized the sorrow of his brothers over their sin, he could not help but forgive them. Despite all his suffering, Joseph recognized how God worked through the situation to deal mercifully with his entire family. In Christ, God has acted with even greater compassion on our behalf: "While we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Rm 5:8).

Examples: Sharing by Joseph (45:6–11)

Application: Joseph invited his entire family to come and share in the prosperity of Egypt during the famine. Questions about property frequently cause tension in households today. As God blesses you with prosperity, share His blessings with others.

Reflecting on the state of Israel 1,200 years after the time of the patriarchs, God told the prophet Hosea, "I led them with cords of kindness, with the bands of love" (Hos 11:4). God does not just watch over us. He binds Himself to us with "bands of love." Even when the children of Israel rebelled against Him, He continued to care for them, sending them salvation and forgiveness in His Son, Jesus Christ.

If your household lacks the characteristics described above, do not give up hope! Call on your heavenly Father for help. By His love, bind yourself to your household and share God's everlasting compassion with them. Through Christ, He will bind your broken heart with cords of compassion (Is 61:1).

Footnotes

Footnotes for Genesis, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:6 Or *a canopy*; also verses 7, 8, 14, 15, 17, 20
- [2] 1:7 Or *fashioned*; also verse 16
- [3] 1:8 Or *Sky*; also verses 9, 14, 15, 17, 20, 26, 28, 30; 2:1
- [4] 1:10 Or *Land*; also verses 11, 12, 22, 24, 25, 26, 28, 30; 2:1
- [5] 1:11 Or *small plants*; also verses 12, 29
- [6] 1:14 Or *appointed times*
- [7] 1:20 Or *flying things*; see Leviticus 11:19-20
- [1] 1:26 The Hebrew word for *man* (*adam*) is the generic term for mankind and becomes the proper name *Adam*

Footnotes for Genesis, Chapter 2

- [1] 2:5 Or *open country*
- [2] 2:5 Or *earth*; also verse 6
- [1] 2:6 Or *spring*
- [1] 2:17 Or *when you eat*
- [2] 2:18 Or *corresponding to*; also verse 20
- [3] 2:19 Or *And out of the ground the* LORD *God formed*
- [4] 2:20 Or *the man*
- [5] 2:22 Hebrew *built*
- [6] 2:23 The Hebrew words for *woman* (*ishshah*) and *man* (*ish*) sound alike

Footnotes for Genesis, Chapter 3

- [7] 3:1 In Hebrew *you* is plural in verses 1-5
- [1] 3:6 Or *to give insight*
- [2] 3:8 Hebrew *wind*
- [3] 3:9 In Hebrew *you* is singular in verses 9 and 11
- [1] 3:15 Hebrew *seed*; so throughout Genesis
- [2] 3:16 Or *against*
- [3] 3:20 *Eve* sounds like the Hebrew for *life-giver* and resembles the word for *living*

Footnotes for Genesis, Chapter 4

- [1] 4:1 *Cain* sounds like the Hebrew for *gotten*
- [2] 4:7 Hebrew *will there not be a lifting up* [of your face]?
- [3] 4:7 Or *against*
- [4] 4:8 Hebrew; Samaritan, Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate add *Let us go out to the field*
- [1] 4:13 Or *My guilt is too great to bear*
- [2] 4:16 *Nod* means *wandering*
- [1] 4:25 *Seth* sounds like the Hebrew for *he appointed*

Footnotes for Genesis, Chapter 5

- [2] 5:2 Hebrew *adam*
- [3] 5:22 Septuagint *pleased God*
- [4] 5:24 Septuagint *was not found*
- [1] 5:29 *Noah* sounds like the Hebrew for *rest*

Footnotes for Genesis, Chapter 6

- [2] 6:3 Or *My Spirit shall not contend with*
- [3] 6:4 Or *giants*
- [1] 6:13 Hebrew *The end of all flesh has come before me*
- [2] 6:14 An unknown kind of tree; transliterated from Hebrew
- [3] 6:15 A *cubit* was about 18 inches or 45 centimeters
- [4] 6:16 Or *skylight*

Footnotes for Genesis, Chapter 7

- [5] 7:2 Or *seven of each kind of clean animal*
- [6] 7:3 Or *seven of each kind*
- [7] 7:4 Hebrew *all existence*; also verse 23
- [1] 7:20 A *cubit* was about 18 inches or 45 centimeters

Footnotes for Genesis, Chapter 8

- [1] 8:21 Or *dishonor*

Footnotes for Genesis, Chapter 9

- [1] 9:7 In Hebrew *you* is plural
- [1] 9:19 Or *from these the whole earth was populated*
- [2] 9:20 Or *Noah, a man of the soil, was the first to plant a vineyard*
- [3] 9:27 *Japheth* sounds like the Hebrew for *enlarge*

Footnotes for Genesis, Chapter 10

- [1] 10:8 Or *he began to be a mighty man on the earth*
- [2] 10:14 Or *from where*
- [3] 10:25 *Peleg* means *division*

Footnotes for Genesis, Chapter 11

- [1] 11:9 *Babel* sounds like the Hebrew for *confused*

Footnotes for Genesis, Chapter 12

- [1] 12:1 Or *had said*
- [1] 12:3 Or *by you all the families of the earth shall bless themselves*
- [2] 12:6 Or *terebinth*

Footnotes for Genesis, Chapter 13

- [1] 13:8 Hebrew *we are men, brothers*
- [2] 13:18 Or *terebinths*

Footnotes for Genesis, Chapter 14

- [1] 14:13 Or *terebinths*

- [1] 14:19 Or *Creator*; also verse 22
- [2] 14:22 Or *I have taken a solemn oath*

Footnotes for Genesis, Chapter 15

- [3] 15:2 Or *I shall die*
- [4] 15:4 Hebrew *what will come out of your own loins*
- [1] 15:18 Or *have given*

Footnotes for Genesis, Chapter 16

- [2] 16:2 Hebrew *be built up*, which sounds like the Hebrew for *children*
- [1] 16:4 Hebrew *her mistress was dishonorable in her eyes*; similarly in verse 5
- [2] 16:11 *Ishmael* means *God hears*
- [3] 16:13 Or *You are a God who sees me*
- [4] 16:13 Hebrew *Have I really seen him here who sees me?* or *Would I have looked here for the one who sees me?*
- [5] 16:14 *Beer-lahai-roi* means *the well of the Living One who sees me*

Footnotes for Genesis, Chapter 17

- [6] 17:1 Hebrew *El Shaddai*
- [7] 17:5 *Abram* means *exalted father*
- [8] 17:5 *Abraham* means *father of a multitude*
- [1] 17:15 *Sarai* and *Sarah* mean *princess*
- [2] 17:16 Hebrew *have given*
- [3] 17:19 *Isaac* means *he laughs*

Footnotes for Genesis, Chapter 18

- [1] 18:1 Or *terebinths*
- [2] 18:3 Or *My lord*
- [3] 18:6 A *seah* was about 7 quarts or 7.3 liters
- [4] 18:14 Or *wonderful*
- [5] 18:15 Or *acted falsely*
- [6] 18:19 Hebrew *known*
- [1] 18:21 Or *they deserve destruction*; Hebrew *they have made a complete end*

Footnotes for Genesis, Chapter 19

- [1] 19:22 *Zoar* means *little*
- [1] 19:37 *Moab* sounds like the Hebrew for *from father*
- [2] 19:38 *Ben-ammi* means *son of my people*

Footnotes for Genesis, Chapter 20

- [1] 20:16 Hebrew *It is a covering of eyes for all*

Footnotes for Genesis, Chapter 21

- [2] 21:3 *Isaac* means *he laughs*
- [3] 21:9 Possibly *laughing in mockery*
- [1] 21:30 Or *you*
- [2] 21:31 *Beersheba* means *well of seven* or *well of the oath*

Footnotes for Genesis, Chapter 22

- [1] 22:5 Or *young man*; also verse 12
- [2] 22:14 Or *will see*
- [3] 22:14 Or *he will be seen*
- [4] 22:17 Or *their*

Footnotes for Genesis, Chapter 23

- [1] 23:3 Hebrew *sons of Heth*; also verses 5, 7, 10, 16, 18, 20
- [2] 23:6 Or *a mighty prince*
- [3] 23:15 A *shekel* was about 2/5 ounce or 11 grams

Footnotes for Genesis, Chapter 24

- [1] 24:10 Hebrew *Aram-naharaim*
- [2] 24:14 Or *By her*
- [3] 24:16 Or *a woman of marriageable age*
- [4] 24:22 A *shekel* was about 2/5 ounce or 11 grams
- [1] 24:48 Or *faithfully*
- [2] 24:60 Or *hate them*

Footnotes for Genesis, Chapter 25

- [1] 25:18 Hebrew *fell*
- [1] 25:22 Or *why do I live?*
- [2] 25:23 Or *from birth*

- [3] 25:26 *Jacob* means *He takes by the heel*, or *He cheats*
- [4] 25:30 *Edom* sounds like the Hebrew for *red*

Footnotes for Genesis, Chapter 26

- [1] 26:8 Hebrew may suggest an intimate relationship
- [2] 26:20 *Esek* means *contention*
- [3] 26:21 *Sitnah* means *enmity*
- [4] 26:22 *Rehoboth* means *broad places*, or *room*
- [1] 26:33 *Shibah* sounds like the Hebrew for *oath*
- [2] 26:35 Hebrew *they were bitterness of spirit*

Footnotes for Genesis, Chapter 27

- [1] 27:36 *Jacob* means *He takes by the heel*, or *He cheats*
- [2] 27:39 Or *Behold, of*
- [3] 27:39 Or *and of*
- [1] 27:46 Hebrew *daughters of Heth*

Footnotes for Genesis, Chapter 28

- [2] 28:3 Hebrew *El Shaddai*
- [3] 28:12 Or *a flight of steps*
- [1] 28:13 Or *beside him*
- [2] 28:19 *Bethel* means *the house of God*

Footnotes for Genesis, Chapter 29

- [1] 29:17 Or *soft*
- [2] 29:24 Or *had given*; also verse 29
- [3] 29:32 *Reuben* means *See, a son*
- [4] 29:33 *Simeon* sounds like the Hebrew for *heard*
- [5] 29:34 *Levi* sounds like the Hebrew for *attached*
- [6] 29:35 *Judah* sounds like the Hebrew for *praise*

Footnotes for Genesis, Chapter 30

- [1] 30:3 Hebrew *on my knees*
- [2] 30:3 Hebrew *be built up*, which sounds like the Hebrew for *children*
- [3] 30:6 *Dan* sounds like the Hebrew for *judged*
- [4] 30:8 Hebrew *With wrestlings of God*
- [5] 30:8 *Naphtali* sounds like the Hebrew for *wrestling*
- [6] 30:11 *Gad* sounds like the Hebrew for *good fortune*
- [7] 30:13 *Asher* sounds like the Hebrew for *happy*
- [8] 30:18 *Issachar* sounds like the Hebrew for *wages*, or *hire*
- [9] 30:20 *Zebulun* sounds like the Hebrew for *honor*
- [10] 30:24 *Joseph* means *May he add*, and sounds like the Hebrew for *taken away*
- [11] 30:27 Or *have become rich and*

Footnotes for Genesis, Chapter 31

- [1] 31:20 Hebrew *stole the heart of*; also verses 26, 27
- [2] 31:29 The Hebrew for *your* is plural here
- [1] 31:47 Aramaic *the heap of witness*
- [2] 31:47 Hebrew *the heap of witness*
- [3] 31:49 *Mizpah* means *watchpost*

- [4] 31:55 Ch 32:1 in Hebrew

Footnotes for Genesis, Chapter 32

- [5] 32:2 *Mahanaim* means *two camps*
- [6] 32:3 Or *had sent*
- [1] 32:20 Hebrew *appease his face*
- [2] 32:20 Hebrew *he will lift my face*
- [3] 32:22 Or *sons*
- [4] 32:28 *Israel* means *He strives with God*, or *God strives*
- [5] 32:30 *Peniel* means *the face of God*

Footnotes for Genesis, Chapter 33

- [1] 33:8 Hebrew *camp*
- [2] 33:12 Or *along with*
- [3] 33:17 *Succoth* means *booths*
- [4] 33:18 Or *peacefully*
- [5] 33:19 Hebrew *a hundred qesitah*; a unit of money of unknown value
- [6] 33:20 *El-Elohe-Israel* means *God, the God of Israel*

Footnotes for Genesis, Chapter 34

- [1] 34:8 The Hebrew for *your* is plural here
- [2] 34:12 Or *engagement present*

Footnotes for Genesis, Chapter 35

- [1] 35:7 *El-bethel* means *God of Bethel*
- [2] 35:8 *Allon-bacuth* means *oak of weeping*
- [3] 35:9 Or *had appeared*
- [4] 35:11 Hebrew *El Shaddai*
- [5] 35:11 Hebrew *from your loins*
- [6] 35:16 Or *about two hours' distance*
- [7] 35:18 *Ben-oni* could mean *son of my sorrow*, or *son of my strength*
- [8] 35:18 *Benjamin* means *son of the right hand*

Footnotes for Genesis, Chapter 36

- [1] 36:2 Hebrew; Samaritan, Septuagint, Syriac *son*; also verse 14
- [1] 36:37 Hebrew *the River*

Footnotes for Genesis, Chapter 37

- [2] 37:3 See Septuagint, Vulgate; or (with Syriac) *a robe with long sleeves*. The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain; also verses 23, 32
- [1] 37:20 Or *cisterns*; also verses 22, 24
- [2] 37:28 A *shekel* was about 2/5 ounce or 11 grams

Footnotes for Genesis, Chapter 38

- [1] 38:5 Hebrew *He*

- [1] 38:21 Hebrew *sacred woman*; a woman who served a pagan deity by prostitution; also verse 22
- [2] 38:24 Or *has committed prostitution*
- [3] 38:24 Or *by prostitution*
- [4] 38:29 *Perez* means *a breach*

Footnotes for Genesis, Chapter 41

- [1] 41:16 Or (compare Samaritan, Septuagint) *Without God it is not possible to give Pharaoh an answer about his welfare*
- [2] 41:34 Or *over the land and organize the land*
- [1] 41:38 Or *of the gods*
- [2] 41:40 Hebrew *and according to your command all my people shall kiss the ground*
- [3] 41:43 *Abrek*, probably an Egyptian word, similar in sound to the Hebrew word meaning *to kneel*
- [4] 41:51 *Manasseh* sounds like the Hebrew for *making to forget*
- [5] 41:52 *Ephraim* sounds like the Hebrew for *making fruitful*
- [6] 41:56 Hebrew *all that was in them*

Footnotes for Genesis, Chapter 43

- [1] 43:14 Hebrew *El Shaddai*
- [2] 43:34 Hebrew *and became intoxicated*

Footnotes for Genesis, Chapter 44

- [1] 44:4 Septuagint (compare Vulgate) adds *Why have you stolen my silver cup?*

Footnotes for Genesis, Chapter 45

- [1] 45:20 Hebrew *Let your eye not pity*
- [2] 45:22 A *shekel* was about 2/5 ounce or 11 grams

Footnotes for Genesis, Chapter 47

- [1] 47:21 Samaritan, Septuagint, Vulgate; Hebrew *he removed them to the cities*
- [1] 47:31 Hebrew; Septuagint *staff*

Footnotes for Genesis, Chapter 48

- [2] 48:3 Hebrew *El Shaddai*
- [3] 48:7 Or *about two hours' distance*
- [4] 48:16 Or *let them be like fish for multitude*
- [5] 48:19 Hebrew *fullness*
- [1] 48:22 Or *one portion of the land*; Hebrew *shekem*, which sounds like the town and district called *Shechem*

Footnotes for Genesis, Chapter 49

- [1] 49:10 By a slight revocalization; a slight emendation yields (compare Septuagint, Syriac, Targum) *until he comes to whom it belongs*; Hebrew *until Shiloh comes*, or *until he comes to Shiloh*
- [2] 49:14 Or *between its saddlebags*
- [3] 49:19 *Gad* sounds like the Hebrew for *raiders* and *raid*
- [4] 49:21 Or *he gives beautiful words*, or *that bears fawns of the fold*
- [5] 49:22 Or *Joseph is a wild donkey, a wild donkey beside a spring, his wild colts beside the wall*
- [6] 49:24 Hebrew *the arms of his hands*
- [7] 49:24 Or *by the name of the Shepherd*
- [1] 49:25 Hebrew *Shaddai*
- [2] 49:26 A slight emendation yields (compare Septuagint) *the blessings of the eternal mountains, the bounties of the everlasting hills*

Footnotes for Genesis, Chapter 50

- [3] 50:11 *Abel-mizraim* means *mourning* (or *meadow*) *of Egypt*
- [1] 50:20 Or *a numerous people*
- [2] 50:23 Hebrew *were born on Joseph's knees*

Study Notes

GENESIS—NOTE ON 1:1–2:3 God's creation of the world is presented in three stages: declaration of the creation of matter out of nothingness (1:1–2); the ordering of creation (days 1 and 2, 1:3–8); and the filling of creation (days 3 through 6, 1:9–31). Chem: "On the first day He created the earth in order that on the third day He might … mould and prepare it for the use of man" (*LTh* 1:163). God fills creation in two steps: inanimate objects first (days 3 and 4, 1:9–19), then animate beings (days 5 and 6, 1:20–31). The account concludes with God's rest on the seventh day (2:1–3). The text is written in prose, though several aspects, such as the repetition of the formula "God saw that it was good," give the text a heightened rhetorical feel.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 1:1 *In the beginning*. The ESV reflects the traditional translation of the opening phrase, which establishes the point in time at which the action occurs. (Some critical scholars translate the Hbr text similarly to two Babylonian epics, the *Enuma Elish* and the *Epic of Atra-Khasis*. Their translation allows denial of the important biblical teaching that God created the world out of nothing [*ex nihilo*] and argues instead that matter is eternal.) The Bible affirms that God created the world (Ps 90:2; Jer 10:16) and that He created it out of nothing through Jesus Christ (Rm 4:17; Heb 1:2). Ter: "By not mentioning [a source of material], [Scripture] has given us a clear proof that there was no such thing" (*ANF* 3:489). *created*. Hbr *bara'* is never used with a subject other than God in the OT. God alone has the power to create (bring into existence from nothing). Humans make (or "create") things only by rearranging what God has created. That God alone is the Creator of all that exists affirms that He is the only true God. *the heavens and the earth*. This first "couple" did not arise by any natural process but came into being as a result of God's direct and unique creative activity. In addition, these terms together refer to the whole of God's creation, the details of which follow. Throughout ch 1, "heavens" refers to the sky and the cosmos beyond the boundaries of the earth, not to the abode of God.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 1:1 God's first act, the creation, is an act of grace. God acts freely to reflect His character, making the world "very good" (1:31). Even after the fall and the coming of sin, much of the

goodness that God built into creation remains. Philosophers debate why evil exists, and people ask how a good God could allow bad things to happen. But it is not the existence of evil and suffering that requires an explanation; it is the existence of goodness and beauty and love that is most remarkable. A world without God cannot explain such things. The persistence of goodness reminds us of what we have lost, but it also offers us a glimpse of God's grace and the everlasting glory to which God has called us through Christ. • "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me" (Ps 51:10). Amen.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 1:2–8 Describes matter at the first moment of creation (v 2) and then describes how God arranged the matter He created. First, God separated light from darkness (vv 3–5). Next, God separated what is below the sky from what is above it (vv 6–8). These arrangements established what we call "time" (expressed in the sequence of days and nights) and "space" (expressed in the separation of the waters above and below the sky). This work was the first two days of creation. Scripture does not explicitly state when God made the angels. Ancient rabbinic and Christian interpreters commonly held that angels were created during the first days, though their opinions and reasons varied widely.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 1:2 *without form and void*. God's initial creative act resulted in shapeless matter that God proceeded to arrange, or order, in several stages. *the deep … the waters*. Formlessness is pictured as a watery mixture; neither the sky nor the dry land has been distinguished. Israelites understood water as a formless material. *deep*. Wordplay: "without form" (Hbr *tohu*) and "deep" (Hbr *tehom*) sound similar. "Deep" not the everyday term for water or the oceans; suggests the vast inaccessible and formless depths of the seas. Image of the undefined matter of creation as a limitless ocean is suggested by the formlessness of the underwater world, which was unknown, and, therefore, mysterious (cf Jb 38:16). Elsewhere, God's power to control the depths of the sea is a sign of His supremacy over both creation (cf Ps 77:16; 135:6) and other gods (see parting of the Red Sea in Ex 15:5, 8; cf Ps 106:9; Is 51:10; 63:13). See note, Mk 4:39. *the Spirit of God*. God's active presence in creation. *hovering*. The Spirit's activity is pictured as a bird or butterfly fluttering over the waters. Bas: "By the Spirit of God, he means the Holy Spirit" (*NPNF* 2 8:62). Mel: "The Father, by speaking, begets the Word who is the image of the eternal Father. And of the Holy Spirit it is expressly said, 'And the Spirit …' " (Chem, *LTh* 1:50).

God was directly involved in not only the action of creating (bringing into existence out of nothing) but also in the work of bringing form and order to that which He had created. There is no place in the biblical view of creation for the abstract and impersonal process of evolution. The Bible affirms that the Father directly and intentionally called the order of the cosmos into being through the Son (Pr 8:22–36; Jn 1:3; Heb 1:2).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 1:3 *And God said*. Note well: In pagan religions of the ancient Near East, nature and the realm of the gods were blended together; material things, such as the sun and moon, or trees and stones, were thought to be divine. (In the Babylonian *Epic of Atra-Khasis*, the material world was formed when the gods mixed the blood of a slain god with dirt. In the *Enuma Elish*, the material world was formed out of the body parts of a slain goddess. By these literary devices, ancient mythology communicated the idea that matter itself was formed of the essence of divinity.) In contrast, the Bible makes clear that God is distinct from the material world. The cosmos is not divine, made up of elements of the gods. Rather, the one true God called the cosmos into being out of nothingness and arranged it by the power of His Word alone. God's Word is "performative"—it does not merely state something, but it accomplishes, or brings about, that which it declares. See notes, Rm 10:17; Is 55:11. *light*. Not natural sunlight, but light called into being by God's Word to contrast the unbroken darkness that was the setting for God's initial creative act (v 2). This anticipates the restored creation at the end of time, in which God's presence will enlighten all things, and there will no longer be a need for the sun or the moon (Rv 21:23; 22:5). Jesus embodied the light of God's presence (Jn 8:12), and God shines this light in us to create faith in Him. For these reasons, lights (lamps or candles) are used in Christian worship to symbolize God's active faith-creating and faith-sustaining presence among His people. See "seven," p 217.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 1:4 *good*. God judged that this first step in ordering His creation conformed to His will. In the same way, all that God creates is good (vv 10, 12, 18, 21, 25), and the whole of His creation is summarized by the phrase "very good" (v 31). *God separated*. See note, vv 2–8.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 1:5 *God called*. Hbr idiom used to assign a name. Lit, "God called to the light: day." Though God allowed Adam to name the living things with which He filled creation (2:19–20), God Himself assigned names to the fundamental distinctions He made as He ordered His

creation. *the first day*. Lit, "day 1." The first cycle of time, initiated by the distinction of light from darkness. *first*. Lit, "one." Moses used the cardinal number here instead of the ordinal form "first"; his time-related words make it quite clear that we are to understand this day 1 as a normal 24-hour day, bounded by an evening and a morning. See note, Lv 23:32. With the six days to follow, it makes up a single week. See note, v 14. *day*. Hbr *yom*; not always used to designate a 24-hour day (e.g., refers to only the daylight portion of a 24-hour day in vv 5, 16), but that is by far its most basic use.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 1:6 God's ordering activity changes. See note, vv 2–8. God introduced three fundamental distinctions in the physical world, as the Israelites understood it: sky, sea, and dry land. *expanse*. Difficult term. Hbr *raqia'*, translated "Heaven" in v 8, suggests a metal plate made flat through hammering. The point of the image is the function rather than the substance: the sky serves as a divider. The Israelites often used figurative terms to describe the cosmos as it appeared to them (cf Is 40:22, where the sky is described as a "curtain" and a "tent"). *let it separate the waters from the waters*. The expanse separates the waters that are above from the waters that are below (v 7). This was the first step in organizing the spatial aspect of creation.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 1:7 *God … separated the waters*. World is described in terms of human experience. To the Israelites, a blue sky and falling rain indicated that there was water above the layer of the air. The seas and the water that emerges from the ground in springs and wells indicated that there was water below (cf Ps 24:2). The layer of air serves to divide these two sources of water.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 1:8 *Heaven*. Not God's abode beyond the realm of creation, but the layer of air that separates the water above from the water below (v 7). *the second day*. The text now switches to the ordinal number "second" to refer to the ongoing sequence. See note, v 5.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 1:9–31 God fills what He has created (v 1) and arranged (vv 2–8).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 1:9 *one place*. Having separated the waters (see note, v 7), God then began to fill the space beneath the sky by drawing the waters below the sky together into one place, allowing dry land to emerge.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 1:10 *called … Earth … Seas*. See note, v 5.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 1:11 *Let the earth sprout*. Filling the space beneath the expanse with inanimate things continues from lesser to greater. Though

today we think of plants as "living" (they grow and reproduce), Israelites thought plants lacked the unique life force that qualifies a living creature. See note, v 20. *plants yielding seed … fruit trees*. Text appears to distinguish two main types of vegetation, trees that produce fruit and other plants that propagate their seed without fruit. This is a general distinction, not an attempt to establish a complete scientific categorization of plants. *according to its kind*. Phrase here and in following passages indicates that ch 1 talks not only about creation of specific individuals but of classes (or kinds) of things. God does not make one plant, but many plants of different kinds. This is also true of the animals referred to later in ch 1. See p 10.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 1:12 *earth brought forth*. Earth responds to God's commands as He works to fill His creation. Throughout the Bible, God controls and directs the course of history and the forces of nature by His Word.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 1:14 *Let there be lights*. Sources of light above the expanse. Just as God gathered the waters into a consolidated place (the sea), God joined the light that He had previously created (vv 3–5) to natural sources. These sources of light will now govern the cycles of time that He established until they are no longer needed at the end of time (see note, v 3). *signs*. Movement of stars helps us keep track of months, seasons, and years. Stars do not control humankind's destiny or predict the future. *days*. Hbr plural for "day," but in the context it appears to refer to what we call a month (not otherwise mentioned here). It is unlikely that "days" here refers to a week because that period of time is not indicated by the movement of the sun, moon, or stars, but comes into being when God establishes every seventh day as a day of rest (cf 2:1–3). To sustain the argument that day 1 does not refer to a normal 24-hour day, one would have to show that all these other time-related terms are being used in some figurative, or extended, sense. This is not the case. Here the sun, moon, and stars govern normal days, nights, months, seasons, and years. See note, v 5.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 1:16 *greater light*. Sun. Words "sun" and "moon" are likely omitted to ex-
clude the possibility of understanding them as deities, as was common through-
out the ancient Near East. *lesser light*. Moon.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 1:20 *living creatures*. Hbr *nephesh chayyah* applies to animals and humans, but not to inanimate things (as understood by the

Israelites) that fill creation: plants and the sources of light in the skies. *expanse of the heavens*. See note, v 6.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 1:21 *great sea creatures*. Hbr *tanninim*, used in mythology to refer to divine or semidivine sea monsters. By contrast, the Bible uses this word to refer to snakes or serpents, sometimes to crocodiles, and sometimes, as here, to any of the mysterious and unknown animals that inhabit the depths of the seas.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 1:22 *God blessed them*. First explicit blessing in the Bible. As seen in v 3, God's Word performs that which it speaks. By pronouncing a blessing, God granted the power of procreation to the animals He had created. The granting of procreative powers to provide for the ongoing welfare of His creation demonstrates God's care. See p 842.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 1:24 *Let the earth bring forth*. God's previous activity had filled the sea and sky with living creatures. God then began to fill the landmass with living creatures and with three general types of land animals. *livestock*. Word commonly used for domesticated animals such as cattle or oxen but also for animals in general. *creeping things*. May refer here specifically to reptiles, but is also at times used to refer to animals in general (9:3). *beasts*. General term (lit, "living things"); may be used here as a kind of catchall for everything that does not fall into the other two categories, perhaps implying wild animals as opposed to the domesticated animals of the first group.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 1:26 *Let Us make*. While affirming the singularity of God, it is not unusual for the OT to use the plural when speaking of God and His activities. This anticipates the doctrine of the Holy Trinity (though some interpreters understand it to be a grammatical device, a plural of majesty or an honorific plural, with no specific theological significance). Iren: "With Him were always present the Word and Wisdom, the Son and the Spirit, by whom and in whom, freely and spontaneously, He made all things, to whom also He speaks" (*ANF* 1:487–88). Ter: "If the number of the Trinity also offends you, … with whom did He make man? and to whom did He make him like? (The answer must be), the Son on the one hand, who was one day to put on human nature; and the Spirit on the other, who was to sanctify man. With these did He then speak, in the Unity of the Trinity, as with His ministers and witnesses" (*ANF* 3:606–7). Luth: "Here both appear: 'Let Us make' and 'He made,' in the plural and in the singular; thereby Moses clearly and forcibly shows us that within and in the

very Godhead and the Creating Essence there is one inseparable and eternal plurality" (AE 1:58). *image*. Hbr *tselem* means something more than mere physical resemblance. An image, in ancient Near Eastern thought, was that which manifested the presence of the gods within the material realm. Created in God's image, Adam not only reflected God's character but also was His representative in the world, His steward over all that He had made. "They had God's Law written into their hearts, because they were created in God's image" (FC Ep VI 2). Gr Nys: "Painters transfer human forms to their pictures by the means of certain colors … our Maker also, painting the portrait to resemble His own beauty, by the addition of virtues, as it were with colors, shows in us His own sovereignty: … purity, freedom from passion, blessedness, alienation from all evil, and all those attributes of the like kind which help to form in men the likeness of God" (*NPNF* 2 5:391). Gr Naz: "[God] will reason with us, and oppose us, and set before us those bitter accusers, our sins … the image [of God in us] … has been blurred and spoiled by wickedness" (*NPNF* 2 7:250). *have dominion*. To rule over something. The order that God imposed upon His creation extends to the beings with which He filled it, whether in the air or in the sea or on land. As God's steward and representative, Adam is placed over all that God has made, to rule over it as God Himself would rule it. Luth: "Man is a creature far superior to the rest of the living beings that live a physical life, especially since as yet his nature had not become depraved" (AE 1:56).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 1:27 *God created*. See note, v 1. Here and in the following chapters, some verses have been set as poetry, reflecting a literary judgment by the ESV editors based on the heightened rhetorical sense that the repetition in the passage suggests. See pp 777–78. *male and female*. Moses gives a summary statement of the creation of mankind and details about it in ch 2. Luth: "Moses puts the two sexes together and says that God created male and female in order to indicate that Eve, too, was made by God as a partaker of the divine image and of the divine similitude, likewise of the rule over everything. Thus even today the woman is the partaker of the future life, just as Peter says that they are joint heirs of the same grace (1 Peter 3:7). In the household the wife is a partner in the management and has a common interest in the children and the property, and yet there is a great difference between the sexes" (AE 1:69).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 1:28 *God blessed them*. God extended to humankind the blessing of procreative power that He had given to animals.

But here He added an additional element: instructions to subdue the earth and have dominion over all the other beings that God has made. These additional instructions reflect the special role that humankind plays in God's creation. See p 842. *Be fruitful and multiply*. See note, v 22. Sex and childbearing are blessed by God in holy wedlock. Cf Ps 127–28. "Genesis 1:28 teaches that people were created to be fruitful, and that one sex should desire the other in a proper way. We are not speaking about lustful desire, which is sin, but about that appetite that was in nature in its perfection. They call this physical love. This love of one sex for the other is truly a divine ordinance" (Ap XXIII 7).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 1:29 *I have given you … food*. God shows His care by providing food and allowing the man and woman to eat everything that is not categorized as a living being (see note, v 20). In the more detailed account of Gn 2, we learn that this general permission is restricted by the prohibition that they may not eat the fruit from one specific tree (2:16–17).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 1:30 *everything that has the breath of life*. "Living creatures" in v 20 (see note). God extended the gift of food to everything that has the character of life.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 1:31 *very good*. Creation is summarized by stating that it conformed to God's intentions in the best possible way. Bas: "All [creatures] bear the marks of the wisdom of the Creator" (*NPNF* 2 8:104). Chem: "The word *tob* refers to something which is beautiful or pleasant, which delights the eye of the beholder or the mind of one who considers it, as Gen. 3:6 says of Eve" (*LTh* 1:190). See use described in note, Est 2:7. As a result of the fall (ch 3), the introduction of sin into the world, and our rejection of God and His will, we do not experience all of creation as "very good."

GENESIS—NOTE ON 1:2–31 God makes all things good. He takes great care to place man and woman in the garden to care for the things that He created. Sin has placed the things God created, including us, in bondage to death and decay. Yet Jesus' death and resurrection has restored the things of God's creation just as it has restored us (Rm 8:19–23). Indeed, God even used His creation to accomplish our salvation: a cross made of wood; the water of Baptism; the bread and wine of the Eucharist; the printed words on the page in, with, and under which He reveals His Word of life to us. • Lord, You have reclaimed all that is Your own, redeemed and restored all of Your

creation to Yourself. Preserve me and Your creation, O Lord, by Your grace. Amen.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 2:1–3 In the conclusion of the creation account, God rests on the seventh day and then sets the seventh day aside to commemorate His work of creation.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 2:1 *heavens and the earth*. See note, 1:1. *host*. The things with which God had filled the earth, sea, and sky. See p 1291.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 2:2 *He rested*. Hbr verb *yishboth* is related to the noun *shabbath*. Ancient Near Eastern creation accounts to which Gn is sometimes compared lack any parallel to the account of God resting after His creative activity. Here God rests because His creative work is complete, not because He is weary.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 2:3 *holy*. Hbr *qadash*, verb used in its basic sense of setting something aside for special use, in this case the commemoration of the completion of God's creative work. See p 7. God anticipates His later commandment (Ex 20:8–11) both here by His own actions and also when His people are on the way to Mount Sinai (Ex 16:22–30). Unlike the other cycles of time mentioned in the creation account, the cycle of a week (bounded by the day of rest) is determined not by the movement of the heavenly bodies but is established only by God's special command. Given this, it is not surprising that there is no equivalent to the OT Sabbath in any other ancient Near Eastern religion. There is also no evidence that Israel's neighbors observed a calendar period equivalent to the week.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 2:1–3 God creates (sets aside) the Sabbath. In the OT, Saturday is the Rest (Sabbath) Day. When Christ fulfilled the whole Law (Mt 5:17), He liberated God's people from the obligation to observe the Sabbath given to the people of Israel in the OT (Col 2:16–17). All days belong equally to God (Rm 14:5–6). Nevertheless, faith in Christ moves God's people to respond to His grace in worship: to hear His Word, to receive His gifts in the Sacraments, to praise Him and give thanks to Him for His mighty works, and to call on Him in prayer. Such worship is the constant response of faith to God's grace. Because God has called Christians together into one Body, the Church, through which He gives His gifts of Word and Sacrament, it is proper for Christians to gather together to worship Him. See note, 1Co 16:2. Sunday, then, symbolically represents the first day of the new rest into which God's people have been called in Christ. (As the first day of this "new creation," Sunday is sometimes referred to as

"the eighth day.") • We praise You, O Lord, for the day of rest that our bodies need. We exalt You, O Christ, for the eternal rest that You have won for us! Amen.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 2:4–4:26 In ch 1, Moses presents an eloquent overview of creation that stands as an introduction to all his books. The next section begins the stories (narratives) of Genesis, and of the Books of Moses and the Bible as a whole. This section offers a more detailed narrative account in three parts, focusing on the creation of man (ch 2), the fall (ch 3), and the fall's aftermath (ch 4). Luth: "These, then, are all historical facts. This is something to which I carefully call attention, lest the unwary reader be led astray by the authority of the fathers, who give up the idea that this is history and look for allegories" (AE 1:93).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 2:4 *These are the generations*. Literary device used throughout Gn to introduce the next stage in the unfolding of the story (see outline, pp 10–11). *heavens and the earth*. Here the heavens and the earth are treated, for literary purposes, as the first generation of God's creation; humankind is presented as the descendants of this couple. See note, 1:1. *in the day that*. Not a specific day in the creation account, but meaning "when" (in accordance with its common use in Hbr). *the* LORD *God*. See p 1227.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 2:5 *no bush … no small plant*. Not a reference to the plants of the third day of creation (1:11–12), but to those that would arise subsequently from the normal process of growth and tillage. "Small plant" refers to grass and other flora that do not have a woody stalk. *God had not caused*. Throughout Scripture, processes of nature, and esp rain, are under God's control. Power to give and withhold rain symbolizes God's ability to control nature according to His will (e.g., Dt 11:13–17; 1Sm 12:17–18). Ultimately, the biblical teaching of God's omnipotence is intended for our comfort, assuring us that God has the power to accomplish His will, esp to save those whom He has called to faith in Himself. *to rain*. Before the flood, plants were sustained by water in the soil itself (cf v 6, probably including what we would think of as dew, which appears to the eye to rise from the ground, though technically it condenses from the air), and by the river that flowed through and out of Eden (v 10). The Bible first mentions rain falling at the time of the flood (7:12).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 2:6 *mist*. Some regard this to be a unique subterranean watering method that was a special feature of the world before

the fall; others regard this as simply dew. See note, v 5. Regardless of the specific form, the point is that the garden (v 10) had sufficient water to sustain the plants God had made on the third day (cf 1:29–30, sustenance for living beings). Some cultures could count on sufficient water, but drought became a lasting concern for the people in the ancient Near East.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 2:7 *formed*. Hbr *yatsar*, related to the word for a potter, emphasizes the fact that God did not make man out of nothing, but shaped him from the existing material of the created world. (Cf Is 29:15–16; 45:4–12; 64:8; Jer 18:1–11.) *man … ground*. Man is called *'adam* (Hbr) because he comes from the *'adamah* (earth). Both terms refer to the reddish brown color of clay soil. *living creature*. See note, 1:20. Despite the fact that humans and animals share this characteristic, they are not the same. Unlike animals, God shaped man in His image and breathed into him the breath of His own life. Ter: "First comes a prefatory statement [1:27], then follow the details in full [2:7–25]; first the subject is named, then it is described" (*ANF* 3:492).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 2:8 *planted*. Summarizes the creative, filling activity of God described in ch 1. *a garden in Eden*. The garden was only a part of the region called Eden. *in the east*. Presumably refers to an area east of the Israelites at the time of Moses (i.e., east of Sinai and Canaan). For a fuller discussion of the location of the garden, see note, vv 10–14.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 2:9 *tree of life*. Mentioned also in 3:22, 24; Rv 2:7; 22:2, 14, 19. Also used in Pr 3:18; 11:30; 13:12; 15:4 as a metaphor for a source of life. In Gn, the tree of life is the means by which the life that God gave to man would become sealed as a permanent characteristic (cf 3:22). That God did not forbid Adam and Eve to eat of this tree (vv 16–17) suggests that God intended immortality for them from the beginning. *good and evil*. Could be a shorthand expression for "everything" (i.e., that it would bestow omniscience). More literally, it is a precise statement referring to the acquisition of moral knowledge and judgment. Hus: "In the tree … the law was placed by God. … To eat, therefore, of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil after the prohibitive command was given, was an absolute evil" (*The Church*, pp 243–44). Luth: "There is now created a new tree for the distinguishing of good and evil, so that Adam might have a definite way to express his worship and reverence toward God. After everything had been entrusted to him to make use of it according to his will, whether he wished to do so for necessity or for pleasure, God finally

demands from Adam that at this tree of the knowledge of good and evil he demonstrate his reverence and obedience toward God and that he maintain this practice, as it were, of worshiping God by not eating anything from it" (AE 1:94).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 2:10–14 There has been much speculation on the location of Eden, including (1) marshlands around the confluence of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers in southeastern Iraq (the name Eden may be related to an ancient Sumerian word used for this region); (2) headwaters of the Tigris and Euphrates in the mountainous area of eastern Turkey, in the region of Lake Van (location of a kingdom known as Beth-eden in northeast Syria in the eighth and ninth centuries BC; also, the association of Noah with Mount Ararat in the same area); (3) Jerusalem, due to the mention of the Gihon Spring (2:13; cf Ezk 47; Rv 21:1–2). The lack of any clear candidates for two of the rivers (v 11) suggests that the topography of Eden was so altered by the great flood that any attempt to locate Eden based on current topography can never be more than futile speculation. Life in God's presence is not limited to an earthly place but comes by grace through faith in Jesus Christ alone (Jn 18:36).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 2:11 *Pishon … Havilah*. Origin and identification of these names is uncertain. Pishon is related to Hbr for "push," meaning to "spring up." Suggestions for these locations include the Indus, the Ganges, and a dry riverbed in east Arabia, the Kuwait River. Such identifications are no more than speculation.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 2:12 *bdellium*. Uncertain meaning. Cf Nu 11:7. Plant associated with this name in the Arabian Peninsula strengthens the association of Havilah with Arabia (cf v 11). Resin gum associated with bdellium is a yellowish color. Because the context implies a reference to a precious stone such as gold and onyx, some have suggested bdellium be translated "pearl." *onyx*. Quartzlike stone striated with black and white bands, often used to make beads and cameos. Another closely related substance (sometimes called sardonyx) has red and white bands. The Hbr term connotes redness. The LXX translates this phrase as "the green stone," apparently referring either to emerald or perhaps the green and black striated stone known as malachite. Cf Ex 28:9.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 2:13 *Gihon*. From Hbr verb meaning to "bubble up" or "burst forth." Elsewhere, it refers to a spring in the Kidron Valley that provided the major water source for the city of Jerusalem. See note, vv

10–14. *Cush*. Usually refers to the lands of Nubia that today make up southern Egypt, Sudan, and Ethiopia. See map, p 33. This led some commentators to identify the Gihon with the Nile (e.g., LXX Jer 2:18).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 2:14 *Tigris*. Identification with Tigris River seems fairly certain. *Assyria*. Major kingdom in northern Mesopotamia (today, part of northern Iraq). Its major cities in biblical times were Asshur and Nineveh. See map, p 33. *Euphrates*. Also known as "the great river" (cf Gn 15:18) or more simply "the river" (cf Hbr of Ex 23:31). The Euphrates was the largest and most important waterway in western Asia, dominating trade and travel through the ancient Near East for more than 1,700 mi.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 2:15 *to work it and keep it*. In accordance with his role as God's image (1:26), the man is placed in the garden to tend it as God's steward and manager of creation (cf 1:28). This work is neither punishment nor toilsome. Work only becomes a source of hardship and suffering as a result of the fall (3:17–19).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 2:16 *every tree*. God did not prohibit Adam and Eve from eating from the tree of life (v 9).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 2:17 *in the day*. See note, v 4. He will die as a result of eating from the tree. Gr Nys: "By the fact of his alienation from the true life, the sentence of death was ratified against him that self-same day" (*NPNF* 2 5:127). *die*. The Bible views a person as a whole being—physical and spiritual together—and not as a soul inhabiting a body, a concept borrowed from Greek philosophy. (For this reason, throughout the Bible spiritual and physical health are seen as belonging together, so that physical impairment may be interpreted as a sign of sin, and healing as a sign of forgiveness [Mt 9:5]. For this reason also, St Paul speaks of the danger of taking the Lord's Supper without recognizing it as Christ's true body and blood in physical terms [1Co 11:27–30].) There could be no death before sin entered the world. Thus, when God tells Adam that he shall surely die, He means both physically and spiritually.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 2:18 *not good … alone*. Being alone is the first thing that God describes as "not good." Not moral fault (or evil) but incompleteness. At this point, God's work of creation was not complete with respect to man. He had no mate appropriate to him and no means of procreation. *helper*. Hbr *'ezer*; elsewhere has sense of "assistant" or even "ally" and is applied to God (see note, Ps 70:5). It implies no inferiority, but it does reinforce the significance of the order of creation. See p 1291.

Accordingly, Adam was the more responsible party (Gn 3; Rm 5). Some have seized on this passage to accuse the Bible of being hostile to women. However, the Bible is the only piece of religious literature from the ancient Near East that gives a full account of the creation of woman; also, the Bible has more significant women figures presented in a positive light than any other body of religious literature from the ancient world. *fit for him*. Lit, "like his opposite." There was no appropriate mate for him. Cf v 20.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 2:19 Text could be misunderstood to imply a different sequence in creation than that suggested by 1:20–27, where man is created after the animals. (E.g., some ancient versions have the phrase "formed again," indicating that after creating man, God made additional animals.) *formed*. Or, "had formed," meaning that the animals God had already formed were now brought before Adam.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 2:20 *The man gave names*. Sign that Adam exercised authority over animals as God's steward of His creation (1:28; 2:15). *helper*. See note, v 18.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 2:21 *deep sleep*. Hbr implies something more than normal sleep. God sometimes brought a special sleep upon a person for a specific purpose (cf Is 29:10). *ribs*. Hbr word is commonly used for a structural component related to the side of something. When used of a building, it may mean a pillar, beam, or plank of wood. When used of a person, it generally means a rib bone.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 2:22 *made*. Lit, "built." Only instance in creation account that this verb is used, underscoring its distinction in the story. God did not make Eve out of nothing or form her directly out of the dust of the ground. By making her from something taken from Adam, God both establishes their relationship within the order of creation and ensures that she will be a helper appropriate to Adam.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 2:23 *she shall be called Woman*. First name Adam gives to his wife. Like the name of the man (*'adam*), the name of his wife (*'ishshah*) is a classification. In his role as God's steward (see note, 1:26), Adam gives a name to this category of created beings, just as he has given names to the rest of God's creation. See note, 3:20.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 2:24 *a man shall leave*. Marriage, childbirth, and growth of the human community were a part of God's plan for humankind from before the fall (1:28). *one flesh*. The coming together of man and

woman in marriage is pictured here as the reuniting of what was separated at the creation of woman.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 2:25 *not ashamed*. Such was the union of man and woman with God and with each other before the fall that there was no awareness of separation that produces shame. Only after their eyes were opened and they became aware of their separateness from each other and from God did they feel the need to cover themselves and to hide from God.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 2:4–25 Ch 2 is a more detailed account of creation, focusing on the creation of humankind. It ends by emphasizing that Adam and Eve are not ashamed—they have nothing to be ashamed of. Too often, we are not ashamed because in our spiritual pride we refuse to acknowledge the shamefulness of our thoughts, words, and deeds. One of the reasons that God gave His Law was to teach us shame, to show us our sinfulness and need of forgiveness. There can be no true repentance without the experience of shame. However, in Jesus Christ, God heals our shame, not by allowing us to deny it but by taking our shamefulness upon Himself and declaring us to be without shame in Him (1Jn 2:28). • Jesus, cover my shame with the robe of Your righteousness, that I may serve my family with joy and confidence. Amen.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 3:1 *serpent*. Common Hbr word for "snake." Snakes would have been among either the general group of "creeping things" or among the "beasts of the earth" (1:24) that God created. There is nothing inherently evil in snakes. In this instance, Satan has either possessed one of these animals or appeared in their form. *crafty*. In Pr, this word is used with a positive connotation ("prudent," Pr 12:16, 23; 13:16; 14:8, 15, 18; 22:3; 27:12). In Jb, it is used with a negative connotation ("crafty," Jb 5:12; 15:5). Here in Gn, the usage appears to be neutral. The main reason for the choice of this word (*'arum*) appears to be that it forms a play on words with the word "naked" (*'arom*) in 2:25. *Did God actually say*. First temptation was (and remains) the temptation to doubt God's Word. Satan implies God has selfish motives, but there is no hint from Moses that God had ill motives toward Adam and Eve or planned their fall. Moses makes clear that the destructive effects of sin only grieved God (6:6). "[The devil] turned Adam and Eve into enthusiasts. He led them away from God's outward Word to spiritualizing and self-pride" (SA III VIII 5). Cf v 4.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 3:3 *neither shall you touch it*. Woman adds this provision to the instructions that God had given to Adam (2:16–17). See notes on spiritualizing, vv 1, 4–5.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 3:4 *You will not surely die*. Satan moves from doubting God's Word to outright denial and rejection of it. Luth: "When Satan sees these beginnings [of temptation], he now exerts himself with his utmost power, as though against a leaning wall, in order to overwhelm her altogether" (AE 1:155).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 3:5 *God knows*. The serpent does not challenge the woman's understanding of God's instructions, but calls God's integrity into doubt, suggesting that the real reason God does not want them to eat of the fruit is that He wants to keep them from becoming like Him. *you will be like God*. Note the progress of temptation: having begun with doubt about God's Word, he then moved to rejection of it, and now the serpent offers Eve the power to establish her own standard of right and wrong, to define truth for herself. The temptation to which the serpent exposed the woman, and to which all humankind has been subject since the first disobedience, is the desire to become godlike, the desire to determine our own standards of good and evil and to direct our own affairs according to our will. *knowing good and evil*. God does know evil, not because it is part of His character, but in the sense that He understands the destructive nature of evil. So far, man and woman had known only the good of God's very good creation. In view of this, the serpent spoke the truth: by disobeying God they will come to know evil as well as good. For the man and the woman, however, the only way to come to know evil is by doing evil through the breaking of God's command.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 3:6 *the tree was to be desired to make one wise*. In her desire to gain wisdom, the woman lost sight of the fundamental truth about wisdom: to be truly wise is to believe and trust in God and to obey His teachings. This truth is summarized in the OT saying that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (see note, Pr 1:7; see also p 1001). Temptation frequently consists of desiring something that God says is wrong. *she also gave some to her husband*. To impart the new "wisdom" to him. *with her*. Adam joined her in disobedience; she did not trick him into eating. It is not clear that he stood with her throughout the temptation.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 3:7 *they knew that they were naked*. The immediate result of their disobedience was a new experience of self-consciousness that

resulted from the breaking of the union that formerly characterized their relationship with each other and with God. This feeling of separateness produced a shame that had not been a part of their experience (2:25). Luth: "It is as if [Moses] were saying: 'Satan had closed not only the eyes but also the heart of Eve through the unbelief and disobedience of all her members within and without. But after sin was allowed to enter and was committed, he blithely allows their eyes to be opened that they may see what they had done.' Here Satan seeks to make another gain, namely, that those who have sinned should perish in despair" (AE 1:164).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 3:8 *Lord God walking*. See p 39. *cool of the day*. Hbr indicates that it was the time of the day when the breeze blows, probably evening. *hid themselves*. Just as covering themselves gave physical expression to their awareness of separation from each other, so their attempt to hide from God gives physical expression to their awareness of separation from Him (cf v 10, Adam's response to God).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 3:9 *God called to the man*. God addressed Adam. As the head and steward of God's creation, Adam is responsible for what has happened, even though the woman was the first to disobey God's command (cf Rm 5:12, 15–17). *Where are you?* Rhetorical, as with the questions God later asks of Adam (v 11) and Cain (4:9). God knows what has been done in secret (cf Ps 90:8; Is 29:15; Jer 23:24).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 3:10 *the sound of You*. Sound of God walking in the garden (v 8; see p 39). *I was afraid … naked*. His shame at being naked, not guilt because of his sin, moved Adam to hide. This revealed a consciousness of self as a being separated from God, which was new to human experience, parallel to the experience of separateness from each other that the man and woman experienced (v 7).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 3:11 *Who told you*. Rhetorical. God already knows the answer, as the next question makes clear.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 3:12 *You gave … she gave*. Adam's answer attempts to make both God and the woman responsible for his disobedience.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 3:13 *deceived*. Hbr implies that the serpent had given her a false hope, an accurate description of events.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 3:14 *dust you shall eat*. Implies humiliation and defeat in an ancient Near Eastern context, where defeated rulers were often forced to do obeisance by placing their faces on the ground.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 3:15 Note movement in the text, which begins with conflict between the woman and the serpent. It then moves to conflict between the descendant of the woman and the descendant of the serpent. But, unusually, it concludes with conflict between the woman's descendant and the serpent himself. Clearly this verse is not simply about the origin of the conflict between humans and snakes, but about a conflict that will culminate with the defeat of the serpent by One who will descend from the woman. This points to Christ and His defeat of Satan on the cross, and for this reason this verse is often called the "protevangelium" (the first promise of the Gospel). *her offspring*. Hbr *zera'*, "seed" (singular form can refer to one seed or to an entire group; e.g., Eng, "bag of seed," not "bag of seeds"). It refers to all the descendants of Eve, but most significantly to Christ as the Second Adam, i.e., all humanity reduced to one. *He*. Presence of other masculine grammatical forms makes it clear that Hbr intends the subject to be masculine, not feminine. Vulg inaccurately translates this as a feminine form (she), leading some to interpret this as referring to the Virgin Mary. *bruise*. Some commentators argue that the two forms of the verb used of the actions of the seed and the serpent are actually from two different Hbr words (e.g., *crush … strike* in NIV). While there is some support for this among languages related to Hbr, most scholars prefer to take these two forms as being from the same Hbr word. The difference in the degree of injury inflicted does not depend on having two different verbs here but on the differing parts of the body being struck. Luth: "Satan understood this threat well; therefore he has continued to rage against human nature with such great hatred. Adam and Eve were encouraged by this promise. Wholeheartedly they grasped the hope of their restoration; and, full of faith, they saw that God cared about their salvation, since He clearly declares that the male Seed of the woman would prostrate this enemy" (AE 1:193). Chem: "The Son of God announced to our first parents the mystery of the promise of the Gospel which had been hidden from eternity in the bosom of the Father, [when] He gave a brief summary of the doctrine of the Gospel in Gen. 3:15" (*LTh* 1:37).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 3:16 *childbearing*. Entire pregnancy, not only giving birth. *desire*. Despite the pain associated with pregnancy, women will not cease to desire marital relations. *he shall rule*. The order God established in creation has not been altered by the fall. Together, Adam and Eve will continue to rule over the rest of creation (1:28). God also intends

that Adam remain His steward, responsible for cultivating creation (vv 17, 23), and that the husband remain the head of the family. All of these relationships will be stained by the effects of the fall. That women may experience this order as troublesome and a source of suffering is a direct result of the fall.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 3:17 *listened to*. Adam's sin included his failure to act as head of the human community, the role God had given him. *cursed is the ground*. Adam's role as steward of creation is not taken away. Rather, the curse God places on the ground means that man will suffer in performing his function as husband, even as woman will suffer in her function as wife.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 3:19 *to dust you shall return*. Tacit condemnation to death, as God warned Adam initially (2:17), fulfilling the promise that Adam would die after eating from the tree. "Human nature is subjected not only to death and other bodily evils, but also to the devil's kingdom" (Ap II 46).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 3:20 *The man called*. Adam gave his wife a new name befitting her role as childbearer. By this name, Adam expresses hope for the future through the promised Seed of the woman. In giving her a new name, he continues his role as steward of God's creation. *Eve*. Hbr *chawwah*, "life," hence the explanatory phrase accompanying the name. The Eng "Eve" is a distortion of the way it was transliterated by the Vulg (*Hava*).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 3:21 Some commentators argue that God killed animals to provide a covering for Adam and Eve, thus anticipating the introduction of the sacrificial system (as providing a covering for sins), and so ultimately pointing to Christ. However, nothing in this verse necessarily implies that God killed the animals whose skins were used; they could have died of natural causes after the fall. Moreover, this verse is never treated as messianic elsewhere in the Bible. While it may be read by Christians as an allegory pointing to Christ, it is probably more accurate in this context to suggest that the verse demonstrates God's continuing care for Adam and Eve (and ultimately for all creation) despite the judgment that He had pronounced on them. Luth: "Here Adam and Eve are dressed in garments by the Lord God Himself. Whenever they looked at their garments, these were to serve as a reminder to them to give thought to their wretched fall from supreme happiness into the utmost misfortune and trouble. Thus they

were to be constantly afraid of sinning, to repent continually, and to sigh for the forgiveness of sins through the promised Seed. This is also why He clothed them, not in foliage or in cotton but in the skins of slain animals, for a sign that they are mortal and that they are living in certain death" (AE 1:221).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 3:22 *like one of Us*. See note, 1:26. *knowing good and evil*. God acknowledged the truth of what the serpent said to the woman: having done evil by disobeying God, Adam and Eve now know both good and evil. *tree of life*. See note, 2:9.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 3:23 *to work*. God intends that Adam's role as steward of creation should continue, even after expulsion from the garden.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 3:24 *cherubim*. Angels. See note, Ezk 10:1. *flaming sword*. Lit, "the flame of the sword." Probably refers to flashes of light reflecting from the sword as it is swung by the cherubim. *guard the way*. Cherubim prevent Adam from returning to the garden. Judgment upon sin cannot be undone by a human's choice. God alone can undo the effects of disobedience. This is the first clear indication that if people were to be saved, salvation would have to come from God alone and from what God would do in the future.

GENESIS—NOTE ON **Ch 3** With the words that God speaks to the serpent, to Eve, and to Adam after their disobedience, He sets the course for the rest of biblical history. Here there is judgment for sin, but also the first hint that the effects of the fall will one day be undone. There is no way back to Eden. The only way for Adam and Eve and their descendants is forward to the cross. The long story culminates in Jesus Christ, the Seed of the woman, but it does not end there. Today, we are part of the unfolding story. We have received God's grace through the Seed of the woman, and now we are sent out to the ends of the earth to bear witness to the completion of God's plan of redemption and to offer His grace in Jesus Christ to all the descendants of Adam and Eve. • O Savior, write our names into Your story, into the Lamb's Book of Life. Amen.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 4:1 *I have gotten*. Hbr phrase (*qanithi*) is wordplay on the name Cain (*qayin*). *with the help of*. Unusual grammar. Some interpreters, including Luther (AE 1:242), understand Hbr to mean that Eve thought Cain was the Lord incarnate, the fulfillment of the promise of the seed in 3:15. Eve's statement more likely recognizes that the fulfillment of

her role as mother is a gift from God and that God has seen her through the pain of childbirth (3:16).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 4:2 Cain tended the soil that God had given his father. See note, 2:15. Abel tended their flocks, which is probably implied in the distinction between "beasts of the earth" and "livestock" mentioned in the creation account (1:24–25), but this is the first time domestication is specifically mentioned in the Bible.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 4:3 *course of time*. Lit, "end of days," implying the end of the growing season. Cain's offering is apparently intended as a thanksgiving offering for the harvest. The text does not record God commanding offerings of any kind, so we must assume that this is either a spontaneous offering of thanks or that God's command was not recorded.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 4:4 *firstborn of his flock*. Like Cain's gift, Abel's gift was a thank offering, in this case for the fruitfulness of his flock. *had regard*. Hbr "look at," "gaze upon," "pay attention to." God favored Abel's sacrifice.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 4:5 *had no regard*. God did not pay attention to Cain's offering. Abel's offering was not inherently superior to Cain's offering. Both were proper thank offerings. Throughout the OT, God looks with favor on offerings of grain and other produce, just as He does on offerings of animals. See pp 170–71. God regarded Abel's offering because it was given in true faith (Heb 11:4). Although the text does not say so directly, the language implies that the offerings were accompanied by prayer requests, and that Abel received that for which he prayed but Cain did not. *his face fell*. Disappointment. Contrast to note at v 7.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 4:6 *Why are you angry*. Cain made the common mistake of thinking that God can be influenced by means of our offerings. God repeatedly reminds His people that He will be gracious to whom He will be gracious and will show mercy upon whom He will show mercy (Ex 33:19). Iren: "God is not appeased by sacrifice. … He who thus cherishes secret sin does not deceive God by that sacrifice which is offered correctly as to outward appearance" (*ANF* 1:485).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 4:7 Several aspects of this verse are difficult. *will you not be accepted?* Suggests that doing good should be its own satisfaction. See ESV note. Hbr "lifting up" suggests a smile (cf Nu 6:26). *crouching*. Cain should resist the attempt of sin to rule him. The dominating power of sin does not come from God. *desire … rule*. He warns Cain to

resist the temptation to take out his anger and disappointment on his brother. Cf 3:16 on the issues of "desire" and "rule" that confronted Eve. Mel: "[God's statement] teaches the difference between inward righteousness and external sacrifices. … There is [also] a warning concerning the coming judgment" (Chem, *LTh* 1:311).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 4:8 Cain did not heed God's warning. He gave in to the domination of sin and exercised his angry desire by killing his brother. *Cain spoke*. See ESV note. Other Hbr texts support the reading in the note. The substance of Cain's conversation with Abel may have been accidentally omitted from the Masoretic Hbr text used as the basis of most modern translations.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 4:9 *Where is Abel your brother?* Rhetorical (see note, 3:9). God asked the question to give Cain the opportunity to confess his sin (cf 3:11).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 4:11 *cursed from the ground*. Adam, driven from the garden for his sin, was forced to toil to get the earth to produce fruit. Now Cain, as a result of his further sin, will be driven off the soil entirely. It will produce no fruit for him (v 12). *its mouth*. Grave in which Cain buried Abel is pictured as the mouth of the land, which has opened to swallow the dead from the killer's hand.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 4:12 *its strength*. Its produce. *You shall be a fugitive and a wanderer*. As Cain will not be able to earn his living by tending the soil, he will have to search for sustenance.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 4:13 *greater than I can bear*. Cain's punishment is twofold: expulsion from the land so that he must wander the earth (v 12) and separation from God (v 14). His selfish response shows a lack of true repentance. Cain demonstrates no guilt or remorse over his sin; rather, he complains about the harshness of his punishment.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 4:14 *from Your face I shall be hidden*. Just as Adam was expelled from God's presence when he was forced out of the Garden of Eden, so Cain interprets his being forced off the land as an expulsion from God's presence. Separation from God is the most severe aspect of divine judgment. See "be with," p 5. *whoever finds me*. Cain expects to encounter his other siblings in his wanderings. They are not mentioned in this account because they are not important to the story of Cain killing his brother. The Bible does not attempt to give us a complete, detailed history of everything, but focuses on events most important to its theological purpose. See note, v

17. *will kill me*. Following the biblical principle that the punishment should fit the crime, Cain expects that God's judgment against him for killing his brother will eventually lead to his own death.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 4:15 *a mark*. Never described and not important. What is important is that God continued to care for Cain even after pronouncing judgment on him, just as He provided clothes for Adam and Eve to show His ongoing care for them after the fall (3:21). Chem: "God … clearly prohibits private revenge" (*LTh* 2:353).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 4:16 *away from the presence of the* LORD. See note, v 14. *Nod*. Wordplay on Hbr *nad*, translated "wanderer" (v 14); general description of Cain's situation. This word does not occur elsewhere in the Bible or other ancient Near Eastern literature as a place-name.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 4:17 As is the practice throughout Gn, the line of Cain's descendants is terminated with a brief genealogical summary because he does not inherit the promise (3:15) given to his parents. The main story resumes with those through whom the promise will be transmitted, starting in v 25. *his wife*. Apparently from among the other descendants of Adam and Eve to which Cain had previously referred (v 14; cf 12:13, Abram's marriage to his half-sister, Sarai). Such marriages were likely common in this earliest period of history. The Lord would later prohibit marriages to close kin (Lv 18). *Enoch*. First of several OT people by this name. Aug: "It does not follow that we are to believe this to have been [Cain's] first-born; for we cannot suppose that this is proved by the expression 'he knew his wife,' as if then for the first time he had had intercourse with her. … Scripture employs this expression neither always when a birth is recorded nor then only when the birth of a first-born is mentioned" (*NPNF* 1 2:290). *he built a city, he called*. Different interpretations of Hbr are possible. Likely, Enoch built the city and named it after his son Irad. It is the first city mentioned in the Bible. That it is built by a descendant of Cain, who was no longer able to earn a living by tilling the soil, is appropriate. The term "city" may be misleading to modern readers. The earliest permanent settlements in the ancient Near East were extremely small, often with dwellings for just a few families.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 4:19 *two wives*. First polygamy in OT, which strongly suggests that it was a deviation from the norm at the time, and that this was the first instance among Adam's descendants. Though God did not specifically prohibit polygamy, it contradicted His design for marriage from

the beginning, which consisted of the permanent union of one man and one woman. See pp 54–55.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 4:20 *have livestock*. See note, v 2. Jabal was likely the father of those who engage in transhumance, the agrarian lifestyle characterized by tending livestock while moving from place to place according to the seasons, thus living in tents.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 4:21 *lyre and pipe*. Archaeologists have found evidence of musical instruments dating back to at least 3000 BC. *lyre*. Forerunner of modern harp, but may have been more like a modern zither (a wooden soundbox with strings stretched across the top that may be plucked or strummed). Whatever its configuration, the lyre here is a stringed instrument. *pipe*. See p 993.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 4:22 *forger*. Modern archaeology dates the beginning of metalworking (in copper) in the ancient Near East at c 4000 BC; this fits within the Gn chronology. *instruments*. Not musical instruments but tools made of bronze or iron. *bronze*. Hbr *nechosheth* may refer to copper or bronze. *iron*. See note, Jb 28:2. Apparently, Tubal-cain developed the first technology of metalworking in copper, which led to work in bronze and iron (i.e., that he was the "father" of those who forged; see wording in v 21).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 4:23–24 Lamech's boast illustrates the depth of the effects of sin on Cain's descendants. Lamech intimidates his wives by bragging of his violence, which exceeds both the accepted social norms of justice and Cain's sinful vengeance inflicted on his brother. The fact that Lamech stands at the end of Cain's genealogy and that he exceeds Cain's violence by multiples of the number seven suggest the logical outcome of Cain's violence. Thus, in both his polygamy and his violence, Lamech personifies the descent into sin that leads ultimately to the flood (6:5–8). The extended reference here not only emphasizes the reason that the line of Cain cannot inherit the promise that God had given to Eve but also serves as a fitting conclusion to ch 4's overall theme about the effects of Adam and Eve's disobedience.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 4:23 *I have killed … for wounding … for striking*. The ancient Near Eastern (and OT) standard of proportional justice ("an eye for an eye") limits the punishment for an injury to the equivalent of the injury received. Lamech bragged of going beyond this and killing those who have merely injured him.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 4:24 *Cain's revenge*. So pervasive is sin's effect that Cain's revenge on Abel is presented as a positive model to be emulated, and Lamech boasts that his vengeance exceeds Cain's. By contrast, God teaches His people to avoid private vengeance and to trust in God to balance the scales of justice in His time and in His way (cf v 15; Lv 19:18; Rm 12:19). Christ teaches that we should be generous in our forgiveness (Mt 18:21–22).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 4:25 *Seth*. Hbr *sheth*, play on Hbr *shath*, translated "appointed." Fitting name because this son is also appointed to bear the promise given to Eve for future generations (see note, 3:15).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 4:26 *call upon the name*. See p 842. *the* LORD. See p 1227. Phrase has caused much debate about Moses' use of sources. See pp 3–5; see also note, Ex 6:3. Wording could mean people began to worship God, whose name was later revealed to be "Yahweh," in an organized fashion. "The descendants of the well-respected patriarchs, and the patriarchs themselves, called to mind constantly how in the beginning a person had been created righteous and holy by God. They know that through the fraud of the Serpent, Adam transgressed God's command, became a sinner, and corrupted and cast himself with all his descendants into death and eternal condemnation. They encouraged and comforted themselves again by the preaching about the woman's seed, who would bruise the Serpent's head" (SD V 23).

GENESIS—NOTE ON **Ch 4** Gn 4 begins with a murder and traces how the shadow of violence lengthens until Lamech perverts God's intention for marriage by taking two wives and boasting that he is 77 times more violent than his murderous ancestor Cain. But we also learn of the birth of Seth, through whom God's promise (3:15) will continue. God's plan is not stopped by murder. God appoints another seed of the woman to receive the promise and to carry the story forward. The promise continues to unfold until it comes at last to the cross. There, Satan tries to derail God's plan by killing the seed of the woman. Once again, God prevails, not by appointing another, but by raising Jesus from the dead in declaration that the work is finished, creation is redeemed, and death itself—the chief effect of the fall—is put to death. • Derail for me, O Lord, the devil's evil plans. Grant me Your help and salvation in Christ. Amen.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 5:1 *book of the generations*. Second "toledoth" heading (see pp 10–11) presents the genealogy of Adam's descendants

through whom the promises pass until they come to Noah. See pp 3–5. The genealogical summary in ch 5 speeds the history toward the next major event, the flood. *When God created man*. Basic fact of the creation of man in God's image is stated, but the fall and its consequences are omitted.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 5:2 *Man*. Hbr *'adam*, used as the class name for all mankind. See note, 2:7.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 5:3 Cain and Abel are not mentioned here because they are not part of the genealogical line through whom the promise passes down to Noah.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 5:4 *other sons and daughters*. The son mentioned in the genealogy is not necessarily the father's firstborn child. In addition to Cain and Abel, some of these other sons and daughters may have been born before Seth. See note, 4:17.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 5:5 The long life spans attributed to the patriarchs and the careful articulation of their ages at the time of the birth of heirs have raised questions about how the numbers in this text should be understood. See pp 8–11.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 5:9 *Kenan*. Alternate form of "Cain" in Hbr. Together with Tubal-cain (4:22), suggests that the name of Adam's firstborn may have become common.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 5:18 *Enoch*. Not Cain's son by the same name (4:17).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 5:22 *walked with God*. The phrase, used elsewhere in the Bible only of Noah (6:9), suggests an esp close relationship that explains the remarkable favor shown toward these two men. See p 7.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 5:24 *God took him*. Unique in the Bible. The only other place that God is said to "take" someone deals with God taking Adam and placing him in the garden (2:15). In this instance, God took Enoch into heaven. The uniqueness of this event inspired considerable interest in Enoch in later generations. During the intertestamental period, some writers used Enoch as a character in a number of speculative works, which they pretended he had written. These were eventually collected into a work known today as 1 Enoch (see note, Jude 14–15). Other works in Enoch's name (2 Enoch and 3 Enoch) date from even later periods. See p 1560.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 5:25 *Lamech*. Not Cain's descendant by the same name (4:18–24).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 5:27 Methusaleh is the longest-living person recorded in Scripture. Though ages attributed to pre-flood persons seem long by our standards, a list of Sumerian kings attributes a 43,200-year reign to the ruler Enmenluanna. Both texts point to the idea that the earliest people lived longer. *he died*. In the year of the flood, at the time of Noah.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 5:29 *Noah*. Wordplay between the form of the name *noach* and "[he] shall bring us relief" (*yenachmehu*). *relief*. Or, "comfort." Apparently, Lamech believed that Noah was the promised seed of Eve who would restore the fallen world and undo the curse God placed on the earth in judgment for Adam and Eve's disobedience (3:17–19). Noah does comfort mankind. Though he is not the Messiah, Noah delivers mankind through the flood, which points toward the salvation that will come by the Messiah. See note, 1Pt 3:20.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 5:32 *After Noah was 500 years old*. Hbr text departs from the formula used throughout ch 5 ("when X had lived Y years"). Apparently Moses wanted to mention all three sons because all are important to the account that follows. The change of formula has led some to suggest that Shem, Ham, and Japheth were triplets. Though possible, such an interpretation is not specifically indicated or required. Noah may have had other children in the first 500 years of his life who are not mentioned in this account because they are no longer living with Noah and are not part of the household who go with him into the ark. The Bible regularly omits historical details that are not significant to the unfolding story. See note, 4:14.
GENESIS—NOTE ON **Ch 5** The genealogical summary advances the story to the next major development—the flood. Genealogies teach an important theological lesson: God perseveres in the fulfillment of His promises. God does not become bored with His plan or discouraged by Satan's efforts to derail it. Like God's people before us, we often wander from God's path. Yet, God works patiently to set the course right again and to draw us back to Himself. For this reason, the genealogies that may seem boring actually proclaim "The Lord is not slow to fulfill His promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance" (2Pt 3:9). • Lord, fulfill Your good purpose for me in Christ, as You have promised. Amen.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 6:1 *daughters*. Specifically mentioned because of their role in the following verses.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 6:2 *sons of God*. Godly believers, Sethites, through whom the promised Messiah would come (3:15). Some interpreters have considered the "sons of God" angels, based on the expression in Jb 38:7. However, such a conclusion directly contradicts Jesus' teaching about the nature of angels (Mt 22:30) and Moses' teaching about "kinds" (see pp 9–10). *daughters of man*. Godless unbelievers, Cainites. *any they chose*. The "sons of God" looked longingly upon Sethite and Cainite women, interested only in the attractive ones.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 6:3 *My Spirit shall not abide*. Despite the presence of God's Spirit, people's conduct continually demonstrated that they were weak and sinful. *flesh*. Hbr *basar*; usually means musculature of a body. Here it is contrasted with the uncreated and divine Spirit, which lasts forever. People had degenerated to the point of being mere flesh. See p 1902.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 6:4 *Nephilim*. Thugs, tyrants. *sons of God*. See note, v 2. *mighty men … the men of renown*. First nobility of the world was a group of tyrants, who were admired nonetheless. They were sinners ripe for judgment in God's eyes.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 6:5 Both the indifference of the Sethites to their heritage and the high-handed violence of the Cainites made clear the magnitude of the wickedness that engulfed the earth. Humankind was incapable of doing good, due to the condition of their hearts. See note, Ps 51:5.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 6:6 *sorry … grieved*. Human emotions are used to express the pain that God experienced when He reflected on the total corruption of humankind by sin. Man's sin is God's sorrow.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 6:7 *animals … creeping things … birds*. Originally created for the use of humankind, other living things will share in the consequences of man's evil. Cf 3:17–18.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 6:8 *found favor*. See p 6. The Lord's favor, found and not won, is present even in the midst of the most severe judgments.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 6:1–8 Seth's descendants increasingly participate in the evil that overwhelms God's creation, preferring their own inclinations toward beauty and power over God's clear will for their lives. Recognizing that the human heart is a continual source of evil, God's patience is about to give way to judgment. But God also plans to have mercy. Even as Noah finds favor in the eyes of the Lord, so also the faithful

of all times have God's favor on account of the promised Savior. • We thank You, O Lord, that You look upon us with favor because of Christ Jesus, our Savior. Keep us ever in this faith. Amen.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 6:9 *generations of Noah*. Focus is not on the great disaster of the flood but on the deliverance God provided to and through Noah. *righteous man*. See p 843. *blameless in his generation*. See note, Jb 1:1. Noah's character and conduct were quite different from that of his contemporaries. However, he was not sinless (9:21). *walked with God*. Noah was publicly known to worship the Lord. See p 7.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 6:10 A major part of Noah's walk with God was the rearing of three God-fearing sons during godless times. See note, 5:32.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 6:11–12 V 8 closes the second section of the history recorded in Gn, a history of humankind's degeneration and the Lord's pronouncement that He will destroy the world. These verses again briefly describe conditions in the world to inform the reader of their cause.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 6:11 *corrupt*. Term used elsewhere of idolatry and of perverted worship (Ex 32:7; Jgs 2:19). *violence*. Denial of the true God leads to cruelty toward fellow human beings. See note, 4:23–24.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 6:12 *And God saw*. Anticipates God's action. Corruption and violence had become so conspicuous and outrageous that God could not refrain from enacting punishment.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 6:13 *an end of all flesh*. With the exception of Noah and his family, the whole human race, which had resisted the influence of God's Spirit, was marked for destruction.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 6:14 *ark*. Hbr word occurring only here and in Ex 2:3, 5 (where it is the basket into which Moses was placed). Likely it was shaped more like a barge than a boat. When the flood story in the ancient *Epic of Gilgamesh* was discovered in the 1800s, some scholars regarded this as proof that the Israelites had simply copied or adapted Mesopotamian legends for writing the story of Noah. However, subsequent research has demonstrated the universality of the flood story, which is told in various forms by numerous cultures across several continents. *gopher wood*. Resinous wood, possibly cypress, used for shipbuilding. *pitch*. Caulking, probably asphalt, used also by Moses' mother to make his basket watertight (Ex 2:3, 2).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 6:15 *cubits*. See p cx. The ark was c 450 ft long, 75 ft wide, and 45 ft high.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 6:16 *to a cubit above*. Probably refers to openings for light and air around the entire structure, a cubit from the roof.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 6:17 *breath of life*. See note, 2:7. Humans and animals would be destroyed, with the exception of aquatic animals for whom breath is not essential to life (cf 7:22).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 6:18 *covenant*. God assures Noah that he will live through the coming flood to receive His covenant (9:9). See p 127.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 6:19–20 The ark was large enough to carry two of every "sort" of animal and still leave ample room for food.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 6:19 *two of every sort*. God's interest in the preservation of a remnant included the animal world.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 6:20 *according to their kinds*. Not species as described by modern biology. See pp 9–10. *creeping thing*. See note, 1:24. *shall come in to you*. The instruction to "bring two of every sort" (v 19) is facilitated by the animals making themselves available.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 6:21 *every sort of food*. Noah and his family would stay busy providing more than a year's supply of food for thousands of mouths.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 6:22 Noah responded with willing obedience as one who walks with God (v 9).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 7:1 *righteous*. See p 843. *in this generation*. Noah's righteousness was exceptional in his generation. There were no others left, though Noah did warn his contemporaries of the coming judgment.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 7:2 *seven pairs*. Animals likely to be used for sacrifice, an exception to the general rule regarding pairs (6:19). *clean … not clean*. The law distinguishing between clean and unclean animals would be clearly established at Mount Sinai, but the difference between clean and unclean animals was known long before, also by Noah. See p 300.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 7:3 *seven pairs of the birds*. Clean birds. See note, Lv 11:13–19.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 7:4 Significance of the number 40 elsewhere in Scripture begins here (e.g., Ex 24:18; Nu 14:33; Mt 4:2; Ac 1:3). It is often a length of time characterizing a critical period in redemptive history (cf v 12; Dt 9:11; Mt 4:1–11). See p 217.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 7:5 *Noah did all*. Repeated (cf 6:22) as the most important detail. Luth: "The particular praise of Noah's faith is that he stays

on the royal road; he adds nothing, changes nothing, and takes nothing away from God's directive" (AE 2:77).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 7:6 Despite Noah's advanced age, he lived nearly a third of his life after the flood.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 7:7 *his wife and his sons' wives*. Eight persons survived the flood. Noah and his family did not participate in the polygamy of the Cainites (see note, 4:19). *to escape the waters*. Lit, "from the face of the waters," suggesting a fearsome moment as the waters began to burst forth (v 11).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 7:8 *clean … not clean*. Noah executed the divine instructions he had received (see note, v 2; cf 6:22). See p 300.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 7:9 *went into the ark*. The animals continued to cooperate; divine impulse effected their timely and orderly boarding of the huge vessel.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 7:10 The seven days mentioned in v 4 had now elapsed.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 7:11 *second month … seventeenth day*. A day fixed in the annals of time and one that the survivors would never forget. *fountains of the great deep*. See note, 2:6. Currents caused by upheavals of the earth created onslaughts of water and waves. *windows of the heavens*. Violent, torrential rains burst from the clouds.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 7:12 As predicted in v 4.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 7:13 *entered the ark*. Luth: "God could indeed have preserved [Noah] by countless other methods. … But in this way the faith and obedience of Noah are praised" (AE 2:90).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 7:14 *according to its kind*. Repeated (cf 6:20). Luth: "The Holy Spirit is not wordy without purpose. … By this procedure Moses wanted to thrust a goad, as it were, into the minds of his readers, to keep them from thinking that his message dealt with some unimportant matter" (AE 2:91).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 7:15 *breath of life*. Used earlier to refer to the objects of God's wrath (6:17); here it refers to those who were the objects of His grace. See note, 2:7.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 7:16 *the* LORD *shut him in*. Act of mercy to protect Noah and his family from assault and to protect them from any inclination to show mercy to last-minute penitents. No power in heaven or on earth will break the door down in order to touch those whom God is protecting.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 7:18 *ark floated*. The waters that destroyed the earth also bore up the ark and saved Noah and his family. Peter used this image to speak of Baptism (1Pt 3:20–21).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 7:19 *waters prevailed*. Nothing stands in the way of turbulent floodwaters and tidal waves. Vast geological changes were certain to take place. (Consider the kind of geological erosion exhibited in the Washington State Scablands.) *all the high mountains … were covered*. Indicates a global flood (2Pt 3:6).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 7:20 *fifteen cubits deep*. Seems to be a detail only God would know, rather than a measurement taken by Noah.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 7:21 *all flesh died*. God's words of 6:17 are fulfilled. *all mankind*. Climax of death.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 7:22 *breath of life*. See note, 2:7.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 7:23 *He blotted out … They were blotted out*. No natural catastrophe; this was God's wrath.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 7:24 The waters are now calm after the storm; the flood has crested.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 6:9–7:24 Faithful Noah and his family experience the greatest horror this earth has known, but the ark carries them up and away from the destruction and total devastation of the great flood. Although dwarfed by Noah's experience, all Christians experience turbulence in their lives that can lead them to the brink of despair. But through Noah, God has demonstrated that He will lift up and save His faithful people whom He has cleansed in Holy Baptism. • Lord, give to Your people today the confidence in Your salvation that Noah demonstrated when he willingly placed himself and the welfare of his family into Your gracious care. Amen.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 8:1 *God remembered Noah*. Describes God's intention to act kindly. When God remembers His people, He does so "for good" (Ne 5:19; 13:31). See p 843. *beasts … livestock*. Wild and domestic animals were also remembered. *made a wind blow*. Start of drying process. First of a series of parallels to the creation events of ch 1 (cf 1:2, "Spirit").
GENESIS—NOTE ON 8:2 *closed … restrained*. Cessation of currents from below are necessary for the waters to abate.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 8:3–4 Their mission accomplished, the waters returned to their places above or below the earth. The grounding of the ark after 150 days was the first measure of progress.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 8:4 *mountains of Ararat*. Exact location uncertain; probably the mountainous region north of Mesopotamia and east of modern Turkey. See map, p 609.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 8:5 *mountains were seen*. Although the tops of mountains were visible, Noah was not eager to leave the ark.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 8:6 *window*. See note, 6:16.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 8:7 *raven*. Noah used birds to secure information. The failure of the scavenger bird to return tells Noah that there is more than a blank waste of water outside the ark. *to and fro*. Perhaps from carcass to carcass. *until the waters were dried up*. The raven stayed in the area of the ark until conditions improved.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 8:8 *dove*. More particular than a raven about a place to land.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 8:9 *no place to set her foot*. Wet and muddy ground would not be a good a place for a dove to land, nor would high altitudes.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 8:10 *seven days*. Same length of time allotted for entering the ark (7:4, 10).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 8:11 *in the evening*. Delayed return indicated dry ground on which the dove could land. *freshly plucked olive leaf*. The dove brought a new leaf from a species that prefers lower altitudes. (Olive seeds would have had a few months to sprout after the waters began to recede.) This was God's sign that the land could welcome and sustain Noah and the animals.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 8:12 *another seven days*. Remarkable patience! *she did not return*. Testimony that the waters had for the most part subsided.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 8:13 *six hundred and first year … first month … first day*. Based on Noah's life. Emphasis on "first" signals a new beginning for humankind. *the covering*. Noah, though cautious as ever, concluded that the ark's roof could be removed.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 8:14 *dried out*. After one year and 11 days, the earth was dry enough for occupation.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 8:15 *Then God said*. Just as he entered the ark when instructed, Noah waited for word to leave it.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 8:16 *Go out from the ark*. The ark was intended to be a shelter, not a home.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 8:17 *swarm*. To "breed abundantly," a word ordinarily used of insects. *be fruitful and multiply*. God's words of 1:22 are

repeated for a new day on earth.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 8:19 The exiting from the ark was as orderly as the entering.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 8:1–19 Noah demonstrates extraordinary patience and willingness to listen and obey God while confined in the ark for more than a year. People of faith do not always demonstrate such patience and often act on their own, even under less trying circumstances than those of Noah. But God is patient when His people are not; in Christ, He provides forgiveness and deliverance when His people do not have the patience of Noah. • Thank You, gracious Lord, for Your patience and forgiveness when we do not trust as we should and when we act on our own without patience. Amen.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 8:20 *clean animal … clean bird*. See notes, 7:2, 3. *burnt offerings*. Only offerings that used entire animals, indicating joyful thanks and complete dedication to God. See pp 170–71.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 8:21 *pleasing aroma*. Pleasant because it was offered in faith and sincerity (see notes, 4:5; Eph 5:2). Mel: "He was pleased with the sacrifice of Noah, his prayer, his thanksgiving, his praise, and his teaching" (Chem, *LTh* 2:569). *curse*. Never again will there be a worldwide catastrophe through flood. See note, 9:11; cf 2Pt 3:7. *evil from his youth*. See note, 6:5. "There is a distinction between man's nature and original sin. This applied not only when he was originally created by God pure and holy and without sin [Genesis 1:31], but it also applies to the way we have that nature now after the fall" (FC Ep I 2). Chem: "There were not in the world at that time any other humans than righteous Noah with his family, and yet even of them he says [this word about evil]. … He is speaking not only of the thoughts, but of the make-up or imagination of the human heart" (*LTh* 1:288).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 8:22 Positive side of God's promise (v 21). Normal succession of times and seasons will continue until the Day of Judgment.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 9:1 *Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth*. What God blesses, He also enables. See note, 1:28.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 9:2 *fear of you and the dread*. The relationship of humans and animals would be different from that experienced by Adam at creation (2:18) and by Noah in the ark. *Into your hand they are delivered*. People will have dominion to hunt or tame the animals.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 9:3–4 Humans will eat animals. The Lord enacts dietary rules, which Moses later repeated and amplified (Lv 11:1–31). The decreasing fruitfulness of the earth (3:17–19) perhaps made it necessary for the animals to serve this purpose. In extremely cold or arid regions, humans could not survive without animals for food.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 9:3 *Every moving thing*. While meat would now supplement humans' diet, only freshly killed animals were to be consumed. *green plants*. Although meat likely was eaten before the flood, now it may be eaten with divine sanction. Chem: "The Fifth Commandment is not talking about beasts or birds or fish. … Beasts were to be eaten. … But he who beats a pack of animals to death sins against the Seventh Commandment. God has willed that, in the very act of killing, all cruelty be avoided" (*LTh* 2:408–9).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 9:4 *life, that is, its blood*. Blood was regarded as the seat and soul of life. God's people were not to emulate the pagan practice of eating blood. See note, Ac 15:20.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 9:5 *reckoning*. Killing animals for food would be permissible, but not the killing of humans—by man or beast. God will demand an account. This passage is a clear proclamation that human life is different from animal life.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 9:6 *by man shall his blood be shed*. God uses human agents to punish evildoers, the beginning of court justice and capital punishment (cf Rm 13:4). *image*. Murder strikes at humanity's dignity and God's majesty. See note, 1:26. Chem: "We must distinguish between public officials to whom has been given the commandment to kill (Ex. 22:18–20; Gen. 9:6) and private individuals to whom the commandment is given, 'Thou shalt not kill' " (*LTh* 2:405).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 9:7 More than a repetition of v 1, this accompanies v 6 as a basic ordinance that will be binding upon humankind as long as the earth stands. Cf Ps 127–28.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 9:8 *and to his sons*. God included a word of assurance to future generations.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 9:9 *I establish My covenant*. God's covenants are unilateral; He obligates Himself to observe the terms of His own contract (here, a reassurance to the flood's survivors after their fearsome experience). See p 127.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 9:10 *with every living creature*. Animals also benefited from God's covenant.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 9:11 Regions may be devastated; people and animals may be swept away by floods. But never again will a flood be universal. See note, 8:21.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 9:12 A rainbow is a visible seal and reminder of God's covenant commitments (vv 13–17). See p 127.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 9:13 *My bow in the cloud*. When the marvelous rainbow appears, believers will recall with joy its God-given significance. Rainbows may not have existed until this time (AE 2:148).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 9:14 *bring clouds over the earth*. Perhaps a new occurrence as a result of atmospheric changes from the flood.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 9:15 God will be faithful to the covenant He has made. See "remember," p 843.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 9:16 *bow*. Natural laws that produce rainbows were already in existence, but now they would work their giant wonders in the sky with particular significance. *everlasting covenant*. While this covenant will last only until the end of time, it is also associated with God's everlasting covenant relationship with His chosen people.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 9:17 *This is the sign*. Sight of a magnificent rainbow may even have accompanied this summary statement.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 8:20–9:17 After the fearsome yearlong experience on the ark, God reassures Noah and his family that He will never again send a universal flood. As time would soon tell and continues to tell, no amount of amazing rescues and rainbow sightings can keep humankind, including God's own people, from falling into sin. But God is faithful to His covenants, even when people are not. The message of every rainbow tells us He is faithful to His promise to provide a Savior. • O God, for Jesus' sake, grant that every sighting of a rainbow may bring to mind Your promises of grace and mercy. Amen.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 9:18 *Ham was the father of Canaan*. Because God's chosen people would in due time possess Canaan, the origin of its early inhabitants is noted. This anticipates the story in vv 21–22, where Ham acted as the father of the Canaanites, known for their immorality.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 9:20 *man of the soil*. Noah returned to farming (5:29) for his livelihood.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 9:21 *drunk*. Scripture's first reference to wine associates it with drunkenness and immodest behavior. See note, Pr 23:29–35. *uncovered in his tent*. Noah threw aside the garment that had covered him.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 9:22 *saw the nakedness*. Expression and incident are confusing, perhaps due to modesty in the description. Hbr expression could imply more than Ham seeing his father uncovered (see note, Lv 18:6). At the very least, the incident had grave consequences for the family and Ham's descendants. *told*. He broadcast, rather than covered, the immodesty.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 9:23 Shem and Japheth took extra measures to avoid further disgrace to their father.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 9:24 *knew*. Perhaps Noah remembered the event or wondered about the garment that covered him.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 9:25 *Cursed be Canaan*. Third pronouncement of a curse in Scripture (3:14–19; 4:11), a prediction of the future subjugation of the Canaanites. See p 6. *servant of servants*. Hbr superlative indicates lowest of slaves. "Canaan" comes from the verb for stooping or submitting. As the son of Ham, Noah's youngest son (v 24), Canaan would be last in authority and inheritance, not only because of birth order, but esp because of alienation from the family due to his father's immorality.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 9:26 *Blessed be the* LORD *, the God of Shem*. The Lord is blessed as the source of Shem's blessings. He is also the God of Shem in a special sense, because Shem's descendants included the Israelites. See "blessed," p 842.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 9:27 *dwell in the tents of Shem*. Share in the blessings bestowed on Shem's descendants.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 9:28–29 Continues genealogy of 5:32, which had been postponed for the flood story.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 9:28 *350 years*. Noah lived a third of his life after the great flood.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 9:29 *and he died*. The 10th and last member of Seth's genealogy (5:3–32), Noah's obituary ends like that of his worthy ancestors.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 9:18–29 Noah's sinful drunkenness results in more sinful behavior and tragic consequences for one of his sons. God's faithful people, past and present, are never free from temptations that often

lead them to sin, at times with adverse consequences for generations. The biblical heroes were sinful men and women who lived by faith in the forgiveness of sins. God has been faithful to His promises and has provided forgiveness of sins and everlasting life through the salvation gained by His Son. • Thank You, O Lord, for the warning that accompanies the encouragement that You have given us through Your servant Noah. Amen.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 10:1 *generations*. See pp 8–11. Known as the Table of Nations, this account fills the gap in history between Noah and Abraham, emphasizes the brotherhood of man, shows the relation of the Semitic nations in the broader region, and builds on this foundation for the history of redemption. More attention is given to those nations with closer relationships to Israel. *born … after the flood*. Noah's sons likely had no children until after the flood. For locations in ch 10, see map, p 33.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 10:2–5 *sons of Japheth*. List is from least to greatest (in terms of importance to the descendants of Shem; see note, v 21).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 10:2 *Gomer*. The Assyrian Gimmirrai people, located north of the Black Sea, instrumental in the fall of the Assyrian Empire. *Magog*. Scythians, mentioned in Ezk 39:6 as a heathen menace threatening to engulf God's people (Rv 20:8–9). *Madai*. Hbr for the Medes, located in mountainous country bordering the Caspian Sea. *Javan*. Hbr name for the Ionian Greeks (Is 66:19; Ezk 27:13). *Tubal*. Opponents of Assyria who lived northeast of Cilicia in Asia Minor (Ezk 38:2). *Meshech*. Associated with and living east of Tubal, finally settling in the vicinity of the Black Sea. *Tiras*. Pirates of the sea, possibly associated with the region/people of Thrace of later times.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 10:3 *Ashkenaz, Riphath, and Togarmah*. Peoples located in the Upper Euphrates region.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 10:4 *Elishah*. People whose region of settlement is unclear. *Tarshish*. People of southern Spain and Gibraltar country. *Kittim*. Kition, a settlement in Cyprus. *Dodanim*. Related to the Ionians and possibly located in Rhodes (a Greek isle).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 10:5 Descendants of Japheth settled along and north of the Great Sea. Each had their own country, language, and tribal divisions. References to various languages in vv 5, 20, and 31 show that the situation described in ch 10 developed after the events of ch 11, when only

one language prevailed (11:1). Ch 10 gives the setting for Abram in ch 12 and following.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 10:6–20 Descendants of Ham were located in southwestern Asia and northeast Africa. Greater detail indicates greater involvement with Shem's descendants, the line of promise.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 10:6 *Cush*. The Upper Nile region, today's Ethiopia. *Egypt*. Hbr *mitsraim*. Lit, "two Egypts," Upper and Lower. *Put*. Associated with Egypt and Africa, either Libya or the land of the ancient Egyptians called Punt, Africa's Somali country. *Canaan*. Originally the low costal plain northeast of Egypt, later extended to include the Jordan Valley and the whole region west of the river.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 10:7 Descendants of Cush settled in Arabia.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 10:8 *first … mighty man*. Powerful warrior or community leader. See note, Ru 2:1. Nimrod was the first after the flood to move early civilization in a new direction (cf v 9), which Scripture does not well define.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 10:9 *mighty hunter*. Hunting or warrior activities were the first steps toward dominating men and using them for conquest. Large, well-organized hunting parties may be in mind. *it is said*. Nimrod's reputation was widespread and emulated by others. See pp 3–5. *before the* LORD. His conduct may have defied God. The expression speaks of being in the presence of God, who determined to judge the actions of humankind (cf 9:5–6). Early rabbinic and Christian interpreters often attributed the building of the tower of Babel to Nimrod.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 10:10 *kingdom*. Earth's first empire, the product of aggression. Cities listed were great postflood cities. *Babel*. Ancient city of Babylon. *Erech*. Hbr for Uruk, one of the important cities of ancient Mesopotamia. *Accad*. Became chief center of Semites in Babylon. *Calneh*. Exact location unknown. *Shinar*. Babylon, possibly associated with Shumir of the Sumerians.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 10:11 *Nineveh*. Most famous of the three Assyrian capitals. *Rehoboth-Ir*. Possibly a suburb of Nineveh. *Calah*. Chief Assyrian center southeast of Nineveh.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 10:12 *the great city*. Nineveh, a metropolis with all its surrounding cities.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 10:13 *Ludim*. In northern Africa, west of the Nile (cf Jer 46:9; Ezk 27:10; 30:5). *Anamim*. In north Africa, west of Egypt near

Cyrene. *Lehabim*. Early Libyans; desert tribes. *Naphtuhim*. People of lower Egypt.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 10:14 *Pathrusim*. Inhabitants of Pathros; its capital, Thebes. *Casluhim*. Possibly inhabitants of Casiotis on the Great Sea. *Philistines*. Indo-European invaders of Egypt who migrated to southwest Canaan and troubled Israel until the time of David.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 10:15 *Sidon*. People of ancient Canaanite seacoast city by the same name. *Heth*. Origin of Hittites, who for centuries occupied the region from near Sidon to the Euphrates.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 10:16 *Jebusites*. Ancient inhabitants of Jerusalem. *Amorites*. Occupants of the hill country of Canaan prior to its conquest by the Israelites. *Girgashites*. Relatively unimportant tribe of Canaan.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 10:17–18 *dispersed*. Along with Girgashites, tribes listed inhabited relatively small city-states and in due time went out of existence upon arrival of Israelites.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 10:19 *territory of the Canaanites*. Parameters of Canaanite presence reached north as far as Sidon, south as far as Gaza, and east as far as the Salt Sea area.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 10:20 Descendants of Ham settled east and south of the Great Sea. Each had their country, separate language, and tribal divisions.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 10:21 *children of Eber*. Specifically mentioned here because the Hebrews were descendants of Eber. *elder brother*. Most significant history, that of Shem, is reserved for last. The writer clarifies that Shem was the oldest brother; Ham was the youngest. Cf 9:24.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 10:22 *Elam*. Elam's descendants inhabited the region beyond the Tigris, east of Babylon. *Asshur*. Early name for Assyria in northern Mesopotamia. *Arpachshad*. Usually identified with the mountainous region northeast of Nineveh. *Lud*. Descendants are thought to be Lydians in western Asia Minor. *Aram*. Comprehensive name for the plain occupied by the Arameans, extending from the mountains of Lebanon to beyond the Euphrates.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 10:23 *Uz*. Home of Job (Jb 1:1). See pp 779–82.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 10:24 *Shelah*. Mentioned again in 11:12–15; significant because of his son, Eber, ancestor of the Hebrews.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 10:25 *Peleg … divided*. He lived at the time when the earth was divided by the confusion of tongues (ch 11). *Joktan*. Father of

the 13 tribes of South Arabia (vv 26–29), of whom little is known.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 10:28 *Sheba*. Territory in southwest Arabia; the home of the queen who visited King Solomon (1Ki 10:1–13).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 10:29 *Ophir*. Located south of Canaan; source of much of King Solomon's gold. See note, Jb 22:24.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 10:30 *Mesha … Sephar … hill country*. Its general location is in southern Arabia. Too little is known to locate this region precisely.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 10:31 Repetition of vv 5, 20, distinguishing between the descendants of each of the sons of Noah.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 10:32 Summary statement to bind together the three branches of the human race after the flood. No further information is provided regarding the origin of races. Given their geographical and historical interrelationships, these various groups intermarried even as groups do today. *clans*. See pp 54–55.
GENESIS—NOTE ON **Ch 10** The Table of Nations describes the origins and interrelationships of many nations of the world. The list is important because it is the only document of its kind in existence and demonstrates the common descent of all human beings from Noah. Most important to the list are the Canaanites and Shemites, around whom the stories of the OT will revolve. From the Shemites would come the good news that God was remembering His promise of the Seed that would crush the head of the evil one (3:15). • Thank You, O God, that You have been faithful to Your promises of a Savior from sin and death, despite our constant straying into temptation. Amen.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 11:1 All people on earth at the earliest time were direct descendants of Noah; therefore, the whole world had the same language. Ch 11 describes events that happened prior to the division of nations described in ch 10.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 11:2 *migrated from the east*. Until now, all events have been consistently identified with "the east." Now, Noah's early descendants journeyed down the Tigris-Euphrates Valley of Mesopotamia.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 11:3 *brick for stone*. On the plain near the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, stones were scarce, while clay was plentiful. The process of "burning" bricks was unique to the region; it was not used in Egypt until much later. *bitumen for mortar*. Use of "slime" (tar from coal or

oil) with bricks for construction well describes the historical setting of the account.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 11:4 *tower*. Ziggurat pyramids are known from Ur, Babylon, and other Mesopotamian cities. This architecture dates back to the third millennium BC. *make a name for ourselves, lest we be dispersed*. Noah's descendants were to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth (9:1). Their intention to create a focal point that would keep them in one place was proof that they intended to break God's command.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 11:5 *the* LORD *came down*. God is described in human terms, intervening in the affairs of humankind (cf Ps 144:5).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 11:6 *nothing … impossible*. Refers to their sinful conceits. If the human race remained united in self-interested pride, there would be no limit to people's rebellion against God.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 11:7 *let Us go down*. See note, 1:26. *confuse their language*. Direct manifestation of divine power appears to have altered their thought processes, making it impossible to communicate and trust one another.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 11:8 *over the face of all the earth*. God not only caused them to desist from their evil purposes but also to "fill the earth" as He intended (9:1).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 11:9 *Babel*. Hbr verb *balal* means "to confuse"; a form of the verb, when contracted, results in Babel, the name of the city.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 11:1–9 To curtail the pride and evil design of early humankind, God intervenes to make it difficult for family groups and tribes to communicate with one another, thereby causing them to disperse to different regions of the Near East and beyond. Like the story of the fall, the story of Babel shows that rebellion against God ultimately leads to divisions among people. People are driven away from paradise and from one another. Yet the Lord was preparing to gather and bless all nations in the birth of the living Word from the line of Shem. • We praise You, O God, that You enable Your Church to overcome language barriers with the Gospel of salvation in Christ Jesus. Amen.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 11:10–26 Genealogical list is a continuation of ch 5, recording further development of the human race, emphasizing the lineage that would stand in special relation to God, and introducing the genealogy of Terah and Abram.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 11:10 *two years after the flood*. Establishes the point in time for reckoning the following genealogy.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 11:11 *daughters*. Although daughters are mentioned, they are not listed by name, perhaps because they were not essential in describing the messianic line.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 11:12 *lived 35 years*. Two catastrophes, the flood and the confusion of tongues, perhaps shortened people's lives. Childbearing is likewise recorded as occurring at younger ages.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 11:13 *other sons and daughters*. The human population, despite the shortening life span, increased in size dramatically during these generations. One could calculate that if each family of the 10 generations averaged 10 children, the population by the time of the 11th generation would have totaled nearly 300 million.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 11:14 *Eber*. Ancestor of the Hebrews; the name is associated with the act of "crossing over" the Euphrates and migrating southward. If there were no gaps in the genealogies, Eber could actually have outlived Abraham.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 11:26 *Abram, Nahor, and Haran*. Three sons of Terah who had important roles in subsequent history: Abram ("the father is exalted") as the father of the chosen family line, Nahor as the ancestor of Rebekah, and Haran as the father of Lot. Abram would be named Abraham in ch 17.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 11:10–26 Sin weighs heavily on the human race as spans of life are drastically shortened. Yet this section assures us that the promised messianic line continues through human history. • Thank You, O Lord, that You never abandon Your people, that they may hold fast to the hope of everlasting life. Amen.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 11:27 *generations of Terah*. Record is narrowed to one family, the family of Terah and the patriarchs Abraham (Abram), Isaac, and Jacob. *Haran fathered Lot*. Lot is mentioned specifically because of his role in Abraham's life (chs 13–14; 19).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 11:28 *Haran died*. The reason Lot would go with Abram. *Ur of the Chaldeans*. Archaeological discoveries have situated Ur on the west bank of the Euphrates in southern Babylon. See map, p 33. This city was the center of the cult of the Mesopotamian moon god Sin.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 11:29 *Milcah, the daughter of Haran*. Later, marriage with a half sister or niece would be forbidden by Mosaic Law. See

note, 4:17. Cf Lv 18.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 11:30 Because Sarai's inability to conceive a child would play prominently in future events, advance attention is called to her condition.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 11:31 *go into the land of Canaan*. Canaan was familiar to the inhabitants of the Tigris and Euphrates valleys. *Haran*. Mesopotamian city in the north; a commercial center. See map, p 33. Like Ur, it was a seat of worship for the Mesopotamian moon god Sin. Terah, an idolater, probably felt at home settling there.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 11:32 Terah's death ended his plan of reaching Canaan, but Abram would fulfill the plan because of the heavenly Father's call.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 11:27–32 After the human race has again turned away from God, the history of salvation and the messianic promise is narrowed to one man, Abram, the son of Terah of the line of Shem. Terah adopts heathen superstition and idolatry, a common practice in every age. But God identifies Abram as the father of the line by which all nations of the earth would be blessed. God will call Abram to leave all and follow Him, first to Haran and, in due time, to Canaan. • Thank You, gracious Lord, for Your patience in working out the details necessary for our salvation in Christ Jesus, and for Your patience and forgiveness when we succumb to this world's attractions and fall into sin. Amen.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 12:1 *Go from*. The Lord called Abram out of idolatry (Jsh 24:2), in which he deserved nothing but condemnation and eternal death. This was not because Abram merited God's favor. Instead, God demonstrated His mercy and grace in calling an idolater out of pagan surroundings and affiliations, setting him apart from the world of false belief to live by the promise of His grace. By choosing Abram, an idolater, God demonstrated that it is not by works but by grace that we are saved. *I will show you*. Though Abram did not know where he was going, he followed the direction God provided by His Word. How the Word of God came to Abram is not specified, but Luther writes, "I am convinced that he was not called directly by God without the ministry" (AE 2:249). See note, 4:26, for more about such ministry of the Word.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 12:2 *great nation*. God's promise was given to a man who was resigned to being childless (11:30). Here, God promises that from Abram will come not only the people of Israel but also the Church of

Christ, which encompasses baptized disciples of Jesus from all nations (Mt 28:19). *bless*. See p 842. God blessed Adam and Eve, telling them to be fruitful and multiply (1:28). God blessed Abram, indicating that his descendants would fill the earth and that all nations would be blessed through him. *name great*. Even the heathen speak well of God's people Israel (Dt 4:6–7) because of God's faithfulness in keeping His promise to them. St Paul calls Christians the offspring of Abraham (Gal 3:29), indicating how widely God has extended the patriarch's name on account of the Gospel. *blessing*. See p 842. Ultimately fulfilled in Christ, but also in various temporal ways, as when God blessed the Egyptians through Joseph, the Ninevites through Jonah, and even the Babylonians during Israel's exile (cf Dn 2:48; 6:28).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 12:3 *bless … curse*. See pp 842, 8–11. The Lord promises that the gates of hell shall not prevail against His people (Mt 16:18). No effort on Satan's part would undermine God's promise to redeem the world in the promised Savior. Thus, Pharaoh's threat was drowned in the Red Sea (Ex 14:28), kings Sihon and Og were destroyed (Dt 2:33; 3:3), and even world powers such as Babylon, Greece, and Rome suffered defeat, while God faithfully upheld His people and the promise of the Gospel. On the other hand, those who befriended His people, such as the midwives in Egypt (Ex 1:20) and Rahab the harlot (Jsh 6:25), were blessed. *in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed*. Not merely a promise of temporal blessings, but the promise of the Gospel that, in Christ Jesus—Abraham's Seed (Gal 3:29)—people of all nations and times will have the eternal blessing of God's forgiveness. There is no greater blessing than that "in Christ God was reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them" (2Co 5:19).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 12:4 *Abram went*. Luth: "Promise and faith belong together" (AE 2:266). What God promised to Abram worked faith in him and caused him to act in faith. See p 2016; cf Rm 10:17.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 12:5 *people that they had acquired*. Servants, laborers, and children and relatives of the same. Luth: "Not simply his household but the true and holy church, in which Abraham was the high priest" (AE 2:280). *land of Canaan*. See note, 9:25.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 12:6 *At that time the Canaanites were in the land*. Moses reminds us that God's people, though called to be separate, are still

in the world, surrounded by enemies against which the Lord protects His elect (Jn 15:18–19; 17:11–21).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 12:7 *Lord appeared*. No one can see God and live (Ex 33:20), and "no one has ever seen God" (1Jn 4:12; cf 1Tm 6:16). Nv: "It was not the Father who was seen … but the Son, who has both been accustomed to descend, and to be seen because He has descended. For He is the image of the invisible God" (*ANF* 5:628; cf Col 1:15). See p 39. *altar to the Lord*. Abram established an altar there because the Lord appeared to him. Abram does this throughout his life.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 12:8 *called upon the name of the Lord*. See p 842. "[Prayer] includes the entire ministry" (AE 2:287). See note, 4:26. Hbr allows the translation "He proclaimed in the name of the Lord." Luther proposed that Abram may have learned of the Lord more fully through the ministry established by the patriarch Shem. See "Lord," p 1227.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 12:1–9 God calls an idolater to faith, giving him a promise that God Himself would fulfill for all people. God's Spirit works faith, when and where He pleases, through the Word. He is faithful to do as He has said. He made Abram into a great nation, blessing all the world through the Son. As Abram's offspring by faith, we have the blessing of God's forgiveness and life without end. • Heavenly Father, call us to trust the Word of God in the water of Holy Baptism, to cling to everything You command, and to live by the blessing of Your Word. In Jesus' name. Amen.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 12:10 *famine*. The Lord disciplines His children by way of crosses and troubles (Heb 12:6). Here, a famine forced Abram to leave the Promised Land in search of food. A painting in the tomb of Khnumhotep II (c 1870 BC) depicts 37 people from the East (Canaan), who visited Egypt. In c 1944 BC, a shepherd rescued an Egyptian named Sinuhe who had fled into Canaan. Such accounts illustrate early interaction between people of Egypt and Canaan near the time of Abraham.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 12:11 *woman beautiful in appearance*. Though Sarai was more than 65 years old at the time (12:4; 17:17), her beauty was still both notable and desirable. The aging of people described in Gn does not seem to correspond directly with aging as we experience it today. See pp 8–11.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 12:13 *my sister*. A half-truth, as the two were, in fact, related (26:7). Abram sought to preserve his own life, even at the risk of his wife's chastity. Aug: "Now he did not deny that she was his wife, but

held his peace about it, committing to God the defense of his wife's chastity" (*NPNF* 2 1:322).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 12:15 *Pharaoh*. Egyptian royal title meaning "the great house." Originally, it was applied to the king's palace, but was later applied to rulers of Egypt. *taken into Pharaoh's house*. Into the palace of the king, where he took Sarai as one of his wives (v 19). See note, 1Ki 3:1–2.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 12:16 *dealt well*. The Lord blessed Abram with worldly wealth, keeping His promise to make Abram's name great, to bless those who bless him, and to curse those who curse him. *camels*. Evidence for the early domestication of camels had been scant, but is now confirmed.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 12:17 *the* LORD *afflicted Pharaoh*. Affliction was sufficient to make the king aware of God's displeasure. How Pharaoh realized his circumstances were due to taking someone else's wife is not clear. *plagues*. Not like those God would later bring on Egypt through Moses (Ex 11:1), but severe enough to trouble the king's conscience.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 12:19 *I took her for my wife?* Text may imply that Abram had little choice over the matter, though Pharaoh assigns him blame. When a king claimed a woman, family members often had little recourse.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 12:10–20 Although God promises Abram that he will possess the land that God will give him, Abram still finds no secure place in which to dwell. At times, we also find ourselves in circumstances that show the opposite of what God says. In Abram's case, he went forth—even out of the land of promise—trusting that God would fulfill His Word. God returned Abram and Sarai, in time, to Canaan, and there kept all that He had promised to them. In the fullness of time, He even brought forth the Son by whom all nations would be blessed. Though the hour of Jesus' agony and death was dark, God was keeping His promise. • Lord God, when all we see appears to contradict what You have promised, teach us to rely on Your unfailing Word. Defend us in Christ Jesus, our Lord. Amen.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 13:2 Abram came to Canaan with apparent wealth (12:5), which increased during his sojourn in Egypt (12:16).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 13:4 *called upon the name of the* LORD. See note, 12:8.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 13:6 *the land could not support both*. As in other nomadic cultures, the wealth of Abram and Lot was in their herds. More and more pasture was needed.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 13:7 *herdsmen*. Shepherds (cf Ps 23:1). *Canaanites and the Perizzites*. Reminder of perils Abram and Lot faced.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 13:8–9 Abram showed that he was a man of peace, yielding his right to his younger nephew. Abram permitted himself to be disadvantaged for the sake of good relations (cf 21:22–34; 23).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 13:10 *like the garden of the* LORD. Lush, verdant, amply supplied with water. Cf 2:8–14; see "Census Figures," p 213. *before the* LORD *destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah*. Implies that readers know the story. Moses provides a clarifying reference for the benefit of readers and hearers who would know the southern end of the Salt Sea, the region of Zoar, as anything but a paradise (cf 19:18–26). See map, p 33.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 13:14–17 After Lot departed to live among wicked men, the Lord reminded Abram of His promise. The Lord repeats and further expounds what He has told Abram (12:7), which was a great comfort to the patriarch after he had given the choice to Lot, who seemingly now had the better part. God is also teaching Abram that he will sojourn in the Promised Land as in a foreign land (Heb 11:9–10).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 13:18 *altar to the* LORD. Abram had already built an altar at Shechem, where the Lord had appeared to him (12:7). He had also built an altar at Bethel ("house of God," 12:8). Then, he built an altar by the oaks of Mamre. He, who would sojourn all his days as a foreigner, made sure that the land in which he dwelt always had a witness to God's Word and promises, through the worship of God's people.
GENESIS—NOTE ON **Ch 13** Conflict arises between Abram's and Lot's herdsmen. Abram—for the sake of peace within the clan—decides they need to part and relinquishes to Lot the right of first choice. What an example Abram sets for true, godly living, an example Christ Himself shows. Though Christ was God, He counted humanity better than Himself, taking the form of a servant that we might be treated like kings and queens! By His self-sacrificing, humble service in our place, we are reconciled with God. • Lord God, teach us, by Abram's example, how to love as we have been loved and how to serve as we have been served. Amen.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 14:1–7 Four invading kings were met by a coalition of five kings from the region that Lot had chosen for himself. That Mesopotamians had invaded the region is recorded by the ruler of Mari, Yakhdun-Lim, who describes a military campaign to Syria, Lebanon, and the Mediterranean coast during the nineteenth century BC.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 14:1 None of these kings can be identified with certainty. *Amraphel*. Not likely the Babylonian king Hammurabi, as once thought. *Elam*. East of the Tigris River. *Goiim*. Common noun in Hbr for "nations" or "gentiles."
GENESIS—NOTE ON 14:2 *these kings made war*. Five kings in the region of the Salt Sea had been vassals of Chedorlaomer (v 4). Their rebellion incurred swift punishment from the four invading kings of Mesopotamia. At this time, Mesopotamia controlled the region that would become Israel. See note, 10:10. *kings*. Hbr term can describe everything from a warlord/chieftain to an emperor. *Sodom … Gomorrah*. Remains of ancient cities have been discovered near the southeastern end of the Salt Sea, though it is not clear whether any of these ruins are ancient Sodom and Gomorrah.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 14:4 *rebelled*. Refused to pay the tribute owed.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 14:5–7 Kings from the east dispersed the border tribes that served as the Jordan River Valley's first line of defense.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 14:5 *fourteenth year*. Since the five kings of the lower Jordan River Valley had come under Chedorlaomer's lordship.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 14:10 *bitumen pits*. Pits of asphalt or tar. The Salt Sea is known for having chunks of asphalt floating in it; in Roman times Josephus called it "Asphaltites Lacus." *hill country*. Highlands in the region of Moab, east of the Salt Sea.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 14:11 *enemy*. Translators' term to indicate the four invading kings who plundered Sodom and Gomorrah. *possessions*. Movable property and goods, particularly cattle. *provisions*. Food.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 14:12 *They also took Lot*. Lot had separated himself from Abram, choosing what seemed to be the better portion. The invaders abducted Lot and took other captives as spoils of war.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 14:13 *Hebrew*. Hbr *'ibri*. Abram is the first biblical figure to be so designated (cf 39:14, 17; 40:15; 43:32; Ex 1:15; 2:11). The word could derive from Eber, of whose lineage was Abram (see note, 11:14), and may be related to the verb meaning "to pass over or through," perhaps referring to migration and nomadic life. It is a matter of debate whether the word is connected with the wandering, nomadic people known as Habiru. *allies*. From Hbr *berith*, "covenant"; those confederated with Abram. The fact that they received a portion of the spoils (v 24) indicates that they were faithful to their alliance.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 14:14 *trained men*. Hbr term used only here in the OT. We may consider the men a testimony to the wealth God had given Abram. *318*. Such a low number of men against perhaps much greater odds emphasizes that the victory is God's, not man's. See note, v 24. *as far as Dan*. Northern city of Dan received its name much later than Moses' era, indicating here a scribal updating for later readers who would no longer have called the city by its earlier name, Laish.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 14:15 A night attack, during which the forces were divided, was a tactic later employed also by Gideon in Jgs 7:16. Such a stratagem has the element of surprise and confusion. Multiple forces attack from various directions under the cover of darkness.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 14:1–16 The land of Canaan is torn by marauding invaders, who sweep up Lot in their conquest. But God in His grace provides deliverance. As God rescued Lot through Abram and his 318 well-trained men, so He watches over and cares for us. He sent a Redeemer to rescue us. When your enemies surround you, revealing just how weak your faith is and how great your sins are, call on the Lord and come quickly to the Lord's Supper, for He sets His Table before you in the presence of your enemies and gives you the victory in Christ. • Dear Lord, You rescued us from sin, death, and the power of the devil when You baptized us in Jesus. By the Gospel of Your Son, pluck us daily from the hands of our enemies, that we may overcome them and finally win the victory. In Jesus' name. Amen.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 14:17 *King's Valley*. Apparently near Jerusalem; mentioned again only in 2Sm 18:18.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 14:18 *Melchizedek*. Name means "the king of righteousness" or "my king is righteousness." Receiving a tithe from Abram, this priest-king was a type of the eternal and universal priesthood of Jesus Christ (Heb 6:20–7:19). *Salem*. "Peace." *bread and wine*. Essential parts of a celebratory meal. See pp 200–201. *priest of God Most High*. "Most High" is used elsewhere, particularly in the psalms (e.g., Ps 7:17; 9:2; 18:13; 46:4). It indicates that He is above all others, the one and only true God. The Early Church Fathers and Luther associated Melchizedek with Shem, the son of Noah (AE 2:381–83). Whether or not this association is correct, the "priest of God Most High" certainly continued in the righteousness preached by Noah (2Pt 2:5) and would have learned of the

promise through the faithful testimony and worship of those who had come before (see Luth, pp 3–5).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 14:19 *Blessed*. See p 842. God called Abram with the promise and blessed him (12:2). Here, through His priest, the Most High (v 18) does as God said and blessed Abram again. *Possessor*. Hbr *qoneh*; commonly used to describe a purchase of property, and thereby, ownership. See "portion," p 7.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 14:20 *blessed be God*. See p 842. God is blessed when people confess Him as the One who gives blessing. *Abram gave him a tenth*. Hbr does not include "Abram" but simply says that "he" gave him a tithe. Cf Heb 7:2, 4 to understand that it was Abram who gave the tithe to Melchizedek.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 14:22 *lifted my hand*. To lift up or raise the hand is to swear or make an oath. See "oath," p 7; see also p 1276.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 14:23 *I have made Abram rich*. Though the offer was generous, Abram displayed none of the avarice that often drives people and desired no profit from the venture. The credit belonged only to God.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 14:24 *Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre*. Allies who accompanied Abram and his men. We are not told how many troops this added to the 318 that Abram mustered against the invaders. See note, v 14.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 14:17–24 The Lord fulfills His promise to bless Abram, doing so through the ministry of Melchizedek, the priest of God Most High, who presents him with a feast. The Lord's blessings come through His gifts, His means, His ministers. The Lord confirmed this ultimately by sending His Son, who gave the eternal sacrifice, once for all, of His body and His blood on the cross. He continues to bless us, even setting a feast before us as He gives His body and His blood in bread and wine. • Lord, bless us daily to live in Your pleasure, which is ours for the sake of Jesus, our great High Priest. Amen.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 15:1 *vision*. Earlier, the Lord "said to Abram" (12:1). After that, He "appeared to Abram" (12:7). Luth: "[Abram] not only heard the word; but the word was represented by a certain likeness of the Speaker" (AE 3:12). Cf Nu 12:6–8; see p 39. *I am your shield*. Comforting word to calm Abram's fears, for he will soon express his worries over remaining childless, without a proper heir (v 2). See note, Ps 28:7. Luth: "A mighty fortress is our God, A trusty shield and weapon" (*LSB* 656:1).

reward. A reward is paid, not only because it is earned, but also because it is promised, and the Lord had promised Abram richly!
GENESIS—NOTE ON 15:2 *continue*. Hbr means "to go or walk," and may carry the sense of departure, even death, as in Simeon's song: "Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace" (Lk 2:29). *house*. Used broadly to encompass Abram's entire estate. *Eliezer of Damascus?* A servant born and raised in Abram's household (v 3); may be the loyal servant in ch 24. Despite his qualifications as someone Abram might adopt as heir, Eliezer is by no means preferable to the natural-born son God promised. (Babylonian documents describe laws regulating adoption of heirs.)
GENESIS—NOTE ON 15:3 *member*. Lit, a "son of the house," a servant born and raised in Abram's household, but not of blood descent.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 15:4 *your very own son*. Lit, "out of your inward parts," out of Abram's body, his natural-born son.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 15:5 *stars*. That Abram is able to walk outside indicates that this is a waking vision. See note, v 1. *offspring*. Hbr is singular, sometimes translated "seed." Christ is ultimately the promised Seed (Gal 3:16), who points to the abundance He produces by His death and resurrection (cf Jn 12:24). See note, Gn 3:15.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 15:6 *believed*. Hbr *'aman*, "to be faithful," "to trust." See "faithfulness,"
p 842. Bern: "[The elect] had … been set free by their faith in a future Deliverer, as of Abraham it is written" (*SLSB*, p 285). *counted*. To think, reckon, or account. Because of God's mercy and grace, for Jesus' sake, He considers our sins forgiven. *righteousness*. See p 1904. Luth: "Righteousness is nothing else than believing God when He makes a promise" (AE 3:20). "Abraham was justified before God through faith alone, for the sake of the Mediator, without the cooperation of his works. This was true not only when Abraham was first converted from idolatry and had no good works, but also afterward, when he had been renewed by the Holy Spirit and adorned with many excellent good works" (FC SD III 33). See p 2016.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 15:8 *how am I to know*. Faith is often fleeting and in need of shoring up. At times, even the saints asked for something to stand with God's Word. For us, also, God has provided the Sacraments with His spoken Word.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 15:9–10 A covenant was literally "cut." The participants cut animals in half, then walked between them as a pledge that such a fate would befall the maker of the covenant should he breach it (cf Jer 34:18). However, here the Lord alone walks between the halves! Abram is a passive and sleeping beneficiary of God's promise (cf vv 12–21). See p 127.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 15:12 *sun was going down*. As vv 1–6 took place at night, in vv 7–21 God has visited Abram a second time. *deep sleep*. As God made Adam slumber when He drew forth the rib to make the woman, so God made Abram slumber as He passed through the severed pieces of the sacrifice. Abram merely received what God had promised. *dreadful and great darkness*. When sinners find themselves before great and holy revelations, fear and trepidation often fall upon them. Thus, Isaiah trembled (Is 6:5), and Peter, James, and John were afraid (Mt 17:5–6). Further, what Abram saw in his dream was still remote. In his slumber, he saw darkly what would later be revealed fully.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 15:13–14 *four hundred years*. A round figure indicating the time Israel would spend in Egypt, ultimately in subjugation. (They would stray from the Lord as hinted in Ex 4:31; Jsh 24:14.) *possessions*. God would bring judgment on Egypt, delivering His people, Israel, who would plunder their Egyptian neighbors of their riches as they departed (Ex 12:35–36).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 15:15 See note, 1Ki 2:10. Luth: "Since Abraham had been enlightened by the Holy Spirit, he realized that these words referred to the resurrection of the dead and to the life of the future world" (AE 3:38).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 15:16 *iniquity … not yet complete*. Luth: "[A statement] to point out the patience of God" (AE 3:40). Chem: "God does not cause wills to be evil nor does He produce evil in the hearts of the ungodly, but he only permits it. …

God determines the boundaries when He is going to give permission, as to when and where He will restrain the ungodly" (*LTh* 1:200).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 15:17 *smoking fire pot and a flaming torch*. By these emblems of God's presence, He passed through the severed pieces of the animals. It is God, not Abram, who assumes the burden if the covenant is broken. Ultimately, it is God's own Son who will assume the burden of

our breaking God's Law, being sacrificed on the cross to atone for our offenses.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 15:18 *covenant*. See p 127.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 15:19–21 Israel would not hold the land described here until the time of King David (2Sm 8:1–15). Not all of the tribes mentioned here are identifiable, but they were those who inhabited the land of Canaan prior to Israel's conquest and reception of the Promised Land. See p 345.

GENESIS—NOTE ON **Ch 15** God credits righteousness to Abram simply on the basis of His covenant promise and faith. To the promise, He adds the visible sign of the slaughtered animals, the fire pot, and the torch by which God shows Abram that He is committed. Today, rest in God's promises given to you in Jesus and delivered to you in His Word and Sacraments. They are enough, because Jesus was enough. • Dear Father, rescue us from our enemies by Your promise made sure in Your Son, who delivers our inheritance to us in the New Testament of His blood. In Jesus' name. Amen.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 16:1 *Egyptian servant*. Sarai may have acquired Hagar while she and Abram sojourned in Egypt. Ironically, the Israelites later become slaves to Egyptians.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 16:2 *obtain children by her*. Lit, "be built up by her." The OT saints sometimes obtained children through means that Holy Scripture describes but does not advocate. However, they were recognized legal practices of the day and shared many of the same benefits and complications realized in today's fertility options (e.g., surrogacy).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 16:3 *as a wife*. For conjugal relations, as would be normal between husband and wife. See pp 54–55.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 16:4 *contempt on her mistress*. Sarai became slighted or demeaned in Hagar's eyes. Hagar was guilty of judging by appearances, assuming that because Abram's seed took root in her, while Sarai remained barren, it meant she, not Sarai, had God's and Abram's favor. Later, St Paul would use Hagar and Sarai as types of the two religions known to man—those teaching justification by the Law and those teaching justification by the Gospel. See note, Gal 4:22–23.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 16:5 *wrong … be on you!* Although Sarai gave occasion for the contempt that Hagar showed her, Abram may have

contributed to the problems, thus giving rise to Sarai's complaint. *May the* LORD *judge between you and me!* Assertion of innocence.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 16:6 *do to her as you please*. In prudence, Abram sided with his barren wife over the pregnant maidservant. *she fled*. Hagar would not receive the discipline of her mistress. By fleeing, she also took away the couple's hope of an heir.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 16:7 *angel of the* LORD. See p 1227; see also note, v 13.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 16:9 *Return … and submit*. Lit, "put yourself under her hands." Sarai, in her harsh treatment of Hagar, was disciplining her servant, who had become arrogant on account of God's gift. To this, Hagar should have submitted in the first place (cf Heb 12:11).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 16:10 God's promise to Hagar was different from His promise to Abram. The children of the slave woman are separate from the children of the free woman (cf Gal 4:21–31). On an earthly level, God promised to multiply a people from Hagar (Arabs), who even now contend with those born from Sarai (Israelites).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 16:12 *a wild donkey of a man*. Unbridled, wild in temperament and spirit, and given to war and bloodshed. This prophetically describes Ishmael. (Cf 25:12–18.) *dwell over against all*. Live in opposition to all.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 16:13 Hagar recognized in the Angel of the Lord a manifestation of the Lord Himself. Hagar confessed that God sees and takes care of her, or that she saw God and He had not destroyed her. Hbr is difficult, comparable to Ex 33:23, where God graciously promised to allow Moses to see His "back."
GENESIS—NOTE ON **Ch 16** Sarai seeks alternative means for fulfilling God's promise. When God provides a son to Hagar, discord and strife arise because of jealousy and pride. How often our own households and marriages are torn asunder when we devise ways and means that God has not commanded! Consider how willing our Lord was to submit Himself to everything the Father willed, even when that meant suffering at the hands of evil men and dying in their place. He has seen your suffering, and has taken it upon Himself. By His dying and His rising, He makes sure the God who sees all is now graciously disposed toward you. • Dear Lord, though You see all, You promise now to see us only in Jesus. Tenderly work among

us by Your means of grace, exercising Your fatherly care. In Jesus' name. Amen.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 17:1 *the* LORD *appeared to Abram*. See note, 12:7. Abram is 99, and 13 years have passed since the birth of Ishmael. *God Almighty*. See p 1227. Nothing is impossible with God. *walk before Me*. See pp 7, 39. *blameless*. See note, Jb 1:1. Luth: "What else did God want than that Abraham should continue in the righteousness and faith because of which he had been declared righteous and that he should be uncorrupted, blameless, and perfect?" (AE 3:78).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 17:2 *covenant*. God's blessings and promises are always new. He had already made His covenant with Abram. He added a name (v 5) and a sign (vv 10–11) by which Abram is to be sure that the original promise has not been forgotten. See p 127.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 17:3 *fell on his face*. See p 1276.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 17:5 *Abraham*. "Abram" means "exalted father," but "Abraham" means "father of many nations." God added a new name to the patriarch, that by it he might be ever mindful of the promise.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 17:7 *everlasting covenant*. Lasting in Christ Jesus, who sent forth His apostles to "make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Mt 28:19). In Christ, the promise God gave to Abraham extends to all nations. See also p 127. *God to you*. God is not merely the Almighty; He is the Almighty for His people, i.e., for their life, forgiveness, and salvation.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 17:8 *an everlasting possession*. Temporal promise of land was fulfilled when God gave His OT people their inheritance in Canaan. True Israel is no longer merely of earthly lineage, but includes those who are true sons of Abraham in Christ Jesus (Gal 3:7). Their true citizenship is not of this earth but in heaven (Php 3:20), even as was Abraham's citizenship (Heb 11:10). See "portion," p 7.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 17:10 *circumcised*. By removal of the foreskin, males received a visible sign (v 11) of God's promise to send a Savior, born of the woman (Gal 4:4–5). No Hebrew male could live a day without being reminded of the promise God had made long before, and every conjugal act between a husband and wife would illustrate the hope that God was working to restore creation and redeem all people. Finally, the shedding of blood pointed to our final redemption by the shedding of Christ's blood. See note, Ex 4:25.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 17:11 *sign*. Pledge or token—something that does not have to exist for itself, but points to something greater. The Word, not the mere removal of flesh from the body, was the chief thing in circumcision.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 17:12 *eight days old*. Such infant circumcision points to God's inclusion of His people in the covenant promise even at a tender age. It also anticipated when circumcision would end and Baptism would become the sign of the new covenant (Col 2:11–12). God finished the work of the original creation on the sixth day, and on the seventh He rested. The eighth day represented a new beginning. Christ finished the work of the new creation by redeeming us with His blood on the sixth day, Good Friday. On the Sabbath, He rested in the tomb. On Easter Sunday, Christ arose, starting the new creation on what may be referred to as the "eighth day." *bought with your money*. Slavery; see p 101. Regarding money, see note, Jsh 24:32.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 17:13 *covenant … in your flesh*. Physical sign illustrated the blood basis of the covenant (15:8–10) and its intensely personal character.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 17:14 *cut off from his people*. To refuse the sign of the covenant displayed unbelief. Instead of losing a piece of skin, the entire person would be cut off from God's covenant people and from the promise. See note, Ex 12:15.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 17:1–14 Abraham receives both a new name and the sign of the covenant promise God had given His people. The Lord received the same sign of circumcision, shedding His infant blood and receiving the name "Jesus," proving Himself to be our dear Savior. • Lord, lead us to treasure the precious Word and Sacraments, which mark and sign us as Your beloved children. Amen.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 17:15 *Sarah*. Means "princess," an indication that as Abraham would be the father of many nations, Sarah would be the mother of the same.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 17:16 *bless*. As God blessed Adam and Eve, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply" (1:28). See p 842. *become nations*. Ultimately fulfilled by our Lord as He made disciples of all nations through Baptism and teaching (Mt 28:19–20).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 17:17 He prostrated Himself in worship and laughter, perhaps in disbelief for joy (cf Lk 24:41), or because faith and

unbelief often go together in sinners (cf Mt 28:17; Mk 9:24). Likely it seemed unreasonable to him that he and Sarah should have a child at their age (18:12). See p 1276.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 17:18 Abraham wrongly believed that Ishmael was the child of promise. This still seemed not only reasonable to him but perhaps also preferable to fathering a child with Sarah at such an old age. The patriarch no doubt had great fondness for his firstborn and did not want him excluded from God's favor.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 17:19 *call his name Isaac*. Isaac means "he laughs," reflecting not only the incredulous laughter of Abraham but also that of Sarah, who laughed at hearing that she would bear a son (18:12). *everlasting covenant for his offspring*. Fulfilled in Christ. See note, 12:3.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 17:20 *Ishmael … blessed*. God did not forget Ishmael, but would multiply him greatly as He had promised Hagar (16:10). *twelve princes*. Fulfilled in 25:13–16. Ishmael was the father of the Arabian tribes.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 17:23 Circumcision was practiced by cultures before this time (see note, Ex 4:25), as washings, ablutions, and cultic meals were practiced before Moses and before Christ instituted Holy Baptism and Holy Communion. Here, God takes a known practice and transforms it by the promise.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 18:2 *three men*. The Lord (the Son of God) and two angels appear in human form. Cyr Jer: "What strange thing do we announce in saying that God was made Man, when [you Jews] yourselves say that Abraham received the Lord as a guest?" (*NPNF* 2 7:76). See notes, 19:24; Jn 8:56; see also p 39.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 18:3 *Your servant*. Expressions of humility were normal, but Abraham recognized he had a special guest.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 18:4 *wash your feet*. First step of proper hospitality. Because there were few inns, people placed high importance on hospitality. Neglect or mistreatment of travelers was regarded as a great social evil. Ambr: "A man ought therefore to be hospitable, kind, upright, not desirous of what belongs to another. … Such is the favor in which hospitality stands with God, that not even the draught of cold water shall fail of getting a reward. You see that Abraham, in looking for guests, received God Himself to entertain" (*NPNF* 2 10:59–60).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 18:5 *morsel of bread*. Abraham described his hospitality as meager, typical of humble Near Eastern manners.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 18:6 *Three seahs*. Extremely large amount for only three men. See p cx. *cakes*. Round, unleavened cakes (resembling pancakes) hastily baked on hot stones or on a metal "camp oven" that could heat up rapidly.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 18:7 *young man*. A servant.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 18:8 *stood by*. Abraham honored his guests by waiting on them rather than sitting with them. See p 1277.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 18:9 *Where is Sarah your wife?* This time, Sarah had to hear the promise "from the mouth of God Himself" (Luth, AE 3:176). *in the tent*. Women may have eaten separately, after the men, a custom still observed in some Near Eastern cultures.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 18:11 *The way of women had ceased*. Sarah could no longer conceive children.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 18:12 *shall I have pleasure?* Of having her own child. Though she laughed in doubt, she later believed. Cf Heb 11:11.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 18:14 Ter: "For a barren woman to have a child against nature was no difficulty with God; nor was it for a virgin to conceive" (*ANF* 3:605).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 18:15 The Lord kindly but decisively rebuked Sarah.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 18:16 *to set them on their way*. Hbr implies Abraham accompanied them for quite a while.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 18:18–19 God chose Abraham to establish true religion through him and to fulfill the messianic promises.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 18:18 *blessed in him?* God graciously promised that Abraham's descendants would become a great nation. From this nation would come the Messiah, from whom all nations can receive God's blessing through faith in Him. See note, 12:3.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 18:20 *outcry*. Sodom's wickedness, already well known, cried out for God's judgment.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 18:21 *I will go down to see*. See note, 11:5.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 17:15–18:21 Divine messengers, on their way to Sodom to deliver judgment, visit Abraham and Sarah to announce that Sarah will bear the child of promise. Like Sarah, we may doubt and even laugh at God's purposes for us. Despite such moments of weakness, the

Lord reassures His saints not only of His omnipotence but also of His forgiveness, as Sarah realized when she gave birth to Isaac in her old age. • Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, nothing is too hard for You. Thank You for patiently bearing with us and forgiving us when we are of little faith. Amen.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 18:23 Abraham correctly guessed that the Lord planned to destroy Sodom. He pleaded for mercy on behalf of the few righteous people there. See "righteous," p 843.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 18:24 *fifty righteous*. Already a small number, given that there were five cities associated with Sodom. Cf 14:8.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 18:25 Abraham believed there was greater injustice in destroying even 50 righteous people than in sparing a great multitude of the wicked. Abraham appealed to justice, knowing that the Lord is perfectly just. *Judge of all the earth*. Unlike other religions, whose tribal gods were limited in power or extent of dominion, Abraham confessed God as Lord of all.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 18:27 Abraham spoke with full realization of his sinfulness; his origin, dust; his destination, ashes. Gr Nys: "Dust and ashes seem to denote what is lifeless and barren; and so there arises a law of faith for the life to come, teaching those who would come to God, by this history of Abraham, that it is impossible to draw near to God, unless faith mediate, and bring the seeking soul into union with the incomprehensible nature of God" (*NPNF* 2 5:259). Luth: "Consider this example whenever you pray, and learn that persistence is needed in praying. It does not offend God; it pleases Him" (AE 3:236).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 18:32 Perhaps considering that God had not spared the world from the flood for the sake of eight people (Noah's household), Abraham did not press his defense further.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 18:22–33 Abraham begs the Lord to spare the wicked cities for the sake of the righteous. The evils of Sodom remind us of our own time, with evil that also cries out for divine intervention. Intercede in prayer for those who have not yet repented of their wickedness. Take comfort in the truth that God spares the wicked for the sake of one righteous man—Jesus Christ. • O Lord, spare us who live in this world of wickedness, for Jesus' sake. Amen.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 19:1 *two angels*. The two "men" of 18:22. *the gate*. Focal point for community activity. See p 792.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 19:2 *lords*. Unlike Abraham, Lot recognized the visitors only as men. See note, 18:3. *spend the night*. Lot knew the danger of spending the night in the city.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 19:3 *unleavened bread*. Bread of the simplest kind. See note, 18:6.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 19:5 *know them*. Have sex with them. Homosexual lust burned among many of the men of Sodom. Cf Lv 18:22; Rm 1:27. See p 1911.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 19:8 *who have not known any man*. Unmarried, though betrothed to Sodomites (v 14). *do to them as you please*. Culture of hospitality (see note, 18:4) made it unthinkable for Lot to abandon his guests. Yet righteous Lot's proposal was horribly wrong. Perhaps he sought what he regarded as the lesser of two evils (heterosexual rape instead of homosexual rape), but his suggestion was evil nonetheless. *shelter*. Protection and hospitality.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 19:9 *judge!* Like Moses would be (Ex 2:14), Lot was an outsider accused of setting himself up as judge. Cf 2Pt 2:7–8.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 19:13 *outcry … great before the* LORD. See note, 18:20.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 19:14 *jesting*. They did not believe Lot's warning. Luth: "The nearer the world is to destruction, the smugger it is" (AE 3:268).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 19:16 *he lingered*. Lot's faith is weak. He hesitates to leave his possessions. *the* LORD *being merciful to him*. Lot required special treatment because of his weakness.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 19:17 *hills*. Higher elevations to the east. See map, p 33.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 19:20 *this city*. Zoar. Lit, "tiny place"; a small settlement at the southern end of the Salt Sea. Cf v 22. *little one*. Lot pleaded that the small city be spared because the evil there was small.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 19:21 *grant you this favor*. Lit, "lift up your face"; to cheer him with kindness. Luth: "Here one can see how great the power of prayer is, inasmuch as Lot rejects that last command—about ascending the hills—when he pleads his exigency [urgency]. … To be sure, God gives all things out of free mercy; yet He wants to be entreated" (AE 3:287). See note, Nu 6:26.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 19:1–22 Lot and his small family are spared the destruction of Sodom, but the deliverance clearly is due to divine mercy and

not human righteousness, as Lot's behavior shows. Just as Lot's rescue makes sense only when contrasted with Sodom's destruction, so also our salvation by Christ's death makes sense only when contrasted with the threats of God's Law. • Lord God, thank You for Your long-suffering when we, like Lot, are weak in faith. Amen.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 19:24 *the* LORD *rained … from the* LORD *out of heaven*. The Son of God, who spoke with Abraham (18:22–33), rained down from His heavenly Father, the First Person of the Godhead. Ambr: "The Lord rains down from the Lord; the Lord grants mercy from the Lord. The Lord is neither divided when He rains from the Lord, nor is there a separation when He grants mercy from the Lord, but in each case the oneness of the Lordship is expressed" (*NPNF* 2 10:150). Chem: "Wherever you read in Scripture that God is speaking about God, as a person about a person, there you are safe in affirming that the three persons of the Deity are indicated" (*LTh* 1:67). *Sodom and Gomorrah*. See note, 14:2. God also destroyed Admah and Zeboiim, other cities of the region. *sulfur and fire*. Perhaps burning brimstone or pitch falling from the sky, lightning igniting coal-enriched soil, or a volcanic eruption.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 19:25 *overthrew*. Lit, "turned over," as with a griddle cake. Perhaps an earthquake was also involved.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 19:26 *she became a pillar of salt*. Reluctant to leave, falling behind, and disobeying clear instructions, Lot's wife was engulfed by the devastation. 1 Clem: "Those who are of a double mind, and who distrust the power of God, bring down judgment on themselves" (*ANF* 1:8).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 19:27 Abraham went to see whether Lot's household had perished.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 19:29 *God remembered Abraham*. God rescued Lot and his family for Abraham's sake (cf 18:32–33). See "remember," p 843.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 19:23–29 God grants Abraham's prayer by preserving the lives of Lot and his daughters. In the destruction of Sodom and the neighboring cities, we see that wicked behavior on earth cries out to God for judgment. This judgment sometimes comes by catastrophic events. But just as clearly, we see God's patient love for His children on earth, even when their response to His grace is weak and pitiful, as in the case of Lot and his family. • Heavenly Father, thank You for Your patience. Deliver us from evil, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 19:30 Although God had granted Zoar as an asylum, Lot went to the hills that originally were to be his destination.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 19:31 *not a man*. In their little world of fear, the daughters became convinced that prospects of marriage and childbearing no longer existed. *come in to us*. Cf v 32.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 19:32 *wine*. The family had spent sufficient time in Zoar to gather provisions for a long stay in the cave. *preserve offspring from our father*. Caught up with fear, they felt compelled to preserve what remained of their family line. Their scheme of incest is one fitting for the depraved Sodomites, who clearly influenced them.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 19:33 *He did not know*. Lot's role, though inexcusable, was passive, carried out in a drunken stupor. See Noah's sin and its consequences, 9:20–27.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 19:36–38 See ESV notes. Lot's daughters felt no shame. They gave names to their sons that would memorialize their conception.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 19:37 *Moabites*. The Lord later ordered the Israelites not to touch Moabite territory because of their descent from Lot (Dt 2:9).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 19:38 *Ammonites*. See note, Nu 21:24; cf Dt 23:3–5.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 19:30–38 Lot and his daughters, driven by weakness and fear, resort to evil means to preserve the family line. They demonstrate no regret, as if the end justifies the means. And still God is patient, even granting protection to their offspring. Weak Christians often resort to an "end justifies the means" solution when they feel they must take matters into their own hands, disregarding God's clear will. God calls us to repent of this. In His grace, through the perfect life, death, and resurrection of His Son, God has provided us with the means to the best of ends: eternal life and blessedness. • "Remove the pow'r of sin from me And cleanse all my impurity That I may have the strength and will Temptations of the flesh to still." Amen. (*LSB* 704:2)

GENESIS—NOTE ON 20:1 *Negeb … Kadesh and Shur … Gerar*. See map, p 33.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 20:2 *She is my sister*. Abraham essentially made the same mistake he had made 20 years before (12:13). *sent and took Sarah*. He took Sarah for his harem,
to make an alliance with rich and powerful Abraham. See note, 1Ki 3:1–2.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 20:3 *dream*. See p 74. *dead man*. Abimelech may already have been ill as a result of taking Sarah (cf v 17).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 20:4 *had not approached her*. Perhaps due to his illness (cf v 17), Abimelech had left Sarah alone. Thus, when Sarah later conceived, her child was clearly Abraham's son.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 20:6 *I who kept you from sinning*. Perhaps by means of Abimelech's illness (cf v 17).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 20:7 *he is a prophet*. Abraham was the first man to bear this title. See pp 1081–83. Abraham was truly a prophet because God revealed Himself to him and he preached God's Word. *he will pray for you*. Another role of a prophet.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 20:11 *no fear of God at all*. Without fear of God, there is less respect for human rights. Practically speaking, genuine fear of God is nearly always necessary for sound public morality. See p 1001.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 20:12 *indeed my sister*. Half-sister. Abraham and Sarah were both fathered by Terah but had different mothers.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 20:14 In strong contrast to Abraham's fearfulness and deception, Abimelech gave goodwill gifts to God's prophet, gifts fitting for a nomad prince.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 20:16 *sign of your innocence*. Generous gift removed any doubt regarding Sarah's moral conduct.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 20:17–18 God went to great lengths to assure that the parenthood of the promised Seed was kept safe: He allowed a disease to afflict the king and his entire household, making it impossible for them to conceive until Abraham prayed for their healing.
GENESIS—NOTE ON **Ch 20** Abraham is deceptive in pretending that Sarah is only his sister, but God intervenes to protect him from the harm of his own doing. Left to our own devices, our scheming makes a mess of our lives and brings affliction to those around us. For Abraham and his promised offspring, a dream and an accompanying illness set matters straight again. For us and for the entire world, the future promised

Offspring, Christ, set matters straight again, reconciling us to God. • Gracious God, thank You for intervening in our lives in Your promised Offspring, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 21:1 When God draws near, it is in mercy or in judgment. He drew near to Sarah in mercy with the blessing He had promised.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 21:2 *old age*. See note, v 5. *God had spoken to him*. God's powerful Word gave Abraham (and Sarah) the strength to bring forth a child in their old age. See note, 1:3, for the power of God's Word in creation.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 21:3 *Isaac*. See note, 17:19.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 21:4 See notes, 17:11, 12.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 21:5 It had been 25 years since the promise was made. Cf 12:2; Rm 4:18–20.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 21:6 Sarah's laughter has been changed from disbelief to joy. Cf Heb 11:11.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 21:1–7 Twenty-five years after the promise was given, a child is born to Abraham and Sarah. His name is Isaac, "he laughs," calling to mind the past laughter of his parents and describing their joy upon his birth. The parents needed patience and faith as those 25 years came and went. How impatient we can become when things do not go as we think they should, even over short periods of time, even when God has clearly promised that all things will work together for good. But God is faithful, even when our patience and faith fall short. He has delivered the greatest of His promises, to give salvation and everlasting life to all who believe in the Lord Jesus. • Heavenly Father, keep us patient and faithful while You carry out Your plan for our lives and our salvation. Amen.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 21:8 *weaned*. Customary at age 2 or 3. *feast*. Weaning was celebrated as an early rite of passage. See note, 1Sm 1:22. Everything associated with Isaac was an occasion for celebration.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 21:9 *son of Hagar*. Ishmael. See note, v 14; cf 16:15–16.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 21:10 *heir*. Ordinarily, the oldest son becomes the heir. Sarah wanted to prevent Ishmael from taking Isaac's inheritance. See "portion," p 7.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 21:12 *do as she tells you*. Though Sarah's motives may have been mixed, God approved of her counsel. *named*. The true

spiritual descendants and the messianic Seed, or Offspring, were to be found in the line of Isaac. Cf Gal 3:16.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 21:13 *make a nation*. To make Ishmael's dismissal easier, God reminded Abraham of His promise regarding this son (see note, 17:20).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 21:14 *on her shoulder*. Hagar carried the provisions. *child*. Ishmael was now c 14 years old (cf 16:16; 21:5).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 21:15 When Ishmael collapsed from the heat and thirst, Hagar left him to die in the shade of desert brush.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 21:17 *God heard*. Ishmael groaned but likely also prayed.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 21:19 God in His providence had guided Hagar to this well and permitted her to see it.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 21:20 *God was with the boy*. Because Ishmael was a son of Abraham, God watched over him as he grew and blessed him with possessions and success. See "be with," p 5.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 21:8–21 When Sarah becomes alarmed at Ishmael's behavior toward Isaac, Abraham determines to dismiss Ishmael and Hagar from his household. Despite clear promises from God, we also become overly concerned about matters in our lives that irritate us or cause us to doubt His promises. But as with Abraham and Sarah, God takes our human weakness into consideration. God has promised to forgive us and adopt us as His children for the sake of Christ's sacrifice. Through faith in Him, we are the children of promise, the children of God. • Heavenly Father, thank You for adopting me in Your only-begotten Son, Jesus. Teach me patience and compassion toward others. Amen.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 21:22 *Phicol*. The name is neither Hebrew nor Egyptian but may derive from a region of the Aegean or Asia Minor, indicating early settlement of Sea Peoples in Canaan. This would explain the reference to Philistines in vv 32, 34. See note, Jgs 10:7. *God is with you*. This was clear to them from Isaac's miraculous birth and Abraham's prosperity. See "be with," p 5.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 21:23 *swear to me*. Abimelech wished to preserve friendly relations with Abraham by a covenant. Covenants always involved oaths. See "oath," p 7.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 21:30 Abraham wished to protect the well by a gift and an oath, in case the Canaanites would claim the well in the future.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 21:32 *land of the Philistines*. See color map 2.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 21:33 *tamarisk tree*. Hearty, desert shrub with tiny leaves. *called there on the name of the* LORD. Luth: "Whenever this little statement is made—that the patriarchs called or cried out in the name of the Lord, or that they built an altar—it denotes that a certain place was appointed for teaching and hearing the Word of God. For if the church is to be preserved, there must be some pious prince to provide quarters for it and grant it room and peace, so that the doctrine and the Word of God can be spread" (AE 4:89). See "call," p 842.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 21:22–34 Abraham agrees to a covenant and works out his differences with the government so that he might live in peace. Good and orderly government is always helpful for the mission of the Church, and God's people are required to support their government with proper citizenship. At the same time, the salvation God provides does not depend on good governments like that of Abimelech, for God will continue to save His elect by the power of Gospel preaching and Sacraments, at times despite evil governments. • O Lord, give good government throughout the world so that the Gospel of Christ's cross may be preached without obstacle or persecution. Amen.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 22:1 *tested*. Verb is translated "tempt" elsewhere, but that is not the sense here. (See SC, Sixth Petition, pp xxxviii–xxxix.) One way that faith is strengthened is through trial and hardship. See p 837.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 22:2 *land of Moriah*. Where Jerusalem and the temple would later be built. *offer him there as a burnt offering*. Human sacrifices were likely common among the Canaanites. God's command seemed to contradict His promise to give many descendants through Isaac.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 22:3 *his young men*. Servants.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 22:5 *I and the boy will … come again to you*. Abraham believed God would raise Isaac from the dead (Heb 11:19).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 22:6 *laid it on Isaac*. See note, v 13.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 22:8 *God will provide*. Abraham's words were first fulfilled by the ram (v 13). Their ultimate and true fulfillment was the Lamb.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 22:11 *angel of the* LORD. This messenger is the Son of God. See notes, v 12; 16:13.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 22:12 *now I know*. By faith, Abraham completed the test. Hil: "God certainly was not ignorant of the faith of Abraham,

which He had already reckoned to him for righteousness" (*NPNF* 2 9:242). *you fear God*. Luth: "The statement refers not only to his faith but also to his entire worship" (AE 4:134). See p 1001. *you have not withheld … from Me*. Angel identified Himself as God.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 22:13 *ram, caught in a thicket by his horns*. Ram became the sacrifice. Often seen as a foreshadowing of Christ with His crown of thorns. Ter: "Christ … in His times, carried His 'wood' on His own shoulders, adhering to the horns of the cross, with a thorny crown encircling His head" (*ANF* 3:171).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 22:14 *to this day*. Up to the time of Moses, who wrote Gn. See pp 3–5.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 22:16 *By myself I have sworn*. As certainly as He is God, so certainly shall He fulfill His promise. See "vow," p 7.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 22:17 *I will surely bless*. Luth: "There is a twofold blessing: a blessing in words and a blessing in actuality. The blessing in words consists of praises and commendation. … The blessing in actuality is truly divine; for when God blesses, the result is the thing itself or that which is said. … He is One who blesses with effect and does all things through what He says" (AE 4:155). See "bless," p 842. *possess the gate*. Control the city gate, i.e., conquer enemy strongholds.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 22:18 *in your offspring*. Or, "in your Seed," i.e., in Jesus Christ (Gal 3:16). *shall all the nations of the earth be blessed*. Luth: "For the promise does not depend on my merits or works; it depends on the Seed of Abraham. By Him I am blessed when I apprehend Him in faith; and the blessing clings to me in turn and permeates my entire body and soul, so that even the body itself is made alive and saved through the same Seed" (AE 4:158). *because you have obeyed*. God blessed Abraham out of His free mercy through faith (15:6), not because Abraham merited the blessing by his works. Nevertheless, his obedience was an external sign of true faith, of which God approved. See note, v 12.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 22:23 *Bethuel fathered Rebekah*. Rebekah, future wife of Isaac, was the daughter of Nahor's youngest son.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 22:24 *concubine*. See pp 54–55.

GENESIS—NOTE ON **Ch 22** The climax of Abraham's life of faith comes when he who loves his son so much is willing to offer him as a sacrifice to his Lord. Surely Abraham finds great relief when God provides the ram in the thicket. Often we fail tests of faith that do not begin to

compare to Abraham's. Thankfully, there was an even greater sacrifice when God the Father in heaven offered the sacrifice of His beloved Son to secure forgiveness for our failures. • Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us. Amen.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 23:1 Sarah is the only woman whose age at death is recorded in the Bible.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 23:3 *Hittites*. Held the city of Hebron; descendants of Heth, a son of Canaan. See note, 26:34; see also map, p 33.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 23:4 Abraham possessed no land in the country.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 23:6 *prince of God*. He is a prophet of the Lord (20:7), a friend of God. The Hittites honored him as a holy, honorable man because God had blessed him. *None … will withhold*. Haggling, to hold out for more money. They were not eager to give away their land.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 23:8 *entreat for me Ephron*. A ruler who had a city (v 10). Abraham was seeking allies to support the transaction.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 23:10 *at the gate of his city*. Where men of the town gathered and official business was transacted. See p 792.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 23:11 More haggling. *I give it to you*. Apparently the land was for Abraham's use, but not for him to possess.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 23:15 *four hundred shekels of silver*. The asking price finally comes out. *what is that between you and me?* Despite a pretense of generosity, Ephron asked an exorbitant price for a field. Cf Jer 32:9.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 23:17 *cave … all the trees*. A legal contract required naming all that was on the field.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 23:18 *a possession*. Abraham made certain that his wife's and his remains would rest in the Promised Land, a testimony to his descendants that he believed God's promises. Hebron is on the highest elevation in Canaan from which one may view all the land that Israel would come to possess. Proper care for the bodies of departed believers was important.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 23:19 In due time, the cave would also hold Abraham's remains and those of Isaac, Rebekah, Jacob, and Leah. A clear title to the land was important.

GENESIS—NOTE ON **Ch 23** Sarah's death is the occasion for a significant development: Abraham purchases a plot of ground in the Promised Land, a testimony to his confidence in God's promises and to his

concern for his wife's remains. At times of death, it is important to give clear testimony to our faith in God's promises, even as God Himself did. God's testimony at the time of His Son's death was clear. By raising Him from the dead on the third day, He assured bodily resurrection and eternal life in heaven for all who believe in Him. • O Lord, grant us confidence in Your promises like that of Abraham, a confidence that is reflected in all we do. Amen.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 24:1 Abraham was c 140 years old. *blessed*. Spiritually and physically. See p 842.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 24:2 *oldest of his household*. Identification of honor; possibly Eliezer. *charge*. Manager of the household. *under my thigh*. Cultural gesture to accompany the oath. The loin and thigh, the body's largest muscles, represented one's physical and reproductive strength (cf 1Ki 12:10; Ps 147:10). The oath testified to their faith in the coming Messiah, who would be born of Abraham's line. See "oath," p 7.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 24:3 *take a wife for my son*. Because of Abraham's advanced age, the servant was asked to assume this parental responsibility. *daughters of the Canaanites*. Despite potential political advantages, the servant was not to look among the heathen Canaanites. Cf Ex 34:10–16; 1Co 7:39. See pp 54–55.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 24:4 *my country*. Ur of the Chaldeans. Cf 11:28. *to my kindred, and take a wife*. Abraham placed great emphasis on the cultural compatibility of the marriage, perhaps because of the immoral culture he witnessed among the Canaanites, who were cursed (9:25). See pp 54–55.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 24:7 *this land*. Isaac was the God-intended heir of Canaan, the Promised Land.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 24:10 *camels*. Needed to bear gifts for the bride and to carry the bride and her company on the return trip. See note, 12:16. *choice gifts*. Presents for the bride and her parents. See note, 34:12.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 24:12–14 The servant began his search with prayer and ended it with thanksgiving (vv 26–27), a practice worthy of imitation.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 24:14 *appointed*. The servant was confident that God had someone in mind, since He had promised to give Abraham many children through Isaac. See pp 54–55.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 24:15 *born to Bethuel*. Rebekah was Isaac's second cousin.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 24:16 *spring*. Wells often were springs accessible by steps. See note, 2Sm 2:13.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 24:23 *for us*. Apparently the servant did not travel alone.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 24:27 See note, vv 12–14.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 24:28 *her mother's household*. Wives in the polygamous society had their own tents and households.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 24:31 *Come in, O blessed*. Luth: "From those most eminent patriarchs Shem, Nahor, and Terah they learned that guests should be received with a ready and willing heart" (AE 4:281). See note, 18:4.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 24:33 *I will not eat*. Ordinarily the guest would eat first, but first the servant wanted to negotiate the betrothal.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 24:35 *blessed my master*. Complete statement of the master's wealth and the son's financial prospects was essential for a marriage proposition because a wedding was a covenant. See "blessed," p 842; see also p 127.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 24:38 See note, v 4.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 24:42–49 See notes, vv 10–28. The servant told the story of the encounter at the well, enhancing it when helpful: Rebekah is called a virgin instead of a young woman, and the instruction not to take Isaac to Mesopotamia is omitted. The servant's prayer describes his personal reflections on the matter.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 24:50 They saw that the Lord had taken this matter out of their hands.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 24:52 *bowed … before the* LORD. To show his thanks. See p 1276.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 24:53 Betrothal gifts concluded the engagement covenant. See note, 34:12.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 24:58 *Will you go*. Luth: "A marriage should be brought about in such a way that we have God present. He established marriage for countless good purposes, and He Himself joins the spouses. Nor does He only join them; He also blesses them. But He requires the consent of the parents as well as of the girl, in order that there may be a lawful and truly divine union" (AE 4:298). See pp 54–55; see also note, Nu 36:6. Cf Pr 31:10–31 for a married woman's prerogatives in Israelite society.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 24:59 *her nurse*. Deborah, who helped raise her. Some servants also accompanied her (v 61).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 24:60 *possess the gate*. See note, 22:17.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 24:61 *rode on the camels*. See note, v 10.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 24:65 *covered herself*. Sign of modesty and respect. Cf 1Co 11:7–10.
GENESIS—NOTE ON **Ch 24** Abraham sends his servant to find a wife for his son Isaac. Rebekah and her parents consent to the proposal. Though they have not met, Isaac and Rebekah consent to a marriage that will be filled with God's blessing and love. Many people today wrongly see romance and emotion as the basis of marriage. Instead, God wants marriage (lifelong faithfulness vowed publicly) to be the basis for the love of husband and wife. Such love is a picture of Christ's love for the Church. He sought us from afar and promises His faithfulness to us. • O Christ, our heavenly Bridegroom, help us to trust the Word spoken by Your servants, the Word that calls us to be joined to You. Amen.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 25:1 *took another wife*. Or, "had taken another wife." The order of events here is thematic, not chronological. Keturah was Abraham's concubine (v 6; see pp 54–55).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 25:5 Isaac was the sole legal heir. The Lord promised to give him the offspring through whom the Savior would come (17:19).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 25:6 *concubines*. Keturah (1Ch 1:32), Reumah (Gn 22:24), and likely Hagar (16:1). See pp 54–55. *sent them away*. To secure Isaac's place as legal heir and focus of the Lord's gracious promise.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 25:8 *Abraham breathed his last and died*. Although physically dead, Abraham still lives and enjoys Christ's glorious presence (Mt 22:32). *gathered to his people*. See note, 1Ki 2:10.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 25:12 *generations of Ishmael*. Gn is divided into 10 "generations" (genealogies). See pp 8–11. Ishmael's is the seventh. Although God's promise rested chiefly on Isaac and his line, Ishmael and his line nonetheless received the Lord's special blessing for a time (cf 16:10).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 25:16 *villages*. Often protected by walls. *encampments*. Nomadic communities without walls.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 25:17 See note, 1Ki 2:10. As a member of Abraham's household until his dismissal (cf 21:14; 25:6, 9), Ishmael heard

of the Lord's grace and the promised Offspring (3:15). Because Ishmael was "gathered to his people" as Abraham was, Ishmael also enjoys Christ's eternal blessings among the saints, though his descendants rejected that blessing (AE 4:327–29).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 25:18 *Havilah to Shur*. Barren region of the Sinai Peninsula. See map, p 60. *settled over against all his kinsmen*. The Ishmaelites caused ongoing conflict with Israel.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 25:1–18 Abraham grows old, being blessed with many children. Yet he makes clear that Isaac alone is his heir. Finally, Abraham dies a blessed death and is given a proper burial by his sons Isaac and Ishmael. Children are a blessing from the Lord that husband and wife should celebrate. Like Abraham, we should instruct our children about the Lord and should bury the bodies of the faithful departed with honor. Such burial is a confession of the resurrection, that Christ will return and raise us from the dead to be gathered to Him. • Lord, continue to give us the blessings of Your cross and the empty tomb as we daily die to sin in our Baptism and await the glorious resurrection with all the saints. Amen.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 25:19 *generations of Isaac*. Gn is divided into 10 "generations" (genealogies). Isaac's is the eighth. See pp 8–11.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 25:21 God graciously intervenes to preserve the line of the coming Savior.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 25:22 *she went to inquire of the* LORD. Perhaps through her father-in-law, Abraham, who was a prophet of the Lord (20:7) and lived another 15 years after these events. See "call," p 842.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 25:23 *the older shall serve the younger*. Contrary to ancient custom and family right, Esau would be subservient to his younger twin, Jacob. By this favor for Jacob, the Lord emphasized that the promise does not come by obligation, rights, or works, but by miraculous, undeserved grace. Cf Rm 9:10–12.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 25:25 "Red" in Hbr sounds like Esau's alternate name, Edom.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 25:26 *holding Esau's heel*. As though trying to prevent Esau from being born first. At this birth, Isaac was 60 years old; Abraham was 160 years old. Abraham died when the twins were 15 years old and Isaac was 75 years old.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 25:27 *a quiet man*. Or, "a man of integrity."

GENESIS—NOTE ON 25:28 Isaac preferred Esau as the firstborn and as an excellent hunter who provided food. Thus, Isaac forgot how the Lord's favor is not given by right of birth order (v 23). Rebekah, however, remembered the Lord's words and gave preference to Jacob (AE 4:386–90).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 25:19–28 God's ways are not our ways. The Lord chooses to give His special blessing to Jacob, who does not deserve this gift either by birth order or by virtue. When we come before God on the basis of rights, claims, and human justice, we fall into the mind-set of Isaac, who wrongfully favored his firstborn, Esau, despite God's promise concerning Jacob. Thankfully, God does not deal with us on the basis of what we deserve for our sin. He chose us from eternity to be His people. Christ bore all our deserved punishment on the cross. • We thank You, Lord Jesus, that Your ways are not our ways. You have given us undeserved pardon and peace in Your cross. Amen.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 25:29 *stew*. See p 236. Ter: "To you [false teachers] your belly is god, and your lungs a temple, and your paunch a sacrificial altar, and your cook the priest, and your fragrant smell the Holy Spirit, and your condiments spiritual gifts, and your belching prophecy. … If I offer you a paltry lentil dyed red … forthwith you will sell all your 'primacies'" (*ANF* 4:113).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 25:30 *red*. Because of the brown-red lentils, which resemble split peas in size and shape. See p 236. *called Edom*. Esau's descendants were called "Edomites." See note, v 25.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 25:31 *Sell me your birthright*. Jacob wanted to acquire the privileges of the firstborn by trickery. These privileges included a double portion of the inheritance (Dt 21:17), leadership over the family, and the blessing to carry on the covenant promise (Gn 27:4, 27–29; 28:4). See "portion," p 7.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 25:32 Esau's ongoing speech shows that he is not near death. Rather, he demonstrated an overdramatic and careless disregard for the right to be the firstborn. See note, Heb 12:16.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 25:34 *birthright*. Included supervision of true worship and preaching of the Messiah, who was to come from Abraham's line.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 25:29–34 Esau disdains his birthright, and Jacob schemes against his brother. Neither is worthy of the Lord's favor and the honor to carry on the promise. By our sinful nature and our actions, we are

unworthy of any blessing of this life, especially the gift of forgiveness and eternal life with Christ. Yet, in His mercy, we receive a great inheritance because Christ has made us a part of His family in Baptism. We are heirs of the promise made to the patriarchs and fulfilled in Christ. • Praise be to our Savior, who has granted us an inheritance among the saints! Amen.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 26:1 *Abimelech*. C 97 years have passed since Abraham's encounter with an Abimelech of the Philistines. Either "Abimelech" was a dynastic title, or this king was a descendant with the same name. *king of the Philistines*. See p 345.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 26:3–5 The Lord renewed the promises He previously made to Abraham. Isaac was blessed to carry on the covenant (AE 5:16–18).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 26:1–5 When a severe famine forces Isaac to relocate his family, the Lord appears to him with words of comfort. In this adversity, the Lord promises to Isaac the same favor He did to Abraham: His caring presence, land, offspring, and blessedness to all people. In times of adversity, we should not doubt the Lord's care for us. He promises that nothing will separate us from His love. • Thanks be to God that the blessing of the cross covers even our sins of doubt and forgetfulness! Lord, we praise You for Your boundless love. Amen.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 26:7 *She is my sister*. Like his father, Abraham, Isaac doubted the Lord's protection and hid the truth regarding his wife. Cf 12:10–20; 20:1–18.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 26:8 *laughing*. Polite expression for intimate teasing or flirting appropriate for married people. "Laughing" is reminiscent of Isaac's name (cf 17:17; 18:12–13; 21:9).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 26:10 *lain with your wife*. Not knowing she was married, somebody else could have taken Rebekah to be his wife. *guilt upon us*. Since Abimelech knew that Isaac had the Lord's favor, Abimelech assumed that such adultery would result in guilt before God. Isaac's sin almost caused a curse rather than a blessing to all people. In contrast to Isaac, Abimelech demonstrated thoughtfulness.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 26:12 *sowed in that land*. Unlike Abraham, Isaac planted and harvested crops, signaling an important change in the family's life. The abundant harvest is a sign of God's favor and blessing.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 26:13 *rich*. In this way, the Lord demonstrated faithfulness to His promise of vv 2–5. See "blessed," p 842.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 26:15 Ancient nomadic groups would fill in the wells of adversaries in order to drive them away (cf 2Ki 3:25).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 26:18 *names*. By reassigning the names given by Abraham, Isaac honored his father and indicated that God's promise to Abraham continued with him.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 26:20 Cf 13:7.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 26:24 *appeared*. The Lord had appeared to Abraham to confirm His covenant promises after he separated from Lot in a water dispute (13:14–17). Now, to assure continuity and equal favor in this uncertain time, the Lord renewed these promises to Isaac after a similar, contentious water dispute. See p 39. *I am with you*. See "be with," p 5. *bless … multiply*. See note, 1:28.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 26:25 *built an altar*. After God revealed Himself, the patriarchs often built altars to the Lord in response to His gracious care (cf 35:7). *called upon the name of the* LORD. Where the Lord locates His name, there is grace. See "call," p 842. Luth: "For wherever mention is made of the erection of an altar and the building of a tabernacle, there the establishment of a little church is pointed out—a church in which people came together to teach and hear the Word of God, to pray, to praise God, and to sacrifice" (AE 5:78). See note, 4:26.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 26:26 *Phicol the commander*. Either an official title or a family name that a descendant bears here. See note, v 1.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 26:27 *hate*. Isaac thus interpreted his expulsion from Gerar.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 26:28–29 Abimelech acknowledged the superiority of Isaac because of the Lord's favor for him.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 26:28 *sworn pact … covenant*. Initial oath in which participants invoke a curse on themselves. See note, 15:9–10.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 26:29 *blessed of the* LORD. By declaring Isaac to be blessed of the Lord, Abimelech also hoped for blessing because he acted kindly toward Isaac. He recognized and confessed that the Lord was fulfilling His promises to Isaac. See "blessed," p 842.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 26:30–31 *feast … exchanged oaths*. This sworn pact is a binding, mutual agreement often ratified by an oath and a meal of friendship (cf 31:53–54; Ex 24:11).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 26:34 *Esau was forty years old*. Isaac would have been age 100. *Hittite*. See note, 23:3. The Hittites were a powerful, diverse

people whose kingdom's center was in Asia Minor. See pp xciv–xcvii. Their religion included a pantheon of deities, foremost of which were a weather god and a sun goddess. The Canaanite names of these women (Judith and Basemath) likely indicate that this Hittite clan had adapted to Canaanite culture. See p 345.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 26:35 *made life bitter for Isaac and Rebekah*. By marrying Hittite women, Esau openly defied the tradition of the family and corrupted the line of Isaac. Cf 24:4.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 26:6–35 Although Isaac doubts the Lord's protection and lies to Abimelech, the Lord provides Isaac with agricultural prosperity and the respect of local rulers. When Isaac is displaced because of a water dispute, the Lord shows His care by promising His presence. Although we sometimes lack confidence in the Lord's providential care, He daily and richly provides for all our needs of body and soul. He is richly present with us because He has placed His name on us in Baptism and feeds us with the true body and blood of Christ in the bread and wine of the Lord's Supper. • For all Your gifts we thank You, dear Savior! Amen.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 27:4 *my soul*. Emphasizes Isaac's earnest wish to bless Esau despite the Lord's words (25:23) and Esau's false conduct (25:29–34; 26:34–35). By asking for a tasty meal in the midst of poor judgment, Isaac acted like Esau, who foolishly traded his birthright for stew.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 27:8 Rebekah remembered the Lord's promise (25:23) and acted to secure the blessing for Jacob. Seeing that Isaac was acting against the Lord's will, she deemed any means appropriate, even deceiving her husband.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 27:13 Rebekah did not directly address Jacob's concern (v 12). She merely demonstrated conviction regarding the Lord's word, even at the risk of Isaac's curse. See note, 12:3.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 27:15 *best garments*. Suggests an important religious ceremony. *house*. Hbr can generically refer to a household or a tent.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 27:19 *your firstborn*. Merely the false statement "I am Esau" would have been sufficient. Sensing Isaac's suspicion, Jacob overreacted and tried to strengthen his lie. The Hbr for "firstborn" resembles "blessing." Jacob sought the blessing of the firstborn. See note, 25:31.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 27:20 *the* LORD *your God*. Cf 31:5, 42; 32:9. Jacob did not confess Yahweh to be his own God until he returned from Haran (28:20–22; 33:18–20). See p 1227.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 27:23 *So he blessed him*. Here, "bless" refers to the beginning of the ritual and all its parts: the kiss, meal, and pronounced words of blessing. See p 842.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 27:26 *kiss me*. A kiss is part of the final blessing ritual. This physical touch indicates the transfer of authority from the dying father to the son.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 27:27–40 Although Isaac wished to undo the Lord's favor to Jacob, the Lord worked through their shortcomings to fulfill His promise. Jacob indeed was blessed undeservedly to receive earthly gifts and to be the vessel to carry on the family line leading to Christ. In contrast, Esau received the misfortune he deserved. Cf Heb 12:16–17.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 27:27 *blessed*. Specific pronouncement of blessing, in contrast to the wider use of the term in v 23. *the smell of a field that the* LORD *has blessed!* Isaac intended this blessing for Esau, whose venue was the open field, where flocks would feed and he would hunt. In true faith, Isaac looked forward to the promised Messiah. However, the Messiah would be born from the offspring of Jacob. *smell*. Used also to describe the Messiah, who would sacrifice Himself as a fragrant offering (Eph 5:2). Cf Heb 11:20.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 27:28 Luth: "The godly should acknowledge that they have their earthly things because God gives and blesses. Nor should they dream, as the heathen and the unbelievers do, that either the good or the evil things in this life come about by chance. On the contrary, they should acknowledge that these great gifts come from God" (AE 5:138).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 27:29 *Cursed … blessed*. Isaac promised that Jacob and his offspring would dwell in the fruitful land of Canaan, have temporal wealth, dominion over many nations, the right and honor of the firstborn, the high priestly and royal honor, and God's constant favor. God would be a friend to those who intended good to Jacob and his offspring. God would be a foe to those who opposed them. But above all, Isaac looked to the coming Messiah in this blessing. It is He who would be born from Jacob's offspring, who is the true firstborn, the King of kings, the one High Priest, from whom all blessing comes and whom all nations must serve. See note, 12:3.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 27:32 *your firstborn, Esau*. Cf v 19. Esau ironically called himself the firstborn, though he had sold this right to Jacob.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 27:33 *Yes, and he shall be blessed*. The gifts and calling of God had been promised and would remain on the line of Jacob. Cf Rm 11:29. Isaac seems to have sensed that the right son has, in fact, received the blessing. Luth: "Such statements cannot and must not be changed, for God does not change His gifts. He does not revoke Baptism, absolution, and the other gifts He bestows through His Word. If He forgives me my sins, then they have truly been forgiven" (AE 5:149).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 27:35–36 *deceitfully … cheated*. While the Lord does not approve of sin, He works even through human frailty to carry out His gracious will.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 27:36 *reserved a blessing*. Cf Heb 12:17.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 27:37 *I have made him lord over you*. Luth: "Jacob's blessing includes the three hierarchies: the domestic, the royal, and the priestly. For the purpose of administering these three he also gives him the goods of the world. In the state he has the rule and government among the people; in the church he has the stewardship of the forgiveness of sins and of eternal life" (AE 5:155). *all his brothers*. Hbr term used broadly for family members (e.g., the Shemites); may refer to Israel's conquests during the time of Joshua's conquest or of the monarchy.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 27:39–40 Just as both Cain and Ishmael were estranged from the land of their families, so also Esau would live in Edom, away from the more prosperous Israelite region. See map, p 60. Edom and Israel would become long-standing rivals. Cf 1Ki 11:14–22; Ob 10–14; see note, Mt 2:3.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 27:41 *days of mourning*. Seven-day period of mourning after his father's imminent death.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 27:44 *a while*. Lit, "a few days." Cf 29:20.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 27:45 *anger turns away … and he forgets*. Knowing Esau's erratic nature, Rebekah hoped his anger would pass. *bereft of you both*. If Esau killed Jacob, the nearest relative would be obligated to kill Esau. Thus, she feared the loss of both her sons. See note, 1Ki 2:31.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 27:46 *Hittite women*. Rebekah feared that Jacob, like Esau, would be estranged from God's people by Hittite wives. See notes, 26:34, 35.

GENESIS—NOTE ON **Ch 27** Esau received the misfortune he deserved Deceptive Jacob, scheming Rebekah, unwitting Isaac, and impulsive Esau all fall short of the Lord's perfect standard. Our hope cannot rest on human nature or accomplishments. We share in this fallen humanity and often act like these biblical figures. Despite this sorry state, Christ became our substitute. He loved us and gave Himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. He was cursed so we may be blessed (Gal 3:13). Through the means of grace (Gospel and Sacraments), we receive the blessings of Christ's saving acts. • Lord, we thank You for providing a salvation that does not rely on our virtue or accomplishments. Amen.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 28:1 *blessed him*. Distinct from 27:28–29. This is a blessing of Abraham (v 4). *a wife from the Canaanite women*. Possibly referring to Hittites, like the wives of Esau, who became acclimated to Canaanite culture (see note, 26:34). Or, it may refer more generally to Canaanites.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 28:3 *God Almighty*. See p 1227. *make you fruitful and multiply you*. The covenant promise includes many descendants (see note, 1:28). This promise leads ultimately to Christ, Jacob's greatest descendant.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 28:4 *blessing of Abraham*. This blessing to Jacob passes on the promises that Yahweh made to Abraham (Gn 12:7; 13:15, 17; 15:18; 17:1–2, 6, 16; 22:17).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 28:1–5 Isaac gives Jacob a command and a blessing: Jacob must leave home, go to his relatives, and not marry a Canaanite wife. Before he departs, Isaac gives Jacob the blessing of Abraham, a blessing that includes the land of Canaan, many descendants, and ultimately the dignity of being an ancestor of the Messiah. Parents today should carefully raise their children to seek a godly, Christian spouse, and children should honor and obey their parents according to God's Word. This is God's command. But He also has a blessing for us. In Christ Jesus, the blessing of Abraham comes to all nations, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith (Gal 3:14). • Heavenly Father, keep us in Your Son, Jesus, that we may retain the Holy Spirit to the end of our days. Amen.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 28:6 *Paddan-aram*. See map, p 60. *as he blessed him*. Cf 27:1–4. How hard this experience must have been for Esau. It seems normal that all close male relatives would attend the final blessing of a dying man. However, Isaac recovered and died later (35:29).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 28:9 *besides the wives he had*. Cf 26:34; 36:1–5.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 28:6–9 Esau chooses a wife from Abraham's family (Ishmael) in order to please Isaac, which may indicate repentance for previously dishonoring his parents. In opposition to the Fourth Commandment, we have often disrespected our parents and others in authority. God's Law condemns our disobedience and calls us to sincere repentance. We are also recipients of His blessing in Christ. • We praise You, O Lord Jesus, that You paid for all our sins with Your bitter suffering and death. Grant us sound marriages and sincere repentance. Amen.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 28:12 *dreamed*. See p 74. *ascending and descending*. The stairway (or ladder) links heaven and earth. See note, v 13. Bern: "Was any one of them either sitting, or standing still? It was not for angels to stand still on the uncertain rounds of a frail ladder; nor can anything remain fixed in the same condition during the uncertain period of this mortal life. Here have we no continuing city; nor do we yet possess, but always seek for, that which is to come. Of necessity you either ascend or descend, and if you try to stand still you cannot but fall" (*SLSB*, pp 119–20). Luth: "This dream signified that infinite, inexpressible, and wondrous mystery of the incarnation of Christ, who was to descend from the patriarch Jacob. … This is a wonderful ascent and descent of the angels, to see the highest and the lowest completely united in one and the same Person, the highest God lying in the manger" (AE 5:217–18).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 28:13–15 Here the Lord Himself renewed His covenant as it had passed from Abraham to Isaac, and now to Jacob.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 28:13 *the* LORD *stood above it*. Christ interpreted this vision as a preincarnate appearance of Himself with His glorious angels (Jn 1:51). See p 39.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 28:14 *all the families of the earth be blessed*. The fulfillment of this promise is in Christ, the greatest descendant of Jacob, in whom all people are blessed by the fruit of His cross. Cf Gal 3:16.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 28:16 *the* LORD *is in this place*. He revealed Himself here. See p 39.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 28:17 *gate of heaven*. A place where heaven and earth meet through God's revelation. For where God's Word is, there heaven is open with all graces. See p 792.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 28:18 *pillar*. Hbr *matsebah* (spelled *massebah* in archaeological literature; plural is *massebot*). An elongated stone set in the

ground like a short pillar, for cultural or religious purposes. The raising of such stones is ancient. They appear much like grave markers with rounded tops. At Canaanite temple sites, the stones could represent worshipers or gods, whose images are carved on the faces of some stones. Such stones could also serve as markers (cf 31:52; 35:20). Jacob used the pillar in this way, to mark the spot where God appeared to him. He would later build an altar from this stone and others, and he would preach God's name and sacrifice at this altar (v 22). See notes, Jsh 24:26, 27. *poured oil*. To show that God had hallowed it to become part of the altar.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 28:19 *Bethel*. Using an ancient, common Semitic name for God, Hbr *'el*. See "God," p 1227. One evidence for the antiquity of the stories in Gn is the fact that they never refer to the Canaanite god Baal, which Moses first mentions in Nu 25:3 when the Israelites are traveling toward the Promised Land. These circumstances accord well with evidence outside of Scripture that shows the emergence of devotion to the storm god Baal (earlier called Hadad) c 1500 BC. *Luz*. Original Canaanite name.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 28:22 *God's house*. Jacob would build an altar here. *a full tenth*. A tithe.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 28:10–22 Long before becoming man, the Second Person of the Godhead appears to Jacob in a vision with ascending and descending angels. The Son of God tells how all nations will be blessed in Him through the line of Jacob. In thankfulness, Jacob vows to build an altar for the worship of the true God and to tithe. Even now, such promises are pleasing to God, if made in faith without superstition. We have much to be thankful for. Christ is our gateway to heaven. To forgive sins and strengthen our faith, Christ descends to us in His Word and Sacraments. • We praise You, Lord, for Your promises and mercy. Be with us as we ascend and descend in service to others. Amen.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 29:1 *people of the east*. Nomads residing on the eastern part of Canaan and across the Jordan, known for prosperity in flocks, herds, and camels. Cf Jb 1:3.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 29:4 *Haran*. See map, p 60.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 29:10 *rolled the stone*. Jacob must have had amazing strength.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 29:11 Jacob saw the hand of God in this event.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 29:14 *my bone and my flesh!* Laban acknowledged Jacob as his kin.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 29:17 *eyes were weak*. Hbr expression is unclear. Leah's eyes were apparently dull and lacking luster in comparison to Rachel's beautiful eyes.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 29:18 *serve you seven years*. One would ratify the betrothal through a bride price. See note, 34:12. Jacob could not ask his immediate family to pay this price, and he had no other means, so he offered his labor. Seven years would equal an extravagant amount of money and thus indicated his deep love for Rachel.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 29:20 *seemed … few days*. See note, 27:44.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 29:21 *my wife*. Jacob had paid the bride price of labor to have Rachel as his wife. *go in to her*. To consummate the marriage.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 29:23 Luth: "Without consent, agreements, and discussion the daughter is seized by the father and placed on the nuptial bed of Jacob. … If these were the customs of those people, they certainly were very bad" (AE 5:301).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 29:24 *his female servant*. Customarily, the bride's father would give a dowry to the bride. Although Laban did not give the usual clothing, money, or furniture, he gave the important gift of a maidservant.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 29:25 *deceived*. Cf 27:35.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 29:27 *the other also*. See pp 54–55.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 29:28 After the week was over, Jacob married Rachel. He did not have to wait another seven years, but he was now obliged to serve Laban 14 years.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 29:1–30 Jacob's sin falls back upon him. Just as he deceived his brother Esau, the firstborn, so also Laban deceives Jacob regarding a firstborn. When people are engaged and married, falsehood and deceit leads to great harm, though the love of husband and wife can make hard work light. Thanks be to God, the Church's Bridegroom deals faithfully. He covers our debt with the sacrifice of His life and love so that we may be His. • Lord Jesus, we praise You for Your extravagant love. Amen.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 29:31 *hated*. Rejected. Jacob did not show as much love to her as he did to Rachel.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 30:1 *When Rachel saw*. Presumably when Leah was pregnant yet again. *Give me children, or I shall die!* In her desperate desire for children, Rachel blamed Jacob for infertility, forgetting the Lord is the source of such blessing.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 30:3 *Here is my servant … on my behalf*. Like Sarah and later Leah (30:9–13), Rachel allowed a surrogate to bear a child in her place. The practice of having surrogate mothers is well attested in laws from the second millennium BC at Anatolian Kanesh, Babylon, and Nuzi. Although reported in Gn, nowhere in Scripture does the Lord condone this behavior.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 30:4 *Bilhah as a wife*. See pp 54–55.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 30:6 *God has judged me*. The Lord had given her justice by answering her prayer.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 30:8 *wrestled … prevailed*. In her competition to produce children, Rachel succeeded by a surrogate mother. Cf 32:28, "striven … prevailed."
GENESIS—NOTE ON 30:9 *ceased bearing children*. After bearing four sons in close succession. *as a wife*. See note, v 3; see also pp 54–55.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 30:14 *days of wheat harvest*. In May. See calendar, p 262. *mandrakes*. Roots used to make perfume. The ancients ascribed to them aphrodisiac qualities and fertility powers.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 30:15 *taken away my husband?* Perhaps Jacob was denying conjugal rights to Leah, the less-favored wife. *lie with you*. Sexual intercourse.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 30:20 *honor*. Leah hoped that in bearing Jacob many sons, he would prize her as a beloved wife.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 30:21 After Jacob's seven years of service for Rachel, or perhaps even later.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 30:22 *God remembered Rachel*. Around the time that Leah was pregnant with her sixth son. See "remember," p 843. *God listened*. Rachel finally relied on the Lord instead of trying to take matters into her own hands. Cf vv 1–3, 15.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 29:31–30:24. As Leah and Rachel contend with each other regarding childbearing and Jacob's affection, they degrade the marriage relationship. As the sole giver of all good gifts, the Lord finally grants Rachel a child and thus removes her reproach (30:23). In many cases, modern technology allows people to turn God's gift of childbearing

into a product they can obtain or refuse at will. Such manipulative attitudes are as old as Leah and Rachel. As Jacob suggests (30:2), we cannot stand in the place of God in these matters, but we must entrust them to His wisdom. In any case, the Lord has given us a child—His only-begotten Son (Is 9:6–7)—to save us and bring salvation to the world. • Lord, grant us patience and trust in matters beyond our control. Bless marriages and families with Your forgiving love. Amen.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 30:26 *Give me my wives*. Jacob served the contracted 14 years for the bride price, so the women are rightfully his wives. See note, 29:18.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 30:27 *learned by divination*. See ESV note. Laban sought information by supernatural means, such as the interpretation of omens. Later, God forbade this practice in Israel because such practices arise from paganism and seek to access evil powers for aid. Cf Lv 19:26; Dt 18:10, 14. See note, 1Sm 15:23.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 30:30 *wherever I turned*. Lit, "at my foot," upon which one steps and turns. The expression's use here seems derogatory, making Laban dependent on Jacob's foot. See note, Ru 4:7.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 30:32 *speckled … spotted … black*. To distinguish Jacob's livestock from Laban's.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 30:33 *my honesty will answer for me later*. Jacob will be vindicated whenever Laban inspects his wages. *stolen*. Any sheep or goat outside the stated parameters would be considered dishonest gain. Through hard lessons, Jacob had learned the virtue of honesty and clarity.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 30:35 *Laban removed*. Laban dishonestly removed the sheep and goats that would have been Jacob's.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 30:39 *bred in front of the sticks*. Jacob assumed that what the sheep saw while breeding would affect their offspring. This may have been the conventional wisdom of the day. However, see note, v 40. This plan succeeded by a miracle of the Lord.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 30:40 *set the faces of the flocks*. Along with the use of the mottled sticks, Jacob seems to have understood the basic principles of selective breeding. He intentionally paired animals to breed for the desired traits. Jacob adhered to the agreement but also acted shrewdly.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 30:41 *stronger … breeding*. Jacob used his method among the strong, whereas the weak would mate without his care and continue to be weak. *breed among the sticks*. See note, v 39.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 30:43 *the man increased greatly*. Jacob recognized that neither the sticks nor his methods alone could have produced such great wealth. He credited the Lord for his prosperity. Cf 31:6–10. *flocks, female servants and male servants, and camels and donkeys*. Such items are still a measure of wealth in herding cultures. See note, Ex 20:17.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 30:25–43 Laban deceives Jacob by taking away the livestock he promised. Nonetheless, the Lord blesses Jacob by miraculously prospering his livestock and granting him shrewdness with honesty. In business, you will be tempted to act dishonestly, as Laban did. Instead, pray for wisdom and shrewdness. In all cases, remember and give thanks that the Lord daily and richly provides for your needs of body and soul. In His faithfulness, He gives us the blessings of His cross in Word and Sacraments and will set all things right at His second coming. • Come, Lord Jesus, and grant us Your wholesome wisdom. Amen.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 31:2 *Laban did not regard him with favor*. Lit, "the face of Laban was no longer with him." Laban's face showed that his attitude toward Jacob had changed. See notes, Nu 6:25, 26.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 31:3 *Return*. Luth: "Because the Word orders it, he is not fearful but proceeds in the name of the Lord, for these are the words of God, who is liberating Jacob from distress and promising to defend him in the future" (AE 6:11). *I will be with you*. See "be with," p 5.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 31:4 *sent and called Rachel and Leah into the field*. To make sure they were ready to leave their homeland.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 31:7 *ten times*. Expression meaning "constantly." See p 217.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 31:9 *God has … given them to me*. God gave them (see note, 30:43). Jacob did not steal them, as Laban's sons said (v 1).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 31:10 *saw in a dream*. As at Bethel (28:12–16), God used a dream to reveal His gracious will to Jacob. See p 74. *mottled*. Having irregular patterns of color in their coats.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 31:11 *the angel of God*. Cf v 13. Elsewhere called "the angel of the LORD" (e.g., 16:7). God is the speaker. See p 1227.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 31:13 *I am the God of Bethel*. At Bethel, the Lord identified Himself as "the God of Abraham … [and] Isaac" (28:13). Since Jacob had been living among people who worshiped false gods, he needed this reminder of who the true God is.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 31:14 *portion or inheritance*. See p 7. Luth: "According to God's command it is the duty of a mother or wife to assist her husband in nourishing and bringing up the children and in attending to the administration of the household. These two wives complain … about the cruelty of their father, in as much as they are already the mothers of 12 children and they are still deprived … of the things necessary for nourishing such a numerous household" (AE 6:15).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 31:15 *devoured our money*. Laban used up his daughters' portion and inheritance for his own purposes.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 31:19 *shear his sheep*. Usually done in spring. See calendar, p 262. Laban had put a distance of three days' journey between his flocks and Jacob's (30:36). *household gods*. Hbr *teraphim*. Rachel may have stolen her father's idols out of anger, or she may have thought that they would grant protection. Neither motive was right.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 31:21 *crossed the Euphrates*. This river marked the northern boundary of the land promised to Abraham (15:18). *set his face*. Suggests Jacob's determination to move away from Laban rapidly. He would cover a great distance. *Gilead*. See map, p 60.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 31:24 *either good or bad*. LXX, "anything bad." Luth: "In your heart you have thought up a huge mass of accusations and charges to vomit out against him. But I order you not only to keep your hands off him but not to offend him even by a word" (AE 6:39).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 31:26 *like captives of the sword?* Laban's words are filled with anger. He disregarded the Lord's command (v 24) by comparing his daughters to prisoners of war.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 31:27 Hypocritical statement.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 31:28 *my sons*. Grandsons.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 31:32 *our kinsmen*. Relatives who were present.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 31:34 *camel's saddle*. Apparently, the saddle could be removed from the camel and serve as a convenient seat for travelers. *sat on them*. That Rachel would sit on "gods" shows that idolatry is ridiculous.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 31:35 *the way of women is upon me*. Rachel claims to be menstruating but may not be telling the truth.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 31:39 *I bore the loss*. Under some ancient law codes (e.g., Code of Hammurabi), a shepherd was not held responsible for losses incurred from attacks of wild beasts.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 31:40 *my sleep fled from my eyes*. Jacob was deprived of sleep because he faithfully tended Laban's flocks.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 31:42 *the Fear of Isaac*. He whom Isaac trusted. See p 1001. *rebuked*. In the dream (v 24).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 31:43 *all that you see is mine*. All that Jacob had originally came from Laban.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 31:44 *make a covenant*. Peace agreement in which Jacob also pledged to be faithful to his wives (v 50). See p 127. *witness*. Laban had often gone back on his word. This formal covenant was meant to testify that this time both he and Jacob could be trusted.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 31:45 *stone … pillar*. As a sign of the covenant. See note, 28:18.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 31:47 *Jegar-sahadutha … Galeed*. See ESV notes. Different languages of the names show the persistent cultural boundaries between the two men.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 31:49 *Mizpah*. Several other locations in Israel were named Mizpah. See map, p 451.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 31:52 *I will not pass over this heap … to do harm*. The pillar and stones served as boundary markers.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 31:53 *God of Nahor, the God of their father*. Nahor, Laban's grandfather (24:15, 29), served "other gods" (Jsh 24:2). Notwithstanding Laban's oath in v 50, it is quite clear that he worshiped multiple gods. *judge between us*. Laban called on the gods to be the guardian of this covenant. *swore by the Fear of his father Isaac*. Jacob bound himself to the agreement in the name of the true God. See note, v 42.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 31:54 *offered a sacrifice … ate bread*. It was customary to end a covenant ceremony with a sacrifice and meal. *his kinsmen*. Luth: "It is likely that Jacob had many relatives in his household from the house of Laban who worked for him" (AE 6:66).

GENESIS—NOTE ON **Ch 31** Deception leads to dispute between relatives, which threatens to break out into open warfare. Such an outcome is avoided because God steps in. Family feuds, often fueled by deceit, continue to plague relationships today. We need God to step into our lives, into our families. In Him and in His Word there is no deceit. Trust Him to forgive the contrite sinner and to quiet the angry heart. Go to Christ for pardon and for peace. • "Grant peace in mercy, Lord, we pray, Peace in our

time, O send us! For there is none on earth but thee, None other to defend us. Only thou, Lord, canst fight for us." Amen. (AE 53:287)
GENESIS—NOTE ON 32:2 *Jacob saw … God's camp!* Jacob called this company of angels "God's camp" (Hbr *machaneh*), from which comes the place-name Mahanaim.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 32:3 *Seir … Edom*. See map, p 60.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 32:7 *afraid and distressed*. Jacob forgot about God's company of angels. *divided*. Tactic used by ancient merchants and caravans to ensure that some of their livestock and goods would survive a raid.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 32:12 God's promise was the basis for Jacob's prayer.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 32:13 *present*. That Jacob sought to turn away Esau's anger with this gift does not mean he lacked trust. Luth: "Although we have God's promises and commandments, nevertheless, God must not be tempted, that is, means must not be neglected, but we must use these things we can use since, indeed, God has not given us reason and the counsels and help of reason that we should despise them" (AE 6:104).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 32:16 *drove*. Herd or flock of animals being driven in a body.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 32:20 *he will accept me*. See ESV note. When Jacob finally does see Esau face-to-face, he hopes to be able to smile (lit, "he will lift my face").
GENESIS—NOTE ON 32:1–21 Faced with possible death, Jacob turns to the Lord in prayer, then makes preparations to aid his family's safety. His prayer is a model for ours: address God, confess who God is and what He has done, confess our unworthiness, petition Him, and remember God's promises, which are the basis for our prayers. God's promise is to bless and pardon us for the sake of Christ, the Offspring of Jacob. • Lord, teach us so to pray!
Amen.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 32:22 *female servants*. Bilhah and Zilpah. *crossed the ford of the Jabbok*. Eastern tributary of the Jordan River, 25 mi N of the Salt Sea. See map, p 60.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 32:24 *a man wrestled with him*. Jacob may have thought at first that his rival was Esau. However, cf v 30. Luth: "The wrestler is the Lord of glory, God Himself, or God's Son, who was to

become incarnate and who appeared and spoke to the fathers. For God in His boundless goodness dealt very familiarly with His chosen patriarch Jacob and disciplined him as though playing with him in a kindly manner" (AE 6:130).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 32:25 *hip was put out of joint*. Hints that Jacob's opponent was more than human.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 32:26 *bless me*. Jacob recognized that his adversary was no mere man, but God Himself. See "bless," p 842.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 32:27 *What is your name?* He asked not because He did not know it, but in order to give Jacob a new name.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 32:28 *Israel*. Luth: "Israel [means] a prince or God's fighter, that is, he who wrestles with God and wins. This happens through that faith which holds so firmly to God's Word, until it overcomes God's wrath and obtains God as the gracious Father" (WA DB 8:137).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 32:29 *Why is it that you ask My name?* Jacob wanted absolute proof of his rival's identity. Apart from the revealed Word, we should not ask for or seek a hidden name of God. *He blessed him*. He repeated the blessing He gave Jacob earlier (28:13–15).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 32:30 *Peniel*. Luth: "For through faith, in the struggle of the cross, one learns to recognize and experience God rightly" (WA DB 8:137). See map, p 60. *seen God face to face*. In His assumed human form. See p 39. *yet my life has been delivered*. The sight of God is usually a destroying fire (cf Heb 12:29).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 32:31 *Penuel*. Variant of Peniel. Cf Jgs 8:8–9.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 32:32 *do not eat the sinew*. Evidently a self-imposed practice; no such law is found in the OT. See pp 3–5.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 32:22–32 Alone and faced with danger, Jacob finds God to be his adversary. Yet faithful Jacob wrestles and receives a new name and God's blessing. It does not always seem that God is on our side. Sometimes He causes Christians to bear trials, temptations, and suffering—i.e., the cross. Yet, this is not to destroy us, but to strengthen us and finally bless us. Christian faith clings to God's Word of mercy in Jesus Christ. • Lord, in Baptism, You have promised to be my God. Grant to me what You see that I need. Amen.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 33:3 *bowing … seven times*. Servant's act of respect for his lord. See p 1276.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 33:4 *they wept*. With joy.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 33:8 *all this company*. The flocks Jacob had sent to Esau. *find favor*. So that Esau would be favorable toward Jacob and his family. See "favor," p 6.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 33:10 *like seeing the face of God*. An experience of mercy. Probably also alludes to the fact that Jacob saw God and lived. Here, Esau could have wiped Jacob out.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 33:11 *my blessing*. Jacob's gift for Esau. *he took it*. By accepting the present, Esau showed that he accepted Jacob.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 33:12 *I will go ahead of you*. To accompany and protect Jacob's household.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 33:13 *children are frail*. Jacob's oldest son, Reuben, was c 13.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 33:14 *until I come to my lord in Seir*. Jacob changed his mind about going to Seir at this time, though he might have visited Esau later. Together, they buried their father, Isaac (35:29).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 33:17 Succoth was nearby, located along the Jabbok River. See map, p 60.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 33:18 Shechem was across the Jordan, due west of Succoth, in Canaan.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 33:19 Purchase of property suggests that Jacob planned to settle here. *money*. See note, Jsh 24:32.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 33:20 *altar … El-Elohe-Israel*. See ESV note. Jacob used his new name to confess his faith in the mighty God of heaven and earth.

GENESIS—NOTE ON **Ch 33** God turns Jacob's fear into joy as Esau approaches and the two brothers are reconciled. Jacob humbles himself, and Esau forgives. As much as possible, without compromising Christian doctrine and morality, we should make peace with those who oppose us—especially family members. This takes mutual humility and forgiveness. God took the lead here. While we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son (Rm 5:10). • Lord God, in Christ You have dealt graciously with me, and in Him I have enough. Amen.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 34:2 *Hivite*. See p 345. *prince*. Master, tribal chief. *lay with her and humiliated her*. Raped her.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 34:4 *Get me this girl for my wife*. God later forbade the Israelites from marrying foreigners (Dt 7:1–5).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 34:9–10 Hamor's interest was more than in his son's marriage. He wanted Jacob's house to be assimilated to the Hivite culture and economy. See note, Ezr 9:12.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 34:12 *bride price*. Hbr *mohar*, compensation for the loss of a daughter. The bride price would be given to Jacob. *gift*. Given to Dinah as a dowry.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 34:13 *deceitfully*. Jacob's sons probably resorted to deception because they thought themselves outnumbered. Luth: "They made pretense and lied in word and deed … for the destruction and ruin of the Shechemites. This assuredly was a mortal sin" (AE 6:202).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 34:14 *uncircumcised*. See note, 17:11. The Hivites, like some other Near Eastern groups, did not practice circumcision. See note, Ex 4:25.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 34:15 *every male … circumcised*. By demanding that the Hivites be circumcised, Jacob's sons treated this sign of God's sacred covenant flippantly. They used God's holy institution for a secular, even sinful, purpose.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 34:17 *we will take our daughter*. The brothers assumed the role of their father when referring to their sister.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 34:20 *the gate*. Where the political business of many ancient cities was transacted. See p 792.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 34:23 *Will not their livestock … be ours?* Through marriage.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 34:25 *sore*. Pain from a surgery such as circumcision is often most intense on the third day. *Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brothers*. All were children of Leah.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 34:29 In biblical times, conquering armies often enslaved the women and children of captured cities. See notes, Dt 21:10–14. Sometimes the slaves would later be sold (cf 37:28).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 34:30 *making me stink*. This cruel deed might give Jacob an evil reputation. *Canaanites … Perizzites*. See p 345.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 34:31 Question implies that Jacob did not care how Dinah was treated.
GENESIS—NOTE ON **Ch 34** One sin leads to another. Shechem rapes Dinah, and Jacob's sons abuse God's holy institution of circumcision so they could massacre the men of Shechem. Christians, beware! Those who treat God's holy things carelessly and who nurture vengeance prepare for

themselves lasting misery. Zeal for a right cause is good, but moderation and due process are also required. The same Savior who died for us also died for sinners such as Shechem and Jacob's sons. • Lord Jesus, grant me wisdom and patience. Help me to love others as You have loved me. Amen.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 35:1 *God said … to the God who appeared to you*. He wanted Jacob to see distinctly that the God addressing him now in Canaan is the same God who appeared to him on the other side of the Jordan, though the manifestation may be different. See note, 2Ki 17:26. God spoke to Jacob in this way not because a different god had appeared to him then (28:13) but because of the distinction of persons in the one, undivided Godhead.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 35:2 *foreign gods*. Plunder from Shechem (34:28–29) likely included statues of false gods. *purify yourselves*. Possibly included bathing and sexual abstinence, as well as repentance and faith in the promised Messiah. See "holy,"
p 7. *change your garments*. Cf Eph 4:22–24.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 35:4 *hid*. Buried.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 35:5 *terror*. God used this to protect Jacob's family. The cities would have wanted to kill Jacob and his family for what his sons did at Shechem (34:25–30).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 35:7 *called the place El-bethel*. See ESV note. God twice revealed Himself here to Jacob; hence the name, which means "God of the house of God." See note, v 1.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 35:10 *Israel shall be your name*. God confirmed the name He gave Jacob previously. Luth: "God is speaking about the chief name, concerning the promises. … He has to be Israel … on account of these promises. But he was also called Jacob [i.e., deceiver] … on account of his works" (AE 6:263).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 35:11 *God Almighty*. See p 1227. *be fruitful and multiply*. The man Israel was already the father of many children; this command was meant also for his descendants. See note, 1:28.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 35:12 *Abraham and Isaac*. The Lord confirmed His promise to the fathers.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 35:14 *pillar*. Jacob had built the previous pillar into an altar (v 7). Here, he set up another pillar. See note, 28:18. *drink offering … oil*. Luth: "It was the rite for initiating and anointing and was also taken up later by Moses, for he anoints the priests and their clothing, etc., just as Jacob anoints the stone that the place may be consecrated and dedicated to God and that the church might come together in this place to hear the Word of God, to pray, and to give thanks" (AE 6:266).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 35:1–15 There was little mention of God in ch 34. Now, He again takes center stage, and Jacob responds. Jacob gets rid of the false gods. He journeys to Bethel, the "house of God." He again hears God's promises. He worships. Where God's people assemble around Word and Sacrament, God Himself is present to forgive those who repent. • "My soul, now praise your Maker! Let all within me bless His name Who makes you full partaker Of mercies more than you dare claim." Amen. (*LSB* 820:1)

GENESIS—NOTE ON 35:17 *another son*. Benjamin. Joseph was Rachel's firstborn.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 35:18 *soul*. Hbr *nephesh*. When the soul leaves the body, death occurs. See note, 2:7. *Ben-oni … Benjamin*. See ESV notes. Jacob called his son Benjamin lest the name Ben-oni become a constant reminder of Rachel's death.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 35:19 *Bethlehem*. May refer to the whole region, not just the city. See map, p 60.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 35:20 *pillar*. See note, 28:18. *Rachel's tomb*. She was buried at Ramah, along the road running down to Bethlehem. See note, Mt 2:18; see also map, p 451.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 35:21 *Eder*. Exact location unknown; near Edom.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 35:22 *Bilhah his father's concubine*. Bilhah, Rachel's maid, was also called Jacob's wife (30:4). See pp 54–55. Reuben's sin of incest caused him to lose the birthright. See note, 49:4.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 35:27 *Isaac*. Jacob's father was still living, though he was prepared to die many years earlier (27:4). *Hebron*. See map, p 60.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 35:29 See note, 1Ki 2:10. Isaac was buried near Mamre with his parents and wife, Rebekah. Mention of both Esau and Jacob shows that they were reconciled. Cf ch 33.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 35:16–29 Sorrows surround Jacob. He learns of his son's incest with his concubine and also the death of his wife and of his father. God-fearing people such as Jacob sometimes have children who fall into great sin and shame. And even those who receive God's promises, such as Rachel and Isaac, are still subject to death. Mourning is a part of life in a sin-broken world. When sorrows surround you, call on the Lord in prayer. Remember and celebrate His promises, which are guaranteed to you in Jesus' death and resurrection. Because Jesus conquered death and sin, we have comfort in the midst of all troubles. • O Lord, forgive our sins, and bring us to eternal life for Jesus' sake. Amen.
GENESIS—NOTE ON **Ch 36** Though we may not understand why, God caused the names of some 200 Edomite noblemen and noblewomen to be written in His Word. See pp 8–11, 628–31.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 36:1 *generations of Esau*. Gn is divided into 10 "generations" (genealogies). Esau's is the ninth.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 36:2 *wives*. The names of Esau's wives differ from those given in 26:34; 28:9. Possibly death, alternate names, or additional

wives account for this. *Canaanites … Hittite … Hivite*. See p 345.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 36:8 *settled in the hill country of Seir*. Where he had already moved before Jacob's return home. Cf Dt 2:12. Thus Jacob had Canaan to himself (37:1), so that God's promise would be fulfilled. Cf Jsh 24:4. The territory that Esau settled came to be called Edom (Idumea in the NT). See map, p 60.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 36:31 *before any king reigned over the Israelites*. Before the Israelites had a king. Cf 35:11; Dt 17:14. Either Moses the prophet wrote these words foreseeing that Israel would one day be ruled by kings, or this is an editorial update written after Moses' time. See notes, Dt 17:15–20.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 36:37 *Rehoboth on the Euphrates*. Or, "Rehoboth-hannahar" ("open space of the river"). See ESV note.
GENESIS—NOTE ON **Ch 36** God shows us that for the sake of devout parents such as Isaac and Rebekah, He will give good things to their children, the Edomites, even though the children do not imitate their parents' faith and life. By doing so, God would lead them and their descendants to repentance. Though the Edomites were often rivals of Israel, the Lord made provision for their salvation (Dt 23:7–8). How great is God's mercy! • Lord Jesus, have mercy on all generations that stray. Call them back to You. Amen.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 37:2 *generations of Jacob*. The 10th and last section of the Book of Genesis, each of which is introduced with the term "generations." See pp 10–11. *with the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah*. These sons would have been closer in age to Joseph than the older offspring of Jacob's wife Leah. *wives*. Concubines. See pp 54–55. *bad report*. Of something evil they had done.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 37:3 *the son of his old age*. Joseph was born to Jacob when he was old, of his favorite wife, Rachel. *he made*. Women carded wool and spun thread from wool and from flax. In Egypt, men usually did the weaving, so Jacob may have actually woven Joseph's garment. Later biblical texts describe women weaving (Pr 31). *robe of many colors*. See ESV note. Mentioned elsewhere only at 2Sm 13:18. It became a source of his brothers' envy.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 37:5 *Joseph had a dream*. Luth: "So far as dreams are concerned, there is the well-known rule that such revelations must be scrutinized with respect to their relation to the Word and to faith. If they are

not in harmony with the Word or destroy faith, they are of Satan" (AE 3:330). Today, we ought not expect God to reveal Himself in dreams, since we have the full revelation of Scripture. See p 74.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 37:7 *binding sheaves*. Like Isaac, Jacob's family was partly nomadic and partly agricultural (see note, 26:12). At harvesttime, the men would tie up the stalks of plants into bundles. *bowed down*. Years later in Egypt, this dream was fulfilled when Joseph's family bowed down to him (see note, 42:6).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 37:9 *another dream*. Although these dreams were the source of great tension, they would comfort Joseph in his future trials with the knowledge that he was part of God's plan.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 37:10 *his father rebuked him*. Knowing that children should honor and serve their parents (Ex 20:12; Dt 5:16), Jacob rebuked Joseph for predicting that he would rule over the rest of the family. *your mother*. Probably refers to Leah, Joseph's stepmother, since Rachel had already died (35:19).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 37:1–11 Joseph is favored by his father but hated by his brothers. Joseph's prophetic dreams only raise tensions in the family. We can expect that those who love virtue will be hated and envied by the wicked. Yet we should also pursue humility and avoid arrogance. Thanks be to God, His favored Son died to redeem His people, though they hated Him. In righteous humility, He redeemed us too. • Almighty God, in this world of division and family strife, bless us with the healing love of Your Son, Jesus. Forgive us our jealousies and hatred. In the Savior's name. Amen.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 37:12 *Shechem*. See map, p 60.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 37:14 *Valley of Hebron … to Shechem*. C 50 mi through the rocky hills that run along the spine of Canaan, no slight journey for a young man of 17 to venture alone. See map, p 60.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 37:16 *seeking my brothers*. No doubt word of the presence of a sizable group of men with their substantial flock would circulate in the region, so it is not surprising that the man would know of the brothers' whereabouts.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 37:17 *Dothan*. Another 16–17 mi from Shechem. See color map 1.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 37:18 Joseph could have been identified from afar by his robe of many colors (v 3).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 37:19 *this dreamer*. Lit, "master of dreams." Sarcasm.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 37:20 *pits*. People dug cisterns to collect rain water. At this time of year, the pit would be dry (v 24). See note, Jer 2:13. *fierce animal*. In ancient times, lions and other dangerous animals roamed the region. Cf 1Sm 17:34.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 37:21 *Reuben*. Jacob's oldest son (35:22–23).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 37:24 See note, v 20.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 37:25 *sat down to eat*. Detail shows how callous the brothers had become. They ignored the cries and pleas of their brother and were undisturbed by their wicked deed. *caravan of Ishmaelites*. Desert-dwelling descendants of Abraham's first son, Ishmael. *balm*. Probably the legendary balm of Gilead, which may have been made from terebinth resin.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 37:26 *Judah*. Cf 49:10. This brother appears several times in the following chapters of Gn, both as a bad example (ch 38) and a noble one (44:18–34). *conceal his blood?* Cover up his death. Cf 4:10.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 37:28 *Midianite traders … sold him to the Ishmaelites*. Midianites were desert-dwelling descendants of Abraham through his wife (or concubine) Keturah. The relation here with the Ishmaelites is unclear. Perhaps the Midianites and Ishmaelites intermingled, or there were both Midianite and Ishmaelite traders in the group to which Joseph was sold. At times, the two terms seem to be used interchangeably, as in Jgs 8:22–28. *twenty shekels of silver*. Typical price for a male slave during this era, attesting to the early second millennium context of the story. The price for slaves went up over time, as demonstrated in Scripture (cf Ex 21:32; 2Ki 15:20) and ancient literature. Coined money was not yet used, so this passage refers to the weight of silver paid. See ESV note; see also note, Jsh 24:32.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 37:29 *tore his clothes*. See note, Jb 1:20.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 37:30 *where shall I go?* As in, "How can I escape my grief?" Reuben wondered how he would explain Joseph's disappearance to Jacob. His brothers had put him into a difficult situation. He felt he had to join in their deception.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 37:34 *tore his garments*. See note, Jb 1:20. In this case, the tearing parallels what Jacob assumed happened to Joseph. Jacob's lament goes far beyond that of Reuben. *sackcloth*. See note, Jb 16:15. *mourned … many days*. Usually public displays of grief lasted a week, or

on occasion a month, as for Moses (Dt 34:8). Jacob declared that his grief for his son would last until he died (v 35).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 37:35 Since they knew Joseph was alive, the brothers' comfort was hypocritical. *Sheol*. Here, "death." See p 792.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 37:36 *Midianites had sold*. See note, v 28. *an officer of Pharaoh, the captain of the guard*. Office of high rank.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 37:12–36 Joseph is betrayed by his brothers and sold into slavery. Yet God spares Joseph's life in order to fulfill His plan and the dreams He had revealed. When sin is not dealt with, it breeds even more wickedness. Joseph's brothers let their hatred lead to betrayal and lies. Many years later, God's Son was betrayed by His friend, not for 20 shekels but for 30 pieces of silver. Yet this also took place so that God could fulfill His plan for our salvation. • Heavenly Father, enable us to help those in need. Turn us away from self-pity and worry to compassion and sympathy. Send Your Holy Spirit to strengthen our faith in times of trial. In the Savior's name we pray. Amen.
GENESIS—NOTE ON **Ch 38** A digression from the Joseph story.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 38:1 *at that time*. I.e., about the time Joseph was sold. *Adullamite*. A man from the city of Adullam, c 10 mi W of Jacob's home at this time. See map, p 534. *Hirah*. Later referred to as Judah's friend (v 12). This incident shows that Jacob's family lived at peace with the inhabitants of the land.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 38:2 *Canaanite*. Simeon also had a Canaanite wife, though later this was forbidden (Dt 7:1–3). *He took her*. Likely in marriage. The woman is not named, only referred to as the daughter of Shua.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 38:3 *Er*. Name might mean "watchful" or "vigilant," but the text does not specify any significance.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 38:5 *Shelah*. Perhaps means "drooping," since he may have been less robust than his brothers. *Chezib*. Probably the same as Achzib (Jsh 15:44), c 3 mi W of Adullam. All the places mentioned here would later be in the territory given to the tribe of Judah.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 38:6 *Judah took a wife for Er*. The father usually selected a bride for his son. See pp 54–55. *Tamar*. Means "palm tree." Probably a Canaanite. See note, Ps 92:12–13.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 38:7 *wicked in the sight of the* LORD. "Er erred"; in Hbr, there is a pun on the name, since to do evil is "Er" spelled backward.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 38:8 *duty of a brother-in-law to her*. The ancient custom, known as levirate marriage (from the Lat for "brother-in-law"), was that a brother would take his deceased brother's widow if she had not borne a male heir. Later, this would become part of Mosaic Law. See note, Ru 1:11.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 38:9 *not be his*. The first male offspring would belong to the line of the deceased brother, not to Onan. *whenever*. Hbr implies that Onan did this repeatedly. *waste the semen on the ground*. Means of birth control, sometimes called onanism. *not to give offspring*. He did not want the family inheritance to be divided up further. Yet if this was all he desired, he could have abstained from intercourse altogether. Instead, Onan wanted to enjoy sexual intercourse while intentionally depriving Tamar of a family and inheritance. Imagine how this hurt and offended her at each encounter. Luth: "Onan must have been a malicious and incorrigible scoundrel. This is a most disgraceful sin. … We call it unchastity, yes, a Sodomitic sin. For Onan goes in to her; that is, he lies with her and copulates, and when it comes to the point of insemination, spills the semen, lest the woman conceive. Surely at such a time the order of nature established by God in procreation should be followed" (AE 7:20–21).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 38:11 *a widow in your father's house*. Though subject to her father-in-law, Tamar could live with her parents.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 38:12 *In the course of time*. Long enough to make it clear that Judah had no intention of giving Shelah to Tamar. *When Judah was comforted*. At the end of his time of mourning. *Timnah*. Town in the hill country of what would later be southern Judah, perhaps east of Debir. See color map 1. *sheepshearers*. Time of sheepshearing was festive and given to drinking of wine. See calendar, p 262. *friend Hirah*. See note, v 1.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 38:14 *veil, wrapping herself up*. To conceal her identity. *entrance*. The gate was typically the place of business and activities in ancient walled towns (see p 792). She may have been at the wayside leading up to the town. *Enaim*. Probably the same as the village of Enam (Jsh 15:34). *Shelah was grown up*. Tamar's motive is clear: Judah had failed to give Shelah to Tamar.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 38:15 *prostitute*. Her appearance and place gave this impression. Ter: "Provision must be made in every way against all immodest associations and suspicions. … Why does not my garb pre-

announce my character?" (*ANF* 4:24–25). *she had covered her face*. Judah did not recognize her because of her veil.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 38:17 *young goat*. Seems to have been the typical payment. Cf Jgs 15:1. *pledge*. Judah had nothing with him to pay for the transaction, an indication that his act was spontaneous rather than premeditated. She asked for some kind of security that he would pay later.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 38:18 Tamar shrewdly asked for things she could later use as evidence. *signet*. A seal engraved with Judah's personal sign, which left its mark when pressed into soft clay. Usually worn on a cord around the neck or as a ring. See note, Jer 32:10. *went in to her*. Mosaic Law would later make clear that sexual
relations between a man and his daughter-in-law are immoral (Lv 18:15).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 38:20 *sent the young goat by his friend*. Hirah seems to have been a partying friend who would support Judah in this type of behavior. *woman's*. Judah had not bothered to find out her name.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 38:21 *cult prostitute*. Hbr refers to a prostitute who practiced her trade in the service of a false deity, often in connection with a fertility cult. This may have been a more socially acceptable prostitute than the term used in v 15. Hirah may have used the term in embarrassment for seeking out a mere harlot.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 38:23 Although what Judah had left with Tamar was valuable, he did not want to pursue the matter and let his deed be made public.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 38:24 Tamar was living with her family (v 11), but word reached Judah. *Bring her out*. To the city gate, where justice was carried out. See p 792. *let her be burned*. Later, this became the legal punishment for prostitution, but only in the case of a priest's daughter. Perhaps it was the law among the Canaanites at the time.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 38:25 Tamar confronted Judah with the evidence by sending it to him (cf v 18). Judah's immorality contrasts sharply with Joseph's chaste conduct in the next chapter.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 38:26 Confronted with the facts, Judah confessed his guilt. He had withheld his son Shelah from Tamar and had illegitimate sexual relations with his daughter-in-law. This admission of sin may have been a turning point for Judah. Later, he showed strong character and selflessness (44:30–34). *righteous*. See p 843.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 38:27–30 The birth of twins parallels that of Jacob and Esau (25:24–26). In both cases, the older twin takes second place. Perez later became the father of the leading clan of Judah, an ancestor of David (Ru 4:18–22), and eventually an ancestor of Christ (Mt 1:1–6).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 38:28 *midwife*. A woman who assisted in childbirth. See note, Ex 1:15. *scarlet thread*. To identify the firstborn. *first*. The midwife was sure the one who put out a hand would be born first.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 38:29 *Perez*. "Breach" or "opening," i.e., one who breaks or bursts out.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 38:30 *Zerah*. "Brightness," probably an allusion to the scarlet thread. From Zerah would come another clan of Judah.
GENESIS—NOTE ON **Ch 38** The sins of Onan, Judah, and Tamar make this one of the most sordid chapters of the Bible. Yet despite human sinfulness, God is at work. Through Judah's son Perez, the line that would eventually give birth to the Savior was preserved (cf Mt 1:3). Sexual sins lead to trouble and heartache in this life. Yet God does not cast away those who were conceived and born out of wedlock, but He preserves those who fear Him, just as He preserved Perez. So let us flee from sexual immorality, being mindful that God punishes unchastity. And let us confess our sins as Judah did, knowing that God, for the sake of Jesus Christ, will forgive all who repent. • Holy God, forgive us our sins. Fill our hearts with the sober and chaste love of Jesus Christ. Amen.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 39:1 *Joseph*. Potiphar's servant. Potiphar's wife likely had her own personal servants, but Joseph, as a slave in the house, was subject to her as well. See p 101.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 39:2 *The* LORD *was with Joseph*. According to His special, gracious presence. God directed all that Joseph did and gave him success. See "be with," p 5.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 39:3 *His master saw that the* LORD *was with him*. Potiphar saw Joseph's good qualities, such as his trustworthiness and success. There is no reason to think that Potiphar feared the Lord.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 39:6 The only thing in the household not under Joseph's direction was the food. Apparently Egyptians did not entrust these matters to foreigners and would not eat with them (43:32).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 39:7 *cast her eyes*. With longing, desire. *Lie with me*. Having failed to break Joseph's faith in 10 years of trials, the devil now comes from a new angle, tempting Joseph with lust and pleasure. Luth:

"Through the working of the Holy Spirit [Joseph] listened to and retained the teaching of his father with the greatest faithfulness and diligence. Accordingly, there shines in him the most ardent faith when in his early, blooming youth he is assailed not only by the worst misfortunes but also by the greatest allurements of pleasure. Yet he cannot be subdued or overcome. Young people should set this example before themselves" (AE 7:54).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 39:8 Joseph did not want to fall short of his master's trust. As a slave, Joseph's predicament was difficult, because he also had to worry about offending his master's wife.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 39:9 *He is not greater in this house than I am*. Although Potiphar was the master in charge of his household, he had complete confidence in Joseph's management. *sin against God?* Joseph's argument for resisting the temptation goes from the lesser to the greater motivation. After saying he did not want to offend his master, Joseph showed he did not want to offend God, who strictly forbids adultery.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 39:11 *men of the house*. Either Potiphar's wife arranged for the other male servants to be gone, or she waited for an opportune time. Luth: "This temptation is one of the most violent of all on account of the excellent and completely safe occasion and opportunity for sinning. … Indeed, you should know that he who holds himself aloof from such a woman can control his way of living" (AE 7:76).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 39:12 *garment*. Loose outer garment.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 39:13–14 Humiliated and angered by Joseph's rebuff, the wife now had material evidence, his garment, that she could use to get revenge.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 39:14 *he has brought … to laugh at us*. She blames her husband for bringing Joseph into the house in order to mock and seduce her. Cf v 17; see note, 26:8.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 39:19 *his anger was kindled*. At Joseph. Or, perhaps he suspected his wife was lying and was upset about having to let go his gifted servant.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 39:20 *prison … the king's prisoners*. The punishment could have been much worse—execution. No trial was involved. It was the wife's word against Joseph's.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 39:21 *keeper of the prison*. Warden or prison governor.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 39:23 *paid no attention*. Joseph was trustworthy.

GENESIS—NOTE ON **Ch 39** With steadfast faith, Joseph resists the temptation of Potiphar's wife. Yet in return for his godly life, Joseph loses his job and is thrown into prison. Today, pursue chastity and flee fornication, as Joseph did. Mark and avoid the bad example of Potiphar's wife, who slandered Joseph. And take comfort: whenever the Lord places the cross and suffering on His people, He also gives consolation and help, as He gave Joseph in Potiphar's house and in prison. • Lord Jesus Christ, You were tempted in every way, just as we are, yet You were without sin (Heb 4:15). Be with us in our temptations, free us from the prison of sin, and by Your cross bring us to eternal life. Amen.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 40:1 *Some time after this*. Joseph was 17 when sold into slavery (37:2) and 30 when freed from jail (41:46). *cupbearer … baker*. High Egyptian court officials with authority over the drinks and food of Pharaoh's household. Besides handling these official duties, they often were influential in the royal court.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 40:3 *captain of the guard*. Potiphar's title (37:36), so this prison was under his authority. The prisoners here were high-ranking. Some were reinstated but others executed (vv 21–22).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 40:4 *he attended them*. Waited on them. This was not mere menial service. *some time*. Lit, "some days," an indefinite period that could even mean a year.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 40:5 *each dream with its own interpretation*. Unlike other pairs of dreams (e.g., ch 41), in which both have the same interpretation.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 40:6 *troubled*. The men did not know what their dreams meant. Luth: "Through the dreams from God an impression of such a nature is made on the hearts that not only the intellect but also the will is troubled beyond normal" (AE 3:11). But not all dreams are from God. See p 74.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 40:8 *no one to interpret*. They could not consult anyone in the prison. Luth: "Since certain instances strongly prove that dreams may be meaningful, they are not to be entirely rejected. However, to be of value, dreams must, as Paul says of prophesying in Rom. 12:7, be according to the analogy of faith. But how to know whether God or the devil inspired a dream cannot be taught by rules. Experience must reveal it" (*WLS* § 1273). See p 74.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 40:11 *Pharaoh's cup was in my hand*. The cupbearer saw himself in his former position.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 40:15 *stolen*. Or, "kidnapped," "forcibly carried off." *pit*. Same term as in 37:20. Here it means "dungeon."
GENESIS—NOTE ON 40:17 *birds were eating it*. In the cupbearer's dream, he had control over the grapes. But the baker, in his dream, was unable to get the food to Pharaoh. In his eagerness for a favorable outcome, the baker did not notice this disturbing difference.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 40:19 *from you!* Probably by beheading. *hang you on a tree*. Or, "wood." The corpse of the baker would be impaled and exposed for the birds to eat.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 40:20 *Pharaoh's birthday*. Egyptian texts say that on a pharaoh's birthday, pardon was given to some prisoners. *lifted up the head*. Restored the cupbearer to honor and took off the baker's head.
GENESIS—NOTE ON **Ch 40** The dreams of the two prisoners mean death for the baker and life for the cupbearer. Yet the chief cupbearer forgot Joseph. Once people are free from danger or troubling situations, they so easily forget those who helped them, and they neglect to honor God, who delivered them. Although others may forget us, even if our father and mother forsake us, the Lord will take care of His people and remember them in His mercy (Ps 27:10). • Lord God, You have said, "I will not forget you," and Your Word is true. Remember us in mercy for the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 41:1 *Pharaoh dreamed*. See p 74.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 41:2 Central to Egypt's agriculture and economy, the Nile River represented Egypt's power and wealth. *fed in the reed grass*. Land flooded by the Nile was used as pastureland after the water receded.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 41:5 The second dream complements the first, as in ch 37. See note, 40:5. *growing*. Same Hbr word as used for the cows that "came up" (vv 2, 3). *on one stalk*. Symbol of abundance. Like the cows, the grain depended on the Nile for life.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 41:6 *thin*. Same Hbr word as used for the cows (vv 3, 4).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 41:8 *magicians*. Term used only for Egyptian and Babylonian men who specialized in occult practices. Cf Dt 18:10–14. *wise men*. In this context, the term refers to pagan diviners skilled in magic and the occult.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 41:12 *young Hebrew*. At the time he interpreted the dreams, Joseph was c 28 years old. Cf v 46.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 41:14 *pit*. Or, "dungeon," same Hbr word used for the pit Joseph was in before being sold into slavery (37:20). Thus his 13 years of misery began by being thrown into a pit and ended by being brought out of one. *shaved … and changed his clothes*. Egyptian men shaved their heads and beards. Joseph dressed in appropriate clothing.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 41:16 *It is not in me*. Luth: "He means to say, 'I am not the one who has interpreted or could interpret the dream. It is God who can do for you as He has done for me.' He gives glory to God, but nevertheless does not deny his [i.e., Joseph's] ministry" (WA DB 8:165). *God will give Pharaoh a favorable answer*. Lit, "an answer of peace." I.e., the interpretation will satisfy Pharaoh.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 41:25 *one*. The dreams have the same meaning. *God has revealed*. In Hbr, "the" precedes "God," emphasizing the one true God.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 41:27 *seven years of famine*. Egypt suffered when the flow and flood of the Nile abated, as described in some Egyptian texts.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 41:30 *famine will consume the land*. All the food supplies would be used up.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 41:1–36 Pharaoh's fortune-tellers and sorcerers cannot help him understand the dreams that God sent. Therefore, Joseph is brought up from the dungeon. Giving all the glory to God, he interprets the dreams and warns of the coming famine. The devil's tools—fortune-tellers and sorcerers—are powerless in divine matters. Like Joseph, we should praise God for any good thing we have. Let us also not be afraid to share good advice in a spirit of humility when such words would help our neighbor. The best thing we have is God Himself—speaking to us through His Word, redeeming us through His Son, and bringing us to Himself through His Sacraments and Spirit. • O Lord, our times are in Your hands. When the opportunity comes for us to help others, give us wisdom and strength to do so. We praise You for Your mercy, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 41:38–39 *Spirit of God?* Pharaoh likely recognized that Joseph's God had great power. Although Pharaoh may have converted to true faith (AE 7:163), he probably counted the true God as one among many and did not get rid of his idols.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 41:40 Joseph became the highest ranking official, master not only in the royal palace, but throughout Egypt. *as regards the throne*. Supreme authority remained with Pharaoh.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 41:42 With several ceremonial acts, Pharaoh conferred power on Joseph. These gifts well fit the Egyptian context during this era. *signet ring*. Official seal for validating documents. See note, 38:18. *garments of fine linen*. Clothing of the finest quality. *gold chain*. One of Egypt's highest distinctions.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 41:43 *second chariot*. Beside the royal chariot.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 41:44 *I am Pharaoh*. Stating his authority to confer this power on Joseph. *lift up hand or foot*. No one could take any action without Joseph's permission.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 41:45 *Zaphenath-paneah*. Possibly means "revealer of hidden things" or, more likely, "the god speaks and he lives." *Asenath*. Means "belonging to [the goddess] Neith." *Potiphera*. Not to be confused with Potiphar. Means "he whom [the sun god] Ra has given." *priest of On*. May have been the high priest in the worship of Ra (also written Re). The city of On was later called Heliopolis, "city of the sun." See map, p 60. Joseph's connection with this idol-worshiping family did not mean he was involved in such worship. His role in the kingdom was political and economic. Centuries later, Pharaoh Akhenaton (1379–1362 BC) declared the god Aton, earlier known as Re-Akhenaton, to be the only true god (monotheism). However, the pharaoh after Akhenaton overturned this belief.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 41:46 *thirty years old*. C 13 years had passed since Joseph was sold into slavery (cf 37:2). *went through all the land*. To arrange the gathering of grain during the years of plenty (v 47).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 41:48 *put the food in the cities*. In granaries.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 41:52 *land of my affliction*. Even in his prosperity, Joseph spoke of Egypt in this way, an indication that he longed for the Promised Land.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 41:54 Ancient records refer to seven-year famines, usually because of drought. To affect all Egypt, the drought would have included the Upper Nile, minimizing yearly floods downstream. Grain disease may also have caused the famine, as not all livestock and pastureland were destroyed (see notes, 42:1; 45:18).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 41:37–57 After years of frustration, Joseph is exalted to oversee the storage and distribution of Egypt's great harvests. As the years of famine begin to take their toll, there is enough surplus to share with those in need throughout all the earth. In hard times, those who have should share with those who have not. Here is comfort: after long periods of suffering, at just the right time, the Lord will give help to His people, just as He did for Joseph. Through His Son, Jesus, God rules over us and gives us what we need: pardon, provision, and peace. • Heavenly Father, give us this day our daily bread, and deliver us from evil, for Jesus' sake. Amen.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 42:1 *grain … in Egypt*. The flooding of the Nile normally kept Egypt fertile even in droughts. Inscriptions show Canaanites coming for food during famine. See note, 12:10. *grain*. Such as barley and wheat; dietary staples. *look at one another?* Failing to take action.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 42:4 *Benjamin*. At least age 22. Cf 46:21. *feared that harm*. Having lost both Rachel and Joseph.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 42:5 See note, 41:54.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 42:6 *governor*. "Vizier," chief administrator, who developed and implemented Pharaoh's policies. *sold*. As overseer. God providentially ensured that Joseph would notice the arrival of his brothers. *bowed*. Joseph's dream is fulfilled. See note, 37:7.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 42:8 *not recognize*. Now 22 years later, Joseph was a ruler in Egyptian royal garb, speaking a foreign language.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 42:9 *nakedness*. Weak and vulnerable spots.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 42:11 *honest*. Though they had lied about Joseph for decades.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 42:13 *youngest*. Benjamin. *no more*. They did not know Joseph's fate.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 42:15 *tested*. To prove their honesty and character. Cf 22:1. *life of Pharaoh*. Oath by one greater than himself adds weight to the test (Heb 6:16).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 42:17 *custody*. Imprisoned, like Joseph (40:3). *three days*. Time for a genuine change of heart to begin (see note, v 21).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 42:18 *I fear God*. Denotes Joseph's faith and awe before God—a clue to Joseph's character that the brothers did not notice. See p 1001.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 42:20 *verified*. See note, v 15.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 42:21 *guilty*. Repentance begins. Luth: "They confess that they are debtors; they acknowledge the cruelty with which they have despised the pitiful plea of their brother." However, "it was indeed an atrocious crime … and they have not
yet come to a full realization and knowledge of its hideousness" (AE 7:259).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 42:22 *reckoning*. Innocent blood seeks justice. Cf 4:10; 9:6.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 42:24 *wept*. Reveals love and recognition of their repentance. *Simeon*. The oldest of the brothers who had sold him had caused trouble before. Cf 34:25, 30. Reuben, the oldest brother, tried to spare Joseph and was not present when he was sold (cf 37:29–30).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 42:25 *money*. Lit, "silver." Measured by weight. See note, Jsh 24:32.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 42:27 *mouth*. Top of the bag.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 42:28 *hearts failed*. Luth: "[The expression] points out that confidence, wisdom, and all courage failed them. They were terrified, not only when they saw the money in the sack but also when they were confronted with the sin they had committed. … As yet, however, they do not grieve; as yet they do not acknowledge their crime" (AE 7:271). *God has done*. Luth: "But they ascribe this to God, the Judge. … And this came from the terror and anguish of conscience which, with great grief and anguish of heart, are wont to follow sin" (AE 7:271).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 42:34 *trade*. Or, "travel freely," which was necessary for business.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 42:35 *afraid*. Because they feared they would be accused of theft, and their brother Simeon, still bound in Egypt, would have to suffer for it.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 42:36 *bereaved me*. Either Jacob suspected the brothers had something to do with Joseph's demise, or he just meant that they brought him the news of it.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 42:37 *Kill my two sons*. Reuben futilely and crudely offered his sons as hostages to assuage Jacob's fear. Luth: "[Jacob] prefers saving Benjamin to saving Reuben and Simeon, and it seems that he regarded Simeon as lost" (AE 7:289).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 42:38 *Sheol*. Here, "death." See p 792.

GENESIS—NOTE ON **Ch 42** The sons of Israel enter Egypt for food and unknowingly fulfill the dream they had resented (37:5–8). Joseph, though harsh, was motivated by the fear of the Lord, and began a test to determine his brothers' treatment of his father and Benjamin, and to encourage repentance and a renewed relationship with God. Luth: "In trials God conducts Himself toward His saints just as Joseph conducts himself toward his brothers" (AE 7:225). Unrepentant sin is not resolved by time or forgetfulness, but by true repentance and forgiveness. Joseph's tears reveal affection. Luth: "Christ is our completely friendly Joseph, who died for us and shed His blood for the remission of our sins" (AE 7:256). • O Lord, no matter how high I sit, You are able to cast me down, and no matter how deep I have fallen, You are able to lift me up. To You be glory, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 43:3 *Judah*. The next oldest son after Reuben, Simeon, and Levi. Reuben failed to convince his father to send Benjamin with them (42:37–38); Simeon was imprisoned (42:24); Jacob distrusted Levi (34:30). Judah is next. Despite glaring sins, Judah had had a change of heart (37:26–27; 38:26).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 43:8 *the boy*. Benjamin, the youngest of the brothers, was an adult, over 20 years old (cf 42:4; 46:21).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 43:9 *bear the blame*. Judah offered to bear whatever penalty Jacob would impose for failure.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 43:10 *returned twice*. They could have made two trips to Egypt, perhaps over two years' time.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 43:11 *choice fruits*. Harvested before the famine, or indicating the famine had causes other than drought (see note, 41:54). Jacob sought to appease Joseph as he had Esau (32:20). *balm*. Medicinal salve (cf Jer 8:22). *honey*. Either from bees or a syrup from grapes or dates. *gum*. Aromatic gum of tragacanth. *myrrh*. Medicinal, anesthetic aromatic (cf Ps 45:8; Mk 15:23). *pistachio nuts … almonds*. Plentiful in Canaan. All items were valuable. See p 236. Luth: "In this way the father honors his son and pays him homage according to the dream" (AE 7:323; cf Gn 37:10).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 43:12 *double the money*. For both prior and current purchases.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 43:14 *God Almighty*. See p 1227. *I am bereaved*. If he must be robbed of his children, in patience he will commit the matter to God.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 43:15 *stood before Joseph*. To purchase grain.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 43:16 *steward*. Servant with complete authority. See notes, 44:4, 10. *slaughter an animal*. Eating meat implies a special occasion. See p 236; cf Lk 15:23.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 43:21 *full weight*. See note, 42:25.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 43:23 *God of your father*. Joseph must have told him of the God of Israel. Luth: "It is evident that he was imbued with the doctrine of godliness by his master" (AE 7:333). *received your money*. Joseph probably paid for the grain.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 43:25 *present*. See note, v 11. *eat bread*. Eat a meal (cf 31:54; Mt 6:11).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 43:26–28 *bowed*. Cf 37:7–8; see p 1276.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 43:29 *lifted up his eyes*. Focused intently. *his mother's*. Rachel's (30:22). Benjamin is the focus of Joseph's further actions.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 43:32 *abomination*. See note, Pr 6:16. Ancient historians record similar instances of Egyptian aversion to eating with foreigners.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 43:33 *amazement*. Not knowing how Joseph or his servants could have known their birth order.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 43:34 *from Joseph's table*. Suggests three tables: Joseph's, from which the food is served; one for the Egyptians; a third for Joseph's brothers. *five times*. To see if his generosity would make the brothers jealous, as Jacob's had long ago (cf 37:3–4). *drank and were merry*. See ESV note. Not as if they had become fully drunk, but because they had had somewhat more to drink due to the happy occasion. Cf Ps 104:15.
GENESIS—NOTE ON **Ch 43** Joseph—motivated by love for Benjamin and his other brothers—tests his brothers to learn whether they will be jealous or abandon their youngest brother, as they had Joseph. Joseph's conduct is like God's. He displays both generosity and severity, seeking repentance. The brothers' fear comes from the alienating power of sin. When we do not rightly fear God, we fear other things more (Mt 10:28). Joseph's banquet displays kindness and generosity, independent of his brothers' recognition of his love. So also God blesses His people, even when they doubt His goodness. Jesus, like His earthly ancestor, Judah,

offered Himself to His Father for us. • Holy God, give us grace to endure Your tests and to recognize Your kindness, in Jesus' name. Amen.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 44:1 *mouth of his sack*. See note, 42:27.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 44:2 *youngest*. Benjamin.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 44:4 *steward*. He had Joseph's authority to arrest the brothers. See note, 43:16.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 44:5 *practices divination?* Just as Joseph presented himself as an Egyptian in his speech, clothing, and manners, he also presented himself as if he were a fortune-teller. This was a pretense, used as the reason Joseph and his servant knew about the "theft." Divination was later forbidden in the Law (Lv 19:26; Dt 18:10). Old Babylonian tablets and Egyptian statues show that oil for divination was dripped into a cup of water. The pattern of the oil in the cup could then be interpreted.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 44:7 *my lord*. They addressed the steward so, because he held Joseph's authority.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 44:8 *your lord's house?* The steward was still subject to Joseph.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 44:10 *my servant*. The steward could speak of Joseph's servant as his own because the steward bore Joseph's authority.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 44:13 *tore their clothes*. Gesture of grief or great distress. See note, Jb 1:20.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 44:14 *Judah*. Now the leader of the brothers. *fell before*. Total obeisance.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 44:15 *practice divination?* See note, v 5.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 44:16 *the guilt*. Though innocent of this charge, Judah knew that before God, he and his brothers were guilty. The threat of slavery reminded them of their sin of selling Joseph. *my lord's servants*. Judah insisted that all would accept punishment, but Joseph refused, keeping the test focused on Benjamin (v 17).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 44:18 *like Pharaoh*. See note, 42:6.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 44:20 *father loves him*. Jacob loved Benjamin more than his other children.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 44:28 *One left me*. See note, 42:36.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 44:29 *in evil*. In the greatest grief and sadness. *Sheol*. Here, "death." See p 792.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 44:30 *his life is bound up in the boy's life*. The father loves him as if he were his own soul.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 44:33 *servant remain*. Judah offered himself, proving a new and right spirit (Ps 51:10–12).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 44:34 *fear … the evil*. Judah could not stand to see the misery that would afflict his father. Luth: "[Joseph] cannot contain himself any longer after he sees that their heart is sincere, that their prayer is steadfast, and that the love of Judah and his brothers for Benjamin is not feigned but is joined with true penitence. For this is an example not only of prayer but of true and very great penitence" (AE 7:376).
GENESIS—NOTE ON **Ch 44** Joseph prepares a final test to determine whether his brothers will allow Benjamin to be enslaved and bring further grief to their father. Their refusal to leave Benjamin behind, and Judah's sacrificial offer of himself to spare both brother and father, show that their hearts have genuinely changed. Like Joseph, God often tests what is in our hearts. He reminds us to humbly acknowledge and take responsibility for our sin. When Judah mediates with his father and with Joseph, and shows himself willing to be enslaved in place of his brother, this prefigures the saving work of his descendant, Jesus, who gave Himself as mediator, ransom, and sacrifice for the world. • Jesus, You gave Yourself for us and made known the Father's loving heart. Turn us from sin, selfishness, and alienation to live for You, as You have died for us. Amen.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 45:1 *no one stayed*. So that Joseph could protect his own reputation with the Egyptians, speak candidly with his brothers, and protect his brothers' reputation regarding their sale of Joseph into slavery.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 45:3 *dismayed*. The brothers feared vengeance.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 45:5 *to preserve life*. Joseph's Egyptian journey was a purposeful act of God, who sent him to Egypt to save thousands. God used the brothers' sin to do His saving work (Rm 8:28; cf Jn 17:12).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 45:8 *not you … but God*. The brothers were not the chief actors in Joseph's coming to Egypt. See note, v 5. *father*. Intimate adviser to Pharaoh. *lord*. Chief servant within Pharaoh's immediate circle of family and leaders (42:6; 44:18). *ruler*. Having authority over the country (41:40).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 45:9 *lord of all Egypt*. See note, 42:6.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 45:10 *land of Goshen*. Perhaps the primary Egyptian region for livestock.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 45:14 *fell upon his … neck*. The brothers embraced, with the head pressed against the other's neck.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 45:15 *talked*. After they had recovered from their fear and were assured of his brotherly love.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 45:18 *best of the land*. Some food was available, despite the famine. See note, 41:54.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 45:19 *are commanded*. Pharaoh's authority ensured the family's welfare. *wagons*. Most people traveled by walking or by riding animals. The wagons would spare Jacob and the little children much difficulty.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 45:20 *Have no concern*. Luth: "Do not let your possessions hinder you. Whatever you cannot sell because of this famine, leave it behind" (WA DB 8:183).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 45:22 *three hundred … five changes*. Joseph expressed special love for Benjamin, without any fear of brotherly resentment.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 45:24 *Do not quarrel*. Although forgiven, the brothers had to take care not to fall into such sins once again.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 45:26 *heart became numb*. Disbelief and shock deny him joy.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 45:27 *spirit … revived*. Jacob's sorrow over the loss of his sons brought him to the point of death. Cf 42:38. But when he saw that his 11 sons had come back, and learned that Joseph was alive, it was as though he had come back to life.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 45:28 *see*. See note, 46:4. *before I die*. See note, 47:9.

GENESIS—NOTE ON **Ch 45** Joseph reveals himself, reassuring his brothers. With Pharaoh's full support, he sends for his father and family. Jacob is finally convinced that his son is alive. God rules the world and brings evil to a good end for the sake of His people, as He did with Joseph's slavery. Let us pursue Joseph's virtues—humility, wisdom, forgiveness, care for parents and family. And let us not quarrel in our Christian journey, but hold fast to the mercy and doctrine that God has revealed. In Christ, our sin is forgiven, and God gives us the joy of reconciliation and new life. • Lord Jesus, the evil that happened to You on the cross was for our good. Give us the benefits of Your death, and form our lives to Your cross. Amen.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 46:1 *Beersheba*. Where Abraham worshiped and where the Lord reaffirmed His covenant with Isaac. See color map 1. *offered sacrifices*. Luth: "He preached the Gospel about the Son of God and

exhorted his hearers to fear God, to believe and hope in Him, to live saintly and honorable lives, to pray, to give thanks, and to hope for a future life" (AE 8:76).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 46:2 *spoke … in visions*. Probably in dreams.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 46:3 God assured Jacob this was not contrary to His promise that Jacob's descendants would inherit the land of Canaan, and that He would protect him.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 46:4 *I Myself will go*. Most people assumed gods had power only in certain places. Here, the Lord showed that He is the God of all the earth, present with His people wherever they are. See note, 2Ki 17:26. *bring you up again*. These words were fulfilled in Jacob's offspring, at the time of the exodus. *Joseph's hand shall close your eyes*. Jacob would die in Egypt, and Joseph would provide honorable burial for his body.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 46:8–25 *descendants of Israel*. The 12 sons are listed not by birth order but according to mothers, with all children and grandchildren, living or deceased: Leah (33 descendants, vv 8–15), Zilpah (16 descendants, vv 16–18), Rachel (14 descendants, vv 19–22), and Bilhah (7 descendants, vv 23–25). Two other women are listed: Dinah, Jacob's daughter by Leah (v 15), and Serah, Jacob's granddaughter through Asher (v 17).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 46:18 *persons*. Lit, "souls."
GENESIS—NOTE ON 46:19 *Jacob's wife*. His most beloved; the wife with the highest status. See pp 54–55.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 46:20 See note, 41:45; cf 48:5–6; Heb 11:21.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 46:27 *two*. LXX: "nine." *seventy*. LXX: "seventy-five." The discrepancy may have come about by differences in how Joseph's children were counted. Cf v 20; 48:5–6.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 46:28 Judah continued to be the leader of the 11. See notes, 43:3, 9; 44:14.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 46:29 *fell … wept*. See note, 45:14.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 46:30 *let me die*. He can now depart in peace and joy.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 46:34 *shepherd … an abomination*. See note, Pr 6:16. Various explanations are offered. E.g., bulls frequently symbolized pharaohs. A bull and a cow represented the Egyptian god Apis and the goddess Hathor, respectively, which might make those who cared for sheep

or lesser creatures religiously and culturally offensive. Also, Egyptians had a caste system in which shepherds were lowly ranked.

GENESIS—NOTE ON **Ch 46** Jacob leaves Canaan for Egypt only when he knows it is the Lord's will. The Lord is not limited by geography. He will fulfill His promise to make Abraham's Seed a great nation in Egypt. Israel's children are called by name as they journey to Egypt. Like Jacob, we should seek the Lord's guidance and blessing for our plans. He has revealed His will for our deeds and our salvation in His Word. Where He has not spoken, He gives us freedom to make reasonable choices. The tearful reunion of Jacob and Joseph is a pattern of the reunion that God seeks with His children. The Lord knows our name, and in the Sacrament of Holy Baptism, His name has been given to us. • Lord God, give us courage to follow You each new day, especially when You call us to paths unknown; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 47:4 *sojourn*. The request is first defined as temporary, affirming that Canaan, not Egypt, is their home.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 47:6 *Settle*. Or, "dwell" (same verb as in v 4b). Pharaoh welcomed Joseph's family to stay permanently. *best of the land*. Goshen is probably the grazing marshes of northern Egypt. See map, p 60.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 47:7 *Jacob blessed Pharaoh*. In Gn, the inferior is blessed by the superior (Heb 7:7). Pharaoh seems to have recognized that having Jacob in Egypt was a benefit. Humans may "bless" God by praising Him. See p 842.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 47:9 *Few*. 130 years is old by our standards, but Abraham died at age 175, and Isaac, at age 180. *evil*. Jacob's life was a series of crises; he expresses pessimism elsewhere (cf 43:6; 44:28).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 47:11 *possession*. Pharaoh's promise (v 6) allowed Joseph to give ownership of land in Goshen to his family. *land of Rameses*. In the region of the land of Goshen, where the city of Rameses would later be built.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 47:13 *Now*. Third year of famine.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 47:14 The people's financial resources were depleted. With Pharaoh's stores of grain, virtually all Egypt's financial assets were in his hands. Ambr: "[Joseph] preferred to sell the corn rather than to give it to the hungry … lest if they received it for nothing, they should give up cultivating the ground. … He did not wish to deprive all of them of their property, but to support them in it" (*NPNF* 2 10:55–56).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 47:16 *food*. Grain. See note, 42:1. *in exchange for your livestock*. Grazing animals were better able to survive this drought than humans.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 47:18 *following year*. Fourth year of famine.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 47:19 *Buy us and our land*. They asked to become sharecroppers, not common slaves who could be separated from their land. Cf v 24.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 47:21 *he made servants of them*. So that Pharaoh could deal with his subjects as with his personal slaves and with their possessions as with his own property. See p 101. *one end … to the other*. Egypt extended along the Nile from the Great Sea to Cush (Ethiopia). See map, p 33.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 47:22 The priests of Egypt were civil servants, supported by Pharaoh.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 47:24 *give a fifth to Pharaoh*. The same percentage required during the years of plenty. Sharecropping often would demand a third or more for the landlord. Moreover, the people were guaranteed food during the famine. The terms were merciful.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 47:25 *saved our lives*. Literally so, because of the food provisions.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 47:26 *to this day*. To the time of Moses, who wrote Gn. See pp 8–10.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 47:29 *hand under my thigh*. See note, 24:2.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 47:30 *their burying place*. In the family burial place at Machpelah (23:9; 25:8–9). Jacob had not forgotten Canaan. He exacted this promise to help his descendants remember their true homeland, despite current prosperity in Egypt. Joseph shows exemplary obedience, respect, and care for his aged father, which serves as a great example to us today.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 47:31 *Swear*. See p 7. *Israel bowed himself*. Perhaps due to weariness, Jacob could not hold himself upright. Or, he turned to God in prayer, thanking Him for granting his request. *upon the head of his bed*. See ESV note. He bowed toward the top part of the bed, where Joseph was standing, and thus toward him and his scepter—partially because Joseph was the current ruler, and partially because through him God had brought salvation to His people.
GENESIS—NOTE ON **Ch 47** Powerful, wealthy Pharaoh humbly receives the blessing of Jacob, a lowly Hebrew, whose son addresses the

famine by centralizing all Egypt's resources in a sharecropping system. Like Pharaoh, we should realize that spiritual blessings take precedence over temporal ones. People who put earthly security and temporal blessings first often take desperate measures to keep things that death will someday take from them. Just as blessing came to mighty Pharaoh through a lowly shepherd, so also the kingdom of God and His righteousness come to believers in humble forms—an infant in a manger, a man dying on a cross; words, water, bread, wine—yet in them are hidden God's majesty. • "Be present at our table, Lord; Be here and ev'rywhere adored; Thy creatures bless, and grant that we May feast in paradise with Thee." Amen. (*LSB* 775)

GENESIS—NOTE ON 48:3 *God Almighty*. See p 1227. *appeared to me at Luz*. See note, 28:13.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 48:5 *your two sons … are mine*. There would be no tribe of Joseph. Jacob's adoption of Joseph's two sons gave Joseph a double share when Canaan was later divided (Jsh 13–22) and allowed 12 divisions in the land of Canaan, even though the priestly tribe (Levi) would be landless. See note, Jsh 14:4.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 48:6 *children … after them*. Though Jacob had adopted Ephraim and Manasseh, he did not adopt Joseph's other children or grant them a special inheritance. Descendants of Joseph's other children would live in the territories of Ephraim and Manasseh.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 48:12 *removed them from his knees*. Luth: "It is strange that those two men of such size and age were in the embrace of Joseph's father. I think, however, that the sons sat beside Jacob while he was lying on his bed. Moses calls this sitting in his embrace or at his knees, namely, at his side or at his feet. Therefore Joseph orders them to rise from the side and falls on his knees with both of them before Jacob, who is sitting on his bed. For this was the custom; they received the blessing on bended knees and with the gesture of worshipers" (AE 8:159). See "bless," p 842.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 48:13 Joseph placed his older son, Manasseh, by Jacob's right hand and the younger son, Ephraim, by the left, anticipating the greater blessing for the older son.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 48:14 *laid it on the head*. Luth: "The custom of the laying on of hands is very ancient and was also transferred by the fathers into the New Testament. … This has been employed as a ceremony of the fathers, the prophets, and the whole church at all times when they entrusted

an office or some administration to a person" (AE 8:159). *crossing his hands*. His crossed hands gave priority to the younger Ephraim. Luth: "According to this rule, the first-born remains the first-born on the basis of legal justice and the command of God. But God, who is the Author and Lord of the Law, sets bounds to it or breaks it and appoints Jacob and Isaac as the first-born after rejecting Esau and Ishmael. Jacob does the same thing here with the two sons" (AE 8:160).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 48:15 *blessed Joseph*. He blessed the two sons of Joseph.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 48:16 *the angel*. Parallel with "God … God" in v 15. The Son of God, the uncreated Messenger of the Lord. See p 1227. *name be carried on*. Although Joseph's sons by birth, they would be identified as adopted sons of Jacob.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 48:21 *God will be with you*. With His grace, consolation, and help. See "be with," p 5.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 48:22 *slope*. See ESV note. Joseph himself would later be buried at Shechem. Cf 33:18–19; 34:25–27.

GENESIS—NOTE ON **Ch 48** Jacob (Israel) adopts and blesses Joseph's sons. Though born in Egypt to an Egyptian mother, they have full status as "children of Israel," people through whom God will bless the world. Like their father, Joseph, we must learn not to value human convention over God's Word and purposes. As Jacob adopted Ephraim and Manasseh, God has graciously adopted us in Holy Baptism (Gal 3:27–4:7).

• "Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, You who lead Joseph like a flock! You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth. Before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh, stir up Your might and come to save us! Restore us, O God; let Your face shine, that we may be saved!" (Ps 80:1–3). Amen.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 49:1–27 With failing breath, Jacob prophesied what would befall his sons in days to come (lit, "at the end of days"). The character of the sons would live on in the 12 tribes and determine their role in the history of salvation. In directing the lives of the patriarchs and their descendants, God had in view a final fulfillment "at the end of days." His promise envisioned a "fullness of time," "the end of the ages," when His Son would be born of a woman to redeem all nations (Gal 4:4; 1Co 10:11). It looked to the end of time, when all God's people would be gathered about the throne of the Lamb (Rv 7:1–10). 1 Clem: "Whosoever will candidly consider each particular, will recognize the greatness of the gifts which

were given by [Jacob]. … All these [sons], therefore, were highly honored, and made great, not for their own sake, or for their own works, or for the righteousness which they wrought, but through the operation of His will. And we, too, being called by His will in Christ Jesus, are not justified by ourselves … but by that faith through which, from the beginning, Almighty God has justified all men; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen" (*ANF* 1:13).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 49:1 Cf v 28. Jacob's blessing included predictive prophecy of the things God would do.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 49:3–4 Hbr here is difficult to translate. Luth: "Reuben should have had the honor of being first-born, namely, the priesthood and the kingdom. But now both are taken from him, and to Levi the priesthood is given, and to Judah the kingdom" (WA DB 8:193).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 49:3 *firstfruits of my strength*. He was born at the height of Jacob's physical prowess.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 49:4 *Unstable as water*. Or, "like water's foam," i.e., he had a weak nature, as can be seen in his incest with Bilhah (35:22), his failure to rescue Joseph (37:22, 29) and his craven offer of his sons (42:37). *not have preeminence*. Though the oldest son, Reuben's tribe became insignificant.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 49:5 *brothers … violence*. They had the same mother and were cohorts in the Shechem slaughter.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 49:6 *Let my soul come not into their council*. Jacob had no part in their decision to slay the Shechemites, and he took no pleasure in it. *glory*. One's life and reputation. Cf Ps 30:12. *hamstrung oxen*. They destroyed Shechem the prince. In Scripture, a ruler's might is often compared to strong oxen. Cf Dt 33:17; Ps 22:12; 68:30. They may have literally crippled the oxen when they attacked Shechem.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 49:7 *divide … scatter*. Tribe of Simeon was later absorbed into Judah, and the tribe of Levi was scattered throughout Israel in priestly communities (Jsh 13:33).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 49:8–12 When blessing Judah, the forefather of King David and of the Messiah (cf Mt 1:1–17), Jacob prophesies about the future age of the kingdom of God. Judah and his offspring are described with contrasting images of war (vv 8–10a) and peace (vv 10b–12). See pp 1565–66.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 49:8 *on the neck*. His enemies cannot escape. He is the victor. *bow down*. They will acknowledge Judah (or rather, his offspring) as their head. From Judah will come Israel's kings and the Messiah.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 49:9 *lion's cub*. Like a young lion in might and bravery. The mature lion of Judah would show his strength in David (cf 1Ch 5:2) and ultimately in the coming Messiah.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 49:10–12 Judah is like a ruler mounted on a donkey, bringing peace to the nations he rules. He stops, ties up his mount, and walks the people's vineyard, tasting the wine and smiling joyfully. His garments are dyed scarlet purple, the color of wealth and rulership.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 49:10 *scepter*. Symbol of royal authority. *ruler's staff*. Or, "lawgiver," i.e., there will always be a ruler from Judah's line. *until … comes*. Because this is a prophecy of what will happen with Judah's descendants, we must think of the Coming One as being from the lineage of Judah. At the same time, it says that He "comes," as if from elsewhere. The prophet Micah spoke of Him more clearly as He who would be both from Judah and at the same time from the beginning, from eternal days (Mi 5:2). Chem: "The promise is not repeated but the promise of God concerning the Seed is beautifully illuminated. For it refers to the time of the coming of the Seed, and the new name of Shiloh is applied to the Seed. The preaching of the Gospel is metaphorically described" (*LTh* 2:457). *tribute*. ESV follows LXX here. Hbr *shiloh*, "rest, peace," i.e., the Prince of Peace. See note, Is 9:6; see also ESV note. Judah will have royal authority until the coming of the One whom all nations will obey. Contrary to the war images (victor, lion, ruler) in vv 8–10a, this is an image of peace. Cf Lk 2:14. Luth: "Today, thanks to the blessing of God, we enjoy the completely clear light of the Gospel by which the word [Shiloh] is cleared up and explained as meaning the Son of a virgin and of God at the same time" (AE 8:243). *obedience of the peoples*. When the kingdom of God comes, the Prince of Peace will rule over all nations, not just the people of Israel. See pp 1565–66.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 49:11 The coming kingdom of Israel is pictured as a feast of celebration. *Binding his foal to the vine*. Normally animals are kept out of vineyards by a fence, wall, or hedge so as not to harm the valuable grapes. But the peace and joy of the coming kingdom will be so deep that no one will be able to harm them. Therefore, there is no need for a fence around the vine, nor will humans need coercion, fear, and the law.

washed his garments in wine. Imagery of feasting, wealth, and joy; kingly Judah will enjoy his success. Cf Ps 104:15.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 49:12 *darker than wine … whiter than milk*. Grape and wine imagery is common in describing the joyful salvation of the messianic age. Cf Is 25:6–9; Jl 3:18; Am 9:13. The kingdom of God is unveiled as a fellowship of joy.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 49:13 *the shore … a haven*. The tribe of Zebulun later settled near Sidon and the coast of the Great Sea. See color map 1.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 49:14–15 Issachar's image is of a resting donkey, lying either between sheepfolds or its saddlebags (see ESV note), implying that Issachar's tribe will not reach its potential and will fall into servitude.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 49:16 *judge*. Samson was from the tribe of Dan (cf Jgs 13:2). Luth: "Samson fulfilled the blessing of Dan" (WA DB 8:195).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 49:17 *serpent in the way*. Refers to Samson cunningly overthrowing the Philistines (Jgs 16).
GENESIS—NOTE ON 49:18 *I wait for Your salvation, O LORD*. Jacob's brief prayer for salvation interjected here implies that his salvation is bound up in the future of his sons. The Offspring of Abraham (the Messiah), through whom Israel and the world are saved, would come from this family. *salvation*. See "salvation," p 843.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 49:19 See ESV note. Gad, on the border of Israel, would be the first line of defense against enemy raids.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 49:20 *royal delicacies*. Asher would occupy a fertile area of Canaan.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 49:21 *doe … beautiful fawns*. See ESV note. Implies that the tribe of Naphtali would have freedom and bear good fruit.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 49:22 *fruitful bough*. Joseph's descendants were promised continuing fruitfulness, like a well-watered plant.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 49:23 *attacked*. Veiled reference to his brothers' jealous conduct (ch 37) or to Ephraim's future warfare.
GENESIS—NOTE ON 49:24 *from there is the Shepherd*. See ESV note. Luth: "The blessing of Joseph refers to the kingdom of Israel, and is said completely of bodily government. … Thus the spiritual blessing and kingdom remains on Judah and the bodily kingdom on Ephraim" (WA DB 8:195). *Shepherd … Stone*. God is Joseph's strength (cf Ps 18:1). God singled out Joseph for blessings beyond his brothers: bountiful agriculture,

large families, etc. As Joseph was richly blessed, so his descendants (esp Ephraim) would be rich and powerful, rivaled only by Judah.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 49:26 *bounties … on the head … brow*. Perhaps precious stones, implying crown or rule. *set apart*. Great leaders will come from Joseph (e.g., Joshua, Gideon, Jeroboam).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 49:27 Benjamin's future would be characterized by battle (e.g., Jgs 3:15–30) and warriors (e.g., King Saul).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 49:1–27 The blessing (testament) of Jacob is a prophecy about each son and his tribe. All 12 sons are blessed as participants in the promise that began with Abraham, emphasizing return to the land. Jacob concentrates on Reuben, Simeon, Judah, and Joseph—the first two negatively, the latter two positively. Jacob's testament promises great blessings, including the height of God's goodness: messianic kingship for Judah's line. Jacob's predictions are not uniformly happy. The reality of sin includes judgment (Simeon and Levi), oppression (Issachar), warfare (Gad, Benjamin), and other distress. Though Joseph will prosper in many ways, the greatest gift to Jacob's descendants is Judah's scepter. The Seed of Abraham culminates in an eternal kingdom for Judah's descendants, fulfilled in the Messiah, Jesus (Shiloh). • "I wait for Your salvation, O LORD" (v 18). Amen.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 49:29–32 Jacob reminded his sons that Canaan, not Egypt, was the Promised Land.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 50:1–3 *fell on his father's face … kissed*. Shows Joseph's great love for Jacob; a fulfillment of 46:4. *embalm*. Egyptian custom of embalming involved removal of organs and packing the chest cavity with mixtures of salt, spices, and herbs to prevent decay. *seventy days*. 40 days of embalming plus 30 days of mourning. The extended time emphasizes the importance of Jacob and of Joseph's family in Egypt (Pharaoh received 72 days of mourning).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 50:8 *children … flocks … herds were left*. Cf Ex 12:32.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 50:10–12 *threshing floor … beyond the Jordan*. Near Jericho. Implies that the procession approached Israel on a route like the one the children of Israel would later travel when approaching the Promised Land (cf Nu 22:1; Jsh 2:1).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 49:28–50:14 Jacob insists on burial in Canaan, Israel's permanent home. He receives the most ornate funeral in the Bible,

which also shows Joseph's importance. The grief at Jacob's death reflects the reality of sin, death's cause (cf 2:17), and yet also the dignity of the human body. Our funeral customs are a way of confessing that God has promised to raise the dead. Christ Jesus has conquered death for our sake (1Co 15:55–57). • Lord Jesus, we praise You for Your resurrection, which conquered sin and death. Amen.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 50:15 The brothers, still troubled by their sin, doubted Joseph's forgiveness. Luth: "For it is not without great difficulty that the heart longs for the kindness and pardon of God, from whom it flees and turns away by nature when it feels that He has been offended by many great and enormous sins. Then it is hard to grant admittance to consolation, and it is difficult for remission to cling to the heart, no matter with how many promises and with how many signs of God's goodwill it has been confirmed. From this one can gather what a sharp poison sin is in man's nature" (AE 8:324).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 50:16 *sent a message*. They were afraid to approach Joseph. *Your father gave this command*. Either the brothers were lying, or this fact was not mentioned earlier.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 50:18 *brothers … fell down*. The brothers joined the messengers, gratefully and repentantly acknowledging Joseph. See "fall," p 1276. *your servants*. They did not assume rights of brotherhood but rather of servitude (cf Lk 15:19).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 50:19 *am I in the place of God?* Vengeance belongs to God alone (Rm 12:19). As a brother, Joseph is to pardon and forgive.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 50:20 *God meant it for good*. Luth: "God causes good to result from evil, not that He wants evil to be done, but His goodness is so great even in our wickedness that He cannot do otherwise than forgive sin if the sinner sobs and implores His mercy. If this happens the sin shall be forgiven" (AE 8:330).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 50:21 *comforted … kindly*. Luth: "You should not sin rashly, confident of obtaining God's pardon; but you should rely on this pardon and find rest in it only when you are in despair. And here the pastor and the ministers of the church should give assistance; and mercy, which is far greater than sin, should be glorified" (AE 8:331–32).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 50:15–21 Jacob's sons fear that only their father's presence prevented Joseph's revenge for their earlier hatred and violence. But Joseph consoles them and speaks kindly to them.

Reconciliation should come from the heart and be confirmed by our deeds, just as Joseph provided for his brothers' families in addition to forgiving them. Sin penetrates flesh and spirit and can lead people to despair. To console despairing sinners, God causes the Gospel of reconciliation in Christ to be preached, and He confirms this message with the comforting Sacraments of Baptism and the Holy Supper. • O Lord, though humans meant to do evil to You with the cross, You meant it for good, to bring about eternal salvation. Praise to You, O Christ. Amen.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 50:23 *were counted as Joseph's own*. See ESV note. May mean adoption. Or, Joseph simply lived long enough to hold his great-grandchildren on his lap.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 50:24 *his brothers*. Either his brothers outlived him, or this refers to the tribes bearing his brothers' names.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 50:25 *carry … bones*. Although Joseph, as the vizier of Egypt, would initially be buried there, Joseph knew the Promised Land was Canaan (see note, 49:29–32).

GENESIS—NOTE ON 50:26 *110 years old*. In the 80th year of service to Pharaoh. See note, Ps 90:10. *embalmed … coffin*. See note, vv 1–3. The coffin would allow Joseph's remains to be moved to Canaan.

GENESIS—NOTE ON 50:22–26 The death of Joseph after 93 years in Egypt closes the first Book of Moses, but his request for final burial in Canaan reminds us that the story has only begun. Joseph's life illustrates one of God's promises for obedience to the Law—prosperous, long life (Ex 20:12). Despite his long, prosperous life, Joseph looks forward, not back: "God *will* surely visit you" (v 25). Egypt's material prosperity is not God's ultimate blessing for His people. The coming gift is the Lord Himself, His visitation, fulfilled in part in the exodus from Egypt. But even the exodus pales before God's final visitation in the Messiah (Lk 1:68) and its culmination when the bones of Joseph and all the redeemed are raised to immortality (1Co 15:53–57). • "Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, You who lead Joseph like a flock!" (Ps 80:1). Give us hearts that long for Your return to lead us out of the Egypt of this world to Yourself in heaven. Amen.

Articles and Resources

Genesis

- The History of Humanity
- Theophanies in Genesis
- Peace and Blessing
- Family Life in Israel
- Genesis, Book of Dreams
- Cords of Love

Exodus

Exodus 1 | Exodus 2 | Exodus 3 | Exodus 4 | Exodus 5 | Exodus 6 | Exodus 7 | Exodus 8 | Exodus 9 | Exodus 10 | Exodus 11 | Exodus 12 | Exodus 13 | Exodus 14 | Exodus 15 | Exodus 16 | Exodus 17 | Exodus 18 | Exodus 19 | Exodus 20 | Exodus 21 | Exodus 22 | Exodus 23 | Exodus 24 | Exodus 25 | Exodus 26 | Exodus 27 | Exodus 28 | Exodus 29 | Exodus 30 | Exodus 31 | Exodus 32 | Exodus 33 | Exodus 34 | Exodus 35 | Exodus 36 | Exodus 37 | Exodus 38 | Exodus 39 | Exodus 40

- Introduction to Exodus
  - Overview
  - Reading Exodus
  - Luther on Exodus
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

Israel Increases Greatly in Egypt

1 [1] ‡‡These are the names of the sons of Israel who came to Egypt
with Jacob, each with his household: [2]Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah,
[3]Issachar, Zebulun, and Benjamin, [4]Dan and Naphtali, Gad and Asher. [5]†All
the descendants of Jacob were seventy persons; Joseph was already in
Egypt. [6] † Then Joseph died, and all his brothers and all that generation.
[7] † But the people of Israel were fruitful and increased greatly; they
multiplied and grew exceedingly strong, so that the land was filled with
them.

Pharaoh Oppresses Israel

8 Now there arose a new king over Egypt, who did not know Joseph.
9 And he said to his people, “Behold, the people of Israel are too many and
too mighty for us. 10 Come, let us deal shrewdly with them, lest they
multiply, and, if war breaks out, they join our enemies and fight against us
and escape from the land.” 11 Therefore they set taskmasters over them to
afflict them with heavy burdens. They built for Pharaoh store cities, Pithom
and Raamses. 12 But the more they were oppressed, the more they
multiplied and the more they spread abroad. And the Egyptians were in
dread of the people of Israel. 13 So they ruthlessly made the people of Israel
work as slaves 14 and made their lives bitter with hard service, in mortar and
brick, and in all kinds of work in the field. In all their work they ruthlessly
made them work as slaves.

15 Then the king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom
was named Shiphrah and the other Puah, 16 “When you serve as midwife to
the Hebrew women and see them on the birthstool, if it is a son, you shall
kill him, but if it is a daughter, she shall live.” 17 But the midwives feared
God and did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but let the male
children live. 18 So the king of Egypt called the midwives and said to them,
“Why have you done this, and let the male children live?” 19 The midwives
said to Pharaoh, “Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian
women, for they are vigorous and give birth before the midwife comes to
them.” 20 So God dealt well with the midwives. And the people multiplied
and grew very strong. 21 And because the midwives feared God, he gave
them families. 22 Then Pharaoh commanded all his people, “Every son that
is born to the Hebrews[1] you shall cast into the Nile, but you shall let every
daughter live.”

The Birth of Moses

2 [1]‡‡‡Now a man from the house of Levi went and took as his wife a
Levite woman. [2]†The woman conceived and bore a son, and when she saw
that he was a fine child, she hid him three months. [3]†When she could hide
him no longer, she took for him a basket made of bulrushes[1] and daubed it
with bitumen and pitch. She put the child in it and placed it among the reeds
by the river bank. [4]And his sister stood at a distance to know what would be
done to him. [5]†Now the daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the
river, while her young women walked beside the river. She saw the basket
among the reeds and sent her servant woman, and she took it. [6]†When she
opened it, she saw the child, and behold, the baby was crying. She took pity
on him and said, “This is one of the Hebrews’ children.” [7]†Then his sister
said to Pharaoh’s daughter, “Shall I go and call you a nurse from the
Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?” [8]And Pharaoh’s daughter said
to her, “Go.” So the girl went and called the child’s mother. [9]† And
Pharaoh’s daughter said to her, “Take this child away and nurse him for me,
and I will give you your wages.” So the woman took the child and nursed
him. [10]†When the child grew up, she brought him to Pharaoh’s daughter,
and he became her son. She named him Moses, “Because,” she said, “I
drew him out of the water.”[2]

Moses Flees to Midian

11 ‡ † One day, when Moses had grown up, he went out to his people and
looked on their burdens, and he saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of
his people.[3] 12 † He looked this way and that, and seeing no one, he struck
down the Egyptian and hid him in the sand. 13 † When he went out the next
day, behold, two Hebrews were struggling together. And he said to the man
in the wrong, “Why do you strike your companion?” 14 † He answered, “Who
made you a prince and a judge over us? Do you mean to kill me as you
killed the Egyptian?” Then Moses was afraid, and thought, “Surely the
thing is known.” 15 † When Pharaoh heard of it, he sought to kill Moses. But
Moses fled from Pharaoh and stayed in the land of Midian. And he sat down
by a well.

16 † Now the priest of Midian had seven daughters, and they came and
drew water and filled the troughs to water their father’s flock. 17 † The
shepherds came and drove them away, but Moses stood up and saved them,
and watered their flock. 18 † When they came home to their father Reuel, he
said, “How is it that you have come home so soon today?” 19 They said, “An
Egyptian delivered us out of the hand of the shepherds and even drew water
for us and watered the flock.” 20 † He said to his daughters, “Then where is
he? Why have you left the man? Call him, that he may eat bread.” 21 † And
Moses was content to dwell with the man, and he gave Moses his daughter
Zipporah. 22 † She gave birth to a son, and he called his name Gershom, for
he said, “I have been a sojourner[1] in a foreign land.”

God Hears Israel's Groaning

23 During those many days the king of Egypt died, and the people of
Israel groaned because of their slavery and cried out for help. Their cry for
rescue from slavery came up to God. 24 And God heard their groaning, and
God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob.
25 God saw the people of Israel—and God knew.

The Burning Bush

3 [1]†Now Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law, Jethro, the
priest of Midian, and he led his flock to the west side of the wilderness and
came to Horeb, the mountain of God. [2]†And the angel of the Lord appeared
to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush. He looked, and behold,
the bush was burning, yet it was not consumed. [3]And Moses said, "I will
turn aside to see this great sight, why the bush is not burned." [4]†When the
Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush,
"Moses, Moses!" And he said, Here I am." [5]†Then he said, "Do not come
near; take your sandals off your feet, for the place on which you are
standing is holy ground." [6]†And he said, "I am the God of your father, the
God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." And Moses hid
his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

[7]†Then the Lord said, "I have surely seen the affliction of my people who
are in Egypt and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters. I know
their sufferings, [8]†and I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of
the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad
land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanites, the
Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. [9]†And
now, behold, the cry of the people of Israel has come to me, and I have also
seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them. [10]†Come, I will
send you to Pharaoh that you may bring my people, the children of Israel,
out of Egypt." [11]But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to
Pharaoh and bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?" [12]†He said, "But I
will be with you, and this shall be the sign for you, that I have sent you:
when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this
mountain."

[13]†Then Moses said to God, "If I come to the people of Israel and say to
them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What
is his name?' what shall I say to them?" [14]†God said to Moses, "I am who I
am."[1] And he said, "Say this to the people of Israel, 'I am has sent me to
you.'" [15]†God also said to Moses, "Say this to the people of Israel, 'The

Lord,[2] the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.' This is my name forever, and thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations. 16 † Go and gather the elders of Israel together and say to them, 'The Lord, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, has appeared to me, saying, "I have observed you and what has been done to you in Egypt, 17 †and I promise that I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt to the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, a land flowing with milk and honey."' 18 † And they will listen to your voice, and you and the elders of Israel shall go to the king of Egypt and say to him, 'The Lord, the God of the Hebrews, has met with us; and now, please let us go a three days' journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the Lord our God.' 19 But I know that the king of Egypt will not let you go unless compelled by a mighty hand.[3] 20 † So I will stretch out my hand and strike Egypt with all the wonders that I will do in it; after that he will let you go. 21 † And I will give this people favor in the sight of the Egyptians; and when you go, you shall not go empty, 22 † but each woman shall ask of her neighbor, and any woman who lives in her house, for silver and gold jewelry, and for clothing. You shall put them on your sons and on your daughters. So you shall plunder the Egyptians."

Moses Given Powerful Signs

4 [1]‡‡Then Moses answered, “But behold, they will not believe me or
listen to my voice, for they will say, ‘The Lord did not appear to you.’”
[2]†The Lord said to him, “What is that in your hand?” He said, “A staff.”
[3]†And he said, “Throw it on the ground.” So he threw it on the ground, and
it became a serpent, and Moses ran from it. [4]†But the Lord said to Moses,
“Put out your hand and catch it by the tail”—so he put out his hand and
caught it, and it became a staff in his hand— [5]†“that they may believe that
the Lord, the God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac,
and the God of Jacob, has appeared to you.” [6]Again, the Lord said to him,
“Put your hand inside your cloak.”[1] And he put his hand inside his cloak,
and when he took it out, behold, his hand was leprous[2] like snow. [7]Then
God said, “Put your hand back inside your cloak.” So he put his hand back
inside his cloak, and when he took it out, behold, it was restored like the
rest of his flesh. [8]†“If they will not believe you,” God said, “or listen to the
first sign, they may believe the latter sign. [9]†If they will not believe even
these two signs or listen to your voice, you shall take some water from the
Nile and pour it on the dry ground, and the water that you shall take from
the Nile will become blood on the dry ground.”

[10]†But Moses said to the Lord, “Oh, my Lord, I am not eloquent, either in
the past or since you have spoken to your servant, but I am slow of speech
and of tongue.” [11]† Then the Lord said to him, “Who has made man’s
mouth? Who makes him mute, or deaf, or seeing, or blind? Is it not I, the
Lord? [12]†Now therefore go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you
what you shall speak.” [13]†But he said, “Oh, my Lord, please send someone
else.” [14]†Then the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses and he said,
“Is there not Aaron, your brother, the Levite? I know that he can speak well.
Behold, he is coming out to meet you, and when he sees you, he will be
glad in his heart. [15]†You shall speak to him and put the words in his mouth,
and I will be with your mouth and with his mouth and will teach you both
what to do. [16]†He shall speak for you to the people, and he shall be your

mouth, and you shall be as God to him. [17]†And take in your hand this staff, with which you shall do the signs.”

Moses Returns to Egypt

18 ‡† Moses went back to Jethro his father-in-law and said to him, “Please
let me go back to my brothers in Egypt to see whether they are still alive.”
And Jethro said to Moses, “Go in peace.” 19 And the Lord said to Moses in
Midian, “Go back to Egypt, for all the men who were seeking your life are
dead.” 20 † So Moses took his wife and his sons and had them ride on a
donkey, and went back to the land of Egypt. And Moses took the staff of
God in his hand.

21 † And the Lord said to Moses, “When you go back to Egypt, see that you
do before Pharaoh all the miracles that I have put in your power. But I will
harden his heart, so that he will not let the people go. 22 † Then you shall say
to Pharaoh, ‘Thus says the Lord, Israel is my firstborn son, 23 † and I say to
you, “Let my son go that he may serve me.” If you refuse to let him go,
behold, I will kill your firstborn son.’”

24 † At a lodging place on the way the Lord met him and sought to put him
to death. 25 † Then Zipporah took a flint and cut off her son’s foreskin and
touched Moses’[1] feet with it and said, “Surely you are a bridegroom of
blood to me!” 26 † So he let him alone. It was then that she said, “A
bridegroom of blood,” because of the circumcision.

27 † The Lord said to Aaron, “Go into the wilderness to meet Moses.” So
he went and met him at the mountain of God and kissed him. 28 And Moses
told Aaron all the words of the Lord with which he had sent him to speak,
and all the signs that he had commanded him to do. 29 † Then Moses and
Aaron went and gathered together all the elders of the people of Israel.
30 † Aaron spoke all the words that the Lord had spoken to Moses and did the
signs in the sight of the people. 31 † And the people believed; and when they
heard that the Lord had visited the people of Israel and that he had seen their
affliction, they bowed their heads and worshiped.

Making Bricks Without Straw

5 [1]†Afterward Moses and Aaron went and said to Pharaoh, “Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, Let my people go, that they may hold a feast to me in the wilderness.’” [2]†But Pharaoh said, “Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice and let Israel go? I do not know the Lord, and moreover, I will not let Israel go.” [3]†Then they said, “The God of the Hebrews has met with us. Please let us go a three days’ journey into the wilderness that we may sacrifice to the Lord our God, lest he fall upon us with pestilence or with the sword.” [4]†But the king of Egypt said to them, “Moses and Aaron, why do you take the people away from their work? Get back to your burdens.” [5]And Pharaoh said, “Behold, the people of the land are now many,[1] and you make them rest from their burdens!” [6]† The same day Pharaoh commanded the taskmasters of the people and their foremen, [7]†“You shall no longer give the people straw to make bricks, as in the past; let them go and gather straw for themselves. [8]But the number of bricks that they made in the past you shall impose on them, you shall by no means reduce it, for they are idle. Therefore they cry, ‘Let us go and offer sacrifice to our God.’ [9]†Let heavier work be laid on the men that they may labor at it and pay no regard to lying words.”

[10]So the taskmasters and the foremen of the people went out and said to the people, “Thus says Pharaoh, ‘I will not give you straw. [11]†Go and get your straw yourselves wherever you can find it, but your work will not be reduced in the least.’” [12]†So the people were scattered throughout all the land of Egypt to gather stubble for straw. [13]The taskmasters were urgent, saying, “Complete your work, your daily task each day, as when there was straw.” [14]† And the foremen of the people of Israel, whom Pharaoh’s taskmasters had set over them, were beaten and were asked, “Why have you not done all your task of making bricks today and yesterday, as in the past?”

[15]Then the foremen of the people of Israel came and cried to Pharaoh, “Why do you treat your servants like this? [16]†No straw is given to your servants, yet they say to us, ‘Make bricks!’ And behold, your servants are beaten; but the fault is in your own people.” [17]†But he said, “You are idle,

you are idle; that is why you say, ‘Let us go and sacrifice to the Lord.’ [18]Go
now and work. No straw will be given you, but you must still deliver the
same number of bricks.” [19]†The foremen of the people of Israel saw that
they were in trouble when they said, “You shall by no means reduce your
number of bricks, your daily task each day.” [20]They met Moses and Aaron,
who were waiting for them, as they came out from Pharaoh; [21]†and they
said to them, “The Lord look on you and judge, because you have made us
stink in the sight of Pharaoh and his servants, and have put a sword in their
hand to kill us.”

[22]†Then Moses turned to the Lord and said, “O Lord, why have you done
evil to this people? Why did you ever send me? [23]†For since I came to
Pharaoh to speak in your name, he has done evil to this people, and you
have not delivered your people at all.”

God Promises Deliverance

6 [1]†But the Lord said to Moses, “Now you shall see what I will do to
Pharaoh; for with a strong hand he will send them out, and with a strong
hand he will drive them out of his land.”
[2]†God spoke to Moses and said to him, “I am the Lord. [3]†I appeared to
Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as God Almighty,[2] but by my name the
Lord I did not make myself known to them. [4]† I also established my
covenant with them to give them the land of Canaan, the land in which they
lived as sojourners. [5]†Moreover, I have heard the groaning of the people of
Israel whom the Egyptians hold as slaves, and I have remembered my
covenant. [6]†Say therefore to the people of Israel, ‘I am the Lord, and I will
bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver
you from slavery to them, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm
and with great acts of judgment. [7]†I will take you to be my people, and I
will be your God, and you shall know that I am the Lord your God, who has
brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. [8]†I will bring you
into the land that I swore to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. I will
give it to you for a possession. I am the Lord.’” [9]†Moses spoke thus to the
people of Israel, but they did not listen to Moses, because of their broken
spirit and harsh slavery.
[10]So the Lord said to Moses, [11]†“Go in, tell Pharaoh king of Egypt to let
the people of Israel go out of his land.” [12]† But Moses said to the Lord,
“Behold, the people of Israel have not listened to me. How then shall
Pharaoh listen to me, for I am of uncircumcised lips?” [13]† But the Lord
spoke to Moses and Aaron and gave them a charge about the people of
Israel and about Pharaoh king of Egypt: to bring the people of Israel out of
the land of Egypt.

The Genealogy of Moses and Aaron

14 These are the heads of their fathers' houses: the sons of Reuben,
the firstborn of Israel: Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi; these are the
clans of Reuben. 15 The sons of Simeon: Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jachin,
Zohar, and Shaul, the son of a Canaanite woman; these are the clans of
Simeon. 16 These are the names of the sons of Levi according to their
generations: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari, the years of the life of Levi
being 137 years. 17 The sons of Gershon: Libni and Shimei, by their clans.
18 The sons of Kohath: Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel, the years of the
life of Kohath being 133 years. 19 The sons of Merari: Mahli and Mushi.
These are the clans of the Levites according to their generations. 20 Amram
took as his wife Jochebed his father's sister, and she bore him Aaron and
Moses, the years of the life of Amram being 137 years. 21 The sons of Izhar:
Korah, Nepheg, and Zichri. 22 The sons of Uzziel: Mishael, Elzaphan, and
Sithri. 23 Aaron took as his wife Elisheba, the daughter of Amminadab and
the sister of Nahshon, and she bore him Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and
Ithamar. 24 The sons of Korah: Assir, Elkanah, and Abiasaph; these are the
clans of the Korahites. 25 Eleazar, Aaron's son, took as his wife one of the
daughters of Putiel, and she bore him Phinehas. These are the heads of the
fathers' houses of the Levites by their clans.

26 These are the Aaron and Moses to whom the Lord said: "Bring out
the people of Israel from the land of Egypt by their hosts." 27 It was they
who spoke to Pharaoh king of Egypt about bringing out the people of Israel
from Egypt, this Moses and this Aaron.

28 On the day when the Lord spoke to Moses in the land of Egypt, 29 the
Lord said to Moses, "I am the Lord; tell Pharaoh king of Egypt all that I say
to you." 30 But Moses said to the Lord, "Behold, I am of uncircumcised
lips. How will Pharaoh listen to me?"

Moses and Aaron Before Pharaoh

7 [1]‡‡And the Lord said to Moses, “See, I have made you like God to
Pharaoh, and your brother Aaron shall be your prophet. [2]You shall speak all
that I command you, and your brother Aaron shall tell Pharaoh to let the
people of Israel go out of his land. [3]‡But I will harden Pharaoh’s heart, and
though I multiply my signs and wonders in the land of Egypt, [4]‡Pharaoh
will not listen to you. Then I will lay my hand on Egypt and bring my hosts,
my people the children of Israel, out of the land of Egypt by great acts of
judgment. [5]‡The Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord, when I stretch
out my hand against Egypt and bring out the people of Israel from among
them.” [6]‡Moses and Aaron did so; they did just as the Lord commanded
them. [7]‡Now Moses was eighty years old, and Aaron eighty-three years old,
when they spoke to Pharaoh.

[8]Then the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, [9]‡“When Pharaoh says to you,
‘Prove yourselves by working a miracle,’ then you shall say to Aaron, ‘Take
your staff and cast it down before Pharaoh, that it may become a serpent.’”
[10]So Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and did just as the Lord
commanded. Aaron cast down his staff before Pharaoh and his servants, and
it became a serpent. [11]‡Then Pharaoh summoned the wise men and the
sorcerers, and they, the magicians of Egypt, also did the same by their
secret arts. [12]‡For each man cast down his staff, and they became serpents.
But Aaron’s staff swallowed up their staffs. [13]‡Still Pharaoh’s heart was
hardened, and he would not listen to them, as the Lord had said.

The First Plague: Water Turned to Blood

14 ‡‡Then the Lord said to Moses, “Pharaoh’s heart is hardened; he refuses
to let the people go. 15 †Go to Pharaoh in the morning, as he is going out to
the water. Stand on the bank of the Nile to meet him, and take in your hand
the staff that turned into a serpent. 16 †And you shall say to him, ‘The Lord,
the God of the Hebrews, sent me to you, saying, “Let my people go, that
they may serve me in the wilderness. But so far, you have not obeyed.”
17 †Thus says the Lord, “By this you shall know that I am the Lord: behold,
with the staff that is in my hand I will strike the water that is in the Nile,
and it shall turn into blood. 18 †The fish in the Nile shall die, and the Nile
will stink, and the Egyptians will grow weary of drinking water from the
Nile.”’” 19 †And the Lord said to Moses, “Say to Aaron, ‘Take your staff and
stretch out your hand over the waters of Egypt, over their rivers, their
canals, and their ponds, and all their pools of water, so that they may
become blood, and there shall be blood throughout all the land of Egypt,
even in vessels of wood and in vessels of stone.’”

20 †Moses and Aaron did as the Lord commanded. In the sight of Pharaoh
and in the sight of his servants he lifted up the staff and struck the water in
the Nile, and all the water in the Nile turned into blood. 21 †And the fish in
the Nile died, and the Nile stank, so that the Egyptians could not drink
water from the Nile. There was blood throughout all the land of Egypt.
22 † But the magicians of Egypt did the same by their secret arts. So
Pharaoh’s heart remained hardened, and he would not listen to them, as the
Lord had said. 23 †Pharaoh turned and went into his house, and he did not
take even this to heart. 24 †And all the Egyptians dug along the Nile for
water to drink, for they could not drink the water of the Nile.

25 †Seven full days passed after the Lord had struck the Nile.

The Second Plague: Frogs

8 [1] † † [1] Then the Lord said to Moses, “Go in to Pharaoh and say to
him, ‘Thus says the Lord, “Let my people go, that they may serve me. [2] †But
if you refuse to let them go, behold, I will plague all your country with
frogs. [3]The Nile shall swarm with frogs that shall come up into your house
and into your bedroom and on your bed and into the houses of your servants
and your people,[1] and into your ovens and your kneading bowls. [4]The frogs
shall come up on you and on your people and on all your servants.”’” [5] †[2]
And the Lord said to Moses, “Say to Aaron, ‘Stretch out your hand with
your staff over the rivers, over the canals and over the pools, and make
frogs come up on the land of Egypt!’” [6]So Aaron stretched out his hand
over the waters of Egypt, and the frogs came up and covered the land of
Egypt. [7] †But the magicians did the same by their secret arts and made frogs
come up on the land of Egypt.

[8] † †Then Pharaoh called Moses and Aaron and said, “Plead with the Lord
to take away the frogs from me and from my people, and I will let the
people go to sacrifice to the Lord.” [9] †Moses said to Pharaoh, “Be pleased to
command me when I am to plead for you and for your servants and for your
people, that the frogs be cut off from you and your houses and be left only
in the Nile.” [10]And he said, “Tomorrow.” Moses said, “Be it as you say, so
that you may know that there is no one like the Lord our God. [11] †The frogs
shall go away from you and your houses and your servants and your people.
They shall be left only in the Nile.” [12] †So Moses and Aaron went out from
Pharaoh, and Moses cried to the Lord about the frogs, as he had agreed with
Pharaoh.[3] [13] †And the Lord did according to the word of Moses. The frogs
died out in the houses, the courtyards, and the fields. [14]And they gathered
them together in heaps, and the land stank. [15] †But when Pharaoh saw that
there was a respite, he hardened his heart and would not listen to them, as
the Lord had said.

The Third Plague: Gnats

16 ‡ ‡Then the Lord said to Moses, “Say to Aaron, ‘Stretch out your staff
and strike the dust of the earth, so that it may become gnats in all the land
of Egypt.’” 17And they did so. Aaron stretched out his hand with his staff
and struck the dust of the earth, and there were gnats on man and beast. All
the dust of the earth became gnats in all the land of Egypt. 18 †The magicians
tried by their secret arts to produce gnats, but they could not. So there were
gnats on man and beast. 19 †Then the magicians said to Pharaoh, “This is the
finger of God.” But Pharaoh’s heart was hardened, and he would not listen
to them, as the Lord had said.

The Fourth Plague: Flies

20 † Then the Lord said to Moses, “Rise up early in the morning and
present yourself to Pharaoh, as he goes out to the water, and say to him,
‘Thus says the Lord, “Let my people go, that they may serve me. 21 †Or else,
if you will not let my people go, behold, I will send swarms of flies on you
and your servants and your people, and into your houses. And the houses of
the Egyptians shall be filled with swarms of flies, and also the ground on
which they stand. 22 †But on that day I will set apart the land of Goshen,
where my people dwell, so that no swarms of flies shall be there, that you
may know that I am the Lord in the midst of the earth.[1] 23 Thus I will put a
division[2] between my people and your people. Tomorrow this sign shall
happen.”’” 24 †And the Lord did so. There came great swarms of flies into
the house of Pharaoh and into his servants’ houses. Throughout all the land
of Egypt the land was ruined by the swarms of flies.

25 †Then Pharaoh called Moses and Aaron and said, “Go, sacrifice to your
God within the land.” 26 †But Moses said, “It would not be right to do so, for
the offerings we shall sacrifice to the Lord our God are an abomination to
the Egyptians. If we sacrifice offerings abominable to the Egyptians before
their eyes, will they not stone us? 27 †We must go three days’ journey into
the wilderness and sacrifice to the Lord our God as he tells us.” 28 † So
Pharaoh said, “I will let you go to sacrifice to the Lord your God in the
wilderness; only you must not go very far away. Plead for me.” 29 †Then
Moses said, “Behold, I am going out from you and I will plead with the
Lord that the swarms of flies may depart from Pharaoh, from his servants,
and from his people, tomorrow. Only let not Pharaoh cheat again by not
letting the people go to sacrifice to the Lord.” 30 So Moses went out from
Pharaoh and prayed to the Lord. 31 †And the Lord did as Moses asked, and
removed the swarms of flies from Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his
people; not one remained. 32 †But Pharaoh hardened his heart this time also,
and did not let the people go.

The Fifth Plague: Egyptian Livestock Die

9 [1]‡‡Then the Lord said to Moses, “Go in to Pharaoh and say to him,
‘Thus says the Lord, the God of the Hebrews, “Let my people go, that they
may serve me. [2]‡For if you refuse to let them go and still hold them,
[3]‡behold, the hand of the Lord will fall with a very severe plague upon your
livestock that are in the field, the horses, the donkeys, the camels, the herds,
and the flocks. [4]But the Lord will make a distinction between the livestock
of Israel and the livestock of Egypt, so that nothing of all that belongs to the
people of Israel shall die.”’” [5]‡And the Lord set a time, saying, “Tomorrow
the Lord will do this thing in the land.” [6]‡And the next day the Lord did this
thing. All the livestock of the Egyptians died, but not one of the livestock of
the people of Israel died. [7]‡And Pharaoh sent, and behold, not one of the
livestock of Israel was dead. But the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he
did not let the people go.

The Sixth Plague: Boils

8 ‡‡‡And the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, “Take handfuls of soot from
the kiln, and let Moses throw them in the air in the sight of Pharaoh. 9 ‡It
shall become fine dust over all the land of Egypt, and become boils
breaking out in sores on man and beast throughout all the land of Egypt.”
10 So they took soot from the kiln and stood before Pharaoh. And Moses
threw it in the air, and it became boils breaking out in sores on man and
beast. 11 †And the magicians could not stand before Moses because of the
boils, for the boils came upon the magicians and upon all the Egyptians.
12 †But the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh, and he did not listen to them,
as the Lord had spoken to Moses.

The Seventh Plague: Hail

13 ‡ ‡ † Then the Lord said to Moses, “Rise up early in the morning and
present yourself before Pharaoh and say to him, ‘Thus says the Lord, the
God of the Hebrews, “Let my people go, that they may serve me. 14 † For this
time I will send all my plagues on you yourself,[1] and on your servants and
your people, so that you may know that there is none like me in all the
earth. 15 † For by now I could have put out my hand and struck you and your
people with pestilence, and you would have been cut off from the earth.
16 † But for this purpose I have raised you up, to show you my power, so that
my name may be proclaimed in all the earth. 17 † You are still exalting
yourself against my people and will not let them go. 18 † Behold, about this
time tomorrow I will cause very heavy hail to fall, such as never has been in
Egypt from the day it was founded until now. 19 † Now therefore send, get
your livestock and all that you have in the field into safe shelter, for every
man and beast that is in the field and is not brought home will die when the
hail falls on them.”’” 20 † Then whoever feared the word of the Lord among
the servants of Pharaoh hurried his slaves and his livestock into the houses,
21 † but whoever did not pay attention to the word of the Lord left his slaves
and his livestock in the field.

22 Then the Lord said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand toward heaven, so
that there may be hail in all the land of Egypt, on man and beast and every
plant of the field, in the land of Egypt.” 23 Then Moses stretched out his staff
toward heaven, and the Lord sent thunder and hail, and fire ran down to the
earth. And the Lord rained hail upon the land of Egypt. 24 † There was hail
and fire flashing continually in the midst of the hail, very heavy hail, such
as had never been in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation. 25 † The
hail struck down everything that was in the field in all the land of Egypt,
both man and beast. And the hail struck down every plant of the field and
broke every tree of the field. 26 Only in the land of Goshen, where the people
of Israel were, was there no hail.

27 † Then Pharaoh sent and called Moses and Aaron and said to them,
“This time I have sinned; the Lord is in the right, and I and my people are in
the wrong. 28 Plead with the Lord, for there has been enough of God’s

thunder and hail. I will let you go, and you shall stay no longer.” 29Moses said to him, “As soon as I have gone out of the city, I will stretch out my hands to the Lord. The thunder will cease, and there will be no more hail, so that you may know that the earth is the Lord’s. 30†But as for you and your servants, I know that you do not yet fear the Lord God.” 31†(The flax and the barley were struck down, for the barley was in the ear and the flax was in bud. 32†But the wheat and the emmer[1] were not struck down, for they are late in coming up.) 33So Moses went out of the city from Pharaoh and stretched out his hands to the Lord, and the thunder and the hail ceased, and the rain no longer poured upon the earth. 34But when Pharaoh saw that the rain and the hail and the thunder had ceased, he sinned yet again and hardened his heart, he and his servants. 35So the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he did not let the people of Israel go, just as the Lord had spoken through Moses.

The Eighth Plague: Locusts

10 [1]†‡Then the Lord said to Moses, “Go in to Pharaoh, for I have
hardened his heart and the heart of his servants, that I may show these signs
of mine among them, [2]†and that you may tell in the hearing of your son and
of your grandson how I have dealt harshly with the Egyptians and what
signs I have done among them, that you may know that I am the Lord.”
[3]†So Moses and Aaron went in to Pharaoh and said to him, “Thus says
the Lord, the God of the Hebrews, ‘How long will you refuse to humble
yourself before me? Let my people go, that they may serve me. [4]†For if you
refuse to let my people go, behold, tomorrow I will bring locusts into your
country, [5]and they shall cover the face of the land, so that no one can see the
land. And they shall eat what is left to you after the hail, and they shall eat
every tree of yours that grows in the field, [6]and they shall fill your houses
and the houses of all your servants and of all the Egyptians, as neither your
fathers nor your grandfathers have seen, from the day they came on earth to
this day.’” Then he turned and went out from Pharaoh.
[7]†Then Pharaoh’s servants said to him, “How long shall this man be a
snare to us? Let the men go, that they may serve the Lord their God. Do you
not yet understand that Egypt is ruined?” [8]†So Moses and Aaron were
brought back to Pharaoh. And he said to them, “Go, serve the Lord your
God. But which ones are to go?” [9]†Moses said, “We will go with our young
and our old. We will go with our sons and daughters and with our flocks
and herds, for we must hold a feast to the Lord.” [10]†But he said to them,
“The Lord be with you, if ever I let you and your little ones go! Look, you
have some evil purpose in mind.[2] [11]†No! Go, the men among you, and
serve the Lord, for that is what you are asking.” And they were driven out
from Pharaoh’s presence.
[12]Then the Lord said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand over the land of
Egypt for the locusts, so that they may come upon the land of Egypt and eat
every plant in the land, all that the hail has left.” [13]†So Moses stretched out
his staff over the land of Egypt, and the Lord brought an east wind upon the
land all that day and all that night. When it was morning, the east wind had
brought the locusts. [14]†The locusts came up over all the land of Egypt and

settled on the whole country of Egypt, such a dense swarm of locusts as had never been before, nor ever will be again. [15]†They covered the face of the whole land, so that the land was darkened, and they ate all the plants in the land and all the fruit of the trees that the hail had left. Not a green thing remained, neither tree nor plant of the field, through all the land of Egypt. [16]Then Pharaoh hastily called Moses and Aaron and said, “I have sinned against the Lord your God, and against you. [17]†Now therefore, forgive my sin, please, only this once, and plead with the Lord your God only to remove this death from me.” [18]So he went out from Pharaoh and pleaded with the Lord. [19]†And the Lord turned the wind into a very strong west wind, which lifted the locusts and drove them into the Red Sea. Not a single locust was left in all the country of Egypt. [20]† But the Lord hardened Pharaoh’s heart, and he did not let the people of Israel go.

The Ninth Plague: Darkness

21 ‡ ‡ Then the Lord said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand toward heaven,
that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, a darkness to be felt.”
22 So Moses stretched out his hand toward heaven, and there was pitch
darkness in all the land of Egypt three days. 23 They did not see one another,
nor did anyone rise from his place for three days, but all the people of Israel
had light where they lived. 24 † Then Pharaoh called Moses and said, “Go,
serve the Lord; your little ones also may go with you; only let your flocks
and your herds remain behind.” 25 But Moses said, “You must also let us
have sacrifices and burnt offerings, that we may sacrifice to the Lord our
God. 26 † Our livestock also must go with us; not a hoof shall be left behind,
for we must take of them to serve the Lord our God, and we do not know
with what we must serve the Lord until we arrive there.” 27 † But the Lord
hardened Pharaoh’s heart, and he would not let them go. 28 † Then Pharaoh
said to him, “Get away from me; take care never to see my face again, for
on the day you see my face you shall die.” 29 † Moses said, “As you say! I
will not see your face again.”

A Final Plague Threatened

11 [1]†The Lord said to Moses, “Yet one plague more I will bring upon
Pharaoh and upon Egypt. Afterward he will let you go from here. When he
lets you go, he will drive you away completely. [2]†Speak now in the hearing
of the people, that they ask, every man of his neighbor and every woman of
her neighbor, for silver and gold jewelry.” [3]†And the Lord gave the people
favor in the sight of the Egyptians. Moreover, the man Moses was very
great in the land of Egypt, in the sight of Pharaoh’s servants and in the sight
of the people.

[4]†So Moses said, “Thus says the Lord: About midnight I will go out in
the midst of Egypt, [5]†and every firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die,
from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sits on his throne, even to the firstborn of
the slave girl who is behind the handmill, and all the firstborn of the cattle.
[6]†There shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there
has never been, nor ever will be again. [7]†But not a dog shall growl against
any of the people of Israel, either man or beast, that you may know that the
Lord makes a distinction between Egypt and Israel. [8]†And all these your
servants shall come down to me and bow down to me, saying, ‘Get out, you
and all the people who follow you.’ And after that I will go out.” And he
went out from Pharaoh in hot anger. [9]† Then the Lord said to Moses,
“Pharaoh will not listen to you, that my wonders may be multiplied in the
land of Egypt.”

[10]Moses and Aaron did all these wonders before Pharaoh, and the Lord
hardened Pharaoh’s heart, and he did not let the people of Israel go out of
his land.

The Passover

12 [1]‡ ‡The Lord said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt,
[2]†“This month shall be for you the beginning of months. It shall be the first
month of the year for you. [3]†Tell all the congregation of Israel that on the
tenth day of this month every man shall take a lamb according to their
fathers’ houses, a lamb for a household. [4]And if the household is too small
for a lamb, then he and his nearest neighbor shall take according to the
number of persons; according to what each can eat you shall make your
count for the lamb. [5]†Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male a year old.
You may take it from the sheep or from the goats, [6]†and you shall keep it
until the fourteenth day of this month, when the whole assembly of the
congregation of Israel shall kill their lambs at twilight.[1]
[7]†“Then they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts
and the lintel of the houses in which they eat it. [8]‡ ‡They shall eat the flesh
that night, roasted on the fire; with unleavened bread and bitter herbs they
shall eat it. [9]†Do not eat any of it raw or boiled in water, but roasted, its
head with its legs and its inner parts. [10]†And you shall let none of it remain
until the morning; anything that remains until the morning you shall burn.
[11]†In this manner you shall eat it: with your belt fastened, your sandals on
your feet, and your staff in your hand. And you shall eat it in haste. It is the
Lord’s Passover. [12]†For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and
I will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and
on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the Lord. [13]†The
blood shall be a sign for you, on the houses where you are. And when I see
the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy
you, when I strike the land of Egypt.
[14]†“This day shall be for you a memorial day, and you shall keep it as a
feast to the Lord; throughout your generations, as a statute forever, you shall
keep it as a feast. [15]†Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. On the first
day you shall remove leaven out of your houses, for if anyone eats what is
leavened, from the first day until the seventh day, that person shall be cut
off from Israel. [16]†On the first day you shall hold a holy assembly, and on

the seventh day a holy assembly. No work shall be done on those days. But what everyone needs to eat, that alone may be prepared by you. 17 †And you shall observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread, for on this very day I brought your hosts out of the land of Egypt. Therefore you shall observe this day, throughout your generations, as a statute forever. 18 †In the first month, from the fourteenth day of the month at evening, you shall eat unleavened bread until the twenty-first day of the month at evening. 19 †For seven days no leaven is to be found in your houses. If anyone eats what is leavened, that person will be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he is a sojourner or a native of the land. 20 You shall eat nothing leavened; in all your dwelling places you shall eat unleavened bread."

21 †Then Moses called all the elders of Israel and said to them, "Go and select lambs for yourselves according to your clans, and kill the Passover lamb. 22 †Take a bunch of hyssop and dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and touch the lintel and the two doorposts with the blood that is in the basin. None of you shall go out of the door of his house until the morning. 23 †For the Lord will pass through to strike the Egyptians, and when he sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, the Lord will pass over the door and will not allow the destroyer to enter your houses to strike you. 24 †You shall observe this rite as a statute for you and for your sons forever. 25 †And when you come to the land that the Lord will give you, as he has promised, you shall keep this service. 26 And when your children say to you, 'What do you mean by this service?' 27 †you shall say, 'It is the sacrifice of the Lord's Passover, for he passed over the houses of the people of Israel in Egypt, when he struck the Egyptians but spared our houses.'" And the people bowed their heads and worshiped.

28 †Then the people of Israel went and did so; as the Lord had commanded Moses and Aaron, so they did.

The Tenth Plague: Death of the Firstborn

29 ‡ † At midnight the Lord struck down all the firstborn in the land of
Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the firstborn
of the captive who was in the dungeon, and all the firstborn of the livestock.
30 † And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he and all his servants and all the
Egyptians. And there was a great cry in Egypt, for there was not a house
where someone was not dead. 31 † Then he summoned Moses and Aaron by
night and said, “Up, go out from among my people, both you and the people
of Israel; and go, serve the Lord, as you have said. 32 † Take your flocks and
your herds, as you have said, and be gone, and bless me also!”

The Exodus

33 ‡The Egyptians were urgent with the people to send them out of the
land in haste. For they said, “We shall all be dead.” 34 †So the people took
their dough before it was leavened, their kneading bowls being bound up in
their cloaks on their shoulders. 35 ‡†The people of Israel had also done as
Moses told them, for they had asked the Egyptians for silver and gold
jewelry and for clothing. 36 †And the Lord had given the people favor in the
sight of the Egyptians, so that they let them have what they asked. Thus
they plundered the Egyptians.

37 †And the people of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about
six hundred thousand men on foot, besides women and children. 38 †A mixed
multitude also went up with them, and very much livestock, both flocks and
herds. 39 And they baked unleavened cakes of the dough that they had
brought out of Egypt, for it was not leavened, because they were thrust out
of Egypt and could not wait, nor had they prepared any provisions for
themselves.

40 †The time that the people of Israel lived in Egypt was 430 years. 41 †At
the end of 430 years, on that very day, all the hosts of the Lord went out
from the land of Egypt. 42 †It was a night of watching by the Lord, to bring
them out of the land of Egypt; so this same night is a night of watching kept
to the Lord by all the people of Israel throughout their generations.

Institution of the Passover

43 ‡ ‡ † And the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, “This is the statute of the
Passover: no foreigner shall eat of it, 44 † but every slave that is bought for
money may eat of it after you have circumcised him. 45 † No foreigner or
hired servant may eat of it. 46 † It shall be eaten in one house; you shall not
take any of the flesh outside the house, and you shall not break any of its
bones. 47 † All the congregation of Israel shall keep it. 48 † If a stranger shall
sojourn with you and would keep the Passover to the Lord, let all his males
be circumcised. Then he may come near and keep it; he shall be as a native
of the land. But no uncircumcised person shall eat of it. 49 † There shall be
one law for the native and for the stranger who sojourns among you.”
50 ‡ All the people of Israel did just as the Lord commanded Moses and
Aaron. 51 And on that very day the Lord brought the people of Israel out of
the land of Egypt by their hosts.

Consecration of the Firstborn

13 [1]‡†The Lord said to Moses, [2]†“Consecrate to me all the firstborn.
Whatever is the first to open the womb among the people of Israel, both of
man and of beast, is mine.”

The Feast of Unleavened Bread

3 ‡ † Then Moses said to the people, “Remember this day in which you
came out from Egypt, out of the house of slavery, for by a strong hand the
Lord brought you out from this place. No leavened bread shall be eaten.
4 † Today, in the month of Abib, you are going out. 5 † And when the Lord
brings you into the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the
Hivites, and the Jebusites, which he swore to your fathers to give you, a
land flowing with milk and honey, you shall keep this service in this month.
6 ‡ Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day there
shall be a feast to the Lord. 7 Unleavened bread shall be eaten for seven
days; no leavened bread shall be seen with you, and no leaven shall be seen
with you in all your territory. 8 † You shall tell your son on that day, ‘It is
because of what the Lord did for me when I came out of Egypt.’ 9 † And it
shall be to you as a sign on your hand and as a memorial between your
eyes, that the law of the Lord may be in your mouth. For with a strong hand
the Lord has brought you out of Egypt. 10 † You shall therefore keep this
statute at its appointed time from year to year.

11 ‡ † “When the Lord brings you into the land of the Canaanites, as he
swore to you and your fathers, and shall give it to you, 12 † you shall set apart
to the Lord all that first opens the womb. All the firstborn of your animals
that are males shall be the Lord’s. 13 † Every firstborn of a donkey you shall
redeem with a lamb, or if you will not redeem it you shall break its neck.
Every firstborn of man among your sons you shall redeem. 14 † And when in
time to come your son asks you, ‘What does this mean?’ you shall say to
him, ‘By a strong hand the Lord brought us out of Egypt, from the house of
slavery. 15 † For when Pharaoh stubbornly refused to let us go, the Lord killed
all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man and the
firstborn of animals. Therefore I sacrifice to the Lord all the males that first
open the womb, but all the firstborn of my sons I redeem.’ 16 † It shall be as a
mark on your hand or frontlets between your eyes, for by a strong hand the
Lord brought us out of Egypt.”

Pillars of Cloud and Fire

17 ‡ † When Pharaoh let the people go, God did not lead them by way of
the land of the Philistines, although that was near. For God said, “Lest the
people change their minds when they see war and return to Egypt.” 18 † But
God led the people around by the way of the wilderness toward the Red
Sea. And the people of Israel went up out of the land of Egypt equipped for
battle. 19 † Moses took the bones of Joseph with him, for Joseph[1] had made
the sons of Israel solemnly swear, saying, “God will surely visit you, and
you shall carry up my bones with you from here.” 20 † And they moved on
from Succoth and encamped at Etham, on the edge of the wilderness.
21 † And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them
along the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, that they
might travel by day and by night. 22 † The pillar of cloud by day and the
pillar of fire by night did not depart from before the people.

Crossing the Red Sea

14 [1]†Then the Lord said to Moses, [2]†"Tell the people of Israel to turn
back and encamp in front of Pi-hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, in
front of Baal-zephon; you shall encamp facing it, by the sea. [3]†For Pharaoh
will say of the people of Israel, 'They are wandering in the land; the
wilderness has shut them in.' [4]†And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and he
will pursue them, and I will get glory over Pharaoh and all his host, and the
Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord." And they did so.

[5]†When the king of Egypt was told that the people had fled, the mind of
Pharaoh and his servants was changed toward the people, and they said,
"What is this we have done, that we have let Israel go from serving us?"
[6]†So he made ready his chariot and took his army with him, [7]†and took six
hundred chosen chariots and all the other chariots of Egypt with officers
over all of them. [8]†And the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of
Egypt, and he pursued the people of Israel while the people of Israel were
going out defiantly. [9]†The Egyptians pursued them, all Pharaoh's horses and
chariots and his horsemen and his army, and overtook them encamped at the
sea, by Pi-hahiroth, in front of Baal-zephon.

[10]†When Pharaoh drew near, the people of Israel lifted up their eyes, and
behold, the Egyptians were marching after them, and they feared greatly.
And the people of Israel cried out to the Lord. [11]‡†They said to Moses, "Is it
because there are no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in
the wilderness? What have you done to us in bringing us out of Egypt? [12]†Is
not this what we said to you in Egypt: 'Leave us alone that we may serve
the Egyptians'? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians
than to die in the wilderness." [13]‡†And Moses said to the people, "Fear not,
stand firm, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will work for you
today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall never see again.
[14]†The Lord will fight for you, and you have only to be silent."

[15]†The Lord said to Moses, "Why do you cry to me? Tell the people of
Israel to go forward. [16]†Lift up your staff, and stretch out your hand over the
sea and divide it, that the people of Israel may go through the sea on dry

ground. [17]†And I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they shall go in after them, and I will get glory over Pharaoh and all his host, his chariots, and his horsemen. [18]†And the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord, when I have gotten glory over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his horsemen."

[19]†Then the angel of God who was going before the host of Israel moved and went behind them, and the pillar of cloud moved from before them and stood behind them, [20]†coming between the host of Egypt and the host of Israel. And there was the cloud and the darkness. And it lit up the night[1] without one coming near the other all night.

[21]†Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the Lord drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. [22]†And the people of Israel went into the midst of the sea on dry ground, the waters being a wall to them on their right hand and on their left. [23]†The Egyptians pursued and went in after them into the midst of the sea, all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. [24]†And in the morning watch the Lord in the pillar of fire and of cloud looked down on the Egyptian forces and threw the Egyptian forces into a panic, [25]† clogging[2] their chariot wheels so that they drove heavily. And the Egyptians said, "Let us flee from before Israel, for the Lord fights for them against the Egyptians."

[26]†Then the Lord said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea, that the water may come back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen." [27]†So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to its normal course when the morning appeared. And as the Egyptians fled into it, the Lord threw[3] the Egyptians into the midst of the sea. [28]†The waters returned and covered the chariots and the horsemen; of all the host of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea, not one of them remained. [29]‡But the people of Israel walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters being a wall to them on their right hand and on their left.

[30]†Thus the Lord saved Israel that day from the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. [31]†Israel saw the great power that the Lord used against the Egyptians, so the people feared the Lord, and they believed in the Lord and in his servant Moses.

The Song of Moses

15 [1]‡‡†Then Moses and the people of Israel sang this song to the Lord, saying,

"I will sing to the Lord, for he has triumphed
gloriously;
the horse and his rider[1] he has thrown into
the sea.
[2]† The Lord is my strength and my song,
and he has become my salvation;
this is my God, and I will praise him,
my father's God, and I will exalt him.
[3]† The Lord is a man of war;
the Lord is his name.
[4]†"haraoh's chariots and his host he cast into
the sea,
and his chosen officers were sunk in the
Red Sea.
[5]† The floods covered them;
they went down into the depths like a stone.
[6]† Your right hand, O Lord, glorious in power,
your right hand, O Lord, shatters the enemy.
[7]† In the greatness of your majesty you
overthrow your adversaries;
you send out your fury; it consumes them
like stubble.
[8]† At the blast of your nostrils the waters piled up;
the floods stood up in a heap;
the deeps congealed in the heart of the sea.
[9]† The enemy said, 'I will pursue, I will
overtake,
I will divide the spoil, my desire shall have

its fill of them.
I will draw my sword; my hand shall destroy
them.'
10† You blew with your wind; the sea covered
them;
they sank like lead in the mighty waters.

11†"Who is like you, O LORD, among the gods?
Who is like you, majestic in holiness,
awesome in glorious deeds, doing
wonders?
12† You stretched out your right hand;
the earth swallowed them.

13†"You have led in your steadfast love the people
whom you have redeemed;
you have guided them by your strength to
your holy abode.
14†† The peoples have heard; they tremble;
pangs have seized the inhabitants of Philistia.
15 Now are the chiefs of Edom dismayed;
trembling seizes the leaders of Moab;
all the inhabitants of Canaan have melted
away.
16† Terror and dread fall upon them;
because of the greatness of your arm, they
are still as a stone,
till your people, O LORD, pass by,
till the people pass by whom you have
purchased.
17† You will bring them in and plant them on
your own mountain,
the place, O LORD, which you have made for
your abode,
the sanctuary, O Lord, which your hands

have established.
18 † The Lord will reign forever and ever.”

19 †For when the horses of Pharaoh with his chariots and his horsemen went into the sea, the Lord brought back the waters of the sea upon them, but the people of Israel walked on dry ground in the midst of the sea. 20 †Then Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a tambourine in her hand, and all the women went out after her with tambourines and dancing. 21 †And Miriam sang to them:

“Sing to the Lord, for he has triumphed
gloriously;
the horse and his rider he has thrown into the
sea.”

Bitter Water Made Sweet

22 ‡† Then Moses made Israel set out from the Red Sea, and they went into
the wilderness of Shur. They went three days in the wilderness and found no
water. 23 † When they came to Marah, they could not drink the water of
Marah because it was bitter; therefore it was named Marah.[1] 24 † And the
people grumbled against Moses, saying, “What shall we drink?” 25 ‡† And he
cried to the Lord, and the Lord showed him a log,[2] and he threw it into the
water, and the water became sweet.

There the Lord [3] made for them a statute and a rule, and there he tested
them, 26 † saying, “If you will diligently listen to the voice of the Lord your
God, and do that which is right in his eyes, and give ear to his
commandments and keep all his statutes, I will put none of the diseases on
you that I put on the Egyptians, for I am the Lord, your healer.”

27 † Then they came to Elim, where there were twelve springs of water and
seventy palm trees, and they encamped there by the water.

Bread from Heaven

16 [1]†They set out from Elim, and all the congregation of the people
of Israel came to the wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on
the fifteenth day of the second month after they had departed from the land
of Egypt. [2]†And the whole congregation of the people of Israel grumbled
against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness, [3]†and the people of Israel said
to them, "Would that we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of
Egypt, when we sat by the meat pots and ate bread to the full, for you have
brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger."

[4]†Then the Lord said to Moses, "Behold, I am about to rain bread from
heaven for you, and the people shall go out and gather a day's portion every
day, that I may test them, whether they will walk in my law or not. [5]†On the
sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as
they gather daily." [6]†So Moses and Aaron said to all the people of Israel,
"At evening you shall know that it was the Lord who brought you out of the
land of Egypt, [7]†and in the morning you shall see the glory of the Lord,
because he has heard your grumbling against the Lord. For what are we, that
you grumble against us?" [8]†And Moses said, "When the Lord gives you in
the evening meat to eat and in the morning bread to the full, because the
Lord has heard your grumbling that you grumble against him—what are
we? Your grumbling is not against us but against the Lord."

[9]†Then Moses said to Aaron, "Say to the whole congregation of the
people of Israel, 'Come near before the Lord, for he has heard your
grumbling.'" [10]And as soon as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of
the people of Israel, they looked toward the wilderness, and behold, the
glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud. [11]And the Lord said to Moses, [12]†"I
have heard the grumbling of the people of Israel. Say to them, 'At twilight
you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall be filled with bread. Then
you shall know that I am the Lord your God.'"

[13]†In the evening quail came up and covered the camp, and in the
morning dew lay around the camp. [14]†And when the dew had gone up, there
was on the face of the wilderness a fine, flake-like thing, fine as frost on the
ground. [15]When the people of Israel saw it, they said to one another, "What

is it?”[1] For they did not know what it was. And Moses said to them, “It is the bread that the Lord has given you to eat. 16This is what the Lord has commanded: ‘Gather of it, each one of you, as much as he can eat. You shall each take an omer,[2] according to the number of the persons that each of you has in his tent.’” 17And the people of Israel did so. They gathered, some more, some less. 18But when they measured it with an omer, whoever gathered much had nothing left over, and whoever gathered little had no lack. Each of them gathered as much as he could eat. 19And Moses said to them, “Let no one leave any of it over till the morning.” 20But they did not listen to Moses. Some left part of it till the morning, and it bred worms and stank. And Moses was angry with them. 21Morning by morning they gathered it, each as much as he could eat; but when the sun grew hot, it melted.

22On the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers each. And when all the leaders of the congregation came and told Moses, 23he said to them, “This is what the Lord has commanded: ‘Tomorrow is a day of solemn rest, a holy Sabbath to the Lord; bake what you will bake and boil what you will boil, and all that is left over lay aside to be kept till the morning.’” 24So they laid it aside till the morning, as Moses commanded them, and it did not stink, and there were no worms in it. 25Moses said, “Eat it today, for today is a Sabbath to the Lord; today you will not find it in the field. 26Six days you shall gather it, but on the seventh day, which is a Sabbath, there will be none.”

27On the seventh day some of the people went out to gather, but they found none. 28And the Lord said to Moses, “How long will you refuse to keep my commandments and my laws? 29See! The Lord has given you the Sabbath; therefore on the sixth day he gives you bread for two days. Remain each of you in his place; let no one go out of his place on the seventh day.” 30So the people rested on the seventh day.

31Now the house of Israel called its name manna. It was like coriander seed, white, and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey. 32Moses said, “This is what the Lord has commanded: ‘Let an omer of it be kept throughout your generations, so that they may see the bread with which I fed you in the wilderness, when I brought you out of the land of Egypt.’” 33And Moses said to Aaron, “Take a jar, and put an omer of manna in it,

and place it before the LORD to be kept throughout your generations.” 34 †As
the LORD commanded Moses, so Aaron placed it before the testimony to be
kept. 35 †The people of Israel ate the manna forty years, till they came to a
habitable land. They ate the manna till they came to the border of the land
of Canaan. 36 †(An omer is the tenth part of an ephah.)[1]

Water from the Rock

17 [1]‡†All the congregation of the people of Israel moved on from the
wilderness of Sin by stages, according to the commandment of the Lord,
and camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink.
[2]‡Therefore the people quarreled with Moses and said, “Give us water to
drink.” And Moses said to them, “Why do you quarrel with me? Why do
you test the Lord?” [3]†But the people thirsted there for water, and the people
grumbled against Moses and said, “Why did you bring us up out of Egypt,
to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?” [4]†So Moses cried
to the Lord, “What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to
stone me.” [5]†And the Lord said to Moses, “Pass on before the people, taking
with you some of the elders of Israel, and take in your hand the staff with
which you struck the Nile, and go. [6]†Behold, I will stand before you there
on the rock at Horeb, and you shall strike the rock, and water shall come out
of it, and the people will drink.” And Moses did so, in the sight of the elders
of Israel. [7]†And he called the name of the place Massah[2] and Meribah,[3]
because of the quarreling of the people of Israel, and because they tested the
Lord by saying, “Is the Lord among us or not?”

Israel Defeats Amalek

8 ‡ † Then Amalek came and fought with Israel at Rephidim. 9 † So Moses
said to Joshua, “Choose for us men, and go out and fight with Amalek.
Tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the staff of God in my
hand.” 10 So Joshua did as Moses told him, and fought with Amalek, while
Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. 11 † Whenever Moses
held up his hand, Israel prevailed, and whenever he lowered his hand,
Amalek prevailed. 12 † But Moses’ hands grew weary, so they took a stone
and put it under him, and he sat on it, while Aaron and Hur held up his
hands, one on one side, and the other on the other side. So his hands were
steady until the going down of the sun. 13 And Joshua overwhelmed Amalek
and his people with the sword.

14 † Then the Lord said to Moses, “Write this as a memorial in a book and
recite it in the ears of Joshua, that I will utterly blot out the memory of
Amalek from under heaven.” 15 † And Moses built an altar and called the
name of it, The Lord Is My Banner, 16 † saying, “A hand upon the throne[1] of
the Lord! The Lord will have war with Amalek from generation to
generation.”

Jethro's Advice

18 [1]†Jethro, the priest of Midian, Moses' father-in-law, heard of all
that God had done for Moses and for Israel his people, how the Lord had
brought Israel out of Egypt. [2]†Now Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, had taken
Zipporah, Moses' wife, after he had sent her home, [3]†along with her two
sons. The name of the one was Gershom (for he said, "I have been a
sojourner[2] in a foreign land"), [4]and the name of the other, Eliezer[3] (for he
said, "The God of my father was my help, and delivered me from the sword
of Pharaoh"). [5]†Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, came with his sons and his
wife to Moses in the wilderness where he was encamped at the mountain of
God. [6]And when he sent word to Moses, "I,[4] your father-in-law Jethro, am
coming to you with your wife and her two sons with her," [7]†Moses went out
to meet his father-in-law and bowed down and kissed him. And they asked
each other of their welfare and went into the tent. [8]†Then Moses told his
father-in-law all that the Lord had done to Pharaoh and to the Egyptians for
Israel's sake, all the hardship that had come upon them in the way, and how
the Lord had delivered them. [9]†And Jethro rejoiced for all the good that the
Lord had done to Israel, in that he had delivered them out of the hand of the
Egyptians.

[10]†Jethro said, "Blessed be the Lord, who has delivered you out of the
hand of the Egyptians and out of the hand of Pharaoh and has delivered the
people from under the hand of the Egyptians. [11]†Now I know that the Lord
is greater than all gods, because in this affair they dealt arrogantly with the
people."[5] [12]†And Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, brought a burnt offering and
sacrifices to God; and Aaron came with all the elders of Israel to eat bread
with Moses' father-in-law before God.

[13]†The next day Moses sat to judge the people, and the people stood
around Moses from morning till evening. [14]†When Moses' father-in-law
saw all that he was doing for the people, he said, "What is this that you are
doing for the people? Why do you sit alone, and all the people stand around
you from morning till evening?" [15]†And Moses said to his father-in-law,
"Because the people come to me to inquire of God; [16]†when they have a

dispute, they come to me and I decide between one person and another, and
I make them know the statutes of God and his laws." [17]Moses' father-in-law
said to him, "What you are doing is not good. [18]You and the people with
you will certainly wear yourselves out, for the thing is too heavy for you.
You are not able to do it alone. [19]†Now obey my voice; I will give you
advice, and God be with you! You shall represent the people before God
and bring their cases to God, [20]†and you shall warn them about the statutes
and the laws, and make them know the way in which they must walk and
what they must do. [21]‡‡Moreover, look for able men from all the people,
men who fear God, who are trustworthy and hate a bribe, and place such
men over the people as chiefs of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties, and of
tens. [22]And let them judge the people at all times. Every great matter they
shall bring to you, but any small matter they shall decide themselves. So it
will be easier for you, and they will bear the burden with you. [23]†If you do
this, God will direct you, you will be able to endure, and all this people also
will go to their place in peace."

[24]†So Moses listened to the voice of his father-in-law and did all that he
had said. [25]†Moses chose able men out of all Israel and made them heads
over the people, chiefs of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties, and of tens.
[26]And they judged the people at all times. Any hard case they brought to
Moses, but any small matter they decided themselves. [27]†Then Moses let his
father-in-law depart, and he went away to his own country.

Israel at Mount Sinai

19 [1]†On the third new moon after the people of Israel had gone out of
the land of Egypt, on that day they came into the wilderness of Sinai.
[2]†They set out from Rephidim and came into the wilderness of Sinai, and
they encamped in the wilderness. There Israel encamped before the
mountain, [3]†while Moses went up to God. The Lord called to him out of the
mountain, saying, "Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the
people of Israel: [4]†You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians,
and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. [5]†Now
therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you
shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is
mine; [6]†and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.
These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel."

[7]†So Moses came and called the elders of the people and set before them
all these words that the Lord had commanded him. [8]† All the people
answered together and said, "All that the Lord has spoken we will do." And
Moses reported the words of the people to the Lord. [9]†And the Lord said to
Moses, "Behold, I am coming to you in a thick cloud, that the people may
hear when I speak with you, and may also believe you forever."

When Moses told the words of the people to the Lord, [10]†the Lord said to
Moses, "Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow, and let
them wash their garments [11]†and be ready for the third day. For on the third
day the Lord will come down on Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people.
[12]†And you shall set limits for the people all around, saying, 'Take care not
to go up into the mountain or touch the edge of it. Whoever touches the
mountain shall be put to death. [13]No hand shall touch him, but he shall be
stoned or shot;[1] whether beast or man, he shall not live.' When the trumpet
sounds a long blast, they shall come up to the mountain." [14]†So Moses went
down from the mountain to the people and consecrated the people; and they
washed their garments. [15]†And he said to the people, "Be ready for the third
day; do not go near a woman."

16 ✝On the morning of the third day there were thunders and lightnings
and a thick cloud on the mountain and a very loud trumpet blast, so that all
the people in the camp trembled. 17Then Moses brought the people out of
the camp to meet God, and they took their stand at the foot of the mountain.
18 ✝Now Mount Sinai was wrapped in smoke because the Lord had
descended on it in fire. The smoke of it went up like the smoke of a kiln,
and the whole mountain trembled greatly. 19And as the sound of the trumpet
grew louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him in thunder.
20The Lord came down on Mount Sinai, to the top of the mountain. And the
Lord called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up.

21And the Lord said to Moses, "Go down and warn the people, lest they
break through to the Lord to look and many of them perish. 22✝Also let the
priests who come near to the Lord consecrate themselves, lest the Lord
break out against them." 23And Moses said to the Lord, "The people cannot
come up to Mount Sinai, for you yourself warned us, saying, 'Set limits
around the mountain and consecrate it.'" 24✝And the Lord said to him, "Go
down, and come up bringing Aaron with you. But do not let the priests and
the people break through to come up to the Lord, lest he break out against
them." 25So Moses went down to the people and told them.

The Ten Commandments

20 [1]‡‡And God spoke all these words, saying, [2]†“I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.

[3]‡‡“You shall have no other gods before[2] me.

[4]†“You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. [5]†You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, [6]†but showing steadfast love to thousands[1] of those who love me and keep my commandments.

[7]‡‡“You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain.

[8]†“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. [9]Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, [10]but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. [11]†For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

[12]‡‡“Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you.

[13]†“You shall not murder.[2]

[14]†“You shall not commit adultery.

[15]†“You shall not steal.

[16]†“You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

[17]†“You shall not covet your neighbor’s house; you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor’s.”

[18]Now when all the people saw the thunder and the flashes of lightning and the sound of the trumpet and the mountain smoking, the people were afraid[3] and trembled, and they stood far off [19]and said to Moses, “You

speak to us, and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us, lest we die.”
20 † Moses said to the people, “Do not fear, for God has come to test you, that
the fear of him may be before you, that you may not sin.” 21 † The people
stood far off, while Moses drew near to the thick darkness where God was.

Laws About Altars

22 ‡ ‡ And the Lord said to Moses, “Thus you shall say to the people of
Israel: ‘You have seen for yourselves that I have talked with you from
heaven. 23 † You shall not make gods of silver to be with me, nor shall you
make for yourselves gods of gold. 24 † An altar of earth you shall make for
me and sacrifice on it your burnt offerings and your peace offerings, your
sheep and your oxen. In every place where I cause my name to be
remembered I will come to you and bless you. 25 † If you make me an altar of
stone, you shall not build it of hewn stones, for if you wield your tool on it
you profane it. 26 † And you shall not go up by steps to my altar, that your
nakedness be not exposed on it.’

Laws About Slaves

21 [1]“Now these are the rules that you shall set before them. [2]When you buy a Hebrew slave, he shall serve six years, and in the seventh he shall go out free, for nothing. [3]If he comes in single, he shall go out single; if he comes in married, then his wife shall go out with him. [4]If his master gives him a wife and she bears him sons or daughters, the wife and her children shall be her master’s, and he shall go out alone. [5]But if the slave plainly says, ‘I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free,’ [6]then his master shall bring him to God, and he shall bring him to the door or the doorpost. And his master shall bore his ear through with an awl, and he shall be his slave forever.

[7]“When a man sells his daughter as a slave, she shall not go out as the male slaves do. [8]If she does not please her master, who has designated her[1] for himself, then he shall let her be redeemed. He shall have no right to sell her to a foreign people, since he has broken faith with her. [9]If he designates her for his son, he shall deal with her as with a daughter. [10]If he takes another wife to himself, he shall not diminish her food, her clothing, or her marital rights. [11]And if he does not do these three things for her, she shall go out for nothing, without payment of money.

[12]“Whoever strikes a man so that he dies shall be put to death. [13]But if he did not lie in wait for him, but God let him fall into his hand, then I will appoint for you a place to which he may flee. [14]But if a man willfully attacks another to kill him by cunning, you shall take him from my altar, that he may die.

[15]“Whoever strikes his father or his mother shall be put to death.

[16]“Whoever steals a man and sells him, and anyone found in possession of him, shall be put to death.

[17]“Whoever curses[2] his father or his mother shall be put to death.

[18]“When men quarrel and one strikes the other with a stone or with his fist and the man does not die but takes to his bed, [19]then if the man rises again and walks outdoors with his staff, he who struck him shall be clear;

only he shall pay for the loss of his time, and shall have him thoroughly healed.

20 † "When a man strikes his slave, male or female, with a rod and the slave dies under his hand, he shall be avenged. 21 † But if the slave survives a day or two, he is not to be avenged, for the slave is his money.

22 † "When men strive together and hit a pregnant woman, so that her children come out, but there is no harm, the one who hit her shall surely be fined, as the woman's husband shall impose on him, and he shall pay as the judges determine. 23 † But if there is harm,[3] then you shall pay life for life, 24 eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, 25 burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.

26 "When a man strikes the eye of his slave, male or female, and destroys it, he shall let the slave go free because of his eye. 27 If he knocks out the tooth of his slave, male or female, he shall let the slave go free because of his tooth.

28 † "When an ox gores a man or a woman to death, the ox shall be stoned, and its flesh shall not be eaten, but the owner of the ox shall not be liable. 29 But if the ox has been accustomed to gore in the past, and its owner has been warned but has not kept it in, and it kills a man or a woman, the ox shall be stoned, and its owner also shall be put to death. 30 † If a ransom is imposed on him, then he shall give for the redemption of his life whatever is imposed on him. 31 If it gores a man's son or daughter, he shall be dealt with according to this same rule. 32 † If the ox gores a slave, male or female, the owner shall give to their master thirty shekels[4] of silver, and the ox shall be stoned.

Laws About Restitution

33 ‡ “When a man opens a pit, or when a man digs a pit and does not cover
it, and an ox or a donkey falls into it, 34 the owner of the pit shall make
restoration. He shall give money to its owner, and the dead beast shall be
his.
35 “When one man’s ox butts another’s, so that it dies, then they shall sell
the live ox and share its price, and the dead beast also they shall share. 36 Or
if it is known that the ox has been accustomed to gore in the past, and its
owner has not kept it in, he shall repay ox for ox, and the dead beast shall
be his.

22 1 † [1] “If a man steals an ox or a sheep, and kills it or sells it, he
shall repay five oxen for an ox, and four sheep for a sheep. 2 ‡ [2] If a thief is
found breaking in and is struck so that he dies, there shall be no bloodguilt
for him, 3 but if the sun has risen on him, there shall be bloodguilt for him.
He shall surely pay. If he has nothing, then he shall be sold for his theft. 4 † If
the stolen beast is found alive in his possession, whether it is an ox or a
donkey or a sheep, he shall pay double.
5 ‡ “If a man causes a field or vineyard to be grazed over, or lets his beast
loose and it feeds in another man’s field, he shall make restitution from the
best in his own field and in his own vineyard.
6 “If fire breaks out and catches in thorns so that the stacked grain or the
standing grain or the field is consumed, he who started the fire shall make
full restitution.
7 ‡ “If a man gives to his neighbor money or goods to keep safe, and it is
stolen from the man’s house, then, if the thief is found, he shall pay double.
8 † If the thief is not found, the owner of the house shall come near to God to
show whether or not he has put his hand to his neighbor’s property. 9 † For
every breach of trust, whether it is for an ox, for a donkey, for a sheep, for a
cloak, or for any kind of lost thing, of which one says, ‘This is it,’ the case
of both parties shall come before God. The one whom God condemns shall
pay double to his neighbor.
10 “If a man gives to his neighbor a donkey or an ox or a sheep or any
beast to keep safe, and it dies or is injured or is driven away, without

anyone seeing it, [11]† an oath by the Lord shall be between them both to see whether or not he has put his hand to his neighbor's property. The owner shall accept the oath, and he shall not make restitution. [12]But if it is stolen from him, he shall make restitution to its owner. [13]If it is torn by beasts, let him bring it as evidence. He shall not make restitution for what has been torn.

[14]"If a man borrows anything of his neighbor, and it is injured or dies, the owner not being with it, he shall make full restitution. [15]If the owner was with it, he shall not make restitution; if it was hired, it came for its hiring fee.[3]

Laws About Social Justice

16 ‡‡ “If a man seduces a virgin[4] who is not betrothed and lies with her, he
shall give the bride-price[5] for her and make her his wife. 17 If her father
utterly refuses to give her to him, he shall pay money equal to the bride-
price for virgins.
18 ‡ “You shall not permit a sorceress to live.
19 “Whoever lies with an animal shall be put to death.
20 ‡ “Whoever sacrifices to any god, other than the Lord alone, shall be
devoted to destruction.[1]
21 “You shall not wrong a sojourner or oppress him, for you were
sojourners in the land of Egypt. 22 You shall not mistreat any widow or
fatherless child. 23 If you do mistreat them, and they cry out to me, I will
surely hear their cry, 24 and my wrath will burn, and I will kill you with the
sword, and your wives shall become widows and your children fatherless.
25 “If you lend money to any of my people with you who is poor, you shall
not be like a moneylender to him, and you shall not exact interest from him.
26 ‡ If ever you take your neighbor’s cloak in pledge, you shall return it to
him before the sun goes down, 27 ‡ for that is his only covering, and it is his
cloak for his body; in what else shall he sleep? And if he cries to me, I will
hear, for I am compassionate.
28 ‡ “You shall not revile God, nor curse a ruler of your people.
29 ‡ “You shall not delay to offer from the fullness of your harvest and
from the outflow of your presses. The firstborn of your sons you shall give
to me. 30 You shall do the same with your oxen and with your sheep: seven
days it shall be with its mother; on the eighth day you shall give it to me.
31 ‡ “You shall be consecrated to me. Therefore you shall not eat any flesh
that is torn by beasts in the field; you shall throw it to the dogs.

23 1 “You shall not spread a false report. You shall not join hands with
a wicked man to be a malicious witness. 2 You shall not fall in with the many
to do evil, nor shall you bear witness in a lawsuit, siding with the many, so
as to pervert justice, 3 ‡ nor shall you be partial to a poor man in his lawsuit.

4 “If you meet your enemy’s ox or his donkey going astray, you shall
bring it back to him. 5 † If you see the donkey of one who hates you lying
down under its burden, you shall refrain from leaving him with it; you shall
rescue it with him.
6 “You shall not pervert the justice due to your poor in his lawsuit. 7 † Keep
far from a false charge, and do not kill the innocent and righteous, for I will
not acquit the wicked. 8 † And you shall take no bribe, for a bribe blinds the
clear-sighted and subverts the cause of those who are in the right.
9 † “You shall not oppress a sojourner. You know the heart of a sojourner,
for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt.

Laws About the Sabbath and Festivals

10 “For six years you shall sow your land and gather in its yield, 11 but
the seventh year you shall let it rest and lie fallow, that the poor of your
people may eat; and what they leave the beasts of the field may eat. You
shall do likewise with your vineyard, and with your olive orchard.
12 “Six days you shall do your work, but on the seventh day you shall
rest; that your ox and your donkey may have rest, and the son of your
servant woman, and the alien, may be refreshed.
13 “Pay attention to all that I have said to you, and make no mention of
the names of other gods, nor let it be heard on your lips.
14 “Three times in the year you shall keep a feast to me. 15 You shall keep
the Feast of Unleavened Bread. As I commanded you, you shall eat
unleavened bread for seven days at the appointed time in the month of
Abib, for in it you came out of Egypt. None shall appear before me empty-
handed. 16 You shall keep the Feast of Harvest, of the firstfruits of your
labor, of what you sow in the field. You shall keep the Feast of Ingathering
at the end of the year, when you gather in from the field the fruit of your
labor. 17 Three times in the year shall all your males appear before the Lord
God.
18 “You shall not offer the blood of my sacrifice with anything leavened,
or let the fat of my feast remain until the morning.
19 “The best of the firstfruits of your ground you shall bring into the
house of the Lord your God.
“You shall not boil a young goat in its mother’s milk.

Conquest of Canaan Promised

20 ‡ ‡ “Behold, I send an angel before you to guard you on the way and to
bring you to the place that I have prepared. 21 Pay careful attention to him
and obey his voice; do not rebel against him, for he will not pardon your
transgression, for my name is in him.
22 “But if you carefully obey his voice and do all that I say, then I will be
an enemy to your enemies and an adversary to your adversaries.
23 † “When my angel goes before you and brings you to the Amorites and
the Hittites and the Perizzites and the Canaanites, the Hivites and the
Jebusites, and I blot them out, 24 † you shall not bow down to their gods nor
serve them, nor do as they do, but you shall utterly overthrow them and
break their pillars in pieces. 25 † You shall serve the Lord your God, and he[1]
will bless your bread and your water, and I will take sickness away from
among you. 26 † None shall miscarry or be barren in your land; I will fulfill
the number of your days. 27 I will send my terror before you and will throw
into confusion all the people against whom you shall come, and I will make
all your enemies turn their backs to you. 28 † And I will send hornets before
you, which shall drive out the Hivites, the Canaanites, and the Hittites from
before you. 29 ‡ I will not drive them out from before you in one year, lest the
land become desolate and the wild beasts multiply against you. 30 Little by
little I will drive them out from before you, until you have increased and
possess the land. 31 And I will set your border from the Red Sea to the Sea of
the Philistines, and from the wilderness to the Euphrates, for I will give the
inhabitants of the land into your hand, and you shall drive them out before
you. 32 † You shall make no covenant with them and their gods. 33 They shall
not dwell in your land, lest they make you sin against me; for if you serve
their gods, it will surely be a snare to you.”

The Covenant Confirmed

24 [1]†Then he said to Moses, “Come up to the Lord, you and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, and worship from afar. [2]Moses alone shall come near to the Lord, but the others shall not come near, and the people shall not come up with him.”

[3]†Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord and all the rules.[1] And all the people answered with one voice and said, “All the words that the Lord has spoken we will do.” [4]†And Moses wrote down all the words of the Lord. He rose early in the morning and built an altar at the foot of the mountain, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel. [5]† And he sent young men of the people of Israel, who offered burnt offerings and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen to the Lord. [6]†And Moses took half of the blood and put it in basins, and half of the blood he threw against the altar. [7]†Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read it in the hearing of the people. And they said, “All that the Lord has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient.” [8]†And Moses took the blood and threw it on the people and said, “Behold the blood of the covenant that the Lord has made with you in accordance with all these words.”

[9]Then Moses and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel went up, [10]†and they saw the God of Israel. There was under his feet as it were a pavement of sapphire stone, like the very heaven for clearness. [11]†And he did not lay his hand on the chief men of the people of Israel; they beheld God, and ate and drank.

[12]†The Lord said to Moses, “Come up to me on the mountain and wait there, that I may give you the tablets of stone, with the law and the commandment, which I have written for their instruction.” [13]†So Moses rose with his assistant Joshua, and Moses went up into the mountain of God. [14]†And he said to the elders, “Wait here for us until we return to you. And behold, Aaron and Hur are with you. Whoever has a dispute, let him go to them.”

[15]† Then Moses went up on the mountain, and the cloud covered the mountain. [16]†The glory of the Lord dwelt on Mount Sinai, and the cloud

covered it six days. And on the seventh day he called to Moses out of the midst of the cloud. [17]†Now the appearance of the glory of the Lord was like a devouring fire on the top of the mountain in the sight of the people of Israel. [18]Moses entered the cloud and went up on the mountain. And Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights.

Contributions for the Sanctuary

25 [1]The Lord said to Moses, [2]“Speak to the people of Israel, that
they take for me a contribution. From every man whose heart moves him
you shall receive the contribution for me. [3]And this is the contribution
that you shall receive from them: gold, silver, and bronze, [4]blue and purple
and scarlet yarns and fine twined linen, goats’ hair, [5]tanned rams’ skins,
goatskins,[1] acacia wood, [6]oil for the lamps, spices for the anointing oil and
for the fragrant incense, [7]onyx stones, and stones for setting, for the ephod
and for the breastpiece. [8]And let them make me a sanctuary, that I may
dwell in their midst. [9]Exactly as I show you concerning the pattern of the
tabernacle, and of all its furniture, so you shall make it.

The Ark of the Covenant

10 ‡ † “They shall make an ark of acacia wood. Two cubits[2] and a half
shall be its length, a cubit and a half its breadth, and a cubit and a half its
height. 11 † You shall overlay it with pure gold, inside and outside shall you
overlay it, and you shall make on it a molding of gold around it. 12 You shall
cast four rings of gold for it and put them on its four feet, two rings on the
one side of it, and two rings on the other side of it. 13 ‡ You shall make poles
of acacia wood and overlay them with gold. 14 And you shall put the poles
into the rings on the sides of the ark to carry the ark by them. 15 The poles
shall remain in the rings of the ark; they shall not be taken from it. 16 † And
you shall put into the ark the testimony that I shall give you.

17 † “You shall make a mercy seat[3] of pure gold. Two cubits and a half
shall be its length, and a cubit and a half its breadth. 18 † And you shall make
two cherubim of gold; of hammered work shall you make them, on the two
ends of the mercy seat. 19 † Make one cherub on the one end, and one cherub
on the other end. Of one piece with the mercy seat shall you make the
cherubim on its two ends. 20 † The cherubim shall spread out their wings
above, overshadowing the mercy seat with their wings, their faces one to
another; toward the mercy seat shall the faces of the cherubim be. 21 † And
you shall put the mercy seat on the top of the ark, and in the ark you shall
put the testimony that I shall give you. 22 † There I will meet with you, and
from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim that are on the
ark of the testimony, I will speak with you about all that I will give you in
commandment for the people of Israel.

The Table for Bread

23 ✝ ✝ “You shall make a table of acacia wood. Two cubits shall be its
length, a cubit its breadth, and a cubit and a half its height. 24You shall
overlay it with pure gold and make a molding of gold around it. 25And you
shall make a rim around it a handbreadth[1] wide, and a molding of gold
around the rim. 26And you shall make for it four rings of gold, and fasten
the rings to the four corners at its four legs. 27Close to the frame the rings
shall lie, as holders for the poles to carry the table. 28You shall make the
poles of acacia wood, and overlay them with gold, and the table shall be
carried with these. 29✝ And you shall make its plates and dishes for incense,
and its flagons and bowls with which to pour drink offerings; you shall
make them of pure gold. 30✝ And you shall set the bread of the Presence on
the table before me regularly.

The Golden Lampstand

31 ‡ † “You shall make a lampstand of pure gold. The lampstand shall be
made of hammered work: its base, its stem, its cups, its calyxes, and its
flowers shall be of one piece with it. 32 ‡ And there shall be six branches
going out of its sides, three branches of the lampstand out of one side of it
and three branches of the lampstand out of the other side of it; 33 † three cups
made like almond blossoms, each with calyx and flower, on one branch, and
three cups made like almond blossoms, each with calyx and flower, on the
other branch—so for the six branches going out of the lampstand. 34 And on
the lampstand itself there shall be four cups made like almond blossoms,
with their calyxes and flowers, 35 and a calyx of one piece with it under each
pair of the six branches going out from the lampstand. 36 Their calyxes and
their branches shall be of one piece with it, the whole of it a single piece of
hammered work of pure gold. 37 † You shall make seven lamps for it. And the
lamps shall be set up so as to give light on the space in front of it. 38 † Its
tongs and their trays shall be of pure gold. 39 It shall be made, with all these
utensils, out of a talent[2] of pure gold. 40 † And see that you make them after
the pattern for them, which is being shown you on the mountain.

The Tabernacle

26 [1]‡†“Moreover, you shall make the tabernacle with ten curtains of
fine twined linen and blue and purple and scarlet yarns; you shall make
them with cherubim skillfully worked into them. [2]† The length of each
curtain shall be twenty-eight cubits,[1] and the breadth of each curtain four
cubits; all the curtains shall be the same size. [3]Five curtains shall be coupled
to one another, and the other five curtains shall be coupled to one another.
[4]And you shall make loops of blue on the edge of the outermost curtain in
the first set. Likewise you shall make loops on the edge of the outermost
curtain in the second set. [5]†Fifty loops you shall make on the one curtain,
and fifty loops you shall make on the edge of the curtain that is in the
second set; the loops shall be opposite one another. [6]†And you shall make
fifty clasps of gold, and couple the curtains one to the other with the clasps,
so that the tabernacle may be a single whole.

[7]† “You shall also make curtains of goats’ hair for a tent over the
tabernacle; eleven curtains shall you make. [8]† The length of each curtain
shall be thirty cubits, and the breadth of each curtain four cubits. The eleven
curtains shall be the same size. [9]† You shall couple five curtains by
themselves, and six curtains by themselves, and the sixth curtain you shall
double over at the front of the tent. [10]† You shall make fifty loops on the
edge of the curtain that is outermost in one set, and fifty loops on the edge
of the curtain that is outermost in the second set.

[11]“You shall make fifty clasps of bronze, and put the clasps into the loops,
and couple the tent together that it may be a single whole. [12]† And the part
that remains of the curtains of the tent, the half curtain that remains, shall
hang over the back of the tabernacle. [13]† And the extra that remains in the
length of the curtains, the cubit on the one side, and the cubit on the other
side, shall hang over the sides of the tabernacle, on this side and that side, to
cover it. [14]†And you shall make for the tent a covering of tanned rams’ skins
and a covering of goatskins on top.

[15]† “You shall make upright frames for the tabernacle of acacia wood.
[16]Ten cubits shall be the length of a frame, and a cubit and a half the breadth

of each frame. [17] † There shall be two tenons in each frame, for fitting
together. So shall you do for all the frames of the tabernacle. [18] You shall
make the frames for the tabernacle: twenty frames for the south side; [19] and
forty bases of silver you shall make under the twenty frames, two bases
under one frame for its two tenons, and two bases under the next frame for
its two tenons; [20] and for the second side of the tabernacle, on the north side
twenty frames, [21] and their forty bases of silver, two bases under one frame,
and two bases under the next frame. [22] † And for the rear of the tabernacle
westward you shall make six frames. [23] And you shall make two frames for
corners of the tabernacle in the rear; [24] they shall be separate beneath, but
joined at the top, at the first ring. Thus shall it be with both of them; they
shall form the two corners. [25] And there shall be eight frames, with their
bases of silver, sixteen bases; two bases under one frame, and two bases
under another frame.

[26] "You shall make bars of acacia wood, five for the frames of the one side
of the tabernacle, [27] and five bars for the frames of the other side of the
tabernacle, and five bars for the frames of the side of the tabernacle at the
rear westward. [28] The middle bar, halfway up the frames, shall run from end
to end. [29] You shall overlay the frames with gold and shall make their rings
of gold for holders for the bars, and you shall overlay the bars with gold.
[30] † Then you shall erect the tabernacle according to the plan for it that you
were shown on the mountain.

[31] † "And you shall make a veil of blue and purple and scarlet yarns and
fine twined linen. It shall be made with cherubim skillfully worked into it.
[32] And you shall hang it on four pillars of acacia overlaid with gold, with
hooks of gold, on four bases of silver. [33] † And you shall hang the veil from
the clasps, and bring the ark of the testimony in there within the veil. And
the veil shall separate for you the Holy Place from the Most Holy. [34] † You
shall put the mercy seat on the ark of the testimony in the Most Holy Place.
[35] And you shall set the table outside the veil, and the lampstand on the south
side of the tabernacle opposite the table, and you shall put the table on the
north side.

[36] † "You shall make a screen for the entrance of the tent, of blue and
purple and scarlet yarns and fine twined linen, embroidered with
needlework. [37] † And you shall make for the screen five pillars of acacia, and

overlay them with gold. Their hooks shall be of gold, and you shall cast five bases of bronze for them.

The Bronze Altar

27 [1]†††“You shall make the altar of acacia wood, five cubits[1] long
and five cubits broad. The altar shall be square, and its height shall be three
cubits. [2]†And you shall make horns for it on its four corners; its horns shall
be of one piece with it, and you shall overlay it with bronze. [3]You shall
make pots for it to receive its ashes, and shovels and basins and forks and
fire pans. You shall make all its utensils of bronze. [4]You shall also make for
it a grating, a network of bronze, and on the net you shall make four bronze
rings at its four corners. [5]And you shall set it under the ledge of the altar so
that the net extends halfway down the altar. [6]And you shall make poles for
the altar, poles of acacia wood, and overlay them with bronze. [7]And the
poles shall be put through the rings, so that the poles are on the two sides of
the altar when it is carried. [8]†You shall make it hollow, with boards. As it
has been shown you on the mountain, so shall it be made.

The Court of the Tabernacle

9 “You shall make the court of the tabernacle. On the south side the
court shall have hangings of fine twined linen a hundred cubits long for one
side. 10 Its twenty pillars and their twenty bases shall be of bronze, but the
hooks of the pillars and their fillets shall be of silver. 11 And likewise for its
length on the north side there shall be hangings a hundred cubits long, its
pillars twenty and their bases twenty, of bronze, but the hooks of the pillars
and their fillets shall be of silver. 12 And for the breadth of the court on the
west side there shall be hangings for fifty cubits, with ten pillars and ten
bases. 13 The breadth of the court on the front to the east shall be fifty cubits.
14 The hangings for the one side of the gate shall be fifteen cubits, with their
three pillars and three bases. 15 On the other side the hangings shall be
fifteen cubits, with their three pillars and three bases. 16 For the gate of the
court there shall be a screen twenty cubits long, of blue and purple and
scarlet yarns and fine twined linen, embroidered with needlework. It shall
have four pillars and with them four bases. 17 All the pillars around the court
shall be filleted with silver. Their hooks shall be of silver, and their bases of
bronze. 18 The length of the court shall be a hundred cubits, the breadth
fifty, and the height five cubits, with hangings of fine twined linen and
bases of bronze. 19 All the utensils of the tabernacle for every use, and all its
pegs and all the pegs of the court, shall be of bronze.

Oil for the Lamp

[20] “You shall command the people of Israel that they bring to you pure beaten olive oil for the light, that a lamp may regularly be set up to burn. [21] In the tent of meeting, outside the veil that is before the testimony, Aaron and his sons shall tend it from evening to morning before the Lord. It shall be a statute forever to be observed throughout their generations by the people of Israel.

The Priests’ Garments

28 [1]†“Then bring near to you Aaron your brother, and his sons with
him, from among the people of Israel, to serve me as priests—Aaron and
Aaron’s sons, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar. [2]†And you shall make
holy garments for Aaron your brother, for glory and for beauty. [3]†You shall
speak to all the skillful, whom I have filled with a spirit of skill, that they
make Aaron’s garments to consecrate him for my priesthood. [4]†These are
the garments that they shall make: a breastpiece, an ephod, a robe, a coat of
checker work, a turban, and a sash. They shall make holy garments for
Aaron your brother and his sons to serve me as priests. [5]They shall receive
gold, blue and purple and scarlet yarns, and fine twined linen.

[6]“And they shall make the ephod of gold, of blue and purple and scarlet
yarns, and of fine twined linen, skillfully worked. [7]It shall have two
shoulder pieces attached to its two edges, so that it may be joined together.
[8]†And the skillfully woven band on it shall be made like it and be of one
piece with it, of gold, blue and purple and scarlet yarns, and fine twined
linen. [9]†You shall take two onyx stones, and engrave on them the names of
the sons of Israel, [10]†six of their names on the one stone, and the names of
the remaining six on the other stone, in the order of their birth. [11]†As a
jeweler engraves signets, so shall you engrave the two stones with the
names of the sons of Israel. You shall enclose them in settings of gold
filigree. [12]†And you shall set the two stones on the shoulder pieces of the
ephod, as stones of remembrance for the sons of Israel. And Aaron shall
bear their names before the Lord on his two shoulders for remembrance.
[13]You shall make settings of gold filigree, [14]and two chains of pure gold,
twisted like cords; and you shall attach the corded chains to the settings.

[15]‡†“You shall make a breastpiece of judgment, in skilled work. In the
style of the ephod you shall make it—of gold, blue and purple and scarlet
yarns, and fine twined linen shall you make it. [16]†It shall be square and
doubled, a span[1] its length and a span its breadth. [17]‡You shall set in it four
rows of stones. A row of sardius,[1] topaz, and carbuncle shall be the first
row; [18]and the second row an emerald, a sapphire, and a diamond; [19]and the

third row a jacinth, an agate, and an amethyst; [20]and the fourth row a beryl,
an onyx, and a jasper. They shall be set in gold filigree. [21]There shall be
twelve stones with their names according to the names of the sons of Israel.
They shall be like signets, each engraved with its name, for the twelve
tribes. [22]You shall make for the breastpiece twisted chains like cords, of
pure gold. [23]And you shall make for the breastpiece two rings of gold, and
put the two rings on the two edges of the breastpiece. [24]And you shall put
the two cords of gold in the two rings at the edges of the breastpiece. [25]The
two ends of the two cords you shall attach to the two settings of filigree,
and so attach it in front to the shoulder pieces of the ephod. [26]You shall
make two rings of gold, and put them at the two ends of the breastpiece, on
its inside edge next to the ephod. [27]And you shall make two rings of gold,
and attach them in front to the lower part of the two shoulder pieces of the
ephod, at its seam above the skillfully woven band of the ephod. [28]And they
shall bind the breastpiece by its rings to the rings of the ephod with a lace of
blue, so that it may lie on the skillfully woven band of the ephod, so that the
breastpiece shall not come loose from the ephod. [29]†So Aaron shall bear the
names of the sons of Israel in the breastpiece of judgment on his heart,
when he goes into the Holy Place, to bring them to regular remembrance
before the Lord. [30]†And in the breastpiece of judgment you shall put the
Urim and the Thummim, and they shall be on Aaron's heart, when he goes
in before the Lord. Thus Aaron shall bear the judgment of the people of
Israel on his heart before the Lord regularly.

[31]"You shall make the robe of the ephod all of blue. [32]It shall have an
opening for the head in the middle of it, with a woven binding around the
opening, like the opening in a garment,[2] so that it may not tear. [33]†On its
hem you shall make pomegranates of blue and purple and scarlet yarns,
around its hem, with bells of gold between them, [34]a golden bell and a
pomegranate, a golden bell and a pomegranate, around the hem of the robe.
[35]†And it shall be on Aaron when he ministers, and its sound shall be heard
when he goes into the Holy Place before the Lord, and when he comes out,
so that he does not die.

[36]† "You shall make a plate of pure gold and engrave on it, like the
engraving of a signet, 'Holy to the Lord.' [37]†And you shall fasten it on the
turban by a cord of blue. It shall be on the front of the turban. [38]†It shall be

on Aaron's forehead, and Aaron shall bear any guilt from the holy things that the people of Israel consecrate as their holy gifts. It shall regularly be on his forehead, that they may be accepted before the LORD.

39 † "You shall weave the coat in checker work of fine linen, and you shall make a turban of fine linen, and you shall make a sash embroidered with needlework.

40 † "For Aaron's sons you shall make coats and sashes and caps. You shall make them for glory and beauty. 41 † And you shall put them on Aaron your brother, and on his sons with him, and shall anoint them and ordain them and consecrate them, that they may serve me as priests. 42 † You shall make for them linen undergarments to cover their naked flesh. They shall reach from the hips to the thighs; 43 † and they shall be on Aaron and on his sons when they go into the tent of meeting or when they come near the altar to minister in the Holy Place, lest they bear guilt and die. This shall be a statute forever for him and for his offspring after him.

Consecration of the Priests

29 [1]†“Now this is what you shall do to them to consecrate them, that
they may serve me as priests. Take one bull of the herd and two rams
without blemish, [2]†and unleavened bread, unleavened cakes mixed with oil,
and unleavened wafers smeared with oil. You shall make them of fine wheat
flour. [3]†You shall put them in one basket and bring them in the basket, and
bring the bull and the two rams. [4]‡†You shall bring Aaron and his sons to
the entrance of the tent of meeting and wash them with water. [5]Then you
shall take the garments, and put on Aaron the coat and the robe of the
ephod, and the ephod, and the breastpiece, and gird him with the skillfully
woven band of the ephod. [6]And you shall set the turban on his head and put
the holy crown on the turban. [7]You shall take the anointing oil and pour it
on his head and anoint him. [8]Then you shall bring his sons and put coats on
them, [9]‡†and you shall gird Aaron and his sons with sashes and bind caps
on them. And the priesthood shall be theirs by a statute forever. Thus you
shall ordain Aaron and his sons.

[10]†“Then you shall bring the bull before the tent of meeting. Aaron and
his sons shall lay their hands on the head of the bull. [11]Then you shall kill
the bull before the Lord at the entrance of the tent of meeting, [12]†and shall
take part of the blood of the bull and put it on the horns of the altar with
your finger, and the rest of[1] the blood you shall pour out at the base of the
altar. [13]†And you shall take all the fat that covers the entrails, and the long
lobe of the liver, and the two kidneys with the fat that is on them, and burn
them on the altar. [14]†But the flesh of the bull and its skin and its dung you
shall burn with fire outside the camp; it is a sin offering.

[15]“Then you shall take one of the rams, and Aaron and his sons shall lay
their hands on the head of the ram, [16]†and you shall kill the ram and shall
take its blood and throw it against the sides of the altar. [17]Then you shall cut
the ram into pieces, and wash its entrails and its legs, and put them with its
pieces and its head, [18]†and burn the whole ram on the altar. It is a burnt
offering to the Lord. It is a pleasing aroma, a food offering[2] to the Lord.

19 “You shall take the other ram, and Aaron and his sons shall lay their
hands on the head of the ram, 20 and you shall kill the ram and take part of
its blood and put it on the tip of the right ear of Aaron and on the tips of the
right ears of his sons, and on the thumbs of their right hands and on the
great toes of their right feet, and throw the rest of the blood against the sides
of the altar. 21 Then you shall take part of the blood that is on the altar, and
of the anointing oil, and sprinkle it on Aaron and his garments, and on his
sons and his sons’ garments with him. He and his garments shall be holy,
and his sons and his sons’ garments with him.
22 “You shall also take the fat from the ram and the fat tail and the fat that
covers the entrails, and the long lobe of the liver and the two kidneys with
the fat that is on them, and the right thigh (for it is a ram of ordination),
23 and one loaf of bread and one cake of bread made with oil, and one wafer
out of the basket of unleavened bread that is before the Lord. 24 You shall
put all these on the palms of Aaron and on the palms of his sons, and wave
them for a wave offering before the Lord. 25 Then you shall take them from
their hands and burn them on the altar on top of the burnt offering, as a
pleasing aroma before the Lord. It is a food offering to the Lord.
26 “You shall take the breast of the ram of Aaron’s ordination and wave it
for a wave offering before the Lord, and it shall be your portion. 27 And you
shall consecrate the breast of the wave offering that is waved and the thigh
of the priests’ portion that is contributed from the ram of ordination, from
what was Aaron’s and his sons’. 28 It shall be for Aaron and his sons as a
perpetual due from the people of Israel, for it is a contribution. It shall be a
contribution from the people of Israel from their peace offerings, their
contribution to the Lord.
29 “The holy garments of Aaron shall be for his sons after him; they shall
be anointed in them and ordained in them. 30 The son who succeeds him as
priest, who comes into the tent of meeting to minister in the Holy Place,
shall wear them seven days.
31 “You shall take the ram of ordination and boil its flesh in a holy place.
32 And Aaron and his sons shall eat the flesh of the ram and the bread that is
in the basket in the entrance of the tent of meeting. 33 They shall eat those
things with which atonement was made at their ordination and consecration,
but an outsider shall not eat of them, because they are holy. 34 And if any of

the flesh for the ordination or of the bread remain until the morning, then you shall burn the remainder with fire. It shall not be eaten, because it is holy.

35 “Thus you shall do to Aaron and to his sons, according to all that I have commanded you. Through seven days shall you ordain them, 36 † and every day you shall offer a bull as a sin offering for atonement. Also you shall purify the altar, when you make atonement for it, and shall anoint it to consecrate it. 37 † Seven days you shall make atonement for the altar and consecrate it, and the altar shall be most holy. Whatever touches the altar shall become holy.

38 † “Now this is what you shall offer on the altar: two lambs a year old day by day regularly. 39 One lamb you shall offer in the morning, and the other lamb you shall offer at twilight. 40 † And with the first lamb a tenth seah[1] of fine flour mingled with a fourth of a hin[2] of beaten oil, and a fourth of a hin of wine for a drink offering. 41 † The other lamb you shall offer at twilight, and shall offer with it a grain offering and its drink offering, as in the morning, for a pleasing aroma, a food offering to the Lord. 42 † It shall be a regular burnt offering throughout your generations at the entrance of the tent of meeting before the Lord, where I will meet with you, to speak to you there. 43 † There I will meet with the people of Israel, and it shall be sanctified by my glory. 44 † I will consecrate the tent of meeting and the altar. Aaron also and his sons I will consecrate to serve me as priests. 45 † I will dwell among the people of Israel and will be their God. 46 † And they shall know that I am the Lord their God, who brought them out of the land of Egypt that I might dwell among them. I am the Lord their God.

The Altar of Incense

30 [1]‡‡“You shall make an altar on which to burn incense; you shall
make it of acacia wood. [2]† A cubit[1] shall be its length, and a cubit its
breadth. It shall be square, and two cubits shall be its height. Its horns shall
be of one piece with it. [3]You shall overlay it with pure gold, its top and
around its sides and its horns. And you shall make a molding of gold around
it. [4]And you shall make two golden rings for it. Under its molding on two
opposite sides of it you shall make them, and they shall be holders for poles
with which to carry it. [5]You shall make the poles of acacia wood and
overlay them with gold. [6]†And you shall put it in front of the veil that is
above the ark of the testimony, in front of the mercy seat that is above the
testimony, where I will meet with you. [7]†And Aaron shall burn fragrant
incense on it. Every morning when he dresses the lamps he shall burn it,
[8]†and when Aaron sets up the lamps at twilight, he shall burn it, a regular
incense offering before the Lord throughout your generations. [9]†You shall
not offer unauthorized incense on it, or a burnt offering, or a grain offering,
and you shall not pour a drink offering on it. [10]† Aaron shall make
atonement on its horns once a year. With the blood of the sin offering of
atonement he shall make atonement for it once in the year throughout your
generations. It is most holy to the Lord.”

The Census Tax

11 ‡‡‡The Lord said to Moses, 12 †“When you take the census of the people
of Israel, then each shall give a ransom for his life to the Lord when you
number them, that there be no plague among them when you number them.
13 †Each one who is numbered in the census shall give this: half a shekel[2]
according to the shekel of the sanctuary (the shekel is twenty gerahs),[3] half
a shekel as an offering to the Lord. 14 †Everyone who is numbered in the
census, from twenty years old and upward, shall give the Lord’s offering.
15 ‡‡The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less, than the
half shekel, when you give the Lord’s offering to make atonement for your
lives. 16 †You shall take the atonement money from the people of Israel and
shall give it for the service of the tent of meeting, that it may bring the
people of Israel to remembrance before the Lord, so as to make atonement
for your lives.”

The Bronze Basin

17 ✝✝✝ The Lord said to Moses, 18 “You shall also make a basin of bronze,
with its stand of bronze, for washing. You shall put it between the tent of
meeting and the altar, and you shall put water in it, 19 ✝ with which Aaron and
his sons shall wash their hands and their feet. 20 ✝ When they go into the tent
of meeting, or when they come near the altar to minister, to burn a food
offering[1] to the Lord, they shall wash with water, so that they may not die.
21 ✝ They shall wash their hands and their feet, so that they may not die. It
shall be a statute forever to them, even to him and to his offspring
throughout their generations.”

The Anointing Oil and Incense

22 ‡ ‡ ‡ The Lord said to Moses, 23 ‡ “Take the finest spices: of liquid myrrh
500 shekels, and of sweet-smelling cinnamon half as much, that is, 250, and
250 of aromatic cane, 24 ‡ and 500 of cassia, according to the shekel of the
sanctuary, and a hin[2] of olive oil. 25 ‡ And you shall make of these a sacred
anointing oil blended as by the perfumer; it shall be a holy anointing oil.
26 ‡ With it you shall anoint the tent of meeting and the ark of the testimony,
27 ‡ and the table and all its utensils, and the lampstand and its utensils, and
the altar of incense, 28 and the altar of burnt offering with all its utensils and
the basin and its stand. 29 ‡ You shall consecrate them, that they may be most
holy. Whatever touches them will become holy. 30 You shall anoint Aaron
and his sons, and consecrate them, that they may serve me as priests. 31 And
you shall say to the people of Israel, ‘This shall be my holy anointing oil
throughout your generations. 32 It shall not be poured on the body of an
ordinary person, and you shall make no other like it in composition. It is
holy, and it shall be holy to you. 33 ‡ Whoever compounds any like it or
whoever puts any of it on an outsider shall be cut off from his people.’”

34 ‡ ‡ The Lord said to Moses, “Take sweet spices, stacte, and onycha, and
galbanum, sweet spices with pure frankincense (of each shall there be an
equal part), 35 and make an incense blended as by the perfumer, seasoned
with salt, pure and holy. 36 ‡ You shall beat some of it very small, and put
part of it before the testimony in the tent of meeting where I shall meet with
you. It shall be most holy for you. 37 ‡ And the incense that you shall make
according to its composition, you shall not make for yourselves. It shall be
for you holy to the Lord. 38 Whoever makes any like it to use as perfume
shall be cut off from his people.”

Oholiab and Bezalel

31 [1]The Lord said to Moses, [2]“See, I have called by name Bezalel
the son of Uri, son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, [3]and I have filled him with
the Spirit of God, with ability and intelligence, with knowledge and all
craftsmanship, [4] to devise artistic designs, to work in gold, silver, and
bronze, [5]in cutting stones for setting, and in carving wood, to work in every
craft. [6] And behold, I have appointed with him Oholiab, the son of
Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan. And I have given to all able men ability,
that they may make all that I have commanded you: [7]the tent of meeting,
and the ark of the testimony, and the mercy seat that is on it, and all the
furnishings of the tent, [8]the table and its utensils, and the pure lampstand
with all its utensils, and the altar of incense, [9]and the altar of burnt offering
with all its utensils, and the basin and its stand, [10]and the finely worked
garments,[1] the holy garments for Aaron the priest and the garments of his
sons, for their service as priests, [11]and the anointing oil and the fragrant
incense for the Holy Place. According to all that I have commanded you,
they shall do.”

The Sabbath

12 ‡ † And the Lord said to Moses, 13 † “You are to speak to the people of
Israel and say, ‘Above all you shall keep my Sabbaths, for this is a sign
between me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that
I, the Lord, sanctify you. 14 † You shall keep the Sabbath, because it is holy
for you. Everyone who profanes it shall be put to death. Whoever does any
work on it, that soul shall be cut off from among his people. 15 Six days shall
work be done, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of solemn rest, holy to the
Lord. Whoever does any work on the Sabbath day shall be put to death.
16 † Therefore the people of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, observing the
Sabbath throughout their generations, as a covenant forever. 17 † It is a sign
forever between me and the people of Israel that in six days the Lord made
heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed.’”
18 † And he gave to Moses, when he had finished speaking with him on
Mount Sinai, the two tablets of the testimony, tablets of stone, written with
the finger of God.

The Golden Calf

32 [1]†When the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from
the mountain, the people gathered themselves together to Aaron and said to
him, “Up, make us gods who shall go before us. As for this Moses, the man
who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has
become of him.” [2]†So Aaron said to them, “Take off the rings of gold that
are in the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring them
to me.” [3]So all the people took off the rings of gold that were in their ears
and brought them to Aaron. [4]†And he received the gold from their hand and
fashioned it with a graving tool and made a golden[1] calf. And they said,
“These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of
Egypt!” [5]†When Aaron saw this, he built an altar before it. And Aaron made
proclamation and said, “Tomorrow shall be a feast to the Lord.” [6]†And they
rose up early the next day and offered burnt offerings and brought peace
offerings. And the people sat down to eat and drink and rose up to play.

[7]†And the Lord said to Moses, “Go down, for your people, whom you
brought up out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves. [8]They have
turned aside quickly out of the way that I commanded them. They have
made for themselves a golden calf and have worshiped it and sacrificed to it
and said, These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land
of Egypt!’” [9]†And the Lord said to Moses, “I have seen this people, and
behold, it is a stiff-necked people. [10]†Now therefore let me alone, that my
wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them, in order that I
may make a great nation of you.”

[11]†But Moses implored the Lord his God and said, “O Lord, why does
your wrath burn hot against your people, whom you have brought out of the
land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand? [12]†Why should the
Egyptians say, ‘With evil intent did he bring them out, to kill them in the
mountains and to consume them from the face of the earth’? Turn from your
burning anger and relent from this disaster against your people.
[13]†Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, your servants, to whom you
swore by your own self, and said to them, ‘I will multiply your offspring as
the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have promised I will give to your

offspring, and they shall inherit it forever.’” 14 † And the Lord relented from
the disaster that he had spoken of bringing on his people.

15 † Then Moses turned and went down from the mountain with the two
tablets of the testimony in his hand, tablets that were written on both sides;
on the front and on the back they were written. 16 † The tablets were the work
of God, and the writing was the writing of God, engraved on the tablets.
17 † When Joshua heard the noise of the people as they shouted, he said to
Moses, “There is a noise of war in the camp.” 18 † But he said, “It is not the
sound of shouting for victory, or the sound of the cry of defeat, but the
sound of singing that I hear.” 19 † And as soon as he came near the camp and
saw the calf and the dancing, Moses’ anger burned hot, and he threw the
tablets out of his hands and broke them at the foot of the mountain. 20 † He
took the calf that they had made and burned it with fire and ground it to
powder and scattered it on the water and made the people of Israel drink it.

21 And Moses said to Aaron, “What did this people do to you that you
have brought such a great sin upon them?” 22 † And Aaron said, “Let not the
anger of my lord burn hot. You know the people, that they are set on evil.
23 For they said to me, ‘Make us gods who shall go before us. As for this
Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not
know what has become of him.’ 24 † So I said to them, ‘Let any who have
gold take it off.’ So they gave it to me, and I threw it into the fire, and out
came this calf.”

25 † And when Moses saw that the people had broken loose (for Aaron had
let them break loose, to the derision of their enemies), 26 † then Moses stood
in the gate of the camp and said, “Who is on the Lord’s side? Come to me.”
And all the sons of Levi gathered around him. 27 † And he said to them,
“Thus says the Lord God of Israel, ‘Put your sword on your side each of
you, and go to and fro from gate to gate throughout the camp, and each of
you kill his brother and his companion and his neighbor.’” 28 † And the sons
of Levi did according to the word of Moses. And that day about three
thousand men of the people fell. 29 † And Moses said, “Today you have been
ordained for the service of the Lord, each one at the cost of his son and of
his brother, so that he might bestow a blessing upon you this day.”

30 † The next day Moses said to the people, “You have sinned a great sin.
And now I will go up to the Lord; perhaps I can make atonement for your

sin.” 31 † So Moses returned to the Lord and said, “Alas, this people has
sinned a great sin. They have made for themselves gods of gold. 32 † But
now, if you will forgive their sin—but if not, please blot me out of your
book that you have written.” 33 † But the Lord said to Moses, “Whoever has
sinned against me, I will blot out of my book. 34 † But now go, lead the
people to the place about which I have spoken to you; behold, my angel
shall go before you. Nevertheless, in the day when I visit, I will visit their
sin upon them.”

35 † Then the Lord sent a plague on the people, because they made the calf,
the one that Aaron made.

The Command to Leave Sinai

33 [1]†The Lord said to Moses, “Depart; go up from here, you and the
people whom you have brought up out of the land of Egypt, to the land of
which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying, ‘To your offspring I
will give it.’ [2]†I will send an angel before you, and I will drive out the
Canaanites, the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the
Jebusites. [3]†Go up to a land flowing with milk and honey; but I will not go
up among you, lest I consume you on the way, for you are a stiff-necked
people.”

[4]†When the people heard this disastrous word, they mourned, and no one
put on his ornaments. [5]For the Lord had said to Moses, “Say to the people of
Israel, ‘You are a stiff-necked people; if for a single moment I should go up
among you, I would consume you. So now take off your ornaments, that I
may know what to do with you.’” [6]†Therefore the people of Israel stripped
themselves of their ornaments, from Mount Horeb onward.

The Tent of Meeting

7 ‡†Now Moses used to take the tent and pitch it outside the camp, far off
from the camp, and he called it the tent of meeting. And everyone who
sought the Lord would go out to the tent of meeting, which was outside the
camp. 8 †Whenever Moses went out to the tent, all the people would rise up,
and each would stand at his tent door, and watch Moses until he had gone
into the tent. 9 † When Moses entered the tent, the pillar of cloud would
descend and stand at the entrance of the tent, and the Lord [1] would speak
with Moses. 10 †And when all the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at
the entrance of the tent, all the people would rise up and worship, each at
his tent door. 11 †Thus the Lord used to speak to Moses face to face, as a man
speaks to his friend. When Moses turned again into the camp, his assistant
Joshua the son of Nun, a young man, would not depart from the tent.

Moses' Intercession

12 ‡‡‡Moses said to the Lord, "See, you say to me, 'Bring up this people,'
but you have not let me know whom you will send with me. Yet you have
said, 'I know you by name, and you have also found favor in my sight.'
13 †Now therefore, if I have found favor in your sight, please show me now
your ways, that I may know you in order to find favor in your sight.
Consider too that this nation is your people." 14 †And he said, "My presence
will go with you, and I will give you rest." 15 And he said to him, "If your
presence will not go with me, do not bring us up from here. 16 †For how
shall it be known that I have found favor in your sight, I and your people? Is
it not in your going with us, so that we are distinct, I and your people, from
every other people on the face of the earth?"

17 †And the Lord said to Moses, "This very thing that you have spoken I
will do, for you have found favor in my sight, and I know you by name."
18 †Moses said, "Please show me your glory." 19 ‡†And he said, "I will make
all my goodness pass before you and will proclaim before you my name
'The Lord.' And I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will
show mercy on whom I will show mercy. 20 †But," he said, "you cannot see
my face, for man shall not see me and live." 21 †And the Lord said, "Behold,
there is a place by me where you shall stand on the rock, 22 †and while my
glory passes by I will put you in a cleft of the rock, and I will cover you
with my hand until I have passed by. 23 †Then I will take away my hand, and
you shall see my back, but my face shall not be seen."

Moses Makes New Tablets

34 [1]The Lord said to Moses, “Cut for yourself two tablets of stone
like the first, and I will write on the tablets the words that were on the first
tablets, which you broke. [2]Be ready by the morning, and come up in the
morning to Mount Sinai, and present yourself there to me on the top of the
mountain. [3]No one shall come up with you, and let no one be seen
throughout all the mountain. Let no flocks or herds graze opposite that
mountain.” [4]So Moses cut two tablets of stone like the first. And he rose
early in the morning and went up on Mount Sinai, as the Lord had
commanded him, and took in his hand two tablets of stone. [5]The Lord
descended in the cloud and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name
of the Lord. [6]The Lord passed before him and proclaimed, “The Lord, the
Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in
steadfast love and faithfulness, [7]keeping steadfast love for thousands,[1]
forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear
the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the
children’s children, to the third and the fourth generation.” [8]And Moses
quickly bowed his head toward the earth and worshiped. [9]And he said, If
now I have found favor in your sight, O Lord, please let the Lord go in the
midst of us, for it is a stiff-necked people, and pardon our iniquity and our
sin, and take us for your inheritance.”

The Covenant Renewed

10 ‡ ‡ † And he said, “Behold, I am making a covenant. Before all your
people I will do marvels, such as have not been created in all the earth or in
any nation. And all the people among whom you are shall see the work of
the Lord, for it is an awesome thing that I will do with you.
11 † “Observe what I command you this day. Behold, I will drive out
before you the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the
Hivites, and the Jebusites. 12 † Take care, lest you make a covenant with the
inhabitants of the land to which you go, lest it become a snare in your
midst. 13 † You shall tear down their altars and break their pillars and cut
down their Asherim 14 † (for you shall worship no other god, for the Lord,
whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God), 15 † lest you make a covenant with
the inhabitants of the land, and when they whore after their gods and
sacrifice to their gods and you are invited, you eat of his sacrifice, 16 † and
you take of their daughters for your sons, and their daughters whore after
their gods and make your sons whore after their gods.
17 † “You shall not make for yourself any gods of cast metal.
18 † “You shall keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Seven days you shall
eat unleavened bread, as I commanded you, at the time appointed in the
month Abib, for in the month Abib you came out from Egypt. 19 ‡ All that
open the womb are mine, all your male[1] livestock, the firstborn of cow and
sheep. 20 The firstborn of a donkey you shall redeem with a lamb, or if you
will not redeem it you shall break its neck. All the firstborn of your sons
you shall redeem. And none shall appear before me empty-handed.
21 † “Six days you shall work, but on the seventh day you shall rest. In
plowing time and in harvest you shall rest. 22 † You shall observe the Feast of
Weeks, the firstfruits of wheat harvest, and the Feast of Ingathering at the
year’s end. 23 † Three times in the year shall all your males appear before the
Lord God, the God of Israel. 24 † For I will cast out nations before you and
enlarge your borders; no one shall covet your land, when you go up to
appear before the Lord your God three times in the year.
25 † “You shall not offer the blood of my sacrifice with anything leavened,
or let the sacrifice of the Feast of the Passover remain until the morning.

[26] † The best of the firstfruits of your ground you shall bring to the house of the Lord your God. You shall not boil a young goat in its mother's milk."

[27] † And the Lord said to Moses, "Write these words, for in accordance with these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel." [28] † So he was there with the Lord forty days and forty nights. He neither ate bread nor drank water. And he wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant, the Ten Commandments.[2]

The Shining Face of Moses

29 ‡ † When Moses came down from Mount Sinai, with the two tablets of
the testimony in his hand as he came down from the mountain, Moses did
not know that the skin of his face shone because he had been talking with
God.[3] 30 † Aaron and all the people of Israel saw Moses, and behold, the
skin of his face shone, and they were afraid to come near him. 31 † But Moses
called to them, and Aaron and all the leaders of the congregation returned to
him, and Moses talked with them. 32 † Afterward all the people of Israel
came near, and he commanded them all that the Lord had spoken with him
in Mount Sinai. 33 † And when Moses had finished speaking with them, he
put a veil over his face.

34 † Whenever Moses went in before the Lord to speak with him, he would
remove the veil, until he came out. And when he came out and told the
people of Israel what he was commanded, 35 † the people of Israel would see
the face of Moses, that the skin of Moses' face was shining. And Moses
would put the veil over his face again, until he went in to speak with him.

Sabbath Regulations

35 [1] †Moses assembled all the congregation of the people of Israel
and said to them, “These are the things that the Lord has commanded you to
do. [2] †Six days work shall be done, but on the seventh day you shall have a
Sabbath of solemn rest, holy to the Lord. Whoever does any work on it shall
be put to death. [3] †You shall kindle no fire in all your dwelling places on the
Sabbath day.”

Contributions for the Tabernacle

4 ‡Moses said to all the congregation of the people of Israel, “This is the
thing that the Lord has commanded. 5 †Take from among you a contribution
to the Lord. Whoever is of a generous heart, let him bring the Lord’s
contribution: gold, silver, and bronze; 6 blue and purple and scarlet yarns and
fine twined linen; goats’ hair, 7 tanned rams’ skins, and goatskins;[1] acacia
wood, 8 oil for the light, spices for the anointing oil and for the fragrant
incense, 9 and onyx stones and stones for setting, for the ephod and for the
breastpiece.

10 †“Let every skillful craftsman among you come and make all that the
Lord has commanded: 11 †the tabernacle, its tent and its covering, its hooks
and its frames, its bars, its pillars, and its bases; 12 the ark with its poles, the
mercy seat, and the veil of the screen; 13 the table with its poles and all its
utensils, and the bread of the Presence; 14 the lampstand also for the light,
with its utensils and its lamps, and the oil for the light; 15 and the altar of
incense, with its poles, and the anointing oil and the fragrant incense, and
the screen for the door, at the door of the tabernacle; 16 the altar of burnt
offering, with its grating of bronze, its poles, and all its utensils, the basin
and its stand; 17 the hangings of the court, its pillars and its bases, and the
screen for the gate of the court; 18 the pegs of the tabernacle and the pegs of
the court, and their cords; 19 †the finely worked garments for ministering[2] in
the Holy Place, the holy garments for Aaron the priest, and the garments of
his sons, for their service as priests.”

20 Then all the congregation of the people of Israel departed from the
presence of Moses. 21 † And they came, everyone whose heart stirred him,
and everyone whose spirit moved him, and brought the Lord’s contribution
to be used for the tent of meeting, and for all its service, and for the holy
garments. 22 †So they came, both men and women. All who were of a willing
heart brought brooches and earrings and signet rings and armlets, all sorts
of gold objects, every man dedicating an offering of gold to the Lord. 23 And
every one who possessed blue or purple or scarlet yarns or fine linen or
goats’ hair or tanned rams’ skins or goatskins brought them. 24 †Everyone

who could make a contribution of silver or bronze brought it as the LORD's contribution. And every one who possessed acacia wood of any use in the work brought it. [25]†And every skillful woman spun with her hands, and they all brought what they had spun in blue and purple and scarlet yarns and fine twined linen. [26]All the women whose hearts stirred them to use their skill spun the goats' hair. [27]†And the leaders brought onyx stones and stones to be set, for the ephod and for the breastpiece, [28]and spices and oil for the light, and for the anointing oil, and for the fragrant incense. [29]†All the men and women, the people of Israel, whose heart moved them to bring anything for the work that the LORD had commanded by Moses to be done brought it as a freewill offering to the LORD.

Construction of the Tabernacle

30 †Then Moses said to the people of Israel, “See, the Lord has called by
name Bezalel the son of Uri, son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah; 31 †and he has
filled him with the Spirit of God, with skill, with intelligence, with
knowledge, and with all craftsmanship, 32 to devise artistic designs, to work
in gold and silver and bronze, 33 in cutting stones for setting, and in carving
wood, for work in every skilled craft. 34 †And he has inspired him to teach,
both him and Oholiab the son of Ahisamach of the tribe of Dan. 35 †He has
filled them with skill to do every sort of work done by an engraver or by a
designer or by an embroiderer in blue and purple and scarlet yarns and fine
twined linen, or by a weaver—by any sort of workman or skilled designer.

36 1 †Bezalel and Oholiab and every craftsman in whom the Lord has
put skill and intelligence to know how to do any work in the construction of
the sanctuary shall work in accordance with all that the Lord has
commanded.”

2 †And Moses called Bezalel and Oholiab and every craftsman in whose
mind the Lord had put skill, everyone whose heart stirred him up to come to
do the work. 3 And they received from Moses all the contribution that the
people of Israel had brought for doing the work on the sanctuary. They still
kept bringing him freewill offerings every morning, 4 † so that all the
craftsmen who were doing every sort of task on the sanctuary came, each
from the task that he was doing, 5 †and said to Moses, “The people bring
much more than enough for doing the work that the Lord has commanded
us to do.” 6 So Moses gave command, and word was proclaimed throughout
the camp, “Let no man or woman do anything more for the contribution for
the sanctuary.” So the people were restrained from bringing, 7 † for the
material they had was sufficient to do all the work, and more.

8 †And all the craftsmen among the workmen made the tabernacle with
ten curtains. They were made of fine twined linen and blue and purple and
scarlet yarns, with cherubim skillfully worked. 9 The length of each curtain
was twenty-eight cubits,[1] and the breadth of each curtain four cubits. All
the curtains were the same size.

[10]†He coupled five curtains to one another, and the other five curtains he coupled to one another. [11]He made loops of blue on the edge of the outermost curtain of the first set. Likewise he made them on the edge of the outermost curtain of the second set. [12]He made fifty loops on the one curtain, and he made fifty loops on the edge of the curtain that was in the second set. The loops were opposite one another. [13]And he made fifty clasps of gold, and coupled the curtains one to the other with clasps. So the tabernacle was a single whole.

[14]He also made curtains of goats' hair for a tent over the tabernacle. He made eleven curtains. [15]The length of each curtain was thirty cubits, and the breadth of each curtain four cubits. The eleven curtains were the same size. [16]He coupled five curtains by themselves, and six curtains by themselves. [17]And he made fifty loops on the edge of the outermost curtain of the one set, and fifty loops on the edge of the other connecting curtain. [18]And he made fifty clasps of bronze to couple the tent together that it might be a single whole. [19]And he made for the tent a covering of tanned rams' skins and goatskins.

[20]Then he made the upright frames for the tabernacle of acacia wood. [21]Ten cubits was the length of a frame, and a cubit and a half the breadth of each frame. [22]Each frame had two tenons for fitting together. He did this for all the frames of the tabernacle. [23]The frames for the tabernacle he made thus: twenty frames for the south side. [24]And he made forty bases of silver under the twenty frames, two bases under one frame for its two tenons, and two bases under the next frame for its two tenons. [25]For the second side of the tabernacle, on the north side, he made twenty frames [26]and their forty bases of silver, two bases under one frame and two bases under the next frame. [27]For the rear of the tabernacle westward he made six frames. [28]He made two frames for corners of the tabernacle in the rear. [29]And they were separate beneath but joined at the top, at the first ring. He made two of them this way for the two corners. [30]There were eight frames with their bases of silver: sixteen bases, under every frame two bases.

[31]He made bars of acacia wood, five for the frames of the one side of the tabernacle, [32]and five bars for the frames of the other side of the tabernacle, and five bars for the frames of the tabernacle at the rear westward. [33]And he

made the middle bar to run from end to end halfway up the frames. [34]And he overlaid the frames with gold, and made their rings of gold for holders for the bars, and overlaid the bars with gold.

[35]He made the veil of blue and purple and scarlet yarns and fine twined linen; with cherubim skillfully worked into it he made it. [36]And for it he made four pillars of acacia and overlaid them with gold. Their hooks were of gold, and he cast for them four bases of silver. [37]He also made a screen for the entrance of the tent, of blue and purple and scarlet yarns and fine twined linen, embroidered with needlework, [38]and its five pillars with their hooks. He overlaid their capitals, and their fillets were of gold, but their five bases were of bronze.

Making the Ark

37 [1]‡‡Bezalel made the ark of acacia wood. Two cubits[1] and a half
was its length, a cubit and a half its breadth, and a cubit and a half its
height. [2]†And he overlaid it with pure gold inside and outside, and made a
molding of gold around it. [3]And he cast for it four rings of gold for its four
feet, two rings on its one side and two rings on its other side. [4]‡And he
made poles of acacia wood and overlaid them with gold [5]and put the poles
into the rings on the sides of the ark to carry the ark. [6]And he made a mercy
seat of pure gold. Two cubits and a half was its length, and a cubit and a
half its breadth. [7]†And he made two cherubim of gold. He made them of
hammered work on the two ends of the mercy seat, [8]one cherub on the one
end, and one cherub on the other end. Of one piece with the mercy seat he
made the cherubim on its two ends. [9]The cherubim spread out their wings
above, overshadowing the mercy seat with their wings, with their faces one
to another; toward the mercy seat were the faces of the cherubim.

Making the Table

10 He also made the table of acacia wood. Two cubits was its length, a
cubit its breadth, and a cubit and a half its height. 11 And he overlaid it with
pure gold, and made a molding of gold around it. 12 And he made a rim
around it a handbreadth[2] wide, and made a molding of gold around the rim.
13 He cast for it four rings of gold and fastened the rings to the four corners
at its four legs. 14 Close to the frame were the rings, as holders for the poles
to carry the table. 15 He made the poles of acacia wood to carry the table, and
overlaid them with gold. 16 And he made the vessels of pure gold that were
to be on the table, its plates and dishes for incense, and its bowls and
flagons with which to pour drink offerings.

Making the Lampstand

17 ††He also made the lampstand of pure gold. He made the lampstand of
hammered work. Its base, its stem, its cups, its calyxes, and its flowers were
of one piece with it. 18 And there were six branches going out of its sides,
three branches of the lampstand out of one side of it and three branches of
the lampstand out of the other side of it; 19 three cups made like almond
blossoms, each with calyx and flower, on one branch, and three cups made
like almond blossoms, each with calyx and flower, on the other branch—so
for the six branches going out of the lampstand. 20 †And on the lampstand
itself were four cups made like almond blossoms, with their calyxes and
flowers, 21 and a calyx of one piece with it under each pair of the six
branches going out of it. 22 Their calyxes and their branches were of one
piece with it. The whole of it was a single piece of hammered work of pure
gold. 23 And he made its seven lamps and its tongs and its trays of pure gold.
24 †He made it and all its utensils out of a talent[1] of pure gold.

Making the Altar of Incense

25 He made the altar of incense of acacia wood. Its length was a cubit,
and its breadth was a cubit. It was square, and two cubits was its height. Its
horns were of one piece with it. 26 He overlaid it with pure gold, its top and
around its sides and its horns. And he made a molding of gold around it,
27 and made two rings of gold on it under its molding, on two opposite sides
of it, as holders for the poles with which to carry it. 28 And he made the poles
of acacia wood and overlaid them with gold.

29 He made the holy anointing oil also, and the pure fragrant incense,
blended as by the perfumer.

Making the Altar of Burnt Offering

38 [1] He made the altar of burnt offering of acacia wood. Five cubits[2] was its length, and five cubits its breadth. It was square, and three cubits was its height. [2]He made horns for it on its four corners. Its horns were of one piece with it, and he overlaid it with bronze. [3]And he made all the utensils of the altar, the pots, the shovels, the basins, the forks, and the fire pans. He made all its utensils of bronze. [4]And he made for the altar a grating, a network of bronze, under its ledge, extending halfway down. [5]He cast four rings on the four corners of the bronze grating as holders for the poles. [6]He made the poles of acacia wood and overlaid them with bronze. [7]And he put the poles through the rings on the sides of the altar to carry it with them. He made it hollow, with boards.

Making the Bronze Basin

8 ††He made the basin of bronze and its stand of bronze, from the mirrors
of the ministering women who ministered in the entrance of the tent of
meeting.

Making the Court

[9] And he made the court. For the south side the hangings of the court were of fine twined linen, a hundred cubits; [10] their twenty pillars and their twenty bases were of bronze, but the hooks of the pillars and their fillets were of silver. [11] And for the north side there were hangings of a hundred cubits, their twenty pillars, their twenty bases were of bronze, but the hooks of the pillars and their fillets were of silver. [12] And for the west side were hangings of fifty cubits, their ten pillars, and their ten bases; the hooks of the pillars and their fillets were of silver. [13] And for the front to the east, fifty cubits. [14] The hangings for one side of the gate were fifteen cubits, with their three pillars and three bases. [15] And so for the other side. On both sides of the gate of the court were hangings of fifteen cubits, with their three pillars and their three bases. [16] All the hangings around the court were of fine twined linen. [17] And the bases for the pillars were of bronze, but the hooks of the pillars and their fillets were of silver. The overlaying of their capitals was also of silver, and all the pillars of the court were filleted with silver. [18] And the screen for the gate of the court was embroidered with needlework in blue and purple and scarlet yarns and fine twined linen. It was twenty cubits long and five cubits high in its breadth, corresponding to the hangings of the court. [19] And their pillars were four in number. Their four bases were of bronze, their hooks of silver, and the overlaying of their capitals and their fillets of silver. [20] And all the pegs for the tabernacle and for the court all around were of bronze.

Materials for the Tabernacle

21 ‡ † These are the records of the tabernacle, the tabernacle of the
testimony, as they were recorded at the commandment of Moses, the
responsibility of the Levites under the direction of Ithamar the son of Aaron
the priest. 22 †Bezalel the son of Uri, son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, made
all that the LORD commanded Moses; 23 †and with him was Oholiab the son
of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan, an engraver and designer and
embroiderer in blue and purple and scarlet yarns and fine twined linen.
24 ‡All the gold that was used for the work, in all the construction of the
sanctuary, the gold from the offering, was twenty-nine talents and 730
shekels,[1] by the shekel of the sanctuary. 25 The silver from those of the
congregation who were recorded was a hundred talents and 1,775 shekels,
by the shekel of the sanctuary: 26 †a beka[2] a head (that is, half a shekel, by
the shekel of the sanctuary), for everyone who was listed in the records,
from twenty years old and upward, for 603,550 men. 27 †The hundred talents
of silver were for casting the bases of the sanctuary and the bases of the
veil; a hundred bases for the hundred talents, a talent a base. 28 And of the
1,775 shekels he made hooks for the pillars and overlaid their capitals and
made fillets for them. 29 The bronze that was offered was seventy talents and
2,400 shekels; 30 with it he made the bases for the entrance of the tent of
meeting, the bronze altar and the bronze grating for it and all the utensils of
the altar, 31 the bases around the court, and the bases of the gate of the court,
all the pegs of the tabernacle, and all the pegs around the court.

Making the Priestly Garments

39 [1]From the blue and purple and scarlet yarns they made finely
woven garments,[3] for ministering in the Holy Place. They made the holy
garments for Aaron, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

[2]He made the ephod of gold, blue and purple and scarlet yarns, and fine
twined linen. [3]†And they hammered out gold leaf, and he cut it into threads
to work into the blue and purple and the scarlet yarns, and into the fine
twined linen, in skilled design. [4]They made for the ephod attaching shoulder
pieces, joined to it at its two edges. [5]And the skillfully woven band on it
was of one piece with it and made like it, of gold, blue and purple and
scarlet yarns, and fine twined linen, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

[6]They made the onyx stones, enclosed in settings of gold filigree, and
engraved like the engravings of a signet, according to the names of the sons
of Israel. [7]And he set them on the shoulder pieces of the ephod to be stones
of remembrance for the sons of Israel, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

[8]He made the breastpiece, in skilled work, in the style of the ephod, of
gold, blue and purple and scarlet yarns, and fine twined linen. [9]It was
square. They made the breastpiece doubled, a span[4] its length and a span
its breadth when doubled. [10]And they set in it four rows of stones. A row of
sardius, topaz, and carbuncle was the first row; [11]and the second row, an
emerald, a sapphire, and a diamond; [12]and the third row, a jacinth, an agate,
and an amethyst; [13]and the fourth row, a beryl, an onyx, and a jasper. They
were enclosed in settings of gold filigree. [14]There were twelve stones with
their names according to the names of the sons of Israel. They were like
signets, each engraved with its name, for the twelve tribes. [15]And they made
on the breastpiece twisted chains like cords, of pure gold. [16]And they made
two settings of gold filigree and two gold rings, and put the two rings on the
two edges of the breastpiece. [17]And they put the two cords of gold in the
two rings at the edges of the breastpiece. [18]They attached the two ends of
the two cords to the two settings of filigree. Thus they attached it in front to
the shoulder pieces of the ephod. [19]Then they made two rings of gold, and
put them at the two ends of the breastpiece, on its inside edge next to the

ephod. [20]And they made two rings of gold, and attached them in front to the lower part of the two shoulder pieces of the ephod, at its seam above the skillfully woven band of the ephod. [21]And they bound the breastpiece by its rings to the rings of the ephod with a lace of blue, so that it should lie on the skillfully woven band of the ephod, and that the breastpiece should not come loose from the ephod, as the Lord had commanded Moses.

[22]He also made the robe of the ephod woven all of blue, [23]and the opening of the robe in it was like the opening in a garment, with a binding around the opening, so that it might not tear. [24]On the hem of the robe they made pomegranates of blue and purple and scarlet yarns and fine twined linen. [25]They also made bells of pure gold, and put the bells between the pomegranates all around the hem of the robe, between the pomegranates— [26]a bell and a pomegranate, a bell and a pomegranate around the hem of the robe for ministering, as the Lord had commanded Moses.

[27]They also made the coats, woven of fine linen, for Aaron and his sons, [28]and the turban of fine linen, and the caps of fine linen, and the linen undergarments of fine twined linen, [29]and the sash of fine twined linen and of blue and purple and scarlet yarns, embroidered with needlework, as the Lord had commanded Moses.

[30]†They made the plate of the holy crown of pure gold, and wrote on it an inscription, like the engraving of a signet, "Holy to the Lord." [31]And they tied to it a cord of blue to fasten it on the turban above, as the Lord had commanded Moses.

[32]†Thus all the work of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting was finished, and the people of Israel did according to all that the Lord had commanded Moses; so they did. [33]†Then they brought the tabernacle to Moses, the tent and all its utensils, its hooks, its frames, its bars, its pillars, and its bases; [34]† the covering of tanned rams' skins and goatskins, and the veil of the screen; [35]the ark of the testimony with its poles and the mercy seat; [36]the table with all its utensils, and the bread of the Presence; [37]†the lampstand of pure gold and its lamps with the lamps set and all its utensils, and the oil for the light; [38]†the golden altar, the anointing oil and the fragrant incense, and the screen for the entrance of the tent; [39]†the bronze altar, and its grating of bronze, its poles, and all its utensils; the basin and its stand; [40]the hangings of the court, its pillars, and its bases, and the screen for the gate of the court,

its cords, and its pegs; and all the utensils for the service of the tabernacle, for the tent of meeting; [41]†the finely worked garments for ministering in the Holy Place, the holy garments for Aaron the priest, and the garments of his sons for their service as priests. [42]According to all that the LORD had commanded Moses, so the people of Israel had done all the work. [43]†And Moses saw all the work, and behold, they had done it; as the LORD had commanded, so had they done it. Then Moses blessed them.

The Tabernacle Erected

40 [1]The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, [2]"On the first day of the first
month you shall erect the tabernacle of the tent of meeting. [3]And you
shall put in it the ark of the testimony, and you shall screen the ark with the
veil. [4]And you shall bring in the table and arrange it, and you shall bring in
the lampstand and set up its lamps. [5]And you shall put the golden altar for
incense before the ark of the testimony, and set up the screen for the door of
the tabernacle. [6]You shall set the altar of burnt offering before the door of
the tabernacle of the tent of meeting, [7]and place the basin between the tent
of meeting and the altar, and put water in it. [8]And you shall set up the court
all around, and hang up the screen for the gate of the court.

[9]"Then you shall take the anointing oil and anoint the tabernacle and
all that is in it, and consecrate it and all its furniture, so that it may become
holy. [10]You shall also anoint the altar of burnt offering and all its utensils,
and consecrate the altar, so that the altar may become most holy. [11]You shall
also anoint the basin and its stand, and consecrate it. [12]Then you shall
bring Aaron and his sons to the entrance of the tent of meeting and shall
wash them with water [13]and put on Aaron the holy garments. And you shall
anoint him and consecrate him, that he may serve me as priest. [14]You shall
bring his sons also and put coats on them, [15]and anoint them, as you
anointed their father, that they may serve me as priests. And their anointing
shall admit them to a perpetual priesthood throughout their generations."

[16]This Moses did; according to all that the Lord commanded him, so he
did. [17]In the first month in the second year, on the first day of the month,
the tabernacle was erected. [18]Moses erected the tabernacle. He laid its
bases, and set up its frames, and put in its poles, and raised up its pillars.
[19]And he spread the tent over the tabernacle and put the covering of the
tent over it, as the Lord had commanded Moses. [20]He took the testimony
and put it into the ark, and put the poles on the ark and set the mercy seat
above on the ark. [21]And he brought the ark into the tabernacle and set up
the veil of the screen, and screened the ark of the testimony, as the Lord had
commanded Moses. [22]He put the table in the tent of meeting, on the north

side of the tabernacle, outside the veil, [23] † and arranged the bread on it before the Lord, as the Lord had commanded Moses. [24] † He put the lampstand in the tent of meeting, opposite the table on the south side of the tabernacle, [25] and set up the lamps before the Lord, as the Lord had commanded Moses. [26] † He put the golden altar in the tent of meeting before the veil, [27] † and burned fragrant incense on it, as the Lord had commanded Moses. [28] He put in place the screen for the door of the tabernacle. [29] † And he set the altar of burnt offering at the entrance of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting, and offered on it the burnt offering and the grain offering, as the Lord had commanded Moses. [30] † He set the basin between the tent of meeting and the altar, and put water in it for washing, [31] with which Moses and Aaron and his sons washed their hands and their feet. [32] When they went into the tent of meeting, and when they approached the altar, they washed, as the Lord commanded Moses. [33] † And he erected the court around the tabernacle and the altar, and set up the screen of the gate of the court. So Moses finished the work.

The Glory of the Lord

34 ‡ ‡ Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the Lord
filled the tabernacle. 35 ‡ And Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting
because the cloud settled on it, and the glory of the Lord filled the
tabernacle. 36 ‡ Throughout all their journeys, whenever the cloud was taken
up from over the tabernacle, the people of Israel would set out. 37 But if the
cloud was not taken up, then they did not set out till the day that it was
taken up. 38 ‡ For the cloud of the Lord was on the tabernacle by day, and fire
was in it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel throughout all their
journeys.

Exodus

OVERVIEW

Author
Moses the prophet

Date
c 1446 BC

Places
Egypt; Midian; Mount Horeb (Mount Sinai); land of Goshen; Red Sea; wilderness of Shur; Marah; Elim; wilderness of Sin; Rephidim; Massah; Meribah; wilderness of Sinai

People
Joseph; Pharaoh; Egyptian taskmasters; Shiphrah; Puah; Moses; Amram; Jochebed; Miriam; Pharaoh's daughter; Jethro (Reuel); Zipporah; Gershom; Eliezer; elders of Israel; Aaron; foremen of the people of Israel; magicians of Egypt; Nadab; Abihu; Eleazar; Ithamar; Amalekites; Joshua; Hur; Oholiab; Bezalel

Purpose
The Lord reintroduces Himself to Israel, rescues them from Egypt, and gives them a covenant of laws and sacrifices

Law Themes
Plagues against unrepentant Egypt; God gives the Ten Commandments and requires an oath to fulfill the Law

Gospel Themes
God remembers and fulfills His promises to the patriarchs; atonement through sacrifice

Memory Verses

The Ten Commandments (Ex 20:1–17); the Lord's two ways (Ex 34:6–7)

Introduction to Exodus

Reading Exodus

Thin, cool ribbons of green vegetation border heavenly blue waters. They flow together amid a vast plain of parched yellow sand and dust. From a distance, they appear like a great serpent slithering through the desert, with its tail in Lake Victoria and its head 4,160 miles away on the shore of the Great Sea (see map, p 120). If you stand at the edge of this great serpent, the green vegetation stretches unbroken to the riverbank. But in the other direction, the yellow sand stretches as far as the eye can see. The coiling track of the Nile is life and civilization. It offers an abrupt escape from the desert. But its moisture and vigor also form a trap. One escapes its coils and crosses the desert only with the greatest effort.

After 430 years of sipping from the Nile, the children of Israel forgot their homeland in Canaan to the east. The Egyptians forgot God's mercy during the administration of Joseph, who delivered them from the dryness of the desert and settled the Israelites in the Nile Delta (Gn 47:13–31; c 1876 BC). Though the Egyptians enslaved the Israelites, mistreated them, and even forced them to cast their sons into the river, the Israelites could not walk away from the Nile. The great serpent trapped them in its coils.

Exodus describes how the Lord awakened the memory of Israel, caused them to call out to Him, and sent Moses to rescue Israel from the grip of the Nile and the dryness of the desert.

As you read Exodus, keep one foot on the Nile's cool green bank and the other foot on the scalding yellow sand. Feel the Israelites' dilemma. Recognize the immense obstacles and temptations from which the Lord rescued them. And call Him your deliverer amid the obstacles and temptations of your life.

Luther on Exodus

[In Exodus] when the world was now full and sunk in blindness so that men scarcely knew any longer what sin was or where death came from, God brings Moses forward with the law and selects a special people, in order to enlighten the world again through them, and by the law to reveal sin anew. He therefore organizes this people with all kinds of laws and separates it from all other peoples. He has them build a tent, and begins a form of worship. He appoints princes and officials, and provides his people splendidly with both laws and men, to rule them both in the body before the world and in the spirit before God….

For the law has three kinds of pupils. The first are those who hear the law and despise it, and who lead an impious life without fear. To these the law does not come. They are represented by the calf worshipers in the wilderness, on whose account Moses broke the tables of the law [Exod. 32:19]. To them he did not bring the law.

The second kind are those who attempt to fulfill the law by their own power, without grace…. For the law shows that our ability counts

for nothing without Christ's grace.

> The third kind of pupils are those who see Moses clearly, without a veil. These are they who understand the intention of the law and how it demands impossible things…. For if Christ's glory did not come alongside this splendor of Moses, no one could bear the brightness of the law, the terror of sin and death. These [third kind of] pupils fall away from all works and presumption and learn from the law nothing else except to recognize sin and to yearn for Christ. This is the true office of Moses and the very nature of the law. (AE 35:237, 245–46)

For more of Luther's insights on the Ten Commandments, see *Ten Sermons on the Catechism* (AE 51:137–61) and *Eight Sermons at Wittenberg* (AE 51:79–83).

Challenges for Readers

Date and Authorship. The traditional date for the exodus, based on biblical genealogies, chronicles, and reports about individuals' life spans, is April (15 Nisan) 1446 BC. Critical scholars have questioned this date, arguing against the reliability of Scripture and arguing that the archaeological data supports a later conquest of the Promised Land (c 1240 BC). See pp 338–40. Regarding authorship, see pp 3–5.

The 10 Wonders. Today, people tend to think of God as a gentle grandfather or a benign spiritual force. Exodus reveals the wrath of a personal God. For example, Moses describes how the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart during the 10 plagues (4:21; 7:3) so that He, as a "man of war," might punish Pharaoh (15:3). The Lord warns that sinful children will inherit the punishment of their sinful parents (34:6–7). Such events may challenge our sense of divine justice.

Liberation Theology. Some interpreters treat Exodus politically, as a tale about liberating slaves rather than a history of redemption. Critics have questioned the dates and places described in the Book. Debate has even arisen about the numbering of the Ten Commandments. Such approaches distract us from the Book's key messages and uses. The study notes will address these challenges and direct you to fruitful interpretation that reflects Exodus's true character.

The Covenant. Though the covenant is an important element of the Book of Exodus, it is not the key element, as some theologians have proposed. The Book's heart is God's redemptive action, rescuing His people through the exodus and atoning for their sins through the sacrifices. A key verse for Exodus, indeed for all of Scripture, is Ex 34:6–7, where the Lord reveals His ways to Israel. This passage—the "Jn 3:16" of the OT—is repeated throughout Scripture. See note, Ex 34:6–7.

Laws Given through Moses. The events from Ex 12 to Nu 8 (c one-third of the Books of Moses) encompass one year's time following the exodus. Most of this section (Ex 20–Nu 8) relates the moral, ceremonial, and civil laws for the nation. The chs of Gn 1–Ex 19 and Nu 9–Dt 34 are almost entirely historical rather than legislative. The Books of Moses—called the Torah ("instruction," see "Law," p 971)—are the story of how God graciously calls, redeems, and guides His people toward nationhood.

Through the leadership of Moses and Aaron, the Lord established a well organized nation from a people who had recently been slaves and had never had a permanent homeland. The Passover is the ritual “heart” of this creation, redemption, and sanctification story.

Blessings for Readers

Exodus describes the central redemptive event of the OT. Through the blood of the Passover lambs, the Lord delivered His people from slavery. This redemption becomes the most-mentioned event of Israelite history. Through the blood of the covenant, the Lord consecrated Israel as a kingdom of priests. He directed the building of the tabernacle as a place of worship and forgiveness.

Moses and the elders of Israel also enjoyed the splendor of seeing God (24:9–11) and learning the meaning of His name, Yahweh (3:14–17). They saw that God is not only holy but also merciful and patient. He remembers His people and His promises to their forefathers for a thousand generations (34:6–7; cf Dt 7:9). As you read Exodus, look for these important themes. See that the Lord still leads His people through the prophet like Moses (Dt 18:15–18; cf Ac 3:22) and redeems you by the blood of "the Lamb of God," Jesus (Jn 1:29, 36).

OUTLINE

I. Israel Enslaved in Egypt (chs 1–11)
- A. Israel in Egypt (ch 1)
  1. Israel's growth (1:1–7)
  2. Slave labor (1:8–14)
  3. Attempted extermination (1:15–22)
- B. Moses the Deliverer (ch 2)
  1. Birth and rescue of Moses (2:1–10)
  2. Moses' flight to Midian and marriage to Zipporah (2:11–22)
  3. God plans to rescue His people (2:23–25)
- C. God's Plan of Deliverance (chs 3–4)
  1. God reveals Himself to Moses (3:1–12)
  2. God reveals His divine name (3:13–17)
  3. God gives Moses instructions (3:18–22)
  4. The staff, the signs, and Aaron (4:1–17)
  5. Moses' return to Egypt (4:18–23)
  6. Zipporah circumcises their son (4:24–26)
  7. Aaron sent to be Moses' mouth (4:27–31)

D. Preparation and Confrontation with Pharaoh: the 10 Plagues (chs 5–11)
1. Making bricks without straw (ch 5)
2. God promises deliverance (6:1–13)
3. The genealogy of Moses and Aaron (6:14–30)
4. Moses and Aaron before Pharaoh (7:1–13)
5. First plague: water turned to blood (7:14–24)
6. Second plague: frogs (7:25–8:15)
7. Third plague: gnats (8:16–19)
8. Fourth plague: flies (8:20–32)
9. Fifth plague: death of Egyptian livestock (9:1–7)
10. Sixth plague: boils (9:8–12)
11. Seventh plague: hail (9:13–35)
12. Eighth plague: locusts (10:1–20)
13. Ninth plague: darkness (10:21–29)
14. Tenth plague announced: death of Egyptian firstborn (ch 11)

II. Passover and Exodus (12:1–15:21)
A. Preparations for and Celebration of Passover (12:1–28)
B. Death of Egyptian Firstborn and Expulsion of Israelites (12:29–42)
C. Passover Regulations (12:43–51)
D. Consecration of the Firstborn (13:1–16)
E. Crossing the Red Sea (13:17–14:31)
F. Song of the Sea (15:1–21)

III. Through the Wilderness to Mount Sinai (15:22–18:27)
A. First Complaints and Waters of Marah (15:22–27)
B. More Complaints and Manna and Quail (ch 16)
C. More Complaints and Water from a Rock (17:1–7)
D. War with Amalekites, and Moses and Joshua Supported by Aaron and Hur (17:8–16)
E. Aid and Advice from Jethro (ch 18)

IV. Initial Events at Sinai (chs 19–24)
A. Moses and Aaron Ascend the Mountain (ch 19)
B. The Ten Commandments (20:1–17)
C. The Book of the Covenant (20:18–23:33)
1. Prologue to terms of the covenant (20:18–26)
2. Laws on slaves (21:1–11)
3. Laws on homicide (21:12–17)

4. Laws on bodily injuries (21:18–32)
5. Laws on property damage (21:33–22:15)
6. Laws on society (22:16–23:9)
7. Liturgical laws (23:10–19)
8. Epilogue (23:20–33)

D. Ratification of the Covenant with Unique Blood Ceremony (ch 24)

V. Prescriptions for the Tabernacle and Accessories (chs 25–31)

A. Gathering of Materials and Revelation of Heavenly Pattern (25:1–9)
B. Ark and Its Lid with Cherubim Atop (25:10–22)
C. Table for Bread of the Presence (25:23–30)
D. Lampstand (25:31–40)
E. Frames and Curtains of Tabernacle (ch 26)
F. Altar of Burnt Offering (27:1–8)
G. Courtyard (27:9–19)
H. Oil for Lampstand (27:20–21)
I. Vestments for Aaron the High Priest and Other Priests (ch 28)
J. Ordination of the Priests (ch 29)
K. Altar of Incense (30:1–10)
L. Census Tax for the Tabernacle (30:11–16)
M. Basin for Priestly Washing (30:17–21)
N. Anointing Oil and Sanctuary Incense (30:22–38)
O. Appointing of Craftsmen under Bezalel and Oholiab (31:1–11)
P. Reminder to Keep Sabbaths (31:12–18)

VI. Apostasy and Restoration (chs 32–34)

A. The Golden Calf (32:1–29)
B. Moses' Intercession (32:30–33:23)
C. Renewal of the Covenant (ch 34)

VII. Construction of the Tabernacle (chs 35–40)

A. Materials Contributed by the People (35:1–36:7)
B. Description of Construction (36:8–38:31)
C. Manufacture of Priestly Vestments (39:1–31)
D. Tabernacle and Vestments Inspected and Blessed (39:32–43)
E. Erection of the Tabernacle (40:1–33)
F. Consecration of the Tabernacle by the Cloud and Glory of the Lord (40:34–38)

Articles and Resources Related to Exodus

- Slavery in the Bible
- The Book of the Covenant
- The Blood of the Covenant
- The Materials of the Tabernacle
- No Graven Images?

Slavery in the Bible

The Scriptures do not endorse or promote the practice of people holding other human beings as personal property. The Bible typically treats slavery in a negative light. “Freedom” through God’s saving grace is a dominant theme in both testaments.

Slavery in the Old Testament

Held captive for 430 years under the hand of a cruel oppressor (Ex 12:40–41), the Israelites cried to God for deliverance. God heard their cries and sent a leader—Moses—to aid in their release from Pharaoh. Speaking to Moses from the burning bush, God said:

> I have surely seen the affliction of My people who are in Egypt and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters. I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey…. Come, I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring My people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt. (Ex 3:7–8, 10)

Where the Bible speaks of slavery continuing among God's people (who were themselves slaves for nearly five centuries), slavery appears as a temporary allowance for human weakness rather than a perpetual, God-given right. Following the exodus, the Law of Moses permitted the holding of even Israelite slaves, but only for a period of six years—slaves were to be released at the beginning of every seventh year (Ex 21:2). Bondage for life was to be only on a voluntary basis (Ex 21:5–6). God's personal interaction with slaves seems to be one of kindness and compassion (such as the story of Hagar and Ishmael in Gn 21:8–21 and Jesus' healing of the centurion's servant in Mt 8:5–13). God extended His grace, love, and forgiveness not only to free persons but also to slaves (as in the covenant of circumcision in Gn 17:1–14, especially v 13, and the Passover in Ex 12:44).

Slavery in the New Testament

In the New Testament, the Greek word for *slave* has a much broader meaning than what might be familiar to many readers today (see "minister," p 1903). In the Roman world, slaves could serve in a variety of positions (from chain gang to cook, from hairdresser to obstetrician). Roman slaves quite often held positions of great power and responsibility.

Slavery in the Roman world was not associated with the oppression of any particular race. Slaves were most often prisoners of war taken from foreign lands, or non-Roman individuals sold by their families to repay a debt. Fair-skinned Britons and blond Germanic peoples were included in their number.

Typical Roman slaves hoped for release (manumission) at age 30, the usual age for discharge. While in service to their master, slaves could earn wages, buy and sell property, enter into contracts, and own slaves themselves. Frequently, Roman free persons sold themselves into slavery in order to pay debts, while non-Roman persons sold themselves in order to eventually obtain Roman citizenship.

In Paul's Letter to Philemon, the slave Onesimus appears to be a high-ranking personal servant entrusted with caring for his master's temporal possessions (having access to his money), an enviable position to hold. Paul's tenor in this short Letter is one of reconciliation and forgiveness: the goal is restoring the slave to a right relationship with his brother in Christ, who is also his earthly master. Notably, in his First Letter to Timothy, Paul condemns those involved in "kidnapping" persons to be sold into slavery, listing "enslavers" among those especially deserving of the Law's condemnation (1Tm 1:10). (As Christianity spread throughout the Roman Empire, it undermined the practice of slavery.)

Work Today

With these things in mind, Paul's advice to slaves and to their masters does have application for contemporary Christians, particularly in regard to their workplace. Seen in the light of the modern employer/employee relationship, we find Paul encouraging workers to remain faithful in their God-given calling and to their God-given employer (1Co 7:17, 21, 24); discouraging believers from accepting unsuitable or demeaning work (v 23); advocating obedience and service to those in positions of authority (Eph 6:5–8; Ti 2:9); and reminding believers having temporal responsibility that they are not to abuse power over their subordinates but are to treat them kindly, remembering that they are accountable also to Christ (1Co 7:22; Eph 6:9).

Luther explains concerning the Fourth Commandment: "We should fear and love God so that we do not despise or anger our parents and other authorities, but honor them, serve and obey them, love and cherish them." God has given each one of us responsibilities of service so that we may be a blessing to others. Regrettably, we often forsake those responsibilities and do injury to those in authority over us by disobeying their reasonable requests or by stealing from our employer through laziness or shoddy work. When we act in these ways, we are not behaving as free persons, but rather as slaves—slaves to sin (Rm 6:16).

"But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin … having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness" (Rm 6:17–18). In Christ, we have been delivered by God's mighty hand and outstretched arm, a hand and an arm that once were bound to a cross but are now raised in blessing. God heard our cry for mercy and sent us a deliverer, one "worthy of more glory than Moses" (Heb 3:3), who has crushed the chains of oppression under His feet. In God's Son, we are "free indeed" (Jn 8:36). Paul sums up who and what we are because of Christ in these words: "For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery" (Gal 5:1).

The Book of the Covenant

Archaeologists have discovered texts of many covenants from Mesopotamian, Syro-Palestinian, and Hittite culture that range in date from c 2500 BC to 650 BC. These covenants governed the relationships between stronger and weaker nations (suzerain-vassal covenants; royal grant covenants) or between equal nations (parity covenants). The form and content especially of Hittite covenants in the second millennium have many of the same elements and even the same order as God's covenant with Israel in Ex 19–24 (a suzerain-vassal covenant) and the renewals of that covenant in Lv 11–27; the Book of Deuteronomy; and Jsh 24. In other words, God's covenant with Moses and Israel clearly fits the time and setting described in the Bible (see chronology, pp xcii–cix).

When Israel moved into Egypt c 1876 BC, Pharaoh gave them land in exchange for their services as herdsmen (Gn 47:1–12). Their discussion has the elements of a brief, informal covenant (perhaps a formal agreement was also adopted). As Israel grew, their relationship with the pharaohs changed. The new pharaoh mentioned in Ex 1:8–22 radically altered the agreement between the two nations, resulting in Israel's enslavement. God's rescue of Israel and His renewal of the covenant first made with Abraham are the main themes of Exodus (see chart).

Other elements include blessings (Lv 26:3–13; Dt 28:1–14; Jsh 24:20c) and curses (Lv 26:14–43; Dt 28:15–68; Jsh 24:19–20), which also feature in other Near Eastern covenants.

The early Christians retained the old covenant patterns of promises, oath, washing, and an intimate meal in the service we know today as "confirmation." (Note this pattern in Ac 2:37–42; 16:29–34.) Ancient Christian documents such as the *Didache* (late first century) and the *First Apology* of Justin Martyr (second century) demonstrate this pattern of worship and covenant renewal. Remember how Christ called you to faith, renewed you in Baptism, and nurtures you still in His Holy Supper. Recognize in these actions the intimate, caring relationship that your Lord desires to have with you. Rejoice in the new covenant based upon the blood of Christ (Heb 12:18–24).

The Blood of the Covenant

Repulsed by the Old Testament sacrifice of animals, many people close their eyes to the truths in these portions of Scripture. They understand that the Old Testament points to the promised Savior of the New Testament, but the bloody stories of a warlike God offend some.

However, the old covenant embodies the discipline, divine nature, and dramatic revelation of a loving, trustworthy Lord. The Old Testament reveals

- the depth of humankind's depravity;
- the seriousness of people's sin;
- the extent of God's wrath;
- the depth of God's love;
- the need for a redeeming Savior.

Moses understood these issues. He told the Israelites that to cover human sin, blood must be shed. The power of the blood must accompany any approach to the Father. And as the blood of the old covenant spilled onto the altar and was sprinkled on the people, God revealed His redeeming grace and the forgiving power of His mercy.

The Blood

Why blood? Moses explained, “For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it for you on the altar to make atonement for your souls, for it is the blood that makes atonement by the life” (Lv 17:11). The rituals of blood pointed to the seriousness of sin. Lifeblood must be given for atonement. Someone, or something, must give its life. God’s wrath needed satisfaction. Rather than require the death of the guilty parties, God offered grace by allowing the sacrifice of animals in their stead.

Yet in the deepest recesses of God’s heart, His delight was not in blood sacrifice but in the yielding and surrendering of His people’s lives in dedication to Him. As Samuel said to Saul, “Has the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to listen than the fat of rams” (1Sm 15:22). David also said, “For You will not delight in sacrifice, or I would give it; You will not be pleased with a burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, You will not despise” (Ps 51:16–17).

The blood, used to foreshadow the sacrifice of Christ, pointed to something deeper. The Lord yearned for reconciliation and fellowship—something blood sacrifice could only signify. He knew the blood spilled on the altar and sprinkled on the people was temporary. One blood sacrifice, greater than the blood of rams and goats, was needed to change the focus from the Law to the incomprehensible mercy of God. One blood sacrifice made on an altar of wood was still to come.

The Altar

Moses built an altar as his first sign of the covenant relationship to consecrate the people to God (Ex 24:4–5). At the foot of the mountain, he ordered the slaughter of animals. Although God had not yet fully described the importance of sacrifice in the Law, Moses knew what he must do. To the Israelites and other ancient peoples, an altar meant a place for putting something to death, not only physically but also in their hearts. The altar also represented God's presence.

The blood sprinkled on the altar represented a life offered, or poured out, to Him in sacrifice. Sacrifices were not wasteful or extravagant acts of worship. Most sacrifices were eaten. The altar was the point where the people, the priests, and God held a meal together to show their relationship of peace and fellowship.

As a place of fellowship, consecration, and sacrifice, the altar had to be sanctified through blood. The sanctified altar, then, became holy ground on which to lay the sin offerings of the people. The throwing of blood on the altar signified access to God; the blood of a chosen substitute replaced their own lives, now committed and dedicated to Him.

The Cross

Jesus' disciples understood the blood of the old covenant, but could they possibly comprehend the depth of Christ's words on Maundy Thursday evening when He lifted a cup and spoke of the blood of the new covenant (Mt 26:27–28)? Christ often foretold His suffering and death, yet no words could prepare the disciples for the events that followed.

Another altar rose above the earth that Good Friday, wooden and roughly cut. It would hold *the* Sacrifice, the One whose blood would redeem all people for all eternity. The Father in heaven observed Jesus' obedience and accepted the sacrifice. For in the heavenly tabernacle, an everlasting covenant—a new covenant—was made (Heb 9:11–14). By the cross, His disciples became partakers in His life and possessors of the heavenly inheritance (Heb 9:16–22).

The New Covenant and You

Just as a meal followed the sacrifices of the old covenant, so God's people commune with Him today at the Lord's Table. When you receive the body and blood of Christ, His fullness fills you. His mercy forgives you. His grace redeems you. You rest assured in the blotting out of all your sins (1Jn 1:7). With immediate deliverance and total justification, you know that God's wrath has been averted, for He no longer sees your sins but the covering of blood sprinkled on your behalf.

In this new life, dedicate yourself in service to Him, for God has revealed the redeeming grace of His love and the forgiving power of His mercy by the blood of the new covenant. That blood, spilled on the altar of the cross, now saves you. You are His forever.

The Materials of the Tabernacle

The items gathered for the tabernacle provided more than just building materials. Many of the items carried spiritual significance for the early Israelites and were part of the Lord's message to His people. Carefully read the chart to gain a fuller understanding of the symbolism. See also p 139.

No Graven Images?

Some Christian interpreters, Jewish rabbis, and Muslim clerics have misunderstood Ex 20:4 to mean that God's people cannot create three-dimensional figures of any kind. For example, since the eighth century, Eastern Orthodox Christians have insisted that religious artists restrict themselves to two-dimensional works such as paintings or mosaics. The radical German Reformer Andreas Karlstadt (c 1480–1541) led a movement to destroy statuary and remove all art from churches. His ideas influenced Swiss reformers Ulrich Zwingli (1484–1531) and John Calvin (1509–64), who stripped their area churches of art. They allowed illustrations of biblical stories to appear in people's homes, so long as the pictures were not used devotionally.

In contrast, God told Moses to create images of cherubim for the tabernacle (Ex 25:18–20). God's Word did not forbid the creation of such three-dimensional figures; it forbade the worship of such figures. It forbade the creation of an image to represent invisible Yahweh. (The word translated "graven image" in Ex 20:4 [KJV] comes from the Hebrew word for "carving." It does not refer to just any carving but is commonly used to describe an idol.)

The examples of the cherubim in the tabernacle and later works of art in Solomon's temple show that God did not restrict art to two dimensions (e.g., lilies and pomegranates in 1Ki 7:19–20; oxen in 1Ki 7:25; cherubim in 1Ki 6:23). Ultimately, God Himself took three-dimensional form in the person of His Son, Jesus Christ, who is the very "icon" or "image" of the invisible God (Col 1:15).

Footnotes

Footnotes for Exodus, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:22 Samaritan, Septuagint, Targum; Hebrew lacks *to the Hebrews*

Footnotes for Exodus, Chapter 2

- [1] 2:3 Hebrew *papyrus reeds*
- [2] 2:10 *Moses* sounds like the Hebrew for *draw out*
- [3] 2:11 Hebrew *brothers*
- [1] 2:22 *Gershom* sounds like the Hebrew for *sojourner*

Footnotes for Exodus, Chapter 3

- [1] 3:14 Or *I AM WHAT I AM*, or *I WILL BE WHAT I WILL BE*
- [2] 3:15 The word *LORD*, when spelled with capital letters, stands for the divine name, *YHWH*, which is here connected with the verb *hayah*, "to be" in verse 14
- [3] 3:19 Septuagint, Vulgate; Hebrew *go, not by a mighty hand*

Footnotes for Exodus, Chapter 4

- [1] 4:6 Hebrew *into your bosom*; also verse 7

- [2] 4:6 *Leprosy* was a term for several skin diseases; see Leviticus 13
- [1] 4:25 Hebrew *his*

Footnotes for Exodus, Chapter 5

- [1] 5:5 Samaritan *they are now more numerous than the people of the land*

Footnotes for Exodus, Chapter 6

- [2] 6:3 Hebrew *El Shaddai*

Footnotes for Exodus, Chapter 8

- [1] 8:1 Ch 7:26 in Hebrew
- [1] 8:3 Or *among your people*
- [2] 8:5 Ch 8:1 in Hebrew
- [3] 8:12 Or *which he had brought upon Pharaoh*
- [1] 8:22 Or *that I the* LORD *am in the land*
- [2] 8:23 Septuagint, Vulgate; Hebrew *set redemption*

Footnotes for Exodus, Chapter 9

- [1] 9:14 Hebrew *on your heart*
- [1] 9:32 A type of wheat

Footnotes for Exodus, Chapter 10

- [2] 10:10 Hebrew *before your face*

Footnotes for Exodus, Chapter 12

- [1] 12:6 Hebrew *between the two evenings*

Footnotes for Exodus, Chapter 13

- [1] 13:19 Samaritan, Septuagint; Hebrew *he*

Footnotes for Exodus, Chapter 14

- [1] 14:20 Septuagint *and the night passed*
- [2] 14:25 Or *binding* (compare Samaritan, Septuagint, Syriac); Hebrew *removing*
- [3] 14:27 Hebrew *shook off*

Footnotes for Exodus, Chapter 15

- [1] 15:1 Or *its chariot*; also verse 21
- [1] 15:23 *Marah* means *bitterness*
- [2] 15:25 Or *tree*

- [3] 15:25 Hebrew *he*

Footnotes for Exodus, Chapter 16

- [1] 16:15 Or *"It is manna."* Hebrew *man hu*
- [2] 16:16 An *omer* was about 2 quarts or 2 liters
- [1] 16:36 An *ephah* was about 3/5 bushel or 22 liters

Footnotes for Exodus, Chapter 17

- [2] 17:7 *Massah* means *testing*
- [3] 17:7 *Meribah* means *quarreling*
- [1] 17:16 A slight change would yield *upon the banner*

Footnotes for Exodus, Chapter 18

- [2] 18:3 *Gershom* sounds like the Hebrew word for *sojourner*
- [3] 18:4 *Eliezer* means *My God is help*
- [4] 18:6 Hebrew; Samaritan, Septuagint, Syriac *behold*
- [5] 18:11 Hebrew *with them*

Footnotes for Exodus, Chapter 19

- [1] 19:13 That is, shot with an arrow

Footnotes for Exodus, Chapter 20

- [2] 20:3 Or *besides*
- [1] 20:6 Or *to the thousandth generation*
- [2] 20:13 The Hebrew word also covers causing human death through carelessness or negligence
- [3] 20:18 Samaritan, Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate; Masoretic Text *the people saw*

Footnotes for Exodus, Chapter 21

- [1] 21:8 Or *so that he has not designated her*
- [2] 21:17 Or *dishonors*; Septuagint *reviles*
- [3] 21:23 Or *so that her children come out and it is clear who was to blame, he shall be fined as the woman's husband shall impose on him, and he alone shall pay. If it is unclear who was to blame . . .*
- [4] 21:32 A *shekel* was about 2/5 ounce or 11 grams

Footnotes for Exodus, Chapter 22

- [1] 22:1 Ch 21:37 in Hebrew
- [2] 22:2 Ch 22:1 in Hebrew
- [3] 22:15 Or *it is reckoned in* (Hebrew *comes into*) *its hiring fee*
- [4] 22:16 Or *a girl of marriageable age*; also verse 17
- [5] 22:16 Or *engagement present*; also verse 17
- [1] 22:20 That is, set apart (devoted) as an offering to the Lord (for destruction)

Footnotes for Exodus, Chapter 23

- [1] 23:25 Septuagint, Vulgate *I*

Footnotes for Exodus, Chapter 24

- [1] 24:3 Or *all the just decrees*

Footnotes for Exodus, Chapter 25

- [1] 25:5 Uncertain; possibly *dolphin skins*, or *dugong skins*; compare 26:14
- [2] 25:10 A *cubit* was about 18 inches or 45 centimeters
- [3] 25:17 Or *cover*
- [1] 25:25 A *handbreadth* was about 3 inches or 7.5 centimeters
- [2] 25:39 A *talent* was about 75 pounds or 34 kilograms

Footnotes for Exodus, Chapter 26

- [1] 26:2 A *cubit* was about 18 inches or 45 centimeters

Footnotes for Exodus, Chapter 27

- [1] 27:1 A *cubit* was about 18 inches or 45 centimeters

Footnotes for Exodus, Chapter 28

- [1] 28:16 A *span* was about 9 inches or 22 centimeters
- [1] 28:17 The identity of some of these stones is uncertain
- [2] 28:32 The meaning of the Hebrew word is uncertain; possibly *coat of mail*

Footnotes for Exodus, Chapter 29

- [1] 29:12 Hebrew *all*
- [2] 29:18 Or *an offering by fire*; also verses 25, 41
- [1] 29:40 A *seah* was about 7 quarts or 7.3 liters
- [2] 29:40 A *hin* was about 4 quarts or 3.5 liters

Footnotes for Exodus, Chapter 30

- [1] 30:2 A *cubit* was about 18 inches or 45 centimeters
- [2] 30:13 A *shekel* was about 2/5 ounce or 11 grams
- [3] 30:13 A *gerah* was about 1/50 ounce or 0.6 gram
- [1] 30:20 Or *an offering by fire*
- [2] 30:24 A *hin* was about 4 quarts or 3.5 liters

Footnotes for Exodus, Chapter 31

- [1] 31:10 Or *garments for worship*

Footnotes for Exodus, Chapter 32

- [1] 32:4 Hebrew *cast metal*; also verse 8

Footnotes for Exodus, Chapter 33

- [1] 33:9 Hebrew *he*

Footnotes for Exodus, Chapter 34

- [1] 34:7 Or *to the thousandth generation*
- [1] 34:19 Septuagint, Theodotion, Vulgate, Targum; the meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain
- [2] 34:28 Hebrew *the ten words*
- [3] 34:29 Hebrew *him*

Footnotes for Exodus, Chapter 35

- [1] 35:7 The meaning of the Hebrew word is uncertain; also verse 23; compare 25:5
- [2] 35:19 Or *garments for worship*; see 31:10

Footnotes for Exodus, Chapter 36

- [1] 36:9 A *cubit* was about 18 inches or 45 centimeters

Footnotes for Exodus, Chapter 37

- [1] 37:1 A *cubit* was about 18 inches or 45 centimeters
- [2] 37:12 A *handbreadth* was about 3 inches or 7.5 centimeters
- [1] 37:24 A *talent* was about 75 pounds or 34 kilograms

Footnotes for Exodus, Chapter 38

- [2] 38:1 A *cubit* was about 18 inches or 45 centimeters
- [1] 38:24 A *talent* was about 75 pounds or 34 kilograms; a *shekel* was about 2/5 ounce or 11 grams
- [2] 38:26 A *beka* was about 1/5 ounce or 5.5 grams

Footnotes for Exodus, Chapter 39

- [3] 39:1 Or *garments for worship*
- [4] 39:9 A *span* was about 9 inches or 22 centimeters

Study Notes

EXODUS—NOTE ON 1:1–5 *These are the names*. Hbr links Ex to Gn; first six Hbr words of Ex are identical to those in Gn 46:8. Cf Gn 49:2–27. Ex begins with remembering.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 1:5 *seventy*. Same number as in Gn 46:27; descendants of one man and his 12 sons.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 1:6 Gn ends with the report of Joseph's death. The repeated obituary portends trouble for Israel.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 1:7 *people of Israel.* Israel in v 1 refers to a person. In Egypt, Israel became a nation. *fruitful … filled*. Underscores the prolific fertility of Israel. What God promised Abraham (Gn 15:5; 17:6), and seemed impossible to him, came to pass.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 1:1–7 Israel emerges as a people. God's blessing and the fulfillment of God's promise gives growth and preserves His people in a foreign land. Consider how God provides for, supports, protects, and preserves His Church day by day. "For all this it is my duty to thank and praise, serve and obey Him" (SC, First Article, p xxxvi). God blesses us as He blessed Israel, yet He has also revealed to us His greatest blessings in His only-begotten Son. • O Lord, the multitude of Your blessings leads us to multiply thanks and praise to Your name. Fill Your Church with sons and daughters faithful to You. Amen.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 1:8 *Now*. C 300 years since Joseph's death. *a new king*. Circumstances changed for Israel with the advent of this king, whose name was unimportant to record. However, see chronology, pp xcv–xcvi. The Egyptian pharaoh was regarded as a divine son of the gods. The upcoming struggle is between the gods of Egypt, represented by Pharaoh, and the true God.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 1:10 The king's actions proved him a fool; attempting to prevent their "exodus," he provoked this very result. Some rabbinic traditions attributed this shrewd counsel to Jannes and Jambres. Cf 2Tm 3:8.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 1:11 *taskmasters*. Supervisors who imposed a harsh workload. For the Old Kingdom of Egypt (third millennium BC), there is no evidence of foreign laborers enslaved for building projects. However, the New Kingdom of Egypt is known for such labor (from c 1870 BC). The

tomb of the vizier Rekhmire shows slaves making mud bricks and Egyptians watching over them (Kitchen, p 247). *store cities*. For grain storage. *Pithom and Raamses*. Cities in the Nile Delta named in Egyptian historical records. Exact location unknown.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 1:12 *the more they multiplied*. What the king feared (v 10), happened. *dread.* Anxious fear of slaves not previously experienced fell on the Egyptians.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 1:13–14 *work as slaves … work in the field*. Hbr word for "service" or "work" appears five times, emphasizing the burden placed on God's people. Agricultural work was added to building projects.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 1:15 *Hebrew midwives ... Shiphrah and ... Puah.* Two representative Hebrew midwives are named, whereas the Egyptian pharaoh is unnamed. God exalts "those of humble estate" and brings down "the mighty" (Lk 1:52). These women served both Egyptians and Hebrews, though they would have had other midwives serving with them to care for such large populations.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 1:16 *birthstool*. Rare Hbr word (lit, "two stones") suggests items like modern medical stirrups used in childbirth. *son ... kill him*. Ancient empires could choose to kill, enslave/control, or assimilate foreign populations. Pharaoh's plan has elements of each approach. Eliminating daughters would be a surer form of population control. However, girls were better able to cross cultural boundaries through concubinage or marriage and therefore could be adapted to Egyptian life.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 1:17 *feared God*. See p 1001. Two obscure women frustrate a powerful ruler because they "obey God rather than men" (Ac 5:29).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 1:19 *Hebrew women are ... vigorous.* Midwives bravely stated the truth. Pharaoh showed his naïveté by failing to question the midwives further.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 1:20–21 God was pleased with Shiphrah and Puah, who now shared in the blessings of family. Perhaps they selflessly aided others but had not experienced this joy.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 1:22 *Every son*. Aaron, three years older than Moses (7:7), apparently escaped the threat imposed by this law. *cast into the Nile*. The Nile was regarded as the source of life, bringing fertility to the land. Now it became an agent of death.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 1:8–22 As a last resort to halt the growth of Israel, Pharaoh commands all his people to collaborate in the mass killing of Hebrew boys (v 22). Pharaoh imagines that he can thwart God's will, just as Herod does when he slaughters many infants while trying to slay Jesus (Mt 2:16). But "He who sits in the heavens laughs," and the Lord holds worldly rulers "in derision" (Ps 2:4). Luth: "Oh, how much strength of faith is demanded by these words!" (AE 14:321). When evil in this world seems to triumph and we struggle on account of our weakness, we can call to mind the women who feared God and were blessed by Him. By God's grace, we also shall persevere in faith because we will win the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ (1Co 15:57). • Lord, grant us brave faith like the midwives so that we faithfully serve You in the face of all opposition. Amen.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 2:1–2 What follows Pharaoh's order to kill is a report not of death but of marriage and conception.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 2:1 *Levi*. The Levites became the priestly tribe of Israel.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 2:2 *fine*. Hbr *tob*. Same word is used in Gn 1 to describe God's "good" creation.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 2:3 *basket*. Same Hbr word is used for Noah's ark. Many ancient cultures practiced infant exposure, or leaving unwanted children without care (e.g., the Mesopotamian "Legend of Sargon"). Pharaoh's ruling forced a version of this despicable practice on the Israelites. *bulrushes*. Papyrus, a tall stalk or reed used to construct small boats. *bitumen and pitch*. These tars made the basket watertight. This detail shows the mother's intense care. *placed it among the reeds*. Tall grass along the Nile hid the basket.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 2:5 *bathe at the river*. The princess may have bathed in the Nile believing the water imparted fruitfulness and long life. *her young women*. Attendants.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 2:6 Hbr indicates that Pharaoh's daughter knew she was breaking her father's law when she became Moses' protector. No explanation, apart from care, is given for her actions.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 2:7 *nurse*. A wet nurse, who suckles another's child.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 2:9 *I will give you your wages*. Moses' mother (v 2) is paid from Pharaoh's treasury to nurse her own son! This was not the only time Pharaoh was plundered to benefit God's people (cf 12:36).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 2:10 *he became her son*. Indicating adoption. *Moses*. Authentic Egyptian name found in historical records ("Mose"). *drew him out of the water.* Hbr *mosheh* (Moses) and *mashah* ("draw out") sound alike. The name worked in Hbr and Egyptian.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 2:1–10 Moses, born of believing Hebrew parents (Heb 11:23), is raised in Pharaoh's household and "instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians" (Ac 7:22), enjoying the best of two worlds. Although God is not mentioned, He is accomplishing His purposes to redeem Israel. Even when God does not seem to be at work in our lives, we can be certain that His good and gracious will is being done among us. • Lord, help us to provide well for our children and their instruction, especially in the Christian faith, and to celebrate Your redemption for us. Amen.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 2:11 *his people*. As an adult, Moses identified with his people when he saw their burdens and one of them brutally beaten. Moses may have grown up knowing his Hebrew heritage since he was nursed by his own mother. He may also have been circumcised.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 2:12 Moses tried to hide his deed because he had no authority for his action.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 2:13 Moses again became angry with someone "in the wrong" and demanded an explanation.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 2:14 *prince and a judge*. See notes, Jsh 20:4; Jgs 2:16.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 2:15 *Pharaoh … sought to kill Moses.* Pharaoh would not tolerate someone living in his palace and acting against his authority. *land of Midian*. The Midianites (cf Gn 25:4; 37:36) were nomadic tribes. Moses fled into the Sinai Peninsula, east of Egypt. See map, p 120; see also note, Jgs 6:1.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 2:16 *priest of Midian*. Just as Melchizedek, the king-priest of Salem (Gn 14:18; Heb 7:1), was a mysterious figure, so was this priest of Midian (cf Ex 18). The gods he worshiped are never described. See note, 18:11. *water their father's flock*. They had done the hard work of filling the water troughs, and then they were attacked (v 17).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 2:17 *saved them*. A third time, Moses stood up for people being wronged, acting as the rescuer of the weak and mistreated (cf vv 12–14). *watered their flock*. Moses showed further mercy.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 2:18 *Reuel*. The priest of Midian likely had more than one name; his more common name was Jethro.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 2:20 Their father showed irritation at their failure to show hospitality to a stranger. See note, Gn 18:4.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 2:21 *gave … his daughter*. In marriage (Hbr expression). Cf Gn 29:28.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 2:22 *Gershom*. Combining the Hbr words for "stranger" and "there." *have been a sojourner.* A Hebrew man, raised as an Egyptian, married a Midianite priest's daughter. Moses was a foreigner everywhere.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 2:11–22 God humbles Moses before calling him to lead Israel out of Egypt, letting him feel the sufferings of his people and making Moses realize how totally inadequate he is to save them. This former prince must live as a fugitive in the household of a Midianite priest. Luth: "God is the God of the humble, the miserable, the afflicted, the oppressed, the desperate, and of those who have been brought down to nothing at all" (AE 26:314). God humbles us as He humbled Moses. He does this so that at the proper time He may raise us up in Christ (1Pt 5:6). • Lord, teach me to trust Your guidance even when days are dark. Amen.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 2:23 *many days*. During Moses' absence from Egypt, the king died. *groaned … and cried out for help*. The change in rulers did nothing to change Israel's slavery.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 2:24–25 *God heard … remembered … saw … knew*. Four verbs catalog God's response to Israel's cry for rescue. God's knowing always brings about an effect. God understood what Israel felt. After seeming to be out of touch and unconcerned, He was about to act. See "remember," p 843.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 2:23–25 God hears Israel's cry for deliverance. Sinful humans forget the promises they make, but God never forgets. He does not forget Israel but remembers His covenant with their fathers. In Holy Communion, we remember God's new covenant in Christ. Holy Communion is God's promise of forgiveness to us and assures us that He will never forget us. • Rescue us, dearest Jesus, from the slavery of sin, and deliver us to the Promised Land. Amen.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 3:1 *Jethro, the priest of Midian*. See notes, 2:16, 18. *Horeb, the mountain of God*. Elsewhere named Sinai (cf 19:11). God appeared to Moses and later to all Israel here (ch 19). The exact location is

unknown but it is probably at the southern end of the Sinai Peninsula. See map, p 120.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 3:2 *angel of the* LORD. See p 1227. Just: "This same One alone who is called an Angel, and who is God, appeared to and communed with Moses" (*ANF* 1:227). *flame*. Caught Moses' attention. "God does not want to deal with us in any other way than through the spoken Word and the Sacraments. Whatever is praised as from the Spirit—without the Word and Sacraments—is the devil himself. God wanted to appear even to Moses through the burning bush and spoken Word [Exodus 3:2–15]. No prophet, neither Elijah nor Elisha, received the Spirit without the Ten Commandments 'or the spoken Word'" (SA III VIII 10–11).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 3:4 *Lord … God*. Refers to the angel (v 2), or messenger, who is here identified as God. Iren: "The Son of God is implanted everywhere throughout his writings … and speaks with Moses from the bush" (*ANF* 1:473).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 3:5 *take your sandals off ... holy ground.* God warned Moses not to keep on his everyday footwear and so defile ground sanctified by His presence. In Near Eastern culture, feet are esp associated with uncleanliness, which can lead to shame.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 3:6 *your father*. Amram (6:20). The Lord includes the patriarchal genealogy, Moses' ancestors with whom He established the covenant. *afraid to look at God*. Moses turned his eyes from the burning bush, the flaming symbol of God's presence, fearing that God's majesty would consume him.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 3:7 *seen ... heard ... know*. See note, 2:24–25.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 3:8 *come down*. See p 39. Iren: "It [was] customary from the beginning with the Word of God to ascend and descend for the purpose of saving those who were in affliction" (*ANF* 1:476). *deliver*. See p 842. *flowing with milk and honey*. Often used in the OT to describe the bounty of the Promised Land. See p 6. *place of the Canaanites*. See p 345.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 3:9 *oppression*. Cf v 7.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 3:10–11 *I will send you*. In view of Moses' earlier flight from Egypt, Moses was shocked to learn that God was calling him to bring Israel out of Egypt. *Who am I.* Moses' first objection is that he is a nobody. He did not recognize that God had shaped him for leadership.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 3:12 *I will be*. Hbr verb (*'ehyeh*) is the same as in v 14, where it is translated "I AM." The I AM was with Moses. *this … sign*. The

burning bush was the sign guaranteeing that Moses would later bring the people to this same mountain. *serve God*. To worship the Lord, who would descend again in fire.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 3:13 *What is His name?* Moses' second objection is raised more for his own sake than for the sake of the people who might ask. Jacob got no answer when he asked God the same question (Gn 32:29).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 3:14 *I AM WHO I AM*. God began His answer with a short sentence defining His uniqueness. There is no one like God. See "LORD," p 1227. *I AM has sent me to you.* See notes, vv 12, 15.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 3:15 *The LORD ... has sent me.* See ESV note. God revealed the special name that Israel was to use in worship and teaching. This name was likely pronounced "Yahweh" (YAH-way). See p 1227. *My name forever … remembered throughout all generations*. "I AM WHO I AM," pronounced Yahweh, and known as "LORD" was God's special name, which Israel was to keep holy by calling on it in prayer and in praise.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 3:16 *elders*. Heads of the families and clans, commonly listed in genealogies. See note, Zec 8:4. Moses was to utilize a leadership structure already in place. See pp 54–55.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 3:17 *I promise*. God wanted the Israelites to be certain that He would deliver them from Egypt. *land of the Canaanites … milk and honey*. See note, v 8.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 3:18 *elders*. See note, v 16. *met with us*. Moses would represent all Israel and bring the Lord's testimony to the elders, commissioning them as witnesses with him. *three days' journey … sacrifice*. The Lord knew that Egypt's king would reject even this modest request (v 19), leading to Egypt's punishment.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 3:20 *strike Egypt with ... wonders*. The Lord knew it would take the 10 plagues to compel Pharaoh to let Israel go. Luth: "The … people physically came out of the physical land of Egypt through many miracles, as is written in Exodus. This figure does not mean that we, too, should physically go out of Egypt. Rather, our souls should leave the sins and spiritual power of the devil through true faith" (AE 39:77–78).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 3:21 *favor*. See p 6. The Lord planned for the Egyptians to pay Israel back for their years of hard labor.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 3:22 *neighbor*. Egyptians and Israelites apparently lived closely but were separated both ethnically and economically. *plunder*. Victorious armies plundered the goods of the defeated enemy (cf 2Ch

20:25), so the Lord's triumph over the gods of Egypt allowed His people to plunder their enemy.

EXODUS—NOTE ON **Ch 3** What begins as just another day tending sheep changes dramatically when God confronts Moses at the burning bush on the holy mountain. I AM makes His presence known in fire and word. I AM discloses His special name. I AM sends Moses on what seems to him an impossible mission. Moses has absolutely no hope for success except through God's Word and promise, which assures him of God's presence. Luth: "Without God's Word we can have no God" (AE 13:386). What was true for Moses is true for us as well. God is present for us and speaks to us in His Word. We have no hope for salvation except through God's Word and promise. • "Lord, open now my heart to hear, And through Your Word to me draw near" (*LSB* 908:1). Amen.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 4:1 *they will not believe me*. Moses' third objection contradicts God's statement that Israel "will listen to your voice" (3:18).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 4:2 *staff*. Shepherd's staff or rod; it became the symbol of God's power (7:15).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 4:3 *serpent*. Represented evil for Israel (cf Gn 3:1). Egyptians worshiped the serpent as a symbol of wisdom, fertility, and healing.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 4:4 A test of faith. It is dangerous to catch a serpent by the tail.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 4:5 *that they may believe*. Sign was to convince the people that God had appeared to Moses but also to convince Moses of God's power.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 4:8 *If they will not believe*. "If" anticipates the future unbelief and rebellion Israel would express for generations. Miracles do not necessarily lead to faith (Jn 12:37; 1Co 1:22–23).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 4:9 Moses could not perform the third sign in the arid wilderness, but it prefigured the first plague.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 4:10 *I am slow of speech and of tongue*. Moses still resisted God's call with a fourth objection, claiming to have a "heavy" (Hbr *kabed*) mouth and tongue. Perhaps he had a speech impediment. Ironically, the same Hbr root word can be used for "glory" and "honor," which Moses would later receive.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 4:11 Rhetorical questions, hinting at the Lord's irritation with Moses. *mouth ... mute ... deaf ... seeing ... blind?* God takes

responsibility for all our abilities, which He may use for His purposes. See note, Jn 9:3.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 4:12 *I will be with your mouth*. I AM (see note, 3:12) would speak through Moses, making him a prophet.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 4:13 *send someone else*. Moses' last objection. He did not want to go back to Egypt, but he humbly left the decision to the Lord.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 4:14 *anger … kindled*. When God's anger flared against a person, usually punishment followed (Dt 29:27); yet here God provided Moses with a helper. *Aaron … is coming out to meet you*. First mention of Aaron, whom the Lord commanded to meet Moses (v 27). Aaron was three years older, and so would likely have known about his brother. See note, 6:20.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 4:15 Promise similar to v 12 but now includes the mouth of Aaron. This made Aaron a prophet. See pp 1081–83.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 4:16 *you shall be as God to him*. Human beings were sometimes called "gods" in the sense that they were mighty leaders (Ps 82:6; Jn 10:34). See "God," p 1227. Moses, not Aaron, remained the divine instrument through whom God spoke.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 4:17 *staff*. See note, v 2.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 4:1–17 Moses resists the Lord's call to lead Israel out of Egypt because of his focus on his own shortcomings and the doubts of his people. Moses may not be the best speaker, but that does not matter because he will be speaking God's Word (v 12). Like Moses, we Christians have been called to speak God's Word. This is an important assignment because it is through the Word that God "works in people's hearts true repentance, knowledge of sins, and true faith in God's Son, Jesus Christ. By this means, and in no other way …, God desires to call people to eternal salvation" (FC SD II 50). • Lord, bless my mouth that I may speak Your Word clearly and with sincerity. Amen.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 4:18 *Please let me go*. Moses showed his willingness to obey God by requesting Jethro's permission to leave. *Go in peace*. Jethro blessed Moses.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 4:20 *staff of God*. See note, v 2.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 4:21 *I will harden his heart*. The Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart only after the sixth plague. Prior to that, Pharaoh hardened

his own heart against the Lord and continued to do so. God's action was a judgment against Pharaoh's sin. See note, 9:12.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 4:22 *Israel is My firstborn son*. God makes Himself the Father of the nation, attesting to the intimate Father-son relationship God had with Israel (cf Mt 2:15). See note, Hos 11:1. The firstborn had special rights of inheritance. See note, Gn 25:31. *firstborn son*. Lit, "my son, my firstborn is Israel." Hbr for "firstborn" is masculine.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 4:23 Pharaoh could save his firstborn son only if he freed the Lord's firstborn son (Israel; v 22). Pharaoh's dynasty would lose its heir. This ultimatum was not delivered immediately but was delayed until ch 11.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 4:24 *lodging place*. A night stop for Moses' family traveling to Egypt. Oases may have had shelters because of frequent visitors. *met him ... put him to death*. This episode is difficult to understand. The Lord may have sought Moses' death or the death of his uncircumcised son. The story implies that Moses should have circumcised his son before leaving for Egypt.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 4:25 *Zipporah.* Moses' wife (2:21) and the only person named in these verses (see below). *flint*. See note, Jsh 5:2. *cut off her son's foreskin*. They had two sons (18:3–4). Apparently, one was not circumcised but the other had been. By this time, the sons may have been grown men. Ter: "God, forseeing that He was about to give this circumcision to the people of Israel for 'a sign,' not for salvation, urges the circumcision of the son of Moses, their future leader, for this reason; that … the people should not despise [circumcision]" (*ANF* 3:153–54). *touched Moses' feet*. Lit, "and she touched [it] to his feet." A symbolic action may be involved. However, the Hbr verb can mean "to cast," as in some other passages (Is 25:12; 26:5), which could fit the context of a family dispute, ending with Zipporah throwing the foreskin at Moses' feet. Some rabbinic interpreters consider resistance by Jethro, the Midianite priest, as the reason the son was not circumcised. *bridegroom of blood*. Indicating family conflict. Zipporah did not circumcise her son until a life was in danger. Though circumcision was practiced by a number of western Semitic tribes, Zipporah's family may not have practiced it. The incident showed the importance of circumcision as a sign of God's covenant (Gn 17:9–14) and the setting apart of Moses' family as Israelites rather than Midianites.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 4:26 *He let him alone*. The Lord no longer sought to kill Moses or his son, but it seems that Moses went on to Egypt alone. He was later reunited with his wife and sons in Midian (18:2–3). *because of the circumcision.* Zipporah gained either Moses' life or his appeasement by shedding her son's blood in circumcision.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 4:27 *The LORD said to Aaron*. The Lord spoke to him as to a prophet (see note, v 15). Aaron was "glad in his heart" (v 14) to meet his brother again. *kissed*. Customary family greeting. See p 1276.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 4:29 *gathered … the elders*. Moses would stand before Pharaoh as an official representative of a large group of people. This explains why Pharaoh granted him an audience and considered his proposal. See note, 5:3. *elders*. See note, 3:16.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 4:30 Aaron and Moses worked so closely together that it made little difference who performed the signs.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 4:31 *visited*. Moses is received as God's representative both to Israel and Pharaoh and affirmed as Israel's representative to God. See notes, vv 1, 5. *they bowed their heads and worshiped*. First mention of worship in Ex but hardly the last. The Word of God brought them faith, which naturally prompted their worship. We do not know particulars about their beliefs or worship practices at this point. Clearly, some had knowledge of their ancestral faith, but others had fallen into idolatry (Jsh 24:14). See "bow," p 1276.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 4:18–31 Moses returns to Egypt as an act of faith. Confronting Pharaoh with God's demands and confronting the people whom he fears (4:1) proves a daunting assignment. Yet Moses obeys, and the people believe. Luther calls faith the "skill above all skills. It is the work of the Holy Spirit alone" (AE 14:59). There is no other way to explain the faith of Moses and of the people, and there is no other way to explain our faith. By our own reason and strength, we cannot believe in Jesus Christ. But because "the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel," I bow my head and worship (SC, Third Article, p xxxvii). • Lord, hear our prayer and lead us this day, no matter what challenges arise. Amen.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 5:1 *Thus says the LORD.* The Lord had directed Moses to use this prophetic introduction (4:22). See p 1080. *Let My people go.* Resounds repeatedly (9:1, 13; 10:3). A "property" dispute with Pharaoh. *hold a feast*. Cf 3:18; 5:3. A dispute about how and where to worship. Egyptian work registers record festival days when workers could make

sacrifices. It seems Moses' request as a community representative was not exceptional.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 5:2 Pharaoh was not familiar with "Yahweh" as a god, nor did he recognize His authority. Later, he would come to know about the Lord very well (7:5, 17).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 5:3 *Hebrews*. See note, Gn 14:13. *Please*. Note Moses' humble regard for Pharaoh; the Lord had told him to use this word (3:18). *three days' journey*. See note, 8:27. *lest He fall upon us*. Moses argued that Pharaoh would lose his slaves if the Hebrews suffered death. *pestilence*. See note, 9:3.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 5:4 Pharaoh regarded the request to worship the Lord simply as a way of avoiding work (vv 8, 17–18).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 5:6 *taskmasters*. See note, 1:11. *foremen*. Probably Israelites who served under Egyptians in the chain of command.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 5:7 *straw to make bricks*. Egyptians mixed clay, straw, and water, and shaped the mixture with brick molds. The bricks dried in the sun. An Egyptian scroll (c 1275 BC) at the Louvre, Paris, mentions brick making, overseers, and a complaint about the lack of straw for the bricks.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 5:9 *lying words*. See Moses' and Aaron's words, vv 1, 3.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 5:11 Previously, the Egyptians provided straw, but now the slaves needed to search for it.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 5:12 *stubble for straw*. Chaff (cf Is 5:24; 40:24).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 5:14 *foremen … were beaten*. See note, v 6. The foremen were both despised as collaborators by their own people and abused by the Egyptians.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 5:16 *the fault is in your own people*. They boldly complained to Pharaoh about being beaten for the shortage when the Egyptians were at fault.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 5:17 *You are idle*. Pharaoh blamed the foremen for Moses' requests. Cf v 8.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 5:19 *in trouble*. With their own people, because Pharaoh would not allow a reduction in the daily quota of bricks.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 5:21 *stink in the sight*. Mixed metaphor. The term for "smell" can also mean "reputation," which was in view. *a sword in their*

hand to kill us. Hyperbole, indicating their anger and fear. At this point, they fear Pharaoh more than the Lord.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 5:22 *done evil*. A victim's accusation. Moses has the same questions as the foremen ("Why?"; v 15) and expresses utter frustration.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 5:23 *Pharaoh ... has done evil*. Moses softened the accusation by assigning the evil to Pharaoh. *not delivered.* Moses accused God of failing to fulfill His initial promise at the burning bush (3:8).

EXODUS—NOTE ON **Ch 5** The Lord sends Moses to deliver the people, but Pharaoh only makes their burdens heavier. Why does God wait and put people through such suffering? Luth: "Faith does not despair of the God who sends trouble. Faith does not consider Him angry or an enemy…. Faith rises above all this and sees God's fatherly heart behind His unfriendly exterior" (AE 14:59). • Lord, forgive my accusations and inaction in view of Your Word and the obstacles I face. Grant me confidence in Your fatherly heart. Amen.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 6:1 *with a strong hand*. The Lord's plan for delivering Israel called for Pharaoh himself to drive the people out of Egypt (12:31–32).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 6:2 *I am the* LORD. At the burning bush, God told Moses to use the name "LORD" when speaking to the people (3:15). This statement, expressing the Lord's authority, is repeated in vv 6, 29.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 6:3 *God Almighty*. See ESV note. The name God commonly used when He appeared to the patriarchs (Gn 28:3; 35:11; 43:14; 48:3). *did not make Myself known to them*. The name LORD (Yahweh) appears frequently in Gn and is even found in statements of the patriarchs. However, the name is never explained ("make Myself known"), as in ch 3 or 6:6; 20:2. In Ex, the name becomes strongly associated with the Lord as deliverer or savior. See "LORD," p 1227.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 6:4 The God who once established His covenant with Abraham (Gn 17:1–8) was the Lord who renewed His promise to the people of Israel (v 8). See p 127.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 6:5 *I have remembered*. See note, 2:24–25.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 6:6 *I will bring you out … deliver … redeem*. First-person verbs emphasized the Lord's promise to free His people from slavery. See "deliver" and "redeem," pp 842, 843. *outstretched arm*. Wielding a weapon or striking a blow. See "arm," p 842.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 6:7 *My people*. God chose Israel to be His very own people (Ezk 20:5). References to this election recur often (Lv 26:12; Jer 11:4; 24:7; 30:22; Ezk 14:11; 36:28; 37:23, 27; Zec 8:8).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 6:8 *I am the* LORD. God emphasized His authority at the beginning (v 2) and end of His message. The name encompasses His purpose of salvation. See note, v 3.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 6:9 A change had come over the people (cf 4:31), now hopeless and unimpressed by words.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 6:11 *Go in*. The Lord instructed Moses to confront Pharaoh immediately, while still at the meeting place (cf 5:20).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 6:12 Moses is demoralized and begins to blame himself for the trouble, reverting to earlier excuses (see note, 4:10). *uncircumcised lips*. Not only lips but also ears and heart (Lv 26:41; Ac 7:51) are described as uncircumcised and therefore sinful (cf Is 6:5).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 6:13 *charge*. Hbr *tsawah*, "command," as in the commandments of the covenant. Rather than answer Moses' question, the Lord ordered him and Aaron to get on with their assignment.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 6:1–13 The Lord reveals the purpose attached to His sacred name: deliverance. Shakespeare's famous question "What's in a name?" dismisses the significance of names, but this does not apply to the name Yahweh! God says of His name: "You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain" (Ex 20:7). This name is for worship and teaching and is not to be abused by cursing and lies. This "name has been revealed and given to us so that it may be of constant use and profit" (LC I 63). • Lord, sanctify my heart and tongue that my words may truly honor You and Your holy name. Amen.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 6:14–27 Offers only a brief summary of a family that lived in Egypt for 430 years (12:40). This genealogy interrupts the history to emphasize that Moses and Aaron deserve a hearing from the people. Israelite genealogies emphasized kinship responsibilities, privileges, and inheritance (see "Form and Use of Genealogies," p 629). At this low point of the story, Moses reminds his hearers of who he is and the importance of the Levites for Israel's future. Cf Nu 3.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 6:14–16 *Reuben … Simeon … Levi*. Counting through the list of Jacob's sons, Moses reached the tribe he plans to

describe. Such a memory device assists the listeners (or readers), who would likely know such kinship by heart.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 6:14 *heads of their fathers' houses*. Larger kinship groups. See note, 3:16.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 6:15 *Shaul, the son of a Canaanite woman*. Judah also fathered children by a Canaanite (Gn 38:2–5).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 6:16 *Gershon, Kohath, and Merari*. Only the descendants of Kohath, including Aaron and Moses, are listed in any detail.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 6:19 *clans*. Broader families. See p 54–55.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 6:20 *Jochebed his father's sister*. Amram's marriage to his aunt, as well as marriages between other family members, was later forbidden (Lv 18:9–18). *Aaron and Moses*. Aaron's four sons are named but not Moses' sons (18:3). Aaron's sons grew more important through their role as priests. Moses' descendants became temple treasurers.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 6:23 *Elisheba*. Aaron's wife from Judah. Her father and brother are named in David's family tree. The future priestly and royal tribes are joined in Aaron's household.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 6:24 *clans of the Korahites*. Korah later led a rebellion against Moses and was swallowed up by the earth (Nu 16) though his sons were spared (Nu 26:10–11). Some psalms are attributed to the sons of Korah. See p 840; see also note, 1Ch 9:19.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 6:25 *Eleazar*. Succeeded his father, Aaron, as high priest (Nu 20:25–28). *Phinehas*. Stood up for the Lord at Peor; therefore Israel's priests came from his family. See note, Nu 25:8.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 6:26–27 *Aaron ... Moses ... Moses ... Aaron*. Repeated to stress their importance.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 6:26 *by their hosts*. Tribes were organized in battle array, which is how Israel marched through the wilderness. (Moses would have written Ex in the wilderness.)
EXODUS—NOTE ON 6:28–29 *tell Pharaoh ... all that I say to you*. The story resumes from v 13 with the forceful reminder that Moses would be speaking the Word of the Lord.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 6:30 *How will Pharaoh listen to me?* Repeated from v 12. The Lord answers in ch 7. Moses knew and rightly feared Pharaoh's power. In 10:28, Pharaoh threatened Moses with death. Readers may wonder why Pharaoh didn't just get rid of Moses since he was a nuisance. God was at work to preserve Moses and Aaron. Pharaoh surely

recognized the regard Moses quickly gained with both the Israelites and the Egyptians (11:3) on account of the wonders God worked through him. Pharaoh became divided from his counselors, who at first thought they could humiliate and dismiss Moses (7:11) but later learned they could not (9:11–12). By the eighth plague, the leadership of Egypt was clearly divided (10:7), and Moses recorded some of the backroom politics, which served God's purposes in punishing the Egyptians and delivering all of Israel.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 6:14–30 As a Levite, Moses has good family connections, but this does not translate into an eager willingness to serve the Lord. He continues to doubt that Pharaoh will ever let Israel go. How different is another Servant of the Lord with good family connections (Mt 1:1–17; Lk 3:23–38)! His attitude is spelled out in Luther's great hymn "Dear Christians, One and All, Rejoice" (*LSB* 556, especially st 1, 6). Jesus' willing obedience frees us from the eternal consequences of our sinful fears, doubts, and stubbornness. • Dear Father in heaven, my heart and voice sing Your wonders. I praise You for Your victory in Christ, who paid our ransom with His life. Amen.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 7:1 *like God to Pharaoh*. Moses would reveal the divine will to Aaron and act as executor of God's will to Pharaoh. *Aaron shall be your prophet*. See pp 1081–83. To announce to Pharaoh the revelations of Moses. Moses is also promised divine authority and power over Pharaoh, who would eventually bow before him.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 7:3 *I will harden Pharaoh's heart*. See notes, 4:21; 9:12. *signs and wonders*. Exponentially amplified natural events showed that God was true to His Word. Signs provided assurance (Jsh 2:12–13), gave testimony (Is 19:19–20) and warning (Nu 17:10), and encouraged faith.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 7:4 *My hand*. See "hand," p 842. *My hosts*. Israel was organized as an army, according to tribes (6:26; 12:51; Nu 1–2). See p 1291. *judgment*. Lit, plural. Judgments of condemnation for Egypt (Law) and salvation for Israel (Gospel). Cf 6:6.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 7:5 *Egyptians shall know that I am the* LORD. Here, the judgment is condemnation (however, cf 6:6). Later, the Lord will also plan to save Egyptians. See note, Is 19:19.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 7:6 God's Word affirmed Moses and Aaron in their calling. The Israelites will not express doubt again until 14:15.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 7:7 At birth and ages 40, 80, and 120, Moses experienced significant events in his life (Heb 11:24–29). At 80, Moses received the Lord's divine pledge to uphold all he was called to do.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 7:9 *Prove yourselves by working a miracle*. The divine mission will be attested by a sign. God's messengers confirmed their calling in the presence of the king (vv 10–13). *serpent*. Probably a cobra, the snake typically used by Egyptian charmers.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 7:11 *wise men*. They belonged to the priestly caste educated in human wisdom and sorcery. *secret arts*. Incantations and spells were used by the Egyptians. Sleight of hand could also have tricked people into believing a miracle took place.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 7:12 *they became serpents*. The magicians practiced the art of turning snakes into sticks by squeezing the nape of a snake's neck, compelling it to become rigid and appear dead. Here, they also turned their sticks into snakes, raising the suspicion that the sticks had been only rigid snakes. These acts could also have been the lying wonders of Satan (cf 2Th 2:9). *Aaron's staff swallowed up their staffs*. Demonstrated the supremacy of Yahweh over the gods of Egypt. Ter: "The verity of Moses swallowed up their lying deceit" (*ANF* 3:234).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 7:13 *heart was hardened*. See notes, 4:21; 9:12.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 7:1–13 According to God's divine plan of salvation, Moses and Aaron are His "god" and "prophet" who speak His Word before Pharaoh in order to rescue the Israelites from 430 years of bondage. God's plan continues through His greater prophet, Jesus, who fulfilled all of God's promises and became the living Word in order to rescue us from an eternity of bondage to sin. • Lord God, heavenly Father, through Your Holy Spirit, You call, gather, and enlighten Your children. Through the same Spirit, give us a right understanding of Your love toward us, even when our cross and sufferings are unbearable. Comfort and strengthen us, we pray, for the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 7:14–12:32 Egyptians worshiped creatures as deities, which were judged by the various plagues. Moses and Aaron were empowered by God to force the release of Israel by a series of miracles as penalties. While these plagues were not altogether unknown to the Egyptians, the fact that they came upon the land with overwhelming force and in close succession proved to Pharaoh that the Lord is the Lord of

heaven and earth and He rules over the powers of creation, sin, and death with unrestricted freedom and omnipotence.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 7:15 Pharaoh went to the Nile to walk, bathe, check the water level, and present daily worship (cf 2:5).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 7:16 *Hebrews*. See note, Gn 14:13.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 7:17 *my hand*. Moses and Aaron are God's servants. *turn into blood*. The same sense as in Jl 2:31, where the moon is to be turned into blood; thus it was not a chemical change into real blood, but a change in appearance, possibly because of red algae. *The Admonitions of an Egyptian Sage* (late third millennium BC) refers to the Nile as being turned to blood.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 7:18 A natural chemical phenomenon was immediately intensified and precipitated by the hand of God and affected all the tributaries of the Nile. Dead fish made the river stink.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 7:19 *even in vessels of wood and … stone*. Used to filter, transport, and store water from the Nile for daily use. The appearance of "blood" here would prove that this was no ordinary natural event.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 7:20 The Egyptians may have seen the river's blood-red hue as portraying death and concluded that Israel's God had slain Hapi, the Nile god believed to be the giver of life and sustenance.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 7:21 *all the land of Egypt*. Bounded by Libya, the Great Sea, the Red Sea, and Cush. See map, p 33.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 7:22 See note, v 11. The magicians would have plied their arts on water that was unaffected, which is described in v 24.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 7:23 *did not take even this to heart*. Indicated a hardening against the basic needs of his people.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 7:24 Fine sediment along the river purified the water of its chemical instability, making it drinkable.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 7:25 *Seven full days passed*. Plagues did not come daily, though they did occur speedily.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 7:14–25 The Lord strikes at the very heart of Pharaoh's idolatry by striking the Nile and the resources provided by the river, which are associated with Egyptian gods. He begins to deliver His people from Egypt through water, by which He will later destroy Pharaoh's army and set Israel apart. Today, praise God, who has likewise delivered you through a water miracle: Holy Baptism. • Dear Father in heaven, guard us from the craftiness of the devil, who would seek to undo us and draw us

away from Christ. In a world of idols and self-made "gods," remind us that Satan has been judged and his weapon of deceit will soon be fully extinguished, through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord. Amen.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 8:1 If God's people are to serve and worship Him, they must be free from bondage. See note, 5:1.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 8:2–4 *plague*. Lit, "strike." See note, 9:3. *frogs*. Small Nile frogs. The Egyptian goddess Heqt was thought to take the form of a frog that helped women as they gave birth to children. This is the second plague. The first three plagues covered the whole land and fell upon both Israelites and Egyptians.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 8:5 *Aaron*. See note, 7:1.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 8:7 See note, 7:11.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 8:8–10:24 Note Pharaoh's responses: plead (8:8); sacrifice (8:25); I have sinned (9:27); only men may go (10:11); forgive my sin (10:17); only people may go (10:24). Over time, he recognized his inability to resist the Lord's purpose.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 8:8 Pharaoh regarded the God of Israel as the author of the plague and entreated Moses to intercede with God to remove it.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 8:9–10 *Be pleased to command me*. Showing humility, Moses placed himself under Pharaoh's authority. Ambr: "[Moses] knew that the king would not keep true to his promises, yet he thought it right and good to pray when asked to do so, to bless when wronged, to forgive when besought" (*NPNF* 2 10:82). *cut off*. Can mean they were restricted, but is also an expression for death. See note, 12:15. *Tomorrow*. Moses let Pharaoh set the time for the frogs to be removed. The timed conclusion of the plague would again demonstrate its miraculous character.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 8:11–13 *The frogs shall go away … The frogs died*. God may have used the red, putrid waters of the Nile (see note, 7:17) to kill the frogs.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 8:12 *Moses cried to the* LORD. Earnest prayer, after which God removed the plague, though perhaps not as Pharaoh expected. *as … agreed*. Moses acted in good faith. See note, v 15.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 8:13 *the* LORD *did according to the word of Moses*. The Lord hears and answers out of His divine, fatherly goodness and mercy.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 8:15 *respite*. Relief from overpowering pressure. *would not listen*. Pharaoh proved himself a liar, a sin he had charged to

Moses (5:9).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 8:1–15 This sets a recurring theme of sin, oppression (the plagues), repentance, and deliverance. Magicians, sorcerers, and charlatans cannot stop the power of God. As the intensity of temporal punishment increases in terms of social and economic impact, God still remains slow to anger and desires to deliver sinners by His grace. • Lord, when I am weak in faith, strengthen me. When I am cold in love, warm me so that the love Christ first worked in me through His Word and Spirit may go out to my neighbor. Uphold me that I might remain in You even unto life everlasting. Amen.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 8:16–17 *gnats*. They usually breed in the flooded fields of Egypt in late autumn. But here they arise miraculously from the dust Aaron struck. Barely visible to the eye, they sting and cause painful skin irritation; they creep into eyes and noses.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 8:18 *The magicians … could not*. The Egyptian magicians displayed the impotence of their secret arts next to the creative power of the true God. See note, 7:11.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 8:19 *the finger of God*. Denotes creative omnipotence. Generic Hbr *'elohim* is used here instead of the specific *yahweh*. See p 1227. The magicians realized their powers had been surpassed. Trickery was now out of the question.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 8:16–19 The plague of gnats is more intense than the previous plagues, and the magicians concede that there is a God greater than the ones they serve. God's judgment increases in magnitude as this plague drives Pharaoh and his magicians toward despair. People who trust Christ the Lord are drawn closer to Him in times of tribulation, seeking His forgiveness, comfort, strength, and healing for the sake of His cross and resurrection. • O God, our Father, what would we be if You would forsake us? What would we do if You would withdraw Your hand? How quickly the prudent become simple; the wise become fools. In Christ Jesus, daily increase our faith that we may recognize Your loving hand at work in our lives. Amen.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 8:21 *flies*. More aggressive than gnats, buzzing the ears and landing esp on the edges of the eyelids. The Egyptians venerated flies and beetles.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 8:22 The Lord condemned the Egyptians but delivered the Israelites from evil (9:4, 11, 26; 10:6, 23; 11:7). He proved

that Israel had His blessing. *Goshen.* See map, p 120.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 8:24 *the land was ruined*. Flies killed plants and caused disfiguring swelling in humans.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 8:25 *sacrifice to your God within the land*. Pharaoh compromised.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 8:26 *abomination*. The sacrifices would not be pure according to the rites of the Egyptians. This would be blasphemy toward their gods, and they would likely stone the Israelites. See note, Pr 6:16. *stone us?* The penalty for blasphemy could be delivered by a mob, without Pharaoh's consent.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 8:27 *three days' journey … wilderness*. Where Israel is beyond Pharaoh's domination and oversight (cf Gn 30:36).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 8:28 *you must not go very far*. A counterproposal that still exerted Pharaoh's and Egypt's control and standards. *Plead for me*. That the swarms be removed. See note, v 8.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 8:29 *cheat again*. See note, v 15.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 8:31 *the LORD did as Moses asked*. See note, v 13.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 8:32 *Pharaoh hardened his heart*. See notes, 4:21; 9:12.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 8:20–32 The Lord distinguishes between Egypt and Israel by protecting His people in Goshen from the plagues. Pharaoh wants the Israelites to sacrifice and worship according to his expectations, but Moses could never allow this. The means and character of worship must be subject to God's Word rather than the will of any government or mob. The Lord distinguishes us by His grace and redemption. • O dreadful and severe Judge, wonderful and mysterious are Your judgments. You are so jealous for Your people's pure praise, sanctified by the blood of Your beloved Son. Keep us in the one true faith. Amen.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 9:1 *Hebrews*. See note, Gn 14:13.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 9:2 Moses highlighted Pharaoh's obstinate resistance.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 9:3 *the hand of the LORD will fall*. See p 842. *plague*. Usually translated "pestilence" (5:3), it is any infectious outbreak. The Eng term came to describe all 10 wonders by which God struck the Egyptians. *upon … livestock*. Possibly murrain, similar to anthrax, which could affect the grazing cattle and other domestic animals, destroying the wealth of the

Egyptians. God could have used the flies (8:21) to carry the bacteria now infecting the animals.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 9:5 *the Lord set a time*. To this plague, God adds a warning and a time for the Egyptians to respond. They could rescue their animals by trusting the Lord's word and segregating their livestock from animals in the fields (cf v 20). The protected cattle survived (vv 19–21).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 9:6 *All … died*. Those in the field (cf vv 3, 19). The sin of one man who thought he was a "god" had not only personal but also communal repercussions. Herds and flocks were equivalent to wealth.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 9:7 *sent*. Confidential messengers confirmed that the cattle of the Israelites had been spared. *heart of Pharaoh was hardened*. Threat, promise, judgment, and mercy made no impression on him (cf Ps 51).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 9:1–7 Despite the number of times Pharaoh goes through the cycle of sin, oppression, regret, and deliverance, God will not be mocked. God deals another detrimental blow to the Egyptian religious and economic systems. By God's grace, Israel is delivered from temporal judgment and destruction. The Lamb of God delivers us from sin, death, and the devil through His atoning blood. • Heavenly Father, many smile when Your precious Word of Law and Gospel is condemned. Many hear of redeeming grace in Your Son, Jesus Christ, and rail against Him in thought, word, and deed. Protect us as we bear witness to all who are hardened to Your Word. Amen.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 9:8–10 Soot blew like dust over the land, and God used it to make boils break out on people and animals.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 9:8 *kiln*. Smelting furnace or limekiln for firing the bricks the Israelites were forced to produce (1:14; 5:7–19). The kiln is now an instrument of chastisement against the Egyptians.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 9:9–10 *boils*. Skin swollen in abscesses and blisters as a result of disease (see note, v 3). *land of Egypt*. See note, 8:22.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 9:11 *magicians could not stand*. Boils and pustule abscesses seriously affected leg and joint movement (cf Dt 28:35).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 9:12 *the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh*. See note, 4:21. The Lord confirmed Pharaoh in his persistent unbelief. "Even Pharaoh perished in this way. (Of whom it is written [in Exodus 9:16; Romans 9:17], 'But for this purpose I have raised you up, to show you My power, so that My name may be proclaimed in all the earth.') This was not

because God had begrudged him salvation or because it had been His good pleasure that Pharaoh should be damned and lost. For God is not willing that any should perish [2 Peter 3:9]; '[He also has] no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live' (Ezekiel 33:11)" (FC SD XI 84). *them*. Pharaoh's counselors. See note, 6:30.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 9:8–12 The magicians collapse under the Lord's chastisement; both people and animals are smitten by painful skin abscesses. The Lord again distinguishes His people in this plague by sparing the Israelites and their animals. The blessings God gives us should extend beyond us to bless even our animals! If the Lord shows such mercy to sheep, how much more shall He show mercy toward you? His Gospel rescues us from sin, death, and the devil. • Dear Father in heaven, You saved me by grace through faith in Christ, Your Son. As long as this corrupt nature clings to me like a dead corpse, teach me to say, "Forgive me, for I am a wretched sinner worthy of punishment." Free me, O Lord, for I am helpless without You. Amen.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 9:13 *Hebrews*. See note, Gn 14:13.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 9:13–10:29 These three preparatory plagues will be exponentially greater than the previous one and will prepare Pharaoh for the final plague of judgment. God did not destroy Pharaoh with just one act of judgment in order that (1) Pharaoh might glorify God, and (2) the name of the Lord might be declared to the ends of His kingdom.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 9:14 *this time I will send all My plagues*. Difference of degree. Previous plagues (blood, frogs, gnats, flies, livestock, and boils) failed to touch the hard heart of Pharaoh.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 9:15 *pestilence*. See note, v 3.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 9:16 *I have raised you up*. Kings reign by God's permission. See note, Rm 9:17. *My name … proclaimed*. See note, Jsh 2:10.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 9:17 *still exalting yourself*. Though the Lord had distinguished Israel, Pharaoh's attitude toward them had not changed.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 9:18 *heavy hail*. Hail of great size in awful volleys, accompanied by thunder and fire (lightning; v 23).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 9:19 See notes, vv 5, 20.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 9:20 *whoever feared*. Some of Pharaoh's servants had come to believe Moses. *livestock into the houses*. A sign of divine mercy and rescue. Herds of cattle were turned out to pasture between Jan

and Apr, so this plague would have killed range cattle. Other plagues threatened the livestock as well.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 9:21 Those who ignored God's warning would reap the prophesied judgment (vv 22–26).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 9:24 *fire flashing*. Lightning intensified the threat (cf Ezk 1:4).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 9:25 *every plant*. Probably occurred in Jan or Feb, when the flax and barley were in flower but the wheat and emmer had not yet germinated (vv 31–33).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 9:27 *This time I have sinned*. The supernatural aspect of this plague, esp the terrible violence of the hailstorm, made a stronger impression upon Pharaoh than the previous plagues. Pharaoh finally admitted limited guilt.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 9:30 *fear the* LORD *God*. See p 1001.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 9:31 *flax and the barley were struck down*. Not yet ripe but in ear and in blossom. See note, v 25. *flax*. Used for Egyptian linen; a valuable crop.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 9:32 *wheat and the emmer*. Grain for making bread.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 9:13–35 Pharaoh mocks God with false repentance, but the Lord is unmoved. Sinners cannot bargain with God by conceding some of their sins or by amending behaviors. God sees through it all. Like the thief on the cross, we do not appeal to mockery but instead call on God's mercy. Jesus is always ready to forgive. • O Lord Christ, I am the worst evil; You are the highest good. But You took my sin and gave me Your righteousness. I am led to this confession through Your Law and Gospel-promises. O faithful God, my merciful Redeemer, grant that I trust in You alone. Amen.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 10:1 *hardened his heart*. See notes, 4:21; 9:12.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 10:2 *tell … your son*. Israelite children were taught the story and lessons of the exodus. Parents were obligated to teach the mighty works of God to their children. See note, Pr 1:8; cf 12:26–27; Ps 105:26–38; 106:7–12; 136:10–16.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 10:3 *Hebrews*. See note, Gn 14:13. *How long*. The Lord demanded homage from Pharaoh, not just the worship of the Israelites.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 10:4 *locusts*. Swarms as never seen before in Egypt; the exceptional destruction showed that God was judging the people (cf Am 7:1–3).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 10:7 *snare*. Lethal trap for animals; figurative expression for ultimate destruction. *Let the men go*. Another compromise was considered.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 10:8 *serve*. Worship. *But which ones ... ?* Bargaining to prevent the loss of slaves.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 10:9 *must hold a feast*. A sacrificial feast to the Lord. Moses would not compromise.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 10:10 *The Lord be with you*. Not a blessing but a threat. Pharaoh took a divine prerogative by supposing that the Israelites were his slave people and as such were Egyptian property.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 10:11 This concession was not serious. The women and children would be held as hostages against the return of the men.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 10:13 The wind blew a day and a night, evidence that the locusts came from a great distance, proving to the Egyptians that the omnipotence of Yahweh extended beyond the borders of Egypt.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 10:14 *never been before, nor … again*. A miracle of magnitude. Cf Jl 1:1–4; Rv 9:3–10.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 10:15 *darkened*. A dense army, annihilating any vegetation that had remained after the hail.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 10:17 *forgive my sin*. See notes, 4:21; 9:12. *remove this death*. Locusts would bring utter ruin to Egypt's agriculture.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 10:19 *turned the wind*. By means of a strong west wind, the Lord cast the locusts into the Red Sea so that they would perish. *Not a single locust*. Yet another miracle.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 10:20 *hardened Pharaoh's heart*. See notes, 4:21; 9:12.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 10:1–20 Pharaoh seeks compromise and even forgiveness, but his pride still refuses to bend to the will of God. Sinners of the worst description are to be admonished by the Law, even if there is little hope of amendment. God strengthened Moses' faith by saying that the hardening of Pharaoh was according to His divine will so that the signs would confirm to Israel and all successive generations that the Lord is God (cf 7:3–5). Pharaoh's confession was only a pious platitude, but for us the gift of confession is beautiful—the Holy Spirit moves us to agree with God that we sin and deserve punishment, and for the sake of Christ, we receive the gift of absolution. • My God and my Lord, I know that when I confess my sins to You, You are faithful and just and will cleanse me from all my

unrighteousness for the sake of Your Son, my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 10:21 *a darkness to be felt*. Possibly, God caused a great, swelling sandstorm so that the sky was darkened (except where the Israelites lived). The Egyptians' sun god (Ra) could not grant them light.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 10:24 Yet another attempt at compromise. Pharaoh sensed that the conflict was ultimate and not just about a onetime trip for a worship festival.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 10:26 Moses was firm. The Lord would not negotiate with Pharaoh.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 10:27 *hardened*. See notes, 4:21; 9:12.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 10:28 *you shall die*. Pharaoh fell into such vengeful wrath that he sent Moses away under threat. Pharaoh's murderous intent would return against him in the last plague.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 10:29 *I will not see your face again*. Ironic statement during a plague of darkness! This marks a decisive turning point; the last blow would be followed by the release of the people. When people drive God's Word from their midst, He gives them over to their own delusions.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 10:21–29 The plague of darkness removes any ability to move freely, as was possible with the first several plagues. Sinners mock God's Word and in so doing deceive themselves. The Egyptians would soon be exposed to the destroyer and the death of the firstborn as a testimony that the Lord is patient and slow to anger, but at the proper time, judgment will come. Thanks be to God that by the vicarious sacrifice of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, we are His children through Holy Baptism, forgiven, cleansed, and protected from the final judgment. • O Lord, do not look upon me with condemnation. But look at the righteous face of Your dear Son, Jesus Christ, my Mediator, High Priest, and Savior. O Father, be gracious and merciful for His sake. Amen.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 11:1 *Yet one plague more*. The 10th plague is the final judgment of God, who revealed this to Moses during his last meeting with Pharaoh (10:28–29; 11:8).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 11:2 The Israelites were to ask the Egyptians for articles of silver and gold, which the Lord would make them willing to give.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 11:3 *favor*. See note, 3:21. Pharaoh's servants wanted God's wrath to end after so much suffering. *Moses was very great in*

the land. Moses' fame in Egypt influenced Pharaoh's servants and people to give freely.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 11:4 *I will go out*. The continuation of Moses' brief answer in 10:29; at midnight of the Passover.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 11:5 *every firstborn … shall die*. Cf Ps 105:36; 135:8. On the great importance of a firstborn son, see "firstborn," p 6. The daughters were not killed in this plague (cf 4:22–23). *behind the handmill*. See note, Jgs 16:21. *cattle*. The plague was to fall upon the firstborn of both people and animals as God's judgment of Pharaoh's sinful conduct in imprisoning the Israelites and their cattle. See note, 9:20.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 11:6 *a great cry*. An oriental custom in the case of death.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 11:7 *not a dog shall growl*. Perhaps a proverbial expression. As a severe storm approaches, animals hide and are silent; dogs would be inconspicuous, not uttering a sound. Not the slightest injury would come to the Israelites. *distinction*. See note, 8:22. While Egypt was given into death, Israel would be saved through divine intervention.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 11:8 *bow down*. Pharaoh had lost his people's respect. See notes, v 3; 6:30. *hot anger*. Occasioned by the king's threat (10:28), Moses left Pharaoh in great wrath, pointing to the judgment of God.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 11:9–10 Ends Moses' negotiations with Pharaoh, which began in ch 7. All these events served God's plans for Israel and Egypt.
EXODUS—NOTE ON **Ch 11** God's final judgment is about to come upon Pharaoh and Egypt. The hardened king will see that God's patience has come to an end and His wrath is imminent. The 10th plague will bring judgment upon sin and its wages (Rm 6:23). In our stead, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, took upon Himself the full punishment for all our sin so that we will not die an eternal death. • Dear Father, I commend my spirit into Your merciful hands. Receive my prayer because of the blood, sufferings, and death of Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, my Lord and Savior. Amen.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 12:1–28 The institution of Passover took place at the Lord's command. The Lord established Israel as a nation by the Passover (cf Is 43:15).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 12:2 *first month of the year for you*. Nisan (Abib). See calendar, p 262. Starting the year with Passover reminded Israel that all its life as the people of God was grounded in God's redemptive act in the exodus.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 12:3 *a lamb*. Lit, "a young one," either a sheep or goat (v 5). The sight of the lamb provided the occasion for remembrance and instruction regarding God's mercy and deliverance from their oppressor. See note, 10:2. *according to their fathers' houses*. See note, 6:14; see also pp 54–55. Only the members of one family or family circle should gather together, not an indiscriminate company.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 12:5 *without blemish*. To be fit for sacrifice and as a symbol of the moral integrity of the person represented by the sacrifice. Cf 29:1; Lv 1:3; Nu 6:14; Dt 15:21. *male*. Taking the place of the firstborn males of Israel. *year old*. From the eighth day of its life to the end of its first year; a law that also applied to other sacrifices (22:29–30; Lv 22:27). *sheep or … goats*. At the time of Josiah, kids were still used as well as lambs (2Ch 35:7). The imagery here is frequently applied to Jesus (cf Jn 1:29; 1Co 5:7; 1Pt 1:19; Rv 5:6; 7:14; 12:11.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 12:6 Ritual slaughtering and dressing of the sacrifice took place at the same time for each household. *twilight*. See ESV note. From the moment the sun sinks below the horizon to the time of total darkness (cf 29:39, 41).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 12:7 *blood*. A sign for the Lord to spare the Israelite households and not permit the destroyer to enter them (vv 13, 23). *doorposts … lintel*. Blood surrounded the entry, marking the home as under the Lord's protection (cf Heb 9:22; 1Jn 1:7). By marking across from post to post and then from the lintel downward, a cross pattern is formed in the entryway. Jesus Christ is "the propitiation for our sins" (1Jn 2:2; 4:10). He is "our Passover lamb" (1Co 5:7).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 12:8–9 *roasted*. As shepherds cook; reminiscent of Israel's pastoral life during the patriarchal years.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 12:8 *that night*. The night of the 14th of Nisan. See calendar, p 262.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 12:9 *its head with its legs and its inner parts*. So a bone would not be broken (v 46). This, too, points to Christ (Jn 19:36).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 12:10 *let none of it remain until the morning*. A rule later given for all the sacrificial meals except the peace offering. The

household was to eat and remember together (vv 26–27), with some urgency (v 11). Realizing our sin in bitterness and brokenness of heart, we eagerly feed upon Christ (Mt 26:26–29; Mk 14:22–25; Lk 22:17–20; 1Co 11:23–25).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 12:11 The Israelites were to be prepared for the flight from Egypt without terror or panic (Dt 20:3; Ps 31:24) and dressed in traveling garb. *belt fastened*. So walking would not be hindered. *sandals on your feet*. Prepared for rough terrain. *staff in your hand*. For protection and support. *Passover*. Hbr *pesach*; used for the holiday, the sacrifice, and the paschal (Passover) lamb (v 21; 2Ch 35:1, 13). The verb form also appears in v 27. The preparation of the lamb in accordance with divine instruction was later transferred to the whole seven-day observance of the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Lv 23:4–8), which began with this meal and the sacrifices that were to be offered at that feast (Dt 16:1–2; 2Ch 35:1, 7). See note, 13:6–7. Ter: "Even Moses prophesied … and added that 'it was the *passover of the Lord*,' that is, the *passion of Christ*" (*ANF* 3:167). See notes, 1Co 5:7–8.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 12:12 *strike all the firstborn*. See note, 11:5. *on all the gods … judgments*. See notes, 7:20; 8:2–4; 10:21. The Egyptians worshiped these gods through their kings and certain sacred animals such as the bull Apis and the goat Mendes, the firstborn of which all died. When animals sacred to the gods died, this demonstrated that the gods were powerless to resist the one true God. Cf Is 19:1. *I am the* LORD. See notes, 6:2, 8.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 12:13 *a sign for you*. God placed the Israelites under the sign of the blood on the houses in which they were assembled; this in turn was a sign of God's mercy that no plague should fall upon them. Cypr: "When the world shall begin to be desolated and smitten, whoever is found in the blood and the sign of Christ alone shall escape" (*ANF* 5:464). *plague*. See note, 9:3.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 12:14 Remembrance was to be maintained by repetition of the feast and the celebration of their new life of fellowship with the Lord (Nu 9:1–5; Jsh 5:10; 2Ch 30:1–27; 35:1–19; Jn 2:23; 6:4; 11:55).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 12:15 *unleavened bread*. Leavening was a symbol of sin (cf Lk 12:1). Abstaining from leaven symbolized the new life

cleansed from the sinful nature (v 19). *cut off from Israel*. See notes, Gn 17:14; Lv 17:4; cf Ex 31:14; Lv 20:2–5.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 12:16 *a holy assembly*. A call to the congregation by trumpet (Nu 10:2) to worship the Lord (Ezk 46:3, 9; Is 4:5). *No work*. Except for the preparation of food. On the Sabbath, even food preparation was prohibited (35:2–3).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 12:17 *Feast of Unleavened Bread*. Vv 18–19 explain the progress of this seven-day festival (cf Mk 14:12). See pp 200–201. *hosts*. A military term meaning army or multitude (see note, 7:4). *this day*. Israel was released from Egypt on the early morning of the 15th of Abib (Nisan). See calendar, p 262.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 12:18 *fourteenth day of the month … twenty-first day of the month*. Because the Lord brought Israel out of Egypt on the 15th of Abib, they were to keep the memorial of their creation as the people of the Lord as a seven-day feast to seal the covenant relationship (see note, v 2).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 12:19 *no leaven … cut off*. See note, v 15. *sojourner*. A non-Israelite living among the people but not circumcised. *native of the land*. Israel, after settlement in the Promised Land.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 12:21 *elders*. See note, 3:16. *clans*. See pp 54–55. *Passover lamb*. See notes, v 11; Jn 1:29; Heb 7:26; see also pp 170–71.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 12:22 *hyssop*. Probably wild marjoram or a kind of thyme, later used in atonement rituals. See note, Ps 51:7. Cf Lv 14:49–53; Nu 19:18–19. The plant's lengthiness is noted in Jn 19:29. *dip it in the blood*. Cf Heb 10:29; 12:24. *blood*. See note, v 7.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 12:23 *pass over the door*. See note, v 7. *destroyer*. Refers to an angel that administers God's judgment through pestilence (2Sm 24:15–16; 2Ki 19:35; Ps 78:49; 1Co 10:10).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 12:24 *rite*. Lit, "word." *statute*. Something declared as fixed or established, such as a decree. See p 971.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 12:25 When dwelling in the Promised Land, they were to explain this service to their children through oral tradition. After the Passover recorded in Nu 9:1–5, Israel did not celebrate this feast until they crossed into the Promised Land (cf Jsh 5).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 12:27 *bowed their heads and worshiped*. Showing their faith and gratitude for the salvation they were to receive in the Passover.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 12:28 Emphasizes that Moses (prophet) and Aaron (priest) proclaimed God's Word.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 12:1–28 Passover marks a new era for the people of Israel and foreshadows the new, spiritual Israel in Christ, the perfect Lamb who takes away the sin of the world (1Co 5:7; Heb 7:27). • O Lord, I am in need of a Shepherd to seek and save me, for I am a straying sheep. You are the Good Shepherd, who seeks and saves the lost. Save me, O Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. Amen.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 12:29 *midnight*. All Egypt was asleep; Pharaoh and his people would be shocked out of their sleep of sin. *firstborn*. An earlier pharaoh had ordered the death of all newborn sons (1:22). Those who fashion a snare for the righteous often fall into the same pit (Pr 28:10). The Lord punished the Egyptians with the death of the firstborn only, which by comparison seems merciful.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 12:30 *Pharaoh … all … all*. A national tragedy. The sons who were to inherit the rule of Egypt and the leadership of their families were lost. See note, 11:5.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 12:31 *summoned*. Or, "proclaimed to." Cf 10:28–29. A pronouncement rather than a face-to-face meeting seems likely. *by night*. Note the urgency. *serve*. Worship. *as you have said*. Pharaoh is not granting total independence, but the requested time for a festival (10:25–26).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 12:32 *and bless me also!* Prayer was requested at other departures (8:8, 28; 9:28; 10:17). This is a special plea, in view of the suffering.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 12:29–32 The final plague takes place at midnight, as all Egypt lies in deep sleep; every firstborn son dies. Pharaoh comprehends that this plague is certainly God's punishment. The exodus has begun; salvation has arrived by God's grace. Today the Lord desires our freedom from oppression, especially the oppression of sin, which is why He sent His only-begotten Son. • O Father, grant that we may be your heavenly children. Teach us to be mindful of our souls and our heavenly heritage so that our earthly pilgrimage and inheritance may not deceive, limit, or hinder us. Amen.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 12:34 *before it was leavened*. The Lord had anticipated this circumstance in His Passover instructions (cf v 15). Under pressure of necessity, the people were obliged to content themselves with

unleavened bread; thus it was also called the bread of affliction. *cloaks*. Folded and knotted cloaks served as shoulder bags, as depicted in ancient art.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 12:35–36. See note, 11:2.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 12:35 People attended sacred festivals wearing their best. The Israelites had been held captive to forced labor and poverty and were now paid in full.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 12:36 *favor*. See note, 3:21; cf Gn 39:21; Ezk 39:10. Dread also moved the Egyptians to compliance.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 12:37 *Rameses to Succoth*. See map, p 120. *six hundred thousand men*. Commentators calculate that there were more than two million Israelite men, women, and children. The number of men 20 years of age and older at Sinai was 603,550 (38:26; Nu 1:46), and there were 22,000 male Levites a month old and upward (Nu 3:39).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 12:38 *A mixed multitude*. A throng of foreign people attached themselves to the people of Israel. Cf Gn 12:3; Dt 29:11; Zec 8:23. They may have become a snare to Israel later. See note, Nu 11:4.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 12:40 *430 years*. The round number 400 is used in other places (e.g., Ac 7:6).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 12:41 *on that very day*. The day of the exodus (v 14). *hosts*. See note, 7:4.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 12:42 *a night of watching by the* LORD. The Lord passes over and preserves Israel to bring His people out of Egypt.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 12:33–42 After 430 years in Egypt, most of them spent in slavery, Israel begins its exodus into religious freedom, which centers on freedom to worship and sacrifice to the one true God. The troubles of Israel's departure from Egypt are merely the introduction to a new life of liberty, which comes with burdens and responsibilities. God Almighty preserves His people from the destroyer and brings Israel out of the land of bondage by grace alone. Teach about this salvation to your children. Also explain our exodus from sin and death granted through our Lord Jesus. • O Father and God of all comfort, through Your holy Word, grant us a firm faith that delivers us from sin, death, and the devil. By Your gift of faith, may we overcome every trial and realize what Your Son Himself says is true: "Take heart; I have overcome the world" (Jn 16:33). Amen.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 12:43–49 Regulations concerning those who could partake of the Passover.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 12:43 *foreigner*. A dweller or settler who lived permanently among the Israelites without being received into their religious fellowship.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 12:44 *slave … circumcised*. By virtue of a divine call, not through biological descent, Israel became God's children, predestined to become a blessing to all nations (Gn 12:2–3). Slaves were to be included in the Passover celebration via circumcision.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 12:45 Visitors working for wages were not to eat of the Passover because they stood in an external and impermanent relationship to Israel.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 12:46 *outside the house*. Cf vv 7–11; 22. *you shall not break any of its bones*. See notes, v 9; Jn 19:36.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 12:47 See note, v 14.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 12:48 If a foreigner living among the Israelites wished to keep the Passover, he was first to be spiritually incorporated into the nation through circumcision (Gn 17:9–14). Cf 1Co 11:28 for the parallel for participants in the Lord's Supper. See p 300.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 12:49 *one law*. No uncircumcised man was to partake (v 48).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 12:50–51 A summary of ch 12 and a bridge to ch 13.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 12:43–51 The Lord gives supplementary regulations concerning the Passover due to the fact that Egyptians and likely other persons (v 38) have joined themselves to the Israelites. As the Lord brought His people out of the prison of Egypt by His grace, so our Lord Christ, through His crucifixion in our stead, sets people of all nations free from the prison of sin, death, and the devil. • Christ, my Savior, You atoned for all of my sins with Your precious blood. In the Sacrament, You give me Your true body and blood for the forgiveness of sin. May I abide in this new freedom and the blessings of Your precious blood until I reach the promised land. Amen.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 13:1 *The* LORD *said*. The Lord will personally guide Israel by His Word on the journey ahead (vv 21–22).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 13:2 God claimed Israel's firstborn as His own because He rescued them from the 10th plague, making the firstborn a

firstfruit offering to the Lord. See pp 170–71. This consecration, or setting aside, served two functions: (1) Collectively, the firstborn represented all Israel, whom God chose as His own firstborn among the nations (4:22–23). (2) As individuals, the firstborn were living reminders of this calling in every home (e.g., Joseph and Mary presented Jesus, Mary's firstborn, at the temple). Scripture describes firstborn sons as receiving a double portion of the inheritance, a special blessing, and headship of the family (see note, Gn 25:31).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 13:1–2 The firstborn of Israel belongs to the Lord. As our Creator and Savior, Jesus claims each of us as His own. This claim presents a formidable challenge. It means that we must yield our lives to Jesus, consecrating ourselves as living sacrifices to Him (Rm 12:1–2). We are not up to the task, but Jesus consecrates us by His precious sacrifice on the cross, which gives us amazing benefits: adoption into His family (Rm 8:15), opportunities to make a genuine difference in this world (Eph 2:10), and the grand expectation of eternity with Him (Php 3:20–21). • I praise You for Your salvation, O Lord, because You chose and consecrated me as Your own. Thank You for Your infinite grace and mercy. Amen.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 13:3 *house of slavery*. Phrase used here for the first time; the feast is now a celebration of freedom. *No leavened bread*. See notes, 12:15, 34.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 13:4 *Abib*. See notes, 12:17, 18; see also calendar, p 262.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 13:5 *Amorites … Jebusites*. See note, Gn 10:16, see also p 345. *land flowing with milk and honey*. See note, 3:8.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 13:6–7 Institution of annual seven-day celebration beginning the day after the Passover and ending with a feast. Israel ate bread without yeast all seven days. It became known as the Feast of Unleavened Bread. See note, 12:11; see also pp 200–201.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 13:8 *tell your son*. God furnished object lessons, such as the unleavened bread, for parents to use in teaching their children about God's salvation. Cf v 14; 10:2; see note, Pr 1:8. Luth: "The children of Israel, whenever they turned to repentance, remembered above all their exodus from Egypt, and remembering turned back to God who had brought them out. Moses impressed this memory and this protection upon them many times, and David afterwards did the same. How much more ought we to remember our exodus from Egypt, and by this remembrance turn back to

him who led us through the washing of regeneration [Titus 3:5], remembrance of which is commended to us for this very reason!" (AE 36:60).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 13:9 *as a sign … and as a memorial*. A figure of speech telling the Israelites to keep the object lessons on hand and remember God's salvation. See notes, Dt 6:8, 9. Passages of Scripture in small boxes, called phylacteries, were discovered at Qumran. Devout Jews strapped them to their foreheads as an act of prayer. Over time, this practice became an empty ritual; Jesus criticized aspects of this practice in Mt 23:5.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 13:10 *appointed time*. God directed Israel to observe the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread every year at this time.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 13:11–12 God repeated Himself (v 2) to underscore His promise of land and His requirement to set apart all the firstborn.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 13:11 *When the LORD*. Statement of certainty —"when," not "if." The promise points to a specific location—Canaan—and is linked to Israel's patriarchs. *you*. God made the promise personal.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 13:12 *first opens the womb*. See note, v 2.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 13:13 *donkey … man*. Two special cases. First, the donkey was not acceptable as a sacrifice (Lv 22:19). The people were to redeem a firstborn male donkey by sacrificing a lamb or by breaking the donkey's neck to kill it without spilling blood (blood made it a sacrifice). Second, the Israelites were to consecrate their children to life rather than to death, so this command effectively prohibited human sacrifice. Cf Gn 22:13 and note. The offering of a lamb in place of a human points to Jesus Christ, the Lamb offered by God on our behalf. *redeem*. Buy back for a price. See p 843.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 13:14 *What does this mean?* See note, v 8.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 13:15 *I redeem*. Stresses the personal nature of this instruction. See p 843.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 13:16 See note, v 9.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 13:3–16 The Lord sets Israel apart by instituting observances that help them remember their freedom won in the exodus. Today, God gives us a new start and calls us into a life that is pure and set apart for Him. But we are unfit to come into God's presence unless someone provides a way. Jesus offered Himself as the perfect, "once for all" sacrifice (Heb 10:10). He purifies us from our sin and consecrates us so that

God can call us His own. • Lord, let me grasp the magnitude of what You have done for me so that I may praise and thank You for giving me a new start! Amen.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 13:17 *by way of the land of the Philistines*. A direct trade route to Canaan ran along the coast and passed a series of fortified Egyptian outposts and Philistine settlements. Egyptians called this the Way of Horus. It is also known as the Way of the Sea. See map, p 120. *see war*. Egyptians controlled this route and would obstruct Israel's journey. The Lord had earlier planned for Israel to worship at Sinai. Cf 3:1, 12.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 13:18 Israel traveled in an organized fashion, but as former slaves they would have had poor weaponry (probably only tools) and no military training. God's presence ultimately equipped them for battle (cf Eph 6:10–18). *Red Sea*. Hbr *yam suph*, "sea of reeds." Vegetation floats on the water and washes up to the shore. The name is broadly associated with waters of the Gulf of Suez and also the Gulf of Aqaba (cf Nu 21:4; 33:1–11; Dt 1:40; 2:1). It is not known precisely where they crossed. See note, 14:2; see also map, p 120.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 13:19 *bones of Joseph*. A man of faith, Joseph knew that God would bring His people out of Egypt, so he had asked that his embalmed body be taken for burial in the Promised Land.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 13:20 *Succoth … Etham*. See map, p 120.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 13:21 *pillar of cloud … pillar of fire*. Supernatural column of clouds. "Fire" can describe lightning (9:24; see notes, 19:18; Jb 1:16).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 13:22 *did not depart*. God was present with His people day and night.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 13:17–22 The Lord leads Israel out of Egypt 430 years after they entered it because of Joseph. Joseph had expected God to "visit" His people (Gn 50:25), but he might have been surprised and pleased to learn that God does not cut the visit short. The Lord has become Israel's traveling companion and guide. God meets Israel where they are, shows them the way, and brings them along by His grace. Similarly, He knows that we are not able to come into His presence on our own; in fact, we sometimes go the other direction altogether! He knows our situation, meets us where we are, and walks with us by day and night to bring us into His kingdom. • Lord, thank You for coming to us in Christ and for not leaving us to fend for ourselves. Amen.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 14:1 See note, 13:1.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 14:2 *Pi-hahiroth*. "Region of salt marshes." Location unknown. *Migdol*. "Watchtower." Any of several locations. *Baal-zephon*. "Baal of the north," suggesting a Canaanite influence on this area. Site unknown. See probable route on map, p 120.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 14:3 Because the area south and east of Egypt was a wilderness, Pharaoh would conclude that Israel missed the main road to Canaan and lost their way.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 14:4 *harden*. See notes, 4:21; 9:12. God used Pharaoh's arrogance to illustrate His care for His people. *get glory over Pharaoh*. The Lord plans a final blow. The conclusive defeat of Pharaoh would prove God's superiority. *the Egyptians shall know*. Cf Jsh 2:8–11; 1Sm 6:6. *they did so*. Cf 12:50. Luth: "The exodus of the Children of Israel from Egypt was not only physical. Indeed, it was spiritual at the same time, as the apostle states clearly in 1 Cor. 10:1–4" (AE 29:157).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 14:5 *fled*. Israel had not just gone out to worship, but had left with no intention to return to slavery in Egypt (see note, 12:31). *Pharaoh and his servants*. Now united in purpose. See note, 6:30. *we have let Israel go*. They would not admit that God had forced them to let Israel go.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 14:6 *he made ready*. Pharaoh personally led the pursuit of Israel.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 14:7 The 600 chariots were probably an elite corps with special status and training, while the rest operated as part of the regular army. Each chariot usually carried a driver, an archer or weapons specialist, and an officer to coordinate their attack.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 14:8 *going out defiantly*. Not planning to return.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 14:9 God resolved this conflict at a place where Israel was trapped in a dead end.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 14:10 *marching*. Egypt's army and chariots were coming into view. *cried out to the* LORD. Israel responded as it should, by seeking the Lord's deliverance.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 14:11–12 Though Israel cried for help, they also attacked Moses and the Lord's motives. Neither the Egyptians nor most of the Israelites understood that God was in complete control of this situation. Moses had not told them God's plans (vv 3–4).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 14:11 *no graves in Egypt*. A sarcastic complaint against Moses and the Lord.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 14:12 Without eyes of faith, the Israelites could see only two alternatives—one bad, the other worse: slavery in Egypt or death in the wilderness. They did not consider that God would save them from disaster.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 14:13–14 Moses was confident of God's salvation but did not hesitate to turn to God with his concerns. Moses served as an intermediary between God and the people, speaking to God on behalf of the people and speaking to the people on behalf of God. This foreshadows Jesus Christ in His role as mediator for us.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 14:13 *salvation of the LORD*. See p 843. Israel would see God save them from the Egyptian army, which represented their old life of slavery (cf Is 52:10).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 14:14 *The LORD will fight for you*. Salvation does not depend on anything humans do or avoid doing; it is a gift from God. Israel did not need to save itself from the Egyptian army.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 14:15 Moses had been praying, but it was time for Israel to move. Luth: "One should not despise a Christian person…. He is precious in God's sight and his prayer is powerful and great, for he has been sanctified by Christ's blood and anointed with the Spirit of God. Whatever he sincerely prays for, especially in the unexpressed yearning of his heart, becomes a great, unbearable cry in God's ears. God must listen, as he did to Moses, Exodus 14 [:15], 'Why do you cry to me?' even though Moses couldn't whisper, so great was his anxiety and trembling in the terrible troubles that beset him. His sighs and the deep cry of his heart divided the Red Sea and dried it up, led the children of Israel across, and drowned Pharaoh with all his army, etc. This and even more can be accomplished by a true, spiritual longing. Even Moses did not know how or for what he should pray—not knowing how the deliverance would be accomplished—but his cry came from his heart" (AE 43:248).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 14:16 *Lift … stretch … divide*. The Lord worked through Moses, affirming his leadership. *through the sea on dry ground*. An unimaginable route with unimaginable conditions.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 14:17 *harden*. See note, v 4.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 14:18 *know that I am the LORD*. See note, v 4.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 14:19 *angel of God*. Separate from and guiding the cloud. See p 39. *behind them*. For defense.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 14:20 *the darkness … lit up the night*. By the cloud, the Lord protected Israel and provided them with light while leaving the Egyptians in darkness.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 14:21 *Moses stretched out his hand*. See note, v 16. *a strong east wind*. Blowing from behind the Israelites to push back the water and dry the exposed seafloor. Since the water parted in two directions (v 22), wind was only part of the miracle.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 14:22 *sea*. See note, 13:18.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 14:23 The pillar of cloud and fire now moved aside and allowed the Egyptian army to resume their pursuit.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 14:24 *morning watch*. Three to six a.m. *the LORD in the pillar of fire and of cloud*. See note, v 19; see also p 39.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 14:25 *clogging their chariot wheels*. The wheels began to sink into the sand and mud. *the LORD fights for them*. The Egyptians finally saw God's intervention, fulfilling v 18.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 14:26 *Stretch out your hand*. The water's return to its place was no accident.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 14:27 *fled into*. Cf v 25.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 14:28 *host*. The army, which Pharaoh assembled for pursuit (v 9). Troops stationed at other places would not have been included here. *not one … remained*. God's victory is complete. Pharaoh and some commanders may have survived if they were directing the army from the rear. Survival, though, meant living with defeat, which would be a fitting punishment for their arrogance.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 14:29–31 A summary of the miracle God orchestrated to save Israel and distinguish them as His people.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 14:30 *the LORD saved Israel*. The water killed the Egyptian army, which represented Israel's old life of slavery, but God miraculously brought Israel through the water and into a new life of freedom. See "salvation," p 843. These actions foreshadowed the deliverance promised in Holy Baptism (1Co 10:2). *Egyptians dead on the seashore*. An eyewitness confirmation that the old threat was gone.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 14:31 *feared … believed in the LORD*. When God demonstrated His power and righteous judgment, Israel could not help but

realize their weakness and sin, so fear and belief were the appropriate response (cf Is 6:5). See p 1001.

EXODUS—NOTE ON **Ch 14** God miraculously brings Israel through the waters, but this is more than simply passing a geographic barrier. When Israel crosses through the sea, they leave behind slavery and a future of death in Egypt for freedom and a future of life with God. Israel is powerless to make this drastic change on its own, but God intervenes to provide the way. We need this kind of drastic change in our own life or we are doomed to slavery in sin and death. God has intervened for us in Baptism (1Co 10:1–2), saving us from our old slavery in sin and bringing us into the new freedom of the Gospel. • "The LORD is my strength and my song, and He has become my salvation; this is my God, and I will praise Him, my father's God, and I will exalt Him. The LORD is a man of war; the LORD is His name" (15:2–3). Amen.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 15:1–18 A poetic celebration of God's saving Israel from the Egyptians (vv 1–12) and anticipating salvation from the Canaanites (vv 13–18).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 15:1 *sang this song*. A God-given, on-the-spot composition. *his rider*. Possibly cavalry riders, used as scouts, but most likely the riders in the chariots. See ESV note. *thrown into the sea*. Cf 14:27.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 15:2 *my strength and my song*. God sustains His people and inspires them to praise Him in song (cf Ps 118:14; Is 12:2; Rv 15:3). Luth: "If you want to be a maker of God, come here and listen. He wants to teach you the art so that you do not err and make an idol but make the true God as he really is. Not that you are to create his divine nature, for it is and remains eternally uncreated; rather, you are to make him God for you, so that he might also be for you a true God, as he is for himself a true God…. Learn to remember him, that is, as has been said, by preaching, praising, honoring, listening, and giving thanks for the grace revealed in Christ…. When this takes place, you have made him the true God for yourself, and by means of such a confession you have upheld his divine glory…. It is true that such worship takes place devoid of all splendor and does not appeal to the eye according to the flesh; but it fills the heart, which otherwise neither heaven nor earth could fill…. That praising and thanking God is the same as adorning and decorating God is plainly written in the Song of Moses, Exodus 15 [:2]: 'This is my God, and I will praise him, my

father's God, and I will exalt him.' See, there you are told how you can make your God beautiful, embellish, adorn, and paint him in the nicest way, place a wreath and crown upon him, deck him out with brooches and chains, and you need no money or bronze for it; but you must believe with your heart and praise him with your mouth, listen to his praise and grace with your ears, and whatever else has been said above" (AE 38:107–8).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 15:3 *The Lord is a man of war*. God is a warrior fighting for His people (14:14). The Lord approves of and participates in just wars. See p 376.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 15:4 *chosen officers*. See note, 14:7.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 15:5 This was the final punishment for Egypt's arrogance. Centuries later, Jeremiah would predict a similar punishment for Babylon's arrogance (Jer 51:63–64).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 15:6 *right hand*. See p 843.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 15:7 *consumes them like stubble*. Quickly.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 15:8 *blast of Your nostrils*. A figurative description of God's wrath and of the east wind. *congealed*. God made the separated waters stand aside in their assigned place.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 15:9 *I will*. Repeated four times; reveals Egypt's arrogance.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 15:10 *You blew*. See note, v 8. *mighty waters*. Ambr: "Even then holy baptism was prefigured in that passage of the Hebrews, wherein the Egyptian perished, the Hebrew escaped. For what else are we daily taught in this sacrament but that guilt is swallowed up and error done away, but that virtue and innocence remain unharmed?" (*NPNF* 2 10:318).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 15:11 *Who is like You*. Repeated twice to emphasize God's unique status. *majestic in holiness*. The Lord is great and separate from all rivals. God's defeat of the Egyptians and their gods (idols) was obvious, and Israel witnessed this in the cloud and the battle action.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 15:12 *right hand*. See p 843. *earth swallowed them*. Refers to the grave.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 15:13 *steadfast love*. See p 843. *redeemed*. Rescued from Egypt. See p 843. *guided … to Your holy abode*. Looks forward to Israel's arrival at God's holy mountain, their entry into Canaan, and perhaps to the temple on Mount Zion (Gal 4:25).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 15:14–15 Prophetically lists the nations Israel would encounter on the way to the Promised Land, roughly in order.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 15:14 *peoples have heard*. See note, Jsh 2:10.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 15:16 *pass by*. One of the verbs used to describe God's "passing through" Egypt (12:12, 23). Israel would cross the territory of other nations on their way to Canaan. *purchased*. Hbr *qanah*, another expression for "redeemed." See "redeem," p 843.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 15:17 *plant them on Your own mountain*. See note, v 13. Mount Zion, Israel's spiritual home.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 15:18 Israel would become God's kingdom (19:6).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 15:19 Summary of events that prompted Moses' song of praise.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 15:20 *Miriam the prophetess*. Miriam was one of only a few prophetesses in the Bible. See p 389. *dancing*. Part of the celebration of God's victory. A "round" dance, performed in a circle; a typical dance for women (cf Jer 31:13).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 15:21 Miriam and the women apparently picked up the first phrase of Moses' song and sang it as a chorus.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 15:1–21 Moses praises the Lord for victory and anticipates future victories. The Israelites are just beginning to understand how badly they have needed God's rescue from Egypt and to see the life with God into which He is bringing them. In the light of God's Law, we begin to see how badly we need God's rescue. And in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, we can begin to see the humbling extravagance of God's grace. • "Who is like You, O LORD, among the gods? Who is like You, majestic in holiness, awesome in glorious deeds, doing wonders? You stretched out Your right hand; the earth swallowed them. You have led in Your steadfast love the people whom You have redeemed; You have guided them by Your strength to Your holy abode" (15:11–13). Amen.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 15:22 *wilderness of Shur*. East of Egypt, in the northwest part of the Sinai Peninsula. See map, p 120. Nu 33:8 calls this the wilderness of Etham. Both mean "fortress wall" (*shur* is Hbr; *etham* is Egyptian).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 15:23 *Marah*. Probably modern Ain Hawarah, along the east side of the Gulf of Suez, 50 mi from its north end. See map caption, p 120. *bitter*. It probably contained dissolved minerals that gave the

water a disagreeable taste. The people were used to a very different water source in Egypt.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 15:24 *people grumbled*. First of many instances in which Israel grumbled against Moses, a mark of unbelief (1Co 10:10).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 15:25–26 *statute … rule … commandments … statutes*. With this incident, the Lord began to lay down some rules to discipline the immature nation. He introduces covenant language, as He had with the patriarchs (e.g., Gn 26:5). See p 971.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 15:25 *showed*. The word for God's Law (i.e., "instruction") is a form of this verb. *log*. See ESV note. God had provided the solution years earlier, when the tree first grew. *water became sweet*. A miracle; no natural reason for this result is apparent. Perhaps the tree represented life, communicating to onlookers that the water was cleansed. *tested*. See note, Gn 22:1.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 15:26 *diseases … I put on the Egyptians*. A mark of divine punishment. Cf 12:23. *I am the LORD, your healer*. Israel is to look to God for health and sustenance (cf Dt 32:39). Physicians were highly prized in the Egyptian culture, from which Israel had just departed.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 15:27 *Elim*. Means "large trees," probably in the Valley of Gharandel, c 7 mi S of Marah. See map, p 120. Date palms were highly valued as a source of food and shade.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 15:22–27 The Lord patiently supplies Israel with drinking water. Without water, there is no life. We need water to refresh our body; without it, we die. And if we go without spiritual refreshment, we will die eternally. However, God meets this spiritual need for us just as certainly as He slaked Israel's thirst at Marah. • Jesus Christ, Living Water, refresh us in this wilderness so that we may pass the test and prove You faithful by our faithful obedience. Amen.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 16:1 One month had passed since leaving Egypt. A group of this size, with livestock, would likely have traveled no more than 10 mi per day and would have required intervals of rest.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 16:2 *whole congregation … grumbled*. Collectively, the nation once again showed its lack of confidence in God's chosen leaders.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 16:3 *died by the hand of the LORD*. Israel tested God with illogical, unwarranted faultfinding. *meat pots*. Slaves were not often

given meat, so the people were fantasizing about the best moments of their life in Egypt.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 16:4 *bread from heaven*. God would provide bread through a daily miracle. This gift foreshadows the gift of Jesus as the bread of life (Jn 6:47–51). *test … whether they will walk in My law*. God set simple rules about when and how to gather the bread to test Israel's confidence in His daily care for them. *walk*. See p 7.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 16:5 The people were to gather twice as much on the sixth day so that they would not have to gather food on the seventh day of the week, which was the Sabbath.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 16:6 *you shall know*. If they had eyes of faith to see and understand, they would see that God's provision of food confirmed His intent to save and sustain Israel.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 16:7 *see the glory of the* LORD. The provision of bread should remind Israel of God's presence.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 16:8 *grumbling*. A sin against God, which He will judge.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 16:9–10 *Come near before the* LORD. How this happened is not entirely clear. It seems that the Lord drew near to them in the cloud. *glory … in the cloud*. See note, 13:21.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 16:12 *I have heard*. God loves His people too much to ignore them.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 16:13 *quail*. Small game birds that migrate through this area in large numbers. Their migration was a mark of God's providence.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 16:14 *fine, flake-like thing*. Some scholars think this was a natural occurrence. However, no manna was found on the Sabbath, which makes a natural phenomenon unlikely. Moses, who had lived in the wilderness, simply noted that it was "bread that the LORD has given" (v 15).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 16:18 Whether by sharing or by God's unseen intervention, each person had just the right amount of manna to eat.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 16:19–20 The people were supposed to gather only enough manna for one day, but some disregarded the command and tried to hoard some for the next day. The rotting food revealed their disobedience.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 16:20 *it bred worms*. Probably maggots from flies.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 16:22–30 God used manna to teach Israel at least three lessons: (1) They were to rely on Him (gathering manna one day at a

time). (2) They were to obey Him (not hoarding the manna). (3) They were to have special regard for the Sabbath (seventh-day exception to gathering).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 16:23 *rest, a holy Sabbath to the* LORD. The seventh day of the week had been set aside as a day of rest and holiness at creation, but it is first named here. *Sabbath*. Hbr means "stop" or "rest." See note, Gn 2:2.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 16:26 *there will be none*. The Sabbath was for rest (vv 29–30).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 16:27 *some … went out to gather*. A sign of unbelief and disobedience.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 16:28 God challenged Moses over the people's disobedience (v 27) because as the intermediary (see note, 14:13–14), Moses represented Israel.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 16:29–30 God explicitly commanded the people to rest rather than search for food on the Sabbath. They finally took God at His word. Their search was a symptom of arrogance rather than faith.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 16:31 *manna*. See ESV note, v 15. *coriander seed … wafers made with honey*. Because the Israelites did not know what it was, they described it by comparison.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 16:32 *kept throughout your generations*. Dt 8:3 explains the lesson God gave Israel in furnishing the manna; God directed that a portion be kept as evidence, or a testimony, for future generations.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 16:33 *place it before the* LORD. Anticipating the jar's preservation in the ark of the covenant.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 16:34 *placed it before the testimony*. The action probably took place after the ark of the covenant and the tabernacle were built. Moses would place the jar, the tablets of the Law, and Aaron's rod that budded (Nu 17) in the ark of the covenant as a testimony to what God had done for Israel. *testimony*. See p 971.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 16:35 *ate the manna forty years*. Until they arrived in Canaan and could procure their own food.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 16:36 *omer*. See p cx.
EXODUS—NOTE ON **Ch 16** God meets Israel's need for food with bread from heaven. However, when the Israelites ignore God's simple rules for its collection and consumption, they provoke an exasperated rebuke from God (vv 28–29). Israel does not understand at the time, but God is blessing them through this experience, training them in the rhythms of work

and Sabbath rest. These rhythms still apply for us today because we require both physical rest and rest from our sins through the righteous labors of Jesus. • Lord, lead us in productive labor and healing rest, even as You labored to grant us rest by Your cross and resurrection. Amen.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 17:1 *congregation*. See p 6. *Rephidim*. Probably the Wadi Refayid in southern Sinai. See map, p 120; see also note, v 8.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 17:2–3 *test the* LORD*?* Despite His promise of sustenance (16:4), the people accused God of abandoning them.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 17:3 *our livestock*. Herders were nearly as concerned for their animals as for their families.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 17:4 *this people?* Reflecting their estrangement, Moses did not call them "my people" or "Your people." *ready to stone me*. The Israelites are in rebellion against Moses and, by extension, God. Cf 8:26.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 17:5 *the staff with which you struck the Nile*. This staff was a symbol of God's authority. See note, 4:2.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 17:6 *I will stand*. A theophany. See p 39. *strike the rock*. Dt 32:4, 15, 18, and 31 identify God as "the Rock." Ambr: "For them water flowed from the rock, for you Blood flowed from Christ; water satisfied them for a time, the Blood satiates you for eternity…. You after drinking will be beyond the power of thirsting; that was in a shadow, this is in truth" (*NPNF* 2 10:323). Luth: "Faith is the prerequisite before everything. If one has faith, all other things gush forth from it, like water from the rock and stone" (AE 11:146). Luth: "St. Paul does not say that the rock which Moses struck is Christ. His words say very plainly: They ate of the same spiritual food of which we eat, and they drank of the same spiritual drink of which we drink, and so forth…. He does not say that Christ is *signified* by, but that Christ himself actually *is*, the spiritual Rock—the one signified by that physical rock. That is why Paul was careful to add the word 'spiritual' to the word 'Rock,' so that no one could ever construe it to mean that physical rock. Moreover, he says it was a Rock which was yet to come, from which they drank spiritually" (AE 36:280–81).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 17:7 *Is the* LORD *among us or not?* The Lord shows them plainly that He is present with them. They have not yet learned to live by faith. See "presence," p 843.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 17:1–7 When Israel runs out of water, they grumble instead of turning to God, their Rock, for help. God in His graciousness does not deal with them according to their folly but furnishes the water they desperately need. He was stricken Himself for what they deserve. Christ Jesus is the Rock of Israel and our Rock of salvation. • O Lord, our Rock, grant us the insight of faith, and give us the stability, refuge, and living water that we need. Amen.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 17:8 *Amalek came and fought*. A nomadic tribe, descended from Esau (Gn 36:12, 16). Israel may have been camped near or between Wadi Refayid and Wadi Feiran, and Amalek would not want them to use either oasis. *Rephidim*. See map, p 120.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 17:9 *Joshua*. See note, Jsh 1:1. *go out and fight*. Joshua chose men to lead into battle, but this succeeded only as God willed it.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 17:11 *held up his hand*. Moses held his hands spread out in prayer, appealing to God for help. See "stretch out hands," p 1277. Cypr: "By this sign of the cross also Amalek was conquered by Jesus [Joshua] through Moses" (*ANF* 5:524).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 17:12 *Aaron and Hur held up his hands*. They assisted Moses, setting an example for believers to support their leaders in prayer.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 17:14 *memorial in a book*. Possibly the Book of the Wars of the Lord (Nu 21:14). See pp 3–5. Moses witnessed to the knowledge and practice of record keeping and sacred history. *recite it in the ears of Joshua*. Joshua may have acted as a scribe. These events anticipated Joshua's future leadership of Israel as well as additional battles with Amalek. *blot out … Amalek*. War of annihilation against Amalek.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 17:15 *The Lord Is My Banner*. Hbr for "banner" is related to "staff," linking the altar to the place where Moses prayed over the battle against Amalek.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 17:16 *hand upon the throne of the Lord!* Amalek tried to lay a hand upon the Lord's property, a serious offense.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 17:8–16 Israel learns firsthand as they fight enemies such as Amalek that success depends on the Lord. Without the Lord's direction and strength, they will lose. Victory comes by God's intervention. • Heavenly Father, fight for us as we look to You in times of

difficulty. Strengthen and protect us as we face challenges and enemies. Amen.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 18:1 *Jethro, the priest of Midian*. See notes, 2:16, 18.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 18:2 *sent her home*. When and why this happened is unclear. Cf 4:24–26, after which Zipporah is not mentioned until here.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 18:3–4 *Gershom … Eliezer*. See notes, 4:25, 26.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 18:5 *mountain of God*. Sinai. See note, 3:1.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 18:7 *bowed … kissed*. Customary greeting of courtesy and respect.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 18:8 *delivered*. See p 842.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 18:9 *Jethro rejoiced*. Cf Nu 22:4–7. The elders of Midian did not have Jethro's regard for the Lord and saw Israel as a threat.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 18:10 *Blessed be the* LORD. See p 842.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 18:11 *greater than all gods*. Jethro had not believed in one God, but now he recognized the Lord as supreme. Cf 2Ki 5:15; Jnh 1:16 for similar confessions. *dealt arrogantly*. See note, 15:9.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 18:12 A fellowship meal, marking their shared faith in the Lord.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 18:13 *sat to judge*. As the judge, Moses sat. Litigants and witnesses stood.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 18:14 *sit alone*. Moses tried to be judge for the entire nation.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 18:15 *to inquire of God*. To seek resolution of disputes through Moses, their intermediary with God. See "seek," p 843.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 18:16 *the statutes of God and His laws*. Rules introduced in ch 12 and 15:25–26. Decisions were probably made case by case. The practice of law and justice was important to the Lord in ordering Israelite society, as the details of the Books of Moses show. The Lord worked through Moses—a judge—to write these first books of Scripture.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 18:19 *God be with you!* See "be with," p 5. Jethro advised Moses on how to delegate his workload, but also recognized that God must authorize and direct the process.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 18:20 *make them know the way*. Moses should educate the people and resolve disputes. See "way," p 844.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 18:21–22 These judges worked administratively under the auspices of Moses.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 18:21 *fear God*. This would make the men trustworthy and immune to bribes. See p 1001.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 18:23 *God will direct you*. Jethro's reorganization did not rule out God's direction but respected it.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 18:24 *listened to the voice*. Moses humbly accepted Jethro's advice.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 18:25 *heads … chiefs*. This hierarchy of leadership, based on existing offices, provided Israel with a practical system of government that they had not developed while in Egypt.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 18:27 *his own country*. Midian. See map, p 120.
EXODUS—NOTE ON **Ch 18** Moses serves as chief mediator between God and the Israelites, and God uses Moses and his subordinates to teach the people about Himself through His Law. God also uses Moses to provide access to Him, since the people come to Moses to seek God's will. This role of Moses foreshadowed Jesus, our mediator with the Father. God has revealed Himself in Jesus for all to see, and through Jesus we may approach God as one of His own children. • Jesus Christ, our mediator, judge and guide us so we may be Your faithful servants who minister in Your name. Amen.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 19:1 *third new moon*. Late May or early June. Cf 12:2; see calendar, p 262.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 19:2 *Rephidim … wilderness of Sinai*. Southeastern Sinai Peninsula. See map, p 120. Modern surveys of the area have suggested the Er-Raha plain as a potential place for a large Israelite encampment. The peak Gebel Musa stands close by. The traditional site is marked today by St Catherine's Monastery. This remains the best possible site, though the absolute location where Moses received the covenant cannot be determined.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 19:3 *went up to God*. Ascended the mountain to talk with God.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 19:4 *on eagles' wings*. Metaphor for their speedy salvation and rescue from Egypt.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 19:5 *keep My covenant*. As a response to His covenant promise (cf 6:5), the people were to obey God. See p 127. *My treasured possession*. They would enjoy a relationship of grace and forgiveness (cf Eph 2:8–10).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 19:6 *kingdom of priests*. As the consecrated priests would stand between God and His people, so the people of Israel would act as priests to the world, set aside by God for service, witness, and prayer. Israel would be a priest to all the nations of the world. See pp 1565–66. Today, Jesus perfectly mediates between sinners and God; the Church also intercedes (1Pt 2:9). Luth: "Do not despair after sin, but lift your eyes on high to where Christ intercedes for us. He is our Advocate. He intercedes for us and says: 'Father, I have suffered for this person; I am looking after him.' This prayer cannot be in vain" (AE 30:236).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 19:7 *elders*. See note, 3:16. See p 228.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 19:8 *we will do*. The people are confident they can fulfill the Law. Chem: "God restrains this arrogance by manifesting their sin and His wrath by the voice of the Law" (*LTh* 2:458).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 19:9 God publicly authenticated Moses as His spokesman so the people would have no doubt about the source of the Law that Moses would give them.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 19:10 *consecrate*. See p 6.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 19:11 *in the sight*. The people would be able to see the cloud and lightning and hear the thunder (visible manifestation of God's presence). See note, v 18; see also p 39.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 19:12–13 The people were to come close to the mountain but not touch it. God is holy, and the people are sinners. Sinners could not approach God without being destroyed.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 19:14 *consecrated*. See p 6.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 19:15 *do not go near a woman*. Refers to sexual intercourse, which rendered men ceremonially unclean for a short time (cf Lv 15:16–18). See p 300.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 19:16–19 God's power and majesty were overwhelming, striking fear into the hearts of all who were there.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 19:18 *Lord had descended on it in fire*. Physical manifestation of the living God. See note, v 11. Fire and smoke often signaled God's presence, esp in the context of covenant and promise (cf Gn 15:17). See p 39.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 19:22–23 *consecrate*. See p 6. Even the priests who drew near to God in their duties were not exempt from this requirement. No one was to set foot on the mountain. The repetition underscored the

seriousness of the command and also helped people commit the rules to memory. (At this time, most people were illiterate; see pp 1081–83.)

EXODUS—NOTE ON 19:24 *bringing Aaron*. Aaron served as Moses' "mouthpiece" and also helped lead God's people (4:14–16).

EXODUS—NOTE ON **Ch 19** God's people, rescued from slavery in Egypt by His grace, go to Mount Sinai, where God establishes His covenant with them. Sinfulness prevents the people from approaching God personally. Yet God graciously appoints an intermediary, Moses, through whom He makes His covenant with His people. Thanks be to God, we can approach Him with confidence through our mediator, Jesus. • O Lord, deliver and consecrate us this day in the renewal of our Baptism, that we may lead lives that honor You. Amen.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 20:1 *words*. Hbr *dabar*; see p 971.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 20:2 *I … you*. The Lord directly addresses each individual of Israel. *your God*. The God who established a covenant with Abraham and Moses (cf 3:14) and who holds authority over these people.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 20:3–17 Though traditionally known as the Ten Commandments, the term "commandments" occurs only in v 6. See note, 34:28. The list proclaims both Law (vv 3–17) and mercy (vv 2, 6). According to the Jewish Mishnah, reciting the Ten Commandments was a significant feature of temple liturgy (Tamid 5:1).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 20:3 Prohibits any other gods from Israel's exclusive relationship with Him. See note, Dt 32:39; see also SC, First Commandment, p xxxv. *before Me*. Lit, "in front of My face."
EXODUS—NOTE ON 20:4 *carved image*. Explanation of v 3. See p 141. Cypr: "Idols are not gods, and … the elements are not to be worshipped in the place of gods" (*ANF* 5:498).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 20:5 *jealous*. Hbr *qanna'*, adjective used esp of God; associated with term for "zealous" and "passionate." God prohibits worshiping other gods because, as in any good marriage, the relationship does not admit third parties. See note, Hos 4:13. This was not sinful jealousy, but a righteous desire for His people to be faithful. *visiting the iniquity*. Bringing the deserved condemnation. *of the fathers on the children*. Sin, which is inherited (Ps 51:5), corrupts and affects families. Consider how children often repeat the sins of the parents and then suffer the consequences. Our relationship with God is both individual and corporate. However, note two things: God pictures His mercy here as being much greater than His wrath. Every person stands before God in judgment based on his own relationship with God, not another's (cf Dt 24:16). See SC, First Commandment, p xxxv. Luth: "'Although the Law does not justify, it is nevertheless extremely useful and necessary. In the first place, it acts as a civic restraint upon those who are unspiritual and uncivilized. In the second place, it produces in a man the knowledge of himself as a sinner, who is therefore subject to death and worthy of eternal wrath.' But what is the value of this effect, this humiliation, this wounding and crushing by the hammer? It has this value, that grace can have access to us. Therefore the Law is a minister and a preparation for grace" (AE 26:314).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 20:6 *steadfast love*. See p 843. *commandments*. See p 971.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 20:7–17 God no longer speaks directly to the people (see note, v 2), but Moses speaks for Him. Cf v 19.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 20:7 The commandment prohibits taking oaths or vows in the Lord's name, which one does not intend to keep. See "oath," p 7. *in vain*. Without meaning (i.e., to use it unnecessarily or casually). See SC, Second Commandment, p xxxv.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 20:8 *Remember*. Pay attention to. *Sabbath*. Hbr means "rest" or "stop." *keep it holy*. Keep it special by being separate from other days. It is meant for rest and worship. Cf Dt 5:12–15 for emphasis on worship as reexperiencing the saving acts of God. See "holy," p 7; see also SC, Third Commandment, p xxxv. According to Ne 13:17–19, the Sabbath began when it grew dark (Friday night).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 20:11 Follow God's example by resting. People worked six days a week, 12 or more hours per day. They needed a day of rest, primarily for the soul (cf Mt 11:28). *the LORD blessed the Sabbath day*. Declared it special, set apart for Him. See note, Gn 2:3.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 20:12–17 Whereas the first set, or "table," of commandments (vv 3–11) describes a person's actions toward God, the second set, or "table," describes one's actions toward others.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 20:12 Care for parents was esp needed during old age, during funeral and burial rites, and about a year after burial, when the bones of the deceased were gathered to the family bone pile. See note, 1Ki 2:10. *Honor*. Hold in high regard, respect and obey. See SC, Fourth Commandment, p xxxv. *your days may be long*. See note, Eph 6:3. *land*. Canaan.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 20:13 *murder*. The unauthorized taking of human life, whether premeditated, in anger, or by carelessness. See SC, Fifth Commandment, p xxxv; see also note, Gn 9:6.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 20:14 *adultery*. Specifically refers to a married person engaging in sexual activity with someone other than his or her spouse. See SC, Sixth Commandment, p xxxv. See also pp 2120–21.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 20:15 God forbids taking private property, which shows approval of the concept of private property in human economy. Ultimately, He is the owner of everything (cf Ps 50:10). See SC, Seventh Commandment, p xxxvi.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 20:16 *bear false witness*. Lie under oath in court. See SC, Eighth Commandment, p xxxvi.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 20:17 Understood as two commandments. See SC, Ninth and Tenth Commandments, p xxxvi. Unlike the early commandments that address actions, these two focus on intentions. Ambr: "Love of money, then, is an old, an ancient vice, which showed itself even at the declaration of the divine law" (*NPNF* 2 10:63). *covet*. Hbr *chamad*, desire or crave. *neighbor's*. Member of another household. *ox*. Large cattle were important contributors to the household and were kept nearby or in homes. See pp 380–81.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 20:20 *God has come to test you*. See note, Gn 22:1. God graciously gave the Israelites a tangible experience of His presence so they would take these commands seriously. Luth: "If He were to come to deal with us in His true person and majesty, we would be lost. No one would believe it if He were to utter a word strong enough to resound from heaven to earth. No one would be able to endure a voice as great and powerful as the one on Mt. Sinai, when He spoke with trumpet blasts amid a great display of thunder, with the entire mountain on fire and enveloped in smoke, as is recorded in Ex. 19 and 20" (AE 22:308). *fear of Him*. See p 1001. *not sin*. Their "fear" included saving faith and the personal, awesome experience at Sinai. Motivation for keeping the Law included not only respect for God as One who punishes sin but also simple trust in Him, which leads to joyful obedience.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 20:21 *thick darkness where God was*. A veil for the glory of God; the visible symbol of His majestic presence. See note, 33:19–23.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 20:1–21 God reminds His people that He graciously rescued them in the exodus, impresses them with His majesty and presence, and establishes a covenant with them to guide their service as a "kingdom of priests." Human sin means that the Law, a reflection of God's own righteousness, always condemns us. Therefore, the Lord comforts His people by reminding them first of His mercy toward them. He made them His people, a blessing He extends also to us (1Pt 2:9–10). • "You have this Law to see therein That you have not been free from sin But also that you clearly see How pure toward God life should be. Have mercy, Lord!" Amen. (*LSB* 581:11)

EXODUS—NOTE ON 20:22–23:19 The laws and topics provided in the Book of the Covenant receive more detailed treatment in Lv and Dt. They appear to address the immediate issues of the people dwelling in Sinai.

Later, the laws could more fully anticipate how the people would live in the Promised Land. Mel: "There are three general divisions of the Mosaic law: the moral laws, the ceremonial, and the civil or judicial laws…. The ceremonial laws of Moses and the civil laws are not commanded to the other nations, nor are they binding upon us. They were given to the people of Israel for that time in order that the political structure might continue for a definite period of time, so that there might be a specific place in which the Christ should be born and reveal Himself, be proclaimed, and become the sacrifice and openly complete the work of our eternal life…. The moral laws have been summarized by God in a remarkable way on one small table, which is called the Decalog [Ten Words]" (Chem, *LTh* 2:342).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 20:23 *make gods*. See note, v 4. No image made by human hands was to depict God. He would give the people markers of His presence among them in the sanctuary (chs 25–26). Luth: "We believe and confess the one true, almighty, and eternal God. But [the evangelist John] states expressly that three distinct Persons dwell in that same single divine essence, namely, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. The Father begets the Son from eternity, the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son, etc. Therefore there are three distinct Persons, equal in glory and majesty; yet there is only one divine essence" (AE 22:5–6).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 20:24 *altar of earth*. Edifice of earth, stone, or other material upon which animals were sacrificed. Cf 38:1–2. *sacrifice*. See pp 170–71. *I cause My name to be remembered*. As we meditate on God, His Word, and His works of salvation. See note, Ps 1:2.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 20:25 Carving stones for an altar verged on violating the First Commandment (v 4). Canaanite altars discovered at Ugarit were made with cut stones and steps.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 20:26 *nakedness*. Climbing steps increases exposure; the altar was to have a ramp instead. Respectful covering of one's sexual organs implied deference to the One who created man and woman (cf Gn 9:22–23). Exposure of the sexual organs was disrespectful, esp in the presence of God, who had covered humankind (Gn 3:21). Priests were required to wear linen undergarments (Ex 28:42).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 20:22–26 Ch 20 marks the beginning of the Book of the Covenant (20:22–23:19), in which the Ten Commandments are explained and applied. Humans constantly run the risk of idolatry, making something or someone else "god" in their lives (cf Dt 4:15–20). Here God

regulates worship, helping His people to receive His Word and to trust Him for salvation. To worship the God of the First Commandment is to worship the triune God, the Holy Trinity. • "The Lord, my God, be praised, My light, my life from heaven; My maker, who to me Has soul and body given; My Father, who will shield And keep me day by day And make each moment yield New blessings on my way." Amen. (*LSB* 794:1)

EXODUS—NOTE ON 21:1–23:9 Egyptian civil law differs from Israelite civil law, which bears greater resemblance to the laws and practices of Mesopotamia, from which Abraham's family came (cf esp the Code of Hammurabi, c 1728–1686 BC).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 21:2 *Hebrew slave*. Economies based on slavery were common throughout the world and still exist today in various forms. God regulated the practice in Israel, establishing certain rights for slaves and setting time limits on their bondage. See p 101. *free, for nothing*. After six years of service, the owner was required to set the slave free without charge. The slave was in some respects like a contract employee with protection and rights under law but "owned."

EXODUS—NOTE ON 21:3–4 The rights of both the owner and the slave were protected. These verses reflect the common legal and social context of the second millennium BC.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 21:5–6 Options for the slave included perpetual bondage to his master (a "permanent contract"), by which his family would also remain intact. Slave owners also had an obligation to slaves, providing housing, food, and humane treatment.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 21:6 *bring him to God*. By a public oath before the leading men of the community. See "oath," p 7. *bore his ear*. Pierced ears marked a slave in Israel.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 21:7 *sells his daughter*. People sold their children into service during times of famine, when they could not afford to feed them. See note, Mt 18:25.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 21:8 *designated her for himself*. Betrothal; similar to our engagement but legally binding. *redeemed*. Her family could buy her back. See p 843. *broken faith*. The woman had certain rights under the Law and, if it was broken, she was free. The owner/husband was required to keep his social and legal commitments to her. See note, 1Ch 2:7. It was esp important that she remain among her people.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 21:10 *another wife*. Polygamy was not necessarily approved by these provisions (see note, Gn 4:19), but God protected the rights of women in polygamous marriages. A husband had to provide for her physical welfare and fulfill his responsibility to her. See pp 54–55. *marital rights*. Providing her with sexual relations and children. See notes, Gn 30:3, 15.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 21:13 *God let him fall into his hand*. Describes an unintended or accidental act of manslaughter. God does not cause the death but allows it. *a place to which he may flee*. A city of refuge, where such a person would be safe from retribution from the victim's family. See notes, Jsh 20:7–8.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 21:14 *you shall take him from My altar*. Not even the ultimate sanctuary (the horns of God's altar) would protect a person who intentionally murdered another human being. Cf 1Ki 1:49–53.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 21:15–17 Parents represent God's order; therefore, an attack on mother or father is tantamount to an attack on God's order. See p 1291.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 21:16 *steals a man*. Kidnaps.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 21:18–19 Principles of legal liability. The attacker would compensate the victim for lost wages and medical expenses.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 21:20 *slave*. See p 101. *avenged*. Punished in proportion to the crime.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 21:21 *survives a day or two*. The owner was given the benefit of the doubt, and the death would be considered accidental or unintentional. A master was permitted to discipline his slaves physically but not to maim them (they would then immediately go free) or kill them (the master would then be punished). Slaves had greater human rights under God's Law than under the laws of many nations.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 21:22 *as the woman's husband shall impose*. The plaintiff (the husband) would sue for damages (set the amount of the suit), and a court would decide the case. *judges determine*. Elders of the village constituted the community's judicial body. See p 792.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 21:23–25 *if … harm … life for life*. Proportional justice. Equal injury would be inflicted on the attacker. God considers unborn children human beings.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 21:28–32, 35–36 The owner of an animal that caused harm for the first time had no way of knowing the animal was

dangerous; the owner was relatively free from liability. However, if the animal had shown aggressive inclinations or had previously caused harm, the owner was clearly liable under the law for all damages.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 21:30 *redemption*. See p 843.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 21:32 *thirty shekels*. See note, Gn 37:28.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 21:1–32 Through Moses, God gives a variety of "guiding decisions," precedent-setting legislation that would guide Israel's courts throughout the coming generations. Slavery (vv 1–11) and homicide (vv 12–36) occupy the first two parts of this guide. Because we, God's people, continue to sin, even though we are justified by faith, we need God's Law as a guide in life. God's Law shows that He values all people, including slaves, women, and children (cf Gal 3:26–29). All people are sinners, and our gracious Lord makes His forgiveness available to all. • "My gracious Master and my God, Assist me to proclaim, To spread through all the earth abroad, The honors of Thy name. He breaks the pow'r of canceled sin; He sets the pris'ner free. His blood can make the foulest clean; His blood avails for me." Amen. (*LSB* 528:2, 4)

EXODUS—NOTE ON 22:1 *repay five*. Punitive damages (over and above the actual cost of the animal) may have been assessed because the oxen and sheep would have been the source of a family's income.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 22:2–3 Nighttime intrusion would make it hard for the homeowner to know whether the intruder meant to harm or merely to steal. Lethal force would be justified in such a case. However, if the intrusion occurred during daylight hours and it was evident the intruder meant only to steal, then lethal force would not be justified. See note, 1Ki 2:31.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 22:4 *pay double*. Because the animal was recovered safe in contrast to the animal in v 1.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 22:5–6 *make restitution … make full restitution*. Repetition for emphasis. Luth: "A sincere Christian believer has all the possessions of God and is a child of God. The time of his life, however, is but a pilgrimage. For through faith the spirit is already in heaven, and this makes him lord over all things. But God permits him to remain alive in the flesh and lets his body walk the earth in order that he may help others and bring them to heaven too. Therefore we must use everything on earth in no other way than as a guest who travels across country, comes to an inn where he must spend the night, and takes nothing but food and lodging from the

innkeeper. He does not say that the innkeeper's property belongs to him. Thus we must also deal with temporal goods as if they did not belong to us. We must limit our enjoyment of them to what is necessary for the preservation of the body. With the rest we must help our neighbor" (AE 30:35).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 22:7–9 Details of the procedure to establish rightful ownership were not recorded (cf 1Ki 3:16–28).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 22:8 *shall come near to God*. Seek God's decision in the matter. Moses did not describe the exact process, perhaps because it was well known. Cf 1Sm 14:40–42; see "seek," p 843.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 22:9 *both parties*. Both claimants appeared before the judges as God's representatives for a decision. Cf ch 18.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 22:11 An oath in the name of the Lord was taken seriously and would be considered sufficient "proof" of the trustee's innocence. See "oath," p 7.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 21:33–22:15 Sinful human nature always seeks its own welfare, even at the expense of others. God graciously regulates society for the benefit of all His people. We will never experience an all-peaceful "heaven on earth," but God's mercy and the forgiveness of sins allow us to enjoy His peace and blessings now. • "Give me Thy courage, Lord, to speak Whenever strong oppress the weak. Should I myself the victim be, Help me forgive, rememb'ring Thee." Amen. (*LSB* 844:4)

EXODUS—NOTE ON 22:16 *bride-price*. See note, Gn 34:12. *make her his wife*. Sexual intercourse was tantamount to marriage, only to be regularized with a ceremony.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 22:18 *sorceress*. A woman who practiced witchcraft (fortune-telling, casting spells, etc.). Witchcraft attempted to know, avoid, or alter the Lord's will. See note, Dt 18:10–11.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 22:20 *devoted to destruction*. See p 6.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 22:26 *cloak in pledge*. Shows the high value of garments, due to the labor and material required to make them by hand. *return it*. Each evening, out of compassion for the borrower (who needed it to keep warm at night), the lender should return the cloak used as collateral. This large, square outer garment was wrapped around the body or draped over the shoulder, similar to a Roman toga, and reached down to the knees.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 22:27 *in what else shall he sleep?* The poor often had only this garment (v 26) in which to sleep. *compassionate*. Hbr *chanan*,

"to be gracious, generous." The Lord cares about people, particularly the poor. His compassion supports all these regulations. Luth: "Christ demands only that your life give tangible evidence of your love toward your neighbor. He says: 'It would please Me, and I would be satisfied, if you, as members of one body under one Head, show one another fidelity and benevolence, friendship, service, and assistance; if you do not stir up factions and schisms among one another and thus destroy love'" (AE 24:251).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 22:28 *curse a ruler*. In their office, rulers represented God. Cf Rm 13:1–7; see "curse," p 6.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 22:29 *firstborn … give to Me*. Giving God firstfruits showed respect for Him as owner of all the world and submission to Him as Lord. Firstborn animals were to be sacrificed, and firstborn children were to be redeemed. See notes, 4:22; 13:2; cf Lk 2:22–23.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 22:31 *consecrated*. See p 6. *throw it to the dogs*. Kept as pets in Egypt; dogs in Israel more often roamed in packs, scavenging for food in villages and towns. See note, Php 3:2.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 23:3 *nor … partial*. Justice must be impartial. Neither rich nor poor should have an advantage in court.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 23:5 If an animal collapsed under its burden, help was to be given the animal and its owner, even if the owner hated you (Lv 19:18).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 23:7 *righteous*. See p 843.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 23:8 Justice must not be perverted—it must be fair, honest, and impartial. Bribes were forbidden.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 23:9 *You know the heart of a sojourner*. A traveler lacked protection and was often at the mercy of the locals. Israel should recall they all were "travelers" in Egypt and treat the sojourner with compassion and respect.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 22:16–23:9 The Lord regulates human relations with sensitivity toward the poor and powerless, yet also with high regard for impartial justice. God protects the poor and vulnerable by building compassion and respect for justice into Israel's social laws. His two ways of Law and Gospel manifest themselves constantly for our good. • "To those who help in Christ have found And would in works of love abound It shows what deeds are His delight And should be done as good and right." Amen. (*LSB* 579:3)

EXODUS—NOTE ON 23:11 The poor were allowed to forage in the fields during the Sabbath Year. See p 206.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 23:12 Cf Ex 20:8–11. A reminder of the Sabbath Day designed to refresh land, animals, and humanity. See p 206. Luth: "Man was especially created for the knowledge and worship of God; for the Sabbath was not ordained for sheep and cows but for men, that in them the knowledge of God might be developed and might increase. Therefore although man lost his knowledge of God, nevertheless God wanted this command about sanctifying the Sabbath to remain in force. On the seventh day He wanted men to busy themselves both with His Word and with the other forms of worship established by Him, so that we might give first thought to the fact that this nature was created chiefly for acknowledging and glorifying God" (AE 1:80).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 23:13 *make no mention*. Cf 20:3. God bound Israel to Himself in an exclusive relationship much like marriage (see note, 20:5).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 23:14–17 The three great festivals of the OT. See pp 200–201.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 23:17 *all your males appear before the Lord* GOD. All family heads were to make these three annual pilgrimages to Jerusalem (cf Lk 2:41). Women and children also attended (cf 1Sm 1).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 23:19 *The best of the firstfruits*. God received the first and the best of what He gave to Israel. Cf 22:29. *boil a young goat*. Rabbinic texts ascribe this practice to the Ishmaelites. Milking the mother, and then boiling her kid in that milk, is painfully ironic and disrespectful toward the life-giving relationships God established between the creatures and the people they feed and sustain. This law reinforces the fact that animals were used for food, but it also enforces an attitude of respect and care for animals as living creatures. See notes, Gn 9:3, 4.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 23:10–19 The Lord connects the Sabbath with regulations on rest (cf Ex 20:8–11) and worship (cf Dt 5:12–15). Rest refreshes the body; worship refreshes the soul. By nature, greed impels us to work all the time in an effort to accumulate wealth, exhausting both the body and soul for mere possessions. God generously provides all we need in six days of labor and calls us to trust Him enough to take time off for rest and worship, for He is our dearest treasure. • "Hence, all earthly treasure! Jesus is my pleasure, Jesus is my choice. Hence, all empty glory! Naught to me thy story Told with tempting voice. Pain or loss, Or shame or cross,

Shall not from my Savior move me Since He deigns to love me." Amen. (*LSB* 743:4)
EXODUS—NOTE ON 23:20–21 *I send an angel … obey his voice*. See "angel," p 5. *for My name is in him*. God's name signifies His authority and presence in this messenger. See "angel of the LORD," p 1227.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 23:23 See p 345.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 23:24 *break their pillars in pieces*. Stones (resembling pillars) were set up as worship sites for false gods. God wanted these pagan worship structures destroyed. See note, Gn 28:18.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 23:25 *bless your bread and your water*. God provided for their daily needs. See "bless," p 842. *I will take sickness away*. Physical health and well-being were part of God's gifts to His people. See note, 15:26.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 23:26 *the number of your days*. A full length of life.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 23:28 People Israel would conquer. See p 345.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 23:29–30 As numerous as the Israelites were, they would not yet fill the land. A general conquest would come quickly (Dt 9:3), but a complete conquest would require time (see pp 338–40).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 23:32 A covenant is a binding agreement that would have indicated peaceful coexistence with these pagan peoples, who could become a fatal snare through their false gods and fertility religions. See p 127.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 23:20–33 God promises to drive out Israel's enemies ahead of them if they remain faithful to Him and to the covenant given them through Moses. Because the Israelites fail to do as God commands, they fall victim to the false gods of the Canaanites. Despite Israel's failure to keep God's command, God preserves a remnant of Israel from which is born Jesus, Savior of all nations. • "God loved the world so that He gave His only Son the lost to save, That all who would in Him believe Should everlasting life receive." Amen. (*LSB* 571:1)
EXODUS—NOTE ON 24:1–2 Moses (the leader), along with priests and elders (religious and state leaders), represented the people in the covenant confirmation. See note, 3:16. See also p 228.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 24:3 *with one voice*. Showing consensus and unity.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 24:4 *wrote down*. Cf v 7. *twelve pillars*. Stones were piled up to make pillars as a memorial of the event (cf Jsh 4:4–7). See note, Gn 28:18.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 24:5 *young men*. Designated for the task (cf 19:22), since the Levitical priesthood had not yet been established. *offerings*. See pp 170–71.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 24:6 *blood he threw against the altar*. How covenants were made. See note, Gn 17:7. An animal was sacrificed, and the agreement was sealed by its death and blood. This is the establishment of the agreement between God and His people.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 24:7 *Book of the Covenant*. See p 127. *Book*. Lit, "scroll."
EXODUS—NOTE ON 24:8 *took the blood and threw it on the people*. See pp xxvi–xxx.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 24:10 *they saw*. No one could see God and live, but the elders did not die. The Lord is never described physically in this passage, but Moses describes the place where the Lord appeared (see p 39). *the God of Israel*. Describes God's acceptance of His people and the intimate fellowship between God and sinners (cf 33:18–20).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 24:11 *ate and drank*. The degree of fellowship is evidenced by the shared meal. See pp 170–71.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 24:12 *tablets of stone*. See note, 31:18. *I have written*. God set the terms. He initiated the covenant with His people by rescuing them from Egypt.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 24:13 *Joshua*. Moses' aide and second-in-command. He would later lead the people into the Promised Land. See note, Jsh 1:1.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 24:14 *elders*. See note, 3:16. See also p 228. *Hur*. Probably the son of Caleb, one of two faithful spies.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 24:15–18 *went up*. Moses and Joshua continued up the mountain to a point at which Joshua stopped and Moses ascended farther. Moses waited until the seventh day and then entered the presence of the Lord.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 24:16 Moses does not inform us about his activities during the previous six days.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 24:17 *the glory of the* LORD. See pp 6–7.
EXODUS—NOTE ON **Ch 24** Moses ascends Mount Sinai to receive the terms of the covenant God makes with His people, concluding the Book of the Covenant begun in ch 20. Sin creates an impassible barrier between God and people. By the blood of the covenant, the Lord anticipates the

forgiveness of sins in Jesus, who would become "sin" for us in order to redeem us (2Co 5:21). • "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow" (Ps 51:7). Amen.

EXODUS—NOTE ON **Chs 25–40** The account of building the tabernacle is paralleled by similar accounts from the rulers Gudea of Lagash and Samsu-iluna of Babylon, and the Baal myth of Ugarit. Moses records the account in a known literary style that includes God's command, preparations, manufacture, consecration, and blessings.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 25:1 *The* LORD *said to Moses*. Formula that occurs seven times in chs 25–31 (25:1; 30:11, 17, 22, 34; 31:1, 12), perhaps echoing the repetition in the story of creation (Gn 1). The seventh use (31:12) introduces the Sabbath.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 25:2 *From every man … contribution for Me*. Not an obligation but a voluntary offering.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 25:3–7 Describes highest quality materials.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 25:3 *gold, silver, and bronze*. The closer to the Most Holy Place, the more precious the metal. The tabernacle and its furniture were gold (v 24), bases (26:19–21) and anchoring hooks were silver (27:10–11); items in the court were bronze (27:1–3; 30:17–18).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 25:5 *acacia*. Hard wood, brown to orange in color, used for cabinetmaking.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 25:7 *ephod*. A vest. See note, 28:36.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 25:8 *sanctuary*. See p 7. *that I may dwell in their midst*. God would now dwell among His people in His sanctuary. The sanctuary's three spheres of holiness were reminiscent of those at Mount Sinai: (1) At the base of Mount Sinai was an altar; the people approached no farther (19:23). The Israelites typically came no farther than the entrance to the tent of meeting (Lv 1:2–5). (2) The priests and the elders were permitted farther up Sinai (Ex 24:1). Only priests were permitted in the Holy Place (Nu 18:4–7). (3) The peak of Sinai was reserved for Moses (Ex 19:20; 24:2). This corresponds to the Most Holy Place, reserved for the high priest (Heb 9:7).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 25:9 *pattern*. Hbr *tabnith*, from the verb "to build." The Lord showed Moses patterns, or models, to guide the work. *tabernacle*. Tent-dwelling. See diagram, p 139.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 25:1–9 The Lord tells Moses to build a sanctuary in which He will dwell. Though God is present everywhere, He locates His

saving presence in the tabernacle, where He has promised to be found. Today, He locates His blessings of salvation for you in the Word and Sacraments of His Church. • Lord God, what a wonderful blessing that You meet with us through Your Son, Jesus. Move our hearts to share the Gospel with others, that many more may hear, learn, and believe in You. Amen.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 25:10 *an ark*. Same Hbr term as Moses' basket (2:3) and Noah's boat, where eight people were preserved (Gn 6:14). *acacia*. See note, v 5.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 25:11 *pure gold*. Gold leaf applied to the wood. See note, v 3.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 25:13–15 *poles*. Used to carry the ark. See note, 2Sm 6:6. Such a chest with rings, carried by poles, was discovered in the tomb of Pharaoh Tutankhamun.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 25:16 *the testimony*. The Ten Commandments (20:1–17), the basis for the covenant (24:7–8). Also referred to as the "covenant" or the "tablets" (34:27–28). See p 971.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 25:17 *mercy seat*. Hbr *kapporeth*, "atonement," from the idea of covering something. See "atonement," p 5. This is the traditional translation for the cover of the ark, which was regarded as God's footstool or throne (1Sm 4:4; Ps 132:7) from which God spoke to Moses (v 22; Nu 7:89). God forgave sin when the high priest sprinkled or "covered" the mercy seat with the blood of the appointed sacrifices (Lv 16:14–18; Heb 9:6–12). The Ten Commandments were placed underneath the mercy seat (1Ki 8:9; Heb 9:4) so that the blood of sacrifice would cover them. See p 495.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 25:18 *two cherubim of gold*. Artwork to represent the devotion of the angels of heaven. Cf 20:4; Ezk 10:1. *hammered work*. See diagram, p 159.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 25:19 See diagram, p 159.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 25:20 *overshadowing*. Cherubim sheltered the mercy seat, depicting God as the One enthroned on cherubim (v 17). Their outstretched wings depicted movement (cf 2Sm 22:11). *their faces one to another*. Looking toward the place of atonement, not toward God's face. See note, Is 6:2.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 25:21 *the testimony*. See note, v 16.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 25:22 *I will meet with you … I will speak with you*. "You" is singular, meaning Moses. Earlier, the Lord met with Moses on

Mount Sinai (19:9, 16–19), also called Mount Horeb (Dt 18:16). Frightened, the people (Ex 19:10–25) asked the Lord to speak through Moses as an intermediary (Dt 18:16–17). Mel: "From this mercy seat God was going to speak to the people and there He would answer their prayer…. There are several types which apply here. Just as the mercy seat is the seat of God, so Christ is the seat of God, because in Christ the divine nature truly exists and before Him the church is gathered; and our prayers are not heard except for His sake…. Those who pray without knowledge of Christ or trust in Him will be rejected by God, as will all those who do not know the Gospel" (Chem, *LTh* 2:658). *commandment*. See p 971. God also addressed the liturgical shape of Israel's life.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 25:10–22 The Lord speaks to Moses from the mercy seat, the place of the Commandments and the atonement—His Law and His Gospel-mercy. Today, God no longer speaks from Mount Sinai or between the cherubim of the ark. He has spoken in these last days by His Son (Heb 1:2), who came to fulfill the Law for us and atone for all our sin. • Lord God, move our hearts to be attentive as You speak, and give Yourself to us in Your Word and Sacraments, through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 25:23 *acacia*. See note, v 5.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 25:29 *incense*. See notes, 30:1, 7, 8. *drink offerings*. Flagons filled with wine. Priests may have drunk the contents of these flagons when they ate the bread every Sabbath (Lv 24:8–9).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 25:30 *bread of the Presence*. Lit, "the bread of the face," i.e., before God's face, since He was present in the Most Holy Place. See application note, Lv 24:5–9.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 25:23–30 God sets before His people the bread of His presence. Jesus is "the living bread that came down from heaven" (Jn 6:51). • Lead us, dear Jesus, to feast on Your sacramental body in the bread and drink Your blood in the cup of thanksgiving (1Co 10:16), that we may be nourished by Your presence for all eternity. Amen.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 25:31 *lampstand*. For burning oil and lighting the holy place. *hammered work*. See diagram, p 159. *calyxes*. The leaves surrounding a flower; they look like a cup from which the flower blooms.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 25:32–35 See diagram, p 139.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 25:33 *almond blossoms*. Earliest to flower in spring.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 25:37 The beautiful lampstand served a practical purpose, lighting the tabernacle. The golden lampstand foreshadowed Christ (Jn 1:6–9). Cf Rv 1:12–13. As the lampstand gave the sanctuary light, so Christ is the light of the world (Jn 8:12). Many congregations today have two lampstands of seven lamps in the chancel, symbolizing the presence of Christ with His Church. *seven lamps*. As the seven "lights" in a week. See p 217.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 25:38 *tongs*. To remove the burnt wicks. *trays*. Held the wicks.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 25:40 *the pattern … shown you on the mountain*. See note, v 9.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 25:31–40 The lampstand serves both practical and symbolic functions, providing the only light in the dark sanctuary and representing the sacred order God established in the daily and weekly services of His house. No wonder "light" and "enlightenment" have come to describe His work among us through the Word we hear at His house, which enlightens our understanding of His ways. • Jesus, we praise You, for in mercy You have not left us in darkness but have enlightened us with the Word of Your salvation. Lead us to reflect Your light in a lost world. Amen.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 26:1–27:19 God is a God of order and beauty. Cf 28:40. See p 1291.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 26:1 *tabernacle*. See diagram, p 139. *ten curtains*. Placed over the framework of the tabernacle. No roof poles are mentioned; the tabernacle had a flat roof. See diagram, p 139. *blue … purple … scarlet*. A variety of bluish/purplish colors that were nonetheless distinct and likely based on different dye baths. *cherubim skillfully worked into them*. Woven into the fabric. See note, Ezk 10:1. Gold, as a complementary color, would stand out strongly from the fabric and intensify the coloration.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 26:2 *breadth of each curtain four cubits*. Loom width may have been 4 cubits.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 26:5 *opposite one another*. Loops were positioned so that they met exactly, emphasizing the quality of the work.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 26:6 *clasps … so that the tabernacle may be a single whole*. Two sets of five curtains were clasped at their loops for a breadth of 40 cubits (vv 3–4). The clasps fastened everything together tightly, making a sturdy tent.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 26:7 *goats' hair for a tent*. Provided waterproofing.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 26:8 *thirty cubits*. See scale in diagram, p 139.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 26:9 The sixth curtain apparently doubled over at the front of the tabernacle to form a gable 2 cubits in breadth.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 26:10 *outermost*. At the back corners of the tabernacle court, where curtains would need to be joined.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 26:12 *hang over the back*. The tabernacle was 30 cubits in breadth (vv 16, 18). The curtain of goats' hair was 44 cubits in breadth (north to south; v 8). Fourteen cubits of goats'-hair curtain draped the western, or back, wall.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 26:13 *hang over the sides*. The goats'-hair curtain was 2 cubits longer than the cherubim curtain (v 2).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 26:14 For waterproofing.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 26:15 *acacia*. See note, 25:5.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 26:17 *tenons*. Lit, "hands"; pegs that held the frames together.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 26:22 *rear of the tabernacle westward*. The front opening faced the rising sun, which set the time for the morning sacrifice. See pp 170–71; see also note, Mal 4:2.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 26:30 *the plan*. Hbr *mishpat*, "judgment." What the Lord decided. See note, 25:9.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 26:31 *cherubim skillfully worked*. See v 36.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 26:33 The Most Holy Place was a cube of 10 cubits. *ark of the testimony*. See note, 25:16. *the Holy Place from the Most Holy*. Cf 25:8; see "holy," p 7.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 26:34 *mercy seat*. See note, 25:17.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 26:36 *screen*. At the entrance to the tabernacle. Cf Heb 9:2. *embroidered with needlework*. Cf v 31.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 26:37 *gold … bronze*. See diagram, p 139; see also note, 25:3.
EXODUS—NOTE ON **Ch 26** The tabernacle is laid out according to the specifications God gave on the mountain (25:40; Ac 7:44). Worship is not spontaneous or haphazard but is carefully organized to honor the Creator, who set creation in order by carefully arranging space, boundaries, and the passage of time. Cf Gn 1:1–2:3. Today, organized worship, patterned on God's Word and the life of our Savior, honors God's works of creation, redemption, and sanctification, by which He makes us His beloved people. •

Lord Jesus, You establish all things to benefit us with Your gifts. We praise You for the mercy shown us through Your shed blood. Amen.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 27:1–8 The first and most visible furniture in the court was the bronze altar. This showed that sacrifice was needed to have fellowship with God, ultimately pointing to the altar of the cross, where Jesus reconciled the world to Himself.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 27:1 *altar of acacia wood*. The altar's firebox was overlaid with bronze (v 2), and the box was presumably filled with earth or gravel to prevent the fire from destroying the structure. See note, 25:5.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 27:2 *horns*. See p 842. Typical Near Eastern design element. Practically, such horns could help hold the wood and the sacrifice in place. Priests may also have tied sacrificial animals to them during the preparations for sacrifice. See note, 1Ki 1:50.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 27:8 *As it has been shown you*. See note, 25:9.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 27:1–8 The first and most visible item of furniture in the court is the bronze altar. Blood is applied on the horns and sides to atone for sins. The altar points forward to the cross of Calvary, where Jesus, God's sacrifice, shed His blood to atone for the sins of the world. • Lord Jesus, we thank and praise You. You are the perfect sacrifice who made peace with the Father for us. Amen.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 27:9 *court of the tabernacle*. The court walls separated the ordinary space from the holiness of God's presence within the tabernacle. Israel's access to God was restricted to the court (cf 25:8). Devout people longed to enter the court and be in God's presence (Ps 84:2, 10; 100:4; 116:12–14, 17–19). *tabernacle*. See diagram, p 139.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 27:16 *gate … a screen*. The line of sight toward the interior of the tabernacle was blocked. Priests and Levites could still enter when the gate was set back from the opening to provide a screen. See diagram, p 139.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 27:18 *length … a hundred cubits*. C 150 ft. *height five cubits*. The court walls. The tabernacle was 10 cubits high (26:16), which made it impossible to see the tabernacle when one stood close by the wall of the court.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 27:9–19 Specific limits mark the holiness of the Lord, limiting the approach of humans to Him. Due to our sins, we cannot approach the Holy One of Israel and live. Through Christ's work on the cross, we have access to the court, the Most Holy Place in heaven (cf Heb

4:14). • Jesus, may Your Spirit lead us to confess Your loving mercy, that many more may enter Your courts in praise and eternal life. Amen.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 27:20 *beaten olive oil*. Clear oil that burned brightly with little smoke. Similar to modern virgin oil, pressed from the crushed olives rather than rinsed out by hot water, as happens when the olives are crushed a second time.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 27:21 *tent of meeting*. Usually describes the Holy Place of the tabernacle. However, it also described a tent Moses set up for meeting with the Lord, which was pitched outside the camp of Israel (33:7). *outside the veil*. In the Holy Place, where Aaron and his sons tended the lamp. *the testimony*. See note, 25:16.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 27:20–21 Because the lamp stands in the Holy Place, the priests need to tend it. The light provided by the lamp enables their service. Today, the Lord enables our service and hallows us as His priesthood—believers enlightened with the Holy Spirit. • Jesus, thank You that Your Word and Sacraments bring us the light of salvation. By the power of Your Holy Spirit, may we be light to the world that is lost in darkness. Amen.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 28:1 *to serve … as priests*. Hbr *kahan*. Priests represent worshipers and present the worshipers' cause before God.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 28:2 *holy garments … for glory and for beauty*. Just as sacred space in the tabernacle was separated from secular space, so the priests of the tabernacle were distinct from the laity. See p 141.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 28:3 *filled with a spirit of skill*. See note, 31:3. *garments to consecrate*. Priestly garments symbolized the office of the priesthood and set the priests apart in their service. See "consecrate," p 6.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 28:4 *ephod*. A vest. See note, v 36. *checker work*. Woven in a pattern of squares. The ephod, breastpiece, lace of blue (v 28), and blue robe were luxurious apparel.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 28:8 *skillfully woven band*. Tied around the waist; kept the ephod snug.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 28:9 *onyx*. Translucent stones set in gold on the shoulder (vv 12–13).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 28:10 *in the order of their birth*. Cf Gn 29:32–30:24; 35:16–19.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 28:11 *jeweler engraves signets*. Seals engraved with the names of Israel's sons. *gold filigree*. Intricate ornamental design

using strands of gold wire.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 28:12 *stones of remembrance*. To remind the priest that he mediated for Israel and bore witness to God that Israel was His people. See "remember," p 843.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 28:15–43 Note the key body parts for jewelry: shoulders, heart, and forehead. Cf Dt 6:5, 8. As mediator, Aaron bore responsibility for Israel and loved Israel.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 28:15 *breastpiece*. Typically, a warrior's armor but here modified for priestly service. *judgment*. Contained within the breastpiece were the instruments of decision making: the Urim and Thummim. See note, v 30.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 28:16 *doubled*. Forming the shape of a pocket. Cf v 30. *span*. See p cx.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 28:17–21 Cf 12:35–36. Precious stones, representing the 12 tribes of Israel, illustrated that God's people were His treasured possession. Cf Dt 7:6.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 28:29 *breastpiece of judgment*. See note, v 15.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 28:30 *Urim and the Thummim*. Two sacred lots placed in the breastpiece that were used by the high priest to receive answers from the Lord. See notes, 1Sm 14:39–42; see also "seek," p 843. *on Aaron's heart*. The heart of the high priest was to be one with Israel. *judgment*. Guidance. See "rules," p 971.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 28:33 *pomegranates*. Fruit about the size of an apple. See note, 1Ki 7:18; see also p 236.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 28:35 A musical offering. Whether bells also served a practical purpose is unclear.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 28:36 *engraving of a signet*. Writing etched into gold. *Holy to the* LORD. The high priest was devoted to the Lord. The ephod (v 6), breastpiece (v 15), robe (v 31), turban (v 37), and plate of pure gold (v 36) were made with the same materials used for the tabernacle (26:1), inner veil (26:31), outer veil (26:36), and court veil (27:16). The attire of the priests was associated with the holy presence of the Lord.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 28:37 *turban*. Headdress worn by Aaron to remind him that his thoughts were to be pure.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 28:38 *bear any guilt*. Aaron functioned as a mediator to take sins away through sacrifices. See note, v 1. *consecrate*. See

p 6. *accepted before the* LORD. Aaron represented the people as he presented their offerings.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 28:39 *checker*. See note, v 4.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 28:40 *coats and sashes and caps*. Regular priestly garments. *for glory and beauty*. God designed the priesthood so that the people would give Him the glory due His name.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 28:41 *anoint … ordain … consecrate*. The priests were set apart, ritually ordained into their office. See notes, 29:9; 1Sm 10:1.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 28:42 *linen undergarments to cover their naked flesh*. Pagan priests frequently performed their rites naked or used sexual rituals. Before the true God, modesty is required. See note, 20:26.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 28:43 *altar … in the Holy Place*. They ministered at the altar of incense. See notes, 30:6, 7. *bear guilt and die*. Cf Lv 10:1–2. *statute*. See p 971.
EXODUS—NOTE ON **Ch 28** The beautiful priestly attire reflects the beauty of God as well as the office in which the priests minister. Often today, our devotion to God grows more and more lax. Rather than stand to pray, we sit. Rather than dress properly, we become casual or immodest. Rather than sing, we just listen. In contrast, the Lord required that even the clothing and movement of the high priest would bring glory and offer praise. Reassess your offering of praise and service to the Lord. Give all glory to Jesus, who diligently bore your guilt and consecrates you by grace. • O Lord God, draw us to the One whom our pastors preach, Christ crucified for the forgiveness of sins. Amen.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 29:1 *consecrate*. See p 6. *Take*. Animals were selected from herds (cf Dt 12:6). *without blemish*. Without physical defect. Cf 1Pt 1:19.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 29:2 *unleavened*. Made without yeast. *smeared*. As people today may spread butter on bread.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 29:3 *one basket*. For the grain offering (v 41). See pp 170–71.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 29:4–9, 31–33 Note the pattern of consecration: wash, dress, anoint, and eat from the sacrifices. Such elements were adopted by the early Christians for services of Baptism, confirmation, and first Communion during the Easter Vigil.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 29:4 *the entrance*. By the outer veil (26:36–37). *wash them*. Special event in arid climates, emphasizing the purity of God,

whom they would serve. Moses would officiate at the first ordination when he washed the priests (cf 30:19).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 29:9–10, 20, 24–25 Note the emphasis throughout on the priests' hands, by which they served the Lord.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 29:9 *statute*. See p 971. *ordain*. Lit, "fill the hand" by entrusting the work and service to Aaron and his sons.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 29:10 *lay their hands*. Hands "filled" with the work of the Lord must empty themselves of sins by transferring the sins to sacrificial animals (Lv 4:3–4).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 29:12 *blood*. Shedding of blood brought atonement. See pp 170–71. *horns*. By daubing the horns with blood, the entire altar was cleansed and consecrated.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 29:13 Pagan priests used such items for divination (see note, Dt 18:10–11).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 29:14 *a sin offering*. For personal sins the priests committed. See pp 170–71.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 29:16 *blood … against the sides of the altar*. Ensured that both the offerer and altar were cleansed from impurity.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 29:18 *burn the whole ram … burnt offering*. Consumed by fire. The flesh was the most important part, since it was burned on the altar (cf Lv 1:3–17). *food offering*. The pleasing aroma to God (the aroma of grilling meat) assured people that the Lord took pleasure in them and would deal favorably with them. See pp 170–71.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 29:20 *blood … on the tip of the right ear of Aaron … on the thumbs … on the great toes*. An act of purification and consecration. The right ear emphasized hearing and obeying the Word of God. The right thumb signified that the priests were now pure to handle the holy things of God. The right toe allowed the priest to walk on holy ground, pure before God.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 29:21 *blood … oil*. Mixed together; elsewhere, blood was mixed with water (see pp xxvi–xxx; cf Heb 9:19). See also note, 40:9. *sprinkle*. This anointing gave priests access to the altar and its food. *holy*. See p 7.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 29:22 *right thigh (for it is a ram of ordination)*. This ram constituted the peace offering (Lv 3:9–11). See pp 170–71. The right thigh was the priests' portion of the peace offering (Lv 7:32–33). *ordination*. See note, v 9.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 29:24 *palms of Aaron*. The newly consecrated priests now take the food offering in hand. *a wave offering*. By elevating these foods, the priests dedicated to God what by law belonged to them. See note, Lv 7:30–35.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 29:25 *food offering*. See pp 170–71.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 29:26 *the breast … shall be your portion*. Moses officiated at the first ordination (Lv 8). Because he was not a priest, he could not eat the sin offering (v 14; Lv 6:25–26) or the thigh from the ram of ordination (vv 31–32), but instead ate the breast. *portion*. See p 7.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 29:28 *sons*. The ordination pertained to Aaron and his sons, from the tribe of Levi. *perpetual*. This contribution occurred whenever peace offerings were presented. See pp 170–71.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 29:29 *holy garments … for his sons after him*. The ephod that hung on the shoulder and the sash around the waist (28:4) were adjustable, which allowed the garments to fit the next generation. *anointed*. See note, 1Sm 10:1. *ordained*. See note, v 9.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 29:30 *son who succeeds him*. High priest who would succeed Aaron and serve in the Most Holy Place. *wear them seven days*. See p 217. High priest began his work on the eighth day, the first day of the new week. See note, Gn 17:12.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 29:31 *ordination*. See note, v 9. *in a holy place*. Within the tabernacle court.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 29:32 *the entrance*. By the screen (27:16) in front of the altar for burnt offering. See diagram, p 139. *tent of meeting*. See note, 27:21.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 29:33 *atonement*. See p 5. *outsider*. Only priests ate what pertained to ordination. *holy*. See p 7.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 29:36 *purify the altar*. Due to the priests' sinfulness. Cf vv 12, 16. *consecrate*. See p 6.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 29:37 *atonement*. See p 5. *consecrate*. See p 6. *most holy*. Lit, "holy of holies," which is how Hbr forms a superlative. Items described this way were to be handled only by priests on duty at the tabernacle. See note, Lv 2:3. *Whatever touches the altar shall become holy*. It could not return to use outside the tabernacle court.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 29:38–42 Regular, daily sacrifices the new priest would offer. See pp 170–71.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 29:40 *seah … hin*. See p cx. *drink offering*. Poured at the base of the altar (Nu 28:7). Cf Lv 23:13. It accompanied all burnt offerings. See pp 170–71.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 29:41 *offering*. See pp 170–71.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 29:42 *I will meet with you, to speak*. God promised that through the ark He would commune with His people. See note, 25:17.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 29:43 *sanctified by My glory*. The tabernacle of Israel would be sanctified by God's abiding presence. See "holy" and "glory of the LORD," pp 7, 6.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 29:44 *I will consecrate*. The Lord Himself is the true source and cause of consecration. The rituals illustrated and applied this truth. See "holy," p 7.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 29:45 A reference to the promise given in 25:8, 22, which was fulfilled in Jesus, who tabernacled with us (Jn 1:14).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 29:46 Connection to the Book of the Covenant and its testimony (20:1), which distinguished Yahweh from every so-called god. As the Lord claimed the people, they would claim and proclaim Him. See "be with," p 5.
EXODUS—NOTE ON **Ch 29** God consecrates the Aaronic priesthood to consecrate His people, who would be a kingdom of priests (19:6). Our High Priest, Jesus, set aside this old order of sacrifices to offer Himself once for all (Heb 10:8–10). • Rejoice that, through Jesus, we can "draw near [to God] with a true heart in full assurance of faith" (Heb 10:22) and receive forgiveness of our sins. Amen.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 30:1 *altar*. Also referred to as the "golden altar" as it was overlaid with gold (v 3). *burn incense*. Incense was first placed on the table for the bread of the Presence (Lv 24:5–9) and then burned on the altar of incense. *acacia*. See note, 25:5.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 30:2 *horns*. See note, 27:2.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 30:6 The altar of incense stood in front of the second curtain (Heb 9:2–3), before the Most Holy Place (cf Ex 26:31). See diagram, p 139. *testimony*. See note, 25:16.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 30:7 *fragrant incense*. Once pure frankincense was made, it was placed on the table for the bread of the Presence alongside the bread and wine (Lv 24:7). See note, Lv 2:1. Jesus was a fragrant incense to the Father (cf Eph 5:2). All prayer that is accepted by the Father is presented through Jesus.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 30:8 *incense offering*. Incense was burned as nearly as possible to when the lamb was being slain at the bronze altar and when the priests dressed the lamps (cf v 7). Incense was needed for a practical purpose: to sweeten the air. As the incense was lit, the assembled people silently offered their sacrifice of prayer (Lk 1:10). See pp 170–71.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 30:9 Anyone who gave an unauthorized offering transgressed God's holiness and was slain. *offering*. See pp 170–71.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 30:10 *atonement*. See p 5. *sin offering*. Once a year, the high priest sprinkled the shed blood of the lamb on the mercy seat (Lv 16:34). See pp 170–71. *most holy*. See note, 29:37.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 30:1–10 The Lord describes the use of incense in the sanctuary; it is offered with the people's prayers. Without faith, it is impossible for us to pray rightly and to please God (Heb 11:6). Jesus' life and work was pleasing incense before His Father. Through Jesus' intercession, our prayers are acceptable. • May the Good News impel us to intercede continually before You, Jesus, on behalf of the Church and for the needs of all people. Amen.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 30:11–16 This census tax served to bolster the freewill offering raised in 25:1–9.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 30:11 See note, 25:1.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 30:12 *census*. A onetime event. *ransom for his life*. See "redeem," p 843; see also notes, 1Pt 1:18–19. *plague*. The tax reflected faith in the Lord. To break faith with the Lord would lead to disaster. Cf 1Ch 21:1–22:1.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 30:13 *shekel*. A standard unit of weight for silver or gold. A half-shekel was 1/5 oz. See p cx. *sanctuary*. "Holy place"; see diagram, p 139. *offering to the* LORD. A gift in response to the blessings the Lord gives us (cf 1Ch 29:14, 16). Moses conducted the census (vv 11–12).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 30:14 *twenty years old and upward*. The age Israelites became eligible for military service (Nu 1:3).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 30:15–16 Poll tax (v 12).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 30:15 *not give more … less*. Each gave the same amount. *atonement for your lives*. See note, v 12. *atonement*. See p 5.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 30:16 *service*. Maintenance. *remembrance*. Reminder that guilt incurred by sins was removed before the Lord. The Lord treated the people as reconciled because of this payment. Cf Mt 17:24–27.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 30:11–16 The census tax is established for upkeep and atonement at the sanctuary. No amount of labor on our part can remove the guilt that our sins incur. Jesus paid the ransom for every soul that walks on the earth. • Lord Jesus, may Your Holy Spirit lead us to give generously, so the work of proclaiming the Gospel may go forth in Word and Sacrament, for You have paid the price for all. Amen.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 30:17–20 Priests began their service after they washed. This washing foreshadowed the washing of Holy Baptism.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 30:17 See note, 25:1.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 30:19 *hands and their feet*. The parts of the body that became soiled most often during work. Washing one's feet naturally causes a person to wash his hands. See notes, Mk 7:3–4; Jn 13:5.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 30:20 *food offering*. See pp 170–71. *die*. Whoever ministered in a profane manner would die, for God's holiness consumes sin (Lv 10:1–3). See note, v 9.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 30:17–21 The priests must wash their hands and feet before they minister before God. Our High Priest, Jesus, was washed (Mt 3:13–17) before He began His work of redemption on our behalf. • Lord Jesus, through our pastors' service in Holy Baptism, You wash our hands, feet, and conscience (1Co 6:11; Heb 10:21–22). May this "washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit" (Ti 3:5) move us to serve You by serving our neighbor. Amen.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 30:21 *statute*. See p 971.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 30:22–38 The sanctuary had a distinct fragrance. Three liquids purified the priests and the tabernacle: blood (29:19–21), water (30:17–21), and fragrant oil. Cf 1Jn 5:6–8.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 30:22 See note, 25:1.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 30:23 *finest spices*. The best for the Lord. *liquid myrrh*. Balsam sap. *sweet-smelling cinnamon*. From the bark of cinnamon trees, imported from the region of India. *aromatic cane*. Spongy tissue from the root of a reed plant.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 30:24 *cassia*. Produced from the dried flowers of cassia cinnamon trees.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 30:25 *blended*. Thoroughly mixed.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 30:26 *ark of the testimony*. See note, 25:16.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 30:27 When the high priest was anointed into his office (v 31), the tent and artifacts were anointed as well.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 30:29 *consecrate*. Sin defiled the tabernacle and court. The consecrated utensils were transferred from the human to the divine sphere. *Whatever touches them will become holy*. Through these rites, the Lord shared His holiness with the priests, tabernacle, and furniture. See "holy," p 7.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 30:33 *cut off from his people*. He would lose his salvation. See note, Gn 17:14.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 30:34–36 *stacte*. Resin that oozes from certain trees. *onycha*. Made from the shells of mollusks. *galbanum*. Rubbery sap extracted from the roots of flowering plants native to Syria and Persia.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 30:34 See note, 25:1.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 30:36 *beat*. Pulverize. *before the testimony*. Offered on the golden altar (vv 6–8). See notes, vv 1, 6; 25:16.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 30:37 Any deviation in composition resulted in punishment (Lv 10:1–3).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 30:22–38 The Lord gives details for the anointing oil. This perfumed oil distinguishes the Lord's priests and the tabernacle. Today, the Lord sends the Holy Spirit, who sets us apart from the world by His work of sanctification and the fruit of the Spirit. • Thank You, Lord, for anointing us in Baptism (2Co 1:21), that we may serve You in holiness and approach You in "all boldness and confidence … as dear children ask their dear father" (SC, Lord's Prayer Introduction, p xxxvii). Amen.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 31:1 See note, 25:1.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 31:2 *Hur*. Grandfather of Bezalel.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 31:3 *filled him with the Spirit of God*. In addition to their God-given talents as created beings, these men received supernatural abilities from the Holy Spirit. See p 1920.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 31:4 *to devise*. Though the Lord revealed the general plans for the tabernacle (25:40; 27:8), the details had to be finalized.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 31:6 *him*. Bezalel. As senior leader, Bezalel was mentioned first in the list (v 2) and distinguished by his specific responsibilities.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 31:7 *ark of the testimony*. See note, 25:16. *mercy seat*. See note, 25:17.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 31:1–11 Artisans assemble to begin the work, and they follow the Lord's plans exactly. As you serve in your congregation, remember that "unless the LORD builds the house, those who build it labor in vain" (Ps 127:1). Value the service of each person, but give all glory to the Lord, who forgives your sins and makes you one in Christ. • Jesus, we are unworthy servants. "We have only done what was our duty" (Lk 17:10). Lead us to use our gifts in honorable service to spread Your Gospel. Amen.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 31:12 See note, 25:1. Introduces the Sabbath.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 31:13 The Sabbath was the pinnacle of God's revelation. *I, the LORD, sanctify you*. The Lord lived with His people in these rites and removed their guilt. Physical rest pointed to spiritual rest (cf Mt 11:28–30; Heb 4:2–6). See notes, Gn 2:2, 3; see also "holy," p 7.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 31:14 *put to death … cut off*. Not trusting in the Lord's rest invited temporal death, a precursor to eternal death. See note, 12:15.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 31:16 Cf 20:8–11. *covenant*. See p 127.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 31:17 *in six days the LORD made heaven and earth*. Connects the building of the tabernacle to creation. The tabernacle would be a Sabbath-house, a house of rest. *refreshed*. The people's refreshment came in part through physical rest and all the more from a conscience cleansed by the Word of God.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 31:18 *testimony*. See note, 25:16. *tablets of stone*. Common in ancient Near East to record important public documents on enduring surfaces. Cf Jsh 8:32. *written with the finger of God*. God Himself wrote the Commandments. Cf Lk 11:20.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 31:12–18 Plans for construction are revealed. Craftsmen, imbued with the Spirit of God, are secured. Such work is not an end in itself. It finds its fulfillment in the Sabbath rest for the sin-wearied soul. • Lord Jesus, may Your Spirit work in our hearts, leading us to repentance, that we may remain in the rest You have for us through all eternity. Amen.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 32:1 *gods*. The people requested multiple gods, but Aaron made just one idol (v 4). The people may have imagined that the calf carried another, invisible god. *go before us*. As the Lord had gone before them in a pillar of cloud or fire, so the people wanted a visible representation of their idols to lead them. Ephr: "They had been secretly

worshiping [the idol] in their hearts…. Moses who kept them in awe was removed from them, that the idolatry might cry aloud in their mouths, which the restraint of Moses had kept down in their hearts" (*NPNF* 2 13:312).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 32:2–3 Both men and women wore earrings and donated them for the idol's manufacture. Ter: "The people were about to lose, as a judgment upon themselves, the true ornaments for the ears [:] the words of God" (*ANF* 3:636).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 32:4 *fashioned it with a graving tool*. After casting the gold into the right shape, Aaron finished it with a carving tool. The idol may have been made of wood that was overlaid with gold, allowing it later to be burned and ground up (v 20). *golden calf*. An image of a calf or young bull; a common symbol of fertility and power in many religions. See p 141. *gods*. Aaron is likely referring to the idol and Yahweh as Israel's gods, mixing truth and error. See note, v 5.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 32:5 *Aaron saw*. Or, "Aaron was afraid," which some believe to be the reason Aaron cooperated with the people in this false worship. *to the* LORD. Aaron is mixing forbidden idolatry with the worship of the true God.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 32:6 *burnt offerings*. See pp 170–71. *peace offerings*. Part of the animal was burned in sacrifice; the rest was eaten by the people. See pp 170–71. *to play*. Implies immoral activity done for the honor of the god. See note, Gn 26:8, which describes the same term. Ter: "Understand the modest language of Holy Scripture: [genuine] 'play,' … would not have [been] reprehended" (*ANF* 4:105). Mel: "When their stomachs were full and they felt at ease, they forgot all about God and became negligent and wanton" (Chem, *LTh* 2:668).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 32:7 *your people*. Not "My people," as previous, because they are not acting like God's children.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 32:9 *stiff-necked*. A yoked or haltered animal might tighten its neck muscles to resist having its head turned to go a new direction. Like a farm animal that refused to be guided, Israel refused to follow God's new direction for them.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 32:10 *wrath may burn hot*. God communicated His holy nature in terms that humans could understand. Here, He compared His reaction to human anger. *make a great nation of you*. God promised Abraham that he would be a great nation. See note, Gn 12:2. God could do

this only through Moses, one of Abraham's descendants, and still be faithful to His promise.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 32:11 *Moses implored*. Moses interceded for God's mercy on Israel. This shows that Moses has grown in love for Israel. Aug: "Moses makes intercession for them…. And that he might not seem to have acted thus from necessity rather than from love, God offered [Moses] another people…. But he did not accept it; he cleaves to the sinners, he prays for the sinners" (*NPNF* 1 6:387).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 32:12 *Why should the Egyptians say*. Moses argued that God's justified destruction of Israel might cause the nations to blaspheme God and become even more alienated from Him. *Turn … relent*. Though God would be just in punishing Israel, Moses cried for mercy. See note, 1Ch 21:15.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 32:13 Moses trusted the divine promise to the patriarchs and asked for God's mercy. *swore*. See p 7. *inherit*. See "portion," p 7.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 32:14 *relented*. See note, 1Ch 21:15. Luth: "It is superfluous to enter on the subtle question here how God can repent, turn from and regret His anger, since He is unchangeable. Some people are deeply concerned about this; they complicate the matter for themselves unnecessarily" (AE 19:88–89). See pp 1079–80. *His*. Though they have sinned, God still acknowledges them as His people and not just Moses' people (cf v 7).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 32:15 *tablets of the testimony*. The Ten Commandments. These tablets were small enough for Moses to carry in one hand. See note, 25:16. *written on both sides*. Detail often missing in artistic portrayals.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 32:16 *engraved*. Words were cut into the stone.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 32:17 *Joshua*. Moses' assistant went part of the way with Moses, but Moses was alone when he spoke with God (24:15). See note, 24:13.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 32:18–19 *singing … dancing*. Likely reflecting practices associated with pagan worship. Cf v 6; see p 959.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 32:19 *broke them*. In anger, showing that Israel had broken God's covenant.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 32:20 Moses completely destroyed the idol and made Israel drink the remains in water. This provided a strong reminder that

their sin had polluted them thoroughly (cf Nu 5:24–26). Cypr: "Why do you bow your body captive before foolish images and creations of earth? God made you upright; and while other animals are downlooking, and are depressed in posture bending towards the earth, yours is a lofty attitude; and your countenance is raised upwards to heaven, and to God" (*ANF* 5:462).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 32:22 *they are set on evil*. The people wanted to sin and were bound to sin. See note, Gn 6:5. Like Adam (Gn 3:12), Aaron tries to deflect responsibility to others without confessing his sin.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 32:24 *out came this calf*. Denying his guilt, Aaron implies that the idol was formed miraculously.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 32:25 *Aaron had let them*. The people, out of control, had given in to their sinful passions. *break loose*. Hbr can also refer to nakedness. *enemies*. The Egyptians and others who did not worship the true God would mock this behavior.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 32:26 *gate*. Entrance at one end of camp. Gates commonly served as gathering places. See p 792. *Who is on the LORD's side?* Those who had been faithful to the true God and had not participated in the idolatry. *sons of Levi*. Priests would come from this tribe, as did Moses and Aaron.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 32:27 *gate to gate*. From one end to the other. *his brother and his companion and his neighbor*. Fellow Israelites, not just Levites. Anyone who did not come forward as being "on the LORD's side" (v 26) was guilty of idolatry. Some of these were killed.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 32:28 *three thousand*. Small percentage of those who had committed idolatry. The punishment was not as severe as it might have been.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 32:29 *ordained for the service of the LORD*. The Levites had shown their dedication to God by placing Him above all people. See note, 29:9. *son … brother*. All Israelites were related. Levites showed that loyalty to God is more important than family ties. *bestow a blessing*. The Levites (along with others) received God's blessing, first promised to Abraham (Gn 12:2–3), that they would be God's people. See "bless," p 842.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 32:30 *great sin*. All sin is serious, but this crass idolatry was a rejection of God. *I can make atonement*. Moses did not tell Israel how he proposed to do this, but the following verses made his intentions clear. See "atonement," p 5.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 32:31 *gods*. See note, v 4.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 32:32 *blot me out of Your book*. Ancient kings would keep lists of their subjects—those who belonged to the king. Moses offered to be cut off from God's people or even lose his life if it might be helpful to Israel. But such an exchange is not possible. The life of one sinner is not enough to pay for another (Ps 49:7–8). Ambr: "What reproaches Moses had to bear from his people! … With what gentle words used he to address the people, even after he was wronged! He comforted them in their labors, consoled them by his prophetic declarations of the future, and encouraged them by his works" (*NPNF* 2 10:48). Bern: "What a devoted advocate! who, because he does not seek his own interests, easily obtains everything which he seeks. What a benign chief, who, binding together his people with bonds of charity as the head is united with the members, will either save them with himself or else encounter the same danger as they!" (*SLSB*, p 72).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 32:33 A blunt reminder that sin merits death (Rm 6:23). Everyone who sinned would die, though not all died at that moment.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 32:34 *angel*. See p 5.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 32:35 *they made … Aaron made*. The people were responsible for their sin as Aaron was responsible for his.

EXODUS—NOTE ON **Ch 32** Feeling alone in the wilderness, Israel soon doubts God's promises and turns to idolatry. Their idol is unable to help them, and they experience greater suffering. We, too, may grow impatient or doubt God's promises. In fear or doubt, we may turn to idols of our own: anything that we "fear, love, and trust" more than the true God. But these idols cannot help us. Thank God that He remembers His promises and is faithful to us, even when we are unfaithful. He sends His Son to offer atonement for our sin. He alone is able to take the sin of the world upon Himself and give us His perfect righteousness. We are God's people because of Him. • O Christ, Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world, thank You for giving Yourself for me. Forgive my sins, and strengthen me to believe in You and love You. Amen.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 33:2 *angel*. Though God condemned their idolatry, He still protected and guided His people (cf v 3). *Canaanites*. See p 345.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 33:3 *flowing with milk and honey*. See p 6. *I will not go up among you*. God certainly is present with His people but notes that their sin has consequences. They will not experience His blessings in the same way as if they had not committed idolatry. *consume*. God's

holiness would destroy them in their sin. "This hereditary sin is such a deep corruption of nature that no reason can understand it. Rather, it must be believed from the revelation of Scripture" (SA III I 3). *stiff-necked*. See note, 32:9.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 33:4 *ornaments*. As a sign of sorrow, the Israelites did not wear festive clothing or jewelry. This is common practice in a time of mourning.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 33:6 Mourners and penitent people generally removed their ornaments for a limited time (see note, v 4). Here, it becomes an enduring response from Israel.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 33:1–6 Fully aware of their sin, the Israelites strip off their ornaments to show their repentance and sorrow. Our repentance may also be accompanied by outward signs, but these are not substitutes for a repentant heart. Each day, we confess our sins to God. Through the means of grace, we receive His forgiveness. How blessed we are that, because of Christ, God is "faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1Jn 1:9). • Thank You, Lord, for Your gracious forgiveness in Christ. Amen.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 33:7 *the tent*. Not the tabernacle, which would be built later. See note, 27:21. *sought the* LORD. Israel was learning to turn to God instead of to idols. See "seek," p 843.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 33:8 *rise up … watch*. In expectation of God's presence and to honor His presence. It is no small thing for God to come among His people.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 33:9 *pillar of cloud*. See note, 13:21. *the* LORD *would speak with Moses*. When the pillar of cloud was over the tent, God spoke directly to Moses. Moses recorded some of these conversations in the Bible.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 33:10 *worship*. Lit, "bow down." The people would prostrate themselves before the Lord, acknowledging His presence and identity. See "bow," p 1276.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 33:11 *face to face*. Hbr expression for intimacy (cf Dt 5:4, applied to Israel). This experience was significantly different from the one mentioned in v 20. *as a man speaks to his friend*. God spoke to Moses directly, not through visions or dreams. *assistant Joshua*. See note, 24:13. *would not depart from the tent*. The Levitical priesthood had not yet been established. Joshua served as an attendant in the tent. He remained in

the tent whenever Moses was not there, so that someone was always in the tent.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 33:7–11 Moses receives an extraordinary gift: God speaks to him face-to-face, as to a friend. Jesus Christ gives believers in the NT the same gift. He says, "I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you" (Jn 15:15). He invites our prayers and has promised to hear us and answer. He works with us in His grace. How blessed are we to be called the friends of God. • Thank You, Jesus, for being my friend. May I always hear Your voice in faith. Amen.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 33:12–23 Though this passage speaks of future events on the mountain (cf 34:2), Moses was probably in the tent when this conversation occurred.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 33:12 *whom You will send with me*. God promised to send an angel before Israel (v 2). Moses sought assurance that God would bless them. *know you by name*. God knew Moses personally, including the details of his life. *favor*. God is pleased with Moses. This can only be because of God's grace, not Moses' personal characteristics, which were often deficient (cf 4:10, 13). See p 6.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 33:13 *show me now Your ways, that I may know You*. Moses wanted to know more about God, whose ways are higher than human ways. Moses had found favor in God's sight but seems confused as to why. He wants to understand why and how God shows favor. See "favor," p 6; see "way," p 844; see also notes, v 19; 34:6–7.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 33:14 *presence*. God's presence was sometimes seen in the pillar of cloud, but God was always present with Israel. See p 843. *rest*. Israel was commanded to rest on the Sabbath. When they lived in God's covenant, they could rest and enjoy peace—trusting Him to care for them.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 33:16 *distinct*. Lit, "lifted up" so they appear different. The presence and favor of God made Israel distinct from the rest of the nations. See notes, Dt 7:6–10.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 33:17 *I know you by name*. See note, v 12.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 33:18 *show me Your glory*. Moses boldly asked for a direct vision of God's glory. Moses thought that the presence of God's glory would prove that the promise would be fulfilled. See "glory of the LORD," pp 6–7.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 33:19–23 God would appear visibly before Moses. See p 39. The Lord took steps to protect him, lest the divine holiness destroy sinful Moses.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 33:19 *My goodness pass*. Moses asked to see God's glory, but God told him that He would send His goodness. God would reveal more in His character than in His glorious appearance. *proclaim … My name* '*The* LORD.' The Lord had already proclaimed and revealed His name to Moses (3:14) and Israel (20:2), but here the revelation is deeper, coupled with His goodness and declarations of His graciousness. *gracious … and will show mercy*. Moses asked to understand God's "ways" of Law and Gospel (v 13); God reveals the purity of His grace to Moses, which does not respond to people due to their merit but springs from God's own goodness. See "mercy," p 842.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 33:20 Note the contrast between human sinfulness and divine holiness. A sinful human could not withstand the full revelation of God's presence without being destroyed. Luth: "He says, 'Man shall not see Me and live.' Therefore He put before us an image of Himself, because He shows Himself to us in such a manner that we can grasp Him. In the New Testament we have Baptism, the Lord's Supper, absolution, and the ministry of the Word" (AE 2:46).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 33:21 *place by Me*. In human terms, God told Moses how he would see the divine presence.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 33:22 Moses could see only a portion of God's glory. *glory*. Describes God as He is—perfect, wonderful, and holy. See pp 6–7. *cover you with My hand*. God would conceal most of His presence from Moses for Moses' own good.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 33:23 *see My back*. Cf v 22. Moses does not see God's "face"—the full expression of His glory, but he does see a glimpse of the divine presence (cf 34:6–7). Ter: "It is not permitted us to contemplate the sun, in the full amount of [its] substance which is in the heavens, but we can only endure with our eyes a ray" (*ANF* 3:609).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 33:12–23 Moses asks to learn God's ways and see God's glory. He is permitted to see a glimpse of God's presence. John tells us that no one has ever seen God's full presence and glory, for it would be too much for a sinner to bear. Yet, we see God when Christ Jesus covered Himself in our flesh and lived among us (Jn 1:18). On the cross, He was glorified (Jn 17:5). • "The Law of God is good and wise And sets His

will before our eyes, Shows us the way of righteousness, And dooms to death when we transgress. The Gospel shows the Father's grace, Who sent His Son to save our race, Proclaims how Jesus lived and died That we might thus be justified." Amen. (*LSB* 579:1; 580:1)

EXODUS—NOTE ON 34:1 *tablets of stone*. See note, 31:18. *I will write*. Moses wrote on the tablets, but it is God who inspires the words, guides Moses, and guarantees the content and accuracy of His Word.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 34:2 *present yourself*. A formal summons of Moses to come before God on Sinai.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 34:3 *No one shall come up with you*. Even Joshua, Moses' assistant (24:13), was to stay away. *graze opposite*. No animals were allowed to graze on the slopes of the mountain while God was revealing Himself.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 34:4 *hand*. See note, 32:15.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 34:5 *descended … and stood with him*. God is omnipresent, but here His presence was localized and partially visible to Moses. *proclaimed the name of the* LORD. God identified Himself by name. This is a personal encounter. See p 39.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 34:6–7 Fulfilling His promise of 33:19, God appears to Moses and reveals His name. He also reveals His "ways," which are divided into mercy (vv 6–7a) and punishment (v 7b). God reveals that He works through Law and Gospel. These two ways stem from His very being and show how He has worked and will work with humankind through all covenants and eras of history. See p 127. This passage is the "Jn 3:16" of the OT, cited repeatedly hereafter, which demonstrates the unity of Scripture. Cf Dt 5:9; 7:9; Ne 9:31; Jer 32:18; Dn 9:4; Jl 2:13; Mi 7:18–20. See pp xlv–xlvii.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 34:6 *The* LORD, *the* LORD. Formal and majestic proclamation of God's name and identity, followed by a proclamation of some of His attributes. *merciful*. Not giving people the due penalty for their sin. *gracious*. Giving people undeserved blessings, which are given only for Christ's sake. See p 842. *slow to anger*. Patient and long-suffering with His people. *steadfast love and faithfulness*. See pp 842–43. "Wherever we escape from disaster or danger, we ought to remember that it is God who gives and does all these things. In these escapes we sense and see His fatherly heart and His surpassing love toward us" (LC II 23).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 34:7 *for thousands*. Or, "for thousands of generations." God's love and grace never end. See p 217. *forgiving*. God removed and forgot sin because of Christ, the coming Messiah. *iniquity … transgression … sin*. These overlapping words for sin showed that this description referred to all human sin. See p 959. *iniquity*. Guilt that accompanied sin. *transgression*. Rebellion against God. *sin*. Any violation of God's Law. *clear the guilty*. God did not simply forget sin. Its penalty was to be paid by either the sinner or by a sacrifice. *visiting the iniquity*. Sin affected more than the individual; its consequences also affected others, including descendants. *to the third and the fourth generation*. Hbr expression for a continuing effect. See note, 20:5. See also note, Pr 30, on numerical sayings.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 34:8 *bowed … and worshiped*. Moses appropriately acknowledged God's presence and identity by responding to His glory and self-revelation. See "bow," p 1276.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 34:9 *favor*. See p 6. *stiff-necked*. See note, 32:9. *pardon*. Moses asked God to declare forgiveness of Israel's guilt. *inheritance*. Moses prayed for God to make Israel His children and heirs of His kingdom. See "portion," p 7.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 34:1–9 Sinful hearts stumble over God's verdict that the effects of sin may harm anyone other than the sinner. Could it be fair that the fathers' sin affects the third and fourth generation (v 7)? But the results of sin in one person's life often do impact others. We learn patterns of sin from our parents and often suffer the effects of others' sin. But the Lord's steadfast love, mercy, and grace are greater than any sin, because He has atoned for our sin. His mercy abounds for thousands of generations (v 7), far more than the effects of sin. • Merciful Lord, I confess my sin and plead for future generations. Grant me forgiveness; make me Your heir for Jesus' sake. Amen.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 34:10–28 The Lord repeats various promises and commands related to worship and interaction with non-Israelites. This emphasis may stem from the recent disobedience in matters of worship, which included adoption of foreign gods and practices (ch 32). The Lord would revisit these matters in the rest of the Books of Moses.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 34:10 *I am making a covenant*. Israel broke the covenant in idolatry (ch 32). Since they could not repair the damage of their sin, God restored the covenant. See p 127. *marvels*. Signs of God's

almighty power. *the work of the* LORD. They would see that God caused these events to happen.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 34:11 See p 345.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 34:12 God made a covenant with Israel, which was to be exclusive.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 34:13 *pillars*. See note, Gn 28:18. *Asherim*. Representations of Asherah, the most important Canaanite goddess. She was commonly the sister-wife to the storm god Baal (see note, Nu 25:3). At Ugarit, she was consort to the god El and mother of other gods, including Baal. (An inscription at Kuntillet ʻAjrud names her as a consort to "Yahweh of Samaria," illustrating the mixing of religions in the Northern Kingdom.) Asherah was associated with the sea but was honored most as goddess of fertility. Asherah (Ashtoreth) is also associated with Babylonian Ishtar. See note, Est 2:7. The Bible notes that Asherah was worshiped in association with trees, groves, and wooden poles (see p 526). She was often portrayed in carved wooden figurines with her female characteristics featured prominently. Archaeologists associate Asherah with the numerous fertility figurines discovered throughout Canaan. Most Near Eastern religions had a male deity and a female deity as a couple; worship practices for Baal and Asherah were sexual in nature. Later, the cult was so popular, Judean artisans developed their own style in depicting such fertility goddesses. The only era when such figurines are not found is the period after the return from exile, illustrating how effective the religious reforms were under Ezra and Nehemiah. See p 403.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 34:14 *no other god*. See note, Dt 32:39. *Jealous*. See note, 20:5.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 34:15 *covenant*. See p 127. *whore after their gods*. Israel was "married" to God. See note, Hos 4:13. *eat of his sacrifice*. In certain sacrifices, gods were given some of the offering and worshipers ate the rest to show their union with that god. Participation in such meals was also idolatrous. See notes, 1Co 10:18, 20, 21.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 34:16 Israelites were not to marry Canaanites; such unions would almost certainly lead to idolatry and breaking God's covenant.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 34:17 Images were not forbidden, but idols were. See note, 20:4.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 34:18 *Feast of Unleavened Bread*. The Passover, during which Israel was to remember annually God's deliverance from Egypt and to tell the story to their children. *month Abib*. Began shortly after the vernal equinox. See calendar, p 262.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 34:19–20 See note, 13:2.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 34:21 See notes, 20:8, 11.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 34:22 See pp 200–201.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 34:23 Men of Israel were commanded to worship together for these festivals. These were not to be mere family remembrances, but worship from a nation.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 34:24 *no one shall covet … three times in the year*. God's promise here is contingent on obedience. If Israel was united and faithful to God, no one would attempt to take their land, even when they were worshiping at these festivals.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 34:25 *leavened*. Bread made with yeast. *Feast of the Passover*. Annual remembrance of God's deliverance. See pp 200–201.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 34:26 *best of the firstfruits*. Offerings to God were not an afterthought; He was to receive the first and the best. See pp 170–71. *You shall not boil … in its mother's milk*. See note, 23:19.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 34:27 *Write these words*. The commands just given (vv 10–26). See note, vv 10–28. *covenant*. See p 127.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 34:28 *He neither ate bread nor drank water*. Only with God's miraculous help. *he wrote*. Could refer to the Lord or to Moses; most likely, Moses acted as God's scribe and wrote the words from God (v 1). *the covenant, the Ten Commandments*. Lit, "the covenant of the 10 words," which summarized the commands of the entire covenant. See "covenant," p 6. Chem: "So great is the brevity in the individual precepts of the Decalog that Moses called them 'words' (*verba*), Deut. 4:12; 10:4; Ex. 34:28. Yet within this brevity is included whatever pertains to loving God and our neighbor, and these brief statements should be the rule and measure by which we recognize what sins are, Rom. 3:20" (*LTh* 2:356).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 34:10–28 Sinners are unable to keep God's holy commands perfectly. We rebel against them in our thoughts, words, and deeds. If left up to us, we could not live in God's covenant. Here, in the middle of the worship provisions of the covenant, God foreshadows His solution: redemption through sacrifice (v 20). The blood of the Lamb redeems those who continually break the covenant. He died for us that we

might live. • Lord Jesus, Lamb of God, I am grateful for Your sacrifice. Strengthen me by Your Spirit to worship You properly. Amen.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 34:29 *tablets of the testimony*. See note, 32:15. *skin of his face shone*. Moses' face was literally radiant, reflecting the glory of the Lord.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 34:30 *afraid*. Even a reflection of the divine glory was too much for sinful people to bear. This is beyond all human experience.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 34:31 *leaders of the congregation*. See note, 3:16. See also p 228.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 34:32 *commanded*. Moses proclaimed the things that God had revealed and told the people to follow them. See p 971.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 34:33 *veil*. Term is different from the veil (wrapping or shawl) used by a woman in Gn 38:19. Since Moses' appearance frightened the people, he covered his face.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 34:34 *in before the* LORD. See note, 27:21. *remove the veil*. Moses would not conceal his face from God. Likewise, when he was speaking God's Word to the people, he would remove the veil. This reminded the people that Moses had seen God face-to-face.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 34:35 Moses does not mention whether his face ever ceased to be radiant.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 34:29–35 Moses veils himself because the Israelites, in their sinfulness, are terrified to see a manifestation of God's glory. Today, our sin also separates us from God's glory and presence, but St Paul reminds us that "when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed … and we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image" (2Co 3:16, 18). Because of Christ, we see the Lord and live in His glorious grace. • O Lord my God, let me see You in Christ under the veil of the incarnation. Amen.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 35:2 Third time the Lord teaches about and emphasizes the Sabbath. See note, 34:10–28.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 35:3 *kindle no fire*. Fire was used for cooking (work) but was also instrumental in constructing the golden calf. Cf 32:24.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 35:1–3 God calls the people again to share in His Sabbath rest. The soul that forsakes the gift of Sabbath rest remains in torment. Our true rest is in the one true God, who grants life, peace, and all blessings. • We thank You, Jesus, for patiently having had mercy on us, that

we can rest in the work of salvation that You have accomplished for us. Amen.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 35:5 *contribution to the* LORD. Request fulfilled in ch 25.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 35:10 *every skillful craftsman*. Oholiab and Bezalel as designers and leaders (31:2–6).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 35:11 *tabernacle*. See diagram, p 139.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 35:19 Cf ch 28.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 35:21 *heart stirred … spirit moved*. God's Word caused the people to be generous. See note, v 29. *tent of meeting*. See note, 27:21.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 35:22 *brooches and earrings and signet rings and armlets*. Jewelry they had plundered from the Egyptians. See note, 3:22. *every man*. Everyone whose heart was stirred.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 35:24 *possessed acacia wood*. Cf 25:13; see note, 25:5.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 35:25–26 See note, Gn 37:3; cf Ex 35:35.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 35:27 *leaders*. Cf 18:24–26.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 35:29 *moved … freewill offering*. Verb and noun have same Hbr root *nadab*, to "urge" or "volunteer." The expression "freewill" can be confusing, as Scripture does not teach that the human will is free in spiritual matters but is bound due to the fall into sin. See note, Gn 6:5. We are servants, either of sin or of righteousness (Rm 6:16–18). Good works, such as the offerings described here, are motivated by the Holy Spirit working through the Word (cf v 4). The believer gladly hears and obeys God's Word (v 21).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 35:4–29 Offerings, materials, and laborers pour into the work site to begin the task. Work begins as an act of faith motivated by God's Word. • "Thy strong Word bespeaks us righteous; Bright with Thine own holiness, Glorious now, we press toward glory, And our lives our hopes confess. Alleluia, alleluia! Praise to Thee who light dost send! Alleluia, alleluia! Alleluia without end!" Amen. (*LSB* 578:3)
EXODUS—NOTE ON 35:31 *filled him with the Spirit of God*. See note, 31:3.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 35:34 Bezalel and Oholiab trained the other workmen and acted as foremen.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 35:35 *embroiderer … weaver*. Men were weavers. See note, Gn 37:3.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 36:1 *sanctuary*. See p 7.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 36:2 Cf 35:21, 29.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 36:4 See note, 31:3.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 36:5 Cf 1Ch 29:16.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 36:7 *sufficient … and more*. Luth: "It is a living, busy, active, mighty thing, this faith. It is impossible for it not to be doing good works incessantly" (FC SD IV, 10–11).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 36:8 *cherubim*. See note, Ezk 10:1.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 36:10 *He*. Bezalel. Cf 31:2–3.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 35:30–36:38 What God spoke, Moses reveals to Bezalel and Oholiab, who in turn train the craftsmen. God works through a plan, through means, and through people. When the fullness of time came (Gal 4:4), Jesus enacted the plan laid before eternity (Eph 1:4) and built a heavenly city with foundations (Heb 11:10; Rv 21:9–27). • Holy Spirit, keep us faithful to the doctrinal foundation of the prophets, the apostles, and the cornerstone, Jesus (Eph 2:20). Amen.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 37:1–9 Cf 25:10–20.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 37:2 Cf 25:11.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 37:4–6 Cf 25:10–22.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 37:7 *cherubim*. See note, Ezk 10:1.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 37:1–9 The ark and mercy seat are built. As the single most holy piece of furniture, the ark is specifically mentioned as being built by Bezalel. The ark would receive the blood of the sacrifices, which pointed forward to the atonement of Christ, our Lord. • O Lord God, Your holiness and mercy shine more brightly than the finest gold. Exceedingly great is Your mercy toward us. Amen.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 37:10–16 Bezalel builds the table for the bread of the Presence. Just as the Lord provided for the nourishment of the priests in the bread and the flagons containing wine, so He nourishes us now in the elements of the Lord's Supper, even giving us His body and blood. • O Holy Spirit, lead us to seek the merciful presence of Jesus in Holy Communion, where He has promised to be found. Amen.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 37:17 See note, 25:18. *calyxes*. See note, 25:31.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 37:20 See diagram, p 139.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 37:24 *talent*. See p cx.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 37:17–24 The assembled lampstand gives light to the tabernacle but also symbolizes the light of God's care and mercy. Due to sin, the eyes of our heart are bad, and the whole body is darkened (Mt 6:23). How great is our need for repentance! Jesus is the light of the world, and in Him we have the light of life (Jn 8:12). • Jesus, we praise You that through Word and Sacrament, You enlighten us to walk in the way of salvation (Ps 119:105). Amen.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 37:25 See diagram, p 139.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 37:25–29 The altar of incense and the anointing oil purifies the air of the tabernacle. Their composition is precious. Later, the Magi brought Jesus precious incense after His birth, showing that His life's work on our behalf was a pleasing fragrance before the Father. He covers the stench of our sin and makes us precious to the Father. • Holy Jesus, purify us, that we may honor You before the Father in heaven. Amen.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 38:1–7 The altar of burnt offering is assembled. We cannot approach the Father on our own merit. Only through the altar of the cross do we have access to Him. • Lord Jesus, thank You for offering Your life for the forgiveness of sin. Through Your work of mercy, we have access to the heavenly Father. Amen.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 38:8 *bronze*. See note, 25:3. *mirrors*. See note, 1Co 13:12. Formerly used for personal beautification, the mirrors are now used to serve the Lord. *ministering women*. See p 389.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 38:8 Donating their material goods of mirrors, these women no longer focus on themselves. Moved by the Holy Spirit, they now want to reflect the Lord to others. • Lord, take our eyes off our selfish interests. By the power of the Holy Spirit, may we reflect Jesus' love to others. Amen.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 38:9–20 Bezalel erects the court boundary. Entering from the east, one comes first to the place of sacrifice: the bronze altar. Today, we first enter the courts of the Lord when He leads us to trust in Christ's sacrifice. • Spirit of God, lead us in the way of life (Jn 14:6). Amen.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 38:21 *tabernacle of the testimony*. See note, 25:16; see also diagram, p 139.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 38:22 *the* LORD *commanded*. Refrain appears 19 times in describing the work of the sanctuary (38:22; 39:1, 5, 7, 21, 26, 29, 31, 32, 42, 43; 40:16, 19, 21, 23, 25, 27, 29, 32).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 38:23 See note, Gn 37:3; cf Ex 35:35.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 38:24–25 See note, 25:3. *sanctuary*. See p 7.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 38:26 *shekel*. See note, 30:13. *603,550 men*. See note, Nu 1:46.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 38:27 A large quantity of silver was used. Cf v 25.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 38:21–31 In the Gospels, Jesus compares the tabernacle and Herod's temple with the temple of His body (Mt 27:40; Jn 2:19–22), by which we have full remission of sin. By the temple of Jesus' body, we approach the Father. • Lord Jesus, we praise You that the prophecies of the OT (Lk 24:27) have been fulfilled in Your life, death, and resurrection. Amen.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 39:3 See note, 26:1; see also application note, ch 28.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 39:30 *Holy*. See p 7.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 39:32 *Thus … finished*. Cf Gn 2:1; the construction of the tabernacle mimics the first creation. See note, v 43.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 39:33 *tabernacle*. See diagram, p 139.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 39:34 *covering*. Cf 26:14. *veil*. Cf 26:31–33.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 39:37 Cf 25:31–39.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 39:38 *oil*. Cf 30:22–33. *incense*. Cf 30:34–38.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 39:39 Cf 27:1–8.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 39:41 Cf ch 28.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 39:43 *blessed them*. Creation was proclaimed very good, and God blessed His work (Gn 2:3). Creation of the tabernacle was also very good because it was built as God commanded and as Moses blessed. See p 842.
EXODUS—NOTE ON **Ch 39** The priestly garments are completed. Just as the garments of the priests set them apart, so the Lord clothes us with His righteousness and sets us apart as a royal priesthood. • Bless me, O Savior, and consecrate me for service in Your kingdom. Amen.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 40:2 *first day of the first month*. Nearly one calendar year has passed since the Passover, established on the 10th day of the first month.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 40:3–33 Working from the Most Holy Place outward (25:8).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 40:3 *ark of the testimony*. See note, 25:16.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 40:4 *table*. Cf 25:23–30. *lampstand*. Cf 25:31–39.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 40:5 *altar*. Cf 30:1–10. *screen*. Cf 26:36–37.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 40:6. Cf 27:1–8.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 40:7 *tent of meeting*. Cf 25:8.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 40:8 *court*. Cf 27:9–19. *screen*. Cf 27:16.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 40:9–15 Anointing was by sprinkling.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 40:9 *anointing oil*. Oil was a preservative (e.g., oilcloth).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 40:10 *most holy*. See note, 29:37. Both the altar of burnt offering (27:1–8) and the altar of incense (30:1–10) are mentioned. Cf Lv 8:11.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 40:12 *wash*. Cf 30:17–21.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 40:13 *garments*. Cf ch 28. *anoint*. Cf ch 29. *consecrate*. See p 6.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 40:16–33 Repetition affirms that all was done according to the Lord's directive (38:22).
EXODUS—NOTE ON 40:17 *second year*. See note, v 2.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 40:18 *frames*. Cf 26:15–25. *poles*. Cf 26:26–30. *pillars*. Cf 26:32.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 40:19 *tent*. Cf 26:7–13. *covering*. Cf 26:14.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 40:20 *the testimony*. The Ten Commandments. See note, 25:16; see also p 971. *ark*. Cf 25:10–11. *poles*. Cf 25:12–15. *mercy seat*. Cf 25:17.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 40:21 Cf ch 26.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 40:22 *table*. Cf 25:23–30.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 40:23 *bread*. Cf Lv 24:5–9.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 40:24 *lampstand*. Cf 25:31–39.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 40:26 *golden altar*. For incense. See note, 30:1.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 40:27 *incense*. Cf 30:34–38.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 40:29 *offered … burnt offering*. Moses offered the first sacrifice because the priesthood was not yet ordained (cf Lv 8; see notes, 29:4, 26). *grain offering*. Offered along with the burnt offering. See pp 170–71.
EXODUS—NOTE ON 40:30 *basin*. Cf 30:17–21.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 40:33 *Moses finished the work*. He oversaw the work. Cf Gn 2:2. The creation of the tabernacle ushered in new life through faith in the shed blood. Cf 39:42–43.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 40:1–33 The Lord lives among His people in the tabernacle and leads them to life and salvation. Today, the Lord blesses us in the means of grace, leading us to life and salvation through His shed blood, which covers our sin. • Thank You, Jesus, for these OT types that find their fulfillment in You. Amen.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 40:34 *cloud*. The cloud and glory of the Lord were present on Sinai (24:15–18). *glory of the* LORD. See pp 6–7. *tabernacle*. See diagram, p 139.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 40:35 Though Moses was not a priest, he typically worked alongside them and had special access to God's presence (see notes, 29:4, 26). But not even Moses could enter on this occasion, when God sanctified and blessed the tabernacle.

EXODUS—NOTE ON 40:36 The cloud testified that the Lord was protecting and leading His people (14:19–20).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 40:38 *cloud*. Cf v 34. *fire*. The Lord lived in the pillar of fire by night and cloud by day (13:21–22).

EXODUS—NOTE ON 40:34–38 In the tabernacle, the glory of the Lord is seen. We do not choose God, His location, or the form of worship. God reveals this in His gracious mercy so that we may be with Him for all eternity. The glory of the Lord continues in Word and Sacrament, through which Christ lives in and with us. • "Immortal, invisible, God only wise, In light inaccessible hid from our eyes, Most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days, Almighty, victorious, Thy great name we praise." Amen. (*LSB* 802:1)

Leviticus

Leviticus 1 | Leviticus 2 | Leviticus 3 | Leviticus 4 | Leviticus 5 | Leviticus 6 | Leviticus 7 | Leviticus 8 | Leviticus 9 | Leviticus 10 | Leviticus 11 | Leviticus 12 | Leviticus 13 | Leviticus 14 | Leviticus 15 | Leviticus 16 | Leviticus 17 | Leviticus 18 | Leviticus 19 | Leviticus 20 | Leviticus 21 | Leviticus 22 | Leviticus 23 | Leviticus 24 | Leviticus 25 | Leviticus 26 | Leviticus 27

- Introduction to Leviticus
  - Overview
  - Reading Leviticus
  - Luther on Leviticus
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

Laws for Burnt Offerings

1 [1] The Lord called Moses and spoke to him from the tent of
meeting, saying, [2] "Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, When
any one of you brings an offering to the Lord, you shall bring your offering
of livestock from the herd or from the flock.

[3] "If his offering is a burnt offering from the herd, he shall offer a male
without blemish. He shall bring it to the entrance of the tent of meeting, that
he may be accepted before the Lord. [4] He shall lay his hand on the head of
the burnt offering, and it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for
him. [5] Then he shall kill the bull before the Lord, and Aaron's sons the
priests shall bring the blood and throw the blood against the sides of the
altar that is at the entrance of the tent of meeting. [6] Then he shall flay the
burnt offering and cut it into pieces, [7] and the sons of Aaron the priest shall
put fire on the altar and arrange wood on the fire. [8] And Aaron's sons the
priests shall arrange the pieces, the head, and the fat, on the wood that is on
the fire on the altar; [9] but its entrails and its legs he shall wash with water.
And the priest shall burn all of it on the altar, as a burnt offering, a food
offering[1] with a pleasing aroma to the Lord.

[10] "If his gift for a burnt offering is from the flock, from the sheep or
goats, he shall bring a male without blemish, [11] and he shall kill it on the
north side of the altar before the Lord, and Aaron's sons the priests shall
throw its blood against the sides of the altar. [12] And he shall cut it into
pieces, with its head and its fat, and the priest shall arrange them on the
wood that is on the fire on the altar, [13] but the entrails and the legs he shall
wash with water. And the priest shall offer all of it and burn it on the altar; it
is a burnt offering, a food offering with a pleasing aroma to the Lord.

[14] "If his offering to the Lord is a burnt offering of birds, then he shall
bring his offering of turtledoves or pigeons. [15] And the priest shall bring it
to the altar and wring off its head and burn it on the altar. Its blood shall be
drained out on the side of the altar. [16] He shall remove its crop with its
contents[2] and cast it beside the altar on the east side, in the place for ashes.
[17] He shall tear it open by its wings, but shall not sever it completely. And

the priest shall burn it on the altar, on the wood that is on the fire. It is a burnt offering, a food offering with a pleasing aroma to the LORD.

Laws for Grain Offerings

2 [1]‡†“When anyone brings a grain offering as an offering to the Lord, his offering shall be of fine flour. He shall pour oil on it and put frankincense on it [2]†and bring it to Aaron’s sons the priests. And he shall take from it a handful of the fine flour and oil, with all of its frankincense, and the priest shall burn this as its memorial portion on the altar, a food offering with a pleasing aroma to the Lord. [3]†But the rest of the grain offering shall be for Aaron and his sons; it is a most holy part of the Lord’s food offerings.

[4]‡†“When you bring a grain offering baked in the oven as an offering, it shall be unleavened loaves of fine flour mixed with oil or unleavened wafers smeared with oil. [5]And if your offering is a grain offering baked on a griddle, it shall be of fine flour unleavened, mixed with oil. [6]You shall break it in pieces and pour oil on it; it is a grain offering. [7]And if your offering is a grain offering cooked in a pan, it shall be made of fine flour with oil. [8]†And you shall bring the grain offering that is made of these things to the Lord, and when it is presented to the priest, he shall bring it to the altar. [9]†And the priest shall take from the grain offering its memorial portion and burn this on the altar, a food offering with a pleasing aroma to the Lord. [10]†But the rest of the grain offering shall be for Aaron and his sons; it is a most holy part of the Lord’s food offerings.

[11]†“No grain offering that you bring to the Lord shall be made with leaven, for you shall burn no leaven nor any honey as a food offering to the Lord. [12]†As an offering of firstfruits you may bring them to the Lord, but they shall not be offered on the altar for a pleasing aroma. [13]†You shall season all your grain offerings with salt. You shall not let the salt of the covenant with your God be missing from your grain offering; with all your offerings you shall offer salt.

[14]†“If you offer a grain offering of firstfruits to the Lord, you shall offer for the grain offering of your firstfruits fresh ears, roasted with fire, crushed new grain. [15]†And you shall put oil on it and lay frankincense on it; it is a grain offering. [16]And the priest shall burn as its memorial portion some of

the crushed grain and some of the oil with all of its frankincense; it is a food offering to the LORD.

Laws for Peace Offerings

3 [1]†“If his offering is a sacrifice of peace offering, if he offers an animal from the herd, male or female, he shall offer it without blemish before the Lord. [2]†And he shall lay his hand on the head of his offering and kill it at the entrance of the tent of meeting, and Aaron’s sons the priests shall throw the blood against the sides of the altar. [3]†And from the sacrifice of the peace offering, as a food offering to the Lord, he shall offer the fat covering the entrails and all the fat that is on the entrails, [4]†and the two kidneys with the fat that is on them at the loins, and the long lobe of the liver that he shall remove with the kidneys. [5]†Then Aaron’s sons shall burn it on the altar on top of the burnt offering, which is on the wood on the fire; it is a food offering with a pleasing aroma to the Lord.

[6]†“If his offering for a sacrifice of peace offering to the Lord is an animal from the flock, male or female, he shall offer it without blemish. [7]†If he offers a lamb for his offering, then he shall offer it before the Lord, [8]lay his hand on the head of his offering, and kill it in front of the tent of meeting; and Aaron’s sons shall throw its blood against the sides of the altar. [9]†Then from the sacrifice of the peace offering he shall offer as a food offering to the Lord its fat; he shall remove the whole fat tail, cut off close to the backbone, and the fat that covers the entrails and all the fat that is on the entrails [10]and the two kidneys with the fat that is on them at the loins and the long lobe of the liver that he shall remove with the kidneys. [11]†And the priest shall burn it on the altar as a food offering to the Lord.

[12]“If his offering is a goat, then he shall offer it before the Lord [13]†and lay his hand on its head and kill it in front of the tent of meeting, and the sons of Aaron shall throw its blood against the sides of the altar. [14]Then he shall offer from it, as his offering for a food offering to the Lord, the fat covering the entrails and all the fat that is on the entrails [15]and the two kidneys with the fat that is on them at the loins and the long lobe of the liver that he shall remove with the kidneys. [16]†And the priest shall burn them on the altar as a food offering with a pleasing aroma. All fat is the Lord’s. [17]†It shall be a

statute forever throughout your generations, in all your dwelling places, that you eat neither fat nor blood.”

Laws for Sin Offerings

4 [1]And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, [2]"Speak to the people of Israel, saying, If anyone sins unintentionally[1] in any of the Lord's commandments about things not to be done, and does any one of them, [3]if it is the anointed priest who sins, thus bringing guilt on the people, then he shall offer for the sin that he has committed a bull from the herd without blemish to the Lord for a sin offering. [4]He shall bring the bull to the entrance of the tent of meeting before the Lord and lay his hand on the head of the bull and kill the bull before the Lord. [5]And the anointed priest shall take some of the blood of the bull and bring it into the tent of meeting, [6]and the priest shall dip his finger in the blood and sprinkle part of the blood seven times before the Lord in front of the veil of the sanctuary. [7]And the priest shall put some of the blood on the horns of the altar of fragrant incense before the Lord that is in the tent of meeting, and all the rest of the blood of the bull he shall pour out at the base of the altar of burnt offering that is at the entrance of the tent of meeting. [8]And all the fat of the bull of the sin offering he shall remove from it, the fat that covers the entrails and all the fat that is on the entrails [9]and the two kidneys with the fat that is on them at the loins and the long lobe of the liver that he shall remove with the kidneys [10](just as these are taken from the ox of the sacrifice of the peace offerings); and the priest shall burn them on the altar of burnt offering. [11]But the skin of the bull and all its flesh, with its head, its legs, its entrails, and its dung— [12]all the rest of the bull—he shall carry outside the camp to a clean place, to the ash heap, and shall burn it up on a fire of wood. On the ash heap it shall be burned up.

[13] "If the whole congregation of Israel sins unintentionally[1] and the thing is hidden from the eyes of the assembly, and they do any one of the things that by the Lord's commandments ought not to be done, and they realize their guilt,[2] [14]when the sin which they have committed becomes known, the assembly shall offer a bull from the herd for a sin offering and bring it in front of the tent of meeting. [15]And the elders of the congregation shall lay their hands on the head of the bull before the Lord, and the bull

shall be killed before the LORD. 16 †Then the anointed priest shall bring some
of the blood of the bull into the tent of meeting, 17 †and the priest shall dip
his finger in the blood and sprinkle it seven times before the LORD in front of
the veil. 18 And he shall put some of the blood on the horns of the altar that is
in the tent of meeting before the LORD, and the rest of the blood he shall pour
out at the base of the altar of burnt offering that is at the entrance of the tent
of meeting. 19 And all its fat he shall take from it and burn on the altar.
20 †Thus shall he do with the bull. As he did with the bull of the sin offering,
so shall he do with this. And the priest shall make atonement for them, and
they shall be forgiven. 21 †And he shall carry the bull outside the camp and
burn it up as he burned the first bull; it is the sin offering for the assembly.

22 †"When a leader sins, doing unintentionally any one of all the things
that by the commandments of the LORD his God ought not to be done, and
realizes his guilt, 23 †or the sin which he has committed is made known to
him, he shall bring as his offering a goat, a male without blemish, 24 and
shall lay his hand on the head of the goat and kill it in the place where they
kill the burnt offering before the LORD; it is a sin offering. 25 †Then the priest
shall take some of the blood of the sin offering with his finger and put it on
the horns of the altar of burnt offering and pour out the rest of its blood at
the base of the altar of burnt offering. 26 †And all its fat he shall burn on the
altar, like the fat of the sacrifice of peace offerings. So the priest shall make
atonement for him for his sin, and he shall be forgiven.

27 †"If anyone of the common people sins unintentionally in doing any
one of the things that by the LORD's commandments ought not to be done,
and realizes his guilt, 28 †or the sin which he has committed is made known
to him, he shall bring for his offering a goat, a female without blemish, for
his sin which he has committed. 29 †And he shall lay his hand on the head of
the sin offering and kill the sin offering in the place of burnt offering.
30 †And the priest shall take some of its blood with his finger and put it on
the horns of the altar of burnt offering and pour out all the rest of its blood
at the base of the altar. 31 †And all its fat he shall remove, as the fat is
removed from the peace offerings, and the priest shall burn it on the altar
for a pleasing aroma to the LORD. And the priest shall make atonement for
him, and he shall be forgiven.

32 †“If he brings a lamb as his offering for a sin offering, he shall bring a
female without blemish 33 †and lay his hand on the head of the sin offering
and kill it for a sin offering in the place where they kill the burnt offering.
34 †Then the priest shall take some of the blood of the sin offering with his
finger and put it on the horns of the altar of burnt offering and pour out all
the rest of its blood at the base of the altar. 35 †And all its fat he shall remove
as the fat of the lamb is removed from the sacrifice of peace offerings, and
the priest shall burn it on the altar, on top of the Lord's food offerings. And
the priest shall make atonement for him for the sin which he has committed,
and he shall be forgiven.

5 1 ††“If anyone sins in that he hears a public adjuration to testify, and
though he is a witness, whether he has seen or come to know the matter, yet
does not speak, he shall bear his iniquity; 2 †or if anyone touches an unclean
thing, whether a carcass of an unclean wild animal or a carcass of unclean
livestock or a carcass of unclean swarming things, and it is hidden from him
and he has become unclean, and he realizes his guilt; 3 †or if he touches
human uncleanness, of whatever sort the uncleanness may be with which
one becomes unclean, and it is hidden from him, when he comes to know it,
and realizes his guilt; 4 †or if anyone utters with his lips a rash oath to do
evil or to do good, any sort of rash oath that people swear, and it is hidden
from him, when he comes to know it, and he realizes his guilt in any of
these; 5 †when he realizes his guilt in any of these and confesses the sin he
has committed, 6 †he shall bring to the Lord as his compensation[1] for the sin
that he has committed, a female from the flock, a lamb or a goat, for a sin
offering. And the priest shall make atonement for him for his sin.

7 †“But if he cannot afford a lamb, then he shall bring to the Lord as his
compensation for the sin that he has committed two turtledoves or two
pigeons,[2] one for a sin offering and the other for a burnt offering. 8 He shall
bring them to the priest, who shall offer first the one for the sin offering. He
shall wring its head from its neck but shall not sever it completely, 9 and he
shall sprinkle some of the blood of the sin offering on the side of the altar,
while the rest of the blood shall be drained out at the base of the altar; it is a
sin offering. 10 †Then he shall offer the second for a burnt offering according
to the rule. And the priest shall make atonement for him for the sin that he
has committed, and he shall be forgiven.

11 † “But if he cannot afford two turtledoves or two pigeons, then he shall
bring as his offering for the sin that he has committed a tenth of an ephah[1]
of fine flour for a sin offering. He shall put no oil on it and shall put no
frankincense on it, for it is a sin offering. 12 † And he shall bring it to the
priest, and the priest shall take a handful of it as its memorial portion and
burn this on the altar, on the Lord’s food offerings; it is a sin offering.
13 † Thus the priest shall make atonement for him for the sin which he has
committed in any one of these things, and he shall be forgiven. And the
remainder[2] shall be for the priest, as in the grain offering.”

Laws for Guilt Offerings

14 †The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 15 †“If anyone commits a breach of
faith and sins unintentionally in any of the holy things of the Lord, he shall
bring to the Lord as his compensation, a ram without blemish out of the
flock, valued[3] in silver shekels,[4] according to the shekel of the sanctuary,
for a guilt offering. 16He shall also make restitution for what he has done
amiss in the holy thing and shall add a fifth to it and give it to the priest.
And the priest shall make atonement for him with the ram of the guilt
offering, and he shall be forgiven.
17 “If anyone sins, doing any of the things that by the Lord’s
commandments ought not to be done, though he did not know it, then
realizes his guilt, he shall bear his iniquity. 18He shall bring to the priest a
ram without blemish out of the flock, or its equivalent for a guilt offering,
and the priest shall make atonement for him for the mistake that he made
unintentionally, and he shall be forgiven. 19 †It is a guilt offering; he has
indeed incurred guilt before[5] the Lord.”

6 1[6] The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 2†“If anyone sins and commits
a breach of faith against the Lord by deceiving his neighbor in a matter of
deposit or security, or through robbery, or if he has oppressed his neighbor
3or has found something lost and lied about it, swearing falsely—in any of
all the things that people do and sin thereby— 4if he has sinned and has
realized his guilt and will restore what he took by robbery or what he got by
oppression or the deposit that was committed to him or the lost thing that he
found 5†or anything about which he has sworn falsely, he shall restore it in
full and shall add a fifth to it, and give it to him to whom it belongs on the
day he realizes his guilt. 6 † And he shall bring to the priest as his
compensation to the Lord a ram without blemish out of the flock, or its
equivalent for a guilt offering. 7†And the priest shall make atonement for
him before the Lord, and he shall be forgiven for any of the things that one
may do and thereby become guilty.”

The Priests and the Offerings

8 ‡ ‡ ‡ [7] The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 9 † “Command Aaron and his
sons, saying, This is the law of the burnt offering. The burnt offering shall
be on the hearth on the altar all night until the morning, and the fire of the
altar shall be kept burning on it. 10 † And the priest shall put on his linen
garment and put his linen undergarment on his body, and he shall take up
the ashes to which the fire has reduced the burnt offering on the altar and
put them beside the altar. 11 † Then he shall take off his garments and put on
other garments and carry the ashes outside the camp to a clean place. 12 † The
fire on the altar shall be kept burning on it; it shall not go out. The priest
shall burn wood on it every morning, and he shall arrange the burnt offering
on it and shall burn on it the fat of the peace offerings. 13 Fire shall be kept
burning on the altar continually; it shall not go out.

14 † “And this is the law of the grain offering. The sons of Aaron shall offer
it before the Lord in front of the altar. 15 And one shall take from it a handful
of the fine flour of the grain offering and its oil and all the frankincense that
is on the grain offering and burn this as its memorial portion on the altar, a
pleasing aroma to the Lord. 16 † And the rest of it Aaron and his sons shall
eat. It shall be eaten unleavened in a holy place. In the court of the tent of
meeting they shall eat it. 17 † It shall not be baked with leaven. I have given it
as their portion of my food offerings. It is a thing most holy, like the sin
offering and the guilt offering. 18 † Every male among the children of Aaron
may eat of it, as decreed forever throughout your generations, from the
Lord’s food offerings. Whatever touches them shall become holy.”

19 The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 20 † “This is the offering that Aaron
and his sons shall offer to the Lord on the day when he is anointed: a tenth
of an ephah[1] of fine flour as a regular grain offering, half of it in the
morning and half in the evening. 21 † It shall be made with oil on a griddle.
You shall bring it well mixed, in baked[2] pieces like a grain offering, and
offer it for a pleasing aroma to the Lord. 22 † The priest from among Aaron’s
sons, who is anointed to succeed him, shall offer it to the Lord as decreed
forever. The whole of it shall be burned. 23 Every grain offering of a priest
shall be wholly burned. It shall not be eaten.”

[24]The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, [25]†“Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, This is the law of the sin offering. In the place where the burnt offering is killed shall the sin offering be killed before the Lord; it is most holy. [26]†The priest who offers it for sin shall eat it. In a holy place it shall be eaten, in the court of the tent of meeting. [27]†Whatever touches its flesh shall be holy, and when any of its blood is splashed on a garment, you shall wash that on which it was splashed in a holy place. [28]And the earthenware vessel in which it is boiled shall be broken. But if it is boiled in a bronze vessel, that shall be scoured and rinsed in water. [29]†Every male among the priests may eat of it; it is most holy. [30]†But no sin offering shall be eaten from which any blood is brought into the tent of meeting to make atonement in the Holy Place; it shall be burned up with fire.

7 [1]†“This is the law of the guilt offering. It is most holy. [2]In the place where they kill the burnt offering they shall kill the guilt offering, and its blood shall be thrown against the sides of the altar. [3]And all its fat shall be offered, the fat tail, the fat that covers the entrails, [4]the two kidneys with the fat that is on them at the loins, and the long lobe of the liver that he shall remove with the kidneys. [5]The priest shall burn them on the altar as a food offering to the Lord; it is a guilt offering. [6]‡†Every male among the priests may eat of it. It shall be eaten in a holy place. It is most holy. [7]†The guilt offering is just like the sin offering; there is one law for them. The priest who makes atonement with it shall have it. [8]And the priest who offers any man’s burnt offering shall have for himself the skin of the burnt offering that he has offered. [9]And every grain offering baked in the oven and all that is prepared on a pan or a griddle shall belong to the priest who offers it. [10]†And every grain offering, mixed with oil or dry, shall be shared equally among all the sons of Aaron.

[11]† “And this is the law of the sacrifice of peace offerings that one may offer to the Lord. [12]†If he offers it for a thanksgiving, then he shall offer with the thanksgiving sacrifice unleavened loaves mixed with oil, unleavened wafers smeared with oil, and loaves of fine flour well mixed with oil. [13]†With the sacrifice of his peace offerings for thanksgiving he shall bring his offering with loaves of leavened bread. [14]†And from it he shall offer one loaf from each offering, as a gift to the Lord. It shall belong

to the priest who throws the blood of the peace offerings. 15 †And the flesh
of the sacrifice of his peace offerings for thanksgiving shall be eaten on the
day of his offering. He shall not leave any of it until the morning. 16 †But if
the sacrifice of his offering is a vow offering or a freewill offering, it shall
be eaten on the day that he offers his sacrifice, and on the next day what
remains of it shall be eaten. 17 But what remains of the flesh of the sacrifice
on the third day shall be burned up with fire. 18 †If any of the flesh of the
sacrifice of his peace offering is eaten on the third day, he who offers it
shall not be accepted, neither shall it be credited to him. It is tainted, and he
who eats of it shall bear his iniquity.

19 †"Flesh that touches any unclean thing shall not be eaten. It shall be
burned up with fire. All who are clean may eat flesh, 20 †but the person who
eats of the flesh of the sacrifice of the Lord's peace offerings while an
uncleanness is on him, that person shall be cut off from his people. 21 And if
anyone touches an unclean thing, whether human uncleanness or an unclean
beast or any unclean detestable creature, and then eats some flesh from the
sacrifice of the Lord's peace offerings, that person shall be cut off from his
people."

22 †The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 23 "Speak to the people of Israel,
saying, You shall eat no fat, of ox or sheep or goat. 24 The fat of an animal
that dies of itself and the fat of one that is torn by beasts may be put to any
other use, but on no account shall you eat it. 25 For every person who eats of
the fat of an animal of which a food offering may be made to the Lord shall
be cut off from his people. 26 †Moreover, you shall eat no blood whatever,
whether of fowl or of animal, in any of your dwelling places. 27 Whoever
eats any blood, that person shall be cut off from his people."

28 The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 29 †"Speak to the people of Israel,
saying, Whoever offers the sacrifice of his peace offerings to the Lord shall
bring his offering to the Lord from the sacrifice of his peace offerings.
30 †His own hands shall bring the Lord's food offerings. He shall bring the
fat with the breast, that the breast may be waved as a wave offering before
the Lord. 31 The priest shall burn the fat on the altar, but the breast shall be
for Aaron and his sons. 32 And the right thigh you shall give to the priest as a
contribution from the sacrifice of your peace offerings. 33 Whoever among
the sons of Aaron offers the blood of the peace offerings and the fat shall

have the right thigh for a portion. [34]For the breast that is waved and the thigh that is contributed I have taken from the people of Israel, out of the sacrifices of their peace offerings, and have given them to Aaron the priest and to his sons, as a perpetual due from the people of Israel. [35]This is the portion of Aaron and of his sons from the LORD's food offerings, from the day they were presented to serve as priests of the LORD. [36] † The LORD commanded this to be given them by the people of Israel, from the day that he anointed them. It is a perpetual due throughout their generations."

[37] † This is the law of the burnt offering, of the grain offering, of the sin offering, of the guilt offering, of the ordination offering, and of the peace offering, [38]which the LORD commanded Moses on Mount Sinai, on the day that he commanded the people of Israel to bring their offerings to the LORD, in the wilderness of Sinai.

Consecration of Aaron and His Sons

8 [1]†The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, [2]†"Take Aaron and his sons
with him, and the garments and the anointing oil and the bull of the sin
offering and the two rams and the basket of unleavened bread. [3]†And
assemble all the congregation at the entrance of the tent of meeting." [4]And
Moses did as the Lord commanded him, and the congregation was
assembled at the entrance of the tent of meeting.

[5]And Moses said to the congregation, "This is the thing that the Lord has
commanded to be done." [6]And Moses brought Aaron and his sons and
washed them with water. [7]†And he put the coat on him and tied the sash
around his waist and clothed him with the robe and put the ephod on him
and tied the skillfully woven band of the ephod around him, binding it to
him with the band.[1] [8]†And he placed the breastpiece on him, and in the
breastpiece he put the Urim and the Thummim. [9]And he set the turban on
his head, and on the turban, in front, he set the golden plate, the holy crown,
as the Lord commanded Moses.

[10]† Then Moses took the anointing oil and anointed the tabernacle and all
that was in it, and consecrated them. [11]And he sprinkled some of it on the
altar seven times, and anointed the altar and all its utensils and the basin and
its stand, to consecrate them. [12]†And he poured some of the anointing oil on
Aaron's head and anointed him to consecrate him. [13]†And Moses brought
Aaron's sons and clothed them with coats and tied sashes around their
waists and bound caps on them, as the Lord commanded Moses.

[14]†Then he brought the bull of the sin offering, and Aaron and his sons
laid their hands on the head of the bull of the sin offering. [15]†And he[2]
killed it, and Moses took the blood, and with his finger put it on the horns of the
altar around it and purified the altar and poured out the blood at the base of
the altar and consecrated it to make atonement for it. [16]And he took all the
fat that was on the entrails and the long lobe of the liver and the two
kidneys with their fat, and Moses burned them on the altar. [17]†But the bull
and its skin and its flesh and its dung he burned up with fire outside the
camp, as the Lord commanded Moses.

18 Then he presented the ram of the burnt offering, and Aaron and his
sons laid their hands on the head of the ram. 19And he killed it, and Moses
threw the blood against the sides of the altar. 20He cut the ram into pieces,
and Moses burned the head and the pieces and the fat. 21† He washed the
entrails and the legs with water, and Moses burned the whole ram on the
altar. It was a burnt offering with a pleasing aroma, a food offering for the
LORD, as the LORD commanded Moses.
22† Then he presented the other ram, the ram of ordination, and Aaron and
his sons laid their hands on the head of the ram. 23† And he killed it, and
Moses took some of its blood and put it on the lobe of Aaron's right ear and
on the thumb of his right hand and on the big toe of his right foot. 24Then he
presented Aaron's sons, and Moses put some of the blood on the lobes of
their right ears and on the thumbs of their right hands and on the big toes of
their right feet. And Moses threw the blood against the sides of the altar.
25Then he took the fat and the fat tail and all the fat that was on the entrails
and the long lobe of the liver and the two kidneys with their fat and the
right thigh, 26and out of the basket of unleavened bread that was before the
LORD he took one unleavened loaf and one loaf of bread with oil and one
wafer and placed them on the pieces of fat and on the right thigh. 27† And he
put all these in the hands of Aaron and in the hands of his sons and waved
them as a wave offering before the LORD. 28† Then Moses took them from
their hands and burned them on the altar with the burnt offering. This was
an ordination offering with a pleasing aroma, a food offering to the LORD.
29† And Moses took the breast and waved it for a wave offering before the
LORD. It was Moses' portion of the ram of ordination, as the LORD
commanded Moses.
30† Then Moses took some of the anointing oil and of the blood that was
on the altar and sprinkled it on Aaron and his garments, and also on his sons
and his sons' garments. So he consecrated Aaron and his garments, and his
sons and his sons' garments with him.
31And Moses said to Aaron and his sons, "Boil the flesh at the entrance of
the tent of meeting, and there eat it and the bread that is in the basket of
ordination offerings, as I commanded, saying, 'Aaron and his sons shall eat
it.' 32And what remains of the flesh and the bread you shall burn up with
fire. 33† And you shall not go outside the entrance of the tent of meeting for

seven days, until the days of your ordination are completed, for it will take seven days to ordain you. [34]As has been done today, the LORD has commanded to be done to make atonement for you. [35]At the entrance of the tent of meeting you shall remain day and night for seven days, performing what the LORD has charged, so that you do not die, for so I have been commanded." [36]And Aaron and his sons did all the things that the LORD commanded by Moses.

The LORD Accepts Aaron's Offering

9 [1]†On the eighth day Moses called Aaron and his sons and the elders
of Israel, [2]and he said to Aaron, "Take for yourself a bull calf for a sin
offering and a ram for a burnt offering, both without blemish, and offer
them before the LORD. [3]And say to the people of Israel, 'Take a male goat for
a sin offering, and a calf and a lamb, both a year old without blemish, for a
burnt offering, [4]and an ox and a ram for peace offerings, to sacrifice before
the LORD, and a grain offering mixed with oil, for today the LORD will appear
to you.'" [5]†And they brought what Moses commanded in front of the tent of
meeting, and all the congregation drew near and stood before the LORD.
[6]And Moses said, "This is the thing that the LORD commanded you to do,
that the glory of the LORD may appear to you." [7]†Then Moses said to Aaron,
"Draw near to the altar and offer your sin offering and your burnt offering
and make atonement for yourself and for the people, and bring the offering
of the people and make atonement for them, as the LORD has commanded."

[8]So Aaron drew near to the altar and killed the calf of the sin offering,
which was for himself. [9]†And the sons of Aaron presented the blood to him,
and he dipped his finger in the blood and put it on the horns of the altar and
poured out the blood at the base of the altar. [10]But the fat and the kidneys
and the long lobe of the liver from the sin offering he burned on the altar, as
the LORD commanded Moses. [11]†The flesh and the skin he burned up with
fire outside the camp.

[12]Then he killed the burnt offering, and Aaron's sons handed him the
blood, and he threw it against the sides of the altar. [13]And they handed the
burnt offering to him, piece by piece, and the head, and he burned them on
the altar. [14]And he washed the entrails and the legs and burned them with
the burnt offering on the altar.

[15]† Then he presented the people's offering and took the goat of the sin
offering that was for the people and killed it and offered it as a sin offering,
like the first one. [16]And he presented the burnt offering and offered it
according to the rule. [17]And he presented the grain offering, took a handful
of it, and burned it on the altar, besides the burnt offering of the morning.

[18]† Then he killed the ox and the ram, the sacrifice of peace offerings for
the people. And Aaron's sons handed him the blood, and he threw it against
the sides of the altar. [19]But the fat pieces of the ox and of the ram, the fat tail
and that which covers the entrails and the kidneys and the long lobe of the
liver— [20]they put the fat pieces on the breasts, and he burned the fat pieces
on the altar, [21]†but the breasts and the right thigh Aaron waved for a wave
offering before the Lord, as Moses commanded.
[22]† Then Aaron lifted up his hands toward the people and blessed them,
and he came down from offering the sin offering and the burnt offering and
the peace offerings. [23]†And Moses and Aaron went into the tent of meeting,
and when they came out they blessed the people, and the glory of the Lord
appeared to all the people. [24]†And fire came out from before the Lord and
consumed the burnt offering and the pieces of fat on the altar, and when all
the people saw it, they shouted and fell on their faces.

The Death of Nadab and Abihu

10 [1]†Now Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, each took his censer
and put fire in it and laid incense on it and offered unauthorized[1] fire
before the Lord, which he had not commanded them. [2]†And fire came out
from before the Lord and consumed them, and they died before the Lord.
[3]†Then Moses said to Aaron, "This is what the Lord has said, 'Among those
who are near me I will be sanctified, and before all the people I will be
glorified.'" And Aaron held his peace.

[4]‡ And Moses called Mishael and Elzaphan, the sons of Uzziel the uncle
of Aaron, and said to them, "Come near; carry your brothers away from the
front of the sanctuary and out of the camp." [5]So they came near and carried
them in their coats out of the camp, as Moses had said. [6]‡And Moses said to
Aaron and to Eleazar and Ithamar his sons, "Do not let the hair of your
heads hang loose, and do not tear your clothes, lest you die, and wrath come
upon all the congregation; but let your brothers, the whole house of Israel,
bewail the burning that the Lord has kindled. [7]And do not go outside the
entrance of the tent of meeting, lest you die, for the anointing oil of the Lord
is upon you." And they did according to the word of Moses.

[8]And the Lord spoke to Aaron, saying, [9]†"Drink no wine or strong drink,
you or your sons with you, when you go into the tent of meeting, lest you
die. It shall be a statute forever throughout your generations. [10]†You are to
distinguish between the holy and the common, and between the unclean and
the clean, [11]†and you are to teach the people of Israel all the statutes that the
Lord has spoken to them by Moses."

[12]‡†Moses spoke to Aaron and to Eleazar and Ithamar, his surviving sons:
"Take the grain offering that is left of the Lord's food offerings, and eat it
unleavened beside the altar, for it is most holy. [13]You shall eat it in a holy
place, because it is your due and your sons' due, from the Lord's food
offerings, for so I am commanded. [14]But the breast that is waved and the
thigh that is contributed you shall eat in a clean place, you and your sons
and your daughters with you, for they are given as your due and your sons'
due from the sacrifices of the peace offerings of the people of Israel. [15]The

thigh that is contributed and the breast that is waved they shall bring with the food offerings of the fat pieces to wave for a wave offering before the Lord, and it shall be yours and your sons' with you as a due forever, as the Lord has commanded."

16 †Now Moses diligently inquired about the goat of the sin offering, and behold, it was burned up! And he was angry with Eleazar and Ithamar, the surviving sons of Aaron, saying, 17 † "Why have you not eaten the sin offering in the place of the sanctuary, since it is a thing most holy and has been given to you that you may bear the iniquity of the congregation, to make atonement for them before the Lord? 18 †Behold, its blood was not brought into the inner part of the sanctuary. You certainly ought to have eaten it in the sanctuary, as I commanded." 19 †And Aaron said to Moses, "Behold, today they have offered their sin offering and their burnt offering before the Lord, and yet such things as these have happened to me! If I had eaten the sin offering today, would the Lord have approved?" 20 †And when Moses heard that, he approved.

Clean and Unclean Animals

11 [1] † And the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying to them,
[2] "Speak to the people of Israel, saying, These are the living things that you
may eat among all the animals that are on the earth. [3] † Whatever parts the
hoof and is cloven-footed and chews the cud, among the animals, you may
eat. [4] Nevertheless, among those that chew the cud or part the hoof, you
shall not eat these: The camel, because it chews the cud but does not part
the hoof, is unclean to you. [5] And the rock badger, because it chews the cud
but does not part the hoof, is unclean to you. [6] And the hare, because it
chews the cud but does not part the hoof, is unclean to you. [7] And the pig,
because it parts the hoof and is cloven-footed but does not chew the cud, is
unclean to you. [8] You shall not eat any of their flesh, and you shall not touch
their carcasses; they are unclean to you.

[9] † "These you may eat, of all that are in the waters. Everything in the
waters that has fins and scales, whether in the seas or in the rivers, you may
eat. [10] But anything in the seas or the rivers that has not fins and scales, of
the swarming creatures in the waters and of the living creatures that are in
the waters, is detestable to you. [11] You shall regard them as detestable; you
shall not eat any of their flesh, and you shall detest their carcasses.
[12] Everything in the waters that has not fins and scales is detestable to you.

[13] † "And these you shall detest among the birds;[1] they shall not be eaten;
they are detestable: the eagle,[2] the bearded vulture, the black vulture, [14] the
kite, the falcon of any kind, [15] every raven of any kind, [16] the ostrich, the
nighthawk, the sea gull, the hawk of any kind, [17] the little owl, the
cormorant, the short-eared owl, [18] the barn owl, the tawny owl, the carrion
vulture, [19] the stork, the heron of any kind, the hoopoe, and the bat.

[20] † "All winged insects that go on all fours are detestable to you. [21] Yet
among the winged insects that go on all fours you may eat those that have
jointed legs above their feet, with which to hop on the ground. [22] Of them
you may eat: the locust of any kind, the bald locust of any kind, the cricket
of any kind, and the grasshopper of any kind. [23] But all other winged insects
that have four feet are detestable to you.

[24] ✝ “And by these you shall become unclean. Whoever touches their
carcass shall be unclean until the evening, [25]and whoever carries any part of
their carcass shall wash his clothes and be unclean until the evening.
[26]Every animal that parts the hoof but is not cloven-footed or does not chew
the cud is unclean to you. Everyone who touches them shall be unclean.
[27]And all that walk on their paws, among the animals that go on all fours,
are unclean to you. Whoever touches their carcass shall be unclean until the
evening, [28]and he who carries their carcass shall wash his clothes and be
unclean until the evening; they are unclean to you.

[29] ✝ “And these are unclean to you among the swarming things that swarm
on the ground: the mole rat, the mouse, the great lizard of any kind, [30]the
gecko, the monitor lizard, the lizard, the sand lizard, and the chameleon.
[31]These are unclean to you among all that swarm. Whoever touches them
when they are dead shall be unclean until the evening. [32]And anything on
which any of them falls when they are dead shall be unclean, whether it is
an article of wood or a garment or a skin or a sack, any article that is used
for any purpose. It must be put into water, and it shall be unclean until the
evening; then it shall be clean. [33]And if any of them falls into any
earthenware vessel, all that is in it shall be unclean, and you shall break it.
[34]Any food in it that could be eaten, on which water comes, shall be
unclean. And all drink that could be drunk from every such vessel shall be
unclean. [35]And everything on which any part of their carcass falls shall be
unclean. Whether oven or stove, it shall be broken in pieces. They are
unclean and shall remain unclean for you. [36]Nevertheless, a spring or a
cistern holding water shall be clean, but whoever touches a carcass in them
shall be unclean. [37]And if any part of their carcass falls upon any seed grain
that is to be sown, it is clean, [38]but if water is put on the seed and any part of
their carcass falls on it, it is unclean to you.

[39] ✝ “And if any animal which you may eat dies, whoever touches its
carcass shall be unclean until the evening, [40]and whoever eats of its carcass
shall wash his clothes and be unclean until the evening. And whoever
carries the carcass shall wash his clothes and be unclean until the evening.

[41] ✝ “Every swarming thing that swarms on the ground is detestable; it
shall not be eaten. [42]Whatever goes on its belly, and whatever goes on all
fours, or whatever has many feet, any swarming thing that swarms on the

ground, you shall not eat, for they are detestable. [43]You shall not make yourselves detestable with any swarming thing that swarms, and you shall not defile yourselves with them, and become unclean through them. [44]†† For I am the LORD your God. Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am holy. You shall not defile yourselves with any swarming thing that crawls on the ground. [45]For I am the LORD who brought you up out of the land of Egypt to be your God. You shall therefore be holy, for I am holy."

[46] † This is the law about beast and bird and every living creature that moves through the waters and every creature that swarms on the ground, [47]to make a distinction between the unclean and the clean and between the living creature that may be eaten and the living creature that may not be eaten.

Purification After Childbirth

12 [1]The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, [2]†“Speak to the people of
Israel, saying, ‘If a woman conceives and bears a male child, then she shall
be unclean seven days. As at the time of her menstruation, she shall be
unclean. [3]† And on the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be
circumcised. [4]†Then she shall continue for thirty-three days in the blood of
her purifying. She shall not touch anything holy, nor come into the
sanctuary, until the days of her purifying are completed. [5]†But if she bears a
female child, then she shall be unclean two weeks, as in her menstruation.
And she shall continue in the blood of her purifying for sixty-six days.

[6]†“‘And when the days of her purifying are completed, whether for a son
or for a daughter, she shall bring to the priest at the entrance of the tent of
meeting a lamb a year old for a burnt offering, and a pigeon or a turtledove
for a sin offering, [7]† and he shall offer it before the Lord and make
atonement for her. Then she shall be clean from the flow of her blood. This
is the law for her who bears a child, either male or female. [8]†And if she
cannot afford a lamb, then she shall take two turtledoves or two pigeons,[1]
one for a burnt offering and the other for a sin offering. And the priest shall
make atonement for her, and she shall be clean.’”

Laws About Leprosy

13 [1]The Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying, [2]“When a person
has on the skin of his body a swelling or an eruption or a spot, and it turns
into a case of leprous[1] disease on the skin of his body, then he shall be
brought to Aaron the priest or to one of his sons the priests, [3]† and the priest
shall examine the diseased area on the skin of his body. And if the hair in
the diseased area has turned white and the disease appears to be deeper than
the skin of his body, it is a case of leprous disease. When the priest has
examined him, he shall pronounce him unclean. [4]†But if the spot is white in
the skin of his body and appears no deeper than the skin, and the hair in it
has not turned white, the priest shall shut up the diseased person for seven
days. [5]† And the priest shall examine him on the seventh day, and if in his
eyes the disease is checked and the disease has not spread in the skin, then
the priest shall shut him up for another seven days. [6]† And the priest shall
examine him again on the seventh day, and if the diseased area has faded
and the disease has not spread in the skin, then the priest shall pronounce
him clean; it is only an eruption. And he shall wash his clothes and be clean.
[7]But if the eruption spreads in the skin, after he has shown himself to the
priest for his cleansing, he shall appear again before the priest. [8]And the
priest shall look, and if the eruption has spread in the skin, then the priest
shall pronounce him unclean; it is a leprous disease.

[9]“When a man is afflicted with a leprous disease, he shall be brought to
the priest, [10]and the priest shall look. And if there is a white swelling in the
skin that has turned the hair white, and there is raw flesh in the swelling, [11]it
is a chronic leprous disease in the skin of his body, and the priest shall
pronounce him unclean. He shall not shut him up, for he is unclean. [12]And if
the leprous disease breaks out in the skin, so that the leprous disease covers
all the skin of the diseased person from head to foot, so far as the priest can
see, [13]† then the priest shall look, and if the leprous disease has covered all
his body, he shall pronounce him clean of the disease; it has all turned
white, and he is clean. [14]† But when raw flesh appears on him, he shall be
unclean. [15]And the priest shall examine the raw flesh and pronounce him

unclean. Raw flesh is unclean, for it is a leprous disease. [16]†But if the raw flesh recovers and turns white again, then he shall come to the priest, [17]and the priest shall examine him, and if the disease has turned white, then the priest shall pronounce the diseased person clean; he is clean.

[18]"If there is in the skin of one's body a boil and it heals, [19]and in the place of the boil there comes a white swelling or a reddish-white spot, then it shall be shown to the priest. [20]†And the priest shall look, and if it appears deeper than the skin and its hair has turned white, then the priest shall pronounce him unclean. It is a case of leprous disease that has broken out in the boil. [21]†But if the priest examines it and there is no white hair in it and it is not deeper than the skin, but has faded, then the priest shall shut him up seven days. [22]And if it spreads in the skin, then the priest shall pronounce him unclean; it is a disease. [23]†But if the spot remains in one place and does not spread, it is the scar of the boil, and the priest shall pronounce him clean.

[24]†"Or, when the body has a burn on its skin and the raw flesh of the burn becomes a spot, reddish-white or white, [25]the priest shall examine it, and if the hair in the spot has turned white and it appears deeper than the skin, then it is a leprous disease. It has broken out in the burn, and the priest shall pronounce him unclean; it is a case of leprous disease. [26]But if the priest examines it and there is no white hair in the spot and it is no deeper than the skin, but has faded, the priest shall shut him up seven days, [27]and the priest shall examine him the seventh day. If it is spreading in the skin, then the priest shall pronounce him unclean; it is a case of leprous disease. [28]But if the spot remains in one place and does not spread in the skin, but has faded, it is a swelling from the burn, and the priest shall pronounce him clean, for it is the scar of the burn.

[29]†"When a man or woman has a disease on the head or the beard, [30]the priest shall examine the disease. And if it appears deeper than the skin, and the hair in it is yellow and thin, then the priest shall pronounce him unclean. It is an itch, a leprous disease of the head or the beard. [31]And if the priest examines the itching disease and it appears no deeper than the skin and there is no black hair in it, then the priest shall shut up the person with the itching disease for seven days, [32]and on the seventh day the priest shall examine the disease. If the itch has not spread, and there is in it no yellow

hair, and the itch appears to be no deeper than the skin, [33]then he shall shave himself, but the itch he shall not shave; and the priest shall shut up the person with the itching disease for another seven days. [34]† And on the seventh day the priest shall examine the itch, and if the itch has not spread in the skin and it appears to be no deeper than the skin, then the priest shall pronounce him clean. And he shall wash his clothes and be clean. [35]But if the itch spreads in the skin after his cleansing, [36]then the priest shall examine him, and if the itch has spread in the skin, the priest need not seek for the yellow hair; he is unclean. [37]But if in his eyes the itch is unchanged and black hair has grown in it, the itch is healed and he is clean, and the priest shall pronounce him clean.

[38]“When a man or a woman has spots on the skin of the body, white spots, [39]†the priest shall look, and if the spots on the skin of the body are of a dull white, it is leukoderma that has broken out in the skin; he is clean.

[40]“If a man’s hair falls out from his head, he is bald; he is clean. [41]And if a man’s hair falls out from his forehead, he has baldness of the forehead; he is clean. [42]† But if there is on the bald head or the bald forehead a reddish-white diseased area, it is a leprous disease breaking out on his bald head or his bald forehead. [43]Then the priest shall examine him, and if the diseased swelling is reddish-white on his bald head or on his bald forehead, like the appearance of leprous disease in the skin of the body, [44]he is a leprous man, he is unclean. The priest must pronounce him unclean; his disease is on his head.

[45]“The leprous person who has the disease shall wear torn clothes and let the hair of his head hang loose, and he shall cover his upper lip[1] and cry out, ‘Unclean, unclean.’ [46]He shall remain unclean as long as he has the disease. He is unclean. He shall live alone. His dwelling shall be outside the camp.

[47]† “When there is a case of leprous disease in a garment, whether a woolen or a linen garment, [48]†in warp or woof of linen or wool, or in a skin or in anything made of skin, [49]†if the disease is greenish or reddish in the garment, or in the skin or in the warp or the woof or in any article made of skin, it is a case of leprous disease, and it shall be shown to the priest. [50]And the priest shall examine the disease and shut up that which has the disease for seven days. [51]Then he shall examine the disease on the seventh day. If

the disease has spread in the garment, in the warp or the woof, or in the skin, whatever be the use of the skin, the disease is a persistent leprous disease; it is unclean. 52 † And he shall burn the garment, or the warp or the woof, the wool or the linen, or any article made of skin that is diseased, for it is a persistent leprous disease. It shall be burned in the fire.

53 "And if the priest examines, and if the disease has not spread in the garment, in the warp or the woof or in any article made of skin, 54 † then the priest shall command that they wash the thing in which is the disease, and he shall shut it up for another seven days. 55 † And the priest shall examine the diseased thing after it has been washed. And if the appearance of the diseased area has not changed, though the disease has not spread, it is unclean. You shall burn it in the fire, whether the rot is on the back or on the front.

56 † "But if the priest examines, and if the diseased area has faded after it has been washed, he shall tear it out of the garment or the skin or the warp or the woof. 57 Then if it appears again in the garment, in the warp or the woof, or in any article made of skin, it is spreading. You shall burn with fire whatever has the disease. 58 But the garment, or the warp or the woof, or any article made of skin from which the disease departs when you have washed it, shall then be washed a second time, and be clean."

59 † This is the law for a case of leprous disease in a garment of wool or linen, either in the warp or the woof, or in any article made of skin, to determine whether it is clean or unclean.

Laws for Cleansing Lepers

14 [1]The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, [2]"This shall be the law of the
leprous person for the day of his cleansing. He shall be brought to the
priest, [3]and the priest shall go out of the camp, and the priest shall look.
Then, if the case of leprous disease is healed in the leprous person, [4]the
priest shall command them to take for him who is to be cleansed two live[1]
clean birds and cedarwood and scarlet yarn and hyssop. [5]And the priest
shall command them to kill one of the birds in an earthenware vessel over
fresh[2] water. [6]He shall take the live bird with the cedarwood and the
scarlet yarn and the hyssop, and dip them and the live bird in the blood of
the bird that was killed over the fresh water. [7]And he shall sprinkle it seven
times on him who is to be cleansed of the leprous disease. Then he shall
pronounce him clean and shall let the living bird go into the open field.
[8]And he who is to be cleansed shall wash his clothes and shave off all his
hair and bathe himself in water, and he shall be clean. And after that he may
come into the camp, but live outside his tent seven days. [9]And on the
seventh day he shall shave off all his hair from his head, his beard, and his
eyebrows. He shall shave off all his hair, and then he shall wash his clothes
and bathe his body in water, and he shall be clean.

[10]"And on the eighth day he shall take two male lambs without
blemish, and one ewe lamb a year old without blemish, and a grain offering
of three tenths of an ephah[3] of fine flour mixed with oil, and one log[4] of
oil. [11]And the priest who cleanses him shall set the man who is to be
cleansed and these things before the LORD, at the entrance of the tent of
meeting. [12]And the priest shall take one of the male lambs and offer it for a
guilt offering, along with the log of oil, and wave them for a wave offering
before the LORD. [13]And he shall kill the lamb in the place where they kill
the sin offering and the burnt offering, in the place of the sanctuary. For the
guilt offering, like the sin offering, belongs to the priest; it is most holy.
[14]The priest shall take some of the blood of the guilt offering, and the
priest shall put it on the lobe of the right ear of him who is to be cleansed
and on the thumb of his right hand and on the big toe of his right foot.

15 †Then the priest shall take some of the log of oil and pour it into the palm
of his own left hand 16 and dip his right finger in the oil that is in his left
hand and sprinkle some oil with his finger seven times before the Lord.
17 And some of the oil that remains in his hand the priest shall put on the
lobe of the right ear of him who is to be cleansed and on the thumb of his
right hand and on the big toe of his right foot, on top of the blood of the
guilt offering. 18 †And the rest of the oil that is in the priest's hand he shall
put on the head of him who is to be cleansed. Then the priest shall make
atonement for him before the Lord. 19 The priest shall offer the sin offering,
to make atonement for him who is to be cleansed from his uncleanness. And
afterward he shall kill the burnt offering. 20 †And the priest shall offer the
burnt offering and the grain offering on the altar. Thus the priest shall make
atonement for him, and he shall be clean.

21 †"But if he is poor and cannot afford so much, then he shall take one
male lamb for a guilt offering to be waved, to make atonement for him, and
a tenth of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering, and a
log of oil; 22 also two turtledoves or two pigeons, whichever he can afford.
The one shall be a sin offering and the other a burnt offering. 23 And on the
eighth day he shall bring them for his cleansing to the priest, to the entrance
of the tent of meeting, before the Lord. 24 And the priest shall take the lamb
of the guilt offering and the log of oil, and the priest shall wave them for a
wave offering before the Lord. 25 And he shall kill the lamb of the guilt
offering. And the priest shall take some of the blood of the guilt offering
and put it on the lobe of the right ear of him who is to be cleansed, and on
the thumb of his right hand and on the big toe of his right foot. 26 And the
priest shall pour some of the oil into the palm of his own left hand, 27 and
shall sprinkle with his right finger some of the oil that is in his left hand
seven times before the Lord. 28 And the priest shall put some of the oil that is
in his hand on the lobe of the right ear of him who is to be cleansed and on
the thumb of his right hand and on the big toe of his right foot, in the place
where the blood of the guilt offering was put. 29 And the rest of the oil that is
in the priest's hand he shall put on the head of him who is to be cleansed, to
make atonement for him before the Lord. 30 And he shall offer, of the
turtledoves or pigeons, whichever he can afford, 31 one[1] for a sin offering
and the other for a burnt offering, along with a grain offering. And the priest

shall make atonement before the LORD for him who is being cleansed. [32]This is the law for him in whom is a case of leprous disease, who cannot afford the offerings for his cleansing."

Laws for Cleansing Houses

33 ‡ ‡The Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying, 34 †“When you come
into the land of Canaan, which I give you for a possession, and I put a case
of leprous disease in a house in the land of your possession, 35then he who
owns the house shall come and tell the priest, ‘There seems to me to be
some case of disease in my house.’ 36†Then the priest shall command that
they empty the house before the priest goes to examine the disease, lest all
that is in the house be declared unclean. And afterward the priest shall go in
to see the house. 37†And he shall examine the disease. And if the disease is
in the walls of the house with greenish or reddish spots, and if it appears to
be deeper than the surface, 38†then the priest shall go out of the house to the
door of the house and shut up the house seven days. 39And the priest shall
come again on the seventh day, and look. If the disease has spread in the
walls of the house, 40†then the priest shall command that they take out the
stones in which is the disease and throw them into an unclean place outside
the city. 41And he shall have the inside of the house scraped all around, and
the plaster that they scrape off they shall pour out in an unclean place
outside the city. 42Then they shall take other stones and put them in the
place of those stones, and he shall take other plaster and plaster the house.

43“If the disease breaks out again in the house, after he has taken out the
stones and scraped the house and plastered it, 44then the priest shall go and
look. And if the disease has spread in the house, it is a persistent leprous
disease in the house; it is unclean. 45And he shall break down the house, its
stones and timber and all the plaster of the house, and he shall carry them
out of the city to an unclean place. 46Moreover, whoever enters the house
while it is shut up shall be unclean until the evening, 47and whoever sleeps
in the house shall wash his clothes, and whoever eats in the house shall
wash his clothes.

48‡“But if the priest comes and looks, and if the disease has not spread in
the house after the house was plastered, then the priest shall pronounce the
house clean, for the disease is healed. 49And for the cleansing of the house
he shall take two small birds, with cedarwood and scarlet yarn and hyssop,
50and shall kill one of the birds in an earthenware vessel over fresh water

[51]and shall take the cedarwood and the hyssop and the scarlet yarn, along with the live bird, and dip them in the blood of the bird that was killed and in the fresh water and sprinkle the house seven times. [52]Thus he shall cleanse the house with the blood of the bird and with the fresh water and with the live bird and with the cedarwood and hyssop and scarlet yarn. [53]And he shall let the live bird go out of the city into the open country. So he shall make atonement for the house, and it shall be clean."

[54]†This is the law for any case of leprous disease: for an itch, [55]for leprous disease in a garment or in a house, [56]and for a swelling or an eruption or a spot, [57]to show when it is unclean and when it is clean. This is the law for leprous disease.

Laws About Bodily Discharges

15 [1]The Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying, [2]"Speak to the
people of Israel and say to them, When any man has a discharge from his
body,[1] his discharge is unclean. [3]And this is the law of his uncleanness for
a discharge: whether his body runs with his discharge, or his body is
blocked up by his discharge, it is his uncleanness. [4]Every bed on which
the one with the discharge lies shall be unclean, and everything on which he
sits shall be unclean. [5]And anyone who touches his bed shall wash his
clothes and bathe himself in water and be unclean until the evening. [6]And
whoever sits on anything on which the one with the discharge has sat shall
wash his clothes and bathe himself in water and be unclean until the
evening. [7]And whoever touches the body of the one with the discharge shall
wash his clothes and bathe himself in water and be unclean until the
evening. [8]And if the one with the discharge spits on someone who is clean,
then he shall wash his clothes and bathe himself in water and be unclean
until the evening. [9]And any saddle on which the one with the discharge
rides shall be unclean. [10]And whoever touches anything that was under him
shall be unclean until the evening. And whoever carries such things shall
wash his clothes and bathe himself in water and be unclean until the
evening. [11]Anyone whom the one with the discharge touches without having
rinsed his hands in water shall wash his clothes and bathe himself in water
and be unclean until the evening. [12]And an earthenware vessel that the one
with the discharge touches shall be broken, and every vessel of wood shall
be rinsed in water.

[13]"And when the one with a discharge is cleansed of his discharge, then
he shall count for himself seven days for his cleansing, and wash his
clothes. And he shall bathe his body in fresh water and shall be clean.
[14]And on the eighth day he shall take two turtledoves or two pigeons and
come before the Lord to the entrance of the tent of meeting and give them to
the priest. [15]And the priest shall use them, one for a sin offering and the
other for a burnt offering. And the priest shall make atonement for him
before the Lord for his discharge.

16 ✝ “If a man has an emission of semen, he shall bathe his whole body in
water and be unclean until the evening. 17 And every garment and every skin
on which the semen comes shall be washed with water and be unclean until
the evening. 18 If a man lies with a woman and has an emission of semen,
both of them shall bathe themselves in water and be unclean until the
evening.
19 ✝ “When a woman has a discharge, and the discharge in her body is
blood, she shall be in her menstrual impurity for seven days, and whoever
touches her shall be unclean until the evening. 20 And everything on which
she lies during her menstrual impurity shall be unclean. Everything also on
which she sits shall be unclean. 21 And whoever touches her bed shall wash
his clothes and bathe himself in water and be unclean until the evening.
22 And whoever touches anything on which she sits shall wash his clothes
and bathe himself in water and be unclean until the evening. 23 Whether it is
the bed or anything on which she sits, when he touches it he shall be
unclean until the evening. 24 And if any man lies with her and her menstrual
impurity comes upon him, he shall be unclean seven days, and every bed on
which he lies shall be unclean.
25 ✝ “If a woman has a discharge of blood for many days, not at the time of
her menstrual impurity, or if she has a discharge beyond the time of her
impurity, all the days of the discharge she shall continue in uncleanness. As
in the days of her impurity, she shall be unclean. 26 Every bed on which she
lies, all the days of her discharge, shall be to her as the bed of her impurity.
And everything on which she sits shall be unclean, as in the uncleanness of
her menstrual impurity. 27 And whoever touches these things shall be
unclean, and shall wash his clothes and bathe himself in water and be
unclean until the evening. 28 But if she is cleansed of her discharge, she shall
count for herself seven days, and after that she shall be clean. 29 ✝ And on the
eighth day she shall take two turtledoves or two pigeons and bring them to
the priest, to the entrance of the tent of meeting. 30 And the priest shall use
one for a sin offering and the other for a burnt offering. And the priest shall
make atonement for her before the Lord for her unclean discharge.
31 ✝ “Thus you shall keep the people of Israel separate from their
uncleanness, lest they die in their uncleanness by defiling my tabernacle
that is in their midst.”

[32] † This is the law for him who has a discharge and for him who has an emission of semen, becoming unclean thereby; [33] also for her who is unwell with her menstrual impurity, that is, for anyone, male or female, who has a discharge, and for the man who lies with a woman who is unclean.

The Day of Atonement

16 [1]The Lord spoke to Moses after the death of the two sons of
Aaron, when they drew near before the Lord and died, [2]†and the Lord said
to Moses, “Tell Aaron your brother not to come at any time into the Holy
Place inside the veil, before the mercy seat that is on the ark, so that he may
not die. For I will appear in the cloud over the mercy seat. [3]†But in this way
Aaron shall come into the Holy Place: with a bull from the herd for a sin
offering and a ram for a burnt offering. [4]†He shall put on the holy linen coat
and shall have the linen undergarment on his body, and he shall tie the linen
sash around his waist, and wear the linen turban; these are the holy
garments. He shall bathe his body in water and then put them on. [5]†And he
shall take from the congregation of the people of Israel two male goats for a
sin offering, and one ram for a burnt offering.

[6]†“Aaron shall offer the bull as a sin offering for himself and shall make
atonement for himself and for his house. [7]Then he shall take the two goats
and set them before the Lord at the entrance of the tent of meeting. [8]†And
Aaron shall cast lots over the two goats, one lot for the Lord and the other
lot for Azazel.[1] [9]And Aaron shall present the goat on which the lot fell for
the Lord and use it as a sin offering, [10]†but the goat on which the lot fell for
Azazel shall be presented alive before the Lord to make atonement over it,
that it may be sent away into the wilderness to Azazel.

[11]“Aaron shall present the bull as a sin offering for himself, and shall
make atonement for himself and for his house. He shall kill the bull as a sin
offering for himself. [12]†And he shall take a censer full of coals of fire from
the altar before the Lord, and two handfuls of sweet incense beaten small,
and he shall bring it inside the veil [13]†and put the incense on the fire before
the Lord, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat that is over
the testimony, so that he does not die. [14]† And he shall take some of the
blood of the bull and sprinkle it with his finger on the front of the mercy
seat on the east side, and in front of the mercy seat he shall sprinkle some of
the blood with his finger seven times.

15 ‡“Then he shall kill the goat of the sin offering that is for the people and
bring its blood inside the veil and do with its blood as he did with the blood
of the bull, sprinkling it over the mercy seat and in front of the mercy seat.
16 Thus he shall make atonement for the Holy Place, because of the
uncleannesses of the people of Israel and because of their transgressions, all
their sins. And so he shall do for the tent of meeting, which dwells with
them in the midst of their uncleannesses. 17 No one may be in the tent of
meeting from the time he enters to make atonement in the Holy Place until
he comes out and has made atonement for himself and for his house and for
all the assembly of Israel. 18 ‡Then he shall go out to the altar that is before
the Lord and make atonement for it, and shall take some of the blood of the
bull and some of the blood of the goat, and put it on the horns of the altar all
around. 19 And he shall sprinkle some of the blood on it with his finger seven
times, and cleanse it and consecrate it from the uncleannesses of the people
of Israel.

20 “And when he has made an end of atoning for the Holy Place and the
tent of meeting and the altar, he shall present the live goat. 21 †And Aaron
shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat, and confess over it all
the iniquities of the people of Israel, and all their transgressions, all their
sins. And he shall put them on the head of the goat and send it away into the
wilderness by the hand of a man who is in readiness. 22 The goat shall bear
all their iniquities on itself to a remote area, and he shall let the goat go free
in the wilderness.

23 †“Then Aaron shall come into the tent of meeting and shall take off the
linen garments that he put on when he went into the Holy Place and shall
leave them there. 24 †And he shall bathe his body in water in a holy place
and put on his garments and come out and offer his burnt offering and the
burnt offering of the people and make atonement for himself and for the
people. 25 And the fat of the sin offering he shall burn on the altar. 26 †And he
who lets the goat go to Azazel shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in
water, and afterward he may come into the camp. 27 †And the bull for the sin
offering and the goat for the sin offering, whose blood was brought in to
make atonement in the Holy Place, shall be carried outside the camp. Their
skin and their flesh and their dung shall be burned up with fire. 28 And he
who burns them shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in water, and
afterward he may come into the camp.

[29]† “And it shall be a statute to you forever that in the seventh month, on
the tenth day of the month, you shall afflict yourselves[1] and shall do no
work, either the native or the stranger who sojourns among you. [30]†For on
this day shall atonement be made for you to cleanse you. You shall be clean
before the Lord from all your sins. [31]†It is a Sabbath of solemn rest to you,
and you shall afflict yourselves; it is a statute forever. [32]And the priest who
is anointed and consecrated as priest in his father’s place shall make
atonement, wearing the holy linen garments. [33]He shall make atonement for
the holy sanctuary, and he shall make atonement for the tent of meeting and
for the altar, and he shall make atonement for the priests and for all the
people of the assembly. [34]†And this shall be a statute forever for you, that
atonement may be made for the people of Israel once in the year because of
all their sins.” And Moses did as the Lord commanded him.

The Place of Sacrifice

17 [1]‡‡And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, [2]"Speak to Aaron and
his sons and to all the people of Israel and say to them, This is the thing that
the Lord has commanded. [3]If any one of the house of Israel kills an ox or a
lamb or a goat in the camp, or kills it outside the camp, [4]†and does not bring
it to the entrance of the tent of meeting to offer it as a gift to the Lord in
front of the tabernacle of the Lord, bloodguilt shall be imputed to that man.
He has shed blood, and that man shall be cut off from among his people.
[5]†This is to the end that the people of Israel may bring their sacrifices that
they sacrifice in the open field, that they may bring them to the Lord, to the
priest at the entrance of the tent of meeting, and sacrifice them as sacrifices
of peace offerings to the Lord. [6]And the priest shall throw the blood on the
altar of the Lord at the entrance of the tent of meeting and burn the fat for a
pleasing aroma to the Lord. [7]†So they shall no more sacrifice their sacrifices
to goat demons, after whom they whore. This shall be a statute forever for
them throughout their generations.

[8]"And you shall say to them, Any one of the house of Israel, or of the
strangers who sojourn among them, who offers a burnt offering or sacrifice
[9]†and does not bring it to the entrance of the tent of meeting to offer it to the
Lord, that man shall be cut off from his people.

Laws Against Eating Blood

10 ‡ ‡ “If any one of the house of Israel or of the strangers who sojourn
among them eats any blood, I will set my face against that person who eats
blood and will cut him off from among his people. 11For the life of the flesh
is in the blood, and I have given it for you on the altar to make atonement
for your souls, for it is the blood that makes atonement by the life.
12Therefore I have said to the people of Israel, No person among you shall
eat blood, neither shall any stranger who sojourns among you eat blood.
13 ‡ “Any one also of the people of Israel, or of the strangers who sojourn
among them, who takes in hunting any beast or bird that may be eaten shall
pour out its blood and cover it with earth. 14 † For the life of every creature[1]
is its blood: its blood is its life.[2] Therefore I have said to the people of
Israel, You shall not eat the blood of any creature, for the life of every
creature is its blood. Whoever eats it shall be cut off. 15 ‡ And every person
who eats what dies of itself or what is torn by beasts, whether he is a native
or a sojourner, shall wash his clothes and bathe himself in water and be
unclean until the evening; then he shall be clean. 16But if he does not wash
them or bathe his flesh, he shall bear his iniquity.”

Unlawful Sexual Relations

18 [1]†And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, [2]"Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, I am the Lord your God. [3]†You shall not do as they do in the land of Egypt, where you lived, and you shall not do as they do in the land of Canaan, to which I am bringing you. You shall not walk in their statutes. [4]You shall follow my rules[3] and keep my statutes and walk in them. I am the Lord your God. [5]†You shall therefore keep my statutes and my rules; if a person does them, he shall live by them: I am the Lord.

[6]†† "None of you shall approach any one of his close relatives to uncover nakedness. I am the Lord. [7]You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father, which is the nakedness of your mother; she is your mother, you shall not uncover her nakedness. [8]You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's wife; it is your father's nakedness. [9]You shall not uncover the nakedness of your sister, your father's daughter or your mother's daughter, whether brought up in the family or in another home. [10]† You shall not uncover the nakedness of your son's daughter or of your daughter's daughter, for their nakedness is your own nakedness. [11]You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's wife's daughter, brought up in your father's family, since she is your sister. [12]You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's sister; she is your father's relative. [13]You shall not uncover the nakedness of your mother's sister, for she is your mother's relative. [14]You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's brother, that is, you shall not approach his wife; she is your aunt. [15]You shall not uncover the nakedness of your daughter-in-law; she is your son's wife, you shall not uncover her nakedness. [16]You shall not uncover the nakedness of your brother's wife; it is your brother's nakedness. [17]† You shall not uncover the nakedness of a woman and of her daughter, and you shall not take her son's daughter or her daughter's daughter to uncover her nakedness; they are relatives; it is depravity. [18]†And you shall not take a woman as a rival wife to her sister, uncovering her nakedness while her sister is still alive.

[19]† "You shall not approach a woman to uncover her nakedness while she is in her menstrual uncleanness. [20]†And you shall not lie sexually with your

neighbor's wife and so make yourself unclean with her. 21 † You shall not
give any of your children to offer them[1] to Molech, and so profane the
name of your God: I am the Lord. 22 † You shall not lie with a male as with a
woman; it is an abomination. 23 † And you shall not lie with any animal and
so make yourself unclean with it, neither shall any woman give herself to an
animal to lie with it: it is perversion.

24 † "Do not make yourselves unclean by any of these things, for by all
these the nations I am driving out before you have become unclean, 25 † and
the land became unclean, so that I punished its iniquity, and the land
vomited out its inhabitants. 26 † But you shall keep my statutes and my rules
and do none of these abominations, either the native or the stranger who
sojourns among you 27 † (for the people of the land, who were before you,
did all of these abominations, so that the land became unclean), 28 † lest the
land vomit you out when you make it unclean, as it vomited out the nation
that was before you. 29 † For everyone who does any of these abominations,
the persons who do them shall be cut off from among their people. 30 † So
keep my charge never to practice any of these abominable customs that
were practiced before you, and never to make yourselves unclean by them: I
am the Lord your God."

The Lord Is Holy

19 [1]†‡And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, [2]†“Speak to all the congregation of the people of Israel and say to them, You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy. [3]‡Every one of you shall revere his mother and his father, and you shall keep my Sabbaths: I am the Lord your God. [4]Do not turn to idols or make for yourselves any gods of cast metal: I am the Lord your God.

[5]†“When you offer a sacrifice of peace offerings to the Lord, you shall offer it so that you may be accepted. [6]It shall be eaten the same day you offer it or on the day after, and anything left over until the third day shall be burned up with fire. [7]‡If it is eaten at all on the third day, it is tainted; it will not be accepted, [8]and everyone who eats it shall bear his iniquity, because he has profaned what is holy to the Lord, and that person shall be cut off from his people.

Love Your Neighbor as Yourself

9 ‡‡“When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap your field
right up to its edge, neither shall you gather the gleanings after your harvest.
10 And you shall not strip your vineyard bare, neither shall you gather the
fallen grapes of your vineyard. You shall leave them for the poor and for the
sojourner: I am the Lord your God.

11 “You shall not steal; you shall not deal falsely; you shall not lie to one
another. 12 You shall not swear by my name falsely, and so profane the name
of your God: I am the Lord.

13 †“You shall not oppress your neighbor or rob him. The wages of a hired
servant shall not remain with you all night until the morning. 14 †You shall
not curse the deaf or put a stumbling block before the blind, but you shall
fear your God: I am the Lord.

15 ‡“You shall do no injustice in court. You shall not be partial to the poor
or defer to the great, but in righteousness shall you judge your neighbor.
16 You shall not go around as a slanderer among your people, and you shall
not stand up against the life[1] of your neighbor: I am the Lord.

17 †“You shall not hate your brother in your heart, but you shall reason
frankly with your neighbor, lest you incur sin because of him. 18 †You shall
not take vengeance or bear a grudge against the sons of your own people,
but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord.

You Shall Keep My Statutes

19 ✝✝“You shall keep my statutes. You shall not let your cattle breed with a
different kind. You shall not sow your field with two kinds of seed, nor shall
you wear a garment of cloth made of two kinds of material.
20 ✝“If a man lies sexually with a woman who is a slave, assigned to
another man and not yet ransomed or given her freedom, a distinction shall
be made. They shall not be put to death, because she was not free; 21but he
shall bring his compensation to the Lord, to the entrance of the tent of
meeting, a ram for a guilt offering. 22✝And the priest shall make atonement
for him with the ram of the guilt offering before the Lord for his sin that he
has committed, and he shall be forgiven for the sin that he has committed.
23 ✝“When you come into the land and plant any kind of tree for food,
then you shall regard its fruit as forbidden.[1] Three years it shall be
forbidden to you; it must not be eaten. 24And in the fourth year all its fruit
shall be holy, an offering of praise to the Lord. 25✝But in the fifth year you
may eat of its fruit, to increase its yield for you: I am the Lord your God.
26✝“You shall not eat any flesh with the blood in it. You shall not interpret
omens or tell fortunes. 27✝You shall not round off the hair on your temples
or mar the edges of your beard. 28You shall not make any cuts on your body
for the dead or tattoo yourselves: I am the Lord.
29✝“Do not profane your daughter by making her a prostitute, lest the land
fall into prostitution and the land become full of depravity. 30✝You shall
keep my Sabbaths and reverence my sanctuary: I am the Lord.
31✝“Do not turn to mediums or necromancers; do not seek them out, and
so make yourselves unclean by them: I am the Lord your God.
32✝“You shall stand up before the gray head and honor the face of an old
man, and you shall fear your God: I am the Lord.
33 ✝“When a stranger sojourns with you in your land, you shall not do him
wrong. 34✝You shall treat the stranger who sojourns with you as the native
among you, and you shall love him as yourself, for you were strangers in
the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God.
35 ✝“You shall do no wrong in judgment, in measures of length or weight
or quantity. 36You shall have just balances, just weights, a just ephah, and a

just hin:[2] I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt. 37 † And you shall observe all my statutes and all my rules, and do them: I am the Lord.”

Punishment for Child Sacrifice

20 [1]†The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, [2]†"Say to the people of Israel, Any one of the people of Israel or of the strangers who sojourn in Israel who gives any of his children to Molech shall surely be put to death. The people of the land shall stone him with stones. [3]†I myself will set my face against that man and will cut him off from among his people, because he has given one of his children to Molech, to make my sanctuary unclean and to profane my holy name. [4]And if the people of the land do at all close their eyes to that man when he gives one of his children to Molech, and do not put him to death, [5]†then I will set my face against that man and against his clan and will cut them off from among their people, him and all who follow him in whoring after Molech.

[6]†"If a person turns to mediums and necromancers, whoring after them, I will set my face against that person and will cut him off from among his people. [7]†Consecrate yourselves, therefore, and be holy, for I am the Lord your God. [8]†Keep my statutes and do them; I am the Lord who sanctifies you. [9]†For anyone who curses his father or his mother shall surely be put to death; he has cursed his father or his mother; his blood is upon him.

Punishments for Sexual Immorality

[10]‡‡“If a man commits adultery with the wife of[1] his neighbor, both the
adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death. [11]‡If a man lies with
his father’s wife, he has uncovered his father’s nakedness; both of them
shall surely be put to death; their blood is upon them. [12]If a man lies with
his daughter-in-law, both of them shall surely be put to death; they have
committed perversion; their blood is upon them. [13]If a man lies with a male
as with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination; they shall
surely be put to death; their blood is upon them. [14]‡If a man takes a woman
and her mother also, it is depravity; he and they shall be burned with fire,
that there may be no depravity among you. [15]If a man lies with an animal,
he shall surely be put to death, and you shall kill the animal. [16]If a woman
approaches any animal and lies with it, you shall kill the woman and the
animal; they shall surely be put to death; their blood is upon them.

[17]‡“If a man takes his sister, a daughter of his father or a daughter of his
mother, and sees her nakedness, and she sees his nakedness, it is a disgrace,
and they shall be cut off in the sight of the children of their people. He has
uncovered his sister’s nakedness, and he shall bear his iniquity. [18]If a man
lies with a woman during her menstrual period and uncovers her nakedness,
he has made naked her fountain, and she has uncovered the fountain of her
blood. Both of them shall be cut off from among their people. [19]You shall
not uncover the nakedness of your mother’s sister or of your father’s sister,
for that is to make naked one’s relative; they shall bear their iniquity. [20]‡If a
man lies with his uncle’s wife, he has uncovered his uncle’s nakedness; they
shall bear their sin; they shall die childless. [21]If a man takes his brother’s
wife, it is impurity.[2] He has uncovered his brother’s nakedness; they shall
be childless.

You Shall Be Holy

22 ‡ ‡ ‡ “You shall therefore keep all my statutes and all my rules and do
them, that the land where I am bringing you to live may not vomit you out.
23 And you shall not walk in the customs of the nation that I am driving out
before you, for they did all these things, and therefore I detested them.
24 † But I have said to you, ‘You shall inherit their land, and I will give it to
you to possess, a land flowing with milk and honey.’ I am the Lord your
God, who has separated you from the peoples. 25 You shall therefore separate
the clean beast from the unclean, and the unclean bird from the clean. You
shall not make yourselves detestable by beast or by bird or by anything with
which the ground crawls, which I have set apart for you to hold unclean.
26 † You shall be holy to me, for I the Lord am holy and have separated you
from the peoples, that you should be mine.

27 † “A man or a woman who is a medium or a necromancer shall surely be
put to death. They shall be stoned with stones; their blood shall be upon
them.”

Holiness and the Priests

21 [1]And the Lord said to Moses, “Speak to the priests, the sons of Aaron, and say to them: No one shall make himself unclean for the dead among his people, [2]except for his closest relatives, his mother, his father, his son, his daughter, his brother, [3]or his virgin sister (who is near to him because she has had no husband; for her he may make himself unclean). [4]He shall not make himself unclean as a husband among his people and so profane himself. [5]They shall not make bald patches on their heads, nor shave off the edges of their beards, nor make any cuts on their body. [6]They shall be holy to their God and not profane the name of their God. For they offer the Lord’s food offerings, the bread of their God; therefore they shall be holy. [7]They shall not marry a prostitute or a woman who has been defiled, neither shall they marry a woman divorced from her husband, for the priest is holy to his God. [8]You shall sanctify him, for he offers the bread of your God. He shall be holy to you, for I, the Lord, who sanctify you, am holy. [9]And the daughter of any priest, if she profanes herself by whoring, profanes her father; she shall be burned with fire.

[10] “The priest who is chief among his brothers, on whose head the anointing oil is poured and who has been consecrated to wear the garments, shall not let the hair of his head hang loose nor tear his clothes. [11]He shall not go in to any dead bodies nor make himself unclean, even for his father or for his mother. [12]He shall not go out of the sanctuary, lest he profane the sanctuary of his God, for the consecration of the anointing oil of his God is on him: I am the Lord. [13]And he shall take a wife in her virginity.[1] [14]A widow, or a divorced woman, or a woman who has been defiled, or a prostitute, these he shall not marry. But he shall take as his wife a virgin[2] of his own people, [15]that he may not profane his offspring among his people, for I am the Lord who sanctifies him.”

[16]And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, [17]“Speak to Aaron, saying, None of your offspring throughout their generations who has a blemish may approach to offer the bread of his God. [18]For no one who has a blemish shall draw near, a man blind or lame, or one who has a mutilated face or a limb

too long, [19]or a man who has an injured foot or an injured hand, [20]or a hunchback or a dwarf or a man with a defect in his sight or an itching disease or scabs or crushed testicles. [21]No man of the offspring of Aaron the priest who has a blemish shall come near to offer the LORD's food offerings; since he has a blemish, he shall not come near to offer the bread of his God. [22]He may eat the bread of his God, both of the most holy and of the holy things, [23]but he shall not go through the veil or approach the altar, because he has a blemish, that he may not profane my sanctuaries, for I am the LORD who sanctifies them." [24]†So Moses spoke to Aaron and to his sons and to all the people of Israel.

22 [1]†And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, [2]†"Speak to Aaron and his sons so that they abstain from the holy things of the people of Israel, which they dedicate to me, so that they do not profane my holy name: I am the LORD. [3]†Say to them, 'If any one of all your offspring throughout your generations approaches the holy things that the people of Israel dedicate to the LORD, while he has an uncleanness, that person shall be cut off from my presence: I am the LORD. [4]†None of the offspring of Aaron who has a leprous disease or a discharge may eat of the holy things until he is clean. Whoever touches anything that is unclean through contact with the dead or a man who has had an emission of semen, [5]and whoever touches a swarming thing by which he may be made unclean or a person from whom he may take uncleanness, whatever his uncleanness may be— [6]the person who touches such a thing shall be unclean until the evening and shall not eat of the holy things unless he has bathed his body in water. [7]When the sun goes down he shall be clean, and afterward he may eat of the holy things, because they are his food. [8]He shall not eat what dies of itself or is torn by beasts, and so make himself unclean by it: I am the LORD.' [9]They shall therefore keep my charge, lest they bear sin for it and die thereby when they profane it: I am the LORD who sanctifies them.

[10]"A lay person shall not eat of a holy thing; no foreign guest of the priest or hired servant shall eat of a holy thing, [11]but if a priest buys a slave as his property for money, the slave[1] may eat of it, and anyone born in his house may eat of his food. [12]If a priest's daughter marries a layman, she shall not eat of the contribution of the holy things. [13]But if a priest's daughter is

widowed or divorced and has no child and returns to her father's house, as in her youth, she may eat of her father's food; yet no lay person shall eat of it. [14]And if anyone eats of a holy thing unintentionally, he shall add the fifth of its value to it and give the holy thing to the priest. [15]They shall not profane the holy things of the people of Israel, which they contribute to the LORD, [16]and so cause them to bear iniquity and guilt, by eating their holy things: for I am the LORD who sanctifies them."

Acceptable Offerings

17 ‡ ‡And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 18 †“Speak to Aaron and his
sons and all the people of Israel and say to them, When any one of the
house of Israel or of the sojourners in Israel presents a burnt offering as his
offering, for any of their vows or freewill offerings that they offer to the
Lord, 19if it is to be accepted for you it shall be a male without blemish, of
the bulls or the sheep or the goats. 20You shall not offer anything that has a
blemish, for it will not be acceptable for you. 21†And when anyone offers a
sacrifice of peace offerings to the Lord to fulfill a vow or as a freewill
offering from the herd or from the flock, to be accepted it must be perfect;
there shall be no blemish in it. 22Animals blind or disabled or mutilated or
having a discharge or an itch or scabs you shall not offer to the Lord or give
them to the Lord as a food offering on the altar. 23†You may present a bull or
a lamb that has a part too long or too short for a freewill offering, but for a
vow offering it cannot be accepted. 24Any animal that has its testicles
bruised or crushed or torn or cut you shall not offer to the Lord; you shall
not do it within your land, 25†neither shall you offer as the bread of your
God any such animals gotten from a foreigner. Since there is a blemish in
them, because of their mutilation, they will not be accepted for you.”
26‡And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 27“When an ox or sheep or goat
is born, it shall remain seven days with its mother, and from the eighth day
on it shall be acceptable as a food offering to the Lord. 28But you shall not
kill an ox or a sheep and her young in one day. 29†And when you sacrifice a
sacrifice of thanksgiving to the Lord, you shall sacrifice it so that you may
be accepted. 30It shall be eaten on the same day; you shall leave none of it
until morning: I am the Lord.
31‡“So you shall keep my commandments and do them: I am the Lord.
32And you shall not profane my holy name, that I may be sanctified among
the people of Israel. I am the Lord who sanctifies you, 33who brought you
out of the land of Egypt to be your God: I am the Lord.”

Feasts of the Lord

23 [1] The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, [2] "Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, These are the appointed feasts of the Lord that you shall proclaim as holy convocations; they are my appointed feasts.

The Sabbath

3 † “Six days shall work be done, but on the seventh day is a Sabbath of
solemn rest, a holy convocation. You shall do no work. It is a Sabbath to the
Lord in all your dwelling places.

The Passover

4 † “These are the appointed feasts of the Lord, the holy convocations,
which you shall proclaim at the time appointed for them. 5 † In the first
month, on the fourteenth day of the month at twilight,[1] is the Lord’s
Passover. 6 † And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the Feast of
Unleavened Bread to the Lord; for seven days you shall eat unleavened
bread. 7 † On the first day you shall have a holy convocation; you shall not
do any ordinary work. 8 † But you shall present a food offering to the Lord
for seven days. On the seventh day is a holy convocation; you shall not do
any ordinary work.”

The Feast of Firstfruits

9 ‡And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 10 †“Speak to the people of Israel
and say to them, When you come into the land that I give you and reap its
harvest, you shall bring the sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the
priest, 11 †and he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, so that you may be
accepted. On the day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it. 12 ‡And on
the day when you wave the sheaf, you shall offer a male lamb a year old
without blemish as a burnt offering to the Lord. 13 And the grain offering
with it shall be two tenths of an ephah[1] of fine flour mixed with oil, a food
offering to the Lord with a pleasing aroma, and the drink offering with it
shall be of wine, a fourth of a hin.[2] 14 †And you shall eat neither bread nor
grain parched or fresh until this same day, until you have brought the
offering of your God: it is a statute forever throughout your generations in
all your dwellings.

The Feast of Weeks

15 ‡ ‡ “You shall count seven full weeks from the day after the Sabbath,
from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering. 16 † You shall
count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath. Then you shall present
a grain offering of new grain to the Lord. 17 † You shall bring from your
dwelling places two loaves of bread to be waved, made of two tenths of an
ephah. They shall be of fine flour, and they shall be baked with leaven, as
firstfruits to the Lord. 18 † And you shall present with the bread seven lambs a
year old without blemish, and one bull from the herd and two rams. They
shall be a burnt offering to the Lord, with their grain offering and their drink
offerings, a food offering with a pleasing aroma to the Lord. 19 And you shall
offer one male goat for a sin offering, and two male lambs a year old as a
sacrifice of peace offerings. 20 † And the priest shall wave them with the
bread of the firstfruits as a wave offering before the Lord, with the two
lambs. They shall be holy to the Lord for the priest. 21 † And you shall make
proclamation on the same day. You shall hold a holy convocation. You shall
not do any ordinary work. It is a statute forever in all your dwelling places
throughout your generations.

22 † “And when you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap your
field right up to its edge, nor shall you gather the gleanings after your
harvest. You shall leave them for the poor and for the sojourner: I am the
Lord your God.”

The Feast of Trumpets

23 And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 24 “Speak to the people of
Israel, saying, In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you shall
observe a day of solemn rest, a memorial proclaimed with blast of trumpets,
a holy convocation. 25 You shall not do any ordinary work, and you shall
present a food offering to the Lord.”

The Day of Atonement

[26]†And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, [27]†“Now on the tenth day of this
seventh month is the Day of Atonement. It shall be for you a time of holy
convocation, and you shall afflict yourselves and present a food offering to
the Lord. [28]And you shall not do any work on that very day, for it is a Day of
Atonement, to make atonement for you before the Lord your God. [29]†For
whoever is not afflicted on that very day shall be cut off from his people.
[30]†And whoever does any work on that very day, that person I will destroy
from among his people. [31]You shall not do any work. It is a statute forever
throughout your generations in all your dwelling places. [32]†It shall be to you
a Sabbath of solemn rest, and you shall afflict yourselves. On the ninth day
of the month beginning at evening, from evening to evening shall you keep
your Sabbath.”

The Feast of Booths

33 † And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 34 † “Speak to the people of
Israel, saying, On the fifteenth day of this seventh month and for seven days
is the Feast of Booths[1] to the Lord. 35On the first day shall be a holy
convocation; you shall not do any ordinary work. 36For seven days you shall
present food offerings to the Lord. On the eighth day you shall hold a holy
convocation and present a food offering to the Lord. It is a solemn
assembly; you shall not do any ordinary work.

37 † “These are the appointed feasts of the Lord, which you shall proclaim
as times of holy convocation, for presenting to the Lord food offerings,
burnt offerings and grain offerings, sacrifices and drink offerings, each on
its proper day, 38 † besides the Lord’s Sabbaths and besides your gifts and
besides all your vow offerings and besides all your freewill offerings, which
you give to the Lord.

39 “On the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in
the produce of the land, you shall celebrate the feast of the Lord seven days.
On the first day shall be a solemn rest, and on the eighth day shall be a
solemn rest. 40 † And you shall take on the first day the fruit of splendid trees,
branches of palm trees and boughs of leafy trees and willows of the brook,
and you shall rejoice before the Lord your God seven days. 41You shall
celebrate it as a feast to the Lord for seven days in the year. It is a statute
forever throughout your generations; you shall celebrate it in the seventh
month. 42 † You shall dwell in booths for seven days. All native Israelites
shall dwell in booths, 43that your generations may know that I made the
people of Israel dwell in booths when I brought them out of the land of
Egypt: I am the Lord your God.”

44Thus Moses declared to the people of Israel the appointed feasts of the
Lord.

The Lamps

24 [1]‡‡The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, [2]†“Command the people of
Israel to bring you pure oil from beaten olives for the lamp, that a light may
be kept burning regularly. [3]†Outside the veil of the testimony, in the tent of
meeting, Aaron shall arrange it from evening to morning before the Lord
regularly. It shall be a statute forever throughout your generations. [4]He shall
arrange the lamps on the lampstand of pure gold[2] before the Lord regularly.

Bread for the Tabernacle

5 ‡ ‡ “You shall take fine flour and bake twelve loaves from it; two tenths
of an ephah[3] shall be in each loaf. 6 And you shall set them in two piles, six
in a pile, on the table of pure gold[4] before the Lord. 7 And you shall put pure
frankincense on each pile, that it may go with the bread as a memorial
portion as a food offering to the Lord. 8 ‡ Every Sabbath day Aaron shall
arrange it before the Lord regularly; it is from the people of Israel as a
covenant forever. 9 And it shall be for Aaron and his sons, and they shall eat
it in a holy place, since it is for him a most holy portion out of the Lord’s
food offerings, a perpetual due.”

Punishment for Blasphemy

10 ‡ ‡Now an Israelite woman's son, whose father was an Egyptian, went
out among the people of Israel. And the Israelite woman's son and a man of
Israel fought in the camp, 11 ‡and the Israelite woman's son blasphemed the
Name, and cursed. Then they brought him to Moses. His mother's name
was Shelomith, the daughter of Dibri, of the tribe of Dan. 12 ‡And they put
him in custody, till the will of the Lord should be clear to them.

13 Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 14 ‡"Bring out of the camp the
one who cursed, and let all who heard him lay their hands on his head, and
let all the congregation stone him. 15 And speak to the people of Israel,
saying, Whoever curses his God shall bear his sin. 16 Whoever blasphemes
the name of the Lord shall surely be put to death. All the congregation shall
stone him. The sojourner as well as the native, when he blasphemes the
Name, shall be put to death.

An Eye for an Eye

17 ‡‡‡“Whoever takes a human life shall surely be put to death. 18 Whoever
takes an animal’s life shall make it good, life for life. 19 If anyone injures his
neighbor, as he has done it shall be done to him, 20 †fracture for fracture, eye
for eye, tooth for tooth; whatever injury he has given a person shall be
given to him. 21 Whoever kills an animal shall make it good, and whoever
kills a person shall be put to death. 22 You shall have the same rule for the
sojourner and for the native, for I am the Lord your God.” 23 So Moses spoke
to the people of Israel, and they brought out of the camp the one who had
cursed and stoned him with stones. Thus the people of Israel did as the Lord
commanded Moses.

The Sabbath Year

25 [1]The Lord spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai, saying, [2]“Speak to
the people of Israel and say to them, When you come into the land that I
give you, the land shall keep a Sabbath to the Lord. [3]For six years you
shall sow your field, and for six years you shall prune your vineyard and
gather in its fruits, [4]but in the seventh year there shall be a Sabbath of
solemn rest for the land, a Sabbath to the Lord. You shall not sow your field
or prune your vineyard. [5]You shall not reap what grows of itself in your
harvest, or gather the grapes of your undressed vine. It shall be a year of
solemn rest for the land. [6]The Sabbath of the land shall provide food for
you, for yourself and for your male and female slaves and for your hired
servant and the sojourner who lives with you, [7]and for your cattle and for
the wild animals that are in your land: all its yield shall be for food.

The Year of Jubilee

8 “You shall count seven weeks[1] of years, seven times seven years, so
that the time of the seven weeks of years shall give you forty-nine years.
9 Then you shall sound the loud trumpet on the tenth day of the seventh
month. On the Day of Atonement you shall sound the trumpet throughout
all your land. 10 And you shall consecrate the fiftieth year, and proclaim
liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you,
when each of you shall return to his property and each of you shall return to
his clan. 11 That fiftieth year shall be a jubilee for you; in it you shall
neither sow nor reap what grows of itself nor gather the grapes from the
undressed vines. 12 For it is a jubilee. It shall be holy to you. You may eat
the produce of the field.[1]

13 “In this year of jubilee each of you shall return to his property. 14 And if
you make a sale to your neighbor or buy from your neighbor, you shall not
wrong one another. 15 You shall pay your neighbor according to the number
of years after the jubilee, and he shall sell to you according to the number of
years for crops. 16 If the years are many, you shall increase the price, and if
the years are few, you shall reduce the price, for it is the number of the
crops that he is selling to you. 17 You shall not wrong one another, but you
shall fear your God, for I am the Lord your God.

18 “Therefore you shall do my statutes and keep my rules and perform
them, and then you will dwell in the land securely. 19 The land will yield its
fruit, and you will eat your fill and dwell in it securely. 20 And if you say,
‘What shall we eat in the seventh year, if we may not sow or gather in our
crop?’ 21 I will command my blessing on you in the sixth year, so that it will
produce a crop sufficient for three years. 22 When you sow in the eighth year,
you will be eating some of the old crop; you shall eat the old until the ninth
year, when its crop arrives.

Redemption of Property

23 ‡ ‡ “The land shall not be sold in perpetuity, for the land is mine. For you
are strangers and sojourners with me. 24 ‡ And in all the country you possess,
you shall allow a redemption of the land.

25 ‡ “If your brother becomes poor and sells part of his property, then his
nearest redeemer shall come and redeem what his brother has sold. 26 If a
man has no one to redeem it and then himself becomes prosperous and finds
sufficient means to redeem it, 27 let him calculate the years since he sold it
and pay back the balance to the man to whom he sold it, and then return to
his property. 28 But if he has not sufficient means to recover it, then what he
sold shall remain in the hand of the buyer until the year of jubilee. In the
jubilee it shall be released, and he shall return to his property.

29 “If a man sells a dwelling house in a walled city, he may redeem it
within a year of its sale. For a full year he shall have the right of
redemption. 30 If it is not redeemed within a full year, then the house in the
walled city shall belong in perpetuity to the buyer, throughout his
generations; it shall not be released in the jubilee. 31 But the houses of the
villages that have no wall around them shall be classified with the fields of
the land. They may be redeemed, and they shall be released in the jubilee.
32 As for the cities of the Levites, the Levites may redeem at any time the
houses in the cities they possess. 33 And if one of the Levites exercises his
right of redemption, then the house that was sold in a city they possess shall
be released in the jubilee. For the houses in the cities of the Levites are their
possession among the people of Israel. 34 But the fields of pastureland
belonging to their cities may not be sold, for that is their possession forever.

Kindness for Poor Brothers

35 ‡ ‡ “If your brother becomes poor and cannot maintain himself with you,
you shall support him as though he were a stranger and a sojourner, and he
shall live with you. 36 † Take no interest from him or profit, but fear your
God, that your brother may live beside you. 37 You shall not lend him your
money at interest, nor give him your food for profit. 38 † I am the Lord your
God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt to give you the land of
Canaan, and to be your God.

39 † “If your brother becomes poor beside you and sells himself to you,
you shall not make him serve as a slave: 40 † he shall be with you as a hired
servant and as a sojourner. He shall serve with you until the year of the
jubilee. 41 Then he shall go out from you, he and his children with him, and
go back to his own clan and return to the possession of his fathers. 42 For
they are my servants,[1] whom I brought out of the land of Egypt; they shall
not be sold as slaves. 43 † You shall not rule over him ruthlessly but shall fear
your God. 44 ‡ As for your male and female slaves whom you may have: you
may buy male and female slaves from among the nations that are around
you. 45 You may also buy from among the strangers who sojourn with you
and their clans that are with you, who have been born in your land, and they
may be your property. 46 You may bequeath them to your sons after you to
inherit as a possession forever. You may make slaves of them, but over your
brothers the people of Israel you shall not rule, one over another ruthlessly.

Redeeming a Poor Man

47 ‡ ‡ “If a stranger or sojourner with you becomes rich, and your brother
beside him becomes poor and sells himself to the stranger or sojourner with
you or to a member of the stranger’s clan, 48 † then after he is sold he may be
redeemed. One of his brothers may redeem him, 49 † or his uncle or his
cousin may redeem him, or a close relative from his clan may redeem him.
Or if he grows rich he may redeem himself. 50 ‡ He shall calculate with his
buyer from the year when he sold himself to him until the year of jubilee,
and the price of his sale shall vary with the number of years. The time he
was with his owner shall be rated as the time of a hired servant. 51 If there
are still many years left, he shall pay proportionately for his redemption
some of his sale price. 52 If there remain but a few years until the year of
jubilee, he shall calculate and pay for his redemption in proportion to his
years of service. 53 He shall treat him as a servant hired year by year. He
shall not rule ruthlessly over him in your sight. 54 And if he is not redeemed
by these means, then he and his children with him shall be released in the
year of jubilee. 55 † For it is to me that the people of Israel are servants.[2]
They are my servants whom I brought out of the land of Egypt: I am the
Lord your God.

Blessings for Obedience

26 [1]“You shall not make idols for yourselves or erect an image or pillar, and you shall not set up a figured stone in your land to bow down to it, for I am the Lord your God. [2]You shall keep my Sabbaths and reverence my sanctuary: I am the Lord.

[3]“If you walk in my statutes and observe my commandments and do them, [4]then I will give you your rains in their season, and the land shall yield its increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit. [5]Your threshing shall last to the time of the grape harvest, and the grape harvest shall last to the time for sowing. And you shall eat your bread to the full and dwell in your land securely. [6]I will give peace in the land, and you shall lie down, and none shall make you afraid. And I will remove harmful beasts from the land, and the sword shall not go through your land. [7]You shall chase your enemies, and they shall fall before you by the sword. [8]Five of you shall chase a hundred, and a hundred of you shall chase ten thousand, and your enemies shall fall before you by the sword. [9]I will turn to you and make you fruitful and multiply you and will confirm my covenant with you. [10]You shall eat old store long kept, and you shall clear out the old to make way for the new. [11]I will make my dwelling[1] among you, and my soul shall not abhor you. [12]And I will walk among you and will be your God, and you shall be my people. [13]I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, that you should not be their slaves. And I have broken the bars of your yoke and made you walk erect.

Punishment for Disobedience

14 ‡ ‡ ‡ “But if you will not listen to me and will not do all these
commandments, 15if you spurn my statutes, and if your soul abhors my
rules, so that you will not do all my commandments, but break my
covenant, 16† then I will do this to you: I will visit you with panic, with
wasting disease and fever that consume the eyes and make the heart ache.
And you shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it. 17†I will
set my face against you, and you shall be struck down before your enemies.
Those who hate you shall rule over you, and you shall flee when none
pursues you. 18And if in spite of this you will not listen to me, then I will
discipline you again sevenfold for your sins, 19†and I will break the pride of
your power, and I will make your heavens like iron and your earth like
bronze. 20And your strength shall be spent in vain, for your land shall not
yield its increase, and the trees of the land shall not yield their fruit.

21 † “Then if you walk contrary to me and will not listen to me, I will
continue striking you, sevenfold for your sins. 22† And I will let loose the
wild beasts against you, which shall bereave you of your children and
destroy your livestock and make you few in number, so that your roads
shall be deserted.

23† “And if by this discipline you are not turned to me but walk contrary
to me, 24then I also will walk contrary to you, and I myself will strike you
sevenfold for your sins. 25† And I will bring a sword upon you, that shall
execute vengeance for the covenant. And if you gather within your cities, I
will send pestilence among you, and you shall be delivered into the hand of
the enemy. 26† When I break your supply[1] of bread, ten women shall bake
your bread in a single oven and shall dole out your bread again by weight,
and you shall eat and not be satisfied.

27“But if in spite of this you will not listen to me, but walk contrary to
me, 28then I will walk contrary to you in fury, and I myself will discipline
you sevenfold for your sins. 29† You shall eat the flesh of your sons, and you
shall eat the flesh of your daughters. 30† And I will destroy your high places
and cut down your incense altars and cast your dead bodies upon the dead
bodies of your idols, and my soul will abhor you. 31† And I will lay your

cities waste and will make your sanctuaries desolate, and I will not smell your pleasing aromas. 32And I myself will devastate the land, so that your enemies who settle in it shall be appalled at it. 33And I will scatter you among the nations, and I will unsheathe the sword after you, and your land shall be a desolation, and your cities shall be a waste.

34 ‡ “Then the land shall enjoy[2] its Sabbaths as long as it lies desolate, while you are in your enemies’ land; then the land shall rest, and enjoy its Sabbaths. 35As long as it lies desolate it shall have rest, the rest that it did not have on your Sabbaths when you were dwelling in it. 36And as for those of you who are left, I will send faintness into their hearts in the lands of their enemies. The sound of a driven leaf shall put them to flight, and they shall flee as one flees from the sword, and they shall fall when none pursues. 37They shall stumble over one another, as if to escape a sword, though none pursues. And you shall have no power to stand before your enemies. 38And you shall perish among the nations, and the land of your enemies shall eat you up. 39 † And those of you who are left shall rot away in your enemies’ lands because of their iniquity, and also because of the iniquities of their fathers they shall rot away like them.

40 † “But if they confess their iniquity and the iniquity of their fathers in their treachery that they committed against me, and also in walking contrary to me, 41 † so that I walked contrary to them and brought them into the land of their enemies—if then their uncircumcised heart is humbled and they make amends for their iniquity, 42 † then I will remember my covenant with Jacob, and I will remember my covenant with Isaac and my covenant with Abraham, and I will remember the land. 43But the land shall be abandoned by them and enjoy its Sabbaths while it lies desolate without them, and they shall make amends for their iniquity, because they spurned my rules and their soul abhorred my statutes. 44Yet for all that, when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not spurn them, neither will I abhor them so as to destroy them utterly and break my covenant with them, for I am the Lord their God. 45But I will for their sake remember the covenant with their forefathers, whom I brought out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the nations, that I might be their God: I am the Lord.”

46 † These are the statutes and rules and laws that the Lord made between himself and the people of Israel through Moses on Mount Sinai.

Laws About Vows

27 [1]The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, [2]“Speak to the people of Israel
and say to them, If anyone makes a special vow to the Lord involving the
valuation of persons, [3]then the valuation of a male from twenty years old
up to sixty years old shall be fifty shekels[1] of silver, according to the
shekel of the sanctuary. [4]If the person is a female, the valuation shall be
thirty shekels. [5]If the person is from five years old up to twenty years old,
the valuation shall be for a male twenty shekels, and for a female ten
shekels. [6]If the person is from a month old up to five years old, the
valuation shall be for a male five shekels of silver, and for a female the
valuation shall be three shekels of silver. [7]And if the person is sixty years
old or over, then the valuation for a male shall be fifteen shekels, and for a
female ten shekels. [8]And if someone is too poor to pay the valuation, then
he shall be made to stand before the priest, and the priest shall value him;
the priest shall value him according to what the vower can afford.

[9]“If the vow[2] is an animal that may be offered as an offering to the
Lord, all of it that he gives to the Lord is holy. [10]He shall not exchange it or
make a substitute for it, good for bad, or bad for good; and if he does in fact
substitute one animal for another, then both it and the substitute shall be
holy. [11]And if it is any unclean animal that may not be offered as an
offering to the Lord, then he shall stand the animal before the priest, [12]and
the priest shall value it as either good or bad; as the priest values it, so it
shall be. [13]But if he wishes to redeem it, he shall add a fifth to the valuation.

[14]“When a man dedicates his house as a holy gift to the Lord, the priest
shall value it as either good or bad; as the priest values it, so it shall stand.
[15]And if the donor wishes to redeem his house, he shall add a fifth to the
valuation price, and it shall be his.

[16]“If a man dedicates to the Lord part of the land that is his possession,
then the valuation shall be in proportion to its seed. A homer[3] of barley
seed shall be valued at fifty shekels of silver. [17]If he dedicates his field from
the year of jubilee, the valuation shall stand, [18]but if he dedicates his field
after the jubilee, then the priest shall calculate the price according to the

years that remain until the year of jubilee, and a deduction shall be made from the valuation. 19And if he who dedicates the field wishes to redeem it, then he shall add a fifth to its valuation price, and it shall remain his. 20But if he does not wish to redeem the field, or if he has sold the field to another man, it shall not be redeemed anymore. 21But the field, when it is released in the jubilee, shall be a holy gift to the Lord, like a field that has been devoted. The priest shall be in possession of it. 22If he dedicates to the Lord a field that he has bought, which is not a part of his possession, 23then the priest shall calculate the amount of the valuation for it up to the year of jubilee, and the man shall give the valuation on that day as a holy gift to the Lord. 24In the year of jubilee the field shall return to him from whom it was bought, to whom the land belongs as a possession. 25Every valuation shall be according to the shekel of the sanctuary: twenty gerahs[4] shall make a shekel.

26†“But a firstborn of animals, which as a firstborn belongs to the Lord, no man may dedicate; whether ox or sheep, it is the Lord’s. 27And if it is an unclean animal, then he shall buy it back at the valuation, and add a fifth to it; or, if it is not redeemed, it shall be sold at the valuation.

28“But no devoted thing that a man devotes to the Lord, of anything that he has, whether man or beast, or of his inherited field, shall be sold or redeemed; every devoted thing is most holy to the Lord. 29†No one devoted, who is to be devoted for destruction[5] from mankind, shall be ransomed; he shall surely be put to death.

30“Every tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land or of the fruit of the trees, is the Lord’s; it is holy to the Lord. 31†If a man wishes to redeem some of his tithe, he shall add a fifth to it. 32And every tithe of herds and flocks, every tenth animal of all that pass under the herdsman’s staff, shall be holy to the Lord. 33One shall not differentiate between good or bad, neither shall he make a substitute for it; and if he does substitute for it, then both it and the substitute shall be holy; it shall not be redeemed.”

34These are the commandments that the Lord commanded Moses for the people of Israel on Mount Sinai.

Leviticus

OVERVIEW

Author
Moses the prophet

Date
c 1445 BC

Places
Wilderness of Sinai; tabernacle in the Israelite camp

People
Moses; Aaron and his sons: Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, Ithamar; elders and congregation of Israel

Purpose
To teach Israel how God shares His holiness with them and how they should live in His holiness

Law Themes
Uncleanness; sin requires blood sacrifices; diseases resulting from sin; walking in God's statutes and commands

Gospel Themes
Cleansing; atonement; redemption; "I am the LORD your God"; consecration; rest

Memory Verses
Teach the people (10:10–11); holy to the Lord (11:45; 20:26); atonement (16:30–34); sacrifice only to the Lord (17:1–5)

Introduction to Leviticus

Reading Leviticus

He had pastured and watered the young bull all its days. Now the bull stood calmly before him as he solemnly placed his hands on its head. He nimbly swung a blade through the bottom of the animal's throat, severing the main artery. Blood spurted and then drained rapidly into the bowls brought by the priests, who carried the blood to the altar while the worshiper continued to butcher and skin the animal. God would be honored by the fat, the kidneys, and the liver lobe that the priests would burn. The worshiper's family would feast together on the meat the Lord had provided.

Leviticus opens with earthy, life-and-death detail about the sacrifices Israel was to offer at the tabernacle they had just built in the wilderness. Their cattle, which had traveled with them out of Egypt and southward to Sinai, would not only feed their eager bellies but also touch their hearts as living illustrations of God's gracious provision for them. By these sacrifices, He would provide atonement for sin and food for life and fellowship in the congregation of Israel.

Luther on Leviticus

> The special topic of the third book [Leviticus] is the appointment of the priesthood, with the statutes and laws according to which the priests are to act and to teach the people. There we see that a priestly office is instituted only because of sin, to disclose sin to the people and to make atonement before God, so that its entire function is to deal with sin and sinners. For this reason too no temporal wealth is given to the priests; neither are they commanded or permitted to rule men's bodies. Rather the only work assigned to them is to care for the people who are in sin. (AE 35:237–38)

Challenges for Readers

Animal Sacrifice. Chs 1–7 provide detailed descriptions of animal sacrifice. The services God instituted for Israel are literally bathed in blood, which might be strange and offensive to many modern readers. However, in most cases the worshipers, or the priests and their families, ate the meat of the sacrifices in an experience comparable to congregational meals today. The Israelites did not have modern conveniences such as refrigeration; therefore, slaughter, cooking, and eating all took place together in a festive atmosphere of worship.

Goat Demons and Azazel. Some modern commentators associate the atonement services of ch 16 with sacrifices to "goat demons" (17:7), which they assume was a more primitive form of Israelite religion. There is no historical or textual basis for these assumptions. See note, 16:8.

Nadab and Abihu Punished. Moses did not fully describe the exact violation Aaron's oldest sons committed, which resulted in God harshly punishing them. They mishandled an incense offering by using "unauthorized fire" (10:1), which could mean (1) they burned the incense that should have been sprinkled on the bread of the Presence, (2) they carried burning incense into the tabernacle when they were not supposed to, or (3) they used an unauthorized source for their fire. (Some commentators suggest these priests were drunk because a warning against using alcohol comes immediately after the incident [10:9].) God's swift, harsh response seems surprising. As you read about such incidents, remember the weight of responsibility to which God calls leaders and teachers of the faith. His harshest punishments teach by example and set clear precedent in new situations (cf Ex 32; Lv 24:10–16; Jsh 7; 2Sm 6:1–15).

Blessings for Readers

As you study the Book of Leviticus, reflect on the detail and deep care with which God teaches the people about faithful, orderly worship. Though worship is chiefly a matter of faith and sincere repentance, God's people must not regard the outward expressions of worship as mere formalism; our outward actions reveal our hearts. Genuine confession of faith manifests itself in thought, word, and deed.

Note especially the four greatest themes of Leviticus: cleansing, atonement, rest, and redemption. These themes foreshadow Jesus' sacrifice on the cross, His peace, and the freedom He grants us in the Gospel. Seeing these broad themes allows one to understand that Leviticus is truly about the chief article of the Christian faith: justification through Christ's blood.

OUTLINE

I. Israelite Involvement in the Divine Service (chs 1–15)
  A. Manual of Offerings (chs 1–7)
    1. Voluntary, God-pleasing offerings (chs 1–3)
      a. Divine legislation for private offerings (1:1–2)
      b. Regulations for burnt offerings (1:3–17)
      c. Regulations for grain offerings (ch 2)
      d. Regulations for peace offerings (ch 3)
    2. Mandatory offerings for atonement (4:1–6:7)
      a. Regulations for sin offerings (4:1–5:13)
      b. Regulations for guilt offerings (5:14–6:7)
    3. Consumption of holy food (6:8–7:38)
      a. Daily public offering (6:8–18)
      b. Daily grain offering of high priest (6:19–23)
      c. Occasional offerings of Israelites (6:24–7:21)
      d. Prohibited food: fat and blood (7:22–27)
      e. Priest's portion of peace offerings (7:28–36)
      f. Conclusion of the manual of offerings (7:37–38)
  B. Inauguration of the Divine Service (chs 8–10)
    1. Consecration of priests (ch 8)
    2. The Lord accepts Aaron's offering (ch 9)

3. Penalty for disobedience (ch 10)

C. Manual of Purity (chs 11–15)

1. Instruction on clean and unclean meat (ch 11)
2. Purity after childbirth (ch 12)
3. Diagnosis of impurity from skin diseases (ch 13)
4. Purification of the skin-diseased (14:1–32)
5. Purification of infested houses (14:33–57)
6. Purification of genital discharges (ch 15)

II. Ritual for Day of Atonement (ch 16)

III. Participation of Israelites in God's Holiness (chs 17–27)

A. Reverence for Sanctuary (chs 17–22)

1. Ritual use and abuse of blood (ch 17)
2. Ritual defilement of land by sexual immorality (ch 18)
3. Holiness of the congregation (ch 19)
4. Penalties for ritual defilement of the sanctuary and the land (ch 20)
5. Holy priests and holy offerings (21:1–22:16)
   a. Protecting holiness of priests (21:1–15)
   b. Causes of disqualification from priestly service (21:16–24)
   c. Consumption of holy food by priests and their families (22:1–16)
6. Acceptable offerings for Israelites (22:17–33)

B. Observance of Sabbaths (chs 23–25)

1. Calendar of holy times (ch 23)
2. Holy oil and holy bread (24:1–9)
3. Penalty for abuse of God's holy name (24:10–16)
4. An eye for an eye (24:17–23)
5. Sabbath Year and Jubilee (ch 25)

C. Promises and Warnings: God's Policy for Israel (ch 26)

D. Laws about Vows (ch 27)

Articles and Resources Related to Leviticus

- A Wrong Understanding of Freedom
- Eating the Offerings
- Outmoded or Relevant?
- When You Fast

- Feasts Appointed by the Lord
- The Lamb of God
- The Heart of the Atonement
- Freedom, Rest, and Redemption

A Wrong Understanding of Freedom

When the Law is minimized, God's revelation in His Word is distorted. If the Law tells us the unchangeable will of God, then it follows that we should not—even if we could—discard the Law. To eliminate the Law is serious disservice to the very Word of God. But since the fall into sin in Eden, the perennial bent of humanity has been to do things that are openly repugnant to the will of the Creator. Man has become autonomous, a law unto himself, obeying no bounds….

The claim of absolute freedom under the Gospel, apart from any ordering of life, is based on a false conception of the Gospel and a wrong understanding of freedom, which either sanctions disorder and anarchy or confuses Law and Gospel by assigning a normative function to the Gospel…. Once a church body begins to draw a wedge between the two doctrines, Law and Gospel, in a manner that subjects the Law to disdain and denigration, it is courting anarchy.

Joseph Tom Omolo, "Women's Ordination: A Litmus Test for Antinomianism" (MA thesis, Concordia Seminary, 2007), 14, 17.

Eating the Offerings

Imagine the combination of a church, a slaughterhouse, and an open-air kitchen and you will begin to form a picture of the tabernacle. Each day, the priests sacrificed animals and grain offerings. On feast days, they made more extensive sacrifices based on the laws God gave Moses. When people brought their personal sacrifices to the Lord, the priests offered these as well.

The offerings we make today—bills and coins—may seem vastly different from the bloody sacrifices of the OT. However, in at least one way, our offerings and the offerings of the OT worked the same: both kinds of offerings have fed the Lord's ministers and their families.

The Portion of the Priests and Levites

During the wilderness wanderings, the Lord commanded that the priests and Levites should receive a tithe of all the offerings in Israel (Nu 18:8–32). The priests sacrificed a portion of this tithe by burning it or presenting it before the Holy Place of the tabernacle. The remainder of the meat or grain might feed the priests, the Levites, and their families.

When Israel settled in the Promised Land, the priests and Levites did not receive a major land grant like the other tribes. They made their living by teaching and guiding God's people (cf Dt 17:8–13; Jsh 21; 2Ch 15:3; 17:7–9). Leviticus provides the details about what portions of the sacrifices belonged to the priests. They did not eat any of the burnt offerings, but they were allowed to eat a portion of most other offerings. Here are examples (see also note, 2:3):

- • Grain offering—Lv 2:3, 10; 6:16, 18, 23
- • Peace offering—Lv 7:14–21, 28–38
- • Sin offering—Lv 6:26, 29–30
- • Guilt offering—Lv 7:6–10
- • Showbread—Lv 24:9

Lost Priests and Levites

When priests and Levites did not faithfully teach God's Word, people stopped following the Law and bringing their offerings. As a consequence, the priests and Levites were forced to wander in search of other work. Jgs 17–19 gives examples of two corrupt Levite priests wandering throughout the land. They join in idolatry, brutality, and other forms of wickedness. These stories illustrate the dreadful consequences of neglecting God's Word.

1Sm 2:12–17 records an abuse of God's offerings by Hophni and Phinehas, two sons of the high priest Eli. These young priests and their servants were consuming more and more of the offerings. They robbed their fellow Israelites and abused the sacrifices. As a result, God told the prophet Samuel that the sons of Eli would die. The entire family would lose its priestly office.

In 174 BC, while the Seleucids of Syria ruled Jerusalem, there was a dispute between the priests. A priest named Jason obtained the high priesthood of Israel by offering the largest sum of money to the pagan Seleucid ruler Antiochus IV Epiphanes. Three years later, a man named Menelaus offered more money than Jason and received the high priesthood, even though Menelaus was not a descendant of Aaron. This unholy selling of the high priesthood led to the desecration of the temple and the Maccabean revolt (167 BC). See pp 1553–58.

Holy Offerings

Each of these stories shows the seriousness of the call to administer God's Word. They illustrate the need for faithfulness with the offerings of God's people. Today, diligently pray for your pastor and other leaders in your congregation so that they will not enter temptation. As the Lord's Word teaches, faithfully support His servants through your tithes and offerings. Remember that the Lord works through them and through you to accomplish His purposes.

As you make your offering to the Lord, remember what the Lord offered up for you—His only Son! Think of the constant blessings of body and soul the Lord bestows on you each day through Christ. Jesus made the perfect sacrifice once for all upon the cross. The Lord nourished the priests of the old covenant by the sacrifices, but today He nourishes the priesthood of believers through the sacrifice of Jesus, our Passover Lamb.

Outmoded or Relevant?

The demand for holiness did not end with the old covenant. Consider just a few passages from the new covenant:

> Present your members as slaves to righteousness leading to sanctification. (Rm 6:19)
>
> Present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God. (Rm 12:1)
>
> Let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God. (2Co 7:1)
>
> We should be holy and blameless before Him. (Eph 1:4)
>
> [He] called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of His own purpose and grace. (2Tm 1:9)
>
> As He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct. (1Pt 1:15)

In fact, were these passages (and many others from the New Testament) encountered in Leviticus, they would not be considered foreign elements.

Like Israel, the people of the new covenant must be holy in order to be in communion with God, and they must give evidence of that communion in holy worship and holy lives. Though many of the laws in Leviticus no longer apply (Gal 3:19–25), the book (indeed, all the Law) still provides profitable instruction in holy living (Rm 7:6; 12:1–2; 2Tm. 3:16–17).

But since unholiness awaits God's people at every corner of life, they (like Israel) must be *accounted* holy:

> For in Him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through Him to reconcile to Himself all things, … making peace by the blood of His cross…. He has now reconciled [you] in His body of flesh by His death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before Him. (Col 1:19–23)

This reconciliation is once and for all; every sin becomes contemporary with it and is atoned. The Lamb of God, slaughtered 20 centuries ago, gave benefit for sins committed today as well as for Israel's sins long ago, for "it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins" (Heb 10:4).

The sacrifices of the Old Testament have been abrogated because they pointed forward to the blood of Christ, who has come. Yet even the New

Testament believer (who is, at the same time, a sinner with "natural" thinking) needs to read of them and hear again the underlying theology:

Sin is not a trivial matter. Every breaking of God's will, including unwitting sin, has deadly consequences.

People can do nothing to make themselves acceptable to God. Their forfeited lives can be redeemed only by an atonement, a substitution, that God has "given on the altar."

People daily need to seek the forgiving mercy of God.

Total redemption calls forth a total response and commitment to God. Holy living is living wholly to God. "You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Mt 5:48).

Walter R. Roehrs, *Survey of Covenant History: A Historical Overview of the Old Testament* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1989), 63–64; Scripture quotations changed to ESV.

When You Fast

Afflicting One's Soul

The modern Jewish calendar has 28 fasting days, but in the Old Testament, God commanded only one annual fast. In Lv 16:29–31, Moses gave God's dictum to "afflict [deny] yourselves" on the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur). In response to the atonement for Israel's corporate sin, devout Israelites would fast from morning until evening on the tenth day of the seventh month.

Before the exile to Babylon, Israelites fasted during times of impend-ing danger, mourning, sickness, threat of war, distress, and sorrow. For example, Hannah did not eat because of the great stress brought about by her barrenness (1Sm 1:7), and David fasted after learning of Abner's death (2Sm 3:35). Religious leaders also mandated periods of fasting at times of great national crisis (cf Jgs 20:26; 2Ch 20:3; Jer 36:9). These examples show that fasting was an expression of sorrow and, most important, an expression of repentance.

Overindulgence

Where faith is strongest, Satan works hardest. While God esteems those who are "humble and contrite in spirit" (Is 66:2), Satan vigorously attacks them with temptations to overindulge. Thankfully, God did not leave His people powerless in their sin. In answer to prayer, God sent Isaiah to call passionately for their repentance and help them understand the true character of fasting as an expression of sorrow over sin and an opportunity to have mercy on the hungry (Is 58:3–8).

Unfortunately, instead of heeding God's call, the people continued in their self-centeredness and thus brought about the Babylonian exile. For God's people, the Babylonian exile and the destruction of the first temple by Nebuchadnezzar (587 BC) was a turning point in history rivaled only by the Roman destruction of Herod's temple (AD 70). As a result of the exile, four new fasts were added to the Jewish calendar, each marking key historical dates leading up to and including the exile (Zec 8:18–19). For instance, a fast in the fourth month laments the breach of Jerusalem's outer wall by Nebuchadnezzar (Jer 52:6–7). A fast in the fifth month commemorates the burning of God's holy temple and other buildings (2Ki 25:8–9), while a fast in the seventh month marks the assassination of Gedaliah, whom the king of Babylon had placed as governor over Judah (Zec 7:5). Finally, a fast during the tenth month is held in memory of Nebuchadnezzar's siege of Jerusalem (2Ki 25:1). These fasts served a holy purpose: they reminded the Israelites of the sorrows brought by neglecting God's Word. However, over time fasting became another way the Israelites abused God's Word.

In the hope of preventing any further captivity, Jewish scholars pored over the writings of Moses, frantically searching for a reason why God exiled them. They determined to apply the Law more vigorously. What followed was a fundamental shift in their belief system. To this day, many people still believe that if they keep all the laws perfectly, they will gain salvation. Fasting changed from an expression of repentance to compulsory appeasement of a legalistic code. This deception led many astray to spend eternity apart from the Lord, who desires to save all people (1Tm 2:3–4).

The Appearing of Christ

Before the birth of Jesus, the Pharisees mandated twice-weekly fasting (Lk 18:9–12). The Essenes, a splinter group that may have lived at Qumran, centered much of their lives on fasting. For the unfaithful, fasting was something done to curry God's favor—a duty, a work, a law. But for the faithful, fasting continued as an expression of repentance and reverence for the Lord, who created them and promised to redeem them.

After Jesus' Baptism, He went into the wilderness and fasted for 40 days and 40 nights (Mt 4:2). This recalled the devotion of Moses (Ex 24:18), the great prophet Elijah (1Ki 19:8), and the 40 years of wilderness wandering for Israel. During this fast, Satan repeatedly tempted Jesus, but He used God's precious Word to defend Himself.

Fasting for You

During the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus spoke against fasting as a means of salvation. Instead, He commended fasting as a private, voluntary act of humility before God (Mt 6:16–18). Take a few moments now to read His words and reflect on your own devotion. If you are like most people, you have thought more about dieting than fasting. It is hard to imagine a daylong fast. No doubt fasting for 40 days like Jesus did after His Baptism is out of the question. Yet our Lord's words clearly reveal that fasting should be part of a Christian's life: He said, "When you fast" (Mt 6:16), not "If you fast" (cf Mt 9:14–15). The early Christians fasted (Ac 13:2–3; 14:23). Why shouldn't a twenty-first-century Christian do likewise?

As you fast, let the feelings of hunger you experience remind you to pray. Spend the time you would normally spend eating by reading God's Word and meditating on the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Through His Word, the Lord will bless and nourish you. "Then shall your light break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up speedily; your righteousness shall go before you; the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard. Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer; you shall cry, and He will say, 'Here I am' " (Is 58:8–9).

How You Might Fast

Consider fasting for a meal or two before partaking of the Lord's Supper. Spend your extra time studying God's Word and singing Communion hymns.

Fasting during Lent can be a wonderful way to remember the perfect obedience of Christ and His sacrifice for your salvation. Money not spent on food may be donated for the poor.

You might follow this routine for a daylong fast: (1) rise before dawn and eat breakfast; (2) examine yourself as you would prior to partaking of the Lord's Supper; (3) offer your life to God in penitent prayer; (4) go about your day, breaking your fast at evening.

If you are diabetic, fasting could be hazardous. Check with your doctor.Do not consider fasting as a dieting program.

If abstaining from food is not possible, consider abstaining from something else. For example, turn off your television and spend time in prayer and study of God's Word.

Feasts Appointed by the Lord

In Gn 2 and Ex 20, the Lord hallowed the seventh day as a day of rest so that God's people could learn of God's blessings, celebrate them, and be strengthened for further service. During the exodus, the Lord added other feasts (Ex 12; 23:10–19; 34:18–26) and required the men of Israel to gather annually for special celebrations. In this way, the Lord hallowed time so the people could share in His holiness. The chart below provides an overview of the feasts as listed in Lv 23 and how the people observed them at the tabernacle. See calendar, p 262.

Bible Feasts and the Church Year

As Jews, the earliest Christians followed the Israelite calendar and its feasts as observed by first-century Judaism. However, as more and more Gentiles came to faith in Jesus as their Savior, a new yearly pattern of worship emerged: the Church Year, which most Christians continue to observe today. The Israelite year was organized around the rhythm of the agricultural seasons in Israel and national events. By contrast, the Church Year was organized around the life and teachings of Jesus.

Two Church festivals descend directly from Israelite feast days: Easter and Pentecost. For centuries, the early Christians referred to Easter as Pasch, from the Hebrew word for Passover. The name *Pentecost* comes from the Greek word for 50, since Israelites and Christians celebrated this feast 50 days after Passover. These annual celebrations remind us of the Old Testament roots of the Church as well as the transformation of worship in view of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. Study the chart below to grow in your understanding of the Jewish and Christian calendars.

Holy Time Today

In Christ, every day is the day of salvation (2Co 6:2). Yet the patterns of our holidays continue to serve us by serving God's purposes. They call to mind God's blessings. They organize our thoughts around the works of His mercy. And, perhaps most important, they draw God's people together in celebration, to encourage one another through His Word (Heb 10:25).

When the pace of life or the demands of the holidays overwhelm you, pause and remember the Sabbath rest and the feast of blessings provided for you through the Lord of the Sabbath, Jesus Christ (Mt 11:28–12:8).

The Lamb of God

Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29), John the Baptist, the last Old Testament prophet, said, pointing at Jesus Christ. This is the One whose sole purpose is not to moralize over issues of politics or history or being politically correct or incorrect. No, His sol[e] task is to take away the sin of the world. All kinds of roles ascribed to Him outside of this great mission nullify this great message, "This is the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world." …

For the believing Jews the words of John the Baptist had to remind [of] bondage and deliverance. They were slaves in Egypt. God delivered them from that terrible bondage in a miraculous way. As the Angel of the Lord was passing through the land of captivity, he was killing all the first-born in Egypt. Consequences of being part of the sinful oppression never touched Israelites sojourning in that god-less country. They had a lamb. They put blood of the lamb on the door-posts, they ate the body of the roasted lamb without breaking its bones. They ate the lamb, lamb's blood was on their doorways and death had not touched them. Christ was with His people there foreshadowing [inexpressible] love of the Triune God in the coming Incarnate Lamb of God. Now a prophet of the Lord is standing at the Jordan River and points at Jesus Christ and says, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." …

A Passover lamb in Egypt and the lambs sacrificed by Israelites as it was commanded by God were pointing at this true Lamb of God, Jesus Christ that sacrificed Himself for our sake on the Cross of Calvary. There He brought all our sins to wash them away with His holy, innocent blood and in a minute of His holy death to proclaim "It is finished!"

Bp. Dr. Vyacheslav Horpynchuk, "Behold, the Lamb of God!" (sermon, January 20, 2008).

The Heart of the Atonement

The] English word for *atonement* can be derived from the [words] "at-one," i.e. making reconcilement or putting at-one. The Old Testament is full of … examples when people sacrifice a dove, sheep, goats or ox in order to cover up or to abolish their guilt. For this purpose Israelites had the Day of Atonement…. But all this was only "types" or "shadows" that were "preparing the way" for the coming Christ. The Old Testament is full (or —"pregnant") with prophecies and traditions that show … Christ.

Some modern scholars say that the traditional doctrine of the Atonement is too much influenced by the Old Testament. They can see only the horrible death of Christ on a cross…. They deny even the possibility that Christ could die in order to satisfy God's justice and to forgive our sins. Some can see only a righteous man who died for us. This way they limit the Atonement Christ made….

Vicarious satisfaction is the heart of the Atonement and is the Scriptural teaching. Other doctrines such as victory over the devil and death are consequences of the Christ's work. Therefore it is correct to say that the Atonement in a narrow sense is vicarious satisfaction…. In a wider sense it embrace[s] not only the death of Christ for [our] sins but also His incarnation, temptations, victory over the devil and death. It is not possible to accomplish for a mere man, but only for a God-Man.

Remigijus Semeklis, "The Atonement: Christ as a Priest and a Sacrifice" (MA thesis, Concordia Theological Seminary, 2002), 36–37.

Freedom, Rest, and Redemption

This article examines three aspects of Jubilee: (1) the care of the land; (2) the redemption of land, homes, and people; and (3) the treatment of the poor. It will provide you with a firm understanding of this special Sabbath and its emphasis on freedom for God's people.

Care of the Land

Long before the first Israelite set foot in Canaan, God made land provisions for each tribe and family. In addition, the Levites were given 48 cities and adjoining lands in all 12 tribal areas. God remained the landowner, while the Israelites were His tenants (Lv 25:23–24). This was the same relationship God had with Adam, whom He placed in the Garden of Eden "to work it and take care of it" (Gn 2:15). It is also the same relationship God wants in our lives.

God commanded the Israelites to care for their land through a period of Sabbath rest every seven years (Lv 25:1–7). When the Sabbath rest came, the Israelites were to let their fields go fallow. They trusted God to provide enough harvest in the sixth year to sustain them through the eighth. This cycle lasted seven successive seven-year periods. Then that year's Day of Atonement ushered in the celebration of Jubilee.

In the 50th year, the 7th month, on the 10th day, a trumpet blast marked the beginning of this unique feast. (The word *jubilee* comes from *yobel*, a Hebrew word for "ram's horn trumpet.") The sound called every Israelite back to his or her original land. It also marked a second Sabbath year for the land (Lv 25:11–12). God assured His people that they would harvest enough in the 48th year to last the three years of the Sabbath year, the Jubilee, and the wait for the next year's harvest (Lv 25:21).

Since God owned the land, it was never sold, only leased. Payments were based on the number of harvests until Jubilee (Lv 25:13–16). More harvests meant a higher lease payment. God knew that the Israelites would be tempted to take advantage of their countrymen in financial matters (Lv 25:17). He also knew that they would exhaust the land in their pursuit of success. The Sabbath and Jubilee festivals addressed these issues and taught the Israelites to depend on the Lord for their prosperity.

Redemption

One of the most important aspects of Jubilee was redemption. For example, impoverished Israelites who leased their land could redeem it if they or a kinsman paid the value of the lease for the number of years remaining until Jubilee. Only a kinsman could redeem the land.

A kinsman could also redeem homes (except if the home was in a walled city). Homes in walled cities were limited by a one-year redemption proviso, after which they could not be redeemed, not even at Jubilee (Lv 25:29–30). Since the homes of Levites were found only in walled cities, God made an exemption for them. Their homes were redeemable at any time, as was the case for all homes in villages without walls. If a Levite's home was not redeemed, it had to be returned during Jubilee. Although Levites could sell their home, they could not sell any of the pastureland near their home, since it provided food for their livestock (Lv 25:31–34; Nu 35:2–5).

The Israelite people could also be redeemed. At any time, a relative could secure release for a man and his family forced into slavery by economic hardship (Lv 25:47–49). If a man became prosperous, he could redeem himself (v 49b). Regardless, all Israelite slaves were released at Jubilee (Lv 25:40). Any Israelite in the possession of a foreigner or another Israelite was to be treated as a hired hand because he belonged to God. What was the redemption rate for Israelites? Lv 25:50 states that the buyer and seller were to count the number of years until Jubilee and then multiply that figure by the rate paid a hired man. Redemption applied only to the Israelite people. Their foreign slaves were never subject to release and could be willed as inherited property (Lv 25:46).

Treatment of the Poor

God commanded that during a Jubilee, His people should care for their poorer countrymen by lending them money at no interest and selling them food at no profit (Lv 25:35–38). God never wants the poor mistreated, so He strictly commanded His people to treat the poor with respect and never take advantage of them. Notice how He sternly reminds them to love the poor out of respect for Him, remembering how He redeemed them in Egypt (Lv 25:37–38). God also prevented the wealthy from amassing great tracts of land at the expense of the poor by commanding its return during Jubilee.

Our Sabbath and Jubilee

God's Word continually calls sinners to repent and live in God-given rest and freedom. Throughout Lv 25, the Lord reminded the Israelites that He had set them free, that He had redeemed them (25:38, 42, 55). Today, God's Word reminds us of the Redeemer of all people. Jesus our Kinsman has set us free. His precious blood has redeemed us from the slavery of sin (Heb 2:14–18). That is true cause for jubilation!

Footnotes

Footnotes for Leviticus, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:9 Or *an offering by fire*; so throughout Leviticus
- [2] 1:16 Or *feathers*

Footnotes for Leviticus, Chapter 4

- [1] 4:2 Or *by mistake*; so throughout Leviticus
- [1] 4:13 Or *makes a mistake*
- [2] 4:13 Or *suffer for their guilt*, or *are guilty*; also verses 22, 27, and chapter 5

Footnotes for Leviticus, Chapter 5

- [1] 5:6 Hebrew *his guilt penalty*; so throughout Leviticus
- [2] 5:7 Septuagint *two young pigeons*; also verse 11
- [1] 5:11 An *ephah* was about 3/5 bushel or 22 liters
- [2] 5:13 Septuagint; Hebrew *it*
- [3] 5:15 Or *flock, or its equivalent*
- [4] 5:15 A *shekel* was about 2/5 ounce or 11 grams
- [5] 5:19 Or *he has paid full compensation to*

Footnotes for Leviticus, Chapter 6

- [6] 6:1 Ch 5:20 in Hebrew
- [7] 6:8 Ch 6:1 in Hebrew
- [1] 6:20 An *ephah* was about 3/5 bushel or 22 liters
- [2] 6:21 The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain

Footnotes for Leviticus, Chapter 8

- [1] 8:7 Hebrew *with it*
- [2] 8:15 Probably Aaron or his representative; possibly Moses; also verses 16-23

Footnotes for Leviticus, Chapter 10

- [1] 10:1 Or *strange*

Footnotes for Leviticus, Chapter 11

- [1] 11:13 Or *things that fly*; compare Genesis 1:20
- [2] 11:13 The identity of many of these birds is uncertain

Footnotes for Leviticus, Chapter 12

- [1] 12:8 Septuagint *two young pigeons*

Footnotes for Leviticus, Chapter 13

- [1] 13:2 *Leprosy* was a term for several skin diseases
- [1] 13:45 Or *mustache*

Footnotes for Leviticus, Chapter 14

- [1] 14:4 Or *wild*
- [2] 14:5 Or *running*; Hebrew *living*; also verses 6, 50, 51, 52
- [3] 14:10 An *ephah* was about 3/5 bushel or 22 liters
- [4] 14:10 A *log* was about 1/3 quart or 0.3 liter
- [1] 14:31 Septuagint, Syriac; Hebrew *afford, 31such as he can afford, one*

Footnotes for Leviticus, Chapter 15

- [1] 15:2 Hebrew *flesh*; also verse 3

Footnotes for Leviticus, Chapter 16

- [1] 16:8 The meaning of *Azazel* is uncertain; possibly the name of a place or a demon, traditionally a scapegoat; also verses 10, 26
- [1] 16:29 Or *shall fast*; also verse 31

Footnotes for Leviticus, Chapter 17

- [1] 17:14 Hebrew *all flesh*
- [2] 17:14 Hebrew *it is in its life*

Footnotes for Leviticus, Chapter 18

- [3] 18:4 Or *my just decrees*; also verse 5
- [1] 18:21 Hebrew *to make them pass through* [the fire]

Footnotes for Leviticus, Chapter 19

- [1] 19:16 Hebrew *blood*
- [1] 19:23 Hebrew *as its uncircumcision*
- [2] 19:36 An *ephah* was about 3/5 bushel or 22 liters; a *hin* was about 4 quarts or 3.5 liters

Footnotes for Leviticus, Chapter 20

- [1] 20:10 Hebrew repeats *if a man commits adultery with the wife of*
- [2] 20:21 Literally *menstrual impurity*

Footnotes for Leviticus, Chapter 21

- [1] 21:13 Or *a young wife*

- [2] 21:14 Hebrew *young woman*

Footnotes for Leviticus, Chapter 22

- [1] 22:11 Hebrew *he*

Footnotes for Leviticus, Chapter 23

- [1] 23:5 Hebrew *between the two evenings*
- [1] 23:13 An *ephah* was about 3/5 bushel or 22 liters
- [2] 23:13 A *hin* was about 4 quarts or 3.5 liters
- [1] 23:34 Or *tabernacles*

Footnotes for Leviticus, Chapter 24

- [2] 24:4 Hebrew *the pure lampstand*
- [3] 24:5 An *ephah* was about 3/5 bushel or 22 liters
- [4] 24:6 Hebrew *the pure table*

Footnotes for Leviticus, Chapter 25

- [1] 25:8 Or *Sabbaths*
- [1] 25:12 Or *countryside*
- [1] 25:42 Hebrew *slaves*
- [2] 25:55 Or *slaves*

Footnotes for Leviticus, Chapter 26

- [1] 26:11 Hebrew *tabernacle*
- [1] 26:26 Hebrew *staff*
- [2] 26:34 Or *pay for*; twice in this verse; also verse 43

Footnotes for Leviticus, Chapter 27

- [1] 27:3 A *shekel* was about 2/5 ounce or 11 grams
- [2] 27:9 Hebrew *it*
- [3] 27:16 A *homer* was about 6 bushels or 220 liters
- [4] 27:25 A *gerah* was about 1/50 ounce or 0.6 gram
- [5] 27:29 That is, set apart (devoted) as an offering to the Lord (for destruction)

Study Notes

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 1:1 *The Lord called Moses*. Moses wrote Lv under divine inspiration. Ancient Israelites knew Lv as "Now He (God) Called," a name that emphasized God's actions instead of the ceremonial rites performed by Levites ("Leviticus" comes from the LXX). God continues the dialogue with Moses begun at the burning bush (Ex 3), beginning some 33 times with "the Lord spoke to Moses" (e.g., 4:1; 5:14; 8:1; 18:1). *tent of meeting*. Consecrated portable tent where God dwelled among His people (see note, Ex 27:21).

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 1:2 *offering of livestock*. Part of the household (see note, Ex 20:17) and representative of it. Israelites brought to the Lord the firstborn of their animals (27:26) and tithed to Him (27:32). Archaeological discoveries show that animals offered by the Israelites were also offered by other nations. However, Canaanites sacrificed donkeys at Ugarit, Philistines had ritual burials for dogs, and Greeks sacrificed dogs, horses, and pigs.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 1:3 *burnt offering*. See pp 170–71. *without blemish*. Animals presented before God must be perfect, as He is perfect (22:20–25). "They were not called sacrifice because they merited the forgiveness of sins before God, but because they merited the forgiveness of sins according to the righteousness of the Law, so that those for whom they were made might not be excluded from that commonwealth 'from the people of Israel'. Therefore, for a trespass, the sacrifices were called sin offerings and burnt offerings" (Ap XXIV 21). Animal sacrifices were commanded by God as a precursor to the ultimate sacrifice of Jesus Christ at Calvary (1Pt 1:18–19). "We teach that the sacrifice of Christ dying on the cross has been enough for the sins of the whole world. There is no need for other sacrifices, as though Christ's sacrifice were not enough for our sins. So people are justified not because of any other sacrifices, but because of this one sacrifice of Christ, if they believe that they have been redeemed by this sacrifice" (Ap XIII 8).

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 1:4 *lay his hand on the head*. Vouched that the animal belonged to the person presenting the sacrifice and could be used on his behalf to secure God's approval and acceptance. See note, Ex 29:10. *atonement*. See p 5.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 1:5 Priestly work began once the offerer slit the throat of his sacrifice. The sacrificial blood was collected in a basin and applied to the altar. *throw the blood against the sides of the altar*. A priest sprinkled the sacrificial blood on the sides of the altar in the rite of atonement: the animal's death atoned for the life of the offerer.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 1:6–7 Before the sacrifice was placed on the altar for total consumption by fire, the priest removed the skin and cut it into pieces. *altar*. Most holy; where God met His people each morning and evening (Ex 29:38–43).
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 1:8 *the fat*. Many pagan religions believed that an animal's power and strength were found in the fat and blood once the animal was sacrificed to their deities. To overturn this idea, God reserved the fat for Himself (3:16) and designated the blood for atonement (17:11). An Israelite found guilty of eating fat or drinking blood was "cut off from his people" (7:25–27).
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 1:9 *wash*. In the butchering process, fecal material, blood, or even dirt may end up on the sacrifice. Thorough washing was necessary before the offering was incinerated on God's holy altar. Uncleanliness desecrated God's altar. *food offering*. Most assuredly, God does not eat in the sense that we eat. The altar fire turns the sacrifice into smoke, which ascends into God's heavenly domain. *pleasing aroma to the* LORD. Indicates God's acceptance of the offering and, therefore, acceptance of the offerer. Unlike pagan deities, God offers forgiveness. With sacrifices, people tried to manipulate these deities into providing rain, bringing forth abundant crops, or instilling power and strength.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 1:10–17 Additional ordinances for burnt offerings, including sheep, goats, and birds.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 1:10 *male without blemish*. Males were less valuable to breeding stock because only one male was needed to populate a herd. Moreover, male animals were the head of the flock or herd and as such could represent the male head of the Israelite family for sacrificial purposes.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 1:12 The head represented the whole animal and the person who presented it.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 1:13 *wash*. See note, v 9.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 1:14 *turtledoves or pigeons*. In His grace, God provided a less expensive sacrifice for those of poorer means.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 1:15 *blood shall be drained*. See note, v 5.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 1:16 *crop*. Because the crop of the bird was unclean and could not be offered in sacrifices, it was placed in an ash heap on the east side of the altar (see diagram, p 139). The ash heap was cleaned up every morning (6:10–11).
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 1:17 *a pleasing aroma*. See note, v 9.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 1:1–17 In His grace, God provides a means through which He can "dwell" among a sinful people: the sacrifice of animals on behalf of the people. This priestly system culminates in the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Today, just as the Israelites faithfully confessed their sins and prayed to the Lord, present your confession of sins and prayers of repentance and faith before Him in the name of "the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (Jn 1:29). • Almighty Father, may we always rejoice in Your abundant grace, through Christ, our Lord. Amen.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 2:1–3 "Most Holy" Foods for Priestly Consumption
Offering: Private grain offering
Food Item: Flour
Reference: 2:3
Offering: Private grain offering
Food Item: Bread
Reference: 2:10
Offering: Public grain offering
Food Item: Flour
Reference: 6:17–18; 10:12
Offering: Sin offering
Food Item: Meat
Reference: 6:17, 25, 29
Offering: Guilt offering
Food Item: Meat
Reference: 6:17; 7:1–7
Offering: Showbread
Food Item: Loaves
Reference: 24:5–9
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 2:1 *grain offering*. Only freshly gathered grain was used in a grain offering. Since God provides all we have, He wants the

best we can offer. See pp 170–71. *fine flour*. Usually means finely milled flour, though the definition is not certain. The grain used was most likely wheat or, in some instances, barley. *frankincense*. Aromatic gum resin procured from three types of trees found in southern Arabia and East Africa. For the Israelites, frankincense was mixed with the grain offering and also provided a central ingredient to the sacred incense burned twice daily in the incense altar inside the tent of meeting (cf Ex 30:34).

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 2:2 *memorial portion*. Substituted for the entire grain offering. "The eucharistic sacrifices were the grain offering, the drink offering, thank offerings, firstfruits, tithes [Leviticus 1–7]" (Ap XXIV 21).

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 2:3 *the rest … for Aaron and his sons*. After the memorial portion was offered to God and burned on the altar (v 2), the remaining portion of the grain was dedicated to God, consecrated, and given to the priests as food. *most holy*. Offerings presented to the Lord became "most holy" and provided sustenance for His priests. Only the priests were allowed to eat "most holy" food, and only in the sanctuary (courtyard of the tent of meeting).

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 2:4–10 The Lord gave the Israelites regulations for presenting an acceptable grain offering. If the flour was presented as bread, olive oil had to be used in its preparation. Olive oil served to make the memorial portion of the offering flammable. Bread was baked in an oven (2:4) or on a flat plate (2:5). Round cakes were fried in oil (2:7). Frankincense provided a second ingredient to the grain offering (2:1–2), as did salt (see note, v 13).

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 2:4 Leavening agents were associated with sin, decay, corruption, sickness, and even death. All baked items offered to God as a grain offering were unleavened. The bread of the Passover meal was also unleavened. This significant Israelite feast is also called the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Ex 13:3–16).

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 2:8 *he shall bring it to the altar*. When the officiating priest brought the memorial portion before the Lord and burned it, it became His property. See note, v 3.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 2:9 *pleasing aroma to the* LORD. See note, 1:9.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 2:10 *for Aaron and his sons*. See note, v 3.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 2:11 *no leaven nor any honey*. Hbr word for "honey" likely refers to "fruit syrup." Fruit syrup, like leavened dough, is

subject to fermentation and could become putrid; it could not be used as a grain offering. See p 236.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 2:12 *firstfruits*. First vegetables and grains of harvest belonged to God. These were dedicated and presented to Him during the Feast of Firstfruits celebrated on the 16th day of Abib. See pp 200–201.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 2:13 *salt of the covenant*. See p 127. Salt was produced by drying seawater from mineral deposits near the Salt Sea. Salt preserves, so it reminded the Israelites that God would preserve His covenant with Abraham, including the messianic promise that through Abraham "all the families of the earth" would be blessed (Gn 12:1–3). Ultimately, this was fulfilled in the life and teaching of Jesus Christ. Cf Mt 5:13.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 2:14 Fire-roasted grain was commonly eaten in ancient times and is still eaten in Syria and Egypt. See p 236.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 2:15 *frankincense*. See note, v 1.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON **Ch 2** God provides His OT priests with food through the grain offering. The remaining grain becomes most holy once the priest burns the memorial portion. By grace, the priests are permitted to eat a sacred meal at God's table. In this, God's people may see a foreshadowing of Holy Communion. Today, at Christ's invitation, we come to the Lord's Table, where we receive the true body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, a holy meal God Himself prepares for the forgiveness of sins. • We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen our faith toward You and love for one another. Amen. (Adapted from *LSB*, p 166.)

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 3:1 *a sacrifice of peace offering*. See pp 170–71. *male or female*. Burnt offerings required a male sacrifice; peace offerings had no such requirement. *without blemish*. See note, 1:3.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 3:2 See notes, 1:4, 5.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 3:3 *the fat*. See note, 1:8.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 3:4 *long lobe of the liver*. The liver was burned completely, removing it from use in fortune-telling (cf 19:26; Dt 18:10). Ancient pagan cultures used liver for divination.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 3:5 *food offering … pleasing aroma to the* LORD. See note, 1:9.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 3:6 *without blemish*. See note, 1:3.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 3:7–8 See notes, 1:4, 5.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 3:9 *fat tail*. Considered a delicacy representing the produce of the land (cf Gn 45:18). See note, 1:8.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 3:11 *food offering*. See note, 1:9.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 3:13 See notes, 1:4, 5.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 3:16 *food offering with a pleasing aroma*. See note, 1:9. *All fat is the LORD's*. See note, 1:8.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 3:17 *eat neither fat nor blood*. See note, 1:8.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON **Ch 3** Through the peace offering on high holy days and special occasions, God provides meat for a sacrificial banquet, which a family could share with invited guests (7:11–36; 19:5–6; 23:37). Peace offerings acknowledge God's grace toward His people. Jesus' death was God's great peace offering for the world, since the Father brought about our peace and reconciliation through Jesus. • Gracious Father, we thank You for Your peace through Christ, who offered Himself for the sins of the world. Grant us generous hearts to share Your peace. Amen.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON **Ch 4** Highlights God's regulations covering inadvertent or accidental offenses made against Him. Unintentional sins in this chapter fall into four categories: those committed by the priests (vv 3–12); those committed by the whole Israelite community (vv 13–21); those committed by the leader (vv 22–26); and those committed by an individual (vv 27–35). In each of these four cases, God prescribes means of atonement leading to repentance and the forgiveness of sin (v 35).
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 4:2 *sins unintentionally*. Contrasts unintentional sins with those of a deliberate nature recorded in Nu 15:22–31. *sins*. Hbr *chata'*, "misses the mark." Sin involves failure to keep God's Law (Rm 4:15; 1Jn 3:4; see p 959). Any such violation deserves death (Rm 6:23a).
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 4:3 *guilt*. As representatives of the Israelite community, when priests sinned they brought God's wrath against the whole community. *sin offering*. Atonement was at the heart of this offering. By God's grace, the Israelites were provided a means by which God cleansed the tabernacle and freed His people from the iniquity of their sins.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 4:4 *lay his hand on the head*. See note, 1:4.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 4:5–6 *into the tent of meeting*. Ritual went beyond the eastern courtyard of the tent of meeting ("the entrance," v 4)

into the inner courts and the veil separating the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place, the dwelling place of God (see diagram, p 139).
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 4:6–7 Ritual atonement. Blood is God's atoning agent (17:11). Note how the author of Heb ties this Lv ordinance to the atoning death of Christ (Heb 9:20–22). See "atonement," p 5. *seven times*. Used repeatedly: 4:17; 8:11; 14:16, 27, 51; 16:19; 25:8; 26:18, 21, 24, 28. See p 217.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 4:8 *remove … the fat*. See note, 1:8.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 4:11–12 Remainder of sacrificial bull was taken to the ash heap outside the camp and burned. The camp housed the tent of meeting, where God resided, so care was taken not to defile the camp with anything unclean, whether a person or a thing. Only those persons declared ritually clean could enter the camp (cf 14:8; 16:26, 28). See note, 1:16.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 4:13 *sins unintentionally*. See note, v 2. Anyone who sinned intentionally (e.g., blasphemed) was cast out of camp. In some cases, the punishment was death. Cf Nu 15:30–36. *realize their guilt*. When God, through direct action or the action of others, draws attention to the sin, and those involved realize what they have done and repent. See King David's response to the prophet Nathan when accused of adultery (2Sm 12:1–15).
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 4:15 When the Israelite community was found guilty of sin, elders of each tribe were to gather around the young bull offered to the Lord. All elders gathered corporately to confess the sins of the community and to lay hands on the young bull. Their sins were transferred to the animal, which was sacrificed as a sin offering before the Lord. See notes, 1:4, 5; Ex 3:16.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 4:16–18 See note, vv 6–7.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 4:17 *veil*. Curtain that hung between the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 4:20 *atonement*. See p 5. *forgiven*. Or, "released." God's forgiveness releases one from the burden of sin, removing all impurity and guilt. His actions free our consciences and restore us to Him. See p 1902.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 4:21 *burn it up … the first bull*. See note, vv 11–12.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 4:22 *leader sins*. Sins committed by a leader impact his whole family or clan. *unintentionally*. See note, v 2. On Israelite

leaders, see p 228.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 4:23 *male without blemish*. See note, 1:10.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 4:25 See note, vv 6–7.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 4:26 *atonement*. See p 5. *forgiven*. See note, v 20.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 4:27 *common people*. Members of tribes who were not priests or princes. *unintentionally*. See note, v 2.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 4:28 *female without blemish*. God permitted individual sinners to offer sacrifices based on their financial means. A bull (vv 4, 14) or male goat (v 23) emphasized the severity of sins committed by leaders. A female goat was offered by the general population (followers).
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 4:29 *lay his hand on the head*. See note, 1:4.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 4:30 See note, vv 6–7.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 4:31 *pleasing aroma to the* LORD. See note, 1:9. *atonement*. See p 5. *forgiven*. See note, v 20.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 4:32 *female without blemish*. See note, v 28.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 4:33 *lay his hand on the head*. See note, 1:4.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 4:34 See note, vv 6–7.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 4:35 *on top of the* LORD *'s food offerings*. Often, more than one offering was presented. First, the sin offering, then the burnt and grain offering, then the peace offering. *atonement*. See p 5. *forgiven*. See note, v 20.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 5:1–13 These offerings fit into a category known as a graded sin offering. Sacrificial offerings were made to cleanse the offerer of his sin in four categories: failure to respond to a public oath to testify (v 1); touching an unclean thing (v 2); touching human uncleanness (v 3); or uttering a careless oath (v 4).
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 5:1 It is sinful not to testify when called to do so. *adjuration*. A placing under oath. See "oath," p 7.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 5:2 *unclean thing*. See p 300. *guilt*. Ritually unclean people were unfit for God's presence.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 5:3 *human uncleanness*. Any person with a skin disease (14:2, 19) or a bodily discharge (15:2, 16, 19), or anyone who had handled a corpse (Nu 19:14–16).
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 5:4 *rash oath*. Oath made in haste that may include bargaining with God (e.g., "Lord, if You do this, I will be more faithful in worship attendance"). See "oath," p 7.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 5:5 Sins were confessed publicly at the altar before God and His priest. We are called to confess our sins as well (1Jn 1:8–10).
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 5:6 *female*. See note, 4:28. *atonement*. See p 5.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 5:7 *cannot afford*. See note 1:14. *burnt offering*. See pp 170–71.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 5:10 *atonement*. See p 5. *forgiven*. See note, 4:20.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 5:11 *cannot afford*. See note, 1:14. *fine flour*. See note, 2:1. *no frankincense*. Too expensive for the poor. In this case, God wanted the unsavoriness of this sacrifice to remind the sinner not to relish sin.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 5:12 *memorial portion*. See note, 2:2.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 5:13 *atonement*. See p 5. *forgiven*. See note, 4:20.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 4:1–5:13 God, who abhors all sin, distinguishes sins of error from those of intent. Because of sin, God could no longer dwell with the Israelites as He desired. To this end, God gave the sin offering for the deliverance of those who inadvertently sinned against Him (cf 4:20, 26, 31, 35). Just as God's OT people publicly confessed their sins during divine worship, God's people today confess, "We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone" (*LSB*, p 151). Jesus Christ is the sin offering for all sins, for all time (1Jn 2:2; 4:10). • How wonderful it is to hear the words of Absolution: "Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins." Amen. (*LSB*, p 151)
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 5:15–16 *shekel of the sanctuary*. Weight of this shekel was set by the priests and may have varied in weight from the common shekel. See note, Jsh 24:32. *guilt offering*. An individual was required to present a sacrifice to compensate God for his or her sacrilege. See pp 170–71. The guilt offering, also called a reparation offering, required a ram of acceptable value. Precious metals valued at one-fifth of the animal's value were weighed and given to the priest (cf 6:5).
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON **5:16, 18** *atonement*. See p 5. *forgiven*. See note, 4:20.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 5:19 *incurred guilt before the* LORD. Offenders suffered divine retribution for instances of unrepented sin.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 6:2 *breach of faith*. See note, 1Ch 2:7. Actions toward our neighbor are connected to our attitude toward God. This important link is emphasized in the Ten Commandments, where we are commanded to love God (Ex 20:1–11) and then to love our neighbor (Ex 20:12–17). Sins committed against our neighbor violate our trust in God. Defrauding one's neighbor by any means, including robbery, withholding wages, or swearing falsely, required restoration of the property and a further restitution of one-fifth of the property's value. In addition, a confession of sins was made along with a guilt offering.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 6:5 *restore it in full and shall add a fifth*. A feature of the guilt offering. See note, 5:15–16. *on the day*. God desires that once a sin is realized, confession be made. We see God's grace in these words, for He does not want His people to live in sin and forfeit His many blessings.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 6:6 Compensation offered to God in the guilt offering reminded the sinner that this sin went deeper than an offense against the neighbor; it also involved God. *without blemish*. See note, 1:3.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 6:7 *atonement*. See p 5. *forgiven*. See note, 4:20.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 5:14–6:7 The Lord describes the sacrifice and compensations of the guilt offering for mending relationships with God and with neighbor. While summing up the Law, Christ taught, "You shall love the Lord your God…. You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Mt 22:37, 39). In the Law, the Lord calls us to something far greater than self-interest. Praise God, His attitude toward us is merciful and self-giving; He desires our atonement. • Lord, have mercy on me for my mistreatment of my neighbor. Lead me to love others as You have loved me in Jesus. Amen.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 6:8–7:38 Priestly regulations governing each sacrifice were set forth by God.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 6:8 Continuing dialogue between Moses and God.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 6:9 *burnt offering*. See pp 170–71. *on the hearth … all night*. Burnt offerings were left on the altar until completely consumed.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 6:10 Holy vestments marked the priest's sacred office and status when he officiated in the sanctuary. Vestments consisted of an underskirt, linen tunic, embroidered linen sash, and linen skullcap. Each item received a sprinkling of blood and holy oil (8:30; Ex 29:21).

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 6:11 *other garments*. Holy vestments (v 10) were exchanged for ordinary clothing when performing duties such as carrying ashes outside the camp.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 6:12 *fat of the peace offerings*. Placed on top of the burnt offering (3:5).
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 6:14 *grain offering*. See pp 170–71.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 6:16 *a holy place*. While the whole courtyard near the altar was available, the priests most likely used the western half. Later, special rooms were provided for this purpose (Ezk 42:13; 46:19–20).
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 6:17 *most holy*. See note, 2:3.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 6:18 *Every male*. Only men were allowed to become priests. See pp 1972, 2067. *Whatever touches them shall become holy*. Both holiness and sin were transferable by touch (cf 11:24).
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 6:20 *day when he is anointed*. God issued His regulations to Moses prior to the ordination of Aaron and his sons. Cf ch 8. *fine flour*. See note, 2:1.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 6:21 The unleavened baked pieces were prepared by priests, not the laity as prescribed in ch 2. For priests, grain offerings culminated in a holy meal eaten in God's presence in the courtyard of the tent of meeting. See note, v 16. *pleasing aroma*. See note, 1:9.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 6:22 *The priest … decreed forever*. God designated the high priest as presenter of this offering. As such, each high priest from that day forward was responsible for this daily ritual. Descendants of ancient Israel no longer make these offerings today because the Romans violently destroyed the Jerusalem temple in AD 70. (Today, the Dome of the Rock, a Muslim mosque, stands on the site of the ancient temple, preventing renewal of sacrifices.) However, texts regarding the offerings are still recited in traditional synagogue services.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 6:25 *sin offering*. See note, 4:3.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 6:26 The meat of the sin offering of the people became the food of the officiating priest and was eaten in the courtyard. Meat offered by the priest as his sin offering was not eaten, but incinerated (v 30) on the ash dump (cf 16:27). *eaten, in the court*. See note, v 16.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 6:27 See note, v 18.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 6:29 *Every male*. See note, v 18. *most holy*. See note, 2:3.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 6:30 *atonement in the Holy Place*. This sin offering is different from all others. Here, God previews the sin offering made on the Day of Atonement, a day of cleansing for all things belonging to God (ch 16). The meat from the sin offering on this day is not consumed but is burned completely on the ash dump (cf 16:27).

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 6:8–30 God would have fellowship with His people only after they atoned for sin through sacrifice. The people had to be ritually clean to participate in the meal God prepared for them (7:19–21). Today, God's people eat a meal in His presence each time they partake of Holy Communion as God's priests (cf 1Pt 2:9). Christ's body was offered as a sin offering and a reparation offering to God. By Christ's holy flesh and blood, God keeps His people holy (Heb 10:10). • Father in heaven, we thank You for Your surpassing gifts of grace and fellowship, which come through Christ's atoning sacrifice. Amen.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 7:1 *guilt offering*. See note, 5:15–16.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 7:6–10 God ordained that the officiating priest was given the meat of the guilt and sin offerings and the hide of the burnt offering. The grain offering, after the memorial portion was burned, is divided equally among the priests. Notice how God faithfully supplied the daily needs of His OT priesthood, just as He provides our daily needs. See "portion," p 7.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 7:6 *Every male*. See note, 6:18.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 7:7 The guilt offering and the sin offering were alike in the law governing the distribution of meat. In both, the meat was given to the officiating priest.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 7:10 *shared equally*. Each priest received a share of the grain offering, whether or not he officiated.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 7:11 *peace offerings*. Cf ch 3. Three kinds of peace offerings are known: to give thanks, to fulfill a vow, and to volunteer an offering in a sense of gratitude and consecration to God.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 7:12 *thanksgiving*. Included not only a sacrifice but also the singing of the song of thanksgiving (cf Jer 33:11).

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 7:13 *loaves of leavened bread*. The only other time Israelites were allowed to bring leavened bread into the tabernacle was to offer grain at the Feast of Weeks (23:17).

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 7:14 *one loaf from each offering*. Offered to officiating priest; rest eaten at the sacrificial meal.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 7:15 *eaten on the day*. To prevent it from becoming "tainted" (v 18). Defiled meat was not consumable.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 7:16 *vow offering … freewill offering*. See notes, v 11; Ex 35:29.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 7:18 *not be accepted*. Meat from a less-sacred sacrifice (i.e., votive or freewill) could be eaten the second day. But after that, meat was defiled. *credited*. The Lord recognized and accepted the offering. *tainted … iniquity*. Consumption of tainted meat canceled any blessing God attached to the sacrifice.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 7:19 *unclean … clean*. See p 300.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 7:20–21 *cut off from his people*. Removed from the encampment. As leaven permeates bread, the sin of one individual infects the whole Israelite camp, making it unclean in God's sight. God will not dwell with and shower blessings of His mercy on an unrepentant people.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 7:22–25 God extends the prohibition against eating fat of a sacrificed animal to include the fat of animals that died of natural causes or were killed. Instead, this fat could be used for other purposes such as fuel for lamps or as a polish or ointment.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 7:26–27 See note, 1:8.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 7:29–30 The offerer personally brings his offering to the Lord with "his own hands."
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 7:30–35 *wave offering*. Executed by extending the offering horizontally, away from the body and back again. With the breast waved horizontally, followed by the thigh presented vertically, we see symbolized God's later tool of salvation: the cross.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 7:36 Since priests were anointed into God's service, they were provided with the breast and thigh as their right and hereditary portion from God (v 35). See "portion," p 7; cf 1Co 9:13–14; Mt 10:8–10.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 7:37 *This is the law*. See note, 11:46–47. Order of sacrifices in this verse is different from that found in previous chapters. This was deliberately done by God so that His priests received a list of sacrifices in "order of holiness" (CC Lv, p 183).
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON **Ch 7** Concludes God's manual of offerings, a precise manual meant to be strictly followed by priests and individuals. Here is God's framework to prepare an unholy people to dwell with a holy

God. By His incarnation and atoning sacrifice, Jesus Christ is today our Immanuel, "God with us" to save us. • To You, O Lord, we offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving for Your daily blessings of forgiveness, food, consecration, and peace in Christ. Amen.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 8:1 A new section presents God's guidelines for the ordination of the priesthood. God commands Moses to conduct the initial rite of ordination for the high priest, Aaron, and his sons.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 8:2 The Lord prescribes four things necessary for ordination: vestments worn by the priests when they officiated at the altar; holy anointing oil that sanctified a person or object (Ex 30:22–33); three animals for the sin offering (4:3), burnt offering (1:10–13; 9:2), and ordination offering (3:7–11); and unleavened bread. One piece from each of the three classes of bread was presented with the fat of the ordination offering (7:12). Gr Naz: "No one is worthy of the mightiness of God, and the sacrifice, and priesthood, who has not first presented himself to God, a living, holy sacrifice, and set forth the reasonable, well-pleasing service, and sacrificed to God the sacrifice of praise and the contrite spirit, which is the only sacrifice required of us by the Giver of all" (*NPNF* 2 7:223).

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 8:3 *all the congregation*. Ordination was a public worship service involving the entire Israelite community. *tent of meeting*. See note, 1:1.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 8:7–9 Each priest wore his linen underskirt overlaid with a white linen tunic; a linen sash embroidered with blue, purple, or scarlet yarn; and a linen cap. For the high priest's garments, cf Ex 28. See p 141.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 8:8 *Urim and the Thummim*. See note, 1Sm 28:6; see also "seek," p 843.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 8:10 *anointing oil*. See note, v 2. *consecrated*. See p 6.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 8:12 With an application of sacred anointing oil, God sets Aaron apart for his holy work as high priest.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 8:13 *caps*. Unlike the high priest, who wore a turban with a gold plate inscribed with the words "Yahweh's holiness," Aaron's four sons—Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar—wore linen caps when officiating (Ex 28:40).

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 8:14 *laid their hands on the head*. See note, 1:4.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 8:15 See note, 4:6–7. *horns of the altar*. Cf Ex 38:1–2.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 8:17 *outside the camp*. See note, 4:11–12.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 8:21 *burnt offering*. See pp 170–71. *pleasing aroma, a food offering*. See note, 1:9.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 8:22–29 *ram of ordination*. Third sacrifice offered during rite of ordination. Normally, a peace offering was made at this time. The ordination sacrifice differed from the peace offering in three ways. First, Moses splashed blood on the sides of the altar, then applied blood to the right ear, right thumb, and right big toe of the priestly candidates. Second, Moses performed a unique wave offering (vv 26–27). Finally, Moses received the breast, rather than the thigh, because he was not a priest, though he was a Levite.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 8:23–24 See note, Ex 29:20.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 8:27 *in the hands*. See note, Ex 29:9–10, 20, 24–25. *wave offering*. See note, 7:30–35.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 8:28 *pleasing aroma, a food offering*. See note, 1:9.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 8:29 *Moses' portion*. See note, vv 22–29.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 8:30 See note, Ex 29:21.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 8:33–36 Installation ceremony took seven full days; penalty for a priest leaving early was death.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON **Ch 8** Moses consecrates Aaron as high priest and Aaron's sons as priests. Today, Jesus is our great High Priest (Heb 2:17; 3:1; 7:26). We come before Him as sinners in need of consecration. As with the OT priests, it is God's cleansing that makes us holy. In Baptism, God washes us clean (1Co 6:11). He anoints us with the Holy Spirit (2Co 1:21–22). Christ Himself consecrates us as priests (Eph 5:26–27). • "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from Your presence, and take not Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit" (Ps 51:10–12). Amen.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 9:1–4 The eighth day of ordination marked the beginning of a new era. Prior to this day, Moses had served as officiant. But the days of purification and consecration were complete, and Aaron and his sons began their service to God in their capacity as high priest and priests.

(Note how the seven days of consecration correspond to the seven days of creation. See p 217.)
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 9:5 *stood before the* LORD. As part of their worship of God, the entire Israelite community gathered before Him.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 9:7 *sin offering*. See note, 4:3. *burnt offering*. See pp 170–71. *atonement*. See p 5.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 9:9 See note, 4:6–7.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 9:11 See note, 4:11–12.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 9:15 *the people's offering*. Leaders of various tribes brought their offerings to Aaron (vv 1–5a). Aaron presented them to God (vv 15–21), performing the rite of atonement on behalf of the Israelite congregation (v 7b).
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 9:18 *peace offerings for the people*. This special offering, instituted only on high holy days and special occasions, marked "peace" between God and man and included a meal shared by family and invited guests of the offerer. Most likely, the leaders shared a communal meal involving the meat of this sacrifice. See pp 170–71.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 9:21 *wave offering*. See note, 7:30–35.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 9:22 *lifted up his hands … blessed*. Aaron lifted his hands toward the congregation and bestowed God's blessing on them. Cf Dt 10:8; 1Ch 23:13; see "bless," p 842. *he came down*. Aaron came down the altar ramp. See note, Ex 20:26.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 9:23 Moses led Aaron into the tent of meeting to set the precedent for daily entry of the high priest into the Holy Place (Ex 28:29) to burn incense (Ex 30:7–8). *they blessed*. They returned with an unstated blessing from almighty God. *the glory of the* LORD. See pp 6–7.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 9:24 *consumed*. God's fire "ate up" the burnt offering lying on the altar.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON **Ch 9** Aaron begins his priestly duties with God's approval. In the Divine Service, God's people today share much in common with God's OT people. Like them, we come before God and humbly confess our sins. We also seek anew the promise of forgiveness offered by God's grace. • Precious Lord, we thank You for the glimpse of salvation in the sacrifices offered by Your OT priests. May we grow to understand the binding relationship we share through the Aaronic blessing and the communal meal made possible by the great atoning offering of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Amen.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON **Ch 10** Nadab and Abihu bring unauthorized fire into God's presence and pay with their lives for failing to distinguish between holy and common, a priestly requirement (v 10).
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 10:1 *censer*. Ceremonial container holding hot coals for burning incense. Cf 16:12–13. *unauthorized fire*. Not authorized by God for use in the Divine Service. The character of the offense is not fully clear. Iren: "The heretics, indeed, who bring strange fire to the altar of God—namely, strange doctrines—shall be burned up by the fire from heaven, as were Nadab and Abihu" (*ANF* 1:497).
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 10:2 *fire came out*. Holy fire from the Most Holy Place. See note, Jb 1:16. *consumed them*. Ironically, God's earlier sign of blessing (9:24) here expresses condemnation. He does not tolerate man's arbitrary worship procedures. He alone provides the ordinances governing divine worship. Cf Ex 40; Nu 7.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 10:3 *sanctified … glorified*. God, the source of all holiness, expects His priests to treat Him as holy, and then God's people will do so as well. *Aaron held his peace*. He accepted God's decision.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 10:4–5 *Mishael and Elzaphan*. Nadab and Abihu's cousins.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 10:6–7 Aaron and his surviving two sons are not to mourn or attend the funeral; God has anointed them as priests, and their service is confined to the tent of meeting. At Jesus' trial, the high priest tore his clothes (Mt 26:65), contrary to Mosaic Law. As the temple curtain was ripped apart at Christ's death, so, too, was the priestly office ripped apart. See notes, Mk 15:38; Lk 23:45.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 10:9 Priests were not allowed to drink intoxicating beverages before or during the time they carried out their liturgical duties. Some commentaries suggest that Nadab and Abihu were drunk in v 1, but most likely intoxicating drink is mentioned here because drinking from the "cup of consolation" was part of the funeral service (Jer 16:7).
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 10:10 God's OT priests were responsible for determining what was God's (holy) and what was not (common). All rituals were performed to safeguard God's holiness and protect His people from the consequences of desecrating His holiness.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 10:11 *teach the people*. God's priests were to share instruction and ritual knowledge with God's people. See notes, Dt

6:6–9; Pr 1:8; see also p 555.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 10:12–15 Sacrifices begun (ch 9) before the deaths of Aaron's two sons were not made unclean by their deaths. God commanded use of these sacrifices as food for Aaron and his children.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 10:12 *most holy*. See note, 2:3.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 10:16 *sin offering*. See note, 4:3. *burned up!* Moses becomes angry after learning that a sin offering was burned instead of eaten.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 10:17 *bear the iniquity*. A chain of accountability was established. The Levites bore the iniquity of the people (Nu 18:23). The Aaronic priests bore the iniquity of the whole priesthood (Nu 18:1). The high priest bore the iniquity for acts of sacrilege during divine worship (Ex 28:38). Then, on the Day of Atonement, which God instituted because of Nadab and Abihu's actions, a scapegoat bore the iniquities of people and priests, lest any should die for a sacrilege to God's holiness (Lv 16:21–22). *atonement*. See p 5.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 10:18 The law governing sin offerings was broken. When blood of the sin offering was used to atone for a priest and the blood was sprinkled in the tent of meeting, the offering was then burned. However, when the sin offering was not for priestly atonement, the meat was eaten. In this instance, the priests confused the two offerings.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 10:19 *yet such things as these have happened to me!* After the death of his sons, Aaron was extra cautious in his actions.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 10:20 Moses was satisfied that Aaron's actions were sincere and not an act of rebellion against the Lord.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON **Ch 10** The story of Nadab and Abihu's thoughtlessness shows us that God is present in grace and in wrath. The God who justifies sinners also condemns those who will not sanctify the Lord. God's people, the beneficiaries of His grace, should serve the Lord in reverence and awe (Heb 12:28–29). Jesus Christ, who bore the sins of all, declares us acceptable to God (1Pt 2:24). Scripture calls this justification. • Lord, how awesome is Your almighty power. Thank You for Your grace, which justified sinners like us and made us holy through the body and blood of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON **Ch 11** Part of the manual of purity (chs 11–15), here dealing with dietary rules. Because the family table was an extension of the Lord's altar, God proclaimed what foods would defile them

("unclean") or not defile them ("clean"). By eating unclean foods, the people would die in their impurity as Nadab and Abihu had done (10:1). See p 300.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 11:1 God addresses both Moses and Aaron for the first time. As high priest, Aaron is included as a custodian of God's teachings.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 11:3–8 Israelites could eat meat from an animal only if it had a split hoof and chewed its cud. Specific examples are provided to avoid confusion.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 11:9–12 Fish could be eaten only if they had scales and fins.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 11:13–19 A list of birds that are unclean and not to be eaten. Some are birds of prey, and others feed on carcasses of dead animals.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 11:20–23 Insects that walked on all fours were unclean. Since insects have six or more legs and not four, these regulations seem to apply to insects that move (creep) like an animal on four legs. Hopping insects, including locusts, katydids, crickets, and grasshoppers, distinguished themselves and were edible.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 11:24–28 Contact with a carcass made an individual unclean until the ritual bath before sunset.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 11:29–38 Israelites or anyone living within their camp became unclean by touching the following: dead rodents or reptiles (vv 29–31), an article onto which a carcass falls (v 32), a container into which a carcass falls (v 33), contaminated food or drink (v 34), oven or stove onto which part of a carcass falls (v 35), a carcass in a spring or cistern (v 36), and wet seed onto which part of a carcass falls (vv 37–38).

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 11:39–40 Ritual impurity also resulted from touching the carcass of an edible, four-legged animal found dead from natural causes.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 11:41–43 Israelites seeing a snake could not help but recall the fall into sin and God's promise of a Savior to deliver them. See note, Gn 3:15.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 11:44–45 *For I am the* LORD. This covenant phrase appears 45 times from here to the end of Lv and served to remind the Israelites that He had distinguished Israel from other nations (20:24), that

He might sanctify the chosen people (20:8; 21:8) and be their God. See note, Ex 20:2.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 11:44 *Consecrate … holy*. We might define as holy anything belonging to the sphere of God's being or activity. See "holy," p 7. Ter: "The will of God is our sanctification, for He wishes His 'image'—us—to become likewise His 'likeness'; that we may be 'holy' just as [He] Himself is 'holy'" (*ANF* 4:50).

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 11:46–47 *This is the law*. Summary statement. Although multifaceted, all of God's ordinances fall under a common heading of "the Law," lovingly designed by God so that His people might share in His holiness.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON **Ch 11** Each dietary regulation was lovingly put in place so that God might protect His people from death such as what was experienced by Nadab and Abihu, who died because of their impurity. As seen in this section, the wages of sin is death (Rm 6:23a). Disobedience of God's Word results in death. But in His Word, He grants life and fellowship by His grace. • Merciful Lord, You alone are holy, and You shared holiness with us through the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ, who fulfilled the Law, and declared what was unclean to be clean. We thank You, Lord, for Your great mercy, through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 12:2 *unclean seven days*. After seven days, the new mother could resume normal family life.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 12:3 Cf Gn 17:10–14.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 12:4 *blood of her purifying*. She was not ritually unclean, but not yet ritually clean. Discharge during the first week or two after a birth was known as "the blood of purity."

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 12:5 *unclean two weeks*. As throughout the Law, male and female are distinguished in God's order. However, no explanation is given for the doubling of the purification time between male and female babies. The weeks may mark the boundaries for postnatal discharge as the Israelites typically experienced them.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 12:6 *burnt offering … sin offering*. These sacrifices purified the new mother from the impurity of her blood flow. Menstruation was not regarded as sinful, but the flow of blood made people ritually unclean (15:19–24). See note, Ex 19:15.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 12:7 *atonement*. See p 5. *clean from the flow of her blood*. Through the ritual burning of the lamb on the altar, the woman

was accepted by God and readmitted into the community.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 12:8 *cannot afford a lamb*. See note, 1:14. Lk 2:22–32 records the account of Mary's sacrifice when Jesus was born.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON **Ch 12** Childbirth made a woman ceremonially unclean. These rules would exempt the new mother from the rigors of the Law and her typical role in family/community life. They also promised cleansing and restoration. In these ways, the Lord acts mercifully toward His daughters, even as He remembers us with kindness. • Merciful Father, we thank You for the rich blessings we find in Your Word. There we see how You placed Your Son under the Law, that we might have rest and peace. Amen.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON **Chs 13–14** God's laws regarding unclean skin diseases, commonly called leprosy. No one English word covers all the skin diseases in these chapters.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 13:3 *priest shall examine*. God commanded His priests to distinguish "between the unclean and the clean" (11:47). Priests acted as religious officials, not as doctors prescribing treatments. *hair … turned white*. Two symptoms verified a skin disease: white hair in a discolored area, and an ulcer with raw (dying) flesh. *pronounce him unclean*. By priestly declaration, the affected individual was no longer able to participate in public worship until declared clean again.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 13:4 *seven days*. Period of home quarantine to keep the infected individual under surveillance before declaring him clean or unclean. The significance of seven days is not explained in religious terms; however, see p 217.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 13:5–6 *another seven*. If the infection has not spread in 14 days, the individual is declared clean. If the infection has spread, the individual is unclean. Cf vv 7–8.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 13:6 *eruption*. Scab. *wash his clothes and be clean*. See note, v 34.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 13:13 *turned white*. The significance of its turning white is not absolutely clear. However, since it was not red, there were apparently no open wounds.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 13:14 *raw flesh*. Skin ulcer.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 13:16–17 See note, v 13.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 13:20 *leprous disease that has broken out in the boil*. Formed in the scar left by a boil.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 13:21 *shut him up seven days*. See note, v 4.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 13:23 If the spot in the boil did not spread, no skin disease was present.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 13:24–28 Skin diseases could occur in burn scars. If reddish-white or white raw flesh contained white hair, the individual was declared unclean. Reddish-white or white raw flesh without white hair resulted in a seven-day quarantine. See note, v 4. On the seventh day, the priest decided if the disease was spreading before declaring the individual clean or unclean.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 13:29–37 Skin diseases of the head and chin were marked by infected flesh with yellow and thinning hair. After a week, the priest reexamined the infected area to determine if it was spreading or subsiding, as well as to search for the existence of yellow hair. If the infection was subsiding, the individual was declared clean. His clothes had to be washed before he became ritually clean. If the infection spread or yellow hairs were present, the priest declared the individual unclean.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 13:34 *wash his clothes and be clean*. Ritual washings were not done specifically for sanitary purposes but to remove ritual uncleanness before the holy God. Cf 1:9; 8:6.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 13:39 *leukoderma*. Noncontagious rash common in warm climates.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 13:42–46 Most serious of all skin diseases. Sufferers were to give warning of their uncleanness with shouts of "Unclean, unclean!" Their disease was transferable and could make others ceremonially unclean on contact. Infected individuals must live outside the camp and have no further contact with family and friends. Most significant is their exclusion from divine worship.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 13:47 *leprous disease in a garment*. Infection of mold or mildew on items of clothing. Mold appears greenish; mildew is yellowish.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 13:48 *warp*. Vertical fabric threads. *woof*. Horizontal fabric threads. *linen or wool, or in a skin*. Wool and flax were the most common fibers used in ancient cloth weaving. Skins, or hides, were also used as clothing.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 13:49 *shown to the priest*. See note, v 3.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 13:52 Fabrics with an irremovable infection were destroyed.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 13:54 See note, v 34. Fabrics were to be reevaluated just as individuals with skin disease were.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 13:55 *rot*. Most likely a fungus that has eaten away the cloth.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 13:56–57 Infected area must be cut out to prevent further contamination, but if it appears again, the article must be destroyed.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 13:59 See note, 11:46–47.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON **Ch 13** Infectious skin diseases, whether of the body or of clothing, make individuals unclean. Priestly legislation keeps God's people clean, so that God might dwell among them and bless them (cf Ex 25:8). In Lv 13, we witness minute details of God's Law. We also see God's grace and His hand of protection providing guidelines for what is clean and unclean for His OT people. In Baptism, God clothes people today with Christ's "righteousness and holiness" (Eph 4:23–24). Christ strips off our old self (Eph 4:22), and we are clothed in Him (Rm 13:14). • Lord, we see Your hand of grace in the teachings of Leviticus. Without it, You could not dwell among Your people. Strengthen us, we pray, with Your precious Word and Sacraments to life eternal. In Jesus' name. Amen.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 14:2 *law of the leprous person*. See note, 11:46–47.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 14:4–6 Purification rites for the leprous person. God's intervention, through priestly actions, brings individuals back into God's covenant community.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 14:6 *yarn*. Used for binding other items, though the process is not explained.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 14:7–9 The ancient Israelites held that birds symbolized human vitality, so this rite symbolized the healed person's freedom and return from social death to life.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 14:10–20 On the eighth day, the cleansed individual brought the required offerings, oils, and flour to the sanctuary. The purificatory priest received the offerings and dedicated them to God. Like the ordination offering, blood is applied to the right earlobe, right thumb, and right big toe of the individual. Before the priest applied holy oil to the same places, he sprinkled oil seven times on the courtyard floor. After applying holy oil to the right ear, hand, and foot, remaining oil was "put on" the individual's head, in contrast to the high priest, on whom the oil was

"poured" (8:12; 21:10). Remaining blood was used to perform the rite of atonement. A sin offering, burnt offering, and grain offering followed, establishing the person as clean and acceptable to God.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 14:10 *without blemish*. See note, 1:3. *fine flour*. See note, 2:1.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 14:12 *guilt offering*. See note, 5:15–16. *wave offering*. See note, 7:30–35.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 14:13 *sin offering*. See note, 4:3. *burnt offering*. See pp 170–71.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 14:14 Recalls the ordination of God's priests. See note, 8:22–29.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 14:15–18 Holy oil was placed on the person's head in contrast to the pollution of his head (cf 13:43–44). The head of a person governs the body and so represents the whole person.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 14:18 *atonement*. See p 5.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 14:20 *grain offering*. See pp 170–71.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 14:21–32 By God's grace, even the poor among the Israelites were provided a means of purification from the infection of skin disease. See note, 1:14.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 14:1–32 Disease is a consequence of the fall into sin, which isolates God's people outside the boundaries He established, but God provides the means to readmit those whose skin disease is healed. Thankfully, God now provides a means for the sinner, outside His boundaries, to return to Him: His own Son, Jesus Christ. When we repent, Christ removes our impurities, that we might daily be clothed in our Baptism (Gal 3:27; Col 3:9–10). • Lord God, we come before You with a deep sense of our unworthiness and of Your infinite love and grace. Forgive, protect, and guide us always, for Jesus' sake. Amen.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 14:33–53 Purification of homes infested by mold or mildew. Compare to 13:47–59; in both cases, if the disease has not spread in the fabric or home, they are declared clean.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 14:34 *Canaan, which I give you for a possession*. Land of Canaan was promised to Abram's descendants (Gn 15:18–21). Although God allowed the Israelites to settle in Canaan, the land belonged to God; the Israelites were tenants. See notes, Jsh 1:6; 13:6. They lived together with God; therefore, their homes and towns were to be kept ritually clean. *I put a case of leprous disease in a house*. Hurrian and Hittite

cultures believed that infections were a sign that the gods were displeased; Babylonians believed infections were a sign of demon possession. God counters these claims, stating that sometimes He sends infections that make homes and people unclean.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 14:36 Priests were allowed to leave the tent of meeting. In this case, they made a house call to determine whether a home was clean or unclean.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 14:37 *greenish or reddish spots*. Fungus such as mold or mildew reaching below the surface of the mud-plastered walls.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 14:38 *seven days*. See note, 13:4.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 14:40 *an unclean place*. Outside the community, where trash and other unclean items were placed to prevent the pollution of God's people.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 14:48–53 Before homes were declared clean, a rite of purification (comparable to those for an infected person) was performed (cf vv 1–9).

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 14:54 See note, 11:46–47.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 14:33–57 Infected individuals and homes must be removed from God's presence. In His mercy, God provides His priests with purification rites to cleanse individuals and homes. Ultimately, God sent His Son to enter the unclean home of sinners (cf Mt 26:6). Christ purifies and blesses our homes by His presence, as we pray, "Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest, and let these gifts to us be blessed." • Bless our homes, Lord, we pray. Make them safe havens for the hearing of Your precious Word. Protect us from the power of the evil one. Amen.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 15:2–15 Abnormal male or female genital discharges are addressed.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 15:3 *uncleanness*. Infections disqualified individuals from contact with holy things, making them ritually impure.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 15:4–12 Uncleanness could be transferred through contact with an infected person's bed or chair (vv 4–6), body (v 7), spittle (v 8), saddle (v 9), or vessels (v 12). Those made unclean remained unclean until their ritual bath at sundown.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 15:4 *bed*. Perhaps an actual bed; most likely padding for sleeping on a dirt floor.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 15:5 *unclean until the evening*. See note, 11:24–28.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 15:12 Porous nature of earthenware retained infections. Breaking the object and removing it from the camp could prevent a transfer of the infection. Wooden vessels could be thoroughly cleansed, removing any infection.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 15:13 *seven days*. See note, 13:4.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 15:14–15 The eighth day marked a new beginning in the purification process. For information on sin offerings and burnt offerings, see pp 170–71.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 15:16–18 Any emission of semen during sexual intercourse made both the man and woman ritually unclean, requiring the washing of themselves and their bedding. After sexual intercourse, normal daily functions could occur without contaminating others, unlike the rules for an infectious skin disease (14:1–9). After intercourse, the couple was required to bathe, and they remained unclean until their ritual evening bath.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 15:19–24 Menstruation made a woman ritually unclean and unable to come into God's presence in worship. If a man had sexual intercourse with a woman during her monthly period, her menstrual blood made him ritually unclean for seven days. These rules did not prevent women from their normal work routines, but placed restrictions on items that could come in contact with menstrual blood. No rite of purification is presented in this text, which implies that she need only count off seven days after the beginning of the issue of blood and take a ritual bath on the eighth day to become clean again.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 15:25–30 Abnormal menstrual blood flow is addressed in these verses. Once the abnormal flow ceased, the woman was to mark off seven days. On the eighth day, she presented the required doves or pigeons to the priest.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 15:29 Under normal circumstances, a woman did not bring a sacrifice at the end of her monthly flow. Women performed these sacrifices when an abnormal menstrual flow ended.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 15:31 In grace, God provided ordinances to prevent deaths like those experienced by Nadab and Abihu when they brought "unauthorized fire" into the Lord's presence. Cf 10:1–2.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 15:32 See note, 11:46–47.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON **Ch 15** Ritual impurity separates God from His people. God's declaration that semen and menstrual blood cause uncleanness prevents His people from engaging in ritual prostitution. Lv 15

provides specific examples of how God provides a means to remove impurity and to make His people clean again. His Word, which threatens by the Law, also cleanses hearts by faith in the Gospel. • Lord, You alone have the power to make us clean in Your sight through the washing of Holy Baptism. Renew us by Your grace. Amen.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 16:2 *not to come at any time into the Holy Place*. The deaths of Nadab and Abihu necessitated regulations for the protection of those coming into God's presence. Aaron is not to enter the Most Holy Place indiscriminately (here called just "Holy Place"), but only on the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur), and then only after carefully following God's prescribed means of cleansing. *I will appear in the cloud*. Refers to the cloud of smoke from the incense burned by the high priest as he entered God's presence (v 13). These regulations protected those serving God from defiling themselves and incurring God's wrath. Cf Ex 19:16–25. *mercy seat*. See note, Ex 25:17.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 16:3 *sin offering*. See note, 4:3. *burnt offering*. Cf 1:1–9; see pp 170–71.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 16:4 Before entering into the Lord's presence, the high priest prepared himself by washing completely and dressing in the manner God ordained. These are the high priest's "sacred vestments." Cf 8:5–9.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 16:5 On the Day of Atonement, Aaron offered two sacrifices for the entire Israelite community, including resident aliens.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 16:6 *offering for himself*. See note, 4:28.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 16:8 *cast lots*. One male goat was designated as belonging to God; the second was assigned to Azazel. *Azazel*. Commonly translated as "a departing goat" or "[e]scapegoat." In modern Hbr, the words *lekh la-azazel* correspond to Eng "go to hell," which is exactly what the Israelite community wanted to happen to their sins. However, see note, 17:7.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 16:10 *make atonement over it*. The high priest placed his hands on the scapegoat and confessed Israel's sins over it before sending it off into the wilderness to die (vv 21–22). The death of this goat atoned for Israel's sins. See p 5.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 16:12 *beaten small*. Finely ground.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 16:13 *cloud*. Provided a screen between the high priest and the mercy seat. The mercy seat is where God dwells; His

presence was often marked by a cloud or theophany. See p 39. God was present whether or not the cloud/theophany was visible. *so that he does not die*. The incense cloud protected the high priest from seeing the Lord and dying.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 16:14 *seven times*. See note, 4:6–7.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 16:15–16 *atonement for the Holy Place*. The blood sprinkled on the mercy seat and on the ground cleansed the Most Holy Place of Israel's sins. See note, v 2. *tent of meeting*. See note, Ex 27:21.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 16:18–19 Leaving the Most Holy Place, the high priest carried the sacrificial blood and cleansed the altar of burnt offering in the courtyard of the tent of meeting. Over the course of the year, this altar had become defiled by the sins brought before it. Through ritual cleansing, blood was sprinkled seven times, symbolizing God's perfection in this act.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 16:21 *lay both his hands on the head*. With the laying on of hands, the priest offers a corporate confession of the acts of rebellion and sin the Israelites had committed against God. In so doing, the high priest transferred their sin to the scapegoat, which would take their sins away from them and into the wilderness. *confess … the iniquities*. Wicked acts performed against God; sin.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 16:23 *leave them there*. The high priest's garments are holy and must stay inside the tent of meeting. Removing them would defile God's holiness.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 16:24 Final act of cleansing for the altar of burnt offerings.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 16:26 *Azazel*. See note, v 8.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 16:27 See note, 4:11–12.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 16:29 The Day of Atonement was celebrated annually on the 10th day of the seventh month. Included in the self-denial practiced by the Israelites was a 24-hour abstention from food, drink, bathing, anointing, and sexual intercourse. The Israelites often wore sackcloth and ashes as a sign of mourning over the sins they had committed. See note, Jb 16:15.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 16:30 *atonement*. See p 5.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 16:31 *Sabbath of solemn rest*. God connected the cessation of work on the seventh day of the week (Ex 31:15), the cessation of work in the seventh month on the Day of Atonement, and the complete

cessation of cultivation of the land in the seventh year (Lv 25:4). *you shall afflict yourselves*. By showing penitence before God. See note, v 29. "There are monstrous debates about changing the law, ceremonies of the new law, and changing the Sabbath Day. They have all sprung from the false belief that in the Church there must be something similar to the services set forth in Leviticus [1–7], and that Christ had commissioned the apostles and bishops to come up with new ceremonies necessary to salvation. These errors crept into the Church when the righteousness that comes through faith was not taught clearly enough. Some debate whether or not keeping the Lord's Day is not a divine right, but similar to it. They prescribe the extent to which it is lawful to work on holy days. What else are such disputes except traps for the conscience?" (AC XXVIII 61–64).

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 16:34 *statute forever*. See note, 6:22.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON **Ch 16** Once a year, on the 10th day of the seventh month, God implemented a mandatory Day of Atonement. Ritual sacrifices cleansed the sanctuary, tent of meeting, altar, priests, and entire congregation of their sins. The chief cleansing agent was blood, which pointed forward to Jesus' sacrifice. By His death, Jesus offered the perfect sacrifice and entered the heavenly sanctuary with His blood (Heb 9:11–14), opening the way for believers to enter into God's presence (Heb 6:20). • We give You thanks, Lord, for Your abundant mercy. You heard Your people's prayers of repentance and sent Your precious Son to die for all. By His blood, we are made clean and enter into eternal life with You. Amen.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 17:1–4 Outside the tabernacle, God considered the ritual sacrifice of animals and disposal of their blood a capital crime. Only those sacrifices commanded by God and offered at the entrance to the tent of meeting were permitted.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 17:4 *bloodguilt*. The life of any creature is in its blood (vv 11, 14). God compares their needless slaughter to murder of human beings. *cut off*. God's punishment may include execution at His own hand, but most certainly a dismissal from God's covenant community.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 17:5 *they sacrifice in the open field*. Pagan nations poured the blood of slaughtered animals on the ground to appease the "spirits." The Lord required singular devotion and one altar. *tent of meeting*. See note, Ex 27:21. *peace offerings*. See pp 170–71.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 17:7 *goat demons*. Earth spirits envisaged as he-goats much like the satyrs of mythology. Cf 2Ch 11:15; Is 13:21; 34:14.

Some interpreters associate these pagan deities with the Azazel goat (see note, 16:8), though Scripture never affirms such an association. *they whore*. See note, Hos 4:13.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 17:9 *cut off*. See note, v 4.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 17:1–9 God proclaims His dwelling place as the exclusive place for sacrifices. He does not want His people running after false gods. Today, avoid every association with idolatrous practices. Jesus is the only way to the Father (Jn 1:17–18; 14:6). He alone atones for our sins of idolatry with His precious blood (Rm 3:25). By God's grace, He offers eternal life (Rm 6:23). • Father in heaven, grant us undivided hearts focused on Your dear Son, who came to ransom us from our sin, that we might receive the joy of Your salvation. Amen.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 17:10–12 God reserved blood for a divine purpose, the atonement of sins.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 17:13–14 The Israelites and those who came among them as strangers were permitted to hunt birds and animals to supplement their diets. The blood from these birds and animals was drained on the ground and covered with earth. Dt 12:15–16, 20–25; 15:21–23 use this ordinance as permission to slaughter domestic animals for their consumption.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 17:14 *cut off*. See note, v 4.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 17:15–16 See note, 11:24–28.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 17:10–16 God forbids the wanton killing of birds and animals. He desires that respect be shown for all life. Those who kill wantonly are held accountable for each life. Thanks be to God for the precious, life-giving blood of Jesus, who has reconciled us to the Father. • Father of mercy, You provided Your ancient people with ordinances that respected lifeblood as the atonement of sins. By Christ's blood, You redeemed all people. Thank You for Your gracious gifts through Jesus Christ. Amen.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 18:1–5 God often used a personal identifier when addressing His people. In doing so, He reminded them of His covenant with them at Mount Sinai and showed that His personal interest was in their well-being. In this case, God connected their sexual relationships with His provision of land. Cf Gn 26:24; 35:11. Some provisions here bear similarity to the Code of Hammurabi (c 1728–1686 BC).

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 18:3 *land of Egypt … land of Canaan*. God detailed the sexual practices He abhors, in order that the Israelites might live before Him in purity, unlike the Egyptians and Canaanites. Because of their sexual practices, Canaan, the land promised to the Israelites, is defiled, and their people will soon be "vomited out" of the land as God leads the Israelites in (v 25). Bas: "It appears that the legislator does not include every kind of sin, but particularly prohibits those of the Egyptians, from among whom Israel had gone forth, and of the Canaanites among whom they were going" (*NPNF* 2 8:213).
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 18:5 *statutes … rules*. See p 971. *shall live by them: I am the* LORD. God offers the promise of life, including vitality, prosperity, and blessings, if His decrees are kept (Dt 30:15–20).
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 18:6–23 Pointedly, God provides provisions for holiness in sexuality by addressing key issues of incest (vv 6–16), adultery (vv 17–18, 20), sacrificial idolatry (v 21), homosexuality (v 22), and bestiality (v 23). The Bible records Abraham's intercourse with a servant (Gn 16:1–4), Lot's incest (Gn 19:36), and Jacob's marriage to his first cousins, who were also sisters (Gn 29), but it never promotes such relationships. God restates here that His original intent at creation was the ordered intimacy between one man and one woman. He makes plain that close intermarriage is now forbidden. See note, Gn 4:19.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 18:6 *uncover nakedness*. Euphemism for sexual relations; a command against nudity. See note, Gn 9:22; cf Lv 20:17. A person's nakedness involves personal honor, modesty, and sexual identity.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 18:10 *your own nakedness*. Incest degrades and often destroys those who participate in it, even entire families.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 18:17 *depravity*. Technical term in ritual legislation used to describe a deliberate act of sexual misconduct such as rape, prostitution (19:29; cf Ezk 16:26–27), and incest (Lv 20:14).
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 18:18 *rival wife to her sister*. Marriage to a sister-in-law was permitted only after the death of her sister. See note, vv 6–23.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 18:19 *menstrual uncleanness*. Cf 15:19–24.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 18:20 *unclean with her*. See note, 15:16–18. This legislation may be addressing the consensual act of intercourse to impregnate the wife of an infertile man.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 18:21 In pagan cultures, children were offered to gods such as Molech, an Ammonite god (2Ki 16:3). These children were slaughtered or perhaps incinerated (Ezk 16:21). Such acts desecrate God's holy name. See note, 2Ki 23:10.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 18:22 Sexual intercourse was ordained by God for procreation (cf Gn 1:28) and must involve husband and wife, the "male and female" in Gn 1:27. *abomination*. See note, Pr 6:16. On homosexuality, see p 1911.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 18:23 *perversion*. Disruption in the divinely established order by the union of what should be kept apart. Bestiality, or the sexual union of a human being and an animal, is perverted behavior.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 18:24 *I am driving out*. Sexual purity commanded by God had implications for all nations. Because of the sexual practices of the Canaanites, God used the Israelites to drive them from their land.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 18:25 *the land vomited out its inhabitants*. God in His purity looked upon the displacement of the Canaanites as accomplished fact. The correlation between the ugliness of sin and the "vomit[ing] out" restated divine intervention as God called people to account for their deeds and let them suffer the consequences of their sin. See note, Gn 9:25. See also p 345.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 18:26 *abominations*. See note, v 22.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 18:27 God warns that those now inhabiting Canaan polluted the land by their sin. He commissions Israel to protect His land from sexual pollution.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 18:28 *lest the land vomit you out*. The Israelites were given possession of the land on a conditional basis. They must remain sexually pure and follow God's tenets or be subjected to the same consequences as the Canaanites before them. Cf Dt 28.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 18:29 *abominations*. See note, v 22.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 18:30 *abominable customs*. See note, v 22. *I am the* LORD *your God*. God's name here and in v 2 reminds His people from whom these ordinances come.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON **Ch 18** Sexual purity is so important to God that He issued decrees detailing how to protect it. Only intercourse between a husband and wife is approved by God. God speaks against sexual sins among Christians as well (Eph 5:5–6; Heb 13:4). The Gospel sets people

free from sin, but that freedom is not an excuse for committing sin. God knows our hearts and provides marriage to protect us from sin (1Co 7:2). In faithfulness to His Church, He hallows us and provides for our forgiveness from all sins. • Lord of the Church, forgive me and protect my heart from all impurity. Keep me from sexual sin by the power of Your Holy Spirit. Amen.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 19:2 *congregation*. God addressed the Israelites as a liturgical community. See "great congregation," p 842. Later, God will address each person individually. The following commands use the singular "you": vv 9, 10, 12, 15b–18, 19b, 29, 32, 34b. *I the* LORD *your God am holy*. Only God is intrinsically holy; He is the source of Israel's holiness. See "holy," p 7.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 19:3–4 Fourth, Third, and First Commandments restated.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 19:5 *peace offerings*. See pp 170–71. *accepted*. Unacceptable peace offerings cut God's people off from His blessings flowing through their family and into their congregation. In the truest sense, it was spiritual suicide.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 19:7–8 *tainted … profaned*. Without refrigeration, meat became rancid and unacceptable to God. See note, 7:18. *cut off*. See note, 17:4.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 19:1–8 God ties His holiness to Israel in words not unlike those of Jesus, who said, "I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in Me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing" (Jn 15:5). He is the source of our holiness, life, and salvation. God attached Himself to us through His means of grace. God's Word and Sacraments feed and nourish us as surely as a vine feeds and nourishes its branches. • Lord, by Your abundant grace, have mercy on us. Nurture us through Your Word and Sacraments, through Christ, our Savior. Amen.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 19:9–10 God blessed the poor and aliens with a portion of the crops and vineyards left for them as food.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 19:13 *oppress … rob*. Command against exploitation. *wages … not remain with you*. Protection for society's poor.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 19:14 *stumbling block*. Anything that would cause the blind to fall. *fear your God*. See p 1001.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 19:15–16 In response to His righteousness, the Lord expected fairness from His people.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 19:17 *not hate your brother*. A society filled with hatred will soon tear itself away from God and self-destruct. *reason frankly*. Jesus expounded this ordinance in Mt 18:15–17.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 19:18 *vengeance or bear a grudge*. God pays back evildoers (Ps 94:1; Na 1:2), so thoughts of personal revenge and violence are prohibited. Cypr: "When a wrong is received, patience is to be maintained, and that vengeance is to be left to God" (*ANF* 5:555). See note, Gn 4:15. *love your neighbor as yourself*. See notes, Mt 22:37–40.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 19:9–18 God wants His holiness reflected in the lives and conduct of His people. The Israelite community shared in God's holiness, and so do believers today (cf 1Co 1:2). We are hallowed in the Lord's name. • Almighty Father, may our conduct reflect sincere faith in Your Gospel. Deliver us from evil thoughts and deeds for the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 19:19 *cattle breed with a different kind*. Living things were meant to breed with their own kind. See note, Gn 1:11. *two kinds of material*. Because the priests wore fabric of mixed yarn (Ex 28:6, 15; 39:29), others were forbidden to wear similar clothing to avoid spiritual ambiguity.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 19:20–22 Ambiguous case; the woman was not free and the betrothal was not settled. The man commits the sin of adultery and is required to sacrifice for his behavior. Had she been free, both she and her lover should be put to death (Dt 22:23–24).
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 19:22 *atonement*. See p 5. *guilt offering*. See note, 5:15–16; see also pp 170–71. *forgiven*. See note, 4:20.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 19:23–25 Fruit trees planted in Canaan were not harvested the first three years. In the fourth year, all of the fruit was declared holy and given to the priests to eat. Beginning the fifth year, the firstfruits were given to God (Ne 10:35, 37); the remainder could be used or sold.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 19:25 *increase its yield*. Offering firstfruits to God freed the remainder of the fruit for common consumption, and God blessed His people with increased yields. *I am the* LORD *your God*. See note, Ex 20:2.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 19:26 *blood*. Cf 17:10–16. *not interpret omens or tell fortunes*. See notes, Gn 30:27; Dt 18:10–11.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 19:27–28 Practices often employed by cults of the dead.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 19:29 Daughters are not property for commercial enterprise, no matter how poor or desperate the family. Families are precious to God.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 19:30 Israelite families participated in God's holiness by honoring the Sabbath (vv 2–3) and respecting God's sanctuary.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 19:31 Consulting the spirits of the dead in search of power, blessing, or help was prohibited. See note, Dt 18:10–11.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 19:32 *the gray head*. The congregation's elders. See notes, Ex 3:16; 20:12. *fear your God*. When honor and respect are paid to the elderly, God is honored, feared, and respected. See p 1001.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 19:33–34 God applied v 18 to the aliens living among them. See note, Gn 18:4.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 19:34 *love him as yourself*. Cf v 18. *strangers*. The Israelites were once aliens living in Egypt. When they were generous in their treatment of aliens, they honored God's faithfulness. Cf Ex 22:21.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 19:35–36 Prohibition of false weights and scales applied not only to the Israelites but also to aliens. If one loved one's neighbor as oneself, such dishonest business practices would never occur.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 19:37 *statutes … rules*. See p 971. *I am the* LORD. See note, Ex 20:2.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 19:19–37 Through these holy ordinances, God demands the obedience of His people. By His grace, He also chooses to dwell among them and shower them with blessings. By His hand, they were delivered from the corruption of Egypt; by His hand, they would drive out the Canaanites and settle in their land; and by His hand, the land would bring forth its abundance. Today, by the Lord's nail-pierced hands, we are His people. As God's holy people, we bring Christ's message of salvation to all nations (Mt 28:19–20), which is the ultimate expression of loving our neighbors as ourselves. • Forgive us, Lord, for we do not always love our neighbor as ourselves. Strengthen us by Your Holy Spirit, that we may continually boast in what You have done. Amen.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON **Ch 20** Penalties for the ritual defilements presented in chs 18–19.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 20:2 *children to Molech*. See note, 18:21. *stone him with stones*. Execution for acts of sacrilege.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 20:3 *cut him off*. See note, 17:4. *make My sanctuary unclean*. Sacrifice of children to Molech defiled God's sanctuary. Stoning was done outside the camp to prevent defiling the congregation (cf 24:14). *profane My holy name*. Show irreverence toward God and His sacred things.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 20:5 *set My face*. Oppose. *clan*. See pp 54–55. *cut them off*. See note, 17:4. *whoring after Molech*. God considered idolatry spiritual whoring or spiritual prostitution. Cf Nu 15:39; Ezk 16:15.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 20:6 See note, 19:31.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 20:7 *Consecrate*. See p 6. Cypr: "We ask and entreat, that we who were sanctified in baptism may continue in that which we have begun to be. And this we daily pray for; for we have need of daily sanctification, that we who daily fall away may wash out our sins by continual sanctification" (*ANF* 5:450).
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 20:8 *I am the LORD who sanctifies you*. Through ritual decrees, God made and kept His people holy. See "holy," p 7.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 20:9 This and preceding decrees were designed to preserve the family.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 20:1–9 In response for all He has done, God commands the loyalty of His people. To protect those He loves from spiritual whoring, God decrees that those who follow false gods be dealt with decisively. God wants their influence eliminated, that others will not fall away and spend eternity apart from Him. Today, God's Law continues to reveal us as sinners deserving death (Rm 3:9–20), but Jesus reveals that He came not to condemn but to save sinners (Jn 3:17–18). Through Baptism, He grants new life in His Word (Rm 6:1–11; 1Co 6:9–11). • Father, we thank You for setting us apart through the blessings of Holy Baptism. Amen.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 20:10 Penalty for adultery was death. On the blessings of marriage, see notes Gn 1:28; 2:24–25; cf Ps 128; Sg.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 20:11 *their blood is upon them*. Those punished bore their own guilt. God prevented revenge by the executed person's kinsfolk. See note, 1Ki 2:31.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 20:14 *burned with fire*. The worst kind of sexual depravity was incest with two women in the first degree of kinship.

Cremation denied them burial in a family tomb and removed all traces of their existence.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 20:17 *cut off*. See note, 17:4.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 20:20–21 *bear their sin*. Offense leads to death. *childless*. Sexual union between a man and his aunt or sister-in-law will not produce living children or will cause the children to abandon their parents.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 20:10–21 Sexual immorality defiles individuals, making them unclean. Because these individuals are God's holy people, their sexual conduct desecrates God's name as well. Today, the closest thing we have to sacrificing children on Molech's altar is the sin of abortion offered to the idol of personal convenience. God calls us to honor Him with our bodies (1Pt 1:14–15), to refrain from sexual immorality (Ac 15:29), and to offer our lives in humble service. Christians, too, are accountable to God for their behavior. Thank God, He protects and preserves families from Satan's clutches and provides forgiveness for even the most destructive sins. • Lord God, You are a light in the darkness of this world. Forgive our sins. Send Your Holy Spirit to bless and keep us. In Christ we pray. Amen.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 20:22–26 God's precepts and decrees about holiness were not new. He shared many of them with the patriarchs Abraham (Gn 12:7; 15:15–21; 17:4–8; 18:18–19; 22:17–18), Isaac (Gn 26:2–5), and Jacob (Gn 28:13–14; 35:11–12; 46:3). Here, God restated His precepts, which the Israelites may have forgotten during their Egyptian captivity. His holiness will separate them from the inhabitants of Canaan. If the Israelites remained holy before God, they would fulfill God's promise to make them a blessing (Dt 4:1–8), the blessing ultimately fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 20:22 *statutes … rules*. See p 971.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 20:24 *inherit*. See "portion," p 7. *flowing with milk and honey*. See p 6. *I am the* LORD *your God*. See note, Ex 20:2.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 20:26 *holy*. See p 7.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 20:27 See note, 19:31.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 20:22–27 In reading Lv, we might feel threatened by the Law. Do this! Don't do that! Or we may become legalistic, thinking salvation hinges on our goodness. Recognize that God made His people holy by grace, and in the Law He guides them away from the self-destructive customs of the nations. In the Gospel of Jesus Christ,

believers have freedom from their sins, freedom to please God as His beloved, chosen people. • Lord, You saw us as sinners, yet loved us still. By Your grace, You washed us in the water of Baptism and made us new creations. Sustain us with the life-giving body and blood of Your Son. Send Your Holy Spirit to make us pure. Keep us as Your ambassadors, living examples of Your love for all people. Amen.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 21:1–22:16 Joins the code of the priests (21:1–9) to the code of the high priest (21:10–15); lists defects that disqualify a priest from eating sacred food (22:1–9); provides a list of residents within a priest's house disqualified from eating sacred food (22:10–16).

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 21:1 *make himself unclean for the dead*. Touching a dead body (Nu 19:11) or entering the home of a dead person (Nu 19:14) made a priest unclean.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 21:3 An unmarried sister was legally a member of her brother's family.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 21:5 Priests were devoted to God and were not to mark their bodies as a sign of devotion to the deceased person.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 21:7 Priests were forbidden to marry women who engaged in sexual activity with other men because they defiled a priest's holiness.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 21:8 *He shall be holy to you*. The nation of Israel is to honor and respect God's priests and avoid doing anything to desecrate their holiness.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 21:9 If the daughter of a priest became a prostitute, she defiled her father. Such sacrilege was punishable by burning. Although not specifically stated, some commentators believe this analogy also applied to priests' sons.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 21:10–11 See note, v 1.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 21:13–15 See note, v 7.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 21:15 *profane his offspring*. Any male child born of a priest's union with a widow, divorcée, or prostitute was disqualified from priesthood.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 21:16–24 Physical blemishes disqualified a priest from entering God's sanctuary or holy places. The disabled or misshapen were not regarded as profane, for the Lord allowed them to perform other tasks and eat holy food.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 21:24 *all the people of Israel*. Conduct of priests was a matter of concern because priests were national leaders. Cf v 8; Ex 19:6.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 22:1–9 Relates to earlier laws (chs 11–15).
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 22:2 *holy things … they dedicate to Me*. Personal offerings donated and dedicated to the Lord by the Israelites. Priests were given a portion of the offering as compensation for their service. God required that His priests deal respectfully with all sacred objects; unclean priests were not to handle these objects at all.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 22:3 *cut off from My presence*. Not permitted into the Lord's sanctuary. See "presence," p 843.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 22:4–16 God establishes parameters for those eating His sacred meal. Those excluded were unclean family members (vv 4–8), laypeople (vv 10a, 13b), indentured servants and employees (v 10b), and daughters married to laymen (v 12). Those included were slaves of the priests and their children (v 11b), widowed or divorced daughters who had no sons to support them (v 13a), as well as the priests and their immediate families. The Lord sanctified them through the holy bread and meat that He provided (v 9).
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 21:1–22:16 God sets His priests apart. They determine what is holy and what is common (10:10). Such an important responsibility requires rules to protect their consecration before God so that they would not die as did Nadab and Abihu. All the people are responsible for helping priests maintain their sacred status before God. Today, Christ's atoning death makes us members of God's royal priesthood (1Pt 2:9). As members of His royal priesthood, God separates us from every defilement (2Co 7:1) and calls us to care for one another. • Lord, as You have set us apart for Yourself, lead us to set our hearts on You and our feet on the way of Your statutes, to the honor of Your name. Amen.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 22:17–25 Ordinances governing the animals that may be offered to God by the Israelites and the aliens living among them. See pp 170–71.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 22:18 *burnt offering*. See pp 170–71. *freewill offerings*. Voluntary, personal burnt offering or peace offering. See notes, 7:11; Ex 35:29.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 22:21 *peace offerings*. See pp 170–71.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 22:23 *vow offering*. Presented to God at the completion of a promise sworn in His name. See "vow," p 7.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 22:25 *bread of your God*. Israelites must not treat the sacrifices of holy meat as common food. *their mutilation*. Through His priests, God declared an animal suitable or unsuitable for sacrifice. Any disfigurement made the animal unsuitable.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 22:26–28 See note, Ex 23:19.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 22:29 God established these regulations so the Israelites would know for certain that their sacrifices were acceptable to Him.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 22:31–33 The summary reminded the Israelites that keeping God's commands was a response to His great love for them. *I am the* LORD. See note, Ex 20:2.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 22:17–33 Our God is a holy God who shares His holiness with His people. By keeping God's ordinances, the Israelites reflect God's love back to Him and to one another. Failure to keep God's commands destroys any assurance of God's acceptance of their sacrifice and of them. Today, God brings His people into His holy presence through the blood of His Son, Jesus Christ (Eph 2:17–22). By His Word, God sanctifies us and makes us holy (Jn 17:17; cf Eph 5:26), that we may present ourselves unblemished to God as a "living sacrifice" (Rm 12:1). • "Lord Jesus, my salvation, My light, my life divine, My only consolation, O make me wholly Thine! For Thou has dearly bought me With blood and bitter pain. Let me, since Thou hast sought me, Eternal life obtain." Amen. (*LSB* 689:2)
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 23:2 *appointed feasts of the* LORD. God desired to meet His people at His altar (Ex 29:42–43; Nu 17:4); He fixed the times to meet with them there (v 44). *holy convocations*. Gatherings for divine worship.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 23:3 *solemn*. Marked or observed with religious rites.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 23:1–3 Ch 23 represents a liturgical calendar for the Israelites. All such festivals and Sabbaths prefigure Christ (Col 2:16–17). The life of Jesus Christ shapes the Christian liturgical calendar, granting rest not only for our weary bodies but also for our weary souls. • Lord, may we always see the life of Christ reflected in our service, since He comes near to us through His precious Word and Sacraments. Amen.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 23:5 *first month, on the fourteenth day of the month*. See calendar, p 262. *Passover*. Cf Ex 12:25–27.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 23:6 *Feast of Unleavened Bread*. Named from the prohibition of eating leavened bread. Cf Ex 12:8; 14–20.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 23:7 *ordinary work*. One's occupation.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 23:8 *food offering*. See note, 1:9.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 23:4–8 Remembrance of God's deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt was the most important component in their liturgical calendar. He made redemption the chief theme of their service. Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, was slain on Good Friday as the Passover lambs were sacrificed. His sacrifice made redemption the chief theme of our worship too. • Blessed Redeemer, deliver us from all evil through Jesus Christ, our Paschal Lamb. Amen.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 23:10 *harvest*. See calendar, p 262. *sheaf of the firstfruits*. Earliest sheaves from the barley harvest.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 23:11 *wave the sheaf*. Ritual action to thank God for His blessings. *you may be accepted*. See note, 22:29.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 23:12–13 As the sheaves were waved, an unblemished lamb was presented as a burnt offering along with a grain offering of flour mixed with oil and wine.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 23:14 God forbade any eating of the new harvest until He received thanks.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 23:9–14 Ritual celebrations remind the Israelites of God's blessing of the harvest. Today, the food that sustains us is likewise a gift from His kindness. At every meal, offer thanks to God for His generous gift of daily bread and blessing, from the One who has blessed us with the bread of life. • Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest, and let these gifts to us be blessed. Amen.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 23:15–16 The Feast of Weeks is celebrated 50 days after the barley harvest in May/June. See calendar, p 262.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 23:16 *new grain*. Beginning of the wheat harvest.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 23:17 *fine flour*. See note, 2:1.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 23:18 *pleasing aroma to the L* ORD. See note, 1:9.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 23:20 *wave offering*. See note, 7:30–35. *holy to the L* ORD *for the priest*. Only the priests could eat from this sacrifice.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 23:21 God declares the day holy, like a Sabbath, so people may observe this feast. *ordinary work*. One's occupation.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 23:22 See note, 19:9–10.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 23:15–22 God reminds His people that He is the source of all their blessings. He desires that they pause to thank Him during the wheat harvest. At Pentecost in the NT, God poured out the rich blessings of His Holy Spirit to begin a new harvest: God's harvest of believers in Christ. • Lord, strengthen us with Your Holy Spirit, that we might gather a rich harvest of souls for Christ, so others may receive Your joy and rest. Amen.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 23:24 *seventh month, on the first day*. See calendar, p 262. *a memorial*. This holy day celebrated the Lord as King. *trumpets*. See p 993.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 23:25 *food offering*. See note, 1:9.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 23:23–25 God's acclamation as Israel's King ushers in the seventh month of the calendar. As Israel celebrated God's reign through the old covenant, we celebrate His present reign in Christ, our gracious Lord. • Lord God, precious King, make us ever mindful of Your abundant mercies. Amen.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 23:27 *Day of Atonement*. See calendar, p 262; see also note, 16:29. *afflict yourselves*. See note, 16:31.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 23:29 *cut off from his people*. See note, 7:20–21.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 23:30 *I will destroy*. Reference to the fate of Nadab and Abihu.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 23:32 *afflict yourselves*. See note, 16:31. *evening to evening*. Days were calculated from evening to evening (cf Gn 1:5).
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 23:26–32 The Day of Atonement was the great day of rest in the Sabbath month (23:32), with no work performed the entire day. Like Passover, the Day of Atonement commemorated God's mercy and was an annual call to repentance and faith. Though our repentance should be daily, a season each year for repentance (e.g., Lent) helps us focus intentionally on our need for the Savior and the blessings He offers through the Church. • God of mercy, thank You for the atoning death of Your Son. Grant me sincere repentance and faith. Amen.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 23:34 *fifteenth day of this seventh month*. See calendar, p 262. *Feast of Booths*. Commemorated Israel's passing through

the wilderness (v 43).
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 23:37 *food offerings*. See note, 1:9. *burnt offerings*. See pp 170–71. *grain offerings*. See pp 170–71. *drink offerings*. Wine (Nu 15:5) poured around the altar (cf Ex 30:9).
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 23:38 *freewill offerings*. See notes, 7:11; Ex 35:29.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 23:40 Known as the "four species"; trees from which branches were taken and used as part of the ceremonies in the Feast of Booths. See pp 200–201.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 23:42 *dwell in booths*. Israelites commemorated their passage through the wilderness by living in crude huts made of tree branches.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 23:33–44 The Feast of Booths concluded the festive half of the liturgy that began at Passover and commemorated Israel's safe travel on the way to the Promised Land. As you start each new journey, call on God's blessing and commemorate His care. Walk with Him by faith. His peace will comfort you in all circumstances. • As You watched over Israel, dearest Jesus, and journeyed with the disciples, so also abide with me and watch over me until, by Your grace, I reach my eternal home in heaven. Amen.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 24:1–4 The first of three ordinances regarding God's holy things. Cf Ex 25:31–40.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 24:2 *pure oil from beaten olives*. See note, Ex 27:20.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 24:3 *Outside the veil of the testimony*. The Holy Place was located outside the curtain before the ark. See diagram, p 139.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 24:1–4 Aaron or his sons attend the lamps twice daily to maintain light in the Holy Place. As you serve the Lord daily, rejoice and attend the light of His Word, which enlightens the sanctuary of the heart. Jesus is the light of the world (Jn 8:12; 9:5). • Shine Your light on us, O Lord, that others might see the light of Christ through us. Amen.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 24:5–9 Second of three ordinances regarding God's holy things. Cf Ex 25:23–30.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 24:8 *a covenant forever*. God's covenant with the Israelites (Ex 24) obligated them to bring Him bread.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 24:5–9 The second ordinance involves the bread of the Presence. Each Sabbath, the high priest sets 12 new loaves before the Lord (v 8). As you thank God for daily bread, remember that Jesus is the bread of life (Jn 6:35, 48). He gives His flesh as bread for all believers (Jn 6:51) and grants life (Jn 6:53–55). • Lord, Your precious body provides bread for our souls in a lasting covenant. We thank and praise You, O Lord. Amen.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 24:10 *Now*. Apparently this incident interrupted Moses' work on compiling Lv. *father was an Egyptian*. Technically an alien among the Israelites.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 24:11 *blasphemed the Name, and cursed*. Forbidden (Ex 20:7). Punishing someone severely for their words seems harsh by our free-speech standards. However, cursing involved more than cussing or a slip of the tongue. See "curse," p 6; see "name," p 843. *tribe of Dan*. Descendant of Jacob's fourth son, Dan.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 24:12 *till the will of the LORD should be clear*. No specific punishment was provided in God's Law, so the Israelites waited for God's decision.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 24:14 *lay their hands on his head*. Those who heard the cursing transferred the pollution they heard back to the blasphemer. See note, Ex 29:10. *stone him*. Mode of execution to purge the blasphemer from their midst.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 24:10–16 The third ordinance (see note, vv 1–4) deals with God's holy name. God equates this blasphemy with the sin of idolatry because it undermined true worship. Blasphemers were cursed by God (cf Mt 25:41). The Lord bids us to hallow God's name (Mt 6:9), to call on His name (1Co 1:2), and to do everything in His name (Col 3:17). God's name is "a treasure greater and nobler than heaven and earth" (LC IV 16). • Lord, may we at all times remember Your name and keep it holy. Amen.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 24:17–23 The cursing of God's name (v 16) leads Moses to recite the guiding principle of punishment, which applied to all inhabitants. Today we say the punishment should fit the crime.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 24:17–18 *life for life*. Restatement of God's Law given in Gn 9:6.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 24:20 God seeks to prevent exaggerated revenge.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 24:17–23 God establishes a system for administering justice based on equity and compensation for loss. However, no human compensation could give back to the Lord the honor due His saving name. Thanks be to God, Christ's atoning death brings forgiveness of blasphemy and teaches us to call on His mercy. • O Lord, guide our lips, that every word we say may give glory and honor to Your precious name. Amen.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON **Chs 25–26** Comprises a single speech God prepared for Moses to deliver to the Israelites. The speech connects life in the land with the observance of the Sabbath years.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 25:2 *the land shall keep a Sabbath*. The land will rest every seventh year.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 25:3–7 The land was left uncultivated during the seventh year, which helped restore its productive qualities. Whatever it produced during that year was gleaned for people and animal usage, but not sold commercially.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 25:1–7 Just as humankind needs a Sabbath rest, so the land needs rest. Because the land belongs to God, it was returned to Him every seventh year. All we have belongs to the Lord, our Maker and Redeemer. Honor Him with your property and life, even as He blesses and prospers you in His loving care. • Lord of heaven and earth, may we never forget that all we have, including the salvation of our souls, is provided by Your gracious hand. Amen.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 25:9 *Day of Atonement*. See calendar, p 262; see also note, 16:29.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 25:10 *proclaim liberty*. All the land of Israel would be divided for the tribes, clans, and households (see notes, Jsh 1:6; 13:6). The Year of Jubilee included the return of land to its original owner (v 13) and the release of slaves (v 40). This ensured that families always had a place in Israel and would not be sold abroad or forced to wander away from the Promised Land. *jubilee*. Name derived from the horn of a ram, which was sounded to mark the beginning of the year of freedom. *return*. Each person was restored to the land possessed by his family, which had been provided by God (cf Jsh 13:6–21:45).

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 25:11 *neither sow nor reap*. As in the Sabbath Year, the land remained uncultivated during the Year of Jubilee.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 25:12 *eat the produce*. What grew voluntarily could be eaten.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 25:14 *not wrong one another*. Fair treatment of others always applies if we are to do as God commands in the Second Table of the Law (Ex 20:12–17).
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 25:15–16 Land "purchases" did not give title to the land. A purchaser obtained only the rights to produce a certain number of harvests, with the value of the land established by the number of years until the next Jubilee.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 25:20–22 God promised such abundant harvests that there would be enough to eat while the land rested during the Sabbath Year and the Year of Jubilee (years 49 and 50 in succession).
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 25:8–22 The Year of Jubilee provides God's people with restored freedoms. Lands are returned to their original owners, slaves are freed, land is given rest, and loans are written off. In this way, the Lord emphasizes freedom, family, property rights, and devotion, which make a nation strong. In Christ, we find our jubilee. In Him, our sins are forgiven, and we receive our "eternal inheritance" (Heb 9:15). • Thank You, Lord, for freeing us from the bondage of sin. May we honor You by our freedom, family, and goods. Amen.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 25:23 *the land is Mine*. Although God gave the land to the Israelites, He retained ownership and could terminate the lease if they proved unfit tenants. *strangers and sojourners with Me*. The Israelites resided in the land at God's discretion.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 25:24 *redemption of the land*. God provided means by which the land stayed within the family.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 25:25–34 Two cases of redemption are specified. (1) If a man sold property out of necessity, his paternal next of kin was obligated to buy it back. See note, Ru 2:20. Should the poor man prosper, he also could buy back his land. Regardless of circumstances, the land returned to its original owner at Jubilee, when God acted as redeemer. (2) Homes in walled cities were redeemable only within the first year; otherwise, all family rights were forfeited. There were two exceptions: houses in rural villages (v 31) and houses in towns belonging to the Levites (vv 32–34).
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 25:23–34 Land is God's gift to His people through their tribes and clans. God desires that this gift stay in families and

never be bargained or sold. God's laws of redemption made this possible. At all times, land sold by a poor family member could be redeemed. How greatly the Lord treasures families! In love, God has redeemed us from sin through the precious blood of His Son. We are bought and paid for. We are His. • Lord, we praise You for sending a Kinsman-Redeemer, Jesus Christ, to redeem us with His precious blood. Amen.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 25:35 Family members were to care for relatives who were poor by allowing them to work for them. *brother*. Fellow Israelite.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 25:36 Interest was often taken in advance of a loan. In this case, no interest was to be taken. *fear your God*. See p 1001.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 25:38 God reminded the Israelites that He freed them from Egyptian bondage so that He might provide them land, fulfilling God's promise to Abraham (Gn 15:18–21).

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 25:39 *sells himself to you*. An Israelite could sell himself to another in payment of a debt. See p 101.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 25:40 *hired servant*. A fellow Israelite received the same treatment as a hired worker and was never to be mistreated. *jubilee*. See note, v 10.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 25:43 *fear your God*. See p 1001.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 25:44–46 Although the enslavement of their fellow Israelites was not allowed, they were allowed to own slaves purchased from foreign lands or from among the aliens living with them in Canaan. See p 101.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 25:35–46 Israelites are to respect one another, regardless of their financial circumstances. God expects His people to honor Him for His great provisions by treating others with respect (Ex 20:12–17). We also see God's faithfulness in the provision of land. For our sakes, Jesus Christ became poor, that He might provide us with God's blessings (2Co 8:9). As our Brother, He frees us from the bondage of sin. • Merciful Savior, lead me to love and respect my brothers and sisters and serve for their benefit, in accordance with Your merciful goodness. Amen.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 25:47–55 The compensation paid to redeem an Israelite enslaved for his debt was based on the number of years until the next Jubilee; if only a few years remained until the Jubilee, a yearly rate was established.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 25:48 An indebted Israelite was always redeemable; a slave was not.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 25:49 *redeem himself*. Servants were allowed to earn money. If their financial circumstances changed, Israelites could pay for their own release.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 25:50–54 God provided a means to calculate what was owed for a person's redemption from servitude.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 25:55 The Israelites were free only because God freed them from Egyptian captivity. Because He redeemed them, they no longer belonged to themselves but to God.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 25:47–55 God set apart the Israelites by His covenant. Those who entered bond-service because of debts were to be treated with respect, for they did not belong to their master but to God. Today, those in Christ are likewise beneficiaries of God's grace (Ac 10:39–43). Because we are released from our debts, we are called to have mercy on others, to release them from their debt (Mt 6:12). We now await the restoration promised in the heavenly Jubilee (Ac 3:21). • Lord of promise, thank You for our release from sin. We await the fullness of heaven, through Christ, our Lord. Amen.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 26:1 See notes, Ex 20:4, 5. *pillar*. See note, Gn 28:18. *bow down*. See p 1276.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 26:3 *walk*. See p 7. *statutes … commandments*. See p 971. "By their own strength, people cannot fulfill God's Law. They are all under sin, subject to eternal wrath and death. Because of this, we cannot be freed by the Law from sin and be justified" (Ap IV 40).
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 26:4–8 Blessings are restated in Dt 28:1–14.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 26:9 *fruitful and multiply*. By God's hand, the Israelites will grow in number. Cf Gn 15:4–5. *confirm My covenant with you*. God's covenant promise to Abraham, renewed with the patriarchs and at Sinai (Ex 20). The covenant culminated in the messianic promise, fulfilled in Christ. See notes, Gn 12:2, 3.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 26:10 The food supply would not run out before the next harvest.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 26:11 *My soul*. God's holy being and presence, which abided at the tabernacle. See "presence," p 843. Aph: "My beloved, we also have received of the Spirit of Christ, and Christ *dwells in us*" (*NPNF* 2 13:371).

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 26:12 God desired to walk among His people as He once did with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden (Gn 3:8).
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 26:13 The chain of promises concludes with God's reminder that He is their liberator. See note, Ex 20:2.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 26:1–13 By the Word of promise, the Lord grants us faith, that we may walk by faith and enjoy His blessings of abundance and peace. Failure to walk with God brings painful consequences (vv 14–39). Therefore, cling to God's Word, especially His promise that His people belong to Him (v 13). • Lord, we entrust our lives to You. You alone have the words of eternal life. Amen.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 26:14–46 Curses are expounded in Dt 28:15–68.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 26:14–15 *commandments … statutes … rules*. See p 971. *covenant*. See p 127. God's agreement to provide and care for His people and to provide a Messiah. This agreement is irrevocable by God.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 26:16 *wasting disease*. See note, Ps 106:15.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 26:17 *set My face against you*. See note, Ps 119:135.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 26:19 Continued refusal to listen to God brings pride-breaking drought.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 26:21 *sevenfold for your sins*. Punishment, though complete, would leave room for God's mercy.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 26:22 *let loose the wild beasts*. As a means of discipline, God unleashes wild animals in order to turn hearts back to Him. Cf 2Ki 17:26.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 26:23 *discipline*. Lit, "these things" listed in vv 16–22. In His mercy, God disciplines His disobedient people so they might "not be condemned along with the world" (1Co 11:31–32).
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 26:25 *vengeance for the covenant*. In an attempt to bring His wayward people back to Him, God disciplines more harshly. *pestilence*. Plague. See note, Ps 91:3. Besieged cities were esp prone to epidemics.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 26:26 *supply*. Lit, "staff," which may refer to a stick used to hold ring-shaped bread out of the reach of rodents. Short supply of flour resulted in a central supply and rationing.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 26:29 Cannibalism occurred during two later sieges (cf 2Ki 6:26–28).
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 26:30 *high places*. See p 526.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 26:31 *pleasing aromas*. See note, 1:9.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 26:34–35 The ultimate humbling would come by removing the Israelites from the land God promised them, which forcibly gave the land rest from cultivation.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 26:39 God's discipline will lead to the Israelites' captivity, where they will rot away.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 26:40 *confess*. Confession and Absolution were seen at the golden calf incident. Cf Ex 32; Ezr 10:1–17; Ne 9.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 26:41 *uncircumcised heart*. Unrepentant heart that does not accord with the covenant.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 26:42 *remember*. See p 843. Israel's sin could not annul God's covenant with Abraham, which promised the Savior.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 26:46 *statutes … rules … laws*. See p 971.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 26:14–46 Failure to obey God's statutes, rules, and laws results in punishment. God's discipline intensifies as the disobedience intensifies against Him. One by one, God removes His blessings in order to lead His people back to Him in repentance, that He may again shower them with His grace (2Pt 3:9). The epitome of God's grace is seen at the cross, where His Son died to remove the curse brought by sin (cf 1Jn 1:9). • "O almighty God, merciful Father, I, a poor, miserable sinner, confess unto You all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended You and justly deserved Your temporal and eternal punishment. But I am heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them, and I pray You of Your boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor, sinful being." Amen. (*LSB*, p 184)
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON **Ch 27** There are four possible reasons for the placement of the laws about vows at the end of Lv. (1) Vows made by the Israelites may be linked to God's promises in ch 26. (2) These laws provide the necessary funding for sanctuary maintenance, allowing the Israelites to keep God's command to revere the sanctuary (26:2). (3) It allows Lv to end on a positive note, emphasizing Israel's voluntary response to God's grace. (4) Voluntary contributions to the sanctuary provide a counterbalance to the divinely ordained offerings of chs 1–7. See "vow," p 7.
LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 27:3–8 Shows common social distinctions among the Israelites. The values may be associated with the person's

productivity. Men of fighting age (cf Nu 1:3) would pay the most. See note, Jsh 24:32.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 27:9–10 God knows men's hearts. The temptation exists to substitute an animal of one species for another, so God prevents such actions by declaring, through His priests, that both animals were holy and not redeemable. Both animals then could be sold and the money used to support the sanctuary.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 27:11–12 Unclean animals (cf 5:2) could be offered in a vow, but not sacrificed. After they were ascribed a value by the priests, they were sold, and the money was used to support the sanctuary.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 27:14–25 Dedicating, or devoting, items in the manner addressed here was often done in answer to prayer. Dedication offerings were different from votive (freewill) offerings. Dedication offerings belonged to God immediately (the offering was consecrated or holy), while votive offerings were made only when God answered a prayer. The most dramatic example of a votive offering is that of Hannah, who volunteered her young son Samuel to God (1Sm 1:21–28). Family land offered to God was redeemable by paying one shekel per year for each area covered by a homer (c 8 bushels) of barley, less the number of years to the next Jubilee, and then adding one-fifth to the total. If an individual had already sold the land pledged to God, the land was forever forfeited to Him.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 27:26–27 Firstborn animals already belonged to God and were presented to the priests. Therefore, these animals could not be dedicated to God (Ex 13:12). The dedication of unclean animals was permitted, but these were redeemed at their value plus one-fifth.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 27:29 *devoted for destruction*. See p 6.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON 27:31 People or unclean livestock were redeemed at the value set by the priest, plus one-fifth. Payment was made in precious metals (e.g., silver) for the amount of the assessed value.

LEVITICUS—NOTE ON **Ch 27** Lv concludes by showing how all God's people are involved in the stewardship of God's house. Based on how God has blessed them, each Israelite provides materials and finances for the maintenance of God's sanctuary for the ongoing operation of the Divine Service. The collection of our offerings during the liturgy serves a parallel purpose (cf Ac 4:34–5:11). Our offerings are part of the holy work of God's people for the benefit of the world (Rm 15:27; 2Co 9:12). Through our offerings, we bear witness to what God has done through Calvary's cross. •

“What shall I render to the Lord for all His benefits to me? I will offer the sacrifice of thanksgiving and will call on the name of the Lord. I will take the cup of salvation and will call on the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows to the Lord now in the presence of all His people, in the courts of the Lord’s house, in the midst of you, O Jerusalem.” Amen. (*LSB*, p 176)

Numbers

Numbers 1 | Numbers 2 | Numbers 3 | Numbers 4 | Numbers 5 | Numbers 6 | Numbers 7 | Numbers 8 | Numbers 9 | Numbers 10 | Numbers 11 | Numbers 12 | Numbers 13 | Numbers 14 | Numbers 15 | Numbers 16 | Numbers 17 | Numbers 18 | Numbers 19 | Numbers 20 | Numbers 21 | Numbers 22 | Numbers 23 | Numbers 24 | Numbers 25 | Numbers 26 | Numbers 27 | Numbers 28 | Numbers 29 | Numbers 30 | Numbers 31 | Numbers 32 | Numbers 33 | Numbers 34 | Numbers 35 | Numbers 36

- Introduction to Numbers
  - Overview
  - Reading Numbers
  - Luther on Numbers
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

A Census of Israel's Warriors

1 [1]The Lord spoke to Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the tent of meeting, on the first day of the second month, in the second year after they had come out of the land of Egypt, saying, [2] "Take a census of all the congregation of the people of Israel, by clans, by fathers' houses, according to the number of names, every male, head by head. [3] From twenty years old and upward, all in Israel who are able to go to war, you and Aaron shall list them, company by company. [4]And there shall be with you a man from each tribe, each man being the head of the house of his fathers. [5]And these are the names of the men who shall assist you. From Reuben, Elizur the son of Shedeur; [6]from Simeon, Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai; [7]from Judah, Nahshon the son of Amminadab; [8]from Issachar, Nethanel the son of Zuar; [9]from Zebulun, Eliab the son of Helon; [10]from the sons of Joseph, from Ephraim, Elishama the son of Ammihud, and from Manasseh, Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur; [11]from Benjamin, Abidan the son of Gideoni; [12]from Dan, Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai; [13]from Asher, Pagiel the son of Ochran; [14]from Gad, Eliasaph the son of Deuel; [15]from Naphtali, Ahira the son of Enan." [16]These were the ones chosen from the congregation, the chiefs of their ancestral tribes, the heads of the clans of Israel.

[17]Moses and Aaron took these men who had been named, [18]and on the first day of the second month, they assembled the whole congregation together, who registered themselves by clans, by fathers' houses, according to the number of names from twenty years old and upward, head by head, [19]as the Lord commanded Moses. So he listed them in the wilderness of Sinai.

[20]The people of Reuben, Israel's firstborn, their generations, by their clans, by their fathers' houses, according to the number of names, head by head, every male from twenty years old and upward, all who were able to go to war: [21]those listed of the tribe of Reuben were 46,500.

[22]Of the people of Simeon, their generations, by their clans, by their fathers' houses, those of them who were listed, according to the number of names, head by head, every male from twenty years old and upward, all

who were able to go to war: [23]those listed of the tribe of Simeon were 59,300.

[24]Of the people of Gad, their generations, by their clans, by their fathers' houses, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all who were able to go to war: [25]those listed of the tribe of Gad were 45,650.

[26]Of the people of Judah, their generations, by their clans, by their fathers' houses, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and upward, every man able to go to war: [27]those listed of the tribe of Judah were 74,600.

[28]Of the people of Issachar, their generations, by their clans, by their fathers' houses, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and upward, every man able to go to war: [29]those listed of the tribe of Issachar were 54,400.

[30]Of the people of Zebulun, their generations, by their clans, by their fathers' houses, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and upward, every man able to go to war: [31]those listed of the tribe of Zebulun were 57,400.

[32]Of the people of Joseph, namely, of the people of Ephraim, their generations, by their clans, by their fathers' houses, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and upward, every man able to go to war: [33]those listed of the tribe of Ephraim were 40,500.

[34]Of the people of Manasseh, their generations, by their clans, by their fathers' houses, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and upward, every man able to go to war: [35]those listed of the tribe of Manasseh were 32,200.

[36]Of the people of Benjamin, their generations, by their clans, by their fathers' houses, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and upward, every man able to go to war: [37]those listed of the tribe of Benjamin were 35,400.

[38]Of the people of Dan, their generations, by their clans, by their fathers' houses, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and upward, every man able to go to war: [39]those listed of the tribe of Dan were 62,700.

[40]Of the people of Asher, their generations, by their clans, by their fathers' houses, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and upward, every man able to go to war: [41]those listed of the tribe of Asher were 41,500.

[42]Of the people of Naphtali, their generations, by their clans, by their fathers' houses, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and upward, every man able to go to war: [43]those listed of the tribe of Naphtali were 53,400.

[44]These are those who were listed, whom Moses and Aaron listed with the help of the chiefs of Israel, twelve men, each representing his fathers' house. [45]So all those listed of the people of Israel, by their fathers' houses, from twenty years old and upward, every man able to go to war in Israel— [46]† all those listed were 603,550.

Levites Exempted

47 ‡ † But the Levites were not listed along with them by their ancestral
tribe. 48 For the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 49 “Only the tribe of Levi you
shall not list, and you shall not take a census of them among the people of
Israel. 50 † But appoint the Levites over the tabernacle of the testimony, and
over all its furnishings, and over all that belongs to it. They are to carry the
tabernacle and all its furnishings, and they shall take care of it and shall
camp around the tabernacle. 51 † When the tabernacle is to set out, the
Levites shall take it down, and when the tabernacle is to be pitched, the
Levites shall set it up. And if any outsider comes near, he shall be put to
death. 52 † The people of Israel shall pitch their tents by their companies,
each man in his own camp and each man by his own standard. 53 † But the
Levites shall camp around the tabernacle of the testimony, so that there may
be no wrath on the congregation of the people of Israel. And the Levites
shall keep guard over the tabernacle of the testimony.” 54 Thus did the
people of Israel; they did according to all that the Lord commanded Moses.

Arrangement of the Camp

2 [1]The Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying, [2]† "The people of Israel shall camp each by his own standard, with the banners of their fathers' houses. They shall camp facing the tent of meeting on every side. [3]‡Those to camp on the east side toward the sunrise shall be of the standard of the camp of Judah by their companies, the chief of the people of Judah being Nahshon the son of Amminadab, [4]his company as listed being 74,600. [5]Those to camp next to him shall be the tribe of Issachar, the chief of the people of Issachar being Nethanel the son of Zuar, [6]his company as listed being 54,400. [7]Then the tribe of Zebulun, the chief of the people of Zebulun being Eliab the son of Helon, [8]his company as listed being 57,400. [9]† All those listed of the camp of Judah, by their companies, were 186,400. They shall set out first on the march.

[10]"On the south side shall be the standard of the camp of Reuben by their companies, the chief of the people of Reuben being Elizur the son of Shedeur, [11]his company as listed being 46,500. [12]And those to camp next to him shall be the tribe of Simeon, the chief of the people of Simeon being Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai, [13]his company as listed being 59,300. [14]Then the tribe of Gad, the chief of the people of Gad being Eliasaph the son of Reuel, [15]his company as listed being 45,650. [16]All those listed of the camp of Reuben, by their companies, were 151,450. They shall set out second.

[17]† "Then the tent of meeting shall set out, with the camp of the Levites in the midst of the camps; as they camp, so shall they set out, each in position, standard by standard.

[18]"On the west side shall be the standard of the camp of Ephraim by their companies, the chief of the people of Ephraim being Elishama the son of Ammihud, [19]his company as listed being 40,500. [20]And next to him shall be the tribe of Manasseh, the chief of the people of Manasseh being Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur, [21]his company as listed being 32,200. [22]Then the tribe of Benjamin, the chief of the people of Benjamin being Abidan the son of Gideoni, [23]his company as listed being 35,400. [24]All those listed of the camp

of Ephraim, by their companies, were 108,100. They shall set out third on the march.

25 “On the north side shall be the standard of the camp of Dan by their companies, the chief of the people of Dan being Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai, 26 his company as listed being 62,700. 27 And those to camp next to him shall be the tribe of Asher, the chief of the people of Asher being Pagiel the son of Ochran, 28 his company as listed being 41,500. 29 Then the tribe of Naphtali, the chief of the people of Naphtali being Ahira the son of Enan, 30 his company as listed being 53,400. 31 All those listed of the camp of Dan were 157,600. They shall set out last, standard by standard.”

32 † These are the people of Israel as listed by their fathers’ houses. All those listed in the camps by their companies were 603,550. 33 † But the Levites were not listed among the people of Israel, as the Lord commanded Moses.

34 Thus did the people of Israel. According to all that the Lord commanded Moses, so they camped by their standards, and so they set out, each one in his clan, according to his fathers’ house.

The Sons of Aaron

3 [1]‡‡These are the generations of Aaron and Moses at the time when
the Lord spoke with Moses on Mount Sinai. [2]These are the names of the
sons of Aaron: Nadab the firstborn, and Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar.
[3]†These are the names of the sons of Aaron, the anointed priests, whom he
ordained to serve as priests. [4]†But Nadab and Abihu died before the Lord
when they offered unauthorized fire before the Lord in the wilderness of
Sinai, and they had no children. So Eleazar and Ithamar served as priests in
the lifetime of Aaron their father.

Duties of the Levites

5 ✝And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 6 ✝"Bring the tribe of Levi near,
and set them before Aaron the priest, that they may minister to him. 7 ✝They
shall keep guard over him and over the whole congregation before the tent
of meeting, as they minister at the tabernacle. 8 They shall guard all the
furnishings of the tent of meeting, and keep guard over the people of Israel
as they minister at the tabernacle. 9 ✝And you shall give the Levites to Aaron
and his sons; they are wholly given to him from among the people of Israel.
10 ✝And you shall appoint Aaron and his sons, and they shall guard their
priesthood. But if any outsider comes near, he shall be put to death."

11 And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 12 ✝"Behold, I have taken the
Levites from among the people of Israel instead of every firstborn who
opens the womb among the people of Israel. The Levites shall be mine, 13 for
all the firstborn are mine. On the day that I struck down all the firstborn in
the land of Egypt, I consecrated for my own all the firstborn in Israel, both
of man and of beast. They shall be mine: I am the Lord."

14 And the Lord spoke to Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, saying, 15 ✝"List
the sons of Levi, by fathers' houses and by clans; every male from a month
old and upward you shall list." 16 ✝So Moses listed them according to the
word of the Lord, as he was commanded. 17 And these were the sons of Levi
by their names: Gershon and Kohath and Merari. 18 And these are the names
of the sons of Gershon by their clans: Libni and Shimei. 19 And the sons of
Kohath by their clans: Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel. 20 And the sons of
Merari by their clans: Mahli and Mushi. These are the clans of the Levites,
by their fathers' houses.

21 ✝To Gershon belonged the clan of the Libnites and the clan of the
Shimeites; these were the clans of the Gershonites. 22 Their listing according
to the number of all the males from a month old and upward was[1] 7,500.
23 The clans of the Gershonites were to camp behind the tabernacle on the
west, 24 with Eliasaph, the son of Lael as chief of the fathers' house of the
Gershonites. 25 And the guard duty of the sons of Gershon in the tent of
meeting involved the tabernacle, the tent with its covering, the screen for
the entrance of the tent of meeting, 26 the hangings of the court, the screen

for the door of the court that is around the tabernacle and the altar, and its cords—all the service connected with these.

27 ‡To Kohath belonged the clan of the Amramites and the clan of the
Izharites and the clan of the Hebronites and the clan of the Uzzielites; these
are the clans of the Kohathites. 28According to the number of all the males,
from a month old and upward, there were 8,600, keeping guard over the
sanctuary. 29The clans of the sons of Kohath were to camp on the south side
of the tabernacle, 30with Elizaphan the son of Uzziel as chief of the fathers'
house of the clans of the Kohathites. 31And their guard duty involved the
ark, the table, the lampstand, the altars, the vessels of the sanctuary with
which the priests minister, and the screen; all the service connected with
these. 32And Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest was to be chief over the
chiefs of the Levites, and to have oversight of those who kept guard over
the sanctuary.

33 ‡To Merari belonged the clan of the Mahlites and the clan of the
Mushites: these are the clans of Merari. 34Their listing according to the
number of all the males from a month old and upward was 6,200. 35And the
chief of the fathers' house of the clans of Merari was Zuriel the son of
Abihail. They were to camp on the north side of the tabernacle. 36And the
appointed guard duty of the sons of Merari involved the frames of the
tabernacle, the bars, the pillars, the bases, and all their accessories; all the
service connected with these; 37also the pillars around the court, with their
bases and pegs and cords.

38 †Those who were to camp before the tabernacle on the east, before the
tent of meeting toward the sunrise, were Moses and Aaron and his sons,
guarding the sanctuary itself, to protect[1] the people of Israel. And any
outsider who came near was to be put to death. 39 †All those listed among
the Levites, whom Moses and Aaron listed at the commandment of the
Lord, by clans, all the males from a month old and upward, were 22,000.

Redemption of the Firstborn

40 ✝ ✝ And the Lord said to Moses, “List all the firstborn males of the
people of Israel, from a month old and upward, taking the number of their
names. 41 And you shall take the Levites for me—I am the Lord—instead of
all the firstborn among the people of Israel, and the cattle of the Levites
instead of all the firstborn among the cattle of the people of Israel.” 42 So
Moses listed all the firstborn among the people of Israel, as the Lord
commanded him. 43 ✝ And all the firstborn males, according to the number of
names, from a month old and upward as listed were 22,273.

44 And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 45 “Take the Levites instead of all
the firstborn among the people of Israel, and the cattle of the Levites instead
of their cattle. The Levites shall be mine: I am the Lord. 46 ✝ And as the
redemption price for the 273 of the firstborn of the people of Israel, over
and above the number of the male Levites, 47 you shall take five shekels[2]
per head; you shall take them according to the shekel of the sanctuary (the
shekel of twenty gerahs[3]), 48 and give the money to Aaron and his sons as
the redemption price for those who are over.” 49 So Moses took the
redemption money from those who were over and above those redeemed by
the Levites. 50 ✝ From the firstborn of the people of Israel he took the money,
1,365 shekels, by the shekel of the sanctuary. 51 And Moses gave the
redemption money to Aaron and his sons, according to the word of the Lord,
as the Lord commanded Moses.

Duties of the Kohathites

4 [1]The Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying, [2]†"Take a census of
the sons of Kohath from among the sons of Levi, by their clans and their
fathers' houses, [3]† from thirty years old up to fifty years old, all who can
come on duty, to do the work in the tent of meeting. [4]†† This is the service
of the sons of Kohath in the tent of meeting: the most holy things. [5]When
the camp is to set out, Aaron and his sons shall go in and take down the veil
of the screen and cover the ark of the testimony with it. [6]Then they shall put
on it a covering of goatskin[4] and spread on top of that a cloth all of blue,
and shall put in its poles. [7]And over the table of the bread of the Presence
they shall spread a cloth of blue and put on it the plates, the dishes for
incense, the bowls, and the flagons for the drink offering; the regular
showbread also shall be on it. [8]Then they shall spread over them a cloth of
scarlet and cover the same with a covering of goatskin, and shall put in its
poles. [9]And they shall take a cloth of blue and cover the lampstand for the
light, with its lamps, its tongs, its trays, and all the vessels for oil with
which it is supplied. [10]And they shall put it with all its utensils in a covering
of goatskin and put it on the carrying frame. [11]† And over the golden altar
they shall spread a cloth of blue and cover it with a covering of goatskin,
and shall put in its poles. [12]And they shall take all the vessels of the service
that are used in the sanctuary and put them in a cloth of blue and cover
them with a covering of goatskin and put them on the carrying frame. [13]And
they shall take away the ashes from the altar and spread a purple cloth over
it. [14]And they shall put on it all the utensils of the altar, which are used for
the service there, the fire pans, the forks, the shovels, and the basins, all the
utensils of the altar; and they shall spread on it a covering of goatskin, and
shall put in its poles. [15]† And when Aaron and his sons have finished
covering the sanctuary and all the furnishings of the sanctuary, as the camp
sets out, after that the sons of Kohath shall come to carry these, but they
must not touch the holy things, lest they die. These are the things of the tent
of meeting that the sons of Kohath are to carry.

16 ✝“And Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest shall have charge of the oil
for the light, the fragrant incense, the regular grain offering, and the
anointing oil, with the oversight of the whole tabernacle and all that is in it,
of the sanctuary and its vessels.”
17 The Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying, 18 ✝“Let not the tribe of the
clans of the Kohathites be destroyed from among the Levites, 19 but deal
thus with them, that they may live and not die when they come near to the
most holy things: Aaron and his sons shall go in and appoint them each to
his task and to his burden, 20 but they shall not go in to look on the holy
things even for a moment, lest they die.”
21 The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 22 ✝“Take a cen-
sus of the sons of Gershon also, by their fathers’ houses and by their clans.
23 From thirty years old up to fifty years old, you shall list them, all who can
come to do duty, to do service in the tent of meeting. 24 This is the service of
the clans of the Gershonites, in serving and bearing burdens: 25 they shall
carry the curtains of the tabernacle and the tent of meeting with its covering
and the covering of goatskin that is on top of it and the screen for the
entrance of the tent of meeting 26 and the hangings of the court and the
screen for the entrance of the gate of the court that is around the tabernacle
and the altar, and their cords and all the equipment for their service. And
they shall do all that needs to be done with regard to them. 27 All the service
of the sons of the Gershonites shall be at the command of Aaron and his
sons, in all that they are to carry and in all that they have to do. And you
shall assign to their charge all that they are to carry. 28 ✝This is the service of
the clans of the sons of the Gershonites in the tent of meeting, and their
guard duty is to be under the direction of Ithamar the son of Aaron the
priest.
29 ✝“As for the sons of Merari, you shall list them by their clans and their
fathers’ houses. 30 From thirty years old up to fifty years old, you shall list
them, everyone who can come on duty, to do the service of the tent of
meeting. 31 And this is what they are charged to carry, as the whole of their
service in the tent of meeting: the frames of the tabernacle, with its bars,
pillars, and bases, 32 and the pillars around the court with their bases, pegs,
and cords, with all their equipment and all their accessories. And you shall
list by name the objects that they are required to carry. 33 This is the service

of the clans of the sons of Merari, the whole of their service in the tent of meeting, under the direction of Ithamar the son of Aaron the priest.”

34 ✝And Moses and Aaron and the chiefs of the congregation listed the sons of the Kohathites, by their clans and their fathers’ houses, 35 from thirty years old up to fifty years old, everyone who could come on duty, for service in the tent of meeting; 36 and those listed by clans were 2,750. 37 This was the list of the clans of the Kohathites, all who served in the tent of meeting, whom Moses and Aaron listed according to the commandment of the Lord by Moses.

38 Those listed of the sons of Gershon, by their clans and their fathers’ houses, 39 from thirty years old up to fifty years old, everyone who could come on duty for service in the tent of meeting— 40 those listed by their clans and their fathers’ houses were 2,630. 41 This was the list of the clans of the sons of Gershon, all who served in the tent of meeting, whom Moses and Aaron listed according to the commandment of the Lord.

42 Those listed of the clans of the sons of Merari, by their clans and their fathers’ houses, 43 from thirty years old up to fifty years old, everyone who could come on duty, for service in the tent of meeting— 44 those listed by clans were 3,200. 45 This was the list of the clans of the sons of Merari, whom Moses and Aaron listed according to the commandment of the Lord by Moses.

46 All those who were listed of the Levites, whom Moses and Aaron and the chiefs of Israel listed, by their clans and their fathers’ houses, 47 from thirty years old up to fifty years old, everyone who could come to do the service of ministry and the service of bearing burdens in the tent of meeting, 48 those listed were 8,580. 49 According to the commandment of the Lord through Moses they were listed, each one with his task of serving or carrying. Thus they were listed by him, as the Lord commanded Moses.

Unclean People

5 [1] The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, [2] "Command the people of
Israel that they put out of the camp everyone who is leprous[1] or has a
discharge and everyone who is unclean through contact with the dead. [3]You
shall put out both male and female, putting them outside the camp, that they
may not defile their camp, in the midst of which I dwell." [4]And the people
of Israel did so, and put them outside the camp; as the Lord said to Moses,
so the people of Israel did.

Confession and Restitution

5 ‡ ‡ And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 6 † “Speak to the people of
Israel, When a man or woman commits any of the sins that people commit
by breaking faith with the Lord, and that person realizes his guilt, 7 †he shall
confess his sin that he has committed.[2] And he shall make full restitution
for his wrong, adding a fifth to it and giving it to him to whom he did the
wrong. 8 † But if the man has no next of kin to whom restitution may be
made for the wrong, the restitution for wrong shall go to the Lord for the
priest, in addition to the ram of atonement with which atonement is made
for him. 9 ‡ And every contribution, all the holy donations of the people of
Israel, which they bring to the priest, shall be his. 10 Each one shall keep his
holy donations: whatever anyone gives to the priest shall be his.”

A Test for Adultery

11 ‡ ‡And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 12 †“Speak to the people of
Israel, If any man’s wife goes astray and breaks faith with him, 13 †if a man
lies with her sexually, and it is hidden from the eyes of her husband, and she
is undetected though she has defiled herself, and there is no witness against
her, since she was not taken in the act, 14 †and if the spirit of jealousy comes
over him and he is jealous of his wife who has defiled herself, or if the spirit
of jealousy comes over him and he is jealous of his wife, though she has not
defiled herself, 15 †then the man shall bring his wife to the priest and bring
the offering required of her, a tenth of an ephah[1] of barley flour. He shall
pour no oil on it and put no frankincense on it, for it is a grain offering of
jealousy, a grain offering of remembrance, bringing iniquity to
remembrance.

16 ‡ †“And the priest shall bring her near and set her before the Lord.
17 †And the priest shall take holy water in an earthenware vessel and take
some of the dust that is on the floor of the tabernacle and put it into the
water. 18 †And the priest shall set the woman before the Lord and unbind the
hair of the woman’s head and place in her hands the grain offering of
remembrance, which is the grain offering of jealousy. And in his hand the
priest shall have the water of bitterness that brings the curse. 19 †Then the
priest shall make her take an oath, saying, ‘If no man has lain with you, and
if you have not turned aside to uncleanness while you were under your
husband’s authority, be free from this water of bitterness that brings the
curse. 20 But if you have gone astray, though you are under your husband’s
authority, and if you have defiled yourself, and some man other than your
husband has lain with you, 21 †then’ (let the priest make the woman take the
oath of the curse, and say to the woman) ‘the Lord make you a curse and an
oath among your people, when the Lord makes your thigh fall away and
your body swell. 22 †May this water that brings the curse pass into your
bowels and make your womb swell and your thigh fall away.’ And the
woman shall say, ‘Amen, Amen.’

23 ‡“Then the priest shall write these curses in a book and wash them off
into the water of bitterness. 24 And he shall make the woman drink the water

of bitterness that brings the curse, and the water that brings the curse shall enter into her and cause bitter pain. 25 † And the priest shall take the grain offering of jealousy out of the woman's hand and shall wave the grain offering before the LORD and bring it to the altar. 26 † And the priest shall take a handful of the grain offering, as its memorial portion, and burn it on the altar, and afterward shall make the woman drink the water. 27 † And when he has made her drink the water, then, if she has defiled herself and has broken faith with her husband, the water that brings the curse shall enter into her and cause bitter pain, and her womb shall swell, and her thigh shall fall away, and the woman shall become a curse among her people. 28 † But if the woman has not defiled herself and is clean, then she shall be free and shall conceive children.

29 "This is the law in cases of jealousy, when a wife, though under her husband's authority, goes astray and defiles herself, 30 or when the spirit of jealousy comes over a man and he is jealous of his wife. Then he shall set the woman before the LORD, and the priest shall carry out for her all this law. 31 † The man shall be free from iniquity, but the woman shall bear her iniquity."

The Nazirite Vow

6 [1]†And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, [2]†"Speak to the people of
Israel and say to them, When either a man or a woman makes a special vow,
the vow of a Nazirite,[1] to separate himself to the Lord, [3]†he shall separate
himself from wine and strong drink. He shall drink no vinegar made from
wine or strong drink and shall not drink any juice of grapes or eat grapes,
fresh or dried. [4]†All the days of his separation[2] he shall eat nothing that is
produced by the grapevine, not even the seeds or the skins.

[5]† "All the days of his vow of separation, no razor shall touch his head.
Until the time is completed for which he separates himself to the Lord, he
shall be holy. He shall let the locks of hair of his head grow long.

[6]† "All the days that he separates himself to the Lord he shall not go near
a dead body. [7]Not even for his father or for his mother, for brother or sister,
if they die, shall he make himself unclean, because his separation to God is
on his head. [8]All the days of his separation he is holy to the Lord.

[9]† "And if any man dies very suddenly beside him and he defiles his
consecrated head, then he shall shave his head on the day of his cleansing;
on the seventh day he shall shave it. [10]On the eighth day he shall bring two
turtledoves or two pigeons to the priest to the entrance of the tent of
meeting, [11]†and the priest shall offer one for a sin offering and the other for
a burnt offering, and make atonement for him, because he sinned by reason
of the dead body. And he shall consecrate his head that same day [12]† and
separate himself to the Lord for the days of his separation and bring a male
lamb a year old for a guilt offering. But the previous period shall be void,
because his separation was defiled.

[13]†† "And this is the law for the Nazirite, when the time of his separation
has been completed: he shall be brought to the entrance of the tent of
meeting, [14]and he shall bring his gift to the Lord, one male lamb a year old
without blemish for a burnt offering, and one ewe lamb a year old without
blemish as a sin offering, and one ram without blemish as a peace offering,
[15]and a basket of unleavened bread, loaves of fine flour mixed with oil, and
unleavened wafers smeared with oil, and their grain offering and their drink

offerings. [16]And the priest shall bring them before the Lord and offer his sin offering and his burnt offering, [17]and he shall offer the ram as a sacrifice of peace offering to the Lord, with the basket of unleavened bread. The priest shall offer also its grain offering and its drink offering. [18]And the Nazirite shall shave his consecrated head at the entrance of the tent of meeting and shall take the hair from his consecrated head and put it on the fire that is under the sacrifice of the peace offering. [19]And the priest shall take the shoulder of the ram, when it is boiled, and one unleavened loaf out of the basket and one unleavened wafer, and shall put them on the hands of the Nazirite, after he has shaved the hair of his consecration, [20]† and the priest shall wave them for a wave offering before the Lord. They are a holy portion for the priest, together with the breast that is waved and the thigh that is contributed. And after that the Nazirite may drink wine.

[21]"This is the law of the Nazirite. But if he vows an offering to the Lord above his Nazirite vow, as he can afford, in exact accordance with the vow that he takes, then he shall do in addition to the law of the Nazirite."

Aaron’s Blessing

22 ‡ ‡ The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 23 ‡ “Speak to Aaron and his sons,
saying, Thus you shall bless the people of Israel: you shall say to them,

24 ‡ The Lord bless you and keep you;
25 ‡ the Lord make his face to shine upon you
and be gracious to you;
26 ‡ the Lord lift up his countenance[1] upon you
and give you peace.

27 ‡ “So shall they put my name upon the people of Israel, and I will bless
them.”

Offerings at the Tabernacle's Consecration

7 [1]†On the day when Moses had finished setting up the tabernacle and
had anointed and consecrated it with all its furnishings and had anointed
and consecrated the altar with all its utensils, [2]†the chiefs of Israel, heads of
their fathers' houses, who were the chiefs of the tribes, who were over those
who were listed, approached [3]†and brought their offerings before the Lord,
six wagons and twelve oxen, a wagon for every two of the chiefs, and for
each one an ox. They brought them before the tabernacle. [4]Then the Lord
said to Moses, [5]† "Accept these from them, that they may be used in the
service of the tent of meeting, and give them to the Levites, to each man
according to his service." [6]So Moses took the wagons and the oxen and
gave them to the Levites. [7]Two wagons and four oxen he gave to the sons of
Gershon, according to their service. [8]And four wagons and eight oxen he
gave to the sons of Merari, according to their service, under the direction of
Ithamar the son of Aaron the priest. [9]†But to the sons of Kohath he gave
none, because they were charged with the service of the holy things that had
to be carried on the shoulder. [10]† And the chiefs offered offerings for the
dedication of the altar on the day it was anointed; and the chiefs offered
their offering before the altar. [11]†And the Lord said to Moses, "They shall
offer their offerings, one chief each day, for the dedication of the altar."

[12]† He who offered his offering the first day was Nahshon the son of
Amminadab, of the tribe of Judah. [13]And his offering was one silver plate
whose weight was 130 shekels,[1] one silver basin of 70 shekels, according
to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil
for a grain offering; [14]one golden dish of 10 shekels, full of incense; [15]one
bull from the herd, one ram, one male lamb a year old, for a burnt offering;
[16]one male goat for a sin offering; [17]and for the sacrifice of peace offerings,
two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs a year old. This
was the offering of Nahshon the son of Amminadab.

[18]On the second day Nethanel the son of Zuar, the chief of Issachar, made
an offering. [19]He offered for his offering one silver plate whose weight was
130 shekels, one silver basin of 70 shekels, according to the shekel of the

sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering;
[20]one golden dish of 10 shekels, full of incense; [21]one bull from the herd,
one ram, one male lamb a year old, for a burnt offering; [22]one male goat for
a sin offering; [23]and for the sacrifice of peace offerings, two oxen, five rams,
five male goats, and five male lambs a year old. This was the offering of
Nethanel the son of Zuar.

[24]On the third day Eliab the son of Helon, the chief of the people of
Zebulun: [25]his offering was one silver plate whose weight was 130 shekels,
one silver basin of 70 shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both
of them full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; [26]one golden
dish of 10 shekels, full of incense; [27]one bull from the herd, one ram, one
male lamb a year old, for a burnt offering; [28]one male goat for a sin
offering; [29]and for the sacrifice of peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five
male goats, and five male lambs a year old. This was the offering of Eliab
the son of Helon.

[30]On the fourth day Elizur the son of Shedeur, the chief of the people of
Reuben: [31]his offering was one silver plate whose weight was 130 shekels,
one silver basin of 70 shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both
of them full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; [32]one golden
dish of 10 shekels, full of incense; [33]one bull from the herd, one ram, one
male lamb a year old, for a burnt offering; [34]one male goat for a sin
offering; [35]and for the sacrifice of peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five
male goats, and five male lambs a year old. This was the offering of Elizur
the son of Shedeur.

[36]On the fifth day Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai, the chief of the
people of Simeon: [37]his offering was one silver plate whose weight was 130
shekels, one silver basin of 70 shekels, according to the shekel of the
sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering;
[38]one golden dish of 10 shekels, full of incense; [39]one bull from the herd,
one ram, one male lamb a year old, for a burnt offering; [40]one male goat for
a sin offering; [41]and for the sacrifice of peace offerings, two oxen, five rams,
five male goats, and five male lambs a year old. This was the offering of
Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai.

[42]On the sixth day Eliasaph the son of Deuel, the chief of the people of
Gad: [43]his offering was one silver plate whose weight was 130 shekels, one

silver basin of 70 shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; [44]one golden dish of 10 shekels, full of incense; [45]one bull from the herd, one ram, one male lamb a year old, for a burnt offering; [46]one male goat for a sin offering; [47]and for the sacrifice of peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs a year old. This was the offering of Eliasaph the son of Deuel.

[48]On the seventh day Elishama the son of Ammihud, the chief of the people of Ephraim: [49]his offering was one silver plate whose weight was 130 shekels, one silver basin of 70 shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; [50]one golden dish of 10 shekels, full of incense; [51]one bull from the herd, one ram, one male lamb a year old, for a burnt offering; [52]one male goat for a sin offering; [53]and for the sacrifice of peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs a year old. This was the offering of Elishama the son of Ammihud.

[54]On the eighth day Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur, the chief of the people of Manasseh: [55]his offering was one silver plate whose weight was 130 shekels, one silver basin of 70 shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; [56]one golden dish of 10 shekels, full of incense; [57]one bull from the herd, one ram, one male lamb a year old, for a burnt offering; [58]one male goat for a sin offering; [59]and for the sacrifice of peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs a year old. This was the offering of Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur.

[60]On the ninth day Abidan the son of Gideoni, the chief of the people of Benjamin: [61]his offering was one silver plate whose weight was 130 shekels, one silver basin of 70 shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; [62]one golden dish of 10 shekels, full of incense; [63]one bull from the herd, one ram, one male lamb a year old, for a burnt offering; [64]one male goat for a sin offering; [65]and for the sacrifice of peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs a year old. This was the offering of Abidan the son of Gideoni.

[66]On the tenth day Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai, the chief of the
people of Dan: [67]his offering was one silver plate whose weight was 130
shekels, one silver basin of 70 shekels, according to the shekel of the
sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering;
[68]one golden dish of 10 shekels, full of incense; [69]one bull from the herd,
one ram, one male lamb a year old, for a burnt offering; [70]one male goat for
a sin offering; [71]and for the sacrifice of peace offerings, two oxen, five rams,
five male goats, and five male lambs a year old. This was the offering of
Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai.

[72]On the eleventh day Pagiel the son of Ochran, the chief of the people of
Asher: [73]his offering was one silver plate whose weight was 130 shekels,
one silver basin of 70 shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both
of them full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; [74]one golden
dish of 10 shekels, full of incense; [75]one bull from the herd, one ram, one
male lamb a year old, for a burnt offering; [76]one male goat for a sin
offering; [77]and for the sacrifice of peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five
male goats, and five male lambs a year old. This was the offering of Pagiel
the son of Ochran.

[78]On the twelfth day Ahira the son of Enan, the chief of the people of
Naphtali: [79]his offering was one silver plate whose weight was 130 shekels,
one silver basin of 70 shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both
of them full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; [80]one golden
dish of 10 shekels, full of incense; [81]one bull from the herd, one ram, one
male lamb a year old, for a burnt offering; [82]one male goat for a sin
offering; [83]and for the sacrifice of peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five
male goats, and five male lambs a year old. This was the offering of Ahira
the son of Enan.

[84]This was the dedication offering for the altar on the day when it was
anointed, from the chiefs of Israel: twelve silver plates, twelve silver basins,
twelve golden dishes, [85]each silver plate weighing 130 shekels and each
basin 70, all the silver of the vessels 2,400 shekels according to the shekel
of the sanctuary, [86]the twelve golden dishes, full of incense, weighing 10
shekels apiece according to the shekel of the sanctuary, all the gold of the
dishes being 120 shekels; [87]all the cattle for the burnt offering twelve bulls,
twelve rams, twelve male lambs a year old, with their grain offering; and

twelve male goats for a sin offering; [88]and all the cattle for the sacrifice of peace offerings twenty-four bulls, the rams sixty, the male goats sixty, the male lambs a year old sixty. This was the dedication offering for the altar after it was anointed.

[89]†And when Moses went into the tent of meeting to speak with the LORD, he heard the voice speaking to him from above the mercy seat that was on the ark of the testimony, from between the two cherubim; and it spoke to him.

The Seven Lamps

8 [1]Now the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, [2]"Speak to Aaron and say
to him, When you set up the lamps, the seven lamps shall give light in front
of the lampstand." [3]And Aaron did so: he set up its lamps in front of the
lampstand, as the Lord commanded Moses. [4]And this was the
workmanship of the lampstand, hammered work of gold. From its base to
its flowers, it was hammered work; according to the pattern that the Lord
had shown Moses, so he made the lampstand.

Cleansing of the Levites

5 ‡And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 6 †“Take the Levites from among
the people of Israel and cleanse them. 7 † Thus you shall do to them to
cleanse them: sprinkle the water of purification upon them, and let them go
with a razor over all their body, and wash their clothes and cleanse
themselves. 8Then let them take a bull from the herd and its grain offering
of fine flour mixed with oil, and you shall take another bull from the herd
for a sin offering. 9And you shall bring the Levites before the tent of
meeting and assemble the whole congregation of the people of Israel.
10 †When you bring the Levites before the Lord, the people of Israel shall lay
their hands on the Levites, 11 †and Aaron shall offer the Levites before the
Lord as a wave offering from the people of Israel, that they may do the
service of the Lord. 12 †Then the Levites shall lay their hands on the heads of
the bulls, and you shall offer the one for a sin offering and the other for a
burnt offering to the Lord to make atonement for the Levites. 13And you
shall set the Levites before Aaron and his sons, and shall offer them as a
wave offering to the Lord.

14 †“Thus you shall separate the Levites from among the people of Israel,
and the Levites shall be mine. 15And after that the Levites shall go in to
serve at the tent of meeting, when you have cleansed them and offered them
as a wave offering. 16 ‡For they are wholly given to me from among the
people of Israel. Instead of all who open the womb, the firstborn of all the
people of Israel, I have taken them for myself. 17For all the firstborn among
the people of Israel are mine, both of man and of beast. On the day that I
struck down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt I consecrated them for
myself, 18and I have taken the Levites instead of all the firstborn among the
people of Israel. 19 †And I have given the Levites as a gift to Aaron and his
sons from among the people of Israel, to do the service for the people of
Israel at the tent of meeting and to make atonement for the people of Israel,
that there may be no plague among the people of Israel when the people of
Israel come near the sanctuary.”

20 †Thus did Moses and Aaron and all the congregation of the people of
Israel to the Levites. According to all that the Lord commanded Moses

concerning the Levites, the people of Israel did to them. [21]And the Levites purified themselves from sin and washed their clothes, and Aaron offered them as a wave offering before the LORD, and Aaron made atonement for them to cleanse them. [22]And after that the Levites went in to do their service in the tent of meeting before Aaron and his sons; as the LORD had commanded Moses concerning the Levites, so they did to them.

Retirement of the Levites

23 And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 24 “This applies to the Levites:
from twenty-five years old and upward they[1] shall come to do duty in the
service of the tent of meeting. 25 And from the age of fifty years they shall
withdraw from the duty of the service and serve no more. 26 They
minister[2] to their brothers in the tent of meeting by keeping guard, but they
shall do no service. Thus shall you do to the Levites in assigning their
duties.”

The Passover Celebrated

9 [1]‡†And the Lord spoke to Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the
first month of the second year after they had come out of the land of Egypt,
saying, [2]†"Let the people of Israel keep the Passover at its appointed time.
[3]†On the fourteenth day of this month, at twilight, you shall keep it at its
appointed time; according to all its statutes and all its rules you shall keep
it." [4]So Moses told the people of Israel that they should keep the Passover.
[5]And they kept the Passover in the first month, on the fourteenth day of the
month, at twilight, in the wilderness of Sinai; according to all that the Lord
commanded Moses, so the people of Israel did. [6]†And there were certain
men who were unclean through touching a dead body, so that they could not
keep the Passover on that day, and they came before Moses and Aaron on
that day. [7]And those men said to him, "We are unclean through touching a
dead body. Why are we kept from bringing the Lord's offering at its
appointed time among the people of Israel?" [8]And Moses said to them,
"Wait, that I may hear what the Lord will command concerning you."

[9]‡The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, [10]†"Speak to the people of Israel,
saying, If any one of you or of your descendants is unclean through
touching a dead body, or is on a long journey, he shall still keep the
Passover to the Lord. [11]In the second month on the fourteenth day at twilight
they shall keep it. They shall eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs.
[12]They shall leave none of it until the morning, nor break any of its bones;
according to all the statute for the Passover they shall keep it. [13]†But if
anyone who is clean and is not on a journey fails to keep the Passover, that
person shall be cut off from his people because he did not bring the Lord's
offering at its appointed time; that man shall bear his sin. [14]† And if a
stranger sojourns among you and would keep the Passover to the Lord,
according to the statute of the Passover and according to its rule, so shall he
do. You shall have one statute, both for the sojourner and for the native."

The Cloud Covering the Tabernacle

15 ‡ † On the day that the tabernacle was set up, the cloud covered the
tabernacle, the tent of the testimony. And at evening it was over the
tabernacle like the appearance of fire until morning. 16 So it was always: the
cloud covered it by day[1] and the appearance of fire by night. 17 † And
whenever the cloud lifted from over the tent, after that the people of Israel
set out, and in the place where the cloud settled down, there the people of
Israel camped. 18 At the command of the Lord the people of Israel set out,
and at the command of the Lord they camped. As long as the cloud rested
over the tabernacle, they remained in camp. 19 Even when the cloud
continued over the tabernacle many days, the people of Israel kept the
charge of the Lord and did not set out. 20 Sometimes the cloud was a few
days over the tabernacle, and according to the command of the Lord they
remained in camp; then according to the command of the Lord they set out.
21 And sometimes the cloud remained from evening until morning. And
when the cloud lifted in the morning, they set out, or if it continued for a
day and a night, when the cloud lifted they set out. 22 Whether it was two
days, or a month, or a longer time, that the cloud continued over the
tabernacle, abiding there, the people of Israel remained in camp and did not
set out, but when it lifted they set out. 23 † At the command of the Lord they
camped, and at the command of the Lord they set out. They kept the charge
of the Lord, at the command of the Lord by Moses.

The Silver Trumpets

10 [1]The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, [2]"Make two silver trumpets.
Of hammered work you shall make them, and you shall use them for
summoning the congregation and for breaking camp. [3]And when both are
blown, all the congregation shall gather themselves to you at the entrance of
the tent of meeting. [4]But if they blow only one, then the chiefs, the heads
of the tribes of Israel, shall gather themselves to you. [5]When you blow an
alarm, the camps that are on the east side shall set out. [6]And when you blow
an alarm the second time, the camps that are on the south side shall set out.
An alarm is to be blown whenever they are to set out. [7]But when the
assembly is to be gathered together, you shall blow a long blast, but you
shall not sound an alarm. [8]And the sons of Aaron, the priests, shall blow
the trumpets. The trumpets shall be to you for a perpetual statute throughout
your generations. [9]And when you go to war in your land against the
adversary who oppresses you, then you shall sound an alarm with the
trumpets, that you may be remembered before the Lord your God, and you
shall be saved from your enemies. [10]On the day of your gladness also, and
at your appointed feasts and at the beginnings of your months, you shall
blow the trumpets over your burnt offerings and over the sacrifices of your
peace offerings. They shall be a reminder of you before your God: I am the
Lord your God."

Israel Leaves Sinai

11 ‡ † In the second year, in the second month, on the twentieth day of the
month, the cloud lifted from over the tabernacle of the testimony, 12 † and the
people of Israel set out by stages from the wilderness of Sinai. And the
cloud settled down in the wilderness of Paran. 13 † They set out for the first
time at the command of the Lord by Moses. 14 ‡ † The standard of the camp of
the people of Judah set out first by their companies, and over their company
was Nahshon the son of Amminadab. 15 And over the company of the tribe
of the people of Issachar was Nethanel the son of Zuar. 16 And over the
company of the tribe of the people of Zebulun was Eliab the son of Helon.

17 ‡ And when the tabernacle was taken down, the sons of Gershon and the
sons of Merari, who carried the tabernacle, set out. 18 And the standard of the
camp of Reuben set out by their companies, and over their company was
Elizur the son of Shedeur. 19 And over the company of the tribe of the people
of Simeon was Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai. 20 And over the company
of the tribe of the people of Gad was Eliasaph the son of Deuel.

21 Then the Kohathites set out, carrying the holy things, and the tabernacle
was set up before their arrival. 22 And the standard of the camp of the people
of Ephraim set out by their companies, and over their company was
Elishama the son of Ammihud. 23 And over the company of the tribe of the
people of Manasseh was Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur. 24 And over the
company of the tribe of the people of Benjamin was Abidan the son of
Gideoni.

25 Then the standard of the camp of the people of Dan, acting as the rear
guard of all the camps, set out by their companies, and over their company
was Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai. 26 And over the company of the tribe
of the people of Asher was Pagiel the son of Ochran. 27 And over the
company of the tribe of the people of Naphtali was Ahira the son of Enan.
28 This was the order of march of the people of Israel by their companies,
when they set out.

29 ‡ And Moses said to Hobab the son of Reuel the Midianite, Moses'
father-in-law, "We are setting out for the place of which the Lord said, 'I
will give it to you.' Come with us, and we will do good to you, for the Lord

has promised good to Israel.” 30But he said to him, “I will not go. I will depart to my own land and to my kindred.” 31And he said, “Please do not leave us, for you know where we should camp in the wilderness, and you will serve as eyes for us. 32And if you do go with us, whatever good the Lord will do to us, the same will we do to you.”

33† So they set out from the mount of the Lord three days’ journey. And the ark of the covenant of the Lord went before them three days’ journey, to seek out a resting place for them. 34† And the cloud of the Lord was over them by day, whenever they set out from the camp.

35† And whenever the ark set out, Moses said, “Arise, O Lord, and let your enemies be scattered, and let those who hate you flee before you.” 36And when it rested, he said, “Return, O Lord, to the ten thousand thousands of Israel.”

The People Complain

11 [1]‡†And the people complained in the hearing of the Lord about
their misfortunes, and when the Lord heard it, his anger was kindled, and
the fire of the Lord burned among them and consumed some outlying parts
of the camp. [2]Then the people cried out to Moses, and Moses prayed to the
Lord, and the fire died down. [3]So the name of that place was called Taberah,
[1] because the fire of the Lord burned among them.

[4]‡†Now the rabble that was among them had a strong craving. And the
people of Israel also wept again and said, “Oh that we had meat to eat!
[5]†We remember the fish we ate in Egypt that cost nothing, the cucumbers,
the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic. [6]But now our strength is
dried up, and there is nothing at all but this manna to look at.”

[7]‡Now the manna was like coriander seed, and its appearance like that of
bdellium. [8]The people went about and gathered it and ground it in handmills
or
beat it in mortars and boiled it in pots and made cakes of it. And the taste of
it was like the taste of cakes baked with oil. [9]When the dew fell upon the
camp in the night, the manna fell with it.

[10]†Moses heard the people weeping throughout their clans, everyone at
the door of his tent. And the anger of the Lord blazed hotly, and Moses was
displeased. [11]†Moses said to the Lord, “Why have you dealt ill with your
servant? And why have I not found favor in your sight, that you lay the
burden of all this people on me? [12]†Did I conceive all this people? Did I
give them birth, that you should say to me, ‘Carry them in your bosom, as a
nurse carries a nursing child,’ to the land that you swore to give their
fathers? [13]Where am I to get meat to give to all this people? For they weep
before me and say, ‘Give us meat, that we may eat.’ [14]†I am not able to
carry all this people alone; the burden is too heavy for me. [15]†If you will
treat me like this, kill me at once, if I find favor in your sight, that I may not
see my wretchedness.”

Elders Appointed to Aid Moses

16 ‡ † Then the Lord said to Moses, “Gather for me seventy men of the
elders of Israel, whom you know to be the elders of the people and officers
over them, and bring them to the tent of meeting, and let them take their
stand there with you. 17 † And I will come down and talk with you there. And
I will take some of the Spirit that is on you and put it on them, and they
shall bear the burden of the people with you, so that you may not bear it
yourself alone. 18 † And say to the people, ‘Consecrate yourselves for
tomorrow, and you shall eat meat, for you have wept in the hearing of the
Lord, saying, “Who will give us meat to eat? For it was better for us in
Egypt.” Therefore the Lord will give you meat, and you shall eat. 19 You
shall not eat just one day, or two days, or five days, or ten days, or twenty
days, 20 † but a whole month, until it comes out at your nostrils and becomes
loathsome to you, because you have rejected the Lord who is among you
and have wept before him, saying, “Why did we come out of Egypt?”’”
21 But Moses said, “The people among whom I am number six hundred
thousand on foot, and you have said, ‘I will give them meat, that they may
eat a whole month!’ 22 Shall flocks and herds be slaughtered for them, and be
enough for them? Or shall all the fish of the sea be gathered together for
them, and be enough for them?” 23 † And the Lord said to Moses, “Is the
Lord’s hand shortened? Now you shall see whether my word will come true
for you or not.”

24 † So Moses went out and told the people the words of the Lord. And he
gathered seventy men of the elders of the people and placed them around
the tent. 25 † Then the Lord came down in the cloud and spoke to him, and
took some of the Spirit that was on him and put it on the seventy elders.
And as soon as the Spirit rested on them, they prophesied. But they did not
continue doing it.

26 † Now two men remained in the camp, one named Eldad, and the other
named Medad, and the Spirit rested on them. They were among those
registered, but they had not gone out to the tent, and so they prophesied in
the camp. 27 And a young man ran and told Moses, “Eldad and Medad are
prophesying in the camp.” 28 † And Joshua the son of Nun, the assistant of

Moses from his youth, said, “My lord Moses, stop them.” [29]†But Moses said to him, “Are you jealous for my sake? Would that all the Lord’s people were prophets, that the Lord would put his Spirit on them!” [30]And Moses and the elders of Israel returned to the camp.

Quail and a Plague

31 ‡ † Then a wind from the Lord sprang up, and it brought quail from the
sea and let them fall beside the camp, about a day's journey on this side and
a day's journey on the other side, around the camp, and about two cubits[1]
above the ground. 32 † And the people rose all that day and all night and all
the next day, and gathered the quail. Those who gathered least gathered ten
homers.[2] And they spread them out for themselves all around the camp.
33 † While the meat was yet between their teeth, before it was consumed, the
anger of the Lord was kindled
against the people, and the Lord struck down the people with a very great
plague. 34 Therefore the name of that place was called Kibroth-hattaavah,[3]
because there they buried the people who had the craving. 35 From Kibroth-
hattaavah the people journeyed to Hazeroth, and they remained at Hazeroth.

Miriam and Aaron Oppose Moses

12 [1]†Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of the Cushite
woman whom he had married, for he had married a Cushite woman. [2]†And
they said, “Has the Lord indeed spoken only through Moses? Has he not
spoken through us also?” And the Lord heard it. [3]†Now the man Moses was
very meek, more than all people who were on the face of the earth. [4]†And
suddenly the Lord said to Moses and to Aaron and Miriam, “Come out, you
three, to the tent of meeting.” And the three of them came out. [5]†And the
Lord came down in a pillar of cloud and stood at the entrance of the tent and
called Aaron and Miriam, and they both came forward. [6]†And he said,
“Hear my words: If there
is a prophet among you, I the Lord make myself known to him in a vision; I
speak with him in a dream. [7]†Not so with my servant Moses. He is faithful
in all my house. [8]†With him I speak mouth to mouth, clearly, and not in
riddles, and he beholds the form of the Lord. Why then were you not afraid
to speak against my servant Moses?” [9]And the anger of the Lord was
kindled against them, and he
departed.

[10]†When the cloud removed from over the tent, behold, Miriam was
leprous,[1] like snow. And Aaron turned toward Miriam, and behold, she was
leprous. [11]And Aaron said to Moses, “Oh, my lord, do not punish us[2]
because we have done foolishly and have sinned. [12]†Let her not be as one
dead, whose flesh is half eaten away when he comes out of his moth-
er’s womb.” [13]†And Moses cried to the Lord, “O God, please heal her—
please.” [14]†But the Lord said to Moses, “If her father had but spit in her
face, should she not be shamed seven days? Let her be shut outside the
camp seven days, and after that she may be brought in again.” [15]So Miriam
was shut outside the camp seven days, and the people did not set out on the
march till Miriam was brought in again. [16]After that the people set out from
Hazeroth, and camped in the wilderness of Paran.

Spies Sent into Canaan

13 [1]The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, [2]"Send men to spy out the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the people of Israel. From each tribe of their fathers you shall send a man, every one a chief among them." [3]So Moses sent them from the wilderness of Paran, according to the command of the LORD, all of them men who were heads of the people of Israel. [4]And these were their names: From the tribe of Reuben, Shammua the son of Zaccur; [5]from the tribe of Simeon, Shaphat the son of Hori; [6]from the tribe of Judah, Caleb the son of Jephunneh; [7]from the tribe
of Issachar, Igal the son of Joseph; [8]from the tribe of Ephraim, Hoshea the son of Nun; [9]from the tribe of Benjamin, Palti the son of Raphu; [10]from the tribe
of Zebulun, Gaddiel the son of Sodi; [11]from the tribe of Joseph (that is, from the tribe of Manasseh), Gaddi the son of Susi; [12]from the tribe of Dan, Ammiel the son of Gemalli; [13]from the tribe of Asher, Sethur the son of Michael; [14]from the tribe of Naphtali, Nahbi the son
of Vophsi; [15]from the tribe of Gad, Geuel the son of Machi. [16]These were the names of the men whom Moses sent to spy out the land. And Moses called Hoshea the son of Nun Joshua.

[17]Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan and said to them, "Go up into the Negeb and go up into the hill country, [18]and see what the land is, and whether the people who dwell in it are strong or weak, whether they are few or many, [19]and whether the land that they dwell in is good or bad, and whether the cities that they dwell in are camps or strongholds, [20]and whether the land is rich or poor, and whether there are trees in it or not. Be of good courage and bring some of the fruit of the land." Now the time was the season of the first ripe grapes.

[21]So they went up and spied out the land from the wilderness of Zin to Rehob, near Lebo-hamath. [22]They went up into the Negeb and came to Hebron. Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmai, the descendants of Anak, were there. (Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt.) [23]And they came to the Valley of Eshcol and cut down from there a branch with a single cluster

of grapes, and they carried it on a pole between two of them; they also brought some pomegranates and figs. 24That place was called the Valley of Eshcol,[1] because of the cluster that the people of Israel cut down from there.

Report of the Spies

25 ‡ † At the end of forty days they returned from spying out the land.
26 And they came to Moses and Aaron and to all the congregation of the
people of Israel in the wilderness of Paran, at Kadesh. They brought back
word to them and to all the congregation, and showed them the fruit of the
land. 27 † And they told him, “We came to the land to which you sent us. It
flows with milk and honey, and this is its fruit. 28 ‡ However, the people who
dwell in the land are strong, and the cities are fortified and very large. And
besides, we saw the descendants of Anak there. 29 The Amalekites dwell in
the land of the Negeb. The Hittites, the Jebusites, and the Amorites dwell in
the hill country. And the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and along the
Jordan.”
30 † But Caleb quieted the people before Moses and said, “Let us go up at
once and occupy it, for we are well able to overcome it.” 31 † Then the men
who had gone up with him said, “We are not able to go up against the
people, for they are stronger than we are.” 32 † So they brought to the people
of Israel a bad report of the land that they had spied out, saying, “The land,
through which we have gone to spy it out, is a land that devours its
inhabitants, and all the people that we saw in it are of great height. 33 † And
there we saw the Nephilim (the sons of Anak, who come from the
Nephilim), and we seemed to ourselves like grasshoppers, and so we
seemed to them.”

The People Rebel

14 [1]‡‡‡Then all the congregation raised a loud cry, and the people
wept that night. [2]And all the people of Israel grumbled against Moses and
Aaron. The whole congregation said to them, “Would that we had died in
the land of Egypt! Or would that we had died in this wilderness! [3]†Why is
the Lord bringing us into this land, to fall by the sword? Our wives and our
little ones will become a prey. Would it not be better for us to go back to
Egypt?” [4]† And they said to one another, “Let us choose a leader and go
back to Egypt.”

[5]†Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the
congregation of the people of Israel. [6]† And Joshua the son of Nun and
Caleb the son of Jephunneh, who were among those who had spied out the
land, tore their clothes [7]and said to all the congregation of the people of
Israel, “The land, which we passed through to spy it out, is an exceedingly
good land. [8]†If the Lord delights in us, he will bring us into this land and
give it to us, a land that flows with milk and honey. [9]†Only do not rebel
against the Lord. And do not fear the people of the land, for they are bread
for us. Their protection is removed from them, and the Lord is with us; do
not fear them.” [10]†Then all the congregation said to stone them with stones.
But the glory of the Lord appeared at the tent of meeting to all the people of
Israel.

[11]‡And the Lord said to Moses, “How long will this people despise me?
And how long will they not believe in me, in spite of all the signs that I
have done among them? [12]I will strike them with the pestilence and
disinherit them, and I will make of you a nation greater and mightier than
they.”

Moses Intercedes for the People

13 ‡‡But Moses said to the Lord, “Then the Egyptians will hear of it, for
you brought up this people in your might from among them, 14 ‡†and they
will tell the inhabitants of this land. They have heard that you, O Lord, are
in the midst of this people. For you, O Lord, are seen face to face, and your
cloud stands over them and you go before them, in a pillar of cloud by day
and in a pillar of fire by night. 15 Now if you kill this people as one man,
then the nations who have heard your fame will say, 16 ‘It is because the Lord
was not able to bring this people into the land that he swore to give to them
that he has killed them in the wilderness.’ 17 And now, please let the power
of the Lord be great as you have promised, saying, 18 †‘The Lord is slow to
anger and abounding in steadfast love, forgiving iniquity and transgression,
but he will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers
on the children, to the third and the fourth generation.’ 19 †Please pardon the
iniquity of this people, according to the greatness of your steadfast love,
just as you have forgiven this people, from Egypt until now.”

God Promises Judgment

20 ‡ ‡ † Then the Lord said, “I have pardoned, according to your word.
21 † But truly, as I live, and as all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the
Lord, 22 † none of the men who have seen my glory and my signs that I did in
Egypt and in the wilderness, and yet have put me to the test these ten times
and have not obeyed my voice, 23 shall see the land that I swore to give to
their fathers. And none of those who despised me shall see it. 24 † But my
servant Caleb, because he has a different spirit and has followed me fully, I
will bring into the land into which he went, and his descendants shall
possess it. 25 † Now, since the Amalekites and the Canaanites dwell in the
valleys, turn tomorrow and set out for the wilderness by the way to the Red
Sea.”

26 And the Lord spoke to Moses and to Aaron, saying, 27 “How long shall
this wicked congregation grumble against me? I have heard the grumblings
of the people of Israel, which they grumble against me. 28 Say to them, ‘As I
live, declares the Lord, what you have said in my hearing I will do to you:
29 † your dead bodies shall fall in this wilderness, and of all your number,
listed in the census from twenty years old and upward, who have grumbled
against me, 30 ‡ not one shall come into the land where I swore that I would
make you dwell, except Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of
Nun. 31 But your little ones, who you said would become a prey, I will bring
in, and they shall know the land that you have rejected. 32 But as for you,
your dead bodies shall fall in this wilderness. 33 † And your children shall be
shepherds in the wilderness forty years and shall suffer for your
faithlessness, until the last of your dead bodies lies in the wilderness.
34 ‡ According to the number of the days in which you spied out the land,
forty days, a year for each day, you shall bear your iniquity forty years, and
you shall know my displeasure.’ 35 † I, the Lord, have spoken. Surely this will
I do to all this wicked congregation who are gathered together against me:
in this wilderness they shall come to a full end, and there they shall die.”

36 And the men whom Moses sent to spy out the land, who returned and
made all the congregation grumble against him by bringing up a bad report
about the land— 37 † the men who brought up a bad report of the land—died

by plague before the LORD. [38]Of those men who went to spy out the land, only Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh remained alive.

Israel Defeated in Battle

39 † When Moses told these words to all the people of Israel, the people
mourned greatly. 40 † And they rose early in the morning and went up to the
heights of the hill country, saying, “Here we are. We will go up to the place
that the Lord has promised, for we have sinned.” 41 But Moses said, “Why
now are you transgressing the command of the Lord, when that will not
succeed? 42 † Do not go up, for the Lord is not among you, lest you be struck
down before your enemies. 43 For there the Amalekites and the Canaanites
are facing you, and you shall fall by the sword. Because you have turned
back from following the Lord, the Lord will not be with you.” 44 † But they
presumed to go up to the heights of the hill country, although neither the ark
of the covenant of the Lord nor Moses departed out of the camp. 45 † Then
the Amalekites and the Canaanites who lived in that hill country came down
and defeated them and pursued them, even to Hormah.

Laws About Sacrifices

15 [1]The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, [2]"Speak to the people of
Israel and say to them, When you come into the land you are to inhabit,
which I am giving you, [3]and you offer to the Lord from the herd or from
the flock a food offering[1] or a burnt offering or a sacrifice, to fulfill a vow
or as a freewill offering or at your appointed feasts, to make a pleasing
aroma to the Lord, [4]then he who brings his offering shall offer to the Lord a
grain offering of a tenth of an ephah[2] of fine flour, mixed with a quarter of
a hin[3] of oil; [5]and you shall offer with the burnt offering, or for the
sacrifice, a quarter of a hin of wine for the drink offering for each lamb. [6]Or
for a ram, you shall offer for a grain offering two tenths of an ephah of fine
flour mixed with a third of a hin of oil. [7]And for the drink offering you shall
offer a third of a hin of wine, a pleasing aroma to the Lord. [8]And when you
offer a bull as a burnt offering or sacrifice, to fulfill a vow or for peace
offerings to the Lord, [9]then one shall offer with the bull a grain offering of
three tenths of an ephah of fine flour, mixed with half a hin of oil. [10]And
you shall offer for the drink offering half a hin of wine, as a food offering, a
pleasing aroma to the Lord.

[11]"Thus it shall be done for each bull or ram, or for each lamb or young
goat. [12]As many as you offer, so shall you do with each one, as many as
there are. [13]Every native Israelite shall do these things in this way, in
offering a food offering, with a pleasing aroma to the Lord. [14]And if a
stranger is sojourning with you, or anyone is living permanently among
you, and he wishes to offer a food offering, with a pleasing aroma to the
Lord, he shall do as you do. [15]For the assembly, there shall be one statute for
you and for the stranger who sojourns with you, a statute forever throughout
your generations. You and the sojourner shall be alike before the Lord.
[16]One law and one rule shall be for you and for the stranger who sojourns
with you."

[17]The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, [18]"Speak to the people of Israel and
say to them, When you come into the land to which I bring you [19]and when
you eat of the bread of the land, you shall present a contribution to the Lord.

[20]† Of the first of your dough you shall present a loaf as a contribution; like
a contribution from the threshing floor, so shall you present it. [21]Some of the
first of your dough you shall give to the Lord as a contribution throughout
your generations.

Laws About Unintentional Sins

22 ‡ † “But if you sin unintentionally,[4] and do not observe all these
commandments that the Lord has spoken to Moses, 23all that the Lord has
commanded you by Moses, from the day that the Lord gave commandment,
and onward throughout your generations, 24then if it was done
unintentionally without the knowledge of the congregation, all the
congregation shall offer one bull from the herd for a burnt offering, a
pleasing aroma to the Lord, with its grain offering and its drink offering,
according to the rule, and one male goat for a sin offering. 25†And the priest
shall make atonement for all the congregation of the people of Israel, and
they shall be forgiven, because it was a mistake, and they have brought their
offering, a food offering to the Lord, and their sin offering before the Lord
for their mistake. 26And all the congregation of the people of Israel shall be
forgiven, and the stranger who sojourns among them, because the whole
population was involved in the mistake.

27“If one person sins unintentionally, he shall offer a female goat a year
old for a sin offering. 28And the priest shall make atonement before the Lord
for the person who makes a mistake, when he sins unintentionally, to make
atonement for him, and he shall be forgiven. 29You shall have one law for
him who does anything unintentionally, for him who is native among the
people of Israel and for the stranger who sojourns among them. 30†But the
person who does anything with a high hand, whether he is native or a
sojourner, reviles the Lord, and that person shall be cut off from among his
people. 31Because he has despised the word of the Lord and has broken his
commandment, that person shall be utterly cut off; his iniquity shall be on
him.”

A Sabbathbreaker Executed

32 ‡‡‡While the people of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man
gathering sticks on the Sabbath day. 33 And those who found him gathering
sticks brought him to Moses and Aaron and to all the congregation. 34 They
put him in custody, because it had not been made clear what should be done
to him. 35 † And the Lord said to Moses, “The man shall be put to death; all
the congregation shall stone him with stones outside the camp.” 36 And all
the congregation brought him outside the camp and stoned him to death
with stones, as the Lord commanded Moses.

Tassels on Garments

37 The Lord said to Moses, 38 “Speak to the people of Israel, and tell
them to make tassels on the corners of their garments throughout their
generations, and to put a cord of blue on the tassel of each corner. 39 And it
shall be a tassel for you to look at and remember all the commandments of
the Lord, to do them, not to follow[1] after your own heart and your own
eyes, which you are inclined to whore after. 40 So you shall remember and
do all my commandments, and be holy to your God. 41 I am the Lord your
God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt to be your God: I am the
Lord your God.”

Korah's Rebellion

16 [1]Now Korah the son of Izhar, son of Kohath, son of Levi, and
Dathan and Abiram the sons of Eliab, and On the son of Peleth, sons of
Reuben, took men. [2]†And they rose up before Moses, with a number of the
people of Israel, 250 chiefs of the congregation, chosen from the assembly,
well-known men. [3]†They assembled themselves together against Moses and
against Aaron and said to them, "You have gone too far! For all in the
congregation are holy, every one of them, and the LORD is among them. Why
then do you exalt yourselves above the assembly of the LORD?" [4]† When
Moses heard it, he fell on his face, [5]and he said to Korah and all his
company, "In the morning the LORD will show who is his,[1] and who is holy,
and will bring him near to him. The one whom he chooses he will bring
near to him. [6]†Do this: take censers, Korah and all his company; [7]†put fire
in them and put incense on them before the LORD tomorrow, and the man
whom the LORD chooses shall be the holy one. You have gone too far, sons
of Levi!" [8]And Moses said to Korah, "Hear now, you sons of Levi: [9]is it too
small a thing for you that the God of Israel has separated you from the
congregation of Israel, to bring you near to himself, to do service in the
tabernacle of the LORD and to stand before the congregation to minister to
them, [10]†and that he has brought you near him, and all your brothers the
sons of Levi with you? And would you seek the priesthood also?
[11]† Therefore it is against the LORD that you and all your company have
gathered together. What is Aaron that you grumble against him?"

[12]†And Moses sent to call Dathan and Abiram the sons of Eliab, and they
said, "We will not come up. [13]†Is it a small thing that you have brought us
up out of a land flowing with milk and honey, to kill us in the wilderness,
that you must also make yourself a prince over us? [14]†Moreover, you have
not brought us into a land flowing with milk and honey, nor given us
inheritance of fields and vineyards. Will you put out the eyes of these men?
We will not come up." [15]†And Moses was very angry and said to the LORD,
"Do not respect their offering. I have not taken one donkey from them, and
I have not harmed one of them."

16 And Moses said to Korah, “Be present, you and all your company,
before the Lord, you and they, and Aaron, tomorrow. 17 And let every one of
you take his censer and put incense on it, and every one of you bring before
the Lord his censer, 250 censers; you also, and Aaron, each his censer.”
18 † So every man took his censer and put fire in them and laid incense on
them and stood at the entrance of the tent of meeting with Moses and
Aaron. 19 † Then Korah assembled all the congregation against them at the
entrance of the tent of meeting. And the glory of the Lord appeared to all the
congregation.
20 And the Lord spoke to Moses and to Aaron, saying, 21 “Separate
yourselves from among this congregation, that I may consume them in a
moment.” 22 † And they fell on their faces and said, “O God, the God of the
spirits of all flesh, shall one man sin, and will you be angry with all the
congregation?” 23 And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 24 “Say to the
congregation, Get away from the dwelling of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram.”
25 † Then Moses rose and went to Dathan and Abiram, and the elders of
Israel followed him. 26 †† And he spoke to the congregation, saying, “Depart,
please, from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest
you be swept away with all their sins.” 27 † So they got away from the
dwelling of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. And Dathan and Abiram came out
and stood at the door of their tents, together with their wives, their sons, and
their little ones. 28 ‡ And Moses said, “Hereby you shall know that the Lord
has sent me to do all these works, and that it has not been of my own
accord. 29 If these men die as all men die, or if they are visited by the fate of
all mankind, then the Lord has not sent me. 30 † But if the Lord creates
something new, and the ground opens its mouth and swallows them up with
all that belongs to them, and they go down alive into Sheol, then you shall
know that these men have despised the Lord.”
31 And as soon as he had finished speaking all these words, the ground
under them split apart. 32 And the earth opened its mouth and swallowed
them up, with their households and all the people who belonged to Korah
and all their goods. 33 So they and all that belonged to them went down alive
into Sheol, and the earth closed over them, and they perished from the midst
of the assembly. 34 And all Israel who were around them fled at their cry, for

they said, “Lest the earth swallow us up!” 35 †And fire came out from the Lord and consumed the 250 men offering the incense.

36[1] Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 37 †“Tell Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest to take up the censers out of the blaze. Then scatter the fire far and wide, for they have become holy. 38As for the censers of these men who have sinned at the cost of their lives, let them be made into hammered plates as a covering for the altar, for they offered them before the Lord, and they became holy. Thus they shall be a sign to the people of Israel.” 39So Eleazar the priest took the bronze censers, which those who were burned had offered, and they were hammered out as a covering for the altar, 40to be a reminder to the people of Israel, so that no outsider, who is not of the descendants of Aaron, should draw near to burn incense before the Lord, lest he become like Korah and his company—as the Lord said to him through Moses.

41 †But on the next day all the congregation of the people of Israel grumbled against Moses and against Aaron, saying, “You have killed the people of the Lord.” 42†And when the congregation had assembled against Moses and against Aaron, they turned toward the tent of meeting. And behold, the cloud covered it, and the glory of the Lord appeared. 43And Moses and Aaron came to the front of the tent of meeting, 44and the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 45†“Get away from the midst of this congregation, that I may consume them in a moment.” And they fell on their faces. 46†And Moses said to Aaron, “Take your censer, and put fire on it from off the altar and lay incense on it and carry it quickly to the congregation and make atonement for them, for wrath has gone out from the Lord; the plague has begun.” 47So Aaron took it as Moses said and ran into the midst of the assembly. And behold, the plague had already begun among the people. And he put on the incense and made atonement for the people. 48And he stood between the dead and the living, and the plague was stopped. 49Now those who died in the plague were 14,700, besides those who died in the affair of Korah. 50And Aaron returned to Moses at the entrance of the tent of meeting, when the plague was stopped.

Aaron's Staff Buds

17 1 [1] The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 2 "Speak
to the people of Israel, and get from them staffs, one for each fathers' house,
from all their chiefs according to their fathers' houses, twelve staffs. Write
each man's name on his staff, 3 and write Aaron's name on the staff of Levi.
For there shall be one staff for the head of each fathers' house. 4 Then you
shall deposit them in the tent of meeting before the testimony, where I meet
with you. 5 And the staff of the man whom I choose shall sprout. Thus I
will make to cease from me the grumblings of the people of Israel, which
they grumble against you." 6 Moses spoke to the people of Israel. And all
their chiefs gave him staffs, one for each chief, according to their fathers'
houses, twelve staffs. And the staff of Aaron was among their staffs. 7 And
Moses deposited the staffs before the Lord in the tent of the testimony.

8 On the next day Moses went into the tent of the testimony, and behold,
the staff of Aaron for the house of Levi had sprouted and put forth buds and
produced blossoms, and it bore ripe almonds. 9 Then Moses brought out all
the staffs from before the Lord to all the people of Israel. And they looked,
and each man took his staff. 10 And the Lord said to Moses, "Put back the
staff of Aaron before the testimony, to be kept as a sign for the rebels, that
you may make an end of their grumblings against me, lest they die." 11 Thus
did Moses; as the Lord commanded him, so he did.

12 And the people of Israel said to Moses, "Behold, we perish, we are
undone, we are all undone. 13 Everyone who comes near, who comes near to
the tabernacle of the Lord, shall die. Are we all to perish?"

Duties of Priests and Levites

18 [1]†So the Lord said to Aaron, “You and your sons and your father’s
house with you shall bear iniquity connected with the sanctuary, and you
and your sons with you shall bear iniquity connected with your priesthood.
[2]†And with you bring your brothers also, the tribe of Levi, the tribe of your
father, that they may join you and minister to you while you and your sons
with you are before the tent of the testimony. [3]†They shall keep guard over
you and over the whole tent, but shall not come near to the vessels of the
sanctuary or to the altar lest they, and you, die. [4]They shall join you and
keep guard over the tent of meeting for all the service of the tent, and no
outsider shall come near you. [5]And you shall keep guard over the sanctuary
and over the altar, that there may never again be wrath on the people of
Israel. [6]†And behold, I have taken your brothers the Levites from among the
people of Israel. They are a gift to you, given to the Lord, to do the service
of the tent of meeting. [7]†And you and your sons with you shall guard your
priesthood for all that concerns the altar and that is within the veil; and you
shall serve. I give your priesthood as a gift,[1] and any outsider who comes
near shall be put to death.”

[8]†† Then the Lord spoke to Aaron, “Behold, I have given you charge of
the contributions made to me, all the consecrated things of the people of
Israel. I have given them to you as a portion and to your sons as a perpetual
due. [9]This shall be yours of the most holy things, reserved from the fire:
every offering of theirs, every grain offering of theirs and every sin offering
of theirs and every guilt offering of theirs, which they render to me, shall be
most holy to you and to your sons. [10]†In a most holy place shall you eat it.
Every male may eat it; it is holy to you. [11]† This also is yours: the
contribution of their gift, all the wave offerings of the people of Israel. I
have given them to you, and to your sons and daughters with you, as a
perpetual due. Everyone who is clean in your house may eat it. [12]†All the
best of the oil and all the best of the wine and of the grain, the firstfruits of
what they give to the Lord, I give to you. [13]The first ripe fruits of all that is
in their land, which they bring to the Lord, shall be yours. Everyone who is

clean in your house may eat it. [14]Every devoted thing in Israel shall be yours. [15] † Everything that opens the womb of all flesh, whether man or beast, which they offer to the Lord, shall be yours. Nevertheless, the firstborn of man you shall redeem, and the firstborn of unclean animals you shall redeem. [16] † And their redemption price (at a month old you shall redeem them) you shall fix at five shekels[2] in silver, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, which is twenty gerahs. [17]But the firstborn of a cow, or the firstborn of a sheep, or the firstborn of a goat, you shall not redeem; they are holy. You shall sprinkle their blood on the altar and shall burn their fat as a food offering, with a pleasing aroma to the Lord. [18]But their flesh shall be yours, as the breast that is waved and as the right thigh are yours. [19] † All the holy contributions that the people of Israel present to the Lord I give to you, and to your sons and daughters with you, as a perpetual due. It is a covenant of salt forever before the Lord for you and for your offspring with you." [20] † And the Lord said to Aaron, "You shall have no inheritance in their land, neither shall you have any portion among them. I am your portion and your inheritance among the people of Israel.

[21] † "To the Levites I have given every tithe in Israel for an inheritance, in return for their service that they do, their service in the tent of meeting, [22]so that the people of Israel do not come near the tent of meeting, lest they bear sin and die. [23]But the Levites shall do the service of the tent of meeting, and they shall bear their iniquity. It shall be a perpetual statute throughout your generations, and among the people of Israel they shall have no inheritance. [24]For the tithe of the people of Israel, which they present as a contribution to the Lord, I have given to the Levites for an inheritance. Therefore I have said of them that they shall have no inheritance among the people of Israel."

[25] † And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, [26]"Moreover, you shall speak and say to the Levites, 'When you take from the people of Israel the tithe that I have given you from them for your inheritance, then you shall present a contribution from it to the Lord, a tithe of the tithe. [27]And your contribution shall be counted to you as though it were the grain of the threshing floor, and as the fullness of the winepress. [28] † So you shall also present a contribution to the Lord from all your tithes, which you receive from the people of Israel. And from it you shall give the Lord's contribution to Aaron the priest. [29]Out of all the gifts to you, you shall present every

contribution due to the LORD; from each its best part is to be dedicated.’
30 †Therefore you shall say to them, ‘When you have offered from it the best
of it, then the rest shall be counted to the Levites as produce of the
threshing floor, and as produce of the winepress. 31 And you may eat it in
any place, you and your households, for it is your reward in return for your
service in the tent of meeting. 32 †And you shall bear no sin by reason of it,
when you have contributed the best of it. But you shall not profane the holy
things of the people of Israel, lest you die.’”

Laws for Purification

19 [1]Now the Lord spoke to Moses and to Aaron, saying, [2]†"This is
the statute of the law that the Lord has commanded: Tell the people of Israel
to bring you a red heifer without defect, in which there is no blemish, and
on which a yoke has never come. [3]And you shall give it to Eleazar the
priest, and it shall be taken outside the camp and slaughtered before him.
[4]†And Eleazar the priest shall take some of its blood with his finger, and
sprinkle some of its blood toward the front of the tent of meeting seven
times. [5]†And the heifer shall be burned in his sight. Its skin, its flesh, and its
blood, with its dung, shall be burned. [6]†And the priest shall take cedarwood
and hyssop and scarlet yarn, and throw them into the fire burning the heifer.
[7]†Then the priest shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in water, and
afterward he may come into the camp. But the priest shall be unclean until
evening. [8]The one who burns the heifer shall wash his clothes in water and
bathe his body in water and shall be unclean until evening. [9]†And a man
who is clean shall gather up the ashes of the heifer and deposit them outside
the camp in a clean place. And they shall be kept for the water for impurity
for the congregation of the people of Israel; it is a sin offering. [10]†And the
one who gathers the ashes of the heifer shall wash his clothes and be
unclean until evening. And this shall be a perpetual statute for the people of
Israel, and for the stranger who sojourns among them.

[11]†"Whoever touches the dead body of any person shall be unclean seven
days. [12]He shall cleanse himself with the water on the third day and on the
seventh day, and so be clean. But if he does not cleanse himself on the third
day and on the seventh day, he will not become clean. [13]Whoever touches a
dead person, the body of anyone who has died, and does not cleanse
himself, defiles the tabernacle of the Lord, and that person shall be cut off
from Israel; because the water for impurity was not thrown on him, he shall
be unclean. His uncleanness is still on him.

[14]†"This is the law when someone dies in a tent: everyone who comes
into the tent and everyone who is in the tent shall be unclean seven days.
[15]And every open vessel that has no cover fastened on it is unclean.

16 Whoever in the open field touches someone who was killed with a sword
or who died naturally, or touches a human bone or a grave, shall be unclean
seven days. 17 For the unclean they shall take some ashes of the burnt sin
offering, and fresh[1] water shall be added in a vessel. 18 Then a clean person
shall take hyssop and dip it in the water and sprinkle it on the tent and on all
the furnishings and on the persons who were there and on whoever touched
the bone, or the slain or the dead or the grave. 19 And the clean person shall
sprinkle it on the unclean on the third day and on the seventh day. Thus on
the seventh day he shall cleanse him, and he shall wash his clothes and
bathe himself in water, and at evening he shall be clean.

20 † "If the man who is unclean does not cleanse himself, that person shall
be cut off from the midst of the assembly, since he has defiled the sanctuary
of the Lord. Because the water for impurity has not been thrown on him, he
is unclean. 21 And it shall be a statute forever for them. The one who
sprinkles the water for impurity shall wash his clothes, and the one who
touches the water for impurity shall be unclean until evening. 22 And
whatever the unclean person touches shall be unclean, and anyone who
touches it shall be unclean until evening."

The Death of Miriam

20 [1] ††And the people of Israel, the whole congregation, came into the wilderness of Zin in the first month, and the people stayed in Kadesh. And Miriam died there and was buried there.

The Waters of Meribah

2 ‡ ‡ Now there was no water for the congregation. And they assembled
themselves together against Moses and against Aaron. 3 † And the people
quarreled with Moses and said, “Would that we had perished when our
brothers perished before the Lord! 4 Why have you brought the assembly of
the Lord into this wilderness, that we should die here, both we and our
cattle? 5 † And why have you made us come up out of Egypt to bring us to
this evil place? It is no place for grain or figs or vines or pomegranates, and
there is no water to drink.” 6 † Then Moses and Aaron went from the
presence of the assembly to the entrance of the tent of meeting and fell on
their faces. And the glory of the Lord appeared to them, 7 and the Lord spoke
to Moses, saying, 8 †“Take the staff, and assemble the congregation, you and
Aaron your brother, and tell the rock before their eyes to yield its water. So
you shall bring water out of the rock for them and give drink to the
congregation and their cattle.” 9 And Moses took the staff from before the
Lord, as he commanded him.

Moses Strikes the Rock

10 ‡ † Then Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly together before the
rock, and he said to them, “Hear now, you rebels: shall we bring water for
you out of this rock?” 11 ‡ And Moses lifted up his hand and struck the rock
with his staff twice, and water came out abundantly, and the congregation
drank, and their livestock. 12 And the Lord said to Moses and Aaron,
“Because you did not believe in me, to uphold me as holy in the eyes of the
people of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land
that I have given them.” 13 † These are the waters of Meribah,[1] where the
people of Israel quarreled with the Lord, and through them he showed
himself holy.

Edom Refuses Passage

14 ‡ † Moses sent messengers from Kadesh to the king of Edom: “Thus
says your brother Israel: You know all the hardship that we have met: 15 how
our fathers went down to Egypt, and we lived in Egypt a long time. And the
Egyptians dealt harshly with us and our fathers. 16 And when we cried to the
Lord, he heard our voice and sent an angel and brought us out of Egypt. And
here we are in Kadesh, a city on the edge of your territory. 17 † Please let us
pass through your land. We will not pass through field or vineyard, or drink
water from a well. We will go along the King’s Highway. We will not turn
aside to the right hand or to the left until we have passed through your
territory.” 18 ‡ But Edom said to him, “You shall not pass through, lest I come
out with the sword against you.” 19 † And the people of Israel said to him,
“We will go up by the highway, and if we drink of your water, I and my
livestock, then I will pay for it. Let me only pass through on foot, nothing
more.” 20 But he said, “You shall not pass through.” And Edom came out
against them with a large army and with a strong force. 21 † Thus Edom
refused to give Israel passage through his territory, so Israel turned away
from him.

The Death of Aaron

22 ††And they journeyed from Kadesh, and the people of Israel, the whole
congregation, came to Mount Hor. 23 And the Lord said to Moses and Aaron
at Mount Hor, on the border of the land of Edom, 24 †"Let Aaron be gathered
to his people, for he shall not enter the land that I have given to the people
of Israel, because you rebelled against my command at the waters of
Meribah. 25 Take Aaron and Eleazar his son and bring them up to Mount
Hor. 26 †And strip Aaron of his garments and put them on Eleazar his son.
And Aaron shall be gathered to his people and shall die there." 27 †Moses did
as the Lord commanded. And they went up Mount Hor in the sight of all the
congregation. 28 †And Moses stripped Aaron of his garments and put them
on Eleazar his son. And Aaron died there on the top of the mountain. Then
Moses and Eleazar came down from the mountain. 29 †And when all the
congregation saw that Aaron had perished, all the house of Israel wept for
Aaron thirty days.

Arad Destroyed

21 [1]†† When the Canaanite, the king of Arad, who lived in the Negeb,
heard that Israel was coming by the way of Atharim, he fought against
Israel, and took some of them captive. [2]† And Israel vowed a vow to the
Lord and said, “If you will indeed give this people into my hand, then I will
devote their cities to destruction.”[1] [3]† And the Lord heeded the voice of
Israel and gave over the Canaanites, and they devoted them and their cities
to destruction. So the name of the place was called Hormah.[2]

The Bronze Serpent

4 ✝✝From Mount Hor they set out by the way to the Red Sea, to go around
the land of Edom. And the people became impatient on the way. 5 ✝And the
people spoke against God and against Moses, “Why have you brought us up
out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and
we loathe this worthless food.” 6 ✝Then the Lord sent fiery serpents among
the people, and they bit the people, so that many people of Israel died.
7 ✝And the people came to Moses and said, “We have sinned, for we have
spoken against the Lord and against you. Pray to the Lord, that he take away
the serpents from us.” So Moses prayed for the people. 8 ✝And the Lord said
to Moses, “Make a fiery serpent and set it on a pole, and everyone who is
bitten, when he sees it, shall live.” 9 ✝So Moses made a bronze[3] serpent and
set it on a pole. And if a serpent bit anyone, he would look at the bronze
serpent and live.

The Song of the Well

10 ‡† And the people of Israel set out and camped in Oboth. 11 † And they
set out from Oboth and camped at Iye-abarim, in the wilderness that is
opposite Moab, toward the sunrise. 12 From there they set out and camped in
the Valley of Zered. 13 From there they set out and camped on the other side
of the Arnon, which is in the wilderness that extends from the border of the
Amorites, for the Arnon is the border of Moab, between Moab and the
Amorites. 14 ‡† Therefore it is said in the Book of the Wars of the Lord,

WILDERNESS WANDERINGS. God delayed the conquest of Canaan for 40 years (Nu 13–14; Dt 1:19–46). Israel often stayed near Kadesh-barnea (Nu 33:36). Aaron died on Mount Hor (Nu 20:22–29; 33:37–39). Israel destroyed Arad and surrounding cities (Nu 21:1–3). Edom refused passage to the east (Nu 20:14–21), so the Israelites went perhaps as far south as Ezion-geber to skirt Edom (Nu 21:4; Dt 2:8; see color map 3). They camped in the Valley of Zered and along the Arnon River (Nu 21:12–13). At Jahaz, they defeated the Amorites who had occupied part of Moab (Nu 21:21–30; Dt 2:24–37). They defeated Bashan at Edrei (Nu 21:31–35; Dt 3:1–7). Next they camped east of Jericho at Shittim (Nu 25). After they defeated the Midianites (Nu 31), Israel controlled the Transjordan from the Valley of the Arnon to Mount Hermon (Dt 3:8–10). Moses died on Mount Nebo (Dt 34).

" Waheb in Suphah, and the valleys of the
Arnon,
15 and the slope of the valleys
that extends to the seat of Ar,
and leans to the border of Moab."

16 And from there they continued to Beer;[1] that is the well of which the
Lord said to Moses, "Gather the people together, so that I may give them
water." 17 † Then Israel sang this song:

“ Spring up, O well!—Sing to it!—
18 † the well that the princes made,
that the nobles of the people dug,
with the scepter and with their staffs.”

And from the wilderness they went on to Mattanah, 19 and from Mattanah to Nahaliel, and from Nahaliel to Bamoth, 20 † and from Bamoth to the valley lying in the region of Moab by the top of Pisgah that looks down on the desert.[2]

King Sihon Defeated

21 ‡ † Then Israel sent messengers to Sihon king of the Amorites, saying,
22 † "Let me pass through your land. We will not turn aside into field or
vineyard. We will not drink the water of a well. We will go by the King's
Highway until we have passed through your territory." 23 But Sihon would
not allow Israel to pass through his territory. He gathered all his people
together and went out against Israel to the wilderness and came to Jahaz and
fought against Israel. 24 † And Israel defeated him with the edge of the sword
and took possession of his land from the Arnon to the Jabbok, as far as to
the Ammonites, for the border of the Ammonites was strong. 25 † And Israel
took all these cities, and Israel settled in all the cities of the Amorites, in
Heshbon, and in all its villages. 26 For Heshbon was the city of Sihon the
king of the Amorites, who had fought against the former king of Moab and
taken all his land out of his hand, as far as the Arnon. 27 † Therefore the
ballad singers say,

" Come to Heshbon, let it be built;
let the city of Sihon be established.
28 † For fire came out from Heshbon,
flame from the city of Sihon.
It devoured Ar of Moab,
and swallowed[3] the heights of the Arnon.
29 † Woe to you, O Moab!
You are undone, O people of Chemosh!
He has made his sons fugitives,
and his daughters captives,
to an Amorite king, Sihon.
30 † So we overthrew them;
Heshbon, as far as Dibon, perished;
and we laid waste as far as Nophah;
fire spread as far as Medeba."[1]

King Og Defeated

31 †Thus Israel lived in the land of the Amorites. 32 †And Moses sent to spy
out Jazer, and they captured its villages and dispossessed the Amorites who
were there. 33 †Then they turned and went up by the way to Bashan. And Og
the king of Bashan came out against them, he and all his people, to battle at
Edrei. 34 †But the Lord said to Moses, “Do not fear him, for I have given him
into your hand, and all his people, and his land. And you shall do to him as
you did to Sihon king of the Amorites, who lived at Heshbon.” 35 †So they
defeated him and his sons and all his people, until he
had no survivor left. And they possessed his land.

Balak Summons Balaam

22 [1]‡†Then the people of Israel set out and camped in the plains of Moab beyond the Jordan at Jericho. [2]†And Balak the son of Zippor saw all that Israel had done to the Amorites. [3]†And Moab was in great dread of the people, because they were many. Moab was overcome with fear of the people of Israel. [4]†And Moab said to the elders of Midian, "This horde will now lick up all that is around us, as the ox licks up the grass of the field." So Balak the son of Zippor, who was king of Moab at that time, [5]† sent messengers to Balaam the son of Beor at Pethor, which is near the River in the land of the people of Amaw,[2] to call him, saying, "Behold, a people has come out of Egypt. They cover the face of the earth, and they are dwelling opposite me. [6]† Come now, curse this people for me, since they are too mighty for me. Perhaps I shall be able to defeat them and drive them from the land, for I know that he whom you bless is blessed, and he whom you curse is cursed."

[7]†So the elders of Moab and the elders of Midian departed with the fees for divination in their hand. And they came to Balaam and gave him Balak's message. [8]‡†And he said to them, "Lodge here tonight, and I will bring back word to you, as the Lord speaks to me." So the princes of Moab stayed with Balaam. [9]†And God came to Balaam and said, "Who are these men with you?" [10]And Balaam said to God, "Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, has sent to me, saying, [11]'Behold, a people has come out of Egypt, and it covers the face of the earth. Now come, curse them for me. Perhaps I shall be able to fight against them and drive them out.'" [12]†God said to Balaam, "You shall not go with them. You shall not curse the people, for they are blessed." [13]So Balaam rose in the morning and said to the princes of Balak, "Go to your own land, for the Lord has refused to let me go with you." [14]†So the princes of Moab rose and went to Balak and said, "Balaam refuses to come with us."

[15]Once again Balak sent princes, more in number and more honorable than these. [16]And they came to Balaam and said to him, "Thus says Balak the son of Zippor: 'Let nothing hinder you from coming to me, [17]for I will

surely do you great honor, and whatever you say to me I will do. Come, curse this people for me.’” 18†But Balaam answered and said to the servants of Balak, “Though Balak were to give me his house full of silver and gold, I could not go beyond the command of the Lord my God to do less or more. 19†So you, too, please stay here tonight, that I may know what more the Lord will say to me.” 20†And God came to Balaam at night and said to him, “If the men have come to call you, rise, go with them; but only do what I tell you.” 21So Balaam rose in the morning and saddled his donkey and went with the princes of Moab.

Balaam's Donkey and the Angel

22 ‡ † But God's anger was kindled because he went, and the angel of the
LORD took his stand in the way as his adversary. Now he was riding on the
donkey, and his two servants were with him. 23 † And the donkey saw the
angel of the LORD standing in the road, with a drawn sword in his hand. And
the donkey turned aside out of the road and went into the field. And Balaam
struck the donkey, to turn her into the road. 24 Then the angel of the LORD
stood in a narrow path between the vineyards, with a wall on either side.
25 And when the donkey saw the angel of the LORD, she pushed against the
wall and pressed Balaam's foot against the wall. So he struck her again.
26 Then the angel of the LORD went ahead and stood in a narrow place, where
there was no way to turn either to the right or to the left. 27 When the donkey
saw the angel of the LORD, she lay down under Balaam. And Balaam's anger
was kindled, and he struck the donkey with his staff. 28 † Then the LORD
opened the mouth of the donkey, and she said to Balaam, "What have I
done to you, that you have struck me these three times?" 29 † And Balaam
said to the donkey, "Because you have made a fool of me. I wish I had a
sword in my hand, for then I would kill you." 30 † And the donkey said to
Balaam, "Am I not your donkey, on which you have ridden all your life
long to this day? Is it my habit to treat you this way?" And he said, "No."

31 † Then the LORD opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel of the
LORD standing in the way, with his drawn sword in his hand. And he bowed
down and fell on his face. 32 † And the angel of the LORD said to him, "Why
have you struck your donkey these three times? Behold, I have come out to
oppose you because your way is perverse[1] before me. 33 The donkey saw
me and turned aside before me these three times. If she had not turned aside
from me, surely just now I would have killed you and let her live." 34 † Then
Balaam said to the angel of the LORD, "I have sinned, for I did not know that
you stood in the road against me. Now therefore, if it is evil in your sight, I
will turn back." 35 † And the angel of the LORD said to Balaam, "Go with the
men, but speak only the word that I tell you." So Balaam went on with the
princes of Balak.

[36]When Balak heard that Balaam had come, he went out to meet him at the city of Moab, on the border formed by the Arnon, at the extremity of the border. [37]†And Balak said to Balaam, “Did I not send to you to call you? Why did you not come to me? Am I not able to honor you?” [38]Balaam said to Balak, “Behold, I have come to you! Have I now any power of my own to speak anything? The word that God puts in my mouth, that must I speak.” [39]†Then Balaam went with Balak, and they came to Kiriath-huzoth. [40]†And Balak sacrificed oxen and sheep, and sent for Balaam and for the princes who were with him.

[41]† And in the morning Balak took Balaam and brought him up to Bamoth-baal, and from there he saw a fraction of the people.

Balaam's First Oracle

23 [1]†And Balaam said to Balak, "Build for me here seven altars, and
prepare for me here seven bulls and seven rams." [2]Balak did as Balaam had
said. And Balak and Balaam offered on each altar a bull and a ram. [3]†And
Balaam said to Balak, "Stand beside your burnt offering, and I will go.
Perhaps the LORD will come to meet me, and whatever he shows me I will
tell you." And he went to a bare height, [4]† and God met Balaam. And
Balaam said to him, "I have arranged the seven altars and I have offered on
each altar a bull and a ram." [5]†And the LORD put a word in Balaam's mouth
and said, "Return to Balak, and thus you shall speak." [6]And he returned to
him, and behold, he and all the princes of Moab were standing beside his
burnt offering. [7]†††And Balaam took up his discourse and said,

" From Aram Balak has brought me,
the king of Moab from the eastern
mountains:
' Come, curse Jacob for me,
and come, denounce Israel!'
[8] How can I curse whom God has not cursed?
How can I denounce whom the LORD has
not denounced?
[9]† For from the top of the crags I see him,
from the hills I behold him;
behold, a people dwelling alone,
and not counting itself among the nations!
[10]† Who can count the dust of Jacob
or number the fourth part[1] of Israel?
Let me die the death of the upright,
and let my end be like his!"

[11]†And Balak said to Balaam, "What have you done to me? I took you to
curse my enemies, and behold, you have done nothing but bless them."

12 † And he answered and said, “Must I not take care to speak what the Lord
puts in my mouth?”

Balaam's Second Oracle

13 ‡ † And Balak said to him, "Please come with me to another place, from
which you may see them. You shall see only a fraction of them and shall not
see them all. Then curse them for me from there." 14 † And he took him to the
field of Zophim, to the top of Pisgah, and built seven altars and offered a
bull and a ram on each altar. 15 Balaam said to Balak, "Stand here beside
your burnt offering, while I meet the Lord over there." 16 † And the Lord met
Balaam and put a word in his mouth and said, "Return to Balak, and thus
shall you speak." 17 And he came to him, and behold, he was standing beside
his burnt offering, and the princes of Moab with him. And Balak said to
him, "What has the Lord spoken?" 18 † And Balaam took up his discourse
and said,

" Rise, Balak, and hear;
give ear to me, O son of Zippor:
19 † God is not man, that he should lie,
or a son of man, that he should change his mind.
Has he said, and will he not do it?
Or has he spoken, and will he not fulfill it?
20 Behold, I received a command to bless:
he has blessed, and I cannot revoke it.
21 † He has not beheld misfortune in Jacob,
nor has he seen trouble in Israel.
The Lord their God is with them,
and the shout of a king is among them.
22 † God brings them out of Egypt
and is for them like the horns of the wild ox.
23 ‡ For there is no enchantment against Jacob,
no divination against Israel;
now it shall be said of Jacob and Israel,
' What has God wrought!'
24 Behold, a people! As a lioness it rises up
and as a lion it lifts itself;
it does not lie down until it has devoured the

prey
and drunk the blood of the slain.”

25 † And Balak said to Balaam, “Do not curse them at all, and do not bless
them at all.” 26 But Balaam answered Balak, “Did I not tell you, ‘All that the
Lord says, that I must do’?” 27 † And Balak said to Balaam, “Come now, I
will take you to another place. Perhaps it will please God that you may
curse them for me from there.” 28 † So Balak took Balaam to the top of Peor,
which overlooks the desert.[1] 29 And Balaam said to Balak, “Build for me
here seven altars and prepare for me here seven bulls and seven rams.”
30 And Balak did as Balaam had said, and offered a bull and a ram on each
altar.

Balaam's Third Oracle

24 [1]‡† When Balaam saw that it pleased the Lord to bless Israel, he did not go, as at other times, to look for omens, but set his face toward the wilderness. [2]† And Balaam lifted up his eyes and saw Israel camping tribe by tribe. And the Spirit of God came upon him, [3]† and he took up his discourse and said,

" The oracle of Balaam the son of Beor,
the oracle of the man whose eye is opened,[1]
[4]† the oracle of him who hears the words of God,
who sees the vision of the Almighty,
falling down with his eyes uncovered:
[5]‡ How lovely are your tents, O Jacob,
your encampments, O Israel!
[6] Like palm groves[2] that stretch afar,
like gardens beside a river,
like aloes that the Lord has planted,
like cedar trees beside the waters.
[7]† Water shall flow from his buckets,
and his seed shall be in many waters;
his king shall be higher than Agag,
and his kingdom shall be exalted.
[8]† God brings him out of Egypt
and is for him like the horns of the wild ox;
he shall eat up the nations, his adversaries,
and shall break their bones in pieces
and pierce them through with his arrows.
[9]† He crouched, he lay down like a lion
and like a lioness; who will rouse him up?
Blessed are those who bless you,
and cursed are those who curse you."

[10] † And Balak's anger was kindled against Balaam, and he struck his hands together. And Balak said to Balaam, "I called you to curse my enemies, and behold, you have blessed them these three times. [11] † Therefore now flee to your own place. I said, 'I will certainly honor you,' but the Lord has held you back from honor." [12] And Balaam said to Balak, "Did I not tell your messengers whom you sent to me, [13] 'If Balak should give me his house full of silver and gold, I would not be able to go beyond the word of the Lord, to do either good or bad of my own will. What the Lord speaks, that will I speak'? [14] † And now, behold, I am going to my people. Come, I will let you know what this people will do to your people in the latter days."

Balaam's Final Oracle

15 †††And he took up his discourse and said,

" The oracle of Balaam the son of Beor,
the oracle of the man whose eye is opened,
16 the oracle of him who hears the words of God,
and knows the knowledge of the Most High,
who sees the vision of the Almighty,
falling down with his eyes uncovered:
17 † I see him, but not now;
I behold him, but not near:
a star shall come out of Jacob,
and a scepter shall rise out of Israel;
it shall crush the forehead[3] of Moab
and break down all the sons of Sheth.
18 † Edom shall be dispossessed;
Seir also, his enemies, shall be dispossessed.
Israel is doing valiantly.
19 And one from Jacob shall exercise dominion
and destroy the survivors of cities!"

20 †Then he looked on Amalek and took up his discourse and said,

" Amalek was the first among the nations,
but its end is utter destruction."

21 †And he looked on the Kenite, and took up his discourse and said,

" Enduring is your dwelling place,
and your nest is set in the rock.
22 † Nevertheless, Kain shall be burned
when Asshur takes you away captive."

23 And he took up his discourse and said,

“ Alas, who shall live when God does this?
24† But ships shall come from Kittim
and shall afflict Asshur and Eber;
and he too shall come to utter destruction.”

25†Then Balaam rose and went back to his place. And Balak also went his way.

Baal Worship at Peor

25 [1]‡‡While Israel lived in Shittim, the people began to whore with
the daughters of Moab. [2]‡These invited the people to the sacrifices of their
gods, and the people ate and bowed down to their gods. [3]‡So Israel yoked
himself to Baal of Peor. And the anger of the Lord was kindled against
Israel. [4]‡And the Lord said to Moses, “Take all the chiefs of the people and
hang[1] them in the sun before the Lord, that the fierce anger of the Lord may
turn away from Israel.” [5]‡And Moses said to the judges of Israel, “Each of
you kill those of his men who have yoked themselves to Baal of Peor.”

[6]‡And behold, one of the people of Israel came and brought a Midianite
woman to his family, in the sight of Moses and in the sight of the whole
congregation of the people of Israel, while they were weeping in the
entrance of the tent of meeting. [7]‡When Phinehas the son of Eleazar, son of
Aaron the priest, saw it, he rose and left the congregation and took a spear
in his hand [8]‡and went after the man of Israel into the chamber and pierced
both of them, the man of Israel and the woman through her belly. Thus the
plague on the people of Israel was stopped. [9]Nevertheless, those who died
by the plague were twenty-four thousand.

The Zeal of Phinehas

10 And the Lord said to Moses, 11 “Phinehas the son of Eleazar, son of
Aaron the priest, has turned back my wrath from the people of Israel, in that
he was jealous with my jealousy among them, so that I did not consume the
people of Israel in my jealousy. 12 Therefore say, ‘Behold, I give to him my
covenant of peace, 13 and it shall be to him and to his descendants after him
the covenant of a perpetual priesthood, because he was jealous for his God
and made atonement for the people of Israel.’”

14 The name of the slain man of Israel, who was killed with the Midianite
woman, was Zimri the son of Salu, chief of a father’s house belonging to
the Simeonites. 15 And the name of the Midianite woman who was killed
was Cozbi the daughter of Zur, who was the tribal head of a father’s house
in Midian.

16 And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 17 “Harass the Midianites and
strike them down, 18 for they have harassed you with their wiles, with
which they beguiled you in the matter of Peor, and in the matter of Cozbi,
the daughter of the chief of Midian, their sister, who was killed on the day
of the plague on account of Peor.”

Census of the New Generation

26 [1] After the plague, the Lord said to Moses and to Eleazar the son
of Aaron, the priest, [2]†"Take a census of all the congregation of the people
of Israel, from twenty years old and upward, by their fathers' houses, all in
Israel who are able to go to war." [3]And Moses and Eleazar the priest spoke
with them in the plains of Moab by the Jordan at Jericho, saying, [4]"Take a
census of the people,[1] from twenty years old and upward," as the Lord
commanded Moses. The people of Israel who came out of the land of Egypt
were:

[5]††Reuben, the firstborn of Israel; the sons of Reuben: of Hanoch, the
clan of the Hanochites; of Pallu, the clan of the Palluites; [6]of Hezron, the
clan of the Hezronites; of Carmi, the clan of the Carmites. [7]These are the
clans of the Reubenites, and those listed were 43,730. [8]And the sons of
Pallu: Eliab. [9]The sons of Eliab: Nemuel, Dathan, and Abiram. These are
the Dathan and Abiram, chosen from the congregation, who contended
against Moses and Aaron in the company of Korah, when they contended
against the Lord [10]and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up
together with Korah, when that company died, when the fire devoured 250
men, and they became a warning. [11]But the sons of Korah did not die.

[12]The sons of Simeon according to their clans: of Nemuel, the clan of the
Nemuelites; of Jamin, the clan of the Jaminites; of Jachin, the clan of the
Jachinites; [13]of Zerah, the clan of the Zerahites; of Shaul, the clan of the
Shaulites. [14]These are the clans of the Simeonites, 22,200.

[15]The sons of Gad according to their clans: of Zephon, the clan of the
Zephonites; of Haggi, the clan of the Haggites; of Shuni, the clan of the
Shunites; [16]of Ozni, the clan of the Oznites; of Eri, the clan of the Erites;
[17]of Arod, the clan of the Arodites; of Areli, the clan of the Arelites. [18]These
are the clans of the sons of Gad as they were listed, 40,500.

[19]The sons of Judah were Er and Onan; and Er and Onan died in the land
of Canaan. [20]And the sons of Judah according to their clans were: of Shelah,
the clan of the Shelanites; of Perez, the clan of the Perezites; of Zerah, the
clan of the Zerahites. [21]And the sons of Perez were: of Hezron, the clan of

the Hezronites; of Hamul, the clan of the Hamulites. [22]These are the clans of Judah as they were listed, 76,500.

[23]The sons of Issachar according to their clans: of Tola, the clan of the Tolaites; of Puvah, the clan of the Punites; [24]of Jashub, the clan of the Jashubites;
of Shimron, the clan of the Shimronites. [25]These are the clans of Issachar as they were listed, 64,300.

[26]The sons of Zebulun, according to their clans: of Sered, the clan of the Seredites; of Elon, the clan of the Elonites; of Jahleel, the clan of the Jahleelites. [27]These are the clans of the Zebulunites as they were listed, 60,500.

[28]The sons of Joseph according to their clans: Manasseh and Ephraim. [29]The sons of Manasseh: of Machir, the clan of the Machirites; and Machir was the father of Gilead; of Gilead, the clan of the Gileadites. [30]These are the sons of Gilead: of Iezer, the clan of the Iezerites; of Helek, the clan of the Helekites; [31]and of Asriel, the clan of the Asrielites; and of Shechem, the clan of the Shechemites; [32]and of Shemida, the clan of the Shemidaites; and of Hepher, the clan of the Hepherites. [33] † Now Zelophehad the son of Hepher had no sons, but daughters. And the names of the daughters of Zelophehad were Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. [34]These are the clans of Manasseh, and those listed were 52,700.

[35]These are the sons of Ephraim according to their clans: of Shuthelah, the clan of the Shuthelahites; of Becher, the clan of the Becherites; of Tahan, the clan of the Tahanites. [36]And these are the sons of Shuthelah: of Eran, the clan of the Eranites. [37]These are the clans of the sons of Ephraim as they were listed, 32,500. These are the sons of Joseph according to their clans.

[38]The sons of Benjamin according to their clans: of Bela, the clan of the Belaites; of Ashbel, the clan of the Ashbelites; of Ahiram, the clan of the Ahiramites; [39]of Shephupham, the clan of the Shuphamites; of Hupham, the clan of the Huphamites. [40]And the sons of Bela were Ard and Naaman: of Ard, the clan of the Ardites; of Naaman, the clan of the Naamites. [41]These are the sons of Benjamin according to their clans, and those listed were 45,600.

[42]These are the sons of Dan according to their clans: of Shuham, the clan of the Shuhamites. These are the clans of Dan according to their clans. [43]All the clans of the Shuhamites, as they were listed, were 64,400.

[44]The sons of Asher according to their clans: of Imnah, the clan of the Imnites; of Ishvi, the clan of the Ishvites; of Beriah, the clan of the Beriites. [45]Of the sons of Beriah: of Heber, the clan of the Heberites; of Malchiel, the clan of the Malchielites. [46]And the name of the daughter of Asher was Serah. [47]These are the clans of the sons of Asher as they were listed, 53,400.

[48]The sons of Naphtali according to their clans: of Jahzeel, the clan of the Jahzeelites; of Guni, the clan of the Gunites; [49]of Jezer, the clan of the Jezerites; of Shillem, the clan of the Shillemites. [50]These are the clans of Naphtali according to their clans, and those listed were 45,400.

[51]This was the list of the people of Israel, 601,730.

[52]The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, [53]"Among these the land shall be divided for inheritance according to the number of names. [54]† To a large tribe you shall give a large inheritance, and to a small tribe you shall give a small inheritance; every tribe shall be given its inheritance in proportion to its list. [55]But the land shall be divided by lot. According to the names of the tribes of their fathers they shall inherit. [56]†Their inheritance shall be divided according to lot between the larger and the smaller."

[57]†This was the list of the Levites according to their clans: of Gershon, the clan of the Gershonites; of Kohath, the clan of the Kohathites; of Merari, the clan of the Merarites. [58]These are the clans of Levi: the clan of the Libnites, the clan of the Hebronites, the clan of
the Mahlites, the clan of the Mushites, the clan
of the Korahites. And Kohath was the father of Amram. [59]The name of Amram's wife was Jochebed the daughter of Levi, who was born to Levi in Egypt. And she bore to Amram Aaron and Moses and Miriam their sister. [60]And to Aaron were born Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. [61]But Nadab and Abihu died when they offered unauthorized fire before the Lord. [62]†And those listed were 23,000, every male from a month old and upward. For they were not listed among the people of Israel, because there was no inheritance given to them among the people of Israel.

[63]†These were those listed by Moses and Eleazar the priest, who listed the people of Israel in the plains of Moab by the Jordan at Jericho. [64]But

among these there was not one of those listed by Moses and Aaron the priest, who had listed the people of Israel in the wilderness of Sinai. [65]For the LORD had said of them, “They shall die in the wilderness.” Not one of them was left, except Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun.

The Daughters of Zelophehad

27 [1]‡† Then drew near the daughters of Zelophehad the son of Hepher, son of Gilead, son of Machir, son of Manasseh, from the clans of Manasseh the son of Joseph. The names of his daughters were: Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. [2]‡ And they stood before Moses and before Eleazar the priest and before the chiefs and all the congregation, at the entrance of the tent of meeting, saying, [3]"Our father died in the wilderness. He was not among the company of those who gathered themselves together against the Lord in the company of Korah, but died for his own sin. And he had no sons. [4]† Why should the name of our father be taken away from his clan because he had no son? Give to us a possession among our father's brothers."

[5]‡ Moses brought their case before the Lord. [6]And the Lord said to Moses, [7]"The daughters of Zelophehad are right. You shall give them possession of an inheritance among their father's brothers and transfer the inheritance of their father to them. [8]And you shall speak to the people of Israel, saying, 'If a man dies and has no son, then you shall transfer his inheritance to his daughter. [9]And if he has no daughter, then you shall give his inheritance to his brothers. [10]And if he has no brothers, then you shall give his inheritance to his father's brothers. [11]† And if his father has no brothers, then you shall give his inheritance to the nearest kinsman of his clan, and he shall possess it. And it shall be for the people of Israel a statute and rule, as the Lord commanded Moses.'"

Joshua to Succeed Moses

12 ✝✝✝The Lord said to Moses, “Go up into this mountain of Abarim and
see the land that I have given to the people of Israel. 13✝When you have seen
it, you also shall be gathered to your people, as your brother Aaron was,
14because you rebelled against my word in the wilderness of Zin when the
congregation quarreled, failing to uphold me as holy at the waters before
their eyes.” (These are the waters of Meribah of Kadesh in the wilderness of
Zin.) 15Moses spoke to the Lord, saying, 16✝“Let the Lord, the God of the
spirits of all flesh, appoint a man over the congregation 17✝who shall go out
before them and come in before them, who shall lead them out and bring
them in, that the congregation of the Lord may not be as sheep that have no
shepherd.” 18✝So the Lord said to Moses, “Take Joshua the son of Nun, a
man in whom is the Spirit, and lay your hand on him. 19✝Make him stand
before Eleazar the priest and all the congregation, and you shall
commission him in their sight. 20✝You shall invest him with some of your
authority, that all the congregation of the people of Israel may obey. 21✝And
he shall stand before Eleazar the priest, who shall inquire for him by the
judgment of the Urim before the Lord. At his word they shall go out, and at
his word they shall come in, both he and all the people of Israel with him,
the whole congregation.” 22And Moses did as the Lord commanded him. He
took Joshua and made him stand before Eleazar the priest and the whole
congregation, 23and he laid his hands on him and commissioned him as the
Lord directed through Moses.

Daily Offerings

28 [1] ✝The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, [2]“Command the people of
Israel and say to them, ‘My offering, my food for my food offerings, my
pleasing aroma, you shall be careful to offer to me at its appointed time.’
[3]And you shall say to them, This is the food offering that you shall offer to
the Lord: two male lambs a year old without blemish, day by day, as a
regular offering. [4] ✝The one lamb you shall offer in the morning, and the
other lamb you shall offer at twilight; [5]also a tenth of an ephah[1] of fine
flour for a grain offering, mixed with a quarter of a hin[2] of beaten oil. [6]It is
a regular burnt offering, which was ordained at Mount Sinai for a pleasing
aroma, a food offering to the Lord. [7]✝Its drink offering shall be a quarter of
a hin for each lamb. In the Holy Place you shall pour out a drink offering of
strong drink to the Lord. [8]The other lamb you shall offer at twilight. Like
the grain offering of the morning, and like its drink offering, you shall offer
it as a food offering, with a pleasing aroma to the Lord.

Sabbath Offerings

9 † “On the Sabbath day, two male lambs a year old without blemish, and
two tenths of an ephah of fine flour for a grain offering, mixed with oil, and
its drink offering: 10 this is the burnt offering of every Sabbath, besides the
regular burnt offering and its drink offering.

Monthly Offerings

[11]“At the beginnings of your months, you shall offer a burnt offering to
the Lord: two bulls from the herd, one ram, seven male lambs a year old
without blemish; [12]also three tenths of an ephah of fine flour for a grain
offering, mixed with oil, for each bull, and two tenths of fine flour for a
grain offering, mixed with oil, for the one ram; [13]and a tenth of fine flour
mixed with oil as a grain offering for every lamb; for a burnt offering with a
pleasing aroma, a food offering to the Lord. [14]Their drink offerings shall be
half a hin of wine for a bull, a third of a hin for a ram, and a quarter of a hin
for a lamb. This is the burnt offering of each month throughout the months
of the year. [15]Also one male goat for a sin offering to the Lord; it shall be
offered besides the regular burnt offering and its drink offering.

Passover Offerings

16 ✝“On the fourteenth day of the first month is the Lord’s Passover, 17and
on the fifteenth day of this month is a feast. Seven days shall unleavened
bread be eaten. 18On the first day there shall be a holy convocation. You
shall not do any ordinary work, 19but offer a food offering, a burnt offering
to the Lord: two bulls from the herd, one ram, and seven male lambs a year
old; see that they are without blemish; 20also their grain offering of fine
flour mixed with oil; three tenths of an ephah shall you offer for a bull, and
two tenths for a ram; 21a tenth shall you offer for each of the seven lambs;
22 ✝also one male goat for a sin offering, to make atonement for you. 23You
shall offer these besides the burnt offering of the morning, which is for a
regular burnt offering. 24In the same way you shall offer daily, for seven
days, the food of a food offering, with a pleasing aroma to the Lord. It shall
be offered besides the regular burnt offering and its drink offering. 25And on
the seventh day you shall have a holy convocation. You shall not do any
ordinary work.

Offerings for the Feast of Weeks

[26] † “On the day of the firstfruits, when you offer a grain offering of new
grain to the Lord at your Feast of Weeks, you shall have a holy convocation.
You shall not do any ordinary work, [27] but offer a burnt offering, with a
pleasing aroma to the Lord: two bulls from the herd, one ram, seven male
lambs a year old; [28] also their grain offering of fine flour mixed with oil,
three tenths of an ephah for each bull, two tenths for one ram, [29] a tenth for
each of the seven lambs; [30] with one male goat, to make atonement for you.
[31] Besides the regular burnt offering and its grain offering, you shall offer
them and their drink offering. See that they are without blemish.

Offerings for the Feast of Trumpets

29 [1]"On the first day of the seventh month you shall have a holy
convocation. You shall not do any ordinary work. It is a day for you to blow
the trumpets, [2]and you shall offer a burnt offering, for a pleasing aroma to
the LORD: one bull from the herd, one ram, seven male lambs a year old
without blemish; [3]also their grain offering of fine flour mixed with oil, three
tenths of an ephah[1] for the bull, two tenths for the ram, [4]and one tenth for
each of the seven lambs; [5]with one male goat for a sin offering, to make
atonement for you; [6]besides the burnt offering of the new moon, and its
grain offering, and the regular burnt offering and its grain offering, and their
drink offering, according to the rule for them, for a pleasing aroma, a food
offering to the LORD.

Offerings for the Day of Atonement

[7]"On the tenth day of this seventh month you shall have a holy convocation and afflict yourselves. You shall do no work, [8]but you shall offer a burnt offering to the LORD, a pleasing aroma: one bull from the herd, one ram, seven male lambs a year old: see that they are without blemish. [9]And their grain offering shall be of fine flour mixed with oil, three tenths of an ephah for the bull, two tenths for the one ram, [10]a tenth for each of the seven lambs: [11]also one male goat for a sin offering, besides the sin offering of atonement, and the regular burnt offering and its grain offering, and their drink offerings.

Offerings for the Feast of Booths

12 ✝ “On the fifteenth day of the seventh month you shall have a holy
convocation. You shall not do any ordinary work, and you shall keep a feast
to the Lord seven days. 13And you shall offer a burnt offering, a food
offering, with a pleasing aroma to the Lord, thirteen bulls from the herd,
two rams, fourteen male lambs a year old; they shall be without blemish;
14and their grain offering of fine flour mixed with oil, three tenths of an
ephah for each of the thirteen bulls, two tenths for each of the two rams,
15and a tenth for each of the fourteen lambs; 16also one male
goat for a sin offering, besides the regular burnt offering, its grain offering
and its drink offering.

17“On the second day twelve bulls from the herd, two rams, fourteen male
lambs a year old without blemish, 18with the grain offering and the drink
offerings for the bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, in the prescribed
quantities; 19also one male goat for a sin offering, besides the regular burnt
offering and its grain offering, and their drink offerings.

20“On the third day eleven bulls, two rams, fourteen male lambs a year
old without blemish, 21with the grain offering and the drink offerings for the
bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, in the prescribed quantities; 22also one
male goat for a sin offering, besides the regular burnt offering and its grain
offering and its drink offering.

23“On the fourth day ten bulls, two rams, fourteen male lambs a year old
without blemish, 24with the grain offering and the drink offerings for the
bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, in the prescribed quantities; 25also one
male goat for a sin offering, besides the regular burnt offering, its grain
offering and its drink offering.

26“On the fifth day nine bulls, two rams, fourteen male lambs a year old
without blemish, 27with the grain offering and the drink offerings for the
bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, in the prescribed quantities; 28also one
male goat for a sin offering; besides the regular burnt offering and its grain
offering and its drink offering.

29“On the sixth day eight bulls, two rams, fourteen male lambs a year old
without blemish, 30with the grain offering and the drink offerings for the

bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, in the prescribed quantities; [31]also one male goat for a sin offering; besides the regular burnt offering, its grain offering, and its drink offerings.

[32]“On the seventh day seven bulls, two rams, fourteen male lambs a year old without blemish, [33]with the grain offering and the drink offerings for the bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, in the prescribed quantities; [34]also one male goat for a sin offering; besides the regular burnt offering, its grain offering, and its drink offering.

[35]† “On the eighth day you shall have a solemn assembly. You shall not do any ordinary work, [36]but you shall offer a burnt offering, a food offering, with a pleasing aroma to the Lord: one bull, one ram, seven male lambs a year old without blemish, [37]and the grain offering and the drink offerings for the bull, for the ram, and for the lambs, in the prescribed quantities; [38]also one male goat for a sin offering; besides the regular burnt offering and its grain offering and its drink offering.

[39]“These you shall offer to the Lord at your appointed feasts, in addition to your vow offerings and your freewill offerings, for your burnt offerings, and for your grain offerings, and for your drink offerings, and for your peace offerings.”

[40][1] So Moses told the people of Israel everything just as the Lord had commanded Moses.

Men and Vows

30 [1]‡†Moses spoke to the heads of the tribes of the people of Israel,
saying, “This is what the Lord has commanded. [2]†If a man vows a vow to
the Lord, or swears an oath to bind himself by a pledge, he shall not break
his word. He shall do according to all that proceeds out of his mouth.

Women and Vows

3 ‡ ‡ † "If a woman vows a vow to the Lord and binds herself by a pledge,
while within her father's house in her youth, 4 † and her father hears of her
vow and of her pledge by which she has bound herself and says nothing to
her, then all her vows shall stand, and every pledge by which she has bound
herself shall stand. 5 † But if her father opposes her on the day that he hears
of it, no vow of hers, no pledge by which she has bound herself shall stand.
And the Lord will forgive her, because her father opposed her.

6 ‡ † "If she marries a husband, while under her vows or any thoughtless
utterance of her lips by which she has bound herself, 7 and her husband hears
of it and says nothing to her on the day that he hears, then her vows shall
stand, and her pledges by which she has bound herself shall stand. 8 But if,
on the day that her husband comes to hear of it, he opposes her, then he
makes void her vow that was on her, and the thoughtless utterance of her
lips by which she bound herself. And the Lord will forgive her. 9 † (But any
vow of a widow or of a divorced woman, anything by which she has bound
herself, shall stand against her.) 10 And if she vowed in her husband's house
or bound herself by a pledge with an oath, 11 and her husband heard of it and
said nothing to her and did not oppose her, then all her vows shall stand,
and every pledge by which she bound herself shall stand. 12 But if her
husband makes them null and void on the day that he hears them, then
whatever proceeds out of her lips concerning her vows or concerning her
pledge of herself shall not stand. Her husband has made them void, and the
Lord will forgive her. 13 Any vow and any binding oath to afflict herself, her
husband may establish,[1] or her husband may make void. 14 † But if her
husband says nothing to her from day to day, then he establishes all her
vows or all her pledges that are upon her. He has established them, because
he said nothing to her on the day that he heard of them. 15 But if he makes
them null and void after he has heard of them, then he shall bear her
iniquity."

16 These are the statutes that the Lord commanded Moses about a man and
his wife and about a father and his daughter while she is in her youth within
her father's house.

Vengeance on Midian

31 [1]The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, [2]†"Avenge the people of Israel on the Midianites. Afterward you shall be gathered to your people." [3]So Moses spoke to the people, saying, "Arm men from among you for the war, that they may go against Midian to execute the Lord's vengeance on Midian. [4]†You shall send a thousand from each of the tribes of Israel to the war." [5]So there were provided, out of the thousands of Israel, a thousand from each tribe, twelve thousand armed for war. [6]†And Moses sent them to the war, a thousand from each tribe, together with Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, with the vessels of the sanctuary and the trumpets for the alarm in his hand. [7]†They warred against Midian, as the Lord commanded Moses, and killed every male. [8]†They killed the kings of Midian with the rest of their slain, Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur, and Reba, the five kings of Midian. And they also killed Balaam the son of Beor with the sword. [9]†And the people of Israel took captive the women of Midian and their little ones, and they took as plunder all their cattle, their flocks, and all their goods. [10]All their cities in the places where they lived, and all their encampments, they burned with fire, [11]and took all the spoil and all the plunder, both of man and of beast. [12]Then they brought the captives and the plunder and the spoil to Moses, and to Eleazar the priest, and to the congregation of the people of Israel, at the camp on the plains of Moab by the Jordan at Jericho.

[13]Moses and Eleazar the priest and all the chiefs of the congregation went to meet them outside the camp. [14]And Moses was angry with the officers of the army, the commanders of thousands and the commanders of hundreds, who had come from service in the war. [15]†Moses said to them, "Have you let all the women live? [16]Behold, these, on Balaam's advice, caused the people of Israel to act treacherously against the Lord in the incident of Peor, and so the plague came among the congregation of the Lord. [17]†Now therefore, kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman who has known man by lying with him. [18]†But all the young girls who have not known man by lying with him keep alive for yourselves. [19]†Encamp outside the camp seven days. Whoever of you has killed any person and whoever

has touched any slain, purify yourselves and your captives on the third day and on the seventh day. [20]You shall purify every garment, every article of skin, all work of goats' hair, and every article of wood."

[21]‡Then Eleazar the priest said to the men in the army who had gone to battle: "This is the statute of the law that the Lord has commanded Moses: [22]only the gold, the silver, the bronze, the iron, the tin, and the lead, [23]everything that can stand the fire, you shall pass through the fire, and it shall be clean. Nevertheless, it shall also be purified with the water for impurity. And whatever cannot stand the fire, you shall pass through the water. [24]‡You must wash your clothes on the seventh day, and you shall be clean. And afterward you may come into the camp."

[25]The Lord said to Moses, [26]"Take the count of the plunder that was taken, both of man and of beast, you and Eleazar the priest and the heads of the fathers' houses of the congregation, [27]‡and divide the plunder into two parts between the warriors who went out to battle and all the congregation. [28]And levy for the Lord a tribute from the men of war who went out to battle, one out of five hundred, of the people and of the oxen and of the donkeys and of the flocks. [29]Take it from their half and give it to Eleazar the priest as a contribution to the Lord. [30]And from the people of Israel's half you shall take one drawn out of every fifty, of the people, of the oxen, of the donkeys, and of the flocks, of all the cattle, and give them to the Levites who keep guard over the tabernacle of the Lord." [31]And Moses and Eleazar the priest did as the Lord commanded Moses.

[32]‡Now the plunder remaining of the spoil that the army took was 675,000 sheep, [33]72,000 cattle, [34]61,000 donkeys, [35]and 32,000 persons in all, women who had not known man by lying with him. [36]And the half, the portion of those who had gone out in the army, numbered 337,500 sheep, [37]and the Lord's tribute of sheep was 675. [38]The cattle were 36,000, of which the Lord's tribute was 72. [39]The donkeys were 30,500, of which the Lord's tribute was 61. [40]The persons were 16,000, of which the Lord's tribute was 32 persons. [41]And Moses gave the tribute, which was the contribution for the Lord, to Eleazar the priest, as the Lord commanded Moses.

[42]From the people of Israel's half, which Moses separated from that of the men who had served in the army— [43]now the congregation's half was

337,500 sheep, [44]36,000 cattle, [45]and 30,500 donkeys, [46]and 16,000 persons — [47]from the people of Israel's half Moses took one of every 50, both of persons and of beasts, and gave them to the Levites who kept guard over the tabernacle of the LORD, as the LORD commanded Moses.

[48]Then the officers who were over the thousands of the army, the commanders of thousands and the commanders of hundreds, came near to Moses [49]† and said to Moses, "Your servants have counted the men of war who are under our command, and there is not a man missing from us. [50]† And we have brought the LORD's offering, what each man found, articles of gold, armlets and bracelets, signet rings, earrings, and beads, to make atonement for ourselves before the LORD." [51]And Moses and Eleazar the priest received from them the gold, all crafted articles. [52]And all the gold of the contribution that they presented to the LORD, from the commanders of thousands and the commanders of hundreds, was 16,750 shekels.[1] [53](The men in the army had each taken plunder for himself.) [54]And Moses and Eleazar the priest received the gold from the commanders of thousands and of hundreds, and brought it into the tent of meeting, as a memorial for the people of Israel before the LORD.

Reuben and Gad Settle in Gilead

32 [1]†Now the people of Reuben and the people of Gad had a very great number of livestock. And they saw the land of Jazer and the land of Gilead, and behold, the place was a place for livestock. [2]So the people of Gad and the people of Reuben came and said to Moses and to Eleazar the priest and to the chiefs of the congregation, [3]"Ataroth, Dibon, Jazer, Nimrah, Heshbon, Elealeh, Sebam, Nebo, and Beon, [4]the land that the Lord struck down before the congregation of Israel, is a land for livestock, and your servants have livestock." [5]†And they said, "If we have found favor in your sight, let this land be given to your servants for a possession. Do not take us across the Jordan."

[6]†But Moses said to the people of Gad and to the people of Reuben, "Shall your brothers go to the war while you sit here? [7]† Why will you discourage the heart of the people of Israel from going over into the land that the Lord has given them? [8]Your fathers did this, when I sent them from Kadesh-barnea to see the land. [9]For when they went up to the Valley of Eshcol and saw the land, they discouraged the heart of the people of Israel from going into the land that the Lord had given them. [10]And the Lord's anger was kindled on that day, and he swore, saying, [11]'Surely none of the men who came up out of Egypt, from twenty years old and upward, shall see the land that I swore to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, because they have not wholly followed me, [12]none except Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite and Joshua the son of Nun, for they have wholly followed the Lord.' [13]And the Lord's anger was kindled against Israel, and he made them wander in the wilderness forty years, until all the generation that had done evil in the sight of the Lord was gone. [14]†And behold, you have risen in your fathers' place, a brood of sinful men, to increase still more the fierce anger of the Lord against Israel! [15]For if you turn away from following him, he will again abandon them in the wilderness, and you will destroy all this people."

[16]†Then they came near to him and said, "We will build sheepfolds here for our livestock, and cities for our little ones, [17]but we will take up arms,

ready to go before the people of Israel, until we have brought them to their place. And our little ones shall live in the fortified cities because of the inhabitants of the land. 18 † We will not return to our homes until each of the people of Israel has gained his inheritance. 19 For we will not inherit with them on the other side of the Jordan and beyond, because our inheritance has come to us on this side of the Jordan to the east." 20 ‡ So Moses said to them, "If you will do this, if you will take up arms to go before the Lord for the war, 21 † and every armed man of you will pass over the Jordan before the Lord, until he has driven out his enemies from before him 22 and the land is subdued before the Lord; then after that you shall return and be free of obligation to the Lord and to Israel, and this land shall be your possession before the Lord. 23 † But if you will not do so, behold, you have sinned against the Lord, and be sure your sin will find you out. 24 Build cities for your little ones and folds for your sheep, and do what you have promised." 25 And the people of Gad and the people of Reuben said to Moses, "Your servants will do as my lord commands. 26 Our little ones, our wives, our livestock, and all our cattle shall remain there in the cities of Gilead, 27 but your servants will pass over, every man who is armed for war, before the Lord to battle, as my lord orders."

28 ‡ So Moses gave command concerning them to Eleazar the priest and to Joshua the son of Nun and to the heads of the fathers' houses of the tribes of the people of Israel. 29 And Moses said to them, "If the people of Gad and the people of Reuben, every man who is armed to battle before the Lord, will pass with you over the Jordan and the land shall be subdued before you, then you shall give them the land of Gilead for a possession. 30 However, if they will not pass over with you armed, they shall have possessions among you in the land of Canaan." 31 And the people of Gad and the people of Reuben answered, "What the Lord has said to your servants, we will do. 32 We will pass over armed before the Lord into the land of Canaan, and the possession of our inheritance shall remain with us beyond the Jordan."

33 † And Moses gave to them, to the people of Gad and to the people of Reuben and to the half-tribe of Manasseh the son of Joseph, the kingdom of Sihon king of the Amorites and the kingdom of Og king of Bashan, the land and its cities with their territories, the cities of the land throughout the

country. 34 † And the people of Gad built Dibon, Ataroth, Aroer, 35 Atroth-
shophan, Jazer, Jogbehah, 36 Beth-nimrah and Beth-haran, fortified cities,
and folds for sheep. 37 And the people of Reuben built Heshbon, Elealeh,
Kiriathaim, 38 Nebo, and Baal-meon (their names were changed), and
Sibmah. And they gave other names to the cities that they built. 39 And the
sons of Machir the son of Manasseh went to Gilead and captured it, and
dispossessed the Amorites who were in it. 40 † And Moses gave Gilead to
Machir the son of Manasseh, and he settled in it. 41 And Jair the son of
Manasseh went and captured their villages, and called them Havvoth-jair.[1]
42 † And Nobah went and captured Kenath and its villages, and called it
Nobah, after his own name.

Recounting Israel's Journey

33 [1]‡‡‡These are the stages of the people of Israel, when they went
out of the land of Egypt by their companies under the leadership of Moses
and Aaron. [2]Moses wrote down their starting places, stage by stage, by
command of the Lord, and these are their stages according to their starting
places. [3]They set out from Rameses in the first month, on the fifteenth day
of the first month. On the day after the Passover, the people of Israel went
out triumphantly in the sight of all the Egyptians, [4]† while the Egyptians
were burying all their firstborn, whom the Lord had struck down among
them. On their gods also the Lord executed judgments.

[5]‡So the people of Israel set out from Rameses and camped at Succoth.
[6]And they set out from Succoth and camped at Etham, which is on the edge
of the wilderness. [7]And they set out from Etham and turned back to Pi-
hahiroth, which is east of Baal-zephon, and they camped before Migdol.
[8]†And they set out from before Hahiroth[1] and passed through the midst of
the sea into the wilderness, and they went a three days' journey in the
wilderness of Etham and camped at Marah. [9]And they set out from Marah
and came to Elim; at Elim there were twelve springs of water and seventy
palm trees, and they camped there. [10]And they set out from Elim and
camped by the Red Sea. [11]And they set out from the Red Sea and camped in
the wilderness of Sin. [12]And they set out from the wilderness of Sin and
camped at Dophkah. [13]And they set out from Dophkah and camped at
Alush. [14]And they set out from Alush and camped at Rephidim, where there
was no water for the people to drink. [15]And they set out from Rephidim and
camped in the wilderness of Sinai. [16]And they set out from the wilderness of
Sinai and camped at Kibroth-hattaavah. [17]And they set out from Kibroth-
hattaavah and camped at Hazeroth. [18]And they set out from Hazeroth and
camped at Rithmah. [19]And they set out from Rithmah and camped at
Rimmon-perez. [20]And they set out from Rimmon-perez and camped at
Libnah. [21]And they set out from Libnah and camped at Rissah. [22]And they
set out from Rissah and camped at Kehelathah. [23]And they set out from
Kehelathah and camped at Mount Shepher. [24]And they set out from Mount

Shepher and camped at Haradah. [25]And they set out from Haradah and camped at Makheloth. [26]And they set out from Makheloth and camped at Tahath. [27]And they set out from Tahath and camped at Terah. [28]And they set out from Terah and camped at Mithkah. [29]And they set out from Mithkah and camped at Hashmonah. [30]And they set out from Hashmonah and camped at Moseroth. [31]And they set out from Moseroth and camped at Bene-jaakan. [32]And they set out from Bene-jaakan and camped at Hor-haggidgad. [33]And they set out from Hor-haggidgad and camped at Jotbathah. [34]And they set out from Jotbathah and camped at Abronah. [35]And they set out from Abronah and camped at Ezion-geber. [36]And they set out from Ezion-geber and camped in the wilderness of Zin (that is, Kadesh). [37]And they set out from Kadesh and camped at Mount Hor, on the edge of the land of Edom.

[38]†And Aaron the priest went up Mount Hor at the command of the LORD and died there, in the fortieth year after the people of Israel had come out of the land of Egypt, on the first day of the fifth month. [39]†And Aaron was 123 years old when he died on Mount Hor.

[40]†And the Canaanite, the king of Arad, who lived in the Negeb in the land of Canaan, heard of the coming of the people of Israel.

[41]And they set out from Mount Hor and camped at Zalmonah. [42]†And they set out from Zalmonah and
camped at Punon. [43]And they set out from Punon and camped at Oboth. [44]And they set out from Oboth and camped at Iye-abarim, in the territory of Moab. [45]And they set out from Iyim and camped at Dibon-gad. [46]And they set out from Dibon-gad and camped at Almon-diblathaim. [47]And they set out from Almon-diblathaim and camped in the mountains of Abarim, before Nebo. [48]And they set out from the mountains of Abarim and camped in the plains of Moab by the Jordan at Jericho; [49]†they camped by the Jordan from Beth-jeshimoth as far as Abel-shittim in the plains of Moab.

Drive Out the Inhabitants

50 ✝And the Lord spoke to Moses in the plains of Moab by the Jordan at
Jericho, saying, 51 “Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, When you
pass over the Jordan into the land of Canaan, 52 ✝then you shall drive out all
the inhabitants of the land from before you and destroy all their figured
stones and destroy all their metal images and demolish all their high places.
53 ✝And you shall take possession of the land and settle in it, for I have given
the land to you to possess it. 54 ✝You shall inherit the land by lot according to
your clans. To a large tribe you shall give a large inheritance, and to a small
tribe you shall give a small inheritance. Wherever the lot falls for anyone,
that shall be his. According to the tribes of your fathers you shall inherit.
55 ✝But if you do not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you,
then those of them whom you let remain shall be as barbs in your eyes and
thorns in your sides, and they shall trouble you in the land where you dwell.
56 ✝And I will do to you as I thought to do to them.”

Boundaries of the Land

34 [1]The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, [2]"Command the people of
Israel, and say to them, When you enter the land of Canaan (this is the land
that shall fall to you for an inheritance, the land of Canaan as defined by its
borders), [3]your south side shall be from the wilderness of Zin alongside
Edom, and your southern border shall run from the end of the Salt Sea on
the east. [4]And your border shall turn south of the ascent of Akrabbim, and
cross to Zin, and its limit shall be south of Kadesh-barnea. Then it shall go
on to Hazar-addar, and pass along to Azmon. [5]And the border shall turn
from Azmon to the Brook of Egypt, and its limit shall be at the sea.

[6]"For the western border, you shall have the Great Sea and its[1] coast.
This shall be your western border.

[7]"This shall be your northern border: from the Great Sea you shall draw
a line to Mount Hor. [8]From Mount Hor you shall draw a line to Lebo-
hamath, and the limit of the border shall be at Zedad. [9]Then the border shall
extend to Ziphron, and its limit shall be at Hazar-enan. This shall be your
northern border.

[10]"You shall draw a line for your eastern border from Hazar-enan to
Shepham. [11]And the border shall go down from Shepham to Riblah on the
east side of Ain. And the border shall go down and reach to the shoulder of
the Sea of Chinnereth on the east. [12]And the border shall go down to the
Jordan, and its limit shall be at the Salt Sea. This shall be your land as
defined by its borders all around."

[13]Moses commanded the people of Israel, saying, "This is the land that
you shall inherit by lot, which the Lord has commanded to give to the nine
tribes and to the half-tribe. [14]For the tribe of the people of Reuben by
fathers' houses and the tribe of the people of Gad by their fathers' houses
have received their inheritance, and also the half-tribe of Manasseh. [15]The
two tribes and the half-tribe have received their inheritance beyond the
Jordan east of Jericho, toward the sunrise."

List of Tribal Chiefs

16 The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 17 “These are the names of the men
who shall divide the land to you for inheritance: Eleazar the priest and
Joshua the son of Nun. 18 You shall take one chief from every tribe to
divide the land for inheritance. 19 These are the names of the men: Of the
tribe of Judah, Caleb the son of Jephunneh. 20 Of the tribe of the people of
Simeon, Shemuel the son of Ammihud. 21 Of the tribe of Benjamin, Elidad
the son of Chislon. 22 Of the tribe of the people of Dan a chief, Bukki the son
of Jogli. 23 Of the people of Joseph: of the tribe of the people of Manasseh a
chief, Hanniel the son of Ephod. 24 And of the tribe of the people of Ephraim
a chief, Kemuel the son of Shiphtan. 25 Of the tribe of the people of Zebulun
a chief, Elizaphan the son of Parnach. 26 Of the tribe of the people of
Issachar a chief, Paltiel the son of Azzan. 27 And of the tribe of the people of
Asher a chief, Ahihud the son of Shelomi. 28 Of the tribe of the people of
Naphtali a chief, Pedahel the son of Ammihud. 29 These are the men whom
the Lord commanded to divide the inheritance for the people of Israel in the
land of Canaan.”

Cities for the Levites

35 [1]†The Lord spoke to Moses in the plains of Moab by the Jordan at
Jericho, saying, [2]"Command the people of Israel to give to the Levites some
of the inheritance of their possession as cities for them to dwell in. And you
shall give to the Levites pasturelands around the cities. [3]†The cities shall be
theirs to dwell in, and their pasturelands shall be for their cattle and for their
livestock and for all their beasts. [4]The pasturelands of the cities, which you
shall give to the Levites, shall reach from the wall of the city outward a
thousand cubits[1] all around. [5]And you shall measure, outside the city, on
the east side two thousand cubits, and on the south side two thousand
cubits, and on the west side two thousand cubits, and on the north side two
thousand cubits, the city being in the middle. This shall belong to them as
pastureland for their cities.

[6]†"The cities that you give to the Levites shall be the six cities of refuge,
where you shall permit the manslayer to flee, and in addition to them you
shall give forty-two cities. [7]All the cities that you give to the Levites shall
be forty-eight, with their pasturelands. [8]And as for the cities that you shall
give from the possession of the people of Israel, from the larger tribes you
shall take many, and from the smaller tribes you shall take few; each, in
proportion to the inheritance that it inherits, shall give of its cities to the
Levites."

Cities of Refuge

9 ‡And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 10 “Speak to the people of Israel
and say to them, When you cross the Jordan into the land of Canaan, 11 †then
you shall select cities to be cities of refuge for you, that the manslayer who
kills any person without intent may flee there. 12 †The cities shall be for you
a refuge from the avenger, that the manslayer may not die until he stands
before the congregation for judgment. 13 And the cities that you give shall be
your six cities of refuge. 14 †You shall give three cities beyond the Jordan,
and three cities in the land of Canaan, to be cities of refuge. 15 These six
cities shall be for refuge for the people of Israel, and for the stranger and for
the sojourner among them, that anyone who kills any person without intent
may flee there.

16 ‡† “But if he struck him down with an iron object, so that he died, he is
a murderer. The murderer shall be put to death. 17 And if he struck him down
with a stone tool that could cause death, and he died, he is a murderer. The
murderer shall be put to death. 18 Or if he struck him down with a wooden
tool that could cause death, and he died, he is a murderer. The murderer
shall be put to death. 19 The avenger of blood shall himself put the murderer
to death; when he meets him, he shall put him to death. 20 And if he pushed
him out of hatred or hurled something at him, lying in wait, so that he died,
21 or in enmity struck him down with his hand, so that he died, then he who
struck the blow shall be put to death. He is a murderer. The avenger of
blood shall put the murderer to death when he meets him.

22 ‡ “But if he pushed him suddenly without enmity, or hurled anything on
him without lying in wait 23 or used a stone that could cause death, and
without seeing him dropped it on him, so that he died, though he was not
his enemy and did not seek his harm, 24 †then the congregation shall judge
between the manslayer and the avenger of blood, in accordance with these
rules. 25 †And the congregation shall rescue the manslayer from the hand of
the avenger of blood, and the congregation shall restore him to his city of
refuge to which he had fled, and he shall live in it until the death of the high
priest who was anointed with the holy oil. 26 But if the manslayer shall at
any time go beyond the boundaries of his city of refuge to which he fled,

[27] † and the avenger of blood finds him outside the boundaries of his city of refuge, and the avenger of blood kills the manslayer, he shall not be guilty of blood. [28] For he must remain in his city of refuge until the death of the high priest, but after the death of the high priest the manslayer may return to the land of his possession. [29] And these things shall be for a statute and rule for you throughout your generations in all your dwelling places.

[30] † "If anyone kills a person, the murderer shall be put to death on the evidence of witnesses. But no person shall be put to death on the testimony of one witness. [31] † Moreover, you shall accept no ransom for the life of a murderer, who is guilty of death, but he shall be put to death. [32] † And you shall accept no ransom for him who has fled to his city of refuge, that he may return to dwell in the land before the death of the high priest. [33] † You shall not pollute the land in which you live, for blood pollutes the land, and no atonement can be made for the land for the blood that is shed in it, except by the blood of the one who shed it. [34] † You shall not defile the land in which you live, in the midst of which I dwell, for I the LORD dwell in the midst of the people of Israel."

Marriage of Female Heirs

36 [1]The heads of the fathers' houses of the clan of the people of Gilead the son of Machir, son of Manasseh, from the clans of the people of Joseph, came near and spoke before Moses and before the chiefs, the heads of the fathers' houses of the people of Israel. [2]† They said, "The Lord commanded my lord to give the land for inheritance by lot to the people of Israel, and my lord was commanded by the Lord to give the inheritance of Zelophehad our brother to his daughters. [3]†But if they are married to any of the sons of the other tribes of the people of Israel, then their inheritance will be taken from the inheritance of our fathers and added to the inheritance of the tribe into which they marry. So it will be taken away from the lot of our inheritance. [4]†And when the jubilee of the people of Israel comes, then their inheritance will be added to the inheritance of the tribe into which they marry, and their inheritance will be taken from the inheritance of the tribe of our fathers."

[5]And Moses commanded the people of Israel according to the word of the Lord, saying, "The tribe of the people of Joseph is right. [6]†This is what the Lord commands concerning the daughters of Zelophehad, 'Let them marry whom they think best, only they shall marry within the clan of the tribe of their father. [7]The inheritance of the people of Israel shall not be transferred from one tribe to another, for every one of the people of Israel shall hold on to the inheritance of the tribe of his fathers. [8]And every daughter who possesses an inheritance in any tribe of the people of Israel shall be wife to one of the clan of the tribe of her father, so that every one of the people of Israel may possess the inheritance of his fathers. [9]So no inheritance shall be transferred from one tribe to another, for each of the tribes of the people of Israel shall hold on to its own inheritance.'"

[10]The daughters of Zelophehad did as the Lord commanded Moses, [11]†for Mahlah, Tirzah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Noah, the daughters of Zelophehad, were married to sons of their father's brothers. [12]They were married into the clans of the people of Manasseh the son of Joseph, and their inheritance remained in the tribe of their father's clan.

13 †These are the commandments and the rules that the Lord commanded
through Moses to the people of Israel in the plains of Moab by the Jordan at
Jericho.

Numbers

Overview

Author
Moses the prophet

Date
1445–1406 BC

Places
Wilderness of Sinai; Wilderness of Zin; see color map 3

People
Moses; Aaron; Levites; elders and chiefs of Israel; Miriam; 12 spies; Korah; Dathan; Abiram; Sihon; Og; Balak; Balaam

Purpose
To describe how the Lord preserves Israel despite the obstacles from Sinai to Canaan

Law Themes
Duties; uncleanness; punishment for complaining; rebellion; cursing

Gospel Themes
Redemption; "I am the LORD your God"; consecration; purification; atonement; blessing

Memory Verses
Aaronic benediction (6:24–27); God's Word is true (23:19); star of Jacob (24:17)

Introduction to Numbers

Reading Numbers

He felt excited on the first day of travel, anticipating a new and better land. On the second day, his burden grew heavy as exhaustion rose from heel to shoulder. When they broke for camp at the end of the third day, he complained like everyone else about the hard march, the lack of decent food, and the constant drudgery. The march of millions of people and animals by ranks kicked up an endless cloud of dust. Grime caked his sweaty brow and caused him to cough up a steady stream of curses and complaints.

Numbers is a story of endurance and promises of a better life. Nothing could better describe the hopes, disappointments, and struggles of God's people today, who look forward to the fulfillment of all God's promises. Numbers teaches duties, discipline, and the daily need for repentance, forgiveness, and faith.

Luther on Numbers

In the fourth book [Numbers], after the laws have been given, the princes and priests instituted, the tent and form of worship set up, and everything that pertains to the people of God made ready, then the whole thing begins to function; a test is made as to how well the arrangement operates and how satisfactory it is. This is why this very book says so much about the disobedience of the people and the plagues that came upon them. And some of the laws are explained and the number of the laws increased. Indeed this is the way it always goes; laws are quickly given, but when they are to go into effect and become operative, they meet with nothing but hindrance; nothing goes as the law demands. This book is a notable example of how vacuous it is to make people righteous with laws; rather, as St. Paul says, laws cause only sin and wrath. (AE 35:238)

Therefore we see that these many laws of Moses were given not only to prevent anyone from choosing ways of his own for doing good and living aright, as was said above, but rather that sins might simply become numerous and be heaped up beyond measure. The purpose was to burden the conscience so that the hardened blindness would have to recognize itself, and feel its own inability and nothingness in the achieving of good. Such blindness must be thus compelled and forced by the law to seek something beyond the law and its own ability, namely, the grace of God promised in the Christ who was to come. Every law of God is good and right [Rom. 7:7–16], even if it only bids men to carry dung or to gather straw. Accordingly, whoever does not keep this good law—or keeps it unwillingly—cannot be righteous or good in his heart. But human nature cannot keep it otherwise than unwillingly. It must therefore, through this good law of God, recognize and feel its wickedness, and sigh and long for the aid of divine grace in Christ. (AE 35:244)

Challenges for Readers

Census Figures. The censuses in chs 1 and 26, which give the Book its name, would suggest a total of c 2.2 million Israelites. Critics have argued that these figures must be exaggerated because so large a group and their livestock could not survive in the Sinai wilderness. Elaborate reinterpretations of the figures in ch 1 have been proposed. Yet Moses carefully describes how the Lord prospered and cared for His people in miraculous and providential ways (cf 11:7, 31). One should also note that the Sinai Peninsula was not as barren then as it is today. The climate in the region provided more rain and vegetation. See note, Jsh 17:15. (Cf Ps 68:7–9 about God's special providence.)

Standing of Women. The test of adultery (5:11–31), the capture of Midianite girls (31:18), and the laws about women's vows (30:3–16) have been cited as evidence that the Bible teaches suppression of women or that women were owned and valued much like cattle. Such an interpretation does not take into account the cultural environment of the second millennium BC or what Scripture, in other places, teaches about men and women (see note, 30:3–16). The example of the daughters of Zelophehad (27:1–11; ch 36) tells a different story; these single women were allowed to inherit their father's property and could choose husbands for themselves (36:6). See notes, 2:3–31; Pr 31:10–31.

Laws Given through Moses. See p 95.

Ministers Then and Now. Although comparisons and applications can be made from the services of priests and Levites of the OT to the services of church workers today, the services cannot be equated.

Vengeance. God's command to punish the Midianites may surprise some readers. See notes, ch 31; Ex 20:5.

Blessings for Readers

As you read Numbers, reflect on how God repeatedly speaks His Word of Law and promise to the people while sustaining them in the wilderness. Each event illustrates His fatherly discipline and gracious care for a wayward, rebellious people. Numbers leaves the reader hanging, anticipating something greater because the Book ends on Jordan's east bank, just shy of the Promised Land.

While reading Numbers, pray for the Lord to discipline and sustain you in the service of His kingdom. Also, anticipate how He prepares something greater for you, an eternal homeland in heaven to be revealed when Christ returns.

OUTLINE

The presentation of Israel's history in Numbers has the feel of a journey. The inclusion of legal material corresponds to the historical situation.

I. From Mount Sinai to Kadesh (chs 1–12)
- A. First Census (chs 1–4)
  1. Israel's warriors (1:1–46)
  2. Levites exempted (1:47–54)
  3. Arrangement of the camp (ch 2)
  4. Sons of Aaron (3:1–4)
  5. Duties of the Levites (3:5–39)
  6. Redemption of the firstborn (3:40–51)
  7. Duties of the Kohathites (ch 4)
- B. Final Preparations for the Journey (5:1–10:10)
  1. Unclean people (5:1–4)
  2. Confession and restitution (5:5–10)
  3. Test for adultery (5:11–31)
  4. Nazirite vow (6:1–21)
  5. Aaron's blessing (6:22–27)
  6. Offerings at the tabernacle's consecration (ch 7)
  7. Seven lamps (8:1–4)
  8. Cleansing of the Levites (8:5–22)
  9. Retirement of the Levites (8:23–26)

10. Passover celebrated (9:1–14)
11. Cloud covering the tabernacle (9:15–23)
12. Silver trumpets (10:1–10)

C. Journey to Kadesh (10:11–12:16)
1. Israel leaves Sinai (10:11–36)
2. People complain (11:1–15)
3. Elders appointed to aid Moses (11:16–30)
4. Quail and a plague (11:31–35)
5. Miriam and Aaron oppose Moses (ch 12)

II. From Kadesh to Transjordan (chs 13–21)

A. Refusal to Invade Canaan (chs 13–14)
1. Twelve spies and their mixed report (ch 13)
2. People rebel, are punished and defeated (ch 14)

B. Religious Questions (chs 15–19)
1. Laws about sacrifices and unintentional sins (15:1–31)
2. Sabbathbreaker executed (15:32–36)
3. Tassels on garments (15:37–41)
4. Korah's rebellion (ch 16)
5. Aaron's staff buds (ch 17)
6. Duties of priests and Levites (ch 18)
7. Laws for purification (ch 19)

C. Journey to Moab and Conquest of Transjordan (chs 20–21)
1. Death of Miriam (20:1)
2. Waters of Meribah (20:2–9)
3. Moses strikes the rock (20:10–13)
4. Edom refuses passage (20:14–21)
5. Death of Aaron (20:22–29)
6. Arad destroyed (21:1–3)
7. Bronze serpent (21:4–9)
8. Arriving in Moab (21:10–20)
9. Conquest of Transjordan (21:21–35)

III. Israel on the Plains of Moab (chs 22–36)

A. Balaam Blesses Israel, but Israel Disobeys (chs 22–25)
1. Balak summons Balaam (22:1–21)
2. Balaam's donkey and the angel (22:22–41)
3. Balaam's first oracle (23:1–12)
4. Balaam's second oracle (23:13–30)

5. Balaam's third oracle (24:1–14)
6. Balaam's final oracle (24:15–25)
7. Baal worship at Peor (25:1–9)
8. Zeal of Phinehas (25:10–18)

B. Second Census and New Laws (chs 26–30)
1. Census of the new generation (ch 26)
2. Daughters of Zelophehad (27:1–11)
3. Joshua to succeed Moses (27:12–23)
4. Daily offerings (28:1–8)
5. Sabbath offerings (28:9–10)
6. Monthly offerings (28:11–15)
7. Passover offerings (28:16–25)
8. Offerings for the Feast of Weeks (28:26–31)
9. Offerings for the Feast of Trumpets (29:1–6)
10. Offerings for the Day of Atonement (29:7–11)
11. Offerings for the Feast of Booths (29:12–40)
12. Men and vows (30:1–2)
13. Women and vows (30:3–16)

C. Defeat of Midian and Settlement of Transjordan (chs 31–32)
1. Vengeance on Midian (ch 31)
2. Reuben and Gad settle in Gilead (ch 32)

D. Final Preparatory Matters (chs 33–36)
1. Recounting Israel's journey (ch 33)
2. Promised Land's boundaries (34:1–15)
3. List of tribal chiefs (34:16–29)
4. Cities of Levites and of refuge (ch 35)
5. Inheritance of daughters (ch 36)

Articles and Resources Related to Numbers

- Number Symbolism
- Leadership and Service in Israel
- The Israelite Diet
- The Israelite Calendar

Number Symbolism

The Israelites used number symbolism, as did many other ancient cultures. Ancient systems for counting probably developed from the 10 digits of human hands. As written language developed, ancient people commonly used the letters of their alphabets to represent numbers (this was true for the Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek languages). The use of letters as numbers caused numbers to become invested with greater symbolic meaning.

The numbers presented in historical accounts of the Bible should usually be read as ordinary numbers; apocalyptic books such as Daniel, Ezekiel, and Revelation tend to use more number symbolism. The numbering of the days of creation may have provided symbolic meaning to some numbers, though Scripture does not emphasize this for each number. Sometimes, multiples of a number carry deeper meaning (Dn 9:24; Mt 18:22; Rv 13:18). However, biblical writers more often associated ideas with certain numbers in only a general way. Common associations are described below; use these associations cautiously. See note, Pr 30.

one. Typically represents uniqueness (2Sm 7:23) or unity (Gn 2:24; Ex 26:6). In the OT, related to Hbr *ro'sh*, "first in order; head, or chief" (see p 228). See note, Dt 6:4.

two. Hbr root term means "to repeat." The number's form is not plural but dual, a word form in Semitic languages used for pairs on the human body (arms, legs, etc.). However, the term also describes division, contrast, and distinction (1Ki 18:21; Jb 9:33). There may be an association with Day 2 of the creation, which describes separations (Gn 1:6–8).

three. The first plural number in Hbr, since "two" in Hbr is dual. Three appears with examples of counsel (Gn 18:2; Dt 19:15; Jb 2:11; Ezk 14:14) and also represents a short, complete cycle of action (Nu 22:28; Est 4:16). The threefold repetition of God's name and His attributes also associates the number with God (Nu 6:23–26; Is 6:3) and points to Jesus' teaching about the Trinity (Mt 28:19).

four. Associated with the four corners of an object (Ex 27:2; Jb 1:19), directions of the compass (1Ch 9:24; Is 11:2; Zec 6:5), and the winds that blow from the four quarters of heaven (Jer 49:36). Four is therefore associated with the heavenly and earthly spheres of creation.

six. The number of mankind, since God created Adam and Eve on the sixth day (Gn 1:24–27; Rv 13:18).

seven. Prominent in biblical order and design (such as the sevenfold lampstand). The most obvious association between the number seven and God's design is with the heavenly lights in the seven sunrises of the week (Gn 2:2–3; Ex 20:8–11), the moon's progress around the earth in c 28 days (7 × 4; Israel had a lunar calendar, Ex 12:2), and the seven visible "lights" in the sky (sun, moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn; cf Rv 1:20). In this way, seven has strong association with heaven, divine illumination, and the things of God.

ten. Often associated with a group of persons in Semitic languages, though this association is not strong in the OT. Ten commonly represents completeness or constancy (Gn 31:7; see also multiples of ten —"hundred" and "thousand"—below). Tithing, based on giving the tenth part of a whole thing, is an important biblical practice in which offering the tenth represents thanks for the whole (Gn 14:20; 28:22; Lv 27:30–34; Nu 18:21–32; Dt 12:1–14; 14:22–29). The Ten Commandments (lit, "10 words") can stand for the whole of God's covenant (Ex 34:28; Dt 4:13).

twelve. Associated with the sons of Jacob (Gn 35:22b–26), from whom descended the tribes of Israel (Ex 28:21; Nu 1:1–16). Twelve thus represents the people of God. This later applied to the NT people of God, the Church, led by the twelve apostles (Mt 19:28).

twenty-four. Twelve repeated (Rv 4:4, 10). See *twelve*.

forty. Often used with a length of time characterizing a critical period in redemptive history or a period of testing (Gn 7:12; Dt 9:11; Mt 4:2).

seventy. See *seven*; see also p 206.

hundred. Used in round figures (cf Gn 15:13; Lv 26:8; Mt 18:12) and in expressions of uncertain amounts (Is 65:20), as also happens in other languages (e.g., the Eng expression "I've told you a hundred times" means "constantly").

thousand. Hbr *'eleph*; occurs most often in censuses and accounts of troop musters in the Book of Numbers and other Historical Books. It is a technical military term similar to modern military terms such as division, brigade, and regimen (cf Nu 31, where 12,000 troops were mustered, a unit from each tribe). It described an Israelite tactical unit, which may not have included a literal 1,000 men. When Israelites heard or read the word *'eleph*, they did not necessarily think of the number 1,000. Like

"ten" and "hundred," "thousand" can simply mean a large quantity, all of something, or constantly (Jb 9:3; Ps 50:10; 84:10; 90:4). This background is especially helpful for understanding the symbolism in Rv 7:4–8; 14:1–3; 20:2 (see notes).

144,000. Multiple of *twelve* and a *thousand*, symbolizing all of God's people; Rv 7:4; 14:1–3. See *twelve* and *thousand*.

Students of the Bible should beware of searching the Scriptures for hidden number symbolism because such speculating has led to false interpretations and false teachings in the past. Especially dangerous is the mixing of nonbiblical systems of number symbolism with interpretations of the Bible, as happened with the Jewish interpreter Philo of Alexandria, the Jewish Cabbala, and Christian allegorists. The Early Church Father Irenaeus strongly warned against the heretical Gnostic abuse of number symbolism, and his words provide appropriate caution today (*ANF* 1:393–96).

Leadership and Service in Israel

Terms for Israelite leadership are often used interchangeably, so that offices are not easily ranked. However, during the tribal period (Ex 1 through 1Sm 8), the general order seems to be (1) elder of Israel, (2) tribal leader, (3) clan leader, (4) household leader, (5) household member, and (6) sojourner (cf Dt 29:10–11). On the organization of the people in the wilderness, see note, Nu 1:2–18. 1Ki 8:1 gives an illustration of civil leadership in the kingdom period (1Sm 9 through 2Ch 36), stating, "Solomon assembled the elders of Israel and all the heads of the tribes, the leaders of the fathers' houses of the people of Israel." (Regarding households, see pp 54–55.) Most Israelite leaders could also act as military commanders. During the kingdom period, other administrative offices were added to supplement the traditional tribal administration.

The explanations below provide guidance through general descriptions of common terms and how they were used. Specific uses of these terms varied widely over the thousands of years described by Old Testament history.

Civil Institutions

king. Hbr *melek*. Uses range from leaders of tribes and cities to the leader of a nation or an empire. Beginning with King Saul, the OT focuses strongly on this rank of civil leadership. See pp 1565–66.

elder. Hbr *zaqen*; term related to "beard." Used for various levels of tribal leadership. A body of 70 elders led Israel, representing the tribes (e.g., Ex 24:9; c six elders per tribe). Elders were often associated with religious leadership and acted as counselors to rulers. Each city typically had elders who acted as judges. See p 792.

prince. Hbr *sar*; often used parallel with "chief" as a warlord or leader of a tribe. The prince was a high-level official during the kingdom period. The term does not specifically mean the son of a king, as it is commonly used in Eng.

head. Hbr *ro'sh*; like "chief," general term used with "tribe," "clan," and "father's house." Indicates different leadership strata within a tribe.

chief. Hbr *nasi'*; like "head," used variously with "father's house," "tribe," and with military units.

eunuch. Hbr *saris*. In the Israelite kingdom period, a minor official. In other nations, eunuchs served in more important administrative roles. The term does not necessarily mean the official was castrated. See notes, 2Ki 9:32; 20:18.

judge. Hbr *shophet*. Elders served as officers of law courts in their communities (see *elder*). The judges (Judges–1Sm 9) who led Israel during the tribal period were not officers of such courts, but temporary military saviors. See pp 380–81. Unlike local judges, priests, and kings, these tribal judges did not always come to their office because of tribal or family background; the Lord raised them up, or they were appointed by another Israelite leader (1Sm 8:1).

noble. Translated from various Hbr terms, occurring mostly in later OT books. Indicates a free man, or a leader in fame or ability.

people of the land. General citizenry. However, in Jeremiah and Ezekiel, the expression may describe landowners who had political and cultural influence.

slaves. Israelites could be slaves for a time but were to be freed (see pp 101, 206). Captives, such as Canaanites, might be enslaved permanently. See

Gibeonites.

Gibeonites. Neither Israelites nor leaders, but Canaanites who became slaves. They cut wood and drew water for the Israelites (see notes, Jsh 9:21, 27). Other Canaanites who were spared during the conquest entered this type of service. See notes, Gn 9:25; 1Ki 5:15.

Religious Institutions

high priest. Leader of the priests and Levites; a descendant of Aaron of the tribe of Levi. High priests were chosen from the line of Eleazar (Nu 20:25–28) and his son Phinehas. In later times, there appears to be more than one high priest (cf 1Ki 2:27, 35; see p 495). One of Eleazar's descendants, Zadok (1Ch 6:1–15), headed the later succession of high priests. See "Zadokites," p 1558.

priests. Descendants of Aaron ordained for service (Lv 8) at the tabernacle and temple (Leviticus focuses on priestly duties). They oversaw the work of the Levites (Numbers states the Levites' duties).

Levites. Descendants of the patriarch Levi whom the Lord appointed as tabernacle/temple workers through Moses (Nu 3:5–39).

women of the tabernacle. Mentioned only in Ex 38:8 and 1Sm 2:22, they apparently assisted the priests and Levites. However, their work is not described. See p 389. Women could not serve as priests or Levites.

Nazirites. Men or women who dedicated themselves to the Lord through a temporary vow (Nu 6:1–21).

Regarding prophets and prophetesses, see pp 1081–83, 389.

The Israelite Diet

Crevices, knots, and whorls wrinkle the faces of the stout olive trees growing on the slope of the Kidron Valley, just east of Jerusalem. Their massive trunks demonstrate their great age. Some scholars suggest that Jesus may have walked amid these very trees. In fact, the early Christians prayed in this olive grove and concluded that it was the Garden of Gethsemane, where Jesus retreated after eating the bread and drinking the cup of the Passover.

Olives, wheat, and grapes provided the basic ingredients of an ancient Near Eastern diet. But as the Israelites thanked God for the abundance of the harvest and passed these foods around the table, they saw something more. Many of these foods bore spiritual meaning. The following chart will introduce you to the basics of Israelite meals and some of the meanings they evoked.

Whether you reach for olives from the Kidron Valley or corn-fed beef from Iowa, let your food remind you of the heavenly Father, who opens His hand and satisfies the desires of every living thing (Ps 145:16). See in each food His gracious provision, and receive your daily bread with thanksgiving. Like Jesus, offer a blessing before and after each meal (Mt 14:19; Mk 8:7; 14:22; Lk 24:30). (See SC, pp xli–xlii, for such prayers.)

When you finish eating, remember, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God" (Mt 4:4). During His time in the wilderness, Jesus refused Satan's bread (Mt 4:1–4). On the cross, He closed His mouth to wine and gall (Mt 27:34). Instead of eating and drinking during those trials, Jesus spoke God's Word for you and for your salvation. Feasting on God's Word, receive the life and satisfaction that He alone can give (Mt 4:4). Christ will fill your heart with hope and peace (Rm 15:13).

The Israelite Calendar

The first months of the Israelite calendar are arranged here from first to last as they typically ordered them. Israel basically has two seasons: the wet season (Bul/Heshvan through Ziv/Iyyar) and the dry season (Sivan through Ethanim/Tishri).

An extra month, Adar Sheni (Second Adar), adjusts the lunar cycles with the solar cycle. See p 1567.

The Gezer Calendar tablet (tenth century BC) describes a 12-month cycle beginning in the fall. The poetic form may represent a schoolboy's rhyme. It states, "His double-month is ingathering. His double-month is sowing. His double-month is late-planting. His month is chopping flax. His month is barley harvest. His month is harvest and measuring (?). His double-month is pruning. His month is summerfruit" (*CS* 2:222).

Footnotes

Footnotes for Numbers, Chapter 3

- [1] 3:22 Hebrew *their listing was*
- [1] 3:38 Hebrew *guard*
- [2] 3:47 A *shekel* was about 2/5 ounce or 11 grams
- [3] 3:47 A *gerah* was about 1/50 ounce or 0.6 gram

Footnotes for Numbers, Chapter 4

- [4] 4:6 The meaning of the Hebrew word is uncertain; compare Exodus 25:5

Footnotes for Numbers, Chapter 5

- [1] 5:2 *Leprosy* was a term for several skin diseases; see Leviticus 13
- [2] 5:7 Hebrew *they shall confess their sin that they have committed*
- [1] 5:15 An *ephah* was about 3/5 bushel or 22 liters

Footnotes for Numbers, Chapter 6

- [1] 6:2 *Nazirite* means *one separated*, or *one consecrated*
- [2] 6:4 Or *Naziriteship*

- [1] 6:26 Or *face*

Footnotes for Numbers, Chapter 7

- [1] 7:13 A *shekel* was about 2/5 ounce or 11 grams

Footnotes for Numbers, Chapter 8

- [1] 8:24 Hebrew *he*; also verses 25, 26
- [2] 8:26 Hebrew *He ministers*

Footnotes for Numbers, Chapter 9

- [1] 9:16 Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate; Hebrew lacks *by day*

Footnotes for Numbers, Chapter 11

- [1] 11:3 *Taberah* means *burning*
- [1] 11:31 A *cubit* was about 18 inches or 45 centimeters
- [2] 11:32 A *homer* was about 6 bushels or 220 liters
- [3] 11:34 *Kibroth-hattaavah* means *graves of craving*

Footnotes for Numbers, Chapter 12

- [1] 12:10 *Leprosy* was a term for several skin diseases; see Leviticus 13
- [2] 12:11 Hebrew *do not lay sin upon us*

Footnotes for Numbers, Chapter 13

- [1] 13:24 *Eshcol* means *cluster*

Footnotes for Numbers, Chapter 15

- [1] 15:3 Or *an offering by fire*; so throughout Numbers
- [2] 15:4 An *ephah* was about 3/5 bushel or 22 liters
- [3] 15:4 A *hin* was about 4 quarts or 3.5 liters
- [4] 15:22 Or *by mistake*; also verses 24, 27, 28, 29
- [1] 15:39 Hebrew *to spy out*

Footnotes for Numbers, Chapter 16

- [1] 16:5 Septuagint *The Lord knows those who are his*
- [1] 16:36 Ch 17:1 in Hebrew

Footnotes for Numbers, Chapter 17

- [1] 17:1 Ch 17:16 in Hebrew

Footnotes for Numbers, Chapter 18

- [1] 18:7 Hebrew *service of gift*
- [2] 18:16 A *shekel* was about 2/5 ounce or 11 grams

Footnotes for Numbers, Chapter 19

- [1] 19:17 Hebrew *living*

Footnotes for Numbers, Chapter 20

- [1] 20:13 *Meribah* means *quarreling*

Footnotes for Numbers, Chapter 21

- [1] 21:2 That is, set apart (devote) as an offering to the Lord (for destruction); also verse 3
- [2] 21:3 *Hormah* means *destruction*
- [3] 21:9 Or *copper*
- [1] 21:16 *Beer* means *well*
- [2] 21:20 Or *Jeshimon*
- [3] 21:28 Septuagint; Hebrew *the lords of*
- [1] 21:30 Compare Samaritan and Septuagint; Hebrew *and we laid waste as far as Nophah, which is as far as Medeba*

Footnotes for Numbers, Chapter 22

- [2] 22:5 Or *his kindred*
- [1] 22:32 Or *reckless*

Footnotes for Numbers, Chapter 23

- [1] 23:10 Or *dust clouds*
- [1] 23:28 Or *Jeshimon*

Footnotes for Numbers, Chapter 24

- [1] 24:3 Or *closed*, or *perfect*; also verse 15
- [2] 24:6 Or *valleys*
- [3] 24:17 Hebrew *corners* [of the head]

Footnotes for Numbers, Chapter 25

- [1] 25:4 Or *impale*

Footnotes for Numbers, Chapter 26

- [1] 26:4 *Take a census of the people* is implied (compare verse 2)

Footnotes for Numbers, Chapter 28

- [1] 28:5 An *ephah* was about 3/5 bushel or 22 liters
- [2] 28:5 A *hin* was about 4 quarts or 3.5 liters

Footnotes for Numbers, Chapter 29

- [1] 29:3 An *ephah* was about 3/5 bushel or 22 liters
- [1] 29:40 Ch 30:1 in Hebrew

Footnotes for Numbers, Chapter 30

- [1] 30:13 Or *may allow to stand*

Footnotes for Numbers, Chapter 31

- [1] 31:52 A *shekel* was about 2/5 ounce or 11 grams

Footnotes for Numbers, Chapter 32

- [1] 32:41 *Havvoth-jair* means *the villages of Jair*

Footnotes for Numbers, Chapter 33

- [1] 33:8 Some manuscripts and versions *Pi-hahiroth*

Footnotes for Numbers, Chapter 34

- [1] 34:6 Syriac; Hebrew lacks *its*

Footnotes for Numbers, Chapter 35

- [1] 35:4 A *cubit* was about 18 inches or 45 centimeters

Study Notes

NUMBERS—NOTE ON **Ch 1** Records how the nation was counted and organized into military-style units. People traveled with the order and precision of an army. The numerical strength of each unit was to be carefully recorded by "a man from each tribe … the head of the house of his fathers" (v 4). The Eng title of the Book is based on the record of the censuses (from LXX *arithmoi*); the Hbr title, "in the wilderness," gives a better description of the work as a whole.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 1:1 *The* LORD *spoke to Moses*. Lit, "And then the LORD spoke to Moses" indicates that Moses is continuing the account begun in Lv. The division of Lv and Nu was a practical matter of scroll size, not a difference in message. Nu appears to be a summary of a diary that Moses kept. The expression about the Lord speaking is repeated 80 times in Nu, setting the tone for the entire Book and indicating the Lord's direct and gracious supervision of His people. Today, God's people have the written record of God's Word, which guides our lives and worship. *tent of meeting*. Where the Lord gave directions to His people (e.g., Ex 40:34; Lv 1:1). See note, Ex 27:21. *the first day of the second month*. Nineteen days later, Israel was to leave Mount Sinai. Daily mustering was done quickly because the people were organized by the sanctuary tax census taken months earlier (Ex 30:11–12; 38:26).

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 1:2–18 *census of all the congregation*. To demonstrate to His people how great the Lord had made them; to make them realize how great His care was for them; to provide order for their living, traveling, and for war, thus demonstrating that their God is a God of order. Cf 1Co 14:40; see note, Gn 1:2. See also p 1291. *clans … fathers' houses*. Levels and divisions of the people. Tribe names were derived from the 12 sons of Jacob, who had lived four centuries earlier. Clan names were taken from the grandsons of Jacob. Fathers' houses included all living descendants of a common, living ancestor. Individual names included every male age 20 and older. See pp 54–55.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 1:20–40 Tribes numbered according to the census tabulation (vv 5–15). Grouped in threes according to their encampment in military units; e.g., Reuben, Simeon, and Gad were deployed on the south side of the tabernacle.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 1:46 See "Census Figures," p 213. Figures for the individual groups add up to the given total. Total population may have been nearly 2.2 million. The Lord kept His promise to Abraham about raising a nation (Gn 15:5) to provide the promised Savior (cf Gal 3:8–9). The census agrees with the round figure given in Ex 12:37 and with the exact count in Ex 38:26 and Nu 2:32. It is somewhat larger than the sum recorded after the lapse of 38 years (26:51). See note, 26:5–51. The remains of those who died in the wilderness would not be found today, as they were buried in shallow graves.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 1:1–46 Through a census, the Lord shows Moses that Israel has grown mightily. However, the strength of God's people does not depend on size and military strength but on His Word and grace. How good to know that God counts you righteous in His sight through His Son, who lived perfectly for you and died as the atoning sacrifice for your sin. In Christ, God numbers you among His people through your Baptism, providing all you need for your earthly journey to the promised land of heaven. • Lord, keep me ever faithful to Your Word, and sustain me with Your grace in the family of all believers. Thank You for freeing me from bondage to sin, death, and the devil, through Christ, my Lord. Amen.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 1:47 *not listed*. Levites were appointed "over the tabernacle" (v 50); therefore, there was no need to tabulate their manpower in a military census. Their numbers and duties are recorded separately in chs 3–4.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 1:50 *the testimony*. See note, Ex 25:16.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 1:51 *outsider … put to death*. See note, Ex 19:12–13.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 1:52 *standard*. Occurs here and 13 times in ch 2 (only again Sg 2:4, where it is translated "banner"). Designates a banner to identify larger groups. Individual tribes also had distinctive ensigns.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 1:53 *camp*. See note, 2:2. *no wrath*. Unmediated approach to the holy God works disaster (e.g., Lv 10:1–7). Communion with Him is possible only through the means of grace instituted in the covenant. *Levites shall keep guard*. Armed, military-style guards. See note, 3:7–10.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 1:47–54 The Lord sets the Levites apart for special service. Their duty is spiritual, not military. God charges the Levites

with moving, maintaining, and protecting the tabernacle, God's dwelling place. As an added means of protection, He instructs the Israelites to camp around the tabernacle; the Levites serve as the final defense against defilement (vv 52–53). See diagram, p 139. By God's grace, all the people huddle about His sacred dwelling and enjoy the blessings of His presence. • Praise be to God, who sets us apart by His Holy Spirit, and who guards the faith He has worked in us through our Baptism. Amen.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 2:2 *own standard*. Not specifically described. See note, 1:52. Rabbinic tradition associated a lion with the standard of Judah, a man with Reuben, an ox with Ephraim, and an eagle with Dan (see the faces of the cherubim, Ezk 1:10; cf Gn 49:3, 9). *facing the tent*. Tribes were stationed around the four sides of the tabernacle but did not contact it. Three divisions of Levites were closest to it, on three sides. Moses, Aaron, and his sons were on the fourth side (the front side on the east). See diagram, p 139.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 2:3–31 Matriarchal heritage ordered the tribes. Sons of Leah came first, on the east side (vv 3–9) and the south side (vv 10–13, 16). Zilpah's son Gad was also on the south side (vv 14–16). Third, on the west side, were the sons of Rachel (vv 18–24). Last, on the north side, were the sons of Bilhah (vv 25–26, 29–31) and the other son of Zilpah, Asher (vv 27–28, 31). The Levites are mentioned after the first and last two groups to indicate their importance (vv 17, 33).

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 2:9 *set out first*. As prophesied by Jacob (cf Gn 49:8), Judah became the lead tribe.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 2:17 The Levites, sons of Leah, would follow the first group, the tribe of Judah (vv 3–9).

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 2:32 *listed*. Each tribe's population is again added from vv 4–31. Though each triad of tribes had approximately the same manpower, the vanguard on the east side had the most soldiers (vv 3–9).

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 2:33 See note, 1:47.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON **Ch 2** God's dwelling place is the center of Israelite life. Note that v 17, referring to the Levites and the movement of the tent of meeting, is the central verse of the 34 verses in ch 2. When encamped, the Israelites face the tent of meeting, showing the centrality of God's place for their lives. For today's believers, Christ dwells in our midst and incorporates us into His holy tabernacle, the Church. • Lord, dwell among us by Your Word and Spirit, that we may keep You first in our lives and follow You always. Amen.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 3:1–4 *generations*. See pp 8–11. Leaders of the Levites are briefly reintroduced. Cf Lv 8–10 for their consecration and history.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 3:3 *anointed … ordained*. See notes, 1Sm 10:1; Ex 29:9–10.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 3:4 *Nadab and Abihu*. Cf Lv 10:1–7; 1Ch 24:1–2; Nu 20:25.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 3:1–4 Aaron's sons are set apart to serve as God's high priests. They would be the anointed leaders of the tabernacle and later the temple, down to the first century, when Herod's temple was destroyed in AD 70. Although Aaron's oldest sons, Nadab and Abihu, offended the Lord and were consumed by fire, in His mercy God raised up new, faithful leaders in Aaron's younger sons. Today, pray for the leaders of your congregation and community, that they may walk in the ways of the Lord. He will hear your prayer for Jesus' sake and lead you into a blessed future. • Merciful Father, lead us always by Your Son, who is ever faithful. Amen.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 3:6 *minister*. Hbr *sharath*, to serve by attending or waiting on someone. Description of the priests' role in offering sacrifices. See notes, Lv 1:5–9.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 3:7–10 *guard*. Priests did not guard the Lord in a merely militaristic sense but kept the services of His house and observed the proper usages of the sacred vessels.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 3:9 *give the Levites*. Priests led the Levites. *wholly given*. Levites were exempt from military duty to give full-time assistance to the priests. They humbly served the Lord as they served God's ordained representatives. The Lord always supplies His people with the gifts and abilities needed to support His mission, as Paul indicates in 1Co 12:27–31. The Lord expects His people to use the gifts He gives to their full potential, and He gives them the strength to do so (cf 1Co 4:2).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 3:10 *guard their priesthood*. Levites could not rise in rank to priesthood. *put to death*. Changing God's established order was punished severely, just as the Lord had severely punished the priests Nadab and Abihu for changing the order of sacrifices. See notes, Lv 10.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 3:12 *instead of every firstborn*. The Lord always claims the firstborn of His people (cf Gn 4:4). The substitution of the Levite firstborn reminded Israel of the firstborn of Egypt, who died to secure their

freedom (Ex 11:5; 13:11–16), foreshadowing the sacrifice of God's only-begotten Son to liberate the world from bondage to sin, death, and hell (Lk 2:7; Rm 8:29; Col 1:15, 18; Heb 1:6; 12:23; Rv 1:5). Luth: "The entire Levitical priesthood points to Him and indicates that He would be a King and Priest entirely different from those of the past or future" (AE 13:228). Animals were also offered to the Lord in recognition of His claim to Israel's firstborn and to point toward the ultimate sacrifice of Jesus (Heb 13:11–12; cf 1Jn 1:7b). See note, Ex 22:29.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 3:15 *fathers' houses … every male*. Not just those who were old enough for military duty (cf 1:17–18).

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 3:16–39 The three "sons of Levi" and their immediate descendants are listed first (vv 17–20). Names are repeated as each of the three major groups is counted, assigned a place in the camp, and given its general area of responsibility. Tasks are described in greater detail in ch 4.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 3:21–26 *Gershonites*. Guards and caretakers for the structural coverings of the tabernacle (vv 25–26).

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 3:27–32 *Kohathites*. Guards and caretakers of the furnishing of the sanctuary (v 31).

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 3:33–37 *sons of Merari*. Guards and caretakers of the structural framework of the tabernacle (v 36).

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 3:38 See note, vv 7–10.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 3:39 *22,000*. Totals in vv 22, 28, and 34 (7,500; 8,600; 6,200) equal 22,300 Levite males. There is a possible scribal error in v 28, where the loss of a letter would change the figure from 8,300 to 8,600.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 3:5–39 The Lord chooses the Levites to assist the sons of Aaron, His anointed priests. Each Levitical clan performs assigned duties for the care and security of the sanctuary (tent of meeting) and its precious contents (vv 25, 31, 36–37). Just as the Lord consecrated the Levites to care for the tabernacle and to support the services of the sanctuary, He likewise calls and consecrates His people today to support the ministry of the Word. The Lord has a place for you to serve among His people. Rejoice in the mutual love and care He provides for all in Christ Jesus. • O God, by Your grace through Christ, You have made us Your temple. Bless our service together in spreading the Word of salvation to all nations. Amen.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 3:40–43 See note, v 12.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 3:43 The number of firstborn males in Israel nearly matched the number of Levite males (v 39), who were consecrated to the Lord's service and thereby "paid" the redemption price for the whole nation.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 3:46 *redemption price*. See note, v 43.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 3:50 *shekel of the sanctuary*. See note, Ex 30:13.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 3:40–51 According to the Law, the firstborn sons belong to the Lord (Ex 34:20). In their place, God appoints the Levites and allows for the redemption of all firstborn Israelite sons, foreshadowing redemption through Christ (Heb 9:12). • Lord, You provided our redemption through the blood of Your Son, Jesus. We praise You for His generous sacrifice. Amen.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 4:2 *Kohath*. Clan of Moses and Aaron (cf Ex 6:16).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 4:3 *thirty years*. Levites were eligible for "work in the tent of meeting" at age 25. They provided a different kind of service than those who had reached age 30. *tent of meeting*. See note, Ex 27:21.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 4:4–15 Precise descriptions of priestly and Levitical duties ensure good order and safety. Cf Lv 10:1–3.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 4:4 *most holy things*. Kohathites had the most sacred assignment: carry "the sanctuary and all the furnishings" after Aaron and his sons "have finished covering" them (v 15). They were not to touch or even "to look on the holy things … lest they die" (v 20).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 4:11 *golden altar*. The golden altar of incense (cf v 13). See note, Ex 30:1.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 4:15 *not touch*. See note, v 4. Objects were carefully wrapped; touch was regarded as the chief means of transferring uncleanness (see note, Ex 29:10).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 4:16 Eleazar would act as head of the Levites in caring for the most sacred vessels. This leadership role is confirmed for all of Aaron's sons in vv 17–20.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 4:18 *Kohathites*. Directly supervised by "Eleazar the son of Aaron" (v 16).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 4:22–28 Earlier, the Levites were exempt from the military census, but now they undergo a census for service at the tabernacle. See note, 3:9.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 4:28 *Ithamar*. Gershonites and sons of Merari were "under the direction of Ithamar," another son of Aaron (v 33).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 4:29–33 Sons of Merari would carry the outer portions of the tent.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 4:34–49 Summary of the census data.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON **Ch 4** The Lord calls the Levites to complete specific tasks. Great care is taken to protect items used in worship within the tent of meeting. Failure to respect items God had declared holy would result in immediate death (v 15). Today, God entrusts us with His Gospel message of reconciliation through His Son, Jesus Christ. That message must be kept undefiled (Gal 1:8) by proper training for ordained ministers of the Gospel (2Tm 2:2) and for all believers. Those whom the Lord calls, He also equips by grace. • Lord, send us Your Holy Spirit, that Your Word may always be preached in purity and truth among us. Amen.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 5:2–4 Moses enacted the purity laws recorded in Lv 13–15. Levitical laws protected the Israelite camp from defilement. Among those laws were regulations governing people found to have an infectious skin disease or any bodily discharge. Regulations also governed those who had touched dead bodies. Unclean individuals, whether male or female, were placed outside the camp (v 3). See p 300. After Israel settled in the Promised Land, unclean people were required to live outside cities and villages (cf 2Ki 7:3; 15:5).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 5:1–4 The ground is holy wherever the tent of meeting lodges. Defilement means death, for uncleanness is rooted in sin. Today, through Confession and Absolution, we may enter the Lord's presence. Our corporate prayer of Confession reminds us that "we are by nature sinful and unclean" and that our salvation comes through Christ's mercy alone (*LSB*, p 167). • Lord, Your mercy enables us to walk anew in our Father's ways. Cleanse us for life in the communion of saints and life everlasting. Amen.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 5:5–6:21 The Lord provides Moses with laws for specific issues affecting the unity and purity of the camp.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 5:6 *breaking faith*. See notes, Lv 6:2; 1Ch 2:7; 10:13.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 5:7 *confess his sin*. During the guilt offering (Lv 5:14–6:7). See notes, Lv 5:15–16; 6:2. *make full restitution*. Theft is "breaking faith with the LORD" because He is the source of all things. The

thief made restitution to the rightful owner or his kinsmen according to Lv 6:1–7. *fifth*. Sin tax of 20 percent.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 5:8 *restitution … go to the* LORD. In case no rightful owner or kinsman could be found, the thief paid the penalties to the priest. *atonement*. See p 5.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 5:9–10 *holy donations … shall be his*. Since the priest conducted the services of the offerings, he also partook of the offerings. See note, Lv 6:26; see also pp 170–71.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 5:5–10 Any sinful act committed against another is considered "breaking faith with the LORD" (v 6). God expects His people to keep His Law, for that will be their wisdom and understanding in the sight of the people (Dt 4:6). Through the guilt offering, the sinner is reconciled to the Lord and to the community of faith. Today, God's people receive forgiveness through Confession and Absolution. However, do not neglect to make restitution for what you have done wrong. Freely honor the Lord's mercy by making restitution and by showing mercy toward others. The Lord, who takes away your sin, also freely grants you His promised Holy Spirit. • Precious Savior, by Your grace, set us free from sin. Grant us Your Holy Spirit and thoughtful hearts for making restitution. Amen.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 5:11–31 A water test. The goal of the ordeal was to cause sincere confession of sin or of innocence. This unusual procedure has some parallels with practices in other cultures. The Babylonian Code of Hammurabi (c 1728–1686 BC) has a water test whereby a suspected wife was to throw herself into a river. See note, vv 16–22.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 5:12 *wife*. Lit, "woman." Married or betrothed. *breaks faith*. See notes, Lv 6:2; 1Ch 2:7; 10:13. Close association in a camp heightened temptation to commit adultery. Mishnah Sotah 1, which comments on these circumstances, assumes that the husband has warned his wife before witnesses. It also requires that he or another person stand as an official witness of her suspicious behavior. So, according to rabbinic accounts, the husband could not act on a whim.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 5:13 *she is undetected*. No witnesses to the crime, but clear cause for suspicion and concern (circumstantial evidence). *defiled herself*. See note, Lv 12:6.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 5:14 *spirit of jealousy*. Suspicion.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 5:15 *grain offering of jealousy*. A husband, suspicious of his wife's fidelity, brought a grain offering of remembrance.

bringing iniquity to remembrance. Plain offering to invoke the Lord's memory, that He might establish her guilt or innocence.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 5:16–22 To invoke God's judgment upon the woman, she has to undergo a test. While holding the grain offering of remembrance and while under an oath of incrimination, she is asked to drink "holy water," containing "the dust that is on the floor of the tabernacle" (v 17). Her guilt or innocence becomes manifest by the results that this mixture causes inside her. This method of determining guilt or innocence was no magical process but depended on God's direct intervention. There is no instance of this trial by ordeal in the biblical record. However, Mishnah Sotah 1:4 describes such proceedings taking place at the "great court" of the temple in Jerusalem.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 5:16 *set her before the* LORD. Before the sanctuary.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 5:17 *holy water*. From the bronze basin in the sanctuary (cf Ex 30:17–21). *dust*. A second item of the sanctuary was added, making a murky solution. The significance of these elements is not entirely clear.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 5:18 *unbind the hair*. Her head covering was removed, normally an act of mourning. But here the act raised the issue of immoral behavior (i.e., has she uncovered herself?). *water of bitterness*. Wordplay in Hbr (*me hammarim ham'ararim*). The mixture likely tasted bitter (cf Ex 15:23), though bitterness can also denote feelings of anger and disappointment. *curse*. The oath (v 19), like a typical covenant in the Lord's name, would involve a curse on the person speaking it. If one did not fulfill his word, harm would befall him (see p 6).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 5:19 *oath*. See note, v 18. *under your husband's authority*. Betrothed or married.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 5:21 *oath of the curse*. See note, v 18. *thigh fall away and your body swell*. By the oath, if she had committed adultery, she cursed her own womb and body.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 5:22 *bowels … womb*. The normal bodily course for water but with the potential of bringing the curse. See note, v 21. *Amen, Amen*. She swears the oath.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 5:23–24 He makes her drink her own words/oath. *bitter pain*. Perhaps the mixture caused physical distress.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 5:25 *wave the grain offering*. See note, Lv 7:30–35.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 5:26 *afterward … drink the water*. A duplication in the sequence (cf v 23), because the note about the offering interrupted the account.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 5:27 *the woman shall become a curse*. The curse, if fulfilled, would prove her guilty and change her status in the community (how is not explained).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 5:28 The curse would not befall her if she were innocent. She could be reconciled with her husband and have a family with him. The reference to children may mean that a woman found guilty was divorced (Dt 24:1) and thereby bereft of children.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 5:31 *man shall be free*. He did not undergo the trial and was not held liable for the outcome. However, consider the tensions existing within the woman's family or with the man suspected of committing adultery with her; cf Lv 20:10. *bear her iniquity*. If found guilty. Some commentators point to this verse and the ordeal (vv 11–28) as examples of unfair and demeaning treatment of women in the Bible. Such an interpretation fails to appreciate the seriousness of adultery and its consequences. Adultery undermines people's lives in serious ways: trust is destroyed, inheritance comes into question, disease is spread, and children might be born without fatherly care. Adultery tears families and nations apart. Because women by nature bear children, they carry a special burden in such circumstances, which made them the focus of this ordeal. All of this heightens the special burden on husbands and fathers to properly love and care for wives and daughters, as clearly taught in Scripture (e.g., Eph 5:25–33; 6:4).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 5:11–31 God provides recourse should a man suspect his wife of adultery, a most serious matter (Ex 20:14). In OT times, the penalty for adultery was death (Lv 20:10). God designed human sexuality for the blessed estate of marriage. Yet He also offers forgiveness through Christ for those who err and repent. • Almighty Father, keep us sexually pure, whether we are married or unmarried. In Jesus' name. Amen.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 6:2 *a special vow*. See p 7. "To separate, consecrate." For unspecified reasons, voluntarily and for a certain period of time, a person could make a special pledge of dedication to the Lord above the normal requirements of holiness. The vow and its consecration gave the person a special, holy status (i.e., status of a priest or Levite). This vow of separation included three elements: abstention from all products of the

grapevine, fermented and unfermented (vv 3–4; cf Lv 10:9; Am 2:11); letting his hair grow (v 5); and avoidance of all contact with the dead (vv 6–12; see the priestly regulation in Lv 21:1–4). *Nazirite*. Cf 1Sm 1:28; Lk 1:15; Ac 18:18. "The Nazirites did not make their vows with the same opinion of the monks, which we condemn. The rite of the Nazirites was an exercise or a declaration of faith before the people. It did not merit the forgiveness of sins before God and did not justify before God. Further, just as circumcision or slaying victims would not be a service of God now, so the rite of the Nazirites should not be presented now as a service" (Ap XXVII 58).

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 6:3 Wine was associated with joy (cf Ps 104:15), and vows typically involved serious matters.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 6:4 *days of his separation*. Specific times are not designated. Some vows were lifelong (Jgs 13:3–5; 1Sm 1:28). However, cf Ac 18:18.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 6:5 Razors were typically used for cutting hair. Uncut hair created a visual testimony of the vow. Cf Lv 21:1–5; Ezk 27:31. *holy*. See p 7.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 6:6–7 Funerals typically involved ritual uncleanness and shaving off the hair as a sign of mourning.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 6:9 *defiles his consecrated head*. See note, vv 6–7.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 6:11 *he sinned*. Became unclean, even though it was accidental. See "guilt offering," in note, Lv 5:15–16.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 6:12 *previous period shall be void*. Vowed period of consecration would have to start over.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 6:13–15 A full complement of offerings made atonement and ended the vow.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 6:13 *completed*. A special sacrifice marked the Nazirite's release from the pledge (vv 14–16).

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 6:20 *wave offering*. See note, Lv 7:30–35.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 6:1–21 Nazirite vows are made voluntarily before God. The length of vows can vary, but once a vow is made, God requires fulfillment (v 21). Today, we take vows at important times: Baptisms, confirmations, weddings, citizenship, and government service. When you take a vow, honor the Lord by keeping your word. God, who does not take lightly any vow made to Him, faithfully keeps His vows,

including that of Gn 3:15, which promised your salvation in Christ. • Lord God, thank You for Your faithfulness. Help me to keep my word to You and to others. In Christ's name. Amen.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 6:22–27 After introducing new regulations for the camp (chs 1–6), the Lord adds a blessing, showing His gracious favor toward the people. The threefold repetition of the divine name (cf Ps 24:8–10; 113:1; 136:1–3) anticipates the threefold name Jesus uses in Mt 28:19, the basis for the doctrine of the Trinity. See note, Mt 28:19. The first clause in each line of the benediction invokes God's movement to His people; the second clause invokes His activities.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 6:23 *bless the people*. See p 842. The priests expressed God's gracious attitude to the Israelites in a formula Aaron used when he "lifted up his hands toward the people and blessed them" (Lv 9:22). The rite in Lv 9 was the consecration of the Aaronic priesthood. The specific occasion for the blessing in Nu 6 is not described. It perhaps concluded the regular services of the tabernacle. Its frequent use is demonstrated by echoes found in Psalms and by an inscription of the blessing on silver amulets found in a burial cave at Ketef Hinnom, Jerusalem (see note, Pr 1:9). Luth: "I believe Christ used something like this when, ascending into heaven, he blessed his disciples [Luke 24:50–51]" (AE 53:30).

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 6:24 *keep*. Guard and protect.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 6:25 *make His face to shine*. The Lord warned Moses that no man could see His face and live (Ex 33:20). When God sets His face against His enemies, they are destroyed or put to flight. But here, God's face beams (see note, Jb 17:7) with gentle kindness so that His people are not harmed but blessed. Through the mercies and promises of the covenant, the people who were terrified by the Lord's presence now begin to see Him for who He is. *gracious*. Essence of God's character. See p 842.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 6:26 *lift up His countenance*. Hbr expression for viewing someone favorably, as a smile turns the corners of the mouth upward. Same Hbr word used for "face" (v 25) and for "countenance." *peace*. When God's favor lights up His gaze on us, the result is peace, well-being, wholeness. See p 7.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 6:27 *put My name upon the people*. More than 20 times since the exodus, Moses recorded the Lord's claim "I am the LORD your God." See note, Dt 1:10. This bond of the covenant-promise, that

Israel belongs to God and God to Israel, is made a regular part of the tabernacle services. Israel bears God's name as a mark of His ownership, blessing, and protection.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 6:22–27 The Aaronic benediction is still repeated in Christian worship (e.g., *LSB*, pp 166, 183, 202, 212, 218). Note that the divine name Yahweh is used three times in reference to the triune nature of God. What a blessing it is to know that God the Father blesses all aspects of our lives, that God the Son has redeemed us poor, miserable sinners, and that God the Holy Spirit calls us by the Gospel. He saves us by His name, applied to us in Holy Baptism (Mt 28:19) and invoked by us throughout our lives. • "I bind unto myself today The strong name of the Trinity By invocation of the same, The Three in One and One in Three." Amen. (*LSB* 604:1)

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 7:1 *finished … the tabernacle*. Continues the story of the tabernacle from Lv 8:10–11. Out of gratitude for God's mercy, "the chiefs of the tribes" (v 2) supplied consecrated items. Other gifts "for the dedication of the altar" (v 11) by each tribal representative are recorded in the same connection. The ceremony extended over a period of 12 days.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 7:2 *chiefs*. Named in vv 12–83. See p 228.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 7:3 *wagons*. Needed to transport the tabernacle.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 7:5 *give them to the Levites*. They cared for the tabernacle and transported it. Cf chs 3–4.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 7:9 The most holy parts were treated/handled distinctly. See note, 4:15.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 7:10 *dedication of the altar*. Cf Lv 9.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 7:11 Offered over 12 days.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 7:12–83 Gifts are listed individually in the roll call of the various leaders, though the gifts are identical. Repetition emphasizes that all tribes participated equally and that God looks for a response to His goodness from those who receive it (see SC, First Article, p xxxvi). The tribal chiefs present their gifts in the same order as the arrangement of the camp (ch 2).

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 7:84–88 Summary, which again emphasizes the equality of the offerings.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 7:89 Describes how the Lord will speak with Moses now that the tabernacle is complete. It concludes what the Lord "said to Moses" (v 4) and the general introduction to the following series of

divine directives, each of which is prefaced by "the LORD spoke" (8:1, 5, 23). *above the mercy seat*. See note, Ex 25:22.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON **Ch 7** Each leader of the 12 tribes of Israel presents his offering to God at the tabernacle dedication. Leaders give thanks to God for bringing them out of Egypt to establish His covenant with them. The offerings of Israel commemorate God's favor, which we still enjoy due to the sacrifice of Christ's blood at Calvary (cf 1Co 5:7). • Father, for Your mercy we give You thanks and praise. Grant us generous hearts in offering thanks to You. Amen.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 8:2 *in front of the lampstand*. Last detail of tabernacle construction; more specific direction provided in Ex 25:31–40. Light was directed toward the table for the bread of the Presence (Ex 25:37). All provisions for the tabernacle's proper use are completed, and Israel is now ready to move.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 8:4 *hammered work*. See diagram, p 159.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 8:1–4 No windows shed light into the Lord's sanctuary, so these lampstands are truly a light shining in the darkness (see diagram, p 139). For the priests serving in the Most Holy Place, the luminescence provides a poignant symbol that true light comes from the Lord alone. Today, we light candles to symbolize the Lord's presence among us through His Word and Sacraments. God's light is Jesus Christ (Jn 1:4), who conquers death and grants eternal life (Rm 6:23b). • Lord of heaven and earth, in the lampstand You provide a precious symbol of Your grace: salvation's true light. Your Word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. Amen.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 8:6 *from among the people*. Before the Levites began to carry out their assignments (chs 3–4), they were formally inducted into office (vv 5–19). The rites included ceremonial and physical purification (vv 7–8), the transfer of the people's guilt to the Levites and from them to the sacrificial animals (vv 8–12), the dedication of the Levites as a "wave offering" (v 11). *cleanse*. See p 300.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 8:7 *water of purification*. See note, 19:9. *razor over all their body*. Cleansing from parasites.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 8:10 *lay their hands*. People's sins were laid symbolically on the Levites as a substitutionary oblation (cf Lv 3:12–13). Levites in turn laid their hands on the heads of the bulls that were slain "to make atonement" (v 12; see note, Ex 29:10).

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 8:11 *wave offering*. To perform this ritual, Aaron likely led them to the altar and then drew them back. Cf Lv 8:27.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 8:12 *lay their hands on the heads*. See note, v 10. *sin offering … burnt offering*. See pp 170–71.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 8:14 *separate the Levites*. See note, v 6.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 8:16–19 See notes, 3:9; Ex 4:22; 13:2.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 8:19 *atonement*. See p 5.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 8:20 *people of Israel did to them*. The Israelites apparently learned to follow the ritual laws, though they continued to offend the Lord in other ways.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 8:5–22 Israel's sin is transferred to the Levites, who transfer this sin to sacrificial animals. Only by the blood of sacrificial animals are the Levites cleansed of their sin and allowed to serve the priests of the Most High God. "It is the blood that makes atonement by the life" (Lv 17:11). At Calvary, Jesus redeemed all humans from sin (Heb 9:15) as foreshadowed in the OT sacrifices. Rejoice, for Christ's sacrifice sets you free! • "Lamb of God, pure and holy, Who on the cross didst suffer, Ever patient and lowly, Thyself to scorn didst offer. All sins Thou borest for us, Else had despair reigned o'er us: Have mercy on us, O Jesus! O Jesus!" Amen. (*LSB* 434:1)
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 8:24 *twenty-five years*. See note, 4:3. Scholars believe that older Levites taught the men from ages 25 to 30 as apprentices until they learned their tasks.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 8:25 *fifty years they shall withdraw*. Retirement, due to the physical labor of caring for and moving the parts of the tabernacle. Priests could serve longer (e.g., Zechariah, Lk 1:5–7).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 8:26 *keeping guard*. See note, 3:7–10.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 8:23–26 Our God is a God of order. He gives an age requirement for performing the work in His tabernacle. A Levite could begin service at age 25. Once a Levite reached 50, he could assist younger Levites, but he could no longer do the work required at the tabernacle. Just as the Lord provided the Sabbath for His people's rest, He provided for the Levites' retirement in good health. Today, the Church should show appropriate care for the health of faithful church workers, for the Lord bears the burdens of us all and carries us through life unto life everlasting. • "Entrust your days and burdens To God's most loving hand; He cares for you while ruling The sky, the sea, the land. For He who guides

the tempests Along their thund'rous ways Will find for you a pathway And guide you all your days." Amen. (*LSB* 754:1)
NUMBERS—NOTE ON **Ch 9** The census, instructions, and consecrations of chs 1–8 took place over c two weeks in 1446 BC (see chronology, p xcvi). Israel would now observe its second Passover before leaving Sinai.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 9:1 *first month of the second year*. Nisan (Apr/May) 1446 BC.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 9:2 *Passover at its appointed time*. One who had not kept the Passover was to "be cut off from his people" (v 13). Some Israelites were unclean, thus excluded from participating in the Passover when it was observed on its regular day, the 14th day of the first month. Their dilemma was presented to the Lord (v 8).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 9:3 *twilight*. See note, Ex 12:6.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 9:6 *unclean*. See note, Lv 11:29–38.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 9:9–11 The Lord commanded the unclean to observe the Passover two weeks later, thus permitting all Israelites to undertake the journey into the wilderness, which began six days later. This special provision applied also when their descendants in the desert had strayed "on a long journey" (lit, "on a distant way"). However, the basic requirements of the Passover were not changed (vv 11–12).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 9:10 *still keep the Passover*. See note, ch 9.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 9:13 *cut off from his people*. See note, Ex 12:15. *bear his sin*. Judged guilty and subject to punishment.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 9:14 *sojourner … native*. See note, Ex 12:19.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 9:1–14 God commands Moses to celebrate Passover anew as a memorial of His great deliverance. All people were to participate, even if they could not observe the event on the same dates. God reveals His grace in the Passover and in the exceptions He allows for its observance. Just as He continually sought the good and unity of Israel, He seeks our good and unity in the services of His precious Word, which describes our creation, redemption, and sanctification as His people through faith in Christ, our Passover Lamb. • Lord, we deserve death because of our sins. Yet Your Son's blood covers our sins and grants eternal life. Unite our hearts in the confession of this faith. Amen.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 9:15 *cloud … appearance of fire*. See note, v 17. *tent of the testimony*. See note, Ex 25:16.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 9:17 *set out … camped*. The final directive for the departure from Sinai and the journey in the wilderness gave explicit marching orders. The first of these came from God in the form of a cloud that had guided Israel on its way out of Egypt (Ex 13:21–22; 14:19–20). The cloud rested over the tabernacle after its completion, and now its future purpose is explained: to signal the breaking and making of camp (v 15; Ex 40:34–38). This function is here repeated and explained in greater detail because God, by this means, was about to lead His people to the Promised Land. See p 39.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 9:23 *kept the charge of the* LORD. Israel showed its trust in God's direction by obeying Him, even when He delayed their journey for a month or longer (vv 17–22; cf Ps 16:11; 27:11; 119:105; 139:3; 142:3).

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 9:15–23 At God's directive, the Israelites move away from Mount Sinai. God's providential care is evident. The pillar of cloud/fire symbolizes His gracious hand over His covenant community. Today, God continues to care for His people, sustaining them on the journey of faith through His means of grace. • "Open now the crystal fountain Whence the healing stream doth flow; Let the fiery, cloudy pillar Lead me all my journey through. Strong deliv'rer, strong deliv'rer, Be Thou still my strength and shield; Be Thou still my strength and shield." Amen. (*LSB* 918:2)

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 10:2 *two silver trumpets*. Straight metal tubes, different from the curved ram's horn, which is also translated as "trumpet" (Ex 19:16, 19; 20:18; Lv 25:9). See p 993. *hammered work*. See diagram, p 159. *breaking camp*. Israel obeyed God's commands in an orderly fashion. Like a large military unit, it was summoned to action by prearranged signals given by two silver trumpets.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 10:3 *all the congregation shall gather*. Space for this large gathering must have been reserved east of the tabernacle.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 10:4 *chiefs*. See p 228.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 10:5 *alarm*. Specified call, perhaps long used in military or community service.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 10:8–9 Later, when Israel was in its land, trumpets were used in time of war and on days of gladness (cf Lv 25:9; see p 993).

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 10:10 *burnt offerings … peace offerings*. See pp 170–71. *your God*. See note, Dt 1:10.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 10:1–10 Blasts on the silver trumpets signal the time to move, but they also serve the purpose of calling leaders of the entire community to assemble at the tent of meeting. God ordains an Israelite theocracy with Himself as King. In mercy, God leads His people toward the land promised long ago (Gn 12:7). Scripture teaches that a trumpet blast will also signal our call to heaven on the Last Day (1Th 4:16).
• "Today on weary nations The heav'nly manna falls; To holy convocations The silver trumpet calls, Where Gospel light is glowing With pure and radiant beams And living water flowing With soul-refreshing streams." Amen. (*LW* 203:3)

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 10:11 Ziv (Apr/May) 1445 BC. See calendar, p 262. *tabernacle of the testimony*. See note, Ex 25:16.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 10:12 *by stages*. Israel broke camp from Mount Sinai according to prearranged orders. By recording the sequence of the tribal groups and once more listing the leaders, Moses showed that the people followed God's commands. The next chapters (10:11–21:35) explain why it took 38 more years before Israel arrived in "the plains of Moab" (22:1), opposite the Jordan River. See color map 2. *Paran*. Wilderness where the tribes settled on signal, after moving in a northeasterly direction. Perhaps a name for the general Sinai Peninsula. The northern reaches of Paran are called the wilderness of Zin (cf 20:1). From there, the borders of the Promised Land could have been reached in a short time.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 10:13 *first time*. Departing from Sinai.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 10:14–28 The order as prearranged. See note, v 12; cf ch 2.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 10:14 *the son of*. The father's name was given as we use a surname to help identify families and to distinguish people with the same first name.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 10:17–28 Levites who carried the structural parts of the tabernacle set out with the first contingent of three tribes. Kohathites, "carrying the holy things" (v 21) and thus constituting "the midst of the camps" (2:17), followed with the next three standards.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 10:29–32 *Reuel*. See note, Ex 2:18. Hobab, Midianite brother-in-law of Moses, is called his "father-in-law" in Jgs 4:11. Perhaps Hobab had become the head of his family. Although God was

directing the march of the Israelites, they could use help from an experienced man in the ordinary tasks of setting up a camp.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 10:33 *the ark … before them*. If taken literally, this sentence would say that the ark of the covenant was carried in advance of the entire marching group, contrary to the general rule that it was to be "in the midst of the camps" (2:17). It is possible that such a deviation from general practice was decreed for the first three days of the journey or for special occasions (cf Jsh 3:6). But the reference to the ark may merely emphasize the fact that the real guide of Israel was not Hobab but the Lord, who dwelled above the mercy seat of the ark. He directed the course of the march through the cloud (v 34).

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 10:34 *cloud of the* LORD. See note, Ex 13:21.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 10:35–36 Liturgical responses to the Lord's leadership, expressed as prayers. The community would be more vulnerable during travel, but the Lord was ever vigilant in His care, as Moses confidently expresses.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 10:11–36 The Israelites march to the Promised Land; the ark of the covenant leads the way (v 33). The Lord deals gently with His people by providing constant guidance and sound leadership. Today, pray for your leaders, that the Lord would bless and keep them and guide them in thoughtful service to His people, whom Christ redeemed with His precious blood. • "Arise, O LORD, and let Your enemies be scattered, and let those who hate You flee before You" (v 35). Amen.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 11:1 *complained*. Comparatively few incidents along the way are recorded. Almost all are variations of the same theme: Israel complains ("murmurs") and revolts against God's guidance. The story of the chosen people is not an epic of national heroism nor the glorious record of a people willing to suffer hardship for the sake of freedom. *their misfortunes*. They complained (vv 1–3); wept over the food (vv 4–35); rebelled against Moses (chs 12; 16); "raised a loud cry" (14:1) after hearing the report of the spies (ch 13); disobeyed an express command not to enter Canaan from the south (14:39–45); "quarreled with Moses" because of lack of water (20:2–5); even after reaching Moab, they "spoke against God and against Moses" (21:5). So it had been from the beginning (cf Ex 14:10–12; 15:22–25; 16; 17). And so it is with us. Only because "the steadfast love of the LORD never ceases," because "His mercies … are new every morning" (Lm 3:22–23), do we remain His true children and not turn back to the

slavery of self, materialism, and the demonic bondage of evil (Mal 3:6). *fire of the* LORD. See note, Ex 13:21.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 11:4–6 In contrast with what the Israelites had experienced in Egypt, the wilderness was a completely different setting with new hardships. The food they had brought from Egypt more than a year earlier was now long gone, leading them to unthankfulness. Luth: "We may know and judge how full the world is nowadays of false preachers and false saints, who fill the ears of the people with preaching good works. There are indeed a few who teach them how to do good works, but the greater part preach human doctrines and works that they themselves have devised and set up…. These men are mere parasites and hirelings; slaves, not sons; aliens, not heirs. They turn themselves into idols, whom God is to love and praise and for whom He is to do the very things they ought to do for Him. They have no spirit, nor is God their Savior. His good gifts are their Savior, and with them God must serve them as their lackey. They are the Children of Israel, who were not content in the desert with eating bread from heaven, but wanted meat, onions, and garlic, too (Num. 11:4–6)" (AE 21:311–12).

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 11:4 *rabble*. Lit, "the gathered ones," a unique term in Hbr Scripture. Likely non-Israelite slaves who escaped with the Israelites and believed in the Lord because of the miracles and plagues. See note, Ex 12:38.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 11:5 The Egyptian text "In Praise of the City Ramses" celebrates a similar bounty in a food list. *fish*. Important source of protein for Egyptians and Israelites. See p 236.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 11:7–9 Moses illustrates just how fine the Lord's provision was for His people. *cakes*. See note, Gn 18:6; see also p 236.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 11:10 The people's discontent led to discontent between the Lord and Moses.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 11:11 Israel's complaints stretched Moses' patience to the breaking point and caused him to complain, resembling Israel's murmurings and weeping. Because Moses turned to the Lord in his feelings of insufficiency and frustration, his complaint did not degenerate into rebellion.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 11:12 *as a nurse carries a nursing child*. Irony. The Lord had provided Moses with his own mother as a nurse (Ex 2:7–9)

and had stayed with Moses throughout the recent struggle from Midian to Egypt to Sinai.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 11:14 Note Jethro's advice to Moses in Ex 18.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 11:15 Moses reached a new level of distress, different from that experienced earlier. *favor*. See p 6.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 11:1–15 The grumbling begins only three days into the journey. Perhaps aching muscles or sore feet cause their discomfort. God provides guidance to the Promised Land and manna to eat on the way; in return for His love, He receives grumbling. Sometimes, obeying God causes pain and suffering. When tempted to grumble, think of Christ at Gethsemane and how He turned His pains into prayers. Meditate on how He willingly submitted to the Father's will for the sake of our salvation (Mt 26:39). • "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds In a believer's ear! It soothes our sorrows, heals our wounds, And drives away our fear. It makes the wounded spirit whole And calms the heart's unrest; 'Tis manna to the hungry soul And to the weary, rest." Amen. (*LSB* 524:1–2)

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 11:16 The Lord came to the aid of His weak and distraught servant, giving Moses a twofold solution to his problem. See prayers at Ps 43:2; 142:2. *seventy men*. Moses' task of administration was lightened by the appointment of 70 elders of Israel who were to "bear the burden of the people" with him (v 17). By a supply of meat, the Lord also removed the immediate cause of Israel's irritating weeping (vv 18–20). *whom you know*. Trusted men. *elders … officers*. See note, Ex 3:16. See also p 228. *tent of meeting*. See note, Ex 27:21.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 11:17 *I will come down*. A theophany. See p 39. *some of the Spirit*. God's Spirit equips the spirits of His servants in various degrees. See p 1815. Moses' assistants were to work in harmony with him in carrying out God's will. They were to be endowed with the same spiritual gifts that Moses possessed in extraordinary measure, but they were not to supplant him as the sole leader of the people. Aph: "God and His Christ, though they are One, yet dwell in men who are many…. When He took away some of the Spirit of Moses, and the seventy men were filled with it, Moses nothing lacked, nor could it be known that anything was taken away from his Spirit" (*NPNF* 2 13:370). Cyr Jer: "It was not Moses who bestowed the gift, but the Spirit…. He secretly alluded to what was to happen among us on the day of Pentecost; for He Himself came down

among us. He had however also come down upon many before" (*NPNF* 2 7:122).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 11:18 *Consecrate*. See p 6.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 11:20 *until it comes out at your nostrils*. Humorous hyperbole expressing God's displeasure. See p 1335. *rejected the* LORD. A serious and somber condemnation. *among you*. See "be with," p 5.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 11:23 *Is the* LORD*'s hand shortened?* See "hand," p 842.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 11:24 *gathered seventy men*. Possibly the same men chosen on Jethro's advice (cf Ex 18:21; 24:1).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 11:25 *some of the Spirit*. See note, v 17. *prophesied … did not continue*. The extraordinary manifestation of divine power took place only to validate the authority of the 70 elders. When they left the tent, this miraculous gift was no longer available to them.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 11:26 *remained in the camp*. They had not made it to the consecration rite. *registered*. Implies a written record. See pp 3–5.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 11:28 *from his youth*. See note, Ex 17:14. *stop them*. Joshua feared that Eldad and Medad were assuming authority in competition with Moses (a threat that would arise in ch 16). However, Moses assured him that the Lord gives His Spirit under various conditions for the same purpose (cf Lk 9:49–50).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 11:29 Moses reiterates his exhaustion due to leadership (vv 11–15). *all … prophets*. Fulfilled at Pentecost (Ac 2). Even so, the Lord provides His people with leaders (Eph 4:8–16).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 11:16–30 Earlier, we learned of Moses' helplessness as Israel's leader—one man amid a throng of rebellious people. Mercifully, God grants 70 elders to help Moses. Like Moses, you may at times feel frustration and become angry with the Lord. Thanks be to God, He is "slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness" (Ps 86:15). In His mercy, the Lord provides for you and calls you to repentance and faith through His faithful servants. • Lord, You command us to call upon You in times of trouble, and You promise to deliver us. We thank You for hearing our prayer through Christ, our Lord. Amen.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 11:31 *quail from the sea*. See note, Ex 16:13. A southeast wind over the gulf brings a large flock of migrating birds into the wilderness. The region is well known as a migration route for African, Asian, and European species. *a day's journey*. Distance over which the

flock spread. *two cubits above the ground*. C 36 in. Exhausted, they could not flee.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 11:32 *spread them out*. Either sharing or drying the meat for preservation.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 11:33 *between their teeth*. Bitter irony; they did not enjoy the food they so craved.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 11:31–35 The Israelites greedily hoard the quail, gathering at least 6 bushels per person. They eat some and dry the rest to eat later. Meat replaces God in their minds, just as wealth replaces God in Christ's parable of the rich fool (Lk 12:16–21). As Job noted, "The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away" (Jb 1:21). In all circumstances, the Lord leads us to confess, "Blessed be the name of the LORD" (Jb 1:21), for He truly does bless us and supply our needs (cf Mt 6:11). • Father, with our daily bread, grant us faithful hearts, ever set on You. Amen.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 12:1 *spoke against*. Occurred at the next recorded place of encampment, Hazeroth (11:35). *for he had married a Cushite woman*. Seems to suggest a rather recent event. Moses' sister and brother attacked his leadership, hiding their sinful claim to his position by finding fault with his marriage to a Cushite (Ethiopian) woman. On Moses' family, cf Ex 6:14–26; 18:1–6. The Lord did not forbid the marriage of an Israelite man to a foreign woman (cf Gn 41:45), except in certain cases (Dt 7:1–4).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 12:2 *spoken through us*. See notes, Ex 4:15; 15:20.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 12:3 *very meek*. Moses did not speak out strongly or move to punish. He was humble before the Lord, who quickly acted to vindicate him. See note, Ps 37:10–11. Moses' faults and virtues are mentioned with equal candor. Here, his humility motivates God's intervention on his behalf. Moses has the final word by recording his own meekness and vindication.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 12:4 *tent of meeting*. See note, Ex 27:21.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 12:5 *pillar of cloud*. See note, Ex 13:21. *stood at the entrance of the tent*. See p 39.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 12:6 *prophet … vision … dream*. Typical means of revelation in OT. See p 74. Luth: "This diversity of expressions sheds light on the three types of prophecy or the three classes of revelation that are clearly mentioned in Num. 12:6–8.… It is a vision or a form of apparition when God appears to people when they are awake, not as in

dreams…. But these visions are usually forms which require explanation…. Dreams are on a level below this" (AE 3:10–11).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 12:7 See "faithfulness," p 842. *all My house*. God speaks as head of Israel, which is His household. See p 54–55.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 12:8 *mouth to mouth*. Moses held a unique position. God communicated His will through him more directly and intimately than through any other prophet, including Aaron and "Miriam the prophetess" (Ex 15:20; cf 25:22; Dt 18:15, 18). Moses was even granted to see "the form of the LORD." See note, Ex 33:18. Bas: "Let us listen then to these words of truth written without the help of the 'enticing words of man's wisdom' [1Co 2:4] by the dictation of the Holy Spirit; words destined to produce not the applause of those who hear them, but the salvation of those who are instructed by them" (*NPNF* 2 8:52).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 12:10 Aaron was likely not made leprous because that would prevent him from serving as high priest. See note, v 13.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 12:12 Sorrowful reference to an ill-formed child, who could not survive.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 12:13 *O God, please heal her*. Only Miriam was made leprous, perhaps because she was the instigator of the opposition, while Aaron was only the weak-willed accomplice (cf Ex 32:1–6, 21–24); however, see note, v 10. Or, perhaps his full confession of guilt averted the Lord's anger (v 11). Moses' intercession for his offending sister (without a word of recrimination) is a powerful demonstration of his meekness (v 3).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 12:14 Miriam had offended the Lord Himself, yet He was lenient with her. *seven days?* Cured of her disease, Miriam was nevertheless required to observe the period of isolation prescribed for the cleansing of lepers.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON **Ch 12** Moses faces a new rebellion when Miriam and Aaron claim equal status with their younger brother. They learn the danger of challenging God's authority. God's punishment is swift, yet merciful. Our Lord is a Lord of both Law and Gospel, by which He always calls people to repentance and pronounces grace. • Heavenly Lord, curb our rebellious, jealous hearts, and grant us meekness. Look on us with mercy through Christ, our Redeemer. Amen.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON **Ch 13** Representatives of the tribes will act as a reconnaissance party and report to the people upon return. The Lord's

command that spies be sent was His answer to Israel's request for an exploration of the land.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 13:2 *spy out the land*. See note, Jsh 2:1. *I am giving*. See note, Jsh 1:6. *chief*. See p 228.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 13:3 *from the wilderness of Paran*. See color map 3. After their reconnaissance, the spies returned to Kadesh, located in the northern part of a larger area called the wilderness of Paran (see note, 10:12), only 50 mi SW of Beersheba and the southern border of the Promised Land.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 13:4–15 Similar to the order provided in 1:5–15, but Zebulun is separated from the sons of Leah, and Manasseh is separated from Ephraim. The 12 men chosen to explore Canaan were not the same tribal leaders mentioned in 1:5–15. Only two are mentioned by name: Caleb and Hoshea, the son of Nun.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 13:11 *Joseph … Manasseh*. See note, Jsh 12:6.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 13:16 *Hoshea … Joshua*. Moses had changed the name from Hoshea (salvation) to Joshua (the LORD is salvation). See notes, Dt 32:44; Jsh 1:1.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 13:17 *Negeb*. See note, Jgs 1:9. The spies penetrated as far north as Rehob (v 21), in the vicinity of Hamath, on the Orontes River (cf 2Ki 14:28). This brief summary is followed by a more detailed account of their experiences in one of the areas (vv 22–24). In the Negeb, they were closer to their home base and were able to carry out the assignment to "bring some of the fruit of the land" (v 20). See color map 2.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 13:20 *trees in it*. Sign of fruitfulness in contrast with the wilderness. *the season*. See calendar, p 262.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 13:21–24 See map, p 60.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 13:22 *Anak*. Lit, "necklace." Nothing is known of these people except their reputed great size. Their descendants are called Nephilim (lit, "giants"). See note, Gn 6:4. *Hebron*. See color map 1.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 13:23 *Eshcol*. Valley mentioned only in connection with the spying of the land. The name likely fell out of use. *carried it on a pole*. Extraordinarily large clusters can weigh as much as 12 lb. The Egyptian story of Sinuhe
(c 1960–1928 BC) celebrates the bounty of figs and grapes in Canaan.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 13:1–24 God permits the spies to enter the Promised Land at the Israelites' request (Dt 1:22). Twelve spies, one from

each tribe, are sent; among them is Moses' successor, Joshua. Just as the Lord gave His people a challenging mission, anticipating great faithfulness, He likewise challenges us. As the Lord grants you the opportunity for bold service, meet that challenge with diligence. When you err, diligently repent —for He is generous in mercy. His enduring mission is to bless and provide for you, as He has done in Christ Jesus. • Grant me fruitful labor, dear Lord, in the vineyard of Your kingdom. Amen.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 13:25 Cf vv 21–22.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 13:27 *flows with milk and honey*. See p 6.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 13:28–29 See p 345.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 13:30 Although only Caleb is mentioned in this rebuttal to the other spies, Joshua no doubt supported him.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 13:31 *We are not able*. True! But the Lord was able. The events reveal the people's lack of faith in His leadership.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 13:32 *devours its inhabitants*. Hyperbole. Attempt to support their claim that the Israelites were no match for the Canaanites.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 13:33 *Nephilim*. See note, Gn 6:4.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 13:25–33 The land is just as God had described it to Moses, flowing with milk and honey (Ex 3:8; Nu 13:27). Yet 10 of the 12 spies fear the inhabitants of the land (v 31), thereby doubting God. The hymn "What a Friend We Have in Jesus" says, "Oh, what peace we often forfeit; Oh, what needless pain we bear—All because we do not carry Ev'rything to God in prayer!" (*LSB* 770:1). When you face challenges, do not collapse in doubt. Instead, call on your gracious Lord, who redeemed you and will lead you. • Lord, we confess that we are not able to fulfill our calling without sin. Forgive us for Christ's sake, and lead us through every trial. Amen.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 14:1–4 The people complain with new vigor (cf 11:1) and prefer slavery to the challenges and responsibilities of freedom.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 14:1 *all the congregation*. This outburst of dissatisfaction exceeded previous murmurings.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 14:3 *become a prey*. Enslavement or death.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 14:4 *choose a leader*. Lit, "give a head"; as if they were saying, "Let us be headstrong and insist this time to have things our way."

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 14:5 *fell on their faces*. See "fall," p 1276. Moses and Aaron begged the people to turn from their rebellion.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 14:6 *tore their clothes*. See note, Jb 1:20. Gesture by which Joshua and Caleb warned the Israelites that their action was equivalent to blasphemy (cf Mt 26:65; Ac 14:14). They continued to rally them to trust the Lord, but the contenders for the Lord barely escaped being stoned by the rioting people (v 10).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 14:8 *the* LORD *delights in us*. See note, Hos 11:3. *flows with milk and honey*. See p 6.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 14:9 *they are bread*. Although the land "devours its inhabitants" (13:32), the Israelites would be able to overcome them as easily as eating bread.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 14:10 *stone*. See note, Ex 17:4. *glory of the* LORD. See pp 6–7.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 14:11–12 See note, Ex 32:10. *signs*. Miracles and acts of grace, through which God may create faith.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 14:1–12 The doubt of 10 spies poisons the entire camp. God has limits to His patience. See note, Gn 15:16. The chief sin, as illustrated by the First Commandment, is lack of faith in who God is and what He has done. When you doubt and fail, His Word remains good. Call on Him in repentance, for He grants faith by grace through His precious Word. • Father, we long to follow You. Send Your Word and Spirit to gently lead us. Amen.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 14:13–19 Account of Moses' appeal to God for Israel. Moses admits that the Lord would be just if He were to "kill this people as one man" (v 15). He rested his appeal for divine forbearance entirely in God. The appeal anticipates God's mission to the nations, based on His reputation as a righteous judge and redeemer.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 14:14–16 They would scoff, because in their view the defeat of a people was also proof of the impotence of their gods (cf Ex 9:29; 12:12; Jgs 16:24; Is 37:18–20).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 14:14 *face to face*. For a similar expression, see note, 12:8.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 14:18 "Even the saints have sins. The innocent shall not be innocent" (Ap V 208). See note, Ex 34:7.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 14:19 *pardon*. See note, Ex 34:9. *steadfast love*. See p 843. Moses knew this kind of daring wrestling with God for the life of Israel was valid only if God would "pardon the iniquity of this people."

In "forgiving iniquity and transgression" (v 18), His glory shines most brilliantly (Ex 34:6–9).

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 14:13–19 The nations inhabiting the Promised Land already know God's name. His power and majesty have preceded Him. Moses argues that if God were to destroy the Israelites for their rebellion, God's holy name would be defamed. So Moses appeals to God for mercy. And God is merciful; He hears the prayers of the righteous (Pr 15:29). What a blessing to know that our humble prayers are heard by the very Creator of heaven and earth. Because of Christ's obedience, we dare to call Him "Abba, Father." • Please pardon us, O Lord, according to the greatness of Your steadfast love, by which You delivered Israel. Amen.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 14:20–23 God always forgives penitent sinners, even more than 70 times 7 (Mt 18:21–22). But the temporal consequences of disobedience to His will serve His purposes in the lives of His people. See note, 2Sm 12:14.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 14:20 *according to your word*. Moses' prayer of intercession "has great power as it is working" (Jas 5:16; cf Gn 18:22–33).

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 14:21 *all the earth*. The Lord reveals the scope of His presence and mission through Israel. Ambr: "[God is] present in all His fullness at one and the same moment, in heaven, in earth, in the deepest depth of the sea, to sight invisible, by speech not to be declared, by feeling not to be measured; to be followed by faith, to be adored with devotion" (*NPNF* 2 10:218). *glory of the* LORD. See pp 6–7.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 14:22 *ten times*. Round figure (our "dozen times"). Although the number of recorded murmurings approached this total, the measure of Israelite iniquities was full. The number 10 also corresponds with the number of unfaithful spies (cf 13:25–33).

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 14:24 *Caleb*. Cf v 6. Joshua was to be Moses' successor. He and Caleb were the only ones not to be affected by the Lord's decree.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 14:25 *the way to the Red Sea*. Northeast arm of the Red Sea, now known as the Gulf of Aqaba. See note, Ex 13:18; see color map 3.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 14:29 *all … listed in the census*. Cf ch 1.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 14:30–31 Irony. Helpless children would rise to defeat their enemies.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 14:33 *suffer*. See note, Ex 20:5. *faithlessness*. Lit, "whoredoms." See note, Hos 4:13.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 14:34–35 *forty years*. Two years had elapsed since the liberation from Egypt. During the remaining 38 years of wandering, this wicked congregation was to "come to a full end."
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 14:35 *gathered together against Me*. Unlike other instances (e.g., Ex 32:26), the whole people were united in rebellion.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 14:37 *the men … died*. Those who lead others into temptation have the greater sin (Mt 18:6–7). *plague*. Lit, "blow," "strike." Describes the plagues of the exodus in Ex 9:14.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 14:20–38 Those persons 20 years and older will not see the land God promised. Yet God will not bring destruction on all Israel for their disobedience. Caleb, Joshua, and the next generation will inhabit the new land. The awe of God's mercy is evident. God does not deliver what the Israelites truly deserve for their insolence. Instead, He shows mercy by raising up a new generation to inherit His promise. • "Shepherd of tender youth, Guiding in love and truth Through devious ways; Christ, our triumphant king, We come Your name to sing And here our children bring To join Your praise." Amen. (*LSB* 864:1)
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 14:40 *heights*. Common places of prayer. See p 526. *We will go up*. Revolting against God's leadership, the people had just said, "Let us … go back to Egypt" (v 4). Now they insist on giving evidence of their faith, but in their own way and in defiance of God's direct command. Despair and presumption are two inevitable consequences of unbelief (cf Jer 17:9; Eph 4:22–23).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 14:42 *the Lord is not among you*. See "be with," p 5. The Israelites angered God so severely that He sentenced them to c 38 years of wandering in the wilderness, thwarting their high-handed attempt to penetrate the land at once from the south (cf v 45).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 14:44 *the ark … Moses*. Emblems of God's presence and approval.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 14:45 *Hormah*. Lit, "complete destruction."
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 14:39–45 The Israelites completely change plans, but again ignore God's Word. Sham obedience meets with God's resistance. He knows the truth about human hearts. In view of this, do not persist in your sin, as Israel did, or be slow to repent. Hear God's gracious call to repentance each day. Rejoice in the Word and in God's forgiveness

through Christ, the Savior. • "Savior, when in dust to Thee Low we bow the adoring knee; When, repentant, to the skies Scarce we lift our weeping eyes; O, by all Thy pains and woe Suffered once for us below, Bending from Thy throne on high, Hear our penitential cry!" Amen. (*LSB* 419:1)

NUMBERS—NOTE ON **Chs 15–21** Events during the next 38 years of wandering in the wilderness. None is given a definite date.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 15:1–21 Not long after the grumbling recorded in ch 14, the Lord assured His erring people that He did indeed abound in steadfast love (14:18). The younger generation did not have to abandon hope that they would come into the land of Canaan (vv 2, 18). Some ceremonies by which the covenant people were to enjoy communion with God were repeated. God made additions or adjustments to laws. From v 2, it appears that, in general, offerings had been suspended (cf Am 5:25; Ac 7:42; the matter of circumcision in Jsh 5:2). Travel in the wilderness, which should have been only a few months, turned into 38 years. Thankfully, the Lord sustained the people and their cattle, even sending rain to make fruitful pastures (Ps 68:7–10). Luth: "Since this life, however, cannot be without external forms of worship, God put before them all these forms and included them in his commandment in order that if they must or would do God any outward service, they might take one of these and not one they themselves had invented. They could then be doubly sure that their work was being done in obedience to God and his word. So they are prevented on every hand from following their own reason and free will in doing good and living aright. Room, place, time, person, work, and form are all more than adequately determined and prescribed, so that the people cannot complain and need not follow simply the example of alien worship" (AE 35:239–40).

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 15:3 *food offering … burnt offering … vow … freewill offering*. See pp 170–71.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 15:4–6 *grain offering*. Quantities of flour, wine, and oil to accompany various animal sacrifices. See pp 170–71.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 15:8 *peace offerings*. See pp 170–71.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 15:14–15 *You and the sojourner shall be alike before the* LORD. See notes, Ex 12:48, 49.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 15:20 *dough*. Cake made of the first grain that came from the threshing floor, part of the offering of firstfruits.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 15:1–21 God reassures the people that after the older generation has passed away, He will fulfill His promise to the younger

generation. To those older than 20, this pronouncement from Moses is both punishment and promise. They will not inherit the land, but God will have mercy on their children and their children's children. After the cloud of punishment comes the rainbow of God's grace. For the whole community, He also preserves the sacrifices, which are His chosen means of atonement. • "You are the great High Priest; You have prepared the feast Of holy love; And in our mortal pain None calls on You in vain; Our plea do not disdain; Help from above." Amen. (*LSB* 864:3)

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 15:22 *if you sin*. The whole nation had been punished for its disobedience, and 10 of the spies had "died by plague before the LORD" (14:37). The people were to have no fear that the Lord had changed His covenant regarding sin done unwittingly, whether by the whole congregation (vv 23–26) or by an individual (vv 27–31).

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 15:25 *atonement*. See p 5.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 15:30 *with a high hand*. The person who committed sins in defiance of God, and with intention and malice, removed himself from God's covenant grace and forgiveness. Cf Mk 3:28–30; 1Jn 5:16–17. *cut off*. See note, Lv 17:4. Parallels the practice of excommunication today. See notes, 1Co 5.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 15:22–31 God restates the rules for dealing with unintentional sin through sin offerings (Lv 4). God prepares the younger Israelites in His holy ways. Today, in Confession and Absolution, God provides us forgiveness for our unintentional sin. Here we meet our merciful God and hear anew that we are freed from our sin by Christ's sacrifice. • "I lay my sins on Jesus, The spotless Lamb of God; He bears them all and frees us From the accursed load. I bring my guilt to Jesus To wash my crimson stains Clean in His blood most precious Till not a spot remains." Amen. (*LSB* 606:1)

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 15:32–36 After the discipline of ch 14 and reinforcement of teaching in ch 15, the people grew more diligent in observing the Law.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 15:32 *on the Sabbath day*. Cf Ex 31:14; 35:2.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 15:35 *put to death*. As a warning against willful sinning, a breaker of the Sabbath law was executed. The mode of execution had not been specified in Ex. Moses and Aaron carry out God's explicit direction. Cf Lv 24:12.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 15:32–36 The Sabbath is God's gift to Israel (Ex 20:8–10), that they might devote the day to worship by learning God's Word. The man gathering wood shows contempt for God's Word. God considers this blasphemous because the man's act follows on the heels of God's restatement about deliberate sin (vv 22–31). Still today, willful sin and despising of God's Word have damnable consequences. Jesus, Lord of the Sabbath, has fulfilled all the requirements of the Law for our sake (Mt 5:17). Yet how great is our need for His precious Word, which leads us in repentance and grants pardon, faith, and everlasting rest. • Lord, let us never despise Your Word and refuse to hear it; give us life according to Your Word. Amen.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 15:38 *tassels*. Fringes fastened with a blue cord on the "corners" (lit, "wings") of the upper garment. These visuals helped Israel remember the Lord's commands (v 39). This outward means to help them "be holy" (v 40) was, like all others, later abused and became a means of parading empty piety. Cf Mt 6:1.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 15:39 *not to follow … your own heart*. See note, Gn 6:5.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 15:40 *holy*. See p 7.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 15:41 See notes, Lv 11:44–45; Dt 1:10.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 15:37–41 God provides a visible reminder for the Israelites of His Word and His presence among them. Today, in the cross of God's Son, we witness the ultimate reminder of God's Law and Gospel, His wrath and grace. • "God's Word is our great heritage And shall be ours forever; To spread its light from age to age Shall be our chief endeavor. Through life it guides our way, In death it is our stay. Lord, grant, while worlds endure, We keep its teachings pure Throughout all generations." Amen. (*LSB* 582)

NUMBERS—NOTE ON **Chs 16–17** Insurrection raised its ugly head against the mediators of the covenant, Moses and Aaron, at an unspecified point during their 38 years of wandering. Experiences recorded in ch 14 were soon forgotten. Israel's repeated murmurings came in short intervals (cf Ex 14:11–12; 15:23–24; 16:2–3, 20, 26–28; 17:1–2). Here, two groups joined hands to overthrow the divinely established order, each venting its particular complaint.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 16:2 *rose up*. Led by Korah, one of the sons of Levi (v 7). Although the Levites had been given the distinction "to do

service in the tabernacle of the LORD" (v 9; cf chs 3–4), they presumed to "seek the priesthood also" (v 10), to which God had appointed only Aaron and his immediate family. See note, 3:10. *chiefs … well-known*. Tensions between priests and Levites led to involvement by political leaders and a high-stakes confrontation.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 16:3 *all in the congregation are holy*. Claim of priestly privileges for every Israelite. *the LORD is among them*. See "be with," p 5.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 16:4 *fell on his face*. See "fall," p 1276.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 16:6 Rivalry seemed specifically to be with Aaron (cf v 17), who was in charge of all the priests and Levites. *censers*. See note, Lv 10:1.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 16:7 *You have gone too far, sons of Levi!* Beyond their divinely appointed authority (cf Lv 10).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 16:10 *seek the priesthood*. The Levites were subject to the priests (see note, 3:10), which resulted in envy and rivalry.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 16:11 *What is Aaron that you grumble against him?* The Levites' dispute was actually with the Lord.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 16:12–14 Dathan and Abiram challenged Moses' leadership. As descendants of Reuben, the firstborn of the tribal ancestors, they may have resented a Levite's leadership (v 7).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 16:13 *a prince over us?* Aaron was the right hand of Moses, against whose leadership the whole movement was ultimately directed. Dathan and Abiram attacked Moses' leadership because he failed to give them the promised inheritance. They insisted that he had misled them to kill them in the wilderness and compared Egypt to a "land flowing with milk and honey." See p 6.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 16:14 *Will you put out the eyes of these men?* The Levites insist that they are not blind to what Moses has done by appointing Aaron's family to the priesthood. They accuse him of favoritism.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 16:15 *I have not taken one donkey from them*. The expression, though true and serious, has a humorous and sarcastic tone (cf Ex 20:17; Gn 43:18). See p 1335. Luth: "The ungodly … are obsessed with the ambition to apply and appropriate the promises to themselves. Therefore they oppress and harass the true church. In these circumstances there is nothing else for us to do than to commend our cause to the Lord, as Moses did in that troublesome conflict with Korah, Dathan, and Abiram (Num.

16). They were entirely incurable and so sure of their own cause that they were neither willing nor able to be instructed. Therefore Moses refers the matter to a divine judgment and prays the Lord not to regard their sacrifice. Thereupon the Lord pronounces judgment upon them and encourages the true church" (AE 3:15).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 16:18 Cf Lv 10:1.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 16:19 *against*. Opposite. *glory of the* LORD. See pp 6–7.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 16:22 *fell on their faces*. See p 1276. *one man*. Probably refers to Korah (v 1).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 16:25 *elders*. See note, Ex 3:16. See also p 228.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 16:26–27 Other Israelites apparently still believed Moses.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 16:26 *from the tents of these wicked men*. All who agreed with the rebels refused to leave their dwelling and so "went down alive into Sheol" with "all their goods" (vv 32–33). The earth opened and "swallowed them up" (v 32). Some members of Korah's immediate family apparently were not involved. Cf Nu 26:9–11; see the heading of such psalms as Ps 42; 1Ch 6:22. Cypr: "All will be liable to guilt as well as its punishment, who with irreligious boldness mingle themselves with schismatics in opposition to prelates and priests" (*ANF* 5:400). Luth: "To grace all things are possible. Korah stirs up a great rebellion, and he himself perishes. But this great miracle follows … his sons are nevertheless preserved. Later they became renowned by reason of most excellent virtues, since they composed very beautiful psalms which can easily stand comparison and vie with the psalms of David. Yet they were descendants of Levi and Korah….
Accordingly, God always observes this rule. He sets forth His threats; yet He chooses something good from evil men and sinners, just as He preserves some out of the whole human race, which is lost because of sins" (AE 8:227–28).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 16:27 *wives … little ones*. Whole families suffered the consequences of the fathers' sins (cf Ex 20:5).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 16:28–30 Moses outlines a test by which people could recognize God's judgment and favor. Cf 1Ki 18:22–24.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 16:30 "It is still a great mercy that the earth bears and supports us" (LC I 60). *Sheol*. See p 792.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 16:35 *fire came out*. From the sanctuary. See note, Lv 10:2. Luth: "A defended sin is unforgivable. For he who forgives this sin would be in agreement with it and would approve of it. But God does not approve of iniquity. 'Evil may not sojourn with Thee, etc.,' as Ps. 5:4 says. Thus Moses prayed against Korah (Num. 16), and 1 John 5:16 says: 'There is sin which is mortal' " (AE 16:35).

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 16:37–38 *they have become holy*. Incense burners of the rebels were hammered into bronze plates to cover the altar, a sign of the dire consequences of disobeying the Lord. See "holy," p 7.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 16:41 *all the congregation*. The rebellious propaganda had so poisoned the people's minds that they refused to acknowledge the death of the instigators as God's punishment.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 16:42 *glory of the* LORD. See p 6–7.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 16:45 *fell on their faces*. See "fall," p 1276.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 16:46 *Take your censer*. Ordinarily, Aaron offered incense only on the altar in the sanctuary (Ex 30:1–10; Lv 16:12–13). But extraordinary means were required to make atonement for the stricken people. When Aaron ran "into the midst of the assembly" with his censer, "the plague was stopped" (vv 47–50). It was to teach the people that a sacred rite, executed by the divinely authorized person, had a salutary effect, but Korah's illegitimate use of the censer resulted in death.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON **Ch 16** We may ask: Was God justified in allowing an entire generation to die before leading the Israelites into the Promised Land? An answer comes in the rebellion of Korah and his followers, which threatens the lives of the Lord's servants and the unity of the congregation. Yet when the Lord's punishment falls on the rebels, the Lord's servant Aaron rushes into the midst of the plague to save the people. His intercession reminds us of Christ's intercession for us; He came among us to save us. • "O LORD, I call upon You; hasten to me! Give ear to my voice when I call to You! Let my prayer be counted as incense before You, and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice!" (Ps 141:1–2). Amen.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 17:2 *staffs*. Symbols of authority. Cf Gn 49:10.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 17:3 *write Aaron's name*. As high priest, Aaron would also be head of the tribe of Levi. Aaron's rod was to be placed "before the testimony" (i.e., the ark of the covenant) and preserved there as a warning for the rebels (v 10; cf Ex 25:21–22).

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 17:5 *sprout*. The test would involve a miracle.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 17:7 *tent of the testimony*. See note, Ex 25:16.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 17:8 To demonstrate the validity of Aaron's ordination, the Lord let Aaron's rod blossom during the night, while other staffs, representing other tribes, showed no signs of life. This miraculous sign was to convince the people to "make an end of their grumblings" against the Lord (v 10). Proper respect is due to God's rightly called and ordained servants. *sprouted … buds … blossoms … ripe almonds*. The Lord multiplies the miracle beyond the standards of Moses' test (v 5). See p 236.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 17:10 *testimony*. See note, Ex 25:16.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 17:12–13 The people immediately regret their rebellious attitude and anticipate judgment to fall as before. Instead, the Lord responds to their regret with teaching from His Word (chs 18–19).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON **Ch 17** God supports Aaron's priesthood by a miracle that distinguishes Aaron from the leaders of the 12 tribes. He provides a visual reminder of God's seal of approval on the Levitical priesthood. Properly ordained and installed leadership is a blessing from God, not a curse. Respect those in authority over you by praying for them in patience and by trusting without envy. Rejoice that the Lord Himself reigns among you by His life-giving Word. • "Jesus, Thy boundless love to me No thought can reach, no tongue declare; Unite my thankful heart to Thee, And reign without a rival there! Thine wholly, Thine alone I am; Be Thou alone my constant flame." Amen. (*LSB* 683:1)
NUMBERS—NOTE ON **Ch 18** In vv 1–24, God spoke to Aaron, dealing with the priests and Levites and assigning them a unique position. Vv 25–32 were spoken to Moses, who is charged with the supervision of the priests and the Levites and their relationship with one another.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 18:1 *bear iniquity*. God assures His people that not everyone "who comes near to the tabernacle of the LORD, shall die" (17:13). Aaron and his sons were privileged to "keep guard over the sanctuary and over the altar" (v 5). See note, Lv 10:17. They bore responsibility for any failure to perform their sacred duties.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 18:2 *bring your brothers*. Levites' status remained unchanged. They alone were to assist the priest in all the duties of the tent (cf chs 3–4), but were excluded from priestly functions in the sanctuary or at the altar. If these regulations were followed, no one would die (vv 3, 7). *minister to you*. See note, 3:6.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 18:3 *keep guard*. See note, 3:7–10. *lest they, and you, die*. Cf Lv 10:1–3.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 18:6 *They are a gift to you, given to the* LORD. In giving the Levites, the Lord chooses them for Himself.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 18:7 *veil*. Cf Ex 26:31–33.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 18:8–9 See note, Lv 2:3.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 18:8 *a perpetual due*. Heave offerings that were not designated as belonging to the Lord. Given to the priests as part of their benefits.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 18:10 *Every male*. Cf Lv 6:29.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 18:11 *wave offerings*. See note, Lv 7:30–35. *sons and daughters*. Unlike the offerings of vv 9–10, the whole family could partake of the wave offerings. *clean*. See p 300.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 18:12 *firstfruits*. Cf v 13.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 18:15 *opens the womb … redeem*. See note, Ex 22:29.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 18:16 *shekel of the sanctuary*. See note, Ex 30:13.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 18:19 *covenant of salt*. See note, Lv 2:13.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 18:20 *portion … inheritance*. See p 7.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 18:21 *every tithe*. God required a tenth of every Israelite's income to support the Levites, who, like the priests, had no inheritance in Canaan. Their livelihood was to come from "their service in the tent of meeting." They received whatever part of the tithe was not designated for an offering to the Lord on the altar. See p 1092.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 18:25 *spoke to Moses*. See note, ch 18.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 18:28 *give the* LORD*'s contribution to Aaron the priest*. Israel gave 10 percent to the Levites. They gave 10 percent to Aaron as high priest, who managed the offering for the whole priesthood.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 18:30 *the best*. Reserved for the priests as leaders.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 18:32 *bear no sin by reason of it*. Levites could handle the offering but could not corrupt the process.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON **Ch 18** Although the latest rebellion against the Lord comes from the Levites through Korah, God does not dismiss the Levites but reaffirms them in their calling. He provides for their forgiveness and their inheritance. Today, those who serve the Lord as church workers are to receive mercy and payment from the churches. Exercise diligent care for the church workers called to your congregation or school. Rejoice that

the Lord distributes His life-giving Word to you through them. • "You, O Lord, Yourself have called him For Your precious lambs to care; But to prosper in his calling, He the Spirit's gifts must share. Give him wisdom from above, Fill his heart with holy love; In his weakness, Lord, be near him, In his prayers, Good Shepherd, hear him." Amen. (*LSB* 681:2)

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 19:2 *statute of the law*. See p 971. *red heifer*. Reddish brown heifer (cow that had never been bred). No reason is given why the color of the sacrificial animal had to be red.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 19:4 *sprinkle … seven times*. See note, Lv 4:6–7.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 19:5 *its dung*. Undigested food in the animal's bowels.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 19:6 Materials used in the purification from leprosy were added to the fire.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 19:7–8 *unclean*. See p 300.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 19:9 *water for impurity*. Water with the ash may have formed a weak lye solution. *impurity*. Hbr word describes the ceremonial uncleanness incurred by a woman's "discharge of blood" (Lv 15:25). *sin offering*. See pp 170–71.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 19:10 *perpetual statute*. See note, Lv 6:22.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 19:11–13 Contact with corpses or animal carcasses rendered the Israelites ritually unclean (Lv 5:2; 11:24–28; 21:1–4, 10–11; 22:4–7; Nu 6:6–12). The death of many in "the affair of Korah" (16:49) called for special measures of purification. The defilement was to be removed by the application of ritually prepared water. *cleanse himself … thrown on him*. Washing by having water poured or dumped on the person requires less water than immersion. See p 1370. Cypr: "It appears that the sprinkling also of water prevails equally with the washing of salvation" (*ANF* 5:401). See note, Ezk 36:25.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 19:14–19 See note, vv 11–13.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 19:20 *cut off from the midst of the assembly*. See note, Lv 7:20–21. *water for impurity*. See note, v 9. *thrown on him*. See note, vv 11–13. All rites to achieve ceremonial cleanness and purification of the flesh would not have spanned the gap between the holy God and sinful humankind if they had not pointed to the only acceptable sacrifice: Christ Jesus, who "offered Himself without blemish to God" (Heb 9:13–14).

NUMBERS—NOTE ON **Ch 19** God provides a means to cleanse those who had touched a corpse or accidentally come in contact with a bone of a

dead person or a grave. Such a rite of purification foreshadows the cleansing power of Baptism. • Father of grace, we remember our Baptism and how You made us clean through water and the Word. Amen.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 20:1 *wilderness of Zin*. See notes, 10:12; 13:3. *first month*. Adar. See calendar, p 262. Moses did not record the year Miriam died. Cf 33:36–39.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 20:1 In the 40th year, a new generation of Israelites arrives where the nation stood 38 years before. Those over the age of 20 have died. Sin brought about the destruction of those who distrusted the Lord. Yet in His mercy, God raises up a new generation. Rebellion has a cost, but God is ever ready to start afresh and fulfill His promises. • Prepare me, O Lord, for new things by equipping me with Your timeless truth and love through Christ Jesus. Amen.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 20:2–13 Cf Ex 17:1–7, where the Israelites also had "quarreled with Moses" over lack of water. At Moses' intercession, the Lord gave them additional evidence that He was able to supply all their needs.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 20:3 The younger generation showed no greater trust in the Lord than did their elders. This generation could not remember events in Egypt, but they did remember their parents' complaints and repeated them.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 20:5 *this evil place?* The wilderness.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 20:6 *fell on their faces*. See p 1276. *glory of the* LORD. See pp 6–7.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 20:8 *tell the rock*. At Rephidim, God commanded Moses to "strike the rock" (Ex 17:6).

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 20:2–9 Moses faces the same situation as before: grumbling Israelites protest against Moses, Aaron, and God for lack of water. As before, Moses and Aaron humble themselves before the Lord at the entrance to the tent of meeting, and God opens His hand of mercy. When struggles and complaints hamper you, turn to the Lord in humble prayer. He will hear and honor your requests faithfully, in accordance with His good and gracious purposes. • Lord, we often doubt Your Word. Send Your Spirit to strengthen us, that we may pray confidently and lead boldly. Amen.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 20:10 *rebels*. Hbr *hammorim*, does not have the same root as "Meribah" (quarreling) and "Marah" (bitterness), but makes similar sounds, echoing one another as the events in 20:2–13 echo the events in Ex 17:1–7. *shall we bring*. "Meek" Moses also had clay feet (12:3). His endurance and patience were exhausted. He felt he had to assert

himself against the rebels or at least take some credit for the miraculous supply of water.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 20:11–12 *twice … did not believe*. Instead of letting the Word of the Lord reveal its power (v 8), Moses sought to make his contribution to the miracle by striking the rock twice. Thereby he failed to sanctify God before the eyes of the people. *you shall not bring*. The Lord was forgiving toward Moses, but Moses' actions had consequences. Moses could not exalt himself before God.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 20:13 *Meribah*. To distinguish this incident from the one at Rephidim, this place is called Meribah of Kadesh (or Meribah-kadesh, Dt 32:51). *He showed Himself holy*. The Lord distinguished His power, authority, and grace from Israel and her leaders. See "holy," p 7.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 20:10–13 Meribah means "quarreling." Moses' words "shall we" indicate that he and Aaron were claiming credit for the miracle of water, not attributing it to God. Every good and perfect gift comes from the Lord. God's servants act as conduits of His kindness. As you serve each day, reflect by asking yourself, "How has God made me a blessing to others in my duties?" Though you will stumble in faith, as Moses did, know that your merciful Father will not cast you aside but will receive you unto Himself by grace alone. • Father, form in me a humble attitude of service and a repentant heart. Amen.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 20:14 *king of Edom*. By turning northward from Kadesh, the Israelites could take a direct route to the Transjordan Valley, past the descendants of Esau, Jacob's twin brother (Gn 25:21–26; 36:1–8). God's curse of the Canaanites does not include the Edomites, Israel's relatives through Esau. Therefore, an attack on them was forbidden.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 20:17 *King's Highway*. Important caravan route and military road; ran northward to Damascus from Ezion-geber on the Gulf of Aqaba. Route existed already in the third millennium BC. It crossed Edomite and Moabite territory and continued east of the Salt Sea and the Jordan as far north as Damascus. The name may mean it is fit for a king to travel, as opposed to more difficult routes. See color map 3.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 20:18–19 *Edom said … Israel said*. King of Edom and Moses represented and spoke for their people.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 20:19 *water … pay*. Note how precious water is in this region. Its value underlies many struggles and stories in Scripture.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 20:21 Although the Israelites promised peaceful passage through the land, they were forbidden to trespass on Edomite territory (Dt 2:4–6). The king of Moab responded negatively to a similar request by the Israelites (Jgs 11:17–18). See map, p 250. Denied the use of the King's Highway by their kinsmen and forbidden to employ warlike measures, the Israelites took a circuitous route around Edom and Moab (21:4; Dt 2:4–9).

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 20:14–21 Moses appeals to the Edomites for passage on the basis of history, and he promises to pay for water. Yet, Edom denies them passage. The tensions between Jacob and Esau, renewed here, persist throughout Israel's history (see pp 1473–74). How sad when relatives cannot trust one another. How enduring the consequences of rivalry. Seek peace and fairness within your family. Above all things, pray for the forgiveness of sins as you forgive those who trespass against you (Mt 6:12). How blessed is the mercy of Jesus, our Brother (Heb 2:10–18). • Father, we thank You for Your grace, which traded our sinful lives for the sinless life of our Brother Christ Jesus. Amen.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 20:22 *Mount Hor*. Territory in the vicinity of this mountain is called Moseroth ("chastisements"; 33:31; cf Dt 10:6). Exact location unknown.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 20:24 *gathered to his people*. See note, 1Ki 2:10.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 20:26 *strip Aaron*. Death would defile the garments. Cf ch 19.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 20:27 *in the sight*. To confirm the change for the congregation.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 20:28 *put them on Eleazar*. Transferring his office.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 20:29 *wept for Aaron thirty days*. See notes, Gn 37:34; 50:1–3. Luth: "I don't like to see examples of joyful death. On the other hand, I like to see those who tremble and shake and grow pale when they face death and yet get through. It was so with the great saints; they were not glad to die. Fear is something natural because death is a punishment, and therefore something sad. According to the spirit one dies willingly, but according to the flesh the saying applies, 'Another will carry you where you do not wish to go' [John 21:18]" (AE 54:65).

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 20:22–29 Moses and Aaron install Eleazar as high priest. Aaron dies for his disbelief at Meribah (v 12). In death, he joins

the rebellious generation who were lost in the wilderness. Today, rebellion is sometimes glorified. However, the Lord calls His people to peace, which He pronounces through His ministers in the word of blessing (Nu 6:24–26). Rejoice in and pray for His peace. • Lord, preserve Your Word among us, and grant us wise and peaceful hearts through Christ, our great High Priest. Amen.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 21:1 *the Canaanite, the king*. King's identity and location are not clear. *Arad*. See map, p 250. A city, but may also describe a region of the Negeb surrounding it. Archaeologists believe the city of Arad was well populated and prosperous before the time of Abraham but largely abandoned during the time of Moses.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 21:2 *vow*. See p 7. *devote their cities to destruction*. See p 6.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 21:3 *Lord heeded*. Lit, "listened to the voice of." See note, Jsh 10:14. *Hormah*. See note, 14:45.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 21:1–3 The Canaanite king of Arad learns of the movement of the Israelite nation and responds by attacking some of the outlying citizens, carrying some into captivity. In this example, the Israelites show their faith in God by coming to Him for guidance before striking back. God is faithful. When His people return to Him, He hears their prayers and has mercy on them. • We praise You, O Lord, for hearing our prayers. Grant us ready ears that listen to Your Word with sincerity. Amen.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 21:4 *Mount Hor*. See note, 20:22. *the way to the Red Sea*. The Gulf of Aqaba is meant, on the east side of the Sinai Peninsula southeast of Canaan. See color map 3. This region (likely near Punon) was well known for its copper mines. (Copper is used for making bronze.) *impatient*. Caused by travel away from Canaan rather than toward it.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 21:5 Ter: "Although they were there nourished with divine supplies, nevertheless [they] were more mindful of their belly and their gullet than of God" (*ANF* 3:679).

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 21:6 *fiery serpents*. Hbr *nechashim seraphim*; similar to the word for "bronze" (see notes, v 9; Is 6:2). The wordplay may refer to the shiny, metallic brown appearance of some species of adder. *fiery*. May also describe the pain that accompanied the animals' bites.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 21:7 *We have sinned*. A second time, the people resort to prayer, which shows they begin to understand the way of life in

which the Lord will lead them: sin, repentance, restoration, and service.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 21:8–9 *pole*. Hbr term also used to describe a sign, which could likewise mean a miracle, as in "signs and wonders." God's word of promise made the healing possible. The Fathers held that this pole/sign was in the shape of a cross. Just: "Moses, by the inspiration and influence of God, took brass,
and made it into the figure of a cross" (*ANF* 1:183). See Basil (*NPNF* 2 8:299).

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 21:9 *bronze serpent*. Hbr *nechash nechsheth*; see note, v 6. God spared those who accepted the means of rescue He provided. Healing did not magically emanate from the coiled piece of metal but depended on faith in the power of God's Word. Cyr Jer: "That brazen serpent was hung up as a remedy for the biting serpents, not as a type of Him that suffered for us, but as a contrast; and it saved those who looked upon it, not because they believed it to live, but because it was killed, and killed with it the powers that were subject to it, being destroyed as it deserved" (*NPNF* 2 7:431). Cyr Jer: "Whoso had been bitten by the living serpent, and looked to the brasen serpent, might be saved by believing" (*NPNF* 2 7:87). Wycl: "Christ, in his own person … [is] the sacrament of sacraments…. Jesus our living serpent, having the likeness of sin upon him, though he could not possibly sin, was suspended on the cross, that those who are stung by the poison of the old serpent, sin, may become spiritually whole" (*TT*, pp 157–58). See p 141. Later, when its healing power was not attributed to the Creator but to the creature, the bronze serpent was destroyed by King Hezekiah (2Ki 18:4). His action was necessary because serpents were the idolatrous object of veneration among the earliest peoples. But the rescue from death that God wrought through the bronze serpent was only a type of what He intended when His incarnate Son bore our sin and was lifted to the cross. When faith looks up to Christ crucified, God saves from eternal death all victims of the fatal venom of sin (Jn 3:14–18, 36). Iren: "The law never hindered them from believing in the Son of God; nay, but it even exhorted them so to do, saying that men can be saved in no other way from the old wound of the serpent than by believing in Him who, in the likeness of sinful flesh, is lifted up from the earth upon the tree of martyrdom, and draws all things to Himself, and vivifies the dead" (*ANF* 1:465).

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 21:4–9 As Moses guides God's people in the direction of the Red Sea, away from their primary objective of the Promised Land, rebellion begins anew. Our lives also persist in the pattern of rebellion, repentance, and restoration. Those in Israel who repented received God's salvation by looking to the sign of His mercy in faith (v 9). What an excellent precursor of God's redemption through the cross. Those who look upon the cross in faith are saved. • Gracious Lord, send Your Holy Spirit to deepen our faith in Christ, that we live by daily repentance and faith in Your Son. Amen.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 21:10 *set out*. Turned eastward and northward. See color map 2. It seems they followed a course just east of the King's Highway, skirting and at times crossing into Edomite territory. At certain places, some of the Edomite tribes enriched themselves by selling food to the desert wanderers, despite their king's command (cf Dt 2:6). The borders of Edom and Moab may have been somewhat fluid, and central control may not always have been effective.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 21:11 *toward the sunrise*. On the east side.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 21:14–30 Some scholars regard the songs of ch 21 (vv 14–18, 27–30) as intrusions into the narrative account because they appear to interrupt the sequence of events. However, Moses uses a similar approach in Gn 2–3; Ex 15. See pp 3–5.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 21:14 *Book of the Wars of the* LORD. Nothing more is known of this book. It appears to have been a separate collection of songs celebrating the numerous victories of Israel against opposing forces (e.g., the Song of Moses, Ex 15). *Waheb … border of Moab*. Brief quotation merely indicates the joy of the Israelites that they had reached the unidentified sites in the Arnon valleys. Cf vv 17–18, 27–30; see pp 3–5.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 21:17 *this song*. Joyful "Song of the Well," sung because the Lord had led them to a place where they merely had to dig below the surface to find a natural supply of water. The days were over when they traversed dry areas and were dependent for water from a rock.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 21:18 *scepter*. At times denotes the insignia of rulers (Ps 60:7; 108:8), but can also be rendered "lieutenant" or "lawgiver" (Jgs 5:14; Is 33:22; Gn 49:10 KJV). Here, it seems to mean that the people used their staves to dig below the surface when directed to do so by Moses, "the lawgiver."

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 21:20 See map, p 250. *Pisgah*. Lit, "the cleft." Always has the definite article in Hbr. Denotes various heights; may be translated as a common noun (23:13–14; Dt 3:27; 34:1). Places of encampment, listed here, in ch 33, and Dt 1–2, cannot always be identified with certainty.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 21:10–20 God carries His people to the east side of the Jordan River. Finally, 40 years of wilderness wandering are about to end. We can almost hear the shout of joy echoing through the passage of time. For the time being, all the hardships and the sin of doubting God seem only a fleeting memory. Despite the moaning of an ungrateful people, God keeps His Word sworn in a dream to Abraham (Gn 15:17–21). He will keep His Word to you too. • Faithful Lord, You supply us with all good things, especially the blessings of salvation. Preserve us in this faith. Amen.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 21:21 *Amorites*. Had invaded territory on all sides of the Fertile Crescent. In their thrust eastward, they had founded a dynasty in Babylon, of which King Hammurabi is famous for his law code (c 1728–1686 BC). They had also penetrated Canaanite lands east of the Jordan (cf Gn 10:16).

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 21:22 *King's Highway*. See note, 20:17.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 21:24 *the Jabbok*. Flows into the Jordan c 25 mi N of the Salt Sea. See map, p 250. The area conquered by Israel north of the Arnon River had been in part owned by the Ammonites before the Amorites seized it. The former had been forced to move east of the Jabbok (cf Dt 2:37; Jsh 13:10, 25; Jgs 11:13, 22). Moabites and Ammonites were descendants of Lot, Abraham's nephew (Gn 19:36–38).

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 21:25 This region was not part of the Promised Land.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 21:27 *ballad singers say*. Mocking song (cf Hab 2:6). See note, v 17.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 21:28 *fire came out*. Characterizes the attack of Sihon. Possibly ironic, if Chemosh was the god of fire (see note, v 29).

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 21:29 *Chemosh!* Chief god of the Moabites (cf Jer 48:46). Related to Milcom, god of the Ammonites, as well as Canaanite gods Baal and Molech. See note, 25:3. According to the Moabite Stone, Chemosh was a savage war god. *Sihon*. Cf v 26.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 21:30 See map, p 250.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 21:21–30 For a second time, the Israelites seek permission to travel the King's Highway. This time, they are denied its use by Sihon, king of the Amorites. The Israelites lay claim to Sihon's land, which later became a home for the tribes of Reuben and Gad (32:1–5). God protects His people and overthrows the false religions of the nations. • Lord, protect us with Your Holy Spirit as Your Word and Sacraments preserve us in the one true faith. Amen.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 21:32 By taking Jazer, perhaps north of Heshbon, the Israelites completed the conquest of the Amorite territory of Sihon. See map, p 250. *spy*. See note, Jsh 2:1.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 21:33 *Bashan*. Fertile territory held by another Amorite king who was enormous in size (Dt 3:1–11). When its two capitals, Edrei and Ashtaroth (directly east of the Sea of Chinnereth), fell into their hands, the Israelites controlled the entire Transjordan area from the Arnon River to the vicinity of Mount Hermon (Dt 3:8), the source of the Jordan River.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 21:34 *hand*. See p 842.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 21:35 *until he had no survivor left*. Cf v 3.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 21:31–35 Og, a second Amorite king, marches against the Israelites. The Lord delivers another victory. The Israelites now lay claim to all the land east of the Jordan. This territory is later given to the half-tribe of Manasseh. God uses the battles at Jahaz (v 23) and Edrei (v 33) to strengthen the resolve of His people. On their own, they could not win against the Amorites, but with God, all things are possible. • Lord, lead us in the path of righteousness, trusting that all things are possible with You through Christ Jesus. Amen.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 22:1 In obedience to God's command, the Israelites did not harass the Edomites and the Moabites (Dt 2:9).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 22:2 *Balak*. Possibly a Midianite. If so, he would have been "king of Moab at that time" (v 4) because he had seized control of former Moabite holdings as the Amorites had done in other territories (21:26).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 22:3 *great dread*. Balak "was overcome with fear" (v 3), lest the same fate was in store for him that had befallen the Amorite kings Sihon and Og (ch 21).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 22:4 *elders of Midian*. Descendants of Abraham and Keturah, the nomadic Midianites moved about in various desert areas,

also those east of Moab and Edom (cf Gn 25:1–4; 37:25). *licks up the grass*. As effortlessly and casually as a cow wanders and grazes.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 22:5 *Balaam*. Mysterious and complex character. His nationality cannot definitely be determined. Archaeologists discovered an ink inscription written on plaster c 700 BC at a temple in biblical Succoth (modern Deir ʻAllah; see color map 1). It includes the sayings of Balaam, son of Beor, and is written in a unique west Semitic dialect. Both red and black inks were used. Similar Israelite plaster texts were found at Kuntillet ʻAjrud in northern Sinai. Cf Dt 27:2–3. *Pethor*. Near the Euphrates, far to the north in Aram, south of Carchemish. See color map 3. *people of Amaw*. Mentioned by Assyrian records among place-names in that area. Moses does not record that Pethor was Balaam's original home. Possibly, he visited Pethor because his services had been sought there. When later he "went back to his place" (24:25), he apparently did not return to the distant north because he remained active among the Midianites and eventually died there (31:8, 16).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 22:6 *curse this people*. See p 6.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 22:7 *elders*. See note, Ex 3:16. *fees for divination*. See note, Dt 18:10–11.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 22:8–9 Balaam anticipates that he can manipulate Israel's God and turn Him against them. *the LORD speaks to me … God came to Balaam*. In the account of Balaam's confrontation with Israel's Protector, the general term "God" (vv 9, 12, 20, 38; 23:4) and His proper name "LORD" (vv 8, 13, 18; 23:3, 5) frequently occur side by side, often in successive verses, even in the same verse (v 22; see note, Ex 6:3).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 22:8 *princes*. Elders; cf v 7. See p 228.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 22:9 God alerts Balaam that He knew the wicked purpose of the Moabite delegation.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 22:12 *blessed*. See note, Gn 12:2.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 22:14 *went to Balak*. C 350 mi; development of these events happened over weeks, illustrating the persistence of everyone involved.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 22:18 *LORD my God*. Balaam's religious convictions are even more mystifying. He acknowledged and obeyed Israel's Lord (v 8; 24:4), but he also persisted in heathen practices. Despite his professed recognition of the true God, he succumbed to his greed and repeatedly sought a way to comply with his royal benefactor's evil request.

The tension between his self-determination and God's will is a good example of the complexity of human perversity (2Pt 2:12–16). But when Balaam attempted to ply his trade as a soothsayer, God put true words of prophecy on his lips (v 6; cf Jn 11:49–51). The NT refers to the story of Balaam as a warning against the sins of greed and idolatry (2Pt 2:15; Jude 11; Rv 2:14). Iren: "Balaam … is certainly not then to be counted as a prophet, but as a soothsayer" (*ANF* 1:572).

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 22:19 *that I may know*. The offer of greater reward for Balaam's services induced him to pretend that he did not already know what "the command of the LORD" was (v 18). God permitted the greedy soothsayer to accompany Balak's emissaries to teach Balaam a lesson. At the same time, He made it clear that the expedition served only His purpose. Balaam is not an isolated example of God's dealing with people who ignore His will in their quest for material gain. He may let them attain their coveted objective and make it a means of breaking their rebellious self-will. (Cf 11:33; Ps 106:13–15; Is 10:12–14.)

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 22:20–21 God does not give Balaam permission but chooses words that test him.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 22:1–21 Fearful Balak summons the soothsayer Balaam to curse the Israelites. God works with the situation by emphasizing the importance of His Word, which must be fulfilled. God cannot be manipulated, and His Word must not be twisted for sinful purposes. Receive the Word with an open heart, and rejoice in the blessings it contains for you, especially the salvation promised in Jesus. • Lord, how magnificently You provide protection for those You love. Have mercy on us poor sinners, through Christ, the Living Word. Amen.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 22:22 *anger was kindled*. Lit, "nose grew hot," describing red-faced rage. To convince Balaam that his impure motives were known to God, He manifested His anger in a most dramatic way. *angel of the LORD*. Identified with the Lord (v 35). See p 1227. Sav: "Before the ass stood an angel with a sword. This is Christ" (*WGS*, p 101).

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 22:23 *donkey saw the angel*. Only Balaam's beast of burden was at first enabled to see the heavenly vision. "The princes of Moab" (v 21) and the "two servants" (v 22) apparently remained unaware of it. Cf 2Ki 6:17; Jn 12:28–29; Ac 9:1–7. *Balaam struck*. Moses begins to build the irony of the fact that the donkey knows better than her master.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 22:28 *the LORD opened the mouth of the donkey*. Note the humor! *she said to Balaam*. By nature, animals cannot speak rationally with humans. But there can be no doubt that the Creator, who brought them to life from the mute earth (Gn 1:24), can empower them to utter His message to people when it serves His purpose. See p 1335.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 22:29 Balaam engages in an argument with his donkey as though nothing strange were taking place. So great is his rage he cannot see his foolishness. *I wish I had a sword*. Ironic, as an angel stands by with a sword (vv 23, 31).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 22:30 The donkey, speaking rationally, begins to win the argument!
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 22:31 *bowed down and fell on his face*. See p 1276.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 22:32 *your way is perverse*. Balaam pretended to listen to God but rushed to oppose Him.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 22:34 *I have sinned*. Balaam confessed that the Lord, who "test[s] the minds and hearts" (Ps 7:9), knew that he intended to use the Lord's permission to "go with them" (v 20) to gratify his lust for wealth. Cf Jer 11:20; Rv 2:23.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 22:35 *speak only the word that I tell you*. At the end of Balaam's journey, he was to transmit a genuine word of prophecy. Balak's plot was to be frustrated by the very agent whom he had chosen to carry it out.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 22:37 *honor*. Cf v 17. Balaam's sin likely included prideful lust for recognition.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 22:39 *Kiriath-huzoth*. Lit, "city of streets"; site mentioned only here.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 22:40 In Balaam's honor, Balak gave a banquet, for which oxen and sheep were slaughtered. *sacrificed*. Hbr does not always denote the killing of animals for ritual purposes (Dt 12:15, 21; 1Sm 28:24; 2Ch 18:2).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 22:41 *Bamoth-baal*. Lit, "the high places of baal." See p 526. Actual god involved may be Chemosh, rather than the Phoenician Baal, since "Baal" is used for Chemosh among the nearby Ammonites. See note, 21:29. *saw a fraction*. Superstitious technique seemed to require that the curse be uttered from a place where the soothsayer saw his victims. When the attempt failed at this otherwise

unknown height, Balak took Balaam to "the top of Pisgah" (23:13–14) and finally to "the top of Peor" (23:28).

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 22:22–41 As Balaam mocked the Lord by ignoring His Word, the Lord now comically mocks Balaam. So great is God's Word, it can make a donkey speak! Treasure the Word. Share it confidently, because the Word is God's power for working repentance and forgiving sins. • Speak, O Lord; Your servant is listening. Amen.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON **Ch 23** Balaam sacrificed a bull and a ram on each of seven altars (vv 2, 14, 30). Except for the last instance, he left Balak and his princes at the altars in order to "meet" the Lord. Then he returned to them with the word of the Lord (vv 3–6, 15–17).

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 23:3 *burnt offering*. See pp 170–71. *bare height*. Mountains and hills were wooded in an earlier era, making stony heights stand out. See pp 212–13.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 23:4 *God met Balaam*. Likely a theophany of God. See p 39.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 23:5 *Lord put a word*. He equipped Balaam with an unmistakable message.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 23:7–24:25 Each oracle presents new evidence that God's favor rested on the covenant nation; this builds to a climax in the fourth oracle. The central thought of each blessing and summary sentences are as follows: God has made the seed of Abraham into a great multitude (23:10); Israel has the assurance of God's unfailing promises (23:20); Israel will overcome all hostility (24:9); out of Israel, God will "in the latter days" (24:14) raise up a Ruler who will let His kingdom come (24:17).

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 23:7–10 Balaam uttered his blessing on Israel in a discourse that made a mockery of Balak's sinister intentions.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 23:7 *curse*. God had blessed Israel and would continue to do so to establish His kingdom.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 23:9 *a people dwelling alone*. Israel is separate, holy, unique.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 23:10 *death of the upright*. Balaam acknowledged that the Israelites were righteous in God's sight. In His covenant of grace, God had declared them acceptable to Him despite their sins.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 23:11 *bless them*. Hyperbole. Poem does not explicitly bless Israel, but Balaam expresses longing to be like them, judging them upright (v 10).

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 23:12 Cf 22:20; see note, 22:35.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 23:1–12 God presents the first of Balaam's four oracles. Balaam cannot curse the people whom God has not cursed (v 8). The Israelites are completely unaware that Balak seeks their harm. As Christians, we, too, are often oblivious to the many spiritual and earthly forces that seek our destruction. Thankfully, God is not oblivious to them and stretches out His mighty hand to protect us. • We praise You, O Lord, for the abundant blessings You grant each day. Deliver us from evil. Amen.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 23:13 Balak seems to think that Balaam is impressed by Israel's grandeur (cf v 10a). He suggests a different vantage point, which diminishes the people.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 23:14 *field of Zophim*. Lit, "the field of the watchers"; unidentified place. *Pisgah*. See note, 21:20.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 23:16 *the* LORD *met Balaam*. See note, v 4.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 23:18 *discourse*. See "*mashal*," p 777.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 23:19 *not man*. Iren: "He thus shows that all men are indeed guilty of falsehood, inasmuch as they change from one thing to another" (*ANF* 1:572). See note, Gn 6:5. *change His mind*. See notes, 22:19; Ti 1:2. Chem: "Many in all ages have gone astray by trying to imitate these laws of Moses … [arguing from Nu 23:19 that] the ceremonial and civil laws which have come from God are not subject to change. Reply: God gave the laws in such a way that they were not to continue in perpetuity but to a certain time, until the Seed [Christ] should come, and then be abrogated, Heb. 9:10, 'imposed until the time of reformation' " (*LTh* 2:347, 351). See p 1646.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 23:21 *misfortune … trouble*. Israel deserved and received God's punishment for her unfaithfulness to Him. See note, v 10. *God is with them*. See "be with," p 5. *the shout of a king is among them*. Anticipates that Israel will arise in power (cf Gn 49:8–10).

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 23:22 *horns of the wild ox*. Strong for defense. See "horn," p 842.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 23:23–24 Balaam is stripped of his usual weapons (enchantment, divination; see note, Dt 18:10–11). *As a lioness*. See note, Gn 49:9.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 23:25 In frustration, Balak gives up.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 23:27 *another place*. See note, v 13. *please God*. Balak persists in the hope that God will turn against His people.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 23:28 *top of Peor*. Like Bamoth-baal, this may have been a high place on which the god Peor was worshiped. See note, 22:41; see also p 526. *overlooks the desert*. Not even looking at Israel anymore.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 23:13–30 For a second time, seven altars are constructed—this time atop Pisgah (v 14). The results are the same. God does not change His mind as humans do (v 19). What God has blessed must remain blessed; therefore, Balaam must bless Israel as well. He can say only what God has commanded him to say. God's Word is changeless, and He dwells with His people to bless them. • "The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make His face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the LORD lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace" (Nu 6:24–26). Amen.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 24:1 *look for omens*. See note, Dt 18:10–11.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 24:2 *the Spirit of God came upon him*. Balaam is directed like a true prophet, though he acts only out of personal interest (see note, 22:18). God also caused the donkey to speak for Him (see note, 22:28).

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 24:3 *discourse*. See "*mashal*," p 777. *opened*. Hbr word occurs only here and in v 15. If it is derived from a root meaning "to close," then Balaam had been blind to "the vision of the Almighty" (v 4) until "the Spirit of God came upon him" (v 2) and opened his eyes.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 24:4 *the vision of the Almighty*. See note, 12:6. *falling down*. Overwhelmed with awe (see "fall," p 1276). *eyes uncovered*. Cf 22:31.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 24:5–6 Israel's organized encampments look like a garden thriving in the wilderness.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 24:7 *his king … kingdom*. Anticipates Israel's ascendancy and coming king. See note, Gn 49:8–12. *Agag*. An Amalekite king bearing this name or title was defeated by Saul and slain by Samuel (1Sm 15).

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 24:8 *horns of the wild ox*. See note, 23:22.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 24:9 See note, Gn 49:9. *Blessed … cursed*. See note, Gn 12:3; see also p 6.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 24:10 *he struck his hands together*. See note, Jb 34:26. See also p 1277.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 24:11 *flee*. Implying imminent punishment if Balaam will not leave.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 24:14 *I will let you know*. Balaam's discourses will end in a grand finale of prophetic utterances. He mentions specific nations, whose opposition to the covenant people will be shattered. He envisions the course of actions that God will pursue so that finally salvation comes through Israel (cf Jn 4:22). *latter days*. The NT era.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 24:1–14 God will not allow Balaam to curse the Israelites. Instead, Balaam blesses them and recites God's litany of love. Previous accounts in Numbers reveal Israel's rebellious nature. Despite this, God loves them because of His promised Savior. Today, despite all your sins, the Lord treasures you continuously and calls you to repentance and faith. • Father, the extent of Your love is beyond measure. Bless us and keep us in Christ, our Savior. Amen.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 24:15–16 Cf vv 3–4.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 24:15 *oracle*. See p 1079.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 24:17 *a star*. Symbol of royalty inasmuch as the king is invested with authority from heaven to reign. *scepter*. Symbol of royal power and authority. May also denote a comet or a constellation in the form of a staff that will light up the skies of Israel's future. It arose over Israel's horizon in David's glorious reign. But it reached its full brightness in the messianic King, whom the Wise Men found under the star of Bethlehem. Just: "That He should arise like a star from the seed of Abraham, Moses showed before hand…. Accordingly, when a star rose in heaven at the time of His birth, as is recorded in the memoirs of His apostles, the Magi from Arabia, recognizing the sign by this, came and worshipped Him" (*ANF* 1:252). Ephr: "The Virgin this day brought forth Immanuel in Bethlehem…. Lo! from Jacob shone the Star, and from Israel rose the Head. The prophecy that Balaam spoke had its interpreting today!" (*NPNF* 2 13:223). *Sheth*. Moab.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 24:18 *Edom*. David vanquished both Edom and Moab (cf 2Sm 8:2).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 24:20 The first enemy defeated by the Israelites (Ex 17:8–13) will come to destruction (1Sm 30; 1Ch 4:41–43).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 24:21 Kenites were associated with the Midianites (10:29; Jgs 1:16; 4:11; 1Sm 27:10; 30:29).

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 24:22 *Kain*. May be a Kenite tribal name or designate a locality that "shall be burned." *Asshur*. Hbr word for Assyria. Some commentators believe that here it denotes some other unknown tribe. In v 24, it is linked with Eber, also an unidentified people.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 24:24 *Kittim*. Sea Peoples from Cyprus and the eastern Mediterranean coast who will destroy Asshur and Eber. Israel alone will survive.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 24:25 *to his place*. His home, unknown; see note, 22:5.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 24:15–25 The fourth and final oracle occurs immediately after Balaam's encounter with Balak and has to do with future events: a messianic prophecy of a star coming out of Jacob. God uses Balaam to disclose His will 1,500 years in the future. The future belongs to God. Rebellion, sin, or sinister means will not deter His plan of salvation through Christ. • Lord, we thank You for Your faithfulness fulfilled in Christ. Rule us by Your beloved Word. Amen.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 25:1 *whore*. Scripture does not mince words in describing unfaithfulness to God. Idolatry here and elsewhere is branded as harlotry (see note, Hos 4:13; cf Is 1:21; Jer 3:1). However, this ugly word is more than a figure of speech when it refers to the worship of a fertility god such as Baal of Peor (v 3). In order to gain a favorable response from Baal, devotees engaged in sexual orgies (vv 6–8). Ter: "The people go to the daughters of Moab to gratify their lust: they are allured to the idols, so that they committed whoredom with the spirit" (*ANF* 3:636).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 25:2 *invited the people*. This enticement came "on Balaam's advice" (31:16). When this enigmatic and perverse soothsayer was unsuccessful in his attempt to curse the Israelites, he devised a scheme that would undo his blessing. By their worship of Baal, the Israelites would incur God's wrath and destroy themselves.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 25:3 *Baal*. Lit, "lord," "owner." The principal Canaanite god, often associated with a particular place (here, Peor). Baal manifestations of fertility worship were in many locations. Baal was pictured in Canaanite mythology as a vibrant god riding a bull on the clouds. He often had the horns of a bull on his helmet. He held a club (perhaps representing thunder) in one hand and a spear (perhaps representing lightning) in the other. He was believed to exercise his power each year in the autumn and winter rains, reviving the dry soil and bringing

the mysterious life force to animals and the land. Baal worship and other ancient Near Eastern fertility worship did not focus on commandments, sin, forgiveness, or life after death; it was thought instead that Baal guaranteed the dependable cycle of the growing seasons. See note, Ex 34:13; see also p 403.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 25:4 *hang them*. Lest the bad example of the chiefs lead the whole congregation astray, they were put to death. God has "no pleasure in the death of anyone" (Ezk 18:32), yet He is a devouring fire when His holy will is flouted (Ezk 33:11; Rm 1:18–32; Eph 5:6).

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 25:5 *Baal of Peor*. See note, v 3.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 25:6 *one of the people … Midianite woman*. Leaders of their people (vv 14–15). *in the sight*. Bold defiance. *weeping*. Likely due to repentant sorrow. See note, Ezr 10:1.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 25:7–8 Phinehas, Aaron's grandson, leaps into action, in view of the Lord's command (v 4).

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 25:8 *pierced both of them*. Because Phinehas "was jealous for his God" (v 13), he and his descendants were to serve as high priests, whose foremost function was to make "atonement for the people" (v 13; cf 16:46; Ex 30:10, 15; 40:15; Lv 16:29–34). *the plague*. Along with the punishment of the chiefs (v 4), the Lord sent further punishments among the tribes. Cf 11:33; 14:37; 16:46.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 25:1–9 Balaam worms his way into the spiritual lives of Israel and causes them to forsake God for the worship of Baal. The situation is reminiscent of the worship of the golden calf (Ex 32). As at that time, God's anger against sin causes the death of thousands; yet it saves tens of thousands more. God is a God of both Law and Gospel. He metes out punishment to drive people to repentance but also has compassion on His wayward sons and daughters. • Lord, grant us zeal for Your ways, that we walk and live honorably before You. Amen.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 25:11 *jealous with My jealousy*. See note, Ex 20:5.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 25:12 *My covenant of peace*. Though Phinehas has acted as a warrior, his covenant shall be for peaceful service in the priesthood. (Cf Ps 106:30–31, where "intervened" is a term for prayer.) Gr Naz: "[Phinehas] was more praised because he prayed for the people when they had transgressed. Let us then also stand and make propitiation, and let the plague be stayed, and let this be counted unto us for righteousness"

(*NPNF* 2 7:471). Phinehas had been appointed a priest as a descendant of Eleazar (cf Lv 10:6) but would now be the high priest.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 25:13 *jealous for his God*. Cf v 11. *atonement*. See note, v 8; see also p 5.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 25:14–15 Emphasizes the important social rank of the sinners, which illustrates the depth of the problem and Phinehas's boldness in addressing it.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 25:17 Cf 31:1–12.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 25:18 *their wiles … beguiled*. Midianites were not simply acting as "neighbors" but intentionally sought to lead Israel into idolatry.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 25:10–18 Phinehas strikes on the Lord's behalf, stopping the idolatrous actions of Zimri and Cozbi. This is a First Commandment issue. God allows no other gods before Him and takes necessary measures to preserve His people. He always gives Himself fully for His people as demonstrated by Christ's sacrifice on the cross for us. • Protect us, Lord, from the sin of idolatry. Grant us faithful ministers and leaders who will strengthen our faith by Your Word and Sacraments. Amen.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON **Ch 26** Census showed increase in Manasseh (possible in two generations). A decrease in Simeon is explainable if most of the 24,000 killed by the plague at Shittim were Simeonites (25:1, 9, 14). The small number of Levites is understandable; by David's time, there were still only 38,000 over the age of 30 (1Ch 23:3).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 26:2 In view of the impending conquest of Canaan by force of arms, Moses was to make another tabulation of Israel's military forces.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 26:5–51 In the following list, the numbers in parentheses are from ch 1, allowing easy comparison of the changes Israel experienced during the wilderness wanderings. Reuben, 43,730 (46,500); Simeon, 22,200 (59,300); Gad, 40,500 (45,650); Judah, 76,500 (74,600); Issachar, 64,300 (54,400); Zebulun, 60,500 (57,400); Manasseh, 52,700 (32,200); Ephraim, 32,500 (40,500); Benjamin, 45,600 (35,400); Dan/Shuham, 64,400 (62,700); Asher, 53,400 (41,500); Naphtali, 45,400 (53,400); all of Israel, 601,730 (603,550). Despite living in the wilderness and the experience of several plagues (chs 11; 14; 16; 25), Israel's population had dropped only 0.3 percent. However, the tribe of Simeon suffered great loss, 62.5 percent of their male population. This was likely

due to persistent unfaithfulness, as specifically described in the idolatry of Baal of Peor (25:4). The tribe of Ephraim suffered great losses (19.8 percent), but their brother-tribe, Manasseh, experienced the greatest growth (64 percent). Judah remained the strongest tribe.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 26:5 *clan*. See pp 54–55.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 26:33 Cf 27:1–11.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 26:54 *inheritance in proportion*. First purpose of the census was military preparedness (cf vv 1–4). However, Israel would also need to possess the regions it conquered. Therefore, notes are added here regarding tribal inheritance, a great theme of the conquest in Jsh. See "portion," p 7; cf Jsh 1:6.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 26:56 *according to lot*. See note, Jsh 14:2.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 26:57–62 Cf chs 3–4. Genealogy is incomplete, breaking off in v 58 to focus on the ancestry of Aaron and Moses. These brothers were descendants of Kohath. Cf ch 3 for other families mentioned (v 58). See note, Ex 6:14–27.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 26:62 *every male*. Since the Levites were exempt from military duty, there was no point in establishing how many had reached the age of 20 (v 2). In their case, all male members who had survived the critical 30 days after birth were to be counted (cf 3:43). The Levites were the smallest tribe.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 26:63 *listed by Moses and Eleazar the priest*. Eleazar worked with Moses to record the census, indicating that more than one author was involved in developing the Books of Moses. See note, Ex 17:14; see also pp 3–5.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON **Ch 26** Opposite the Jordan River and Jericho, the Lord commands another census. The records show God's faithfulness in preserving His people. Today, pray that God's Word and heritage will be maintained in your family. His abiding love can see you through every plague and trouble. • Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who comforts us in all our afflictions. Amen.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 27:1 *daughters of Zelophehad*. Five unmarried women having no brothers (v 3). *Noah*. Hbr spelling differs from the man Noah in Gn 6–9.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 27:2–3 They bring a precedent-setting request before Moses regarding the distribution of the land of Canaan. *Our father died*. Their father had no male heirs (26:33). They asked whether their

father's allotment of tribal land would be lost to their family. *died for his own sin*. Supported Korah's rebellion.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 27:4 When a daughter married, the husband's name and clan received property rights.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 27:5–11 Decisions were based on preserving families and inheritance to keep clans, tribes, and nations strong. On the place of women in Israelite society, see p 213.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 27:11 *statute and rule*. The general rule for the division of the land was amended. In such cases, the inheritance was to remain within the smaller family unit. No individual was to acquire large estates. This ordinance was in keeping with the provision of the Year of Jubilee (Lv 25:8–34).

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 27:1–11 Contrary to many grievances presented in Numbers, the daughters of Zelophehad approach Moses with humble demeanor to seek his counsel. The Lord hears their request and answers with grace and mercy. The prayer of the upright pleases God (Pr 15:8). He has our good at heart in all His teaching. • Lord, grant us both boldness and humility in our prayers, that we may enjoy Your blessings and prosper before You. Keep our families strong in Your Word. Amen.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 27:12–23 The appointment of Joshua, as well as the events recorded in chs 28–36, took place before "that very day" that Moses complied with the command to "go up this mountain" to "be gathered" to his people (Dt 32:48–52). The mention of his impending death alerted Moses to the need of appointing his successor.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 27:12 *Abarim*. One peak of this mountain range was Mount Nebo.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 27:13 *gathered to your people*. See note, 1Ki 2:10.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 27:16 *the God of the spirits of all flesh*. See note, Gn 6:3.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 27:17 *go out … come in*. Acting as a shepherd over all the affairs of the state. *as sheep that have no shepherd*. Wild and vulnerable.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 27:18 *in whom is the Spirit*. See note, Ex 31:3. *lay your hand on him*. See note, v 20. Joshua, though primarily a military and political leader, was thoroughly guided by the Lord and His Word.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 27:19 *you shall commission him in their sight*. Lit, "You shall command him before their eyes," charging him with duty.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 27:20 *invest … authority*. Chem: "God says to Moses … the authority with which you have hitherto been adorned you will give to your successor, so also is authority publicly given before the church to him upon whom the hands are laid" (*LTh* 2:705–6).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 27:21 *Urim*. See notes, Ex 28:30; 1Sm 14:39–42. God had communicated with Moses face-to-face (Ex 33:11; Dt 34:10). Moses' successor likewise was to act at God's word. But the will of the Lord was to be revealed to Joshua through Eleazar and the Urim.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 27:12–23 Death is near for Moses, who desires that God would provide a new leader. Otherwise, the people would wander like "sheep that have no shepherd" (v 17). In His mercy, God raises up Joshua, one of the two spies who returned from the Promised Land with a favorable report (cf v 18; 14:6–9). Today, pray that the Lord would bless the leaders of your congregation, your church, and its institutions. Pray that He will raise up a new and faithful generation focused on the Word of life. He is always ready to provide for His beloved flock through our Good Shepherd, Jesus. • Lord, we are sinful sheep. By Your Spirit, raise up faithful leaders to guide us through Word and Sacrament. Amen.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON **Chs 28–29** The people who were about to cross the Jordan were a new generation (26:64–65). For their benefit, the Lord emphasized that they must bring the offerings and sacrifices, prescribed by Him through Moses, also after Joshua led them into the land of Canaan. The kinds of oblations and the presentation of them had been defined for the previous generation (Lv 1–7; 23; Nu 15:1–16). The statutes, not substantially different from those given earlier, provide a convenient summary and calendar of sacrificial services noted in Ex 23:14–17; 29:38–42; 31:12–17; Lv 23. Here, the priests could see the full number of required sacrifices listed, from daily to annual observances. In repeating much of this legislation, the Lord made it clear that Israel received the blessing of His unceasing presence in regular communion with Him. The sacrifices and offerings were to be brought in due season: daily (28:3–8), on the weekly Sabbath days (28:9–10), at the beginning of every month (28:11–15), on specified days of the year (28:16–29:40). See pp 170–71, 200–201.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 28:1–8 Known as the Tamid, from the term "regular" (v 3). Here is the core devotion of Israel: the offering of a male

lamb. Cf Jn 1:29.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 28:4–8 Three parts of that daily sacrifice: the burning of the lamb, the drink offering, and the offering of wheat flour. "The Law had pictures or shadows of future things [Colossians 2:17]. So Christ and the entire worship of the New Testament are shown in this picture. The burning of the lamb illustrates Christ's death. The drink offering illustrates that everywhere in the entire world, by the preaching of the Gospel, believers are sprinkled with the blood of that Lamb, that is, sanctified. Peter says, 'In the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with His blood' (1 Peter 1:2). The offering of wheat flour means faith, prayer, and thanksgiving in hearts. Therefore, in the Old Testament, the shadow is discerned. In the New, the thing illustrated should be sought, and not another type, as sufficient for a sacrifice" (Ap XXIV 36–37).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 28:7 *pour out*. The Lord had specified the amount of wine (Ex 29:40) but had not directed how it was to be offered to Him.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 28:9 *ephah*. See p cx.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 28:16–25 Cf 9:1–14; Ex 12:6, 18.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 28:22 *male*. See note, Lv 1:10.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 28:26 *Feast of Weeks*. See note, Lv 23:15–16.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 29:12–38 Provisions for the celebration of this eight-day festival are expanded (Lv 23:34–36). Added here are the numbers and kinds of animals to be sacrificed, together with the required grain and drink offerings. A total of 70 bulls are offered. The decreasing number of bulls offered (from 13 to 7) probably symbolized the gradual unwinding of the festival from its high point, though it still ended with the sacred number seven.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 29:35 *solemn assembly*. A closing service for the feast.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON **Chs 28–29** With the older generation buried in the wilderness, God begins grooming the younger generation as faithful stewards of His Law. As sacrificial smoke wends heavenward, we glimpse the worshiper's total dedication to God (cf Rm 12:1). Present as well is the underlying theme ultimately fulfilled in the death of Jesus Christ: blood is necessary for atonement (Heb 9:22). • Father, through the Divine Worship, You draw near to us, that we may again be shepherded for this life and consecrated for the life to come. Amen.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 30:1 *heads of the tribes*. Cf ch 2; see note, Ex 3:16.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 30:2 *vows a vow*. See p 7. Chs 28–29 dealt with prescribed offerings but not the previous regulations governing "vow offerings and … freewill offerings" (29:39; Lv 27; Nu 6). Such vows were made publicly before God and His servants at the tabernacle (cf Ps 116:18–19). *he shall not break his word*. The general rule was to remain in force: all vows were to be kept (cf v 9). But special provisions are now added for vows by women if they affected relations between "a man and his wife" and between "a father and his daughter" (v 16). "You must also know how to use God's name rightly. For when He says, 'You shall not take the name of the Lord, your God, in vain,' He wants us to understand at the same time that His name is to be used properly. For His name has been revealed and given to us so that it may be of constant use and profit. So it is natural to conclude that since this commandment forbids using the holy name for falsehood or wickedness, we are, on the other hand, commanded to use His name for truth and for all good, like when someone takes an oath truthfully when it is needed and it is demanded" (LC I 63–64).

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 30:1–2 Vows made to God—made in His name—are to be carried out faithfully. When these vows are not fulfilled, they reflect poorly on God's good name and shame His people. Our word must be our bond, including our word of repentance when we do not live up to our words. God's Word does not fail us. All His promises are yes to us in Christ Jesus (2Co 1:20). • "Speak, O Lord, Your servant listens, Let Your Word to me come near; Newborn life and spirit give me, Let each promise still my fear. Death's dread pow'r, its inward strife, Wars against Your Word of life; Fill me, Lord, with love's strong fervor That I cling to You forever!" Amen. (*LSB* 589:1)

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 30:3–16 Highlights relationships between fathers/daughters and husbands/wives. An Israelite woman was typically in a dependent relationship with a male family member. This reality has offended some advocates of women's rights, who view such a situation as "patriarchal" or unfair. Such assessments fail to appreciate the realities of life in a tribal culture, where raids on villages were common. Women who did not have a protector were extremely vulnerable (Gn 34:1–2; Dt 21:10–14; 22:23–29; 2Sm 13:14; 2Ki 5:2). Women in Israel sought a dependent relationship; interdependency was regarded as a matter of survival (see

note, Is 4:1). The modern battle between the sexes was completely unknown to ancient Israelites and is foreign to God's design for families. See notes, Gn 2:18, 24; Eph 5:22–25. See also p 1291.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 30:3 *binds herself*. The purpose of the additional regulations was to safeguard marital harmony (e.g., 1Sm 1:11, 22–23). The vow to abstain from sexual relations was to be made by women only with the consent of their husbands or the men they were about to marry (cf 1Co 7:1–7).

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 30:4 *father … says nothing*. He makes no protest; silence establishes his responsibility.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 30:5 *the LORD will forgive her*. He will not hold her responsible for the vow.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 30:6–15 In certain instances, the head of the household may "make void" (v 13) the pledge, provided that he makes his objections known "on the day that he hears" (v 12) of it.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 30:6 *thoughtless utterance*. A hasty vow.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 30:9 *divorced woman*. Cf Dt 24:1–4. A widow or a divorced woman who was not bound by family ties could make vows of any kind.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 30:14 *her husband says nothing*. See note, v 4.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 30:3–16 Dependents need the approval of their father or husband to make a binding vow. Our decisions are often not simply our own; they certainly affect other people—especially in a family. As you pray about the path of life ahead, consider how your choices will affect others. Discuss matters with them, as appropriate. Pray for the Lord's guidance, and seek understanding in His Word. His Word to you is good, sealed in the promise of Christ Jesus, the head of His Bride, the Church. • "Unless You build it, Father, The house is built in vain; Unless You, Savior, bless it, The joy will turn to pain. But nothing breaks the union Of hearts in You made one; The love Your Spirit hallows Is endless love begun." Amen. (*LSB* 858:4)

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 31:2 *Avenge*. God was provoked to vengeance on the Midianites because they had seduced Israel to idolatry (v 16; ch 25). The war seems to focus specifically on Midianites involved with corrupting Israel (five kings, v 8), not the entire people of Midian. Ambr: "A deeper vengeance is taken on fiercer foes, and on those that are false as well as on those who have done greater wrongs, as was the case with the Midianites"

(*NPNF* 2 10:24). *Midianites*. The nationality of Moses' wife and her family (Ex 2:16–22).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 31:4 *thousand*. See p 217.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 31:6 *Phinehas*. He, not Joshua or Eleazar, was chosen to direct this campaign, because he had proved that he was "jealous for his God" (25:6–13). *the vessels of the sanctuary*. Lit, "the instruments of holiness," which are "the trumpets for the alarm."
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 31:7 *killed every male*. See note, v 2. Unlike the war of conquest, where the Canaanites would be wiped out (see pp 338–40), the soldiers plan to spare the Midianite women and children (v 9).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 31:8 *the kings of Midian*. Regional tribal rulers.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 31:9 *captive the women … their little ones*. Common strategy in tribal warfare. Men of fighting age could not be absorbed into a new tribe. However, women and children could be assimilated and were shown mercy. Whereas other nations regarded the taking of women as part of the spoils of war (Jgs 5:30), Moses here distinguishes between the captives and the plunder.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 31:15–16 Moses is concerned about the assimilation of the women and the boys because the Midianites had specifically sought to corrupt Israel before. However, because adultery was punishable by death under the Law (Lv 20:10), Moses might have regarded the Midianites here as adulterous and deserving the full punishment. Though Moses' decisions accord with God's original command to avenge the people of Israel (v 2), the specific orders about treatment of prisoners do not have God's explicit command or approval (cf 2Ki 6:18–23; see application note, 2Ch 28:5–21). *plague*. Refers to a disease that had earlier taken the lives of 24,000 Israelites. Same term used in 1Sm 6:5 (cf 1Sm 5:9, 12, where the men break out with tumors). The character of the plague is not explained. It is possible that it spread by sexual contact, which could have informed Moses' decisions about handling the Midianite prisoners.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 31:17–18 Moses' decision eerily parallels the practices of the Egyptians in Ex 1:22.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 31:18 *young girls*. Virgins, who had not been the cause of Israel's harlotry, were to be spared. They would most easily adapt to life in a new tribe and would also not carry sexually transmitted diseases.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 31:19–20 *purify*. See p 300. Those who had come in contact with corpses were to perform the prescribed purification rites (cf

v 24).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 31:21–23 *statute of the law*. See p 971. *pass through the fire*. All material objects of spoil were to be "purified with the water for impurity" (cf 19:9–19). Metals had to pass through fire to be clean. These actions, too, may point to concerns about the spread of disease. See note, vv 15–16.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 31:24 Cf v 20.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 31:27 *into two parts*. All booty was to be shared equally by soldiers and civilians. The former were required to take from their half and give the priests one out of 500; the noncombatants contributed from their part one out of 50 to the Levites.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 31:32–47 The Midianite tribe was wealthy. Since there were 32,000 young women, the total tribe had likely numbered more than 100,000. However, this is clearly not the full number of Midianites, but a local group.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 31:49 *not a man missing*. The battle was miraculous.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 31:50 When the military leaders saw that they had suffered no casualties, they realized how good the Lord had been to them. Out of gratitude, they brought voluntary offerings to Moses and Eleazar. *atonement*. See p 5.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON **Ch 31** Moses is given a final assignment. He is to oversee the destruction of a group of Midianites who had tempted Israel to idolatry and brought a plague among them. God acts forcefully to protect His people from falling away. Phinehas, the son of Eleazar the high priest, coordinates the attack. The victory secures the east bank of the Jordan, from which the Israelites will conquer Canaan. The tactics described here were meant for this specific situation and cannot be used by people today as a guide to "holy war." Vengeance belongs to God (Dt 32:35) and is enacted through His chosen authorities, not by individuals. Pray for the safety and peace of soldiers, police, and all in such callings. Entrust your life, health, and future to the one and only Savior, who is strong to deliver. • "Entrust your days and burdens To God's most loving hand; He cares for you while ruling The sky, the sea, the land. For He who guides the tempests Along their thund'rous ways Will find for you a pathway And guide you all your days." Amen. (*LSB* 754:1)
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 32:1 *a place for livestock*. Plains for grazing.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 32:5 The prospect of material gain motivated the request by Reuben and Gad. Selfish interests prevailed over their sense of unity as the covenant people. They were inclined to shirk obligation to other tribes to complete the conquest of the Promised Land.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 32:6–9 Moses reminds the people of Reuben and Gad what happened when Israel last hesitated (ch 14). Also, the Reubenites were important instigators in Korah's rebellion (16:1).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 32:7 *discourage the heart*. Moses feared that the desertion of the common cause by the two tribes would have the same disheartening effect on the people that the report of the spies had produced and would precipitate a similar judgment by the Lord (chs 13–14).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 32:14 Moses snaps at their suggestion (v 5), assuming that rebellion is again about to follow.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 32:16 *came near*. Perhaps for a private conference. *sheepfolds*. Rock walls formed a large pen, where sheep and shepherds were safe from nighttime predators. Caves were also used for this purpose. *cities for our little ones*. Permanent settlements.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 32:18 Gad and Reuben commit themselves to full and lasting military service to address Moses' concern (v 6).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 32:20–22 Whereas the men of Reuben and Gad pledged themselves in service to their brethren (v 17), Moses emphasized they were vowing to serve the Lord.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 32:21 *pass over the Jordan*. Upon the promise of Gad and Reuben to help protect the other tribes, they were permitted to claim the land between the Arnon and Jabbok rivers, most of which had already been taken from the Amorites (21:21–35). It appears to have been a joint occupation of the entire territory without clearly defined borders between the two tribes. Manasseh was able to get its Transjordan portion by dispossessing the Amorites north of the Jabbok (vv 39–42).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 32:23 God would judge them for an unfulfilled vow.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 32:28–29 The settlement discussed privately (vv 16–27) is now made public.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 32:33 *half-tribe of Manasseh*. Half of the tribe of Manasseh received its land on the east side of the Jordan River, together with the tribes of Reuben and Gad. The other half of Manasseh will receive its land in Jsh 17.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 32:34–36 *built … fortified cities, and folds for sheep*. They likely adapted captured cities and sheepfolds, so the settlement would not have taken too long. Cf vv 41–42.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 32:40 Moses had led the earlier attacks, which captured the territory, giving him authority to make the grants.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 32:42 *Nobah*. Perhaps from Gad.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON **Ch 32** The Reubenites and Gadites desire the good land east of the Jordan to raise livestock. They vow to fight beside their brothers in the conquest of Canaan (fulfilled in Jsh 22:1–6). When you make promises, keep your word, for the Lord will hold you responsible. Rejoice that He keeps His Word responsibly, promising and delivering His blessings and care. • "O Comforter of priceless worth, Send peace and unity on earth; Support us in our final strife And lead us out of death to life." Amen. (*LSB* 655:3)
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 33:1–49 Israel's journeys under Moses' leadership had come to an end. Having brought his people within striking distance of their ultimate goal, Moses compiled a list of their encampments. The following travelogue is similar to other ancient travel documents, such as the Old Babylonian itinerary (eighteenth century BC), the travels of Shamshi-Adad I of Assyria, and the campaign records of the New Kingdom Pharaohs (fifteenth to thirteenth centuries BC). For the modern reader, this collection of data may be as unexciting as the genealogical tables in Gn. But each link in this long chain of place-names stirred a song of praise in Israelite hearts because a mighty and forgiving God had been with them every step of the way from Egypt to the Jordan. He did not forsake the escaped slaves, no matter where they encamped or from where they set out (v 3). Believers need only to hear the names of the encampments of their pilgrimage to be moved to recount gratefully what God had done for them.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 33:1 *stages*. Lit, "their breaking camp"; a noun derived from the verb translated as "they set out" (e.g., v 3).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 33:4 *On their gods also the* LORD *executed judgments*. See notes, Ex 1:8; 3:22; 7:12.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 33:5–49 See map, p 120. Moses surveyed the people's past from the exodus (Ex 12:37; 13:4) to their arrival in the plains of Moab 40 years later (vv 48–49). The list names the places recorded in the preceding accounts of their wilderness wanderings. The journey from Egypt to Mount Sinai is repeated in vv 5–15 (Ex 12:37–19:2). But this section also

names two new sites (Dophkah, Alush, vv 12–14). In vv 16–49, the names of many more sites supplement the sketchy account of Israel's progress from Mount Sinai to the plains of Moab (10:11–26:3). This log does not mention some encampments that appeared in the preceding record (21:18–19). The location of some of these stations cannot be identified. Consequently, the exact route of the wanderings, particularly during the last 38 years, cannot be definitely established.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 33:8 *three days' journey*. Moses seems to distinguish travel camps (for an evening) from more permanent camps, as at Marah.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 33:38 *first day of the fifth month*. Ab 1407. See calendar, p 262.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 33:39 *Mount Hor*. See note, 20:22. High places were regarded as sacred. See p 526.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 33:40 Alludes to the battle at Arad (21:1–3).

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 33:42 *Punon*. Likely within the borders of Edom (see note, 21:10). They may have crossed Ammonite or Edomite territory to camp here.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 33:49 Encompassing c 7 mi.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 33:1–49 God guides Israel every step of the way to the Promised Land. He dwells among them as He had promised (Ex 25:8). He is always their God for the sake of His love toward them in the coming Messiah, although many times the Israelites do not behave like God's people. Even now, in Jesus the Messiah, the Lord walks with you and remains ever faithful, calling you to repentance, faith, and a blessed future.

• "Rise! To arms! With prayer employ you, O Christians, lest the foe destroy you; For Satan has designed your fall. Wield God's Word, the weapon glorious; Against all foes be thus victorious, For God protects you from them all. Fear not the hordes of hell, Here is Emmanuel. Hail the Savior! The strong foes yield To Christ, our shield, And we, the victors, hold the field." Amen. (*LSB* 668:1)

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 33:52 *drive out*. At times, the Lord speaks of displacing the Canaanites; at other times, of destroying them. The two approaches do not appear to conflict, because the goal in either case was to make room for Israel. See note, Jsh 23:9. See also "devote to destruction," p 6. The Canaanites' idolatrous symbols and sites of worship were to be

demolished. At this time, their measure of iniquity was complete (Gn 15:16). *high places*. See p 526.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 33:53 *I have given the land*. See note, Jsh 1:6.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 33:54 *by lot according to your clans*. The extent of each allotment was proportionate to the size of the tribe, which had been established by the census.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 33:55 *barbs … thorns*. See note, Jgs 2:3.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 33:56 The Israelites were to know that their God was not a partisan or national deity. If their disobedience to this command later brought about their apostasy, He would punish them as severely as He did the Canaanites (Dt 8:19–20). Unfortunately, the Israelites disregarded this warning and broke the covenant. God carried out His threat. Cf 2Ki 17; 25.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 33:50–56 God does not want the religions of the heathen Canaanites to influence the Israelites or to lead them astray as did the Midianites. God's people today should avoid all syncretism with other religions, lest the teaching of God's Word be corrupted. As you interact with others who do not know or believe in Christ, pray for their deliverance, life, and salvation. Rejoice in the inheritance the Lord grants you as His beloved children. • "Preserve Your Word, O Savior, To us this latter day, And let Your kingdom flourish; Enlarge Your Church, we pray. O keep our faith from failing; Keep hope's bright star aglow. Let nothing from truth turn us While living here below." Amen. (*LSB* 658:1)
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 34:3 The southern border of the Promised Land began at the lower tip of the Salt Sea and swept southward in a semicircle, turning northward along the Brook
of Egypt and ending at the Mediterranean (Jsh 15:2–4). See color map 1.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 34:7–9 *Mount Hor*. This unidentified mountain must be distinguished from the height where Aaron was buried (20:22–29; 33:38–39). Apparently, it is a northern peak of the Lebanon range. From here, the northern border was formed by a line drawn eastward to the desert and ending at an oasis named Hazar-enan, west of Hamath. See map, p 250.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 34:8 *you shall draw a line*. The Lord speaks to Moses as though he has a map in front of him. A clay map of the Mesopotamian city Nippur dates from this era. Moses may have created such a reference tool.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 34:11–12 The eastern border is traced from Hazar-enan south through some unknown sites to a line that ran westward to the southeastern edge of the Sea of Chinnereth. From here, it followed the Jordan to the Salt Sea, the starting point of the survey (v 3).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 34:13 *inherit by lot*. Cf Jsh 14–20.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 34:1–15 God has already given the Israelites the Promised Land. Yet, the Lord still calls them to faithful action, to live and serve according to the promise. He also calls us to fulfill our calling as His heaven-bound people. As you face new challenges, consider that the Lord has already prepared your way. His gift and inheritance cannot be taken from you. • "Faint not nor fear, His arms are near; He changes not who holds you dear; Only believe, and you will see That Christ is all eternally." Amen. (*LSB* 664:4)
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 34:17 *for inheritance*. Before the Israelites began to take possession of the land, God reminded them that they had no vested claim to it; it was His gift to them. He would assign each tribe an allotment (v 13; 26:52–56; Jsh 14:2).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 34:18–29 Ten tribal leaders were chosen to carry out the divine directives for the division of the land west of the Jordan. Reuben and Gad had already received their portion. See "portion," p 7.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 34:16–29 The Lord works through the drawing of lots and assigns the territory He wishes various tribes to inhabit (cf Jsh 14–20). Eleazar and Joshua oversee the process as God's representatives. Inheritance can become a matter of dispute in families. Speak and work in a Christlike manner with family members about sensitive matters. Realize that, as God's people, Christ has prepared a great and lasting inheritance for you, which surpasses all earthly joys. • "O sweet and blessed country, The home of God's elect! O sweet and blessed country That faithful hearts expect! In mercy, Jesus, bring us To that eternal rest With You and God the Father And Spirit, ever blest." Amen. (*LSB* 672:4)
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 35:3 *pasturelands*. The offerings at the tabernacle alone would not feed and sustain the Levites and their families; they needed homes and pastures nearby.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 35:6–7 *six cities of refuge*. Cf Jsh 20. *forty-two cities*. Levites were not to have their inheritance in one compact area (cf 18:20–24). Because they were to represent all of Israel by their service in the tabernacle (18:1–7), each tribe, "in proportion to" (35:8) its size, was to

contribute cities and their surrounding grazing grounds in order to provide the Levites with dwelling places and a means of sustenance (Jsh 21). The 6 cities of refuge added to the 42 Levitical holdings equal 48 localities surrendered by all tribes.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 35:1–8 God had selected the Levites to help the priests. Their cities of refuge would protect individuals accused of accidental killing. The Lord leaves nothing to chance or accident but thoroughly prepares for His people's bodily needs, peace, and blessing. Today, entrust your life and ways to Him, for He cares for you! • "O God of mercy, God of might, In love and pity infinite, Teach us, as ever in Thy sight, To live our lives in Thee." Amen. (*LSB* 852:1)

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 35:11 *select cities*. Advance instructions for the allotment of Israel's inheritance included the directive to set aside six cities to serve the common good in the maintenance of social order. *manslayer*. One who unintentionally or without malicious forethought had caused the death of another could find safety from the avenger in one of the six cities of refuge.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 35:12 *avenger*. According to ancient custom, a slain person's nearest of kin had the right to act as "the avenger of blood." It devolved upon him to take the life of the murderer of his relative (vv 25, 27; cf Gn 4:9). This means of safeguarding the sanctity of life and of administering justice was to be severely restricted. The old system could have resulted in endless feuds. See note, 1Ki 2:31. *stands before the congregation*. See p 792.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 35:14 *three cities beyond the Jordan*. Named by Moses (Dt 4:43). *three cities in the land of Canaan*. Appointed by Joshua (Jsh 20:7).

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 35:16–34 Elders of each city would sort through such matters. See p 792.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 35:16 *iron object*. See note, Jb 20:24. *murderer shall be put to death*. The institution of cities of refuge was not to abrogate the law that "whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed" (Gn 9:6). But capital punishment could be inflicted on an accused murderer only "on the evidence of witnesses" to the crime (v 30; cf Dt 19:15).

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 35:22–23 God's Law is esp focused on the issue of motive. See note, Ex 20:13.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 35:24 *congregation shall judge*. See p 792.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 35:25 *rescue*. Provide refuge. *until the death of the high priest*. The life of the high priest served as an atonement in such cases.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 35:27 *avenger … not be guilty of blood*. See note, v 12.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 35:30 See note, v 16.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 35:31 *no ransom*. Unpardonable. However, see "redeem," p 843.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 35:32 *before the death of the high priest*. See note, v 25.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 35:33 *blood pollutes the land*. See note, v 12. *no atonement*. Unpardonable. Cf v 31.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 35:34 *I the* LORD *dwell in the midst of the people of Israel*. See note, Ex 25:17; see also "be with," p 5.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 35:9–34 Individuals accused of an accidental killing find safety from "the avenger of blood" in cities of refuge. These cities could not harbor intentional murders (cf Ex 20:13). To protect the innocent, God establishes a system of justice with two witnesses (v 30). Today, pray for the families of victims and for the guilty. Pray also for wise lawmakers, judges, and juries. Our God is a judge who has pronounced just punishment. In Christ, He also pronounces grace and mercy, which are blessings for believers, who in turn benefit their communities. • " 'You shall not murder, hurt, nor hate; Your anger dare not dominate. Be kind and patient; help, defend, And treat your foe as your friend.' Have mercy, Lord!" Amen. (*LSB* 581:6)
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 36:2 Moses had ruled that daughters were entitled to inherit their father's portion if he had no sons (27:1–11).
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 36:3 *the inheritance of our fathers*. The leaders of the tribe of Manasseh, to whom the litigant women belonged, foresaw that an unrestricted application of this provision could destroy the established tribal borders. If such an heiress married a member of another tribe, her husband would become the owner of the land within another tribe's inheritance.
NUMBERS—NOTE ON 36:4 *jubilee of the people*. Year of Jubilee, when holdings acquired by financial transactions were to be returned to the

former owner (Lv 25:8–34). See p 206. This would not restore the property to the original tribe, however.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 36:6 *whom they think best*. These women had a choice in finding husbands. See pp 212–13; see also note, 30:9. *marry within the clan*. To keep borders of tribal allotments intact.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 36:11 *married to sons of their father's brothers*. Not necessarily first cousins; "brothers" here could mean members of Manasseh generally.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON 36:13 *commandments … rules*. See p 971. Summarizes the directives that up to this point Moses had given to the Israelites after their arrival in the plains of Moab. Before his death, he had more to say to his people (cf Dt). *in the plains of Moab*. See color map 2.

NUMBERS—NOTE ON **Ch 36** For each tribe to retain its territory, God commands that Zelophehad's daughters choose husbands within their own tribe. Numbers ends with a brief summary statement that all regulations therein came by God's hand. In Christ, God cares for each individual. He willingly bends an ear to hear even the most routine request and acts on each person's behalf with righteousness and mercy. • Lord, You lovingly guided Your people Israel. You also found me in my sin and saved me through the precious blood of Your Son. Preserve me in the one true faith. Amen.

Deuteronomy

Deuteronomy_1 | Deuteronomy_2 | Deuteronomy_3 | Deuteronomy_4 | Deuteronomy_5 | Deuteronomy_6 | Deuteronomy_7 | Deuteronomy_8 | Deuteronomy_9 | Deuteronomy_10 | Deuteronomy_11 | Deuteronomy_12 | Deuteronomy_13 | Deuteronomy_14 | Deuteronomy_15 | Deuteronomy_16 | Deuteronomy_17 | Deuteronomy_18 | Deuteronomy_19 | Deuteronomy_20 | Deuteronomy_21 | Deuteronomy_22 | Deuteronomy_23 | Deuteronomy_24 | Deuteronomy_25 | Deuteronomy_26 | Deuteronomy_27 | Deuteronomy_28 | Deuteronomy_29 | Deuteronomy_30 | Deuteronomy_31 | Deuteronomy_32 | Deuteronomy 33 | Deuteronomy 34

- Introduction to Deuteronomy
  - Overview
  - Reading Deuteronomy
  - Luther on Deuteronomy
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

The Command to Leave Horeb

1 [1]These are the words that Moses spoke to all Israel beyond the
Jordan in the wilderness, in the Arabah opposite Suph, between Paran and
Tophel, Laban, Hazeroth, and Dizahab. [2]It is eleven days' journey from
Horeb by the way of Mount Seir to Kadesh-barnea. [3]In the fortieth year, on
the first day of the eleventh month, Moses spoke to the people of Israel
according to all that the Lord had given him in commandment to them,
[4] after he had defeated Sihon the king of the Amorites, who lived in
Heshbon, and Og the king of Bashan, who lived in Ashtaroth and in Edrei.
[5]Beyond the Jordan, in the land of Moab, Moses undertook to explain this
law, saying, [6]"The Lord our God said to us in Horeb, 'You have stayed
long enough at this mountain. [7]Turn and take your journey, and go to the
hill country of the Amorites and to all their neighbors in the Arabah, in the
hill country and in the lowland and in the Negeb and by the seacoast, the
land of the Canaanites, and Lebanon, as far as the great river, the river
Euphrates. [8]See, I have set the land before you. Go in and take possession
of the land that the Lord swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to
Jacob, to give to them and to their offspring after them.'

Leaders Appointed

9 ‡ ‡ “At that time I said to you, ‘I am not able to bear you by myself.
10 † The Lord your God has multiplied you, and behold, you are today as
numerous as the stars of heaven. 11 † May the Lord, the God of your fathers,
make you a thousand times as many as you are and bless you, as he has
promised you! 12 † How can I bear by myself the weight and burden of you
and your strife? 13 † Choose for your tribes wise, understanding, and
experienced men, and I will appoint them as your heads.’ 14 And you
answered me, ‘The thing that you have spoken is good for us to do.’ 15 † So I
took the heads of your tribes, wise and experienced men, and set them as
heads over you, commanders of thousands, commanders of hundreds,
commanders of fifties, commanders of tens, and officers, throughout your
tribes. 16 † And I charged your judges at that time, ‘Hear the cases between
your brothers, and judge righteously between a man and his brother or the
alien who is with him. 17 † You shall not be partial in judgment. You shall
hear the small and the great alike. You shall not be intimidated by anyone,
for the judgment is God’s. And the case that is too hard for you, you shall
bring to me, and I will hear it.’ 18 † And I commanded you at that time all the
things that you should do.

Israel's Refusal to Enter the Land

19 ‡ ‡ ‡ "Then we set out from Horeb and went through all that great and
terrifying wilderness that you saw, on the way to the hill country of the
Amorites, as the Lord our God commanded us. And we came to Kadesh-
barnea. 20 † And I said to you, 'You have come to the hill country of the
Amorites, which the Lord our God is giving us. 21 † See, the Lord your God
has set the land before you. Go up, take possession, as the Lord, the God of
your fathers, has told you. Do not fear or be dismayed.' 22 † Then all of you
came near me and said, 'Let us send men before us, that they may explore
the land for us and bring us word again of the way by which we must go up
and the cities into which we shall come.' 23 The thing seemed good to me,
and I took twelve men from you, one man from each tribe. 24 † And they
turned and went up into the hill country, and came to the Valley of Eshcol
and spied it out. 25 † And they took in their hands some of the fruit of the
land and brought it down to us, and brought us word again and said, 'It is a
good land that the Lord our God is giving us.'

26 † "Yet you would not go up, but rebelled against the command of the
Lord your God. 27 † And you murmured in your tents and said, 'Because the
Lord hated us he has brought us out of the land of Egypt, to give us into the
hand of the Amorites, to destroy us. 28 † Where are we going up? Our
brothers have made our hearts melt, saying, "The people are greater and
taller than we. The cities are great and fortified up to heaven. And besides,
we have seen the sons of the Anakim there."' 29 Then I said to you, 'Do not
be in dread or afraid of them. 30 † The Lord your God who goes before you
will himself fight for you, just as he did for you in Egypt before your eyes,
31 † and in the wilderness, where you have seen how the Lord your God
carried you, as a man carries his son, all the way that you went until you
came to this place.' 32 Yet in spite of this word you did not believe the Lord
your God, 33 † who went before you in the way to seek you out a place to
pitch your tents, in fire by night and in the cloud by day, to show you by
what way you should go.

The Penalty for Israel's Rebellion

34 ‡ ‡ "And the Lord heard your words and was angered, and he swore,
35 'Not one of these men of this evil generation shall see the good land that I
swore to give to your fathers, 36 † except Caleb the son of Jephunneh. He
shall see it, and to him and to his children I will give the land on which he
has trodden, because he has wholly followed the Lord!' 37 ‡ Even with me the
Lord was angry on your account and said, 'You also shall not go in there.
38 † Joshua the son of Nun, who stands before you, he shall enter. Encourage
him, for he shall cause Israel to inherit it. 39 † And as for your little ones, who
you said would become a prey, and your children, who today have no
knowledge of good or evil, they shall go in there. And to them I will give it,
and they shall possess it. 40 † But as for you, turn, and journey into the
wilderness in the direction of the Red Sea.'
41 † "Then you answered me, 'We have sinned against the Lord. We
ourselves will go up and fight, just as the Lord our God commanded us.'
And every one of you fastened on his weapons of war and thought it easy to
go up into the hill country. 42 † And the Lord said to me, 'Say to them, Do not
go up or fight, for I am not in your midst, lest you be defeated before your
enemies.' 43 So I spoke to you, and you would not listen; but you rebelled
against the command of the Lord and presumptuously went up into the hill
country. 44 † Then the Amorites who lived in that hill country came out
against you and chased you as bees do and beat you down in Seir as far as
Hormah. 45 † And you returned and wept before the Lord, but the Lord did
not listen to your voice or give ear to you. 46 † So you remained at Kadesh
many days, the days that you remained there.

The Wilderness Years

2 [1]‡† “Then we turned and journeyed into the wilderness in the direction of the Red Sea, as the Lord told me. And for many days we traveled around Mount Seir. [2]Then the Lord said to me, [3]† ‘You have been traveling around this mountain country long enough. Turn northward [4]† and command the people, “You are about to pass through the territory of your brothers, the people of Esau, who live in Seir; and they will be afraid of you. So be very careful. [5]† Do not contend with them, for I will not give you any of their land, no, not so much as for the sole of the foot to tread on, because I have given Mount Seir to Esau as a possession. [6]You shall purchase food from them for money, that you may eat, and you shall also buy water of them for money, that you may drink. [7]† For the Lord your God has blessed you in all the work of your hands. He knows your going through this great wilderness. These forty years the Lord your God has been with you. You have lacked nothing.”’ [8]† So we went on, away from our brothers, the people of Esau, who live in Seir, away from the Arabah road from Elath and Ezion-geber.

“And we turned and went in the direction of the wilderness of Moab. [9]† And the Lord said to me, ‘Do not harass Moab or contend with them in battle, for I will not give you any of their land for a possession, because I have given Ar to the people of Lot for a possession.’ [10]‡† (The Emim formerly lived there, a people great and many, and tall as the Anakim. [11]† Like the Anakim they are also counted as Rephaim, but the Moabites call them Emim. [12]† The Horites also lived in Seir formerly, but the people of Esau dispossessed them and destroyed them from before them and settled in their place, as Israel did to the land of their possession, which the Lord gave to them.) [13]† ‘Now rise up and go over the brook Zered.’ So we went over the brook Zered. [14]† And the time from our leaving Kadesh-barnea until we crossed the brook Zered was thirty-eight years, until the entire generation, that is, the men of war, had perished from the camp, as the Lord had sworn to them. [15]For indeed the hand of the Lord was against them, to destroy them from the camp, until they had perished.

16 “So as soon as all the men of war had perished and were dead from
among the people, 17 the Lord said to me, 18 ‘Today you are to cross the
border of Moab at Ar. 19 † And when you approach the territory of the people
of Ammon, do not harass them or contend with them, for I will not give you
any of the land of the people of Ammon as a possession, because I have
given it to the sons of Lot for a possession.’ 20 † (It is also counted as a land
of Rephaim. Rephaim formerly lived there—but the Ammonites call them
Zamzummim— 21 † a people great and many, and tall as the Anakim; but the
Lord destroyed them before the Ammonites,[1] and they dispossessed them
and settled in their place, 22 † as he did for the people of Esau, who live in
Seir, when he destroyed the Horites before them and they dispossessed
them and settled in their place even to this day. 23 † As for the Avvim, who
lived in villages as far as Gaza, the Caphtorim, who came from Caphtor,
destroyed them and settled in their place.) 24 ‘Rise up, set out on your
journey and go over the Valley of the Arnon. Behold, I have given into your
hand Sihon the Amorite, king of Heshbon, and his land. Begin to take
possession, and contend with him in battle. 25 † This day I will begin to put
the dread and fear of you on the peoples who are under the whole heaven,
who shall hear the report of you and shall tremble and be in anguish
because of you.’

The Defeat of King Sihon

26 ‡ ‡ ‡ “So I sent messengers from the wilderness of Kedemoth to Sihon
the king of Heshbon, with words of peace, saying, 27 ‡ ‘Let me pass through
your land. I will go only by the road; I will turn aside neither to the right
nor to the left. 28 You shall sell me food for money, that I may eat, and give
me water for money, that I may drink. Only let me pass through on foot,
29 ‡ as the sons of Esau who live in Seir and the Moabites who live in Ar did
for me, until I go over the Jordan into the land that the Lord our God is
giving to us.’ 30 ‡ But Sihon the king of Heshbon would not let us pass by
him, for the Lord your God hardened his spirit and made his heart obstinate,
that he might give him into your hand, as he is this day. 31 ‡ And the Lord
said to me, ‘Behold, I have begun to give Sihon and his land over to you.
Begin to take possession, that you may occupy his land.’ 32 ‡ Then Sihon
came out against us, he and all his people, to battle at Jahaz. 33 And the Lord
our God gave him over to us, and we defeated him and his sons and all his
people. 34 ‡ And we captured all his cities at that time and devoted to
destruction[1] every city, men, women, and children. We left no survivors.
35 Only the livestock we took as spoil for ourselves, with the plunder of the
cities that we captured. 36 ‡ From Aroer, which is on the edge of the Valley of
the Arnon, and from the city that is in the valley, as far as Gilead, there was
not a city too high for us. The Lord our God gave all into our hands. 37 ‡ Only
to the land of the sons of Ammon you did not draw near, that is, to all the
banks of the river Jabbok and the cities of the hill country, whatever the
Lord our God had forbidden us.

The Defeat of King Og

3 [1]†‡†“Then we turned and went up the way to Bashan. And Og the king of Bashan came out against us, he and all his people, to battle at Edrei. [2]But the Lord said to me, ‘Do not fear him, for I have given him and all his people and his land into your hand. And you shall do to him as you did to Sihon the king of the Amorites, who lived at Heshbon.’ [3]So the Lord our God gave into our hand Og also, the king of Bashan, and all his people, and we struck him down until he had no survivor left. [4]†And we took all his cities at that time—there was not a city that we did not take from them—sixty cities, the whole region of Argob, the kingdom of Og in Bashan. [5]†All these were cities fortified with high walls, gates, and bars, besides very many unwalled villages. [6]†And we devoted them to destruction,[2] as we did to Sihon the king of Heshbon, devoting to destruction every city, men, women, and children. [7]†But all the livestock and the spoil of the cities we took as our plunder. [8]†So we took the land at that time out of the hand of the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, from the Valley of the Arnon to Mount Hermon [9](the Sidonians call Hermon Sirion, while the Amorites call it Senir), [10]†all the cities of the tableland and all Gilead and all Bashan, as far as Salecah and Edrei, cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan. [11]†(For only Og the king of Bashan was left of the remnant of the Rephaim. Behold, his bed was a bed of iron. Is it not in Rabbah of the Ammonites? Nine cubits[3] was its length, and four cubits its breadth, according to the common cubit.[4])

[12]† “When we took possession of this land at that time, I gave to the Reubenites and the Gadites the territory beginning at Aroer, which is on the edge of the Valley of the Arnon, and half the hill country of Gilead with its cities. [13]†The rest of Gilead, and all Bashan, the kingdom of Og, that is, all the region of Argob, I gave to the half-tribe of Manasseh. (All that portion of Bashan is called the land of Rephaim. [14]†‡†Jair the Manassite took all the region of Argob, that is, Bashan, as far as the border of the Geshurites and the Maacathites, and called the villages after his own name, Havvoth-jair, as it is to this day.) [15]†To Machir I gave Gilead, [16]and to the Reubenites and the

Gadites I gave the territory from Gilead as far as the Valley of the Arnon,
with the middle of the valley as a border, as far over as the river Jabbok, the
border of the Ammonites; 17 †the Arabah also, with the Jordan as the border,
from Chinnereth as far as the Sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea, under the
slopes of Pisgah on the east.

18 †"And I commanded you at that time, saying, 'The Lord your God has
given you this land to possess. All your men of valor shall cross over armed
before your brothers, the people of Israel. 19 †Only your wives, your little
ones, and your livestock (I know that you have much livestock) shall
remain in the cities that I have given you, 20 †until the Lord gives rest to your
brothers, as to you, and they also occupy the land that the Lord your God
gives them beyond the Jordan. Then each of you may return to his
possession which I have given you.' 21 †And I commanded Joshua at that
time, 'Your eyes have seen all that the Lord your God has done to these two
kings. So will the Lord do to all the kingdoms into which you are crossing.
22 †You shall not fear them, for it is the Lord your God who fights for you.'

Moses Forbidden to Enter the Land

23 ‡ † “And I pleaded with the Lord at that time, saying, 24 † ‘O Lord God,
you have only begun to show your servant your greatness and your mighty
hand. For what god is there in heaven or on earth who can do such works
and mighty acts as yours? 25 Please let me go over and see the good land
beyond the Jordan, that good hill country and Lebanon.’ 26 † But the Lord
was angry with me because of you and would not listen to me. And the Lord
said to me, ‘Enough from you; do not speak to me of this matter again.
27 † Go up to the top of Pisgah and lift up your eyes westward and northward
and southward and eastward, and look at it with your eyes, for you shall not
go over this Jordan. 28 † But charge Joshua, and encourage and strengthen
him, for he shall go over at the head of this people, and he shall put them in
possession of the land that you shall see.’ 29 † So we remained in the valley
opposite Beth-peor.

Moses Commands Obedience

4 [1]†† “And now, O Israel, listen to the statutes and the rules[1] that I am
teaching you, and do them, that you may live, and go in and take possession
of the land that the Lord, the God of your fathers, is giving you. [2]† You shall
not add to the word that I command you, nor take from it, that you may
keep the commandments of the Lord your God that I command you. [3]† Your
eyes have seen what the Lord did at Baal-peor, for the Lord your God
destroyed from among you all the men who followed the Baal of Peor. [4]But
you who held fast to the Lord your God are all alive today. [5]† See, I have
taught you statutes and rules, as the Lord my God commanded me, that you
should do them in the land that you are entering to take possession of it.
[6] † Keep them and do them, for that will be your wisdom and your
understanding in the sight of the peoples, who, when they hear all these
statutes, will say, ‘Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding
people.’ [7]† For what great nation is there that has a god so near to it as the
Lord our God is to us, whenever we call upon him? [8]† And what great nation
is there, that has statutes and rules so righteous as all this law that I set
before you today?

[9] † “Only take care, and keep your soul diligently, lest you forget the
things that your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the
days of your life. Make them known to your children and your children’s
children— [10]† how on the day that you stood before the Lord your God at
Horeb, the Lord said to me, ‘Gather the people to me, that I may let them
hear my words, so that they may learn to fear me all the days that they live
on the earth, and that they may teach their children so.’ [11]† And you came
near and stood at the foot of the mountain, while the mountain burned with
fire to the heart of heaven, wrapped in darkness, cloud, and gloom. [12]† Then
the Lord spoke to you out of the midst of the fire. You heard the sound of
words, but saw no form; there was only a voice. [13]† And he declared to you
his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, that is, the Ten
Commandments,[1] and he wrote them on two tablets of stone. [14]† And the
Lord commanded me at that time to teach you statutes and rules, that you
might do them in the land that you are going over to possess.

Idolatry Forbidden

15 ‡ † “Therefore watch yourselves very carefully. Since you saw no form
on the day that the Lord spoke to you at Horeb out of the midst of the fire,
16 ‡ beware lest you act corruptly by making a carved image for yourselves,
in the form of any figure, the likeness of male or female, 17 the likeness of
any animal that is on the earth, the likeness of any winged bird that flies in
the air, 18 the likeness of anything that creeps on the ground, the likeness of
any fish that is in the water under the earth. 19 † And beware lest you raise
your eyes to heaven, and when you see the sun and the moon and the stars,
all the host of heaven, you be drawn away and bow down to them and serve
them, things that the Lord your God has allotted to all the peoples under the
whole heaven. 20 † But the Lord has taken you and brought you out of the
iron furnace, out of Egypt, to be a people of his own inheritance, as you are
this day. 21 † Furthermore, the Lord was angry with me because of you, and
he swore that I should not cross the Jordan, and that I should not enter the
good land that the Lord your God is giving you for an inheritance. 22 For I
must die in this land; I must not go over the Jordan. But you shall go over
and take possession of that good land. 23 † Take care, lest you forget the
covenant of the Lord your God, which he made with you, and make a
carved image, the form of anything that the Lord your God has forbidden
you. 24 † For the Lord your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God.

25 † “When you father children and children’s children, and have grown
old in the land, if you act corruptly by making a carved image in the form of
anything, and by doing what is evil in the sight of the Lord your God, so as
to provoke him to anger, 26 † I call heaven and earth to witness against you
today, that you will soon utterly perish from the land that you are going
over the Jordan to possess. You will not live long in it, but will be utterly
destroyed. 27 ‡ And the Lord will scatter you among the peoples, and you will
be left few in number among the nations where the Lord will drive you.
28 And there you will serve gods of wood and stone, the work of human
hands, that neither see, nor hear, nor eat, nor smell. 29 † But from there you
will seek the Lord your God and you will find him, if you search after him
with all your heart and with all your soul. 30 † When you are in tribulation,

and all these things come upon you in the latter days, you will return to the Lord your God and obey his voice. 31 †For the Lord your God is a merciful God. He will not leave you or destroy you or forget the covenant with your fathers that he swore to them.

The Lord Alone Is God

32 ‡ † “For ask now of the days that are past, which were before you, since
the day that God created man on the earth, and ask from one end of heaven
to the other, whether such a great thing as this has ever happened or was
ever heard of. 33 Did any people ever hear the voice of a god speaking out of
the midst of the fire, as you have heard, and still live? 34 † Or has any god
ever attempted to go and take a nation for himself from the midst of another
nation, by trials, by signs, by wonders, and by war, by a mighty hand and an
outstretched arm, and by great deeds of terror, all of which the Lord your
God did for you in Egypt before your eyes? 35 † To you it was shown, that
you might know that the Lord is God; there is no other besides him. 36 † Out
of heaven he let you hear his voice, that he might discipline you. And on
earth he let you see his great fire, and you heard his words out of the midst
of the fire. 37 † And because he loved your fathers and chose their offspring
after them[1] and brought you out of Egypt with his own presence, by his
great power, 38 † driving out before you nations greater and mightier than
yourselves, to bring you in, to give you their land for an inheritance, as it is
this day, 39 † know therefore today, and lay it to your heart, that the Lord is
God in heaven above and on the earth beneath; there is no other.
40 † Therefore you shall keep his statutes and his commandments, which I
command you today, that it may go well with you and with your children
after you, and that you may prolong your days in the land that the Lord your
God is giving you for all time.”

Cities of Refuge

41 Then Moses set apart three cities in the east beyond the Jordan, 42 that
the manslayer might flee there, anyone who kills his neighbor
unintentionally, without being at enmity with him in time past; he may flee
to one of these cities and save his life: 43 Bezer in the wilderness on the
tableland for the Reubenites, Ramoth in Gilead for the Gadites, and Golan
in Bashan for the Manassites.

Introduction to the Law

44 This is the law that Moses set before the people of Israel. 45 These are
the testimonies, the statutes, and the rules, which Moses spoke to the people
of Israel when they came out of Egypt, 46 beyond the Jordan in the valley
opposite Beth-peor, in the land of Sihon the king of the Amorites, who lived
at Heshbon, whom Moses and the people of Israel defeated when they came
out of Egypt. 47 And they took possession of his land and the land of Og, the
king of Bashan, the two kings of the Amorites, who lived to the east beyond
the Jordan; 48 from Aroer, which is on the edge of the Valley of the Arnon, as
far as Mount Sirion[2] (that is, Hermon), 49 together with all the Arabah on
the east side of the Jordan as far as the Sea of the Arabah, under the slopes
of Pisgah.

The Ten Commandments

5 [1]†And Moses summoned all Israel and said to them, “Hear, O Israel,
the statutes and the rules that I speak in your hearing today, and you shall
learn them and be careful to do them. [2]†The Lord our God made a covenant
with us in Horeb. [3]†Not with our fathers did the Lord make this covenant,
but with us, who are all of us here alive today. [4]†The Lord spoke with you
face to face at the mountain, out of the midst of the fire, [5]† while I stood
between the Lord and you at that time, to declare to you the word of the
Lord. For you were afraid because of the fire, and you did not go up into the
mountain. He said:

[6]†† “‘I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt,
out of the house of slavery.

[7]† “‘You shall have no other gods before[1] me.

[8]“‘You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of
anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in
the water under the earth. [9]You shall not bow down to them or serve them;
for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers
on the children to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me,
[10]but showing steadfast love to thousands[2] of those who love me and keep
my commandments.

[11]“‘You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord
will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain.

[12]“‘Observe the Sabbath day, to keep it holy, as the Lord your God
commanded you. [13]Six days you shall labor and do all your work, [14]†but the
seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any
work, you or your son or your daughter or your male servant or your female
servant, or your ox or your donkey or any of your livestock, or the
sojourner who is within your gates, that your male servant and your female
servant may rest as well as you. [15]† You shall remember that you were a
slave[3] in the land of Egypt, and the Lord your God brought you out from
there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. Therefore the Lord your
God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day.

16 † “‘Honor your father and your mother, as the Lord your God
commanded you, that your days may be long, and that it may go well with
you in the land that the Lord your God is giving you.
17 “‘You shall not murder.[4]
18 “‘And you shall not commit adultery.
19 “‘And you shall not steal.
20 “‘And you shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
21 † “‘And you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife. And you shall not
desire your neighbor’s house, his field, or his male servant, or his female
servant, his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor’s.’
22 †“These words the Lord spoke to all your assembly at the mountain out
of the midst of the fire, the cloud, and the thick darkness, with a loud voice;
and he added no more. And he wrote them on two tablets of stone and gave
them to me. 23 †And as soon as you heard the voice out of the midst of the
darkness, while the mountain was burning with fire, you came near to me,
all the heads of your tribes, and your elders. 24 †And you said, ‘Behold, the
Lord our God has shown us his glory and greatness, and we have heard his
voice out of the midst of the fire. This day we have seen God speak with
man, and man still live. 25 †Now therefore why should we die? For this great
fire will consume us. If we hear the voice of the Lord our God any more, we
shall die. 26 For who is there of all flesh, that has heard the voice of the
living God speaking out of the midst of fire as we have, and has still lived?
27 Go near and hear all that the Lord our God will say and speak to us all that
the Lord our God will speak to you, and we will hear and do it.’
28 †“And the Lord heard your words, when you spoke to me. And the Lord
said to me, ‘I have heard the words of this people, which they have spoken
to you. They are right in all that they have spoken. 29 †Oh that they had such
a mind as this always, to fear me and to keep all my commandments, that it
might go well with them and with their descendants[1] forever! 30 Go and say
to them, “Return to your tents.” 31 †But you, stand here by me, and I will tell
you the whole commandment and the statutes and the rules that you shall
teach them, that they may do them in the land that I am giving them to
possess.’ 32 You shall be careful therefore to do as the Lord your God has
commanded you. You shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left.
33 You shall walk in all the way that the Lord your God has commanded you,

that you may live, and that it may go well with you, and that you may live long in the land that you shall possess.

The Greatest Commandment

6 [1]†“Now this is the commandment, the statutes and the rules[2] that
the Lord your God commanded me to teach you, that you may do them in
the land to which you are going over, to possess it, [2]†that you may fear the
Lord your God, you and your son and your son’s son, by keeping all his
statutes and his commandments, which I command you, all the days of your
life, and that your days may be long. [3]†Hear therefore, O Israel, and be
careful to do them, that it may go well with you, and that you may multiply
greatly, as the Lord, the God of your fathers, has promised you, in a land
flowing with milk and honey.

[4]†“Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.[3] [5]†You shall love
the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all
your might. [6]†And these words that I command you today shall be on your
heart. [7]†You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of
them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when
you lie down, and when you rise. [8]†You shall bind them as a sign on your
hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. [9]†You shall write
them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

[10]†“And when the Lord your God brings you into the land that he swore
to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give you—with great
and good cities that you did not build, [11]and houses full of all good things
that you did not fill, and cisterns that you did not dig, and vineyards and
olive trees that you did not plant—and when you eat and are full, [12]then take
care lest you forget the Lord, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out
of the house of slavery. [13]†It is the Lord your God you shall fear. Him you
shall serve and by his name you shall swear. [14]†You shall not go after other
gods, the gods of the peoples who are around you— [15]†for the Lord your
God in your midst is a jealous God—lest the anger of the Lord your God be
kindled against you, and he destroy you from off the face of the earth.

[16]†“You shall not put the Lord your God to the test, as you tested him at
Massah. [17]†You shall diligently keep the commandments of the Lord your
God, and his testimonies and his statutes, which he has commanded you.

[18]And you shall do what is right and good in the sight of the Lord, that it
may go well with you, and that you may go in and take possession of the
good land that the Lord swore to give to your fathers [19]by thrusting out all
your enemies from before you, as the Lord has promised.

[20]"When your son asks you in time to come, 'What is the meaning of the
testimonies and the statutes and the rules that the Lord our God has
commanded you?' [21]then you shall say to your son, 'We were Pharaoh's
slaves in Egypt. And the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand.
[22]And the Lord showed signs and wonders, great and grievous, against
Egypt and against Pharaoh and all his household, before our eyes. [23]And he
brought us out from there, that he might bring us in and give us the land that
he swore to give to our fathers. [24]And the Lord commanded us to do all
these statutes, to fear the Lord our God, for our good always, that he might
preserve us alive, as we are this day. [25]And it will be righteousness for us,
if we are careful to do all this commandment before the Lord our God, as he
has commanded us.'

A Chosen People

7 [1]†“When the Lord your God brings you into the land that you are
entering to take possession of it, and clears away many nations before you,
the Hittites, the Girgashites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the
Hivites, and the Jebusites, seven nations more numerous and mightier than
yourselves, [2]†and when the Lord your God gives them over to you, and you
defeat them, then you must devote them to complete destruction.[1] You
shall make no covenant with them and show no mercy to them. [3]†You shall
not intermarry with them, giving your daughters to their sons or taking their
daughters for your sons, [4]for they would turn away your sons from
following me, to serve other gods. Then the anger of the Lord would be
kindled against you, and he would destroy you quickly. [5]†But thus shall you
deal with them: you shall break down their altars and dash in pieces their
pillars and chop down their Asherim and burn their carved images with fire.

[6]†“For you are a people holy to the Lord your God. The Lord your God
has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the
peoples who are on the face of the earth. [7]†It was not because you were
more in number than any other people that the Lord set his love on you and
chose you, for you were the fewest of all peoples, [8]but it is because the Lord
loves you and is keeping the oath that he swore to your fathers, that the
Lord has brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the
house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. [9]† Know
therefore that the Lord your God is God, the faithful God who keeps
covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his
commandments, to a thousand generations, [10]†and repays to their face those
who hate him, by destroying them. He will not be slack with one who hates
him. He will repay him to his face. [11]†You shall therefore be careful to do
the commandment and the statutes and the rules that I command you today.

[12]†“And because you listen to these rules and keep and do them, the Lord
your God will keep with you the covenant and the steadfast love that he
swore to your fathers. [13]He will love you, bless you, and multiply you. He
will also bless the fruit of your womb and the fruit of your ground, your
grain and your wine and your oil, the increase of your herds and the young

of your flock, in the land that he swore to your fathers to give you. 14You shall be blessed above all peoples. There shall not be male or female barren among you or among your livestock. 15And the Lord will take away from you all sickness, and none of the evil diseases of Egypt, which you knew, will he inflict on you, but he will lay them on all who hate you. 16†And you shall consume all the peoples that the Lord your God will give over to you. Your eye shall not pity them, neither shall you serve their gods, for that would be a snare to you.

17"If you say in your heart, 'These nations are greater than I. How can I dispossess them?' 18you shall not be afraid of them but you shall remember what the Lord your God did to Pharaoh and to all Egypt, 19†the great trials that your eyes saw, the signs, the wonders, the mighty hand, and the outstretched arm, by which the Lord your God brought you out. So will the Lord your God do to all the peoples of whom you are afraid. 20†Moreover, the Lord your God will send hornets among them, until those who are left and hide themselves from you are destroyed. 21†You shall not be in dread of them, for the Lord your God is in your midst, a great and awesome God. 22†The Lord your God will clear away these nations before you little by little. You may not make an end of them at once,[1] lest the wild beasts grow too numerous for you. 23But the Lord your God will give them over to you and throw them into great confusion, until they are destroyed. 24And he will give their kings into your hand, and you shall make their name perish from under heaven. No one shall be able to stand against you until you have destroyed them. 25†The carved images of their gods you shall burn with fire. You shall not covet the silver or the gold that is on them or take it for yourselves, lest you be ensnared by it, for it is an abomination to the Lord your God. 26And you shall not bring an abominable thing into your house and become devoted to destruction[2] like it. You shall utterly detest and abhor it, for it is devoted to destruction.

Remember the Lord Your God

8 [1]†“The whole commandment that I command you today you shall
be careful to do, that you may live and multiply, and go in and possess the
land that the Lord swore to give to your fathers. [2]†And you shall remember
the whole way that the Lord your God has led you these forty years in the
wilderness, that he might humble you, testing you to know what was in
your heart, whether you would keep his commandments or not. [3]†And he
humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did
not know, nor did your fathers know, that he might make you know that
man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word[3] that comes
from the mouth of the Lord. [4]Your clothing did not wear out on you and
your foot did not swell these forty years. [5]†Know then in your heart that, as
a man disciplines his son, the Lord your God disciplines you. [6]†So you shall
keep the commandments of the Lord your God by walking in his ways and
by fearing him. [7]For the Lord your God is bringing you into a good land, a
land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, flowing out in the valleys
and hills, [8]†a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and
pomegranates, a land of olive trees and honey, [9]†a land in which you will
eat bread without scarcity, in which you will lack nothing, a land whose
stones are iron, and out of whose hills you can dig copper. [10]†And you shall
eat and be full, and you shall bless the Lord your God for the good land he
has given you.

[11]†“Take care lest you forget the Lord your God by not keeping his
commandments and his rules and his statutes, which I command you today,
[12]†lest, when you have eaten and are full and have built good houses and
live in them, [13]and when your herds and flocks multiply and your silver and
gold is multiplied and all that you have is multiplied, [14]then your heart be
lifted up, and you forget the Lord your God, who brought you out of the
land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, [15]†who led you through the great
and terrifying wilderness, with its fiery serpents and scorpions and thirsty
ground where there was no water, who brought you water out of the flinty
rock, [16]†who fed you in the wilderness with manna that your fathers did not

know, that he might humble you and test you, to do you good in the end. [17]Beware lest you say in your heart, ‘My power and the might of my hand have gotten me this wealth.’ [18]†You shall remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth, that he may confirm his covenant that he swore to your fathers, as it is this day. [19]And if you forget the Lord your God and go after other gods and serve them and worship them, I solemnly warn you today that you shall surely perish. [20]Like the nations that the Lord makes to perish before you, so shall you perish, because you would not obey the voice of the Lord your God.

Not Because of Righteousness

9 [1]‡‡‡“Hear, O Israel: you are to cross over the Jordan today, to go in
to dispossess nations greater and mightier than yourselves, cities great and
fortified up to heaven, [2]†a people great and tall, the sons of the Anakim,
whom you know, and of whom you have heard it said, ‘Who can stand
before the sons of Anak?’ [3]†Know therefore today that he who goes over
before you as a consuming fire is the Lord your God. He will destroy them
and subdue them before you. So you shall drive them out and make them
perish quickly, as the Lord has promised you.

[4]‡“Do not say in your heart, after the Lord your God has thrust them out
before you, ‘It is because of my righteousness that the Lord has brought me
in to possess this land,’ whereas it is because of the wickedness of these
nations that the Lord is driving them out before you. [5]Not because of your
righteousness or the uprightness of your heart are you going in to possess
their land, but because of the wickedness of these nations the Lord your
God is driving them out from before you, and that he may confirm the word
that the Lord swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

[6]†“Know, therefore, that the Lord your God is not giving you this good
land to possess because of your righteousness, for you are a stubborn
people. [7]Remember and do not forget how you provoked the Lord your God
to wrath in the wilderness. From the day you came out of the land of Egypt
until you came to this place, you have been rebellious against the Lord.
[8]Even at Horeb you provoked the Lord to wrath, and the Lord was so angry
with you that he was ready to destroy you. [9]When I went up the mountain to
receive the tablets of stone, the tablets of the covenant that the Lord made
with you, I remained on the mountain forty days and forty nights. I neither
ate bread nor drank water. [10]†And the Lord gave me the two tablets of stone
written with the finger of God, and on them were all the words that the Lord
had spoken with you on the mountain out of the midst of the fire on the day
of the assembly. [11]And at the end of forty days and forty nights the Lord
gave me the two tablets of stone, the tablets of the covenant. [12]†Then the
Lord said to me, ‘Arise, go down quickly from here, for your people whom
you have brought from Egypt have acted corruptly. They have turned aside

quickly out of the way that I commanded them; they have made themselves a metal image.'

The Golden Calf

13 ‡ ‡ ‡ “Furthermore, the Lord said to me, ‘I have seen this people, and
behold, it is a stubborn people. 14 † Let me alone, that I may destroy them
and blot out their name from under heaven. And I will make of you a nation
mightier and greater than they.’ 15 † So I turned and came down from the
mountain, and the mountain was burning with fire. And the two tablets of
the covenant were in my two hands. 16 And I looked, and behold, you had
sinned against the Lord your God. You had made yourselves a golden[1] calf.
You had turned aside quickly from the way that the Lord had commanded
you. 17 † So I took hold of the two tablets and threw them out of my two
hands and broke them before your eyes. 18 † Then I lay prostrate before the
Lord as before, forty days and forty nights. I neither ate bread nor drank
water, because of all the sin that you had committed, in doing what was evil
in the sight of the Lord to provoke him to anger. 19 † For I was afraid of the
anger and hot displeasure that the Lord bore against you, so that he was
ready to destroy you. But the Lord listened to me that time also. 20 † And the
Lord was so angry with Aaron that he was ready to destroy him. And I
prayed for Aaron also at the same time. 21 † Then I took the sinful thing, the
calf that you had made, and burned it with fire and crushed it, grinding it
very small, until it was as fine as dust. And I threw the dust of it into the
brook that ran down from the mountain.

22 † “At Taberah also, and at Massah and at Kibroth-hattaavah you
provoked the Lord to wrath. 23 And when the Lord sent you from Kadesh-
barnea, saying, ‘Go up and take possession of the land that I have given
you,’ then you rebelled against the commandment of the Lord your God and
did not believe him or obey his voice. 24 You have been rebellious against
the Lord from the day that I knew you.

25 † “So I lay prostrate before the Lord for these forty days and forty
nights, because the Lord had said he would destroy you. 26 † And I prayed to
the Lord, ‘O Lord God, do not destroy your people and your heritage, whom
you have redeemed through your greatness, whom you have brought out of
Egypt with a mighty hand. 27 † Remember your servants, Abraham, Isaac,
and Jacob. Do not regard the stubbornness of this people, or their

wickedness or their sin, [28]lest the land from which you brought us say, “Because the Lord was not able to bring them into the land that he promised them, and because he hated them, he has brought them out to put them to death in the wilderness.” [29]For they are your people and your heritage, whom you brought out by your great power and by your outstretched arm.’

New Tablets of Stone

10 [1]‡‡“At that time the Lord said to me, ‘Cut for yourself two tablets
of stone like the first, and come up to me on the mountain and make an ark
of wood. [2]†And I will write on the tablets the words that were on the first
tablets that you broke, and you shall put them in the ark.’ [3]†So I made an
ark of acacia wood, and cut two tablets of stone like the first, and went up
the mountain with the two tablets in my hand. [4]And he wrote on the tablets,
in the same writing as before, the Ten Commandments[1] that the Lord had
spoken to you on the mountain out of the midst of the fire on the day of the
assembly. And the Lord gave them to me. [5]Then I turned and came down
from the mountain and put the tablets in the ark that I had made. And there
they are, as the Lord commanded me.”

[6]‡†(The people of Israel journeyed from Beeroth Bene-jaakan[2] to
Moserah. There Aaron died, and there he was buried. And his son Eleazar
ministered as priest in his place. [7]†From there they journeyed to Gudgodah,
and from Gudgodah to Jotbathah, a land with brooks of water. [8]†At that
time the Lord set apart the tribe of Levi to carry the ark of the covenant of
the Lord to stand before the Lord to minister to him and to bless in his
name, to this day. [9]Therefore Levi has no portion or inheritance with his
brothers. The Lord is his inheritance, as the Lord your God said to him.)

[10]†“I myself stayed on the mountain, as at the first time, forty days and
forty nights, and the Lord listened to me that time also. The Lord was
unwilling to destroy you. [11]†And the Lord said to me, ‘Arise, go on your
journey at the head of the people, so that they may go in and possess the
land, which I swore to their fathers to give them.’

Circumcise Your Heart

12 ‡ † “And now, Israel, what does the Lord your God require of you, but to
fear the Lord your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the
Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, 13 and to keep the
commandments and statutes of the Lord, which I am commanding you
today for your good? 14 † Behold, to the Lord your God belong heaven and
the heaven of heavens, the earth with all that is in it. 15 † Yet the Lord set his
heart in love on your fathers and chose their offspring after them, you above
all peoples, as you are this day. 16 † Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your
heart, and be no longer stubborn. 17 ‡ For the Lord your God is God of gods
and Lord of lords, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God, who is not
partial and takes no bribe. 18 He executes justice for the fatherless and the
widow, and loves the sojourner, giving him food and clothing. 19 † Love the
sojourner, therefore, for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt. 20 † You
shall fear the Lord your God. You shall serve him and hold fast to him, and
by his name you shall swear. 21 † He is your praise. He is your God, who has
done for you these great and terrifying things that your eyes have seen.
22 † Your fathers went down to Egypt seventy persons, and now the Lord your
God has made you as numerous as the stars of heaven.

Love and Serve the Lord

11 [1] † "You shall therefore love the Lord your God and keep his
charge, his statutes, his rules, and his commandments always. [2] † And
consider today (since I am not speaking to your children who have not
known or seen it), consider the discipline[1] of the Lord your God, his
greatness, his mighty hand and his outstretched arm, [3] † his signs and his
deeds that he did in Egypt to Pharaoh the king of Egypt and to all his land,
[4] † and what he did to the army of Egypt, to their horses and to their chariots,
how he made the water of the Red Sea flow over them as they pursued after
you, and how the Lord has destroyed them to this day, [5] and what he did to
you in the wilderness, until you came to this place, [6] and what he did to
Dathan and Abiram the sons of Eliab, son of Reuben, how the earth opened
its mouth and swallowed them up, with their households, their tents, and
every living thing that followed them, in the midst of all Israel. [7] † For your
eyes have seen all the great work of the Lord that he did.

[8] † You shall therefore keep the whole commandment that I command you
today, that you may be strong, and go in and take possession of the land that
you are going over to possess, [9] † and that you may live long in the land that
the Lord swore to your fathers to give to them and to their offspring, a land
flowing with milk and honey. [10] † For the land that you are entering to take
possession of it is not like the land of Egypt, from which you have come,
where you sowed your seed and irrigated it,[2] like a garden of vegetables.
[11] † But the land that you are going over to possess is a land of hills and
valleys, which drinks water by the rain from heaven, [12] † a land that the Lord
your God cares for. The eyes of the Lord your God are always upon it, from
the beginning of the year to the end of the year.

[13] † "And if you will indeed obey my commandments that I command you
today, to love the Lord your God, and to serve him with all your heart and
with all your soul, [14] † he[3] will give the rain for your land in its season, the
early rain and the later rain, that you may gather in your grain and your
wine and your oil. [15] And he will give grass in your fields for your livestock,
and you shall eat and be full. [16] Take care lest your heart be deceived, and

you turn aside and serve other gods and worship them; 17 † then the anger of the Lord will be kindled against you, and he will shut up the heavens, so that there will be no rain, and the land will yield no fruit, and you will perish quickly off the good land that the Lord is giving you.

18 † "You shall therefore lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul, and you shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. 19 † You shall teach them to your children, talking of them when you are sitting in your house, and when you are walking by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. 20 You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates, 21 that your days and the days of your children may be multiplied in the land that the Lord swore to your fathers to give them, as long as the heavens are above the earth. 22 † For if you will be careful to do all this commandment that I command you to do, loving the Lord your God, walking in all his ways, and holding fast to him, 23 † then the Lord will drive out all these nations before you, and you will dispossess nations greater and mightier than yourselves. 24 † Every place on which the sole of your foot treads shall be yours. Your territory shall be from the wilderness to[1] the Lebanon and from the River, the river Euphrates, to the western sea. 25 † No one shall be able to stand against you. The Lord your God will lay the fear of you and the dread of you on all the land that you shall tread, as he promised you.

26 † "See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse: 27 the blessing, if you obey the command-ments of the Lord your God, which I command you today, 28 † and the curse, if you do not obey the commandments of the Lord your God, but turn aside from the way that I am commanding you today, to go after other gods that you have not known. 29 † And when the Lord your God brings you into the land that you are entering to take possession of it, you shall set the blessing on Mount Gerizim and the curse on Mount Ebal. 30 † Are they not beyond the Jordan, west of the road, toward the going down of the sun, in the land of the Canaanites who live in the Arabah, opposite Gilgal, beside the oak[2] of Moreh? 31 For you are to cross over the Jordan to go in to take possession of the land that the Lord your God is giving you. And when you possess it and live in it, 32 you shall be careful to do all the statutes and the rules that I am setting before you today.

The Lord's Chosen Place of Worship

12 [1]†† "These are the statutes and rules that you shall be careful to do
in the land that the Lord, the God of your fathers, has given you to possess,
all the days that you live on the earth. [2]† You shall surely destroy all the
places where the nations whom you shall dispossess served their gods, on
the high mountains and on the hills and under every green tree. [3]† You shall
tear down their altars and dash in pieces their pillars and burn their Asherim
with fire. You shall chop down the carved images of their gods and destroy
their name out of that place. [4]† You shall not worship the Lord your God in
that way. [5]† But you shall seek the place that the Lord your God will choose
out of all your tribes to put his name and make his habitation[1] there. There
you shall go, [6]† and there you shall bring your burnt offerings and your
sacrifices, your tithes and the contribution that you present, your vow
offerings, your freewill offerings, and the firstborn of your herd and of your
flock. [7]† And there you shall eat before the Lord your God, and you shall
rejoice, you and your households, in all that you undertake, in which the
Lord your God has blessed you.

[8]† "You shall not do according to all that we are doing here today,
everyone doing whatever is right in his own eyes, [9]† for you have not as yet
come to the rest and to the inheritance that the Lord your God is giving you.
[10]† But when you go over the Jordan and live in the land that the Lord your
God is giving you to inherit, and when he gives you rest from all your
enemies around, so that you live in safety, [11]† then to the place that the Lord
your God will choose, to make his name dwell there, there you shall bring
all that I command you: your burnt offerings and your sacrifices, your tithes
and the contribution that you present, and all your finest vow offerings that
you vow to the Lord. [12]† And you shall rejoice before the Lord your God,
you and your sons and your daughters, your male servants and your female
servants, and the Levite that is within your towns, since he has no portion or
inheritance with you. [13]Take care that you do not offer your burnt offerings
at any place that you see, [14]but at the place that the Lord will choose in one

of your tribes, there you shall offer your burnt offerings, and there you shall do all that I am commanding you.

15 † "However, you may slaughter and eat meat within any of your towns, as much as you desire, according to the blessing of the LORD your God that he has given you. The unclean and the clean may eat of it, as of the gazelle and as of the deer. 16 † Only you shall not eat the blood; you shall pour it out on the earth like water. 17 You may not eat within your towns the tithe of your grain or of your wine or of your oil, or the firstborn of your herd or of your flock, or any of your vow offerings that you vow, or your freewill offerings or the contribution that you present, 18 but you shall eat them before the LORD your God in the place that the LORD your God will choose, you and your son and your daughter, your male servant and your female servant, and the Levite who is within your towns. And you shall rejoice before the LORD your God in all that you undertake. 19 Take care that you do not neglect the Levite as long as you live in your land.

20 "When the LORD your God enlarges your territory, as he has promised you, and you say, 'I will eat meat,' because you crave meat, you may eat meat whenever you desire. 21 † If the place that the LORD your God will choose to put his name there is too far from you, then you may kill any of your herd or your flock, which the LORD has given you, as I have commanded you, and you may eat within your towns whenever you desire. 22 Just as the gazelle or the deer is eaten, so you may eat of it. The unclean and the clean alike may eat of it. 23 † Only be sure that you do not eat the blood, for the blood is the life, and you shall not eat the life with the flesh. 24 You shall not eat it; you shall pour it out on the earth like water. 25 You shall not eat it, that all may go well with you and with your children after you, when you do what is right in the sight of the LORD. 26 † But the holy things that are due from you, and your vow offerings, you shall take, and you shall go to the place that the LORD will choose, 27 and offer your burnt offerings, the flesh and the blood, on the altar of the LORD your God. The blood of your sacrifices shall be poured out on the altar of the LORD your God, but the flesh you may eat. 28 Be careful to obey all these words that I command you, that it may go well with you and with your children after you forever, when you do what is good and right in the sight of the LORD your God.

Warning Against Idolatry

29 † “When the Lord your God cuts off before you the nations whom you
go in to dispossess, and you dispossess them and dwell in their land, 30 † take
care that you be not ensnared to follow them, after they have been
destroyed before you, and that you do not inquire about their gods, saying,
‘How did these nations serve their gods?—that I also may do the same.’
31 † You shall not worship the Lord your God in that way, for every
abominable thing that the Lord hates they have done for their gods, for they
even burn their sons and their daughters in the fire to their gods.
32 † [1] “Everything that I command you, you shall be careful to do. You
shall not add to it or take from it.

13 1 † “If a prophet or a dreamer of dreams arises among you and
gives you a sign or a wonder, 2 † and the sign or wonder that he tells you
comes to pass, and if he says, ‘Let us go after other gods,’ which you have
not known, ‘and let us serve them,’ 3 † you shall not listen to the words of
that prophet or that dreamer of dreams. For the Lord your God is testing
you, to know whether you love the Lord your God with all your heart and
with all your soul. 4 † You shall walk after the Lord your God and fear him
and keep his commandments and obey his voice, and you shall serve him
and hold fast to him. 5 † But that prophet or that dreamer of dreams shall be
put to death, because he has taught rebellion against the Lord your God,
who brought you out of the land of Egypt and redeemed you out of the
house of slavery, to make you leave the way in which the Lord your God
commanded you to walk. So you shall purge the evil[2] from your midst.
6 † “If your brother, the son of your mother, or your son or your daughter
or the wife you embrace[3] or your friend who is as your own soul entices
you secretly, saying, ‘Let us go and serve other gods,’ which neither you nor
your fathers have known, 7 some of the gods of the peoples who are around
you, whether near you or far off from you, from the one end of the earth to
the other, 8 you shall not yield to him or listen to him, nor shall your eye pity
him, nor shall you spare him, nor shall you conceal him. 9 † But you shall kill
him. Your hand shall be first against him to put him to death, and afterward

the hand of all the people. [10]You shall stone him to death with stones, because he sought to draw you away from the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. [11]And all Israel shall hear and fear and never again do any such wickedness as this among you.

[12]“If you hear in one of your cities, which the Lord your God is giving you to dwell there, [13]† that certain worthless fellows have gone out among you and have drawn away the inhabitants of their city, saying, ‘Let us go and serve other gods,’ which you have not known, [14]† then you shall inquire and make search and ask diligently. And behold, if it be true and certain that such an abomination has been done among you, [15]† you shall surely put the inhabitants of that city to the sword, devoting it to destruction,[1] all who are in it and its cattle, with the edge of the sword. [16]† You shall gather all its spoil into the midst of its open square and burn the city and all its spoil with fire, as a whole burnt offering to the Lord your God. It shall be a heap forever. It shall not be built again. [17]† None of the devoted things shall stick to your hand, that the Lord may turn from the fierceness of his anger and show you mercy and have compassion on you and multiply you, as he swore to your fathers, [18]if you obey the voice of the Lord your God, keeping all his commandments that I am commanding you today, and doing what is right in the sight of the Lord your God.

Clean and Unclean Food

14 [1]‡‡“You are the sons of the Lord your God. You shall not cut
yourselves or make any baldness on your foreheads for the dead. [2]†For you
are a people holy to the Lord your God, and the Lord has chosen you to be a
people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the
face of the earth.

[3]‡‡“You shall not eat any abomination. [4]These are the animals you may
eat: the ox, the sheep, the goat, [5]the deer, the gazelle, the roebuck, the wild
goat, the ibex,[2] the antelope, and the mountain sheep. [6]Every animal that
parts the hoof and has the hoof cloven in two and chews the cud, among the
animals, you may eat. [7]Yet of those that chew the cud or have the hoof
cloven you shall not eat these: the camel, the hare, and the rock badger,
because they chew the cud but do not part the hoof, are unclean for you.
[8]And the pig, because it parts the hoof but does not chew the cud, is unclean
for you. Their flesh you shall not eat, and their carcasses you shall not
touch.

[9]“Of all that are in the waters you may eat these: whatever has fins and
scales you may eat. [10]And whatever does not have fins and scales you shall
not eat; it is unclean for you.

[11]“You may eat all clean birds. [12]But these are the ones that you shall not
eat: the eagle,[3] the bearded vulture, the black vulture, [13]the kite, the falcon
of any kind; [14]every raven of any kind; [15]the ostrich, the nighthawk, the sea
gull, the hawk of any kind; [16]the little owl and the short-eared owl, the barn
owl [17]and the tawny owl, the carrion vulture and the cormorant, [18]the stork,
the heron of any kind; the hoopoe and the bat. [19]And all winged insects are
unclean for you; they shall not be eaten. [20]All clean winged things you may
eat.

[21]†“You shall not eat anything that has died naturally. You may give it to
the sojourner who is within your towns, that he may eat it, or you may sell
it to a foreigner. For you are a people holy to the Lord your God.

“You shall not boil a young goat in its mother’s milk.

Tithes

22 ‡‡“You shall tithe all the yield of your seed that comes from the field
year by year. 23 †And before the Lord your God, in the place that he will
choose, to make his name dwell there, you shall eat the tithe of your grain,
of your wine, and of your oil, and the firstborn of your herd and flock, that
you may learn to fear the Lord your God always. 24 †And if the way is too
long for you, so that you are not able to carry the tithe, when the Lord your
God blesses you, because the place is too far from you, which the Lord your
God chooses, to set his name there, 25 then you shall turn it into money and
bind up the money in your hand and go to the place that the Lord your God
chooses 26 †and spend the money for whatever you desire—oxen or sheep or
wine or strong drink, whatever your appetite craves. And you shall eat there
before the Lord your God and rejoice, you and your household. 27 †And you
shall not neglect the Levite who is within your towns, for he has no portion
or inheritance with you.

28 ‡“At the end of every three years you shall bring out all the tithe of
your produce in the same year and lay it up within your towns. 29 †And the
Levite, because he has no portion or inheritance with you, and the
sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow, who are within your towns, shall
come and eat and be filled, that the Lord your God may bless you in all the
work of your hands that you do.

The Sabbatical Year

15 [1]‡†“At the end of every seven years you shall grant a release.
[2]And this is the manner of the release: every creditor shall release what he
has lent to his neighbor. He shall not exact it of his neighbor, his brother,
because the Lord's release has been proclaimed. [3]Of a foreigner you may
exact it, but whatever of yours is with your brother your hand shall release.
[4]†But there will be no poor among you; for the Lord will bless you in the
land that the Lord your God is giving you for an inheritance to possess— [5]if
only you will strictly obey the voice of the Lord your God, being careful to
do all this commandment that I command you today. [6]†For the Lord your
God will bless you, as he promised you, and you shall lend to many nations,
but you shall not borrow, and you shall rule over many nations, but they
shall not rule over you.

[7]‡†“If among you, one of your brothers should become poor, in any of
your towns within your land that the Lord your God is giving you, you shall
not harden your heart or shut your hand against your poor brother, [8]but you
shall open your hand to him and lend him sufficient for his need, whatever
it may be. [9]Take care lest there be an unworthy thought in your heart and
you say, 'The seventh year, the year of release is near,' and your eye look
grudgingly[1] on your poor brother, and you give him nothing, and he cry to
the Lord against you, and you be guilty of sin. [10]†You shall give to him
freely, and your heart shall not be grudging when you give to him, because
for this the Lord your God will bless you in all your work and in all that you
undertake. [11]†For there will never cease to be poor in the land. Therefore I
command you, 'You shall open wide your hand to your brother, to the
needy and to the poor, in your land.'

[12]‡“If your brother, a Hebrew man or a Hebrew woman, is sold[2] to you,
he shall serve you six years, and in the seventh year you shall let him go
free from you. [13]And when you let him go free from you, you shall not let
him go empty-handed. [14]†You shall furnish him liberally out of your flock,
out of your threshing floor, and out of your winepress. As the Lord your
God has blessed you, you shall give to him. [15]†You shall remember that you

were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the Lord your God redeemed you; therefore I command you this today. 16 †But if he says to you, ‘I will not go out from you,’ because he loves you and your household, since he is well-off with you, 17then you shall take an awl, and put it through his ear into the door, and he shall be your slave forever. And to your female slave you shall do the same. 18It shall not seem hard to you when you let him go free from you, for at half the cost of a hired servant he has served you six years. So the Lord your God will bless you in all that you do.

19 †“All the firstborn males that are born of your herd and flock you shall dedicate to the Lord your God. You shall do no work with the firstborn of your herd, nor shear the firstborn of your flock. 20You shall eat it, you and your household, before the Lord your God year by year at the place that the Lord will choose. 21 †But if it has any blemish, if it is lame or blind or has any serious blemish whatever, you shall not sacrifice it to the Lord your God. 22 †You shall eat it within your towns. The unclean and the clean alike may eat it, as though it were a gazelle or a deer. 23Only you shall not eat its blood; you shall pour it out on the ground like water.

Passover

16 [1]†‡†“Observe the month of Abib and keep the Passover to the Lord your God, for in the month of Abib the Lord your God brought you out of Egypt by night. [2]†And you shall offer the Passover sacrifice to the Lord your God, from the flock or the herd, at the place that the Lord will choose, to make his name dwell there. [3]†You shall eat no leavened bread with it. Seven days you shall eat it with unleavened bread, the bread of affliction—for you came out of the land of Egypt in haste—that all the days of your life you may remember the day when you came out of the land of Egypt. [4]No leaven shall be seen with you in all your territory for seven days, nor shall any of the flesh that you sacrifice on the evening of the first day remain all night until morning. [5]You may not offer the Passover sacrifice within any of your towns that the Lord your God is giving you, [6]†but at the place that the Lord your God will choose, to make his name dwell in it, there you shall offer the Passover sacrifice, in the evening at sunset, at the time you came out of Egypt. [7]†And you shall cook it and eat it at the place that the Lord your God will choose. And in the morning you shall turn and go to your tents. [8]†For six days you shall eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day there shall be a solemn assembly to the Lord your God. You shall do no work on it.

The Feast of Weeks

9 “You shall count seven weeks. Begin to count the seven weeks from
the time the sickle is first put to the standing grain. 10 Then you shall keep
the Feast of Weeks to the Lord your God with the tribute of a freewill
offering from your hand, which you shall give as the Lord your God blesses
you. 11 And you shall rejoice before the Lord your God, you and your son
and your daughter, your male servant and your female servant, the Levite
who is within your towns, the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow who
are among you, at the place that the Lord your God will choose, to make his
name dwell there. 12 You shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt; and
you shall be careful to observe these statutes.

The Feast of Booths

13 ‡ ‡ “You shall keep the Feast of Booths seven days, when you have
gathered in the produce from your threshing floor and your winepress.
14 † You shall rejoice in your feast, you and your son and your daughter, your
male servant and your female servant, the Levite, the sojourner, the
fatherless, and the widow who are within your towns. 15 † For seven days you
shall keep the feast to the Lord your God at the place that the Lord will
choose, because the Lord your God will bless you in all your produce and in
all the work of your hands, so that you will be altogether joyful.
16 † “Three times a year all your males shall appear before the Lord your
God at the place that he will choose: at the Feast of Unleavened Bread, at
the Feast of Weeks, and at the Feast of Booths. They shall not appear before
the Lord empty-handed. 17 Every man shall give as he is able, according to
the blessing of the Lord your God that he has given you.

Justice

[18] ‡ ‡ ‡ “You shall appoint judges and officers in all your towns that the Lord your God is giving you, according to your tribes, and they shall judge the people with righteous judgment. [19] † You shall not pervert justice. You shall not show partiality, and you shall not accept a bribe, for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and subverts the cause of the righteous. [20] Justice, and only justice, you shall follow, that you may live and inherit the land that the Lord your God is giving you.

Forbidden Forms of Worship

21 ‡ ‡ “You shall not plant any tree as an Asherah beside the altar of the
Lord your God that you shall make. 22 And you shall not set up a pillar,
which the Lord your God hates.

17 [1]†“You shall not sacrifice to the Lord your God an ox or a sheep in which is a blemish, any defect whatever, for that is an abomination to the Lord your God.

[2]“If there is found among you, within any of your towns that the Lord your God is giving you, a man or woman who does what is evil in the sight of the Lord your God, in transgressing his covenant, [3]and has gone and served other gods and worshiped them, or the sun or the moon or any of the host of heaven, which I have forbidden, [4]†and it is told you and you hear of it, then you shall inquire diligently, and if it is true and certain that such an abomination has been done in Israel, [5]† then you shall bring out to your gates that man or woman who has done this evil thing, and you shall stone that man or woman to death with stones. [6]† On the evidence of two witnesses or of three witnesses the one who is to die shall be put to death; a person shall not be put to death on the evidence of one witness. [7]†The hand of the witnesses shall be first against him to put him to death, and afterward the hand of all the people. So you shall purge[1] the evil[2] from your midst.

Legal Decisions by Priests and Judges

8 ‡‡“If any case arises requiring decision between one kind of homicide
and another, one kind of legal right and another, or one kind of assault and
another, any case within your towns that is too difficult for you, then you
shall arise and go up to the place that the Lord your God will choose. 9And
you shall come to the Levitical priests and to the judge who is in office in
those days, and you shall consult them, and they shall declare to you the
decision. 10†Then you shall do according to what they declare to you from
that place that the Lord will choose. And you shall be careful to do
according to all that they direct you. 11According to the instructions that
they give you, and according to the decision which they pronounce to you,
you shall do. You shall not turn aside from the verdict that they declare to
you, either to the right hand or to the left. 12 † The man who acts
presumptuously by not obeying the priest who stands to minister there
before the Lord your God, or the judge, that man shall die. So you shall
purge the evil from Israel. 13And all the people shall hear and fear and not
act presumptuously again.

Laws Concerning Israel's Kings

14 “When you come to the land that the Lord your God is giving you, and
you possess it and dwell in it and then say, ‘I will set a king over me, like
all the nations that are around me,’ 15 you may indeed set a king over you
whom the Lord your God will choose. One from among your brothers you
shall set as king over you. You may not put a foreigner over you, who is not
your brother. 16 Only he must not acquire many horses for himself or cause
the people to return to Egypt in order to acquire many horses, since the Lord
has said to you, ‘You shall never return that way again.’ 17 And he shall not
acquire many wives for himself, lest his heart turn away, nor shall he
acquire for himself excessive silver and gold.

18 “And when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write for
himself in a book a copy of this law, approved by[1] the Levitical priests.
19 And it shall be with him, and he shall read in it all the days of his life,
that he may learn to fear the Lord his God by keeping all the words of this
law and these statutes, and doing them, 20 that his heart may not be lifted up
above his brothers, and that he may not turn aside from the commandment,
either to the right hand or to the left, so that he may continue long in his
kingdom, he and his children, in Israel.

Provision for Priests and Levites

18 [1] ‡ † “The Levitical priests, all the tribe of Levi, shall have no
portion or inheritance with Israel. They shall eat the Lord’s food offerings[2]
as their[3] inheritance. [2] † They shall have no inheritance among their
brothers; the Lord is their inheritance, as he promised them. [3]And this shall
be the priests’ due from the people, from those offering a sacrifice, whether
an ox or a sheep: they shall give to the priest the shoulder and the two
cheeks and the stomach. [4]The firstfruits of your grain, of your wine and of
your oil, and the first fleece of your sheep, you shall give him. [5] † For the
Lord your God has chosen him out of all your tribes to stand and minister in
the name of the Lord, him and his sons for all time.

[6] ‡ “And if a Levite comes from any of your towns out of all Israel, where
he lives—and he may come when he desires[4]—to the place that the Lord
will choose, [7]and ministers in the name of the Lord his God, like all his
fellow Levites who stand to minister there before the Lord, [8] † then he may
have equal portions to eat, besides what he receives from the sale of his
patrimony.[5]

Abominable Practices

9 ‡ † “When you come into the land that the Lord your God is giving you,
you shall not learn to follow the abominable practices of those nations.
10 ‡ There shall not be found among you anyone who burns his son or his
daughter as an offering,[1] anyone who practices divination or tells fortunes
or interprets omens, or a sorcerer 11 or a charmer or a medium or a
necromancer or one who inquires of the dead, 12 † for whoever does these
things is an abomination to the Lord. And because of these abominations the
Lord your God is driving them out before you. 13 † You shall be blameless
before the Lord your God, 14 † for these nations, which you are about to
dispossess, listen to fortune-tellers and to diviners. But as for you, the Lord
your God has not allowed you to do this.

A New Prophet like Moses

15 ‡ † “The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from
among you, from your brothers—it is to him you shall listen— 16 ‡ just as
you desired of the Lord your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly,
when you said, ‘Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God or see
this great fire any more, lest I die.’ 17 † And the Lord said to me, ‘They are
right in what they have spoken. 18 † I will raise up for them a prophet like
you from among their brothers. And I will put my words in his mouth, and
he shall speak to them all that I command him. 19 † And whoever will not
listen to my words that he shall speak in my name, I myself will require it
of him. 20 † But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in my name that I
have not commanded him to speak, or[1] who speaks in the name of other
gods, that same prophet shall die.’ 21 And if you say in your heart, ‘How may
we know the word that the Lord has not spoken?’— 22 † when a prophet
speaks in the name of the Lord, if the word does not come to pass or come
true, that is a word that the Lord has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it
presumptuously. You need not be afraid of him.

Laws Concerning Cities of Refuge

19 [1]‡‡“When the Lord your God cuts off the nations whose land the Lord your God is giving you, and you dispossess them and dwell in their cities and in their houses, [2]you shall set apart three cities for yourselves in the land that the Lord your God is giving you to possess. [3]You shall measure the distances[2] and divide into three parts the area of the land that the Lord your God gives you as a possession, so that any manslayer can flee to them.

[4]‡“This is the provision for the manslayer, who by fleeing there may save his life. If anyone kills his neighbor unintentionally without having hated him in the past— [5]as when someone goes into the forest with his neighbor to cut wood, and his hand swings the axe to cut down a tree, and the head slips from the handle and strikes his neighbor so that he dies—he may flee to one of these cities and live, [6]lest the avenger of blood in hot anger pursue the manslayer and overtake him, because the way is long, and strike him fatally, though the man did not deserve to die, since he had not hated his neighbor in the past. [7]Therefore I command you, You shall set apart three cities. [8]‡And if the Lord your God enlarges your territory, as he has sworn to your fathers, and gives you all the land that he promised to give to your fathers— [9]†provided you are careful to keep all this commandment, which I command you today, by loving the Lord your God and by walking ever in his ways—then you shall add three other cities to these three, [10]† lest innocent blood be shed in your land that the Lord your God is giving you for an inheritance, and so the guilt of bloodshed be upon you.

[11]‡“But if anyone hates his neighbor and lies in wait for him and attacks him and strikes him fatally so that he dies, and he flees into one of these cities, [12]†then the elders of his city shall send and take him from there, and hand him over to the avenger of blood, so that he may die. [13]†Your eye shall not pity him, but you shall purge the guilt of innocent blood[3] from Israel, so that it may be well with you.

Property Boundaries

14 ☥☥"You shall not move your neighbor's landmark, which the men of old
have set, in the inheritance that you will hold in the land that the Lord your
God is giving you to possess.

Laws Concerning Witnesses

15 ‡ ‡ “A single witness shall not suffice against a person for any crime or
for any wrong in connection with any offense that he has committed. Only
on the evidence of two witnesses or of three witnesses shall a charge be
established. 16 If a malicious witness arises to accuse a person of
wrongdoing, 17 † then both parties to the dispute shall appear before the Lord,
before the priests and the judges who are in office in those days. 18 ‡ The
judges shall inquire diligently, and if the witness is a false witness and has
accused his brother falsely, 19 then you shall do to him as he had meant to do
to his brother. So you shall purge the evil[1] from your midst. 20 † And the rest
shall hear and fear, and shall never again commit any such evil among you.
21 † Your eye shall not pity. It shall be life for life, eye for eye, tooth for
tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.

Laws Concerning Warfare

20 [1]†“When you go out to war against your enemies, and see horses
and chariots and an army larger than your own, you shall not be afraid of
them, for the Lord your God is with you, who brought you up out of the
land of Egypt. [2]† And when you draw near to the battle, the priest shall
come forward and speak to the people [3]and shall say to them, ‘Hear, O
Israel, today you are drawing near for battle against your enemies: let not
your heart faint. Do not fear or panic or be in dread of them, [4]for the Lord
your God is he who goes with you to fight for you against your enemies, to
give you the victory.’ [5]†Then the officers shall speak to the people, saying,
‘Is there any man who has built a new house and has not dedicated it? Let
him go back to his house, lest he die in the battle and another man dedicate
it. [6]And is there any man who has planted a vineyard and has not enjoyed its
fruit? Let him go back to his house, lest he die in the battle and another man
enjoy its fruit. [7]And is there any man who has betrothed a wife and has not
taken her? Let him go back to his house, lest he die in the battle and another
man take her.’ [8]And the officers shall speak further to the people, and say,
‘Is there any man who is fearful and fainthearted? Let him go back to his
house, lest he make the heart of his fellows melt like his own.’ [9]†And when
the officers have finished speaking to the people, then commanders shall be
appointed at the head of the people.

[10]††“When you draw near to a city to fight against it, offer terms of peace
to it. [11]And if it responds to you peaceably and it opens to you, then all the
people who are found in it shall do forced labor for you and shall serve you.
[12]†But if it makes no peace with you, but makes war against you, then you
shall besiege it. [13]And when the Lord your God gives it into your hand, you
shall put all its males to the sword, [14]but the women and the little ones, the
livestock, and everything else in the city, all its spoil, you shall take as
plunder for yourselves. And you shall enjoy the spoil of your enemies,
which the Lord your God has given you. [15]†Thus you shall do to all the
cities that are very far from you, which are not cities of the nations here.
[16]†But in the cities of these peoples that the Lord your God is giving you for

an inheritance, you shall save alive nothing that breathes, [17]but you shall devote them to complete destruction,[1] the Hittites and the Amorites, the Canaanites and the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites, as the Lord your God has commanded, [18]† that they may not teach you to do according to all their abominable practices that they have done for their gods, and so you sin against the Lord your God.

[19]† "When you besiege a city for a long time, making war against it in order to take it, you shall not destroy its trees by wielding an axe against them. You may eat from them, but you shall not cut them down. Are the trees in the field human, that they should be besieged by you? [20]Only the trees that you know are not trees for food you may destroy and cut down, that you may build siegeworks against the city that makes war with you, until it falls.

Atonement for Unsolved Murders

21 [1]‡†“If in the land that the Lord your God is giving you to possess
someone is found slain, lying in the open country, and it is not known who
killed him, [2]† then your elders and your judges shall come out, and they
shall measure the distance to the surrounding cities. [3]‡And the elders of the
city that is nearest to the slain man shall take a heifer that has never been
worked and that has not pulled in a yoke. [4]†And the elders of that city shall
bring the heifer down to a valley with running water, which is neither
plowed nor sown, and shall break the heifer's neck there in the valley.
[5]†Then the priests, the sons of Levi, shall come forward, for the Lord your
God has chosen them to minister to him and to bless in the name of the
Lord, and by their word every dispute and every assault shall be settled.
[6]‡And all the elders of that city nearest to the slain man shall wash their
hands over the heifer whose neck was broken in the valley, [7]and they shall
testify, 'Our hands did not shed this blood, nor did our eyes see it shed.
[8]† Accept atonement, O Lord, for your people Israel, whom you have
redeemed, and do not set the guilt of innocent blood in the midst of your
people Israel, so that their blood guilt be atoned for.' [9]So you shall purge the
guilt of innocent blood from your midst, when you do what is right in the
sight of the Lord.

Marrying Female Captives

10 ‡‡“When you go out to war against your enemies, and the Lord your
God gives them into your hand and you take them captive, 11 †and you see
among the captives a beautiful woman, and you desire to take her to be your
wife, 12 ‡and you bring her home to your house, she shall shave her head and
pare her nails. 13 And she shall take off the clothes in which she was
captured and shall remain in your house and lament her father and her
mother a full month. After that you may go in to her and be her husband,
and she shall be your wife. 14 †But if you no longer delight in her, you shall
let her go where she wants. But you shall not sell her for money, nor shall
you treat her as a slave, since you have humiliated her.

Inheritance Rights of the Firstborn

15 ‡ † “If a man has two wives, the one loved and the other unloved, and
both the loved and the unloved have borne him children, and if the firstborn
son belongs to the unloved,[1] 16 † then on the day when he assigns his
possessions as an inheritance to his sons, he may not treat the son of the
loved as the firstborn in preference to the son of the unloved, who is the
firstborn, 17 † but he shall acknowledge the firstborn, the son of the unloved,
by giving him a double portion of all that he has, for he is the firstfruits of
his strength. The right of the firstborn is his.

A Rebellious Son

18 ‡ ‡ “If a man has a stubborn and rebellious son who will not obey the
voice of his father or the voice of his mother, and, though they discipline
him, will not listen to them, 19 then his father and his mother shall take hold
of him and bring him out to the elders of his city at the gate of the place
where he lives, 20 † and they shall say to the elders of his city, ‘This our son
is stubborn and rebellious; he will not obey our voice; he is a glutton and a
drunkard.’ 21 † Then all the men of the city shall stone him to death with
stones. So you shall purge the evil from your midst, and all Israel shall hear,
and fear.

A Man Hanged on a Tree Is Cursed

22 ‡‡“And if a man has committed a crime punishable by death and he is
put to death, and you hang him on a tree, 23 †his body shall not remain all
night on the tree, but you shall bury him the same day, for a hanged man is
cursed by God. You shall not defile your land that the Lord your God is
giving you for an inheritance.

Various Laws

22 [1]†‡†“You shall not see your brother’s ox or his sheep going astray and ignore them. You shall take them back to your brother. [2]†And if he does not live near you and you do not know who he is, you shall bring it home to your house, and it shall stay with you until your brother seeks it. Then you shall restore it to him. [3]And you shall do the same with his donkey or with his garment, or with any lost thing of your brother’s, which he loses and you find; you may not ignore it. [4]†You shall not see your brother’s donkey or his ox fallen down by the way and ignore them. You shall help him to lift them up again.

[5]†“A woman shall not wear a man’s garment, nor shall a man put on a woman’s cloak, for whoever does these things is an abomination to the Lord your God.

[6]‡“If you come across a bird’s nest in any tree or on the ground, with young ones or eggs and the mother sitting on the young or on the eggs, you shall not take the mother with the young. [7]You shall let the mother go, but the young you may take for yourself, that it may go well with you, and that you may live long.

[8]†“When you build a new house, you shall make a parapet for your roof, that you may not bring the guilt of blood upon your house, if anyone should fall from it.

[9]‡“You shall not sow your vineyard with two kinds of seed, lest the whole yield be forfeited,[1] the crop that you have sown and the yield of the vineyard. [10]†You shall not plow with an ox and a donkey together. [11]†You shall not wear cloth of wool and linen mixed together.

[12]†“You shall make yourself tassels on the four corners of the garment with which you cover yourself.

Laws Concerning Sexual Immorality

13 ‡‡‡“If any man takes a wife and goes in to her and then hates her 14 and
accuses her of misconduct and brings a bad name upon her, saying, ‘I took
this woman, and when I came near her, I did not find in her evidence of
virginity,’ 15 then the father of the young woman and her mother shall take
and bring out the evidence of her virginity to the elders of the city in the
gate. 16 And the father of the young woman shall say to the elders, ‘I gave
my daughter to this man to marry, and he hates her; 17 and behold, he has
accused her of misconduct, saying, “I did not find in your daughter
evidence of virginity.” And yet this is the evidence of my daughter’s
virginity.’ And they shall spread the cloak before the elders of the city.
18 ‡Then the elders of that city shall take the man and whip[1] him, 19 ‡and
they shall fine him a hundred shekels[2] of silver and give them to the father
of the young woman, because he has brought a bad name upon a virgin[3] of
Israel. And she shall be his wife. He may not divorce her all his days. 20 But
if the thing is true, that evidence of virginity was not found in the young
woman, 21 ‡then they shall bring out the young woman to the door of her
father’s house, and the men of her city shall stone her to death with stones,
because she has done an outrageous thing in Israel by whoring in her
father’s house. So you shall purge the evil from your midst.

22 ‡“If a man is found lying with the wife of another man, both of them
shall die, the man who lay with the woman, and the woman. So you shall
purge the evil from Israel.

23 ‡‡“If there is a betrothed virgin, and a man meets her in the city and lies
with her, 24 then you shall bring them both out to the gate of that city, and
you shall stone them to death with stones, the young woman because she
did not cry for help though she was in the city, and the man because he
violated his neighbor’s wife. So you shall purge the evil from your midst.

25 ‡‡“But if in the open country a man meets a young woman who is
betrothed, and the man seizes her and lies with her, then only the man who
lay with her shall die. 26 But you shall do nothing to the young woman; she
has committed no offense punishable by death. For this case is like that of a
man attacking and murdering his neighbor, 27 because he met her in the open

country, and though the betrothed young woman cried for help there was no one to rescue her.

28 ✝“If a man meets a virgin who is not betrothed, and seizes her and lies
with her, and they are found, 29then the man who lay with her shall give to
the father of the young woman fifty shekels of silver, and she shall be his
wife, because he has violated her. He may not divorce her all his days.

30 ✝[4] “A man shall not take his father’s wife, so that he does not uncover
his father’s nakedness.[5]

Those Excluded from the Assembly

23 [1]†††"No one whose testicles are crushed or whose male organ is
cut off shall enter the assembly of the Lord.
[2]†"No one born of a forbidden union may enter the assembly of the Lord.
Even to the tenth generation, none of his descendants may enter the
assembly of the Lord.
[3]†"No Ammonite or Moabite may enter the assembly of the Lord. Even to
the tenth generation, none of them may enter the assembly of the Lord
forever, [4]because they did not meet you with bread and with water on the
way, when you came out of Egypt, and because they hired against you
Balaam the son of Beor from Pethor of Mesopotamia, to curse you. [5]†But
the Lord your God would not listen to Balaam; instead the Lord your God
turned the curse into a blessing for you, because the Lord your God loved
you. [6]You shall not seek their peace or their prosperity all your days forever.
[7]†"You shall not abhor an Edomite, for he is your brother. You shall not
abhor an Egyptian, because you were a sojourner in his land. [8]Children born
to them in the third generation may enter the assembly of the Lord.

Uncleanness in the Camp

9 ✝✝✝“When you are encamped against your enemies, then you shall keep
yourself from every evil thing.
10 ✝“If any man among you becomes unclean because of a nocturnal
emission, then he shall go outside the camp. He shall not come inside the
camp, 11but when evening comes, he shall bathe himself in water, and as the
sun sets, he may come inside the camp.
12“You shall have a place outside the camp, and you shall go out to it.
13And you shall have a trowel with your tools, and when you sit down
outside, you shall dig a hole with it and turn back and cover up your
excrement. 14✝Because the Lord your God walks in the midst of your camp,
to deliver you and to give up your enemies before you, therefore your camp
must be holy, so that he may not see anything indecent among you and turn
away from you.

Miscellaneous Laws

15 ‡‡ “You shall not give up to his master a slave who has escaped from his
master to you. 16 He shall dwell with you, in your midst, in the place that he
shall choose within one of your towns, wherever it suits him. You shall not
wrong him.

17 † “None of the daughters of Israel shall be a cult prostitute, and none of
the sons of Israel shall be a cult prostitute. 18 † You shall not bring the fee of
a prostitute or the wages of a dog[1] into the house of the Lord your God in
payment for any vow, for both of these are an abomination to the Lord your
God.

19 † “You shall not charge interest on loans to your brother, interest on
money, interest on food, interest on anything that is lent for interest. 20 † You
may charge a foreigner interest, but you may not charge your brother
interest, that the Lord your God may bless you in all that you undertake in
the land that you are entering to take possession of it.

21 ‡ “If you make a vow to the Lord your God, you shall not delay
fulfilling it, for the Lord your God will surely require it of you, and you will
be guilty of sin. 22 But if you refrain from vowing, you will not be guilty of
sin. 23 You shall be careful to do what has passed your lips, for you have
voluntarily vowed to the Lord your God what you have promised with your
mouth.

24 ‡ “If you go into your neighbor’s vineyard, you may eat your fill of
grapes, as many as you wish, but you shall not put any in your bag. 25 If you
go into your neighbor’s standing grain, you may pluck the ears with your
hand, but you shall not put a sickle to your neighbor’s standing grain.

Laws Concerning Divorce

24 [1]‡† “When a man takes a wife and marries her, if then she finds no
favor in his eyes because he has found some indecency in her, and he writes
her a certificate of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out of his
house, and she departs out of his house, [2]and if she goes and becomes
another man’s wife, [3]and the latter man hates her and writes her a certificate
of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house, or if the
latter man dies, who took her to be his wife, [4]† then her former husband,
who sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after she has been
defiled, for that is an abomination before the Lord. And you shall not bring
sin upon the land that the Lord your God is giving you for an inheritance.

Miscellaneous Laws

5 ‡ ‡ “When a man is newly married, he shall not go out with the army or
be liable for any other public duty. He shall be free at home one year to be
happy with his wife whom he has taken.
6 † “No one shall take a mill or an upper millstone in pledge, for that
would be taking a life in pledge.
7 † “If a man is found stealing one of his brothers of the people of Israel,
and if he treats him as a slave or sells him, then that thief shall die. So you
shall purge the evil from your midst.
8 † “Take care, in a case of leprous[1] disease, to be very careful to do
according to all that the Levitical priests shall direct you. As I commanded
them, so you shall be careful to do. 9 Remember what the Lord your God did
to Miriam on the way as you came out of Egypt.
10 ‡ “When you make your neighbor a loan of any sort, you shall not go
into his house to collect his pledge. 11 You shall stand outside, and the man
to whom you make the loan shall bring the pledge out to you. 12 ‡ And if he
is a poor man, you shall not sleep in his pledge. 13 You shall restore to him
the pledge as the sun sets, that he may sleep in his cloak and bless you. And
it shall be righteousness for you before the Lord your God.
14 † “You shall not oppress a hired servant who is poor and needy, whether
he is one of your brothers or one of the sojourners who are in your land
within your towns. 15 You shall give him his wages on the same day, before
the sun sets (for he is poor and counts on it), lest he cry against you to the
Lord, and you be guilty of sin.
16 † “Fathers shall not be put to death because of their children, nor shall
children be put to death because of their fathers. Each one shall be put to
death for his own sin.
17 “You shall not pervert the justice due to the sojourner or to the
fatherless, or take a widow’s garment in pledge, 18 † but you shall remember
that you were a slave in Egypt and the Lord your God redeemed you from
there; therefore I command you to do this.
19 ‡ ‡ “When you reap your harvest in your field and forget a sheaf in the
field, you shall not go back to get it. It shall be for the sojourner, the

fatherless, and the widow, that the LORD your God may bless you in all the work of your hands. 20When you beat your olive trees, you shall not go over them again. It shall be for the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow. 21When you gather the grapes of your vineyard, you shall not strip it afterward. It shall be for the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow. 22You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt; therefore I command you to do this.

25 1"If there is a dispute between men and they come into court and the judges decide between them, acquitting the innocent and condemning the guilty, 2† then if the guilty man deserves to be beaten, the judge shall cause him to lie down and be beaten in his presence with a number of stripes in proportion to his offense. 3† Forty stripes may be given him, but not more, lest, if one should go on to beat him with more stripes than these, your brother be degraded in your sight.

4† "You shall not muzzle an ox when it is treading out the grain.

Laws Concerning Levirate Marriage

5 ‡ † “If brothers dwell together, and one of them dies and has no son, the
wife of the dead man shall not be married outside the family to a stranger.
Her husband’s brother shall go in to her and take her as his wife and
perform the duty of a husband’s brother to her. 6 † And the first son whom
she bears shall succeed to the name of his dead brother, that his name may
not be blotted out of Israel. 7 † And if the man does not wish to take his
brother’s wife, then his brother’s wife shall go up to the gate to the elders
and say, ‘My husband’s brother refuses to perpetuate his brother’s name in
Israel; he will not perform the duty of a husband’s brother to me.’ 8 Then the
elders of his city shall call him and speak to him, and if he persists, saying,
‘I do not wish to take her,’ 9 † then his brother’s wife shall go up to him in
the presence of the elders and pull his sandal off his foot and spit in his
face. And she shall answer and say, ‘So shall it be done to the man who
does not build up his brother’s house.’ 10 † And the name of his house[1] shall
be called in Israel, ‘The house of him who had his sandal pulled off.’

Miscellaneous Laws

11 ‡‡“When men fight with one another and the wife of the one draws near
to rescue her husband from the hand of him who is beating him and puts out
her hand and seizes him by the private parts, 12 then you shall cut off her
hand. Your eye shall have no pity.

13 ‡“You shall not have in your bag two kinds of weights, a large and a
small. 14 You shall not have in your house two kinds of measures, a large and
a small. 15 A full and fair[1] weight you shall have, a full and fair measure you
shall have, that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is
giving you. 16 †For all who do such things, all who act dishonestly, are an
abomination to the Lord your God.

17 ‡“Remember what Amalek did to you on the way as you came out of
Egypt, 18 how he attacked you on the way when you were faint and weary,
and cut off your tail, those who were lagging behind you, and he did not
fear God. 19 Therefore when the Lord your God has given you rest from all
your enemies around you, in the land that the Lord your God is giving you
for an inheritance to possess, you shall blot out the memory of Amalek from
under heaven; you shall not forget.

Offerings of Firstfruits and Tithes

26 [1]†† "When you come into the land that the LORD your God is
giving you for an inheritance and have taken possession of it and live in it,
[2]† you shall take some of the first of all the fruit of the ground, which you
harvest from your land that the LORD your God is giving you, and you shall
put it in a basket, and you shall go to the place that the LORD your God will
choose, to make his name to dwell there. [3]And you shall go to the priest
who is in office at that time and say to him, 'I declare today to the LORD
your God that I have come into the land that the LORD swore to our fathers to
give us.' [4]Then the priest shall take the basket from your hand and set it
down before the altar of the LORD your God.

[5]† "And you shall make response before the LORD your God, 'A wandering
Aramean was my father. And he went down into Egypt and sojourned there,
few in number, and there he became a nation, great, mighty, and populous.
[6]† And the Egyptians treated us harshly and humiliated us and laid on us
hard labor. [7]Then we cried to the LORD, the God of our fathers, and the LORD
heard our voice and saw our affliction, our toil, and our oppression. [8]And
the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched
arm, with great deeds of terror,[2] with signs and wonders. [9]† And he brought
us into this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey.
[10]And behold, now I bring the first of the fruit of the ground, which you, O
LORD, have given me.' And you shall set it down before the LORD your God
and worship before the LORD your God. [11]And you shall rejoice in all the
good that the LORD your God has given to you and to your house, you, and
the Levite, and the sojourner who is among you.

[12]† "When you have finished paying all the tithe of your produce in the
third year, which is the year of tithing, giving it to the Levite, the sojourner,
the fatherless, and the widow, so that they may eat within your towns and
be filled, [13]† then you shall say before the LORD your God, 'I have removed
the sacred portion out of my house, and moreover, I have given it to the
Levite, the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow, according to all your
commandment that you have commanded me. I have not transgressed any
of your commandments, nor have I forgotten them. [14]I have not eaten of the

tithe while I was mourning, or removed any of it while I was unclean, or offered any of it to the dead. I have obeyed the voice of the Lord my God. I have done according to all that you have commanded me. 15 †Look down from your holy habitation, from heaven, and bless your people Israel and the ground that you have given us, as you swore to our fathers, a land flowing with milk and honey.'

16 †"This day the Lord your God commands you to do these statutes and rules. You shall therefore be careful to do them with all your heart and with all your soul. 17 †You have declared today that the Lord is your God, and that you will walk in his ways, and keep his statutes and his commandments and his rules, and will obey his voice. 18 †And the Lord has declared today that you are a people for his treasured possession, as he has promised you, and that you are to keep all his commandments, 19 †and that he will set you in praise and in fame and in honor high above all nations that he has made, and that you shall be a people holy to the Lord your God, as he promised."

The Altar on Mount Ebal

27 [1]‡†Now Moses and the elders of Israel commanded the people, saying, “Keep the whole commandment that I command you today. [2]†And on the day you cross over the Jordan to the land that the Lord your God is giving you, you shall set up large stones and plaster them with plaster. [3]†And you shall write on them all the words of this law, when you cross over to enter the land that the Lord your God is giving you, a land flowing with milk and honey, as the Lord, the God of your fathers, has promised you. [4]†And when you have crossed over the Jordan, you shall set up these stones, concerning which I command you today, on Mount Ebal, and you shall plaster them with plaster. [5]‡And there you shall build an altar to the Lord your God, an altar of stones. You shall wield no iron tool on them; [6]you shall build an altar to the Lord your God of uncut[1] stones. And you shall offer burnt offerings on it to the Lord your God, [7]and you shall sacrifice peace offerings and shall eat there, and you shall rejoice before the Lord your God. [8]And you shall write on the stones all the words of this law very plainly.”

Curses from Mount Ebal

9 ‡ ‡ † Then Moses and the Levitical priests said to all Israel, “Keep silence
and hear, O Israel: this day you have become the people of the Lord your
God. 10 † You shall therefore obey the voice of the Lord your God, keeping
his commandments and his statutes, which I command you today.”
11 That day Moses charged the people, saying, 12 ‡ † “When you have
crossed over the Jordan, these shall stand on Mount Gerizim to bless the
people: Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph, and Benjamin. 13 † And these
shall stand on Mount Ebal for the curse: Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulun,
Dan, and Naphtali. 14 And the Levites shall declare to all the men of Israel in
a loud voice:
15 ‡ “‘Cursed be the man who makes a carved or cast metal image, an
abomination to the Lord, a thing made by the hands of a craftsman, and sets
it up in secret.’ And all the people shall answer and say, ‘Amen.’
16 † “‘Cursed be anyone who dishonors his father or his mother.’ And all
the people shall say, ‘Amen.’
17 † “‘Cursed be anyone who moves his neighbor’s landmark.’ And all the
people shall say, ‘Amen.’
18 “‘Cursed be anyone who misleads a blind man on the road.’ And all the
people shall say, ‘Amen.’
19 “‘Cursed be anyone who perverts the justice due to the sojourner, the
fatherless, and the widow.’ And all the people shall say, ‘Amen.’
20 ‡ “‘Cursed be anyone who lies with his father’s wife, because he has
uncovered his father’s nakedness.’[1] And all the people shall say, ‘Amen.’
21 “‘Cursed be anyone who lies with any kind of animal.’ And all the
people shall say, ‘Amen.’
22 “‘Cursed be anyone who lies with his sister, whether the daughter of his
father or the daughter of his mother.’ And all the people shall say, ‘Amen.’
23 “‘Cursed be anyone who lies with his mother-in-law.’ And all the people
shall say, ‘Amen.’
24 † “‘Cursed be anyone who strikes down his neighbor in secret.’ And all
the people shall say, ‘Amen.’

[25] † “‘Cursed be anyone who takes a bribe to shed innocent blood.’ And all the people shall say, ‘Amen.’

[26] † “‘Cursed be anyone who does not confirm the words of this law by doing them.’ And all the people shall say, ‘Amen.’

Blessings for Obedience

28 [1]“And if you faithfully obey the voice of the Lord your God, being careful to do all his commandments that I command you today, the Lord your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth. [2]And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, if you obey the voice of the Lord your God. [3]Blessed shall you be in the city, and blessed shall you be in the field. [4]Blessed shall be the fruit of your womb and the fruit of your ground and the fruit of your cattle, the increase of your herds and the young of your flock. [5]Blessed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl. [6]Blessed shall you be when you come in, and blessed shall you be when you go out.

[7]“The Lord will cause your enemies who rise against you to be defeated before you. They shall come out against you one way and flee before you seven ways. [8]The Lord will command the blessing on you in your barns and in all that you undertake. And he will bless you in the land that the Lord your God is giving you. [9]The Lord will establish you as a people holy to himself, as he has sworn to you, if you keep the commandments of the Lord your God and walk in his ways. [10]And all the peoples of the earth shall see that you are called by the name of the Lord, and they shall be afraid of you. [11]And the Lord will make you abound in prosperity, in the fruit of your womb and in the fruit of your livestock and in the fruit of your ground, within the land that the Lord swore to your fathers to give you. [12]The Lord will open to you his good treasury, the heavens, to give the rain to your land in its season and to bless all the work of your hands. And you shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow. [13]And the Lord will make you the head and not the tail, and you shall only go up and not down, if you obey the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you today, being careful to do them, [14]and if you do not turn aside from any of the words that I command you today, to the right hand or to the left, to go after other gods to serve them.

Curses for Disobedience

15 ‡ ‡ † “But if you will not obey the voice of the Lord your God or be
careful to do all his commandments and his statutes that I command you
today, then all these curses shall come upon you and overtake you.
16 † Cursed shall you be in the city, and cursed shall you be in the field.
17 Cursed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl. 18 Cursed shall be the
fruit of your womb and the fruit of your ground, the increase of your herds
and the young of your flock. 19 Cursed shall you be when you come in, and
cursed shall you be when you go out.

20 “The Lord will send on you curses, confusion, and frustration in all that
you undertake to do, until you are destroyed and perish quickly on account
of the evil of your deeds, because you have forsaken me. 21 † The Lord will
make the pestilence stick to you until he has consumed you off the land that
you are entering to take possession of it. 22 † The Lord will strike you with
wasting disease and with fever, inflammation and fiery heat, and with
drought[1] and with blight and with mildew. They shall pursue you until you
perish. 23 † And the heavens over your head shall be bronze, and the earth
under you shall be iron. 24 The Lord will make the rain of your land powder.
From heaven dust shall come down on you until you are destroyed.

25 † “The Lord will cause you to be defeated before your enemies. You
shall go out one way against them and flee seven ways before them. And
you shall be a horror to all the kingdoms of the earth. 26 † And your dead
body shall be food for all birds of the air and for the beasts of the earth, and
there shall be no one to frighten them away. 27 † The Lord will strike you
with the boils of Egypt, and with tumors and scabs and itch, of which you
cannot be healed. 28 † The Lord will strike you with madness and blindness
and confusion of mind, 29 † and you shall grope at noonday, as the blind
grope in darkness, and you shall not prosper in your ways.[1] And you shall
be only oppressed and robbed continually, and there shall be no one to help
you. 30 ‡ † You shall betroth a wife, but another man shall ravish her. You
shall build a house, but you shall not dwell in it. You shall plant a vineyard,
but you shall not enjoy its fruit. 31 Your ox shall be slaughtered before your
eyes, but you shall not eat any of it. Your donkey shall be seized before

your face, but shall not be restored to you. Your sheep shall be given to your enemies, but there shall be no one to help you. 32 † Your sons and your daughters shall be given to another people, while your eyes look on and fail with longing for them all day long, but you shall be helpless. 33 † A nation that you have not known shall eat up the fruit of your ground and of all your labors, and you shall be only oppressed and crushed continually, 34 † so that you are driven mad by the sights that your eyes see. 35 The Lord will strike you on the knees and on the legs with grievous boils of which you cannot be healed, from the sole of your foot to the crown of your head.

36 † "The Lord will bring you and your king whom you set over you to a nation that neither you nor your fathers have known. And there you shall serve other gods of wood and stone. 37 † And you shall become a horror, a proverb, and a byword among all the peoples where the Lord will lead you away. 38 † You shall carry much seed into the field and shall gather in little, for the locust shall consume it. 39 You shall plant vineyards and dress them, but you shall neither drink of the wine nor gather the grapes, for the worm shall eat them. 40 You shall have olive trees throughout all your territory, but you shall not anoint yourself with the oil, for your olives shall drop off. 41 † You shall father sons and daughters, but they shall not be yours, for they shall go into captivity. 42 The cricket[2] shall possess all your trees and the fruit of your ground. 43 † The sojourner who is among you shall rise higher and higher above you, and you shall come down lower and lower. 44 He shall lend to you, and you shall not lend to him. He shall be the head, and you shall be the tail.

45 † "All these curses shall come upon you and pursue you and overtake you till you are destroyed, because you did not obey the voice of the Lord your God, to keep his commandments and his statutes that he commanded you. 46 † They shall be a sign and a wonder against you and your offspring forever. 47 Because you did not serve the Lord your God with joyfulness and gladness of heart, because of the abundance of all things, 48 † therefore you shall serve your enemies whom the Lord will send against you, in hunger and thirst, in nakedness, and lacking everything. And he will put a yoke of iron on your neck until he has destroyed you. 49 † The Lord will bring a nation against you from far away, from the end of the earth, swooping down like the eagle, a nation whose language you do not understand, 50 † a hard-

faced nation who shall not respect the old or show mercy to the young. [51]It shall eat the offspring of your cattle and the fruit of your ground, until you are destroyed; it also shall not leave you grain, wine, or oil, the increase of your herds or the young of your flock, until they have caused you to perish.

[52]"They shall besiege you in all your towns, until your high and fortified walls, in which you trusted, come down throughout all your land. And they shall besiege you in all your towns throughout all your land, which the LORD your God has given you. [53]† And you shall eat the fruit of your womb, the flesh of your sons and daughters, whom the LORD your God has given you, in the siege and in the distress with which your enemies shall distress you. [54]The man who is the most tender and refined among you will begrudge food to his brother, to the wife he embraces,[1] and to the last of the children whom he has left, [55]† so that he will not give to any of them any of the flesh of his children whom he is eating, because he has nothing else left, in the siege and in the distress with which your enemy shall distress you in all your towns. [56]The most tender and refined woman among you, who would not venture to set the sole of her foot on the ground because she is so delicate and tender, will begrudge to the husband she embraces,[2] to her son and to her daughter, [57]her afterbirth that comes out from between her feet and her children whom she bears, because lacking everything she will eat them secretly, in the siege and in the distress with which your enemy shall distress you in your towns.

[58]† "If you are not careful to do all the words of this law that are written in this book, that you may fear this glorious and awesome name, the LORD your God, [59]† then the LORD will bring on you and your offspring extraordinary afflictions, afflictions severe and lasting, and sicknesses grievous and lasting. [60]† And he will bring upon you again all the diseases of Egypt, of which you were afraid, and they shall cling to you. [61]Every sickness also and every affliction that is not recorded in the book of this law, the LORD will bring upon you, until you are destroyed. [62]† Whereas you were as numerous as the stars of heaven, you shall be left few in number, because you did not obey the voice of the LORD your God. [63]† And as the LORD took delight in doing you good and multiplying you, so the LORD will take delight in bringing ruin upon you and destroying you. And you shall be plucked off the land that you are entering to take possession of it.

64 “And the Lord will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the
earth to the other, and there you shall serve other gods of wood and stone,
which neither you nor your fathers have known. 65 † And among these
nations you shall find no respite, and there shall be no resting place for the
sole of your foot, but the Lord will give you there a trembling heart and
failing eyes and a languishing soul. 66 † Your life shall hang in doubt before
you. Night and day you shall be in dread and have no assurance of your life.
67 † In the morning you shall say, ‘If only it were evening!’ and at evening
you shall say, ‘If only it were morning!’ because of the dread that your heart
shall feel, and the sights that your eyes shall see. 68 † And the Lord will bring
you back in ships to Egypt, a journey that I promised that you should never
make again; and there you shall offer yourselves for sale to your enemies as
male and female slaves, but there will be no buyer.”

The Covenant Renewed in Moab

29 [1][3] These are the words of the covenant that the Lord commanded
Moses to make with the people of Israel in the land of Moab, besides the
covenant that he had made with them at Horeb.

[2][1] And Moses summoned all Israel and said to them: "You have seen all
that the Lord did before your eyes in the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh and to all
his servants and to all his land, [3]the great trials that your eyes saw, the signs,
and those great wonders. [4]† But to this day the Lord has not given you a
heart to understand or eyes to see or ears to hear. [5]‡ I have led you forty
years in the wilderness. Your clothes have not worn out on you, and your
sandals have not worn off your feet. [6]You have not eaten bread, and you
have not drunk wine or strong drink, that you may know that I am the Lord
your God. [7]And when you came to this place, Sihon the king of Heshbon
and Og the king of Bashan came out against us to battle, but we defeated
them. [8]† We took their land and gave it for an inheritance to the Reubenites,
the Gadites, and the half-tribe of the Manassites. [9]Therefore keep the words
of this covenant and do them, that you may prosper[2] in all that you do.

[10]‡ "You are standing today all of you before the Lord your God: the heads
of your tribes,[3] your elders, and your officers, all the men of Israel, [11]your
little ones, your wives, and the sojourner who is in your camp, from the one
who chops your wood to the one who draws your water, [12]† so that you may
enter into the sworn covenant of the Lord your God, which the Lord your
God is making with you today, [13]† that he may establish you today as his
people, and that he may be your God, as he promised you, and as he swore
to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. [14]† It is not with you
alone that I am making this sworn covenant, [15]† but with whoever is
standing here with us today before the Lord our God, and with whoever is
not here with us today.

[16]"You know how we lived in the land of Egypt, and how we came
through the midst of the nations through which you passed. [17]And you have
seen their detestable things, their idols of wood and stone, of silver and
gold, which were among them. [18]† Beware lest there be among you a man or

woman or clan or tribe whose heart is turning away today from the Lord our God to go and serve the gods of those nations. Beware lest there be among you a root bearing poisonous and bitter fruit, [19]†one who, when he hears the words of this sworn covenant, blesses himself in his heart, saying, ‘I shall be safe, though I walk in the stubbornness of my heart.’ This will lead to the sweeping away of moist and dry alike. [20]†The Lord will not be willing to forgive him, but rather the anger of the Lord and his jealousy will smoke against that man, and the curses written in this book will settle upon him, and the Lord will blot out his name from under heaven. [21]†And the Lord will single him out from all the tribes of Israel for calamity, in accordance with all the curses of the covenant written in this Book of the Law. [22]‡‡And the next generation, your children who rise up after you, and the foreigner who comes from a far land, will say, when they see the afflictions of that land and the sicknesses with which the Lord has made it sick— [23]†the whole land burned out with brimstone and salt, nothing sown and nothing growing, where no plant can sprout, an overthrow like that of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim, which the Lord overthrew in his anger and wrath— [24]all the nations will say, ‘Why has the Lord done thus to this land? What caused the heat of this great anger?’ [25]†Then people will say, ‘It is because they abandoned the covenant of the Lord, the God of their fathers, which he made with them when he brought them out of the land of Egypt, [26]and went and served other gods and worshiped them, gods whom they had not known and whom he had not allotted to them. [27]Therefore the anger of the Lord was kindled against this land, bringing upon it all the curses written in this book, [28]†and the Lord uprooted them from their land in anger and fury and great wrath, and cast them into another land, as they are this day.’

[29]†“The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.

Repentance and Forgiveness

30 [1]‡†“And when all these things come upon you, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before you, and you call them to mind among all the nations where the Lord your God has driven you, [2]†and return to the Lord your God, you and your children, and obey his voice in all that I command you today, with all your heart and with all your soul, [3]†then the Lord your God will restore your fortunes and have compassion on you, and he will gather you again from all the peoples where the Lord your God has scattered you. [4]†If your outcasts are in the uttermost parts of heaven, from there the Lord your God will gather you, and from there he will take you. [5]† And the Lord your God will bring you into the land that your fathers possessed, that you may possess it. And he will make you more prosperous and numerous than your fathers. [6]†And the Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring, so that you will love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live. [7]†And the Lord your God will put all these curses on your foes and enemies who persecuted you. [8]†And you shall again obey the voice of the Lord and keep all his commandments that I command you today. [9]The Lord your God will make you abundantly prosperous in all the work of your hand, in the fruit of your womb and in the fruit of your cattle and in the fruit of your ground. For the Lord will again take delight in prospering you, as he took delight in your fathers, [10]†when you obey the voice of the Lord your God, to keep his commandments and his statutes that are written in this Book of the Law, when you turn to the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul.

The Choice of Life and Death

11 ‡ ‡ “For this commandment that I command you today is not too hard for
you, neither is it far off. 12 ‡ It is not in heaven, that you should say, ‘Who
will ascend to heaven for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do
it?’ 13 Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say, ‘Who will go over the
sea for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?’ 14 But the word is
very near you. It is in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can do it.

15 † “See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil. 16 † If
you obey the commandments of the Lord your God[1] that I command you
today, by loving the Lord your God, by walking in his ways, and by keeping
his commandments and his statutes and his rules,[2] then you shall live and
multiply, and the Lord your God will bless you in the land that you are
entering to take possession of it. 17 But if your heart turns away, and you will
not hear, but are drawn away to worship other gods and serve them, 18 I
declare to you today, that you shall surely perish. You shall not live long in
the land that you are going over the Jordan to enter and possess. 19 † I call
heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life
and death, blessing and curse. Therefore choose life, that you and your
offspring may live, 20 † loving the Lord your God, obeying his voice and
holding fast to him, for he is your life and length of days, that you may
dwell in the land that the Lord swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac,
and to Jacob, to give them.”

Joshua to Succeed Moses

31 [1]‡†So Moses continued to speak these words to all Israel. [2]And he said to them, “I am 120 years old today. I am no longer able to go out and come in. The Lord has said to me, ‘You shall not go over this Jordan.’ [3]†The Lord your God himself will go over before you. He will destroy these nations before you, so that you shall dispossess them, and Joshua will go over at your head, as the Lord has spoken. [4]†And the Lord will do to them as he did to Sihon and Og, the kings of the Amorites, and to their land, when he destroyed them. [5]And the Lord will give them over to you, and you shall do to them according to the whole commandment that I have commanded you. [6]‡Be strong and courageous. Do not fear or be in dread of them, for it is the Lord your God who goes with you. He will not leave you or forsake you.”

[7]Then Moses summoned Joshua and said to him in the sight of all Israel, “Be strong and courageous, for you shall go with this people into the land that the Lord has sworn to their fathers to give them, and you shall put them in possession of it. [8]†It is the Lord who goes before you. He will be with you; he will not leave you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed.”

The Reading of the Law

9 ‡† Then Moses wrote this law and gave it to the priests, the sons of Levi,
who carried the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and to all the elders of
Israel. 10 † And Moses commanded them, “At the end of every seven years,
at the set time in the year of release, at the Feast of Booths, 11 ‡ when all
Israel comes to appear before the Lord your God at the place that he will
choose, you shall read this law before all Israel in their hearing. 12 Assemble
the people, men, women, and little ones, and the sojourner within your
towns, that they may hear and learn to fear the Lord your God, and be
careful to do all the words of this law, 13 † and that their children, who have
not known it, may hear and learn to fear the Lord your God, as long as you
live in the land that you are going over the Jordan to possess.”

Joshua Commissioned to Lead Israel

14 ‡ † And the Lord said to Moses, “Behold, the days approach when you
must die. Call Joshua and present yourselves in the tent of meeting, that I
may commission him.” And Moses and Joshua went and presented
themselves in the tent of meeting. 15 † And the Lord appeared in the tent in a
pillar of cloud. And the pillar of cloud stood over the entrance of the tent.
16 † And the Lord said to Moses, “Behold, you are about to lie down with
your fathers. Then this people will rise and whore after the foreign gods
among them in the land that they are entering, and they will forsake me and
break my covenant that I have made with them. 17 † Then my anger will be
kindled against them in that day, and I will forsake them and hide my face
from them, and they will be devoured. And many evils and troubles will
come upon them, so that they will say in that day, ‘Have not these evils
come upon us because our God is not among us?’ 18 And I will surely hide
my face in that day because of all the evil that they have done, because they
have turned to other gods.
19 † “Now therefore write this song and teach it to the people of Israel. Put
it in their mouths, that this song may be a witness for me against the people
of Israel. 20 † For when I have brought them into the land flowing with milk
and honey, which I swore to give to their fathers, and they have eaten and
are full and grown fat, they will turn to other gods and serve them, and
despise me and break my covenant. 21 † And when many evils and troubles
have come upon them, this song shall confront them as a witness (for it will
live unforgotten in the mouths of their offspring). For I know what they are
inclined to do even today, before I have brought them into the land that I
swore to give.” 22 † So Moses wrote this song the same day and taught it to
the people of Israel.
23 † And the Lord commissioned Joshua the son of Nun and said, “Be
strong and courageous, for you shall bring the people of Israel into the land
that I swore to give them. I will be with you.”
24 ‡ † When Moses had finished writing the words of this law in a book to
the very end, 25 † Moses commanded the Levites who carried the ark of the
covenant of the Lord, 26 † “Take this Book of the Law and put it by the side

of the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, that it may be there for a witness against you. 27 †For I know how rebellious and stubborn you are. Behold, even today while I am yet alive with you, you have been rebellious against the Lord. How much more after my death! 28 †Assemble to me all the elders of your tribes and your officers, that I may speak these words in their ears and call heaven and earth to witness against them. 29 For I know that after my death you will surely act corruptly and turn aside from the way that I have commanded you. And in the days to come evil will befall you, because you will do what is evil in the sight of the Lord, provoking him to anger through the work of your hands.”

The Song of Moses

30 ‡‡Then Moses spoke the words of this song until they were finished, in the ears of all the assembly of Israel:

32 1 ‡“Give ear, O heavens, and I will speak, and let the earth hear the words of my mouth.

2 May my teaching drop as the rain,
my speech distill as the dew,
like gentle rain upon the tender grass,
and like showers upon the herb.
3 For I will proclaim the name of the Lord;
ascribe greatness to our God!

4 ‡ “The Rock, his work is perfect,
for all his ways are justice.
A God of faithfulness and without iniquity,
just and upright is he.
5 ‡ They have dealt corruptly with him;
they are no longer his children because they
are blemished;
they are a crooked and twisted generation.
6 ‡ Do you thus repay the Lord,
you foolish and senseless people?
Is not he your father, who created you,
who made you and established you?
7 ‡ Remember the days of old;
consider the years of many generations;
ask your father, and he will show you,
your elders, and they will tell you.
8 ‡ When the Most High gave to the nations
their inheritance,
when he divided mankind,

he fixed the borders[1] of the peoples
according to the number of the sons of God.[2]
9† But the Lord's portion is his people,
Jacob his allotted heritage.

10† "He found him in a desert land,
and in the howling waste of the wilderness;
he encircled him, he cared for him,
he kept him as the apple of his eye.
11† Like an eagle that stirs up its nest,
that flutters over its young,
spreading out its wings, catching them,
bearing them on its pinions,
12† the Lord alone guided him,
no foreign god was with him.
13†† He made him ride on the high places of the land,
and he ate the produce of the field,
and he suckled him with honey out of the rock,
and oil out of the flinty rock.
14 Curds from the herd, and milk from the flock,
with fat[3] of lambs,
rams of Bashan and goats,
with the very finest[4] of the wheat—
and you drank foaming wine made from the blood of the grape.

15† "But Jeshurun grew fat, and kicked;
you grew fat, stout, and sleek;
then he forsook God who made him
and scoffed at the Rock of his salvation.

16 They stirred him to jealousy with strange
gods;
with abominations they provoked him to
anger.
17 They sacrificed to demons that were no gods,
to gods they had never known,
to new gods that had come recently,
whom your fathers had never dreaded.
18 You were unmindful of the Rock that bore[1]
you,
and you forgot the God who gave you
birth.

19 "The Lord saw it and spurned them,
because of the provocation of his sons and
his daughters.
20 And he said, 'I will hide my face from them;
I will see what their end will be,
For they are a perverse generation,
children in whom is no faithfulness.
21 They have made me jealous with what is no
god;
they have provoked me to anger with their
idols.
So I will make them jealous with those who
are no people;
I will provoke them to anger with a foolish
nation.
22 For a fire is kindled by my anger,
and it burns to the depths of Sheol,
devours the earth and its increase,
and sets on fire the foundations of the
mountains.

23 “‘And I will heap disasters upon them;
I will spend my arrows on them;
24 they shall be wasted with hunger,
and devoured by plague
and poisonous pestilence;
I will send the teeth of beasts against them,
with the venom of things that crawl in the
dust.
25 Outdoors the sword shall bereave,
and indoors terror,
for young man and woman alike,
the nursing child with the man of gray
hairs.
26 I would have said, “I will cut them to pieces;
I will wipe them from human memory,”
27 had I not feared provocation by the enemy,
lest their adversaries should misunderstand,
lest they should say, “Our hand is
triumphant,
it was not the Lord who did all this.”’

28 “For they are a nation void of counsel,
and there is no understanding in them.
29 If they were wise, they would understand
this;
they would discern their latter end!
30 How could one have chased a thousand,
and two have put ten thousand to flight,
unless their Rock had sold them,
and the Lord had given them up?
31 For their rock is not as our Rock;
our enemies are by themselves.
32 For their vine comes from the vine of Sodom
and from the fields of Gomorrah;
their grapes are grapes of poison;

their clusters are bitter;
33 their wine is the poison of serpents
and the cruel venom of asps.
34 “‘Is not this laid up in store with me,
sealed up in my treasuries?
35 Vengeance is mine, and recompense,[1]
for the time when their foot shall slip;
for the day of their calamity is at hand,
and their doom comes swiftly.’
36† For the Lord will vindicate[2] his people
and have compassion on his servants,
when he sees that their power is gone
and there is none remaining, bond or free.
37† Then he will say, ‘Where are their gods,
the rock in which they took refuge,
38 who ate the fat of their sacrifices
and drank the wine of their drink offering?
Let them rise up and help you;
let them be your protection!

39† “‘See now that I, even I, am he,
and there is no god beside me;
I kill and I make alive;
I wound and I heal;
and there is none that can deliver out of my
hand.
40† For I lift up my hand to heaven
and swear, As I live forever,
41 if I sharpen my flashing sword[3]
and my hand takes hold on judgment,
I will take vengeance on my adversaries
and will repay those who hate me.
42† I will make my arrows drunk with blood,
and my sword shall devour flesh—

with the blood of the slain and the captives,
from the long-haired heads of the enemy.’

43† “Rejoice with him, O heavens;
bow down to him, all gods,[4]
for he avenges the blood of his children[5]
and takes vengeance on his adversaries.
He repays those who hate him[6]
and cleanses[7] his people’s land.”[8]

44†Moses came and recited all the words of this song in the hearing of the people, he and Joshua[9] the son of Nun. 45And when Moses had finished speaking all these words to all Israel, 46†he said to them, “Take to heart all the words by which I am warning you today, that you may command them to your children, that they may be careful to do all the words of this law. 47†For it is no empty word for you, but your very life, and by this word you shall live long in the land that you are going over the Jordan to possess.”

Moses' Death Foretold

48 That very day the Lord spoke to Moses, 49 "Go up this mountain of the
Abarim, Mount Nebo, which is in the land of Moab, opposite Jericho, and
view the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the people of Israel for a
possession. 50 And die on the mountain which you go up, and be gathered
to your people, as Aaron your brother died in Mount Hor and was gathered
to his people, 51 because you broke faith with me in the midst of the
people of Israel at the waters of Meribah-kadesh, in the wilderness of Zin,
and because you did not treat me as holy in the midst of the people of Israel.
52 For you shall see the land before you, but you shall not go there, into the
land that I am giving to the people of Israel."

Moses' Final Blessing on Israel

33 [1]‡†This is the blessing with which Moses the man of God blessed
the people of Israel before his death. [2]†He said,

"The LORD came from Sinai
and dawned from Seir upon us;[1]
he shone forth from Mount Paran;
he came from the ten thousands of holy ones,
with flaming fire[2] at his right hand.
[3] Yes, he loved his people,[3]
all his holy ones were in his[4] hand;
so they followed[5] in your steps,
receiving direction from you,
[4] when Moses commanded us a law,
as a possession for the assembly of Jacob.
[5]† Thus the LORD became king in Jeshurun,
when the heads of the people were
gathered,
all the tribes of Israel together.
[6]‡ "Let Reuben live, and not die,
but let his men be few."

[7]And this he said of Judah:

" Hear, O LORD, the voice of Judah,
and bring him in to his people.
With your hands contend[6] for him,
and be a help against his adversaries."

[8]†And of Levi he said,

"Give to Levi[7] your Thummim,
and your Urim to your godly one,

whom you tested at Massah,
with whom you quarreled at the waters of Meribah;
9† who said of his father and mother,
‘I regard them not’;
he disowned his brothers
and ignored his children.
For they observed your word
and kept your covenant.
10 They shall teach Jacob your rules
and Israel your law;
they shall put incense before you
and whole burnt offerings on your altar.
11 Bless, O Lord, his substance,
and accept the work of his hands;
crush the loins of his adversaries,
of those who hate him, that they rise not again.”

12†Of Benjamin he said,

“The beloved of the Lord dwells in safety.
The High God[1] surrounds him all day long,
and dwells between his shoulders.”

13And of Joseph he said,

“Blessed by the Lord be his land,
with the choicest gifts of heaven above,[2]
and of the deep that crouches beneath,
14 with the choicest fruits of the sun
and the rich yield of the months,
15 with the finest produce of the ancient mountains
and the abundance of the everlasting hills,
16† with the best gifts of the earth and its

fullness
and the favor of him who dwells in the bush.
May these rest on the head of Joseph,
on the pate of him who is prince among his
brothers.
17 A firstborn bull[3]—he has majesty,
and his horns are the horns of a wild ox;
with them he shall gore the peoples,
all of them, to the ends of the earth;
they are the ten thousands of Ephraim,
and they are the thousands of Manasseh.”

18 And of Zebulun he said,

“Rejoice, Zebulun, in your going out,
and Issachar, in your tents.
19 They shall call peoples to their mountain;
there they offer right sacrifices;
for they draw from the abundance of the seas
and the hidden treasures of the sand.”

20 † And of Gad he said,

“Blessed be he who enlarges Gad!
Gad crouches like a lion;
he tears off arm and scalp.
21 He chose the best of the land for himself,
for there a commander’s portion was
reserved;
and he came with the heads of the people,
with Israel he executed the justice of the
Lord,
and his judgments for Israel.”

22 And of Dan he said,

“ Dan is a lion’s cub
that leaps from Bashan.”

23 † And of Naphtali he said,

“O Naphtali, sated with favor,
and full of the blessing of the Lord,
possess the lake[4] and the south.”

24 † And of Asher he said,

“Most blessed of sons be Asher;
let him be the favorite of his brothers,
and let him dip his foot in oil.
25 Your bars shall be iron and bronze,
and as your days, so shall your strength be.

26 † “There is none like God, O Jeshurun,
who rides through the heavens to your help,
through the skies in his majesty.
27 † The eternal God is your dwelling place,[5]
and underneath are the everlasting arms.[6]
And he thrust out the enemy before you
and said, Destroy.
28 So Israel lived in safety,
Jacob lived alone,[7]
in a land of grain and wine,
whose heavens drop down dew.
29 † Happy are you, O Israel! Who is like you,
a people saved by the Lord,
the shield of your help,
and the sword of your triumph!
Your enemies shall come fawning to you,
and you shall tread upon their backs.”

The Death of Moses

34 [1]†‡Then Moses went up from the plains of Moab to Mount Nebo,
to the top of Pisgah, which is opposite Jericho. And the Lord showed him all
the land, Gilead as far as Dan, [2]all Naphtali, the land of Ephraim and
Manasseh, all the land of Judah as far as the western sea, [3]the Negeb, and
the Plain, that is, the Valley of Jericho the city of palm trees, as far as Zoar.
[4]And the Lord said to him, “This is the land of which I swore to Abraham,
to Isaac, and to Jacob, ‘I will give it to your offspring.’ I have let you see it
with your eyes, but you shall not go over there.” [5]So Moses the servant of
the Lord died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord,
[6]†and he buried him in the valley in the land of Moab opposite Beth-peor;
but no one knows the place of his burial to this day. [7]†Moses was 120 years
old when he died. His eye was undimmed, and his vigor unabated. [8]And the
people of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days. Then the
days of weeping and mourning for Moses were ended.

[9]†And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom, for Moses
had laid his hands on him. So the people of Israel obeyed him and did as the
Lord had commanded Moses. [10]†And there has not arisen a prophet since in
Israel like Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face, [11]none like him for all
the signs and the wonders that the Lord sent him to do in the land of Egypt,
to Pharaoh and to all his servants and to all his land, [12]and for all the mighty
power and all the great deeds of terror that Moses did in the sight of all
Israel.

Deuteronomy

OVERVIEW

Author
Moses the prophet

Date
1407/1406 BC

Place
Plains of Moab; see color map 2

People
Moses; Joshua; priests and Levites; judges, elders, and chiefs of Israel; Sihon and Og

Purpose
To present the renewal of the Sinai covenant for God's people before they entered the Promised Land

Law Themes
Devoted to destruction; hard-hearted; laws of the covenant; snare of idolatry; cursing

Gospel Themes
Redemption; "I am the LORD your God"; inheritance; righteousness by God's Word; promises of the covenant; God's love and calling; atonement; faithfulness; blessing

Memory Verses
Fair judgment (1:17); God's unchanging Word (4:2); the Lord is one (6:4–7); false prophets and the new prophet (18:15–22); God wounds and heals (32:39)

Introduction to Deuteronomy

Reading Deuteronomy

She huddled her child in a smothering embrace, scolding and weeping. The boy had toddled out of the tent to visit the animals fenced and staked outside. A bull calf drew the boy's attention. He walked beside the animal, brushing its soft, shaggy coat with his hand. The touch of his hand tickled the calf's side. It kicked, just missing the boy's head. It raised its foot again as the boy's mother pulled her child away—just in time.

In Deuteronomy, the Lord reminds Israel that they are His treasured possession (7:6; 14:2; 26:18). Moses begins his address as the Lord's prophet, reminding Israel of how the Lord delivered them from the bondage of Egypt and how they abused their freedom while in the wilderness by worshiping the golden calf. Deuteronomy delivers the Lord's rebuke against disobedience, yet it also affirms God's surpassing, parental love for His people (4:32–40).

Luther on Deuteronomy

> In the fifth book [Deuteronomy], after the people have been punished because of their disobedience, and God has enticed them a little with grace, in order that by his kindness in giving them the two kingdoms they might be moved to keep his law gladly and willingly, then Moses repeats the whole law. He repeats the story of all that has happened to the people (except for that which concerns the priesthood) and explains anew everything that belongs either to the bodily or to the spiritual governing of a people. Thus Moses, as a perfect lawgiver, fulfilled all the duties of his office. He not only gave the law, but was there when men were to fulfill it. When things went wrong, he explained the law and re-established it. Yet this explanation in the fifth book really contains nothing else than faith toward God and love toward one's neighbor, for all God's laws come to that. Therefore, down to the twentieth chapter, Moses, in his explanation of the law, guards against everything that might destroy faith in God; and from there to the end of the book he guards against everything that hinders love. (AE 35:238–39)

Moses beautifully repeats and edits into brief compass the whole history, the good deeds and the wonders of God, at the same time mentioning also the deeds of godless men. He intends to declare the glory and magnificence of God and thus to coax the people to trust the divine goodness and to fear His wrath, so that, taught by experience, they might become ready to receive His Law from the heart. For the best preparation of all for hearing the Law and for moving the hearer is that which takes place through the evangelical praise of the mercy and the wrath of God. (AE 9:16)

For first of all Moses teaches godliness. He preaches faith amply and richly. He attaches the most beautiful ceremonies, by which the common people must be grasped and held, to keep them from making up their own, which God hates. Then he busies himself with the ordering of civil government and the nurture of mutual love, and he directs and arranges everything with the most suitable and just laws. Nothing here is foolish or useless, but everything is necessary and useful, as he will easily understand who knows what it is to manage government among people that are a little too free and wise in their

> own estimation, as this Jewish nation was. In such circumstances it is often necessary to ordain and do and permit things that would otherwise be laughed at and hissed down with very good reason. I do not think that God wanted to shape people by means of such ceremonies for any reason other than that He saw that the masses were most moved and captivated by those surface displays. To keep them from being empty masks and mere spectacles, He added His Word, the stuff and substance behind the masks, as it were, that by it they might become serious and meaningful, and the people themselves might know that what they did pleased God, and that if they themselves devised others without the Word, mere games and trumpery would result. (AE 9:6–7)

For more of Luther's insights on this Book, see *Lectures on Deuteronomy* (AE 9).

Challenges for Readers

Authorship. Nineteenth-century critical scholars theorized that Deuteronomy appeared late in the kingdom period and was the Book discovered in the temple that sparked Josiah's reform (cf 2Ki 22–23). They held that the Book's content developed over many years from many authors but was finally edited in the exilic period by someone they titled the Deuteronomist (see pp 335–37). No hard evidence has ever appeared for this complex theory (see pp 3–5). Deuteronomy consistently refers to Moses' role as author, and the form of the covenant in the Book fits the manner of covenants from Moses' time (see p 127).

Title and Content. Deuteronomy literally means "second law," the title the Book received in the LXX. The title refers to the fact that Deuteronomy relates a renewal of the Law (Hbr *torah*) of Moses. See "Law," p 971.

Covenant Renewal. See p 127.

Balance of Curses and Blessings. A feature of Dt 27–28 that often causes confusion is the brief list of blessings for the covenant and the extensive list of curses. Similar imbalance also occurs in other covenants of this era, as they tended to emphasize the penalties for breaking the covenant (see p 127). However, one should also note that the term "bless" predominates in Deuteronomy, appearing more often throughout (46 times in Hbr).

The Death of Moses. Though the Book is attributed to Moses, it seems reasonable that another author provided the last chapter, which relates Moses' death.

Blessings for Readers

Although many passages in Deuteronomy describe civil and ceremonial laws for OT Israel, take special note of how Moses emphasizes the Lord's love and election of His people, which extends to believers today. Deuteronomy shows us the heart of God: His wrath and His mercy.

OUTLINE

I. Preamble (1:1–8)
II. Historical Prologue (1:9–4:43)
  A. The Appointment of Leaders (1:9–18)
  B. Spies Sent Out (1:19–25)
  C. Rebellion against the Lord (1:26–46)
  D. Wanderings in the Desert (2:1–23)
  E. Defeat of Sihon, King of Heshbon (2:24–37)
  F. Defeat of Og, King of Bashan (3:1–11)
  G. Division of the Land (3:12–20)
  H. Moses Forbidden to Cross the Jordan (3:21–29)
  I. Obedience Commanded (4:1–14)
  J. Idolatry Forbidden (4:15–31)
  K. The Lord Is God (4:32–40)
  L. Cities of Refuge (4:41–43)
III. Stipulations of the Covenant (4:44–26:19)
  A. Moral Law (4:44–11:32)
    1. Introduction to the Law (4:44–49)
    2. The Ten Commandments (ch 5)
    3. Love the Lord your God (ch 6)
    4. Driving out the nations (ch 7)
    5. Do not forget the Lord (ch 8)
    6. Not because of Israel's righteousness (9:1–6)
    7. The golden calf (9:7–29)
    8. Tablets like the first ones (10:1–11)
    9. Fear the Lord (10:12–22)
    10. Love and obey the Lord (ch 11)
  B. Ceremonial Law (12:1–16:17)

1. The one place of worship (ch 12)
2. Worshiping other gods (ch 13)
3. Clean and unclean food (14:1–21)
4. Tithes (14:22–29)
5. The year for canceling debts (15:1–11)
6. Freeing servants (15:12–18)
7. The firstborn animals (15:19–23)
8. Passover (16:1–8)
9. Feast of Weeks (16:9–12)
10. Feast of Booths (16:13–17)

C. Civil Law (16:18–26:19)

1. Judges (16:18–20)
2. Worshiping other gods (16:21–17:7)
3. Law courts (17:8–13)
4. The king (17:14–20)
5. Offerings for priests and Levites (18:1–8)
6. Detestable practices (18:9–14)
7. The prophet (18:15–22)
8. Cities of refuge (19:1–14)
9. Witnesses (19:15–21)
10. Going to war (ch 20)
11. Atonement for unsolved murders (21:1–9)
12. Marrying a captive woman (21:10–14)
13. The right of the firstborn (21:15–17)
14. A rebellious son (21:18–21)
15. Various laws (21:22–22:12)
16. Marriage violations (22:13–30)
17. Exclusion from the assembly (23:1–8)
18. Uncleanness in the camp (23:9–14)
19. Miscellaneous laws (23:15–25:19)
20. Firstfruits and tithes (26:1–15)
21. Follow the Lord's commands (26:16–19)

IV. Ratification of the Covenant (chs 27–30)

A. The Altar on Mount Ebal (27:1–8)

B. Curses from Mount Ebal (27:9–26)

C. Blessings for Obedience (28:1–14)

D. Curses for Disobedience (28:15–68)

E. Renewal of the Covenant (ch 29)
F. Prosperity after Returning to the Lord (30:1–10)
G. The Offer of Life or Death (30:11–20)

V. Leadership Succession under the Covenant (chs 31–34)
A. Joshua to Succeed Moses (31:1–8)
B. The Reading of the Law (31:9–13)
C. Israel's Rebellion Predicted (31:14–29)
D. The Song of Moses (31:30–32:47)
E. Moses to Die on Mount Nebo (32:48–52)
F. Moses Blesses the Tribes (ch 33)
G. The Death of Moses (ch 34)

Articles and Resources Related to Deuteronomy

- Meditating on God's Word
- Meals as Boundaries
- False Prophets Then and Now
- The Pattern of the Prophets

Meditating on God's Word

Christian meditation differs from all other kinds of meditation because it concentrates on what Jesus says; it is meditation on His Word as it is given to us in the Scriptures [cf Dt 6:6]. We meditate on His powerful Word. His Word has an impact on us as we pay attention to it, does its work in us as we listen to it, and reshapes us inwardly as we let it have its say. The words of Jesus actually produce our meditation. Yet that does not happen automatically but only as we put our trust in it.

As Christians, we have all experienced the power of God's Word in us as a word of judgment and salvation. Its impact on our conscience is described most vividly in Hebrews 4:12–13:

> For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And no creature is hidden from His sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.

As we meditate on God's Word, we stand spiritually naked before God and in His sight. His Word puts us face-to-face with Him. That Word penetrates and exposes the secret reaches of our hearts; it lays us bare before God and holds us accountable to Him. But, best of all, it does all this so that it can give us life and do its work in us.

[Luther's Insight]

Martin Luther explains the power of meditation on God's Word most memorably in a sermon that he preached on Christmas Day in 1519. There he speaks about "sacramental" meditation on the Gospels and their stories about Jesus:

> All the words and stories of the gospels are sacraments of a kind, sacred signs by which God works in believers what the histories signify. Just as baptism is the sacrament by which God restores us; just as absolution is the sacrament by which God forgives sins, so the words of Christ are sacraments through which he works salvation. Hence the gospel is to be taken sacramentally, that is, the words of Christ need to be meditated on as symbols through which that righteousness, power, and salvation is given which these words themselves portray…. We meditate properly on the gospel, when we do so sacramentally, for through faith the words produce what they portray. Christ was born; believe that he was born for you and you will be born again. Christ conquered death and sin; believe that he conquered them for you and you will conquer them. (WA 9:439, 442; author's translation)

When Luther speaks of the words of Christ as sacraments, he is not using the term in its narrow sense, but more broadly as a divine enactment, a sacred sign that conveys what it signifies. Neither God's Word by itself nor faith in itself produces the kind of meditation that God desires. Rather, meditation is the exercise of faith in Christ and His performative Word, for faith receives what Christ gives to us through His Word. We receive, as we believe….

[Our Spiritual Director]

Luther, in his teaching on meditation, highlights this role of the Holy Spirit as our teacher and guide. His basic assumption is that the same Spirit who inspired the Scriptures still animates them and us through them. Thus he says:

> You should meditate … not only in your heart, but also externally, by actually repeating and comparing oral speech and literal words of the book, reading and rereading them with diligent attention and reflection, so that you may see what the Holy Spirit means by them…. For God will not give you his Spirit without the external Word; so take your cue from that. His command to write, preach, read, hear, sing, speak, etc., outwardly was not given in vain. (AE 34:286)

So we receive the Holy Spirit from God the Father by meditating on the external Word, the Word that comes to us from outside, the Word that speaks to us from the Scriptures. This understanding of how God's Spirit is given through God's Word shapes the evangelical practice of meditation. Before we meditate on what is written for us in the Scriptures, we do well to pray to God the Father through His dear Son for the gift of the Spirit to guide, enlighten, and empower us. Yet we do not just pray for the Holy Spirit to direct our meditation on His Word; we actually receive the Holy Spirit as we meditate on the Word. Thus we meditate on the Word so that the Spirit will tell us what God the Father has to say and to give to us through His Son.

[The Preaching of the Spirit]

This gift of the Holy Spirit is most evident in what Luther calls the preaching of the Spirit. By this he refers to the occasional flood of inspiration and enlightenment, jubilation and empowerment that breaks in on us as we meditate on God's Word. We can't force inspiration but can only receive it when it happens. Enlightenment is given as we attend to the Scriptures and become engrossed in them as they speak personally to us. Luther gives this advice about the enlightenment that comes in meditation:

> If such an abundance of good thoughts comes to us, we ought to … make room for such thoughts, listen in silence, and under no circumstances obstruct them. The Holy Spirit himself preaches here, and one word of his sermon is far better than a thousand of our prayers. (AE 43:198)

John W. Kleinig, *Grace upon Grace: Spirituality for Today* (St. Louis: Concordia, 2008), 100–102, 110–11. See note, Ps 1:2. See also "meditate," p 842.

Meals as Boundaries

The holiness laws told the people of Israel which foods they could eat and which foods were off-limits. These laws reminded the Israelites that they were unique and protected them from mingling with pagan nations and thus getting involved with foreign gods. God began to give dietary rules already in the time of Noah. The Israelites also had dietary customs that are mentioned in Scripture. The chart below provides an overview of principles.

The law about not touching the carcass of a dead animal reveals the boundary character of holiness (Lv 11:39–40; cf 17:15–16). Uncleanness not only affected the individual but also the relationship of the individual to the community.

Boundaries of Passover

The rules of the Passover meal make this boundary character of holiness even more clear. In Ex 12:43–49, the Lord told Moses and Aaron that foreigners could not participate in the Passover meal. A boundary existed between Israel and other people. If a foreigner wanted to cross the boundary, become part of Israel, and partake of the Passover lamb, then every male in that person's household had to be circumcised. The household needed to prepare for the Passover by submitting to the covenant of Israel. In other words, the unclean people needed to receive the cleansing provided by the covenant.

In the new covenant, the apostle Paul places a similar emphasis on boundaries and preparedness. But this time the boundaries are not based on nationality or circumcision but on repentance, faith, and public confession of God's truth.

In 1Co 5, Paul urges the Corinthian congregation to expel a man unrepentant for sexual immorality. In vv 7–8, Paul mentions Christ as the Passover Lamb and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which the congregation must keep with "sincerity and truth." He then urges the congregation "not even to eat" with unrepentant people (v 11). Paul has the Lord's Supper in view as the new Passover. In 1Co 10 and 11, Paul writes about boundaries at the meals of the congregation. He warns them against partaking of idolatrous meals if they also want to receive the Lord's Supper. He calls the congregation to repentance, reviews the doctrine of the Lord's Supper with them, and reminds them to "examine" themselves before partaking of the body and blood of Christ. He also warns that dire consequences befall those who do not recognize, and confess, the actual presence of the Lord's body.

Christ at the Door

In Rv 2–3, Jesus speaks to a congregation He loves. He confronts them for their sins and calls them to repentance. He says, “I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with Me” (3:20). Jesus determines to cross the boundary that separates them and feast with them.

Christ calls to you and the members of your congregation in the same way today. He sets boundaries of right and wrong for your lives and calls you to account when you trespass. But this is all an expression of His love for you. By His Holy Supper, He makes you clean. He restores you to fellowship with Him.

False Prophets Then and Now

More than 3,400 years ago, the prophet Moses warned God's people about the coming of false prophets. He gave the people specific instructions about how to distinguish true prophets from false ones:

- False prophets would teach people to follow other gods (Dt 13:1–3).
- False prophets would speak what God had not commanded (Dt 18:20).
- False prophets would predict things that would not come true (Dt 18:22).

Moses' counsel about false prophets ends with an important note: "You need not be afraid of [them]" (Dt 18:22). With these words, Moses anticipated the fear tactics so often used by false prophets.

Old Testament Examples

As Moses predicted, false prophets plagued ancient Israel. For example, an evil spirit filled King Saul and aroused murderous envy in him (1Sm 18:10–11). The Lord grew so frustrated with Saul that He refused to answer his questions. Saul turned to a medium at En-dor for spiritual guidance (1Sm 28:4–20).

Later rulers welcomed the prophets of the Canaanite god Baal but persecuted the Lord's prophets (1Ki 18:16–40). Rather than relying exclusively on fear, later false prophets also began prophesying peace and victory in order to gain the favor of Israel's leadership (1Ki 22:12; Jer 6:13–15; Ezk 13:1–16). Jeremiah repeatedly described the activities of these false prophets (chs 23; 26–28).

New Testament Examples

Jesus also warned about the coming of false prophets (Mt 7:15–23), especially during two times that were yet to come: the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70 and the end of the world (Mt 24). Since the ascension of Jesus, false teachers seem to have taken over the role of false prophets. The apostle John teaches that the spirits of people should be tested to see whether they come from the Lord (1Jn 4:1–6). The specific test in his day was to ask whether they confessed that "Jesus Christ has come in the flesh," that is, whether they taught Jesus was truly human or merely a spirit.

In Revelation, John warns of a false prophet who will appear at the end of time and will deceive many with miraculous signs. He will convince people to follow the "beast" (or Antichrist). Whether the false prophet represents an individual or a movement remains to be seen. John concludes by stating that the false prophet and the beast will be cast into the lake of fire (19:20).

Failed Prophecies Today

Until Christ returns, God's people may anticipate the work of false prophets. The chart below lists individuals and groups whose prophecies about the return of Christ or the end of the world have failed. This is only a small sampling but includes prominent names that you may have heard on the news or seen in your local bookstore.

Abide by God's Word

Since the days of John Nelson Darby, people have repeatedly tried to predict the end of the world. Every one of these predictions has failed. But the people who publish predictions today continue to receive much attention and, often, financial gain. Do not be fooled and misled by false prophets. Apply Moses' test of prophets. Apply the apostle John's test for false teachers. Heed Jesus' warning that false prophets will stealthily seek to deceive God's people. Beware of groups that obsess about the "rapture" doctrine or the end of the world.

Before ascending to heaven, Jesus assured us that He would return. He refused to give dates to His disciples (Ac 1:7). He insisted that only the heavenly Father knew when the last things would take place (Mt 24:36). Rather than talking about these issues, Jesus called His disciples to serve as witnesses to the great and gracious salvation He accomplished through His death and resurrection. Christian, this is your focus and mission! Rejoice in Jesus' promise. Pray for His return. As you are strengthened through His Word and Sacraments, live and bear witness by His grace, confident of your future.

The Pattern of the Prophets

In 1854, mathematician George Boole published a pattern of logic that profoundly affects your life today. Using two digits, 0 and 1, Boole created the form of algebra that led to modern computers and digital technology. By reducing information to its simplest two-digit form, Boole's pattern of logic made it possible to record digital sound, shoot digital pictures, store information on tiny devices of all kinds, and send it around the world via the Internet.

Just as every message that appears on our modern computer depends on the simple two-digit logic of George Boole, so every story and message of the Bible depends on a simple twofold logic called Law and Gospel (see note, Ex 34:6–7). The Lutheran Confessions say that the proper distinction between Law and Gospel is "a particularly brilliant light" and "serves the purpose of rightly dividing God's Word and properly explaining and understanding the Scriptures of the holy prophets and apostles. We must guard this distinction with special care" (FC SD V 1). See pp xxxi–xxxii. Bible interpreters have long recognized this simple pattern in prophetic preaching. The following article will help you understand and identify this twofold pattern in Scripture.

Curses and Blessings

The twofold pattern of prophetic preaching appears in the writings of the greatest Old Testament prophet, Moses. At the end of Deuteronomy—during his extended farewell sermon—Moses summarizes the future of Israel with a service of curses and blessings the Israelites were to use when they settled the Promised Land. Here is the pattern:

Curses for disobeying
27:9–26
Blessings for obeying
28:1–14
More curses for disobeying the covenant
28:15–29:29
Blessings and prosperity
30:1–20

After Moses died, Joshua led the people into the land and settled them. He gathered them at Mount Ebal, according to God's word through Moses, and led them in renewing the covenant with "the blessing and the curse" (Jsh 8:34).

Confrontation and Comfort

A similar pattern emerges in the preaching of the next great prophet, Samuel. When Israel insisted on having its own king, like the other nations, the Lord gave them a king and a twofold message through His prophet.

Confrontation
1Sm 12:6–19

Comfort
1Sm 12:20–25

Samuel's words reminded the people that God's covenant with them was not simply commands—"do this" and "do that." God also gave them His comforting promise of love and care through the covenant. Ultimately, God promised them an eternal King—Jesus—who would deliver them from evil (2Sm 7:5–17).

Judgment and Forgiveness

When King David sinned by committing adultery with Bathsheba and then plotting the death of her husband, God spoke His twofold message through the prophet Nathan.

Judgment on David

2Sm 12:1–12

Forgiveness for David

2Sm 12:13

David repented of his sin, and God forgave him, restored him, and prospered his rule over Israel. Through David's family, God fulfilled His promise of a Savior-King, whose reign of justice and mercy would never end. David was a forebearer of Jesus, who was called the "Son of David" (Mt 21:9).

This same pattern and message continued in the later prophets. As you study the Prophetic Books of Isaiah through Malachi, take note of the pattern in their preaching. A simple outline that appears repeatedly in the "writing prophets" is as follows:

1. God's judgment on the nations
2. God's judgment on Israel
3. God's forgiveness for Israel and the nations

This pattern appears from the shortest Prophetic Book, Obadiah, to the longest Prophetic Books. God's pattern for ministering to the needs of people remained consistent throughout the Old Testament.

The Apostles' Preaching

The pattern of curses and blessings, confrontation and comfort, judgment and forgiveness did not just apply to the people of the Old Testament. That same pattern appears in the preaching of the apostles, as recorded in the Book of Acts (note especially the sermons in 2:22–39; 3:12–26; and 17:22–31). When Paul gave his final instructions to the elders at Ephesus, he called them to this twofold pattern of ministry. He warned them to be on their guard against false teaching, which threatened God's flock. He committed them to God and His word of grace by which they were saved (Ac 20:25–32).

God’s Pattern for Your Life

For decades, people did not recognize the importance of George Boole’s simple pattern of logic. His writing remained a mere curiosity. Then in 1937, electrical engineer Claude Elwood Shannon recognized its importance. Four years later, Bell Telephone hired Shannon, and his discoveries have revolutionized our lives.

God’s simple pattern of Law and Gospel will likewise revolutionize your life. Each day as you read God’s Word and pray, thank Him for the pattern of the prophets. Repent of your sins and rejoice in God’s forgiveness through His Son, Jesus. Anticipate this pattern in all Christian preaching and teaching. When you find this pattern missing, humbly encourage your pastor or teacher to use the pattern of the prophets, the proclamation of God’s Word through Law and Gospel.

Remember that this is how the Lord works through His Word to care for you as His child. He saves you through the ministry of the ultimate Prophet, Jesus. Your Lord will bless and comfort you, forgive and encourage you through the pattern of the prophets. Until Christ comes again, this pattern of the prophets will continue, correcting and rebuking through the Law, encouraging and comforting through the Gospel of Jesus Christ (2Tm 4:1–2).

Footnotes

Footnotes for Deuteronomy, Chapter 2

- [1] 2:21 Hebrew *them*
- [1] 2:34 That is, set apart (devoted) as an offering to the Lord (for destruction)

Footnotes for Deuteronomy, Chapter 3

- [2] 3:6 That is, set apart (devoted) as an offering to the Lord (for destruction); twice in this verse
- [3] 3:11 A *cubit* was about 18 inches or 45 centimeters
- [4] 3:11 Hebrew *cubit of a man*

Footnotes for Deuteronomy, Chapter 4

- [1] 4:1 Or *just decrees*; also verses 5, 8, 14, 45
- [1] 4:13 Hebrew *words*
- [1] 4:37 Hebrew *his offspring after him*
- [2] 4:48 Syriac; Hebrew *Sion*

Footnotes for Deuteronomy, Chapter 5

- [1] 5:7 Or *besides*
- [2] 5:10 Or *to the thousandth generation*
- [3] 5:15 Or *servant*
- [4] 5:17 The Hebrew word also covers causing human death through carelessness or negligence
- [1] 5:29 Or *sons*

Footnotes for Deuteronomy, Chapter 6

- [2] 6:1 Or *just decrees*; also verse 20
- [3] 6:4 Or *The LORD our God is one LORD*; or *The LORD is our God, the LORD is one*; or *The LORD is our God, the LORD alone*

Footnotes for Deuteronomy, Chapter 7

- [1] 7:2 That is, set apart (devote) as an offering to the Lord (for destruction)
- [1] 7:22 Or *quickly*
- [2] 7:26 That is, set apart (devoted) as an offering to the Lord (for destruction); twice in this verse

Footnotes for Deuteronomy, Chapter 8

- [3] 8:3 Hebrew *by all*

Footnotes for Deuteronomy, Chapter 9

- [1] 9:16 Hebrew *cast-metal*

Footnotes for Deuteronomy, Chapter 10

- [1] 10:4 Hebrew *words*
- [2] 10:6 Or *the wells of the Bene-jaakan*

Footnotes for Deuteronomy, Chapter 11

- [1] 11:2 Or *instruction*
- [2] 11:10 Hebrew *watered it with your feet*
- [3] 11:14 Samaritan, Septuagint, Vulgate; Hebrew *I*; also verse 15
- [1] 11:24 Hebrew *and*
- [2] 11:30 Septuagint, Syriac; see Genesis 12:6. Hebrew *oaks*, or *terebinths*

Footnotes for Deuteronomy, Chapter 12

- [1] 12:5 Or *name as its habitation*
- [1] 12:32 Ch 13:1 in Hebrew

Footnotes for Deuteronomy, Chapter 13

- [2] 13:5 Or *evil person*
- [3] 13:6 Hebrew *the wife of your bosom*
- [1] 13:15 That is, setting apart (devoting) as an offering to the Lord (for destruction)

Footnotes for Deuteronomy, Chapter 14

- [2] 14:5 Or *addax*
- [3] 14:12 The identity of many of these birds is uncertain

Footnotes for Deuteronomy, Chapter 15

- [1] 15:9 Or *be evil*; also verse 10
- [2] 15:12 Or *sells himself*

Footnotes for Deuteronomy, Chapter 17

- [1] 17:7 Septuagint *drive out*; also verse 12
- [2] 17:7 Or *evil person*; also verse 12
- [1] 17:18 Hebrew *from before*

Footnotes for Deuteronomy, Chapter 18

- [2] 18:1 Or *the offerings by fire to the LORD*
- [3] 18:1 Hebrew *his*
- [4] 18:6 Or *lives—if he comes enthusiastically*
- [5] 18:8 The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain
- [1] 18:10 Hebrew *makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire*
- [1] 18:20 Or *and*

Footnotes for Deuteronomy, Chapter 19

- [2] 19:3 Hebrew *road*
- [3] 19:13 Or *the blood of the innocent*
- [1] 19:19 Or *evil person*

Footnotes for Deuteronomy, Chapter 20

- [1] 20:17 That is, set apart (devote) as an offering to the Lord (for destruction)

Footnotes for Deuteronomy, Chapter 21

- [1] 21:15 Or *hated*; also verses 16, 17

Footnotes for Deuteronomy, Chapter 22

- [1] 22:9 Hebrew *become holy*
- [1] 22:18 Or *discipline*
- [2] 22:19 A *shekel* was about 2/5 ounce or 11 grams
- [3] 22:19 Or *girl of marriageable age*
- [4] 22:30 Ch 23:1 in Hebrew
- [5] 22:30 Hebrew *uncover his father's skirt*

Footnotes for Deuteronomy, Chapter 23

- [1] 23:18 Or *male prostitute*

Footnotes for Deuteronomy, Chapter 24

- [1] 24:8 *Leprosy* was a term for several skin diseases; see Leviticus 13

Footnotes for Deuteronomy, Chapter 25

- [1] 25:10 Hebrew *its name*
- [1] 25:15 Or *just*, or *righteous*; twice in this verse

Footnotes for Deuteronomy, Chapter 26

- [2] 26:8 Hebrew *with great terror*

Footnotes for Deuteronomy, Chapter 27

- [1] 27:6 Hebrew *whole*
- [1] 27:20 Hebrew *uncovered his father's skirt*

Footnotes for Deuteronomy, Chapter 28

- [1] 28:22 Or *sword*
- [1] 28:29 Or *shall not succeed in finding your ways*
- [2] 28:42 Identity uncertain
- [1] 28:54 Hebrew *the wife of his bosom*
- [2] 28:56 Hebrew *the husband of her bosom*

Footnotes for Deuteronomy, Chapter 29

- [3] 29:1 Ch 28:69 in Hebrew
- [1] 29:2 Ch 29:1 in Hebrew
- [2] 29:9 Or *deal wisely*
- [3] 29:10 Septuagint, Syriac; Hebrew *your heads, your tribes*

Footnotes for Deuteronomy, Chapter 30

- [1] 30:16 Septuagint; Hebrew lacks *If you obey the commandments of the LORD your God*
- [2] 30:16 Or *his just decrees*

Footnotes for Deuteronomy, Chapter 32

- [1] 32:8 Or *territories*
- [2] 32:8 Compare Dead Sea Scroll, Septuagint; Masoretic Text *Israel*
- [3] 32:14 That is, with the best
- [4] 32:14 Hebrew *with the kidney fat*
- [1] 32:18 Or *fathered*
- [1] 32:35 Septuagint *and I will repay*
- [2] 32:36 Septuagint *judge*
- [3] 32:41 Hebrew *the lightning of my sword*
- [4] 32:43 Dead Sea Scroll, Septuagint; Masoretic Text *Rejoice his people, O nations*
- [5] 32:43 Dead Sea Scroll, Septuagint; Masoretic Text *servants*
- [6] 32:43 Dead Sea Scroll, Septuagint; Masoretic Text lacks *He repays those who hate him*
- [7] 32:43 Or *atones for*
- [8] 32:43 Septuagint, Vulgate; Hebrew *his land his people*
- [9] 32:44 Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate; Hebrew *Hoshea*

Footnotes for Deuteronomy, Chapter 33

- [1] 33:2 Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate; Hebrew *them*
- [2] 33:2 The meaning of the Hebrew word is uncertain
- [3] 33:3 Septuagint; Hebrew *peoples*
- [4] 33:3 Hebrew *your*
- [5] 33:3 The meaning of the Hebrew word is uncertain
- [6] 33:7 Probable reading; Hebrew *With his hands he contended*
- [7] 33:8 Dead Sea Scroll, Septuagint; Masoretic Text lacks *Give to Levi*
- [1] 33:12 Septuagint; Hebrew *dwells in safety by him. He*
- [2] 33:13 Two Hebrew manuscripts and Targum; Hebrew *with the dew*

- [3] 33:17 Dead Sea Scroll, Septuagint, Samaritan; Masoretic Text *His firstborn bull*
- [4] 33:23 Or *west*
- [5] 33:27 Or *a dwelling place*
- [6] 33:27 Revocalization of verse 27 yields *He subdues the ancient gods, and shatters the forces of old*
- [7] 33:28 Hebrew *the abode of Jacob was alone*

Study Notes

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 1:1–2 Moses delivers his final sermon east of the Jordan River, c 15 mi SW of modern Amman, Jordan. See color map 2.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 1:1 *all Israel*. All the Israelites are assembled, not just their tribal representatives.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 1:2 *eleven days' journey*. Covering c 150 mi.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 1:3 *spoke*. Historians date this event to Dec/Jan 1407/1406 BC. *given him in commandment*. Moses reissues God's Commandments to a new generation. The older generation died for their disobedience (Nu 13–14).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 1:4 *Sihon … Og*. Both were defeated by Israel but fell by God's hand (cf 2:33; 3:3).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 1:5 *explain this law*. Moses expounds God's instruction prescribed in Ex 20–24; Lv; and Nu. See pp 94–95.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 1:6 *Horeb*. Name for Sinai Peninsula and Mount Sinai. Here Moses received God's Commandments. *long enough*. After 40 years, God was about to fulfill the promise He swore to Abram (see note, v 7).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 1:7 Moses repeats God's intention to deliver them into the Promised Land by describing the area geographically. These are the same dimensions God gave by covenant to Abram (Gn 15:18–21; cf Gn 26:2–4; 35:11–12).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 1:8 *set the land before you*. God considers the land as though already possessed by Israel.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 1:1–8 Through many trials, God raises a new generation in Israel and brings them to the plains of Moab just east of the Jordan River. The Promised Land is in sight. God's covenant promise is sure. He keeps His word to His people, including His word to you. Rejoice in the Lord's faithfulness as you share His testimonies with others. The Gospel is fresh and precious for every new generation. • Heavenly Lord, we praise You and thank You for Your faithfulness in Christ, our Lord. Amen.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 1:9–18 Moses restates the events of Ex 18:13–26.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 1:10 *The LORD your God*. Title occurs more than 250 times in Dt. The living Lord who called Israel out of Egypt continues to be with them (cf Ex 3:14). See note, Lv 11:44–45. *numerous as the stars*. God faithfully blessed His people with numerous offspring in keeping with His pledge to Abram.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 1:11 *bless*. Cf Nu 6:24–26; see p 842.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 1:12 *strife?* Sin brings strife. Moses faced an impossible task when trying to administer justice to so many.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 1:13 *Choose … experienced men*. The judges were leading Israelite men. Moses wisely urged the people to choose their own leaders, whom he would approve. Moses retained the authority to handle the most difficult cases and provided the appropriate training (cf v 18). *appoint*. A cooperative effort between a congregation and its called servant. See note, Ac 6:3. Luth: "Beasts are managed by power and skill. Men should be ruled by wisdom and understanding, since man thrives on reason, which cannot be assaulted with a rope or brandished sword but through a word directed to the ear. And when reason has been grasped through a word, the whole man is moved and led wherever you wish" (AE 9:18).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 1:15 *heads*. Male judges selected by the people. *commanders … tribes*. Israel's judicial system, under God, was as far reaching as the local tribes, or family groups. See p 228.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 1:16 *judges*. Other specific responsibilities are given in 17:8; 19:17. See p 228.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 1:17 *not be partial*. Show no favoritism. *not be intimidated*. Provide fair treatment even in the face of reprisals. *judgment is God's*. God rules through the judges. *bring to me*. Moses is the ultimate human authority in Israel.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 1:18 *at that time*. When the Israelites were encamped at Sinai (1446 BC).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 1:9–18 In His great love, God establishes a judicial system administered by God-fearing men selected from among the Israelites. God knows the human heart. He knows that sin brings discord and dissent. Left unchecked, sin can destroy a nation and finally cause eternal separation from God. But thanks be to God, we have a faithful Judge in heaven who wishes not to condemn us but to deliver us from sin. • Lord, we thank You because we know that on Judgment Day,

You will see believers through the blood of Jesus Christ and declare us "not guilty!" Amen.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 1:19–33 Moses recounts the events of Nu 13. He includes only the reassuring words of Joshua and Caleb (v 25) and omits the negative reports.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 1:19 *set out*. At God's direction, the Israelites broke camp after 11 months in Sinai (cf Ex 19:1; Nu 10:11) and traveled to Kadesh-barnea, c 50 mi SW of Beersheba. See map, p 60. *terrifying wilderness*. The terrain along their route (over 100 mi) to Kadesh-barnea is nothing but sand and limestone. *Kadesh-barnea*. The site of Israel's most vehement rebellion.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 1:20 *giving us*. See note, Jsh 1:11.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 1:21 *set the land before you*. See note, v 8.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 1:22 *all of you*. Previous generation, now deceased. *explore*. Unwilling to take God at His word, the Israelites insist on sending spies to assure them that they can defeat the Canaanites. By comparing this account with Nu 13, we learn that the Lord told Moses to send spies after the people grumbled. *go up*. Has two senses: (1) to go into the land; and (2) a rise in elevation. On elevations in Canaan, see map, p 971.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 1:24 *Valley of Eshcol*. Near the city of Hebron (see color map 1). *spied*. Cf v 22, "explore."
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 1:25 *good land*. Cf Nu 13:23.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 1:26 *rebelled*. Cf Nu 14.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 1:27 *hated us*. So deep was the Israelite rebellion, they falsely concluded that God hated them and only brought them to this point to die at the hands of the Amorites.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 1:28 *Where*. Instead of following God, the Israelites sought an alternative route. *brothers*. The 10 spies who returned with a negative report. The Israelites trusted their word above God's. *fortified up to heaven*. See note, 2:36. *Anakim*. The name "Anak" appears in Egyptian texts for a ruler in Canaan. These descendants of Anak lived near Hebron. See note, Nu 13:22. The spies also exaggerated their claim by comparing the Anakim to the Nephilim (Nu 13:33), a race of ungodly men from before the time of the flood (Gn 6:4).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 1:30 *goes before you*. God leads the Israelites into Canaan. *fight*. The battles in Canaan are won because it is

God who does the fighting. See note, Ex 14:14.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 1:31 *carried you*. The God of creation has sustained the Israelites, bearing them up throughout their Sinai journey.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 1:33 *seek*. Hbr *tur*, "search out"; used here to describe God's work. Also used in Nu 13:17 to describe the mission of the spies. *fire by night … cloud by day*. See notes, Ex 13:21; Nu 9:15–23.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 1:19–33 Moses retells the story of the Israelites' rebellion. Although God promised to drive out the Canaanites, the Israelites listened to the 10 spies instead and recoiled in fear. As a result, an entire generation of Israelites died in the desert. Today, we are wrong to trust the word of others over the Word of God. God gives His Word for our blessing and to strengthen us in faith. • Lord, at those times when we rebel against You, send Your Spirit to show us the error of our ways. Remember that we are Your sons and daughters through Holy Baptism, and sustain and strengthen us by the body and blood of Your own dear Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 1:34–35 The Lord took an oath; when He does so, He swears by His own faithfulness (cf Gn 22:16). See note, 2Tm 2:13; see also "oath," p 7.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 1:36 *except Caleb*. Caleb and Joshua (v 38) were the only spies who brought favorable reports. *land*. By God's decree, the land of Caleb's inheritance included Hebron (Jsh 14:13–15). *wholly followed*. Caleb trusted God completely.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 1:37–46 Cf Nu 20:9–13.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 1:38 *Joshua*. See note, v 36. *stands before you*. Joshua is soon named Moses' successor. *inherit*. Under Joshua's leadership, Israel will inherit what God had promised. See "portion," p 7.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 1:39 Except for Caleb, Joshua, and Israelites under 20 years old, none of the Israelites who came out of Egypt would enter the Promised Land (Nu 32:11). *no knowledge of good or evil*. These children were too young to carefully distinguish between right and wrong. See note, Is 7:16.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 1:40 *direction of the Red Sea*. God commands Moses to lead His people away from the Promised Land.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 1:41 *sinned*. Although the older generation confessed their sin of rebellion, the consequences remained.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 1:42 *not in your midst*. God has withdrawn His presence. See "be with," p 5.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 1:44 Without God to fight their battle, the Israelites were driven from the battlefield in disarray. *Seir as far as Hormah*. The rout was complete; the defeated Israelites fled some 30 mi S of Hebron. See color map 1.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 1:45 *wept before the LORD*. The Israelites' stinging defeat brings heartfelt contrition.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 1:46 Difficult to determine whether the 38 years were spent in the wilderness near Kadesh-barnea or journeying through Edom (2:14). Luth: "This gave those nations which were already about to perish a period of time for repentance, that they might be terrified by the threats of God and be converted [cf Jsh 2:9]. So even at the cost of damage and peril to His own people He is concerned for the Gentiles too as He smites it and spares them to show that He is the God not only of the Jews but also of the Gentiles" (AE 9:20–21).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 1:34–46 The Israelites' disobedience causes God to withdraw His presence and delay giving them the Promised Land. After 40 years, God teaches His faithfulness to a new generation and prepares them as a father prepares his dear children. How patient is our heavenly Father's love and care! • Gentle Shepherd, lead us patiently, that we may one day cross from death to eternal life. Amen.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 2:1 *Mount Seir*. Also known as Edom. Region southeast of the Salt Sea, now part of Saudi Arabia. See color map 2.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 2:3 A decisive change in plan.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 2:4 *brothers*. The Israelites were not to take the land of the Edomites (descendants of Esau) or of the Moabites or Ammonites (vv 9, 19; see note, v 19). This command shows that the conquest was not a greedy landgrab on the part of the Israelites. Rather, it was part of God's plan of salvation, which included punishment for the Canaanites and preservation of Abraham's descendants for the sake of God's promises of salvation for the whole world through the Messiah. See "Salvation History," p 9; see also note, Gn 12:3. *afraid of you*. God strikes fear in the Canaanites. See note, Jsh 2:9.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 2:5 *given Mount Seir to Esau*. Descendants of Esau were also promised land (Gn 36:8–9).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 2:7 The Israelites had plundered sufficient wealth from Egypt (Ex 12:35–36). They did not need to plunder their relatives.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 2:8 *Arabah road*. Difficult to trace the exact route, but most likely they kept to the southeast border of Edom. See color map 3. *direction of the wilderness*. The Israelites' journey "northward" carried them east of Moab and across the Valley of Arnon (Nu 21:13).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 2:9 Moses begins to describe specific peoples Israel will encounter (vv 9–12, 19–23). See p 345. *Do not harass Moab*. Moabite land was north of Edom. *Ar*. Once the center of the Moabite territory; location unknown (Nu 21:28). *people of Lot*. Descendants of Abraham's nephew Lot.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 2:10–12, 20–23 Parentheses set off digressions about the nations. (Hbr has no parentheses.)
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 2:10 *Emim*. "Frightful ones." These people once inhabited Moabite land and may have moved into Canaan from the west. *Anakim*. See note, 1:28.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 2:11 *Rephaim*. Ancient race of large people known for their historic deeds.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 2:12 *Horites*. Non-Semitic peoples who inhabited Canaan and the Transjordan. They descended from the Hurrians, an ancient Mesopotamian race, and are also known by that name. *destroyed them*. Esau's descendants (Edomites) drove the Horites out, and their culture disappeared.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 2:13 *brook Zered*. Intermittent stream that still flows into southern tip of the Salt Sea; once served as the northern border of Edom. See color map 1.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 2:14 *men of war*. The previous generation of eligible men had died. *Lord had sworn*. God said that their bodies would fall in the wilderness because of their unfaithfulness (Nu 14:29).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 2:19 *sons of Lot*. Lot's daughters bore Moab and Ben-ammi, whose descendants were the Moabites and the Ammonites. See note, v 4.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 2:20 *Rephaim*. See note, v 11. *Zamzummim*. "Murmurers." Perhaps the Zuzim of Gn 14:5.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 2:21 *Anakim*. See note, 1:28. *LORD destroyed*. God removed all obstacles as Israel prepared to enter Canaan.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 2:22 *Horites*. See note, v 12.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 2:23 *Avvim*. A coastal tribe. *Caphtorim*. Perhaps the Sea People of Crete who settled in Canaan and conquered the homeland of the Avvim. The Philistines also came from Crete and settled along the Mediterranean coast. See p 345.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 2:25 *dread and fear*. As the Israelites begin their conquest of Canaan, God is already at work.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 2:1–25 God's promise of land for the Edomites, Moabites, and Ammonites means that the Israelites must pass farther east. God leads the charge to drive the Amorites from the land. The Israelites' victories belong only to God. Our victories, too, belong to God. Our salvation is only by God's hand, not our own. By His Son's precious blood, we are justified; by His Spirit, we are sanctified. • Father, whenever we are tempted to boast of our own deeds, let us recall Paul's words: " 'Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.' For it is not the one who commends himself who is approved, but the one whom the Lord commends" (2Co 10:17–18). Amen.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 2:26–37 Recounts Nu 21:21–30 but adds an important detail. Sihon refused to allow the Israelites to travel through his land because God hardened his heart as part of God's plan to provide land to the Israelites. See notes, Ex 4:21; 9:12.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 2:26 *messengers*. Moses sent emissaries to announce his intention to pass through Sihon's land. *Kedemoth*. "Eastern regions," east of the Jordan River.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 2:27 *road*. After bypassing Edom and Moab to the east and crossing the Arnon River, the Israelites traveled north on the King's Highway. See color map 2.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 2:29 At first the Edomites refused Israel passage (Nu 20:19–21). However, it seems that they did allow Israel to pass along the eastern border instead of going through the middle of their country.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 2:30 *God hardened his spirit*. See note, vv 26–37.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 2:31 *occupy his land*. Sihon's land was given to the Reubenites. See map, p 365.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 2:32 *Jahaz*. C 15 mi SE of Heshbon. See map, p 250.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 2:34 *devoted to destruction … no survivors*. Sihon's sin led to complete annihilation; the sin of the Amorites had reached its full measure (cf Gn 15:16). See p 6; see also note, Nu 31:2.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 2:36 Archaeologists note that kings often surrounded their territories with armed fortresses. Sihon could have stayed in his fortifications and allowed the Israelites to pass, but instead he stubbornly marched against them over open ground. The high walls of the Canaanite cities frightened the first generation of Israelites (1:28).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 2:37 For now, God preserved the territory occupied by the Ammonites. *Jabbok*. C 30 mi N of Mount Nebo. See color map 2. *hill country*. The east side of the Jordan River is marked by mountains and hills extending north like a backbone.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 2:26–37 The conquest is underway. Stubborn King Sihon places his army in God's path, and it is swallowed up as easily as Pharaoh's army in the Red Sea. The Lord fights the battles of His people. • Lord, soften our hearts and create in us a faith that never rejects Your precious Word, like Sihon and Pharaoh did. Bring us to a richer understanding of how the waters of Baptism have drowned the old Adam and made us new people. Amen.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 3:1–22 Restates Nu 21:31–35. God defeats Og's army and the 60 fortified cities in Argob. To prevent a counterattack, all inhabitants were completely destroyed. See p 376.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 3:1 *Bashan*. Northeast of the Sea of Chinnereth; known today as the Golan Heights. At the time of Moses, it was known for its thick forest and lush pastures. See "Census Figures," p 213. *Edrei*. Site of Og's defeat. See map, p 250.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 3:4 *Argob*. A section of the tableland of Bashan.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 3:5 *high walls, gates, and bars*. Archaeologists have discovered stone doors 18 in thick secured by bars, and walls 4 ft thick built from stacks of rocks without cement.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 3:6 *devoted them to destruction*. See p 6.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 3:7 *plunder*. God often provided livestock and spoils as recompense for army service (2:35; Jsh 8:2).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 3:8 *Mount Hermon*. Over 9,000 ft high and visible from the heights of Moab, this peak in the Anti-Lebanon range marked the northern limits of Israel's conquests (Jsh 11:17). See color map 2.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 3:10 *tableland*. See note, v 4.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 3:11 *bed of iron*. Hbr word for "bed" may also mean "sarcophagus." See note, Jb 20:24. In this victory, we again see God at work. *cubits … common cubit*. See p cx. Og's bed was about 7 × 15 ft.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 3:12 Territory given to the tribes of Reuben and Gad. See map, p 365.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 3:13 *half-tribe of Manasseh*. See note, Nu 32:33.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 3:14–17 For a territorial breakdown of the tribes, as well as that of the Moabites and the Edomites, see map, p 365. Archaeologists have discovered remains of settlements from c 1500 to 1200 BC. These include new cultural features evidenced by the types of pottery and the homes. These features are characteristic of Israelite settlements west of the Jordan.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 3:14 *Jair the Manassite*. Jair led the attack against the Argob. *Havvoth-jair*. "Cities of Jair."
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 3:15 *Machir*. Descendants of Machir, son of Manasseh (Gn 50:23).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 3:17 *Sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea*. See color map 1.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 3:18 *All … shall cross over*. Did not empty the region of all men over age 20. Joshua records that about 40,000 troops from Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh crossed the Jordan and prepared to do battle with the Canaanites (Jsh 4:13). This figure constitutes c 37 percent of the three tribes' available fighting force (Nu 1:20–21, 24–25, 34–35). God promised the Transjordan to Abraham (Gn 15:18). *men of valor*. See note, Jsh 1:14.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 3:19 *much livestock*. God presented the tribes of Reuben and Gad with livestock and plunder for their conquest of Sihon and Og (2:35; 3:7).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 3:20 *rest*. Only when Canaan is subdued will the fighting men from Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh

return to their families.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 3:21 *commanded Joshua*. Restates Joshua's call (Nu 27:18–23). Moses also encourages Joshua by reviewing two key issues: (1) what God has already done, and (2) what God promises to do in the future.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 3:22 *fights for you*. See note, Ex 14:14.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 3:1–22 Moses presents Israel's victory over Og, the apportionment of land east of the Jordan River, and the installation of Joshua. Within these verses, believers are reminded of God's faithfulness. As He faithfully led Israel, God will also lead His people today. His promises to us are sealed in the blood of His Son (cf 2Co 1:20). • Lord of heaven and earth, You shower Your blessings on those who are led to faith by Your Holy Spirit. Guide and protect us from the evil one, who would take away our promised inheritance. Amen.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 3:23 *pleaded*. Moses prayed for God to allow him to cross into Canaan, but God's answer was no. Sin has consequences (cf 2Sm 12:11–18).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 3:24 Moses witnessed God's awesome power for 40 years. *what god*. Cf Is 40:9–31.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 3:26 *angry with me because of you*. Cf Nu 20:2–13. See note, Nu 20:11–12. *Enough from you*. God's forgiveness does not mean a removal of the consequences attached to sin. Luth: "But why is the prayer of Moses not heard, since it is likely that he prayed in the Spirit? This is written for our example and consolation. For even though the Lord does not hear him and this causes Moses to realize that He is angry with him, as he says here, nevertheless He does not desert him; He commands him to climb the mountain and view the land, and to give orders to Joshua. So, since we do not know in what manner we should pray (Rom. 8:26), let us not be surprised if we are not heard. At the same time, however, let us in no wise doubt that we are favored by, and dear to, God; and let us grasp at the favor beneath the wrath, lest we lose heart" (AE 9:42).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 3:27 *Pisgah*. This high plain overlooking the Salt Sea from the northeast contains Mount Nebo, which rises some 2,700 ft above sea level. God permitted only Moses to see the Promised Land from here.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 3:28 *charge Joshua*. Cf 31:7–8.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 3:29 *valley opposite Beth-peor*. Israelite encampment and site of apostasy recorded in Nu 25 (cf Dt 4:3). See map, p 250.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 3:23–29 Sin and its consequences walk hand in hand. Moses' consequence was that he did not enter the Promised Land at that time. What a sad reality. Yet, see application note, ch 34. Forgiven sinners rejoice that the consequences of sin no longer bring eternal separation from God. Paul says it best: "The wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rm 6:23). • Lord, despite the earthly consequences of sin, teach us to live faithfully and in view of the eternal blessings of forgiveness. Amen.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON **Chs 4–26** The main section of the Book: a re-presentation of the covenant (see pp 274–76).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 4:1 *statutes and the rules*. See p 971. *do them, that you may live*. God's promise of blessing was subject to Israel's response to His laws and decrees. Israel's obedience here should be understood in the broad sense as obedience that results from God's gift of faith. *go in and take possession of the land*. Command given 70 times in Dt. However, as Israel transitions from the nomadic to the settled life, God's relationship with them will not change.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 4:2 Several places in Scripture repeat this theme. God's Word, with its promises of the Messiah and their fulfillment in Jesus Christ, is sacred, and mankind cannot change it. Luth: "But you will say: 'Then why have so many additional books of the prophets been added? And David decided that a temple should be built when the tabernacle of Moses had been done away with, and he arranged the orders of the Levites. And Joshua did many things and commanded the people. So it can be said about many other things.' I answer: It does not take away from or add to the word of Moses when someone teaches the same thing in other words or in more words. Thus the prophets taught and explained Moses, not themselves, and they judged according to his Law and reproved kings and people. Moreover, what Moses says here applies not to God but to the people: 'Do not add, etc.' For who doubts that as the time requires God Himself can add or subtract something? Whether He adds or subtracts, He Himself always remains true; His Word is always true and leads and preserves us faithfully" (AE 9:51–52).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 4:3 *Baal of Peor*. See note, 3:29. On "Baal," see note, Nu 25:3.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 4:5 *statutes … rules … commanded*. See p 971.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 4:6 *your wisdom and your understanding*. Nations passing along Israel's trade route will see God reflected in the lives of His people. See pp 775–78. *great nation*. See "Census Figures," p 213. A fulfillment of God's promise to Abram (Gn 12:2).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 4:7 *a god so near*. God will make His dwelling among the Israelites, who faithfully keep God's laws and decrees (Lv 26:11–12). See "be with," p 5.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 4:8 *statutes … rules … law*. See p 971. *righteous*. See p 843.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 4:9 *keep your soul*. The Israelites should be alert for deceptions that would turn their hearts away from God. *Make them known*. Parents have a covenant responsibility to train their children in obedience to God (Pr 22:6). This command extends into the NT (Mt 19:14; Ac 2:39). See note, Pr 1:8.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 4:10 *fear*. This admonition is often repeated (6:24; 8:6; 10:12; 28:58). See p 1001.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 4:11 Moses recounts God's appearance in fire at Mount Sinai.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 4:12 *saw no form*. See note, Ex 24:10. The visible appearance of God's presence is known as a theophany. See p 39. Cyr Jer: "He is Holy, and Almighty, and excels all in goodness, and majesty, and wisdom: of Whom we can declare neither beginning, nor form, nor shape…. If it is wholly impossible to imagine His likeness, how shall thought come near His substance? There have been many imaginations by many persons, and all have failed" (*NPNF* 2 7:35).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 4:13 *His covenant … the Ten Commandments*. God's Law included much more than the Ten Commandments, but they sum up the whole Law. See note, Ex 34:28. *He wrote them*. God personally inscribed the two stone tablets He gave to Moses (Ex 31:18). Luth: "It is impossible for men to think properly about God, speak about Him, or worship Him, without the Word of God" (AE 9:58).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 4:14 Iren: "The laws of bondage [civil and ceremonial], however, were one by one promulgated to the people by Moses, suited for their instruction or for their punishment…. These things, therefore, which were given for bondage, and for a sign to them, He cancelled by the new covenant of liberty. But He has increased and widened those laws which are natural, and noble, and common to all, granting to men largely and without grudging, by means of adoption, to know God the Father, and to love Him with the whole heart, and to follow His word unswervingly" (*ANF* 1:482).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 4:1–14 God desires to dwell among His people, but a holy God cannot live among an unholy people. So God lovingly establishes His ordinances, including the Ten Commandments. Through the Word, the Lord leads us to faith and to keep His commands faithfully; He shows forth His blessings in our lives. • Lord of all, we gratefully acknowledge that Christ has freed us from the bondage of the Law, for we are "justified by His grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Rm 3:24). Thanks be to God! Amen.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 4:15 *saw no form*. See note, v 12.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 4:16–18 See notes, Ex 20:3–4.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 4:19 Canaanites worshiped the sun, moon, and stars. E.g., Jericho was a center of Canaanite moon worship.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 4:20 *iron furnace*. Iron smelting required very high temperatures compared to other metals. Moses reminds the Israelites that their Egyptian captivity was a time of great suffering. See note, Jb 20:24.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 4:21 *because of you*. See note, Nu 20:11–12. If God was so strict with Moses, how much stricter would He be with the people if they flagrantly violated His commands? *inheritance*. See "portion," p 7.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 4:23 *covenant*. See p 127.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 4:24 *consuming fire*. Iren: "God was indeed a consuming fire (*igneum*) to the people that transgressed the law, and threatened that God would bring upon them a day of fire; but to those who had the fear of God he said, 'The Lord God is merciful and gracious' " (*ANF* 1:490). Ambr: "[Moses] saw the fire in the bush, and had heard God when the voice from the flame of fire came to him … and the fire did no

harm" (*NPNF* 2 10:112). See note, Lv 10:2. *a jealous God*. God maintains the honor of His promises. See note, Ex 20:5.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 4:25 *in the form of anything*. See note, Ex 20:4.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 4:26 *heaven and earth to witness*. Moses calls on all of God's creation as witness to God's covenant with His people. Parties in ancient Near Eastern treaties often called upon their gods as covenant witnesses.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 4:27–28 Unfortunately, this consequence for disobedience is in Israel's future (2Ki 17:6; 25:21). Blessings and curses were part of ancient Near Eastern treaties; cf Dt 28. See p 127.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 4:29 *seek the LORD your God*. See "seek," p 843. Although the Israelites will later be enslaved by the Assyrians and the Babylonians, God provides a means whereby the repentant may return to Him.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 4:30 *tribulation*. Lit, "narrowness." Similar to Eng expression "a tight spot." *latter days*. Moses prophesies Israel's future. *return*. See p 1080.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 4:31 *a merciful God*. Though God knows Israel's future unfaithfulness, He promises mercy and that He will not forget His covenant. *covenant*. See p 6. *He swore to them*. God attested to this covenant (Gn 22:15–18). See "vow," p 7.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 4:15–31 Just as a loving father warns his children against life's dangers, so God warns Israel. Through Moses, God warns the Israelites of the perils of following pagan gods. Consequences would include forfeiting the land, though God retained ownership of it (Lv 25:23). He promises mercy to Israel and extends that kindness to us too. • Almighty God, though Israel's disobedience caused the forfeiture of their land, You never removed the promise of a Savior given first to Adam and Eve (Gn 3:15) and confirmed to Abram (Gn 12:3b). That promise is completed in the life, death, and resurrection of my Lord Jesus. Great is Your faithfulness! Amen.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 4:32 *ask now*. A great source of learning comes from asking one's elders to explain the past (cf 32:7). The Passover Seder revolves around the asking of questions (Ex 12:26–27). When the Israelites entered the Promised Land, memorials were erected as teaching tools (Jsh 4:7–9).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 4:34 Israel's deliverance is unique in historical annals. *hand … arm*. See p 842.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 4:35 The exodus is a catechetical event. See notes, v 32; 32:39; see also SC, First Commandment, p xxxv.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 4:36 *discipline*. Or, "rebuke." God's discipline is designed to bring the recipient back to Him. See note, Mt 18:15–17.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 4:37 *He loved your fathers*. First reference to God's love for His people recorded in Dt. As a result of God's love, His people should love Him. See note, 6:5. *chose their offspring*. See "choose," p 5. *brought … with His own presence*. God's grace alone delivered Israel from the oppressions of Egypt. His great miracles confirmed His presence among them (Ex 13:21–22; 14:19–31).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 4:38 *inheritance*. See "portion," p 7.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 4:39 *there is no other*. No other god has authority over the forces of nature or history. See notes, 32:39; Is 44:6.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 4:40 *prolong your days*. See note, Eph 6:3.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 4:32–40 Moses reminds the people that with fire and wonders God has established Himself as the God of Israel. No other god has led a people away from their captors, conquered their enemies, and established them in a new land. Such a God is worthy of our worship and praise. In Christ, He declares us His very own people. • Lord Almighty, in our times of trouble, let us remember that You are with us always. Amen.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 4:41–43 Moses establishes three cities of refuge in the land east of the Jordan River. These cities are already securely in the hands of the Reubenites, Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh. See note, Nu 35:11.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 4:41–43 The Lord provides refuge for His people east of the Jordan. Today, the Lord Himself is our refuge. He prepares an everlasting home for us. • Father, as sinners, it is reassuring to know that You are our refuge and our strength (Ps 46:1). We trust in Your providential care. Amen.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 4:45 *testimonies … statutes … rules*. See p 971. Covenantal language similar to ancient Near Eastern treaties of the day. Everything God has commanded is obeyed in faith. Throughout the

course of the OT, God calls on His people to abide by His Word. Cf Gn 26:5; Lv 10:11; 18:3; Ezk 43:11; Mal 3:7.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 4:49 *Arabah*. See note, Jsh 3:16. *slopes of Pisgah*. Israel now possesses the territory on the east side of the Jordan as far north as Mount Hermon and as far south as the Arnon River, which separates the Reubenites from the Moabites. See color map 2.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 4:44–49 The conquest of Canaan is underway. Territories once belonging to Sihon and Og are under full control of the Reubenites, Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh. Moses presents God's Word to the Israelites, including many laws and promises. Holding fast to these laws and promises, the people would experience God's blessings. Still today, He promises many and great blessings to those who receive His testimonies. • Faithful Lord, we have the assurance that "all the promises of God find their Yes in [Jesus]" (2Co 1:20). For Your rich blessings in our lives, we humbly give You thanks. Amen.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 5:1 *statutes … rules*. See p 971.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 5:2 *Horeb*. See note, 1:6.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 5:3 *covenant*. Given to the first generation of Israelites at Sinai, but the terms now apply to this second generation. See note, Ex 19:5. Chem: "Before the birth of Christ no teaching was ever revealed in the church with such great miracles and testimonies as the promulgation of the Law" (*LTh* 2:354).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 5:4 *face to face*. The Lord spoke to them and heard their reply (4:12, 15).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 5:5 *I stood between*. Moses served as the mediator between God and His people at Sinai, carrying messages back and forth during the preparation for the covenant (Ex 19) and for the ratification (Ex 24). We see in Moses a preview of our Lord Jesus Christ, who mediates between God and us (1Tm 2:5).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 5:6–21 See notes, Ex 20:3–17. Differences in the accounts are noted below.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 5:6 God introduces Himself—part of a standard suzerain-vassal agreement of the ancient Near East. In these pacts, the ruler begins the agreement with a preamble ("I am the LORD your God"), followed by a historic prologue ("who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery"). This verse is critical for our understanding of the covenant. These Commandments were given to people who were

already called and redeemed by God in order that they might show their love for God. They were not given to sinners in order for them to achieve justification, which they had already received by faith (Gn 15:6; Rm 4). See p 127.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 5:7 See note, 32:39.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 5:14 Text differs from Ex 20:8–11. *seventh day*. Chem: "God has willed that in the observances of the Sabbath there be a memorial of the article of creation … that the people may be instructed by this teaching device to pray to God and to await His blessings, and that thus faith be strengthened" (*LTh* 2:391). Ter: "The force of such precepts was temporary, and respected the necessity of present circumstances" (*ANF* 3:156). See note, Gn 2:2.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 5:15 *you were a slave*. Moses adds a reminder of how the Israelites are to treat their slaves on the Sabbath; both male and female slaves are given rest on each Sabbath, just as the Israelites. Chem: "This manifestly pertains to the people of Israel … [who] were put in a place of rest in the land of Canaan" (*LTh* 2:389).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 5:16 *Honor*. Hbr *kabed*, lit, "heavy." Here it means "consider someone very important, prize highly." See "glory of the LORD," pp 6–7. Luther emphasizes the wider implications of this commandment: "All authority flows and is born from the authority of parents" (LC I 141). *that your days may be long*. The blessings of obedience are also applied to all of the Commandments.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 5:21 Moses weaves together the Ninth and Tenth Commandments by transposing "house" and "wife." *covet … desire*. See note, Ex 20:17.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 5:22 *spoke to all*. Chem: "God in the very act of promulgating the Law showed that He did not place the ceremonial and the civil on the same level with the Decalog…. The Lord spoke these words to the whole multitude. But with regard to the other laws God [spoke] to Moses alone" (*LTh* 2:351).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 5:23 *heads of your tribes … elders*. See p 228.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 5:24 When the Israelites first heard God's voice at Mount Sinai, they thought they would die (Ex 20:19). However, no one died in this transaction. Iren: "God the Father is shown forth through all these [operations], the Spirit indeed working, and the Son ministering,

while the Father was approving, and man's salvation being accomplished" (*ANF* 1:489).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 5:25–27 In this recounting of the events at Sinai, Moses recalls the fear expressed by the previous Israelite generation: that God had brought them to Mount Sinai to exterminate them. Moses served as the intermediary between God and His people (Ex 20:19).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 5:28 *They are right*. God Himself approved the Israelite nation's request for Moses to serve as an intermediary.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 5:29–30 In His infinite wisdom, God commended the Israelites' request for a mediator and for their fear and reverence toward Him.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 5:31 *commandment … statutes … rules*. See p 971. All of God's statutes and commands were shared exclusively with Moses. Moses then taught these regulations to God's people.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON **Ch 5** Moses recounts how all of the Israelites assembled at Mount Sinai to hear God present guidelines for a holy relationship with Him and with one another. Sinful men and women need an intermediary between themselves and God. Though Moses served in that capacity at Sinai, Jesus Christ fills that role in a much greater way for you and for me (1Tm 2:5–6; cf Rm 8:1–2). • Lord of mercy, in Your Law we become painfully aware that our sinful nature separates us from You. Through Christ, our Lord, draw us ever closer to You through Your Word and Sacraments. Amen.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 6:1 *commandment … statutes … rules*. See p 971.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 6:2 *fear the LORD*. See p 1001.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 6:3 *multiply greatly*. God promised to be Israel's God (Ex 6:7) and bless with offspring those who followed His precepts. This promise takes us back to the Garden of Eden, where God blessed Adam and Eve and commanded them to be "fruitful and multiply" (Gn 1:28). God's original desire was for a world filled with people who love and fear Him. This original love toward God and each other allowed God to commune with them in a very special way. *flowing with milk and honey*. See p 6.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 6:4 This verse, known as the *Shema* ("Hear") for the first word in Hbr, is an early creed of Israel's faith in God.

See p 1975. Observant Jews still say the *Shema* twice daily, during morning and evening prayers. The text includes Dt 6:4–9; 11:13–21; Nu 15:37–41. See Mishnah Berakhot. Ambr: "We must follow the ways of the Lord, and take heed to our own ways, lest they lead us into sin. One can take heed if one is not hasty in speaking…. Be silent therefore first of all, and hearken, that you fail not in your tongue" (*NPNF* 2 10:2). *the* LORD *is one*. God is unique (Hbr *'echad*) and singular in His qualities. He alone is God. This is in contrast to the Canaanite Baals that represented various powers of nature. The oneness of God does not militate against the unity of the three persons in the Trinity. (E.g., "one" is also used in Gn 2:24 to describe the "one flesh" relationship of Adam and Eve.) "God is one divine essence who is eternal, without a body, without parts, of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness. He is the maker and preserver of all things, visible and invisible [Nehemiah 9:6]. Yet there are three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit" (AC I 2–3). Ambr: "[He is] unchangeable, always abiding in unity of power, always the same, and not altered by any accession or diminution" (*NPNF* 2 10:150). See p 1815.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 6:5 *love … with all*. Hbr *'aheb*; common term for affection. God commands His people to love Him above all else. Ter: "The primordial law was given to Adam and Eve in paradise, as a womb of all the precepts of God. In short, if they had loved the Lord their God, they would not have contravened His precept" (*ANF* 3:152). *heart … soul … might*. God's desire is that His people love Him with total sincerity, without reservation, and with all their faculties. See note, 29:4. Ambr: "First stands faith, which is a sign of wisdom…. You should give to God the most precious thing you have, that is, your mind, for you have nothing better than that. When you have paid your debt to your Creator, then you may labor for men, to show them kindness, and to give help" (*NPNF* 2 10:42). Mel: "The corrupt nature of man in this life cannot produce this perfect obedience. Doubts concerning both the anger and mercy of God cling in his heart. No one fears God as he ought. No one is so on fire with love as he ought to be" (Chem, *LTh* 2:365). "What does it mean to have a god? Or, what is God? Answer: A god means that from which we are to expect all good and in which we are to take refuge in all distress. So, to have a God is nothing other than trusting and believing Him with the heart. I have often said that the confidence and faith of the heart alone make both God and an idol. If your faith and trust is right, then your god is also true. On the other hand, if

your trust is false and wrong, then you do not have the true God. For these two belong together, faith and God [Hebrews 11:6]. Now, I say that whatever you set your heart on and put your trust in is truly your god" (LC I 1–3).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 6:6 *these words*. Some rabbis regarded this as a reference to vv 4–5, but likely refers to the 10 "words," or Commandments (5:6–21). Here God presents a restatement of the First Tablet of the Law (Ex 20:3–11). *on your heart*. Always remembered and inwardly treasured. The Mishnah describes the priests at the Jerusalem temple reciting the Ten Commandments (Dt 6:4–9; 11:13–21; Nu 15:37–41; Tamid 5:1). See note, Rm 2:15.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 6:7 *teach them diligently*. Hbr *shanan*; verb for sharpening by repeatedly running the blade over a whetstone. Parents are to teach God's Word faithfully and repeatedly to their offspring so that God will continually dwell with His people. See note, Pr 1:8. *sit … walk … lie … rise*. Daily living presents numerous opportunities to talk to our children about what God has done—even the most mundane events. As Christians, we should take every opportunity to discuss what God has done through Christ, no matter where we are or what we are doing.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 6:8 *bind them as a sign … frontlets*. "It is so we might have our eyes constantly fixed on them. We should have them always in our memory. Then we might do them in all our actions and ways. Then everyone may make them his daily exercise in all cases, in every business and transaction, as though they were written in every place wherever he would look, indeed, wherever he walks or stands" (LC I 331–32). Although God uses the words here to emphasize the importance of remembering His Word continually in everything, many Jews later took the command literally and tied phylacteries to their foreheads and left arms. See note, Mt 23:5.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 6:9 *write them*. Later, Jews fastened small capsulelike containers called "mezuzoth" to their doorposts. Inside were the words of Dt 6:4–9 and 11:13–21 as a continual reminder of God's grace toward them. "He knows our danger and need, as well as the constant and furious assaults and temptations of devils. He wants to warn, equip, and preserve us against them, as with a good armor against their fiery darts

[Ephesians 6:10–17] and with good medicine against their evil infection and temptation" (LC Longer Preface 14).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 6:10–12 We easily forget the many blessings God has provided. Material blessings can even steal our hearts away from God. See note, Mt 19:23–24.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 6:13 *fear*. See p 1001. This command connects with v 5, which addresses a believer's love for God. An awe-filled reverence for God is in keeping with the First Tablet of the Law (Ex 20:3–11; Dt 5:7–15). *swear*. See p 7; see also note, Mt 5:34–35.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 6:14 See note, 32:39.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 6:15 *in your midst*. In keeping with the promise He made in Ex 25:8, God dwells among His people. See "be with," p 5. *jealous*. See note, Ex 20:5. In His love, God will not tolerate any unfaithfulness or the worship of a rival god (Jsh 24:19).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 6:16 The Israelites had tested God by questioning whether or not He was with them. Jesus quoted this verse in response to Satan's temptation.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 6:17 *commandments … testimonies … statutes*. See p 971.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 6:20–25 God's people practiced catechesis. See note, Lk 1:4; cf Jsh 4:6–7. Luther used this same teaching technique in his Large and Small Catechisms by asking, "What does this mean?" See note, Ex 10:2.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 6:24 *fear the LORD*. See p 1001.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 6:25 The faith God has worked in us causes us to obey God's commands as an act of love. See notes, Gal 5:22–23. *righteousness*. See p 843. Chem: "This is not a statement of Law, but it is speaking of the mercy which God bestows on the godly in this life…. Moses calls it mercy [Vulg.] because it is not given out of merit but out of grace" (*LTh* 2:644).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON **Ch 6** God desires to shower His people with blessings, but their hearing and following of His Word is required for Him to dwell among them. He alone is God. There is no other. Thankfully, the Father sent His one and only Son as our atoning sacrifice. God's Holy Spirit now dwells within all believers. Indeed, we become God's dwelling place (1Co 3:16). • Lord, we thank You for parents, relatives, friends, and

pastors who speak Your Word in purity and truth. Use us now as instruments for the salvation of others. Amen.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 7:1 *seven nations*. See chart, p 345; see also notes, Gn 10:15–19.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 7:2 *devote … to … destruction*. See p 6. *no covenant … no mercy*. God calls for the total annihilation of the Canaanites, knowing that their apostasy may easily spread among the Israelites and lead them astray.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 7:3 *You shall not intermarry*. God's protection against the allure of cult worship. It is best not to deliberately seek a marriage partner who is outside the faith. However, see notes, 1Co 7:12–14.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 7:5 God is not tolerant of other religions that would separate people from Him. But God is just, and He gave the idolaters in Canaan centuries to repent. They refused. Sadly, many individuals today continue as the Canaanites did and persistently reject the work of the Holy Spirit. See note, Mk 3:29–30. *pillars*. See note, Gn 28:18. *Asherim*. See note, Ex 34:13.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 7:6 *holy to the* LORD. God declared the Israelites holy. See p 7. Their lineage would produce the world's Messiah, Jesus Christ. *chosen … His treasured possession*. God formed the nation of Israel for Himself, so they might proclaim His praise (Is 43:21) and lead other people to the Lord. See "choose," p 5.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 7:7–8 God selected Israel as His holy people by grace alone in fulfillment of His promise to Adam and Eve (Gn 3:15), Abram (Gn 12:3, 7), Isaac (Gn 26:3–6), and Jacob (Gn 28:13–15). See p 1245.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 7:9 *faithful*. See p 842; cf Nu 23:19. *keeps covenant*. See p 127. *steadfast love*. See p 843. Unlike sinful human beings, God fulfills each promise; He remains steadfast in His love toward those who love Him. *thousand generations*. There are no time limits on God's abundant mercy for those who love Him (Ex 34:7). See p 217.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 7:10 *repays to their face*. God promised to judge Israel's enemies in this life. Sometimes God's judgment comes as discipline (Ezk 5:13), while at other times it is everlasting condemnation (Heb 6:1–6).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 7:11 *commandment … statutes … rules*. See p 971.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 7:12–16 The blessings God has poured into the lives of the Israelites have overflowed in their love for God and His commands. In response, God pours out even more blessings. See "bless," p 842. In these verses, we see what it means to be "blessed." See notes, Gn 12:2–3.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 7:16 *snare*. See note, Ps 64:5. Failure to completely destroy the Canaanites would lead to idolatry. Such idolatry later caused Israel's enslavement in Assyria and Babylon (cf 2Ki 17). God foretold the consequences of disobeying His command to destroy the Canaanites. Cf Dt 28:15–68.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 7:19 *great trials*. God's 10 plagues (Ex 7:14–12:30) tested Pharaoh's unbelief. Only when God struck down Pharaoh's son did he relent and release the Israelites from enslavement (Ex 12:29–32). Even then, Pharaoh's heart remained hardened against God, and he remained in his sin of unbelief, sending troops after God's people (Ex 14:5–9). *the signs, the wonders, the mighty hand*. See note, 11:3.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 7:20 *hornets*. See note, Ex 23:28.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 7:21 *God is in your midst*. See note, 6:15.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 7:22 Joshua's campaigns of conquest would last c six years (1406–1400 BC). See "Joshua versus Judges," p 339. The total defeat of the Canaanites extended over a longer period of time. See note, 1Ki 5:15.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 7:25–26 See note, v 5.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON **Ch 7** God's hand is raised against the inhabitants of Canaan, whose sin has ripened before God, causing His action. God, not the Israelites on their own, will drive the Canaanites from the Promised Land. He plans to fulfill His promise to Israel's greatest ancestors: Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Today, through Jesus Christ, believers are led into the promised land of eternal life. Each time we look upon the empty cross, we are reminded of God's promise of redemption fulfilled in Christ. • Lord of all creation, we thank You for the precious foretelling of deliverance made known to Your ancient people and delivered in Christ Jesus, our Lord. Grant us encouragement in Your precious Word. Amen.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 8:1 *whole commandment*. All of God's Commandments are intricately woven together, forming a unit. This exhortation ties in to 6:5.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 8:2 *humble you, testing you*. God already knows what is in our hearts, so He does the testing for our sake, not His. See note, Gn 22:1. These tests are designed to teach Israel to trust God more fully. Cf Heb 12:7–8.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 8:3 God's provision of manna humbled the Israelites. They quickly found that they could not provide for themselves. Instead, they had to trust in God for their daily bread. God provided only enough manna for each day (Ex 16:4–5) in order that the Israelites might learn to rely fully on God for sustenance. We pray that God would daily provide for us each time we pray the Lord's Prayer (Mt 6:11). Ambr: "It is therefore a good thing for us to be bedewed with the exhortations of the divine Scriptures, and that the word of God should come down upon us like the dew. When, therefore, you sit at the table of that great man, understand who that great man is. Set in the paradise of delight and placed at the feast of wisdom, think of what is put before you! The divine Scriptures are the feast of wisdom, and the single books the various dishes. Know, first, what dishes the banquet offers, then stretch forth your hand, that those things which you read, or which you receive from the Lord your God, you may carry out in action, and so by your duties may show forth the grace that was granted to you" (*NPNF* 2 10:28).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 8:5 God disciplines believers to strengthen their faith or to return them to His righteous path in order that He might bless them. Cf Lv 26:14–42.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 8:6 *walking … ways*. See p 7. *fearing*. See p 1001.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 8:8 See p 236.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 8:9 *iron*. The mountains of southern Lebanon and the territory east of the Sea of Chinnereth are rich in iron. *copper*. Copper mines and smelters have been found by archaeologists in the Arabah Desert south of the Salt Sea. See note, Jb 28:2.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 8:10 *bless the* LORD. See p 842; cf Ec 5:18–19.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 8:11 *commandments … rules … statutes*. See p 971.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 8:12–14 Ter: "[The Lord is] teaching man not to be studious of the stomach" (*ANF* 4:105). When we have everything we want, it becomes easy to forget the Lord.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 8:15 *fiery serpents*. Cf Nu 21:4–9.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 8:16 See notes, vv 2–3.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 8:18 God faithfully remembered His covenant promise to Abram (Gn 12:2–3) and continually provided for His people. *covenant … swore*. See pp 6, 7.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON **Ch 8** God weaves a pattern of worship into the lives of the Israelites. By remembering and keeping God's commands, they honor His name and show God's grace to the nations surrounding them (4:6). Their disobedience dishonors God's name. How easily Christians today look upon themselves as self-made, dishonoring God in the process. Instead, may we pray as J. S. Bach did, "To God alone be glory" (*Soli Deo Gloria*), for there is no other Savior. • Father, forgive us. We are poor, miserable sinners, often content to go our own way and seek our own glory. We ask that You send Your Holy Spirit to lead us to repentance, and then feed us with Your sustaining bread of life. Amen.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 9:1–12 The theme of this section of Scripture could be summarized as "By grace you have been saved" (Eph 2:5).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 9:1 *today*. Previously, the Israelites' disobedience had delayed their entry into the Promised Land. *fortified up to heaven*. Hyperbole depicting the strength of the Canaanites. See note, 2:36; cf 1:28.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 9:2 *sons of Anak?* See note, 1:28; cf Nu 13:31. The Israelites felt helpless fighting against the Anakim, but God would fight their battles for them.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 9:3 See note, Lv 10:2.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 9:4–5 *righteousness*. See p 843. God destroyed the Anakim because they were wicked. The Israelites needed to understand that the land was given to them by God's grace and not because of any righteousness they possessed.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 9:6 *stubborn people*. Or, "stiff-necked people." An expression God used some 40 years earlier during the golden calf incident (cf Ex 32:9).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 9:10 *all the words*. The Ten Commandments. See note, Ex 34:28.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 9:12 *your people*. God spoke as though Israel belonged to Moses. The sin of the Israelites distanced them from the Lord.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 9:1–12 God will soon lead the Israelites into Canaan, a land that 40 years earlier they had called unconquerable. But God Himself will lead the charge with "consuming fire" (v 3). Israel's victory will not be based on their righteousness; neither are the blessing and victory we receive. Our salvation came at a terrible price: it cost God the life of His Son, a gift we are to remember in Holy Communion until Christ comes again in His glory (1Co 11:26). • Heavenly Lord, let us never boast of the works of our hands. Everything we have is a precious gift of grace from You, through Your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 9:13–21 Moses retells the golden calf incident. The order is not chronological, as detailed in Ex 32, but only gives highlights.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 9:13 *stubborn people*. Cf v 6.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 9:14 God's anger burned so strongly against the Israelites that He wanted to destroy them for their gross idolatry and raise up another people to take their place. (Consider how God totally destroyed all but eight people during the great flood; cf Gn 6–8.)
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 9:15 *burning with fire*. A theophany marked God's presence on Mount Sinai (Ex 19:16).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 9:17 *broke them before your eyes*. Several Near Eastern treaties contain provisions that if the treaty is broken, the other party may burn or smash the treaty document in a public confirmation that the treaty had been broken.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 9:18 Moses fasted an additional 40 days and 40 nights, confessing the people's sin of idolatry. God was sustaining his life during the meditation.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 9:19 *the LORD listened*. Moses offered intercessory prayers on Israel's behalf.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 9:20 *so angry*. Mel: "Let us [not] imagine that God is made of stone or is a stoic…. God was angry at Aaron and … at that time Aaron was not in a state of grace but was guilty of eternal punishment. We must shrink in horror from the fall of Aaron" (Chem, *LTh*

1:310). *I prayed for Aaron*. Cyr Jer: "Shall not Jesus, His Only-begotten, prevail with God when He prays for us? … Only, O man, repent also in like manner, and grace is not forbidden you" (*NPNF* 2 7:10).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 9:21 *brook*. Today no brook is found on Mount Sinai. Low-growing bushes at the base of the mountain indicate that moisture is present. See "Census Figures," p 213.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 9:22 Events in Sinai. *Taberah*. Where some Israelites complained and God destroyed them by fire. *Massah*. Where the Israelites quarreled and tested the Lord over the lack of water. *Kibroth-hattaavah*. Where some Israelites were struck down by a plague because they grumbled to the Lord for lack of meat.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 9:25 Time after time, we see Moses falling down to pray that God would forgive His rebellious people. Moses provides a model for intercessory prayer, the ultimate of which is seen in Christ's High Priestly Prayer (Jn 17).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 9:26 *heritage*. See p 7. *redeemed through Your greatness*. Moses recognized and acknowledged that the exodus deliverance was by God's grace. See "redeem," p 843.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 9:27 *Do not regard*. Hbr wording requests that God not "turn His face toward" the sin Israel has committed. By not noting these sins, God graciously withholds the punishment the people deserve.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 9:13–29 By retelling the story of the golden calf (Ex 32), Moses teaches a new generation about the consequences of disobeying God's commands. The entire nation was about to forfeit their status as God's chosen people. But God mercifully turned away from their sin. Today, God still calls His people to come before Him and seek His forgiveness in order that He might "cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1Jn 1:9). • Loving Father, each sin we commit brings tears to Your eyes. By our own actions, we separate ourselves from You. Look past our faults to see the gracious intercession of Your Son at Calvary. Amen.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 10:1–11 Cf Ex 34.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 10:2 Moses had smashed the first tablets in anger over the golden calf. After forgiving the Israelites, God inscribed two new tablets.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 10:3 *So I made an ark*. Moses constructed a container to house God's Law. This was perhaps only a temporary housing for the two tablets of the Law until the more permanent ark of the covenant was built (Ex 25:16, 21; 40:20).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 10:6–9 Refers to events that happened after Israel's departure from Sinai. They show that God had indeed forgiven His people.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 10:6 *There Aaron died*. God might have struck Aaron dead at Mount Sinai, but thanks to Moses' intercessory prayer (9:26–29), Aaron survived. God graciously restored the priesthood to Aaron.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 10:7 Listed here are the places where the Israelites camped after departing Kadesh-barnea. Some places were not recorded in Nu 33:37. See map, p 250.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 10:8 *At that time*. Refers to Ex 28–29. *ark of the covenant*. See diagram, p 203. *bless*. See p 842.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 10:10 Refers to Moses' second period of fasting (9:25–29). *unwilling to destroy you*. Although God wanted to destroy the Israelites, He responded to Moses' intercessory pleas and relented (Ex 32:14).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 10:11 God's forgiveness is complete. The Israelites are granted permission to enter the land God had promised their ancestors.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 10:1–11 Moses reminds the Israelites of their idolatry at Sinai. Only Moses' prayer of intercession spared them. God inscribed two new tablets with His precious commands and promised to lead the Israelites into Canaan. Today, pray for yourself and others who face temptation. Take comfort in the promise that Jesus intercedes for you and will be with you amid all struggles. • Lord, have mercy on us and hear our cry for greater faith and greater faithfulness. Amen.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 10:12 *fear the* LORD. See p 1001. *walk … ways*. See p 7.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 10:14 *heaven of heavens*. The highest heaven. See note, 2Co 12:2.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 10:15 *chose*. God's chosen people are sinners. They bring no special qualities to merit God's favor, yet He chose

them to be His people. See note, Eph 1:4. God still initiates the relationship of faith today (Rm 5:8; 1Jn 4:10).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 10:16 The call to circumcise the heart indicates that the human heart is by nature stubborn and rebellious toward God. A circumcised heart is a heart responding in faith to God's grace. On the symbolism of circumcision, see note, Gn 17:12.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 10:17–18 A creed-like statement. Many of God's names found here are repeated elsewhere in Scripture (e.g., Ps 136:2–3; 1Tm 6:15; 2Sm 7:22; 1Ch 16:25; Ne 1:5; 8:6; Ps 48:1; Jb 36:5; Is 9:6; Jer 32:18; Ps 68:35; Dn 9:4). Isaiah uses the name "Mighty God" to describe the coming Messiah (Is 9:6). See "Mighty One," p 1227.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 10:19 *Love the sojourner*. See note, Ex 12:19.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 10:20 *hold fast*. Hbr *dabaq*, "cling"; the same word used of Adam and Eve (Gn 2:24) and of Ruth and Naomi (Ru 1:14).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 10:21 *He is your praise*. God desires that He alone be the focus of worship, for it is He who has rescued and forgiven His people.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 10:22 Jacob and his descendants, 70 in all, traveled to Egypt to join Joseph, who was already living there (Ex 1:1). By His grace, God grew these Israelites into a mighty nation. See "Census Figures," p 213. *numerous as the stars*. Hyperbole. A reminder of God's faithfulness in fulfilling His promise to Abram.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 10:12–22 God desires that those who love Him realize that He has the awesome power to forgive sins. In respect of this power, and in honor due His holy name, the Israelites are to reflect God's love back to Him in their words and actions. In so doing, they witness God's love to the nations around them and to the foreigners among them. Reflected here is God's desire that all should be saved and learn of His coming Messiah, Jesus. By God's grace, we repent of our stubborness. Through Baptism, we are made new creatures (Rm 6:4), counting ourselves dead to sin and alive to God (Rm 6:11). • Precious Lord, almighty Father, we thank You for the abundant mercy You show to those who repent and turn away from their sins. Forgive us for the sake of Your dear Son. Amen.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 11:1 *charge … statutes … rules … commandments*. God's holy ordinances, kept in response to His love. See p

971. *always*. See note, Ps 1:2.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 11:2 *not speaking to your children*. Moses chides the adults to listen and to obey God faithfully. *discipline of the* LORD. God's punishment of the Egyptians. *hand … arm*. See p 842.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 11:3 God used the 10 plagues (signs) as well as the destruction of the Egyptian army (deeds) to deliver Israel.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 11:4 By God's hand, the Egyptian army had not sufficiently recovered to pursue the Israelites. God is in charge of safe passage for the Israelites, lest they think their survival is based on anything but His grace.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 11:7 This generation may have witnessed the exodus as children (under age 20; cf Nu 14:29). They certainly witnessed God's provision in the wilderness.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 11:8 *going over to possess*. In God's eyes, the occupation of Canaan is an accomplished fact.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 11:9 *flowing with milk and honey*. See p 6.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 11:10 *irrigated it*. See ESV note. Hbr refers to a water-lifting device that was operated with the feet (e.g., a treadmill or corkscrew for raising water). The feet were also used to open channels for water in the rows of soil. Egypt depended heavily on irrigation from the Nile River, so the people would have been well trained in irrigation methods.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 11:11 *drinks*. Porous limestone soaks up water and reserves it.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 11:12 Unlike the land of Egypt, where the Israelites struggled to irrigate the fields, God promises to attend their farmland in Canaan continually, providing rain in its season and ensuring abundant crops for His chosen people (v 14).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 11:13 *with all your heart*. Theme repeated throughout Dt (e.g., 4:29; 10:12; 11:13; 13:3; 26:16; 30:2, 6, 10). See note, 6:5.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 11:14 *rain … season*. See calendar, p 262.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 11:17 Today, parts of Canaan are bony and barren because God withheld the rain. C six centuries after the Israelites had entered Canaan, they turned away from God so extensively that God withheld His blessing of rain (1Ki 17:1) in a dramatic call for them to repent and return to Him.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 11:18–21 Cf 6:4–9.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 11:19 *teach them to your children*. Cf 4:9; 6:6–9; see note, 6:7.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 11:22 *walking … ways*. See p 7.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 11:23 See note, Ex 14:14.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 11:24 Israel's territory was large for a nation of that time. Their territory once included parts of Lebanon and the Sinai Desert. See color map 3.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 11:25 *fear of you*. Rahab later confirms this to the Israelite spies (Jsh 2:9). *as He promised*. God keeps all His promises.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 11:26–28 See p 127; cf chs 27–28.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 11:28 *other gods*. See note, 32:39.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 11:29 Cf Jsh 8:30–35 and notes. Located in the heart of Israel, Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim today continue to echo with God's curses and blessings. Ebal is barren and unproductive, while Gerizim is rich and fertile. See color map 2.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 11:30 Rhetorical question; the location was well known. The mountains are near Shechem, the place where God appeared to Abram and promised that his offspring would inherit the land (Gn 12:6–7; cf Gn 33:18–20).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON **Ch 11** Soon the Israelites will cross the Jordan River to begin conquering the land God had promised to Abram so many years before. We can almost hear their cries of thanksgiving! Yet Moses' warning is stern. Even today, though we have the Bible and know its teaching, we may fail to heed it. Pause today to repent and give praise to your Lord for His merciful goodness. Abundant blessings, especially eternal life (Jn 6:47), are still yours through Jesus Christ. • Lord and sustainer of life, send Your Holy Spirit to us through Your Word and Sacraments. Make us new creatures who daily see Your abundant blessings and honor You with our lives. Amen.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON **Chs 12–25** Moses has been offering a commentary on the First Commandment: how to love and serve the Lord "with all your heart and with all your soul" (10:12). Now he begins teaching about (1) how the Israelites were to receive the gracious presence of God in worship and (2) the holy life that flowed from doing so.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 12:1 *statutes and rules*. The teachings in chs 12–25. See p 971. *possess, all the days*. See "portion," p 7.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 12:2–4 Idolatrous worship would remain a constant temptation for God's people (cf Is 57:5–7; Jer 2:20). See p 526. God gave the land for right worship. The defiling presence of idol worship was incompatible with the revelation of God's holiness (cf Ac 19:17–20). See "devote to destruction," p 6.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 12:3 *pillars*. See note, Gn 28:18. *Asherim*. See note, Ex 34:13. *destroy their name*. So they are forgotten.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 12:4 *in that way*. Worship must be done in a way that is instituted by God's Word. Luth: "All this He commands in order that in the worship of God the people may not be carried away by its own feeling, however holy and good, but may be governed by the Word; for if man does not live without the Word even with respect to the belly, how much less does he live without the Word in the work of God and in the spirit! God wants our conscience to be certain and sure that it is pleasing to Him. This cannot be done if the conscience is led by its own feeling, but only if it relies on the Word of God" (AE 9:123). See FC SD VI 20.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 12:5 *place*. Singular. There would be only one place of sacrifice in the land. See application note, Lv 17:1–9. *His habitation*. See p 495. Over time, God would establish His dwelling as the place where His name would be proclaimed (cf 1Ki 8). Later, this would be Jerusalem, and most specifically the temple. There God's people could have sure access to His gracious presence (cf 1Ch 21–22). Though God is everywhere, He leads us to seek Him in specific ways. As Christians, we find Christ present for us in His means of grace, around which His Church gathers.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 12:6 See pp 170–71.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 12:7 *eat before the* LORD *… rejoice*. While pagans sacrificed their own goods to appease the gods, the Israelites offered what God had provided (Lv 1–7). *blessed*. See p 842.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 12:8 Wilderness practices would not necessarily apply in the Promised Land. The people were not permitted to worship God in times, places, and ways that God had not instituted.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 12:9 *rest … inheritance*. See "portion," p 7.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 12:10 *over the Jordan*. The conquest. See "Ethics of Conquest," p 339.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 12:11 *make His name dwell*. See "name," p 843. *finest vow offerings*. See "vow," p 7.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 12:12 Moses describes men, women, children, and slaves participating in worship. *Levite*. See p 228.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 12:15 Cf Lv 17:1–9.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 12:16 *you shall not eat the blood*. Blood taboos are common in many cultures. However, the Israelites had a special reason to abstain from eating blood: God provided the blood of slaughtered animals for a specific and holy use in worship, to cleanse what human sin had made unclean or defiled (cf Lv 17).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 12:21 *too far*. Cf Lv 17:3–4.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 12:23 *do not eat the blood*. See note, v 16.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 12:26 *holy things*. Cf Lv 1–5; see p 7.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 12:1–28 The Lord calls His people to cleanse the land of all places of false worship. He would provide for them a place to receive His presence in grace and blessing. Today, God forbids us from worshiping Him in ways that seem good to us but that are contrary to His Word. God gives us His clear Word in Christ Jesus. In His Word and Sacraments, we have rest in our consciences, and we experience the deep joy that comes from having God's forgiveness. • Lord Jesus, in You I find the fullness of God's glory. I worship and adore You, my Lord and my God. Amen.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 12:30 *ensnared*. See note, Ps 64:5. *follow them*. In ancient times, it was customary for new arrivals in a land to worship the gods and follow the customs of that land (cf 2Ki 17:24–28). Moses warned God's people against becoming trapped into following pagan worship customs.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 12:31 *burn their sons and their daughters*. Child sacrifice was associated with the worship of Molech (see note, Lv 18:21). Israel failed to heed God's warning about this practice. Solomon (1Ki 11:7), Ahaz (2Ch 28:3), and Manasseh (2Ki 21:6) later built altars to Molech and allowed the sacrifice of children. See p 403.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 12:32 Clear prohibition against worshiping the Lord according to pagan customs. See note, 4:2.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 13:1 *a prophet or a dreamer of dreams*. Someone claiming to have received a word or vision from God. See pp 74, 1081–83. Luth: "One must rest wholly on the Word alone and shut out everything from eyes and senses, because when the Word is lost, God is lost. It is better to lose friends, brothers, saints, mighty ones, and everything than to lose God" (AE 9:129). *gives you a sign*. See notes, Ex 7:11–12. Chem: "No miracles can prevail against the doctrine which has been revealed by God" (*LTh* 2:700).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 13:2 *Let us go after other gods*. See note, 18:20.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 13:3 *God is testing you*. Cypr: "Unless the battle has preceded, there cannot be a victory: … the crown is given to the victors. For the helmsman is recognized in the tempest; in the warfare the soldier is proved" (*ANF* 5:472). See note, Gn 22:1. *to know whether you love*. The Lord wanted people to trust His Word and to grow in their love for Him, and so warned them against placing their trust in signs or wonders. Similar warnings are given by Jesus (Mt 7:15–20) and by St Paul (Gal 1:6–9).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 13:4 *walk after the* LORD. See p 7. *fear*. See p 1001.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 13:5 *redeemed*. See p 843. *purge the evil from your midst*. See note, 21:21. God called His people to be intolerant toward those whose teaching would destroy their community and threaten their future (cf 12:31). Cypr: "Let no one, beloved brethren, make you to err from the ways of the Lord; let no one snatch you, Christians, from the Gospel of Christ" (*ANF* 5:318).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 13:6 *wife you embrace*. The person who is closest to you, who can speak to you in a whisper. See ESV note.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 13:9 *Your hand shall be first*. The person who made the accusation was responsible to effect the punishment. This shows the seriousness with which the temptation of idolatry was treated; it also served to protect the innocent against false accusation by forcing the accuser to take personal and public responsibility for the denunciation. *afterward … all*. By taking part in the punishment, the whole community was to confirm the rightness of the law and of the verdict against the guilty. It was illegal to put a person to death without a public hearing or on the evidence of one witness. Cf 17:5–6.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 13:13 *worthless fellows*. Traditionally rendered "children of Belial"; lit, "sons of worthlessness." I.e., troublemakers, people who maliciously incite chaos and murder by false report and false teaching. Cf 1Sm 10:27; 2Co 6:15.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 13:14 *abomination*. Describes a thing or action that is opposed to right worship of God or something at odds with right living as God's people. Cf 7:25, 26; 17:1; 27:15; 32:16; see note, Pr 6:16.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 13:15 *devoting it to destruction*. See p 6.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 13:16 *It shall not be built again*. The city would be a tell—a heap of ruins that would witness to the Lord's just wrath. See note, Jsh 6:26.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 13:17 *devoted things*. See p 6. *mercy … compassion*. See pp 842–43.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 12:29–13:18 The Lord warns His people to fear Him, especially when they are tempted to worship the gods and follow the abominable customs of the people whose land they are to possess. Those who oppose God can draw many followers through their displays of power and spectacle. God's Word gives us His solemn and binding promises. God means what He says: In Christ, your sins are forgiven. In Christ, you will find life to the full. In Christ, you will be free to love others as you love yourself. • Father, by the leading of Your Holy Spirit, let me always trust in Your Son, my Lord Jesus Christ. Only in Him can I find the light, the truth, and the peace that I need. Amen.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 14:1 *sons of the* LORD. In the OT, the people of Israel were regarded as God's own children; they were part of His household and subject to His rules. In the NT, all Christians are described as members of God's household (Eph 2:19; 1Tm 3:15) and as sons of God the Father (Rm 8:12–17). *cut yourselves*. In Canaanite religion, people ritually cut themselves until blood flowed (see note, 1Ki 18:28). *baldness on your foreheads*. Mourners were forbidden to tear out the hair from the front of their head (either out of despair or to arouse pity).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 14:2 *His treasured possession*. See note, 7:6.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 14:3–21 See notes, Lv 11; see also p 300. Luther held that God gave four basic reasons for forbidding His people at that time from eating unclean animals: (1) They were literally unclean and

so unfit for human consumption (at least for that time and place). (2) Such strict dietary laws, which distinguished God's people from the other nations, would discourage His people from making additional laws of their own devising. (3) Through the strict laws, human pride might be broken, so that God's people might grow in desire for the One who would deliver them from their sins. (4) In seeing that "unclean, rapacious, and cruel animals were forbidden," God's people would be moved to love and gentleness (AE 9:134–38).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 14:3 *eat any abomination*. Same attitude toward unclean food as toward pagan practices of the land God's people were to enter (see note, 13:14).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 14:21 See note, Ex 23:19.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 14:1–21 The Lord calls His people, as members of His household, to avoid mimicking the self-destructive behaviors of their pagan neighbors. The Israelites were to adopt new and distinct table manners, eating only clean food. As members of God's household (Eph 2:19), we, too, must leave behind all those behaviors and habits that damage ourselves and the Christian community (Eph 5:1–7). Since God has adopted us in Christ Jesus, our Father in heaven will always give us His Holy Spirit so that we may be cleansed from all our sin (Rm 8:12–17). • Father, cleanse me from my guilt, and give me the will and the strength to lead a life worthy of my calling. In Jesus' name. Amen.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 14:22–29 In Nu 18:20–27, the Levites received the tithe. Here we see that the collection of the tithe was also a festive occasion that included a meal with the Levites and needy individuals.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 14:23 *His name dwell there*. See "name," p 843. *fear the* LORD. See p 1001.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 14:24 *blesses*. See p 842.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 14:26 *wine or strong drink*. God blessed the use of alcohol in this communal celebration. However, see note, Pr 20:1. Cf Jn 2:1–12; 1Co 11:23–26.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 14:27 Cf Nu 18.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 14:28–29 Mention of this law is also made in Tob 1:7.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 14:29 *bless*. See p 842.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 14:22–29 God would provide for His people through the land that He was giving them. He commands them to use their portion for worship and to provide for the needy. Today, God calls us to share with our neighbor in need from the abundance of our possessions (cf Eph 4:28; Lk 10:25–37). Because God provides for us, we do not need to be anxious about our sustenance in this life (Mt 6:31). We are free to gratefully receive the generosity of others, to joyfully use the best we have in the worship of God, and to cheerfully experience God's love as we give to those in need (2Co 9:7). • Lord, thank You for Your great generosity to me. By Your Holy Spirit, lead me to give cheerfully and gratefully because of the gifts You have given. In Jesus' name. Amen.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 15:1–2 Luther comments that such a charitable model of business would limit the amount of litigation and disputes in a nation, and that it would make creditors rightly more cautious in lending (AE 9:144). See note, v 6. This model does not likely apply to today's economy since the law applied only to the "brothers" of Israel, who were connected by tribal kinship. Foreigners were not protected by this rule (v 3).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 15:1 *grant a release*. Not insist on repayment.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 15:4 *no poor among you*. See note, v 11. In the land the Lord was giving His people, there would always be plenty for everyone—old and young, sick and healthy. It was God's will that His people would harvest and use the produce of the land in a charitable manner, and that the people's strict obedience to God's commands would alleviate poverty. *bless*. See p 842. *inheritance*. See "portion," p 7.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 15:6 *lend*. God was not absolutely opposed to credit-based business. *you shall not borrow*. Such a rule would protect the Israelites from being dominated financially, which could open the way to cultural and religious domination by the idol-worshiping nations.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 15:7–11 It was sinful to ignore a brother in need. This teaching is taken up in the NT. See notes, 1Tm 5:8; Gal 6:10.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 15:7 *not harden your heart*. See notes, Ex 4:21; 9:12. People were forbidden from willfully refusing to help the poor.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 15:10 God's people should not hoard wealth as a source of security. Instead, God called the wealthy to trust that He would always provide bountifully for them through their work and their

business dealings; He called them to live out this trust in freely sharing with those in need.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 15:11 *never cease to be poor*. People, through no fault of their own, would be vulnerable to falling into poverty (e.g., the elderly, the sick, widows and orphans, and refugees).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 15:12–14 In order to find a way out of poverty, God's people in need could sell themselves into slavery to their fellow Israelites. This, however, could only be for a limited time (up to six years), and upon release, poor workers were to receive enough to sustain themselves independently (so as not to have to resell themselves into slavery).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 15:14 *blessed*. See p 842.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 15:15 *redeemed*. See p 843.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 15:16–18 Describes how an Israelite could voluntarily enter into lifelong slavery. This possibility is envisaged as happening when a master and slave have established a mutually beneficial (even caring) relationship. The master or mistress of the slave would be obliged to receive the person as a slave and so be responsible for their care and provision.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 15:19 The Israelites consecrated the firstborn male to God as a reminder that He provided all their livestock (12:6; Nu 18:17–19).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 15:21 Only the best was fit for sacrificing to God and for sharing in religious celebration. The people's sacrifices were not intended to be offerings made in order to placate God's wrath. Rather, God provided them with the best animals, which were used for making them clean from guilt and for feasts.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 15:22 See p 300.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON **Ch 15** Since the Lord would generously provide for His people, He commands them to be generous with one another. Today, the existence of poverty in the Christian community is a scandal, and the cry of those in need in any community goes up before the Lord. In the Church, you have brothers and sisters given to you by God. This means that you can always be confident God will provide for you when you are in need, and that you can help others knowing that God will give you more than enough to live life to the full. • Gracious Father, grant me wisdom in caring for my brothers and sisters in Christ. Since You have

adopted me in Holy Baptism, help me give and receive in ways that honor You. Amen.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 16:1–17 All males were to appear at the sanctuary for three annual pilgrim feasts: Passover (vv 1–8); the Feast of Weeks, or Pentecost (vv 9–12); and the Feast of Booths (vv 13–15).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 16:1 *Abib*. See calendar, p 262; see also pp 200–201.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 16:2 *at the place*. In Egypt, the Passover was celebrated in homes. In the wilderness, it was celebrated in tents clustered around the tabernacle. Now Moses directs them to celebrate the Passover at a central location to maintain solidarity, since they will be living in various parts of Canaan. See note, Jsh 5:10.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 16:3 God's people ate hastily prepared unleavened bread at the first Passover, when they were readying to flee from the distress of captivity in Egypt (Ex 13:3–16). The NT takes up the imagery of unleavened bread as a symbol of purity and deliverance from evil (1Co 5:6–8).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 16:6 *time you came out*. After the first Passover, God's people were sent out of Egypt at night (Ex 12:29–32).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 16:7 *go to your tents*. To the places they were staying while they were gathered together for the festival and away from their own homes.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 16:8 *solemn assembly*. See note, Lv 23:3.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 16:1–8 At the Passover festival, the people would remember the way God delivered them from slavery in Egypt. Today, if we forget all that God has done for us, we fall back into sinful actions and habits. Without God's help, we find ourselves suffering the distress and affliction of slavery to sin. Our Lord Jesus has given us His body and blood to make Himself present with us and to deliver us from evil. As we celebrate the Lord's Supper "in remembrance" of Jesus, we receive the freedom from sin that He alone gives. • Lord Jesus, remember me in Your kingdom, and deliver me from all evil. Amen.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 16:10 *Feast of Weeks*. So named because Moses commanded a seven-week interval (v 9). Known also as the Feast of Harvest (Ex 23:16) and "day of the firstfruits" (Nu 28:26). Later it was called Pentecost based on the LXX translation of "fifty days" (Lv 23:16).

See p 1835. *freewill offering*. See note, Ex 35:29. Made in addition to the required tithe. *blesses*. See p 842.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 16:9–12 God commands His people to remember their blessings and to share from their bounty with those in need. When God has given us much, He asks much from us (Lk 12:48). By sharing what God has given you, you show your trust in His generosity. He also promises through Jesus, the Savior, that you will receive many times more than you give, in this age and in the age to come (Lk 18:18–30). • Father, since You have given me so much, give me also Your Holy Spirit so that I may be generous to all who suffer need. In Jesus' name. Amen.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 16:13 *seven days*. From the 15th to 22nd day of the seventh month of Tishri (Sept/Oct). Cf Ex 23:14–17; 34:22 (Feast of Ingathering); Lv 23:33–44; see pp 200–201.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 16:14 An exhaustive list of everyone who would dwell in the land, with special mention of those who were economically and socially vulnerable and those who could have been viewed as outsiders with no right to participate in feasting.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 16:15 *bless*. See p 842.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 16:16 *all your males*. Men acted as representatives for their families; all the people of the land were included as participants in the times of celebration.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 16:13–17 The Feast of Booths includes foreigners, who are also called to celebrate God's gracious provision of the harvest. God gives blessings to all, even to those who are not His people (Mt 5:43–48). If we refuse to show God's generous love to other people, our behavior is no better than that of unbelievers. The fellowship we have in Christ with people "from every tribe and language and people and nation" (Rv 5:9) is God's great blessing to us. Together we experience the true unity that comes from access to God's grace in Christ Jesus. • Lord Jesus, thank You for giving me brothers and sisters from every tribe and language and people and nation! Grant us joy together in the Gospel. Amen.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 16:18–20 God commands impartial justice throughout the land.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 16:18 *appoint judges and officers*. Levitical priests and judges heard difficult cases at special locations (17:8–13). See p 228. *tribes*. Settled in specific regions. See map, p 365.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 16:19 The judges and officers were to be blind to the status of those coming before them for judgment; the poor were not to expect partiality, or the rich, deference. On the other hand, the judges and officers were to have their eyes open to the law and to beware of bribes that would blind them to seeing the true legal standing of the disputants in a case. *righteous*. See p 843.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 16:18–20 God commands impartiality in judges because He is Himself impartial in judgment (Rm 2:11). In this we stand warned: there will be tribulation and distress for all who do evil, including those within the household of God. Yet God shows His righteousness in judgment by leading us in faith to receive His mercy and forgiveness in Christ Jesus. • Lord Jesus, all my hope is in You, because You are my righteousness, my peace, and my joy. Amen.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 16:21–22 See notes, 7:5; 12:2–4.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 17:1 *abomination*. See notes, 13:14; 15:21.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 17:4 *inquire diligently*. The people had an obligation to confirm whether rumors about transgression of the covenant were based in fact. In this way, even the rumor of idolatry would be suppressed. See application note, Jsh 22:10–34. *abomination*. See notes, 13:14; 15:21.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 17:5 The people were not to tolerate idolatry in the land. The punishment was severe regardless of the offender's gender.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 17:6 *two … three witnesses*. Safeguard against false accusations made out of desire for revenge or personal gain. See p 217.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 17:7 The accuser was also responsible for the execution of justice. There could be no anonymous denunciations. See note, Jn 8:7.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 16:21–17:7 God forbids all forms of false worship even as He provides for instruction in the truth. We did not choose God, but He chose us (Jn 15:16). We can be rightly confident that He will keep us in true faith and lead us through death to eternal life. • Thank You, Lord Jesus, for choosing me to be Your disciple. Keep me in true faith so I may do those things that are pleasing to You. Amen.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 17:8–13 Outlines the course of action when legal issues could not be decided locally (cf 16:18–20). Levitical priests had a prominent role in judging crimes. The decision of the Levitical priests, in conjunction with that of the presiding judge, was to be final. Chem: "[This] is not speaking of the doctrine which has been commanded or of the dogmas of the faith or religious controversies, but of ceremonial and civil matters" (*LTh* 2:709).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 17:10 Chem: "They were bound to the law of the Lord, and if they judged contrary to this, their decision was null and void" (*LTh* 2:710).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 17:12 Chem: "The duties of the priests were, first, to teach concerning the Law and to answer questions about it; to judge and settle controversies; Lev. 14:35; Deut. 17:9; Mal. 2:7; second, they were to pray, Lev. 4:20; Num. 15:25; third, to make sacrifices and offerings, Lev. 24:4; and fourth, to cleanse, Leviticus 14" (*LTh* 2:345).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 17:8–13 Difficult legal cases require special consideration, and the people are to respect the decisions. When the Law of God convicts us, we must not seek to escape judgment by trying to gain other people's approval for our sinful actions. God gives His judgment through the Law to drive us to repentance (Rm 3:20) so that we may receive salvation from sin in our Lord Jesus. • Lord, let me hear Your word of judgment so that I may place my hope not in the opinion of sinful human beings, but in Jesus Christ, my Lord. Amen.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 17:15 God gives a concession (not a command) that His people may have a king, but the process for choosing a king would be the Lord's prerogative (cf 1Sm 9:1–10:27). *One from among your brothers*. The king must be an Israelite.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 17:16 The king's power was limited. He was forbidden from having many horses because that would mean the unnecessary buildup of military forces.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 17:17 *many wives*. The king was forbidden from having many wives. Monogamy was God's original plan for human beings (Gn 2:8–25; see note, Gn 4:19), and polygamy often leads to further evils (cf 2Sm 11–12). A harem would also invite the possibility of idolatry with the introduction of foreign, idol-worshiping wives into the court of Israel (cf 1Ki 11). *excessive silver and gold*. The king was forbidden from imposing burdensome taxes and forced labor on the people (cf 1Ki 12).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 17:18 *write for himself*. The king must be literate and well instructed in God's Word. The king was personally accountable to God and the people on the basis of the teaching handed on by Moses. *approved by the Levitical priests*. Unlike the kings of foreign nations, the kings of Israel would not be lawmakers but lawkeepers. The Levitical priests would ensure that the king would not introduce his own laws but would submit to God's Law. Chem: "The duty of the ruler is to see that the people 'live in honesty,' that is, they are to establish and defend external order and not tolerate anything in conflict with it. The ruler must establish discipline … let him rule according to the Decalog" (*LTh* 2:400–401).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 17:19 *all the days*. See note, Ps 1:2. *fear the* LORD. See p 1001.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 17:20 Unlike Pharaoh or the other kings of the surrounding nations, the kings of Israel could not consider themselves descended from the gods, with special powers to make absolute laws. Instead, God called His kings to uphold His Law. *lifted up*. Prideful, considering himself above the Law.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 17:14–20 God gives His concession, allowing His people to have a king, but only on certain conditions. Note well the focus on God's Word in this description of a good and godly king. God's Word will similarly bless, equip, and strengthen you for faithful service. • Lord, Your instruction shows me the way of life and love; keep my heart always open to Your teaching. Amen.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 18:1 Unlike the other tribes of Israel, the Levites' inheritance is not to be a territory but portions of the peoples' offerings (cf Lv 7:28–36). Cf Dt 12:19 for an exhortation not to neglect the Levites. See "portion,"p 7.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 18:2 Cf Nu 18:20.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 18:5 *minister*. Hbr *sharath*, "attend," "wait on." The work of the tabernacle and the rationale for the Levites' special treatment: they were chosen out of all Israel to minister before the Lord in His name for the people. They were the mediators between Israel and the Lord. Cf 10:8; 21:5.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 18:6–8 Levites residing elsewhere in Israel were permitted to come to the tabernacle as they desired to serve the Lord (cf Nu 3:5–4:49). (It is unclear whether this refers to a temporary or

permanent change in location—perhaps both.) They were to be given equal portions with the regularly serving priests, even if they had other sources of income (sale of ancestral property, inheritance, etc.). Luth: "God commanded this to exercise their faith and love, that they might learn to share their substance gladly, persuaded by the sure faith that they would be supported by God" (AE 9:174–75).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 18:8 *patrimony*. Likely refers to a source of income that is not to affect his service or share of the offerings.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 18:1–8 Though the Levitical priesthood will not have an inheritance of land that will provide their sustenance, the Lord Himself will be their inheritance. They are to share in the offerings that are brought to the Lord. Today, we are not to neglect the physical needs of those who serve the Lord among us, for "you shall not muzzle an ox when it is treading out the grain" (25:4) and "the laborer deserves his food" (Mt 10:10). Cf 1Co 9:9–14; 1Tm 5:18. God provided for the needs of the Levitical priests through the gifts of His people. So also today, God's people are moved by His grace in Christ Jesus to support those who labor among them, especially in preaching the life-giving Gospel of Jesus. • Lord God, help us to give "double honor" (1Tm 5:17) to those who faithfully labor among us in Your vineyard, calling us to repentance with Your holy Law and uplifting us with the mercy, forgiveness, and life that are ours in Christ Jesus, our Savior. Amen.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 18:9 Techniques for invoking occult powers are prohibited. Following such abominable practices as other nations would be a rejection of the Lord, the sole source of truth and power, who provides His people with legitimate priesthood (vv 1–8) and prophecy (vv 15–22). See note, Pr 6:16.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 18:10–11 Prohibited abominable practices include all types of divination, magic, and consulting with the spirit world. "All such people place their heart and trust elsewhere than in the true God" (LC I 12). *burns his son or his daughter*. May refer to a nonlethal trial-by-fire ordeal (see ESV note) or to child sacrifice, such as to the false god Molech. See note, 12:31; cf 2Ki 3:26–27. *divination … fortunes … omens*. Various means to discover the course of future events or the will of the gods. See notes, Gn 30:27; 44:5. *sorcerer … charmer*. Using magic to supernaturally influence people or events. *medium … necromancer … inquires of the dead*. Cult of the dead or conjuring up spirits of the dead and

consulting with the spirit world, esp to have the future revealed (cf 26:14; see note, 1Sm 28:8).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 18:12 Not only the practices but also anyone who engages in them is an abomination to the Lord. This is why God's judgment stood against the Canaanites and the Israelites would dispossess them of the land (v 14).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 18:13 *blameless*. Hbr *tam*, "complete" or "sound," in this case indicating faithfulness to the covenant conditions of fellowship with the Lord. Such undivided commitment would lead to blessedness and remaining in the land. See note, Jb 1:1.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 18:14 Unlike the Canaanites, who conduct their affairs by listening to sorcerers and diviners, Israel is to conduct its affairs in conformity with the word of the prophets (cf v 15). Luth: "All these—since they are human inventions without the Word of God—must be condemned among the people of God, whose life and works must be governed by the sure Word of God" (AE 9:176).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 18:9–14 As Israel enters the Promised Land, they will be exposed to the influences of the false, occultist worship practices of the nations surrounding them, which they are to avoid. The people are faced with a great challenge: will they remain faithful to the Lord, or will they desert Him? Today, consider to whom you will listen. As parents lovingly protect their children by warning, reminding, and encouraging them, so our gracious God comes to us in His Word, warning us of snares and pitfalls, reminding us of our relationship to Him as His beloved children, and encouraging and comforting us with the assurance of His love and forgiveness. • Lord God, give me an undivided heart that I may always honor Your name and be Your witness to others, a city set on a hill, whose light cannot be hidden (Mt 5:14). Amen.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 18:15 *prophet*. Israel would have a succession of prophets resembling Moses in function, declaring the Word of Lord. See pp 1081–83. *like me*. Moses here describes a prophet having a unique relationship with the Lord, one no other prophet enjoyed (34:10; Nu 12:6–8). Jewish commentators expected the coming of a new Moses. Luth: "This is the chief passage in this whole book and a clearly expressed prophecy of Christ as the new Teacher. Hence the apostles also courageously adduce this passage (Acts 3:22–23; 7:37)…. Here Moses clearly describes his own end, and he yields his mastery to the Prophet who

is to come…. Here he prophesies that Christ will be true man and will come from the blood of the Jews, because salvation is from the Jews (John 4:22). No one has ever arisen from this people who taught a different word from the word of Moses and set up a new ministry except this one Christ of ours" (AE 9:176, 180).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 18:16–18 Precedent for making prophecy the means for God's communication with Israel (cf 5:22–29). Israel felt the fear of sinners faced by a perfect, holy God and His demands, so they asked Moses to be the one who met with God on their behalf and brought His Word to them.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 18:17 The Lord acknowledged the appropriateness of their request.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 18:18 *I will put My words in His mouth*. The true prophet speaks only God's Word (cf Jer 15:16; Ezk 2:9–3:3; 1Pt 1:10–11; 2Pt 1:19–21). See note, Nu 12:6; see also p 1081–83. Cypr: "Concerning [the prophet,] Christ says in the Gospel according to John: 'Search the Scriptures, in which you think you have eternal life. These are they which testify concerning Me…. For if you had believed Moses, you would also believe Me' " (*ANF* 5:512). Chem: "When minds have in this way been prepared and crushed by the Law [v 15], then God explains and repeats His promise about raising up another prophet and about another kind of teaching, namely the Gospel" (*LTh* 2:464). *all that I command*. Wide variety of subjects: religion, domestic affairs, and foreign affairs. When the prophet speaks, the Lord speaks (Ex 4:15–16).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 18:19 *require it of him*. To obey the prophet's words was to obey the Lord's words. To ignore the prophet's word would lead to divine judgment. The Lord made no similar declaration about the orders of an Israelite king.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 18:20 Two types of prophecy are punishable by death: falsely attributing a prophecy to the Lord, and speaking in the name of other gods.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 18:22 If a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, a record of reliability must be established: what the prophet says will or will not come to pass (cf 1Sm 3:19–20). If not, he has spoken falsely. They were not to be afraid of a false prophet's power or be afraid to punish him; such a prophet was a fraud and could not harm them (a true prophet apparently could; 1Ki 18:20–40). Luth: "Those who come in the

name of strange gods are those who come without the Scriptures and the Word of God but use their own spirit as a pretext" (AE 9:187–88). See notes, 1Jn 4:1–3.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 18:15–22 Criteria for identifying false prophets and false prophecy are given. God will provide a source of revelation to communicate with His people: He will send a line of prophets that will culminate in the great Prophet promised here, the Lord Jesus Christ. God's Word is holy and is to be treated as such. Neglect of His Word, denial of His Word, adding to or subtracting from His Word, or twisting His Word are all sin. God graciously desires to speak to us to give to us what we cannot live without, the Word that has the power to bring us to repentance (Rm 3:20, Law), make us alive to eternal life (Rm 1:16, Gospel), and keep us in the truth (Jn 8:31–32). • "Lord, keep us steadfast in Your Word; Curb those who by deceit or sword Would wrest the kingdom from Your Son And bring to naught all He has done." Amen. (*LSB* 655:1)

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON **Ch 19** Cf Nu 35. Civil laws regarding homicide, unintentional (vv 4–10) and intentional (vv 11–13); movement of boundary markers (v 14); and perjury (vv 15–21).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 19:1–3 God establishes cities of refuge: three in the Transjordan (4:43) and three in Canaan after the conquest (v 2). Next of kin would seek blood revenge for a death, and these cities of refuge would ensure due process for the accused, preventing an injustice. They were to be evenly distributed throughout the land so no one would be at a disadvantage. According to Nu 35:6 and Jsh 21:13–36, the six cities of refuge were Levitical cities.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 19:4–6 *kills … unintentionally*. An accident with no prior hatred. Capital punishment is not deserved, and a city of refuge would prevent the injustice of an angry avenger striking down the offender. Luth: "Whatever the offense has been, the heart rather than the hand of the offender is to be considered…. If the heart is innocent of hate, the deed is innocent of murder" (AE 9:193–94). *avenger of blood*. See notes, Nu 35:12; 1Ki 2:31.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 19:8–10 God had promised, on condition of the peoples' fidelity to the covenant, that their land would be enlarged (11:22–24). If that happened, three more cities of refuge were to be added to help ensure that innocent blood would not be shed in their land. If innocent blood were shed, the guilt of it would be shared by the community.

According to Jgs 2:20–3:4, God revoked the promise of enlarged territory due to Israel's disobedience. However, Israel did expand greatly under David and Solomon. See color map 3. Cf 32:35; Ps 94:1–2; Rm 12:17, 19 for God's vengeance.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 19:9 *walking*. See p 7.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 19:10 *inheritance*. See p 7.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 19:11–13 Deliberate, premeditated killing is different (on account of hate), and such a murderer cannot abuse a city of refuge by claiming protection there. This crime, once determined, must be punished.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 19:12 *hand him over*. The elders of his city (see note, Ex 3:16) would demand his extradition and hand him over to the avenger of blood (see note, vv 4–6) for execution after conviction. *so that he may die*. Same verb is used of the victim (v 11); thus the punishment fits the crime (see note, v 21).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 19:13 There shall be no mercy for this crime. Shedding of innocent blood was a stain on Israel that had to be removed for their well-being. After all, the Lord dwelled there, and the land was not to be defiled (Nu 35:34). Luth: "Here [vv 11–13] you see that vengeance is assigned to the government" (AE 9:195). Cf Rm 13:1–5.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 19:1–13 God gives statutes covering both unintentional and intentional killings. God has given life—all life, from conception on—and reserves the right to take it. No individual can presume to take life into his or her own hands: "You shall not murder" (5:17). God has given us our own "city of refuge" to which we may flee when the guilt of sin threatens to overwhelm us: His grace in Christ Jesus, whose innocent blood was shed for sinners. There you will find free and full forgiveness—the guilt is purged away! • Almighty God, give to us a respect for all life as a sacred gift from You, no matter how small, no matter how feeble and frail, no matter how young or old. Amen.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 19:14 *landmark*. Large stone (or pile of stones) marking the boundary line of someone's property. Moving a landmark for personal gain was a serious moral offense; since the Lord gave the land, to act fraudulently was to act against Him. Jewish commentators saw this as a command against changing established practices of the elders.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 19:14 God gives each family of His people an allotment of land, and the property boundaries of neighbors are to

respected (cf 5:19, 21). God indeed deals bountifully with us to care for our physical needs in this life, but even more so has He given us an inheritance in heaven, secured for us and marked out by Christ Jesus! • Lord God, let us not become enamored by the things of this life but rest secure in the knowledge that You will provide for Your children's needs. Amen.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 19:15 *single witness … not suffice*. Protection against a wrongful conviction on the basis of inadequate or false testimony (vv 16–17). Cf 17:6.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 19:17 *before the* LORD. In front of the tabernacle, where God's presence resided.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 19:18–19 A perjurer is punished with the penalty intended for the accused. See note, v 21. *purge the evil*. Mel: "He wills that the wild ravings of men be held in check and be punished by the penalties imposed by their rules" (Chem, *LTh* 2:437).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 19:20 This law ensured that others would be discouraged from bringing accusations that were questionable or known to be false (cf 5:20).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 19:21 The law of punishment in kind (*lex talionis*) was merciful. It meant that the punishment must fit the crime—the degree of vengeance could not exceed the degree of original injury. This was not personal vengeance but just punishment following a trial with due process. See note, Rm 12:19.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 19:15–21 Laws are given concerning witnesses who bring accusations against others, and safeguards concerning them are given to ensure justice. God calls us to deal with one another with integrity, being faithful witnesses for the protection of ourselves or others and never hurting others by bearing false witness against them. Holy Scripture itself is a witness that our God is just; His perfect justice is seen at the cross, where payment was made in full for sin. There, Jesus became a curse for us; the One who knew no sin was made sin for us (2Co 5:21). • Lord, joy fills our hearts at hearing that You sent Your Son to bear our sin for us and open the door of eternal life to us. We pray that Your Holy Spirit would keep us in the faith until the day of redemption. Amen.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON **Ch 20** Treats three aspects of conduct during war: before the battle (vv 1–9), at the siege of a city (vv 10–18), and the treatment of forests and orchards near the city (vv 19–20).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 20:1 When Israel crossed the Jordan into Canaan, they faced the great psychological disadvantage of confronting horses, chariots, and greater numbers of warriors (Jsh 11:4–9; 17:16; Jgs 1:19). But when faced with superior numbers and equipment, they were not to fear but to be mindful of the Lord and His mighty deed of delivering them from Egypt (cf Ex 14:26–28; Jgs 4:13–16). Luth: "What walls, what arms, what powers, what multitude will resist those for whom God fights?" (AE 9:202). *with you*. See "be with," p 5.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 20:2–4 Priests remind the people that the Lord will go with them into battle to fight for them and give them the victory.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 20:5–8 There are two classes of exemptions from military service: humanitarian situations and those of simple unsuitability for service (those who lack courage).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 20:9 Israel had no standing army at this time, but a militia was mobilized when needed.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 20:10–18 Two different cases of warfare are addressed here: besieging a distant city (vv 10–15) and besieging a city in the land Israel is to possess (vv 16–18).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 20:10–11 Israel is to offer peace (Hbr *shalom*), with terms of surrender and a promise to spare the city and its inhabitants if they agree to serve Israel. If peace is accepted, the inhabitants are spared and put to forced labor. See notes, Jgs 1:28; 1Ki 5:13, 15. The city becomes a vassal of Israel.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 20:12–14 If peace is rejected (v 10), then a siege is mounted. All males are put to death, and all women, children, and plunder are taken as Israel's possessions. God's orchestrating of the victory is taken for granted. (Cf 21:10–14 for restrictions on treatment of captives.)
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 20:15 Cities outside the Promised Land were treated differently because they posed a different threat to Israel's well-being (politically and spiritually).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 20:16–17 Cities within the Promised Land were not offered the option of surrender but were to be utterly destroyed.

This was the Lord's command. Cf 2:34. See "portion" and "devote to destruction," pp 7, 6.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 20:18 The influence of the wicked could (and did) lead Israel to forsake the Lord. The Israelites were instruments of the Lord's judgment against the wicked Canaanites (9:4–5). Luth: "Therefore He wants the Jews [Israelites] to proceed against the Gentiles, not with the greed of the avenger or the lust of the sword but in obedience to His command, that they may fulfill His wrath against those godless people" (AE 9:204).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 20:19–20 A warfare ethic: the purpose of war was not to destroy the land; i.e., there was to be no scorched-earth policy. Only trees without fruit were to be cut down for siege purposes (battering rams, towers, walls, ladders, etc.). The land was to be preserved for future generations (see notes, Nu 23:3; Jsh 17:15; Jgs 9:48).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON **Ch 20** God gives statutes governing warfare. God's moral will is not to be suspended but is to guide and direct our actions, even in matters of war. In the face of danger, God encourages His people with the promise of His presence and the assurance that He fights for them to give them the victory. We, too, have been given the promise of our Savior's constant presence with us, even on the battlefields we tread. In your struggles, call on Him, for He has promised grace, wisdom, and every blessing in your hour of need. • Lord Jesus Christ, clothe us, we pray, with the whole armor of God that we may stand firm in every assault and never lose sight of Your victory on our behalf at the cross and empty tomb. Amen.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 21:1 *slain*. Hbr "pierced." Placed the people and the land under blood guilt, so atonement was necessary (cf 19:4–13; Nu 35:33).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 21:2 Civil authorities determined the closest city to the slain victim, whose elders would then undertake the legal procedure described in vv 3–8.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 21:3–4 *heifer … valley … water*. All were undefiled by human use and therefore appropriate for sacred use.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 21:4 *break the heifer's neck*. Either ritual atonement or judicial execution; perhaps both. This method was used on the firstborn of impure animals not able to be sacrificed (cf Ex 13:2; 34:20). This action may point to a symbolic, substitutionary execution of the guilty.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 21:5 *minister*. See note, 18:5. Those who minister to the Lord become involved, conducting the prescribed liturgical rubrics. They exercise final judicial authority. *bless*. See p 842.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 21:6–7 See note, v 4. Twofold action by civil authorities from the city. First, they wash their hands, symbolically expressing their innocence. Second, they verbally testify to their innocence and pray to the Lord for forgiveness for Israel (v 8), the basis of which is the grace of God, who had redeemed Israel before.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 21:8 *atonement*. See p 5. *Your people*. Spoken twice to emphasize that the whole nation, not just the city nearest the slain person, needed absolution due to collective responsibility for bloodshed in the land.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 21:1–9 The Lord provides a sacrifice for an unsolved murder. He emphasizes the value of human life by describing the atonement that must be made for it. In satisfying His divine justice, God sent His own Son into this world to make the expiatory sacrifice, the atonement, for our lives on the cross of Calvary, there shedding His lifeblood for the guilt of our sins. • Lord Jesus Christ, as You alone are the sacrificial Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, accept our heartfelt repentance for our sins. Wash us in Your blood and clothe us in Your righteousness. We pray in Your holy name. Amen.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 21:10–14 These stipulations for marrying female captives ensure their appropriate moral treatment and consideration for their feelings.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 21:11 Taking a foreign wife from outside the land was permitted. Cf 20:10–15.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 21:12–13 See note, Nu 31:18.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 21:14 If marriage under these circumstances did not work, divorce was permissible. Cf 24:1–4. However, this wife was legally protected. God wanted Israel, in contrast to the nations around them, to treat women with respect and dignity. See "Standing of Women," p 213.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 21:10–14 Israel is given laws governing the marrying of female captives. God expects Israel to act differently than the world around them. God has established marriage for the good of men and women. The model for this union is that of the Bridegroom, Christ, with His Bride, the Church. For her, He gave Himself

up unto death and applied the benefits of His death and resurrection to her in Holy Baptism. We the baptized, the Church, thus stand before God without spot or blemish as the Bride of Christ! • Lord God, as You have created us male and female and instituted marriage to be an intimate blessing to us, lead us to love and respect one another and keep the marriage covenant undefiled through our loving Bridegroom, Christ Jesus. Amen.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 21:15 *two wives*. See note, Gn 4:19.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 21:16 Regardless of the father's feelings for his wives, the firstborn is to be at no legal disadvantage in the inheritance.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 21:17 Firstborn's share of inheritance was to be double according to ancient custom in Israel (cf Gn 27; 48:14). Nuzi documents (fifteenth century BC) have a similar ruling. *firstfruits of his strength*. God's first gift and blessing, who then has preferential treatment in the family and greater responsibility. Cf Ps 127–28.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 21:15–17 The inheritance rights of the firstborn are safeguarded. God assures fair treatment and proper inheritance, which helps stabilize family life. Since He gives all things to us by grace, there is no basis for rivalry based on our merits. In Christ Jesus, we are assured of an inheritance imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for us! • Lord God, for Your undeserved goodness to us, we give You our thanks. You have made us to be partakers of the inheritance of Your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, Your only-begotten Son, the firstborn from the dead. Amen.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 21:18–21 Upholding parental authority was necessary for the stability of the family and community (see note, 5:16; cf Mk 7:10). The offense here is one so serious that it would threaten the stability and continuity of the covenant community. However, parents did not have the right to kill their children but had to bring them before the authorities, which protected children against capricious punishment by parents. On authority in Israel, see p 228.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 21:20 *glutton and a drunkard*. Examples of behaviors that could lead to this offense.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 21:21 Though there are no examples in the OT of this sentence being carried out, this law emphasized the seriousness

of the offense. The intent of this law was not to rehabilitate but to cleanse the community and deter evil.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 21:18–21 Persistent and utter rebellion against parental authority is covered by a law that demands capital punishment if there is no repentance. God demands that the integrity of the family be maintained by honoring fathers and mothers as His representatives to their children. To despise one's mother and father is to despise God Himself and threaten the well-being of the larger community. God is our heavenly Father, who has given us a new birth to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, making us members of His household. • Keep me, dear heavenly Father, from despising or angering my parents and other authorities. Lead me by Your grace to honor, serve, obey, love, and cherish them, through Jesus Christ, whose perfect obedience as a Son has won my forgiveness and salvation. Amen.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 21:22–23 To deter crime, ancient Near Eastern cultures would often display the corpses of executed criminals by hanging or impaling them publicly as a visual statement that justice was upheld. See note, 1Sm 31:10; cf 2Sm 4:12; 21:8–9.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 21:23 *a hanged man is cursed by God*. See "curse," p 6. The body was accursed on account of the capital crime. The NT uses this verse to describe Christ's work for us! He became sin for us (2Co 5:21), was publicly hanged on a tree (1Pt 2:24), and was accursed and forsaken by God for it (Mt 27:46). Just: "[This curse] confirms our hope which depends on the crucified Christ, not because He who has been crucified is cursed by God, but because God foretold that which would be done by you all, and by those like to you, who do not know that this is He who existed before all, who is the eternal Priest of God, and King, and Christ" (*ANF* 1:247). *inheritance*. See "portion," p 7.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 21:22–23 Executed criminals are not to be left hanging but must be buried the same day. They are cursed by God and will defile God's gift, the land of promise, which God had hallowed. God gave Israel and us the gift of a Savior, His Son, who was hung on a tree to redeem us. He hallows us from the curse of the Law by becoming a curse for us. • Lord Jesus Christ, save us from the curse of our sin. Move us to fix our eyes on You as we persevere through this life until You at last grant us deliverance. In Your name we pray. Amen.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 22:1–4 One's brother is anyone in need, friend or enemy!
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 22:1 Stray animals were a common problem in an agrarian society. The Lord requires positive action to restore a neighbor's lost livestock. *ignore them*. Lit, "hide oneself," i.e., try to avoid the inconvenience or expense of helping.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 22:2 Obligation held, even if the brother was distant or unknown.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 22:4 See notes, vv 1, 2; the situation is different, but the mandate is the same.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 22:5 Male and female are visibly distinct. Wearing the other's clothing gives the appearance of reversing God's natural order. (Such practices likely involved homosexuality or foreign cults.)
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 22:6–7 Legislation unique to Dt protects the potential future food source rather than allowing an immediate short-term gain.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 22:8 Roofs in ancient Near East were flat and used for drying and storing produce, socializing, and sleeping in warm weather. See note, Jsh 2:6. Negligence in providing a low restraining wall or railing around the edge of the roof would amount to homicide if someone fell from it and died.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 22:9–11 These three laws forbidding the mixing of dissimilar items served as object lessons reminding the people that they belonged to the Lord and were to be separate from the surrounding nations with their false gods and abominable practices.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 22:10 The ox was ritually clean, but the donkey was unclean (14:3–8). They are also of differing sizes and strengths, so this law protects the weaker.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 22:11 See note, Lv 19:19.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 22:12 *tassels*. Characterized priestly clothing and reminded Israel that they are to strive to become "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Ex 19:6). Also a clear reminder to keep the Lord's Law as a response to His saving them from bondage (Nu 15:39–40).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 22:1–12 God gives a variety of laws governing brotherly love, maintaining distinctions in the created order, and keeping Israel unto Himself. Love is the fulfilling of the Law in both our

relationship to God and to one another. Our Savior, Jesus, did not come "to be served but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many" (Mt 20:28). It is in His serving us, atoning for all our sins, and opening for us the door to heaven that we are set free from concern for self and are enabled to turn our attention to serving others (cf Jn 13:34). • Praise be to You, O God, for setting us apart in this world as new creations in Christ. Strengthen us through Your means of grace to keep us ever in the faith and to be servants to our neighbors and witnesses of Your love in Christ to all. Amen.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 22:13–30 Cf Lv 18; 20:10–21.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 22:13–15 *hates her*. Rejects her, accusing her of premarital unfaithfulness. *evidence*. Sheet or garment marked with blood from the night the marriage was consummated.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 22:18 He is degraded by whipping for defaming the girl and her family.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 22:19 *fine him*. Levied because the man's accusation would have forced his bride's father to return the bride-price. Severe and public punishments would prevent slanderous charges. *she shall be his wife*. The man loses his right to ever divorce the woman, which is really a protection for her.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 22:21 *her father's house*. Where she was under his authority.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 22:22 Adultery (consensual intercourse between a married person and someone other than that person's spouse) was a crime (5:18) and punishable by death. It was destructive to the social order, defiled the land, and had to be purged (cf Lv 18:20, 24–30). The Code of Hammurabi (c 1728–1686 BC) ruled that adulterers were to be bound and thrown into a river.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 22:23–29 These laws do not always clearly cover the difference between consent and force (rape).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 22:23–24 Betrothal makes this woman another man's wife (a ruling also found in the Code of Hammurabi). The crime is thus adultery and punishable by death (see note, v 22). With no evidence that she cried out for help, it is presumed to be consensual sex, and both are guilty of a capital crime.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 22:25–27 Differs from vv 23–24 in that the man seizes the woman and her cries cannot be heard.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 22:25 *seizes her*. Implies rape.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 22:28–29 See note, vv 25–27. Since the woman is not betrothed, there is no adultery and hence no death penalty. The man is punished by a bride-price. See note, Gn 34:12. *not divorce her*. Thus providing for the woman and any child from this union.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 22:30 Cf Lv 20:11. *uncover his father's nakedness*. Adultery with a stepmother. To "cover" was a metaphor for taking a woman in marriage, thus this man uncovers his stepmother's nakedness and invades the marital relationship. Occasionally, sons tried to take the headship role by having sexual relations with their father's concubines (cf Gn 35:22; 2Sm 16:22; 1Ki 2:21).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 22:13–30 Laws are given concerning marriage, promiscuity, adultery, rape, and incestuous adultery. These laws protect individuals, the integrity of the family unit, and the social stability and purity of the nation. Our God has blessed us with the institution of marriage to provide family, companionship, and a God-pleasing outlet for sexual desire. Such an intimate union is in fact a reflection of the oneness God establishes with us through faith in the relationship of the Church (the Bride) with Christ (the Bridegroom) who "gave Himself up for her" (Eph 5:25). • Lord Jesus Christ, keep us faithful and pure that our lives and marriages may honor You. Where we have fallen, forgive us our sins, enable us to forgive one another, and restore us by Your grace to wholeness. Amen.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 23:1–8 Heritage and identity were passed on through the father, who was circumcised as a member of the assembly of the Lord or who lived outside the boundaries of that covenant (cf Gn 17:1–4). The prohibitions here are focused on males. Women and girls could be assimilated into Israel more easily, as various examples show (Nu 31:18–20; Dt 21:10–14). However, note the issues raised by marriage with foreign women described in Ezr 9.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 23:1 Likely refers to voluntary self-mutilation that could be identified with paganism—the sign of submission to another god. *assembly*. Hbr *qahal*. Convened to officially transact business (war, crowning a king, adjudicating legal cases, parceling land) and for worship.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 23:2 *forbidden union*. Likely refers to a son from incest, from a cult prostitute, or from a mixed marriage with

certain foreigners (e.g., Philistines, Ammonites, Moabites). *to the tenth generation*. Forever. See p 217.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 23:3–6 Permanent prohibition from the assembly for male descendants of Moab and Ammon who were living in the land of Israel as resident aliens.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 23:5 *curse … blessing*. See p 6.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 23:7–8 Those covered by this command were not to be treated as unclean forever. *abhor*. Hbr is from the same root as "abomination" and is used generally of ritual uncleanness.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 23:1–8 The regulations given here prohibit certain nations from entering and taking part in the assembly of Israel. Other foreigners are to be treated more leniently. The worship of God is a serious matter (cf Ps 51:17). Today, all who approach Him with broken hearts are received by Him, for "now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ" (Eph 2:13). • Lord Jesus Christ, blessed Savior of all, thank You for reconciling me to God, making peace between us through the blood of Your cross, and for inviting me to Your "assembly," Your Church, to partake of Your life-giving gifts. Amen.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 23:9–14 During a military campaign, the soldiers were to keep the camp ritually clean (e.g., toilet facilities were to be kept outside the camp and excrement covered up). The purpose is hygienic but also relates directly to the presence of the Lord walking in the camp (v 14).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 23:9 *evil thing*. Apparently not morally evil, but unclean and unbecoming.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 23:10 *nocturnal emission*. Perhaps simply urination (not necessarily a parallel to Lv 15:16).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 23:14 *deliver*. See p 842.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 23:9–14 When Israel was at war, the Lord's presence among them was to be recognized and respected by keeping the camp holy, free from anything unclean and unbecoming. Since God is always with us, we dare not live as though He is not present or in ways that would dishonor Him. In Christ, we are assured that His love, forgiveness, and grace are always present and that He stands with us in our daily life as our sure defense. • O Lord God, thanks and praise to You that, as the new Israel, we are Your people, whom You save, sanctify, and grant ultimate victory. Amen.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 23:15–16 Escaped slaves from foreign countries could settle wherever they wished in Israel (all Israel was to be considered a sanctuary). They were not reduced to slavery again in Israel. Israel's covenant relationship with the Lord prohibited extradition treaties with foreign powers.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 23:17 *cult prostitute*. Lit, "holy one." Pagan religions among Israel's neighbors employed religious prostitutes for the fertility rituals of their deities.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 23:18 *wages of a dog*. Possibly indicating worship of foreign gods; see note, Lv 1:2; see also ESV note. *abomination*. See note, Pr 6:16.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 23:19 Loans were made to alleviate poverty, but a fellow Israelite's need was not to become an opportunity for another's gain (cf Lv 25:35–36). Ambr: "Is it not a wicked thing to demand under the guise of kindly feeling a larger sum from him who has not the means to pay off a less amount?" (*NPNF* 2 10:70). *brother*. Fellow Israelite.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 23:20 *foreigner*. Likely in Israel as traders and merchants. *bless*. See p 842.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 23:21–23 *vow*. See p 7. Cf Ec 5:5. See note, Nu 30:2.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 23:24–25 God demands charity and hospitality but protects the owner from being taken advantage of. Such an attitude of charity and hospitality toward others is also expected of NT believers (cf Rm 12:9–13; Gal 6:10; Heb 13:2; Jas 2:14–18; 1Pt 4:8–11). See note, Gn 18:4.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 23:15–25 Miscellaneous laws encourage love for God and compassion for others. God's moral Law governs all our behavior and relationships. To transgress any part of His Law is to place ourselves at odds with Him, to sin against Him, and to incur His wrath. However, "we love because He first loved us" (1Jn 4:19), as He demonstrated in the exodus of Israel and in the cross of His Son. • Lord God, help me to show my thankfulness by a reverent and cheerful obedience to Your will and by a steadfast trust in Your loving-kindness and unfailing mercy, through Jesus Christ. Amen.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 24:1 *some indecency*. Lit, "nakedness"; suggests indecent exposure, not adultery, for that would be punished by death. Luther condemned this perversion: "If one took a fancy to another's

wife, he might declare any reason both to dismiss his own wife and to estrange his neighbor's wife from him, so that he might get her in a way that appeared right. That was not considered a sin or a disgrace among them" (LC I 295). *writes*. Israel's leadership was likely literate, but the general population probably was not. See pp 1081–83.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 24:4 The Law prevents frivolous divorces, since the wife could not return to her first husband. *abomination*. See note, Pr 6:16. All forms of sexual impurity are disgusting to the Lord. *inheritance*. See "portion," p 7.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 24:1–4 Jesus explained that Moses only allowed laws about divorce because of "hardness of heart" (Mt 19:8). Israel's hardness of heart made it necessary for Moses to give divorce laws despite all the laws about family and morality that the Lord had already given through Moses. Yet, in all circumstances, the Lord does not simply tolerate sin but calls people to repent and to have their hearts changed by His Word of grace. • Lord, teach us to pray with David, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me" (Ps 51:10). Amen.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 24:5 Establishment of a stable family is given priority above civic responsibilities.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 24:6 Women usually ground meal with a mill and baked bread each day. Taking a family's mill would threaten people's lives. *pledge*. Security for a loan that a lender demanded of the borrower (cf vv 10–13, 17).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 24:7 Kidnapping for the purpose of selling someone into slavery was widespread in the ancient Near East.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 24:8 *As I commanded*. Hus: "He who commands ought only to command things in agreement with the law, and the person obeying ought to the same extent to obey them and never act contrary to the will of God Almighty" (*The Church*, p 194).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 24:10–11 Shows consideration for someone forced to borrow. The borrower has the right to select what pledge he chooses to give, not the lender (see note, v 6).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 24:12–13 Should a poor person offer his cloak as security for a loan, the lender was required to return it by nightfall. See note, Am 2:8. *righteousness for you*. See p 843. Chem: "To give a pledge back to the poor is certainly a good and righteous work, and yet it is not such a work that—if measured by the rigorous standard of the Law—

would merit the title of 'righteousness.' … Hence, because the person has already been justified, the term 'righteousness' has already been assigned to him" (*LTh* 2:646).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 24:14 *sojourners*. See note, Ex 23:9.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 24:16 *put to death for his own sin*. Cypr: "Every one is himself held fast in his own sin; nor can one become guilty for another" (*ANF* 5:334).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 24:18 *remember*. Motivation for showing justice and love to the unfortunate (cf v 22). *redeemed*. See p 843.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 24:19–22 Unripe or overlooked grain, olives, and grapes were to be left behind to show compassion for those who were allowed to glean for food (cf Ru 2:1–7). Care for the poor still required the poor to work.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 24:19 *bless*. See p 842.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 25:2 See note, 19:21.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 25:3 Restraint on the one meting out punishment, which protected the humanity of both.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 25:4 God's Law shows concern not only for the poor, the widow, the stranger, and the criminal, but also for animals. See pp 822–23; cf Hos 10:11. Paul cites this compassionate law as proof by comparison that Christians ought to financially support ministers of the Gospel (1Co 9:9–14).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 24:5–25:4 These miscellaneous laws protect the weak from the strong. Jesus may have had some of these laws in mind when He taught the Golden Rule: "Whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them" (Mt 7:12). Luther picks up on this loving concern for one's neighbor in several of his explanations to the Commandments (see pp xxxv–xxxvi). When we examine our words and actions, we must confess our failure to love our neighbor as we love ourselves. Thanks be to God for His compassion toward us! His Son loved us more than Himself, and He died for our sins. • Precious Savior, move me to love others more and more because of Your great love for me. Amen.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 25:5 Some of Israel's neighbors also followed this practice. Except in the situation described here, such a marriage to a close family member was forbidden (Lv 18:16; 20:21).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 25:6 See note, Gn 38:8.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 25:7 *gate*. See p 792. *elders*. See note, Ex 3:16. See also p 228.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 25:9 These symbolic actions express utmost disdain, a public ritual of disgrace. See note, Ru 4:8.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 25:10 This family nickname would perpetuate the memory of a brother's loveless action.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 25:5–10 The man who refused to marry his brother's widow lacked God's gift of love. He cared for his own interests, not his brother's. God calls us to live and act differently: in love. How very different is our Savior, who cared not for His own interests but for the interests of us all and has chosen the Church as His beloved Bride. • Dear Jesus, Your sacrifice leads me to sing, "Love so amazing, so divine, Demands my soul, my life, my all!" Amen. (*LSB* 425:4)
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 25:11–12 The harsh punishment compensates for the crime of a scandalous attack on a husband's opponent (see note, 19:21).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 25:13–16 The last of the civil and criminal laws recorded in Dt. Such dishonest business practices were persistent and widespread in biblical times. See note, Pr 11:1. Mel: "The lazy and wasteful are all thieves, for unless they take from someone else they cannot sustain their laziness and costly habits" (Chem, *LTh* 2:417).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 25:16 *abomination*. See note, Pr 6:16.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 25:17–19 Amalekites were descendants of Esau (Gn 36:9–12) who lived south and east of the Salt Sea. The Lord's judgment (Ex 17:14) is against Amalek because of their attack of Israel at Rephidim during the exodus. As Israel is about to enter the Promised Land, the Lord reminds them of this obligation (cf 1Sm 15; 30:16–20).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 25:11–19 People in every society sin by taking unfair advantage of one another. Such behavior stirs the Lord to anger. He therefore authorizes Israel to blot out the memory of Amalek. God must address all sin by punishment, atonement, or forgiveness. Only because Jesus bore our punishment can we escape God's wrath and receive full pardon for our sins. • Lord Jesus, may Your goodness lead me to be an instrument of justice and fairness in the world. Amen.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 26:1–11 *land* … *Lord* … *giving*. These words recur repeatedly. The ritual offering of firstfruits reminded the

individual worshiper that the Promised Land is God's gracious gift and is to be received with joyful thanksgiving.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 26:1 *inheritance*. See "portion," p 7.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 26:2 *make His name to dwell there*. See note, 1Ki 8:18; see also "name," p 843.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON **26:5b–10a** This brief recital of Israelite history is similar to a creed or liturgy. As the Israelites offer the firstfruits of the land, they remember their ancestors, who had been landless and suffered countless hardships in Egypt before the Lord finally delivered them. The worshiper's concluding words, addressed directly to the Lord, confess that this firstfruit offering is a gift from Him. See p 1835.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 26:5 *wandering Aramean*. Reference to Jacob (Israel), who spent 20 years in Aram working for his uncle Laban and later moved to Egypt with his 12 sons.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 26:6 In Egypt, the Israelites worked as slaves and had no land they could call their own.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 26:9 *land flowing with milk and honey*. See p 6.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 26:12 The Lord commanded both an annual tithe and a third-year tithe (14:22–29).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 26:13 Individual Israelites were required to verify to the Lord that they had paid their third-year tithe by speaking these prescribed words. *I have not transgressed*. This assertion of innocence refers to the proper payment of the tithe, including following the ritual restrictions (v 14).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 26:15 Declaration closes with a prayer for blessing on the people and the land. See "bless," p 842. *flowing with milk and honey*. See p 6.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 26:16 *commands … statutes … rules*. See p 971.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 26:17–18 Moses first reminds the people of their solemn declaration to the Lord and then of His declaration to them (Ex 19:3–8). *declared*. The Hbr verb form used here suggests a very formal and intense declaration of covenant loyalty. *walk*. See p 7. *ways … statutes … commandments … rules*. See p 971.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 26:18 *treasured possession*. See "portion," p 7.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 26:19 *holy*. See p 7.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON **Ch 26** God's grace to Israel is celebrated as they are reminded of deliverance from slavery in Egypt, the gift of land, and being a holy people chosen as the Lord's treasured possession. Also described is Israel's response in the offering of firstfruits, the payment of the tithe for the sake of the needy, and a promise to keep the Lord's command. Like Israel, our joyful response is to serve the Lord with good works. Baptism celebrates God's grace to us: deliverance from the slavery of sin, the promise of an inheritance in God's heavenly land, and being declared a saint even now. • Lord, accept my heartfelt thanks for Your grace, which strengthens me to walk in Your ways. Amen.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 27:1 *elders*. Since Moses would not be crossing over the Jordan, the elders, along with Joshua, would be responsible for spiritual leadership in the future.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 27:2 *large stones … plaster*. This method of preparation and writing is well attested in the ancient world and is typically Egyptian in technique. See note, Nu 22:5.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 27:3 *flowing with milk and honey*. See p 6.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 27:4 *Mount Ebal*. North of Shechem, opposite Mount Gerizim. See color map 2.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 27:5–6 *altar … uncut stones*. Specially constructed of field stones to celebrate the occupation of the Promised Land and the renewal of God's covenant with His people. Archaeologists have found cut stone altars at Dan and Beersheba, which were likely used for pagan sacrifices. In the 1980s, archaeologists excavated a site on Mount Ebal that may have contained a large altar and courtyard, which was compared to Joshua's altar (Jsh 8:30). The interpretation of the site remains disputed.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 27:1–8 The Lord's command regarding Mount Ebal emphasizes the importance of God's written Word and God's desire that His people respond joyfully with sacrifices of praise. He encourages us to treasure His Word rather than the words of humans. Thanks be to God that He has given us the Word made flesh to save us from the word of the Law by the word of blessing in the Gospel. • Move me, Spirit of God, to sing from the heart: "How precious is the book divine, by inspiration giv'n! Bright as a lamp its teachings shine to guide our souls to heav'n. Amen." (*LW* 332:1)

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 27:9–10 The priests added their voices to that of Moses in admonishing all Israel to keep God's command.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 27:9 *become the people of the* LORD. Reference to the covenant renewal reported in 26:16–19.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 27:10 *commandments … statutes*. See p 971.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 27:12–26 *Levites shall declare*. Since the tribe of Levi is included with those who bless the people (v 12), the curses spoken by the Levites in vv 15–26 must be distinguished from those mentioned in v 13.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 27:12 *bless*. See p 842.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 27:13 *curse*. See p 6.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 27:15–26 These specific sins largely correspond with sins more generally forbidden in the Ten Commandments. All these sins are also condemned in other OT laws. *Cursed*. God's curse is the sole penalty imposed on those guilty of the sins described in these verses. Such a curse from God on a person or thing (such as a house; cf Zec 5:4) was understood to have destructive power. See p 6. *Amen*. This affirmation of agreement is equivalent to pronouncing the curse on one's self, with one's own mouth. See p 1901.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 27:16 *dishonors his father or his mother*. Cf Ex 21:17, which mandates the death penalty for anyone who curses his parents.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 27:17 *neighbor's landmark*. Marking the property line. See notes, 19:14; Gn 28:18.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 27:20–23 *his father's wife … his sister*. Appears to refer to one's stepmother and half sister. Mention of these sexual sins is an indication that such immorality existed in the surrounding cultures, and perhaps even in Israel.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 27:24 Such secret murder might go unpunished by authorities, but God's curse remains.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 27:25 Anyone who accepts payment to commit murder, but does not carry out the crime, is still cursed.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 27:26 Whoever fails to keep a law is cursed.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 27:9–26 The old covenant promised blessings to those who kept God's Law and curses to anyone who did not

(cf Gal 3:10). To say "Amen" to God's law is not enough. God demands perfect obedience (Jas 2:10). Israel broke the old covenant with their sins, as does everyone (cf Jer 31:31–34). But Jesus Christ is the mediator of a new covenant. His death redeems us "from the transgressions committed under the first covenant" (Heb 9:15). The remedy for sin's curse is to believe with Luther that "this is our highest comfort, to clothe and wrap Christ this way in my sins, your sins, and the sins of the entire world" (AE 26:279). • Holy Spirit, comfort me with the sure knowledge that Christ has removed sin's curse. Amen.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON **Ch 28** Luth: "Just as this chapter is the longest, it is also the easiest; for it contains nothing but a heap of blessings and cursings" (AE 9:267). Ancient covenants typically included curses on those who broke the covenant. Critics have argued that the curses (e.g., regarding exile) prove a late date for Dt, around the era of Israel's and Judah's exiles under Assyria and Babylon. However, such curses are known from the early second millennium BC (e.g., documents from Mari and the Code of Hammurabi [c 1728–1686 BC]), which have numerous curses in common with the list here. This chapter does not teach the way to eternal salvation. Rather, earthly blessings are promised to God's chosen people for obeying His voice. Such blessings come to us believers as well, for "good works have merit, not for forgiveness of sins, for grace, or for justification (for these we receive only through faith), but for other rewards, bodily and spiritual, in this life and after this life" (Ap V 73).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 28:1 *today*. Israel is in the land of Moab, about to enter Canaan (cf vv 13–14; 29:1).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 28:2 Unimaginable blessings will catch up with and overflow to the Israelites if they obey, but curses will come if they do not (v 15). *blessings*. See p 842.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 28:3–6 *Blessed*. Repeated six times to emphasize the reward for obedience. See p 842. Cf vv 16–19, where the word "cursed" is repeated for the same six items.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 28:5 *kneading bowl*. Wide, shallow bowl for preparing bread dough.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 28:6 *when you come in … when you go out*. Refers to a person fulfilling daily responsibilities, possibly carrying out military actions (cf 31:2).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 28:7 Image of enemy's unity of attack and disarray of retreat. Victory over neighboring nations is one of the blessings held out to Israel (vv 1, 10). *seven ways*. See p 217.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 28:9 *holy … walk*. See p 7.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 28:10 *they shall be afraid of you*. Neighboring nations will avoid attacking Israel for fear of defeat (v 7). See note, Jsh 2:9.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 28:12 Heaven is pictured as having a storehouse of water from which the Lord pours down rain (cf 11:11). *lend … not borrow*. Israel would be blessed with a favorable balance of trade. Cf 1Ki 10:14–25.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 28:13 Israel will be prince among the nations, rich in produce, strong against her enemies, if only they will obey the command of the Lord.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 28:1–14 The Lord presents the blessings connected with the covenant; the curses will be described next. Threat and promise, Law and Gospel, are the ways of God with humankind. Here, the blessings seal the renewal of the covenant, and the curses that follow anticipate the need for the new covenant, sealed in the blood of Christ, which was shed for our blessing and pardon. • Heavenly Father, You have richly blessed me with all I need for daily life. Give me a thankful heart and a desire to serve You and my neighbor. Amen.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 28:15–68 After Moses describes the blessings that would result from obeying the voice of the Lord (vv 1–14), he depicts in vivid language the punishments for disobedience. Specific sins are not named (as in 27:15–26), but rather these curses would fall on Israel for forsaking the Lord (v 20). There are several general categories of punishments: bodily afflictions; mental anguish; family disruptions; loss of crops; defeat in war, including the besieging of towns and the resulting cannibalism. The ultimate curse will be the destruction of Israel as a nation (vv 20, 24, 45, 48, 51, 61, 63; also note the words "perish," "ruin," and "consume"). The curses outnumber the blessings four to one. "The old Adam, like an unruly, stubborn ass, is still a part of them [believers]. It must be forced to obey Christ. It not only requires the teaching, admonition, force, and threatening of the Law, but it also often needs the club of punishments and troubles. This goes on until the body of sin is entirely put off [Romans 6:6] and a person is perfectly renewed in the resurrection.

Then he will need neither the preaching of the Law nor its threats and punishments, just as he will no longer need the Gospel. These belong to this imperfect life" (FC SD VI 24).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 28:15 *curses*. See p 6. *overtake*. See note, v 2.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 28:16–19 Cf vv 3–6 for corresponding list of six blessings.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 28:21 *pestilence stick to you*. General term describing a lingering, severe epidemic. See note, Ps 91:3.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 28:22 Afflictions affecting people and cropland. See note, Ps 106:15.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 28:23 *bronze … iron*. Bas: "It threatens him with a complete drought" (*NPNF* 2 8:70).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 28:25 Reverse of v 7, which describes Israel as victorious in battle.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 28:26 *your dead body shall be food*. To be denied burial and have one's body consumed was an ultimate curse in the ancient world. Cf Is 66:24.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 28:27 *boils of Egypt … cannot be healed*. Sixth of 10 plagues that befell Egypt will strike Israel even more severely.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 28:28 *madness*. Physical afflictions bring on psychological disorders.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 28:29 *no one to help you*. Similar descriptions of abandonment are found in vv 26, 31.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 28:30–32 Demise of a household (cf Ex 20:17). Ordered and tranquil life is displaced by utter futility and helplessness (cf v 51).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 28:30 *betroth a wife*. Betrothal more or less equals the relationship of marriage (see note, Hos 2:19; cf 2Sm 3:14).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 28:32 *eyes look on and fail with longing*. Like the idiom "to cry one's eyes out."
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 28:33 *nation that you have not known*. God's agents for inflicting punishment on Israel will be powerful foreign nations like Assyria and Babylon.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 28:34 See note, v 28.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 28:36 *king*. Moses had earlier spoken of Israel's future king (17:14–20). *serve other gods of wood and stone*.

Because Israel failed to serve the Lord (v 47), they would be forced to serve idols (v 64) and their enemies (v 48).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 28:37 Illustrated in destructions of Jerusalem. Israel would become a horrible object lesson of what happens when a nation fails to serve the Lord.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 28:38–40 Reverse of blessings promised in vv 11–12a. Labor will be in vain. Cf vv 30–32, 51.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 28:41 *captivity*. Assyrians and Babylonians would eventually lead into captivity young and old alike.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 28:43–44 The foreigners residing in Israel (cf 24:14) would come to have the upper hand. The blessings in vv 12b–13a would be radically reversed.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 28:45 *pursue*. Intensifies the threatened destruction for failure to obey the Lord's voice. See note, vv 15–68.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 28:46 *a sign and a wonder*. See note, Ex 3:20. *forever*. There will never come a time when the descendants of Israel will forget that sin is punished.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 28:48 *yoke of iron*. Common metaphor to express submission to foreign rule.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 28:49 *eagle*. Or, vulture, which frequented the battlefields. Symbolized an enemy's power and speed in warfare. *language you do not understand*. Israel's conquerors would speak a foreign language. See notes, Is 28:11; 1Co 14:21–22.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 28:50 *hard-faced nation*. With armies noted for brutality.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 28:53–57 Possibly the most gruesome scenes in the Bible. Moses does not mince words when warning about the consequences of divine judgment.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 28:55 A note of ultimate desperation.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 28:58 *fear this glorious and awesome name*. God's name is synonymous with God Himself and for this reason must be revered. Cf 12:5, 11, 21; 14:23–24. See "name," p 843.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 28:59 *afflictions*. Lit, "blows"; sometimes translated "plagues."
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 28:60–61 *diseases of Egypt … affliction*. Israel is threatened both with Egypt's plagues and with diseases not previously described.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 28:62 *stars of heaven*. Abraham's offspring were to be as numerous as the stars (Gn 15:5). *few in number*. As when Israel went down to Egypt (cf 26:5).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 28:63 *plucked off the land*. Even before Israel enters the Promised Land, they are warned of possibly being pulled up as one tears a weed from the soil.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 28:65 Vivid portrayal of one with cried-out eyes (v 32), feeble and fearful, in dread of what might come next (vv 66–67).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 28:66 Cyr Jer: "It was Life, which hung on the Cross" (*NPNF* 2 7:87). Leo: "In the crucified LORD they could think of nothing but their wicked deed, having not the fear, by which true faith is justified, but that by which an evil conscience is racked. But let our understandings, illumined by the Spirit of Truth, foster with pure and free heart the glory of the cross which irradiates heaven and earth, and see with the inner sight what the LORD meant when He spoke of His coming Passion" (*NPNF* 2 12:172).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 28:67 Sights of destruction provoke feelings of dread.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 28:68 The children of Israel had earlier been forced to serve as slaves in Egypt. Now, their desire to sell themselves as slaves will fail. So dreadful is God's curse.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 28:15–68 Moses forcefully details the dreadful consequences of disobeying the voice of the Lord God. These punishments would not be the result of the natural cycles of history. Moses repeatedly identifies the Lord as the One who sends the curses. The message is clear: "God threatens to punish all who break these commandments. Therefore, we should fear His wrath and not do anything against them" (SC, Close of the Commandments, p xxxvi). St Paul reminds believers that the things that happened to Israel are examples for us (1Co 10:6). Although we trust in Jesus for the forgiveness of sins and eternal salvation, as sinners, we still need the preaching of the Law. Praise God, who always provides for our needs, speaking the truth to us in love—the harsh truth and the healing truth in Christ. • Help me, loving Savior, to treasure both Law and Gospel as I travel the way that leads to eternal life. Amen.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON **Ch 29** At Horeb (Sinai), Moses had been the mediator of a covenant between the Lord and Israel (Ex 24:3–8). Now, 40 years later, this covenant is renewed in Moab as the people are about to enter the Promised Land. This new generation replaces the one that died in the wilderness (Nu 14:22–35). Luther points out the importance of renewing the covenant, "lest [the new generation] think that the Law given to the fathers did not apply to them, and that they could disregard it" (AE 9:271). See p 127.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 29:4 Israel lacked spiritual insight. This verse supports the teaching that the Holy Spirit "opens the mind and heart to understand the Scriptures and to listen to the Word" (FC SD II 26). People are spiritually blind until they have been enlightened by the Holy Spirit, though they may also resist Him. See note, Eph 1:18. *heart*. Chem: "The Hebrews absolutely do not have in the Scriptures a word with which to designate the seat of knowledge, namely, the brain, but locate knowledge and intellect in the heart" (*LTh* 1:230).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 29:5–6 Moses is quoting the Lord, who revealed Himself to Israel by His providential care throughout their 40 years in the wilderness. See note, Ex 20:2.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 29:8 *inheritance*. See "portion," p 7.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 29:10–11 Comprehensive list emphasizes that all Israel is bound by the covenant requirements, including the resident foreigners who labored among them.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 29:12 *enter into the sworn covenant*. Lit, "cross over into the covenant guarded by oath." Cf vv 14, 19; see p 127; see also "vow," p 7.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 29:13 Existing covenant was ratified, and God confirmed that Israel was His people, based on His sworn promise to the patriarchs (26:18–19).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 29:14 *sworn covenant*. See note, v 12.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 29:15 *whoever is not here*. Future generations on whom the covenant conditions would also be binding.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 29:18 Moses issues a strong warning, both to individuals and groups, against the sinful worship practices of other nations. Idol worship is compared to a root that grows into a plant producing fruit of bitter poison. The sinful action of a few spreads poison throughout the entire people (cf 1Co 5:6).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 29:19 *walk*. See p 7. *stubbornness*. Smug attitude betrays a false sense of security. *moist and dry alike*. Likely proverbial; when punishment comes, both good and bad will be swept away. Community health depended on each individual.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 29:20 *Lord will not be willing to forgive him*. Jesus also teaches about an unforgivable sin (cf Mk 3:29). This Israelite's spiritual arrogance (v 19) warranted a similar harsh verdict. *jealousy*. See note, Ex 20:5.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 29:21 *curses*. See p 6. *Book of the Law*. Likely part or all of Dt. Cf 28:58; 30:10; 31:24, 26.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 29:22–28 *land*. Key word in these verses.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 29:22–24 Long and involved sentence poses two questions that "your children," "the foreigner," and "all the nations" might ask after observing the devastation of the land of Israel.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 29:23 *the whole land burned out with brimstone and salt*. Reminder of what happened to Sodom and Gomorrah, but may also refer to the practice of conquerors spreading salt on the soil to make it infertile. *Admah … Zeboiim*. Cities named along with Sodom and Gomorrah as being in the Valley of Siddim (Gn 14:2–8).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 29:25 *covenant*. See p 127.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 29:28 *uprooted … cast them into another land*. What would happen to Israel for serving other gods.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 29:29 *secret things*. Lit, "hidden things." Mysteries that only God knows. See notes, Rm 11:33, 34. *revealed*. God clearly revealed the words of His Law to Israel at Horeb and in Moab for them and their children to do.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON **Ch 29** In this farewell speech, Moses emphasizes several important truths: the Lord's gracious care for every Israelite, the responsibility of each person to abide by God's covenant, and the certainty that anyone who turns away from the Lord will be punished. Individual responsibility is highlighted. Though there are spiritual mysteries, God has revealed what each one of us needs to know for eternal salvation, from our helplessness because of our sins to the sending of His Son to suffer and die to save us from these. • Lord, thank You for revealing to me the way of salvation. Grant me a bold heart to share this blessed truth with others. Amen.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 30:1 Moses admonishes the Israelites to reflect on the blessing and the curse by faith in God and so interpret what has taken place. Cf 1:32–33. *blessing*. See p 842. *curse*. See p 6. *call them to mind*. Not a shallow mental reflection.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 30:2 *return to the LORD your God*. Phrase underscores both Israel's repeated unfaithfulness and the unfathomable depth of the Lord's grace and compassion. Cf 4:30 for the function of the Law in confronting rebellious Israel with the recognition of their apostasy. Without the Gospel—without God's grace—Israel was incapable of returning. *all your heart and with all your soul*. Recalls the commandment in 6:5 (repeated in 30:6, 10). In the Sermon on the Mount (Mt 5–7), Jesus explains that just as sin begins in the heart and manifests itself in the bodily members, so does righteousness wrought by God's grace. Each bears fruit, whether bad or good (Mt 7:16–20).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 30:3 History of God's people Israel illustrates His plan of salvation. In His holiness, God punishes Israel's disobedience not as an end in itself but to teach that salvation comes only from the one true God—the God who made His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. In permitting His chosen people to fall away and realize the consequences of their disobedience, God demonstrates both His absolute intolerance of sin and His mysterious love for humankind. The Holy Spirit, through the Law, drove the hard-hearted children of Israel into contrition; they confessed their sin and recognized that they could not save themselves. He then made their hearts tender by bringing the message of salvation through the promised Messiah. See pp xxxi–xxxii. *compassion*. See "mercy," pp 842–43.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 30:4 *uttermost parts of heaven*. Hyperbole underscores dispersion of Israelites through future invasion and captivity. Years later, Nehemiah reminded God of His covenant and the promise He made to gather His scattered people (Ne 1:4–9).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 30:5 God's covenant with Abraham and his offspring included the promise of land (Gn 17:8).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 30:6 *circumcise your heart*. Reinforces the theme that faith begins in the heart with the gracious work of the Holy Spirit through the Word, and manifests itself in obedience to the one true God. Jeremiah described the new covenant that God would make with His people: God Himself, with no assistance from humans, would

write His Law (*torah*) on their hearts (Jer 31:31–34). Likewise, Ezekiel prophesied how God would restore His people, with no assistance from humankind (Ezk 11:19–20; cf Ezk 36:25–29; Rm 2:28–29).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 30:7 When God's chosen people trust in God alone, He protects them from their enemies. Cf Ps 54:6–7.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 30:8 Living in daily contrition and repentance, obedience to God proceeds from faith and constitutes the fruit of faith. Cf Heb 11:6.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 30:10 See p 971. *this Book of the Law*. Probably refers to something more than the Decalogue, possibly the statutes described in chs 12–26, since 4:13 makes specific reference to the Ten Commandments.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 30:1–10 Moses, approaching the end of his life, reviews God's covenant relationship with the Israelites. God gives His Law to His people, not as a legalistic code, but to establish their holiness. However, the people fail miserably to walk in holiness of life and repeatedly commit apostasy. Moses taught them, and teaches us, that a relationship with God means a circumcision of the heart, i.e., faith rooted in the heart and soul. Such faith lives in obedience to the one true God, who gathers and blesses His people. • Holy Spirit, circumcise our hearts through the Word so we cling to Christ in faith and walk in obedience to the Father. Amen.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 30:11 *this commandment*. Cf v 8; 6:5–6; see p 971. A commandment derives its force from its source, in this case, God Almighty. This commandment summed up all of the commandments Moses taught the people: to love the Lord your God with all your heart. *not too hard*. It is not beyond one's grasp to understand. Those with circumcised hearts—i.e., those who believe—will understand.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 30:12–14 *It*. The commandment in 6:5–6. No one will have to search for it; the Lord God, the source of the commandment, will Himself place it in the heart and mouth of His people. Cf Am 8:11–12.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 30:15 *life and good, death and evil*. Just: "God spoke thus to the man first created [, Adam]" (*ANF* 1:177). God's ways with humankind thus always remain the same (see pp xxxi–xxxii). Daniel would describe how Israel brought down on themselves the curse of

death and evil by departing from God's Law—the whole Word of God (Dn 9:11).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 30:16 *ways … commandments … statutes … rules*. Each suggests a different emphasis. See p 971.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 30:19 *heaven and earth to witness*. God informed Israel that His whole creation was summoned to testify that He had told His people in advance what the results of their choice would be: it was a matter of life and death. *choose life*. On the basis that God had chosen them and established a covenant relationship with them based upon grace. See p 127. Chem: "These statements must not be understood as applying only to the concerns of this life, for in Luke 10:25ff., when the scribe says, 'What shall I do to gain eternal life?' Christ replies, 'What is written in the Law … this do and you shall live' " (*LTh* 2:620).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 30:20 *holding fast to Him, for He is your life*. The Spirit of God, who breathed life-giving breath into Adam, breathes life-giving breath into His people through His Word. Cf Ezk 36:22–28. Iren: "Preparing man for this life, the Lord Himself did speak in His own person to all alike the words of the Decalogue [Ten Commandments]; and therefore, in like manner, do they remain permanently with us" (*ANF* 1:482).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 30:11–20 The Lord's declaration to His people to choose life is inseparable from His covenant of grace that He established with them. Israel's history clearly demonstrates that they spurned the life God had reserved for them through His grace, pursuing death instead. Consequently, by rejecting God's grace, they rejected the length of days God promised to those who love the Lord, walk in His ways, and keep His commands. • Heavenly Father, we pray for forgiveness, for all too often we pursue the way of death and evil rather than life and good. Forgive us for the sake of Christ, who perfectly obeyed Your commands and died for our sins. May Your Holy Spirit work mightily within our hearts. Amen.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 31:1–**2** Moses did not have God's permission to lead the people any further. Cf 3:23–28; 32:51–52.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 31:3 Moses asserts that the Lord God Himself, the real leader of Israel, would not only enter the Promised Land with the Israelites but would go before them and destroy their enemies.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 31:4 *Sihon*. See notes, 1:4; 2:26–37. *Og*. See notes, 1:4; 3:1–22.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 31:6–7 *Be strong and courageous*. See note, Jsh 1:6. Phrase forms thematic underpinnings of Joshua's inauguration as Moses' successor and indicates that when Israel crosses the Jordan, the people would face the certain prospect of numerous military campaigns (cf vv 7, 23).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 31:8 *He will not leave you or forsake you*. Because of His covenant of grace He made with their forefathers. Cf Mt 28:19–20; Jn 14:18.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 31:1–8 Moses' introduction of Joshua as his successor begins with acknowledging God's judgment on his own disobedience, which disqualified him from entering the Promised Land. Yet, God in His mercy would go before His covenant people, destroy their enemies, and cause them to inherit the Promised Land. Because of the covenant of grace God made with His people, He would not leave them or forsake them. • Heavenly Father, when I feel alone and afraid, remind me that You will never leave me or forsake me. Revive me with the strength and courage that comes from Your Word. Amen.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 31:9 *gave it to the priests*. God directed priests to serve as custodians of the Law and to ensure that it was read at regular intervals. See note, Lv 10:11. *elders*. See note, Ex 3:16. See also p 228.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 31:10 *the year of release*. Lv 25:23–34 lists provisions for redemption of people, property, and possessions in observance of the Year of Jubilee, a year of liberty. The Lord directed His people to observe the seventh year—the sabbatical year—as a year of rest for the entire land (Lv 25:1–7). See p 206. *Feast of Booths*. Dwelling in booths for seven days commemorated how the Israelites dwelled in booths when the Lord delivered them out of the hands of the Egyptians (cf Lv 23:42–43). See calendar, p 262.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 31:11–13 The Lord established the frequency, time, and location for the public reading of the Law. Everyone traveling with Israel was to assemble for the reading. Cf Jsh 23–24.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 31:13 *their children*. Provision to teach children the ways of the Lord constituted an indispensable element of the people's response to God's covenant of grace (cf 6:7). See note, Pr 1:8.

Luth: “It is the duty of every father of a family to question and examine his children and servants at least once a week and to ascertain what they know, or are learning from the catechism. And if they do not know the catechism, he should keep them learning it faithfully” (LC, Short Preface, 4).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 31:9–13 Israel could have no relationship with the Lord God apart from His Word. Israel’s very existence depended upon the Lord. In response to His grace, Israel was to engage in regularly reading the Law and instructing future generations about the one true God, who led them through the wilderness to the Promised Land. • Let Your Holy Spirit dwell mightily within my heart that I do not forsake the path of faith and thereby be disqualified from entering the eternal promised land. Amen.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 31:14 God’s direction signaled the transfer of authority from Moses to Joshua. See note, 34:9.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 31:15 *cloud*. See note, Ex 40:34.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 31:16 *whore after the foreign gods*. In Hos 1:2; 2:1–23, God illustrated Israel’s spiritual condition of chronic infidelity by commanding the prophet Hosea to marry a prostitute to symbolize how Israel committed spiritual adultery through their idolatry. *covenant*. See p 127.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 31:17 *I will forsake them*. When God’s people forsake Him, He will forsake them. The full force of the Father’s fury that sinful human beings deserved fell upon His own Son at the cross (cf Mk 15:34).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 31:19 *song may be a witness for Me*. Another witness against the people if they should break the covenant. See note, 4:26; see also p 127.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 31:20 *flowing with milk and honey*. See p 6. *grown fat, they will turn*. Israel would forget that God is the source of their fatness, i.e., their abundance (cf Is 1:4). Rather than glorifying the one true God for opening up the windows of heaven and showering blessings upon them (Mal 3:6–12), they would turn to other gods.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 31:21 *unforgotten in … their offspring*. Ironically, children would remember this indicting song and convict Israel. Similarly, it is mere children, with their song of “Hosanna to the Son of David,” that both incites and indicts the chief priests and scribes during Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem (Mt 21:15–16; see note, Ps 8:2).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 31:22 *same day.* Urgency underscores the song's gravity.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 31:23 *commissioned*. Unlike Moses, Joshua expressed no reluctance in accepting this commission (cf Ex 3). Cf 2Ki 2 for the transfer of the mantle from Elijah to Elisha, Is 6 for Isaiah's call from the Lord, Jer 1 for Jeremiah's call from the Lord, Ezk 2–3 for Ezekiel's call, and Am 7:14–15 for Amos's description of his call. *be with*. See p 5.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 31:24–29 Records the stinging message Moses delivered, along with the presentation of the written Law (vv 9–13). Reinforces 30:14.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 31:24 *to the very end*. Identifies the author and that the written Law would be completed in its entirety.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 31:25 *Levites*. Descendants of Levi, the Levites were substituted for the firstborn among the people of Israel and performed duties pertaining to the worship of the one true God (cf Ex 6:16–25; Lv 10:11; 25:32; Nu 3:11–13; 35:2–8; Dt 10:8; 17:18).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 31:26 *Book of the Law*. Not just Dt. See pp 274–76. *by the side*. Ex 25:22 identifies the ark of the covenant as the place where God would instruct Moses regarding the message he was to deliver orally to Israel. The placement of the written Word by the side of the ark indicates to those assembled that the written Word will be just as authoritative as if it were delivered orally by Moses and then orally passed within each household (cf Dt 5:23–33; 6:6–9; 11:18–20). God's oral Word, heretofore communicated through Moses, is now God's written Word.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 31:27 *even today … rebellious*. Suggests that Moses, even in the face of impending death, enjoyed no respite from Israel's rebellious behavior and was judging breaches against the Ten Commandments.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 31:28 *elders*. Leaders who themselves fomented rebellion (e.g., Nu 12–14; 16). See note, Ex 3:16. *heaven and earth to witness*. See note, 30:19.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 31:14–29 As Moses focuses on his impending death, he identifies Joshua as his successor and God's Word as a lasting authority. Moses puts the Israelites on notice that the words he has just finished writing, i.e., the Book of the Law, is just as authoritative as the words he had spoken to them in the past because God was the author of

both the oral and the written Word. Employing the Law, Moses prophesies that Israel will be unfaithful. Yet, he also encourages Joshua to be strong and repeats God's promise that He will bring them into the Promised Land (31:23). • Lord God, heavenly Father, let Your Holy Spirit so work in my heart through faith in Christ that I never disregard Your Word but hold it sacred and gladly hear and learn it. Amen.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 31:30 *spoke … this song*. Hbr expression likely refers to singing.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 32:1–4 Both a confession of faith in and an exaltation of the one true God. Chem: "The works which God performs in Himself (*per se*) are holy and perfect, … since God is without any iniquity, He is just and righteous. But those things which the Holy Spirit works in our body of sin and death in the regenerate, these things the Spirit Himself affirms are imperfect because of our flesh which has not yet been completely destroyed, Rom. 6:6" (*LTh* 2:341).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 32:4 *Rock*. See p 843. *perfect*. Hbr *tamim*, "complete," "sound." Iren: "God recapitulated [brought together] in Himself the ancient formation of man, that He might kill sin, deprive death of its power, and vivify man; and therefore His works are true" (*ANF* 1:448). *ways*. See p 844. *justice*. See p 842. *faithfulness*. See p 842. *upright*. See note, Jb 1:1.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 32:5 Viewing Israel through prophetic eyes, Moses wrote this indicting song as if Israel had already occupied the Promised Land and "dealt corruptly with" the Lord. Daniel's prayer signals the fulfillment of Moses' prophecy (Dn 9). Ps 78 provides a thorough treatment of Israel's apostasy and the Lord's repeated attempts to turn them back. *no longer His children*. Gr Naz: "How shall we bear His convictions; or what reply shall we make, when He reproaches us not only with the multitude of the benefits for which we have continued ungrateful, but also with His chastisements, and reckons up the remedies with which we have refused to be healed? Calling us His children indeed, but unworthy children, and His sons, but strange sons who have stumbled" (*NPNF* 2 7:250). Cyr Jer: "Not according to nature, but according to God's grace, and by adoption, we call Him Father" (*NPNF* 2 7:46).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 32:6 *created … established*. "Scripture testifies that God has created human nature not only before the fall, but that it is God's creature and work also since the fall" (FC SD I 34). Iren:

"[Moses] indicates that He who from the beginning founded and created them, the Word, who also redeems and vivifies us in the last times, is shown as hanging on the tree, and they will not believe on Him" (*ANF* 1:474).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 32:7 *ask your father*. Elderly were esp respected because of their wisdom. The Lord God charged parents with the sacred duty of passing on the covenant history and God's acts of deliverance to their children. See notes, Dt 6:7; Pr 1:8; cf Ex 13:8–9. Jn D: "If we read once or twice and do not understand what we read, let us not grow weary, but let us persist, let us talk much, let us enquire" (*NPNF* 2 9:89).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 32:8 *nations*. Iren: "He did also make one race of men to dwell upon all the earth" (*ANF* 1:433). *sons of God*. In this context, the phrase signifies the tribes of Israel (Nu 26:52–56).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 32:9 *Lord 's portion is His people*. Cf Ex 19:3–6; 1Pt 2:9–10. See "portion," p 7. 1 Clem: "Our gracious and merciful Father … made us partakers in the blessing of His elect" (*ANF* 1:12).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 32:10 *He found him*. God found His people; they did not find Him—they were not even looking for Him (cf 7:7–8; 9:6–7).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 32:11 The Lord bore His people on eagles' wings.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 32:12 *the Lord alone*. There is only one true God, and He is jealous (5:6–9).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 32:13–14 *honey … milk*. Underscores God's promise to bring His people to a good land (Ex 3:8, 17; 13:5; 33:3; Lv 20:24; Nu 14:8; Dt 6:3). See "flowing with milk and honey," p 6. During their rebellion, Abiram and Eliab employed this phrase to mock Moses, thereby mocking God (Nu 16:12–15).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 32:13 *on the high places*. When God sets His people on the high places, they have security (see note, Hab 3:19), in contrast to the wicked, who presume in their pride that no one can bring them down from their high places (Ob 3–4).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 32:15 *Jeshurun*. Name for Israel derived from Hbr word for "straight" or "right," used to describe God in v 4 ("upright"). Applied ironically to Israel here, it describes how the chosen nation was to have been; instead it was "crooked." Cf 33:5, 26 for its use as a complimentary title of how Israel could be by the grace of God. V 5

intimates the use of this nickname. Cf Mt 3:3, the message of John the Baptist. 1 Clem: "Every kind of honour and happiness was bestowed upon you…. So the worthless rose up against the honoured, those of no reputation against such as were renowned, the foolish against the wise, the young against those advanced in years. For this reason righteousness and peace are departed from you" (*ANF* 1:5–6). *Rock … salvation*. See p 843.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 32:16 *jealousy*. See note, Ex 20:5.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 32:17–43 Since the twofold purpose of this song was to prophesy Israel's apostasy and serve as a witness against them (31:19–22), the two titles "Jeshurun" and "Rock" establish a pattern for the remainder of the song: Jeshurun, i.e., Israel (see note, v 15), forsook God, committed idolatry and abominations, and forgot God. The Rock, i.e., God, was stirred to jealousy, provoked to anger against them, would hide His face, and would stir them to jealousy by employing foreign nations to turn them back to Him.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 32:17 *demons*. Chem: "The prophets taught that men of this kind, who out of good intention had gone off on their own into their own forms of worship, were not serving God but the devil" (*LTh* 2:576). See note, Lv 17:7.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 32:18 *Rock*. See p 843. *you forgot the God*. Forgetting and remembering serve as key indicators of the covenantal relationship between God and humankind. When we forget God, we stand in danger of God forgetting us and of being cut off forever. Sinful human beings, like rebellious Israel, will forget God. God's grace is the controlling principle for the covenant and for remembrance: we are enabled to remember God's promise because He does not forget us. See "remember," p 843. *gave you birth*. See note, v 6.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 32:20 *I will hide My face*. Reversal of Aaronic blessing (Nu 6:24–26). *faithfulness*. See p 842.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 32:21 God's discipline would match their apostasy. He would stir them to jealousy by showing them that the gods and nations they put their faith in were not a source of good, but of evil, and were powerless to help them. *no people*. Aph: "The holy People [the Church] inherited an eternal Kingdom; the holy people who were chosen instead of the People [Israel]" (*NPNF* 2 13:360–61).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 32:22 *depths of Sheol*. Conveys the sense of the grave, the place where the dead are. See p 792.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 32:24–25 The Lord would provoke them to jealousy by these curses of the covenant. See note, Rm 10:19–21. *plague … pestilence*. See note, Ps 91:3.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 32:26–27 The Lord would not unleash the full measure of His wrath on Israel because enemy nations would misinterpret the Lord's act to mean that they had achieved a victory on their own. Ps 106:8 captures the essence of the Lord working judgment and redemption for His own glory.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 32:28 *nation*. Not the Israelites but the nations God selected to discipline His people.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 32:29 *wise*. See pp 775–78.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 32:30–35 Rather than the enemy acknowledging the one true God as their Rock and their source of life, they trusted in other gods. This aligned them with Sodom and Gomorrah and consigned them to "calamity" and "doom" at the hands of the Lord, to whom belongs vengeance. *rock*. See p 843.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 32:36 Remembering His covenant, the Lord will deliver His people. God does not desire punishment for punishment's sake but for the purposes of discipline and growth in faith (Ezk 18:23; cf 1Tm 2:3–4; 2Pt 3:9). *compassion*. See "mercy," pp 842–43.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 32:37–38 The Lord God mocks the false gods pursued by His people. Similarly, Elijah mocked the false prophets who called on the name of Baal on Mount Carmel (1Ki 18:1–40).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 32:39 *no god beside Me*. Bas: "In Scripture 'one' and 'only' are not predicated of God to mark distinction from the Son and the Holy Ghost, but to except the unreal gods falsely so called" (*NPNF* 2 8:117). Chem: "There is no other essence, no different essence in the Deity, than that one and only essence which has thus been revealed" (*LTh* 1:64). *I kill … I wound*. God's "alien" work (see note, Is 28:21). The Lord kills and wounds so that sinners blinded by pride might see the reality that they are wounded and dead in their sin and trust the Lord, who alone heals and makes alive. "When they are idle, negligent, and rebellious in this matter because of the flesh, He rebukes them through the Law. So the Spirit carries out both offices together: He slays and makes alive [Deuteronomy 32:39]. He leads into hell and brings up again. For His office is not only to comfort, but also to rebuke" (FC SD VI 12). Luth: "God wants us to regard the evils that we experience as coming to us with

His permission…. God permits evil to come to us; for it is His will that, when we have been chastened, we cast ourselves on His mercy" (AE 13:135). *none that can deliver*. Aph: "My beloved, have no doubt as to the Resurrection of the dead…. Believe that in the day of Resurrection, your body shall arise in its entirety, and you shall receive from our Lord the reward of your faith, and in all that you have believed, you shall rejoice and be made glad…. When Death heard all these things, amazement seized him, and he sat him down in mourning" (*NPNF* 2 13:383, 402–3).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 32:40–41 *lift up My hand*. A threat to execute judgment with sword and arrows from the divine armory. *hand*. See p 842.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 32:42 *My sword shall devour flesh*. Bern: "Let divine fear transfix your flesh, that the desire of the flesh may not deceive you. It flatters, but under its tongue is suffering and sorrow; it weeps, but betrays" (*SLSB*, p 184). *long-haired heads*. Refers to those who brandish a sense of invincibility. Warriors styled their hair to look more fearsome.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 32:43 *bow down*. Philistine statue of the god Dagon "bowed" before the ark of the covenant (1Sm 5:1–4). *all gods*. Cf v 17.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 32:44 Joint recitation of the song validated the transfer of authority from Moses to Joshua and validated the message of the song. The one true God ordained Joshua and inspired the words of the song.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 32:46 *Take to heart*. "Where the heart is rightly set toward God [Deuteronomy 32:46] and this commandment is observed, all the other commandments follow" (LC I 48).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 32:47 *no empty word for you*. Upon completion of the song, Moses puts Israel on notice that this song is not just some clever ditty. *by this word you shall live long*. Illustrates the covenant of grace God established with His people. See note, Eph 6:3.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 31:30–32:47 Moses' song prophesies Israel's apostasy and professes the one true God. Employing enemy forces and the elements of nature, God would bring His calamity upon them. Yet, for His name's sake and in His compassion, He would vindicate His people and vanquish the enemy. • Father, I am ashamed to say that I am no better than Israel. Through Your Spirit and Word, take away my heart of stone and

create in me a new heart—a heart that yearns to live with You forever. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 32:49 *Abarim*. Region east of Jordan and south of Bashan; its mountains overlook the Jordan River and the Salt Sea. See color map 2. *Mount Nebo*. A 2,643-ft summit in the Pisgah of Abarim range in Moab. See color map 2.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 32:50 *gathered to your people*. Euphemism for death; phrase was used for Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but not for Joseph. See note, 1Ki 2:10.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 32:51–52 Though Moses disqualified himself from entering the Promised Land by breaking faith with the Lord, the Lord would allow him to see it from a distance.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 32:51 *you broke faith*. See note, Lv 6:2. *holy*. See p 7.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 32:48–52 The Lord reminds Moses that he has disqualified himself from entering the Promised Land due to breaking faith with Him. Yet, in His mercy, God permits Moses to see the Promised Land from a distance. He received Moses into the eternal promised land so that he might also stand on another mountain with the Messiah during His transfiguration (Mt 17:1–13). • Father, forgive my breaking faith with You. Work mightily within my heart that I may live my Christ-redeemed life by faith in all I think, do, and say. Amen.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 33:1–5 Moses' blessing takes the hearers back to the moment when God gave them the Law at Sinai.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 33:1 *man of God*. Prophet. See pp 1081–83. *blessed*. See p 842.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 33:2 *Seir*. See map, p 60. *ten thousands of holy ones*. Angels (cf Is 6:1–7).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 33:5 *king in Jeshurun*. See note, 32:15.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 33:6–25 Moses blesses the tribes. Cf Gn 49, the blessing pronounced by Jacob upon his sons, which incorporated an acknowledgment of their transgressions. Moses' blessing on the tribes hints at their inheritance of land and the manner in which they would use or perhaps misuse their inheritance. Although Moses did not mention the tribe of Simeon by name, Simeon was not excluded from the inheritance of land in Nu 26. Jsh 19:1–9 explains how the tribe of Simeon received land in the territory of Judah. Jgs 1:1–20 records how Simeon joined with Judah to

fight their adversaries. Consequently, the name exclusion may indicate the future association with Judah, participation in fighting the adversaries (33:7), and a share in Judah's blessing.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 33:8 *Thummim … Urim*. See note, 1Sm 14:39–42.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 33:9 *I regard them not*. Cypr: "Being redeemed and quickened by the blood of Christ, we ought to prefer nothing to Christ" (*ANF* 5:500). *observed … kept*. Ambr: "His trusty ones … have no deceit in their hearts, hide no treachery within them, but guard His words and ponder them in their heart, as Mary pondered them [Lk 2:19]" (*NPNF* 2 10:43). *covenant*. See p 127.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 33:12 *dwells between his shoulders*. May denote hilly slopes; in this case, may also point to the temple, which would stand on Benjamin's rocky border and would be the final place to serve as God's dwelling among His people.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 33:16 *favor*. See p 6.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 33:20 *Blessed*. See p 842.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 33:23 *favor*. See p 6. *blessing*. See p 842.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 33:24 *oil*. Strategic and abundant natural resource for Asher that would allow this tribe to protect its borders as if it had bars of iron and bronze (v 25).

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 33:26 *Jeshurun*. See note, 32:15.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 33:27 *underneath are the everlasting arms*. No enemies would be able to rob Israel of the blessings God had in store for them, the instrument of His choice to bring salvation to a sin-cursed world. *Destroy*. See "devote to destruction," p 6.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 33:29 *saved … shield*. See "salvation," p 843.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON **Ch 33** While Moses' final blessing hints at Israel's future in the Promised Land, it ultimately points Israel beyond the physical Promised Land to the eternal promised land made possible through the Messiah. The Messiah, unlike Moses, kept faith (cf 32:51) and lived in perfect obedience to the Father. He secured the eternal promised land to prepare a place for all (Jn 14). • Father, bless me and make me a blessing to others so that I proclaim Your Word of salvation through Christ in this broken world. Amen.

DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 34:1–4 The Lord may have granted Moses a onetime, unlimited view of the land as well as a onetime view into the future of Israel's occupation. *not go over there*. Moses was allowed to stand in the Promised Land at Christ's transfiguration, however (Mt 17:1–8).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 34:1 *Mount Nebo*. See note, 32:49.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 34:6 *He buried him*. LXX takes the verb impersonally ("they buried"), and some Jewish commentators believe angels were involved in the burial. Unlike Elijah, Moses was not bodily translated into heaven. His burial by the Lord has been interpreted to mean that his lifeless body was immune to decay (cf Jude 9). Aph: "Two goodly benefits did his Lord accomplish for Moses in not making known his tomb to the children of Israel. He rejoiced that his adversaries should not know it, and cast forth his bones from his tomb; and in the second place, that the children of his people should not know it, and make his tomb a place of worship" (*NPNF* 2 13:378).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 34:7 *undimmed … unabated*. Until his death, Moses was blessed by the Lord with the stamina and vigor to lead God's people.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 34:9 *full of the spirit of wisdom*. Just as the Lord called Moses and the Holy Spirit sanctified him for the Lord's work through the Word, now the Holy Spirit would sanctify Joshua to lead God's people. See pp 775–78. *laid his hands on him*. Signified the public and final transfer of authority to Joshua. Cyr Jer: "In the days of Moses, the Spirit was given by laying on of hands…. And on you also, who are about to be baptized, shall His grace come" (*NPNF* 2 7:122).
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON 34:10 *the LORD knew face to face*. Cf Ex 3:1–4:17 (esp 4:12, 16); see notes, 18:15; 31:26.
DEUTERONOMY—NOTE ON **Ch 34** The conclusion of Dt signals a transition in leadership from Moses to Joshua, a transition from the oral communication of the Word to the written communication of the Word, a transition from the wilderness wanderings to the eventual occupation of the Promised Land. Moses' final messages to the people include both warnings (in the words of a song) and promises (in the words of a blessing). The promises in Moses' blessing point to the One "counted worthy of more glory than Moses" (Heb 3:3), namely Christ, because while Moses was a faithful servant of God who spoke God's Word, Christ is Son of God (Heb 3:6), whom God appointed heir of all things (Heb 1:2). "For the law was

given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ" (Jn 1:17). Although Moses disqualified himself from entering the Promised Land because of his disobedience, God allowed him to see firsthand the fulfillment of all Scripture, for Moses and us, at Christ's transfiguration. • Father, when I close my eyes in death, awaken me to behold Your glory and see You face-to-face, through Your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

JOSHUA THROUGH ESTHER

The Books of History

Be strong and very courageous, being careful to do according to all the law that Moses my servant commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may have good success wherever you go. This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. (Jsh 1:7–8)

With these words, the Lord sets before Joshua His plan for Israel's future and the two ways that the writers of the Books of History would judge Israel's leaders and events. These historians would distinguish (1) Israel's failure to keep God's Word revealed to Moses and (2) Israel's faithfulness to God's Word. The Books of History record the consequences of condemnation under God's Law and the blessings that flow from God's gracious promises. In these two ways, God's Word through Moses anticipated Israel's life and future, the failure or prosperity that would come with sin or with faith.

Sources Cited in the Books of History

The writers of the Books of History reference numerous other collections and documents in their works. The following list is not exhaustive, but it illustrates the number and variety of the documents. There is probably duplication within the list, because the writers likely referred to the same documents by different titles.

The Book of the Law of Moses (Jsh 1:8)
The Book of Jashar (Jsh 10:13)
The Description of the Land (Jsh 18:9)
The Book of the Law of God (Jsh 24:26)

The Commandments of the Lord (Jgs 3:4)
The Officials and Elders of Succoth (Jgs 8:14)
The Rights and Duties of the Kingship (1Sm 10:25)
The Law of Moses (1Ki 2:3)
The Book of the Acts of Solomon (1Ki 11:41)
The Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel (1Ki 14:19)

The Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah (1Ki 14:29)

The Book of the Law/the Covenant (2Ki 22:8–23:27)

The Law of the Lord (1Ch 16:40)

The Chronicles of King David (1Ch 27:24)

The Chronicles of Samuel the Seer (1Ch 29:29)

The Chronicles of Nathan the Prophet (1Ch 29:29)

The Chronicles of Gad the Seer (1Ch 29:29)

The History of Nathan the Prophet (2Ch 9:29)

The Prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite (2Ch 9:29)

The Visions of Iddo the Seer (2Ch 9:29)

The Chronicles of Shemaiah the Prophet (2Ch 12:15)

The Chronicles of Iddo the Seer (2Ch 12:15)

The Story of the Prophet Iddo (2Ch 13:22)

The Prophecy of Azariah the Son of Obed (2Ch 15:8)

The Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel (2Ch 16:11)

The Book of the Law of the Lord (2Ch 17:9)

The Chronicles of Jehu the Son of Hannani (2Ch 20:34)

The Book of the Kings of Israel (2Ch 20:34)

The Story of the Book of the Kings (2Ch 24:27)

The Book of Moses (2Ch 25:4)

The Vision of Isaiah the Prophet (2Ch 32:32)

The Chronicles of the Seers (2Ch 33:19)

The Laments (2Ch 35:25)

The Book of the Kings of Israel and Judah (2Ch 36:8)

The Letter to Artaxerxes (Ezr 4)

The Book of the Records (Persian; Ezr 4:15)

The Book of the Genealogy (Neh 7:5)

The Book of the Chronicles (Neh 12:23)

The Book of the Chronicles (Persian; Est 2:23)

The Book of Memorable Deeds (Persian; Est 6:1)

The Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Media and Persia (Persian; Est 10:2)

Though many of these sources are lost, some of the titles listed above may be names for books of Scripture. Most significantly, there are

numerous references throughout the Books of History to the "Law," which refers to one or more of the Books of Moses (the Pentateuch). This shows the continuing importance and influence that the Books of Moses played in guiding the style and themes of later writers.

The Books of History also include numerous references to letters during the kingdom period, such as the Letter to Artaxerxes listed above. Scribes may have collected these for the different kings and used them as a basis for writing comprehensive historical accounts (e.g., 2Sm 11:14; see p 1900). There are also references to oral prophecies, such as the Prophecy of Azariah the Son of Obed listed above, and chronicles, or historical accounts.

Unlike the other Books of History, Judges lacks the numerous references to other documents. However, Judges shows special interest in oral accounts of naming (1:17, 26; 6:24, 32; 10:4; 15:17, 19; 18:12), which was also of interest to Moses (see pp 3–4).

Relation to One Another in the Scriptures

Joshua, Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel, and 1 and 2 Kings were known by the rabbis as "the Former Prophets." Their writings followed the ministry and the manner of Moses, so their works naturally followed his in the Hebrew Scriptures. The rabbis placed Ruth, Esther, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Chronicles in the general category of "Writings." Editors for the Septuagint brought all these books together as a running history of Israel from the death of Moses to the reestablishment of the temple after the Babylonian exile.

Critical scholars have assumed that the theological and historical perspectives of "the Former Prophets" were shaped by a common editor, the "Deuteronomist," who interpreted Israelite history in view of the covenant blessings and curses described in Dt 27–28. Clearly, Moses' farewell sermon in Deuteronomy influenced the content and writing of these books; an editor must have brought these books together in the canon of Scripture.

However, one should note that the books of the Former Prophets were written by authors from different eras who shared a common theology of history, which they drew from Moses. For example, Joshua was written by Joshua. Judges was clearly authored before the kingdom period, and 1 and 2 Samuel date from the united monarchy. These accounts and their interests are followed by 1 and 2 Kings, which record the history of the divided monarchies down to the time of the Babylonian exile. (See chronology, pp xcii–cix.)

Aside from Ruth, which was likely written to honor the rule of David, the other "Writings" were penned after the exile and served the purpose of strengthening and reestablishing the remnant of God's people after that national crisis. Ezra, Nehemiah, and 1 and 2 Chronicles are like the Former Prophets in style, emphasizing the curses and blessings of the Law of Moses. Ruth and Esther are wonderfully plotted stories about faithful women.

History and God's People

As the size and scope of the Books of History show, history is an important field of study for God's people. St Paul wrote about the history of Israel, "Now these things took place as examples for us, that we might not desire evil as they did" (1Co 10:6). The stories of the Israelites stand in Scripture like sermon illustrations for the teachings of Moses.

In his *Preface to Galeatius Capella's History*, Luther wrote about the value and use of history with specific reference to Judges, Kings, Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah.

> Upon thorough reflection one finds that almost all laws, art, good counsel, warning, threatening, terrifying, comforting, strengthening, instruction, prudence, wisdom, discretion, and all virtues well up out of the narratives and histories as from a living fountain. It all adds up to this: histories are nothing else than a demonstration, recollection, and sign of divine action and judgment, how He upholds, rules, obstructs, prospers, punishes, and honors the world, and especially men, each according to his just desert, evil or good. And although there are many who do not acknowledge God or esteem him, they must nevertheless come up against the examples and histories and be afraid lest they fare like those individuals whom the histories portray. They are more deeply moved by this than if one were simply to restrain and control them with mere words of the law or instruction. Thus we read not only in the Holy Scriptures, but also in the books of pagans how they cited as witnesses and held up the examples, words, and deeds of forebears when they wanted to carry a point with the people or when they intended to teach, admonish, warn, or deter. The historians, therefore, are the most useful people and the best teachers, so that one can never honor, praise, and thank them enough…. One can see especially in the books of Judges, Kings, and Chronicles that among the Jewish people such masters were appointed and retained. That was also the case among the kings of Persia who had such libraries in Media, as one can gather from the book of Ezra and Nehemiah [Ezra 6:2]. (AE 34:275–76).

How fitting that the Lord of history, the promised Son of David (2Sm 7:8–16), should Himself become man and part of history in order to be our Savior. In Him, we see the Law of Moses fulfilled and the promised Kingdom come.

Joshua

Joshua 1 | Joshua 2 | Joshua 3 | Joshua 4 | Joshua 5 | Joshua 6 | Joshua 7 | Joshua 8 | Joshua 9 | Joshua 10 | Joshua 11 | Joshua 12 | Joshua 13 | Joshua 14 | Joshua 15 | Joshua 16 | Joshua 17 | Joshua 18 | Joshua 19 | Joshua 20 | Joshua 21 | Joshua 22 | Joshua 23 | Joshua 24

- Introduction to Joshua
  - Overview
  - Reading Joshua
  - Luther on Joshua
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

God Commissions Joshua

1 [1]‡†After the death of Moses the servant of the Lord, the Lord said to
Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' assistant, [2]†"Moses my servant is dead. Now
therefore arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, into the land
that I am giving to them, to the people of Israel. [3]Every place that the sole
of your foot will tread upon I have given to you, just as I promised to
Moses. [4]†From the wilderness and this Lebanon as far as the great river, the
river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites to the Great Sea toward the going
down of the sun shall be your territory. [5]†No man shall be able to stand
before you all the days of your life. Just as I was with Moses, so I will be
with you. I will not leave you or forsake you. [6]†Be strong and courageous,
for you shall cause this people to inherit the land that I swore to their fathers
to give them. [7]†Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to do
according to all the law that Moses my servant commanded you. Do not
turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may have good
success[1] wherever you go. [8]†This Book of the Law shall not depart from
your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be
careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make
your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. [9]†Have I not
commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do
not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."

Joshua Assumes Command

10 ‡ ‡ And Joshua commanded the officers of the people, 11 † “Pass through
the midst of the camp and command the people, ‘Prepare your provisions,
for within three days you are to pass over this Jordan to go in to take
possession of the land that the Lord your God is giving you to possess.’”
12 ‡ And to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh
Joshua said, 13 “Remember the word that Moses the servant of the Lord
commanded you, saying, ‘The Lord your God is providing you a place of
rest and will give you this land.’ 14 † Your wives, your little ones, and your
livestock shall remain in the land that Moses gave you beyond the Jordan,
but all the men of valor among you shall pass over armed before your
brothers and shall help them, 15 † until the Lord gives rest to your brothers as
he has to you, and they also take possession of the land that the Lord your
God is giving them. Then you shall return to the land of your possession
and shall possess it, the land that Moses the servant of the Lord gave you
beyond the Jordan toward the sunrise.”
16 ‡ And they answered Joshua, “All that you have commanded us we will
do, and wherever you send us we will go. 17 † Just as we obeyed Moses in all
things, so we will obey you. Only may the Lord your God be with you, as
he was with Moses! 18 † Whoever rebels against your commandment and
disobeys your words, whatever you command him, shall be put to death.
Only be strong and courageous.”

Rahab Hides the Spies

2 [1]†And Joshua the son of Nun sent[1] two men secretly from Shittim as spies, saying, “Go, view the land, especially Jericho.” And they went and came into the house of a prostitute whose name was Rahab and lodged there. [2]†And it was told to the king of Jericho, “Behold, men of Israel have come here tonight to search out the land.” [3]Then the king of Jericho sent to Rahab, saying, “Bring out the men who have come to you, who entered your house, for they have come to search out all the land.” [4]But the woman had taken the two men and hidden them. And she said, “True, the men came to me, but I did not know where they were from. [5]†And when the gate was about to be closed at dark, the men went out. I do not know where the men went. Pursue them quickly, for you will overtake them.” [6]†But she had brought them up to the roof and hid them with the stalks of flax that she had laid in order on the roof. [7]†So the men pursued after them on the way to the Jordan as far as the fords. And the gate was shut as soon as the pursuers had gone out.

[8]Before the men[2] lay down, she came up to them on the roof [9]†and said to the men, “I know that the Lord has given you the land, and that the fear of you has fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land melt away before you. [10]†For we have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea before you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon and Og, whom you devoted to destruction.[1] [11]†And as soon as we heard it, our hearts melted, and there was no spirit left in any man because of you, for the Lord your God, he is God in the heavens above and on the earth beneath. [12]†Now then, please swear to me by the Lord that, as I have dealt kindly with you, you also will deal kindly with my father’s house, and give me a sure sign [13]that you will save alive my father and mother, my brothers and sisters, and all who belong to them, and deliver our lives from death.” [14]†And the men said to her, “Our life for yours even to death! If you do not tell this business of ours, then when the Lord gives us the land we will deal kindly and faithfully with you.”

15 †Then she let them down by a rope through the window, for her house
was built into the city wall, so that she lived in the wall. 16 †And she said[2]
to them, “Go into the hills, or the pursuers will encounter you, and hide
there three days until the pursuers have returned. Then afterward you may
go your way.” 17 †The men said to her, “We will be guiltless with respect to
this oath of yours that you have made us swear. 18 †Behold, when we come
into the land, you shall tie this scarlet cord in the window through which
you let us down, and you shall gather into your house your father and
mother, your brothers, and all your father’s household. 19 †Then if anyone
goes out of the doors of your house into the street, his blood shall be on his
own head, and we shall be guiltless. But if a hand is laid on anyone who is
with you in the house, his blood shall be on our head. 20 †But if you tell this
business of ours, then we shall be guiltless with respect to your oath that
you have made us swear.” 21 †And she said, “According to your words, so be
it.” Then she sent them away, and they departed. And she tied the scarlet
cord in the window.

22 †They departed and went into the hills and remained there three days
until the pursuers returned, and the pursuers searched all along the way and
found nothing. 23 †Then the two men returned. They came down from the
hills and passed over and came to Joshua the son of Nun, and they told him
all that had happened to them. 24 †And they said to Joshua, “Truly the Lord
has given all the land into our hands. And also, all the inhabitants of the
land melt away because of us.”

Israel Crosses the Jordan

3 [1]†Then Joshua rose early in the morning and they set out from Shittim. And they came to the Jordan, he and all the people of Israel, and lodged there before they passed over. [2]†At the end of three days the officers went through the camp [3]†and commanded the people, “As soon as you see the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God being carried by the Levitical priests, then you shall set out from your place and follow it. [4]†Yet there shall be a distance between you and it, about 2,000 cubits[1] in length. Do not come near it, in order that you may know the way you shall go, for you have not passed this way before.” [5]†Then Joshua said to the people, “Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you.” [6]†And Joshua said to the priests, “Take up the ark of the covenant and pass on before the people.” So they took up the ark of the covenant and went before the people.

[7]†The Lord said to Joshua, “Today I will begin to exalt you in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. [8]†And as for you, command the priests who bear the ark of the covenant, ‘When you come to the brink of the waters of the Jordan, you shall stand still in the Jordan.’” [9]†And Joshua said to the people of Israel, “Come here and listen to the words of the Lord your God.” [10]†And Joshua said, “Here is how you shall know that the living God is among you and that he will without fail drive out from before you the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Hivites, the Perizzites, the Girgashites, the Amorites, and the Jebusites. [11]†Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth[2] is passing over before you into the Jordan. [12]†Now therefore take twelve men from the tribes of Israel, from each tribe a man. [13]†And when the soles of the feet of the priests bearing the ark of the Lord, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan shall be cut off from flowing, and the waters coming down from above shall stand in one heap.”

[14]So when the people set out from their tents to pass over the Jordan with the priests bearing the ark of the covenant before the people, [15]†and as soon

as those bearing the ark had come as far as the Jordan, and the feet of the priests bearing the ark were dipped in the brink of the water (now the Jordan overflows all its banks throughout the time of harvest), [16] ‡ † the waters coming down from above stood and rose up in a heap very far away, at Adam, the city that is beside Zarethan, and those flowing down toward the Sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea, were completely cut off. And the people passed over opposite Jericho. [17]Now the priests bearing the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firmly on dry ground in the midst of the Jordan, and all Israel was passing over on dry ground until all the nation finished passing over the Jordan.

Twelve Memorial Stones from the Jordan

4 [1]†When all the nation had finished passing over the Jordan, the Lord
said to Joshua, [2]†"Take twelve men from the people, from each tribe a man,
[3]†and command them, saying, 'Take twelve stones from here out of the
midst of the Jordan, from the very place where the priests' feet stood firmly,
and bring them over with you and lay them down in the place where you
lodge tonight.'" [4]†Then Joshua called the twelve men from the people of
Israel, whom he had appointed, a man from each tribe. [5]††And Joshua said
to them, "Pass on before the ark of the Lord your God into the midst of the
Jordan, and take up each of you a stone upon his shoulder, according to the
number of the tribes of the people of Israel, [6]†that this may be a sign among
you. When your children ask in time to come, 'What do those stones mean
to you?' [7]†then you shall tell them that the waters of the Jordan were cut off
before the ark of the covenant of the Lord. When it passed over the Jordan,
the waters of the Jordan were cut off. So these stones shall be to the people
of Israel a memorial forever."

[8]†And the people of Israel did just as Joshua commanded and took up
twelve stones out of the midst of the Jordan, according to the number of the
tribes of the people of Israel, just as the Lord told Joshua. And they carried
them over with them to the place where they lodged and laid them down[1]
there. [9]†And Joshua set up twelve stones in the midst of the Jordan, in the
place where the feet of the priests bearing the ark of the covenant had stood;
and they are there to this day. [10]†For the priests bearing the ark stood in the
midst of the Jordan until everything was finished that the Lord commanded
Joshua to tell the people, according to all that Moses had commanded
Joshua.

The people passed over in haste. [11]†And when all the people had finished
passing over, the ark of the Lord and the priests passed over before the
people. [12]†The sons of Reuben and the sons of Gad and the half-tribe of
Manasseh passed over armed before the people of Israel, as Moses had told
them. [13]About 40,000 ready for war passed over before the Lord for battle,
to the plains of Jericho. [14]†On that day the Lord exalted Joshua in the sight

of all Israel, and they stood in awe of him just as they had stood in awe of Moses, all the days of his life.

15 †And the Lord said to Joshua, 16 †“Command the priests bearing the ark of the testimony to come up out of the Jordan.” 17 †So Joshua commanded the priests, “Come up out of the Jordan.” 18 †And when the priests bearing the ark of the covenant of the Lord came up from the midst of the Jordan, and the soles of the priests’ feet were lifted up on dry ground, the waters of the Jordan returned to their place and overflowed all its banks, as before.

19 †The people came up out of the Jordan on the tenth day of the first month, and they encamped at Gilgal on the east border of Jericho. 20 †And those twelve stones, which they took out of the Jordan, Joshua set up at Gilgal. 21 †And he said to the people of Israel, “When your children ask their fathers in times to come, ‘What do these stones mean?’ 22 †then you shall let your children know, ‘Israel passed over this Jordan on dry ground.’ 23 †For the Lord your God dried up the waters of the Jordan for you until you passed over, as the Lord your God did to the Red Sea, which he dried up for us until we passed over, 24 †so that all the peoples of the earth may know that the hand of the Lord is mighty, that you may fear the Lord your God forever.”[1]

The New Generation Circumcised

5 [1]‡†As soon as all the kings of the Amorites who were beyond the
Jordan to the west, and all the kings of the Canaanites who were by the sea,
heard that the Lord had dried up the waters of the Jordan for the people of
Israel until they had crossed over, their hearts melted and there was no
longer any spirit in them because of the people of Israel.

[2]†At that time the Lord said to Joshua, "Make flint knives and circumcise
the sons of Israel a second time." [3]So Joshua made flint knives and
circumcised the sons of Israel at Gibeath-haaraloth.[2] [4]† And this is the
reason why Joshua circumcised them: all the males of the people who came
out of Egypt, all the men of war, had died in the wilderness on the way after
they had come out of Egypt. [5]‡ Though all the people who came out had
been circumcised, yet all the people who were born on the way in the
wilderness after they had come out of Egypt had not been circumcised. [6]For
the people of Israel walked forty years in the wilderness, until all the nation,
the men of war who came out of Egypt, perished, because they did not obey
the voice of the Lord; the Lord swore to them that he would not let them see
the land that the Lord had sworn to their fathers to give to us, a land flowing
with milk and honey. [7]‡†So it was their children, whom he raised up in their
place, that Joshua circumcised. For they were uncircumcised, because they
had not been circumcised on the way.

[8]†When the circumcising of the whole nation was finished, they remained
in their places in the camp until they were healed. [9]† And the Lord said to
Joshua, "Today I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you." And so
the name of that place is called Gilgal[1] to this day.

First Passover in Canaan

10 ‡ † While the people of Israel were encamped at Gilgal, they kept the
Passover on the fourteenth day of the month in the evening on the plains of
Jericho. 11 † And the day after the Passover, on that very day, they ate of the
produce of the land, unleavened cakes and parched grain. 12 † And the manna
ceased the day after they ate of the produce of the land. And there was no
longer manna for the people of Israel, but they ate of the fruit of the land of
Canaan that year.

The Commander of the Lord's Army

13 ✝✝✝When Joshua was by Jericho, he lifted up his eyes and looked, and
behold, a man was standing before him with his drawn sword in his hand.
And Joshua went to him and said to him, "Are you for us, or for our
adversaries?" 14✝And he said, "No; but I am the commander of the army of
the Lord. Now I have come." And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and
worshiped and said to him, "What does my lord say to his servant?" 15And
the commander of the Lord's army said to Joshua, "Take off your sandals
from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy." And Joshua
did so.

The Fall of Jericho

6 [1]†Now Jericho was shut up inside and outside because of the people
of Israel. None went out, and none came in. [2]†And the Lord said to Joshua,
"See, I have given Jericho into your hand, with its king and mighty men of
valor. [3]†You shall march around the city, all the men of war going around
the city once. Thus shall you do for six days. [4]†Seven priests shall bear
seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark. On the seventh day you shall
march around the city seven times, and the priests shall blow the trumpets.
[5]†And when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, when you hear the
sound of the trumpet, then all the people shall shout with a great shout, and
the wall of the city will fall down flat,[1] and the people shall go up,
everyone straight before him." [6]†So Joshua the son of Nun called the priests
and said to them, "Take up the ark of the covenant and let seven priests bear
seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the Lord." [7]†And he said to
the people, "Go forward. March around the city and let the armed men pass
on before the ark of the Lord."

[8]†And just as Joshua had commanded the people, the seven priests
bearing the seven trumpets of rams' horns before the Lord went forward,
blowing the trumpets, with the ark of the covenant of the Lord following
them. [9]The armed men were walking before the priests who were blowing
the trumpets, and the rear guard was walking after the ark, while the
trumpets blew continually. [10]† But Joshua commanded the people, "You
shall not shout or make your voice heard, neither shall any word go out of
your mouth, until the day I tell you to shout. Then you shall shout." [11]So he
caused the ark of the Lord to circle the city, going about it once. And they
came into the camp and spent the night in the camp.

[12]Then Joshua rose early in the morning, and the priests took up the ark
of the Lord. [13]And the seven priests bearing the seven trumpets of rams'
horns before the ark of the Lord walked on, and they blew the trumpets
continually. And the armed men were walking before them, and the rear
guard was walking after the ark of the Lord, while the trumpets blew

continually. 14 † And the second day they marched around the city once, and returned into the camp. So they did for six days.

15 On the seventh day they rose early, at the dawn of day, and marched around the city in the same manner seven times. It was only on that day that they marched around the city seven times. 16 And at the seventh time, when the priests had blown the trumpets, Joshua said to the people, "Shout, for the Lord has given you the city. 17 † And the city and all that is within it shall be devoted to the Lord for destruction.[2] Only Rahab the prostitute and all who are with her in her house shall live, because she hid the messengers whom we sent. 18 † But you, keep yourselves from the things devoted to destruction, lest when you have devoted them you take any of the devoted things and make the camp of Israel a thing for destruction and bring trouble upon it. 19 † But all silver and gold, and every vessel of bronze and iron, are holy to the Lord; they shall go into the treasury of the Lord." 20 † So the people shouted, and the trumpets were blown. As soon as the people heard the sound of the trumpet, the people shouted a great shout, and the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they captured the city. 21 † Then they devoted all in the city to destruction, both men and women, young and old, oxen, sheep, and donkeys, with the edge of the sword.

22 † But to the two men who had spied out the land, Joshua said, "Go into the prostitute's house and bring out from there the woman and all who belong to her, as you swore to her." 23 † So the young men who had been spies went in and brought out Rahab and her father and mother and brothers and all who belonged to her. And they brought all her relatives and put them outside the camp of Israel. 24 † And they burned the city with fire, and everything in it. Only the silver and gold, and the vessels of bronze and of iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the Lord. 25 † But Rahab the prostitute and her father's household and all who belonged to her, Joshua saved alive. And she has lived in Israel to this day, because she hid the messengers whom Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.

26 † Joshua laid an oath on them at that time, saying, "Cursed before the Lord be the man who rises up and rebuilds this city, Jericho.

"At the cost of his firstborn shall he
lay its foundation,

and at the cost of his youngest son
shall he set up its gates.”

27 †So the Lord was with Joshua, and his fame was in all the land.

Israel Defeated at Ai

7 [1] ‡ † But the people of Israel broke faith in regard to the devoted
things, for Achan the son of Carmi, son of Zabdi, son of Zerah, of the tribe
of Judah, took some of the devoted things. And the anger of the Lord burned
against the people of Israel.

[2] † Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which is near Beth-aven, east of
Bethel, and said to them, "Go up and spy out the land." And the men went
up and spied out Ai. [3] And they returned to Joshua and said to him, "Do not
have all the people go up, but let about two or three thousand men go up
and attack Ai. Do not make the whole people toil up there, for they are
few." [4] † So about 3,000 men went up there from the people. And they fled
before the men of Ai, [5] † and the men of Ai killed about thirty-six of their
men and chased them before the gate as far as Shebarim and struck them at
the descent. And the hearts of the people melted and became as water.

[6] † Then Joshua tore his clothes and fell to the earth on his face before the
ark of the Lord until the evening, he and the elders of Israel. And they put
dust on their heads. [7] † And Joshua said, "Alas, O Lord God, why have you
brought this people over the Jordan at all, to give us into the hands of the
Amorites, to destroy us? Would that we had been content to dwell beyond
the Jordan! [8] ‡ O Lord, what can I say, when Israel has turned their backs
before their enemies! [9] † For the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the
land will hear of it and will surround us and cut off our name from the
earth. And what will you do for your great name?"

The Sin of Achan

10 †The Lord said to Joshua, “Get up! Why have you fallen on your face?
11 †Israel has sinned; they have transgressed my covenant that I commanded
them; they have taken some of the devoted things; they have stolen and lied
and put them among their own belongings. 12 †Therefore the people of Israel
cannot stand before their enemies. They turn their backs before their
enemies, because they have become devoted for destruction.[1] I will be with
you no more, unless you destroy the devoted things from among you. 13 †Get
up! Consecrate the people and say, ‘Consecrate yourselves for tomorrow;
for thus says the Lord, God of Israel, “There are devoted things in your
midst, O Israel. You cannot stand before your enemies until you take away
the devoted things from among you.” 14 †In the morning therefore you shall
be brought near by your tribes. And the tribe that the Lord takes by lot shall
come near by clans. And the clan that the Lord takes shall come near by
households. And the household that the Lord takes shall come near man by
man. 15 †And he who is taken with the devoted things shall be burned with
fire, he and all that he has, because he has transgressed the covenant of the
Lord, and because he has done an outrageous thing in Israel.’”

16 So Joshua rose early in the morning and brought Israel near tribe by
tribe, and the tribe of Judah was taken. 17 And he brought near the clans of
Judah, and the clan of the Zerahites was taken. And he brought near the clan
of the Zerahites man by man, and Zabdi was taken. 18 And he brought near
his household man by man, and Achan the son of Carmi, son of Zabdi, son
of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, was taken. 19 †Then Joshua said to Achan,
“My son, give glory to the Lord God of Israel and give praise[2] to him. And
tell me now what you have done; do not hide it from me.” 20 †And Achan
answered Joshua, “Truly I have sinned against the Lord God of Israel, and
this is what I did: 21 †when I saw among the spoil a beautiful cloak from
Shinar, and 200 shekels of silver, and a bar of gold weighing 50 shekels,[1]
then I coveted them and took them. And see, they are hidden in the earth
inside my tent, with the silver underneath.”

22 So Joshua sent messengers, and they ran to the tent; and behold, it was
hidden in his tent with the silver underneath. 23 †And they took them out of

the tent and brought them to Joshua and to all the people of Israel. And they laid them down before the Lord. 24 ‡ † And Joshua and all Israel with him took Achan the son of Zerah, and the silver and the cloak and the bar of gold, and his sons and daughters and his oxen and donkeys and sheep and his tent and all that he had. And they brought them up to the Valley of Achor. 25 † And Joshua said, “Why did you bring trouble on us? The Lord brings trouble on you today.” And all Israel stoned him with stones. They burned them with fire and stoned them with stones. 26 † And they raised over him a great heap of stones that remains to this day. Then the Lord turned from his burning anger. Therefore, to this day the name of that place is called the Valley of Achor.[2]

The Fall of Ai

8 [1] ‡ † And the Lord said to Joshua, “Do not fear and do not be
dismayed. Take all the fighting men with you, and arise, go up to Ai. See, I
have given into your hand the king of Ai, and his people, his city, and his
land. [2] † And you shall do to Ai and its king as you did to Jericho and its
king. Only its spoil and its livestock you shall take as plunder for
yourselves. Lay an ambush against the city, behind it.”

[3] ‡ † So Joshua and all the fighting men arose to go up to Ai. And Joshua
chose 30,000 mighty men of valor and sent them out by night. [4] And he
commanded them, “Behold, you shall lie in ambush against the city, behind
it. Do not go very far from the city, but all of you remain ready. [5] And I and
all the people who are with me will approach the city. And when they come
out against us just as before, we shall flee before them. [6] And they will come
out after us, until we have drawn them away from the city. For they will say,
‘They are fleeing from us, just as before.’ So we will flee before them.
[7] † Then you shall rise up from the ambush and seize the city, for the Lord
your God will give it into your hand. [8] † And as soon as you have taken the
city, you shall set the city on fire. You shall do according to the word of the
Lord. See, I have commanded you.” [9] † So Joshua sent them out. And they
went to the place of ambush and lay between Bethel and Ai, to the west of
Ai, but Joshua spent that night among the people.

[10] † Joshua arose early in the morning and mustered the people and went
up, he and the elders of Israel, before the people to Ai. [11] † And all the
fighting men who were with him went up and drew near before the city and
encamped on the north side of Ai, with a ravine between them and Ai. [12] † He
took about 5,000 men and set them in ambush between Bethel and Ai, to the
west of the city. [13] † So they stationed the forces, the main encampment that
was north of the city and its rear guard west of the city. But Joshua spent
that night in the valley. [14] † And as soon as the king of Ai saw this, he and all
his people, the men of the city, hurried and went out early to the appointed
place[1] toward the Arabah to meet Israel in battle. But he did not know that
there was an ambush against him behind the city. [15] And Joshua and all

Israel pretended to be beaten before them and fled in the direction of the wilderness. 16 †So all the people who were in the city were called together to pursue them, and as they pursued Joshua they were drawn away from the city. 17 †Not a man was left in Ai or Bethel who did not go out after Israel. They left the city open and pursued Israel.

18 †Then the Lord said to Joshua, “Stretch out the javelin that is in your hand toward Ai, for I will give it into your hand.” And Joshua stretched out the javelin that was in his hand toward the city. 19 And the men in the ambush rose quickly out of their place, and as soon as he had stretched out his hand, they ran and entered the city and captured it. And they hurried to set the city on fire. 20 †So when the men of Ai looked back, behold, the smoke of the city went up to heaven, and they had no power to flee this way or that, for the people who fled to the wilderness turned back against the pursuers. 21 And when Joshua and all Israel saw that the ambush had captured the city, and that the smoke of the city went up, then they turned back and struck down the men of Ai. 22 †And the others came out from the city against them, so they were in the midst of Israel, some on this side, and some on that side. And Israel struck them down, until there was left none that survived or escaped. 23 But the king of Ai they took alive, and brought him near to Joshua.

24 †When Israel had finished killing all the inhabitants of Ai in the open wilderness where they pursued them, and all of them to the very last had fallen by the edge of the sword, all Israel returned to Ai and struck it down with the edge of the sword. 25 And all who fell that day, both men and women, were 12,000, all the people of Ai. 26 †But Joshua did not draw back his hand with which he stretched out the javelin until he had devoted all the inhabitants of Ai to destruction.[2] 27 Only the livestock and the spoil of that city Israel took as their plunder, according to the word of the Lord that he commanded Joshua. 28 †So Joshua burned Ai and made it forever a heap of ruins, as it is to this day. 29 †And he hanged the king of Ai on a tree until evening. And at sunset Joshua commanded, and they took his body down from the tree and threw it at the entrance of the gate of the city and raised over it a great heap of stones, which stands there to this day.

Joshua Renews the Covenant

30 ‡ ‡ ‡ At that time Joshua built an altar to the Lord, the God of Israel, on
Mount Ebal, 31 † just as Moses the servant of the Lord had commanded the
people of Israel, as it is written in the Book of the Law of Moses, “an altar
of uncut stones, upon which no man has wielded an iron tool.” And they
offered on it burnt offerings to the Lord and sacrificed peace offerings.
32 † And there, in the presence of the people of Israel, he wrote on the stones
a copy of the law of Moses, which he had written. 33 † And all Israel,
sojourner as well as native born, with their elders and officers and their
judges, stood on opposite sides of the ark before the Levitical priests who
carried the ark of the covenant of the Lord, half of them in front of Mount
Gerizim and half of them in front of Mount Ebal, just as Moses the servant
of the Lord had commanded at the first, to bless the people of Israel. 34 † And
afterward he read all the words of the law, the blessing and the curse,
according to all that is written in the Book of the Law. 35 † There was not a
word of all that Moses commanded that Joshua did not read before all the
assembly of Israel, and the women, and the little ones, and the sojourners
who lived[1] among them.

The Gibeonite Deception

9 [1]‡†As soon as all the kings who were beyond the Jordan in the hill country and in the lowland all along the coast of the Great Sea toward Lebanon, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, heard of this, [2]they gathered together as one to fight against Joshua and Israel.

[3]†But when the inhabitants of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and to Ai, [4]†they on their part acted with cunning and went and made ready provisions and took worn-out sacks for their donkeys, and wineskins, worn-out and torn and mended, [5]with worn-out, patched sandals on their feet, and worn-out clothes. And all their provisions were dry and crumbly. [6]And they went to Joshua in the camp at Gilgal and said to him and to the men of Israel, "We have come from a distant country, so now make a covenant with us." [7]†But the men of Israel said to the Hivites, "Perhaps you live among us; then how can we make a covenant with you?" [8]†They said to Joshua, "We are your servants." And Joshua said to them, "Who are you? And where do you come from?" [9]†They said to him, "From a very distant country your servants have come, because of the name of the Lord your God. For we have heard a report of him, and all that he did in Egypt, [10]†and all that he did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon the king of Heshbon, and to Og king of Bashan, who lived in Ashtaroth. [11]So our elders and all the inhabitants of our country said to us, 'Take provisions in your hand for the journey and go to meet them and say to them, "We are your servants. Come now, make a covenant with us."' [12]Here is our bread. It was still warm when we took it from our houses as our food for the journey on the day we set out to come to you, but now, behold, it is dry and crumbly. [13]†These wineskins were new when we filled them, and behold, they have burst. And these garments and sandals of ours are worn out from the very long journey." [14]‡So the men took some of their provisions, but did not ask counsel from the Lord. [15]†And Joshua made peace with them and made a covenant with them, to let them live, and the leaders of the congregation swore to them.

16 † At the end of three days after they had made a covenant with them,
they heard that they were their neighbors and that they lived among them.
17 † And the people of Israel set out and reached their cities on the third day.
Now their cities were Gibeon, Chephirah, Beeroth, and Kiriath-jearim.
18 ‡ † But the people of Israel did not attack them, because the leaders of the
congregation had sworn to them by the Lord, the God of Israel. Then all the
congregation murmured against the leaders. 19 But all the leaders said to all
the congregation, “We have sworn to them by the Lord, the God of Israel,
and now we may not touch them. 20 This we will do to them: let them live,
lest wrath be upon us, because of the oath that we swore to them.” 21 † And
the leaders said to them, “Let them live.” So they became cutters of wood
and drawers of water for all the congregation, just as the leaders had said of
them.

22 ‡ Joshua summoned them, and he said to them, “Why did you deceive
us, saying, ‘We are very far from you,’ when you dwell among us? 23 † Now
therefore you are cursed, and some of you shall never be anything but
servants, cutters of wood and drawers of water for the house of my God.”
24 † They answered Joshua, “Because it was told to your servants for a
certainty that the Lord your God had commanded his servant Moses to give
you all the land and to destroy all the inhabitants of the land from before
you—so we feared greatly for our lives because of you and did this thing.
25 And now, behold, we are in your hand. Whatever seems good and right in
your sight to do to us, do it.” 26 So he did this to them and delivered them out
of the hand of the people of Israel, and they did not kill them. 27 † But Joshua
made them that day cutters of wood and drawers of water for the
congregation and for the altar of the Lord, to this day, in the place that he
should choose.

The Sun Stands Still

10 [1]‡†As soon as Adoni-zedek, king of Jerusalem, heard how Joshua had captured Ai and had devoted it to destruction,[1] doing to Ai and its king as he had done to Jericho and its king, and how the inhabitants of Gibeon had made peace with Israel and were among them, [2]† he[2] feared greatly, because Gibeon was a great city, like one of the royal cities, and because it was greater than Ai, and all its men were warriors. [3]†So Adoni-zedek king of Jerusalem sent to Hoham king of Hebron, to Piram king of Jarmuth, to Japhia king of Lachish, and to Debir king of Eglon, saying, [4]"Come up to me and help me, and let us strike Gibeon. For it has made peace with Joshua and with the people of Israel." [5]† Then the five kings of the Amorites, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, and the king of Eglon, gathered their forces and went up with all their armies and encamped against Gibeon and made war against it.

[6]†And the men of Gibeon sent to Joshua at the camp in Gilgal, saying, "Do not relax your hand from your servants. Come up to us quickly and save us and help us, for all the kings of the Amorites who dwell in the hill country are gathered against us." [7]†So Joshua went up from Gilgal, he and all the people of war with him, and all the mighty men of valor. [8]†And the Lord said to Joshua, "Do not fear them, for I have given them into your hands. Not a man of them shall stand before you." [9]†So Joshua came upon them suddenly, having marched up all night from Gilgal. [10]†And the Lord threw them into a panic before Israel, who[1] struck them with a great blow at Gibeon and chased them by the way of the ascent of Beth-horon and struck them as far as Azekah and Makkedah. [11]†And as they fled before Israel, while they were going down the ascent of Beth-horon, the Lord threw down large stones from heaven on them as far as Azekah, and they died. There were more who died because of the hailstones than the sons of Israel killed with the sword.

[12]‡At that time Joshua spoke to the Lord in the day when the Lord gave the Amorites over to the sons of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel,

"Sun, stand still at Gibeon,
and moon, in the Valley of Aijalon."
13 And the sun stood still, and the moon
stopped,
until the nation took vengeance on their
enemies.

Is this not written in the Book of Jashar? The sun stopped in the midst of heaven and did not hurry to set for about a whole day. 14 † There has been no day like it before or since, when the LORD heeded the voice of a man, for the LORD fought for Israel.

15 So Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to the camp at Gilgal.

Five Amorite Kings Executed

16 ‡ † These five kings fled and hid themselves in the cave at Makkedah.
17 And it was told to Joshua, “The five kings have been found, hidden in the
cave at Makkedah.” 18 † And Joshua said, “Roll large stones against the
mouth of the cave and set men by it to guard them, 19 † but do not stay there
yourselves. Pursue your enemies; attack their rear guard. Do not let them
enter their cities, for the Lord your God has given them into your hand.”
20 † When Joshua and the sons of Israel had finished striking them with a
great blow until they were wiped out, and when the remnant that remained
of them had entered into the fortified cities, 21 † then all the people returned
safe to Joshua in the camp at Makkedah. Not a man moved his tongue
against any of the people of Israel.

22 Then Joshua said, “Open the mouth of the cave and bring those five
kings out to me from the cave.” 23 And they did so, and brought those five
kings out to him from the cave, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron,
the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, and the king of Eglon. 24 † And
when they brought those kings out to Joshua, Joshua summoned all the men
of Israel and said to the chiefs of the men of war who had gone with him,
“Come near; put your feet on the necks of these kings.” Then they came
near and put their feet on their necks. 25 † And Joshua said to them, “Do not
be afraid or dismayed; be strong and courageous. For thus the Lord will do
to all your enemies against whom you fight.” 26 † And afterward Joshua
struck them and put them to death, and he hanged them on five trees. And
they hung on the trees until evening. 27 † But at the time of the going down of
the sun, Joshua commanded, and they took them down from the trees and
threw them into the cave where they had hidden themselves, and they set
large stones against the mouth of the cave, which remain to this very day.

28 † As for Makkedah, Joshua captured it on that day and struck it, and its
king, with the edge of the sword. He devoted to destruction every person in
it; he left none remaining. And he did to the king of Makkedah just as he
had done to the king of Jericho.

Conquest of Southern Canaan

29 ‡ ‡ ‡ Then Joshua and all Israel with him passed on from Makkedah to
Libnah and fought against Libnah. 30 † And the Lord gave it also and its king
into the hand of Israel. And he struck it with the edge of the sword, and
every person in it; he left none remaining in it. And he did to its king as he
had done to the king of Jericho.
31 Then Joshua and all Israel with him passed on from Libnah to Lachish
and laid siege to it and fought against it. 32 † And the Lord gave Lachish into
the hand of Israel, and he captured it on the second day and struck it with
the edge of the sword, and every person in it, as he had done to Libnah.
33 † Then Horam king of Gezer came up to help Lachish. And Joshua
struck him and his people, until he left none remaining.
34 † Then Joshua and all Israel with him passed on from Lachish to Eglon.
And they laid siege to it and fought against it. 35 † And they captured it on
that day, and struck it with the edge of the sword. And he devoted every
person in it to destruction that day, as he had done to Lachish.
36 Then Joshua and all Israel with him went up from Eglon to Hebron.
And they fought against it 37 † and captured it and struck it with the edge of
the sword, and its king and its towns, and every person in it. He left none
remaining, as he had done to Eglon, and devoted it to destruction and every
person in it.
38 Then Joshua and all Israel with him turned back to Debir and fought
against it 39 † and he captured it with its king and all its towns. And they
struck them with the edge of the sword and devoted to destruction every
person in it; he left none remaining. Just as he had done to Hebron and to
Libnah and its king, so he did to Debir and to its king.
40 † So Joshua struck the whole land, the hill country and the Negeb and
the lowland and the slopes, and all their kings. He left none remaining, but
devoted to destruction all that breathed, just as the Lord God of Israel
commanded. 41 And Joshua struck them from Kadesh-barnea as far as Gaza,
and all the country of Goshen, as far as Gibeon. 42 † And Joshua captured all
these kings and their land at one time, because the Lord God of Israel fought

for Israel. [43]Then Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to the camp at Gilgal.

Conquests in Northern Canaan

11 [1]†When Jabin, king of Hazor, heard of this, he sent to Jobab king
of Madon, and to the king of Shimron, and to the king of Achshaph, [2]and to
the kings who were in the northern hill country, and in the Arabah south of
Chinneroth, and in the lowland, and in Naphoth-dor on the west, [3]to the
Canaanites in the east and the west, the Amorites, the Hittites, the
Perizzites, and the Jebusites in the hill country, and the Hivites under
Hermon in the land of Mizpah. [4]†And they came out with all their troops, a
great horde, in number like the sand that is on the seashore, with very many
horses and chariots. [5]And all these kings joined their forces and came and
encamped together at the waters of Merom to fight against Israel.

[6]†And the Lord said to Joshua, "Do not be afraid of them, for tomorrow
at this time I will give over all of them, slain, to Israel. You shall hamstring
their horses and burn their chariots with fire." [7]†So Joshua and all his
warriors came suddenly against them by the waters of Merom and fell upon
them. [8]†And the Lord gave them into the hand of Israel, who struck them
and chased them as far as Great Sidon and Misrephoth-maim, and eastward
as far as the Valley of Mizpeh. And they struck them until he left none
remaining. [9]And Joshua did to them just as the Lord said to him: he
hamstrung their horses and burned their chariots with fire.

[10]†And Joshua turned back at that time and captured Hazor and struck its
king with the sword, for Hazor formerly was the head of all those
kingdoms. [11]And they struck with the sword all who were in it, devoting
them to destruction;[1] there was none left that breathed. And he burned
Hazor with fire. [12]†And all the cities of those kings, and all their kings,
Joshua captured, and struck them with the edge of the sword, devoting them
to destruction, just as Moses the servant of the Lord had commanded. [13]†But
none of the cities that stood on mounds did Israel burn, except Hazor alone;
that Joshua burned. [14]†And all the spoil of these cities and the livestock, the
people of Israel took for their plunder. But every man they struck with the
edge of the sword until they had destroyed them, and they did not leave any
who breathed. [15]†Just as the Lord had commanded Moses his servant, so

Moses commanded Joshua, and so Joshua did. He left nothing undone of all that the Lord had commanded Moses.

16 So Joshua took all that land, the hill country and all the Negeb and all
the land of Goshen and the lowland and the Arabah and the hill country of
Israel and its lowland 17 from Mount Halak, which rises toward Seir, as far
as Baal-gad in the Valley of Lebanon below Mount Hermon. And he
captured all their kings and struck them and put them to death. 18 Joshua
made war a long time with all those kings. 19 There was not a city that
made peace with the people of Israel except the Hivites, the inhabitants of
Gibeon. They took them all in battle. 20 For it was the Lord's doing to
harden their hearts that they should come against Israel in battle, in order
that they should be devoted to destruction and should receive no mercy but
be destroyed, just as the Lord commanded Moses.

21 And Joshua came at that time and cut off the Anakim from the hill
country, from Hebron, from Debir, from Anab, and from all the hill country
of Judah, and from all the hill country of Israel. Joshua devoted them to
destruction with their cities. 22 There was none of the Anakim left in the
land of the people of Israel. Only in Gaza, in Gath, and in Ashdod did some
remain. 23 So Joshua took the whole land, according to all that the Lord had
spoken to Moses. And Joshua gave it for an inheritance to Israel according
to their tribal allotments. And the land had rest from war.

Kings Defeated by Moses

12 [1]‡†Now these are the kings of the land whom the people of Israel defeated and took possession of their land beyond the Jordan toward the sunrise, from the Valley of the Arnon to Mount Hermon, with all the Arabah eastward: [2]Sihon king of the Amorites who lived at Heshbon and ruled from Aroer, which is on the edge of the Valley of the Arnon, and from the middle of the valley as far as the river Jabbok, the boundary of the Ammonites, that is, half of Gilead, [3]†and the Arabah to the Sea of Chinneroth eastward, and in the direction of Beth-jeshimoth, to the Sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea, southward to the foot of the slopes of Pisgah; [4]and Og[1] king of Bashan, one of the remnant of the Rephaim, who lived at Ashtaroth and at Edrei [5]and ruled over Mount Hermon and Salecah and all Bashan to the boundary of the Geshurites and the Maacathites, and over half of Gilead to the boundary of Sihon king of Heshbon. [6]†Moses, the servant of the Lord, and the people of Israel defeated them. And Moses the servant of the Lord gave their land for a possession to the Reubenites and the Gadites and the half-tribe of Manasseh.

Kings Defeated by Joshua

7 ‡‡‡And these are the kings of the land whom Joshua and the people of
Israel defeated on the west side of the Jordan, from Baal-gad in the Valley
of Lebanon to Mount Halak, that rises toward Seir (and Joshua gave their
land to the tribes of Israel as a possession according to their allotments, 8in
the hill country, in the lowland, in the Arabah, in the slopes, in the
wilderness, and in the Negeb, the land of the Hittites, the Amorites, the
Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites): 9 ‡the king of
Jericho, one; the king of Ai, which is beside Bethel, one; 10the king of
Jerusalem, one; the king of Hebron, one; 11the king of Jarmuth, one; the
king of Lachish, one; 12the king of Eglon, one; the king of Gezer, one; 13the
king of Debir, one; the king of Geder, one; 14the king of Hormah, one; the
king of Arad, one; 15the king of Libnah, one; the king of Adullam, one; 16the
king of Makkedah, one; the king of Bethel, one; 17the king of Tappuah, one;
the king of Hepher, one; 18the king of Aphek, one; the king of Lasharon,
one; 19the king of Madon, one; the king of Hazor, one; 20the king of
Shimron-meron, one; the king of Achshaph, one; 21the king of Taanach, one;
the king of Megiddo, one; 22the king of Kedesh, one; the king of Jokneam in
Carmel, one; 23the king of Dor in Naphath-dor, one; the king of Goiim in
Galilee,[1] one; 24the king of Tirzah, one: in all, thirty-one kings.

Land Still to Be Conquered

13 [1]†† Now Joshua was old and advanced in years, and the Lord said
to him, “You are old and advanced in years, and there remains yet very
much land to possess. [2]† This is the land that yet remains: all the regions of
the Philistines, and all those of the Geshurites [3](from the Shihor, which is
east of Egypt, northward to the boundary of Ekron, it is counted as
Canaanite; there are five rulers of the Philistines, those of Gaza, Ashdod,
Ashkelon, Gath, and Ekron), and those of the Avvim, [4]in the south, all the
land of the Canaanites, and Mearah that belongs to the Sidonians, to Aphek,
to the boundary of the Amorites, [5]and the land of the Gebalites, and all
Lebanon, toward the sunrise, from Baal-gad below Mount Hermon to Lebo-
hamath, [6] † all the inhabitants of the hill country from Lebanon to
Misrephoth-maim, even all the Sidonians. I myself will drive them out from
before the people of Israel. Only allot the land to Israel for an inheritance,
as I have commanded you. [7] † Now therefore divide this land for an
inheritance to the nine tribes and half the tribe of Manasseh.”

The Inheritance East of the Jordan

8 With the other half of the tribe of Manasseh[2] the Reubenites and the
Gadites received their inheritance, which Moses gave them, beyond the
Jordan eastward, as Moses the servant of the Lord gave them: 9 from Aroer,
which is on the edge of the Valley of the Arnon, and the city that is in the
middle of the valley, and all the tableland of Medeba as far as Dibon; 10 and
all the cities of Sihon king of the Amorites, who reigned in Heshbon, as far
as the boundary of the Ammonites; 11 and Gilead, and the region of the
Geshurites and Maacathites, and all Mount Hermon, and all Bashan to
Salecah; 12 all the kingdom of Og in Bashan, who reigned in Ashtaroth and
in Edrei (he alone was left of the remnant of the Rephaim); these Moses had
struck and driven out. 13 Yet the people of Israel did not drive out the
Geshurites or the Maacathites, but Geshur and Maacath dwell in the midst
of Israel to this day.

14 To the tribe of Levi alone Moses gave no inheritance. The offerings by
fire to the Lord God of Israel are their inheritance, as he said to him.

15 And Moses gave an inheritance to the tribe of the people of Reuben
according to their clans. 16 So their territory was from Aroer, which is on the
edge of the Valley of the Arnon, and the city that is in the middle of the
valley, and all the tableland by Medeba; 17 with Heshbon, and all its cities
that are in the tableland; Dibon, and Bamoth-baal, and Beth-baal-meon,
18 and Jahaz, and Kedemoth, and Mephaath, 19 and Kiriathaim, and Sibmah,
and Zereth-shahar on the hill of the valley, 20 and Beth-peor, and the slopes
of Pisgah, and Beth-jeshimoth, 21 that is, all the cities of the tableland, and
all the kingdom of Sihon king of the Amorites, who reigned in Heshbon,
whom Moses defeated with the leaders of Midian, Evi and Rekem and Zur
and Hur and Reba, the princes of Sihon, who lived in the land. 22 Balaam
also, the son of Beor, the one who practiced divination, was killed with the
sword by the people of Israel among the rest of their slain. 23 And the border
of the people of Reuben was the Jordan as a boundary. This was the
inheritance of the people of Reuben, according to their clans with their
cities and villages.

[24]Moses gave an inheritance also to the tribe of Gad, to the people of
Gad, according to their clans. [25]Their territory was Jazer, and all the cities of
Gilead, and half the land of the Ammonites, to Aroer, which is east of
Rabbah, [26]and from Heshbon to Ramath-mizpeh and Betonim, and from
Mahanaim to the territory of Debir,[1] [27]and in the valley Beth-haram, Beth-
nimrah, Succoth, and Zaphon, the rest of the kingdom of Sihon king of
Heshbon, having the Jordan as a boundary, to the lower end of the Sea of
Chinnereth, eastward beyond the Jordan. [28]This is the inheritance of the
people of Gad according to their clans, with their cities and villages.

[29]† And Moses gave an inheritance to the half-tribe of Manasseh. It was
allotted to the half-tribe of the people of Manasseh according to their clans.
[30]Their region extended from Mahanaim, through all Bashan, the whole
kingdom of Og king of Bashan, and all the towns of Jair, which are in
Bashan, sixty cities, [31]and half Gilead, and Ashtaroth, and Edrei, the cities
of the kingdom of Og in Bashan. These were allotted to the people of
Machir the son of Manasseh for the half of the people of Machir according
to their clans.

[32]These are the inheritances that Moses distributed in the plains of Moab,
beyond the Jordan east of Jericho. [33]† But to the tribe of Levi Moses gave no
inheritance; the Lord God of Israel is their inheritance, just as he said to
them.

The Inheritance West of the Jordan

14 [1]‡†These are the inheritances that the people of Israel received in the land of Canaan, which Eleazar the priest and Joshua the son of Nun and the heads of the fathers' houses of the tribes of the people of Israel gave them to inherit. [2]† Their inheritance was by lot, just as the Lord had commanded by the hand of Moses for the nine and one-half tribes. [3]†For Moses had given an inheritance to the two and one-half tribes beyond the Jordan, but to the Levites he gave no inheritance among them. [4]†For the people of Joseph were two tribes, Manasseh and Ephraim. And no portion was given to the Levites in the land, but only cities to dwell in, with their pasturelands for their livestock and their substance. [5]The people of Israel did as the Lord commanded Moses; they allotted the land.

Caleb’s Request and Inheritance

6 †Then the people of Judah came to Joshua at Gilgal. And Caleb the son
of Jephunneh the Kenizzite said to him, “You know what the Lord said to
Moses the man of God in Kadesh-barnea concerning you and me. 7 †I was
forty years old when Moses the servant of the Lord sent me from Kadesh-
barnea to spy out the land, and I brought him word again as it was in my
heart. 8 †But my brothers who went up with me made the heart of the people
melt; yet I wholly followed the Lord my God. 9 †And Moses swore on that
day, saying, ‘Surely the land on which your foot has trodden shall be an
inheritance for you and your children forever, because you have wholly
followed the Lord my God.’ 10 †And now, behold, the Lord has kept me
alive, just as he said, these forty-five years since the time that the Lord
spoke this word to Moses, while Israel walked in the wilderness. And now,
behold, I am this day eighty-five years old. 11 †I am still as strong today as I
was in the day that Moses sent me; my strength now is as my strength was
then, for war and for going and coming. 12 †So now give me this hill country
of which the Lord spoke on that day, for you heard on that day how the
Anakim were there, with great fortified cities. It may be that the Lord will
be with me, and I shall drive them out just as the Lord said.”

13 †Then Joshua blessed him, and he gave Hebron to Caleb the son of
Jephunneh for an inheritance. 14 Therefore Hebron became the inheritance of
Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite to this day, because he wholly
followed the Lord, the God of Israel. 15 †Now the name of Hebron formerly
was Kiriath-arba.[1] (Arba[2] was the greatest man among the Anakim.) And
the land had rest from war.

The Allotment for Judah

15 [1]†‡The allotment for the tribe of the people of Judah according to
their clans reached southward to the boundary of Edom, to the wilderness of
Zin at the farthest south. [2]And their south boundary ran from the end of the
Salt Sea, from the bay that faces southward. [3]It goes out southward of the
ascent of Akrabbim, passes along to Zin, and goes up south of Kadesh-
barnea, along by Hezron, up to Addar, turns about to Karka, [4]passes along
to Azmon, goes out by the Brook of Egypt, and comes to its end at the sea.
This shall be your south boundary. [5]And the east boundary is the Salt Sea,
to the mouth of the Jordan. And the boundary on the north side runs from
the bay of the sea at the mouth of the Jordan. [6]And the boundary goes up to
Beth-hoglah and passes along north of Beth-arabah. And the boundary goes
up to the stone of Bohan the son of Reuben. [7]And the boundary goes up to
Debir from the Valley of Achor, and so northward, turning toward Gilgal,
which is opposite the ascent of Adummim, which is on the south side of the
valley. And the boundary passes along to the waters of En-shemesh and
ends at En-rogel. [8]†Then the boundary goes up by the Valley of the Son of
Hinnom at the southern shoulder of the Jebusite (that is, Jerusalem). And
the boundary goes up to the top of the mountain that lies over against the
Valley of Hinnom, on the west, at the northern end of the Valley of
Rephaim. [9]Then the boundary extends from the top of the mountain to the
spring of the waters of Nephtoah, and from there to the cities of Mount
Ephron. Then the boundary bends around to Baalah (that is, Kiriath-jearim).
[10]And the boundary circles west of Baalah to Mount Seir, passes along to
the northern shoulder of Mount Jearim (that is, Chesalon), and goes down
to Beth-shemesh and passes along by Timnah. [11]The boundary goes out to
the shoulder of the hill north of Ekron, then the boundary bends around to
Shikkeron and passes along to Mount Baalah and goes out to Jabneel. Then
the boundary comes to an end at the sea. [12]†And the west boundary was the
Great Sea with its coastline. This is the boundary around the people of
Judah according to their clans.

[13]† According to the commandment of the Lord to Joshua, he gave to
Caleb the son of Jephunneh a portion among the people of Judah, Kiriath-

arba, that is, Hebron (Arba was the father of Anak). 14And Caleb drove out
from there the three sons of Anak, Sheshai and Ahiman and Talmai, the
descendants of Anak. 15And he went up from there against the inhabitants of
Debir. Now the name of Debir formerly was Kiriath-sepher. 16†And Caleb
said, “Whoever strikes Kiriath-sepher and captures it, to him will I give
Achsah my daughter as wife.” 17And Othniel the son of Kenaz, the brother
of Caleb, captured it. And he gave him Achsah his daughter as wife. 18When
she came to him, she urged him to ask her father for a field. And she got off
her donkey, and Caleb said to her, “What do you want?” 19†She said to him,
“Give me a blessing. Since you have given me the land of the Negeb, give
me also springs of water.” And he gave her the upper springs and the lower
springs.

20†This is the inheritance of the tribe of the people of Judah according to
their clans. 21The cities belonging to the tribe of the people of Judah in the
extreme south, toward the boundary of Edom, were Kabzeel, Eder, Jagur,
22Kinah, Dimonah, Adadah, 23Kedesh, Hazor, Ithnan, 24Ziph, Telem,
Bealoth, 25Hazor-hadattah, Kerioth-hezron (that is, Hazor), 26Amam, Shema,
Moladah, 27Hazar-gaddah, Heshmon, Beth-pelet, 28Hazar-shual, Beersheba,
Biziothiah, 29Baalah, Iim, Ezem, 30Eltolad, Chesil, Hormah, 31Ziklag,
Madmannah, Sansannah, 32Lebaoth, Shilhim, Ain, and Rimmon: in all,
twenty-nine cities with their villages.

33And in the lowland, Eshtaol, Zorah, Ashnah, 34Zanoah, En-gannim,
Tappuah, Enam, 35Jarmuth, Adullam, Socoh, Azekah, 36Shaaraim, Adithaim,
Gederah, Gederothaim: fourteen cities with their villages.

37Zenan, Hadashah, Migdal-gad, 38Dilean, Mizpeh, Joktheel, 39Lachish,
Bozkath, Eglon, 40Cabbon, Lahmam, Chitlish, 41Gederoth, Beth-dagon,
Naamah, and Makkedah: sixteen cities with their villages.

42Libnah, Ether, Ashan, 43Iphtah, Ashnah, Nezib, 44Keilah, Achzib, and
Mareshah: nine cities with their villages.

45Ekron, with its towns and its villages; 46from Ekron to the sea, all that
were by the side of Ashdod, with their villages.

47Ashdod, its towns and its villages; Gaza, its towns and its villages; to
the Brook of Egypt, and the Great Sea with its coastline.

48And in the hill country, Shamir, Jattir, Socoh, 49Dannah, Kiriath-sannah
(that is, Debir), 50Anab, Eshtemoh, Anim, 51Goshen, Holon, and Giloh:

eleven cities with their villages.

[52]Arab, Dumah, Eshan, [53]Janim, Beth-tappuah, Aphekah, [54]Humtah, Kiriath-arba (that is, Hebron), and Zior: nine cities with their villages.

[55]Maon, Carmel, Ziph, Juttah, [56]Jezreel, Jokdeam, Zanoah, [57]Kain, Gibeah, and Timnah: ten cities with their villages.

[58]Halhul, Beth-zur, Gedor, [59]Maarath, Beth-anoth, and Eltekon: six cities with their villages.

[60]Kiriath-baal (that is, Kiriath-jearim), and Rabbah: two cities with their villages.

[61]†In the wilderness, Beth-arabah, Middin, Secacah, [62]Nibshan, the City of Salt, and Engedi: six cities with their villages.

[63]†But the Jebusites, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the people of Judah could not drive out, so the Jebusites dwell with the people of Judah at Jerusalem to this day.

The Allotment for Ephraim and Manasseh

16 [1]The allotment of the people of Joseph went from the Jordan by
Jericho, east of the waters of Jericho, into the wilderness, going up from
Jericho into the hill country to Bethel. [2]Then going from Bethel to Luz, it
passes along to Ataroth, the territory of the Archites. [3]Then it goes down
westward to the territory of the Japhletites, as far as the territory of Lower
Beth-horon, then to Gezer, and it ends at the sea.

[4]The people of Joseph, Manasseh and Ephraim, received their
inheritance.

[5]The territory of the people of Ephraim by their clans was as follows: the
boundary of their inheritance on the east was Ataroth-addar as far as Upper
Beth-horon, [6]and the boundary goes from there to the sea. On the north is
Michmethath. Then on the east the boundary turns around toward Taanath-
shiloh and passes along beyond it on the east to Janoah, [7]then it goes down
from Janoah to Ataroth and to Naarah, and touches Jericho, ending at the
Jordan. [8]From Tappuah the boundary goes westward to the brook Kanah
and ends at the sea. Such is the inheritance of the tribe of the people of
Ephraim by their clans, [9]together with the towns that were set apart for the
people of Ephraim within the inheritance of the Manassites, all those towns
with their villages. [10]† However, they did not drive out the Canaanites who
lived in Gezer, so the Canaanites have lived in the midst of Ephraim to this
day but have been made to do forced labor.

17 [1]†† Then allotment was made to the people of Manasseh, for he
was the firstborn of Joseph. To Machir the firstborn of Manasseh, the father
of Gilead, were allotted Gilead and Bashan, because he was a man of war.
[2]And allotments were made to the rest of the people of Manasseh by their
clans, Abiezer, Helek, Asriel, Shechem, Hepher, and Shemida. These were
the male descendants of Manasseh the son of Joseph, by their clans.

[3]† Now Zelophehad the son of Hepher, son of Gilead, son of Machir, son
of Manasseh, had no sons, but only daughters, and these are the names of
his daughters: Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. [4]They
approached Eleazar the priest and Joshua the son of Nun and the leaders

and said, “The Lord commanded Moses to give us an inheritance along with our brothers.” So according to the mouth of the Lord he gave them an inheritance among the brothers of their father. 5Thus there fell to Manasseh ten portions, besides the land of Gilead and Bashan, which is on the other side of the Jordan, 6because the daughters of Manasseh received an inheritance along with his sons. The land of Gilead was allotted to the rest of the people of Manasseh.

7The territory of Manasseh reached from Asher to Michmethath, which is east of Shechem. Then the boundary goes along southward to the inhabitants of En-tappuah. 8The land of Tappuah belonged to Manasseh, but the town of Tappuah on the boundary of Manasseh belonged to the people of Ephraim. 9Then the boundary went down to the brook Kanah. These cities, to the south of the brook, among the cities of Manasseh, belong to Ephraim. Then the boundary of Manasseh goes on the north side of the brook and ends at the sea, 10the land to the south being Ephraim’s and that to the north being Manasseh’s, with the sea forming its boundary. On the north Asher is reached, and on the east Issachar. 11Also in Issachar and in Asher Manasseh had Beth-shean and its villages, and Ibleam and its villages, and the inhabitants of Dor and its villages, and the inhabitants of En-dor and its villages, and the inhabitants of Taanach and its villages, and the inhabitants of Megiddo and its villages; the third is Naphath.[1] 12† Yet the people of Manasseh could not take possession of those cities, but the Canaanites persisted in dwelling in that land. 13Now when the people of Israel grew strong, they put the Canaanites to forced labor, but did not utterly drive them out.

14† Then the people of Joseph spoke to Joshua, saying, “Why have you given me but one lot and one portion as an inheritance, although I am a numerous people, since all along the Lord has blessed me?” 15† And Joshua said to them, “If you are a numerous people, go up by yourselves to the forest, and there clear ground for yourselves in the land of the Perizzites and the Rephaim, since the hill country of Ephraim is too narrow for you.” 16† The people of Joseph said, “The hill country is not enough for us. Yet all the Canaanites who dwell in the plain have chariots of iron, both those in Beth-shean and its villages and those in the Valley of Jezreel.” 17† Then Joshua said to the house of Joseph, to Ephraim and Manasseh, “You are a numerous people and have great power. You shall not have one allotment

only, [18]but the hill country shall be yours, for though it is a forest, you shall clear it and possess it to its farthest borders. For you shall drive out the Canaanites, though they have chariots of iron, and though they are strong."

Allotment of the Remaining Land

18 [1]‡‡Then the whole congregation of the people of Israel assembled
at Shiloh and set up the tent of meeting there. The land lay subdued before
them.
[2]There remained among the people of Israel seven tribes whose
inheritance had not yet been apportioned. [3]†So Joshua said to the people of
Israel, “How long will you put off going in to take possession of the land,
which the Lord, the God of your fathers, has given you? [4]† Provide three
men from each tribe, and I will send them out that they may set out and go
up and down the land. They shall write a description of it with a view to
their inheritances, and then come to me. [5]† They shall divide it into seven
portions. Judah shall continue in his territory on the south, and the house of
Joseph shall continue in their territory on the north. [6]† And you shall
describe the land in seven divisions and bring the description here to me.
And I will cast lots for you here before the Lord our God. [7]† The Levites
have no portion among you, for the priesthood of the Lord is their heritage.
And Gad and Reuben and half the tribe of Manasseh have received their
inheritance beyond the Jordan eastward, which Moses the servant of the
Lord gave them.”
[8]† So the men arose and went, and Joshua charged those who went to
write the description of the land, saying, “Go up and down in the land and
write a description and return to me. And I will cast lots for you here before
the Lord in Shiloh.” [9]†So the men went and passed up and down in the land
and wrote in a book a description of it by towns in seven divisions. Then
they came to Joshua to the camp at Shiloh, [10]† and Joshua cast lots for them
in Shiloh before the Lord. And there Joshua apportioned the land to the
people of Israel, to each his portion.

The Inheritance for Benjamin

11 † The lot of the tribe of the people of Benjamin according to its clans
came up, and the territory allotted to it fell between the people of Judah and
the people of Joseph. 12 On the north side their boundary began at the
Jordan. Then the boundary goes up to the shoulder north of Jericho, then up
through the hill country westward, and it ends at the wilderness of Beth-
aven. 13 From there the boundary passes along southward in the direction of
Luz, to the shoulder of Luz (that is, Bethel), then the boundary goes down
to Ataroth-addar, on the mountain that lies south of Lower Beth-horon.
14 Then the boundary goes in another direction, turning on the western side
southward from the mountain that lies to the south, opposite Beth-horon,
and it ends at Kiriath-baal (that is, Kiriath-jearim), a city belonging to the
people of Judah. This forms the western side. 15 And the southern side
begins at the outskirts of Kiriath-jearim. And the boundary goes from there
to Ephron,[1] to the spring of the waters of Nephtoah. 16 † Then the boundary
goes down to the border of the mountain that overlooks the Valley of the
Son of Hinnom, which is at the north end of the Valley of Rephaim. And it
then goes down the Valley of Hinnom, south of the shoulder of the
Jebusites, and downward to En-rogel. 17 Then it bends in a northerly
direction going on to En-shemesh, and from there goes to Geliloth, which is
opposite the ascent of Adummim. Then it goes down to the stone of Bohan
the son of Reuben, 18 and passing on to the north of the shoulder of Beth-
arabah[2] it goes down to the Arabah. 19 Then the boundary passes on to the
north of the shoulder of Beth-hoglah. And the boundary ends at the northern
bay of the Salt Sea, at the south end of the Jordan: this is the southern
border. 20 The Jordan forms its boundary on the eastern side. This is the
inheritance of the people of Benjamin, according to their clans, boundary by
boundary all around.

21 Now the cities of the tribe of the people of Benjamin according to their
clans were Jericho, Beth-hoglah, Emek-keziz, 22 Beth-arabah, Zemaraim,
Bethel, 23 Avvim, Parah, Ophrah, 24 Chephar-ammoni, Ophni, Geba—twelve
cities with their villages: 25 Gibeon, Ramah, Beeroth, 26 Mizpeh, Chephirah,
Mozah, 27 Rekem, Irpeel, Taralah, 28 † Zela, Haeleph, Jebus[3] (that is,

Jerusalem), Gibeah[4] and Kiriath-jearim[5]—fourteen cities with their villages. This is the inheritance of the people of Benjamin according to its clans.

The Inheritance for Simeon

19 [1]‡‡†The second lot came out for Simeon, for the tribe of the
people of Simeon, according to their clans, and their inheritance was in the
midst of the inheritance of the people of Judah. [2]†And they had for their
inheritance Beersheba, Sheba, Moladah, [3]Hazar-shual, Balah, Ezem,
[4]Eltolad, Bethul, Hormah, [5]Ziklag, Beth-marcaboth, Hazar-susah, [6]‡Beth-
lebaoth, and Sharuhen—thirteen cities with their villages; [7]Ain, Rimmon,
Ether, and Ashan—four cities with their villages, [8]together with all the
villages around these cities as far as Baalath-beer, Ramah of the Negeb.
This was the inheritance of the tribe of the people of Simeon according to
their clans. [9]†The inheritance of the people of Simeon formed part of the
territory of the people of Judah. Because the portion of the people of Judah
was too large for them, the people of Simeon obtained an inheritance in the
midst of their inheritance.

The Inheritance for Zebulun

10 ‡ ‡ The third lot came up for the people of Zebulun, according to their
clans. And the territory of their inheritance reached as far as Sarid. 11 Then
their boundary goes up westward and on to Mareal and touches
Dabbesheth, then the brook that is east of Jokneam. 12 From Sarid it goes in
the other direction eastward toward the sunrise to the boundary of Chisloth-
tabor. From there it goes to Daberath, then up to Japhia. 13 From there it
passes along on the east toward the sunrise to Gath-hepher, to Eth-kazin,
and going on to Rimmon it bends toward Neah, 14 then on the north the
boundary turns about to Hannathon, and it ends at the Valley of Iphtahel;
15 † and Kattath, Nahalal, Shimron, Idalah, and Bethlehem—twelve cities
with their villages. 16 This is the inheritance of the people of Zebulun,
according to their clans—these cities with their villages.

The Inheritance for Issachar

17 ‡ ‡ The fourth lot came out for Issachar, for the people of Issachar,
according to their clans. 18 Their territory included Jezreel, Chesulloth,
Shunem, 19 Hapharaim, Shion, Anaharath, 20 Rabbith, Kishion, Ebez,
21 Remeth, En-gannim, En-haddah, Beth-pazzez. 22 The boundary also
touches Tabor, Shahazumah, and Beth-shemesh, and its boundary ends at
the Jordan—sixteen cities with their villages. 23 This is the inheritance of the
tribe of the people of Issachar, according to their clans—the cities with their
villages.

The Inheritance for Asher

[24]‡‡The fifth lot came out for the tribe of the people of Asher according
to their clans. [25]Their territory included Helkath, Hali, Beten, Achshaph,
[26]Allammelech, Amad, and Mishal. On the west it touches Carmel and
Shihor-libnath, [27]then it turns eastward, it goes to Beth-dagon, and touches
Zebulun and the Valley of Iphtahel northward to Beth-emek and Neiel.
Then it continues in the north to Cabul, [28]†Ebron, Rehob, Hammon, Kanah,
as far as Sidon the Great. [29]Then the boundary turns to Ramah, reaching to
the fortified city of Tyre. Then the boundary turns to Hosah, and it ends at
the sea; Mahalab,[1] Achzib, [30]Ummah, Aphek and Rehob—twenty-two
cities with their villages. [31]This is the inheritance of the tribe of the people
of Asher according to their clans—these cities with their villages.

The Inheritance for Naphtali

[32]‡‡The sixth lot came out for the people of Naphtali, for the people of Naphtali, according to their clans. [33]And their boundary ran from Heleph, from the oak in Zaanannim, and Adami-nekeb, and Jabneel, as far as Lakkum, and it ended at the Jordan. [34]Then the boundary turns westward to Aznoth-tabor and goes from there to Hukkok, touching Zebulun at the south and Asher on the west and Judah on the east at the Jordan. [35]The fortified cities are Ziddim, Zer, Hammath, Rakkath, Chinnereth, [36]Adamah, Ramah, Hazor, [37]Kedesh, Edrei, En-hazor, [38]†Yiron, Migdal-el, Horem, Beth-anath, and Beth-shemesh—nineteen cities with their villages. [39]This is the inheritance of the tribe of the people of Naphtali according to their clans—the cities with their villages.

The Inheritance for Dan

40 The seventh lot came out for the tribe of the people of Dan, according
to their clans. 41 And the territory of its inheritance included Zorah, Eshtaol,
Ir-shemesh, 42 Shaalabbin, Aijalon, Ithlah, 43 Elon, Timnah, Ekron, 44 Eltekeh,
Gibbethon, Baalath, 45 Jehud, Bene-berak, Gath-rimmon, 46 and Me-jarkon
and Rakkon with the territory over against Joppa. 47 When the territory of
the people of Dan was lost to them, the people of Dan went up and fought
against Leshem, and after capturing it and striking it with the sword they
took possession of it and settled in it, calling Leshem, Dan, after the name
of Dan their ancestor. 48 This is the inheritance of the tribe of the people of
Dan, according to their clans—these cities with their villages.

The Inheritance for Joshua

49 ‡ ‡ ‡ When they had finished distributing the several territories of the
land as inheritances, the people of Israel gave an inheritance among them to
Joshua the son of Nun. 50 † By command of the Lord they gave him the city
that he asked, Timnath-serah in the hill country of Ephraim. And he rebuilt
the city and settled in it.

51 † These are the inheritances that Eleazar the priest and Joshua the son of
Nun and the heads of the fathers' houses of the tribes of the people of Israel
distributed by lot at Shiloh before the Lord, at the entrance of the tent of
meeting. So they finished dividing the land.

The Cities of Refuge

20 [1]Then the Lord said to Joshua, [2]"Say to the people of Israel, 'Appoint the cities of refuge, of which I spoke to you through Moses, [3]† that the manslayer who strikes any person without intent or unknowingly may flee there. They shall be for you a refuge from the avenger of blood. [4]† He shall flee to one of these cities and shall stand at the entrance of the gate of the city and explain his case to the elders of that city. Then they shall take him into the city and give him a place, and he shall remain with them. [5]† And if the avenger of blood pursues him, they shall not give up the manslayer into his hand, because he struck his neighbor unknowingly, and did not hate him in the past. [6]† And he shall remain in that city until he has stood before the congregation for judgment, until the death of him who is high priest at the time. Then the manslayer may return to his own town and his own home, to the town from which he fled.'"

[7]†† So they set apart Kedesh in Galilee in the hill country of Naphtali, and Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim, and Kiriath-arba (that is, Hebron) in the hill country of Judah. [8]† And beyond the Jordan east of Jericho, they appointed Bezer in the wilderness on the tableland, from the tribe of Reuben, and Ramoth in Gilead, from the tribe of Gad, and Golan in Bashan, from the tribe of Manasseh. [9]† These were the cities designated for all the people of Israel and for the stranger sojourning among them, that anyone who killed a person without intent could flee there, so that he might not die by the hand of the avenger of blood, till he stood before the congregation.

Cities and Pasturelands Allotted to Levi

21 [1]†Then the heads of the fathers' houses of the Levites came to
Eleazar the priest and to Joshua the son of Nun and to the heads of the
fathers' houses of the tribes of the people of Israel. [2]†And they said to them
at Shiloh in the land of Canaan, "The Lord commanded through Moses that
we be given cities to dwell in, along with their pasturelands for our
livestock." [3]†So by command of the Lord the people of Israel gave to the
Levites the following cities and pasturelands out of their inheritance.

[4]†The lot came out for the clans of the Kohathites. So those Levites who
were descendants of Aaron the priest received by lot from the tribes of
Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin, thirteen cities.

[5]And the rest of the Kohathites received by lot from the clans of the tribe
of Ephraim, from the tribe of Dan and the half-tribe of Manasseh, ten cities.

[6]The Gershonites received by lot from the clans of the tribe of Issachar,
from the tribe of Asher, from the tribe of Naphtali, and from the half-tribe
of Manasseh in Bashan, thirteen cities.

[7]The Merarites according to their clans received from the tribe of
Reuben, the tribe of Gad, and the tribe of Zebulun, twelve cities.

[8]These cities and their pasturelands the people of Israel gave by lot to the
Levites, as the Lord had commanded through Moses.

[9]Out of the tribe of the people of Judah and the tribe of the people of
Simeon they gave the following cities mentioned by name, [10]which went to
the descendants of Aaron, one of the clans of the Kohathites who belonged
to the people of Levi; since the lot fell to them first. [11]They gave them
Kiriath-arba (Arba being the father of Anak), that is Hebron, in the hill
country of Judah, along with the pasturelands around it. [12]But the fields of
the city and its villages had been given to Caleb the son of Jephunneh as his
possession.

[13]And to the descendants of Aaron the priest they gave Hebron, the city of
refuge for the manslayer, with its pasturelands, Libnah with its
pasturelands, [14]Jattir with its pasturelands, Eshtemoa with its pasturelands,
[15]Holon with its pasturelands, Debir with its pasturelands, [16]Ain with its

pasturelands, Juttah with its pasturelands, Beth-shemesh with its pasturelands—nine cities out of these two tribes; [17]then out of the tribe of Benjamin, Gibeon with its pasturelands, Geba with its pasturelands, [18]Anathoth with its pasturelands, and Almon with its pasturelands—four cities. [19]The cities of the descendants of Aaron, the priests, were in all thirteen cities with their pasturelands.

[20]As to the rest of the Kohathites belonging to the Kohathite clans of the Levites, the cities allotted to them were out of the tribe of Ephraim. [21]To them were given Shechem, the city of refuge for the manslayer, with its pasturelands in the hill country of Ephraim, Gezer with its pasturelands, [22]Kibzaim with its pasturelands, Beth-horon with its pasturelands—four cities; [23]and out of the tribe of Dan, Elteke with its pasturelands, Gibbethon with its pasturelands, [24]Aijalon with its pasturelands, Gath-rimmon with its pasturelands—four cities; [25]and out of the half-tribe of Manasseh, Taanach with its pasturelands, and Gath-rimmon with its pasturelands—two cities. [26]The cities of the clans of the rest of the Kohathites were ten in all with their pasturelands.

[27]And to the Gershonites, one of the clans of the Levites, were given out of the half-tribe of Manasseh, Golan in Bashan with its pasturelands, the city of refuge for the manslayer, and Beeshterah with its pasturelands—two cities; [28]and out of the tribe of Issachar, Kishion with its pasturelands, Daberath with its pasturelands, [29]Jarmuth with its pasturelands, En-gannim with its pasturelands—four cities; [30]and out of the tribe of Asher, Mishal with its pasturelands, Abdon with its pasturelands, [31]Helkath with its pasturelands, and Rehob with its pasturelands—four cities; [32]and out of the tribe of Naphtali, Kedesh in Galilee with its pasturelands, the city of refuge for the manslayer, Hammoth-dor with its pasturelands, and Kartan with its pasturelands—three cities. [33]The cities of the several clans of the Gershonites were in all thirteen cities with their pasturelands.

[34]And to the rest of the Levites, the Merarite clans, were given out of the tribe of Zebulun, Jokneam with its pasturelands, Kartah with its pasturelands, [35]Dimnah with its pasturelands, Nahalal with its pasturelands —four cities; [36]and out of the tribe of Reuben, Bezer with its pasturelands, Jahaz with its pasturelands, [37]Kedemoth with its pasturelands, and Mephaath with its pasturelands—four cities; [38]and out of the tribe of Gad,

Ramoth in Gilead with its pasturelands, the city of refuge for the manslayer, Mahanaim with its pasturelands, [39]Heshbon with its pasturelands, Jazer with its pasturelands—four cities in all. [40]As for the cities of the several Merarite clans, that is, the remainder of the clans of the Levites, those allotted to them were in all twelve cities.

[41]The cities of the Levites in the midst of the possession of the people of Israel were in all forty-eight cities with their pasturelands. [42]These cities each had its pasturelands around it. So it was with all these cities.

[43]†† Thus the Lord gave to Israel all the land that he swore to give to their fathers. And they took possession of it, and they settled there. [44]† And the Lord gave them rest on every side just as he had sworn to their fathers. Not one of all their enemies had withstood them, for the Lord had given all their enemies into their hands. [45]† Not one word of all the good promises that the Lord had made to the house of Israel had failed; all came to pass.

The Eastern Tribes Return Home

22 [1]At that time Joshua summoned the Reubenites and the Gadites and the half-tribe of Manasseh, [2]and said to them, “You have kept all that Moses the servant of the Lord commanded you and have obeyed my voice in all that I have commanded you. [3]You have not forsaken your brothers these many days, down to this day, but have been careful to keep the charge of the Lord your God. [4]And now the Lord your God has given rest to your brothers, as he promised them. Therefore turn and go to your tents in the land where your possession lies, which Moses the servant of the Lord gave you on the other side of the Jordan. [5]Only be very careful to observe the commandment and the law that Moses the servant of the Lord commanded you, to love the Lord your God, and to walk in all his ways and to keep his commandments and to cling to him and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul.” [6]So Joshua blessed them and sent them away, and they went to their tents.

[7]Now to the one half of the tribe of Manasseh Moses had given a possession in Bashan, but to the other half Joshua had given a possession beside their brothers in the land west of the Jordan. And when Joshua sent them away to their homes and blessed them, [8]he said to them, “Go back to your tents with much wealth and with very much livestock, with silver, gold, bronze, and iron, and with much clothing. Divide the spoil of your enemies with your brothers.” [9]So the people of Reuben and the people of Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh returned home, parting from the people of Israel at Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan, to go to the land of Gilead, their own land of which they had possessed themselves by command of the Lord through Moses.

The Eastern Tribes' Altar of Witness

10 ‡† And when they came to the region of the Jordan that is in the land of
Canaan, the people of Reuben and the people of Gad and the half-tribe of
Manasseh built there an altar by the Jordan, an altar of imposing size. 11 And
the people of Israel heard it said, "Behold, the people of Reuben and the
people of Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh have built the altar at the
frontier of the land of Canaan, in the region about the Jordan, on the side
that belongs to the people of Israel." 12 † And when the people of Israel heard
of it, the whole assembly of the people of Israel gathered at Shiloh to make
war against them.

13 † Then the people of Israel sent to the people of Reuben and the people
of Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh, in the land of Gilead, Phinehas the
son of Eleazar the priest, 14 † and with him ten chiefs, one from each of the
tribal families of Israel, every one of them the head of a family among the
clans of Israel. 15 † And they came to the people of Reuben, the people of
Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, in the land of Gilead, and they said to
them, 16 † "Thus says the whole congregation of the Lord, 'What is this
breach of faith that you have committed against the God of Israel in turning
away this day from following the Lord by building yourselves an altar this
day in rebellion against the Lord? 17 † Have we not had enough of the sin at
Peor from which even yet we have not cleansed ourselves, and for which
there came a plague upon the congregation of the Lord, 18 † that you too must
turn away this day from following the Lord? And if you too rebel against
the Lord today then tomorrow he will be angry with the whole congregation
of Israel. 19 ‡† But now, if the land of your possession is unclean, pass over
into the Lord's land where the Lord's tabernacle stands, and take for
yourselves a possession among us. Only do not rebel against the Lord or
make us as rebels by building for yourselves an altar other than the altar of
the Lord our God. 20 † Did not Achan the son of Zerah break faith in the
matter of the devoted things, and wrath fell upon all the congregation of
Israel? And he did not perish alone for his iniquity.'"

21 Then the people of Reuben, the people of Gad, and the half-tribe of
Manasseh said in answer to the heads of the families of Israel, 22 † "The

Mighty One, God, the Lord! The Mighty One, God, the Lord! He knows;
and let Israel itself know! If it was in rebellion or in breach of faith against
the Lord, do not spare us today [23]† for building an altar to turn away from
following the Lord. Or if we did so to offer burnt offerings or grain
offerings or peace offerings on it, may the Lord himself take vengeance.
[24]No, but we did it from fear that in time to come your children might say to
our children, 'What have you to do with the Lord, the God of Israel? [25]For
the Lord has made the Jordan a boundary between us and you, you people
of Reuben and people of Gad. You have no portion in the Lord.' So your
children might make our children cease to worship the Lord. [26]† Therefore
we said, 'Let us now build an altar, not for burnt offering, nor for sacrifice,
[27]† but to be a witness between us and you, and between our generations
after us, that we do perform the service of the Lord in his presence with our
burnt offerings and sacrifices and peace offerings, so your children will not
say to our children in time to come, "You have no portion in the Lord."'
[28]† And we thought, If this should be said to us or to our descendants in time
to come, we should say, 'Behold, the copy of the altar of the Lord, which
our fathers made, not for burnt offerings, nor for sacrifice, but to be a
witness between us and you.' [29]Far be it from us that we should rebel
against the Lord and turn away this day from following the Lord by building
an altar for burnt offering, grain offering, or sacrifice, other than the altar of
the Lord our God that stands before his tabernacle!"

[30]† When Phinehas the priest and the chiefs of the congregation, the heads
of the families of Israel who were with him, heard the words that the people
of Reuben and the people of Gad and the people of Manasseh spoke, it was
good in their eyes. [31]† And Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest said to the
people of Reuben and the people of Gad and the people of Manasseh,
"Today we know that the Lord is in our midst, because you have not
committed this breach of faith against the Lord. Now you have delivered the
people of Israel from the hand of the Lord."

[32]Then Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, and the chiefs, returned
from the people of Reuben and the people of Gad in the land of Gilead to
the land of Canaan, to the people of Israel, and brought back word to them.
[33]† And the report was good in the eyes of the people of Israel. And the
people of Israel blessed God and spoke no more of making war against
them to destroy the land where the people of Reuben and the people of Gad

were settled. [34]†The people of Reuben and the people of Gad called the altar
Witness, “For,” they said, “it is a witness between us that the Lord is God.”

Joshua's Charge to Israel's Leaders

23 [1]†A long time afterward, when the Lord had given rest to Israel
from all their surrounding enemies, and Joshua was old and well advanced
in years, [2]†Joshua summoned all Israel, its elders and heads, its judges and
officers, and said to them, "I am now old and well advanced in years. [3]†And
you have seen all that the Lord your God has done to all these nations for
your sake, for it is the Lord your God who has fought for you. [4]†Behold, I
have allotted to you as an inheritance for your tribes those nations that
remain, along with all the nations that I have already cut off, from the
Jordan to the Great Sea in the west. [5]The Lord your God will push them
back before you and drive them out of your sight. And you shall possess
their land, just as the Lord your God promised you. [6]†Therefore, be very
strong to keep and to do all that is written in the Book of the Law of Moses,
turning aside from it neither to the right hand nor to the left, [7]†that you may
not mix with these nations remaining among you or make mention of the
names of their gods or swear by them or serve them or bow down to them,
[8]but you shall cling to the Lord your God just as you have done to this day.
[9]†For the Lord has driven out before you great and strong nations. And as
for you, no man has been able to stand before you to this day. [10]‡†One man
of you puts to flight a thousand, since it is the Lord your God who fights for
you, just as he promised you. [11]Be very careful, therefore, to love the Lord
your God. [12]†For if you turn back and cling to the remnant of these nations
remaining among you and make marriages with them, so that you associate
with them and they with you, [13]†know for certain that the Lord your God
will no longer drive out these nations before you, but they shall be a snare
and a trap for you, a whip on your sides and thorns in your eyes, until you
perish from off this good ground that the Lord your God has given you.

[14]†"And now I am about to go the way of all the earth, and you know in
your hearts and souls, all of you, that not one word has failed of all the good
things[1] that the Lord your God promised concerning you. All have come to
pass for you; not one of them has failed. [15]‡But just as all the good things
that the Lord your God promised concerning you have been fulfilled for

you, so the LORD will bring upon you all the evil things, until he has destroyed you from off this good land that the LORD your God has given you, [16]if you transgress the covenant of the LORD your God, which he commanded you, and go and serve other gods and bow down to them. Then the anger of the LORD will be kindled against you, and you shall perish quickly from off the good land that he has given to you."

The Covenant Renewal at Shechem

24 [1]‡ †Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem and summoned the elders, the heads, the judges, and the officers of Israel. And they presented themselves before God. [2]‡ ‡ †And Joshua said to all the people, “Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, ‘Long ago, your fathers lived beyond the Euphrates, Terah, the father of Abraham and of Nahor; and they served other gods. [3]†Then I took your father Abraham from beyond the River and led him through all the land of Canaan, and made his offspring many. I gave him Isaac. [4]†And to Isaac I gave Jacob and Esau. And I gave Esau the hill country of Seir to possess, but Jacob and his children went down to Egypt. [5]And I sent Moses and Aaron, and I plagued Egypt with what I did in the midst of it, and afterward I brought you out.

[6]“‘Then I brought your fathers out of Egypt, and you came to the sea. And the Egyptians pursued your fathers with chariots and horsemen to the Red Sea. [7]†And when they cried to the Lord, he put darkness between you and the Egyptians and made the sea come upon them and cover them; and your eyes saw what I did in Egypt. And you lived in the wilderness a long time. [8]†Then I brought you to the land of the Amorites, who lived on the other side of the Jordan. They fought with you, and I gave them into your hand, and you took possession of their land, and I destroyed them before you. [9]† Then Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, arose and fought against Israel. And he sent and invited Balaam the son of Beor to curse you, [10]†but I would not listen to Balaam. Indeed, he blessed you. So I delivered you out of his hand. [11]And you went over the Jordan and came to Jericho, and the leaders of Jericho fought against you, and also the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Girgashites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. And I gave them into your hand. [12]†And I sent the hornet before you, which drove them out before you, the two kings of the Amorites; it was not by your sword or by your bow. [13]†I gave you a land on which you had not labored and cities that you had not built, and you dwell in them. You eat the fruit of vineyards and olive orchards that you did not plant.’

Choose Whom You Will Serve

14 ‡ ‡ † “Now therefore fear the Lord and serve him in sincerity and in
faithfulness. Put away the gods that your fathers served beyond the River
and in Egypt, and serve the Lord. 15 ‡ And if it is evil in your eyes to serve
the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your
fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in
whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the
Lord.”
16 Then the people answered, “Far be it from us that we should forsake the
Lord to serve other gods, 17 for it is the Lord our God who brought us and our
fathers up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and who did
those great signs in our sight and preserved us in all the way that we went,
and among all the peoples through whom we passed. 18 † And the Lord drove
out before us all the peoples, the Amorites who lived in the land. Therefore
we also will serve the Lord, for he is our God.”
19 † But Joshua said to the people, “You are not able to serve the Lord, for
he is a holy God. He is a jealous God; he will not forgive your
transgressions or your sins. 20 † If you forsake the Lord and serve foreign
gods, then he will turn and do you harm and consume you, after having
done you good.” 21 † And the people said to Joshua, “No, but we will serve
the Lord.” 22 † Then Joshua said to the people, “You are witnesses against
yourselves that you have chosen the Lord, to serve him.” And they said,
“We are witnesses.” 23 † He said, “Then put away the foreign gods that are
among you, and incline your heart to the Lord, the God of Israel.” 24 And the
people said to Joshua, “The Lord our God we will serve, and his voice we
will obey.” 25 † So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and put
in place statutes and rules for them at Shechem. 26 † And Joshua wrote these
words in the Book of the Law of God. And he took a large stone and set it
up there under the terebinth that was by the sanctuary of the Lord. 27 † And
Joshua said to all the people, “Behold, this stone shall be a witness against
us, for it has heard all the words of the Lord that he spoke to us. Therefore it
shall be a witness against you, lest you deal falsely with your God.” 28 † So
Joshua sent the people away, every man to his inheritance.

Joshua's Death and Burial

29 ‡ † After these things Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died, being 110 years old. 30 † And they buried him in his own inheritance at Timnath-serah, which is in the hill country of Ephraim, north of the mountain of Gaash.

31 † Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua and had known all the work that the Lord did for Israel.

32 † As for the bones of Joseph, which the people of Israel brought up from Egypt, they buried them at Shechem, in the piece of land that Jacob bought from the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem for a hundred pieces of money.[1] It became an inheritance of the descendants of Joseph.

33 † And Eleazar the son of Aaron died, and they buried him at Gibeah, the town of Phinehas his son, which had been given him in the hill country of Ephraim.

Joshua

OVERVIEW

Author(s)
Joshua; an unknown writer

Date
c 1406–1375 BC

Places
Transjordan; Jericho; Gilgal; Ai; Gibeon; central highlands of Canaan; Shiloh; Shechem; see maps, pp 357, 365

People
Joshua; Caleb; Rahab; Achan; Adoni-zedek; Eleazar; Phinehas

Purpose
To record how the Lord fulfilled His promise to give Canaan as an inheritance to Israel

Law Themes
Devotion to destruction; Achan's greed; inheritance; cities of refuge; the Law of Moses; memorials

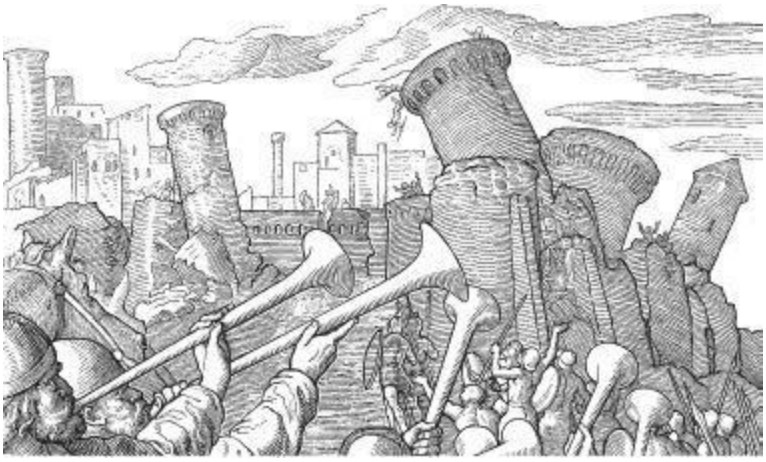
Gospel Themes
Joshua's name; covenant renewal; the Lord's promises fulfilled; cities of refuge; memorials

Memory Verses
Meditate on the Word (1:7–8); my house will serve the Lord (24:14–15)

Introduction to Joshua

Reading Joshua

A bronze blade growls and yawns as a young man draws it across the whetstone. Its edges glimmer copper-bright, like ripples on the Jordan at dawn. He turns over the broad blade, nearly as long as his forearm, and eyes it carefully. The grinding has smoothed out the dents caused by helmets and shields. The blade whistles as he wields it in mock combat. His thumb feels the letters of his father's name and his grandfather's name, etched along the blade's spine. Another year, and the young man will leave the sharpening to his younger brother. Another year, at age 20, he will join the men in battle.



The conquest of Canaan did not happen overnight, nor was it completed during Joshua's lifetime. The Book of Joshua covers only seven years and three campaigns against the people of Canaan, a struggle that would last until David's reign c 400 years later. Yet, Joshua's account anticipates full success and shows the people the way to ultimate victory: trust in the Lord, for He always fulfills His promises.

Luther on Joshua

Joshua, however, denotes Christ, because of his name and because of what he does. Although he was a servant of Moses, yet after his master's death he leads the people in and parcels out the inheritance of the Lord. Thus Christ, who was first made under the Law (Gal. 4:4), served it for us; then, when it was ended, He established another ministry, that of the Gospel, by which we are led through Him into the spiritual kingdom of a conscience joyful and serene in God, where we reign forever. (AE 9:43)

Joshua also fulfilled it [Dt 27–28] after the city of Ai was taken (Josh. 8:30 ff.); there both the blessings and the curses were read before the whole people, and burnt offerings and thankofferings were made, as Moses says here. Of course, this was done that through the external show the crude people (as I have said) might be stirred to remember the Law, for people are moved by outward ceremonies more than by bare words alone….

[Moses] recounts no blessings here, but only cursings, although he assigns seven tribes to blessings and it is written in Joshua that blessings were also recounted (Joshua 8:33 ff.). I think that the reason for this was that Moses shows himself to be the minister of sin and death through the Law, which holds all under a curse (Gal. 3:10). Finally this people of the Law perished through the curse. But Joshua adds blessings, that he might point to Christ, who blesses all who are under the curse of the Law and yearn for Him. On account of Christ, Judah is classified among those who ought to stand forth to receive a blessing, because He [Christ] was to come from Judah. (AE 9:258–59)

This [Jsh 24:19–20] was the farewell speech of Joshua. He admonishes the people with extraordinary feeling, as if he would say, "I fear that you will provoke God's wrath again. If so, God will punish you, for he can't tolerate this. If you provoke him and fall away from him, God will be angry," etc. Another solution is that the earlier words [24:14–15] were said of the ungodly and the later words [vv 19–20] of the godly, just as we have many psalms in which, here and there, people are praised and are lifted up to heaven and immediately after are put down into hell; by synecdoche, in the former case the godly in

the whole people are spoken of, and in the latter case the ungodly. We do the same thing in our churches when we preach; we praise those among the people who are good and then, on the other hand, we reprove the bad and the ungodly. So the church is called holy, although only the smallest part of it is actually holy. (AE 54:301)

Challenges for Readers

Joshua versus Judges. Critics have questioned the historical reliability of Joshua and Judges. In fact, they have read these biblical books in opposition to each other and incorporated archaeological findings in attempts to reach what they regard as a more faithful reconstruction of Israel's conquests. They have derived at least three theories: (1) Israel conquered the Canaanites much later than biblical accounts suggest; (2) Israel peacefully infiltrated Canaan; and (3) Israel emerged from an existing population of Canaanites and never came out of Egypt. Responding to these theories, interpreters carefully studied the Scriptures and the archaeological data to arrive at another explanation: Joshua led three successful campaigns of conquest in Canaan, but these campaigns did not permanently defeat or remove the Canaanites. Over time, Israel's population spread from the central highlands to occupy more and more of Canaan. Judges describes the struggles the Israelites faced because they settled among the Canaanites, contrary to God's command (see pp 380–81).

Sequence and Length of Events. Based on 1Ki 6:1, the exodus took place in 1446 BC, 480 years before Solomon built the temple. Subtracting the reigns of Solomon, David, and Saul, as well as the time for the conquest and the wilderness wanderings, one ends up with a figure of c 300 years for the time of the judges. However, the total time for leaders, oppressions, and periods of rest in Judges is 407 years. Some of the time periods in Judges are likely rounded off (40 and multiples of 40 appear numerous times). Other time periods may overlap because some accounts could describe local rather than national events. (See chronology, pp xcii–cix.) See notes, Jgs 11:26; 20:28.

Ethics of Conquest. Various features of Joshua cause ethical concerns for modern readers. For example, the practice of devoting the Canaanites to destruction (cf 2:10; see p 6) appears throughout Joshua. (Also, Rahab lies to protect the Israelite spies [see note, 2:5]). Readers should recognize that the specific practices God commanded for the conquest are not commanded for armies of all times. See p 376. The intensive conquest of the land seems to have lasted seven years, 1406–1399 BC. We arrive at that figure of seven years partly from chronological information concerning the life of Caleb.

He was 78 when the conquest began and 85 when it was finished. (Some explicit chronological information appears in 14:10.)

Blessings for Readers

As you study the Book of Joshua, consider how the Lord prepared Joshua to lead Israel. He succeeded, not because he was a brilliant strategist or charismatic genius, but because he believed "this Book of the Law" (1:8), that is, God's Holy Word. Joshua continually emphasizes that the Lord gave them the land according to His promise, that the Lord fulfills His Word and so grants success. Even the name Joshua is a word of promise, anticipating the appearance of a later and greater leader for God's people who would give them decisive victory (see note, 1:1).

Just as the Lord called Israel to remain steadfast in the physical and spiritual struggle they faced among the Canaanites, He calls us today to be spiritually steadfast. Christ won salvation for us on the cross, and through His Word, He continues to equip us and rally us for challenges today.

OUTLINE

I. The Lord Prepares Israel to Inherit the Land (1:1–5:12)
- A. Transition and Setting (1:1)
- B. The Lord Encourages Joshua to Take Possession of the Land (1:2–9)
- C. Joshua Commands the Officers to Muster the People (1:10–11)
- D. Joshua Reminds the Transjordan Tribes of Duty toward All Israel (1:12–15)
- E. The Transjordan Tribes Respond (1:16–18)
- F. The Spies and Rahab (ch 2)
- G. Crossing before Conquest (chs 3–4)
- H. Interlude between Crossing and Conquering (5:1–12)

II. The Lord Causes Israel to Capture the Land Inheritance (5:13–12:24)
- A. Encounter with the Divine Commander (5:13–15)
- B. Central Campaign (chs 6–8)
- C. Southern Campaign (chs 9–10)
- D. Northern Campaign: Defeat of Jabin and the Kings of the North (11:1–15)
- E. Review of Israel's Victories (11:16–12:24)

III. The Lord Allots the Land Inheritance to Israel (chs 13–21)
- A. The Lord Commands Joshua to Allot the Land (13:1–7)

B. The Allotment Carried Out (13:8–21:42)
C. Summary Statements: God Has Now Given the Land Promised Long Ago (21:43–45)

IV. The Lord's War Victory Enables Israel to Live in the Land Inheritance as Heirs of All His Covenant Promises (chs 22–24)
A. Joshua Blesses and Dismisses the Transjordan Tribes from Shiloh (22:1–9)
B. Israel Remains One Covenant Nation (22:10–34)
C. Joshua's First Farewell Sermon (ch 23)
D. Covenant Renewal at Shechem (24:1–28)
E. Three Saints Await Resurrection in the Promised Land: Memorials to the Lord's Fulfilled Promises (24:29–33)

Articles and Resources Related to Joshua

- The Peoples of Canaan
- Divine Warfare

The Peoples of Canaan

The Seven Nations. Jsh 3:10 names seven nations that the Lord will drive out. These seven nations are representative and stand for the complete number of Israel's enemies that are ripe for judgment. Similar lists are found in Gn 10:15–18; 13:7; 15:19–21; Ex 3:8; Nu 13:29; Dt 7:1; cf Ac 13:19.

Scripture offers the background needed to uncover the identities of the seven nations and the reason God desires their expulsion from Canaan. One commonality shared by these nations is their relationship to Noah (Gn 10:15–19). (Only the Perizzites fail to receive mention in Gn 10. Every other nation finds its origin in Canaan, the son of Ham and the grandson of Noah.) As a result of Ham dishonoring his father, Noah, Ham's son Canaan was cursed (Gn 9:24–25). Thus, Gn 9:25 portends that the Canaanites would be "a servant of servants," for the Semitic root of his name means "to sink, be low."

The peoples occupying the land of Canaan likewise share a common rejection of God's grace and subsequent decadence. Dt 18:9–13 lists the detestable practices of the nations already in the land. Among these are child sacrifices, the practice of divination or sorcery, and occult activity. In addition, Lv 18 and 20 detail the rampant sexual depravity among the Canaanites.

Canaanites: Not only do the Canaanites derive their name from the son of Ham, but they also lend that name to the land in which they settled, as well as to the peoples who settled along the Great Sea and along the Jordan River (Nu 13:29; Jsh 5:1; 11:3). Interestingly, some scholars attribute the creation of the Semitic alphabet, which developed into the Hebrew and Northwest Semitic languages, to the Canaanites. The Phoenicians carried this Semitic alphabet to Greece, where it was adapted and then carried by Etruscans to Italy. "God thus used the heathen Canaanites, by way of their alphabet, to help disseminate His word" (CC Jsh, p 177). What a wonderful example of how God uses all things for His benefit.

Amorites: Like the Canaanites, the Amorites were descendants of Canaan, the son of Ham. The Amorites settled the southern slopes of the Judean mountains (Dt 1:7, 19, 20) and were principally a farming culture. Sihon and Og were both Amorite kings defeated before the Israelites crossed the

Jordan (Nu 21:21–35; Dt 1:4–7). Five Amorite kings found God's wrath through Joshua (Jsh 10:10) and suffered additional defeats (Jsh 11:8). The Amorites spoke a Semitic language and, like the Canaanites, often lent their name in a broad sense to all the area of Canaan (Gn 15:16; Jsh 24:15).

Jebusites: The Jebusites lived in the Canaanite hill country (Nu 13:29; Jsh 11:3). Their capital city was known as Jebus (Jerusalem) at the time of Joshua (Jsh 10; 15:63; 2Sm 5:5–9). Jebus was captured and burned by the men of Judah (cf Jgs 1:8), but the Jebusites regained possession and held it until the time of David, Israel's greatest king (2Sm 5:6–9; 1Ch 11:4–9). Not all of the Jebusites were destroyed, however, because David later purchased Araunah the Jebusite's threshing floor (2Sm 24:18–24), which later became the foundation for the Jerusalem temple. Under Solomon, the pre-Israelite peoples like the Jebusites were made slaves (1Ki 9:20–21).

Hittites: Gn 15 ties the Hittites to Canaan. They were of Indo-European origin. Some scholars speculate that the Hittites had physical features similar to the Mongols, while others believe the Hittites may have emigrated from Russia. In any case, the cave Abraham bought as a tomb for his beloved wife, Sarah, was purchased from Ephron the Hittite (Gn 23:3–20). Esau took a wife from among the Hittites (Gn 26:34). The Hittites are closely aligned with the Amorites and mentioned as living among the mountains of Canaan. They were found among the Amorites in the mountain region of Judah when Joshua and the spies entered the Promised Land (Nu 13:29). In addition, they took part with other Canaanites in campaigns against Israel (Jsh 9:1).

Hivites: Listed among the lineage of Canaan (Gn 10:15–19), scholars believe that the Hivites inhabited Gibeon (Jsh 9:7, 17), the area below Mount Hermon (Jsh 11:3), and the Lebanon mountains (Jgs 3:3). The Hivites remained in Canaan until the time of King David (2Sm 24:7). The Hivites were not a warlike people; they made a treaty with Joshua in Jsh 9. The Bible indicates that one reason why God allowed a few of these Canaanite peoples like the Hivites to remain was so that the Israelites might be trained in warfare and to test Israel to see if they would obey God's commands to remove them (cf Jgs 3:3–4).

Girgashites: The Girgashites comprised a nation west of the Jordan (Jsh 24:11). Like many other peoples in Canaan, the Girgashites were descendants of Ham through Canaan. Outside of Scripture, the words *grgs* and *bn grgs* ("son of Grgs") have been found in Ugaritic literature,

suggesting that the name was familiar in Canaan. Along with the lands of other Canaanite nations, God promised the land of the Girgashites to Abraham and his descendants (cf Gn 15:17–21).

Perizzites: Very little is known about the Perizzites. Along with other pre-Israelite nations, the Perizzites are mentioned in several places outside of Joshua (Gn 15:20; 34:30; 1Ki 9:20). Some scholars believe the name Perizzite links them to occupants of rural areas or unwalled towns. However, the Bible places the Perizzites in the hill country of Canaan (Jsh 11:3), perhaps in the forest country between Judah and Ephraim (cf Gn 15:18–21; Jsh 17:15). In spite of their victory over this nation (Jsh 12:7–8), the Israelites intermarried with the Perizzites (Jgs 3:5–6) and never fully removed them from the land (Ezr 9:1).

The Philistines. The Philistines were not descendants of Canaanite tribes but were non-Semites who came from Caphtor (Crete; Am 9:7; Jer 47:4). They may be the "Sea Peoples" mentioned in Egyptian texts (see note, Gn 21:22); it is not clear when they settled in Canaan. Their country ultimately stretched from Joppa to south of Gaza. They formed a league of five cities: Gaza, Ekron, Ashdod, Ashkelon, and Gath. Philistines later dominated Israel (Jgs 3:31; 13–16; 1Sm 7:3–14) and held a monopoly on iron (1Sm 13:19–22). They were defeated by Jonathan (1Sm 13–14) and subjugated by David and made a tributary of Israel (1Sm 17–18). During the divided monarchy, the Philistines regained power (1Ki 15:27; 2Ch 21:16; 28:18). See note, 2Sm 15:18.

Divine Warfare

Satan and Man's Sin Started Warfare

Before the rebellion of Satan, war did not exist…. Humanity's conflict is first vertical, because reprobate man naturally hates the just and holy God, and then horizontal, between people, even between husband and wife (Gn 3:16), who are united as one flesh.

The first point that must be made, then, is that wars will continue to flare up between sinful human beings as long as they live in this fallen world, in which Satan is at work. The devil is the original murderer, and he continues to foster hatred and killing. Christ himself declared that there would continue to be wars and rumors of war, and that "it is necessary for this to happen" (Mt 24:6; similar are Mk 13:7; Lk 21:9). Only when he returns in glory to bring this world to its end and fully subjugate Satan will war cease.

Therefore every utopian religion or philosophy that has the goal of eliminating all earthly warfare is doomed to fail because it fails to reckon with the total depravity of human nature and the ongoing activity of Satan in this world.

Christ's Divine Warfare Achieves Victory and Salvation

The second and crucial point is that divine warfare is God's means for saving his chosen people. For the sake of OT Israel, God engaged in temporal and national warfare, while for the salvation of all believers of both Testaments, God won the spiritual war through the physical death of Jesus on the cross and his bodily resurrection. Without this divine warfare, mankind would have been doomed to eternity in hell, but God's warfare enabled Israel to inherit the promised land, and his victory on the cross has made all believers heirs of eternal life in the new heavens and new earth….

The book of Joshua has striking historical records of the personal involvement of the LORD in the battles of Israel for the promised land. God told Israel that it was "not by [their] sword and not by [their] bow" that they were victorious over the Canaanites (Josh 24:12). The LORD himself must fight and achieve the victory for the benefit of his people, in keeping with the biblical doctrine of divine monergism (versus synergism) in salvation….

Divine Warfare as God's Just Punishment on Human Sin

A third point is that justified warfare is God's means to punish evildoers and that such punishment is necessary to curb sin and maintain temporal order. God carries out such punishment not only for the good and stability of societies, but also so that his church can do its proper work of proclaiming the Gospel. A pacifist religion or philosophy actually contributes to violence and iniquity by failing to curtail evildoers—by death if necessary. God may be patient for long periods of time, justice may be delayed, and evildoers may evade their temporal due, but the final day of reckoning will come.

To comprehend the twofold meaning of the military conquest of Canaan by Israel in the book of Joshua, we need to bear in mind that the LORD is a God of Law and Gospel, judgment and salvation. He damns the impenitent to eternity in hell and justifies penitent believers, making them heirs of eternal life in the new heavens and new earth. Both of these actions are expressions of his character as the one holy and righteous God….

The Church's Warfare Is Spiritual

We see the long history of divine warfare culminate at the cross in the suffering and death of Jesus Christ, who atoned vicariously for the sin and rebellion of the whole world. As he lay dead in the tomb, he appeared vanquished by the devil, who had entered his betrayer, Judas. But on earth's gladdest day, he rose as the victor, having conquered sin, Satan, and death. Paradoxically, the instrument of his death was his instrument of conquest: "Having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross" (Col 2:15). He is the stronger man who has disarmed the strong man—the devil—and plundered the devil's palace (Lk 11:22) by freeing those the devil had kept in bondage….

Through the preaching of the Gospel and administration of the Sacraments, lost sinners are transferred from the kingdom of Satan into the kingdom of God. This transfer took place through OT Israel too, as in the cases of the former prostitute Rahab and her family (Josh 6:22–25) and the Gibeonites (Joshua 9), who were spared, incorporated into God's Israel, and justified before God (Heb 11:31 and James 2:25 affirm this about Rahab). The Gibeonites even became sanctuary servants, cutting wood and drawing water for "the house of my [Joshua's] God" and "for the altar of the LORD" (Josh 9:23, 27).

The Christian Gospel in Word and Sacrament rescues the perishing from eternal destruction and fortifies them to do battle against the forces of evil within (the sinful flesh) and without (the devil and the world) that assail them. It is necessary for Christians to oppose detestable practices such as idolatry, sexual immorality, homosexuality, abortion, euthanasia, and occult practices, which correspond to the ancient abominations of the Canaanites. The church rightly prohibits God's people from engaging in such practices. The church also rightly endeavors to persuade society at large to prohibit such evils, and to do so Christians work peacefully through lawful means, not by violence….

A Christian View of Warfare Must Distinguish Law from Gospel

The church and individual Christians must carefully distinguish Law and Gospel in order to follow and implement what God's Word says about warfare. Physical warfare may be a justified use of force according to God's Law, since God uses nations, armies, and society's laws to punish evil and protect the common welfare. However, earthly warfare cannot bring about God's kingdom of grace, which comes only through the Gospel in Word and Sacrament. In the OT too, it was not Israel's warfare, but faith in God's acts of salvation in fulfillment of his Word that caused Rahab and the Gibeonites to be saved.

Adolph L. Harstad, *Joshua*, CC (St. Louis: Concordia, 2004), 256–66. See also, "devote to destruction," p 6.

Footnotes

Footnotes for Joshua, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:7 Or *may act wisely*

Footnotes for Joshua, Chapter 2

- [1] 2:1 Or *had sent*
- [2] 2:8 Hebrew *they*
- [1] 2:10 That is, set apart (devoted) as an offering to the Lord (for destruction)
- [2] 2:16 Or *had said*

Footnotes for Joshua, Chapter 3

- [1] 3:4 A *cubit* was about 18 inches or 45 centimeters
- [2] 3:11 Hebrew *the ark of the covenant, the Lord of all the earth*

Footnotes for Joshua, Chapter 4

- [1] 4:8 Or *to rest*
- [1] 4:24 Or *all the days*

Footnotes for Joshua, Chapter 5

- [2] 5:3 *Gibeath-haaraloth* means *the hill of the foreskins*
- [1] 5:9 *Gilgal* sounds like the Hebrew for *to roll*

Footnotes for Joshua, Chapter 6

- [1] 6:5 Hebrew *under itself*; also verse 20
- [2] 6:17 That is, set apart (devoted) as an offering to the Lord (for destruction); also verses 18, 21

Footnotes for Joshua, Chapter 7

- [1] 7:12 That is, set apart (devoted) as an offering to the Lord (for destruction)
- [2] 7:19 Or *and make confession*
- [1] 7:21 A *shekel* was about 2/5 ounce or 11 grams
- [2] 7:26 *Achor* means *trouble*

Footnotes for Joshua, Chapter 8

- [1] 8:14 Hebrew *appointed time*
- [2] 8:26 That is, set apart (devoted) as an offering to the Lord (for destruction)
- [1] 8:35 Or *traveled*

Footnotes for Joshua, Chapter 10

- [1] 10:1 That is, set apart (devoted) as an offering to the Lord (for destruction); also verses 28, 35, 37, 39, 40
- [2] 10:2 One Hebrew manuscript, Vulgate (compare Syriac); most Hebrew manuscripts *they*
- [1] 10:10 Or *and he*

Footnotes for Joshua, Chapter 11

- [1] 11:11 That is, setting apart (devoting) as an offering to the Lord (for destruction); also verses 12, 20, 21

Footnotes for Joshua, Chapter 12

- [1] 12:4 Septuagint; Hebrew *the boundary of Og*
- [1] 12:23 Septuagint; Hebrew *Gilgal*

Footnotes for Joshua, Chapter 13

- [2] 13:8 Hebrew *With it*
- [1] 13:26 Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate; Hebrew *Lidebir*

Footnotes for Joshua, Chapter 14

- [1] 14:15 *Kiriath-arba* means *the city of Arba*
- [2] 14:15 Hebrew *He*

Footnotes for Joshua, Chapter 17

- [1] 17:11 The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain

Footnotes for Joshua, Chapter 18

- [1] 18:15 See 15:9; Hebrew *westward*
- [2] 18:18 Septuagint; Hebrew *to the shoulder over against the Arabah*
- [3] 18:28 Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate; Hebrew *the Jebusite*
- [4] 18:28 Hebrew *Gibeath*
- [5] 18:28 Septuagint; Hebrew *Kiriath*

Footnotes for Joshua, Chapter 19

- [1] 19:29 Compare Septuagint; Hebrew *Mehebel*

Footnotes for Joshua, Chapter 23

- [1] 23:14 Or *words*; also twice in verse 15

Footnotes for Joshua, Chapter 24

- [1] 24:32 Hebrew *for a hundred qesitah*; a unit of money of unknown value

Study Notes

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 1:1 *After the death of Moses*. Israel mourned for 30 days (Dt 34:8; 1406 BC). The Lord spoke to Joshua in Abib (later called Nisan), our Mar/Apr (4:19). *servant of the* LORD. See p 7. Joshua will receive this title in 24:29. *Joshua*. Originally Hoshea ("salvation"), expanded by Moses to Joshua or "Jehoshuah" ("the LORD/Yahweh is salvation"; Nu 13:16). Later in the OT, it was spelled Jeshua. Its contracted form is Jesus; Joshua's name and that of the Savior are identical in the Gk NT (Ac 7:45; Heb 4:8). Cyr Jer: "Jesus the son of Nave was in many things a type of Him. For when he began to rule over the people, he began from Jordan, whence Christ also, after He was baptized, began to preach the gospel" (*NPNF* 2 7:60). *assistant*. Hbr term is used of Joshua in Ex 24:13; 33:11; Nu 11:28. Joshua accompanied Moses on Mount Sinai, guarded Moses' tent, and deferred to Moses by calling him "my lord."

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 1:2 *arise*. "Prepare to" or "get ready to," referring to some preliminary activity.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 1:4 Cf Dt 11:24. Four corners of Israel's territory would be the wilderness, Lebanon, the Euphrates River, and the Great (Mediterranean/Western) Sea. Cf Nu 34:1–12; Dt 1:7.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 1:5 *stand before you*. Hbr expression for holding one's ground or position. In military confrontations with enemies, Joshua will prevail. *I will be with you*. See "be with," p 5.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 1:6 *strong and courageous*. Encapsulates theme of vv 1–9, as seen in repetition of terms in vv 7, 9. Hbr often uses two synonymous terms for a single idea in order to emphasize it. *inherit*. Central theme of Jsh, namely, that the Lord fulfills His promise to give the land of Canaan to His covenant people as an inheritance. See "portion," p 7.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 1:7 *law*. See p 7. *turn … right … left*. See note, 2Ch 34:2. *success*. See ESV note. When Joshua studies God's written Word, he will act wisely and be successful. For the believer, "success" is measured by God's definition, not by the world's definition (cf Lk 16:22–23).

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 1:8 *Book of the Law*. First five books of our Bible. See p 5. *meditate*. See p 842. *prosperous*. Parallel with "success" (see note, v 7), Israel becomes "prosperous" when the Lord leads Joshua to conquer and allot the land of Canaan, just as He has promised.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 1:9 *commanded*. Joshua now carries an authority imparted by the Lord Himself. Therefore, he has no reason to fear his big task or to doubt its success, because the Lord supplies what is necessary to carry out His commands.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 1:1–9 The Lord encourages Joshua with assurances of success and promises of His presence through His empowering Word, as Joshua begins the critical work of conquering and allotting the Promised Land to Israel. If left alone in our sin and weakness, we would not be able to serve God and to become successful in His eyes. Yet, God enables us through the promises of His Scriptures. He makes us strong and courageous for service by assuring us that through Immanuel ("God with us") we are forgiven and will inherit not a piece of land, such as Israel, but a better, eternal home (Heb 11:16). • Fill us, O Lord, with the promises of Your Word, so blessed by Your presence that we may serve You with strength and courage and find success through You. Amen.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 1:10 *officers*. Hbr refers to subordinate administrators in the service of government, military, or society.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 1:11 *provisions*. May imply military provisions (Jgs 20:10); probably includes food supplies. God's special provision of manna would not cease until Israel was in the Promised Land some days later (5:12). *giving*. Joshua emphasizes that the land is a gift from the Lord in accord with His promise to Abraham (Gn 17:8); in this chapter alone, "give" is used in vv 2, 3, 6, 11, 13. See "portion," p 7.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 1:12–13 *half-tribe of Manasseh*. See note, Nu 32:33. *rest*. Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh are already enjoying the "rest" of physical security in their share of the land (13:8–32). Their enemies east of the Jordan are defeated, and they are settled after 40 years on the move. The rest they enjoy points forward to the greater rest found in Jesus (Heb 4:1–11).

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 1:14 *beyond the Jordan*. The Transjordan, or land east of the Jordan. *men of valor*. Strong warriors, the special fighting forces of these three tribes (cf 6:2; 8:3; 10:7). See note, Ru 2:1.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 1:15 *rest to your brothers*. The other 9½ tribes would receive their rest from the Lord when the Canaanites west of the Jordan were defeated and their land was allotted to Israel, some seven years later (based on the age of Caleb at the beginning and end of the conquest; cf 14:6–10).

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 1:16–18 The 2½ Transjordanian tribes wholeheartedly agree to help the other tribes find rest across the Jordan (Nu 32:25–27, 31–32.) They affirm complete loyalty to Joshua and, thereby, to the Lord; they call for God's presence with Joshua and encourage him with the same words that the Lord had spoken in Jsh 1:6–7, 9.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 1:17 *we obeyed Moses*. Previous generation rebelled against Moses. The Lord, however, raised up in their place an obedient generation (5:6–7). *your God*. People acknowledge Joshua's faith in the Lord and his God-given authority as their leader.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 1:18 Some Egyptian texts pronounce curses on rebellious leaders. Rebellion against Joshua would constitute treason in this military context. More than that, it would display rebellion against the Lord, who appointed Joshua as leader of the covenant nation. The Lord arms Joshua not with empty threats but with authority to end rebellion.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 1:10–18 Encouraged by the Lord's Word, Joshua assumes command and encourages the people, especially the three eastern tribes, who in turn encourage Joshua. When we search for faults in our leaders, spew forth loveless words about them, and display a fractious spirit, we rob faithful leaders of the joy of serving the Lord. God is at work by the power of His Word to create unity and cooperation between leaders and followers. • O Lord, cause us to live "with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph 4:2–3). Amen.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 2:1 *Shittim*. Abel-shittim, "brook of the acacia trees," located 8 mi from the Jordan River, opposite Jericho, in the plains of Moab (Tell el-Hammam or Tell el-Kefren; cf Nu 25:1; 33:49–50). Area offers strategic locations overlooking plains of Moab. *spies*. Scripture does not condemn the use of spies either here or in Nu 13, where the Lord commands their use. Joshua uses his "spirit of wisdom" (Dt 34:9). Jesus says that His disciples are to be "wise as serpents" even while they are "innocent as doves" (Mt 10:16). *especially Jericho*. Key city because it controlled the routes into the heart of Canaan. It was near the main fords across the southern Jordan, and it controlled the fresh spring water vital to the area. To take Jericho would be a first step in taking the heart of Canaan (cf Nu 13:18–20). *came into the house of a prostitute*. Context shows their purpose was to gather information. Rahab's house may have served as an inn and was an ideal place for soaking up information on Jericho and the

area. Because the house was built into the city wall (v 15), a quick escape from the city would be possible. Ultimately, the Lord's grace leads them to this house so that He may rescue Rahab for eternal salvation. She will even become an ancestress of Jesus (Mt 1:5).

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 2:2 *king*. Canaan at this time consisted of city-states, each with a king. Ch 12 names 31 such kings. The Amarna Letters, written about the time of Joshua, show that these Canaanite kings thought of Egyptian pharaohs as their overlords and protectors.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 2:5 Author simply records the facts and does not comment on the appropriateness of Rahab's deception. Account does not use the word "lie" to describe what she does, nor do the two NT passages that speak of her actions (Heb 11:31; Jas 2:25). See note, 2Sm 17:20. We do not owe the truth to people who will use it for evil.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 2:6 *roof*. Flat roofs of ancient houses made them practical as work spaces, spare rooms, storage areas, or as drying floors for crops (Jgs 16:27; 1Sm 9:25). *stalks of flax*. Used to make linen clothing, sails, rope, and lamp wicks. Author does not explain how Rahab hid the men with the flax.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 2:7 *the fords*. Shallow places in the Jordan gave Jericho strategic importance. Definite article "the" may indicate that they were well known and used often. Cf 2Sm 19:16–19.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 2:9 *I know*. Rahab reflects her saving faith (Heb 11:31; Jas 2:25). She has somehow learned about the Lord of salvation and His plans for Israel. Because faith is always God's gift, He ultimately is the author of her faith (1Co 12:3). Ambr: "After she believed in God, she found salvation" (*NPNF* 2 10:377). *melt away*. Hearts disintegrating in fear. Moses had prophesied this "melting" of Canaanites in Ex 15:15, where he uses the same Hbr verb.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 2:10 *we have heard*. Word of two dramatic events traveled far: Israel's crossing of the Red Sea by the hand of the Lord 40 years earlier, and Israel's recent defeat of two kings east of the Jordan River. *devoted to destruction*. See p 6.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 2:11 *no spirit*. Or, "no courage." *the LORD your God, He is God*. Rahab's saving faith shines in her confession. She knows the special name for the true God of free and faithful grace: the Lord, or Yahweh. She acknowledges that He is God of all. See p 1227.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 2:12 *swear*. Oath that Rahab requests from the spies is evidence of her faith in the saving God, because she insists that they swear "by the LORD." She ties her future safety to the Lord by a solemn oath. See "vow," p 7. *my father's house*. Rahab's concern is for the entire household. See note, v 14. *a sure sign*. Oath in the Lord's name guarantees safety. Rahab needs no other sign because the Lord is always faithful to His name.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 2:14 *Our life for yours*. The spies vow to give their very lives, if necessary, to keep their promise and protect Rahab. See "vow," p 7. *yours*. Hbr plural, showing their pledge extends to Rahab's entire family. See note, v 12.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 2:15 *built into the city wall*. Three possibilities of construction: (1) Rahab's house may have made use of part of the city wall for an inner wall, with its upper story extending higher than the city wall; (2) her house may have been built on timbers across two parallel city walls several yards apart; or (3) most likely, her house consisted of one or more chambers within a "casemate" wall, which has two long parallel walls subdivided by cross walls that create little rooms. Those rooms could be used for living or storage, or they could be filled in for defensive purposes. Archaeology has uncovered many examples of casemate construction in Israel.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 2:16 Ancient Hittite document stipulates that an enemy invader must be tracked for three days. Perhaps that rule was widespread and known to Rahab. She anticipates what is about to take place and devises a plan for the spies' safety. Jas 2:25–26 shows that her actions are evidence of living faith.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 2:17 *guiltless*. Spies are declaring by this word that they will be exempt from the obligations of their oath if Rahab does not meet certain conditions. Cf v 19: "his blood shall be on his own head."

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 2:18 *scarlet cord*. Not the rope of v 15. Cord would mark the house to be safeguarded by Israel. On scarlet dye, see p 141. From the time of the Early Church, Christians attached symbolism to this blood-colored cord, associating it with the blood of Jesus (see *ANF* 1:8). However, a connection between Christ's blood and the symbol of the cord is not absolutely certain.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 2:19 *blood shall be on his own head*. Those who go outside the safety of Rahab's house will be responsible for their own

destruction when Israel comes to take Jericho.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 2:20 *business*. Hbr *dabar*, "word," "instruction." The king of Jericho and others already know that these men are involved in the "business" of spying. The specific "business" that Rahab must not reveal may relate to the instructions about the scarlet cord.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 2:21 *they departed*. The city gate had been closed (v 7). However, v 15 suggests that when Rahab let the spies down by a rope through a window, they landed outside the city wall.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 2:22 *hills*. West of Jericho (cf v 16); part of the mountainous backbone of Canaan.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 2:23 *passed over*. Crossed the Jordan.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 2:24 In their debriefing with Joshua, the spies all but repeat Rahab's words in v 9. The spies' conclusion is based on the facts they have gathered, but esp on the promises of the Lord to give this land to Israel. They thus speak from a perspective of God-given faith (cf Nu 13).
JOSHUA—NOTE ON **Ch 2** Joshua sends two spies to Jericho, where they find a people filled with fear, but they also find a person who shares their faith: Rahab the prostitute. Our deepest human fears arise from a sense of guilt and the deserved judgment of God. Although these fears flourished at Jericho, as they do today, the God of free and faithful grace grants forgiveness, safety, and peace to repentant sinners, who are justified by grace through faith in Christ and who perform works that prove their God-given faith (Rm 3:22, 24; Jas 2:25–26). • We praise You, Lord, that You call people of all kinds out of the darkness of their sin and haunting fears into the light and safety of Your grace. Amen.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON **Chs 3–4** At least seven promises here: (1) to exalt Joshua (3:7; 4:14); (2) to show that the Lord is with Joshua as He was with Moses (3:7); (3) to assure Israel that the Lord is among them (3:10); (4) to show the Lord's resolve to drive out the enemies of Israel (3:10); (5) to provide a teaching tool for future generations (4:6–7, 21–22); (6) to lead all the peoples of the earth to know the Lord's strength to save (4:24); and (7) to lead people to fear and worship the Lord (4:24).
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 3:1 *Shittim*. See note, 2:1. *lodged*. In their tents; cf v 14.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 3:2 *officers*. See note, 1:10.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 3:3 *ark of the covenant*. See notes, Ex 25:10–22. The ark is the central focus of the miracle at the Jordan in chs 3–4. To

follow the ark of the covenant is to follow the Lord. *Levitical priests*. All the priests were Levites, but only those Levites who came from the line of Aaron were priests. The rest of the Levites had other duties. Cf Nu 3.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 3:4 *2,000 cubits*. C ½ mi. See ESV note. *know the way*. The press of the crowd around the ark could obscure the view for many. Through the ark, the Lord leads the way.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 3:5 *Consecrate yourselves*. Joshua does not prescribe specific acts of consecration. See p 6. *wonders*. Or, "miraculous acts." Hbr term describes the 10 plagues on Egypt (Ex 3:20). *among you*. Parallel to "in the sight of all Israel" (v 7).
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 3:6 *priests*. Carrying the ark was a priestly function. Cf v 3.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 3:7 *begin to exalt*. The Lord will see that Joshua receives the respect necessary for leading His people. In 4:14, we see that the Lord fulfilled His promises. See note, chs 3–4. *Moses … you*. Dt 34:10–12 tells of the matchless role of the prophet Moses and the Lord's unique relationship with him. Jsh emphasizes a number of striking parallel events shared by Joshua and Moses and the special title they both enjoyed, "servant of the LORD" (cf 1:1). Subtheme of Jsh is "as Moses, so Joshua." Cf 1:3–5; Dt 11:24–25.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 3:8 *stand still in the Jordan*. See note, v 16.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 3:9 Joshua speaks like a prophet, as one to whom the Lord has spoken directly. His divinely appointed leadership and authority are thus emphasized. Ambr: "After he believed, he forthwith conquered, being found worthy to triumph in the battle of faith" (*NPNF* 2 10:300). Aph: "Joshua the son of Nun by faith cast down the walls of Jericho, and they fell without difficulty. Again by faith he destroyed thirty-one kings and made the children of Israel to inherit the land" (*NPNF* 2 13:351).
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 3:10 *living God*. Hbr for God is *El*, "Mighty One," to emphasize His power in this context. He is "living," in contrast to the dead, worthless idols of the nations named in this verse. Cf Is 44:6–28. See note, Mt 16:16. *Canaanites … Jebusites*. See p 345.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 3:11 *Lord of all the earth*. See ESV note. God has the right and power to drive out the seven nations in judgment and to give this land to Israel in grace.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 3:12 *twelve men … from each tribe a man*. The Levites may be exempted because they are engaged in carrying the ark. However, Ephraim and Manasseh likely could be represented by only one man, as they are sons of Joseph.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 3:13 *Lord of all the earth*. See note, v 11. *cut off*. See note, v 16. A dry divide would separate the waters of the river to the north from those to the south. Those southern waters would flow into the Salt Sea with nothing coming behind them.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 3:15 *harvest*. Barley and flax harvest (2:6) occurs during the month of Abib (later, Nisan; 4:19); our Mar/Apr. See calendar, p 262.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 3:16–17 Mighty miracle from God. No natural phenomenon, such as a landslide cutting off the water, could explain all that transpires here. Certain facts attest to a miracle: the prediction (v 5), the split-second timing (vv 13, 15), the time of year (v 15), the time involved for the whole nation to cross on dry ground, and the fact that Joshua would not be exalted because of a mere landslide (v 7; 4:14).
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 3:16 *stood*. They stopped flowing any farther southward. They were "cut off from flowing" (v 13). Their movement then could only be upward to form a heap. *Adam*. City of Adam may have been on the east bank of the Jordan where the Jabbok met the Jordan. *Arabah*. Portion of the Great Rift Valley within the Promised Land. The Great Rift Valley stretches from Turkey to Mozambique. This miracle at the Jordan is comparable to the miracle at the Red Sea. The phenomenon of a "heap" of water ties the two accounts together (3:13, 16; Ex 15:8). What God once did under Moses, He now does under Joshua in order to exalt him.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON **Ch 3** With the ark of the covenant of the Lord leading Israel, the waters of the Jordan pile up in a heap, allowing Israel to cross safely on dry land. Today, you can find direction and purpose in the Lord Jesus as "the way" (Jn 14:6). He who did wonders at the Jordan will lead you through this life and land you safely in the heavenly Canaan. • "Jesus, lead Thou on Till our rest is won. Heav'nly leader, still direct us, Still support, console, protect us, Till we safely stand In our fatherland." Amen. (*LSB* 718:4)
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 4:1 Nation has crossed, but priests with the ark hold their position in the middle of the dry riverbed (vv 10, 16).

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 4:2 In 3:12, Joshua commanded that 12 men be chosen. Now their task is made known.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 4:3 *out of the midst of the Jordan*. Priests with the ark are still in the riverbed. *from the very place*. Implies that the Lord is speaking from His location at the ark of the covenant. He is in the thick of things, holding back the waters and protecting His people.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 4:4 *appointed*. Cf v 2; 3:12.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 4:5–7 Memorials in stone were common in OT Israel. Jacob ("Israel") on four occasions set up stones after a significant event in his life (Gn 28:18; 31:45; 35:14, 20). In Jsh, there are many different stone memorials (4:1–9, 20–24; 7:25–26; 8:28–32; 10:27; 22:10–34; 24:26–27).
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 4:5 *each of you*. Emphasizes participation of all Israel, a subtheme of Jsh.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 4:6 *sign*. "Memorial" (v 7); in the OT, a thing, act, or event that establishes the certainty of a promise or event (e.g., the rainbow is a "sign"; Gn 9:12). *children ask*. The 12 rocks will serve as an aid for parents to teach their children in catechetical fashion. Cf Ex 12:26; 13:14 for children's questions.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 4:7 *before*. Or, "because of." *the ark of the covenant of the* LORD. Using the full name of the ark emphasizes that the Lord, through the means of His ark, effected the miracle. *a memorial forever*. The physical stones are not known to us today, but because this account is included in Scripture, the stones continue to be a memorial to the Lord's power and grace.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 4:8 These 12 stones become a memorial at Gilgal, as v 20 reveals; different from the 12-stone memorial of v 9.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 4:9 Two memorials with 12 stones each thus commemorate the miracle at the Jordan: one at Gilgal and one in the river itself. *in the midst of the Jordan*. In the middle of the riverbed. *they are there*. The 12 stones are probably large and conspicuous. At least the top of this memorial would be high, dry, and visible most of the year. Their unusual midriver position would catch the eye. *to this day*. When Jsh was written. Common phrase in Jsh (5:9; 6:25; 7:26 [twice]; 8:28, 29; 9:27; 10:27; 13:13; 14:14; 15:63; 16:10; 23:8–9) and other biblical books, which accents the historical reality of the events.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 4:10 *until … finished*. Text does not say just how long but there are three indicators of time: the whole nation of hundreds of thousands of people cross while the priests hold the ark; the people pass over "in haste"; and the crossing happens within one day (vv 3, 19). *in haste*. Not to suggest a frantic rush for fear that disaster might strike, but rather that there was no delay and no obstacle because of God's steady, powerful hand holding back the waters. Cf Ex 12:11; Dt 16:3 regarding the Passover meal.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 4:11 After the people crossed, the priests with the ark evidently moved from the rear of the people, passed by them, and resumed a leading position.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 4:12–13 *40,000*. About one-third of the total number of armed men for these 2½ tribes, which was 110,580, according to the census of Nu 26. The rest of their troops evidently remained in the Transjordan without compromising the promise of these tribes. Cf 1:12–18. *plains of Jericho*. Area north of the Salt Sea that spreads out into a large flat plain on both sides of the Jordan River. West of the river, this plain is called "the plains of Jericho"; east of the river it is called "the plains of Moab" (Nu 22:1).
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 4:14 *exalted … awe*. See notes, chs 3–4; 3:7.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 4:15–18 The Lord caused the miracle and directed the activity around it. This recurring literary pattern gives structure to Jsh: (1) the Lord commands Joshua, (2) Joshua commands Israel, and (3) Israel obeys the command.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 4:16 *testimony*. See note, Ex 25:16; see also p 971. Hbr terms for "covenant" and "testimony" were sometimes used interchangeably (cf Ex 31:18; Dt 9:11).
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 4:17 From v 11, it appears that the priests with the ark have already crossed over. Here in v 17, it seems they still stand in the dry riverbed. Narration may be arranged topically, not chronologically. In reference to time, the command of v 17 may have preceded the action of v 11.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 4:18 *covenant*. Cf v 16; 3:3. *overflowed*. River returns to its flooded condition (3:15).
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 4:19 *the tenth day of the first month*. The 10th of Abib (later, Nisan) our Mar/Apr. See calendar, p 262. Exactly 40 years earlier on this day, the Israelites selected lambs for the Passover before their

exodus from Egypt (Ex 12:3). The lambs were sacrificed on the 14th of Abib (Ex 12:6).
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 4:20 In v 8, these stones were laid down there. Now Joshua sets them up as a memorial (v 7).
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 4:21 Repetition from v 6 stresses the need for continuing catechesis in the saving acts of the Lord. In v 6, Joshua addresses the 12 stone carriers; in v 21, he speaks to the Israelites. His audiences are different, yet readers get the benefit of repetition.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 4:22 *dry ground*. Highlights the grace and power of the Lord.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 4:23 See note, 3:16.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 4:24 *all the peoples of the earth may know*. One aim of the Lord at the miracle at the Jordan is evangelism, that all people know His saving acts. That aim continues to be accomplished as people everywhere read of this miracle in Scripture. *hand of the* LORD. Symbol of His strength. His miracle with the waters of the Jordan proclaims the power of his "hand." See p 842. *fear the* LORD. See p 1001.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON **Ch 4** Israel safely and miraculously enters the Promised Land, and Joshua is exalted (3:7). The stone memorials will serve to teach the power of God in judgment and salvation. • Praise to You, O Lord, that Your hand controls our enemies, Satan, sin, and death, and that the hands of our risen Savior were once pierced for our salvation. Amen.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 5:1 *Amorites … Canaanites*. Cf 3:10. Each name has a narrow and a broad sense—as individual people and as a name that stands for all the peoples of the land. Here, the two names represent all the peoples west of the Jordan. See p 345. *sea*. Great Sea (1:4). *melted*. Cf 2:9, though a different Hbr word is used there. *no longer any spirit*. They lost courage.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 5:2 *flint*. Sharp and plentiful. Stone knives would also remind Israel that circumcision was an ancient sign of God's covenant with Abraham. *circumcise*. OT circumcision prefigures NT Baptism, as Paul shows in Col 2:11–12. *a second time*. Not recircumcising individuals but reestablishing the practice of circumcision.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 5:4 *died in the wilderness*. As God foretold (Nu 14:26–30).
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 5:5–6 Either no one was circumcised for the entire 40 years between leaving Egypt and entering the Promised Land or, more

likely, circumcision ceased at the time of the rebellion of Nu 14, for 38 years (Dt 2:14). *voice of the* LORD. His Word. *a land flowing with milk and honey*. See p 6.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 5:7–8 Special circumstances call for mass circumcision. In the future, all eight-day-old males could be circumcised, as originally commanded (Gn 17:12). Just: "The blood of that circumcision is obsolete, and we trust in the blood of salvation; there is now another covenant, and another law has gone forth from Zion. Jesus Christ circumcises all who will … that they may be a righteous nation, a people keeping faith, holding to the truth, and maintaining peace" (*ANF* 1:206).

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 5:7 *not been circumcised on the way*. The wandering would not necessarily have affected the practice, as the nation camped for long periods. See note, vv 5–6.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 5:8 *healed*. In Gn 34, the men of Shechem were still in pain and unable to fight three days after circumcision. Israel crossed the river on the 10th of the month (4:19) and celebrated Passover the evening of the 14th (5:10). The circumcision took place between those dates.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 5:9 *the reproach of Egypt*. Included the lack of circumcision and the disdain Egypt would have shown toward Israel and the Lord, had all Israel died without taking the Promised Land (Ex 32:12; Nu 14:13–16; Dt 9:28). *Gilgal*. See ESV note. Aram *Golgotha* ("skull") is related.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 5:1–9 In the Promised Land, the nation resumes the practice of circumcision, the sign and seal of God's covenant with His people, by which He rolls away the reproach of Egypt at Gilgal. Our sin brings us eternal reproach before God. Through His appointed means today (Baptism), the Lord removes our guilt. • Thank You, Lord, for rolling away the sin of the world at Golgotha, even as You rolled away the reproach of Egypt at Gilgal. Amen.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 5:10 *Passover*. See pp 200–201. Israel arrived in the Promised Land on the 10th of Nisan (4:19), the day of selecting Passover lambs (Ex 12:3). The males of Israel were circumcised, a requisite for eating the Passover (Ex 12:48). Thus, the nation could celebrate Passover according to God's institution under the full moon on the 14th of Nisan in the Promised Land, exactly 40 years after the first Passover. The OT Passover anticipates the Lord's Supper, which Jesus instituted at Passover (Lk 22:15).

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 5:11 *produce of the land*. See note, 3:15. *unleavened*. Eaten the week after the Passover (Lv 23:4–6).
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 5:12 No hint of sadness at the end of the manna. Entry into the "land flowing with milk and honey" (v 6) is a time of joy, and the miraculous manna is no longer needed because of God's fulfilled promise. By grace, they eat what they did not labor over (cf Dt 6:10–12). *fruit*. Or, "yield," "produce."
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 5:10–12 Israel celebrates its spiritual holidays, as the Lord provides for its worldly needs. We sometimes ignore spiritual priorities while fretting over inferior matters. Awareness of God's saving grace and generous gifts leads us to set right priorities and to "seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness" (Mt 6:33). • Forgive our materialism, O Lord, and lead us to give priority to Your heavenly treasures. Amen.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 5:13–15 The person whom Joshua encounters is sequentially (1) a man with drawn sword; (2) the commander of the army of the Lord; (3) one whom Joshua worships and calls "my lord"; (4) one before whom Joshua is to remove his sandals as Moses did before the Lord in Ex 3:5; and (5) and one whose presence makes the place holy, also as in Ex 3:5.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 5:13 Man is in fighting stance with unsheathed sword. An astonished Joshua wonders whom the man intends to fight. Jerome: "Joshua went forth, and was met by the Prince of the host, sword in hand, that is either to show that he was ready to fight for the circumcised people, or to sever the tie [to them]…. If the armed host of the Lord was represented by the trumpets of the priests, we may see in Jericho a type of the overthrow of the world by the preaching of the Gospel" (*NPNF* 2 6:362).
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 5:14 *commander*. Hbr word can refer to a representative of a king, an official, a leader, or various kinds of military or civilian officials. Can also refer to an angel. In Is 9:6, the Child is called the "Prince [Commander] of Peace." In Dn 8:11, God is called "the Prince of the host [army]." *Now I have come*. His arrival is timely, just before battles begin. *worshiped*. Physically bending low. See p 1276. *my lord*. Hbr *'adoni*, "my lord." The same word is used of God in 3:11, 13, so perhaps here it refers to Yahweh, the Lord. See p 1227.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 5:13–15 Joshua has a surprise encounter with the commander of the army of the Lord, who will provide him success in battle. When we think we have the strength to fight our spiritual enemies, we are on our way to defeat. Through Word and Sacraments, God leads us to rely on His strength for victory (cf Rm 8:31). • "For us fights the valiant One, Whom God Himself elected…. He holds the field forever." Amen. (*LSB* 656:2)

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 6:1 *shut up inside and outside*. Lit, "shut and shut off." Every entrance and exit of Jericho is sealed off.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 6:2 The Lord wants Joshua to see the frightened and seemingly impregnable city as already defeated. *men of valor*. See note, 1:14.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 6:3 The Lord evidently wants to build up the faith of Israel during a long ritual before He tears down the walls of Jericho (cf Heb 11:30). The size of Jericho is estimated to have been 9–12 acres. Its circumference may have been ½–1 mi. We know nothing about the width of the line of marchers around the city. A large processional could circle Jericho in less than an hour. Israel is able to complete seven circuits on the seventh day (v 15).

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 6:4 *seven*. See p 217. *rams' horns*. Trumpets in OT times could be made of rams' horns or of metal. "Jubilee" is a modification of the Hbr word for the horn of a ram. See p 993.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 6:5 *fall down flat*. Complete collapse; pictures the wall coming straight down, rather than toppling on its side.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 6:6 As in the miracle at the Jordan (chs 3–4), the ark of the covenant will be the focus in the march around the city. The ark, the vehicle and symbol of the Lord's presence, will show that He is responsible for what will happen at Jericho.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 6:7 *the people*. It is unclear whether every individual of Israel joined in the march. The small size of the site of Jericho (Tell es-Sultan) and the large numbers of Israelites would seem to indicate a representative number of people. *armed men pass on before*. Armed men lead the march and will have a role later in the destruction of the city. Because of resistance from the leaders of Jericho, the army was needed (24:11).

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 6:8 See note, 4:15–18.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 6:10 Silence solemnly depicts the Lord's approaching judgment.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 6:14 Implication is that the people continue to march in silence each day.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 6:17 *devoted to the* LORD *for destruction*. See ESV note; see also p 6. *Rahab*. Her house was marked by a scarlet cord (2:18) and safeguarded by an oath in the Lord's name (2:12). (Cf vv 22–23.)
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 6:18 With several related terms, Joshua emphatically warns about what is set apart for destruction. This prepares us for the disobedience of Achan and events of ch 7.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 6:19 *iron*. Events of Jsh transpired in the Late Bronze Age (1550–1200 BC), but iron is already in common use. Cf 8:31; 17:16, 18; 22:8; see note, Jb 20:24. *treasury*. See note, v 24. Because the temple would not be built for another four centuries, this "treasury" must be at the tabernacle at Gilgal.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 6:20 Author does not state whether God used any natural phenomena, such as an earthquake or rain, as an agent of His miracle. At the Red Sea, He used "a strong east wind" (Ex 14:21). Mere naturalistic explanations do not do justice to what the text depicts.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 6:21 *men and women, young and old*. Destruction of Jericho is total. Soldiers of Israel follow the orders of the Lord as agents of His just judgment. Residents of Jericho are destroyed, temporally and eternally, for not repenting of their unbelief, child sacrifice, ritual prostitution, etc., despite the abundant time given them to do so (Gn 15:16; cf Ezk 33:11; 2Pt 3:9). In not sparing the Canaanites, the Lord spares Israel from the "abominable practices" and temptations of these people (Dt 20:18). See p 345.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 6:22 Cf 2:12–14. In the midst of judgment and destruction comes a scene of mercy and safety. The former prostitute, with her God-given faith (Heb 11:31; Jas 2:25–26), and her family are delivered from the judgment that surrounds them—a picture and reminder of God's mercy in Christ as the place of refuge.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 6:23 *outside the camp*. Temporarily; v 25 says Rahab lives "in Israel." Initially, she and her family may have been considered ceremonially unclean. Cf Lv 13:46.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 6:24 *treasury*. Metal coins were not used as money; minting of coins was a much later development (see notes, 24:32; Gn

37:28). These precious metals were likely used to allow Israel and its priests to carry out the worship prescribed by the Lord. E.g., see note, Lv 27:31.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 6:25 *saved alive*. Same verb used in 2:13. *she has lived in Israel to this day*. May mean that Rahab still "lived" in Israel through her offspring; 24:31 seems to show that Jsh was written at least a generation or two after the time of the man Joshua. See note, p 4:9.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 6:26 God had ordered the destruction of Jericho because of its sin. It would thus be an evil act to rebuild what God had condemned and destroyed. The collapsed foundation and gates would be a continuing reminder of His judgment against sin and His victory for Israel. Israel could live in the city (18:21; Jgs 3:13 [the "city of palms" is Jericho]; 2Sm 10:5) but not rebuild its foundation and gates. This curse was "according to the word of the LORD," and not merely Joshua's idea (cf 1Ki 16:34). *Cursed*. See p 6.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 6:27 *fame*. Or, "report," "news." The Lord has given Joshua success and has exalted him according to His promises of 1:8 and 3:7. The victory over Jericho was God's work; yet by grace, He shares His fame with His leader.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON **Ch 6** As a woman of faith in the Lord, Rahab is kept safe in the middle of the destruction of unrepentant Jericho; she becomes part of Israel. God is a God of justice, who cannot let sin go unpunished. Judgment awaits those who refuse His loving forgiveness in Christ. Yet, God is also a God of love, whose justice was satisfied when His Son took the punishment for the sin of the world. The Lord delivers us, through faith in Jesus, from the destruction awaiting this present evil age. • We thank You, O Lord, that while You are just, You are the justifier of all who rest their faith in Jesus. We praise You, O Jesus, that You gave Yourself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age. Amen.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 7:1 *broke faith*. These two words have the same Hbr root: "broke faith (by doing) a breaking of faith." Conscious act of treachery or unfaithfulness against the Lord in direct violation of His covenant with Israel. See note, 1Ch 2:7. *devoted things*. See p 6. The "devoting" is carried out either by destroying them or by placing them in the treasury of the Lord (6:17–19). *anger of the LORD burned*. God's fierce anger that acts "as a consuming fire" (Dt 9:3) against Israel's enemies now flares at His own people. It will not cool until appropriate judgment is carried out.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 7:2 *Ai*. Lit, "the ruin." Site may have contained a heap of ruins already before this time. See note, v 5. *Go up*. From Jericho at 800 ft below sea level, the spies ascend to Ai on the central ridge of mountains that form the backbone of Canaan. See map, p 357.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 7:4 Even the higher number of recommended troops is forced to flee in defeat. The disaster is not due to faulty intelligence from the spies. When God is opposed to human plans, they fail.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 7:5 *about thirty-six*. Any loss would be shocking after the collapse of Jericho and the spies' recommendation about Ai. *Shebarim … at the descent*. Shebarim may refer to stone quarries. A stone quarry c 1½ mi SW of Khirbet-el-Maqatir and descending c 220 yd below it may be the site of biblical Ai. *hearts of the people melted*. In the past, Canaanite hearts had melted in fear and discouragement (2:11; 5:1). Now, the hearts of Israel, God's own covenant people, melt.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 7:6 *tore … dust*. Signs of distress or mourning; cf Gn 44:13. In the ancient Near East, grief and distress were dramatized rather than internalized. See notes, Jb 1:20; 2:12. *before the ark*. Location of Joshua's action at the ark of the covenant shows that he knows that something related to Israel's covenant relationship with the Lord has gone wrong. The Lord will confirm this in v 11. See p 495. *elders*. First reference in Jsh to the "elders" in Israel (cf 8:10, 33; 23:2; 24:1, 31). See note, Ex 3:16. See also p 228.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 7:7 Words of Joshua come dangerously close to those of the Israelite grumblers in the wilderness (Ex 14:11–12; 16:3; 17:3; Nu 14:2–3).
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 7:8–9 Joshua and the elders expected quick and complete victory with no loss to Israel. But now, Israel was defeated at Ai, right in the heart of the land. "Melted" Canaan had won half of the battles and could take heart from the recent defeat of Israel.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 7:9 *cut off our name*. Israel's name would be lost to history if the Canaanites were allowed to wipe out the nation. *from the earth*. Or, "from the land." From the early victory at Jericho, it seemed that the name Israel would be associated with the land. Joshua wonders now if that will continue. *what will You do for Your great name?* Joshua knows that the Lord has attached the name Israel to His own name by making a covenant with the Israelites. The implication is that there will be great harm to the Lord's own name if He lets the name Israel drop from the land He

promised them and allows the name Canaan to prevail. See "for Your name's sake," p 842.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 7:1–9 The sin of one man, Achan, results in defeat and death for the Israelites at Ai. Likewise, the sin of one man, Adam, resulted in death spreading to all men, because all men have sinned. But one man, Jesus Christ, has brought righteousness and eternal life as a free gift that is received through faith. (Cf Rm 5:12–21.) • We praise You, Lord, that in Christ "the tribes of Adam boast more blessings than their father lost." Amen. (*TLH* 511:5)

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 7:11 *transgressed*. Irony. Same Hbr word is used often in Jsh to refer to "crossing" the Jordan. The nation that the Lord caused to cross over the Jordan has now crossed over or transgressed His covenant. *stolen and lied*. Israel/Achan stole what belonged to God. Covering up the action made it a lie.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 7:12 Contrast with God's promise in 1:5. *cannot stand*. In the sense of "stand up against, prevail." *they have become devoted for destruction*. Cf 6:18, where Joshua warned this would happen if Israel took for private use the things devoted to the Lord. See "devote to destruction," p 6.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 7:13 *Consecrate*. See p 6.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 7:14 Lists four categories of Israelite social structure: (1) *tribe*. Achan is from the tribe of Judah. (2) *clan*. "Family"; Achan is from the clan of Zerah, son of Judah (Gn 38:30). (3) *household*. Broader term than "nuclear family"; Achan is from the household of Zabdi, son of Zerah. (4) *man by man*. Individuals. See pp 54–55. *brought near*. Most likely to the ark of the covenant, where Joshua was (v 6). *by lot*. The Hbr does not say explicitly "takes by lot," but only "takes"; likely this involves lots or the high priest's Urim and Thummim. See notes, 1Sm 14:39–42. The drawn-out process will give the culprit time to step forward. No one can hide sin (Heb 4:13).

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 7:15 *shall be burned with fire*. What was done to Jericho as a city set apart for destruction (6:21, 24) is to be done to an Israelite who broke the covenant. Cf 6:18. *all that he has*. Could mean all his possessions or all his family members. Phrase is repeated in v 24, where it stands closer to the list of his possessions than to the references to his sons and daughters. *outrageous*. Same word refers to incestuous rape in 2Sm 13:12 and to a request for homosexual relations in Jgs 19:23–24.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 7:19 *My son*. Joshua displays a fatherly attitude toward the transgressor. *give glory*. Solemn charge to tell the truth (cf Jn 9:24). *give praise*. Largely synonymous with "give glory"; the two expressions together say the equivalent of "tell the whole truth, so help you God."
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 7:20 *I have sinned*. In Hbr, the pronoun "I" is emphasized. What the Lord in v 11 said Israel had done, Achan personally confesses.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 7:21 *beautiful cloak*. Robe from a distant land was probably very expensive (the same Hbr word describes the robe worn by the king of Nineveh in Jnh 3:6). *Shinar*. Near Babylon. See map, p 609. *coveted*. See note, Ex 20:17. *earth inside my tent*. The very dirt of the Promised Land, on which his tent rests, was used for the dirty work of covenant violation and cover-up. *with the silver underneath*. Such detail reveals that Achan is now confessing his personal, specific guilt without excuse.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 7:23 *laid them down before the* LORD. These items belonged to the Lord; resolution of the sin involved their presentation to Him (probably before the ark). See "presence," p 843.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 7:24–25 *Achor … trouble*. Achor means "trouble" or "disaster."
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 7:24 *sons and daughters*. Either as witnesses or to be executed, if they were willing participants in the covenant violation (see note, v 25). Law strictly forbade putting to death children for the sins of their father (Dt 24:16).
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 7:25 *trouble on you*. His just execution. The text, however, is silent about Achan's eternal destiny. Repentant believers who are taken from death row to their execution by civil justice are ushered into paradise (Lk 23:43). Faith in the saving Lord may have been present in Achan at the time of his honest confession and just execution. *stoned*. Commanded method of capital punishment for a number of crimes, as stated in the Law of Moses. Two Hbr terms for "to stone" used here, and two objects of the stoning. (1) "Stoned him" refers only to Achan. (2) "Stoned them" may mean "pelting with stones" the ashes of Achan, his animals, and his goods (or "them" may refer to his family). Cf v 26, where the singular "him" is used in reference to stones being raised. *burned*. Accomplishes the Lord's direct order in v 15, in keeping with the Lord's

words in 6:18. Achan himself became devoted to destruction. See "devote to destruction," p 6.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 7:26 *great heap*. The first two stone memorials in the land praised the Lord for His miracle at the Jordan (4:9, 20); this memorial shouts stern warning about disobedience. *the* LORD *turned*. His anger cooled, and reconciliation was achieved when judgment was meted out against the transgressor. See "turn," p 1080. *Achor*. Cf vv 24–25 and 6:18, where wordplay involves the Hbr word for "to bring trouble," the name of the valley where Achan is stoned, and the similar sounding name of Achan. Thus, God brings trouble on the troubler of Israel in the valley of trouble. Cf Hos 2:15, where the prophet Hosea reveals that even the earth's most troubled locations, like the Valley of Achor, will enjoy the hope that the Messiah brings.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 7:10–26 Guilty Achan is caught by the Lord, confesses before Joshua, and is stoned at the Valley of Achor. Since Adam and Eve hid in the foliage of Eden, people have imagined that they can keep their sins hidden from God. But "all are naked and exposed to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account" (Heb 4:13). "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1Jn 1:9). • We thank You, dear Lord, that we can confess freely before You and receive Your free and faithful forgiveness for Jesus' sake. Amen.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 8:1 *Do not fear*. Having met the Lord's conditions (1:6), there is no reason for fear or dismay, for God is with them. *all the fighting men*. The whole army gathered to Joshua (c 160,000–200,000 men), as opposed to the advice of the spies (7:3). *go up to Ai*. See note, 7:2.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 8:2 *plunder*. Jericho's spoils were for the Lord, who gives the spoils of Ai to Israel. *behind it*. Ambush takes place on the back side of the city, from the west (cf v 9).

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 8:3–8 Joshua divides his army. The first portion will draw Ai's army out of the city moving eastward; then the remainder of Joshua's army will enter the city, capture it, and burn it. After this, they will leave the city heading eastward, and the two armies will smash the army of Ai and Bethel between them.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 8:3 *men of valor*. See note, 1:14. *out by night*. This was the expected second wave that would swarm in behind the army of Ai as it left in pursuit of Joshua to the east.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 8:7 *God will give*. Even the cities of Israel's enemies are God's to keep or to give. See note, 1:6.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 8:8 *set the city on fire*. The buildings of Ai were to be completely destroyed—as Jericho had been—along with all the people. *according to the word of the* LORD. Cf vv 1–2.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 8:9 *between Bethel and Ai, to the west of Ai*. Area provided large rocks and the like, which made good cover. See map, p 357.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 8:10 *elders of Israel*. See note, Ex 3:16. See also p 228. By going, the elders demonstrated faithfulness to Joshua as the Lord's chosen leader.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 8:11 *with a ravine between them and Ai*. Ai could see Israel's camp but not easily attack it.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 8:12 The 5,000 were to capture and destroy the city, while the 30,000 would ambush the men pursuing Joshua and his army.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 8:13 *rear guard*. The 30,000 who would come behind them to crush the army of Ai.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 8:14 *appointed place*. Appointed by the Lord for Ai's defeat. *Arabah*. See note, 3:16.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 8:16 *all the people*. All the fighting men.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 8:17 *or Bethel*. Perhaps as a result of a treaty, the fighting men of Bethel joined Ai in pursuit of Israel. *left the city open*. Unprotected and vulnerable to attack.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 8:18 *javelin*. Cf Ex 7:19; 8:16; 14:26 for similar gestures of Moses. True power for victory comes from the Lord. Cf v 26.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 8:20 *no power to flee*. Lit, "no hands in them," referring to an awareness of their helplessness.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 8:22 *some on this side, and some on that side*. Refers to the ambush of the men who came from behind, westward out of the city, as Joshua came from the east.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 8:24 *killing all the inhabitants*. These deaths come at God's command; they are His judgment against evil.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 8:26 Joshua literally does what the Lord told him, until what the Lord commanded is completed; cf Ex 17:11–13.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 8:28 *forever a heap of ruins*. God's judgment is irreversible. *to this day*. See note, 4:9.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 8:29 *hanged the king of Ai on a tree*. Standard practice for public humiliation and demonstration of victory. *gate*. Main

gate. *a great heap of stones*. Visible reminder of what becomes of all who are evil, no matter how great. See note, 4:5–7.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 8:1–29 After the sin of Achan has been punished and Joshua does all that the Lord commanded, Israel successfully destroys the city of Ai. This is an example of God's judgment and sentence against all sin and sinners. Thanks be to God, He judges us "not guilty" in Christ. • Lord, preserve us from sin and judgment, and give us repentant hearts that find refuge in Christ alone. Amen.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 8:30–35 Testimony that possession of the Promised Land depended on the people's faithfulness to God's covenant.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 8:30 *built an altar*. A way of laying claim to the land the Lord had promised. *Ebal*. At Shechem, between Ebal and Gerizim, Abraham had also built an altar (Gn 12:6–7). See color map 2. Archaeologists have uncovered what may be an Israelite shrine on this site.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 8:31 *uncut stones*. Not hewn or cut by people. *burnt offerings … peace offerings*. See pp 170–71.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 8:32 *copy of the law*. Could have been the Ten Commandments and/or the curses and blessings (Dt 27–28).

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 8:33 *sojourner*. Those who had come out of Egypt (Ex 12:38, 48–49) and those who had joined Israel during the wanderings (cf Nu 25; 31). *elders … officers … judges*. Leaders of every rank, emphasizing all were gathered. See p 228. *opposite sides of the ark*. Those facing Gerizim to the south pronounced blessings, and those facing Ebal to the north pronounced curses, as described in Dt 27–28. *ark of the covenant*. Sacred symbol of the Lord's presence with the people. See diagram, p 203.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 8:34 *he read*. Joshua's position on the mountain made it possible for all to hear. *the blessing and the curse*. Cf Dt 27–28.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 8:35 *little ones*. Children were in attendance. *sojourners*. See note, v 33.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 8:30–35 This event rededicates the people to the covenant and announces to those in the Promised Land that God had come to claim the land. The Law is written in stone to remind the people that it has not gone away. The Word was given by God in Christ, the Rock of Ages, so forgiveness and life might be written on our hearts. • Dear Lord, etch Your Word more deeply into my heart and life, so that I might live in Jesus Christ—the Word who is life. Amen.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 9:1–2 Other inhabitants of Canaan feared that they would share the fate of Jericho and Ai unless they joined forces against the invaders. (Cf chs 10–11 for Israel's battles against such coalitions.)
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 9:1 *beyond the Jordan*. Land west of the Jordan. See color map 2.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 9:3 *Gibeon*. Confederation of towns north of Jerusalem.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 9:4 *they*. Likely a collective of leaders from the various towns of Gibeon.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 9:7 Questioning is based on the fact that the Lord strictly forbids making any covenant with any peoples in Canaan (Ex 34:12; Nu 33).
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 9:8 *We are your servants*. Common words of politeness, not an indication on their part to become submissive to Israel. *Who … where*. Joshua's questions indicate that their response is unsatisfactory.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 9:9 *Lord*. Speaking the Lord's name may have been part of the ruse by which they appeared respectful of Israel's God to gain Israel's favor. *heard a report*. Probably the same report that had come to Jericho. See note, 2:10.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 9:10 *Ashtaroth*. Another way of referencing the region of Canaan, which was dedicated to the worship of the goddess Ashtaroth. See note, Ex 34:13.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 9:13 *wineskins*. New wineskins are used for new wine because they can stretch during fermentation. *they have burst*. Excellent detail to add to the illusion. Wineskins would have likely burst during a long journey with exposure to heat and jostling.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 9:14–15 *did not ask counsel from the Lord*. Instead of inquiring of the Lord through Urim and Thummim (Nu 27:21), the men of Israel trusted in their own judgment, bought the deception, and made a forbidden covenant/treaty with them (cf Ex 23:32; Dt 7:2). See "seek," p 843.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 9:15 *swore*. At the conclusion of making any covenant or agreement, an oath, binding on all Israel, was sworn in the name of the God of Israel (cf Ex 24:7; 2Ch 15:12–15). See "vow," p 7.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 9:16 *heard*. Perhaps through their own scouts who were searching the region.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 9:17 *their cities*. Located in central Canaan. See map, p 357.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 9:18–20 *sworn to them by the LORD, the God of Israel*. In the leaders' oath, with the Lord as witness, they had called upon the Lord to bring wrath upon Israel if they broke their word (v 20). This wrath fell upon Israel when Saul ignored the oath and attacked the Gibeonites (2Sm 21:1–14).
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 9:18 *murmured*. Over the violation of the rules in Dt 7 and over their inability to take possession of and plunder the Gibeonite cities.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 9:21 *cutters of wood and drawers of water*. The Gibeonites had said, "We are your servants" (v 8), and, perhaps with a measure of vengeance, they were made to do menial service for the tabernacle and households of Israel (vv 23, 27). See notes, v 27; 1Ki 5:15.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 9:22–24 Questioning reveals that the leaders had not intentionally disobeyed the Lord or brought shame on Israel.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 9:23 *cursed*. See p 6. Punishment for their deception was servitude of the lowest class in the house of the Lord and to the people of Israel. This curse is believed to be the fulfillment of the curse of Noah on Canaan (Gn 9:25). *some*. All would be servants, but in time some would earn, or be granted, their freedom. *house of my God*. At this time, the tabernacle, including the needs of the Levites.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 9:24 *told*. See note, v 9.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 9:27 *for the congregation*. The Gibeonites would be slaves to the people and to the tabernacle. Serving in the tabernacle was a constant reminder that Canaanite worship was over. See note, v 21. *place that He should choose*. God would choose where He would have the Gibeonites serve, be it in the tabernacle or in His temple that would eventually be built.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON **Ch 9** Because Joshua and the Israelites neglect to seek the Lord's counsel, they fall for the deceit of the Gibeonites and make a treaty that they must honor. How often do we judge things based on appearance and act without consulting the Lord and His Word? His Word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. • Lord, grant us the wisdom and guidance of Your Spirit, so we might seek Your counsel in all we do. Amen.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 10:1 *devoted it to destruction*. See p 6.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 10:2 *royal cities*. Cities or centers secure against the enemies of a king. *warriors*. Despite their military superiority, the Gibeonites still feared the power of the Lord that was displayed against Jericho and Ai.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 10:3 *Adoni-zedek*. Lit, "The LORD is righteous," a name similar to that of another king of Jerusalem, Melchizedek ("King of Righteousness"). *Jerusalem*. Also called "Jebus"; first usage of "Jerusalem" for this city in the OT. *Hebron … Jarmuth … Lachish … Eglon*. See map, p 357.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 10:5 *against Gibeon*. Jerusalem led the attack, hence it came from the southeast.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 10:6 *Do not relax your hand*. Joshua stretched out his hand against the city of Ai (8:18), and the armies of Israel destroyed it. This phrase is a call for Joshua to use the armies of Israel to defend against the Canaanites. *your servants*. Gibeonites were reminding Joshua of their vassal relationship to Israel.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 10:7 *went up*. From Gilgal to Gibeon. *mighty men of valor*. See note, 1:14.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 10:8 The Lord would bring the attacking armies into Joshua's hand to do with as He instructed.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 10:9 *marched up all night*. In order to reach Gibeon in one night from Gilgal near Jericho, the Israelites would have had to climb a rise of 3,000 ft in 17 mi. See maps, pp 357, 971.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 10:10 Israelites were able to chase the panic-stricken enemy westward down a 1,000-ft descent to lower Beth-horon and south toward the lowlands known as the Shephelah, where Azekah and Makkedah were located. See map, p 357. *Makkedah*. See note, v 16.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 10:11 *large stones from heaven … hailstones*. In keeping His promise, the Lord aided Israel by casting hailstones down on the enemy. Hail was referred to as stones from the sky.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 10:12–13 Heated discussion of this passage proceeds from opposing viewpoints. (1) Some interpreters find here no miraculous intervention in the regular course of nature but rather a poetic, figurative way of saying that the day was long enough to permit Israel to destroy the fleeing enemy. Hence, it would be similar to the poetic statement "The stars fought … against Sisera" (Jgs 5:20). (2) A second interpretation finds the miraculous element in the fact that God, at the right

moment, commandeered the forces of nature (as in Egypt and at Jericho) by sending a barrage of hailstones at Gibeon. The accompanying storm prolonged the darkness of the night. Under its cover, the Israelites surprised the enemy and were able to complete the pursuit of the fleeing allies. Accordingly, the result of God's intervention was sustained darkness rather than additional hours of sunlight. (3) Opposed to this contention is the view that this day was miraculously prolonged beyond the normal 24 hours, which is the best reading. A believer may readily trust that He who created "the heavens and the earth … and all the host of them" (Gn 2:1) could control His creation and stop the vast machinery of the universe. Luth: "God's power had been so ordered that the sun retained its course and motion; but when Joshua prayed in his distress and commanded the sun to stand still, the sun stood still at Joshua's word. Ask the astronomers how great a miracle this is! But what is the reason? No other than that God does the will of those who fear Him and subordinates His will to ours, provided we continue to fear Him…. In Scripture there are more evidences of this kind; they prove that God allows Himself to be prevailed upon and subordinates His will to ours. Why, then, are we so remiss in regard to prayer? Why are we without faith to such an extent and so fainthearted, as though our prayer amounted to nothing?" (AE 3:289). *stand still*. "Be silent"; by analogy, "cease" or "desist" from a given activity. Hipp: "The sun stood still, and the moon, in their places, so that that day was one of twenty-four hours" (*ANF* 5:176). Ath: "This was the work, not of the son of Nun, but of the Lord, Who heard his prayer" (*NPNF* 2 4:550). *Book of Jashar?* Lit, "the book of the upright one." This anthology of ancient Israel has not survived. From time to time, other poetic descriptions of events apparently were added to this collection of songs (2Sm 1:18). See note, Nu 21:14; see also pp 335–37.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 10:14 *heeded*. See note, Nu 21:3. Hus: "Obedience is a more general thing than submission, since obedience is becoming in God and submission is not…. God, the Trinity, was not subject to man, or under a man as a lesser to a greater" (*The Church*, pp 185–86).

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 10:1–15 When the kings in Canaan set out to destroy Gibeon for its covenant with Israel, Joshua honors that covenant and God delivers Gibeon (v 11). When confronted by strife, do we try to handle it ourselves, or do we call on the Lord to save and help us? What a blessing to call boldly on the Lord Jesus Christ in our troubles and find in

His baptismal covenant with us grace and mercy to help in time of need. • Deliver us, good Lord, according to Your promises, for we trust in Your good Word. Amen.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 10:16 *Makkedah*. Town in western foothills near Azekah (v 10). See map, p 357.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 10:18 The place they sought for refuge became a prison and ultimately their tomb.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 10:19 *yourselves*. Commanders of Israel who had gone up to fight against the five kings. *their rear guard*. The danger now is the reserve of the five kings' armies that could assist and protect the cities in the event they lost.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 10:20 *remnant*. Though the armies as units had been wiped out, not every member had been killed.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 10:21 *Not a man moved his tongue*. Unlike in 9:18, when they had grumbled over the treaty with the Gibeonites.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 10:24 *chiefs*. General term for commanders of the armies of Israel. The same term was found on a pottery shard in the Judean fort in the Arael Valley. *put your feet on the necks of these kings*. Humiliating gesture symbolized that the kings were completely under the power of the victors. This symbolism is used elsewhere in Scripture to show the Lord's rule (Ps 110:5; Mal 4:3; 1Co 15:25–28; Eph 1:22; Col 2:14–15).

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 10:25 *be strong and courageous*. See note, 1:6. There were more wars to wage, and this was to instill confidence in the people for what lay ahead. *the LORD will do*. Prophetic promise. The Lord had given them into Joshua's hands.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 10:26 *he hanged them*. To make a statement to one and all that these kings were cursed by God (Dt 21:22–23). See note, Jsh 8:29.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 10:27 *they took them down*. According to God's command (Dt 21:23).

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 10:28 *Makkedah*. See note, v 16. *just as he had done*. Joshua faithfully carries out God's command.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 10:16–28 Joshua captures and destroys the five kings, who tried to hide in a cave that later became their tomb. When the Lord promises victory, He brings it to pass. No matter how great or how many challenges face you, cling to the Lord's promises and pray based on them. He will hear and answer in mercy, as the promises of Christ prove. •

Lord Jesus, defend us from all dangers, and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 10:29–43 See map, p 357.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 10:30 The armies of Israel attacked and destroyed the people, possessions, and city without taking anything for themselves, just as they had done to Jericho.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 10:32 *as … Libnah*. This and similar expressions in vv 35, 37, 39 emphasize the faithfulness of Joshua and Israel to the Lord.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 10:33 *Gezer*. Israel never captured this city, but the defeat of its army was a great victory.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 10:34 *laid siege*. Attacked it with the purpose of capturing it.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 10:35 *devoted every person in it to destruction*. See p 6. *as … Lachish*. See note, v 32.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 10:37 *as … Eglon*. See note, v 32. *devoted it to destruction*. See p 6.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 10:39 *devoted to destruction*. See p 6. *as … Hebron and to Libnah*. See note, v 32.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 10:40 *all that breathed*. Likely refers to all people and domesticated animals. Along with "devoted to destruction," it is an expression of obedience to the Lord.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 10:42 *captured … one time*. Captured in one campaign by the hand of God.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 10:29–43 The Lord leads His people through a series of successive victories. Consider the deliverance that came by God's hand as you reflect on the challenges you face. What a blessing that by Christ's crucified hands He gives us His victory against all our sin and death's power. He equips us for every new challenge. • Grant that I may in all things, Lord, seek the hand and the victory of Christ through faith in Him. Amen.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 11:1–3 See map, p 357. *Chinneroth*. See note, 12:3.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 11:4 *in number like the sand*. Figure of speech to depict a seemingly impossible situation that the Lord will turn to victory. *horses and chariots*. Sophisticated military equipment, which Israel did not have until the time of Solomon. Israel was to rely on the Lord as their defense and offense.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 11:6 *this time*. Despite overwhelming numbers, Joshua would be given victory over them within a 24-hour period, emphasizing the power of the Lord for Israel. *hamstring their horses*. Cutting the tendons on the hind legs of the horses so they could never bear or pull a load. *burn*. See note, 17:16.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 11:7 *came suddenly*. Before their armies were ready. The enemy chariots were not suitable for this wooded central hill country.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 11:8 *left none remaining*. Israel obeyed the Lord's command of v 6.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 11:10 *turned back*. Another way of saying that when Joshua returned from pursuit and destruction of the previous kingdoms, he went on the offensive again. *Hazor … head of all those kingdoms*. Due to its size, fortifications, and strategic location on the main north-south route from the Jezreel Valley to the Beqa Valley in Lebanon. Archaeology has confirmed the city's greatness. See map, p 357.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 11:12 *devoting them to destruction*. See p 6. *as Moses … commanded*. Cf Dt 7:2; 20:16–17.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 11:13 *stood on mounds … except Hazor alone*. Cities on mounds were common because of their more defensible position. Apparently, the Israelites took possession of those cities that were not burned.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 11:14 *plunder*. See note, 8:2.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 11:15 Stated to legitimize Joshua as Moses' successor and to express that in everything, Joshua was faithful to all that the Lord had commanded Moses.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 11:16–17 See color map 2.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 11:18 *a long time*. C 7 years passed in the life of Caleb, who was 78 when the conquest began (cf 14:7; Dt 2:14) and 85 when Joshua took Hebron (cf 14:10).
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 11:19 *not a city that made peace*. They were unwilling to submit to the Israelites, and the Lord hardened their hearts (v 20) so as to bring them to destruction.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 11:20 *harden their hearts*. See notes, Ex 4:21; 9:12. *devoted to destruction*. See p 6. *no mercy*. Because they refused to submit.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 11:21 *Anakim*. Dreaded and oldest inhabitants of Canaan, whose presence convinced the spies sent by Moses to rebel against

the Lord (Nu 13:28, 33). Possibly called "Ya'anaq" in Egyptian texts of the era. Elimination of this group serves as a conclusion to the conquest.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 11:22 *Gaza … Gath … Ashdod*. Some of the Anakim fled to these cities, a fact that may have later caused trouble for Israel, as Goliath would come from Gath (1Sm 17:4). See color map 1.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 11:23 *spoken to Moses*. Expresses Joshua's faithful leadership as Moses' successor. *inheritance*. See note, 1:6. *the land had rest from war*. Though there was still more land to possess, the time of war ceased for now. See note, Jgs 1:27–36.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON **Ch 11** The initial conquest of the land under the leadership of Joshua is completed. Joshua, by the hand of God, gives the Israelites the land as their inheritance. The Lord has said, "Do not be afraid" (v 6). Fear should not affect our faithfulness to the will and direction of the Lord. Jesus, by His faithfulness and His own hand, gives us the promised land of the new heavens and new earth as our eternal inheritance. • Gracious Lord, grant us faith in Your faithfulness, and accomplish Your service in and through us. Amen.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 12:1 *beyond the Jordan toward the sunrise*. Lands to the east of the Jordan.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 12:3 *Sea of Chinneroth*. Also spelled "Chinnereth" ("lutes"; see p 993). Canaanite name for the Sea of Galilee. See color map 1. *Sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea*. See note, 3:16; see also color map 1.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 12:6 *Moses … gave*. Stresses the legitimacy of the Reubenite and Gadite claims to this land. *servant of the LORD*. See p 7. *Manasseh*. Half the tribe of Manasseh was given land on the eastern side of the Jordan. The other half was given land on the western side (13:8–13).

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 12:1–6 This list of defeated enemies serves as a reminder that no power, no matter how great or glorious, can withstand the power of the Lord. Through the power of God, Moses gave the land to the Lord's chosen. So Christ, the Son of God, by His power hidden in the cross, gives us the promised land of the new heavens and the new earth. • May the Lord work in us a faith that looks not to the powers as they are now but to His eternal power to save. Amen.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 12:7–24 *west side of the Jordan*. A second tabulation repeats the names of kings whom Joshua defeated (chs 2–7) and adds a considerable number not mentioned previously. This summary credits Joshua with victories over the Canaanite rulers. It does not claim

that he "took possession of their land," as Moses had done east of the Jordan (v 1). These victories took seven years (see note, 11:18).

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 12:7–8 *(and Joshua ... Jebusites)*. Parenthetic note anticipates the following chapters. Joshua was commanded to take this action, even though "there remains yet very much land to possess" (13:1). The detailed catalog of the division of the land shows its importance, for the land symbolized that better country that God has prepared for His people (Heb 11:16; Rv 11:15).

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 12:9–24 See map, p 357.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 12:7–24 How remarkable that Joshua, once a slave in Egypt, becomes a conqueror of all of these kings! It is because the Lord is with him. How remarkable that the Lord is also with you and will strengthen you to overcome all that would enslave you. • May the Lord keep us faithful to the one true King, who reigns in grace. Amen.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 13:1 *Joshua was old*. Joshua was 40 or older at the time of the spying episode (Nu 13:2–16); he served 40 more years at Moses' side; it is now c 7 years after crossing the Jordan. Thus, Joshua is 87 or older. *very much land to possess*. Though allotted to tribes of Israel and promised by God, many parts of the land remained occupied or controlled by non-Israelites. Jgs 1–3 gives some explanation for why God allowed this (cf esp Jgs 3:1–4).

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 13:2–3 *Philistines*. Mentioned only here in Jsh, they would grow to become Israel's chief rivals in Jgs and 1Sm.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 13:6 *I myself will drive them out*. God challenges their faith. He will complete all His promises in time. *allot the land … inheritance*. God gives a portion of the land to each tribe as an inheritance, not as something earned. See note, 1:6; cf Nu 27:1–11; 36:7–12; Ru 4:10; Pr 17:2; Ezk 45; 48:29. As part of God's covenant, the possession of the inheritance is forfeited when the people's transgression becomes excessive.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 13:7 *nine tribes and half the tribe of Manasseh*. Tribes of Gad and Reuben and half the tribe of Manasseh had petitioned Moses to receive the Transjordan lands as their inheritance, regarding them to be suitable. Cf Nu 32.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 13:1–7 Even with much already accomplished to bring the people of God into their promised possession, much remains to be done for the promises to be completely fulfilled. Though God has established a place for His people to dwell eternally, many things conspire

to rob us of that promised inheritance and peace. Nevertheless, God continues to reinforce His promises and to strengthen us through His Sacraments so we do not give up. • Dear Jesus, lead us onward until our rest is complete in You. Remind us always that You have won the battles for us and will drive out our enemies before us. You are our inheritance and treasure. Amen.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 13:8–33 Eastern holdings are not to be considered as separate from the rest of Israel, even though they are outside of the official boundaries of the land. Thus, the eastern tribes and clans are as much a part of God's people as the western ones. Cf 22:10–34; see map, p 365.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 13:12 *Og … of the Rephaim*. Cf Gn 14:5; Dt 2:11, 20; 3:11. Size of bed mentioned in Dt 3:11 suggests the Rephaim were giants like Goliath of Gath. See note, 1Ch 20:4.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 13:14 *Levi … no inheritance*. Instead of permanent possession of a parcel of land, the Levites were to have a permanent position involved in the worship and sacrifices brought to the Lord. *offerings by fire*. Most important offering the Levites are to receive. They are also to receive the tithes and firstfruits brought to the Lord (Nu 18:8–16). Cf Dt 18:1–5; see pp 170–71.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 13:15–28 Cf Nu 32.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 13:22 *Balaam … was killed*. Balaam's first encounter with Israel on behalf of the king of Moab (Nu 22–25) is not his last; he was later successful in bringing a curse on Israel, though he fell in battle (Nu 31:8, 15–16). *practiced divination*. Cf Nu 22:4–6. One method was to examine the entrails of animals sacrificed to a god (Nu 23:1–6; 24:1–4). See note, Dt 18:10–11.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 13:29–31 *half-tribe of Manasseh*. See note, Nu 32:33.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 13:33 See note, v 14.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 13:8–33 The promise of the land to Abraham's descendants finds earliest fulfillment in the tribes east of the Jordan. This fulfillment, centuries in the making, teaches us why we live by faith, trusting God's timing and purpose as He holds out His promises to all. • Lord, though my name is not listed in these pages of Scripture, You have given me the most important promise of an eternal inheritance through Your

Son, Jesus Christ. Help me to remember and hold fast to that until I enjoy my inheritance in its completeness. Amen.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 14:1 *Eleazar the priest*. Third of Aaron's sons; he survived and remained faithful throughout the wilderness wanderings. *heads of the fathers' houses*. Each tribe had one representative in the process—their chief or most prominent member. See p 228.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 14:2 *by lot*. Method to determine God's will in the distribution of lands; exact procedure is not clearly known, but the process required faith that God would indeed guide the choice, as well as a willingness to abide by the choice as being from God. Such a method would exclude favoritism. See note, 7:14.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 14:3 *Levites … no inheritance*. See note, 13:14.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 14:4 *people of Joseph were two tribes*. Right of firstborn included a double portion; as Joseph had been given that right, each of his two sons received one portion. *no portion … Levites*. Because Levi inherited the sacrifices of the tabernacle, he received no major portion of the land. See note, 13:14; see also "portion," p 7. *cities to dwell in, with their pasturelands*. Agricultural communities frequently had common and private pasturelands surrounding the community. The Levites were assigned to live in such communities, allowing them to keep animals for their own needs.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 14:1–5 Final preparations and explanatory remarks are given before the land is apportioned to the remaining tribes. All the tribes have a place in the Promised Land! God does not fail to bless even one member of His people in Christ. • O Lord, though I may not always have tangible rewards as a member of Your people, still I give thanks for the greater blessings, which the world cannot understand: the death and resurrection of my Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 14:7 *spy*. Cf Nu 13:1–16. *as it was in my heart*. Caleb's positive report reflected the confidence that God would provide what was needed to conquer the land.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 14:8 *melt*. Majority report of the spies provoked fear in the hearts of the people (Nu 14:1–4). See note, 2:9.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 14:9 *forever*. Added to the promise of Nu 14:24; Dt 1:36. Hbr phrase can mean simply "for a very long time" instead of "into eternity." The promise would be conditioned on Caleb's descendants

continuing in the Lord's ways. *wholly followed*. Caleb did not waver in his wholehearted trust in God.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 14:10 *forty-five years*. It had been 38 years since the spying episode and 7 years since entering the land.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 14:11 *still as strong*. Considering the description of Moses at his death at age 120 (Dt 34:7) and that Joshua lived to age 110 (24:29), this is no exaggeration. *strength*. Caleb counts on God being his strength in battle.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 14:12 *the LORD will be with me*. Further example of Caleb following wholly after God (v 9), counting on His promise to help, and taking up the challenge to possess the remaining land (13:6). See p 5.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 14:13 *Joshua blessed him*. Perhaps along the lines of Ru 2:4 and Nu 6:22–27. See "bless," p 842. *Hebron*. See note, 1Sm 30:31.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 14:15 *land had rest from war*. No further efforts take place to secure more land until after the land distribution is complete. There are no attacks on the people of Israel as they settle into their new possession.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 14:6–15 The first allotment begins with Caleb. His story reminds us of God's judgment on faithless Israel (the conquest was delayed) and God's faithfulness to the faithful (His promises are completed to Caleb). Throughout, Caleb shows that the Lord is the strength of the faithful. • Lord, thank You for all that You have promised me. Keep me faithful and counting on Your help until I am able to enjoy the very last portion of Your promises, in Jesus Christ. Amen.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 15:1–12 See map, p 365.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 15:1 *Judah*. First to receive allotment, as he was given greater prominence than his three older brothers, who had committed acts that caused them to lose their inheritance as firstborn (cf Gn 49:1–12). Jacob's prophecies confer a leadership role on Judah, but not the double portion of material blessings, which went to Joseph (Gn 48:17–22).
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 15:8 *the Jebusite (that is, Jerusalem)*. City is identified first by its inhabitants; then by the name it will be known by when David dislodges those inhabitants. See note, v 63.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 15:12 *west boundary was the Great Sea*. Both the southern (v 4) and northern boundaries were to extend to the Great Sea, but the Philistines continued to occupy and control the coastal plain.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 15:13 *the commandment of the LORD to Joshua*. It is Joshua's responsibility (Dt 1:38) to carry out this command, first conveyed through Moses (Nu 14:24; Dt 1:36).
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 15:16–19 *give Achsah my daughter as wife*. Though the action here suggests that men might marry women for political advancement, note the response to Achsah's boldness and requests in vv 18–19. See "Standing of Women," p 213.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 15:19 *Give me a blessing*. Achsah asks that she be given rights as one who could receive inheritance; thus also her husband is to be included as a descendant of Caleb. See "bless," p 842. *upper springs and the lower springs*. Hbr for "blessing" is similar to "pool" or "pond," and the blessing Achsah seeks is that their life on the land be sustainable. Caleb's response is double what she expects, overflowing (cf Jn 4:13–14; 7:37–39).
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 15:20–63 Lists of cities possessed by Judah are grouped with a description of the region within Judah. Apparent discrepancies between the numbers given and the actual number of names mentioned may be due to the inclusion of alternate names or the listing of "villages" as well as "cities." Many cities with enclosures also had outlying communities without enclosures that were not considered large or significant enough to note here.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 15:61 *wilderness*. Along the western shore of the Salt Sea.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 15:63 Borders of Judah come very close to Jerusalem around the south. The city was in Benjamin's territory (18:28). Neither tribe had complete success in dislodging the Jebusites (Jgs 1:8; 1:21), unlike David (2Sm 5:6–7).
JOSHUA—NOTE ON **Ch 15** Judah receives precedence in the allotment of land. The assigning of land to Judah points to our end-times promised land through Christ, who came from the tribe of Judah. As Judah was assigned land before fully possessing it, so the Lord gives us eternal life even before we fully possess it in the resurrection. • Lord, grant me faith to receive the promises You have laid before me for the sake of Your Son. Help me also to be faithful to those promises until they are fulfilled completely in heaven. Amen.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON **Ch 16** Not only was Joseph the favorite son of Jacob, but his two sons were adopted by Jacob (Gn 48:5–6). Ephraim, the

second son, receives territory before his firstborn brother, in keeping with Gn 48:17–20. See map, p 365.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 16:10 *they did not drive out the Canaanites*. They failed to take God up on all His promises (13:6). *forced labor*. See note, 2Sm 20:24.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON **Ch 16** Failures of Ephraim to drive out the Canaanites warn us against neglecting our spiritual battles as Christians. The Lord equips us for these struggles, giving us His Spirit and the Word. God's allotment to Ephraim can also give us hope because it shows the Lord keeping a long-standing promise. The giving of land to Ephraim ahead of his brother highlights God's unmerited grace to an undeserving people. • O Lord, help us identify and know our enemies, so we do not grow complacent. Stir us to bold service through Christ, our Lord. Amen.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 17:1–11 See map, p 365.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 17:1 *he was the firstborn*. Even though Ephraim preceded him, Manasseh received a total allotment second only to Judah's. See note, ch 16. *man of war*. As a condition for receiving land east of the Jordan, the clan of Machir had agreed to leave their families behind and assist in the conquest of the land (1:12–15; Nu 32:1–27).
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 17:3–6 See notes, Nu 27:1–11; 36:2–6.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 17:12–13 See note, 16:10.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 17:14 *one lot and one portion*. Combined tribes claim the promise of Israel/Jacob of the double portion of the firstborn son (Gn 48:21–22). *a numerous people*. According to the second census (Nu 26), Ephraim and Manasseh together have a population greater than any single tribe, fulfilling the prophecy of Gn 48:19–20.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 17:15 *forest … clear ground*. Evidence is plentiful that this land, and much of the eastern Mediterranean, was heavily forested. Population pressures were the main cause of later deforestation. See note, Jgs 9:48. *Rephaim*. See note, 13:12.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 17:16 *chariots of iron*. Joshua burned some of these chariots (11:9), so wood was predominant in the chariot's construction, but iron parts could have been used in the axle, wheel rims, or as armor.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 17:17–18 *you shall drive out*. In addition to promising a healthy population, God also promises to fight for His people to give them full possession of the land.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON **Ch 17** The tribes of Joseph move to lay claim to the promises of God by inheriting their land. But they forget His promises about acquiring His blessings. God's promises do not come up short. He promises to address our true needs in Christ. • Dear God, help me to see how all of Your promises fit together and how well You have already acted to secure my portion in Your Son, my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Grant me all diligence in my calling of service to You. Amen.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON **Chs 18–19** This section begins and ends with the mention of the tabernacle at Shiloh (18:1; 19:51). Remaining tribal allotments are ordered around the mothers of the tribal patriarchs: Rachel (Jacob's favorite wife) had Benjamin; Leah had Simeon, Zebulun, and Issachar; Zilpah had Asher; Bilhah had Naphtali and Dan.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 18:1 *whole congregation*. See note, 23:2. *Shiloh*. Located in territory of Ephraim, 20 mi N of Jerusalem, between Shechem and Bethel. See color map 1. After the tribes of Joseph settled all the issues of their allotment at Gilgal, the process shifted to this new location. Shiloh was accessible to the rest of Israel. *subdued*. Israel had sufficient control of the country, and specifically of this area, so this location was free from Canaanite threat. See p 495.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 18:3 *put off going in to take possession*. Some hesitation had developed concerning finishing the job of occupying the land. There was a lack of claiming and also settling on the land.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 18:4 *They shall write a description*. Surveys were to be taken of the quantity and quality of the land. Indicates that a significant number of Israelites were literate. See pp 1081–83.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 18:5 *seven portions*. Surveyors were to determine how best to divide the remaining land, according to Nu 26:52–56, so more populous tribes received sufficient land. Their estimations may not have yielded exactly equal portions in terms of acreage or population capacity.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 18:6 The 21 surveyors described and divided the land. Lots were then cast to choose which tribe would receive each division. *cast lots … before the* LORD. See note, 14:2. God would direct the drawing so the portion selected for each tribe matched their needs.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 18:7 *Levites have no portion*. See note, 13:14.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 18:8 *cast lots … before the* LORD *in Shiloh*. In vv 4–6, the charge is to all the tribes assembled. Here, Joshua repeats the task to the three representatives from each of the remaining seven tribes.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 18:9 *a book*. Scroll or tablet. Can also be translated "document." *by towns*. Towns or cities would be a key defining factor to the land, indicating boundaries, water sources, and which lands went with a given town.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 18:10 It seems that all went according to the instructions Joshua had outlined and repeated in vv 4–8. *cast lots*. See note, 14:2.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 18:1–10 Settling the land of Canaan was not an overnight event. God's servant Joshua needed to remind, encourage, and direct the people in this matter, lest they become negligent in following God's promises to their completion. Take heart! God will not let His promised blessings go unused or unclaimed. • When we have received abundantly from You, O Lord, help us realize the fullness of Your blessings. Fill our borders with the peace and protection Your mercy provides through Your Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 18:11–28 *Benjamin*. The other son of Jacob's favorite wife. See note, chs 18–19. These 26 cities are located between Ephraim and Judah. See map, p 365. On size and allotments, see note, v 5.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 18:16 *Valley of the Son of Hinnom*. On the south and west of Jerusalem. "Son of" is later dropped, and name is later transliterated "Gehenna," a place where children were sacrificed to Molech by fire (Jer 7:31; 19:4–6; 32:35). See map, p 493.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 18:28 *Jebus (that is, Jerusalem)*. See notes, 15:8, 63.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON **Ch 18** Benjamin, one of the smallest tribes, receives its allotment between Judah and Ephraim, the two most powerful tribes. Benjamin's land would become the heartland of the kingdom of Israel. No matter how small we may seem to others in the Church or the world, we can take confidence, because the Lord makes plans for us and promises our salvation. • Lord, teach me my place in the service of Your kingdom, and strengthen me for greater service. Amen.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 19:1–9 Lists 17 cities allotted to Simeon. See map, p 365.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 19:1 *midst … of the people of Judah*. See note, v 9.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 19:2 *Beersheba*. Important place in Abraham's life (Gn 21:22–34); later, part of the description of the entirety of Israel, from north to south (cf Jgs 20:1; 1Sm 3:20; 2Sm 3:10).

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 19:6–7 *Sharuhen*. Mentioned as the location of an Egyptian garrison in Egyptian military texts, which record a rebellion taking place north of this region during the fifteenth century BC. Egyptians were active in southern Canaan and along the coast up to Megiddo. *thirteen cities … four cities*. In the second census (Nu 26), Simeon is listed as having fewer clans and less than half the population of Benjamin, thus Simeon receives fewer cities than Benjamin.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 19:9 *Simeon … in the midst*. Note Jacob's curse that Levi and Simeon (Gn 49:5–7) would be scattered among other tribes. In Levi's case, this meant receiving cities among all the other tribes; in Simeon's case, it meant dwelling in Judah. When the kingdom later became divided, the tribe of Simeon remained with Judah (David's tribe), along with parts of Benjamin (1Ki 11:11–13).

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 19:1–9 Simeon's clans receive land and cities within the boundaries of Judah. Consequences of the rash actions of Simeon and Levi were visited upon their descendants (see note, v 9). Yet, there is still blessing on the tribe of Simeon, for they are not without an inheritance. They come under the care of their brother, according to God's mercy. • Thank You, Lord, that You have a place for all who repent. All who believe and put their hope in You will not be disappointed but will receive a place in Your kingdom. Amen.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 19:10–16 Lists 12 cities allotted to Zebulun, with boundary descriptions. See map, p 365.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 19:15 *Bethlehem*. Not the famous ancestral home of David and Christ, but a city northwest of Nazareth. Though Nazareth was the most notable town in this territory, it is never mentioned in the OT.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 19:10–16 The disbursement of inheritance continues with Zebulun. This tribe receives so little mention in Scripture that the people are virtually anonymous. Yet, their territory would be the first to hear the Gospel preached from the life of Jesus, as Isaiah prophesied (Is 9:1; Mt 4:12–16). • Lord, help us to remember that our peace lies not in the permanent possession of a parcel of land but in the promises You gave us concerning the One born in Bethlehem of Judea, raised in Nazareth of Zebulun. Amen.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 19:17–23 Lists 16 cities allotted to Issachar, with border descriptions. See map, p 365.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 19:17–23 Issachar receives as inheritance the area west of the Jordan and south of the Sea of Chinnereth. Issachar receives even less attention in Scripture than Zebulun. Yet, the Lord prepared their eternal inheritance, for Ezekiel later prophesied that they would have a gate to the new Jerusalem, as would believers from the other tribes (Ezk 48:33). • Father, You have promised to be with us and see us through to the eternal inheritance prepared for us in Your Son, our risen Lord and Savior. By His grace, open to us the gates of heaven. Amen.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 19:24–31 Lists 22 cities allotted to Asher, with border descriptions. See map, p 365.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 19:28 *Sidon the Great*. Old Canaanite and then Phoenician city on the coast (Gn 10:15) that was later the source of serious temptation to Israel, esp through Jezebel, wife of King Ahab. She was the daughter of Ethbaal, king of Sidon (1Ki 16:31).

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 19:24–31 Asher's allotment runs along the Great Sea north of Mount Carmel, up to the pagan city of Sidon. By giving this border/coastal territory to Asher, the Lord gives the tribe a great challenge, which they would not properly meet. When the Lord challenges us, He also equips us by His good Word and Spirit. Praise God! The region of Asher became a haven for the Gospel through the ministry of Jesus and the apostles (Mt 15:21–28). • Father, we often dwell too near temptations and do not rely on You to overcome them. Grant us strength to avoid temptation and to proclaim Your Son as the Savior of all. Amen.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 19:32–39 Lists 19 cities allotted to Naphtali, with border descriptions. See map, p 365.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 19:38 *nineteen cities*. See note, 15:20–63.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 19:32–39 Naphtali's portion and inheritance to the north would be hit hard by invading armies but would also be among the first to hear the preaching of Christ (Is 9:1; Mt 4:15). • Lord, make our way glorious, for the sake of Christ. Amen.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 19:40–48 Lists 19 cities allotted to Dan, with border descriptions. See map, p 365.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 19:47 *lost to them*. Tribe was unable to move into its allotment by the Great Sea and sought out other, unclaimed land far to the north. Like Naphtali, Dan had a challenging inheritance and was furiously

resisted by the Amorites (Jgs 1:34). They soon fell into idolatry and remained in it (Jgs 18).

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 19:40–48 Dan's failure to gain its inheritance often stands for the evil from which we need the salvation of the Lord (Gn 49:16–18; note Dan's absence from the list in Rv 7:4–8). When we fail and fall into sin, we will be tempted to give up completely on what we know is good and right. Yet, when we are at our lowest, the Lord remembers us in His mercy. • "Lord, keep us steadfast in Your Word; Curb those who by deceit or sword Would wrest the kingdom from Your Son And bring to naught all He has done." Amen. (*LSB* 655:1)

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 19:49–51 Last allotment is to Joshua, of the tribe of Ephraim, and is within the territory granted to Ephraim. See Caleb's special treatment (14:6–9; 15:13). Cf Nu 14:24–30; Dt 1:36–38.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 19:49 *Israel gave*. Tribes show gratitude.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 19:50 *command of the* LORD. Emphasizing properness of the allotment.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 19:51 *Eleazar the priest*. See note, 22:13. *by lot*. See note, 14:2.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 19:49–51 As a strong leader, Joshua receives his portion last! The allotment of land began with Caleb, one of the faithful spies. It ends with Joshua, the other faithful spy. All of this was done with God having a firm hand in the proceedings and the people trusting that He would deal generously with them. • We thank You, Lord, for Your faithful dealings with us. Teach us how to put You, not ourselves, first in all things. Amen.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON **Ch 20** No examples in the OT of anyone making use of the refuge afforded by these cities. We may assume that Israel used this arrangement during times of covenant faithfulness but perhaps ignored it when unfaithful. Even the Passover was neglected for years (2Ki 23:21–23).

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 20:3 *manslayer*. Form of Hbr verb used in the Fifth Commandment, "You shall not murder" (Ex 20:13; Dt 5:17). *avenger of blood*. Hbr *go'el*. In other contexts, translated "redeemer" (cf Ru 3:12; Jb 19:25). Life belongs to God, who has authority in issues of life and death. In the OT, He exercised His authority under this arrangement involving an "avenger of blood" (cf Gn 4:10; 9:6; Dt 32:35). Both OT and NT affirm the practice of capital punishment (see note, Gn 9:6; Rm 12:19). The high value

of each human life under the Creator is affirmed by requiring the payment of the highest price if a life is taken unjustly. Ancient documents attest that avengers existed also in Mesopotamia at the time of Joshua. They exist today in countries with strong tribal identity. See note, 1Ki 2:31.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 20:4 *stand at the entrance … explain his case*. See p 792. The preliminary hearing; the full trial took place inside the city (v 6). *elders*. Distinguished from Israel's "heads," "judges," and "officers" (23:2; 24:1). See note, Ex 3:16.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 20:5 Those who unintentionally kill another have a God-ordained legal right to safety in a city of refuge.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 20:6 *until the death of him who is high priest*. The death of the high priest, intercessor for all Israel, evidently restored harmony and signaled the safe release of the manslayer to his former hometown. Death of the OT high priest anticipated the death of the great High Priest, Jesus Christ, whose blood makes full atonement for all. *the manslayer may return to his own town*. Assures safety for the unintentional manslayer. The avenger of blood has no legal right to harm him.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 20:7–8 Lists 6 of the 48 cities the Levites would receive by lot from the inheritance of the other 12 tribes (cf ch 21; Nu 35:1–8). Ultimately, God is the "owner" of these cities and all the tribal allotments (Lv 25:23). The fact that these were Levite cities places a special burden for judgment and justice on the priestly tribe. The locations of these six cities (see map, p 365), no more than c 30 mi from any spot in the land, made it possible for one fleeing to arrive at a city of refuge within hours. The six cities lie in a horseshoe pattern beginning in the northwest and ending in the northeast.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 20:7 Only these three cities are newly appointed here by Joshua.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 20:8 Cf Dt 4:43 for Moses' earlier appointment of these three cities.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 20:9 *stranger sojourning*. Native and nonnative Israelites had equal rights in regard to the safety afforded by the cities of refuge. Cf Ex 22:21; 23:9; Lv 19:33–34; Dt 10:17–19.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON **Ch 20** At the Lord's direction, Joshua appoints six cities of refuge, demonstrating the Lord's desire for both justice and mercy. Today, through Jesus' perfect life and atoning death, our God of grace "is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble" (Ps 46:1). •

Dear God of love, "we flee for refuge to Your infinite mercy, seeking and imploring Your grace for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ." Amen. (*LSB*, p 184)

JOSHUA—NOTE ON **Ch 21** In his curse on Simeon and Levi for their fierce anger, Jacob prophesied that Levi would be scattered and dispersed in Israel (Gn 49:5–7). Those words are fulfilled as the Levites receive their cities scattered among the 12 tribes. The Levites living in their 48 cities (v 41) throughout the land serve as roving teachers of God's people as they watch over the Word and covenant of the Lord (cf Dt 33:8–11; 2Ch 17:8–9). See note, 20:7–8. At the tabernacle, and later at the temple, the priestly Levites from the line of Aaron offered the sacrifices that pointed forward to the sacrifice of Jesus.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 21:1 *heads of the fathers' houses*. Chiefs of the various clans within a tribe. See note, 22:14.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 21:2 Cf Nu 35:1–8.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 21:3–40 Cities for the Levites come proportionately from the inheritance of the other tribes. Larger tribes give up more cities than the smaller tribes (Nu 35:8).

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 21:4–5 *Kohathites*. Kohath was one of Levi's three sons. (The other sons were Gershon and Merari.) Moses and Aaron were from Kohath's line. Aaron's line of Kohathites was the priestly line. Aaron's line thus receives cities near the future site of the temple, where they will serve, namely, Jerusalem. The nonpriestly Kohathites (v 5) did not need to receive cities near Jerusalem because they would not necessarily serve at the temple each day.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 21:43–45 Encapsulates the theme of Jsh: the Lord is faithful and fulfills His promise to give the land. A tone of praise and thanksgiving resonates as the author reflects Joshua's own words (23:14; cf Jesus' words in Mt 5:18).

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 21:43 *the* LORD *gave to Israel all the land*. Israel has an expanse of land from Mount Hermon to the Negeb and from the Great Sea to the Arabian Desert. *took possession of it*. See pp 338–40.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 21:44 *rest*. Cf 1:15; Dt 3:20. The Lord has given Israel "rest" by defeating their enemies, providing security, and giving them land after 40 years of wandering. This rest anticipates the more valuable rest found only in Jesus and received through faith (Heb 4:3, 8; see note, Jsh 1:12–13.) *Not one of all their enemies had withstood them*. Sure to His

promises, the Lord provided complete victory over enemies, as Israel acted in faith. Without faith in Him, Israel would experience defeat, as ch 7 demonstrated. Even that initial defeat was erased by the victory of ch 8 as Israel repented. Jsh 13:1–7; 15:63 show that even land given by the Lord and allotted to Israel needs the continuing faithful action of His covenant people. Failure to rest on the Lord's promises of victory would lead to future defeat. Yet, that does not detract from the Lord's complete victory to date. See pp 338–40.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 21:45 *had failed*. Lit, "had fallen." The promises of the land are God's promises to Joshua in 1:2–6 and, still earlier, His original promise to Abraham (Gn 12:2–3; 13:14–17).

JOSHUA—NOTE ON **Ch 21** The Lord provides for the tribe of Levi, and with that, the author proclaims with praise that the Lord has kept all of His promises. We are not to become attached to the things of this world as though they have lasting value. The Lord provided the Levites with earthly cities that anticipated a better city, a heavenly one (Heb 11:16). Likewise, He promises that as we seek first His kingdom and His righteousness through Christ, He will grant us what we need for this life (Mt 6:33). • Heavenly Father, release us from worries and undue attachment to earthly things, so we might find our true joy in You and the enduring city awaiting us through Christ. Amen.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 22:1 The 2½ tribes that had received their land on the east side of the Jordan River before the conquest of Canaan west of the river. Cf Nu 32; Dt 3:12–20; Jsh 13:8–32.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 22:2 *Moses the servant of the* LORD. See note, 1:1.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 22:3 *keep the charge*. Lit, "the keeping of the command"; i.e., their "duty." Cf 1:12–15.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 22:4 *rest*. See note, 21:44. *tents*. Hbr can also refer to more permanent "homes," probably the meaning here.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 22:5 Summary of how Israel is to respond in faith under the Mosaic covenant. *love … walk … keep … cling … serve*. These verbs guide believing Israelites in their response of faith. Israel's actions flow from the Lord's prior deep affection displayed through His acts of deliverance. (Cf 1Jn 4:19.)

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 22:6–7 *blessed*. Blessing in its highest sense invokes the name of the Lord for spiritual and physical well-being. Joshua may have

used a liturgical formula, such as the Aaronic blessing of Nu 6:22–27, or v 8 may quote the actual words of the blessing. See note, v 8.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 22:8 If these are the actual words of Joshua's blessing, he gives the tribes a peaceful dismissal (like our "Depart in peace") and speaks of their being able to share their wealth (giving to others is a blessed activity and a blessing for the giver, Ac 20:35). *wealth*. Spoils of war from Jericho had been devoted to destruction at God's command (ch 6). But thereafter, Israel was allowed to keep the spoils from their victories and amassed a great quantity of their enemies' livestock, metals, and clothing. *your brothers*. Fellow tribesmen who had stayed behind in Gilead, east of the Jordan, to protect their families and livestock.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 22:9 *Canaan*. Land west of the Jordan. *Gilead*. Land east of the Jordan. See color map 2.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 22:1–9 In the first of his three farewell sermons, Joshua dismisses the eastern tribes after they faithfully finished the work they promised to do. Commitment, responsibility, and faithfulness to our word are not always present among us. The commitment and faithfulness of the Lord in saving us from our enemies is proven by the cross of Christ, who grants us faith and faithfulness. • When we finish the tasks You give us, "Lord, dismiss us with Your blessing, Fill our hearts with joy and peace; Let us each, Your love possessing, Triumph in redeeming grace. O refresh us; O refresh us, Trav'ling through this wilderness." Amen. (*LSB* 924:1)

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 22:10 *altar of imposing size*. Lit, "large in regard to appearance." The altar may have been large to make it clear to the other tribes that they were not trying to hide a small, secret altar.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 22:12 *whole assembly … gathered … to make war against them*. Cf Dt 13:12–18, which tells what Israel is to do if fellow Israelites start to worship other gods. In their assumption about the eastern tribes' action, the western tribes are following this command.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 22:13 *Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest*. Eleazar is the son of Aaron (Ex 6:23) and the high priest at the time of Joshua. Phinehas is thus the grandson of Aaron; he will be the high priest at the death of Eleazar. First mention of Phinehas in Jsh. Cf Nu 25:10–13; Ps 106:28–31 for his righteous actions earlier.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 22:14 *chiefs*. Tribe of Levi is represented by Phinehas. The 9½ tribes each have a representative chief (including a chief

from the half-tribe of Manasseh west of the river). Thus there are 10 chiefs plus Phinehas.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 22:15 *Gilead*. See note, v 9.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 22:16 *whole congregation*. They speak as though the eastern tribes have already rejected the true God and are no longer part of the congregation. *breach of faith*. See note, 7:1. *rebellion*. Allegation (not the reality) is that by building the altar, the eastern tribes have revolted against the Lord.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 22:17 *Peor*. Lit, "the sin *of* Peor"; refers to Israel's evil action recorded in Nu 25 involving "Baal of Peor." Baal was the Canaanite male fertility god, said to be the son of the Canaanite's chief god, El, and his wife, Asherah. *plague*. Refers to the divine punishment described in Nu 25:8–9.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 22:18 *tomorrow He will be angry with the whole congregation of Israel*. The Lord deals with His people as one body; therefore, all the tribes of Israel will feel His just anger if the 2½ tribes have rebelled against Him. Thus, the 9½ tribes seek to end the problem, even by means of war, so they are not affected by God's wrath because of collective retribution.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 22:19–20 Western tribes extend a generous offer to the eastern tribes; they can return to the west side of the Jordan and even take some of the western tribes' land for their own. They reason that losing some land is preferable to losing God's covenant and experiencing His judgment. The delegation believes the tribes can reconcile the matter peacefully.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 22:19 *unclean*. Western tribes reason that the eastern tribes might consider the land east of the Jordan to be spiritually unclean, perhaps due to the absence of the tabernacle there. The tabernacle is the place of various rites prescribed by the Lord to take away spiritual uncleanness. *the Lord 's land*. Land west of the Jordan, where the tabernacle, the dwelling place of the Lord, was. The Law of Moses had said that the Lord would choose one place where He would cause His name to dwell (Dt 12:5, 11); that was the tabernacle and later the temple. Those words prepared for the redeeming work of Jesus, the new temple (Jn 2:18–22). *other than the altar of the Lord*. The altar of the Lord, prescribed in Ex 27, was at the tabernacle, presently at Shiloh, west of the Jordan.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 22:20 *he did not perish alone for his iniquity*. Probably refers to the 36 Israelite soldiers who died at the first attempt to capture Ai (7:5); they died at Canaanite hands because of Achan's guilt. Less likely that this refers to the death of Achan's family, since the Hbr of 7:24–25 is ambiguous as to whether the family of Achan was executed along with him (see note, 7:25).
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 22:22 In their vehement and solemn oath of denial, the eastern tribes invoke three names of the true God: El (The Mighty One), Elohim (God), and Yahweh (the LORD). See p 1227.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 22:23 *offerings*. See pp 170–71; cf Lv 1:3–3:17; 6:14–23; 7:11–18. Dt 12:13–14 gives an explicit command not to offer burnt offerings anywhere except at the Lord's one designated location: His tabernacle and later the Jerusalem temple. The offerings at Mount Ebal (8:30–35) were by special divine command and thus did not violate the prohibition. The offering of sacrifices only at the Lord's one altar points forward to the once for all sacrifice of Jesus on the one cross at Jerusalem.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 22:26–27 *nor for sacrifice, but to be a witness*. Purpose of their altar is the same as that of the heap of stones that Jacob and Laban set up in Gn 31:43–52: a witness between them. It was never intended to function as a sacrificial altar.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 22:27 *the service of the LORD*. Worship that God prescribed, esp in Lv. *in His presence*. Emphasizes that the location of their service would not be at the replica altar they have just built but at the tabernacle at Shiloh (18:1). Cf v 29.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 22:28 *copy of the altar of the LORD*. Replica altar near the Jordan is to serve as a type of the true altar at the tabernacle at Shiloh.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 22:30 *heard … it was good in their eyes*. Mixed metaphor, common in languages when idioms are used.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 22:31 *the LORD is in our midst*. Refers to His gracious presence in Israel, not to His omnipresence. Peaceful resolution proves that the Lord has been present in grace with the whole nation. The Lord is present according to His grace with His covenant people through His OT means of grace: His Word, ark, tabernacle, altar where atonement takes place, and His sacred institutions, such as circumcision. *you have delivered the people*. If the original allegations had been correct, the hand of

the Lord would have fallen in judgment on Israel. By not committing sin, they spared Israel that judgment.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 22:33 *report*. Concerning what the altar truly meant and about the peaceful resolution. *blessed God*. See p 842.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 22:34 *Witness*. Even inanimate objects can serve as witnesses or reminders. The replica altar silently witnesses to the truth that the real altar resides at the tabernacle and that the eastern tribes are a part of Israel, though separated from the tabernacle by a river. On covenant witnesses, see p 127.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 22:10–34 The misunderstanding about the altar is peacefully resolved. Believers still carry their old sinful natures; therefore, misunderstandings or false accusations sometimes flare up among them. But the power of God's Word and Spirit working in our hearts can bring about genuine reconciliation and peace. • When we presume guilt on the part of others, lead us, O Lord, to listen humbly and to speak the truth in love. May Your name be blessed as Your Spirit cleans our ears of unfounded skepticism and our tongues of loveless criticism. Amen.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 23:1 *A long time afterward*. Probably c 1375 BC, based on the age of Caleb (see note, 14:10) and other chronological information from Scripture, archaeology, and astronomy. See pp 338–40.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 23:2 *elders … heads … judges … officers*. Leaders of Israelite society. As representatives, they could properly be called "all Israel." Cf 8:33. See p 228. *officers*. See note, 1:10. *I am now old*. Joshua died at age 110 (24:29).

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 23:3 *the* LORD *your God who has fought for you*. Theme of Jsh is that Israel's success was the result of the Lord's victories for His people (cf 24:2–13).

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 23:4 *those nations that remain*. Cf 13:1–7 for the land still to be conquered. Nations of Canaan have been hamstrung, but much work remains if Israel is to take full possession and hold on to the land that has been allotted. See pp 338–40.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 23:6 *be very strong*. Joshua borrows the Lord's language (1:7–8). Strength to carry out God's will comes from God through the power He gives in His Word (cf Php 2:13). *Book of the Law of Moses*. First five books of the Bible; portion of the inspired Scriptures completed by the time of Joshua. See p 5. *neither to the right … left*. See note, 2Ch 34:2.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 23:7 *may not mix*. Intermarriage with heathen nations was prohibited (Ex 34:13–16). The real threat to Israel in mixing with heathen nations is spiritual, not political. *make mention … swear … serve … bow down*. Each term can refer to worship.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 23:9 *the LORD has driven out*. Chs 1–12 attest to the Lord's victories for Israel, fulfilling His promises of Dt 4:38; 7:1; 9:1; 11:23. *driven out*. Verb does not mean simply "remove to another location," but rather "destroy."
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 23:10–11 By accenting what the Lord has done for His people, Joshua motivates Israel to love the Lord, who first loved Israel (1Jn 4:19).
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 23:10 *puts to flight a thousand*. What God promises, He fulfills, no matter the seeming odds against it. Gr Nys: "Victory in battle being due not to numbers, but to righteousness" (*NPNF* 2 5:250).
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 23:12 *make marriages*. Intermarriage with unbelievers is perilous because the unbelieving spouse may seduce the believer into abandoning the faith and cause destruction (Dt 7:4). Cf 1Co 7:12–16; 2Co 6:14.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 23:13 *these nations*. Canaanites will afflict Israel with spiritual and physical disaster if she turns away from the Lord and His covenant. *a snare and a trap … a whip on your sides … thorns in your eyes*. Cf Ex 34:12. *good ground*. The ground is good as God's gift, the place where Christ would carry out His ministry to give all believers an eternally good inheritance.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 23:14 *go the way of all the earth*. Because the whole world fell into sin, this is an apt phrase for "to die." *not one word has failed*. See note, 21:43–45.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 23:15–16 Blessings and curses as found in Dt 28. For her own good, Israel must see the tragic picture of life without the Lord and His covenant. Cf Lv 26:14–39; Dt 28:15–68; 29:18–28 for earlier warnings of disaster for covenant rejection. In breaking the covenant, Israel's name would be added to the list of nations driven from the land (cf Lv 18:28). This came to pass in 722 BC, when idolatrous northern Israel was destroyed, and in 587 BC, when Judah was defeated and exiled to Babylon.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON **Ch 23** In the second of Joshua's three farewell sermons, he addresses the leaders of Israel with warnings against serving

other gods and reminds them of the Lord's faithfulness and victories for Israel. What God threatens to those who reject Him and His salvation will certainly come to pass. God has not failed to fulfill even one word of all the good things He has promised. We can trust all the promises of His Word. • Lord, cause us to know that You are always faithful to Your Word, so that we heed Your warnings and trust Your gracious promises. Amen.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 24:1 *Shechem*. At the heart of the land; rich in salvation history (e.g., Gn 12:6–7). *elders … heads … judges … officers*. See note, 23:2. *presented themselves before God*. Probably before the tabernacle and ark of the covenant, as divinely appointed vehicles of God's presence (see note, v 26; see also p 495). Scene recalls Ex 19:17, when Israel stood in covenant assembly before God at Mount Sinai with Moses as their mediator.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 24:2–13 Records essentials of salvation history from Abraham to Joshua, accenting God's grace. He does not choose people who are righteous in themselves. In His unmerited favor, He calls sinners. Full account appears in Gn 11:27 through Jsh 12. *I*. See note, vv 14–28.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 24:2–3 *served other gods*. Abraham and his family were serving other gods when God "took" him and gave him His gracious promises. Later Jewish interpreters misread the idolatry as applying to Terah and Nahor but not to Abraham. They regarded Abraham's purity as the reason for God's choice of Abraham rather than His grace. Mel: "Not even Abraham, the father of all believers, along with his leading people, was immune to the abomination of idolatry, but when God wanted to keep him safe, He was compelled to call him from the deep mire of idolatry" (Chem, *LTh* 2:322).

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 24:2 *beyond the Euphrates*. East of the Euphrates in Mesopotamia ("between the rivers"), where Abraham and his family first lived, specifically in Ur and Haran. *Nahor*. Nahor and Haran were brothers of Abraham (Abram). Cf Gn 11:26. *other gods*. People of Ur, from whom Abraham came, had invented some 4,000 gods.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 24:3 *made his offspring many*. Abraham and Sarah's many offspring include the hundreds of thousands who listen to Joshua speak here at Shechem. Cf Nu 26.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 24:4 *down to Egypt*. Background to years of bondage, from which God, in grace and power, redeemed His chosen people.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 24:7 *made the sea come upon them*. Cf Ex 15:4–5, 10. *your eyes*. May be understood in the sense of "the eyes of the Israelites as a nation" (e.g., Americans might say collectively, "We landed on the moon in 1969"). Only the eyes of the oldest Israelites literally saw what the Lord did to the Egyptians (cf Nu 14:29–30). *lived in the wilderness a long time*. The 40 years described in Ex 16–Nu 21.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 24:8 *into your hand*. Graphic expression for "I caused you to defeat them." See "hand," p 842.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 24:9 *Balaam the son of Beor to curse you*. Cf Nu 22–24. Under the influence of the Lord, Balaam instead blessed Israel with four beautiful oracles. He even saw the future advent of Jesus Christ as a "star" and "scepter" (Nu 24:17).

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 24:10 *he blessed you*. See note, v 9. *I delivered you*. Balaam's plan to curse was not effective because God promised to bless Israel. Later, Balaam himself was killed by God's people (Nu 31:8).

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 24:12 *I sent the hornet*. Probably a colorful metaphor for the dread that gripped the Canaanites (2:11); cf Ex 23:27–28, where "terror" and "hornet" seem to be parallel. Alternatively, since the hornet was a symbol of Lower Egypt and since Egyptian raids into Canaan prior to Israel's entry had weakened the Canaanites, Egypt's army could figuratively be "the hornet." Of course a literal "hornet" is also possible. The God who had summoned frogs, gnats, flies, and locusts to plague Egyptians could also gather swarms of hornets.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 24:13 God's pure grace toward Israel is the message. Both the defeat of the Canaanites (v 12) and the life that Israel enjoyed thereafter came by God's unmerited favor, not by the power or merit of Israelites. Cf Dt 6:10–12 for Moses' exhortation, which uses much of the same thought and vocabulary as this verse.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 24:1–13 At Shechem, Joshua summarizes for Israel the history of salvation by grace, from the call of Abraham to the victories under Joshua. Likewise, we deserve none of the good that God gives us. God Himself in Christ has defeated our great enemies: sin, Satan, and death. He calls us by the Gospel of Christ and gives us an everlasting heritage, kingdom, and life. • Dear Lord of grace, make me know through Your Word that real success is not by my effort but by Your cross. Cause gratitude, love, and loyalty to well up in me as I rehearse Your victories for me and Your blessings to me. Amen.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 24:14–28 The Lord spoke in the first person through Joshua in vv 2–13. Now in v 14, Joshua himself speaks.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 24:14 *fear the* LORD. See p 1001. *Put away the gods*. Chem: "The Israelites in Egypt were accustomed to the practice of idolatry" (*LTh* 2:373). Although 23:8 and 24:31 emphasize Israel's faithfulness, this verse speaks of idols their ancestors served and the temptation they caused. Not mentioned here are the immediate consequences of unfaithfulness, such as those that followed the sin of Achan. Instead, Joshua demands throwing away all false gods of the heart—anything that keeps Israel from serving the Lord alone.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 24:15–16 If Israel rejects the Lord, she can choose between two groups of worthless gods—Mesopotamian or Canaanite. This is like saying to a hungry person: If you reject this banquet of delicacies, you may choose between garbage or dung. Joshua's statement evokes holy horror from Israel. *we will serve the* LORD. Even if Joshua and his house have to stand alone against all Israel and the surrounding pagan nations, as he and Caleb did earlier (Nu 14:1–9), they will serve the Lord. This is a bold profession of faith in the Lord and commitment to His covenant.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 24:18 *the* LORD *drove out*. See note, 23:9. *we also will serve the* LORD, *for He is our God*. People of Israel fashion their confession after the words of Joshua in v 15. Their commitment to the Lord is the same as his.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 24:19 Joshua's response to the people's good confession is surprising. Here are some possible explanations: (1) He is testing the sincerity of Israel with the intent of strengthening their commitment; (2) he is trying to break down all ideas that sinful Israel can remain loyal by their own power so that they rest on the Lord's power alone; (3) he may have been given a revelation of the idolatry that will bring God's curse on Israel in the future; or (4) he may be addressing unbelievers hiding within faithful Israel. The second alternative seems most likely.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 24:20 *He will turn*. Becoming justifiably hostile toward people who previously enjoyed His favor. *harm and consume you*. God is holy and thus never the source of evil, but the execution of His anger brings disaster upon sinful people. What God had done to Israel's enemies, He will do to Israel if she forsakes Him. The threat is a warning against apostasy.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 24:21 People seem to cut off Joshua midspeech with a holy no! Their resolve in vv 16–18 remains unshaken here.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 24:22 *you have chosen the LORD, to serve Him*. The choice here is not made by unbelievers who are choosing the Lord for their salvation; this is impossible for unbelievers because of their naturally sinful condition (Rm 8:6–7; 1Co 2:14; Eph 2:1). This is the choice of believers who, like Joshua himself, are led by the Holy Spirit and are determined not to abandon the faith God has given them.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 24:23 *put away the foreign gods*. Temptations for Israel would be strong from the foreign gods among them and the thoughts about them lurking in their hearts. *heart*. In its abstract sense, the richest biblical term for the totality of the nonphysical part of a person. Most OT usages of "heart" refer to one or all of the personality features that we often call emotion, thought, and will.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 24:25 *made a covenant*. Renewal of the Mosaic covenant, which the Lord set in place at Mount Sinai. Renewed covenant will continue to serve as (1) a mirror for Israelites so that they know their sin, receive atonement in the sacrifices instituted by God, and trust in God's gracious covenant first given to Abraham; (2) a sanctifying hedge to set Israel apart from all other nations by its righteous ordinances; and (3) a shadow or prefiguration that pictures and previews the new and better covenant of pure grace in Christ. *statutes and rules*. Hbr terms are singular. The idea is probably the one covenant pledge that Israel will serve the Lord alone, as the people just stated in v 24. See p 971.
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 24:26 *wrote these words*. Author does not reveal which words. We can surmise that they include at least the terms, charges, and promises of ch 24 that will keep the conditional Mosaic covenant in force for Israel. Some think "these words" refers to the substance of Jsh, with the exception of 24:29–33. *the Book of the Law of God*. Implies that these written words receive canonical status as the authoritative Word of God along with the Books of Moses. See p 5. *a large stone*. See note, 4:5–7. Archaeologists have found the remains of a temple at Shechem that included a huge upright stone (*massebah*). *terebinth*. See note, Jgs 6:11. *sanctuary of the LORD*. The tabernacle, which was now at Shechem, moved there from Shiloh (18:1).
JOSHUA—NOTE ON 24:27 *this stone shall be a witness*. The same term for "witness" appears in Gn 21:30 and Gn 31:52; in the latter verse it refers

to a heap of stones and a stone pillar that attested to the covenant between Jacob and Laban. There is no hint in the OT of animistic ideas concerning stone witnesses and memorials, as though they housed spirits. See notes, 22:34; Gn 28:18.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 24:28 *every man to his inheritance*. Only a handful of individual allotments are recorded in Jsh (14:6–15; 15:16–19; 17:3–6; 19:49–50; 24:33). Usually the allotment is to each tribe, "according to their clans" (e.g., 18:28).

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 24:14–28 As the Mosaic covenant is formally renewed at Shechem, Joshua and the people boldly profess their faithfulness to the God who redeemed them and gave them victory. In our weakness and fear of the world, we may be hesitant to witness to the God who has given us our eternal inheritance. Pray for courage. His saving grace and His Spirit can enable us to boldly confess His name. • "All who confess Christ's holy name, Give God the praise and glory. Let all who know His pow'r proclaim Aloud the wondrous story. Cast ev'ry idol from its throne, For God is God, and He alone: To God all praise and glory!" Amen. (*LSB* 819:5)

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 24:29 *servant of the* LORD. See note, 1:1. *110 years old*. Joseph had also died at age 110 (Gn 50:26). Egyptian writings show that 110 was considered the ideal number of years on this earth.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 24:30 Joshua's burial in the Promised Land attests that the Lord is faithful to His promises. *Timnath-serah*. Cf Jgs 2:9.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 24:31 *the elders who outlived Joshua*. Those in leadership positions who were a generation younger than Joshua and Caleb, the two longest surviving men in Israel. *had known all the work that the* LORD *did for Israel*. Some elders had experienced as children the Lord's work at the exodus from Egypt and His care of Israel in the wilderness. More had observed His mighty victories over the Canaanites and His allotment of their inheritance in the Promised Land. The Lord's acts of grace and power motivated a generation for faithful service.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 24:32 *bones of Joseph*. Cf Gn 50:24–26. Joseph's instructions concerning his bones (four centuries earlier) were an expression of his faith in God's promises. Now, the burial of his bones in the Promised Land at Shechem stresses that faith in God's promises is never misplaced (cf Ac 7:15–17). *buried them at Shechem*. This is where Joseph was looking for his brothers before his abduction hundreds of years earlier (Gn 37:13). Now, he is returned to Shechem at the center of the Promised Land, also at

the center of the land allotted to his two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh. Culturally, burial on a piece of property indicated ownership. Maintaining the family tomb showed evidence of the family's property rights. *hundred pieces of money*. See ESV note. Not coins, but a common unit of weight. Term appears only in the oldest books of the Bible (cf Gn 33:19, Jb 42:11). Minted coins came much later. See note, Ezr 2:69.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 24:33 *Eleazar*. Important in the pages of Jsh as the priestly officiant at the allotting of the land (14:1; 17:4; 19:51; 21:1). His name at the end emphasizes the theme of the fulfillment of the Lord's promises.

JOSHUA—NOTE ON 24:29–33 Three graves in the Promised Land (of Joshua, Joseph, and Eleazar) attest to the faithfulness of the Lord in fulfilling His promises. "Sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned" (Rm 5:12). "If, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ" (Rm 5:17). • We praise You, dear Lord, that when we lie buried in the ground, we also lie buried in Your sure promises of the resurrection to eternal life, through Jesus, the new Joshua. He lived, died, and rose so that after we die, we might be raised and live with Him forever. Amen.

Judges

Judges 1 | Judges 2 | Judges 3 | Judges 4 | Judges 5 | Judges 6 | Judges 7 | Judges 8 | Judges 9 | Judges 10 | Judges 11 | Judges 12 | Judges 13 | Judges 14 | Judges 15 | Judges 16 | Judges 17 | Judges 18 | Judges 19 | Judges 20 | Judges 21

- Introduction to Judges
  - Overview
  - Reading Judges
  - Luther on Judges
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

The Continuing Conquest of Canaan

1 [1] ‡ † After the death of Joshua, the people of Israel inquired of the Lord, “Who shall go up first for us against the Canaanites, to fight against them?” [2] The Lord said, “Judah shall go up; behold, I have given the land into his hand.” [3] And Judah said to Simeon his brother, “Come up with me into the territory allotted to me, that we may fight against the Canaanites. And I likewise will go with you into the territory allotted to you.” So Simeon went with him. [4] † Then Judah went up and the Lord gave the Canaanites and the Perizzites into their hand, and they defeated 10,000 of them at Bezek. [5] † They found Adoni-bezek at Bezek and fought against him and defeated the Canaanites and the Perizzites. [6] † Adoni-bezek fled, but they pursued him and caught him and cut off his thumbs and his big toes. [7] † And Adoni-bezek said, “Seventy kings with their thumbs and their big toes cut off used to pick up scraps under my table. As I have done, so God has repaid me.” And they brought him to Jerusalem, and he died there.

[8] † And the men of Judah fought against Jerusalem and captured it and struck it with the edge of the sword and set the city on fire. [9] † And afterward the men of Judah went down to fight against the Canaanites who lived in the hill country, in the Negeb, and in the lowland. [10] † And Judah went against the Canaanites who lived in Hebron (now the name of Hebron was formerly Kiriath-arba), and they defeated Sheshai and Ahiman and Talmai.

[11] † From there they went against the inhabitants of Debir. The name of Debir was formerly Kiriath-sepher. [12] ‡ And Caleb said, “He who attacks Kiriath-sepher and captures it, I will give him Achsah my daughter for a wife.” [13] † And Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb’s younger brother, captured it. And he gave him Achsah his daughter for a wife. [14] † When she came to him, she urged him to ask her father for a field. And she dismounted from her donkey, and Caleb said to her, “What do you want?” [15] † She said to him, “Give me a blessing. Since you have set me in the land of the Negeb, give me also springs of water.” And Caleb gave her the upper springs and the lower springs.

16 †And the descendants of the Kenite, Moses' father-in-law, went up with
the people of Judah from the city of palms into the wilderness of Judah,
which lies in the Negeb near Arad, and they went and settled with the
people. 17 †And Judah went with Simeon his brother, and they defeated the
Canaanites who inhabited Zephath and devoted it to destruction. So the
name of the city was called Hormah.[1] 18 †Judah also captured Gaza with its
territory, and Ashkelon with its territory, and Ekron with its territory. 19 †And
the Lord was with Judah, and he took possession of the hill country, but he
could not drive out the inhabitants of the plain because they had chariots of
iron. 20 †And Hebron was given to Caleb, as Moses had said. And he drove
out from it the three sons of Anak. 21 †But the people of Benjamin did not
drive out the Jebusites who lived in Jerusalem, so the Jebusites have lived
with the people of Benjamin in Jerusalem to this day.

22 †The house of Joseph also went up against Bethel, and the Lord was
with them. 23 †And the house of Joseph scouted out Bethel. (Now the name
of the city was formerly Luz.) 24 †And the spies saw a man coming out of
the city, and they said to him, "Please show us the way into the city, and we
will deal kindly with you." 25 And he showed them the way into the city.
And they struck the city with the edge of the sword, but they let the man
and all his family go. 26 †And the man went to the land of the Hittites and
built a city and called its name Luz. That is its name to this day.

Failure to Complete the Conquest

27 ‡ ‡ † Manasseh did not drive out the inhabitants of Beth-shean and its
villages, or Taanach and its villages, or the inhabitants of Dor and its
villages, or the inhabitants of Ibleam and its villages, or the inhabitants of
Megiddo and its villages, for the Canaanites persisted in dwelling in that
land. 28 † When Israel grew strong, they put the Canaanites to forced labor,
but did not drive them out completely.
29 † And Ephraim did not drive out the Canaanites who lived in Gezer, so
the Canaanites lived in Gezer among them.
30 † Zebulun did not drive out the inhabitants of Kitron, or the inhabitants
of Nahalol, so the Canaanites lived among them, but became subject to
forced labor.
31 † Asher did not drive out the inhabitants of Acco, or the inhabitants of
Sidon or of Ahlab or of Achzib or of Helbah or of Aphik or of Rehob, 32 so
the Asherites lived among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land, for
they did not drive them out.
33 † Naphtali did not drive out the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh, or the
inhabitants of Beth-anath, so they lived among the Canaanites, the
inhabitants of the land. Nevertheless, the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh and
of Beth-anath became subject to forced labor for them.
34 † The Amorites pressed the people of Dan back into the hill country, for
they did not allow them to come down to the plain. 35 The Amorites persisted
in dwelling in Mount Heres, in Aijalon, and in Shaalbim, but the hand of the
house of Joseph rested heavily on them, and they became subject to forced
labor. 36 And the border of the Amorites ran from the ascent of Akrabbim,
from Sela and upward.

Israel's Disobedience

2 [1]‡†Now the angel of the Lord went up from Gilgal to Bochim. And
he said, "I brought you up from Egypt and brought you into the land that I
swore to give to your fathers. I said, 'I will never break my covenant with
you, [2]† and you shall make no covenant with the inhabitants of this land;
you shall break down their altars.' But you have not obeyed my voice. What
is this you have done? [3]†So now I say, I will not drive them out before you,
but they shall become thorns in your sides,[1] and their gods shall be a snare
to you." [4]† As soon as the angel of the Lord spoke these words to all the
people of Israel, the people lifted up their voices and wept. [5]† And they
called the name of that place Bochim.[2] And they sacrificed there to the
Lord.

The Death of Joshua

6 † When Joshua dismissed the people, the people of Israel went each to
his inheritance to take possession of the land. 7 † And the people served the
Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived
Joshua, who had seen all the great work that the Lord had done for Israel.
8 And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died at the age of 110
years. 9 And they buried him within the boundaries of his inheritance in
Timnath-heres, in the hill country of Ephraim, north of the mountain of
Gaash. 10 † And all that generation also were gathered to their fathers. And
there arose another generation after them who did not know the Lord or the
work that he had done for Israel.

Israel’s Unfaithfulness

11 ‡‡‡And the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the Lord
and served the Baals. 12 †And they abandoned the Lord, the God of their
fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt. They went after
other gods, from among the gods of the peoples who were around them, and
bowed down to them. And they provoked the Lord to anger. 13 † They
abandoned the Lord and served the Baals and the Ashtaroth. 14 †So the anger
of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he gave them over to plunderers,
who plundered them. And he sold them into the hand of their surrounding
enemies, so that they could no longer withstand their enemies. 15 †Whenever
they marched out, the hand of the Lord was against them for harm, as the
Lord had warned, and as the Lord had sworn to them. And they were in
terrible distress.

The Lord Raises Up Judges

16 ‡ † Then the Lord raised up judges, who saved them out of the hand of
those who plundered them. 17 † Yet they did not listen to their judges, for
they whored after other gods and bowed down to them. They soon turned
aside from the way in which their fathers had walked, who had obeyed the
commandments of the Lord, and they did not do so. 18 † Whenever the Lord
raised up judges for them, the Lord was with the judge, and he saved them
from the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge. For the Lord was
moved to pity by their groaning because of those who afflicted and
oppressed them. 19 But whenever the judge died, they turned back and were
more corrupt than their fathers, going after other gods, serving them and
bowing down to them. They did not drop any of their practices or their
stubborn ways. 20 So the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he
said, “Because this people has transgressed my covenant that I commanded
their fathers and have not obeyed my voice, 21 I will no longer drive out
before them any of the nations that Joshua left when he died, 22 † in order to
test Israel by them, whether they will take care to walk in the way of the
Lord as their fathers did, or not.” 23 So the Lord left those nations, not driving
them out quickly, and he did not give them into the hand of Joshua.

3 1 ‡ † Now these are the nations that the Lord left, to test Israel by
them, that is, all in Israel who had not experienced all the wars in Canaan.
2 † It was only in order that the generations of the people of Israel might
know war, to teach war to those who had not known it before. 3 † These are
the nations: the five lords of the Philistines and all the Canaanites and the
Sidonians and the Hivites who lived on Mount Lebanon, from Mount Baal-
hermon as far as Lebo-hamath. 4 † They were for the testing of Israel, to
know whether Israel would obey the commandments of the Lord, which he
commanded their fathers by the hand of Moses. 5 † So the people of Israel
lived among the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the
Hivites, and the Jebusites. 6 † And their daughters they took to themselves
for wives, and their own daughters they gave to their sons, and they served
their gods.

Othniel

7 ‡ † And the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the Lord.
They forgot the Lord their God and served the Baals and the Asheroth.
8 † Therefore the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he sold
them into the hand of Cushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia. And the
people of Israel served Cushan-rishathaim eight years. 9 † But when the
people of Israel cried out to the Lord, the Lord raised up a deliverer for the
people of Israel, who saved them, Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's
younger brother. 10 † The Spirit of the Lord was upon him, and he judged
Israel. He went out to war, and the Lord gave Cushan-rishathaim king of
Mesopotamia into his hand. And his hand prevailed over Cushan-
rishathaim. 11 † So the land had rest forty years. Then Othniel the son of
Kenaz died.

Ehud

12 ‡ † And the people of Israel again did what was evil in the sight of the
Lord, and the Lord strengthened Eglon the king of Moab against Israel,
because they had done what was evil in the sight of the Lord. 13 † He
gathered to himself the Ammonites and the Amalekites, and went and
defeated Israel. And they took possession of the city of palms. 14 And the
people of Israel served Eglon the king of Moab eighteen years.
15 † Then the people of Israel cried out to the Lord, and the Lord raised up
for them a deliverer, Ehud, the son of Gera, the Benjaminite, a left-handed
man. The people of Israel sent tribute by him to Eglon the king of Moab.
16 † And Ehud made for himself a sword with two edges, a cubit[1] in length,
and he bound it on his right thigh under his clothes. 17 † And he presented the
tribute to Eglon king of Moab. Now Eglon was a very fat man. 18 † And
when Ehud had finished presenting the tribute, he sent away the people who
carried the tribute. 19 † But he himself turned back at the idols near Gilgal
and said, “I have a secret message for you, O king.” And he commanded,
“Silence.” And all his attendants went out from his presence. 20 † And Ehud
came to him as he was sitting alone in his cool roof chamber. And Ehud
said, “I have a message from God for you.” And he arose from his seat.
21 And Ehud reached with his left hand, took the sword from his right thigh,
and thrust it into his belly. 22 † And the hilt also went in after the blade, and
the fat closed over the blade, for he did not pull the sword out of his belly;
and the dung came out. 23 † Then Ehud went out into the porch[1] and closed
the doors of the roof chamber behind him and locked them.
24 † When he had gone, the servants came, and when they saw that the
doors of the roof chamber were locked, they thought, “Surely he is relieving
himself in the closet of the cool chamber.” 25 † And they waited till they were
embarrassed. But when he still did not open the doors of the roof chamber,
they took the key and opened them, and there lay their lord dead on the
floor.
26 ‡ Ehud escaped while they delayed, and he passed beyond the idols and
escaped to Seirah. 27 When he arrived, he sounded the trumpet in the hill
country of Ephraim. Then the people of Israel went down with him from the

hill country, and he was their leader. [28]†And he said to them, “Follow after me, for the Lord has given your enemies the Moabites into your hand.” So they went down after him and seized the fords of the Jordan against the Moabites and did not allow anyone to pass over. [29]And they killed at that time about 10,000 of the Moabites, all strong, able-bodied men; not a man escaped. [30]†So Moab was subdued that day under the hand of Israel. And the land had rest for eighty years.

Shamgar

31 †† After him was Shamgar the son of Anath, who killed 600 of the Philistines with an oxgoad, and he also saved Israel.

Deborah and Barak

4 [1]†And the people of Israel again did what was evil in the sight of the Lord after Ehud died. [2]†And the Lord sold them into the hand of Jabin king of Canaan, who reigned in Hazor. The commander of his army was Sisera, who lived in Harosheth-hagoyim. [3]†Then the people of Israel cried out to the Lord for help, for he had 900 chariots of iron and he oppressed the people of Israel cruelly for twenty years.

[4]†Now Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lappidoth, was judging Israel at that time. [5]†She used to sit under the palm of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim, and the people of Israel came up to her for judgment. [6]†She sent and summoned Barak the son of Abinoam from Kedesh-naphtali and said to him, "Has not the Lord, the God of Israel, commanded you, 'Go, gather your men at Mount Tabor, taking 10,000 from the people of Naphtali and the people of Zebulun. [7]†And I will draw out Sisera, the general of Jabin's army, to meet you by the river Kishon with his chariots and his troops, and I will give him into your hand'?" [8]†Barak said to her, "If you will go with me, I will go, but if you will not go with me, I will not go." [9]†And she said, "I will surely go with you. Nevertheless, the road on which you are going will not lead to your glory, for the Lord will sell Sisera into the hand of a woman." Then Deborah arose and went with Barak to Kedesh. [10]†And Barak called out Zebulun and Naphtali to Kedesh. And 10,000 men went up at his heels, and Deborah went up with him.

[11] † Now Heber the Kenite had separated from the Kenites, the descendants of Hobab the father-in-law of Moses, and had pitched his tent as far away as the oak in Zaanannim, which is near Kedesh.

[12]‡When Sisera was told that Barak the son of Abinoam had gone up to Mount Tabor, [13]Sisera called out all his chariots, 900 chariots of iron, and all the men who were with him, from Harosheth-hagoyim to the river Kishon. [14]†And Deborah said to Barak, "Up! For this is the day in which the Lord has given Sisera into your hand. Does not the Lord go out before you?" So Barak went down from Mount Tabor with 10,000 men following him. [15]†And the Lord routed Sisera and all his chariots and all his army before

Barak by the edge of the sword. And Sisera got down from his chariot and fled away on foot. [16]And Barak pursued the chariots and the army to Harosheth-hagoyim, and all the army of Sisera fell by the edge of the sword; not a man was left.

[17]†But Sisera fled away on foot to the tent of Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, for there was peace between Jabin the king of Hazor and the house of Heber the Kenite. [18]†And Jael came out to meet Sisera and said to him, "Turn aside, my lord; turn aside to me; do not be afraid." So he turned aside to her into the tent, and she covered him with a rug. [19]†And he said to her, "Please give me a little water to drink, for I am thirsty." So she opened a skin of milk and gave him a drink and covered him. [20]And he said to her, "Stand at the opening of the tent, and if any man comes and asks you, 'Is anyone here?' say, 'No.'" [21]†But Jael the wife of Heber took a tent peg, and took a hammer in her hand. Then she went softly to him and drove the peg into his temple until it went down into the ground while he was lying fast asleep from weariness. So he died. [22]†And behold, as Barak was pursuing Sisera, Jael went out to meet him and said to him, "Come, and I will show you the man whom you are seeking." So he went in to her tent, and there lay Sisera dead, with the tent peg in his temple.

[23]So on that day God subdued Jabin the king of Canaan before the people of Israel. [24]And the hand of the people of Israel pressed harder and harder against Jabin the king of Canaan, until they destroyed Jabin king of Canaan.

The Song of Deborah and Barak

5 [1]† Then sang Deborah and Barak the son of Abinoam on that day:

[2]† "That the leaders took the lead in Israel,
that the people offered themselves willingly,
bless the LORD!

[3]† "Hear, O kings; give ear, O princes;
to the LORD I will sing;
I will make melody to the LORD, the God of
Israel.

[4]† "LORD, when you went out from Seir,
when you marched from the region of Edom,
the earth trembled
and the heavens dropped,
yes, the clouds dropped water.
[5] The mountains quaked before the LORD,
even Sinai before the LORD, the God of Israel.

[6]† "In the days of Shamgar, son of Anath,
in the days of Jael, the highways were
abandoned,
and travelers kept to the byways.
[7]† The villagers ceased in Israel;
they ceased to be until I arose;
I, Deborah, arose as a mother in Israel.
[8] When new gods were chosen,
then war was in the gates.
Was shield or spear to be seen
among forty thousand in Israel?

9† My heart goes out to the commanders of
Israel
who offered themselves willingly among the
people.
Bless the Lord.

10† “Tell of it, you who ride on white donkeys,
you who sit on rich carpets[1]
and you who walk by the way.
11† To the sound of musicians[2] at the watering
places,
there they repeat the righteous triumphs
of the Lord,
the righteous triumphs of his villagers in
Israel.

“ Then down to the gates marched the people
of the Lord.

12† “Awake, awake, Deborah!
Awake, awake, break out in a song!
Arise, Barak, lead away your captives,
O son of Abinoam.
13† Then down marched the remnant of the
noble;
the people of the Lord marched down for
me against the mighty.
14 From Ephraim their root they marched
down into the valley,[1]
following you, Benjamin, with your
kinsmen;
from Machir marched down the
commanders,
and from Zebulun those who bear the

lieutenant's[2] staff;
15 the princes of Issachar came with Deborah,
and Issachar faithful to Barak;
into the valley they rushed at his heels.
Among the clans of Reuben
there were great searchings of heart.
16 Why did you sit still among the sheepfolds,
to hear the whistling for the flocks?
Among the clans of Reuben
there were great searchings of heart.
17† Gilead stayed beyond the Jordan;
and Dan, why did he stay with the ships?
Asher sat still at the coast of the sea,
staying by his landings.
18 Zebulun is a people who risked their lives to
the death;
Naphtali, too, on the heights of the field.

19† "The kings came, they fought;
then fought the kings of Canaan,
at Taanach, by the waters of Megiddo;
they got no spoils of silver.
20† From heaven the stars fought,
from their courses they fought against Sisera.
21† The torrent Kishon swept them away,
the ancient torrent, the torrent Kishon.
March on, my soul, with might!

22† "Then loud beat the horses' hoofs
with the galloping, galloping of his steeds.

23† "Curse Meroz, says the angel of the LORD,
curse its inhabitants thoroughly,
because they did not come to the help of the

LORD,
to the help of the LORD against the mighty.

24† "Most blessed of women be Jael,
the wife of Heber the Kenite,
of tent-dwelling women most blessed.
25† He asked water and she gave him milk;
she brought him curds in a noble's bowl.
26† She sent her hand to the tent peg
and her right hand to the workmen's mallet;
she struck Sisera;
she crushed his head;
she shattered and pierced his temple.
27† Between her feet
he sank, he fell, he lay still;
between her feet
he sank, he fell;
where he sank,
there he fell—dead.

28† "Out of the window she peered,
the mother of Sisera wailed through the
lattice:
'Why is his chariot so long in coming?
Why tarry the hoofbeats of his chariots?'
29 Her wisest princesses answer,
indeed, she answers herself,
30 'Have they not found and divided the spoil?—
A womb or two for every man;
spoil of dyed materials for Sisera,
spoil of dyed materials embroidered,
two pieces of dyed work embroidered for
the neck as spoil?'

31 “So may all your enemies perish, O Lord!
But your friends be like the sun as he rises
in his might.”

And the land had rest for forty years.

Midian Oppresses Israel

6 [1]‡†The people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the Lord,
and the Lord gave them into the hand of Midian seven years. [2]†And the
hand of Midian overpowered Israel, and because of Midian the people of
Israel made for themselves the dens that are in the mountains and the caves
and the strongholds. [3]†For whenever the Israelites planted crops, the
Midianites and the Amalekites and the people of the East would come up
against them. [4]‡They would encamp against them and devour the produce
of the land, as far as Gaza, and leave no sustenance in Israel and no sheep
or ox or donkey. [5]†For they would come up with their livestock and their
tents; they would come like locusts in number—both they and their camels
could not be counted—so that they laid waste the land as they came in.
[6]And Israel was brought very low because of Midian. And the people of
Israel cried out for help to the Lord.

[7]†When the people of Israel cried out to the Lord on account of the
Midianites, [8]‡the Lord sent a prophet to the people of Israel. And he said to
them, “Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: I led you up from Egypt and
brought you out of the house of bondage. [9]And I delivered you from the
hand of the Egyptians and from the hand of all who oppressed you, and
drove them out before you and gave you their land. [10]And I said to you, ‘I
am the Lord your God; you shall not fear the gods of the Amorites in whose
land you dwell.’ But you have not obeyed my voice.”

The Call of Gideon

11 †Now the angel of the Lord came and sat under the terebinth at Ophrah,
which belonged to Joash the Abiezrite, while his son Gideon was beating
out wheat in the winepress to hide it from the Midianites. 12 †And the angel
of the Lord appeared to him and said to him, “The Lord is with you, O
mighty man of valor.” 13 †And Gideon said to him, “Please, sir,[1] if the Lord
is with us, why then has all this happened to us? And where are all his
wonderful deeds that our fathers recounted to us, saying, ‘Did not the Lord
bring us up from Egypt?’ But now the Lord has forsaken us and given us
into the hand of Midian.” 14 †And the Lord[2] turned to him and said, “Go in
this might of yours and save Israel from the hand of Midian; do not I send
you?” 15 †And he said to him, “Please, Lord, how can I save Israel? Behold,
my clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father’s
house.” 16 †And the Lord said to him, “But I will be with you, and you shall
strike the Midianites as one man.” 17 †And he said to him, “If now I have
found favor in your eyes, then show me a sign that it is you who speak with
me. 18 Please do not depart from here until I come to you and bring out my
present and set it before you.” And he said, “I will stay till you return.”

19 †So Gideon went into his house and prepared a young goat and
unleavened cakes from an ephah[1] of flour. The meat he put in a basket, and
the broth he put in a pot, and brought them to him under the terebinth and
presented them. 20 And the angel of God said to him, “Take the meat and the
unleavened cakes, and put them on this rock, and pour the broth over
them.” And he did so. 21 †Then the angel of the Lord reached out the tip of
the staff that was in his hand and touched the meat and the unleavened
cakes. And fire sprang up from the rock and consumed the meat and the
unleavened cakes. And the angel of the Lord vanished from his sight.
22 †Then Gideon perceived that he was the angel of the Lord. And Gideon
said, “Alas, O Lord God! For now I have seen the angel of the Lord face to
face.” 23 †But the Lord said to him, “Peace be to you. Do not fear; you shall
not die.” 24 †Then Gideon built an altar there to the Lord and called it, The
Lord Is Peace. To this day it still stands at Ophrah, which belongs to the
Abiezrites.

25 ✝That night the Lord said to him, “Take your father’s bull, and the
second bull seven years old, and pull down the altar of Baal that your father
has, and cut down the Asherah that is beside it 26and build an altar to the
Lord your God on the top of the stronghold here, with stones laid in due
order. Then take the second bull and offer it as a burnt offering with the
wood of the Asherah that you shall cut down.” 27✝So Gideon took ten men
of his servants and did as the Lord had told him. But because he was too
afraid of his family and the men of the town to do it by day, he did it by
night.

Gideon Destroys the Altar of Baal

28 †† When the men of the town rose early in the morning, behold, the altar
of Baal was broken down, and the Asherah beside it was cut down, and the
second bull was offered on the altar that had been built. 29 † And they said to
one another, “Who has done this thing?” And after they had searched and
inquired, they said, “Gideon the son of Joash has done this thing.” 30 † Then
the men of the town said to Joash, “Bring out your son, that he may die, for
he has broken down the altar of Baal and cut down the Asherah beside it.”
31 † But Joash said to all who stood against him, “Will you contend for Baal?
Or will you save him? Whoever contends for him shall be put to death by
morning. If he is a god, let him contend for himself, because his altar has
been broken down.” 32 † Therefore on that day Gideon[1] was called
Jerubbaal, that is to say, “Let Baal contend against him,” because he broke
down his altar.

33 † Now all the Midianites and the Amalekites and the people of the East
came together, and they crossed the Jordan and encamped in the Valley of
Jezreel. 34 † But the Spirit of the Lord clothed Gideon, and he sounded the
trumpet, and the Abiezrites were called out to follow him. 35 † And he sent
messengers throughout all Manasseh, and they too were called out to follow
him. And he sent messengers to Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali, and they
went up to meet them.

The Sign of the Fleece

[36]‡‡Then Gideon said to God, “If you will save Israel by my hand, as you
have said, [37]†behold, I am laying a fleece of wool on the threshing floor. If
there is dew on the fleece alone, and it is dry on all the ground, then I shall
know that you will save Israel by my hand, as you have said.” [38]†And it was
so. When he rose early next morning and squeezed the fleece, he wrung
enough dew from the fleece to fill a bowl with water. [39]†Then Gideon said
to God, “Let not your anger burn against me; let me speak just once more.
Please let me test just once more with the fleece. Please let it be dry on the
fleece only, and on all the ground let there be dew.” [40]And God did so that
night; and it was dry on the fleece only, and on all the ground there was
dew.

Gideon’s Three Hundred Men

7 [1] Then Jerubbaal (that is, Gideon) and all the people who were
with him rose early and encamped beside the spring of Harod. And the
camp of Midian was north of them, by the hill of Moreh, in the valley.
[2] The Lord said to Gideon, “The people with you are too many for me to
give the Midianites into their hand, lest Israel boast over me, saying, ‘My
own hand has saved me.’ [3] Now therefore proclaim in the ears of the
people, saying, ‘Whoever is fearful and trembling, let him return home and
hurry away from Mount Gilead.’” Then 22,000 of the people returned, and
10,000 remained.
[4] And the Lord said to Gideon, “The people are still too many. Take them
down to the water, and I will test them for you there, and anyone of whom I
say to you, ‘This one shall go with you,’ shall go with you, and anyone of
whom I say to you, ‘This one shall not go with you,’ shall not go.” [5] So he
brought the people down to the water. And the Lord said to Gideon, “Every
one who laps the water with his tongue, as a dog laps, you shall set by
himself. Likewise, every one who kneels down to drink.” [6] And the number
of those who lapped, putting their hands to their mouths, was 300 men, but
all the rest of the people knelt down to drink water. [7] And the Lord said to
Gideon, “With the 300 men who lapped I will save you and give the
Midianites into your hand, and let all the others go every man to his home.”
[8] So the people took provisions in their hands, and their trumpets. And he
sent all the rest of Israel every man to his tent, but retained the 300 men.
And the camp of Midian was below him in the valley.
[9] That same night the Lord said to him, “Arise, go down against the
camp, for I have given it into your hand. [10] But if you are afraid to go down,
go down to the camp with Purah your servant. [11] And you shall hear what
they say, and afterward your hands shall be strengthened to go down against
the camp.” Then he went down with Purah his servant to the outposts of the
armed men who were in the camp. [12] And the Midianites and the Amalekites
and all the people of the East lay along the valley like locusts in abundance,
and their camels were without number, as the sand that is on the seashore in
abundance. [13] When Gideon came, behold, a man was telling a dream to his

comrade. And he said, “Behold, I dreamed a dream, and behold, a cake of barley bread tumbled into the camp of Midian and came to the tent and struck it so that it fell and turned it upside down, so that the tent lay flat.” [14]†And his comrade answered, “This is no other than the sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel; God has given into his hand Midian and all the camp.”

[15]†As soon as Gideon heard the telling of the dream and its interpretation, he worshiped. And he returned to the camp of Israel and said, “Arise, for the Lord has given the host of Midian into your hand.” [16]†And he divided the 300 men into three companies and put trumpets into the hands of all of them and empty jars, with torches inside the jars. [17]†And he said to them, “Look at me, and do likewise. When I come to the outskirts of the camp, do as I do. [18]When I blow the trumpet, I and all who are with me, then blow the trumpets also on every side of all the camp and shout, ‘For the Lord and for Gideon.’”

Gideon Defeats Midian

19 ‡ † So Gideon and the hundred men who were with him came to the
outskirts of the camp at the beginning of the middle watch, when they had
just set the watch. And they blew the trumpets and smashed the jars that
were in their hands. 20 † Then the three companies blew the trumpets and
broke the jars. They held in their left hands the torches, and in their right
hands the trumpets to blow. And they cried out, “A sword for the Lord and
for Gideon!” 21 † Every man stood in his place around the camp, and all the
army ran. They cried out and fled. 22 † When they blew the 300 trumpets, the
Lord set every man’s sword against his comrade and against all the army.
And the army fled as far as Beth-shittah toward Zererah,[1] as far as the
border of Abel-meholah, by Tabbath. 23 † And the men of Israel were called
out from Naphtali and from Asher and from all Manasseh, and they pursued
after Midian.

24 † Gideon sent messengers throughout all the hill country of Ephraim,
saying, “Come down against the Midianites and capture the waters against
them, as far as Beth-barah, and also the Jordan.” So all the men of Ephraim
were called out, and they captured the waters as far as Beth-barah, and also
the Jordan. 25 † And they captured the two princes of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb.
They killed Oreb at the rock of Oreb, and Zeeb they killed at the winepress
of Zeeb. Then they pursued Midian, and they brought the heads of Oreb and
Zeeb to Gideon across the Jordan.

Gideon Defeats Zebah and Zalmunna

8 [1]‡† Then the men of Ephraim said to him, “What is this that you
have done to us, not to call us when you went to fight against Midian?” And
they accused him fiercely. [2]‡ And he said to them, “What have I done now
in comparison with you? Is not the gleaning of the grapes of Ephraim better
than the grape harvest of Abiezer? [3]God has given into your hands the
princes of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb. What have I been able to do in
comparison with you?” Then their anger[2] against him subsided when he
said this.

[4]‡ And Gideon came to the Jordan and crossed over, he and the 300 men
who were with him, exhausted yet pursuing. [5]‡ So he said to the men of
Succoth, “Please give loaves of bread to the people who follow me, for they
are exhausted, and I am pursuing after Zebah and Zalmunna, the kings of
Midian.” [6]And the officials of Succoth said, “Are the hands of Zebah and
Zalmunna already in your hand, that we should give bread to your army?”
[7]† So Gideon said, “Well then, when the Lord has given Zebah and
Zalmunna into my hand, I will flail your flesh with the thorns of the
wilderness and with briers.” [8]† And from there he went up to Penuel, and
spoke to them in the same way, and the men of Penuel answered him as the
men of Succoth had answered. [9]† And he said to the men of Penuel, “When I
come again in peace, I will break down this tower.”

[10]‡† Now Zebah and Zalmunna were in Karkor with their army, about
15,000 men, all who were left of all the army of the people of the East, for
there had fallen 120,000 men who drew the sword. [11]† And Gideon went up
by the way of the tent dwellers east of Nobah and Jogbehah and attacked
the army, for the army felt secure. [12]And Zebah and Zalmunna fled, and he
pursued them and captured the two kings of Midian, Zebah and Zalmunna,
and he threw all the army into a panic.

[13]Then Gideon the son of Joash returned from the battle by the ascent of
Heres. [14]† And he captured a young man of Succoth and questioned him.
And he wrote down for him the officials and elders of Succoth, seventy-
seven men. [15]† And he came to the men of Succoth and said, “Behold Zebah

and Zalmunna, about whom you taunted me, saying, ‘Are the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna already in your hand, that we should give bread to your men who are exhausted?’” [16]†And he took the elders of the city, and he took thorns of the wilderness and briers and with them taught the men of Succoth a lesson. [17]And he broke down the tower of Penuel and killed the men of the city.

[18]†Then he said to Zebah and Zalmunna, “Where are the men whom you killed at Tabor?” They answered, “As you are, so were they. Every one of them resembled the son of a king.” [19] † And he said, “They were my brothers, the sons of my mother. As the Lord lives, if you had saved them alive, I would not kill you.” [20]†So he said to Jether his firstborn, “Rise and kill them!” But the young man did not draw his sword, for he was afraid, because he was still a young man. [21]†Then Zebah and Zalmunna said, “Rise yourself and fall upon us, for as the man is, so is his strength.” And Gideon arose and killed Zebah and Zalmunna, and he took the crescent ornaments that were on the necks of their camels.

Gideon’s Ephod

22 ‡ † Then the men of Israel said to Gideon, “Rule over us, you and your
son and your grandson also, for you have saved us from the hand of
Midian.” 23 † Gideon said to them, “I will not rule over you, and my son will
not rule over you; the Lord will rule over you.” 24 † And Gideon said to them,
“Let me make a request of you: every one of you give me the earrings from
his spoil.” (For they had golden earrings, because they were Ishmaelites.)
25 † And they answered, “We will willingly give them.” And they spread a
cloak, and every man threw in it the earrings of his spoil. 26 † And the weight
of the golden earrings that he requested was 1,700 shekels[1] of gold, besides
the crescent ornaments and the pendants and the purple garments worn by
the kings of Midian, and besides the collars that were around the necks of
their camels. 27 † And Gideon made an ephod of it and put it in his city, in
Ophrah. And all Israel whored after it there, and it became a snare to
Gideon and to his family. 28 † So Midian was subdued before the people of
Israel, and they raised their heads no more. And the land had rest forty years
in the days of Gideon.

The Death of Gideon

29 ‡† Jerubbaal the son of Joash went and lived in his own house. 30 † Now Gideon had seventy sons, his own offspring,[1] for he had many wives. 31 † And his concubine who was in Shechem also bore him a son, and he called his name Abimelech. 32 † And Gideon the son of Joash died in a good old age and was buried in the tomb of Joash his father, at Ophrah of the Abiezrites.

33 † As soon as Gideon died, the people of Israel turned again and whored after the Baals and made Baal-berith their god. 34 And the people of Israel did not remember the Lord their God, who had delivered them from the hand of all their enemies on every side, 35 † and they did not show steadfast love to the family of Jerubbaal (that is, Gideon) in return for all the good that he had done to Israel.

Abimelech's Conspiracy

9 [1] ‡ † Now Abimelech the son of Jerubbaal went to Shechem to his
mother's relatives and said to them and to the whole clan of his mother's
family, [2] † "Say in the ears of all the leaders of Shechem, 'Which is better for
you, that all seventy of the sons of Jerubbaal rule over you, or that one rule
over you?' Remember also that I am your bone and your flesh."
[3] And his mother's relatives spoke all these words on his behalf in the ears
of all the leaders of Shechem, and their hearts inclined to follow Abimelech,
for they said, "He is our brother." [4] † And they gave him seventy pieces of
silver out of the house of Baal-berith with which Abimelech hired worthless
and reckless fellows, who followed him. [5] † And he went to his father's
house at Ophrah and killed his brothers the sons of Jerubbaal, seventy men,
on one stone. But Jotham the youngest son of Jerubbaal was left, for he hid
himself. [6] † And all the leaders of Shechem came together, and all Beth-
millo, and they went and made Abimelech king, by the oak of the pillar at
Shechem.
[7] † When it was told to Jotham, he went and stood on top of Mount
Gerizim and cried aloud and said to them, "Listen to me, you leaders of
Shechem, that God may listen to you. [8] ‡ The trees once went out to anoint a
king over them, and they said to the olive tree, 'Reign over us.' [9] But the
olive tree said to them, 'Shall I leave my abundance, by which gods and
men are honored, and go hold sway over the trees?' [10] And the trees said to
the fig tree, 'You come and reign over us.' [11] But the fig tree said to them,
'Shall I leave my sweetness and my good fruit and go hold sway over the
trees?' [12] And the trees said to the vine, 'You come and reign over us.' [13] But
the vine said to them, 'Shall I leave my wine that cheers God and men and
go hold sway over the trees?' [14] Then all the trees said to the bramble, 'You
come and reign over us.' [15] And the bramble said to the trees, 'If in good
faith you are anointing me king over you, then come and take refuge in my
shade, but if not, let fire come out of the bramble and devour the cedars of
Lebanon.'

16 † “Now therefore, if you acted in good faith and integrity when you
made Abimelech king, and if you have dealt well with Jerubbaal and his
house and have done to him as his deeds deserved— 17 for my father fought
for you and risked his life and delivered you from the hand of Midian,
18 † and you have risen up against my father’s house this day and have killed
his sons, seventy men on one stone, and have made Abimelech, the son of
his female servant, king over the leaders of Shechem, because he is your
relative— 19 if you then have acted in good faith and integrity with Jerubbaal
and with his house this day, then rejoice in Abimelech, and let him also
rejoice in
you. 20 † But if not, let fire come out from Abimelech and devour the leaders
of Shechem and Beth-millo; and let fire come out from the leaders of
Shechem and
from Beth-millo and devour Abimelech.” 21 † And Jotham ran away and fled
and went to Beer and lived there, because of Abimelech his brother.

The Downfall of Abimelech

22 Abimelech ruled over Israel three years. 23 And God sent an evil
spirit between Abimelech and the leaders of Shechem, and the leaders of
Shechem dealt treacherously with Abimelech, 24 that the violence done to the
seventy sons of Jerubbaal might come, and their blood be laid on
Abimelech their brother, who killed them, and on the men of Shechem, who
strengthened his hands to kill his brothers. 25 And the leaders of Shechem
put men in ambush against him on the mountaintops, and they robbed all
who passed by them along that way. And it was told to Abimelech.

26 And Gaal the son of Ebed moved into Shechem with his relatives, and
the leaders of Shechem put confidence in him. 27 And they went out into
the field and gathered the grapes from their vineyards and trod them and
held a festival; and they went into the house of their god and ate and drank
and reviled Abimelech. 28 And Gaal the son of Ebed said, "Who is
Abimelech, and who are we of Shechem, that we should serve him? Is he
not the son of Jerubbaal, and is not Zebul his officer? Serve the men of
Hamor the father of Shechem; but why should we serve him? 29 Would that
this people were under my hand! Then I would remove Abimelech. I would
say[1] to Abimelech, 'Increase your army, and come out.'"

30 When Zebul the ruler of the city heard the words of Gaal the son of
Ebed, his anger was kindled. 31 And he sent messengers to Abimelech
secretly,[2] saying, "Behold, Gaal the son of Ebed and his relatives have
come to Shechem, and they are stirring up[3] the city against you. 32 Now
therefore, go by night, you and the people who are with you, and set an
ambush in the field. 33 Then in the morning, as soon as the sun is up, rise
early and rush upon the city. And when he and the people who are with him
come out against you, you may do to them as your hand finds to do."

34 So Abimelech and all the men who were with him rose up by night and
set an ambush against Shechem in four companies. 35 And Gaal the son of
Ebed went out and stood in the entrance of the gate of the city, and
Abimelech and the people who were with him rose from the ambush.
36 And when Gaal saw the people, he said to Zebul, "Look, people are
coming down from the mountaintops!" And Zebul said to him, "You

mistake[4] the shadow of the mountains for men." 37†Gaal spoke again and said, "Look, people are coming down from the center of the land, and one company is coming from the direction of the Diviners' Oak." 38†Then Zebul said to him, "Where is your mouth now, you who said, 'Who is Abimelech, that we should serve him?' Are not these the people whom you despised? Go out now and fight with them." 39And Gaal went out at the head of the leaders of Shechem and fought with Abimelech. 40†And Abimelech chased him, and he fled before him. And many fell wounded, up to the entrance of the gate. 41†And Abimelech lived at Arumah, and Zebul drove out Gaal and his relatives, so that they could not dwell at Shechem.

42 ‡ On the following day, the people went out into the field, and Abimelech was told. 43He took his people and divided them into three companies and set an ambush in the fields. And he looked and saw the people coming out of the city. So he rose against them and killed them. 44‡Abimelech and the company that was with him rushed forward and stood at the entrance of the gate of the city, while the two companies rushed upon all who were in the field and killed them. 45And Abimelech fought against the city all that day. He captured the city and killed the people who were in it, and he razed the city and sowed it with salt.

46†When all the leaders of the Tower of Shechem heard of it, they entered the stronghold of the house of El-berith. 47Abimelech was told that all the leaders of the Tower of Shechem were gathered together. 48†And Abimelech went up to Mount Zalmon, he and all the people who were with him. And Abimelech took an axe in his hand and cut down a bundle of brushwood and took it up and laid it on his shoulder. And he said to the men who were with him, "What you have seen me do, hurry and do as I have done." 49†So every one of the people cut down his bundle and following Abimelech put it against the stronghold, and they set the stronghold on fire over them, so that all the people of the Tower of Shechem also died, about 1,000 men and women.

50†Then Abimelech went to Thebez and encamped against Thebez and captured it. 51†But there was a strong tower within the city, and all the men and women and all the leaders of the city fled to it and shut themselves in, and they went up to the roof of the tower. 52†And Abimelech came to the tower and fought against it and drew near to the door of the tower to burn it

with fire. [53]†And a certain woman threw an upper millstone on Abimelech's head and crushed his skull. [54]†Then he called quickly to the young man his armor-bearer and said to him, "Draw your sword and kill me, lest they say of me, 'A woman killed him.'" And his young man thrust him through, and he died. [55] † And when the men of Israel saw that Abimelech was dead, everyone departed to his home. [56] † Thus God returned the evil of Abimelech, which he committed against his father in killing his seventy brothers. [57]†And God also made all the evil of the men of Shechem return on their heads, and upon them came the curse of Jotham the son of Jerubbaal.

Tola and Jair

10 [1] ‡ ‡After Abimelech there arose to save Israel Tola the son of
Puah, son of Dodo, a man of Issachar, and he lived at Shamir in the hill
country of Ephraim. [2]And he judged Israel twenty-three years. Then he died
and was buried at Shamir.

[3]After him arose Jair the Gileadite, who judged Israel twenty-two years.
[4]†And he had thirty sons who rode on thirty donkeys, and they had thirty
cities, called Havvoth-jair to this day, which are in the land of Gilead.
[5]†And Jair died and was buried in Kamon.

Further Disobedience and Oppression

6 ‡†The people of Israel again did what was evil in the
sight of the Lord and served the Baals and the Ashtaroth, the gods of Syria,
the gods of Sidon, the gods of Moab, the gods of the Ammonites, and the
gods of the Philistines. And they forsook the Lord and did not serve him.
7 †So the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he sold them into
the hand of the Philistines and into the hand of the Ammonites, 8 and they
crushed and oppressed the people of Israel that year. For eighteen years they
oppressed all the people of Israel who were beyond the Jordan in the land of
the Amorites, which is in Gilead. 9 And the Ammonites crossed the Jordan to
fight also against Judah and against Benjamin and against the house of
Ephraim, so that Israel was severely distressed.

10 †And the people of Israel cried out to the Lord, saying, “We have sinned
against you, because we have forsaken our God and have served the Baals.”
11 ‡And the Lord said to the people of Israel, “Did I not save you from the
Egyptians and from the Amorites, from the Ammonites and from the
Philistines? 12 The Sidonians also, and the Amalekites and the Maonites
oppressed you, and you cried out to me, and I saved you out of their hand.
13 †Yet you have forsaken me and served other gods; therefore I will save
you no more. 14 Go and cry out to the gods whom you have chosen; let them
save you in the time of your distress.” 15 †And the people of Israel said to the
Lord, “We have sinned; do to us whatever seems good to you. Only please
deliver us this day.” 16 †So they put away the foreign gods from among them
and served the Lord, and he became impatient over the misery of Israel.

17 † Then the Ammonites were called to arms, and they encamped in
Gilead. And the people of Israel came together, and they encamped at
Mizpah. 18 †And the people, the leaders of Gilead, said one to another, “Who
is the man who will begin to fight against the Ammonites? He shall be head
over all the inhabitants of Gilead.”

Jephthah Delivers Israel

11 [1]Now Jephthah the Gileadite was a mighty warrior, but he was
the son of a prostitute. Gilead was the father of Jephthah. [2]And Gilead's
wife also bore him sons. And when his wife's sons grew up, they drove
Jephthah out and said to him, "You shall not have an inheritance in our
father's house, for you are the son of another woman." [3]Then Jephthah
fled from his brothers and lived in the land of Tob, and worthless fellows
collected around Jephthah and went out with him.

[4]After a time the Ammonites made war against Israel. [5]And when the
Ammonites made war against Israel, the elders of Gilead went to bring
Jephthah from the land of Tob. [6]And they said to Jephthah, "Come and be
our leader, that we may fight against the Ammonites." [7]But Jephthah said
to the elders of Gilead, "Did you not hate me and drive me out of my
father's house? Why have you come to me now when you are in distress?"
[8]And the elders of Gilead said to Jephthah, "That is why we have turned to
you now, that you may go with us and fight against the Ammonites and be
our head over all the inhabitants of Gilead." [9]Jephthah said to the elders of
Gilead, "If you bring me home again to fight against the Ammonites, and
the Lord gives them over to me, I will be your head." [10]And the elders of
Gilead said to Jephthah, "The Lord will be witness between us, if we do not
do as you say." [11]So Jephthah went with the elders of Gilead, and the
people made him head and leader over them. And Jephthah spoke all his
words before the Lord at Mizpah.

[12]Then Jephthah sent messengers to the king of the Ammonites and said,
"What do you have against me, that you have come to me to fight against
my land?" [13]And the king of the Ammonites answered the messengers of
Jephthah, "Because Israel on coming up from Egypt took away my land,
from the Arnon to the Jabbok and to the Jordan; now therefore restore it
peaceably." [14]Jephthah again sent messengers to the king of the
Ammonites [15]and said to him, "Thus says Jephthah: Israel did not take away
the land of Moab or the land of the Ammonites, [16]but when they came up
from Egypt, Israel went through the wilderness to the Red Sea and came to

Kadesh. [17]Israel then sent messengers to the king of Edom, saying, ‘Please let us pass through your land,’ but the king of Edom would not listen. And they sent also to the king of Moab, but he would not consent. So Israel remained at Kadesh.

[18]“‘Then they journeyed through the wilderness and went around the land of Edom and the land of Moab and arrived on the east side of the land of Moab and camped on the other side of the Arnon. But they did not enter the territory of Moab, for the Arnon was the boundary of Moab. [19]Israel then sent messengers to Sihon king of the Amorites, king of Heshbon, and Israel said to him, ‘Please let us pass through your land to our country,’ [20]but Sihon did not trust Israel to pass through his territory, so Sihon gathered all his people together and encamped at Jahaz and fought with Israel. [21]And the Lord, the God of Israel, gave Sihon and all his people into the hand of Israel, and they defeated them. So Israel took possession of all the land of the Amorites, who inhabited that country. [22]And they took possession of all the territory of the Amorites from the Arnon to the Jabbok and from the wilderness to the Jordan. [23] † So then the Lord, the God of Israel, dispossessed the Amorites from before his people Israel; and are you to take possession of them? [24]†Will you not possess what Chemosh your god gives you to possess? And all that the Lord our God has dispossessed before us, we will possess. [25]†Now are you any better than Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab? Did he ever contend against Israel, or did he ever go to war with them? [26]†While Israel lived in Heshbon and its villages, and in Aroer and its villages, and in all the cities that are on the banks of the Arnon, 300 years, why did you not deliver them within that time? [27]†I therefore have not sinned against you, and you do me wrong by making war on me. The Lord, the Judge, decide this day between the people of Israel and the people of Ammon.” [28]†But the king of the Ammonites did not listen to the words of Jephthah that he sent to him.

Jephthah's Tragic Vow

29 ‡†Then the Spirit of the Lord was upon Jephthah, and he passed through
Gilead and Manasseh and passed on to Mizpah of Gilead, and from Mizpah
of Gilead he passed on to the Ammonites. 30 †And Jephthah made a vow to
the Lord and said, "If you will give the Ammonites into my hand, 31 †then
whatever[1] comes out from the doors of my house to meet me when I return
in peace from the Ammonites shall be the Lord's, and I will offer it[2] up for
a burnt offering." 32So Jephthah crossed over to the Ammonites to fight
against them, and the Lord gave them into his hand. 33 †And he struck them
from Aroer to the neighborhood of Minnith, twenty cities, and as far as
Abel-keramim, with a great blow. So the Ammonites were subdued before
the people of Israel.

34Then Jephthah came to his home at Mizpah. And behold, his daughter
came out to meet him with tambourines and with dances. She was his only
child; besides her he had neither son nor daughter. 35 †And as soon as he saw
her, he tore his clothes and said, "Alas, my daughter! You have brought me
very low, and you have become the cause of great trouble to me. For I have
opened my mouth to the Lord, and I cannot take back my vow." 36 †And she
said to him, "My father, you have opened your mouth to the Lord; do to me
according to what has gone out of your mouth, now that the Lord has
avenged you on your enemies, on the Ammonites." 37 †So she said to her
father, "Let this thing be done for me: leave me alone two months, that I
may go up and down on the mountains and weep for my virginity, I and my
companions." 38So he said, "Go." Then he sent her away for two months,
and she departed, she and her companions, and wept for her virginity on the
mountains. 39 †And at the end of two months, she returned to her father, who
did with her according to his vow that he had made. She had never known a
man, and it became a custom in Israel 40 †that the daughters of Israel went
year by year to lament the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite four days in
the year.

Jephthah's Conflict with Ephraim

12 [1] The men of Ephraim were called to arms, and they crossed to
Zaphon and said to Jephthah, "Why did you cross over to fight against the
Ammonites and did not call us to go with you? We will burn your house
over you with fire." [2] And Jephthah said to them, "I and my people had a
great dispute with the Ammonites, and when I called you, you did not save
me from their hand. [3] And when I saw that you would not save me, I took
my life in my hand and crossed over against the Ammonites, and the Lord
gave them into my hand. Why then have you come up to me this day to
fight against me?" [4] Then Jephthah gathered all the men of Gilead and
fought with Ephraim. And the men of Gilead struck Ephraim, because they
said, "You are fugitives of Ephraim, you Gileadites, in the midst of Ephraim
and Manasseh." [5] And the Gileadites captured the fords of the Jordan
against the Ephraimites. And when any of the fugitives of Ephraim said,
"Let me go over," the men of Gilead said to him, "Are you an Ephraimite?"
When he said, "No," [6] they said to him, "Then say Shibboleth," and he
said, "Sibboleth," for he could not pronounce it right. Then they seized him
and slaughtered him at the fords of the Jordan. At that time 42,000 of the
Ephraimites fell.

[7] Jephthah judged Israel six years. Then Jephthah the Gileadite died and
was buried in his city in Gilead.[1]

Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon

[8]†† After him Ibzan of Bethlehem judged Israel. [9]† He had thirty sons, and
thirty daughters he gave in marriage outside his clan, and thirty daughters
he brought in from outside for his sons. And he judged Israel seven years.
[10]Then Ibzan died and was buried at Bethlehem.

[11]After him Elon the Zebulunite judged Israel, and he judged Israel ten
years. [12]† Then Elon the Zebulunite died and was buried at Aijalon in the
land of Zebulun.

[13]After him Abdon the son of Hillel the Pirathonite judged Israel. [14]† He
had forty sons and thirty grandsons, who rode on seventy donkeys, and he
judged Israel eight years. [15]Then Abdon the son of Hillel the Pirathonite
died and was buried at Pirathon in the land of Ephraim, in the hill country
of the Amalekites.

The Birth of Samson

13 [1]†And the people of Israel again did what was evil in the sight of
the Lord, so the Lord gave them into the hand of the Philistines for forty
years.
[2]†There was a certain man of Zorah, of the tribe of the Danites, whose
name was Manoah. And his wife was barren and had no children. [3]†And the
angel of the Lord appeared to the woman and said to her, "Behold, you are
barren and have not borne children, but you shall conceive and bear a son.
[4]Therefore be careful and drink no wine or strong drink, and eat nothing
unclean, [5]† for behold, you shall conceive and bear a son. No razor shall
come upon his head, for the child shall be a Nazirite to God from the womb,
and he shall begin to save Israel from the hand of the Philistines." [6]†Then
the woman came and told her husband, "A man of God came to me, and his
appearance was like the appearance of the angel of God, very awesome. I
did not ask him where he was from, and he did not tell me his name, [7]†but
he said to me, 'Behold, you shall conceive and bear a son. So then drink no
wine or strong drink, and eat nothing unclean, for the child shall be a
Nazirite to God from the womb to the day of his death.'"
[8]†Then Manoah prayed to the Lord and said, "O Lord, please let the man
of God whom you sent come again to us and teach us what we are to do
with the child who will be born." [9]†And God listened to the voice of
Manoah, and the angel of God came again to the woman as she sat in the
field. But Manoah her husband was not with her. [10]†So the woman ran
quickly and told her husband, "Behold, the man who came to me the other
day has appeared to me." [11]And Manoah arose and went after his wife and
came to the man and said to him, "Are you the man who spoke to this
woman?" And he said, "I am." [12]†And Manoah said, "Now when your
words come true, what is to be the child's manner of life, and what is his
mission?" [13]And the angel of the Lord said to Manoah, "Of all that I said to
the woman let her be careful. [14]She may not eat of anything that comes from
the vine, neither let her drink wine or strong drink, or eat any unclean thing.
All that I commanded her let her observe."

15 Manoah said to the angel of the Lord, “Please let us detain you and
prepare a young goat for you.” 16 † And the angel of the Lord said to Manoah,
“If you detain me, I will not eat of your food. But if you prepare a burnt
offering, then offer it to the Lord.” (For Manoah did not know that he was
the angel of the Lord.) 17 † And Manoah said to the angel of the Lord, “What
is your name, so that, when your words come true, we may honor you?”
18 † And the angel of the Lord said to him, “Why do you ask my name, seeing
it is wonderful?” 19 † So Manoah took the young goat with the grain offering,
and offered it on the rock to the Lord, to the one who works[1] wonders, and
Manoah and his wife were watching. 20 † And when the flame went up
toward heaven from the altar, the angel of the Lord went up in the flame of
the altar. Now Manoah and his wife were watching, and they fell on their
faces to the ground.

21 † The angel of the Lord appeared no more to Manoah and to his wife.
Then Manoah knew that he was the angel of the Lord. 22 † And Manoah said
to his wife, “We shall surely die, for we have seen God.” 23 † But his wife
said to him, “If the Lord had meant to kill us, he would not have accepted a
burnt offering and a grain offering at our hands, or shown us all these
things, or now announced to us such things as these.” 24 † And the woman
bore a son and called his name Samson. And the young man grew, and the
Lord blessed him. 25 † And the Spirit of the Lord began to stir him in
Mahaneh-dan, between Zorah and Eshtaol.

Samson's Marriage

14 [1]†Samson went down to Timnah, and at Timnah he saw one of the
daughters of the Philistines. [2]† Then he came up and told his father and
mother, "I saw one of the daughters of the Philistines at Timnah. Now get
her for me as my wife." [3]†But his father and mother said to him, "Is there
not a woman among the daughters of your relatives, or among all our
people, that you must go to take a wife from the uncircumcised
Philistines?" But Samson said to his father, "Get her for me, for she is right
in my eyes."

[4]†His father and mother did not know that it was from the LORD, for he
was seeking an opportunity against the Philistines. At that time the
Philistines ruled over Israel.

[5]† Then Samson went down with his father and mother to Timnah, and
they came to the vineyards of Timnah. And behold, a young lion came
toward him roaring. [6]† Then the Spirit of the LORD rushed upon him, and
although he had nothing in his hand, he tore the lion in pieces as one tears a
young goat. But he did not tell his father or his mother what he had done.
[7]† Then he went down and talked with the woman, and she was right in
Samson's eyes.

[8]After some days he returned to take her. And he turned aside to see the
carcass of the lion, and behold, there was a swarm of bees in the body of the
lion, and honey. [9]†He scraped it out into his hands and went on, eating as he
went. And he came to his father and mother and gave some to them, and
they ate. But he did not tell them that he had scraped the honey from the
carcass of the lion.

[10]† His father went down to the woman, and Samson prepared a feast
there, for so the young men used to do. [11]† As soon as the people saw him,
they brought thirty companions to be with him. [12]† And Samson said to
them, "Let me now put a riddle to you. If you can tell me what it is, within
the seven days of the feast, and find it out, then I will give you thirty linen
garments and thirty changes of clothes, [13]but if you cannot tell me what it is,
then you shall give me thirty linen garments and thirty changes of clothes."

And they said to him, “Put your riddle, that we may hear it.” 14And he said to them,

> “Out of the eater came something to eat.
> Out of the strong came something sweet.”

And in three days they could not solve the riddle.

15†On the fourth[1] day they said to Samson’s wife, “Entice your husband to tell us what the riddle is, lest we burn you and your father’s house with fire. Have you invited us here to impoverish us?” 16† And Samson’s wife wept over him and said, “You only hate me; you do not love me. You have put a riddle to my people, and you have not told me what it is.” And he said to her, “Behold, I have not told my father nor my mother, and shall I tell you?” 17†She wept before him the seven days that their feast lasted, and on the seventh day he told her, because she pressed him hard. Then she told the riddle to her people. 18†And the men of the city said to him on the seventh day before the sun went down,

> “What is sweeter than honey?
> What is stronger than a lion?”

And he said to them,

> “If you had not plowed with my heifer,
> you would not have found out my riddle.”

19 † And the Spirit of the Lord rushed upon him, and he went down to Ashkelon and struck down thirty men of the town and took their spoil and gave the garments to those who had told the riddle. In hot anger he went back to his father’s house. 20 † And Samson’s wife was given to his companion, who had been his best man.

Samson Defeats the Philistines

15 [1]†After some days, at the time of wheat harvest, Samson went to visit his wife with a young goat. And he said, “I will go in to my wife in the chamber.” But her father would not allow him to go in. [2]†And her father said, “I really thought that you utterly hated her, so I gave her to your companion. Is not her younger sister more beautiful than she? Please take her instead.” [3]†And Samson said to them, “This time I shall be innocent in regard to the Philistines, when I do them harm.” [4]†So Samson went and caught 300 foxes and took torches. And he turned them tail to tail and put a torch between each pair of tails. [5]And when he had set
fire to the torches, he let the foxes go into the standing grain of the Philistines and set fire to the stacked grain and the standing grain, as well as the olive orchards. [6]†Then the Philistines said, “Who has done this?” And they said, “Samson, the son-in-law of the Timnite, because he has taken his wife and given her to his companion.” And the Philistines came up and burned her and her father with fire. [7]And Samson said to them, “If this is what you do, I swear I will be avenged on you, and after that I will quit.” [8]†And he struck them hip and thigh with a great blow, and he went down and stayed in the cleft of the rock of Etam.

[9]†Then the Philistines came up and encamped in Judah and made a raid on Lehi. [10]And the men of Judah said, “Why have you come up against us?” They said, “We have come up to bind Samson, to do to him as he did to us.” [11]†Then 3,000 men of Judah went down to the cleft of the rock of Etam, and said to Samson, “Do you not know that the Philistines are rulers over us? What then is this that you have done to us?” And he said to them, “As they did to me, so have I done to them.” [12]†And they said to him, “We have come down to bind you, that we may give you into the hands of the Philistines.” And Samson said to them, “Swear to me that you will not attack me yourselves.” [13]†They said to him, “No; we will only bind you and give you into their hands. We will surely not kill you.” So they bound him with two new ropes and brought him up from the rock.

[14]†When he came to Lehi, the Philistines came shouting to meet him. Then the Spirit of the Lord rushed upon him, and the ropes that were on his

arms became as flax that has caught fire, and his bonds melted off his hands. 15 † And he found a fresh jawbone of a donkey, and put out his hand and took it, and with it he struck 1,000 men. 16 † And Samson said,

"With the jawbone of a donkey,
heaps upon heaps,
with the jawbone of a donkey
have I struck down a thousand men."

17 As soon as he had finished speaking, he threw away the jawbone out of his hand. And that place was called Ramath-lehi.[1]

18 † And he was very thirsty, and he called upon the Lord and said, "You have granted this great salvation by the hand of your servant, and shall I now die of thirst and fall into the hands of the uncircumcised?" 19 † And God split open the hollow place that is at Lehi, and water came out from it. And when he drank, his spirit returned, and he revived. Therefore the name of it was called En-hakkore;[2] it is at Lehi to this day. 20 And he judged Israel in the days of the Philistines twenty years.

Samson and Delilah

16 [1]‡†Samson went to Gaza, and there he saw a prostitute, and he
went in to her. [2]The Gazites were told, “Samson has come here.” And they
surrounded the place and set an ambush for him all night at the gate of the
city. They kept quiet all night, saying, “Let us wait till the light of the
morning; then we will kill him.” [3]†But Samson lay till midnight, and at
midnight he arose and took hold of the doors of the gate of the city and the
two posts, and pulled them up, bar and all, and put them on his shoulders
and carried them to the top of the hill that is in front of Hebron.

[4]†After this he loved a woman in the Valley of Sorek, whose name was
Delilah. [5]†And the lords of the Philistines came up to her and said to her,
“Seduce him, and see where his great strength lies, and by what means we
may overpower him, that we may bind him to humble him. And we will
each give you 1,100 pieces of silver.” [6]†So Delilah said to Samson, “Please
tell me where your great strength lies, and how you might be bound, that
one could subdue you.”

[7]‡Samson said to her, “If they bind me with seven fresh bowstrings that
have not been dried, then I shall become weak and be like any other man.”
[8]Then the lords of the Philistines brought up to her seven fresh bowstrings
that had not been dried, and she bound him with them. [9]†Now she had men
lying in ambush in an inner chamber. And she said to him, “The Philistines
are upon you, Samson!” But he snapped the bowstrings, as a thread of flax
snaps when it touches the fire. So the secret of his strength was not known.

[10]Then Delilah said to Samson, “Behold, you have mocked me and told
me lies. Please tell me how you might be bound.” [11]‡And he said to her, “If
they bind me with new ropes that have not been used, then I shall become
weak and be like any other man.” [12]So Delilah took new ropes and bound
him with them and said to him, “The Philistines are upon you, Samson!”
And the men lying in ambush were in an inner chamber. But he snapped the
ropes off his arms like a thread.

[13]†Then Delilah said to Samson, “Until now you have mocked me and
told me lies. Tell me how you might be bound.” And he said to her, “If you
weave the seven locks of my head with the web and fasten it tight with the

pin, then I shall become weak and be like any other man.” 14So while he slept, Delilah took the seven locks of his head and wove them into the web. [1] And she made them tight with the pin and said to him, “The Philistines are upon you, Samson!” But he awoke from his sleep and pulled away the pin, the loom, and the web.

15†And she said to him, “How can you say, ‘I love you,’ when your heart is not with me? You have mocked me these three times, and you have not told me where your great strength lies.” 16And when she pressed him hard with her words day after day, and urged him, his soul was vexed to death. 17†And he told her all his heart, and said to her, “A razor has never come upon my head, for I have been a Nazirite to God from my mother’s womb. If my head is shaved, then my strength will leave me, and I shall become weak and be like any other man.”

18When Delilah saw that he had told her all his heart, she sent and called the lords of the Philistines, saying, “Come up again, for he has told me all his heart.” Then the lords of the Philistines came up to her and brought the money in their hands. 19†She made him sleep on her knees. And she called a man and had him shave off the seven locks of his head. Then she began to torment him, and his strength left him. 20†And she said, “The Philistines are upon you, Samson!” And he awoke from his sleep and said, “I will go out as at other times and shake myself free.” But he did not know that the Lord had left him. 21†And the Philistines seized him and gouged out his eyes and brought him down to Gaza and bound him with bronze shackles. And he ground at the mill in the prison. 22†But the hair of his head began to grow again after it had been shaved.

The Death of Samson

23 ‡† Now the lords of the Philistines gathered to offer a great sacrifice to
Dagon their god and to rejoice, and they said, “Our god has given Samson
our enemy into our hand.” 24 And when the people saw him, they praised
their god. For they said, “Our god has given our enemy into our hand, the
ravager of our country, who has killed many of us.”[1] 25 † And when their
hearts were merry, they said, “Call Samson, that he may entertain us.” So
they called Samson out of the prison, and he entertained them. They made
him stand between the pillars. 26 ‡ And Samson said to the young man who
held him by the hand, “Let me feel the pillars on which the house rests, that
I may lean against them.” 27 Now the house was full of men and women. All
the lords of the Philistines were there, and on the roof there were about
3,000 men and women, who looked on while Samson entertained.

28 ‡ Then Samson called to the Lord and said, “O Lord God, please
remember me and please strengthen me only this once, O God, that I may
be avenged on the Philistines for my two eyes.” 29 And Samson grasped the
two middle pillars on which the house rested, and he leaned his weight
against them, his right hand on the one and his left hand on the other.
30 † And Samson said, “Let me die with the Philistines.” Then he bowed with
all his strength, and the house fell upon the lords and upon all the people
who were in it. So the dead whom he killed at his death were more than
those whom he had killed during his life. 31 † Then his brothers and all his
family came down and took him and brought him up and buried him
between Zorah and Eshtaol in the tomb of Manoah his father. He had
judged Israel twenty years.

Micah and the Levite

17 [1]†There was a man of the hill country of Ephraim, whose name
was Micah. [2]†And he said to his mother, “The 1,100 pieces of silver that
were taken from you, about which you uttered a curse, and also spoke it in
my ears, behold, the silver is with me; I took it.” And his mother said,
“Blessed be my son by the Lord.” [3]†And he restored the 1,100 pieces of
silver to his mother. And his mother said, “I dedicate the silver to the Lord
from my hand for my son, to make a carved image and a metal image. Now
therefore I will restore it to you.” [4]†So when he restored the money to his
mother, his mother took 200 pieces of silver and gave it to the silversmith,
who made it into a carved image and a metal image. And it was in the house
of Micah. [5]†And the man Micah had a shrine, and he made an ephod and
household gods, and ordained[1] one of his sons, who became his priest. [6]†In
those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his
own eyes.

[7]†Now there was a young man of Bethlehem in Judah, of the family of
Judah, who was a Levite, and
he sojourned there. [8]†And the man departed from the town of Bethlehem in
Judah to sojourn where he could find a place. And as he journeyed, he came
to the hill country of Ephraim to the house of Micah. [9]And Micah said to
him, “Where do you come from?” And he said to him, “I am a Levite of
Bethlehem in Judah, and I am going to sojourn where I may find a place.”
[10]†And Micah said to him, “Stay with me, and be to me a father and a
priest, and I will give you ten pieces of silver a year and a suit of clothes
and your living.” And the Levite went in. [11]And the Levite was content to
dwell with the man, and the young man became to him like one of his sons.
[12]†And Micah ordained the Levite, and the young man became his priest,
and was in the house of Micah. [13]†Then Micah said, “Now I know that the
Lord will prosper me, because I have a Levite as priest.”

Danites Take the Levite and the Idol

18 [1]†In those days there was no king in Israel. And in those days the
tribe of the people of Dan was seeking for itself an inheritance to dwell in,
for until then no inheritance among the tribes of Israel had fallen to them.
[2]†So the people of Dan sent five able men from the whole number of their
tribe, from Zorah and from Eshtaol, to spy out the land and to explore it.
And they said to them, "Go and explore the land." And they came to the hill
country of Ephraim, to the house of Micah, and lodged there. [3]†When they
were by the house of Micah, they recognized the voice of the young Levite.
And they turned aside and said to him, "Who brought you here? What are
you doing in this place? What is your business here?" [4]And he said to them,
"This is how Micah dealt with me: he has hired me, and I have become his
priest." [5]†And they said to him, "Inquire of God, please, that we may know
whether the journey on which we are setting out will succeed." [6]†And the
priest said to them, "Go in peace. The journey on which you go is under the
eye of the Lord."

[7]†Then the five men departed and came to Laish and saw the people who
were there, how they lived in security, after the manner of the Sidonians,
quiet and unsuspecting, lacking[1] nothing that is in the earth and possessing
wealth, and how they were far from the Sidonians and had no dealings with
anyone. [8]And when they came to their brothers at Zorah and Eshtaol, their
brothers said to them, "What do you report?" [9]They said, "Arise, and let us
go up against them, for we have seen the land, and behold, it is very good.
And will you do nothing? Do not be slow to go, to enter in and possess the
land. [10]†As soon as you go, you will come to an unsuspecting people. The
land is spacious, for God has given it into your hands, a place where there is
no lack of anything that is in the earth."

[11]‡So 600 men of the tribe of Dan, armed with weapons of war, set out
from Zorah and Eshtaol, [12]and went up and encamped at Kiriath-jearim in
Judah. On this account that place is called Mahaneh-dan[2] to this day;
behold, it is west of Kiriath-jearim. [13]And they passed on from there to the
hill country of Ephraim, and came to the house of Micah.

14 †Then the five men who had gone to scout out the country of Laish said
to their brothers, “Do you know that in these houses there are an ephod,
household gods, a carved image, and a metal image? Now therefore
consider what you will do.” 15And they turned aside there and came to the
house of the young Levite, at the home of Micah, and asked him about his
welfare. 16 †Now the 600 men of the Danites, armed with their weapons of
war, stood by the entrance of the gate. 17And the five men who had gone to
scout out the land went up and entered and took the carved image, the
ephod, the household gods, and the metal image, while the priest stood by
the entrance of the gate with the 600 men armed with weapons of war.
18 †And when these went into Micah’s house and took the carved image, the
ephod, the household gods, and the metal image, the priest said to them,
“What are you doing?” 19And they said to him, “Keep quiet; put your hand
on your mouth and come with us and be to us a father and a priest. Is it
better for you to be priest to the house of one man, or to be priest to a tribe
and clan in Israel?” 20And the priest’s heart was glad. He took the ephod and
the household gods and the carved image and went along with the people.
21 †So they turned and departed, putting the little ones and the livestock
and the goods in front of them. 22 †When they had gone a distance from the
home of Micah, the men who were in the houses near Micah’s house were
called out, and they overtook the people of Dan. 23And they shouted to the
people of Dan, who turned around and said to Micah, “What is the matter
with you, that you come with such a company?” 24And he said, “You take
my gods that I made and the priest, and go away, and what have I left? How
then do you ask me, ‘What is the matter with you?’” 25And the people of
Dan said to him, “Do not let your voice be heard among us, lest angry
fellows fall upon you, and you lose your life with the lives of your
household.” 26Then the people of Dan went their way. And when Micah saw
that they were too strong for him, he turned and went back to his home.
27But the people of Dan took what Micah had made, and the priest who
belonged to him, and they came to Laish, to a people quiet and
unsuspecting, and struck them with the edge of the sword and burned the
city with fire. 28 †And there was no deliverer because it was far from Sidon,
and they had no dealings with anyone. It was in the valley that belongs to
Beth-rehob. Then they rebuilt the city and lived in it. 29 †And they named the

city Dan, after the name of Dan their ancestor, who was born to Israel; but the name of the city was Laish at the first. 30 † And the people of Dan set up the carved image for themselves, and Jonathan the son of Gershom, son of Moses,[1] and his sons were priests to the tribe of the Danites until the day of the captivity of the land. 31 † So they set up Micah's carved image that he made, as long as the house of God was at Shiloh.

A Levite and His Concubine

19 [1] ‡ † In those days, when there was no king in Israel, a certain
Levite was sojourning in the remote parts of the hill country of Ephraim,
who took to himself a concubine from Bethlehem in Judah. [2] † And his
concubine was unfaithful to[2] him, and she went away from him to her
father's house at Bethlehem in Judah, and was there some four months.
[3] † Then her husband arose and went after her, to speak kindly to her and
bring her back. He had with him his servant and a couple of donkeys. And
she brought him into her father's house. And when the girl's father saw him,
he came with joy to meet him. [4] † And his father-in-law, the girl's father,
made him stay, and he remained with him three days. So they ate and drank
and spent the night there. [5] ‡ And on the fourth day they arose early in the
morning, and he prepared to go, but the girl's father said to his son-in-law,
"Strengthen your heart with a morsel of bread, and after that you may go."
[6] So the two of them sat and ate and drank together. And the girl's father said
to the man, "Be pleased to spend the night, and let your heart be merry."
[7] And when the man rose up to go, his father-in-law pressed him, till he
spent the night there again. [8] And on the fifth day he arose early in the
morning to depart. And the girl's father said, "Strengthen your heart and
wait until the day declines." So they ate, both of them. [9] And when the man
and his concubine and his servant rose up to depart, his father-in-law, the
girl's father, said to him, "Behold, now the day has waned toward evening.
Please, spend the night. Behold, the day draws to its close. Lodge here and
let your heart be merry, and tomorrow you shall arise early in the morning
for your journey, and go home."

[10] † But the man would not spend the night. He rose up and departed and
arrived opposite Jebus (that is, Jerusalem). He had with him a couple of
saddled donkeys, and his concubine was with him. [11] When they were near
Jebus, the day was nearly over, and the servant said to his master, "Come
now, let us turn aside to this city of the Jebusites and spend the night in it."
[12] † And his master said to him, "We will not turn aside into the city of
foreigners, who do not belong to the people of Israel, but we will pass on to
Gibeah." [13] ‡ And he said to his young man, "Come and let us draw near to

one of these places and spend the night at Gibeah or at Ramah.” 14So they passed on and went their way. And the sun went down on them near Gibeah, which belongs to Benjamin, 15and they turned aside there, to go in and spend the night at Gibeah. And he went in and sat down in the open square of the city, for no one took them into his house to spend the night.

16 † And behold, an old man was coming from his work in the field at evening. The man was from the hill country of Ephraim, and he was sojourning in Gibeah. The men of the place were Benjaminites. 17And he lifted up his eyes and saw the traveler in the open square of the city. And the old man said, “Where are you going? And where do you come from?” 18 † And he said to him, “We are passing from Bethlehem in Judah to the remote parts of the hill country of Ephraim, from which I come. I went to Bethlehem in Judah, and I am going to the house of the Lord,[1] but no one has taken me into his house. 19We have straw and feed for our donkeys, with bread and wine for me and your female servant and the young man with your servants. There is no lack of anything.” 20 † And the old man said, “Peace be to you; I will care for all your wants. Only, do not spend the night in the square.” 21So he brought him into his house and gave the donkeys feed. And they washed their feet, and ate and drank.

Gibeah’s Crime

22 ‡‡‡As they were making their hearts merry, behold, the men of the city,
worthless fellows, surrounded the house, beating on the door. And they said
to the old man, the master of the house, “Bring out the man who came into
your house, that we may know him.” 23 † And the man, the master of the
house, went out to them and said to them, “No, my brothers, do not act so
wickedly; since this man has come into my house, do not do this vile thing.
24 † Behold, here are my virgin daughter and his concubine. Let me bring
them out now. Violate them and do with them what seems good to you, but
against this man do not do this outrageous thing.” 25 †But the men would not
listen to him. So the man seized his concubine and made her go out to them.
And they knew her and abused her all night until the morning. And as the
dawn began to break, they let her go. 26 † And as morning appeared, the
woman came and fell down at the door of the man’s house where her master
was, until it was light.

27 †And her master rose up in the morning, and when he opened the doors
of the house and went out to go on his way, behold, there was his concubine
lying at the door of the house, with her hands on the threshold. 28 †He said to
her, “Get up, let us be going.” But there was no answer. Then he put her on
the donkey, and the man rose up and went away to his home. 29 †And when
he entered his house, he took a knife, and taking hold of his concubine he
divided her, limb by limb, into twelve pieces, and sent her throughout all
the territory of Israel. 30 †And all who saw it said, “Such a thing has never
happened or been seen from the day that the people of Israel came up out of
the land of Egypt until this day; consider it, take counsel, and speak.”

Israel's War with the Tribe of Benjamin

20 [1]†Then all the people of Israel came out, from Dan to Beersheba, including the land of Gilead, and the congregation assembled as one man to the Lord at Mizpah. [2]†And the chiefs of all the people, of all the tribes of Israel, presented themselves in the assembly of the people of God, 400,000 men on foot that drew the sword. [3](Now the people of Benjamin heard that the people of Israel had gone up to Mizpah.) And the people of Israel said, "Tell us, how did this evil happen?" [4]†And the Levite, the husband of the woman who was murdered, answered and said, "I came to Gibeah that belongs to Benjamin, I and my concubine, to spend the night. [5]And the leaders of Gibeah rose against me and surrounded the house against me by night. They meant to kill me, and they violated my concubine, and she is dead. [6]†So I took hold of my concubine and cut her in pieces and sent her throughout all the country of the inheritance of Israel, for they have committed abomination and outrage in Israel. [7]Behold, you people of Israel, all of you, give your advice and counsel here."

[8]And all the people arose as one man, saying, "None of us will go to his tent, and none of us will return to his house. [9]†But now this is what we will do to Gibeah: we will go up against it by lot, [10]and we will take ten men of a hundred throughout all the tribes of Israel, and a hundred of a thousand, and a thousand of ten thousand, to bring provisions for the people, that when they come they may repay Gibeah of Benjamin, for all the outrage that they have committed in Israel." [11]So all the men of Israel gathered against the city, united as one man.

[12]And the tribes of Israel sent men through all the tribe of Benjamin, saying, "What evil is this that has taken place among you? [13]†Now therefore give up the men, the worthless fellows in Gibeah, that we may put them to death and purge evil from Israel." But the Benjaminites would not listen to the voice of their brothers, the people of Israel. [14]† Then the people of Benjamin came together out of the cities to Gibeah to go out to battle against the people of Israel. [15]†And the people of Benjamin mustered out of their cities on that day 26,000 men who drew the sword, besides the

inhabitants of Gibeah, who mustered 700 chosen men. [16]†Among all these were 700 chosen men who were left-handed; every one could sling a stone at a hair and not miss. [17]And the men of Israel, apart from Benjamin, mustered 400,000 men who drew the sword; all these were men of war.

[18]†The people of Israel arose and went up to Bethel and inquired of God, "Who shall go up first for us to fight against the people of Benjamin?" And the Lord said, "Judah shall go up first."

[19]Then the people of Israel rose in the morning and encamped against Gibeah. [20]And the men of Israel went out to fight against Benjamin, and the men of Israel drew up the battle line against them at Gibeah. [21]†The people of Benjamin came out of Gibeah and destroyed on that day 22,000 men of the Israelites. [22]‡But the people, the men of Israel, took courage, and again formed the battle line in the same place where they had formed it on the first day. [23]And the people of Israel went up and wept before the Lord until the evening. And they inquired of the Lord, "Shall we again draw near to fight against our brothers, the people of Benjamin?" And the Lord said, "Go up against them."

[24]So the people of Israel came near against the people of Benjamin the second day. [25]†And Benjamin went against them out of Gibeah the second day, and destroyed 18,000 men of the people of Israel. All these were men who drew the sword. [26]†Then all the people of Israel, the whole army, went up and came to Bethel and wept. They sat there before the Lord and fasted that day until evening, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the Lord. [27]†And the people of Israel inquired of the Lord (for the ark of the covenant of God was there in those days, [28]†and Phinehas the son of Eleazar, son of Aaron, ministered before it in those days), saying, "Shall we go out once more to battle against our brothers, the people of Benjamin, or shall we cease?" And the Lord said, "Go up, for tomorrow I will give them into your hand."

[29]‡So Israel set men in ambush around Gibeah. [30]And the people of Israel went up against the people of Benjamin on the third day and set themselves in array against Gibeah, as at other times. [31]And the people of Benjamin went out against the people and were drawn away from the city. And as at other times they began to strike and kill some of the people in the highways, one of which goes up to Bethel and the other to Gibeah, and in the open

country, about thirty men of Israel. 32And the people of Benjamin said, “They are routed before us, as at the first.” But the people of Israel said, “Let us flee and draw them away from the city to the highways.” 33†And all the men of Israel rose up out of their place and set themselves in array at Baal-tamar, and the men of Israel who were in ambush rushed out of their place from Maareh-geba.[1] 34And there came against Gibeah 10,000 chosen men out of all Israel, and the battle was hard, but the Benjaminites did not know that disaster was close upon them. 35†And the Lord defeated Benjamin before Israel, and the people of Israel destroyed 25,100 men of Benjamin that day. All these were men who drew the sword. 36†† So the people of Benjamin saw that they were defeated.

The men of Israel gave ground to Benjamin, because they trusted the men in ambush whom they had set against Gibeah. 37†Then the men in ambush hurried and rushed against Gibeah; the men in ambush moved out and struck all the city with the edge of the sword. 38Now the appointed signal between the men of Israel and the men in the main ambush was that when they made a great cloud of smoke rise up out of the city 39the men of Israel should turn in battle. Now Benjamin had begun to strike and kill about thirty men of Israel. They said, “Surely they are defeated before us, as in the first battle.” 40But when the signal began to rise out of the city in a column of smoke, the Benjaminites looked behind them, and behold, the whole of the city went up in smoke to heaven. 41Then the men of Israel turned, and the men of Benjamin were dismayed, for they saw that disaster was close upon them. 42†Therefore they turned their backs before the men of Israel in the direction of the wilderness, but the battle overtook them. And those who came out of the cities were destroying them in their midst. 43†Surrounding the Benjaminites, they pursued them and trod them down from Nohah[1] as far as opposite Gibeah on the east. 44Eighteen thousand men of Benjamin fell, all of them men of valor. 45†And they turned and fled toward the wilderness to the rock of Rimmon. Five thousand men of them were cut down in the highways. And they were pursued hard to Gidom, and 2,000 men of them were struck down. 46†So all who fell that day of Benjamin were 25,000 men who drew the sword, all of them men of valor. 47†But 600 men turned and fled toward the wilderness to the rock of Rimmon and remained at the rock of Rimmon four months. 48†And the men of Israel

turned back against the people of Benjamin and struck them with the edge of the sword, the city, men and beasts and all that they found. And all the towns that they found they set on fire.

Wives Provided for the Tribe of Benjamin

21 [1]Now the men of Israel had sworn at Mizpah, “No one of us shall
give his daughter in marriage to Benjamin.” [2]† And the people came to
Bethel and sat there till evening before God, and they lifted up their voices
and wept bitterly. [3]And they said, “O Lord, the God of Israel, why has this
happened in Israel, that today there should be one tribe lacking in Israel?”
[4]And the next day the people rose early and built there an altar and offered
burnt offerings and peace offerings. [5]†And the people of Israel said, “Which
of all the tribes of Israel did not come up in the assembly to the Lord?” For
they had taken a great oath concerning him who did not come up to the Lord
to Mizpah, saying, “He shall surely be put to death.” [6]And the people of
Israel had compassion for Benjamin their brother and said, “One tribe is cut
off from Israel this day. [7]†What shall we do for wives for those who are left,
since we have sworn by the Lord that we will not give them any of our
daughters for wives?”

[8]† And they said, “What one is there of the tribes of Israel that did not
come up to the Lord to Mizpah?” And behold, no one had come to the camp
from Jabesh-gilead, to the assembly. [9]For when the people were mustered,
behold, not one of the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead was there. [10]† So the
congregation sent 12,000 of their bravest men there and commanded them,
“Go and strike the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead with the edge of the sword;
also the women and the little ones. [11]†This is what you shall do: every male
and every woman that has lain with a male you shall devote to destruction.”
[12]† And they found among the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead 400 young
virgins who had not known a man by lying with him, and they brought them
to the camp at Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan.

[13]† Then the whole congregation sent word to the people of Benjamin
who were at the rock of Rimmon and proclaimed peace to them. [14]And
Benjamin returned at that time. And they gave them the women whom they
had saved alive of the women of Jabesh-gilead, but they were not enough
for them. [15]†And the people had compassion on Benjamin because the Lord
had made a breach in the tribes of Israel.

16 Then the elders of the congregation said, “What shall we do for wives
for those who are left, since the women are destroyed out of Benjamin?”
17 And they said, “There must be an inheritance for the survivors of
Benjamin, that a tribe not be blotted out from Israel. 18 † Yet we cannot give
them wives from our daughters.” For the people of Israel had sworn,
“Cursed be he who gives a wife to Benjamin.” 19 † So they said, “Behold,
there is the yearly feast of the Lord at Shiloh, which is north of Bethel, on
the east of the highway that goes up from Bethel to Shechem, and south of
Lebonah.” 20 And they commanded the people of Benjamin, saying, “Go and
lie in ambush in the vineyards 21 † and watch. If the daughters of Shiloh
come out to dance in the dances, then come out of the vineyards and snatch
each man his wife from the daughters of Shiloh, and go to the land of
Benjamin. 22 ‡ † And when their fathers or their brothers come to complain to
us, we will say to them, ‘Grant them graciously to us, because we did not
take for each man of them his wife in battle, neither did you give them to
them, else you would now be guilty.’” 23 And the people of Benjamin did so
and took their wives, according to their number, from the dancers whom
they carried off. Then they went and returned to their inheritance and rebuilt
the towns and lived in them. 24 † And the people of Israel departed from there
at that time, every man to his tribe and family, and they went out from there
every man to his inheritance.

25 † In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right
in his own eyes.

Judges

Overview

Author(s)
Unknown

Date
Written c 1000 BC

Places
Cities throughout Israel and Canaan, especially in the central highlands, which Israel conquered first and held

People
Joshua, Deborah, Gideon, Samson, and other judges; the tribes of Israel; Canaanites; Philistines; Moabites; Midianites; Ammonites

Purpose
To present Israel's declining spiritual state and the Lord's mercy, by which He forgave them and held them together

Law Themes
Israel's failure to conquer the Promised Land; transgression of the covenant; cowardice; idolatry; unfaithful Levites; doing what's right in one's own eyes

Gospel Themes
The Lord provides saviors and judges; the Lord answers Israel's cry for help; the angel of the Lord; the Spirit of the Lord

Memory Verses
The Lord's enemies and friends (5:31); 11 tribes repent (20:26); wayward Israel (21:25)

Introduction to Judges

Reading Judges

A young man climbs down from the loft. Oxen, a donkey, and a few goats rise up from the dirt-packed floor. They low and bleat for more fodder as they stretch and stomp. The young man leans against a pillar, watching his grandmother, who turns flat loaves of bread in an oven. She rises and places a warm loaf in his left hand. His father passes and places a lead rope in his right. It is time to yoke the oxen. Late fall means preparing the fields for sowing.

The young man steps into the cool air, leading the oxen from the ground floor of their home. As he walks, he runs his hand along a light gray mud-brick wall, worn smooth by the oxen's girth as they lumber to and from the fields each day. Near the edge of town, they pass a high, square tower. Its

rugged stones stand ready to resist the next raid on their village. In the village gateway, elders take their seats. They nod in approval at the young man's early start and the modest gait of his ox team. Outside the city walls spread the stubbled fields where they had cut the wheat that June. Beyond, on the hills, rises an oak forest that echoes with the ax blows of slaves, felling trees for the morning and evening sacrifices at the local shrine. So go the days and seasons in the Israelite settlements of central Canaan.

Luther on Judges

The historians, therefore, are the most useful people and the best teachers, so that one can never honor, praise, and thank them enough. (AE 34:276)

It is necessary to know the scope of this word [judges] in Hebrew; for it denotes also an official position itself or the administration of law, as in Ps. 1:5: "The godless shall not stand in the judgment," which others would render, "in rule"; likewise Ps. 72:1: "God, give judgment to the king." Hence it is used in the name of the Book of Judges, which in Latin would be called the book of princes, rulers, governors, or magistrates. (AE 9:49)

He calls leaders "saviors," as we find in the Book of Judges (Judg. 3:9), where He sent them many saviors, that is, leaders to lead them and take charge of them, to be in the lead if they ever had to fight with enemies. (AE 18:204)

In the book of Judges one can see the good that God did through Ehud [Judg. 3:15–30], Gideon [Judg. 6:11–8:28], Deborah [Judg. 4:4–5:31], Samson [Judg. 13:2–16:31], and other individuals, though the people were not worthy of it. (AE 46:192–93)

Challenges for Readers

Joshua versus Judges. See p 339.

Sequence and Length of Events. See p 339.

Documentation. Other biblical books do not fill in gaps for events that took place during the time of the judges. There are only a few references: Is 9:4 (Midian); Hos 9:9; 10:9 (Benjaminites at Gibeah); Hos 6:7–10 (Gilead, Shechem, and Ephraimite); and Ps 68:7–14 (Deborah). Also, the Book of Judges does not show the same interest in documents that the other Historical Books do. See pp 335–37.

Cycles in History. A structured presentation of events in Judges is found in 2:10–23: (1) Israel strays from the Lord, (2) another nation invades to oppress Israel, (3) Israel cries to the Lord for deliverance, and (4) the Lord provides a judge. Such features appear with variations throughout the Book and drive home its purpose.

Blessings for Readers

The Book of Judges chronicles the moral decay that afflicted Israel and led to its oppression, at times recording events so shocking one can scarcely believe they appear in Sacred Scripture. Yet these historic examples have a blessed purpose: to warn us against the spiritual indifference and moral decay that would stalk our generation and the next. They show how important our duty is as God's family to teach God's Word.

And what is the message of the Word? The Lord hears the cry of His people. He does not forget them but multiplies His mercy generation after generation. As you study Judges, call out to the Lord on behalf of your family, your children and grandchildren, that the Spirit of the Lord would rest on them and they would know their deliverer, Jesus.

OUTLINE

I. Prologue (1:1–3:6)
   A. Israel's Failure to Purge the Land (1:1–2:5)
   B. God's Dealings with Israel's Spiritual Failure (2:6–3:6)
II. The Judges Cycles (3:7–16:31)
   A. Major Judge: Othniel (3:7–11)
   B. Major Judge: Ehud (3:12–30)
   C. Minor Judge: Shamgar (3:31)
   D. Major Judge: Deborah (chs 4–5)
   E. Major Judge: Gideon (chs 6–8)
   F. Interlude: Abimelech's Doomed Attempt at Kingship (ch 9)
   G. Minor Judge: Tola (10:1–2)
   H. Minor Judge: Jair (10:3–5)
   I. Major Judge: Jephthah (10:6–12:7)
   J. Minor Judge: Ibzan (12:8–10)
   K. Minor Judge: Elon (12:11–12)
   L. Minor Judge: Abdon (12:13–15)
   M. Major Judge: Samson (chs 13–16)
III. Dual Epilogue (chs 17–21)
   A. The Danites Move North (chs 17–18)

B. Bethlehem and Jabesh-gilead (chs 19–21)

The accounts in this Book probably overlap somewhat, but the accounts of the major and minor judges (3:7–16:31) are presented largely in chronological order. The incidents in the dual epilogue (chs 17–21) are more difficult to date but probably took place early in the period. The era extended from the death of Joshua (c 1399 BC) to the beginning of the reign of Saul, the first king of Israel's united monarchy (c 1048 BC). While the entire period thus comprised slightly more than three centuries, Othniel did not come to leadership until an entire generation had died after the death of Joshua (cf 2:10). In addition, Samuel must also be included within this chronology prior to 1048 BC. Several judges may have ruled simultaneously in separate locations.

Articles and Resources Related to Judges

- Prophetesses in the Bible
- Israel's Identity Crisis
- Savior and Judge

Prophetesses in the Bible

Old Testament Prophetesses

Miriam. The Old Testament speaks about five prophetesses. The first is Miriam, the sister of Moses. She led the women of Israel in a song of triumph after the crossing of the Red Sea (Ex 15:20–21). Later, in Nu 12:1–2, Miriam seems to refer to her role as prophetess as she questions Moses' marriage to a Cushite woman. God, however, noted the difference between Moses and other prophets (Nu 12:5–8). He struck Miriam with leprosy and had Moses send her out of the camp for seven days before He answered Moses' prayer and healed her (Nu 12:10–15). Despite the incident, the prophet Micah remembered Miriam favorably and acknowledged her leadership role for God's people during the exodus (Mi 6:4).

Deborah. Of all the prophetesses, we know the most about Deborah (Jgs 4–5). She led Israel and settled disputes between the people. (See also 2Sm 14:2; 20:16.) Through her, the Lord called Barak to lead Israel against the Canaanites. When Barak refused to follow the Lord's counsel without her help, Deborah told him that not he, but a woman, would have the honor of victory (Jael; Jgs 4:21–24). Like Miriam, Deborah sang a song of victory to rally the troops (Jgs 5).

Mother of King Lemuel. A brief note in Pr 31:1 mentions an "oracle" taught to King Lemuel by his mother. The passage is rather ambiguous for a number of reasons. Lemuel is mentioned nowhere else. The term translated "oracle" might be the name of a region among the Ishmaelites (Arabs). At the very least, the passage shows the role of a mother instructing her son through a song.

Huldah. When the priest Hilkiah discovered the Book of the Law in the temple and presented it to King Josiah, the king sent a delegation to "inquire of the Lord" about the message of the book (2Ki 22:8–20; 2Ch 34:22–28). The king's delegation sought out the prophetess Huldah, who was close by, rather than one of the male prophets (Jeremiah and Zephaniah) who lived at this time. Through Huldah, the Lord rebuked the people and also promised mercy to Josiah.

Isaiah's Wife. Isaiah's wife is called a prophetess in Is 8:3. The passage, however, describes her simply in terms of normal husband-wife relations. She may be called a prophetess because she is married to a prophet.

Old Testament False Prophetesses

Lying Prophetesses. Just as false prophets misled God's people, so prophetesses misled God's people during the Babylonian exile. God commanded Ezekiel to speak against the prophetesses "who prophesy out of their own minds [imagination]" (Ezk 13:17). In particular, he mentions their use of charms, false visions, and divination. Apparently these women were mixing the prophetic practices of Israel with the religious practices of the other nations.

Noadiah. Nehemiah mentions intimidation from the prophetess Noadiah and other prophets who did not want him to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem (Ne 6:14).

New Testament Prophetesses

Anna. The first prophetess mentioned in the New Testament was an elderly widow who was constantly at the temple (Lk 2:36–38). It is possible that she had a room at the temple and may have served there in some capacity. Luke does not record her "thanks" spoken over the baby Jesus. Most likely, she spoke or sang poetically, as had Simeon (Lk 2:25–35).

Daughters of Philip. In Ac 21:9, Luke mentions that Philip the evangelist had four unmarried daughters who prophesied. Luke gives no other details except that they lived in Caesarea.

Prophetesses at Corinth. Paul makes a passing reference in 1Co 11:5 to women praying and prophesying. His concern in the passage is that they may pray or prophesy without exercising the modesty of the time by covering their heads (wearing a veil). In 1Co 11:1–16 (as well as in other writings), Paul emphasizes the headship of the husband over his wife and the headship of Christ over men. When a woman prophesies with her head uncovered, she "dishonors her head, since it is the same as if her head were shaven" (v 5). Paul sees this as a violation of the created order and authority given by God. See p 1291.

For the sake of good order, the prophets of Corinth were to take turns speaking and were to judge one another's messages (1Co 14:26–40). In this context, Paul never mentions prophetesses. But he notes that the women should not speak in the congregation, according to the custom everywhere (vv 33–35). Paul was confident that the prophets would recognize the authority of his teaching. In other words, the prophets were subject to Paul's teaching as an apostle called by Christ.

New Testament False Prophetesses

Jezebel. The New Testament also mentions a false prophetess (Rv 2:20–23). Jesus calls her "Jezebel," after the Old Testament queen who introduced so many elements of Canaanite religion into Israel (cf 1Ki 18:19). This New Testament Jezebel was notorious for immorality and idolatry. Revelation states that Jesus had called her to repent, which probably means she was a straying member of the Thyatira congregation. He threatened to strike her dead and her "children" (followers?) if they would not repent.

Prophetesses Today

The few passages about prophetesses from both the Old and New Testaments show the blessings God at times bestowed through the leadership of women. But though Scripture describes prophetesses, it does not encourage the establishment of an office of prophetess. In fact, Paul's reference to prophetesses in 1Co 11 occurs in a passage emphasizing the leadership role of a husband! When Paul returned to the matter of prophets and prophecy, he specifically limited the role women were to play as speakers in the congregation.

At first, Paul's words about prophetesses may seem to conflict with the Old Testament examples of Miriam, Deborah, and Huldah. However, careful consideration of these passages reveals remarkable compatibility. For example, none of the passages show a prophetess serving as a public speaker for God during a congregational gathering (Paul's concern in 1Co 14:33b–35). However, they do show women offering private counsel, settling disputes, and perhaps most important, publicly thanking and praising God. God called women especially to share His Word in song and poetry (Miriam, Deborah, the mother of King Lemuel, and possibly Anna; note also the song of Mary in Lk 1:46–55). Song may have been a key element in what defined a prophetess.

Scripture, like much of human culture, consistently distinguishes the roles of men and women. In particular, it describes women speaking God's Word publicly in song and privately through counsel. It describes men speaking God's Word publicly when Christ calls them through His Church. These modes of service blessed God's people during biblical times and continue to bless and guide God's people today. See notes, Gn 2:18, 24; Eph 5; see also pp 1972, 2080.

Israel's Identity Crisis

How quickly the Israelites (and you and I) forget *whose* people we are: we belong to God. Instead of remembering our true identity, we suffer an identity crisis when we sin. The first identity crisis came in the Garden of Eden as Adam and Eve doubted God's Word and chose to be identified with a lying serpent. Now the Israelites ask, "Did God really say to destroy the Canaanites? What harm is there in a little compromise? The Canaanites I've met are nice people. Surely, God wouldn't want to destroy them, would He?" Who were these gods that caused the Israelites to fall? Who were these contenders against the almighty God who would tempt them with a new identity? The Bible names some of them: Baal (Jgs 2:11); Asherah (Jgs 6:25); Molech (1Ki 11:7; cf Jgs 10:6); and Dagon (Jgs 16:23).

Baal

Baal was the most popular Canaanite god and the son of El, the high god. Every region in Canaan had a Baal to worship. Archaeologists have discovered artifacts near Ras Sharma (ancient Ugarit) that portray Baal as the god of rain, thunder, and lightning. The Canaanites believed that Baal controlled the changing seasons and that his touch made colors wilt. They also believed that Baal provided the earth's produce, and temple prostitution was used to remind him to send rain. During religious ceremonies, an officiating priest danced about Baal's altar, chanting and cutting himself with a knife, hoping to attract Baal's attention. New Year festivals celebrating the death and rebirth of nature provided the annual epitome of Baal worship. Baal's priests taught that he was responsible for plagues and misfortunes. Only human sacrifices could placate Baal. Most often, those sacrificed were children. When the Phoenicians, a people who originated on the island of Crete, arrived in Canaan by ship, they adopted Baal and his consort, Asherah, as their fertility gods. The Phoenicians later carried their newly adopted gods throughout the Mediterranean aboard their cargo ships. See note, Nu 25:3.

Asherah/Ashtoreth

(Plural forms: Asherim/Asheroth/Ashtaroth)

Baal's female counterpart is commonly called Asherah, though other titles appear in the Bible (see note, Ex 34:13). To honor Asherah, a Canaanite woman had to offer either her hair or her chastity. The city of Ashkelon, where Samson killed 30 Philistines (Jgs 14:19), once housed a shrine for Asherah. Like her counterpart, Baal, Asherah had a retinue of temple prostitutes. The precise origins of Asherah as the mother-goddess are unknown, because her fame was so far-reaching in the ancient world, and female goddesses were easily confused or treated as interchangeable. E.g., in Phoenicia, there was "Ashtarte of the name of Baal." In some parts of Assyria and Babylon, the goddess "Nana" was worshiped as the goddess of sexual love and fertility. Elsewhere in Babylon was "Shamash, the wife of Molech," or "Zarpanit," the goddess of plant and animal fertility. In Assyria, there was "Ishtar of Arbela," the goddess of war. And in southern Arabia, there was "Athtar."

Molech

Molech was the Phoenician god of human sacrifice. At times, Molech's idol welcomed children into his searing arms. Innocent victims were placed between the outstretched arms of Molech's heated statue and burned to death. In later times, Solomon established a temple to Molech at Mount Olivet (1Ki 11:7). Josiah destroyed the temple of Molech at Topheth (2Ki 23:10). The worship of Molech spread to Carthage, where it is reported that in one incident alone, 200 young boys were sacrificed in hopes of lifting a siege.

Dagon

Dagon was the Philistines' national god, who had numerous temples throughout Canaan. Samson was brought to Dagon's temple in Gaza in an elaborate thank-you ceremony to this Philistine god (Jgs 16:23). When Samson destroyed Dagon's temple, 3,000 Dagon worshipers died (Jgs 16:27–30). The Philistines brought war trophies into other Dagon temples, including the ark of God (1Sm 5:1–2) and the head of Saul (1Ch 10:8–10). Historians believe that Dagon worship began in Babylon and spread throughout Canaan, continuing into the late centuries BC, when many of his temples were destroyed by Jonathan Maccabee.

Sin and Lost Identities

We may find no appeal in the ancient gods of Canaan. There is no allure, no enticement. Yet, it was the Canaanite gods who caused many Israelites to be tempted away from the true God. Perhaps the Israelites wanted a god they could manipulate with rites and ceremonies, regardless of how inhumane their practice. We often seek gods we can manipulate as well. Even some Christians are enticed to worship such things as possessions, money, lust, greed, and power. Pornography causes some Christians to fall. Drug abuse, child abuse, homosexuality, and sexual, physical, and mental abuse cause others to fall. Sin causes us to forget that we are God's temple (1Co 3:16). For the ancient Israelites, sin began innocently enough (it usually does in our lives too). Sadly, doubting God's Word has eternal ramifications. As we fall into sin, we lose sight of the consequences—that "those who practice such things deserve to die" (Rm 1:32). Here are three personal questions to ask ourselves: (1) What idols have I set up in God's place? (2) Is the god of self-indulgence, the god of promiscuous sex, or the god of child sacrifice (abortion) a part of my life? (3) Is the god of money and material possessions seeking to topple me into sin?

Our True Identity

Now, let us consider our true identity as children of God, the identity God gave us at our Baptism. At Baptism, our old, sinful self was drowned and was crucified with Christ so "that the body of sin might be brought to nothing" (Rm 6:6). Jesus Christ is our Savior. He paid the full price to rescue those overcome by sin with His dear body and blood. God's peace warms our hearts each time we consider what Jesus Christ has done. He has "saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to His own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit" (Ti 3:5).

Savior and Judge

Some religious scholars credit the prophet Samuel as the author of Judges, though his name is not found among its pages. Others have suggested that either Nathan or Gad (1Ch 29:29) was the author. In the Hebrew Bible, Judges is found in a section known as the "Former Prophets," along with three other books: Joshua, Samuel, and Kings. "Judges" is taken from the Hebrew word *shaphat*, meaning both "to judge" and "to govern." These judges not only governed the Israelites but also acted as "saviors," delivering God's people from the merciless hands of the Canaanites. Only one, Deborah, actually settled legal disputes (Jgs 4:5). Six judges are titled or described as deliverers, using the same word from which Jesus' title of "Savior" is derived. These six savior judges are Othniel (3:9), Ehud (3:15), Shamgar (3:31), Gideon (ch 6), Tola (10:1), and Samson (ch 13).

Remember that God reserves judgment for Himself, so each judge is acting as God's under-judge. It is God who is working through their weaknesses to judge and save His people. In the broadest sense, we might say that God raised judges as rulers, or governors, in order that He might redeem (save) His people from the atrocities they were committing when they followed the false gods of the Canaanites. As sinful human beings (as you and I are), these judges had both strengths and weaknesses.

Othniel

Othniel is the first of God's six deliverers. After Israel turned away from God and worshiped the false gods Baal and Asheroth (3:7), God led Israel into eight years of servanthood to Cushan-rishathaim. By His grace, God used Othniel as a military leader and a judge/savior to free Israel from the hands of the king of Aram. Othniel's conquest was followed by 40 years of peace (3:11). Othniel is often called Israel's ideal judge, a preview of Christ's return and His judgment (Rv 19:11).

Ehud

Following another cycle of sinfulness after Othniel's death (Jgs 3:11–12), Israel cried out for rescue (3:15). God provided a second judge/savior to free them from Eglon, king of Moab. That deliverer was Ehud, who used his left-handedness to conceal a sword on his right thigh (3:16). As Ehud approached Eglon by pretending to share a secret, he drew the sword with his left hand and "thrust it into" Eglon's belly (3:21). Because the Hebrew word for left-handedness means "restricted as to the right hand," some scholars believe Ehud's right hand was crippled. Israel enjoyed 80 years of rest following Ehud's victory (Jgs 3:30).

Shamgar

Information about Shamgar, God's third deliverer, is limited to the biblical account found only in Jgs 3:31. Shamgar was the son of Anath, and God used him to kill 600 Philistines with a stick used to prod oxen. Shamgar's exploits may have overlapped Ehud's time, since Ehud's death is not mentioned until 4:1.

Deborah and Barak

Following the death of Ehud, the Israelites once more slipped back into sin (4:1). This time, God called out Jabin, king of Canaan, to rule over Israel for nearly 20 years. Then God raised Deborah, a prophetess, wife, and judge (4:4), and Barak (4:6). God's plan of redemption was given to Deborah, who employed Barak to carry it out (4:11–24). Together they judged/saved Israel, and 40 years of peace followed (5:31).

Gideon

Israel again became corrupt (6:1), and God allowed His people's captivity at the hands of the Midianites. After seven years (6:1), the Israelites cried out to God (6:7). God answered with an unknown prophet, sent to explain the reason for Israel's enslavement (6:7–8). Then God personally called Gideon as His fourth deliverer, or judge/savior (6:11–12). By God's hand, Gideon defeated the Midianites (7:1–8:21). In peace, Gideon refused attempts to crown him king, but took tributes from his fellow Israelites and dishonored God by creating a golden ephod. Despite Gideon's disobedience, God granted Israel 40 years of rest (8:28).

Abimelech

Abimelech was Gideon's son by a concubine (8:31). Upon Gideon's death, Israel set up Baal-berith as its god (8:33–34). Abimelech is called an "antijudge" because he murdered his own family (9:5). His rule lasted only three years (9:22), and Abimelech died when a millstone was dropped on his head, followed by a death blow administered by his servant (9:52–54).

Tola and Jair

Tola is Israel's fifth deliverer, or judge/savior (10:1). The Book of Judges reveals that Tola judged for 23 years (10:2) and that Jair judged 22 years and managed 30 cities (10:3–4).

Jephthah

Israel again fell into sin (10:6) and was subjected to Philistine and Ammonite rule for 18 years (10:7–8) before God raised another judge/savior. His name was Jephthah, and he judged for six years. Jephthah made a hasty vow to God that may have resulted in the tragic death of his own daughter (see notes, 11:37, 39).

Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon

The writer of Judges reveals very little about the lives of Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon other than that they judged/saved Israel for 7 (12:9), 10 (12:11), and 8 years (12:13–14), respectively.

Samson

Samson is the last of God's six deliverers (13:5). The account of Samson's life reflects the same cycle of sin and repentance seen in the lives of his fellow Israelites.

Come, Lord Jesus

Each judge of Israel acted to save God's people from oppression and apostasy. In so doing, they pointed us to Jesus Christ. He has given us permanent release from the power of sin by ransoming us from death to life (Rm 6:23). We long for His second coming, when He will come to judge the living and the dead (2Tm 4:1). Through His Gospel, we already have God's verdict: not guilty!

Footnotes

Footnotes for Judges, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:17 *Hormah* means *utter destruction*

Footnotes for Judges, Chapter 2

- [1] 2:3 Vulgate, Old Latin (compare Septuagint); Hebrew *sides*
- [2] 2:5 *Bochim* means *weepers*

Footnotes for Judges, Chapter 3

- [1] 3:16 A *cubit* was about 18 inches or 45 centimeters
- [1] 3:23 The meaning of the Hebrew word is uncertain

Footnotes for Judges, Chapter 5

- [1] 5:10 The meaning of the Hebrew word is uncertain; it may connote *saddle blankets*
- [2] 5:11 Or *archers*; the meaning of the Hebrew word is uncertain
- [1] 5:14 Septuagint; Hebrew *in Amalek*
- [2] 5:10 Hebrew *commander's*

Footnotes for Judges, Chapter 6

- [1] 6:13 Or *Please, my Lord*
- [2] 6:14 Septuagint *the angel of the* LORD; also verse 16
- [1] 6:19 An *ephah* was about 3/5 bushel or 22 liters
- [1] 6:32 Hebrew *he*

Footnotes for Judges, Chapter 7

- [1] 7:22 Some Hebrew manuscripts *Zeredah*

Footnotes for Judges, Chapter 8

- [2] 8:3 Hebrew *their spirit*
- [1] 8:26 A *shekel* was about 2/5 ounce or 11 grams
- [1] 8:30 Hebrew *who came from his own loins*

Footnotes for Judges, Chapter 9

- [1] 9:29 Septuagint; Hebrew *and he said*
- [2] 9:31 Or *at Tormah*
- [3] 9:31 Hebrew *besieging*, or *closing up*
- [4] 9:36 Hebrew *You see*

Footnotes for Judges, Chapter 11

- [1] 11:31 Or *whoever*
- [2] 11:31 Or *him*

Footnotes for Judges, Chapter 12

- [1] 12:7 Septuagint; Hebrew *in the cities of Gilead*

Footnotes for Judges, Chapter 13

- [1] 13:19 Septuagint, Vulgate; Hebrew *Lord , and working*

Footnotes for Judges, Chapter 14

- [1] 14:15 Septuagint, Syriac; Hebrew *seventh*

Footnotes for Judges, Chapter 15

- [1] 15:17 *Ramath-lehi* means *the hill of the jawbone*
- [2] 15:19 *En-hakkore* means *the spring of him who called*

Footnotes for Judges, Chapter 16

- [1] 16:14 Compare Septuagint; Hebrew lacks *and fasten it tight . . . into the web*
- [1] 16:24 Or *who has multiplied our slain*

Footnotes for Judges, Chapter 17

- [1] 17:5 Hebrew *filled the hand of*; also verse 12

Footnotes for Judges, Chapter 18

- [1] 18:7 Compare 18:10; the meaning of the Hebrew word is uncertain
- [2] 18:12 *Mahaneh-dan* means *camp of Dan*
- [1] 18:30 Or *Manasseh*

Footnotes for Judges, Chapter 19

- [2] 19:2 Septuagint, Old Latin *became angry with*
- [1] 19:18 Septuagint *my home*; compare verse 29

Footnotes for Judges, Chapter 20

- [1] 20:33 Some Septuagint manuscripts *place west of Geba*

- [1] 20:43 Septuagint; Hebrew [at their] *resting place*

Study Notes

JUDGES—NOTE ON 1:1 *After the death of Joshua*. See "Sequence and Length of Events," p 339. *inquired*. Probably by means of the Urim and Thummim. See "call," p 842.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 1:4 *into their hand*. The Lord was behind the victory. See note, Jsh 24:8. *Bezek*. Lit, "pebble." Possibly an early, and belittling, reference to Jerusalem.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 1:5 *Adoni-bezek*. "Lord of pebble," possibly mimicking the names of two former kings of Jerusalem: Melchizedek ("King of Righteousness"; Gn 14:18–20) and Adoni-zedek ("Lord of Righteousness"; Jsh 10:1–2).
JUDGES—NOTE ON 1:6 *cut off his thumbs and his big toes*. Body mutilation to humiliate the victim and incapacitate him, as well as to inflict fear on other rulers. Such cruelty was common in the ancient Near East; it is troubling to see the men of Judah and Simeon practice it here. As time went by, the Israelites acted and thought less as the Lord's covenant people and more as Canaanites.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 1:7 *they*. Israelites.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 1:8 *captured it*. This conquest of Jerusalem was only temporary. In v 21, the Benjaminites were unable to drive the Jebusites out of Jerusalem, as archaeology confirms. A stepped-stone structure built in the northeast part of the old city dates to this period and could be the work of Jebusite defenders. The city remained a pocket of resistance for more than three centuries, until David captured it as his capital city (2Sm 5:6–7).
JUDGES—NOTE ON 1:9 *hill country*. Rocky hills running like a spine north to south through the land. *Negeb*. Desert region extending south from Jerusalem toward the Sinai Peninsula. *lowland*. Shephelah, the gentle hilly region sloping from Jerusalem to the flat coastal plain along the Great Sea. See color map 2.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 1:10 *Kiriath-arba*. Hebron's alternate name, meaning "City of Four," probably referring to an original federation of four cities.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 1:11 *Debir*. Also called *Kiriath-sepher*, "City of the Book," located c 10 mi S of Hebron.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 1:12–15 *Achsah*. Women often go unnamed in OT, but Achsah is named as a strong, independent woman.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 1:13 *Othniel*. See note, 3:9.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 1:14 *she urged him to ask her father for a field*. Well within Achsah's right to request; an illustration of the boldness with which a daughter could approach her father. See "Standing of Women," p 213.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 1:15 *blessing*. See p 842. *give me also springs of water*. Achsah wanted a reliable source of water in this semiarid climate.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 1:16 *Arad*. C 10 mi E of Beersheba (traditional southern boundary of the land) and 20 mi S of Hebron. Archaeologists discovered a small temple or shrine within the fortress, the design of which agreed in many ways with biblical descriptions of a sanctuary. The priestly names Pashhur and Meremoth (cf Jer 20:1; Ezr 8:33) were found on potsherds near the temple, which was in use for centuries.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 1:17 *Zephath*. "Watchtower"; Canaanite city in the region of Judah. *Hormah*. New name may be a description instead of a proper name. See ESV note; see also "devote to destruction," p 6.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 1:18 *Gaza … Ashkelon … Ekron*. These cities, along with Gath and Ashdod, were the five major Philistine cities, controlling the Great Sea coast in southwest Canaan. See p 345; see also color map 1.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 1:19 *chariots of iron*. They had iron axles and perhaps iron plates over their structure.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 1:20 *the three sons of Anak*. Anakim were already in Canaan when the Israelites arrived, said to be descended from the Nephilim (Gn 6:1–4) and regarded as very powerful.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 1:21 *did not drive out*. Beginning of a litany of the failure of the tribes to complete Israel's conquest of the land. See notes, vv 8, 27–36; cf Jsh 13:2–6.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 1:22 *house of Joseph*. Ephraim, one of two tribes descended from the sons of Joseph.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 1:23 *Bethel*. "House of God"; strategically located 12 mi N of Jerusalem at the border between Benjamin and Ephraim. See color map 1.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 1:24 *we will deal kindly with you*. A covenant agreement, violating the Lord's prohibition against making covenants with the peoples of the land (Dt 7:2). Luth: "To be sure, the Jebusite and the Canaanite will always live in our midst," but we must not allow them to

rule us (AE 10:381n). These verses serve as a warning to "coarse, lazy Christians" who fail to appreciate spiritual matters and "become sluggish and secure" (AE 38:131).

JUDGES—NOTE ON 1:26 *land of the Hittites*. The Hittites flourished along the southern coast of present-day Turkey two centuries earlier; these were probably remnant groups that migrated into Canaan after the Hittite Empire disbanded. See color map 3; see also chronology pp xcvi–xcviii.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 1:1–26 After the optimistic, faith-filled account in Jsh, Jgs 1 introduces the disappointing next phase of Israelite history. Despite the sinful disappointments of our life histories, Jesus knows our weaknesses and forgives our neglect of His promises. Daily, we return to our Baptism to drown our sinful nature with its evil desires and to put on our new nature, which is righteous and pure (see SC, Baptism, pp xxxix–xl). The righteousness of Jesus replaces our unrighteousness. • Thank You, Lord, for rescuing us from our own worst enemies—our sinful flesh and the "Canaanites" that surround us. Amen.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 1:27–36 List of failures in the conquest. Archaeology has confirmed the persistent presence of Canaanites in many of these places. Adoni-bezek had lost his fingers and toes, his freedom, and finally his life (vv 5–7), but the Canaanite traitors at Bethel were allowed to remain alive and flourish. The Israelites generally permitted the Canaanites to live as their slaves or simply to live among them. Dan was entirely pressed out of its tribal allotment by the Amorites.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 1:27 *Beth-shean*. Strategic crossroads at the junction of the Jezreel and Jordan valleys. ("Beth-shan" in 1Sm 31:10, 12; 2Sm 21:12.) See color map 1. *Taanach*. 17 mi W of Beth-shean (see note, 5:19). *Dor*. On the coast of the Great Sea, just south of Mount Carmel. *Megiddo*. Also located at a strategic crossroads. See notes, 5:19; Rv 16:16.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 1:28 *forced labor*. Having endured forced labor and slavery in Egypt, the Israelites then inflicted slavery on some of the Canaanite peoples. See p 101. This went against God's command in Dt 7:2.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 1:29 *Gezer*. In Ephraim's allotment, c 20 mi NW of Jerusalem, guarding an important east-west trade route.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 1:30 *Kitron … Nahalol*. West of the Sea of Chinnereth.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 1:31 More Canaanite city-states were allowed to remain in Asher than in any other tribal allotment. *Sidon*. A center of

Canaanite shipping and trade, this entire region was vulnerable to religious influence by other peoples.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 1:33 *Beth-shemesh*. "House of the sun." *Beth-anath*. "House of [the goddess] Anath." Both names reflect pagan worship practiced in those cities.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 1:34 *pressed the people of Dan back into the hill country*. Dan received an allotment along the coastal plain west of Judah but seems never to have gained control of its land. Being driven out by the Amorites, Dan faced additional resistance from the Philistines along the coast. An account in the epilogue tells how Dan moved to the northernmost point of the land, beyond the Sea of Chinnereth (18:27–29).

JUDGES—NOTE ON 1:27–36 The various tribes of Israel allow the Canaanites to remain in the land, which creates a powerful temptation for Israelites to adopt their culture and worship their gods. How history repeats itself! Yet God in His mercy never abandons us. • Forgive us, Lord, for indifference to Your will. Help us to love what You command, turn to You for mercy, and seek to conform our lives to Your holy will. Amen.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 2:1 *the angel of the* LORD. See p 1227. *went up from Gilgal to Bochim*. In Jsh 5:13–15, the angel of the Lord appeared to Joshua to announce the upcoming conquest of the land. The angel now reappears to remind Israel that the campaign begun on a triumphant note is in danger of failure. *Gilgal*. On the west bank of the Jordan River, to the east of Jericho. *I brought you up*. What follows is classic covenant language, as the Lord reviews His saving acts on Israel's behalf. See p 127.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 2:2 *you shall make no covenant … you have not obeyed*. After reviewing the Lord's kindness, covenant formulas list the obedience the Lord asked for in response.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 2:3 *I will not drive them out*. The Lord would repay the Israelites with exactly what their actions allowed. The presence of these peoples and their gods would become "thorns" and "a snare"—painful burdens and treacherous temptations to their spiritual well-being.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 2:4 *lifted up their voices and wept*. Not necessarily a sign of true repentance. Any genuine repentance at Bochim was short-lived.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 2:5 *Bochim*. Apparently near Gilgal. See color map 1. *sacrificed*. To their credit, the people offered sacrifices. This was done at the tabernacle, now located at Shiloh (Jsh 18:1); the distance there was not great. See color map 1.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 2:1–5 Israel's failure to drive out its Canaanite opponents is not caused by military weakness but rather by spiritual weakness. Because of spiritual weakness, believers today also experience suffering, disappointments, and even death. Yet the Lord faithfully calls us to repentance amid our sufferings. He suffered for our sins and renews us by the Gospel. • O Lord, "make us glad for as many days as You have afflicted us, and for as many years as we have seen evil" (Ps 90:15). Amen.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 2:7 *all the days of Joshua*. A reminder of the great beginning of conquest under Joshua and his peers (e.g., Jsh 5:13–6:21; 8:1–29; 10:29–11:23). Luther noted that when a godly nation loses its reverence for God, "another nation far worse and more godless takes its place." Though people may remain outwardly religious, "they devise acts of worship that are horrible monstrosities." Israel succumbed to "loathsome idolatry" in the worship of the Baals, of Ashtaroth, and of Molech (AE 8:131–32).

JUDGES—NOTE ON 2:10 *gathered to their fathers*. See note, 1Ki 2:10. *generation … did not know the* LORD. The author anticipates even worse trouble because the families had failed to teach the faith to their children, as God called them to do. See notes, Dt 6:7; Ps 145:4.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 2:6–10 The Israelites know who the Lord is, but they no longer experience His blessed presence among them. Despite Israel's favored history, paganism is never far from the surface. Where the Law shows us our sin, the Gospel shows us the Father's loving heart in Jesus. He cures our spiritual blindness and leads us to seek Him and worship Him with new hearts. • "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. … Restore to me the joy of Your salvation" (Ps 51:10, 12). Amen.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 2:11–23 See "Cycles in History," p 381.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 2:11 *did what was evil*. The particular evil of worshiping the false gods of their neighbors. *Baals*. See note, Nu 25:3.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 2:12 *other gods*. Others called their gods by different names, but their beliefs and worship practices were similar. *peoples*. See notes, 3:12, 13. *provoked the* LORD *to anger*. The Lord is a personal being, not a mere inanimate force or divine principle. He loves us, eagerly desires fellowship with us, is outraged at our sin, and has spared no expense to restore us to fellowship with Him. See note, Ex 20:5.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 2:13 *Ashtaroth*. Plural of "Asherah." See note, Ex 34:13.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 2:14 *anger … kindled*. See note, v 12.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 2:15 *the hand of the LORD*. See p 842. *against them for harm*. The hand of the Lord, which had richly blessed them, would now be turned against them.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 2:11–15 Israel's sad reversal of fortune is more than a coincidence. They made God their enemy because of their unfaithfulness. Without sincere faith, it is impossible to please God and rightly receive His blessings. God exposes our faulty motives so that He can bring us to a greater appreciation of His grace. • Dear Lord, direct our hearts in sincerity so that we receive Your blessings with grateful hearts. Amen.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 2:16 *judges*. Hbr *shophetim*. Not officers of law courts, but temporary military saviors for their people. See pp 380–81. Unlike priests and kings, they did not come to their office because of tribal or family background; the Lord raised them up. *saved*. See "salvation," p 843.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 2:17 *whored after other gods*. Faith in God is never mere intellectual agreement to doctrinal statements; it always involves trust and a living relationship. (See p 2016.) Unbelief is unfaithfulness to God and abandonment of His faithful promises. Devotion to the Baals included various practices in which Baal's worshipers "prostituted" themselves. Cf Hos 4:14.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 2:18 *the LORD was moved to pity by their groaning*. God responded to the people's prayers, even though they were offered selfishly or from shallow motives.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 2:22 *test Israel by them*. The Lord protected the people, even though they would fail the test of faithfulness. See note, Gn 22:1.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 2:16–23 Unfortunately, Israel's repentance does not last long. Yet even in these dark times, God does not withdraw His mercy from His people but raises up a series of champions to be their "saviors." God does not forgive us because of our faith—as if faith were a good work to make up for all we have done wrong. God forgives us entirely for the sake of and through the merits of our Savior, Jesus (Rm 5:17–19). •

O Lord, grant us the rhythm of repentance and forgiveness in our day-to-day lives. Grant also sincerity and faith through Christ, our Savior. Amen.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 3:1 *test*. See note, Gn 22:1.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 3:2 *Israel might know war*. The Lord wanted Israel to understand the physical and spiritual war in which they were engaged. Avoiding this spiritual warfare would result in no true peace at all. Luth: "The most dangerous trial of all is when there is no trial, when everything is all right and running smoothly. This is when a man tends to forget God, to become too independent and put his time of prosperity to a wrong use" (AE 44:47).
JUDGES—NOTE ON 3:3 *lords*. Or, "princes," suggesting a distinctive political structure, different from both the tribal league of Israel and the Canaanite city-states. *Philistines*. The only nation not native to the land. See notes, 10:7; Ps 83:6–8; see also p 345.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 3:4 *testing … obey the commandments of the* LORD. This test was not for the Lord's benefit but for the Israelites', to see if they would measure their actions against God's justice and the covenant He promised.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 3:5 *Canaanites … Jebusites*. See p 345.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 3:6 *their*. Canaanites, etc. (cf v 5). *they*. The Israelites. Intermarriage would lead Israel into pagan worship and idolatry.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 3:1–6 Israel would no longer enjoy the blessings promised in Lv 26:1–13 and Dt 28:1–14 under the Lord's covenant; instead, the Israelites would find themselves engaged in a struggle against their pagan neighbors. How wonderful that God promises to stand by us, despite our wavering faith. "If we are faithless, He remains faithful—for He cannot deny Himself" (2Tm 2:13). • Merciful Father, assure us in Your faithfulness so that we live by faith in our Savior. Amen.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 3:7 *what was evil*. See note, 2:11.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 3:8 *anger of the* LORD. God's anger was fueled by His jealous love for Israel and His keen disappointment for their failing to heed His warnings. See note, 2:12. *He sold them … served*. Note the language of slavery, to which the people had returned due to their unfaithfulness. *Cushan-rishathaim*. Lit, "doubly wicked Cushan." May have been a nickname or even a self-chosen designation. Cushan's territory, identified with Aram, extended from northeast of the Sea of Chinnereth to the Taurus Mountains on the north and to the Euphrates River on the east. The first

oppressor God sent against Israel was not the leader of a nearby confederation of city-states but an international power. See map, p 60.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 3:9 *cried out to the* LORD. Not a cry of repentance but of distress. See notes, 2:18; 10:10. *deliverer … Othniel*. He had an established record of military success. A relative of Caleb, he provided a link to the past generation, which had remained faithful to the Lord. He married Achsah, the daughter of Caleb, an Israelite war hero (1:12–15). Othniel was not guilty of intermarriage with the Canaanite women or of sexual immorality (cf 3:6). The author does not mention any character flaws or motives of personal revenge of Othniel's, which distinguishes him from other judges.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 3:10 *The Spirit of the* LORD *was upon him*. The Spirit transformed the hearts of the judges (6:34; 11:29; 13:25; 14:6; etc), though their sinful failings were not miraculously removed. The person and work of the Holy Spirit is more fully revealed in the NT (see p 1815). The Spirit always "calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies" people in faith and equips them for service (SC, Third Article, p xxxvii). *he judged Israel*. See note, 2:16. *into his hand*. Victory comes from the Lord. See note, Jsh 24:8.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 3:11 *rest forty years*. It is unclear how long Othniel's career continued after this rescue. The "rest" he brought may have extended well beyond his death. Only once did the Israelites enjoy a period of rest longer than 40 years (cf v 30).

JUDGES—NOTE ON 3:7–11 Othniel, the ideal judge, is God's first champion to rescue Israel from a powerful foreign oppressor. God gave Othniel His Spirit and victory. Today, our struggles with temptation and problems may at times seem greater than we are able to bear. We may feel overwhelmed, confused, hopeless. Yet God's grace is sufficient for us, and His power is made perfect in weakness (2Co 12:9). In times of struggle, God's blessings may become most apparent and most treasured. • Assure us, O Lord, that Your grace is sufficient for all our needs. Grant us Your Spirit and boldness. Amen.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 3:12 *did what was evil*. See note, 2:11. *Eglon*. Means "little calf." Through his own stupidity, Eglon will become a sacrificial animal. *Moab*. Nation east of the Jordan, descended from the incestuous relationship of Lot and one of his daughters (see note, Gn 19:37). See color map 2.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 3:13 *Ammonites and the Amalekites*. Ammon was descended from the incestuous relationship between Lot and one of his daughters (see notes, Gn 19:36–38, 37, 38; application note, Gn 19:30–38); Amalek was descended from Esau, Jacob's brother (cf Gn 36:12). *city of palms*. Jericho. Nations east of the Jordan had gained a foothold by taking this important city, which had been rebuilt (cf Jsh 6:1–21) and stood by the fords of the river.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 3:15 *a deliverer*. Hbr *moshia'*. A "savior" of his people, but not a "judge." *Ehud … Benjaminite*. Benjamin means "son of the right hand," but Ehud himself was left-handed. *left-handed*. Lit, "restricted in his right hand." Ehud rescued Israel in a tricky, "left-handed" way. Ironically, Ehud gained Eglon's trust by hand-delivering Israel's annual tribute payment. *tribute*. Conquerors required regular payment from their vassal states, similar to the collection of taxes.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 3:16 *a cubit in length*. C 18–20 in long. *he bound it on his right thigh*. A right-handed man would ordinarily strap a weapon to his left thigh. Ehud's restricted right hand seemed to render him too weak to be a threat to the Moabite guards, and they would not have considered checking his other thigh.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 3:17 *a very fat man*. Sign of wealth and ease. Eglon is portrayed as susceptible to flattery and a victim of his own appetite.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 3:18 *he sent away the people*. Ehud wanted to act alone.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 3:19 *idols near Gilgal*. Whether Eglon's palace was on the east or west side of the Jordan River, these idols seem to have served as road markers. *secret message*. A ploy to get a private audience with Eglon. *all his attendants went out*. That Eglon dismissed his attendants from the room is a sign of his trust in Ehud. Eglon's eagerness for the secret illustrates other weaknesses—greed and corruption.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 3:20 *cool roof chamber*. Perhaps a room over the beams, a raised throne room that would catch the breeze. *from God*. Ehud added these words to his original statement (v 19), speaking as though he were a prophet. Eglon may have regarded such a message with a mixture of dread and curiosity. *he arose*. Presumably from his throne, though subsequent events suggest a toilet or latrine was nearby (v 24).
JUDGES—NOTE ON 3:22 *the hilt also went*. Eglon's greedy body consumed and hid the sword. *the dung came out*. Ehud's surprise attack and

the deep thrust of his sword caused Eglon's bowels to fail as he fell to his death.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 3:23 *porch*. See ESV note. Ehud may have exited by the same way he entered, locking the door from the outside, or he may have locked the door from the inside, escaping over the side of a wall onto a porch or outer courtyard.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 3:24 *Surely he is relieving himself*. Eglon's attendants delayed, allowing Ehud additional time to escape.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 3:25 *embarrassed*. Though originally considering vulgar thoughts, the attendants grew nervous as their king failed to emerge.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 3:26–27 *beyond the idols*. At Gilgal, just north of Jericho, safely outside Moabite control. *Seirah … the hill country of Ephraim*. High ground in the heart of Israel. See color map 2.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 3:28 *the LORD has given*. Ehud credited God with the success, in the manner of a sincere Israelite warrior. *the fords*. The crossing for the Jordan River, near the northern edge of the Salt Sea. *did not allow*. Israel prevented Moabite soldiers from retreating to their own land and divided the fleeing soldiers.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 3:30 *subdued*. As a vassal to Israel. *rest*. See note, v 11. *eighty years*. See "Sequence and Length of Events," p 339.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 3:12–30 The treachery-filled victory of Ehud over Eglon and the Moabites is told in greater detail than the account of Othniel's victory over Cushan-rishathaim (vv 9–11). Although we may admire Ehud's courage and ingenuity, his deceptive method in God's name brings the sincerity of his confession about the Lord (v 28) into question. God uses the people available to Him to achieve His larger purposes, and God blesses us despite our misdeeds and selfish motives. In all things, He works for the good of those who love Him (Rm 8:28). • "I need Thy presence ev'ry passing hour; What but Thy grace can foil the tempter's pow'r? Who like Thyself my guide and stay can be? Through cloud and sunshine, O abide with me." Amen. (*LSB* 878:2)
JUDGES—NOTE ON 3:31 *Shamgar*. Because this name does not seem to be Hbr in origin, Shamgar was probably not an Israelite. *son of Anath*. Well-attested Canaanite name, also found inscribed on an arrowhead found south of Bethlehem. A group of professional soldiers was known as the "sons of Anath" (cf Anathoth, 1Ch 7:8, 11); Shamgar may have been associated with them. Anath was also a deity worshiped from Egypt to Mesopotamia. *killed*

600 of the Philistines. Possibly the total of Philistines he killed throughout his lifetime, rather than in any single campaign. *oxgoad*. A pole, 8–10 ft long, with a metal, chisel-shaped blade, used by farmers to clean the plow blade and to prod oxen. It could serve as a weapon. *saved*. The author does not call Shamgar a "judge." See "salvation," p 843.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 3:31 Almost everything about this one-verse summary differs from the surrounding accounts. There is no announcement that Israel did evil in the eyes of the Lord and no mention that they cried out to Him; no mention that the Lord raised up His person to save them, or that Shamgar was clothed with the Spirit, or that God acted in this judge's behalf. Had the Israelites become so enmeshed in Canaanite culture that there were no Israelites to answer the Lord's call? The company of men and women the Lord has called includes many common people (1Co 1:26). God can use even those whose parentage, education, or vocation are humble or obscure. When and where it pleases the Spirit of God, He can make judges out of farmers and apostles out of fishermen. • Lord, accomplish great outcomes through ordinary-looking vessels. Begin with me. Amen.

JUDGES—NOTE ON **Chs 4–5** The account of Deborah and Barak is presented in both prose and poetry. The prose version uses more common words than the poetic account and focuses on telling the story in logical order. The poetic account offers impressions of the story and adds details. See pp 775–78.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 4:1 *did what was evil*. See note, 2:11. *Ehud*. Cf 3:12–30.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 4:2 *the* LORD *sold them*. See note, 3:8. *Jabin*. Probably a royal title rather than a personal name. *Hazor*. Called "the head of all those kingdoms" at the time of Joshua, who burned the city (Jsh 11:10–11). Hazor occupied a strategic site in the valley north of the Sea of Chinnereth along a major road connecting Egypt with Mesopotamia. See color map 1. *Sisera*. Neither a Canaanite nor Hbr name; he may have arrived in Canaan with the Sea Peoples, some of whom were the Philistines (see note, 10:7). *Harosheth-hagoyim*. Lit, "metal forge of the nations." Perhaps the Canaanites forged iron there, with which they built the chariots that play prominently in the story. See note, 1Sm 13:19.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 4:3 *cried out to the* LORD. See notes, 2:18; 10:10. *chariots of iron*. Technological advantage over the Israelites, who did not acquire such things until the time of the Israelite kings. See note, 1Sm

13:19. *cruelly for twenty years*. The oppression of Israel grew still worse (cf 3:8, 14).
JUDGES—NOTE ON 4:4 *Deborah, a prophetess*. A prophet was one who spoke on behalf of another (Ex 7:1–2). See p 389. *wife of Lappidoth, was judging*. Luther noted the service of Deborah and other women as rulers; they "have been very good at management" (AE 28:276). See p 389. Luther even suggested that women's leadership in other areas of life might motivate men to properly fulfill their responsibility of preaching (AE 36:151–52). See p 1972.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 4:5 *Ramah and Bethel*. In southern Ephraim, 50 mi S of where the decisive battle against the Canaanites later took place (vv 12–16). See map, p 451.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 4:6 *Kedesh-naphtali*. 5 mi NW of Lake Huleh, the northernmost outpost in Israelite territory. See map, p 365. *commanded you*. See note, v 4. Deborah's words to Barak may indicate that the Lord had already commanded him and he had hesitated. He needed affirmation to fulfill his duty (cf v 8).
JUDGES—NOTE ON 4:7 *Sisera … Jabin's*. See note, v 2. *Kishon*. North of Mount Carmel. See color map 2.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 4:8 Although Barak's name means "thunderbolt" and he is listed among the "heroes of faith" in Heb 11:32, he appears hesitant to go to battle without assurances from Deborah. His hesitance may be attributed to fear, or it may have been a commendable reluctance to fight without the assurance of the Lord's support.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 4:9 *hand of a woman*. Shameful defeat for a proud warrior. *woman*. Not Deborah but Jael (v 21).
JUDGES—NOTE ON 4:10 *at his heels*. Following him.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 4:11 *Zaanannim*. Meaning "to pack up," possibly a location where traders and caravanners stopped to sell or trade goods.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 4:12–13 *Mount Tabor*. The Israelites camped on the slopes of the mountain as a refuge from chariot attack, hoping to draw Sisera and his troops into a trap. *to the river Kishon*. See note, v 7. Sisera chose to station his army in the Jezreel Valley, where his sizable chariot force would have room to maneuver. This decision led to his downfall. See color map 2.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 4:14 Deborah did not lead the troops herself but fulfilled the prophet's true role by encouraging with the words and promises

of God.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 4:15 *routed*. The poetry version explains how the rout occurred (5:20–22). The wet ground around the Kishon River made the chariots ineffective. A downpour and a flash flood swept the army away. *fled*. When the battle was clearly lost, Sisera abandoned his panic-stricken men to seek shelter for himself.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 4:17 *Jael*. Her husband, Heber the Kenite, was mentioned earlier (v 11), foreshadowing what would come. Kenite territory was far to the south, but Heber had left his homeland and thrown his support to Jabin and Sisera. Jabin and Heber had made a covenant with each other but, as will become clear, Jael remained loyal to Israel.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 4:18 Clearly, Jael knew Sisera, and her comforting words lured Sisera into false security.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 4:19 *give me a little water … she opened a skin of milk*. Jael appeared to be showing kindness by offering Sisera something better (goats' or sheep's milk) than he had requested (water). Yet the milk made him sleepy. Jos: "He [Sisera] drank so unmeasurably that he fell asleep" (*Ant* 5:208).
JUDGES—NOTE ON 4:21 *drove the peg into his temple*. In a dramatic, brutal act, Jael proved that her loyalty to the Lord and to Israel was greater than her devotion to her husband. She fulfilled the NT directive "We must obey God rather than men" (Ac 5:29).
JUDGES—NOTE ON 4:22 *I will show you the man whom you are seeking*. Barak could now see how Deborah's prediction (v 9) had come true: the Lord delivered Sisera into the hand of a woman, and the glory was hers, not his.
JUDGES—NOTE ON **Ch 4** After Israelite armies led by Barak defeat Jabin and the Canaanites, an Israelite woman kills Sisera the Canaanite general by pounding a tent peg through his skull. Barak does not demonstrate strong faith, but many Christians can sympathize with his misgivings. We, too, can be weak and slow to act. Yet the Lord is with us, alongside us. Jesus went ahead of us to the cross and through death to everlasting life. He will lead us to the victory ground of heaven. • Lord Jesus, give us faith to believe Your promises and courage to wage our battles and win the victory You give. Amen.
JUDGES—NOTE ON **Ch 5** The first lines of the poem state its theme. It is a call to praise "the LORD, the God of Israel" (v 3), who by omnipotence (v

4) raised Israel from the depths of humiliation (vv 6–9). The "triumphs of the LORD" (v 11) were achieved when the people rallied to Deborah's and Barak's call for action against the oppressor, even though some tribes failed to cooperate (vv 12–18, 22). The kings of Canaan (v 19) were swept away by the power of the Ruler of the universe (vv 19–21). Their commander suffered an ignominious death at the hands of a woman (vv 24–27), while his mother waited in vain for his return (vv 28–30). The Lord's victory demonstrated the futility of all opposition to His will.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 5:1 *on that day*. Poetic outburst of exuberant thanksgiving for Israel's deliverance. In short sentences and vivid descriptions, the poem voices spontaneous emotion. Such superb qualities suggest that it was composed by Deborah. Barak joined her in singing it just as "Moses and the people" sang his hymn of praise (Ex 15:1). It may have been preserved in such anthologies of war songs as "the Book of Jashar" (see note, Jsh 10:12–13) or "the Book of the Wars of the Lord" (see note, Nu 21:14). The text in its present form is at times difficult to translate. Apparently later copyists no longer understood some of its ancient terms and expressions.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 5:2 *bless the LORD!* See p 842.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 5:3 *the LORD, the God of Israel*. This title for God expresses that the triumph belonged to the whole nation as His people.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 5:4 *Seir*. Just as the Lord once led His people out of Sinai's wilderness, so He again arose from the desert to rescue Israel from its oppressor. See map, p 60.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 5:6 God worked change and victory through His chosen judges. The verse demonstrates how devastating Jabin's grip on Israel had become. Frightened travelers were forced to abandon major roads, where chariots could easily travel. Unwalled villages became easy marks for marauding Canaanites. *Shamgar, son of Anath*. See notes, 3:31.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 5:7 *a mother in Israel*. Though no biological children of Deborah are mentioned, she encouraged and strengthened her people.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 5:9 *Bless the LORD*. See p 842.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 5:10 *white donkeys … carpets*. Reserved for the wealthy.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 5:11 *musicians*. See ESV note. Storytellers would relate the Lord's victory. *watering places … gates*. Where people gathered

for civil conversation. See note, 2Sm 2:13; see also p 792. *righteous*. See p 843.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 5:12 *your captives*. Anticipation of victory before the battle began.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 5:13–18 In previous episodes, each tribe was expected to regain control of its own territory. In this battle, however, help from neighboring tribes would have been welcomed, but only some tribes offered assistance. The tribes that did respond—Ephraim, Benjamin, Manasseh (Machir; cf Gn 50:23), Zebulun, Issachar, and Naphtali—were concentrated in the central and northern regions of the land most affected by the Canaanite coalition under Jabin. Reuben, Asher, Dan, and Gilead (east of the Jordan River) were situated at a distance from battle with the Canaanites, yet Deborah deplored their indecision and lack of resolve to offer help to their fellow tribes. Two tribes, Judah and Simeon, are not even mentioned since they were in the far south. Deborah's words betray a lack of unity and cohesion among the tribes, anticipating the later verdict, "Everyone did what was right in his own eyes" (21:25). See map, p 365.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 5:17 *Gilead*. Not a tribe, but a region east of the Jordan. The people there were too attached to their land to offer their help. *ships*. People from Dan and Asher may have worked on Canaanite or Philistine ships or docks.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 5:19 *Taanach … Megiddo*. Dominated the main pass that runs northeast through the hill country from the Plain of Sharon to the Plain of Megiddo. Megiddo was the site of numerous key battles. Cf Rv 16:16; see color map 2.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 5:20 Israel's victory was no mere human achievement. The skies opened and torrential rain fell, overwhelming Sisera's chariots.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 5:21 *Kishon*. This normally small river flooded.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 5:22 *galloping, galloping*. In the downpour of rain, riders panicked and the horses pulling Sisera's chariots broke rank. As the chariot wheels became stuck in the mud, the horses galloped away from their helpless drivers.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 5:23 *Meroz*. Apparently a city in one of the tribal areas that refused help. *to the help of the* LORD. The Creator of the universe needs no help from His creatures, yet He enlists us to labor and fight for His cause.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 5:24 *Most blessed of women be Jael*. The prose account simply recalls Jael's grisly deeds, but the poetic account begins with praise for her resourcefulness and courage.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 5:25 *He asked water*. Sisera requested the very element that had just destroyed his army. *she brought him curds in a noble's bowl*. Jael treated Sisera with mock obeisance. The verse is a taunt: this powerful commander of men was reduced to asking a woman for a drink of water.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 5:26 Sisera is not the only would-be victor to become the victim of a woman; cf 9:54.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 5:27 *Between her feet he sank*. Completely vanquished. Cf Jsh 10:24–25.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 5:28–30 Just when the reader might muster some sympathy for Sisera, the poetic account closes with a gruesome, mocking vignette featuring his mother, who waited anxiously at the window for a glimpse of his return. As she agonized over his delay, she was reassured by the women around her. Raping the defeated enemy's wives and daughters takes time! She callously depersonalized her son's imagined victims, reducing them to mere "wombs." Unknown to her, Sisera had been killed by one of these "wombs."
JUDGES—NOTE ON **Ch 5** The Song of Deborah and Barak is a poetic and vivid retelling of the Lord's victory over the Canaanites, especially praising Jael's triumph over Sisera. It rightly gives God credit for the triumph, for He is the ultimate Judge and Savior. • Almighty God, we implore Your daily help in our struggle with our spiritual enemies—the devil, the world, and our sinful flesh. Forgive us our failings, and grant us victory through Jesus, Your Son and our Savior. Amen.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 6:1 *did what was evil*. See note, 2:11. *Midian*. Descendants of Abraham by his wife Keturah following the death of Sarah (Gn 25:1–2). Midianites are mentioned as one of the caravan traders that took Joseph as a slave into Egypt (Gn 37:28–36). Moses' wife was a Midianite (Ex 2:15–22). See map, p 120. They were quite prosperous when Israel conquered them (Nu 31:32–54); archaeologists associate the Qurayyah pottery found in northwest Arabia with the Midianites. They did not continue as a national people after the rise of the Israelite kings.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 6:2 *dens … caves … strongholds*. Dry ravines, valleys, and caves in the clefts of the mountains carved by water erosion

were refuges of last resort.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 6:3 Normally living farther south in the Negeb (see color map 2), the Amalekites allied with the Midianites in making raids into Israelite territory. These desert dwellers would have found the fertile, well-watered Israelite lands attractive to raid.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 6:4–5 *devour the produce*. Bringing their livestock and tents with them, the raiders set up camp at strategic locations all the way to Gaza, on the Great Sea shore. See color map 1.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 6:5 *camels*. Not typical livestock of the Israelites. A single camel could carry a load of up to 400 lb, plus its rider, and travel for up to a week without water. See note, Gn 12:16.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 6:7 *cried out*. See notes, 2:18; 10:10.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 6:8–9 *a prophet*. This unnamed male prophet was a counterpart to Deborah (4:4). Using covenant language (cf Ex 20:2), the prophet reminded Israel of the blessings God had showered on Israel: freedom from slavery in Egypt and rescue to the land of Canaan.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 6:11 *terebinth*. Also known as the turpentine tree, which grows over 32 ft tall. *Ophrah*. Uncertain location, possibly 8 mi NW of Beth-shean. *beating out*. See note, Ps 1:4. Fearful and demoralized, Gideon was beating out the grain with a stick, under cover of the walls of a wine vat.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 6:12 *angel of the* LORD. See p 1227. At first, Gideon assumed he was talking only to another man. This messenger spoke as the Lord Himself. *O mighty man of valor*. Given the pitiful circumstances in which Gideon found himself, the angel's greeting may have seemed ironic, even sarcastic. But this greeting foreshadowed Gideon's future. Because the Lord was with him, Gideon would become a man of valor. See note, Ru 2:1.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 6:13 *if the* LORD *is with us*. Though outwardly polite, Gideon's response expressed skepticism and his demoralized spirit.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 6:14 *the* LORD *turned*. To face Gideon, who was complaining about the Lord's inaction. *Go in this might of yours*. Foreshadowing Gideon's future success, it is expressed, however, with sarcasm.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 6:15 Gideon felt not only his own inadequacy but also that of his clan. See pp 54–55. The clan was the basis of the military unit called a "thousand." See p 217.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 6:16 *be with you*. See p 5. *as one man*. As if they were a single man, echoing the promise to Joshua (Jsh 23:10).
JUDGES—NOTE ON 6:17 *show me a sign*. Gideon then realized he may have been speaking with more than a mere mortal. He will continue asking for signs, however, and his response to the Lord's signs demonstrates his reluctance and insecurity in answering the Lord's call.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 6:19 *terebinth*. See note, v 11. *presented*. Gave a sacrificial gift. Gideon's gift is lavish. Even in times of plenty, people did not eat meat every day. See p 236.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 6:21 *fire sprang up*. Evidence that the Lord accepted Gideon's gift.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 6:22 Gideon could see that his visitor was the Lord, and he became convinced he would die, as Moses (Ex 33:20) and Isaiah (Is 6:5) also feared.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 6:23 *But the Lord said to him*. Gideon now spoke with the Lord directly, as Abraham and Moses had done in the past. *Peace*. See p 7.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 6:24 *built an altar*. Cf Gn 8:20; 12:7–8; 13:18; 26:25; 35:7. Offerings were typically to be made at the tabernacle. *The Lord Is Peace*. Relieved that his life had been spared, Gideon expressed his newfound safety and security in the name he gave to the altar. *To this day*. Until c 1000 BC, when Jgs was written. See note, Jsh 4:9.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 6:25–26 *bull … second bull*. Gideon likely yoked them together to pull down the altar. *seven years old*. How long Midian had oppressed Israel (v 1). *Baal … Asherah*. See notes, Ex 34:13; Nu 25:3. Growing up in pagan surroundings, Gideon may not have known much about the Lord until this appearance. *build an altar*. Gideon's construction of an altar to the Lord posed a direct challenge to the community and to his father. *stronghold*. A community fort. For an example, see note, 9:46. *burnt offering*. See pp 170–71. *wood of the Asherah*. See note, Ex 34:13.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 6:27 *too afraid*. Gideon's immediate response showed fear rather than zeal. He removed the Baal altar at night, hoping not to incur the wrath of his community and family.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 6:1–27 Gideon's initial call to be a judge reveals his demoralized spirit and weak character, yet with the assurance of the Lord's presence, he makes a first assault on the Baal worship in his own community. Unchecked, sin takes an ever greater hold on individuals and

entire communities. Instead of speaking God's words and promises from generation to generation, parents may leave a legacy of unbelief and false worship (cf Dt 5:9). Gideon seems an unlikely figure to become a future champion of Israel. Yet the Lord of surprising, unearned grace seeks sinners and equips them to accomplish great things. • Help us, Lord, to believe Your promises, seek Your will, and act in the courage You alone give. Amen.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 6:28 *rose early*. Dawn was a common hour for offering sacrifice. See pp 170–71.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 6:29 *Who has done this thing?* Spoken not in appreciation for Gideon's courageous act but in anger and with the intent of punishing the perpetrator. *they said*. The informants are not identified.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 6:30 Because Gideon still lived in his father's household as the youngest son of the family, the responsibility for his action lay with his father, Joash.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 6:31 *Will you contend for Baal?* Joash's question uses legal language. If Baal was such a powerful god, why would he need any human being to act in his defense? Though he does not directly defend his son, Joash seems to support his actions.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 6:32 *Jerubbaal*. Ironic nickname. Joash put the name positively: Gideon had challenged Baal by tearing down the altar devoted to him. Yet Gideon never fully renounced his loyalty to Baal; cf 8:27, 33.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 6:33 *Jezreel*. The invading armies, sweeping from the east, crossed the Jordan at this spot, where rich farmland was clearly visible. See color map 2.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 6:34 *clothed*. Descriptive expression for how the Holy Spirit surrounded Gideon with divine protection for his assignment. In vv 36–40, Gideon used an article of clothing to discern the Lord's will. In 8:27, he formed an article of clothing that became the object of idolatrous worship.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 6:35 Gideon's summons for help went out to the northernmost tribes clustered around the Sea of Chinnereth. See map, p 365.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 6:28–35 Gideon's act of tearing down the Baal altar arouses antagonism. He receives an outpouring of the Holy Spirit to empower him for battle and win the support of neighboring Israelite tribes.

As Gideon is clothed by the Lord, so the Holy Spirit clothes us with the righteousness of Christ Jesus. Through Baptism, we live here in safety and will stand bold "on the great day of God the Almighty" (Rv 16:14). • "Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness My beauty are, my glorious dress; Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed, With joy shall I lift up my head." Amen. (*LSB* 563:1)

JUDGES—NOTE ON 6:36–37 At best, Gideon's challenge is a weakness of faith, maybe even outright unbelief (cf Dt 6:16). Gideon did not need these signs to ascertain the will of God; the Lord had clearly revealed His will (v 14). Gideon sought signs because he wanted a demonstration that the Lord had the power and the willingness to keep His promises. The Lord is patient with him.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 6:37 *fleece*. Blanket of wool shorn in one piece from a sheep.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 6:38 *dew*. Sign of God's blessing; dew sustained life in a dry climate (cf Gn 27:28; Dt 33:28). Through the summer months, there is little or no rain in Israel, but the appearance of the morning dew is the guarantee of moisture on crops. See calendar, p 262.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 6:39 *dry on the fleece only*. The second sign would go against nature, since the wool fleece would ordinarily absorb moisture. Luth: "In all his promises, moreover, in addition to the word, God has usually given a sign, for the greater assurance and strengthening of our faith. Thus he gave Noah the sign of the rainbow. To Abraham he gave circumcision as a sign. To Gideon he gave the rain on the ground and on the fleece. So we constantly find in the Scriptures many of these signs, given along with the promises" (AE 35:86).

JUDGES—NOTE ON 6:36–40 Despite a clear revelation of the Lord's will, Gideon twice puts the Lord to a test, hoping to gain certainty for his faltering faith. Jesus said that an evil and adulterous generation looks for a sign (Mt 12:39). But when the Lord wishes to give us a sign, we are arrogant to reject it (cf Is 7:10–14). The Lord is patient with us and merciful through His Son. • Almighty God, send us Your Holy Spirit, that through Your Holy Word our faith may be built up and strengthened. Help us realize that in the Word alone we find the Good News of salvation, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 7:1 *spring of Harod*. Located at the foot of Mount Gilboa. See color map 2. The Israelite army was barely 10 mi from the

camp of the Midianite forces. *hill of Moreh*. "Teacher's" Hill.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 7:2 *too many*. After reassuring Gideon with a pair of signs, the Lord then severely weakened Gideon's military power. These two apparently contradictory actions have the common goal of leading Gideon to place his trust in the Lord, not in himself or his troops. *lest Israel boast*. If given an unexpected victory, the fearful may turn overconfident and arrogant.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 7:3 Though 32,000 had answered Gideon's call to fight, their morale was low. According to Dt 20:8, a man was exempted from military service if he was fearful of battle and would demoralize other soldiers. With the loss of more than two-thirds of their army, Gideon's troops were outnumbered by more than 13 to 1.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 7:4 *test*. To "sift" or "purify," as is done in purifying metals. See note, Mal 3:3.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 7:5 *laps … as a dog laps*. Unclear. Apparently scooping the water to their faces as a dog scoops water with its tongue. Some have suggested that "lapping" the water in this manner indicated that these soldiers were more alert and ready for battle. The vast majority of the others—9,700 of the 10,000—went down on their hands and knees and would then, presumably, be slower to react.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 7:6 *lapped … hands to their mouths*. Possibly to keep their heads raised in alertness (see note, v 5). (In contrast, Josephus wrote that the 300 the Lord selected were the least fit for battle, so that it would be obvious that this victory was the Lord's doing [*Ant* 5:217].) At any rate, the lapping was the Lord's mechanism to reduce Gideon's army to a ridiculously small number: Gideon was now outnumbered 450 to 1!
JUDGES—NOTE ON 7:7–8 *I will save you*. Gideon's only hope now was to trust in God's promise. *let all the others go*. The very assurance Gideon hoped to gain with his two requests for a sign—that the battle would be successful—was now taken away by the Lord as He drastically reduced the size of Gideon's army. *home*
… tent. The men removed to camp or even their home territory.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 7:9–11 Gideon's hesitancy continued. The Lord provided still another sign by what Gideon would hear in the Midianite camp. *Purah your servant*. Detail from a secretive event. Purah may have been Gideon's armor-bearer, who kept company with the nervous leader.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 7:13 *a cake of barley bread*. Probably a griddle cake. Barley was considered an inferior grain (2Ki 7:1). This lesser grain symbolized the inferiority of Israel's troops and the lack of courage of Israel's leader.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 7:14 *no other than … Gideon*. The Lord provided an interpreter for the ambiguous dream so that Gideon could not mistake the meaning.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 7:15 *worshiped*. Bowed down. Gideon finally took courage.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 7:16 *trumpets*. Made of animals' horns, usually rams, for Israel's soldiers to signal one another. Cf Jsh 6:6; see p 973.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 7:17–18 Gideon's battle plan seemed crazy but was actually brilliant. For this night attack, swords would be an unnecessary encumbrance. Instead, trumpet blasts and the glare of torch lights would create mayhem in the Midianite camp.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 7:1–18 After his army is reduced to a frighteningly low number, Gideon gains confidence when he overhears a dream in the Midianite camp. Gideon then devises a clever plan to create confusion. We are tempted to criticize Gideon's lack of decisiveness, but we, too, need repeated assurance that God will keep His promises. • Lord, help us leave our sinful mistakes behind us so we may look ahead with the confidence only You can give. Amen.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 7:19 *the middle watch … they had just set the watch*. Between 10 p.m. and 2 a.m. (Israelites at this time divided the watches into three shifts of four hours each; see p 1567); the darkness and the changing of the guard could confuse the enemy. Soldiers coming on watch would still be adjusting their eyes and ears to the darkness.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 7:20 *A sword for the* LORD *and for Gideon!* Delightful irony! Gideon and his troops won the victory without ever wielding their swords.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 7:21 *stood*. As the Israelite warriors stood their ground, Midianite troops tried frantically to escape. *ran … cried out … fled*. Natural response of people roused from deep sleep—highly effective psychological warfare.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 7:22 They probably fled across the Jordan River toward the mountains of eastern Gilead. *Zererah*. See ESV note. May be modern-day Tell el-Sa'idiyah, on the Jabbok River, east of the Jordan. *Abel-*

meholah. On the western side of the Jordan River, c 12 mi S of Beth-shean. See map, p 581.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 7:23 The men who returned to their tents (v 8) then came out in pursuit.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 7:24 *as far as Beth-barah, and also the Jordan*. West and a bit south of where the Jabbok meets the Jordan, a considerable distance downriver from the Midianite camp.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 7:25 *they brought the heads*. Heads, hands, or even foreskins were brought back from campaigns, not only to facilitate a body count, but also to indicate complete defeat of the enemy. See note, 1Sm 18:25.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 7:19–25 In the same way the Lord fought for Gideon, so He also fights for us against seemingly insurmountable odds. He overcame our greatest enemy in the most improbable way: the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. • Almighty God, Lord of hosts, encourage us with the assurance that You are with us always and that with You at our side, we never need fear. In the Savior's name we pray. Amen.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 8:1 The tribe of Ephraim was as proud as it was powerful, resentful that Gideon had not enlisted soldiers from its ranks to assist in what had become a great victory. See note, 12:1.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 8:2–3 *gleaning of the grapes*. Leftovers from the harvest, what was dropped or discarded. *Ephraim better than … Abiezer?* "A soft answer turns away wrath" (Pr 15:1). Gideon's question sounds like a compliment to Ephraim and a humbling of his tribe, Abiezer (6:11). The Ephraimites walked away satisfied, but they also exposed their vanity for sly ridicule by Gideon's troops. *God has given … Oreb and Zeeb*. Gideon was a persuasive diplomat, highlighting and complimenting the men of Ephraim's greatest achievement in the conflict and making them God's choice for this victory.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 8:4–9 Gideon sought support for his most loyal men and was turned away. Succoth and Penuel, east of the Jordan, were close to the territory of the Midianite and Amalekite soldiers who fled. This may explain why these Israelites refused to help, since they would fear revenge.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 8:5–6 *Succoth*. Along the Jabbok River, c 32 mi from the original battle site, identified today usually as Tell Deir Alla. See color map 1. *loaves …*
exhausted. Though Gideon's request seems reasonable and respectful, the

princes of Succoth responded sarcastically. The leaders at Succoth did not have confidence in Gideon's ability to complete this victory.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 8:7 *I will flail your flesh*. Instead of gentle diplomacy, Gideon met disloyalty and treason with threats.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 8:8 *Penuel*. Where centuries before, Jacob had wrestled with God. The men here also denied Gideon support. See color map 1.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 8:9 *I will break down this tower*. Apparently, Penuel's pride was its fortress tower. Gideon's mission had now become a personal campaign for recognition and retribution, and he would use Israel's troops for revenge.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 8:10–12 Gideon's anger toward Succoth and Penuel took second place to his mission of crushing the Midianites.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 8:10 *Karkor*. Oasis beyond the borders of Canaan and likely in the territory of Ammon, over 100 mi from Succoth and Penuel. *15,000 men … 120,000 men*. The Midianite army had been greatly reduced. The dead Midianites are ironically described as those "who drew the sword," which they could no longer do. See note, 7:20.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 8:11 *tent dwellers*. Families living like today's Bedouin. *felt secure*. They weren't expecting an attack in their own region.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 8:14 *wrote down*. Incidental detail demonstrates that writing was a common skill. See pp 1081–83. Canaanites were among the first people to move beyond picture writing to an alphabet with fewer than 30 characters. See p 345.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 8:15 *you taunted me*. Total victory did not soften Gideon's personality. His greatest opposition came not from the enemy but from those who were supposedly his allies. See note, vv 4–9.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 8:16–17 *taught … a lesson*. Polite description of a likely deadly act. Cf v 7. *killed the men of the city*. Gideon's character was transformed—but this time, not for the better. He learned zeal but not mercy.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 8:18 *killed at Tabor?* Along the Zebulun-Issachar border, on or near Mount Tabor. This incident is not recorded. See color map 1. *As you are … resembled the son of a king*. Ambiguous attempt at flattery.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 8:19 *my brothers*. Gideon's interest in the men of Tabor became clear. The Midianites had killed his brothers, and he

suspected Zebah and Zalmunna were personally responsible for their deaths. Some military historians suggest that the brothers were deployed near Tabor to block the advance of the Midianites. *the sons of my mother*. In a polygamous time, it would not always have been obvious that they were full brothers. *I would not kill you*. Seems rhetorical given what Gideon did to his fellow Israelites at Succoth and Penuel (vv 16–17).

JUDGES—NOTE ON 8:20 *young man*. Gideon's command to Jether added to his insult against the Midianite kings, but it put the boy in a difficult position. If he disobeyed his father, he would have appeared rebellious and unmanly. If he complied with his father's demand, he would have become an accomplice in his father's vengeance. He also may have hesitated because of his low status or rank, which did not accord him the honor of slaying a king.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 8:21 *Rise yourself*. Seems mocking. The Midianite kings are defiant to the end. *crescent ornaments*. Probably moon amulets to ward off evil spirits.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 8:1–21 In pursuit of the Midianites, Gideon acts magnanimously toward the Ephraimites jealous of his victory, but bitterly toward other countrymen. A desire for personal gain, recognition, or revenge can also cloud the actions of God's people today, though our actions may seldom be as physically cruel as Gideon's. Such vengeance arises from the sinful flesh. However, battle against spiritual enemies is proper. Fight the good fight of faith; our warfare is not against flesh and blood but against the enemies of the Savior (Eph 6:12). He has won the victory, which is ours through faith. • Lord of hosts, strengthen us to fight the good fight of faith. In our Savior's name we pray. Amen.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 8:22 *men of Israel*. A delegation, perhaps representing only the 300 (v 4), or only those northern tribes most affected by the Midianite oppression. *Rule*. There is no mention of the Israelites praising God for this improbable victory. Instead, they turn to the human agent of victory. This is the first record of Israel asking for a king (cf Dt 17:14–15). Cf 1Sm 8.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 8:23 *the* LORD *will rule over you*. Theocracy (God's rule over His people) is an important theme from Ex to 1Sm. Though Gideon's reply sounds like a pious refusal of kingship, his previous and subsequent behavior betray his bartering for leadership. (See note, v 31.)

Gideon's response magnifies his humility yet still secures his power. See the barter process in Gn 23:12–16.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 8:24 *Ishmaelites*. These people of the east were descended from Ishmael and thus were related to Midian (see note, 6:1) and were sometimes associated with them. They apparently had the custom of wearing earrings, which may have distinguished them from the Israelites. See note, Ex 21:6.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 8:25 *cloak*. Commonly used for carrying things, slung over the back.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 8:26 *1,700 shekels of gold*. Depending on the weight of the shekel used, this was 40–75 lb of gold. See p cx. This wealth ensured Gideon's position as a ruler. Such rich spoil would also have strengthened the northern tribes. *pendants*. Drop-shaped decorations such as earrings.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 8:27 *ephod*. An article of clothing. Ordinarily, the God-approved upper garment made of linen, which the priest wore in performance of religious duties. Gideon's ephod must have been heavily laden with gold thread and ornamentation, and it may have been formed in the shape of a statue. See note, 6:34. *And all Israel whored after it*. Israel's lapse into idolatry is described with an indelicate term. God's people were guilty of horrific unfaithfulness to Him. Chem: "Gideon out of good intention made an ephod out of the booty of the Midianites, which brought his own house into ruins. On the basis of this the worship of Baal and other gods flourished among them, although Gideon had established it on the excuse that the people were really desiring to serve the true God" (*LTh* 2:576). See notes, 2:17; Hos 1:2; 4:13. *a snare to Gideon and to his family*. Gideon's actions might be construed as misplaced piety. Luth: "How strange was the fall of that wondrous man Gideon. … Let everyone see to it that he is certain his worship and service of God has been instituted by God's word, and not invented by pious notions or good intentions" (AE 35:271, 273).
JUDGES—NOTE ON 8:28 The Midianites never again asserted themselves as a great nation or power, but their importance as traders continued. See note, 6:1.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 8:22–28 Gideon's apparently pious refusal of kingship masks a heart already sold to monarchy. His request for gold from his supporters allows him to make an idol that leads Israel into idolatry. Even the lowliest person may have the heart of a tyrant. With fame,

popularity, power, and material success comes the danger that one's heart may be turned away from the Savior. Yet the God of persistent grace continues to work on our stubborn hearts. • Lord, let us never fall victim to our own wishes or devices, but keep us humble, as was Jesus, who took on the form of a servant and became obedient to death on a cross to forgive our pride. Amen.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 8:29 *Jerubbaal*. Gideon (cf v 35).

JUDGES—NOTE ON 8:30 *seventy sons*. Multiples of seven typically symbolized completeness (see p 217). In a polygamous society, a powerful man like Gideon could well have had numerous wives and concubines and a large number of children. Abdon also had 40 sons and 30 grandsons (12:14).

JUDGES—NOTE ON 8:31 *concubine*. See pp 54–55. *Shechem*. Important city for the tribe of Manasseh. See color map 1. Its population was composed of both Israelites and Canaanites, a significant detail as the story in ch 9 unfolds. *Abimelech*. "My father is king." Name makes Gideon's feelings about kingship clear. See note, v 23.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 8:32 *a good old age*. Used elsewhere of Abraham (Gn 15:15) and David (1Ch 29:28). *tomb*. Cave or rock-hewn chamber owned by the family. After a corpse decomposed, bones were often moved to make room for another corpse.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 8:33 *As soon as Gideon died*. Gideon instilled no lasting change in the hearts of his people. *whored*. See note, v 27. *Baal-berith*. "Lord of the covenant." The Israelites made a covenant with the lord Baal, but Baal was not the Lord who had made a covenant with them. Though Gideon was not directly responsible for their return to the Baals, his ephod encouraged idolatry and superstition. See note, Nu 25:3.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 8:35 *steadfast love*. See p 843. *all the good*. Celebrates Gideon's leadership, which could have done the people more good if loyalties had endured. However, the chaotic condition left by Gideon's polygamy and idolatry was directly responsible for the disturbing events with his son Abimelech (ch 9).

JUDGES—NOTE ON 8:29–35 Despite military success, prestige, and wealth, Gideon's judgeship brings Israel little lasting good. One of his many sons will now seek to gain the crown Gideon ceremoniously rejected. Career accomplishments and material wealth may be overshadowed by foolish choices and unrestrained ambition. What matters is not what people

think about us but what God has declared about us. Christ's forgiveness pardons even the worst of our failures, and we become new creatures, eager to do good. • "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me" (Ps 51:10). Then I will serve Your people with true honor and humility. Amen.

JUDGES—NOTE ON **Ch 9** Abimelech's story illustrates a tragically flawed attempt at kingship during the judges era. He acted willfully throughout. The lack of tribal designations in ch 9 probably reflects the weak association these people had with Israel. Archaeology confirms that Israelites and Canaanites lived alongside one another for centuries at Shechem.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 9:1 *Abimelech*. See note, 8:31. This oppressor of Israel was half-Israelite, half-Canaanite. *Shechem*. See note, 8:31.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 9:2 Abimelech must have felt monarchy was inevitable and that the people's only choice concerned who their monarch would be.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 9:4 *seventy pieces of silver out of the house of Baal-berith*. Cf 8:33. Ancient temples also served as depositories for personal and government money. See note, 1Ch 26:20–28. *worthless and reckless fellows*. The Israelite majority were greatly influenced by Canaanite religion and culture.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 9:5 *brothers … seventy men*. Cf 8:30. *on one stone*. He killed his brothers in a ritual execution.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 9:6 *Beth-millo*. "House of filling-in," referring to earthen fill or rubble used to build a platform for walls and other structures. See note, v 46. *made Abimelech king*. Probably a local ruler for the people around Shechem. However, see note, v 22. *pillar*. A large stone ("stela") set up as a monument (cf Is 29:3, where the term is used in a military context).

JUDGES—NOTE ON 9:7 *God may listen to you*. Jotham hoped to persuade people that Abimelech was a poor choice to be their king. If they would reject Abimelech, God would answer their prayers. Jotham spoke as a prophet might speak, but he is never called a prophet.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 9:8–15 Jotham's parable features plants that can speak, representing various rulers; first parable recorded in Scripture. See p 1609. Jotham's story did not oppose kingship but rejected Abimelech as king. The olive tree, fig tree, and vine all produced abundant food in the land, but the bramble was worthless and its thorns were harmful. The

parable also voiced a warning to the Shechemites. If they had not made their choice in good faith, and if their choice did not give proper recognition to Abimelech's father and his family, the "bramble" would stir a fire that would devour their beautiful "cedars."

JUDGES—NOTE ON 9:16 *good faith and integrity*. Jotham's conclusion is sarcastic. Because neither Abimelech nor the Shechemites had acted in good faith and integrity, they could each rejoice in the other.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 9:18 *female servant*. Concubine. See pp 54–55.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 9:20 *let fire come out*. A curse, anticipating that the conspirators would destroy one another. See "curse," p 6.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 9:21 *Beer*. Most likely in Moab. See ESV note, Nu 21:16.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 9:1–21 Abimelech, Gideon's illegitimate son, brutally murders his 70 brothers and has himself appointed king in Shechem. One brother, however, manages to escape and in a parable warns that Abimelech is unworthy of the office. Today, the Lord calls us to act with integrity when we choose our leaders or when we speak up against them. Through God's Word we learn genuine integrity, which the Holy Spirit produces in sinners through the Word of Christ, our Savior. • Heavenly Father, forgive our lack of integrity and failure to follow Your Word. Make us bold to speak the truth with integrity from You. Amen.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 9:22 *ruled*. During his three years as ruler in the central region of Israel, Abimelech exploited Israel and did not rule for people's benefit.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 9:23 *God sent an evil spirit*. The Lord allows Satan and his evil angels to inspire an attitude of distrust and bitterness. See note, 1Ki 22:20–22. *the leaders of Shechem dealt treacherously*. The Shechemites' true character became obvious. Their unhappiness with Abimelech may have arisen because Abimelech did not reside in their city (cf v 26; 41), and they had not benefited from his kingship.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 9:25 *ambush against him on the mountaintops*. Shechem lay on the most important trade route through the central hill country of Canaan, where most Israelites dwelt. People expected a king to collect taxes from passing merchants and in return provide the merchants safe travel. The robbers stole Abimelech's profit and his reputation.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 9:26 *Gaal*. Another character entered the drama and won the confidence of the disgruntled Shechemites. Just as they had

conspired with Abimelech against their rightful rulers, so they conspired with Gaal against Abimelech.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 9:27 *gathered the grapes*. Harvested in Aug and Sept. See calendar, p 262. *held a festival*. Harvest festivals could disintegrate into debauchery, particularly when devoted to pagan gods. *house of their god*. Cf 8:33. Temples were equipped with kitchens and banquet halls. See notes, 1Sm 9:22, 24. *reviled Abimelech*. As today, people enjoyed complaining about their government.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 9:28 *son of Jerubbaal*. Baal worshipers complained about Abimelech, whose father, Gideon, had torn down Baal's altar (6:25–32) and reestablished worship of Yahweh. *Hamor*. Canaanite prince (Hivite; see p 345) who founded Shechem (Gn 33:19).
JUDGES—NOTE ON 9:29 *under my hand!* Similar to the later would-be king Absalom, who stole the hearts of the people (cf 2Sm 15–18).
JUDGES—NOTE ON 9:30–31 In Shechem, Zebul was angered by Gaal's insurrection and, true to his loyalties, warned Abimelech.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 9:32–33 *ambush*. Zebul proposed that Abimelech's men attack the hungover followers of Gaal (cf v 27) at sunrise.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 9:34 *four companies*. Four smaller segments instead of one large mass of troops would decrease the chance of detection and cause the attack to come from several directions.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 9:36 Zebul could be treacherous, as his misinformation shows.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 9:37 *Diviners' Oak*. Large trees served as gathering points and as places of superstitious devotion. A diviner used interpretive methods to discern the will of the gods (e.g., reading signs in nature). See note, 1Sm 15:23. Gaal's vision was likely distorted from the previous night's revelry (cf v 27).
JUDGES—NOTE ON 9:38 *Where is your mouth now*. In panic, he ceased to be mouthy and boastful.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 9:40 *fell … up to the entrance*. Disastrous retreat to the city.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 9:41 *lived*. Lit, "sat down." *Arumah*. Abimelech's encampment. Zebul pressed the engagement. *Shechem*. See color map 1.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 9:42–43 Not satisfied with Gaal's defeat, Abimelech attacked the unsuspecting Shechemites on their way out to their fields, because they had supported his enemy. Jotham's parable (v 15) had come true: the "bramble" had brought "fire" to the city.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 9:44–45 Abimelech's attack blocked the people's retreat to safety. *sowed it with salt*. Plants could not grow in salt, so the land became an unproductive wilderness. The Romans did this to Carthage in 146 BC.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 9:46 *leaders*. Lit, "lords," the aristocrats of Shechem (cf v 6). *Tower*. Taller fortress outside the city wall. Perhaps the "millo" (v 6). This tower may have been the Baal-berith temple (v 4). Communities built special fortifications because city walls could easily be breached. Such towers were squat-shaped piles of stone and debris (not the tall, hollow spires of later architecture). Archaeologists discovered a square base of unworked stones for such a tower at Giloh. *El-berith*. Lit, "god of the covenant." Previously called Baal-berith (8:33; 9:4). Hbr *'el* could be used interchangeably with *baal*, "lord."
JUDGES—NOTE ON 9:48 *Mount Zalmon … brushwood*. The high ground was still wooded. See note, Jsh 17:15.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 9:49 *set the stronghold on fire*. The heat may have expanded the stones of the tower, causing them to burst or fall from the wall. Smoke would have smothered the people.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 9:50 *Thebez*. Usually identified as modern Tubas, 9 mi NE of Shechem, though recent scholarship suggests Tell el-Farah, 6 mi from Shechem. See Shechem on color map 1.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 9:51 Apparently the town was loyal to Gaal. *strong tower*. Probably located along the city's edge, perhaps even constructed on the city wall. From the tower, defenders could deploy rocks, arrows, spears, or boiling water or oil on attackers below. Cf Pr 18:10.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 9:52 Same strategy as in vv 48–49, but against a better fortress ("strong," v 51).
JUDGES—NOTE ON 9:53 *upper millstone*. The "rider" stone rolled along a track carved in a larger lower stone. Descriptions of its size and shape vary: perhaps 1–1½ ft wide, 3–5 in thick, either circular or loaf-shaped. It

was small enough to be used by one person. Milling grain was woman's work. See note, Jb 31:10.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 9:54 *armor-bearer*. A warrior's apprentice, who maintained and bore the equipment. *lest they say*. Proud to the end, Abimelech tried to make the circumstances of his death appear more heroic. 3,200 years later, readers still learn that Abimelech was killed by a woman. Cf 5:26.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 9:55 *men of Israel*. See note, 8:22.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 9:56 *Thus God returned the evil of Abimelech*. He who by a stone once overcame (v 18) was likewise by a stone overcome (v 53). God avenged the blood of His servant Gideon. See note, 1Ki 2:31.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 9:57 Jotham's curse was fulfilled about the people of Shechem just as it was about Abimelech. See note, vv 8–15.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 9:22–57 The first attempt at kingship in Israel fails miserably, not because monarchy is an unacceptable form of government but because Abimelech is an unworthy candidate. How frequently rulers exploit people rather than seeing leadership as an opportunity for service! Luther once said that a wise prince was a rare bird; every form of government requires leaders of integrity. How different a leader is our Lord Jesus, who maintained His integrity. Rather than exploit us, He sacrificed Himself for us. • Lord God, ruler of the nations, bless our land with wise and godly leaders. Amen.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 10:1–5 *save*. No foreign oppressor is mentioned, nor is any description offered of how Tola and Jair discharged their duties. They may have been military leaders or judicial arbiters. The good news is they served Israel rather than spending their energies on personal vengeance. *Tola*. Second of the so-called "minor" judges. *Shamir*. West of Shechem. Centuries later, King Omri chose Shamir as the site for his capital and called it Samaria. Cf 1Ki 16:23–24. See color map 1.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 10:4 *thirty donkeys*. Israelites did not ride horses or have chariots at this time. See note, Jsh 11:4. Hbr features a clever wordplay, which could be rendered: "He had thirty boys who rode thirty burros and owned thirty boroughs" (New Jewish Version). *Havvoth-jair*. "Tent villages of Jair," east of the Jordan, south of the Sea of Chinnereth.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 10:5 *Kamon*. Probably Qamm in modern Jordan.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 10:1–5 Following the discredited kingship of Abimelech, the Lord provides rescue and safety through two "minor"

judges (see note, v 6). Even good judges like Jair are affected by the sins of the culture—polygamy and a thirst for wealth. How blind we may be to the besetting sins of our culture! God's grace stepped into our world in the person of Jesus, who rode a donkey in humility so that He might teach and serve the people. • We praise You, O Lord, for the many blessings we enjoy through men and women who remain little known to us. We rejoice in the way Your Word focuses on the One we need to know most: Jesus. Amen.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 10:6 *again did what was evil*. See note, 2:11. Suggests that Tola and Jair may have helped restore or sustain Israel's devotion to the Lord. Unfortunately, the spiritual influence of Tola and Jair did not extend beyond their lives. Though the Ten Commandments call for complete loyalty to the Lord, Israel sank deeper into polytheism and religious syncretism. *served*. Worshiped. The number of false gods increased in Israel. Perhaps the 45 years of leadership under Tola and Jair allowed increased trade, exposing the people to new peoples and religions. *Baals and the Ashtaroth*. Canaanite deities. See notes, Ex 34:13; Nu 25:3. *gods of Syria*. See note, 2Ch 28:23. *gods of Sidon*. Principally their version of Ashtaroth. *gods of Moab*. Cf 1Ki 11:33. *gods of the Ammonites*. Cf Lv 18:21. *gods of the Philistines*. Cf 16:23. The writer lists seven groups of deities. Vv 11–12 list seven nations from whom the Lord delivered Israel. *forsook … did not serve Him*. People commonly multiplied the number of gods they worshiped, seeking greater favor by every means. E.g., an inscription from Kutillet 'Ajrud pairs Yahweh, the God of Israel, with Asherah, a Canaanite goddess.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 10:7 *anger … kindled*. See note, 2:12. *sold*. See note, 2Ki 17:17. Religious apostasy and political degeneration went hand in hand. *Philistines*. One of the many Sea Peoples who infiltrated Canaan from the west and southwest during the second half of the second millennium BC. *Ammonites*. See note, 3:13. As Israelites sought out false gods on all sides, the Lord sent oppressors from all sides.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 10:10 *cried out*. See note, 2:18. The method for approaching the Lord is not specifically described but is characteristic of "inquiring of the Lord" by speaking with a priest or the high priest at the tabernacle (cf 20:27–28; see "call," p 842). The tabernacle and the priesthood are explicitly featured in Jgs until the last story (chs 17–21), which heightens the sense of lawlessness and false religion throughout the Book. Chs 17–21 illustrate that even the priests and Levites were falling

away until the Lord called the nation to repentance, which is the dominant theological theme of the Book. *Baals*. See note, Nu 25:3.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 10:11–12 *the* LORD *said*. We are not told where, how, or through whom the Lord revealed this message, but it appears not to have been through the angel of the Lord (cf 2:1–3) or through a prophet (cf 6:8–10). *Did I not save you*. The past three centuries had been filled with instances in which the Lord rescued His people from their oppressors. *Egyptians … Maonites*. Cf v 6 list.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 10:13 *I will save you no more*. Even divine patience can be exhausted. Cf Gn 15:16.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 10:15 *We have sinned*. In response to their great spiritual distress (v 10) and the Lord's withering sarcasm (v 14), Israel's remorse seems genuine. *do to us*. In their answer, they seem willing to accept whatever disciplinary pain the Lord deemed suitable for their spiritual correction.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 10:16 *they put away the foreign gods*. The people appealed to God only when circumstances became truly dire. Yet the repentance here may be genuine. The Lord responds to them by sending Jephthah (chs 11–12).

JUDGES—NOTE ON 10:17 *Gilead*. Southeast of the Sea of Chinnereth. See color map 2. Ammonites hoped to follow their initial success (vv 7–9) with a second campaign against Israel. *Mizpah*. "Watchpost." OT mentions several Mizpahs in this general area, and it is uncertain which Mizpah is meant. Mizpah in Gilead offered a rallying place that may have best served this purpose.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 10:18 *Who … will begin to fight against*. Israel rallied not to muster troops but to address their lack of leadership.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 10:6–18 Israel's spiritual well-being deteriorates after the death of Tola and Jair. During oppression from the Ammonites, Israel is left to beg for a leader to repulse this latest threat. Spiritual gullibility leads people to believe anything that suits their desires. God is remarkable in His persistent mercy and in His willingness to begin anew with us. • All that was written in the Scripture was written to teach us. Enable us to learn and grow, dear Jesus. Amen.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 11:1 *a mighty warrior*. Lit, "a mighty one of power." A man who possessed bravery and military means to accomplish great things. *son of a prostitute*. Circumstances of Jephthah's birth made him

socially disadvantaged, since he likely had no father to care for him. See note, v 7; see also pp 54–55. As Israel's spiritual condition continued to spiral downward, the men selected by the Lord to become judges possessed fewer ideal qualities.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 11:2 *wife's sons*. Legal heirs. See note, v 7.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 11:3 *the land of Tob*. Volcanic highlands east of Bashan, north of Gilead. See color map 2. *worthless fellows*. Opportunists who were distressed, discontented, in debt, or outcasts found in Jephthah a man of similar circumstances.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 11:4 *Ammonites*. See note, 10:17.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 11:5–6 *elders*. See note, Ex 3:16. See also p 228.*Come and be our leader*. Village elders could offer leadership during times of peace and would normally disdain people like Jephthah. But the Ammonite threat made them desperate. *leader*. A military commander.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 11:7 *hate me and drive me out of my father's house?* Elders served as judges in a community (see p 792). Jephthah had a grudge against their judgment. Whether rightly or wrongly, he lost his inheritance due to their decisions. One or more of the elders could have been Jephthah's brothers (cf v 2). *Why … me now*. Jephthah's rhetorical questions demonstrate his shrewd negotiating ability. He took advantage of the elders' desperation to negotiate an agreement more favorable to himself.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 11:8 *head*. Elders sweetened their offer, adding more comprehensive leadership.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 11:9 *bring me home*. See note, v 7. *the LORD gives them over to me*. While not reluctant to advance his own position, Jephthah commendably ascribed ultimate victory to the Lord.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 11:10 *The LORD will be witness*. Elders are making a covenant (see p 127). Jephthah will recount Israel's history to the Ammonite messengers in covenant format. See note, vv 14–27.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 11:11 *the people made him head*. By public rite. *head and leader*. Jephthah received the level of leadership he had negotiated (v 8; see p 228). *before the LORD at Mizpah*. Jephthah took an oath at the same place as did Jacob (Gn 31:48–54).
JUDGES—NOTE ON 11:12 *Jephthah sent messengers*. The only instance in Jgs of an effort at diplomacy before the exercising of a military option. *against my land?* Jephthah claimed that land east of the Jordan rightfully belonged to Israel and to him (see notes, vv 2, 7).

JUDGES—NOTE ON 11:13 The Ammonite king countered that the land east of the Jordan was Ammon's possession, not Israel's, because the Ammonites had a more ancient claim to it.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 11:14–27 Jephthah's reply reveals a remarkable knowledge of history and of the Lord's covenant with Israel. The Ammonites' charge against Israel rings hollow; Ammon was living on land the Moabites could claim legitimately. Jephthah recounts how Israel had first sought permission to pass through the historic territories of the Edomites, Moabites, and Amorites, but were not granted it. Permission denied, Israel took the longer route around Moab and established camp beyond Moabite territory. Jephthah refers only to those facts that strengthen his claim. He implies that though Israel had respected Moabite boundaries, other local peoples (the generalized term "Amorites") must have violated those boundaries in order to have come into possession of this area.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 11:23 *the Lord … dispossessed the Amorites*. "To the victors belong the spoils"; thus neighboring peoples understood that if Israel was victorious in battle, it had legitimate claim to the land.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 11:24 *Chemosh*. The god of the Moabites; the god of the Ammonites was Milcom/Molech (see note, Lv 18:21). Jephthah did not acknowledge the existence of other gods, but was making a legal claim on terms the Ammonites would be forced to concede.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 11:25 *Balak*. Though Moab had more legitimate claims to the land than Ammon, Balak, the king of Moab, never made such a claim.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 11:26 *Heshbon … Aroer … villages … cities*. Land formerly belonging to Moab. See map, p 250. *300 years*. Since the Israelites had been living there for three centuries with no counter claim from Moab or Ammon, what claim did the king of Ammon think he had on those lands now? Jephthah's round figure corroborates the understanding that the judges period lasted c 350 years, and supports the reference in 1Ki 6:1 that the time period from the exodus to the 40-year reign of Solomon was 480 years. See pp 338–40.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 11:27 *The Lord , the Judge*. Whatever "legitimacy" he appeared to grant to the gods of Moab and Ammon, Jephthah confessed that the Lord was the God who would settle this dispute—if not through Jephthah's diplomacy, then through military victory.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 11:28 The Ammonite king's refusal to listen set the stage for Jephthah's military victory, which also became the occasion for one of the most well known and controversial events in the Book.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 11:1–28 Despite his outcast status, Jephthah is selected to lead the Israelite armies against the Ammonites. He argues that Israel has proper claim to the lands east of the Jordan after living there three centuries. God's people today, too, have a homeland that the Lord has appointed: the promised land of the new creation. Christians may appear an unimportant minority on earth, with no particular claim to power, and losing influence as society becomes more and more secular. Yet God still guides the affairs of the world in the interest of His people. • Lord God, ruler over the nations, encourage us when we seem to be surrounded and overwhelmed by an ungodly world. Prepare us for our eternal homeland, which we will enter when Jesus returns. Amen.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 11:29 *Spirit of the* LORD *was upon Jephthah*. See note, 3:10. The Lord's Spirit made Jephthah bold to pursue the Ammonites in battle but did not prevent him from making an impulsive decision (v 30).

JUDGES—NOTE ON 11:30 *Jephthah made a vow*. Common practice among the Israelites; once made, it was not to be broken (see note, Nu 30:2; cf Dt 23:21–23). Whether as a calculated risk or with reckless abandon, Jephthah must have sought additional assurance of the Lord's blessing. Could a man who knew the Law of the Lord as well as Jephthah appears to have known it (cf vv 14–27) have been ignorant of the Lord's opposition to human sacrifice? As a social outcast and the son of a prostitute, Jephthah may have assimilated heathen beliefs and practices.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 11:31 *whatever comes out*. Rash vow, which can only lead to trouble. Throughout the passage, the pronouns are masculine, indicating that Jephthah did not expect it to be his daughter. *shall be the* LORD *'s, and I will offer it up*. Some Hbr grammarians translate "and" as "or." Jephthah's wording may suggest a different course of action if met by a person or by an animal. See notes, vv 37, 39. *burnt offering*. See pp 170–71.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 11:33 *Aroer*. Near the Arnon River; marks the southern edge of the territory Ammon had invaded. *Minnith*. Location unknown. *Abel-keramim*. C 12 mi from Rabbah, the Ammonite capital.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 11:35 *tore his clothes*. See note, Jb 1:20. *very low … great trouble*. Men go to war to protect their wives and children, not to put

them in harm's way. But in this case, his victory tore apart his family. *vow*. Cf vv 30–31.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 11:36 His daughter's gentle spirit and willing submission is extraordinary, like that of Mary (Lk 1:38).

JUDGES—NOTE ON 11:37 *two months*. Possessing greater presence of mind than did her father, she requested an extended time to bewail her fate with her female friends. *weep for my virginity*. It seems unusual that she would bewail her virginity rather than her impending death. Because she was his only child, his family line would be cut off with her death. It is possible that he offered her or dedicated her to perpetual service at the tabernacle, such that she could not marry. Cf 1Sm 2:22; see also p 389.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 11:39 *according to his vow*. Cf vv 30–31. Jewish commentators, first-century historian Flavius Josephus, and Christian Church Fathers believed that Jephthah did indeed offer his daughter as a burnt offering. In other biblical texts, there were methods of substitution (e.g., the Lord accepted a ram caught in a thicket as a substitute for Isaac; Gn 22:13). The firstborn of every womb, spared by the Lord when He passed over Israelite homes in Egypt, belonged to the Lord but could be redeemed by the Levites, who were assigned to lifetime service (Ex 13:1–2; Nu 3:11–13).

JUDGES—NOTE ON 11:40 *lament … four days*. Though heartfelt and sorrowful at the time, this observance apparently did not endure.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 11:29–40 Jephthah's carefully crafted speech and military victory over the Ammonites are overshadowed by his rash vow to sacrifice the first thing that comes out to him from his doorway—which turns out to be his only child. Beware the foolishness of making vows or swearing in frivolous or uncertain situations. We can be thankful that Jesus offered Himself as payment for all our thoughtless words and foolish actions. • Forgive us, O Lord, for the thoughtless and foolish words that we speak. Guide us to speak the truth of Your Word in love. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 12:1 *did not call us*. Ephraim, in its arrogance, chafed because it wanted leadership of the region and a share in the booty. Luth: "The sons of Ephraim were always prouder than the rest, for they had been adopted by Jacob and preferred to Manasseh, and they had been born of Joseph, a patriarch exalted above the others. Therefore they had grown

haughty because of such privileges, as they were also proudly puffed up in opposition to Gideon and Jephthah" (AE 11:40).

JUDGES—NOTE ON 12:2 Ephraim wanted to share in the credit for victory after the fighting was already over. *called*. Not mentioned in ch 11 because it had no effect. *did not save*. Ephraimites failed to come when Jephthah needed them.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 12:3 *would not save*. See note, v 2. *I took my life in my hand*. Jephthah risked his life for a victory but the Ephraimites did nothing but complain.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 12:4 *Gilead*. Tribes of Gad, Reuben, and part of Manasseh lived east of the Jordan, outside the boundaries of the Promised Land. God approved this arrangement (Nu 32:33; see map, p 365). *they*. Ephraimites. *fugitives*. Ephraim is insulting the Gileadites as an illegitimate mob living outside the tribal identities. Cf Jsh 22.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 12:5 *fords of the Jordan*. Where the Ephraimites were trying to retreat back across the river to their homeland.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 12:6 *say*. Tribes were already so disunified as to have acquired regional dialects. *Shibboleth*. Means "a stream" or "flood." *42,000*. Number of casualties in the war.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 12:1–7 The tribe of Ephraim, in its pride and jealousy, is angry at not participating in the glory of Jephthah's victory and threatens to kill the Gileadites. Instead, identifying their enemies by their regional dialect, the Gileadites defeat Ephraim, killing 42,000 of their fellow Israelites. God uses Jephthah, a sinner, to deliver His people. God's grace to and through Jephthah may remind us of the deliverance He provides us through Christ, not by our own merit. This destroys human pride, but gives us a greater victory. • O Lord, forgive us for our desire for glory and for despising others. Give us the right word for crossing into eternity, namely, the right confession of Your Son, in whose name we pray. Amen.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 12:8 *Bethlehem*. May be the city in Judah where David and Jesus were born or the other town of that same name in Zebulun (Jsh 19:15).

JUDGES—NOTE ON 12:9 *outside*. Marriage outside the "clan," or extended family unit, would have been proper. Marriage outside Israel would not. The Hbr does not specify "clan" but just says "outside," so the meaning is not completely clear. *thirty daughters he brought*. One way to

achieve civic order among such fractious tribes was through marriage alliances, which may have kept the peace for the seven years of his judgeship. See note, 1Ki 3:1–2.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 12:12 *Elon … Aijalon*. Name of the judge and name of his burial site have exactly the same consonantal spelling in Hbr. *Aijalon in the land of Zebulun*. Archaeologists have identified possible sites for this city. See color map 1.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 12:14 *forty sons*. Polygamy was common. See note, 8:30; see also pp 54–55.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 12:8–15 Three "minor" judges are mentioned, but nothing is said of their deeds, other than that two of them have large families. Unlike other judges, these deal with no invaders, no civil war, and no dramatic sins. Nevertheless, the people still need to be judged through God's servants who apply His Law. Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon—living out both their spiritual offices (in their judgeships) and temporal offices (in their families)—stand as examples of the doctrine of vocation. Nothing is recorded of their good works. Yet, God was still pleased with them on account of their faith. • O Lord, make me faithful in my everyday callings. May I ever cling to Your Word, appreciate Your daily blessings, and call on You in every need. Through Christ, our Lord, I pray. Amen.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 13:1 *did what was evil*. See note, 2:11. *Philistines*. See notes, 10:7; Ps 83:6–8; see also p 345. *forty years*. See "Sequence and Length of Events," p 339.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 13:2 *Zorah*. Small town 14 mi W of Jerusalem. *was barren and had no children*. Repetition underscores her physical inability to bear children.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 13:3 *angel of the Lord*. See p 1227. *you shall conceive and bear a son*. Sarah (Gn 17:15–16), Hannah (1Sm 1:12–20), and Elizabeth (Lk 1:8–24) were other barren women in the Bible who were visited by the Lord (through an angel or a priest) and then conceived a child who became an important agent of God (Isaac, Samuel, and John the Baptist). See pp 54–55.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 13:5 *No razor*. Israelite men wore their hair at different lengths, as artistic inscriptions and biblical texts attest. The head was shaved as a sign of mourning. See note, 16:22. *Nazirite*. From a word meaning "dedication"—by which an Israelite consecrated himself to God. See notes, Nu 6:1–20. *begin to save*. Israel's struggle against the Philistines

continued with Samuel (1Sm 7), Saul (1Sm 13–14), David (1Sm 17; 2Sm 5:17–25), and on through the kings.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 13:6 *like the appearance of the angel of God*. She assumed he was a human prophet, but she was overwhelmed by his majestic appearance, to the point of neglecting to ask him his name and where he was from. *angel*. See p 5.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 13:7 Nazirite vow was usually temporary, as that taken by St Paul (Ac 21:23–24). Only two others are recorded in Scripture as being Nazirites from birth: Samuel (1Sm 1:11) and John the Baptist (Lk 1:14–15).
JUDGES—NOTE ON 13:8 Manoah may have believed his wife, but he prayed to know more about how he should raise this special child. May the Lord place such a prayer on the lips of parents today and likewise place the Scriptures in their hands.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 13:9 *God listened*. God heard the prayer offered in such faith. *the angel of God came again*. See note, v 6.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 13:10 The woman was alone the first time the angel appeared (vv 3–5). This time, she brought her husband to see the angel so that he, too, as the father, would be involved in the revelation about their son (vv 13–14).
JUDGES—NOTE ON 13:12–14 Manoah wanted to know more, but the angel simply repeated what he first told Manoah's wife. God's Word does not always tell us everything we would like to know. Our part is simply to trust what God has revealed. See note, 2Ch 35:22.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 13:16 *angel of the* LORD. See p 1227. *I will not eat*. Angel rejected Manoah's attempt to manipulate God through the obligations of hospitality and use of His name (v 17). *to the* LORD. Angel transformed into a divine sacrifice what Manoah regarded as an ordinary meal. In a similar situation with Abraham and Sarah, the Angel of the Lord did share a human meal, in light of their faith (Gn 18:3–8), but Manoah's motives were not as pure as Abraham's. *did not know*. Manoah may not have completely accepted his wife's account.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 13:17 *honor*. Many ancient people believed that one could manipulate people and spiritual beings through their names. The Angel of the Lord rejected Manoah's attempt to exercise power over God.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 13:18 *wonderful?* Far beyond what Manoah could grasp (see title for Christ, Is 9:6).

JUDGES—NOTE ON 13:19 *offered it on the rock*. Though sacrifices were not to be offered except at the tabernacle (cf Lv 17:8–9), here the Lord sanctified the offering by His presence and His command. Cf 1Tm 4:5.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 13:20 *altar*. The rock became an altar when the Lord accepted the sacrifice.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 13:21 *angel of the Lord*. See p 1227.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 13:22 *We shall surely die*. The holiness of God consumes sinners who come into His presence (Ex 33:3). *God*. With the offering, the angel revealed His true nature, and Manoah and his wife experienced a "theophany," a direct revelation of God. See p 39.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 13:23 Manoah's wife showed greater faith and insight than her husband as she recognized that the Lord had accepted the sacrifice and covered their sinfulness. Also, the Lord had promised to work through them and their son.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 13:24 *Samson*. Similar to term "sun" (Hbr *shemesh*). Some scholars see a connection with pagan solar deities, but Josephus says that the word means "the strong one" or "the daring one."
JUDGES—NOTE ON 13:25 *the Spirit of the Lord began to stir him*. The Holy Spirit made Samson begin his work of deliverance, equipping him with supernatural strength. See note, 3:10. *Mahaneh-dan*. Lit, "the camp of Dan," possibly a temporary settlement for displaced refugees from the tribe of Dan. See note, 1:34. The location may be less than a mile from Samson's birthplace.

JUDGES—NOTE ON **Ch 13** The Lord's messenger appears to a barren woman, promising that she will bear a son who must live as a Nazirite and who will save Israel from the Philistines. This special experience anticipates the special life the woman's son will lead. God's Word comes to us with special purpose too. In the humble forms of the pages of the Bible; the water, bread, and wine of the Sacraments; and the preaching of a pastor, the Lord strengthens us for our special mission of serving Him in a hostile world. • O Lord, we thank You for Your Word, which You have graciously communicated to us in human language. Forgive us for being blind to Your wonderful Word, and lead us to trust it. For You reveal to us that You have provided a Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 14:1 *Timnah*. Small village c 4 mi from where Samson lived.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 14:2 *get her for me*. Commanding his parents, rather than making a polite request, showed that Samson was a spoiled child who violated the Fourth Commandment. Parents did not always arrange marriages (cf Gn 28:6–9). *as my wife*. Marrying outside of Israel was wrong, as Samson's parents indicate (v 3). The Law of Moses forbade marrying Canaanites (Dt 7:3–4). Although technically the Philistines were not Canaanites, neither did they worship the one true God. Jsh 13:2–3 counted them among the Canaanites as pagan enemies of Israel. The marriage would go against his Nazirite vow. See note, 13:5.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 14:3 *uncircumcised Philistines?* A number of Semitic people groups practiced circumcision (see, e.g., note, 1Sm 18:25), but the Philistines, who were from Aegean or Greek lands, did not. *right*. Hbr *yashar*, "straight" and thereby correct. Her appearance pleased him. Perhaps a wordplay because, as his parents noted, the relationship would not at all be right. See note, 17:6.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 14:4 *from the* LORD. Often, we cannot clearly tell what the Lord is doing with our lives, except we know that He has our good in mind (Rm 8:28). God providentially used even Samson's sins for His purpose of igniting conflict between the Israelites and the Philistines. *ruled*. Dominated and likely exacted tribute from them as vassals.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 14:5 *young lion*. See note, Ps 34:10. See also note, 1Sm 17:37.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 14:6 *Spirit of the* LORD *rushed upon him*. The mighty deeds of previous judges also are ascribed to the descent of the Holy Spirit (see note, 3:10). *one tears a young goat*. Emphasis is on the ease with which he handled the lion. Verb suggests tearing down the middle, as in pulling the hind legs apart. To this day in the Near East, young goats and lambs are so torn in pieces after they are cooked. *did not tell his father or his mother*. Both Samson and his parents set out for Timnah, but they did not travel together, perhaps because of the tensions between them (v 3).
JUDGES—NOTE ON 14:7 *right*. See note, v 3.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 14:9 Nazirites were forbidden to touch anything dead, so Samson violated the Nazirite vow. The honey also would have been considered unclean, yet he gave it to his parents without telling them.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 14:10 *used to do*. Israelites typically held the wedding feast at the groom's home. Either holding it at the bride's home was a practice at the time, or it was a Philistine custom, in which case

Samson was again violating the Law's prohibitions against following the customs of the pagans. See pp 54–55.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 14:11 *thirty companions*. Normally, the groom would provide his own groomsmen. They had to be provided for Samson, since Israelites would not accompany him in his fraternization with the Philistines. The exchange of gifts and services is typical in wedding arrangements and may have played a role in the tensions that followed.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 14:12 *riddle*. Riddles were often used as entertainment at banquets and to teach wisdom. See note, Pr 1:6. See also "Enigmatic Sayings," p 1775. *thirty linen garments … changes of clothes*. Hugely expensive wager. Commoners did not own changes of clothes, though nobles did.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 14:15–16 Samson's wife feared her fellow Philistines' threats against her and her parents. She probably did not realize then just how strong Samson was.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 14:16 *You only hate me*. Manipulation, rather than love and trust, manifests itself immediately.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 14:17 Samson's wife had been entreating him with tears every day of the feast, wanting to know the answer herself. But not until the fourth day did the Philistine companions come to her with their threats (cf v 15).
JUDGES—NOTE ON 14:18 *before the sun went down*. Once the sun went down, the seventh day of the wedding feast would be over, the deadline Samson had set. *plowed with my heifer*. Literally refers to imposing hard service on an inexperienced animal, which signifies the manipulation of Samson's wife. Some commentators think Samson was accusing them of having sexual relations with his wife.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 14:19 *Spirit of the Lord*. The Holy Spirit did not give Samson supernatural strength merely to kill lions but to deliver Israel from the Philistines. See note, 3:10. *Ashkelon*. Major city of the Philistines, 23 mi away. See color map 2. *spoil*. Rather than inviting local retribution by plundering a nearby village, Samson attacked a Philistine city. This escalated the petty personal conflict into a military confrontation. God providentially used Samson's weakness and bad behavior for His purpose of punishing the Philistines.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 14:20 *given to his companion*. Because Samson stormed out on the last day of the wedding feast, the marriage would not

have been consummated. *best man*. It would have been embarrassing for the bride to have been abandoned at the very end of the wedding festivities. This "best man" would have been one of the 30 Philistine companions that were provided for him (v 11) and who won the riddle contest (v 18).

JUDGES—NOTE ON **Ch 14** Samson sees a Philistine woman and urges his parents to approve an inappropriate marriage with her. Samson is strong physically, but weak morally. Although his long hair marks him externally as a Nazirite, he violates God's Law repeatedly and disrespects his parents. Despite Samson's sinfulness, "the Spirit of the LORD" comes upon him for the sake of God's purposes. God saves Samson and uses him to deliver Israel. God still has a plan and compassion for the weak in faith today. • O Father, I confess that I am like Samson, filled with lusts, disobedience, and violent passions. Forgive my sin, and fill me with Your Holy Spirit, through Your Son, that I might serve Your greater purposes and learn humility through the cross. Amen.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 15:1 *wheat harvest*. End of May or beginning of June. See calendar, p 262. *a young goat*. In the Near East to this day, there is a certain kind of marriage in which the wife continues to live with her parents with the husband visiting periodically, always bearing a gift. Samson assumed that the wedding, which he left in a rage, had been valid. *chamber*. The woman's room.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 15:2 *hated*. May have meant divorce. To the Philistine, Samson had abandoned his bride by leaving before the feast was over and the marriage was consummated. Samson never initiated a divorce under Mosaic Law. Confusion about whether the couple was married illustrates one of the problems of marriages that involve different marriage laws and customs. *your companion*. See note, 14:20.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 15:3 He felt he deserved revenge. His treatment at the hands of these Philistines was emblematic of how the whole nation mistreated the Israelites.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 15:4–5 *foxes*. Or jackals, which travel in packs. The Romans would tie torches to the tails of foxes as part of their worship of Ceres, goddess of the harvest. Hannibal sent oxen with torches between their horns to attack the Romans. Samson, in effect, turned the animals into incendiary devices.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 15:6 *son-in-law*. Philistines blamed the father's efforts to save his family's honor. *burned her and her father*. What the

companions threatened to do if the woman did not come up with the answer to the riddle (14:15), making this an example of Philistine unfaithfulness and cruelty. Taking revenge against this helpless family was easier than fighting Samson.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 15:8 *he struck them hip and thigh*. Expression for unsparing slaughter. Imagery may refer to limbs hewed off and piled up or to a wrestling move, which is pictured in an ancient Babylonian inscription of Gilgamesh. *rock of Etam*. Location unclear. Caves in the cliffs of nearby Wadi Isma'in are accessible only by climbing through a fissure wide enough for only one person.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 15:9 *Lehi*. Lit, "jawbone." Probably named after Samson's exploit (vv 15, 18). Location uncertain.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 15:11 *rulers over us?* The Judeans feared the Philistines' domination. *As they did to me*. Echoes the Philistines (v 10). Motivation on each side was reprisal and an escalating counterreprisal.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 15:12 Illustrates degradation of the Israelites. Instead of seeing in Samson a God-sent deliverer and joining him in battle, they cooperated with their oppressors and sought to arrest him. Unlike other judges, Samson raised no army but fought the enemy hosts completely alone.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 15:13 *new*. Not brittle or rotten. Anticipates 16:11.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 15:14 *Lehi*. See note, v 9. *Spirit of the LORD*. See note, 3:10.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 15:15 *jawbone of a donkey*. Impromptu weapon. See notes, 1Sm 13:19–22.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 15:16 Hbr for "donkey" and "heaps" have the same consonantal spelling; wordplay.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 15:18 *salvation*. See p 843.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 15:19 *hollow place*. Lit, the "socket" of a tooth. Luther translated it to mean that water came out of the socket of the donkey's jawbone, but the term more likely refers to a formation in the rock. *to this day*. It still flowed when Jgs was written. See also note, Jsh 4:9.

JUDGES—NOTE ON **Ch 15** Samson goes to claim his bride, only to find that her father has married her to someone else. Enraged, Samson begins a personal conflict with the Philistines. Despite Samson's rage, the Holy Spirit works through Samson to accomplish "great salvation" for His people. Samson rightly confesses that this is God's gift, for He is the true

Judge and Savior. • O Lord, protect me from the impulse to take revenge. Forgive me for having sinned by conforming to the godless culture around me. Give me courage to resist the temptations of the world and to trust that I am never alone, thanks to Your Holy Spirit, who keeps me strong in faith. Amen.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 16:1 *Gaza*. See color map 1. *prostitute*. See pp 54–55. For all of his physical strength, Samson was not strong enough to control his physical lusts, which would eventually be his downfall. Samson is a type of the whole nation of Israel, which, while capable of great strength through God's grace, continually sinned and fell into spiritual adultery (cf 2:17).

JUDGES—NOTE ON 16:3 *doors of the gate*. The gates had heavy doors, likely clad in metal and fitted with round-bottomed posts set into sockets, allowing the doors to swing open. They would be locked with a bar that went through the whole assembly, including the posts, to prevent them from rotating. *in front of Hebron*. Hebron is c 40 mi away, but that the hill is "in front" of the region may mean it was much closer. (Perhaps the hill marked the direction of Hebron.) Samson tore the entire structure out of the wall, carried it up a hill, and set it up so all could see. This prodigious feat of strength with the gates that were supposed to guarantee the city's security made a mockery of the Philistines.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 16:4 *Valley of Sorek*. Near Zorah, Samson's birthplace.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 16:5 *1,100 pieces of silver*. Three years' wages. With five Philistine rulers promising Delilah this sum (cf 3:3), the bribe would support her for 15 years. *pieces*. Sometimes translated as "shekels." A shekel was about a month's wages, about 2/5 oz. See p cx.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 16:6 Delilah made a brazen request. Samson was convinced of his own invulnerability. As a lover of riddles and games, he toyed with her.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 16:7–8 *seven fresh bowstrings*. Made from animal sinew or gut, these would contract as they dried, causing the binding to tighten.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 16:9 *inner chamber*. See note, 1Ki 22:25. *The Philistines are upon you*. Philistines did not necessarily attack each time. Delilah, in effect, may have been shouting "Gotcha!" to test Samson's reaction and the effectiveness of each scheme to weaken him.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 16:11–12 *new ropes*. Event in 15:13–14 may have given Samson this idea. *The Philistines are upon you*. See note, v 9. *inner chamber*. See note, 1Ki 22:25.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 16:13 *the web*. Threads of a weaver's loom. Stakes of Delilah's loom were probably driven into the ground. On Israelite weaving, see note, Gn 37:3.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 16:15–16 Samson was fooled by his passion for Delilah and by his sense of invincibility. *vexed to death*. Seems that Samson genuinely loved her and continued to seek her love.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 16:17 *Nazirite*. Samson had broken his other Nazirite vows. His uncut hair was the last sign of his commitment.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 16:19 *on her knees*. Perhaps with his head on her lap. *shave off*. Typical means for cutting hair, using a straight razor. *she began to torment him*. Exact nature of torment, whether physical torture or verbal cruelty, is not clear. The theme in Jgs of a woman conquering a warrior appears again (cf 4:9; 9:53).
JUDGES—NOTE ON 16:20 *The Philistines are upon you*. See note, v 9. This time, Delilah was telling the truth. *the LORD had left him*. Samson assumed that, as in the other cases, he still would be strong. God had been long-suffering with Samson's sinful ways, but now, with Samson repudiating his final sign of dedication to God, the Holy Spirit left him. Because his strength came from God and not, as he assumed, from himself, Samson now had nothing but weakness. See note, 3:10.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 16:21 *ground at the mill*. Means of humiliating prisoners, since grinding was women's work performed on the ground with a hand mill. See note, Jb 31:10.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 16:22 Nazirite vows could be renewed. Samson—weak, blind, and defeated—is in a position to repent and turn to God. In Lv 19:27, God forbids trimming hair at the temples and the edge of one's beard, which were required by Canaanite funeral rituals. Levitical laws entailed shaving off all of one's hair (Lv 14:8–9). Only the Nazirite vow, which could be temporary, required not cutting one's hair (Nu 6:5). At the end of the term of the Nazirite vow, the hair would all be cut off and burned as a sacrifice on the altar (Nu 6:18).
JUDGES—NOTE ON 16:1–22 Samson's weakness for women proves to be his doom when Delilah coaxes from him the secret of his strength. Bereft of all of his powers, Samson is at the mercy of the Philistines. Often, like

Samson, it is when we are weak and broken spiritually (or perhaps also physically) that we finally despair of ourselves. In that hour, Christ is the true strong man for us spiritually. Samson carried the gates of a city, but Jesus carried the cross and all our sin. • O Lord, forgive me both for succumbing to temptation and for presuming Your forbearance again and again. Take not Your Holy Spirit from me. Help me to trust not in my own strength but in the strength of Jesus Christ, my Lord, in whose name I pray. Amen.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 16:23 *Dagon*. Thought to be a water deity with the body of a fish and the head and hands of a man, more recent scholars think Dagon may have been a corn or vegetation god. *god*. Hbr is plural, "gods." *Our god has given Samson our enemy into our hand*. The Philistines interpreted the defeat of Samson as a great victory for their god (or "gods"), thus vaunting Dagon over the true God of the Israelites, who worked through Samson.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 16:25 *entertain*. Connotes laughter and derision. Perhaps Philistines mockingly called him to perform feats of strength, of which he was no longer capable.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 16:26–27 Archaeologists have not yet found such temples in Canaan but have found them in Cyprus, the Aegean culture from which the Philistines came. The structure enclosed a large courtyard, with pillars supporting the roof.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 16:28–29 Samson called upon God, invoking Him by each of His three revealed names in the OT: Adonai (Lord), Yahweh (LORD), and Elohim (God). See p 1227. Samson repented and turned to the true God. He then asked that God strengthen him one more time so he could be what God had intended him to be, a Nazirite called to deliver Israel. *remember me*. Cf Lk 23:42, where the thief on the cross has the same request. See p 843.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 16:30 *Let me die with the Philistines*. Not an act of self-destruction—that happened when he threw his life away with Delilah—but the laying down of his life to destroy the temple of the false god and to deliver God's people. Chem: "Samson was not a private individual but a judge over the people of God who … prayed of the Lord, from whom he had his mandate, for the public punishment of the Philistines so that he might be able to avenge himself on the enemy. Just as a ruler in punishing the enemy in a lawful war, when he exposes himself to the danger of death,

is not sinning, neither did Samson. Furthermore, Samson was a type of Christ, who in dying must destroy death in keeping with the statement of Hos. 13:14, 'I will be your death, O death' " (*LTh* 2:409).

JUDGES—NOTE ON 16:31 *his brothers … brought him up*. Samson's family showed courage in retrieving his body from the ruins and giving it an honorable burial in the tomb of his now-deceased father. Because Samson's mother had been barren, giving birth to him by a miracle, these "brothers" may have been tribal kinsmen. *Zorah and Eshtaol*. C 1½ mi apart; Zorah was his birthplace. Site would have overlooked the Valley of Sorek, where Delilah lived.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 16:23–31 As Samson is weak and humiliated, the Philistines ascribe their victory to their god Dagon. In that hour, Samson turns to God in faith. He pushes down the columns that support the roof of the temple, destroying thousands of the enemy. Like Samson, Christ died for His people. But unlike Samson, Christ fulfilled the Law and brought forgiveness and eternal life. • O Father, I, too, am a defeated sinner, spiritually blind and in bondage to the devil according to my sinful flesh. Remember me, Lord. Give me strength to carry out what You have called me to do. May Christ in His sacrifice pull down the works of Satan and deliver me from captivity. In His name I pray. Amen.

JUDGES—NOTE ON **Chs 17–21** On chronology, see p 339.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 17:1 *hill country*. Much of Ephraim is hilly, but this probably refers to the territory between Bethel and the Jezreel River. See color map 2.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 17:2 *1,100 pieces of silver*. See note, 16:5. *uttered a curse*. Apparently, Micah returned the money out of fear of his mother's curse on the thief, himself. See note, Gn 12:3. *Blessed*. Not wanting her curse to fall on her son, she tried to reverse the effect by blessing him. See p 842.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 17:3 Remarkably, the mother dedicated all of the silver to the Lord, but then made an idolatrous image. *a carved image and a metal image*. First term refers to a statue, as of stone or wood, that is shaped or "gravened" by a tool; latter term refers to a statue that has been cast of molten metal. Some scholars believe these were two separate images, while others think the image had two parts, perhaps the idol and its pedestal.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 17:4 Apparently, 200 pieces of silver for the image and the balance for the maintenance of the shrine.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 17:5 *ephod*. See note, 8:27. *ordained*. Micah presumed to make one of his own sons a priest, in direct violation of God's Word, which required that all priests of the Lord be from the tribe of Levi and, specifically, descendants of Aaron (Nu 3:5–10).
JUDGES—NOTE ON 17:6 *right in his own eyes*. Variation of the expression used in 14:3. Since there was no central civil authority, people developed their own individual and regional practices, resulting in moral and religious relativism. Chem: "Scripture is constantly describing the corrupt and dissolute state of the church, for example Judg. 17:6; 21:25. Thus people boast of their Christian liberty and under this pretext claim that they are permitted to spread whatever opinions they wish" (*LTh* 1:17).
JUDGES—NOTE ON 17:7 *Levite*. Jonathan (see note, 18:30). The Levites were given cities distributed throughout the lands of the other tribes (Nu 35:1–8). They were counted, in civil matters, as belonging to the tribe in whose land they lived. So the young man could be considered "of the family of Judah," though he was literally a descendant of Levi.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 17:8 Bethlehem was not one of the cities given to the Levites. The young man dwelt temporarily in different places rather than serving in the place where God assigned him, showing how the Israelites had drifted away from following God's Word. Economic hardship or lack of support for the priestly tribe may have forced the man to move. See color map 2.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 17:10 *father*. Title of respect to a spiritual adviser (e.g., 2Ki 6:21; 13:14).
JUDGES—NOTE ON 17:12 *ordained*. Lit, Micah "filled the hand" of the Levite by entrusting the sacrifices to him. Though Micah had irregularly ordained his own son as the priest for his idolatry (v 5), he knew enough of God's Word to know that Levites were preferable, since God appointed the members of that tribe for service in His tabernacle. Not just any Levite was to preside as priest, but only those of the clan descended from Aaron (cf Nu 18:1). And Levites were to serve the true God at the tabernacle sacrifices, not false gods at idolatrous shrines.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 17:13 Pagan religiosity seeks to manipulate deities for the worshiper's tangible benefit.
JUDGES—NOTE ON **Ch 17** A dishonest Ephraimite named Micah uses cursed treasure to create idols, which he worships as the true God of Israel. He even hires a wandering Levite to serve as the priest of his idolatrous

shrine. Remarkably, the situation will grow far worse in the coming chapters. Even at our worst, the Lord has chosen and ordained for us a Savior, our true High Priest, Jesus Christ, who is the only way to salvation. • O Lord, forgive me for my idolatry, for the way I exalt my own opinions and preferences and hold to them rather than to Your holy Word. Teach me to forsake the materialism of our times and to follow You as my King. Through Christ, I pray. Amen.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 18:1 *In those days … no king*. Implies that the account was written at a later date, when there was a king for Israel. See pp 338–40; see also note, 17:6. *Dan … no inheritance*. They were presumptuously trying to seize land that God had not allotted to them. See note, 1:34; see also "portion," p 7.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 18:2 *Zorah … Eshtaol*. Towns originally assigned to the Danites (Jsh 19:41), proving that these Danites were not totally bereft of an inheritance, as they claimed, but simply wanted something more.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 18:3 *recognized the voice*. They may have known him from Bethlehem, or they may have recognized his regional and tribal dialect. See note, 12:6.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 18:5 *Inquire*. See note, 1:1; see also "call," p 842.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 18:6 *under the eye*. The Lord is watching over them.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 18:7 *Laish*. Called Leshem in Jsh 19:47 and Dan elsewhere, at the extreme north of Israelite territory, past the allotment of Naphtali, near the source of the Jordan. See map, p 365. *the manner of the Sidonians*. They followed the customs and culture of the Sidonians. *no dealings with anyone*. They were physically isolated because of the mountains that separated them from the Sidonians and other potential allies.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 18:10 *God has given it*. They assumed this from the word of the idolatrous priest (v 6).

JUDGES—NOTE ON 18:11–12 See map, p 365.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 18:14 Danites wanted the priest and his cult objects so their new settlement would have a religious shrine. Regarding these objects, see notes, 8:27; 17:3; Hos 3:4.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 18:16–17 The Danites, too weak to take possession of their own territory (see note, 1:34), were not only willing to attack a peaceful people, but they also plundered Micah despite the hospitality he showed them. *stood by … the gate*. Ready to leave. *went up*. The shrine

may have been on a hill or on the second story of a building. *the priest stood by … the gate*. He had already been collected by the soldiers.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 18:18–20 Describes what happened when the Danites entered the shrine (v 17). The Levite priest seemed willing to go along with the robbery. He also showed his bad character, betraying his earlier benefactor out of ambition to serve more people.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 18:21 *little ones … livestock*. Danites put their children and property in front, where they would be safer in the event of an attack from pursuers.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 18:22–26 Micah's attempt to reason with the Danites failed, ending in threats.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 18:28 *no deliverer*. No one could rescue them. See "deliver," p 842. *the valley that belongs to Beth-rehob*. In Syria, rather than in the Promised Land. See map, p 500.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 18:29 *Dan … Laish*. See note, v 7; see also map, p 365.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 18:30 *Jonathan*. Name of Micah's Levite (17:7). The Levitical family established its own priestly dynasty, which lasted c 280 years. Jonathan was possibly a grandson of Moses. This indicates these events happened early in the time of the judges. See "Sequence and Length of Events," p 339. *day of the captivity*. Probably not the Assyrian conquest of c 722 BC. Likely refers to the capture of the ark of the covenant by the Philistines (1Sm 4–6; c 1060 BC), referred to as a "captivity" in Ps 78:61–62.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 18:31 Contrasts the idolatrous shrine with the true tabernacle located at Shiloh until the time of Samuel, when it was captured by the Philistines (1Sm 4–6). Archaeologists have discovered the remains of a shrine at Dan, which later became the site of a temple set up by Jeroboam (1Ki 12:26–33).
JUDGES—NOTE ON **Ch 18** The Danites believe it is too difficult to take the inheritance assigned to them, so they look for easier prey, acting with cruelty and idolatry. God's commands are often difficult to obey, but acting on our own impulses only multiplies sin. The Lord had generously provided the Danites with priests and a sanctuary at Shiloh, where He promised to meet with them and grant them His mercy. Even so, the Lord meets with us and blesses us through the means He has ordained: the Word

and the Sacraments. • O Lord, I, too, often substitute my own will for Yours. Forgive my self-chosen theologies, my selfish cruelty to others, and my lack of trust. Grant me refuge in Your Word and in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Amen.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 19:1 *no king*. See note, 18:1. *a certain Levite*. This Levite was another itinerant, "sojourning" outside the cities that were the inheritance of his tribe (cf 17:7).

JUDGES—NOTE ON 19:2 *unfaithful*. Being a concubine was lawful (see pp 54–55). Her unfaithfulness constituted adultery. *went away*. She may have fled to escape the death penalty (Lv 20:10).

JUDGES—NOTE ON 19:3 *husband*. See note, v 2. *a couple of donkeys*. To bring his concubine home with him. *he came with joy*. The father would have been disgraced if his daughter remained separated from her husband.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 19:4 Elaborate and leisurely hospitality of the culture contrasts with the violations described later (vv 22–30).

JUDGES—NOTE ON 19:5–9 Extreme hospitality may have been the father's attempt to make up with the man for his daughter's misbehavior.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 19:10 *the man would not spend the night*. He needed to leave, but the insistent hospitality of his father-in-law meant that he could travel only a short distance before nightfall. *Jebus*. Occupied by the Jebusites. See note, 1:8.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 19:12 *city of foreigners*. He did not feel safe trusting the hospitality of the Jebusites, preferring to stay with fellow Israelites. *Gibeah*. See color map 3.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 19:13–15 *at Gibeah or at Ramah*. See map, p 451. *no one took them*. Ironic, given his feelings about the Jebusites (v 12). The town square was the social center of the community, but none of the Benjaminites extended their hospitality, an unspeakable breach of etiquette in that culture. On hospitality, see note, Gn 18:4.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 19:16 *sojourning in Gibeah*. The old man was not a Benjaminite but an Ephraimite, the tribe with whom the Levite himself lived (v 1). He may have been temporarily doing business with the Benjaminites.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 19:18 *going to the house of the Lord*. The Levite intended to go to Shiloh, c 24 mi away, where the tabernacle was located. Perhaps he would offer a sacrifice for the reconciliation he made with his concubine.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 19:20–21 *Peace be to you*. Common Israelite greeting. See p 7. *his house*. Though a temporary resident, the old man had established a home in the city and exceeded the Levite's expectation of hospitality.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 19:1–21 A Levite travels to find his concubine. Though the woman has sinned, the family makes a great effort to be reconciled. Such sins still wound and divide families today. Through the prayers and encouragement we share, the Lord works to restore broken relationships and bring healing. • O Lord, help us to love our family members, even those who sin against us, and to extend Your love to those who need our hospitality, through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 19:22–26 In the events that followed, no one acted rightly, illustrating how wicked Israel had become. Cf Gn 6:5.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 19:22 *making … merry*. Probably drinking. Cf Ps 104:15. *worthless fellows*. Rulers of the city made no attempt to curb or punish the mob of rabble-rousers, so the whole community was implicated in the crime. *master of the house*. Responsible for his guests. *know him*. The writer uses a polite way to say they wanted to have sex with the man. Cf Gn 4:1.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 19:23 *my brothers*. The Benjaminites, who were to be God's own people, replayed the sin of Sodom (Gn 19:4–11). *vile thing*. The Ephraimite recognized the sinful character of the men's request.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 19:24 Shockingly, the old man put the obligations of hospitality above everything else, even the safety of his own daughter and his guest's wife. *Violate them*. The man clearly recognized the sinful character of the illicit sexual relations he suggested. *outrageous thing*. Homosexual rape was esp abhorrent to the old man.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 19:25 *the man*. The Levite. *made her go out*. Despite the Levite's earlier interest in being reconciled to his concubine, in apparent fear for his life, he turned her over to the mob. His actions and attitude here may explain why she had been unfaithful to him (cf v 28) or may indicate that he had not truly forgiven her. The Ephraimite's daughter was not forced to go out, perhaps the one point of mercy in the entire story. *knew her and abused her*. Rape and likely other acts of violence (cf v 26).

JUDGES—NOTE ON 19:26 *her master*. Her husband, the Levite, who was responsible for her but showed a sinful callousness and lack of courage in abandoning her.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 19:27 *hands on the threshold*. Pathetically reaching out her arms for help.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 19:28 *Get up*. Colder words have rarely been spoken. *no answer*. She was possibly unconscious but most likely had died from the abuse she suffered. *put her on the donkey*. Not an act of kindness but part of a plan (vv 29–30).
JUDGES—NOTE ON 19:29 *divided her*. The Levite, who would have had experience dismembering animal sacrifices, cut up her body in the same way. *sent her*. The 12 pieces were delivered to the 12 tribes of Israel (which would include Benjamin) so that all could see with their own eyes the results of this monstrous, repulsive crime. The writer does not clearly explain the Levite's motives or what message accompanied the packages. Given his callousness toward his concubine and his treatment of her body, he shows no remorse but coldly reports the horror that had taken place. The reader is left to contemplate the meaning of it all and how to respond (cf v 30b).
JUDGES—NOTE ON 19:30 *never happened*. Israelites show a keen sense for history and precedent. Same sorts of things had not taken place since the exodus (perhaps a few generations earlier), though they had happened to Lot's family c 1,000 years earlier (Gn 19:1–11). *consider it, take counsel, and speak*. The deed was unspeakably horrible, and the people realized that something must be done. They could not immediately reach a course of action.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 19:22–30 The violent death of a Levite's concubine illustrates the low point of wickedness during this period in Israel's history. Consider that such horrors happen still today and are even promoted under the guise of sexual or artistic freedom. Lord, have pity! Deliver the Church, Your Bride, from evil. • Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 20:1 *Dan to Beersheba*. From the northernmost settlement in the land of Israel to the southernmost. *Gilead*. Land east of the Jordan that was occupied by Israelites. *as one man*. All of Israel (except, of course, for Benjamin) united against the Benjaminites, in the first such

collective action since the time of Joshua. *Mizpah*. This point of assembly was in the land of Benjamin, not Gilead, as in 10:17. See map, p 451.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 20:2 *chiefs*. Family leaders or elders, who often also served as military leaders. See p 228. *assembly of the people of God*. See "great congregation," p 842. *on foot*. See note, Jsh 11:4.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 20:4–5 The Levite's account is self-serving, since he downplayed his own role in the woman's death. His emphasis on how his own life was at risk may accurately illustrate the fear that motivated his cowardly behavior. Details in 19:22–29 indicate that other witnesses had a chance to report the matter.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 20:6 *abomination*. See note, Pr 3:32. *outrage*. The Levite characterized well the sin of the Benjaminites, but in failing to confess his own sin, he may have stirred up the Israelites to a harsher response than may have been warranted.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 20:9–11 *by lot*. Each tribe had its men cast lots to determine who would fight in the army and who would supply provisions for the campaign. *as one man*. See note, v 1.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 20:13 *give up*. The Benjaminites had already prepared to resist.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 20:14 Organized for formal engagement.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 20:15 *26,000*. Benjamin was one of the smallest tribes. *chosen*. The best.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 20:16 *left-handed*. Because most soldiers held their sword in their right hand and would have trained to fight right-handed combatants, left-handed soldiers were esp treacherous. See note, 3:15. *sling a stone at a hair and not miss*. Vivid description of the Benjaminites' prowess and accuracy with the sling.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 20:18 *Bethel*. Location of the tabernacle. *inquired of God*. Cf v 9; see "call," p 842. *Judah shall go up first*. In the hilly terrain of Benjamin, Israel's advantage in numbers could not be fully exploited against the defenders. Judah was selected to lead the attack against its fellow Israelites, just as it was selected to lead the attack against the Canaanites (1:2). This also foreshadowed the later civil war, in which David with his tribe of Judah fought Saul's tribe of Benjamin (2Sm 3:1).
JUDGES—NOTE ON 20:21 *22,000 men*. Horrible losses. Judah had the "honor" of leading the attack, but, judging from the casualties, the other tribes also took part in the combat.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 20:22–23 *Shall we*. Cf v 18. The great losses shook their confidence.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 20:25 *destroyed 18,000 men*. 40,000 Israelites had been killed in two days, 10 percent of the entire force. Cf vv 17, 21.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 20:26 *Bethel*. Location of the tabernacle. See p 495. *fasted … offerings*. Acts of repentance and atonement.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 20:27 *inquired*. Cf v 9; see "call," p 842.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 20:28 *Phinehas*. The grandson of Aaron, Phinehas was the priest who struck down the leaders of the apostasy at Peor during the exodus (Nu 25:7–8) and who negotiated peace with the Transjordan tribes in the time of Joshua (Jsh 22:10–34). That means this war with Benjamin must have taken place quite early in the period of the judges, even though it is described, out of sequence, at the very end of the Book. (Some Jewish interpreters held that God rewarded Phinehas with immortality because of his faithfulness.) The focus on Benjamin prepares the reader for the events of 1Sm. *I will give them into your hand*. On the first two days, the Israelites fought their "brothers" in a spirit of self-righteousness and confidence. But then the whole army went to the tabernacle at Bethel, where they wept, fasted, and offered sacrifices. Now that the Israelites confessed their own sinfulness and turned to God, He would bless their sad work of executing judgment and, for the first time, promised them victory.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 20:29–32 *ambush*. Not the frontal attacks as on the first two days. This time the Israelites, helped by God, employed strategy. When the allied tribes were driven back by the Benjaminites, as on the other days, they retreated on purpose. This drew the main force of the Benjaminites away from their city, making it vulnerable to the Israelites' second force. *Benjamin went out*. Essentially the same strategy and results employed when the Israelites took the Canaanite city of Ai (Jsh 8:3–28). *highways*. The battle moved along the roads that led out from the city.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 20:33 *Baal-tamar*. Means "possessor of palms," referring to a region not far from Gibeah. This is where the main force was in battle formation. *Maareh-geba*. Means "the plains of Geba," located a few mi northeast of Gibeah (Geba). Troops stationed for the ambush were hiding here. See map, p 451.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 20:35 *the* LORD *defeated*. God punished the Benjaminites by means of the other 11 tribes, fulfilling His promise.

Virtually their entire force was destroyed.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 20:36–43 Parallel account of the battle fills in the details, e.g., the use of signals.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 20:36 *they trusted*. They relied on the ambush they had set up (see note, vv 29–32).
JUDGES—NOTE ON 20:37 *all the city*. The city of God's own apostate people was devoted to total annihilation, as if it were a city of the Canaanites when Joshua led the people to first occupy the land. See "devote to destruction," p 6.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 20:42 *the direction of the wilderness*. Toward the northeast and the desert between Jericho and the mountains of Bethel.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 20:43 *Nohah*. Lit, "resting place." Could be either the proper name of a city or a place where the Benjaminite army had temporarily halted to rest.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 20:45 *rock of Rimmon*. See note, v 47.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 20:46 *25,000 men*. Evidence that the Bible sometimes employs round numbers, since the more precise number is given in v 35 as 25,100.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 20:47 *rock of Rimmon*. Survivors fled to this rock in the desert, located just beyond the border of the settled lands. Such places were esp difficult to attack. See "rock," p 843.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 20:48 *turned back*. The Israelites halted the pursuit of the remnants of the Benjaminite army and turned back to destroy and slaughter everyone throughout the land. It is not clear whether the Lord intended this action or the people planned it. In self-righteous indignation, the Israelites treated their apostate brothers like pagan Canaanites, virtually eradicating them.

JUDGES—NOTE ON **Ch 20** The Levite tells the Israelites about the abomination committed by the Benjaminites, so the shocked tribes, unified for the first time since Joshua's day, resolve to punish their kindred tribe. But only when the Israelites repent and come before God in brokenness, humility, and with blood sacrifices does God save them. He is a God of justice and compassion. • O Lord, we tremble at Your wrath against sin. Forgive us when we condemn the sins of others but do not indict ourselves. We repent in brokenness and weeping. Our only recourse is to cling to the sacrifice of Jesus, whose blood covers all our sin. Amen.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 21:2 *wept bitterly*. After the heat of battle, the enormity of what they had done sank in. To avenge one murder, 40,000 men of Israel died on the battlefield, and a whole tribe of their kinsmen was all but exterminated.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 21:5 *did not come … to Mizpah*. Cf 20:1.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 21:7 *not give them … wives*. In their anger, the 11 tribes had made a rash vow not to allow any intermarriage with the tribe of Benjamin, but this meant that one of the 12 tribes of Israel must face extinction. See note, Nu 30:2.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 21:8 *did not come … to Mizpah*. Cf 20:1. *Jabesh-gilead*. A city c 8 mi E of the Jordan River, in the territory of Manasseh. See color map 1.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 21:10 The Israelites legalistically fulfilled one vow in order to circumvent another. The inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead arguably shared in the guilt of Benjamin for not taking part in the war and for violating the covenant unity of the rest of the tribes, but there is no indication that God commanded this punishment, which can be seen instead as an act of lovelessness.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 21:11 What Moses commanded that the Israelites do to the pagan Midianites (Nu 31:1–18). *devote to destruction*. See p 6. God was not consulted at all in this enterprise.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 21:12 *Shiloh*. Location of the tabernacle.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 21:13 *rock of Rimmon*. See note, 20:47.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 21:15 *compassion*. Again, we see the Israelites' selective morality in having compassion on the tribe of Benjamin, whom they had just nearly exterminated, but no compassion for the city of Jabesh-gilead. *the LORD had made a breach*. God is blamed for the tragedy, though the perpetrators acted mostly on their own initiative.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 21:18 *Cursed*. See note, Gn 12:3.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 21:19 *yearly feast*. Probably the Feast of Booths. See pp 200–201. *highway*. The highland trade route through the central hill country. See color map 1. *Lebonah*. Just off the main highway between Jerusalem and Bethel, at practically the geographic center of Israel.
JUDGES—NOTE ON 21:21 *Shiloh*. Where the tabernacle would periodically be set up and thus a shrine and place of pilgrimage for all of the tribes of Israel. See p 495.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 21:22–23 The fathers would not have violated the vow (v 1) because they did not intentionally "give" their daughters to Benjaminites; the Benjaminites just took them. As in vv 8–12, we see the Israelites' legalistic manipulation of the letter of the law. Ironically, what began as an attempt to punish the rape and murder of one woman ended with the punishers engineering the rape of 600 women and the murder of thousands.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 21:22 *did not take … wife in battle*. Excuses. The fathers need not feel the dishonor of losing their daughters due to defeat in war.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 21:24 *inheritance*. See "portion," p 7.

JUDGES—NOTE ON 21:25 *no king*. See note, 18:1. *right in his own eyes*. See note, 17:6. Lest anyone think this moral chaos is sanctioned by God, Jgs closes with this refrain, stressing the horrific consequences of the lack of social authority and the practice of moral relativism.

JUDGES—NOTE ON **Ch 21** After the carnage against the Benjaminites, the Israelites begin to mourn the near eradication of one of their kindred tribes. They have compassion for the 600 survivors and hope to restore the tribe. So the elders devise a plan to come up with wives for the Benjaminites. These manipulations of morality are a final example of the moral degradation that comes from everyone doing what is right in his own eyes. God pours out His wrath on sinners, but He saves a remnant by His grace. • O Lord, Your Word reveals the depths of my sin, including my misguided attempts at righteousness. Forgive me by the Word of my King, Jesus, who gave His life to rescue me from sin. In His name I pray. Amen.

Ruth

Ruth 1 | Ruth 2 | Ruth 3 | Ruth 4

- Introduction to Ruth
  - Overview
  - Reading Ruth
  - Luther on Ruth
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

Naomi Widowed

1 [1]†† In the days when the judges ruled there was a famine in the land,
and a man of Bethlehem in Judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab,
he and his wife and his two sons. [2]† The name of the man was Elimelech
and the name of his wife Naomi, and the names of his two sons were
Mahlon and Chilion. They were Ephrathites from Bethlehem in Judah. They
went into the country of Moab and remained there. [3]† But Elimelech, the
husband of Naomi, died, and she was left with her two sons. [4]† These took
Moabite wives; the name of the one was Orpah and the name of the other
Ruth. They lived there about ten years, [5]and both Mahlon and Chilion died,
so that the woman was left without her two sons and her husband.

Ruth’s Loyalty to Naomi

6 Then she arose with her daughters-in-law to return from the country
of Moab, for she had heard in the fields of Moab that the Lord had visited
his people and given them food. 7 So she set out from the place where she
was with her two daughters-in-law, and they went on the way to return to
the land of Judah. 8 But Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, “Go,
return each of you to her mother’s house. May the Lord deal kindly with
you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me. 9 The Lord grant that you
may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband!” Then she kissed
them, and they lifted up their voices and wept. 10 And they said to her, “No,
we will return with you to your people.” 11 But Naomi said, “Turn back, my
daughters; why will you go with me? Have I yet sons in my womb that they
may become your husbands? 12 Turn back, my daughters; go your way, for I
am too old to have a husband. If I should say I have hope, even if I should
have a husband this night and should bear sons, 13 would you therefore wait
till they were grown? Would you therefore refrain from marrying? No, my
daughters, for it is exceedingly bitter to me for your sake that the hand of
the Lord has gone out against me.” 14 Then they lifted up their voices and
wept again. And Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her.

15 And she said, “See, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and
to her gods; return after your sister-in-law.” 16 But Ruth said, “Do not urge
me to leave you or to return from following you. For where you go I will
go, and where you lodge I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and
your God my God. 17 Where you die I will die, and there will I be buried.
May the Lord do so to me and more also if anything but death parts me
from you.” 18 And when Naomi saw that she was determined to go with
her, she said no more.

Naomi and Ruth Return

19 ‡†So the two of them went on until they came to Bethlehem. And when
they came to Bethlehem, the whole town was stirred because of them. And
the women said, “Is this Naomi?” 20 ‡†She said to them, “Do not call me
Naomi;[1] call me Mara,[2] for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me.
21 †I went away full, and the Lord has brought me back empty. Why call me
Naomi, when the Lord has testified against me and the Almighty has
brought calamity upon me?”
22 †So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabite her daughter-in-law with
her, who returned from the country of Moab. And they came to Bethlehem
at the beginning of barley harvest.

Ruth Meets Boaz

2 [1]†Now Naomi had a relative of her husband's, a worthy man of the
clan of Elimelech, whose name was Boaz. [2]†And Ruth the Moabite said to
Naomi, "Let me go to the field and glean among the ears of grain after him
in whose sight I shall find favor." And she said to her, "Go, my daughter."
[3]†So she set out and went and gleaned in the field after the reapers, and she
happened to come to the part of the field belonging to Boaz, who was of the
clan of Elimelech. [4]†And behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem. And he said
to the reapers, "The Lord be with you!" And they answered, "The Lord bless
you." [5]†Then Boaz said to his young man who was in charge of the reapers,
"Whose young woman is this?" [6]†And the servant who was in charge of the
reapers answered, "She is the young Moabite woman, who came back with
Naomi from the country of Moab. [7]† She said, 'Please let me glean and
gather among the sheaves after the reapers.' So she came, and she has
continued from early morning until now, except for a short rest."[1]

[8]††Then Boaz said to Ruth, "Now, listen, my daughter, do not go to glean
in another field or leave this one, but keep close to my young women. [9]‡Let
your eyes be on the field that they are reaping, and go after them. Have I
not charged the young men not to touch you? And when you are thirsty, go
to the vessels and drink what the young men have drawn." [10]†Then she fell
on her face, bowing to the ground, and said to him, "Why have I found
favor in your eyes, that you should take notice of me, since I am a
foreigner?" [11]† But Boaz answered her, "All that you have done for your
mother-in-law since the death of your husband has been fully told to me,
and how you left your father and mother and your native land and came to a
people that you did not know before. [12]†The Lord repay you for what you
have done, and a full reward be given you by the Lord, the God of Israel,
under whose wings you have come to take refuge!" [13]† Then she said, "I
have found favor in your eyes, my lord, for you have comforted me and
spoken kindly to your servant, though I am not one of your servants."

[14]†And at mealtime Boaz said to her, "Come here and eat some bread and
dip your morsel in the wine." So she sat beside the reapers, and he passed to

her roasted grain. And she ate until she was satisfied, and she had some left over. 15 † When she rose to glean, Boaz instructed his young men, saying, “Let her glean even among the sheaves, and do not reproach her. 16 † And also pull out some from the bundles for her and leave it for her to glean, and do not rebuke her.”

17 † So she gleaned in the field until evening. Then she beat out what she had gleaned, and it was about an ephah[1] of barley. 18 † And she took it up and went into the city. Her mother-in-law saw what she had gleaned. She also brought out and gave her what food she had left over after being satisfied. 19 † And her mother-in-law said to her, “Where did you glean today? And where have you worked? Blessed be the man who took notice of you.” So she told her mother-in-law with whom she had worked and said, “The man’s name with whom I worked today is Boaz.” 20 † And Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, “May he be blessed by the Lord, whose kindness has not forsaken the living or the dead!” Naomi also said to her, “The man is a close relative of ours, one of our redeemers.” 21 † And Ruth the Moabite said, “Besides, he said to me, ‘You shall keep close by my young men until they have finished all my harvest.’” 22 † And Naomi said to Ruth, her daughter-in-law, “It is good, my daughter, that you go out with his young women, lest in another field you be assaulted.” 23 † So she kept close to the young women of Boaz, gleaning until the end of the barley and wheat harvests. And she lived with her mother-in-law.

Ruth and Boaz at the Threshing Floor

3 [1]†Then Naomi her mother-in-law said to her, “My daughter, should
I not seek rest for you, that it may be well with you? [2]†Is not Boaz our
relative, with whose young women you were? See, he is winnowing barley
tonight at the threshing floor. [3]†Wash therefore and anoint yourself, and put
on your cloak and go down to the threshing floor, but do not make yourself
known to the man until he has finished eating and drinking. [4]†But when he
lies down, observe the place where he lies. Then go and uncover his feet
and lie down, and he will tell you what to do.” [5]†And she replied, “All that
you say I will do.”

[6]So she went down to the threshing floor and did just as her mother-in-
law had commanded her. [7]†And when Boaz had eaten and drunk, and his
heart was merry, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of grain. Then
she came softly and uncovered his feet and lay down. [8]†At midnight the
man was startled and turned over, and behold, a woman lay at his feet! [9]†He
said, “Who are you?” And she answered, “I am Ruth, your servant. Spread
your wings[1] over your servant, for you are a redeemer.” [10]†And he said,
“May you be blessed by the Lord, my daughter. You have made this last
kindness greater than the first in that you have not gone after young men,
whether poor or rich. [11]†And now, my daughter, do not fear. I will do for
you all that you ask, for all my fellow townsmen know that you are a
worthy woman. [12]†And now it is true that I am a redeemer. Yet there is a
redeemer nearer than I. [13]†Remain tonight, and in the morning, if he will
redeem you, good; let him do it. But if he is not willing to redeem you,
then, as the Lord lives, I will redeem you. Lie down until the morning.”

[14]†So she lay at his feet until the morning, but arose before one could
recognize another. And he said, “Let it not be known that the woman came
to the threshing floor.” [15]†And he said, “Bring the garment you are wearing
and hold it out.” So she held it, and he measured out six measures of barley
and put it on her. Then she went into the city. [16]†And when she came to her
mother-in-law, she said, “How did you fare, my daughter?” Then she told
her all that the man had done for her, [17]†saying, “These six measures of

barley he gave to me, for he said to me, ‘You must not go back empty-handed to your mother-in-law.’” [18] † She replied, “Wait, my daughter, until you learn how the matter turns out, for the man will not rest but will settle the matter today.”

Boaz Redeems Ruth

4 [1]‡†Now Boaz had gone up to the gate and sat down there. And behold, the redeemer, of whom Boaz had spoken, came by. So Boaz said, “Turn aside, friend; sit down here.” And he turned aside and sat down. [2]†And he took ten men of the elders of the city and said, “Sit down here.” So they sat down. [3]†Then he said to the redeemer, “Naomi, who has come back from the country of Moab, is selling the parcel of land that belonged to our relative Elimelech. [4]†So I thought I would tell you of it and say, ‘Buy it in the presence of those sitting here and in the presence of the elders of my people.’ If you will redeem it, redeem it. But if you[1] will not, tell me, that I may know, for there is no one besides you to redeem it, and I come after you.” And he said, “I will redeem it.” [5]†Then Boaz said, “The day you buy the field from the hand of Naomi, you also acquire Ruth[2] the Moabite, the widow of the dead, in order to perpetuate the name of the dead in his inheritance.” [6]†Then the redeemer said, “I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I impair my own inheritance. Take my right of redemption yourself, for I cannot redeem it.”

[7]†Now this was the custom in former times in Israel concerning redeeming and exchanging: to confirm a transaction, the one drew off his sandal and gave it to the other, and this was the manner of attesting in Israel. [8]†So when the redeemer said to Boaz, “Buy it for yourself,” he drew off his sandal. [9]†Then Boaz said to the elders and all the people, “You are witnesses this day that I have bought from the hand of Naomi all that belonged to Elimelech and all that belonged to Chilion and to Mahlon. [10]†Also Ruth the Moabite, the widow of Mahlon, I have bought to be my wife, to perpetuate the name of the dead in his inheritance, that the name of the dead may not be cut off from among his brothers and from the gate of his native place. You are witnesses this day.” [11]‡Then all the people who were at the gate and the elders said, “We are witnesses. May the Lord make the woman, who is coming into your house, like Rachel and Leah, who together built up the house of Israel. May you act worthily in Ephrathah and be renowned in Bethlehem, [12]and may your house be like the house of

Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah, because of the offspring that the LORD will give you by this young woman."

Ruth and Boaz Marry

13 ‡†So Boaz took Ruth, and she became his wife. And he went in to her,
and the Lord gave her conception, and she bore a son. 14 ‡†Then the women
said to Naomi, “Blessed be the Lord, who has not left you this day without a
redeemer, and may his name be renowned in Israel! 15 †He shall be to you a
restorer of life and a nourisher of your old age, for your daughter-in-law
who loves you, who is more to you than seven sons, has given birth to
him.” 16 †Then Naomi took the child and laid him on her lap and became his
nurse. 17 †And the women of the neighborhood gave him a name, saying, “A
son has been born to Naomi.” They named him Obed. He was the father of
Jesse, the father of David.

The Genealogy of David

18 ‡ ‡ ‡Now these are the generations of Perez: Perez fathered Hezron,
19 Hezron fathered Ram, Ram fathered Amminadab,
20 †Amminadab fathered Nahshon, Nahshon fathered Salmon,
21 † Salmon fathered Boaz, Boaz fathered Obed,
22 Obed fathered Jesse, and Jesse fathered David.

Ruth

OVERVIEW

Author(s)
Unknown

Date
Written c 1000 BC

Places
Bethlehem in Judah; Moab

People
Ruth; Naomi; Elimelech; Mahlon; Chilion; Orpah; Boaz; unnamed relative; Obed; Jesse; David

Purpose
To show that the Lord demonstrates His faithfulness by providing for Ruth's family a redeemer, who secures their heritage among God's people

Law Themes
The frailty of life; God allows suffering; selfish disregard for family

Gospel Themes
The Lord's kindness; God welcomes the nations by grace; redemption; inheritance; the genealogy of Jesus, the Redeemer

Memory Verses
Ruth's faithfulness (1:16–17); Boaz's blessing (2:11–12); the women's blessing (4:14–15)

Introduction to Ruth

Reading Ruth

A sledge of heavy timbers and black basalt stones rolls and crushes stalks of barley against the bleached, concrete-hard earth. Two boys sit atop the sledge, reining an ox, which casually circles the threshing floor. The unmuzzled ox lowers its head often and licks the floor, drawing up its share of the harvest. To the side, young men rake, scoop, and toss the stubble. As wind blows away the lighter chaff, the men catch the precious grain in their wicker scoops and dump it into clay jars for storage. Women and girls approach, bearing fresh flat bread and goat skins sloshing with wine. Eating, drinking, and dancing with family and neighbors will begin at twilight.

As you read Ruth, consider the bond of families and neighbors who shared the same threshing floors, suffered together through dry years, and celebrated together in the good. The Book of Ruth illustrates for us the frailty and danger of isolation and the life-or-death bond of family.

Luther on Ruth

Ruth, who followed her mother-in-law Naomi, says (Ruth 1:16): “Your people shall be my people, and your God my God.” Although she did not belong to the holy people—for she was a Moabitess—she was nevertheless saved because she clung in faith to the God of Israel. (AE 3:133)

God has always been accustomed to collect a church for Himself even from among the heathen. Thus Ruth was a Moabitess, and Rahab was a Canaanite woman. They are numbered in the genealogy of Christ (Matt. 1:5). Nor were these the only women who attached themselves to the godly, but many other Canaanites did so along with them. Not that Ruth or Rahab partook of the forgiveness of sins because they were on the wrong path. No, they were converted; they received the Word from the Israelites. This means, of course, that a heathen or unbeliever became a believer. For after believing the Word which he heard, he was a member of the church and no longer a heathen. (AE 8:135–36)

This passage is an exposition of the law in Deuteronomy 25 [:5], namely, that if the brother of the deceased man is unwilling, then the next to him in blood kinship should marry her. Besides, Ruth didn’t demand that Boaz marry her. (AE 54:301)

Challenges for Readers

Propaganda for David. The Book of Ruth is clearly written in defense of David's rule. Some critics see this detracting from the Book's credibility.

Boaz's Feet. Some interpreters view the uncovering of Boaz's feet as a polite way to note sexual activity. However, nothing else in the Book agrees with this interpretation, and everywhere the faithfulness and integrity of Ruth and Boaz are emphasized.

Blessings for Readers

The Book of Ruth relates a beautiful story in the history of King David's family, illustrating how God guides history for the sake of His people. He works through suffering and redemption to preserve His people and to welcome the nations. These aspects of the Book point to the birth of Jesus, the world's Redeemer, who descends from Ruth and Boaz.

Though the Book of Ruth is not a love story, it beautifully illustrates the Lord's enduring love for you. As you read Ruth, consider how the Lord calls you to show love and faithfulness to your family and your neighbors, for whom Christ lived and gave His life.

OUTLINE

Ruth: A Drama of Faithfulness

The history of Ruth clearly divides according to its chapters into four acts. Each act may conveniently be divided into two scenes.

Act I The Dilemma

Scene A—Prologue: Tragedy (Famine in Israel; deaths of father and sons in Moab; 1:1–5)

Scene B—Setting: Return (Naomi returns with Ruth but no heir; 1:6–22)

Act II The Hope

Scene A—Acceptance (Boaz welcomes Ruth to his field and to Israel; 2:1–17)

Scene B—Nourishment (Widows are temporarily cared for; 2:18–23)

Act III The Risk

Scene A—Strategy (Naomi proposes daring plan for permanent solution; 3:1–6)

Scene B—Challenge (Ruth challenges Boaz to redemption and marriage; 3:7–18)

Act IV The Solution

Scene A—Climax: Sacrifice (Boaz acts to solve dilemma; 4:1–12)

Scene B—Epilogue: Heir (Fidelity is blessed eventually with descendant King David; 4:13–22)

Footnotes

Footnotes for Ruth, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:20 *Naomi* means *pleasant*
- [2] 1:20 *Mara* means *bitter*

Footnotes for Ruth, Chapter 2

- [1] 2:7 Compare Septuagint, Vulgate; the meaning of the Hebrew phrase is uncertain
- [1] 2:17 An *ephah* was about 3/5 bushel or 22 liters

Footnotes for Ruth, Chapter 3

- [1] 3:9 Compare 2:12; the word for *wings* can also mean *corners of a garment*

Footnotes for Ruth, Chapter 4

- [1] 4:4 Hebrew *he*
- [2] 4:5 Masoretic Text *you also buy it from Ruth*

Study Notes

RUTH—NOTE ON 1:1 *when the judges ruled*. The events took place within an 11-year period during the time of the judges. See pp 338–40. Ruth was likely written during David's reign (c 1009–970 BC). *Bethlehem*. Means "the house of bread"; ironic in a time of famine. *went to sojourn in … Moab*. During a famine, Elimelech led his family to more inviting agricultural prospects. There is nothing wrong in his move to Moab. To escape famine, Abraham went to Egypt, Isaac went to Gerar of the Philistines, and Jacob went to Egypt at God's command (Gn 46:1–7). To avoid Saul's rampage, David hid his parents in Moab (1Sm 22:3–5).

RUTH—NOTE ON 1:2 *Ephrathites*. David was an Ephrathite from Bethlehem (1Sm 17:12).

RUTH—NOTE ON 1:3 *Elimelech*. Lit, "my God is King." The true God and King, the protector of widows (Ps 68:5), will provide for Naomi.

RUTH—NOTE ON 1:4 *These took Moabite wives*. Intermarriage with Moabites was not prohibited as it was with the seven dispossessed peoples of Canaan: Hittites, Girgashites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites (Dt 7:1–3). The Moabites and the Ammonites were the descendants of the incestuous union of Lot with his daughters (Gn 19:36–38). Moabites were not to enter the assembly of worshipers "even to the tenth generation" (Dt 23:3; Ne 13:1). *Ruth*. Tradition has linked "Ruth" with the Hbr word for "friend."

RUTH—NOTE ON 1:1–5 Elimelech and his sons struggle during a famine and move to Moab to preserve their family. You, too, may struggle against unexpected changes in the economy or in your family. God gives you freedom in making family and business decisions, but He also gives you the blessings and guidance of His Holy Word. Whether you are prospering or struggling, look to the Word, wherein lies wisdom for this life and the promise of eternal life through Jesus. • Make my heart, Lord Jesus, captive to Your Word, which guides my family, my work, and my future. Amen.

RUTH—NOTE ON 1:6 *the Lord had visited His people*. God's people see His providence in everything. God had remembered to give food, particularly to Bethlehem, "the house of bread."

RUTH—NOTE ON 1:7 *to return to the land of Judah*. As God provides sustenance for their livelihood, He will provide for Naomi's future as well. Formerly, when Israelites left the Promised Land (e.g., Abraham and Isaac), they returned because of God's promises. Ultimately, God's promises regarding the land are fulfilled in Jesus, who gives all believers an eternal inheritance, "a better country, that is, a heavenly one" (Heb 11:13–16).
RUTH—NOTE ON 1:8 *May the* LORD *deal kindly with you*. Formula used in two other OT contexts (2Sm 2:6; 15:20). Naomi uses the personal name Yahweh, which refers to God's involvement in human affairs. *kindly*. Hbr *chesed*, which may be translated "in faithfulness." The theme of faithfulness or kindness is central to the story and its application (cf 3:10). See "steadfast love," p 843. In showing kindness, the Lord's ultimate aim is that His people repent and turn to Him.
RUTH—NOTE ON 1:9 *rest*. Humanly speaking, opportunity for this was bleak.
RUTH—NOTE ON 1:10 *we will return with you*. The faith of Naomi and her sons inspired her foreign daughters-in-law to have faith in the God of Israel.
RUTH—NOTE ON 1:11–12 *Have I yet sons in my womb*. Hyperbole. Naomi was referring to levirate marriage (Lat *levir*, "brother-in-law"). Elimelech's brother would be legally obligated to marry Naomi to perpetuate Elimelech's name and posterity (vv 12–13). Naomi ironically described a legal and logical possibility that would never be fulfilled: following Dt 25:5–6, Naomi's brother-in-law would marry her so that she could give birth to sons, who in due time would marry the two older widows Ruth and Orpah.
RUTH—NOTE ON 1:13 *exceedingly bitter to me for your sake*. Or, "much more bitter for me than for you." Cf v 20. *the hand of the* LORD *has gone out against me*. Naomi affirmed God's participation in the events. Her statement is a confession of faith and sorrowful resolve much like Job's (Jb 1:21).
RUTH—NOTE ON 1:14 *Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her*. Naomi's words convinced Orpah to seek security through her own efforts. Ruth was willing to face a life of poverty, lack of marriage, childlessness, and prejudice in Israel. She could not live without Naomi and the God of Israel, even if she was to be treated as a second-class citizen in the Promised Land.

RUTH—NOTE ON 1:15 *her gods*. Orpah had believed and worshiped as her husband did. She now renounced her faith in the God of Israel, thinking she could better care for herself than could the Lord.

RUTH—NOTE ON 1:16–17 Poetry. Note the structure:

A *Do not urge me to leave.*	Plea against separation.
B *For where you go I will go.*	Promise of family loyalty.
C *Your people shall be my people, and your God my God.*	Confession of faith.
B′ *Where you die I will die.*	Promise of family loyalty.
A′ *If anything but death parts me from you.*	Oath against separation.

RUTH—NOTE ON 1:17 *May the LORD do so to me*. Common oath formula calling the Lord as witness (1Sm 14:44; 2Ki 6:31). See "oath," p 7.

RUTH—NOTE ON 1:18 Much like a present-day confirmand, Ruth satisfactorily confessed her faith in the Lord. Observing the faithfulness of Elimelech, Naomi, and Mahlon to the Lord and His covenant, Ruth was drawn to the God of Israel, forsaking her gods and people.

RUTH—NOTE ON 1:6–18 Ruth refuses to stay in Moab when Naomi determines to go back to Bethlehem, even though her sister-in-law stays in Moab. Ruth boldly confesses her faith in the Lord and her commitment to her family. What an incredible example of godly priorities: the Lord and family come first! • Thanks be to God that He put us first and made us family through the suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus, who crossed heaven and earth to save us. Amen.

RUTH—NOTE ON 1:19 *the whole town was stirred*. More than 10 years had passed since Naomi had left in far better circumstances than when she returned (v 4).

RUTH—NOTE ON 1:20–21 Some scholars regard these verses as poetry.

RUTH—NOTE ON 1:20 Naomi is ashamed to return to Bethlehem without husband or sons. This shame is multiplied, for she knows she will remain childless, unable to provide sons for her daughters-in-law. *the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me*. Or, "has made me very bitter." Naomi compares her experience in Moab to the Israelites' bitter slavery in Egypt.

RUTH—NOTE ON 1:21 *testified against me*. As with Job, there is no sin charged against Naomi in all her actions. At times, it appears that God is

hidden and uncaring in a believer's suffering (Is 45:15). But God is surely present to bring relief in His time.

RUTH—NOTE ON 1:22 *barley harvest*. Mar/Apr. Spring rains had passed. See calendar, p 262.

RUTH—NOTE ON 1:19–22 Naomi confesses the bitterness she feels on returning to Bethlehem without her husband and sons. Yet Ruth is with her still. Like Naomi, Christians today seek to do their best when caring for loved ones. Intermittent times of suffering are used by God to humble us. In due time, God raises us up to see His mercy and to care more dearly. • Lord Jesus, when You act in ways we do not understand, direct us to our Baptism. There, You bound Yourself to us in forgiveness and love so that, like Naomi and Ruth, we will see Your deliverance in Your time. Amen.

RUTH—NOTE ON 2:1 *worthy*. Lit, "a mighty man of valor." Boaz's social, legal, and economic status in the town was well respected. This expression commonly describes a seasoned warrior. See note, Jsh 1:14. Boaz was a "worthy man" before the Lord, as his forthcoming behavior makes apparent. These words imply that Naomi knew Boaz before departing for Moab.

RUTH—NOTE ON 2:2 Ruth was careful to seek the most favorable opportunity for gleaning (Lv 19:9; 23:22). But even this was a challenge because she was a Moabite.

RUTH—NOTE ON 2:3 *she happened*. "The heart of a man plans his way, but the LORD establishes his steps" (Pr 16:9). *field belonging to Boaz*. Beginning with fields owned by others, Ruth comes to Boaz's field.

RUTH—NOTE ON 2:4 *The LORD be with you! … The LORD bless you*. Typical expressions of greeting and blessing still used today. They underscore the reality of the Lord's commitment to Israel when He says, "I am with you." This speaks of the Lord's fidelity toward those who fear Him (Ps 130:3–4). The angel Gabriel used the same words to proclaim the Lord's fidelity to the Virgin Mary (Lk 1:28). See "be with," p 5.

RUTH—NOTE ON 2:5 *Whose young woman is this?* As a good businessman, Boaz inspected his fields. Boaz did not ask "who" Ruth was. Boaz asked under "whose" authority or family this woman found her identity. See pp 54–55.

RUTH—NOTE ON 2:6 *Moabite woman*. Six times Ruth is called a Moabite (1:4; 2:2, 6, 21; 4:5, 10). This underscores that she is a foreigner who, hearing God's Word through Naomi and her family, willingly came in

faith to the land of the God of Israel. *with Naomi*. Ruth is under the authority of Naomi, within the family of Elimelech, a kinsman of Boaz.
RUTH—NOTE ON 2:7 Ruth worked hard at her task to the glory of God (cf 1Co 10:31).
RUTH—NOTE ON 2:8–9 As a young, attractive single woman, or as a foreigner whose presence might bring residual ethnic prejudice from the Israelites, Ruth was protected by Boaz's word. Boaz would keep a protective eye on Ruth.
RUTH—NOTE ON 2:8 *my daughter*. Naomi addressed Ruth in this language as well (2:2, 22; 3:1, 16), suggesting that she and Boaz were roughly the same age. *my young women*. After the menservants cut the grain stalks, the young women gathered it into sheaves (bundles) to be brought to the threshing floor. Ruth was to follow behind the young women—ahead of the other aliens, widows, and poor—to have first opportunity to collect the best and most abundant gleanings without fear of rough treatment from the hired help.
RUTH—NOTE ON 2:9–10 *drink … foreigner*. Though a foreigner, Ruth would not have to draw water for Israelites (Dt 29:10–11; Jsh 9:21–27); though a woman, she would not have to draw water for men (Gn 24:11–18; Jn 4:7–9). Now she would drink water drawn by Israelite men.
RUTH—NOTE ON 2:10 *she fell … to the ground*. Boaz was possibly the first person to show kindness to Ruth since she arrived in Bethlehem. *Why have I found favor in your eyes*. Ruth knew she had been found by Boaz, in whose sight she wanted to find favor (v 2). See "favor," p 6.
RUTH—NOTE ON 2:11 Till now, Boaz knew Ruth only by reputation. With his own eyes, Boaz now sees the righteousness of Ruth's actions. *you left*. Ruth was the antitheses of Orpah. Ruth's sacrifice of leaving family and country could have reminded Boaz of Abraham and Sarah's earlier pilgrimage (Gn 12:1–5) to the Promised Land.
RUTH—NOTE ON 2:12 The blessing pronounced by Boaz pointed ahead to the shed blood of Jesus Christ on Mount Calvary for the forgiveness of the sins of the world. This blessing reaches its most poetic expression when Jesus proclaims His redemptive love for Jerusalem (Mt 23:37–39). *The LORD repay you for what you have done*. "Faith must be the mother and source of works that are truly good and well pleasing to God, which God will reward in this world and in the world to come. This is why St. Paul calls them true fruit of faith, also fruit of the Spirit [Galatians 5:22–23]" (FC SD IV 9).

under whose wings. On the cherubim as God's "wings," see notes, Ps 80:1; 99:1.

RUTH—NOTE ON 2:13 *I have found favor*. After suffering, Ruth is now the beneficiary of the Lord's mercy through Boaz's kindness. See "favor," p 6. *kindly … though I am not one of your servants*. Because she is not an Israelite, she has no legal standing in Israel.

RUTH—NOTE ON 2:14 Boaz invites a destitute foreigner who was doing the menial work of gleaning to eat with him and his reapers. Boaz serves Ruth a meal with his own hands. This is a tremendous rise in status for Ruth. *wine*. Or, sour vinegar made from wine. *she had some left over*. Boaz's generosity overflows.

RUTH—NOTE ON 2:15 *Let her glean even among the sheaves*. Gleaners typically followed the young women who bundled together stalks and ears of cut cereal grass into a sheaf. Now Ruth gleans before the young women bundled the sheaves.

RUTH—NOTE ON 2:16 *bundles for her … to glean*. Boaz's generosity far exceeds the requirements prescribed in the Law for the poor (Lv 19:9; Dt 24:19). Such acts show that Boaz has a particular interest in Ruth.

RUTH—NOTE ON 2:17 *she gleaned in the field until evening*. Though her work was manifestly easier and more productive, she did not become presumptuous and slack in her labors. *beat out*. See "Reading Ruth," p 422. *an ephah of barley*. C 29 lbs, an astonishing amount gleaned in one day's labor.

RUTH—NOTE ON 2:18 *city*. Typical translation of the Hbr term, though it may describe a walled town of small size, such as Bethlehem.

RUTH—NOTE ON 2:19 *with whom I worked…. Boaz*. Ruth makes it sound as though she was working for Boaz. She recognizes that he treated her as a member of his clan, but she is not affected by this. Throughout, Boaz hints at things that Ruth has yet to comprehend!

RUTH—NOTE ON 2:20 *redeemers*. Hbr *go'el*. A redeemer's responsibilities included the following.: "First, buying back the estate of a deceased relative (Lev 25:24–30; Jer 32:6–15); second, buying back an impoverished relative who had to sell himself into slavery (Lev 25:47–53); third, receiving restitution for a crime whose victim was deceased (Num 5:8); and fourth, avenging the willful, non-accidental killing of his relative by executing the murderer, for whom there was no ransom (Num 35:11–12, 16–21, 31–32; Deut 19:11–12), although this fourth practice was probably

replaced by due procedures in criminal courts during the monarchy. Fifth, as implied in non-legal literature, the redeemer evidently also had the customary duty to assist the relative in a lawsuit" (CC Ru, p 38). Cf Jb 19:25; Ps 119:154; Pr 23:11; Jer 50:34; Lm 3:58.

RUTH—NOTE ON 2:21 Boaz's men would also now keep a protective eye on Ruth.

RUTH—NOTE ON 2:22 *young women*. Workers for Boaz. *assaulted*. As a young, single foreign woman, Ruth would be open to simmering verbal prejudice or worse.

RUTH—NOTE ON 2:23 *she lived with her mother-in-law*. Though times were improving, Ruth was still faithful to her mother-in-law in accord to the vow she made in 1:16–17.

RUTH—NOTE ON **Ch 2** The Lord brings Ruth and Boaz together in mutual honor. We see a wonderful reversal in the fortunes of Ruth and Naomi. In times of darkness and suffering today, we may doubt God's Father-heart toward us. Yet God promises that He works all things for our good (Rm 8:28–39). • Dear Jesus, by Your Holy Spirit, open the eyes of our hearts so that we may see You caring for us through those around us. Amen.

RUTH—NOTE ON 3:1 *seek rest for you*. Naomi plays the matchmaker seeking a husband for her daughter-in-law. Arranged marriages were common in Israel (Gn 24; Jgs 14:1–10). See pp 54–55.

RUTH—NOTE ON 3:2 *winnowing*. See note, Ps 1:4. *threshing floor*. Located on a hilltop, c 30 ft in diameter with a compacted clay or rock surface. See pp 422–23.

RUTH—NOTE ON 3:3 *Wash … anoint … put on*. Ruth prepared herself as a bride does for her husband with washing, anointing (olive oil, perhaps with perfume), and special attire. *cloak*. Concealed her identity. *until he has finished eating and drinking*. As is commonly said, "The way to a man's heart is through his stomach."

RUTH—NOTE ON 3:4 *observe the place where he lies*. No amount of darkness could hide the embarrassment associated with approaching the wrong man! *uncover his feet*. The night's chill would waken Boaz. In light of v 9, the uncovering of Boaz's feet symbolized Ruth's proposal for marriage. See "Boaz's Feet," p 422.

RUTH—NOTE ON 3:5–6 Ruth was faithful to her vow in 1:16–17.

RUTH—NOTE ON 3:7 *his heart was merry*. Taken in moderation, wine is a gift of God that gladdens the heart (Ps 104:15). Boaz was a righteous

man; therefore, it would be wrong to infer that he was drunk. He was content from a good meal and with knowledge of a bountiful crop.
RUTH—NOTE ON 3:8 *startled*. Out of a deep sleep. *a woman lay at his feet!* Women would not be staying at the threshing floor.
RUTH—NOTE ON 3:9 *your servant*. Earlier, Boaz treated her as a member of his familial clan (2:19). *wings*. Hbr *kanaph*, the outer garment that ancient men wrapped about themselves in the day and used as a blanket at night. A wife finds rest under the protective wing of her husband, just as Israel finds rest under the protective wing of Yahweh (2:12; see pp 212–13). Paul compares the relationship of Christ to the Church as a husband to his bride (Eph 5:25). Naomi's gamble was that Boaz would be favorably impressed by Ruth's loyalty and would agree to her marriage request.
RUTH—NOTE ON 3:10 *blessed*. Similar to the greeting in 2:4; Boaz underscores the reality of the Lord's commitment to Ruth. See p 842. *kindness*. See "steadfast love," p 843. By now, Ruth's virtue was known throughout Bethlehem. She could have married for love or for money, but she married for the sake of family loyalty. Though Ruth could have approached a young man her own age, she approaches Boaz, who is approximately the same age as Naomi. This is more evidence of the virtue of this woman. She thinks not of herself, but of Naomi, redeeming the property, and providing an heir for the family. All that Ruth does is motivated by fidelity to the Lord and His covenant. Boaz implies that he, too, trusts in Yahweh and sees His hand in all that Ruth does.
RUTH—NOTE ON 3:11 *I will do for you all that you ask*. Boaz agrees to marry Ruth. *worthy*. See note, 2:11.
RUTH—NOTE ON 3:12 *nearer than I*. Boaz cannot act alone, according to the Law (Lv 25:25). Like Ruth, Boaz modeled fidelity to the Lord and His covenant.
RUTH—NOTE ON 3:13 *Remain*. It would not be safe to be out late at night, esp for a young woman. Additionally, if she were seen, it would raise many questions. There is no reason to assume that Ruth or Boaz went beyond what Naomi said in vv 1–4, by engaging in sex. *as the Lord lives*. Boaz willingly subjects himself to divine punishment should he not keep his word to Ruth. See "vow," p 7. *redeem*. Boaz was going to redeem the situation much like today when a person says he will redeem the time. Out of fidelity to the God of Israel and His covenant, Boaz was going beyond the letter of the Law (Lv 19:18; Mt 22:39; Rm 13:9–10). He was going to

live by the spirit of the Law. He would provide the economic means in case the primary redeemer would not. He was also consenting to Ruth's desire to mother an heir to perpetuate the names of Elimelech and Mahlon.

RUTH—NOTE ON 3:14 *Let it not be known*. Scandalous rumors would have been exceedingly harmful, making it difficult for Boaz to pursue Naomi's and Ruth's claims to the family estate.

RUTH—NOTE ON 3:15 *garment*. Ruth had frequently returned from Boaz's field in the evenings laden with grain; carrying grain in her garment would disguise it from curious eyes. She worked long hours to ward off poverty; carrying grain would quiet, not raise, suspicion about her activity. *six measures*. A generous gift.

RUTH—NOTE ON 3:16 Most likely, Naomi slept little that night. *daughter*. A tone of loving-kindness, but it also reflects how Naomi now viewed Ruth—as her daughter.

RUTH—NOTE ON 3:17 Through Boaz, the Lord was now reversing the "bitterness/Mara" of earlier days (1:20–21). Naomi returned from Moab empty. The full measure of grain would fill their bellies and anticipates, in due course, seed to fill Ruth's womb.

RUTH—NOTE ON 3:18 *Wait*. Ruth was not to worry. Naomi's plan for Ruth to find rest under the loving headship of a husband would soon be fulfilled.

RUTH—NOTE ON **Ch 3** Naomi acts in faith and hope as she sends Ruth to Boaz as a potential redeemer. These women do not simply take matters into their own hands. Their actions are based on the promises in God's Word, which sets a marvelous example for us. We can always approach our Redeemer, Jesus. • Lord Jesus, through Your Gospel promises, work in us so that we follow the example of Naomi, Ruth, Boaz, and our father-in-faith Abraham, who waited patiently and received what was promised (Heb 6:15). Amen.

RUTH—NOTE ON 4:1 *up to the gate*. See p 792. *friend*. The relative's name is not included in the story so as not to shame his family.

RUTH—NOTE ON 4:2 *ten … elders*. A quorum to judge and settle the case. Participants and even passersby could freely discuss the matter until a decision was reached, based on consensus and common sense (vv 9–12). See p 792.

RUTH—NOTE ON 4:3 *is selling*. Or, "has sold." The Hbr verb is in the perfect tense, a straightforward way of saying the land had already been

sold. Wives could act in business matters. See notes, Pr 31:10–31; 31:16; see also the covenant oath in Dt 29:10–13. Before leaving for Moab 11 years earlier, Elimelech sold the rights to the harvests on his land (see note, v 5). This is why Naomi returned to Bethlehem penniless and dependent on Ruth's gleanings from a generous kinsman. Naomi is now asking that the redeemer purchase back the use of the land. (See note, 2:20, the first responsibility.)

RUTH—NOTE ON 4:4 With such direct speech, Boaz rebukes the man for his unfaithfulness to the Lord and His covenant when he did not purchase the rights 11 years ago to keep the land from being sold outside the family (2:20). Those assembled show no surprise at Boaz's direct words, because they understood the man's responsibility, which he had not fulfilled. Boaz announced his plans, contingent on those of the primary redeemer.

RUTH—NOTE ON 4:5 *The day you buy the field*. Israelites could not literally sell their inheritance; land could only be leased (Lv 25:23–28; Nu 36:7). They owned the harvests, not the land itself. *you also acquire Ruth*. Or, "I will also acquire Ruth." In other words, "the day you redeem the land, I will marry Ruth as she and I agreed to earlier" (cf 3:10–13). The Hbr has historically presented some difficulty for translators (e.g., ESV note). Since the primary redeemer was not a brother of Elimelech, there is no biblical basis for the primary redeemer to enter into a levirate marriage (see note, 1:11). Additionally, levirate marriages were pursued with Israelite widows, not with foreigners. Ruth was not yet considered an Israelite, as her marriage with Mahlon had not been in the land of Israel (see note, vv 11–12). Neither the primary redeemer nor townspeople knew Boaz and Ruth planned to marry (3:13).

RUTH—NOTE ON 4:6 *impair my own inheritance*. When Boaz and Ruth had a son, the boy would perpetuate the name of his mother's first husband and stand as heir to his property, though the boy would physically be the son of Boaz the redeemer. The primary redeemer's family would ultimately lose the property rights to the boy. *Take my right of redemption*. Technically, the transaction is not one of redemption, for no exchange of goods occurred. Rather, it is the transfer of the right of redemption (see note, v 5). *I cannot redeem it*. The heart of the primary redeemer was not willing to do the sacrificial labor that would benefit Ruth and Naomi, relatives outside his immediate family.

RUTH—NOTE ON 4:7 *custom in former times*. Implies that the events were not familiar to the reader and that the writing occurred later. In earlier times, transfer of property occurred when the seller lifted up his foot from the property and placed the buyer's foot on it. To "set foot" on the land was associated with ownership (Dt 1:36; 11:24; Jsh 1:3; 14:9). *drew off his sandal*. The custom had changed. A sandal was removed and handed to the other, which symbolized the legal transaction.
RUTH—NOTE ON 4:8 *drew off his sandal*. See note, v 7. The primary redeemer gave Boaz the right to step onto the property. Such public symbolism was important testimony in a society that did not keep day-to-day legal records, as happened in later times. The primary redeemer publicly renounced his claim on the harvests from the land.
RUTH—NOTE ON 4:9 *You are witnesses this day*. The 10 elders (see note, v 2) could testify later, in case a dispute arose. The transaction, witnessed by all, was the equivalent of a notary or a judge's ruling.
RUTH—NOTE ON 4:10 *bought*. Or, "acquired." Boaz had assumed the right of redemption. Secondarily, in marrying Ruth, he would acquire the responsibility to raise up an heir. This placed Boaz at a financial disadvantage, but it secured the future for Ruth and Naomi. Boaz would benefit from the harvests until either the Year of Jubilee, when all land was returned to the original owners (Lv 25:8–13), or until an heir was born from Ruth's womb. The field was large enough to provide sustenance in normal (not famine) conditions.
RUTH—NOTE ON 4:11–12 Poetic. *May the LORD make the woman … like Rachel and Leah*. The elders regarded Ruth legally as an Israelite. Rachel and Leah were Arameans (Gn 30:14–15; 31:19–20). *Tamar*. Probably a Canaanite (Gn 38:2, 6, 14–18, 26). These foreign women gave birth to the descendants of Israel, and Judah in particular. *young woman*. She was of childbearing years. The drama comes full circle with words Boaz first used to describe Ruth (2:5). The man who inquired earlier about this young woman would take her home as his wife.
RUTH—NOTE ON 4:1–12 Boaz acts boldly on behalf of Naomi and Ruth to secure their future and family inheritance. Today, God calls us to act with wisdom on behalf of the helpless, to perpetuate their life and share with them the inheritance of eternal life in His name. Jesus bears witness that He has and will act as the Redeemer of us all. • Jesus, my inheritance is

rich from You! Give me a bold heart to share what I have received from Your Word and blessings. Amen.

RUTH—NOTE ON 4:13 *became his wife*. In light of the culture, it is reasonable to assume Boaz was a family man, and so Ruth would become his second wife. *conception*. The Lord creates us in our mothers' wombs (Ps 139:13) as full human beings from the moment of conception.

RUTH—NOTE ON 4:14–15 Some scholars regard these verses as poetry. Naomi, who once felt shame (1:19–21), is now exalted at the birth of her grandson.

RUTH—NOTE ON 4:14 *women*. They wished to bless Naomi and Ruth, asking that Ruth's son become famous in all Israel. *Blessed be the* LORD, *who has not left you*. See p 842. The faithfulness of Boaz, Ruth, and Naomi to the Lord's covenant brought the praise of the villagers.

RUTH—NOTE ON 4:15 *more to you than seven sons*. Ruth's faithfulness multiplies blessings for others. Regarding Ruth, Naomi might say, "The LORD takes pleasure in those who fear Him, in those who hope in His steadfast love" (Ps 147:11).

RUTH—NOTE ON 4:16 *nurse*. Naomi did not serve as a wet nurse to the child but cared for him as a grandmother.

RUTH—NOTE ON 4:17 *women … gave him a name*. This passage and 1Sm 1:20 suggest that women gave children their names (cf Lk 1:57–63). *Obed*. "One who serves." He was going to care for the earthly needs of his mother and grandmother. *the father of Jesse, the father of David*. Obed is the grandfather of King David. There is the nuance in Obed's name that he is also the servant of Yahweh. Ruth and Obed are ancestors of King David and of Christ Jesus.

RUTH—NOTE ON 4:13–17 The Lord blesses Boaz and Ruth with marriage and with a child; Naomi's friends celebrate His merciful redemption. As the Lord blesses you, let others know of His kindness so that they may celebrate with you. He restores your life and guarantees your future through the blessings of His beloved Son. • Bless me, O Lord, that I may not fail to bless Your name before others and lead them in celebration of Your bountiful goodness. Amen.

RUTH—NOTE ON 4:18–22 This genealogy is not complete, nor was it meant to be. See p 9. Two other 10-generation lists are found in Genesis: Adam to Noah (5:1–29) and Shem to Abraham (11:10–26). Both lists end with a new beginning and hope.

RUTH—NOTE ON 4:18 *generations*. See p 9.
RUTH—NOTE ON 4:20 *Nahshon*. Brother-in-law of Aaron. Emerged as a tribal leader in Israel, helping Moses conduct the census of Israel in the wilderness. When Israel dedicated the temple, Nahshon was the first leader to do so (Nu 7:12, 17).
RUTH—NOTE ON 4:21 Boaz is the seventh ancestor named. Ancient genealogies reserved the seventh spot as a place of special honor and importance.
RUTH—NOTE ON 4:18–22 The Book of Ruth ends with a summary of the genealogy of King David. The drama of God's mercy has come full circle. Those seemingly abandoned by God now see His mighty arm of covenant blessing reaching out to them. • Lord God, Your faithfulness and covenant to us were seen when You did not spare Your Son, Jesus, for the forgiveness of our sins. May Your Spirit work in our hearts a desire for faithfulness to Jesus Christ and the new covenant He made for us in the Sacrament of the Altar, wherein we receive Jesus' body and blood for forgiveness and peace. Amen.

1 Samuel

1 Samuel 1 | 1 Samuel 2 | 1 Samuel 3 | 1 Samuel 4 | 1 Samuel 5 | 1 Samuel 6 | 1 Samuel 7 | 1 Samuel 8 | 1 Samuel 9 | 1 Samuel 10 | 1 Samuel 11 | 1 Samuel 12 | 1 Samuel 13 | 1 Samuel 14 | 1 Samuel 15 | 1 Samuel 16 | 1 Samuel 17 | 1 Samuel 18 | 1 Samuel 19 | 1 Samuel 20 | 1 Samuel 21 | 1 Samuel 22 | 1 Samuel 23 | 1 Samuel 24 | 1 Samuel 25 | 1 Samuel 26 | 1 Samuel 27 | 1 Samuel 28 | 1 Samuel 29 | 1 Samuel 30 | 1 Samuel 31

- Introduction to 1 Samuel
  - Overview
  - Reading 1 and 2 Samuel
  - Luther on 1 and 2 Samuel
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

The Birth of Samuel

1 [1] ‡ † There was a certain man of Ramathaim-zophim of the hill
country of Ephraim whose name was Elkanah the son of Jeroham, son of
Elihu, son of Tohu, son of Zuph, an Ephrathite. [2] † He had two wives. The
name of the one was Hannah, and the name of the other, Peninnah. And
Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children.

[3] † Now this man used to go up year by year from his city to worship and
to sacrifice to the Lord of hosts at Shiloh, where the two sons of Eli, Hophni
and Phinehas, were priests of the Lord. [4] ‡ † On the day when Elkanah
sacrificed, he would give portions to Peninnah his wife and to all her sons
and daughters. [5] † But to Hannah he gave a double portion, because he loved
her, though the Lord had closed her womb.[1] [6] † And her rival used to
provoke her grievously to irritate her, because the Lord had closed her
womb. [7] So it went on year by year. As often as she went up to the house of
the Lord, she used to provoke her. Therefore Hannah wept and would not
eat. [8] † And Elkanah, her husband, said to her, “Hannah, why do you weep?
And why do you not eat? And why is your heart sad? Am I not more to you
than ten sons?”

[9] † After they had eaten and drunk in Shiloh, Hannah rose. Now Eli the
priest was sitting on the seat beside the doorpost of the temple of the Lord.
[10] She was deeply distressed and prayed to the Lord and wept bitterly. [11] † And
she vowed a vow and said, “O Lord of hosts, if you will indeed look on the
affliction of your servant and remember me and not forget your servant, but
will give to your servant a son, then I will give him to the Lord all the days
of his life, and no razor shall touch his head.”

[12] As she continued praying before the Lord, Eli observed her mouth.
[13] † Hannah was speaking in her heart; only her lips moved, and her voice
was not heard. Therefore Eli took her to be a drunken woman. [14] And Eli
said to her, “How long will you go on being drunk? Put your wine away
from you.” [15] † But Hannah answered, “No, my lord, I am a woman troubled
in spirit. I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but I have been
pouring out my soul before the Lord. [16] Do not regard your servant as a

worthless woman, for all along I have been speaking out of my great anxiety and vexation.” [17]†Then Eli answered, “Go in peace, and the God of Israel grant your petition that you have made to him.” [18]†And she said, “Let your servant find favor in your eyes.” Then the woman went her way and ate, and her face was no longer sad.

[19]†They rose early in the morning and worshiped before the Lord; then they went back to their house at Ramah. And Elkanah knew Hannah his wife, and the Lord remembered her. [20]†And in due time Hannah conceived and bore a son, and she called his name Samuel, for she said, “I have asked for him from the Lord.”[1]

Samuel Given to the LORD

21 ‡ † The man Elkanah and all his house went up to offer to the Lord the
yearly sacrifice and to pay his vow. 22 † But Hannah did not go up, for she
said to her husband, “As soon as the child is weaned, I will bring him, so
that he may appear in the presence of the Lord and dwell there forever.”
23 † Elkanah her husband said to her, “Do what seems best to you; wait until
you have weaned him; only, may the Lord establish his word.” So the
woman remained and nursed her son until she weaned him. 24 † And when
she had weaned him, she took him up with her, along with a three-year-old
bull,[2] an ephah[3] of flour, and a skin of wine, and she brought him to the
house of the Lord at Shiloh. And the child was young. 25 Then they
slaughtered the bull, and they brought the child to Eli. 26 And she said, “Oh,
my lord! As you live, my lord, I am the woman who was standing here in
your presence, praying to the Lord. 27 For this child I prayed, and the Lord
has granted me my petition that I made to him. 28 † Therefore I have lent him
to the Lord. As long as he lives, he is lent to the Lord.”

And he worshiped the Lord there.

Hannah's Prayer

2 1 ‡‡‡And Hannah prayed and said,

"My heart exults in the Lord;
my strength[4] is exalted in the Lord.
My mouth derides my enemies,
because I rejoice in your salvation.

2 "There is none holy like the Lord;
there is none besides you;
there is no rock like our God.
3 ‡ Talk no more so very proudly,
let not arrogance come from your mouth;
for the Lord is a God of knowledge,
and by him actions are weighed.
4 The bows of the mighty are broken,
but the feeble bind on strength.
5 Those who were full have hired themselves
out for bread,
but those who were hungry have ceased to
hunger.
The barren has borne seven,
but she who has many children is forlorn.
6 ‡ The Lord kills and brings to life;
he brings down to Sheol and raises up.
7 The Lord makes poor and makes rich;
he brings low and he exalts.
8 ‡ He raises up the poor from the dust;
he lifts the needy from the ash heap
to make them sit with princes
and inherit a seat of honor.
For the pillars of the earth are the Lord's,
and on them he has set the world.

9 † “He will guard the feet of his faithful ones,
but the wicked shall be cut off in
darkness,
for not by might shall a man prevail.
10 † The adversaries of the Lord shall be broken
to pieces;
against them he will thunder in heaven.
The Lord will judge the ends of the earth;
he will give strength to his king
and exalt the power[1] of his anointed.”

11 † Then Elkanah went home to Ramah. And the boy ministered to the Lord in the presence of Eli the priest.

Eli’s Worthless Sons

12 Now the sons of Eli were worthless men. They did not know the Lord. 13 The custom of the priests with the people was that when any man
offered sacrifice, the priest’s servant[2] would come, while the meat was
boiling, with a three-pronged fork in his hand, 14 and he would thrust it into
the pan or kettle or cauldron or pot. All that the fork brought up the priest
would take for himself. This is what they did at Shiloh to all the Israelites
who came there. 15 Moreover, before the fat was burned, the priest’s servant
would come and say to the man who was sacrificing, “Give meat for the
priest to roast, for he will not accept boiled meat from you but only raw.”
16 And if the man said to him, “Let them burn the fat first, and then take as
much as you wish,” he would say, “No, you must give it now, and if not, I
will take it by force.” 17 Thus the sin of the young men was very great in
the sight of the Lord, for the men treated the offering of the Lord with
contempt.

18 Samuel was ministering before the Lord, a boy clothed with a linen
ephod. 19 And his mother used to make for him a little robe and take it to
him each year when she went up with her husband to offer the yearly
sacrifice. 20 Then Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife, and say, “May the
Lord give you children by this woman for the petition she asked of the
Lord.” So then they would return to their home.

21 Indeed the Lord visited Hannah, and she conceived and bore three sons
and two daughters. And the young man Samuel grew in the presence of the
Lord.

Eli Rebukes His Sons

22 Now Eli was very old, and he kept hearing all that his sons were
doing to all Israel, and how they lay with the women who were serving at
the entrance to the tent of meeting. 23 And he said to them, “Why do you do
such things? For I hear of your evil dealings from all the people. 24 No, my
sons; it is no good report that I hear the people of the Lord spreading
abroad. 25 If someone sins against a man, God will mediate for him, but if
someone sins against the Lord, who can intercede for him?” But they would
not listen to the voice of their father, for it was the will of the Lord to put
them to death.

26 Now the young man Samuel continued to grow both in stature and in
favor with the Lord and also with man.

The LORD Rejects Eli's Household

27 ‡† And there came a man of God to Eli and said to him, "Thus the Lord
has said, 'Did I indeed reveal myself to the house of your father when they
were in Egypt subject to the house of Pharaoh? 28 † Did I choose him out of
all the tribes of Israel to be my priest, to go up to my altar, to burn incense,
to wear an ephod before me? I gave to the house of your father all my
offerings by fire from the people of Israel. 29 † Why then do you scorn[1] my
sacrifices and my offerings that I commanded, and honor your sons above
me by fattening yourselves on the choicest parts of every offering of my
people Israel?' 30 ‡ Therefore the Lord, the God of Israel, declares: 'I
promised that your house and the house of your father should go in and out
before me forever,' but now the Lord declares: 'Far be it from me, for those
who honor me I will honor, and those who despise me shall be lightly
esteemed. 31 Behold, the days are coming when I will cut off your strength
and the strength of your father's house, so that there will not be an old man
in your house. 32 Then in distress you will look with envious eye on all the
prosperity that shall be bestowed on Israel, and there shall not be an old
man in your house forever. 33 † The only one of you whom I shall not cut off
from my altar shall be spared to weep his[1] eyes out to grieve his heart, and
all the descendants[2] of your house shall die by the sword of men. [3] 34 † And
this that shall come upon your two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, shall be the
sign to you: both of them shall die on the same day. 35 † And I will raise up
for myself a faithful priest, who shall do according to what is in my heart
and in my mind. And I will build him a sure house, and he shall go in and
out before my anointed forever. 36 † And everyone who is left in your house
shall come to implore him for a piece of silver or a loaf of bread and shall
say, "Please put me in one of the priests' places, that I may eat a morsel of
bread."""

The LORD Calls Samuel

3 [1]†Now the young man Samuel was ministering to the Lord under
Eli. And the word of the Lord was rare in those days; there was no frequent
vision.

[2]At that time Eli, whose eyesight had begun to grow dim so that he could
not see, was lying down in his own place. [3]†The lamp of God had not yet
gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the temple of the Lord, where the
ark of God was.

[4]†Then the Lord called Samuel, and he said, "Here I am!" [5]†and ran to Eli
and said, "Here I am, for you called me." But he said, "I did not call; lie
down again." So he went and lay down.

[6]And the Lord called again, "Samuel!" and Samuel arose and went to Eli
and said, "Here I am, for you called me." But he said, "I did not call, my
son; lie down again." [7]†Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord, and the
word of the Lord had not yet been revealed to him.

[8]† And the Lord called Samuel again the third time. And he arose and
went to Eli and said, "Here I am, for you called me." Then Eli perceived
that the Lord was calling the young man. [9]Therefore Eli said to Samuel,
"Go, lie down, and if he calls you, you shall say, 'Speak, Lord, for your
servant hears.'" So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

[10]† And the Lord came and stood, calling as at other times, "Samuel!
Samuel!" And Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant hears." [11]† Then the
Lord said to Samuel, "Behold, I am about to do a thing in Israel at which the
two ears of everyone who hears it will tingle. [12]On that day I will fulfill
against Eli all that I have spoken concerning his house, from beginning to
end. [13]†And I declare to him that I am about to punish his house forever, for
the iniquity that he knew, because his sons were blaspheming God,[1] and he
did not restrain them. [14]† Therefore I swear to the house of Eli that the
iniquity of Eli's house shall not be atoned for by sacrifice or offering
forever."

[15]†Samuel lay until morning; then he opened the doors of the house of the
Lord. And Samuel was afraid to tell the vision to Eli. [16]But Eli called

Samuel and said, “Samuel, my son.” And he said, “Here I am.” [17]†And Eli said, “What was it that he told you? Do not hide it from me. May God do so to you and more also if you hide anything from me of all that he told you.” [18]†So Samuel told him everything and hid nothing from him. And he said, “It is the Lord. Let him do what seems good to him.”

[19]† And Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him and let none of his words fall to the ground. [20]†And all Israel from Dan to Beersheba knew that Samuel was established as a prophet of the Lord. [21]†And the Lord appeared again at Shiloh, for the Lord revealed himself to Samuel at Shiloh by the word of the Lord.

The Philistines Capture the Ark

4 [1]‡†And the word of Samuel came to all Israel.

Now Israel went out to battle against the Philistines. They encamped at Ebenezer, and the Philistines encamped at Aphek. [2]The Philistines drew up in line against Israel, and when the battle spread, Israel was defeated by the Philistines, who killed about four thousand men on the field of battle. [3]†And when the troops came to the camp, the elders of Israel said, "Why has the Lord defeated us today before the Philistines? Let us bring the ark of the covenant of the Lord here from Shiloh, that it may come among us and save us from the power of our enemies." [4]† So the people sent to Shiloh and brought from there the ark of the covenant of the Lord of hosts, who is enthroned on the cherubim. And the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were there with the ark of the covenant of God.

[5]As soon as the ark of the covenant of the Lord came into the camp, all Israel gave a mighty shout, so that the earth resounded. [6]† And when the Philistines heard the noise of the shouting, they said, "What does this great shouting in the camp of the Hebrews mean?" And when they learned that the ark of the Lord had come to the camp, [7]the Philistines were afraid, for they said, "A god has come into the camp." And they said, "Woe to us! For nothing like this has happened before. [8]† Woe to us! Who can deliver us from the power of these mighty gods? These are the gods who struck the Egyptians with every sort of plague in the wilderness. [9]†Take courage, and be men, O Philistines, lest you become slaves to the Hebrews as they have been to you; be men and fight."

[10]†So the Philistines fought, and Israel was defeated, and they fled, every man to his home. And there was a very great slaughter, for there fell of Israel thirty thousand foot soldiers. [11]And the ark of God was captured, and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, died.

The Death of Eli

12 ‡ † A man of Benjamin ran from the battle line and came to Shiloh the
same day, with his clothes torn and with dirt on his head. 13 When he arrived,
Eli was sitting on his seat by the road watching, for his heart trembled for
the ark of God. And when the man came into the city and told the news, all
the city cried out. 14 When Eli heard the sound of the outcry, he said, “What
is this uproar?” Then the man hurried and came and told Eli. 15 Now Eli was
ninety-eight years old and his eyes were set so that he could not see. 16 And
the man said to Eli, “I am he who has come from the battle; I fled from the
battle today.” And he said, “How did it go, my son?” 17 † He who brought the
news answered and said, “Israel has fled before the Philistines, and there
has also been a great defeat among the people. Your two sons also, Hophni
and Phinehas, are dead, and the ark of God has been captured.” 18 † As soon
as he mentioned the ark of God, Eli fell over backward from his seat by the
side of the gate, and his neck was broken and he died, for the man was old
and heavy. He had judged Israel forty years.

19 † Now his daughter-in-law, the wife of Phinehas, was pregnant, about to
give birth. And when she heard the news that the ark of God was captured,
and that her father-in-law and her husband were dead, she bowed and gave
birth, for her pains came upon her. 20 † And about the time of her death the
women attending her said to her, “Do not be afraid, for you have borne a
son.” But she did not answer or pay attention. 21 † And she named the child
Ichabod, saying, “The glory has departed[1] from Israel!” because the ark of
God had been captured and because of her father-in-law and her husband.
22 And she said, “The glory has departed from Israel, for the ark of God has
been captured.”

The Philistines and the Ark

5 [1]†When the Philistines captured the ark of God, they brought it from
Ebenezer to Ashdod. [2]†Then the Philistines took the ark of God and brought
it into the house of Dagon and set it up beside Dagon. [3]†And when the
people of Ashdod rose early the next day, behold, Dagon had fallen face
downward on the ground before the ark of the Lord. So they took Dagon
and put him back in his place. [4]But when they rose early on the next
morning, behold, Dagon had fallen face downward on the ground before the
ark of the Lord, and the head of Dagon and both his hands were lying cut
off on the threshold. Only the trunk of Dagon was left to him. [5]†This is why
the priests of Dagon and all who enter the house of Dagon do not tread on
the threshold of Dagon in Ashdod to this day.

[6]†The hand of the Lord was heavy against the people of Ashdod, and he
terrified and afflicted them with tumors, both Ashdod and its territory.
[7]†And when the men of Ashdod saw how things were, they said, “The ark
of the God of Israel must not remain with us, for his hand is hard against us
and against Dagon our god.” [8]†So they sent and gathered together all the
lords of the Philistines and said, “What shall we do with the ark of the God
of Israel?” They answered, “Let the ark of the God of Israel be brought
around to Gath.” So they brought the ark of the God of Israel there. [9]†But
after they had brought it around, the hand of the Lord was against the city,
causing a very great panic, and he afflicted the men of the city, both young
and old, so that tumors broke out on them. [10]†So they sent the ark of God to
Ekron. But as soon as the ark of God came to Ekron, the people of Ekron
cried out, “They have brought around to us the ark of the God of Israel to
kill us and our people.” [11]†They sent therefore and gathered together all the
lords of the Philistines and said, “Send away the ark of the God of Israel,
and let it return to its own place, that it may not kill us and our people.” For
there was a deathly panic throughout the whole city. The hand of God was
very heavy there. [12]The men who did not die were struck with tumors, and
the cry of the city went up to heaven.

The Ark Returned to Israel

6 [1]‡†The ark of the Lord was in the country of the Philistines seven
months. [2]† And the Philistines called for the priests and the diviners and
said, “What shall we do with the ark of the Lord? Tell us with what we shall
send it to its place.” [3]‡They said, “If you send away the ark of the God of
Israel, do not send it empty, but by all means return him a guilt offering.
Then you will be healed, and it will be known to you why his hand does not
turn away from you.” [4]And they said, “What is the guilt offering that we
shall return to him?” They answered, “Five golden tumors and five golden
mice, according to the number of the lords of the Philistines, for the same
plague was on all of you and on your lords. [5]So you must make images of
your tumors and images of your mice that ravage the land, and give glory to
the God of Israel. Perhaps he will lighten his hand from off you and your
gods and your land. [6]†Why should you harden your hearts as the Egyptians
and Pharaoh hardened their hearts? After he had dealt severely with them,
did they not send the people away, and they departed? [7]†Now then, take and
prepare a new cart and two milk cows on which there has never come a
yoke, and yoke the cows to the cart, but take their calves home, away from
them. [8]And take the ark of the Lord and place it on the cart and put in a box
at its side the figures of gold, which you are returning to him as a guilt
offering. Then send it off and let it go its way [9]†and watch. If it goes up on
the way to its own land, to Beth-shemesh, then it is he who has done us this
great harm, but if not, then we shall know that it is not his hand that struck
us; it happened to us by coincidence.”

[10]The men did so, and took two milk cows and yoked them to the cart and
shut up their calves at home. [11]And they put the ark of the Lord on the cart
and the box with the golden mice and the images of their tumors. [12]†And
the cows went straight in the direction of Beth-shemesh along one highway,
lowing as they went. They turned neither to the right nor to the left, and the
lords of the Philistines went after them as far as the border of Beth-
shemesh. [13]† Now the people of Beth-shemesh were reaping their wheat
harvest in the valley. And when they lifted up their eyes and saw the ark,
they rejoiced to see it. [14]‡†The cart came into the field of Joshua of Beth-

shemesh and stopped there. A great stone was there. And they split up the wood of the cart and offered the cows as a burnt offering to the LORD. 15And the Levites took down the ark of the LORD and the box that was beside it, in which were the golden figures, and set them upon the great stone. And the men of Beth-shemesh offered burnt offerings and sacrificed sacrifices on that day to the LORD. 16†And when the five lords of the Philistines saw it, they returned that day to Ekron.

17†These are the golden tumors that the Philistines returned as a guilt offering to the LORD: one for Ashdod, one for Gaza, one for Ashkelon, one for Gath, one for Ekron, 18†and the golden mice, according to the number of all the cities of the Philistines belonging to the five lords, both fortified cities and unwalled villages. The great stone beside which they set down the ark of the LORD is a witness to this day in the field of Joshua of Beth-shemesh.

19†And he struck some of the men of Beth-shemesh, because they looked upon the ark of the LORD. He struck seventy men of them,[1] and the people mourned because the LORD had struck the people with a great blow. 20†Then the men of Beth-shemesh said, "Who is able to stand before the LORD, this holy God? And to whom shall he go up away from us?" 21†So they sent messengers to the inhabitants of Kiriath-jearim, saying, "The Philistines have returned the ark of the LORD. Come down and take it up to you."

7 1†And the men of Kiriath-jearim came and took up the ark of the LORD and brought it to the house of Abinadab on the hill. And they consecrated his son Eleazar to have charge of the ark of the LORD. 2†From the day that the ark was lodged at Kiriath-jearim, a long time passed, some twenty years, and all the house of Israel lamented after the LORD.

Samuel Judges Israel

3 ‡ † And Samuel said to all the house of Israel, “If you are returning to the
Lord with all your heart, then put away the foreign gods and the Ashtaroth
from among you and direct your heart to the Lord and serve him only, and
he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines.” 4 † So the people of
Israel put away the Baals and the Ashtaroth, and they served the Lord only.
5 † Then Samuel said, “Gather all Israel at Mizpah, and I will pray to the
Lord for you.” 6 † So they gathered at Mizpah and drew water and poured it
out before the Lord and fasted on that day and said there, “We have sinned
against the Lord.” And Samuel judged the people of Israel at Mizpah.
7 † Now when the Philistines heard that the people of Israel had gathered at
Mizpah, the lords of the Philistines went up against Israel. And when the
people of Israel heard of it, they were afraid of the Philistines. 8 † And the
people of Israel said to Samuel, “Do not cease to cry out to the Lord our
God for us, that he may save us from the hand of the Philistines.” 9 † So
Samuel took a nursing lamb and offered it as a whole burnt offering to the
Lord. And Samuel cried out to the Lord for Israel, and the Lord answered
him. 10 As Samuel was offering up the burnt offering, the Philistines drew
near to attack Israel. But the Lord thundered with a mighty sound that day
against the Philistines and threw them into confusion, and they were routed
before Israel. 11 † And the men of Israel went out from Mizpah and pursued
the Philistines and struck them, as far as below Beth-car.
12 † Then Samuel took a stone and set it up between Mizpah and Shen[1]
and called its name Ebenezer;[2] for he said, “Till now the Lord has helped
us.” 13 † So the Philistines were subdued and did not again enter the territory
of Israel. And the hand of the Lord was against the Philistines all the days of
Samuel. 14 † The cities that the Philistines had taken from Israel were
restored to Israel, from Ekron to Gath, and Israel delivered their territory
from the hand of the Philistines. There was peace also between Israel and
the Amorites.
15 Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life. 16 † And he went on a circuit
year by year to Bethel, Gilgal, and Mizpah. And he judged Israel in all these

places. [17] † Then he would return to Ramah, for his home was there, and there also he judged Israel. And he built there an altar to the LORD.

Israel Demands a King

8 [1]‡†When Samuel became old, he made his sons judges over Israel.
[2]† The name of his firstborn son was Joel, and the name of his second,
Abijah; they were judges in Beersheba. [3]†Yet his sons did not walk in his
ways but turned aside after gain. They took bribes and perverted justice.
[4]‡†Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at
Ramah [5]and said to him, "Behold, you are old and your sons do not walk in
your ways. Now appoint for us a king to judge us like all the nations." [6]But
the thing displeased Samuel when they said, "Give us a king to judge us."
And Samuel prayed to the LORD. [7]†And the LORD said to Samuel, "Obey the
voice of the people in all that they say to you, for they have not rejected
you, but they have rejected me from being king over them. [8]‡According to
all the deeds that they have done, from the day I brought them up out of
Egypt even to this day, forsaking me and serving other gods, so they are
also doing to you. [9]Now then, obey their voice; only you shall solemnly
warn them and show them the ways of the king who shall reign over them."

Samuel's Warning Against Kings

10 ‡ † So Samuel told all the words of the Lord to the people who were
asking for a king from him. 11 ‡ He said, "These will be the ways of the king
who will reign over you: he will take your sons and appoint them to his
chariots and to be his horsemen and to run before his chariots. 12 † And he
will appoint for himself commanders of thousands and commanders of
fifties, and some to plow his ground and to reap his harvest, and to make his
implements of war and the equipment of his chariots. 13 He will take your
daughters to be perfumers and cooks and bakers. 14 He will take the best of
your fields and vineyards and olive orchards and give them to his servants.
15 He will take the tenth of your grain and of your vineyards and give it to
his officers and to his servants. 16 He will take your male servants and
female servants and the best of your young men[1] and your donkeys, and
put them to his work. 17 † He will take the tenth of your flocks, and you shall
be his slaves. 18 † And in that day you will cry out because of your king,
whom you have chosen for yourselves, but the Lord will not answer you in
that day."

The LORD Grants Israel's Request

19 † But the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel. And they said,
"No! But there shall be a king over us, 20 † that we also may be like all the
nations, and that our king may judge us and go out before us and fight our
battles." 21 † And when Samuel had heard all the words of the people, he
repeated them in the ears of the LORD. 22 And the LORD said to Samuel, "Obey
their voice and make them a king." Samuel then said to the men of Israel,
"Go every man to his city."

Saul Chosen to Be King

9 [1]†There was a man of Benjamin whose name was Kish, the son of Abiel, son of Zeror, son of Becorath, son of Aphiah, a Benjaminite, a man of wealth. [2]†And he had a son whose name was Saul, a handsome young man. There was not a man among the people of Israel more handsome than he. From his shoulders upward he was taller than any of the people.

[3]†Now the donkeys of Kish, Saul's father, were lost. So Kish said to Saul his son, "Take one of the young men with you, and arise, go and look for the donkeys." [4]†And he passed through the hill country of Ephraim and passed through the land of Shalishah, but they did not find them. And they passed through the land of Shaalim, but they were not there. Then they passed through the land of Benjamin, but did not find them.

[5]When they came to the land of Zuph, Saul said to his servant[1] who was with him, "Come, let us go back, lest my father cease to care about the donkeys and become anxious about us." [6]†But he said to him, "Behold, there is a man of God in this city, and he is a man who is held in honor; all that he says comes true. So now let us go there. Perhaps he can tell us the way we should go." [7]†Then Saul said to his servant, "But if we go, what can we bring the man? For the bread in our sacks is gone, and there is no present to bring to the man of God. What do we have?" [8]†The servant answered Saul again, "Here, I have with me a quarter of a shekel[2] of silver, and I will give it to the man of God to tell us our way." [9]†(Formerly in Israel, when a man went to inquire of God, he said, "Come, let us go to the seer," for today's "prophet" was formerly called a seer.) [10]And Saul said to his servant, "Well said; come, let us go." So they went to the city where the man of God was.

[11]As they went up the hill to the city, they met young women coming out to draw water and said to them, "Is the seer here?" [12]†They answered, "He is; behold, he is just ahead of you. Hurry. He has come just now to the city, because the people have a sacrifice today on the high place. [13]†As soon as you enter the city you will find him, before he goes up to the high place to eat. For the people will not eat till he comes, since he must bless the sacrifice; afterward those who are invited will eat. Now go up, for you will

meet him immediately.” [14]So they went up to the city. As they were entering the city, they saw Samuel coming out toward them on his way up to the high place.

[15]Now the day before Saul came, the Lord had revealed to Samuel: [16]† “Tomorrow about this time I will send to you a man from the land of Benjamin, and you shall anoint him to be prince over my people Israel. He shall save my people from the hand of the Philistines. For I have seen[1] my people, because their cry has come to me.” [17]†When Samuel saw Saul, the Lord told him, “Here is the man of whom I spoke to you! He it is who shall restrain my people.” [18]Then Saul approached Samuel in the gate and said, “Tell me where is the house of the seer?” [19]†Samuel answered Saul, “I am the seer. Go up before me to the high place, for today you shall eat with me, and in the morning I will let you go and will tell you all that is on your mind. [20]†As for your donkeys that were lost three days ago, do not set your mind on them, for they have been found. And for whom is all that is desirable in Israel? Is it not for you and for all your father’s house?” [21]†Saul answered, “Am I not a Benjaminite, from the least of the tribes of Israel? And is not my clan the humblest of all the clans of the tribe of Benjamin? Why then have you spoken to me in this way?”

[22]†Then Samuel took Saul and his young man and brought them into the hall and gave them a place at the head of those who had been invited, who were about thirty persons. [23]And Samuel said to the cook, “Bring the portion I gave you, of which I said to you, ‘Put it aside.’” [24]†So the cook took up the leg and what was on it and set them before Saul. And Samuel said, “See, what was kept is set before you. Eat, because it was kept for you until the hour appointed, that you might eat with the guests.”[2]

So Saul ate with Samuel that day. [25]†And when they came down from the high place into the city, a bed was spread for Saul[3] on the roof, and he lay down to sleep. [26]Then at the break of dawn[4] Samuel called to Saul on the roof, “Up, that I may send you on your way.” So Saul arose, and both he and Samuel went out into the street.

[27]†As they were going down to the outskirts of the city, Samuel said to Saul, “Tell the servant to pass on before us, and when he has passed on, stop here yourself for a while, that I may make known to you the word of God.”

Saul Anointed King

10 [1]‡†Then Samuel took a flask of oil and poured it on his head and
kissed him and said, “Has not the Lord anointed you to be prince over his
people Israel? And you shall reign over the people of the Lord and you will
save them from the hand of their surrounding enemies. And this shall be the
sign to you that the Lord has anointed you to be prince[1] over his heritage.
[2]†When you depart from me today, you will meet two men by Rachel’s
tomb in the territory of Benjamin at Zelzah, and they will say to you, ‘The
donkeys that you went to seek are found, and now your father has ceased to
care about the donkeys and is anxious about you, saying, “What shall I do
about my son?”’ [3]†Then you shall go on from there farther and come to the
oak of Tabor. Three men going up to God at Bethel will meet you there, one
carrying three young goats, another carrying three loaves of bread, and
another carrying a skin of wine. [4]†And they will greet you and give you two
loaves of bread, which you shall accept from their hand. [5]†After that you
shall come to Gibeath-elohim,[2] where there is a garrison of the Philistines.
And there, as soon as you come to the city, you will meet a group of
prophets coming down from the high place with harp, tambourine, flute,
and lyre before them, prophesying. [6]†Then the Spirit of the Lord will rush
upon you, and you will prophesy with them and be turned into another man.
[7]†Now when these signs meet you, do what your hand finds to do, for God
is with you. [8]Then go down before me to Gilgal. And behold, I am coming
to you to offer burnt offerings and to sacrifice peace offerings. Seven days
you shall wait, until I come to you and show you what you shall do.”

[9]†When he turned his back to leave Samuel, God gave him another heart.
And all these signs came to pass that day. [10]‡When they came to Gibeah,[3]
behold, a group of prophets met him, and the Spirit of God rushed upon
him, and he prophesied among them. [11]‡And when all who knew him
previously saw how he prophesied with the prophets, the people said to one
another, “What has come over the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the
prophets?” [12]And a man of the place answered, “And who is their father?”

Therefore it became a proverb, “Is Saul also among the prophets?” 13When
he had finished prophesying, he came to the high place.

14†Saul’s uncle said to him and to his servant, “Where did you go?” And
he said, “To seek the donkeys. And when we saw they were not to be found,
we went to Samuel.” 15And Saul’s uncle said, “Please tell me what Samuel
said to you.” 16† And Saul said to his uncle, “He told us plainly that the
donkeys had been found.” But about the matter of the kingdom, of which
Samuel had spoken, he did not tell him anything.

Saul Proclaimed King

17 Now Samuel called the people together to the Lord at Mizpah. 18 And
he said to the people of Israel, “Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, ‘I
brought up Israel out of Egypt, and I delivered you from the hand of the
Egyptians and from the hand of all the kingdoms that were oppressing you.’
19 But today you have rejected your God, who saves you from all your
calamities and your distresses, and you have said to him, ‘Set a king over
us.’ Now therefore present yourselves before the Lord by your tribes and by
your thousands.”

20 Then Samuel brought all the tribes of Israel near, and the tribe of
Benjamin was taken by lot. 21 He brought the tribe of Benjamin near by its
clans, and the clan of the Matrites was taken by lot;[1] and Saul the son of
Kish was taken by lot. But when they sought him, he could not be found.
22 So they inquired again of the Lord, “Is there a man still to come?” and the
Lord said, “Behold, he has hidden himself among the baggage.” 23 Then they
ran and took him from there. And when he stood among the people, he was
taller than any of the people from his shoulders upward. 24 And Samuel said
to all the people, “Do you see him whom the Lord has chosen? There is
none like him among all the people.” And all the people shouted, “Long live
the king!”

25 Then Samuel told the people the rights and duties of the kingship, and
he wrote them in a book and laid it up before the Lord. Then Samuel sent all
the people away, each one to his home. 26 Saul also went to his home at
Gibeah, and with him went men of valor whose hearts God had touched.
27 But some worthless fellows said, “How can this man save us?” And they
despised him and brought him no present. But he held his peace.

Saul Defeats the Ammonites

11 [1]†† Then Nahash the Ammonite went up and besieged Jabesh-
gilead, and all the men of Jabesh said to Nahash, “Make a treaty with us,
and we will serve you.” [2]† But Nahash the Ammonite said to them, “On this
condition I will make a treaty with you, that I gouge out all your right eyes,
and thus bring disgrace on all Israel.” [3]† The elders of Jabesh said to him,
“Give us seven days’ respite that we may send messengers through all the
territory of Israel. Then, if there is no one to save us, we will give ourselves
up to you.” [4]† When the messengers came to Gibeah of Saul, they reported
the matter in the ears of the people, and all the people wept aloud.

[5]Now, behold, Saul was coming from the field behind the oxen. And Saul
said, “What is wrong with the people, that they are weeping?” So they told
him the news of the men of Jabesh. [6]†† And the Spirit of God rushed upon
Saul when he heard these words, and his anger was greatly kindled. [7]† He
took a yoke of oxen and cut them in pieces and sent them throughout all the
territory of Israel by the hand of messengers, saying, “Whoever does not
come out after Saul and Samuel, so shall it be done to his oxen!” Then the
dread of the Lord fell upon the people, and they came out as one man.
[8]† When he mustered them at Bezek, the people of Israel were three hundred
thousand, and the men of Judah thirty thousand. [9]And they said to the
messengers who had come, “Thus shall you say to the men of Jabesh-
gilead: ‘Tomorrow, by the time the sun is hot, you shall have deliverance.’”
When the messengers came and told the men of Jabesh, they were glad.
[10]† Therefore the men of Jabesh said, “Tomorrow we will give ourselves up
to you, and you may do to us whatever seems good to you.” [11]† And the next
day Saul put the people in three companies. And they came into the midst of
the camp in the morning watch and struck down the Ammonites until the
heat of the day. And those who survived were scattered, so that no two of
them were left together.

The Kingdom Is Renewed

12 Then the people said to Samuel, “Who is it that said, ‘Shall Saul reign
over us?’ Bring the men, that we may put them to death.” 13 But Saul said,
“Not a man shall be put to death this day, for today the Lord has worked
salvation in Israel.” 14 Then Samuel said to the people, “Come, let us go to
Gilgal and there renew the kingdom.” 15 So all the people went to Gilgal,
and there they made Saul king before the Lord in Gilgal. There they
sacrificed peace offerings before the Lord, and there Saul and all the men of
Israel rejoiced greatly.

Samuel's Farewell Address

12 [1]†And Samuel said to all Israel, "Behold, I have obeyed your
voice in all that you have said to me and have made a king over you. [2]And
now, behold, the king walks before you, and I am old and gray; and behold,
my sons are with you. I have walked before you from my youth until this
day. [3]†Here I am; testify against me before the Lord and before his anointed.
Whose ox have I taken? Or whose donkey have I taken? Or whom have I
defrauded? Whom have I oppressed? Or from whose hand have I taken a
bribe to blind my eyes with it? Testify against me[1] and I will restore it to
you." [4]They said, "You have not defrauded us or oppressed us or taken
anything from any man's hand." [5]† And he said to them, "The Lord is
witness against you, and his anointed is witness this day, that you have not
found anything in my hand." And they said, "He is witness."

[6]And Samuel said to the people, "The Lord is witness,[2] who appointed
Moses and Aaron and brought your fathers up out of the land of Egypt.
[7]Now therefore stand still that I may plead with you before the Lord
concerning all the righteous deeds of the Lord that he performed for you and
for your fathers. [8]† When Jacob went into Egypt, and the Egyptians
oppressed them,[3] then your fathers cried out to the Lord and the Lord sent
Moses and Aaron, who brought your fathers out of Egypt and made them
dwell in this place. [9]But they forgot the Lord their God. And he sold them
into the hand of Sisera, commander of the army of Hazor,[4] and into the
hand of the Philistines, and into the hand of the king of Moab. And they
fought against them. [10]†And they cried out to the Lord and said, 'We have
sinned, because we have forsaken the Lord and have served the Baals and
the Ashtaroth. But now deliver us out of the hand of our enemies, that we
may serve you.' [11]†And the Lord sent Jerubbaal and Barak[5] and Jephthah
and Samuel and delivered you out of the hand of your enemies on every
side, and you lived in safety. [12]†And when you saw that Nahash the king of
the Ammonites came against you, you said to me, 'No, but a king shall
reign over us,' when the Lord your God was your king. [13]And now behold
the king whom you have chosen, for whom you have asked; behold, the

Lord has set a king over you. 14 †If you will fear the Lord and serve him and
obey his voice and not rebel against the commandment of the Lord, and if
both you and the king who reigns over you will follow the Lord your God, it
will be well. 15But if you will not obey the voice of the Lord, but rebel
against the commandment of the Lord, then the hand of the Lord will be
against you and your king.[6]16Now therefore stand still and see this great
thing that the Lord will do before your eyes. 17 † Is it not wheat harvest
today? I will call upon the Lord, that he may send thunder and rain. And you
shall know and see that your wickedness is great, which you have done in
the sight of the Lord, in asking for yourselves a king." 18†So Samuel called
upon the Lord, and the Lord sent thunder and rain that day, and all the
people greatly feared the Lord and Samuel.

19†And all the people said to Samuel, "Pray for your servants to the Lord
your God, that we may not die, for we have added to all our sins this evil, to
ask for ourselves a king." 20And Samuel said to the people, "Do not be
afraid; you have done all this evil. Yet do not turn aside from following the
Lord, but serve the Lord with all your heart. 21And do not turn aside after
empty things that cannot profit or deliver, for they are empty. 22 †For the
Lord will not forsake his people, for his great name's sake, because it has
pleased the Lord to make you a people for himself. 23†Moreover, as for me,
far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord by ceasing to pray for
you, and I will instruct you in the good and the right way. 24†Only fear the
Lord and serve him faithfully with all your heart. For consider what great
things he has done for you. 25But if you still do wickedly, you shall be swept
away, both you and your king."

Saul Fights the Philistines

13 [1] ‡ † Saul was . . .[1] years old when he began to reign, and he reigned . . . and two[2] years over Israel.

[2] † Saul chose three thousand men of Israel. Two thousand were with Saul in Michmash and the hill country of Bethel, and a thousand were with Jonathan in Gibeah of Benjamin. The rest of the people he sent home, every man to his tent. [3] † Jonathan defeated the garrison of the Philistines that was at Geba, and the Philistines heard of it. And Saul blew the trumpet throughout all the land, saying, "Let the Hebrews hear." [4] † And all Israel heard it said that Saul had defeated the garrison of the Philistines, and also that Israel had become a stench to the Philistines. And the people were called out to join Saul at Gilgal.

[5] † And the Philistines mustered to fight with Israel, thirty thousand chariots and six thousand horsemen and troops like the sand on the seashore in multitude. They came up and encamped in Michmash, to the east of Beth-aven. [6] † When the men of Israel saw that they were in trouble (for the people were hard pressed), the people hid themselves in caves and in holes and in rocks and in tombs and in cisterns, [7] † and some Hebrews crossed the fords of the Jordan to the land of Gad and Gilead. Saul was still at Gilgal, and all the people followed him trembling.

Saul's Unlawful Sacrifice

8 ‡ ‡ ‡He waited seven days, the time appointed by Samuel. But Samuel
did not come to Gilgal, and the people were scattering from him. 9 †So Saul
said, "Bring the burnt offering here to me, and the peace offerings." And he
offered the burnt offering. 10 †As soon as he had finished offering the burnt
offering, behold, Samuel came. And Saul went out to meet him and greet
him. 11 †Samuel said, "What have you done?" And Saul said, "When I saw
that the people were scattering from me, and that you did not come within
the days appointed, and that the Philistines had mustered at Michmash, 12 †I
said, 'Now the Philistines will come down against me at Gilgal, and I have
not sought the favor of the Lord.' So I forced myself, and offered the burnt
offering." 13 †And Samuel said to Saul, "You have done foolishly. You have
not kept the command of the Lord your God, with which he commanded
you. For then the Lord would have established your kingdom over Israel
forever. 14 †But now your kingdom shall not continue. The Lord has sought
out a man after his own heart, and the Lord has commanded him to be
prince over his people, because you have not kept what the Lord
commanded you." 15 †And Samuel arose and went up from Gilgal. The rest
of the people went up after Saul to meet the army; they went up from
Gilgal[1] to Gibeah of Benjamin.

And Saul numbered the people who were present with him, about six
hundred men. 16 †And Saul and Jonathan his son and the people who were
present with them stayed in Geba of Benjamin, but the Philistines
encamped in Michmash. 17 ‡ And raiders came out of the camp of the
Philistines in three companies. One company turned toward Ophrah, to the
land of Shual; 18 another company turned toward Beth-horon; and another
company turned toward the border that looks down on the Valley of Zeboim
toward the wilderness.

19 †Now there was no blacksmith to be found throughout all the land of
Israel, for the Philistines said, "Lest the Hebrews make themselves swords
or spears." 20 †But every one of the Israelites went down to the Philistines to
sharpen his plowshare, his mattock, his axe, or his sickle,[2] 21 †and the charge
was two-thirds of a shekel[3] for the plowshares and for the mattocks, and a

third of a shekel[4] for sharpening the axes and for setting the goads.[5] 22 †So on the day of the battle there was neither sword nor spear found in the hand of any of the people with Saul and Jonathan, but Saul and Jonathan his son had them. 23 †And the garrison of the Philistines went out to the pass of Michmash.

Jonathan Defeats the Philistines

14 [1]One day Jonathan the son of Saul said to the young man who carried his armor, “Come, let us go over to the Philistine garrison on the other side.” But he did not tell his father. [2]Saul was staying in the outskirts of Gibeah in the pomegranate cave[1] at Migron. The people who were with him were about six hundred men, [3]including Ahijah the son of Ahitub, Ichabod’s brother, son of Phinehas, son of Eli, the priest of the Lord in Shiloh, wearing an ephod. And the people did not know that Jonathan had gone. [4]Within the passes, by which Jonathan sought to go over to the Philistine garrison, there was a rocky crag on the one side and a rocky crag on the other side. The name of the one was Bozez, and the name of the other Seneh. [5]The one crag rose on the north in front of Michmash, and the other on the south in front of Geba.

[6]Jonathan said to the young man who carried his armor, “Come, let us go over to the garrison of these uncircumcised. It may be that the Lord will work for us, for nothing can hinder the Lord from saving by many or by few.” [7]And his armor-bearer said to him, “Do all that is in your heart. Do as you wish.[2] Behold, I am with you heart and soul.” [8]Then Jonathan said, “Behold, we will cross over to the men, and we will show ourselves to them. [9]If they say to us, ‘Wait until we come to you,’ then we will stand still in our place, and we will not go up to them. [10]But if they say, ‘Come up to us,’ then we will go up, for the Lord has given them into our hand. And this shall be the sign to us.” [11]So both of them showed themselves to the garrison of the Philistines. And the Philistines said, “Look, Hebrews are coming out of the holes where they have hidden themselves.” [12]And the men of the garrison hailed Jonathan and his armor-bearer and said, “Come up to us, and we will show you a thing.” And Jonathan said to his armor-bearer, “Come up after me, for the Lord has given them into the hand of Israel.” [13]Then Jonathan climbed up on his hands and feet, and his armor-bearer after him. And they fell before Jonathan, and his armor-bearer killed them after him. [14]And that first strike, which Jonathan and his armor-bearer made, killed about twenty men within as it were half a furrow’s length in an

acre[3] of land. 15 †And there was a panic in the camp, in the field, and among
all the people. The garrison and even the raiders trembled, the earth quaked,
and it became a very great panic.
16 †And the watchmen of Saul in Gibeah of Benjamin looked, and behold,
the multitude was dispersing here and there.[4] 17 † Then Saul said to the
people who were with him, “Count and see who has gone from us.” And
when they had counted, behold, Jonathan and his armor-bearer were not
there. 18 †So Saul said to Ahijah, “Bring the ark of God here.” For the ark of
God went at that time with the people[5] of Israel. 19 †Now while Saul was
talking to the priest, the tumult in the camp of the Philistines increased
more and more. So Saul said to the priest, “Withdraw your hand.” 20 †Then
Saul and all the people who were with him rallied and went into the battle.
And behold, every Philistine’s sword was against his fellow, and there was
very great confusion. 21 † Now the Hebrews who had been with the
Philistines before that time and who had gone up with them into the camp,
even they also turned to be with the Israelites who were with Saul and
Jonathan. 22 † Likewise, when all the men of Israel who had hidden
themselves in the hill country of Ephraim heard that the Philistines were
fleeing, they too followed hard after them in the battle. 23 †So the Lord saved
Israel that day. And the battle passed beyond Beth-aven.

Saul's Rash Vow

24 And the men of Israel had been hard pressed that day, so Saul had
laid an oath on the people, saying, "Cursed be the man who eats food until
it is evening and I am avenged on my enemies." So none of the people had
tasted food. 25 Now when all the people[1] came to the forest, behold, there
was honey on the ground. 26 And when the people entered the forest, behold,
the honey was dropping, but no one put his hand to his mouth, for the
people feared the oath. 27 But Jonathan had not heard his father charge the
people with the oath, so he put out the tip of the staff that was in his hand
and dipped it in the honeycomb and put his hand to his mouth, and his eyes
became bright. 28 Then one of the people said, "Your father strictly charged
the people with an oath, saying, 'Cursed be the man who eats food this
day.'" And the people were faint. 29 Then Jonathan said, "My father has
troubled the land. See how my eyes have become bright because I tasted a
little of this honey. 30 How much better if the people had eaten freely today
of the spoil of their enemies that they found. For now the defeat among the
Philistines has not been great."

31 They struck down the Philistines that day from Michmash to Aijalon.
And the people were very faint. 32 The people pounced on the spoil and
took sheep and oxen and calves and slaughtered them on the ground. And
the people ate them with the blood. 33 Then they told Saul, "Behold, the
people are sinning against the Lord by eating with the blood." And he said,
"You have dealt treacherously; roll a great stone to me here."[2] 34 And Saul
said, "Disperse yourselves among the people and say to them, 'Let every
man bring his ox or his sheep and slaughter them here and eat, and do not
sin against the Lord by eating with the blood.'" So every one of the people
brought his ox with him that night and they slaughtered them there. 35 And
Saul built an altar to the Lord; it was the first altar that he built to the Lord.

36 Then Saul said, "Let us go down after the Philistines by night and
plunder them until the morning light; let us not leave a man of them." And
they said, "Do whatever seems good to you." But the priest said, "Let us
draw near to God here." 37 And Saul inquired of God, "Shall I go down
after the Philistines? Will you give them into the hand of Israel?" But he did

not answer him that day. 38And Saul said, “Come here, all you leaders of the people, and know and see how this sin has arisen today. 39†For as the Lord lives who saves Israel, though it be in Jonathan my son, he shall surely die.” But there was not a man among all the people who answered him. 40†Then he said to all Israel, “You shall be on one side, and I and Jonathan my son will be on the other side.” And the people said to Saul, “Do what seems good to you.” 41Therefore Saul said, “O Lord God of Israel, why[1] have you not answered your servant this day? If this guilt is in me or in Jonathan my son, O Lord, God of Israel, give Urim. But if this guilt is in your people Israel, give Thummim.” And Jonathan and Saul were taken, but the people escaped. 42Then Saul said, “Cast the lot between me and my son Jonathan.” And Jonathan was taken.

43 † Then Saul said to Jonathan, “Tell me what you have done.” And Jonathan told him, “I tasted a little honey with the tip of the staff that was in my hand. Here I am; I will die.” 44And Saul said, “God do so to me and more also; you shall surely die, Jonathan.” 45†Then the people said to Saul, “Shall Jonathan die, who has worked this great salvation in Israel? Far from it! As the Lord lives, there shall not one hair of his head fall to the ground, for he has worked with God this day.” So the people ransomed Jonathan, so that he did not die. 46Then Saul went up from pursuing the Philistines, and the Philistines went to their own place.

Saul Fights Israel’s Enemies

47 When Saul had taken the kingship over Israel, he fought against all
his enemies on every side, against Moab, against the Ammonites, against
Edom, against the kings of Zobah, and against the Philistines. Wherever he
turned he routed them. 48 And he did valiantly and struck the Amalekites
and delivered Israel out of the hands of those who plundered them.

49 Now the sons of Saul were Jonathan, Ishvi, and Malchi-shua. And the
names of his two daughters were these: the name of the firstborn was
Merab, and the name of the younger Michal. 50 And the name of Saul’s
wife was Ahinoam the daughter of Ahimaaz. And the name of the
commander of his army was Abner the son of Ner, Saul’s uncle. 51 Kish was
the father of Saul, and Ner the father of Abner was the son of Abiel.

52 There was hard fighting against the Philistines all the days of Saul.
And when Saul saw any strong man, or any valiant man, he attached him to
himself.

The LORD Rejects Saul

15 [1]†And Samuel said to Saul, “The Lord sent me to anoint you king
over his people Israel; now therefore listen to the words of the Lord. [2]†Thus
says the Lord of hosts, ‘I have noted what Amalek did to Israel in opposing
them on the way when they came up out of Egypt. [3]†Now go and strike
Amalek and devote to destruction[1] all that they have. Do not spare them,
but kill both man and woman, child and infant, ox and sheep, camel and
donkey.’”
[4]†So Saul summoned the people and numbered them in Telaim, two
hundred thousand men on foot, and ten thousand men of Judah. [5]†And Saul
came to the city of Amalek and lay in wait in the valley. [6]†Then Saul said to
the Kenites, “Go, depart; go down from among the Amalekites, lest I
destroy you with them. For you showed kindness to all the people of Israel
when they came up out of Egypt.” So the Kenites departed from among the
Amalekites. [7]†And Saul defeated the Amalekites from Havilah as far as
Shur, which is east of Egypt. [8]†And he took Agag the king of the
Amalekites alive and devoted to destruction all the people with the edge of
the sword. [9]†But Saul and the people spared Agag and the best of the sheep
and of the oxen and of the fattened calves[2] and the lambs, and all that was
good, and would not utterly destroy them. All that was despised and
worthless they devoted to destruction.
[10]The word of the Lord came to Samuel: [11]†“I regret that I have made
Saul king, for he has turned back from following me and has not performed
my commandments.” And Samuel was angry, and he cried to the Lord all
night. [12]†And Samuel rose early to meet Saul in the morning. And it was
told Samuel, “Saul came to Carmel, and behold, he set up a monument for
himself and turned and passed on and went down to Gilgal.” [13]†And Samuel
came to Saul, and Saul said to him, “Blessed be you to the Lord. I have
performed the commandment of the Lord.” [14]And Samuel said, “What then
is this bleating of the sheep in my ears and the lowing of the oxen that I
hear?” [15]Saul said, “They have brought them from the Amalekites, for the
people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen to sacrifice to the Lord

your God, and the rest we have devoted to destruction." [16]†Then Samuel said to Saul, "Stop! I will tell you what the Lord said to me this night." And he said to him, "Speak."

[17]†And Samuel said, "Though you are little in your own eyes, are you not the head of the tribes of Israel? The Lord anointed you king over Israel. [18]†And the Lord sent you on a mission and said, 'Go, devote to destruction the sinners, the Amalekites, and fight against them until they are consumed.' [19]†Why then did you not obey the voice of the Lord? Why did you pounce on the spoil and do what was evil in the sight of the Lord?" [20]†And Saul said to Samuel, "I have obeyed the voice of the Lord. I have gone on the mission on which the Lord sent me. I have brought Agag the king of Amalek, and I have devoted the Amalekites to destruction. [21]But the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the best of the things devoted to destruction, to sacrifice to the Lord your God in Gilgal." [22]†And Samuel said,

"Has the Lord as great delight in burnt
offerings and sacrifices,
as in obeying the voice of the Lord?
Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice,
and to listen than the fat of rams.
[23]† For rebellion is as the sin of divination,
and presumption is as iniquity and
idolatry.
Because you have rejected the word of the
Lord,
he has also rejected you from being king."

[24]†Saul said to Samuel, "I have sinned, for I have transgressed the commandment of the Lord and your words, because I feared the people and obeyed their voice. [25]†Now therefore, please pardon my sin and return with me that I may worship the Lord." [26]†And Samuel said to Saul, "I will not return with you. For you have rejected the word of the Lord, and the Lord has rejected you from being king over Israel." [27]†As Samuel turned to go away, Saul seized the skirt of his robe, and it tore. [28]And Samuel said to him, "The Lord has torn the kingdom of Israel from you this day and has

given it to a neighbor of yours, who is better than you. 29 † And also the
Glory of Israel will not lie or have regret, for he is not a man, that he should
have regret." 30 † Then he said, "I have sinned; yet honor me now before the
elders of my people and before Israel, and return with me, that I may bow
before the LORD your God." 31 † So Samuel turned back after Saul, and Saul
bowed before the LORD.

32 † Then Samuel said, "Bring here to me Agag the king of the
Amalekites." And Agag came to him cheerfully.[1] Agag said, "Surely the
bitterness of death is past." 33 † And Samuel said, "As your sword has made
women childless, so shall your mother be childless among women." And
Samuel hacked Agag to pieces before the LORD in Gilgal.

34 † Then Samuel went to Ramah, and Saul went up to his house in Gibeah
of Saul. 35 † And Samuel did not see Saul again until the day of his death, but
Samuel grieved over Saul. And the LORD regretted that he had made Saul
king over Israel.

David Anointed King

16 [1]The Lord said to Samuel, “How long will you grieve over Saul,
since I have rejected him from being king over Israel? Fill your horn with
oil, and go. I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided
for myself a king among his sons.” [2]And Samuel said, “How can I go? If
Saul hears it, he will kill me.” And the Lord said, “Take a heifer with you
and say, ‘I have come to sacrifice to the Lord.’ [3]And invite Jesse to the
sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do. And you shall anoint for
me him whom I declare to you.” [4]Samuel did what the Lord commanded
and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the city came to meet him trembling
and said, “Do you come peaceably?” [5]And he said, “Peaceably; I have
come to sacrifice to the Lord. Consecrate yourselves, and come with me to
the sacrifice.” And he consecrated Jesse and his sons and invited them to
the sacrifice.

[6]When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, “Surely the Lord’s
anointed is before him.” [7]But the Lord said to Samuel, “Do not look on his
appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For
the Lord sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but
the Lord looks on the heart.” [8]Then Jesse called Abinadab and made him
pass before Samuel. And he said, “Neither has the Lord chosen this one.”
[9]Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, “Neither has the Lord
chosen this one.” [10]And Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel.
And Samuel said to Jesse, “The Lord has not chosen these.” [11]Then Samuel
said to Jesse, “Are all your sons here?” And he said, “There remains yet the
youngest,[1] but behold, he is keeping the sheep.” And Samuel said to Jesse,
“Send and get him, for we will not sit down till he comes here.” [12]And he
sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy and had beautiful eyes and was
handsome. And the Lord said, “Arise, anoint him, for this is he.” [13]Then
Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers.
And the Spirit of the Lord rushed upon David from that day forward. And
Samuel rose up and went to Ramah.

David in Saul's Service

14 ‡ ‡ ‡ †Now the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and a harmful spirit
from the Lord tormented him. 15 †And Saul's servants said to him, "Behold
now, a harmful spirit from God is tormenting you. 16 †Let our lord now
command your servants who are before you to seek out a man who is
skillful in playing the lyre, and when the harmful spirit from God is upon
you, he will play it, and you will be well." 17 †So Saul said to his servants,
"Provide for me a man who can play well and bring him to me." 18 †One of
the young men answered, "Behold, I have seen a son of Jesse the
Bethlehemite, who is skillful in playing, a man of valor, a man of war,
prudent in speech, and a man of good presence, and the Lord is with him."
19 †Therefore Saul sent messengers to Jesse and said, "Send me David your
son, who is with the sheep." 20 †And Jesse took a donkey laden with bread
and a skin of wine and a young goat and sent them by David his son to
Saul. 21 †And David came to Saul and entered his service. And Saul loved
him greatly, and he became his armor-bearer. 22 †And Saul sent to Jesse,
saying, "Let David remain in my service, for he has found favor in my
sight." 23 †And whenever the harmful spirit from God was upon Saul, David
took the lyre and played it with his hand. So Saul was refreshed and was
well, and the harmful spirit departed from him.

David and Goliath

17 [1]†Now the Philistines gathered their armies for battle. And they
were gathered at Socoh, which belongs to Judah, and encamped between
Socoh and Azekah, in Ephes-dammim. [2]And Saul and the men of Israel
were gathered, and encamped in the Valley of Elah, and drew up in line of
battle against the Philistines. [3]And the Philistines stood on the mountain on
the one side, and Israel stood on the mountain on the other side, with a
valley between them. [4]†And there came out from the camp of the Philistines
a champion named Goliath of Gath, whose height was six[1] cubits and a
span. [5]†He had a helmet of bronze on his head, and he was armed with a
coat of mail, and the weight of the coat was five thousand shekels[2] of
bronze. [6]And he had bronze armor on his legs, and a javelin of bronze slung
between his shoulders. [7]The shaft of his spear was like a weaver's beam,
and his spear's head weighed six hundred shekels of iron. And his shield-
bearer went before him. [8]†He stood and shouted to the ranks of Israel,
"Why have you come out to draw up for battle? Am I not a Philistine, and
are you not servants of Saul? Choose a man for yourselves, and let him
come down to me. [9]†If he is able to fight with me and kill me, then we will
be your servants. But if I prevail against him and kill him, then you shall be
our servants and serve us." [10]†And the Philistine said, "I defy the ranks of
Israel this day. Give me a man, that we may fight together." [11]†When Saul
and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they were dismayed and
greatly afraid.

[12]†Now David was the son of an Ephrathite of Bethlehem in Judah,
named Jesse, who had eight sons. In the days of Saul the man was already
old and advanced in years.[3] [13]†The three oldest sons of Jesse had followed
Saul to the battle. And the names of his three sons who went to the battle
were Eliab the firstborn, and next to him Abinadab, and the third Shammah.
[14]David was the youngest. The three eldest followed Saul, [15]†but David
went back and forth from Saul to feed his father's sheep at Bethlehem.
[16]†For forty days the Philistine came forward and took his stand, morning
and evening.

17 †And Jesse said to David his son, “Take for your brothers an ephah[4] of
this parched grain, and these ten loaves, and carry them quickly to the camp
to your brothers. 18 †Also take these ten cheeses to the commander of their
thousand. See if your brothers are well, and bring some token from them.”
19 Now Saul and they and all the men of Israel were in the Valley of Elah,
fighting with the Philistines. 20 †And David rose early in the morning and
left the sheep with a keeper and took the provisions and went, as Jesse had
commanded him. And he came to the encampment as the host was going
out to the battle line, shouting the war cry. 21 And Israel and the Philistines
drew up for battle, army against army. 22 †And David left the things in
charge of the keeper of the baggage and ran to the ranks and went and
greeted his brothers. 23 †As he talked with them, behold, the champion, the
Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name, came up out of the ranks of the
Philistines and spoke the same words as before. And David heard him.
24 †All the men of Israel, when they saw the man, fled from him and were
much afraid. 25 †And the men of Israel said, “Have you seen this man who
has come up? Surely he has come up to defy Israel. And the king will enrich
the man who kills him with great riches and will give him his daughter and
make his father’s house free in Israel.” 26 †And David said to the men who
stood by him, “What shall be done for the man who kills this Philistine and
takes away the reproach from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised
Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?” 27 †And the
people answered him in the same way, “So shall it be done to the man who
kills him.”
28 †Now Eliab his eldest brother heard when he spoke to the men. And
Eliab’s anger was kindled against David, and he said, “Why have you come
down? And with whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness? I
know your presumption and the evil of your heart, for you have come down
to see the battle.” 29 †And David said, “What have I done now? Was it not
but a word?” 30 And he turned away from him toward another, and spoke in
the same way, and the people answered him again as before.
31 †When the words that David spoke were heard, they repeated them
before Saul, and he sent for him. 32 And David said to Saul, “Let no man’s
heart fail because of him. Your servant will go and fight with this
Philistine.” 33 †And Saul said to David, “You are not able to go against this

Philistine to fight with him, for you are but a youth, and he has been a man of war from his youth." [34]†But David said to Saul, "Your servant used to keep sheep for his father. And when there came a lion, or a bear, and took a lamb from the flock, [35]†I went after him and struck him and delivered it out of his mouth. And if he arose against me, I caught him by his beard and struck him and killed him. [36]†Your servant has struck down both lions and bears, and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be like one of them, for he has defied the armies of the living God." [37]†And David said, "The Lord who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine." And Saul said to David, "Go, and the Lord be with you!"

[38]†Then Saul clothed David with his armor. He put a helmet of bronze on his head and clothed him with a coat of mail, [39]†and David strapped his sword over his armor. And he tried in vain to go, for he had not tested them. Then David said to Saul, "I cannot go with these, for I have not tested them." So David put them off. [40]†Then he took his staff in his hand and chose five smooth stones from the brook and put them in his shepherd's pouch. His sling was in his hand, and he approached the Philistine.

[41]†And the Philistine moved forward and came near to David, with his shield-bearer in front of him. [42]†And when the Philistine looked and saw David, he disdained him, for he was but a youth, ruddy and handsome in appearance. [43]†And the Philistine said to David, "Am I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?" And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. [44]†The Philistine said to David, "Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the air and to the beasts of the field." [45]†Then David said to the Philistine, "You come to me with a sword and with a spear and with a javelin, but I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. [46]†This day the Lord will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you down and cut off your head. And I will give the dead bodies of the host of the Philistines this day to the birds of the air and to the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel, [47]†and that all this assembly may know that the Lord saves not with sword and spear. For the battle is the Lord's, and he will give you into our hand."

48 † When the Philistine arose and came and drew near to meet David,
David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet the Philistine. 49 † And
David put his hand in his bag and took out a stone and slung it and struck
the Philistine on his forehead. The stone sank into his forehead, and he fell
on his face to the ground.
50 † So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone,
and struck the Philistine and killed him. There was no sword in the hand of
David. 51 † Then David ran and stood over the Philistine and took his sword
and drew it out of its sheath and killed him and cut off his head with it.
When the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they fled. 52 † And
the men of Israel and Judah rose with a shout and pursued the Philistines as
far as Gath[1] and the gates of Ekron, so that the wounded Philistines fell on
the way from Shaaraim as far as Gath and Ekron. 53 And the people of Israel
came back from chasing the Philistines, and they plundered their camp.
54 † And David took the head of the Philistine and brought it to Jerusalem,
but he put his armor in his tent.
55 † As soon as Saul saw David go out against the Philistine, he said to
Abner, the commander of the army, “Abner, whose son is this youth?” And
Abner said, “As your soul lives, O king, I do not know.” 56 And the king
said, “Inquire whose son the boy is.” 57 † And as soon as David returned
from the striking down of the Philistine, Abner took him, and brought him
before Saul with the head of the Philistine in his hand. 58 † And Saul said to
him, “Whose son are you, young man?” And David answered, “I am the son
of your servant Jesse the Bethlehemite.”

David and Jonathan's Friendship

18 [1]†† As soon as he had finished speaking to Saul, the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. [2]And Saul took him that day and would not let him return to his father's house. [3]† Then Jonathan made a covenant with David, because he loved him as his own soul. [4]† And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was on him and gave it to David, and his armor, and even his sword and his bow and his belt. [5]† And David went out and was successful wherever Saul sent him, so that Saul set him over the men of war. And this was good in the sight of all the people and also in the sight of Saul's servants.

Saul's Jealousy of David

6 † † † As they were coming home, when David returned from striking
down the Philistine, the women came out of all the cities of Israel, singing
and dancing, to meet King Saul, with tambourines, with songs of joy, and
with musical instruments.[1] 7 And the women sang to one another as they
celebrated,

"Saul has struck down his thousands,
and David his ten thousands."

8 And Saul was very angry, and this saying displeased him. He said, "They
have ascribed to David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed
thousands, and what more can he have but the kingdom?" 9 † And Saul eyed
David from that day on.

10 † The next day a harmful spirit from God rushed upon Saul, and he
raved within his house while David was playing the lyre, as he did day by
day. Saul had his spear in his hand. 11 And Saul hurled the spear, for he
thought, "I will pin David to the wall." But David evaded him twice.

12 † Saul was afraid of David because the Lord was with him but had
departed from Saul. 13 † So Saul removed him from his presence and made
him a commander of a thousand. And he went out and came in before the
people. 14 † And David had success in all his undertakings, for the Lord was
with him. 15 And when Saul saw that he had great success, he stood in
fearful awe of him. 16 † But all Israel and Judah loved David, for he went out
and came in before them.

David Marries Michal

17 ‡ † Then Saul said to David, “Here is my elder daughter Merab. I will
give her to you for a wife. Only be valiant for me and fight the Lord’s
battles.” For Saul thought, “Let not my hand be against him, but let the
hand of the Philistines be against him.” 18 † And David said to Saul, “Who
am I, and who are my relatives, my father’s clan in Israel, that I should be
son-in-law to the king?” 19 † But at the time when Merab, Saul’s daughter,
should have been given to David, she was given to Adriel the Meholathite
for a wife.

20 † Now Saul’s daughter Michal loved David. And they told Saul, and the
thing pleased him. 21 † Saul thought, “Let me give her to him, that she may
be a snare for him and that the hand of the Philistines may be against him.”
Therefore Saul said to David a second time,[1] “You shall now be my son-in-
law.” 22 And Saul commanded his servants, “Speak to David in private and
say, ‘Behold, the king has delight in you, and all his servants love you. Now
then become the king’s son-in-law.’” 23 † And Saul’s servants spoke those
words in the ears of David. And David said, “Does it seem to you a little
thing to become the king’s son-in-law, since I am a poor man and have no
reputation?” 24 And the servants of Saul told him, “Thus and so did David
speak.” 25 † Then Saul said, “Thus shall you say to David, ‘The king desires
no bride-price except a hundred foreskins of the Philistines, that he may be
avenged of the king’s enemies.’” Now Saul thought to make David fall by
the hand of the Philistines. 26 And when his servants told David these words,
it pleased David well to be the king’s son-in-law. Before the time had
expired, 27 † David arose and went, along with his men, and killed two
hundred of the Philistines. And David brought their foreskins, which were
given in full number to the king, that he might become the king’s son-in-
law. And Saul gave him his daughter Michal for a wife. 28 † But when Saul
saw and knew that the Lord was with David, and that Michal, Saul’s
daughter, loved him, 29 † Saul was even more afraid of David. So Saul was
David’s enemy continually.

30 † Then the princes of the Philistines came out to battle, and as often as
they came out David had more success than all the servants of Saul, so that

his name was highly esteemed.

Saul Tries to Kill David

19 [1]†And Saul spoke to Jonathan his son and to all his servants, that
they should kill David. But Jonathan, Saul's son, delighted much in David.
[2]†And Jonathan told David, "Saul my father seeks to kill you. Therefore be
on your guard in the morning. Stay in a secret place and hide yourself. [3]And
I will go out and stand beside my father in the field where you are, and I
will speak to my father about you. And if I learn anything I will tell you."
[4]†And Jonathan spoke well of David to Saul his father and said to him, "Let
not the king sin against his servant David, because he has not sinned against
you, and because his deeds have brought good to you. [5]†For he took his life
in his hand and he struck down the Philistine, and the Lord worked a great
salvation for all Israel. You saw it, and rejoiced. Why then will you sin
against innocent blood by killing David without cause?" [6]† And Saul
listened to the voice of Jonathan. Saul swore, "As the Lord lives, he shall
not be put to death." [7]And Jonathan called David, and Jonathan reported to
him all these things. And Jonathan brought David to Saul, and he was in his
presence as before.

[8]† And there was war again. And David went out and fought with the
Philistines and struck them with a great blow, so that they fled before him.
[9]† Then a harmful spirit from the Lord came upon Saul, as he sat in his
house with his spear in his hand. And David was playing the lyre. [10]And
Saul sought to pin David to the wall with the spear, but he eluded Saul, so
that he struck the spear into the wall. And David fled and escaped that
night.

[11]†Saul sent messengers to David's house to watch him, that he might kill
him in the morning. But Michal, David's wife, told him, "If you do not
escape with your life tonight, tomorrow you will be killed." [12]So Michal let
David down through the window, and he fled away and escaped. [13]†Michal
took an image and laid it on the bed and put a pillow of goats' hair at its
head and covered it with the clothes. [14]†And when Saul sent messengers to
take David, she said, "He is sick." [15]Then Saul sent the messengers to see
David, saying, "Bring him up to me in the bed, that I may kill him." [16]And

when the messengers came in, behold, the image was in the bed, with the pillow of goats' hair at its head. [17] † Saul said to Michal, "Why have you deceived me thus and let my enemy go, so that he has escaped?" And Michal answered Saul, "He said to me, 'Let me go. Why should I kill you?'"

[18] † Now David fled and escaped, and he came to Samuel at Ramah and told him all that Saul had done to him. And he and Samuel went and lived at Naioth. [19] And it was told Saul, "Behold, David is at Naioth in Ramah." [20] † Then Saul sent messengers to take David, and when they saw the company of the prophets prophesying, and Samuel standing as head over them, the Spirit of God came upon the messengers of Saul, and they also prophesied. [21] When it was told Saul, he sent other messengers, and they also prophesied. And Saul sent messengers again the third time, and they also prophesied. [22] † Then he himself went to Ramah and came to the great well that is in Secu. And he asked, "Where are Samuel and David?" And one said, "Behold, they are at Naioth in Ramah." [23] † And he went there to Naioth in Ramah. And the Spirit of God came upon him also, and as he went he prophesied until he came to Naioth in Ramah. [24] And he too stripped off his clothes, and he too prophesied before Samuel and lay naked all that day and all that night. Thus it is said, "Is Saul also among the prophets?"

Jonathan Warns David

20 [1]†Then David fled from Naioth in Ramah and came and said
before Jonathan, “What have I done? What is my guilt? And what is my sin
before your father, that he seeks my life?” [2]†And he said to him, “Far from
it! You shall not die. Behold, my father does nothing either great or small
without disclosing it to me. And why should my father hide this from me? It
is not so.” [3]†But David vowed again, saying, “Your father knows well that I
have found favor in your eyes, and he thinks, ‘Do not let Jonathan know
this, lest he be grieved.’ But truly, as the Lord lives and as your soul lives,
there is but a step between me and death.” [4]†Then Jonathan said to David,
“Whatever you say, I will do for you.” [5]†David said to Jonathan, “Behold,
tomorrow is the new moon, and I should not fail to sit at table with the king.
But let me go, that I may hide myself in the field till the third day at
evening. [6]†If your father misses me at all, then say, ‘David earnestly asked
leave of me to run to Bethlehem his city, for there is a yearly sacrifice there
for all the clan.’ [7]If he says, ‘Good!’ it will be well with your servant, but if
he is angry, then know that harm is determined by him. [8]†Therefore deal
kindly with your servant, for you have brought your servant into a covenant
of the Lord with you. But if there is guilt in me, kill me yourself, for why
should you bring me to your father?” [9]And Jonathan said, “Far be it from
you! If I knew that it was determined by my father that harm should come
to you, would I not tell you?” [10]†Then David said to Jonathan, “Who will
tell me if your father answers you roughly?” [11]†And Jonathan said to David,
“Come, let us go out into the field.” So they both went out into the field.

[12]†And Jonathan said to David, “The Lord, the God of Israel, be witness![1] When I have sounded out my father, about this time tomorrow, or the third day, behold, if he is well disposed toward David, shall I not then send and disclose it to you? [13]†But should it please my father to do you harm, the Lord do so to Jonathan and more also if I do not disclose it to you and send you away, that you may go in safety. May the Lord be with you, as he has been with my father. [14]†If I am still alive, show me the steadfast love of the Lord, that I may not die; [15]†and do not cut off[2] your steadfast love from my

house forever, when the Lord cuts off every one of the enemies of David from the face of the earth.” [16]† And Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David, saying, “May[3] the Lord take vengeance on David’s enemies.” [17]And Jonathan made David swear again by his love for him, for he loved him as he loved his own soul.

[18]Then Jonathan said to him, “Tomorrow is the new moon, and you will be missed, because your seat will be empty. [19]† On the third day go down quickly to the place where you hid yourself when the matter was in hand, and remain beside the stone heap.[4] [20]And I will shoot three arrows to the side of it, as though I shot at a mark. [21]† And behold, I will send the young man, saying, ‘Go, find the arrows.’ If I say to the young man, ‘Look, the arrows are on this side of you, take them,’ then you are to come, for, as the Lord lives, it is safe for you and there is no danger. [22]† But if I say to the youth, ‘Look, the arrows are beyond you,’ then go, for the Lord has sent you away. [23]† And as for the matter of which you and I have spoken, behold, the Lord is between you and me forever.”

[24]† So David hid himself in the field. And when the new moon came, the king sat down to eat food. [25]† The king sat on his seat, as at other times, on the seat by the wall. Jonathan sat opposite,[5] and Abner sat by Saul’s side, but David’s place was empty.

[26]† Yet Saul did not say anything that day, for he thought, “Something has happened to him. He is not clean; surely he is not clean.” [27]But on the second day, the day after the new moon, David’s place was empty. And Saul said to Jonathan his son, “Why has not the son of Jesse come to the meal, either yesterday or today?” [28]Jonathan answered Saul, “David earnestly asked leave of me to go to Bethlehem. [29]† He said, ‘Let me go, for our clan holds a sacrifice in the city, and my brother has commanded me to be there. So now, if I have found favor in your eyes, let me get away and see my brothers.’ For this reason he has not come to the king’s table.”

[30]† Then Saul’s anger was kindled against Jonathan, and he said to him, “You son of a perverse, rebellious woman, do I not know that you have chosen the son of Jesse to your own shame, and to the shame of your mother’s nakedness? [31]† For as long as the son of Jesse lives on the earth, neither you nor your kingdom shall be established. Therefore send and bring him to me, for he shall surely die.” [32]Then Jonathan answered Saul his

father, “Why should he be put to death? What has he done?” 33 †But Saul hurled his spear at him to strike him. So Jonathan knew that his father was determined to put David to death. 34 †And Jonathan rose from the table in fierce anger and ate no food the second day of the month, for he was grieved for David, because his father had disgraced him.

35 †In the morning Jonathan went out into the field to the appointment with David, and with him a little boy. 36 †And he said to his boy, “Run and find the arrows that I shoot.” As the boy ran, he shot an arrow beyond him. 37 And when the boy came to the place of the arrow that Jonathan had shot, Jonathan called after the boy and said, “Is not the arrow beyond you?” 38 And Jonathan called after the boy, “Hurry! Be quick! Do not stay!” So Jonathan’s boy gathered up the arrows and came to his master. 39 †But the boy knew nothing. Only Jonathan and David knew the matter. 40 †And Jonathan gave his weapons to his boy and said to him, “Go and carry them to the city.” 41 †And as soon as the boy had gone, David rose from beside the stone heap[1] and fell on his face to the ground and bowed three times. And they kissed one another and wept with one another, David weeping the most. 42 †Then Jonathan said to David, “Go in peace, because we have sworn both of us in the name of the Lord, saying, ‘The Lord shall be between me and you, and between my offspring and your offspring, forever.’” And he rose and departed, and Jonathan went into the city.[2]

David and the Holy Bread

21 [1][3] Then David came to Nob to Ahimelech the priest. And Ahimelech came to meet David trembling and said to him, “Why are you alone, and no one with you?” [2]And David said to Ahimelech the priest, “The king has charged me with a matter and said to me, ‘Let no one know anything of the matter about which I send you, and with which I have charged you.’ I have made an appointment with the young men for such and such a place. [3]Now then, what do you have on hand? Give me five loaves of bread, or whatever is here.” [4]And the priest answered David, “I have no common bread on hand, but there is holy bread—if the young men have kept themselves from women.” [5]And David answered the priest, “Truly women have been kept from us as always when I go on an expedition. The vessels of the young men are holy even when it is an ordinary journey. How much more today will their vessels be holy?” [6]So the priest gave him the holy bread, for there was no bread there but the bread of the Presence, which is removed from before the Lord, to be replaced by hot bread on the day it is taken away.

[7]Now a certain man of the servants of Saul was there that day, detained before the Lord. His name was Doeg the Edomite, the chief of Saul’s herdsmen.

[8]Then David said to Ahimelech, “Then have you not here a spear or a sword at hand? For I have brought neither my sword nor my weapons with me, because the king’s business required haste.” [9]And the priest said, “The sword of Goliath the Philistine, whom you struck down in the Valley of Elah, behold, it is here wrapped in a cloth behind the ephod. If you will take that, take it, for there is none but that here.” And David said, “There is none like that; give it to me.”

David Flees to Gath

[10]And David rose and fled that day from Saul and went to Achish the king of Gath. [11]And the servants of Achish said to him, “Is not this David the king of the land? Did they not sing to one another of him in dances,

‘ Saul has struck down his thousands,
and David his ten thousands’?”

[12]And David took these words to heart and was much afraid of Achish the king of Gath. [13]So he changed his behavior before them and pretended to be insane in their hands and made marks on the doors of the gate and let his spittle run down his beard. [14]Then Achish said to his servants, “Behold, you see the man is mad. Why then have you brought him to me? [15]Do I lack madmen, that you have brought this fellow to behave as a madman in my presence? Shall this fellow come into my house?”

David at the Cave of Adullam

22 [1]David departed from there and escaped to the cave of Adullam. And when his brothers and all his father's house heard it, they went down there to him. [2]And everyone who was in distress, and everyone who was in debt, and everyone who was bitter in soul,[1] gathered to him. And he became captain over them. And there were with him about four hundred men.

[3]And David went from there to Mizpeh of Moab. And he said to the king of Moab, "Please let my father and my mother stay[2] with you, till I know what God will do for me." [4]And he left them with the king of Moab, and they stayed with him all the time that David was in the stronghold. [5]Then the prophet Gad said to David, "Do not remain in the stronghold; depart, and go into the land of Judah." So David departed and went into the forest of Hereth.

Saul Kills the Priests at Nob

6 Now Saul heard that David was discovered, and the men who were with
him. Saul was sitting at Gibeah under the tamarisk tree on the height with
his spear in his hand, and all his servants were standing about him. 7 And
Saul said to his servants who stood about him, "Hear now, people of
Benjamin; will the son of Jesse give every one of you fields and vineyards,
will he make you all commanders of thousands and commanders of
hundreds, 8 that all of you have conspired against me? No one discloses to
me when my son makes a covenant with the son of Jesse. None of you is
sorry for me or discloses to me that my son has stirred up my servant
against me, to lie in wait, as at this day." 9 Then answered Doeg the
Edomite, who stood by the servants of Saul, "I saw the son of Jesse coming
to Nob, to Ahimelech the son of Ahitub, 10 and he inquired of the Lord for
him and gave him provisions and gave him the sword of Goliath the
Philistine."

11 Then the king sent to summon Ahimelech the priest, the son of Ahitub,
and all his father's house, the priests who were at Nob, and all of them
came to the king. 12 And Saul said, "Hear now, son of Ahitub." And he
answered, "Here I am, my lord." 13 And Saul said to him, "Why have you
conspired against me, you and the son of Jesse, in that you have given him
bread and a sword and have inquired of God for him, so that he has risen
against me, to lie in wait, as at this day?" 14 Then Ahimelech answered the
king, "And who among all your servants is so faithful as David, who is the
king's son-in-law, and captain over[3] your bodyguard, and honored in your
house? 15 Is today the first time that I have inquired of God for him? No! Let
not the king impute anything to his servant or to all the house of my father,
for your servant has known nothing of all this, much or little." 16 And the
king said, "You shall surely die, Ahimelech, you and all your father's
house." 17 And the king said to the guard who stood about him, "Turn and
kill the priests of the Lord, because their hand also is with David, and they
knew that he fled and did not disclose it to me." But the servants of the king
would not put out their hand to strike the priests of the Lord. 18 Then the king
said to Doeg, "You turn and strike the priests." And Doeg the Edomite

turned and struck down the priests, and he killed on that day eighty-five persons who wore the linen ephod. [19]And Nob, the city of the priests, he put to the sword; both man and woman, child and infant, ox, donkey and sheep, he put to the sword.

[20]But one of the sons of Ahimelech the son of Ahitub, named Abiathar, escaped and fled after David. [21]And Abiathar told David that Saul had killed the priests of the Lord. [22]And David said to Abiathar, "I knew on that day, when Doeg the Edomite was there, that he would surely tell Saul. I have occasioned the death of all the persons of your father's house. [23]Stay with me; do not be afraid, for he who seeks my life seeks your life. With me you shall be in safekeeping."

David Saves the City of Keilah

23 [1]Now they told David, “Behold, the Philistines are fighting
against Keilah and are robbing the threshing floors.” [2]Therefore David
inquired of the Lord, “Shall I go and attack these Philistines?” And the Lord
said to David, “Go and attack the Philistines and save Keilah.” [3]But David’s
men said to him, “Behold, we are afraid here in Judah; how much more
then if we go to Keilah against the armies of the Philistines?” [4]Then David
inquired of the Lord again. And the Lord answered him, “Arise, go down to
Keilah, for I will give the Philistines into your hand.” [5]And David and his
men went to Keilah and fought with the Philistines and brought away their
livestock and struck them with a great blow. So David saved the inhabitants
of Keilah.

[6]When Abiathar the son of Ahimelech had fled to David to Keilah, he had
come down with an ephod in his hand. [7]Now it was told Saul that David had
come to Keilah. And Saul said, “God has given him into my hand, for he
has shut himself in by entering a town that has gates and bars.” [8]And Saul
summoned all the people to war, to go down to Keilah, to besiege David
and his men. [9]David knew that Saul was plotting harm against him. And he
said to Abiathar the priest, “Bring the ephod here.” [10]Then said David, “O
Lord, the God of Israel, your servant has surely heard that Saul seeks to
come to Keilah, to destroy the city on my account. [11]Will the men of Keilah
surrender me into his hand? Will Saul come down, as your servant has
heard? O Lord, the God of Israel, please tell your servant.” And the Lord
said, “He will come down.” [12]Then David said, “Will the men of Keilah
surrender me and my men into the hand of Saul?” And the Lord said, “They
will surrender you.” [13]Then David and his men, who were about six
hundred, arose and departed from Keilah, and they went wherever they
could go. When Saul was told that David had escaped from Keilah, he gave
up the expedition. [14]And David remained in the strongholds in the
wilderness, in the hill country of the wilderness of Ziph. And Saul sought
him every day, but God did not give him into his hand.

Saul Pursues David

15 David saw that Saul had come out to seek his life. David was in the
wilderness of Ziph at Horesh. 16 And Jonathan, Saul's son, rose and went to
David at Horesh, and strengthened his hand in God. 17 And he said to him,
"Do not fear, for the hand of Saul my father shall not find you. You shall be
king over Israel, and I shall be next to you. Saul my father also knows this."
18 And the two of them made a covenant before the LORD. David remained at
Horesh, and Jonathan went home.

19 Then the Ziphites went up to Saul at Gibeah, saying, "Is not David
hiding among us in the strongholds at Horesh, on the hill of Hachilah,
which is south of Jeshimon? 20 Now come down, O king, according to all
your heart's desire to come down, and our part shall be to surrender him
into the king's hand." 21 And Saul said, "May you be blessed by the LORD, for
you have had compassion on me. 22 Go, make yet more sure. Know and see
the place where his foot is, and who has seen him there, for it is told me that
he is very cunning. 23 See therefore and take note of all the lurking places
where he hides, and come back to me with sure information. Then I will go
with you. And if he is in the land, I will search him out among all the
thousands of Judah." 24 And they arose and went to Ziph ahead of Saul.

Now David and his men were in the wilderness of Maon, in the Arabah to
the south of Jeshimon. 25 And Saul and his men went to seek him. And
David was told, so he went down to the rock and lived in the wilderness of
Maon. And when Saul heard that, he pursued after David in the wilderness
of Maon. 26 Saul went on one side of the mountain, and David and his men
on the other side of the mountain. And David was hurrying to get away
from Saul. As Saul and his men were closing in on David and his men to
capture them, 27 a messenger came to Saul, saying, "Hurry and come, for the
Philistines have made a raid against the land." 28 So Saul returned from
pursuing after David and went against the Philistines. Therefore that place
was called the Rock of Escape.[1] 29[2] And David went up from there and
lived in the strongholds of Engedi.

David Spares Saul's Life

24 [1][3] When Saul returned from following the Philistines, he was
told, "Behold, David is in the wilderness of Engedi." [2]Then Saul took three
thousand chosen men out of all Israel and went to seek David and his men
in front of the Wildgoats' Rocks. [3]And he came to the sheepfolds by the
way, where there was a cave, and Saul went in to relieve himself.[4] Now
David and his men were sitting in the innermost parts of the cave. [4]And the
men of David said to him, "Here is the day of which the Lord said to you,
'Behold, I will give your enemy into your hand, and you shall do to him as
it shall seem good to you.'" Then David arose and stealthily cut off a corner
of Saul's robe. [5]And afterward David's heart struck him, because he had cut
off a corner of Saul's robe. [6]He said to his men, "The Lord forbid that I
should do this thing to my lord, the Lord's anointed, to put out my hand
against him, seeing he is the Lord's anointed." [7]So David persuaded his men
with these words and did not permit them to attack Saul. And Saul rose up
and left the cave and went on his way.

[8]Afterward David also arose and went out of the cave, and called after
Saul, "My lord the king!" And when Saul looked behind him, David bowed
with his face to the earth and paid homage. [9]And David said to Saul, "Why
do you listen to the words of men who say, 'Behold, David seeks your
harm'? [10]Behold, this day your eyes have seen how the Lord gave you today
into my hand in the cave. And some told me to kill you, but I spared you.[1] I
said, 'I will not put out my hand against my lord, for he is the Lord's
anointed.' [11]See, my father, see the corner of your robe in my hand. For by
the fact that I cut off the corner of your robe and did not kill you, you may
know and see that there is no wrong or treason in my hands. I have not
sinned against you, though you hunt my life to take it. [12]May the Lord judge
between me and you, may the Lord avenge me against you, but my hand
shall not be against you. [13]As the proverb of the ancients says, 'Out of the
wicked comes wickedness.' But my hand shall not be against you. [14]After
whom has the king of Israel come out? After whom do you pursue? After a
dead dog! After a flea! [15]May the Lord therefore be judge and give sentence

between me and you, and see to it and plead my cause and deliver me from your hand.”

16 As soon as David had finished speaking these words to Saul, Saul said,
“Is this your voice, my son David?” And Saul lifted up his voice and wept.
17 He said to David, “You are more righteous than I, for you have repaid me
good, whereas I have repaid you evil. 18 And you have declared this day how
you have dealt well with me, in that you did not kill me when the Lord put
me into your hands. 19 For if a man finds his enemy, will he let him go away
safe? So may the Lord reward you with good for what you have done to me
this day. 20 And now, behold, I know that you shall surely be king, and that
the kingdom of Israel shall be established in your hand. 21 Swear to me
therefore by the Lord that you will not cut off my offspring after me, and
that you will not destroy my name out of my father’s house.” 22 And David
swore this to Saul. Then Saul went home, but David and his men went up to
the stronghold.

The Death of Samuel

25 [1]Now Samuel died. And all Israel assembled and mourned for him, and they buried him in his house at Ramah.

David and Abigail

Then David rose and went down to the wilderness of Paran. [2]And there was a man in Maon whose business was in Carmel. The man was very rich; he had three thousand sheep and a thousand goats. He was shearing his sheep in Carmel. [3]Now the name of the man was Nabal, and the name of his wife Abigail. The woman was discerning and beautiful, but the man was harsh and badly behaved; he was a Calebite. [4]David heard in the wilderness that Nabal was shearing his sheep. [5]So David sent ten young men. And David said to the young men, "Go up to Carmel, and go to Nabal and greet him in my name. [6]And thus you shall greet him: 'Peace be to you, and peace be to your house, and peace be to all that you have. [7]I hear that you have shearers. Now your shepherds have been with us, and we did them no harm, and they missed nothing all the time they were in Carmel. [8]Ask your young men, and they will tell you. Therefore let my young men find favor in your eyes, for we come on a feast day. Please give whatever you have at hand to your servants and to your son David.'"

[9]When David's young men came, they said all this to Nabal in the name of David, and then they waited. [10]And Nabal answered David's servants, "Who is David? Who is the son of Jesse? There are many servants these days who are breaking away from their masters. [11]Shall I take my bread and my water and my meat that I have killed for my shearers and give it to men who come from I do not know where?" [12]So David's young men turned away and came back and told him all this. [13]And David said to his men, "Every man strap on his sword!" And every man of them strapped on his sword. David also strapped on his sword. And about four hundred men went up after David, while two hundred remained with the baggage.

[14]But one of the young men told Abigail, Nabal's wife, "Behold, David sent messengers out of the wilderness to greet our master, and he railed at them. [15]Yet the men were very good to us, and we suffered no harm, and we did not miss anything when we were in the fields, as long as we went with them. [16]They were a wall to us both by night and by day, all the while we were with them keeping the sheep. [17]Now therefore know this and consider

what you should do, for harm is determined against our master and against all his house, and he is such a worthless man that one cannot speak to him."

18 Then Abigail made haste and took two hundred loaves and two skins of wine and five sheep already prepared and five seahs[1] of parched grain and a hundred clusters of raisins and two hundred cakes of figs, and laid them on donkeys. 19 And she said to her young men, "Go on before me; behold, I come after you." But she did not tell her husband Nabal. 20 And as she rode on the donkey and came down under cover of the mountain, behold, David and his men came down toward her, and she met them. 21 Now David had said, "Surely in vain have I guarded all that this fellow has in the wilderness, so that nothing was missed of all that belonged to him, and he has returned me evil for good. 22 God do so to the enemies of David[2] and more also, if by morning I leave so much as one male of all who belong to him."

23 When Abigail saw David, she hurried and got down from the donkey and fell before David on her face and bowed to the ground. 24 She fell at his feet and said, "On me alone, my lord, be the guilt. Please let your servant speak in your ears, and hear the words of your servant. 25 Let not my lord regard this worthless fellow, Nabal, for as his name is, so is he. Nabal[3] is his name, and folly is with him. But I your servant did not see the young men of my lord, whom you sent. 26 Now then, my lord, as the Lord lives, and as your soul lives, because the Lord has restrained you from bloodguilt and from saving with your own hand, now then let your enemies and those who seek to do evil to my lord be as Nabal. 27 And now let this present that your servant has brought to my lord be given to the young men who follow my lord. 28 Please forgive the trespass of your servant. For the Lord will certainly make my lord a sure house, because my lord is fighting the battles of the Lord, and evil shall not be found in you so long as you live. 29 If men rise up to pursue you and to seek your life, the life of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of the living in the care of the Lord your God. And the lives of your enemies he shall sling out as from the hollow of a sling. 30 And when the Lord has done to my lord according to all the good that he has spoken concerning you and has appointed you prince over Israel, 31 my lord shall have no cause of grief or pangs of conscience for having shed blood

without cause or for my lord taking vengeance himself. And when the Lord has dealt well with my lord, then remember your servant."

[32]And David said to Abigail, "Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, who sent you this day to meet me! [33]Blessed be your discretion, and blessed be you, who have kept me this day from bloodguilt and from avenging myself with my own hand! [34]For as surely as the Lord, the God of Israel, lives, who has restrained me from hurting you, unless you had hurried and come to meet me, truly by morning there had not been left to Nabal so much as one male." [35]Then David received from her hand what she had brought him. And he said to her, "Go up in peace to your house. See, I have obeyed your voice, and I have granted your petition."

[36]And Abigail came to Nabal, and behold, he was holding a feast in his house, like the feast of a king. And Nabal's heart was merry within him, for he was very drunk. So she told him nothing at all until the morning light. [37]In the morning, when the wine had gone out of Nabal, his wife told him these things, and his heart died within him, and he became as a stone. [38]And about ten days later the Lord struck Nabal, and he died.

[39]When David heard that Nabal was dead, he said, "Blessed be the Lord who has avenged the insult I received at the hand of Nabal, and has kept back his servant from wrongdoing. The Lord has returned the evil of Nabal on his own head." Then David sent and spoke to Abigail, to take her as his wife. [40]When the servants of David came to Abigail at Carmel, they said to her, "David has sent us to you to take you to him as his wife." [41]And she rose and bowed with her face to the ground and said, "Behold, your handmaid is a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my lord." [42]And Abigail hurried and rose and mounted a donkey, and her five young women attended her. She followed the messengers of David and became his wife.

[43]David also took Ahinoam of Jezreel, and both of them became his wives. [44]Saul had given Michal his daughter, David's wife, to Palti the son of Laish, who was of Gallim.

David Spares Saul Again

26 [1]Then the Ziphites came to Saul at Gibeah, saying, “Is not David
hiding himself on the hill of Hachilah, which is on the east of Jeshimon?”
[2]So Saul arose and went down to the wilderness of Ziph with three thousand
chosen men of Israel to seek David in the wilderness of Ziph. [3]And Saul
encamped on the hill of Hachilah, which is beside the road on the east of
Jeshimon. But David remained in the wilderness. When he saw that Saul
came after him into the wilderness, [4]David sent out spies and learned that
Saul had come. [5]Then David rose and came to the place where Saul had
encamped. And David saw the place where Saul lay, with Abner the son of
Ner, the commander of his army. Saul was lying within the encampment,
while the army was encamped around him.

[6]Then David said to Ahimelech the Hittite, and to Joab’s brother Abishai
the son of Zeruiah, “Who will go down with me into the camp to Saul?”
And Abishai said, “I will go down with you.” [7]So David and Abishai went
to the army by night. And there lay Saul sleeping within the encampment,
with his spear stuck in the ground at his head, and Abner and the army lay
around him. [8]Then said Abishai to David, “God has given your enemy into
your hand this day. Now please let me pin him to the earth with one stroke
of the spear, and I will not strike him twice.” [9]But David said to Abishai,
“Do not destroy him, for who can put out his hand against the Lord’s
anointed and be guiltless?” [10]And David said, “As the Lord lives, the Lord
will strike him, or his day will come to die, or he will go down into battle
and perish. [11]The Lord forbid that I should put out my hand against the
Lord’s anointed. But take now the spear that is at his head and the jar of
water, and let us go.” [12]So David took the spear and the jar of water from
Saul’s head, and they went away. No man saw it or knew it, nor did any
awake, for they were all asleep, because a deep sleep from the Lord had
fallen upon them.

[13]Then David went over to the other side and stood far off on the top of
the hill, with a great space between them. [14]And David called to the army,
and to Abner the son of Ner, saying, “Will you not answer, Abner?” Then

Abner answered, “Who are you who calls to the king?” [15]And David said to Abner, “Are you not a man? Who is like you in Israel? Why then have you not kept watch over your lord the king? For one of the people came in to destroy the king your lord. [16]This thing that you have done is not good. As the Lord lives, you deserve to die, because you have not kept watch over your lord, the Lord’s anointed. And now see where the king’s spear is and the jar of water that was at his head.”

[17]Saul recognized David’s voice and said, “Is this your voice, my son David?” And David said, “It is my voice, my lord, O king.” [18]And he said, “Why does my lord pursue after his servant? For what have I done? What evil is on my hands? [19]Now therefore let my lord the king hear the words of his servant. If it is the Lord who has stirred you up against me, may he accept an offering, but if it is men, may they be cursed before the Lord, for they have driven me out this day that I should have no share in the heritage of the Lord, saying, ‘Go, serve other gods.’ [20]Now therefore, let not my blood fall to the earth away from the presence of the Lord, for the king of Israel has come out to seek a single flea like one who hunts a partridge in the mountains.”

[21]Then Saul said, “I have sinned. Return, my son David, for I will no more do you harm, because my life was precious in your eyes this day. Behold, I have acted foolishly, and have made a great mistake.” [22]And David answered and said, “Here is the spear, O king! Let one of the young men come over and take it. [23]The Lord rewards every man for his righteousness and his faithfulness, for the Lord gave you into my hand today, and I would not put out my hand against the Lord’s anointed. [24]Behold, as your life was precious this day in my sight, so may my life be precious in the sight of the Lord, and may he deliver me out of all tribulation.” [25]Then Saul said to David, “Blessed be you, my son David! You will do many things and will succeed in them.” So David went his way, and Saul returned to his place.

David Flees to the Philistines

27 [1]Then David said in his heart, “Now I shall perish one day by the hand of Saul. There is nothing better for me than that I should escape to the land of the Philistines. Then Saul will despair of seeking me any longer within the borders of Israel, and I shall escape out of his hand.” [2]So David arose and went over, he and the six hundred men who were with him, to Achish the son of Maoch, king of Gath. [3]And David lived with Achish at Gath, he and his men, every man with his household, and David with his two wives, Ahinoam of Jezreel, and Abigail of Carmel, Nabal’s widow. [4]And when it was told Saul that David had fled to Gath, he no longer sought him.

[5]Then David said to Achish, “If I have found favor in your eyes, let a place be given me in one of the country towns, that I may dwell there. For why should your servant dwell in the royal city with you?” [6]So that day Achish gave him Ziklag. Therefore Ziklag has belonged to the kings of Judah to this day. [7]And the number of the days that David lived in the country of the Philistines was a year and four months.

[8]Now David and his men went up and made raids against the Geshurites, the Girzites, and the Amalekites, for these were the inhabitants of the land from of old, as far as Shur, to the land of Egypt. [9]And David would strike the land and would leave neither man nor woman alive, but would take away the sheep, the oxen, the donkeys, the camels, and the garments, and come back to Achish. [10]When Achish asked, “Where have you made a raid today?” David would say, “Against the Negeb of Judah,” or, “Against the Negeb of the Jerahmeelites,” or, “Against the Negeb of the Kenites.” [11]And David would leave neither man nor woman alive to bring news to Gath, thinking, “lest they should tell about us and say, ‘So David has done.’” Such was his custom all the while he lived in the country of the Philistines. [12]And Achish trusted David, thinking, “He has made himself an utter stench to his people Israel; therefore he shall always be my servant.”

Saul and the Medium of En-dor

28 [1]In those days the Philistines gathered their forces for war, to fight against Israel. And Achish said to David, “Understand that you and your men are to go out with me in the army.” [2]David said to Achish, “Very well, you shall know what your servant can do.” And Achish said to David, “Very well, I will make you my bodyguard for life.”

[3]Now Samuel had died, and all Israel had mourned for him and buried him in Ramah, his own city. And Saul had put the mediums and the necromancers out of the land. [4]The Philistines assembled and came and encamped at Shunem. And Saul gathered all Israel, and they encamped at Gilboa. [5]When Saul saw the army of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart trembled greatly. [6]And when Saul inquired of the Lord, the Lord did not answer him, either by dreams, or by Urim, or by prophets. [7]Then Saul said to his servants, “Seek out for me a woman who is a medium, that I may go to her and inquire of her.” And his servants said to him, “Behold, there is a medium at En-dor.”

[8]So Saul disguised himself and put on other garments and went, he and two men with him. And they came to the woman by night. And he said, “Divine for me by a spirit and bring up for me whomever I shall name to you.” [9]The woman said to him, “Surely you know what Saul has done, how he has cut off the mediums and the necromancers from the land. Why then are you laying a trap for my life to bring about my death?” [10]But Saul swore to her by the Lord, “As the Lord lives, no punishment shall come upon you for this thing.” [11]Then the woman said, “Whom shall I bring up for you?” He said, “Bring up Samuel for me.” [12]When the woman saw Samuel, she cried out with a loud voice. And the woman said to Saul, “Why have you deceived me? You are Saul.” [13]The king said to her, “Do not be afraid. What do you see?” And the woman said to Saul, “I see a god coming up out of the earth.” [14]He said to her, “What is his appearance?” And she said, “An old man is coming up, and he is wrapped in a robe.” And Saul knew that it was Samuel, and he bowed with his face to the ground and paid homage.

[15]Then Samuel said to Saul, “Why have you disturbed me by bringing me up?” Saul answered, “I am in great distress, for the Philistines are warring against me, and God has turned away from me and answers me no more, either by prophets or by dreams. Therefore I have summoned you to tell me what I shall do.” [16]And Samuel said, “Why then do you ask me, since the Lord has turned from you and become your enemy? [17]The Lord has done to you as he spoke by me, for the Lord has torn the kingdom out of your hand and given it to your neighbor, David. [18]Because you did not obey the voice of the Lord and did not carry out his fierce wrath against Amalek, therefore the Lord has done this thing to you this day. [19]Moreover, the Lord will give Israel also with you into the hand of the Philistines, and tomorrow you and your sons shall be with me. The Lord will give the army of Israel also into the hand of the Philistines.”

[20]Then Saul fell at once full length on the ground, filled with fear because of the words of Samuel. And there was no strength in him, for he had eaten nothing all day and all night. [21]And the woman came to Saul, and when she saw that he was terrified, she said to him, “Behold, your servant has obeyed you. I have taken my life in my hand and have listened to what you have said to me. [22]Now therefore, you also obey your servant. Let me set a morsel of bread before you; and eat, that you may have strength when you go on your way.” [23]He refused and said, “I will not eat.” But his servants, together with the woman, urged him, and he listened to their words. So he arose from the earth and sat on the bed. [24]Now the woman had a fattened calf in the house, and she quickly killed it, and she took flour and kneaded it and baked unleavened bread of it, [25]and she put it before Saul and his servants, and they ate. Then they rose and went away that night.

The Philistines Reject David

29 [1]Now the Philistines had gathered all their forces at Aphek. And the Israelites were encamped by the spring that is in Jezreel. [2]As the lords of the Philistines were passing on by hundreds and by thousands, and David and his men were passing on in the rear with Achish, [3]the commanders of the Philistines said, "What are these Hebrews doing here?" And Achish said to the commanders of the Philistines, "Is this not David, the servant of Saul, king of Israel, who has been with me now for days and years, and since he deserted to me I have found no fault in him to this day." [4]But the commanders of the Philistines were angry with him. And the commanders of the Philistines said to him, "Send the man back, that he may return to the place to which you have assigned him. He shall not go down with us to battle, lest in the battle he become an adversary to us. For how could this fellow reconcile himself to his lord? Would it not be with the heads of the men here? [5]Is not this David, of whom they sing to one another in dances,

> ' Saul has struck down his thousands,
> and David his ten thousands'?"

[6]Then Achish called David and said to him, "As the LORD lives, you have been honest, and to me it seems right that you should march out and in with me in the campaign. For I have found nothing wrong in you from the day of your coming to me to this day. Nevertheless, the lords do not approve of you. [7]So go back now; and go peaceably, that you may not displease the lords of the Philistines." [8]And David said to Achish, "But what have I done? What have you found in your servant from the day I entered your service until now, that I may not go and fight against the enemies of my lord the king?" [9]And Achish answered David and said, "I know that you are as blameless in my sight as an angel of God. Nevertheless, the commanders of the Philistines have said, 'He shall not go up with us to the battle.' [10]Now then rise early in the morning with the servants of your lord who came with you, and start early in the morning, and depart as soon as you have light."

[11]So David set out with his men early in the morning to return to the land of the Philistines. But the Philistines went up to Jezreel.

David's Wives Are Captured

30 [1]Now when David and his men came to Ziklag on the third day,
the Amalekites had made a raid against the Negeb and against Ziklag. They
had overcome Ziklag and burned it with fire [2]and taken captive the women
and all[1] who were in it, both small and great. They killed no one, but
carried them off and went their way. [3]And when David and his men came to
the city, they found it burned with fire, and their wives and sons and
daughters taken captive. [4]Then David and the people who were with him
raised their voices and wept until they had no more strength to weep.
[5]David's two wives also had been taken captive, Ahinoam of Jezreel and
Abigail the widow of Nabal of Carmel. [6]And David was greatly distressed,
for the people spoke of stoning him, because all the people were bitter in
soul,[2] each for his sons and daughters. But David strengthened himself in
the Lord his God.

[7]And David said to Abiathar the priest, the son of Ahimelech, "Bring me
the ephod." So Abiathar brought the ephod to David. [8]And David inquired
of the Lord, "Shall I pursue after this band? Shall I overtake them?" He
answered him, "Pursue, for you shall surely overtake and shall surely
rescue." [9]So David set out, and the six hundred men who were with him,
and they came to the brook Besor, where those who were left behind stayed.
[10]But David pursued, he and four hundred men. Two hundred stayed behind,
who were too exhausted to cross the brook Besor.

[11]They found an Egyptian in the open country and brought him to David.
And they gave him bread and he ate. They gave him water to drink, [12]and
they gave him a piece of a cake of figs and two clusters of raisins. And
when he had eaten, his spirit revived, for he had not eaten bread or drunk
water for three days and three nights. [13]And David said to him, "To whom
do you belong? And where are you from?" He said, "I am a young man of
Egypt, servant to an Amalekite, and my master left me behind because I fell
sick three days ago. [14]We had made a raid against the Negeb of the
Cherethites and against that which belongs to Judah and against the Negeb
of Caleb, and we burned Ziklag with fire." [15]And David said to him, "Will

you take me down to this band?" And he said, "Swear to me by God that you will not kill me or deliver me into the hands of my master, and I will take you down to this band."

David Defeats the Amalekites

16 And when he had taken him down, behold, they were spread abroad
over all the land, eating and drinking and dancing, because of all the great
spoil they had taken from the land of the Philistines and from the land of
Judah. 17 And David struck them down from twilight until the evening of the
next day, and not a man of them escaped, except four hundred young men,
who mounted camels and fled. 18 David recovered all that the Amalekites
had taken, and David rescued his two wives. 19 Nothing was missing,
whether small or great, sons or daughters, spoil or anything that had been
taken. David brought back all. 20 David also captured all the flocks and
herds, and the people drove the livestock before him,[1] and said, "This is
David's spoil."

21 Then David came to the two hundred men who had been too exhausted
to follow David, and who had been left at the brook Besor. And they went
out to meet David and to meet the people who were with him. And when
David came near to the people he greeted them. 22 Then all the wicked and
worthless fellows among the men who had gone with David said, "Because
they did not go with us, we will not give them any of the spoil that we have
recovered, except that each man may lead away his wife and children, and
depart." 23 But David said, "You shall not do so, my brothers, with what the
Lord has given us. He has preserved us and given into our hand the band
that came against us. 24 Who would listen to you in this matter? For as his
share is who goes down into the battle, so shall his share be who stays by
the baggage. They shall share alike." 25 And he made it a statute and a rule
for Israel from that day forward to this day.

26 When David came to Ziklag, he sent part of the spoil to his friends, the
elders of Judah, saying, "Here is a present for you from the spoil of the
enemies of the Lord." 27 It was for those in Bethel, in Ramoth of the Negeb,
in Jattir, 28 in Aroer, in Siphmoth, in Eshtemoa, 29 in Racal, in the cities of the
Jerahmeelites, in the cities of the Kenites, 30 in Hormah, in Bor-ashan, in
Athach, 31 in Hebron, for all the places where David and his men had
roamed.

The Death of Saul

31 [1]Now the Philistines fought against Israel, and the men of Israel fled before the Philistines and fell slain on Mount Gilboa. [2]And the Philistines overtook Saul and his sons, and the Philistines struck down Jonathan and Abinadab and Malchi-shua, the sons of Saul. [3]The battle pressed hard against Saul, and the archers found him, and he was badly wounded by the archers. [4]Then Saul said to his armor-bearer, "Draw your sword, and thrust me through with it, lest these uncircumcised come and thrust me through, and mistreat me." But his armor-bearer would not, for he feared greatly. Therefore Saul took his own sword and fell upon it. [5]And when his armor-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he also fell upon his sword and died with him. [6]Thus Saul died, and his three sons, and his armor-bearer, and all his men, on the same day together. [7]And when the men of Israel who were on the other side of the valley and those beyond the Jordan saw that the men of Israel had fled and that Saul and his sons were dead, they abandoned their cities and fled. And the Philistines came and lived in them.

[8]The next day, when the Philistines came to strip the slain, they found Saul and his three sons fallen on Mount Gilboa. [9]So they cut off his head and stripped off his armor and sent messengers throughout the land of the Philistines, to carry the good news to the house of their idols and to the people. [10]They put his armor in the temple of Ashtaroth, and they fastened his body to the wall of Beth-shan. [11]But when the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead heard what the Philistines had done to Saul, [12]all the valiant men arose and went all night and took the body of Saul and the bodies of his sons from the wall of Beth-shan, and they came to Jabesh and burned them there. [13]And they took their bones and buried them under the tamarisk tree in Jabesh and fasted seven days.

1 and 2 Samuel

Overview

Author(s)
Unknown

Date
Written c 970 BC

Places
Regions of Benjamin/Ephraim, Philistia, and Judah (see maps, pp 365, 451, 468)

People
The prophet Samuel; King Saul and Jonathan; David, the son of Jesse; Hannah; the priests: Eli, Hophni, and Phinehas; Goliath and the Philistines

Purpose
To reveal the Lord's faithfulness toward Israel in establishing His rule through Samuel, Saul, and David, despite the people's unfaithfulness

Law Themes
Barrenness; covetousness; neglect of fatherly duties; unfaithfulness; rejection of God's rule; failure to keep God's Word; rash vows; jealousy; divination

Gospel Themes
The Lord provides leaders; the Lord promises an everlasting kingdom and priesthood; victory in the Lord's name; godly friendship; blessings through the tabernacle; David's mercy

Memory Verses
Hannah's prayer (2:1–10); a new priesthood (2:30–31, 35); the Lord calls Samuel (3:10–11); obedience better than sacrifice (15:22–23); the battle is

the Lord’s (17:45–47)

Introduction to 1 and 2 Samuel

Reading 1 and 2 Samuel

He breathes a word and it is done. Though the word is a mere puff of air, he is not to break his word. It binds him tightly. It will be fulfilled in blood when he stands at the entrance of the tabernacle and makes a peace offering. The oath an Israelite swears cannot be undone, because he makes his vow before the Lord, who will judge the earth.

The Books of Samuel record vows, or oaths, for the main characters: Elkanah, Hannah, and Samuel (1Sm 1:11, 21); Saul and his troops (1Sm 14:24); David and Jonathan (1Sm 20:3, 17; 2Sm 21:7); David (1Sm 24:21–22; 2Sm 19:23); Absalom (2Sm 15:7–8); Joab (2Sm 19:7); and even the Lord, who vows judgment on Eli and his sons (1Sm 3:14). These vows show how greatly God treasures a promise. These Books record how the Lord fulfilled His word concerning David (1Sm 16) and point to the promise that He would fulfill through David (2Sm 7:16) when the Word would become flesh (Jn 1:14).

Luther on 1 and 2 Samuel

St. Anna, the mother of Samuel, sings in 1 Samuel 2:9: "Not by might shall a man prevail." St. Paul says in 2 Corinthians 3:5: "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to claim anything as coming from us; our sufficiency is from God." This is a most important article of faith, including many things; it completely puts down all pride, arrogance, blasphemy, fame, and false trust, and exalts God alone. It points out the reason why God alone is to be exalted—because He does all things. That is easily said but hard to believe and to translate into life. For those who carry it out in their lives are most peaceable, composed, and simple-hearted folk, who lay no claim to anything, well knowing it is not theirs but God's. (AE 21:328)

Although God manipulates and establishes all kingdoms, granting them to whom He will, nevertheless to this people He adds a special word of favor, to let them know that they have the kingdom of God. Therefore in the Book of Samuel they are reproved for having sinned gravely; for in seeking a king they trusted in him as in a man and a human government and did not seek a king in God and through His Word, as He says there (1 Sam 8:7): "They have rejected Me from being king over them."

Moses instructs [a prospective king] to rule with trust in God alone and with the knowledge that he has been appointed and preserved by His Word. Therefore he commands him not to multiply horses (v. 16), that is, not to trust in military might; not to lead the people back into Egypt, that is, not to trust in human favor and strength; not to multiply gold and silver, that is, not to trust in wealth (v. 17); not to multiply wives, that is, not to let his faith be snuffed out by thorns, as Christ calls the pleasures and cares of life, Luke 8:14. On the other hand, he does not forbid him to be strong with horses and military might, as we read that David and Solomon were (1 Kings 4:26); nor does he forbid compacts and alliances with men, like those which Solomon had with the King of Tyre and Egypt (1 Kings 5:12), and David with the Moabites, the Ammonites, and King Toi (2 Sam. 8:9). (AE 9:169)

God had ordered Saul to exterminate the Amalekites, insisting that not so much as the hoof of an ox survive. But Saul disobeyed. He did

indeed slay all the people, but he spared the fine cattle. He was seized by avarice, so that he did not destroy all the fine beasts. And when the prophet Samuel took him to task for this, asking him to account for the animals that had not been slain, he replied: “The people spared them, to sacrifice them to the Lord our God.” Samuel now became so incensed that he pronounced a terrible judgment on Saul, saying: “What does God care about your sacrifice? He demands obedience. God did not command you to sacrifice the animals.” And when Saul continued to justify and defend what he had done, the charge of disobedience was flung into his teeth. He was informed that God regarded disobedience as a sin comparable to idolatry and sorcery (1 Sam. 15:1–31). For if God orders me to do one thing and I do another, and, over and above this, try to justify myself, I am really committing sorcery. As a matter of fact, we are all still wont to do this. If Saul had only said: “I forgot the command. I did wrong!” his sin would have been remitted. (AE 22:397)

Challenges for Readers

Authorship, Sources, and Editing. Interpreters have proposed that different authors worked on the Books of Samuel (see note, 1Ch 29:29). Modern critics have speculated about different documents for 1 Samuel (centered on the ark of the covenant, Saul, and David), which were edited much later to make our current Book. The critics commonly speak of an editor whose work reflected the concerns of the legal code in Deuteronomy (the Deuteronomist). However, no separate documents have ever been discovered; this source-critical view remains unproven at best. Historians have no reliable way of identifying specific authors or of attributing specific passages or theologies to proposed authors or editors. Samuel likely wrote the first part of 1 Samuel, but his death is recorded in ch 25. So someone else certainly helped write the Books. In view of these facts, it is best to read 1 and 2 Samuel as a unified work completed and preserved by Samuel's successors. See pp 335–37.

Samuel's Life and Service. Samuel lived for much of the eleventh century BC, though the Bible does not give us much information about when he was born or when he died. Readers can only make conclusions based on Samuel's interaction with people whose lives are dateable. Eli, who began to lead Israel around 1099 BC, is already established as a priest when Samuel is conceived and born (1Sm 1). When Samuel goes to serve with Eli at the tabernacle (1:24–28), Samuel is still very young—perhaps three years old. Eli's sons are somewhat older, though still young men (as described in 2:17). So Samuel was likely born near the beginning of Eli's priesthood and service as judge. The Lord called Samuel while he was still a boy (3:19–20), and Samuel began to serve as a prophet at a young age. He is not mentioned again until ch 7, when he is a full-grown man leading Israel, after Eli and his sons have died (c 1060 BC). So there is a significant gap in time from ch 3 to ch 7, at least 20 years (cf 7:2). There is another gap between chs 7 and 8. In 8:1, Samuel is an old man with grown sons. Samuel anoints David while David is still a boy (ch 16). Samuel may have died when David was a grown man, though Samuel's death may be mentioned out of sequence at 25:1.

The Text of 1 and 2 Samuel. A comparison between the Septuagint and Qumran scrolls shows differences in the ancient texts for 1 and 2 Samuel.

The ESV notes, which appear below the Bible text, comment on noteworthy differences.

Ethics of Conquest. See p 339.

Church and State Relations. Some interpreters wrongly apply the events and teachings of Israel's history to modern nations and politics, as though the Church today should seek to establish an earthly kingdom like ancient Israel. Though 1 and 2 Samuel properly contain many lessons for church leaders and also for politicians, they do not provide a blueprint for establishing the ideal, godly unification of church and state. See note, Rm 13; see also pp 1565–66.

Blessings for Readers

As you study 1 and 2 Samuel, reflect on how the Lord constantly cares for His people, despite their weaknesses. Just as in the Book of Judges, the Lord hears the people's prayers and calls them to repentance again and again. Ultimately, He raises them up as a unified nation under His servant, the prophet-king David.

Though the stories about the kings describe the political intrigues and misdeeds of the ancient Israelites, the Books of 1 and 2 Samuel as a whole anticipate the greater rule of the greater King, whose reign shall never end (cf 1Sm 2:35; 2Sm 7:16). Like all of Scripture, the history of Israel's prophets, priests, and kings ultimately points to Jesus, our heavenly leader.

OUTLINE

I. Birth of Samuel and Religious Environment in Israel (1Sm 1–3)
  A. Faithful Family: Elkanah and Hannah (1Sm 1:1–2:11)
    1. God makes the barren fruitful: Hannah bears a son (1Sm 1:1–20)
    2. Hannah returns to the Lord what He had first given her (1Sm 1:21–28)
    3. Hannah's "Magnificat" (1Sm 2:1–11)
  B. Unfaithful Family: Eli's Sons (1Sm 2:12–36)
    1. Eli's sons in the Lord's house versus Samuel in the Lord's house (1Sm 2:12–26)
    2. Bitter fruit of unfaithfulness (1Sm 2:27–36)
  C. Call and Initial Ministry of Samuel (1Sm 3)
    1. Call of Samuel (1Sm 3:1–18)
    2. The Word of the Lord remains with Samuel (1Sm 3:19–21)
II. Movement of the Ark, Emblem of the Lord's Presence (1Sm 4:1–7:2)
  A. The Lord Refuses to Manifest His Presence through the Ark (1Sm 4:1–11)
  B. The Lord's Withdrawal of His Presence (Glory) (1Sm 4:12–22)
  C. The Lord Manifests His Presence through the Ark (1Sm 5)
  D. The Lord's Presence at the Ark Returns (1Sm 6:1–7:2)
III. What's at Stake in the Governance (Rule) of Israel (1Sm 7:3–8:22)
  A. Israel Repents and God Delivers Them through Samuel (1Sm 7:3–17)

B. A King like the Nations, instead of God through His Judges (1Sm 8)

IV. Transition from Judgeship to Monarchy (1Sm 9–12)

A. Selection and Anointing of Saul (1Sm 9:1–10:8)

B. Public Selection of Saul (1Sm 10:9–27)

C. Saul's Victory at Jabesh Confirms His Selection as King (1Sm 11)

D. Samuel's Warnings: the Blessings and Curses of the Monarchy (1Sm 12)

V. Rise and Crisis of Saul (1Sm 13–15)

A. Saul's Impulsive Sacrifice (1Sm 13:1–14)

B. Campaign from Gibeah and Philistine Detachment at Michmash (1Sm 13:15–14:46)

C. Saul's Limited Success (1Sm 14:47–52)

D. Saul's Third Impulsive Action and Rejection as King (1Sm 15)

VI. Saul Must Decrease, and David Must Increase (1Sm 16–31)

A. Samuel Anoints David; the Spirit Comes to David (1Sm 16:1–13)

B. The Spirit Departs from Saul and Rests on David (1Sm 16:14–23)

C. David Defeats Goliath (1Sm 17)

D. David's Success Angers Saul (1Sm 18)

E. Saul's Family Helps David Avoid Saul's Attacks (1Sm 19–20)

1. Michal thwarts a plot (1Sm 19)
2. Jonathan helps David to escape Israel (1Sm 20)

F. David's Flight from Saul (1Sm 21–31)

1. David at Nob (1Sm 21:1–9)
2. Achish of Gath (1Sm 21:10–15)
3. David escapes to a cave and a forest (1Sm 22:1–5)
4. Saul kills the priestly family at Nob (1Sm 22:6–23)
5. David rescues Keilah (1Sm 23:1–6)
6. Saul tries to capture David (1Sm 23:7–29)
7. David spares Saul's life (1Sm 24)
8. Samuel's death; David, Nabal, and Abigail (1Sm 25)
9. David spares Saul's life a second time (1Sm 26)
10. David among the Philistines (1Sm 27)
11. Saul consults a medium (1Sm 28)
12. Philistines refuse David's help against Israel (1Sm 29)
13. David avenges the Amalekite assault on Ziklag (1Sm 30)
14. Saul and three sons die in the battle at Gilboa (1Sm 31)

VII. David Becomes King of Judah (2Sm 1–4)

A. David Responds to Deaths of Saul and Jonathan (2Sm 1)
B. David Anointed King of Judah (2Sm 2:1–7)
C. Civil War between the Houses of Saul and David (2Sm 2:8–4:12)
1. Civil war increases revenge (2Sm 2:8–32)
2. Ish-bosheth offends Abner, who defects to David (2Sm 3:1–25)
3. Joab avenges Asahel (2Sm 3:26–39)
4. Ish-bosheth is assassinated (2Sm 4)

VIII. David Becomes King of All Israel (2Sm 5–10)
A. David Anointed King of Israel (2Sm 5:1–6:23)
1. David anointed king at Hebron; captures Jerusalem (2Sm 5:1–16)
2. David defeats the Philistines (2Sm 5:17–25)
3. Ark brought to Jerusalem (2Sm 6)
B. The Lord Makes His Covenant with David (2Sm 7)
1. The Lord promises to build and maintain David's house (2Sm 7:1–17)
2. David's prayer (2Sm 7:18–29)
C. The Lord Gives David Victory over All Israel's Enemies (2Sm 8)
D. David Gives Mephibosheth a Place in His Household (2Sm 9)
E. David Defeats the Ammonites and Syrians (2Sm 10)

IX. David's Sin with Bathsheba Triggers Family Rebellion (2Sm 11–18)
A. David Commits Adultery and Murder (2Sm 11)
B. David Is Confronted with His Sin and Repents (2Sm 12)
1. Nathan confronts David, who repents (2Sm 12:1–13a)
2. David is forgiven, but his sin has consequences (2Sm 12:13b–25)
3. Battle against the Ammonites concluded (2Sm 12:26–31)
C. David's Family Is Torn Apart by Rape and Revenge (2Sm 13)
1. Amnon rapes his half-sister Tamar (2Sm 13:1–22)
2. Absalom's revenge by murdering Amnon (2Sm 13:23–39)
D. Absalom Is Restored to the King's Presence by Joab's Intercession (2Sm 14)
E. Absalom's Rebellion (2Sm 15–18)
1. Absalom's conspiracy to usurp the throne at Hebron (2Sm 15:1–12)
2. David abandons Jerusalem; Absalom takes the throne (2Sm 15:13–37)
3. Saul's family reacts to David's exile (2Sm 16:1–14)
4. Contradictory counsel of Hushai and Ahithophel (2Sm 16:15–17:29)
5. The battle for the kingdom (2Sm 18)

X. David Is Restored to the Throne and Completes His Reign (2Sm 19–24)
   A. David Returns to Jerusalem (2Sm 19)
   B. Sheba Attempts to Divide Israel (2Sm 20)
   C. Episodes in David's Reign (2Sm 21–24)
      1. Gibeonites compensated for Saul's aggression (2Sm 21:1–14)
      2. More skirmishes against the Philistines (2Sm 21:15–22)
      3. David's psalm about the civil war with the house of Saul (2Sm 22)
      4. David's last words (2Sm 23:1–7)
      5. David's mighty men (2Sm 23:8–39)
      6. David's sinful census (2Sm 24)

Footnotes

Footnotes for 1 and 2 Samuel, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:5 Syriac; the meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain. Septuagint *And, although he loved Hannah, he would give Hannah only one portion, because the* LORD *had closed her womb*
- [1] 1:20 *Samuel* sounds like the Hebrew for *heard of God*
- [2] 1:24 Septuagint, Syriac; Hebrew *three bulls*
- [3] 1:24 An *ephah* was about 3/5 bushel or 22 liters

Footnotes for 1 and 2 Samuel, Chapter 2

- [4] 2:1 Hebrew *horn*
- [1] 2:10 Hebrew *horn*
- [2] 2:13 Hebrew *young man*; also verse 15
- [1] 2:29 Septuagint; Hebrew *kick at*
- [1] 2:33 Septuagint; Hebrew *your*; twice in this verse
- [2] 2:33 Hebrew *increase*
- [3] 2:33 Septuagint; Hebrew *die as men*

Footnotes for 1 and 2 Samuel, Chapter 3

- [1] 3:13 Or *blaspheming for themselves*

Footnotes for 1 and 2 Samuel, Chapter 4

- [1] 4:21 Or *gone into exile*; also verse 22

Footnotes for 1 and 2 Samuel, Chapter 6

- [1] 6:19 Hebrew *of the people seventy men, fifty thousand men*

Footnotes for 1 and 2 Samuel, Chapter 7

- [1] 7:12 Hebrew; Septuagint, Syriac *Jeshanah*
- [2] 7:12 *Ebenezer* means *stone of help*

Footnotes for 1 and 2 Samuel, Chapter 8

- [1] 8:16 Septuagint *cattle*

Footnotes for 1 and 2 Samuel, Chapter 9

- [1] 9:5 Hebrew *young man*; also verses 7, 8, 10, 27
- [2] 9:8 A *shekel* was about 2/5 ounce or 11 grams
- [1] 9:16 Septuagint adds *the affliction of*
- [2] 9:24 Hebrew *appointed, saying, 'I have invited the people'*
- [3] 9:25 Septuagint; Hebrew *and he spoke with Saul*

- [4] 9:26 Septuagint; Hebrew *And they arose early and at the break of dawn*

Footnotes for 1 and 2 Samuel, Chapter 10

- [1] 10:1 Septuagint; Hebrew lacks *over his people Israel? And you shall. . . . to be prince*
- [2] 10:5 *Gibeath-elohim* means *the hill of God*
- [3] 10:10 *Gibeah* means *the hill*
- [1] 10:21 Septuagint adds *finally he brought the family of the Matrites near, man by man*

Footnotes for 1 and 2 Samuel, Chapter 12

- [1] 12:3 Septuagint; Hebrew lacks *Testify against me*
- [2] 12:6 Septuagint; Hebrew lacks *is witness*
- [3] 12:8 Septuagint; Hebrew lacks *and the Egyptians oppressed them*
- [4] 12:9 Septuagint *the army of Jabin king of Hazor*
- [5] 12:11 Septuagint, Syriac; Hebrew *Bedan*
- [6] 12:15 Septuagint; Hebrew *fathers*

Footnotes for 1 and 2 Samuel, Chapter 13

- [1] 13:1 The number is lacking in Hebrew and Septuagint
- [2] 13:1 *Two* may not be the entire number; something may have dropped out
- [1] 13:15 Septuagint; Hebrew lacks *The rest of the people . . . from Gilgal*
- [2] 13:20 Septuagint; Hebrew *plowshare*

- [3] 13:21 Hebrew *was a pim*
- [4] 13:21 A *shekel* was about 2/5 ounce or 11 grams
- [5] 13:21 The meaning of the Hebrew verse is uncertain

Footnotes for 1 and 2 Samuel, Chapter 14

- [1] 14:2 Or *under the pomegranate* [tree]
- [2] 14:7 Septuagint *Do all that your mind inclines to*
- [3] 14:14 Hebrew *a yoke*
- [4] 14:16 Septuagint; Hebrew *they went here and there*
- [5] 14:18 Hebrew; Septuagint *"Bring the ephod." For at that time he wore the ephod before the people*
- [1] 14:25 Hebrew *land*
- [2] 14:33 Septuagint; Hebrew *this day*
- [1] 14:41 Vulgate (compare Septuagint); Hebrew *Saul said to the* LORD, the God of Israel, "Why . . .

Footnotes for 1 and 2 Samuel, Chapter 15

- [1] 15:3 That is, set apart (devote) as an offering to the Lord (for destruction); also verses 8, 9, 15, 18, 20, 21
- [2] 15:9 The meaning of the Hebrew term is uncertain
- [1] 15:32 Or *haltingly* (compare Septuagint); the Hebrew is uncertain

Footnotes for 1 and 2 Samuel, Chapter 16

- [1] 16:11 Or *smallest*

Footnotes for 1 and 2 Samuel, Chapter 17

- [1] 17:4 Hebrew; Septuagint, Dead Sea Scroll and Josephus *four*
- [2] 17:5 A *shekel* was about 2/5 ounce or 11 grams
- [3] 17:12 Septuagint, Syriac; Hebrew *years among men*
- [4] 17:17 An *ephah* was about 3/5 bushel or 22 liters
- [1] 17:52 Septuagint; Hebrew *Gai*

Footnotes for 1 and 2 Samuel, Chapter 18

- [1] 18:6 Or *triangles*, or *three-stringed instruments*
- [1] 18:21 Hebrew *by two*

Footnotes for 1 and 2 Samuel, Chapter 20

- [1] 20:12 Hebrew lacks *be witness*
- [2] 20:15 Or *but if I die, do not cut off*
- [3] 20:16 Septuagint *earth, [16]let not the name of Jonathan be cut off from the house of David. And may*
- [4] 20:19 Septuagint; Hebrew *the stone Ezel*
- [5] 20:25 Compare Septuagint; Hebrew *stood up*
- [1] 20:41 Septuagint; Hebrew *from beside the south*
- [2] 20:42 This sentence is 21:1 in Hebrew

Footnotes for 1 and 2 Samuel, Chapter 21

- [3] 21:1 Ch 21:2 in Hebrew

Footnotes for 1 and 2 Samuel, Chapter 22

- [1] 22:2 Or *discontented*
- [2] 22:3 Syriac, Vulgate; Hebrew *go out*
- [3] 22:14 Septuagint, Targum; Hebrew *and has turned aside to*

Footnotes for 1 and 2 Samuel, Chapter 23

- [1] 23:28 Or *Rock of Divisions*
- [2] 23:29 Ch 24:1 in Hebrew

Footnotes for 1 and 2 Samuel, Chapter 24

- [3] 24:1 Ch 24:2 in Hebrew
- [4] 24:3 Hebrew *cover his feet*
- [1] 24:10 Septuagint, Syriac, Targum; Hebrew *it* [my eye] *spared you*

Footnotes for 1 and 2 Samuel, Chapter 25

- [1] 25:18 A *seah* was about 7 quarts or 7.3 liters
- [2] 25:22 Septuagint *to David*
- [3] 25:25 *Nabal* means *fool*

Footnotes for 1 and 2 Samuel, Chapter 30

- [1] 30:2 Septuagint; Hebrew lacks *and all*
- [2] 30:6 Compare 22:2
- [1] 30:20 The meaning of the Hebrew clause is uncertain

Study Notes

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 1:1 This verse gives the liturgical moorings for the opening of the Book, which will present Samuel, the last of the judges, as priest (7:7–9), prophet (3:19–21), and kingmaker (ch 9), and which will deal with the relationship between the altar/priest/king. Samuel, in his prophetic ministry, will show the role of the king as patron of the altar and the ark. *Ramathaim-zophim*. C 22 mi N of Jerusalem. Shows that Elkanah was probably a Zuphite (one of a particular Levitical family) from Ramah (cf 1Ch 6:25–28). *Ephraim*. Reference for where Elkanah lived, rather than his tribal origins. Since Elkanah was a Levite, i.e., one of the tribe from whom God drew men to serve as priests (Nu 3), it sets the sacred tribal status for Elkanah's son Samuel, who would go on to perform sacrificial rites usually associated with priests.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 1:2 *two wives*. See note, Gn 16:3. *no children*. Hannah's barrenness called into question God's blessing on her life (Gn 1:28). Lack of children also put her economic and social status in jeopardy, as Elkanah's future through her seemed to come to an end (Dt 25:7–10).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 1:3 *go up year by year*. Probably for the Feast of Booths (Lv 23:33–43), or possibly as a personal pilgrimage. *Shiloh*. North of Bethel. See color map 1. The tent of meeting, set up at Shiloh early in the conquest (Jsh 18:1), was the main sanctuary of God's people in the time of the judges and here. By the end of 2Sm (24:18–25), the altar has moved to Jerusalem. The movement of access to God's gracious presence from Shiloh to Jerusalem is the backdrop against which the events in the Books are rightly interpreted. See p 495.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 1:4–8 No explanation as to why the Lord allowed Hannah's prolonged affliction; there is no note of judgment against her.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 1:4 Portions distributed came from the sacrificial animal, and eating the sacrifice was part of the sacrificial ritual (Lv 3). This was a festive meal and was the place of fellowship in thankfulness for God's mercy. Elkanah rightly distributed portions of this offering to his family; his behavior contrasts with that of Eli's sons (2:12–17, 22–25).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 1:5 *the LORD had closed her womb*. No explanation is given. As in the Gospel account of the man born blind (Jn 9:1–3), the emphasis is not on the cause of the deprivation, but on how God is glorified in the life of His people. God continues to bring life and healing out of situations that seem desperate or hopeless from a human point of view (Rm 8:31–39; 2Co 12:1–10).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 1:6 *her rival used to provoke her*. Peninnah exalted herself through her provocation of Hannah. This contrasts with Hannah humbling herself before the Lord (vv 9–18; cf 1Pt 5:6). The fact that Peninnah provoked Hannah in God's presence also suggests that perhaps Peninnah acted in a sacrilegious manner.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 1:8 *heart sad?* Text gives no indication as to whether Elkanah rebuked Peninnah. Silence on this point invites us to meditate on the nature of the polygamous marriage and its consequences. *more to you*. Weak attempt at comfort.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 1:9 *eaten and drunk*. Worshipers near the tabernacle would eat portions of certain offerings as part of their fellowship with the Lord. See pp 170–71. *temple*. Also used to describe the tabernacle, the typical place of sacrifice and prayer for God's people at this time. See note, Ps 5:7.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 1:11 *vow*. See p 7. A solemn promise made to God to perform an act or abstain from an act in return for God's favor. There was no necessity to make a vow, but once made, it was binding. Regulations for a married woman making a vow are set out in Nu 30:6–15. Hannah's vow was binding also on Elkanah, her husband. *affliction*. Hannah trusted that God would look compassionately on her in her childlessness (Ps 107:41) and also that God would not willingly bring affliction on her (Lm 3:33). *no razor*. She has in mind a Nazirite vow. See note, Nu 6:5.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 1:13 *drunken*. Drinking wine would have been part of the festive meal. Eli perhaps shows his own weakness in mistaking Hannah's behavior for drunkenness. Cypr: "Hannah … prayed to God not with clamorous petition, but silently and modestly, within the very recesses of her heart. She spoke with hidden prayer, but with manifest faith. She spoke not with her voice, but with her heart, because she knew that thus God hears; and she effectually obtained what she sought, because she asked it with belief" (*ANF* 5:448).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 1:15 *pouring out my soul*. Crying out to God in trust.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 1:17 Not simply an expression of good will toward Hannah, but a word from God to be received and trusted.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 1:18 Hannah's trusting reception of God's Word made her a true daughter of Abraham (Rm 4:13–25).
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 1:19 *Ramah*. See note, v 1. *remembered her*. Does not mean that God had previously forgotten Hannah. Rather, God was graciously present for her according to His promise (v 17). See p 843.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 1:20 *Samuel*. "His name is El (God)." Suggests that Samuel's God is the true God. See ESV note.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 1:1–20 The Lord shows His mercy to Hannah and demonstrates that His power is stronger than human weakness by giving Hannah a son. Samuel, dedicated to God even before conception, is a living sign of God's grace. Peninnah's self-righteous provocation of Hannah is a warning to us never to judge those who suffer deprivation of any sort, or to assume that God judges us favorably in relation to those who suffer. Hannah's trusting openness to God's Word, and the blessing she received, encourages us to trust that God will deal with us according to His compassionate love in Christ Jesus. • Lord God, hear all those who cry to You in their affliction, and remember Your promise to save those who call on Your name. Amen.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 1:21 *yearly sacrifice*. See note, v 3.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 1:22 *weaned*. Samuel would have been about age 3. Breast-feeding typically lasted much longer than it does today. Because it sometimes inhibits ovulation, breast-feeding can help prevent pregnancy. A feast celebrating the weaning might also be observed (Gn 21:8). *presence of the* LORD. See p 843. *dwell there forever*. See note, v 28.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 1:23 *establish His word*. Prayerfully, Elkanah expresses his own hope that God's blessing of more children will come with the fulfillment of Hannah's vow (v 11). Hannah will not fail to bring Samuel into God's presence and will prepare the boy for service to God. Husbands had responsibility for their wives' vows. See "vow," p 7.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 1:24 Exact nature of this offering is not clear. It may have been a custom at Shiloh only or an offering specific to Hannah's vow (cf Lv 27; Nu 30).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 1:28 *lent*. Lit, "make him one asked of the Lord," playing off the verbs for asking that are repeatedly used. Samuel belonged to the Lord forever (v 22). *he worshiped*. Lit, "he bowed down" (some versions have "they"). See p 1276. It probably means that Samuel worshiped the Lord at Shiloh from that time, though an act of consecration may be meant; the meaning is ambiguous.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 1:21–28 Hannah brings the young Samuel to the presence of the Lord at Shiloh, and she offers a sacrifice of thanksgiving and consecration. In fulfillment of her vow, Hannah gives Samuel to the Lord for the length of his life. Everything that we have is a gift from the Lord. This means that we have no right to keep anything back from service to God, no matter how dear it is to us. God's claim on our life is absolute (Lk 14:25–33). Always true to His Word, He will stand by His promises to us, even when we have no earthly reason for hope. • Thank You, Lord, for all Your gifts to us. Let our joy be complete as we offer ourselves and our children to You and to each other in love. Amen.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:1–10 *prayed*. Prayer includes all forms of communication with God and takes the form of thanksgiving, praise, confession, meditation, contemplation, or intercession. Hannah's prayer gives the doctrine of 1 and 2Sm in themes: we do not prevail through might; God exercises judgment through the king; God lifts up the humble; and God works through the "little." Hannah's song is similar to David's song (2Sm 22) and parallels Mary's song (Lk 1:46–55). See pp 777–78.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:1–2 *salvation*. See p 843. *holy*. See p 7. *rock*. See p 843.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:3–5 Hannah appears first of all to be addressing Peninnah, who had previously provoked Hannah for her barrenness (1:6–7). Hannah's song also speaks to those who take pride in their own strength and mock those whom God has chosen in their weakness. Cypr: "Hannah, barren, from whom is born Samuel … according to the mercy and promise of God, [conceived] when she had prayed in the temple; and Samuel being born, was a type of Christ" (*ANF* 5:513).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:6 *The* LORD *kills and brings to life*. See note, Dt 32:39. The Lord desires to save all people, no matter how sinful they are (Ezk 33:10–11). Hannah acknowledges that life and death are in God's hands and that God has power to humble and exalt (1Pt 5:5–6). "Contrition is contained in the first clause, and how we are revived in

contrition is clearly described in the second. We are revived by God's Word, which offers grace. This sustains and enlivens hearts" (Ap XIIA 49–50). Ter: "It is by death that He kills, it is by the resurrection that He will make alive" (*ANF* 3:565). Luth: "These works He performs through the two ministries [of the Law and of grace]: the first by the letter, the second by the Spirit. The effect of the letter is such that because of His wrath no one can continue to exist; that of the Spirit is such that because of His grace no one can perish. Ah, this matter is so preciously profound that it deserves to be spoken of constantly" (*WLS* § 2284). Luth: "This we must learn … to console such people and explain these temptations as instances of the peculiar ways, so to speak, in which God is wont to contend with His own in the guise of a destroyer. Then we can exhort them to hold fast to the promise, or the light and spark of the Word, in the hope that liberation will certainly follow" (*WLS* § 33). *Sheol*. See p 792.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:8 *pillars of the earth*. See note, Jb 9:6.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:9 *guard the feet*. See note, Ps 121:3. *faithful ones*. See p 842.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:10 *give strength to His king*. At the time, there was no king in Israel. Hannah's word prophesies the time when God would give His righteous judgments through His anointed king. This was fulfilled imperfectly in the earthly kings of Israel and then perfectly in Christ Jesus. *anointed*. See notes, 10:1; Ps 2:2. First reference in the OT to the "anointed."

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:11 *ministered*. He served and assisted the priests in their duties, living as an apprentice to a teacher. As such, he would have lived among the families of the priests. See diagram, p 139.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:1–11 Hannah exults that God has fulfilled His Word. Her prayer stands as a warning to us when we are tempted to trust in our own strength, beauty, wealth, or intelligence. Her prayer also gives us encouragement to look to God for every good thing that we need in life, confident that He will fulfill our deepest desires in eternity through His Anointed One, Jesus Christ. • Praise to You, God of Hannah, for You delight in exalting those who humble themselves before You. Amen.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:12 *sons of Eli*. Cf 1:3. *did not know*. Since Eli's sons served their own will and desires, they did not have the knowledge of God's character and His purpose for their lives, which comes

from trusting and surrendering to Him in an intimate relationship of faith (Rm 12:1–2).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:13–14 Eli's sons dealt contemptuously with provisions made in the Law regarding the distribution of sacrificial offerings (Lv 7:29–36). *servant*. Levites, and perhaps consecrated young men like Samuel, served alongside the priest (Nu 3:5–10).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:15–16 In the Law, God commanded that the fat portion of the offering be burned as a way of expressing the worshiper's desire to give the best to the Lord (Lv 3:16–17; 7:31). Eli's sons showed contempt for God and His Law, not simply by stealing the offerings through threats of violence, but also by treating what was holy (set apart by and for God) as if it were common (simply for human use). See pp 170–71. Jerome: "A priest must avoid covetousness. … They must not, that is, follow the example of the sons of Eli who lay with the women in the vestibule of the Temple and, supposing religion to consist in plunder, diverted to the gratification of their own appetites all the best parts of the [sacrificial] victims" (*NPNF* 2 6:148).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:17 *sin*. See p 959.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:18 *ministering*. To attend or serve by fulfilling priestly duties. Term is never used of the priests at Shiloh, suggesting Samuel's innocence in the midst of corruption. *ephod*. Linen apron of the Levites, less rich in material and color than the vestments of the priests (Ex 28:6–14).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:19 *a little robe*. Royal, or priestly, robe. Hannah's persisting care is touching and lavish, since typically a person owned only one set of clothes. *yearly sacrifice*. See note, 1:3.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:21 *visited*. See notes, Gn 21:1; Ru 1:6. *three sons and two daughters*. Children are a blessing from God. See notes, Gn 1:28; Ps 127–28. *the presence of the* LORD. The ark of the covenant provided access to God's presence See note, 4:3; see also p 843.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:12–21 While Eli's sons abuse their priestly authority and treat with contempt both the worshipers and the sacrifices offered to God, Samuel grows in his service in the Lord's presence. Hannah and Elkanah also experience God's blessing through the ministry of Eli and receive the gift of more children. This passage encourages us that no matter how disordered things may get in our world and even in the Church, God will stand by His gracious Word of blessing. •

Thank You, Lord, for Your unfailing love and faithfulness to us. Bless us in faithful service to You, to our family, and in our callings. Amen.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:22 *kept hearing*. Apparently, Eli was slow to discipline his errant sons. *women who were serving*. See p 389. Priests and women were behaving like Canaanites. Improper treatment of sacrificial food and impure sexual conduct were linked in the code of priestly behavior (Lv 21:7–8). *tent of meeting*. See note, Ex 27:21.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:23–24 Eli made some attempt to discipline his sons. But as high priest, he should have dismissed them.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:25 Nu 15:30–31 speaks of defiant sin "with a high hand" not against other people, but against the Lord. The consequence of such sin was death. With repentance on the part of those who had committed such sin, priestly intercession could avert God's wrath. Without such repentance, no atonement could be made. *will of the Lord to put them to death*. The Lord was determined because they persisted in their evil ways.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:26 Samuel is a stark contrast to Eli's sons. Unlike them, Samuel is said to have the approval not only of God but also of human beings. See the evaluation of Jesus, Lk 2:52. Cypr: "We ought then, beloved brethren, to remember and to know, that when we call God Father, we ought to act as God's children; so that in the measure in which we find pleasure in considering God as Father, He might also be able to find pleasure in us" (*ANF* 5:450). *favor*. See p 6.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:22–26 Eli's sons continue in their high-handed contempt for God's Law, refusing to listen to their father's rebuke and warning. As Eli's sons grow in their sin, Samuel grows in favor with God and with people. God's rebuke and warning show His desire for our repentance. When we have sinned against Him, He provides for us an intercessor, the Lord Jesus Christ. • Lord, give me ears that hear Your rebuke and a mouth that confesses Your will. Thanks be to God that in Christ Jesus there is no condemnation for us. Amen.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:27 *a man of God*. A prophet (see pp 1077–83); usually in the OT, the appearance of a man of God means the proclamation of God's judgment (cf 9:6, 10). Chem: "When the Levites did not do their duty, God raised up prophets from other tribes who brought them back into line" (*LTh* 2:703). *your father*. Aaron. Cf Ex 4:14–15.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:28 Compact definition of what God expects from a priest: right application of the sacrificial blood at the altar; right consecration of offerings (including intercessory prayer for the people); and right conduct in life coupled with right teaching. See pp 170–71.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:29 *Why then do you scorn*. The Lord holds Eli the parent/high priest ultimately responsible for the actions of his sons; Eli's failure to restrain his sons (cf 3:13) showed that he honored them more than God.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:30–32 God's judgment against Eli means an end to Eli's priestly line. Under Solomon, the Zadokite priests would take up the priesthood (see notes, 1Ki 2:26, 27). See "curse," p 6. Luth: "God praises and commends only those who turn all praise away from themselves and direct it to Him" (*WLS* § 3427). Chem: "Having been deserted by God, they offended even more and did not hear the voice of their father, and thus in piling up sins they also heaped up for themselves the wrath of God, until finally they had filled the measure to the full" (*LTh* 1:198).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:33 *only one*. Or, "anyone." Some of Eli's descendants survived (14:3; 22:20).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:34 *the sign*. The deaths of Eli's sons on the same day would see the beginning of God putting into effect His judgment on Eli's house. God was about to deliver His people as He had repeatedly done before (see p 381).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:35 *a faithful priest*. Most immediately, Samuel. Later, Zadok was the faithful priest under the reign of Solomon (1Ki 2:26–35). It is a promise that is fulfilled perfectly in the life and ministry of the Lord Jesus (Heb 7:26–28). Hipp: "All the kings and priests were styled Christs, because they were anointed with the holy oil, which Moses of old prepared. These, then, bore the name of the Lord in their persons, showing aforetime the type, and presenting the image until the perfect King and Priest appeared from heaven, who alone did the will of the Father" (*ANF* 5:180). See also Cypr, *ANF* 5:512. *a sure house*. His household or lineage. *My anointed*. God's chosen leader, the king. See note, 10:1. *forever*. The prophecy is ultimately fulfilled in Jesus.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:36 A priest who lost his job lost his inheritance, or portion, in Israel. See "portion," p 7.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:27–36 Eli receives God's condemnation of his priestly service, a judgment that has negative consequences for Eli's whole house. God vows that He will raise up a faithful priest to serve Him according to His will. This word warns us that God will hold us responsible for those in our care. It also assures us that God will always provide a means of saving us from our sins through the ministry of the anointed Son of God, Jesus Christ. • Lord God, give us the humility to take responsibility for people in our care, and save us from turning a blind eye to evil. Amen.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 3:1 *ministering*. See note, 2:18. *word of the* LORD *was rare*. See p 1080. *no frequent vision*. Implies that prophets typically received God's Word through visions. See note, Nu 12:6. Although God's Word was still active in sustaining creation and was continually handed on in the Law and in sacrificial worship, God did not frequently proclaim His Word through inspired prophets. His Word was not widely received in faith by the people (cf Am 8:11–12).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 3:3 *lamp of God*. See diagram, p 139. *not yet gone out*. Suggests that it was sometime before daybreak. *temple*. See note, 1:9. *where the ark … was*. Surprising. May mean Samuel was in the tabernacle courtyard, not within the tabernacle itself. See "courts of the Lord," p 842; cf v 15. The wording suggests that Samuel was ready for priestly service and that his character was fit to hear God's voice.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 3:4 *Here I am!* Expresses willingness to serve, as in "Yes, sir!"

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 3:5–6 *ran to Eli*. At first, Samuel was sure that Eli was calling him. The next two times Samuel was called (vv 6–8), he did not run to Eli, but simply "arose and went," suggesting Samuel's growing uncertainty about who was calling him.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 3:7 *did not yet know*. Eli's sons did not "know" the Lord (2:12) because of their refusal to submit to God. Samuel does not yet "know" God because of his lack of experience with God's direct revelation. Samuel will "know" God through his submissive trust in God's direct revelation. See note, Jer 31:34.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 3:8–9 It seems likely that the Lord does not reveal Himself to Samuel in Eli's presence because of the word of judgment that He has to give. The Lord, in commissioning Samuel to be His

messenger of judgment, frees Samuel to exercise trust in His Word, rather than seek human approval.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 3:10 *came and stood*. See p 39. *Samuel! Samuel!* Repeated, as a parent calls a child. *Speak, for Your servant hears*. A prayer worthy of memorization by every believer. Recite this each time you open Scripture or hear God's Word from a faithful preacher. See front inside cover (*LSB* 589:1).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 3:11 *ears … will tingle*. Expression describing the experience of dread that comes from hearing God's word of judgment (2Ki 21:12; Jer 19:3).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 3:13 Brings together Eli's own warning to his sons (2:22–25) with the message of the "man of God" (2:27–36). Eli is charged with doing nothing to extinguish the corrupt priestly office of his sons. The Lord has sworn judgment: no atonement will be made for the sin of Eli's house. *restrain*. The same verb in Ezk 21:7 is translated "will faint."

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 3:14 *swear*. See p 7. *atoned*. See p 5.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 3:15 *doors*. The entrance to the tabernacle had curtains rather than doors. However, doors of a more permanent structure could have been added to the tabernacle courts. See "courts of the Lord," p 842.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 3:17 *May God do so*. Eli probably made a gesture (such as running his finger across his neck) suggesting death by slaying.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 3:18 *It is the* LORD. Eli recognized the prophecy (2:27–36). His answer expresses resolve or sarcasm. Cf Jgs 21:25.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 3:19 *the* LORD *was with him*. See "be with," p 5. *let none … fall*. Just as God did not let His Word be unfruitful or unfulfilled (Jsh 21:45; 23:14; 1Ki 8:56), so He did not allow Samuel's words to "fall." Samuel, instead, was established as God's true prophet.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 3:20 *Dan to Beersheba*. See note, Jgs 20:1. *established*. Hbr is source of Eng "Amen." Expression of ordination or consecration.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 3:21 *appeared*. See p 39. *again*. The Lord continually revealed Himself to Samuel and so strengthened Samuel in his calling as a prophet. *by the word*. Through which God blesses and consecrates.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **Ch 3** While the Lord's word of judgment against Eli's house is confirmed through His revelation to Samuel, that same revelation confirms Samuel's own calling as a prophet. The judgment against Eli is threatening also to us when we fail to restrain those under our authority who do evil. But also hear the assurance that human weakness will not thwart God's will to bring the Good News of salvation to His creation! • Lord, give us humility to receive and speak Your Word without fear of those who oppose You. Amen.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 4:1 *word … came*. The Word of the Lord is no longer "rare" (3:1) but is proclaimed to all Israel through Samuel's prophetic ministry. *Ebenezer*. "Stone of help," a different place from that mentioned in 7:12; probably refers to a town near Philistine territory.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 4:3 *elders*. See note, Ex 3:16. *the LORD defeated us*. See notes, 2Ch 13:13, 18. *ark of the covenant*. The throne of God's gracious presence for His people (Ex 25:10–22) had been associated with military campaigns before this time (Nu 10:35; Jsh 3:14–17; 6:12–21). However, without a clear word from God on the matter, moving the ark from its consecrated place was an act of sacrilege, an invitation not to victory but to defeat. The problem was not so much that the Israelites associated God's gracious presence with the ark (indeed access to God's gracious presence was by means of the ark), but that they attempted to manipulate this presence to their own will. See p 495.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 4:4 *the LORD of hosts*. See p 1291. *enthroned on the cherubim*. See note, Ezk 10:1.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 4:6 See p 345. *Hebrews*. See pp 1904–5.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 4:8 It appears that the Philistines know something of the history of Israel, but they confuse the story of the exodus by stating that the Egyptians suffered the plagues in the wilderness (and not in Egypt itself), and by attributing more than one god to Israel.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 4:9 *slaves … as they have been*. The Philistines and Israelites had clashed and defeated one another before. Cf Jgs 3:1–4, 31; 13:5; 14:4.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 4:10 *to his home*. The soldiers deserted, giving the Philistines a clear victory. *thirty thousand foot soldiers*. Seven and a half times as many soldiers as were lost in the first battle.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 4:1–11 After suffering a relatively minor defeat, the Israelites decide to bring the ark from Shiloh to the

battlefront, only to suffer a catastrophic military defeat and lose the ark to the Philistines. This account stands as a rebuke to us if we believe that God's gracious presence can be manipulated for our purposes to give us license to do our own sinful will. God calls us to receive Him according to His Word, which directs our hearts in faith and our feet in the paths of righteousness. • Lord, defeat my wayward will, and lead me to walk in Your ways. I praise You for the victory Your Son won at the cross and grave so that I may serve in Your presence. Amen.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 4:12 A messenger from the future king's (Saul's) tribe ran 18 mi and arrived in the attire of a mourner.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 4:17 The ordering of the news (and Eli's reaction to it in v 18) suggests that the loss of the ark was considered by both the messenger and Eli as the greatest tragedy.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 4:18 *Eli fell*. Jerome: "Eli also was a holy priest, but … Eli himself offended God by [showing] too great leniency to his sons; therefore, so far from the righteousness of your bishop being able to deliver you, it is rather to be feared that your wickedness may hurl him from his seat" (*NPNF* 2 6:294). *heavy*. Perhaps linked to the judgment in 2:29 ("fattening yourselves"). *judged Israel forty years*. Since Eli died at age 98 (v 15), the implication is that he began his vocation as judge at age 58. See also pp 338–40.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 4:19 Stress can induce labor.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 4:20 *her death*. Fulfillment of God's judgment against Eli and his house (2:27–36; 3:10–14).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 4:21 *Ichabod*. Hbr "glory" (see pp 6–7), with a prefix of indeterminate meaning. Name probably means "no glory."

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 4:12–22 God's word of judgment is fulfilled in Israel's defeat, the death of Eli's sons, and the capture of the ark. Yet, Eli and his daughter-in-law, after hearing the news, also die. God's word of judgment is fearful and means death to all who have sinned. Our hope lies in His mercy alone, shown in Christ Jesus, our faithful High Priest, who bore God's wrath. • Lord, let not my heart grow fat with self-righteousness, sloth, or indifference. Exercise me in Your life-giving Word. Amen.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 5:1 *ark of God*. See note, 4:3. *Ebenezer … Ashdod*. See map, p 451.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 5:2 *Dagon*. See note, Jgs 16:23.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 5:3–4 *fallen … before the ark*. The idol was in a posture of submission and reverence before the place of God's glorious presence. *cut off*. Not simply broken. Decapitation and cutting off the hands of slain enemies were part of ancient warfare (17:51, 54; 31:9). The state of Dagon's idol in the morning is a sign of its military defeat.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 5:5 *threshold*. Priests of Dagon considered the threshold taboo because it had been in contact with key parts of Dagon's image. To step on the threshold would have dishonored the god.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 5:6 *hand of the LORD was heavy*. See p 842. Expression about the hand is used numerous times (e.g., vv 6, 7, 9, 11; 6:3, 5, 9). The Philistines realized the Lord was afflicting them. *tumors*. Lit, "swellings," "hills." Perhaps enlarged lymph glands of the groin that go along with bubonic plague, or they could be boils and sores (cf v 9).
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 5:7 *His hand is hard against us*. See note, v 6.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 5:8 *lords*. Or, "princes" of the five cities. See note, Jgs 3:3. *Gath*. One of the five principal cities of the Philistines, of closest proximity to Judah. See map, p 451.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 5:9 *tumors*. See note, v 6.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 5:10 *Ekron*. One of the five principal cities of the Philistines. See map, p 451.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 5:11 Ekron was the third Philistine city struck by plague while in possession of the ark. Destroying the ark would have brought greater judgment than possessing it, so the lords of the Philistines determine to send the ark back to the Israelites. *lords*. See note, v 8. *The hand of God was very heavy*. Particularly "deathly" in Ekron (see note, v 6).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **Ch 5** The idol-worshiping Philistines experience the ark not as a means of blessing but as a means of judgment. Not only is their chief god, Dagon, humiliated before the ark, but all the Philistine cities that house the ark experience the "hand" of the Lord in the form of plague. If we despise the means of God's grace, we, too, stand under God's judgment (cf 2Sm 6:6–8; 1Co 11:27–32). Through repentance and His promised mercy, God gives us the gift of faith so that His presence may bring our healing and salvation (cf Lk 8:43–48). • Lord Jesus, thank You for being present with us to heal us, to forgive us, and to strengthen us in love for one another. Amen.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 6:1 *seven months*. Indicating that the ark had completed its stay in Philistine territory.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 6:2 *diviners*. See note, Dt 18:10–11.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 6:3–5 The Philistine priests and diviners spell out the nature of a suggested guilt offering in terms of "sympathetic magic," with the departure of the golden statues intended to remove the rats and plagues from their cities. This was not the same guilt offering instituted by God, which was intended for atonement of unintentional sin and cleansing from defilement. See pp 170–71.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 6:6 *harden your hearts*. See notes, 4:8; Ex 4:21; 9:12.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 6:7 Divination based on the animals' inexperience and instinct. *milk cows*. Probably fresh, first-calf heifers never used for field labor; fit animals for sacrifice (cf Nu 19:1–10). *home, away from them*. The cows will not hear or see their calves, prompting the cows to wander in search of them. The cows would then draw the offering away without human guidance. It would be miraculous if two panicky, inexperienced animals drew the cart effectively, more so if they drew the ark back to Israel where it belonged.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 6:9 *watch*. Priests and diviners were trying to determine whether the affliction they had experienced (ch 5) was the Lord's hand against them or coincidence. *Beth-shemesh*. C 15 mi W of Jerusalem. See map, p 558. Archaeological evidence shows that Canaanite and Philistine cultures influenced the settlement. The city grew in importance under Israelite rule.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 6:12 *went straight.* Hbr emphasizes how effectively and directly the inexperienced cows drew the cart. The diviners would see this as clear evidence that Israel's God was involved. *lowing as they went*. Calling their calves. Typical search behavior. *lords*. See note, 5:8.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 6:13 *wheat harvest*. June or July. See calendar, p 262.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 6:14–15 Shiloh had been desecrated through the actions of Eli's sons and was no longer a fit place for sacrifice. Because God provided access to His gracious presence through the ark, the Israelites saw fit to offer sacrifice before it. This right use of the ark contrasts with the improper use to which it was put in 4:1–11. However, see note, 6:19.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 6:14 *stone*. An impromptu altar. *burnt offering*. See pp 170–71.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 6:16 *lords*. See note, 5:8.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 6:17 Although Gaza and Ashkelon are not in the list of places affected by the ark (5:6–12), they were two of the five chief cities of the Philistines. The naming of all five cities conveys the message of the Lord's complete victory over the Philistines. The list also sounds like an inventory.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 6:18 *both*. All Philistia. *fortified cities*. Typical for larger, older settlements because raids were common. *unwalled villages*. Newer or smaller settlements. *a witness*. See note, Jsh 24:27. *to this day*. The author had firsthand knowledge of the place. See note, Jsh 4:9.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 6:19 *looked upon*. Or, "looked into." Text suggests that the men were struck by the Lord because they treated what was holy with irreverence. The men were not consecrated for service with the ark.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 6:20 *stand before the* LORD. I.e., the presence of God by means of the ark. See "presence," p 843. The Lord let them know the priesthood was still needed, despite what He did to Eli's house.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 6:21 *Kiriath-jearim*. C 9 mi NE of Beth-shemesh. See map, p 365. *take it up to you*. Because of the desecration of Shiloh by Eli's sons, the ark could not return there. Cf Jer 7:9–15; Ps 78:60 for a prophetic comment on the desecration of Shiloh. It appears that Kiriath-jearim was a politically neutral city, already associated with worship, as Shiloh had been.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 7:1 *house of Abinadab*. Probably Levites. *consecrated*. See p 6.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 7:2 *twenty years*. The time between the return of the ark from Philistia until the deliverance mentioned in vv 10–14. *Israel lamented after the* LORD. The theological point is that after oppression, the people cried out to the Lord and received deliverance.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 6:1–7:2 Although the Philistines returned the ark with a guilt offering, and although the ark's return was confirmed by a miraculous sign, the Israelites still had to learn proper reverence toward God's holy things. Today, we should not assume that our status as God's children through Holy Baptism means that we have the

freedom to behave in an irreverent manner toward what God has set aside for holy purposes (e.g., the Lord's Supper). Instead, God has set us free to live in humility, repentance, and faith. • Thank You, Lord God, for consecrating us as Your holy people and for sharing Your holiness with us. Amen.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 7:3 *returning*. See p 1080. *put away*. Laying something aside permanently. *Ashtaroth*. See note, Ex 34:13.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 7:4 *Baals*. See note, Nu 25:3.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 7:5 *Mizpah*. See note, Jgs 20:1. Probably 7 mi N of Jerusalem. See map, p 451.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 7:6 *drew water and poured it out*. Expressing sorrow and tearful repentance. *fasted*. See note, Lv 16:29. *judged*. In this context, Samuel led Israel in repentance. See pp 380–81.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 7:7 *lords*. See note, 5:8.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 7:8 *save*. See "salvation," p 843.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 7:9 *nursing lamb … whole burnt offering*. Exact significance is unclear, but apparently this was an act of total dedication of the people to the Lord (cf 13:9–12). See pp 170–71.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 7:11 *Beth-car*. Possibly 8 mi W of Mizpah.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 7:12 *between Mizpah and Shen … Ebenezer*. See map, p 451. Exact location uncertain; not the place referred to in 4:1 and 5:1.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 7:13 *hand of the LORD*. See p 842.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 7:14 *Ekron to Gath*. See map, p 451. *Amorites*. See p 345.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 7:16 *Bethel, Gilgal, and Mizpah*. Cities relatively close to Jerusalem (the future capital) and to Samuel's hometown of Ramah. See map, p 451.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 7:17 *Ramah*. C 5 mi N of Jerusalem. See map, p 451. *built there an altar*. See note about Samuel's role, 1:1.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 7:3–17 With Samuel's encouragement, the people of Israel turn to the Lord and cry out for mercy. This marks the beginning of a new era, in which the people of Israel subdue the Philistines, have their land restored, experience peace, and live under the leadership of Samuel the judge. Like the people of Israel, when we live apart from God, we experience frustration and defeat. As God leads us to cry to Him for

mercy, He restores us and makes us whole in Christ Jesus. • Lord God, be merciful to us, for we have sinned against You. Give us Your peace, we ask, in Jesus' name. Amen.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **Chs 8–12** Samuel was the last of the judges but the first kingmaker. We witness the events of this transitional time in these significant chapters.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 8:1 *old*. Cf 12:2; see note, Zec 8:4.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 8:2 *Beersheba*. See color map 1; see also note, Jgs 20:1. Samuel's sons were given responsibility for this extreme southern region, while Samuel maintained his established judicial circuit headquartered in the central region held by the Benjaminites, north of Jerusalem (7:15–17).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 8:3 Samuel's sons openly rejected the way of the Lord. Samuel tried to establish a judicial dynasty by declaring Joel and Abijah his successors, something God had not commanded (cf Jgs 8:22–23). Samuel's sons had pious names (Jo El, "Yahweh is God," and Abi Yahweh, "My father is Yahweh"), yet their lives were far from godly. Though Samuel had witnessed Eli's poor fathering of Hophni and Phinehas, he fell into the same predicament. *turned aside after gain*. Summarizes the unethical acts the Lord had forbidden.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 8:4–5 Senior members of the community come to Samuel at his judicial headquarters and express their concerns, citing his age and his sons' misconduct.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 8:4 *elders*. See note, Ex 3:16. See also p 228.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 8:7 *not … you … but … Me*. Hbr emphasizes "you" and "Me." Samuel felt his leadership was being questioned, but there was a greater problem. Luth: "Their sin was not their desire to have a king, for after all God gave them one, but rather, that they set their trust on human help and government when they should have trusted in God alone. This was a grave sin" (AE 52:187). The Lord had promised a king for Israel centuries earlier (Gn 49:10; Nu 24:7, 17; Dt 17:14–20).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 8:8–9 Judges were recognized and respected because the Lord established them as leaders (i.e., as those endowed with administrative gifts by the Spirit and also as those embraced as natural leaders by popular support). As judges were raised up, God

conferred the gifts of the Holy Spirit on them (Jgs 6:34; 11:29; 14:6, 19; 15:14). A king, as a unifying political leader for the loose tribal federation, would not necessarily be God's earthly representative. The Israelites already had such a hereditary office in the priesthood.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 8:1–9 With an unseemly desire to be like other nations, Israel's elders ask Samuel for a king, their action being a rebuke to Samuel and a rejection of the Lord as their King. Leadership should be tempered by faith, which calls on the Lord, His guidance, and His blessing. Nothing is as precious to us as the Lord, who treasures us and leads us by His only-begotten Son. Whoever believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life. • Heavenly Father, by the power of the Holy Spirit, lead us to see how much we are worth to You in Jesus. Amen.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 8:10 Samuel was not called to be king, yet he was recognized as the divine authority in Israel, so elders conferred with him regarding their decision. *asking*. Hbr *sha'al*, a wordplay on "Saul."

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 8:11–17 *he will take*. Repeated six times in these verses. The king extracts funds from the people and conscripts their sons and daughters for service. Government taxation, nearly unknown among the Israelites, would become exorbitant. An additional 10 percent would be levied on top of the tithe already required for the Lord (Lv 27:30–32; Nu 18:26; Dt 14:22, 28; 26:12; 2Ch 31:5–6; Am 4:4; Mal 3:8). Within two generations, Solomon's rule became extremely burdensome and oppressive (cf 1Ki 4:22–23; 12:4). Royal records discovered at Alakakh, Ugarit, and Mari show similar problems under kings in neighboring regions. Samuel demonstrates awareness of regional politics.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 8:12 *commanders of thousands*. Military rank also known from Ugarit.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 8:17 *you shall be his slaves*. People saw only positive reasons for having a king. Here, Samuel describes the true relationship: they will be vassals, and the king will be their master.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 8:18 Cries for deliverance will go unheeded because they chose the king over the Lord.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 8:10–18 The Lord tells Samuel to agree to the request for a king, but also to warn the people about what a king will do. Like the people of Israel, our actions often say to God, "Not Your will, but mine be done," as we insist on things that may not be good

for us. God is surprisingly flexible and generous. He often gives us what we want, but even more graciously, He gives us what we need—forgiveness, life, and salvation. • Dear Jesus, help me to see the blessings in my life, even when I do not get what I want. Strengthen me to join You in praying, "Not my will, but Yours be done." Amen.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 8:20 Request for a king is based on two false, almost childlike premises. (1) They thought the king would act as a substitute agent and fight for them, despite God's promises to fight (Ex 14:14; Dt 1:30). (2) They wanted to be more like their pagan neighbors, having a king to symbolize desired unity. Yet, they were breaking covenant with the Lord, who was their King (Nu 23:21; Dt 33:5). The promise of a king that God had made in the wilderness (Dt 17:14–20) is fulfilled, not by God's initiative as Samuel expected, but by the people themselves.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 8:21 By repeating the people's rejection, Samuel again seeks the Lord's guidance. As in many prayers, our desires are repeated before the Lord not to inform Him but to show our submission to His will.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 8:19–22 People insist on a king, and God tells Samuel to go along with them. Some of those who seem most successful in the world refuse to acknowledge God or to follow His Son, our Lord. Even in the Church are those whose plans and teachings go against our Lord's revealed will. Nevertheless, like a chess master, the Lord sees the larger picture and achieves His objectives even through human error. Similarly, Jesus' death on the cross was brought about by human intrigue, yet it accomplished the very thing that God desired, the redemption of the world. • Thank You, Lord, for working through human instruments and accomplishing Your holy, divine, and good will for the world. In Jesus' name. Amen.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **Chs 9–10** Although the story in chs 9–10 seems to flow, there may have been several years between each event—particularly when Saul returned to the home of his father. He is identified as a "young man" (9:2), yet that would have implied he was mature enough to serve in the military and also marry. By ch 13, Saul's son Jonathan is capable of military leadership.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 9:1 *a man of wealth*. Lit, "a mighty man of power," a noble warrior. Saul's well-to-do father has a respectable lineage. See note, v 3.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 9:2 *young man*. Hbr refers to a mature man in prime of life and capable of bearing arms. Good-looking and grand of stature, Saul presented a kingly visage. *From his shoulders upward*. Hbr idiom; a "head taller" than anyone else.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 9:3 Donkeys were valued as beasts of burden and for agricultural operations, particularly for threshing and plowing. Wealth was often tied to the number of donkeys owned (Ezr 2:66–67; Ne 7:68–69).
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 9:4–5 See color map 2. Lands located strategically around the hill country of Benjamin and Ephraim. Hill country of Ephraim is north of Saul's home in Gibeah. Perhaps Saul and his servant started near Gilgal, proceeding northwest to the land of Shual (13:17), and they may even have gone to Jabneh (2Ch 26:6) before arriving at Ramah. They made a circuit, returning to Zuph, most likely the area of Ramathaim-zophim (town of Ramah in district of Zuph), Samuel's hometown (cf 1:1).
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 9:6 *man of God*. Used throughout the OT for a professional holy man. Indirectly, Samuel is identified as a prophet (or "seer," v 9). Saul does not seem to be aware of Samuel's work, which could say something about Saul's spiritual life up to this time. Saul's servant believes Samuel may help, since his words always come to pass (Dt 18:22; 1Sm 3:19).
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 9:7 *present*. Payment for Samuel's responsibilities, similar to honorariums paid to speakers. Such gifts were occasionally abused and served as bribes to obtain a more favorable message (cf Nu 22:7).
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 9:8 *quarter of a shekel*. Probably equivalent to a quarter of a day's wage. It was not much money, but it showed appropriate respect for services requested. *shekel*. Not coins. See notes, Jsh 24:32; Ezr 2:69. Stone weights with one or more letters of "shekel" engraved on them have been found throughout Israel. There may have been different systems of shekel measurement, based on different locations. At Eshtemoa near Hebron (Judah), five pottery jugs were found containing odd-shaped silver ingots, c 100 shekels in weight. They were composed largely of melted-down jewelry. See p cx. A ram could be purchased with shekels (Lv 5:15), and a half-shekel was used for sanctuary worship dues (Ex 30:13).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 9:9 *inquire*. See "seek," p 843. *prophet … seer*. Highlights popular usage of terms for this important office. Hipp: "One who sets forth in detail things to be, was rightly judged a prophet. Wherefore prophets were with good reason called from the very first 'seers'" (*ANF* 5:205). A faithful seer (Hbr *chozeh*, "visionary"; 2Sm 24:11; 1Ch 29:29) or prophet primarily served as God's messenger (Ex 4:15–16). He might, indeed, predict the future, but usually those predictions were given in the context of a larger message to the people. E.g., Micah's prediction of Christ's birth in Bethlehem (5:2) or Zechariah's "Palm Sunday" prediction (9:9) are recorded in the larger contexts of the Lord's promises to rescue His people. See pp 1077–83. *seer*. Hbr *ro'eh*, simply "one who sees." Originally, one who could "see" into the future and offer help (a similar form of the word is used of God in Gn 16:13).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 9:12 *high place*. Usually associated with illicit pagan deities (2Ki 18:4), yet here refers to appropriate altar area in the Israelite community. See p 526. When the Israelites entered the Promised Land, they followed the Canaanite custom of building altars on nearby hills or mounds (cf Gn 22:2), probably replacing pagan Canaanite altars with altars dedicated to Yahweh. The central worship site in Shiloh had been destroyed, so the ark of the covenant may have had no regular resting place. (See note, Ps 78:60–61.) The priestly family was not active after Eli's sons died, so local communities continued their own practices, even setting up their own priesthood (cf Jgs 17:10). These sites, however, allowed for the entrance of idolatrous practices and, therefore, were frequently condemned (see note, 1Ki 3:1–2; cf 2Ki 23:8–10, 19–20). Luth: "In former times, the ceremonies conducted in some of the high places did not displease God, such as the great altar of Gibeon in I Kings 3[:4], upon which Solomon sacrificed, and the high place where Samuel lived and anointed Saul [I Sam. 9:25, 10:1]; because they lived in faith and did all things in faith" (AE 36:221).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 9:13 The Lord commanded that sacrifices be made for specific occasions. Samuel is likely carrying on the role he held under Eli in the tabernacle. Samuel was called on to preside over and offer a prayer of blessing upon the sacrifice, indicating that the sacrifice conformed to God's will. This is the only reference to the blessing of a sacrifice in the OT.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 9:16 *prince*. Lit, "one who has been announced," but is not yet king. In a sense, Saul is still preparing for his kingly office, the prince-designate or crown prince. *their cry has come to Me*. God's message to Samuel echoes Ex 2–3, where the cries of the Israelites in bondage resulted in the divine mandate given to Moses to set the Lord's people free. Saul would also be a "savior" from the Philistine subjugation.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 9:17 *restrain*. Though usually considered a negative action, it indicates a special form of ruling by keeping in check or within bounds through the Lord's divine regulations.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 9:19 *I am the seer*. Samuel readily accepts this title for his prophetic office. See note, v 9. He promises to tell not only the future but also what Saul himself desired in his heart.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 9:20 *And for whom is all that is desirable in Israel?* Or, "And on whom is all the desire of Israel? Is it not on you?" Israel's hopes are set on Saul's future; what are a few donkeys in comparison? This also suggests that every desirable thing, whether wealth or power, will be Saul's.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 9:21 *clan*. Several related families who lived in close proximity. Although Saul's father may have been powerful (or wealthy), he may have been an anomaly in an otherwise unremarkable clan. See pp 54–55. *humblest*. Samuel recognized true humility in Saul (see note, 10:6). Certainly, God uses the humble and the lowly (e.g., Hannah's song in 2:8 and Mary's song in Lk 1:46–55). This is a central theme throughout Scripture, as the Lord uses the powerless and weak to promote His work in the world (1Co 1:26–31). This humility is appropriate in Saul's case, due to some inglorious episodes in his tribe's history (Jgs 19–20).
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 9:22 *the hall*. Main building this clan used for larger assemblies and social occasions (dining hall).
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 9:24 Throughout biblical times, eating was a sign of community acceptance and a mark of hospitality. *leg*. Choicest cut of meat, reserved for honored guests or more properly for the Lord's consecrated priest (Nu 6:20; 18:18). Samuel's deference to Saul indicates to all assembled that Saul is being given special regard. Saul must have been dumbfounded at the honor and distinction.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 9:25 *high place*. Located at the summit of the city of Ramah, where Samuel lived, just north of Jerusalem. Some

scholars suggest there were possibly two hills, one on which the city was built and another nearby higher hill for the altar area. See note, v 12. *a bed was spread*. Saul would sleep on specially prepared straw on the roof of the house. In the dry summer months in Israel, people often slept on housetops to catch cool evening breezes.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 9:27 Samuel wants to speak to Saul in private; there also seems to be a ritual significance to this action. Saul's servant is to go ahead, and Samuel would provide a message to Saul that would have great significance: a revelation.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **Ch 9** While pursuing mundane things, Saul is stopped and anointed as Israel's first king. Under trivial circumstances stand momentous realities. The Lord's use of life's circumstances is beyond our expectations. He shows us His plans for us (Jer 29:11), which ultimately are fulfilled in Jesus Christ (2Co 1:17–20). The events of our lives are never accidental but always providential. • Give me the confidence of faith to look beyond the petty concerns of my daily life, Lord. Especially as I gather for worship with my fellow sisters and brothers, let me see Your divine and gracious will for me. Amen.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 10:1 *oil*. Used in biblical times for food preparation, as fuel for lamps, for medicinal purposes, and as a cleansing agent, particularly associated with the tabernacle and priesthood (Ex 30:22–33). See p 236. *poured it on his head*. Anointing with oil was also used to identify prophets (1Ki 19:16), priests (Ex 29:7; 40:12–15; Lv 4:3; 8:12), and esp kings (12:3; 16:1, 13; 24:6; 26:9, 16; 2Sm 1:14, 16; 19:21; 22:51; 23:1; 1Ki 19:16; Ps 2:2, 6) as divinely equipped for their particular task. *kissed*. See note, Gn 27:26. *anointed*. In this case, the chosen leader of God's people. See note, Ps 2:2. In some theological traditions today, people seek out leaders who have "the anointing," i.e., special charisma provided by God. By contrast, in Scripture, the Anointed One is Christ, as head of the Church, who appoints faithful servants for His people. Beware of leaders who claim a special "anointing." See p 1227. Saul likely knelt so that Samuel could reach his head for anointing. See note, Ps 133:2.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 10:2 *Rachel's tomb*. Medieval tradition locates Rachel's tomb just outside of Bethlehem, near the border of Ephraim and Benjamin. However, most scholars locate it farther north, near Ramah, just south of Bethel (Jer 31:15).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 10:3 *oak of Tabor*. A terebinth grew on the way to Bethel and must have been a well-known landmark. *Bethel*. Lit, "house of God." Place where Jacob had seen a stairway to heaven (Gn 28:10–19) became a significant worship site for many generations. *carrying*. Apparently bringing sacrificial offerings to Bethel.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 10:4 *two loaves of bread*. Significant because it indicates Saul's vicarious participation in the wave offering of bread that they will make (Nu 18:11). Saul was clearly being "set aside" for holy things.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 10:5 *Gibeath-elohim*. Lit, "the hill of God," probably Gibeah, Saul's hometown (v 26; 11:4). Located in area assigned to Benjamin (Jsh 18:28; Jgs 19:12–14). Name affirms that this is God's land, not that of the Philistines (Dt 32:43; Is 14:2; Hos 9:3). That a Philistine garrison was located there along with an Israelite high place shows that the Philistine occupation was not oppressive or even that significant. *group of prophets … prophesying*. Musicians singing God's Word were regarded as prophets (see notes, 1Ch 25:1, 2). *harp, tambourine, flute, and lyre*. Phoenician and Canaanite clay figurines of bands using these instruments have been discovered. These instruments must have formed a typical musical ensemble. Both male and female figures are depicted playing such instruments. See note, 18:6; see also p 993.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 10:6 *Spirit of the LORD*. The Spirit would occasionally come upon leaders of Israel for special purposes. Saul, by joining this troop of prophets, identifies himself with their prophetic roles. *rush*. Hbr term typically describes prosperity or strength. Author uses verb esp to describe changing of a person by a spirit (18:10). Cf 2Sm 19:18, where the verb describes crossing the Jordan River. *turned into another man*. Besides the physical anointing, the Lord's Spirit comes upon Saul and transforms him (lit, "overturned"). Mention of the Spirit (cf Ex 31:3; Dt 34:9; Jgs 6:34; 11:29) is significant. God assures His people that Saul's election is proper and blessed. Saul joins the prophetic celebration, and his very person seems to change. Descriptions of Saul's activities as "ecstatic" are based on comparisons with pagan prophetic behavior (see notes, 1Ki 18:28, 29) rather than the Lord's prophets. Saul did not become an ecstatic, but he probably changed from a quiet, shy young man to a bold and confident leader (cf 11:6). See note, 9:21.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 10:7 Samuel's instruction is for Saul to surrender himself to the Lord's leading. Within a week (13:8–14), Saul will misuse the privileges given him and bring judgment upon himself and God's people. *do what your hand finds to do*. Saul has privileges for manifesting his kingly role. *God is with you*. See "be with," p 5.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 10:9 *another heart*. See note, v 6. Not only his outward behavior but also Saul's very attitude changed as a result of the Spirit of God coming upon him.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 10:10–11 See notes, v 6; 9:21. At home again, Saul's acquaintances acknowledge him as being very different from the man who had left a few weeks earlier. With uncharacteristic freedom, he joined the prophets.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 10:11–12 Curiously, the proverbs are stated as questions, indicating something suspicious about his prophetic activities. Saul was apparently not a very spiritual person prior to his anointing (see note, 9:6). But now he assumes spiritual leadership, like the prophets before him. *who is their father?* Prophets may have been addressed as "father" (2Ki 2:12; 6:21; 13:14), so the question could concern Samuel's leadership.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 10:14 *Saul's uncle*. Ner approaches him (1Ch 9:35–36) rather than his father. Ner's son, Saul's cousin Abner, would later become the great commander of Saul's army (see note, 14:50; cf ch 26; 2Sm 2). "Ner" was also the name of Saul's grandfather (1Ch 8:29–33; 9:39).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 10:16 Saul, again behaving shyly, avoids telling the most important detail of all that had transpired.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 10:1–16 Although Samuel anoints Saul as the king-designate and the Holy Spirit changes Saul, people remain uncertain about his leadership. At times, others, or even you, may question the direction life is taking. Call on the Lord, who always leads in the right way, even when it seems otherwise. The ultimate sign of this is the death and resurrection of Jesus, who is the way, the truth, and the life. • Thank You, heavenly Father, for providing Jesus as the ultimate sign of Your gracious guidance. By the power of Your Spirit, increase my faith in You and my confidence in living for Jesus. Amen.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 10:17 *Mizpah*. Lit, "watchtower." Used for several locations throughout Israel. Mizpah in Benjamin is the site

where the Lord helped His people defeat the Philistines (7:10–13) and where Samuel had been acclaimed judge. The irony of Saul's kingship should not be missed; God had led the people to victory at Mizpah as their King, but now they cried out for another king.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 10:18–19 Official decree from Samuel, reaffirming the Lord's divine care and covenant with His people and echoing the Ten Commandments (cf Ex 20:2; Dt 5:6). Yet the Israelites had broken that covenant relationship by having false gods (cf Ex 20:3). Despite their sin (reminiscent of the words in 8:7), the Lord makes good come out of it. *Thus says the* LORD. See p 1080. *delivered*. The Lord delivered them from Egyptian slavery into the Promised Land (Jsh 24) and used the judges, as His instruments, to save them from their enemies (Jgs 3:9, 15, 31; 6:14; 10:1; 13:5). *thousands*. Equivalent to "clans" in v 21; Hbr term at this time is less precise as a numerical unit. See p 217.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 10:20 *taken by lot*. See note, Jsh 14:2.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 10:21 Saul's modesty and shyness (see note, 9:21) apparently returned, and he cannot be found until the Lord reveals his hiding place. Reluctantly, he assumed the kingly responsibilities, to the acclamation of the people.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 10:25 Samuel prescribes both for the king and for the people the duties and prerogatives (Hbr *mishpat* has both connotations) of the new monarchy, assuring that God's presence and purpose would be fulfilled. *book*. Samuel records the Lord's message and places it before the Lord—perhaps in the ark, which held the two tablets of the Ten Commandments (Ex 25:16), the pot of manna (Ex 16:33), and Aaron's staff (Nu 17:10); cf Dt 31:26. Such a document could have contributed to the writing of 1 and 2Sm and demonstrates the literacy of servants trained at the tabernacle.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 10:26 *Gibeah*. Saul's capital-stronghold, perhaps located on a bluff north of Jerusalem, which overlooked a main road. Archaeologists have discovered a corner of a fortress on this site, which included a rectangular tower. *men of valor*. Perhaps the beginning of Israel's official army. God moved them to support Saul militarily.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 10:27 *save*. See "salvation," p 843. *despised*. Division of opinion on Saul's suitability. Saul shows himself to be the proper public figure who remains quiet in the face of inappropriate opposition.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 10:17–27 The secret selection and anointing of Saul is made public in a national assembly, though Saul is still hesitant about taking on the role. When we hesitate to turn away from certain behaviors or to take on godly responsibilities, God's Spirit brings change through repentance and faith. As we die to sin and live in Christ (Rm 6:1–4), He gives our lives deeper meaning. • "Take my life and let it be Consecrated, Lord, to Thee; Take my moments and my days, Let them flow in ceaseless praise. Take my will and make it Thine, It shall be no longer mine; Take my heart, it is Thine own, It shall be Thy royal throne." Amen. (*LSB* 783/784:1, 5)

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 11:1 *Nahash the Ammonite*. Descendant of Lot's younger daughter (Gn 19:38; Dt 2:19). Ammonites lived east of the territory of Gad near the upper regions of the Jabbok River (Dt 2:37; Jsh 12:2). See map, p 365. Nahash was a Transjordanian warlord whose hostility toward Jabesh-gilead apparently stemmed from a claim that the land was his (Jgs 11:12–13). The expanded version of 1Sm among the Dead Sea Scrolls describes his policy of gouging out the right eyes of the people he conquered. This engagement with the Ammonites represents Saul's first challenge as the anointed leader of Israel.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 11:2 Cruel torture of captives would not only be humiliating and disfiguring but would also incapacitate them militarily, because they would lack depth perception. Cf Jgs 16:21.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 11:3 Desperate, the elders negotiate a siege treaty. Requesting a week's time for deliberation and help, they seem to accept Nahash's terms. Nahash is overly confident that the alarm and request for help would be futile. *elders*. See note, Ex 3:16. See also p 228.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 11:4 *Gibeah*. Saul's hometown, where there were a few fighting men, but no real army. *wept aloud*. People raise a public lament.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 11:6–11 Saul uses threats to rally the people, similar to the act of the Levite in Jgs 19:29–30. Both were invitations to a holy war. Not merely the threat, but the Lord's presence rallies the people of Israel for battle.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 11:6 *Spirit of God*. The Spirit rouses Saul's righteous anger. Such special endowments by the Spirit occurred among the earlier judges, particularly Samson (Jgs 14:6, 19; 15:14). *anger*

was greatly kindled. Lit, "his nose swelled greatly," his nostrils flared with rage.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 11:7 Saul's oath takes on the form of a covenant ceremony, since God had used a similar act to establish His covenant with Abraham (Gn 15). *dread*. Perhaps recalling that event, people respond in fear. Dread is similar to proper "fear of the LORD." See p 1001.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 11:8 *Bezek*. North of Shechem, several miles west across the Jordan. Within easy striking distance from Gibeah, c 17 mi from Jabesh-gilead. See map, p 451. *Judah*. Saul's tribe, Benjamin, was small and previously held in disrespect by Judah, which sometimes exhibited a separatist or isolationist attitude toward the other tribes (cf 2Sm 2:8–11). *thirty thousand*. Nearly a tenth of the military contingent.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 11:10 *give ourselves up*. Hbr has double sense, as "we will come out to you." Deception, yet truth is also revealed. The defiant message lulled the overly confident Ammonites into complacency.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 11:11 *three companies*. Saul's strategy to divide the large military force and surround the Ammonites in a pincer movement was a tactic used by Abimelech (Jgs 9:36–37). *morning watch*. Lit, "last watch of the night," traditionally the third watch (2 a.m. until 6 a.m.). See p 1567. Undoubtedly, this is a surprise attack by Saul and his troops.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 11:1–11 In the Spirit of God, Saul acts boldly and strategically. When circumstances call for boldness and righteous anger, do you act confidently? The Lord is our "very present help in trouble" (Ps 46:1). In challenging times, God's Spirit empowers you to face the challenge. • O Holy Spirit, fill me with passions that reflect Your desire for my life. When I am to be an instrument of Your help or hope, give me Your words and gifts. In Jesus' name. Amen.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 11:13 Saul recognizes God's hand in the great deliverance from the Ammonites. Not vengeful against those who questioned his leadership, he magnanimously treats them kindly, aware that this is all part of the Lord's gracious plan.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 11:14 *renew*. God's rule is eternal. Although Israel was not yet a united kingdom in an earthly sense, the Lord had renewed His rule and the people recognize this in the persons of Samuel and Saul.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 11:15 *Gilgal*. Means "turning." Located between Jordan River and Jericho, once again it marks a turning point in Israel's history (Jsh 4:19–24; 5:2–9; 10:8–15). Samuel had made it an annual stop on his judicial circuit. Saul's kingship was privately announced at Ramah (see note, 9:25; cf 10:1) and solemnized at Mizpah (10:17–27). The people officially affirm him here in a solemn public assembly. *peace offerings*. See pp 170–71. Prepared as a sign of reconciliation between all the tribes and the Lord, they mark a ratification of the covenant similar to that at Sinai (Ex 24:5–11). The people gave offerings also in recognition of the monarchy as a continuation of the theocracy, for which they finally rejoice in grand style.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 11:12–15 The nation unites in worship and praise to the Lord for the victory by Saul's leadership and by God's hand. In our repentance today, God provides "turning points" in our lives, so we again hear His words of comfort, promise, and hope. Knowing that Jesus is indeed our Savior and Lord, we can act confidently as agents of God's kingdom. • Father in heaven, look down upon me when things seem to be turning upside down, and help me to see Your Son's gentle, nail-pierced hand at work in my life. By Your Spirit I pray. Amen.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **Ch 12** Though Samuel acknowledges he has gone along with the request of the people of Israel, we know that it was the Lord who was behind the whole event (cf 9:15–17; 15:26).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 12:1 Samuel gathers Israel as did Moses (Dt 29:10–15) and Joshua (Jsh 23–24). Now he rehearses Israel's history, reminding them of the Lord's care and gracious presence. The terms of the Lord's covenant relationship with Israel remained the same, notwithstanding change in administrative leadership and style.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 12:3 *testify against me*. Samuel exonerates himself before the people, showing that, regardless of his sons' misuse of power (see note, 8:3), he received no personal gain from his service as judge over Israel—in contrast to the king who "will take" (8:11–18). *His anointed*. See note, 10:1. Refers to Saul, yet an inference to Christ cannot be eliminated.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 12:5 Poetic, providing repetition and comparison between "The LORD" and "His anointed," both serving as witness for Samuel. Samuel accuses the people before their real Judge, the

Lord (Jgs 11:27). They had fallen away from the Lord's ways, yet the Lord had remained faithful to them.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 12:8–15 Samuel rehearses a creedlike historical account of the Lord's continuing care, recalling the cycle of sin, servitude, supplication, salvation, and silence. The basic sin was that Israel "forgot the LORD," yet He never forgot them.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 12:10 *Baals … Ashtaroth*. See notes, Ex 34:13; Nu 25:3.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 12:11 Order of judges is not chronological but clearly reflects their prominence, which culminated in Samuel. *Jerubbaal*. Gideon's nickname, emphasizing his rejection of the Canaanite Baal worship. *Samuel*. Refers to himself objectively in this indictment, using a recognized legal technique to convict people of their sin.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 12:12 Hus: "The spiritual power, which is [priestly], excels the royal in age, dignity, and usefulness. … The spiritual power is in and of itself sufficient for the ruling of the people, as appears from the history of Israel. … Earthly power … is of no avail independent of the spiritual power which is the chief regulative force" (*The Church*, p 93).
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 12:14 Samuel repeats the traditional covenant relationship that God had established with His people, beginning with Abraham and continuing through Moses and Joshua and now Samuel himself (Ex 19:5–6; Dt 28; Jsh 24:20). The same alternatives Moses and Joshua had presented to the people, Samuel presents to them—either the Lord or not (Dt 30:15–20; Jsh 24). The First Commandment is always at the heart of Israel's history. *obey*. Lit, "to hear" Him, which implies that the one hearing will obey.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 12:17 *wheat harvest today?* Late spring, when rain was extremely rare. See calendar, p 262. *wickedness … a king*. Samuel underscores the great wickedness of Israel in asking for a king without the Lord's express order.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 12:18 *thunder and rain*. Samuel's predicted and unusual thunder and rain confirms his judgment of the people. Disaster will harm the wheat harvest by creating conditions for mold (Pr 26:1). Such an unusual occurrence in May or June brings fear upon the people, reminiscent of the exodus, when the Lord displayed His

power. Samuel also demonstrates his own prophetic power, illustrating his ability to communicate with the Lord.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 12:19–21 See Israelites' earlier request of Moses (Ex 9:28).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 12:22 Samuel points out the graciousness of God's continuing presence among them. After advising them not to follow other (empty) ways (cf Is 41:29), he reaffirms that the Lord's hand and instruction will continue to guide the people (as He had under Moses).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 12:23 Samuel's role as judge will cease, but he will continue to be the voice of God in his prophetic role—interceding for them and instructing them in the ways of the Lord. Luth: "Here we read that it is a sin against God if we preachers do not rightly instruct the people and pray for them. Also that it is sin when the people will not obey or fear God, who instructs them through us, his ministers" (AE 43:230).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 12:24 *fear the LORD*. See p 1001.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **Ch 12** By words and a miraculous sign, Samuel powerfully proclaims a message of judgment and promise. When you look back over your life, see that you have been less than wholly faithful to the Lord. Yet, "consider what great things He has done for you" (v 24). God remains faithful to His promises, especially His promise of forgiveness! • Lord, gracious Father, thank You for the blessings I have received from You, particularly the forgiveness of sins. Bless all those who stand as Your representative in my life that they may be faithful too. In Jesus' name. Amen.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:1 See ESV notes. Verse establishes the formula that introduces the reigns of later kings. The omission of two numbers reminds us that fallible scribes copied the texts of the Bible, but their mistakes in copying have not compromised biblical doctrine. God allowed these small details to drop out. Because Saul had a son (Jonathan) old enough to be an officer in the army, he was probably past 40. As subsequent verses indicate, other details are also lacking in the account of Saul's reign; the omissions coincide with God's judgment on Saul's lack of faith and good judgment. It is as though God is shortening Saul's time as a commentary on his reign.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:2 Saul forms Israel's first organized military, probably militia troops, since the time of Joshua. Some details are

lacking, including at what point in Saul's reign this occurred. The towns mentioned were in Israel's heartland, in the hill country not far north of Jerusalem. *Jonathan*. Important to David's life; first mentioned here as a son of fighting age. Cf Nu 1:3.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:3 *Jonathan defeated the garrison*. Jonathan's military prowess is immediately evident. *Hebrews*. Term normally not used by Israelites to refer to themselves but used by outsiders. See pp 1905–6.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:4 *Saul had defeated the garrison*. Although Jonathan had been victorious (v 3), news spread that Saul had defeated the enemy, perhaps evidence of his obsessive desire for personal glory. *Gilgal*. Like Bethel, in the circuit of towns Samuel visited as judge (7:16); location uncertain, probably in vicinity of Jericho. See map, p 451.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:5 *chariots*. Philistines had a distinct advantage, since the Israelites did not acquire chariots until the time of King Solomon, two generations after Saul. *like the sand on the seashore*. See note, Jsh 11:4. Hyperbole. *Michmash*. C 8 mi NE of Jerusalem, overlooking a pass leading to the Jordan Valley. See map, p 451.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:6 Numerical and military superiority of Philistine army had its effect on Israel.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:7 *fords of the Jordan*. Crossing the Jordan wherever it was shallow enough to pass through, Israelites fled to the east. *Gad … Gilead*. See map, p 365.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:1–7 Encounters with the Philistines dominate Saul's reign. This is definitely a time that calls for trust in God. In a similar way, the question for us is not whether we will face troubles, but where we will place our trust at those times. True refuge resides only in the true God—the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of Samuel, the God who fulfilled His promises by sending His Son, Jesus Christ, to save the world. • Heavenly Father, we thank You for Your gracious daily guidance and protection. We ask that You continue to watch over us and those we love. You graciously give us all things through Your Son. Amen.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:8–23 Saul's character defects manifest themselves as he takes matters into his own hands rather than follow God's directive.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:8–9 After a week, Saul grew impatient for Samuel.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:9 *burnt offering … peace offerings*. See pp 170–71.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:10 *behold, Samuel came*. Seems Samuel was testing Saul, waiting to see if Saul would keep the established order.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:11 *What have you done?* Reminiscent of God's questioning of Adam and Eve (Gn 3:9–13). *the people were scattering … you did not come*. Like our first parents, Saul directed the blame away from himself to others and to the questioner.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:12 Saul's words are a rationalization for his actions. Humans have a common tendency to offer reasons for not following God's directives.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:13 *foolishly*. Moral failure rather than mental mistake. See p 1016. *not kept the command*. As God's prophet, Samuel spoke for the Lord, and Saul, like all of Israel, was to recognize that fact. Cf 3:20. *forever*. Hbr word denotes a time into the unknown future. Because of Saul's disobedience, however, his dynasty would be cut short.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:14 *after His own heart*. A reference to David. Later, God would promise David, "Your throne shall be established forever" (2Sm 7:16).
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:15 *six hundred men*. Because of the delay, the number of troops with Saul had thinned (cf v 2); humanly speaking, his growing impatience was understandable, yet he had failed to wait for the Lord's schedule.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:16 *Geba of Benjamin*. May be the same place as Gibeah of Benjamin (v 2).
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:17–18 Place-names indicate that the raiding parties left Michmash going north (Ophrah), west-southwest (Beth-horon), and southeast (Valley of Zeboim). Going out in every direction, they probably had the intent of plundering Israelite towns in retaliation for Jonathan's rebellion (v 3). *border*. May refer to an east-west road that ran between the territories of Judah and Benjamin.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:19 *no blacksmith*. Philistines held the edge in metal technology (perhaps iron work learned from the Hittites); earliest discoveries of iron in Canaan were found in Philistine regions, including a sword, knives, and jewelry. See note, Jb 20:24.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:20 *went down to the Philistines*. While the Israelites may have had some fears, their inability even to sharpen their own tools drove them to seek out Philistine skills. *mattock*. Tool, shaped like a pickax, used for loosening soil. Indicates agrarian nature of Israelite society. A quenched and tempered steel pick was discovered at Har Adir in Upper Galilee in a fortress from the eleventh century BC.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:21 *two-thirds … a third of a shekel*. Weight for gold and silver. See p cx. Probably exorbitant fees; they helped keep the Israelites economically depressed. The first measurement is a "pim," used only here in Scripture. See p cx. The word appears on stone weights discovered in Judea.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:22 *neither sword nor spear*. Perhaps the Philistine raiding parties had confiscated Israelite iron weapons, except

for the swords of Saul and Jonathan. The rest of the Israelites would use bows and arrows and slingshots.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:23 *pass of Michmash*. Philistine garrison encamped on north bank of the ravine that separated them from the Israelites, creating mounting tension. See map, p 451.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:8–23 Because of Saul's act of disobedience and lack of faith, he will lose his kingdom and God's help against the Philistines. Often, we bring troubles into our lives by thinking that God is not acting quickly enough to remove or ease some difficult situation. Yet, He acts in "the fullness of time" as when "God sent forth His Son" (Gal 4:4) to forgive all our sins—including our faithless impatience. • Almighty God, in Your infinite wisdom, You use all things for our temporal and eternal good. Forgive us the many times we do not wait on You but turn to our own faulty human solutions. In Jesus' name. Amen.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:1 Given the rising tension, Jonathan wanted to survey the enemy forces, but without his father's knowledge because Saul might squelch his initiative. Jonathan's actions were probably more spontaneous than considered, because he was so motivated to defend the safety and honor of God's people. *armor*. Jonathan was fully equipped for battle.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:2 *pomegranate cave at Migron*. See ESV note. Location unknown. Imposing pomegranate trees are still seen in Israel. *six hundred men*. Emphasizes smallness of Israelite forces.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:3 *Ahijah*. High priest and great-grandson of Eli, he apparently also served as court chaplain. Linking Saul with the failed house of Eli foreshadows the downfall of his dynasty. *ephod*. Garment generally worn by high priest (Samuel also wore one, 2:18). Used in consulting the Lord. See note, Ex 28:36.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:6 *these uncircumcised*. Equivalent to "these unbelievers." As people whose unbelief put them outside God's covenant with Abraham and his descendants (Gn 17:10), the Philistines did not share the promises of the Israelites. *nothing can hinder the* LORD. Jonathan's bold confession acknowledged that success lay in God's hands.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:7 The armor-bearer supported Jonathan physically and spiritually.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:8 Jonathan's faith-based boldness is evident in his readiness to come out in the open against a numerically

superior enemy.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:9–10 *If they say*. Jonathan trusted that God would bring success whatever the circumstances. *the LORD has given them into our hand*. Wordplay on Jonathan's name, "the Lord gave." When the enemy dared him to take the more dangerous alternative (climbing the stony crags), he took that as a sign from God. *hand*. See p 842.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:11–12 *out of the holes*. Philistines derisively compare Israelites to animals. *show you a thing*. Teach you a lesson; punish you.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:13–14 *killed about twenty men*. The narrow passage at the top made it easy for a few men to engage many. God gave the strength and victory to Jonathan and his armor-bearer. *half a furrow's length*. Lit, "half a yoke," half the area that a yoke of oxen could plow in one day.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:15 *garrison … raiders*. Different type of soldiers; some specialized in standing guard, others in going out on raiding parties. *earth quaked*. God intervened in nature, causing panic among the arrogant Philistines.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:16 Defeat of Philistines is reminiscent of how Israelites under Gideon had defeated the numerically superior army of Midian, whose "army fled" (Jgs 7:22).
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:17 A capable general, Saul saw the action in the distance and wanted to know which of his troops were involved.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:18 Previously, the ark had been brought into battle against the Philistines—with disastrous consequences (4:11). See p 495.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:19 *Withdraw your hand*. Saul felt that waiting for the Lord's directive might jeopardize his chance for victory. Such interruption of a priestly activity was unprecedented and unthinkable.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:20 *against his fellow*. In the general confusion, Philistines were turning on one another.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:21 Israelite mercenaries turned against Philistines now that Israelites were winning.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:22 Success breeds success, and the Israelites who previously hid for their own safety now joined the victorious Israelites.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:23 *the* LORD *saved Israel*. See "salvation," p 843. *Beth-aven*. Near Bethel (cf 13:5). See map, p 451.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:1–23 Against great odds, the Lord gives Israel a victory over the Philistines through Jonathan, whose name means "the Lord gave." Too often, fear keeps us from venturing out for the Lord. Though we should not dare God to give us signs, we can learn from Jonathan's story to attempt great things for God and expect great things from Him. Though we may fail from the world's perspective, God gives us ultimate spiritual victory and all things in Christ. • Heavenly Father, forgive us for our timidity and failure to step out in faith. Inspire us through Jonathan's example to confront the forces of sin and Satan. Amen.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:24 *Cursed be the man*. Rash vow. See p 6. *I am avenged*. While Saul perceived his conflict with the enemy as a personal vendetta, Jonathan saw it as carrying out God's plan. Saul's growing egocentrism becomes evident.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:25–26 Although enticed by food that could restore their strength, the people took the oath of v 24 seriously.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:27–28 *his eyes became bright*. He was refreshed, his strength renewed. *the people were faint*. Contrast between Jonathan's renewed strength and the weakness of the rest of the army is striking and shows the foolishness of Saul's oath.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:29 Jonathan was as honest and forthright as he was brave, even to the point of openly criticizing his father. *troubled*. See Jsh 7:25–26 and notes.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:30 Jonathan immediately recognized the sad results of the oath his father had made, limiting the fighting capacity of his own army and its ability to gain the full victory that was in its grasp.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:31 *Aijalon*. West of and closer to Philistine territory than Michmash, c 14 mi NW of Jerusalem. Famous for Joshua's battle, when the sun stood still (Jsh 10:12). See map, p 451. *very faint*. Repetition intensifies the words of v 28, adding "very."

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:32–34 *spoil*. Booty of the battle included the livestock of the Philistines. *ate them with the blood*. Unclean behavior. Mosaic Law forbade this (Lv 17:11–12; 19:26; Dt 12:16). *roll a great stone … slaughter them here*. When the people slaughtered the animals on the stone, blood drained out to the ground, making the meat acceptable for eating.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:35 *built an altar to the* LORD. It seems Saul used the "great stone" as an altar, thus consecrating the slaughtered animals to the Lord. *first altar*. Indicates Saul's lifelong lack of interest in spiritual matters. See note, 9:6.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:36 *by night*. Saul wanted to overtake the enemy under cover of darkness. *draw near to God here*. It is the priest, not Saul, who suggests taking the matter to God. In addition to the construction of the altar, apparently Ahijah the priest was thinking of using the Urim and Thummim (cf v 41).
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:37–38 *Saul inquired of God*. After the priest suggested it, Saul turned to God. See "call," p 842. *He did not answer*. In addition to the Israelites' failure to attain a complete victory, Saul's rash vow resulted in God not answering his inquiry. "Saul was a great king, chosen by God, and a godly man. But when he was established on his throne, he let his heart wander from God and put his trust in his crown and power [1 Samuel 9–13]. Then he had to perish with all he had, so that not even his children remained [1 Samuel 31]" (LC I 45). *see how this sin has arisen*. Saul wanted the leaders of Israel to see the resolution of this situation.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:39–42 Almost all we know about how the sacred lot operated comes from this and the following verses. It seems that the technique used in determining God's will involved questions that could be answered by yes or no. Answers were given by means of the Urim and Thummim, which may have been sticks, some kind of dice, or black and white stones.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:39 *as the* LORD *lives*. Oath formula. See p 7. *Jonathan*. Saul names his own son to emphasize the zeal of his oath. *he shall surely die*. Saul failed to see that it was his own ill-considered vow that had caused the problem.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:40–42 *on one side … on the other side*. These words offer some insight into the working of the Urim and Thummim, which in some way would indicate a choice between the two. *Jonathan was taken*. Final casting of the lot pointed to Jonathan as the one who was at the center of the impasse (cf Jsh 7:18). In reality, Jonathan was not guilty before God; nevertheless, the Lord used this means to get to the heart of the issue.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:43–44 *Tell me what you have done*. Saul had the culprit, or so he thought. *I will die*. Jonathan's bravery is evident once more, as he was willing even to die if that would serve the cause of God's people. Throughout chs 13–15, faithful and noble Jonathan shines in bright contrast to his self-serving and unbelieving father. *God do so to me and more also*. Another curse formula. See p 6. *you shall surely die, Jonathan*. Saul was ready to sacrifice his own son for the foolish vow.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:45 *salvation*. See p 843. *As the LORD lives*. People answer Saul's vow with one of their own, namely, that Jonathan would not die. *worked with God this day*. People saw that taking Jonathan's life would be wrong. *ransomed*. See "redeem," p 843. Noble Jonathan had the backing of the people and of God.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:24–46 Saul's foolish oath threatens Jonathan's life, but the people rightly intervene. At times, all of us have acted rashly rather than seeking God's guidance, sometimes with long-lasting (perhaps lifelong) repercussions. Thankfully, as the Israelites "ransomed" Jonathan from Saul's rash oath, Christ ransomed us from our own sinful folly and grants us new opportunities. • Almighty God, forgive us when we act rashly. Give us the wisdom to seek out Your way in the pages of Holy Scripture. In the Savior's name. Amen.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:47–48 Summarizes Saul's reign from a military standpoint.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:47 *Moab*. Southeast of the Salt Sea; played a frequent role in Israelite history, including the story of Ruth. *Ammonites*. Ammon was northeast of the Salt Sea, with the capital of Rabbath-ammon (modern day Amman, capital of Jordan); see note, Jgs 3:13. There was much interchange between Ammon and Israel, including David's flight there (2Sm 17:27–29) and Solomon's marriage with Ammonite women (1Ki 11:1). *Edom*. South of Moab; Israel under Moses passed through it on its way to the Promised Land. *Zobah*. Northeast of Israel; controlled eastern Syria. *Philistines*. From whom the name "Palestine" is derived; perennial enemies of Israel. Eventually, Saul met his end in a battle against them (ch 31), located on the coast of the Great Sea. See map, p 451. *he routed them*. Despite Saul's spiritual failings, God used him to defeat the enemies of His chosen nation.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:48 *he did valiantly*. Saul's skill and bravery as a military commander is acknowledged. *Amalekites*. Nomadic

raiders descended from Esau (Gn 36:12, 16), living south of Israel. The two nations had clashed when Moses led the Israelites through that region (Dt 25:17).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:49–51 Simplicity of Saul's family life contrasts sharply with that of King David and even more so with that of King Solomon.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:49 *Michal*. Later married David (18:20–27).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:50 *Ahinoam*. Only mention of a wife of Saul; his concubine Rizpah is referred to in 2Sm 3:7; 21:8–12. *Abner*. Saul's cousin; common in the ancient Near East to appoint family members to important government positions.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:52 *hard fighting against the Philistines*. No other foe so dominated the attention of Saul as did the Philistines, as the mention here attests. *strong man*. Though a king, Saul's main role was that of military commander; because of constant threats from Israel's neighbors, he was always looking for men who could serve in the army. Among them was David, who would become Saul's successor.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:47–52 As king, Saul serves primarily as a military leader. Today, believers continue to face enemies, both spiritual and physical. Through God's weapons, in particular "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (Eph 6:17), God grants us victory and strength to serve Him boldly. • Lord of hosts, be with us in our daily struggle against all enemies that seek to destroy us now and eternally. Strengthen and uphold us until we pass from the Church Militant to the Church Triumphant. In Jesus' name. Amen.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:1 *anoint you*. See note, 10:1. *listen*. Cf Jn 8:31, where Jesus says, "If you abide in My word, you are truly My disciples."

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:2 *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291. *Amalek*. See note, 14:48.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:3 *devote to destruction*. See p 6. Some commentators refer to this call for destruction as a "holy war." Yet, outside of that unique situation, God has never given His people the directive to carry out military warfare to destroy enemies. It is far removed from the Muslim concept of jihad. For ancient Israel, it was God's way of giving His people the land He had promised them and taking it from a people who for

centuries had turned their backs on God and engaged in the vilest practices. See p 376.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:4 *Telaim*. Probably Telem in southern Judah (Jsh 15:24). *two hundred thousand men on foot*. Huge force, mustered from all the tribes (with Judah singled out), indicates the need for a large army to defeat the Amalekite threat. See p 217.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:5 *city of Amalek*. Unnamed Amalekite settlement, possibly where the king lived. *lay in wait*. In vast expanses of rocks, hills, and ravines, it would be possible to keep a large force undercover. Ambush was a common form of attack (cf Jsh 8; Jgs 20:33).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:6 *Kenites*. Bedouin or nomadic people related to Midianites. Moses had married a Kenite (Jgs 4:11), and some Kenites had gone with the Israelites into the Promised Land. *the Kenites departed*. Spared because of their "kindness" toward the Israelites. See "steadfast love," p 843.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:7 *Havilah*. Lit, "a stretch of sand," in the northern Arabian Peninsula, or the word could be an altered spelling of Hbr for "the wadi" or valley. *Shur*. Lit, "wall," wilderness in northern Sinai Peninsula.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:8 *all the people*. Just the Amalekites in this city; the nation of Amalek was not completely destroyed. Under David and Solomon, the Amalekites paid tribute to Israel (2Sm 8:11–12). By the time of King Hezekiah (c 700 BC), few Amalekites remained (1Ch 4:42–43).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:9 *spared Agag*. In Est 3:1, the evil Haman is described as an Agagite, either a descendant of Agag or a person having the wicked character of Agag. In sparing Agag, Saul was not being good, but rather disobedient. It may have been an act of pride, in that he could show off the captive king to all the people. *despised and worthless*. Keeping the best for themselves, the people destroyed only undesirable livestock. Centuries later, God would reprimand the people of Jerusalem for keeping the prize animals, while sacrificing to Him the "lame or sick" and "what is blemished" (Mal 1:13–14). Today, we do the same when we spend lavishly on ourselves and give only measly leftovers for the Lord's work.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:11 *I regret that I have made Saul king*. See note, v 35. God used this expression before sending the flood (Gn 6:7). *cried to the* LORD. In grief and in prayer for Saul. See "call," p 842.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:12 *Carmel*. Not Mount Carmel in northern Israel, but a town in Judah, c 8 mi SE of Hebron. *monument for himself*. Rather than erecting a monument honoring God, Saul set one up for himself, a clear demonstration of how far his heart was from the Lord.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:13–15 *Blessed be you … I have performed the commandment*. Saul greets Samuel with a blessing. In his conscience, Saul felt justified for his actions. *bleating of the sheep*. Samuel points to the evidence that contradicts Saul's lie about carrying out the Lord's commandment. *the people spared*. Saul blames the soldiers, when it was his responsibility (v 9). The humility of Saul's early reign has given way to pride that fails to acknowledge sin.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:16 From youth, Samuel was God's spokesman, privileged to hear directly from God His will for the chosen people (cf ch 3).
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:17 *little in your own eyes*. Sarcasm; Saul was obsessed with his own importance, though before coming to power he had truly been humble (10:22). Greg: "When he was little with himself, he was great with God; but, when he appeared great with himself, he was little with God" (*NPNF* 2 12:15).
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:18 *sent you on a mission*. Samuel underscores the seriousness of Saul's failure, for he had a mission from God. *devote to destruction*. See p 6. *the sinners, the Amalekites*. Refers to the Amalekites' obduracy and outright opposition to the true God and His people.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:19 Samuel asks rhetorical questions designed to solicit from Saul an acknowledgment of sin and a repentant attitude. *pounce on the spoil*. Greed caused Saul to disobey the command to destroy the Amalekites and their livestock.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:20–21 *I have obeyed*. Despite Samuel's attempt to bring Saul to see his sin, Saul refused to acknowledge any fault. *the people took of the spoil*. Again, Saul shifts the blame away from himself. See note, 13:11. *to sacrifice to the* LORD. Even if what Saul said was true, God did not ask for this, but for the destruction of the Amalekites (v 3). *your God*. Saul may have said this simply to win Samuel's favor and not necessarily as an expression of unbelief, as if God is Samuel's God but not Saul's.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:22–23 Poetic (see pp 775–78). Samuel's most eloquent words. *to obey is better than sacrifice*. Samuel is not saying that sacrifice is unimportant, but that it should be accompanied by the obedience that flows from saving faith. Luth: "In Scripture faith is called obedience" (AE 30:30). See pp 170–71. Iren: "The prophets indicate in the fullest manner that God stood in no need of their slavish obedience, but that it was upon their own account that He enjoyed certain observances in the law. … When He perceived them neglecting righteousness, and abstaining from the love of God, and imagining that God was to be propitiated by sacrifices and the other typical observances, Samuel did even thus speak to them" (*ANF* 1:482).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:23 *rebellion … presumption*. Samuel classifies human pride and rebellion against God's commands along with idolatry and its accompanying evils. All have this in common—they look elsewhere than to God's Word for guidance and place their faith elsewhere than in the true God. This is a strong reminder to us that whenever we turn from God and place our trust in something or someone else, it is a form of idolatry. Chem: "[Samuel] shows that in [Saul's] disobedient way the rule he broke was the Second Commandment. … He uses His name in vain" (*LTh* 2:357). *divination*. Determining the future by observing natural phenomena, such as the movement of the heavenly bodies, consultation with mediums (ch 28), and other such practices rather than listening to the Lord's Word as delivered through His chosen spokesmen. This was a sin of the Amalekites and of other heathen nations with which Israel came into contact in the Promised Land. Cf Dt 18:9–14. Their rituals were connected with worship of idols (Jer 10:1–10).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:24 *I have sinned*. Saul's words may well be sincere, yet he qualifies them. *I feared the people and obeyed their voice*. Even in confessing, Saul shifts blame.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:25 *please pardon my sin*. Another confession from Saul. Only God knows the sincerity of Saul's confession, but his subsequent words make it suspect. Cf Ex 10:16–17. *return with me that I may worship the* LORD. Concern comes across as more political and for show than sincere.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:26 *I will not*. Withdrawal of God's spokesman Samuel from Saul would represent God's rejection of Saul's kingship.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:27–28 *seized the skirt of his robe*. Saul desperately did not want to lose Samuel, who served as a symbol of God's favor before the people. *it tore … torn the kingdom*. Samuel immediately saw the tearing of his robe as a symbol of something larger, the tearing of the kingdom away from Saul and his family. Samuel apparently wore a distinctive robe, which may have evidenced his priestly and prophetic service (cf 2:19; 28:14). *a neighbor of yours*. David would ascend to the throne.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:29 *Glory of Israel*. A title for God. See pp 6–7. *regret*. See note, v 35.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:30 *honor me now before the elders*. Saul continues to seem more concerned with the perception of others than with his relationship with the living God. We constantly need to take stock in our lives as to the reason we do things (such as attend church). *elders*. See p 228.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:31 *Samuel turned back after Saul*. Samuel was not concerned with helping Saul appear pious before the people, but he wanted to complete the Lord's directives. *bowed before the* LORD. Sincerity or insincerity of this act of worship would not be evident to those present (cf 16:7).
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:32 *cheerfully*. May also be translated as "trembling" or "in fetters." *Surely the bitterness of death is past*. Expression of false confidence, wishful thinking, or resignation to his fate.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:33 *hacked*. Samuel was still able-bodied enough to carry out the law of retaliation. Demonstrating the severity of God's judgment, it was a graphic testimony to disobedient Saul. *before the* LORD *in Gilgal*. Before the Lord's altar.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:34 Tragic and final parting of Saul and Samuel. Although Samuel and Saul lived fewer than 5 mi apart, they never saw each other again. *Ramah*. In hill country of Benjamin. This had been the seat of Samuel's judgeship (7:17) and was where he had anointed Saul king of Israel (10:1). See map, p 451. *Gibeah*. Also in territory of Benjamin.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:35 *Samuel grieved over Saul*. Could mean that Samuel regarded Saul as one who was already dead, but in light of Samuel's character, it more likely means that in his grief he continued to pray that Saul would repent. Bern: "When affection calls us, reason is silent. When Samuel wept over Saul it was by a feeling of pity, and not of

approval" (*SLSB*, p 32). *the* LORD *regretted*. See "relent," pp 1079–80. God is all-knowing and perfect in all He does so that His will and decisions are unchangeable (v 29; cf Ps 110:4); from a human standpoint, however, God reacts to human conditions and, in that sense, may change.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **Ch 15** One of the most tragic passages in OT history is recorded here—a stark reminder of the seriousness of not listening to and following God's Word. Saul fails to carry out the Lord's command to destroy the Amalekites completely, so the Lord will no longer bless his leadership. God's Law is clear and calls for His people's perfect obedience in thought, word, and deed. Through the Law, God calls us to repent. Only because of Christ's sinless obedience and sacrificial death on our behalf can we enjoy His blessings. • Heavenly Father, forgive us for the many times we have not followed Your Word completely. We can never thank You enough for Jesus' sacrifice for our sins. Renew in us daily the will and ability to live for Him who died for us. Amen.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 16:1 *I have rejected him*. Luth: "Since God is a just judge, we must love and laud his justice and rejoice in God even when he miserably destroys the wicked in body and soul, for in all this his lofty and unspeakable justice shines forth. Thus even hell is no less full of good, the supreme good, than is heaven. … The Lord forbade Samuel … to continue mourning for Saul. … It is as if he says: Does my will so displease you that you prefer the will of man to me?" (AE 42:156). Although Samuel wasn't originally in favor of the monarchy, he grieved over what might have been, over the promise cut short by disobedience to God (15:22–23). Yet, God lifts him out of his depression by sending him on an errand. *oil*. See note, 10:1.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 16:2 *heifer*. Used in peace offerings (Lv 3:1). A heifer is here, for that reason, a sacrificial offering. See pp 170–71.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 16:3 God takes initiative in anointing David as future king; 24:6 refers to the king as "the LORD's anointed," which becomes our word "Messiah." See p 1227.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 16:4 *Bethlehem*. Small town (Mi 5:2; see map, p 451). *trembling*. Because Samuel represents God's awesome majesty. *peaceably*. Prophet's words could be words of judgment or words of mercy.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 16:5 *Consecrate*. See p 6. Jesse was probably not one of the elders, since the expression "son of Jesse," as

applied to David by his opponents (20:27–31), implied ridicule. This would mean Jesse was of no account in his community.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 16:6–13 The selection of "God's anointed" flows from His love, not from the external splendor of the one He chooses (Ps 78:70–72). The mystery of divine election is part of the mystery of God's good and gracious will. God's thoughts are not our thoughts (Is 55:8–9).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 16:6–9 *Eliab … Abinadab … Shammah*. Three oldest sons will soon be part of Saul's army.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 16:6 *Eliab*. Lit, "God is father." God isn't as impressed with Jesse's firstborn son as is Samuel. Samuel doesn't always accurately perceive God's ways and intentions.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 16:7 Cf v 12. David's external appearance isn't God's primary focus. God seeks someone who will not run after other gods.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 16:10 God did not choose one of Jesse's seven oldest sons. In the Bible, God often chooses a younger brother (Jacob rather than Esau, Ephraim rather than Manasseh; Gn 25:23; 48:17–19).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 16:11 *sit down*. Presumably to eat.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 16:12 *ruddy*. Lit, "reddish." Implies a healthy-looking attractiveness. David's good looks were a bonus to his inner worth in God's eyes.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 16:13 Anointing with oil here encompasses anointing with the Holy Spirit (Is 61:1). There is a new emphasis on the Spirit of the Lord abiding with God's chosen leader. *rushed*. See note, 10:6. *from that day forward*. The Spirit stays with David. (However, see note, Ps 51:11–12.) Elsewhere, the Spirit comes and goes (three times for Samson—Jgs 14:6, 19; 15:14—and twice for Saul—1Sm 10:10; 11:6). Before Samuel's time, the Lord's Spirit is mentioned infrequently, except for the time of the judges (Jgs 3:10; 6:34). The rush of the Spirit upon David ensures that whatever the future may hold, he is divinely equipped for the work God calls him to do. See p 1815.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 16:1–13 Samuel's focus is directed away from Saul's ruined potential to what God will do through Jesse's youngest son, David, a man after God's own heart (13:14). Because God looks on our hearts (v 7), we stand condemned before Him (Jer 17:9–10a). Yet, He leads us to plead: "Create in me a clean heart, O God" (Ps 51:10).

By faith in the Gospel, our hearts are cleansed (Ac 15:9), and we are reassured that God will not despise a broken and contrite heart (Ps 51:17). • Thank You, Lord, that You do not judge by appearances but have promised us that there is "no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" (Rm 8:1). Amen.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 16:14–23 Episode could have occurred after defeat of Goliath, but it is placed here to contrast the departure of God's Spirit from Saul with the conferring of His Spirit upon David.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 16:14 *departed*. Because of Saul's disobedience to God (ch 15). Bas: "[The Holy Spirit] does not abide with those who, on account of the instability of their will, easily reject the grace which they have received. An instance of this is seen in Saul" (*NPNF* 2 8:38). See Chem, *LTh* 1:145. *a harmful spirit from the* LORD. Harmful, or evil spirits are subject to God's control and operate only within divinely determined boundaries. What God permits, God is said to do. See note, Jb 1:12. God still guides what Saul does. Chem: "God permits, allows, suffers sin in the sense of deserting or leaving someone to it" (*LTh* 1:218).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 16:15 *tormenting*. Saul's dangerous moods are occasioned by knowledge that God has rejected him as king. His bad conscience robs him of any sense of God's presence.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 16:16 *lyre*. See p 993. People were aware of the effects of certain types of music on those with psychological problems. See notes, 10:5; 1Ch 15:16–24.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 16:17 *a man who can play well*. His music is of such quality that it has the necessary therapeutic effect.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 16:18 *a man of valor*. See note, Jgs 6:12. David was not yet 20 years old (see note, 17:33). This raises questions of chronology. See note, vv 14–23. *prudent in speech*. Highly prized virtue in Israel. *the* LORD *is with him*. David's outstanding feature. A servant of Saul already recognizes this about him. See "be with," p 5.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 16:19 Saul is oblivious to the irony that he is inviting his successor under his roof.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 16:20 *bread*. David's father gives a donation to the royal kitchen as an act of goodwill.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 16:21 Samuel had warned his people that a king would take their best men into his service (8:16). *armor-bearer*. Honorary title conferred on a member of the king's entourage.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 16:22 Though Jesse lost David's services as shepherd, it was great compensation to have a son in the king's court.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 16:23 With God's Spirit absent from Saul, the evil, harmful spirit that came upon him had to be exorcised from time to time. God still shows Saul mercy by letting David provide relief from the spirit's torments.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 16:14–23 David plays music to soothe Saul when an injurious ("evil") spirit brings Saul emotional and mental instability. When you are overwhelmed by temptation or depression, pray to God: "Take not Your Holy Spirit from me" (Ps 51:11). Jesus, your Good Shepherd, gave His life for you. No one can snatch you out of His hand (Jn 10:28). • "Almighty God, merciful Father, since You have wakened from death the Shepherd of Your sheep, grant us Your Holy Spirit that when we hear the voice of our Shepherd we may know Him who calls us each by name and follow where He leads." Amen. (*LSB Altar Book*, p 603)
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **Ch 17** Battlefield layout consisted of a line of shield-bearing spearmen with archers at the rear. Once battle began, the troops engaged in hand-to-hand combat. A trumpet gave the signal for attack and retreat. Before David's time, the Israelites had not had a leader since Joshua who understood strategy and tactics.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:1–3 *Socoh*. C 15 mi W of Bethlehem. *Azekah*. C 2 mi NW of Socoh in the region of Judah. *Elah*. Valley in Judah, protected by cities of Azekah and Libnah. For safety, opposing armies were lined up on both sides of a valley. See map, p 451.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:4 *champion*. Hbr word occurs only here in OT. Inference is that Goliath, over 9 ft tall, represents the best of the Philistine soldiers.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:5–7 Goliath's coat of armor weighed c 125 lb. His javelin could be used in defense or offense. His spearhead weighed 14½ lb. Comparing his spear to a weaver's beam probably describes its shape rather than its size. See p cx. Descriptions of his armor and arms are not in Semitic terms.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:8 Of considerable height himself, Saul, as king, should have been Israel's champion. Duels between representative strongmen were a common way to avoid more widespread bloodshed. Cf 2Sm 2:12–15.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:9 Cf 2Sm 21:15–22. Same principle of representation occurs when leaders act on our behalf, or when our Lord fights and defeats the forces of evil on our behalf.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:10 *the Philistine*. Term is used derisively throughout ch 17 for overly self-confident Goliath. *defy*. In defying Israel's army, Goliath defies God, the protector and defender of His people.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:11 Saul and his people were greatly afraid because the odds seemed overwhelmingly against them; they lost their faith in God's power. They felt too weak to attack. If they did not accept Goliath's offer, they could lose by default. *the Philistine*. See note, v 10.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:12 *Bethlehem*. Village within the larger Ephrathah clan. See map, p 451.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:13 As Jesse was too old for military service, his three oldest sons served instead. Cf Nu 1:3.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:15 Now that Saul had focused on military matters, David was not always needed at Saul's court. See notes, 16:18–23. Shepherds had little social rank in Israel. There were no professional shepherds. This lowliest of jobs went to the youngest capable family member.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:16 *the Philistine*. See note, v 10.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:17 Too young to fight, David provided food for his older brothers.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:18 Jesse gave special treatment to his sons' commander so the commander might care for Jesse's sons. *cheeses*. Lit, "slices of milk."
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:20 *the sheep*. Small flock of perhaps no more than 100 sheep (cf Mt 18:12; Lk 15:4) would need only one person to watch it. Cf v 28.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:22 David is eager to attend the battle. He takes the initiative to meet his brothers. *keeper of the baggage*. Supply keeper, who looked after the provisions that fathers provided for their sons.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:23 In contrast to Saul, when David hears Goliath's threats, David will respond in faith.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:24 Israelites fled because of their lack of faith in God's help.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:25 Lavish offer to entice bravery. Saul will later renege on his offer to David. *free*. Victor's family will be exempt from taxes or obligated labor.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:26 David's character is captured in the first words attributed to him. He sees the issues more clearly than Saul and his soldiers. He makes the first theological comment. David sees no military giant. *uncircumcised*. Term of contempt for a pagan.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:27 David's question in v 26 comes after the answer of v 25 and is directed to a different group of people (as v 27 makes clear). David asks his question to ensure he has heard correctly.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:28 Eliab's anger may arise from jealousy toward his brother and a sense of guilt for the defeatist attitude of his people. His language is similar to that used to describe Joseph's brothers' rage against him (Gn 37). *presumption*. Hbr means "arrogantly taking too much on oneself."
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:29 *What have I done now?* David protests his innocence. Eliab should be angry at Goliath rather than at David.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:31–32 David weighed the difficulties from a divine perspective. Here was an opportunity for God to display His power. Ambr: "David … was chosen from among all to rule the people. How gentle and kindly he was, humble in spirit too, how diligent and ready to show affection. Before he came to the throne he offered himself in the stead of all" (*NPNF* 2 10:48–49). *this Philistine*. See note, v 10.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:33 Saul continues to view the situation from a human point of view, failing to take into account what God can do. Hannah had already proclaimed how God can defeat the mighty and exalt the lowly (2:4–9). This will soon happen. *youth*. Hbr *na'ar*, "boy" or "young man." The same term described Jonathan's armor-bearer (14:1). Men were obligated for military service at age 20 (Nu 1:3). David is still younger than 20, but his age is not clear. Cf 20:35, where the noun is modified by "little," which could describe size or age. (A feminine form, Hbr *na'arah*, is used for girls; 2Ki 5:2.)
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:34 In response to Saul's practical observation, David delivers a testimony of faith in God's almighty help. He speaks in the past tense of being a shepherd, anticipating a new future provided by God. *lion … bear*. See note, v 37.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:35 *struck*. With either a sling or club. See note, Jgs 20:16. *delivered*. See p 842.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:36 David sees no greater difficulty in defeating Goliath than in defeating the wild animals that attacked his flock. Goliath can be compared to a bear or lion (Pr 28:15).
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:37 *delivered*. See p 842. Deliverance from enemies depicted as predatory animals is a biblical motif (Ps 22:21). Remembrance of God's deliverance in the past fills David with confidence that God will not let him down. *lion*. Asian lion, which existed in Israel until the fourteenth century AD. *bear*. Syrian brown bear.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:38 Wearing someone else's armor imbued the wearer with the owner's essence. Also, Saul could claim credit for David's victory.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:39 David prefers to attack Goliath on his own terms.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:40 *sling*. See note, Jgs 20:16.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:41 *the Philistine*. See note, v 10.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:42 Goliath's pride was offended when he saw a youthful David come as his challenger. *ruddy*. See note, 16:12.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:43 Goliath's derision and curse are part of warfare at that time. See "curse," p 6. *dog*. Later became a slur word specifically for Gentiles. See note, 24:14. *the Philistine*. See note, v 10.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:44 Goliath does not suspect that this youth's impertinence is a carefully considered maneuver. Appearances can be deceptive (16:7).
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:45 *spear*. For throwing and thrusting. *javelin*. Or a type of sword, based on the Qumran Order of War. *name*. David's secret weapon: he comes in the name of the living God. He is acting more for God than for Israel. See p 843. *LORD of hosts*. See p 1291.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:46 The theological significance of the event is that God is the true deliverer of His people. The victory David anticipates will demonstrate to all the world the existence and power of Israel's God.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:47 *assembly may know*. Event would be recounted and recalled in the liturgical assembly of God's people. Glory belongs to God; David takes no credit for the victory over Goliath. *saves*. Both Israelite and Philistine armies will be shown the error of placing trust

in human devices for national security. Point of the OT is that salvation comes from God alone. See "salvation," p 843. *the battle is the LORD's*. Luth: "You see that [David] was righteous and acceptable to God, strong and constant in faith, before he did this work. Accordingly, David's 'doing' is neither a natural doing nor a moral doing; it is a doing in faith" (AE 26:263).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:48 *the Philistine*. See note, v 10. *arose*. Beginning of his attack, not that he had been seated. *battle line*. See note, ch 17.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:49 String of actions rapidly brings the story to its climax. Having testified to his faith in God, David makes short work of Goliath. *forehead*. Goliath's helmet (v 5) should have protected him. He may not have worn it or adjusted it properly. Later Gk artwork depicts soldiers with their helmets pushed toward the back of their heads when not in battle.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:50 *the Philistine*. See note, v 10.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:51 *killed*. Hbr verb has sense of finishing Goliath off. Ironically, David kills Goliath with the Philistine's own sword. David's victory affirms the superiority of faith in God over the supposed marvels of human technology and skill. Luth: "Sin is destroyed by its own fruit and is slain by the death to which it gave birth, as a viper is devoured by its own offspring. It is a glorious spectacle to see how sin is destroyed, not by the work of another, but by its own, and how it is stabbed with its own sword, as Goliath is beheaded by his own sword [1 Sam. 17:51]. Goliath also was a kind of sin, a giant terrifying to all except the young boy David, that is, to Christ, who singlehandedly laid him low, beheaded him with his own sword" (AE 42:151–52).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:52 *Gath*. On coastal plain of southern Philistia. *Ekron*. C 25 mi W of Jerusalem. See map, p 451. *Shaaraim*. On the line of the Philistine flight from Azekah, before the parting of ways to Gath and Ekron.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:54 Although Jerusalem was not yet a part of Israel, David displayed Goliath's head there as a warning to its inhabitants. He put Jerusalem on notice that it, too, would be defeated. These events happened after vv 55–58 (as v 57 makes clear). *his tent*. Unclear. Could simply mean "home" (cf 2Sm 20:1), or David may have planned to stay with his brothers at the battlefield.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:55 David was not permanently at Saul's court. Saul had taken little note of David's family. Saul's unstable mental condition may have affected his memory. *As your soul lives*. Oath formula meaning "by your life."
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:57 See note, v 54.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:58 Saul seeks more information than the name of David's father. He is likely considering the politics of the situation. Though David comes from a relatively unimportant clan, he was a member of the most powerful tribe, Judah, which could throw support behind him in a coup.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **Ch 17** This gripping story of the faith of young David provides a superb example of how God grants victory in the face of impossible odds. It anticipates Jesus' victory on the cross in the face of all the powers against Him. We are not to place our trust in human endeavors and devices. The message of the cross is that God chose what is weak to shame the strong, and the "weakness" of God is stronger than human strength (1Co 1:18–27; 1Jn 4:4). • Lord God, when I feel insecure, let me cast my cares on You, knowing that You care for me. Amen.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 18:1 *knit*. Same Hbr verb used in Gn 44:30 to express Jacob's love for his son Benjamin. Jonathan initiates a friendship with David that blesses and hallows life. *loved*. Used of a covenant relationship; possesses political overtones. Never used of homosexual desire or activity. (OT uses the verb "to know" for sexual activity; see note, Gn 19:5. Latter verb is never used of David's relationship with Jonathan.) The fact that Saul, too, loved David (16:21) prepares us for the later political use of the verb "love."
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 18:3 *covenant*. See p 127. Jonathan pledges allegiance to Israel's future king in a political arrangement that involves a commitment to care for each other and promote the other's interests. Loyalty is the essence of such a covenant.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 18:4 By giving David his robes, Jonathan renounces his right to the throne. David accepts the robes without further ado. He receives from Jonathan what he cannot receive from Saul (17:38–39).
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 18:5 *was successful*. Hbr denotes skill as well as success. Because God's Spirit was with David, he was successful in battle without formal military training.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 18:1–5 Jonathan's unselfish affection for David is seen when Jonathan renounces his own right to the throne—something highly unusual. Mixed motives can easily mar friendships. In Christ, the friend of sinners, we have a faithful and forgiving friend who will never leave or forsake us. • "What a friend we have in Jesus, All our sins and griefs to bear! What a privilege to carry Ev'rything to God in prayer! Oh, what peace we often forfeit; Oh, what needless pain we bear—All because we do not carry Ev'rything to God in prayer!" Amen. (*LSB* 770:1)

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 18:6–8 After a military victory, it was common for women to celebrate their nation's triumph. Their song gives Saul pride of place by mentioning him first; they do not intend to offend the king. However, Saul took grave offense at their words and felt threatened by their suggestion of support for David. The song uses poetic exaggeration; David had not yet slain hundreds, let alone thousands, of people.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 18:6 *dancing*. See p 993. *instruments*. See note, 10:5. The Epic of Gilgamesh mentions women as musicians.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 18:9 In light of vv 12, 15, 29, this means "Saul kept a fearful eye on David." Perhaps he suspects David may succeed him.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 18:10–11 As Saul's military commander, David was at the king's beck and call. If the king wanted entertainment to soothe his mental torment, David was obliged to comply. A spear in Saul's hand and a lyre in David's—what a contrast between Saul's harmful intentions and David's helpful assistance.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 18:12 Saul feared David because Saul had alienated himself from God, while God was with David, protecting him from harm and destruction.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 18:13 Whatever Saul does to minimize David's influence has the reverse effect. He had hoped David would die in battle. Instead, support for David grows among the people.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 18:14 *success*. Because God was an intimate part of David's daily life. See note, v 5. *with him*. See "be with," p 5.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 18:16 David's God-given success binds the people all the more closely to him in a covenant relationship. *loved*.

People gave David allegiance and loyalty. See note, v 1. *he went out*. David's military activities elevated him to prominence before the people.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 18:6–16 Saul's jealousy does him no good; meanwhile, David is faithful to the Lord, who gives him success. Envy and jealousy diminish our enjoyment of life, stealing our contentment. God "has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places" (Eph 1:3). What more do we need? • Lord, help me to be content with all the blessings You give me. Enable me to use them to bring blessings into the lives of others. Amen.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 18:17 Saul does not yet give his daughter to David, who might soon die in battle. He only promises her to David. Royal marriages were highly political. See note, 1Ki 3:1–2. Luth: "King Saul did not like David and would have liked to kill him; but since he wanted to be holy, he decided not to kill him himself, but to send him among the Philistines to be killed there, so that his hand would remain innocent" (AE 21:74).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 18:18 David sees Saul's political agenda clearly and responds modestly.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 18:19 In order to humiliate David, Saul gives Merab to Adriel. Merab would bear Adriel five sons (2Sm 21:8).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 18:20 Michal's love for David parallels Jonathan's and may have the same covenant connotations. Both love David more than they love their father. *they*. Michal and David or others at court who observed them.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 18:21 Saul intends Michal to be a snare for David in keeping him off guard and by requiring a ridiculous dowry, or bride-price (v 25), which could prove fatal for David. See note, Gn 34:12.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 18:23 Unlike today's culture of self-promotion, the culture of David's time was one of self-deprecation. *poor*. He cannot afford to marry the king's daughter. *man*. Cf 21:14. David is no longer a youth. See note, 17:33. *no reputation?* David's family is not aristocratic. See note, 16:5, regarding Jesse.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 18:25 *bride-price*. Paid to the bride's father as compensation for her loss and as insurance for her support if she were widowed. In Gn 29:20, service to the bride's father also substitutes for a monetary dowry. See pp 54–55. *foreskins*. Would show that these men were Philistines. A thirteenth-century Egyptian relief shows scribes

counting a pile of hands taken from Hittite soldiers and recording their number. Israelites, Ammonites, Moabites, and Edomites, as West Semitic people, practiced circumcision. Philistines, of Greek cultural origins, did not.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 18:27 See note, 2Sm 3:14. Although David killed more men, he brought only what Saul required. Ironically, Saul thought David would die pursuing the bride-price.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 18:28 Michal's love for David, now added to Jonathan's love (covenant loyalty) to him, shows God's blessing on David. *the Lord was with David*. See "be with," p 5.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 18:29 The more God blesses David, the more Saul fears him as his rival and potential heir to the throne, aided by his marriage into the king's family. Though Saul could clearly see that God was with David, it led to no change of heart on the king's part.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 18:30 Philistines are no match for David's superior skills. *highly esteemed*. David's name was "precious" (cf Ps 139:17; Is 43:4).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 18:17–30 At the beginning (v 5), middle (v 15), and end of this chapter (v 30), we are told that David is successful in all he does, because the Lord is with him. As with Joseph (Gn 50:20), what others intend for evil against David God turns into good. Fear of others (v 29) can be a sign of little faith. Our Lord says, "Fear not" (Lk 12:32). When afraid, we are urged to trust the Gospel promise of Rm 8:31, "If God is for us, who can be against us?" • Lord, give me faith to believe that "for those who love God all things work together for good" (Rm 8:28). Amen.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 19:1 *servants*. Saul's attendants, not Jonathan's. Saul plots to kill David. *delighted*. Describes laughter, pleasure, and enjoyment.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 19:2–7 Here we see the strength of Jonathan's devotion to David, a friendship free of all selfish motives.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 19:4 True friends speak well of each other and put the best construction on the other's actions, as Jonathan does concerning David to his father.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 19:5 *the Lord worked*. Jonathan's faith in God shines forth in the words of this verse. He saw the blessings God brought to all Israel through David's victory over Goliath. *salvation*. See p

843. *innocent blood*. To kill an innocent person such as David is to be guilty of a terrible sin (Dt 21:8–9). See note, 1Ki 2:31.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 19:6 *As the Lord lives*. Saul makes another religious oath he has no intention of keeping (cf 14:24–44).
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 19:8–10 Repeats events of 18:10–11.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 19:9 *harmful spirit from the Lord*. See note, 16:14.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 19:11 *messengers*. Sometimes assigned to do evil tasks, like assassinate a ruler's rival. *morning*. Ps 59 gives insight on how David felt at the time. Saul sought to kill David at dawn; God's love preserved David in the morning (Ps 59:16). *Michal … told him*. Her first allegiance is to her husband, David, not to her father.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 19:13 *image*. See note, Gn 31:19. In this case, the image appears life-sized.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 19:14 Michal engages in this deception so her husband cannot be caught by Saul's henchmen. Her deception is reported matter-of-factly, without praise or censure. It is part of the drama of the story and does not endorse lying.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 19:17 *enemy*. Saul has been employing an escalation of negative terms for David; first time he refers to him as his enemy.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 19:18 David goes to Samuel for sanctuary, strength, and courage to face threats to his life. *Ramah*. In Ephraim. *Naioth*. Near Ramah, short distance north of Jerusalem.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 19:20 *company*. Prophets often lodged together with fellow prophets. See p 555. The Spirit of God protects David by causing Saul's messengers to prophesy under a divinely induced trance. *prophesied*. See note, 10:6.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 19:22 *Secu*. C 3 mi N of Ramah.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 19:23–24 *stripped off*. In contrast to his messengers (vv 20–21), Saul behaves esp strangely. He takes off his royal robes as though casting aside his royal office. He has lost all control of himself. *Is Saul also among the prophets?* Demands a negative reply. To question Saul's behavior as a prophet is to question his legitimacy as king.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **Ch 19** Saul's hatred for David results in his attempts to murder him, but the Lord intervenes through Saul's own children. "Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer" (1Jn 3:15). Ask

God to remove hatred from your heart and cleanse it by His gift of forgiveness. "Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered" (Ps 32:1). • Thank You, Lord, that You forgive my sins and remember them no more. Amen.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 20:1 Cf 19:18.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 20:2 Jonathan is not afraid of losing his crown to David because he believes it is God's will that David be the next king of Israel (cf vv 12–15).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 20:3 David is more sensitive than is Jonathan to the precarious nature of life. Our lives are in the hands of the living Lord.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 20:4 Jonathan promises David unconditional assistance. He becomes the means by which David's God-ordained destiny is achieved.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 20:5 *new moon*. See note, Am 8:5. Apparently, Jesse's family gathered for a special time of worship during the new-moon celebration. See calendar, p 262.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 20:6 Because of the covenant they made with each other, Jonathan feels responsible for David. *yearly sacrifice*. See notes, v 29; 16:2.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 20:8 *deal kindly*. Or, "show covenant loyalty." See p 127. *covenant of the* LORD. With vows in the Lord's name.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 20:10 David's question is answered in vv 18–23.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 20:11 *into the field*. The privacy assures David of Jonathan's loyalty and underscores their close relationship.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 20:12 Jonathan believes he can successfully mediate between David and his father. *The* LORD *… be witness!* Solemn affirmation of the truth.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 20:13 *May the* LORD *be with you*. Jonathan's promise of loyalty to David is set in the form of a prayer. See "be with," p 5.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 20:14 *show me the steadfast love of the* LORD. May be superlative for highest possible loyalty. See p 843.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 20:15 Jonathan senses David's coming greatness but feels no jealousy. His words anticipate David's future rule as king.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 20:16–17 Jonathan prays that the Lord will ensure that David upholds his obligations to the covenant they have made. Jonathan has David reaffirm his side of their covenant. Words like these make this chapter one of the most touching accounts of friendship in literature. *house of David*. His dynasty.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 20:19 *stone heap*. See ESV note. Likely a familiar landmark.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 20:21 *as the* LORD *lives*. Oath formula. Jonathan declares that the Lord would be witness to the covenant of protection agreed to in vv 14–16. See p 7.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 20:22 God's hand is at work in actions we have chosen to do when we respond to His will. If David's life is in danger, he must flee so that he can be an instrument of God's future plans. As the Lord sent Joseph away to save lives in Egypt (Gn 45:4–7), so the Lord sends David away in safety to prepare him for his future vocation as king.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 20:23 *between you and me*. Jonathan swears an oath of undying friendship, backed by his deep faith in the Lord. The Lord would seal the pact of friendship.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 20:24 *field*. An open field was a typical place for archers to engage in target practice.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 20:25 *by the wall*. To be safe from attack from behind, Saul sat with Abner, his army general, beside him for protection.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 20:26 *not clean*. Ritual uncleanness disqualified a person from participating in a religious celebration and from community involvement. Because uncleanness was temporary, Saul became suspicious when David was absent longer than necessary.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 20:29 *sacrifice*. Lit, "kinship sacrifice." *my brother has commanded me*. Additional detail to what David said in v 6. His brother was probably in charge of family celebrations.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 20:30 *perverse, rebellious woman*. Jonathan's mother was Ahinoam (14:50). That Saul says this of his own wife shows how much he has lost perspective because of his loathing of David (though the curses may also illustrate strife in Saul's household). Saul intends to curse Jonathan rather than his mother, as the rest of the verse makes clear. *shame … nakedness?* Saul suggests that Jonathan is so

disloyal to his father that his mother is reduced in status from the bond of wedlock to that of a prostitute.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 20:31 Saul fears conspiracy, realizing he is no match for David and the protection Jonathan provides him. He virtually concedes David's invincibility. See note, 17:58.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 20:33 Due to Saul's unstable mental state, the spear he throws at his son misses him, as it had missed David (19:10). God was at work protecting the two friends.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 20:34 *fierce anger*. At the public humiliation he endured before Abner and the others. *ate no food*. See p 189. *grieved for David.* By impugning Jonathan, Saul had slandered David also.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 20:35 *little boy*. See note, 17:33.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 20:36 *arrow*. The Hbr is rare, found elsewhere only in 2Ki 9:24. With accurate aim, Jonathan shoots only one arrow.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 20:39 Jonathan's directions to the boy (v 38) were intended for David. The boy, of course, knew nothing of the reason behind the shooting of the arrows.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 20:40 *city*. Gibeah, where Jonathan was currently living (cf 15:34), c 3 mi N of Jerusalem. See map, p 468.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 20:41 *bowed*. Common gesture (Gn 33:3). See p 1276. David gives Jonathan the triple homage befitting a royal person. Mutual weeping and kissing is in expectation of their imminent farewell (cf Gn 45:14–15). *kissed*. Likely on the neck (Gn 33:4) rather than on the lips (Sg 1:2). See note, 18:1.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 20:42 *sworn … in the name of the* LORD. Swearing an oath in the Lord's name was a solemn act, as the Second Commandment reminds us. See SC, p xxxv. *forever*. Covenant David and Jonathan make with each other now involves their future descendants. Apart from a brief encounter in 23:16–18, this is the last time David and Jonathan would see each other. *departed*. See note, v 22.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **Ch 20** David and Jonathan's friendship displays lasting loyalty and personal self-sacrifice (cf Pr 17:17). Give thanks to the Lord for the friends He has blessed you with and the wonderful way He has protected you. Pray to grow in the grace of giving thanks. By grace, God treats all of us infinitely better than we deserve. •

“By grace I’m saved, grace free and boundless; My soul, believe and doubt it not.” Amen. (*LSB* 566:1)

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **21:1** *Nob*. City with priestly associations in territory of Benjamin, just north of Jerusalem. David has traveled just a few miles from Ramah. See map, p 468. *Ahimelech*. High priest, displaced by destruction of Shiloh. He is trembling, sensing something is amiss because the king's son-in-law is traveling alone.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **21:2** *charged me*. Would explain David's unannounced visit and provide a compelling case for secrecy.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **21:3** *five loaves of bread*. Modest request.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **21:4** *holy bread*. To be eaten only by Aaron and his sons. See note, Ex 25:30. Presumably the bread offered to David had been replaced by the bread of the next Sabbath. *kept themselves from women*. Dt 23 describes how the battle camp must be holy, involving ritual cleanness. Throughout Scripture, there is peril when the unclean and the holy come into contact, apparent also in St Paul's warning about unworthy participation in the Lord's Supper (1Co 11:29).
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **21:5** *as always*. In view of the directions of Dt 23, abstinence was probably practiced whenever soldiers were deployed. *vessels*. Sexual organs.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **21:6** *replaced by hot bread*. Occurred each Sabbath, when the priests consumed the previous week's portion. Jesus cited the event as a precedent for ceremonial law giving way to human necessity (Mt 12:3–4).
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **21:7** *detained before the LORD*. Perhaps excluded from the holy temple because he was an Edomite or was unclean, or perhaps detained by a vow or penitential duty. *Edomite*. Cf Gn 25:30; Nu 20:14–21.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **21:8** *the king's business required haste*. Elaborates story introduced in v 2.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **21:9** Goliath's sword was kept in this sacred place as a relic of God's victory at David's hand. David had placed Goliath's armor in his tent (17:54). *the ephod*. Priestly garment, made of the same material as the curtain of the temple. Israel's intermediary was clothed with the materials of God's presence. See notes, 14:3; Jgs 8:27.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **21:1–9** David receives the holy bread of the Presence to sustain him during his flight from Saul. Despite David's weakness before men and his sin before God, he is sustained with this unusual blessing. When troubles and sins surround you, turn to the Lord and

His servants for aid. Confess your sins and weaknesses honestly, and receive the care He administers through His servants. In mercy, the Lord will nourish, sustain, and forgive you. • Continue to nourish Your people and arm them against evil, dear Lord. Grant them wisdom with honesty. Amen.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **21:10** *Gath*. One of five major cities of the Philistines; place from which Gittite giants, including Goliath, came (17:4). See map, p 468.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **21:11** *the king*. Although anointed by God's prophet to this office, David is not yet king. Paradoxically, David was seen as the real power in the land as he sought protection from Saul.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **21:12** *much afraid*. Because he was recognized. David's military victories were at the expense of the Philistines; he could hardly expect to be welcomed.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **21:13** *he changed his behavior*. Represents a change of plans. David may have thought of defecting to the Philistines in an alliance against Saul, but fear may have brought him to abandon the idea. *made marks on the doors of the gate*. David may have been feigning some compulsive behavior by spitting or by beating on the doors.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **21:14** *brought him*. Presumably under restraint by guards.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **21:15** David's strategy worked. Achish felt repulsed rather than threatened. David achieved escape by deception, but God achieved the deliverance of His servant through this, or even despite it.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **21:10–15** David pretends to be insane and so escapes the predicament at Gath. What clever, desperate measures! The author records these devices but does not commend their use in God's name. While God would have us use our minds to accomplish worthy goals, He would also call us to trust Him and confess Him in the face of difficulty. Our trustworthy Father can deliver us, as He demonstrated through the suffering of His beloved Son. • As You have promised, gracious Lord, deliver those who call upon You in the day of trouble. Amen.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **22:1** *cave*. Used in this area for shelter. David fled to a cave again in 2Sm 23:13. *Adullam*. Old Canaanite city c 12 mi E of Gath, out of Philistine territory. *his brothers and all his father's*

house. Although we have heard little about them—beyond an episode of resentment (17:28–30)—David's family rallied to his support.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **22:2** *bitter in soul*. Drawn from the disadvantaged of society, including those who had suffered personal loss. *captain*. May not be a formal military title; implies command of the company.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **22:3** *Mizpeh*. Moabite town east of the Salt Sea; may be identified with Kir-hareseth, the Moabite capital. To reach Mizpeh, David probably traveled south around the sea. *what God will do*. David witnesses to his confidence that God will act for him.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **22:4** David's ancestry is linked to Moab (see pp 422–23); this, together with possibility of an alliance against Saul, would secure him a welcome. *stronghold*. Perhaps a cave.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **22:5** *Gad*. Prophet who attained status in David's kingly court. Saul had not carefully developed such a counsel relationship with Samuel, though he sought Samuel's blessings for political purposes (see note, 15:25). Examples from Mari and Hamath describe prophetic figures acting as king's counselors in other nations. *go into … Judah*. A risky move, as it takes him into the area Saul controlled. *forest of Hereth*. Located in Judah, on the other side of the Salt Sea, a considerable return journey.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **22:1–5** During David's continued flight, his followers support him and God protects him, directing David through a prophet. David had panicked due to fear (ch 21), but the Lord calmed and directed him. When troubled, treasure God's Word as your stronghold. Through the Word, the Lord will bless, comfort, and strengthen you. • Give us a trusting heart to obey You, heavenly Father, and to live in the confidence of Your Word, our stronghold. Amen.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **22:6–23** Jonathan is not mentioned in this account, except as the focus of Saul's anger (v 8) because of his alliance with David.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **22:6** *Gibeah*. Saul's birthplace and capital. See note, 20:40.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **22:7** Saul suspects David of bribery. *son of Jesse*. Pejorative description of his former favorite. See note, 16:5.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **22:8** *conspired … covenant*. We do not know how Saul came to learn of the covenant between Jonathan and David.

It may be a paranoid assumption, though true. *my son*. Failure to use his name implies anger with Jonathan.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **22:9** *Nob*. See notes, 21:1; Ps 52 intro.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **22:10** *he inquired*. Not mentioned in ch 21, but Ahimelech admits to it implicitly (v 15). See "seek," p 843. Saul compared seeking the oracle of God with material support of treachery.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **22:11** Tabernacle was located at Nob after the destruction of Shiloh. The Philistines had captured the ark before attacking Shiloh (4:3). See p 495. *all*. Ahimelech and his whole priestly family.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **22:12** Saul's address to the priest is curt.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **22:13** *to lie in wait*. Saul is wrong, as David later shows his unwillingness to attack his king. David's strategy is entirely defensive.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **22:14–15** Ahimelech's response is both honest and brave. He commends David's loyalty while expressing his own innocence. Rather than denying the charge that the king brings against him, he justifies the actions of which he is accused.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **22:16** *all your father's house*. Death sentence is pronounced on the entire family, as though the priesthood itself were condemned.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **22:17** *kill the priests of the* LORD. Wipe them all out. *would not … strike*. Refusal to comply suggests loyalty to David or reverence for the priesthood.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **22:19** *man and woman, child and infant, ox, donkey and sheep*. Procedure of total annihilation in "devoting" something to destruction (see p 6) that Saul should have followed in ch 15.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **22:20** The priesthood survived through Abiathar, who surfaces in 2Sm together with the priest Zadok, son of Ahitub (Abiathar's grandfather), so there was at least one other continuing line of priesthood.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **22:21** *Saul had killed the priests of the* LORD. Report avoids sensationalism and focuses on the event's most serious aspect.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **22:22** David failed to warn the priests, which now makes him feel guilty. Clearly, his confession does not exonerate Saul or his servant Doeg. In the NT also, loyalty to God's

anointed brings with it the promise of suffering and possible martyrdom (cf Mt 16:25).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **22:23** *he who seeks my life seeks your life*. Jesus assures us: "If the world hates you, know that it has hated Me before it hated you" (Jn 15:18).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **22:6–23** The story temporarily leaves David. We see the priesthood nobly suffering at the hands of the godless. Be prepared to suffer as God's royal priesthood, remembering that God's purpose will not be thwarted, as shown in Jesus' death and resurrection for you. • Jesus, our great High Priest, since You freely gave Your life for me, take my life into Your service. Amen.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **23:1** *they*. No specific persons; likely Judeans. *Keilah*. Judean town close to the Philistine border; a vulnerable target for raids.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **23:2** *David inquired*. We are not told whether the inquiry was made through Abiathar the priest. In v 10, David inquires directly in prayer, as Hannah prayed without mediation (ch 1). *save Keilah*. Echoes the role of Israel's judges, who saved Israel from their attackers (e.g., Jgs 2:16).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **23:3** David's men feared that involvement against the Philistines would set them against a yet more fearsome adversary than Saul.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **23:4** See "seek" and "hand," p 843, 842. Military inferiority was irrelevant.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **23:5** *brought away their livestock*. Perhaps already plundered from the people of Keilah, or beasts brought along to carry back the spoil.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **23:6** *ephod*. See note, 21:9.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **23:7** *God*. Unlike David, Saul does not use the distinctive name "the LORD," by which the Almighty revealed Himself (Ex 3:14–15). Saul attributes his fortune to divine intervention, but he makes the same mistake as David's comrades in v 3, merely looking at the outward circumstances and ignoring God's will.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **23:8** Still following faulty reasoning (v 7), Saul musters all his troops to exploit his advantage. *besiege*. Labor-intensive tactic.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **23:9** *ephod*. See note, 21:9.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **23:10–13** Inquiry is made by way of yes-or-no questions, as with the other priestly device, the sacred Urim and Thummim. See note, 14:39–42; see also "seek," p 843.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **23:11** *Will Saul come down*. David's first question is to confirm the report he has heard. *the LORD said*. Mediated by Abiathar.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **23:12** *Will the men of Keilah surrender me*. Urgent question, in light of the Lord's confirmation of Saul's attack. The Lord affirms their betrayal, even though David has saved them, and Saul seeks to destroy the city on account of David.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **23:13** *six hundred*. In 22:2, his company amounted to 400 men. This has been supplemented, perhaps by a loyal element in Keilah. *wherever they could go*. Dispersed, making pursuit impossible, and canceling strategic disadvantage of confinement in the city.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **23:14** *wilderness of Ziph*. Barren desert area close to Hebron. *God*. The real director of these events. *hand*. See "hand," p 842.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **23:1–14** The Lord protects His servant and frustrates the plans of the wicked, revealing His will not only in the word of the prophet but also by hindsight in the unfolding of events. Trust the Lord to answer your prayers and to protect you against those who make themselves God's enemies. He is watching over you, though His presence may often be hidden by adverse circumstances. • Reveal to us Your will, dear Lord, and give us grace to follow it. Amen.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **23:15** *Horesh*. C 5 mi S of Hebron.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **23:16** The Holy Spirit offers encouragement through Jonathan, who strengthened David's morale. *strengthened his hand in God*. OT expression describes heartening esp of those who feel dispirited (cf Is 35:3).
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **23:17** In favor of God's anointed, Jonathan abdicates any claim to kingship. In 15:26, Samuel announces God's rejection of Saul's kingship and, therefore, of his son's succession. *Saul my father also knows this*. Saul heard the prophet's word on this matter and surely realized his struggle to retain rule was hollow.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **23:18** *a covenant*. Renewal of oath of loyalty sworn in ch 20. It was sincerely undertaken, though Jonathan did

not eventually have the opportunity of being next to King David. *before the* LORD. Agreement is made with God present as a witness.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **23:19** Fairly precise directions are offered to Saul. *Gibeah*. See note, 22:6. *Horesh*. Cf v 15. *Hachilah*. In Judean hills southeast of Hebron. See map, p 468.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **23:20** *our part*. Might imply their duty, which falls short of actually delivering David themselves.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **23:21** *blessed by the* LORD. Saul's blessing sounds worthless from the lips of one who had ordered the slaughter of priests (cf Jas 3:10).
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **23:22** *make yet more sure*. Saul demands that they give the precise location to the very footprint. *cunning*. Reports about David's skills continue to reach Saul.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **23:23** *See … and take note*. Repetition betrays Saul's anxiety and insecurity.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **23:24** *Maon*. Desert area south of Hebron. *Arabah*. The Rift Valley through which the Jordan River runs.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **23:25** *was told*. Passive voice sometimes alludes to God's actions. One of the Ziphites likely supplied the warning.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **23:26** *the mountain*. "The rock" in v 25. *closing in*. Implies a pincer movement, from which there is no realistic hope of escape.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **23:27–28** Saul's hopes, so close to fruition, are suddenly dashed. God's intervention is implied.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **23:29** *Engedi*. Oasis by the cliffs of the western shore of the Salt Sea.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **23:15–29** Against the overwhelming opposition of Saul and his Ziphite informers, God spares David as Jonathan said He would. Remember that a word of encouragement from Scripture can be invaluable to someone in distress. The Lord is mighty to deliver His people. • We praise You, O God, for those You send to comfort us in our lowest times. Hear us for Jesus' sake. Amen.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **24:1** *was told*. See note, 23:25.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **24:2** *three thousand chosen men*. Select troops outnumber David's troops five to one. *Wildgoats' Rocks*. Ibex live on these cliffs, illustrating their ruggedness.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **24:3** *relieve himself*. Need for privacy brought Saul into the cave, where he would be alone and unguarded. *his men*. All 600 men required a large cave or complex of caves, though most of them may have been sheltering elsewhere.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **24:4** *the Lord said to you*. This promise is not recorded earlier in the Bible. *as it shall seem good to you*. In the minds of the men, this meant killing Saul, but David showed godly restraint.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **24:5** *David's heart struck him*. Though he had acted with moderation, David still had a sense of having violated God's anointed.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **24:6** *Lord 's anointed*. See notes, 10:1; 16:3. Although God subsequently revoked His choice (13:13–14), and David himself had already been anointed (16:13), it was not for him to force the succession or to disrespect the anointed.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **24:7** *with these words*. David used words of persuasion to convince his men, while Saul ensured compliance through fear.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **24:8** David's homage exposes him to vulnerability. Nevertheless, his reverence for the Lord and His anointed outweighs the danger.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **24:9** Rhetorical question conveys deferential rebuke. Saul should not listen to his men, because their words are untrue. Unfortunately, the cowardly reinforcement of a despot's paranoia is a common response.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **24:10** *my hand*. Wordplay begins in this verse. The Lord left Saul at David's mercy ("in his hand"), but David would not extend that hand against Saul. David repeats the reasons he gave at the time (v 6). Ambr: "All learned to observe faith to their king and not to seize the kingdom, but to fear and reverence him. Thus what is virtuous was preferred to what was useful, and then usefulness followed on what was virtuous" (*NPNF* 2 10:77).
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **24:11** *in my hands*. Saul had expected to find treason in David's hands, which held only a piece of cloth testifying to the very opposite.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **24:12** *may the Lord avenge me*. Does not necessarily mean that David wished Saul ill. David leaves vengeance to God rather than seeking to manipulate it. Cf Rm 12:19.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **24:13** *proverb of the ancients*. Anticipates Jesus' teaching (Mt 15:18–20). *my hand*. See note, v 10.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **24:14** *dead dog! … flea!* With modest and self-effacing words, David indicates he is not worth pursuit by the king of Israel. As scavengers, dogs were despised. Nothing was more useless or unclean than a dead dog. See p 300.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **24:15** The Lord is called on as a perfectly qualified judge and as David's advocate; see similar roles of Christ (1Jn 2:1) and the Spirit (Jn 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7).
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **24:16** *my son*. Saul returns the affection of David (v 11). *wept*. His tears are those of regret, though these feelings quickly give way to baser ones. Luth: "This is the way hypocrites act. They feign friendship until an opportunity to inflict harm presents itself" (AE 1:271). Chem: "The repentance … does not consist only in recognizing or confessing their sins and certainly not in persevering or continuing in them. … Saul returned to his vomit and again persecuted David. … Scripture says, we must certainly cease from evil and desist from sinning. For what kind of nonsense is it to devise for ourselves a license to sin?" (*LTh* 2:681).
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **24:17** *righteous*. See p 843. *repaid*. God repays evil (Rm 12:19); we should not pursue personal revenge (Rm 12:17). David went further, doing good to those who hated him (cf Lk 6:27–35).
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **24:18–19** Saul acknowledges the extraordinary and unnatural character of David's mercy and asks for the Lord to repay him for the good he has done, which agrees with David's request.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **24:20** *in your hand*. Final play on the word "hand" (see note, v 10) finds Saul prophesying that his kingdom shall, in fact, be the thing established in David's hand. This confirms what Jonathan has already declared his father knew (23:17).
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **24:21** *cut off my offspring*. Final loss, not only to himself, but to his family, whose name would thereby die out.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **24:22** *swore*. David kept his promise by offering protection to Jonathan's son Mephibosheth (2Sm 9). *stronghold*. Perhaps Engedi, or a return to the cave of Adullam (22:1).
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **Ch 24** David's compassion for vulnerable Saul is motivated by respect for God and His anointed. It is met warmly by Saul, resulting in a temporary truce. Today, be ready to show

compassion even to your enemies, as God in Christ has demonstrated His undeserved love to you. • Gracious Lord, thank You for sending Your true Anointed One to bring mercy to me while I was Your enemy. Amen.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **25:1** *Samuel died*. Earlier, perhaps 1031 BC. With Samuel's death is lost this trusted mouthpiece of the Lord and the last living link with the age of the judges. *Israel … mourned*. The universal mourning shows their great respect for Samuel. *Ramah*. Just north of Nob, it was the base for Samuel's whole ministry. *Paran*. Desert area extending far south into the Sinai Peninsula, where Israel had encamped after leaving Mount Sinai. See map, p 468.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **25:2** *Maon … Carmel*. Neighboring towns c 7 or 8 mi S of Hebron and Ziph. *very rich*. The man's wealth is introduced before his name.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **25:3** *Nabal*. Lit, "fool." His name and behavior suggest that our Lord may have alluded to him in the parable of the rich fool (Lk 12:16–21). See p 1016. *badly behaved*. Coarse and boorish; introduction explains that such conduct is in character. Mel: "Hypocrites … profess the truth and are not polluted by worship of idols, yet in their heart are without fear of God, without faith, and they love their pleasures or their treasures more than they love God" (Chem, *LTh* 2:367). *Calebite*. Descendant of Caleb, who was promised territory in this region because of his faithful services in espionage (Nu 14:24).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **25:4** *Nabal was shearing his sheep*. David's men had kept company with the shepherds (cf v 7), who now return with the sheep to their master, Nabal. See calendar, p 262.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **25:5** *in my name*. With David's authority, as emissaries.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **25:6–8** Men are told to show meticulous etiquette in their greeting.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **25:7** Both the person and property of the shepherds had been unmolested while they had been at the mercy of David's militia. This was a testimony to David's goodwill toward them and so, by extension, toward Nabal.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **25:8** *favor*. See p 6. Warranted, but David does not take it for granted. *a feast day*. Sheepshearing was an occasion for feasting, but this may refer to a different celebration. See calendar, p 262.

son. Marks David's deference to Nabal. Saul used the same term with respect to David in 24:16.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **25:9** *they waited*. Implies that Nabal's response is a considered one.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **25:10** *the son of Jesse?* Saul also dismissively referred to David this way in his most aggressive mood (22:13). Nabal is again identified with the foolish king. He may deny David's request out of fear of Saul. After all, one of the accusations leveled at Ahimelech was that he had given David bread (22:13)
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **25:11** *I do not know where?* Perhaps refers to dubious background of David's companions.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **25:12** As emissaries, they did not respond to Nabal but reported back to David.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **25:13** Size of David's company has not changed since ch 23, and two-thirds of them are now mobilized against Nabal. Action appears to be impulsive, and it serves no obvious purpose to fight against a fool.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **25:14** *young men*. One of Nabal's own men made a principled act of rebellion in going to Abigail. Perhaps he had experienced David's kindness (v 15) or feared David's angry response.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **25:15–16** Shepherds worked under protection of David's band.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **25:16** *They were a wall*. Metaphor drawn from the importance of the fortifying wall in protecting a city or an enclosure for the flock.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **25:17** *a worthless man*. Harsh words for a servant to say to his master's wife. *worthless*. Implies godlessness (cf 2:12, the sons of Eli, and 10:26–27, those whose hearts were not touched by God). See p 1016.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **25:18** See p 236. *made haste*. Abigail appreciated the urgency of the situation, mirroring David's hasty action in v 13.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **25:19** *did not tell*. Obviously, Nabal would have foolishly prevented the intervention that was his best hope of survival.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **25:20** *met them*. Apparently just in time, for David's men were mobilized.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **25:21** *in vain*. In a more reflective mood, David might have recognized the value of the kindly action for its own sake. Here he is frustrated and angry.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **25:22** David's curse is immoderate. If the LXX preserves the original wording (see ESV note), he is calling a curse on himself if he fails to avenge Nabal's folly. Later (v 38), God's vengeance is seen, but only against David's enemy. *male*. See note, 1Ki 14:10.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **25:23** Indicates either recognition of David's kingly status or, more likely, a penitential demeanor as she accepts the blame for Nabal's folly. See p 1276.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **25:24** *On me alone*. Abigail confesses the guilt as her own, as the only basis on which she can plead for restraint. *your servant*. Expresses loyalty to David, not to Nabal.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **25:25** *worthless fellow, Nabal*. See note, v 3. Abigail repeats the servant's assessment of him in v 17. *I … did not see*. Abigail accepts the guilt, though the fault is not hers.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **25:26** *the LORD has restrained you*. Abigail is God's instrument in bringing it about. *bloodguilt*. From taking matters into one's own hands and spilling blood without justification. See note, 1Ki 2:31. David had restrained himself from such action against Saul (24:4). Abigail boldly anticipates David's response (v 33).
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **25:27** *my lord*. Abigail anticipates David's position as her husband and king.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **25:28** *forgive the trespass*. Having accepted Nabal's guilt (v 24), Abigail pleads for forgiveness. The Christian might think of Christ's willingness to do this for the world (2Co 5:21; Heb 7:25).
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **25:29** *bound in the bundle*. Lit, "pouch" or "bag." As a person puts a coin or gem into a purse for safekeeping, so the Lord is careful to keep His own among "the living." *sling out*. He summarily dismisses them. See note, Jgs 20:16.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **25:30** As Samuel, Jonathan, and Saul have done, Abigail acknowledges David's future rule.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **25:31** Abigail seeks to spare David's conscience, and for this she hopes to be remembered in the future, as David had expected Nabal to remember his kindness.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **25:32** *Blessed*. See p 842. *sent*. Abigail was the tool of the God of Israel.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **25:33** David accepts Abigail's case entirely. *Blessed*. See p 842. *bloodguilt*. See note, 1Ki 2:31.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **25:34** *unless you had hurried*. Abigail had been right to act and to act quickly. *male*. See note, 1Ki 14:10.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **25:35** *received*. He accepted the gift as the gesture of peace it was intended to convey. *obeyed*. Remarkable, until we remember that he heard God's message in Abigail's voice (v 32).
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **25:36** *a feast*. See note, v 8. *drunk*. Perhaps the cause of his foolishness. See note, Pr 23:29–35.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **25:37** *died … he became as a stone*. He died of pure shock. Cf Ezk 36:26, which suggests that this speaks also of Nabal's spiritual death. Greg: "To a mind that is drunk with fury every right thing that is said appears wrong. Whence to Nabal when he was drunk Abigail laudably kept silence about his fault, but, when he had digested his wine, [she] as laudably told him of [his fault]. … He could for this reason perceive the evil he had done, that he did not hear of it when drunk" (*NPNF* 2 12:40).
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **25:38** *the LORD struck*. Abigail was not the real cause of Nabal's judgment. She only delivered the message.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **25:39** No period of mourning is mentioned. As a worthless man, perhaps Nabal's death did not warrant it. *take her as his wife*. David was already married to Michal, and there would be further wives (1Ch 3:1–9). These are later described as gifts of God (2Sm 12:8). Monogamy had not yet become the norm, at least not for royalty. See pp 54–55.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **25:40** *Carmel*. See note, v 2. *David has sent*. He did not go in person as he had not personally made overtures to her late husband.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **25:41** *wash the feet*. Showing great humility (cf Jn 13:5–16); gesture of hospitality and welcome.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **25:42** *five young women attended her*. Ladies in waiting, personally serving this wealthy woman.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **25:43** *Jezreel*. Hill town in northern Israel. See color map 1.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **25:44** Saul's action amounted to a divorce. *Palti*. Mentioned as Paltiel in 2Sm 3:15. *Gallim*. Town just north of Jerusalem.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **Ch 25** Abigail intervenes between David and Nabal, rescuing both from their anger. Angry decisions lead to self-destruction. God calls us to listen to the voice of reason and peace. His wisdom and peace, expressed in the godly counsel of His servants, will guide your heart in the way of life. • Father, give us grace to be like a prudent one who acts with knowledge, and not like a fool who flaunts his folly (Pr 13:16). Amen.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **26:1** *Gibeah*. See note, 22:6. *hill of Hachilah … Jeshimon?* See note, 23:19; see also map, p 468.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **26:2** Saul's reconciliation with David in ch 24 was temporary. The true (evil) spirit (16:14) now asserts itself. *three thousand chosen men*. Same size as force in 24:2, five times that of David. *Ziph*. See note, 23:14.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **26:3** *saw*. Possibly figure of speech, based on news of Saul's advance. Cf v 4.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **26:4** *sent out spies*. Unlike the previous encounter, David proactively seeks his persecutor.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **26:5** *Abner*. Saul's cousin; see note, 10:14. Presence of Saul's army commander shows the seriousness of his intent.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **26:6** *Ahimelech*. Not to be confused with the priest of the same name in ch 22.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **26:7** David's 600 men got past 3,000 men by stealth, while the camp was asleep (v 12).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **26:8** *Abishai*. Impulsive warrior (cf 2Sm 16:9). *God has given your enemy into your hand*. Exactly what David's companions suggested in the cave (24:4).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **26:9** David's response echoes what he said in the cave (24:6). To strike the Lord's anointed is to sin against the Lord. *anointed*. See note, 10:1.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **26:10** *the LORD will strike him*. As in previous encounter (25:36–39), vengeance is reserved for God. This does not necessarily mean that David hopes for it.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **26:11** *Take now the spear … and the jar*. As in ch 24, evidence is secured to prove David's opportunity to kill Saul or, indeed, to show mercy. This spear is the very thing with which Saul had attempted to kill David (18:11). Ephr: "Let a man show mercy to his persecutors, as did Jesse's son to Saul" (*NPNF* 2 13:226). *water*. Had to be carried; much needed in this arid region.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **26:12** *deep sleep from the* LORD. Same expression describes the stupor induced in Adam, sufficient anesthesia for God to remove Adam's rib. Sleep, however, is also a biblical metaphor for lack of spiritual alertness (cf Is 29:10).
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **26:13** *other side*. A facing hill, separated by a safe distance. Deep crags are found throughout the region.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **26:14** *to the army*. David's accusation is leveled against the whole army, which had failed to guard its king.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **26:15** *Are you not a man?* Charge against Abner allows only two options: to admit incompetence or to admit indifference or worse.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **26:16** *you deserve to die*. Common punishment for dereliction of duty. God disabled Abner and his army (v 12). David demonstrates loyalty to the king by favorable comparison to Abner.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **26:17** *my son*. See note, 24:16. *my lord, O king*. David replies in kind.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **26:18** David's protest is more insistent than in previous encounter. He demands to know precisely what Saul might hold against him.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **26:19** *if it is men*. Cf 24:9, where David had no doubt that Saul was listening to malicious or misguided men.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **26:20** *a single flea*. Cf 24:14. *one who hunts a partridge*. Exhausting chase for hunter and quarry. Birds were typically snared, not chased (see note, Ps 91:3).
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **26:21** David has professed his innocence, but Saul must confess his guilt. His mistake is rooted in foolishness, like Nabal's (ch 25).
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **26:22** As a token of trust, David returns the spear that Saul had once hurled at him in anger.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **26:23** *righteousness … faithfulness*. See pp 842–43. *the* LORD *gave you into my hand*. David may view the experience

as a test. Although God provided the opportunity, David did not take vengeance. God, who always rewards righteousness, will reward David for this. *anointed*. See note, 10:1.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **26:24** David draws an analogy between the esteem he showed for the life of the undeserving Saul and that which he hopes God will show for his life in the challenging times ahead. How David's wish became reality is abundantly illustrated in 2Sm.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **26:25** Saul's prediction of David's future success is the final parallel with ch 24 (v 20). David left the matter there, but surely he had learned from the earlier experience that Saul's repentance might be short-lived.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **Ch 26** Saul again pursues David, who demonstrates that he is a faithful, forgiving servant. Jesus, the Son of David, directs us to forgive "seventy times seven" (Mt 18:22; without limit). He teaches this also by example, demonstrating His limitless forgiveness toward us. • Dearest Jesus, forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. Grant us due patience with erring brothers and sisters. Amen.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **27:1** Although David knew he had been anointed king, he could not bear the constant hide-and-seek existence in the wilderness for his family and small army. *perish*. Lit, "be swept away." *escape to the land of the Philistines*. Given his earlier experience with the Philistines (21:10–15), he was courageous to return there. But this time, he arrived with a small army. Unlike earlier, the Philistines would now be aware of Saul's hostility toward David, which may have contributed to the welcome David received. David's move again demonstrates the awkward and enigmatic relationship between the Israelites and Philistines. See note, 13:20; see also p 345.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **27:2** *Achish the son of Maoch, king of Gath*. Whether this is the Achish of ch 21 is uncertain; he may be a son. The amount of time between chs 21 and 27 is unclear.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **27:3** *every man with his household*. Remarkable hospitality, demonstrating God's favor toward David. It must also have caused severe housing problems and other social issues.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **27:4** David's plan succeeded. Saul gave up the pursuit, not willing to provoke a war by entering Philistine territory.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **27:5** David's suggestion would help to solve probable housing and social issues (see note, v 3) and allow the Israelites to live together as a community and maintain their own worship life. *royal city with you?* David knew how to negotiate, enhancing his request with words the king would like to hear.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **27:6** *Ziklag*. Border town between Philistine and Israelite territory, originally allocated to Simeon (Jsh 19:5; 1Ch 4:30), but likely at this time in the hands of the Philistines. Achish may have given the town to David to establish an outpost of power and order in an unruly region (cf 30:1). According to custom, all such grants were permanent. See map, p 468. *belonged to the kings*. Ziklag became crown property, thereafter belonging specifically to the kings of Judah as a result of this gift.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **27:7** David's stay in Gath and Ziklag, though little more than a year, provided further opportunity to gain the trust of the Philistines and to grow relationships with Israelites living in the area (30:26–31).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **27:8** *Geshurites … Girzites … Amalekites*. Nomadic peoples living along the border between Canaan and Egypt, often plunderers of Judean and Philistine towns. David would pursue these marauders in defense of the Israelite towns, exterminate them, and take their livestock as spoils of war. *Shur*. Expansive wilderness area between Sinai and Egypt next to the Great Sea.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **27:9** David pretended to be making raids on Judah, instead attacking the invaders and thereby actively helping his fellow Judeans. To maintain his deception, he had to make certain that none of the enemy survived. *strike*. Raid. *garments*. Demonstrates similarity of Israelite culture with its Semitic neighbors; their clothing must have looked much the same. *come back to Achish*. David would return after the raids, to report and perhaps also to share some of the spoils.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **27:10** David's responses to Achish's questions were deliberately misleading, indicating only the direction he had gone, allowing Achish to assume that the raids were against Israelites. *Negeb*. Lit, "Southland," regularly used for the southern part of Judah, divided into districts according to population. The center of the Negeb of Judah was Beersheba. A relief at Karnak, describing the victories of Pharaoh Shishak over Rehoboam and Jeroboam (c 926 BC), includes a list

of Judean place-names. The "hights of Dwt," which likely transliterates David's Hbr name Dawid, appears in the list associated with the Negeb. *Jerahmeelites*. Occupied land south of Beersheba. *Kenites*. Near Hebron; understood to be Israelite territory. David was listing people who would potentially rival his later rule.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **27:11** *lived in the country of the Philistines*. David and his army were "in" but not "of" the country.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **27:12** *Achish trusted David … an utter stench*. David convinced Achish that he was further alienating himself from Saul and his own people, when, in fact, he was preparing for rule in Judah. *shall always be my servant*. Lit, "a slave of eternity," a category of bondsman that included acceptance of this status by the servant, who thereby surrendered an opportunity for freedom forever (cf Ex 21:5). Achish was somehow convinced that David would never be going back.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **Ch 27** Tired of the constant danger and hardship of evading Saul, David shrewdly finds refuge among the Philistines. As with David's previous clever action among the Philistines, the writer makes no indication that the Lord encouraged or approved of David's behavior. Rather than living ambiguously, live boldly and clearly for your Lord, entrusting your future to His care rather than to your cleverness or the world's favor. The Lord's favor is far more precious, redeeming your life now and for eternity. • Lord, bless and guide our earthly decisions, that they may provide opportunity for growth in faith and service before You. Amen.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **28:1** Achish, certain he could trust David, incorporated David's small force into his own army as he prepared a major assault on Israel.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **28:2** *you shall know*. David's words are deliberately ambiguous. Achish was willing to take the words as a promise of accomplishments on behalf of the Philistines, but the statement could just as well have predicted defection and turning against them. *your servant*. Indication of respect for a superior, though Achish put much more significance into these words (27:12). *my bodyguard for life*. Lit, "the keeper of my head." Achish entrusts his personal safety to David.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **28:3** *Samuel had died*. Loss of Samuel's leadership may have emboldened the Philistines for an all-out attack on Israel. *put the mediums and the necromancers out of the land*. Action

against religious malpractice recalls the time of Saul's faithful adherence to Yahweh (11:13). Now the king was desperate for any kind of guidance. Mediums consulted the spirits of the dead, and necromancers spoke with the deceased familiar to them, thereby supposedly discovering the secrets of the future. See note, Dt 18:10–11.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **28:4** *Shunem*. Northern city near Megiddo, indicating definite incursion of the Philistines onto Israelite land, thereby forcing Saul to meet their challenge away from the concentration of his power and more favorable conditions in Judah. *Gilboa*. String of hills provided a vantage point from which to observe the enemy's advance. Between Shunem and Gilboa was the Jezreel Valley, a level arena for battle that would favor the Philistines' chariots.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **28:5** *trembled greatly*. Size of Philistine armies was frightening, and they had chosen favorable ground for this fight. But Saul could not ignore their invasion, which threatened to cut Israel in half.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **28:6** *the LORD did not answer*. See notes, 8:18; 14:37–38. *dreams … Urim … prophets*. God's will was regularly conveyed in OT times through dreams and their interpretation; the Urim and Thummim were attached to the breastpiece that was part of the ephod worn by priests; prophets were seers or visionaries. See note, 9:9.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **28:7** *a medium*. Lit, "a possessor of a pit"; apparently a pit was used in the ritual, for making offerings to those dead and buried. Despite the ban on consulting such people, with little apparent difficulty Saul's servants got information about such services. *En-dor*. C 10 mi N of Saul's camp, requiring a perilous night journey, a measure of Saul's desperation. He longed for the Word of the Lord, as he once received it through the prophet Samuel.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **28:8** *disguised himself*. Served double purpose of escaping detection by the Philistines and concealing his identity from the medium. *bring up*. Claiming to communicate to and for the dead, mediums would enter a trance and speak with a demon, which would impersonate the dead person and speak through the medium.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **28:9** The woman, no stranger to deception, could easily see there was something amiss and feared she was caught in a trap.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **28:10** *swore to her by the LORD*. Both ironic and telltale, since consulting the dead was expressly forbidden by God. *As the LORD lives*. Oath formula frequently used by Saul. See p 7.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **28:11** *Bring up Samuel*. Another measure of Saul's desperation: no ordinary spirit would do. Saul attempts to force the faithful prophet to do in death what he swore he would no longer do for Saul—bring a message from God.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **28:12** *When*. Or, "Then." Perhaps even before the woman could attempt to call up Samuel's spirit, she saw a vision of the prophet. *a loud voice*. The shock of the moment of revelation caused the woman to realize she was involved in something more powerful and threatening than she had supposed.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **28:13** *a god*. Spirit's appearance impressed upon her its authority and dignity. *out of the earth*. See note about "pit," v 7.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **28:14** *What is his appearance?* Saul could not see what the woman saw and depended on her description. *An old man … wrapped in a robe*. Vague description, but more than sufficient for Saul. Mention of the prophetic robe, the tearing of which had become the symbol of Saul's downfall, was key (15:27). *bowed … homage*. Saul prostrated himself as before the Lord. See p 1276.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **28:15–19** The medium apparently fled (cf v 21). The spirit spoke directly to Saul without her, bringing a message that was almost identical to Samuel's last words to Saul (ch 15). Samuel had given Saul the plain truth. Here the future is also foretold in precise detail, which has led some interpreters to conclude that the spirit was truly Samuel's spirit (cf Dt 18:22). However, though Satan is the father of lies (Jn 8:44), he and his minions are perfectly capable of speaking the truth (cf Mt 8:29) and can even mouth God's Word (Mt 4:3–10). Saul's sins are denounced as the reason for God's anger and rejection. Missing is the prophet's usual appeal for change of attitude, perhaps because it was too late (cf Mk 3:28–30). Nothing would avert Saul's doom and that of his sons and many of his soldiers. The long-standing issue with this text is whether the spirit was truly Samuel's spirit or the work of an evil spirit, which the Lord compelled to speak the truth (see note, 1Ki 22:20–22). Hipp: "Saul did not actually see, but only, on being told by the woman that the figure of one of those who ascended was the figure he desired, and taking it to be

Samuel, he consulted it as such, and did it obeisance. And it could be no difficult matter for the demon to conjure up the form of Samuel" (*ANF* 5:169). Luth: "We may easily see that the bringing up of Samuel from the dead, I Samuel 28[:12 ff.], was trickery and deceit; the whole event is against this commandment of God. Accordingly we may not assume that the real prophet Samuel was brought from the dead by the medium. But when the Scriptures are silent and do not tell us whether this was the real Samuel or not, it demands from all of us that we should well know that through Moses God has forbidden necromancy. And he never recants what he has said, as Job says, and Balaam in Numbers 24 [23:19]. How should the sorcerers have power over the saints who rest securely in the hands of God?" (AE 52:180; see also 36:196–97). "Evil spirits have produced many wicked tricks by appearing as the souls of the departed [1 Samuel 28], and with unspeakable lies and tricks demanded Masses, vigils, pilgrimages, and other alms" (SA II II 16).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **28:16** Saul looks for a word of assurance that everything is going to be all right, but the earlier words of Samuel are only reinforced (15:28) and are about to be fulfilled. "Whenever the Law alone exercises its office, without the Gospel being added, there is nothing but death and hell, and one must despair, as Saul and Judas did [1Samuel 31; Matthew 27:5]" (SA III III 7).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **28:18** *His fierce wrath*. Saul had failed to carry out God's specific command to destroy the Amalekites and all their property (15:3).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **28:19** *Israel also*. If a king leads badly, the people suffer. Saul's sin would bring judgment not only upon himself but also upon the nation. *be with me*. On the next day, all of them would be dead. See note, 1Ki 2:10.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **28:20** *filled with fear*. Saul falls into still deeper fear. "The contrition of David or Peter [2 Samuel 12:13; Matthew 26:75] helps because faith, which takes hold of the forgiveness of sins granted for Christ's sake, is added to it" (Ap XIIA 36). *eaten nothing*. Ironic. Cf 14:24.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **28:21–22** Knowing that Saul could not otherwise be encouraged to eat, the medium offers an argument, that he owed her for her risking her life (cf v 3). *came*. The medium had apparently fled in fear (v 12). *a morsel of bread*. As if assuring that it will be no

trouble, the woman minimizes what she will offer. The morsel of bread becomes a fattened calf (v 24).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **28:23–24** *He refused*. Only when two of his companions also urge him does Saul agree to eat. *fattened calf*. Veal calf, held in a stall. The woman prepares a special meal for him who will be king for yet a few more hours. *in the house*. Ground floor typically held animals.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **28:25** *that night*. Events apparently went on all through the night. Both literal and spiritual darkness enveloped Saul and his servants as they made their way back to the Israelite camp.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **Ch 28** Despairing from fear and desperate for reassurance, Saul turns to the occult for relief, having forsaken his relationship with God. When a spiritual vacuum exists, lost souls are drawn to the occult, despite warnings. Yet no genuine assurance will be found there. Do not use this tragic episode as a justification or validation of wicked spiritual practices. Instead, acknowledge and rejoice that God's grace and promise are as close at hand as His Word, which will guide you in the paths of life. • Lord, keep us close through Your means of grace, by which we are spared the desperation and darkness so tragically evident in Saul's life. When we are uncertain, grant us patience and comfort through Your Holy Word and the consolation of true brothers and sisters in the faith. Amen.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **29:1** Flashback, to set the order of the battle (cf 28:4). *Aphek*. C 40 mi short of their destination, Shunem, from which they will prepare for the battle on the plain around Jezreel. See map, p 451. *spring*. At this time, the Israelite forces were at Jezreel, at the Spring of Harod at the foot of Mount Gilboa, upon which the Israelites would encamp.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **29:2** *lords of the Philistines*. Kings of the five Philistine city-states, leading their own contingents of troops in military formations. *in the rear*. David and his men marched along with the troops of the city-state Gath, at the rear of the column.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **29:3** *these Hebrews*. See pp 1905–6. While Saul visited the medium at En-dor (ch 28), the Philistine commanders debated about the presence of David and his troops. Although David fooled Achish, the Philistine commanders were not fooled, perhaps

remembering that these were the same Hebrews whose "gods" had delivered them from Egyptian bondage (4:5–9).
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **29:4** *the place … assigned him*. Ziklag. *heads*. Princes argued that David could make himself acceptable to Saul and to Israel by changing sides in the middle of the battle, presenting to Saul another gruesome gift (cf 18:27).
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **29:5** See note, 18:6–8.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **29:6** *As the Lord lives*. Israelite oath formula is unexpected from a Philistine. Achish compels David by swearing in the name of David's God, showing that Achish recognized David's continued allegiance to Yahweh.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **29:7** *go peaceably*. Achish acknowledges that David had a right to protest. It was embarrassing for Achish to have to dismiss the man he had appointed as his bodyguard. He tried hard not to offend David.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **29:8** *enemies of my lord the king?* David protested as though he were suffering an injustice. He may well have planned to do just what the Philistine princes feared, to turn the battle in Israel's favor. In such case, his words were again very clever, having in mind the enemies of King Saul, while Achish was led to think that he was referring to his own enemies as lord and king of the Philistines.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **29:9** *angel of God*. Blessing and success resulted from David's presence in their midst. The same phrase is used of David again in 2Sm 14:17 in reference to his skill as a judge of right and wrong.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **29:10** *rise early in the morning*. Achish wishes to avoid further contention.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **29:11** *return to the land of the Philistines*. Having been honorably dismissed, David and his men part company with the Philistines, who were traveling to Jezreel. David's army would be the only fighting men remaining in the land.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **Ch 29** As the Philistine army moves northward to battle, David's difficult situation within the army is resolved when he is removed from the battlefield. Once again, God looked after David's welfare. We, too, can get ourselves into some pretty tight spots as a result of our own decisions or deceptions. God will not condone our sinfulness, which is often what prompts the decisions we make. Yet, He still

looks after our welfare, making all things work together for good in Christ (Rm 8:28). • O Lord, we thank You for Your patience and kindness toward us as we live out our days on this earth. Amen.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **30:1** *Ziklag*. C 55 mi S of Aphek, covered by David and his men in three days. *Amalekites*. Marauders whom Saul failed to exterminate earlier (15:17–33). They sacked small border towns of Judah and Philistia, including David's town, Ziklag. *Negeb*. See notes, 27:10; Jgs 1:9.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **30:2–5** *taken captive*. Taken away for ransom or sale in the slave trade.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **30:4** *raised their voices and wept*. Refers to great lamentation of a ritual kind.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **30:6** *David strengthened himself in the Lord his God*. In this critical moment, David turns to God (vv 7–8). Instead of complaining or blaming God for this latest tragedy, David poured out his feelings freely in prayer and received the comfort and strength he needed to face this darkest of days.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **30:7** *Abiathar*. He fled with David due to Saul's madness (22:20). *Bring me the ephod*. See note, 28:6.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **30:8** *He answered*. Unlike Saul, who sought in vain for some word from God by priest and ephod, David gets an answer from God. *Pursue … overtake … rescue*. Answer was clear and unequivocal.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **30:9** *Besor*. Stream thought to have been 10–12 mi S of Ziklag. May have been the Wadi Ghazzeh, on which Beersheba and Arad are situated.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **30:10** *four hundred men*. David chose the 400 most fit to go on. *stayed behind*. Leaving the 200 behind not only provided occasion for the institution of the share-alike statute of v 25 but also emphasized that with the Lord's help, victory can be won by small numbers over great armies. *too exhausted*. Or, "dead tired" (related to word "corpse"). The 10 mi in addition to the 25 mi of forced march earlier in the day was the limit for 200 of the soldiers. They were left behind to remain with the baggage (v 24).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **30:11** *found an Egyptian*. Finding a band of robbers and their spoil in the wide-open spaces of the Negeb wilderness

would have been difficult. Providentially, they came upon a nearly dead man.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **30:12** *his spirit revived*. David's men recognized that the young man might be useful to them and revived him with food and water. See p 236. This detail enlivens the event's historicity. *three days and three nights*. Given the harsh conditions of the Negeb, the young man was near death.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **30:13** *fell sick*. A foreign-born slave was expendable. If one became ill, he was left to fend for himself, esp during a military operation.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **30:14** *Negeb*. Divided into different regions (see note, 27:10). *Cherethites*. See note, 2Sm 15:18. *Judah … Caleb … Ziklag*. Beersheba, which belonged to Judah, and Hebron, associated with Caleb, also had suffered, along with David's town, Ziklag.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **30:15** *Swear to me*. An escaped slave who turned informer would be at the mercy of both captor and former master. Before cooperating, he wanted an oath from David that he would not be killed or turned over to his former master. See p 7.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **30:1–15** David faces his first great crisis as a leader since serving in Saul's army years earlier. The Lord aids David and the people of Ziklag through an unlikely source: an abandoned Egyptian slave. The Lord still provides for us through unlikely means, preeminently through Jesus' cross, by which He rescues us from Satan's hordes. • Deliver us from evil, O Lord, and strengthen us to assist others in their hour of crisis. Amen.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **30:16** *spread abroad*. Amalekites were nomadic people and felt totally secure, confident that the Philistine and Israelite armies were far to the north. Rather than huddling defensively, they returned to their typical arrangement. *dancing*. Having laid aside their weapons, they were not ready to defend themselves against David's forces.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **30:17** *from twilight until the evening*. David rested his troops and attacked at first light, when the celebrating Amalekites would be least prepared to defend themselves. The mission was not accomplished until the next day, when David's army finally caught up with all of the scattered enemy. *four hundred*. Unavoidable escape of the 400 who were able to move so rapidly gives a picture of the size of the marauding bands in contrast with David's 400 troops.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **30:18** As assured in v 8, all were recovered, including David's wives—a happy reunion for all, considering how dismal their prospects must have seemed only a day earlier. *David*. He is now mentioned repeatedly in this and following verses. All honor, just like the earlier blame (29:4), is now given to David—an important step toward his assuming the throne of Israel.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **30:19** *Nothing was missing*. Repeated to underscore complete success of David's rescue mission.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **30:20** *all the flocks and herds*. The stolen plunder from the recent raids was recovered, as well as the spoils taken by the Amalekites from raids of other places. *David's spoil*. His men proclaim his victory. What is rescued belongs to the leader, to be distributed as he sees fit. This victory further establishes David's leadership among his troops.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **30:21** *the two hundred men*. Those who had been left behind would have been interested in both the mission's outcome and the fate of their wives and children. They were received cordially by David but not by all.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **30:22** *we will not give them any of the spoil*. Ugly altercation tests David's leadership once again.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **30:23** *my brothers*. David first stressed their kinship, that they were all in this together. *the LORD has given*. He reminds them of how richly God has blessed them by giving them victory. This was no time for such a selfish attitude.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **30:24** *Who would listen*. David reiterates an existing principle. More significantly, he shows he is a ruler, a maintainer of law and justice.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **30:25** *a statute and a rule for Israel*. In the manner of ancient kings, who announced their intentions to act rightly and in accord with accepted practice, David makes his ruling the law of the land, demonstrating his intention to show fairness to all and to apply such fairness firmly. See p 971.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **30:26** With an eye on the future, David made some of the spoil work on his behalf, enhancing relationships not only with the elders of Judah but also with others who were loyal to the Lord. He established himself more and more securely and paved the way for his kingship (2Sm 2:4). These leaders were heads of communities whom David

learned to know during his exile; these communities had endured raids from the Amalekites. David had the privilege of returning some of what had been taken from them.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **30:27–28** *Bethel*. Some of the places in the list that follows are recognizable even today. In the case of Bethel, however, this cannot be the well-known city to the north of Jerusalem. It may refer to Beth-zur, a town in the Judean hills; all of the cities mentioned lie in the southern Judean and Negeb area. See map, p 468. *Jattir* … *Eshtemoa*. Levitical cities (Jsh 21:14). See note, 9:8.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **30:31** *Hebron*. Region's major city, where David would be proclaimed king. Served as his capital until he captured Jerusalem.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **30:16–31** The victory God gives David over the Amalekites provides opportunity for him to grow even stronger as a leader. When the Lord grants success and prosperity to you, consider how this increases your opportunities and your responsibilities. Remember that God forgives you when you fail and also provides you with wisdom to manage what He has placed in your care. • "Grant us wisdom, grant us courage For the facing of this hour, … For the living of these days, … Lest we miss Your kingdom's goal, … Serving You whom we adore." Amen. (*LSB* 850:1–4)

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **31:1** Battle is summarized in this single verse. Saul had been commissioned to save Israel from the Philistines (9:16), but now he will die at their hands, a measure of his failure. *Mount Gilboa*. Location of Israelite camp, opposite Shunem (location of Philistine camp). Jezreel Valley stood between the forces. See color map 2; see also note, 29:1.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **31:2** Saul's sons are the first named casualties (Saul's son Ish-bosheth evidently was not on the battle line). Abner, commander of the Israelite army, escaped and later would help to reestablish the government under Ish-bosheth (2Sm 2:8–10).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **31:3** *archers found him*. Perhaps they actually came upon Saul, but possibly they adjusted for the correct range and mortally wounded him.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **31:4** *thrust me through, and mistreat me*. Saul did not want the Philistines to make sport of him or torture him as they did Samson (Jgs 16:25). Mocking and torture were regarded as part of the

triumph of battle. *he feared greatly*. Armor-bearer refused to end Saul's life, probably because of his great respect for the Lord's anointed or fear of punishment. *took his own sword*. Saul regarded death as preferable to capture. Scripture condemns murder (Ex 20:13), including suicide, which is always described in a negative light (cf 2Sm 17:23; Mt 27:5; Ac 1:18–20).
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **31:5** *also fell upon his sword*. Armor-bearer was accountable for the life of the king. Were he found alive beside the dead king, he probably would have been executed for failure in battle.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **31:6** *all his men*. Refers to Saul's servants or bodyguards, chosen troops who stood with him and his sons at the front.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **31:7** *abandoned their cities*. Outcome of battle and accompanying movements of troops could be seen from surrounding hills and vantage points. The bad news caused general panic and a mass evacuation from Israelite towns in the region. The Israelites probably crossed the Jordan River to the east. Out of that region would be established a new kingdom under Ish-bosheth, Saul's remaining son (2Sm 2:8). *the Philistines came*. The Philistines occupied the abandoned towns and thus came to control the entirety of northern Israel, a fertile area to the north and east of the central hill country. The defeated and weakened Israelites were now confined to the hill country of Samaria and Judah.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **31:8–9** Philistines gloat in their victory at Saul's expense when they come upon the bodies of Saul and his three sons.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **31:9** *cut off his head*. Commonly done to enemies, as in the case of Goliath (17:51). *good news*. The news encouraged their own people and further intimidated the Israelites. *the house of their idols*. The temple of Ashtoreth, the female deity worshiped along with Dagon. See p 403.
1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **31:10** *armor*. Saul's body armor became a trophy to be deposited in the heathen temple, in much the same way Goliath's sword had been kept in the shrine of the God of Israel (21:9). *Ashtaroth*. See note, Ex 34:13. A temple of Ashtoreth has been excavated by archaeologists at Beth-shan. *fastened his body to the wall*. Public exposure of bodies of enemy captives was common, perhaps connected with the belief that such exposure between heaven and earth was a protection against supernatural infection, thereby neutralizing the danger of the corpse to the living. *Beth-shan*. Old Canaanite city that the Israelites had not conquered; c 12 mi SE of Jezreel.

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **31:11–12** *Jabesh-gilead*. City on the east bank of the Jordan that Saul had delivered from Nahash the Ammonite (11:5–11). People there remembered and took this opportunity to demonstrate their loyalty. See color map 1. *Jabesh*. Same as Jabesh-gilead. *burned*. Unusual because cremation was not ordinarily practiced in Israel. Perhaps the bodies were extremely mutilated or decomposed, or perhaps this was a means to prevent further indignities. David subsequently commends the people of Jabesh for their piety (2Sm 2:4–7).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **31:13** *took their bones and buried them*. After purification by fire, the bones were properly buried. Despite Saul's failures, he was the anointed of Yahweh. *tamarisk tree in Jabesh*. Saul's bones would rest at the place where he had won his first victory, during better days in his life (ch 11). David would later remove the bones of Saul and Jonathan and rebury them in Benjamin (2Sm 21:11–14).

1 AND 2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **Ch 31** Saul forfeits his divine blessings by compromising God's Word, and he dies a brutal death at the hands of the very enemy he was chosen to defeat. There is no greater tragedy than when God's people compromise His Word, no greater blessing than when they steadfastly receive it. Learn by the examples of Saul and David. By promises and blessings, the King of heaven provides life for you in His Son, Jesus. • "Lord, keep us steadfast in Your Word; Curb those who by deceit or sword Would wrest the kingdom from Your Son And bring to naught all He has done." Amen. (*LSB* 655:1)

2 Samuel

2 Samuel 1 | 2 Samuel 2 | 2 Samuel 3 | 2 Samuel 4 | 2 Samuel 5 | 2 Samuel 6 | 2 Samuel 7 | 2 Samuel 8 | 2 Samuel 9 | 2 Samuel 10 | 2 Samuel 11 | 2 Samuel 12 | 2 Samuel 13 | 2 Samuel 14 | 2 Samuel 15 | 2 Samuel 16 | 2 Samuel 17 | 2 Samuel 18 | 2 Samuel 19 | 2 Samuel 20 | 2 Samuel 21 | 2 Samuel 22 | 2 Samuel 23 | 2 Samuel 24

- 2 Samuel
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

David Hears of Saul's Death

1 [1]‡†After the death of Saul, when David had returned from striking
down the Amalekites, David remained two days in Ziklag. [2]†And on the
third day, behold, a man came from Saul's camp, with his clothes torn and
dirt on his head. And when he came to David, he fell to the ground and paid
homage. [3]David said to him, "Where do you come from?" And he said to
him, "I have escaped from the camp of Israel." [4]And David said to him,
"How did it go? Tell me." And he answered, "The people fled from the
battle, and also many of the people have fallen and are dead, and Saul and
his son Jonathan are also dead." [5]Then David said to the young man who
told him, "How do you know that Saul and his son Jonathan are dead?"
[6]†And the young man who told him said, "By chance I happened to be on
Mount Gilboa, and there was Saul leaning on his spear, and behold, the
chariots and the horsemen were close upon him. [7]And when he looked
behind him, he saw me, and called to me. And I answered, 'Here I am.'
[8]†And he said to me, 'Who are you?' I answered him, 'I am an Amalekite.'
[9]‡And he said to me 'Stand beside me and kill me, for anguish has seized
me, and yet my life still lingers.' [10]†So I stood beside him and killed him,
because I was sure that he could not live after he had fallen. And I took the
crown that was on his head and the armlet that was on his arm, and I have
brought them here to my lord."

[11]†Then David took hold of his clothes and tore them, and so did all the
men who were with him. [12]†And they mourned and wept and fasted until
evening for Saul and for Jonathan his son and for the people of the LORD and
for the house of Israel, because they had fallen by the sword. [13]†And David
said to the young man who told him, "Where do you come from?" And he
answered, "I am the son of a sojourner, an Amalekite." [14]†David said to
him, "How is it you were not afraid to put out your hand to destroy the
LORD's anointed?" [15]†Then David called one of the young men and said,
"Go, execute him." And he struck him down so that he died. [16]†And David
said to him, "Your blood be on your head, for your own mouth has testified
against you, saying, 'I have killed the LORD's anointed.'"

David’s Lament for Saul and Jonathan

17 And David lamented with this lamentation over Saul and Jonathan
his son, 18 and he said it[1] should be taught to the people of Judah; behold,
it is written in the Book of Jashar.[2] He said:

19 “Your glory, O Israel, is slain on
your high places!
How the mighty have fallen!
20 Tell it not in Gath,
publish it not in the streets of Ashkelon,
lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice,
lest the daughters of the uncircumcised
exult.

21 “You mountains of Gilboa,
let there be no dew or rain upon you,
nor fields of offerings![1]
For there the shield of the mighty was defiled,
the shield of Saul, not anointed with oil.

22 “From the blood of the slain,
from the fat of the mighty,
the bow of Jonathan turned not back,
and the sword of Saul returned not empty.

23 “Saul and Jonathan, beloved and lovely!
In life and in death they were not divided;
they were swifter than eagles;
they were stronger than lions.
24 “You daughters of Israel, weep over Saul,
who clothed you luxuriously in scarlet,
who put ornaments of gold on your apparel.

25 “How the mighty have fallen
in the midst of the battle!

“Jonathan lies slain on your high places.
26 I am distressed for you, my brother
Jonathan;
very pleasant have you been to me;
your love to me was extraordinary,
surpassing the love of women.

27 “How the mighty have fallen,
and the weapons of war perished!”

David Anointed King of Judah

2 [1]‡†After this David inquired of the Lord, “Shall I go up into any of the cities of Judah?” And the Lord said to him, “Go up.” David said, “To which shall I go up?” And he said, “To Hebron.” [2]†So David went up there, and his two wives also, Ahinoam of Jezreel and Abigail the widow of Nabal of Carmel. [3]†And David brought up his men who were with him, everyone with his household, and they lived in the towns of Hebron. [4]†And the men of Judah came, and there they anointed David king over the house of Judah.

When they told David, “It was the men of Jabesh-gilead who buried Saul,” [5]‡David sent messengers to the men of Jabesh-gilead and said to them, “May you be blessed by the Lord, because you showed this loyalty to Saul your lord and buried him. [6]†Now may the Lord show steadfast love and faithfulness to you. And I will do good to you because you have done this thing. [7]Now therefore let your hands be strong, and be valiant, for Saul your lord is dead, and the house of Judah has anointed me king over them.”

Ish-bosheth Made King of Israel

8 ‡ † But Abner the son of Ner, commander of Saul's army, took Ish-
bosheth the son of Saul and brought him over to Mahanaim, 9 † and he made
him king over Gilead and the Ashurites and Jezreel and Ephraim and
Benjamin and all Israel. 10 ‡ Ish-bosheth, Saul's son, was forty years old
when he began to reign over Israel, and he reigned two years. But the house
of Judah followed David. 11 And the time that David was king in Hebron
over the house of Judah was seven years and six months.

The Battle of Gibeon

12 ‡†Abner the son of Ner, and the servants of Ish-bosheth the son of Saul,
went out from Mahanaim to Gibeon. 13 †And Joab the son of Zeruiah and the
servants of David went out and met them at the pool of Gibeon. And they
sat down, the one on the one side of the pool, and the other on the other side
of the pool. 14 † And Abner said to Joab, “Let the young men arise and
compete before us.” And Joab said, “Let them arise.” 15 Then they arose and
passed over by number, twelve for Benjamin and Ish-bosheth the son of
Saul, and twelve of the servants of David. 16 †And each caught his opponent
by the head and thrust his sword in his opponent’s side, so they fell down
together. Therefore that place was called Helkath-hazzurim,[1] which is at
Gibeon. 17 †And the battle was very fierce that day. And Abner and the men
of Israel were beaten before the servants of David.

18 †And the three sons of Zeruiah were there, Joab, Abishai, and Asahel.
Now Asahel was as swift of foot as a wild gazelle. 19 ‡And Asahel pursued
Abner, and as he went, he turned neither to the right hand nor to the left
from following Abner. 20 Then Abner looked behind him and said, “Is it you,
Asahel?” And he answered, “It is I.” 21 ‡Abner said to him, “Turn aside to
your right hand or to your left, and seize one of the young men and take his
spoil.” But Asahel would not turn aside from following him. 22 And Abner
said again to Asahel, “Turn aside from following me. Why should I strike
you to the ground? How then could I lift up my face to your brother Joab?”
23 †But he refused to turn aside. Therefore Abner struck him in the stomach
with the butt of his spear, so that the spear came out at his back. And he fell
there and died where he was. And all who came to the place where Asahel
had fallen and died, stood still.

24 †But Joab and Abishai pursued Abner. And as the sun was going down
they came to the hill of Ammah, which lies before Giah on the way to the
wilderness of Gibeon. 25 †And the people of Benjamin gathered themselves
together behind Abner and became one group and took their stand on the
top of a hill. 26 †Then Abner called to Joab, “Shall the sword devour forever?
Do you not know that the end will be bitter? How long will it be before you
tell your people to turn from the pursuit of their brothers?” 27 And Joab said,

“As God lives, if you had not spoken, surely the men would not have given
up the pursuit of their brothers until the morning.” [28]† So Joab blew the
trumpet, and all the men stopped and pursued Israel no more, nor did they
fight anymore.
[29]† And Abner and his men went all that night through the Arabah. They
crossed the Jordan, and marching the whole morning, they came to
Mahanaim. [30]† Joab returned from the pursuit of Abner. And when he had
gathered all the people together, there were missing from David’s servants
nineteen men besides Asahel. [31]But the servants of David had struck down
of Benjamin 360 of Abner’s men. [32]† And they took up Asahel and buried
him in the tomb of his father, which was at Bethlehem. And Joab and his
men marched all night, and the day broke upon them at Hebron.

Abner Joins David

3 [1]There was a long war between the house of Saul and the house of David. And David grew stronger and stronger, while the house of Saul became weaker and weaker.

[2]And sons were born to David at Hebron: his firstborn was Amnon, of Ahinoam of Jezreel; [3]and his second, Chileab, of Abigail the widow of Nabal of Carmel; and the third, Absalom the son of Maacah the daughter of Talmai king of Geshur; [4]and the fourth, Adonijah the son of Haggith; and the fifth, Shephatiah the son of Abital; [5]and the sixth, Ithream, of Eglah, David's wife. These were born to David in Hebron.

[6]While there was war between the house of Saul and the house of David, Abner was making himself strong in the house of Saul. [7]Now Saul had a concubine whose name was Rizpah, the daughter of Aiah. And Ish-bosheth said to Abner, "Why have you gone in to my father's concubine?" [8]Then Abner was very angry over the words of Ish-bosheth and said, "Am I a dog's head of Judah? To this day I keep showing steadfast love to the house of Saul your father, to his brothers, and to his friends, and have not given you into the hand of David. And yet you charge me today with a fault concerning a woman. [9]God do so to Abner and more also, if I do not accomplish for David what the Lord has sworn to him, [10]to transfer the kingdom from the house of Saul and set up the throne of David over Israel and over Judah, from Dan to Beersheba." [11]And Ish-bosheth could not answer Abner another word, because he feared him.

[12]And Abner sent messengers to David on his behalf,[1] saying, "To whom does the land belong? Make your covenant with me, and behold, my hand shall be with you to bring over all Israel to you." [13]And he said, "Good; I will make a covenant with you. But one thing I require of you; that is, you shall not see my face unless you first bring Michal, Saul's daughter, when you come to see my face." [14]Then David sent messengers to Ish-bosheth, Saul's son, saying, "Give me my wife Michal, for whom I paid the bridal price of a hundred foreskins of the Philistines." [15]And Ish-bosheth sent and took her from her husband Paltiel the son of Laish. [16]But

her husband went with her, weeping after her all the way to Bahurim. Then Abner said to him, “Go, return.” And he returned.

17 † And Abner conferred with the elders of Israel, saying, “For some time past you have been seeking David as king over you. 18 Now then bring it about, for the Lord has promised David, saying, ‘By the hand of my servant David I will save my people Israel from the hand of the Philistines, and from the hand of all their enemies.’” 19 † Abner also spoke to Benjamin. And then Abner went to tell David at Hebron all that Israel and the whole house of Benjamin thought good to do.

20 When Abner came with twenty men to David at Hebron, David made a feast for Abner and the men who were with him. 21 † And Abner said to David, “I will arise and go and will gather all Israel to my lord the king, that they may make a covenant with you, and that you may reign over all that your heart desires.” So David sent Abner away, and he went in peace.

22 † Just then the servants of David arrived with Joab from a raid, bringing much spoil with them. But Abner was not with David at Hebron, for he had sent him away, and he had gone in peace. 23 When Joab and all the army that was with him came, it was told Joab, “Abner the son of Ner came to the king, and he has let him go, and he has gone in peace.” 24 † Then Joab went to the king and said, “What have you done? Behold, Abner came to you. Why is it that you have sent him away, so that he is gone? 25 You know that Abner the son of Ner came to deceive you and to know your going out and your coming in, and to know all that you are doing.”

Joab Murders Abner

[26] When Joab came out from David's presence, he sent messengers after
Abner, and they brought him back from the cistern of Sirah. But David did
not know about it. [27] And when Abner returned to Hebron, Joab took him
aside into the midst of the gate to speak with him privately, and there he
struck him in the stomach, so that he died, for the blood of Asahel his
brother. [28] Afterward, when David heard of it, he said, "I and my kingdom
are forever guiltless before the LORD for the blood of Abner the son of Ner.
[29] May it fall upon the head of Joab and upon all his father's house, and
may the house of Joab never be without one who has a discharge or who is
leprous or who holds a spindle or who falls by the sword or who lacks
bread!" [30] So Joab and Abishai his brother killed Abner, because he had put
their brother Asahel to death in the battle at Gibeon.

David Mourns Abner

31 ‡ † Then David said to Joab and to all the people who were with him,
“Tear your clothes and put on sackcloth and mourn before Abner.” And
King David followed the bier. 32 † They buried Abner at Hebron. And the
king lifted up his voice and wept at the grave of Abner, and all the people
wept. 33 ‡ † And the king lamented for Abner, saying,

“ Should Abner die as a fool dies?
34 † Your hands were not bound;
your feet were not fettered;
as one falls before the wicked
you have fallen.”

And all the people wept again over him. 35 † Then all the people came to
persuade David to eat bread while it was yet day. But David swore, saying,
“God do so to me and more also, if I taste bread or anything else till the sun
goes down!” 36 And all the people took notice of it, and it pleased them, as
everything that the king did pleased all the people. 37 So all the people and
all Israel understood that day that it had not been the king’s will to put to
death Abner the son of Ner. 38 † And the king said to his servants, “Do you
not know that a prince and a great man has fallen this day in Israel? 39 † And
I was gentle today, though anointed king. These men, the sons of Zeruiah,
are more severe than I. The Lord repay the evildoer according to his
wickedness!”

Ish-bosheth Murdered

4 [1] † When Ish-bosheth, Saul's son, heard that Abner had died at Hebron, his courage failed, and all Israel was dismayed. [2] †Now Saul's son had two men who were captains of raiding bands; the name of the one was Baanah, and the name of the other Rechab, sons of Rimmon a man of Benjamin from Beeroth (for Beeroth also is counted part of Benjamin; [3] †the Beerothites fled to Gittaim and have been sojourners there to this day).

[4] †Jonathan, the son of Saul, had a son who was crippled in his feet. He was five years old when the news about Saul and Jonathan came from Jezreel, and his nurse took him up and fled, and as she fled in her haste, he fell and became lame. And his name was Mephibosheth.

[5] Now the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, Rechab and Baanah, set out, and about the heat of the day they came to the house of Ish-bosheth as he was taking his noonday rest. [6] And they came into the midst of the house as if to get wheat, and they stabbed him in the stomach. Then Rechab and Baanah his brother escaped.[1] [7] †When they came into the house, as he lay on his bed in his bedroom, they struck him and put him to death and beheaded him. They took his head and went by the way of the Arabah all night, [8] †and brought the head of Ish-bosheth to David at Hebron. And they said to the king, "Here is the head of Ish-bosheth, the son of Saul, your enemy, who sought your life. The Lord has avenged my lord the king this day on Saul and on his offspring." [9] † But David answered Rechab and Baanah his brother, the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, "As the Lord lives, who has redeemed my life out of every adversity, [10] † when one told me, 'Behold, Saul is dead,' and thought he was bringing good news, I seized him and killed him at Ziklag, which was the reward I gave him for his news. [11] †How much more, when wicked men have killed a righteous man in his own house on his bed, shall I not now require his blood at your hand and destroy you from the earth?" [12] †And David commanded his young men, and they killed them and cut off their hands and feet and hanged them beside the pool at Hebron. But they took the head of Ish-bosheth and buried it in the tomb of Abner at Hebron.

David Anointed King of Israel

5 [1]‡†Then all the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron and said,
"Behold, we are your bone and flesh. [2]†In times past, when Saul was king
over us, it was you who led out and brought in Israel. And the Lord said to
you, 'You shall be shepherd of my people Israel, and you shall be prince
over Israel.'" [3]†So all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron, and
King David made a covenant with them at Hebron before the Lord, and they
anointed David king over Israel. [4]David was thirty years old when he began
to reign, and he reigned forty years. [5]† At Hebron he reigned over Judah
seven years and six months, and at Jerusalem he reigned over all Israel and
Judah thirty-three years.[1]

[6]†And the king and his men went to Jerusalem against the Jebusites, the
inhabitants of the land, who said to David, "You will not come in here, but
the blind and the lame will ward you off"—thinking, "David cannot come
in here." [7]†Nevertheless, David took the stronghold of Zion, that is, the city
of David. [8]† And David said on that day, "Whoever would strike the
Jebusites, let him get up the water shaft to attack 'the lame and the blind,'
who are hated by David's soul." Therefore it is said, "The blind and the
lame shall not come into the house." [9]†And David lived in the stronghold
and called it the city of David. And David built the city all around from the
Millo inward. [10]†And David became greater and greater, for the Lord, the
God of hosts, was with him.

[11]†And Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David, and cedar trees,
also carpenters and masons who built David a house. [12]†And David knew
that the Lord had established him king over Israel, and that he had exalted
his kingdom for the sake of his people Israel.

[13]†And David took more concubines and wives from Jerusalem, after he
came from Hebron, and more sons and daughters were born to David.
[14]‡And these are the names of those who were born to him in Jerusalem:
Shammua, Shobab, Nathan, Solomon, [15]Ibhar, Elishua, Nepheg, Japhia,
[16]Elishama, Eliada, and Eliphelet.

David Defeats the Philistines

17 ‡ † When the Philistines heard that David had been anointed king over
Israel, all the Philistines went up to search for David. But David heard of it
and went down to the stronghold. 18 † Now the Philistines had come and
spread out in the Valley of Rephaim. 19 † And David inquired of the Lord,
“Shall I go up against the Philistines? Will you give them into my hand?”
And the Lord said to David, “Go up, for I will certainly give the Philistines
into your hand.” 20 † And David came to Baal-perazim, and David defeated
them there. And he said, “The Lord has burst through my enemies before
me like a bursting flood.” Therefore the name of that place is called Baal-
perazim.[1] 21 † And the Philistines left their idols there, and David and his
men carried them away.

22 And the Philistines came up yet again and spread out in the Valley of
Rephaim. 23 And when David inquired of the Lord, he said, “You shall not
go up; go around to their rear, and come against them opposite the balsam
trees. 24 † And when you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the
balsam trees, then rouse yourself, for then the Lord has gone out before you
to strike down the army of the Philistines.” 25 † And David did as the Lord
commanded him, and struck down the Philistines from Geba to Gezer.

The Ark Brought to Jerusalem

6 [1] ‡ † David again gathered all the chosen men of Israel, thirty
thousand. [2] † And David arose and went with all the people who were with
him from Baale-judah to bring up from there the ark of God, which is called
by the name of the Lord of hosts who sits enthroned on the cherubim. [3] † And
they carried the ark of God on a new cart and brought it out of the house of
Abinadab, which was on the hill. And Uzzah and Ahio,[2] the sons of
Abinadab, were driving the new cart,[3] [4] with the ark of God, and Ahio went
before the ark.

Uzzah and the Ark

5 ‡ † And David and all the house of Israel were making merry before the
Lord, with songs[4] and lyres and harps and tambourines and castanets and
cymbals. 6 † And when they came to the threshing floor of Nacon, Uzzah put
out his hand to the ark of God and took hold of it, for the oxen stumbled.
7 † And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah, and God struck him
down there because of his error, and he died there beside the ark of God.
8 And David was angry because the Lord had burst forth against Uzzah. And
that place is called Perez-uzzah,[1] to this day. 9 And David was afraid of the
Lord that day, and he said, “How can the ark of the Lord come to me?” 10 So
David was not willing to take the ark of the Lord into the city of David. But
David took it aside to the house of Obed-edom the Gittite. 11 † And the ark of
the Lord remained in the house of Obed-edom the Gittite three months, and
the Lord blessed Obed-edom and all his household.

12 † And it was told King David, “The Lord has blessed the household of
Obed-edom and all that belongs to him, because of the ark of God.” So
David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-edom to
the city of David with rejoicing. 13 † And when those who bore the ark of the
Lord had gone six steps, he sacrificed an ox and a fattened animal. 14 † And
David danced before the Lord with all his might. And David was wearing a
linen ephod. 15 So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the
Lord with shouting and with the sound of the horn.

David and Michal

16 ‡ † As the ark of the Lord came into the city of David, Michal the
daughter of Saul looked out of the window and saw King David leaping and
dancing before the Lord, and she despised him in her heart. 17 † And they
brought in the ark of the Lord and set it in its place, inside the tent that
David had pitched for it. And David offered burnt offerings and peace
offerings before the Lord. 18 † And when David had finished offering the
burnt offerings and the peace offerings, he blessed the people in the name of
the Lord of hosts 19 and distributed among all the people, the whole
multitude of Israel, both men and women, a cake of bread, a portion of
meat,[2] and a cake of raisins to each one. Then all the people departed, each
to his house.

20 † And David returned to bless his household. But Michal the daughter of
Saul came out to meet David and said, “How the king of Israel honored
himself today, uncovering himself today before the eyes of his servants’
female servants, as one of the vulgar fellows shamelessly uncovers
himself!” 21 † And David said to Michal, “It was before the Lord, who chose
me above your father and above all his house, to appoint me as prince over
Israel, the people of the Lord—and I will make merry before the Lord. 22 I
will make myself yet more contemptible than this, and I will be abased in
your[3] eyes. But by the female servants of whom you have spoken, by them
I shall be held in honor.” 23 † And Michal the daughter of Saul had no child
to the day of her death.

God’s Covenant with David

7 [1]†Now when the king lived in his house and the Lord had given him
rest from all his surrounding enemies, [2]†the king said to Nathan the prophet,
“See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwells in a tent.”
[3]†And Nathan said to the king, “Go, do all that is in your heart, for the Lord
is with you.”

[4]But that same night the word of the Lord came to Nathan, [5]“Go and tell
my servant David, ‘Thus says the Lord: Would you build me a house to
dwell in? [6]I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people
of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent for
my dwelling. [7]† In all places where I have moved with all the people of
Israel, did I speak a word with any of the judges[1] of Israel, whom I
commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, “Why have you not built
me a house of cedar?”’ [8]Now, therefore, thus you shall say to my servant
David, ‘Thus says the Lord of hosts, I took you from the pasture, from
following the sheep, that you should be prince over my people Israel. [9]And I
have been with you wherever you went and have cut off all your enemies
from before you. And I will make for you a great name, like the name of the
great ones of the earth. [10]†And I will appoint a place for my people Israel
and will plant them, so that they may dwell in their own place and be
disturbed no more. And violent men shall afflict them no more, as formerly,
[11]†from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel. And I will
give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover, the Lord declares to you that
the Lord will make you a house. [12]†When your days are fulfilled and you lie
down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall
come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. [13]†He shall build a
house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.
[14]††I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son. When he commits
iniquity, I will discipline him with the rod of men, with the stripes of the
sons of men, [15]but my steadfast love will not depart from him, as I took it
from Saul, whom I put away from before you. [16]And your house and your
kingdom shall be made sure forever before me.[2] Your throne shall be

established forever.’” [17] † In accordance with all these words, and in accordance with all this vision, Nathan spoke to David.

David’s Prayer of Gratitude

18 ‡† Then King David went in and sat before the Lord and said, “Who am
I, O Lord God, and what is my house, that you have brought me thus far?
19 † And yet this was a small thing in your eyes, O Lord God. You have
spoken also of your servant’s house for a great while to come, and this is
instruction for mankind, O Lord God! 20 And what more can David say to
you? For you know your servant, O Lord God! 21 Because of your promise,
and according to your own heart, you have brought about all this greatness,
to make your servant know it. 22 † Therefore you are great, O Lord God. For
there is none like you, and there is no God besides you, according to all that
we have heard with our ears. 23 † And who is like your people Israel, the one
nation on earth whom God went to redeem to be his people, making himself
a name and doing for them[3] great and awesome things by driving out[4]
before your people, whom you redeemed for yourself from Egypt, a nation
and its gods? 24 And you established for yourself your people Israel to be
your people forever. And you, O Lord, became their God. 25 And now, O
Lord God, confirm forever the word that you have spoken concerning your
servant and concerning his house, and do as you have spoken. 26 And your
name will be magnified forever, saying, ‘The Lord of hosts is God over
Israel,’ and the house of your servant David will be established before you.
27 † For you, O Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, have made this revelation to
your servant, saying, ‘I will build you a house.’ Therefore your servant has
found courage to pray this prayer to you. 28 And now, O Lord God, you are
God, and your words are true, and you have promised this good thing to
your servant. 29 Now therefore may it please you to bless the house of your
servant, so that it may continue forever before you. For you, O Lord God,
have spoken, and with your blessing shall the house of your servant be
blessed forever.”

David's Victories

8 [1]‡†After this David defeated the Philistines and subdued them, and David took Metheg-ammah out of the hand of the Philistines.

[2]†And he defeated Moab and he measured them with a line, making them lie down on the ground. Two lines he measured to be put to death, and one full line to be spared. And the Moabites became servants to David and brought tribute.

[3]†David also defeated Hadadezer the son of Rehob, king of Zobah, as he went to restore his power at the river Euphrates. [4]†And David took from him 1,700 horsemen, and 20,000 foot soldiers. And David hamstrung all the chariot horses but left enough for 100 chariots. [5]‡And when the Syrians of Damascus came to help Hadadezer king of Zobah, David struck down 22,000 men of the Syrians. [6]Then David put garrisons in Aram of Damascus, and the Syrians became servants to David and brought tribute. And the Lord gave victory to David wherever he went. [7]And David took the shields of gold that were carried by the servants of Hadadezer and brought them to Jerusalem. [8]† And from Betah and from Berothai, cities of Hadadezer, King David took very much bronze.

[9]†When Toi king of Hamath heard that David had defeated the whole army of Hadadezer, [10]†Toi sent his son Joram to King David, to ask about his health and to bless him because he had fought against Hadadezer and defeated him, for Hadadezer had often been at war with Toi. And Joram brought with him articles of silver, of gold, and of bronze. [11]†These also King David dedicated to the Lord, together with the silver and gold that he dedicated from all the nations he subdued, [12]† from Edom, Moab, the Ammonites, the Philistines, Amalek, and from the spoil of Hadadezer the son of Rehob, king of Zobah.

[13]†And David made a name for himself when he returned from striking down 18,000 Edomites in the Valley of Salt. [14]Then he put garrisons in Edom; throughout all Edom he put garrisons, and all the Edomites became David's servants. And the Lord gave victory to David wherever he went.

David’s Officials

15 †So David reigned over all Israel. And David administered justice and
equity to all his people. 16 †Joab the son of Zeruiah was over the army, and
Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud was recorder, 17 †and Zadok the son of Ahitub
and Ahimelech the son of Abiathar were priests, and Seraiah was secretary,
18 † and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over[1] the Cherethites and the
Pelethites, and David’s sons were priests.

David’s Kindness to Mephibosheth

9 [1]†And David said, “Is there still anyone left of the house of Saul,
that I may show him kindness for Jonathan’s sake?” [2]Now there was a
servant of the house of Saul whose name was Ziba, and they called him to
David. And the king said to him, “Are you Ziba?” And he said, “I am your
servant.” [3]And the king said, “Is there not still someone of the house of
Saul, that I may show the kindness of God to him?” Ziba said to the king,
“There is still a son of Jonathan; he is crippled in his feet.” [4]†The king said
to him, “Where is he?” And Ziba said to the king, “He is in the house of
Machir the son of Ammiel, at Lo-debar.” [5]Then King David sent and
brought him from the house of Machir the son of Ammiel, at Lo-debar.
[6]†And Mephibosheth the son of Jonathan, son of Saul, came to David and
fell on his face and paid homage. And David said, “Mephibosheth!” And he
answered, “Behold, I am your servant.” [7]†And David said to him, “Do not
fear, for I will show you kindness for the sake of your father Jonathan, and I
will restore to you all the land of Saul your father, and you shall eat at my
table always.” [8]And he paid homage and said, “What is your servant, that
you should show regard for a dead dog such as I?”

[9]†Then the king called Ziba, Saul’s servant, and said to him, “All that
belonged to Saul and to all his house I have given to your master’s
grandson. [10]†And you and your sons and your servants shall till the land for
him and shall bring in the produce, that your master’s grandson may have
bread to eat. But Mephibosheth your master’s grandson shall always eat at
my table.” Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants. [11]Then Ziba said
to the king, “According to all that my lord the king commands his servant,
so will your servant do.” So Mephibosheth ate at David’s[2] table, like one
of the king’s sons. [12]†And Mephibosheth had a young son, whose name was
Mica. And all who lived in Ziba’s house became Mephibosheth’s servants.
[13]So Mephibosheth lived in Jerusalem, for he ate always at the king’s table.
Now he was lame in both his feet.

David Defeats Ammon and Syria

10 [1]†After this the king of the Ammonites died, and Hanun his son reigned in his place. [2]†And David said, “I will deal loyally[3] with Hanun the son of Nahash, as his father dealt loyally with me.” So David sent by his servants to console him concerning his father. And David’s servants came into the land of the Ammonites. [3]†But the princes of the Ammonites said to Hanun their lord, “Do you think, because David has sent comforters to you, that he is honoring your father? Has not David sent his servants to you to search the city and to spy it out and to overthrow it?” [4]†So Hanun took David’s servants and shaved off half the beard of each and cut off their garments in the middle, at their hips, and sent them away. [5]†When it was told David, he sent to meet them, for the men were greatly ashamed. And the king said, “Remain at Jericho until your beards have grown and then return.”

[6]†When the Ammonites saw that they had become a stench to David, the Ammonites sent and hired the Syrians of Beth-rehob, and the Syrians of Zobah, 20,000 foot soldiers, and the king of Maacah with 1,000 men, and the men of Tob, 12,000 men. [7]And when David heard of it, he sent Joab and all the host of the mighty men. [8]†And the Ammonites came out and drew up in battle array at the entrance of the gate, and the Syrians of Zobah and of Rehob and the men of Tob and Maacah were by themselves in the open country.

[9]†When Joab saw that the battle was set against him both in front and in the rear, he chose some of the best men of Israel and arrayed them against the Syrians. [10]The rest of his men he put in the charge of Abishai his brother, and he arrayed them against the Ammonites. [11]And he said, “If the Syrians are too strong for me, then you shall help me, but if the Ammonites are too strong for you, then I will come and help you. [12]Be of good courage, and let us be courageous for our people, and for the cities of our God, and may the Lord do what seems good to him.” [13]So Joab and the people who were with him drew near to battle against the Syrians, and they fled before him. [14]†And when the Ammonites saw that the Syrians fled, they likewise

fled before Abishai and entered the city. Then Joab returned from fighting against the Ammonites and came to Jerusalem.

15 But when the Syrians saw that they had been defeated by Israel, they gathered themselves together. 16 † And Hadadezer sent and brought out the Syrians who were beyond the Euphrates.[1] They came to Helam, with Shobach the commander of the army of Hadadezer at their head. 17 † And when it was told David, he gathered all Israel together and crossed the Jordan and came to Helam. The Syrians arrayed themselves against David and fought with him. 18 And the Syrians fled before Israel, and David killed of the Syrians the men of 700 chariots, and 40,000 horsemen, and wounded Shobach the commander of their army, so that he died there. 19 And when all the kings who were servants of Hadadezer saw that they had been defeated by Israel, they made peace with Israel and became subject to them. So the Syrians were afraid to save the Ammonites anymore.

David and Bathsheba

11 [1]†In the spring of the year, the time when kings go out to battle,
David sent Joab, and his servants with him, and all Israel. And they ravaged
the Ammonites and besieged Rabbah. But David remained at Jerusalem.

[2]†It happened, late one afternoon, when David arose from his couch and
was walking on the roof of the king's house, that he saw from the roof a
woman bathing; and the woman was very beautiful. [3]And David sent and
inquired about the woman. And one said, "Is not this Bathsheba, the
daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?" [4]† So David sent
messengers and took her, and she came to him, and he lay with her. (Now
she had been purifying herself from her uncleanness.) Then she returned to
her house. [5]†And the woman conceived, and she sent and told David, "I am
pregnant."

[6]†So David sent word to Joab, "Send me Uriah the Hittite." And Joab
sent Uriah to David. [7]When Uriah came to him, David asked how Joab was
doing and how the people were doing and how the war was going. [8]†Then
David said to Uriah, "Go down to your house and wash your feet." And
Uriah went out of the king's house, and there followed him a present from
the king. [9]†But Uriah slept at the door of the king's house with all the
servants of his lord, and did not go down to his house. [10]When they told
David, "Uriah did not go down to his house," David said to Uriah, "Have
you not come from a journey? Why did you not go down to your house?"
[11]†Uriah said to David, "The ark and Israel and Judah dwell in booths, and
my lord Joab and the servants of my lord are camping in the open field.
Shall I then go to my house, to eat and to drink and to lie with my wife? As
you live, and as your soul lives, I will not do this thing." [12]Then David said
to Uriah, "Remain here today also, and tomorrow I will send you back." So
Uriah remained in Jerusalem that day and the next. [13]†And David invited
him, and he ate in his presence and drank, so that he made him drunk. And
in the evening he went out to lie on his couch with the servants of his lord,
but he did not go down to his house.

14 †In the morning David wrote a letter to Joab and sent it by the hand of
Uriah. 15In the letter he wrote, “Set Uriah in the forefront of the hardest
fighting, and then draw back from him, that he may be struck down, and
die.” 16And as Joab was besieging the city, he assigned Uriah to the place
where he knew there were valiant men. 17†And the men of the city came out
and fought with Joab, and some of the servants of David among the people
fell. Uriah the Hittite also died. 18Then Joab sent and told David all the news
about the fighting. 19†And he instructed the messenger, “When you have
finished telling all the news about the fighting to the king, 20then, if the
king’s anger rises, and if he says to you, ‘Why did you go so near the city to
fight? Did you not know that they would shoot from the wall? 21Who killed
Abimelech the son of Jerubbesheth? Did not a woman cast an upper
millstone on him from the wall, so that he died at Thebez? Why did you go
so near the wall?’ then you shall say, ‘Your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead
also.’”

22So the messenger went and came and told David all that Joab had sent
him to tell. 23The messenger said to David, “The men gained an advantage
over us and came out against us in the field, but we drove them back to the
entrance of the gate. 24Then the archers shot at your servants from the wall.
Some of the king’s servants are dead, and your servant Uriah the Hittite is
dead also.” 25David said to the messenger, “Thus shall you say to Joab, ‘Do
not let this matter trouble you, for the sword devours now one and now
another. Strengthen your attack against the city and overthrow it.’ And
encourage him.”

26 †When the wife of Uriah heard that Uriah her husband was dead, she
lamented over her husband. 27And when the mourning was over, David sent
and brought her to his house, and she became his wife and bore him a son.
But the thing that David had done displeased the Lord.

Nathan Rebukes David

12 [1]†‡†And the Lord sent Nathan to David. He came to him and said to him, “There were two men in a certain city, the one rich and the other poor. [2]The rich man had very many flocks and herds, [3]†but the poor man had nothing but one little ewe lamb, which he had bought. And he brought it up, and it grew up with him and with his children. It used to eat of his morsel and drink from his cup and lie in his arms,[1] and it was like a daughter to him. [4]Now there came a traveler to the rich man, and he was unwilling to take one of his own flock or herd to prepare for the guest who had come to him, but he took the poor man’s lamb and prepared it for the man who had come to him.” [5]†Then David’s anger was greatly kindled against the man, and he said to Nathan, “As the Lord lives, the man who has done this deserves to die, [6]and he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity.”

[7]†Nathan said to David, “You are the man! Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, ‘I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you out of the hand of Saul. [8]†And I gave you your master’s house and your master’s wives into your arms and gave you the house of Israel and of Judah. And if this were too little, I would add to you as much more. [9]†Why have you despised the word of the Lord, to do what is evil in his sight? You have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword and have taken his wife to be your wife and have killed him with the sword of the Ammonites. [10]†Now therefore the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised me and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.’ [11]†Thus says the Lord, ‘Behold, I will raise up evil against you out of your own house. And I will take your wives before your eyes and give them to your neighbor, and he shall lie with your wives in the sight of this sun. [12]†For you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel and before the sun.’” [13]†David said to Nathan, “I have sinned against the Lord.” And Nathan said to David, “The Lord also has put away your sin; you shall not die. [14]†Nevertheless, because by this deed you have utterly scorned the

LORD,[2] the child who is born to you shall die.” 15†Then Nathan went to his house.

David's Child Dies

And the Lord afflicted the child that Uriah's wife bore to David, and he
became sick. [16] † David therefore sought God on behalf of the child. And
David fasted and went in and lay all night on the ground. [17] And the elders of
his house stood beside him, to raise him from the ground, but he would not,
nor did he eat food with them. [18] † On the seventh day the child died. And the
servants of David were afraid to tell him that the child was dead, for they
said, "Behold, while the child was yet alive, we spoke to him, and he did
not listen to us. How then can we say to him the child is dead? He may do
himself some harm." [19] But when David saw that his servants were
whispering together, David understood that the child was dead. And David
said to his servants, "Is the child dead?" They said, "He is dead." [20] † Then
David arose from the earth and washed and anointed himself and changed
his clothes. And he went into the house of the Lord and worshiped. He then
went to his own house. And when he asked, they set food before him, and
he ate. [21] Then his servants said to him, "What is this thing that you have
done? You fasted and wept for the child while he was alive; but when the
child died, you arose and ate food." [22] He said, "While the child was still
alive, I fasted and wept, for I said, 'Who knows whether the Lord will be
gracious to me, that the child may live?' [23] † But now he is dead. Why should
I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he will not return
to me."

Solomon’s Birth

24 †Then David comforted his wife, Bathsheba, and went in to her and lay
with her, and she bore a son, and he called his name Solomon. And the Lord
loved him 25 †and sent a message by Nathan the prophet. So he called his
name Jedidiah,[1] because of the Lord.

Rabbah Is Captured

26 †Now Joab fought against Rabbah of the Ammonites and took the royal
city. 27 †And Joab sent messengers to David and said, “I have fought against
Rabbah; moreover, I have taken the city of waters. 28 †Now then gather the
rest of the people together and encamp against the city and take it, lest I
take the city and it be called by my name.” 29 So David gathered all the
people together and went to Rabbah and fought against it and took it. 30 And
he took the crown of their king from his head. The weight of it was a
talent[2] of gold, and in it was a precious stone, and it was placed on David’s
head. And he brought out the spoil of the city, a very great amount. 31 †And
he brought out the people who were in it and set them to labor with saws
and iron picks and iron axes and made them toil at[3] the brick kilns. And
thus he did to all the cities of the Ammonites. Then David and all the people
returned to Jerusalem.

Amnon and Tamar

13 [1]‡†Now Absalom, David's son, had a beautiful sister, whose name
was Tamar. And after a time Amnon, David's son, loved her. [2]†And Amnon
was so tormented that he made himself ill because of his sister Tamar, for
she was a virgin, and it seemed impossible to Amnon to do anything to her.
[3]†But Amnon had a friend, whose name was Jonadab, the son of Shimeah,
David's brother. And Jonadab was a very crafty man. [4]And he said to him,
"O son of the king, why are you so haggard morning after morning? Will
you not tell me?" Amnon said to him, "I love Tamar, my brother Absalom's
sister." [5]†Jonadab said to him, "Lie down on your bed and pretend to be ill.
And when your father comes to see you, say to him, 'Let my sister Tamar
come and give me bread to eat, and prepare the food in my sight, that I may
see it and eat it from her hand.'" [6]So Amnon lay down and pretended to be
ill. And when the king came to see him, Amnon said to the king, "Please let
my sister Tamar come and make a couple of cakes in my sight, that I may
eat from her hand."

[7]†Then David sent home to Tamar, saying, "Go to your brother Amnon's
house and prepare food for him." [8]†So Tamar went to her brother Amnon's
house, where he was lying down. And she took dough and kneaded it and
made cakes in his sight and baked the cakes. [9]†And she took the pan and
emptied it out before him, but he refused to eat. And Amnon said, "Send out
everyone from me." So everyone went out from him. [10]Then Amnon said to
Tamar, "Bring the food into the chamber, that I may eat from your hand."
And Tamar took the cakes she had made and brought them into the chamber
to Amnon her brother. [11]†But when she brought them near him to eat, he
took hold of her and said to her, "Come, lie with me, my sister." [12]†She
answered him, "No, my brother, do not violate[1] me, for such a thing is not
done in Israel; do not do this outrageous thing. [13]†As for me, where could I
carry my shame? And as for you, you would be as one of the outrageous
fools in Israel. Now therefore, please speak to the king, for he will not
withhold me from you." [14]† But he would not listen to her, and being
stronger than she, he violated her and lay with her.

15 †Then Amnon hated her with very great hatred, so that the hatred with
which he hated her was greater than the love with which he had loved her.
And Amnon said to her, “Get up! Go!” 16 †But she said to him, “No, my
brother, for this wrong in sending me away is greater than the other that you
did to me.”[2] But he would not listen to her. 17 †He called the young man
who served him and said, “Put this woman out of my presence and bolt the
door after her.” 18 Now she was wearing a long robe[3] with sleeves, for thus
were the virgin daughters of the king dressed. So his servant put her out and
bolted the door after her. 19 †And Tamar put ashes on her head and tore the
long robe that she wore. And she laid her hand on her head and went away,
crying aloud as she went.

20 †And her brother Absalom said to her, “Has Amnon your brother been
with you? Now hold your peace, my sister. He is your brother; do not take
this to heart.” So Tamar lived, a desolate woman, in her brother Absalom’s
house. 21 †When King David heard of all these things, he was very angry.[4]
22 †But Absalom spoke to Amnon neither good nor bad, for Absalom hated
Amnon, because he had violated his sister Tamar.

Absalom Murders Amnon

23 ‡ ‡ After two full years Absalom had sheepshearers at Baal-hazor, which
is near Ephraim, and Absalom invited all the king's sons. 24 And Absalom
came to the king and said, "Behold, your servant has sheepshearers. Please
let the king and his servants go with your servant." 25 † But the king said to
Absalom, "No, my son, let us not all go, lest we be burdensome to you." He
pressed him, but he would not go but gave him his blessing. 26 † Then
Absalom said, "If not, please let my brother Amnon go with us." And the
king said to him, "Why should he go with you?" 27 But Absalom pressed him
until he let Amnon and all the king's sons go with him. 28 † Then Absalom
commanded his servants, "Mark when Amnon's heart is merry with wine,
and when I say to you, 'Strike Amnon,' then kill him. Do not fear; have I
not commanded you? Be courageous and be valiant." 29 So the servants of
Absalom did to Amnon as Absalom had commanded. Then all the king's
sons arose, and each mounted his mule and fled.

30 † While they were on the way, news came to David, "Absalom has
struck down all the king's sons, and not one of them is left." 31 † Then the
king arose and tore his garments and lay on the earth. And all his servants
who were standing by tore their garments. 32 † But Jonadab the son of
Shimeah, David's brother, said, "Let not my lord suppose that they have
killed all the young men, the king's sons, for Amnon alone is dead. For by
the command of Absalom this has been determined from the day he violated
his sister Tamar. 33 Now therefore let not my lord the king so take it to heart
as to suppose that all the king's sons are dead, for Amnon alone is dead."

Absalom Flees to Geshur

34 ‡ † But Absalom fled. And the young man who kept the watch lifted up
his eyes and looked, and behold, many people were coming from the road
behind him[1] by the side of the mountain. 35 And Jonadab said to the king,
“Behold, the king’s sons have come; as your servant said, so it has come
about.” 36 And as soon as he had finished speaking, behold, the king’s sons
came and lifted up their voice and wept. And the king also and all his
servants wept very bitterly.

37 † But Absalom fled and went to Talmai the son of Ammihud, king of
Geshur. And David mourned for his son day after day. 38 So Absalom fled
and went to Geshur, and was there three years. 39 † And the spirit of the
king[2] longed to go out[3] to Absalom, because he was comforted about
Amnon, since he was dead.

Absalom Returns to Jerusalem

14 [1]†Now Joab the son of Zeruiah knew that the king's heart went
out to Absalom. [2]†And Joab sent to Tekoa and brought from there a wise
woman and said to her, "Pretend to be a mourner and put on mourning
garments. Do not anoint yourself with oil, but behave like a woman who
has been mourning many days for the dead. [3]Go to the king and speak thus
to him." So Joab put the words in her mouth.

[4]†When the woman of Tekoa came to the king, she fell on her face to the
ground and paid homage and said, "Save me, O king." [5]And the king said to
her, "What is your trouble?" She answered, "Alas, I am a widow; my
husband is dead. [6]†And your servant had two sons, and they quarreled with
one another in the field. There was no one to separate them, and one struck
the other and killed him. [7]†And now the whole clan has risen against your
servant, and they say, 'Give up the man who struck his brother, that we may
put him to death for the life of his brother whom he killed.' And so they
would destroy the heir also. Thus they would quench my coal that is left
and leave to my husband neither name nor remnant on the face of the
earth."

[8]Then the king said to the woman, "Go to your house, and I will give
orders concerning you." [9]†And the woman of Tekoa said to the king, "On
me be the guilt, my lord the king, and on my father's house; let the king and
his throne be guiltless." [10]The king said, "If anyone says anything to you,
bring him to me, and he shall never touch you again." [11]†Then she said,
"Please let the king invoke the Lord your God, that the avenger of blood kill
no more, and my son be not destroyed." He said, "As the Lord lives, not one
hair of your son shall fall to the ground."

[12]Then the woman said, "Please let your servant speak a word to my lord
the king." He said, "Speak." [13]†And the woman said, "Why then have you
planned such a thing against the people of God? For in giving this decision
the king convicts himself, inasmuch as the king does not bring his banished
one home again. [14]†We must all die; we are like water spilled on the ground,
which cannot be gathered up again. But God will not take away life, and he

devises means so that the banished one will not remain an outcast. 15Now I have come to say this to my lord the king because the people have made me afraid, and your servant thought, ‘I will speak to the king; it may be that the king will perform the request of his servant. 16†For the king will hear and deliver his servant from the hand of the man who would destroy me and my son together from the heritage of God.’ 17†And your servant thought, ‘The word of my lord the king will set me at rest,’ for my lord the king is like the angel of God to discern good and evil. The Lord your God be with you!”

18Then the king answered the woman, “Do not hide from me anything I ask you.” And the woman said, “Let my lord the king speak.” 19†The king said, “Is the hand of Joab with you in all this?” The woman answered and said, “As surely as you live, my lord the king, one cannot turn to the right hand or to the left from anything that my lord the king has said. It was your servant Joab who commanded me; it was he who put all these words in the mouth of your servant. 20†In order to change the course of things your servant Joab did this. But my lord has wisdom like the wisdom of the angel of God to know all things that are on the earth.”

21Then the king said to Joab, “Behold now, I grant this; go, bring back the young man Absalom.” 22†And Joab fell on his face to the ground and paid homage and blessed the king. And Joab said, “Today your servant knows that I have found favor in your sight, my lord the king, in that the king has granted the request of his servant.” 23†So Joab arose and went to Geshur and brought Absalom to Jerusalem. 24†And the king said, “Let him dwell apart in his own house; he is not to come into my presence.” So Absalom lived apart in his own house and did not come into the king’s presence.

25Now in all Israel there was no one so much to be praised for his handsome appearance as Absalom. From the sole of his foot to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him. 26And when he cut the hair of his head (for at the end of every year he used to cut it; when it was heavy on him, he cut it), he weighed the hair of his head, two hundred shekels[1] by the king’s weight. 27†There were born to Absalom three sons, and one daughter whose name was Tamar. She was a beautiful woman.

28So Absalom lived two full years in Jerusalem, without coming into the king’s presence. 29Then Absalom sent for Joab, to send him to the king, but Joab would not come to him. And he sent a second time, but Joab would not

come. 30 †Then he said to his servants, “See, Joab’s field is next to mine, and
he has barley there; go and set it on fire.” So Absalom’s servants set the
field on fire.[2] 31Then Joab arose and went to Absalom at his house and said
to him, “Why have your servants set my field on fire?” 32 † Absalom
answered Joab, “Behold, I sent word to you, ‘Come here, that I may send
you to the king, to ask, “Why have I come from Geshur? It would be better
for me to be there still.” Now therefore let me go into the presence of the
king, and if there is guilt in me, let him put me to death.’” 33 †Then Joab
went to the king and told him, and he summoned Absalom. So he came to
the king and bowed himself on his face to the ground before the king, and
the king kissed Absalom.

Absalom’s Conspiracy

15 [1]‡†After this Absalom got himself a chariot and horses, and fifty
men to run before him. [2]†And Absalom used to rise early and stand beside
the way of the gate. And when any man had a dispute to come before the
king for judgment, Absalom would call to him and say, “From what city are
you?” And when he said, “Your servant is of such and such a tribe in
Israel,” [3]†Absalom would say to him, “See, your claims are good and right,
but there is no man designated by the king to hear you.” [4]†Then Absalom
would say, “Oh that I were judge in the land! Then every man with a
dispute or cause might come to me, and I would give him justice.” [5]†And
whenever a man came near to pay homage to him, he would put out his
hand and take hold of him and kiss him. [6]†Thus Absalom did to all of Israel
who came to the king for judgment. So Absalom stole the hearts of the men
of Israel.

[7]†And at the end of four[3] years Absalom said to the king, “Please let me
go and pay my vow, which I have vowed to the Lord, in Hebron. [8]†For your
servant vowed a vow while I lived at Geshur in Aram, saying, ‘If the Lord
will indeed bring me back to Jerusalem, then I will offer worship to[4] the
Lord.’” [9]†The king said to him, “Go in peace.” So he arose and went to
Hebron. [10]But Absalom sent secret messengers throughout all the tribes of
Israel, saying, “As soon as you hear the sound of the trumpet, then say,
‘Absalom is king at Hebron!’” [11]†With Absalom went two hundred men
from Jerusalem who were invited guests, and they went in their innocence
and knew nothing. [12]†And while Absalom was offering the sacrifices, he
sent for[1] Ahithophel the Gilonite, David’s counselor, from his city Giloh.
And the conspiracy grew strong, and the people with Absalom kept
increasing.

David Flees Jerusalem

13 ‡ And a messenger came to David, saying, “The hearts of the men of
Israel have gone after Absalom.” 14 † Then David said to all his servants who
were with him at Jerusalem, “Arise, and let us flee, or else there will be no
escape for us from Absalom. Go quickly, lest he overtake us quickly and
bring down ruin on us and strike the city with the edge of the sword.” 15 And
the king’s servants said to the king, “Behold, your servants are ready to do
whatever my lord the king decides.” 16 † So the king went out, and all his
household after him. And the king left ten concubines to keep the house.
17 † And the king went out, and all the people after him. And they halted at
the last house.
18 † And all his servants passed by him, and all the Cherethites, and all the
Pelethites, and all the six hundred Gittites who had followed him from
Gath, passed on before the king. 19 † Then the king said to Ittai the Gittite,
“Why do you also go with us? Go back and stay with the king, for you are a
foreigner and also an exile from your home. 20 You came only yesterday, and
shall I today make you wander about with us, since I go I know not where?
Go back and take your brothers with you, and may the Lord show[2]
steadfast love and faithfulness to you.” 21 But Ittai answered the king, “As
the Lord lives, and as my lord the king lives, wherever my lord the king
shall be, whether for death or for life, there also will your servant be.”
22 And David said to Ittai, “Go then, pass on.” So Ittai the Gittite passed on
with all his men and all the little ones who were with him. 23 † And all the
land wept aloud as all the people passed by, and the king crossed the brook
Kidron, and all the people passed on toward the wilderness.
24 ‡ † And Abiathar came up, and behold, Zadok came also with all the
Levites, bearing the ark of the covenant of God. And they set down the ark
of God until the people had all passed out of the city. 25 † Then the king said
to Zadok, “Carry the ark of God back into the city. If I find favor in the eyes
of the Lord, he will bring me back and let me see both it and his dwelling
place. 26 But if he says, ‘I have no pleasure in you,’ behold, here I am, let
him do to me what seems good to him.” 27 † The king also said to Zadok the
priest, “Are you not a seer? Go back[1] to the city in peace, with your two

sons, Ahimaaz your son, and Jonathan the son of Abiathar. [28]†See, I will wait at the fords of the wilderness until word comes from you to inform me." [29]So Zadok and Abiathar carried the ark of God back to Jerusalem, and they remained there.

[30]†But David went up the ascent of the Mount of Olives, weeping as he went, barefoot and with his head covered. And all the people who were with him covered their heads, and they went up, weeping as they went. [31]†And it was told David, "Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom." And David said, "O LORD, please turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness."

[32]†While David was coming to the summit, where God was worshiped, behold, Hushai the Archite came to meet him with his coat torn and dirt on his head. [33]David said to him, "If you go on with me, you will be a burden to me. [34]But if you return to the city and say to Absalom, 'I will be your servant, O king; as I have been your father's servant in time past, so now I will be your servant,' then you will defeat for me the counsel of Ahithophel. [35]Are not Zadok and Abiathar the priests with you there? So whatever you hear from the king's house, tell it to Zadok and Abiathar the priests. [36]Behold, their two sons are with them there, Ahimaaz, Zadok's son, and Jonathan, Abiathar's son, and by them you shall send to me everything you hear." [37]So Hushai, David's friend, came into the city, just as Absalom was entering Jerusalem.

David and Ziba

16 [1]When David had passed a little beyond the summit, Ziba the servant of Mephibosheth met him, with a couple of donkeys saddled, bearing two hundred loaves of bread, a hundred bunches of raisins, a hundred of summer fruits, and a skin of wine. [2]And the king said to Ziba, "Why have you brought these?" Ziba answered, "The donkeys are for the king's household to ride on, the bread and summer fruit for the young men to eat, and the wine for those who faint in the wilderness to drink." [3]And the king said, "And where is your master's son?" Ziba said to the king, "Behold, he remains in Jerusalem, for he said, 'Today the house of Israel will give me back the kingdom of my father.'" [4]Then the king said to Ziba, "Behold, all that belonged to Mephibosheth is now yours." And Ziba said, "I pay homage; let me ever find favor in your sight, my lord the king."

Shimei Curses David

5 ✝ ✝ When King David came to Bahurim, there came out a man of the
family of the house of Saul, whose name was Shimei, the son of Gera, and
as he came he cursed continually. 6 ✝ And he threw stones at David and at all
the servants of King David, and all the people and all the mighty men were
on his right hand and on his left. 7 ✝ And Shimei said as he cursed, “Get out,
get out, you man of blood, you worthless man! 8 ✝ The Lord has avenged on
you all the blood of the house of Saul, in whose place you have reigned, and
the Lord has given the kingdom into the hand of your son Absalom. See,
your evil is on you, for you are a man of blood.”

9 ✝ Then Abishai the son of Zeruiah said to the king, “Why should this
dead dog curse my lord the king? Let me go over and take off his head.”
10 ✝ But the king said, “What have I to do with you, you sons of Zeruiah? If
he is cursing because the Lord has said to him, ‘Curse David,’ who then
shall say, ‘Why have you done so?’” 11 ✝ And David said to Abishai and to all
his servants, “Behold, my own son seeks my life; how much more now may
this Benjaminite! Leave him alone, and let him curse, for the Lord has told
him to. 12 ✝ It may be that the Lord will look on the wrong done to me,[1] and
that the Lord will repay me with good for his cursing today.” 13 ✝ So David
and his men went on the road, while Shimei went along on the hillside
opposite him and cursed as he went and threw stones at him and flung dust.
14 And the king, and all the people who were with him, arrived weary at the
Jordan.[2] And there he refreshed himself.

Absalom Enters Jerusalem

15 ‡ Now Absalom and all the people, the men of Israel, came to
Jerusalem, and Ahithophel with him. 16 ‡ † And when Hushai the Archite,
David's friend, came to Absalom, Hushai said to Absalom, "Long live the
king! Long live the king!" 17 And Absalom said to Hushai, "Is this your
loyalty to your friend? Why did you not go with your friend?" 18 † And
Hushai said to Absalom, "No, for whom the Lord and this people and all the
men of Israel have chosen, his I will be, and with him I will remain. 19 † And
again, whom should I serve? Should it not be his son? As I have served
your father, so I will serve you."

20 Then Absalom said to Ahithophel, "Give your counsel. What shall we
do?" 21 † Ahithophel said to Absalom, "Go in to your father's concubines,
whom he has left to keep the house, and all Israel will hear that you have
made yourself a stench to your father, and the hands of all who are with you
will be strengthened." 22 † So they pitched a tent for Absalom on the roof.
And Absalom went in to his father's concubines in the sight of all Israel.
23 Now in those days the counsel that Ahithophel gave was as if one
consulted the word of God; so was all the counsel of Ahithophel esteemed,
both by David and by Absalom.

Hushai Saves David

17 [1]†Moreover, Ahithophel said to Absalom, “Let me choose twelve
thousand men, and I will arise and pursue David tonight. [2]I will come upon
him while he is weary and discouraged and throw him into a panic, and all
the people who are with him will flee. I will strike down only the king,
[3]†and I will bring all the people back to you as a bride comes home to her
husband. You seek the life of only one man,[1] and all the people will be at
peace.” [4]And the advice seemed right in the eyes of Absalom and all the
elders of Israel.

[5]†Then Absalom said, “Call Hushai the Archite also, and let us hear what
he has to say.” [6]And when Hushai came to Absalom, Absalom said to him,
“Thus has Ahithophel spoken; shall we do as he says? If not, you speak.”
[7]†Then Hushai said to Absalom, “This time the counsel that Ahithophel has
given is not good.” [8]†Hushai said, “You know that your father and his men
are mighty men, and that they are enraged,[2] like a bear robbed of her cubs
in the field. Besides, your father is expert in war; he will not spend the night
with the people. [9]†Behold, even now he has hidden himself in one of the
pits or in some other place. And as soon as some of the people fall[3] at the
first attack, whoever hears it will say, ‘There has been a slaughter among
the people who follow Absalom.’ [10]†Then even the valiant man, whose heart
is like the heart of a lion, will utterly melt with fear, for all Israel knows that
your father is a mighty man, and that those who are with him are valiant
men. [11]†But my counsel is that all Israel be gathered to you, from Dan to
Beersheba, as the sand by the sea for multitude, and that you go to battle in
person. [12]†So we shall come upon him in some place where he is to be
found, and we shall light upon him as the dew falls on the ground, and of
him and all the men with him not one will be left. [13]If he withdraws into a
city, then all Israel will bring ropes to that city, and we shall drag it into the
valley, until not even a pebble is to be found there.” [14]†And Absalom and all
the men of Israel said, “The counsel of Hushai the Archite is better than the
counsel of Ahithophel.” For the Lord had ordained[4] to defeat the good
counsel of Ahithophel, so that the Lord might bring harm upon Absalom.

15 Then Hushai said to Zadok and Abiathar the priests, “Thus and so did
Ahithophel counsel Absalom and the elders of Israel, and thus and so have I
counseled. 16 † Now therefore send quickly and tell David, ‘Do not stay
tonight at the fords of the wilderness, but by all means pass over, lest the
king and all the people who are with him be swallowed up.’” 17 † Now
Jonathan and Ahimaaz were waiting at En-rogel. A female servant was to go
and tell them, and they were to go and tell King David, for they were not to
be seen entering the city. 18 † But a young man saw them and told Absalom.
So both of them went away quickly and came to the house of a man at
Bahurim, who had a well in his courtyard. And they went down into it.
19 † And the woman took and spread a covering over the well’s mouth and
scattered grain on it, and nothing was known of it. 20 † When Absalom’s
servants came to the woman at the house, they said, “Where are Ahimaaz
and Jonathan?” And the woman said to them, “They have gone over the
brook[5] of water.” And when they had sought and could not find them, they
returned to Jerusalem.

21 After they had gone, the men came up out of the well, and went and
told King David. They said to David, “Arise, and go quickly over the water,
for thus and so has Ahithophel counseled against you.” 22 Then David arose,
and all the people who were with him, and they crossed the Jordan. By
daybreak not one was left who had not crossed the Jordan.

23 † When Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not followed, he saddled
his donkey and went off home to his own city. He set his house in order and
hanged himself, and he died and was buried in the tomb of his father.

24 † Then David came to Mahanaim. And Absalom crossed the Jordan with
all the men of Israel. 25 † Now Absalom had set Amasa over the army instead
of Joab. Amasa was the son of a man named Ithra the Ishmaelite,[1] who had
married Abigal the daughter of Nahash, sister of Zeruiah, Joab’s mother.
26 And Israel and Absalom encamped in the land of Gilead.

27 † When David came to Mahanaim, Shobi the son of Nahash from
Rabbah of the Ammonites, and Machir the son of Ammiel from Lo-debar,
and Barzillai the Gileadite from Rogelim, 28 † brought beds, basins, and
earthen vessels, wheat, barley, flour, parched grain, beans and lentils,[2]
29 honey and curds and sheep and cheese from the herd, for David and the

people with him to eat, for they said, “The people are hungry and weary and thirsty in the wilderness.”

Absalom Killed

18 [1]‡†Then David mustered the men who were with him and set over
them commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds. [2]†And David
sent out the army, one third under the command of Joab, one third under the
command of Abishai the son of Zeruiah, Joab's brother, and one third under
the command of Ittai the Gittite. And the king said to the men, "I myself
will also go out with you." [3]†But the men said, "You shall not go out. For if
we flee, they will not care about us. If half of us die, they will not care
about us. But you are worth ten thousand of us. Therefore it is better that
you send us help from the city." [4]†The king said to them, "Whatever seems
best to you I will do." So the king stood at the side of the gate, while all the
army marched out by hundreds and by thousands. [5]†And the king ordered
Joab and Abishai and Ittai, "Deal gently for my sake with the young man
Absalom." And all the people heard when the king gave orders to all the
commanders about Absalom.

[6]†So the army went out into the field against Israel, and the battle was
fought in the forest of Ephraim. [7]†And the men of Israel were defeated there
by the servants of David, and the loss there was great on that day, twenty
thousand men. [8]†The battle spread over the face of all the country, and the
forest devoured more people that day than the sword.

[9]†And Absalom happened to meet the servants of David. Absalom was
riding on his mule, and the mule went under the thick branches of a great
oak,[3] and his head caught fast in the oak, and he was suspended between
heaven and earth, while the mule that was under him went on. [10]†And a
certain man saw it and told Joab, "Behold, I saw Absalom hanging in an
oak." [11]Joab said to the man who told him, "What, you saw him! Why then
did you not strike him there to the ground? I would have been glad to give
you ten pieces of silver and a belt." [12]But the man said to Joab, "Even if I
felt in my hand the weight of a thousand pieces of silver, I would not reach
out my hand against the king's son, for in our hearing the king commanded
you and Abishai and Ittai, 'For my sake protect the young man Absalom.'
[13]On the other hand, if I had dealt treacherously against his life[1] (and there
is nothing hidden from the king), then you yourself would have stood

aloof.” 14Joab said, “I will not waste time like this with you.” And he took
three javelins in his hand and thrust them into the heart of Absalom while
he was still alive in the oak. 15 † And ten young men, Joab’s armor-bearers,
surrounded Absalom and struck him and killed him.

16 † Then Joab blew the trumpet, and the troops came back from pursuing
Israel, for Joab restrained them. 17 † And they took Absalom and threw him
into a great pit in the forest and raised over him a very great heap of stones.
And all Israel fled every one to his own home. 18 † Now Absalom in his
lifetime had taken and set up for himself the pillar that is in the King’s
Valley, for he said, “I have no son to keep my name in remembrance.” He
called the pillar after his own name, and it is called Absalom’s monument[2]
to this day.

David Hears of Absalom's Death

19 † Then Ahimaaz the son of Zadok said, "Let me run and carry news to
the king that the LORD has delivered him from the hand of his enemies."
20 † And Joab said to him, "You are not to carry news today. You may carry
news another day, but today you shall carry no news, because the king's son
is dead." 21 † Then Joab said to the Cushite, "Go, tell the king what you have
seen." The Cushite bowed before Joab, and ran. 22 Then Ahimaaz the son of
Zadok said again to Joab, "Come what may, let me also run after the
Cushite." And Joab said, "Why will you run, my son, seeing that you will
have no reward for the news?" 23 † "Come what may," he said, "I will run."
So he said to him, "Run." Then Ahimaaz ran by the way of the plain, and
outran the Cushite.

24 † Now David was sitting between the two gates, and the watchman went
up to the roof of the gate by the wall, and when he lifted up his eyes and
looked, he saw a man running alone. 25 † The watchman called out and told
the king. And the king said, "If he is alone, there is news in his mouth." And
he drew nearer and nearer. 26 The watchman saw another man running. And
the watchman called to the gate and said, "See, another man running
alone!" The king said, "He also brings news." 27 The watchman said, "I think
the running of the first is like the running of Ahimaaz the son of Zadok."
And the king said, "He is a good man and comes with good news."

28 † Then Ahimaaz cried out to the king, "All is well." And he bowed
before the king with his face to the earth and said, "Blessed be the LORD
your God, who has delivered up the men who raised their hand against my
lord the king." 29 † And the king said, "Is it well with the young man
Absalom?" Ahimaaz answered, "When Joab sent the king's servant, your
servant, I saw a great commotion, but I do not know what it was." 30 And the
king said, "Turn aside and stand here." So he turned aside and stood still.

David’s Grief

31 And behold, the Cushite came, and the Cushite said, “Good news for
my lord the king! For the Lord has delivered you this day from the hand of
all who rose up against you.” 32 The king said to the Cushite, “Is it well with
the young man Absalom?” And the Cushite answered, “May the enemies of
my lord the king and all who rise up against you for evil be like that young
man.” 33 [1] And the king was deeply moved and went up to the chamber
over the gate and wept. And as he went, he said, “O my son Absalom, my
son, my son Absalom! Would I had died instead of you, O Absalom, my
son, my son!”

Joab Rebukes David

19 [1]†It was told Joab, “Behold, the king is weeping and mourning for
Absalom.” [2]So the victory that day was turned into mourning for all the
people, for the people heard that day, “The king is grieving for his son.”
[3]† And the people stole into the city that day as people steal in who are
ashamed when they flee in battle. [4]†The king covered his face, and the king
cried with a loud voice, “O my son Absalom, O Absalom, my son, my son!”
[5]Then Joab came into the house to the king and said, “You have today
covered with shame the faces of all your servants, who have this day saved
your life and the lives of your sons and your daughters and the lives of your
wives and your concubines, [6]† because you love those who hate you and
hate those who love you. For you have made it clear today that commanders
and servants are nothing to you, for today I know that if Absalom were alive
and all of us were dead today, then you would be pleased. [7]†Now therefore
arise, go out and speak kindly to your servants, for I swear by the Lord, if
you do not go, not a man will stay with you this night, and this will be
worse for you than all the evil that has come upon you from your youth
until now.” [8]† Then the king arose and took his seat in the gate. And the
people were all told, “Behold, the king is sitting in the gate.” And all the
people came before the king.

David Returns to Jerusalem

Now Israel had fled every man to his own home. 9 †And all the people were arguing throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, “The king delivered us from the hand of our enemies and saved us from the hand of the Philistines, and now he has fled out of the land from Absalom. 10 †But Absalom, whom we anointed over us, is dead in battle. Now therefore why do you say nothing about bringing the king back?”

11 †And King David sent this message to Zadok and Abiathar the priests: “Say to the elders of Judah, ‘Why should you be the last to bring the king back to his house, when the word of all Israel has come to the king?[2] 12 You are my brothers; you are my bone and my flesh. Why then should you be the last to bring back the king?’ 13 †And say to Amasa, ‘Are you not my bone and my flesh? God do so to me and more also, if you are not commander of my army from now on in place of Joab.’” 14 †And he swayed the heart of all the men of Judah as one man, so that they sent word to the king, “Return, both you and all your servants.” 15 †So the king came back to the Jordan, and Judah came to Gilgal to meet the king and to bring the king over the Jordan.

David Pardons His Enemies

16 ‡ ‡ † And Shimei the son of Gera, the Benjaminite, from Bahurim,
hurried to come down with the men of Judah to meet King David. 17 And
with him were a thousand men from Benjamin. And Ziba the servant of the
house of Saul, with his fifteen sons and his twenty servants, rushed down to
the Jordan before the king, 18 and they crossed the ford to bring over the
king's household and to do his pleasure. And Shimei the son of Gera fell
down before the king, as he was about to cross the Jordan, 19 and said to the
king, "Let not my lord hold me guilty or remember how your servant did
wrong on the day my lord the king left Jerusalem. Do not let the king take it
to heart. 20 † For your servant knows that I have sinned. Therefore, behold, I
have come this day, the first of all the house of Joseph to come down to
meet my lord the king." 21 † Abishai the son of Zeruiah answered, "Shall not
Shimei be put to death for this, because he cursed the LORD's anointed?"
22 † But David said, "What have I to do with you, you sons of Zeruiah, that
you should this day be as an adversary to me? Shall anyone be put to death
in Israel this day? For do I not know that I am this day king over Israel?"
23 † And the king said to Shimei, "You shall not die." And the king gave him
his oath.

24 † And Mephibosheth the son of Saul came down to meet the king. He
had neither taken care of his feet nor trimmed his beard nor washed his
clothes, from the day the king departed until the day he came back in safety.
25 And when he came to Jerusalem to meet the king, the king said to him,
"Why did you not go with me, Mephibosheth?" 26 † He answered, "My lord,
O king, my servant deceived me, for your servant said to him, 'I will saddle
a donkey for myself,[1] that I may ride on it and go with the king.' For your
servant is lame. 27 † He has slandered your servant to my lord the king. But
my lord the king is like the angel of God; do therefore what seems good to
you. 28 † For all my father's house were but men doomed to death before my
lord the king, but you set your servant among those who eat at your table.
What further right have I, then, to cry to the king?" 29 † And the king said to
him, "Why speak any more of your affairs? I have decided: you and Ziba

shall divide the land.” [30]And Mephibosheth said to the king, “Oh, let him take it all, since my lord the king has come safely home.”

[31]†Now Barzillai the Gileadite had come down from Rogelim, and he went on with the king to the Jordan, to escort him over the Jordan. [32]†Barzillai was a very aged man, eighty years old. He had provided the king with food while he stayed at Mahanaim, for he was a very wealthy man. [33]†And the king said to Barzillai, “Come over with me, and I will provide for you with me in Jerusalem.” [34]But Barzillai said to the king, “How many years have I still to live, that I should go up with the king to Jerusalem? [35]†I am this day eighty years old. Can I discern what is pleasant and what is not? Can your servant taste what he eats or what he drinks? Can I still listen to the voice of singing men and singing women? Why then should your servant be an added burden to my lord the king? [36]Your servant will go a little way over the Jordan with the king. Why should the king repay me with such a reward? [37]†Please let your servant return, that I may die in my own city near the grave of my father and my mother. But here is your servant Chimham. Let him go over with my lord the king, and do for him whatever seems good to you.” [38]And the king answered, “Chimham shall go over with me, and I will do for him whatever seems good to you, and all that you desire of me I will do for you.” [39]†Then all the people went over the Jordan, and the king went over. And the king kissed Barzillai and blessed him, and he returned to his own home. [40]†The king went on to Gilgal, and Chimham went on with him. All the people of Judah, and also half the people of Israel, brought the king on his way.

[41]Then all the men of Israel came to the king and said to the king, “Why have our brothers the men of Judah stolen you away and brought the king and his household over the Jordan, and all David’s men with him?” [42]†All the men of Judah answered the men of Israel, “Because the king is our close relative. Why then are you angry over this matter? Have we eaten at all at the king’s expense? Or has he given us any gift?” [43]†And the men of Israel answered the men of Judah, “We have ten shares in the king, and in David also we have more than you. Why then did you despise us? Were we not the first to speak of bringing back our king?” But the words of the men of Judah were fiercer than the words of the men of Israel.

The Rebellion of Sheba

20 [1]†Now there happened to be there a worthless man, whose name
was Sheba, the son of Bichri, a Benjaminite. And he blew the trumpet and
said,

" We have no portion in David,
and we have no inheritance in the son of
Jesse;
every man to his tents, O Israel!"

[2]So all the men of Israel withdrew from David and followed Sheba the son
of Bichri. But the men of Judah followed their king steadfastly from the
Jordan to Jerusalem.

[3]†And David came to his house at Jerusalem. And the king took the ten
concubines whom he had left to care for the house and put them in a house
under guard and provided for them, but did not go in to them. So they were
shut up until the day of their death, living as if in widowhood.

[4]†Then the king said to Amasa, "Call the men of Judah together to me
within three days, and be here yourself." [5]So Amasa went to summon Judah,
but he delayed beyond the set time that had been appointed him. [6]†And
David said to Abishai, "Now Sheba the son of Bichri will do us more harm
than Absalom. Take your lord's servants and pursue him, lest he get himself
to fortified cities and escape from us."[1] [7]†And there went out after him
Joab's men and the Cherethites and the Pelethites, and all the mighty men.
They went out from Jerusalem to pursue Sheba the son of Bichri. [8]†When
they were at the great stone that is in Gibeon, Amasa came to meet them.
Now Joab was wearing a soldier's garment, and over it was a belt with a
sword in its sheath fastened on his thigh, and as he went forward it fell out.
[9]†And Joab said to Amasa, "Is it well with you, my brother?" And Joab took
Amasa by the beard with his right hand to kiss him. [10]†But Amasa did not
observe the sword that was in Joab's hand. So Joab struck him with it in the
stomach and spilled his entrails to the ground without striking a second
blow, and he died.

Then Joab and Abishai his brother pursued Sheba the son of Bichri.
11 † And one of Joab's young men took his stand by Amasa and said,
"Whoever favors Joab, and whoever is for David, let him follow Joab."
12 And Amasa lay wallowing in his blood in the highway. And anyone who
came by, seeing him, stopped. And when the man saw that all the people
stopped, he carried Amasa out of the highway into the field and threw a
garment over him. 13 † When he was taken out of the highway, all the people
went on after Joab to pursue Sheba the son of Bichri.
14 † And Sheba passed through all the tribes of Israel to Abel of Beth-
maacah,[2] and all the Bichrites[3] assembled and followed him in. 15 † And all
the men who were with Joab came and besieged him in Abel of Beth-
maacah. They cast up a mound against the city, and it stood against the
rampart, and they were battering the wall to throw it down. 16 Then a wise
woman called from the city, "Listen! Listen! Tell Joab, 'Come here, that I
may speak to you.'" 17 And he came near her, and the woman said, "Are you
Joab?" He answered, "I am." Then she said to him, "Listen to the words of
your servant." And he answered, "I am listening." 18 † Then she said, "They
used to say in former times, 'Let them but ask counsel at Abel,' and so they
settled a matter. 19 † I am one of those who are peaceable and faithful in
Israel. You seek to destroy a city that is a mother in Israel. Why will you
swallow up the heritage of the LORD?" 20 Joab answered, "Far be it from me,
far be it, that I should swallow up or destroy! 21 † That is not true. But a man
of the hill country of Ephraim, called Sheba the son of Bichri, has lifted up
his hand against King David. Give up him alone, and I will withdraw from
the city." And the woman said to Joab, "Behold, his head shall be thrown to
you over the wall." 22 Then the woman went to all the people in her wisdom.
And they cut off the head of Sheba the son of Bichri and threw it out to
Joab. So he blew the trumpet, and they dispersed from the city, every man
to his home. And Joab returned to Jerusalem to the king.
23 † Now Joab was in command of all the army of Israel; and Benaiah the
son of Jehoiada was in command of the Cherethites and the Pelethites;
24 † and Adoram was in charge of the forced labor; and Jehoshaphat the son
of Ahilud was the recorder; 25 † and Sheva was secretary; and Zadok and
Abiathar were priests; 26 † and Ira the Jairite was also David's priest.

David Avenges the Gibeonites

21 [1]Now there was a famine in the days of David for three years,
year after year. And David sought the face of the Lord. And the Lord said,
"There is bloodguilt on Saul and on his house, because he put the
Gibeonites to death." [2]So the king called the Gibeonites and spoke to
them. Now the Gibeonites were not of the people of Israel but of the
remnant of the Amorites. Although the people of Israel had sworn to spare
them, Saul had sought to strike them down in his zeal for the people of
Israel and Judah. [3]And David said to the Gibeonites, "What shall I do for
you? And how shall I make atonement, that you may bless the heritage of
the Lord?" [4]The Gibeonites said to him, "It is not a matter of silver or gold
between us and Saul or his house; neither is it for us to put any man to death
in Israel." And he said, "What do you say that I shall do for you?" [5]They
said to the king, "The man who consumed us and planned to destroy us, so
that we should have no place in all the territory of Israel, [6]let seven of his
sons be given to us, so that we may hang them before the Lord at Gibeah of
Saul, the chosen of the Lord." And the king said, "I will give them."

[7]But the king spared Mephibosheth, the son of Saul's son Jonathan,
because of the oath of the Lord that was between them, between David and
Jonathan the son of Saul. [8]The king took the two sons of Rizpah the
daughter of Aiah, whom she bore to Saul, Armoni and Mephibosheth; and
the five sons of Merab[1] the daughter of Saul, whom she bore to Adriel the
son of Barzillai the Meholathite; [9]and he gave them into the hands of the
Gibeonites, and they hanged them on the mountain before the Lord, and the
seven of them perished together. They were put to death in the first days of
harvest, at the beginning of barley harvest.

[10]Then Rizpah the daughter of Aiah took sackcloth and spread it for
herself on the rock, from the beginning of harvest until rain fell upon them
from the heavens. And she did not allow the birds of the air to come upon
them by day, or the beasts of the field by night. [11]When David was told
what Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, the concubine of Saul, had done, [12]David
went and took the bones of Saul and the bones of his son Jonathan from the
men of Jabesh-gilead, who had stolen them from the public square of Beth-

shan, where the Philistines had hanged them, on the day the Philistines killed Saul on Gilboa. 13And he brought up from there the bones of Saul and the bones of his son Jonathan; and they gathered the bones of those who were hanged. 14†And they buried the bones of Saul and his son Jonathan in the land of Benjamin in Zela, in the tomb of Kish his father. And they did all that the king commanded. And after that God responded to the plea for the land.

War with the Philistines

15 ‡ † There was war again between the Philistines and Israel, and David
went down together with his servants, and they fought against the
Philistines. And David grew weary. 16 † And Ishbi-benob, one of the
descendants of the giants, whose spear weighed three hundred shekels[1] of
bronze, and who was armed with a new sword, thought to kill David. 17 † But
Abishai the son of Zeruiah came to his aid and attacked the Philistine and
killed him. Then David's men swore to him, "You shall no longer go out
with us to battle, lest you quench the lamp of Israel."

18 † After this there was again war with the Philistines at Gob. Then
Sibbecai the Hushathite struck down Saph, who was one of the descendants
of the giants. 19 † And there was again war with the Philistines at Gob, and
Elhanan the son of Jaare-oregim, the Bethlehemite, struck down Goliath the
Gittite, the shaft of whose spear was like a weaver's beam.[2] 20 † And there
was again war at Gath, where there was a man of great stature, who had six
fingers on each hand, and six toes on each foot, twenty-four in number, and
he also was descended from the giants. 21 And when he taunted Israel,
Jonathan the son of Shimei, David's brother, struck him down. 22 These four
were descended from the giants in Gath, and they fell by the hand of David
and by the hand of his servants.

David's Song of Deliverance

22 [1]And David spoke to the Lord the words of this song on the day
when the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the
hand of Saul. [2]†He said,

" The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my
deliverer,
[3] my[3] God, my rock, in whom I take refuge,
my shield, and the horn of my salvation,
my stronghold and my refuge,
my savior; you save me from violence.
[4] I call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be
praised,
and I am saved from my enemies.

[5]†† " For the waves of death encompassed me,
the torrents of destruction assailed me;[4]
[6]† the cords of Sheol entangled me;
the snares of death confronted me.

[7]† " In my distress I called upon the Lord;
to my God I called.
From his temple he heard my voice,
and my cry came to his ears.

[8]† " Then the earth reeled and rocked;
the foundations of the heavens trembled
and quaked, because he was angry.
[9]† Smoke went up from his nostrils,[5]
and devouring fire from his mouth;
glowing coals flamed forth from him.

10 He bowed the heavens and came down;
thick darkness was under his feet.
11 He rode on a cherub and flew;
he was seen on the wings of the wind.
12 He made darkness around him his canopy,
thick clouds, a gathering of water.
13 Out of the brightness before him
coals of fire flamed forth.
14 The Lord thundered from heaven,
and the Most High uttered his voice.
15 And he sent out arrows and scattered them;
lightning, and routed them.
16 Then the channels of the sea were seen;
the foundations of the world were laid bare,
at the rebuke of the Lord,
at the blast of the breath of his nostrils.

17 "He sent from on high, he took me;
he drew me out of many waters.
18 He rescued me from my strong enemy,
from those who hated me,
for they were too mighty for me.
19 They confronted me in the day of my calamity,
but the Lord was my support.
20 He brought me out into a broad place;
he rescued me, because he delighted in me.

21 "The Lord dealt with me according to my
righteousness;
according to the cleanness of my hands he
rewarded me.
22 For I have kept the ways of the Lord
and have not wickedly departed from my
God.

23 For all his rules were before me,
and from his statutes I did not turn aside.
24 I was blameless before him,
and I kept myself from guilt.
25 And the Lord has rewarded me according to
my righteousness,
according to my cleanness in his sight.
26“ With the merciful you show yourself
merciful;
with the blameless man you show yourself
blameless;
27 with the purified you deal purely,
and with the crooked you make yourself
seem tortuous.
28 You save a humble people,
but your eyes are on the haughty to bring
them down.
29† For you are my lamp, O Lord,
and my God lightens my darkness.
30 For by you I can run against a troop,
and by my God I can leap over a wall.
31 This God—his way is perfect;
the word of the Lord proves true;
he is a shield for all those who take refuge
in him.

32†“ For who is God, but the Lord?
And who is a rock, except our God?
33† This God is my strong refuge
and has made my[1] way blameless.[2]
34 He made my feet like the feet of a deer
and set me secure on the heights.
35 He trains my hands for war,
so that my arms can bend a bow of bronze.
36 You have given me the shield of your

salvation,
and your gentleness made me great.
37† You gave a wide place for my steps under me,
and my feet[3] did not slip;
38 I pursued my enemies and destroyed them,
and did not turn back until they were
consumed.
39 I consumed them; I thrust them through, so
that they did not rise;
they fell under my feet.

40 For you equipped me with strength for the
battle;
you made those who rise against me sink
under me.
41 You made my enemies turn their backs to
me,[1]
those who hated me, and I destroyed them.
42† They looked, but there was none to save;
they cried to the Lord, but he did not
answer them.
43† I beat them fine as the dust of the earth;
I crushed them and stamped them down
like the mire of the streets.

44“ You delivered me from strife with my people;[2]
you kept me as the head of the nations;
people whom I had not known served me.
45 Foreigners came cringing to me;
as soon as they heard of me, they obeyed me.
46 Foreigners lost heart
and came trembling[3] out of their fortresses.
47“ The Lord lives, and blessed be my rock,
and exalted be my God, the rock of my

salvation,
48 the God who gave me vengeance
and brought down peoples under me,
49 who brought me out from my enemies;
you exalted me above those who rose
against me;
you delivered me from men of violence.
50 For this I will praise you, O Lord, among the
nations,
and sing praises to your name.
51 † Great salvation he brings[4] to his king,
and shows steadfast love to his anointed,
to David and his offspring forever.”

The Last Words of David

23 [1]†††Now these are the last words of David:

The oracle of David, the son of Jesse,
the oracle of the man who was raised on high,
the anointed of the God of Jacob,
the sweet psalmist of Israel:[5]

[2]† "The Spirit of the LORD speaks by me;
his word is on my tongue.
[3]† The God of Israel has spoken;
the Rock of Israel has said to me:
When one rules justly over men,
ruling in the fear of God,
[4]† he dawns on them like the morning light,
like the sun shining forth on a cloudless morning,
like rain[6] that makes grass to sprout from the earth.

[5]† "For does not my house stand so with God?
For he has made with me an everlasting covenant,
ordered in all things and secure.
For will he not cause to prosper
all my help and my desire?
[6]† But worthless men[1] are all like thorns that are thrown away,
for they cannot be taken with the hand;
[7] but the man who touches them
arms himself with iron and the shaft of a

spear,
and they are utterly consumed with fire.”[2]

David’s Mighty Men

8 These are the names of the mighty men whom David had: Josheb-
basshebeth a Tahchemonite; he was chief of the three.[3] He wielded his
spear[4] against eight hundred whom he killed at one time.
9 And next to him among the three mighty men was Eleazar the son of
Dodo, son of Ahohi. He was with David when they defied the Philistines
who were gathered there for battle, and the men of Israel withdrew. 10He
rose and struck down the Philistines until his hand was weary, and his hand
clung to the sword. And the Lord brought about a great victory that day, and
the men returned after him only to strip the slain.
11And next to him was Shammah, the son of Agee the Hararite. The
Philistines gathered together at Lehi, where there was a plot of ground full
of lentils, and the men fled from the Philistines. 12But he took his stand in
the midst of the plot and defended it and struck down the Philistines, and
the Lord worked a great victory.
13And three of the thirty chief men went down and came about harvest
time to David at the cave of Adullam, when a band of Philistines was
encamped in the Valley of Rephaim. 14David was then in the stronghold,
and the garrison of the Philistines was then at Bethlehem. 15And David said
longingly, “Oh, that someone would give me water to drink from the well of
Bethlehem that is by the gate!” 16Then the three mighty men broke through
the camp of the Philistines and drew water out of the well of Bethlehem that
was by the gate and carried and brought it to David. But he would not drink
of it. He poured it out to the Lord 17and said, “Far be it from me, O Lord,
that I should do this. Shall I drink the blood of the men who went at the risk
of their lives?” Therefore he would not drink it. These things the three
mighty men did.
18Now Abishai, the brother of Joab, the son of Zeruiah, was chief of the
thirty.[5] And he wielded his spear against three hundred men[6] and killed
them and won a name beside the three. 19He was the most renowned of the
thirty[7] and became their commander, but he did not attain to the three.
20And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was a valiant man[8] of Kabzeel, a
doer of great deeds. He struck down two ariels[9] of Moab. He also went

down and struck down a lion in a pit on a day when snow had fallen. [21]And he struck down an Egyptian, a handsome man. The Egyptian had a spear in his hand, but Benaiah went down to him with a staff and snatched the spear out of the Egyptian's hand and killed him with his own spear. [22]These things did Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and won a name beside the three mighty men. [23]He was renowned among the thirty, but he did not attain to the three. And David set him over his bodyguard.

[24]†Asahel the brother of Joab was one of the thirty; Elhanan the son of Dodo of Bethlehem, [25]†Shammah of Harod, Elika of Harod, [26]Helez the Paltite, Ira the son of Ikkesh of Tekoa, [27]†Abiezer of Anathoth, Mebunnai the Hushathite, [28]†Zalmon the Ahohite, Maharai of Netophah, [29]†Heleb the son of Baanah of Netophah, Ittai the son of Ribai of Gibeah of the people of Benjamin, [30]†Benaiah of Pirathon, Hiddai of the brooks of Gaash, [31]†Abi-albon the Arbathite, Azmaveth of Bahurim, [32]†Eliahba the Shaalbonite, the sons of Jashen, Jonathan, [33]†Shammah the Hararite, Ahiam the son of Sharar the Hararite, [34]†Eliphelet the son of Ahasbai of Maacah, Eliam the son of Ahithophel of Gilo, [35]†Hezro[1] of Carmel, Paarai the Arbite, [36]Igal the son of Nathan of Zobah, Bani the Gadite, [37]†Zelek the Ammonite, Naharai of Beeroth, the armor-bearer of Joab the son of Zeruiah, [38]†Ira the Ithrite, Gareb the Ithrite, [39]†Uriah the Hittite: thirty-seven in all.

David's Census

24 [1]†Again the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he
incited David against them, saying, "Go, number Israel and Judah." [2]†So
the king said to Joab, the commander of the army,[2] who was with him, "Go
through all the tribes of Israel, from Dan to Beersheba, and number the
people, that I may know the number of the people." [3]†But Joab said to the
king, "May the Lord your God add to the people a hundred times as many
as they are, while the eyes of my lord the king still see it, but why does my
lord the king delight in this thing?" [4]But the king's word prevailed against
Joab and the commanders of the army. So Joab and the commanders of the
army went out from the presence of the king to number the people of Israel.
[5]†They crossed the Jordan and began from Aroer,[3] and from the city that is
in the middle of the valley, toward Gad and on to Jazer. [6]†Then they came
to Gilead, and to Kadesh in the land of the Hittites;[4] and they came to Dan,
and from Dan[5] they went around to Sidon, [7]†and came to the fortress of
Tyre and to all the cities of the Hivites and Canaanites; and they went out to
the Negeb of Judah at Beersheba. [8]So when they had gone through all the
land, they came to Jerusalem at the end of nine months and twenty days.
[9]†And Joab gave the sum of the numbering of the people to the king: in
Israel there were 800,000 valiant men who drew the sword, and the men of
Judah were 500,000.

The Lord's Judgment of David's Sin

10 But David's heart struck him after he had numbered the people. And
David said to the Lord, "I have sinned greatly in what I have done. But now,
O Lord, please take away the iniquity of your servant, for I have done very
foolishly." 11 And when David arose in the morning, the word of the Lord
came to the prophet Gad, David's seer, saying, 12 "Go and say to David,
'Thus says the Lord, Three things I offer[6] you. Choose one of them, that I
may do it to you.'" 13 † So Gad came to David and told him, and said to him,
"Shall three[7] years of famine come to you in your land? Or will you flee
three months before your foes while they pursue you? Or shall there be
three days' pestilence in your land? Now consider, and decide what answer
I shall return to him who sent me." 14 Then David said to Gad, "I am in great
distress. Let us fall into the hand of the Lord, for his mercy is great; but let
me not fall into the hand of man."

15 † So the Lord sent a pestilence on Israel from the morning until the
appointed time. And there died of the people from Dan to Beersheba 70,000
men. 16 † And when the angel stretched out his hand toward Jerusalem to
destroy it, the Lord relented from the calamity and said to the angel who
was working destruction among the people, "It is enough; now stay your
hand." And the angel of the Lord was by the threshing floor of Araunah the
Jebusite. 17 † Then David spoke to the Lord when he saw the angel who was
striking the people, and said, "Behold, I have sinned, and I have done
wickedly. But these sheep, what have they done? Please let your hand be
against me and against my father's house."

David Builds an Altar

18 † And Gad came that day to David and said to him, “Go up, raise an
altar to the Lord on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite.” 19 So David
went up at Gad’s word, as the Lord commanded. 20 † And when Araunah
looked down, he saw the king and his servants coming on toward him. And
Araunah went out and paid homage to the king with his face to the ground.
21 And Araunah said, “Why has my lord the king come to his servant?”
David said, “To buy the threshing floor from you, in order to build an altar
to the Lord, that the plague may be averted from the people.” 22 Then
Araunah said to David, “Let my lord the king take and offer up what seems
good to him. Here are the oxen for the burnt offering and the threshing
sledges and the yokes of the oxen for the wood. 23 All this, O king, Araunah
gives to the king.” And Araunah said to the king, “May the Lord your God
accept you.” 24 † But the king said to Araunah, “No, but I will buy it from
you for a price. I will not offer burnt offerings to the Lord my God that cost
me nothing.” So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen for fifty
shekels[1] of silver. 25 † And David built there an altar to the Lord and offered
burnt offerings and peace offerings. So the Lord responded to the plea for
the land, and the plague was averted from Israel.

2 Samuel

Originally, 1 and 2 Samuel were one long document, as the flow of the story itself shows (see outline, pp 433–34). The document was divided into two books at a later date, perhaps when it was translated for the LXX. For an introduction to the entire document, see pp 431–34.

For more of Luther's insights on this Book, see *Treatise on the Last Words of David* (AE 15:265–352).

Articles and Resources Related to 2 Samuel

- The Lord's Dwelling Place and Throne

The Lord's Dwelling Place and Throne

The mysterious character of the tabernacle and the ark of the covenant is, in part, due to frequent references to their movement and uses in Israel's history. They appear in holy processions, on battlefields, in quiet villages, and on the controversial "high places" that Canaanites and unfaithful Israelites used for worshiping false gods (see pp 526–27).

The changing setting for these sacred vessels was due to their service as physical markers of God's presence with Israel and His approval. For example, passages describe the ark as God's throne, from which He reigned over His kingdom of priests (1Sm 4:4). The tabernacle is described as God's dwelling, before which Israelites were to offer all their sacrifices and around which they gathered for three annual sacred feasts (Ex 25–40). Rather than emphasizing His universal rule by the tabernacle and ark, the Lord commissioned these vessels to teach Israel unity, that He was distinguishing them from other people. He had separated them from the beliefs and forms of worship practiced by the nations to see that there was one God worshiped at one altar (Lv 17:5).

Failure to respect these markers of God's presence brought physical and spiritual dangers. For example, misuse of the ark brought illness (1Sm 5) and even death (2Sm 6:6–7). Only the priests and Levites were to enter and attend to the tabernacle. Respect for the ark of the covenant brought blessing (2Sm 6:12).

The respect God demanded for these sacred vessels stands in marked contrast to the loss of all sense of holiness that plagues modern culture. Today, sacred art, buildings, and books are often treated no differently from daily objects. As you read about the tabernacle and the ark, consider the markers of God's presence in your church, in your home, and perhaps even in your community. Considered respectfully, these witnesses of God's Law and Gospel speak to your daily need for devotion to the one true God.

Dates: **c 1400 BC**

The Tabernacle/Temple: Shiloh possibly site of tabernacle and the ark (Jsh 18:1) for c 340 years

The Tabernacle/Temple: Tabernacle and ark likely moved to Bethel (Jgs 20:18, 26–28)

The Tabernacle/Temple: Tabernacle and ark likely returned to Shiloh (Jgs 21:12, 21)
Dates: **1060 BC**
The Tabernacle/Temple: Shiloh site of tabernacle (1Sm 1:24; 4:4)
The Ark of the Covenant: Ark carried to Ebenezer by the sons of Eli (1Sm 4:1, 4)
Dates: **1060 BC**
The Tabernacle/Temple: Philistines likely destroy tabernacle at Shiloh (cf Ps 78:60–66; Jer 7:14); likely rebuilt later
The Ark of the Covenant: Philistines remove ark to Ashdod (1Sm 5:1)
The Ark of the Covenant: Philistines move ark to Gath and Ekron; in total, the Philistines held the ark for 7 months (1Sm 5:8, 10; 6:1)
The Ark of the Covenant: Israelites receive ark at Beth-shemesh (1Sm 6:15)
The Ark of the Covenant: Israelites move ark to Kiriath-jearim (1Sm 7:1–2)
The Tabernacle/Temple: Nob, a priestly city, likely site of tabernacle (cf 1Sm 21:1–9; 22:19)
The Ark of the Covenant: Ark at house of Obed-edom (2Sm 6:10; 1Ch 13:13–14)
Dates: **After 1002 BC**
The Ark of the Covenant: David moves ark to Jerusalem (city of David, i.e., Zion), where it may have been placed on his property, near or in his house (2Sm 6:17)
The Tabernacle/Temple: Gibeon site of tabernacle, overseen by Zadok (1Ki 1:39; 1Ch 16:39)
The Ark of the Covenant: Jerusalem site of ark, overseen by Asaph (1Ch 16:37–38)
The Ark of the Covenant: Abiathar and Zadok take the ark across the brook Kidron to meet David (2Sm 15:23–24)
The Ark of the Covenant: David sends Abiathar and Zadok back to Jerusalem with the ark (2Sm 15:29)
Dates: **960 BC**
The Tabernacle/Temple: Jerusalem, site of ark and elements of the tabernacle, brought together again by Solomon for use in the temple; ark seems to have remained at the temple for c 260 years (1Ki 8:1; 2Ch 5:2; 8:11)

Dates: **927 BC**
The Tabernacle/Temple: Pharaoh Shishak invades and takes tribute or plunder away from Jerusalem, including treasures of the temple (1Ki 14:25–26; 2Ch 12:9); ark was not among the items Shishak took (see following entries)
Dates: **696–642 BC**
The Tabernacle/Temple: Temple corrupted during reign of Manasseh (2Ch 33:4–5, 7)
The Ark of the Covenant: Ark likely removed from temple during reign of Manasseh (cf 2Ch 33:4–5, 7)
Dates: **c 640 BC**
The Tabernacle/Temple: Temple cleansed by Josiah's reforms (2Ch 34:3–7); ark relocated at temple by Josiah (2Ch 35:3); through Jeremiah, the Lord prophesies the destruction of the ark (Jer 3:16)
Dates: **597 BC**
The Tabernacle/Temple: Nebuchadnezzar moves vessels of the temple to Babylon (2Ch 36:7, 18); ark of the covenant is not specifically listed in this movement and may have been destroyed at this time
Dates: **537 BC**
The Tabernacle/Temple: Sacrifices begin again at temple site (Ezr 3:3–6)
The Ark of the Covenant: Vessels of the tabernacle were returned to Jerusalem by Cyrus's decree (Ezr 5:13–15)
Dates: **516 BC**
The Tabernacle/Temple: Second temple finished (Ezr 6:15)
Dates: **c 20–19 BC**
The Tabernacle/Temple: Herod's temple begun
Dates: **AD 70**
The Tabernacle/Temple: Herod's temple destroyed by Roman general Titus
The Ark of the Covenant: Arch of Titus depicts the Romans removing temple articles, which may have included the ark of the covenant; it is lost to history.

Footnotes

Footnotes for 2 Samuel, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:18 Septuagint; Hebrew *the Bow*, which may be the name of the lament's tune
- [2] 1:18 Or *of the upright*
- [1] 1:21 Septuagint *firstfruits*

Footnotes for 2 Samuel, Chapter 2

- [1] 2:16 *Helkath-hazzurim* means *the field of sword-edges*

Footnotes for 2 Samuel, Chapter 3

- [1] 3:12 Or *where he was*; Septuagint *at Hebron*

Footnotes for 2 Samuel, Chapter 4

- [1] 4:6 Septuagint *And behold, the doorkeeper of the house had been cleaning wheat, but she grew drowsy and slept. So Rechab and Baanah his brother slipped in*

Footnotes for 2 Samuel, Chapter 5

- [1] 5:5 Dead Sea Scroll lacks verses 4-5
- [1] 5:20 *Baal-perazim* means *lord of bursting through*

Footnotes for 2 Samuel, Chapter 6

- [2] 6:3 Or *and his brother*; also verse 4
- [3] 6:3 Compare Septuagint; Hebrew *the new cart, and brought it out of the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill*
- [4] 6:5 Septuagint, 1 Chronicles 13:8; Hebrew *fir trees*
- [1] 6:8 *Perez-uzzah* means *the bursting forth upon Uzzah*
- [2] 6:19 Vulgate; the meaning of the Hebrew term is uncertain
- [3] 6:22 Septuagint; Hebrew *my*

Footnotes for 2 Samuel, Chapter 7

- [1] 7:7 Compare 1 Chronicles 17:6; Hebrew *tribes*
- [2] 7:16 Septuagint; Hebrew *you*
- [3] 7:23 With a few Targums, Vulgate, Syriac; Hebrew *you*
- [4] 7:23 Septuagint (compare 1 Chronicles 17:21); Hebrew *for your land*

Footnotes for 2 Samuel, Chapter 8

- [1] 8:18 Compare 20:23, 1 Chronicles 18:17, Syriac, Targum, Vulgate; Hebrew lacks *was over*

Footnotes for 2 Samuel, Chapter 9

- [2] 9:11 Septuagint; Hebrew *my*

Footnotes for 2 Samuel, Chapter 10

- [3] 10:2 Or *kindly*; twice in this verse
- [1] 10:16 Hebrew *the River*

Footnotes for 2 Samuel, Chapter 12

- [1] 12:3 Hebrew *bosom*; also verse 8
- [2] 12:14 Masoretic Text *the enemies of the* LORD; Dead Sea Scroll *the word of the* LORD
- [1] 12:25 *Jedidiah* means *beloved of the* LORD
- [2] 12:30 A *talent* was about 75 pounds or 34 kilograms
- [3] 12:31 Hebrew *pass through*

Footnotes for 2 Samuel, Chapter 13

- [1] 13:12 Or *humiliate*; also verses 14, 22, 32
- [2] 13:16 Compare Septuagint, Vulgate; the meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain
- [3] 13:18 Or *a robe of many colors* (compare Genesis 37:3); also verse 19
- [4] 13:21 Dead Sea Scroll, Septuagint add *But he would not punish his son Amnon, because he loved him, since he was his firstborn*
- [1] 13:34 Septuagint *the Horonaim Road*
- [2] 13:39 Dead Sea Scroll, Septuagint; Hebrew *David*
- [3] 13:39 Compare Vulgate *ceased to go out*

Footnotes for 2 Samuel, Chapter 14

- [1] 14:26 A *shekel* was about 2/5 ounce or 11 grams
- [2] 14:30 Septuagint, Dead Sea Scroll add *So Joab's servants came to him with their clothes torn, and they said to him, "The servants of Absalom have set your field on fire."*

Footnotes for 2 Samuel, Chapter 15

- [3] 15:7 Septuagint, Syriac; Hebrew *forty*
- [4] 15:8 Or *will serve*
- [1] 15:12 Or *sent*
- [2] 15:20 Septuagint; Hebrew lacks *may the LORD show*
- [1] 15:27 Septuagint *The king also said to Zadok the priest, "Look, go back*

Footnotes for 2 Samuel, Chapter 16

- [1] 16:12 Septuagint, Vulgate *will look upon my affliction*
- [2] 16:14 Septuagint; Hebrew lacks *at the Jordan*

Footnotes for 2 Samuel, Chapter 17

- [1] 17:3 Septuagint; Hebrew *back to you. Like the return of the whole is the man whom you seek*
- [2] 17:8 Hebrew *bitter of soul*
- [3] 17:9 Or *And as he falls on them*

- [4] 17:14 Hebrew *commanded*
- [5] 17:20 The meaning of the Hebrew word is uncertain
- [1] 17:25 Compare 1 Chronicles 2:17; Hebrew *Israelite*
- [2] 17:28 Hebrew adds *and parched grain*

Footnotes for 2 Samuel, Chapter 18

- [3] 18:9 Or *terebinth*; also verses 10, 14
- [1] 18:13 Or *at the risk of my life*
- [2] 18:18 Or *Absalom's hand*
- [1] 18:33 Ch 19:1 in Hebrew

Footnotes for 2 Samuel, Chapter 19

- [2] 19:11 Septuagint; Hebrew *to the king, to his house*
- [1] 19:26 Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate *Saddle a donkey for me*

Footnotes for 2 Samuel, Chapter 20

- [1] 20:6 Hebrew *and snatch away our eyes*
- [2] 20:14 Compare 20:15; Hebrew *and Beth-maacah*
- [3] 20:14 Hebrew *Berites*

Footnotes for 2 Samuel, Chapter 21

- [1] 21:8 Two Hebrew manuscripts, Septuagint; most Hebrew manuscripts *Michal*
- [1] 21:16 A *shekel* was about 2/5 ounce or 11 grams
- [2] 21:19 Contrast 1 Chronicles 20:5, which may preserve the original reading

Footnotes for 2 Samuel, Chapter 22

- [3] 22:3 Septuagint (compare Psalm 18:2); Hebrew lacks *my*
- [4] 22:5 Or *terrified me*
- [5] 22:9 Or *in his wrath*
- [1] 22:33 Or *his*; also verse 34
- [2] 22:33 Compare Psalm 18:32; Hebrew *he has blamelessly set my way free*, or *he has made my way spring up blamelessly*
- [3] 22:37 Hebrew *ankles*
- [1] 22:41 Or *You gave me my enemies' necks*
- [2] 22:44 Septuagint *with the peoples*
- [3] 22:46 Compare Psalm 18:45; Hebrew *equipped themselves*
- [4] 22:51 Or *He is a tower of salvation*

Footnotes for 2 Samuel, Chapter 23

- [5] 23:1 Or *the favorite of the songs of Israel*
- [6] 23:4 Hebrew *from rain*
- [1] 23:6 Hebrew *worthlessness*
- [2] 23:7 Hebrew *consumed with fire in the sitting*
- [3] 23:8 Or *of the captains*
- [4] 23:8 1 Chronicles 11:11; the meaning of the Hebrew expression is uncertain
- [5] 23:18 Two Hebrew manuscripts, Syriac; most Hebrew manuscripts *three*

- [6] 23:18 Or *slain ones*
- [7] 23:19 1 Chronicles 11:25; Hebrew *Was he the most renowned of the three?*
- [8] 23:20 Or *the son of Ishhai*
- [9] 23:20 The meaning of the word *ariel* is unknown
- [1] 23:35 Or *Hezrai*

Footnotes for 2 Samuel, Chapter 24

- [2] 24:2 Septuagint *to Joab and the commanders of the army*
- [3] 24:5 Septuagint; Hebrew *encamped in Aroer*
- [4] 24:6 Septuagint; Hebrew *to the land of Tahtim-hodshi*
- [5] 24:6 Septuagint; Hebrew *they came to Dan-jaan and*
- [6] 24:12 Or *hold over*
- [7] 24:13 Compare 1 Chronicles 21:12, Septuagint; Hebrew *seven*
- [1] 24:24 A *shekel* was about 2/5 ounce or 11 grams

Study Notes

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 1:1 *striking down the Amalekites*. Revenge for when they had raided Ziklag and taken David's wives (1Sm 30). See note, Ex 17:8. *Ziklag*. See note, 1Sm 27:6.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 1:2 *clothes torn and dirt on his head*. Symbols of mourning. See note, Jb 1:20. *fell to the ground*. Sign of obedient honor. See note, 14:4.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 1:6 *Mount Gilboa*. See color map 2.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 1:8 *Amalekite*. See note, v 13.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 1:9–10 Cf 1Sm 31:4–5. Saul's armor may have prevented the sword from penetrating deeply, or perhaps the Amalekite plundered the battle site after Saul's death.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 1:10 *sure that he could not live*. Attempt to justify the assisted suicide. *crown*. Kings often went to battle in full royal clothing (cf 1Ki 22:30–32). *armlet*. Royal bracelet worn on the upper arm. *I have brought*. Messenger implies that David is Saul's rightful successor. He may have hoped for a reward.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 1:11 *clothes … tore*. Symbol of David's grief that his enemy Saul had died. See note, Jb 1:20.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 1:12 They not only mourned the death of Saul and Jonathan but also the defeat at Gilboa, which was a national tragedy.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 1:13 David confirmed the man's identity before taking action. *Amalekite*. Resident aliens who owed obedience to King Saul.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 1:14 *anointed?* Hbr *mashiach*. Used also in OT for the promised Messiah. To destroy the Lord's anointed king was to reject the Lord, who had designated him Israel's leader. See note, 1Sm 10:1.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 1:15 The Amalekite was guilty of murder and deserved to die (v 10). David commissioned a soldier to carry out the execution.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 1:16 *Your blood be on your head*. Expression of condemnation. See note, 1Ki 2:31.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 1:1–16 The Amalekite confesses that he had assisted with Saul's suicide and now expects a reward. Instead, he receives capital punishment for killing the Lord's anointed king. God is the author of human life, and He wants innocent human life protected. Yet, He has given

the sword to the government for the punishment of evildoers. Most important, God is the author of eternal life in the Messiah, Jesus, our Savior. • Lord, thank You for good government. Increase my respect for Your gift of human life. Amen.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 1:17 *lamented*. Lit, "chanted this lament."

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 1:18 *it should be taught to the people*. David wanted his lament to become a national song of mourning to pay tribute to Israel's first royal family and to remind the people that the Lord would bless them through the office of king. See note, Pr 1:8 about education in Israel. Despite Saul's weaknesses, the Israelites had firmly united under him against their enemies. *Book of Jashar*. See note, Jsh 10:12–13.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 1:19–27 A funeral dirge.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 1:19 *glory*. Or, "gazelle." Image of a powerful buck, master of the area it inhabits, lying dead in a place that should have provided protection.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 1:20 *Gath … Ashkelon*. See color map 1. *streets*. Likely refers to street bazaars.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 1:21 *mountains … no dew or rain upon you*. Because Saul's blood had been poured out on them. *defiled*. With dirt and blood. *anointed with oil*. To keep Saul's wicker and leather shield from growing brittle. Supple leather better resisted arrows.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 1:22 Saul and Jonathan had many military victories.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 1:23 *beloved and lovely!* Terms of deep affection. Of Saul's sons, David mentions only Jonathan, his trusted confidant and companion.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 1:24 *clothed you*. Saul's victories had created a stable society that allowed the Israelites to prosper. *scarlet … gold*. Most expensive wool cloth, with fine embroidery.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 1:26 *surpassing the love of women*. David loved Jonathan as a brother. See note, 1Sm 18:1.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 1:27 *the weapons of war perished!* Mourning the loss of two great warriors. Cf v 22.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 1:17–27 David sings not only of his love for his friend Jonathan but also of his respect and admiration for King Saul, a man who had forced him to live as a fugitive for more than 12 years. Like David, we should not delight in our enemies' downfall but commend their

families to God in prayer. How mercifully God treats us, even though we by nature were His enemies (Rm 5:10). • I praise You, O God, for Your amazing grace to me and all sinners in Christ Jesus. Amen.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:1 Because Saul had died, David wondered whether he should seek a leadership role among the Israelites. *inquired*. See "seek," p 843; see also note, 1Sm 23:10–13. *Hebron*. See color map 1.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:2 *Jezreel … Carmel*. Located in Judah. See map, p 468.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:3 The large group was probably more than the walled city of Hebron could hold, so they settled in unwalled villages in the area.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:4 *anointed*. Marked as king. See note, 1Sm 10:1. David had been anointed by Samuel (1Sm 16:5–13). At first, David reigned only over the tribe of Judah (cf v 10). As a result, Israel was divided. *Jabesh-gilead*. See color map 1.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:5–7 Early in Saul's reign, he rescued Jabesh-gilead from the Ammonite army. The citizens remembered his aid, and later they rescued the bodies of Saul and his sons from the walls of Beth-shan, burying the remains in their own city. David commended this courageous act. Their burial of Saul mirrored David's own loyalty and respect for Saul and his family. Because David was known as Saul's enemy, his promise to do good to them must also have comforted them.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:6 *steadfast love and faithfulness*. See p 843.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:1–7 David inquires of the Lord, moves to the area of Hebron, and is anointed by the men of Judah as their king. When told that the men of Jabesh-gilead have buried Saul, David blesses them and promises to treat them well. We, too, should inquire of the Lord in His Holy Word and seek reconciliation with our enemies. Through the reconciliation of Christ's cross, God blesses us and shows us His steadfast love and faithfulness. • Lord, in Your Word, show me Your will for my life and Your reconciling love. Amen.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:8 *Mahanaim*. Ish-bosheth's capital city. See color map 1.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:9 *Gilead … Ashurites … Jezreel … Ephraim*. See color map 2. *Benjamin*. Homeland of Ish-bosheth and Abner. See map, p 365. *all Israel*. Except for Judah.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:10–11 Ish-bosheth apparently did not fight in the battle at Mount Gilboa, perhaps in order to assure an heir to the throne in case disaster struck. He was murdered at the end of two years (4:7). David enjoyed a more stable rule, reigning over Judah at Hebron for 7½ years. The writer anticipates Ish-bosheth's downfall. See chronology, p xcii–cix.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:8–11 Abner makes Saul's son Ish-bosheth king over the northern tribes of Israel, while David reigns over Judah. David may want to reign over all Israel right away, but that is not to be. Sometimes, God's promises call for patience. We have inherited the full kingdom of heaven through the innocent sufferings and death of Jesus, our Savior. We wait patiently to possess it. • Heavenly Father, give me patience as You fulfill Your promises in Your time. Amen.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:12 *Mahanaim*. See note, v 8. *Gibeon*. C 6 mi NW of Jerusalem. See map, p 500.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:13 *Joab*. David's nephew and commander of his army. *pool*. Natural place to meet. Archaeologists have found it to be c 36 ft in diameter and nearly as deep, carved from solid rock. Water would have pooled at the bottom of this deep, broad shaft. It was reached by a series of steps.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:14 The standoff at the pool was delayed by Abner's suggestion that there be a competition. *young men*. Nu 1:3 describes military service beginning at age 20, though conflicts may have brought adolescents into service.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:16 *down together*. May mean all 24 men died due to inexperience and zeal.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:17 Rather than preventing further bloodshed, the contest caused a fierce battle from which Ish-bosheth's army retreated.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:18 Three sons of David's sister Zeruiah wanted to eliminate Abner, making it possible for David to become king of all Israel. *gazelle*. See note, 1:19.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:19–23 *Asahel*. David's youngest nephew foolishly believed he could overtake and kill the commander of the enemy forces.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:21–22 Aware of his own superiority in combat, Abner advised Asahel to be content with fighting a soldier of lesser rank. He likely realized that Asahel's death would make the feud worse.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:23 Apparently, Abner stopped quickly and pierced Asahel with a backward thrust of his spear. *stood still*. From amazement.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:24 *Joab and Abishai*. Asahel's brothers continued to pursue Abner. *hill of Ammah … Giah*. Location is difficult to identify. Apparently it was a short distance northwest of Gibeon. See map, p 500.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:25 *hill*. At Ammah, a defensible position.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:26 Abner requests peace, based on tribal kinship. Cf Jgs 21:16–24.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:28 *trumpet*. Hbr *shophar*. See p 993.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:29 Abner's forces withdrew by cover of darkness. *Arabah*. Wilderness of the Great Rift Valley. See color map 2. *Mahanaim*. See note, v 8.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:30 *nineteen*. Loss of c 3 percent, if David's army was still c 600 men (1Sm 27:2).
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:32 *Bethlehem … Hebron*. See color map 1.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 2:12–32 Competition at Gibeon leads to a fierce battle. The Benjaminites are defeated, but David's nephew Asahel is slain by Abner. Sadly, those fighting and killing one another are all members of God's people Israel. May God prevent us from quarreling unnecessarily with fellow Christians, especially those of our own congregation or family. "We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rm 5:1), so let us be "eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph 4:3). • Lord Jesus, grant me peace with all people, especially those who confess the same faith. Amen.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 3:2–5 *Hebron*. See map, p 500. *Ahinoam … Abigail*. From southern Judah. These marriages may have helped secure the support of the people there. *Geshur*. Small Aramean kingdom in Upper Bashan, east of the Jordan. See color map 2. By marrying Maacah, David formed an alliance with a people east of the Jordan and north of Ish-bosheth's capital. See note, 1Ki 3:1–2; see also pp 54–55.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 3:6 *making himself strong*. Taking over rule of the kingdom.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 3:7 Ish-bosheth believed Abner was trying to take over the kingdom. He accused Abner of sleeping with his father's (Saul's)

concubine, a privilege reserved for the king and thus an act of betrayal. See note, 1Ki 2:17. *concubine*. See pp 54–55.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 3:8 Abner protests that he is not on Judah's side. *dog's head of Judah?* Dogs were despised and considered unclean by Israelites (cf Lv 11:27). *steadfast love*. See p 843. *fault concerning a woman*. Abner trivializes his improper behavior.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 3:9–10 Abner vowed to help make David king over all of Israel. *Dan to Beersheba*. See note, Jgs 20:1.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 3:12 *Abner sent messengers*. Sensitive mission; Abner had led campaigns against David for two years and had killed Asahel.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 3:13 *covenant*. See p 6.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 3:14 *Give me my wife Michal*. David asserts his connection to Saul's family and rule. Ish-bosheth's compliance shows that he recognized his own political and military weakness. David considered himself still legally married to Michal because he had never divorced her. *bridal price*. Cf Gn 34:12; Hos 2:19–20.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 3:16 *Bahurim*. Near the border between Benjamin and Judah.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 3:17–18 Perhaps a clever public relations strategy. *Lord has promised*. No such promise concerning David is recorded in 1 and 2Sm. The Lord promised this regarding Saul (1Sm 9:16). Abner's point was that the promises made to Saul now belonged to David.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 3:19 *Benjamin*. Tribal leaders of Benjamin, probably the main supporters of Ish-bosheth.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 3:21 *covenant*. See p 6. *peace*. Hbr *shalom*. See p 7. David approved of Abner's plan.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 3:22 David may have relied on raids for income.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 3:24–25 Joab regards Abner as a spy seeking out David's military plans.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 3:1–25 The relationship between Ish-bosheth and his general, Abner, deteriorates until, finally, Abner aligns himself with David. How easy for us to use dishonest methods as we strive for position and power. Self-interest and self-glory are sins that plague us all. Jesus, on the other hand, selflessly left His throne on high, died to pay for our sins on the cross, rose, and took the Church as His Bride. • Lord Jesus, praise be to Your holy name for Your supreme sacrifice on our behalf. Amen.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 3:26 *cistern of Sirah*. Still in Judah.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 3:27 *into the midst of the gate*. Into the recesses of the fortified city gate. See p 792. *for the blood*. In revenge for the bloodshed Abner had caused. See note, 1Ki 2:31.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 3:28–29 As king, David was obligated to punish evildoers. Later, on his deathbed, David called for his nephew Joab's execution (1Ki 2:5–6). Yet now, for the sake of peace, David lessened the punishment and instead cursed him. See p 6. David tolerated Joab, as a member of his family and perhaps due to his military skills.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 3:29 *spindle*. Lit, "stick" or "crutch."
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 3:30 *Abishai*. Somehow an accessory to the murder, perhaps by leading the delegation that summoned Abner to Hebron.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 3:26–30 Without David's knowledge and in a time of peace, Joab murders Abner to avenge the death of his brother Asahel. King David curses Joab and all his father's house because vengeance rarely settles matters. When wronged, you will naturally experience thoughts of vengeance. Arrest these thoughts by crying out to the Lord in prayer. Entrust your judgment to Him and to the legitimate authorities. The Lord of justice and peace, who sent His Son to bear all injustice for your sake, is your hope in all circumstances. • Grant us grace, merciful God, that we may flee from evil and do what is good, that Your mercy may crown Your goodness in us, for Jesus' sake. Amen.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 3:31 *Tear your clothes … sackcloth*. See note, Jb 1:20. *King David*. First time David is referred to as "king." Tragic events ironically brought the kingdom to David.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 3:32 Abner was given an honorable funeral at David's capital.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 3:33–34 Abner had died at the hands of criminals. The lament begins and ends with this thought.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 3:33 *lamented*. Lit, "chanted a lament." *fool*. See p 1016.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 3:34 *not bound … not fettered*. Abner was a free man.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 3:35 *taste bread*. Fasting is a biblical expression of grief. See note, Lv 16:29.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 3:38 *prince*. Lit, "a leader," esp a military commander, not necessarily the son of a king.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 3:39 *sons of Zeruiah*. Joab and Abishai (see note, 2:18). David contrasts his gentle leadership with their blood vengeance. As king, David has responsibility for punishment of the wicked.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 3:31–39 Although Abner has been his enemy, David leads the mourning at Abner's funeral. Our sinful nature tends to delight in the misfortune of our enemies. How differently God treats us! "While we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son" (Rm 5:10). • Lord, help me always to love my enemies as You have loved me in Your Son, my Savior. Amen.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 4:1 *Hebron*. See map, p 500. *his courage failed*. Lit, "his hands became feeble." *dismayed*. Lit, "trembled inwardly."

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 4:2 *raiding bands*. They probably plundered non-Israelite communities for Ish-bosheth, much as Joab's band had done for David (3:22).

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 4:3 *Gittaim*. Lit, "two winepresses."

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 4:4 Anticipates ch 9. *Jezreel*. Region where Saul and Jonathan died (on Mount Gilboa). *Mephibosheth*. Member of Saul's family; sole potential heir to Saul's throne, apart from Ish-bosheth.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 4:7 Explains v 6. *they*. Rechab and Baanah. *Arabah*. See note, 2:29.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 4:8 *The LORD has avenged*. They believed they had God's approval for the murder of Ish-bosheth and hoped David would reward them.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 4:9 *redeemed my life*. David relied not on murderous conspirators but on the Lord. See p 843.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 4:10 *one told me*. Amalekite who claimed to have killed Saul (1:14–16). *Ziklag*. See note, 1Sm 27:6.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 4:11 *a righteous man*. Ish-bosheth had done nothing to deserve death. See p 843.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 4:12 *young men*. See note, 2:14. *hanged them*. To show they had died under a divine curse (Dt 21:22–23). *Hebron*. See map, p 500. *head … buried it*. To show respect.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **Ch 4** Two of Ish-bosheth's soldiers murder him and bring his head to David, hoping to receive a reward. Instead, David sentences them to death, but honors his enemy Ish-bosheth. "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good" (Rm 12:21). Through the Son of David, God has mercy on us, who were once His enemies. • Lord

Jesus, Son of David, give me Your Spirit, that I may love my enemies and do good to those who hate me. Amen.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 5:1 *bone and flesh*. They have the same forefather, Jacob.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 5:2 *You shall be shepherd*. Specific prophecy is not found in the preceding accounts, but it is consistent with other prophecies (cf Nu 27:16–17; 1Sm 13:14; 25:30; Ps 78:71).

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 5:3 *Hebron*. See map, p 500. *covenant*. See p 6. *before the LORD*. They called on God to witness this covenant. See "presence," p 843. *they anointed*. Probably through the high priest, whose duty it was. Cf 2:4; 1Sm 16:13; 1Ch 12:38.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 5:5 *Jerusalem*. More central location for David's new capital. See map, p 500.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 5:6 *Jebusites*. See p 345. See note, Jgs 1:8. *blind … lame*. A taunt meaning anyone could defend their strong position.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 5:7 *Zion*. See p 844. Apparently the Jebusite name for the hill and walled settlement. By taking this city, David fulfilled God's command and promise to drive out the Canaanites (cf Ex 23:23).

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 5:8 *water shaft*. Probably "Warren's Tunnel," a narrow opening cut through the rock to obtain water from the Gihon spring when the city was under siege. *the lame and the blind*. David mocks the Jebusites' boast of v 6.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 5:9 *the stronghold*. Original walled Jebusite city. *the city of David*. The Israelites often named cities after themselves. *Millo*. Lit, "an area that is filled in," i.e., a rampart or citadel.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 5:10 *greater and greater*. David enjoyed increasing political and military success. *God of hosts*. See p 1291. The Lord, with armies of angels at His command, is all-powerful.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 5:11 King Hiram's delegation, workers, and materials show that David's reputation was great. *Tyre*. Important Phoenician seaport. See color map 1.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 5:12 David credited his success to the Lord.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 5:13 *concubines and wives from Jerusalem*. Probably to establish political relations with the Jebusites. See note, 1Ki 3:1–2. Yet, the Lord's command was that Israel's kings were not to "acquire many wives" (Dt 17:17). See pp 54–55.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 5:14–16 *Shammua, Shobab, Nathan, Solomon*. Sons of David and Bathsheba.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 5:1–16 After defeating the Jebusites, David makes Jerusalem his capital over all Israel. The Lord causes this for the sake of His people. When success comes our way, let us not boast and demand recognition. Jesus, the Son of David, humbled Himself unto death, even death on a cross, for the sake of sinful people like us. • Lord, make me humble and give me Your blessings in Christ Jesus. Amen.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 5:17 When David was at Hebron, the Philistines considered him an ally because he was warring against King Saul. Now that he was king over all Israel, they changed their minds. *down to the stronghold*. Probably from the heights of Hebron to Jerusalem.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 5:18 *Valley of Rephaim*. Northwest of Jerusalem. See map, p 500.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 5:19 *inquired*. Likely through the priest. See "seek," p 843. *up against*. The Philistines may have held high ground near the valley. See note, v 20.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 5:20 *Baal-perazim*. Lit, "Lord of the breakthrough," so named because David easily broke through the enemy lines. Located near the Valley of Rephaim. Called Mount Perazim in Is 28:21.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 5:21 *carried them away*. To rid the land of idols (cf Nu 33:52) by burning them (1Ch 14:12).

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 5:24 *sound of marching*. Heavenly hosts on the move. See p 1291.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 5:25 *Geba to Gezer*. C 20 mi.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 5:17–25 The Philistines, disturbed that David is now king over all Israel, attack him twice and are defeated. David inquires of and relies on the Lord for victory. For our plans to have God's blessing, we must call on Him and submit to the judgment of His Word. Yet when we are weak, the Lord Himself will fight for us, especially against sin, death, and the devil. • Lord Jesus, be my King and burst through all enemies that would separate me from You. Amen.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 6:1 *chosen*. Those picked to represent Israel in moving the ark. Cf 1Ch 13:1–4.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 6:2 *Baale-judah*. Lit, "Lords of Judah." C 8 mi from Jerusalem. The Israelites renamed the town Kiriath-jearim, which

means “city of the woods,” to avoid reference to pagan gods. See map, p 365. *ark of God*. Cf Ex 25:10–22. *name*. The ark had the name of God, the Lord’s special presence and revelation. The Lord wanted to be called on and worshiped wherever the ark was located. *cherubim*. Served as God’s throne. See note, Ezk 10:1.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 6:3 *new cart*. Out of reverence for the holy ark of God, they used a cart that was not yet profaned by use for common cargo. Yet this method of transport was contrary to the Lord’s instruction (Nu 7:9; 1Ch 15:13–15). *Uzzah and Ahio*. Part of the priestly escort; only Levites were permitted to touch the ark (Dt 10:8).

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 6:1–4 Having defeated the Philistines, David prepares to bring the ark to Jerusalem. Godly leaders of all times should provide for the true worship of God. On the ark, the Lord of hosts is enthroned on the cherubim. As He rules over the holy cherubim, our Lord Jesus Christ also reigns victorious over all our sins and offers forgiveness to all who repent and trust in Him. • Lord, let me worship You in spirit and in truth according to Your Word. Amen.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 6:5 *making merry*. Praise and thanksgiving to the Lord for His benefits; psalms were probably used (e.g., Ps 150). Listing of all instruments indicates corporate worship. See p 993.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 6:6 *took hold of it*. Touching the ark was forbidden.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 6:7 *God struck him down there*. See note, v 3. As a priest, Uzzah ignored God’s command with regard to moving the ark and followed the way of the Philistines. Regardless of how well intentioned Uzzah was, his actions were neither guided nor limited by God’s Word. By striking down Uzzah, God showed that His Word must be honored above all else (cf Lv 10:1–3; Jsh 7:24–25; Ac 5:1–11).

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 6:11 *the LORD blessed Obed-edom*. Like the Sacraments of the NT, how one approached and treated the ark of God determined whether it would be an instrument of blessing or condemnation. Cf 1Co 11:29.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 6:12 *from the house … to the city*. C 6 mi.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 6:13 *who bore*. This time, David had the Levites carry the ark according to God’s Word (1Ch 15:13–15). *steps*. As with Eng “paces,” a unit of measure; perhaps each step was 30 in. *sacrificed*. To

consecrate the procession. Apparently, sacrifices continued at intervals throughout the procession (cf 1Ch 15:26).

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 6:14 *danced*. Only clear reference to male dancing in Scripture. *linen ephod*. Priestly garment, worn while priests carried out official duties. David wears this garment as a prophet and as the leader of God's kingdom of priests (cf Ex 19:6).

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 6:5–15 Uzzah, despite his good intentions, acts contrary to the Word of God and is struck dead. Handling the ark properly, David humbles himself as he lays aside his royal robes, puts on a priestly garment, and worships before the Lord as the leader of a kingdom of priests. When participating in the things of God—His Word, Sacraments, or Church—how you participate is important. Though God disciplines the irreverent, He remains faithful to bless the humble. Having atoned for our offenses on the cross, Christ will bless the repentant and believing heart. • Glory to You, O gracious God, that though we stumble, You are ever ready through Jesus Christ to forgive and bless. Amen.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 6:16 *despised*. Michal probably thought a king should behave differently. In contrast to her father, Saul, David humbled himself before the Lord by wearing an ephod instead of royal clothing. See note, v 20.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 6:17 *tent*. Large tent set up according to the design of Moses' tabernacle. See note, 1Ch 15:1. However, this is not the official tabernacle. See p 495.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 6:18 *he blessed*. Not necessarily the blessing of Aaron (Nu 6:23–27), which only a priest was permitted to give. Similar to Solomon's blessing at the dedication of the temple (1Ki 8:55–61). See "bless," p 842.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 6:20 *bless his household*. Just as he had blessed the people (v 18). *How … today*. Sarcasm. See note, v 16. *uncovering himself*. David had done nothing dishonorable. Michal accused him of nudity, but he merely took off his royal robes to wear the linen ephod.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 6:21 *prince*. General word for nobility, not necessarily the son of a king.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 6:23 Michal, David's first wife, should have borne his first son and heir. The fact that she had no child could indicate that the Lord closed her womb. The house of Saul would have no place in the succession of David's line.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 6:16–23 Michal sees David humbly dressed as a priest and begins to mock him. In faithfully serving the Lord, are you willing to look foolish in the eyes of others? Do not fear to make merry before the Lord and endure suffering. Our Lord Jesus was not ashamed to humble Himself on the cross to save us from our arrogance. • Work true faithfulness in my life, O Lord, no matter how inappropriate it may be in the eyes of the world. Amen.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 7:2 David wanted to build a temple for the Lord. *tent*. See note, 6:17.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 7:3 By consulting Nathan the prophet, David was seeking God's will. Nathan readily agreed with David's plans without first consulting the Lord. *with you*. See "be with," p 5.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 7:7 *Why … cedar?* The Lord had never commanded such a dwelling to be built, so David's predecessors had not acted wrongly by not building one.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 7:10 *as formerly*. As happened in Egypt and at the time of the judges.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 7:11 *the LORD … the LORD*. Cf Ps 110:1. *a house*. A dynasty. Even Solomon's temple served only as a temporary house of God. It would give way to that offspring of David who dwelt (tabernacled) among people and in whom "all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell" bodily (Col 1:19). Cf Jn 1:14; Col 2:9.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 7:12 *His kingdom*. Refers to one successor of David in whom David's kingdom would be established forever. See note, v 13.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 7:13 The singular offspring of David was the promised Messiah. The temple Solomon would build foreshadowed what the Lord would build in His eternal Son, Jesus Christ. Cf Jn 2:19–21. Cypr: "Christ should be the house and temple of God, and … the old temple should cease, and the new one should begin" (*ANF* 5:511).
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 7:14–17 The relationship of the Lord and David's one successor. This prophecy and covenant promise from God is central to the theme of salvation in the OT, since it was anticipated in Jacob's prophecy about Judah (Gn 49:10) and ultimately fulfilled in Jesus, the Son of David (Mt 1:1).
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 7:14 Though these words may refer to Solomon (cf 1Ki 2:12), the substance of prophecy found here was not completely

fulfilled in Solomon or any of his successors until the coming of the Christ. See note, 1Ch 22:10. Just: "This very Christ is the Judge of all the living and the dead. And Nathan likewise, [spoke] to David about Him" (*ANF* 1:258).

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 7:17 *vision*. General term for a revelation from God.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 7:1–17 The Lord tells David and Nathan not what they will do but what He will do and make for David—an everlasting house and kingdom. In all we do for the Lord, we must first consult His Word to find out what is pleasing to Him. Jesus Christ is the "rest" and "house" promised to David. In Him, God's people have rest from their enemies of sin and death, and in Him they shall dwell forever. • Gracious Lord, keep us in the true faith, that we may have the blessed rest and peace that Christ, our eternal King, alone provides. Amen.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 7:18 *went in and sat before the* LORD. Entered the temporary tent and sat before the ark. See note, 6:17. One did not normally pray before the ark this way. *thus far*. So highly exalted.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 7:19 *great while to come*. Esp concerning the time of Christ. See note, v 13. *this is instruction for mankind, O Lord* GOD*!* Lit, "this is the instruction of the man Lord GOD." Either David was describing the character of the coming Messiah, that He would be both man and God (Luther's interpretation), or the last two words are an address to God: "the instruction of man, O Lord GOD." In this case, God's mercy would be an example of how David and all parents should care for their children. *GOD!* See p 1227.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 7:22 *none like You*. Cf ch 22.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 7:23 *making Himself a name*. Making Himself known to many. Cf Dt 7:6–8; 1Sm 12:22; Is 63:12. See "name," p 843.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 7:27 *found courage to pray*. David had never prayed about so weighty a matter.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 7:18–29 In humility, David acknowledges that everything the Lord has done and will do for him and for Israel is due solely to the Lord's mercy. Today, when great blessing comes your way, glorify the Lord for His gifts. His greatest gift is the great One to come, Jesus, the Son of David. • O Lord Jesus, You are both true man and true God. Make us truly thankful for Your mercy, and bless Your Church forever. Amen.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 8:1 *Metheg-ammah*. Lit, "bridle of the mother [city]." As David drove out the Philistines, he took their center of power, their bridle. May refer to the events of 5:17–25.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 8:2 *Moab*. See map, p 500. *Two lines … put to death … one … spared*. Two of every three Moabite fighting men were executed to prevent them from rising up again as a threat.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 8:3 *Hadadezer*. Lit, "Hadad [the storm god of the Syrians] is [my] help." *Zobah*. Also known as Aram-Zobah (Ps 60 prescript). One of several independent Syrian kingdoms near Damascus. See map, p 500. David and Saul both fought against the kings of Zobah. *Euphrates*. Upper Euphrates, northeast of the Sea of Chinnereth.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 8:4 *took from him*. Captured and removed from King Hadadezer's use. *hamstrung*. Crippled to prevent their use as cavalry or chariots. See note, Jsh 11:6.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 8:5–6 *Aram of Damascus*. Major areas and provinces around Damascus. See color map 2.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 8:8 *Betah … Berothai*. Cities in the kingdom of Zobah under the rule of Hadadezer. Named Tibhath and Cun in 1Ch 18:8. *bronze*. Later used by Solomon in building the temple (1Ch 18:8).
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 8:9 *Toi*. Tou in 1Ch 18:9. *Hamath*. Lit, "fortress." Kingdom of Upper Syria on the Orontes River (Nu 13:21, 34:8), at the foot of Mount Hermon. Cf Am 6:2.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 8:10 *to ask about his health and to bless him*. Act of thanksgiving and alliance. *bless*. The blessing consisted of silver, gold, and the goodwill of Toi. See "bless," p 842.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 8:11 *dedicated to the LORD*. To be used later to build the temple. See note, 1Ch 26:20–28.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 8:12 *Ammonites, the Philistines, Amalek*. See p 345. See notes, Ex 17:8; Nu 21:24. Unlike other groups listed here, archaeologists have had difficulty distinguishing and defining Amalekite cultural remains. Amalekites largely disappeared as a group in David's time. See note, 1Ch 4:43.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 8:13 *Valley of Salt*. Region east of the Salt Sea, in the Negeb.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 8:1–14 The Lord gives David great victories over the kingdoms around Canaan and Syria and also much wealth as the spoils of war. We, too, are in a battle against temptation and sin. As it was

for David, our victory comes only when the Lord gives it. Beginning in Baptism and through faith in Jesus Christ, the Lord gives us Christ's blood-bought victory over sin, death, and the devil. • Gracious Lord, many are the battles of the sinner and the saint within me, many are the losses I have suffered. Forgive my sins and keep my faith in the one glorious victory won by Jesus Christ. Amen.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 8:16 *Zeruiah*. David's sister. *recorder*. Official charged with recording important events of the kingdom and with briefing the king on critical issues.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 8:17 *secretary*. Official charged with preparing official public documents and messages from the king. See pp 335–37.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 8:18 *Cherethites … Pelethites*. See note, 15:18. *priests*. Or, "chief officials" (cf LXX). Not Levitical priests but ministers of state through whom the king ruled and through whom others would do business with the king. See notes, 1Ki 4:2; 1Ch 18:17.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 8:15–18 David rules justly and relies on his ministers of state. Today, the Lord calls each of us to treat others with justice and equity, and not lord the authority of our vocation over them. God is both just and merciful, so He sent His Son, Jesus, to deal with the just judgment we deserve, that we might receive His mercy. • Gracious God and Father, thank You for sending Jesus to answer the demands of Your justice and to show us Your grace. Amen.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 9:1 *Jonathan's sake?* David's desire to show kindness went beyond his promise; it came from the deep, brotherly love he and Jonathan shared.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 9:4 *Lo-debar*. Lit, "no pasture."

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 9:6 *Mephibosheth*. Lit, "exterminator of shame," i.e., of idols. *homage*. See note, 14:4.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 9:7 *land of Saul*. Gibeah (1Sm 10:26; 11:4). See map, p 451. *eat at my table always*. Land would provide income for Mephibosheth. He would become part of the royal court. See note, 1Ki 2:7.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 9:9–10 *servant*. See p 101.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 9:10 Ziba had probably already been living on and farming Saul's lands in Gibeah. *eat at my table*. See note, 1Ki 2:7; cf 2Sm 16:1. *servants*. Common for the chief servant to have servants of his own.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 9:12 *Mica*. Possible contender for the throne. Cf 1Ch 8:34–40.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **Ch 9** David learns that Jonathan's son is alive and immediately gives him the lands of Saul and brings him to dine at his table for the rest of his life. We should show such love to our potential enemies. Just as David invites Mephibosheth to eat at his table, the Lord Jesus invites us to eat at His table, where He serves us His body and blood. He provides the Holy Spirit to strengthen us. • Gracious Lord, thank You for loving us, providing for us, and sending Your servant to tend and keep us until our Lord Christ's return. Amen.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 10:1 *Ammonites*. See note, Nu 21:24; cf 8:12.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 10:2 *dealt loyally*. Honored the treaty between himself and David. *land of the Ammonites*. See map, p 500.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 10:3 *Do you think*. Rhetorical question implies a "no" answer.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 10:4 *shaved off … cut off their garments*. Grievous insult. For the Israelites, a man's beard was his greatest ornament. To increase the insult, the long garments were cut off, exposing the men.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 10:5 *Remain at Jericho*. To avoid a ruined reputation in the capital city. *Jericho*. See color map 1.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 10:6 *become a stench*. David and Israel were enraged at them. *Beth-rehob*. Exact location unknown; perhaps east of the Jordan River near Dan. See map, p 500. *Zobah*. See note, 8:3. *Maacah … Tob*. See map, p 500.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 10:8 *entrance of the gate*. Gate of the Ammonites' capital city, Rabbah (11:1).

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 10:9 *both in front and in the rear*. The battle in front was with the Ammonites arrayed outside their capital city. The battle to the rear was with the Syrian mercenaries coming to the aid of the Ammonites.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 10:14 *the city*. Rabbah, their capital. See map, p 500. *returned from fighting*. Joab did not lay siege to Rabbah to totally defeat the Ammonites.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 10:16 *Euphrates … Helam*. See map, p 500.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 10:17 *he gathered all Israel*. David went because there was much at stake. The outcome of this battle determined who would rule the Palestine-Syrian region until the reign of Rehoboam (931–914 BC).

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **Ch 10** The new Ammonite king rejects David's offer of peace, listening instead to those who speak evil of him. In the end, Joab and David defeat and humble the Syrian kings by the Lord's hand. Often in this world, good deeds are rewarded with unthankfulness. Yet God would have us continually act in good faith toward all. Thanks be to God, who fights for us and covers our shame in the mercy of Jesus. • Gracious Lord, we give You thanks for defending us, covering our shame, and keeping us by Your grace. Amen.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 11:1 *In the spring … go out to battle*. When the rainy season ended, the ground and roads became more favorable for armies to move and fight. See calendar, p 262. *Rabbah*. See map, p 500.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 11:2 *walking on the roof*. Roofs were flat and functioned as an extra room. See note, Jsh 2:6.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 11:4 *he lay with her*. Sin of adultery. "When holy people—still having and feeling original sin and daily repenting and striving against it—happen to fall into manifest sins (as David did into adultery, murder, and blasphemy) … then faith and the Holy Spirit have left them" (SA III III 43–44). *she had been purifying*. From the uncleanness of menstruation. A woman had to wait seven days after the menstrual period before having intercourse with her husband. This indicates that Bathsheba was not pregnant when she lay with David.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 11:5 *she sent and told David*. To seek his aid in dealing with the consequences of their sin. According to the Law, they both should have been put to death for their sin (Lv 20:10; Dt 22:22).
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 11:6 *Uriah*. Lit, "my light is the LORD." Though of Gentile background, it seems he adopted the faith of Israel.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 11:8 *wash your feet*. David encouraged Uriah to go home, hoping he would lay with his wife to make it look like the child was his.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 11:9 *slept at the door*. In the court of the palace or in a dwelling affixed to it in which the servants of the king lived. There is no indication that Uriah suspected any impropriety on the part of his wife or the king.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 11:11 Uriah's words show he was a dedicated and conscientious soldier who understood that while his people and nation were fighting for the Lord, he should not be seeking personal pleasure.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 11:13 *made him drunk*. Hoping that with his guard lowered, Uriah would find his way to his wife.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 11:14–15 Ironic exploitation of Uriah's faithfulness. He would surely deliver the note and thereby deliver himself to death. With Uriah dead, there would be no one to challenge the assumption that Uriah was the father of Bathsheba's child.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 11:17–18 Joab knew politics and honored the king's orders, perhaps so that his own interests might be honored at another time.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 11:19–21 Joab anticipated that David would pretend to be angry at the military failure.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 11:26 *lamented over her husband*. Whether or not the lamentation was genuine, the normal mourning period was seven days (Gn 50:10; 1Sm 31:13). Bathsheba likely became David's wife shortly after the seven days in order to hide their sin (v 27).

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **Ch 11** David's sin of the eye becomes a sin of lust and of deed. He lies with another man's wife and then has the man killed to keep the sin secret. Whenever you try to hide a sin by committing another sin, you are just digging yourself deeper into a hole. Instead, confess! God will forgive all who repent and seek the forgiveness earned by Christ on the cross. • "Lord Jesus, think on me And purge away my sin; From worldly passions set me free And make me pure within." Amen. (*LSB* 610:1)
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 12:1–15 The Lord, being ever patient (2Pt 3:9), gave David nearly nine months to repent before sending Nathan to him. Cf v 14. Nathan chose his words to generate maximum pity and empathy in David, who had been a shepherd.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 12:1 *Nathan*. God's prophet and David's royal court preacher/counselor. See pp 1081–83. *city*. Townspeople would have only a few animals.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 12:3 *morsel*. Indicates the small amount of food the man had. *lie in his arms*. Young lambs were often kept as pets.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 12:5 *As the* LORD *lives*. Words of a formal oath, calling on the Lord to judge the actions of those involved. See "oath," p 7. *deserves to die*. Punishment that exceeded legal requirements. Cf Ex 22:1.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 12:7 *You are the man!* David had rightly spoken his own judgment in vv 5–6. Greg: "[Nathan] had come as a physician to a

sick man; he saw that the sore must be cut; but he doubted of the sick man's patience. Therefore he hid the medicinal steel under his robe, which he suddenly drew out and plunged into the sore, that the patient might feel the cutting blade before he saw it, lest, seeing it first, he should refuse to feel it" (*NPNF* 2 12:26). See note, Ps 51:11–12.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 12:8 *wives*. Lit, "women." Earlier accounts attribute only one wife to Saul (1Sm 14:50). The plural refers to the harem of women that David was at liberty to take to himself. Nothing else indicates that he took any of those women as his wives.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 12:9 *despised the word*. Not a reference to David's feelings but to his actual rejection of God's Word. *You have struck down*. The guilt of the murder is on David, even though he did not actually swing the sword or shoot the arrow.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 12:10 *never depart*. Though forgiven, David's sin produced a train of tragic consequences in the royal family: incest and fratricide, insurrection and violation of his wives by a son, and the death of David's infant son. Forgiveness does not necessarily remove the natural consequences of sin.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 12:11 *I will raise up evil*. God would not personally cause this evil, but His providence would prevent neither Absalom's rebellion (ch 15) nor his taking of David's wives (16:20–22).

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 12:12 The Lord will allow this to be done openly, to show that the king is not above the Law and that he dare not despise God's Word.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 12:13 "David is rebuked by Nathan in this way. Terrified, he says, 'I have sinned against the LORD.' This is contrition. Afterward, he hears the Absolution…. This voice encourages David, and through faith it sustains, justifies, and enlivens him" (Ap XIIA 56). Cyr Jer: "Straightway the Prophet appeared as accuser, and the offender confesses the fault. And because he candidly confessed, he received a most speedy cure. For Nathan the Prophet who had uttered the threat, said immediately, *The LORD also has put away your sin*. You see the swift relenting of a merciful God" (*NPNF* 2 7:10).

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 12:14 *the child who is born to you shall die*. Forgiveness frees us from the eternal consequences and punishments of sin, but not necessarily from temporal consequences and discipline. Cf Ex 34:7; Is 55:8. "A punishment is also added, but this punishment does not merit the

forgiveness of sins. Nor are special punishments always added. In repentance these two things ought always to exist, namely, contrition and faith" (Ap XIIA 56–57).

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 12:1–15a By preaching the Law, Nathan leads David to condemn his own sin. Once David repents, Nathan announces the Gospel: the Lord has put away his sin. Nevertheless, his child of adultery will die. Avoiding the responsibility of our sins does not lead to healing. Instead, repentance is the only right preparation for the Gospel. By receiving the Gospel of forgiveness, we are set free from our sins and made alive. • Gracious Lord, thank You for putting Jesus away on the cross, that I would not be put away in my sins. Amen.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 12:15 *the* LORD *afflicted the child*. The Lord allowed illness to come to the child and to take his life. See note, v 10.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 12:16 *sought God*. With devout prayer. See "seek," p 843. *went in*. Into his palace. Cf v 20.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 12:18 *seventh day*. Child was not circumcised. Cf Gn 17:12.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 12:20 *anointed himself*. With olive oil, much as we use lotion today. *went into the house of the* LORD *and worshiped*. To acknowledge the Lord's hand in the child's death and to offer his humble acceptance of the results of his sin. David sees the limits of God's patience toward him.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 12:23 *Can I bring him back again?* The dead are out of reach of our prayers. We cannot weep them back to life. Yet fasting and mourning are appropriate to honor the dead and to remember our own mortality. Cf 1:12. *I shall go to him*. In death. Some commentators think David showed confidence that his son was in heaven. However, the text does not specifically promise this. Rather than speculating on the final outcome of David's child, we should hold to Scripture's clear teaching: (1) All people are conceived in sin and deserve hell (Ps 51:5). (2) God delivers salvation through the Word and Sacraments (Jn 3:5; Rm 10:17; Col 2:11–12; 1Pt 3:21). (3) God's ways do not always make sense to us (Is 55:8). (4) Yet, God is gracious, hears our prayers, and works all things to our good (Ps 34:17; 103:8; Rm 8:28). The child was in God's hands. We trust Him to do what is right and best.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **12:15b–23** David prays for his child's recovery until the child dies. David then goes to worship in the Lord's

house. When suffering the earthly consequences of our sin, we also should acknowledge that we deserve them, and we should continue to worship the Lord, who gave His Son for our sins, that we may live. • "The will of God is always best And shall be done forever; And they who trust in Him are blest; He will forsake them never. He helps indeed In time of need; He chastens with forbearing. They who depend On God, their friend, Shall not be left despairing." Amen. (*LSB* 758:1)

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 12:25 *sent a message by Nathan the prophet*. The Lord had Nathan announce that He had named Solomon "Jedidiah." See ESV note.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 12:24–25 David comforts Bathsheba, and she bears him a son. God gives the child a name indicating His love. When caught up in our grief, let us not forget our family responsibilities. In Baptism, the Lord gives us a new, eternal life and gives us the name "Beloved of the Lord." • Loving Lord, thank You for loving us and giving us a new life and name in Jesus Christ. Amen.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 12:27 *city of waters*. So called because Rabbah was on both sides of the river Jabbok.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 12:28 Joab wanted the victory to be credited to David.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 12:31 *set them to labor*. Victorious kings often used prisoners of war as menial laborers in royal building projects (1Ki 9:20–21; cf Ex 1:11).

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 12:26–31 Joab does not take credit for the victory over Rabbah but invites his master David to join him in conquering the city. We, too, should be loyal to our employers, parents, pastors, and other leaders, not seeking to exalt ourselves at their expense. Christ, the Son of David, is the great King of glory, yet He humbled Himself and gives us the benefits and glory of His victory over the devil. • Gracious Savior, You alone give the victory to me and to all who believe in You. Grant that in all things I take no glory for myself, but that I glorify You now and forever. Amen.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:1 *Absalom*. In line after Amnon for succession to the throne of David. *Amnon*. Cf 3:2–3.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:2 *made himself ill*. His lust for Tamar consumed him. *impossible … to do anything to her*. As a young virgin

daughter of the king, Tamar was housed under protective care and supervision.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:3 *a friend*. Also a counselor. *Shimeah, David's brother*. Elsewhere called Shammah. *crafty*. Or, "wise." Able to recognize opportunities and manipulate circumstances. Cf Gn 3:1; Jer 4:22; Jas 3:14–15.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:5 *when your father comes*. To visit his supposedly ill son. Involving the king would lend legitimacy to the scheme.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:7 *sent home*. The older royal sons lived in their own houses. Cf v 20.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:8 *made cakes in his sight*. Amnon could see the food preparation area (usually a courtyard) from his bedroom, perhaps through the doorway. Tamar was not yet in the chamber with him. Men and women did not typically work together closely, so such domestic activities may have had sensual appeal. See note, Jb 31:10.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:9 *emptied it out before him*. Tamar was in full view of Amnon, but in modesty she did not bring the food to him. *everyone went out*. Everyone else had been sent away, both out of sight and out of earshot, with the exception of Amnon's personal servant (v 17); there was no one to hear or respond to Tamar's cries for help (cf Dt 22:23–27).

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:11 *my sister*. They were paternal siblings, having the same father (David), but different mothers. The Law forbids a man to have sexual relations with his sister, "whether the daughter of his father or the daughter of his mother" (Dt 27:22; cf Lv 18:9, 11).

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:12 *not done in Israel*. The Law God gave to Israel forbids it.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:13 *where could I carry my shame?* Rape would rob Tamar of her present life and future hope. She would no longer be a virgin daughter of the king; marriage arrangements for her would be badly complicated. There would always be the suspicion of fault or willingness on her part. *he will not withhold me from you*. It is questionable whether David would sanction such a marriage (Lv 18:9, 11; Dt 27:22), but Tamar preferred to be married to her father's son (cf Gn 20:12) than to be taken by force. Aside from that, she was buying time to find protection from his advances.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:14 *he violated her*. He raped her. Cf 12:11.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:15 *hated her*. His "love" was never true, only self-serving. Perhaps this hate came from his own guilt and shame.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:16 By law, Amnon was required to marry her (Dt 22:28–29). But in sending her away, he insinuated that she, not he, was at fault (cf Dt 22:13–21). Tamar's reputation was ruined.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:17 *Put this woman out*. He implies that Tamar had done the wrong, perhaps that she had seduced him.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:19 *tore the long robe*. Sign of mourning and graphic indication of what has been taken from her: she is no longer a virgin daughter of the king. See note, Jb 1:20. *hand on her head*. Sign of great grief.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:20 *do not take this to heart*. Absalom attempted to console his sister. Either he did not want her to make a public spectacle of herself and their family, or he was already formulating his plot for revenge, which would require patient silence (vv 22–29). *desolate woman*. Raped and rejected, Tamar could no longer live in her father's house as one of his virgin daughters.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:21 David did nothing. Amnon was the heir apparent at this time; punishment would have been embarrassing. David had learned through personal experience to know the Lord's forgiveness. In his own fallible way, he demonstrated fatherly patience and mercy toward his wayward children. Unfortunately, he did not grasp that a father's love and discipline belong together (Heb 12:5–11). David's fatherly care and provision for Tamar were also missing.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:22 *Absalom hated Amnon*. Contrary to God's Law in Lv 19:17–18.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:1–22 Amnon's lust for his sister Tamar leads him to commit a vile crime against her. David, from misguided love for his son or sinful weakness, fails to administer justice. The way is thus paved for further violence in the house of David. The covetous desires of our hearts, when nurtured instead of resisted, can burst forth into deadly wickedness. We need the Law's restrictions and guidance. Our only hope for mercy is in the Lord, who forgives even the most heinous of crimes for the sake of Jesus Christ, the Son of David. Yet, "the Lord disciplines the one He loves" (Heb 12:6) and calls us to daily repentance to strengthen faith in the forgiveness of sins. • O Lord, spare us from the curse and consequences of our sin for the sake of Christ's sufferings. Amen.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:23 *two full years*. Long enough to avoid suspicions of his hatred of Amnon. *sheepshearers*. Sheepshearing was a time of celebration. See calendar, p 262. *invited all the king's sons*. To mask his vengeful plot against Amnon.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:25 *burdensome*. An excuse. Not likely that the king would take time away from governing to attend a party out of town. By inviting his father, Absalom took a calculated risk to conceal his real agenda. *his blessing*. David unknowingly blessed Absalom's plot to execute Amnon.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:26 *let my brother Amnon go*. If the king could not come to Absalom's party, then the heir apparent should represent his father.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:28 *have I not commanded*. Like father, like son; cf 11:12–25. *Be courageous and be valiant*. Absalom believed he was meting out divine justice. Cf Jsh 1:5–9.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:30 Message suggests there may have been fear of rivalry for David's throne among his sons.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:31 *tore his garments*. Expression of grief and mourning. Cf v 19; 12:20. *lay on the earth*. Recognition of his own mortality (cf Gn 3:19).
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:32 *Jonadab*. Amnon's counselor (v 3).
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:23–33 Absalom takes the law into his own hands and avenges Amnon's rape of his sister Tamar. By failing to discipline his sons, David is partially responsible for all these events. Vengeance is not to be taken into our own hands; punishment and discipline are rightly administered through the offices God has established (parents, government). God confronts our sin head-on with His judgment so He may then cleanse us by the precious blood of the Son of David, Jesus Christ. He prepares for us a feast of peace, the supper of a King who gives us life. • Lord Jesus, deal with us not as we deserve but according to Your great mercy by granting us sincere repentance and faith. Amen.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:34 *Absalom fled*. To avoid punishment. *kept the watch*. At Jerusalem (cf 18:24). *the road behind him*. People fleeing from Baal-hazor took a roundabout journey, which may have been the safest course under the circumstances.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:37 *Talmai*. Absalom's (and Tamar's) maternal grandfather (3:3). *Geshur*. See color map 2. Although under David's

military control (8:3–8; 10:6–19), Geshur affords a measure of political asylum. *mourned for his son*. May mean that David mourned for both Amnon and Absalom (v 39; 14:1).

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:39 Either David yearned to be reunited with his son, though caught by the demands of justice, or he desired to punish Absalom. Either way, he did nothing. See note, v 21.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 13:34–39 Absalom flees from his father and goes into exile. Thus, the king has lost two sons: the murdered Amnon and the runaway Absalom. One sin leads to another, leaving a trail of consequences along the way. While our sin does not always lead to outright murder, unrepentant sin does lead to our spiritual death and to much grief. True reconciliation with God is granted us through the forgiveness of our sins, through the atoning death of God's own Son. • O Lord Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on us! Pardon our iniquity, and with Your forgiveness bring an end to the warfare of our sin. Amen.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:1 *Joab*. See notes, 2:13; 3:39. *the king's heart went out to Absalom*. See note, 13:39.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:2 *Tekoa*. See map, p 558. *wise woman*. Probably neither a technical term nor an official position, but simply a talented woman. *Pretend to be a mourner*. Joab is staging a "morality play," which he hopes will lead David to reconciliation with Absalom (vv 19–20).

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:4 *paid homage*. Indicates significance of David's office as the Lord's anointed one. As a called and anointed servant of the Lord, King David executed justice and served as the deliverer for God's people. Christ, who was to come from David's family (7:12–16; Ps 89:3–4, 20–21) would save His people from their sin (Mt 1:1–16, 20–21). *Save me, O king*. Cf Mt 20:30–31; 21:9.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:6 *no one to separate them*. Implies David's failure to discipline Amnon after he raped Tamar (13:21).

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:7 Woman calls on King David to overrule the Law (Gn 9:5–6; Ex 21:12–14) on account of mitigating circumstances (cf Nu 27:1–7). *destroy the heir*. Similarly, Amnon and Absalom were the most likely heirs to the throne of David. *quench my coal that is left*. Take away my last hope for an heir. Similarly, Tamar had only her brother Absalom to care for her (13:20). *neither name nor remnant*. Similarly, David's legacy was at stake in Absalom's fate.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:9 Woman suggested some would contest the decision, implying that more than a simple verdict would be needed to protect her son.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:11 *avenger of blood*. Relative of the deceased, charged with the responsibility of vengeance. See note, 1Ki 2:31.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:13 *against the people of God?* By failing to administer either justice or mercy toward his sons, David jeopardized the welfare of the entire kingdom. *the king convicts himself*. Cf 12:5–7.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:14 *We must all die*. Amnon would have died eventually, and so would Absalom in time. No amount of justice would bring Amnon back from the dead. The notion is sadly fatalistic. *God will not take away life*. Implies God will act mercifully, in contrast to the enduring banishment imposed by David. *He devises means*. Cf Gn 4:14–16.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:16 *the heritage of God*. The land God gave them and being God's people. See p 7; cf Eph 1:9–11.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:17 By virtue of his office, King David delivered a Christlike pronouncement (Jer 23:5–6) for it is Christ who gives the true Sabbath rest (Heb 4:1–11). *angel of God*. Or, "messenger of God." See p 1227. *discern good and evil*. Cf 1Ki 3:9; Ps 72:1–4.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:19 *the hand of Joab*. Joab's involvement. Perhaps Joab thought Absalom would be the best successor of David as king. When Absalom later rebelled against his father, Joab remained loyal to David (18:2). Yet thereafter, Joab followed Adonijah's attempt to seize the throne (1Ki 1:5–7).
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:20 *angel of God*. See note, v 17.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:22 *homage*. See note, v 4.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:23 *Geshur … Jerusalem*. See color map 2.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:24 *not to come into my presence*. Absalom was excluded from the royal court.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:27 *three sons, and one daughter*. Cf 18:18. Perhaps they died prematurely. *Tamar*. Apparently named for his sister (13:1).
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:30 *go and set it on fire*. To force a meeting with Joab.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:32 *let him put me to death*. Instead of death, Absalom expected a full restoration of royal privileges.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 14:33 *the king kissed Absalom*. Outwardly, David and Absalom were reconciled, but their hearts remained far apart. With restored privileges, Absalom was now able to campaign for his father's kingship (15:1–6).

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **Ch 14** With subtlety, Joab moves the king to show mercy instead of administering justice. David is thereby reconciled with his son only outwardly. Although fathers love even evil children, the children should not misuse this love, as Absalom did. For Christ's sake, God desires not to punish but to spare His sinful and rebellious children. • O God, defend us from the rebellious, give us good government to administer justice, and grant that we may rejoice in and rightly use Your great love. Amen.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:1 *chariot*. Vehicle of war. Absalom was acting like a military commander. *fifty men to run before him*. Not only as a royal entourage, but potentially as a bodyguard and special forces unit.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:2 *the way of the gate*. Where judicial cases were presented and heard (cf Jsh 20:4). See p 792. *before the king for judgment*. The king could not personally hear every case, but he was responsible for the administration of justice. Cf Ex 18:13–26; 1Sm 8:4–5; 1Ch 18:14.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:3 *no man designated by the king*. Unfounded accusation. Cf 14:4; 1Ch 18:14.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:4 By criticizing the king and wishing to be made a judge, Absalom subtly implied he should take the king's position.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:5 *take hold of him and kiss him*. Absalom first put himself in a royal position of judgment, and then he won the people's allegiance by giving them a sign of friendship. Thus, Absalom made himself popular with his father's subjects.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:6 *to all of Israel who came to the king*. Absalom placed himself between the people and their king so that David had no opportunity to hear their cases. By circumventing the system, Absalom fulfilled his own criticisms of the system. *stole the hearts*. Won their loyalty by evil deceit.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:7 *four years*. See ESV note. Could be 40 years after David's first anointing. David was 20 when first anointed; he suffered for 10 years and was confirmed as king at age 30. Thus, Absalom's revolt occurred when David was about 60. *vow*. See p 7. Absalom pretended this

vow as an excuse to depart from Jerusalem without raising suspicion. Cf 1Sm 16:1–13. *Hebron*. See map, p 500. Cf Gn 13:18. David was anointed king at Hebron (2:1–4; 5:1–3). Cf 1Ch 3:1–2.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:8 *Geshur in Aram*. See color map 2.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:9 *Go in peace*. The last words David spoke to Absalom, whose name means "father of peace."

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:11 *two hundred men from Jerusalem*. This impressive contingent lent credence to Absalom and also removed these people from Jerusalem so they would not be able to support or counsel David. *invited guests*. For a feast in connection with the sacrifice.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:12 *Ahithophel the Gilonite*. Possibly grandfather of Bathsheba (cf 23:34; 11:3). In view of his later counsel to Absalom (16:20–17:4), it is likely that Ahithophel had helped to mastermind the rebellion from the beginning.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:1–12 Once Absalom has officially been reconciled to the king, he begins to campaign for the throne. Soon he is no longer content to steal hearts, so he plots to steal the throne. Coveting what God has not given, and scheming sinfully to get it for ourselves, leads not to life but to death. Yet Christ, who is truly righteous, has righteously coveted our life and voluntarily laid down His life on our behalf. We are justified by His grace alone, through faith in His forgiveness. • "Almighty God, You are the only and supreme happiness of the soul of man, without the enjoyment of whom the soul must ever dwell in disquietude and trouble. Fix all the thoughts and affections of my soul upon You, who alone can satisfy all its desires, and give it a peace that passes all understanding. You shall be all in all and the sight of You and Your glory be her great and endless happiness to all eternity. Amen." (Ger, *TLWA*, p 160)

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:14 *let us flee*. By leaving the city, David could choose where, when, and how he would fight. In addition, he could determine who his true servants and loyal supporters were. The innocent would be spared a siege.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:16 *ten concubines to keep the house*. See pp 54–55. Being nonmilitary personnel, the concubines should have been allowed to carry out their duties in peace. Regrettably, this did not happen (16:20–22).

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:17 *the last house*. Probably the most outlying house within the suburbs of Jerusalem.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:18 *Cherethites … Pelethites*. Military units made up of non-Israelites. During his years on the run from King Saul, David fought for the Philistines (1Sm 27; 29–30) but later defeated them (2Sm 5:17–25). David may have enlisted some of his former Philistine comrades and received their loyal service. Cf Ezk 25:16; Zep 2:5. "Cherethite" is perhaps related to "Cretan." *six hundred Gittites*. Apparently David's personal forces that followed him in his flight from Saul. Ironically, men from the land of Goliath ended up serving the man who had killed their great champion (1Sm 17:4, 48–54). *Gath*. Philistine city. See color map 1.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:19 David tested the loyalty of Ittai and his men. *stay with the king*. With Absalom, who had wrongfully been anointed as king (cf 19:10). *an exile from your home*. From the land of the Philistines.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:23 *all … all … all*. Hyperbole. David's many supporters and immediate loyal circle mourn the king's retreat. *Kidron*. Eastern boundary of Jerusalem. See color map 1. In the NT, the Lord's crossing of the Kidron marked the beginning of His Passion (Jn 18:1). Here, the purification of David's house begins when he crosses the brook Kidron.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:13–23 David is forced to flee Jerusalem and cross the brook Kidron. While his own son and countrymen conspire against him, he receives fierce loyalty from foreigners. In suffering, we, like David, should humble ourselves under God's hand and commit ourselves and our paths into His keeping. David's Son, Christ Jesus, was rejected by many of His own (Jn 1:10–11), but He called for disciples from all nations (Mt 28:19–20) to take up the cross and follow Him (Mt 10:16–39). It was He who crossed the brook Kidron, bearing our sin, on the way to the cross. • Lord Jesus, sustain me in suffering, and grant that I may walk in the way of Your cross. Amen.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:24 *Abiathar … Zadok*. Principal priests serving during the reign of David. *bearing the ark*. Shows that the Lord is with David. David brought the ark to Jerusalem (6:1–17), and it was where the Lord was present for His people (Ex 40:18–21, 34–35), so the priests thought it should follow David away from Absalom. See p 495.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:25 *dwelling place*. The tabernacle or the tent for the ark at Jerusalem. See note, 6:17.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:27 *seer?* David asked Zadok to be his "eyes" in Jerusalem. Or, Zadok was a prophet and could give divine guidance (see

note, 1 Sm 9:9).
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:28 *the fords of the wilderness*. The Jordan River crossing, leading to the wilderness. Location uncertain. *inform me*. Priests would be David's spies.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:30 *Mount of Olives*. Cf Mk 11:1; 14:26.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:31 *Ahithophel*. Cf v 12; 16:23.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:32 *where God was worshiped*. Apparently, the Mount of Olives (v 30) was a "high place." See p 526. Here God answered David's prayer by providing the man who would thwart Ahithophel's counsel. *Hushai*. Non-Israelite member of David's cabinet, a royal counselor. In contrast to Ahithophel, he was the king's friend (16:17). *his coat torn and dirt on his head*. Signs of grief and mourning showing he was on David's side. See note, Jb 1:20.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 15:24–37 Though he must depart from Jerusalem, David puts his fate into the Lord's hands. Yet his allies will be his eyes and ears in Jerusalem, bringing word to him at the Jordan River. Life here in this world is often a wilderness journey of weeping and the expectation of death. This is due to our sin against God. But Christ has gone the way of sorrows on our behalf, that we might cross the Jordan with Him, through the waters of Holy Baptism, out of the wilderness into the promised land of heaven. • O Lord Jesus Christ, by the blood of Your eternal covenant, preserve our faith and bring us at last into Your Jerusalem above. Amen.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 16:1 *the summit*. Of the Mount of Olives. *Ziba … Mephibosheth*. Cf 4:4. *a hundred*. An assumed amount. Archaeologists have discovered that ancient writers often did not include exact units of measure. *wine*. See p 236.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 16:3 *give me back the kingdom of my father*. Upon David's return to Jerusalem, Mephibosheth denied this accusation (19:24–28). Because he was lame in both legs, it would have been difficult for him to leave Jerusalem. Furthermore, there was no reason to suppose that Absalom would give the kingdom to the household of Saul. By supporting David and bearing false witness against his master, Ziba probably hoped to free himself from Mephibosheth and take possession of his master's lands. Or, perhaps with pious but misguided zeal, he hoped to serve David's house instead of Saul's. David believed Ziba at this time. Cf 19:29.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 16:4 *I pay homage*. Apparently, this reverence was just lip service. See note, 14:4.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 16:1–4 Ziba provides for King David in his need. Yet he does so at his master's expense. David may be too hasty in handing over Mephibosheth's inheritance. It is tempting to speak falsely of others to gain personal advantage. Today, we are also too easily led to make quick judgments, especially when they agree with our expectations. The Lord, however, looks at the heart and is not fooled. His providence meets all our needs of body and soul, "out of fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness" in us (SC, First Article, p xxxvi). • Keep us, Lord, from false testimony. Thank You for all Your benefits through Jesus Christ. Amen.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 16:5 *cursed continually*. Contrary to the Law, which forbids the cursing of the ruler (Ex 22:28). See p 6; see also SC, Second Commandment, p xxxv.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 16:6 *he threw stones*. Symbolizing that David should be stoned for murder (Lv 24:17–21). *right … left*. Bodyguards surrounded David.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 16:7 *cursed*. See note, v 5.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 16:8 *the blood of the house of Saul*. David was not responsible for the death of Saul or his sons (ch 1; 9:1–13). Shimei, however, may have held him responsible for the bloodshed that ravaged that house. Cf 3:1; 3:26–4:12; 21:1–9. *your evil is on you … man of blood*. Though not accountable for the blood of Saul's house, David was responsible for the death of Uriah the Hittite. Absalom's rebellion was part of the Lord's judgment upon him for that bloodshed (12:7–11).

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 16:9 *Abishai the son of Zeruiah*. See notes, 3:30, 39; 1Sm 26:8. *dead dog*. Nothing but a nuisance with a foul odor. Similar curse is found in Canaanite literature.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 16:10 *What have I to do with you*. Rhetorical question expresses difference in attitude between David and Abishai. Cf 3:39.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 16:11 *let him curse*. David saw this as a consequence of his sin. Cf 12:9–14; Lm 3:37–39. *the LORD has told him to*. Either God commanded this, similar to how He spoke to the prophets, or He simply allowed this to happen in His providence. Either way, David saw the Lord's hand in this cursing. Bern: "You ought, after the example of holy

David, not so much to be angry with those people who have caused you such great sufferings, although they are your own servants, as to know that you ought to humble yourself under the mighty hand of God" (*SLSB*, pp 85–86).

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 16:12 *wrong*. Chem: "It was a sin … a curse that had to be avenged…. Certain sins are at the same time both sins and punishment for sins" (*LTh* 1:198).

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 16:13 *on the road*. C 20 mi long, descending c 3,700 ft to the Jordan River.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 16:5–14 David recognizes Shimei's cursing as the Lord's justice. He spares Shimei from death, accepts the divine judgment, and entrusts himself to God's mercy in faith. The curses of God's Law are the righteous wrath and judgment of the Lord against our sin, for which we "deserve nothing but punishment" (SC, Fifth Petition, p xxxviii). Yet, Christ Jesus has borne the curse and judgment of God in our stead. For His sake, we are spared the punishment we deserve. • Dear Father in heaven, deal with us not according to the severity of Your judgment but according to Your mercy. Amen.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 16:16–19 Hushai was both theologically astute and a brilliant strategist. With one stroke, he affirms his loyalty in relation to the Lord and the people of Israel, thereby providing a compelling explanation for his departure from David and offering what will be taken as flattery of Absalom. But there is a double meaning here—Hushai was actually affirming King David, whom both the Lord and the people of Judah and Israel had anointed.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 16:16 *Long live the king!* Double meaning. While appearing to support Absalom, he really was praying for success for David.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 16:18 *the* LORD *and this people … have chosen*. In, with, and under the political process, governing authorities are chosen and appointed by God and have their authority from Him (Rm 13:1–2); they have no authority unless it has been given to them from above (Jn 19:11). Also, Israelite leaders exercised political authority. See note, 1Ki 12:15.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 16:19 By offering his service to Absalom, Hushai continued to serve David.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 16:21 *Go in to your father's concubines*. To fornicate with the royal harem to show he had taken the king's place. Cf 1Ki 2:13–25; Dt 22:30; 27:20. Although the Lord brought this judgment on

David (12:9–11), Absalom was still accountable for his own sins (cf Mt 26:24). *a stench to your father*. No reconciliation between Absalom and David would be possible. *strengthened*. Absalom's bold-faced sin would give his supporters confidence that he had successfully put himself in his father's place.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 16:22 *on the roof*. See note, 11:2.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 16:15–23 David's sin is repaid in kind. The evil adultery he committed with Bathsheba is punished by his son's adultery with his harem. Sadly, some sins lead to more sins and involve other people in a web of evil. God will not let this go unpunished (Gal 6:7). Yet, God is ever working to save us from our sin. For our sake, the Lord Himself suffered the abandonment and betrayal of His friends and the public humiliation of the cross so we would be justified by His grace. • Lord Jesus, friend of sinners, ever faithful in the face of our unfaithfulness, do not hold our sins against us, but save us from our foolishness. Amen.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:1 *Ahithophel*. See note, 15:12. *pursue David tonight*. A good and effective plan. It would almost certainly have been a quick, decisive victory for Absalom.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:3 *as a bride … husband*. Ahithophel spoke of his king as a husband who has a rightful claim to his wife's loyalty (the loyalty of the people). *the life of only one man*. See ESV note; cf Jn 11:50.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:5 *Hushai*. See note, 15:32.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:7 *not good*. Ahithophel's counsel was actually quite good, but not for David! Nor was it according to God's will. Hushai's plan was to buy David time by telling Absalom to prepare for a large army.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:8 *a bear robbed of her cubs*. Extremely fierce and angry.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:9 *one of the pits*. Cf 18:17.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:10 *like the heart of a lion*. Very courageous.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:11 *Dan to Beersheba*. The north and south extremities of Saul's kingdom; the chief Israelite region. See note, Jgs 20:1. *in person*. Appeal to Absalom's vanity.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:12 *as the dew falls on the ground*. Large army would be like a blanket completely covering David and his men.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:14 *bring harm upon Absalom*. Although the Lord chose to use Absalom's sinful rebellion to discipline David (12:9–11), He still held Absalom accountable for his sins. Cf Mt 26:24.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:16 *the fords of the wilderness*. See note, 15:28. *by all means pass over*. In case Absalom would follow Ahithophel's advice.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:17 *En-rogel*. A well at Jerusalem's southeast corner. See diagram, p 1627.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:18 *Bahurim*. See note, 3:16.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:19 *the woman*. The householder's wife. *well's mouth*. Likely a dry cistern. *scattered grain on it*. As though she were drying it to produce parched grain. No one would likely disturb the drying grain in search of a hiding place beneath.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:20 *over the brook*. See ESV note. Chem: "To conceal something for an honest and just cause in matters which need not be said for reasons of right or usefulness, is not a lie…. It is lawful to use figurative language [e.g., a riddle] which does not reveal the points under discussion" (*LTh* 2:425). Cf Mt 26:64. See note, Jsh 2:5.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:23 More than wounded pride is evident in Ahithophel's suicide. He was deliberate, first setting his house in order. With his great wisdom, he reckoned that David would prevail and return to the throne, and that his own life would be forfeited because of his high treason. Perhaps he also recognized God's hand at work against him (v 14). See note, 1Sm 31:4.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:24 *Mahanaim*. See map, p 500; cf 2:8–11; Gn 32:1–2.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:25 *Amasa … Joab*. David's nephews.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:27 *Shobi*. Apparently the governor of Rabbah after David defeated his brother Hanun (10:4–14; 12:26–30). Like his father, Nahash (10:2), Shobi dealt loyally with David. *Machir*. Provided for Mephibosheth, Jonathan's son, before David restored to him all Saul's land and brought him to eat at the king's table. *Barzillai*. A very old and very rich non-Israelite.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 17:28–29 See p 236.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **Ch 17** David is on the run. Though apparently at the mercy of his enemies and the elements, David is under the mercy of God, who chastens him as a father disciplines his son, yet all the while maintaining His steadfast love for him. The Lord will humble all who exalt themselves, whether sooner or later. We should pray that the Lord would humble us each day, through discipline unto repentance, so that we may not be humbled before Him in the final judgment! For this repentance, and for

the forgiveness of sins, the Lord has instituted the Sacrament of Holy Baptism. In it, we are crucified, dead, and buried with Christ Jesus, in order to be raised with Him to new life (Rm 6:3–4; SC, p xxxix–xl). • We praise You, O God. We bless You and magnify You, that as our dear Father You discipline us in love and provide for all our needs of body and soul, now and forever. Amen.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 18:1 *mustered*. Organized for war. *commanders of thousands … hundreds*. Technical terms for military officers. Number of men in each unit varied. See p 217.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 18:2 *Joab … Abishai*. Cf 2:18–32; 3:26–39; 1Sm 26:6; 1Ch 11:6–8. *Ittai*. Cf 15:18–22.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 18:3 *worth ten thousand of us*. If David fell, the war would be over and Absalom would have won. Cf 17:2–3. *the city*. Mahanaim. Cf 17:24.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 18:4 *hundreds … thousands*. Divisions of the army (cf v 1).

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 18:5 *Deal gently for my sake*. David knew that much of the current situation was the result of his sin, yet the Lord forgave him and spared his life. David wanted to do the same for Absalom. Cf Mt 5:44–45; Lk 23:34; Ac 13:22–23.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 18:6 *forest of Ephraim*. Likely a heavily wooded area with rocky, uneven terrain, probably east of the Jordan. See also note, Jsh 17:15.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 18:7 *twenty thousand men*. See note, v 1.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 18:8 *forest devoured*. Rough terrain disrupted tactics and worked against Absalom's troops.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 18:9 *mule*. Used esp by the king and his family (13:29). Symbolizes Absalom's claim to be king. *head caught fast*. Likely his hair. Cf 14:11, 26. *went on*. As the mule continues on its way without Absalom, God unseats the usurper from his father's throne.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 18:10 *hanging in an oak*. Thus, he was shown to be cursed. Cf Dt 21:22–23; Gal 3:13.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 18:15 *struck … killed*. Joab had his servants finish off Absalom. Nevertheless, Joab was responsible for his death.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 18:16 Cf 17:2–3; 18:3. The one contending for the throne was killed; there was no need to fight.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 18:17 *great heap of stones*. Absalom was "stoned" after death. Cf Dt 21:18–21.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 18:18 *to this day*. See note, Jsh 4:9.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 18:1–18 Absalom, a son of David, is defeated by the Lord and hung on a tree. Joab has Absalom killed and brings the war to an end so the rest of Israel is spared. Pride comes before a fall. Our lives are held and weighed in God's hands. In contrast to Absalom, Jesus, the sinless Son of David, was reckoned a rebellious sinner (2Co 5:21) and died on a tree to bear God's curse against the world's sins (Gal 3:13). • "Fulfilled is all that David told In sure prophetic song of old, That God the nations' king should be And reign in triumph from the tree." Amen. (*LSB* 455:3)
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 18:20 *not to carry news today*. To protect Ahimaaz in case David became angry at news of Absalom's death (cf 1:13–16; 4:7–12).
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 18:21 *Cushite*. See note, Nu 12:1.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 18:23 *the way of the plain*. Presumably, the Cushite ran directly from the battle to Mahanaim, a demanding route over steep and rugged terrain. Ahimaaz took the longer, but easier, route through the Jordan Valley.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 18:24 *between the two gates*. City had both an inner and outer gate. David positioned himself in the courtyard between the two. See p 792.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 18:25 *there is news in his mouth*. He has a message to tell. A lone runner would be a messenger, while a group could have been retreating troops.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 18:28 *All is well*. Hbr *shalom*, "peace," root word of Absalom's name. *his face to the earth*. See p 1276.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 18:29 *I do not know*. He knew, but lost his nerve at the crucial moment.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 18:19–30 Ahimaaz is anxious to bring news of the victory to David, but he fails to tell about Absalom's death. Expecting an angry reaction from the king, Joab sends a Cushite to bear the message. Official messengers must be faithful in delivering the news given them to tell, even if their message is not welcome. This holds true especially for ministers of the Gospel. How blessed are the feet of those who proclaim the Gospel, who tell us that our King Jesus reigns with mercy! • Heavenly

Father, give us courage to speak Your Word according to our vocation as Christians. Amen.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 18:33 *chamber*. Guardroom in the watchtower. Towers usually flanked the city gate. *O my son Absalom*. Repetition expresses pity. *I had died instead of you*. See similar expressions from Moses and Paul in Ex 32:30–34; Rm 9:1–3.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 18:31–33 The Cushite tactfully reveals what has happened, pointing out that Absalom was the king's enemy and had risen up against the king for evil. Nevertheless, David is overcome with grief at the report of his son's death. Not only does our sin bring death upon us, but it also brings death and destruction into our relationships with others and much grief to everyone around us. For all of his faults, David is described as a man after God's own heart, never more so than when his heart went out to the son who betrayed him and sinned against him. Likewise, our Father in heaven has opened His merciful heart to us in the outstretched arms of Jesus, the Son of David. • Lord, grant us grace to rejoice in Your salvation, and to love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us, that we may be merciful, even as You are merciful. Amen.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 19:3 *stole into the city*. Entered secretly, in humility, not as triumphant conquerors.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 19:4 See note, 18:33.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 19:6 *hate those who love you*. By continually mourning for Absalom, David seemed to place more value on the rebels than on his loyal followers.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 19:7 *speak kindly*. To thank his supporters and congratulate them on their victory. Cf Is 40:1–2. *not a man will stay with you*. An implied threat that Joab would lead the troops against the king. *worse*. David needed to move beyond his mourning and leave behind his self-pity to continue living as king, the vocation God had given him.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 19:8 *sitting in the gate*. Sign that David had publicly resumed his royal office and honored their victory over Absalom. See p 792. *the people came before the king*. To present themselves and honor David as their king.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 19:1–8c David's grief over Absalom threatens to undo all that has been accomplished on his behalf. His mourning borders on self-pity and despair, which is neither expedient nor faithful. Sometimes our sin is manifested in pride and self-righteousness, other times in

despondency and defeatism. Like Joab, the Law confronts us with what we must do. But God our King speaks kindly to us. He did not spare His own Son but gave Him up for us all. • Dear Father in heaven, we pray "that the devil, the world, and our sinful nature may not deceive us or mislead us into false belief, despair, and other great shame and vice" (SC, Sixth Petition, p xxxviii–xxxix). Give us the victory by the death and resurrection of Your only-begotten Son. Amen.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 19:9–10 *arguing*. Political arguments on who should now be king.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 19:10 *anointed over us*. Although not mentioned earlier, this anointing evidently took place in Hebron when Absalom launched his revolt (15:10). If he was anointed with the majority's approval, David probably could not immediately resume his kingship. Cf 15:6, 12–13. *you say nothing*. Appeal for the popular support David needed to become their king again.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 19:11 *Zadok and Abiathar*. David used priests for secular political purposes. The politics of Israel could not be separated from the nation's religious significance or from God's promise concerning David and his throne (7:12–13). See pp 1565–66. *bring the king back*. David wanted his own tribe of Judah to lead the way in restoring him to the throne. *word of all Israel*. David had received intelligence concerning the movement in his favor among the northern tribes.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 19:13 *Amasa*. David's nephew, cousin of Joab and Abishai. *God do so to me and more also*. Oath. See p 7. David made a strong promise to Amasa. Perhaps David wanted to remove Joab for having Absalom killed (18:14–15) and for his earlier murder of Abner (3:26–39; 1Ki 2:5–6). At the same time, David sought to bring a leader in Absalom's revolt over to his side. By doing so, David would gain an influential ally and would assure the rebel forces that he did not intend revenge against them.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 19:14 *swayed the heart*. Won the loyalty. Whereas Absalom "stole" the hearts of Israel (15:6), David "sways" the heart of Judah.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 19:15 *Jordan … Gilgal*. See color map 1; cf 1Sm 11:14–15.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **19:8d–15** Having won the war, David has the task of regaining the people's support. The northern tribes of Israel are the

first to call for his return to office, but David needs to negotiate Judah's loyalty. In so doing, he shows that he does not bear grudges against those who opposed him. Today, we are tempted to manipulate the people and situations around us to our own advantage, and even to seek revenge. Remarkably, rather than seeking revenge on us, our gracious God forgives our sins for Jesus' sake and calls us back to His service. • Lord Jesus, let not pride prevent us from doing what is good and right, nor let us make expedience our rule, but guide us by Your Word. Amen.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 19:16–17 Those who had opposed David now took the initiative in being reconciled to him, lest he punish their treason. Ziba was among them, though he had not opposed David but had aided him in his flight (16:1–2). Perhaps he saw that his ruse concerning Mephibosheth would be exposed (16:3; 19:24–28). He reaffirmed his loyalty, hoping not to lose the reward he had received (16:4; cf 19:29).

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 19:16 *Shimei*. See notes, 16:8, 11. *Bahurim*. See note, 3:16.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 19:20 *the house of Joseph*. Technically, this included only the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh (Jsh 16–17), but here it was used for all the northern tribes of Israel, in contrast to Judah.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 19:21 *Abishai the son of Zeruiah*. See notes, 3:30, 39; 1Sm 26:8. *he cursed the* LORD*'s anointed?* Cf 16:7–10; Ps 89:20–23, 49–51; 1Sm 26:8–11.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 19:22 *What have I to do with you*. See note, 16:10. *an adversary to me?* David described Abishai as an accuser (Hbr *satan*) because he urged punishment instead of absolution in response to Shimei's confession. Cf Jb 1:5–12; Rv 12:10–11. *I am this day king over Israel?* Politically speaking, David had nothing to gain, but everything to lose, by resorting to violence at this point.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 19:23 *You shall not die*. Cf 12:13–14. *the king gave him his oath*. But Solomon would see to his punishment (1Ki 2:8–9, 37–46).

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 19:24 *Mephibosheth the son of Saul*. See note, 16:3. *from the day the king departed*. In contrast to Ziba's accusations (16:3), Mephibosheth truly mourned David's exile.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 19:26 Instead of assisting his master, Ziba had left without Mephibosheth, and then had accused him of plotting insurrection against the king (16:3). *saddle a donkey for myself*. See ESV

note. Doing so would have been difficult for the lame Mephibosheth. *your servant is lame*. Shows that he was hardly in a position to threaten David's throne.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 19:27 *like the angel of God*. Like the angel of the covenant, the mediator of divine blessings to the nation, knowing good and evil. See note, 14:17.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 19:28 *among those who eat at your table*. See note, 9:7.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 19:29 *divide the land*. Compromise. One of the men has lied, but David chose not to punish either of them.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 19:31 *Barzillai the Gileadite*. See note, 17:27.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 19:32 *Mahanaim*. See map, p 500.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 19:33 *provide for you*. More than simply offering to repay Barzillai for his generous support, David sought to secure the alliance by making Barzillai a permanent member of his court (1Ki 2:7).

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 19:35 Barzillai's senses were dulled by old age. He describes the pursuits and activities of the king's court.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 19:37 *near the grave*. See note, 1Ki 2:10. *Chimham*. Presumably Barzillai's son.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 19:39 *went over*. Back into the main territory of the realm. *the king kissed Barzillai and blessed him*. To mark a friendship and establish an alliance.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 19:40 *Gilgal*. See color map 1; cf 1Sm 11:14–15. *the people of Judah … half the people of Israel*. Judah was decidedly supportive of David, while Israel remained divided in its support. This is a turn of events; the northern tribes were the first to speak of restoring David to his throne (vv 9–10, 43), while his own tribe of Judah hesitated (vv 11–12).

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 19:42 *our close relative*. David was from the tribe of Judah (1Ch 2:1–15; Mt 1:3–6; Lk 3:31–33). *Have we eaten … any gift?* The men of Judah deny having abused their close kinship with the king.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 19:43 *ten shares in the king*. David was the anointed king of the entire nation, of which Israel comprised the northern 10 tribes, Judah the southern tribe (the Levites not being counted). See note, 1Ki 11:32. *fiercer*. This conflict anticipated the final rift between the north and south under David's grandson Rehoboam (1Ki 12:16–20).

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 19:16–43 As David retraces his steps to Jerusalem, he meets several of the same people he encountered previously. With mercy, wisdom, and generosity, David crosses over the Jordan, out of the wilderness on his way back to the royal city. In contrast to David's willingness to forgive, there is too often jealousy and fierce anger burning in our hearts against our brothers. Thanks be to God that His heart burns instead with love and mercy for us. For He despises nothing He has made but forgives the sins of all who are penitent for Jesus' sake. • Lord God, heavenly Father, grant to us Your Holy Spirit and the charitable heart of Your dear Son, that we may bear with one another in love. Amen.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 20:1 *Benjaminite*. Tribe from which King Saul had come (1Sm 9:1). When the kingdom was later divided under David's grandson Rehoboam, the house of Benjamin was the only other tribe left with Judah under the house of David (2Ch 11:1–12). *no portion in David*. Contradiction of what was said in 19:43. *every man to his tents*. Sheba called Israel to desert the king on his way to Jerusalem.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 20:3 *the ten concubines*. See notes, 15:16; 16:21. *as if in widowhood*. They had been taken by his son, so David would not lie with them (cf Lv 18:15).
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 20:4 *Amasa*. See note, 19:13. *within three days*. David wanted no delay in pursuing Sheba.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 20:6 *Abishai*. Joab's brother, a military commander. *your lord's servants*. General reference to David's troops.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 20:7 *Joab's men*. Presumably the third of the army that he commanded in the battle with Absalom (18:2). Though no longer the commander, Joab quickly moved to resume his previous position. *Cherethites … Pelethites*. See note, 15:18. *the mighty men*. David's elite soldiers. Cf 23:8–39; 1Ch 11:10–47.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 20:8 *the great stone*. Perhaps the "great stone" that Saul had the people bring to Gibeon for their treachery (1Sm 14:32–35). Perhaps it was also the "great high place" at Gibeon (1Ki 3:4). See map, p 500; cf 2Sm 2:12–23. *soldier's garment*. His tunic was girded for ready movement, for the march to battle, with his sword belt fastened over his clothing in the usual fashion. *it fell out*. Joab's sword, perhaps more of a long dagger, slid out of its sheath into the folds of his tunic.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 20:9 *by the beard with his right hand to kiss him*. Customary gesture of affection. By using his right hand, the fighting hand,

Joab put Amasa off guard against any attack.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 20:10 *Joab struck him … he died*. Cf Jgs 3:15–23; 2Sm 3:27. Under Solomon, Joab was later put to death for his crimes (1Ki 2:28–34).
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 20:11 The propaganda was that Joab had not turned against the king by killing Amasa, but had taken charge of the army on David's behalf.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 20:13 *all the people went on after Joab*. With Amasa out of the way, Joab was once more commander in chief.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 20:14 *Beth-maacah*. Lit, "house of Maacah," echoing name of Absalom's mother (3:3). Absalom fled to his mother's "house" (the kingdom of his maternal grandfather) after killing Amnon (13:37); now Sheba was following in his steps. *Bichrites*. Sheba was "the son of Bichri" (v 1), so these would be the members of his own clan, apparently the only followers he had left; or, "Berites" may be from a wordplay on "Beersheba." If so, the narrator is suggesting that the rebel Sheba ran from Beersheba in the south to the territory of Dan in the north and withdrew into a city.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 20:15 Classic siege techniques.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 20:18 *ask counsel at Abel*. City had a reputation for good judgment and wise counsel, as the woman exemplified in her negotiation with Joab.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 20:19 *peaceable and faithful … a mother in Israel*. Feminine qualities she described and represented are a striking contrast to masculine bravado of both Sheba, the "worthless" would-be rebel (v 1), and ruthless Joab. *swallow up the heritage of the* LORD*?* Joab would not want to be seen as an enemy of the Lord's land and people. See "portion," p 7.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 20:21 *him alone*. Cf 17:2–3; 18:3, 15–16.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 20:23 *Joab*. For now, his murderous crimes were left unpunished. Cf 1Ki 2:28–35. *Benaiah*. Would later replace Joab as head of the army under Solomon (1Ki 2:35).
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 20:24 *forced labor*. The service taken from foreigners, which had been utilized since the conquest (Jgs 1:28–35). At first, the people of Israel were not enslaved (1Ki 9:20–22), but by 1Ki 12:1–18 their yoke of hard service was heavy.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 20:25 *Zadok and Abiathar*. Abiathar was probably the high priest in the reign of David. Cf 1Ki 1:5–7; 2:35; 4:4.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 20:26 *Ira the Jairite*. Jairites were descendants of Manasseh who were given the territory of Gilead (Nu 32:40–41; 1Ch 2:21–22). Perhaps Ira was associated with Barzillai the Gileadite (17:27–29; 19:31–39). "The sons of Barzillai" were among "the sons of the priests" (Ezr 2:61). *David's priest*. See note, 8:18.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **Ch 20** For David to return to his throne in Jerusalem, a rebellion among the northern tribes of Israel must be stopped. Though David has been humbled and brought to repentance for his sins, the shadow of rebellion and violence continues to haunt his reign. Nevertheless, by restoring David to the throne of Israel, the Lord shows His promise to raise up a Son of David, whose throne and kingdom shall be eternal. That promise is ultimately fulfilled in Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whose incarnation, death, and resurrection win every spiritual victory. • "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for He has visited and redeemed His people and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant David" (Lk 1:68–69). Amen.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 21:1 *sought the face of the* LORD. Asked questions of the Lord, probably with the Urim and Thummim. See "seek," p 843. *bloodguilt on Saul … Gibeonites*. Nothing more is known of Saul's crime. See note, 1Ki 2:31. Joshua had sworn to let the Gibeonites live (Jsh 9). Perhaps the drought was due to Saul's rejection of this covenant.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 21:2 *the Gibeonites*. Cf Jsh 9; see note, Jsh 9:3.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 21:3 *that you may bless the heritage of the* LORD? Or, "that you may bless the land of Israel, which the Lord gave them as an inheritance." There could be no blessing from the offended party without atonement first being made. Cf Mt 5:23–24.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 21:4 *not a matter of silver or gold*. They did not seek monetary payment for their loss. *any man to death*. They did not need to put just anyone to death, only the guilty.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 21:5 *The man who consumed us*. Saul.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 21:6 *seven of his sons*. Perhaps to signify the number of people Saul killed, or because these seven participated in the slaughter of the Gibeonites, or to symbolize complete satisfaction (the number seven symbolized completeness; see p 217). *hang them*. Cf Nu 25:4; 35:31–33. *Gibeah*. Home and capital of Saul. See color map 3.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 21:7 *Mephibosheth*. Cf 4:4; 9:1–13; 16:1–4; 19:24–30. *because of the oath*. Cf Dt 23:23.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 21:8 *Mephibosheth*. Son of Saul, not of Jonathan.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 21:9 *before the LORD*. Not just a public hanging, but an act of expiation. Gibeonites may have hung them by impaling. *barley harvest*. Probably April. See calendar, p 262.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 21:10 *rain fell upon them*. Showing that God's wrath had been stilled and the drought had ended. *did not allow … to come upon them*. After the shameful death of her two sons, Rizpah sought to prevent further disgrace to their bodies.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 21:11–13 David accorded the remains an honorable burial and showed that the execution of Saul's sons was not due to personal animosity.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 21:14 *God responded to the plea*. God accepted the death of the seven men from Saul's house and ended the famine.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 21:1–14 Saul's sons, whether innocent or guilty with their father, now pay the penalty for Saul's crime. God will not allow sin to go unpunished, though His justice sometimes does not make sense to us. The apparent innocence of the seven from Saul's house, who were hanged on a mount before the Lord as an act of atonement for Saul's sin, brings into sharp focus the all-atoning sacrifice of Christ, the Son of God, who was crucified on Mount Calvary for all the sins of the world. Not just any man's death would propitiate God; only the death of God's Son could bring salvation. • Father, thank You for sending Your holy Son to atone for our sins and win salvation for us. Amen.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 21:15 *Philistines*. See p 345. *David grew weary*. From old age.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 21:16 *giants*. See notes, 1Sm 17:4; 21:10.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 21:17 *Abishai*. Cf 2:24; 3:30; 16:9–10; 18:2; 19:21–22; 20:6; 23:18–19. *lest you quench the lamp of Israel*. After the king's death, everyone, as though sitting in darkness, would not know what to do.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 21:18 *Gob*. See map, p 534. *Sibbecai*. One of David's mighty men. See note, 23:8.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 21:19 *Elhanan*. One of David's mighty men. See note, 23:8. *Goliath*. A scribe may have left out a portion of this verse since Lahmi is the Philistine defeated in this incident (cf 1Ch 20:5). David

defeated Goliath earlier (cf 1Sm 17:4, 50). *Gittite*. From Gath. See map, p 534.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 21:20 *giants*. See notes, 1Sm 17:4; 21:10.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 21:15–22 Despite the attack of Philistine giants and armies, David and the armies of Israel are victorious. Due to his old age, David will no longer go out to battle with his troops. Baptized believers in this world will always face warfare with the devil, the world, and the evil desires of the flesh. But God supplies His Holy Spirit for the battle, and He has already won the war through the cross of Christ. • "Lord, keep us steadfast in Your Word; Curb those who by deceit or sword Would wrest the kingdom from Your Son And bring to naught all He has done." Amen. (*LSB* 655:1)

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **Ch 22** Songs of Hannah and of David frame 1 and 2Sm. David's song shows that where there was no hope that a kingdom could be established, a miracle occurred. The one oppressed by enemies became the king over many nations. At first, it looks like this kingdom is fulfilled in David. But actually, the kingdom described here goes beyond David to his descendant Jesus. See notes, Ps 18.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 22:2–4 *my*. Shows unbreakable link between the speaker in the psalm (the anointed one) and God. God Himself was David's shield.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 22:5–20 Troubles listed here characterize both David and Jesus Christ. These troubles were not simply the death that is the common end of all people. David's office as anointed king put him always at the edge of death. In this, he foreshadowed Jesus, whose office as God's Anointed One not only brought Him to the edge of death but also put Him to death to suffer for the sins of all. Only thereafter did He regain His life. David depicted his own struggles and God's help in words taken from the exodus and God's revelation on Mount Sinai.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 22:5 As if drowning, the king was on the edge of death.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 22:6 *cords of Sheol*. David describes the terrified state of his conscience. See Ap XIIB 52; see also p 792.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 22:7 *From His temple*. In heaven, the place of God's gracious presence. Cf 2Ch 6:21; Heb 8:1–5.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 22:8 *earth reeled*. God, who created the world, used the creation to help His anointed through miraculous earthquakes,

storms, and the like. Cf Dt 4:11.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 22:9 *Smoke … fire … coals*. Cf Ex 19:18.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 22:10 *bowed the heavens*. God majestically revealed Himself in miraculous storms on Mount Sinai. Or, heaven came to earth when God helped His anointed king. Ultimately, divinity and humanity met in the one person of Jesus Christ.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 22:11–15 See notes, Ps 18:11–14, 15, 16.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 22:16 *rebuke*. The cry of God's anointed raised up God's wrath against the enemies. Cf Ex 14:21–22.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 22:17 *many waters*. Just as God rescued Israel from Egypt through the Red Sea waters, so also He rescued the king from the "waves of death" (v 5). Likewise, Christians are rescued from sin, death, and all spiritual enemies in the waters of Holy Baptism.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 22:20 *broad place*. Place where one is free to move, as opposed to the "cords of Sheol" (v 6).
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 22:21–31 Although these verses seem to change from the praise of God to the praise of human works, they actually point to God's covenant. God gave His Word to His people. One difference between God's people and others is that His people are humble toward His revelation, not haughty (v 28). All of "my righteousness" (v 25) is itself a gift of God (vv 29–31). Cf Jb 4:17–19.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 22:29 *lamp … lightens*. Light is a symbol of God's gifts of consolation, joy, strength, and salvation. Cf Is 58:8.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 22:32–46 By God's power, David was a mighty warrior. By God's power also, Jesus, the Anointed One, is strong to save, not by using the sword but by suffering from it.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 22:33 *blameless*. God would not blame or condemn David for his sins but would forgive.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 22:37 *wide place*. See note, v 20. The Lord gives to His anointed ones freedom from sin and death and also steadfastness of faith.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 22:42 *cried to the LORD*. But not in faith. Cf Jas 1:6; 4:3; see "call," p 842.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 22:43 *mire*. See note, Mi 7:10.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 22:51 *anointed … offspring forever*. Entire psalm has not only focused on David but also on his offspring, esp Jesus, the Anointed One, whose kingdom is eternal.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **Ch 22** In this song, David acknowledges that God Almighty trained him for war, provided him with weapons of war, fought for him, and gained for him the victory. Whatever good is in us is God's gift alone. Likewise, forgiveness of our sins and victory over our spiritual enemies are purely His gifts. • Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with David I praise You for delivering me from the power of evil. Amen.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 23:1–7 Luther wrote a treatise on this passage (AE 15:265–352), which teaches Christians to recognize prophecies about Christ and the Trinity in the OT.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 23:1 *last words*. Not the last words that David spoke, but his last will and testament. *anointed*. Luth: "And what is it that he lauds so highly? He says: 'In the first place it is that I am the man to whom God promised the Messiah [lit, "Anointed One"] of the God of Jacob, that the Messiah will descend from me'" (AE 15:271). See note, 1Sm 10:1. *sweet psalmist*. Luth: "To [saddened and wretched consciences], the Book of Psalms is a sweet and delightful song because it sings of and proclaims the Messiah" (AE 15:273–74).

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 23:2 *Spirit of the LORD*. Luth: "Here he begins to talk about the exalted Holy Trinity, of the divine essence. In the first place, he mentions the Holy Spirit" (AE 15:275).

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 23:3 *God of Israel*. See p 1227. Luth: "Which Person of the Godhead this Speaker is we Christians know from the Gospel of John. It is the Father who said in the beginning … 'Let there be light.' And His Word is the Person of the Son, through which Word 'all things were made.' … The same Son the Spirit by the mouth of David here calls *tsur*, 'Rock' of Israel…. For if a carnal mind approaches these words here … he will not think otherwise than that all these terms refer to God in one Person with a superfluity of words" (AE 15:276–78). *rules justly*. See "righteous," p 843; see also pp 1565–66. Luth: "Here he speaks of the eternal justice Messiah ushered into the world, whereby He redeemed us from sin and justified us. For in the words that follow David speaks of 'the everlasting covenant'" (AE 15:345).

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 23:4 *like rain*. Luth: "But in the days of Messiah, says David, when the [Rock of Israel] Himself will reign to justify us and to save us by grace, it will be as enchanting as the most delightful time in spring in the wake of a refreshing, warm rain, that is, following the preaching of the comforting Gospel, immediately after which the Sun,

Christ, rises in our hearts through true faith and devoid of Moses' clouds and thunder and lightning" (AE 15:348).

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 23:5 *does not my house stand*. Luth: "O, what am I and what is my house to God? After all, it is not a house which would be deserving of such inexpressible honors before God, a house from which Messiah, [the Rock of Israel], God's Son, the just Ruler among men, should be born" (AE 15:349). *secure*. Luth: "If you take a glimpse at history, it will seem to you that God has forgotten His covenant and not kept it…. After Messiah came, His kingdom, the church, when viewed externally, impresses one as more desolate and disordered…. [But] there always has been and always is a people that honors the name of Christ, that has His Word, Baptism, the Sacrament, the Office of the Keys, and the Spirit against all the gates of hell" (AE 15:349–50).

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 23:6 *worthless men*. See note, 1Sm 25:17.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 23:1–7 Inspired by the Holy Spirit, David speaks forth his last will and testament, prophesying of God's eternal covenant, which would be fulfilled in the kingdom of Christ. In fact, all the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures are inspired by the Holy Spirit. The Bible is God's Word, and we cannot set it aside. In this Word, God sets forth His covenant of grace, an eternal covenant in which Christ rules us, justifies us, and brings us to eternal life. • O Spirit of the Lord, O God of Israel, O Rock of Israel, most Holy Trinity, rule us, save us, and bring us into Your heavenly kingdom. Amen.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 23:8 *mighty men*. David's elite soldiers. *the three*. The three top soldiers.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 23:9–10 *the men of Israel withdrew*. Suggests that Eleazar alone stood his ground, while all other soldiers retreated.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 23:16 *poured it out*. A sacrifice to the Lord. David felt guilty and acknowledged that the three men risked their lives performing this act of courage.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 23:20 *ariels*. Perhaps means "lionlike men" or "altar." If the former, Abishai defeated two lionlike men, and then he killed a lion. If the latter, he destroyed two Moabite altars.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 23:24 *Asahel*. Cf 1Ch 2:16.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 23:25 *Harod*. Place near Mount Gilboa. Cf Jgs 7:1.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 23:27 *Mebunnai*. Probably the same as Sibbecai (21:18).
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 23:28 *Zalmon*. Probably Ilai of 1Ch 11:29.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 23:29 *Heleb*. Probably Heled (1Ch 11:30) or Heldai (1Ch 27:15). *Ittai*. Not Ittai the Gittite (i.e., of Gath), who led a third of the army against Absalom (15:18–22; 18:2).
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 23:30 *Benaiah*. Not the Benaiah of vv 20–23. *Hiddai*. Probably Hurai of 1Ch 11:32.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 23:31 *Abi-albon*. Perhaps Abiel of 1Ch 11:32.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 23:32 *the sons of Jashen*. Perhaps sons of Hashem. Cf 1Ch 11:34. *Jonathan*. Not Saul's son.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 23:33 *Shammah*. To be distinguished from Shammah, son of Agee, also a Hararite (vv 11–12).
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 23:34 *Eliphelet*. Perhaps identified with Eliphal son of Ur in 1Ch 11:35. *Ahithophel of Gilo*. Cf 15:12, 31; 16:23; 17:23.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 23:35 *Carmel*. Perhaps of the Judean Carmel. *Paarai*. Perhaps Naarai of 1Ch 11:37.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 23:37 *Naharai*. His inclusion on the list makes Joab's exclusion all the more conspicuous. David evidently considered Naharai, the armor-bearer of Joab and not a member of the 12 tribes of Israel, more honorable and worthy of special recognition than Joab, a close relative of David. *Beeroth*. A Hivite city.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 23:38 *Ira*. Not the Ira of 1Ch 11:28. Cf 1Ch 11:40.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 23:39 *thirty-seven in all*. Joab is conspicuously absent from this list. Cf vv 18, 24, 37; 1Ki 2:5–6.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 23:8–39 Though David certainly makes honorable mention of those who fought bravely alongside him, the faithfulness and loyalty of a warrior seems to be the deciding factor in whether he is included in David's list of mighty men. Joab, a general perceived as disloyal, is excluded from the list. In Heb 11, faith is the qualification for being included on the list. The saints in Heb 11 lived "by faith," believing God's Son would ransom them from bondage to hell and death. • Father, through faith in Christ, make me one of Your mighty saints. Amen.
2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 24:1 *and He incited David*. For reasons known only to God, He allowed Satan to tempt David. Motivated by pride or thirst

for power, the king ordered a census of his army. Chem: "God is said to have incited David because it was a punishment for sin" (*LTh* 1:197). See notes, 1Ch 21:1; Jas 1:13–14.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 24:2 *from Dan to Beersheba*. See note, Jgs 20:1.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 24:3 *why does my lord the king delight in this thing?* Joab recognized that David's action could bring guilt on Israel. Cf 1Ch 21:3.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 24:5 *Aroer … Gad … Jazer*. See map, p 558. Moving north.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 24:6 *Gilead … Kadesh … Dan … Sidon*. Toward Galilee and the coast of the Great Sea. *Hittites*. See p 345.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 24:7 *Tyre … Negeb … Beersheba*. See color map 2. *Hivites and Canaanites*. See p 345.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 24:9 *800,000 … 500,000*. Some commentators account for the disparity in the totals between 2Sm 24 and 1Ch 21 by suggesting a distinction between fully armed soldiers and all men of military age. When God commanded Moses to conduct a census of the tribes of Israel by their clans and fathers' houses, He established 20 as the age of eligibility for males to enter military service (Nu 1:3).

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 24:13 *three years of famine*. Cf 21:1. *flee three months before your foes*. Cf 1Sm 19:18; 21:10; 23:24–25. *three days' pestilence in your land?* Cf Ex 7–11. Luth: "Frequently an entire nation is punished because of a godless king, just as God also blesses an entire realm because of a pious prince. Thus God prospered all of Syria through Naaman (2Ki 5:1); but because of the sin which David committed He smote the entire people of Israel" (*WLS* § 2019).

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 24:15 *Dan to Beersheba*. See note, Jgs 20:1.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 24:16 *the angel*. The destroying angel sent by God to carry out the pestilence. *the LORD relented*. Hbr *nacham*. Lit, "repented." See note, 1Ch 21:15. *angel of the LORD*. See p 1227. *Araunah*. Called "Ornan" in 1Ch 21:15. Native of Jerusalem (see note, Jsh 15:8), not an Israelite.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 24:17 Those who filled positions of leadership over God's chosen people were to serve as shepherds for His people (cf Ezk 34:1–10; Is 44:28). David recognized that, as shepherd of the people of Israel, his guilt resulted in the death of thousands, and he pleaded with the Lord to direct His wrath toward his own family instead. Aph: "All the

diligent pastors [shepherds] used thus to give themselves on behalf of their sheep" (*NPNF* 2 13:384). Bern: "Perceiving and lamenting the slaughter of his people, [David] wished to devote himself for them" (*SLSB*, p 73). David's prayer was fulfilled in the Passion of Jesus, the Son of David and our Good Shepherd.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 24:18 *raise an altar … on the threshing floor*. Perhaps because God had revealed Himself there through His angel. David was supposed to offer sacrifices there to appease the wrath of the Lord.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 24:20 *paid homage*. See note, 14:4.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 24:24 *for a price*. Sacrifice had to be costly for David.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON 24:25 *built there an altar*. This altar was built where Solomon's temple would later be built. Cf 1Ch 22:1.

2 SAMUEL—NOTE ON **Ch 24** David's obsession with numbers and statistical strength does not belong in matters of faith. God did not command this census, so He punishes Israel because of it. The temptation to apply worldly strategies in matters of faith is great but should be resisted. Yet, pestilence led to David's repentance, repentance led to sacrifice, and sacrifice led to the temple—the place of God's mercy on earth. Likewise, Christ's cross was a sacrifice to appease God's wrath, which now has resulted in the place of God's mercy on earth: the means of grace in the Holy Christian Church. • "Lamb of God, pure and holy, Who on the cross didst suffer, Ever patient and lowly, Thyself to scorn didst offer. All sins Thou borest for us, Else had despair reigned o'er us: Have mercy on us, O Jesus!" Amen. (*LSB* 434:1)

1 Kings

1 Kings 1 | 1 Kings 2 | 1 Kings 3 | 1 Kings 4 | 1 Kings 5 | 1 Kings 6 | 1 Kings 7 | 1 Kings 8 | 1 Kings 9 | 1 Kings 10 | 1 Kings 11 | 1 Kings 12 | 1 Kings 13 | 1 Kings 14 | 1 Kings 15 | 1 Kings 16 | 1 Kings 17 | 1 Kings 18 | 1 Kings 19 | 1 Kings 20 | 1 Kings 21 | 1 Kings 22

- Introduction to 1 Kings
  - Overview
  - Reading 1 and 2 Kings
  - Luther on 1 and 2 Kings
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

David in His Old Age

1 [1]‡‡Now King David was old and advanced in years. And although
they covered him with clothes, he could not get warm. [2]† Therefore his
servants said to him, “Let a young woman be sought for my lord the king,
and let her wait on the king and be in his service. Let her lie in your arms,[1]
that my lord the king may be warm.” [3]†So they sought for a beautiful young
woman throughout all the territory of Israel, and found Abishag the
Shunammite, and brought her to the king. [4]† The young woman was very
beautiful, and she was of service to the king and attended to him, but the
king knew her not.

Adonijah Sets Himself Up as King

5 ‡ † Now Adonijah the son of Haggith exalted himself, saying, “I will be
king.” And he prepared for himself chariots and horsemen, and fifty men to
run before him. 6 † His father had never at any time displeased him by
asking, “Why have you done thus and so?” He was also a very handsome
man, and he was born next after Absalom. 7 † He conferred with Joab the son
of Zeruiah and with Abiathar the priest. And they followed Adonijah and
helped him. 8 † But Zadok the priest and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada and
Nathan the prophet and Shimei and Rei and David’s mighty men were not
with Adonijah.

9 † Adonijah sacrificed sheep, oxen, and fattened cattle by the Serpent’s
Stone, which is beside En-rogel, and he invited all his brothers, the king’s
sons, and all the royal officials of Judah, 10 † but he did not invite Nathan the
prophet or Benaiah or the mighty men or Solomon his brother.

Nathan and Bathsheba Before David

11 †Then Nathan said to Bathsheba the mother of Solomon, “Have you not
heard that Adonijah the son of Haggith has become king and David our lord
does not know it? 12 †Now therefore come, let me give you advice, that you
may save your own life and the life of your son Solomon. 13 †Go in at once
to King David, and say to him, ‘Did you not, my lord the king, swear to
your servant, saying, “Solomon your son shall reign after me, and he shall
sit on my throne”? Why then is Adonijah king?’ 14 †Then while you are still
speaking with the king, I also will come in after you and confirm[2] your
words.”

15 So Bathsheba went to the king in his chamber (now the king was very
old, and Abishag the Shunammite was attending to the king). 16 †Bathsheba
bowed and paid homage to the king, and the king said, “What do you
desire?” 17 She said to him, “My lord, you swore to your servant by the Lord
your God, saying, ‘Solomon your son shall reign after me, and he shall sit
on my throne.’ 18 †And now, behold, Adonijah is king, although you, my lord
the king, do not know it. 19 He has sacrificed oxen, fattened cattle, and sheep
in abundance, and has invited all the sons of the king, Abiathar the priest,
and Joab the commander of the army, but Solomon your servant he has not
invited. 20 And now, my lord the king, the eyes of all Israel are on you, to tell
them who shall sit on the throne of my lord the king after him. 21 †Otherwise
it will come to pass, when my lord the king sleeps with his fathers, that I
and my son Solomon will be counted offenders.”

22 While she was still speaking with the king, Nathan the prophet came in.
23 And they told the king, “Here is Nathan the prophet.” And when he came
in before the king, he bowed before the king, with his face to the ground.
24 †And Nathan said, “My lord the king, have you said, ‘Adonijah shall reign
after me, and he shall sit on my throne’? 25 For he has gone down this day
and has sacrificed oxen, fattened cattle, and sheep in abundance, and has
invited all the king’s sons, the commanders[1] of the army, and Abiathar the
priest. And behold, they are eating and drinking before him, and saying,
‘Long live King Adonijah!’ 26 †But me, your servant, and Zadok the priest,
and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and your servant Solomon he has not

invited. [27]Has this thing been brought about by my lord the king and you have not told your servants who should sit on the throne of my lord the king after him?”

Solomon Anointed King

28 ‡ † Then King David answered, “Call Bathsheba to me.” So she came
into the king’s presence and stood before the king. 29 And the king swore,
saying, “As the Lord lives, who has redeemed my soul out of every
adversity, 30 as I swore to you by the Lord, the God of Israel, saying,
‘Solomon your son shall reign after me, and he shall sit on my throne in my
place,’ even so will I do this day.” 31 † Then Bathsheba bowed with her face
to the ground and paid homage to the king and said, “May my lord King
David live forever!”

32 † King David said, “Call to me Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet,
and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada.” So they came before the king. 33 † And the
king said to them, “Take with you the servants of your lord and have
Solomon my son ride on my own mule, and bring him down to Gihon.
34 † And let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet there anoint him king
over Israel. Then blow the trumpet and say, ‘Long live King Solomon!’
35 † You shall then come up after him, and he shall come and sit on my
throne, for he shall be king in my place. And I have appointed him to be
ruler over Israel and over Judah.” 36 † And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada
answered the king, “Amen! May the Lord, the God of my lord the king, say
so. 37 As the Lord has been with my lord the king, even so may he be with
Solomon, and make his throne greater than the throne of my lord King
David.”

38 † So Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of
Jehoiada, and the Cherethites and the Pelethites went down and had
Solomon ride on King David’s mule and brought him to Gihon. 39 † There
Zadok the priest took the horn of oil from the tent and anointed Solomon.
Then they blew the trumpet, and all the people said, “Long live King
Solomon!” 40 † And all the people went up after him, playing on pipes, and
rejoicing with great joy, so that the earth was split by their noise.

41 † Adonijah and all the guests who were with him heard it as they
finished feasting. And when Joab heard the sound of the trumpet, he said,
“What does this uproar in the city mean?” 42 † While he was still speaking,
behold, Jonathan the son of Abiathar the priest came. And Adonijah said,

“Come in, for you are a worthy man and bring good news.” 43 † Jonathan
answered Adonijah, “No, for our lord King David has made Solomon king,
44 † and the king has sent with him Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and
Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and the Cherethites and the Pelethites. And
they had him ride on the king’s mule. 45 And Zadok the priest and Nathan
the prophet have anointed him king at Gihon, and they have gone up from
there rejoicing, so that the city is in an uproar. This is the noise that you
have heard. 46 † Solomon sits on the royal throne. 47 † Moreover, the king’s
servants came to congratulate our lord King David, saying, ‘May your God
make the name of Solomon more famous than yours, and make his throne
greater than your throne.’ And the king bowed himself on the bed. 48 And the
king also said, ‘Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, who has granted
someone[1] to sit on my throne this day, my own eyes seeing it.’”

49 Then all the guests of Adonijah trembled and rose, and each went his
own way. 50 † And Adonijah feared Solomon. So he arose and went and took
hold of the horns of the altar. 51 † Then it was told Solomon, “Behold,
Adonijah fears King Solomon, for behold, he has laid hold of the horns of
the altar, saying, ‘Let King Solomon swear to me first that he will not put
his servant to death with the sword.’” 52 And Solomon said, “If he will show
himself a worthy man, not one of his hairs shall fall to the earth, but if
wickedness is found in him, he shall die.” 53 † So King Solomon sent, and
they brought him down from the altar. And he came and paid homage to
King Solomon, and Solomon said to him, “Go to your house.”

David’s Instructions to Solomon

2 [1]‡‡When David’s time to die drew near, he commanded Solomon
his son, saying, [2]“I am about to go the way of all the earth. Be strong, and
show yourself a man, [3]†and keep the charge of the Lord your God, walking
in his ways and keeping his statutes, his commandments, his rules, and his
testimonies, as it is written in the Law of Moses, that you may prosper in all
that you do and wherever you turn, [4]†that the Lord may establish his word
that he spoke concerning me, saying, ‘If your sons pay close attention to
their way, to walk before me in faithfulness with all their heart and with all
their soul, you shall not lack[1] a man on the throne of Israel.’

[5]‡‡“Moreover, you also know what Joab the son of Zeruiah did to me,
how he dealt with the two commanders of the armies of Israel, Abner the
son of Ner, and Amasa the son of Jether, whom he killed, avenging[2] in time
of peace for blood that had been shed in war, and putting the blood of war[3]
on the belt around his[4] waist and on the sandals on his feet. [6]†Act therefore
according to your wisdom, but do not let his gray head go down to Sheol in
peace. [7]†But deal loyally with the sons of Barzillai the Gileadite, and let
them be among those who eat at your table, for with such loyalty[5] they met
me when I fled from Absalom your brother. [8]‡‡And there is also with you
Shimei the son of Gera, the Benjaminite from Bahurim, who cursed me
with a grievous curse on the day when I went to Mahanaim. But when he
came down to meet me at the Jordan, I swore to him by the Lord, saying, ‘I
will not put you to death with the sword.’ [9]†Now therefore do not hold him
guiltless, for you are a wise man. You will know what you ought to do to
him, and you shall bring his gray head down with blood to Sheol.”

The Death of David

[10]†† Then David slept with his fathers and was buried in the city of David.
[11]And the time that David reigned over Israel was forty years. He reigned
seven years in Hebron and thirty-three years in Jerusalem. [12]So Solomon sat
on the throne of David his father, and his kingdom was firmly established.

Solomon’s Reign Established

13 ✝✝✝Then Adonijah the son of Haggith came to Bathsheba the mother of
Solomon. And she said, “Do you come peacefully?” He said, “Peacefully.”
14 Then he said, “I have something to say to you.” She said, “Speak.” 15 ✝He
said, “You know that the kingdom was mine, and that all Israel fully
expected me to reign. However, the kingdom has turned about and become
my brother’s, for it was his from the Lord. 16 And now I have one request to
make of you; do not refuse me.” She said to him, “Speak.” 17 ✝And he said,
“Please ask King Solomon—he will not refuse you—to give me Abishag
the Shunammite as my wife.” 18 ✝Bathsheba said, “Very well; I will speak
for you to the king.”

19 ✝So Bathsheba went to King Solomon to speak to him on behalf of
Adonijah. And the king rose to meet her and bowed down to her. Then he
sat on his throne and had a seat brought for the king’s mother, and she sat
on his right. 20 Then she said, “I have one small request to make of you; do
not refuse me.” And the king said to her, “Make your request, my mother,
for I will not refuse you.” 21 She said, “Let Abishag the Shunammite be
given to Adonijah your brother as his wife.” 22 ✝King Solomon answered his
mother, “And why do you ask Abishag the Shunammite for Adonijah? Ask
for him the kingdom also, for he is my older brother, and on his side are
Abiathar[1] the priest and Joab the son of Zeruiah.” 23 ✝Then King Solomon
swore by the Lord, saying, “God do so to me and more also if this word
does not cost Adonijah his life! 24 Now therefore as the Lord lives, who has
established me and placed me on the throne of David my father, and who
has made me a house, as he promised, Adonijah shall be put to death
today.” 25 So King Solomon sent Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and he struck
him down, and he died.

26 ✝And to Abiathar the priest the king said, “Go to Anathoth, to your
estate, for you deserve death. But I will not at this time put you to death,
because you carried the ark of the Lord God before David my father, and
because you shared in all my father’s affliction.” 27 ✝So Solomon expelled
Abiathar from being priest to the Lord, thus fulfilling the word of the Lord
that he had spoken concerning the house of Eli in Shiloh.

28 † When the news came to Joab—for Joab had supported Adonijah
although he had not supported Absalom—Joab fled to the tent of the Lord
and caught hold of the horns of the altar. 29And when it was told King
Solomon, “Joab has fled to the tent of the Lord, and behold, he is beside the
altar,” Solomon sent Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, saying, “Go, strike him
down.” 30So Benaiah came to the tent of the Lord and said to him, “The king
commands, ‘Come out.’” But he said, “No, I will die here.” Then Benaiah
brought the king word again, saying, “Thus said Joab, and thus he answered
me.” 31 †The king replied to him, “Do as he has said, strike him down and
bury him, and thus take away from me and from my father’s house the guilt
for the blood that Joab shed without cause. 32The Lord will bring back his
bloody deeds on his own head, because, without the knowledge of my
father David, he attacked and killed with the sword two men more righteous
and better than himself, Abner the son of Ner, commander of the army of
Israel, and Amasa the son of Jether, commander of the army of Judah. 33 †So
shall their blood come back on the head of Joab and on the head of his
descendants forever. But for David and for his descendants and for his
house and for his throne there shall be peace from the Lord forevermore.”
34 †Then Benaiah the son of Jehoiada went up and struck him down and put
him to death. And he was buried in his own house in the wilderness. 35 †The
king put Benaiah the son of Jehoiada over the army in place of Joab, and
the king put Zadok the priest in the place of Abiathar.

36 † Then the king sent and summoned Shimei and said to him, “Build
yourself a house in Jerusalem and dwell there, and do not go out from there
to any place whatever. 37 †For on the day you go out and cross the brook
Kidron, know for certain that you shall die. Your blood shall be on your
own head.” 38And Shimei said to the king, “What you say is good; as my
lord the king has said, so will your servant do.” So Shimei lived in
Jerusalem many days.

39 †But it happened at the end of three years that two of Shimei’s servants
ran away to Achish, son of Maacah, king of Gath. And when it was told
Shimei, “Behold, your servants are in Gath,” 40 †Shimei arose and saddled a
donkey and went to Gath to Achish to seek his servants. Shimei went and
brought his servants from Gath. 41And when Solomon was told that Shimei
had gone from Jerusalem to Gath and returned, 42 † the king sent and

summoned Shimei and said to him, “Did I not make you swear by the Lord and solemnly warn you, saying, ‘Know for certain that on the day you go out and go to any place whatever, you shall die’? And you said to me, ‘What you say is good; I will obey.’ 43Why then have you not kept your oath to the Lord and the commandment with which I commanded you?” 44The king also said to Shimei, “You know in your own heart all the harm that you did to David my father. So the Lord will bring back your harm on your own head. 45†But King Solomon shall be blessed, and the throne of David shall be established before the Lord forever.” 46† Then the king commanded Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and he went out and struck him down, and he died.

So the kingdom was established in the hand of Solomon.

Solomon's Prayer for Wisdom

3 [1]‡‡Solomon made a marriage alliance with Pharaoh king of Egypt.
He took Pharaoh's daughter and brought her into the city of David until he
had finished building his own house and the house of the Lord and the wall
around Jerusalem. [2]The people were sacrificing at the high places, however,
because no house had yet been built for the name of the Lord.

[3]†Solomon loved the Lord, walking in the statutes of David his father,
only he sacrificed and made offerings at the high places. [4]†And the king
went to Gibeon to sacrifice there, for that was the great high place. Solomon
used to offer a thousand burnt offerings on that altar. [5]†At Gibeon the Lord
appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and God said, "Ask what I shall
give you." [6]†And Solomon said, "You have shown great and steadfast love
to your servant David my father, because he walked before you in
faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you. And
you have kept for him this great and steadfast love and have given him a
son to sit on his throne this day. [7]†And now, O Lord my God, you have
made your servant king in place of David my father, although I am but a
little child. I do not know how to go out or come in. [8]†And your servant is
in the midst of your people whom you have chosen, a great people, too
many to be numbered or counted for multitude. [9]† Give your servant
therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, that I may discern
between good and evil, for who is able to govern this your great people?"

[10]It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. [11]†And God said to
him, "Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long
life or riches or the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself
understanding to discern what is right, [12]†behold, I now do according to
your word. Behold, I give you a wise and discerning mind, so that none like
you has been before you and none like you shall arise after you. [13]†I give
you also what you have not asked, both riches and honor, so that no other
king shall compare with you, all your days. [14]†And if you will walk in my
ways, keeping my statutes and my commandments, as your father David
walked, then I will lengthen your days."

15 † And Solomon awoke, and behold, it was a dream. Then he came to Jerusalem and stood before the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and offered up burnt offerings and peace offerings, and made a feast for all his servants.

Solomon’s Wisdom

16 ‡‡Then two prostitutes came to the king and stood before him. 17The
one woman said, “Oh, my lord, this woman and I live in the same house,
and I gave birth to a child while she was in the house. 18†Then on the third
day after I gave birth, this woman also gave birth. And we were alone.
There was no one else with us in the house; only we two were in the house.
19‡And this woman’s son died in the night, because she lay on him. 20And
she arose at midnight and took my son from beside me, while your servant
slept, and laid him at her breast, and laid her dead son at my breast. 21When
I rose in the morning to nurse my child, behold, he was dead. But when I
looked at him closely in the morning, behold, he was not the child that I had
borne.” 22But the other woman said, “No, the living child is mine, and the
dead child is yours.” The first said, “No, the dead child is yours, and the
living child is mine.” Thus they spoke before the king.

23Then the king said, “The one says, ‘This is my son that is alive, and
your son is dead’; and the other says, ‘No; but your son is dead, and my son
is the living one.’” 24And the king said, “Bring me a sword.” So a sword
was brought before the king. 25And the king said, “Divide the living child in
two, and give half to the one and half to the other.” 26†Then the woman
whose son was alive said to the king, because her heart yearned for her son,
“Oh, my lord, give her the living child, and by no means put him to death.”
But the other said, “He shall be neither mine nor yours; divide him.”
27†Then the king answered and said, “Give the living child to the first
woman, and by no means put him to death; she is his mother.” 28†And all
Israel heard of the judgment that the king had rendered, and they stood in
awe of the king, because they perceived that the wisdom of God was in him
to do justice.

Solomon's Officials

4 [1]‡King Solomon was king over all Israel, [2]†and these were his high officials: Azariah the son of Zadok was the priest; [3]†Elihoreph and Ahijah the sons of Shisha were secretaries; Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud was recorder; [4]† Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was in command of the army; Zadok and Abiathar were priests; [5]†Azariah the son of Nathan was over the officers; Zabud the son of Nathan was priest and king's friend; [6]† Ahishar was in charge of the palace; and Adoniram the son of Abda was in charge of the forced labor.

[7]‡ †Solomon had twelve officers over all Israel, who provided food for the king and his household. Each man had to make provision for one month in the year. [8]These were their names: Ben-hur, in the hill country of Ephraim; [9]† Ben-deker, in Makaz, Shaalbim, Beth-shemesh, and Elonbeth-hanan; [10]Ben-hesed, in Arubboth (to him belonged Socoh and all the land of Hepher); [11]† Ben-abinadab, in all Naphath-dor (he had Taphath the daughter of Solomon as his wife); [12]Baana the son of Ahilud, in Taanach, Megiddo, and all Beth-shean that is beside Zarethan below Jezreel, and from Beth-shean to Abel-meholah, as far as the other side of Jokmeam; [13]Ben-geber, in Ramoth-gilead (he had the villages of Jair the son of Manasseh, which are in Gilead, and he had the region of Argob, which is in Bashan, sixty great cities with walls and bronze bars); [14]Ahinadab the son of Iddo, in Mahanaim; [15]Ahimaaz, in Naphtali (he had taken Basemath the daughter of Solomon as his wife); [16]Baana the son of Hushai, in Asher and Bealoth; [17]Jehoshaphat the son of Paruah, in Issachar; [18]Shimei the son of Ela, in Benjamin; [19]† Geber the son of Uri, in the land of Gilead, the country of Sihon king of the Amorites and of Og king of Bashan. And there was one governor who was over the land.

Solomon’s Wealth and Wisdom

20 ‡ † Judah and Israel were as many as the sand by the sea. They ate and
drank and were happy. 21 † [1] Solomon ruled over all the kingdoms from the
Euphrates to the land of the Philistines and to the border of Egypt. They
brought tribute and served Solomon all the days of his life.
22 ‡ † Solomon’s provision for one day was thirty cors[2] of fine flour and
sixty cors of meal, 23 † ten fat oxen, and twenty pasture-fed cattle, a hundred
sheep, besides deer, gazelles, roebucks, and fattened fowl. 24 † For he had
dominion over all the region west of the Euphrates from Tiphsah to Gaza,
over all the kings west of the Euphrates. And he had peace on all sides
around him. 25 † And Judah and Israel lived in safety, from Dan even to
Beersheba, every man under his vine and under his fig tree, all the days of
Solomon. 26 † Solomon also had 40,000 stalls of horses for his chariots, and
12,000 horsemen. 27 † And those officers supplied provisions for King
Solomon, and for all who came to King Solomon’s table, each one in his
month. They let nothing be lacking. 28 Barley also and straw for the horses
and swift steeds they brought to the place where it was required, each
according to his duty.
29 † And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding beyond measure,
and breadth of mind like the sand on the seashore, 30 so that Solomon’s
wisdom surpassed the wisdom of all the people of the east and all the
wisdom of Egypt. 31 † For he was wiser than all other men, wiser than Ethan
the Ezrahite, and Heman, Calcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol, and his
fame was in all the surrounding nations. 32 † He also spoke 3,000 proverbs,
and his songs were 1,005. 33 † He spoke of trees, from the cedar that is in
Lebanon to the hyssop that grows out of the wall. He spoke also of beasts,
and of birds, and of reptiles, and of fish. 34 And people of all nations came to
hear the wisdom of Solomon, and from all the kings of the earth, who had
heard of his wisdom.

Preparations for Building the Temple

5 [1]†[1] Now Hiram king of Tyre sent his servants to Solomon when he
heard that they had anointed him king in place of his father, for Hiram
always loved David. [2]And Solomon sent word to Hiram, [3]†"You know that
David my father could not build a house for the name of the Lord his God
because of the warfare with which his enemies surrounded him, until the
Lord put them under the soles of his feet. [4]†But now the Lord my God has
given me rest on every side. There is neither adversary nor misfortune.
[5]And so I intend to build a house for the name of the Lord my God, as the
Lord said to David my father, 'Your son, whom I will set on your throne in
your place, shall build the house for my name.' [6]†Now therefore command
that cedars of Lebanon be cut for me. And my servants will join your
servants, and I will pay you for your servants such wages as you set, for you
know that there is no one among us who knows how to cut timber like the
Sidonians."

[7]†As soon as Hiram heard the words of Solomon, he rejoiced greatly and
said, Blessed be the Lord this day, who has given to David a wise son to be
over this great people." [8]And Hiram sent to Solomon, saying, "I have heard
the message that you have sent to me. I am ready to do all you desire in the
matter of cedar and cypress timber. [9]†My servants shall bring it down to the
sea from Lebanon, and I will make it into rafts to go by sea to the place you
direct. And I will have them broken up there, and you shall receive it. And
you shall meet my wishes by providing food for my household." [10]So Hiram
supplied Solomon with all the timber of cedar and cypress that he desired,
[11]† while Solomon gave Hiram 20,000 cors[1] of wheat as food for his
household, and 20,000[2] cors of beaten oil. Solomon gave this to Hiram
year by year. [12]†And the Lord gave Solomon wisdom, as he promised him.
And there was peace between Hiram and Solomon, and the two of them
made a treaty.

[13]† King Solomon drafted forced labor out of all Israel, and the draft
numbered 30,000 men. [14]And he sent them to Lebanon, 10,000 a month in
shifts. They would be a month in Lebanon and two months at home.

Adoniram was in charge of the draft. [15]†Solomon also had 70,000 burden-
bearers and 80,000 stonecutters in the hill country, [16]†besides Solomon's
3,300 chief officers who were over the work, who had charge of the people
who carried on the work. [17]†At the king's command they quarried out great,
costly stones in order to lay the foundation of the house with dressed stones.
[18]†So Solomon's builders and Hiram's builders and the men of Gebal did
the cutting and prepared the timber and the stone to build the house.

Solomon Builds the Temple

6 [1]†In the four hundred and eightieth year after the people of Israel
came out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over
Israel, in the month of Ziv, which is the second month, he began to build the
house of the LORD. [2]†The house that King Solomon built for the LORD was
sixty cubits[3] long, twenty cubits wide, and thirty cubits high. [3]The
vestibule in front of the nave of the house was twenty cubits long, equal to
the width of the house, and ten cubits deep in front of the house. [4]And he
made for the house windows with recessed frames.[4][5]He also built a
structure[5] against the wall of the house, running around the walls of the
house, both the nave and the inner sanctuary. And he made side chambers
all around. [6]The lowest story[6] was five cubits broad, the middle one was
six cubits broad, and the third was seven cubits broad. For around the
outside of the house he made offsets on the wall in order that the supporting
beams should not be inserted into the walls of the house.

[7]When the house was built, it was with stone prepared at the quarry, so
that neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron was heard in the house
while it was being built.

[8]The entrance for the lowest[7] story was on the south side of the house,
and one went up by stairs to the middle story, and from the middle story to
the third. [9]So he built the house and finished it, and he made the ceiling of
the house of beams and planks of cedar. [10]He built the structure against the
whole house, five cubits high, and it was joined to the house with timbers of
cedar.

[11]†Now the word of the LORD came to Solomon, [12]†"Concerning this
house that you are building, if you will walk in my statutes and obey my
rules and keep all my commandments and walk in them, then I will
establish my word with you, which I spoke to David your father. [13]†And I
will dwell among the children of Israel and will not forsake my people
Israel."

[14]So Solomon built the house and finished it. [15]†He lined the walls of the
house on the inside with boards of cedar. From the floor of the house to the
walls of the ceiling, he covered them on the inside with wood, and he

covered the floor of the house with boards of cypress. 16 †He built twenty
cubits of the rear of the house with boards of cedar from the floor to the
walls, and he built this within as an inner sanctuary, as the Most Holy Place.
17The house, that is, the nave in front of the inner sanctuary, was forty cubits
long. 18 †The cedar within the house was carved in the form of gourds and
open flowers. All was cedar; no stone was seen. 19The inner sanctuary he
prepared in the innermost part of the house, to set there the ark of the
covenant of the Lord. 20 †The inner sanctuary[1] was twenty cubits long,
twenty cubits wide, and twenty cubits high, and he overlaid it with pure
gold. He also overlaid[2] an altar of cedar. 21 †And Solomon overlaid the
inside of the house with pure gold, and he drew chains of gold across, in
front of the inner sanctuary, and overlaid it with gold. 22 †And he overlaid
the whole house with gold, until all the house was finished. Also the whole
altar that belonged to the inner sanctuary he overlaid with gold.

23 †In the inner sanctuary he made two cherubim of olivewood, each ten
cubits high. 24 †Five cubits was the length of one wing of the cherub, and
five cubits the length of the other wing of the cherub; it was ten cubits from
the tip of one wing to the tip of the other. 25The other cherub also measured
ten cubits; both cherubim had the same measure and the same form. 26The
height of one cherub was ten cubits, and so was that of the other cherub.
27He put the cherubim in the innermost part of the house. And the wings of
the cherubim were spread out so that a wing of one touched the one wall,
and a wing of the other cherub touched the other wall; their other wings
touched each other in the middle of the house. 28And he overlaid the
cherubim with gold.

29 †Around all the walls of the house he carved engraved figures of
cherubim and palm trees and open flowers, in the inner and outer rooms.
30The floor of the house he overlaid with gold in the inner and outer rooms.

31 †For the entrance to the inner sanctuary he made doors of olivewood;
the lintel and the doorposts were five-sided.[3]32 †He covered the two doors
of olivewood with carvings of cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers. He
overlaid them with gold and spread gold on the cherubim and on the palm
trees.

33So also he made for the entrance to the nave doorposts of olivewood, in
the form of a square, 34and two doors of cypress wood. The two leaves of

the one door were folding, and the two leaves of the other door were folding. 35 †On them he carved cherubim and palm trees and open flowers, and he overlaid them with gold evenly applied on the carved work. 36 †He built the inner court with three courses of cut stone and one course of cedar beams.

37 †In the fourth year the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid, in the month of Ziv. 38 And in the eleventh year, in the month of Bul, which is the eighth month, the house was finished in all its parts, and according to all its specifications. He was seven years in building it.

Solomon Builds His Palace

7 [1] ‡ † Solomon was building his own house thirteen years, and he
finished his entire house.

[2] ‡ † He built the House of the Forest of Lebanon. Its length was a hundred
cubits[1] and its breadth fifty cubits and its height thirty cubits, and it was
built on four[2] rows of cedar pillars, with cedar beams on the pillars. [3] † And
it was covered with cedar above the chambers that were on the forty-five
pillars, fifteen in each row. [4] There were window frames in three rows, and
window opposite window in three tiers. [5] All the doorways and windows[3]
had square frames, and window was opposite window in three tiers.

[6] † And he made the Hall of Pillars; its length was fifty cubits, and its
breadth thirty cubits. There was a porch in front with pillars, and a canopy
in front of them.

[7] † And he made the Hall of the Throne where he was to pronounce
judgment, even the Hall of Judgment. It was finished with cedar from floor
to rafters.[4]

[8] † His own house where he was to dwell, in the other court back of the
hall, was of like workmanship. Solomon also made a house like this hall for
Pharaoh's daughter whom he had taken in marriage.

[9] † All these were made of costly stones, cut according to measure, sawed
with saws, back and front, even from the foundation to the coping, and from
the outside to the great court. [10] The foundation was of costly stones, huge
stones, stones of eight and ten cubits. [11] And above were costly stones, cut
according to measurement, and cedar. [12] The great court had three courses of
cut stone all around, and a course of cedar beams; so had the inner court of
the house of the Lord and the vestibule of the house.

The Temple Furnishings

13 ‡ ‡ † And King Solomon sent and brought Hiram from Tyre. 14 † He was
the son of a widow of the tribe of Naphtali, and his father was a man of
Tyre, a worker in bronze. And he was full of wisdom, understanding, and
skill for making any work in bronze. He came to King Solomon and did all
his work.

15 † He cast two pillars of bronze. Eighteen cubits was the height of one
pillar, and a line of twelve cubits measured its circumference. It was hollow,
and its thickness was four fingers. The second pillar was the same.[5] 16 † He
also made two capitals of cast bronze to set on the tops of the pillars. The
height of the one capital was five cubits, and the height of the other capital
was five cubits. 17 There were lattices of checker work with wreaths of chain
work for the capitals on the tops of the pillars, a lattice[6] for the one capital
and a lattice for the other capital. 18 † Likewise he made pomegranates[7] in
two rows around the one latticework to cover the capital that was on the top
of the pillar, and he did the same with the other capital. 19 † Now the capitals
that were on the tops of the pillars in the vestibule were of lily-work, four
cubits. 20 The capitals were on the two pillars and also above the rounded
projection which was beside the latticework. There were two hundred
pomegranates in two rows all around, and so with the other capital. 21 † He
set up the pillars at the vestibule of the temple. He set up the pillar on the
south and called its name Jachin, and he set up the pillar on the north and
called its name Boaz. 22 And on the tops of the pillars was lily-work. Thus
the work of the pillars was finished.

23 † Then he made the sea of cast metal. It was round, ten cubits from brim
to brim, and five cubits high, and a line of thirty cubits measured its
circumference. 24 Under its brim were gourds, for ten cubits, compassing the
sea all around. The gourds were in two rows, cast with it when it was cast.
25 It stood on twelve oxen, three facing north, three facing west, three facing
south, and three facing east. The sea was set on them, and all their rear parts
were inward. 26 † Its thickness was a handbreadth,[1] and its brim was made
like the brim of a cup, like the flower of a lily. It held two thousand baths.[2]

27 † He also made the ten stands of bronze. Each stand was four cubits
long, four cubits wide, and three cubits high. 28 This was the construction of
the stands: they had panels, and the panels were set in the frames, 29 ‡ and on
the panels that were set in the frames were lions, oxen, and cherubim. On
the frames, both above and below the lions and oxen, there were wreaths of
beveled work. 30 Moreover, each stand had four bronze wheels and axles of
bronze, and at the four corners were supports for a basin. The supports were
cast with wreaths at the side of each. 31 Its opening was within a crown that
projected upward one cubit. Its opening was round, as a pedestal is made, a
cubit and a half deep. At its opening there were carvings, and its panels
were square, not round. 32 And the four wheels were underneath the panels.
The axles of the wheels were of one piece with the stands, and the height of
a wheel was a cubit and a half. 33 The wheels were made like a chariot
wheel; their axles, their rims, their spokes, and their hubs were all cast.
34 There were four supports at the four corners of each stand. The supports
were of one piece with the stands. 35 And on the top of the stand there was a
round band half a cubit high; and on the top of the stand its stays and its
panels were of one piece with it. 36 And on the surfaces of its stays and on its
panels, he carved cherubim, lions, and palm trees, according to the space of
each, with wreaths all around. 37 After this manner he made the ten stands.
All of them were cast alike, of the same measure and the same form.

38 † And he made ten basins of bronze. Each basin held forty baths, each
basin measured four cubits, and there was a basin for each of the ten stands.
39 And he set the stands, five on the south side of the house, and five on the
north side of the house. And he set the sea at the southeast corner of the
house.

40 ‡ † Hiram also made the pots, the shovels, and the basins. So Hiram
finished all the work that he did for King Solomon on the house of the Lord:
41 the two pillars, the two bowls of the capitals that were on the tops of the
pillars, and the two latticeworks to cover the two bowls of the capitals that
were on the tops of the pillars; 42 and the four hundred pomegranates for the
two latticeworks, two rows of pomegranates for each latticework, to cover
the two bowls of the capitals that were on the pillars; 43 † the ten stands, and
the ten basins on the stands; 44 and the one sea, and the twelve oxen
underneath the sea.

45 Now the pots, the shovels, and the basins, all these vessels in the house
of the LORD, which Hiram made for King Solomon, were of burnished
bronze. 46 †In the plain of the Jordan the king cast them, in the clay ground
between Succoth and Zarethan. 47 And Solomon left all the vessels
unweighed, because there were so many of them; the weight of the bronze
was not ascertained.
48 ††So Solomon made all the vessels that were in the house of the LORD:
the golden altar, the golden table for the bread of the Presence, 49 the
lampstands of pure gold, five on the south side and five on the north, before
the inner sanctuary; the flowers, the lamps, and the tongs, of gold; 50 the
cups, snuffers, basins, dishes for incense, and fire pans, of pure gold; and
the sockets of gold, for the doors of the innermost part of the house, the
Most Holy Place, and for the doors of the nave of the temple.
51 †Thus all the work that King Solomon did on the house of the LORD was
finished. And Solomon brought in the things that David his father had
dedicated, the silver, the gold, and the vessels, and stored them in the
treasuries of the house of the LORD.

The Ark Brought into the Temple

8 [1] ‡Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel and all the heads of
the tribes, the leaders of the fathers' houses of the people of Israel, before
King Solomon in Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the covenant of the Lord
out of the city of David, which is Zion. [2] † And all the men of Israel
assembled to King Solomon at the feast in the month Ethanim, which is the
seventh month. [3] And all the elders of Israel came, and the priests took up
the ark. [4] And they brought up the ark of the Lord, the tent of meeting, and
all the holy vessels that were in the tent; the priests and the Levites brought
them up. [5] † And King Solomon and all the congregation of Israel, who had
assembled before him, were with him before the ark, sacrificing so many
sheep and oxen that they could not be counted or numbered. [6] † Then the
priests brought the ark of the covenant of the Lord to its place in the inner
sanctuary of the house, in the Most Holy Place, underneath the wings of the
cherubim. [7] ‡For the cherubim spread out their wings over the place of the
ark, so that the cherubim overshadowed the ark and its poles. [8] † And the
poles were so long that the ends of the poles were seen from the Holy Place
before the inner sanctuary; but they could not be seen from outside. And
they are there to this day. [9] † There was nothing in the ark except the two
tablets of stone that Moses put there at Horeb, where the Lord made a
covenant with the people of Israel, when they came out of the land of
Egypt. [10] † And when the priests came out of the Holy Place, a cloud filled
the house of the Lord, [11] † so that the priests could not stand to minister
because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord filled the house of the Lord.

Solomon Blesses the Lord

12 ‡ ‡ Then Solomon said, “The Lord[1] has said that he would dwell in thick
darkness. 13 † I have indeed built you an exalted house, a place for you to
dwell in forever.” 14 † Then the king turned around and blessed all the
assembly of Israel, while all the assembly of Israel stood. 15 † And he said,
“Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, who with his hand has fulfilled
what he promised with his mouth to David my father, saying, 16 † ‘Since the
day that I brought my people Israel out of Egypt, I chose no city out of all
the tribes of Israel in which to build a house, that my name might be there.
But I chose David to be over my people Israel.’ 17 Now it was in the heart of
David my father to build a house for the name of the Lord, the God of
Israel. 18 † But the Lord said to David my father, ‘Whereas it was in your
heart to build a house for my name, you did well that it was in your heart.
19 Nevertheless, you shall not build the house, but your son who shall be
born to you shall build the house for my name.’ 20 † Now the Lord has
fulfilled his promise that he made. For I have risen in the place of David my
father, and sit on the throne of Israel, as the Lord promised, and I have built
the house for the name of the Lord, the God of Israel. 21 † And there I have
provided a place for the ark, in which is the covenant of the Lord that he
made with our fathers, when he brought them out of the land of Egypt.”

Solomon’s Prayer of Dedication

22 ‡† Then Solomon stood before the altar of the Lord in the presence of all
the assembly of Israel and spread out his hands toward heaven, 23 † and said,
“O Lord, God of Israel, there is no God like you, in heaven above or on
earth beneath, keeping covenant and showing steadfast love to your
servants who walk before you with all their heart, 24 † who have kept with
your servant David my father what you declared to him. You spoke with
your mouth, and with your hand have fulfilled it this day. 25 † Now therefore,
O Lord, God of Israel, keep for your servant David my father what you have
promised him, saying, ‘You shall not lack a man to sit before me on the
throne of Israel, if only your sons pay close attention to their way, to walk
before me as you have walked before me.’ 26 Now therefore, O God of
Israel, let your word be confirmed, which you have spoken to your servant
David my father.

27 † “But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the
highest heaven cannot contain you; how much less this house that I have
built! 28 † Yet have regard to the prayer of your servant and to his plea, O
Lord my God, listening to the cry and to the prayer that your servant prays
before you this day, 29 † that your eyes may be open night and day toward
this house, the place of which you have said, ‘My name shall be there,’ that
you may listen to the prayer that your servant offers toward this place.
30 † And listen to the plea of your servant and of your people Israel, when
they pray toward this place. And listen in heaven your dwelling place, and
when you hear, forgive.

31 ‡‡† “If a man sins against his neighbor and is made to take an oath and
comes and swears his oath before your altar in this house, 32 † then hear in
heaven and act and judge your servants, condemning the guilty by bringing
his conduct on his own head, and vindicating the righteous by rewarding
him according to his righteousness.

33 “When your people Israel are defeated before the enemy because they
have sinned against you, and if they turn again to you and acknowledge
your name and pray and plead with you in this house, 34 † then hear in

heaven and forgive the sin of your people Israel and bring them again to the land that you gave to their fathers.

35 “When heaven is shut up and there is no rain because they have sinned against you, if they pray toward this place and acknowledge your name and turn from their sin, when you afflict them, 36 † then hear in heaven and forgive the sin of your servants, your people Israel, when you teach them the good way in which they should walk, and grant rain upon your land, which you have given to your people as an inheritance.

37 “If there is famine in the land, if there is pestilence or blight or mildew or locust or caterpillar, if their enemy besieges them in the land at their gates,[1] whatever plague, whatever sickness there is, 38 † whatever prayer, whatever plea is made by any man or by all your people Israel, each knowing the affliction of his own heart and stretching out his hands toward this house, 39 † then hear in heaven your dwelling place and forgive and act and render to each whose heart you know, according to all his ways (for you, you only, know the hearts of all the children of mankind), 40 that they may fear you all the days that they live in the land that you gave to our fathers.

41 “Likewise, when a foreigner, who is not of your people Israel, comes from a far country for your name’s sake 42 (for they shall hear of your great name and your mighty hand, and of your outstretched arm), when he comes and prays toward this house, 43 † hear in heaven your dwelling place and do according to all for which the foreigner calls to you, in order that all the peoples of the earth may know your name and fear you, as do your people Israel, and that they may know that this house that I have built is called by your name.

44 † “If your people go out to battle against their enemy, by whatever way you shall send them, and they pray to the Lord toward the city that you have chosen and the house that I have built for your name, 45 † then hear in heaven their prayer and their plea, and maintain their cause.

46 † “If they sin against you—for there is no one who does not sin—and you are angry with them and give them to an enemy, so that they are carried away captive to the land of the enemy, far off or near, 47 † yet if they turn their heart in the land to which they have been carried captive, and repent and plead with you in the land of their captors, saying, ‘We have sinned and

have acted perversely and wickedly,’ [48]† if they repent with all their mind and with all their heart in the land of their enemies, who carried them captive, and pray to you toward their land, which you gave to their fathers, the city that you have chosen, and the house that I have built for your name, [49]† then hear in heaven your dwelling place their prayer and their plea, and maintain their cause [50]† and forgive your people who have sinned against you, and all their transgressions that they have committed against you, and grant them compassion in the sight of those who carried them captive, that they may have compassion on them [51]† (for they are your people, and your heritage, which you brought out of Egypt, from the midst of the iron furnace). [52]Let your eyes be open to the plea of your servant and to the plea of your people Israel, giving ear to them whenever they call to you. [53]† For you separated them from among all the peoples of the earth to be your heritage, as you declared through Moses your servant, when you brought our fathers out of Egypt, O Lord God.”

Solomon’s Benediction

54 ‡ † Now as Solomon finished offering all this prayer and plea to the
Lord, he arose from before the altar of the Lord, where he had knelt with
hands outstretched toward heaven. 55 † And he stood and blessed all the
assembly of Israel with a loud voice, saying, 56 “Blessed be the Lord who has
given rest to his people Israel, according to all that he promised. Not one
word has failed of all his good promise, which he spoke by Moses his
servant. 57 The Lord our God be with us, as he was with our fathers. May he
not leave us or forsake us, 58 † that he may incline our hearts to him, to walk
in all his ways and to keep his commandments, his statutes, and his rules,
which he commanded our fathers. 59 † Let these words of mine, with which I
have pleaded before the Lord, be near to the Lord our God day and night,
and may he maintain the cause of his servant and the cause of his people
Israel, as each day requires, 60 † that all the peoples of the earth may know
that the Lord is God; there is no other. 61 † Let your heart therefore be wholly
true to the Lord our God, walking in his statutes and keeping his
commandments, as at this day.”

Solomon’s Sacrifices

62 ‡‡Then the king, and all Israel with him, offered sacrifice before the
Lord. 63Solomon offered as peace offerings to the Lord 22,000 oxen and
120,000 sheep. So the king and all the people of Israel dedicated the house
of the Lord. 64The same day the king consecrated the middle of the court
that was before the house of the Lord, for there he offered the burnt offering
and the grain offering and the fat pieces of the peace offerings, because the
bronze altar that was before the Lord was too small to receive the burnt
offering and the grain offering and the fat pieces of the peace offerings.

65 ‡So Solomon held the feast at that time, and all Israel with him, a great
assembly, from Lebo-hamath to the Brook of Egypt, before the Lord our
God, seven days.[1] 66On the eighth day he sent the people away, and they
blessed the king and went to their homes joyful and glad of heart for all the
goodness that the Lord had shown to David his servant and to Israel his
people.

The Lord Appears to Solomon

9 [1]‡‡As soon as Solomon had finished building the house of the Lord
and the king's house and all that Solomon desired to build, [2]† the Lord
appeared to Solomon a second time, as he had appeared to him at Gibeon.
[3]†And the Lord said to him, "I have heard your prayer and your plea, which
you have made before me. I have consecrated this house that you have built,
by putting my name there forever. My eyes and my heart will be there for
all time. [4]And as for you, if you will walk before me, as David your father
walked, with integrity of heart and uprightness, doing according to all that I
have commanded you, and keeping my statutes and my rules, [5]then I will
establish your royal throne over Israel forever, as I promised David your
father, saying, 'You shall not lack a man on the throne of Israel.' [6]†But if
you turn aside from following me, you or your children, and do not keep
my commandments and my statutes that I have set before you, but go and
serve other gods and worship them, [7]†then I will cut off Israel from the land
that I have given them, and the house that I have consecrated for my name I
will cast out of my sight, and Israel will become a proverb and a byword
among all peoples. [8]† And this house will become a heap of ruins.[2]
Everyone passing by it will be astonished and will hiss, and they will say,
'Why has the Lord done thus to this land and to this house?' [9]†Then they
will say, 'Because they abandoned the Lord their God who brought their
fathers out of the land of Egypt and laid hold on other gods and worshiped
them and served them. Therefore the Lord has brought all this disaster on
them.'"

Solomon's Other Acts

10 ‡ At the end of twenty years, in which Solomon had built the two
houses, the house of the Lord and the king's house, 11 † and Hiram king of
Tyre had supplied Solomon with cedar and cypress timber and gold, as
much as he desired, King Solomon gave to Hiram twenty cities in the land
of Galilee. 12 † But when Hiram came from Tyre to see the cities that
Solomon had given him, they did not please him. 13 † Therefore he said,
"What kind of cities are these that you have given me, my brother?" So they
are called the land of Cabul to this day. 14 Hiram had sent to the king 120
talents[1] of gold.

15 † And this is the account of the forced labor that King Solomon drafted
to build the house of the Lord and his own house and the Millo and the wall
of Jerusalem and Hazor and Megiddo and Gezer 16 ‡ † (Pharaoh king of
Egypt had gone up and captured Gezer and burned it with fire, and had
killed the Canaanites who lived in the city, and had given it as dowry to his
daughter, Solomon's wife; 17 † so Solomon rebuilt Gezer) and Lower Beth-
horon 18 † and Baalath and Tamar in the wilderness, in the land of Judah,
[2] 19 † and all the store cities that Solomon had, and the cities for his chariots,
and the cities for his horsemen, and whatever Solomon desired to build in
Jerusalem, in Lebanon, and in all the land of his dominion. 20 All the people
who were left of the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and
the Jebusites, who were not of the people of Israel— 21 † their descendants
who were left after them in the land, whom the people of Israel were unable
to devote to destruction[3]—these Solomon drafted to be slaves, and so they
are to this day. 22 † But of the people of Israel Solomon made no slaves. They
were the soldiers, they were his officials, his commanders, his captains, his
chariot commanders and his horsemen.

23 † These were the chief officers who were over Solomon's work: 550
who had charge of the people who carried on the work.

24 ‡ But Pharaoh's daughter went up from the city of David to her own
house that Solomon had built for her. Then he built the Millo.

25 † Three times a year Solomon used to offer up burnt offerings and peace
offerings on the altar that he built to the Lord, making offerings with it[4]

before the LORD. So he finished the house.

26 †King Solomon built a fleet of ships at Ezion-geber, which is near Eloth
on the shore of the Red Sea, in the land of Edom. 27 And Hiram sent with the
fleet his servants, seamen who were familiar with the sea, together with the
servants of Solomon. 28 †And they went to Ophir and brought from there
gold, 420 talents, and they brought it to King Solomon.

The Queen of Sheba

10 [1]‡†Now when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon
concerning the name of the Lord, she came to test him with hard questions.
[2]She came to Jerusalem with a very great retinue, with camels bearing
spices and very much gold and precious stones. And when she came to
Solomon, she told him all that was on her mind. [3]And Solomon answered
all her questions; there was nothing hidden from the king that he could not
explain to her. [4]And when the queen of Sheba had seen all the wisdom of
Solomon, the house that he had built, [5]†the food of his table, the seating of
his officials, and the attendance of his servants, their clothing, his
cupbearers, and his burnt offerings that he offered at the house of the Lord,
there was no more breath in her.

[6]And she said to the king, "The report was true that I heard in my own
land of your words and of your wisdom, [7]but I did not believe the reports
until I came and my own eyes had seen it. And behold, the half was not told
me. Your wisdom and prosperity surpass the report that I heard. [8]†Happy
are your men! Happy are your servants, who continually stand before you
and hear your wisdom! [9]†Blessed be the Lord your God, who has delighted
in you and set you on the throne of Israel! Because the Lord loved Israel
forever, he has made you king, that you may execute justice and
righteousness." [10]†Then she gave the king 120 talents[1] of gold, and a very
great quantity of spices and precious stones. Never again came such an
abundance of spices as these that the queen of Sheba gave to King
Solomon.

[11]†Moreover, the fleet of Hiram, which brought gold from Ophir, brought
from Ophir a very great amount of almug wood and precious stones. [12]†And
the king made of the almug wood supports for the house of the Lord and for
the king's house, also lyres and harps for the singers. No such almug wood
has come or been seen to this day.

[13]†And King Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba all that she desired,
whatever she asked besides what was given her by the bounty of King
Solomon. So she turned and went back to her own land with her servants.

Solomon’s Great Wealth

14 ‡‡‡Now the weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year was 666
talents of gold, 15 †besides that which came from the explorers and from the
business of the merchants, and from all the kings of the west and from the
governors of the land. 16 King Solomon made 200 large shields of beaten
gold; 600 shekels[2] of gold went into each shield. 17 † And he made 300
shields of beaten gold; three minas[3] of gold went into each shield. And the
king put them in the House of the Forest of Lebanon. 18 †The king also made
a great ivory throne and overlaid it with the finest gold. 19 The throne had six
steps, and at the back of the throne was a calf’s head, and on each side of
the seat were armrests and two lions standing beside the armrests, 20 †while
twelve lions stood there, one on each end of a step on the six steps. The like
of it was never made in any kingdom. 21 All King Solomon’s drinking
vessels were of gold, and all the vessels of the House of the Forest of
Lebanon were of pure gold. None were of silver; silver was not considered
as anything in the days of Solomon. 22 †For the king had a fleet of ships of
Tarshish at sea with the fleet of Hiram. Once every three years the fleet of
ships of Tarshish used to come bringing gold, silver, ivory, apes, and
peacocks.[4]

23 Thus King Solomon excelled all the kings of the earth in riches and in
wisdom. 24 And the whole earth sought the presence of Solomon to hear his
wisdom, which God had put into his mind. 25 † Every one of them brought
his present, articles of silver and gold, garments, myrrh, spices, horses, and
mules, so much year by year.

26 †And Solomon gathered together chariots and horsemen. He had 1,400
chariots and 12,000 horsemen, whom he stationed in the chariot cities and
with the king in Jerusalem. 27 † And the king made silver as common in
Jerusalem as stone, and he made cedar as plentiful as the sycamore of the
Shephelah. 28 † And Solomon’s import of horses was from Egypt and Kue,
and the king’s traders received them from Kue at a price. 29 †A chariot could
be imported from Egypt for 600 shekels of silver and a horse for 150, and
so through the king’s traders they were exported to all the kings of the
Hittites and the kings of Syria.

Solomon Turns from the Lord

11 [1]‡†Now King Solomon loved many foreign women, along with
the daughter of Pharaoh: Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Sidonian, and
Hittite women, [2]†from the nations concerning which the Lord had said to
the people of Israel, “You shall not enter into marriage with them, neither
shall they with you, for surely they will turn away your heart after their
gods.” Solomon clung to these in love. [3]†He had 700 wives, princesses, and
300 concubines. And his wives turned away his heart. [4]†For when Solomon
was old his wives turned away his heart after other gods, and his heart was
not wholly true to the Lord his God, as was the heart of David his father.
[5]†For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and after
Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. [6]So Solomon did what was evil
in the sight of the Lord and did not wholly follow the Lord, as David his
father had done. [7]† Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the
abomination of Moab, and for Molech the abomination of the Ammonites,
on the mountain east of Jerusalem. [8]And so he did for all his foreign wives,
who made offerings and sacrificed to their gods.

The Lord Raises Adversaries

9 ‡And the Lord was angry with Solomon, because his heart had turned
away from the Lord, the God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice
10 †and had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go
after other gods. But he did not keep what the Lord commanded.
11 †Therefore the Lord said to Solomon, “Since this has been your practice
and you have not kept my covenant and my statutes that I have commanded
you, I will surely tear the kingdom from you and will give it to your
servant. 12 †Yet for the sake of David your father I will not do it in your
days, but I will tear it out of the hand of your son. 13However, I will not tear
away all the kingdom, but I will give one tribe to your son, for the sake of
David my servant and for the sake of Jerusalem that I have chosen.”

14 ‡†And the Lord raised up an adversary against Solomon, Hadad the
Edomite. He was of the royal house in Edom. 15 ‡For when David was in
Edom, and Joab the commander of the army went up to bury the slain, he
struck down every male in Edom 16(for Joab and all Israel remained there
six months, until he had cut off every male in Edom). 17But Hadad fled to
Egypt, together with certain Edomites of his father’s servants, Hadad still
being a little child. 18 †They set out from Midian and came to Paran and took
men with them from Paran and came to Egypt, to Pharaoh king of Egypt,
who gave him a house and assigned him an allowance of food and gave him
land. 19 †And Hadad found great favor in the sight of Pharaoh, so that he
gave him in marriage the sister of his own wife, the sister of Tahpenes the
queen. 20And the sister of Tahpenes bore him Genubath his son, whom
Tahpenes weaned in Pharaoh’s house. And Genubath was in Pharaoh’s
house among the sons of Pharaoh. 21 †But when Hadad heard in Egypt that
David slept with his fathers and that Joab the commander of the army was
dead, Hadad said to Pharaoh, “Let me depart, that I may go to my own
country.” 22But Pharaoh said to him, “What have you lacked with me that
you are now seeking to go to your own country?” And he said to him,
“Only let me depart.”

23 †God also raised up as an adversary to him, Rezon the son of Eliada,
who had fled from his master Hadadezer king of Zobah. 24And he gathered

men about him and became leader of a marauding band, after the killing by David. And they went to Damascus and lived there and made him king in Damascus. 25 †He was an adversary of Israel all the days of Solomon, doing harm as Hadad did. And he loathed Israel and reigned over Syria.

26 †Jeroboam the son of Nebat, an Ephraimite of Zeredah, a servant of Solomon, whose mother's name was Zeruah, a widow, also lifted up his hand against the king. 27 And this was the reason why he lifted up his hand against the king. Solomon built the Millo, and closed up the breach of the city of David his father. 28 †The man Jeroboam was very able, and when Solomon saw that the young man was industrious he gave him charge over all the forced labor of the house of Joseph. 29 †And at that time, when Jeroboam went out of Jerusalem, the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite found him on the road. Now Ahijah had dressed himself in a new garment, and the two of them were alone in the open country. 30 †Then Ahijah laid hold of the new garment that was on him, and tore it into twelve pieces. 31 And he said to Jeroboam, "Take for yourself ten pieces, for thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, 'Behold, I am about to tear the kingdom from the hand of Solomon and will give you ten tribes 32 †(but he shall have one tribe, for the sake of my servant David and for the sake of Jerusalem, the city that I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel), 33 †because they have[1] forsaken me and worshiped Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, Chemosh the god of Moab, and Milcom the god of the Ammonites, and they have not walked in my ways, doing what is right in my sight and keeping my statutes and my rules, as David his father did. 34 †Nevertheless, I will not take the whole kingdom out of his hand, but I will make him ruler all the days of his life, for the sake of David my servant whom I chose, who kept my commandments and my statutes. 35 But I will take the kingdom out of his son's hand and will give it to you, ten tribes. 36 †Yet to his son I will give one tribe, that David my servant may always have a lamp before me in Jerusalem, the city where I have chosen to put my name. 37 And I will take you, and you shall reign over all that your soul desires, and you shall be king over Israel. 38 †And if you will listen to all that I command you, and will walk in my ways, and do what is right in my eyes by keeping my statutes and my commandments, as David my servant did, I will be with you and will build you a sure house, as I built for David, and I will give

Israel to you. [39]†And I will afflict the offspring of David because of this, but not forever.’” [40]†Solomon sought therefore to kill Jeroboam. But Jeroboam arose and fled into Egypt, to Shishak king of Egypt, and was in Egypt until the death of Solomon.

[41] †Now the rest of the acts of Solomon, and all that he did, and his wisdom, are they not written in the Book of the Acts of Solomon? [42]†And the time that Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel was forty years. [43]†And Solomon slept with his fathers and was buried in the city of David his father. And Rehoboam his son reigned in his place.

Rehoboam's Folly

12 [1]‡ ‡ †Rehoboam went to Shechem, for all Israel had come to
Shechem to make him king. [2]And as soon as Jeroboam the son of Nebat
heard of it (for he was still in Egypt, where he had fled from King
Solomon), then Jeroboam returned from[1] Egypt. [3]† And they sent and
called him, and Jeroboam and all the assembly of Israel came and said to
Rehoboam, [4]†"Your father made our yoke heavy. Now therefore lighten the
hard service of your father and his heavy yoke on us, and we will serve
you." [5]He said to them, "Go away for three days, then come again to me."
So the people went away.

[6]†Then King Rehoboam took counsel with the old men, who had stood
before Solomon his father while he was yet alive, saying, "How do you
advise me to answer this people?" [7]†And they said to him, "If you will be a
servant to this people today and serve them, and speak good words to them
when you answer them, then they will be your servants forever." [8]†But he
abandoned the counsel that the old men gave him and took counsel with the
young men who had grown up with him and stood before him. [9]And he said
to them, "What do you advise that we answer this people who have said to
me, 'Lighten the yoke that your father put on us'?" [10]And the young men
who had grown up with him said to him, "Thus shall you speak to this
people who said to you, 'Your father made our yoke heavy, but you lighten
it for us,' thus shall you say to them, 'My little finger is thicker than my
father's thighs. [11]†And now, whereas my father laid on you a heavy yoke, I
will add to your yoke. My father disciplined you with whips, but I will
discipline you with scorpions.'"

[12]So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam the third day, as the
king said, "Come to me again the third day." [13]And the king answered the
people harshly, and forsaking the counsel that the old men had given him,
[14]he spoke to them according to the counsel of the young men, saying, "My
father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to your yoke. My father
disciplined you with whips, but I will discipline you with scorpions." [15]†So
the king did not listen to the people, for it was a turn of affairs brought

about by the LORD that he might fulfill his word, which the LORD spoke by Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam the son of Nebat.

The Kingdom Divided

16 ✝ ✝ And when all Israel saw that the king did not listen to them, the
people answered the king, “What portion do we have in David? We have no
inheritance in the son of Jesse. To your tents, O Israel! Look now to your
own house, David.” So Israel went to their tents. 17 ✝ But Rehoboam reigned
over the people of Israel who lived in the cities of Judah. 18 ✝ Then King
Rehoboam sent Adoram, who was taskmaster over the forced labor, and all
Israel stoned him to death with stones. And King Rehoboam hurried to
mount his chariot to flee to Jerusalem. 19 ✝ So Israel has been in rebellion
against the house of David to this day. 20 ✝ And when all Israel heard that
Jeroboam had returned, they sent and called him to the assembly and made
him king over all Israel. There was none that followed the house of David
but the tribe of Judah only.

21 ✝ When Rehoboam came to Jerusalem, he assembled all the house of
Judah and the tribe of Benjamin, 180,000 chosen warriors, to fight against
the house of Israel, to restore the kingdom to Rehoboam the son of
Solomon. 22 ✝ But the word of God came to Shemaiah the man of God:
23 “Say to Rehoboam the son of Solomon, king of Judah, and to all the house
of Judah and Benjamin, and to the rest of the people, 24 ✝ ‘Thus says the
Lord, You shall not go up or fight against your relatives the people of Israel.
Every man return to his home, for this thing is from me.’” So they listened
to the word of the Lord and went home again, according to the word of the
Lord.

Jeroboam’s Golden Calves

25 ‡ † Then Jeroboam built Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim and
lived there. And he went out from there and built Penuel. 26 And Jeroboam
said in his heart, “Now the kingdom will turn back to the house of David.
27 † If this people go up to offer sacrifices in the temple of the Lord at
Jerusalem, then the heart of this people will turn again to their lord, to
Rehoboam king of Judah, and they will kill me and return to Rehoboam
king of Judah.” 28 † So the king took counsel and made two calves of gold.
And he said to the people, “You have gone up to Jerusalem long enough.
Behold your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt.”
29 † And he set one in Bethel, and the other he put in Dan. 30 † Then this thing
became a sin, for the people went as far as Dan to be before one.[1] 31 † He
also made temples on high places and appointed priests from among all the
people, who were not of the Levites. 32 † And Jeroboam appointed a feast on
the fifteenth day of the eighth month like the feast that was in Judah, and he
offered sacrifices on the altar. So he did in Bethel, sacrificing to the calves
that he made. And he placed in Bethel the priests of the high places that he
had made. 33 † He went up to the altar that he had made in Bethel on the
fifteenth day in the eighth month, in the month that he had devised from his
own heart. And he instituted a feast for the people of Israel and went up to
the altar to make offerings.

A Man of God Confronts Jeroboam

13 [1]†† And behold, a man of God came out of Judah by the word of
the Lord to Bethel. Jeroboam was standing by the altar to make offerings.
[2]† And the man cried against the altar by the word of the Lord and said, "O
altar, altar, thus says the Lord: 'Behold, a son shall be born to the house of
David, Josiah by name, and he shall sacrifice on you the priests of the high
places who make offerings on you, and human bones shall be burned on
you.'" [3]And he gave a sign the same day, saying, "This is the sign that the
Lord has spoken: 'Behold, the altar shall be torn down, and the ashes that
are on it shall be poured out.'" [4]† And when the king heard the saying of the
man of God, which he cried against the altar at Bethel, Jeroboam stretched
out his hand from the altar, saying, "Seize him." And his hand, which he
stretched out against him, dried up, so that he could not draw it back to
himself. [5]† The altar also was torn down, and the ashes poured out from the
altar, according to the sign that the man of God had given by the word of
the Lord. [6]† And the king said to the man of God, "Entreat now the favor of
the Lord your God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored to me."
And the man of God entreated the Lord, and the king's hand was restored to
him and became as it was before. [7]† And the king said to the man of God,
"Come home with me, and refresh yourself, and I will give you a reward."
[8]† And the man of God said to the king, "If you give me half your house, I
will not go in with you. And I will not eat bread or drink water in this place,
[9]for so was it commanded me by the word of the Lord, saying, 'You shall
neither eat bread nor drink water nor return by the way that you came.'"
[10]So he went another way and did not return by the way that he came to
Bethel.

The Prophet's Disobedience

11 ‡ † Now an old prophet lived in Bethel. And his sons[1] came and told
him all that the man of God had done that day in Bethel. They also told to
their father the words that he had spoken to the king. 12 And their father said
to them, "Which way did he go?" And his sons showed him the way that the
man of God who came from Judah had gone. 13 And he said to his sons,
"Saddle the donkey for me." So they saddled the donkey for him and he
mounted it. 14 And he went after the man of God and found him sitting under
an oak. And he said to him, "Are you the man of God who came from
Judah?" And he said, "I am." 15 ‡ Then he said to him, "Come home with me
and eat bread." 16 And he said, "I may not return with you, or go in with you,
neither will I eat bread nor drink water with you in this place, 17 for it was
said to me by the word of the Lord, 'You shall neither eat bread nor drink
water there, nor return by the way that you came.'" 18 † And he said to him,
"I also am a prophet as you are, and an angel spoke to me by the word of
the Lord, saying, 'Bring him back with you into your house that he may eat
bread and drink water.'" But he lied to him. 19 So he went back with him and
ate bread in his house and drank water.

20 † And as they sat at the table, the word of the Lord came to the prophet
who had brought him back. 21 † And he cried to the man of God who came
from Judah, "Thus says the Lord, 'Because you have disobeyed the word of
the Lord and have not kept the command that the Lord your God
commanded you, 22 † but have come back and have eaten bread and drunk
water in the place of which he said to you, "Eat no bread and drink no
water," your body shall not come to the tomb of your fathers.'" 23 † And after
he had eaten bread and drunk, he saddled the donkey for the prophet whom
he had brought back. 24 ‡ And as he went away a lion met him on the road
and killed him. And his body was thrown in the road, and the donkey stood
beside it; the lion also stood beside the body. 25 And behold, men passed by
and saw the body thrown in the road and the lion standing by the body. And
they came and told it in the city where the old prophet lived.

26 And when the prophet who had brought him back from the way heard
of it, he said, "It is the man of God who disobeyed the word of the Lord;

therefore the Lord has given him to the lion, which has torn him and killed him, according to the word that the Lord spoke to him.” 27And he said to his sons, “Saddle the donkey for me.” And they saddled it. 28†And he went and found his body thrown in the road, and the donkey and the lion standing beside the body. The lion had not eaten the body or torn the donkey. 29And the prophet took up the body of the man of God and laid it on the donkey and brought it back to the city[2] to mourn and to bury him. 30†And he laid the body in his own grave. And they mourned over him, saying, “Alas, my brother!” 31†And after he had buried him, he said to his sons, “When I die, bury me in the grave in which the man of God is buried; lay my bones beside his bones. 32†For the saying that he called out by the word of the Lord against the altar in Bethel and against all the houses of the high places that are in the cities of Samaria shall surely come to pass.”

33†After this thing Jeroboam did not turn from his evil way, but made priests for the high places again from among all the people. Any who would, he ordained to be priests of the high places. 34And this thing became sin to the house of Jeroboam, so as to cut it off and to destroy it from the face of the earth.

Prophecy Against Jeroboam

14 [1]†At that time Abijah the son of Jeroboam fell sick. [2]†And Jeroboam said to his wife, “Arise, and disguise yourself, that it not be known that you are the wife of Jeroboam, and go to Shiloh. Behold, Ahijah the prophet is there, who said of me that I should be king over this people. [3]†Take with you ten loaves, some cakes, and a jar of honey, and go to him. He will tell you what shall happen to the child.”

[4]Jeroboam’s wife did so. She arose and went to Shiloh and came to the house of Ahijah. Now Ahijah could not see, for his eyes were dim because of his age. [5]And the Lord said to Ahijah, “Behold, the wife of Jeroboam is coming to inquire of you concerning her son, for he is sick. Thus and thus shall you say to her.”

When she came, she pretended to be another woman. [6]But when Ahijah heard the sound of her feet, as she came in at the door, he said, “Come in, wife of Jeroboam. Why do you pretend to be another? For I am charged with unbearable news for you. [7]Go, tell Jeroboam, ‘Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: “Because I exalted you from among the people and made you leader over my people Israel [8]and tore the kingdom away from the house of David and gave it to you, and yet you have not been like my servant David, who kept my commandments and followed me with all his heart, doing only that which was right in my eyes, [9]†but you have done evil above all who were before you and have gone and made for yourself other gods and metal images, provoking me to anger, and have cast me behind your back, [10]††therefore behold, I will bring harm upon the house of Jeroboam and will cut off from Jeroboam every male, both bond and free in Israel, and will burn up the house of Jeroboam, as a man burns up dung until it is all gone. [11]Anyone belonging to Jeroboam who dies in the city the dogs shall eat, and anyone who dies in the open country the birds of the heavens shall eat, for the Lord has spoken it.”’ [12]Arise therefore, go to your house. When your feet enter the city, the child shall die. [13]†And all Israel shall mourn for him and bury him, for he only of Jeroboam shall come to the grave, because in him there is found something pleasing to the Lord, the God of Israel, in the house of Jeroboam. [14]†Moreover, the Lord will raise up for himself a king

over Israel who shall cut off the house of Jeroboam today. And henceforth,
15 † the Lord will strike Israel as a reed is shaken in the water, and root up
Israel out of this good land that he gave to their fathers and scatter them
beyond the Euphrates, because they have made their Asherim, provoking
the Lord to anger. 16 † And he will give Israel up because of the sins of
Jeroboam, which he sinned and made Israel to sin."

17 † Then Jeroboam's wife arose and departed and came to Tirzah. And as
she came to the threshold of the house, the child died. 18 And all Israel
buried him and mourned for him, according to the word of the Lord, which
he spoke by his servant Ahijah the prophet.

The Death of Jeroboam

19 ‡ † Now the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, how he warred and how he
reigned, behold, they are written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings
of Israel. 20 † And the time that Jeroboam reigned was twenty-two years. And
he slept with his fathers, and Nadab his son reigned in his place.

Rehoboam Reigns in Judah

21 ‡‡†Now Rehoboam the son of Solomon reigned in Judah. Rehoboam
was forty-one years old when he began to reign, and he reigned seventeen
years in Jerusalem, the city that the Lord had chosen out of all the tribes of
Israel, to put his name there. His mother's name was Naamah the
Ammonite. 22 †And Judah did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, and
they provoked him to jealousy with their sins that they committed, more
than all that their fathers had done. 23 †For they also built for themselves
high places and pillars and Asherim on every high hill and under every
green tree, 24 †and there were also male cult prostitutes in the land. They did
according to all the abominations of the nations that the Lord drove out
before the people of Israel.

25 †In the fifth year of King Rehoboam, Shishak king of Egypt came up
against Jerusalem. 26 †He took away the treasures of the house of the Lord
and the treasures of the king's house. He took away everything. He also
took away all the shields of gold that Solomon had made, 27 and King
Rehoboam made in their place shields of bronze, and committed them to the
hands of the officers of the guard, who kept the door of the king's house.
28 And as often as the king went into the house of the Lord, the guard carried
them and brought them back to the guardroom.

29 †Now the rest of the acts of Rehoboam and all that he did, are they not
written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? 30 †And there
was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam continually. 31 †And Rehoboam
slept with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the city of David.
His mother's name was Naamah the Ammonite. And Abijam his son
reigned in his place.

Abijam Reigns in Judah

15 [1] Now in the eighteenth year of King Jeroboam the son of Nebat, Abijam began to reign over Judah. [2] He reigned for three years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Maacah the daughter of Abishalom. [3] And he walked in all the sins that his father did before him, and his heart was not wholly true to the Lord his God, as the heart of David his father. [4] Nevertheless, for David's sake the Lord his God gave him a lamp in Jerusalem, setting up his son after him, and establishing Jerusalem, [5] because David did what was right in the eyes of the Lord and did not turn aside from anything that he commanded him all the days of his life, except in the matter of Uriah the Hittite. [6] Now there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all the days of his life. [7] The rest of the acts of Abijam and all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? And there was war between Abijam and Jeroboam. [8] And Abijam slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of David. And Asa his son reigned in his place.

Asa Reigns In Judah

9 ‡ † In the twentieth year of Jeroboam king of Israel, Asa began to reign
over Judah, 10 † and he reigned forty-one years in Jerusalem. His mother's
name was Maacah the daughter of Abishalom. 11 And Asa did what was right
in the eyes of the Lord, as David his father had done. 12 † He put away the
male cult prostitutes out of the land and removed all the idols that his
fathers had made. 13 † He also removed Maacah his mother from being queen
mother because she had made an abominable image for Asherah. And Asa
cut down her image and burned it at the brook Kidron. 14 † But the high
places were not taken away. Nevertheless, the heart of Asa was wholly true
to the Lord all his days. 15 † And he brought into the house of the Lord the
sacred gifts of his father and his own sacred gifts, silver, and gold, and
vessels.

16 † And there was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their
days. 17 † Baasha king of Israel went up against Judah and built Ramah, that
he might permit no one to go out or come in to Asa king of Judah. 18 † Then
Asa took all the silver and the gold that were left in the treasures of the
house of the Lord and the treasures of the king's house and gave them into
the hands of his servants. And King Asa sent them to Ben-hadad the son of
Tabrimmon, the son of Hezion, king of Syria, who lived in Damascus,
saying, 19 "Let there be a covenant[1] between me and you, as there was
between my father and your father. Behold, I am sending to you a present of
silver and gold. Go, break your covenant with Baasha king of Israel, that he
may withdraw from me." 20 † And Ben-hadad listened to King Asa and sent
the commanders of his armies against the cities of Israel and conquered
Ijon, Dan, Abel-beth-maacah, and all Chinneroth, with all the land of
Naphtali. 21 † And when Baasha heard of it, he stopped building Ramah, and
he lived in Tirzah. 22 † Then King Asa made a proclamation to all Judah,
none was exempt, and they carried away the stones of Ramah and its
timber, with which Baasha had been building, and with them King Asa built
Geba of Benjamin and Mizpah. 23 † Now the rest of all the acts of Asa, all his
might, and all that he did, and the cities that he built, are they not written in
the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? But in his old age he was

diseased in his feet. [24]† And Asa slept with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father, and Jehoshaphat his son reigned in his place.

Nadab Reigns in Israel

25 ‡‡† Nadab the son of Jeroboam began to reign over Israel in the second
year of Asa king of Judah, and he reigned over Israel two years. 26 † He did
what was evil in the sight of the Lord and walked in the way of his father,
and in his sin which he made Israel to sin.

27 † Baasha the son of Ahijah, of the house of Issachar, conspired against
him. And Baasha struck him down at Gibbethon, which belonged to the
Philistines, for Nadab and all Israel were laying siege to Gibbethon. 28 † So
Baasha killed him in the third year of Asa king of Judah and reigned in his
place. 29 † And as soon as he was king, he killed all the house of Jeroboam.
He left to the house of Jeroboam not one that breathed, until he had
destroyed it, according to the word of the Lord that he spoke by his servant
Ahijah the Shilonite. 30 It was for the sins of Jeroboam that he sinned and
that he made Israel to sin, and because of the anger to which he provoked
the Lord, the God of Israel.

31 † Now the rest of the acts of Nadab and all that he did, are they not
written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel? 32 † And there
was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their days.

Baasha Reigns in Israel

33 ‡ † In the third year of Asa king of Judah, Baasha the son of Ahijah
began to reign over all Israel at Tirzah, and he reigned twenty-four years.
34 He did what was evil in the sight of the Lord and walked in the way of
Jeroboam and in his sin which he made Israel to sin.

16 1 † And the word of the Lord came to Jehu the son of Hanani
against Baasha, saying, 2 "Since I exalted you out of the dust and made you
leader over my people Israel, and you have walked in the way of Jeroboam
and have made my people Israel to sin, provoking me to anger with their
sins, 3 behold, I will utterly sweep away Baasha and his house, and I will
make your house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat. 4 Anyone
belonging to Baasha who dies in the city the dogs shall eat, and anyone of
his who dies in the field the birds of the heavens shall eat."

5 † Now the rest of the acts of Baasha and what he did, and his might, are
they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel? 6 † And
Baasha slept with his fathers and was buried at Tirzah, and Elah his son
reigned in his place. 7 † Moreover, the word of the Lord came by the prophet
Jehu the son of Hanani against Baasha and his house, both because of all
the evil that he did in the sight of the Lord, provoking him to anger with the
work of his hands, in being like the house of Jeroboam, and also because he
destroyed it.

Elah Reigns in Israel

8 ‡† In the twenty-sixth year of Asa king of Judah, Elah the son of Baasha
began to reign over Israel in Tirzah, and he reigned two years. 9 † But his
servant Zimri, commander of half his chariots, conspired against him. When
he was at Tirzah, drinking himself drunk in the house of Arza, who was
over the household in Tirzah, 10 ‡ Zimri came in and struck him down and
killed him, in the twenty-seventh year of Asa king of Judah, and reigned in
his place.
11 † When he began to reign, as soon as he had seated himself on his
throne, he struck down all the house of Baasha. He did not leave him a
single male of his relatives or his friends. 12 Thus Zimri destroyed all the
house of Baasha, according to the word of the Lord, which he spoke against
Baasha by Jehu the prophet, 13 † for all the sins of Baasha and the sins of
Elah his son, which they sinned and which they made Israel to sin,
provoking the Lord God of Israel to anger with their idols. 14 † Now the rest
of the acts of Elah and all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the
Chronicles of the Kings of Israel?

Zimri Reigns in Israel

15 ††In the twenty-seventh year of Asa king of Judah, Zimri reigned seven
days in Tirzah. Now the troops were encamped against Gibbethon, which
belonged to the Philistines, 16 †and the troops who were encamped heard it
said, “Zimri has conspired, and he has killed the king.” Therefore all Israel
made Omri, the commander of the army, king over Israel that day in the
camp. 17 So Omri went up from Gibbethon, and all Israel with him, and they
besieged Tirzah. 18 †And when Zimri saw that the city was taken, he went
into the citadel of the king’s house and burned the king’s house over him
with fire and died, 19 because of his sins that he committed, doing evil in the
sight of the Lord, walking in the way of Jeroboam, and for his sin which he
committed, making Israel to sin. 20 †Now the rest of the acts of Zimri, and
the conspiracy that he made, are they not written in the Book of the
Chronicles of the Kings of Israel?

Omri Reigns in Israel

21 ‡ † Then the people of Israel were divided into two parts. Half of the
people followed Tibni the son of Ginath, to make him king, and half
followed Omri. 22 † But the people who followed Omri overcame the people
who followed Tibni the son of Ginath. So Tibni died, and Omri became
king. 23 In the thirty-first year of Asa king of Judah, Omri began to reign
over Israel, and he reigned for twelve years; six years he reigned in Tirzah.
24 † He bought the hill of Samaria from Shemer for two talents[1] of silver,
and he fortified the hill and called the name of the city that he built
Samaria, after the name of Shemer, the owner of the hill.

25 † Omri did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, and did more evil than
all who were before him. 26 For he walked in all the way of Jeroboam the
son of Nebat, and in the sins that he made Israel to sin, provoking the Lord,
the God of Israel, to anger by their idols. 27 † Now the rest of the acts of Omri
that he did, and the might that he showed, are they not written in the Book
of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel? 28 † And Omri slept with his fathers
and was buried in Samaria, and Ahab his son reigned in his place.

Ahab Reigns in Israel

[29] ‡† In the thirty-eighth year of Asa king of Judah, Ahab the son of Omri
began to reign over Israel, and Ahab the son of Omri reigned over Israel in
Samaria twenty-two years. [30] † And Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the
sight of the Lord, more than all who were before him. [31] † And as if it had
been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat,
he took for his wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Sidonians,
and went and served Baal and worshiped him. [32] † He erected an altar for
Baal in the house of Baal, which he built in Samaria. [33] † And Ahab made an
Asherah. Ahab did more to provoke the Lord, the God of Israel, to anger
than all the kings of Israel who were before him. [34] † In his days Hiel of
Bethel built Jericho. He laid its foundation at the cost of Abiram his
firstborn, and set up its gates at the cost of his youngest son Segub,
according to the word of the Lord, which he spoke by Joshua the son of
Nun.

Elijah Predicts a Drought

17 [1]‡†Now Elijah the Tishbite, of Tishbe[2] in Gilead, said to Ahab,
“As the Lord, the God of Israel, lives, before whom I stand, there shall be
neither dew nor rain these years, except by my word.” [2]And the word of the
Lord came to him: [3]‡“Depart from here and turn eastward and hide yourself
by the brook Cherith, which is east of the Jordan. [4]You shall drink from the
brook, and I have commanded the ravens to feed you there.” [5]†So he went
and did according to the word of the Lord. He went and lived by the brook
Cherith that is east of the Jordan. [6]And the ravens brought him bread and
meat in the morning, and bread and meat in the evening, and he drank from
the brook. [7]And after a while the brook dried up, because there was no rain
in the land.

The Widow of Zarephath

8 Then the word of the Lord came to him, 9 “Arise, go to Zarephath,
which belongs to Sidon, and dwell there. Behold, I have commanded a
widow there to feed you.” 10 So he arose and went to Zarephath. And when
he came to the gate of the city, behold, a widow was there gathering sticks.
And he called to her and said, “Bring me a little water in a vessel, that I
may drink.” 11 And as she was going to bring it, he called to her and said,
“Bring me a morsel of bread in your hand.” 12 And she said, “As the Lord
your God lives, I have nothing baked, only a handful of flour in a jar and a
little oil in a jug. And now I am gathering a couple of sticks that I may go in
and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it and die.” 13 And
Elijah said to her, “Do not fear; go and do as you have said. But first make
me a little cake of it and bring it to me, and afterward make something for
yourself and your son. 14 For thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, ‘The jar
of flour shall not be spent, and the jug of oil shall not be empty, until the
day that the Lord sends rain upon the earth.’” 15 And she went and did as
Elijah said. And she and he and her household ate for many days. 16 The jar
of flour was not spent, neither did the jug of oil become empty, according to
the word of the Lord that he spoke by Elijah.

Elijah Raises the Widow’s Son

17 † After this the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, became ill.
And his illness was so severe that there was no breath left in him. 18 † And
she said to Elijah, “What have you against me, O man of God? You have
come to me to bring my sin to remembrance and to cause the death of my
son!” 19 † And he said to her, “Give me your son.” And he took him from her
arms and carried him up into the upper chamber where he lodged, and laid
him on his own bed. 20 † And he cried to the Lord, “O Lord my God, have
you brought calamity even upon the widow with whom I sojourn, by killing
her son?” 21 † Then he stretched himself upon the child three times and cried
to the Lord, “O Lord my God, let this child’s life[1] come into him again.”
22 † And the Lord listened to the voice of Elijah. And the life of the child
came into him again, and he revived. 23 † And Elijah took the child and
brought him down from the upper chamber into the house and delivered
him to his mother. And Elijah said, “See, your son lives.” 24 And the woman
said to Elijah, “Now I know that you are a man of God, and that the word of
the Lord in your mouth is truth.”

Elijah Confronts Ahab

18 [1]After many days the word of the Lord came to Elijah, in the
third year, saying, “Go, show yourself to Ahab, and I will send rain upon
the earth.” [2]So Elijah went to show himself to Ahab. Now the famine was
severe in Samaria. [3] And Ahab called Obadiah, who was over the
household. (Now Obadiah feared the Lord greatly, [4]and when Jezebel cut
off the prophets of the Lord, Obadiah took a hundred prophets and hid them
by fifties in a cave and fed them with bread and water.) [5]And Ahab said to
Obadiah, “Go through the land to all the springs of water and to all the
valleys. Perhaps we may find grass and save the horses and mules alive, and
not lose some of the animals.” [6]So they divided the land between them to
pass through it. Ahab went in one direction by himself, and Obadiah went in
another direction by himself.

[7]And as Obadiah was on the way, behold, Elijah met him. And Obadiah
recognized him and fell on his face and said, “Is it you, my lord Elijah?”
[8] And he answered him, “It is I. Go, tell your lord, ‘Behold, Elijah is
here.’” [9]And he said, “How have I sinned, that you would give your servant
into the hand of Ahab, to kill me? [10]As the Lord your God lives, there is no
nation or kingdom where my lord has not sent to seek you. And when they
would say, ‘He is not here,’ he would take an oath of the kingdom or nation,
that they had not found you. [11]And now you say, ‘Go, tell your lord,
“Behold, Elijah is here.”’ [12]And as soon as I have gone from you, the Spirit
of the Lord will carry you I know not where. And so, when I come and tell
Ahab and he cannot find you, he will kill me, although I your servant have
feared the Lord from my youth. [13]Has it not been told my lord what I did
when Jezebel killed the prophets of the Lord, how I hid a hundred men of
the Lord’s prophets by fifties in a cave and fed them with bread and water?
[14]And now you say, ‘Go, tell your lord, “Behold, Elijah is here”’; and he
will kill me.” [15]And Elijah said, “As the Lord of hosts lives, before whom I
stand, I will surely show myself to him today.” [16]So Obadiah went to meet
Ahab, and told him. And Ahab went to meet Elijah.

17 When Ahab saw Elijah, Ahab said to him, “Is it you, you troubler of
Israel?” 18 And he answered, “I have not troubled Israel, but you have, and
your father’s house, because you have abandoned the commandments of the
Lord and followed the Baals. 19 Now therefore send and gather all Israel to
me at Mount Carmel, and the 450 prophets of Baal and the 400 prophets of
Asherah, who eat at Jezebel’s table.”

The Prophets of Baal Defeated

20 † So Ahab sent to all the people of Israel and gathered the prophets
together at Mount Carmel. 21 And Elijah came near to all the people and
said, “How long will you go limping between two different opinions? If the
Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him.” And the people did
not answer him a word. 22 † Then Elijah said to the people, “I, even I only,
am left a prophet of the Lord, but Baal’s prophets are 450 men. 23 Let two
bulls be given to us, and let them choose one bull for themselves and cut it
in pieces and lay it on the wood, but put no fire to it. And I will prepare the
other bull and lay it on the wood and put no fire to it. 24 † And you call upon
the name of your god, and I will call upon the name of the Lord, and the
God who answers by fire, he is God.” And all the people answered, “It is
well spoken.” 25 Then Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, “Choose for
yourselves one bull and prepare it first, for you are many, and call upon the
name of your god, but put no fire to it.” 26 † And they took the bull that was
given them, and they prepared it and called upon the name of Baal from
morning until noon, saying, “O Baal, answer us!” But there was no voice,
and no one answered. And they limped around the altar that they had made.
27 † And at noon Elijah mocked them, saying, “Cry aloud, for he is a god.
Either he is musing, or he is relieving himself, or he is on a journey, or
perhaps he is asleep and must be awakened.” 28 † And they cried aloud and
cut themselves after their custom with swords and lances, until the blood
gushed out upon them. 29 † And as midday passed, they raved on until the
time of the offering of the oblation, but there was no voice. No one
answered; no one paid attention.

30 † Then Elijah said to all the people, “Come near to me.” And all the
people came near to him. And he repaired the altar of the Lord that had been
thrown down. 31 Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the
tribes of the sons of Jacob, to whom the word of the Lord came, saying,
“Israel shall be your name,” 32 and with the stones he built an altar in the
name of the Lord. And he made a trench about the altar, as great as would
contain two seahs[1] of seed. 33 † And he put the wood in order and cut the
bull in pieces and laid it on the wood. And he said, “Fill four jars with water

and pour it on the burnt offering and on the wood.” [34]And he said, “Do it a second time.” And they did it a second time. And he said, “Do it a third time.” And they did it a third time. [35]And the water ran around the altar and filled the trench also with water.

[36]†And at the time of the offering of the oblation, Elijah the prophet came near and said, “O Lord, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that you are God in Israel, and that I am your servant, and that I have done all these things at your word. [37]†Answer me, O Lord, answer me, that this people may know that you, O Lord, are God, and that you have turned their hearts back.” [38]†Then the fire of the Lord fell and consumed the burnt offering and the wood and the stones and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. [39]And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces and said, “The Lord, he is God; the Lord, he is God.” [40]†And Elijah said to them, “Seize the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape.” And they seized them. And Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon and slaughtered them there.

The Lord Sends Rain

41 ‡ † And Elijah said to Ahab, “Go up, eat and drink, for there is a sound
of the rushing of rain.” 42 † So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. And Elijah
went up to the top of Mount Carmel. And he bowed himself down on the
earth and put his face between his knees. 43 † And he said to his servant, “Go
up now, look toward the sea.” And he went up and looked and said, “There
is nothing.” And he said, “Go again,” seven times. 44 † And at the seventh
time he said, “Behold, a little cloud like a man’s hand is rising from the
sea.” And he said, “Go up, say to Ahab, ‘Prepare your chariot and go down,
lest the rain stop you.’” 45 ‡ And in a little while the heavens grew black with
clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. And Ahab rode and went to
Jezreel. 46 And the hand of the Lord was on Elijah, and he gathered up his
garment and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.

Elijah Flees Jezebel

19 [1]‡‡Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword. [2]Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, “So may the gods do to me and more also, if I do not make your life as the life of one of them by this time tomorrow.” [3]†Then he was afraid, and he arose and ran for his life and came to Beersheba, which belongs to Judah, and left his servant there.

[4]†But he himself went a day’s journey into the wilderness and came and sat down under a broom tree. And he asked that he might die, saying, “It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life, for I am no better than my fathers.” [5]‡And he lay down and slept under a broom tree. And behold, an angel touched him and said to him, “Arise and eat.” [6]And he looked, and behold, there was at his head a cake baked on hot stones and a jar of water. And he ate and drank and lay down again. [7]And the angel of the Lord came again a second time and touched him and said, “Arise and eat, for the journey is too great for you.” [8]‡†And he arose and ate and drank, and went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights to Horeb, the mount of God.

The Lord Speaks to Elijah

9 ‡‡There he came to a cave and lodged in it. And behold, the word of the
Lord came to him, and he said to him, “What are you doing here, Elijah?”
10 †He said, “I have been very jealous for the Lord, the God of hosts. For the
people of Israel have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and
killed your prophets with the sword, and I, even I only, am left, and they
seek my life, to take it away.” 11 †And he said, “Go out and stand on the
mount before the Lord.” And behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and
strong wind tore the mountains and broke in pieces the rocks before the
Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind. And after the wind an earthquake,
but the Lord was not in the earthquake. 12 †And after the earthquake a fire,
but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire the sound of a low
whisper.[1]13 †And when Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his cloak and
went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. And behold, there came a
voice to him and said, “What are you doing here, Elijah?” 14He said, “I have
been very jealous for the Lord, the God of hosts. For the people of Israel
have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your
prophets with the sword, and I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life,
to take it away.” 15 ‡And the Lord said to him, “Go, return on your way to
the wilderness of Damascus. And when you arrive, you shall anoint Hazael
to be king over Syria. 16 †And Jehu the son of Nimshi you shall anoint to be
king over Israel, and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah you shall
anoint to be prophet in your place. 17And the one who escapes from the
sword of Hazael shall Jehu put to death, and the one who escapes from the
sword of Jehu shall Elisha put to death. 18 †Yet I will leave seven thousand
in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that
has not kissed him.”

The Call of Elisha

[19] So he departed from there and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen in front of him, and he was with the twelfth. Elijah passed by him and cast his cloak upon him. [20] And he left the oxen and ran after Elijah and said, “Let me kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow you.” And he said to him, “Go back again, for what have I done to you?” [21] And he returned from following him and took the yoke of oxen and sacrificed them and boiled their flesh with the yokes of the oxen and gave it to the people, and they ate. Then he arose and went after Elijah and assisted him.

Ahab's Wars with Syria

20 [1]†† Ben-hadad the king of Syria gathered all his army together. Thirty-two kings were with him, and horses and chariots. And he went up and closed in on Samaria and fought against it. [2]And he sent messengers into the city to Ahab king of Israel and said to him, "Thus says Ben-hadad: [3]† 'Your silver and your gold are mine; your best wives and children also are mine.'" [4]And the king of Israel answered, "As you say, my lord, O king, I am yours, and all that I have." [5]The messengers came again and said, "Thus says Ben-hadad: 'I sent to you, saying, "Deliver to me your silver and your gold, your wives and your children." [6]† Nevertheless I will send my servants to you tomorrow about this time, and they shall search your house and the houses of your servants and lay hands on whatever pleases you and take it away.'"

[7]† Then the king of Israel called all the elders of the land and said, "Mark, now, and see how this man is seeking trouble, for he sent to me for my wives and my children, and for my silver and my gold, and I did not refuse him." [8]† And all the elders and all the people said to him, "Do not listen or consent." [9]† So he said to the messengers of Ben-hadad, "Tell my lord the king, 'All that you first demanded of your servant I will do, but this thing I cannot do.'" And the messengers departed and brought him word again. [10]† Ben-hadad sent to him and said, "The gods do so to me and more also, if the dust of Samaria shall suffice for handfuls for all the people who follow me." [11]And the king of Israel answered, "Tell him, 'Let not him who straps on his armor boast himself as he who takes it off.'" [12]When Ben-hadad heard this message as he was drinking with the kings in the booths, he said to his men, "Take your positions." And they took their positions against the city.

Ahab Defeats Ben-hadad

13 ‡ † And behold, a prophet came near to Ahab king of Israel and said,
“Thus says the Lord, Have you seen all this great multitude? Behold, I will
give it into your hand this day, and you shall know that I am the Lord.”
14 † And Ahab said, “By whom?” He said, “Thus says the Lord, By the
servants of the governors of the districts.” Then he said, “Who shall begin
the battle?” He answered, “You.” 15 † Then he mustered the servants of the
governors of the districts, and they were 232. And after them he mustered
all the people of Israel, seven thousand.

16 † And they went out at noon, while Ben-hadad was drinking himself
drunk in the booths, he and the thirty-two kings who helped him. 17 The
servants of the governors of the districts went out first. And Ben-hadad sent
out scouts, and they reported to him, “Men are coming out from Samaria.”
18 † He said, “If they have come out for peace, take them alive. Or if they
have come out for war, take them alive.”

19 So these went out of the city, the servants of the governors of the
districts and the army that followed them. 20 † And each struck down his
man. The Syrians fled, and Israel pursued them, but Ben-hadad king of
Syria escaped on a horse with horsemen. 21 † And the king of Israel went out
and struck the horses and chariots, and struck the Syrians with a great blow.

22 † Then the prophet came near to the king of Israel and said to him,
“Come, strengthen yourself, and consider well what you have to do, for in
the spring the king of Syria will come up against you.”

23 † And the servants of the king of Syria said to him, “Their gods are gods
of the hills, and so they were stronger than we. But let us fight against them
in the plain, and surely we shall be stronger than they. 24 † And do this:
remove the kings, each from his post, and put commanders in their places,
25 and muster an army like the army that you have lost, horse for horse, and
chariot for chariot. Then we will fight against them in the plain, and surely
we shall be stronger than they.” And he listened to their voice and did so.

Ahab Defeats Ben-hadad Again

[26] In the spring, Ben-hadad mustered the Syrians and went up to Aphek
to fight against Israel. [27] And the people of Israel were mustered and were
provisioned and went against them. The people of Israel encamped before
them like two little flocks of goats, but the Syrians filled the country.
[28] And a man of God came near and said to the king of Israel, "Thus says
the LORD, 'Because the Syrians have said, "The LORD is a god of the hills but
he is not a god of the valleys," therefore I will give all this great multitude
into your hand, and you shall know that I am the LORD.'" [29] And they
encamped opposite one another seven days. Then on the seventh day the
battle was joined. And the people of Israel struck down of the Syrians
100,000 foot soldiers in one day. [30] And the rest fled into the city of
Aphek, and the wall fell upon 27,000 men who were left.

Ben-hadad also fled and entered an inner chamber in the city. [31] And his
servants said to him, "Behold now, we have heard that the kings of the
house of Israel are merciful kings. Let us put sackcloth around our waists
and ropes on our heads and go out to the king of Israel. Perhaps he will
spare your life." [32] So they tied sackcloth around their waists and put ropes
on their heads and went to the king of Israel and said, "Your servant Ben-
hadad says, 'Please, let me live.'" And he said, "Does he still live? He is my
brother." [33] Now the men were watching for a sign, and they quickly took it
up from him and said, "Yes, your brother Ben-hadad." Then he said, "Go
and bring him." Then Ben-hadad came out to him, and he caused him to
come up into the chariot. [34] And Ben-hadad said to him, "The cities that my
father took from your father I will restore, and you may establish bazaars
for yourself in Damascus, as my father did in Samaria." And Ahab said, "I
will let you go on these terms." So he made a covenant with him and let
him go.

A Prophet Condemns Ben-hadad's Release

35 †And a certain man of the sons of the prophets said to his fellow at the
command of the Lord, "Strike me, please." But the man refused to strike
him. 36 †Then he said to him, "Because you have not obeyed the voice of the
Lord, behold, as soon as you have gone from me, a lion shall strike you
down." And as soon as he had departed from him, a lion met him and struck
him down. 37 Then he found another man and said, "Strike me, please." And
the man struck him—struck him and wounded him. 38 †So the prophet
departed and waited for the king by the way, disguising himself with a
bandage over his eyes. 39 †And as the king passed, he cried to the king and
said, "Your servant went out into the midst of the battle, and behold, a
soldier turned and brought a man to me and said, 'Guard this man; if by any
means he is missing, your life shall be for his life, or else you shall pay a
talent[1] of silver.' 40 †And as your servant was busy here and there, he was
gone." The king of Israel said to him, "So shall your judgment be; you
yourself have decided it." 41 †Then he hurried to take the bandage away
from his eyes, and the king of Israel recognized him as one of the prophets.
42 †And he said to him, "Thus says the Lord, 'Because you have let go out of
your hand the man whom I had devoted to destruction,[2] therefore your life
shall be for his life, and your people for his people.'" 43 And the king of
Israel went to his house vexed and sullen and came to Samaria.

Naboth’s Vineyard

21 [1]†‡‡†Now Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard in Jezreel, beside
the palace of Ahab king of Samaria. [2]†And after this Ahab said to Naboth,
“Give me your vineyard, that I may have it for a vegetable garden, because
it is near my house, and I will give you a better vineyard for it; or, if it
seems good to you, I will give you its value in money.” [3]†But Naboth said
to Ahab, “The Lord forbid that I should give you the inheritance of my
fathers.” [4]†And Ahab went into his house vexed and sullen because of what
Naboth the Jezreelite had said to him, for he had said, “I will not give you
the inheritance of my fathers.” And he lay down on his bed and turned away
his face and would eat no food.

[5]But Jezebel his wife came to him and said to him, “Why is your spirit so
vexed that you eat no food?” [6]And he said to her, “Because I spoke to
Naboth the Jezreelite and said to him, ‘Give me your vineyard for money,
or else, if it please you, I will give you another vineyard for it.’ And he
answered, ‘I will not give you my vineyard.’” [7]And Jezebel his wife said to
him, “Do you now govern Israel? Arise and eat bread and let your heart be
cheerful; I will give you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite.”

[8]†So she wrote letters in Ahab’s name and sealed them with his seal, and
she sent the letters to the elders and the leaders who lived with Naboth in
his city. [9]†And she wrote in the letters, “Proclaim a fast, and set Naboth at
the head of the people. [10]†And set two worthless men opposite him, and let
them bring a charge against him, saying, ‘You have cursed[1] God and the
king.’ Then take him out and stone him to death.” [11]And the men of his city,
the elders and the leaders who lived in his city, did as Jezebel had sent word
to them. As it was written in the letters that she had sent to them, [12]they
proclaimed a fast and set Naboth at the head of the people. [13]†And the two
worthless men came in and sat opposite him. And the worthless men
brought a charge against Naboth in the presence of the people, saying,
“Naboth cursed God and the king.” So they took him outside the city and
stoned him to death with stones. [14]Then they sent to Jezebel, saying,
“Naboth has been stoned; he is dead.”

15 † As soon as Jezebel heard that Naboth had been stoned and was dead,
Jezebel said to Ahab, “Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the
Jezreelite, which he refused to give you for money, for Naboth is not alive,
but dead.” 16 And as soon as Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, Ahab arose
to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, to take possession of it.

The Lord Condemns Ahab

17 ‡ ‡ Then the word of the Lord came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying,
18 "Arise, go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, who is in Samaria; behold,
he is in the vineyard of Naboth, where he has gone to take possession.
19 † And you shall say to him, 'Thus says the Lord, "Have you killed and also
taken possession?"' And you shall say to him, 'Thus says the Lord: "In the
place where dogs licked up the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick your own
blood."'"
20 † Ahab said to Elijah, "Have you found me, O my enemy?" He
answered, "I have found you, because you have sold yourself to do what is
evil in the sight of the Lord. 21 Behold, I will bring disaster upon you. I will
utterly burn you up, and will cut off from Ahab every male, bond or free, in
Israel. 22 And I will make your house like the house of Jeroboam the son of
Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah, for the anger to
which you have provoked me, and because you have made Israel to sin.
23 † And of Jezebel the Lord also said, 'The dogs shall eat Jezebel within the
walls of Jezreel.' 24 † Anyone belonging to Ahab who dies in the city the
dogs shall eat, and anyone of his who dies in the open country the birds of
the heavens shall eat."

Ahab’s Repentance

25 ††(There was none who sold himself to do what was evil in the sight of
the Lord like Ahab, whom Jezebel his wife incited. 26 † He acted very
abominably in going after idols, as the Amorites had done, whom the Lord
cast out before the people of Israel.)
27 † And when Ahab heard those words, he tore his clothes and put
sackcloth on his flesh and fasted and lay in sackcloth and went about
dejectedly. 28 And the word of the Lord came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying,
29 †“Have you seen how Ahab has humbled himself before me? Because he
has humbled himself before me, I will not bring the disaster in his days; but
in his son’s days I will bring the disaster upon his house.”

Ahab and the False Prophets

22 [1]For three years Syria and Israel continued without war. [2]But
in the third year Jehoshaphat the king of Judah came down to the king of
Israel. [3]And the king of Israel said to his servants, “Do you know that
Ramoth-gilead belongs to us, and we keep quiet and do not take it out of the
hand of the king of Syria?” [4]And he said to Jehoshaphat, “Will you go
with me to battle at Ramoth-gilead?” And Jehoshaphat said to the king of
Israel, “I am as you are, my people as your people, my horses as your
horses.”

[5]And Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, “Inquire first for the word of
the Lord.” [6]Then the king of Israel gathered the prophets together, about
four hundred men, and said to them, “Shall I go to battle against Ramoth-
gilead, or shall I refrain?” And they said, “Go up, for the Lord will give it
into the hand of the king.” [7]But Jehoshaphat said, “Is there not here
another prophet of the Lord of whom we may inquire?” [8]And the king of
Israel said to Jehoshaphat, “There is yet one man by whom we may inquire
of the Lord, Micaiah the son of Imlah, but I hate him, for he never
prophesies good concerning me, but evil.” And Jehoshaphat said, “Let not
the king say so.” [9]Then the king of Israel summoned an officer and said,
“Bring quickly Micaiah the son of Imlah.” [10]Now the king of Israel and
Jehoshaphat the king of Judah were sitting on their thrones, arrayed in their
robes, at the threshing floor at the entrance of the gate of Samaria, and all
the prophets were prophesying before them. [11]And Zedekiah the son of
Chenaanah made for himself horns of iron and said, “Thus says the Lord,
‘With these you shall push the Syrians until they are destroyed.’” [12]And all
the prophets prophesied so and said, “Go up to Ramoth-gilead and triumph;
the Lord will give it into the hand of the king.”

Micaiah Prophesies Against Ahab

13 And the messenger who went to summon Micaiah said to him,
"Behold, the words of the prophets with one accord are favorable to the
king. Let your word be like the word of one of them, and speak favorably."
14 But Micaiah said, "As the Lord lives, what the Lord says to me, that I
will speak." 15 And when he had come to the king, the king said to him,
"Micaiah, shall we go to Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall we refrain?" And
he answered him, "Go up and triumph; the Lord will give it into the hand of
the king." 16 But the king said to him, "How many times shall I make you
swear that you speak to me nothing but the truth in the name of the Lord?"
17 And he said, "I saw all Israel scattered on the mountains, as sheep that
have no shepherd. And the Lord said, 'These have no master; let each return
to his home in peace.'" 18 And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "Did I
not tell you that he would not prophesy good concerning me, but evil?"
19 And Micaiah said, "Therefore hear the word of the Lord: I saw the Lord
sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing beside him on his
right hand and on his left; 20 and the Lord said, 'Who will entice Ahab, that
he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead?' And one said one thing, and
another said another. 21 Then a spirit came forward and stood before the
Lord, saying, 'I will entice him.' 22 And the Lord said to him, 'By what
means?' And he said, 'I will go out, and will be a lying spirit in the mouth
of all his prophets.' And he said, 'You are to entice him, and you shall
succeed; go out and do so.' 23 Now therefore behold, the Lord has put a
lying spirit in the mouth of all these your prophets; the Lord has declared
disaster for you."

24 Then Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah came near and struck Micaiah on
the cheek and said, "How did the Spirit of the Lord go from me to speak to
you?" 25 And Micaiah said, "Behold, you shall see on that day when you go
into an inner chamber to hide yourself." 26 And the king of Israel said,
"Seize Micaiah, and take him back to Amon the governor of the city and to
Joash the king's son, 27 and say, 'Thus says the king, "Put this fellow in
prison and feed him meager rations of bread and water, until I come in

peace.”””” [28] † And Micaiah said, “If you return in peace, the Lord has not spoken by me.” And he said, “Hear, all you peoples!”

Ahab Killed in Battle

[29] ✝So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah went up to
Ramoth-gilead. [30] ✝And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, “I will
disguise myself and go into battle, but you wear your robes.” And the king
of Israel disguised himself and went into battle. [31] ✝Now the king of Syria
had commanded the thirty-two captains of his chariots, “Fight with neither
small nor great, but only with the king of Israel.” [32] ✝And when the captains
of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, they said, “It is surely the king of Israel.”
So they turned to fight against him. And Jehoshaphat cried out. [33] And when
the captains of the chariots saw that it was not the king of Israel, they turned
back from pursuing him. [34] ✝But a certain man drew his bow at random[1]
and struck the king of Israel between the scale armor and the breastplate.
Therefore he said to the driver of his chariot, “Turn around and carry me
out of the battle, for I am wounded.” [35] ✝And the battle continued that day,
and the king was propped up in his chariot facing the Syrians, until at
evening he died. And the blood of the wound flowed into the bottom of the
chariot. [36] ✝And about sunset a cry went through the army, “Every man to
his city, and every man to his country!”

[37] So the king died, and was brought to Samaria. And they buried the king
in Samaria. [38] ✝And they washed the chariot by the pool of Samaria, and the
dogs licked up his blood, and the prostitutes washed themselves in it,
according to the word of the Lord that he had spoken. [39] ✝Now the rest of the
acts of Ahab and all that he did, and the ivory house that he built and all the
cities that he built, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the
Kings of Israel? [40] So Ahab slept with his fathers, and Ahaziah his son
reigned in his place.

Jehoshaphat Reigns in Judah

41 ‡ ‡Jehoshaphat the son of Asa began to reign over Judah in the fourth
year of Ahab king of Israel. 42Jehoshaphat was thirty-five years old when he
began to reign, and he reigned twenty-five years in Jerusalem. His mother's
name was Azubah the daughter of Shilhi. 43 †He walked in all the way of
Asa his father. He did not turn aside from it, doing what was right in the
sight of the Lord. Yet the high places were not taken away, and the people
still sacrificed and made offerings on the high places. 44 †Jehoshaphat also
made peace with the king of Israel.

45Now the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, and his might that he showed,
and how he warred, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of
the Kings of Judah? 46 †And from the land he exterminated the remnant of
the male cult prostitutes who remained in the days of his father Asa.

47 ‡There was no king in Edom; a deputy was king. 48 †Jehoshaphat made
ships of Tarshish to go to Ophir for gold, but they did not go, for the ships
were wrecked at Ezion-geber. 49 †Then Ahaziah the son of Ahab said to
Jehoshaphat, "Let my servants go with your servants in the ships," but
Jehoshaphat was not willing. 50And Jehoshaphat slept with his fathers and
was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father, and Jehoram his
son reigned in his place.

Ahaziah Reigns in Israel

51 ‡‡Ahaziah the son of Ahab began to reign over Israel in Samaria in the
seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and he reigned two years
over Israel. 52He did what was evil in the sight of the Lord and walked in the
way of his father and in the way of his mother and in the way of Jeroboam
the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin. 53He served Baal and worshiped
him and provoked the Lord, the God of Israel, to anger in every way that his
father had done.

1 and 2 Kings

OVERVIEW

Author
Unknown

Date
History ranges from the last years of David to the composition of the Book, c 560 BC

Places
Jerusalem; Judah; Israel; Shechem; Bethel; Dan; Samaria; Tirzah; Tyre; Syria

People
David; Solomon; Hiram; queen of Sheba; Ahab; Elijah; Elisha; various kings of Israel and Judah

Purpose
To show that the Lord of history executes the threats and keeps the promises of His holy covenant

Law Themes
The Lord condemns the evil deeds of Israelite and Judean kings who violate the covenant, especially by instituting idolatry

Gospel Themes
The Lord establishes David's household through Solomon's line, from which would come the Messiah's everlasting kingdom; promised mercies are delivered through the temple services

Memory Verses
David commends Solomon (1Ki 2:1–4); Solomon prays for wisdom (1Ki 3:6–9); temple dedication (1Ki 8:22–30); Solomon's benediction (1Ki

8:56–61); Elijah’s prayer (1Ki 18:36–39); horses and chariots of fire (2Ki 6:15–17); the Lord warns Israel (2Ki 17:13–14)

Introduction to 1 Kings

Reading 1 and 2 Kings

Wind sweeps the paving stones. It whistles through the branches of the sacred grove, swirls about the altar's steps, and flicks the garments of the visitors and the priests. One priest calls on Yahweh. Another calls on Baal and makes his offering before the image of a bull, graven on an upright stone. Women gather about an Asherah pole, invoking the goddess's blessings. When the sacrifices are complete, all retire from the windy height to enjoy the meat of the sacrifices at the local temple hall.

"High places" (Hbr *bamoth*) are mentioned more than 100 times in the OT, most often in 1 and 2 Kings. These sacred sites, which often stood on hilltops but could be on platforms in towns, were long-standing places of sacrifice. Israel's people and earliest rulers properly worshiped at such places before Solomon built the temple (cf 1Ki 3:2–4). However, after Solomon built the temple, worship at the *bamoth* increasingly became a mixture of devotion to both Yahweh and false gods. People neglected the Lord's Word and the temple in Jerusalem, committing themselves to false worship at their local high places. Wicked kings and false prophets tolerated or supported such false worship, yet some faithful kings and prophets called people back to true worship at the one temple.

Luther on 1 and 2 Kings

Elijah had killed the 800 prophets with great courage (1 Kings 19:1–3), and no one's power was so great that he feared it; but when Jezebel threatened him, he is struck with such fear that he flees. Before this he was not afraid of the king; now he runs away from a woman.

Accordingly, all this seems to be foolish; but it shows great understanding and is very helpful, because it is recorded for the comfort of the churches, in order that we may know how merciful God is. We may indeed be evil and weak, provided that we are not found among those who persecute, hate, and blaspheme God. God wants to have patience with our weakness.

I am neither able nor willing to excuse the fathers, as others do. Indeed, I am glad to hear about the failings and the weaknesses of the saints. But I do not praise these failings and weaknesses as good deeds or virtues…. Nor are these things recorded for the sake of the hard, the proud, and the obstinate. No, they are recorded in order that the nature of the kingdom of Christ may be pointed out. In His small flock He has poor and weak consciences that are easily hurt and are not easily comforted. He is a King of the strong and the weak alike; He hates the proud and declares war on the strong. (AE 5:25–26)

Challenges for Readers

Authorship. As with the other books of the Former Prophets (Joshua through 2 Kings), the author of 1 and 2 Kings is unknown. Some rabbis attributed the books to Jeremiah, though his presence in Egypt (Jer 43:5–7) would have prevented his witnessing the release of Jehoiachin from prison (2Ki 25:27–30). The division between 1 and 2 Kings is not original, as the flow of the story itself shows (see outline, p 528). Later scribes divided the text, perhaps to make the document easier to copy.

The Deuteronomistic History. Critical scholars have assumed that the theological and historical perspectives of the Former Prophets (Joshua through 2 Kings) were shaped by a common editor, the Deuteronomist, who interpreted Israelite history in view of the covenant blessings and curses described in Dt 27–28. Moses' farewell sermon (Dt) certainly influenced the content and writing of these books. An editor may have brought these books together in the canon of Scripture, but the books themselves were written by authors from different eras, who shared a common theology of history. (E.g., Joshua was written by Joshua, Judges was clearly authored before the kingdom period, and 1 and 2 Samuel date from the united kingdom period.)

Chronology. Often, 1 and 2 Kings switch focus between different sources of information about the Judean and Israelite kings. As a result, the order of the history is not strictly chronological. See note, 2Ki 4:1–8:15 for an example.

Reward and Punishment of Rulers. Some evil rulers are punished with short reigns. Other evil rulers enjoy longer reigns, which may seem contradictory to the main theme of the books. The author usually provides specific information as to why the Lord shows greater patience with some rulers.

Kingdom of God. See "Church and State Relations," p 432.

Blessings for Readers

As you read 1 and 2 Kings, take note of how intimately the Lord is involved in the lives of Israel's leaders, punishing their sins and forgiving them when they repent. Also note how the leaders set examples for the people, making their decisions even more important.

Consider your spiritual and political leaders. Pray that the Lord would guide them to make wise decisions and that He would deliver them from evil. Likewise, consider your own plans and conduct and the effect they may have on the future of your family, congregation, and community. Through the blessings and promises extended to the kings of Israel and Judah, the Lord will equip you for leadership and service among His people and assure you of His forgiveness in Christ the King.

OUTLINE

I. David's Reign Ends (1Ki 1:1–2:12)
   A. Solomon Established as King (1Ki 1)
   B. David's Final Advice to Solomon; His Death (1Ki 2:1–12)
II. Solomon's Reign (1Ki 2:13–11:43)
   A. Solomon's Early Reign and Wisdom (1Ki 2:13–4:34)
   B. Building the Temple and Palace (1Ki 5–7)
   C. Dedication of the Temple (1Ki 8:1–9:9)
   D. Further History of Solomon's Reign (1Ki 9:10–10:29)
   E. Solomon's Foreign Wives Turn His Heart from God (1Ki 11)
III. Division of the Kingdom of Israel (1Ki 12:1–24)
   A. Rehoboam Made King, Meets with Jeroboam and the Northern Tribes (1Ki 12:1–15)
   B. Northern Tribes Break from the House of David, Make Jeroboam Their King (1Ki 12:16–24)
IV. Jeroboam I Reigns in Israel (1Ki 12:25–14:20)
   A. Jeroboam's Building Activity and Religious Innovations (1Ki 12:25–33)
   B. Jeroboam, a Prophet, and Another Prophet (1Ki 13:1–32)
   C. Jeroboam's Evil Ways (1Ki 13:33–14:20)
V. Rehoboam, Abijah, and Asa Reign in Judah (1Ki 14:21–15:24)

VI. Nadab, Baasha, Elah, Zimri, and Omri Reign in Israel (1Ki 15:25–16:28)
VII. Ahab Reigns in Israel as the Prophet Elijah Ministers (1Ki 16:29–22:40)
A. Ahab's Wicked Reign (1Ki 16:29–34)
B. Elijah's Ministry (1Ki 17–19)
C. Conflicts between Ahab and Ben-hadad of Syria (1Ki 20)
D. Naboth's Vineyard (1Ki 21)
E. End of Ahab's Reign (1Ki 22:1–40)
VIII. Jehoshaphat Reigns in Judah (1Ki 22:41–50)
IX. Ahaziah Reigns in Israel (1Ki 22:51–2Ki 1:18)
X. Jehoram Reigns in Israel; the Prophet Elisha Ministers (2 Ki 2:1–8:15)
A. Elisha Succeeds Elijah (2Ki 2)
B. Elisha and Jehoram's Campaign against Moab (2Ki 3)
C. Elisha Performs Miracles (2Ki 4)
D. Elisha Aids Naaman, Reprimands Gehazi (2Ki 5)
E. Elisha Causes an Axe Head to Float (2Ki 6:1–7)
F. Elisha and the Syrians (2Ki 6:8–7:20)
G. Elisha Influences Restoration of a Shunammite Woman's Land (2Ki 8:1–6)
H. Elisha Tells of Hazael's Future Evil (2Ki 8:7–15)
XI. Jehoram (Joram) Reigns in Judah (2Ki 8:16–24)
XII. Ahaziah Reigns in Judah (2Ki 8:25–29)
XIII. Jehu Rebels and Reigns in Israel (2Ki 9–10)
A. Jehu Anointed King of Israel (2Ki 9:1–13)
B. Jehu Rebels (2Ki 9:14–10:27)
C. Evaluation of Jehu's Reign (2Ki 10:28–36)
XIV. Joash (Jehoash) Is Preserved and Reigns in Judah (2Ki 11–12)
A. Joash Escapes Athaliah's Coup and Becomes King (2Ki 11)
B. Joash Repairs the Temple in Jerusalem (2Ki 12:1–16)
C. Joash's Other Activities and Death (2Ki 12:17–21)
XV. Jehoahaz Reigns in Israel (2Ki 13:1–9)
XVI. Jehoash Reigns in Israel (2Ki 13:10–25)
A. Jehoash's Reign (2Ki 13:10–13)
B. Death of Elisha (2Ki 13:14–21)
C. Jehoash Defeats the Syrians (2Ki 13:22–25)

XVII. Amaziah Reigns in Judah (2Ki 14:1–22)
A. Amaziah's Reign and Defeat by Jehoash (2Ki 14:1–14)
B. Deaths of Jehoash and Amaziah (2Ki 14:15–22)
XVIII. Jeroboam II Reigns in Israel (2Ki 14:23–29)
XIX. Azariah Reigns in Judah (2Ki 15:1–7)
XX. Zechariah, Shallum, Menahem, Pekahiah, and Pekah Reign in Israel (2Ki 15:8–31)
XXI. Jotham Reigns in Judah (2Ki 15:32–38)
XXII. Ahaz Reigns in Judah (2Ki 16)
A. Ahaz's Wickedness (2Ki 16:1–4)
B. Ahaz Becomes Vassal of Assyria (2Ki 16:5–9)
C. Ahaz Changes the Temple Complex in Jerusalem (2Ki 16:10–20)
XXIII. Hoshea Reigns in Israel as Israel Falls to Assyria (2Ki 17)
A. God's Judgment on the Northern Kingdom (2Ki 17:1–23)
B. Foreign Exiles Resettle the Territory of Israel (2Ki 17:24–41)
XXIV. Hezekiah Reigns in Judah (2Ki 18–20)
A. Hezekiah's Godliness and Reforming Activities (2Ki 18:1–7a)
B. Hezekiah and Assyria (2Ki 18:7b–19:37)
C. Hezekiah's Illness (2Ki 20:1–11)
D. Hezekiah's Mistake with the Babylonian Envoys (2Ki 20:12–21)
XXV. Manasseh Reigns in Judah (2Ki 21:1–18)
XXVI. Amon Reigns in Judah (2Ki 21:19–26)
XXVII. Josiah Reigns in Judah (2Ki 22:1–23:30)
A. Josiah's Godliness and Reforming Activities (2Ki 22:1–23:25)
B. God's Intention to Judge Judah (2Ki 23:26–30)
XXVIII. Jehoahaz Reigns in Judah until Deposed (2Ki 23:31–34)
XXIX. Jehoiakim Reigns in Judah as Vassal, First of Egypt, Then of Babylon (2Ki 23:35–24:7)
XXX. Jehoiachin Reigns in Judah as Babylon's Vassal (2Ki 24:8–17)
A. Jehoiachin's Evil (2Ki 24:8–9)
B. Nebuchadnezzar Deports Jehoiachin and All Jerusalem to Babylon (2Ki 24:10–17)

XXXI. Zedekiah (Mattaniah) Reigns in Judah as Babylon's Vassal (2Ki 24:18–20)
XXXII. Fall and Captivity of Judah (2Ki 25)
A. Nebuchadnezzar Destroys Jerusalem (2Ki 25:1–17)
B. Judahites Executed or Exiled to Babylon (2Ki 25:18–21)
C. Remaining Judeans Flee to Egypt (2Ki 25:22–26)
D. Jehoiachin Released from Prison (2Ki 25:27–30)

Articles and Resources Related to 1 Kings

- Kings and Prophets of Judah and Israel
- Making a Prophet

Kings and Prophets of Judah and Israel

The kingdoms of Judah and Israel began as one kingdom under the rule of Saul (1048–1009 BC). They were divided briefly when David reigned in Hebron (1009–1002 BC) and Saul's son Ish-bosheth (1009–1008 BC) reigned in Mahanaim. Some years after Ish-bosheth was murdered by rivals, David became ruler of all Israel from Jerusalem; he subdued Israel's traditional enemies (1002–970 BC). David's son Solomon succeeded him and further expanded the kingdom (970–931 BC). But Solomon's son Rehoboam did not manage the kingdom well, and it split into Judah and Israel (also called Ephraim in the Old Testament). The chart below presents an overview of the kings of Judah and Israel along with the prophets who served in these kingdoms. (Overlapping dates within a kingdom indicate co-regencies; see shaded areas. Prophets whose names appear in italic have written books of Scripture. Pious kings who introduced reforms are marked with an asterisk.)

Making a Prophet

A young man studying to be a pastor began leading Bible studies at a medium-security prison in Pennsylvania. One evening, an inmate began to argue with him about the Bible and the ministry. “Why are you spending all that time in school?” the inmate asked. “Do you really think you need all that study to be a preacher?”

In a number of religious traditions, ministers do not go to school to prepare for ministry. In fact, some groups contend that formal study of Scripture is dangerous and even drives away the Holy Spirit. However, Scripture itself seems to point in a different direction, encouraging formal study for ministry. An example of this may be found in the “sons of the prophets” described in 1 and 2 Kings.

Sons of the Prophets

Scholars have used a variety of expressions to explain the Hebrew phrase "sons of the prophets." For example, German scholars in the 1800s viewed them as schools of prophets. Others have called them associations or guilds of prophets. Some translators have "company" of prophets. Just what does "sons of the prophets" mean?

Hebrew and other Semitic languages use family terms to describe more than just family or blood relationships. For example, Saul referred to David as his son, even though they were from different tribes (1Sm 24:16). Joab, the leader of David's troops, referred to one of his men as "son" (2Sm 18:22). The Israelites also used family terms to express membership in other groups. For example, in the original Hebrew, people returning from the province of Judah were called "sons" (rather than "people") of the province (Ezr 2:1). The members of Korah's choir at the temple were called "the sons of Korah" (prescript for Ps 42). In view of these expressions, "sons of the prophets" most likely means a group of prophets organized around a father figure who mentored or trained them in his work.

The relationship of a "son of a prophet" to a prophet would be like that of a son to his father. The son would learn from his father, do his bidding, and eventually inherit his work and stature. These "sons of the prophets" may have existed for a long time in Israel. If one takes the procession of prophets from 1Sm 10:5 to be such a group, and Amos's reference to this practice in his day (Am 7:14), one sees that these groups were in existence for at least 340 years (c 1100–c 760 BC). During this time, the role and number of prophets flourished. Before this time and after the exile in Babylon, prophecy virtually disappeared. See pp 1077–83.

The prophet Amos warned about this silence of the prophets (Am 8:11). This silence would mean not just a lack of prophets but also a lack of God's Word. Micah also warned that God would stop answering His people because of their sins (Mi 3:4, 7). The prophets would grow silent because God had grown silent. Today we rejoice to have God's Word at all times through the writing of the prophets and apostles as recorded in Scripture.

Jesus' Ministry

At first, the young man leading Bible study at the Pennsylvania prison wasn't sure how to answer the inmate who questioned the usefulness of formal training for ministry. However, reflection on Jesus' ministry soon provided an answer: "Didn't Jesus' disciples spend about three years with Him before He sent them out on their own to preach and teach?"

The inmate thought for a moment. His angry face softened. "You may have something there," he said. "That might be right."

Jesus scolded the Pharisees and scribes for loving academics and religion for show (Mt 23:5–12). But He also trained His disciples and gave them assignments for putting their learning into practice. The apostles likewise taught and prepared others who evidenced the qualities necessary for ministry. Though the Bible does not propose the number of years necessary for such training, it certainly envisioned formal training for ministry (2Tm 2:2). Therefore, support and encourage faithful study of God's Word. Regard faithful preachers and teachers as you would Moses or Elijah! For they serve not themselves but the Teacher and the Prophet Jesus Christ.

Though teaching formed the everyday activity of Jesus while He led His disciples, He taught His greatest lesson through His actions. Hanging on the cross, as foreshadowed by the prophets, Jesus taught the length, height, and depth of God's love for you. His cry from the cross, "It is finished," declared the completion of your salvation. He affirmed and fulfilled the writings of the prophets so you might always have His Word to comfort and encourage you. Praise the Lord for the ministry of His prophets!

Footnotes

Footnotes for 1 Kings, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:2 Or *in your bosom*
- [2] 1:14 Or *expand on*
- [1] 1:25 Hebrew; Septuagint *Joab the commander*
- [1] 1:48 Septuagint *one of my offspring*

Footnotes for 1 Kings, Chapter 2

- [1] 2:4 Hebrew *there shall not be cut off for you*
- [2] 2:5 Septuagint; Hebrew *placing*
- [3] 2:5 Septuagint *innocent blood*
- [4] 2:5 Septuagint *my*; twice in this verse
- [5] 2:7 Or *steadfast love*
- [1] 2:22 Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate; Hebrew *and for him and for Abiathar*

Footnotes for 1 Kings, Chapter 4

- [1] 4:21 Ch 5:1 in Hebrew
- [2] 4:22 A *cor* was about 6 bushels or 220 liters

Footnotes for 1 Kings, Chapter 5

- [1] 5:1 Ch 5:15 in Hebrew
- [1] 5:11 A *cor* was about 6 bushels or 220 liters
- [2] 5:11 Septuagint; Hebrew *twenty*

Footnotes for 1 Kings, Chapter 6

- [3] 6:2 A *cubit* was about 18 inches or 45 centimeters
- [4] 6:4 Or *blocked lattice windows*
- [5] 6:5 Or *platform*; also verse 10
- [6] 6:6 Septuagint; Hebrew *structure*, or *platform*
- [7] 6:8 Septuagint, Targum; Hebrew *middle*
- [1] 6:20 Vulgate; Hebrew *and before the inner sanctuary*
- [2] 6:20 Septuagint *made*
- [3] 6:31 The meaning of the Hebrew phrase is uncertain

Footnotes for 1 Kings, Chapter 7

- [1] 7:2 A *cubit* was about 18 inches or 45 centimeters
- [2] 7:2 Septuagint *three*
- [3] 7:5 Septuagint; Hebrew *posts*
- [4] 7:7 Syriac, Vulgate; Hebrew *floor*
- [5] 7:15 Targum, Syriac (compare Septuagint and Jeremiah 52:21); Hebrew *fingers. And a line of twelve cubits measured the circumference of the second pillar*
- [6] 7:17 Septuagint; Hebrew *seven*; twice in this verse
- [7] 7:18 Two manuscripts (compare Septuagint); Hebrew *pillars*
- [1] 7:26 A *handbreadth* was about 3 inches or 7.5 centimeters
- [2] 7:26 A *bath* was about 6 gallons or 22 liters

Footnotes for 1 Kings, Chapter 8

- [1] 8:12 Septuagint *The Lord has set the sun in the heavens, but*
- [1] 8:37 Septuagint, Syriac *in any of their cities*
- [1] 8:65 Septuagint; Hebrew *seven days and seven days, fourteen days*

Footnotes for 1 Kings, Chapter 9

- [2] 9:8 Syriac, Old Latin; Hebrew *will become high*
- [1] 9:14 A *talent* was about 75 pounds or 34 kilograms
- [2] 9:18 Hebrew lacks *of Judah*
- [3] 9:21 That is, set apart (devote) as an offering to the Lord (for destruction)
- [4] 9:25 Septuagint lacks *with it*

Footnotes for 1 Kings, Chapter 10

- [1] 10:10 A *talent* was about 75 pounds or 34 kilograms
- [2] 10:16 A *shekel* was about 2/5 ounce or 11 grams
- [3] 10:17 A *mina* was about 1 1/4 pounds or 0.6 kilogram
- [4] 10:22 Or *baboons*

Footnotes for 1 Kings, Chapter 11

- [1] 11:33 Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate *he has*; twice in this verse

Footnotes for 1 Kings, Chapter 12

- [1] 12:2 Septuagint, Vulgate (compare 2 Chronicles 10:2); Hebrew *lived in*
- [1] 12:30 Septuagint *went to the one at Bethel and to the other as far as Dan*

Footnotes for 1 Kings, Chapter 13

- [1] 13:11 Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate; Hebrew *son*
- [2] 13:29 Septuagint; Hebrew *he came to the city of the old prophet*

Footnotes for 1 Kings, Chapter 15

- [1] 15:19 Or *treaty*; twice in this verse

Footnotes for 1 Kings, Chapter 16

- [1] 16:24 A *talent* was about 75 pounds or 34 kilograms

Footnotes for 1 Kings, Chapter 17

- [2] 17:1 Septuagint; Hebrew *of the settlers*
- [1] 17:21 Or *soul*; also verse 22

Footnotes for 1 Kings, Chapter 18

- [1] 18:32 A *seah* was about 7 quarts or 7.3 liters

Footnotes for 1 Kings, Chapter 19

- [1] 19:12 Or *a sound, a thin silence*

Footnotes for 1 Kings, Chapter 20

- [1] 20:39 A *talent* was about 75 pounds or 34 kilograms
- [2] 20:42 That is, set apart (devoted) as an offering to the Lord (for destruction)

Footnotes for 1 Kings, Chapter 21

- [1] 21:10 Hebrew *blessed*; also verse 13

Footnotes for 1 Kings, Chapter 22

- [1] 22:34 Hebrew *in his innocence*

Study Notes

1 Kings—NOTE ON 1:1–2:10 Although 1 and 2Sm are devoted primarily to the life and reign of David, the story of how he transferred the kingdom to Solomon is recorded here. Drained of vitality (vv 1–4), David still took a firm hand in settling the contest for the throne (vv 5–37).

1 Kings—NOTE ON 1:2 *arms*. Accepted practice of supplying warmth to a person with poor circulation (Ec 4:11). The mention of David's ebbing vitality introduces the account of the two contenders for the throne.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 1:3 The beautiful Abishag hailed from Shunem, where the Philistines encamped when they defeated Saul in the battle of Gilboa (1Sm 28:4; cf 2Ki 4:8–17). See map, p 558. Abishag became the subject of subsequent court intrigue (2:13–25). See also pp 1065–67.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 1:4 *knew her not*. David had no sexual intercourse with her. Cf Gn 4:1.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 1:1–4 Opening 1Ki is the account of the last days of King David. The conclusion of David's great reign and epic life reminds us of the mortality of all people, for all are sinners and must die. Yet through the Messiah—great David's greater Son—we have hope and confidence beyond this life to the glories of heaven. • Heavenly Father, thank You for giving us the inspired, inerrant, and authoritative books of Scripture. Guide us as we read Your Word to find therein Your priceless promises through the Messiah, in whose name we pray. Amen.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 1:5 *Adonijah*. Apparently the oldest surviving son of David (cf v 6). *be king*. Adonijah either did not know or disregarded David's choice of a successor (vv 13, 17). His political intrigue is similar to Absalom's conspiracy (2Sm 15:1), except without force. Adonijah, like Absalom, was handsome and pampered (v 6). *run before him*. Signaling his presence and importance.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 1:6 *never … displeased him*. David succeeded as a warrior and king, but not as a father, having spoiled this son. See p 2025. *born next after Absalom*. David's firstborn, Amnon, had been killed by Absalom, the third oldest, who likewise had died a violent death. Presumably, the second in line was also dead (2Sm 3:2–3; 13:23–33; 18:9–15).

1 Kings—NOTE ON 1:7 *Joab*. David's nephew, who "was in command of all the army" (2Sm 20:23). No reason is given why Adonijah had Joab's and Abiathar's support. *Abiathar*. Escaped when "Saul had killed the priests of the LORD" at Nob (1Sm 22:20–22), joined David, and rendered him valuable service before and after he became king (1Sm 23:6, 9; 2Sm 15:35–37; 17:15–16).

1 Kings—NOTE ON 1:8 Adonijah and his conspirators were rejected by (1) Zadok, Abiathar's associate (2Sm 8:17; 15:29); (2) Benaiah, captain of David's bodyguard; (3) Nathan the prophet, who denounced David's crimes but brought the Lord's promise of an eternal kingdom (2Sm 7:4–17); (4) Shimei and Rei, two officials (Shimei, not to be confused with the man who cursed David [2Sm 16:5–14], may have become one of Solomon's 12 officers; 4:7); (5) David's "mighty men" (distinguished warriors), which no doubt also included the servants (v 33) who likely composed the royal guard, the Cherethites and the Pelethites (v 44).

1 Kings—NOTE ON 1:9 *En-rogel*. Lit, "fountain of the fuller," a spring just below Jerusalem where the Kidron Valley and the Valley of Hinnom merge (Jsh 15:7–8; 18:16). *his brothers*. Adonijah sought to extend his popularity within the royal family.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 1:10 *Nathan … Benaiah … mighty men*. See note, v 8. *Solomon his brother*. Clear rivalry existed.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 1:5–10 Even before David's death, a rivalry between two of his sons develops, as Adonijah prepares to take over the reign. Sin and greed lead to dissension—that has not changed. How ugly to witness family rivalry over an inheritance (cf Lk 12:13–15), which is precisely the matter here, especially addressed by the Ninth Commandment. Pray that your family avoids such temptations and plans well for peace. Because of Christ, we are able to forgive one another and live peaceably in His generous heritage of grace. • Lord God, keep me from jealousy and strife. Lead me to trust Your will for my life. In the Savior's name, I pray. Amen.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 1:12 *own life*. Nathan countered Adonijah's plot by warning Bathsheba that Adonijah would kill her and her son, following the prevailing custom of slaying all members of the opposing party (v 21).

1 Kings—NOTE ON 1:13 *swear*. The Bible does not record such an oath; however, no trickery on aged David is suggested. Such an oath could have been made at Solomon's birth (2Sm 12:24; cf 1Ch 22:9–13).

1 Kings—NOTE ON 1:14 *confirm your words*. Reminding David of the oath. Testimony required two or three witnesses (Dt 17:6).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 1:16 *Bathsheba bowed*. In ancient royal households, even a king's wife had to show him deference in public (cf Est 5:1–2).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 1:18–20 Bathsheba's appeal builds urgency, hinting that David has lost control.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 1:21 *counted offenders*. See note, v 12.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 1:24–27 Nathan confirms the story about Adonijah (vv 17–21) but leaves the matter of succession to David.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 1:26 Hints at impending conflict and loss of some of David's long-standing allies (see note, v 8).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 1:11–27 Intrigue increases with word of Adonijah's maneuvers to gain the throne. Nathan shows proper reserve, stating facts and asking the king what his intentions are. When stakes are high, we may feel the urgency to rob others of their decisions. However, God would have us honor the calling of others by assisting them with facts and good counsel. The Word of His prophets is ever ready to counsel and encourage us in the way of peace, indeed, in the way of life everlasting. • Almighty God, our times are in Your hands. Lead us to use our time on earth wisely, as we live for Him who died for us. Amen.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 1:28 *David answered*. David's political will and savvy did not suffer from senility. He issued precise instructions for an enthronement ceremony (vv 32–37) and still commanded loyalty (vv 38–40). *Call Bathsheba*. She had left the bedchamber when the prophet received an audience (v 23). Nathan likewise withdrew when David recalled his wife to announce he would assure Solomon's accession (vv 28–31).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 1:31 *Bathsheba bowed*. See note, v 16.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 1:32 See note, v 8.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 1:33 *own mule*. Mark of royalty (2Sm 13:29; 18:9). When One "greater than Solomon" (Mt 12:42) entered Jerusalem on a donkey, the people expressed their expectations by shouting: "Hosanna to the Son of David" (Mt 21:9, 15). Jesus claimed to be a king, the Anointed, the Messiah, but His "kingdom is not of this world" (Jn 18:36–37). *Gihon*. Spring in Kidron Valley north of En-rogel (see note, v 9), from which Hezekiah later dug a tunnel to the Pool of Siloam. A spring may have been

chosen for the site of coronations because the perpetual flow of water signified a stable and resourceful reign.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 1:34 *trumpet*. Hbr *shophar*. See p 993; cf v 41.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 1:35 *ruler*. Hbr word translated "prince" in 1Sm 9:16; cf 1Sm 10:1.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 1:36 *Amen!* See "faithfulness," p 842.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 1:38 *Zadok … Nathan … Benaiah*. See note, v 8. *Cherethites and the Pelethites*. See note, 2Sm 15:18. *mule*. See note, v 33.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 1:39 *horn of oil*. Cf Ex 30:23–32 for the preparation of anointing oil. See "horn," p 842. *tent*. Not the tabernacle, which was in Gibeon (cf 3:4), but a tent David had set up in Jerusalem to house the ark (2Sm 6:17).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 1:40 *pipes*. Apparently a common instrument. See p 993. *split*. Hyperbole; sound of their rejoicing was great.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 1:41 *What does this … mean?* Adonijah and his band lacked Absalom's wile and perverse determination to seize the throne. They expected no resistance.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 1:42 *Jonathan*. Formerly a secret informant for David.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 1:43 *Solomon king*. Not the news Adonijah wanted to hear, but he did not contest David's decision (vv 41–48). Solomon promised to spare his rival's life (vv 49–53). He wisely sought peace in the royal family.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 1:44 *Zadok … Nathan … Benaiah*. See note, v 8. *Cherethites and the Pelethites*. See note, 2Sm 15:18. *mule*. See note, v 33.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 1:46 *royal throne*. Thrones were transportable; in artwork they are sometimes depicted with wheels.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 1:47 *bowed himself on the bed*. Expresses David's humility and physical infirmity.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 1:50 *horns of the altar*. One guilty of unintentional manslaughter could flee for refuge to the altar (cf Ex 21:12–13). Apparently, this applied to other crimes punishable by death.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 1:51 *swear to me first*. Emphasizes the extent of Adonijah's fear. See p 7.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 1:53 *Solomon sent*. He assumed royal functions before David's death. The record does not specify how long the co-regency lasted or whether it is included in computing the length of Solomon's reign

(cf 1Ch 22:6–29:25). Cf 2Ki 15:5 for another such coregency. Father-son rule likely occurred in other instances, a factor that helps to solve some difficulties in the chronologies of the reigns during the divided kingdom. See p 529.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 1:28–53 Informed of Adonijah's intentions, David declares that Solomon is to succeed him as king according to God's purposes. Human scheming cannot overthrow God's plans. This is a warning to all who think they can defy the Almighty, but it is also a great comfort to us whose lives and futures are in the hands of the merciful and gracious God. • Lord God Almighty, I thank You for Your guidance of my life, assuring me that in Your Son, Jesus, You are reigning for my good, both now and eternally. Amen.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 2:1–9 *commanded Solomon*. David's instructions to his son and successor were of a twofold nature: (1) admonition to be faithful to the covenant (vv 1–4); (2) directions on how to deal with specific individuals (vv 5–9). Cf Pr 4:3–9; see note, Pr 1:8.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 2:3 *walking … ways*. See p 844. *statutes … commandments … rules … testimonies … Law*. See p 971. *prosper*. Key to understanding the entire history recorded in 1 and 2Ki. Observing the terms of the covenant did not merit God's favor. Obedience to the divine will was Israel's response to undeserved mercy. Nevertheless, observance or neglect of covenant obligations was important, as Moses explained at length in Dt. Even the king was not above the Law. If he and the nation turned aside to worship other gods, the Lord would "cut off Israel from the land" (9:6–9). He still directs the course of history according to this basic principle, whether people agree or not (cf Rm 11:22; 1Co 2:16; 2Pt 2:9; Rv 15:3).

1 Kings—NOTE ON 2:4 *He spoke concerning me*. Cf 2Sm 7:11–16.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 2:5–9 David's general admonition in vv 1–4 is similar to God's charge to Joshua (Jsh 1:1–9). However, David's orders regarding Joab and Shimei are difficult to reconcile with the covenant. His instructions to execute the cold-blooded murderer of Abner and Amasa can be explained inasmuch as the curse of bloodguilt needed to be removed. See note, v 31.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 2:5 *avenging in time of peace*. Vengeful murders after hostilities ended.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 2:6 *Act … according to … wisdom*. Wait for a good occasion to execute Joab. *Sheol*. See p 792.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 2:7 *Barzillai*. Cf 2Sm 19:33–39 for his loyalty and David's offer of reward. *eat at your table*. A privilege, though guests supplied their own food. Cf 18:19; 2Ki 25:27–29.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 2:8–9 *Shimei*. David may have wanted to avoid the impression that the punishment was a matter of personal revenge. However, it cannot be denied that David commanded his son to do what he had sworn not to do; thereby, David broke his oath to the offender (2Sm 19:23).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 2:8 *Bahurim*. Village just east of Jerusalem. *Mahanaim*. Place near Jabbok River. See map, p 534.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 2:9 See note, v 6.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 2:1–9 Before dying, King David charges his son Solomon with the responsibilities of kingship. He rightly commends God's Word as the basis of good judgment and leadership. David's dying example of concern for his son Solomon, and the kingdom over which he would reign, encourages us in Christlike love and service to our families and others. In His death, Christ supplied fully for our life and peaceable service in His kingdom. • Father in heaven, through life and in the hour of death, keep my eyes set on my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 2:10 *slept*. Died. *buried*. Refers to burial in an ancestral tomb, joining his ancestors in the common lot of all mortals. *city of David*. Cf 2Sm 5:7. Kings were typically buried in their capital. Luth: "The fathers concluded from these passages that another life remains and that the saints do not perish like cattle but are gathered to the people in the land of the living…. This serves to comfort us, lest we, like others, who have no hope (1 Thess. 4:13), be frightened by or shudder at death. For in Christ death is not bitter, as it is for the ungodly, but it is a change of this wretched and unhappy life into a life that is quiet and blessed" (AE 4:310–11).

1 Kings—NOTE ON 2:10–12 The Bible reminds us that even great kings are mortal and die. Scripture's use of the term "sleep" for death—especially when applied to believers—is a wonderful reminder that we shall awaken from death to life with God in heaven, through the sufferings, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. • God of our fathers, we thank You for all Your blessings. You daily and richly shower us with goodness through Your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 2:13–46 Records how King Solomon dealt with four men who could threaten his rule, all of whom broke the letter of the Law.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 2:13 *Bathsheba*. As queen mother, she was still authoritative. *Do you come peacefully?* See note, 1:12.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 2:15 *kingdom was mine*. Cf 1:11. *it was his from the* LORD. Adonijah seems to admit that he acted improperly.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 2:17 *give me Abishag*. Apparently a foolish rather than an insidious request. A new king might take his predecessor's harem in order to establish his claim to the throne (cf 2Sm 3:7–8; 12:8; 16:21–22). See note, v 22.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 2:18 *Very well*. Adonijah asked Bathsheba to plead his cause because, as queen mother, she had great influence at court (cf 2Ki 11:1–3). Her ready consent to speak for the hapless suitor seems suspicious, given all that had happened. She could have hoped for peaceful settlement between the brothers or even for Solomon's angry response.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 2:19 *bowed down to her*. Although a young man, Solomon honored his mother, setting an example for us.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 2:22 *Ask for him the kingdom also*. Sarcasm; Adonijah's request for a woman associated with the court exposed him to the suspicion of still having designs to become king (v 17). *Abiathar … Joab*. See note, 1:7.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 2:23 *swore*. See note, Ru 1:17. Charging Adonijah with ill motive (v 22), Solomon ordered his execution (v 25).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 2:26 *Abiathar*. Solomon took action against him and Joab, accusing them of complicity in a new plot against him. See note, 1:7. *Anathoth*. Priestly city c 3 mi NE of Jerusalem; the future home of Jeremiah. See map, p 615.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 2:27 *word of the* LORD. Abiathar was a descendant of Eli, for whose house a prophet had predicted disaster. Abiathar's descendants were later permitted to resume service at the temple (1Ch 24:6). *Shiloh*. C 20 mi N of Jerusalem. See color map 1.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 2:28 *tent*. Set up by David for the ark (2Sm 6:17). *horns*. See note, 1:50.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 2:31 *strike him down*. A willful murderer was not to be granted sanctuary at the altar. *the guilt for the blood*. Lit, "the blood of no cost [guilt]." Murder polluted the land. The execution of a murderer by legitimate authority removed the threat of a blood feud, which would only make matters worse. Settling such matters is a major theme in 1 and 2Ki.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 2:33 *peace … forevermore*. Assuming that they did not engage in the sin of murder. Solomon enjoyed peace. His reign ended the blood feuds that stemmed from the rivalry between Saul's house and David's.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 2:34 *own house*. Because of his distinguished services to his people, Joab was granted honorable burial at his ancestral estate in the wilderness of Judah, possibly east of Bethlehem.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 2:35 *Zadok*. Solomon here ends potential rivalry within the priesthood by choosing Zadok (see note, 2Sm 19:11). See pp 1557–58.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 2:36 To keep Shimei under close surveillance, Solomon transferred him to Jerusalem from Bahurim, away from potential allies among members of Shimei's clan (2Sm 16:5; 17:18).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 2:37 *Kidron*. Brook east of Jerusalem in the direction of Shimei's hometown, Bahurim. Solomon sets a clear boundary.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 2:39 *servants ran away*. Common problem. *Maacah*. Perhaps a variant of "Maoch."
1 Kings—NOTE ON 2:40 *Gath*. Philistine city c 25 mi SW of Jerusalem. See map, p 534.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 2:42 *any place whatever*. Solomon changes his requirement about crossing the brook Kidron, either invoking the spirit of his order or finding fault intentionally. The Philistines of Gath had threatened his father's (David's) rule. Solomon likely suspected foul play.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 2:45 See note, 2Sm 7:13.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 2:46 *the kingdom was established in the hand of Solomon*. All rivals were ultimately eliminated. Though Solomon claims the Lord's approval (v 45), the author of 1Ki does not confirm this claim.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 2:13–46 Though a man of peace, Solomon oversees the deaths of his political enemies. Scripture does not absolutely approve of Solomon's motives in these cases but does affirm his right and responsibility to govern. God wants us to respect the earthly government under which we live, recognizing that we serve a higher King and are citizens of an everlasting kingdom, that of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
• Let me be Thine forever, My faithful God and Lord; Let me forsake Thee never Nor wander from Thy Word. Amen. (*LSB* 689:1)
1 Kings—NOTE ON 3:1–2 *marriage alliance*. Typical practice. Solomon's marriage to an Egyptian princess may not have occurred at the very outset

of his regime. But it is an example of his general practice of marrying many foreign wives (11:1) for the sake of peace with neighbors. *building … high places*. Other prominent features of Solomon's career were his extensive building program and his tolerance in worship practices (cf 11:4–7). Directly or indirectly, all these things contributed to Solomon's fall, explaining in advance why "his heart had turned away from the LORD" (11:9). Historically, the downfall of the Egyptian and Hittite empires (c 1200 BC) cleared the way for David and Solomon to rise in power. These conditions continued until c 900 BC, when the Assyrians began to rise. The biblical account fits well into the broad historical setting.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 3:3 *loved the LORD*. Despite the imperfections of his love for the Lord, Solomon received a special measure of divine grace. Given a choice of gifts, he asked for wisdom to govern his people (vv 3–9). By this request, he showed that in his heart he wanted to be motivated by the desire to serve God and His people rather than by the promptings of the flesh for personal gain. God gave him not only "a wise and discerning mind" but also promised him "both riches and honor" (vv 12–13), for all of which he was truly grateful (v 15). *made offerings at the high places*. To Yahweh. See note, 1Sm 9:12.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 3:4 *Gibeon*. No reason is given why Solomon went to sacrifice at "the great high place" in Gibeon, c 6 mi NW of Jerusalem. *a thousand*. Denotes a large number rather than an exact count. See p 217.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 3:5 *dream*. One means of divine revelation (1Sm 28:6, 15), claimed also by false prophets (Jer 23:32; Zec 10:2). See p 74. *by night*. After his evening religious services.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 3:6 *steadfast love … faithfulness … uprightness*. See pp 842–43. *this day*. General; "at this time."

1 Kings—NOTE ON 3:7 *child*. Figure of speech to express lack of experience. Solomon actually had a child of his own at this time (cf 11:42; 14:21). *how to go out or come in*. How to tackle the problems of administering "a great people" whose numbers were bewildering (v 8; Dt 31:2). Luth: "It is incurable and damnable rashness and arrogance on my part when I claim to be such a person and such an extraordinary man that I can manage the state, the home, and the church wisely and properly. But if you are a judge, a bishop, or a prince, you should not feel ashamed to fall on your knees and say: 'Lord God, Thou hast appointed me … guide and

teach me, give me counsel, wisdom, and strength to attend successfully to the office committed to me' " (AE 5:122).

1 Kings—NOTE ON 3:8 *too many … counted*. Hyperbole. David had conducted censuses, though not without issue (1Ch 21).

1 Kings—NOTE ON 3:9 *understanding mind*. Lit, "a hearing heart." Hbr verb "to hear" frequently means "to hearken, to obey" (cf 1Sm 15:22). To act in obedience to God, Solomon wanted to be able to "discern between good and evil." Such discrimination required a mind capable of analytic judgments. However, only a heart that listens to the Lord could supply the basis for making correct decisions, the desire to conform to the divine way, and the willpower to act accordingly.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 3:11 *asked for yourself understanding*. Though David was a man after God's own heart, he lacked judgment, which brought sorrow to his family and kingdom.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 3:12 *wise and discerning mind*. Lit, "a heart of wisdom and understanding." See p 775–78.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 3:13 *give you also*. Cf Mt 6:33, Jesus' promise to those who "seek first [His] kingdom." *no other king … all your days*. Israel never grew greater economically or politically than under Solomon. His expanded power naturally diminished the territory and influence of his rivals. See note, vv 1–2.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 3:14 *ways … statutes … commandments*. See p 971.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 3:15 *dream*. See note, v 5. *he came to Jerusalem*. From Gibeon (vv 4–5). *ark of the covenant*. David had brought it to Jerusalem (2Sm 6:16–17). The Lord's promise (vv 11–14) and gift deepened Solomon's devotion for a time. *offerings … feast*. Special occasion, not a religious feast. See pp 200–201.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 3:1–15 In return for Solomon's selfless request for wisdom, God blesses him, not only with wisdom, but also with riches and honor. May we, like Solomon, recognize that we do not deserve the wonderful opportunities God gives us. Because of our human limitations, we are unable to perfectly fulfill the challenges we face. Yet, in Christ, we have forgiveness; we are a new creation and can do all things through Him who gives us strength and wisdom. • O Lord God, do not forsake me in my life of service, lest I bring it all to ruin. May Your Word, my constant companion, give me strength and wisdom. In Jesus' name. Amen.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 3:16–4:28 The connection between vv 1–15 and what follows is logical rather than chronological. These verses demonstrate that Solomon actually received "an understanding mind" (v 9): (1) he was able to render justice in a difficult case (3:16–28); (2) he displayed executive ability by dividing the country into 12 administrative districts (4:1–19); (3) he "ruled over" a far-flung empire (4:20–21); (4) he managed a grandiose establishment (4:22–28).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 3:18 *no one else … in the house*. No potential witnesses (see note, v 27)
1 Kings—NOTE ON 3:19–20 Newborn babies, born in a dark house to exhausted women, would be difficult to distinguish.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 3:26 *neither mine nor yours*. She had lost all. Any motherly compassion gave way to bitterness.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 3:27 Solomon called on human instinct as a witness in the trial, knowing that the one who truly cared was the mother.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 3:28 *the wisdom of God was in him*. See pp 775–78. *to do justice*. See p 842.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 3:16–28 Solomon's legendary wisdom is evident in his dealing with the two prostitutes who claim to have given birth to the same living child. True wisdom consists of far more than acquiring facts and information. Rather, it is godly wisdom to declare our sinfulness and need for a Savior, and to see in Jesus the One who meets all our needs. • Omniscient Lord, wisdom's highest treasure resides in Your Son, who is the very Wisdom of God. Guide me constantly to serve You faithfully. Amen.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 4:2 *high officials*. Solomon appointed various officials of cabinet rank, associated with him in Jerusalem (vv 1–6), and 12 regional managers, stationed in their respective districts (vv 7–19). *priest*. Cf 2Sm 8:18, where the term "priest" is applied to David's sons, who according to 1Ch 18:17 were his "chief officials." In v 5, the "king's friend" is also a priest.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 4:3 *Elihoreph*. Prompted by a textual variant, some scholars suggest vv 2b–3a reads "Azariah, son of Zadok the priest, was in charge of the calendar," but the traditional reading is preferred.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 4:4 *priests*. Chief priests (Levitical) at the ark in Jerusalem. The tabernacle was still at Shiloh. See note, v 2. See also p 495.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 4:5 *the officers*. Perhaps those mentioned in vv 7–19. *priest*. See note, v 2. *king's friend*. Not a personal friend, but one who

rendered confidential service. Zabud was Solomon's trusted counselor as Hushai had been David's (2Sm 15:32).

1 Kings—NOTE ON 4:6 *Adoniram*. Also spelled "Adoram" and "Hadoram." *forced labor*. Introduced by David, the draft of laborers for work on state projects became so oppressive under Solomon that it was a main factor in causing the division of the kingdom (12:4, 11, 18–20).

1 Kings—NOTE ON 4:7–19 Two noteworthy features of Solomon's reign emerge here: (1) Although some of the place-names have not been identified with known sites, enough fixed points are mentioned to establish the fact that the three districts east and the nine west of the Jordan did not coincide with the territories allotted to the 12 tribes (Jsh 15–19). This administrative realignment of the borders may have been based on the land's productivity because each new district was required to furnish a month's "food for the king and his household" (v 7). (2) One officer appointed to supervise the collection of food from all tribes had his headquarters in the land of Judah (v 9). However, Solomon's own tribe apparently was not required to furnish a monthly share of provisions for the royal household. If this was the case, such discrimination may have sparked the discontent among the other tribes that flared after Solomon's death (ch 12).

1 Kings—NOTE ON 4:7 *had to make provision*. Supplying for the royal household was no small task. Archaeological finds confirm the broad administrative efforts of Judean rulers, whose seals appear on numerous items.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 4:9 *Beth-shemesh*. In Solomon's era, the town was rebuilt as a regional center, which included a huge underground reservoir capable of collecting 211,000 gal of water.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 4:11 *Naphath-dor*. Became major seaport by Ahab's time.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 4:19 *Sihon … Og*. Cf Nu 21:21, 33.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 4:1–19 This list of Solomon's officials, among whom he lived and worked, demonstrates the breadth of his wise rule. Today, the people among whom we work are important to us and to the Lord, who supplies us able companions for serving our nation and His kingdom. We are priceless to Him, and our names are recorded in the Book of Life through Jesus' work on our behalf. • Thank You, Holy Trinity, for the priceless insights of Your Holy Word. In Jesus' name. Amen.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 4:20 *as many as the sand by the sea*. Intentional exaggeration to stress Solomon's great wisdom and wealth. *happy*. With wealth flowing in from a vast empire (v 21), the people ate and drank enough to make life enjoyable, even though they were required to supply enormous provisions for the king's grandiose establishment (vv 22–28). Progressively greater requirements by Solomon finally made his exactions a "heavy yoke" (12:4).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 4:21 *from the Euphrates to the land of the Philistines*. Borders of Solomon's kingdom. See map, p 534.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 4:22–23 Collected provisions could feed at least 1,500 people: the royal family, officials, and regular troops.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 4:22 *cors*. See p cx.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 4:23 *roebucks*. Species of deer, also known as fallow deer. *fattened fowl*. Likely geese.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 4:24 *Tiphsah*. Located on the Upper Euphrates c 200 mi NE of Damascus. *Gaza*. Philistine city near the Great Sea; southwest limit of the empire. See map, p 534. In v 21, the extent of Solomon's empire is mentioned in order to account for the source of his income. Here, the reference to distant borders makes clear why his expenditures were so huge.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 4:25 *Dan even to Beersheba*. All of Israel (Jgs 20:1). *every man under … his fig tree*. Peace allowed men to build financial security for their families.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 4:26 *40,000*. Possibly a scribal slip; 2Ch 9:25 has "4,000 stalls," enough to accommodate the horses of "1,400 chariots" (1Ki 10:26).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 4:27 *officers*. Cf vv 8–19.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 4:29 *wisdom*. See pp 775–78. Solomon gave evidence of his God-given capacities, not only by his judicial abilities (3:16–28) and his administrative astuteness, but also by sage maxims. *breadth of mind like the sand on the seashore*. Figure of speech indicating extent of Solomon's wisdom.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 4:31 Evidently, the men mentioned here were well known for their wisdom. Their names appear in Judah's genealogy (1Ch 2:6).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 4:32 *proverbs*. See p 995–98. *songs were 1,005*. One, the Song of Solomon, is recorded in the Bible, as are two psalms (Ps 72; 127).

1 Kings—NOTE ON 4:33 Solomon did not engage in a scientific study of botany and zoology as we know such disciplines today. The lessons he drew from plant and animal life surpassed in variety and in profundity of thought "the wisdom of all the people of the east [Babylonians and Arabs] and all the wisdom of Egypt" (v 30). Only a few of such maxims have been preserved in Pr (Pr 6:6; 19:12; 30:15–31). See pp 775–78.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 4:20–34 This was a fleeting, golden time in Israel's history. The wealth Solomon enjoyed was a gift from the gracious God. Because of God's great and undeserved love for us, we enjoy countless blessings in this life, including the certainty of priceless joys and blessings awaiting us in heaven. • Almighty God, thank You for the countless blessings You shower upon us without any merit or worthiness in us. In Jesus' name. Amen.

1 Kings—NOTE ON **Chs 5–8** Almost half the account of Solomon's reign is devoted to still another way in which he displayed wisdom: his building enterprises, particularly the construction of the temple (6:12). The tabernacle was supposed to serve as the one place of sacrifice for Israel (Lv 17:8–9), but for centuries the Israelites continued to use the high places (see note, 3:1–2). Even the tabernacle was divided, with the Holy Place remaining at Shiloh (2:26–27) when the ark was moved to another tent on Zion (2Sm 6:17). When Solomon built the temple, he had the opportunity to establish one place of sacrifice for all Israel, which would have united the worship of the people as had not happened since the days of Moses and Joshua. See p 495.

1 Kings—NOTE ON **Ch 5** Outlines two preliminary steps for building: (1) successful negotiations with the Phoenician king, Hiram, for cedar and cypress wood from Mount Lebanon (vv 1–12); (2) the drafting of a huge army of wood and stone workers to prepare the raw materials (vv 13–18).

1 Kings—NOTE ON 5:1 *Hiram*. Other Hbr spellings: "Hirom" (vv 10, 18); "Huram" (2Ch 2:3). All three may be abbreviations of "Ahiram." *Tyre*. Major Phoenician city on an island off the eastern coast of the Great Sea in Lebanon. See map, p 534. *Hiram … loved David*. Hiram's congratulations to Solomon would have been accepted royal custom.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 5:3 *name*. See p 843.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 5:4 *on every side*. Assyrian and later Persian administrations would use a similar expression to describe the region of Israel in relation to the Jordan River.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 5:6 *Lebanon*. Lit, "white mountain," range located north of Israel and running parallel to the coast of the Great Sea. See color map 2. *no one among us*. Ancient Israelites did not excel in architecture or the arts. See note, Am 3:15. See also p 544.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 5:7 Having heard David's testimony of faith, Hiram may have believed in and worshiped the one true God. See note, Jnh 1:16.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 5:9 *rafts*. Timbers were towed in floats from Phoenician seaports to Joppa, the only natural harbor on Israel's coast (2Ch 2:16). From there, they were hauled c 35 mi over land to Jerusalem. *food for my household*. Cf 4:7. Agricultural trade rather than payment of tribute to Hiram.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 5:11 *20,000 cors*. Figures may seem exaggerated, but commentators have calculated that this amount could be harvested from c 12 acres (Kitchen, p 113).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 5:12 *wisdom*. See pp 775–78. *treaty*. Covenant. See p 127.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 5:13 *drafted forced labor*. Lit, "raised tribute" in the form of labor. Similar expression occurs in nonbiblical literature.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 5:15 *burden-bearers*. They and the stonecutters were remnants of Canaanite inhabitants whom Solomon reduced to permanent slave laborers. See note, Jsh 9:21.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 5:16 *chief officers*. Cf 2Ch 2:18 (3,600 "overseers"); 1Ki 9:23 (550 "who had charge of the people"); and 2Ch 8:10 (250). Variance results from different classifications of these groups.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 5:17 *costly*. Hbr "heavy" or "massive." Quarrying of such great stones, however, made them costly.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 5:18 *Gebal*. Seaport north of Sidon. Hiram sent these expert stonemasons to work with Solomon's builders in the limestone hill country (v 15) of Israel.

1 Kings—NOTE ON **Ch 5** Solomon, whose name means "peace," prepares international treaties with Hiram of Tyre in order to build the temple. The Lord calls us to live in peace and to trade with others, even those who do not share our faith. Such peaceful relations are a blessing, but they are small when compared with the blessings of the holy temple. Though Solomon's temple is no more, God hallows us as His holy temple in Baptism. He has brought us to a saving faith in Jesus. The Holy Spirit dwells within our hearts, and we daily strive to honor our gracious God in

all we think, do, and say. • Holy Spirit, dwell within this heart of mine; strengthen my faith in Jesus, my Savior. Amen.
1 Kings—NOTE ON **Ch 6** Phoenician names for months are used in vv 1, 37–38, and in 8:2, showing the influence of Hiram's workers.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 6:1 *he began*. See "Sequence and Length of Events," p 339.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 6:2–38 See diagram, p 541.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 6:11 *word of the* LORD. Even before Solomon finished the temple (vv 9, 14; 9:1), God reminded him that there was no magical power that could impound Him within its walls. God would "dwell" in this house only for the purpose of blessing the king and people according to His covenant promises.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 6:12 *statutes … rules … commandments*. See p 971.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 6:13 *I will dwell among*. See "presence," p 843.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 6:15–22 The sketch of the structural components (vv 2–10) is followed by a description of a predominating interior feature: the exclusive use of wood, ornamented often with gold, so that "no stone was seen" (vv 18). Cedar and cypress wood were used for lining floors and walls, for carved ornamentations, and for making an incense altar that was overlaid with gold (v 20).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 6:16 *cedar*. Scent must have been outstanding. *Most Holy Place*. See note, v 20.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 6:18 *carved in the form of gourds and open flowers*. See note, Ex 20:4.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 6:20 The inner sanctuary, or Most Holy Place (v 16), was a cube of 20 cubits, or 30 ft. However, the overall height of the entire house was 30 cubits, or 45 ft. Hence, either the ceiling of the house was lowered to the floor or the sanctuary was raised 10 cubits, or 15 ft. *an altar*. For incense, which apparently stood close to or partially in the Most Holy Place. See note, Ex 30:1.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 6:21 *chains*. Mentioned only here, these golden chains perhaps served as drawstrings on the veil that separated the inner sanctuary from the Holy Place (2Ch 3:14; Ex 26:31–34).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 6:22 *overlaid the whole … altar*. See note, v 20.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 6:23 *cherubim*. See note, Ezk 10:1. "Facing the nave" (2Ch 3:13), they stretched their wings across the entire 20-cubit width of the inner sanctuary's innermost or western wall. See diagram, p 541. On the

mercy seat of the ark, two more golden cherubim faced each other (Ex 25:20).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 6:24 On the use of images, see p 141.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 6:29 *the walls*. Wooden walls were ornamented with a frieze of carved figures; the wooden floor was overlaid with gold. *carved engraved figures*. See note, Ex 20:4. *palm trees*. Favorite artistic motif, coupled with cherubim in Israelite temples (6:32, 35; Ezk 41:18–20).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 6:31 *doors*. One giving "entrance to the inner sanctuary" and the other "to the nave" (v 33). The latter had the ordinary form of a square. The former, rectangular at bottom and triangular at the top, had the shape of a pentagon.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 6:32 *carvings*. See note, Ex 20:4.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 6:35 *cherubim and palm trees*. See note, v 29.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 6:36 *inner court*. For the walls of the open-air court, situated immediately before the roofed buildings, wood was used only in part.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 6:37–38 *Ziv*. Also called the second month (Nu 9:11); corresponds to our Apr/May. *Bul*. Eighth month, or Oct/Nov. *seven years*. Rounded figure that does not take into account the half years between Ziv and Bul. See calendar, p 262.
1 Kings—NOTE ON **Ch 6** Specific dates (e.g., 480 years after the Israelites came out of Egypt), measurements (60 cubits long), and descriptions (cherubim of olivewood) lend gravity to this description of the seven years it takes to build the temple. With what care and dedication Solomon builds! The Lord calls us to show equal concern for the house of worship in which we gather. It is, after all, a reflection of our devotion to the Lord, His Word, and His work. His dedication to us appeared in Solomon's descendant Jesus, whose body as a holy temple secured our salvation. • Lord of hosts, forgive our sins, and enable us to serve You and work with our neighbors. Through Jesus' name. Amen.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 7:1 It took Solomon twice as long to build his royal edifices as it did to complete the temple (6:38). One house was considerably longer and wider than the house of the Lord (see note, v 2). However, only 12 verses are devoted to Solomon's palace (vv 1–12). From the available data, it is impossible to gain a clear picture of the architectural features and specific function of these buildings. The descriptions illustrate the splendor of Solomon's reign.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 7:2–7 *House of the Forest of Lebanon … Hall of Pillars … Hall of the Throne*. Individual structures in the royal building complex were named in part according to their basic features and in part according to their purpose.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 7:2 *Forest of Lebanon*. This was 60 ft longer and 45 ft wider than the temple; it required so much cedar wood for its construction as to make it a veritable forest. It served as an armory (10:17).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 7:3 *the chambers*. May have been three floors.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 7:6 *Hall of Pillars*. Characteristic feature of the second edifice was its colonnaded pillars.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 7:7 *Hall of the Throne*. In the third structure, Solomon set up his throne, from which he rendered judgments. Cf 10:20.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 7:8 *like workmanship*. Solomon's own royal residence and the palace for Pharaoh's daughter were similar to the Hall of the Throne. *Pharaoh's daughter*. In this political marriage (see note, 3:1–2), she may have required unique accommodations and dignity.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 7:9 *coping*. The covering course of stones at the top of a wall. *great court*. Likely surrounded all the buildings erected by Solomon, including the temple complex with its smaller "inner court" (v 12).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 7:1–12 Solomon's house takes almost twice as long to build (13 years) as does the temple, an ominous foreshadowing of Solomon's shifting priorities. Too often, we neglect the things of God in favor of personal interests. Though the Lord would not have us ignore our home and comforts, He bids us to use all we have for the glory of His name, dedicating ourselves and all to the Architect of heaven. May God for Jesus' sake refocus our attention on spiritual matters and glorify the great gift of salvation among us! • Triune God, we come to You for forgiveness and renewal in Christ. May we praise Your name in all we do and say. Amen.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 7:13–51 After describing the temple's structural features (6:1–10) and its wooden interior (6:14–36), the account now lists its furnishings and vessels of bronze (7:13–47) and gold (vv 48–50).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 7:13 *Hiram*. Not the king of Lebanon (cf 5:1). *Tyre*. See note, 5:1.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 7:14 *son of a widow of the tribe of Naphtali*. Cf 2Ch 2:14. The mother's first husband was from Naphtali; when he died, she married a man from Tyre. *worker in bronze*. Solomon commissioned a half-Tyrian to do the castings. His name, like the king's, was Hiram (cf 2Ch 2:7,

13–14). *all his work*. He produced two massive pillars (vv 15–22); a large reservoir (vv 23–26); 10 lavers, or basins (vv 27–39); and many smaller items (vv 40–45). To this list, 2Ch 4:1 adds the great "altar of bronze."
1 Kings—NOTE ON 7:15 *two pillars*. See diagram, p 672.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 7:16 *capitals*. Crowns that top pillars.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 7:18 *pomegranates*. Near-Eastern fruit; also a symbol of fruitfulness. A pomegranate carved from ivory, which may have been part of the temple decorations, was discovered in Israel with the inscription, "Holy of the priests, to the h[ouse of Yahwe]h." Pomegranates were commonly depicted in Israelite and regional artifacts. See note, Sg 4:3.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 7:19 *lily-work*. Shaped like lilies.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 7:21 *Jachin … Boaz*. Name of first pillar is a verb, meaning "He [God] will establish." Boaz is a prepositional phrase plus a noun: "in Him [is] strength." It is also possible that both names were read as one sentence: "He will establish in strength." See pp 422–23. The entrance to the Holy Place was "oriented," i.e., it faced east, toward the sunrise, as had the tabernacle (Ex 27:12–15). Sunrise and sunset determined the beginning and ending of the Sabbath and the hours of sacrifice. See pp 200–201.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 7:23 *the sea of cast metal*. A reservoir so large that it was called a sea, a term applied to no other water basin. The Hbr always includes the definite article because it served a unique purpose (2Ch 4:6). If the dimensions are meant to be exact (circumference, 45 ft; diameter, 15 ft; depth, 7½ ft), it was rounded or slightly oblong, with bulging or convex sides. See depiction on p 730.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 7:26 *two thousand baths*. C 12,000 gal. (2Ch 4:5 reports the number as 3,000.)
1 Kings—NOTE ON 7:27 *ten stands*. More complicated in design than the stationary sea were the 10 movable basins, or lavers, in which the water was wheeled in order to make it available to "rinse off what was used for the burnt offering" (2Ch 4:6). Though the description is surprisingly detailed, it is difficult to reconstruct an exact model. The author demonstrates a personal fascination with these mechanisms.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 7:29–36 *lions, oxen, and cherubim … wreaths … palm trees*. Low relief. The changing patterns are not explained.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 7:38 *forty baths*. C 240 gal. See p cx.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 7:40–44 In listing all the items of bronze made by Hiram, the three major castings (pillars, sea, lavers) are repeated.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 7:40 *shovels*. Iron examples were discovered at the worship complex in Dan. See note, 12:29.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 7:43 *stands … basins*. See note, v 27.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 7:46 *plain of the Jordan*. Molds for the castings were made of Jordan Valley clay, which was best suited for that purpose. *Succoth*. Transjordanian town. See color map 1. *Zarethan*. Spelled Zeredah in 2Ch 4:17. Site not determined.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 7:48–50 Temple's rich and beautiful decoration is a paradigm for the use of artwork in places of worship throughout the ages.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 7:48 *Solomon made*. Solomon receives the credit, having funded the work. *the vessels*. Much of the wooden interior of the temple was overlaid with gold (6:14–36). These objects were made entirely of the precious metal. *the golden altar*. For the burning of incense. *for the bread of the Presence*. Cf Ex 25:23.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 7:51 *David … dedicated*. Cf 1Ch 22:14. *the treasuries*. Royal support for priestly services. See notes, 1Ch 26:20–28; 27:25.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 7:13–51 The inspired account details the temple's furnishings, indicating the care given to honor this beautiful place of worship. Solomon's magnificent temple with its furnishings, especially those relating to the sacrificial system, point to the coming Savior. Through Jesus' blood and merit, all our sins are washed away. Through the Savior's long-promised sacrifice, forgiveness, life, and eternal salvation are ours. Thanks be to God! • Savior of the nations, dwell in my heart, and make it a temple set apart for loving service to You. Amen.
1 Kings—NOTE ON **Ch 8** After Solomon brought the ark of the covenant into the finished temple from the city of David (2Sm 6:16) and all the holy vessels were in place (1Ki 8:1–11), the rites of dedication began with a hymn of adoration (vv 12–13), followed by a blessing and an address (vv 14–21), a prayer of dedication (vv 22–53), a benediction and admonition (vv 54–61), and dedicatory offerings (vv 62–64).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 8:2 *the feast*. Solomon waited 11 months after the completion of the temple to dedicate it. As an appropriate time for the solemnities, he chose the Feast of Booths, which began on the 15th of

Ethanim, the seventh month, also called Tishri. See pp 200–201. *Ethanim*. See calendar, p 262.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 8:5 *sacrificing*. See pp 170–71.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 8:6 *cherubim*. See note, Ezk 10:1.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 8:7–8 *poles*. Used in carrying the ark (Ex 25:10–15). We do not know the significance of the poles protruding from the Holy Place.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 8:8 *to this day*. The Books of Kings were composed after the temple had been destroyed (see pp 526–27). This note reflects the time of the source that the writer of 1Ki consulted.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 8:9 *nothing … except*. We are not told how or when the other articles associated with the ark were lost or removed (cf Ex 16:33–34; Nu 17:10).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 8:10 *cloud*. God showed His presence in a visible way (cf Ex 19:9). See p 39.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 8:11 *not stand*. They had to withdraw. *the glory of the* LORD. Cf Ex 20:21; 40:3, 34–35; Nu 11:25; 12:5.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 8:1–11 When the Levites bring the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem, the cloud filling the Lord's house is nothing less than God's awesome presence—His glory. God's presence reminds us of our unworthiness before Him. Yet it also announces His hallowing presence among us to cleanse us in His Son, Jesus. • Lord, I thank You for having shown Your glory, not only by Your presence in the temple of Jerusalem, but also especially in the person of Your Son, the Savior. Amen.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 8:12 *dwell in thick darkness*. See note, Ex 20:21. Unapproachable in His holiness, beyond comprehension by His finite creatures, the Creator nevertheless permitted Solomon to build a house for Him, where He made Himself accessible to every covenant-keeping worshiper. Lest the Israelites forget that the "inscrutable" Lord (Rm 11:33–36) cannot be manipulated or made to conform to their thoughts, He dwelt invisibly in the windowless Most Holy Place, "in the cloud over the mercy seat" (Lv 16:2).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 8:13 Solomon reminded the people that he built the temple according to the Lord's instruction and promise (vv 14–21).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 8:14 *stood*. To receive the blessing. See p 1277.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 8:15 *Blessed*. See p 842. *fulfilled*. See note, 2Sm 7:11.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 8:16 *I chose no city*. See p 495.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 8:18 *My name*. Cf Ex 6:3; see p 843. In the temple, the Lord who dwells in darkness chose to reveal Himself in accord with the covenant made when He brought the fathers "out of the land of Egypt" (v 21).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 8:20 *name*. See p 843.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 8:21 *the covenant*. The Ten Commandments were placed in the ark.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 8:12–21 Solomon recalls how the Lord had graciously kept His promises to His people. We, too, can look to the certainty of His promises. They declare God's Law (promises to punish sin and disobedience) and His Gospel (promises of deliverance, mercy, and forgiveness in Christ). • Lord God, heavenly Father, I come before You with a deep sense of unworthiness, yet I also trust fully in Your gracious promises of forgiveness in Jesus. Amen.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 8:22 *before the altar*. Solomon approaches the altar as a priest might. See note, 2Ch 6:3. *spread out his hands*. See p 1277.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 8:23 *God of Israel*. See p 1227.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 8:24 *spoke … fulfilled*. See note, 2Sm 7:11.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 8:25 *walk before me*. See p 7.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 8:27 *will God indeed dwell on the earth?* See "presence," p 843; see also p 39. *contain*. Solomon's entire prayer (vv 22–53) emphasizes the fact that the former sanctuary (the tabernacle) was neither adequate nor stationary (cf Ac 7:44–50). When God's Spirit dwells in people's hearts, they become God's temple in all circumstances of life (1Co 3:16; 6:19). Luth: "Christians make up the holy dwelling place of God in the New Testament, where God is no longer confined to cities and buildings…. These Christians are sanctified far more perfectly than Solomon's temple, sanctified with the Holy Spirit Himself, and anointed with the living oil of God's grace" (AE 13:37).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 8:28 *have regard*. Listen and answer.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 8:29 *My name shall be there*. See "name," p 843.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 8:30 *this place … dwelling place*. Distinction between God's presence in "this place" and His "dwelling place" in heaven, where He hears prayers, is a refrain repeated in all eight requests for divine aid (vv 30, 32, 34, 36, 39, 43, 45, 49). *forgive*. Prayer implies confession of sins. Our foremost need for forgiveness is mentioned in almost every petition (vv 30, 34, 36, 39, 50).

1 Kings—NOTE ON 8:31–53 Refers to troubles listed in the Law of Moses. Solomon lists seven specific needs for help: (1) vindicate the righteous (vv 31–32); (2) forgive a chastened people (vv 33–34); (3) send rain (vv 35–36); (4) relieve bodily ills (vv 37–40); (5) regard the foreigner (vv 41–43); (6) help in time of war (vv 44–45); (7) restore the exiled people (vv 46–53).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 8:31–32 Cf Ex 22:7–12.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 8:31 *oath*. See p 7.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 8:32 *righteous … righteousness*. See p 843.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 8:34 See note, v 30.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 8:36 See note, v 30. *teach*. See note, Pr 1:8.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 8:38 *stretching out his hands*. Lit, "he will spread out his palms to this house." See note, Ex 17:12; see also p 1277.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 8:39 See note, v 30.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 8:43 See note, v 30. *all the peoples of the earth*. Salvation is to extend to the Gentiles. *fear you*. See p 1001.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 8:44 *toward*. Prayers were oriented toward the temple as God's dwelling place.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 8:45 See note, v 30.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 8:46 *no one who does not sin*. Remarkable emphasis on original sin and depravity in this prayer. See note, Ps 51:5. *captive*. The threat of exile was part of the covenant stipulation (Lv 26:27–39; Dt 4:27).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 8:47 *turn their heart … repent*. See p 1080.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 8:48 *all … all*. See note, Dt 6:5. *toward their land*. As Daniel (Dn 6:10).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 8:49 See note, v 30.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 8:50 *forgive*. See note, v 30. *compassion*. To send them home. See "mercy," pp 842–43.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 8:51 *heritage*. See p 7. *from … iron furnace*. Israel's rescue from exile will in effect repeat their deliverance "out of Egypt."
1 Kings—NOTE ON 8:53 *heritage*. See p 7.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 8:22–53 Solomon's lengthy prayer at the temple's dedication is a model of devotion to God and reliance on the Lord. Although God dwells in heaven, He has chosen to come and bless His people with His presence. God recognizes our weakness; in Solomon's words, "there is no one who does not sin" (v 46). God also mercifully hears our prayers for help, comes to us, and delivers us by His great power and love. • Merciful Father, You have chosen to come among us and bless us

with the priceless gifts of faith, hope, and love. For this we thank and praise You. In Jesus' name. Amen.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 8:54 *knelt*. Either at once or sometime during the prayer (cf v 22; see p 1276).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 8:55 *blessed*. See p 842.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 8:58 *incline our hearts to Him*. Expression of loyalty. Verb describes extending toward something, as the tipping of a pitcher. *ways … commandments … statutes … rules*. See p 971.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 8:59 *near to the LORD our God*. Solomon speaks as though he deposited his prayer on record with the Lord at the temple. *day and night*. Always. Sacrifice and prayers were offered morning and evening.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 8:60 Note how Solomon unites his statements about confession and mission. Truth and outreach support each other. *no other*. See note, Dt 32:39.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 8:61 *wholly true*. Hbr *shalem*, "uninjured," "at peace." Root word for peace sounds similar to the name Solomon. See note, 1Ch 22:9.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 8:54–61 Solomon turns to bless the people, recalling God's gracious help in the past and His greatness: "the LORD is God; there is no other" (v 60). Like Solomon, we have every reason to bless the Lord. We dedicate ourselves so that our hearts may "be wholly true to the LORD our God" (v 61) and that we may share the Good News of Jesus "that all the peoples of the earth may know" the Lord (v 60). For He has forgiven and renewed us by grace. • Triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—there is none like You. Lead me always to honor You with all I do and say. I pray in Your saving name. Amen.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 8:62–64 *sacrifice*. Offerings proclaimed by symbolic action what Solomon had expressed in words. *peace offerings … burnt offering … grain offering*. See pp 170–71. Some critics suggest that scribes may have exaggerated the number of oxen and sheep (v 63) while recopying the text. Yet the large number of people at the 14-day ceremonies makes the figures plausible.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 8:65 *the feast*. Booths. See pp 200–201. *seven days*. "On the eighth day" (v 66) of the Feast of Booths, which followed the dedication festivities, Solomon dismissed the people. They came from as far northeast as Lebo-hamath, the valley between the two Lebanon ranges, and

from as far southwest as the Brook of Egypt, the boundary of Judah's territory (cf Nu 34:3; Jsh 15:1).

1 Kings—NOTE ON 8:62–66 The solemn dedication of the temple ends with the awesome sacrifice of thousands of animals and with a feast celebrated by the entire nation of Israel. The thousands of sacrifices at the temple prefigure the one sacrifice when Jesus Christ, the great High Priest, offered His life for the sins of the world. We offer our lives as living sacrifices for our Lord and Savior, having received the priceless gift of salvation through Him. • Loving Savior, thousand, thousand thanks are Yours for the great sacrifice You made on the cross for the sins of the world. Amen.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 9:1–9 The Lord appears to Solomon to make clear that the terms of the covenant applied also to the temple. Its stone and wood would not automatically guarantee the permanency of its builder's dynasty or magically ensure the nation's safety. The temple would "become a heap of ruins" (v 8) if it no longer was the place where the chosen kingdom of priests expressed their undivided devotion to the Lord. King and people would be cut off from the land (v 7) if they thought that the habitation of God's name made them immune to sin's consequences (Jer 7:1–4; 22:8).

1 Kings—NOTE ON 9:2 *appeared to Solomon a second time*. Cf 3:4–15. *Gibeon*. C 6 mi NW of Jerusalem. See color map 1.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 9:3 *forever*. Hbr term denotes a long, unknown time; eventually, the temple was destroyed by the Babylonians in 587 BC. Cf Ezk 10.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 9:6 *serve other gods*. Emphasizing the First Commandment (Ex 20:3).

1 Kings—NOTE ON 9:7 *cut off*. See note, Gn 17:14. God's judgment would include the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. *byword*. See note, Jb 17:6.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 9:8 *they*. Foreigners settling the land. See notes, 2Ki 17:24, 26.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 9:9 *Because … Therefore*. In God's dwelling with His people, there is in His Law a relentless logic of cause and effect. The Law in all of Scripture describes God's reaction to people's sinful response to Him. This reasoning is basic in the preaching of the prophets (e.g., Amos). Jesus applied the same reasoning to Jerusalem and the temple of His day when He predicted their destruction (Mt 23:37–24:2; cf Gal 6:7–8).

1 Kings—NOTE ON 9:1–9 God appears to Solomon a second time to emphasize the promises and the demands of the covenant with David's house. God's promises of blessing and threats of powerful judgment proclaim the Law and the Gospel. The Law and Gospel still apply to us today. The Law calls us to repentance and faithfulness; the Gospel calls us to true faith, blessing, and comfort for now and for eternity. • Lord, keep us from turning away from You and from bringing judgment upon ourselves. Forgive our sins, renew us, and strengthen us for a life of service. In the Savior's name. Amen.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 9:11 *Hiram*. See note, 5:1. *twenty cities*. Solomon was able to pay for Phoenician timber with wheat and oil (5:10–11). But he reimbursed Hiram for "120 talents of gold" (millions of dollars; v 14) by pawning 20 Israelite cities that were later redeemed (2Ch 8:1–2).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 9:12 *Hiram … Tyre*. See note, 5:1.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 9:13 *Cabul*. "Unproductive land." Hiram may have been haggling to profess dissatisfaction with the exchange value of the cities.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 9:15 *forced labor*. For the temple, his royal edifices, and walls of his capital. See note, 4:6. They were also used to fortify strategically located cities (v 19). *Megiddo*. Stables have been found at various excavated levels. See map, p 534. Archaeologists agree that remains at Hazor, Megiddo, Gezer, and other nearby locations are examples of Solomonic architecture.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 9:16–17 At the mention of Gezer, the account is interrupted in order to report how this city, c 20 mi NW of Jerusalem, came into Solomon's possession.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 9:16 *Pharaoh*. Possibly Siamun (c 979–959 BC).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 9:17 *Gezer*. Six-chambered gates have been discovered here, including benches and a drainage system. *Beth-horon*. C 12 mi NW of Jerusalem, it guarded an important road from the plain of the Great Sea into the hill country of Judah. See map, p 534.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 9:18 *Baalath*. Apparently the city by that name assigned to the tribe of Dan (Jsh 19:44). It controlled another approach into Judah almost directly west of Jerusalem. *Tamar*. Hbr text note has "Tadmor" (cf 2Ch 8:4), a city 150 mi NE of Damascus and later known as Palmyra. Tamar—which may be the better reading—was southwest of the Salt Sea (Ezk 47:19; 48:28).

1 Kings—NOTE ON 9:19 *store cities*. Grain reserves. Cf Ex 1:11.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 9:21 *devote to destruction*. See p 6. *slaves*. Cf Jsh 9:27. *to this day*. Exact conditions did not likely exist c 560 BC, when 1Ki was compiled. See note, 12:19.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 9:22 *no slaves*. The Israelites' service was a levy, or form of taxation. See note, 5:13. Some of them became officials of various kinds.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 9:23 *chief officers*. See note, 5:16.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 9:24–25 *own house*. In connection with Solomon's building operations, this short aside tells of Pharaoh's daughter's transfer from temporary quarters in the city of David to her own house, which Solomon completed before he built the Millo, and Solomon's sacrifice in the finished temple.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 9:25 *Three times*. On the occasion of the three important annual feasts: Feast of Unleavened Bread, Feast of Harvest, Feast of Ingathering (Booths; Ex 23:14–17).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 9:26–27 With the help of Hiram's experienced Phoenician seamen, Solomon engaged in maritime enterprises on the Red Sea, to which he had access through the land of Edom, a vassal state. From the northern end of the Gulf of Aqaba, the fleet of merchant ships sailed to Ophir (v 28).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 9:28 *Ophir*. Source of gold and other valuables (10:11–12). See note, Jb 22:24. Gold is rarely found in ancient Israelite sites, having been used as tribute to greater powers (Egypt, Assyria, and Babylon). *420 talents*. C 16 tons.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 9:10–28 Hiram feels cheated in his agreement with Solomon, and the king's glorious building projects include forced labor. The record of Solomon's acts are a mixture of faithful service to God and sinful greed and self-service. Our lives, too, are a record of sin along with our attempts to serve the Lord. That is why we daily need renewal at the cross of Jesus, in whom we are a new creation, dedicated to godly service. • Lord of the nations, teach us to place our trust not in earthly governments and rulers, but in Your perfect power and love. In Jesus' name. Amen.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 10:1 *queen of Sheba … came*. From southwest Arabia (Yemen) to Jerusalem, a distance of more than 1,000 mi. *Sheba*. Homeland of the Sabeans in southern Arabia and nearby Ethiopia. *test*. Hbr is translated "riddle" in Jgs 14:12.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 10:5 *no more breath*. Speechless.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 10:8 *Happy*. See "blessed," p 842.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 10:9 *Blessed*. See "bless," p 842. *the* LORD. The queen attributed Solomon's wisdom and prosperity to Israel's God, referring to Him by His own distinctive name, as did Hiram (see note, 5:7). See p 1227. *justice and righteousness*. See p 842.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 10:10 *she gave … spices*. Very likely the exchange served to ratify a trade agreement, perhaps the spice trade.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 10:11 *Ophir*. See note, Jb 22:24. *almug*. Unidentified tree. Hbr name is not translated but merely transliterated. Some think it was reddish and fragrant sandalwood. In 2Ch 2:8; 9:10, the variant form "algum" occurs, suggesting that it was not a Hbr term but a foreign one.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 10:12 *supports*. Hbr word, which occurs only here, is singular. It could denote a decorative railing or inlaid paneling.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 10:13 *gave … all that she desired*. See note, v 10.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 10:1–13 The queen of Sheba's legendary visit to Jerusalem shows the widespread fame of Solomon's wisdom. Not only does God bless Solomon with great wisdom, but He also blesses him with a great reputation. May we humbly recognize that the blessings we enjoy—including earthly prosperity and a good name—come to us by God's undeserved grace in His Son, Jesus. • Everlasting King, teach me to lean not on my own understanding but on the wisdom that abounds in Your Holy Word. For the sake of Jesus, God's very wisdom, we pray. Amen.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 10:14–25 Solomon's wealth required two additional notes to elaborate on his source of income and his lavish use of gold (vv 14–22) and to explain the acclaim that his riches and wisdom brought him from "the whole earth" (vv 23–25).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 10:14 *666 talents*. C 25 tons.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 10:15 *explorers*. Intriguing reference to Israel's curiosity and entrepreneurship. *kings of the west*. The Phoenicians were trading as far west as Spain, and Israelite traders may have joined such ventures.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 10:17 *shields*. Hbr word is different from the one used in v 16. Shields apparently were carried by a royal honor guard on ceremonial occasions (cf 14:27–28). C 6 lb of gold went into the larger kind (v 16); c 2 lb into the smaller ones. *House of the Forest of Lebanon*. See note, 7:2.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 10:18 *ivory throne*. Probably inlaid with plaques of ivory, as was Ahab's house (22:39).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 10:20 Perhaps similar to King Tutankhamun's lion-throne.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 10:22 *ships of Tarshish*. Likely, ships large enough to sail to Tartessus in Spain (see note, Jnh 1:3). However, the word "Tarshish" may be a common noun denoting the smelting of ore, in which case the name would mean they were capable of carrying a heavy cargo of ore or they sailed to ports where ore was exported.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 10:25 *his present*. Likely a tribute payment.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 10:26 *chariots*. Units were strategically located in "chariot cities" (see notes, 4:26; 9:15). Large stable complexes, excavated at Megiddo, could accommodate hundreds of horses.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 10:27 Solomon had the resources to acquire and maintain his chariot divisions. *sycamore of the Shephelah*. Great trees in the foothills going down to the plains of Philistia. See color map 2.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 10:28 Details of this horse trade are unclear. Sitting astride the north-south trade routes, Solomon likely acted as the middleman in profitable transactions between Egypt and Kue in Asia Minor.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 10:29 *exported to all the kings*. Solomon's horse traders extended their business. *Hittites*. Indo-European people of mountainous region of southeastern Asia Minor (Anatolia). *Syria*. Country northeast of Israel. See map, p 558. Solomon's "delight … in the strength of the horse" (Ps 147:10) violated the divine prescription that the king was not to have "many horses" (Dt 17:16).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 10:14–29 Solomon's fabulous wealth matches his great wisdom; he "excelled all the kings of the earth in riches and in wisdom" (v 23). We often complain about not having enough of this world's goods, yet God daily and richly forgives us and continues to shower material blessings upon us. How great is His undeserved goodness! Such is His great love toward us in Christ—becoming poor, that we might be rich. • Almighty Lord, Ruler of earth and sea, all things on earth are Yours. We praise You for Your all-surpassing greatness. Amen.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 11:1 *foreign women*. Solomon enacted marriage alliances with virtually all the surrounding states, longtime rivals of Israel. See note, 3:1–2.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 11:2 *not enter into marriage*. Cf Dt 7:3–4; Jsh 23:6–13. *in love*. Solomon followed the desires of his heart rather than God's Word forbidding intermarriage with foreign women.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 11:3 *700 wives*. Large harem indicates the splendor of Solomon's court, not merely his sexual excesses. His wives, who outnumbered his concubines, were princesses acquired out of political considerations. On polygamy, see note, Gn 4:19; see also pp 54–55.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 11:4 *turned away*. Gifts of God, such as wisdom and riches, are not a guarantee that their recipient will use them to glorify the Giver. Solomon demonstrated how irrational human wickedness is. The more generously God showered Solomon with wisdom and riches, the greater became his temptation to turn to other gods. (Cf Mt 19:23.) Because Solomon followed the gods of his wives, the Lord allowed his empire to disintegrate and the nation to divide. Cf Lk 12:21; Rm 1:18.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 11:5 *Ashtoreth*. See notes, Ex 34:13; Est 2:7. *Milcom*. Ammonite idol; also called "Molech." See note, Lv 18:21.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 11:7 *Chemosh*. Before entering Canaan, Israel defeated the "people of Chemosh" (Nu 21:29), who sacrificed children to their national idol (2Ki 3:27). *mountain east*. Hill outside the walls of Jerusalem.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 11:1–8 The great tragedy of Solomon's reign is that, having married many foreign women and taken hundreds of concubines, he turns from the Lord to worship his wives' idols. The tragic fall of Solomon is a warning to believers throughout all ages. If someone so wise and good as Solomon can turn from the Lord, how easily the same thing can happen to us! With a deep sense of humility, we say, "There but for the grace of God go I." Thanks be to God that He blesses us with faithful spouses and dear families hallowed by His grace. • Lord Jesus, Savior dear, be my guide through life, lest I lose the way. Be my hope and comfort also in the hour of death. Amen.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 11:10 *not go after other gods*. See note, Dt 32:39.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 11:11 *give it to your servant*. Irony. The servants Solomon exploited would inherit the kingdom.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 11:12 *for the sake of David your father*. See note, 2Sm 7:14–17. *your son*. Rehoboam precipitated the kingdom's division. Under his rule, Judah "committed [abominations], more than all that their fathers had done" (14:22).

1 Kings—NOTE ON 11:14–22 Flashback to David's military campaigns and their effect on Solomon.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 11:14 *Hadad*. Escaped a punitive campaign directed by Joab and Abishai (2Sm 8:13; 1Ch 18:12). *Edom*. Country neighboring Israel, south of Moab. See map, p 558.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 11:15–16 Cf 2Sm 8:13–14.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 11:18 *Midian*. East of the Gulf of Aqaba and south of Israel. *Paran*. Eastern side of the Sinai Peninsula. See color map 3.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 11:19 *sister of Tahpenes*. Egypt's prestige had ebbed low by this time. In better days, foreign rulers found it politically expedient to send their noblewomen to the court on the Nile. Now, Pharaoh gave his sister-in-law in marriage to a fugitive prince (cf note, v 40).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 11:21 After David's death (970 BC), Hadad returned to his homeland for the purpose of "doing harm" (v 25), very likely by engaging in guerrilla warfare against Solomon.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 11:23 *Rezon*. When David crushed King Hadadezer's power (2Sm 8:3–12; 10:16–19), the latter's vassal succeeded in making Damascus an independent capital. Under Rezon and his successors, the Syrian state perennially threatened Israel until, two centuries later, the Assyrians overpowered both Syria and Israel. *Zobah*. City-state located north of Damascus and controlling eastern Syria. See map, p 534.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 11:25 *reigned over Syria*. Cf 10:29 regarding Syria's military strength.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 11:26 *Jeroboam … lifted up*. He capitalized on the general discontent with Solomon's demand for forced labor and brought about the secession of the north. *Zeredah*. A town in Ephraim, probably c 20 mi NE of Jerusalem.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 11:28 *the house of Joseph*. Common name for the Northern Kingdom because Ephraim and Manasseh were the two most powerful tribes of the 10 that revolted (cf Ezk 37:16, 19; Am 5:15).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 11:29 *Ahijah*. Perhaps through him the Lord told Solomon (v 11) the consequences of the king's unfaithfulness. *new garment*. Symbolizing the newness of the kingdom.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 11:30–31 By a symbolic act, Ahijah revealed how the kingdom would be divided.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 11:32 *one tribe*. Jeroboam was to receive 10 tribes. Rehoboam was to rule over only one tribe (the small tribe of Benjamin)

besides his own tribe of Judah. Benjamin and the tribe of Simeon were virtually absorbed by Judah. The Levites had received no territory. See note, Jsh 14:4.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 11:33 *they have forsaken Me*. The prophet describes the reason for Judah's punishment and offers no solution to their dilemma. *Ashtoreth … Chemosh … Milcom*. See notes, vv 5, 7; Ex 34:13; Nu 21:29.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 11:34 *ruler*. Cf 1Sm 10:1.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 11:36 *a lamp*. Figurative expression for David's family line.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 11:38 *I will be with you*. See p 5. *build you a sure house*. The Lord makes a new covenant with Jeroboam regarding the northern tribes. He calls Jeroboam to restore the use of God's Word among them. Unlike the covenant with David, there is no promise of a messianic King.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 11:39 *not forever*. Never again mighty in the political domain, the house of David maintained its identity until One "greater than Solomon" came out of it (cf Lk 2:4; 11:31).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 11:40 *Solomon sought therefore to kill Jeroboam*. Either Ahijah's prophecy became known or Solomon noticed subversive efforts by his once-favored servant (v 28). *Shishak*. First Pharaoh mentioned by name in the OT. Known in Egyptian records as Shoshenq I, he founded the weak Twenty-second (Libyan) Dynasty c 945 BC. After Solomon's death, he invaded Judah and Israel (14:25–26). *death of Solomon*. 931 BC.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 11:41 *Book of the Acts of Solomon?* See p 335–37.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 11:42 *forty years*. The years during which Solomon was associated with his father may be included in this figure (see note, 1:53).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 11:43 See note, 2:10.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 11:9–43 The closing years of Solomon's reign are troubled as the Lord foretells the division of the kingdom and raises up adversaries to Solomon (e.g., Jeroboam). We dare never take God's grace lightly, thinking we can sin without consequences. May God the Holy Spirit always keep us focused on our Savior through Word and Sacraments. Jesus did not take us for granted; He saved us with precious grace. • Blest Savior dear, be always near. Keep me from evil, harm, and fear. Amen.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 12:1–20 Predicted division of the kingdom became reality when negotiations with Solomon's son Rehoboam proved futile (v 16). At Shechem, the 10 northern tribes, henceforth called "Israel," severed political ties with Judah, electing Jeroboam to be their king (v 20). Until the Northern Kingdom was overrun by the Assyrians two centuries later, Israel remained a house divided against itself. With the exception of an interlude of about three decades, the separated brethren were so hostile to one another that they engaged in civil war. At times, they even sought and obtained foreign military aid against one another.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 12:1 *Shechem*. Chief city of Ephraim, c 30 mi N of Jerusalem, where Joshua made a covenant with "all the tribes of Israel" (Jsh 24:1). Nearby were Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim (Jsh 8:30–33). See map, p 558.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 12:3 *assembly of Israel*. See "great congregation," p 842.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 12:4 *yoke heavy*. See notes, 4:6; 5:13.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 12:6 *took counsel*. Monarchy depended on the tribal leaders' support. Rehoboam negotiated with "all the assembly of Israel" (v 3) for his succession to the throne. Cf 1Sm 11:14–15; 2Sm 5:1–3 for Saul's and David's popular acclamation. *old men*. Elders were the preferred counselors. See note, Ex 3:16.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 12:7 *be a servant … serve them*. Elders do not explicitly tell him to give people what they request, but they suggest that he look out for the people's best interest.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 12:8 *young men*. Apparently, Rehoboam had given administrative positions to his young friends. In deliberating on the request to lighten the yoke given by his father, Rehoboam received opposite advice from two groups of counselors (vv 6–11).

1 Kings—NOTE ON 12:11 *scorpions*. Scourges, named after a dreaded animal. They may have had many lashes, each carrying a piece of metal at its end.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 12:15 *the king did not listen to the people*. Though Israel was not democratic, political power lay in the hands of tribal representatives who listened to the clans and families they served. *turn of affairs*. Though unseen and often uninvited, the Lord of the nations still is present at councils on all levels of diplomacy. His "hand is not shortened" in directing the world's history (Is 59:1; 50:2; Nu 11:23). *brought about by the* LORD. Though God did not make Rehoboam and his followers do evil, their actions brought on the judgment God had pronounced on Solomon's house (1Ki 11:29–39). Chem: "Just as God bound the devil 'with chains of darkness,' 2 Peter 2:4, and treated him like a mad dog, … pulling him back or turning him in another direction; so He hinders many choices and decisions of the ungodly. He changes many of their plans and upsets them. He sets limits to their attempts and turns them elsewhere either for the sake of the church or that they may find deliverance for themselves" (*LTh* 1:200).

1 Kings—NOTE ON 12:1–15 Solomon's son Rehoboam foolishly alienates many of the people by laying on them a heavier burden of hard labor than his father had. Rehoboam's arrogance is a warning. When we shut our minds and hearts to the advice of others—and especially to God's inspired Word—we invite disaster. Our greatest asset in life's struggle is God's Word for wisdom, forgiveness, and renewal in Christ. • Mighty

Judge, we come before You with deep awe. Spare us unworthy sinners from the judgment we so justly deserve. In our Savior's name we ask this. Amen.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 12:16 *portion*. See p 7. *To your tents*. Shout of rebellion, raised by Israel at David's time. Cf 1Sm 11:8; 2Sm 2:8–10 for examples of long-standing differences between the northern tribes and Judah. Luth: "Rehoboam … ruined everything, and his kingdom was cut into two parts. But this does not happen only in external and political affairs … but also in religion and in the Word of God. The descendants always neglect the purity of the doctrine handed down to them by the fathers and look for something new. This is what is now being done by those who, after the Gospel has once more become known, are not content with the purity of faith and the doctrine of the Gospel but are stirring up new controversies" (AE 15:43).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 12:17 *people of Israel … in … Judah*. People from the northern tribes had settled in Judah.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 12:18 *Adoram*. Rehoboam flaunted his authority before the people by sending to them the very man to whose office they objected so vehemently (2Sm 20:24). Spelled Hadoram in 2Ch 10:18. *forced labor*. See note, 5:13. Given Israel's past slavery in Egypt, one can easily see why they rejected the continuing encroachment on their freedoms. *all Israel stoned him*. Hyperbole. Describes broad revulsion to Rehoboam's policy.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 12:19 *to this day*. Reference to author's source. The account of the rebellion was likely written while both kingdoms were in existence, prior to 722 BC, when the northern tribes became an Assyrian vassal state. See note, Jsh 4:9.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 12:20 *Judah only*. See note, 11:32. To learn how the Levites in the northern tribes were affected, see notes, v 31; 11:32.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 12:21 *tribe of Benjamin*. Most of Benjamin went with the northern tribes, but the region around Jerusalem remained under Rehoboam.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 12:22 *Shemaiah the man of God*. Prophets could act as counselors to the kings (e.g., Nathan in 1:22–27). See pp 1081–83.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 12:24 *not … fight*. Heir to his father's military power, Rehoboam may have been able to force Israel to submit. The "continual wars," mentioned in 2Ch 12:15, were more in the nature of border skirmishes. *they listened*. To their credit, Rehoboam and the people listened

to Shemaiah, whose word prevailed among the king's counselors. The "word of the LORD" forbade Rehoboam to use force to try to restore the union.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 12:16–24 Rehoboam's foolish and sinful attitude divides the kingdom, making Jeroboam king of the northern tribes. When the leaders of the new Israel, the Church, turn from God's guidance, they invite calamity and ruin. The great Lord of history uses past examples to work repentance in us. He breaks into history, applying mercy through our gracious Savior. • Lord of heavenly hosts, You hold the nations as but dust upon the scales. I trust in Your almighty power. In the Savior's name, I bring before You all my needs. Amen.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 12:25 *built Shechem*. Jeroboam fortified the city (v 1). *Penuel*. On the Jabbok River, east of the Jordan (Gn 32:30–31; Jgs 8:8). See map, p 558.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 12:27 *turn again*. Jeroboam recognized the importance of religion in state affairs and hoped to curb the influence of the priests and Levites centered in Jerusalem.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 12:28 *took counsel*. Rather than consulting the Lord's prophet, Jeroboam likely received the counsel of those corrupted by false worship, which Solomon had tolerated. See notes, v 30; 3:1–2. "If people are allowed to set up religious rites, and through these rites merit grace, the religious rites of all the pagans will have to be approved…. The religious rites of the pagans and the Israelites were rejected for the very reason that they believed they merited forgiveness of sins and righteousness by these rites. Yet they did not know the righteousness of faith" (Ap XV 15–16). "It should be the first care of kings to advance God's glory. It would be very shameful for them to use their influence and power to confirm idolatry" (Tr 54). *two calves*. A small, bronze, bull figure (c 7 in long) was found in the northern Samarian hills. *Behold your gods*. Secession of the northern tribes severed religious as well as political ties. *gods … who brought you up out of the land of Egypt*. See notes, Ex 32:1–6. Jeroboam cleverly connected the theme of freedom from Egyptian slavery to the freedom from forced labor under Rehoboam. Luth: "So great is the perversity of the human heart that it accepts strange gods far more readily and eagerly than it maintains that this God, who has revealed Himself through His promises and signs, is truthful. How great a kindness it is that He has redeemed us through His Son!" (AE 4:146).

1 Kings—NOTE ON 12:29 Fearing that worship in Jerusalem would heal the breach, jeopardizing the entire movement and his own life, Jeroboam established two sanctuaries within the new state's borders. These new religious centers were where veneration of graven images flourished at the time of the judges (see note, Jgs 18:31). *Bethel*. Prominent OT center of worship in Ephraim's hill country. *Dan*. City along Israel's northern border. See map, p 558.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 12:30 *this thing became a sin*. Idol worship brought destruction of the house of Jeroboam (13:33–34) and eventually of the entire Northern Kingdom (14:16). His successors are condemned as having "walked in all the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat" (16:26). Cf 15:30; 16:7, 19.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 12:31 *temples on high places*. Local places of worship, which might have honored Yahweh, pagan deities, or both, now became state-approved sites—another step to decentralize worship. See p 526. *priests from among all the people*. Jeroboam undermined the authority of the Levites, who would have loyalties to their leaders in Jerusalem.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 12:32 *feast*. To wean the people from customary pilgrimages to Jerusalem, Jeroboam appointed a feast to be celebrated a month later than the Feast of Booths. *he offered sacrifices*. Jeroboam arrogated priestly functions to himself (13:1). *he placed in Bethel the priests of the high places*. Organizing and headquartering of the new priestly order. See note, v 28.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 12:33 *devised from his own heart*. See notes, Jgs 17:6; 21:25.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 12:25–33 Jeroboam sets up rival worship. By making golden calves and temples for the practice of idolatrous religion, he leads the people into sin. Today, we need to be aware of the subtle giving of our hearts to the idols of false religions, materialism, pleasure, and self-centeredness. The Lord turns us away from these traps and leads us to the worship of the true God, our Savior, who created the heavens and the earth.
• Lord of history, through the study of Your Holy Word enable us to learn all that You would teach us. Give us godly wisdom to avoid the errors of the past and follow what is good and right. In Jesus' name. Amen.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 13:1 *man of God*. Unnamed prophet from Judah. Prophets might come from any tribe and could act independently of the

priests and Levites. *Judah*. Prominent tribe and central territory of Solomon's kingdom. *Bethel*. See note, 12:29.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 13:2 *O altar, altar*. Repetition signifies pity. Cf 2Sm 19:4. *Josiah*. Fulfillment of the prophecy 300 years later (2Ki 23:16) was a matter of record when 1 and 2Ki were written. *human bones*. Irony. Worship of some pagan gods (e.g., Molech) involved child sacrifice.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 13:4 *dried up*. Shriveled up in atrophy, becoming useless.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 13:5 *torn down*. Perhaps ordered by Jeroboam himself after the miraculous loss of his hand.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 13:6 *Entreat now the favor*. Not necessarily sincere repentance. See note, Ex 8:8. *favor*. See p 6.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 13:7 *a reward*. Gift that may have served as a bribe. Realizing the man was undeniably a true prophet, Jeroboam hoped to deal with him through kindness rather than force.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 13:8–9 *commanded*. No specific reason is given for the prohibition. Perhaps he was to avoid familiarity with idolatrous people. See note, v 22.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 13:1–10 A man of God from Judah confronts King Jeroboam. Following the example of the bold men and women of God in ancient times, we can proclaim God's Law as we speak out against sin. He gives us the healing Gospel of forgiveness in Jesus, which we share with all who are weighed down by sin and guilt. • Father in heaven, convicted of sin by Your Holy Law, I come to You for the sweet forgiveness promised in the Gospel of Jesus, Your Son, my Savior. Amen.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 13:11 *old prophet*. Residing in the city where a golden calf stood, but not raising his voice in protest against it, this old man might have been a prophet of Baal (18:40). We are not told why he tricked the man of God into disobedience (vv 11–19).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 13:15–17 *neither will I eat*. See note, vv 8–9.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 13:18 *he lied*. See note, v 11.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 13:20 The Lord spoke His judgment through the false prophet. See note, Nu 22:35.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 13:21 *disobeyed*. The fate of the man of God serves as a warning not to be misled by those claiming divine inspiration of a message that clearly contradicts God's revealed Word. Cf 1Sm 6:19; 2Sm 6:6–7 for the severity of the punishment.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 13:22 *Eat no bread*. Avoid fellowship and association with idolaters. Cf 1Co 10:14. *not come to the tomb*. The man of God would die far from his family's burial place, a great shame.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 13:23 *after*. The prophet apparently still ate after he heard the warning, when he might have called on the Lord in repentance. When you realize your sins, stop then and there! *donkey*. Possibly a generous gesture, if the prophet had been walking.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 13:24–25 Odd scene caused people to talk. *lion*. See note, 1Sm 17:37.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 13:28 *had not eaten*. Confirmation that this was God's doing, not just a lion hunting.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 13:30 *Alas, my brother!* Lying prophet expresses care for, respect of, and kinship with the disobedient prophet. Both were used by God, but both were unsuited to their calling.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 13:31 The old prophet sought to assure himself that his own corpse would not be desecrated (v 2; 2Ki 23:16). Humans bent on gaining some advantage do not hesitate to pursue their selfish course, even over the dead bodies of others.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 13:32 *Samaria*. By the time the prophecy against Bethel was fulfilled, Samaria, not Shechem (12:25), was the Northern Kingdom's capital. See map, p 558.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 13:33 *not turn*. Unrepentant. See "turn," p 1080. *he ordained*. Appointed, as though he were high priest. *high places*. See p 526.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 13:11–34 An old prophet leads a man of God into sin. Meanwhile, King Jeroboam "did not turn from his evil way" (v 33). The history of God's chosen people gives numerous examples of people hardening their hearts against the truth of God's Word. The Lord who calls us to faith must likewise keep us in the faith, which He does through daily repentance and His means of grace. • Omniscient God, You know my heart. Cleanse me from all deceit and self-righteousness. Fill me with faith and the righteousness that is mine in Jesus Christ. Amen.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 14:2 *disguise yourself*. Either Jeroboam thought he could hoodwink the prophet or he wanted to keep his wife's mission to a true prophet a secret. To add to the deception, she was not to take a costly reward for the prophet but only some food (cf 1Sm 9:7). *Shiloh*. Fewer than 10 mi N of Bethel, the Lord's tabernacle had stood here from Joshua's time to Samuel's time (1Sm 1:3; Jer 7:12). See p 495. May have continued as a

site for faithful Israelites such as Ahijah, the prophet who foretold Jeroboam's rise to power (11:29–39).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 14:3 *loaves … cakes*. See p 236.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 14:9 *evil above all*. As king of Israel's northern tribes, Jeroboam had no predecessors. But he was not the first leader over the people of Israel who had provoked the Lord to anger by evil deeds (v 7). See notes, Jgs 2:11–15.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 14:10–11 A curse in violent and vile expressions. See p 6.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 14:10 *cut off*. See note, Gn 17:14. *male*. Lit, "one who urinates against a wall." See also note, Mi 7:10. *burns up dung*. As fuel. Cf Ezk 4:12.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 14:13 *something pleasing to the LORD*. Lit, "a good word to the LORD." Phrase appears in Ps 45:2 (Hbr) and Pr 12:25, describing gladness in both cases. Obscure expression describes the Lord's free mercy to this child, who alone would receive a proper funeral. The passage goes beyond human understanding, contradicting our sense of what's best. Somehow this child (even in his untimely death, by our expectations) is in God's good care. Parents who lose children may rightly find here comfort about their dear little ones, who are certainly known to the heavenly Father and cannot fall unless He allows it. Cf Mt 10:28–31; Lk 12:4–7. However, none may argue from this text that children are innocent and thereby merit God's favor. See note, Ps 51:5.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 14:14 *today. And henceforth*. Extinction of Jeroboam's house would take place in the immediate future, beginning with the death of his heir and the rise of the Assyrian Empire. However, it would be two centuries before the Assyrians would rule over Israel, scattering them "beyond the Euphrates" (v 15). See p 1258.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 14:15 *as a reed is shaken in the water*. A picture of the instability of the Israelite royal house. *Asherim*. See note, Ex 34:13.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 14:16 *will give Israel up*. Surrendering them to Assyria. *sins of Jeroboam*. See note, 12:28.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 14:17 *Tirzah*. C 8 mi NE of Shechem (see note, 12:1). Evidently Jeroboam's summer residence. It became the Northern Kingdom's capital. See map, p 558.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 14:1–18 The prophet Ahijah foretells that Jeroboam's dynasty will come to an end. God brings punishment on those

who go against His Word and who refuse to repent of their evil ways. This message is related repeatedly in the history of Israel's kings. But what also is related through this sacred history is God's patience with His people, whom He planned to save by the righteous reign of His Son, Jesus Christ. • Gracious Lord, we pray that in Your mercy, You always keep us close to You and Your Word, never cut off but forever bound in faith. In the Savior's name we ask this. Amen.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 14:19 *Chronicles*. Not the biblical book by that name. See p 335–37.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 14:20 *slept with his fathers*. See note, 2:10. *Nadab … reigned*. See notes, v 14; 15:27.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 14:19–20 Jeroboam's reign marks the beginning of a line of kings who will continue to lead the people of Israel astray. Because of sin, death has entered our world. The constant reminder of this fact in Scripture and in the world around us should lead us to look to the solution, to Jesus, the Savior whose coming was promised in the OT and recorded in the NT. • King of kings, You rule over the mighty of this world; You are the Lord of life and death. When I pass from this life, let me fall asleep in Jesus, and when He returns awaken to the joys of heaven. Amen.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 14:21–16:28 From the division of the kingdom and the first king of Israel, the account returns to the reign of Solomon's son Rehoboam (14:21–29) and of two of his successors: Abijam and Asa (15:1–24). In order to synchronize the history of the two kingdoms, the author of 1Ki then resumes the story of five kings who ruled in the north (15:25–16:28).

1 Kings—NOTE ON 14:21 *His mother's name*. In the formula introducing the kings of Judah (not of Israel), the name of the queen mother is a regular feature. The part that Bathsheba, Solomon's mother, played in putting her son on the throne (1:11–31) is a good example of the influence wielded by dowager queens. *Ammonite*. One of Solomon's many foreign wives. See note, 3:1–2.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 14:22 *jealousy*. See note, Ex 20:5.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 14:23 *pillars … Asherim*. See note, Ex 34:13.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 14:24 *prostitutes*. Sacred prostitution, both female and male, played a prominent part in Baal worship. His devotees expected these abominations to have the power of sympathetic magic, automatically

putting the deity under a spell to produce fertility in human beings, herds, and crops. *the nations*. See p 345.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 14:25 *fifth year*. 927 BC. *Shishak*. See note, 11:40. Account of Egyptian invasion, only incident recorded for Rehoboam's reign, intentionally follows description of abominations that provoked the Lord to jealousy. A Karnak inscription describes the events. One later tradition has Shishak removing the ark of the covenant at this time and taking it to Egypt or Ethiopia. However, the texts make no mention of this. See p 495.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 14:26 *took away*. Rehoboam willingly paid tribute. *shields of gold*. See note, 10:17.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 14:29 *Chronicles*. See p 335–37.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 14:30 *war*. See note, 12:24.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 14:31 See note, 2:10.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 14:21–31 Idolatry marks Rehoboam's reign, even though he does not promote it as Jeroboam does in Israel. Sin and rebellion against God are not limited by politics or geography. No one is immune from God's judgment. Pray that God in His mercy will forgive and spare the new Israel, the Church, for the sake of Jesus, the Savior. His faithful reign extends to all people. • Lord God Almighty, send Your Holy Spirit to enlighten and strengthen us, that we may not fall into sin and unbelief. In the Savior's name we pray. Amen.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 15:1 *Abijam*. Also spelled Abijah (see note, 2Ch 13:1). Account of his reign is even shorter than that of Rehoboam, his predecessor.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 15:2 *Abishalom*. Variant spelling of Absalom.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 15:3 *his father*. Lit, his great grandfather. David had trouble disciplining his sons (1:6).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 15:4 *a lamp*. See note, 11:36.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 15:5 Writer idealizes David's reign, yet also remembers David's tragic flaw. Israelite history recorded its leaders' strengths and weaknesses, in contrast to the annals of other nations.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 15:6 *Rehoboam and Jeroboam*. Apparently an accidental scribal repetition of 14:30; omitted by LXX. Cf 2Ch 13:2b, which reads "Abijah and Jeroboam."
1 Kings—NOTE ON 15:7 *Chronicles*. See p 335–37.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 15:8 See note, 2:10.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 15:1–8 Rehoboam's son Abijam reigns for only three years, but it is long enough for him to follow in his father's sinful footsteps. The example that parents set greatly influences their children. Our example for the next generation influences whether they will walk "in all the sins" of their forefathers or whether their hearts may be "wholly true to the LORD" (v 3). Thanks be to Jesus! He not only set an example for us but also assured our rescue by declaring us God's children through Holy Baptism. • Tender Savior, guard and protect us always; help us to pass Your saving Word on to the next generation, that our children and their children may grow up to know You and sing Your praises. Amen.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 15:9 *twentieth year of Jeroboam*. 911 BC. *Asa*. His reign was nearly as long as that of wicked Manasseh's 55 years (2Ki 21:1).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 15:10 *Maacah*. She retained her influential role of queen (grand)mother until Asa deposed her (v 13). *Abishalom*. Variant spelling of Absalom.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 15:12 *male cult prostitutes*. See note, 14:24.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 15:13 *abominable image*. Hbr root means "to shudder"; denotes an idol that produced horror because of its ugliness or obscene representation. Word occurs only here and in parallel account, 2Ch 15:16. *Asherah*. See note, Ex 34:13. *Kidron*. Valley east of Jerusalem. See map, p 548.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 15:14 *high places*. See p 526. *wholly true*. Asa's faith was sincere, though he tolerated false religion and insincerity among his subjects. Chem: "The expression 'with my whole heart' is used in many places in Scripture in opposition to hypocrisy and outward pretense" (*LTh* 2:340).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 15:15 *sacred gifts*. Translated "things … dedicated" in 7:51, these unspecified gifts were to replace the treasures that Shishak took away (14:26).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 15:16 *war*. See note, 12:24. *Baasha*. See note, v 27.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 15:17 *Ramah*. Fortress and troops c 5 mi N of Jerusalem, as a dagger aimed at Judah's heart. See map, p 558.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 15:18 *treasures*. As tribute to Ben-hadad. *Ben-hadad*. Perhaps Rezon's grandson, the Syrian state's founder with headquarters at Damascus (see note, 11:23). At least two of its kings bore the name Ben-hadad, which means "son of the storm god Hadad" (cf 20:1; 2Ki 13:24). By a foreign alliance against the Israelite king Baasha, Asa intensified the civil

war. *Syria … Damascus*. Inland 50 mi from the coast of the Great Sea, one of the oldest continuously occupied cities in the world. See map, p 558.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 15:20 *cities of Israel*. On Israel's northern border. *Chinneroth*. See note, Jsh 12:3.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 15:21 *stopped building*. Syrian pressure on his northern frontier forced Baasha to withdraw from his building operations on his southern border. *Tirzah*. See note, 14:17.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 15:22 Taking advantage of his rival's preoccupation, Asa mobilized "all Judah" to build his own fortified cities with the stones and timbers from Ramah. *carried away*. Building supplies were precious. See note, 5:9. *Geba*. Levitical town 6 mi NE of Jerusalem. *Mizpah*. Northwest of Geba, with which it served as fortresses north of Jerusalem. Archaeologists have found a massive casemate wall at Mizpah. See note, Jsh 2:15; see also map, p 558.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 15:23 *his might*. See note, 2Ch 14:8. *Chronicles*. See pp 335–37. *diseased*. Or, weak due to age.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 15:24 See note, 2:10.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 15:9–24 Asa breaks the pattern of wickedness and "did what was right in the eyes of the LORD" (v 11), though the idolatrous high places remain. The Bible does not teach fatalism. Despite the sins of one generation, the Lord can raise up the next in the right way. Take heart! The Lord intercedes in history. He intercedes in our lives by His gracious Word. • Loving Shepherd, You guide us through this world. Please bless this land with godly leaders who trust in You and follow Your Word. Amen.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 15:25–16:28 Synchronizing the history of the two kingdoms, the author interrupts the account of Judah's kings (14:21–15:24) for a survey of five Israelite kings. Omri's reign (16:21–28) marked a transition to a period of peaceful relations between the Northern and Southern kingdoms.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 15:25 *second year of Asa*. 910 BC.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 15:26 *his sin … made Israel to sin*. Hbr expression; the sin was the religion established by Jeroboam. See note, 12:30; see also "sin," p 959.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 15:27 *Baasha*. Lit, "Baal hears"; Baasha usurped the throne and brought an end to Jeroboam's house. *conspired*. During the two centuries of its existence, Israel was ruled by 19 kings representing nine different dynasties. Conspiracies and regicides were responsible for the

frequent changes in ruling houses, of which none lasted longer than four generations. Jeroboam was succeeded only by his son. *Gibbethon*. C 20 mi W of Ramah. Originally assigned to the tribe of Dan (see map, p 558), Gibbethon was under Philistine control. Evidently Nadab's siege was unsuccessful. The Israelites again—or perhaps still—encamped against the same city 24 years later (16:15).

1 Kings—NOTE ON 15:28 *third year of Asa*. C 909 BC.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 15:29 Cf 14:10.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 15:31 *Chronicles*. See pp 335–37.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 15:32 Repeats v 16; omitted in LXX.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 15:25–32 Switching from Judah to Nadab's reign in the Northern Kingdom, we learn that Nadab, like all the other Israelite kings, "did what was evil in the sight of the LORD" (v 26). The pattern of wicked leadership became entrenched in Israel. Evil is working for such entrenchment still today. Through the Word, the Lord equips us to stand against wickedness in our times and in our land. Likewise, through the means of grace, He brings forgiveness and life to us anew each day. • Lord God heavenly Father, guard us from wickedness in high places. Defend Your people who daily call upon Your saving name. Amen.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 15:33 *third year of Asa*. C 909 BC. *twenty-four years*. Of lowly origin in the tribe of Issachar (v 27), Baasha reigned two years longer than Jeroboam, the founder of the Ephraimite dynasty, which Baasha displaced. Vv 16–22 tell of his hostile relationship to Judah's kings.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 16:1 *Jehu*. A prophet, not to be confused with the later Israelite king by the same name (2Ki 10:28–36). The prophet's denunciation of Baasha was not motivated by political prejudice; he also rebuked a king of Judah (2Ch 19:2). Cf 2Ch 20:34 for his literary activity.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 16:5 *Chronicles*. See p 335–37.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 16:6 *slept*. Died. *buried*. See note, 2:10. *Tirzah*. See note, 14:17.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 16:7 *destroyed it*. Jeroboam's dynasty. Baasha serves God's judgment but also is condemned.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 15:33–16:7 Because of the evil of Israel's King Baasha, the Lord predicts that his house, like that of Jeroboam, will be cut off (16:3). But God's grace to families and households persists, even for us. The great King of heaven confirms us as members of His household. • Lord, bless this house, whate'er befall; may Jesus Christ be all in all. Amen.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 16:8 *twenty-sixth year of Asa*. C 886 BC. *Elah*. Baasha, like Jeroboam, had only one successor. After Elah reigned for only two years, Zimri struck him down.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 16:9 *commander*. In the power struggle for Israel's throne, military leaders played a prominent role. *Arza*. An official who may have helped plan Elah's assassination.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 16:10–22 *Zimri*. The cavalry commander Zimri had barely proclaimed himself king when the troops "encamped against Gibbethon" (v 15) made Omri "the commander of the army, king over Israel" (v 16). He, in turn, had to eliminate Tibni, another contender. Zimri became a proverbial example of an assassin (cf 2Ki 9:31).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 16:11 Prophecy fulfilled (cf v 3).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 16:13 *idols*. Lit, "vanities."
1 Kings—NOTE ON 16:14 *Chronicles*. See p 335–37.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 16:8–14 After only two years as king, Baasha's son Elah is assassinated (while "drinking himself drunk"). One of his military leaders, Zimri, seizes the throne. How easily sinful human beings slip into gross wickedness and debauchery! Instead of indulging our sinful nature, the Lord cultivates in us "the fruit of the Spirit" (Gal 5:22–23). Such fruit grows within a heart made right through faith in Jesus. • Holy Spirit, keep me from falling into the sins that destroy, and guide me in what is good and right. Amen.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 16:15 *twenty-seventh year of Asa*. C 885 BC. *Zimri reigned seven days*. He did not control the entire military (v 9) and could not maintain his coup. *Gibbethon*. See note, 15:27.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 16:16 *all Israel*. See note, 12:18. The unanimity did not last (v 21).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 16:18 *burned … over him*. Suicide. See note, 1Sm 31:4. Archaeologists found the tenth/early ninth-century phase of Tirzah's development destroyed.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 16:20 *Chronicles*. See p 335–37.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 16:15–20 Zimri lasts only seven days as king before the troops conspire against him and make Omri the king. Zimri dies when he burns down the king's house. When we despise the preaching of God's Word, disaster can come quickly. That is why repentance and the drowning of our sinful nature—the old Adam—is a daily activity, as we receive renewal in the Holy Spirit through the life-giving Word of Scripture.

• Heavenly Father, forgive us the sins of this day, and renew us by the Holy Spirit to live for Him who died and rose again for our salvation. Amen.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 16:21 *Tibni*. Supported by "half of the people," Omri's rival maintained his claim to the throne for about five years. Then he died, presumably a casualty of the civil war.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 16:22 *Omri*. Founder of one of the more stable dynasties, Omri restored order in the Northern Kingdom. During the reign of his successors (Ahab, Ahaziah, Jehoram), the relationship between Israel and Judah changed from one of hostility to one of peace and cooperation. The former army commander acted wisely when he moved the capital to "the hill of Samaria" (v 24). Virtually inaccessible on three sides, it was able to hold off the Assyrian army for three years (2Ki 17:5). Ahab completed construction of the city. It thrived for c 150 years. *overcame*. Militarily, which likely caused Tibni's death.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 16:24 *Samaria*. Hbr *shomron*. From verb meaning "watch" or "guard." 7 mi NW of Shechem. See map, p 558. The city was enclosed by a casemate wall in Phoenician style masonry. See note, Jsh 2:15.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 16:25 *more evil*. Omri had a much longer reign than most other kings, thus greater opportunity for evil. We do not know for certain why the Lord tolerated Omri whereas other kings were overthrown. Although he was evil, Omri established peaceful relations with more faithful Judah. See note, v 22.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 16:27 *the might that he showed*. According to extrabiblical sources, Omri achieved international fame. Assyrian records referred to Israel as "the land of Omri" even after his dynasty had vanished. However, considerations other than military and political interest guided the writer of 1Ki in the selection of what he recorded in his prophetic history (see pp 526–27). Hence, he devoted only eight verses (vv 21–28) to this king, who appears to have been one of Israel's more illustrious rulers. By contrast, the story of Omri's son Ahab takes up six chapters (16:29–22:40), more space than is accorded any other king since Solomon. This is likely because of Ahab's repentance and his interaction with Elijah (21:25–29). *Chronicles*. See pp 335–37.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 16:28 See note, 2:10.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 16:21–28 During Omri's reign in Israel, civil war breaks out, with half the people following him and half following Tibni.

Omri's forces are victorious, and Tibni dies. Amid all the conflict of our age, true peace resides in Jesus Christ, through whom our sins are forgiven so that we are reconciled to our heavenly Father and may be reconciled to one another. • "Lord, keep us steadfast in Your Word; Curb those who by deceit or sword Would wrest the kingdom from Your Son And bring to naught all He has done." Amen. (*LSB* 655:1)

1 Kings—NOTE ON 16:29 Conciliatory attitude toward the southern king, no doubt fostered by his father, later led to full cooperation of the two kingdoms against a foreign aggressor (cf 22:1–4). *thirty-eighth year of Asa*. C 874 BC. *Ahab*. Mentioned in the annals of Shalmaneser III of Assyria (858–824 BC).

1 Kings—NOTE ON 16:30 *evil*. Under Ahab's reign, apostasy—the cause of Israel's fall a century later—reached a new high (yet, see note, v 27). Without necessarily observing a chronological sequence, the author presents a series of events as evidence of this "evil in the sight of the LORD." Ahab's marriage to a Phoenician princess and worship of her national idol, known as Melkart, deserves early mention to show how far he went to "provoke the LORD … to anger" (v 33). Capable of violating this basic requirement of the covenant, he could be expected to defy other laws of the Lord. Yet, the Lord ended the reigns of other evil rulers but allowed Ahab to continue, in view of his repentance (cf 21:25–29).

1 Kings—NOTE ON 16:31 *Sidonians*. From the ancient city-state Sidon on the eastern coast of the Great Sea. See map, p 558.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 16:32 *Baal*. Through his wife, Jezebel, Ahab introduced Phoenician Baal worship to Israel. See note, Nu 25:3.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 16:33 *Asherah*. See note, Ex 34:13.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 16:34 As the king's marriage showed his evil heart, so the rebuilding of Jericho showed the people's disregard of the Lord's will. Hiel's loss of his sons from his firstborn to his youngest showed that God fulfilled His threat regarding Jericho. Subsequent history would show the fulfillment of His threat regarding Israel.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 16:29–34 Ahab, who marries Jezebel the Sidonian, becomes the most notorious of the long line of wicked kings (v 30). Once people reject God's Word, anything goes, as the lives of Ahab and Jezebel attest. Yet by His grace, God can call people from the deepest shadow of darkness to repentance and salvation. In Christ, we have the light of life; in Him, we receive the grace and love of our heavenly Father. • "Renew me, O

eternal Light, And let my heart and soul be bright, Illumined with the light of grace That issues from Your holy face." Amen. (*LSB* 704:1)

1 Kings—NOTE ON **Ch 17–2Ki 2** This section is not so much the history of King Ahab and of his successors, but rather a record of the prophet Elijah. It opens with an account of what he did before, during, and after a severe drought (chs 17–18). After announcing the drought and going into hiding, Elijah was miraculously kept alive (17:1–7). Directed by the Lord, Elijah spent the remainder of the drought in the Phoenician city of Zarephath, where he performed two miracles (17:8–24).

1 Kings—NOTE ON **Ch 17** Mel: "Understand how many great and good works this first duty which the woman performed in feeding the prophet produced and consider the mountain of rewards she received. For not only was the family fed, but it was instructed by the prophet concerning the true worship of God and eternal life and in many ways it was protected against the devil. The son was raised from the dead and became a disciple of the prophet, and he doubtlessly utilized his services for the church later on. Even small insignificant works are adorned with rewards far greater than is owed" (Chem, *LTh* 2:571–72).

1 Kings—NOTE ON 17:1 *Elijah*. Heroic prophet of 1Ki. To counteract the evils of Ahab's reign, God raised up one of the most arresting figures among the OT prophets. In "spirit and power," Elijah was to foreshadow One besides whom there was none greater "among those born of women" (Lk 1:17; 7:24–28). As Moses was the type of the Prophet (Dt 18:15–22), so Elijah prefigured the forerunner of the Messiah, John the Baptist (Mal 4:5–6; Mk 9:4–5). He suddenly appeared on the scene; he vanished from sight even more mysteriously (2Ki 2:11). *Tishbite*. Native of Tishbe, obscure village in Transjordanian Gilead, mentioned only in connection with Elijah. *Gilead*. Northern Transjordan area. See map, p 558. *before whom I stand*. Expression of service. Cf Gn 18:22; see p 1277. *dew*. See note, Ps 133:3; see also "Census Figures," p 216.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 17:3–7 The Lord sent Elijah to an obscure location for safety and sustenance.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 17:5 *east of the Jordan*. Lit, "on the face of the Jordan." Location is uncertain.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 17:1–7 Having predicted a drought to Ahab, the great prophet Elijah goes to the brook Cherith, where the Lord has ravens miraculously provide for him. In a wicked, harsh, and hostile world, God

watches over those who are His. No matter how much everything may seem to be against us, the Lord is with us, a haven of everlasting love. • Heavenly Father, when all seems lost, remind us that You did not withhold Your only Son from us. In Jesus, the bread of life, You will give us all we need for this world and for the life to come. Uplift us with assurance of Your love and protection, in Jesus Christ. Amen.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 17:9 *Zarephath*. Small coastal town of Phoenicia between Tyre and Sidon. See map, p 581. *widow*. Jesus' only excursion beyond the borders of ancient Israel was "to the region of Tyre and Sidon," where He, too, met a Syrophoenician woman of great faith (Mk 7:24–30).

1 Kings—NOTE ON 17:10 *gate … gathering sticks*. Odd place to gather firewood. "Stalks" could be intended (cf Jsh 2:6), as threshing floors were often near the city gate (cf 22:10). *Bring me a little water*. Test of generosity. Cf Gn 24:17–20.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 17:12 *As the LORD your God lives*. Vow to affirm the truth of her testimony. The widow recognized Elijah as an Israelite, and her expression may indicate frail faith in the true God. Though Zarephath lay outside Israel, Israelite beliefs had influenced its people (see note, 5:7). Sidonians typically worshiped Eshmun and participated in the regional fertility cults. *die*. Drought was not restricted to Israelite territory, as the Phoenician historian Menander attests.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 17:13 *a little cake*. See p 236.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 17:15 *she went and did as Elijah said*. Act of faith.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 17:16 *not spent*. At the brook Cherith, the Lord had sent ravens with food for Elijah; now He miraculously provides sustenance for the widow. In the religious crisis during the days of Elijah and Elisha (see note, 16:30), more "signs and wonders" witnessed to the power of the true God than in any period since the exodus (Ex 7:3). See p 1077–83.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 17:8–16 Through Elijah, the Lord miraculously provides food for a widow in Zarephath. This story illustrates God's never-ending goodness. He daily and richly provides for all our needs, blessing us far beyond what we deserve or what we ask. • O Lord, may Your past goodness be our assurance for the future. We thank You especially for Your Word, which brings us to know the greatest blessing of all—everlasting salvation in Jesus Christ. Amen.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 17:18 Widow associates prophet with preaching of condemnation. The prophets of northern Israel would certainly emphasize

Law and condemnation, due to the people's unrepentance. See pp xxxi–xxxii.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 17:19 *on his own bed*. Emphasizing Elijah's care for the boy.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 17:20 Elijah seems doubtful, yet prays for the boy's recovery.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 17:21 *stretched*. Hbr verb, typically describing measurement, used in unique form. Elijah applies his life and prayer to the boy, his own body serving as the instrument of healing from the Lord.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 17:22 *listened*. Elijah was a man of God (v 18) who, by the Word of the Lord (v 24) and by intercessory prayer, revived the widow's son (cf 2Ki 4:34; Ac 20:10). The Word made flesh commanded the dead by virtue of His own authority: "I say … arise" (Mk 5:41; Lk 7:14).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 17:23 *upper chamber*. See notes, 2Ki 1:2; 4:10.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 17:17–24 When the widow's son dies, Elijah raises him back to life by God's power. Already in OT stories such as this, we see God's power over death, the height of which is Christ's glorious resurrection from the dead. For us and for our salvation, He has conquered sin, Satan, and death, opening the gates to everlasting life in heaven. • Lord of life and death, be with me in the hour of death with the assurance that comes from Your conquest over sin, Satan, and death itself. Amen.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 18:1 *third year*. Of the drought. More exactly 3½ years (Lk 4:25; Jas 5:17). *send rain*. As Elijah had announced the drought (17:1), so he was to tell Ahab that "the word of the LORD" alone could end it.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 18:3 *Obadiah*. Lit, "servant of the Lord." He used his position at court to save "a hundred prophets" (v 4) of the Lord whose lives were threatened by the murderous Jezebel (v 13; 19:10).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 18:4 *hid them by fifties*. Expression of military organization. Cf 1Sm 8:12.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 18:5 *we*. Drought was so severe that the king himself, with a high-ranking official, had to search for grass to "save the horses and mules alive," which he needed for commercial and military operations.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 18:6 *by himself*. Kings normally traveled with attendants, but the drought may have brought government activities to a standstill.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 18:8 *Elijah is here*. The mysterious, true prophet had reappeared. The false prophets had been no help to the king.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 18:12 Obadiah feared that "the Spirit of the LORD" would suddenly transport Elijah to another hiding place, leaving him to face the king's disappointment. *carry you I know not where*. Cf 2Ki 2:11. *feared the LORD*. See p 1001.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 18:15 Oath. Cf 17:12.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 18:16 *Ahab went to meet Elijah*. Swallowing his pride, the desperate king sought out the prophet.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 18:17–40 In a trial by fire, Elijah dramatically demonstrated that the Canaanite fertility gods were not in control of nature (vv 20–29), and that the "LORD of hosts" (v 15), Creator of "the heavens and the earth … and all the host of them" (cf Gn 2:1), was a jealous God who did not tolerate divided allegiance (vv 30–40; Ex 20:5; Dt 4:24; Jsh 24:19). Luth: "Elijah accuses the people of … doing one thing in their hearts and feigning something else in their work. This is true of every man who is outside Christ" (AE 29:123).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 18:17 *troubler*. On this expression, see note, Jsh 7:25. Ahab refused to acknowledge that he had brought on the drought because he had "abandoned the commandments of the LORD" (v 18). Elijah was not the only preacher of judgment to suffer abuse (cf Ac 16:20–24). Luth: "It is a good sign when men condemn us and call us agitators. The Spirit of God is one who strives with men, reproves them, and condemns them. But men are so constituted that they want to have preached what pleases them" (AE 2:20).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 18:18 *abandoned the commandments*. Sinned against the Law of the covenant. *followed the Baals*. Sinned against the blessed confession and promise of the Lord's name. See note, Nu 25:3. "The godless … believed they merited the forgiveness of sins, not freely through faith, but through sacrifices by the outward act. Therefore, they increased these services and sacrifices, set up the worship of Baal in Israel, and even sacrificed in the groves in Judah. Therefore, the prophets condemn this belief and war against not only the worshipers of Baal, but also other priests who made sacrifices ordained by God with this godless belief" (Ap XXIV 97). Luth: "The examples of all times teach that the Word of truth and the true forms of worship are despised by the common people…. Perverse teachers are most ready to teach, and the common people are most eager to listen. In this manner the Word and the true forms of worship become lost" (AE 2:243).

1 Kings—NOTE ON 18:19 *gather*. In order to prove to the king that he and his "father's house" (v 18) brought divine judgment on himself and his apostate people, Elijah demanded a convocation of all Israel, including the "prophets of Baal." *Mount Carmel*. Mountain range (15 mi long) that juts out toward the Great Sea. See map, p 581. *Baal … Asherah*. See notes, Ex 34:13; Nu 25:3. *Jezebel's table*. Ahab allowed his kingdom to officially sponsor Phoenician Canaanite religion, beyond the state-sponsored worship set up by Jeroboam (12:25–33). Ahab knew about the true faith and recognized Elijah as a true prophet but would not act in light of the truth. Through Elijah, the Lord will force a decisive confrontation.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 18:1–19 Even in wicked King Ahab's presence, God protects Elijah and Obadiah. This is a comfort to Christians, lest we think that God will allow the wicked to destroy us. Our noblest calling in life is to bear witness to the Law and Gospel, proclaiming God's judgment and His grace in Jesus Christ. As we do so, we have Christ's own assurance, "I am with you always" (Mt 28:20). • "Praise to You and adoration, Blessed Jesus, Son of God, Who, to serve Your own creation, Came to share our flesh and blood." Amen. (*LSB* 692:1)

1 Kings—NOTE ON 18:22 *I only*. The Lord's other prophets were hiding (v 4). *prophets*. See pp 1077–83.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 18:24 *fire*. Likely lightning. See note, Jb 1:16. Luth: "God does indeed allow a new word to be taught in order to test us, but He is faithfully at our side, so that no signs are done or that what they have predicted does not come to pass, as He shows in the case of Elijah with the Baalites (1 Kings 18:24)" (AE 9:130).

1 Kings—NOTE ON 18:26 *limped*. Perhaps sarcastic, describing their ritual dance.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 18:27 *relieving himself*. Bawdy sarcasm! Hbr verb used only here.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 18:28 *cut … after their custom*. Bloodletting rituals to compel their god to action. The bloodletting could have expressed sorrow for sin, or it may have been an effort to move the god to compassion.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 18:29 *raved*. Hbr *naba'*; typical term for prophesying but reflexive, "making themselves prophesy." They stirred themselves into a state of frenzy (cf 1Sm 10:6). *until … the oblation*. Likely the evening grain offering (2Ki 16:15).

1 Kings—NOTE ON 18:30 *Come near to me*. Refocusing attention. See note, v 36. *altar of the* LORD. We are not told at exactly what time and under what circumstances this altar was erected. Cf Dt 12:5; see p 526.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 18:33 *in order*. Elijah was familiar with the proper manner of priestly offerings. *water*. Carmel's location beside the sea may have allowed the land nearby to receive some moisture, while the interior of Israel remained in drought.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 18:36 *offering of the oblation*. See note, v 29. Elijah's preparations were likely taking place while the prophets of Baal were performing their rituals.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 18:37 *turned … back*. In repentance. See p 1080.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 18:38 *fire*. Likely lightning. See note, Jb 1:16. Luther noted that Elijah's sacrifice was consumed by fire as a "true manifestation of the divine mercy which the wretched people needed in order not to be without some light of the grace of God. In the same way the very Word, Baptism, and the Eucharist are our lightbearers today, toward which we look as dependable tokens of the sun of grace. We can state with certainty that where the Eucharist, Baptism, and the Word are, there are Christ, forgiveness of sins, and eternal life. Contrariwise, where these signs of grace are not present, or where they are despised by men, there is not only no grace, but execrable errors follow, and men set up for themselves other forms of worship and other signs" (AE 1:249).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 18:40 *brook Kishon*. See map, p 581. *slaughtered them*. Dt 13:6–11; 17:2–7 also decree the death penalty on those who entice the Israelites to "go and serve other gods" (Dt 13:6).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 18:20–40 The famous confrontation between Elijah and the prophets of Baal ends with the execution of the false prophets. Their overthrow is a classic example of how God makes sure that truth ultimately prevails. No matter how entrenched and powerful the forces of evil are in the world, God is still guiding history for the good of His people, for their everlasting salvation. • Lord God, how bold the wicked are, yet I know that You will always be with those whom You have brought into Your family by faith in Jesus Christ. Amen.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 18:41 With false religion overthrown, rain would come as a sign of God's blessing. Cf Dt 28:12.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 18:42 *put his face between his knees*. Unusual bow, perhaps expressing special humility. See p 1276.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 18:43 *seven times*. Abiding in prayer.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 18:44 *go down*. From the height of Carmel toward the lowlands of Jezreel.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 18:45–46 *Jezreel*. On the king's return to his royal residence in Jezreel, a distance of more than 15 mi from Carmel, Elijah humbly served as his forerunner but ran at a miraculous pace. See map, p 581.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 18:41–46 After the 3½-year drought, God sends rain when "[Elijah] prayed again" (Jas 5:18). How powerful is the prayer of a righteous person! May the Holy Spirit dispel our sinful doubts and replace them with the spirit of Elijah, so we confidently trust our Savior. • Like Elijah of old, O Lord, I boldly call upon You in prayer. Keep me and those I love in the safety of Your loving hands. Amen.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 19:1–8 Unnerved by Jezebel's threat, the hitherto dauntless champion of the Lord's cause "ran for his life." Fleeing the Northern Kingdom, he did not stop until he came to Beersheba, the southernmost city of Judah (vv 1–3; cf Jgs 20:1). From there, the dispirited prophet continued his journey south to Mount Horeb (Sinai) "in the strength" of food supplied by "the angel of the LORD" (vv 4–8). Samuel had a similar lapse into fear (1Sm 16:2). Luth: "The Holy Spirit does not always impel godly people; He lets them do some things in accordance with their own will and wish. When Elijah killed the prophets of Baal, he was impelled by the Spirit of God (1 Kings 18:40); yet later on, when Jezebel's wrath has been reported to him, he fears for himself…. He is not commanded by God to withdraw. His reason kept telling him that he would be safe if he hid in the desert…. These facts were recorded to comfort us, who have no other thought about the saints than that they were blocks and logs without feeling" (AE 3:320). Luth: "Before this he was not afraid of the king; now he runs away from a woman. Accordingly, all this seems to be foolish; but it shows great understanding and is very helpful, because it is recorded for the comfort of the churches, in order that we may know how merciful God is. We may indeed be evil and weak, provided that we are not found among those who persecute, hate, and blaspheme God. God wants to have patience with our weakness" (AE 5:25).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 19:3 *Beersheba*. City in the Negeb, the southernmost region of Judah. See map, p 581. *his servant there*. Cf 18:43. Once Elijah felt safe in Judah, he would call a new servant (vv 19–21).

1 Kings—NOTE ON 19:4 *broom tree*. Desert bush that grows to 10–12 ft. Hbr text has "one broom tree," emphasizing sparsity of vegetation in that desolate area. *take away my life*. Ashamed that he ran when he should have confronted Jezebel by faith, Elijah wanted to die, sharing the fate of his fathers (cf Nu 14:28–30).

1 Kings—NOTE ON 19:5–7 *angel touched*. Ministering angel acts in a comforting, gentle manner. Typically, the appearance of an angel evokes fear. See note, Lk 1:11. *angel of the* LORD. See p 1227.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 19:8–14 Elijah had experiences similar to those of Moses: (1) on Horeb (Ex 3:1), both men went without food for the same length of time (Ex 34:28); (2) Elijah stood "at the entrance of the cave"; Moses was in "a cleft of the rock" when the Lord's glory passed by (v 13; Ex 33:22); (3) Elijah "wrapped his face in his cloak"; Moses "hid his face" at the burning bush (v 13; Ex 3:6).

1 Kings—NOTE ON 19:8 *in the strength*. Well nourished, Elijah begins an extreme fast.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 19:1–8 Elijah becomes a wanted man, as Queen Jezebel seeks to kill him. He flees into the wilderness to Mount Horeb, where centuries earlier, Moses had received the Ten Commandments. At times, believers may feel the need to flee from those who would destroy them because of their Christian faith and their profession of that faith. Will it come to that in our land? Even if it does, we can be sure that the Lord will always be with us, patiently blessing us with His love, mercy, and grace. • Almighty God, You are the refuge for Your people in times of trouble. We trust You with all our needs. In Jesus' name. Amen.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 19:9–14 The question in vv 9 and 13 evokes the confession in vv 10 and 14, illustrating the persistence of both the Lord and Elijah. In v 18, the Lord provides information that undermines Elijah's evaluation of his circumstance.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 19:10 *God of hosts*. See p 1291. *altars*. Plural. See notes, Jsh 22:23; 1Sm 9:12. *I only, am left*. Elijah reveals the extent of his loneliness and sense of abandonment.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 19:11 *strong wind*. At other times, God had manifested Himself in phenomena of nature, e.g., wind (Ezk 1:4), earthquake (Nu 16:31), fire (Ex 19:18).

1 Kings—NOTE ON 19:12 *low whisper*. Elijah found no comfort and no assurance in God's power manifested in nature through the wind. Rather,

when God's Word came to instruct him in a quiet voice, then the prophet found truth and strength. What the Lord whispers is a mystery. Luth: "The Law is a hammer that crushes rocks, a fire, a wind, and a great and mighty earthquake that overturns mountains. When Elijah could not bear the terrors of the Law that were signified by these events, he wrapped his head in his mantle; and after the storm he had seen was over, there came a still small voice, in which the Lord was present (1 Kings 19:11–13). But the violence of the fire, the storm, and the earthquake had to come first, before the Lord Himself followed in the still small voice" (AE 26:310–11).

1 Kings—NOTE ON 19:13 *wrapped his face*. Perhaps expressing shame. See note, v 4. *went out*. Perhaps the whisper called him out.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 19:15–17 *wilderness of Damascus*. Many miles north of Israel. *Hazael … Jehu … Elisha*. In a renewed battle against idolatry, Elijah was to anoint these men. Elijah personally recruited Elisha (vv 19–21), who in turn carried out the commands concerning Hazael and Jehu (2Ki 8:7–15; 9:1–10). *Syria*. See note, 10:29.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 19:16 *Jehu*. Called the "son of Omri" on an Assyrian black obelisk that lists his tribute paid to Assyria, because Israel was known as the land of Omri. The low-relief carving shows Jehu bowed on his knees before Shalmaneser III. *anoint*. See note, 1Sm 10:1. *Abel-meholah*. Elisha's home was c 2 mi E of the Jordan and c 25 mi S of the Sea of Chinnereth. See map, p 581. *in your place*. The Lord acknowledges Elijah's exhaustion and plans for his relief, while ensuring the continuation of the ministry.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 19:18 *seven thousand*. Although many were to die by the sword of Hazael and Jehu, for whose rise to power Elisha was responsible (v 17), a large number would be found in Israel who did not succumb to the seduction of Baal worship. "The godless priests in Judah held a false belief about such sacrifices; Baal worship even continued in Israel. Nevertheless, a Church of God was there that objected to these godless services" (Ap XXIV 98). Luth: "This is adequate evidence that size does not make the church. Nor dare one consider how holy its origin is, who its ancestors are, and what they have in their possession and have received from God" (AE 2:101). Mel: "In the time of Elijah the church consisted of Elijah, Elisha, and their hearers, and the church was not without a ministry. For the prophets themselves were the ministers of the Gospel and there were some godly priests with them" (Chem, *LTh* 2:685).

1 Kings—NOTE ON 19:9–18 When Elijah is discouraged, the Lord comes to him in a "low whisper," encouraging him that he is not alone and commissioning him to return to his God-given ministry. God's voice speaks to us in the quietness of the inspired pages of Scripture, by which He encourages us with the forgiveness, life, and salvation in Jesus, the Word made flesh. • I thank You, dear God, that in the pages of the Bible, You have come with the assuring whisper of Your presence and protection. In the gentle Savior's name. Amen.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 19:19 *found Elisha*. See note, v 3. *Shaphat*. Elisha's family lived east of the Jordan, perhaps in the territory of Gad. *twelve yoke of oxen in front of him*. Remarkable coordination of effort, guiding a team of 24 animals. *cast his cloak upon him*. Designating Elisha as his successor. Ephr: "Elijah also was persecuted as Jesus was persecuted. Jezebel the murderess persecuted Elijah; and the persecuting and murderous congregation persecuted Jesus. Elijah restrained the heavens from rain because of the sins of Israel; and Jesus by His coming restrained the Spirit from the prophets, because of the sins of the people. Elijah destroyed the servants of Baal; and Jesus trampled upon Satan and his hosts. Elijah raised to life the son of the widow; and Jesus raised to life the son of the widow, as well as Lazarus and the daughter of the ruler of the Synagogue. Elijah sustained the widow with a little bread; and Jesus satisfied thousands with a little bread. Elijah was taken up in a chariot to heaven; and our Redeemer ascended and took His seat on the right hand of His Father. Elisha received the spirit of Elijah; and Jesus breathed upon the faces of His Apostles" (*NPNF* 2 13:398).

1 Kings—NOTE ON 19:20 *what have I done to you?* Idiomatic question, explaining that the call to discipleship was not intended to conflict with respect for parents.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 19:21 Elisha turned the situation into a sacred feast, perhaps a fellowship meal (see pp 170–71).

1 Kings—NOTE ON 19:19–21 Elijah casts his cloak on Elisha, who will succeed him in God's work. Let us, in the time we have on earth, lay the calling of God's Word on the shoulders of the next generation. As God raises up Elisha to follow in Elijah's footsteps, so He is now raising up faithful servants of the Gospel to minister to this generation and the next. • God of the prophets, bless the prophets' sons—all who proclaim the Good

News of salvation in Jesus Christ. Bless them with courage as they proclaim Your Word to the ends of the earth. Amen.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 20:1 *Ben-hadad*. Not the first Syrian king by that name (see note, 15:18). This Ben-hadad besieged Samaria. He renewed the attacks on Israel originally requested by King Asa of Judah. *Syria*. See note, 10:29. *Thirty-two kings*. His army consisted of 32 divisions, each of which was under the command of an allied king or provincial chieftain. *Samaria*. See note, 16:24.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 20:3 *best wives and children*. Choicest slaves. Ben-hadad insists that Israel become Syria's vassal state.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 20:6 *whatever pleases you*. Further mockery and threats.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 20:7 *elders*. See note, Ex 3:16. *seeking trouble*. Increasing demands showed that Ben-hadad would not keep his word of peace after he received tribute. Conflict was unavoidable.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 20:8 *Do not listen or consent*. The mockery solidified Israel's leadership in support of King Ahab.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 20:9 *this thing*. Concede to the increasing demands.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 20:10 *handfuls*. The Syrian threatened to demolish Samaria so completely that his men would be able to carry off the remaining dust in their hands. Cf 2Sm 17:13 for a similar threat against Jerusalem.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 20:1–12 After describing Elijah's prophetic ministry, the sacred text returns to the history of King Ahab and his wars with Ben-hadad, king of Syria. The Lord guides history and even uses evil people for His good purposes. In such records, the Lord teaches us how He punishes the godless and protects those who call on His name. While the Bible records battles and wars, behind it all, God is still in control for the sake of His people. • Lord of the nations, amid the upheavals and wars of this sinful world, guide, strengthen, encourage, and uplift Your people. Amen.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 20:13 *a prophet*. Not identified.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 20:14 Ahab was trapped in the city without his normal command. He would have to lead an army of bureaucrats against a real fighting force, a considerable act of faith.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 20:15 *governors*. Ben-hadad's invasion of Israel brought all the provincial officials to Samaria for refuge.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 20:16 *went out*. Charged out of the city. *booths*. Temporary barracks, sometimes translated "tabernacles."
1 Kings—NOTE ON 20:18 *take them alive*. Odd orders, likely the result of his drunken state.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 20:20 *each struck*. They attacked successfully and without losses.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 20:21 *struck the horses and chariots*. See note, Jsh 11:6.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 20:22 In His grace, God helped Ahab, who neither deserved nor sought God's help. See note, 16:30.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 20:23 *gods of the hills*. The remark of Ben-hadad's servant reflects the notion, prevalent in the ancient world, that a certain deity had power in only one geographic area or in the exercise of only one function. See note, 2Ki 5:17. *plain*. Syrians were more familiar with battles in open areas, using chariots. See note, Jgs 4:12–13.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 20:24 *remove the kings*. Kings were traditionally warriors, but over time, in a peaceful empire, warrior kings were replaced by administrators who had not experienced battle. They became a liability in a real fight.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 20:13–25 Speaking through a prophet, the Lord tells Ahab that he will defeat the Syrian forces of Ben-hadad. Though undeserving, Ahab is blessed by God with victory. The Lord still sends the rain on the wicked as well as on the just (Mt 5:45). His merciful goodness is infinite for the sake of His children, whom He protects. • We praise You, O Lord, for the mercy and righteousness You provide us, though we are unworthy. Guide Your people, and shine on us from age to age. Amen.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 20:26 *spring*. See note, 2Sm 11:1. *Aphek*. Number of cities bore this name. Cf 1Sm 4:1; 29:1.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 20:28 *man of God*. Not identified. Cf v 13. *valleys*. See note, v 23.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 20:29 *seventh day*. Time was needed to settle the large number of troops and organize for battle. *100,000*. The Hbr word here and in v 30 can denote units of soldiers organized by the thousands or also the title for the leader of such a troop. If the wording represents a troop leader, there would be 100 leaders. See p 217.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 20:30 *wall fell*. Casemate walls could hold large numbers of troops within them. Collapse of such walls would be disastrous

(see note, Jsh 2:15). However, also see the note on calculating numbers, v 29. Luth: "They surpass us by so many thousands, and all that we have seems to recede into nothing. But do not compare yourselves with them. No, compare yourselves with your Lord, and it will be wonderful to see how superior you will be. The flock of Israel was small too, a little band. Yet the king of Israel defeated King Benhadad" (AE 30:289).

1 Kings—NOTE ON 20:26–30 The Lord allows the smaller Israelite force to crush many Syrians because the Syrian king, Ben-hadad, mocked God's omnipresent rule. Beware of mocking the Almighty, either by insult or by lack of faith in His good and gracious rule, which extends over all. He rules in favor of His beloved people. How great is His power toward us in the living Savior, Jesus! • Grant me all boldness, mighty Lord, to carry out Your will and declare Your greatness. Amen.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 20:31 *merciful kings*. In contrast with kings such as the Assyrians, known for their brutality. *sackcloth … ropes*. Emblems of repentance. See notes, Jb 1:20; 16:15.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 20:32 *my brother*. Truly generous and speedy alliance.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 20:34 *my father took from your father*. Evidently, Ahab's father, Omri, suffered reverses that are not mentioned in the short record of his reign (16:21–28). *bazaars*. Promise of a trade relationship.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 20:35 *sons of the prophets*. See p 555.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 20:36 *lion shall strike you*. Swift, harsh punishment. The matter was gravely urgent.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 20:38 *bandage*. Disguised as a wounded soldier, a member of the prophetic guild used a parable to trap Ahab into condemning himself (cf 2Sm 12:1–12).

1 Kings—NOTE ON 20:39 *Your servant went out*. Prophet begins the parable. *a talent*. Penalty for negligence was set at a huge sum. A talent was equal to 3,000 shekels, 100 times the price of a slave.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 20:40 *you yourself have decided it*. He is self-condemned.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 20:41 *king … recognized*. Prophets often served as court counselors. See pp 1077–83.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 20:42 *let go*. From a political point of view, the release of Ben-hadad was a wise move. Cooperation between the two countries was necessary to check the growing menace of Assyrian expansion into Syria, then southward into Israel. Later, Ahab and the

Syrians did make common cause against the Assyrian king Shalmaneser III. The battle took place in 853 BC at Qarqar, c 100 mi N of Damascus. *devoted to destruction*. See p 6.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 20:30–43 The Lord's prophet uses a parable to show Ahab his guilt in releasing Ben-hadad, king of Syria. God calls us to deliver His Word faithfully, whether creatively (as in this example) or in brutal directness. How marvelously our Lord's parables continue to instruct us in repentance and in faith, through the Gospel of His kingdom. His gracious rule delivers us from evil. • Strike my heart, O Lord. Wound me by the Law, that You may heal and deliver me with the life-giving Gospel of Jesus. Amen.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 21:1–16 Ahab "did evil in the sight of the LORD" by introducing Phoenician idolatry (16:29–34) and by entering a forbidden alliance (20:31–34). But here is still another kind of crime. In order to satisfy a royal whim, Ahab deprived a private citizen of his inalienable right to his family's inheritance. See note, Jsh 1:6.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 21:1 *Naboth*. Little is known of this sad character who lived in the historic region of Isaachar. *Jezreel*. Fertile valley stretching from Mount Carmel southeast to the Jordan Valley. Cf 18:45; see map, p 581. Also a city.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 21:2 *after this*. After the war, ch 20.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 21:3 *The LORD forbid*. An oathlike prayer. *inheritance*. Naboth had the law on his side (Lv 25:25–28). See "portion," p 7.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 21:4 *vexed and sullen*. His condition, first described in 20:43, continues.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 21:8 *letters*. For a list of early Israelite correspondence, see "Ancient Letters," p 1900. Numerous informal messages have been discovered written on pieces of pottery. *in Ahab's name*. Jezebel uses deception to surprise her husband. *seal*. See note, Jer 32:10.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 21:9 *Proclaim a fast*. Jezebel insinuated that a crime of such a grave nature had been committed as to require the calling of a penitential general assembly (Jgs 20:26; 1Sm 7:6; 2Ch 20:3). *head*. At the front, as a leader. The unsuspecting Naboth was to be accorded a place of honor.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 21:10 *two worthless men*. Lit, "sons of Belial" (cf Jgs 19:22). *You have cursed God and the king*. As though he were hostile to

established order. *cursed*. See note, Jb 2:9.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 21:13 *sat opposite him*. The fast apparently included an assembly and perhaps rituals. *stoned him*. Penalty prescribed in Lv 24:13–16.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 21:15 *take possession*. Property reverted to the king if its owner was executed or if there were no rightful heirs.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 21:1–16 When Naboth refuses to sell his vineyard to Ahab, Queen Jezebel schemes to charge Naboth with cursing God. Having been falsely accused, Naboth is stoned to death, and Ahab takes possession of the vineyard in violation of God's commandment (Ex 20:17). We are constantly tempted to get what we want at the expense of others. Instead of taking from others, Jesus gave Himself for us. In sacrificing His life for the sins of the world, He gave us the priceless treasure of life and salvation. • Lord Jesus, touch our cold and loveless hearts, and fill them with the warmth of Your love, that we may reach out to all who are in need. Amen.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 21:17–24 Chem: "Certain statements of Scripture do not speak of the remission of guilt and eternal punishment but of the remission of temporal punishment which is turned away sometimes through a complete repentance" (*LTh* 2:642).

1 Kings—NOTE ON 21:19 *Thus says the* LORD. Luth: "Ahab … had his triumph with Jezebel after having killed Naboth, but God had the last word" (AE 17:74). *In the place*. Lit rendering; could also mean "instead of." Cf Hos 1:10. Naboth was killed at Jezreel (v 13); Ahab, at Samaria (22:38). The corpse of Ahab's son J[eh]oram was thrown into Naboth's vineyard (2Ki 9:25). *dogs*. See note, Ps 59:6.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 21:20 *Have you found me*. Sarcasm, since Ahab had struggled previously to find Elijah. See notes, 18:8, 16. *sold yourself*. As a person sells himself to slavery to pay his debts. Ahab is totally given to his evil.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 21:23 *eat Jezebel*. See the fulfillment in 2Ki 9:35–37.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 21:24 To not have a proper burial was considered a great shame.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 21:17–24 Elijah goes to meet Ahab while he is in Naboth's vineyard. There Elijah boldly prophesies the death of Ahab and his wife, Jezebel. Risking his own welfare, Elijah speaks God's Law to Ahab. Thanks be to God, His Word does not end with the Law but includes

the precious Gospel as a key to forgiveness and heaven. • Almighty Judge, Your Law condemns the sinful lives we lead. Forgive us for Jesus' sake, and create in us new hearts that are set to obey Your Commandments. Amen.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 21:25 *sold himself*. See note, v 20. Ahab was soft clay in the strong hands of evil Jezebel, the "Lady Macbeth" of the OT. She did not share his repentance (vv 27–29).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 21:26 *idols … Amorites*. See p 345.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 21:27 *sackcloth … fasted*. Wearing this coarse garment was a sign of mourning. See notes, Jb 1:20; 16:15.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 21:29 *son's days*. The death of his son J[eh]oram is recorded in 2Ki 9:24; the extermination of his house, in 2Ki 10:1–11. Cf Is 39:5–8, which tells of God's mercy to Hezekiah.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 21:25–29 Having been confronted by Elijah, Ahab shows repentance and humbles himself before God. God's Law is powerful, as evidenced in the case of Elijah and Ahab. The power of God's Word—both Law and Gospel—surpasses mere human eloquence and brings life-changing results. Yet, only the Gospel provides forgiveness and new life. • O God, forsake me not. Grant me sincere and lifelong repentance, coupled with sincere and bold faith. Amen.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 22:1–12 Ahab, allied with the king of Judah (v 44), decided to retake Ramoth-gilead.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 22:1 *without war*. Given the earlier antagonism between the two nations, this was unusual.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 22:2 In a third encounter with the Syrians, Ahab was to lose his life. Apparently, Ben-hadad did not return all the cities to Israel as he had promised (20:34).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 22:3 *Ramoth-gilead*. City in tribal territory of Gad, one of three Transjordanian cities of refuge (Jsh 20:8). See map, p 581.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 22:4 *with me*. Friendly relations were cemented by the marriage of Ahab's daughter Athaliah to Jehoshaphat's son Jehoram (2Ki 8:18). *I am as you are*. Political alliance naturally led to a military alliance, resisting a commonly hostile kingdom.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 22:6 *four hundred men*. See numbers in 18:19; count may have had political or symbolic significance.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 22:7 *another*. Jehoshaphat may be expressing doubt about these prophets, or he may have realized that Micaiah was not present to voice support. *prophet of the LORD*. As the golden calves at Dan and

Bethel were supposed to represent the God who brought the people "up out of the land of Egypt" (12:28), so there were prophets in Israel who professed to proclaim "the word of the LORD" (v 5). See notes, Dt 18:18–22.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 22:10 *gate of Samaria*. City gates could include a large, general assembly area or a marketplace (cf 2Ki 7:1). See p 792. *prophesying*. Hbr verb is translated "raved" in 1Sm 18:10; 1Ki 18:29.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 22:11 *horns of iron*. One of the false prophets supplemented the spoken incantation with an action that was to magically produce the effect it portrayed. True prophets also acted out or pantomimed their message in order to make it more impressive (cf 2Ki 13:14–19; Jer 27:2; Ezk 4). See p 1220.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 22:12 *the prophets prophesied so and said*. See pp 1077–83.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 22:1–12 Ahab's false prophets encourage him to fight against the Syrian city of Ramoth-gilead. Many false prophets today would mislead us and rob us of the treasures of God's Word. The Holy Spirit gives us insight through the Word to see through all falsehood. In Scripture, we have all we need: Christ and salvation. • Your Word, O Lord, is a light for my path. Keep me in Christ, who is the way, the truth, and the life. Amen.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 22:14 See pp 1077–83.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 22:15 The king was suspicious. Perhaps Micaiah reflected Ahab's sarcasm in his answer.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 22:16 *the truth*. Ahab realized that Micaiah's prophecy of triumph was intended to ridicule the king's fawning lackeys.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 22:17 *no shepherd*. A nation without a leader. See note, Mi 5:4–5a.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 22:19 *host of heaven*. The companies of angels. See p 1291.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 22:20–22 *entice*. What Micaiah saw was a visionary portrayal of the fact that when people "refused to love the truth and so be saved," God "sends them a strong delusion" (2Th 2:10–11; see also the hardening of Pharaoh's heart, Ex 4:21). Chem: "The devil is properly the father of lying, but because he can do nothing unless God permits, Job 1:12, 1 Kings 22:22, therefore God says in Ezek. 14:9–10, 'I have deceived him,' in order that we may recognize that false prophets are a punishment for contempt, stubbornness, and ingratitude toward the truth" (*LTh* 1:197).

1 Kings—NOTE ON 22:23 *your prophets*. False prophets gathered by Ahab for advice. See note, 18:19.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 22:24 False prophet Zedekiah ironically claimed exclusive possession of the Spirit.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 22:25 *inner chamber*. Dark back room of a house. Micaiah prophesies an ominous event.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 22:26 *Joash*. Descendant of Ahab, not the future king of Judah (2Ki 11–12).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 22:27 Ahab didn't want the prophet's message to interfere with his alliance or with morale.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 22:28 *in peace*. Or, "in safety." Micaiah's prophecy is now clear. *Hear*. He calls the crowd to witness and remember this test of truthfulness (cf 18:30).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 22:13–28 Contrary to the false prophets, Micaiah does not give Ahab a favorable prediction. For this, the king orders that Micaiah be imprisoned. God does not want us to be guided by what others may wish to hear or by the popular opinions of the day. Rather, our only sure guide through life is God's Word, which alone can make us "wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus" (2Tm 3:15). • Heavenly Father, keep us through the Scriptures on the way that leads to eternal life in Jesus Christ. Amen.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 22:30 *disguise myself*. Hoping to gain security, because higher rank usually attracts a more intense attack.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 22:31 *thirty-two captains*. Syrian force apparently was made up of 32 divisions as before; this could represent regions of their nation.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 22:32 One wonders why Jehoshaphat would go along with Ahab's scheme (v 30). *cried out*. Either to the Lord in prayer or for reinforcements.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 22:34 *at random*. Without aiming at any particular target. Events that appear to happen "by chance" (Lk 10:31) are not merely the product of blind fate; God causes them or allows them.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 22:35 *propped up*. Lest the troops become demoralized, he continued to fight. A fitting effort.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 22:36 *Every man to his city … his country!* Full retreat.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 22:38 *dogs*. Cf 14:11; 21:23–24. *prostitutes*. Ahab's blood tainted the water of the Pool of Samaria, where prostitutes customarily washed. Though not recorded in Elijah's prophecy (21:19), this desecration of his blood added to the disgrace of his death.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 22:39 *ivory house*. Luxuriously inlaid with ivory. See note, Am 3:15.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 22:29–40 Giving his royal robes to Jehoshaphat, Ahab disguises himself and goes into battle, where he is struck and killed by a "random" arrow. God's Word never fails; that includes His Word against wickedness and unbelief. Rather than trying to get around God's Word, flee to that Word, which includes the promises of grace and forgiveness in the crucified and risen Christ. • Merciful God, You shower down kindness and love every day. How can I ever thank You for all the undeserved goodness that comes my way? Amen.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 22:41–50 *Jehoshaphat*. Before continuing the history of Israel (2Ki 1–7), the author inserts a brief note of 10 verses about a contemporary on the throne of Judah (873–848 BC). Succeeding a father who did not hesitate to call in Assyrian aid against his northern rival (15:16–24), Jehoshaphat "made peace with the king of Israel" (v 44). This reversal of policy resulted in more than cessation of hostilities. Jehoshaphat fought side by side with two Israelite kings: with Ahab against the Syrians (vv 1–4, 29–36), and with Ahab's son Jehoram against the Moabites (2Ki 3:4–8).
1 Kings—NOTE ON 22:43 *high places*. See p 526.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 22:44 See note, vv 41–50.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 22:46 *male cult prostitutes*. See note, 14:24.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 22:47–50 Jehoshaphat made frustrating efforts to regain territory and trade previously attained by Solomon.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 22:48 *ships of Tarshish*. See note, 10:22.
1 Kings—NOTE ON 22:49 *not willing*. Although allied with the Northern Kingdom, Jehoshaphat retained his independence at least to the extent of refusing Ahaziah's help in a maritime expedition. Archaeological remains at Kuntillet 'Ajrud have both Judean and Israelite features.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 22:41–50 The inspired record briefly returns to the Southern Kingdom of Judah and the life and death of King Jehoshaphat, who, like his father Asa, did "what was right in the sight of the LORD" (v 43). Amid the many examples of godlessness and tragedy, God's Word contains

bright examples of those who followed Him. God's mercy in the life of a fellow believer is a shining beacon that lights our way and strengthens our faith in the Lord. • God of our fathers, embolden us with the example of Your faithful people of old, that we may live bravely for Him who died and rose for us, and in whose name we pray. Amen.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 22:51–53 History of Ahaziah's reign, summarized here, is continued in 2Ki.

1 Kings—NOTE ON 22:51–53 The closing verses of 1Ki record the two-year reign of Ahab's son Ahaziah, who follows in his father's footsteps, does evil, and angers God. Though 1Ki ends on a tragic note, we have seen that alongside God's Law and judgment runs His message of the Gospel and forgiveness. His mercies, though rejected, never end but are new every morning. • Praise to You, the Almighty, the King of creation! With heart and soul we praise and glorify You for all You have done and continue to do for us. In Jesus' name. Amen.

2 Kings

2 Kings 1 | 2 Kings 2 | 2 Kings 3 | 2 Kings 4 | 2 Kings 5 | 2 Kings 6 | 2 Kings 7 | 2 Kings 8 | 2 Kings 9 | 2 Kings 10 | 2 Kings 11 | 2 Kings 12 | 2 Kings 13 | 2 Kings 14 | 2 Kings 15 | 2 Kings 16 | 2 Kings 17 | 2 Kings 18 | 2 Kings 19 | 2 Kings 20 | 2 Kings 21 | 2 Kings 22 | 2 Kings 23 | 2 Kings 24 | 2 Kings 25

- 2 Kings
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

Elijah Denounces Ahaziah

1 [1]†After the death of Ahab, Moab rebelled against Israel.

[2]†Now Ahaziah fell through the lattice in his upper chamber in Samaria, and lay sick; so he sent messengers, telling them, “Go, inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron, whether I shall recover from this sickness.” [3]†But the angel of the Lord said to Elijah the Tishbite, “Arise, go up to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria, and say to them, ‘Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are going to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron? [4]†Now therefore thus says the Lord, You shall not come down from the bed to which you have gone up, but you shall surely die.’” So Elijah went.

[5]The messengers returned to the king, and he said to them, “Why have you returned?” [6]And they said to him, “There came a man to meet us, and said to us, ‘Go back to the king who sent you, and say to him, Thus says the Lord, Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are sending to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron? Therefore you shall not come down from the bed to which you have gone up, but you shall surely die.’” [7]He said to them, “What kind of man was he who came to meet you and told you these things?” [8]†They answered him, “He wore a garment of hair, with a belt of leather about his waist.” And he said, “It is Elijah the Tishbite.”

[9]†Then the king sent to him a captain of fifty men with his fifty. He went up to Elijah, who was sitting on the top of a hill, and said to him, “O man of God, the king says, ‘Come down.’” [10]†But Elijah answered the captain of fifty, “If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty.” Then fire came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty.

[11]†Again the king sent to him another captain of fifty men with his fifty. And he answered and said to him, “O man of God, this is the king’s order, ‘Come down quickly!’” [12]†But Elijah answered them, “If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty.” Then the fire of God came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty.

[13]†Again the king sent the captain of a third fifty with his fifty. And the
third captain of fifty went up and came and fell on his knees before Elijah
and entreated him, “O man of God, please let my life, and the life of these
fifty servants of yours, be precious in your sight. [14]Behold, fire came down
from heaven and consumed the two former captains of fifty men with their
fifties, but now let my life be precious in your sight.” [15]†Then the angel of
the Lord said to Elijah, “Go down with him; do not be afraid of him.” So he
arose and went down with him to the king [16]†and said to him, “Thus says
the Lord, ‘Because you have sent messengers to inquire of Baal-zebub, the
god of Ekron—is it because there is no God in Israel to inquire of his word?
—therefore you shall not come down from the bed to which you have gone
up, but you shall surely die.’”

[17]†So he died according to the word of the Lord that Elijah had spoken.
Jehoram became king in his place in the second year of Jehoram the son of
Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, because Ahaziah had no son. [18]Now the rest of
the acts of Ahaziah that he did, are they not written in the Book of the
Chronicles of the Kings of Israel?

Elijah Taken to Heaven

2 [1]‡†Now when the Lord was about to take Elijah up to heaven by a whirlwind, Elijah and Elisha were on their way from Gilgal. [2]†And Elijah said to Elisha, “Please stay here, for the Lord has sent me as far as Bethel.” But Elisha said, “As the Lord lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you.” So they went down to Bethel. [3]†And the sons of the prophets who were in Bethel came out to Elisha and said to him, “Do you know that today the Lord will take away your master from over you?” And he said, “Yes, I know it; keep quiet.”

[4]†Elijah said to him, “Elisha, please stay here, for the Lord has sent me to Jericho.” But he said, “As the Lord lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you.” So they came to Jericho. [5]†The sons of the prophets who were at Jericho drew near to Elisha and said to him, “Do you know that today the Lord will take away your master from over you?” And he answered, “Yes, I know it; keep quiet.”

[6]†Then Elijah said to him, “Please stay here, for the Lord has sent me to the Jordan.” But he said, “As the Lord lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you.” So the two of them went on. [7]†Fifty men of the sons of the prophets also went and stood at some distance from them, as they both were standing by the Jordan. [8]†Then Elijah took his cloak and rolled it up and struck the water, and the water was parted to the one side and to the other, till the two of them could go over on dry ground.

[9]†When they had crossed, Elijah said to Elisha, “Ask what I shall do for you, before I am taken from you.” And Elisha said, “Please let there be a double portion of your spirit on me.” [10]†And he said, “You have asked a hard thing; yet, if you see me as I am being taken from you, it shall be so for you, but if you do not see me, it shall not be so.” [11]†And as they still went on and talked, behold, chariots of fire and horses of fire separated the two of them. And Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. [12]†And Elisha saw it and he cried, “My father, my father! The chariots of Israel and its horsemen!” And he saw him no more.

Then he took hold of his own clothes and tore them in two pieces. [13]†And he took up the cloak of Elijah that had fallen from him and went back and

stood on the bank of the Jordan. [14]†Then he took the cloak of Elijah that had fallen from him and struck the water, saying, “Where is the Lord, the God of Elijah?” And when he had struck the water, the water was parted to the one side and to the other, and Elisha went over.

Elisha Succeeds Elijah

15 ‡ † Now when the sons of the prophets who were at Jericho saw him
opposite them, they said, “The spirit of Elijah rests on Elisha.” And they
came to meet him and bowed to the ground before him. 16 † And they said to
him, “Behold now, there are with your servants fifty strong men. Please let
them go and seek your master. It may be that the Spirit of the Lord has
caught him up and cast him upon some mountain or into some valley.” And
he said, “You shall not send.” 17 † But when they urged him till he was
ashamed, he said, “Send.” They sent therefore fifty men. And for three days
they sought him but did not find him. 18 And they came back to him while he
was staying at Jericho, and he said to them, “Did I not say to you, ‘Do not
go’?”

19 † Now the men of the city said to Elisha, “Behold, the situation of this
city is pleasant, as my lord sees, but the water is bad, and the land is
unfruitful.” 20 He said, “Bring me a new bowl, and put salt in it.” So they
brought it to him. 21 † Then he went to the spring of water and threw salt in it
and said, “Thus says the Lord, I have healed this water; from now on neither
death nor miscarriage shall come from it.” 22 So the water has been healed to
this day, according to the word that Elisha spoke.

23 † He went up from there to Bethel, and while he was going up on the
way, some small boys came out of the city and jeered at him, saying, “Go
up, you baldhead! Go up, you baldhead!” 24 † And he turned around, and
when he saw them, he cursed them in the name of the Lord. And two she-
bears came out of the woods and tore forty-two of the boys. 25 From there he
went on to Mount Carmel, and from there he returned to Samaria.

Moab Rebels Against Israel

3 [1]†In the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, Jehoram the
son of Ahab became king over Israel in Samaria, and he reigned twelve
years. [2]†He did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, though not like his
father and mother, for he put away the pillar of Baal that his father had
made. [3]†Nevertheless, he clung to the sin of Jeroboam the son of Nebat,
which he made Israel to sin; he did not depart from it.

[4]†Now Mesha king of Moab was a sheep breeder, and he had to deliver to
the king of Israel 100,000 lambs and the wool of 100,000 rams. [5]†But when
Ahab died, the king of Moab rebelled against the king of Israel. [6]So King
Jehoram marched out of Samaria at that time and mustered all Israel. [7]†And
he went and sent word to Jehoshaphat king of Judah, "The king of Moab
has rebelled against me. Will you go with me to battle against Moab?" And
he said, "I will go. I am as you are, my people as your people, my horses as
your horses." [8]†Then he said, "By which way shall we march?" Jehoram
answered, "By the way of the wilderness of Edom."

[9]†So the king of Israel went with the king of Judah and the king of Edom.
And when they had made a circuitous march of seven days, there was no
water for the army or for the animals that followed them. [10]†Then the king
of Israel said, "Alas! The Lord has called these three kings to give them into
the hand of Moab." [11]†And Jehoshaphat said, "Is there no prophet of the
Lord here, through whom we may inquire of the Lord?" Then one of the
king of Israel's servants answered, "Elisha the son of Shaphat is here, who
poured water on the hands of Elijah." [12]And Jehoshaphat said, "The word of
the Lord is with him." So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat and the king of
Edom went down to him.

[13]And Elisha said to the king of Israel, "What have I to do with you? Go
to the prophets of your father and to the prophets of your mother." But the
king of Israel said to him, "No; it is the Lord who has called these three
kings to give them into the hand of Moab." [14]And Elisha said, "As the Lord
of hosts lives, before whom I stand, were it not that I have regard for
Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, I would neither look at you nor see you.

15 †But now bring me a musician.” And when the musician played, the hand
of the Lord came upon him. 16 †And he said, “Thus says the Lord, ‘I will
make this dry streambed full of pools.’ 17For thus says the Lord, ‘You shall
not see wind or rain, but that streambed shall be filled with water, so that
you shall drink, you, your livestock, and your animals.’ 18This is a light
thing in the sight of the Lord. He will also give the Moabites into your hand,
19 †and you shall attack every fortified city and every choice city, and shall
fell every good tree and stop up all springs of water and ruin every good
piece of land with stones.” 20 †The next morning, about the time of offering
the sacrifice, behold, water came from the direction of Edom, till the
country was filled with water.

21 † When all the Moabites heard that the kings had come up to fight
against them, all who were able to put on armor, from the youngest to the
oldest, were called out and were drawn up at the border. 22 †And when they
rose early in the morning and the sun shone on the water, the Moabites saw
the water opposite them as red as blood. 23 †And they said, “This is blood;
the kings have surely fought together and struck one another down. Now
then, Moab, to the spoil!” 24But when they came to the camp of Israel, the
Israelites rose and struck the Moabites, till they fled before them. And they
went forward, striking the Moabites as they went.[1] 25 †And they overthrew
the cities, and on every good piece of land every man threw a stone until it
was covered. They stopped every spring of water and felled all the good
trees, till only its stones were left in Kir-hareseth, and the slingers
surrounded and attacked it. 26 †When the king of Moab saw that the battle
was going against him, he took with him 700 swordsmen to break through,
opposite the king of Edom, but they could not. 27 †Then he took his oldest
son who was to reign in his place and offered him for a burnt offering on
the wall. And there came great wrath against Israel. And they withdrew
from him and returned to their own land.

Elisha and the Widow’s Oil

4 [1]†††Now the wife of one of the sons of the prophets cried to Elisha,
“Your servant my husband is dead, and you know that your servant feared
the Lord, but the creditor has come to take my two children to be his
slaves.” [2]†And Elisha said to her, “What shall I do for you? Tell me; what
have you in the house?” And she said, “Your servant has nothing in the
house except a jar of oil.” [3]Then he said, “Go outside, borrow vessels from
all your neighbors, empty vessels and not too few. [4]Then go in and shut the
door behind yourself and your sons and pour into all these vessels. And
when one is full, set it aside.” [5]So she went from him and shut the door
behind herself and her sons. And as she poured they brought the vessels to
her. [6]When the vessels were full, she said to her son, “Bring me another
vessel.” And he said to her, “There is not another.” Then the oil stopped
flowing. [7]†She came and told the man of God, and he said, “Go, sell the oil
and pay your debts, and you and your sons can live on the rest.”

Elisha and the Shunammite Woman

8 ‡ † One day Elisha went on to Shunem, where a wealthy woman lived,
who urged him to eat some food. So whenever he passed that way, he would
turn in there to eat food. 9 † And she said to her husband, “Behold now, I
know that this is a holy man of God who is continually passing our way.
10 † Let us make a small room on the roof with walls and put there for him a
bed, a table, a chair, and a lamp, so that whenever he comes to us, he can go
in there.”
11 One day he came there, and he turned into the chamber and rested there.
12 And he said to Gehazi his servant, “Call this Shunammite.” When he had
called her, she stood before him. 13 † And he said to him, “Say now to her,
‘See, you have taken all this trouble for us; what is to be done for you?
Would you have a word spoken on your behalf to the king or to the
commander of the army?’” She answered, “I dwell among my own people.”
14 And he said, “What then is to be done for her?” Gehazi answered, “Well,
she has no son, and her husband is old.” 15 † He said, “Call her.” And when
he had called her, she stood in the doorway. 16 † And he said, “At this season,
about this time next year, you shall embrace a son.” And she said, “No, my
lord, O man of God; do not lie to your servant.” 17 But the woman
conceived, and she bore a son about that time the following spring, as
Elisha had said to her.

Elisha Raises the Shunammite's Son

18 †When the child had grown, he went out one day to his father among
the reapers. 19 †And he said to his father, "Oh, my head, my head!" The
father said to his servant, "Carry him to his mother." 20 And when he had
lifted him and brought him to his mother, the child sat on her lap till noon,
and then he died. 21 And she went up and laid him on the bed of the man of
God and shut the door behind him and went out. 22 †Then she called to her
husband and said, "Send me one of the servants and one of the donkeys,
that I may quickly go to the man of God and come back again." 23 †And he
said, "Why will you go to him today? It is neither new moon nor Sabbath."
She said, "All is well." 24 Then she saddled the donkey, and she said to her
servant, "Urge the animal on; do not slacken the pace for me unless I tell
you." 25 †So she set out and came to the man of God at Mount Carmel.

When the man of God saw her coming, he said to Gehazi his servant,
"Look, there is the Shunammite. 26 †Run at once to meet her and say to her,
'Is all well with you? Is all well with your husband? Is all well with the
child?'" And she answered, "All is well." 27 †And when she came to the
mountain to the man of God, she caught hold of his feet. And Gehazi came
to push her away. But the man of God said, "Leave her alone, for she is in
bitter distress, and the Lord has hidden it from me and has not told me."
28 Then she said, "Did I ask my lord for a son? Did I not say, 'Do not
deceive me?'" 29 †He said to Gehazi, "Tie up your garment and take my staff
in your hand and go. If you meet anyone, do not greet him, and if anyone
greets you, do not reply. And lay my staff on the face of the child." 30 †Then
the mother of the child said, "As the Lord lives and as you yourself live, I
will not leave you." So he arose and followed her. 31 †Gehazi went on ahead
and laid the staff on the face of the child, but there was no sound or sign of
life. Therefore he returned to meet him and told him, "The child has not
awakened."

32 †When Elisha came into the house, he saw the child lying dead on his
bed. 33 †So he went in and shut the door behind the two of them and prayed
to the Lord. 34 †Then he went up and lay on the child, putting his mouth on
his mouth, his eyes on his eyes, and his hands on his hands. And as he

stretched himself upon him, the flesh of the child became warm. [35]†Then he got up again and walked once back and forth in the house, and went up and stretched himself upon him. The child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes. [36]Then he summoned Gehazi and said, “Call this Shunammite.” So he called her. And when she came to him, he said, “Pick up your son.” [37]†She came and fell at his feet, bowing to the ground. Then she picked up her son and went out.

Elisha Purifies the Deadly Stew

38 ‡ † And Elisha came again to Gilgal when there was a famine in the land.
And as the sons of the prophets were sitting before him, he said to his
servant, “Set on the large pot, and boil stew for the sons of the prophets.”
39 † One of them went out into the field to gather herbs, and found a wild
vine and gathered from it his lap full of wild gourds, and came and cut them
up into the pot of stew, not knowing what they were. 40 † And they poured
out some for the men to eat. But while they were eating of the stew, they
cried out, “O man of God, there is death in the pot!” And they could not eat
it. 41 † He said, “Then bring flour.” And he threw it into the pot and said,
“Pour some out for the men, that they may eat.” And there was no harm in
the pot.

42 † A man came from Baal-shalishah, bringing the man of God bread of
the firstfruits, twenty loaves of barley and fresh ears of grain in his sack.
And Elisha said, “Give to the men, that they may eat.” 43 † But his servant
said, “How can I set this before a hundred men?” So he repeated, “Give
them to the men, that they may eat, for thus says the Lord, ‘They shall eat
and have some left.’” 44 † So he set it before them. And they ate and had
some left, according to the word of the Lord.

Naaman Healed of Leprosy

5 [1]†† Naaman, commander of the army of the king of Syria, was a
great man with his master and in high favor, because by him the Lord had
given victory to Syria. He was a mighty man of valor, but he was a leper.[1]
[2]† Now the Syrians on one of their raids had carried off a little girl from the
land of Israel, and she worked in the service of Naaman's wife. [3]† She said
to her mistress, "Would that my lord were with the prophet who is in
Samaria! He would cure him of his leprosy." [4]So Naaman went in and told
his lord, "Thus and so spoke the girl from the land of Israel." [5]† And the
king of Syria said, "Go now, and I will send a letter to the king of Israel."

So he went, taking with him ten talents of silver, six thousand shekels[2]
of gold, and ten changes of clothing. [6]† And he brought the letter to the king
of Israel, which read, "When this letter reaches you, know that I have sent
to you Naaman my servant, that you may cure him of his leprosy." [7]† And
when the king of Israel read the letter, he tore his clothes and said, "Am I
God, to kill and to make alive, that this man sends word to me to cure a man
of his leprosy? Only consider, and see how he is seeking a quarrel with
me."

[8]† But when Elisha the man of God heard that the king of Israel had torn
his clothes, he sent to the king, saying, "Why have you torn your clothes?
Let him come now to me, that he may know that there is a prophet in
Israel." [9]† So Naaman came with his horses and chariots and stood at the
door of Elisha's house. [10]† And Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, "Go
and wash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh shall be restored, and
you shall be clean." [11]† But Naaman was angry and went away, saying,
"Behold, I thought that he would surely come out to me and stand and call
upon the name of the Lord his God, and wave his hand over the place and
cure the leper. [12]† Are not Abana[1] and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus,
better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not wash in them and be clean?"
So he turned and went away in a rage. [13]† But his servants came near and
said to him, "My father, it is a great word the prophet has spoken to you;
will you not do it? Has he actually said to you, 'Wash, and be clean'?" [14]† So

he went down and dipped himself seven times in the Jordan, according to the word of the man of God, and his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.

Gehazi's Greed and Punishment

15 ‡ † Then he returned to the man of God, he and all his company, and he
came and stood before him. And he said, "Behold, I know that there is no
God in all the earth but in Israel; so accept now a present from your
servant." 16 † But he said, "As the Lord lives, before whom I stand, I will
receive none." And he urged him to take it, but he refused. 17 † Then Naaman
said, "If not, please let there be given to your servant two mules' load of
earth, for from now on your servant will not offer burnt offering or sacrifice
to any god but the Lord. 18 † In this matter may the Lord pardon your servant:
when my master goes into the house of Rimmon to worship there, leaning
on my arm, and I bow myself in the house of Rimmon, when I bow myself
in the house of Rimmon, the Lord pardon your servant in this matter." 19 † He
said to him, "Go in peace."

But when Naaman had gone from him a short distance, 20 † Gehazi, the
servant of Elisha the man of God, said, "See, my master has spared this
Naaman the Syrian, in not accepting from his hand what he brought. As the
Lord lives, I will run after him and get something from him." 21 So Gehazi
followed Naaman. And when Naaman saw someone running after him, he
got down from the chariot to meet him and said, "Is all well?" 22 † And he
said, "All is well. My master has sent me to say, 'There have just now come
to me from the hill country of Ephraim two young men of the sons of the
prophets. Please give them a talent of silver and two changes of clothing.'"
23 And Naaman said, "Be pleased to accept two talents." And he urged him
and tied up two talents of silver in two bags, with two changes of clothing,
and laid them on two of his servants. And they carried them before Gehazi.
24 † And when he came to the hill, he took them from their hand and put them
in the house, and he sent the men away, and they departed. 25 † He went in
and stood before his master, and Elisha said to him, "Where have you been,
Gehazi?" And he said, "Your servant went nowhere." 26 † But he said to him,
"Did not my heart go when the man turned from his chariot to meet you?
Was it a time to accept money and garments, olive orchards and vineyards,
sheep and oxen, male servants and female servants? 27 † Therefore the

leprosy of Naaman shall cling to you and to your descendants forever.” So he went out from his presence a leper, like snow.

The Axe Head Recovered

6 [1]‡† Now the sons of the prophets said to Elisha, “See, the place
where we dwell under your charge is too small for us. [2]† Let us go to the
Jordan and each of us get there a log, and let us make a place for us to dwell
there.” And he answered, “Go.” [3]Then one of them said, “Be pleased to go
with your servants.” And he answered, “I will go.” [4]So he went with them.
And when they came to the Jordan, they cut down trees. [5]† But as one was
felling a log, his axe head fell into the water, and he cried out, “Alas, my
master! It was borrowed.” [6]† Then the man of God said, “Where did it fall?”
When he showed him the place, he cut off a stick and threw it in there and
made the iron float. [7]And he said, “Take it up.” So he reached out his hand
and took it.

Horses and Chariots of Fire

8 † † Once when the king of Syria was warring against Israel, he took
counsel with his servants, saying, “At such and such a place shall be my
camp.” 9 † But the man of God sent word to the king of Israel, “Beware that
you do not pass this place, for the Syrians are going down there.” 10 † And
the king of Israel sent to the place about which the man of God told him.
Thus he used to warn him, so that he saved himself there more than once or
twice.

11 † And the mind of the king of Syria was greatly troubled because of this
thing, and he called his servants and said to them, “Will you not show me
who of us is for the king of Israel?” 12 † And one of his servants said, “None,
my lord, O king; but Elisha, the prophet who is in Israel, tells the king of
Israel the words that you speak in your bedroom.” 13 † And he said, “Go and
see where he is, that I may send and seize him.” It was told him, “Behold,
he is in Dothan.” 14 † So he sent there horses and chariots and a great army,
and they came by night and surrounded the city.

15 † When the servant of the man of God rose early in the morning and
went out, behold, an army with horses and chariots was all around the city.
And the servant said, “Alas, my master! What shall we do?” 16 † He said,
“Do not be afraid, for those who are with us are more than those who are
with them.” 17 † Then Elisha prayed and said, “O Lord, please open his eyes
that he may see.” So the Lord opened the eyes of the young man, and he
saw, and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all
around Elisha. 18 † And when the Syrians came down against him, Elisha
prayed to the Lord and said, “Please strike this people with blindness.” So
he struck them with blindness in accordance with the prayer of Elisha.
19 † And Elisha said to them, “This is not the way, and this is not the city.
Follow me, and I will bring you to the man whom you seek.” And he led
them to Samaria.

20 As soon as they entered Samaria, Elisha said, “O Lord, open the eyes of
these men, that they may see.” So the Lord opened their eyes and they saw,
and behold, they were in the midst of Samaria. 21 As soon as the king of
Israel saw them, he said to Elisha, “My father, shall I strike them down?

Shall I strike them down?” 22 † He answered, “You shall not strike them down. Would you strike down those whom you have taken captive with your sword and with your bow? Set bread and water before them, that they may eat and drink and go to their master.” 23 † So he prepared for them a great feast, and when they had eaten and drunk, he sent them away, and they went to their master. And the Syrians did not come again on raids into the land of Israel.

Ben-hadad's Siege of Samaria

24 Afterward Ben-hadad king of Syria mustered his entire army and
went up and besieged Samaria. 25 And there was a great famine in Samaria,
as they besieged it, until a donkey's head was sold for eighty shekels of
silver, and the fourth part of a kab[1] of dove's dung for five shekels of
silver. 26 Now as the king of Israel was passing by on the wall, a woman
cried out to him, saying, "Help, my lord, O king!" 27 And he said, "If the
LORD will not help you, how shall I help you? From the threshing floor, or
from the winepress?" 28 And the king asked her, "What is your trouble?" She
answered, "This woman said to me, 'Give your son, that we may eat him
today, and we will eat my son tomorrow.' 29 So we boiled my son and ate
him. And on the next day I said to her, 'Give your son, that we may eat
him.' But she has hidden her son." 30 When the king heard the words of the
woman, he tore his clothes—now he was passing by on the wall—and the
people looked, and behold, he had sackcloth beneath on his body— 31 and
he said, "May God do so to me and more also, if the head of Elisha the son
of Shaphat remains on his shoulders today."

32 Elisha was sitting in his house, and the elders were sitting with him.
Now the king had dispatched a man from his presence, but before the
messenger arrived Elisha said to the elders, "Do you see how this murderer
has sent to take off my head? Look, when the messenger comes, shut the
door and hold the door fast against him. Is not the sound of his master's feet
behind him?" 33 And while he was still speaking with them, the messenger
came down to him and said, "This trouble is from the LORD! Why should I
wait for the LORD any longer?"

Elisha Promises Food

7 [1]‡†But Elisha said, “Hear the word of the Lord: thus says the Lord, Tomorrow about this time a seah[1] of fine flour shall be sold for a shekel,[2] and two seahs of barley for a shekel, at the gate of Samaria.” [2]†Then the captain on whose hand the king leaned said to the man of God, “If the Lord himself should make windows in heaven, could this thing be?” But he said, “You shall see it with your own eyes, but you shall not eat of it.”

The Syrians Flee

3 ‡ † Now there were four men who were lepers[3] at the entrance to the
gate. And they said to one another, “Why are we sitting here until we die?
4 † If we say, ‘Let us enter the city,’ the famine is in the city, and we shall die
there. And if we sit here, we die also. So now come, let us go over to the
camp of the Syrians. If they spare our lives we shall live, and if they kill us
we shall but die.” 5 † So they arose at twilight to go to the camp of the
Syrians. But when they came to the edge of the camp of the Syrians,
behold, there was no one there. 6 † For the Lord had made the army of the
Syrians hear the sound of chariots and of horses, the sound of a great army,
so that they said to one another, “Behold, the king of Israel has hired against
us the kings of the Hittites and the kings of Egypt to come against us.” 7 † So
they fled away in the twilight and abandoned their tents, their horses, and
their donkeys, leaving the camp as it was, and fled for their lives. 8 And
when these lepers came to the edge of the camp, they went into a tent and
ate and drank, and they carried off silver and gold and clothing and went
and hid them. Then they came back and entered another tent and carried off
things from it and went and hid them.

9 † Then they said to one another, “We are not doing right. This day is a
day of good news. If we are silent and wait until the morning light,
punishment will overtake us. Now therefore come; let us go and tell the
king’s household.” 10 So they came and called to the gatekeepers of the city
and told them, “We came to the camp of the Syrians, and behold, there was
no one to be seen or heard there, nothing but the horses tied and the
donkeys tied and the tents as they were.” 11 Then the gatekeepers called out,
and it was told within the king’s household. 12 † And the king rose in the
night and said to his servants, “I will tell you what the Syrians have done to
us. They know that we are hungry. Therefore they have gone out of the
camp to hide themselves in the open country, thinking, ‘When they come
out of the city, we shall take them alive and get into the city.’” 13 † And one
of his servants said, “Let some men take five of the remaining horses,
seeing that those who are left here will fare like the whole multitude of
Israel who have already perished. Let us send and see.” 14 † So they took two

horsemen, and the king sent them after the army of the Syrians, saying, “Go and see.” 15 †So they went after them as far as the Jordan, and behold, all the way was littered with garments and equipment that the Syrians had thrown away in their haste. And the messengers returned and told the king.

16 †Then the people went out and plundered the camp of the Syrians. So a seah of fine flour was sold for a shekel, and two seahs of barley for a shekel, according to the word of the Lord. 17 †Now the king had appointed the captain on whose hand he leaned to have charge of the gate. And the people trampled him in the gate, so that he died, as the man of God had said when the king came down to him. 18 †For when the man of God had said to the king, “Two seahs of barley shall be sold for a shekel, and a seah of fine flour for a shekel, about this time tomorrow in the gate of Samaria,” 19 the captain had answered the man of God, “If the Lord himself should make windows in heaven, could such a thing be?” And he had said, “You shall see it with your own eyes, but you shall not eat of it.” 20 And so it happened to him, for the people trampled him in the gate and he died.

The Shunammite's Land Restored

8 [1]‡‡†Now Elisha had said to the woman whose son he had restored
to life, "Arise, and depart with your household, and sojourn wherever you
can, for the Lord has called for a famine, and it will come upon the land for
seven years." [2]†So the woman arose and did according to the word of the
man of God. She went with her household and sojourned in the land of the
Philistines seven years. [3]† And at the end of the seven years, when the
woman returned from the land of the Philistines, she went to appeal to the
king for her house and her land. [4]†Now the king was talking with Gehazi
the servant of the man of God, saying, "Tell me all the great things that
Elisha has done." [5]† And while he was telling the king how Elisha had
restored the dead to life, behold, the woman whose son he had restored to
life appealed to the king for her house and her land. And Gehazi said, "My
lord, O king, here is the woman, and here is her son whom Elisha restored
to life." [6]†And when the king asked the woman, she told him. So the king
appointed an official for her, saying, "Restore all that was hers, together
with all the produce of the fields from the day that she left the land until
now."

Hazael Murders Ben-hadad

7 ‡† Now Elisha came to Damascus. Ben-hadad the king of Syria was sick.
And when it was told him, “The man of God has come here,” 8 † the king
said to Hazael, “Take a present with you and go to meet the man of God,
and inquire of the Lord through him, saying, ‘Shall I recover from this
sickness?’” 9 † So Hazael went to meet him, and took a present with him, all
kinds of goods of Damascus, forty camel loads. When he came and stood
before him, he said, “Your son Ben-hadad king of Syria has sent me to you,
saying, ‘Shall I recover from this sickness?’” 10 † And Elisha said to him,
“Go, say to him, ‘You shall certainly recover,’ but the Lord has shown me
that he shall certainly die.” 11 And he fixed his gaze and stared at him, until
he was embarrassed. And the man of God wept. 12 † And Hazael said, “Why
does my lord weep?” He answered, “Because I know the evil that you will
do to the people of Israel. You will set on fire their fortresses, and you will
kill their young men with the sword and dash in pieces their little ones and
rip open their pregnant women.” 13 † And Hazael said, “What is your servant,
who is but a dog, that he should do this great thing?” Elisha answered, “The
Lord has shown me that you are to be king over Syria.” 14 Then he departed
from Elisha and came to his master, who said to him, “What did Elisha say
to you?” And he answered, “He told me that you would certainly recover.”
15 † But the next day he took the bed cloth[1] and dipped it in water and spread
it over his face, till he died. And Hazael became king in his place.

Jehoram Reigns in Judah

16 ‡ ‡ ‡In the fifth year of Joram the son of Ahab, king of Israel, when
Jehoshaphat was king of Judah,[2] Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat, king of
Judah, began to reign. 17He was thirty-two years old when he became king,
and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem. 18†And he walked in the way of the
kings of Israel, as the house of Ahab had done, for the daughter of Ahab
was his wife. And he did what was evil in the sight of the Lord. 19†Yet the
Lord was not willing to destroy Judah, for the sake of David his servant,
since he promised to give a lamp to him and to his sons forever.

20In his days Edom revolted from the rule of Judah and set up a king of
their own. 21†Then Joram[3] passed over to Zair with all his chariots and rose
by night, and he and his chariot commanders struck the Edomites who had
surrounded him, but his army fled home. 22†So Edom revolted from the rule
of Judah to this day. Then Libnah revolted at the same time. 23†Now the rest
of the acts of Joram, and all that he did, are they not written in the Book of
the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? 24†So Joram slept with his fathers and
was buried with his fathers in the city of David, and Ahaziah his son
reigned in his place.

Ahaziah Reigns in Judah

25 ‡‡In the twelfth year of Joram the son of Ahab, king of Israel, Ahaziah
the son of Jehoram, king of Judah, began to reign. 26 Ahaziah was twenty-
two years old when he began to reign, and he reigned one year in
Jerusalem. His mother's name was Athaliah; she was a granddaughter of
Omri king of Israel. 27 †He also walked in the way of the house of Ahab and
did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, as the house of Ahab had done,
for he was son-in-law to the house of Ahab.

28 †He went with Joram the son of Ahab to make war against Hazael king
of Syria at Ramoth-gilead, and the Syrians wounded Joram. 29 †And King
Joram returned to be healed in Jezreel of the wounds that the Syrians had
given him at Ramah, when he fought against Hazael king of Syria. And
Ahaziah the son of Jehoram king of Judah went down to see Joram the son
of Ahab in Jezreel, because he was sick.

Jehu Anointed King of Israel

9 [1]‡‡†Then Elisha the prophet called one of the sons of the prophets
and said to him, “Tie up your garments, and take this flask of oil in your
hand, and go to Ramoth-gilead. [2]†And when you arrive, look there for Jehu
the son of Jehoshaphat, son of Nimshi. And go in and have him rise from
among his fellows, and lead him to an inner chamber. [3]†Then take the flask
of oil and pour it on his head and say, ‘Thus says the Lord, I anoint you king
over Israel.’ Then open the door and flee; do not linger.”

[4]So the young man, the servant of the prophet, went to Ramoth-gilead.
[5]†And when he came, behold, the commanders of the army were in council.
And he said, “I have a word for you, O commander.” And Jehu said, “To
which of us all?” And he said, “To you, O commander.” [6]†So he arose and
went into the house. And the young man poured the oil on his head, saying
to him, “Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, I anoint you king over the
people of the Lord, over Israel. [7]†And you shall strike down the house of
Ahab your master, so that I may avenge on Jezebel the blood of my servants
the prophets, and the blood of all the servants of the Lord. [8]†For the whole
house of Ahab shall perish, and I will cut off from Ahab every male, bond
or free, in Israel. [9]And I will make the house of Ahab like the house of
Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah.
[10]†And the dogs shall eat Jezebel in the territory of Jezreel, and none shall
bury her.” Then he opened the door and fled.

[11]†When Jehu came out to the servants of his master, they said to him, “Is
all well? Why did this mad fellow come to you?” And he said to them, “You
know the fellow and his talk.” [12]†And they said, “That is not true; tell us
now.” And he said, “Thus and so he spoke to me, saying, ‘Thus says the
Lord, I anoint you king over Israel.’” [13]†Then in haste every man of them
took his garment and put it under him on the bare[1] steps, and they blew the
trumpet and proclaimed, “Jehu is king.”

Jehu Assassinates Joram and Ahaziah

14 ‡ ‡ † Thus Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat the son of Nimshi conspired
against Joram. (Now Joram with all Israel had been on guard at Ramoth-
gilead against Hazael king of Syria, 15 † but King Joram had returned to be
healed in Jezreel of the wounds that the Syrians had given him, when he
fought with Hazael king of Syria.) So Jehu said, “If this is your decision,
then let no one slip out of the city to go and tell the news in Jezreel.” 16 Then
Jehu mounted his chariot and went to Jezreel, for Joram lay there. And
Ahaziah king of Judah had come down to visit Joram.

17 † Now the watchman was standing on the tower in Jezreel, and he saw
the company of Jehu as he came and said, “I see a company.” And Joram
said, “Take a horseman and send to meet them, and let him say, ‘Is it
peace?’” 18 † So a man on horseback went to meet him and said, “Thus says
the king, ‘Is it peace?’” And Jehu said, “What do you have to do with
peace? Turn around and ride behind me.” And the watchman reported,
saying, “The messenger reached them, but he is not coming back.” 19 † Then
he sent out a second horseman, who came to them and said, “Thus the king
has said, ‘Is it peace?’” And Jehu answered, “What do you have to do with
peace? Turn around and ride behind me.” 20 † Again the watchman reported,
“He reached them, but he is not coming back. And the driving is like the
driving of Jehu the son of Nimshi, for he drives furiously.”

21 † Joram said, “Make ready.” And they made ready his chariot. Then
Joram king of Israel and Ahaziah king of Judah set out, each in his chariot,
and went to meet Jehu, and met him at the property of Naboth the
Jezreelite. 22 † And when Joram saw Jehu, he said, “Is it peace, Jehu?” He
answered, “What peace can there be, so long as the whorings and the
sorceries of your mother Jezebel are so many?” 23 † Then Joram reined about
and fled, saying to Ahaziah, “Treachery, O Ahaziah!” 24 † And Jehu drew his
bow with his full strength, and shot Joram between the shoulders, so that
the arrow pierced his heart, and he sank in his chariot. 25 † Jehu said to
Bidkar his aide, “Take him up and throw him on the plot of ground
belonging to Naboth the Jezreelite. For remember, when you and I rode side
by side behind Ahab his father, how the Lord made this pronouncement

against him: [26]† ‘As surely as I saw yesterday the blood of Naboth and the blood of his sons—declares the Lord—I will repay you on this plot of ground.’ Now therefore take him up and throw him on the plot of ground, in accordance with the word of the Lord.”

[27]† When Ahaziah the king of Judah saw this, he fled in the direction of Beth-haggan. And Jehu pursued him and said, “Shoot him also.” And they shot him[1] in the chariot at the ascent of Gur, which is by Ibleam. And he fled to Megiddo and died there. [28]His servants carried him in a chariot to Jerusalem, and buried him in his tomb with his fathers in the city of David.

[29]† In the eleventh year of Joram the son of Ahab, Ahaziah began to reign over Judah.

Jehu Executes Jezebel

30 When Jehu came to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it. And she painted her
eyes and adorned her head and looked out of the window. 31 And as Jehu
entered the gate, she said, “Is it peace, you Zimri, murderer of your
master?” 32 And he lifted up his face to the window and said, “Who is on
my side? Who?” Two or three eunuchs looked out at him. 33 He said,
“Throw her down.” So they threw her down. And some of her blood
spattered on the wall and on the horses, and they trampled on her. 34 Then
he went in and ate and drank. And he said, “See now to this cursed woman
and bury her, for she is a king’s daughter.” 35 But when they went to bury
her, they found no more of her than the skull and the feet and the palms of
her hands. 36 When they came back and told him, he said, “This is the word
of the Lord, which he spoke by his servant Elijah the Tishbite, ‘In the
territory of Jezreel the dogs shall eat the flesh of Jezebel, 37 and the corpse of
Jezebel shall be as dung on the face of the field in the territory of Jezreel, so
that no one can say, This is Jezebel.’”

Jehu Slaughters Ahab's Descendants

10 [1]‡†Now Ahab had seventy sons in Samaria. So Jehu wrote letters and sent them to Samaria, to the rulers of the city,[2] to the elders, and to the guardians of the sons[3] of Ahab, saying, [2]"Now then, as soon as this letter comes to you, seeing your master's sons are with you, and there are with you chariots and horses, fortified cities also, and weapons, [3]†select the best and fittest of your master's sons and set him on his father's throne and fight for your master's house." [4]† But they were exceedingly afraid and said, "Behold, the two kings could not stand before him. How then can we stand?" [5]† So he who was over the palace, and he who was over the city, together with the elders and the guardians, sent to Jehu, saying, "We are your servants, and we will do all that you tell us. We will not make anyone king. Do whatever is good in your eyes." [6]†Then he wrote to them a second letter, saying, "If you are on my side, and if you are ready to obey me, take the heads of your master's sons and come to me at Jezreel tomorrow at this time." Now the king's sons, seventy persons, were with the great men of the city, who were bringing them up. [7]And as soon as the letter came to them, they took the king's sons and slaughtered them, seventy persons, and put their heads in baskets and sent them to him at Jezreel. [8]† When the messenger came and told him, "They have brought the heads of the king's sons," he said, "Lay them in two heaps at the entrance of the gate until the morning." [9]‡Then in the morning, when he went out, he stood and said to all the people, "You are innocent. It was I who conspired against my master and killed him, but who struck down all these? [10]† Know then that there shall fall to the earth nothing of the word of the Lord, which the Lord spoke concerning the house of Ahab, for the Lord has done what he said by his servant Elijah." [11]†So Jehu struck down all who remained of the house of Ahab in Jezreel, all his great men and his close friends and his priests, until he left him none remaining.

[12]† Then he set out and went to Samaria. On the way, when he was at Beth-eked of the Shepherds, [13]†Jehu met the relatives of Ahaziah king of Judah, and he said, "Who are you?" And they answered, "We are the relatives of Ahaziah, and we came down to visit the royal princes and the

sons of the queen mother.” 14 † He said, “Take them alive.” And they took
them alive and slaughtered them at the pit of Beth-eked, forty-two persons,
and he spared none of them.

15 † And when he departed from there, he met Jehonadab the son of
Rechab coming to meet him. And he greeted him and said to him, “Is your
heart true to my heart as mine is to yours?” And Jehonadab answered, “It
is.” Jehu said,[1] “If it is, give me your hand.” So he gave him his hand. And
Jehu took him up with him into the chariot. 16 † And he said, “Come with me,
and see my zeal for the Lord.” So he[2] had him ride in his chariot. 17 † And
when he came to Samaria, he struck down all who remained to Ahab in
Samaria, till he had wiped them out, according to the word of the Lord that
he spoke to Elijah.

Jehu Strikes Down the Prophets of Baal

18 ‡‡‡Then Jehu assembled all the people and said to them, “Ahab served
Baal a little, but Jehu will serve him much. 19 †Now therefore call to me all
the prophets of Baal, all his worshipers and all his priests. Let none be
missing, for I have a great sacrifice to offer to Baal. Whoever is missing
shall not live.” But Jehu did it with cunning in order to destroy the
worshipers of Baal. 20 And Jehu ordered, “Sanctify a solemn assembly for
Baal.” So they proclaimed it. 21 †And Jehu sent throughout all Israel, and all
the worshipers of Baal came, so that there was not a man left who did not
come. And they entered the house of Baal, and the house of Baal was filled
from one end to the other. 22 †He said to him who was in charge of the
wardrobe, “Bring out the vestments for all the worshipers of Baal.” So he
brought out the vestments for them. 23 †Then Jehu went into the house of
Baal with Jehonadab the son of Rechab, and he said to the worshipers of
Baal, “Search, and see that there is no servant of the Lord here among you,
but only the worshipers of Baal.” 24 ‡Then they[1] went in to offer sacrifices
and burnt offerings.

Now Jehu had stationed eighty men outside and said, “The man who
allows any of those whom I give into your hands to escape shall forfeit his
life.” 25 So as soon as he had made an end of offering the burnt offering,
Jehu said to the guard and to the officers, “Go in and strike them down; let
not a man escape.” So when they put them to the sword, the guard and the
officers cast them out and went into the inner room of the house of Baal,
26 †and they brought out the pillar that was in the house of Baal and burned
it. 27 †And they demolished the pillar of Baal, and demolished the house of
Baal, and made it a latrine to this day.

Jehu Reigns in Israel

28 ‡‡Thus Jehu wiped out Baal from Israel. 29But Jehu did not turn aside
from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which he made Israel to sin—
that is, the golden calves that were in Bethel and in Dan. 30†And the Lord
said to Jehu, “Because you have done well in carrying out what is right in
my eyes, and have done to the house of Ahab according to all that was in
my heart, your sons of the fourth generation shall sit on the throne of
Israel.” 31But Jehu was not careful to walk in the law of the Lord, the God of
Israel, with all his heart. He did not turn from the sins of Jeroboam, which
he made Israel to sin.

32 †In those days the Lord began to cut off parts of Israel. Hazael defeated
them throughout the territory of Israel: 33†from the Jordan eastward, all the
land of Gilead, the Gadites, and the Reubenites, and the Manassites, from
Aroer, which is by the Valley of the Arnon, that is, Gilead and Bashan.
34†Now the rest of the acts of Jehu and all that he did, and all his might, are
they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel? 35†So
Jehu slept with his fathers, and they buried him in Samaria. And Jehoahaz
his son reigned in his place. 36The time that Jehu reigned over Israel in
Samaria was twenty-eight years.

Athaliah Reigns in Judah

11 [1]‡†Now when Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son
was dead, she arose and destroyed all the royal family. [2]†But Jehosheba, the
daughter of King Joram, sister of Ahaziah, took Joash the son of Ahaziah
and stole him away from among the king's sons who were being put to
death, and she put[1] him and his nurse in a bedroom. Thus they[2] hid him
from Athaliah, so that he was not put to death. [3]†And he remained with her
six years, hidden in the house of the Lord, while Athaliah reigned over the
land.

Joash Anointed King in Judah

4 ‡ †But in the seventh year Jehoiada sent and brought the captains of the
Carites and of the guards, and had them come to him in the house of the
Lord. And he made a covenant with them and put them under oath in the
house of the Lord, and he showed them the king's son. 5 ‡ And he
commanded them, "This is the thing that you shall do: one third of you,
those who come off duty on the Sabbath and guard the king's house
6 † (another third being at the gate Sur and a third at the gate behind the
guards) shall guard the palace.[3] 7 † And the two divisions of you, which
come on duty in force on the Sabbath and guard the house of the Lord on
behalf of the king, 8 †shall surround the king, each with his weapons in his
hand. And whoever approaches the ranks is to be put to death. Be with the
king when he goes out and when he comes in."

9 The captains did according to all that Jehoiada the priest commanded,
and they each brought his men who were to go off duty on the Sabbath,
with those who were to come on duty on the Sabbath, and came to Jehoiada
the priest. 10 † And the priest gave to the captains the spears and shields that
had been King David's, which were in the house of the Lord. 11 † And the
guards stood, every man with his weapons in his hand, from the south side
of the house to the north side of the house, around the altar and the house on
behalf of the king. 12 † Then he brought out the king's son and put the crown
on him and gave him the testimony. And they proclaimed him king and
anointed him, and they clapped their hands and said, "Long live the king!"

13 † When Athaliah heard the noise of the guard and of the people, she
went into the house of the Lord to the people. 14 † And when she looked,
there was the king standing by the pillar, according to the custom, and the
captains and the trumpeters beside the king, and all the people of the land
rejoicing and blowing trumpets. And Athaliah tore her clothes and cried,
"Treason! Treason!" 15 † Then Jehoiada the priest commanded the captains
who were set over the army, "Bring her out between the ranks, and put to
death with the sword anyone who follows her." For the priest said, "Let her
not be put to death in the house of the Lord." 16 † So they laid hands on her;

and she went through the horses' entrance to the king's house, and there she was put to death.

17 † And Jehoiada made a covenant between the Lord and the king and people, that they should be the Lord's people, and also between the king and the people. 18 † Then all the people of the land went to the house of Baal and tore it down; his altars and his images they broke in pieces, and they killed Mattan the priest of Baal before the altars. And the priest posted watchmen over the house of the Lord. 19 † And he took the captains, the Carites, the guards, and all the people of the land, and they brought the king down from the house of the Lord, marching through the gate of the guards to the king's house. And he took his seat on the throne of the kings. 20 † So all the people of the land rejoiced, and the city was quiet after Athaliah had been put to death with the sword at the king's house.

Jehoash Reigns in Judah

21 †[1] Jehoash[2] was seven years old when he began to reign.

12 1 †In the seventh year of Jehu, Jehoash[3] began to reign, and he
reigned forty years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Zibiah of
Beersheba. 2 †And Jehoash did what was right in the eyes of the Lord all his
days, because Jehoiada the priest instructed him. 3 †Nevertheless, the high
places were not taken away; the people continued to sacrifice and make
offerings on the high places.

Jehoash Repairs the Temple

4 ‡† Jehoash said to the priests, “All the money of the holy things that is
brought into the house of the Lord, the money for which each man is
assessed—the money from the assessment of persons—and the money that
a man’s heart prompts him to bring into the house of the Lord, 5 † let the
priests take, each from his donor, and let them repair the house wherever
any need of repairs is discovered.” 6 † But by the twenty-third year of King
Jehoash, the priests had made no repairs on the house. 7 ‡† Therefore King
Jehoash summoned Jehoiada the priest and the other priests and said to
them, “Why are you not repairing the house? Now therefore take no more
money from your donors, but hand it over for the repair of the house.” 8 So
the priests agreed that they should take no more money from the people,
and that they should not repair the house.

9 † Then Jehoiada the priest took a chest and bored a hole in the lid of it
and set it beside the altar on the right side as one entered the house of the
Lord. And the priests who guarded the threshold put in it all the money that
was brought into the house of the Lord. 10 And whenever they saw that there
was much money in the chest, the king’s secretary and the high priest came
up and they bagged and counted the money that was found in the house of
the Lord. 11 † Then they would give the money that was weighed out into the
hands of the workmen who had the oversight of the house of the Lord. And
they paid it out to the carpenters and the builders who worked on the house
of the Lord, 12 and to the masons and the stonecutters, as well as to buy
timber and quarried stone for making repairs on the house of the Lord, and
for any outlay for the repairs of the house. 13 ‡ But there were not made for
the house of the Lord basins of silver, snuffers, bowls, trumpets, or any
vessels of gold, or of silver, from the money that was brought into the house
of the Lord, 14 for that was given to the workmen who were repairing the
house of the Lord with it. 15 And they did not ask an accounting from the
men into whose hand they delivered the money to pay out to the workmen,
for they dealt honestly. 16 † The money from the guilt offerings and the
money from the sin offerings was not brought into the house of the Lord; it
belonged to the priests.

[17] †At that time Hazael king of Syria went up and fought against Gath and took it. But when Hazael set his face to go up against Jerusalem, [18] †Jehoash king of Judah took all the sacred gifts that Jehoshaphat and Jehoram and Ahaziah his fathers, the kings of Judah, had dedicated, and his own sacred gifts, and all the gold that was found in the treasuries of the house of the Lord and of the king's house, and sent these to Hazael king of Syria. Then Hazael went away from Jerusalem.

The Death of Joash

19 ‡ † Now the rest of the acts of Joash and all that he did, are they not
written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? 20 † His servants
arose and made a conspiracy and struck down Joash in the house of Millo,
on the way that goes down to Silla. 21 It was Jozacar the son of Shimeath and
Jehozabad the son of Shomer, his servants, who struck him down, so that he
died. And they buried him with his fathers in the city of David, and
Amaziah his son reigned in his place.

Jehoahaz Reigns in Israel

13 [1]†In the twenty-third year of Joash the son of Ahaziah, king of Judah, Jehoahaz the son of Jehu began to reign over Israel in Samaria, and he reigned seventeen years. [2]†He did what was evil in the sight of the Lord and followed the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which he made Israel to sin; he did not depart from them. [3]† And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he gave them continually into the hand of Hazael king of Syria and into the hand of Ben-hadad the son of Hazael. [4]† Then Jehoahaz sought the favor of the Lord, and the Lord listened to him, for he saw the oppression of Israel, how the king of Syria oppressed them. [5]† (Therefore the Lord gave Israel a savior, so that they escaped from the hand of the Syrians, and the people of Israel lived in their homes as formerly. [6]†Nevertheless, they did not depart from the sins of the house of Jeroboam, which he made Israel to sin, but walked[1] in them; and the Asherah also remained in Samaria.) [7]†For there was not left to Jehoahaz an army of more than fifty horsemen and ten chariots and ten thousand footmen, for the king of Syria had destroyed them and made them like the dust at threshing. [8]†Now the rest of the acts of Jehoahaz and all that he did, and his might, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel? [9]†So Jehoahaz slept with his fathers, and they buried him in Samaria, and Joash his son reigned in his place.

Jehoash Reigns in Israel

10 ††In the thirty-seventh year of Joash king of Judah, Jehoash[1] the son of
Jehoahaz began to reign over Israel in Samaria, and he reigned sixteen
years. 11 †He also did what was evil in the sight of the Lord. He did not
depart from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which he made Israel
to sin, but he walked in them. 12 †Now the rest of the acts of Joash and all
that he did, and the might with which he fought against Amaziah king of
Judah, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of
Israel? 13 †So Joash slept with his fathers, and Jeroboam sat on his throne.
And Joash was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel.

The Death of Elisha

14 †† Now when Elisha had fallen sick with the illness of which he was to
die, Joash king of Israel went down to him and wept before him, crying,
"My father, my father! The chariots of Israel and its horsemen!" 15 And
Elisha said to him, "Take a bow and arrows." So he took a bow and arrows.
16 † Then he said to the king of Israel, "Draw the bow," and he drew it. And
Elisha laid his hands on the king's hands. 17 † And he said, "Open the
window eastward," and he opened it. Then Elisha said, "Shoot," and he
shot. And he said, "The Lord's arrow of victory, the arrow of victory over
Syria! For you shall fight the Syrians in Aphek until you have made an end
of them." 18 † And he said, "Take the arrows," and he took them. And he said
to the king of Israel, "Strike the ground with them." And he struck three
times and stopped. 19 † Then the man of God was angry with him and said,
"You should have struck five or six times; then you would have struck
down Syria until you had made an end of it, but now you will strike down
Syria only three times."

20 † So Elisha died, and they buried him. Now bands of Moabites used to
invade the land in the spring of the year. 21 † And as a man was being buried,
behold, a marauding band was seen and the man was thrown into the grave
of Elisha, and as soon as the man touched the bones of Elisha, he revived
and stood on his feet.

22 † Now Hazael king of Syria oppressed Israel all the days of Jehoahaz.
23 † But the Lord was gracious to them and had compassion on them, and he
turned toward them, because of his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and
Jacob, and would not destroy them, nor has he cast them from his presence
until now.

24 † When Hazael king of Syria died, Ben-hadad his son became king in
his place. 25 Then Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz took again from Ben-hadad
the son of Hazael the cities that he had taken from Jehoahaz his father in
war. Three times Joash defeated him and recovered the cities of Israel.

Amaziah Reigns in Judah

14 [1]‡†In the second year of Joash the son of Joahaz, king of Israel,
Amaziah the son of Joash, king of Judah, began to reign. [2]He was twenty-
five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned twenty-nine years in
Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jehoaddin of Jerusalem. [3]† And he did
what was right in the eyes of the Lord, yet not like David his father. He did
in all things as Joash his father had done. [4]† But the high places were not
removed; the people still sacrificed and made offerings on the high places.
[5]† And as soon as the royal power was firmly in his hand, he struck down
his servants who had struck down the king his father. [6]† But he did not put to
death the children of the murderers, according to what is written in the
Book of the Law of Moses, where the Lord commanded, "Fathers shall not
be put to death because of their children, nor shall children be put to death
because of their fathers. But each one shall die for his own sin."

[7]† He struck down ten thousand Edomites in the Valley of Salt and took
Sela by storm, and called it Joktheel, which is its name to this day.

[8]† Then Amaziah sent messengers to Jehoash[1] the son of Jehoahaz, son
of Jehu, king of Israel, saying, "Come, let us look one another in the face."
[9]† And Jehoash king of Israel sent word to Amaziah king of Judah, "A thistle
on Lebanon sent to a cedar on Lebanon, saying, 'Give your daughter to my
son for a wife,' and a wild beast of Lebanon passed by and trampled down
the thistle. [10]† You have indeed struck down Edom, and your heart has lifted
you up. Be content with your glory, and stay at home, for why should you
provoke trouble so that you fall, you and Judah with you?"

[11]† But Amaziah would not listen. So Jehoash king of Israel went up, and
he and Amaziah king of Judah faced one another in battle at Beth-shemesh,
which belongs to Judah. [12]† And Judah was defeated by Israel, and every
man fled to his home. [13]† And Jehoash king of Israel captured Amaziah king
of Judah, the son of Jehoash, son of Ahaziah, at Beth-shemesh, and came to
Jerusalem and broke down the wall of Jerusalem for four hundred cubits,[2]
from the Ephraim Gate to the Corner Gate. [14]† And he seized all the gold
and silver, and all the vessels that were found in the house of the Lord and

in the treasuries of the king's house, also hostages, and he returned to Samaria.

15 †Now the rest of the acts of Jehoash that he did, and his might, and how
he fought with Amaziah king of Judah, are they not written in the Book of
the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel? 16 †And Jehoash slept with his fathers
and was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel, and Jeroboam his son
reigned in his place.

17 Amaziah the son of Joash, king of Judah, lived fifteen years after the
death of Jehoash son of Jehoahaz, king of Israel. 18 †Now the rest of the
deeds of Amaziah, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the
Kings of Judah? 19 †And they made a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem,
and he fled to Lachish. But they sent after him to Lachish and put him to
death there. 20 †And they brought him on horses; and he was buried in
Jerusalem with his fathers in the city of David. 21 †And all the people of
Judah took Azariah, who was sixteen years old, and made him king instead
of his father Amaziah. 22 †He built Elath and restored it to Judah, after the
king slept with his fathers.

Jeroboam II Reigns in Israel

23 ‡‡In the fifteenth year of Amaziah the son of Joash, king of Judah,
Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel, began to reign in Samaria, and he
reigned forty-one years. 24 †And he did what was evil in the sight of the
Lord. He did not depart from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat,
which he made Israel to sin. 25 †He restored the border of Israel from Lebo-
hamath as far as the Sea of the Arabah, according to the word of the Lord,
the God of Israel, which he spoke by his servant Jonah the son of Amittai,
the prophet, who was from Gath-hepher. 26 †For the Lord saw that the
affliction of Israel was very bitter, for there was none left, bond or free, and
there was none to help Israel. 27 †But the Lord had not said that he would
blot out the name of Israel from under heaven, so he saved them by the
hand of Jeroboam the son of Joash.

28 †Now the rest of the acts of Jeroboam and all that he did, and his might,
how he fought, and how he restored Damascus and Hamath to Judah in
Israel, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of
Israel? 29 †And Jeroboam slept with his fathers, the kings of Israel, and
Zechariah his son reigned in his place.

Azariah Reigns in Judah

15 [1]‡‡In the twenty-seventh year of Jeroboam king of Israel, Azariah
the son of Amaziah, king of Judah, began to reign. [2]He was sixteen years
old when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty-two years in Jerusalem.
His mother's name was Jecoliah of Jerusalem. [3]And he did what was right
in the eyes of the LORD, according to all that his father Amaziah had done.
[4] † Nevertheless, the high places were not taken away. The people still
sacrificed and made offerings on the high places. [5]† And the LORD touched
the king, so that he was a leper[1] to the day of his death, and he lived in a
separate house.[2] And Jotham the king's son was over the household,
governing the people of the land. [6]Now the rest of the acts of Azariah, and
all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the
Kings of Judah? [7]† And Azariah slept with his fathers, and they buried him
with his fathers in the city of David, and Jotham his son reigned in his
place.

Zechariah Reigns in Israel

8 ‡‡‡In the thirty-eighth year of Azariah king of Judah, Zechariah the son
of Jeroboam reigned over Israel in Samaria six months. 9 †And he did what
was evil in the sight of the Lord, as his fathers had done. He did not depart
from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which he made Israel to sin.
10 †Shallum the son of Jabesh conspired against him and struck him down at
Ibleam and put him to death and reigned in his place. 11 †Now the rest of the
deeds of Zechariah, behold, they are written in the Book of the Chronicles
of the Kings of Israel. 12 †(This was the promise of the Lord that he gave to
Jehu, “Your sons shall sit on the throne of Israel to the fourth generation.”
And so it came to pass.)

Shallum Reigns in Israel

13 ‡‡Shallum the son of Jabesh began to reign in the thirty-ninth year of
Uzziah[3] king of Judah, and he reigned one month in Samaria. 14 ‡Then
Menahem the son of Gadi came up from Tirzah and came to Samaria, and
he struck down Shallum the son of Jabesh in Samaria and put him to death
and reigned in his place. 15 ‡Now the rest of the deeds of Shallum, and the
conspiracy that he made, behold, they are written in the Book of the
Chronicles of the Kings of Israel. 16 ‡At that time Menahem sacked Tiphsah
and all who were in it and its territory from Tirzah on, because they did not
open it to him. Therefore he sacked it, and he ripped open all the women in
it who were pregnant.

Menahem Reigns in Israel

17 In the thirty-ninth year of Azariah king of Judah, Menahem the son of
Gadi began to reign over Israel, and he reigned ten years in Samaria. 18 And
he did what was evil in the sight of the Lord. He did not depart all his days
from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which he made Israel to sin.
19 Pul[4] the king of Assyria came against the land, and Menahem gave Pul a
thousand talents[5] of silver, that he might help him to confirm his hold on
the royal power. 20 Menahem exacted the money from Israel, that is, from
all the wealthy men, fifty shekels[6] of silver from every man, to give to the
king of Assyria. So the king of Assyria turned back and did not stay there in
the land. 21 Now the rest of the deeds of Menahem and all that he did, are
they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel?
22 And Menahem slept with his fathers, and Pekahiah his son reigned in his
place.

Pekahiah Reigns in Israel

23 ‡ ‡ In the fiftieth year of Azariah king of Judah, Pekahiah the son of
Menahem began to reign over Israel in Samaria, and he reigned two years.
24 And he did what was evil in the sight of the Lord. He did not turn away
from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which he made Israel to sin.
25 † And Pekah the son of Remaliah, his captain, conspired against him with
fifty men of the people of Gilead, and struck him down in Samaria, in the
citadel of the king's house with Argob and Arieh; he put him to death and
reigned in his place. 26 † Now the rest of the deeds of Pekahiah and all that he
did, behold, they are written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of
Israel.

Pekah Reigns in Israel

27 ‡ † In the fifty-second year of Azariah king of Judah, Pekah the son of
Remaliah began to reign over Israel in Samaria, and he reigned twenty
years. 28 † And he did what was evil in the sight of the Lord. He did not
depart from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which he made Israel to
sin.

29 † In the days of Pekah king of Israel, Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria
came and captured Ijon, Abel-beth-maacah, Janoah, Kedesh, Hazor, Gilead,
and Galilee, all the land of Naphtali, and he carried the people captive to
Assyria. 30 † Then Hoshea the son of Elah made a conspiracy against Pekah
the son of Remaliah and struck him down and put him to death and reigned
in his place, in the twentieth year of Jotham the son of Uzziah. 31 † Now the
rest of the acts of Pekah and all that he did, behold, they are written in the
Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel.

Jotham Reigns in Judah

32 ‡ † In the second year of Pekah the son of Remaliah, king of Israel,
Jotham the son of Uzziah, king of Judah, began to reign. 33 † He was twenty-
five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned sixteen years in
Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jerusha the daughter of Zadok. 34 And he
did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, according to all that his father
Uzziah had done. 35 † Nevertheless, the high places were not removed. The
people still sacrificed and made offerings on the high places. He built the
upper gate of the house of the Lord. 36 † Now the rest of the acts of Jotham
and all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the
Kings of Judah? 37 † In those days the Lord began to send Rezin the king of
Syria and Pekah the son of Remaliah against Judah. 38 † Jotham slept with his
fathers and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father, and
Ahaz his son reigned in his place.

Ahaz Reigns in Judah

16 [1]In the seventeenth year of Pekah the son of Remaliah, Ahaz the
son of Jotham, king of Judah, began to reign. [2]†Ahaz was twenty years old
when he began to reign, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. And he
did not do what was right in the eyes of the Lord his God, as his father
David had done, [3]††but he walked in the way of the kings of Israel. He even
burned his son as an offering,[1] according to the despicable practices of the
nations whom the Lord drove out before the people of Israel. [4]†And he
sacrificed and made offerings on the high places and on the hills and under
every green tree.

[5]†Then Rezin king of Syria and Pekah the son of Remaliah, king of
Israel, came up to wage war on Jerusalem, and they besieged Ahaz but
could not conquer him. [6]†At that time Rezin the king of Syria recovered
Elath for Syria and drove the men of Judah from Elath, and the Edomites
came to Elath, where they dwell to this day. [7]†So Ahaz sent messengers to
Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, saying, “I am your servant and your son.
Come up and rescue me from the hand of the king of Syria and from the
hand of the king of Israel, who are attacking me.” [8]†Ahaz also took the
silver and gold that was found in the house of the Lord and in the treasures
of the king’s house and sent a present to the king of Assyria. [9]†And the king
of Assyria listened to him. The king of Assyria marched up against
Damascus and took it, carrying its people captive to Kir, and he killed
Rezin.

[10]†When King Ahaz went to Damascus to meet Tiglath-pileser king of
Assyria, he saw the altar that was at Damascus. And King Ahaz sent to
Uriah the priest a model of the altar, and its pattern, exact in all its details.
[11]And Uriah the priest built the altar; in accordance with all that King Ahaz
had sent from Damascus, so Uriah the priest made it, before King Ahaz
arrived from Damascus. [12]†And when the king came from Damascus, the
king viewed the altar. Then the king drew near to the altar and went up on it
[13]and burned his burnt offering and his grain offering and poured his drink
offering and threw the blood of his peace offerings on the altar. [14]†And the

bronze altar that was before the Lord he removed from the front of the house, from the place between his altar and the house of the Lord, and put it on the north side of his altar. 15 ‡ † And King Ahaz commanded Uriah the priest, saying, “On the great altar burn the morning burnt offering and the evening grain offering and the king’s burnt offering and his grain offering, with the burnt offering of all the people of the land, and their grain offering and their drink offering. And throw on it all the blood of the burnt offering and all the blood of the sacrifice, but the bronze altar shall be for me to inquire by.” 16 Uriah the priest did all this, as King Ahaz commanded.

17 † And King Ahaz cut off the frames of the stands and removed the basin from them, and he took down the sea[1] from off the bronze oxen that were under it and put it on a stone pedestal. 18 † And the covered way for the Sabbath that had been built inside the house and the outer entrance for the king he caused to go around the house of the Lord, because of the king of Assyria. 19 Now the rest of the acts of Ahaz that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? 20 † And Ahaz slept with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the city of David, and Hezekiah his son reigned in his place.

17 1 ‡ ‡ In the twelfth year of Ahaz king of Judah, Hoshea the son of Elah began to reign in Samaria over Israel, and he reigned nine years. 2 † And he did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, yet not as the kings of Israel who were before him. 3 † Against him came up Shalmaneser king of Assyria. And Hoshea became his vassal and paid him tribute. 4 † But the king of Assyria found treachery in Hoshea, for he had sent messengers to So, king of Egypt, and offered no tribute to the king of Assyria, as he had done year by year. Therefore the king of Assyria shut him up and bound him in prison. 5 † Then the king of Assyria invaded all the land and came to Samaria, and for three years he besieged it.

The Fall of Israel

6 †† In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria captured Samaria, and
he carried the Israelites away to Assyria and placed them in Halah, and on
the Habor, the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.

Exile Because of Idolatry

7 ‡ † And this occurred because the people of Israel had sinned against the Lord their God, who had brought them up out of the land of Egypt from
under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and had feared other gods 8 † and
walked in the customs of the nations whom the Lord drove out before the
people of Israel, and in the customs that the kings of Israel had practiced.
9 † And the people of Israel did secretly against the Lord their God things that
were not right. They built for themselves high places in all their towns,
from watchtower to fortified city. 10 † They set up for themselves pillars and
Asherim on every high hill and under every green tree, 11 and there they
made offerings on all the high places, as the nations did whom the Lord
carried away before them. And they did wicked things, provoking the Lord
to anger, 12 and they served idols, of which the Lord had said to them, “You
shall not do this.” 13 † Yet the Lord warned Israel and Judah by every prophet
and every seer, saying, “Turn from your evil ways and keep my
commandments and my statutes, in accordance with all the Law that I
commanded your fathers, and that I sent to you by my servants the
prophets.”

14 But they would not listen, but were stubborn, as their fathers had been,
who did not believe in the Lord their God. 15 † They despised his statutes and
his covenant that he made with their fathers and the warnings that he gave
them. They went after false idols and became false, and they followed the
nations that were around them, concerning whom the Lord had commanded
them that they should not do like them. 16 † And they abandoned all the
commandments of the Lord their God, and made for themselves metal
images of two calves; and they made an Asherah and worshiped all the host
of heaven and served Baal. 17 † And they burned their sons and their
daughters as offerings[1] and used divination and omens and sold themselves
to do evil in the sight of the Lord, provoking him to anger. 18 † Therefore the
Lord was very angry with Israel and removed them out of his sight. None
was left but the tribe of Judah only.

19 † Judah also did not keep the commandments of the Lord their God, but
walked in the customs that Israel had introduced. 20 † And the Lord rejected

all the descendants of Israel and afflicted them and gave them into the hand of plunderers, until he had cast them out of his sight.

21 When he had torn Israel from the house of David, they made Jeroboam
the son of Nebat king. And Jeroboam drove Israel from following the Lord
and made them commit great sin. 22 † The people of Israel walked in all the
sins that Jeroboam did. They did not depart from them, 23 † until the Lord
removed Israel out of his sight, as he had spoken by all his servants the
prophets. So Israel was exiled from their own land to Assyria until this day.

Assyria Resettles Samaria

24 ‡†And the king of Assyria brought people from Babylon, Cuthah, Avva,
Hamath, and Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria instead
of the people of Israel. And they took possession of Samaria and lived in its
cities. 25 †And at the beginning of their dwelling there, they did not fear the
Lord. Therefore the Lord sent lions among them, which killed some of them.
26 †So the king of Assyria was told, “The nations that you have carried away
and placed in the cities of Samaria do not know the law of the god of the
land. Therefore he has sent lions among them, and behold, they are killing
them, because they do not know the law of the god of the land.” 27 ‡Then the
king of Assyria commanded, “Send there one of the priests whom you
carried away from there, and let him[1] go and dwell there and teach them
the law of the god of the land.” 28 So one of the priests whom they had
carried away from Samaria came and lived in Bethel and taught them how
they should fear the Lord.
29 †But every nation still made gods of its own and put them in the shrines
of the high places that the Samaritans had made, every nation in the cities in
which they lived. 30 ‡The men of Babylon made Succoth-benoth, the men of
Cuth made Nergal, the men of Hamath made Ashima, 31 and the Avvites
made Nibhaz and Tartak; and the Sepharvites burned their children in the
fire to Adrammelech and Anammelech, the gods of Sepharvaim. 32 † They
also feared the Lord and appointed from among themselves all sorts of
people as priests of the high places, who sacrificed for them in the shrines
of the high places. 33 ‡So they feared the Lord but also served their own
gods, after the manner of the nations from among whom they had been
carried away.
34 †To this day they do according to the former manner. They do not fear
the Lord, and they do not follow the statutes or the rules or the law or the
commandment that the Lord commanded the children of Jacob, whom he
named Israel. 35 ‡†The Lord made a covenant with them and commanded
them, “You shall not fear other gods or bow yourselves to them or serve
them or sacrifice to them, 36 but you shall fear the Lord, who brought you out
of the land of Egypt with great power and with an outstretched arm. You

shall bow yourselves to him, and to him you shall sacrifice. [37]And the statutes and the rules and the law and the commandment that he wrote for you, you shall always be careful to do. You shall not fear other gods, [38]and you shall not forget the covenant that I have made with you. You shall not fear other gods, [39]but you shall fear the Lord your God, and he will deliver you out of the hand of all your enemies.” [40]However, they would not listen, but they did according to their former manner.

[41]† So these nations feared the Lord and also served their carved images. Their children did likewise, and their children’s children—as their fathers did, so they do to this day.

Hezekiah Reigns in Judah

18 [1]In the third year of Hoshea son of Elah, king of Israel, Hezekiah
the son of Ahaz, king of Judah, began to reign. [2]He was twenty-five years
old when he began to reign, and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem.
His mother's name was Abi the daughter of Zechariah. [3]And he did what
was right in the eyes of the LORD, according to all that David his father had
done. [4]He removed the high places and broke the pillars and cut down the
Asherah. And he broke in pieces the bronze serpent that Moses had made,
for until those days the people of Israel had made offerings to it (it was
called Nehushtan).[1] [5]He trusted in the LORD, the God of Israel, so that
there was none like him among all the kings of Judah after him, nor among
those who were before him. [6]For he held fast to the LORD. He did not depart
from following him, but kept the commandments that the LORD commanded
Moses. [7]And the LORD was with him; wherever he went out, he prospered.
He rebelled against the king of Assyria and would not serve him. [8]He
struck down the Philistines as far as Gaza and its territory, from watchtower
to fortified city.

[9]In the fourth year of King Hezekiah, which was the seventh year of
Hoshea son of Elah, king of Israel, Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up
against Samaria and besieged it, [10]and at the end of three years he took it. In
the sixth year of Hezekiah, which was the ninth year of Hoshea king of
Israel, Samaria was taken. [11]The king of Assyria carried the Israelites away
to Assyria and put them in Halah, and on the Habor, the river of Gozan, and
in the cities of the Medes, [12]because they did not obey the voice of the LORD
their God but transgressed his covenant, even all that Moses the servant of
the LORD commanded. They neither listened nor obeyed.

Sennacherib Attacks Judah

13 ‡†In the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, Sennacherib king of Assyria
came up against all the fortified cities of Judah and took them. 14 †And
Hezekiah king of Judah sent to the king of Assyria at Lachish, saying, “I
have done wrong; withdraw from me. Whatever you impose on me I will
bear.” And the king of Assyria required of Hezekiah king of Judah three
hundred talents[1] of silver and thirty talents of gold. 15 ‡And Hezekiah gave
him all the silver that was found in the house of the Lord and in the
treasuries of the king’s house. 16At that time Hezekiah stripped the gold
from the doors of the temple of the Lord and from the doorposts that
Hezekiah king of Judah had overlaid and gave it to the king of Assyria.
17 †And the king of Assyria sent the Tartan, the Rab-saris, and the
Rabshakeh with a great army from Lachish to King Hezekiah at Jerusalem.
And they went up and came to Jerusalem. When they arrived, they came
and stood by the conduit of the upper pool, which is on the highway to the
Washer’s Field. 18 †And when they called for the king, there came out to
them Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, who was over the household, and Shebnah
the secretary, and Joah the son of Asaph, the recorder.

19 †And the Rabshakeh said to them, “Say to Hezekiah, ‘Thus says the
great king, the king of Assyria: On what do you rest this trust of yours?
20 †Do you think that mere words are strategy and power for war? In whom
do you now trust, that you have rebelled against me? 21 †Behold, you are
trusting now in Egypt, that broken reed of a staff, which will pierce the
hand of any man who leans on it. Such is Pharaoh king of Egypt to all who
trust in him. 22 †But if you say to me, “We trust in the Lord our God,” is it
not he whose high places and altars Hezekiah has removed, saying to Judah
and to Jerusalem, “You shall worship before this altar in Jerusalem”?
23 †Come now, make a wager with my master the king of Assyria: I will give
you two thousand horses, if you are able on your part to set riders on them.
24 †How then can you repulse a single captain among the least of my
master’s servants, when you trust in Egypt for chariots and for horsemen?
25 †Moreover, is it without the Lord that I have come up against this place to
destroy it? The Lord said to me, Go up against this land, and destroy it.’”

[26] † Then Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, and Shebnah, and Joah, said to the Rabshakeh, “Please speak to your servants in Aramaic, for we understand it. Do not speak to us in the language of Judah within the hearing of the people who are on the wall.” [27] † But the Rabshakeh said to them, “Has my master sent me to speak these words to your master and to you, and not to the men sitting on the wall, who are doomed with you to eat their own dung and to drink their own urine?”

[28] † Then the Rabshakeh stood and called out in a loud voice in the language of Judah: “Hear the word of the great king, the king of Assyria! [29] Thus says the king: ‘Do not let Hezekiah deceive you, for he will not be able to deliver you out of my[2] hand. [30] † Do not let Hezekiah make you trust in the Lord by saying, The Lord will surely deliver us, and this city will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria.’ [31] † Do not listen to Hezekiah, for thus says the king of Assyria: ‘Make your peace with me[1] and come out to me. Then each one of you will eat of his own vine, and each one of his own fig tree, and each one of you will drink the water of his own cistern, [32] † until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of grain and wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of olive trees and honey, that you may live, and not die. And do not listen to Hezekiah when he misleads you by saying, The Lord will deliver us. [33] Has any of the gods of the nations ever delivered his land out of the hand of the king of Assyria? [34] † Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivvah? Have they delivered Samaria out of my hand? [35] Who among all the gods of the lands have delivered their lands out of my hand, that the Lord should deliver Jerusalem out of my hand?’”

[36] † But the people were silent and answered him not a word, for the king’s command was, “Do not answer him.” [37] † Then Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, who was over the household, and Shebna the secretary, and Joah the son of Asaph, the recorder, came to Hezekiah with their clothes torn and told him the words of the Rabshakeh.

Isaiah Reassures Hezekiah

19 [1]†† As soon as King Hezekiah heard it, he tore his clothes and
covered himself with sackcloth and went into the house of the Lord. [2]† And
he sent Eliakim, who was over the household, and Shebna the secretary, and
the senior priests, covered with sackcloth, to the prophet Isaiah the son of
Amoz. [3]† They said to him, "Thus says Hezekiah, This day is a day of
distress, of rebuke, and of disgrace; children have come to the point of
birth, and there is no strength to bring them forth. [4]† It may be that the Lord
your God heard all the words of the Rabshakeh, whom his master the king
of Assyria has sent to mock the living God, and will rebuke the words that
the Lord your God has heard; therefore lift up your prayer for the remnant
that is left." [5]† When the servants of King Hezekiah came to Isaiah, [6]† Isaiah
said to them, "Say to your master, 'Thus says the Lord: Do not be afraid
because of the words that you have heard, with which the servants of the
king of Assyria have reviled me. [7]† Behold, I will put a spirit in him, so that
he shall hear a rumor and return to his own land, and I will make him fall
by the sword in his own land.'"

Sennacherib Defies the Lord

8 ‡ † The Rabshakeh returned, and found the king of Assyria fighting
against Libnah, for he heard that the king had left Lachish. 9 †Now the king
heard concerning Tirhakah king of Cush, “Behold, he has set out to fight
against you.” So he sent messengers again to Hezekiah, saying, 10 † “Thus
shall you speak to Hezekiah king of Judah: ‘Do not let your God in whom
you trust deceive you by promising that Jerusalem will not be given into the
hand of the king of Assyria. 11 †Behold, you have heard what the kings of
Assyria have done to all lands, devoting them to destruction. And shall you
be delivered? 12 †Have the gods of the nations delivered them, the nations
that my fathers destroyed, Gozan, Haran, Rezeph, and the people of Eden
who were in Telassar? 13 Where is the king of Hamath, the king of Arpad,
the king of the city of Sepharvaim, the king of Hena, or the king of Ivvah?’”

Hezekiah's Prayer

14 ‡‡† Hezekiah received the letter from the hand of the messengers and
read it; and Hezekiah went up to the house of the Lord and spread it before
the Lord. 15 † And Hezekiah prayed before the Lord and said: "O Lord, the
God of Israel, enthroned above the cherubim, you are the God, you alone,
of all the kingdoms of the earth; you have made heaven and earth. 16 † Incline
your ear, O Lord, and hear; open your eyes, O Lord, and see; and hear the
words of Sennacherib, which he has sent to mock the living God. 17 Truly, O
Lord, the kings of Assyria have laid waste the nations and their lands 18 † and
have cast their gods into the fire, for they were not gods, but the work of
men's hands, wood and stone. Therefore they were destroyed. 19 † So now, O
Lord our God, save us, please, from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the
earth may know that you, O Lord, are God alone."

Isaiah Prophesies Sennacherib's Fall

20 Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah, saying, "Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: Your prayer to me about Sennacherib king of
Assyria I have heard. 21 This is the word that the Lord has spoken
concerning him:

"She despises you, she scorns you—
the virgin daughter of Zion;
she wags her head behind you—
the daughter of Jerusalem.

22 "Whom have you mocked and reviled?
Against whom have you raised your voice
and lifted your eyes to the heights?
Against the Holy One of Israel!
23 By your messengers you have mocked the
Lord,
and you have said, 'With my many chariots
I have gone up the heights of the mountains,
to the far recesses of Lebanon;
I felled its tallest cedars,
its choicest cypresses;
I entered its farthest lodging place,
its most fruitful forest.
24 I dug wells
and drank foreign waters,
and I dried up with the sole of my foot
all the streams of Egypt.'

25 "Have you not heard
that I determined it long ago?
I planned from days of old
what now I bring to pass,

that you should turn fortified cities
into heaps of ruins,
26 while their inhabitants, shorn of strength,
are dismayed and confounded,
and have become like plants of the field
and like tender grass,
like grass on the housetops,
blighted before it is grown.

27† "But I know your sitting down
and your going out and coming in,
and your raging against me.
28† Because you have raged against me
and your complacency has come into my ears,
I will put my hook in your nose
and my bit in your mouth,
and I will turn you back on the way
by which you came.

29†"And this shall be the sign for you: this year eat what grows of itself, and in the second year what springs of the same. Then in the third year sow and reap and plant vineyards, and eat their fruit. 30† And the surviving remnant of the house of Judah shall again take root downward and bear fruit upward. 31†For out of Jerusalem shall go a remnant, and out of Mount Zion a band of survivors. The zeal of the LORD will do this.

32"Therefore thus says the LORD concerning the king of Assyria: He shall not come into this city or shoot an arrow there, or come before it with a shield or cast up a siege mound against it. 33By the way that he came, by the same he shall return, and he shall not come into this city, declares the LORD. 34†For I will defend this city to save it, for my own sake and for the sake of my servant David."

35†And that night the angel of the LORD went out and struck down 185,000 in the camp of the Assyrians. And when people arose early in the morning, behold, these were all dead bodies. 36† Then Sennacherib king of Assyria departed and went home and lived at Nineveh. 37†And as he was worshiping

in the house of Nisroch his god, Adrammelech and Sharezer, his sons, struck him down with the sword and escaped into the land of Ararat. And Esarhaddon his son reigned in his place.

Hezekiah's Illness and Recovery

20 [1]In those days Hezekiah became sick and was at the point of death. And Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz came to him and said to him, "Thus says the Lord, 'Set your house in order, for you shall die; you shall not recover.'" [2]Then Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed to the Lord, saying, [3]"Now, O Lord, please remember how I have walked before you in faithfulness and with a whole heart, and have done what is good in your sight." And Hezekiah wept bitterly. [4]And before Isaiah had gone out of the middle court, the word of the Lord came to him: [5]"Turn back, and say to Hezekiah the leader of my people, Thus says the Lord, the God of David your father: I have heard your prayer; I have seen your tears. Behold, I will heal you. On the third day you shall go up to the house of the Lord, [6]and I will add fifteen years to your life. I will deliver you and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria, and I will defend this city for my own sake and for my servant David's sake." [7]And Isaiah said, "Bring a cake of figs. And let them take and lay it on the boil, that he may recover."

[8]And Hezekiah said to Isaiah, "What shall be the sign that the Lord will heal me, and that I shall go up to the house of the Lord on the third day?" [9]And Isaiah said, "This shall be the sign to you from the Lord, that the Lord will do the thing that he has promised: shall the shadow go forward ten steps, or go back ten steps?" [10]And Hezekiah answered, "It is an easy thing for the shadow to lengthen ten steps. Rather let the shadow go back ten steps." [11]And Isaiah the prophet called to the Lord, and he brought the shadow back ten steps, by which it had gone down on the steps of Ahaz.

Hezekiah and the Babylonian Envoys

[12]At that time Merodach-baladan the son of Baladan, king of Babylon,
sent envoys with letters and a present to Hezekiah, for he heard that
Hezekiah had been sick. [13]And Hezekiah welcomed them, and he showed
them all his treasure house, the silver, the gold, the spices, the precious oil,
his armory, all that was found in his storehouses. There was nothing in his
house or in all his realm that Hezekiah did not show them. [14]Then Isaiah the
prophet came to King Hezekiah, and said to him, “What did these men say?
And from where did they come to you?” And Hezekiah said, “They have
come from a far country, from Babylon.” [15]He said, “What have they seen
in your house?” And Hezekiah answered, “They have seen all that is in my
house; there is nothing in my storehouses that I did not show them.”

[16]Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, “Hear the word of the Lord: [17]Behold, the
days are coming, when all that is in your house, and that which your fathers
have stored up till this day, shall be carried to Babylon. Nothing shall be
left, says the Lord. [18]And some of your own sons, who shall be born to you,
shall be taken away, and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of
Babylon.” [19]Then said Hezekiah to Isaiah, “The word of the Lord that you
have spoken is good.” For he thought, “Why not, if there will be peace and
security in my days?”

[20]The rest of the deeds of Hezekiah and all his might and how he made
the pool and the conduit and brought water into the city, are they not written
in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? [21]And Hezekiah slept
with his fathers, and Manasseh his son reigned in his place.

Manasseh Reigns in Judah

21 [1]Manasseh was twelve years old when he began to reign, and he
reigned fifty-five years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Hephzibah.
[2]And he did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, according to the
despicable practices of the nations whom the Lord drove out before the
people of Israel. [3]For he rebuilt the high places that Hezekiah his father had
destroyed, and he erected altars for Baal and made an Asherah, as Ahab
king of Israel had done, and worshiped all the host of heaven and served
them. [4]And he built altars in the house of the Lord, of which the Lord had
said, "In Jerusalem will I put my name." [5]And he built altars for all the host
of heaven in the two courts of the house of the Lord. [6]And he burned his son
as an offering[1] and used fortune-telling and omens and dealt with mediums
and with necromancers. He did much evil in the sight of the Lord,
provoking him to anger. [7]And the carved image of Asherah that he had
made he set in the house of which the Lord said to David and to Solomon
his son, "In this house, and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the
tribes of Israel, I will put my name forever. [8]And I will not cause the feet of
Israel to wander anymore out of the land that I gave to their fathers, if only
they will be careful to do according to all that I have commanded them, and
according to all the Law that my servant Moses commanded them." [9]But
they did not listen, and Manasseh led them astray to do more evil than the
nations had done whom the Lord destroyed before the people of Israel.

Manasseh’s Idolatry Denounced

[10]And the Lord said by his servants the prophets, [11]“Because Manasseh king of Judah has committed these abominations and has done things more evil than all that the Amorites did, who were before him, and has made Judah also to sin with his idols, [12]therefore thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: Behold, I am bringing upon Jerusalem and Judah such disaster[1] that the ears of everyone who hears of it will tingle. [13]And I will stretch over Jerusalem the measuring line of Samaria, and the plumb line of the house of Ahab, and I will wipe Jerusalem as one wipes a dish, wiping it and turning it upside down. [14]And I will forsake the remnant of my heritage and give them into the hand of their enemies, and they shall become a prey and a spoil to all their enemies, [15]because they have done what is evil in my sight and have provoked me to anger, since the day their fathers came out of Egypt, even to this day.”

[16]Moreover, Manasseh shed very much innocent blood, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another, besides the sin that he made Judah to sin so that they did what was evil in the sight of the Lord.

[17]Now the rest of the acts of Manasseh and all that he did, and the sin that he committed, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? [18]And Manasseh slept with his fathers and was buried in the garden of his house, in the garden of Uzza, and Amon his son reigned in his place.

Amon Reigns in Judah

[19]Amon was twenty-two years old when he began to reign, and he reigned two years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Meshullemeth the daughter of Haruz of Jotbah. [20]And he did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, as Manasseh his father had done. [21]He walked in all the way in which his father walked and served the idols that his father served and worshiped them. [22]He abandoned the Lord, the God of his fathers, and did not walk in the way of the Lord. [23]And the servants of Amon conspired against him and put the king to death in his house. [24]But the people of the land struck down all those who had conspired against King Amon, and the people of the land made Josiah his son king in his place. [25]Now the rest of the acts of Amon that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? [26]And he was buried in his tomb in the garden of Uzza, and Josiah his son reigned in his place.

Josiah Reigns in Judah

22 [1]Josiah was eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jedidah the daughter of Adaiah of Bozkath. [2]And he did what was right in the eyes of the LORD and walked in all the way of David his father, and he did not turn aside to the right or to the left.

Josiah Repairs the Temple

3In the eighteenth year of King Josiah, the king sent Shaphan the son of
Azaliah, son of Meshullam, the secretary, to the house of the Lord, saying,
4"Go up to Hilkiah the high priest, that he may count the money that has
been brought into the house of the Lord, which the keepers of the threshold
have collected from the people. 5And let it be given into the hand of the
workmen who have the oversight of the house of the Lord, and let them give
it to the workmen who are at the house of the Lord, repairing the house
6(that is, to the carpenters, and to the builders, and to the masons), and let
them use it for buying timber and quarried stone to repair the house. 7But no
accounting shall be asked from them for the money that is delivered into
their hand, for they deal honestly."

Hilkiah Finds the Book of the Law

[8]And Hilkiah the high priest said to Shaphan the secretary, “I have found the Book of the Law in the house of the Lord.” And Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it. [9]And Shaphan the secretary came to the king, and reported to the king, “Your servants have emptied out the money that was found in the house and have delivered it into the hand of the workmen who have the oversight of the house of the Lord.” [10]Then Shaphan the secretary told the king, “Hilkiah the priest has given me a book.” And Shaphan read it before the king.

[11]When the king heard the words of the Book of the Law, he tore his clothes. [12]And the king commanded Hilkiah the priest, and Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and Achbor the son of Micaiah, and Shaphan the secretary, and Asaiah the king’s servant, saying, [13]“Go, inquire of the Lord for me, and for the people, and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that has been found. For great is the wrath of the Lord that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not obeyed the words of this book, to do according to all that is written concerning us.”

[14]So Hilkiah the priest, and Ahikam, and Achbor, and Shaphan, and Asaiah went to Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of Tikvah, son of Harhas, keeper of the wardrobe (now she lived in Jerusalem in the Second Quarter), and they talked with her. [15]And she said to them, “Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: ‘Tell the man who sent you to me, [16]Thus says the Lord, Behold, I will bring disaster upon this place and upon its inhabitants, all the words of the book that the king of Judah has read. [17]Because they have forsaken me and have made offerings to other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the work of their hands, therefore my wrath will be kindled against this place, and it will not be quenched. [18]But to the king of Judah, who sent you to inquire of the Lord, thus shall you say to him, Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: Regarding the words that you have heard, [19]because your heart was penitent, and you humbled yourself before the Lord, when you heard how I spoke against this place and against its inhabitants, that they should become a desolation and a curse, and you have torn your clothes and wept before me, I also have heard

you, declares the LORD. [20]Therefore, behold, I will gather you to your fathers, and you shall be gathered to your grave in peace, and your eyes shall not see all the disaster that I will bring upon this place.’” And they brought back word to the king.

Josiah's Reforms

23 [1]Then the king sent, and all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem were gathered to him. [2]And the king went up to the house of the Lord, and with him all the men of Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem and the priests and the prophets, all the people, both small and great. And he read in their hearing all the words of the Book of the Covenant that had been found in the house of the Lord. [3]And the king stood by the pillar and made a covenant before the Lord, to walk after the Lord and to keep his commandments and his testimonies and his statutes with all his heart and all his soul, to perform the words of this covenant that were written in this book. And all the people joined in the covenant.

[4]And the king commanded Hilkiah the high priest and the priests of the second order and the keepers of the threshold to bring out of the temple of the Lord all the vessels made for Baal, for Asherah, and for all the host of heaven. He burned them outside Jerusalem in the fields of the Kidron and carried their ashes to Bethel. [5]And he deposed the priests whom the kings of Judah had ordained to make offerings in the high places at the cities of Judah and around Jerusalem; those also who burned incense to Baal, to the sun and the moon and the constellations and all the host of the heavens. [6]And he brought out the Asherah from the house of the Lord, outside Jerusalem, to the brook Kidron, and burned it at the brook Kidron and beat it to dust and cast the dust of it upon the graves of the common people. [7]And he broke down the houses of the male cult prostitutes who were in the house of the Lord, where the women wove hangings for the Asherah. [8]And he brought all the priests out of the cities of Judah, and defiled the high places where the priests had made offerings, from Geba to Beersheba. And he broke down the high places of the gates that were at the entrance of the gate of Joshua the governor of the city, which were on one's left at the gate of the city. [9]However, the priests of the high places did not come up to the altar of the Lord in Jerusalem, but they ate unleavened bread among their brothers. [10]And he defiled Topheth, which is in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, that no one might burn his son or his daughter as an offering to Molech.[1] [11]And he removed the horses that the kings of Judah had

dedicated to the sun, at the entrance to the house of the Lord, by the chamber of Nathan-melech the chamberlain, which was in the precincts.[2] And he burned the chariots of the sun with fire. 12And the altars on the roof of the upper chamber of Ahaz, which the kings of Judah had made, and the altars that Manasseh had made in the two courts of the house of the Lord, he pulled down and broke in pieces[3] and cast the dust of them into the brook Kidron. 13And the king defiled the high places that were east of Jerusalem, to the south of the mount of corruption, which Solomon the king of Israel had built for Ashtoreth the abomination of the Sidonians, and for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, and for Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. 14And he broke in pieces the pillars and cut down the Asherim and filled their places with the bones of men.

15Moreover, the altar at Bethel, the high place erected by Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, that altar with the high place he pulled down and burned,[4] reducing it to dust. He also burned the Asherah. 16And as Josiah turned, he saw the tombs there on the mount. And he sent and took the bones out of the tombs and burned them on the altar and defiled it, according to the word of the Lord that the man of God proclaimed, who had predicted these things. 17Then he said, “What is that monument that I see?” And the men of the city told him, “It is the tomb of the man of God who came from Judah and predicted[5] these things that you have done against the altar at Bethel.” 18And he said, “Let him be; let no man move his bones.” So they let his bones alone, with the bones of the prophet who came out of Samaria. 19And Josiah removed all the shrines also of the high places that were in the cities of Samaria, which kings of Israel had made, provoking the Lord to anger. He did to them according to all that he had done at Bethel. 20And he sacrificed all the priests of the high places who were there, on the altars, and burned human bones on them. Then he returned to Jerusalem.

Josiah Restores the Passover

[21]And the king commanded all the people, “Keep the Passover to the Lord your God, as it is written in this Book of the Covenant.” [22]For no such Passover had been kept since the days of the judges who judged Israel, or during all the days of the kings of Israel or of the kings of Judah. [23]But in the eighteenth year of King Josiah this Passover was kept to the Lord in Jerusalem.

[24]Moreover, Josiah put away the mediums and the necromancers and the household gods and the idols and all the abominations that were seen in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, that he might establish the words of the law that were written in the book that Hilkiah the priest found in the house of the Lord. [25]Before him there was no king like him, who turned to the Lord with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his might, according to all the Law of Moses, nor did any like him arise after him.

[26]Still the Lord did not turn from the burning of his great wrath, by which his anger was kindled against Judah, because of all the provocations with which Manasseh had provoked him. [27]And the Lord said, “I will remove Judah also out of my sight, as I have removed Israel, and I will cast off this city that I have chosen, Jerusalem, and the house of which I said, My name shall be there.”

Josiah’s Death in Battle

[28]Now the rest of the acts of Josiah and all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? [29]In his days Pharaoh Neco king of Egypt went up to the king of Assyria to the river Euphrates. King Josiah went to meet him, and Pharaoh Neco killed him at Megiddo, as soon as he saw him. [30]And his servants carried him dead in a chariot from Megiddo and brought him to Jerusalem and buried him in his own tomb. And the people of the land took Jehoahaz the son of Josiah, and anointed him, and made him king in his father’s place.

Jehoahaz's Reign and Captivity

[31]Jehoahaz was twenty-three years old when he began to reign, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Hamutal the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. [32]And he did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his fathers had done. [33]And Pharaoh Neco put him in bonds at Riblah in the land of Hamath, that he might not reign in Jerusalem, and laid on the land a tribute of a hundred talents[1] of silver and a talent of gold. [34]And Pharaoh Neco made Eliakim the son of Josiah king in the place of Josiah his father, and changed his name to Jehoiakim. But he took Jehoahaz away, and he came to Egypt and died there. [35]And Jehoiakim gave the silver and the gold to Pharaoh, but he taxed the land to give the money according to the command of Pharaoh. He exacted the silver and the gold of the people of the land, from everyone according to his assessment, to give it to Pharaoh Neco.

Jehoiakim Reigns in Judah

[36]Jehoiakim was twenty-five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Zebidah the daughter of Pedaiah of Rumah. [37]And he did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his fathers had done.

24 [1]In his days, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up, and Jehoiakim became his servant three years. Then he turned and rebelled against him. [2]And the LORD sent against him bands of the Chaldeans and bands of the Syrians and bands of the Moabites and bands of the Ammonites, and sent them against Judah to destroy it, according to the word of the LORD that he spoke by his servants the prophets. [3]Surely this came upon Judah at the command of the LORD, to remove them out of his sight, for the sins of Manasseh, according to all that he had done, [4]and also for the innocent blood that he had shed. For he filled Jerusalem with innocent blood, and the LORD would not pardon. [5]Now the rest of the deeds of Jehoiakim and all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? [6]So Jehoiakim slept with his fathers, and Jehoiachin his son reigned in his place. [7]And the king of Egypt did not come again out of his land, for the king of Babylon had taken all that belonged to the king of Egypt from the Brook of Egypt to the river Euphrates.

Jehoiachin Reigns in Judah

[8]Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he became king, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Nehushta the daughter of Elnathan of Jerusalem. [9]And he did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father had done.

Jerusalem Captured

[10]At that time the servants of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up to Jerusalem, and the city was besieged. [11]And Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to the city while his servants were besieging it, [12]and Jehoiachin the king of Judah gave himself up to the king of Babylon, himself and his mother and his servants and his officials and his palace officials. The king of Babylon took him prisoner in the eighth year of his reign [13]and carried off all the treasures of the house of the Lord and the treasures of the king's house, and cut in pieces all the vessels of gold in the temple of the Lord, which Solomon king of Israel had made, as the Lord had foretold. [14]He carried away all Jerusalem and all the officials and all the mighty men of valor, 10,000 captives, and all the craftsmen and the smiths. None remained, except the poorest people of the land. [15]And he carried away Jehoiachin to Babylon. The king's mother, the king's wives, his officials, and the chief men of the land he took into captivity from Jerusalem to Babylon. [16]And the king of Babylon brought captive to Babylon all the men of valor, 7,000, and the craftsmen and the metal workers, 1,000, all of them strong and fit for war. [17]And the king of Babylon made Mattaniah, Jehoiachin's uncle, king in his place, and changed his name to Zedekiah.

Zedekiah Reigns in Judah

[18]Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he became king, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Hamutal the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. [19]And he did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that Jehoiakim had done. [20]For because of the anger of the LORD it came to the point in Jerusalem and Judah that he cast them out from his presence.

And Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.

Fall and Captivity of Judah

25 [1]And in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, on the tenth day of the month, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came with all his army against Jerusalem and laid siege to it. And they built siegeworks all around it. [2]So the city was besieged till the eleventh year of King Zedekiah. [3]On the ninth day of the fourth month the famine was so severe in the city that there was no food for the people of the land. [4]Then a breach was made in the city, and all the men of war fled by night by the way of the gate between the two walls, by the king's garden, though the Chaldeans were around the city. And they went in the direction of the Arabah. [5]But the army of the Chaldeans pursued the king and overtook him in the plains of Jericho, and all his army was scattered from him. [6]Then they captured the king and brought him up to the king of Babylon at Riblah, and they passed sentence on him. [7]They slaughtered the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and put out the eyes of Zedekiah and bound him in chains and took him to Babylon.

[8]In the fifth month, on the seventh day of the month—that was the nineteenth year of King Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon—Nebuzaradan, the captain of the bodyguard, a servant of the king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem. [9]And he burned the house of the Lord and the king's house and all the houses of Jerusalem; every great house he burned down. [10]And all the army of the Chaldeans, who were with the captain of the guard, broke down the walls around Jerusalem. [11]And the rest of the people who were left in the city and the deserters who had deserted to the king of Babylon, together with the rest of the multitude, Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carried into exile. [12]But the captain of the guard left some of the poorest of the land to be vinedressers and plowmen.

[13]And the pillars of bronze that were in the house of the Lord, and the stands and the bronze sea that were in the house of the Lord, the Chaldeans broke in pieces and carried the bronze to Babylon. [14]And they took away the pots and the shovels and the snuffers and the dishes for incense and all the vessels of bronze used in the temple service, [15]the fire pans also and the

bowls. What was of gold the captain of the guard took away as gold, and what was of silver, as silver. [16]As for the two pillars, the one sea, and the stands that Solomon had made for the house of the Lord, the bronze of all these vessels was beyond weight. [17]The height of the one pillar was eighteen cubits,[1] and on it was a capital of bronze. The height of the capital was three cubits. A latticework and pomegranates, all of bronze, were all around the capital. And the second pillar had the same, with the latticework.

[18]And the captain of the guard took Seraiah the chief priest and Zephaniah the second priest and the three keepers of the threshold, [19]and from the city he took an officer who had been in command of the men of war, and five men of the king's council who were found in the city, and the secretary of the commander of the army who mustered the people of the land, and sixty men of the people of the land who were found in the city. [20]And Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard took them and brought them to the king of Babylon at Riblah. [21]And the king of Babylon struck them down and put them to death at Riblah in the land of Hamath. So Judah was taken into exile out of its land.

Gedaliah Made Governor of Judah

[22]And over the people who remained in the land of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had left, he appointed Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, son of Shaphan, governor. [23]Now when all the captains and their men heard that the king of Babylon had appointed Gedaliah governor, they came with their men to Gedaliah at Mizpah, namely, Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and Johanan the son of Kareah, and Seraiah the son of Tanhumeth the Netophathite, and Jaazaniah the son of the Maacathite. [24]And Gedaliah swore to them and their men, saying, “Do not be afraid because of the Chaldean officials. Live in the land and serve the king of Babylon, and it shall be well with you.” [25]But in the seventh month, Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, son of Elishama, of the royal family, came with ten men and struck down Gedaliah and put him to death along with the Jews and the Chaldeans who were with him at Mizpah. [26]Then all the people, both small and great, and the captains of the forces arose and went to Egypt, for they were afraid of the Chaldeans.

Jehoiachin Released from Prison

27 And in the thirty-seventh year of the exile of Jehoiachin king of Judah,
in the twelfth month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, Evil-
merodach king of Babylon, in the year that he began to reign, graciously
freed[1] Jehoiachin king of Judah from prison. 28 And he spoke kindly to him
and gave him a seat above the seats of the kings who were with him in
Babylon. 29 So Jehoiachin put off his prison garments. And every day of his
life he dined regularly at the king's table, 30 and for his allowance, a regular
allowance was given him by the king, according to his daily needs, as long
as he lived.

2 Kings

In early Hebrew tradition, 1 and 2 Kings were not separate books but were one long document, as the flow of the story itself shows (see outline, p 528). For an introduction to the entire document, see pp 526–28.

Footnotes

Footnotes for 2 Kings, Chapter 3

- [1] 3:24 Septuagint; the meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain

Footnotes for 2 Kings, Chapter 5

- [1] 5:1 *Leprosy* was a term for several skin diseases; see Leviticus 13
- [2] 5:5 A *talent* was about 75 pounds or 34 kilograms; a *shekel* was about 2/5 ounce or 11 grams
- [1] 5:12 Or *Amana*

Footnotes for 2 Kings, Chapter 6

- [1] 6:25 A *shekel* was about 2/5 ounce or 11 grams; a *kab* was about 1 quart or 1 liter

Footnotes for 2 Kings, Chapter 7

- [1] 7:1 A *seah* was about 7 quarts or 7.3 liters
- [2] 7:1 A *shekel* was about 2/5 ounce or 11 grams
- [3] 7:3 *Leprosy* was a term for several skin diseases; see Leviticus 13

Footnotes for 2 Kings, Chapter 8

- [1] 8:15 The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain
- [2] 8:16 Septuagint, Syriac lack *when Jehoshaphat was king of Judah*
- [3] 8:21 *Joram* is another spelling of *Jehoram* (the son of Jehoshaphat) as in verse 16; also verses 23, 24

Footnotes for 2 Kings, Chapter 9

- [1] 9:13 The meaning of the Hebrew word is uncertain
- [1] 9:27 Syriac, Vulgate (compare Septuagint); Hebrew lacks *and they shot him*

Footnotes for 2 Kings, Chapter 10

- [2] 10:1 Septuagint, Vulgate; Hebrew *rulers of Jezreel*
- [3] 10:2 Hebrew lacks *of the sons*
- [1] 10:15 Septuagint; Hebrew lacks *Jehu said*
- [2] 10:16 Septuagint, Syriac, Targum; Hebrew *they*
- [1] 10:24 Septuagint *he* (compare verse 25)

Footnotes for 2 Kings, Chapter 11

- [1] 11:2 Compare 2 Chronicles 22:11; Hebrew lacks *and she put*
- [2] 11:2 Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate (compare 2 Chronicles 22:11) *she*
- [3] 11:6 The meaning of the Hebrew word is uncertain
- [1] 11:21 Ch 12:1 in Hebrew

- [2] 11:21 *Jehoash* is another spelling of *Joash* (son of Ahaziah) as in verse 2

Footnotes for 2 Kings, Chapter 12

- [3] 12:1 *Jehoash* is another spelling of *Joash* (son of Ahaziah) as in 11:2; also verses 2, 4, 6, 7, 18

Footnotes for 2 Kings, Chapter 13

- [1] 13:6 Septuagint, Syriac, Targum, Vulgate; Hebrew *he walked*
- [1] 13:10 *Jehoash* is another spelling for *Joash* (son of Jehoahaz) as in verses 9, 12-14; also verse 25

Footnotes for 2 Kings, Chapter 14

- [1] 14:8 *Jehoash* is another spelling for *Joash* (son of Jehoahaz) as in 13:9, 12-14; also verses 9, 11-16
- [2] 14:13 A *cubit* was about 18 inches or 45 centimeters

Footnotes for 2 Kings, Chapter 15

- [1] 15:5 *Leprosy* was a term for several skin diseases; see Leviticus 13
- [2] 15:5 The meaning of the Hebrew word is uncertain
- [3] 15:13 Another name for *Azariah*
- [4] 15:19 Another name for *Tiglath-pileser III* (compare verse 29)

- [5] 15:19 A *talent* was about 75 pounds or 34 kilograms
- [6] 15:20 A *shekel* was about 2/5 ounce or 11 grams

Footnotes for 2 Kings, Chapter 16

- [1] 16:3 Or *made his son pass through the fire*
- [1] 16:17 Compare 1 Kings 7:23

Footnotes for 2 Kings, Chapter 17

- [1] 17:17 Or *made their sons and their daughters pass through the fire*
- [1] 17:27 Syriac, Vulgate; Hebrew *them*

Footnotes for 2 Kings, Chapter 18

- [1] 18:4 *Nehushtan* sounds like the Hebrew for both *bronze* and *serpent*
- [1] 18:14 A *talent* was about 75 pounds or 34 kilograms
- [2] 18:29 Hebrew *his*
- [1] 18:31 Hebrew *Make a blessing with me*

Footnotes for 2 Kings, Chapter 21

- [1] 21:6 Hebrew *made his son pass through the fire*
- [1] 21:12 Or *evil*

Footnotes for 2 Kings, Chapter 23

- [1] 23:10 Hebrew *might cause his son or daughter to pass through the fire for Molech*
- [2] 23:11 The meaning of the Hebrew word is uncertain
- [3] 23:12 Hebrew *pieces from there*
- [4] 23:15 Septuagint *broke in pieces its stones*
- [5] 23:17 Hebrew *called*
- [1] 23:33 A *talent* was about 75 pounds or 34 kilograms

Footnotes for 2 Kings, Chapter 25

- [1] 25:17 A *cubit* was about 18 inches or 45 centimeters
- [1] 25:27 Hebrew *reign, lifted up the head of*

Study Notes

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 1:1 *Ahab*. See note, 1Ki 16:30. *Moab rebelled*. Explains why Ahaziah's brother and successor, Jehoram, later undertook an expedition against Moab with the cooperation of Jehoshaphat of Judah (3:4–27). *Moab*. See note, Jgs 3:12.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 1:2 *Ahaziah*. Cf 1Ki 22:51–53. *lattice*. Windows were covered by latticework rather than glass. *upper chamber*. Typically, the living and sleeping quarters. *inquire*. See note, 1Co 10:20. *Baal-zebub*. Originally Baal-zebul (NT Beelzebul), "Baal is prince"; here, the writer expresses disdain for this Canaanite idol by calling it Baal-zebub, "Lord of a fly." *Ekron*. A Philistine city c 40 mi SW of Samaria. It boasted of a baal with unusual powers of healing. Archaeological finds suggest a switch from devotion to Dagon (1Sm 5:1–5; see note, Jgs 16:23) to Baal, whose name is then often incorporated in Philistine personal names. See color map 1.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 1:3 *angel of the* LORD. See p 1227. *Tishbite*. See note, 1Ki 17:1.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 1:4 *not come down*. From the upper room (see note, v 2).
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 1:8 *garment of hair*. Hbr "baal [or possessor] of hair" is used only here. Either his hair (including his beard) was long or he wore a hairy garment, which became characteristic of prophets. *Tishbite*. See note, 1Ki 17:1.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 1:9 *fifty men*. Typical platoon. *Come down*. Elijah was well known. The men were apparently afraid to take him but may have mocked him (cf v 4).
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 1:10 *If I am a man of God*. Immediate, mocking reply, likely answering the captain in the manner he had addressed Elijah. *fire came*. God would not have His servant mocked. A similar situation arose in Jesus' life. Because the purpose of Jesus' first coming was "to seek and to save the lost" (Lk 19:10), He did not perform a miracle of judgment such as Elijah's (Lk 9:51–55). However, cf Mt 25:41, on Jesus' judgment.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 1:11 *quickly!* Further insult. See notes, vv 9, 10.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 1:12 *fire … consume*. There were other mass punishments in the OT; see notes, Nu 31:2; Dt 2:34. *fifty*. See note, v 9.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 1:13 *on his knees*. See p 1276. *please*. Complete change of address (cf vv 9, 11). *servants of yours*. Captain realizes his place and weakness of the king.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 1:15 *the angel of the* LORD. See p 1227. *not be afraid*. Elijah could now speak plainly and forcefully with the king. See note, 1Ki 19:3.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 1:16 *Baal-zebub*. See note, v 2. *no God in Israel*. King's actions denied God His rightful place in Israel. Elijah never conceded the actual existence of false gods, even though he mockingly encouraged the prophets of Baal to intensify their cry to the unresponsive idol (cf 1Ki 18:27).
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 1:17 *Jehoram became king*. Son of Ahab, brother of Ahaziah; he only reigned about two years. See note, 8:16; see p 529.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **Ch 1** King Ahaziah and his troops show disdain for the Lord and His servant Elijah and are condemned with fire and death. Today, the Lord would have us treat His servants with proper respect, pray for them, and hear His Word from them. In this sinful world, God's Word is rare and precious, preserving our lives and delivering us from all condemnation. In Christ, we need not fear our enemies or His wrath. • Mighty Lord, strengthen us to speak Your Word without fear and to treasure the souls of others by sharing Your precious Word with them. Amen.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **Ch 2** After briefly noting Ahaziah's death (1:17–18) and before taking up the account of his successor's reign (ch 3), the author records the end of Elijah's ministry (2:1–12a) and the first deeds of his disciple Elisha (vv 12b–25).
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 2:1 *whirlwind*. True tornados are rare in Israel. Term describes a strong wind. *Gilgal*. Not the Gilgal northeast of Jericho. See note, v 2.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 2:2 *stay*. Throughout ch 2, Elijah looks for a way to separate from his disciple. *Bethel*. On a final journey, perhaps to bid farewell to his friends and associates, Elijah went 7 mi S from a place called Gilgal to Bethel and from there c 12 mi SE to Jericho (v 4) and then east to the Jordan (v 7). *As the* LORD *lives*. Oath formula; see note, Nu 30:2. *will not leave*. Apparently sensing what was to happen, Elisha insisted on accompanying Elijah, even though the latter discouraged him.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 2:3 *sons of the prophets*. See p 555. *I know*. The Lord had revealed the matter.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 2:4 See note, v 2.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 2:5 *sons of the prophets*. See p 555. *I know*. See note, v 3.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 2:6 See note, v 2.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 2:7 *Fifty*. Ironically, a respectful platoon of prophets gathered to witness a miracle the Lord would work through Elijah. Contrast with 1:9–10. *sons of the prophets*. See p 555.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 2:8 *cloak and rolled*. When this rectangular cloak was rolled, it would take the shape of a rod. *struck the water*. Moses had stretched out his rod to open a path through the Red Sea.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 2:9 *double portion*. Firstborn son typically received twice the inheritance of other children (see note, Gn 25:31; cf Dt 21:17). Elisha requested a share of his father's spirit double that of the other "sons of the prophets" (see p 555).
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 2:10 *hard thing*. Inheritance issues often bring hardship, even division, within families. *see me*. Elijah asked Elisha to stick close, as was proper for the master's chief disciple, thus distinguishing himself from the other sons.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 2:11 *went on and talked*. Common method of teaching and discipleship, since training did not take place in a classroom setting. See note, Pr 1:8. *chariots … horses of fire*. Either a vision or angels. On angels appearing as animals, see note, Ezk 10:1. Elisha later saw the mountains around hard-pressed Samaria "full of horses and chariots of fire" (6:17), a visible demonstration of God's protection and power. *went up … into heaven*. Where God's saints will reside bodily hereafter in God's presence. See note, 1Th 4:17. The ascension of Elijah was to teach Elisha; it happened because of Elijah's special relationship with the Lord. See note, Gn 5:22. *whirlwind*. See note, v 1.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 2:12 *My father, my father!* See p 555. Repetition expresses longing. *The chariots of Israel and its horsemen!* A prophet like Elijah, who kept the people in communion with the omnipotent Ruler of heaven and earth, deserved this title. A later Israelite king bestowed the same title on Elisha (13:14). Here, Elisha confessed that Israel's true strength and glory were not in war horses and military prowess, as Israel's kings believed, but in the Word and the faith of her prophets. *no more*. Some expected Elijah to return in the flesh (see note, Mal 4:5). *tore them*. See note, Jb 1:20.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 2:13 *the cloak*. After tearing his own clothes, Elisha dramatically demonstrated that he had inherited the spirit of Elijah: with his master's mantle, he performed the same miracle of parting the Jordan (vv 12b–14).
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 2:14 *Where is the LORD, the God of Elijah?* Not expressing doubt, but confronting the question that would be on the hearts of the faithful, because the Lord's chief prophet was now gone (see note, v 9). God settled the matter with a miracle. *parted*. See note, v 8.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 2:1–14 When the Lord takes Elijah to heaven, He also bestows Elijah's office and authority on Elisha, his chief disciple. The burning desire to serve God and His people through faithful leadership is proper (cf 1Tm 3:1). If you set your heart on such noble service, walk and talk with the Lord's servants to learn from them His Word and wisdom, by which the Lord will prepare you for your calling. The heavenly Father will send His Spirit to embolden and uplift you, through Jesus, His Son. • Build me up by Your Word, O Lord, and bear me up by Your grace, that I may serve You honorably and rush to Your side when my service is fulfilled. Amen.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 2:15 *sons of the prophets*. See p 555. *opposite them*. On the far bank of the Jordan. *The spirit of Elijah*. Elisha had received the prophet's office of service. See note, v 14. *bowed*. See p 1276.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 2:16 *It may be … valley*. The Lord had hidden Elijah previously (see note, 1Ki 17:3–7). The sons of the prophets expressed some doubts about the events they witnessed and wanted to be sure of Elisha's succession. *You shall not send*. Elisha had no doubt about what had taken place.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 2:17 *ashamed*. Disappointed, Elisha bears with the weakness of their faith because they needed to confirm the succession and the miracle.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 2:19 *city*. Jericho. *water is bad*. Problem with the water is unknown. See note, v 21.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 2:21 *spring*. Ain Sultan spring near Jericho. *salt*. Symbolic of cleansing, freshness. *healed*. Purified or made healthy. Cf Ex 15:25. *death nor miscarriage*. Could describe the water's effects on the land or its inhabitants.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 2:23 *small boys*. Same modifier is used of David (1Sm 17:14, 33). See also note, 1Sm 20:35. *Go up*. Boys demanded that

Elisha imitate Elijah and go up into heaven in order to prove that he was not an impostor. *baldhead!* Jeering at baldheaded Elisha's claim to be the successor of bushy-haired Elijah (see note, 1:8). They displayed the disdainful attitude present among the people of Israel.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 2:24 *cursed*. See p 6. *she-bears*. Female Syrian brown bears. See note, Hos 13:8. *woods*. See note, Jgs 9:48. *tore*. Mauled. *forty-two*. Boys were apparently gathered for some training or service. *Mount Carmel … Samaria*. See map, p 581.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 2:15–25 Through three miracles, the Lord removes all doubts about Elisha as Elijah's successor. As the Lord calls you to service, He will prepare and support you. Though miracles may not follow you (as with Elisha), you have God's miraculous Word in the pages of Holy Scripture by which the Lord will bless you with the comfort of salvation and equip you for every good work. • O Lord, as You bore insult on the cross and brought forth life for me, let me bear all insults and burdens of my calling. I entrust my defense to Your almighty power and my life to Your surpassing mercy. Amen.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **Ch 3** Jehoram's succession to the throne after the death of his brother Ahaziah (see note, 1:17) is followed in ch 2 by the story of the ascension of Elijah and the beginning of Elisha's ministry. Ch 3 tells the story of King Jehoram's participation in an ill-fated campaign against Moab. The report of his death appears in ch 9.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 3:1 *Jehoshaphat*. Ruled 873–848 BC. *Jehoram*. Record of his reign is interrupted at several points.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 3:2 *evil … not like his father and mother*. See note, 1Ki 16:30. *put away the pillar of Baal*. Probably a massebah stone with a relief carving of the chief Canaanite god on the front. See note, Gn 28:18.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 3:3 *sin of Jeroboam*. See note, 1Ki 12:28. Jehoram opted for a more local and customary form of false worship in Israel.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 3:4 *Mesha*. He inscribed his version of the conflict with the allied invaders on a stone discovered in AD 1869. Written in a language similar to Hbr, this Moabite, or Mesha, Stone supplements and confirms the biblical account. On the stone, Jehoram is called Omri's son rather than his grandson. *had to deliver*. Tribute payment.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 3:5 *Moab*. See map, p 581.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 3:7 Northern and Southern kings work together. See note, 1Ki 15:25–16:28.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 3:8 *wilderness of Edom*. Instead of crossing the Jordan above the Salt Sea and invading Moab from the north, the allied kings agreed on a "circuitous march" (v 9) around the southern end of the sea "by the way of the wilderness of Edom."
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 3:9 *king of Edom*. They forced the Edomite king to join the expedition, assuring there would be no rear attack from the south. *animals*. Likely horses for chariots and mules for riding and packing provisions.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 3:10 Jehoram expressed despair and blamed the Lord. In contrast, Jehoshaphat would seek the Lord (v 11).
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 3:11 *Elisha … is here*. Traveling with the troops, perhaps as a chaplain would. *poured water*. Service that a person rendered his master or teacher. Washing was typically done by pouring because water was often scarce. See note, Ezk 36:25.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 3:15 *musician*. Music is sometimes mentioned as a means to make a prophet receptive to divine inspiration. See note, 1Ch 25:1. More often, "the hand of the LORD" came upon His spokesman without musical accompaniment (e.g., on Elijah and Ezekiel). *hand of the LORD*. See p 842.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 3:16 *pools*. Natural depressions in the streambeds were valued and used like cisterns.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 3:19 In the conquest of the Promised Land, the Israelites were not to engage in this scorched-earth policy (Dt 20:19–20). Moab, in a drier region, was more susceptible to such an attack.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 3:20 *water came from the direction of Edom*. Brook of Zered and other wadis flow from Edom toward the south end of the Salt Sea. See map, p 250.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 3:21 *border*. Along the Brook of Zered.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 3:22 *red as blood*. Reflection of the sun's early morning glow on the reddish cast of the soil gave the water the appearance of blood. From this phenomenon, the Moabites drew the false conclusion that the allies had "struck one another down" (v 23).
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 3:23 *to the spoil!* Hoping to find a weak enemy, they advanced in an unguarded manner and suffered heavy losses in a counterattack by the Israelites (v 24).
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 3:25 *threw a stone*. Making the best fields difficult to cultivate, guaranteeing poorer crops and a less-resistant populace.

stopped … felled. See note, v 19. *only its stones*. Barren landscape. *Kir-hareseth*. Identified with modern Kerak, Jordan, c 10 mi E of the Salt Sea.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 3:26 *king of Edom*. Perhaps Mesha (cf v 4) hoped the Edomites would offer less resistance. However, the Hbr words for Edom and Aram (Syria) look almost identical. If the original text read "Aram," as translated in an ancient Latin version, then Mesha tried to break through to the north in an attempt to get help from the Syrians.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 3:27 *he took his oldest son … on the wall*. Remarkable sacrifice to invoke the Moabite gods' sympathy (perhaps Chemosh; see note, 1Ki 11:7). *wrath against Israel*. Meaning is unclear. Hbr term commonly speaks of God's wrath. LXX indicates the Israelites felt regret. The armies perhaps withdrew from Mesha to show their revulsion at the human sacrifice (Lv 18:21; 20:3). Also, Jehoram and the Israelite leaders may have offended the Judeans and even the Edomites by the extreme nature of the siege or the negotiations, which brought on the horrific sacrifice.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **Ch 3** King Jehoram led Jehoshaphat and the Edomites against Moab on an ill-conceived military campaign, which had some success due to the Lord's intervention through Elisha. Today, do not equate poor planning with faith. For all your endeavors, seek God's blessing through prayer and make your plans through the wisdom of His Word. The Lord grants us wisdom and thoughtful hearts so that we may honor Him with our deeds. Thankfully, He planned for our victory over evil and our everlasting salvation in the person of His Son, Jesus, who offered Himself freely for the sins of all people. • Guide us, O Lord, toward purposeful ends that honor You. Amen.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 4:1–8:15 This long section about Elisha's life follows the story of his participation in the Moabite campaign (ch 3). Apparently, the accounts are not arranged in chronological sequence. None of them is dated. The ruling monarch is not identified by name but simply called "the king of Israel" (5:5; 6:9). Elisha was active during the reign of Jehoram's successors (13:10, 14). Chs 4–7 record eight miraculous deeds (4:1–7, 8–37, 38–41, 42–44; 5:1–14; 6:1–7, 8–23; 6:24–7:20). Ambr: "Other men for the sake of rest are wont to withdraw their minds from business, and to retire from the company and companionship of men; to seek the retirement of the country or the solitude of the fields, or in the city to give their minds a rest and to enjoy peace and quietness. But Elisha was

ever active…. When can the upright man be alone, since he is always with God? When is he left forsaken who is never separated from Christ?" (*NPNF* 2 10:68).

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 4:1 *sons of the prophets*. See p 555. *feared*. See p 1001. *creditor … his slaves*. Because the woman's husband was dead, the creditor had the right to demand that the sons' labor be impounded to pay the debt.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 4:2 *jar of oil*. Olive oil. See p 236.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 4:7 *pay your debts*. God would have us fulfill our obligations (cf Rm 13:8).

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 4:1–7 Through Elisha, the Lord delivers a widow from poverty and her sons from slavery. The Lord cares about your finances, your freedom, and every aspect of your life. Plan well for the future, seek His guidance, and turn to Him with your requests. As the Lord blesses you, use your resources and freedom to honor His name. For His name's sake, He adopts us as members of His household and delivers us from evil. • Pour out for me, O Lord, the oil of gladness, that my mouth may overflow in praise to You. Amen.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 4:8 *Shunem*. Elisha's second deed has two miraculous elements: the birth of a son (vv 11–17) and healing for the son (vv 32–37).

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 4:9 *holy*. See p 7.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 4:10 *on the roof*. Lit, "an upper room of a wall." See note, Jsh 2:6. Apparently, she suggested that the wall of the house be raised, at least on one side, to make possible the construction of a permanent room on the flat roof. Israelite pillared houses typically had two stories. The furnishings are likewise typical. The account illustrates a wife's household authority. See note, Pr 31:10–31.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 4:13 *he said to him, "Say now to her."* Implies that Elisha used Gehazi as an intermediary, perhaps due to a difference in language or dialect. *on your behalf*. Elisha offered to intercede on her behalf with the highest authorities, who were known to respect his counsel (cf 3:11–12). *I dwell among my own people*. The Shunammite woman's friends and relatives kindly shielded her from harm, so she felt she had no need for an outsider's intervention. However, cf 8:2–6.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 4:15 *doorway*. Such portals represented changes in life; also clarifies that the prophet had no contact with the woman who

would become pregnant.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 4:16 *lie*. The woman regarded the birth of a son impossible.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 4:8–17 Through Elisha, the Lord returns a kindness shown by a couple at Shunem. Though we do not merit salvation by our good works, the Lord often provides temporal rewards to His people, acknowledging their faith and kindness. Honor the Lord in all your ways, most of all rejoicing in the gift of His Son, your Savior, who redeems you by grace alone. • Merciful Savior, reward us not as we deserve but according to Your merciful goodness, through Christ, our Lord. Amen.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 4:19 *my head, my head!* Perhaps he suffered sunstroke, which esp threatens children. Later emphasis on sneezing (v 35) may indicate he had a respiratory problem.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 4:22 *come back again*. She wanted to turn around and come back at once.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 4:23 *new moon nor Sabbath*. Appointed service times. See pp 200–201. *All is well*. Hbr "peace," meaning to say: "Good-bye, don't worry about the outcome." Her hurry perplexed her husband because it was not the time of a religious festival that required the prophet's presence at a specified time. She did not disclose the reason for the hasty journey. Later, she gave the same answer to Gehazi, not wishing to be detained by him (v 26).
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 4:25 *Mount Carmel*. Point of ministry for Elijah and Elisha, c 20–25 mi NW of Shunem.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 4:26 *All is well*. See note, v 23.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 4:27 *she caught hold of his feet*. See "fall," p 1276. She hid her concern until she reached the one man she believed could help. *push her away*. Gehazi seemed confused or even offended by her behavior. *hidden*. At other times, the Lord fully informed His prophets. Cf 1Sm 3:17.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 4:29 *staff*. Wielded by Gehazi, the symbol of his master's authority was to work a miracle of healing.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 4:30 *As the Lord lives*. Oath formula; see note, Nu 30:2. Here she swears also by the life of the prophet to demonstrate her attachment to him, as Elisha had done with Elijah (2:2). *I will not leave you*. See note, v 27.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 4:31 *not awakened*. Gehazi spoke in a polite way, confirming the child's death. However, cf Mk 5:39.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 4:32 He had likely set out after Gehazi, who, being younger, could travel more quickly. *his bed*. Elisha's bed (cf v 10).
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 4:33 *prayed*. See note, 1Ki 17:22.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 4:34 See note, 1Ki 17:21. *warm*. Possibly indicating a return to life.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 4:35 *up again and walked*. Reason is unclear. He may have been simply pacing between "treatments" or warming his body, to warm the child. *house*. Or, room.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 4:37 *bowing*. See p 1276.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 4:18–37 The Shunammite woman passionately seeks the Lord's help for her son by seeking out Elisha. When you seek the Lord in prayer, pour out your heart to Him. Bow before Him and make your petitions known. The Lord has made His heart known for you in the life, death, and resurrection of His only-begotten Son, our Savior. • Hear me, O Lord, when I cry to You. Answer me according to Your mercy. Amen.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 4:38 *a famine*. Hbr "the famine," perhaps referring to the one mentioned in 8:1. *sons of the prophets*. See p 555.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 4:39 *wild gourds*. Fruits of a cucumberlike vine thought to be the colocynth. Although used for medicinal purposes, they can prove fatal if eaten in large quantities.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 4:40 *death*. Someone detected the poisonous substance. *could not eat*. Prospect of losing a whole meal for a large group during extended famine was upsetting.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 4:41 *flour*. Basic for making bread, the most common food of the Israelites and emblematic of life itself. See p 236. Though extra flour would disperse the effects of the poison, the result here was not merely clever but miraculous.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 4:42 *Baal-shalishah*. Perhaps the same place called Shalishah in 1Sm 9:4, located c 15 mi NW of Gilgal. *bringing the man of God*. Recognizing in Elisha a "man of God," a man brought him "the firstfruits," normally given to the priests (Ex 23:19). Perhaps this indicates the weakness of the genuine priesthood in the Northern Kingdom of Israel. *fresh ears of grain*. Likely heads of wheat, which could be parched or ground for flour.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 4:43 *How can I … hundred men?* Jesus' disciples made similar remarks when He fed the multitudes (Mt 14:17; 15:33).

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 4:44 *according to the word of the* LORD. God gives life according to His Word, by which this miracle was produced. See p 971.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 4:38–44 Through Elisha, the Lord miraculously provides for the sons of the prophets. Food proclaims the Lord's providential care for His creation. Your daily bread is so much more than sustenance for your weak flesh. His Son, working wonders greater than those of Elisha, declared Himself the bread of life for your sake and continues to sustain the faithful in His Holy Meal. • O Lord, in joy I offer to You the firstfruit of my labors, for You have labored to save me and serve me life-giving bread. Amen.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **Ch 5** Longest of the miracle accounts.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 5:1 *the* LORD *had given victory*. The God of Israel was the Ruler of all nations. The enemies of Syria whom Naaman defeated were probably the Assyrians. See map, p 581. *leper*. Cf Lv 13–14 for rules in Israel regarding leprosy.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 5:2 *little girl*. See note, 1Sm 17:33. *service*. Taken captive on some Syrian raid in Israel, this slave girl became a foreign missionary.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 5:3 *cure*. Cf 4:18–37 for an example.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 5:5 *letter*. See p 1900. *ten talents … of clothing*. Massive gift to the king of Israel, to secure his cooperation.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 5:6 *you may cure*. Apparently, the king of Syria thought that his commander would be cured by a prophet (v 3) who was attached to the court in Samaria.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 5:7 *tore his clothes*. In grief (see note, Jb 1:20) or possibly in anger (cf Mt 26:65). *Am I God*. Wording and request placed the Israelite king in an awkward position. He feared that the Syrian king would hold him responsible if Naaman was not healed. *to kill and to make alive*. God's role, physically and spiritually. See note, Dt 32:39. The king perhaps hesitated to get Elisha involved because Israelite kings rarely had positive relations with true prophets.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 5:8 *a prophet in Israel*. A shaming word to the doubting king, but a word of promise to Naaman.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 5:9 *stood at the door*. He did not invite in the unclean Gentile (Lv 13:46), which would have appeared rude to a foreign dignitary.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 5:10 *a messenger*. Continued distance toward Naaman, which could provoke further insult. *wash in the Jordan … clean*. Cf Lv 13–14.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 5:11 *call upon the name of the* LORD. See p 842. *his God*. Naaman knows of the Lord but does not confess Him. *the place*. Infection was apparently limited to one area of Naaman's body.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 5:12 *Abana and Pharpar ... Damascus*. See map, p 558. They watered fertile fields along their banks. The murky waters of the Jordan, rushing in a low, deeply eroded riverbed to the Salt Sea, had little irrigation value.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 5:13 *father*. See p 555. *a great word*. Overlooking the perceived insults from Elisha, the servants focused properly on the word of promise.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 5:14 *dipped himself*. Verb typically describes dipping a portion of something in a liquid, rather than total immersion (cf Jsh 3:15). Naaman would likely have immersed the portion of his body that was leprous. See note, v 11. *seven times*. See p 217. *according to the word*. See note, v 13. Iren: "As we are lepers in sin, we are made clean, by means of the sacred water and the invocation of the Lord, from our old transgressions; being spiritually regenerated as new-born babes" (*ANF* 1:574). *restored … clean*. See notes, Lv 13. Ambr: "Being forthwith cleansed, [Naaman] understood that it is not of the waters but of grace that a man is cleansed" (*NPNF* 2 10:319); "Naaman the Syrian thought that his leprosy could not be cleansed by water. But that which was impossible God made to be possible, Who gave us so great grace" (*NPNF* 2 10:346). *little child*. See note, 1Sm 17:33.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 5:1–14 The Syrian commander Naaman is convinced that the Lord can heal him of leprosy, according to the Lord's Word. The Lord cleanses us too by water and the Word, for His Word gives life and salvation. • Wash me, O Lord, and I shall be clean. Give me life according to Your Word. Amen.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 5:15 *he*. Naaman. *no God … but in Israel*. God's Word and act of mercy have turned Naaman's heart. He now understands that all the gods of the nations are not genuine. *present*. Lit, "blessing"; see note, Gn 33:11.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 5:16 *As the* LORD *lives*. Oath formula; see note, Nu 30:2. *I will receive none*. Scripture does not explain Elisha's refusal.

However, see note, v 9.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 5:17 *load of earth*. Only recently converted to the God of Israel (v 15), Naaman thought that he needed to worship God on Israelite soil if his offerings were to be acceptable. The notion prevailed in his day that the domain of a god was determined by national borders. For other instances of this view, see note, 1Ki 20:23; cf 2Ki 17:16; 1Sm 26:19–20.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 5:18 *pardon*. Hbr *salach*, "to forbear," as in responding with patience. He realized the fellowship and worship issues that naturally arose for one who believed in and worshiped the one true God. He repeated this request for emphasis. *Rimmon*. Syrian storm god Hadad (see note, 1Ki 15:18). *leaning*. Likely describing a function of his office, by which he literally and symbolically supported the king. *I bow myself in the house of Rimmon*. Has become proverbial to describe those who compromise their principles when under stress.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 5:19 *Go in peace*. Instead of upbraiding the new convert for visiting the house of Rimmon, Elisha dismissed him "in peace." However, of the Israelites, fully taught by God, Elijah demanded that they stop "limping between two different opinions" (1Ki 18:21). Jesus likewise required uncompromising commitment (Lk 11:23; 16:13).
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 5:20 *spared*. Gehazi decided the Syrian owed them. *As the Lord lives*. Oath formula; see note, Nu 30:2.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 5:22 *All is well*. See note, 4:23. *sent me*. A lie. *Ephraim*. Such centers of the "sons of the prophets" as Gilgal and Bethel were situated in Ephraim, north of Jerusalem (2:1–3). See color map 2; see also p 555. *changes of clothing*. Not your everyday change of clothes. Given the wealth Naaman brought with him (v 5), Gehazi's request is fairly modest.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 5:24 *the hill*. Hbr is transliterated Ophel in 2Ch 27:3; 33:14. Not the usual noun for "hill." Except in this instance, Ophel is used exclusively of the Jerusalem temple hill. The definite article indicates that in this case too, a well-known Samaritan elevation is meant. *house*. The Hbr word can also describe a temple.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 5:25 *nowhere*. As in the case of Joseph's brothers, lies beget lies in an attempt to cover up fraud (cf v 22; Gn 37:31–32). However, dishonesty is only one of the noxious growths that spring from the love of money, "a root of all kinds of evils" (1Tm 6:10).

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 5:26 *Did not my heart*. In a vision, Elisha witnessed what had happened. *a time to accept*. Elisha seems to probe Gehazi's intentions, which were fixed on gaining material goods.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 5:27 *your descendants*. Leprosy is not genetic but is spread by persistent exposure to the sick. *a leper*. According to 8:1–6, Gehazi was not absolutely isolated from people. However, his intercession for the widow of Shunem in ch 8 may have taken place some time before the healing of Naaman. See note, 4:1–8:15.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 5:15–27 Elisha's servant Gehazi pursues Naaman's riches, hoping for great wealth; then he lies to Elisha about what he has done. When you are caught in sin, do not hesitate to acknowledge your deeds before the Lord. He is rich in mercy toward the brokenhearted and all who confess their needs to Him. • Lord, grant me a steadfast heart and sincere repentance, that I may inherit the wealth of Your grace in Christ. Amen.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 6:1 *sons of the prophets*. See p 555. *too small*. Under Elisha's leadership, the number of prophets was likely growing.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 6:2 *Jordan*. Prophetic center was likely at Jericho, not far from the "thicket of the Jordan" (2:4–8; Jer 12:5).
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 6:5 *borrowed*. He would have to pay for the lost axe head.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 6:6 *cut off a stick and threw it in there*. As in other examples (2:21; 4:41), God worked a miracle through Elisha's symbolic action. The stick, which would naturally float, leads the axe head to float as well.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 6:1–7 With a miracle of compassion through Elisha, the Lord delivers a son of the prophets from debt. We have similar concerns today. Yet, the Lord cares about every aspect of our lives, as Jesus' compassion toward His disciples showed. Greater still, the Lord removes the debt of our sin by the wood of His cross. • Lord, lead me to use my property and the property of others wisely, that I may share Your compassion with others. Amen.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 6:8 *Once when*. Hbr indicates nonchronological order of this collection of events from Elisha's life. See note, 4:1–8:15. *warring*. Elisha miraculously foiled two Syrian attacks on Israel (6:8–23; 6:24–7:20).
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 6:9 *man of God*. Elisha.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 6:10 *to the place*. An Israelite reconnaissance party verified the truth of Elisha's disclosures. Elisha's information was so accurate, the Syrian king was convinced there was a traitor among his servants (v 11). *used to warn*. Prophets could act as court counselors. See p 1077–88.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 6:11 Syrian leader feared an Israelite spy had infiltrated his government. Israel had used spies in the past. Cf Nu 13; Jsh 2.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 6:12 *Elisha … tells the king*. The Syrian's comment reveals that he, too, had contacts with the Israelite court. *bedroom*. Hyperbole.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 6:13 *seize him*. Ignoring Elisha's special ability to know his plans, the king commanded a special mission. Cf 1:9–14. *Dothan*. 20 mi W of the Jordan. See map, p 581. Controlling a pass through the mountain (v 17) of the Carmel Ridge, Dothan lay on the road from Syria to Egypt on which the Ishmaelites took Joseph to the land of the pharaohs (Gn 37:17).
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 6:14 Rather than sending spies or a discreet force, the Syrian king fully invaded Israel, encountering no opposition along the way.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 6:15 *servant*. Perhaps Gehazi. Cf 4:12.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 6:16 Luth: "Where there are twenty devils, there are a hundred angels, and if that were not so, we should long since have perished. We are on the battle front whenever we teach the Word, whenever we preach and glorify Christ, and then live, as far as possible, according to the Gospel and the Word of God" (AE 12:227).
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 6:17 *open his eyes*. Normally unseen by human eyes, "the angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear Him, and delivers them" (Ps 34:7). Chem: "If our eyes were opened, as Elijah's were … then we might live our lives in greater concern and in fear of God" (*LTh* 1:175). Luth: "Christ does not want us to be alone on the road of death, from which all men shrink. Indeed, we set out upon the road of suffering and death accompanied by the entire church…. All that remains for us now is to pray that our eyes, that is, the eyes of our faith, may be opened that we may see the church around us. Then there will be nothing for us to fear, as is also said in Psalm 125 [:2], 'As mountains are round about it, so the Lord is round about his people, from this time forth and forever.' Amen" (AE 42:163). *horses and chariots of fire*. No matter how invincible the forces of

evil may appear, they never are a match for the heavenly hosts at God's command (Mt 26:53; Rm 8:31). *around Elisha*. As the leader of the Lord's prophets, Elisha received a special detachment of guardian angels. Luth: "It is a great comfort for all Christians to learn from these and other passages of Holy Scripture that they are not forsaken in the cross which they encounter in various forms throughout their lives. For they have the dear angels with them as protectors and guards. Furthermore, God is always present with His gifts, although one angel would really suffice to cope with all the enemies…. Wherever faith prevails and the divine Word is treasured, there we find such radiance shining into our hearts that I have a clear vision of God as my Father, of the open heaven, of the angels about me, and of the help that is mine. Such a precious possession is ours in God's Word and in the Christian faith" (AE 22:210–11).

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 6:18 Prayer is ironic, given Elisha's prayer for sight in v 17.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 6:19 *led*. The prophet personally led the Syrian army. *to Samaria*. Distance of c 10 mi S of Dothan. See map, p 581. Samaria was the capital of Israel.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 6:22 Elisha, as the Lord's servant, sets a standard for treating prisoners. Ambr: "Elisha gained more renown by pardoning than he would have done by slaying, and preserved those enemies whom he had taken for greater usefulness" (*NPNF* 2 10:82). See also "devote to destruction," p 6.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 6:23 *great feast*. Not prison food. Israel provided exceptional treatment. Cf Pr 25:21. *did not come again*. Seems contradicted in 6:24–7:20, but the miracles are not arranged in chronological sequence (see note, 4:1–8:15). This may be a relative term meaning that the Syrians did not raid Israelite territory as long as a conciliatory spirit lasted.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 6:8–23 Through Elisha's leadership, the Lord compassionately settles a war between Syria and Israel. In these events, the Lord teaches us about having mercy on our enemies. When in conflict, prayerfully consider how you might use your strength to pursue peace. Consider that, when we were enemies with God due to our sin, He sought peace with us in the compassionate ministry of Jesus, who gave His life for us. • O Lord, surround us with the care of Your holy angels, that we may not fear but act confidently and compassionately, through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 6:24 *Ben-hadad*. See note, 1Ki 15:18. *Syria … Samaria*. See map, p 581. *besieged*. Common strategy that often brought brutal results. Because ancient warfare did not necessarily have "rules" of war, cities were hesitant to surrender, anticipating horrific treatment and slaughter.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 6:25 *donkey's head*. Normally scorned as food, it sold at highly inflated prices. *kab*. See p cx. *dove's dung*. Possibly the name of a plant that ordinarily was not eaten. In some sieges, people could be driven to seek nourishment from various kinds of excrement.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 6:27 The king of Israel blamed God for the suffering to disguise his own shortcomings. *threshing floor … winepress*. Out of reach. Outside the city walls.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 6:29 *boiled my son*. Woman does not simply regret the loss of her son but complains that she unfairly did not get to eat the other woman's son (cf 1Ki 3:16–26). During the final siege of Jerusalem by the Babylonians (587 BC), "compassionate women … boiled their own children" (Lm 4:10; 2:20).
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 6:30 *tore his clothes … sackcloth*. See notes, Jb 1:20; 16:15.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 6:31 *God do so to me*. For this oath formula, see note, Ru 1:17; see also note, Nu 30:2. God's deed in the vow is not specified but perhaps is illustrated by the tearing of the clothes or the threatened beheading of Elisha. Since the king cannot punish God, he will punish His prophet, who had likely counseled against surrender.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 6:32 *his house*. In city of Samaria. *the elders*. Still taking counsel with the prophet. See note, Ex 3:16. See also p 228. *messenger*. Hbr *mal'ak*, often translated "angel." In this case, an executioner. *the sound of his master's feet behind him?* The Lord showed Elisha that the king regretted his command and was rushing to stop the executioner.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 6:33 *the messenger came*. Compressed sentence means "the messenger came down and [the king who came down immediately behind him] said," etc. *This trouble is from the LORD! Why should I wait*. Elisha apparently had promised God's intervention.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 6:24–33 The Syrians impose a horrific and frustrating siege upon Samaria, causing the Israelite king to blame God and Elisha for the suffering. When you suffer, you will be tempted to blame the

Lord or the Church for evil that you witness. May God strengthen you to resist temptation and to call on the Lord with a broken heart. Like the elders of Samaria, seek consolation and direction from God's prophetic Word, which does not fail. The Suffering Servant, Jesus, knows the depth of your trials. He will bear your sins and griefs as your beloved Savior. • Weeping Jesus, hear my cry, and deliver me from my sins and from all evils. Amen.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 7:1 *thus says the* LORD. See p 1080. *shekel*. See ESV note; see also p cx. Prices would drop drastically. *at the gate*. Where business was transacted. See p 792; see also note, Jb 29:7.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 7:2 *on whose hand the king leaned*. A high official. See note, 5:18. *windows*. Coming through the "windows of the heavens" (Gn 7:11; 8:2), rain would raise crops and eventually supply food. But the captain doubted that more immediate relief from the famine could be forthcoming. *you shall not eat of it*. Because he doubted.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 7:1–2 Elisha boldly prophesies that the Lord will feed the people, but the king's commander expresses doubt. God's promises always seem too good to be true. Yet He provided bread from heaven to Israel in the wilderness (Ex 16:4–31) and today sustains us with the true bread of heaven, the life-giving body of Jesus in the Sacrament of the Altar. • Sustain me, O Lord, against the devil's siege, my doubts, and the world's temptations. Amen.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 7:3 *at the entrance*. Excluded from the city, as required in Lv 13:45–46. *Why*. They did not know where to go.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 7:4 Lepers would be unwelcome in the city (cf Lv 13:45–46). The gate would soon be a battleground. Though it was unlikely the Syrians would welcome the lepers, it was their best option.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 7:5 *twilight*. Before dawn.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 7:6 *Hittites*. See p 345. *Egypt*. Hbr is similar to a term that in Assyrian records designates a territory bordering on Hittite territory. If this northern area is meant, the Syrians fled because they were hopelessly outnumbered by a "great army" of confederates. *come against us*. If the Hittites came upon them from the north and the Egyptians from the south, the Syrians could be ground to pieces like grain between the upper and the lower millstone.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 7:7 *abandoned*. Packing and saddling animals would delay the retreat. They believed the attack was immediate.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 7:9 *not doing right*. The lepers believed it was a crime to let the people in the city die of starvation when food in abundance was available. Failure to share material or spiritual blessings with others is no less reprehensible today (Heb 13:16). Ambr: "Why need we wonder that the people of the Lord had regard for what was seemly and virtuous when even the lepers … showed concern for what is virtuous?" (*NPNF* 2 10:86). *the king's household*. King could organize the gathering of the spoil and dispatch messengers and troops for guiding the work.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 7:12 *in the night*. Things had happened quickly, since the sun was still not up (cf v 5).
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 7:13 *remaining horses*. Other animals were probably devoured. *will fare like the … perished*. If the scouting party did not risk death at the hands of the Syrians, they would die of starvation in the city.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 7:14 *two horsemen*. Lit, "two chariot[s] of horses," apparently drawn by teams of two and three horses. Number of men assigned to the chariots is not actually specified.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 7:15 *Jordan*. C 20 mi E, the direction Syrians would flee on their way toward Damascus.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 7:16 *fine flour*. One word in Hbr. Ground wheat flour was more expensive than barley. See p 236. *according to the word of the LORD*. See p 971.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 7:17 *on whose hand he leaned*. See note, v 2. *man of God*. Elisha. *had said*. Cf v 2.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 7:18 See note, v 1.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 7:3–20 Ironically, the Lord works through helpless, outcast beggars to bring word to Samaria of His victory over Syria and to reveal the bounty of provisions left for the city. As God blesses you with bounty, act honorably and generously toward others, according to His Word. The Lord will fulfill His Word for your sake, providing for all your needs through Christ Jesus, the Lord (Php 4:19). • Lord, grant me a generous heart to share Your bounty and the good news of the promised mercy in Jesus, the bread of life. Amen.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 8:1–6 Result of one of "the great things that Elisha" did (v 4). When the king saw the son of the Shunammite woman "whom Elisha restored to life" (v 5; 4:8–37), he granted her request for the restitution of her property.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 8:1 *Now*. See note, 6:8. Not an account of another miracle but a conclusion to 4:8–37. *woman*. Elisha works with her rather than her husband, which seems unusual. A family or spiritual kinship likely stands behind these circumstances (cf 4:8–10). *household*. Not just their property, but their extended family. *sojourn*. See note, Gn 12:10. *famine*. See note, 4:38.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 8:2 *Philistines*. Isaac sought survival in their territory during a famine in his day (Gn 26:1). Cf Ru 1:1; see color map 2.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 8:3 *appeal*. During her long absence, her house and land evidently had been become the king's property by law.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 8:4 *Gehazi*. Incident took place before he became a leper (5:27). Through his servant, Elisha spoke on the Shunammite woman's behalf, as he had offered to do (4:13). *man of God*. Elisha.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 8:5 *the woman … appealed*. She had been waiting as Gehazi represented her.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 8:6 *produce*. Income that accrued from her property. See "portion," p 7.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 8:1–6 As Elisha had promised, he supports the Shunammite woman (4:13). Today, the Lord calls you as God's servant to make meaningful, thoughtful promises and to keep your word. Thanks be to God! He keeps His Word to us, granting us an inheritance with His Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior. • Lord, let my word be my bond, in imitation of Your integrity and compassion. Amen.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 8:7 *Damascus*. In the Syrian capital, Elisha carried out the task assigned to Elijah: "anoint Hazael to be king over Syria" (1Ki 19:15). See map, p 581. Acting in accord with divine revelation (2Ki 8:8–9), Elisha supported a revolt against Ben-hadad so that "Hazael became king in his place" (v 15).
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 8:8 *inquire*. See "call," p 842. *this sickness?* No doubt, the king knew that Naaman owed his recovery to Yahweh, Elisha's God.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 8:9 *forty camel loads*. Remarkable amount. *son*. Expression of humility. See p 555.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 8:10 Elisha gave a cryptic answer. The king would recover from his present illness but would nevertheless certainly die from another cause.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 8:12 Elisha carried out his mission regardless of his personal feelings in the matter. For the evil that he foresaw, cf 10:32–33; 13:3; 15:16; Hos 13:16; Am 1:3–4.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 8:13 *a dog*. Hazael registered surprise that a person of his low status should rise to royal heights. *great thing?* Hazael feels honored despite the prophet's description of brutal acts committed under his leadership.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 8:15 *he took*. Hazael took. *dipped it in water*. Water apparently swelled and thickened the cloth so that it could effectively suffocate the weak king.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 8:7–15 Elisha prophesies the death of Ben-hadad, the rise of Hazael, and the destruction of Israel through Hazael. The gruesome passage records the particular means and persons God used for judging rebellious Israel and brutal Ben-hadad. Elisha's tears illustrate the pain of God's heart over the sins and condemnation of His rebellious people. How difficult to apply God's Law when our hearts and God's heart long to show compassion! This text shows the seriousness of sin and its ravages against sinners. How dearly we need God's Word to well up our eyes with tears of sincere repentance and swell our hearts with genuine faith. The Lord can and does grant us such blessings through dearest Jesus.

• Penetrate my ears, O Lord. Break my hardened heart and flood my arid eyes. Teach me the need and use of Your Law that I may weep tears of joy at the sound of Your Gospel. Amen.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 8:16–29 Before resuming the account of Jehoram, king of Israel, begun in ch 3, the author inserts brief notices of two Judean rulers: Jehoram (vv 16–24) and Ahaziah (vv 25–29). The latter is introduced here because ch 9 relates how he and his Northern contemporary, Jehoram, came to be killed in a revolt led by the Israelite general Jehu. See p 529.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 8:16 *Joram*. In this period, the divided kingdom had rulers with the same name. In Israel, King Ahaziah had a Jehoram as successor; in Judah, the sequence was the reverse: a Jehoram was followed by an Ahaziah. The shortened form Joram occurs for the rulers in both kingdoms. The history of the Israelite Jehoram, begun in ch 3, was interrupted by a lengthy report of Elisha's activities (4:1–8:15).

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 8:18 *walked*. See p 7. *daughter of Ahab*. Athaliah (v 26). See note, 1Ki 3:1–2. *evil*. See note, 1Ki 16:30.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 8:19 *lamp*. See note, 1Ki 11:36; cf 2Sm 7:14–16.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 8:21 *Joram*. See note, v 16. *Zair*. In Judah.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 8:22 *to this day*. To the time when the sources of 2Ki were written. See note, Jsh 4:9. *Libnah*. City on the edge of Philistine territory c 23 mi SW of Jerusalem. Sennacherib's army would encamp there (19:8). See map, p 615.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 8:23 *Chronicles*. See p 335–37.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 8:24 See note, 1Ki 2:10.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 8:16–24 Though Judah binds itself to sinful Israel through a marriage alliance, the Lord does not yet snuff it out but continues in His promised mercy. Today, when temptation confronts you, do not test the Lord's patience by making peace with wickedness or ungodly relationships but pray that He would guide you through the Word into wholesome relationships. His Word is a lamp for your feet and enlightenment for life everlasting in Christ. • Enlighten us, Lord, by the light of Your Christ, and preserve Your people. Amen.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 8:25–26 Illustrates family connections between the two kingdoms. *Omri*. See note, 1Ki 16:22.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 8:27 See note, v 18.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 8:28 *Hazael*. God's chosen instrument of judgment against sinful Israel (v 12). *Ramoth-gilead*. See map, p 581.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 8:29 *Jezreel … Ramah*. See map, p 558. *Ahaziah … went down to see Joram*. Shows again the strengthening of the bond between Judah and Israel through their leaders.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 8:25–29 Ahaziah, king of Judah, marries into the family of Joram, king of Israel. They fight alongside each other, and Ahaziah visits Joram when he is wounded. Marriage, mutual defense, and visiting the sick are usually noble acts, blessed by God. But Ahaziah uses them to strengthen his bond with evildoers. Today, act with integrity, seeking what is good and fleeing what is evil. The Lord claims us as His family, not as we are, but through the call to repentance and through the forgiveness of sins in Baptism, making us the Bride of Christ (Eph 5:25–27). • O Savior, by the mystery of Your love and mercy, sanctify us as members of Your household. Amen.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 9:1–13 Jehoram, king of Israel, was fighting against Hazael, king of Syria, at Ramoth-gilead, where Ahab had opposed Ben-hadad (see note, 1Ki 22:3). While the battle was in progress, Elisha sent

"one of the sons of the prophets" to carry out the second task assigned to Elijah: to anoint Jehu "to be king over Israel" (1Ki 19:16).
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 9:1 *sons of the prophets*. See p 555. *Tie up your garments*. Tucked into the belt to free the legs for running. *Ramoth-gilead*. See map, p 581.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 9:2 *inner chamber*. Perhaps he was to act discreetly until things were settled with Jehu (vv 11–13).
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 9:3 *pour it on his head*. See note, 1Sm 10:1. *flee; do not linger*. Jehu would lead a violent coup, from which the prophet should distance himself.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 9:5 *in council*. Leaders of the Israelite army were considering the battle with the Syrians who occupied Ramoth-gilead (8:28).
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 9:6 *the people of the LORD*. Some Israelites still belonged to the Lord.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 9:7 *house of Ahab … avenge*. King Joram of Israel was descended from Ahab, whose wife Jezebel had led him into greater sin. See note, 1Ki 16:30; cf 1Ki 18:4, 13.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 9:8 *house of Ahab*. The Lord would do away with wicked Ahab's descendants just as He had cut off previous dynasties. Jeroboam, Israel's first king, had only one successor, who was murdered (1Ki 14:10, 20; 15:29). The fate of Baasha, the third king, and his son was similar (1Ki 16:3–4, 12–13). *every male*. See note, 1Ki 14:10. *bond*. Slaves were regarded as members of a master's household. See p 101.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 9:10 *fled*. See note, v 3.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 9:11 *mad fellow*. The way the prophet tore in and raced out drew suspicion. Jehu used a derogatory reference to put off his curious fellow officers. *the fellow and his talk*. Luth: "As [Isaiah] himself testifies in chapter 5 they put out their tongues at him and pointed their fingers at him; and except for a few devout children of God in the crowd, such as King Hezekiah, they all regarded his preaching as foolishness. For it was the custom among the people to mock the prophets and consider them madmen, … as has always happened to all servants of God and preachers, is happening every day, and will continue to happen" (AE 35:278).
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 9:12 *tell us now*. Jehu's fellow officers saw through his crass dismissal of the prophet. They may have anticipated the prophet's real purpose.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 9:13 *bare steps*. Lit, "the bone of the steps." The phrase suggests that the soldiers put their clothes on the stones much as flesh covers the bare skeleton of the body. When Jesus entered Jerusalem riding on a donkey (as Solomon rode a mule at his coronation), the people spread their garments before Him, acclaiming "the Son of David" as their king (Mt 21:7–9; cf 1Ki 1:32–34). Jehu's accession to the throne marked the end of the brief period of cooperation between the two kingdoms (see note, 1Ki 16:22). Much blood was to flow before Jehu's revolt had eliminated all possible sources of opposition. By Jehu's own hand, or on his orders, the following lost their lives: the king of Israel, Jehoram (vv 14–26); the king of Judah, Ahaziah, who was visiting his brother-in-law Jehoram (vv 27–29); Jezebel, queen mother of Israel (vv 30–37); "seventy sons" of Ahab, Jehoram's father (10:1–11); 42 relatives of Ahaziah (10:12–14); Ahab's remaining descendants (10:15–17); a templeful of Baal worshipers (10:18–27).

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 9:1–13 Elisha sends a "son of the prophets" to anoint Jehu ruler over Israel, to fulfill God's promise of judgment against the dynasty of Ahab. Just as this apprentice to the prophet fulfills his duty diligently, so fulfill your calling diligently in the Lord's name, no matter how others may dismiss it or jeer at you. God will fulfill His purpose for you and bless you with the strength for dedicated service, through Jesus Christ, who bore all your scorn and served you diligently for the sake of your salvation. • O Lord, swing wide the door of opportunity for me, that I may run to serve You in all confidence of Your Word. Amen.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 9:14–26 Trusting that the army was of a mind to support him, Jehu at once went c 45 mi W to Jezreel, where King Joram was recuperating from wounds sustained at Ramoth-gilead (8:28–29). Apparently not suspecting his commander of unfriendly intent, King Joram rode out. Jehu pierced his heart with an arrow. "In accordance with the word of the LORD" (v 26; 1Ki 21:19), his corpse was thrown on the plot of ground stolen from its former owner, Naboth (1Ki 21:1–19).

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 9:14 *Joram*. See note, 8:16.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 9:15 *let no one slip out*. Jehu would race to Jezreel to beat any messengers who might warn the king.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 9:17 *watchman*. See notes, Is 21:6–12. *tower in Jezreel*. Jezreel overlooked an important east-west pass in Israel's

highlands. From the tower, the watchman could see down the Valley of Jezreel toward the Jordan River plain c 12 mi away. *company*. Military unit.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 9:18 *horseback*. Israelites typically rode mules or donkeys, not horses, which were used for drawing chariots. But here the rider apparently mounts the horse itself. *Is it peace?* Rider may be inquiring about the war at Ramoth-gilead rather than Jehu's intentions. Jehu dismisses the man's concern and formal question in a manner that may have characterized him (cf v 11). *ride behind*. In order to keep his mission secret, he commanded the horseman, sent out from the city to meet him, to ride behind him.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 9:19 *second horseman*. Receives the same treatment as the first horseman (v 18).
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 9:20 *furiously*. Lit, "with madness." Jehu's fast and furious driving became proverbial.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 9:21 *went to meet Jehu*. Anxious for news of Ramoth-gilead, the kings left the security of the city. *property of Naboth*. Highly ironic, given that Jezebel (Joram's grandmother) had orchestrated Naboth's death in order to seize his property (1Ki 21:1–19).
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 9:22 *whorings*. By her Baal worship, Jezebel "whored after other gods." Biblical writers and Jesus do not mince words in describing unfaithfulness to God (Jgs 2:17; Jer 3:2; Hos 2:2–3; Mt 12:39; 16:4). *sorceries*. See note, Dt 18:10–11.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 9:23 *Treachery*. Joram knew from Jehu's answer what he intended to do.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 9:24 *shot … between the shoulders*. In some cultures, striking an enemy in the back is considered cowardly. Not so in ancient Canaan, as demonstrated by a Ugaritic myth about the victories of Baal.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 9:25 *his aide*. Chariots typically carried two or three warriors. *Naboth the Jezreelite*. See note, v 21. *behind Ahab*. In his retinue.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 9:26 *in accordance with the word of the* LORD. See note, 1Ki 17:22; see also p 971.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 9:27 *Ahaziah … fled*. Warned by his uncle's cry of "Treachery!" (v 23), the king of Judah escaped southward in the direction of Beth-haggan, c 7 mi S of Jezreel. A little farther south, near Ibleam and at an unknown ascent of Gur, Jehu's men wounded him. From there he backtracked c 10 mi NW to Megiddo. See map, p 558. According to 2Ch

22:9, the fugitive did not die until he made his way back to Samaria, where Jehu killed him. *And they shot him*. See ESV note. In the Tel Dan Stela, a victory monument, Hazael of Damascus credits his god Hadad for victory over Yahweh, Joram, and Ahaziah.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 9:29 *eleventh year*. A postscript, repeating in part the summary of Ahaziah's reign given in 8:25, according to which his accession occurred in the 12th year. For the different bases of computing the years, see pp xcii–xciii.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 9:14–29 The Lord's judgment against Ahab's household is fulfilled with vicious irony when Jehu shoots Joram and has his body cast into the vineyard of Naboth. The Lord will fulfill His Word of condemnation and also His Word of deliverance, removing a wicked ruler from over His people. He puts to death and gives life; to us who believe, He gives life everlasting in Christ. • Lord, give me life according to Your Word. Amen.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 9:30 *Jezebel*. Now a widow (cf 1Ki 22:29–40). *painted her eyes*. Eye shadow and other cosmetics were well known to women in the ancient world. See note, Jb 42:14. Groomed in her queenly finery as if she were about to hold court, Jezebel faced her executioners with iron nerve. *looked out of the window*. Phoenician ivory carvings depict women wearing headdresses looking out of windows. Perhaps there is some significance to this action.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 9:31 *you Zimri*. Proverbial for a traitor. More than 50 years earlier, Zimri assassinated Baasha, the third king of Israel (1Ki 16:8–10).

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 9:32 *eunuchs*. Servants whose testicles were removed so that they might oversee a king's harem without the risk of becoming romantically involved with the women. Could also describe an official who may not have had such an operation. See p 228.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 9:33 *horses*. Those driven by Jehu or others of his company. *trampled*. Startled horses rear and paw at what they perceive as a threat.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 9:34 *ate and drank*. Showing indifference for Jezebel's death. Trip had also been very long from Ramoth-gilead (cf v 14). *a king's daughter*. Her father was the king of Sidon.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 9:35–36 *bury her*. Violating the prophet's wording in v 10, anticipating future disobedience and evil (10:29). *dogs shall eat*.

Fulfillment of God's Word, spoken by Elijah. Similar gruesome account appears in Egyptian "Story of Two Brothers."

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 9:30–37 Jehu executes and disdains the body of Jezebel, the wicked queen mother of Israel. Despite Jehu's unwillingness to follow the Lord's Word completely (see note, vv 35–36), the Lord brought the prophecy to absolute completion through trampling horses and biting dogs. Not a letter of His Word shall fail! Though we fail, God's Word will and does succeed for His sake and for our sakes in Christ the Savior. • King of heaven, reign in justice and compassion for the sake of Your Church. Amen.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 10:1 *seventy sons*. Clearly, Jezebel was not Ahab's only wife. *Samaria*. Capital of Israel. *letters*. See p 1900.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 10:3 Jehu issued a challenge, forcing the guardians to come to arms or conspire against the young men in their care. The guardians of Ahab's 70 sons or grandsons realized that resistance to the conspiracy was useless.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 10:4 *two kings*. Jehoram, Ahab's son and king of Israel, and Ahaziah, king of Judah (9:24, 27).

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 10:5 *We are your servants*. They transferred their loyalty to the new dynasty and proved their loyalty by sending the severed heads of the former king's offspring to Jehu (v 7).

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 10:6 *great men*. The leaders.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 10:8 *two heaps*. So everyone could see that the coup had wiped them out.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 10:9–10 *who struck down*. Pretending to be surprised by the grisly heap of heads, Jehu pointed out to the turncoats that by their execution of "the house of Ahab" they now were irrevocably committed to his cause.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 10:10 *word of the LORD*. Cf 9:8.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 10:11 He killed all potential traitors.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 10:12 *set out*. Traveling from Jezreel. *Beth-eked*. Lit, "the house of binding," so named because shepherds bound their sheep there at shearing time.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 10:13 *relatives*. Next victims of the purge were 42 Judean relatives of King Ahaziah, whose father had married Athaliah, sister of the slain Israelite king Jehoram (8:18, 26).

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 10:14 *alive*. Perhaps to question them. *slaughtered them*. As Jehu proceeded to establish himself on the throne, his wholesale executions went beyond the directive of "the word of the LORD" (see note, v 17). Carried away by personal ambition rather than motivated by "zeal for the LORD" (v 16), God's appointed avenger of the house of Ahab (9:8) went so far as to provoke the Lord to say: "I will punish the house of Jehu for the blood of Jezreel" (Hos 1:4). Cf Is 10:5–19 for God's judgment of Assyria.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 10:15 *Jehonadab*. Descendants of Rechab (a Kenite like Moses' father-in-law, Jethro [cf Jgs 1:16]) were extreme in their opposition to the fertility cult of baalism. They opposed agricultural pursuits, particularly the growing of vineyards (Jer 35:6–10), believing that a return to a Bedouin way of life was Israel's salvation. Jehonadab believed Jehu's revolt was a step in the right direction. *give me your hand*. Welcoming him and drawing him into the chariot.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 10:16 *zeal for the LORD*. See note, v 14.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 10:17 Overall, Jehu fulfilled the prophecy as God had intended. However, in some matters he went beyond what God had said. See note, v 14.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 10:1–17 Jehu pretends to be zealous for the Lord's way, while disobeying the Lord's Word. Today, the Lord calls you to follow His Word deliberately, yet not as an excuse for cruel judgment against others. Even the condemnation of God's Law ultimately serves the peaceful, life-giving purposes of His Gospel, by which He forgives our sins and restores us. • Grant me a faithful heart, O Lord, to follow Your Word and see in it Your compassionate purposes. Amen.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 10:18–27 Jehu's treacherous cunning in luring the Baal worshipers to their death richly deserved the Lord's rebuke (Hos 1:4).
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 10:18–19 *serve him much … I have a great sacrifice to offer to Baal*. Ironic statements declare, yet hide, Jehu's deadly intent against the Baal worshipers, who had been close supporters of Ahab's dynasty. Cf 1Ki 16:31.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 10:19 *prophets … worshipers … priests*. Different orders of the religion.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 10:21 *all the worshipers*. Leaders, not simply every person who sacrificed to Baal. *worshipers*. Lit, "servants." *house of Baal*. A temple.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 10:22 *vestments*. Jehu used clothing to identify his victims.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 10:23 *no servant of the* LORD. Jehu likely hoped to make an alliance with those who followed the Lord. The Baal worshipers, as supporters of Ahab, had to be eliminated.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 10:24–25 *offer sacrifices*. In order to allay all suspicion, Jehu pretended to join in the worship of Baal. *inner room*. Similar to the Most Holy Place in the Jerusalem temple.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 10:26 *pillar*. Lit, "pillars." See note, Gn 28:18. *burned*. May have been made of wood. However, stone was a common medium for these pillar (massebah) stones, which could be cracked and destroyed by heating and cooling.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 10:27 *latrine*. Hbr introduces a more polite term ("sinks") for the public reading of the text.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 10:18–27 Through deception, Jehu wipes out more potential rivals, the servants of Baal, who were closely allied with Ahab's dynasty. Again, Jehu demonstrates his wit and taste for irony (cf 9:11, 34; 10:9, 19). How regrettable that this clever man did not put his talents to work for the sake of proclaiming God's Word. Rather than using your talents for personal gain, turn your God-given talents over to the Lord's service and the service of others. Christ, whose wit confounded His detractors, also spoke plainly the life-changing message of God's grace. • Dearest Jesus, teach me to love my enemies and declare to them Your promises rather than attack them with lies and weapons. Amen.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 10:28–29 Three main religions competed for the hearts of the Israelites: Baal worship, the worship associated with the golden calves (see note, 1Ki 12:28), and the worship of Yahweh. *did not turn aside*. Jehu did not receive a wholehearted endorsement (vv 28–31). He retained the golden calves and was excessive in overcoming opposition to his regime.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 10:30 *what is right in My eyes … in My heart*. The Lord commended Jehu only specifically for overthrowing Ahab's idolatrous house. *fourth generation*. Israel's next four kings were Jehu's descendants: Jehoahaz, J[eh]oash, Jeroboam II, Zechariah.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 10:32 *cut off*. Zeal for the Lord did not automatically guarantee outward success. During Jehu's reign, the Syrians overran Israelite territory "from the Jordan eastward" (v 33).

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 10:33 *Arnon*. River that empties into the Salt Sea almost midway between its northern tip and its southern extremity. See map, p 615.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 10:34 *Chronicles*. See p 335–37.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 10:35 See note, 1Ki 2:10.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 10:28–36 Despite Jehu's excesses, the Lord grants him a long reign and a four-generation dynasty. The Lord tolerates unjust rulers when it serves His purposes of judgment and it is for the good of His people. Pray for your leaders, that they may be not only successful but also just and righteous. Your just and righteous leader, the King of heaven, will hear your pleas and answer according to His good purposes and according to the mercies of Jesus. • Preserve Your Church, O Lord. Deliver and grant all nations faithful, peaceful leaders. Amen.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 11:1 *Athaliah*. Ahab's daughter, the mother of Ahaziah, slain by Jehu (9:27–28). *destroyed all the royal family*. Made herself sole ruler. She almost succeeded in eliminating all possible contenders for the throne, including her own grandchildren. She may have learned such brutality from her father's wife, the infamous Jezebel.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 11:2 *Jehosheba*. We are not told whether she survived the purge. *Joash*. Ahaziah's infant son escaped the purge because his aunt Jehosheba hid him (vv 1–3). *king's sons*. Likely the focus of the purge (v 1). *nurse*. A wet nurse. *a bedroom*. Hbr denotes an inner chamber at the palace, which may have been used for sleeping, for storing bedding, or even as a restroom.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 11:3 *six years*. He was a mere infant when hidden (cf v 21). Joash would have been weaned at age 3 or 4. *hidden in the house of the* LORD. Joash stayed in the priestly quarters of the temple.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 11:1–3 The bloody dynastic practices of pagan nations and of the Northern Kingdom of Israel erupt in Judah through Athaliah. Amid this vicious purge, the Lord preserves the house of David and the renewal of faithful worship by protecting Joash through his aunt Jehosheba. As an aunt or uncle, commend your nieces and nephews to the Lord's care by looking out for their welfare, praying for them, and turning them over to the security of the Lord's house. As the Lord preserved the house of David, from which Jesus would be born, so He will through the Word preserve and nurture the treasured members of your family. • Lord,

grant unity and peace in our families on the basis of Your Holy Word and a common confession of Christ. Amen.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 11:4 *Jehoiada*. A faithful priest, perhaps a high priest. *Carites*. Name suggests that Athaliah's bodyguards were recruited in Caria in Asia Minor. Hbr consonants composing "Carites" and "Cherethites" are similar. For the latter, see note, 2Sm 15:18. *covenant … oath*. See p 6–7.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 11:5–7 Not every detail of the plot is clear. *off duty*. Jehoiada planned to have on hand a double detachment of Levites (2Ch 23:8) and of temple guards. On a certain Sabbath Day, the groups going off duty were to reinforce the contingents coming on duty. By deploying "the two divisions" (v 7) at strategic places, Jehoiada isolated the surprised queen from her supporters. He was also able to surround the king with a sufficiently strong bodyguard.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 11:6 *gate Sur … gate behind the guards*. Locations unclear.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 11:7 *the king*. Joash.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 11:8 *out … in*. No matter where he goes.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 11:10 *spears … shields*. The temple contained a treasury, which here served as an armory.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 11:11 Sizable number lined up in the temple court area.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 11:12 *crown*. The king for God's people was confirmed by God's prophets or priests (cf 1Sm 16:12–13; 1Ki 1:38–39). *the testimony*. Copy of the Law. The crown and the Law were the insignia of the royal office (cf 1Ki 2:3).

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 11:13 *Athaliah … went*. Without a trace of fear, she faced the crisis as defiantly as Jezebel greeted her executioners (9:30–31). *the people*. See note, v 19.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 11:14 *by the pillar*. Perhaps on a dais. *all the people*. Hyperbole. People were broadly represented. *tore her clothes*. See note, Jb 1:20.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 11:15 *between the ranks*. Soldiers lined the path. *not be put to death in the house of the* LORD. To avoid desecrating the sacred place.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 11:16 *horses' entrance*. Apparently the entrance closer to the temple court, where the king or guests brought up their

chariots. *king's house*. The palace, which stood nearby and downhill from the temple.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 11:17 *covenant*. They solemnly pledged to observe the provisions by which God had agreed to constitute Israel as His "treasured possession among all peoples" (see note, Ex 19:5). See p 127.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 11:18 *people of the land*. See note, v 19. *the house of Baal*. Located in Judah, perhaps even Jerusalem. *Mattan*. Priest of Baal whom Athaliah had imported from Israel for the promotion of the Phoenician idol worship, which her mother, Jezebel, had introduced from her homeland (1Ki 16:31–33). *watchmen*. To guard against a reverse coup. Cf Is 21:6–12.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 11:19 *Carites*. See note, v 4. *people of the land*. Recurring expression (vv 13, 18) seems to refer to a particular segment of the population, very likely the landowners. Cf 21:24; 23:30, 35; 25:19; see p 228.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 11:20 *city was quiet*. Revolt against the power of foreign domination had popular support. There was no wholesale bloodshed such as Jehu instituted in Israel (chs 9–10).

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 11:4–20 Through a covenant promise, the Lord emboldens Jehoiada, the Carites, and the guards to place David's heir, Joash, on his rightful throne. As the Lord gives you strength, work with His servants to secure the good of His people. God's Word and promise are the basis of our unity and strength in Christ. • Grant Your people, O Lord, unity in faith and purpose to withstand all evil. Amen.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 12:1 *forty years*. A boy king of 7 years when he began to reign, J[eh]oash was only 47 when "his servants … struck him down" (v 21). *Zibiah of Beersheba*. From Judah's southernmost city. She must have perished in Athaliah's purge (11:1). See map, p 615.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 12:2 *all his days, because Jehoiada*. Or, "as long as Jehoiada" (cf 2Ch 24:2, 17–18). *instructed*. The Hbr verb is the basis of "Law" (*torah*). See p 971.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 12:3 Reforms by other kings were likewise only partly successful. *high places*. See p 526.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 11:21–12:3 Through faithful instruction, the Lord's priest Jehoiada leads Joash to have a long and blessed reign. As the Lord grants you opportunity, faithfully instruct the children in your charge through God's Word, which alone can lead to a good and hopeful life. The

Lord, who Himself studied, learned, and grew as a child, will strengthen and support you in this loving work, even as He forgives your weaknesses and covers your sins. • Teach me to walk in Your ways, O Lord, and to guide young people in the paths of truth. Amen.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 12:4 *money of the holy things*. General term for all money set aside for sacred purposes, which included the required temple tax and freewill contributions. (Cf Ex 30:11–16 for the religious poll tax; cf Ex 35:5; Lv 27:1–8 for regulations regarding voluntary offerings.) *heart prompts him*. See note, Ex 35:29.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 12:5 *priests … donor*. Priests were to collect funds from those laypeople with whom they were personally acquainted. According to 2Ch 24:5, there was a solicitation among all Israel. *donor*. Occurs only here and in v 7. If it refers to a fellow officiant in the temple, then the priests were also to ask their associates to contribute to the fund.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 12:6 Corruption may have hindered the work (cf v 15).

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 12:7–8 King was concerned about the waste of the people's generosity.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 12:7 *donors*. See note, v 5.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 12:9 *a chest*. In Jesus' time, there was a receptacle in the temple for special contributions ("the treasury," Mt 27:6). Jehoiada placed the chest "beside the altar" of burnt offering that stood in a courtyard outside the temple proper (2Ch 24:8). *priests*. Apparently a different group from the collectors in v 8. *guarded the threshold*. Watching the entry to the temple. See notes, 23:4; 1Ch 9:17–33.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 12:11 *workmen who had the oversight*. A new, more honest group (cf v 15).

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 12:13–14 *not made*. At first, all collected money was necessary to make structural repairs. After these were completed, funds continued to come in, with which "were made utensils for the house of the LORD" (2Ch 24:14).

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 12:16 *guilt offerings and … sin offerings*. See notes, Lv 4:3; 5:15–16; Nu 18:8.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 12:17 *Gath*. To reach this Philistine city, c 25 mi SW of Jerusalem, the Syrian king had swept down from the north "throughout the territory of Israel" (10:32).

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 12:18 Tribute was paid, to pursue peace. Pious King Asa had to resort to the same humiliation (1Ki 15:18). *treasuries*. See note, 1Ch 26:20–28.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 12:4–18 The Lord's house receives much needed attention from Jehoash, Jehoiada, and other faithful servants. Care for sacred duties is an act of worship, just as surely as the singing of a hymn or the saying of a prayer. Today, regard the church offerings and your church property with due diligence. By the Word of His house, the Lord will instruct you in faith, life, and the way of salvation. • O Savior, I offer back to You what You have first so generously provided to me. Continually bless me by Your Word. Amen.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 12:19 *Chronicles*. See p 335–37.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 12:20 *house of Millo*. Hbr, "Beth-millo"; see notes, Jgs 9:6; 2Sm 5:9. *Silla*. Location unknown.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 12:19–21 Joash, who began so well, comes to a sorrowful end because he departs from the Lord's way. Through faith, let the end of your life honor your Savior and your heritage. Jesus, who abides with you always, will day by day forgive your faults and deliver you from temptation. His instruction and presence are everlasting. • O Lord, let Your mercies be new for me every morning to the end of my days. Amen.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **Ch 13** Before taking up the reign of Amaziah, the next king of Judah (12:21; 14:1–22), the author turns to two contemporary rulers in the Northern Kingdom: Jehoahaz (vv 1–9) and J[eh]oash (vv 10–25).

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 13:2 *sins of Jeroboam*. See note, 1Ki 12:28.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 13:3 *Hazael*. Cf 1Ki 19:15–17. *Ben-hadad*. Not the same as in 1Ki 20.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 13:4 *sought the favor of the* LORD. Not necessarily in repentance (cf v 6), but an acknowledgment that Israel had given offense to the Lord. *favor*. See p 6.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 13:5 *a savior*. Hbr *moshia'*. See note, Jgs 3:15; see also p 380. Israel was saved from oppression by the Syrians because the Syrians had to defend their eastern borders against inroads by the Assyrians. The situation is ironic, since the Assyrians would later take Israel into exile. This relief from Syrian pressure was evident particularly under the next two Israelite kings: Jehoash (v 25) and Jeroboam II (14:27). See note, Jgs 3:9.

homes as formerly. Refugees from the wars returned to the border towns that the Syrians had overrun.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 13:6 *sins of … Jeroboam*. See note, 1Ki 12:28. *Asherah*. See note, Ex 34:13.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 13:7 *ten chariots*. Israel's military strength had all but vanished. According to Assyrian records, Ahab had once been able to field a cavalry contingent of 2,000 chariots. *like the dust at threshing*. Useless, fine dust that was normally blown away or burned. See note, Ps 1:4.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 13:8 *Chronicles*. See p 335–37.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 13:9 See note, 1Ki 2:10. *Joash*. Or, "Jehoash" (vv 10–25).
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 13:1–9 In dire threat from the Syrians, Jehoahaz is one of the few Israelite kings to seek the Lord's favor. God's favor is ever available, especially for those who sincerely repent of their sins (which Jehoahaz failed to do). The repentant will not have a savior like the Assyrians but will have the true Savior, Christ Jesus, who bears away our sins and establishes an eternal homeland for us. • Savior Jesus, have mercy on me according to Your surpassing favor. Amen.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 13:10 *Joash … Jehoash*. King of Judah (ch 12) and the king of Israel had the same name: Jehoash. Both are known also by the shorter form Joash (12:19).
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 13:11 *sins of Jeroboam*. See note, 1Ki 12:28. *walked*. See p 7.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 13:12 *against Amaziah*. Cf 14:8–14 for the battle between the two kings. *Chronicles*. See p 335–37.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 13:13 See note, 1Ki 2:10.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 13:10–13 Jehoahaz walks in his forebears' ways and renews war with Judah, using the respite from Syria to multiply his sins. God's mercy is abused most when used as an opportunity to do evil. As the Lord has mercy on you, exercise mercy and kindness toward others. His mercy is the dearest treasure of His great and gracious reign, by which He grants forgiveness for your sins. • Lord, grant me opportunities for faithful service and the heart to act on them. Amen.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 13:14 *fallen sick*. Some 50 years had passed since Elisha had helped put Jehu on the throne (9:1–13). Now old and stricken

with a fatal illness, he had one more message to deliver. *My father*. See p 555. *The chariots of Israel and its horsemen!* See note, 2:12.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 13:16 *laid his hands on the king's hands*. Expressing a bond with the king and a blessing of the deeds committed with his hands. The gesture symbolized that the arrow became "the LORD's arrow of victory" (v 17) because divine power was transmitted to the king. (For other symbolic acts, see notes, Jsh 8:18; 1Ki 22:11; cf Jer 19:10–11.) See p 1220.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 13:17 *Open the window*. Elisha freed the king to make the shots. *Aphek*. Various sites bore the name, which in Hbr means "fortress" (see note, 1Ki 20:26). This Aphek probably was located east of the Sea of Chinnereth.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 13:18 *Strike … with them*. Elisha refers to shooting all the arrows. *three times and stopped*. Rather than making an "end of them" (v 17).

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 13:19 *five or six times*. Shooting to the end of the quiver. The strikes represent victorious battles against Syria.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 13:20 *bands of Moabites*. Raiders, seeking spoil or slaves. *spring*. See calendar, p 262.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 13:21 *thrown*. Placed hastily. *grave of Elisha*. Burials were in caves or tombs, where numerous corpses would be placed. *bones*. Corpses would decay down to the bones in about a year. The bones would be lying on a bench, where another body might be laid. See p 1651. *revived*. A resurrection amid a decaying kingdom, oppressed by Syrian armies, raiders, and unfaithful rulers. The Lord works one last miracle through Elisha, a shocking illustration that the Lord is the master of life and the future. Ambr: "Why should we wonder … that flesh returns to the bones [in the resurrection], when we remember the dead raised by the touch of the prophet's body?" (*NPNF* 2 10:187).

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 13:22 *oppressed*. Or, "had oppressed." The servile condition of Israel under Joash's predecessor is recalled in contrast with the freedom promised in v 17.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 13:23 *gracious … compassion*. Chem: "It is correct to say that grace is mercy. For the word *cha¯nan* is translated this way by the interpreters, and the word 'to have mercy' is often joined with [it]" (*LTh* 2:524). See p 842. *covenant*. Writer reaches back past David to the beginning of Israel as a people chosen and blessed by God. In their rebellion and failure, their heritage wears away down to the first promise

from God, which became the last basis of hope. *presence until now*. At the time this passage was written, Israel still stood as a people. See note, Jsh 4:9.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 13:24 *Ben-hadad*. See note, v 3.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 13:14–25 The end of Elisha's life signals lingering hope for the Israelites as the Lord's covenant people. But it also signals the loss of their last great prophet, whose service kept them connected to the Lord. When matters appear hostile or even hopeless, remember that the Lord is gracious and compassionate. He cannot forget you and will not cast you aside. • Revive me, O living Savior; draw me to Your side as Your beloved child. Amen.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 14:1 History of Southern Kingdom, which ended at 12:21 with the note that Amaziah succeeded Joash, his assassinated father, now resumes.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 14:3 *not like David*. Kingdom would continue to erode.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 14:4 *high places*. See p 526.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 14:5 *struck down*. See note, 1Ki 2:31.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 14:6 *Book*. The Five Books of Moses are treated as a unit. See pp 3–5.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 14:7 *Edomites*. They had "revolted from the rule of Judah" some 50 years before, during the time of Joram of Judah (8:20–22). By defeating the Edomites, Amaziah opened the trade routes south to Elath on the Gulf of Aqaba (v 22; cf 1Ki 9:26–28 for Solomon's use of this port). *Valley of Salt*. Marshy region near the Salt Sea. See map, p 500. *Sela*. Lit, "rock," later known by its Gk name "Petra." *Joktheel*. Probably meaning "vanquished by God." *to this day*. Time when Edomite campaign was recorded, which author of Kings cites. See note, Jsh 4:9.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 14:8 *look … in the face*. Meet face-to-face, perhaps for the sake of a political marriage and treaty. On Israel-Judah relations, see notes, 1Ki 3:1–2; 16:22; 22:4.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 14:9 *A thistle*. Similar fable was told by Jotham (cf Jgs 9:8–15). *cedar*. Representing Jehoash of Israel, who magnifies himself against Amaziah.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 14:10 Jehoash's response likely indicates that Amaziah's request included assertion of rights to the throne of Israel.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 14:11 *Beth-shemesh*. C 15 mi W of Jerusalem. See map, p 615.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 14:12 *every man fled*. A full retreat.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 14:13 *Ephraim Gate*. On north side of Jerusalem; opening on a road to Ephraim. *Corner Gate*. At northwest corner of Jerusalem's wall.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 14:14 *seized … the vessels*. Plundering the temple showed disregard for the Lord. *hostages*. Lit, "sons of the pledges," held for ransom.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 14:15 *Chronicles*. See p 335–37.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 14:16 See note, 1Ki 2:10.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 14:18 *Chronicles*. See pp 335–37.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 14:19 *they*. Conspirators are never identified but likely included leaders of Judah who disapproved of Amaziah's disastrous policy. (Amaziah was not said to have the counsel of God's prophets.) Since kings were not impeached, assassination was a common means for changing policy. *Lachish*. C 35 mi SW of Jerusalem. See map, p 615.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 14:20 Apparently, the conspirators arranged for a respectful state funeral.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 14:21 Although Amaziah and his father were victims of assassination, the Davidic dynasty continued. In the Northern Kingdom, assassinations led to new ruling houses. See notes, 1Ki 15:33; 16:7.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 14:22 *Elath*. Cf 1Ki 9:26. *slept with his fathers*. See note, 1Ki 2:10.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 14:1–22 Amaziah serves the Lord, yet he overestimates his power and tries to gain influence in the kingdom of Israel, which defeats him. Faith is not a guarantee of success. Pride leads to downfall. Enact your plans with reflection on God's Word, with prayer, and with wisdom from God. The Lord watches over those who are His and welcomes them by faith as noble children of His everlasting kingdom. • Lord, grant me the wisdom of Your Word, along with bold faith, that I may serve You with peace of mind and enduring hope. Amen.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 14:23–29 Only seven verses are devoted to the long and politically noteworthy reign of Jeroboam II.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 14:24 *sins of Jeroboam*. See note, 1Ki 12:28.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 14:25 *restored the border*. During Jeroboam II's reign, both Syria and Assyria were too weak to prevent the extension of his domain as far north as Lebo-hamath (see note, 1Ki 8:65) and as far south as the Sea of the Arabah (Salt Sea). The prosperity that followed this expansion brought moral degeneracy, social evils, and religious corruption, which in turn called forth vehement denunciations and dire threats of punishment by the prophets Amos (Am 2:6–8) and Hosea (Hos 4:1–2). *the* LORD, *the God of Israel*. See p 1227. The Lord had not given up on the Northern Kingdom but continued to send them true prophets. *Jonah*. The international situation that made possible Jeroboam's rise to power was not an accident of history. The Lord of the nations made it known in advance through the same prophet whom He chose to bring a message of repentance to the Assyrians. *Gath-hepher*. Israelite town north of Nazareth. See map, p 1479.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 14:26 *affliction … bitter*. Constant attack from Syria, rivalry with Judah, and internal strife decimated them. *none left, bond or free*. Israel so lacked proper leadership that God had to raise up Jeroboam II if the people were to continue. *help*. See note, Ps 72:12–14.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 14:27 *blot out*. Cf 8:19. *saved*. See "salvation," p 843.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 14:28 *Damascus and Hamath*. Portions of these kingdoms formerly belonged to Judah. Jeroboam II exercised authority far to the north, reaching back to the glory of David's and Solomon's reigns. See map, p 609. *Chronicles*. See p 335–37.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 14:29 See note, 1Ki 2:10.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 14:23–29 The Lord grants Israel an opportunity to reestablish its kingdom through Jeroboam II, as prophesied by Jonah. The Lord again shows remarkable patience for His rebellious people on the basis of His promises and compassion, proclaimed in Dt 32. If members of your family have wandered from the faith they professed before the Church, do not stop praying for them or proclaiming the Word to them. With the Lord there is great compassion, and His promises uphold us. • Lord, grant restoration to those who wander. Grant me patience as I pray for them and wait on You. Amen.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 15:1–7 *Azariah*. Long reign of Judah's next king (52 years), also called Uzziah (vv 13, 30, 34), is allotted no more space than his contemporary Jeroboam II in Israel received (14:23–29). In Azariah's case

also, there is no record of his political and military activity, even though he extended the borders of Judah so that the territory of the two kingdoms at this time approximated the size of David's empire (14:22; 2Ch 26:6–15). Though the writer cites material prosperity as an example of spiritual blessing, as happens with Solomon (1Ki 3), he consistently leaps over examples of material prosperity to press his greater case: the Lord of history keeps His covenant promises. (See notes, 1Ki 16:22, 25, 27.)

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 15:4 *high places*. See p 526.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 15:5 *touched*. Or, "struck," implying punishment. *a leper*. Account in 2Ch 26 states that the Lord touched him with this disease because he usurped the priestly function of offering incense in the temple.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 15:7 See note, 1Ki 2:10.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 15:1–7 Azariah prospers with God's blessing but also faces His judgment, which brings isolation. Prosperity or sin can divide you from the Lord and His people. Repent daily and focus on the Word, which will prosper you in God's mercy, wisdom, and love. Rejoice in your freedom to gather with the saints for prayer and to receive the Word and the Sacraments, the greatest treasures. • O Lord, whether my house is full or bare, fill my heart with love of Your Word and my mouth with praise for Your saving name. Amen.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 15:8 *Zechariah*. Not the prophet who lived c 225 years later (Zec 1:1).

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 15:8–31 Covers 22 years of Israelite history. During these turbulent times, following the vigorous reign of Jeroboam II, no fewer than five kings laid claim to the throne. One maintained himself only a month; three were assassinated; only one succeeded his father.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 15:9 *sins of Jeroboam*. See note, 1Ki 12:28.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 15:10 *struck him down*. Zechariah was the last descendant of Jehu, fulfilling the Word of the Lord that Jehu's sons were to sit on the throne of Israel to "the fourth generation" (10:30). *Ibleam*. See note, 9:27.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 15:11 *Chronicles*. See p 335–37.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 15:12 See note, v 10.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 15:8–12 During Zechariah's reign, the Lord returns to judgment against Israel, ending Jehu's dynasty, as He had said. Earthly prosperity and power are at the Lord's discretion, to add or remove according to His purposes. Therefore, do not entrust your future to your

strength or the strength of your family. The Lord alone is your strength and salvation. • O Lord, look upon me with favor, and preserve my life and family by grace. Amen.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 15:13–14 Shallum, Zechariah's assassin, was struck down by another conspirator, Menahem, who put down all resistance with the most barbarous atrocities (v 16; Hos 13:16; Am 1:13).
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 15:14 *Tirzah*. Onetime capital of Israel, replaced by Samaria (1Ki 16:24).
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 15:15 *conspiracy*. To usurp the throne. *Chronicles*. See pp 335–337.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 15:16 *Tiphsah*. Allotted to Ephraim (Jsh 17:8), this city was located c 15 mi S of Tirzah. See note, 1Ki 14:17; see also color map 3. *did not open*. They would not surrender to his reign. *ripped open*. Brutality, intended to destroy the city's next generation. See note, 8:12; cf Hos 13:16.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 15:13–16 Shallum, the conspirator, has a remarkably short reign. Divided loyalties in Israel lead to even greater brutality. When you experience frustration or rejection, do not resort to violence but take your frustrations to the Lord in prayer. His counsel will deliver you from the heat of anger and calm your troubled spirit. • Jesus, grant me passion for all that is good, but deliver me by Your Passion from all that is evil, and grant me peace. Amen.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 15:17 *Menahem*. Mentioned alongside other kings in a tribute list for Tiglath-pileser III of Assyria.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 15:18 *sins of Jeroboam*. See note, 1Ki 12:28.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 15:19 *Pul*. Assyrian king Tiglath-pileser (v 29), known in Babylon as Pul, reigned 744–728 BC. With his help, Menahem was able "to confirm his hold on the royal power," ending the bloody rivalry for the throne. Six years after Pul's death, the Assyrian army was to capture Samaria and crush Israel's independence. See map, p 609.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 15:20 *exacted the money*. A property tax. *fifty shekels*. To make up the required sum of "a thousand talents of silver" (v 19), more than 50,000 "wealthy men" had to each contribute c $30. (See p cx.) This general prosperity was soon to end.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 15:21 *Chronicles*. See pp 335–37.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 15:22 See note, 1Ki 2:10.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 15:17–22 Assyria, the kingdom by which the Lord will eventually punish Israel with exile, now appears and takes tribute. Israel would fall within a generation's time. God's people should not put off repentance. Instead, learn to lead your children and grandchildren in a life of repentance, based on God's Law and promised mercy in Christ. For the Lord is merciful to a thousand generations of those who love Him. • Send now Your mercy, dear Father. Please do not delay. Turn our hearts, and draw us to You in Christ. Amen.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 15:23–25 Conspiracies and infighting continued in the Northern Kingdom. After occupying the throne for only two years, Pekahiah lost his life in another military coup. Pekah, who conspired against him, in turn was struck down by Hoshea (v 30), the last of the Israelite kings.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 15:25 *his captain*. This was a military coup. *Gilead*. East of the Jordan, where Assyria would threaten first. See color map 2. The Gileadites likely served as the king's bodyguards. *citadel*. In this part of "the king's house," Zimri, an earlier contender for the throne, also died a violent death (1Ki 16:18). *Argob and Arieh*. Aides who died with their king.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 15:26 *Chronicles*. See pp 335–37.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 15:23–26 Under pressure from Assyria, the Israelites once again conspire against their king, Pekahiah, and establish yet another vulnerable rule. When times are difficult, you may feel tempted to turn on those close to you, but that will only bring further despair. Instead, turn to the Lord in prayer, requesting peace and unity through the Gospel, which unites God's people through Baptism in His name and communion in His Supper. • Lord, remove from us every conspiracy for human power. Move us to pray for one another and to support one another in peace. Amen.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 15:27 *twenty years*. Chronology of this period presents particularly serious difficulties. See p 529.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 15:28 *sins of Jeroboam*. See note, 1Ki 12:28.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 15:29 Pekah and his Syrian ally Rezin, whose land formed a buffer state between Israel and Assyria, tried to put a stop to Tiglath-pileser's conquests by forcing Judah into an alliance against their common enemy. Despite this maneuver, briefly noted in v 37 and further explained in 16:5–17:5, Tiglath-pileser overran Israelite cities and territories on both sides of the Jordan. *captive to Assyria*. Deportation of inhabitants

from invaded territories, initiated by Tiglath-pileser, was designed to break their resistance to the conqueror.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 15:30 Samaria and the adjacent area retained some semblance of independence under the next Israelite king, Hoshea. However, he ruled only by the will of his Assyrian overlord (17:3). Tiglath-pileser III recorded that he placed Hoshea on the throne and exacted 10 talents of gold and 1,000 talents of silver from him as tribute.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 15:31 *Chronicles*. See pp 335–37.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 15:27–31 Assyria begins to dismantle Israel during the reign of Pekah and carries away the first captives. The bondage the Israelites experienced in Egypt returns to them because they reject God's Word. In our lives too, rejection of God's Word leads to bondage. Through the Word of Christ, God sets us free. • Deliver me, O Savior, and grant me life according to Your Word. Amen.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 15:32 *Jotham*. Before continuing the story of Hoshea and the end of Israel (ch 17), the author resumes the account of Judah's kings where he left it in 15:1–7. Jotham, the first of these kings, receives the same kind of short notice accorded all kings mentioned in this chapter (vv 32–38).

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 15:33 *Zadok*. Famous name, elsewhere associated with the priesthood, though no further details are given about this individual.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 15:35 *high places*. See p 526. *built*. Repaired. *upper gate*. Cf 11:19; Jer 20:2. *house of the* LORD. The temple.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 15:36 *Chronicles*. See p 335–37.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 15:37 Pressure on Judah by this northern coalition began to build up during Jotham's reign; its full thrust came in the days of his son Ahaz (16:5–17:5). Syria and Israel cajoled Judah to join them against Assyria. (Assyrian records show that Rezin was the last true Syrian ruler at Damascus. He was already a vassal to Assyria.) Pressure comes in the form of temptation for Judah to trust in human resources rather than in the Lord.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 15:38 See note, 1Ki 2:10. *David his father*. Judah's stability, rooted in God's promise to David (2Sm 7), offers an important contrast with the instability of Israel.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 15:32–38 King Jotham of Judah faces pressure from the kings of Syria and Israel, who tempt him to focus on human

alliances and strength rather than on the Lord. God, of course, is not opposed to alliances, friendships, or trust between His subjects. Indeed, He calls us to faithfulness in such relationships. Yet, He places the greatest importance on trust in His salvation. He is our greatest ally against misplaced faith and false saviors. • Jesus, author and perfecter of my faith, lead me to do what is right in the eyes of the Lord. Amen.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 16:2 *his father David*. All Judean rulers were compared with David, the ideal king and founder of Judah's dynasty.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 16:3–4 Record leaves no doubt that Ahaz rivaled the northern kings in wickedness. He engaged in all "the despicable practices" of Canaanite Baal worship (vv 1–4).

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 16:3 *burned his son*. Offering him to an idol (see ESV note). Cf 2Ch 28:3, where Hbr verb "to burn" is used; see also the account of human sacrifice by the king of Edom (2Ki 17:31). Ahaz's grandson Manasseh likewise "burned his son as an offering" (21:6). Such a practice was typically associated with the gods Chemosh and Molech. See p 403. Luth: "Reverence and fear constitute the true and God-pleasing worship. If Abraham had killed his son because of foolish zeal and with contempt for the Word of God as Ahaz did (2 Kings 16:3), it would indeed have been myrrh, that is, a difficult and painful sacrifice that distresses the heart. But God does not look at the outward work; He looks at the heart itself" (AE 4:100). *despicable … nations*. In Dt 12:31, Moses warned the Israelites not to adopt the practice of the Canaanites, who "burn their sons and their daughters in the fire to their gods" (cf Jer 7:31; 19:4–5; Ezk 16:20; 20:31). *the* LORD *drove out*. See notes, Jsh 3:10; 23:9.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 16:4 *high places*. See p 526. *under every green tree*. See note, Ex 34:13.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 16:5 *wage war*. Cf 15:29 for the reason behind this so-called Syro-Ephraimitic war, which also was the occasion for the Immanuel prophecy (Is 7).

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 16:6 *king of Syria*. LXX has "King of Edom." Hbr words for Edom and Aram (Syria), which originally had no vowels, are composed of consonants that look similar (see note, 3:26). Earlier, Uzziah had defeated the Edomites; Elath, the southern port city, had been occupied by Amaziah (see notes, 14:7, 22). *Edomites came to Elath*. Perhaps the Edomites were allied with Syria and gained by their ally's victories in the

north; they were likely contending with Judah over sources of copper. *to this day*. See note, Jsh 4:9.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 16:7 *your son*. See p 555.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 16:8 *a present*. Tribute. See note, Jgs 3:15.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 16:9 *Kir*. Probably a city on the Euphrates, where they had sojourned before they migrated farther north and east (Am 9:7).
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 16:10 *Damascus*. Capital of Syria; lay across the conqueror's path into Israel. Tiglath-pileser therefore "marched up against Damascus and took it" (v 9) before he overran Israel (15:29). Ten years later, Israel's capital, Samaria, would be captured by the Assyrians. *model of the altar*. After receiving aid from Tiglath-pileser in his struggle against the kings of Israel and Syria (vv 5–9), Ahaz also had an Assyrian altar erected in the Jerusalem temple (vv 10–18). Ahaz manifested abject submission to Tiglath-pileser by giving the worship of the Assyrian idol a place in the Jerusalem temple.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 16:12 *went up on it*. The altar was significantly elevated. Cf Ex 20:26.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 16:14 *bronze altar*. Made by Solomon (1Ki 8:64). It lost its place of prominence to the replica of "the great altar" of the Assyrian god Asshur, whose worship the conqueror already had established in the former Syrian capital (2Ki 16:14–15).
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 16:15–16 As happened under Jeroboam in Israel, Ahaz corrupted and replaced the true worship of Yahweh with false worship. Uriah's complicity shows the weakness and corruption of the Levitical priesthood. Daily sacrifices would now be offered to another god.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 16:15 *offering of all the people*. Ahaz dragged the nation into his sin. *inquire by*. The apostate king may have gone so far in desecrating the bronze altar as to use it for examining entrails of sacrificial animals for good or bad omens, a mode of divination used also by the king of Babylon (Ezk 21:21). However, he may have retained it for inquiring of the Lord, mixing religions as happened in Israel.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 16:17 See notes, 1Ki 7:23, 26, 27.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 16:18 *he caused to go around*. Unclear why structural changes were made in the temple "because of the king of Assyria," i.e., in deference to him.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 16:20 See note, 1Ki 2:10.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **Ch 16** After generations of relatively faithful rulers, Judah is led badly astray by Ahaz, who is cowed by the pressures from Israel, Syria, and Assyria. In savage irony, the wicked King Ahaz, who sacrifices his son to a false god, would receive the sign of Immanuel that announced the coming of the Son of God, our Savior (Is 7:10–25; 9:6–7; 11:1–9). At all times—even the worst of times—the Lord has us and our salvation on His heart. • Deliver us, O Lord, from wicked leaders who would corrupt or impede the offerings and praise of Your dear people. Amen.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 17:1–23 End of Hoshea's short reign also marked fall of Samaria and dissolution of Northern Kingdom. Brief description of events leading up to this catastrophe (vv 1–6) is followed by a longer review of the reason why this calamity befell Israel. From the time God brought the chosen people up from Egypt, they "despised His statutes and His covenant" (v 15), "provoking Him to anger" (v 17). The Lord was very patient with His apostate children. "But they would not listen" (v 14) when He repeatedly called them to repentance. Finally, their measure of iniquity was full. "Very angry with Israel," He "removed them out of His sight" (v 18), as He had spoken by all His "servants the prophets" (v 23).

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 17:2 *not as the kings of Israel*. How Hoshea's evil differed is not explained. Likely, he did not practice the religion introduced by Jeroboam. See note, 1Ki 12:28.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 17:3 *vassal … tribute*. To prevent invasion.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 17:4 *treachery*. According to Assyrian records, Hoshea's conspiracy against Pekah succeeded because he accepted support from Tiglath-pileser (15:29–30). When the latter's son Shalmaneser came to the throne, the Israelite puppet king did not remain a tribute-paying vassal for long. Misled by a promise of help from Egypt (which never came), he threw off the Assyrian yoke. *So*. No pharaoh by that name has been found in Egyptian records. It may represent a transliterated Egyptian common noun meaning "vizier"; the sentence would then read "he had sent messengers to the vizier of the king of Egypt." *king … prison*. Shalmaneser lost no time in putting down the insurrection by imprisoning Hoshea.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 17:5 Archaeological surveys of Samaria and its major cities attest to the total destruction wrought by the Assyrians.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 17:1–5 Hoshea, the last king of Israel, placates the Assyrians, conspires against them, and even resists them for three years.

All of these strategies fail to save the kingdom. All human efforts to hold on to God's blessings and promises—embodied here in the Promised Land—are doomed to fail. Israel received God's call and blessings by grace through faith, which is the only way we receive God's blessings still today. • O Lord, I cannot by my own reason or strength attain and hold Your blessings. Grant them all to me by grace in Christ. Amen.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 17:6 *king of Assyria*. In his annals, Shalmaneser's successor, Sargon (721–705 BC), takes credit for destroying Samaria. He claims to have taken 27,280 captives into exile, no doubt the upper social stratum. Broader calculations from Assyrian records for Tiglath-pileser III and Sargon II total c 50,000 deportees from Israel to Mesopotamia. *Halah*. Unidentifiable site. *Gozan*. City on the Habor River, which empties into the middle Euphrates. *cities of the Medes*. South of the Caspian Sea. See map, p 609. Here, the so-called "lost tribes" lost their national identity. Most of them were integrated with the population of their new homes.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 17:6 Settled in distant lands, the northern tribes are more or less lost to history. Speculators have proposed numerous accounts of what happened to them. Some groups have even claimed to be Israel's descendants. All such theories have proven false and fruitless. The Lord has erased the heritage of these rebellious people. The enduring heritage of the OT passed from Judah, through Jesus, the Son of David, to all people who would receive the promises and blessings of God by grace. • Preserve Your Word and heritage among us, O Lord, from generation to generation. Amen.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 17:7–23 Summarizes major issues and theological themes.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 17:7 *this occurred*. Disappearance of Northern Kingdom and later the fall of Jerusalem (vv 19–20) were the result of God's direction of world history. Proud, cruel Assyria was unaware that it served God's purpose. It was the rod of His anger on a people who did not keep His covenant (Is 10:5–19). *feared*. See p 1001.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 17:8 *walked*. See p 7. *customs*. Elsewhere translated "statutes." See p 971. *the nations whom the LORD drove out*. Canaanites. See notes, Jsh 3:10; 23:9.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 17:9 *high places*. See p 526. *from watchtower to fortified city*. See note, 18:8.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 17:10 *pillars … Asherim*. See notes, Gn 28:18; Ex 34:13.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 17:13 *prophet … seer*. See note, 1Sm 9:9. *Turn*. See p 1080. *commandments … statutes … Law*. See p 971. *sent … by My servants the prophets*. Not only the preaching but also the writings that would finally be gathered as Scripture. This summarizes the appeal for repentance that the prophets consistently preached, a message firmly rooted in God's Word as recorded in the Books of Moses (Scripture at that time) and the Lord's revelations in connection with Scripture. See p 320.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 17:15 *covenant*. See p 127. *false idols*. Lit, "vanity." See note, Ec 1:2.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 17:16 *metal images of two calves*. See note, 1Ki 12:28. *Asherah*. See note, Ex 34:13. *host of heaven*. Astral deities; worship of them was forbidden. Cf Dt 17:3; see note, Dt 4:19. *Baal*. See note, Nu 25:3.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 17:17 *burned*. See note, 16:3. *divination and omens*. See note, Dt 18:10–11. *sold themselves*. Free people could sell themselves as slaves to pay off debt. See notes, Ex 21:2–7.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 17:18 *Judah only*. Tribes of Benjamin and Simeon were more or less absorbed by Judah to form the Southern Kingdom called "Judah." Many Levites would also have dwelt there because of the Jerusalem temple. See map, p 615.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 17:19 *walked*. See p 7.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 17:20 *afflicted*. Not just in punishment by the Assyrians but throughout Israel's history.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 17:22 *sins that Jeroboam did*. See note, 1Ki 12:28.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 17:23 *Israel was exiled*. Main group was taken in 722 BC. *until this day*. Time when record was written on which the author of Kings drew for this account. See note, Jsh 4:9.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 17:7–23 The Lord allowed Israel to fall and go into exile as a warning to all generations of believers. The NT, too, warns us to guard our doctrine and life lest we fall away from the Lord. God calls us to teach His Word faithfully to each generation, emphasizing His Law (by which the Lord leads us to daily repentance) and His promises of the covenant in Christ (by which He grants us everlasting salvation). • "Help us Your holy Law to learn, To mourn our sin and from it turn In faith to You and to Your Son And Holy Spirit, Three in One." Amen. (*LSB* 865:2)

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 17:24 *brought people*. Deportation of the inhabitants and importation of foreigners was designed to break the spirit of nationalism in occupied countries. Archaeological surveys at Samaria show the Assyrians ending their policy of destruction and beginning reconstruction for the new settlers. Intermarriage between the remaining Israelites and the heathen newcomers produced "the Samaritans" (v 29; see p 1557). *Babylon, Cuthah, Avva, Hamath, and Sepharvaim*. Eastern regions conquered by the Assyrians. Some locations are unknown. See map, p 609.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 17:25 *fear the* LORD. See p 1001. *lions*. Asiatic lions. Through creation, God displays His displeasure with the pagan settlers.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 17:26 *god of the land*. Ancient people typically believed in local deities or spirits, which inhabited a place. Though the Promised Land was special to the Lord, the people failed to see that He was also Lord of all creation. See note, 1Ki 20:23.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 17:27–28 The Lord tolerates and works with the foreigners' misunderstanding, that they might learn His Word. See note, Ex 12:19.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 17:29 *gods of its own*. Although the repatriated priest taught the immigrants how they should fear the LORD (v 32), they "also served their own gods" (v 33) whom they had worshiped in their homeland. They came from widely separated places: from Babylon south of Assyria to Hamath in northern Syria. Their gods also represented a motley assortment, some of whom have not been identified (vv 30–31).
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 17:30–31 List includes Babylonian, Elamite, and unknown gods.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 17:32 *high places*. See p 526.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 17:33–34 *fear the* LORD. By their syncretistic religion, the new settlers thought "they feared the LORD," but their religion was displeasing to Him, as was Israel's agelong failure to have no other gods besides Him (Ex 20:3).
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 17:34 *To this day*. See note, v 23. *statutes … rules … law … commandment*. See p 971.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 17:35 See note, Dt 32:39.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 17:35–40 An aside, rehearsing essential features of the covenant established under Moses with Israel, which the priest (v 28) would need to teach to the people.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 17:41 *these nations*. After condemning Israel's past unfaithfulness (vv 34b–40), the writer returns briefly to the mixed worship of the Samaritans. By the time of Jesus, they no longer "served their carved images." See "Samaritans," p 1557. *to this day*. See note, v 23.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 17:24–41 Through a priest and teaching about the covenant, the Lord reaches out to the people settled in Israel. The Lord had commanded Israel to deal graciously with sojourners and to teach them the faith and practices of the true God (see note, Ex 12:19). He would have us deal kindly and patiently with sojourners and guests among us, proclaiming to them God's Law and Gospel, by which the Lord consecrates for Himself a people. • Lord, grant me an open heart to share Your Word and patience with those who know little about You. Lead our congregations to focus on this important mission. Amen.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **Chs 18–25** Story returns to the kings of Judah and the kingdom's ultimate downfall under the Babylonians.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **Ch 18–20** *Hezekiah*. Fall of Northern Kingdom occurred in the early part of the reign of Hezekiah, the pious son of wicked Ahaz (18:9–10). Six more kings were to occupy the throne of Judah. Chs 18–19 tell what happened when Hezekiah "rebelled against the king of Assyria" (18:7), whose vassal he had become after the fall of Samaria.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 18:2 *twenty-five years old*. Hezekiah's father was only 36 when he died (16:2). *Zechariah*. Likely not the prophet who wrote the Book of Zechariah.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 18:4 *high places*. See p 526. *pillars … Asherah*. See notes, Gn 28:18; Ex 34:13. *the bronze serpent*. Hezekiah's reform was more thorough than that of his predecessors. He even broke the bronze serpent to which the people burned incense as if it were an idol, perhaps a symbol of fertility or healing. See note, Nu 21:9. *Nehushtan*. Combination of Hbr words for serpent and bronze.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 18:5 *trusted*. Hbr *batach*, rarely used in 1 and 2Ki but is used repeatedly in ch 18 for the story of Hezekiah. *God of Israel*. See p 1227.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 18:6 When Israel went into exile, the Lord raised up an exceptional king for Judah who was well acquainted with the Law of Moses.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 18:7 *the LORD was with him*. See "be with," p 5. *wherever he went*. To war. *rebelled*. Results of his rebellion are given in

18:13–19:37. Actually, Jerusalem almost shared Samaria's fate, briefly recalled (vv 9–12).

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 18:8 *struck down the Philistines*. Events mentioned in the introductory survey of Hezekiah's reign (vv 1–8) are not dated. His campaign against the Philistines may have been an attempt to force the coastal cities to join him in his rebellion against the Assyrians. *Gaza*. See map, p 615. *from watchtower to fortified city*. Battlements small and great, an expression that may describe the military outposts along the Judean hills. See note, 2Ch 11:5.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 18:9–10 Provides a link from the earlier history (17:6) to the setting for 18:13–19:37.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 18:1–12 The Lord raises up Hezekiah to guide Judah through its most challenging moment, facing the great Assyrian Empire. Like Hezekiah, you are to trust and serve the one true God without compromise, presenting a positive testimony of His grace. The Lord will support you in the face of every obstacle, equipping you through His Word (v 6). • "I am trusting Thee to guide me; Thou alone shalt lead, Ev'ry day and hour supplying All my need." Amen. (*LSB* 729:4)

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 18:13 *fourteenth year*. According to Assyrian records, this was 701 BC, which in turn should have been Hezekiah's 28th year, for according to vv 9–10, Samaria's fall (722 BC) took place in the sixth year of his reign. Likely, his first 14 years are here reckoned as a period before he assumed sole regency. *Sennacherib*. Succeeded Sargon to rule Assyria (704–681 BC). In his annals, he relates how after four years he was able to deal with rebellious groups in the west, including Hezekiah. According to Assyrian records, when Sennacherib held a rally of his vassals to gather tribute, Hezekiah and a few rulers did not attend. *fortified cities*. Judah's line of defense along the hill country. There may have been as many as 46.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 18:14 *Lachish*. Strongly fortified city, c 28 mi SW of Jerusalem, guarded the main road from the lowlands up to Judah's capital. See map, p 615. Before proceeding to Jerusalem, Sennacherib took time to capture Lachish, not wanting to have a center of resistance at his rear. *I have done wrong*. He had resisted Assyrian demands for tribute. *impose*. Tribute to assure peace. A relief depicting the siege records Sennacherib reviewing the tribute. Archaeological remains at Tell ed-Duweir show the Assyrian siege ramp and a counterramp raised by the

Judeans. Sennacherib's records boast the conquest of 46 Judean settlements during the campaign and the deportation of c 200,000 people.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 18:15–16 *gave him all the silver*. Still safe behind Jerusalem's walls, Hezekiah sent Sennacherib a huge amount of gold and silver, apparently with the understanding that nothing beyond payment of tribute was expected of him (vv 13–18). To make the tribute payment, Hezekiah even stripped the gold foil off the recently repaired areas of the temple.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 18:17 *Tartan … Rab-saris … Rabshakeh*. Not personal names but titles of Assyrian officials. A tartan was also the commander in chief for Sargon, Sennacherib's predecessor. See note, Is 36:2. *great army*. 185,000 men. Cf Is 37:36. *conduit of the upper pool*. Here, outside the city, Isaiah had tried in vain to persuade Hezekiah's father, Ahaz, that the Lord was able to avert a threat to Jerusalem. A well-known site at the time, it can no longer be identified with certainty. *Washer's Field*. See note, Is 36:2.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 18:18 Hezekiah sent top-ranking men of his cabinet to meet Sennacherib's delegation. Such officials aided the kings since the days of Solomon (1Ki 4:1–6).

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 18:19 *this trust of yours?* See note, v 5. Assyrian official maligns Hezekiah's greatest quality.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 18:20 *mere words*. See note, 19:7. *rebelled against me?* Cf v 14. The tribute had not satisfied Sennacherib.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 18:21 To rely on Egypt for help was as foolish as leaning for support on the crushed stalk of a marsh plant. The last king of the Northern Kingdom learned this lesson too late (17:4–6). Trust in Egypt proved to be a fatal mistake also in Judah's policy (Is 31:1–3).

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 18:22 The Assyrian argued that Judah could not expect divine intervention because Hezekiah had curtailed rather than promoted the worship of the national deity. Later, he blatantly mocked the living God with the blasphemous claim that even if the Lord would put all His power at Hezekiah's disposal, He would not be able to "deliver Jerusalem" out of Sennacherib's hand (vv 30, 35; 19:4, 10). *high places*. See p 526. *saying to Judah*. The Assyrian was fully informed about Hezekiah's policies, intimidating the king with his intimate knowledge. He perhaps implies the use of spies or citizens who defected to Assyria.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 18:23 *set riders*. Even if Egypt supplied the horses, Hezekiah did not have the manpower to set riders on them.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 18:24 *captain*. Minor governing official.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 18:25 See note, Is 36:10.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 18:26 *Aramaic*. The kingdom of Aram or Syria did not attain world power by force of arms. However, its Semitic dialect became the language of international diplomacy, understood by government officials but not by the common people. After the Babylonian captivity, Aramaic replaced Hebrew even on the popular level. A few Aramaic words spoken by Jesus are preserved in the NT (Mk 5:41; 15:34). *language of Judah*. Hebrew language. *people … on the wall*. Troops on the ramparts were straining to listen to the negotiations. Hezekiah's officials feared that their troops would be demoralized by the Assyrian's rhetoric.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 18:27 *doomed*. Threatening a severe famine because of the siege. *dung … urine?* The Assyrian demonstrates a knowledge of vulgar Hbr terms. Later, scribes placed more polite terms in the margins of manuscripts so the text could be read aloud in synagogues without giving offense.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 18:28–35 The Rabshakeh tried to convince the people that their only hope of survival was surrender to Sennacherib. Even if they were exiled, life would be agreeable, at least preferable to death by starvation in the doomed city.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 18:30 *trust*. See note, v 5. *deliver*. See p 842.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 18:31 See note, Is 36:16.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 18:32 See p 236. *take you away*. The Assyrian promises a pleasant location for their exile. *The LORD will deliver us*. The Assyrian knows about or anticipates the king's encouragement and faith. See p 842.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 18:34 *Hamath … Arpad … Sepharvaim, Hena … Ivvah?* See notes, 17:29, 30–31; Is 36:19.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 18:36 *silent*. People show solidarity with their king.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 18:37 *clothes torn*. See note, Jb 1:20; cf 2Sm 3:31; Jer 41:5; Jl 2:13.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 18:13–37 An Assyrian official shows disdain for Hezekiah, but the people demonstrate their steady trust in their faithful king. At times, we may grow discouraged that there are no good leaders left. Be assured: the Lord always leads His people and can raise up faithful

leaders for them. Pray for your leaders, entrusting them to Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd. He will faithfully lead you in the way of peace. • Trustworthy Lord, bless our leaders with faith, discernment, and courage to stand up for what is right. Amen.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 19:1 *tore his clothes*. See note, Jb 1:20. *sackcloth*. See note, Jb 16:15. *house of the* LORD. The temple courts. Disaster seemed inevitable, but Hezekiah was a man of faith and prayer.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 19:2 *senior priests*. The high priest and leaders of the priestly families. *Amoz*. Not to be confused with another prophet, Amos. Cf 16:5–9; Is 7:12 for Hezekiah's father, Ahaz's, failure to trust in the Lord.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 19:3 *distress … rebuke … disgrace*. Hezekiah fears that the Lord is forsaking them. *no strength to bring them forth*. See note, Is 37:3.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 19:4 *your God*. Hezekiah feels isolated. He speaks as though Isaiah has a special connection with the Lord that he, the king, does not have. *mock the living God*. Hezekiah detects a weakness in the Assyrian's appeal. *remnant*. People of Judah would have fled into Jerusalem for safety from marauding Assyrian soldiers.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 19:5 *servants*. See note, v 2.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 19:6 *reviled Me*. Hezekiah's hunch was right. The Lord had taken offense.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 19:7 *put a spirit in him*. The Lord would set in motion a feeling of fear in his heart. *rumor*. Hbr word is usually translated "report" or "news." The Assyrian had mocked Hezekiah for fighting with "mere words" (18:20). The Lord plans to defeat the mighty Assyrian with just that.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 19:1–7 Through Isaiah, the Lord comforts Hezekiah and promises to defeat the mocking Assyrians with a mere word. Do not mock God or misuse His name! He regards words greatly and will answer you according to your words. Though His Word of rebuke has deadly force, His Word of comfort has life-giving force, as He demonstrated at creation and in the Gospel of His Son, our King. • Speak, O Lord, for Your servant is listening. Instruct me from Your Word. Amen.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 19:8 *Libnah*. Judean fortress southwest of Jerusalem. See map, p 615. *Lachish*. See note, 18:14.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 19:9 *heard*. The rumor God promised (v 7). *Tirhakah*. General and brother of a ruling pharaoh of the Twenty-fifth

(Ethiopian) Dynasty, who later became king in his own right (690–664 BC). There is no record that the two armies actually met in battle. *Cush*. See color map 3. *sent messengers*. While awaiting the approach of an Ethiopian (Egyptian) army, Sennacherib was still hoping to convince the hard-pressed king of Jerusalem that it would be suicidal to continue the defense of the city.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 19:10 *trust*. See note, 18:5.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 19:11 *devoting them to destruction*. See p 6. The Assyrian increases the threat to Jerusalem.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 19:12 *gods of the nations*. Sennacherib claimed that the idols of the peoples whom he defeated were no match for the Assyrian gods. The cities and areas mentioned here are in part those cited on the Rabshakeh's first visit to prove how futile it was to resist his master (18:34). Some cities have not been identified. See notes, 17:29–31. *Eden*. Likely a state on the upper Euphrates known in extrabiblical sources as Bit-'Adinni.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 19:8–13 The Lord shakes the Assyrian's confidence with a report about the Egyptians coming to Judah's aid. Today, have confidence in God's Word, though scoffers and critics may despise it. What the Lord promises, He performs and works salvation for all who trust in Him. • Grant me life, O Lord, according to Your Word. Amen.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 19:14–19 Contrast Hezekiah's response with Israel's in 17:14–17. Hezekiah's prayer is rooted in Yahweh's uniqueness.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 19:14 See note, Is 37:14.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 19:15 *enthroned above the cherubim*. See note, Ezk 10:1; see also p 495. *You alone*. Thorough denial of Sennacherib's assertion that idols directed the fate of "the kingdoms of the earth." See note, Dt 6:4.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 19:16 Hezekiah appealed to the only "living God," the Creator of heaven and earth, who had condescended to reveal Himself to Israel, "enthroned above the cherubim" (v 15) of the ark of the covenant (see notes, Ezk 10:1; Ex 25:18–20; Nu 7:89; 1Ki 8:12). *mock the living God*. See note, v 4.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 19:18 Cf Dt 4:28; 28:36, 64; 29:17; Is 44:9–20; Ezk 20:32 for descriptions of other gods as nothing more than "wood and stone."

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 19:19 *save us*. See "salvation," p 843. *the earth may know*. Jerusalem's deliverance would demonstrate to all kingdoms of the

earth that the world conqueror, who had cast the gods of the other nations into the fire, could not "mock the living God" (v 16) with impunity (Ex 14:18; Ps 92:5–9).

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 19:14–19 Placing Sennacherib's words before the Lord, Hezekiah asks the Lord to distinguish Himself from the idols of the nations. When you pray, appeal to the Lord on the basis of His Word, which describes His unique attributes. The Lord will hear your prayer for Jesus' sake and will answer faithfully. • O Lord God, please save us, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that You, O Lord, are God alone. Amen.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 19:20 *Amoz*. See note, v 2. *sent*. Likely a letter; cf v 14. *prayer … heard*. Since Isaiah's earlier promise of divine help (vv 5–7), the situation had become more desperate. In answer to Hezekiah's continued pleading, the prophet again assured him that his prayer had been heard.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 19:21–28 *the LORD has spoken*. Literary form of prophetic utterance called a taunt or mocking song (cf Is 10:5–11). Addressing the Assyrian with devastating irony, Isaiah deflates his blasphemous arrogance. "The Holy One of Israel," whom Sennacherib "mocked and reviled" (v 22), will force the overconfident conqueror to retreat to his homeland, leading him like an animal by a hook in his nose or a bit in his mouth (2Ch 33:11; Ezk 19:4).

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 19:21 *you*. Singular. A personal message to Sennacherib that also applies to his army. *virgin daughter of Zion … Jerusalem*. Even the little girls would feel confident in mocking the Assyrians. However, see note, Ps 48:11 for a different understanding of the expression. See p 1079. *wags her head*. Gesture expressing contempt. Jesus suffered the same kind of derision (Mt 27:39).

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 19:22 *the Holy One of Israel!* See p 1227.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 19:23–24 See note, Is 37:24–25.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 19:24 Sennacherib did not actually invade Egypt. He merely prided himself that he could overcome all resistance also in that land.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 19:25 See note, Is 37:26.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 19:27 *I know*. See note, Is 37:26.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 19:28 *hook … bit*. Tools used to control animals and slaves. See note, Am 4:2.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 19:29 See note, Is 37:30.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON 19:30 *remnant*. See note, Is 37:31.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 19:31 *zeal*. See notes, Ex 20:5; Is 37:32.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 19:34 *My own sake*. In order to be true to His promises, which He gave to His servant David (2Sm 7:4–17). See "for Your name's sake," p 842.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 19:35 *angel of the* LORD. At the time of the exodus, the Lord sent "the destroyer" into every Egyptian home to smite its firstborn. The angel of the Lord executed judgment at David's time by means of a pestilence. It is possible that he slew the Assyrian army by employing the same means. See p 1227. Luth: "It is well known that at the time of King Hezekiah the angel of the Lord killed 185,000 Assyrians in a single night and by a single assault (2 Kings 19:35). And Christ praises the might of the angels when He tells Peter (Matt. 26:53) about the twelve legions, although a single angel would have been enough to turn back and destroy the enemies of Christ. Indeed, the story of Job proves that even the wicked angels are endowed with great power. It is profitable to know these facts; they serve to comfort the godly but to frighten the ungodly. For we who believe must be certain that the princes of heaven are with us, not one or two, but a great multitude of them, as is recorded in Luke that the heavenly hosts were with the shepherds (Luke 2:13)" (AE 3:270).
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 19:36 See note, Is 37:37.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 19:37 See note, Is 37:38.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON 19:20–37 The Lord mockingly explains for Hezekiah how He planned for the rise and fall of Sennacherib to fulfill His purposes. When headlines disturb you, take comfort in the truth that all the intrigues of the nations and politicians are subject to the Lord's plans for His creation and Church. The Lord responded to Hezekiah's prayer for the sake of His promise to David, Hezekiah's ancestor and the forefather of Jesus, our Savior. He will likewise respond to our prayers. • O Lord, in Your zeal, deliver us from evil. Grant us all confidence in prayer. Amen.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **20:1–11** The Lord answered Hezekiah's prayer in another matter. He received divine help not only in national calamity (chs 18–19) but also in personal affliction. His recovery from a fatal illness likely occurred during the Assyrian invasion (20:6, 19).
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **20:1** *house in order*. Prepare the successor to your throne.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **20:2** See note, Is 38:2.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **20:3** *remember*. Wrestling with the Lord in prayer, as Jacob did (Gn 32:22–32), Hezekiah holds the Lord to the oft-repeated covenant promise that those will "live long" who "walk in all the way that the LORD … has commanded" (Dt 5:33; see also the promise attached to obedience to parents, Dt 5:16). In his song of praise after his recovery, the king confesses his need of forgiveness for "all my sins" (Is 38:17), thus disavowing any self-righteous claim to God's goodness. Cyr Jer: "Take heed lest without reason you mistrust the power of repentance…. Hezekiah did not desist from repentance; but remembering what is written, *When you shall turn and lament, then shall you be saved* [Is 30:15], he turned to the wall" (*NPNF* 2 7:11). *walked before You*. See p 7. *whole heart*. Lit, "heart of peace"; content.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **20:4** *middle court*. Apparently a location within the palace.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **20:5** *father*. See note, Is 38:5. Aph: "Hezekiah prayed, and was healed of his sickness; Jesus prayed, and arose from the abode of the dead. Hezekiah after he arose from his sickness added to his years; and Jesus after His Resurrection received great glory. Hezekiah, after the prolongation of his life, death was given dominion over him; but Jesus, after that He rose, death shall not again have dominion over Him for ever" (*NPNF* 2 13:398).
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **20:7** *figs*. Still used for medical purposes in the Near East. *boil*. Serious infection during an era lacking antibiotics.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **20:8** *sign*. Evidently, Hezekiah requested the sign before the cure (v 7) took place. Isaiah had rebuked Hezekiah's father, Ahaz, for refusing to ask for a sign (Is 7:10–14).
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **20:11** *back ten steps*. Normal recording of the sun's progress on "the steps of Ahaz" was reversed. Apparently, the phenomenon was observed only locally (2Ch 32:31). An outer stairway may have been

built in such a way as to let the sun's shadow appear on various levels as the day wore on, or something like a sundial could be meant. See note, Is 38:8.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **20:1–11** The Lord heeds Hezekiah's prayer and heals him. At times, people wonder whether prayer really matters to God, as He already knows all things and what will happen. This passage removes any excuse for holding your tongue in the hour of need. Call on the Lord, as He invites you to do, and trust, like faithful Hezekiah, that the Lord indeed hears and answers for His mercy's sake, which He has revealed to us in Christ. • O Lord, remember me, and hear my daily requests for the sake of Your promises through Jesus. Amen.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **20:12** *At that time*. Perhaps c 712 BC. As in the case of Hezekiah's illness and cure (vv 1–7), his reception of the Babylonian embassy is not supplied with a definite date. Though this incident occurred after Hezekiah's sickness, its relationship to the Assyrian invasion (chs 17–18) is not clear. Hezekiah had not as yet emptied his treasure house of its silver and gold (18:15). *Merodach-baladan*. This Babylonian ruler gathered a coalition of several nations against Assyria in 703 BC. *letters and a present to Hezekiah*. Hezekiah's recovery from illness was only a diplomatic window dressing for the real purpose of the mission. The Babylonian envoys came to enlist support in the west for a resistance movement against Assyrian domination. Hipp: "Merodach the Chaldean, king of Babylon, being struck with amazement at the time [which changed (v 11)]—for he studied the science of astrology, and measured the courses of these bodies carefully—on learning the cause, sent a letter and gifts to Hezekiah, just as also the wise men from the east did to Christ" (*ANF* 5:176).

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **20:13** Hezekiah displayed the resources that he could contribute to a joint attempt to throw off the Assyrian yoke (vv 12–15).

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **20:14–15** *Isaiah … came*. Prophets could serve as court counsel. See pp 1077–83. *What … where … What*. Prophet boldly questions the king, a testimony to their close relationship and to Isaiah's determination to lead the king in seeing his error.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **20:17–19** Isaiah reproved the king for pride in his own strength and trust in a foreign alliance. Sennacherib's invasion was soon to teach the vain king the futility of his boasting. Ironically, the very

nation enlisting his cooperation would, in 587 BC, carry off the treasures and inhabitants of Jerusalem to its land of Babylon.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **20:18** *eunuchs*. See note, Is 39:7. Hbr word translated "officer" in Gn 37:36; 1Ki 22:9; 2Ki 8:6. In some instances, these men were castrated. Cf Est 2:3; see notes, 2Ki 9:32; Is 56:3. Castration would directly threaten the Davidic dynasty, though the Lord would prevent the total loss of the family. Aph: "The Kingdom of the Son of Man shall be established, an eternal Kingdom…. Be quiet, O you [ruler] that does exalt yourself; vaunt not yourself! For if your wealth has lifted up your heart, it is not more abundant than that of Hezekiah, who went in and boasted of it before the Babylonians, (yet) it was all of it carried away and went to Babylon. And if you glory in your children, they shall be led away from you to the Beast, as the children of King Hezekiah were led away, and became eunuchs in the palace of the King of Babylon" (*NPNF* 2 13:354).

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **20:19** *Why not … in my days?* His self-centered response, showing little regard for his descendants, seems shocking. Perhaps he hoped that if God postponed the disaster, He could be moved to avert it entirely if the next generation would truly repent.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **20:20** *conduit*. Summary of Hezekiah's reign specially mentions the tunnel he made through solid rock from Gihon Spring outside Jerusalem to the Pool of Siloam within the city's walls. More than 1,700 ft long, this amazing engineering feat was discovered in 1838. On its wall is a Hbr inscription of Hezekiah's day, telling of the tunnel's construction. *Chronicles*. See pp 335–37.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **20:21** See note, 1Ki 2:10.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **20:12–21** Hezekiah displays unusual callousness in a spiritual matter, gladly accepting a prophecy condemning his descendants. When you consider the future, curb the pride you take in this hour and take pride in faithful sons and daughters who trust in the Lord and honor His calling and grace. The Lord will not fail to show mercy toward all who trust in His goodness. • Lord, speak Your good Word to me, my children, and my grandchildren, that we may know Your everlasting peace. Amen.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **21:1** *twelve years*. Hezekiah enjoyed a comparatively long reign, so it seems odd that he would not have an older successor. No further information is given.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **21:2** Hezekiah hoped in vain for a successor who, by wholehearted devotion to God, might save Jerusalem from the doom pronounced upon it by Isaiah (20:16–19). The 55-year rule of his son Manasseh was longer and more wicked than that of any king of Judah. Nevertheless, a little more than half a century was to elapse before divine judgment engulfed the city (2Ch 33:10–13). *despicable practices*. See notes, 16:3; Dt 18:10–11. *nations whom the* LORD *drove out*. Canaanites. See notes, Jsh 3:10; 23:9.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **21:3–6** Manasseh's "despicable practices" (v 2) ran the whole gamut from baalized worship of the Lord on "the high places" to unabashed adoption of the fertility idols of Canaan and the veneration of the heavenly bodies, imported by the Assyrians.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **21:3** *high places*. See p 526. *Baal … Asherah … host of heaven*. See notes, 17:16; Nu 25:3; 1Ki 14:24. *Asherah*. Could describe an image of the goddess, a wooden pole that symbolized the goddess, or a place sacred to her, such as a tree or grove. See note, Ex 34:13.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **21:5** *two courts*. See p 842.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **21:6** *burned his son*. See note, 16:3. *fortune-telling … omens … mediums … necromancers*. See note, Dt 18:10–11.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **21:7** *put My name*. Cf Dt 12:5. Tragically, Manasseh despised God's graciousness by putting an idol in the very place God had put His name for Israel.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **21:9** Either hyperbole or a reference to additional gods and deities that the Canaanites had not known. Cf 17:30–31.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **21:1–9** Ironically, faithful Hezekiah leaves his throne to the worst king in Judah's history, Manasseh, who had 55 years to thoroughly corrupt the people. Make parenthood and family among your highest priorities, by which you may serve not only this generation, but generations to come. The Lord makes you and your family the object of His love and mercy in giving His one and only Son for you. • By Your grace, O heavenly Father, bless and keep my family in the one true faith unto life everlasting. Amen.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **21:10** *prophets*. See p 1077–83.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **21:11** *Amorites*. Pre-Israelite inhabitants of the Promised Land. Sometimes used as a general term for the various racial groups of Canaan (cf Gn 15:16, 21). See p 345.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **21:13** *measuring line … plumb line*. Instruments used in erecting buildings to make them conform to predetermined specifications. Judah will discover that its fate will correspond with measured exactness to the words of threat here uttered (24:3–4). *Samaria … Ahab*. End of Ahab's dynasty and destruction of Samaria were warnings that the Lord's condemnation of apostasy should not be ignored.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **21:14** *remnant of My heritage*. Judah. See "portion," p 7.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **21:16** *much innocent blood*. Like Jezebel, Manasseh persecuted the prophets; like Ahab, he stooped to judicial murder whenever a citizen stood in his way (1Ki 18:4; 21).
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **21:17** *Chronicles*. See pp 335–37.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **21:18** See note, 1Ki 2:10. *garden of Uzza*. I.e., summer house; part of Manasseh's palace outside Jerusalem. See note, v 26.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **21:10–18** During Manasseh's reign, the Lord determines to do away with the kingdom of Judah. He does not yet reveal how this will happen. Today, rather than test God's patience, make daily repentance part of your life. For such repentance to be faithful and not just routine, cling to the teachings of God's Word, which shows you your sins and the ways of God's heritage. The Lord will prosper you in His way and regard you as His dear child. • Merciful Father, You are our shield and portion. Preserve Your heritage, we pray. Amen.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **21:20** *did what was evil*. Amon continued his father's policies.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **21:21** *walked*. See p 7.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **21:22** *way*. See p 844.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **21:23–24** Amon was assassinated after reigning only two years. However, his servants or courtiers did not succeed in seizing the throne. "The people of the land" (see note, 11:20) slew the conspirators and perpetuated David's house by making "Josiah his son king in his place."
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **21:24** *struck down*. Countercoup.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **21:25** *Chronicles*. See pp 335–37.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **21:26** *garden of Uzza*. For some reason, Amon and his father were not buried "in the city of David" with their predecessors but in a private, unidentified tomb (see note, v 18; cf 12:21; 14:20). This may reflect the people's condemnation of their rule (cf v 24).

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **21:19–26** King Amon rejects God's ways and walks in the ways of evil King Manasseh, his father. Today, do not simply accept the antics of evil rulers, but also do not read this passage as a blessing for overthrowing your government! Pray for your leaders and look for legitimate ways to condemn their errors (e.g., elections; protest) in order to establish justice in your land. Your just and gracious Ruler in heaven oversees all things. He will bless and keep you according to the grace of His beloved Son. • Dearest Jesus, faithful Son, bless the people of our land with justice and peace. Amen.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **22:1** *Josiah was eight years old*. The boy king evidently was under the tutelage of such elders as Hilkiah, the high priest, who taught him "what was right in the eyes of the LORD" (v 2; parallel case in 12:2). During his reign, Josiah vigorously promoted a national return to covenant faithfulness (22:3–23:25). *Bozkath*. Near Lachish. See map, p 615.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **22:2** *walked in all the way*. See p 7. *David his father*. David was the head of the dynasty and the touchstone for a righteous king. *right or … left*. Cf Dt 5:29; 17:11, 20; 28:14. Even a faithful king might later stray.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **22:1–2** Through the faithful guidance of Hilkiah, the Lord instructs Josiah and raises up another faithful king for Judah. God's people cannot overestimate the value of faithful teachers and counselors for their youth. Do not withhold the teachings of God's Word from the young but teach them right and wrong, truth distinguished from falsehood, during their earliest years. God's beloved Son, who grew up in favor with God and people, will Himself instruct your youth with love and mercy through the Word. • Lord, give us a heart for Christian education, that our children may grow in Your grace and favor. Amen.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **22:3** *eighteenth year*. According to 2Ch 34:3–8, Josiah began his reforms 10 years before he undertook the repair of the temple. In this project, he followed procedures adopted two centuries earlier by Jehoash, who likewise came to the throne at an early age (11:21–12:18).

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **22:4** *keepers of the threshold*. See note, 12:9.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **22:6** *house*. The temple.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **22:7** *they deal honestly*. Trust and good reputation go hand in hand.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **22:3–7** King Josiah, Shaphan, and Hilkiah organize the repairs of the temple, contracting faithful workers. In your work, honor your Christian vocation and your Lord by gaining a reputation for honesty and faithfulness. The Lord will not fail to bless those who deal honestly. He deals honestly with us in calling us to repentance and in setting all things right by the faithful service of His beloved Son. • Lord, make me wise in my work, especially in fairness and honesty, that I might enjoy a God-pleasing reputation before all people. Amen.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **22:8** *the Book of the Law*. The scroll contained the Law, a definite body of legislation of unchallenged authority. Its teaching had existed in written form and was known as "the Book of the Law of Moses" (14:6; cf Jsh 1:8; 8:34). A copy of it survived the religious persecutions of Manasseh (55 years) and of Amon (2 years). Perhaps it lay hidden at the bottom of the treasury chest as 2Ch 34:14 seems to indicate. Scholars debate the exact contents of the scroll. Many propose that it was Dt because of literary parallels with that writing of Moses. However, 1 and 2Ki use expressions similar to "Book of the Law" for Moses' writings generally (1Ki 2:3; 2Ki 14:6; 17:13; 21:8), and many parallels can be found with Ex (a portion of which was called "the Book of the Covenant," Ex 24:7) and Lv so it is not safe to assume the scroll contained only Dt. See note, 23:2.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **22:9** Matter-of-fact report indicates that Shaphan, and perhaps also Hilkiah, had not fully appreciated the importance of the discovery.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **22:10** *Shaphan read it*. Kings typically relied on professional scribes for reading and writing. Cf Est 6:1.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **22:11** *he tore his clothes*. See note, Jb 1:20.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **22:13** *inquire*. See "seek," p 843. *wrath of the* LORD. "The words of this book" that threatened to "bring disaster" on an apostate city and nation (v 16) were clearly summarized in such passages as Lv 26:14–20; Dt 31:16–18. *our fathers have not obeyed*. See notes, 21:2, 20.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **22:14** *Huldah the prophetess*. See p 389. No reason is given why Jeremiah, who began his ministry in the 13th year of Josiah, was not consulted (Jer 1:2). *keeper of the wardrobe*. See p 389. *Second Quarter*. Probably the newer residential area of Jerusalem on the western hill.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **22:17** God had earlier determined to do away with Judah. Cf 21:14.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **22:18–19** *heard … heard*. See note, v 10; cf 20:5. *your heart was penitent*. Lit, "your heart was soft" or tender. *torn*. See note, Jb 1:20.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **22:20** *gather … to your fathers*. In contrast to Manasseh and Amon. See note, 21:26. *in peace*. Based on the Book of the Law, Huldah proclaimed that God's wrath against the people would "not be quenched" (v 17). No doubt, Josiah's reforming legislation met only with grudging and outward compliance that by and large left the hearts of the people untouched. *shall not see all the disaster*. Because of the sincerity of the king's repentance, Jerusalem would remain intact during Josiah's lifetime, even though he would die in battle (23:30).
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **22:8–20** Through the prophetess Huldah, the Lord confirms the message that King Josiah learned from the Book of the Law: the Lord would condemn Judah. However, the Lord also promises mercy to Josiah, in view of his repentance. Sincere repentance is never in vain, even if someone continues to experience hardship after turning to the Lord. Rather, it is the loving work of God's Holy Spirit through His Word, and His works avail for our salvation. • Instruct me, dear Savior, through Your precious Word, and take not Your Holy Spirit away from me. Amen.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **23:1–25** Josiah hoped that the destruction of Jerusalem could still be averted if he and the people complied with the Book of the Law. Josiah "made a covenant before the LORD, to walk after the LORD" (v 3); cleansed the temple and its environs of idolatrous altars, images, and paraphernalia (vv 4–14); destroyed the false altar at Bethel and "all the shrines also of the high places" (vv 15–20); revived the celebration of the Passover (vv 21–23); and ordered the people to abolish private superstitious practices (vv 24–25).
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **23:1** *elders*. See note, Ex 3:16. See also p 228.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **23:2** *house*. The temple. *he read*. Josiah may have done the reading personally, but he could also have made certain that others read on his behalf (see Solomon's role in building the temple, 1Ki 6:14–16). *Book of the Covenant*. Because the king could read "all the words of the Book" at an assembly of the people, the rediscovered scroll may not have contained all the writings of Moses, but only a portion of Ex, Lv, or Dt. However, see the events described in Ne 8:1–8, which may be a complete

reading of the Five Books of Moses, also called "the Book of the Law" as in 2Ki 22:8. All five books can be read aloud in c 15 hours.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **23:3** *the pillar*. See note, 11:14; see also diagram, p 541. *covenant*. In a solemn ceremony, Josiah and the people pledged themselves to the Lord in a solemn agreement. See p 6. For similar renewals of the covenant that God made with Israel at Mount Sinai, see notes, Dt 5:3; Jsh 24:1, 25. *walk*. See p 7. *commandments … testimonies … statutes*. See p 971.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **23:4** *second order*. Common priests, in distinction from the high priest(s). *keepers of the threshold*. Order of Levites who acted as temple guards (1Ch 23:5). *Baal … Asherah*. See notes, Ex 34:13; Nu 25:3. *Kidron*. Trash was dumped near this brook. See map, p 548. *Bethel*. Where Jeroboam set up false worship. Cf 1Ki 12:29.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **23:5** *priests*. Hbr term for officiants in idolatrous worship occurs only here and in Hos 10:5; Zep 1:4. They are distinguished from "the priests of the high places" (v 9), who professed to worship the Lord but at shrines outside the temple of Jerusalem. *the constellations*. Possibly signs of the zodiac. The Hbr word occurs again in a slightly different form in Jb 38:32, where the ESV transliterates it "Mazzaroth." Horoscopes, though false, are still popular today.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **23:6** *Kidron*. See note, v 4. *dust … upon the graves*. Act of defilement. *common people*. Lit, "sons of the people"; perhaps idolaters.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **23:7** *male cult prostitutes*. See note, 1Ki 14:24. *hangings*. May describe garments for idols to wear.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **23:8** *high places*. See p 526. *Geba to Beersheba*. Judah's territory extended from Geba, a few miles north of Jerusalem (see note, 1Ki 15:22), to Beersheba. See map, p 615. At Beersheba, large cut-stone blocks were used to build a horned altar, which may have served the local high place. A temple discovered at Arad was likely destroyed during Josiah's reform. Its small altars were overturned and plastered over. See note, Jgs 20:1. *the gate of Joshua*. Perhaps near his home.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **23:9** *unleavened bread*. Prohibited from officiating at the altar, these demoted priests did not have to take up a secular occupation but were allowed to share in the benefits of their brethren, the loyal sons of Aaron (Nu 18:8–20).

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **23:10** *Topheth*. Place where children were burned to Molech. Perhaps a vocalization for a word meaning "fireplace." *Valley of … Hinnom*. Basis of NT "Gehenna" (see note, Jsh 18:16; see also ESV note on "hell", Mt 5:22). *Molech*. Hbr for king (*melek*) supplied with vowels of the word for shame (*bosheth*; cf Jer 7:32).
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **23:11** *horses … chariots*. Equipment dedicated to the sun god for his trip across the sky. Cf Ps 19:4–6. *chamber … precincts*. Location unknown.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **23:12** *Ahaz … Manasseh*. Unfaithful kings. Cf 21:1–5.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **23:13** *high places*. See p 526. *mount of corruption*. Apparently refers to a part of the Mount of Olives. *Ashtoreth*. See note, Ex 34:13. *Chemosh … Milcom*. These gods were worshiped with child sacrifice. See notes, 1Ki 11:5, 7.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **23:14** *pillars … Asherim*. See notes, Gn 28:18; Ex 34:13. *the bones of men*. Means of defiling the place.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **23:15** *Bethel*. Controlled by Judah at this time. See map, p 615.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **23:16** *as Josiah turned*. Shows that the king personally oversaw the work. *the word of the LORD*. See note, 1Ki 13:2.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **23:18** *prophet who came out of Samaria*. Cf 1Ki 13:31–32.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **23:19** *high places*. See p 526. *in the cities of Samaria*. Judah's rule even reached toward Samaria. See map, p 615.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **23:20** *sacrificed*. Or, killed. *burned human bones on them*. The bodies of the wicked priests themselves were used to make the place unholy, to prevent people from returning there to sacrifice.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **23:1–20** With bitter detail, the writer describes Josiah's campaign to remove all elements of false worship from regions under his rule. Such bold action no doubt offended some of his subjects. Today, the Lord may call you to take bold action. Set your heart to serve the Lord and pray for His help to make changes peaceably. In all circumstances, the God of peace will sustain you for good works. Best of all, He has accomplished your salvation through His beloved Son. • Give me a soft heart toward You, O Lord, but a firm heart toward those who seek to overthrow Your ways. Amen.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **23:21** *Passover*. Described in Ex 12; Nu 9; Dt 16. *Book of the Covenant*. See note, v 2.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **23:22** *no such Passover*. Hbr seems to qualify the event as a remarkable celebration, not simply as the only Passover celebrated in the past 783 years (cf Jsh 5:10–12). Passover was also celebrated under Hezekiah (cf 2Ch 30:1). Ambr: "My sons, think before you act, and when you have thought long then do what you consider right…. [Josiah] celebrated the Lord's passover when he was eighteen years old, as no one had done it before him. As then in zeal he was superior to those who went before him, so do you, my sons, show zeal for God" (*NPNF* 2 10:67).
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **23:24** *put away*. By dismissal or worse (cf v 20). *mediums … necromancers*. See note, 1Sm 28:3. *household gods*. See note, Gn 31:19.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **23:25** *no king like him*. Hezekiah's reform was not nearly as complete or far-reaching, because he did not have authority in Samaria. *turned*. See p 1080. *heart … soul … might*. See notes, Dt 6:5; 1Ki 15:14 (Chem comment).
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **23:26** *did not turn*. God's great wrath resulted from the people's deeply rooted false belief and worship. The official decrees and acts of Josiah did not produce a popular reform. *provocations*. What the Lord resolved in 21:12 would still come to pass.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **23:21–27** The great and memorable Passover celebrated under Josiah does not fundamentally change matters of faith in Judah. The Lord will sift the people through the Babylonian exile only 26 years later. In all nations and congregations, the wicked and the righteous live alongside one another. We live, prosper, suffer, and die together. Yet, the Lord knows those who are His and will preserve them unto Himself. He has placed His name on us in Baptism, and the world cannot take it away. • Preserve Your people, O Savior, and prepare for us a homeland in Your eternal kingdom. Amen.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **23:28** See pp 335–37.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **23:29** Josiah was able to carry out his reforms even in the former Northern Kingdom because for some time Assyria had lost control of Israel. In 612 BC, Assyria's capital, Nineveh, was destroyed by the Babylonians and the Medes. In the ensuing contest for regional control, Pharaoh Neco II (610–595 BC) marched through Israel to join surviving

Assyrian forces against the rising power of Babylon. The allied army was defeated at Carchemish on the upper Euphrates in 605 BC. In an attempt to block the Egyptian advance through Israel, Josiah opposed Neco at Megiddo, one of the most strategic passes through the Carmel Ridge. See map, p 615; see also notes, 9:27; 1Ki 9:15. Josiah lost his life in the battle. Aph: "Josiah also was persecuted as Jesus was persecuted. Josiah was persecuted, and Pharaoh the Lame slew [h]im; and Jesus was persecuted, and the people that were made lame by their sins slew Him. Josiah cleansed the land of Israel from uncleanness; and Jesus cleansed and caused to pass away uncleanness from all the earth" (*NPNF* 2 13:398–99). *Neco … went up to the king of Assyria*. According to Babylonian chronicles, Neco intended to help the Assyrians.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **23:30** *dead in a chariot*. Success in mundane ventures was not a matter of course in Josiah's life, even though in his efforts to reform the people there was no king like him (v 25; 18:5–6). *his own tomb*. Huldah's prophecy is fulfilled (22:20). *anointed*. See note, 1Sm 10:1.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **23:28–30** King Josiah dies due to conflicts over the rising regional power of Babylon. Yet, the Lord fulfills His Word to Josiah by gathering him to the tombs of the kings of Judah. When good people meet a tragic end, such as faithful soldiers or officers who fall in the line of duty, do not assume that they or their families are being punished by the Lord or that He has forsaken them. Instead, honor the noble who fall too soon in your eyes, offering thanks to God for their noble service. Jesus, too, met an early end (to our notions), but His death was purposefully timed by God for our salvation. • "Lord, let at last Thine angels come, To Abr'ham's bosom bear me home, That I may die unfearing; And in its narrow chamber keep My body safe in peaceful sleep Until Thy reappearing. And then from death awaken me, That these mine eyes with joy may see, O Son of God, Thy glorious face, My Savior and my fount of grace. Lord Jesus Christ, my prayer attend, my prayer attend, And I will praise Thee without end." Amen. (*LSB* 708:3)

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **23:31** *twenty-three years old*. No reason is given why the people chose Jehoahaz, who was two years younger than his brother (cf v 36).

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **23:33** *Riblah*. After killing Josiah, Neco proceeded northward beyond Tyre and Sidon to Riblah on the Orontes River "in the

land of Hamath." Here, at Nebuchadnezzar's later base of operations (25:6), Pharaoh deposed Josiah's son Jehoahaz, also called Shallum (Jer 22:11), and "put him in bonds." No doubt Neco feared that "the people of the land" (2Ki 23:35) had made Jehoahaz king because he would follow his father's anti-Egyptian policy.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **23:34–35** *Eliakim … Jehoiakim*. Neco changed the name of his appointee to the throne to impress his vassal with his authority. Cf 24:17 for a similar action. *taxed*. The overlord also exacted tribute, which the puppet king paid by taxing "the people of the land" (see note, 11:19).

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **23:31–35** In three short months, Jehoahaz is able to restore false worship in Judah and so overturn his father's reform. How easy to destroy and corrupt! How hard to set things right again! The Lord alone can truly change hearts, accomplished through His life-giving Word, which purifies us from every stain of sin. • Cleanse me, O spotless Lamb, from all my sins, that I may do what is right in Your eyes. Amen.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **23:36** *twenty-five years old*. See note, v 31.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **23:37** Jeremiah describes in greater detail the evil that Jehoiakim did in the sight of the Lord (Jer 7:16–18; 22:18–23; 25; 26).

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **24:1** *Nebuchadnezzar … came up*. Neco's domination of Judah was short-lived (23:29–36). *servant*. Vassal of Babylon. After defeating Neco at Carchemish, Nebuchadnezzar pursued him to the borders of Egypt. Jehoiakim had no other choice but to submit to the new regional conqueror. On his return to Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar took with him a group of hostages, consisting of members "of the royal family and of the nobility" (Dn 1:3). Among them were Daniel and his associates (Dn 1:1–7). *rebelled*. When after three years the Babylonians suffered serious reverses in a battle with Neco, Jehoiakim rebelled. His trust in Egypt was unwarranted (v 7).

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **24:2** *the LORD sent*. In Judah's moment of weakness, all her neighbors exploited her. This was not simply politics but part of God's judgment. Cypr: "The adversary can do nothing against us except God shall have previously permitted it; so that all our fear, and devotion, and obedience may be turned towards God" (*ANF* 5:454). Nebuchadnezzar was not at once in a position to deal personally and in full force with the rebellion. During this time, the Lord sent against Jehoiakim the Chaldaean (Babylonian) occupation troops, stationed in neighboring Syria, Moab, and

Ammon. Bands from these countries joined in harassing raids against Judean territory. *He spoke*. Cf 20:17–18.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **24:3** *sins of Manasseh*. See note, 21:2.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **24:4** *the LORD would not pardon*. See note, 1Ki 2:31, for principle of bloodguilt.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **24:5** *Chronicles*. See pp 335–37.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **24:6** See note, 1Ki 2:10.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **24:7** *Brook of Egypt … river Euphrates*. All of Canaan and Aram.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **23:36–24:7** The Lord arranges regional politics against Jehoiakim and Judah, determined to avenge the evils committed by Judah's kings. Sins, even when forgiven, continue to bear consequences in our lives. As you consider your life in view of God's Word, consider also the lives and futures of those against whom you sin and ask the Lord for mercy, not only for yourself, but also for those affected by your sins. The Lord, whose mercies are new every morning, will surely hear your prayers. Entrust all things to His good and gracious will. • Take away my sins, O Savior, and guard others from the consequences of my faults. Amen.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **24:8** Three years after Jehoiakim's rash revolt, Nebuchadnezzar was ready to mount a full-scale attack against Jerusalem. In the meantime, Jehoiakim, only 36 years old (23:36), had died or been assassinated. *Jehoiachin*. Jehoiakim's 18-year-old son, also called Jeconiah and Coniah.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **24:12** *gave himself up*. Jehoiachin became Nebuchadnezzar's prisoner in 597 BC. *eighth year*. Of Nebuchadnezzar.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **24:13** Cf 20:17–18. This final sad episode, the destruction of the temple, also happened according to the Lord's purposes. Ambr: "It was far better to preserve souls than gold for the Lord. For He Who sent the apostles without gold also brought together the churches without gold. The Church has gold, not to store up, but to lay out, and to spend on those who need…. Is it not much better that the priests should melt it down for the sustenance of the poor, if other supplies fail, than that a sacrilegious enemy should carry it off and defile it? Would not the Lord Himself say: Why did you suffer so many needy to die of hunger? Surely you had gold? You should have given them sustenance. Why are so many captives brought on the slave market, and why are so many unredeemed left to be slain by the enemy? It had been better to preserve living vessels than

gold ones. To this no answer could be given. For what would you say: I feared that the temple of God would need its ornaments? He would answer: The sacraments need not gold, nor are they proper to gold only—for they are not bought with gold. The glory of the sacraments is the redemption of captives. Truly they are precious vessels, for they redeem men from death. That, indeed, is the true treasure of the Lord which effects what His blood effected" (*NPNF* 2 10:64). Cf Ex 25:10–22 regarding the ark of the covenant.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **24:14** *men of valor*. Soldiers. *10,000 captives*. Nebuchadnezzar deported with him the royal family, the palace officials, and a large segment of the population, leaving behind only the poorest. See note, 17:6. Among these captives was the prophet Ezekiel (Ezk 1:2–3).

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **24:16** *men of valor*. Soldiers for his army. *craftsmen and the metal workers*. Skilled laborers to strengthen his kingdom.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **24:8–17** In the surrender of Jehoiachin, the Lord allows the dismantling of the temple David had planned and Solomon had built. Thanks be to God, He does not dwell in temples we make, as He explained to Solomon at the beginning (1Ki 8:27). He dwells instead in the hearts of His people by faith. • "Abide with me, fast falls the eventide. The darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide. When other helpers fail and comforts flee, Help of the helpless, O abide with me." Amen. (*LSB* 878:1)

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **24:18** *Zedekiah*. Son of Josiah; brother of Jehoahaz (23:30–31). Cf v 17. *became king*. Puppet ruler whom Nebuchadnezzar had not removed.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **24:20** *He cast them out from His presence*. The Lord would reject even the rule of this vassal king over the Promised Land.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **24:18–20** The Lord remains repulsed by Judah's evils, rejecting even the vassal rule of Zedekiah. The depth of God's anger and disappointment over sin is beyond our ability to fathom, just as surely as we cannot understand the depth of our own sins. Yet, the Lord does not cast off His people forever but calls them to repent. Ever present in His Word and Sacraments, He administers to us the full blessings of forgiveness. • "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation, and uphold me with Thy free spirit." Amen. (*LSB*, pp 192–93)

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **25:1** *siegeworks*. See note, 18:14.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **25:2** *besieged*. A decade after the first capture of the city (24:10–17), the anger of the Lord burst upon Jerusalem and Judah with unrestrained vehemence. The prophet Jeremiah urged the king to keep his solemn pledge of allegiance to the Babylonian overlord (Jer 27). However, weak-willed Zedekiah yielded to a pressure group in the city that advocated rebellion. The anticipated help from Egypt proved a delusion (Jer 37:5–11; Ezk 17:15–21). Nebuchadnezzar's patience was at an end. He directed the siege of Jerusalem from his headquarters at Riblah (see note, 23:33).
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **25:4** *breach was made*. After about a year and a half, the city's fortification began to give way. *way of the gate*. No longer identifiable; seems to have been on the eastern side of the city. *Arabah*. Zedekiah and his men tried in vain to escape toward this valley of the Jordan. See color map 2; see also note, Jsh 3:16.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **25:5** *plains of Jericho*. Near the Jordan River.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **25:6** *Riblah*. See map, p 609; see also note, 23:33.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **25:7** It is unclear why the Babylonians did not kill Zedekiah.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **25:8–9** In the year 587 BC, a month after "a breach was made in the city" (v 4), Nebuchadnezzar's general carried out his orders to reduce to rubble the temple, the walls, and the other structures of the city. These actions made the city indefensible, incapable of rebelling again.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **25:11–12** Almost all of the remaining inhabitants were exiled.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **25:13–17** Large quantities of bronze, silver, and gold, taken from furnishings and vessels of the temple, were sent as plunder to Babylon. The detailed interest in the parts of the temple implies the writer may have been a priest or Levite. For more on components of the temple, see notes on 1Ki 6–7; see also diagram, p 541. *pillars of bronze*. The two large pillars, named Jachin and Boaz, which Solomon erected at the entrance of the temple (1Ki 7:15–22). See note, 1Ki 7:21.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **25:18–21** Nebuchadnezzar vented his fury not only on the king and his sons, but he also executed religious leaders, political officials, and "sixty men of the people of the land" (v 19). The latter were the more prominent citizens who had considerable influence in state affairs. See note, 11:20.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **25:18** *Seraiah*. Grandfather or great-grandfather of Ezra. *three keepers of the threshold*. Leaders of this group. See note, 1Ch 9:17–33.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **25:20** *Riblah*. See note, 23:33.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **25:21** *into exile*. Other nations that suffered the fate of Israel and Judah became extinct. Even the captors of Samaria and Jerusalem, Assyria and Babylon, disappeared under the sands of time. However, God did not let the ruins of Jerusalem and the Babylonian captivity become the grave of His chosen people. Humanly speaking, its hopes of revival were as dead as the dried skeletons in Ezekiel's vision (Ezk 37:1–14). But God remained true to His covenant promise to bless all nations through Abraham's Seed (Gn 12:3). By His "breath of life" (Gn 2:7), He raised the national corpse from its Babylonian tomb.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **25:1–21** After Judah's third rebellion, the Babylonians enforce sterner policies, killing off all manner of community leadership and ending Judah's status as a kingdom and a holy land. Yet, all human institutions eventually fail, even mighty Babylon. The holy kingdom of God abides forever because its King, our God and Savior, cannot be overthrown. • Heavenly Father, rule among us by Your Word and Sacraments, that we might be Your own and live under You in peace. Amen.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **25:22** *Gedaliah*. Name was found on a Judean administrative seal. Judah now was reduced to a Babylonian province. *Ahikam*. Rescued Jeremiah from mob violence when the prophet urged submission to the Babylonians (Jer 26:24). No doubt, Nebuchadnezzar entrusted the son with the governorship, hoping that he, too, would advocate nonresistance. Cf Jer 40–41 for a more complete account of Gedaliah's ill-fated administration. *Shaphan*. Josiah's secretary had this name, but it may not refer to the same person. *governor*. The term does not appear in the Hbr, but is provided by translators to describe Gedaliah's appointment.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **25:23** *captains*. Can describe administrators or military men. *Mizpah*. Gedaliah set up headquarters a few miles north of ruined Jerusalem in a city that an earlier king of Judah had fortified (see note, 1Ki 15:22). Here, the governor met with the captains of the forces who had eluded the siege of Jerusalem. *Jaazaniah*. Name was found at Mizpah on a seal impression that described a "servant of the king."

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **25:24** *officials*. Lit, "servants"; no doubt officers in command of Babylonian garrisons.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **25:25** *the seventh month*. Oct/Nov 587. *Ishmael … struck down*. This fanatic member of the royal family acted on the instigation of the king of neighboring Ammon, where he had fled during the siege and fall of Jerusalem. *Gedaliah*. Likely regarded as a traitor. *Jews*. Lit, "Judeans," people of Judah. See note, Ezr 4:12.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **25:26** Afraid that they were not safe from Nebuchadnezzar's long arm anywhere in Judah, the remaining Judeans fled to Egypt, taking Jeremiah with them (Jer 43:7–8). As the only other great regional power, Egypt was the best refuge. Five years later, the Babylonian king exiled another contingent from Jerusalem, possibly in reprisal for Ishmael's rebellion or in anticipation of a similar incident.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **25:22–26** Unable to adjust to changing times, the royal family of Judah continues to resist Babylonian governance of former Judean territory. Today, the Lord blesses us, not only with His Word (Jeremiah warned the royal family against further rebellion, Jer 42), but also with common sense. With God's counsel, adjust to the disappointments you face and make different plans for the future. Most of all, repent of your failures and confess your shortcomings. Your Lord yet has great blessings in mind for you, which He grants in Christ. • Turn my face, O Lord, in the way that I should go. Quiet my heart and grant me hope for the future. Amen.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **25:27** *thirty-seventh year*. 561 BC. *Jehoiachin*. Cf 24:12. *king of Judah*. In title, not in fact. *Evil-merodach*. Hbr form of the name Amel-Marduk, Nebuchadnezzar's son. *graciously freed*. As if prophesying a brighter future, the account ends with new freedom for a dynastic descendant of David. Jehoiachin's grandson was Zerubbabel (Hg 2:20–23; Zec 4), who with Jeshua the priest (Zec 3) "built the altar of the God of Israel" in Jerusalem for the freed Babylonian exiles (Ezr 3:1–7). See note, Ezr 3:2.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **25:28** *seat above*. Like Joseph (cf Gn 40–41), Jehoiachin rose in favor to secure a new future for his people.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **25:29** *dined … at the king's table*. See note, 2Sm 9:7.
2 KINGS—NOTE ON **25:30** *a regular allowance*. His former territory may have supported the king's feasting (cf v 12) and could make Jehoiachin's expected contribution to life at court (1Ki 2:7). Babylonian administrative

records mention deliveries of oil for the sons of the king of Judah and rulers from other nations.

2 KINGS—NOTE ON **25:27–30** Despite all that has happened, the Lord provides for the preservation of the "house of David" (see notes, 2Sm 7:12–17). For the next 500 years, the Judeans would anticipate the restoration of David's reign, which the heavenly Father fulfilled in the coming of Jesus, a "Son of David." His kingdom—the Church—shall never end. • Rule over us, gracious Lord. Welcome and sustain us at Your banquet table, which is a foretaste of the feast to come. Amen.

1 Chronicles

1 Chronicles 1 | 1 Chronicles 2 | 1 Chronicles 3 | 1 Chronicles 4 | 1 Chronicles 5 | 1 Chronicles 6 | 1 Chronicles 7 | 1 Chronicles 8 | 1 Chronicles 9 | 1 Chronicles 10 | 1 Chronicles 11 | 1 Chronicles 12 | 1 Chronicles 13 | 1 Chronicles 14 | 1 Chronicles 15 | 1 Chronicles 16 | 1 Chronicles 17 | 1 Chronicles 18 | 1 Chronicles 19 | 1 Chronicles 20 | 1 Chronicles 21 | 1 Chronicles 22 | 1 Chronicles 23 | 1 Chronicles 24 | 1 Chronicles 25 | 1 Chronicles 26 | 1 Chronicles 27 | 1 Chronicles 28 | 1 Chronicles 29

- Introduction to 1 Chronicles
  - Overview
  - Reading 1 Chronicles
  - Luther on 1 Chronicles
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

From Adam to Abraham

1 [1] ‡ ‡ [1] Adam, Seth, Enosh; [2]Kenan, Mahalalel, Jared; [3]Enoch,
Methuselah, Lamech; [4]†Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

[5]The sons of Japheth: Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and
Tiras. [6]The sons of Gomer: Ashkenaz, Riphath,[2] and Togarmah. [7]The sons
of Javan: Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim, and Rodanim.

[8]‡The sons of Ham: Cush, Egypt, Put, and Canaan. [9]The sons of Cush:
Seba, Havilah, Sabta, Raama, and Sabteca. The sons of Raamah: Sheba and
Dedan. [10]†Cush fathered Nimrod. He was the first on earth to be a mighty
man.[3]

[11]†Egypt fathered Ludim, Anamim, Lehabim, Naphtuhim, [12]Pathrusim,
Casluhim (from whom the Philistines came), and Caphtorim.

[13]Canaan fathered Sidon his firstborn and Heth, [14]and the Jebusites, the
Amorites, the Girgashites, [15]the Hivites, the Arkites, the Sinites, [16]the
Arvadites, the Zemarites, and the Hamathites.

[17]‡The sons of Shem: Elam, Asshur, Arpachshad, Lud, and Aram. And
the sons of Aram:[4] Uz, Hul, Gether, and Meshech. [18]Arpachshad fathered
Shelah, and Shelah fathered Eber. [19]†To Eber were born two sons: the name
of the one was Peleg[5] (for in his days the earth was divided), and his
brother's name was Joktan. [20]Joktan fathered Almodad, Sheleph,
Hazarmaveth, Jerah, [21]Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, [22]Obal,[6] Abimael, Sheba,
[23]Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab; all these were the sons of Joktan.

[24]Shem, Arpachshad, Shelah; [25]Eber, Peleg, Reu; [26]Serug, Nahor, Terah;
[27]Abram, that is, Abraham.

From Abraham to Jacob

28 ‡ † The sons of Abraham: Isaac and Ishmael. 29 † These are their
genealogies: the firstborn of Ishmael, Nebaioth, and Kedar, Adbeel,
Mibsam, 30 Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadad, Tema, 31 Jetur, Naphish, and
Kedemah. These are the sons of Ishmael. 32 † The sons of Keturah,
Abraham's concubine: she bore Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak,
and Shuah. The sons of Jokshan: Sheba and Dedan. 33 The sons of Midian:
Ephah, Epher, Hanoch, Abida, and Eldaah. All these were the descendants
of Keturah.

34 † Abraham fathered Isaac. The sons of Isaac: Esau and Israel. 35 ‡ † The
sons of Esau: Eliphaz, Reuel, Jeush, Jalam, and Korah. 36 The sons of
Eliphaz: Teman, Omar, Zepho, Gatam, Kenaz, and of Timna,[7] Amalek.
37 The sons of Reuel: Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah.

38 The sons of Seir: Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, Dishon, Ezer, and
Dishan. 39 † The sons of Lotan: Hori and Hemam;[1] and Lotan's sister was
Timna. 40 The sons of Shobal: Alvan,[2] Manahath, Ebal, Shepho,[3] and
Onam. The sons of Zibeon: Aiah and Anah. 41 The son[4] of Anah: Dishon.
The sons of Dishon: Hemdan,[5] Eshban, Ithran, and Cheran. 42 The sons of
Ezer: Bilhan, Zaavan, and Akan.[6] The sons of Dishan: Uz and Aran.

43 ‡ † These are the kings who reigned in the land of Edom before any king
reigned over the people of Israel: Bela the son of Beor, the name of his city
being Dinhabah. 44 Bela died, and Jobab the son of Zerah of Bozrah reigned
in his place. 45 Jobab died, and Husham of the land of the Temanites reigned
in his place. 46 † Husham died, and Hadad the son of Bedad, who defeated
Midian in the country of Moab, reigned in his place, the name of his city
being Avith. 47 Hadad died, and Samlah of Masrekah reigned in his place.
48 † Samlah died, and Shaul of Rehoboth on the Euphrates reigned in his
place. 49 Shaul died, and Baal-hanan, the son of Achbor, reigned in his place.
50 † Baal-hanan died, and Hadad reigned in his place, the name of his city
being Pai; and his wife's name was Mehetabel, the daughter of Matred, the
daughter of Mezahab. 51 And Hadad died.

The chiefs of Edom were: chiefs Timna, Alvah, Jetheth, [52]Oholibamah, Elah, Pinon, [53]Kenaz, Teman, Mibzar, [54]Magdiel, and Iram; these are the chiefs of Edom.

A Genealogy of David

2 [1] These are the sons of Israel: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah,
Issachar, Zebulun, [2]Dan, Joseph, Benjamin, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher.
[3] The sons of Judah: Er, Onan and Shelah; these three Bath-shua the
Canaanite bore to him. Now Er, Judah's firstborn, was evil in the sight of
the LORD, and he put him to death. [4]His daughter-in-law Tamar also bore
him Perez and Zerah. Judah had five sons in all.

[5]The sons of Perez: Hezron and Hamul. [6]The sons of Zerah: Zimri, Ethan,
Heman, Calcol, and Dara, five in all. [7]The son[7] of Carmi: Achan, the
troubler of Israel, who broke faith in the matter of the devoted thing; [8]and
Ethan's son was Azariah.

[9] The sons of Hezron that were born to him: Jerahmeel, Ram, and
Chelubai. [10] Ram fathered Amminadab, and Amminadab fathered
Nahshon, prince of the sons of Judah. [11]Nahshon fathered Salmon,[1] Salmon
fathered Boaz, [12]Boaz fathered Obed, Obed fathered Jesse. [13]Jesse fathered
Eliab his firstborn, Abinadab the second, Shimea the third, [14]Nethanel the
fourth, Raddai the fifth, [15]Ozem the sixth, David the seventh. [16]And their
sisters were Zeruiah and Abigail. The sons of Zeruiah: Abishai, Joab, and
Asahel, three. [17]Abigail bore Amasa, and the father of Amasa was Jether
the Ishmaelite.

[18]Caleb the son of Hezron fathered children by his wife Azubah, and
by Jerioth; and these were her sons: Jesher, Shobab, and Ardon. [19]When
Azubah died, Caleb married Ephrath, who bore him Hur. [20]Hur fathered
Uri, and Uri fathered Bezalel.

[21] Afterward Hezron went in to the daughter of Machir the father of
Gilead, whom he married when he was sixty years old, and she bore him
Segub. [22]And Segub fathered Jair, who had twenty-three cities in the land
of Gilead. [23]But Geshur and Aram took from them Havvoth-jair, Kenath,
and its villages, sixty towns. All these were descendants of Machir, the
father of Gilead. [24]After the death of Hezron, Caleb went in to Ephrathah,[2]
the wife of Hezron his father, and she bore him Ashhur, the father of Tekoa.

25 ‡The sons of Jerahmeel, the firstborn of Hezron: Ram, his firstborn,
Bunah, Oren, Ozem, and Ahijah. 26Jerahmeel also had another wife, whose
name was Atarah; she was the mother of Onam. 27The sons of Ram, the
firstborn of Jerahmeel: Maaz, Jamin, and Eker. 28The sons of Onam:
Shammai and Jada. The sons of Shammai: Nadab and Abishur. 29The name
of Abishur's wife was Abihail, and she bore him Ahban and Molid. 30The
sons of Nadab: Seled and Appaim; and Seled died childless. 31The son[3] of
Appaim: Ishi. The son of Ishi: Sheshan. The son of Sheshan: Ahlai. 32The
sons of Jada, Shammai's brother: Jether and Jonathan; and Jether died
childless. 33The sons of Jonathan: Peleth and Zaza. These were the
descendants of Jerahmeel. 34‡Now Sheshan had no sons, only daughters, but
Sheshan had an Egyptian slave whose name was Jarha. 35So Sheshan gave
his daughter in marriage to Jarha his slave, and she bore him Attai. 36Attai
fathered Nathan, and Nathan fathered Zabad. 37Zabad fathered Ephlal, and
Ephlal fathered Obed. 38Obed fathered Jehu, and Jehu fathered Azariah.
39Azariah fathered Helez, and Helez fathered Eleasah. 40Eleasah fathered
Sismai, and Sismai fathered Shallum. 41Shallum fathered Jekamiah, and
Jekamiah fathered Elishama.

42 ‡The sons of Caleb the brother of Jerahmeel: Mareshah[4] his firstborn,
who fathered Ziph. The son[5] of Mareshah: Hebron.[6] 43The sons of Hebron:
Korah, Tappuah, Rekem and Shema. 44Shema fathered Raham, the father of
Jorkeam; and Rekem fathered Shammai. 45The son of Shammai: Maon; and
Maon fathered Beth-zur. 46 †Ephah also, Caleb's concubine, bore Haran,
Moza, and Gazez; and Haran fathered Gazez. 47The sons of Jahdai: Regem,
Jotham, Geshan, Pelet, Ephah, and Shaaph. 48Maacah, Caleb's concubine,
bore Sheber and Tirhanah. 49She also bore Shaaph the father of
Madmannah, Sheva the father of Machbenah and the father of Gibea; and
the daughter of Caleb was Achsah. 50‡These were the descendants of Caleb.

The sons[7] of Hur the firstborn of Ephrathah: Shobal the father of
Kiriath-jearim, 51Salma, the father of Bethlehem, and Hareph the father of
Beth-gader. 52†Shobal the father of Kiriath-jearim had other sons: Haroeh,
half of the Menuhoth. 53†And the clans of Kiriath-jearim: the Ithrites, the
Puthites, the Shumathites, and the Mishraites; from these came the
Zorathites and the Eshtaolites. 54The sons of Salma: Bethlehem, the

Netophathites, Atroth-beth-joab and half of the Manahathites, the Zorites.
55 † The clans also of the scribes who lived at Jabez: the Tirathites, the
Shimeathites and the Sucathites. These are the Kenites who came from
Hammath, the father of the house of Rechab.

Descendants of David

3 [1]‡†These are the sons of David who were born to him in Hebron:
the firstborn, Amnon, by Ahinoam the Jezreelite; the second, Daniel, by
Abigail the Carmelite, [2]the third, Absalom, whose mother was Maacah, the
daughter of Talmai, king of Geshur; the fourth, Adonijah, whose mother
was Haggith; [3]‡the fifth, Shephatiah, by Abital; the sixth, Ithream, by his
wife Eglah; [4]†six were born to him in Hebron, where he reigned for seven
years and six months. And he reigned thirty-three years in Jerusalem.
[5]† These were born to him in Jerusalem: Shimea, Shobab, Nathan and
Solomon, four by Bath-shua, the daughter of Ammiel; [6]then Ibhar,
Elishama, Eliphelet, [7]Nogah, Nepheg, Japhia, [8]† Elishama, Eliada, and
Eliphelet, nine. [9]All these were David's sons, besides the sons of the
concubines, and Tamar was their sister.

[10]‡The son of Solomon was Rehoboam, Abijah his son, Asa his son,
Jehoshaphat his son, [11]Joram his son, Ahaziah his son, Joash his son,
[12]Amaziah his son, Azariah his son, Jotham his son, [13]Ahaz his son,
Hezekiah his son, Manasseh his son, [14]Amon his son, Josiah his son. [15]†The
sons of Josiah: Johanan the firstborn, the second Jehoiakim, the third
Zedekiah, the fourth Shallum. [16]‡†The descendants of Jehoiakim: Jeconiah
his son, Zedekiah his son; [17]†and the sons of Jeconiah, the captive: Shealtiel
his son, [18]Malchiram, Pedaiah, Shenazzar, Jekamiah, Hoshama and
Nedabiah; [19]†and the sons of Pedaiah: Zerubbabel and Shimei; and the sons
of Zerubbabel: Meshullam and Hananiah, and Shelomith was their sister;
[20]and Hashubah, Ohel, Berechiah, Hasadiah, and Jushab-hesed, five. [21]The
sons of Hananiah: Pelatiah and Jeshaiah, his son[1] Rephaiah, his son Arnan,
his son Obadiah, his son Shecaniah. [22]The son[2] of Shecaniah: Shemaiah.
And the sons of Shemaiah: Hattush, Igal, Bariah, Neariah, and Shaphat, six.
[23]The sons of Neariah: Elioenai, Hizkiah, and Azrikam, three. [24]†The sons
of Elioenai: Hodaviah, Eliashib, Pelaiah, Akkub, Johanan, Delaiah, and
Anani, seven.

Descendants of Judah

4 [1]The sons of Judah: Perez, Hezron, Carmi, Hur, and Shobal.
[2]Reaiah the son of Shobal fathered Jahath, and Jahath fathered Ahumai and
Lahad. These were the clans of the Zorathites. [3]These were the sons[1] of
Etam: Jezreel, Ishma, and Idbash; and the name of their sister was
Hazzelelponi, [4]and Penuel fathered Gedor, and Ezer fathered Hushah. These
were the sons of Hur, the firstborn of Ephrathah, the father of Bethlehem.
[5]Ashhur, the father of Tekoa, had two wives, Helah and Naarah; [6]Naarah
bore him Ahuzzam, Hepher, Temeni, and Haahashtari. These were the sons
of Naarah. [7]The sons of Helah: Zereth, Izhar, and Ethnan. [8]Koz fathered
Anub, Zobebah, and the clans of Aharhel, the son of Harum. [9]Jabez was
more honorable than his brothers; and his mother called his name Jabez,
saying, "Because I bore him in pain."[2] [10]Jabez called upon the God of
Israel, saying, "Oh that you would bless me and enlarge my border, and that
your hand might be with me, and that you would keep me from harm[3] so
that it might not bring me pain!" And God granted what he asked.
[11]Chelub, the brother of Shuhah, fathered Mehir, who fathered Eshton.
[12]Eshton fathered Beth-rapha, Paseah, and Tehinnah, the father of Ir-nahash.
These are the men of Recah. [13]The sons of Kenaz: Othniel and Seraiah;
and the sons of Othniel: Hathath and Meonothai.[4] [14]Meonothai fathered
Ophrah; and Seraiah fathered Joab, the father of Ge-harashim,[5] so-called
because they were craftsmen. [15]The sons of Caleb the son of Jephunneh: Iru,
Elah, and Naam; and the son[6] of Elah: Kenaz. [16]The sons of Jehallelel:
Ziph, Ziphah, Tiria, and Asarel. [17]The sons of Ezrah: Jether, Mered, Epher,
and Jalon. These are the sons of Bithiah, the daughter of Pharaoh, whom
Mered married;[7] and she conceived and bore[8] Miriam, Shammai, and
Ishbah, the father of Eshtemoa. [18]And his Judahite wife bore Jered the father
of Gedor, Heber the father of Soco, and Jekuthiel the father of Zanoah.
[19]The sons of the wife of Hodiah, the sister of Naham, were the fathers of
Keilah the Garmite and Eshtemoa the Maacathite. [20]The sons of Shimon:
Amnon, Rinnah, Ben-hanan, and Tilon. The sons of Ishi: Zoheth and Ben-
zoheth. [21]The sons of Shelah the son of Judah: Er the father of Lecah,

Laadah the father of Mareshah, and the clans of the house of linen workers at Beth-ashbea; 22 † and Jokim, and the men of Cozeba, and Joash, and Saraph, who ruled in Moab and returned to Lehem[9] (now the records[10] are ancient). 23 † These were the potters who were inhabitants of Netaim and Gederah. They lived there in the king's service.

Descendants of Simeon

24 ‡‡The sons of Simeon: Nemuel, Jamin, Jarib, Zerah, Shaul; 25 Shallum
was his son, Mibsam his son, Mishma his son. 26 The sons of Mishma:
Hammuel his son, Zaccur his son, Shimei his son. 27 Shimei had sixteen sons
and six daughters; but his brothers did not have many children, nor did all
their clan multiply like the men of Judah. 28 ‡They lived in Beersheba,
Moladah, Hazar-shual, 29 Bilhah, Ezem, Tolad, 30 Bethuel, Hormah, Ziklag,
31 Beth-marcaboth, Hazar-susim, Beth-biri, and Shaaraim. These were their
cities until David reigned. 32 †And their villages were Etam, Ain, Rimmon,
Tochen, and Ashan, five cities, 33 along with all their villages that were
around these cities as far as Baal. These were their settlements, and they
kept a genealogical record.

34 Meshobab, Jamlech, Joshah the son of Amaziah, 35 Joel, Jehu the son of
Joshibiah, son of Seraiah, son of Asiel, 36 Elioenai, Jaakobah, Jeshohaiah,
Asaiah, Adiel, Jesimiel, Benaiah, 37 Ziza the son of Shiphi, son of Allon, son
of Jedaiah, son of Shimri, son of Shemaiah— 38 these mentioned by name
were princes in their clans, and their fathers' houses increased greatly.
39 ‡They journeyed to the entrance of Gedor, to the east side of the valley, to
seek pasture for their flocks, 40 †where they found rich, good pasture, and
the land was very broad, quiet, and peaceful, for the former inhabitants
there belonged to Ham. 41 †These, registered by name, came in the days of
Hezekiah, king of Judah, and destroyed their tents and the Meunites who
were found there, and marked them for destruction to this day, and settled in
their place, because there was pasture there for their flocks. 42 †And some of
them, five hundred men of the Simeonites, went to Mount Seir, having as
their leaders Pelatiah, Neariah, Rephaiah, and Uzziel, the sons of Ishi.
43 †And they defeated the remnant of the Amalekites who had escaped, and
they have lived there to this day.

Descendants of Reuben

5 [1] ‡ ‡ The sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel (for he was the
firstborn, but because he defiled his father's couch, his birthright was given
to the sons of Joseph the son of Israel, so that he could not be enrolled as
the oldest son; [2]though Judah became strong among his brothers and a chief
came from him, yet the birthright belonged to Joseph), [3]the sons of Reuben,
the firstborn of Israel: Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi. [4] ‡ The sons of
Joel: Shemaiah his son, Gog his son, Shimei his son, [5]Micah his son, Reaiah
his son, Baal his son, [6] † Beerah his son, whom Tiglath-pileser[1] king of
Assyria carried away into exile; he was a chief of the Reubenites. [7]And his
kinsmen by their clans, when the genealogy of their generations was
recorded: the chief, Jeiel, and Zechariah, [8] † and Bela the son of Azaz, son of
Shema, son of Joel, who lived in Aroer, as far as Nebo and Baal-meon. [9] † He
also lived to the east as far as the entrance of the desert this side of the
Euphrates, because their livestock had multiplied in the land of Gilead.
[10] † And in the days of Saul they waged war against the Hagrites, who fell
into their hand. And they lived in their tents throughout all the region east of
Gilead.

Descendants of Gad

11 ‡‡‡‡The sons of Gad lived over against them in the land of Bashan as
far as Salecah: 12 Joel the chief, Shapham the second, Janai, and Shaphat in
Bashan. 13 And their kinsmen according to their fathers' houses: Michael,
Meshullam, Sheba, Jorai, Jacan, Zia and Eber, seven. 14 These were the sons
of Abihail the son of Huri, son of Jaroah, son of Gilead, son of Michael, son
of Jeshishai, son of Jahdo, son of Buz. 15 Ahi the son of Abdiel, son of Guni,
was chief in their fathers' houses, 16 †and they lived in Gilead, in Bashan and
in its towns, and in all the pasturelands of Sharon to their limits. 17 All of
these were recorded in genealogies in the days of Jotham king of Judah, and
in the days of Jeroboam king of Israel.

18 ‡† The Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh had
valiant men who carried shield and sword, and drew the bow, expert in war,
44,760, able to go to war. 19 †They waged war against the Hagrites, Jetur,
Naphish, and Nodab. 20 And when they prevailed over them, the Hagrites
and all who were with them were given into their hands, for they cried out
to God in the battle, and he granted their urgent plea because they trusted in
him. 21 †They carried off their livestock: 50,000 of their camels, 250,000
sheep, 2,000 donkeys, and 100,000 men alive. 22 For many fell, because the
war was of God. And they lived in their place until the exile.

The Half-Tribe of Manasseh

23 ‡‡The members of the half-tribe of Manasseh lived in the land. They
were very numerous from Bashan to Baal-hermon, Senir, and Mount
Hermon. 24These were the heads of their fathers' houses: Epher,[1] Ishi, Eliel,
Azriel, Jeremiah, Hodaviah, and Jahdiel, mighty warriors, famous men,
heads of their fathers' houses. 25†But they broke faith with the God of their
fathers, and whored after the gods of the peoples of the land, whom God
had destroyed before them. 26†So the God of Israel stirred up the spirit of
Pul king of Assyria, the spirit of Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, and he took
them into exile, namely, the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of
Manasseh, and brought them to Halah, Habor, Hara, and the river Gozan, to
this day.

Descendants of Levi

6 [1]†[1] The sons of Levi: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. [2]†The sons of
Kohath: Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel. [3]The children of Amram:
Aaron, Moses, and Miriam. The sons of Aaron: Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and
Ithamar. [4]Eleazar fathered Phinehas, Phinehas fathered Abishua, [5]Abishua
fathered Bukki, Bukki fathered Uzzi, [6]Uzzi fathered Zerahiah, Zerahiah
fathered Meraioth, [7]Meraioth fathered Amariah, Amariah fathered Ahitub,
[8]Ahitub fathered Zadok, Zadok fathered Ahimaaz, [9]Ahimaaz fathered
Azariah, Azariah fathered Johanan, [10]†and Johanan fathered Azariah (it was
he who served as priest in the house that Solomon built in Jerusalem).
[11]Azariah fathered Amariah, Amariah fathered Ahitub, [12]Ahitub fathered
Zadok, Zadok fathered Shallum, [13]Shallum fathered Hilkiah, Hilkiah
fathered Azariah, [14]Azariah fathered Seraiah, Seraiah fathered Jehozadak;
[15]†and Jehozadak went into exile when the Lord sent Judah and Jerusalem
into exile by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar.

[16]†[2] The sons of Levi: Gershom, Kohath, and Merari. [17]And these are the
names of the sons of Gershom: Libni and Shimei. [18]The sons of Kohath:
Amram, Izhar, Hebron and Uzziel. [19]The sons of Merari: Mahli and Mushi.
These are the clans of the Levites according to their fathers. [20]Of Gershom:
Libni his son, Jahath his son, Zimmah his son, [21]Joah his son, Iddo his son,
Zerah his son, Jeatherai his son. [22]The sons of Kohath: Amminadab his son,
Korah his son, Assir his son, [23]Elkanah his son, Ebiasaph his son, Assir his
son, [24]Tahath his son, Uriel his son, Uzziah his son, and Shaul his son. [25]The
sons of Elkanah: Amasai and Ahimoth, [26]Elkanah his son, Zophai his son,
Nahath his son, [27]Eliab his son, Jeroham his son, Elkanah his son. [28]†The
sons of Samuel: Joel[3] his firstborn, the second Abijah.[4] [29]The sons of
Merari: Mahli, Libni his son, Shimei his son, Uzzah his son, [30]Shimea his
son, Haggiah his son, and Asaiah his son.

[31]††These are the men whom David put in charge of the service of song
in the house of the Lord after the ark rested there. [32]†They ministered with
song before the tabernacle of the tent of meeting until Solomon built the

house of the LORD in Jerusalem, and they performed their service according to their order. 33 ‡These are the men who served and their sons. Of the sons of the Kohathites: Heman the singer the son of Joel, son of Samuel, 34 son of Elkanah, son of Jeroham, son of Eliel, son of Toah, 35 son of Zuph, son of Elkanah, son of Mahath, son of Amasai, 36 son of Elkanah, son of Joel, son of Azariah, son of Zephaniah, 37 son of Tahath, son of Assir, son of Ebiasaph, son of Korah, 38 son of Izhar, son of Kohath, son of Levi, son of Israel; 39 †and his brother Asaph, who stood on his right hand, namely, Asaph the son of Berechiah, son of Shimea, 40 son of Michael, son of Baaseiah, son of Malchijah, 41 son of Ethni, son of Zerah, son of Adaiah, 42 son of Ethan, son of Zimmah, son of Shimei, 43 son of Jahath, son of Gershom, son of Levi. 44 †On the left hand were their brothers, the sons of Merari: Ethan the son of Kishi, son of Abdi, son of Malluch, 45 son of Hashabiah, son of Amaziah, son of Hilkiah, 46 son of Amzi, son of Bani, son of Shemer, 47 son of Mahli, son of Mushi, son of Merari, son of Levi. 48 †And their brothers the Levites were appointed for all the service of the tabernacle of the house of God.

49 ‡‡But Aaron and his sons made offerings on the altar of burnt offering and on the altar of incense for all the work of the Most Holy Place, and to make atonement for Israel, according to all that Moses the servant of God had commanded. 50 ‡These are the sons of Aaron: Eleazar his son, Phinehas his son, Abishua his son, 51 Bukki his son, Uzzi his son, Zerahiah his son, 52 Meraioth his son, Amariah his son, Ahitub his son, 53 Zadok his son, Ahimaaz his son.

54 ‡These are their dwelling places according to their settlements within their borders: to the sons of Aaron of the clans of Kohathites, for theirs was the first lot, 55 to them they gave Hebron in the land of Judah and its surrounding pasturelands, 56 but the fields of the city and its villages they gave to Caleb the son of Jephunneh. 57 †To the sons of Aaron they gave the cities of refuge: Hebron, Libnah with its pasturelands, Jattir, Eshtemoa with its pasturelands, 58 Hilen with its pasturelands, Debir with its pasturelands, 59 Ashan with its pasturelands, and Beth-shemesh with its pasturelands; 60 and from the tribe of Benjamin, Gibeon,[1] Geba with its pasturelands, Alemeth with its pasturelands, and Anathoth with its pasturelands. All their cities throughout their clans were thirteen.

[61]To the rest of the Kohathites were given by lot out of the clan of the tribe, out of the half-tribe, the half of Manasseh, ten cities. [62]To the Gershomites according to their clans were allotted thirteen cities out of the tribes of Issachar, Asher, Naphtali and Manasseh in Bashan. [63]To the Merarites according to their clans were allotted twelve cities out of the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Zebulun. [64]So the people of Israel gave the Levites the cities with their pasturelands. [65]They gave by lot out of the tribes of Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin these cities that are mentioned by name.

[66]And some of the clans of the sons of Kohath had cities of their territory out of the tribe of Ephraim. [67]They were given the cities of refuge: Shechem with its pasturelands in the hill country of Ephraim, Gezer with its pasturelands, [68]Jokmeam with its pasturelands, Beth-horon with its pasturelands, [69]Aijalon with its pasturelands, Gath-rimmon with its pasturelands, [70]and out of the half-tribe of Manasseh, Aner with its pasturelands, and Bileam with its pasturelands, for the rest of the clans of the Kohathites.

[71]To the Gershomites were given out of the clan of the half-tribe of Manasseh: Golan in Bashan with its pasturelands and Ashtaroth with its pasturelands; [72]and out of the tribe of Issachar: Kedesh with its pasturelands, Daberath with its pasturelands, [73]Ramoth with its pasturelands, and Anem with its pasturelands; [74]out of the tribe of Asher: Mashal with its pasturelands, Abdon with its pasturelands, [75]Hukok with its pasturelands, and Rehob with its pasturelands; [76]and out of the tribe of Naphtali: Kedesh in Galilee with its pasturelands, Hammon with its pasturelands, and Kiriathaim with its pasturelands. [77]† To the rest of the Merarites were allotted out of the tribe of Zebulun: Rimmono with its pasturelands, Tabor with its pasturelands, [78]and beyond the Jordan at Jericho, on the east side of the Jordan, out of the tribe of Reuben: Bezer in the wilderness with its pasturelands, Jahzah with its pasturelands, [79]Kedemoth with its pasturelands, and Mephaath with its pasturelands; [80]and out of the tribe of Gad: Ramoth in Gilead with its pasturelands, Mahanaim with its pasturelands, [81]Heshbon with its pasturelands, and Jazer with its pasturelands.

Descendants of Issachar

7 [1] ‡ ‡ The sons[1] of Issachar: Tola, Puah, Jashub, and Shimron, four.
[2] † The sons of Tola: Uzzi, Rephaiah, Jeriel, Jahmai, Ibsam, and Shemuel,
heads of their fathers' houses, namely of Tola, mighty warriors of their
generations, their number in the days of David being 22,600. [3] † The son[2] of
Uzzi: Izrahiah. And the sons of Izrahiah: Michael, Obadiah, Joel, and
Isshiah, all five of them were chief men. [4] And along with them, by their
generations, according to their fathers' houses, were units of the army for
war, 36,000, for they had many wives and sons. [5] Their kinsmen belonging
to all the clans of Issachar were in all 87,000 mighty warriors, enrolled by
genealogy.

Descendants of Benjamin

6 ‡ † The sons of Benjamin: Bela, Becher, and Jediael, three. 7 The sons of
Bela: Ezbon, Uzzi, Uzziel, Jerimoth, and Iri, five, heads of fathers' houses,
mighty warriors. And their enrollment by genealogies was 22,034. 8 The
sons of Becher: Zemirah, Joash, Eliezer, Elioenai, Omri, Jeremoth, Abijah,
Anathoth, and Alemeth. All these were the sons of Becher. 9 And their
enrollment by genealogies, according to their generations, as heads of their
fathers' houses, mighty warriors, was 20,200. 10 The son of Jediael: Bilhan.
And the sons of Bilhan: Jeush, Benjamin, Ehud, Chenaanah, Zethan,
Tarshish, and Ahishahar. 11 All these were the sons of Jediael according to
the heads of their fathers' houses, mighty warriors, 17,200, able to go to
war. 12 † And Shuppim and Huppim were the sons of Ir, Hushim the son of
Aher.

Descendants of Naphtali

13 The sons of Naphtali: Jahziel, Guni, Jezer and Shallum, the descendants of Bilhah.

Descendants of Manasseh

14 ‡ † The sons of Manasseh: Asriel, whom his Aramean concubine bore;
she bore Machir the father of Gilead. 15 And Machir took a wife for Huppim
and for Shuppim. The name of his sister was Maacah. And the name of the
second was Zelophehad, and Zelophehad had daughters. 16 And Maacah the
wife of Machir bore a son, and she called his name Peresh; and the name of
his brother was Sheresh; and his sons were Ulam and Rakem. 17 The son of
Ulam: Bedan. These were the sons of Gilead the son of Machir, son of
Manasseh. 18 And his sister Hammolecheth bore Ishhod, Abiezer and
Mahlah. 19 The sons of Shemida were Ahian, Shechem, Likhi, and Aniam.

Descendants of Ephraim

20 ‡‡‡The sons of Ephraim: Shuthelah, and Bered his son, Tahath his son,
Eleadah his son, Tahath his son, 21 ‡Zabad his son, Shuthelah his son, and
Ezer and Elead, whom the men of Gath who were born in the land killed,
because they came down to raid their livestock. 22 And Ephraim their father
mourned many days, and his brothers came to comfort him. 23 And Ephraim
went in to his wife, and she conceived and bore a son. And he called his
name Beriah, because disaster had befallen his house.[1] 24 ‡His daughter was
Sheerah, who built both Lower and Upper Beth-horon, and Uzzen-sheerah.
25 Rephah was his son, Resheph his son, Telah his son, Tahan his son,
26 Ladan his son, Ammihud his son, Elishama his son, 27 Nun[2] his son,
Joshua his son. 28 Their possessions and settlements were Bethel and its
towns, and to the east Naaran, and to the west Gezer and its towns,
Shechem and its towns, and Ayyah and its towns; 29 also in possession of the
Manassites, Beth-shean and its towns, Taanach and its towns, Megiddo and
its towns, Dor and its towns. In these lived the sons of Joseph the son of
Israel.

Descendants of Asher

30 ‡ ‡ The sons of Asher: Imnah, Ishvah, Ishvi, Beriah, and their sister
Serah. 31 The sons of Beriah: Heber, and Malchiel, who fathered Birzaith.
32 Heber fathered Japhlet, Shomer, Hotham, and their sister Shua. 33 The sons
of Japhlet: Pasach, Bimhal, and Ashvath. These are the sons of Japhlet.
34 The sons of Shemer his brother: Rohgah, Jehubbah, and Aram. 35 The sons
of Helem his brother: Zophah, Imna, Shelesh, and Amal. 36 The sons of
Zophah: Suah, Harnepher, Shual, Beri, Imrah. 37 Bezer, Hod, Shamma,
Shilshah, Ithran, and Beera. 38 The sons of Jether: Jephunneh, Pispa, and
Ara. 39 The sons of Ulla: Arah, Hanniel, and Rizia. 40 † All of these were men
of Asher, heads of fathers' houses, approved, mighty warriors, chiefs of the
princes. Their number enrolled by genealogies, for service in war, was
26,000 men.

A Genealogy of Saul

8 [1]†Benjamin fathered Bela his firstborn, Ashbel the second, Aharah
the third, [2]Nohah the fourth, and Rapha the fifth. [3]And Bela had sons:
Addar, Gera, Abihud, [4]Abishua, Naaman, Ahoah, [5]Gera, Shephuphan, and
Huram. [6]†These are the sons of Ehud (they were heads of fathers' houses of
the inhabitants of Geba, and they were carried into exile to Manahath):
[7]Naaman,[3] Ahijah, and Gera, that is, Heglam,[4] who fathered Uzza and
Ahihud. [8]‡‡And Shaharaim fathered sons in the country of Moab after he
had sent away Hushim and Baara his wives. [9]He fathered sons by Hodesh
his wife: Jobab, Zibia, Mesha, Malcam, [10]Jeuz, Sachia, and Mirmah. These
were his sons, heads of fathers' houses. [11]He also fathered sons by Hushim:
Abitub and Elpaal. [12]The sons of Elpaal: Eber, Misham, and Shemed, who
built Ono and Lod with its towns, [13]‡†and Beriah and Shema (they were
heads of fathers' houses of the inhabitants of Aijalon, who caused the
inhabitants of Gath to flee); [14]and Ahio, Shashak, and Jeremoth. [15]Zebadiah,
Arad, Eder, [16]Michael, Ishpah, and Joha were sons of Beriah. [17]Zebadiah,
Meshullam, Hizki, Heber, [18]Ishmerai, Izliah, and Jobab were the sons of
Elpaal. [19]Jakim, Zichri, Zabdi, [20]Elienai, Zillethai, Eliel, [21]Adaiah, Beraiah,
and Shimrath were the sons of Shimei. [22]Ishpan, Eber, Eliel, [23]Abdon,
Zichri, Hanan, [24]Hananiah, Elam, Anthothijah, [25]Iphdeiah, and Penuel were
the sons of Shashak. [26]Shamsherai, Shehariah, Athaliah, [27]Jaareshiah, Elijah,
and Zichri were the sons of Jeroham. [28]†These were the heads of fathers'
houses, according to their generations, chief men. These lived in Jerusalem.

[29]‡†Jeiel[1] the father of Gibeon lived in Gibeon, and the name of his wife
was Maacah. [30]His firstborn son: Abdon, then Zur, Kish, Baal, Nadab,
[31]Gedor, Ahio, Zecher, [32]and Mikloth (he fathered Shimeah). Now these also
lived opposite their kinsmen in Jerusalem, with their kinsmen. [33]†Ner was
the father of Kish, Kish of Saul, Saul of Jonathan, Malchi-shua, Abinadab
and Eshbaal; [34]and the son of Jonathan was Merib-baal; and Merib-baal was
the father of Micah. [35]The sons of Micah: Pithon, Melech, Tarea, and Ahaz.
[36]Ahaz fathered Jehoaddah, and Jehoaddah fathered Alemeth, Azmaveth,

and Zimri. Zimri fathered Moza. [37]Moza fathered Binea; Raphah was his
son, Eleasah his son, Azel his son. [38]Azel had six sons, and these are their
names: Azrikam, Bocheru, Ishmael, Shearіah, Obadiah, and Hanan. All
these were the sons of Azel. [39]The sons of Eshek his brother: Ulam his
firstborn, Jeush the second, and Eliphelet the third. [40]† The sons of Ulam
were men who were mighty warriors, bowmen, having many sons and
grandsons, 150. All these were Benjaminites.

A Genealogy of the Returned Exiles

9 [1]So all Israel was recorded in genealogies, and these are written
in the Book of the Kings of Israel. And Judah was taken into exile in
Babylon because of their breach of faith. [2]Now the first to dwell again in
their possessions in their cities were Israel, the priests, the Levites, and the
temple servants. [3]And some of the people of Judah, Benjamin, Ephraim,
and Manasseh lived in Jerusalem: [4]Uthai the son of Ammihud, son of
Omri, son of Imri, son of Bani, from the sons of Perez the son of Judah.
[5]And of the Shilonites: Asaiah the firstborn, and his sons. [6]Of the sons of
Zerah: Jeuel and their kinsmen, 690. [7]Of the Benjaminites: Sallu the son of
Meshullam, son of Hodaviah, son of Hassenuah, [8]Ibneiah the son of
Jeroham, Elah the son of Uzzi, son of Michri, and Meshullam the son of
Shephatiah, son of Reuel, son of Ibnijah; [9]and their kinsmen according to
their generations, 956. All these were heads of fathers' houses according to
their fathers' houses.

[10]Of the priests: Jedaiah, Jehoiarib, Jachin, [11]and Azariah the son of
Hilkiah, son of Meshullam, son of Zadok, son of Meraioth, son of Ahitub,
the chief officer of the house of God; [12]and Adaiah the son of Jeroham, son
of Pashhur, son of Malchijah, and Maasai the son of Adiel, son of Jahzerah,
son of Meshullam, son of Meshillemith, son of Immer; [13]besides their
kinsmen, heads of their fathers' houses, 1,760, mighty men for the work of
the service of the house of God.

[14]Of the Levites: Shemaiah the son of Hasshub, son of Azrikam, son of
Hashabiah, of the sons of Merari; [15]and Bakbakkar, Heresh, Galal and
Mattaniah the son of Mica, son of Zichri, son of Asaph; [16]and Obadiah the
son of Shemaiah, son of Galal, son of Jeduthun, and Berechiah the son of
Asa, son of Elkanah, who lived in the villages of the Netophathites.

[17]The gatekeepers were Shallum, Akkub, Talmon, Ahiman, and their
kinsmen (Shallum was the chief); [18]until then they were in the king's gate
on the east side as the gatekeepers of the camps of the Levites. [19]Shallum
the son of Kore, son of Ebiasaph, son of Korah, and his kinsmen of his
fathers' house, the Korahites, were in charge of the work of the service,

keepers of the thresholds of the tent, as their fathers had been in charge of the camp of the Lord, keepers of the entrance. [20]†And Phinehas the son of Eleazar was the chief officer over them in time past; the Lord was with him. [21]Zechariah the son of Meshelemiah was gatekeeper at the entrance of the tent of meeting. [22]All these, who were chosen as gatekeepers at the thresholds, were 212. They were enrolled by genealogies in their villages. David and Samuel the seer established them in their office of trust. [23]So they and their sons were in charge of the gates of the house of the Lord, that is, the house of the tent, as guards. [24]The gatekeepers were on the four sides, east, west, north, and south. [25]†And their kinsmen who were in their villages were obligated to come in every seven days, in turn, to be with these, [26]for the four chief gatekeepers, who were Levites, were entrusted to be over the chambers and the treasures of the house of God. [27]And they lodged around the house of God, for on them lay the duty of watching, and they had charge of opening it every morning.

[28]Some of them had charge of the utensils of service, for they were required to count them when they were brought in and taken out. [29]Others of them were appointed over the furniture and over all the holy utensils, also over the fine flour, the wine, the oil, the incense, and the spices. [30]Others, of the sons of the priests, prepared the mixing of the spices, [31]†and Mattithiah, one of the Levites, the firstborn of Shallum the Korahite, was entrusted with making the flat cakes. [32]Also some of their kinsmen of the Kohathites had charge of the showbread, to prepare it every Sabbath.

[33]†Now these, the singers, the heads of fathers' houses of the Levites, were in the chambers of the temple free from other service, for they were on duty day and night. [34]†These were heads of fathers' houses of the Levites, according to their generations, leaders. These lived in Jerusalem.

Saul’s Genealogy Repeated

35 In Gibeon lived the father of Gibeon, Jeiel, and the name of his wife
was Maacah, 36 and his firstborn son Abdon, then Zur, Kish, Baal, Ner,
Nadab, 37 Gedor, Ahio, Zechariah, and Mikloth; 38 and Mikloth was the father
of Shimeam; and these also lived opposite their kinsmen in Jerusalem, with
their kinsmen. 39 Ner fathered Kish, Kish fathered Saul, Saul fathered
Jonathan, Malchi-shua, Abinadab, and Eshbaal. 40 And the son of Jonathan
was Merib-baal, and Merib-baal fathered Micah. 41 The sons of Micah:
Pithon, Melech, Tahrea, and Ahaz.[1] 42 And Ahaz fathered Jarah, and Jarah
fathered Alemeth, Azmaveth, and Zimri. And Zimri fathered Moza. 43 Moza
fathered Binea, and Rephaiah was his son, Eleasah his son, Azel his son.
44 Azel had six sons and these are their names: Azrikam, Bocheru, Ishmael,
Shearіah, Obadiah, and Hanan; these were the sons of Azel.

The Death of Saul and His Sons

10 [1]†Now the Philistines fought against Israel, and the men of Israel
fled before the Philistines and fell slain on Mount Gilboa. [2]And the
Philistines overtook Saul and his sons, and the Philistines struck down
Jonathan and Abinadab and Malchi-shua, the sons of Saul. [3]The battle
pressed hard against Saul, and the archers found him, and he was wounded
by the archers. [4]Then Saul said to his armor-bearer, "Draw your sword and
thrust me through with it, lest these uncircumcised come and mistreat me."
But his armor-bearer would not, for he feared greatly. Therefore Saul took
his own sword and fell upon it. [5]And when his armor-bearer saw that Saul
was dead, he also fell upon his sword and died. [6]†Thus Saul died; he and his
three sons and all his house died together. [7]And when all the men of Israel
who were in the valley saw that the army[2] had fled and that Saul and his
sons were dead, they abandoned their cities and fled, and the Philistines
came and lived in them.

[8]††The next day, when the Philistines came to strip the slain, they found
Saul and his sons fallen on Mount Gilboa. [9]†And they stripped him and
took his head and his armor, and sent messengers throughout the land of the
Philistines to carry the good news to their idols and to the people. [10]†And
they put his armor in the temple of their gods and fastened his head in the
temple of Dagon. [11]†But when all Jabesh-gilead heard all that the Philistines
had done to Saul, [12]all the valiant men arose and took away the body of Saul
and the bodies of his sons, and brought them to Jabesh. And they buried
their bones under the oak in Jabesh and fasted seven days.

[13]†So Saul died for his breach of faith. He broke faith with the Lord in
that he did not keep the command of the Lord, and also consulted a
medium, seeking guidance. [14]†He did not seek guidance from the Lord.
Therefore the Lord put him to death and turned the kingdom over to David
the son of Jesse.

David Anointed King

11 [1]†† Then all Israel gathered together to David at Hebron and said,
"Behold, we are your bone and flesh. [2]† In times past, even when Saul was
king, it was you who led out and brought in Israel. And the Lord your God
said to you, 'You shall be shepherd of my people Israel, and you shall be
prince over my people Israel.'" [3]† So all the elders of Israel came to the king
at Hebron, and David made a covenant with them at Hebron before the
Lord. And they anointed David king over Israel, according to the word of
the Lord by Samuel.

David Takes Jerusalem

4 ‡‡‡And David and all Israel went to Jerusalem, that is, Jebus, where the
Jebusites were, the inhabitants of the land. 5 †The inhabitants of Jebus said
to David, “You will not come in here.” Nevertheless, David took the
stronghold of Zion, that is, the city of David. 6 † David said, “Whoever
strikes the Jebusites first shall be chief and commander.” And Joab the son
of Zeruiah went up first, so he became chief. 7 And David lived in the
stronghold; therefore it was called the city of David. 8 †And he built the city
all around from the Millo in complete circuit, and Joab repaired the rest of
the city. 9 †And David became greater and greater, for the Lord of hosts was
with him.

David’s Mighty Men

10 ‡ ‡ †Now these are the chiefs of David’s mighty men, who gave him
strong support in his kingdom, together with all Israel, to make him king,
according to the word of the Lord concerning Israel. 11 †This is an account of
David’s mighty men: Jashobeam, a Hachmonite, was chief of the three.[1]
He wielded his spear against 300 whom he killed at one time.
12 And next to him among the three mighty men was Eleazar the son of
Dodo, the Ahohite. 13 † He was with David at Pas-dammim when the
Philistines were gathered there for battle. There was a plot of ground full of
barley, and the men fled from the Philistines. 14 †But he took his[1] stand in
the midst of the plot and defended it and killed the Philistines. And the Lord
saved them by a great victory.
15 ‡ ‡Three of the thirty chief men went down to the rock to David at the
cave of Adullam, when the army of Philistines was encamped in the Valley
of Rephaim. 16 David was then in the stronghold, and the garrison of the
Philistines was then at Bethlehem. 17 And David said longingly, “Oh that
someone would give me water to drink from the well of Bethlehem that is
by the gate!” 18 †Then the three mighty men broke through the camp of the
Philistines and drew water out of the well of Bethlehem that was by the gate
and took it and brought it to David. But David would not drink it. He
poured it out to the Lord 19 †and said, “Far be it from me before my God that
I should do this. Shall I drink the lifeblood of these men? For at the risk of
their lives they brought it.” Therefore he would not drink it. These things
did the three mighty men.
20 †Now Abishai, the brother of Joab, was chief of the thirty.[2] And he
wielded his spear against 300 men and killed them and won a name beside
the three. 21 He was the most renowned[3] of the thirty[4] and became their
commander, but he did not attain to the three.
22 And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was a valiant man[5] of Kabzeel, a doer
of great deeds. He struck down two heroes of Moab. He also went down
and struck down a lion in a pit on a day when snow had fallen. 23 And he
struck down an Egyptian, a man of great stature, five cubits[6] tall. The
Egyptian had in his hand a spear like a weaver’s beam, but Benaiah went

down to him with a staff and snatched the spear out of the Egyptian's hand and killed him with his own spear. [24]These things did Benaiah the son of Jehoiada and won a name beside the three mighty men. [25]He was renowned among the thirty, but he did not attain to the three. And David set him over his bodyguard.

[26]†The mighty men were Asahel the brother of Joab, Elhanan the son of Dodo of Bethlehem, [27]Shammoth of Harod,[7] Helez the Pelonite, [28]Ira the son of Ikkesh of Tekoa, Abiezer of Anathoth, [29]Sibbecai the Hushathite, Ilai the Ahohite, [30]Maharai of Netophah, Heled the son of Baanah of Netophah, [31]Ithai the son of Ribai of Gibeah of the people of Benjamin, Benaiah of Pirathon, [32]Hurai of the brooks of Gaash, Abiel the Arbathite, [33]Azmaveth of Baharum, Eliahba the Shaalbonite, [34]Hashem[8] the Gizonite, Jonathan the son of Shagee the Hararite, [35]Ahiam the son of Sachar the Hararite, Eliphal the son of Ur, [36]Hepher the Mecherathite, Ahijah the Pelonite, [37]Hezro of Carmel, Naarai the son of Ezbai, [38]Joel the brother of Nathan, Mibhar the son of Hagri, [39]Zelek the Ammonite, Naharai of Beeroth, the armor-bearer of Joab the son of Zeruiah, [40]Ira the Ithrite, Gareb the Ithrite, [41]Uriah the Hittite, Zabad the son of Ahlai, [42]Adina the son of Shiza the Reubenite, a leader of the Reubenites, and thirty with him, [43]Hanan the son of Maacah, and Joshaphat the Mithnite, [44]Uzzia the Ashterathite, Shama and Jeiel the sons of Hotham the Aroerite, [45]Jediael the son of Shimri, and Joha his brother, the Tizite, [46]Eliel the Mahavite, and Jeribai, and Joshaviah, the sons of Elnaam, and Ithmah the Moabite, [47]Eliel, and Obed, and Jaasiel the Mezobaite.

The Mighty Men Join David

12 [1]†††Now these are the men who came to David at Ziklag, while
he could not move about freely because of Saul the son of Kish. And they
were among the mighty men who helped him in war. [2]†They were bowmen
and could shoot arrows and sling stones with either the right or the left
hand; they were Benjaminites, Saul's kinsmen. [3]†The chief was Ahiezer,
then Joash, both sons of Shemaah of Gibeah; also Jeziel and Pelet, the sons
of Azmaveth; Beracah, Jehu of Anathoth, [4]Ishmaiah of Gibeon, a mighty
man among the thirty and a leader over the thirty; Jeremiah,[1] Jahaziel,
Johanan, Jozabad of Gederah, [5]Eluzai,[2] Jerimoth, Bealiah, Shemariah,
Shephatiah the Haruphite; [6]Elkanah, Isshiah, Azarel, Joezer, and
Jashobeam, the Korahites; [7]And Joelah and Zebadiah, the sons of Jeroham
of Gedor.

[8]†From the Gadites there went over to David at the stronghold in the
wilderness mighty and experienced warriors, expert with shield and spear,
whose faces were like the faces of lions and who were swift as gazelles
upon the mountains: [9]Ezer the chief, Obadiah second, Eliab third,
[10]Mishmannah fourth, Jeremiah fifth, [11]Attai sixth, Eliel seventh, [12]Johanan
eighth, Elzabad ninth, [13]Jeremiah tenth, Machbannai eleventh. [14]These
Gadites were officers of the army; the least was a match for a hundred men
and the greatest for a thousand. [15]†These are the men who crossed the
Jordan in the first month, when it was overflowing all its banks, and put to
flight all those in the valleys, to the east and to the west.

[16]†And some of the men of Benjamin and Judah came to the stronghold
to David. [17]†David went out to meet them and said to them, "If you have
come to me in friendship to help me, my heart will be joined to you; but if
to betray me to my adversaries, although there is no wrong in my hands,
then may the God of our fathers see and rebuke you." [18]†Then the Spirit
clothed Amasai, chief of the thirty, and he said,

"We are yours, O David,
and with you, O son of Jesse!
Peace, peace to you,

and peace to your helpers!
For your God helps you.”

Then David received them and made them officers of his troops.

19 †Some of the men of Manasseh deserted to David when he came with
the Philistines for the battle against Saul. (Yet he did not help them, for the
rulers of the Philistines took counsel and sent him away, saying, “At peril to
our heads he will desert to his master Saul.”) 20 †As he went to Ziklag, these
men of Manasseh deserted to him: Adnah, Jozabad, Jediael, Michael,
Jozabad, Elihu, and Zillethai, chiefs of thousands in Manasseh. 21 † They
helped David against the band of raiders, for they were all mighty men of
valor and were commanders in the army. 22 †For from day to day men came
to David to help him, until there was a great army, like an army of God.

23 †These are the numbers of the divisions of the armed troops who came
to David in Hebron to turn the kingdom of Saul over to him, according to
the word of the Lord. 24 The men of Judah bearing shield and spear were
6,800 armed troops. 25 Of the Simeonites, mighty men of valor for war,
7,100. 26 † Of the Levites 4,600. 27 The prince Jehoiada, of the house of
Aaron, and with him 3,700. 28 †Zadok, a young man mighty in valor, and
twenty-two commanders from his own fathers’ house. 29 Of the
Benjaminites, the kinsmen of Saul, 3,000, of whom the majority had to that
point kept their allegiance to the house of Saul. 30 Of the Ephraimites
20,800, mighty men of valor, famous men in their fathers’ houses. 31 †Of the
half-tribe of Manasseh 18,000, who were expressly named to come and
make David king. 32 Of Issachar, men who had understanding of the times,
to know what Israel ought to do, 200 chiefs, and all their kinsmen under
their command. 33 †Of Zebulun 50,000 seasoned troops, equipped for battle
with all the weapons of war, to help David[1] with singleness of purpose.
34 Of Naphtali 1,000 commanders with whom were 37,000 men armed with
shield and spear. 35 Of the Danites 28,600 men equipped for battle. 36 Of
Asher 40,000 seasoned troops ready for battle. 37 Of the Reubenites and
Gadites and the half-tribe of Manasseh from beyond the Jordan, 120,000
men armed with all the weapons of war.

38 † †All these, men of war, arrayed in battle order, came to Hebron with
full intent to make David king over all Israel. Likewise, all the rest of Israel

were of a single mind to make David king. [39] † And they were there with David for three days, eating and drinking, for their brothers had made preparation for them. [40] † And also their relatives, from as far as Issachar and Zebulun and Naphtali, came bringing food on donkeys and on camels and on mules and on oxen, abundant provisions of flour, cakes of figs, clusters of raisins, and wine and oil, oxen and sheep, for there was joy in Israel.

The Ark Brought from Kiriath-Jearim

13 [1]‡‡†David consulted with the commanders of thousands and of
hundreds, with every leader. [2]And David said to all the assembly of Israel,
“If it seems good to you and from the Lord our God, let us send abroad to
our brothers who remain in all the lands of Israel, as well as to the priests
and Levites in the cities that have pasturelands, that they may be gathered to
us. [3]†Then let us bring again the ark of our God to us, for we did not seek
it[2] in the days of Saul.” [4]†All the assembly agreed to do so, for the thing
was right in the eyes of all the people.

Uzzah and the Ark

5 ‡ † So David assembled all Israel from the Nile[3] of Egypt to Lebo-
hamath, to bring the ark of God from Kiriath-jearim. 6 † And David and all
Israel went up to Baalah, that is, to Kiriath-jearim that belongs to Judah, to
bring up from there the ark of God, which is called by the name of the Lord
who sits enthroned above the cherubim. 7 † And they carried the ark of God
on a new cart, from the house of Abinadab, and Uzzah and Ahio[4] were
driving the cart. 8 And David and all Israel were rejoicing before God with
all their might, with song and lyres and harps and tambourines and cymbals
and trumpets.

9 ‡ † And when they came to the threshing floor of Chidon, Uzzah put out
his hand to take hold of the ark, for the oxen stumbled. 10 And the anger of
the Lord was kindled against Uzzah, and he struck him down because he put
out his hand to the ark, and he died there before God. 11 † And David was
angry because the Lord had broken out against Uzzah. And that place is
called Perez-uzza[1] to this day. 12 And David was afraid of God that day, and
he said, “How can I bring the ark of God home to me?” 13 ‡ So David did not
take the ark home into the city of David, but took it aside to the house of
Obed-edom the Gittite. 14 And the ark of God remained with the household
of Obed-edom in his house three months. And the Lord blessed the
household of Obed-edom and all that he had.

David's Wives and Children

14 [1]†† And Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David, and cedar
trees, also masons and carpenters to build a house for him. [2]† And David
knew that the Lord had established him as king over Israel, and that his
kingdom was highly exalted for the sake of his people Israel.

[3]† And David took more wives in Jerusalem, and David fathered more
sons and daughters. [4]† These are the names of the children born to him in
Jerusalem: Shammua, Shobab, Nathan, Solomon, [5]Ibhar, Elishua, Elpelet,
[6]Nogah, Nepheg, Japhia, [7]Elishama, Beeliada and Eliphelet.

Philistines Defeated

8 ‡ ‡ † When the Philistines heard that David had been anointed king over
all Israel, all the Philistines went up to search for David. But David heard of
it and went out against them. 9 † Now the Philistines had come and made a
raid in the Valley of Rephaim. 10 ‡ † And David inquired of God, “Shall I go
up against the Philistines? Will you give them into my hand?” And the Lord
said to him, “Go up, and I will give them into your hand.” 11 † And he went
up to Baal-perazim, and David struck them down there. And David said,
“God has broken through[2] my enemies by my hand, like a bursting flood.”
Therefore the name of that place is called Baal-perazim. 12 † And they left
their gods there, and David gave command, and they were burned.

13 † And the Philistines yet again made a raid in the valley. 14 And when
David again inquired of God, God said to him, “You shall not go up after
them; go around and come against them opposite the balsam trees. 15 † And
when you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the balsam trees, then
go out to battle, for God has gone out before you to strike down the army of
the Philistines.” 16 † And David did as God commanded him, and they struck
down the Philistine army from Gibeon to Gezer. 17 † And the fame of David
went out into all lands, and the Lord brought the fear of him upon all
nations.

The Ark Brought to Jerusalem

15 [1]‡†David[3] built houses for himself in the city of David. And he
prepared a place for the ark of God and pitched a tent for it. [2]†Then David
said that no one but the Levites may carry the ark of God, for the Lord had
chosen them to carry the ark of the Lord and to minister to him forever.
[3]And David assembled all Israel at Jerusalem to bring up the ark of the Lord
to its place, which he had prepared for it. [4]‡And David gathered together the
sons of Aaron and the Levites: [5]of the sons of Kohath, Uriel the chief, with
120 of his brothers; [6]of the sons of Merari, Asaiah the chief, with 220 of his
brothers; [7]of the sons of Gershom, Joel the chief, with 130 of his brothers;
[8]of the sons of Elizaphan, Shemaiah the chief, with 200 of his brothers; [9]of
the sons of Hebron, Eliel the chief, with 80 of his brothers; [10]of the sons of
Uzziel, Amminadab the chief, with 112 of his brothers. [11]†Then David
summoned the priests Zadok and Abiathar, and the Levites Uriel, Asaiah,
Joel, Shemaiah, Eliel, and Amminadab, [12]†and said to them, “You are the
heads of the fathers’ houses of the Levites. Consecrate yourselves, you and
your brothers, so that you may bring up the ark of the Lord, the God of
Israel, to the place that I have prepared for it. [13]†Because you did not carry
it the first time, the Lord our God broke out against us, because we did not
seek him according to the rule.” [14]So the priests and the Levites consecrated
themselves to bring up the ark of the Lord, the God of Israel. [15]†And the
Levites carried the ark of God on their shoulders with the poles, as Moses
had commanded according to the word of the Lord.

[16]‡David also commanded the chiefs of the Levites to appoint their
brothers as the singers who should play loudly on musical instruments, on
harps and lyres and cymbals, to raise sounds of joy. [17]So the Levites
appointed Heman the son of Joel; and of his brothers Asaph the son of
Berechiah; and of the sons of Merari, their brothers, Ethan the son of
Kushaiah; [18]†and with them their brothers of the second order, Zechariah,
Jaaziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattithiah,
Eliphelehu, and Mikneiah, and the gatekeepers Obed-edom and Jeiel.
[19]†The singers, Heman, Asaph, and Ethan, were to sound bronze cymbals;

[20] † Zechariah, Aziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Maaseiah, and Benaiah were to play harps according to Alamoth; [21] † but Mattithiah, Eliphelehu, Mikneiah, Obed-edom, Jeiel, and Azaziah were to lead with lyres according to the Sheminith. [22]Chenaniah, leader of the Levites in music, should direct the music, for he understood it. [23]Berechiah and Elkanah were to be gatekeepers for the ark. [24]Shebaniah, Joshaphat, Nethanel, Amasai, Zechariah, Benaiah, and Eliezer, the priests, should blow the trumpets before the ark of God. Obed-edom and Jehiah were to be gatekeepers for the ark.

[25] † So David and the elders of Israel and the commanders of thousands went to bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD from the house of Obed-edom with rejoicing. [26] † And because God helped the Levites who were carrying the ark of the covenant of the LORD, they sacrificed seven bulls and seven rams. [27] †David was clothed with a robe of fine linen, as also were all the Levites who were carrying the ark, and the singers and Chenaniah the leader of the music of the singers. And David wore a linen ephod. [28]So all Israel brought up the ark of the covenant of the LORD with shouting, to the sound of the horn, trumpets, and cymbals, and made loud music on harps and lyres.

[29] † And as the ark of the covenant of the LORD came to the city of David, Michal the daughter of Saul looked out of the window and saw King David dancing and rejoicing, and she despised him in her heart.

The Ark Placed in a Tent

16 [1]‡†And they brought in the ark of God and set it inside the tent
that David had pitched for it, and they offered burnt offerings and peace
offerings before God. [2]‡†And when David had finished offering the burnt
offerings and the peace offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the
Lord [3]and distributed to all Israel, both men and women, to each a loaf of
bread, a portion of meat,[1] and a cake of raisins.

[4]Then he appointed some of the Levites as ministers before the ark of the
Lord, to invoke, to thank, and to praise the Lord, the God of Israel. [5]‡Asaph
was the chief, and second to him were Zechariah, Jeiel, Shemiramoth,
Jehiel, Mattithiah, Eliab, Benaiah, Obed-edom, and Jeiel, who were to play
harps and lyres; Asaph was to sound the cymbals, [6]and Benaiah and Jahaziel
the priests were to blow trumpets regularly before the ark of the covenant of
God. [7]Then on that day David first appointed that thanksgiving be sung to
the Lord by Asaph and his brothers.

David's Song of Thanks

8 Oh give thanks to the Lord; call upon his
name;
make known his deeds among the peoples!
9 Sing to him; sing praises to him;
tell of all his wondrous works!
10 Glory in his holy name;
let the hearts of those who seek the Lord
rejoice!
11 Seek the Lord and his strength;
seek his presence continually!
12 Remember the wondrous works that he has
done,
his miracles and the judgments he uttered,
13 O offspring of Israel his servant,
sons of Jacob, his chosen ones!

14 He is the Lord our God;
his judgments are in all the earth.
15 Remember his covenant forever,
the word that he commanded, for a
thousand generations,
16 the covenant that he made with Abraham,
his sworn promise to Isaac,
17 which he confirmed as a statute to Jacob,
as an everlasting covenant to Israel,
18 saying, "To you I will give the land of Canaan,
as your portion for an inheritance."

19 When you were few in number,
and of little account, and sojourners in it,
20 wandering from nation to nation,

from one kingdom to another people,
21 he allowed no one to oppress them;
he rebuked kings on their account,
22 saying, “Touch not my anointed ones,
do my prophets no harm!”

23 Sing to the Lord, all the earth!
Tell of his salvation from day to day.
24 Declare his glory among the nations,
his marvelous works among all the peoples!
25 For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised,
and he is to be held in awe above all gods.
26 For all the gods of the peoples are idols,
but the Lord made the heavens.
27 Splendor and majesty are before him;
strength and joy are in his place.

28 Ascribe to the Lord, O clans of the peoples,
ascribe to the Lord glory and strength!
29 Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name;
bring an offering and come before him!
Worship the Lord in the splendor of holiness;[1]
30 tremble before him, all the earth;
yes, the world is established; it shall never
be moved.
31 Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth
rejoice,
and let them say among the nations,
“The Lord reigns!”
32 Let the sea roar, and all that fills it;
let the field exult, and everything in it!
33 Then shall the trees of the forest sing for joy
before the Lord, for he comes to judge the
earth.

[34]†† Oh give thanks to the LORD, for he is good;
for his steadfast love endures forever!

[35]Say also:

"Save us, O God of our salvation,
and gather and deliver us from among the nations,
that we may give thanks to your holy name,
and glory in your praise.
[36]† Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel,
from everlasting to everlasting!"

Then all the people said, "Amen!" and praised the LORD.

Worship Before the Ark

37 ‡ ‡ ‡ So David left Asaph and his brothers there before the ark of the
covenant of the Lord to minister regularly before the ark as each day
required, 38 and also Obed-edom and his[2] sixty-eight brothers, while Obed-
edom, the son of Jeduthun, and Hosah were to be gatekeepers. 39 † And he
left Zadok the priest and his brothers the priests before the tabernacle of the
Lord in the high place that was at Gibeon 40 to offer burnt offerings to the
Lord on the altar of burnt offering regularly morning and evening, to do all
that is written in the Law of the Lord that he commanded Israel. 41 † With
them were Heman and Jeduthun and the rest of those chosen and expressly
named to give thanks to the Lord, for his steadfast love endures forever.
42 Heman and Jeduthun had trumpets and cymbals for the music and
instruments for sacred song. The sons of Jeduthun were appointed to the
gate.

43 † Then all the people departed each to his house, and David went home
to bless his household.

The Lord's Covenant with David

17 [1]‡‡†Now when David lived in his house, David said to Nathan the prophet, "Behold, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of the covenant of the Lord is under a tent." [2]And Nathan said to David, "Do all that is in your heart, for God is with you."

[3]‡But that same night the word of the Lord came to Nathan, [4]"Go and tell my servant David, 'Thus says the Lord: It is not you who will build me a house to dwell in. [5]†For I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up Israel to this day, but I have gone from tent to tent and from dwelling to dwelling. [6]†In all places where I have moved with all Israel, did I speak a word with any of the judges of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people, saying, "Why have you not built me a house of cedar?"' [7]Now, therefore, thus shall you say to my servant David, 'Thus says the Lord of hosts, I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, to be prince over my people Israel, [8]†and I have been with you wherever you have gone and have cut off all your enemies from before you. And I will make for you a name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. [9]And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, that they may dwell in their own place and be disturbed no more. And violent men shall waste them no more, as formerly, [10]†from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel. And I will subdue all your enemies. Moreover, I declare to you that the Lord will build you a house. [11]When your days are fulfilled to walk with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, one of your own sons, and I will establish his kingdom. [12]†He shall build a house for me, and I will establish his throne forever. [13]†I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son. I will not take my steadfast love from him, as I took it from him who was before you, [14]†but I will confirm him in my house and in my kingdom forever, and his throne shall be established forever.'" [15]In accordance with all these words, and in accordance with all this vision, Nathan spoke to David.

David's Prayer

16 ‡ ‡ ‡ Then King David went in and sat before the Lord and said, "Who
am I, O Lord God, and what is my house, that you have brought me thus
far? 17 † And this was a small thing in your eyes, O God. You have also
spoken of your servant's house for a great while to come, and have shown
me future generations,[1] O Lord God! 18 And what more can David say to
you for honoring your servant? For you know your servant. 19 For your
servant's sake, O Lord, and according to your own heart, you have done all
this greatness, in making known all these great things. 20 † There is none like
you, O Lord, and there is no God besides you, according to all that we have
heard with our ears. 21 † And who is like your people Israel, the one[2] nation
on earth whom God went to redeem to be his people, making for yourself a
name for great and awesome things, in driving out nations before your
people whom you redeemed from Egypt? 22 And you made your people
Israel to be your people forever, and you, O Lord, became their God. 23 And
now, O Lord, let the word that you have spoken concerning your servant
and concerning his house be established forever, and do as you have
spoken, 24 † and your name will be established and magnified forever, saying,
'The Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, is Israel's God,' and the house of your
servant David will be established before you. 25 For you, my God, have
revealed to your servant that you will build a house for him. Therefore your
servant has found courage to pray before you. 26 And now, O Lord, you are
God, and you have promised this good thing to your servant. 27 Now you
have been pleased to bless the house of your servant, that it may continue
forever before you, for it is you, O Lord, who have blessed, and it is blessed
forever."

David Defeats His Enemies

18 [1]After this David defeated the Philistines and subdued them,
and he took Gath and its villages out of the hand of the Philistines.
[2]And he defeated Moab, and the Moabites became servants to David
and brought tribute.
[3]David also defeated Hadadezer king of Zobah-Hamath, as he went to
set up his monument[1] at the river Euphrates. [4]And David took from him
1,000 chariots, 7,000 horsemen, and 20,000 foot soldiers. And David
hamstrung all the chariot horses, but left enough for 100 chariots. [5]And
when the Syrians of Damascus came to help Hadadezer king of Zobah,
David struck down 22,000 men of the Syrians. [6]Then David put garrisons[2]
in Syria of Damascus, and the Syrians became servants to David and
brought tribute. And the Lord gave victory to David[3] wherever he went.
[7]And David took the shields of gold that were carried by the servants of
Hadadezer and brought them to Jerusalem. [8]And from Tibhath and from
Cun, cities of Hadadezer, David took a large amount of bronze. With it
Solomon made the bronze sea and the pillars and the vessels of bronze.
[9]When Tou king of Hamath heard that David had defeated the whole
army of Hadadezer, king of Zobah, [10]he sent his son Hadoram to King
David, to ask about his health and to bless him because he had fought
against Hadadezer and defeated him; for Hadadezer had often been at war
with Tou. And he sent all sorts of articles of gold, of silver, and of bronze.
[11]These also King David dedicated to the Lord, together with the silver and
gold that he had carried off from all the nations, from Edom, Moab, the
Ammonites, the Philistines, and Amalek.
[12]And Abishai, the son of Zeruiah, killed 18,000 Edomites in the Valley
of Salt. [13]Then he put garrisons in Edom, and all the Edomites became
David's servants. And the Lord gave victory to David wherever he went.

David’s Administration

14 ‡ ‡ ‡ So David reigned over all Israel, and he administered justice and
equity to all his people. 15 † And Joab the son of Zeruiah was over the army;
and Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud was recorder; 16 † and Zadok the son of
Ahitub and Ahimelech the son of Abiathar were priests; and Shavsha was
secretary; 17 † and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over the Cherethites and
the Pelethites; and David’s sons were the chief officials in the service of the
king.

The Ammonites Disgrace David's Men

19 [1]‡‡Now after this Nahash the king of the Ammonites died, and his
son reigned in his place. [2]And David said, "I will deal kindly with Hanun
the son of Nahash, for his father dealt kindly with me." So David sent
messengers to console him concerning his father. And David's servants
came to the land of the Ammonites to Hanun to console him. [3]But the
princes of the Ammonites said to Hanun, "Do you think, because David has
sent comforters to you, that he is honoring your father? Have not his
servants come to you to search and to overthrow and to spy out the land?"
[4]‡ So Hanun took David's servants and shaved them and cut off their
garments in the middle, at their hips, and sent them away; [5]and they
departed. When David was told concerning the men, he sent messengers to
meet them, for the men were greatly ashamed. And the king said, "Remain
at Jericho until your beards have grown and then return."

[6]† When the Ammonites saw that they had become a stench to David,
Hanun and the Ammonites sent 1,000 talents[1] of silver to hire chariots and
horsemen from Mesopotamia, from Aram-maacah, and from Zobah. [7]†They
hired 32,000 chariots and the king of Maacah with his army, who came and
encamped before Medeba. And the Ammonites were mustered from their
cities and came to battle. [8]When David heard of it, he sent Joab and all the
army of the mighty men. [9]† And the Ammonites came out and drew up in
battle array at the entrance of the city, and the kings who had come were by
themselves in the open country.

Ammonites and Syrians Defeated

10 ‡ † When Joab saw that the battle was set against him both in front and
in the rear, he chose some of the best men of Israel and arrayed them
against the Syrians. 11 The rest of his men he put in the charge of Abishai his
brother, and they were arrayed against the Ammonites. 12 And he said, “If
the Syrians are too strong for me, then you shall help me, but if the
Ammonites are too strong for you, then I will help you. 13 Be strong, and let
us use our strength for our people and for the cities of our God, and may the
Lord do what seems good to him.” 14 So Joab and the people who were with
him drew near before the Syrians for battle, and they fled before him.
15 † And when the Ammonites saw that the Syrians fled, they likewise fled
before Abishai, Joab’s brother, and entered the city. Then Joab came to
Jerusalem.

16 But when the Syrians saw that they had been defeated by Israel, they
sent messengers and brought out the Syrians who were beyond the
Euphrates, with Shophach the commander of the army of Hadadezer at their
head. 17 † And when it was told to David, he gathered all Israel together and
crossed the Jordan and came to them and drew up his forces against them.
And when David set the battle in array against the Syrians, they fought with
him. 18 And the Syrians fled before Israel, and David killed of the Syrians
the men of 7,000 chariots and 40,000 foot soldiers, and put to death also
Shophach the commander of their army. 19 † And when the servants of
Hadadezer saw that they had been defeated by Israel, they made peace with
David and became subject to him. So the Syrians were not willing to save
the Ammonites anymore.

The Capture of Rabbah

20 [1]‡†In the spring of the year, the time when kings go out to battle,
Joab led out the army and ravaged the country of the Ammonites and came
and besieged Rabbah. But David remained at Jerusalem. And Joab struck
down Rabbah and overthrew it. [2]And David took the crown of their king
from his head. He found that it weighed a talent[2] of gold, and in it was a
precious stone. And it was placed on David's head. And he brought out the
spoil of the city, a very great amount. [3]And he brought out the people who
were in it and set them to labor[3] with saws and iron picks and axes.[4] And
thus David did to all the cities of the Ammonites. Then David and all the
people returned to Jerusalem.

Philistine Giants Killed

4 ‡ † And after this there arose war with the Philistines at Gezer. Then
Sibbecai the Hushathite struck down Sippai, who was one of the
descendants of the giants, and the Philistines were subdued. 5 † And there
was again war with the Philistines, and Elhanan the son of Jair struck down
Lahmi the brother of Goliath the Gittite, the shaft of whose spear was like a
weaver's beam. 6 † And there was again war at Gath, where there was a man
of great stature, who had six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot,
twenty-four in number, and he also was descended from the giants. 7 And
when he taunted Israel, Jonathan the son of Shimea, David's brother, struck
him down. 8 These were descended from the giants in Gath, and they fell by
the hand of David and by the hand of his servants.

David's Census Brings Pestilence

21 [1]‡‡†Then Satan stood against Israel and incited David to number
Israel. [2]So David said to Joab and the commanders of the army, "Go,
number Israel, from Beersheba to Dan, and bring me a report, that I may
know their number." [3]‡But Joab said, "May the Lord add to his people a
hundred times as many as they are! Are they not, my lord the king, all of
them my lord's servants? Why then should my lord require this? Why
should it be a cause of guilt for Israel?" [4]But the king's word prevailed
against Joab. So Joab departed and went throughout all Israel and came
back to Jerusalem. [5]†And Joab gave the sum of the numbering of the people
to David. In all Israel there were 1,100,000 men who drew the sword, and
in Judah 470,000 who drew the sword. [6]†But he did not include Levi and
Benjamin in the numbering, for the king's command was abhorrent to Joab.
[7]† But God was displeased with this thing, and he struck Israel. [8]And
David said to God, "I have sinned greatly in that I have done this thing. But
now, please take away the iniquity of your servant, for I have acted very
foolishly." [9]†And the Lord spoke to Gad, David's seer, saying, [10]‡"Go and
say to David, 'Thus says the Lord, Three things I offer you; choose one of
them, that I may do it to you.'" [11]So Gad came to David and said to him,
"Thus says the Lord, 'Choose what you will: [12]†either three years of famine,
or three months of devastation by your foes while the sword of your
enemies overtakes you, or else three days of the sword of the Lord,
pestilence on the land, with the angel of the Lord destroying throughout all
the territory of Israel.' Now decide what answer I shall return to him who
sent me." [13]†Then David said to Gad, "I am in great distress. Let me fall
into the hand of the Lord, for his mercy is very great, but do not let me fall
into the hand of man."
[14]So the Lord sent a pestilence on Israel, and 70,000 men of Israel fell.
[15]‡†And God sent the angel to Jerusalem to destroy it, but as he was about
to destroy it, the Lord saw, and he relented from the calamity. And he said to
the angel who was working destruction, "It is enough; now stay your hand."
And the angel of the Lord was standing by the threshing floor of Ornan the
Jebusite. [16]† And David lifted his eyes and saw the angel of the Lord

standing between earth and heaven, and in his hand a drawn sword stretched out over Jerusalem. Then David and the elders, clothed in sackcloth, fell upon their faces. [17] † And David said to God, “Was it not I who gave command to number the people? It is I who have sinned and done great evil. But these sheep, what have they done? Please let your hand, O Lord my God, be against me and against my father’s house. But do not let the plague be on your people.”

David Builds an Altar

18 ††Now the angel of the Lord had commanded Gad to say to David that
David should go up and raise an altar to the Lord on the threshing floor of
Ornan the Jebusite. 19So David went up at Gad's word, which he had spoken
in the name of the Lord. 20†Now Ornan was threshing wheat. He turned and
saw the angel, and his four sons who were with him hid themselves. 21As
David came to Ornan, Ornan looked and saw David and went out from the
threshing floor and paid homage to David with his face to the ground. 22And
David said to Ornan, "Give me the site of the threshing floor that I may
build on it an altar to the Lord—give it to me at its full price—that the
plague may be averted from the people." 23 †Then Ornan said to David,
"Take it, and let my lord the king do what seems good to him. See, I give
the oxen for burnt offerings and the threshing sledges for the wood and the
wheat for a grain offering; I give it all." 24But King David said to Ornan,
"No, but I will buy them for the full price. I will not take for the Lord what
is yours, nor offer burnt offerings that cost me nothing." 25†So David paid
Ornan 600 shekels[1] of gold by weight for the site. 26†And David built there
an altar to the Lord and presented burnt offerings and peace offerings and
called on the Lord, and the Lord [2] answered him with fire from heaven
upon the altar of burnt offering. 27†Then the Lord commanded the angel,
and he put his sword back into its sheath.

28At that time, when David saw that the Lord had answered him at the
threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite, he sacrificed there. 29 †For the
tabernacle of the Lord, which Moses had made in the wilderness, and the
altar of burnt offering were at that time in the high place at Gibeon, 30but
David could not go before it to inquire of God, for he was afraid of the
sword of the angel of the Lord.

22 1Then David said, "Here shall be the house of the Lord God and
here the altar of burnt offering for Israel."

David Prepares for Temple Building

2 †††† David commanded to gather together the resident aliens who were
in the land of Israel, and he set stonecutters to prepare dressed stones for
building the house of God. 3 David also provided great quantities of iron for
nails for the doors of the gates and for clamps, as well as bronze in
quantities beyond weighing, 4 and cedar timbers without number, for the
Sidonians and Tyrians brought great quantities of cedar to David. 5 † For
David said, “Solomon my son is young and inexperienced, and the house
that is to be built for the Lord must be exceedingly magnificent, of fame and
glory throughout all lands. I will therefore make preparation for it.” So
David provided materials in great quantity before his death.

Solomon Charged to Build the Temple

6 †‡†Then he called for Solomon his son and charged him to build a house
for the Lord, the God of Israel. 7David said to Solomon, “My son, I had it in
my heart to build a house to the name of the Lord my God. 8†But the word
of the Lord came to me, saying, ‘You have shed much blood and have
waged great wars. You shall not build a house to my name, because you
have shed so much blood before me on the earth. 9†Behold, a son shall be
born to you who shall be a man of rest. I will give him rest from all his
surrounding enemies. For his name shall be Solomon, and I will give peace
and quiet to Israel in his days. 10†He shall build a house for my name. He
shall be my son, and I will be his father, and I will establish his royal throne
in Israel forever.’

11“Now, my son, the Lord be with you, so that you may succeed in
building the house of the Lord your God, as he has spoken concerning you.
12Only, may the Lord grant you discretion and understanding, that when he
gives you charge over Israel you may keep the law of the Lord your God.
13†Then you will prosper if you are careful to observe the statutes and the
rules that the Lord commanded Moses for Israel. Be strong and courageous.
Fear not; do not be dismayed. 14†With great pains I have provided for the
house of the Lord 100,000 talents[1] of gold, a million talents of silver, and
bronze and iron beyond weighing, for there is so much of it; timber and
stone, too, I have provided. To these you must add. 15You have an
abundance of workmen: stonecutters, masons, carpenters, and all kinds of
craftsmen without number, skilled in working 16gold, silver, bronze, and
iron. Arise and work! The Lord be with you!”

17†‡David also commanded all the leaders of Israel to help Solomon his
son, saying, 18“Is not the Lord your God with you? And has he not given
you peace on every side? For he has delivered the inhabitants of the land
into my hand, and the land is subdued before the Lord and his people.
19†Now set your mind and heart to seek the Lord your God. Arise and build
the sanctuary of the Lord God, so that the ark of the covenant of the Lord
and the holy vessels of God may be brought into a house built for the name
of the Lord.”

David Organizes the Levites

23 [1]†When David was old and full of days, he made Solomon his son
king over Israel.
[2]† David[1] assembled all the leaders of Israel and the priests and the
Levites. [3]† The Levites, thirty years old and upward, were numbered, and
the total was 38,000 men. [4]"Twenty-four thousand of these," David said,[2]
"shall have charge of the work in the house of the Lord, 6,000 shall be
officers and judges, [5]4,000 gatekeepers, and 4,000 shall offer praises to the
Lord with the instruments that I have made for praise." [6]† And David
organized them in divisions corresponding to the sons of Levi: Gershon,
Kohath, and Merari.
[7]† The sons of Gershon[3] were Ladan and Shimei. [8]The sons of Ladan:
Jehiel the chief, and Zetham, and Joel, three. [9]The sons of Shimei:
Shelomoth, Haziel, and Haran, three. These were the heads of the fathers'
houses of Ladan. [10]And the sons of Shimei: Jahath, Zina, and Jeush and
Beriah. These four were the sons of Shimei. [11]Jahath was the chief, and
Zizah the second; but Jeush and Beriah did not have many sons, therefore
they became counted as a single father's house.
[12]The sons of Kohath: Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel, four. [13]The
sons of Amram: Aaron and Moses. Aaron was set apart to dedicate the most
holy things, that he and his sons forever should make offerings before the
Lord and minister to him and pronounce blessings in his name forever. [14]But
the sons of Moses the man of God were named among the tribe of Levi.
[15]The sons of Moses: Gershom and Eliezer. [16]The sons of Gershom: Shebuel
the chief. [17]The sons of Eliezer: Rehabiah the chief. Eliezer had no other
sons, but the sons of Rehabiah were very many. [18]The sons of Izhar:
Shelomith the chief. [19]The sons of Hebron: Jeriah the chief, Amariah the
second, Jahaziel the third, and Jekameam the fourth. [20]The sons of Uzziel:
Micah the chief and Isshiah the second.
[21]The sons of Merari: Mahli and Mushi. The sons of Mahli: Eleazar and
Kish. [22]Eleazar died having no sons, but only daughters; their kinsmen, the

sons of Kish, married them. [23]The sons of Mushi: Mahli, Eder, and Jeremoth, three.

[24]† These were the sons of Levi by their fathers' houses, the heads of fathers' houses as they were listed according to the number of the names of the individuals from twenty years old and upward who were to do the work for the service of the house of the Lord. [25]For David said, "The Lord, the God of Israel, has given rest to his people, and he dwells in Jerusalem forever. [26]And so the Levites no longer need to carry the tabernacle or any of the things for its service." [27]† For by the last words of David the sons of Levi were numbered from twenty years old and upward. [28]† For their duty was to assist the sons of Aaron for the service of the house of the Lord, having the care of the courts and the chambers, the cleansing of all that is holy, and any work for the service of the house of God. [29]Their duty was also to assist with the showbread, the flour for the grain offering, the wafers of unleavened bread, the baked offering, the offering mixed with oil, and all measures of quantity or size. [30]† And they were to stand every morning, thanking and praising the Lord, and likewise at evening, [31]and whenever burnt offerings were offered to the Lord on Sabbaths, new moons, and feast days, according to the number required of them, regularly before the Lord. [32]† Thus they were to keep charge of the tent of meeting and the sanctuary, and to attend the sons of Aaron, their brothers, for the service of the house of the Lord.

David Organizes the Priests

24 [1]‡‡The divisions of the sons of Aaron were these. The sons of Aaron: Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. [2]But Nadab and Abihu died before their father and had no children, so Eleazar and Ithamar became the priests. [3]†With the help of Zadok of the sons of Eleazar, and Ahimelech of the sons of Ithamar, David organized them according to the appointed duties in their service. [4]Since more chief men were found among the sons of Eleazar than among the sons of Ithamar, they organized them under sixteen heads of fathers' houses of the sons of Eleazar, and eight of the sons of Ithamar. [5]†They divided them by lot, all alike, for there were sacred officers and officers of God among both the sons of Eleazar and the sons of Ithamar. [6]‡‡And the scribe Shemaiah, the son of Nethanel, a Levite, recorded them in the presence of the king and the princes and Zadok the priest and Ahimelech the son of Abiathar and the heads of the fathers' houses of the priests and of the Levites, one father's house being chosen for Eleazar and one chosen for Ithamar.

[7]The first lot fell to Jehoiarib, the second to Jedaiah, [8]the third to Harim, the fourth to Seorim, [9]the fifth to Malchijah, the sixth to Mijamin, [10]†the seventh to Hakkoz, the eighth to Abijah, [11]the ninth to Jeshua, the tenth to Shecaniah, [12]the eleventh to Eliashib, the twelfth to Jakim, [13]the thirteenth to Huppah, the fourteenth to Jeshebeab, [14]the fifteenth to Bilgah, the sixteenth to Immer, [15]the seventeenth to Hezir, the eighteenth to Happizzez, [16]the nineteenth to Pethahiah, the twentieth to Jehezkel, [17]the twenty-first to Jachin, the twenty-second to Gamul, [18]the twenty-third to Delaiah, the twenty-fourth to Maaziah. [19]†These had as their appointed duty in their service to come into the house of the Lord according to the procedure established for them by Aaron their father, as the Lord God of Israel had commanded him.

[20]‡‡And of the rest of the sons of Levi: of the sons of Amram, Shubael; of the sons of Shubael, Jehdeiah. [21]Of Rehabiah: of the sons of Rehabiah, Isshiah the chief. [22]Of the Izharites, Shelomoth; of the sons of Shelomoth, Jahath. [23]The sons of Hebron:[1] Jeriah the chief,[2] Amariah the second,

Jahaziel the third, Jekameam the fourth. [24]The sons of Uzziel, Micah; of the sons of Micah, Shamir. [25]The brother of Micah, Isshiah; of the sons of Isshiah, Zechariah. [26]The sons of Merari: Mahli and Mushi. The sons of Jaaziah: Beno.[3][27]The sons of Merari: of Jaaziah, Beno, Shoham, Zaccur, and Ibri. [28]Of Mahli: Eleazar, who had no sons. [29]Of Kish, the sons of Kish: Jerahmeel. [30]The sons of Mushi: Mahli, Eder, and Jerimoth. These were the sons of the Levites according to their fathers' houses. [31]† These also, the head of each father's house and his younger brother alike, cast lots, just as their brothers the sons of Aaron, in the presence of King David, Zadok, Ahimelech, and the heads of fathers' houses of the priests and of the Levites.

David Organizes the Musicians

25 [1]†David and the chiefs of the service also set apart for the service
the sons of Asaph, and of Heman, and of Jeduthun, who prophesied with
lyres, with harps, and with cymbals. The list of those who did the work and
of their duties was: [2]†Of the sons of Asaph: Zaccur, Joseph, Nethaniah, and
Asharelah, sons of Asaph, under the direction of Asaph, who prophesied
under the direction of the king. [3]Of Jeduthun, the sons of Jeduthun:
Gedaliah, Zeri, Jeshaiah, Shimei,[1] Hashabiah, and Mattithiah, six, under
the direction of their father Jeduthun, who prophesied with the lyre in
thanksgiving and praise to the Lord. [4]† Of Heman, the sons of Heman:
Bukkiah, Mattaniah, Uzziel, Shebuel and Jerimoth, Hananiah, Hanani,
Eliathah, Giddalti, and Romamti-ezer, Joshbekashah, Mallothi, Hothir,
Mahazioth. [5]†All these were the sons of Heman the king's seer, according to
the promise of God to exalt him, for God had given Heman fourteen sons
and three daughters. [6]They were all under the direction of their father in the
music in the house of the Lord with cymbals, harps, and lyres for the service
of the house of God. Asaph, Jeduthun, and Heman were under the order of
the king. [7]The number of them along with their brothers, who were trained
in singing to the Lord, all who were skillful, was 288. [8]†And they cast lots
for their duties, small and great, teacher and pupil alike.

[9]†† The first lot fell for Asaph to Joseph; the second to Gedaliah, to him
and his brothers and his sons, twelve; [10]the third to Zaccur, his sons and his
brothers, twelve; [11]the fourth to Izri, his sons and his brothers, twelve; [12]the
fifth to Nethaniah, his sons and his brothers, twelve; [13]the sixth to Bukkiah,
his sons and his brothers, twelve; [14]the seventh to Jesharelah, his sons and
his brothers, twelve; [15]the eighth to Jeshaiah, his sons and his brothers,
twelve; [16]the ninth to Mattaniah, his sons and his brothers, twelve; [17]the
tenth to Shimei, his sons and his brothers, twelve; [18]the eleventh to Azarel,
his sons and his brothers, twelve; [19]the twelfth to Hashabiah, his sons and
his brothers, twelve; [20]to the thirteenth, Shubael, his sons and his brothers,
twelve; [21]to the fourteenth, Mattithiah, his sons and his brothers, twelve; [22]to
the fifteenth, to Jeremoth, his sons and his brothers, twelve; [23]to the

sixteenth, to Hananiah, his sons and his brothers, twelve; [24]to the seventeenth, to Joshbekashah, his sons and his brothers, twelve; [25]to the eighteenth, to Hanani, his sons and his brothers, twelve; [26]to the nineteenth, to Mallothi, his sons and his brothers, twelve; [27]to the twentieth, to Eliathah, his sons and his brothers, twelve; [28]to the twenty-first, to Hothir, his sons and his brothers, twelve; [29]to the twenty-second, to Giddalti, his sons and his brothers, twelve; [30]to the twenty-third, to Mahazioth, his sons and his brothers, twelve; [31]to the twenty-fourth, to Romamti-ezer, his sons and his brothers, twelve.

Divisions of the Gatekeepers

26 [1]‡‡†As for the divisions of the gatekeepers: of the Korahites, Meshelemiah the son of Kore, of the sons of Asaph. [2]And Meshelemiah had sons: Zechariah the firstborn, Jediael the second, Zebadiah the third, Jathniel the fourth, [3]Elam the fifth, Jehohanan the sixth, Eliehoenai the seventh. [4]†And Obed-edom had sons: Shemaiah the firstborn, Jehozabad the second, Joah the third, Sachar the fourth, Nethanel the fifth, [5]†Ammiel the sixth, Issachar the seventh, Peullethai the eighth, for God blessed him. [6]Also to his son Shemaiah were sons born who were rulers in their fathers' houses, for they were men of great ability. [7]The sons of Shemaiah: Othni, Rephael, Obed and Elzabad, whose brothers were able men, Elihu and Semachiah. [8]All these were of the sons of Obed-edom with their sons and brothers, able men qualified for the service; sixty-two of Obed-edom. [9]And Meshelemiah had sons and brothers, able men, eighteen. [10]†And Hosah, of the sons of Merari, had sons: Shimri the chief (for though he was not the firstborn, his father made him chief), [11]Hilkiah the second, Tebaliah the third, Zechariah the fourth: all the sons and brothers of Hosah were thirteen.

[12]‡†These divisions of the gatekeepers, corresponding to their chief men, had duties, just as their brothers did, ministering in the house of the Lord. [13]And they cast lots by fathers' houses, small and great alike, for their gates. [14]The lot for the east fell to Shelemiah. They cast lots also for his son Zechariah, a shrewd counselor, and his lot came out for the north. [15]Obed-edom's came out for the south, and to his sons was allotted the gatehouse. [16]† For Shuppim and Hosah it came out for the west, at the gate of Shallecheth on the road that goes up. Watch corresponded to watch. [17]On the east there were six each day,[1] on the north four each day, on the south four each day, as well as two and two at the gatehouse. [18]And for the colonnade[2] on the west there were four at the road and two at the colonnade. [19]These were the divisions of the gatekeepers among the Korahites and the sons of Merari.

Treasurers and Other Officials

20 ‡ ‡ ‡ And of the Levites, Ahijah had charge of the treasuries of the house
of God and the treasuries of the dedicated gifts. 21 The sons of Ladan, the
sons of the Gershonites belonging to Ladan, the heads of the fathers' houses
belonging to Ladan the Gershonite: Jehieli.[3]
22 The sons of Jehieli, Zetham, and Joel his brother, were in charge of the
treasuries of the house of the Lord. 23 Of the Amramites, the Izharites, the
Hebronites, and the Uzzielites— 24 † and Shebuel the son of Gershom, son of
Moses, was chief officer in charge of the treasuries. 25 His brothers: from
Eliezer were his son Rehabiah, and his son Jeshaiah, and his son Joram, and
his son Zichri, and his son Shelomoth. 26 † This Shelomoth and his brothers
were in charge of all the treasuries of the dedicated gifts that David the king
and the heads of the fathers' houses and the officers of the thousands and
the hundreds and the commanders of the army had dedicated. 27 From spoil
won in battles they dedicated gifts for the maintenance of the house of the
Lord. 28 † Also all that Samuel the seer and Saul the son of Kish and Abner
the son of Ner and Joab the son of Zeruiah had dedicated—all dedicated
gifts were in the care of Shelomoth[4] and his brothers.
29 ‡ † Of the Izharites, Chenaniah and his sons were appointed to external
duties for Israel, as officers and judges. 30 † Of the Hebronites, Hashabiah
and his brothers, 1,700 men of ability, had the oversight of Israel westward
of the Jordan for all the work of the Lord and for the service of the king.
31 † Of the Hebronites, Jerijah was chief of the Hebronites of whatever
genealogy or fathers' houses. (In the fortieth year of David's reign search
was made and men of great ability among them were found at Jazer in
Gilead.) 32 King David appointed him and his brothers, 2,700 men of ability,
heads of fathers' houses, to have the oversight of the Reubenites, the
Gadites and the half-tribe of the Manassites for everything pertaining to
God and for the affairs of the king.

Military Divisions

27 [1] ‡‡† This is the number of the people of Israel, the heads of fathers' houses, the commanders of thousands and hundreds, and their officers who served the king in all matters concerning the divisions that came and went, month after month throughout the year, each division numbering 24,000:

[2] Jashobeam the son of Zabdiel was in charge of the first division in the first month; in his division were 24,000. [3] He was a descendant of Perez and was chief of all the commanders. He served for the first month. [4] Dodai the Ahohite[1] was in charge of the division of the second month; in his division were 24,000. [5] The third commander, for the third month, was Benaiah, the son of Jehoiada the chief priest; in his division were 24,000. [6] This is the Benaiah who was a mighty man of the thirty and in command of the thirty; Ammizabad his son was in charge of his division.[2] [7] † Asahel the brother of Joab was fourth, for the fourth month, and his son Zebadiah after him; in his division were 24,000. [8] The fifth commander, for the fifth month, was Shamhuth the Izrahite; in his division were 24,000. [9] Sixth, for the sixth month, was Ira, the son of Ikkesh the Tekoite; in his division were 24,000. [10] Seventh, for the seventh month, was Helez the Pelonite, of the sons of Ephraim; in his division were 24,000. [11] Eighth, for the eighth month, was Sibbecai the Hushathite, of the Zerahites; in his division were 24,000. [12] Ninth, for the ninth month, was Abiezer of Anathoth, a Benjaminite; in his division were 24,000. [13] Tenth, for the tenth month, was Maharai of Netophah, of the Zerahites; in his division were 24,000. [14] Eleventh, for the eleventh month, was Benaiah of Pirathon, of the sons of Ephraim; in his division were 24,000. [15] Twelfth, for the twelfth month, was Heldai the Netophathite, of Othniel; in his division were 24,000.

Leaders of Tribes

16 ‡‡Over the tribes of Israel, for the Reubenites, Eliezer the son of Zichri
was chief officer; for the Simeonites, Shephatiah the son of Maacah; 17 †for
Levi, Hashabiah the son of Kemuel; for Aaron, Zadok; 18 for Judah, Elihu,
one of David's brothers; for Issachar, Omri the son of Michael; 19 for
Zebulun, Ishmaiah the son of Obadiah; for Naphtali, Jeremoth the son of
Azriel; 20 for the Ephraimites, Hoshea the son of Azaziah; for the half-tribe
of Manasseh, Joel the son of Pedaiah; 21 for the half-tribe of Manasseh in
Gilead, Iddo the son of Zechariah; for Benjamin, Jaasiel the son of Abner;
22 †for Dan, Azarel the son of Jeroham. These were the leaders of the tribes
of Israel. 23 ‡‡David did not count those below twenty years of age, for the
LORD had promised to make Israel as many as the stars of heaven. 24 †Joab
the son of Zeruiah began to count, but did not finish. Yet wrath came upon
Israel for this, and the number was not entered in the chronicles of King
David.

25 ‡‡Over the king's treasuries was Azmaveth the son of Adiel; and over
the treasuries in the country, in the cities, in the villages, and in the towers,
was Jonathan the son of Uzziah; 26 and over those who did the work of the
field for tilling the soil was Ezri the son of Chelub; 27 and over the vineyards
was Shimei the Ramathite; and over the produce of the vineyards for the
wine cellars was Zabdi the Shiphmite. 28 †Over the olive and sycamore trees
in the Shephelah was Baal-hanan the Gederite; and over the stores of oil
was Joash. 29 † Over the herds that pastured in Sharon was Shitrai the
Sharonite; over the herds in the valleys was Shaphat the son of Adlai.
30 Over the camels was Obil the Ishmaelite; and over the donkeys was
Jehdeiah the Meronothite. Over the flocks was Jaziz the Hagrite. 31 All these
were stewards of King David's property.

32 ‡ † Jonathan, David's uncle, was a counselor, being a man of
understanding and a scribe. He and Jehiel the son of Hachmoni attended the
king's sons. 33 †Ahithophel was the king's counselor, and Hushai the Archite
was the king's friend. 34 Ahithophel was succeeded by Jehoiada the son of
Benaiah, and Abiathar. Joab was commander of the king's army.

David's Charge to Israel

28 [1]‡†David assembled at Jerusalem all the officials of Israel, the officials of the tribes, the officers of the divisions that served the king, the commanders of thousands, the commanders of hundreds, the stewards of all the property and livestock of the king and his sons, together with the palace officials, the mighty men and all the seasoned warriors. [2]‡Then King David rose to his feet and said: "Hear me, my brothers and my people. I had it in my heart to build a house of rest for the ark of the covenant of the Lord and for the footstool of our God, and I made preparations for building. [3]But God said to me, 'You may not build a house for my name, for you are a man of war and have shed blood.' [4]Yet the Lord God of Israel chose me from all my father's house to be king over Israel forever. For he chose Judah as leader, and in the house of Judah my father's house, and among my father's sons he took pleasure in me to make me king over all Israel. [5]And of all my sons (for the Lord has given me many sons) he has chosen Solomon my son to sit on the throne of the kingdom of the Lord over Israel. [6]†He said to me, 'It is Solomon your son who shall build my house and my courts, for I have chosen him to be my son, and I will be his father. [7]†I will establish his kingdom forever if he continues strong in keeping my commandments and my rules, as he is today.' [8]Now therefore in the sight of all Israel, the assembly of the Lord, and in the hearing of our God, observe and seek out all the commandments of the Lord your God, that you may possess this good land and leave it for an inheritance to your children after you forever.

David's Charge to Solomon

9 ‡‡†"And you, Solomon my son, know the God of your father and serve
him with a whole heart and with a willing mind, for the Lord searches all
hearts and understands every plan and thought. If you seek him, he will be
found by you, but if you forsake him, he will cast you off forever. 10 Be
careful now, for the Lord has chosen you to build a house for the sanctuary;
be strong and do it."

11 ‡ Then David gave Solomon his son the plan of the vestibule of the
temple,[1] and of its houses, its treasuries, its upper rooms, and its inner
chambers, and of the room for the mercy seat; 12 †and the plan of all that he
had in mind for the courts of the house of the Lord, all the surrounding
chambers, the treasuries of the house of God, and the treasuries for
dedicated gifts; 13 for the divisions of the priests and of the Levites, and all
the work of the service in the house of the Lord; for all the vessels for the
service in the house of the Lord, 14 the weight of gold for all golden vessels
for each service, the weight of silver vessels for each service, 15 †the weight
of the golden lampstands and their lamps, the weight of gold for each
lampstand and its lamps, the weight of silver for a lampstand and its lamps,
according to the use of each lampstand in the service, 16 the weight of gold
for each table for the showbread, the silver for the silver tables, 17 and pure
gold for the forks, the basins and the cups; for the golden bowls and the
weight of each; for the silver bowls and the weight of each; 18 †for the altar
of incense made of refined gold, and its weight; also his plan for the golden
chariot of the cherubim that spread their wings and covered the ark of the
covenant of the Lord. 19 †"All this he made clear to me in writing from the
hand of the Lord, all the work to be done according to the plan."

20 ‡†Then David said to Solomon his son, "Be strong and courageous and
do it. Do not be afraid and do not be dismayed, for the Lord God, even my
God, is with you. He will not leave you or forsake you, until all the work
for the service of the house of the Lord is finished. 21 † And behold the
divisions of the priests and the Levites for all the service of the house of
God; and with you in all the work will be every willing man who has skill

for any kind of service; also the officers and all the people will be wholly at your command.”

Offerings for the Temple

29 [1]‡‡‡†And David the king said to all the assembly, “Solomon my
son, whom alone God has chosen, is young and inexperienced, and the
work is great, for the palace will not be for man but for the Lord God. [2]†So I
have provided for the house of my God, so far as I was able, the gold for the
things of gold, the silver for the things of silver, and the bronze for the
things of bronze, the iron for the things of iron, and wood for the things of
wood, besides great quantities of onyx and stones for setting, antimony,
colored stones, all sorts of precious stones and marble. [3]Moreover, in
addition to all that I have provided for the holy house, I have a treasure of
my own of gold and silver, and because of my devotion to the house of my
God I give it to the house of my God: [4]†3,000 talents[1] of gold, of the gold
of Ophir, and 7,000 talents of refined silver, for overlaying the walls of the
house,[2] [5]and for all the work to be done by craftsmen, gold for the things of
gold and silver for the things of silver. Who then will offer willingly,
consecrating himself[3] today to the Lord?”

[6]‡†Then the leaders of fathers’ houses made their freewill offerings, as
did also the leaders of the tribes, the commanders of thousands and of
hundreds, and the officers over the king’s work. [7]†They gave for the service
of the house of God 5,000 talents and 10,000 darics[4] of gold, 10,000
talents of silver, 18,000 talents of bronze and 100,000 talents of iron. [8]And
whoever had precious stones gave them to the treasury of the house of the
Lord, in the care of Jehiel the Gershonite. [9]† Then the people rejoiced
because they had given willingly, for with a whole heart they had offered
freely to the Lord. David the king also rejoiced greatly.

David Prays in the Assembly

10 ‡ ‡ † Therefore David blessed the Lord in the presence of all the
assembly. And David said: “Blessed are you, O Lord, the God of Israel our
father, forever and ever. 11 Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and
the glory and the victory and the majesty, for all that is in the heavens and
in the earth is yours. Yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and you are exalted as
head above all. 12 Both riches and honor come from you, and you rule over
all. In your hand are power and might, and in your hand it is to make great
and to give strength to all. 13 And now we thank you, our God, and praise
your glorious name.

14 †“But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able thus to
offer willingly? For all things come from you, and of your own have we
given you. 15 †For we are strangers before you and sojourners, as all our
fathers were. Our days on the earth are like a shadow, and there is no
abiding.[5] 16 O Lord our God, all this abundance that we have provided for
building you a house for your holy name comes from your hand and is all
your own. 17 †I know, my God, that you test the heart and have pleasure in
uprightness. In the uprightness of my heart I have freely offered all these
things, and now I have seen your people, who are present here, offering
freely and joyously to you. 18 † O Lord, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and
Israel, our fathers, keep forever such purposes and thoughts in the hearts of
your people, and direct their hearts toward you. 19 †Grant to Solomon my
son a whole heart that he may keep your commandments, your testimonies,
and your statutes, performing all, and that he may build the palace for
which I have made provision.”

20 †Then David said to all the assembly, “Bless the Lord your God.” And
all the assembly blessed the Lord, the God of their fathers, and bowed their
heads and paid homage to the Lord and to the king. 21 ‡ And they offered
sacrifices to the Lord, and on the next day offered burnt offerings to the
Lord, 1,000 bulls, 1,000 rams, and 1,000 lambs, with their drink offerings,
and sacrifices in abundance for all Israel. 22 ‡† And they ate and drank before
the Lord on that day with great gladness.

Solomon Anointed King

And they made Solomon the son of David king the second time, and they anointed him as prince for the Lord, and Zadok as priest.

[23]Then Solomon sat on the throne of the Lord as king in place of David his father. And he prospered, and all Israel obeyed him. [24]All the leaders and the mighty men, and also all the sons of King David, pledged their allegiance to King Solomon. [25]And the Lord made Solomon very great in the sight of all Israel and bestowed on him such royal majesty as had not been on any king before him in Israel.

The Death of David

[26]‡‡Thus David the son of Jesse reigned over all Israel. [27]†The time that
he reigned over Israel was forty years. He reigned seven years in Hebron
and thirty-three years in Jerusalem. [28]Then he died at a good age, full of
days, riches, and honor. And Solomon his son reigned in his place. [29]†Now
the acts of King David, from first to last, are written in the Chronicles of
Samuel the seer, and in the Chronicles of Nathan the prophet, and in the
Chronicles of Gad the seer, [30]with accounts of all his rule and his might and
of the circumstances that came upon him and upon Israel and upon all the
kingdoms of the countries.

1 and 2 Chronicles

Overview

Author
Unknown, likely a Levite

Date
Written c 430 BC

Places
Jerusalem; Gibeon; Mount Gilboa; Hebron; Ammon; Syria; Zion

People
Saul; David; Solomon; Joab; Nathan; Uzzah; Asaph; Zadok; Levites; the exiles

Purpose
To chronicle for the exiles the rule of David's house and the appointed services of the Levites as a record of how God's people "keep faith"

Law Themes
Breaking faith; exile; failure to follow God's Word; seek the Lord

Gospel Themes
God's blessings and rule through David; the Lord's rule through David's house; God with His servant; atonement at the tabernacle

Memory Verses
A royal throne forever (1Ch 22:9–10); Levites as prophets (1Ch 25:1); my God is with you (1Ch 28:20); David's doxology and prayer (1Ch 29:11, 16–17); the eyes of the Lord (2Ch 16:9); Jehoshaphat's battle plan (2Ch 20:20–22)

Introduction to 1 and 2 Chronicles

Reading 1 and 2 Chronicles

Pressing into the leather, he draws the wooden stylus across the column, incising a straight line. Row upon row is now ready to receive his text. He moistens the reed pen in a bowl of black ink and brushes out an even series of letters, copying them from the wax-covered tablets he scribed earlier. He also pulls close older scrolls, the records of kings and prophets long dead, yet well remembered by their descendants. He carefully lists each name and generation. Kinship is so important, establishing one's place in the tribe, clan, family, and household. The record describes one's inheritance and allegiance. The past ensures the future.

Readers of 1 Chronicles are often baffled by the first nine chapters of genealogy. Likewise, they wonder why the Chronicles repeat so much information from earlier books of Scripture. As you read Chronicles, carefully note the unique passages and emphases that the Chronicler brings to his readers. Like one telling a familiar story to encourage, the Chronicler helps his readers find their place in the history of God's plan of salvation.

Luther on 1 and 2 Chronicles

Luther specifically commented on the value of Chronicles for teaching the faith. See “History and God’s People,” p 336.

When I speak of the title [of Isaiah; 1:1], I do not mean only that you should read or understand the words “Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, kings of Judah,” etc., but that you should take in hand the last book of Kings and the last book of Chronicles and grasp them well, especially the events, the speeches, and the incidents that occurred under the kings named in the title [of Isaiah], clear to the end of those books. For if one would understand the prophecies, it is necessary that one know how things were in the land, how matters lay, what was in the mind of the people—what plans they had with respect to their neighbors, friends, and enemies—and especially what attitude they took in their country toward God and toward the prophet, whether they held to his word and worship or to idolatry. (AE 35:274)

Challenges for Readers

Authorship and the Author's Interests. The name and history of the Chronicler is not known. However, he expresses clear and constant interest in two things: (1) God's rule through David's house, and (2) the appointment of the Levites to serve at the Lord's house, the tabernacle and temple. As a result, scholars commonly agree that the writer was a Levite who had returned with the exiles. The Chronicler reviews history from Adam to Cyrus's decree in 538 BC.

Parallels with the Books of Samuel and Kings. The Chronicler draws extensively on numerous biblical books, especially the Books of Samuel and Kings, which contain earlier, parallel historical accounts. He frequently used these biblical books or the chronicles the previous authors had used (1Ch 29:29). The center column provides extensive references for discovering parallel accounts in these books. (For example, at the beginning of 1Ch 10, one finds in the center column, "For vv 1–12, see 1Sm 31:1–13." For each new heading in the ESV text, check also for a parallel reference in the center column.) For the genealogies, the Chronicler often refers to Genesis, Exodus, Numbers, Joshua, and Ruth. He also had access to other resources that are now lost, for example, the record of Moabite kings (1Ch 4:22). See also pp 335–37.

Omissions. The Chronicler frequently assumes that readers are familiar with earlier events. In particular, he often leaves out well-known disgraceful events in the lives of David and Solomon. For example, he omits the stories of David and Bathsheba (2Sm 11:2–27); Nathan's rebuke (2Sm 12:1–15); fallout from David's sin with Bathsheba: Amnon and Tamar (2Sm 13:1–22); Absalom's revenge (2Sm 13:23–39); Joab's scheme regarding Absalom (2Sm 14:1–33); Absalom's rebellion and death (2Sm 15:1–19:8b); David's return to Jerusalem (2Sm 19:8c–43); the rebellion of Sheba (2Sm 20:1–22); the avenging of the Gibeonites (2Sm 21:1–14); and Abishai's rescue of David (2Sm 21:15–17). It may be that the author sought to present a more positive account in order to encourage the exhausted and challenged Judeans who had returned to rebuild Jerusalem.

Also excluded are Solomon's struggles to gain the throne (1Ki 1:5–27; 2:13–46) and his apostasy and adversaries at the end of his reign (1Ki 11:1–40). Material not directly related to the temple is also omitted: Solomon's

wise judgments (1Ki 3:16–28), officials (1Ki 4:1–19), and other building projects (1Ki 7:1–12). In Kings, the division of the kingdom after the death of Solomon is blamed firmly on Solomon's apostasy (1Ki 11). In Chronicles, the blame is focused upon his son Rehoboam (2Ch 13:6–7).

Additions. The Chronicler also adds numerous accounts that were not included in Samuel and Kings. He had access to written records of Israel's history that probably were not available to the writers for Samuel and Kings. In the outline that follows, the passages unique to 1 and 2 Chronicles are in italic. Likely sources for these passages are (1) the Chronicles/History of Nathan the Prophet (1Ch 29:29; 2Ch 9:29), (2) the Chronicles of Gad the Seer (1Ch 29:29), (3) the Prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite (2Ch 9:29), and (4) the Visions of Iddo the Seer (2Ch 9:29). For more extensive comment on Chronicles, check the parallel accounts in Samuel and Kings. The study notes in Chronicles focus on what is unique to Chronicles and do not seek to repeat the extensive comment already available in Samuel and Kings.

Form and Use of Genealogies. Genealogies connect the people of God with the past and with God's gracious actions in the past. Because of their connection with the past, the people of the present can be assured of the legitimacy of their own community. Israelite genealogies appear in different forms: (1) lineal genealogy depicts a line from father to son without reference to siblings; (2) collateral or segmented genealogy is like lineal genealogy, but includes siblings; (3) ascending genealogy traces later generations to prior generations; (4) descending genealogy traces from prior generations to later generations. Through such genealogies, the Chronicler connects the Judeans after the exile with their ancestors and history. By tracing genealogies to Adam and Noah, he also connects all readers of every nation to the story of God's actions through the kings, priests, and prophets of ancient Israel, and through the great and final King, Priest, and Prophet: Jesus the Christ. For more on biblical genealogies, see notes, 1Ch 1–9; 2:15–3:24; 3:17. See also "Genealogies and Ages," p 9.

Blessings for Readers

As you read Chronicles, consider the focus the author places on the ministry of the Word, atonement through God's house, and God's care for His people through Israel's greatest leaders: David and Solomon. Especially note that the musicians at the tabernacle and temple, who handled God's Word in song, were regarded as prophets.

Throughout, the Chronicler shows regard for God's blessings through the Word, which calls God's people to faith and keeps them in the faith. The greatest Word of all in Chronicles is the sustained promise of an everlasting kingdom from David's household, fulfilled in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Savior of all.

OUTLINE

The Books of Chronicles show us how Israel, Judah, and the house of David stand at the center of God's plan of salvation, fulfilled in the reign of the Messiah. Passages that occur in 1 and 2 Chronicles but not in 1 and 2 Samuel or 1 and 2 Kings are in italic.

Chapter 9 is important to understanding the character and composition of 1Ch. Israel's ancestry, traced back to Adam (1Ch 1–8), on the one hand, and the return from the Babylonian captivity, on the other, constitute the framework within which the historical survey of Chronicles runs its course. Repatriated "people of Judah, Benjamin, Ephraim, and Manasseh" had the assurance that they were still a part of all Israel whose genealogies are on record (1Ch 9:3). Jerusalem, David's capital and site of Solomon's temple, was again at the center of things (1Ch 9:1–9). Furthermore, authorized officiants, priests, and their Levitical assistants resumed the worship rites, as "David and Samuel the seer established them" (1Ch 9:22). The last verses introduce David's reign through the repetition of ancestors and descendants of Saul, his only predecessor (1Ch 9:35–44; cf 8:29–40). Although human sin brings consequences, the divine purposes of Israel's God cannot be thwarted—a fact to which 1Ch 9:2–34 points.

I. Nations and Israel in God's Plan of Salvation (1Ch 1:1–9:34)

A. From Adam to Abraham (1Ch 1:1–27)

B. From Abraham to Jacob (1Ch 1:28–54)

C. A Genealogy of David (1Ch 2)
D. Descendants of David (1Ch 3)
E. Descendants of Judah (1Ch 4:1–23)
F. Descendants of Simeon (1Ch 4:24–43)
G. Descendants of Reuben (1Ch 5:1–10)
H. Descendants of Gad (1Ch 5:11–22)
I. The Half-Tribe of Manasseh (1Ch 5:23–26)
J. Descendants of Levi (1Ch 6)
K. Descendants of Issachar (1Ch 7:1–5)
L. Descendants of Benjamin (1Ch 7:6–12)
M. Descendants of Naphtali (1Ch 7:13)
N. Descendants of Manasseh (1Ch 7:14–19)
O. Descendants of Ephraim (1Ch 7:20–29)
P. Descendants of Asher (1Ch 7:30–40)
Q. A Genealogy of Saul (1Ch 8)
R. A Genealogy of the Returned Exiles (1Ch 9:1–34)

II. The Establishment of David's Reign and the Centrality of the Ark of the Covenant (1Ch 9:35–17:27)
A. Saul's Genealogy Repeated (1Ch 9:35–44)
B. Death of Saul and His Sons (1Ch 10)
C. David Anointed King (1Ch 11:1–3)
D. David Takes Jerusalem (1Ch 11:4–9)
E. David's Mighty Men (1Ch 11:10–47)
F. *Mighty Men Join David (1Ch 12)*
G. The Ark Brought from Kiriath-jearim (1Ch 13:1–4)
H. Uzzah and the Ark (1Ch 13:5–14)
I. David's Wives and Children (1Ch 14:1–7)
J. Philistines Defeated (1Ch 14:8–17)
K. The Ark Brought to Jerusalem (1Ch 15)
L. The Ark Placed in a Tent (1Ch 16:1–7)
M. David's Song of Thanks (1Ch 16:8–36)
N. Worship before the Ark (1Ch 16:37–43)
O. The Lord's Covenant with David (1Ch 17:1–15)
P. David's Prayer (1Ch 17:16–27)

III. David's Military Campaigns (1Ch 18–20)
A. David Defeats His Enemies (1Ch 18:1–13)
B. David's Administration (1Ch 18:14–17)

C. Ammonites Disgrace David's Men (1Ch 19:1–9)
D. Ammonites and Syrians Defeated (1Ch 19:10–19)
E. Capture of Rabbah (1Ch 20:1–3)
F. Philistine Giants Killed (1Ch 20:4–8)

IV. David's Preparation for Locating and Building the Temple (1Ch 21–22)
A. David's Census Brings Pestilence (1Ch 21:1–17)
B. David Builds an Altar (1Ch 21:18–22:1)
C. *David Prepares for the Temple Building (1Ch 22:2–5)*
D. *Solomon Charged to Build the Temple (1Ch 22:6–19)*

V. David Organizes Temple Worship (1Ch 23–26)
A. *David Organizes the Levites (1Ch 23)*
B. *David Organizes the Priests (1Ch 24)*
C. *David Organizes the Musicians (1Ch 25)*
D. *Divisions of Gatekeepers (1Ch 26:1–19)*
E. *Treasurers and Other Officials (1Ch 26:20–32)*

VI. David Leaves the Kingdom to Solomon (1Ch 27–29)
A. *Military Divisions (1Ch 27:1–15)*
B. *Leaders of Tribes (1Ch 27:16–34)*
C. *David's Charge to Israel (1Ch 28:1–8)*
D. *David's Charge to Solomon (1Ch 28:9–21)*
E. *Offerings for the Temple (1Ch 29:1–9)*
F. David Prays in the Assembly (1Ch 29:10–22)
G. Solomon Anointed King (1Ch 29:22–25)
H. The Death of David (1Ch 29:26–30)

VII. History of Solomon, Builder of the Temple (2Ch 1–9)
A. Solomon Worships at Gibeon (2Ch 1:1–6)
B. Solomon Prays for Wisdom (2Ch 1:7–13)
C. Solomon Given Wealth (2Ch 1:14–17)
D. Preparing to Build the Temple (2Ch 2)
E. Solomon Builds the Temple (2Ch 3)
F. The Temple's Furnishings (2Ch 4:1–5:1)
G. The Ark Brought to the Temple (2Ch 5:2–14)
H. Solomon Blesses the People (2Ch 6:1–11)
I. Solomon's Prayer of Dedication (2Ch 6:12–42)
J. Fire from Heaven (2Ch 7:1–3)
K. Dedication of the Temple (2Ch 7:4–10)

L. If My People Pray (2Ch 7:11–22)
M. Solomon's Accomplishments (2Ch 8)
N. The Queen of Sheba (2Ch 9:1–12)
O. Solomon's Wealth (2Ch 9:13–28)
P. Solomon's Death (2Ch 9:29–31)

VIII. Division of the Kingdom of Israel under Rehoboam (2Ch 10–12)
A. The Revolt against Rehoboam (2Ch 10)
B. Rehoboam Secures His Kingdom (2Ch 11:1–12)
C. Priests and Levites Come to Jerusalem (2Ch 11:13–17)
D. Rehoboam's Family (2Ch 11:18–23)
E. Egypt Plunders Jerusalem (2Ch 12)

IX. The Davidic Dynasty in Judah before the Assyrian Invasion (2Ch 13–26)
A. *Abijah's Reign (2Ch 13)*
B. *Asa's Reign and Religious Reforms (2Ch 14:1–15:15)*
C. Asa Deposes Maacah and Imprisons Hanani (2Ch 15:16–16:14)
D. *Jehoshaphat's Mighty Reign (2Ch 17)*
E. Jehoshaphat's Alliance with Ahab (2Ch 18)
F. *Jehoshaphat's Reforms and Victory (2Ch 19:1–20:30)*
G. End of Jehoshaphat's Reign (2Ch 20:31–37)
H. Jehoram's Reign (2Ch 21:1–10)
I. Jehoram's Rebellion (2Ch 21:11–20)
J. Ahaziah's Reign (2Ch 22:1–9)
K. Queen Athaliah's Reign (2Ch 22:10–12)
L. Joash's Ascent and Reform (2Ch 23:1–24:14)
M. *Joash's Treachery (2Ch 24:15–22)*
N. Joash Assassinated (2Ch 24:23–27)
O. Amaziah's Reign (2Ch 25)
P. Uzziah's Reign (2Ch 26:1–5)
Q. *Uzziah's Wars (2Ch 26:6–15)*
R. Uzziah's Pride and Punishment (2Ch 26:16–23)

X. The Davidic Dynasty in Judah during the Syrian, Assyrian, and Babylonian Invasions (2Ch 27–36)
A. Jotham's Reign (2Ch 27)
B. Ahaz's Reign (2Ch 28:1–7)
C. *Ahaz and Judah Defeated (2Ch 28:8–15)*

D. Ahaz's Alliance with Assyria and His Idolatry (2Ch 28:16–27)
E. Hezekiah's Reign Begins (2Ch 29:1–2)
F. *Hezekiah's Reforms (2Ch 29:3–31:21)*
G. Hezekiah Depends on the Lord to Defeat Assyria (2Ch 32)
H. Manasseh's Reign and Repentance (2Ch 33:1–20)
I. Amon's Reign and Death (2Ch 33:21–25)
J. Josiah's Reign and Reform (2Ch 34–35)
K. Judah's Decline under Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah (2Ch 36:1–16)
L. Jerusalem Captured, Burned, and Its People Exiled to Babylon (2Ch 36:17–21)
M. Proclamation of Cyrus (2Ch 36:22–23)

CYCLES IN CHRONICLES

A cyclical theme emerges in the Chronicles history:
Cycle 1
A. Creation of the World and Israel (1Ch 1–8)
B. Retribution by Exile for Unfaithfulness (1Ch 9:1)
C. Restoration of Israel in Jerusalem (1Ch 9:2–34)
Cycle 2
A. Rise of Saul (1Ch 9:35–44)
B. Retribution for Unfaithfulness (1Ch 10:1–14a)
C. Restoration in David (1Ch 10:14b)
Cycle 3
A. The Ideal Kingdom (1Ch 11–2Ch 9)
B1. Retribution by Division of the Kingdom for Unfaithfulness (2Ch 10:1–36:13)
B2. Retribution by Exile for Unfaithfulness (2Ch 36:14–21)
C. Restoration by Cyrus (2Ch 36:22–23)

Footnotes

Footnotes for 1 and 2 Chronicles, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:1 Many names in these genealogies are spelled differently in other biblical books
- [2] 1:6 Septuagint; Hebrew *Diphath*
- [3] 1:10 Or *He began to be a mighty man on the earth*
- [4] 1:17 Septuagint; Hebrew lacks *And the sons of Aram*
- [5] 1:19 *Peleg* means *division*
- [6] 1:22 Septuagint, Syriac (compare Genesis 10:28); Hebrew *Ebal*
- [7] 1:36 Septuagint (compare Genesis 36:12); Hebrew lacks *and of*
- [1] 1:39 Septuagint (compare Genesis 36:22); Hebrew *Homam*
- [2] 1:40 Septuagint (compare Genesis 36:23); Hebrew *Alian*
- [3] 1:40 Septuagint (compare Genesis 36:23); Hebrew *Shephi*
- [4] 1:41 Hebrew *sons*
- [5] 1:41 Septuagint (compare Genesis 36:26); Hebrew *Hamran*
- [6] 1:42 Septuagint (compare Genesis 36:27); Hebrew *Jaakan*

Footnotes for 1 and 2 Chronicles, Chapter 2

- [7] 2:7 Hebrew *sons*
- [1] 2:11 Septuagint (compare Ruth 4:21); Hebrew *Salma*
- [2] 2:24 Septuagint, Vulgate; Hebrew *in Caleb Ephrathah*
- [3] 2:31 Hebrew *sons*; three times in this verse
- [4] 2:42 Septuagint; Hebrew *Mesha*
- [5] 2:42 Hebrew *sons*
- [6] 2:42 Hebrew *the father of Hebron*
- [7] 2:50 Septuagint, Vulgate; Hebrew *son*

Footnotes for 1 and 2 Chronicles, Chapter 3

- [1] 3:21 Septuagint (compare Syriac, Vulgate); Hebrew *sons of*; four times in this verse
- [2] 3:22 Hebrew *sons*

Footnotes for 1 and 2 Chronicles, Chapter 4

- [1] 4:3 Septuagint (compare Vulgate); Hebrew *father*
- [2] 4:9 *Jabez* sounds like the Hebrew for *pain*
- [3] 4:10 Or *evil*
- [4] 4:13 Septuagint, Vulgate; Hebrew lacks *Meonothai*
- [5] 4:14 *Ge-harashim* means *valley of craftsmen*
- [6] 4:15 Hebrew *sons*
- [7] 4:17 The clause *These are . . . married* is transposed from verse 18
- [8] 4:17 Hebrew lacks *and bore*
- [9] 4:22 Vulgate (compare Septuagint); Hebrew *and Jashubi-lahem*
- [10] 4:22 Or *matters*

Footnotes for 1 and 2 Chronicles, Chapter 5

- [1] 5:6 Hebrew *Tilgath-pilneser*; also verse 26
- [1] 5:24 Septuagint, Vulgate; Hebrew *and Epher*

Footnotes for 1 and 2 Chronicles, Chapter 6

- [1] 6:1 Ch 5:27 in Hebrew

- [2] 6:16 Ch 6:1 in Hebrew
- [3] 6:28 Septuagint, Syriac (compare verse 33 and 1 Samuel 8:2); Hebrew lacks *Joel*
- [4] 6:28 Hebrew *and Abijah*
- [1] 6:60 Septuagint, Syriac (compare Joshua 21:17); Hebrew lacks *Gibeon*

Footnotes for 1 and 2 Chronicles, Chapter 7

- [1] 7:1 Syriac (compare Vulgate); Hebrew *And to the sons*
- [2] 7:3 Hebrew *sons*; also verses 10, 12, 17
- [1] 7:23 *Beriah* sounds like the Hebrew for *disaster*
- [2] 7:27 Hebrew *Non*

Footnotes for 1 and 2 Chronicles, Chapter 8

- [3] 8:7 Hebrew *and Naaman*
- [4] 8:7 Or *he carried them into exile*
- [1] 8:29 Compare 9:35; Hebrew lacks *Jeiel*

Footnotes for 1 and 2 Chronicles, Chapter 9

- [1] 9:41 Compare 8:35; Hebrew lacks *and Ahaz*

Footnotes for 1 and 2 Chronicles, Chapter 10

- [2] 10:7 Hebrew *they*

Footnotes for 1 and 2 Chronicles, Chapter 11

- [1] 11:11 Compare 2 Samuel 23:8; Hebrew *thirty*, or *captains*
- [1] 11:14 Compare 2 Samuel 23:12; Hebrew *they . . . their*
- [2] 11:20 Syriac; Hebrew *three*
- [3] 11:21 Compare 2 Samuel 23:19; Hebrew *more renowned among the two*
- [4] 11:21 Syriac; Hebrew *three*
- [5] 11:22 Syriac; Hebrew *the son of a valiant man*
- [6] 11:23 A *cubit* was about 18 inches or 45 centimeters
- [7] 11:27 Compare 2 Samuel 23:25; Hebrew *the Harorite*
- [8] 11:34 Compare Septuagint and 2 Samuel 23:32; Hebrew *the sons of Hashem*

Footnotes for 1 and 2 Chronicles, Chapter 12

- [1] 12:4 Hebrew verse 5
- [2] 12:5 Hebrew verse 6
- [1] 12:33 Septuagint; Hebrew lacks *David*

Footnotes for 1 and 2 Chronicles, Chapter 13

- [2] 13:3 Or *him*
- [3] 13:5 Hebrew *Shihor*
- [4] 13:7 Or *and his brother*
- [1] 13:11 *Perez-uzza* means *the breaking out against Uzzah*

Footnotes for 1 and 2 Chronicles, Chapter 14

- [2] 14:11 *Baal-perazim* means *Lord of breaking through*

Footnotes for 1 and 2 Chronicles, Chapter 15

- [3] 15:1 Hebrew *He*

Footnotes for 1 and 2 Chronicles, Chapter 16

- [1] 16:3 Compare Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate; the meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain
- [1] 16:29 Or *in holy attire*
- [2] 16:38 Hebrew *their*

Footnotes for 1 and 2 Chronicles, Chapter 17

- [1] 17:17 The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain
- [2] 17:21 Septuagint, Vulgate *other*

Footnotes for 1 and 2 Chronicles, Chapter 18

- [1] 18:3 Hebrew *hand*

- [2] 18:6 Septuagint, Vulgate, 2 Samuel 8:6 (compare Syriac); Hebrew lacks *garrisons*
- [3] 18:6 Hebrew *the* LORD *saved David*; also verse 13

Footnotes for 1 and 2 Chronicles, Chapter 19

- [1] 19:6 A *talent* was about 75 pounds or 34 kilograms

Footnotes for 1 and 2 Chronicles, Chapter 20

- [2] 20:2 A *talent* was about 75 pounds or 34 kilograms
- [3] 20:3 Compare 2 Samuel 12:31; Hebrew *he sawed*
- [4] 20:3 Compare 2 Samuel 12:31; Hebrew *saws*

Footnotes for 1 and 2 Chronicles, Chapter 21

- [1] 21:25 A *shekel* was about 2/5 ounce or 11 grams
- [2] 21:26 Hebrew *he*

Footnotes for 1 and 2 Chronicles, Chapter 22

- [1] 22:14 A *talent* was about 75 pounds or 34 kilograms

Footnotes for 1 and 2 Chronicles, Chapter 23

- [1] 23:2 Hebrew *He*
- [2] 23:4 Hebrew lacks *David said*
- [3] 23:7 Vulgate (compare Septuagint, Syriac); Hebrew *to the Gershonite*

Footnotes for 1 and 2 Chronicles, Chapter 24

- [1] 24:23 Compare 23:19; Hebrew lacks *Hebron*
- [2] 24:23 Compare 23:19; Hebrew lacks *the chief*
- [3] 24:26 Or *his son*; also verse 27

Footnotes for 1 and 2 Chronicles, Chapter 25

- [1] 25:3 One Hebrew manuscript, Septuagint; most Hebrew manuscripts lack *Shimei*

Footnotes for 1 and 2 Chronicles, Chapter 26

- [1] 26:17 Septuagint; Hebrew *six Levites*
- [2] 26:18 Or *court*; Hebrew *parbar* (meaning unknown); twice in this verse
- [3] 26:21 The Hebrew of verse 21 is uncertain
- [4] 26:28 Hebrew *Shelomith*

Footnotes for 1 and 2 Chronicles, Chapter 27

- [1] 27:4 Septuagint; Hebrew *Ahohite and his division and Mikloth the chief officer*
- [2] 27:6 Septuagint, Vulgate; Hebrew *was his division*

Footnotes for 1 and 2 Chronicles, Chapter 28

- [1] 28:11 Hebrew lacks *of the temple*

Footnotes for 1 and 2 Chronicles, Chapter 29

- [1] 29:4 A *talent* was about 75 pounds or 34 kilograms
- [2] 29:4 Septuagint; Hebrew *houses*
- [3] 29:5 Or *ordaining himself*; Hebrew *filling his hand*
- [4] 29:7 A *daric* was a coin weighing about 1/4 ounce or 8.5 grams
- [5] 29:15 Septuagint, Vulgate; Hebrew *hope*, or *prospect*

Study Notes

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Chs 1–9** Ch 1 outlines nations from Adam through Jacob/Israel, envisioning all people within God's plan of salvation. Chs 2–8 focus on tribes of Israel, with particular attention to Judah (2:3–4:23), Levi (ch 6), and Benjamin (7:6–12; ch 8; 9:35–44). Genealogical lists are like five concentric circles: (1) the outermost circle is all humanity; (2) the next circle in is the nations related to Israel; (3) next are the tribes of Israel; (4) the tribes of Judah, Benjamin, and Levi are the second-last circle (tribes represent Jerusalem [Benjamin], the Davidic kingship [Judah], and the priesthood [Levi] at the heart of the world's salvation); and (5) the innermost circle includes the people of postexilic Jerusalem (9:1–34), establishing the legitimacy of the postexilic nation as the continuation of ancient Israel into the present and the future.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 1:1–4 Cf Gn 5. Israel's descent traces from Adam, the one from whom God "made … every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth" (Ac 17:26). Adam's sons Cain and Abel are not mentioned in v 1 because the line of descent proceeded through his son Seth. After the great flood, three ethnic groups developed out of the one family of Noah. His son Shem was the ancestor of Abraham, who was the father of believers (vv 24–27). Abraham's son Isaac was chosen as the bearer of the promise. Of Isaac's twin sons, it was Jacob who became the progenitor of the 12 tribes of Israel, God's "treasured possession among all peoples" (Ex 19:5; cf 1Ch 1:28–2:2).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 1:4 Line of the chosen people preceding the 12 tribes of Israel consists of two ancestral chains, each having 10 links: from Adam to Noah (vv 1–4); from Shem to Abraham (vv 24–27). Symmetry, rather than completeness, is often the basis for Hebrew genealogies. Through his three sons (Shem, Ham, Japheth), Noah became the progenitor of 70 ethnic groups (vv 5–23). Chosen from the resulting mass of peoples, Abraham (the patriarch of Israel) likewise sired three branches of descendants. Through his son Isaac, his other son Ishmael, and his concubine Keturah, his offspring likewise totals 70 names (vv 28–42). Abraham's line of descent through Isaac and Jacob is listed separately in ch 2. See the three groupings of 14 names in Mt 1:2–17.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 1:8–16 *sons of Ham*. See note, Gn 10:6–20. Many of these names represent nations.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 1:10 *a mighty man*. See note, Ru 2:1.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 1:11 *Egypt*. Country or area that various groups occupy is often noted rather than their racial relationship. See note, Gn 10:1.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 1:17–28 See note, Gn 11:10–26.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 1:19 *the earth was divided*. See ESV note; see also note, Gn 10:25.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 1:1–27 Through the families of the earth, the Lord unfolds His plan of salvation, focusing on Abraham, the father of all who believe (Rm 4:16). Just as sin divided and corrupted Adam's family, it attacks and tears apart families today. Yet, these genealogies show how the Lord continues to work through families as the faith is preserved and spread from one generation to the next. The Godhead itself shows this, with the Father sending forth His Son for the sake of our salvation (Jn 3:16). • Merciful Father, rescue my family from the wedge of sins that would separate us. Draw us together with cords of love through Your Son. Amen.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 1:28 *Abraham*. Chronicles does not report the history of the patriarchs, assuming that the reader knows Gn 12–50.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 1:29 *genealogies*. Hbr *toledoth,* "generations," first use of a common term in Chronicles. See "Genealogies and Ages," p 9.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 1:32 *concubine*. See pp 54–55. In Gn 25:1, Keturah is Abraham's "wife" taken after Sarah's death.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 1:34 *sons of Isaac*. Cf Gn 25:19–26. *Israel*. Used instead of "Jacob." See p 7.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 1:35–37 *sons of Esau*. Father of the Edomites. Cf Gn 36:1–5, 10–19.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 1:35 Gn 36:14 lists Jeush, Jalam, and Korah as the sons of Esau through Oholibamah, a name also found in the list of Edomite chiefs (v 52; Gn 36:41).
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 1:39 *Timna*. Name is used for a man or a woman (vv 36, 51).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 1:43–51a Extensive coverage of Edom may be due to the importance of their descendants in the postexilic time when Chronicles was written. See pp 1473–74.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 1:43 *Edom*. See color map 2.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 1:46 *Moab*. See color map 2.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 1:48 *Rehoboth on the Euphrates*. Northeast of Israel. Specific location unknown.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 1:50 *Pai*. Location unknown.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **1:51b–54** *chiefs of Edom*. Cf Gn 36:40–43.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 1:28–54 As He promised, the Lord made Abraham the father of many nations. Sadly, Abraham's physical (not spiritual) descendants are still in conflict nearly 4,000 years later as the nations of the Near East continually battle one another and draw others into the conflict. Such conflicts can end only through the forgiveness of sins, offered through Abraham's offspring, our Lord Jesus Christ. • O Lord, You multiplied the families of the earth from father Abraham. Bless our families as well, and grant them lasting peace through Your only begotten Son, Jesus. Amen.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Chs 2–7** Ch 1 draws the line of descent from Adam through an array of families and nations to Jacob (1:34), the immediate ancestor of the people through whom God determined to bless "all the families of the earth" (Gn 12:3). Chs 2–7 trace the genealogy of Jacob's 12 sons, from whom derived the tribes of Israel.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 2:1–2 Order is similar to Gn 35:22–26, which arranges Israel's collateral genealogy according to the mothers, but here Dan is after Zebulun rather than after Benjamin. Other variations are found in 12:23–37; 27:16–24; Gn 29:31–30:24, which lists Israel's sons in order of birth; and Gn 46:8–27, which extends the genealogy out one or two generations and arranges the order of maternity by grouping each servant with her mistress. The function here is to introduce the balance of the genealogies, which now focus on the sons of Israel (chs 2–9).
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 2:3–4:23 Focused account of the tribe of Judah, from whom David would descend. The records follow an intentional pattern: (1) records of Judah (2:3–55); (2) focuses within Judah —the Davidic line (ch 3); and (3) further records of Judah (4:1–23). David,

the central figure here, is also the theological center of the Chronicler's history because the Lord worked through David's family.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 2:3 *Judah*. Recorded first because his line leads to David, to his dynastic successors, and to leaders in the postexilic community such as Zerubbabel (3:19). *Bath-shua the Canaanite*. The Chronicler pointedly mentions the non-Israelite branch in Judah's family tree. He likewise does not cover up Judah's incestuous relations with his daughter-in-law Tamar (v 4; Gn 38). Jesus, Savior of Jew and Gentile, of harlots and sinners, has in His human ancestry not only the Canaanites Tamar and Rahab, but also Ruth the Moabitess and Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah the Hittite (Mt 1:3–6). If there is mercy and hope for Judah's family, there is surely mercy and hope for ours too!

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 2:4 *daughter-in-law Tamar*. The Davidic line was drawn through Perez from the illegal union of Judah and Tamar. Therefore, the messianic line is not one that shuns humanity in its weakness and sin, but one that embraces the flesh of fallen people.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 2:7 *Achan, the troubler*. Hbr wordplay: "Achan the *'oker* (troubler)." See note, Jsh 7:25. *broke faith*. Hbr *ma'al*, "unfaithful." Regularly used to condemn evil kings, esp in texts not paralleled elsewhere in the OT (5:25; 2Ch 12:2; 26:16; 28:19, 22; 29:6; 30:7). Also used of Judah to explain the Babylonian exile (2Ch 36:14).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 2:9 *Chelubai*. Hbr occurs in two other forms: "Caleb" (vv 18, 24, 42, 49; 4:15) and "Chelub" (4:11). Unlikely that all refer to the same person, even though "Caleb the son of Hezron" and "Caleb the son of Jephunneh" are said to have a daughter named Achsah (vv 18, 49; Jsh 15:13, 17). Caleb was Joshua's associate in spying out the land of Canaan (Nu 13).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 2:10–17 Line of Judah through Ram (Aram). Family rose to prominence as the line that produced the Davidic kings (ch 3). Cf 1Sm 16:1–13.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 2:10 *prince*. Lit, "one lifted up." A tribal leader. See p 228.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 2:13–15 Only seven of Jesse's eight sons are named here (cf 1Sm 16:10; 17:12). One was likely omitted from this genealogical list because he left no descendants. Eliab, mentioned here, and Elihu in 27:18 may be variant forms of the same name.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 2:15–3:24 Telescoping centuries and eons, the line of descent from Adam quickly comes to David, whose significance in Israel's covenant relationship to God is the underlying theme of Chronicles. To show David's importance, not only is his ancestry listed but also his descendants down into the postexilic period (ch 3). On David's ancestry, cf Ru 4:18–22.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 2:16 *sisters*. Mentioned here because their sons played important roles in David's reign, the most influential of whom was Joab (2Sm 2:18–32; 3:26–30; 11:1; 18:9–17).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 2:17 *Ishmaelite*. Jether or Ithra is also called an Israelite. See ESV note, 2Sm 17:25.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 2:18–55 David's lineage from Judah through the second son of Hezron (v 9) is followed by the genealogy of Hezron's other two sons, Caleb and Jerahmeel. The clans that sprang from these two ancestors were not associated with the 12 tribes until Judah adopted them. The Kenites (v 55) were a branch of Caleb's family (cf Jgs 1:16; 1Sm 27:10).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 2:18–24 Line of Judah: collateral genealogies of Caleb (part 1).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 2:20 *Bezalel*. Significant, as he was the skilled designer and builder of the tabernacle (Ex 31:1–5). He also made the bronze altar before which Solomon asked for the gift of wisdom some 400 years later (2Ch 1:5). Throughout Chronicles, the kings and the temple are constantly intertwined.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 2:21 *sixty years old*. Exceptional age for this era. See note, Zec 8:4.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 2:22 *land of Gilead*. See color map 2.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 2:23 *Havvoth-jair, Kenath*. Locations unknown.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 2:25–42 Line of Judah: collateral genealogies of Jerahmeel. No other genealogical material is found in the Scriptures regarding these Judeans. They were granted territory in the Negeb (1Sm 27:10; 30:27–29).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 2:34–41 Line of Sheshan (cf v 31). Informs us that his line was mixed with that of his Egyptian servant Jarha.

Thus the nations of the world (ch 1) are still intimately connected with Israel, and their Creator has not forgotten them.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 2:42–55 Line of Judah: collateral genealogies of Caleb (part 2).
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 2:46 *concubine*. See pp 54–55.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 2:50–55 Resumes the genealogy of sons of Hur, left off in v 20. It will be taken up again in 4:1–4.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 2:52 *Haroeh*. Named as Reaiah in 4:2 and should be understood by that name.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 2:53 *clans*. See pp 54–55.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 2:55 *clans also of the scribes*. Trades were held in families (cf 4:21) as skills were passed from parent to child. See note, Pr 1:8. *Kenites*. Descendants of Moses' father-in-law; apparently they settled among the people of Judah (Jgs 1:16; 4:11).
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Ch 2** Although Judah was not the firstborn or the most noble of Jacob's sons, his descendants took the first place among the tribes of Israel and fathered the greatest kings and builders. Today, though you have stumbled in life, set your heart on serving the Lord and supporting your family. The Lord will hear your prayers of repentance and of blessing for your family. His great desire is to bless all through Jesus, His Son. • O Lord, may my sins not weigh down my family, but may Your forgiveness of my sins become an example of Your surpassing mercy. Build up my family into a holy house, devoted to Your service. Amen.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 3:1–9 Just as names today have long and short versions, different pronunciations, and different spellings, so did Hbr names. Daniel is Chileab in 2Sm 3:3. Shimea is Shammua in 1Ch 14:4 and 2Sm 5:14. Ammiel is Eliam in 2Sm 11:3. Elishama is Elishua in 1Ch 14:5 and 2Sm 5:15. Bath-shua is a variant of Bathsheba.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 3:1 *Abigail the Carmelite*. Wife of Nabal the Carmelite (2Sm 3:3). The Chronicler assumes that the readers know the disgraceful history of 1Sm 25 and does not reflect on it so as not to detract from David's image. In this way, David is idealized even in the genealogies. See pp 628–31.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 3:3–9 Cf 14:4–7; 2Sm 5:14–16.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 3:4 See note, chs 11–12.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 3:5 *Bath-shua*. Variant spelling of Bathsheba. See note, vv 1–9.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 3:8 *Eliada*. Cf 2Sm 5:16. Known as "Beeliada" in 14:7, but here reflects removal of the name Baal from the first part of the name. See note, Nu 25:3.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 3:10–16 Davidic kings, from Solomon to the exile. Vv 10–14 are a lineal genealogy, tracing David's line through each successor. Vv 15–16 are collateral genealogies. See p 629. Each king will be discussed in 2Ch.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 3:15 *Johanan*. Josiah's firstborn is not found in any list of his successors. *Shallum*. Cf Jer 22:11. Also known as Jehoahaz. Pharaoh Neco ended Jehoahaz's reign after three months (2Ch 36:3–4).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 3:16–24 Davidic kings during exilic and postexilic generations. The line of Jeconiah is important for dating the Chronicler's work. Jeconiah's son Pedaiah was born c 595 BC. The following generations would extend to 440 BC (at c 20 years per generation) or 415 BC (at c 25 years per generation), providing an approximate date for the Chronicler's work. See pp 628–31.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 3:16 *Jeconiah*. Shorter form "Coniah" (Jer 22:24), also referred to as "Jehoiachin" (2Ki 24:6; 2Ch 36:9).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 3:17 *the captive*. Reference to Babylonian exile. *Shealtiel*. One leader in the postexilic period of reconstruction was Zerubbabel, called "the son of Shealtiel" (cf Ezr 3:2; 5:2; Hg 1:1). Vv 18–19 indicate that the word "son" is used in the broader sense of grandson or successor, as it is in other instances (cf Gn 31:55). See "Forms and Use of Genealogies," p 629.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 3:19 *sons of Zerubbabel*. Two grandsons are mentioned. Vv 22–24 trace his line of descent into the fourth generation. *Shelomith*. Archaeologists discovered her name on a scarab-shaped, black-stone seal associated with the governor of Judah.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 3:24 *Anani*. Mentioned in a letter by the Jews of Elephantine, Egypt, whose temple had been threatened by troops. The letter complains that the leadership in Jerusalem never responded to them during their crisis.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Ch 3** David's dynasty ruled all Israel for 80 years and the Southern Kingdom of Judah for over 400 years; his descendants continued to lead after the return from the Babylonian exile. From a small beginning with a shepherd boy, the Lord wrought great

things. Today, through prayer and godly leadership, humbly commend your family to God's service. Jesus, David's greatest descendant, will lead you into a blessed future. • O great David's greater Son, build my family up in lasting devotion through Your Holy Word. Amen.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 4:1 *Judah*. Some names of Judah's lineage listed in ch 2 are repeated here in different contexts. It is unclear why certain groups are singled out for special mention.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 4:2–4 The Chronicler picks up where he left off in 2:55, when he took up the important Judean family of David (ch 3).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 4:9–20 Line of Judah: fragmentary genealogies. Little connects these names beyond one or two generations.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 4:9–10 Lit, "Jabez was more honored than his brothers." *Jabez … pain*. Because his mother was in great pain (Hbr *'ozeb*) when Jabez was born, she gave him a name that, by transposing the last two consonants, means "he gives pain." In answer to his prayer, blessing rather than pain came into his life. His piety is recorded rather than his family ties. Effective prayer ultimately depends on God's assurance that He will hear and answer prayer. This brief story in the midst of a genealogy shows the Chronicler's postexilic audience that the God of their fathers is the God who answers prayer. It is not given as a model prayer or as a guarantee of prosperity.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 4:11 *Chelub*. See note, 2:9.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 4:13 *Othniel*. Israel's first judge (cf Jgs 3:7–11).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 4:17 *daughter of Pharaoh*. Phrase may simply mean that she was an Egyptian woman, to distinguish her from "his Judahite wife" (v 18).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 4:21–23 Line of Judah through Shelah. The Chronicler completes Judah's genealogies by returning to its beginning in 2:3.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 4:21 *Shelah*. His descendants followed occupations in permanent settlements (linen workers, potters) in contrast to the seminomadic way of the clans mentioned in vv 11–20. Shelah, son of Judah, should have married his brother Er's widow Tamar to fulfill the levirate law. Shelah does not do so but does name his own son Er, thus preserving his brother's memory.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 4:22 *the records are ancient*. The Chronicler, in passing, notes the great age of his special source for the names of these Moabite rulers.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 4:23 *the king's service*. Royal pottery business. Archaeologists have found numerous jars marked with various royal seals.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 4:1–23 Other members of David's family, who increased the family's territory and served with David, are listed. In any group or family, some will lead, but most will follow. No matter what your calling, bring honor to your family, congregation, employer, and nation by prayer and devoted service. For Christ, born of Bethlehem Ephrathah (cf v 4), has called you by His grace. • Lord, grant me a servant's heart, that Your rule may extend to those who have not yet heard or believed. Amen.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 4:24–43 Descendants of Simeon. Tribe of Simeon was long associated with Judah, beginning with the prophecy of Jacob to his second son (Gn 49:5–7): Simeon, together with Levi, would be scattered in Israel. Levitical cities in Jsh 21:9–16 are taken from Judah and Simeon together. Simeon's inheritance is "in the midst of the inheritance of the people of Judah" (Jsh 19:1), and their early association included a military alliance after Joshua's death (Jgs 1:3). The territory of Simeon was later absorbed into that of Judah, though clearly the Simeonites retained their tribal identity. See map, p 365. Structure: vv 24–27 are a proper genealogy for tracing Simeon's family; vv 28–33 list their towns and villages; vv 34–43 list the leaders and conquests of Simeon. Cf Ex 6:15; Nu 26:12–14.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 4:28–31 During David's reign, a census was taken from which the names of these cities may have been derived (2Sm 24:1–9).
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 4:32 Cf Jsh 19:7.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 4:39–43 Military exploits of the Simeonites are unknown except from this text. Clearly, they were a warlike tribe that, at the time of Hezekiah (v 41), expanded both to the west (vv 39–41) and to the east (vv 42–43). These victories, coordinated with the temple worship reformer Hezekiah, may be more important for illustrating the glory of Hezekiah's reign than they are for illustrating Simeon's power.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 4:40 *Ham*. A Canaanite people.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 4:41 *Meunites*. Defeated also by King Uzziah (2Ch 26:7), these victims of a later Simeonite attack probably were so called because of their association with Ma'an, an Edomite city southeast of Petra. *to this day*. Designates the time the Chronicler's source was written; cf v 43.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 4:42 *Mount Seir*. Region of Edom. See color map 2.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 4:43 *Amalekites*. In another movement of expansion (vv 42–43) the Simeonites destroyed the Amalekites who had escaped to Mount Seir, i.e., Edom, perhaps at the same time when Saul made war on them (1Sm 15:4–7; see note, Ex 17:8).
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 4:24–43 Simeon's descendants and some of their noteworthy successes are listed. They lived peaceably and supportively among Judah's descendants, showing the mutual support brothers may supply. God's people today live in and depend on such brotherhood, upon which the Church is based. Christ, our Brother, unites us in the service of our heavenly Father. • Dearest Father, make my service dear to my brothers and sisters in Christ, that we may unite in praising You. Amen.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Ch 5** Ancestral history of the 2½ tribes located east of the Jordan. It begins with Reuben, whose territory lay mostly along the Salt Sea down to the Arnon River (vv 1–10). Instead of the usual introductory formula "the sons of," the tribes of Gad (v 11) and East Manasseh (v 23) are introduced in geographical relation to Reuben. Gad's patrimony was above Reuben's territory (vv 11–22); half the tribe of Manasseh occupied an area extending northward from Gad (vv 23–26). (See note, Jsh 12:6, for more on East and West Manasseh.) The Israelite possessions in the Transjordan frequently are said to consist of Gilead (vv 9–10, 16) and Bashan (vv 16, 23), the latter designating the northern section. Gilead is at times applied to the entire East Jordan area (Dt 34:1). See color map 2. A theological interpretation is given both at the beginning of the chapter (vv 1–2) and at the end (vv 25–26).
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 5:1–2 Explains why Reuben, the firstborn of Israel, did not inherit his birthright as leader of Israel. He violated his father when he had sexual relations with Bilhah, Israel's concubine (Gn 35:22), and lost his father's blessing (Gn 49:3–4). The birthright went to Joseph, who gained a double portion (cf Dt 21:17) by

having two sons (Ephraim and Manasseh) who receive an inheritance (cf Gn 48:5). Judah prevailed and from him a "chief," or ruler, came: David (and ultimately through David came the Messiah).
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 5:4–8 *Joel*. We know nothing of him except the genealogy provided here.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 5:6 *Tiglath-pileser*. See ESV note. An Assyrian king (744–727 BC) whose name is found in several variants; also known by his throne name, Pul (v 26; 2Ki 15:19). He invaded Israel c 733–732 BC and took the Reubenite leader Beerah captive. Pul also forced Ahaz of Judah to pay tribute.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 5:8 *Aroer Nebo*. See map, p 250.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 5:9 *entrance*. Bordering the Desert of Arabia. See color map 2. *livestock*. Transjordan was famous as a grazing region. *Gilead*. See color map 2.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 5:10 *in the days of Saul*. In stark contrast to their fate some 300 years later at the hands of the Assyrians (v 6), Reuben had been militarily strong. The Reubenites enjoyed success as long as they were united to Judah. The Chronicler appeals to their fifth-century descendants to reunite themselves to Judah. *Hagrites*. See note, v 19.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 5:1–10 The Chronicler recounts Reuben's weakness and relationship to Judah, which illustrates why Judah came to lead Israel. Leadership and inheritance are not blessings one can simply take for granted, because they come with responsibility. God has given you responsibility in His kingdom, no matter what your standing in life. He has also equipped and blessed you with gifts, including the blessings of life and salvation through Christ, our Head. • Lead on, dearest Jesus, and grant me the will and strength to follow Your way. Amen.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 5:11–22 List of Gad's descendants (vv 11–17) and the war of the Transjordan tribes with their neighbors to the east (vv 18–22) are reported only here.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 5:11–17 Names here came from an otherwise unknown census that was taken after the kingdom was divided. See chronology, p 529. An earlier genealogical tabulation of Gad is given in Nu 26:15–18.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 5:11 *over … in the land of Bashan*. Close relationship of Gad to Reuben arises from where they lived (cf vv 9,

16, 23). See map, p 365.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 5:16 *Sharon*. See color map 2.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 5:18–22 Warfare narrative relates several themes important to how the Chronicler will treat the warfare of God's people. Large numbers of warriors (v 18) and booty (v 21) show God's favor. As in ancient war texts, valiant men "cried out to God" because they "trusted in Him" and He "granted their urgent plea" (v 20). Significantly, it is noted that "the war was of God," and through His help these tribes dwelt in the conquered lands "until the exile" under the Assyrians (v 22). The success of the OT nation of Israel (and correspondingly, the NT Church) depended on God, who called them to trust only in His help, a lesson for the Chronicler's own time and God's people of every age.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 5:18 *valiant men*. Lit, "from sons of army."
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 5:19 *Hagrites*. Eastern tribes, who were descendants of Hagar, Ishmael's mother. Their confederates Jetur and Naphish are listed among Ishmael's sons (1:31).
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 5:21 *men alive*. Likely used as slaves.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 5:11–22 Only a little information is recorded about the "sons of Gad" in Scripture, who lived and fought beside the sons of Reuben. When brothers support one another in godly service, how great is the blessing! But offense and envy too often divide brothers and neighbors. Through God's blessings, forgiveness, and mercy requested in prayer, He can and does restore us to one another. • Merciful Lord, grant us peace with our brethren and neighbors, that all may call on Your name and serve one another in joy. Amen.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 5:23–24 Half-tribe of Manasseh, which lived east of the Jordan (Nu 32:33–42), is listed here according to territory rather than genealogy. Additional genealogical data is given in 7:14–19.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 5:25 *broke faith*. They strayed from the covenant. See note, 2:7. *whored*. See note, Hos 1:2.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 5:26 *exile*. Three tribes enjoyed tremendous military victories through God's help early in their history (vv 18–22), but later met crushing defeat. Earlier wars were "of God" (v 22),

and so is this war. The difference now is that "the God of Israel stirred up the spirit of Pul king of Assyria" against His own people (defeat twice referred to explicitly [vv 6, 22] and once implicitly [v 17]) because they broke faith with Him. The Chronicler deals directly with the fate of these tribes. Two phases of exile are noted: in 2Ki 15:29 (under Tiglath-pileser III) and in 2Ki 17:6; 18:11 (under Shalmaneser V and concluded by Sargon II's siege of Samaria). The Chronicler telescopes the two into one. *stirred up the spirit of Pul*. God brings about the war (cf 2Ch 21:16; 36:22), due to the sin of the North (cf 2Ki 17; 25). The same grim assessment is offered of Judah when they go into captivity (2Ch 36:14). The Chronicler will, however, also provide an answer for both North and South. In Hezekiah's proclamation, the North is urged to return to Yahweh, and their exile will be ended (2Ch 30:6–9). *Pul*. See note, 2Ki 15:19. *Halah, Habor, Hara … Gozan*. See map, p 609.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 5:23–26 The early successes of East Manasseh did not spare them from defeat after they abandoned God's covenant. God punished them specifically through sending the Assyrians. He still manages affairs between nations today. Remarkably, the people of Assyria came to faith centuries later when the Gospel spread to the east (cf Is 19:25). The Lord's Word is powerful to stir hearts not only to war but also to faith and peace in Christ. • Stir our hearts, O Lord, to keep Your Word faithfully by believing in Jesus and proclaiming His name among the nations. Amen.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Ch 6** Tribe of Levi. Combines a genealogy (vv 1–53; cf Nu 3:17–18; 26:57–62) and a list of Levitical cities (vv 54–81). Forms of the genealogies differ from section to section. E.g., vv 1–15 use the formula "X fathered Y"; vv 16–30, 50–53 use "sons of X: Y, Z"; and vv 33–47 use "X, son of Y, son of Z." These differences indicate that the Chronicler faithfully transmitted the records before him. Compared with tribes in ch 5, almost three times the space is devoted to the Levites because their appointed ministry was essential to God's people. Continuity of the priesthood validates the legitimacy of the temple and the faithful practice of the divinely established beliefs and rituals in the Chronicler's own time. Its placement at the center of the genealogical section (chs 1–9) underscores that all of the human race, from Adam (1:1) through the postexilic people of Jerusalem (9:1–34), have life and salvation through the ministry of God's Word in Israel's divinely established beliefs and rituals.

The Chronicler's interest in the proper worship and ministry of ancient Israel is not merely one of order and regulation. It reflects desire for God's grace found in the means that God has chosen. That same desire was formative in the sixteenth-century Lutheran confessors as they maintained the necessity of the ministry and described who God called to fulfill its duties (AC V; AC XIV).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:1–30 Vv 1–15 trace the high priestly line of the Levite Aaron to the time of the exile. Supplementing this highly select group of Levi's descendants, vv 16–30 resume the genealogy of his three sons: Gershom, Kohath, Merari. The lists are not exhaustive. All descendants of the third son of Jacob through Leah are called Levites, but not all of them performed the same functions.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:2 *sons of Kohath*. The priestly line through Aaron. Assumes familiarity with the older texts and thus makes no mention of the death of Aaron's sons Nadab and Abihu (Lv 10:1–2; Nu 3:4). Other lists of priests are found in vv 50–53, 9:11; Ezr 7:1–5; Ne 11:10–11.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:10 *the house*. The temple.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:15 *into exile*. 587 BC.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:16–30 Three branches of Levites. Short genealogies are provided for Gershom (vv 17, 20–21) and Merari (vv 19, 29–30). Kohath is far more complex (vv 18, 22–28).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:28 *Samuel*. A Levite who lived in the territory of Ephraim (see note, 1Sm 1:1). The Chronicler does not deal with his history, but by including Samuel in the genealogies, he acknowledges his significance. Textual variations exist in the names of the Samuel genealogy (cf 1Ch 6:33–38).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:31–48 These Levites served vitally as musicians in the tabernacle during David's reign and in the temple during and after Solomon's reign (vv 31–33a). This shows an intimate connection between David and the faithful service of the divinely established beliefs and rituals, which will be important in later accounts of David's organization of temple personnel (chs 16; 23–27). Three lines of Levites are listed: (1) Hemanites from Kohath (vv 33b–38; cf Ps 88 title) through Izhar; (2) Asaphites from Gershom through Jahath (vv 39–43; cf Ps 50 title); (3) Ethanites (Jeduthun) from Merari through Mushi (vv 44–47; cf Ps 89; 62 titles).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:31 *service of song*. Musical accompaniment was an essential element of worship (cf ch 25). See p 993. *house*. The tabernacle.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:32 *the tabernacle of the tent of meeting*. See note, Ex 27:21.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:33–38 Priority of the Hemanites is indicated by their appearing first, the tracing of their decent to Levi himself, the length of the account, and the title "Heman the singer."
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:39 *stood on his right hand*. Position for processions or during the service.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:44 *On the left hand*. See note, v 39.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:48 Summary statement.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:49–53 Functions of the high priests that Moses commanded in Nu 3:5–15; 18:1–7. Only sons of Aaron could enter the sanctuary. Chronicles affirms the proper function for personnel who carried out the divinely established beliefs and rituals (cf 2Ch 13:10–11).
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:49 *the work of the Most Holy Place*. This special assignment to those sons of Levi who were sons of Aaron (vv 49–53) is distinguished from the "service of the tabernacle," which the other Levites performed (v 48). See pp 170–71. *atonement*. See p 5.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:50–53 High priests to the time of David.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:54–81 Because "no portion was given to the Levites in the land," the Lord ordered that they be given "cities to dwell in, with their pasturelands" (Jsh 14:4) within the inheritance of the other tribes (Nu 35:1–8; Jsh 21:3). The 13 cities allotted to the Kohathite priests are named first (vv 54–60). All the tribes contributed territory to the non-Aaronite descendants of Kohath and to the other two branches of the Levitical family—35 cities in all (vv 61–65), some of which are listed (vv 66–81). Cf Jsh 21:1–42; the differences in the lists are likely because vv 54–81 describe the location of the Levites in David's time. The giving of cities and pasturelands is ascribed to the decisions of each tribe, thus connecting the priestly line with all Israel. This was vital because, according to Nu 3:11–13, the Levites served as a substitute for the firstborn

of every Israelite woman. Their sustenance came from each tribe's offering. This happened properly in Joshua's time, in David's time, and in the Chronicler's time.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:57 *cities of refuge.* See note, Nu 35:11; cf Jsh 20. Author is focused on pasturelands. Only city of refuge mentioned here is Hebron (v 55). See map, p 365.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:77 *the rest*. Anticipates conclusion of the list.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Ch 6** An overview of the priestly tribe, down to the time of David. The service of the priests helps us understand the service of Christ in the NT. Heb 5:10 declares Christ to be the High Priest after the order of Melchizedek, superior to all those of Levi because He Himself is the sacrifice for our sins. He lives forever (Heb 7) and serves in the greater, heavenly temple (Heb 8–10). • Lord, through Your atoning blood, I am forgiven and united with all the faithful. Be our refuge in all adversity, and prepare us for service in Your kingdom. Amen.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Ch 7** Tribes of Issachar, Benjamin, Naphtali, Manasseh, Ephraim, and Asher rebelled against Rehoboam, David's grandson (2Ch 10). The Chronicler preserves their genealogical records because they were of the house of Israel. Not one branch of Israel would be forgotten.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 7:1 *sons of Issachar*. Combines genealogical data from Gn 46:13 and Nu 26:23–24, though with spelling differences.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 7:2 *days of David*. Very likely, data was taken from the census David made (2Sm 24:1–9).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 7:3 *five*. Four sons of Izrahiah are named, though the Chronicler counts five sons. It may be that the "five" refers to the sons of Uzzi, the father of Izrahiah and grandfather of the other four, which then would total five sons of Uzzi.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 7:1–5 Although little information about Issachar is presented, the Chronicler records the tribe's great numbers. How sad that this prosperous tribe did not also prosper in serving God's Word. Today, focusing on numerical strength remains deceptive. The Lord counts us as His people and grants us strength by grace alone. • Lord, make me a good steward of those in my charge, and teach me to rely on Your strength alone. Amen.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 7:6 Represents one of several variant listings, which may reflect a military census (cf vv 7, 9, and 11) taken at a particular time, perhaps under David, as in the Issachar material (vv 1–5).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 7:12 *of Aher*. Or, "of another." May refer to Dan, who would otherwise receive no notice in the genealogy of Jacob's 12 sons. The Hushim were his sons (Gn 46:23). Dan may not have been mentioned to express contempt for the tribe, which in its earlier years was guilty of brazen idolatry (Jgs 17–18).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 7:6–12 Benjamin, Jacob's youngest son and the father of one of the smallest tribes, is given the honor of a genealogy, unlike Dan, who receives almost no notice. The Lord cares for all the faithful, no matter how small or unimportant they appear to the world. • O Lord, thank You for counting me precious through the merits of Your precious Son. Amen.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 7:13 *sons of Naphtali*. Unlike vv 1–12, there are no military census records for Naphtali. Instead, genealogies of Gn 46:24–25a and Nu 26:48–50 are reproduced with minor spelling variants. *Bilhah*. Rachel's servant who bore Naphtali.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 7:14–19 *sons of Manasseh*. Genealogy is of West Manasseh (see note, 5:23–24, for East Manasseh). Tabulation includes residents on both sides of the river. Women are given a prominent place because they introduced a non-Israelite strain into the tribe.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 7:14 *concubine*. See pp 54–55.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 7:13–19 Summaries of Naphtali and West Manasseh specially note the place of mothers. How great is a mother's influence on her children, whether for good or for evil! Faithful mothers are God's gifts to His children, an exceptional blessing. • Lord, grant faithful mothers in the service of Your Church, devoted and humble like Your own dear mother. Amen.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 7:20–29 *sons of Ephraim*. Genealogy of Ephraim, brother of Manasseh and son of Joseph and Asenath, daughter of the high priest of On (Gn 41:50–52; 46:20), is naturally linked to that of Manasseh. Genealogy falls into four parts: (1) genealogy through Shuthelah (vv 20–21a); (2) history of Beriah, ancestor of Joshua (vv 21b–24); (3) genealogy of Joshua (vv 25–27); and (4) territorial lists (vv 28–29).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 7:20 *Ephraim*. Second tribe of Joseph; occupied territory south of Manasseh and north of Benjamin. See map, p 365. His most illustrious descendant was Joshua (v 27).
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 7:21–24 *Gath*. Philistine city. Nothing more is known of a raid on the Ephraimites by Canaanites associated with it. *Ephraim … mourned*. Provides insight into the life of the tribal forefather. This history, set in Egypt where Ephraim was born as the son of Joseph, resembles the story of Job: both Job and Ephraim suffered evil, lost children, were comforted by others, and received new children. Through Beriah, Ephraim's great descendant Joshua was born (vv 25–27).
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 7:24 *built*. Unusual for a woman to be engaged in building activities.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 7:20–29 The touching story of Ephraim's recovery from disaster illustrates brotherly care and personal endurance, as Ephraim became a most powerful tribe in Israel's history. Though we suffer much in this life, our Brother Jesus Christ is full of comfort and supports us through our brothers and sisters in the faith. • Dearest Jesus, comfort us in all our sorrows, that we might comfort others. Amen.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 7:30–40 *sons of Asher*. Only vv 30–31, 40 are paralleled elsewhere in the OT (Gn 46:17; Nu 26:44–47). Inheritance of Asher was west and north of Zebulun (Jsh 19:10–16, 24–31). See map, p 365.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 7:40 *mighty warriors, chiefs of the princes*. Only these are mentioned by name (vv 30–39). *26,000*. Fewer Asherite troops than the 40,000 in 12:36; 41,500 in Nu 1:41; 2:28; or the 53,400 in Nu 26:47. The differences probably reflect censuses at different times.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 7:30–40 Account of Asher concludes the genealogy of the 12 tribes. Leaders of this far-flung tribe receive special emphasis, though their warrior's strength did not sustain them. Our strength and sustenance come from the Lord alone. • Merciful Lord, You make the first last and the last first. Turn our lives around by Your grace. Amen.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Ch 8** Here begins a transition to the story of David and the everlasting house promised to him (chs 10–29). The genealogy of Benjamin includes Israel's first king and David's predecessor,

Saul, with his ancestors and descendants. Though Saul died in disgrace (ch 10), his son Jonathan continued a line that prospered and raised up men of valor. Some of these Benjaminites joined forces with David's tribe, Judah, to restore the kingdom for David's grandson Rehoboam (1Ki 12:21). Before the exile, many Benjaminites lived in Jerusalem, "David's city," which was home to kings and the temple (Jgs 1:21). After the exile, Benjamin remained important in God's rule in Jerusalem (Ezr 1:5). This text is a more difficult genealogical record than ch 7; in some cases, it provides otherwise unknown details, and in others, it provides histories that vary from other Benjaminite genealogies. These are "snapshots" of the Benjaminite family at particular times rather than a continuous historical account.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 8:1–7 Sons of Benjamin and Bela. Listed also in 7:6; Gn 46:21; Nu 26:38–40, though the names vary greatly (some can be reconciled as spelling variations).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 8:6 *Ehud*. A judge by that name was the son of Gera (Jgs 3:15). Incidents mentioned here and in the next verses are otherwise unknown. *Geba*. See map, p 615. *exile to Manahath*. See map, p 717.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 8:8–27 These names are not recorded anywhere else. None of them are mentioned in the lists of those who returned from Babylon (9:1–9; Ne 11:1–9).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 8:8–12 Sons of Shaharaim. Genealogical fragment, unconnected with vv 1–7 except as different branches of the same tribe. *Moab … Ono … Lod*. Indicates widespread settlements of the Benjaminites—from Moab on the east to an area southeast of Joppa. See color map 2.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 8:13–28 Sons of Beriah, Shema/Shimei, Shashak, and Jeremoth/Jehoram. While their extensive genealogy is largely fragmented, two discernible groups are found: one centered on Aijalon, including the brothers Beriah and Shema/Shimei (vv 13–18), the other centered on Jerusalem, including the brothers Jeremoth/Jehoram (vv 19–28). Nothing else is known of these families.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 8:13 *Aijalon … Gath*. See color map 1.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 8:28 *chief men*. See note, 7:40. *lived in Jerusalem*. Before the exile.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 8:29–40 More specific genealogy of Saul. Text parallels Saulite genealogy in 9:35–44; it varies slightly from that of 1Sm 9:1–2a. The names of Saul's sons appear in v 33b and 9:39 as "Jonathan, Malchi-shua, Abinadab, and Eshbaal," but in 1Sm 14:49 as "Jonathan, Ishvi, and Malchi-shua." ("Ishvi" is a variant of "Eshbaal," modified to remove the Baalistic ending. The same son is called Ish-bosheth, "Son of Shame" in 2Sm 2–4.) Of Saul's remaining descendants (8:35–38; 9:40–41), only Merib-baal and Micah are known elswhere. Merib-baal (or Meri-baal, "Hero of Baal") and his son Micah appear in 2Sm 9:6, 12, where Merib-baal is known as "Mephibosheth." The genealogy of Eshek is found only in vv 39–40.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 8:29 *Gibeon*. C 6 mi NW of Jerusalem, where "the tabernacle of the Lord" was (21:29) and where Solomon worshiped before he built the temple (2Ch 1:3). See color map 1.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 8:33 *Ner ... Kish*. According to 1Sm 14:50–51, Ner and Kish were brothers.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 8:40 *bowmen*. For their skill in archery, cf 12:2; Jgs 20:15–16.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Ch 8** A Benjaminite genealogy designed specifically for Saul's family shows that though Saul's tribe was smaller than others, it received special attention because God called them to service as leaders of Israel. For God's people, honor and nobility are not products of our strength, but of God's calling and the character He develops in us. • Consecrate my life and my family, dear Lord, to faithfully fulfill my calling to the honor of Your name. Amen.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 9:1–34 Inhabitants of Jerusalem after the Babylonian exile. Israel was restored from various tribes (v 3). After so many years elsewhere, many Israelites would not or could not return.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 9:1 *Book of the Kings of Israel*. See pp 335–37. *breach of faith*. See note, 2:7. Main focus of Chronicles. Beginning in retrospect, Chronicles proved that Israel could be the instrument of God's plan of universal salvation only as it continued in covenant loyalty, expressed above all in worship of the true God according to His Word. See pp 628–29.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 9:2–3 Introduction to Judah after the exile in Babylon. The list shows the restored Jerusalem could become the

home to all God's people, South and North.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 9:2 *temple servants*. Non-Israelites who were pressed into service. See note, Jsh 9:27. They were people "whom David and his officials had set apart to attend the Levites" (Ezr 8:20). Associated with the Levites, they also had quarters in Jerusalem and lived in Levitical cities (Ezr 2:70; Ne 3:26, 31; 11:21).
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 9:3 *lived in Jerusalem*. Repeated in v 34.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 9:4–9 Judean and Benjaminite lists. Judahite list (vv 4–6) is similar to Ne 11:4–5, and Benjaminite list (vv 7–8) to Ne 11:7–9, though with numerous variants in each case.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 9:10–13 *priests*. Listings correspond closely with Ne 11:10–14, differing primarily in spelling and details of generations. Some names appear elsewhere in Chronicles. The continuity of the postexilic priesthood with the ancient priesthood is of vital importance because it represents the only valid ministry of the divinely established beliefs, rites, and rituals. See note, ch 6.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 9:13 *1,760*. Total figure in Ne 11:10–14 is 1,192. Difference may be due to a different basis of calculation. *mighty men*. See note, Ru 2:1.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 9:14–16 *Levites*. Listings correspond closely with Ne 11:15–17, differing in spelling and details. With the priests, the Levites form the essential personnel once present in the tabernacle and later in Solomon's temple. The unbroken chain of legitimate clergy has continued into the Chronicler's own time and legitimates the function of the rebuilt temple. Cf ch 23.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 9:17–33 Gatekeepers and temple functionaries. Gatekeepers are named and their functions described in vv 17–27. Four are affirmed as chief gatekeepers in vv 17 and 26. The intervening verses describe the prominence of the gatekeepers (vv 18–19a), the legitimacy of their office in history (vv 19b–21), and a reaffirmation of their prominence (vv 22–25). Four chief gatekeepers were responsible for security (v 27; cf 26:20); others had charge of the utensils (v 28; cf 23:28); some mixed the spices (v 30; cf Ex 30:22–38); some were bakers (vv 31–32); and others were temple musicians (v 33; cf 15:16–24). Levites were in constant service. Cf 23:24–32 for David's establishment of these duties.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 9:19 *Korahites.* Luth: "In Moses we read (Num. 26:11) that the sons of Korah received extraordinary grace in that they were preserved when their father was swallowed up by the earth with his companions. … They would not depart from the tabernacle, but had admonished their father and his followers to desist from error. For that reason they are highly praised in Chronicles. The psalms they composed are very joyous and most delightful and are plainly wedding lyrics. Therefore I believe the descendants of Korah were especially chosen for God's worship that there might also be poets of sacred things among God's people, to sing together and compose hymns for the honor and glory of God. Thus Ethan and Jeduthun are praised among many others (1 Chron. 15:19; 9:16, 19). More than the others, however, the sons of Korah sang especially of Christ; but they sang in a different way from David—under the allegory of marriage. It is apparent that they were good and pious sons, who believed God in the face of their father's madness. For that reason they were preserved for the praise of God. They were not priests, but Levites. They remained in that station and did not aspire to the priesthood as their father did" (AE 12:201).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 9:20 *the LORD was with him*. See "be with," p 5.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 9:25 *every seven days*. The guard changed for the Sabbath.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 9:31–32 *flat cakes … showbread*. The latter is lit, "bread of ordering." Set in two rows, six loaves (cakes) to a row. Called "the bread of the Presence" (Ex 25:30; 1Ki 7:48). See note, Ex 25:30.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 9:33 *singers*. Chronicles stresses the importance of music and song in the temple worship (see note, 6:31). *chambers*. See diagram, p 541. *free from other service*. Their singing was so important for the daily services that they did nothing else.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 9:34 Conclusion to vv 1–33.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 9:35–44 Bridge between genealogical section (1:1–9:34) and the narrative section (1Ch 10–2Ch 36), leading the reader to Saul, the first king of Israel. See note, 8:29–40. This slightly different list of Saul's ancestors and descendants leads to the story of the death of the first king, which in turn is an introduction to the main theme of Chronicles: the reign of David.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 9:1–44 The separated people of Israel return to a new unity at Jerusalem. The Lord renews their service and their hope based on restored faith in His mercy. Though we break faith with the Lord daily, He restores us daily through repentance and faith in Christ, whose mercy is new every morning. • Renew us, Lord. Recall us to Zion, and sanctify our service by Your Word. Amen.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 10:1–13 Only incident of Saul's life from 1Sm 8–31 that is recorded here. Chronicles only considers Saul as David's unfaithful predecessor (cf v 14). *Mount Gilboa*. See color map 2.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 10:6 *all his house died together*. General statement; the Chronicler also notes in the genealogies that the line of Saul's son Jonathan continued (8:34–40; 9:40–44). *house*. Here refers to a political force or dynasty. Expression refers to "all his men" (1Sm 31:6) who constituted Saul's immediate entourage or bodyguard.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 10:8–12 The Chronicler omits details such as Saul's decapitation, the name of the goddess Ashtaroth, the fastening of the body to the wall of Beth-shan, the all-night journey of the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead, and the cremation of Saul's body. Included is the account of Saul's head being taken to the temple of Dagon (v 10), a pagan temple in Philistia. When the ark of the covenant was taken there (1Sm 4–7), the idol Dagon's head and arms were broken off.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 10:8 *strip the slain*. Articles of value, even clothing, were taken as part of a winning soldier's compensation.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 10:9 *good news to their idols*. Gods were not regarded as all-knowing, as Scripture describes the Lord.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 10:10 *fastened his head*. Picture of the exile yet to come, typified in the head of Saul hung before a pagan god in a foreign land.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 10:11 *Jabesh-gilead*. See color map 1.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 10:13 Theological analysis of Saul's death. Saul died because he was unfaithful and failed to keep God's command that Samuel the prophet had given him (1Sm 13). He refused to exterminate the Amalekites (1Sm 15; 28:18), and he visited a medium in Endor (1Sm 28:8–14). Failure to heed the prophets is given as the ultimate

reason for the Babylonian exile (2Ch 36:15–16). *breach of faith*. See note, 2:7.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 10:14 Saul's demise was according to God's decision, so that He might put David on the throne. This is a type of the exile to come under Babylon. Like Saul, Judah was unfaithful, did not seek the Lord, and rejected His prophets. Therefore, God raised up Babylon to destroy Judah. Yet, just as after Saul's death God gave the throne to the great king David, so He also would restore the exiles. Readers are thus warned about their own faithfulness, their own seeking of the Lord, and their own reception of the prophetic word. Saul took his own life. However, the cause of death is ascribed directly to God, even though it happened through human agents (see notes, Dt 2:34; Nu 31:2). *seek guidance*. See p 843.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Ch 10** See application note, 1Sm 31.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Chs 11–12** Initial stages of David's reign. At the end of the 7½-year struggle for the throne (which is telescoped in 1Ch), elders from the whole nation came to Hebron and "anointed David king over Israel." The battle of Gilboa (1 Sm 31; 2Sm 1), is not mentioned in 1Ch. The Chronicler has David immediately proclaimed king by all Israel. Absent is any detrimental information about David's character. (See "Omissions," p 629.) The prophetic promise to David was fulfilled "according to the word of the LORD by Samuel" (11:3; cf vv 9–10; 12:18, 23). Throughout his rise, the people support him until, at the end, every tribe is united as one nation under one king. At the stronghold, David was supported by the northern tribe of Gad (12:8–15) and by the southern tribes of Benjamin and Judah (12:16–18). At Ziklag, he was supported by the southern tribe of Benjamin (12:1–7) and the northern tribe of Manasseh (12:19–21). At Hebron, his support broadened to include both Israelites and non-Israelites (11:10–47) and, from among the Israelites, contingents from every tribe (12:22–37). David's reign at Hebron for 7½ years is reported in 2Sm 5:4–5.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 11:1 *Hebron*. See color map 1. *your bone and flesh*. Members of his family are thereby inseparable.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 11:2 *led … shepherd*. People long recognized Saul's lack of leadership and that the Lord had chosen David, though they do not explicitly use the title "king" here.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 11:3 *elders*. See note, Ex 3:16. See also p 228. *covenant*. See p 6. *before the* LORD. With His approval. *anointed*. See note, 1Sm 10:1.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 11:1–3 The Chronicler announces and celebrates David's enthronement, overlooking David's struggles. Critics may fault the Chronicler's omission of the graphic details about David's ascent. Yet all of us, like the Chronicler, tend to look back on the past with nostalgia and celebrate the good rather than the bad. In fact, the record of God's blessings to David was what the Chronicler's readers needed to remember most. When failures and trials would overwhelm us, the Lord focuses us on His mercy, which can carry us through. • Lord, I repent of my failures, though I cannot number them all or bear to dwell on them. Focus my heart, dear Lord, on Your great mercy. Amen.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 11:4–8 Account of all Israel's acceptance of David (vv 1–3) is followed by the story of the capture of Jerusalem.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 11:4 *Jebus*. Cf 2Sm 5:6–10. Gr Naz: "[O] grand and renowned temple, our new inheritance, whose greatness is now due to the Word, which once was a Jebus, and has now been made by us a Jerusalem" (*NPNF* 2 7:394).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 11:5 *stronghold of Zion*. See p 844. Archaeologists have found a substantial stone wall at Zion.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 11:6 Account is structured with several omissions from and additions to the 2Sm account. The Jebusites' taunt that the blind and the lame could ward off David's entrance to the city (2Sm 5:6) and then David's subsequent order to attack "the lame and the blind" (2Sm 5:8) are left out. *Joab … went up first*. This detail prepares the reader for Joab's later role as David's commander and his role in rebuilding the city after the capture (v 8).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 11:8 *Millo*. See note, 2Sm 5:9.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 11:9 *the* LORD *of hosts*. See p 1291. *with him*. See "be with," p 5.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 11:4–9 See application note, 2Sm 5:1–16.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 11:10–47 Honor roll of David's military men follows immediately upon the telling of his accession to the throne and acquisition of his capital, whereas in Samuel this roster appears

as an appendix to the account of his reign (2Sm 23:8–39). This topical, rather than chronological, sequence determines the order in which events are reported. The muster rolls in ch 12 are also not found in 2Sm.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 11:10 *mighty men*. See note, Ru 2:1. These men distinguished themselves in David's service not only at the time when all Israel made him king, but also before he was king and later in his reign. See note, 12:1.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 11:11 *Hachmonite*. A clan or family name. *300*. Or, 800 (2Sm 23:8); difference may have arisen through scribal inaccuracy. *killed at one time*. Not necessarily a singular effort of Jashobeam, but the result of his leadership (cf 1Sm 18:7).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 11:13 *barley*. Or, "lentils" (2Sm 23:11). A copyist could easily confuse the Hbr words because of their similar spelling.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 11:14 *he … his*. Shammah (2Sm 23:11–12) is the subject of the verbs here and the main hero of the exploit.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 11:15–19 David's noble character shows he is devoted to the Lord and to his people, thus the ideal king.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 11:15–16 *Adullam … Valley of Rephaim … Bethlehem*. Cf 2Sm 23:13–17; see maps, pp 500, 534.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 11:18 *poured it out to the* LORD. Greg: "[David] poured it out as a libation to the Lord" (*NPNF* 2 13:66). See pp 170–71.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 11:19 *drink the lifeblood*. See note, Gn 9:4. Greg: "He, who to his guilt previously feared not that the blood of dying soldiers should be shed, afterwards considered that, were he to drink the water, he should have shed the blood of living soldiers" (*NPNF* 2 13:66).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 11:20 *Abishai*. His feat and that of Benaiah (vv 22–25) are reported in 2Sm 23:18–23.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 11:26–47 Roster of mighty men is more complete than the list in 2Sm 23:24–39, where 16 entries following Uriah's name (v 41) do not appear. *mighty men*. See note, Ru 2:1.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 11:10–47 See application note, 2Sm 23:8–39.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 12:1–22 Several contingents of "mighty men" threw in their lot with David while he was still a fugitive of

Saul's fury (cf ch 11; 1Sm 19–30). Four groups of defectors from Saul are mentioned here. They came from Benjamin (vv 1–7), Gad (vv 8–15), Benjamin and Judah (vv 16–18), and Manasseh (vv 19–22). This is only a partial list of men who supported David before Saul's death. There is no record of these accretions to David's army in 1 and 2Sm.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 12:1–7 Benjaminites (Saul's tribe) join David at Ziklag.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 12:1 *came to David*. An act of faith in the word of the prophet. Not until David gathered his kingdom and established his rule was their faith visibly rewarded. *Ziklag*. See map, p 468. *could not move*. Saul kept pursuing David and finally forced him to dwell among the Philistines (1Sm 27).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 12:2 *Saul's kinsmen*. Though not the first, they joined David when he was at Ziklag, not long before Saul's death (cf 1Sm 27:2–6). Because these Benjaminites were Saul's kinsmen, their defection to David was particularly noteworthy. Because of their common bloodline, they could be expected to remain faithful to the mad King Saul, yet they found his rule so intolerable that they joined the resistance movement against him.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 12:3–4 *Gibeah … Gibeon*. See color maps 1, 3. *thirty*. Apparently a select group, different from the chain of command in ch 11. Cf v 18.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 12:8 *Gadites*. From east of the Jordan (see note, ch 5), where Saul's son Ish-bosheth maintained himself for 7½ years after his father's death. The desertion of Saul by his own tribesmen, followed by their immediate neighbors, reveals the extent of the dissatisfaction with his rule. *stronghold*. Probably a reference to the cave of Adullam, where David fled soon after Saul ordered his arrest (cf 1Sm 22:1).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 12:15 Dissident Gadites had great obstacles to overcome. For some reason, they had to cross the Jordan when it was at flood stage during the month of Nisan (our Mar/Apr). Additionally, they had to "put to flight" loyalist Benjaminites who tried to prevent their defection to David.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 12:16 *stronghold*. See note, v 8.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 12:17 *friendship*. David tested the trustworthiness of this mixed contingent because he had learned during his flight from Saul to be careful whom he trusted. Cf 1Sm 23:19–29; 26.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 12:18 *Spirit clothed*. The Spirit moved Amasai to give an assurance of their loyalty in lofty poetry. See notes, Jgs 3:10; 6:34. *thirty*. See note, vv 3–4. *Peace, peace to you*. Hbr greeting. Cf Jgs 19:20. *helps*. See note, Gn 2:18.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 12:19 *sent him away*. David "did not help … the Philistines" in the battle of Gilboa because their rulers did not trust him (1Sm 29).
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 12:20 *thousands*. See p 217.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 12:21 *raiders*. Amalekites who destroyed Ziklag when David left it unprotected (1Sm 30). *men of valor*. See note, Jsh 1:14.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 12:22 *an army of God*. Like God's host of angels (cf Gn 32:1–2; Mt 26:53). At Hebron, troops from every tribe join David (vv 2–37). A total of 340,647 warriors gathered to support David (vv 24–37).
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 12:23 Before Saul's death and during his son's ill-fated regime (cf 2Sm 2:10), David received growing support from various volunteer groups. David became commander of Israel's national army, composed of divisions furnished from the various tribes (vv 23–40).
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 12:26–27 Priests and Levites could also serve as soldiers.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 12:28 *Zadok*. Possibly the man who became high priest after Abiathar.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 12:31 *half-tribe*. See note, Nu 32:33.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 12:33 *seasoned troops*. Experienced warriors, fully trained, having unit cohesion. *weapons of war*. Spears, shields, swords, bows and arrows, slings, and short swords.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 12:38–40 Coronation feast. Length and abundant provisions underscore the magnificence of this feast. David's son Solomon also celebrated his coronation with a tremendous feast (29:20–22).
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 12:38 *All these*. See note, v 22. *battle order*. Formally organized for the march as professionals, not a meandering militia.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 12:39 *their brothers*. People of Judah, in which Hebron lay, assumed the main burden of providing for the

visitors from other tribes. See map, p 615.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 12:40 *joy in Israel*. Spontaneous generosity and goodwill followed the news about David's coronation.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Ch 12** David wins support from throughout Israel, and his coronation is a great celebration. The feasts shared at David's coronation at Hebron and Solomon's coronation in Jerusalem, for all their joy, pale when compared to the feast that awaits all believers (cf Is 25:6–8; Jer 3:18). The feast that will be celebrated at the end of time will bring together all God's scattered children, not only those of Israel but those of the separated children of Adam as well (cf 1Ch 1:1). That eternal feast even now sustains the Church on earth. In every celebration of the Lord's Supper, the gathered people of God look beyond the circumstances of life to an eternal day of joy for all nations (cf Mt 26:29; Mk 14:25; Lk 22:15–18; 1Co 11:23–26; Rv 19:6–9). • "Gather us together, we pray, from the ends of the earth to celebrate with all the faithful the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom, which has no end." Amen. (*LSB*, p 178)

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Ch 13–14** Events of 2Sm 5:17–6:11 are in reverse order here.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 13:1–4 Written to stress the importance of true worship, the Chronicler disregards the chronological sequence to highlight David's concern for the ark, the symbolic throne of the transcendent God (v 6; see p 495). Chs 10–12 set the stage, explaining how David was able to undertake moving the ark. Wearing the crown of all Israel (10:1–11:3) in the former Jebusite city of Jerusalem (11:4–9) and commanding a national army (11:10–12:40), David was in a position to promote the spiritual life of his people. Cf 2Sm 6:1–11. David acts as ideal leader, consulting with the commanders. Note David's concern for all Israel and his desire to have priests and Levites join him. He would correct Saul's error of not seeking the Lord at the ark of the covenant (see notes, 10:13, 14).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 13:1 *thousands … hundreds*. See p 217.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 13:3 *seek*. See p 843.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 13:4 *All the assembly*. All the people had a voice in the matter through their representatives. Israel acted by consensus rather than by vote.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 13:1–4 David strengthens the unity of Israel by consulting the leaders and receiving affirmation. Consensus is often difficult to attain, especially in a large group. Yet the Lord blesses the people's sincere desire for restoring godly practices. Likewise, He will bless our desire for godly consensus and peace, which He provides in the Gospel. • Grant our congregations unity, dear Lord, as they call upon You and listen to one another. Amen.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 13:5 *Nile … to Lebo-hamath*. From the southern to the northern border of the land, more commonly expressed as "from Dan to Beersheba" (Jgs 20:1).
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 13:6 *enthroned above the cherubim*. See note, Ezk 10:1.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 13:7 *a new cart*. Means by which the ark was last moved. Rather than consulting God's Word, the movers simply followed precedent. See note, vv 9–12. *Uzzah and Ahio*. Sons of Abinadab (2Sm 6:3). Unclear whether this family was Levitical and thus qualified to participate in the movement of the ark.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 13:9–12 Cf 2Sm 6:6–9. The issue here was obedience to the Mosaic Law concerning the ark. It was to be carried with poles (Ex 25:12–15). It was also a capital offense to touch the ark (Nu 4:15). Uzzah's instinctive reaction to steady the ark was contrary to the divinely established statutes regarding the ark. The lesson would bear fruit when David conformed to divine requirements and later successfully brought the ark to Jerusalem (15:25–16:6).
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 13:9 *Chidon*. Also called "Nacon" (2Sm 6:6).
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 13:11 *angry*. The object of David's anger, whether God or Uzzah and Ahio, is never clarified.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 13:13–14 *Obed-edom*. Possibly a Levite from Gath-rimmon, thus a proper caretaker for the ark.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 13:5–14 See application note, 2Sm 6:5–15.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Ch 14** Three factors demonstrating that "the LORD had established [David] as king over Israel": (1) building activity with the help of a foreign king, Hiram of Tyre (vv 1–2); (2) conditions permitting domestic tranquility and growth of his family (vv 3–

7); (3) double defeat inflicted on the Philistines, who threatened the independence of the land (vv 8–17).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 14:1 Glory of David's kingdom is immediately apparent in the goodwill gesture of Hiram, king of Tyre. With this assurance, David knew that the Lord had established him as king. *Tyre*. See color map 1.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 14:2 *for the sake of His people Israel*. David viewed government as God's blessing for His people.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 14:3–7 David's family. Cf 2Sm 5:13–16. David's prosperity resulted in his enlarged family. This collateral genealogy is almost identical to 3:5–8.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 14:4 *children*. Some are mentioned only here. The names of a few have variant forms in other lists.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 14:1–7 God establishes David's house and his household in Jerusalem. Our station in life, whether humble or exalted in the eyes of the world, is established for the sake of God's good purposes. In mercy, He has established our heavenly home through Christ. • O Lord, welcome me as Your child for the sake of Your only-begotten Son. Amen.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 14:8–17 Cf 2Sm 5:17–25.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 14:8 *all the Philistines*. Hyperbole.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 14:9 *Valley of Rephaim*. See map, p 500.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 14:10–16 David seeks consultation with Yahweh (vv 10, 14; 2Sm 5:19a, 23); God announces the giving of the enemy into David's hands (v 10b; 2Sm 5:19b); the Lord goes out before the enemy (v 15; 2Sm 5:24). The enemy's gods are burned (v 12; 2Sm 5:21), and their army is obliterated (v 16; 2Sm 5:25).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 14:10 *inquired of God*. See "call," p 842.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 14:11 *Baal-perazim*. Specific location unknown.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 14:12 *left their gods*. A rushed retreat. David shows no fear of the idols because of his confidence in the Lord.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 14:13 *valley*. Valley of Rephaim. See map, p 500.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 14:15 *marching in the tops of the balsam trees*. A reference to the angelic hosts God sent to do battle for David with the Philistines.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 14:16 *Gibeon to Gezer*. See color map 1.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 14:17 David's victory, brought by the Lord, resolved the issue that precipitated the war. He passed the test brought by the Philistines.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 14:8–17 See application note, 2Sm 5:17–25.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 15:1–24 Due to the prominence of the ark in Israel's worship, 1Ch gives a unique, extended report of its transfer to Jerusalem and the provisions made for it at its new location. See "Authorship and the Author's Interests," p 628.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 15:1 *pitched a tent*. David not only built houses for himself in Jerusalem (cf 14:1–2) but also prepared a place for the ark with a tent (cf Ex 33:7–11).
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 15:2 Only Levites should carry the ark under Mosaic Law (Nu 1:47–54). No longer "afraid of God," as he was at the time of Uzzah's death, David realized that God did not object in principle to the moving of the ark. In its temporary quarters, it brought blessings to the house of Obed-edom (13:13–14). Cf Ex 25:14; Nu 1:50; 4:5–16; Dt 10:8 for the prescribed procedure.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 15:4–10 Listing represents all three branches of Levi: Kohath, Merari, and Gershom. In addition to priestly representatives, of whom only Zadok and Abiathar are mentioned (v 11), more than 800 Levites were to take part in the procession.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 15:11 *David summoned*. He acts as a leader for the priests here and throughout 1Ch, guiding, organizing, and even participating in their services wearing a priestly garment (v 27).
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 15:12 *Consecrate yourselves*. Purification rites were required of those who engage in holy ceremonies (Ex 19:10, 14; 29:1–37; 30:19–21; 40:31–32; Lv 8:5–35; 11:44).
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 15:13 *seek Him*. See p 843. *according to the rule*. In 13:7, they had not considered Moses' words about how to move the ark (cf v 15).
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 15:15 *carried the ark*. To stress that this time the ark was moved "according to the word of the LORD," the carrying is described as already accomplished.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 15:16–24 Processional music, vocal and instrumental, was to be offered under the direction of three Levites: Heman, Asaph, and Ethan, (v 17; see note, 6:31). Assisting them were "their brothers of the second order" (v 18), i.e., in a subsidiary position to the three leaders. Luth: "[David] himself establishes, arranges, and prepares the entire worship service with all diligence. He himself composes psalms as a model of how they should teach and praise God, and he stimulates and appoints many others for the same work of composing psalms. 'No,' dear

David says, 'I will not tolerate liars, hangmen of souls, bloody dogs, and murderers in my kingdom. They shall not mislead my people this way; they shall not murder or persecute the faithful priests and teachers this way. I will not tolerate them. They must go! Then the true teachers will be able to praise my God securely, freely, and joyfully, and to preach to the people in a profitable and salutary manner.' Oh, what a fine and lovely kingdom it was in which the Word of God for once received a pious and faithful king! There everything had to be in very fine fettle, flourishing and prospering amid all wisdom and virtue; for God's Word cannot fail to produce virtue. Therefore it was also during this period that this noble book, the Psalter, was produced, the like of which had not existed or been produced among the people. In fact, there were more people properly trained in the Scriptures at that time than before or after. No school will ever match this high school of David, be it high or low" (AE 13:188–89).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 15:18 *gatekeepers*. See note, 9:17–33. *Obed-edom*. See note, 13:13–14.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 15:19 *cymbals*. Hbr term used only in books written during and after the exile (1Ch; 2Ch; Ezr; Ne).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 15:20 *Alamoth*. Lit, "virgins." See superscription of Ps 46.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 15:21 *the Sheminith*. Lit, "the eighth." See note, Ps 6.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 15:25–29 Ark is brought to Jerusalem. The Levites would continue to care for the ark once it was in its proper place (cf 16:4–6; Nu 10:1–10).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 15:26 *God helped*. God's Word guided them to move the ark properly. *seven bulls and seven rams*. Sacrificed when the procession reached its destination. As it started out, "an ox and a fattened animal" were offered (2Sm 6:13). *seven*. See p 217.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 15:27 *linen ephod*. David is said to have joined with the Levites, even wearing the linen ephod, a priestly vestment (cf 1Sm 2:18). David is a unique king in that he embodies the promise of the future priest and king, the Messiah (see notes, 21:26; Zec 6:12, 13).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 15:29 *Michal … despised him*. Cf 2Sm 6:20–23.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Ch 15** See application note, 2Sm 6:16–23.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Ch 16** David's establishment of the ongoing care of the ark (vv 4–7) presents him as the ideal king in court and temple. The Psalms record the giving of the covenant to Abraham and his faithful keeping of that covenant, resulting in praise from the people of God (vv 8–36). Psalms are a constant in the worshiping community.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 16:1 *tent*. Temporary shelter made of goats' hair (Ex 26:7) that David had pitched to provide a covering for the ark. The tent, or "tabernacle of the Lord," at Gibeon retained its religious significance (2Ch 1:3–6).
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 16:2–3 Eating and drinking as part of worship has deep roots in the OT.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 16:2 *blessed*. See pp 170–71, 842.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 16:5–6 Most of the men chosen to provide the ministry of music "before the ark" (v 4) in its new location had been appointed "to raise sounds of joy" during the procession (15:16).
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 16:1–7 David, the new king, acts as a priest by blessing and ministering to the congregation of Israel. Christ has consecrated you as a priest in His kingdom to bless, thank, and praise God before the nations. He sustains you in this precious service with His very body and blood for the forgiveness of all your sins. • "Save us, O God of our salvation, and gather and deliver us from among the nations, that we may give thanks to Your holy name, and glory in Your praise" (v 35). Amen.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 16:8–22 See notes, Ps 105:1–15.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 16:23–33 See notes, Ps 96:1–13.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 16:34–36 See notes, Ps 106:1, 48.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 16:34 From God's confession of Himself. See notes, Ex 34:6, 7.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 16:36 *people … praised the* LORD. The people participated in the liturgy and likely joined in singing.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 16:8–36 Three psalms are arranged specifically to emphasize Israel's thanks for the Lord's merciful deeds. Recite this psalm to express your thanks to God, including specific examples of His mercy in your life. For His steadfast love, which He

professes to you through His beloved Son, truly endures forever. • "Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting!" (v 36). Amen.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 16:37–43 Unique to 1Ch. David maintained separate places for the tabernacle and the ark. These dual sanctuaries were united when Solomon built the temple (2Ch 1:13; 5:5). Until that time, there were two high priests, one at Jerusalem and one at Gibeon.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 16:37 *each day required*. Services before the ark in Jerusalem followed established procedures, just as the "burnt offerings" at Gibeon were made (v 40).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 16:39 *Zadok*. His associate Abiathar (15:11; 2Sm 8:17) remained in Jerusalem. *high place*. See p 526. *Gibeon*. See color map 1.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 16:41 *Jeduthun*. Also known as Ethan (6:44). His name appears in the prescripts of Ps 39; 62; 77.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 16:43 *bless his household*. See p 842.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 16:37–43 David establishes two sites for worship and provides for proper services at each. The time, place, and character of our services need good planning in view of God's Word (cf 1Co 14:40). God's Word and prayer sanctify such services so that we may receive His gracious blessings in Christ Jesus. • Fill our hearts and mouths, O Lord, with the word of Your steadfast love, which endures forever. Amen.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 17:1–15 Though Nathan the prophet gives David advice to "do all that is in your heart" (vv 1–2), the Lord will reverse this counsel (vv 3–15).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 17:1 *under a tent*. Lit, "under the curtains." David did not want to continue to leave the ark, the symbolic throne of the God of Israel, under a makeshift shelter (16:1) while he occupied regal quarters built of cedar. Cf Hg 1:4 for a similar situation.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 17:3–15 The Lord's Word encompasses several points. David is not the one who will build the temple (v 4). The Lord had never required a "house of cedar" in the past (vv 5–6). David must remember that he is ruler of Israel only because the Lord has established him who once was but a shepherd boy (vv 7–10). The real issue is whether David recognizes that the Lord has built his house (or dynasty; v

10). Finally, David's son will build a house for the Lord (vv 11–15). The removal of the Lord's steadfast love would not happen to Solomon as it happened to Saul (10:13–14).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 17:5 *tent to tent*. The ark, which represented God's presence to the people, had been in the tabernacle, the temple of Dagon, at the threshing floors of Kiriath-jearim and Obed-edom, and finally in Jerusalem, where it dwelt in a tent (16:1–7).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 17:6 *judges*. See pp 380–81. *house of cedar?* What David built for himself.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 17:8 *name*. A reputation.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 17:10 *house*. A dynasty.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 17:12 *I will establish his throne forever*. Ter: "[This] is more suitable to Christ, God's Son, than to Solomon, —a temporal king. … For at the present day nations are invoking Christ which used not to know Him" (*ANF* 3:173).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 17:13 *father … son*. See note, 28:6.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 17:14 *My house … kingdom*. David would participate in God's kingdom, Israel (cf Ex 19:6). *forever*. Anticipation of the eternal kingdom and life that the Lord bestows in the new creation.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 17:1–15 See application note, 2Sm 7:1–17.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 17:16–27 Cf 2Sm 7:18–29.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 17:16 *went in*. David entered the tent of the ark. *sat before the LORD*. Only reference to sitting as a position of prayer found in the OT. See p 1277. *Who am I*. David understands that he has received kingship and an eternal promise not through his own merit but solely because God is gracious. Cf 29:10–19.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 17:17 *shown me future generations*. Described by Nathan's prophecy (vv 11–14), perhaps accompanied by a vision.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 17:20 *all that we have heard*. The reading of the Law and the testimony of God's deeds. Cf Ps 145:10–12.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 17:21 *redeem*. See p 843.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 17:24 David seems to recite a liturgical text that has a creedal character. *LORD of hosts*. See p 1291.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 17:16–27 See application note, 2Sm 7:18–29.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 18:1–13 Wars with Moab (v 2), Zobah-Hamath (vv 3–4), Syria (vv 5–6), and Edom (vv 12–13). The Chronicler follows 2Sm 8:1–14 with several significant changes. Not mentioned is David's cruel treatment of the Moabites (2Sm 8:2), perhaps because such actions would reflect poorly on his noble character. Though not permitted to engage directly in the construction of the temple, David did much to make the deferred project an eventual success. His first contribution to the cause was of a political nature. Through David's conquests, God ensured that neighboring nations that had previously harassed Israel, particularly during the period of the judges, would not interfere during Solomon's building of the temple. David also contributed directly to the building program. He supplied the site for the temple and stockpiled material for it (21:1–22:5).
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 18:1 *Gath*. See color map 1.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 18:2 *servants … tribute*. Not slaves, but a vassal state to Israel.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 18:3 *Zobah-Hamath … Euphrates*. Northernmost extent of David's influence, later controlled by Solomon.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 18:4 *hamstrung*. See note, Jsh 11:6.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 18:5 *Damascus … Zobah*. See map, p 534.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 18:8 *Tibhath … Cun*. Cities near the mountains of Lebanon under the rule of Hadadezer, king of Zobah. *bronze*. Spoil of David's victory, used by Solomon in the temple appointments, once again connecting David to the temple. *sea … pillars … vessels*. See diagram, p 672.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 18:9 *Hamath*. See color map 3.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 18:11 *dedicated to the* LORD. See note, 2Sm 8:11. *silver and gold*. Temple vessels could be made from these precious metals, or they were added to the temple treasuries and used to support the priests and festivals.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 18:12 *Abishai, the son of Zeruiah*. He acted for David, who is said to have done this in 2Sm 8:13. *Valley of Salt*. See map, p 500.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 18:13 *Edom*. See color map 2.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 18:1–13 See application note, 2Sm 8:1–14.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 18:14–17 David's officers and their duties are named: military leader, recorder, priests, secretaries, and chief officials. Cf 2Sm 8:15–18.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 18:14 *David … administered justice*. He served as the high court (cf 1Ki 3:16–28). *equity*. Fairness, equal treatment before the law. See "righteous," p 843.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 18:15 *Joab*. First soldier to attack Jebus. *recorder*. See note, 2Sm 8:16.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 18:16 Two priests are named: Zadok the son of Ahitub and Ahimelech the son of Abiathar. See note, 16:37–43, on dual sanctuaries. *secretary*. See note, 2Sm 8:17.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 18:17 *Cherethites … Pelethites*. See note, 2Sm 15:18. *chief officials*. Cf 2Sm 8:18, where David's sons are referred to as "priests," using the Hbr term for "priest" in an older, broader sense, while 1Ch uses "heads" to describe their role as leaders (e.g., 27:1).
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 18:14–17 See application note, 2Sm 8:15–18.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Ch 19** Shows David as a victorious warrior against the Ammonites and Syrians. His sins and personal defects are omitted in 1Ch, as they do not contribute to the development of the central theme: the temple and its services.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 19:1 *Nahash the king of the Ammonites*. An enemy of Saul (1Sm 11:1). *Ammonites*. Related to Israel through Lot (Gn 19:38; Dt 2:19) and located east of Gad. They had a long tradition of enmity with Israel (Jgs 3:13; 11:4–33), which continued into postexilic days (Ne 2:19; 13:1–9). See notes on the parallel account of the subjugation of the Ammonites in 2Sm 10.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 19:4–5 *shaved … cut*. To humiliate not only the men but also David, who had sent them.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 19:6 *Mesopotamia … Aram-maacah … Zobah*. Nations north/northeast of Israel. See map, pp 60, 534.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 19:7 *chariots*. The difference in figures here and in v 18 from those given in 2Sm 10:6, 18 is likely caused by scribal errors in copying the manuscripts. Details of the enemy force are not found in 2Sm 10. *Medeba*. In the grazing region of Moab.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 19:9 *battle array*. Set up in lines along the battlefront. *the city*. Rabbah. Joab will later lead his army against this city and destroy it (20:1–3).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 19:1–9 The respect David showed the Ammonite ruler is repaid with humiliation. As a servant of Christ's kingdom, you, too, will suffer ridicule and humiliation (Mt 5:10–12). Fight this spiritual warfare with prayer, as is fitting for a soldier of the cross. The Lord, your King, bore your humiliation on the cross and covers your shame with the robe of His righteousness. • Lord, grant me all humility, yet boldness, as Your ambassador. I leave the punishment of my persecutors to the servants of justice You have appointed, trusting in Your judgments. Amen.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 19:10 *Joab*. See note, 18:15.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 19:15 *the city*. Rabbah. See note, v 9.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 19:17 David gets involved personally.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 19:19 *they made peace with David*. Different wording from 2Sm 10:19, indicating that the enemy's war was not against Israel alone but against the Lord's anointed king, and thus against the Lord Himself. Abijah used the same theme in his prebattle speech to the rebellious Northern Kingdom and to Jeroboam, their usurper king (2Ch 13).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 19:10–19 See application note, 2Sm 10.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 20:1 *spring … when kings go out to battle*. April, when the harvest is not taking place and the weather is more conducive to fighting. See calendar, p 262. *besieged Rabbah*. Though David had mercy on the Syrians, he did not let up on the rebellious Ammonites. The conclusion of the Ammonite war (vv 1–3) is recorded also in 2Sm 11:1; 12:26–31.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 20:1–3 David's conquest of the Ammonites. When people persist in rebellion and sin, the Lord would have you persist in applying God's Law. Do not grow faint in discipline. The Lord disciplines you as a result of His surpassing mercy, loving you as a dear father loves his children. • O Father, turn me from my rebellion to acknowledge Your abundant goodness. Amen.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 20:4 *Philistines*. Though driven from Israel's borders in two battles (14:8–17), they still challenged David's supremacy. *Gezer*. See color map 1. *giants*. From Hbr *raphah*, known as people of large stature (see "Rephaim" in Gn 15:20; Dt 2:1–11, 20–21).
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 20:5 *Goliath the Gittite.* The giant David killed with a slingshot (1Sm 17:41–49). *weaver's beam*. See note, 1Sm 17:5–7.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 20:6 *Gath*. See color map 1. *six fingers … toes*. Genetic defect, which may have been related to these Philistines' great size.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 20:4–8 David's army defeats even the most formidable warriors. Fear of such giants had kept Israel from entering the Promised Land, but the Lord strengthened His people for victory. No matter what colossal challenges face you, the Lord will grant you strength and faithful companions with whom to overcome such challenges. • Lord, equip me with all things needful to fulfill Your calling. Grant me the support of dear brothers and sisters who take confidence in Your promises, through Christ, our Lord. Amen.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 21:1–22:1 Though much of the detrimental material about David in 2Sm was not included in 1Ch (see "Omissions," p 629), the account of David's sinful census is included, along with additional information found only in 21:27–22:1. These accounts connect David with the choice of the temple site.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 21:1 *Satan*. Hbr for "adversary." Found also in Jb 1–2 and Zec 3:1 but with the definite article ("the adversary"). Here it is a proper name. Though 2Sm 24:1 implies that it was the Lord who incited David to take the census, the Chronicler chooses to emphasize the instrument used, i.e., Satan. Chem: "How David fell into such calamitous thinking that he was not willing to follow the counsel of those who gave him good advice is given … 'Satan moved him' to do this" (*LTh* 1:175). *number Israel*. David wished to leave a politically strong nation to Solomon (ch 28).
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 21:3–4 Cf 2Sm 24:3–4. Joab, David's faithful general, objected to the census. The census itself was not evil, but the motivation for it was wrong. The number of troops does not matter, as later warfare narratives will demonstrate. Only trust in the Lord

wins battles. David here demonstrates faith and trust in the size of Israel's army.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 21:5 Description of the process of census taking (2Sm 24:5–8) is not recorded, only the total—1,100,000 troops. See note, 2Sm 24:9.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 21:6 Unique to 1Ch. David's army would have been even larger had Joab counted Levi and Benjamin.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 21:7 Famine, enemy destruction, and the sword of the Lord were precisely the punishments decreed for covenant failure in Dt 28:15–68.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 21:9 *seer*. See note, 1Sm 9:9.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 21:10–12 Choices emphasize the seriousness of the offense and challenge David as if to say, "If you're so clever, choose your own punishment."

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 21:12 *three years*. Or, seven years; see ESV note, 2Sm 24:13. *pestilence*. See note, Ps 91:3. *angel of the* LORD. See p 1227.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 21:13 True to his motive for the census, David expresses fear about his earthly enemies. See note, vv 3–4.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 21:15–26 Cf 2Sm 24:16b–25. Selection of the temple site. The angel was stopped over a particular spot, the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite (Araunah in 2Sm 24:16). This spot was then dedicated for the altar of the Lord.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 21:15 *the* LORD *saw*. Text does not specify what the Lord saw. Perhaps the sight of all the people at Jerusalem moved Him to compassion. *relented*. Hbr *nacham*, "regret." In other usage, this term means "to comfort" (cf Is 40:1–2). *threshing floor*. See note, Ru 3:2.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 21:16 *clothed in sackcloth*. See note, Jb 16:15.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 21:17 *I … sinned*. Confession of sins affirms David's sincerity. *hand … against me*. See p 842. *against my father's house*. David's request may have fulfillment in the foolish judgments of his grandson Rehoboam, who caused division in Israel.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 21:1–17 See application note, 2Sm 24.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 21:18 *an altar*. Platform of uncut stones.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 21:20 *saw the angel … hid*. Appearance of an angel is often fearsome. Cf v 30.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 21:23 *sledges*. See notes, Jb 41:30; Am 1:3.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 21:25 In 2Sm 24:24, David buys the threshing floor and oxen for 50 shekels of silver. The 1Ch price may be for the entire temple site, while the 2Sm price is only for the threshing floor section and animals.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 21:26 *presented … offerings*. David's role as the one who sacrifices demonstrates again his priestly king identity (see note, 15:27; cf 16:1–7). *answered him with fire*. Visible demonstration of divine approval is not mentioned in the parallel account (2Sm 24), but it is in other instances, cf Lv 9:24 (Aaron's consecration); 1Ki 18:38 (Elijah on Carmel); 2Ch 7:1 (dedication of the temple). *fire*. Lightning.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 21:27–22:1 Unique to 1Ch. The Chronicler notes that though David was not the builder of the temple, he is, in fact, responsible for everything about the temple, even its site.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 21:29 *Gibeon*. See color map 1.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 21:18–22:1 See application note, 2Sm 24.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 22:2–29:30 David organizes the temple (chs 23–26) and governmental personnel (ch 27). His actions are encased in two speeches regarding his son's succession to the throne and role as builder of the temple: a private speech to Solomon and the leaders of Israel (ch 22), and a public charge to Solomon preceding David's death (chs 28–29). In this way, the legitimacy of both the temple and the Davidic line is maintained.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 22:2–5 David is the one who gathered the laborers and materials that would be used in building the temple (cf vv 14–16). Stone, iron, bronze, and cedar were gathered in immense quantities. Some of the bronze had been taken as war booty in David's victory over Zobah (cf 18:7–8).
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 22:2 *resident aliens*. For David's stockpiling program, he recruited non-Israelites, who were forced to work

in labor gangs (2Ch 8:7–8). See p 101.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 22:5 *young and inexperienced*. Solomon does not let youth or naivete keep him from being a model king. In 2Ch 13:7, Rehoboam's youth and inexperience split the kingdom. *must be exceedingly magnificent*. David wanted God's house to attract the interest of the nations.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 22:2–5 Though the Lord does not let David build the temple, He allows him to make preparations so that Solomon can accomplish the goal. The heavenly Father calls on earthly fathers to care for and support their children. This is especially important in matters of faith (cf Dt 6:7–9), of which the building of the temple is an excellent example. As the Lord calls fathers to this work, He strengthens and sustains them through the work of His Son and His Spirit, working and building together as a family. • Lord, grant peaceful labor and cooperation within our families so that we may accomplish Your purposes. Amen.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 22:6–16 David's private charge to Solomon.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 22:6 *charged him*. David matched the liberality of his financial contributions to the temple (21:1–22:5) with the sincerity of moral support, even though he was not permitted to undertake the project. He laid the unfinished business on Solomon's heart (vv 6–16) and urged "all the leaders of Israel to help Solomon his son" (v 17).
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 22:8 David was a bloodied warrior, which explains the Lord's word through Nathan the prophet (17:1–15). Solomon also states David was too preoccupied with war to build the temple (1Ki 5:3). Although the Lord ordered the conquest, had granted David numerous victories in war, and is even described as a warrior and avenger in Scripture, here He desires a man of peace to build His temple on earth. When considering the Lord's character and actions, we must always keep in mind His two ways with humankind: the Law (by which He punishes and condemns) and the Gospel (by which He forgives and comforts). The Lord shows that peace and comfort are His proper work. See note, Is 28:21. *shed so much blood*. Jerome: "The reference is not, as some think, to his wars, but to the murder [of Uriah]" (*NPNF* 2 6:363).
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 22:9 *man of rest*. Or, "a calm man." The peace necessary for building the temple resulted from David's victories

over the neighboring peoples (chs 18–20). *Solomon*. Hbr *shelomoh*, similar to *shalom*, "peace." Solomon will be a man of peace who, unlike David, will not engage in warfare. Unlike David, he will exact no vengeance (cf 1Ki 2:5–9).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 22:10 *his father*. See note, 28:6. *establish … forever*. Chem: "To David was given a particularly clear repetition of the promise [regarding Christ]" (*LTh* 2:458).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 22:13 *Fear not; do not be dismayed*. See note, 28:20.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 22:14 *100,000 talents of gold*. At the height of his glory, Solomon had an annual income of 666 talents of gold. David may be speaking here in figures that are meant to indicate large sums rather than totals based on actual calculations.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 22:17–18 David reminds the Israelite leaders that it is through the Lord that the land has been subdued.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 22:19 *seek*. See p 843. *holy vessels*. Utensils and furnishings dedicated for use in the temple. See note, 1Ki 7:48.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 22:6–19 David tells Solomon to build the temple, affirming that the Lord will be with him in this task. We also commend our children to the Lord's care, praying for them daily and wisely entrusting them with service to the Lord, their family, and their nation. Our success and our future is with the Lord. He entrusted the work of our salvation to His beloved Son, who in turn commended the temple of His body and His spirit into the Father's hands (Lk 23:46), that we might be cleansed by His blood and reign with Him in the resurrection. • O Jesus, grant such trust and sharing in our families! Be with us, and keep us by Your grace. Amen.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Chs 23–26** Having made Solomon his co-regent, David convened a national assembly at which he organized the temple officiants to assure orderly and regular worship services. The descendants of Levi who were not of the priestly line of Aaron were divided into four groups of varying size, each to function in a different capacity (23:2–6).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 23:1 *David was old*. At the end of his life, David had done everything to advance the building of the temple, short of its actual construction. He supported the project financially (21:1–

22:5) and morally (22:6–19). *made Solomon his son king*. All the assembly will confirm him as king in 29:22b.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 23:2–32 Unique to 1Ch, with three major sections: vv 2–5, categories of positions and numbers for each; vv 6–27, divisions according to the sons of Levi; and vv 28–32, a catalog of Levitical duties. Solomon would implement the duties that David had established. See the listing of postexilic Levitical duties in 9:10–33. See also Levi's genealogy, ch 6.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 23:3 *thirty years old and upward*. Conforms to the standard of the initial Mosaic census (Nu 4:1–3), but which Moses later lowered to age 25 (Nu 8:23–24). David lowers the age even further, to 20 years old (1Ch 23:24–27). *the total*. When "David assembled all Israel … to bring up the ark," the number of participating Levites was 862 (15:1–10; cf Nu 3:39).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 23:6 *Gershon, Kohath, and Merari*. See genealogy, 6:16–20. The Levites receive special attention here because of their integral role at the temple alongside the priests. Ezra gave the Levites special attention because they were so few in number among those who returned from the exile. See note, Ezr 2:40.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 23:7–23 Members of the three branches of Levi's descendants (6:1) received assignments: Gershon (vv 7–11), Kohath (vv 12–20), Merari (vv 21–23). Their list is supplemented in 24:20–31.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 23:24 *twenty years*. Levites began to minister at age 30 (v 3; see note, Nu 4:3). "By the last words of David" (v 27), they were to be registered for service at age 20.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 23:27 *last words*. Statement of David's will.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 23:28 *cleansing*. See p 6.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 23:30 *morning … evening*. Under Mosaic Law, the sons of Aaron offered daily sacrifices both in the morning and at twilight (Ex 29:38–41; Nu 28:3–8). David modeled the order of the temple upon the Law given through Moses.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 23:32 Though both the priests and the serving Levites were descendants of Levi and thus brothers, one familial grouping served as priests, and the others served as assistants to the priests. In the household of faith, God has established differing roles according to

His design, yet all are one as sons and daughters of God. Service in one role or another does not and cannot imply superiority or inferiority.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Ch 23** David organizes the Levites for service at Jerusalem because they have earlier been spread throughout the tribes. Throughout Scripture, we see the importance of organized worship services, which God still expects of us today. Although congregations are imperfect because they are composed of sinners, the Lord has still entrusted to them His precious Word and Sacraments for the sake of our forgiveness through the Gospel. Treasure your congregation as the site from which the Lord has promised to bless you. • O Lord, bless my congregation with unity and peace, so that the Gospel may be taught in its purity and the Sacraments administered according to Christ's institution. Amen.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 24:1–19 David organizes the priests before continuing with the ordinances for the other three groups of Levites (described in chs 25–26). David divided the descendants of Aaron's sons Eleazar and Ithamar into 24 courses, or work shifts, in order to provide for uninterrupted performance of the prescribed rituals. Each group would be on duty for about two weeks each year.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 24:1–5 Lists Aaron's sons and explains why the priestly divisions are based on only Eleazar and Ithamar. Familiarity with the unseemly history of the other sons, Nadab and Abihu, and their early death (Lv 10:1–3) is assumed. Of the 24 divisions established, 8 were from the smaller family of Ithamar and 16 from the large clan of Eleazar. This established the two-week-long annual periods of service for each division.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 24:3 *Zadok … Ahimelech*. See notes, 16:39; 18:16.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 24:5 *lot*. See note, Jsh 14:2. *sacred officers*. High priest and leading priestly families (cf "officers" and "princes" in 2Ch 36:14; Is 43:28). *officers of God*. Perhaps synonym or term specific to high priests. See also p 228.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 24:6–18 Lots having been drawn (v 5), the 24 divisions of priests are named and numbered.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 24:6 *scribe … recorded*. The Chronicler reveals one of his sources.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 24:10 *Abijah*. From this division would come the priest Zechariah, father of John the Baptist (Lk 1:5).
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 24:19 The families served in rotation. A vital fact is asserted here: these divisions ministered according to the pattern Aaron established, as the Lord had commanded him. The ministry of the OT, like that of the NT, had its origins not in human decision or organization skill but in divine decree. Temple personnel held offices from God.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 24:20–31 List of additional Levites, an extension or supplement of those listed in 23:6–24. Through the casting of lots, each was placed into the various offices, just as the Aaronites had been (v 5) and the musicians (25:1–8) and gatekeepers (26:12–13) would be.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 24:20 *the rest*. Entries not fully included in the previous catalog (23:7–23). Some names are repeated from there in altered form.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 24:31 *cast lots*. See note, Jsh 14:2.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Ch 24** David organizes the Levites according to God's Law. Though the Lord may specially and directly call an individual, in most cases, He establishes the offices of His kingdom through the commands and promises of the Word, as affirmed by the congregations. Today, regard faithful pastors with the full respect due their calling, and also show respect to those who assist and serve with them. God has established the ministry for your faithful instruction and blessing. • Dear Jesus, call faithful servants into the work of Your Church that I may receive the blessings You have ordained in the communion of saints. Amen.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Ch 25** David organizes the musicians of the temple from among the Levitical families of Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun. Cf 6:31–48; 15:16–24; 16:4–7, 37–42; 23:5. The use of music in the temple was vital for the praise and prayer of God's people. After supplying the priests with assistants (23:7–32; 24:20–31), David ordered staffs of musicians and singers to be regularly on hand for service in the temple. These were set apart into 24 choruses or ensembles. Each of these was made up of 12 individuals, for a total of 288 persons (vv 1–8). Every unit, constituted by lot, had members from the three musical families. The order in which they were chosen determined also the sequence in which they were to perform their duty in the temple (vv 9–31). Bach: "This

chapter is the true foundation of all God-pleasing church music" (*JSBS*, p 93).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 25:1 *chiefs of the service*. David consulted with the commanders of the army before setting apart the musicians. The use of musicians in warfare plays a major role not only in Israel (cf Jgs 7:19–25; 2Ch 20:20–22) but also in the broader ancient Near East. *set apart*. See p 7. *prophesied*. Singing "thanksgiving and praise to the LORD" with musical accompaniment had much in common with proclamation of the prophetic word (v 3). Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada the priest, prophesied (2Ch 24:20); the Levite Jahaziel functioned as a battle prophet (2Ch 20:14–17); and Heman (v 5), Asaph (2Ch 29:30), and Jeduthun (2Ch 35:15) are referred to as seers. In 1Ch, it is David who establishes temple musicians with duties involving prophecy. The institution of prophecy is thus closely connected not only with David but also with the the faithful practice of the divinely established worship practices. *lyres … harps … cymbals*. See p 993.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 25:2 *prophesied under the direction of the king*. David's concern for music, while certainly connected to his own interests and role as a musician, is reflective of the intimate connection not only between kingship and priesthood but also the prophetic office. The OT offices of prophet, priest, and king shaped the threefold office of David's Seed, Jesus the Messiah.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 25:4 *Hananiah … Mahazioth*. When rearranged and slightly altered in form, these nine names constitute the words of a short hymn. Hananiah, e.g., means "Lord, have mercy." The sons of Heman are also in the longer list in vv 9–31.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 25:5 *seer*. Synonym for "prophet."

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 25:8 *teacher and pupil*. Implies a formal education or apprenticeship in music. See note, Pr 1:8.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 25:9–31 The Chronicler records the divisions of the Levitical musicians in a manner parallel to the divisions of priests in 24:1–18.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 25:9 *first lot*. Cf 24:7, 31; see note, Jsh 14:2.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Ch 25** David organizes the musicians of the temple as prophets. The Lord calls church musicians to know and handle His Word rightly for the benefit of the hearers. The Lord

speaks through them for our admonition and encouragement. How great a blessing is God's life-giving Word in melody and chant! • Bless our ears, O Lord, that our eyes may see, that our mouths may say, and that our hands may do what is worthy of Your Gospel. Amen.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 26:1–19 Unique to 1Ch. Provides a genealogical list (vv 1–11) and a listing of the duties of the gatekeepers (vv 12–19).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 26:1 *gatekeepers*. A total of 93 men, recruited from two branches of the Levitical families (vv 1–11; cf 16:38, where as many as 68 guards/watchmen were put on duty after the transfer of the ark to Jerusalem). *Kore … Asaph*. On the basis of 6:23 and 9:19, the name Asaph, son of Kore, is a variant of the name Ebiasaph and distinguished from Asaph the musician.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 26:4 *Obed-edom*. Caretaker of the ark of the covenant (13:13–14).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 26:5 *blessed*. See p 842.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 26:10 *made him chief*. Lit, "made him head." The firstborn typically, though not necessarily, became head of the family. See p 228.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 26:12–13 Like the priests (24:1–18) and the musicians (25:9–31), the gatekeepers are chosen by lots. See note, Jsh 14:2.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 26:12 *divisions*. Based on the gates and posts to which each of the working units was assigned (east, north, the gatehouse, west [gate of Shallecheth], and the colonnade; vv 12–19).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 26:16 *Shallecheth*. Unknown other than here. May refer to Hbr word for "chamber room."

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 26:1–19 David provides for the protection of the sanctuary and for those who go in and out of its gates. Today, congregations appoint ushers for greeting and guiding people at churches. This is important service, ensuring good order at worship and guiding people into the hearing of God's life-giving Word. • O Lord, provide all manner of faithful servants for the work of Your kingdom. Amen.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 26:20–28 Postexilic account (9:26–28) had already noted the continuing use of Levites in custody of the temple treasury. Treasure included material David dedicated through the plunder of

war (cf 18:7; 20:1–3) as well as the material Samuel, Saul, Abner, and Joab gathered. The temple treasury likely also served as an archive (cf 2Ki 22:8–10; 1Macc 14:48–49), though royal archives were also kept in later years (cf Jer 36:12, 20). The king of Israel and other citizens might have copies of books of Scripture (Dt 17:18; 1Macc 1:54–57). The Copper Scroll from Qumran (3Q15) lists manuscripts along with other treasures that the Qumran community hid during a time of persecution, which illustrates how precious manuscripts were.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 26:20 *treasuries*. Cf Ex 30:11–16; Lv 27; Nu 18:15–16; 2Ki 12:4, 18 for more about the contributions that flowed into these treasuries.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 26:24 Moses' family received the powerful responsibility of handling the vast temple finances.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 26:26 *thousands … hundreds*. See p 217.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 26:29–32 Other Levitical officers. 6,000 Levites were deployed to serve as "officers and judges" throughout Israel. Jehoshaphat undertook a similar procedure in his judicial reforms when he sent, among others, priests and Levites to serve as judges (2Ch 19:4–11). See note about the Levites' burden as judges, Jsh 20:7–8.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 26:28 *seer*. See note, 1Sm 9:9.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 26:29 *external duties*. While not directly connected with the temple, these were necessary for its internal order and stability.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 26:30 *Hebronites*. See color map 3.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 26:31 *Gilead*. See color map 2.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 26:20–32 David entrusted many aspects of his rule to the Levites, who could teach and apply the Word in their services. God's Word applies to every aspect of life, every day of the week (see pp 775–78). No matter what your calling in life is, the Lord sanctifies that calling by His Word and prayer, making your work a sacred service. As a carpenter serving His earthly father, Joseph, Jesus sanctified the work of human hands. His labor on the cross sanctifies us wholly. • Merciful Jesus, grant me all diligence in my calling, no matter where You send me. Amen.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Ch 27** David left Solomon a kingdom with other administrative features designed to let building and

maintenance operations proceed smoothly: (1) he created a well-organized army, capable of warding off invasions from neighboring enemies (chs 18–20), should they renew their attacks (27:1–15); (2) he appointed local government officials, responsible to the crown (vv 16–24); (3) he made 12 stewards responsible for supervising the income from royal estates and livestock (vv 25–31); and (4) he created a small advisory council to assist the king in directing the administrative program (vv 32–34).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 27:1–15 There are 288,000 troops counted in this muster. They served one month per year per division of 24,000 men. The first commanders (Jashobeam, Dodai, Benaiah) were listed as David's mighty men in 11:10–25, and the rest were among the mighty men in 11:26–47; 2Sm 23:8–39.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 27:1 *heads of fathers' houses*. See note, Jsh 14:1. *month after month*. David's military system provided for a monthly rotation of duty for 12 divisions. Each of the 24 staffs of commanders of thousands and hundreds came on duty and went off duty month after month throughout the year; i.e., they reported for a month's tour of active duty.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 27:7 Asahel's successor is mentioned because Abner had slain Asahel during David's early reign in Hebron (2Sm 2:18–23).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 27:1–15 David establishes a comprehensive military program, by which the king could call up troops for service. Soldiers play an important role in any organized society, a role blessed by God when service is carried out according to His Word. God Himself has organized the angels as the armies of heaven to fight on your behalf and to deliver you according to the purposes of His saving mercy in Jesus. • Send forth Your hosts, O Lord, to defend Your Holy Church and so aid the proclamation of the Gospel. Amen.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 27:16–24 Chiefs of the 12 tribes of Israel. In the tribe of Levi, there was a special officer for the descendants of Aaron (v 17). Manasseh, divided by the Jordan, had an officer on the west and on the east sides of the river (vv 20–21). Asher and Gad are replaced here by the half-tribes of Manasseh and Ephraim (cf 2:1–2 and note).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 27:17 *Aaron*. See note, vv 16–24.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 27:22 *leaders*. Not the tribal elders, but military leaders.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 27:23–24 Reference to David's census (ch 21).
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 27:23 *twenty years*. Age when Israelite young men were considered "able to go to war" (Nu 1:3). *Lord had promised.* Cf Gn 12:2; 15:5; 22:17.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 27:24 *wrath came upon Israel*. Reference to the uncompleted census with which "God was displeased" (21:6–7).
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 27:25–34 Overseers of various kinds of property (vv 25–31) and David's personal advisers (vv 32–34).
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 27:25 *treasuries*. Distinct from "the treasuries of the house of God" (26:20), these were the source of David's personal wealth, which was mainly plunder taken from defeated enemies (1Sm 30:20: 2Sm 8:6–8).
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 27:28 *sycamore trees*. Trees bearing a figlike fruit, which the prophet Amos cultivated (Am 7:14).
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 27:29 *Sharon*. See color map 2.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 27:32–34 *counselor*. List includes men such as Ahithophel and Hushai, who were members of David's inner circle of advisers already at the time of Absalom's rebellion (2Sm 17). Their names do not occur in a similar catalog of royal dignitaries preserved in 18:14–17 and 2Sm 20:23–26. See pp 775–78.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 27:32 *attended the king's sons*. Provided for their care and perhaps their education.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 27:33 *friend*. See note, 1Ki 4:5.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 27:16–34 David welcomes the service of tribal leaders and appoints the treasurers, farmers, herders, counselors, and military commanders of his reign. He wisely adapts the older tribal system for the purposes of forming a united nation under the king's central authority. As the Lord granted David wisdom to pursue his calling, He will grant you wisdom for your calling. Like David, listen to the wisdom of your family and counselors, but consider all things in view of God's Word. Through the Word, the Lord saves you from sin and from foolish error in your service. • O Lord, my calling is too great for me to manage by my own reason and strength. Grant me Your wisdom and counsel. Amen.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Chs 28–29** David's final speech, when Solomon is publicly anointed as king (29:22–25). With the temple construction secure and the transfer of power complete, David dies (29:26–30).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 28:1 *assembled … the officials*. The Chronicler inserted a digest of chs 23–27 to explain who these officials were, what their duties were, and how they were organized into working units. *thousands … hundreds*. See p 217.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 28:2–8 David's address to the officials of Israel is a public confirmation of his private words to Solomon in ch 22. David desired to build the temple but was forbidden to do so because he was a warrior (vv 2–3; cf 22:7–8). From Judah, God chose David; from David, God has chosen Solomon (vv 4–7; cf 17:7–15; 22:9–10).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 28:6 *his father*. The title "father" is rare for God in the OT. See note, Mt 6:9.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 28:7 *kingdom forever*. See note, 2Sm 7:13.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 28:1–8 David announces that the Lord chose Solomon as the future king. When the Lord chooses and calls someone, He likewise equips them for that calling. You, too, are called, chosen, and equipped by God for service in His kingdom. Honor His calling with fruitful works of service. He called and chose you in the merciful, loving service of Jesus, who paid for your sins and declared you a child of the eternal Father through Baptism in His name. • Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 28:9–10 David's words to Solomon (part 1). Solomon is now publicly charged with the duty to serve the Lord (cf 22:11–13).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 28:9 *know*. See p 7. *seek*. See p 843. *forsake.* Key concept in theological vocabulary of 1 and 2Ch, the term is used elsewhere for irregular worship (2Ch 12:5; 13:10–11; 21:10–11; 28:6; 29:6) or the worship of foreign gods (2Ch 7:19, 22; 24:18; 34:25).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 28:11–19 Divinely inspired temple plans. David states that he received these "in writing," thereby equating the origin of these plans with the Mosaic Law that God had written (Ex 34:1). Because David had required both the assembly and Solomon to pledge to follow every command of God (vv 8–9), these temple plans were commands from God Himself. For the description of the temple as Solomon built and furnished it, see notes, 1Ki 6–7.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 28:12 *had in mind*. Refers to all that the Spirit had given David.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 28:15 *each lampstand*. There were 10 such lampstands (1Ki 7:49).
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 28:18 *golden chariot of the cherubim*. Lit, "golden the chariot, the cherubim." The second noun (cherubim) explains that God is pictured as moving about on these angels as on a chariot (see note, Ps 18:10). See p 495.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 28:19 *All this*. The works of this pattern. *clear to me*. Ironically, the pronoun ("me") is unclear, perhaps due to scribal omission of a letter, but it seems to refer to Solomon.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 28:20–21 David's words to Solomon (part 2). David's last recorded words to his son and heir.
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 28:20 *Be strong*. After handing the plan to Solomon, David encouraged him to execute it. Cf Jsh 1:6. *Do not be afraid*. Common in the OT, esp in the patriarchal days: Gn 15:1 (Abram); 21:17 (Hagar); 26:24 (Isaac); 46:3 (Jacob). David also uses this phrase with Solomon in 22:13. It also appears in later warfare accounts (2Ch 20:15–17; 32:7).
1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 28:21 Bach: "Splendid proof that, besides other arrangements of the service of worship, music too was instituted by the Spirit of God through David" (*JSBS*, p 95). Calov: "Now it is clear from this divine example and all the prophetic institutions of David that he did nothing on his own initiative in connection with the building of the temple and arranging the service but that he in all things acted according to the plan which the Lord through His Spirit communicated to him and according to those institutions and offices, exactly as the Lord God had instructed his heart. For we serve God in vain when we insist on our will and on services we dream up ourselves, Matt. 15:9. God prescribes, outlines, encircles, and shows us all things and therefore reveals His will,

how He wishes to be honored by us. Therefore in matters of religion we should not plan and do anything without His revealed Word. Use this as a warning against human deception, self-chosen worship, and man-made rules. Similarly, it is contrary to the arrogance and haughtiness of the papists who raise themselves above Scripture" (*JSBS*, p 95).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 28:9–21 David receives the plans for the temple from God and carefully passes them on to Solomon, his heir. God still calls parents to hear Him through Holy Scripture and to pass these words and duties along to their heirs. How rich is our inheritance through the Word, which consecrates us as co-heirs with Christ and as the temple of the living God. • Hallowed Father, make me holy by the blood of Your Son, that I may inherit the riches of Your grace and the gift of Your Spirit. Amen.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:1–20 David's words before the assembly. These words conclude the final speech of David begun in 28:1 (see note, chs 28–29). Three parts comprise this section: David's words to the assembly (vv 1–5); the assembly's response (vv 6–9); David's prayer before the assembly (vv 10–20).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:1–5 David returns to the themes of his private speech to Solomon in ch 22. In conclusion, he appeals for contributions, perhaps in order that the temple not be seen as David's personal monument, but as the temple of all Israel.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:1 *palace*. The temple.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:2–5 Still in the presence of "all the assembly," David gave additional financial aid to the building of the temple. He supplemented the contributions from other sources (22:3–5) with a huge personal gift and encouraged others to do likewise.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:4 *Ophir*. Location unknown.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:6–9 Gifts of the assembly. In response to David's speech, people give generously. Gifts of gold equaled c 188 tons; silver, c 375 tons; bronze, c 675 tons; and iron, c 3,750 tons.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:6 *freewill offerings*. See note, Ex 35:29.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:7 *darics*. Persian gold coins. Part of the sum the leaders supplied is computed in coinage that was current when Chronicles was composed.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:9 Note the joy of the people at giving willingly and freely. Stewardship of God's gifts is not a matter of

coercion, but rather of a willing spirit in response to the Lord's goodness.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:1–9 David leads Israel in giving by setting an example of generosity for the Lord's work. Everything you have comes from God's bountiful goodness; therefore, give generously to the work of His Church and set a good example for those under your care. The Lord gives Himself to you with a whole heart and would not withhold His only-begotten Son. • Bless me, O Lord, that I may bless and freely give all honor to Your saving name. Amen.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:10–20 David's prayer before the assembly. Note the consistent use of the first-person plural (we, us, our). This is not a private prayer from David, but the prayer of the assembled community. Themes of David's other prayers come forward in these final words of the anointed king (cf 16:7–36; 17:16–27). David praises God's "glorious name" (vv 10–13) in words of adoration resembling the closing doxology of the prayer we call the "Our Father." At the close of a remarkable life, David gives all the glory to the Lord of Israel alone and commits his people to the Lord's care.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:10 *blessed the* LORD. See p 842. Wholehearted response of the assembly to David's proposals moved him to turn to God in prayer (vv 10–19), then to ask those present to join him in grateful worship (vv 20–21a). *Israel our father, forever and ever.* Or, "Israel, our Father forever and ever," referring to God as Father.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:14 A foundational principle of God's generosity, which inspires our generosity and our trust that the Lord will continue to supply our needs even as we give up what we have.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:15 *strangers … sojourners*. Harking back to the tents of the patriarchs. *no abiding*. Humanly speaking, there is no escaping death.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:17 *test*. See note, Gn 22:1. *uprightness*. See note, Jb 1:1.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:18 *keep forever*. David's plea would be answered by the Lord's patience with Israel and Judah, but the everlasting kingdom could be established only through Christ.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:19 *a whole heart*. Wordplay; "whole" (Hbr *shalem*) sounds like "Solomon." Both stem from the term for "peace" or "completeness." *commandments … testimonies … statutes*. See p 971. *palace*. The temple.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:20 *Bless the Lord your God*. See p 842. *bowed their heads*. See p 1276.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:22–25 Coronation of Solomon. In 23:1, David declared Solomon king, but now Solomon becomes king through the acclamation of all Israel (cf 11:1–3, David's coronation). There is a seamless transition between David and Solomon. In this account, Solomon ascends to the throne without the resistance he faced in the account of his accession in 1Ki 1–2. He continues and raises to new heights the golden age begun through his father. In very real ways, the son is to be understood as being greater than the father. In other words, the second (i.e., Solomon) fulfills all that was present though hidden in the first (i.e., David). All future kings until the exile would be compared to the standards of David and Solomon. All would fall short. Certain kings brought periods of faithfulness and prosperity. Others brought a symbolic unity of all Israel through their reforms, though the kingdom was never politically reunited after Rehoboam's reign. Even the best kings of Judah, however, exhibited personal failures. Further, they engaged in warfare like David, albeit victorious warfare. None exhibited the peaceful prosperity achieved by Solomon.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:21–22 Coronation feast. See note, 12:38–40. Close connection between king and temple is again brought forward through the joint anointing of Solomon as king and Zadok as high priest. The great and final son of David (Jesus Christ) is both King and High Priest. His coronation on the Last Day will be a celebration, not only of all Israel, but of all creation.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:22 *before the Lord*. See "presence," p 843. *the second time*. Solomon's ultimate coronation (vv 22b–24) is recorded without relating the struggle for the throne (1Ki 1–2).

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:10–25 David, the king, acts like a priest by leading the assembly of Israel's leaders in prayer. God calls all leaders to be examples in faith for those they lead. As you conclude the Lord's Prayer each day (cf vv 10–11), keep David's example in mind and humble yourself before the King of heaven. He reigns on your behalf to bless and strengthen you by the grace of His Son, Jesus. • O Jesus, beloved Son, wiser than Solomon, make me a faithful leader and example to all who serve in Your eternal kingdom. Amen.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:26–28 David's long life, riches, and honor are all marks of divine favor, as David often acknowledged.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:27 *Hebron*. See color map 1.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:29 *Chronicles of Samuel … of Nathan … of Gad*. The Chronicler is careful to assert that his accounts are not his creative fiction but come from historical annals. Though the Chronicler records only selections about David's life, he provides his sources by which further details may be known. He does not cover up the weaknesses in David's history, but composes theological descriptions focused on the Lord's blessings to and through David. The description of sources here could indicate that Nathan and Gad completed the Books of Samuel. See pp 431–32.

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:26–30 See application note, 1Ki 2:10–12.

2 Chronicles

2 Chronicles 1 | 2 Chronicles 2 | 2 Chronicles 3 | 2 Chronicles 4 | 2 Chronicles 5 | 2 Chronicles 6 | 2 Chronicles 7 | 2 Chronicles 8 | 2 Chronicles 9 | 2 Chronicles 10 | 2 Chronicles 11 | 2 Chronicles 12 | 2 Chronicles 13 | 2 Chronicles 14 | 2 Chronicles 15 | 2 Chronicles 16 | 2 Chronicles 17 | 2 Chronicles 18 | 2 Chronicles 19 | 2 Chronicles 20 | 2 Chronicles 21 | 2 Chronicles 22 | 2 Chronicles 23 | 2 Chronicles 24 | 2 Chronicles 25 | 2 Chronicles 26 | 2 Chronicles 27 | 2 Chronicles 28 | 2 Chronicles 29 | 2 Chronicles 30 | 2 Chronicles 31 | 2 Chronicles 32 | 2 Chronicles 33 | 2 Chronicles 34 | 2 Chronicles 35 | 2 Chronicles 36

- 2 Chronicles
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

Solomon Worships at Gibeon

1 [1]‡‡†Solomon the son of David established himself in his kingdom,
and the Lord his God was with him and made him exceedingly great.
[2]†Solomon spoke to all Israel, to the commanders of thousands and of
hundreds, to the judges, and to all the leaders in all Israel, the heads of
fathers' houses. [3]†And Solomon, and all the assembly with him, went to the
high place that was at Gibeon, for the tent of meeting of God, which Moses
the servant of the Lord had made in the wilderness, was there. [4](But David
had brought up the ark of God from Kiriath-jearim to the place that David
had prepared for it, for he had pitched a tent for it in Jerusalem.)
[5]†Moreover, the bronze altar that Bezalel the son of Uri, son of Hur, had
made, was there before the tabernacle of the Lord. And Solomon and the
assembly sought it[1] out. [6]†And Solomon went up there to the bronze altar
before the Lord, which was at the tent of meeting, and offered a thousand
burnt offerings on it.

Solomon Prays for Wisdom

7 ‡‡‡In that night God appeared to Solomon, and said to him, “Ask what I
shall give you.” 8 †And Solomon said to God, “You have shown great and
steadfast love to David my father, and have made me king in his place. 9 †O
Lord God, let your word to David my father be now fulfilled, for you have
made me king over a people as numerous as the dust of the earth. 10 †Give
me now wisdom and knowledge to go out and come in before this people,
for who can govern this people of yours, which is so great?” 11 ‡ God
answered Solomon, “Because this was in your heart, and you have not
asked possessions, wealth, honor, or the life of those who hate you, and
have not even asked long life, but have asked wisdom and knowledge for
yourself that you may govern my people over whom I have made you king,
12 wisdom and knowledge are granted to you. I will also give you riches,
possessions, and honor, such as none of the kings had who were before you,
and none after you shall have the like.” 13 †So Solomon came from[1] the
high place at Gibeon, from before the tent of meeting, to Jerusalem. And he
reigned over Israel.

Solomon Given Wealth

14 ‡ ‡ Solomon gathered together chariots and horsemen. He had 1,400
chariots and 12,000 horsemen, whom he stationed in the chariot cities and
with the king in Jerusalem. 15 And the king made silver and gold as common
in Jerusalem as stone, and he made cedar as plentiful as the sycamore of the
Shephelah. 16 And Solomon's import of horses was from Egypt and Kue, and
the king's traders would buy them from Kue for a price. 17 They imported a
chariot from Egypt for 600 shekels[2] of silver, and a horse for 150.
Likewise through them these were exported to all the kings of the Hittites
and the kings of Syria.

Preparing to Build the Temple

2 [1]† [3] Now Solomon purposed to build a temple for the name of the Lord, and a royal palace for himself. [2]† [4] And Solomon assigned 70,000 men to bear burdens and 80,000 to quarry in the hill country, and 3,600 to oversee them. [3]‡ † And Solomon sent word to Hiram the king of Tyre: "As you dealt with David my father and sent him cedar to build himself a house to dwell in, so deal with me. [4]† Behold, I am about to build a house for the name of the Lord my God and dedicate it to him for the burning of incense of sweet spices before him, and for the regular arrangement of the showbread, and for burnt offerings morning and evening, on the Sabbaths and the new moons and the appointed feasts of the Lord our God, as ordained forever for Israel. [5]The house that I am to build will be great, for our God is greater than all gods. [6]But who is able to build him a house, since heaven, even highest heaven, cannot contain him? Who am I to build a house for him, except as a place to make offerings before him? [7]So now send me a man skilled to work in gold, silver, bronze, and iron, and in purple, crimson, and blue fabrics, trained also in engraving, to be with the skilled workers who are with me in Judah and Jerusalem, whom David my father provided. [8]† Send me also cedar, cypress, and algum timber from Lebanon, for I know that your servants know how to cut timber in Lebanon. And my servants will be with your servants, [9]to prepare timber for me in abundance, for the house I am to build will be great and wonderful. [10]I will give for your servants, the woodsmen who cut timber, 20,000 cors[5] of crushed wheat, 20,000 cors of barley, 20,000 baths[6] of wine, and 20,000 baths of oil."

[11]‡ ‡ Then Hiram the king of Tyre answered in a letter that he sent to Solomon, "Because the Lord loves his people, he has made you king over them." [12]Hiram also said, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who made heaven and earth, who has given King David a wise son, who has discretion and understanding, who will build a temple for the Lord and a royal palace for himself.

[13]† “Now I have sent a skilled man, who has understanding, Huram-abi,
[14]† the son of a woman of the daughters of Dan, and his father was a man of
Tyre. He is trained to work in gold, silver, bronze, iron, stone, and wood,
and in purple, blue, and crimson fabrics and fine linen, and to do all sorts of
engraving and execute any design that may be assigned him, with your
craftsmen, the craftsmen of my lord, David your father. [15]Now therefore the
wheat and barley, oil and wine, of which my lord has spoken, let him send
to his servants. [16]And we will cut whatever timber you need from Lebanon
and bring it to you in rafts by sea to Joppa, so that you may take it up to
Jerusalem.”

[17]†† Then Solomon counted all the resident aliens who were in the land of
Israel, after the census of them that David his father had taken, and there
were found 153,600. [18]Seventy thousand of them he assigned to bear
burdens, 80,000 to quarry in the hill country, and 3,600 as overseers to
make the people work.

Solomon Builds the Temple

3 [1] ‡ ‡ † Then Solomon began to build the house of the Lord in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where the Lord [1] had appeared to David his father, at the place that David had appointed, on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite. [2] † He began to build in the second month of the fourth year of his reign. [3] † These are Solomon's measurements[2] for building the house of God: the length, in cubits[3] of the old standard, was sixty cubits, and the breadth twenty cubits. [4] † The vestibule in front of the nave of the house was twenty cubits long, equal to the width of the house,[4] and its height was 120 cubits. He overlaid it on the inside with pure gold. [5] ‡ † The nave he lined with cypress and covered it with fine gold and made palms and chains on it. [6] † He adorned the house with settings of precious stones. The gold was gold of Parvaim. [7] † So he lined the house with gold—its beams, its thresholds, its walls, and its doors—and he carved cherubim on the walls.

[8] And he made the Most Holy Place. Its length, corresponding to the breadth of the house, was twenty cubits, and its breadth was twenty cubits. He overlaid it with 600 talents[5] of fine gold. [9] † The weight of gold for the nails was fifty shekels.[6] And he overlaid the upper chambers with gold.

[10] ‡ In the Most Holy Place he made two cherubim of wood[7] and overlaid[8] them with gold. [11] The wings of the cherubim together extended twenty cubits: one wing of the one, of five cubits, touched the wall of the house, and its other wing, of five cubits, touched the wing of the other cherub; [12] and of this cherub, one wing, of five cubits, touched the wall of the house, and the other wing, also of five cubits, was joined to the wing of the first cherub. [13] The wings of these cherubim extended twenty cubits. The cherubim[9] stood on their feet, facing the nave. [14] † And he made the veil of blue and purple and crimson fabrics and fine linen, and he worked cherubim on it.

[15] ‡ † In front of the house he made two pillars thirty-five cubits high, with a capital of five cubits on the top of each. [16] He made chains like a necklace[10] and put them on the tops of the pillars, and he made a hundred

pomegranates and put them on the chains. [17]†He set up the pillars in front of the temple, one on the south, the other on the north; that on the south he called Jachin, and that on the north Boaz.

The Temple's Furnishings

4 [1]‡†He made an altar of bronze, twenty cubits[1] long and twenty cubits wide and ten cubits high. [2]Then he made the sea of cast metal. It was round, ten cubits from brim to brim, and five cubits high, and a line of thirty cubits measured its circumference. [3]†Under it were figures of gourds,[2] for ten cubits, compassing the sea all around. The gourds were in two rows, cast with it when it was cast. [4]†It stood on twelve oxen, three facing north, three facing west, three facing south, and three facing east. The sea was set on them, and all their rear parts were inward. [5]† Its thickness was a handbreadth.[3] And its brim was made like the brim of a cup, like the flower of a lily. It held 3,000 baths.[4] [6]†He also made ten basins in which to wash, and set five on the south side, and five on the north side. In these they were to rinse off what was used for the burnt offering, and the sea was for the priests to wash in.

[7]‡†And he made ten golden lampstands as prescribed, and set them in the temple, five on the south side and five on the north. [8]†He also made ten tables and placed them in the temple, five on the south side and five on the north. And he made a hundred basins of gold. [9]†He made the court of the priests and the great court and doors for the court and overlaid their doors with bronze. [10]And he set the sea at the southeast corner of the house.

[11]‡†Hiram also made the pots, the shovels, and the basins. So Hiram finished the work that he did for King Solomon on the house of God: [12]the two pillars, the bowls, and the two capitals on the top of the pillars; and the two latticeworks to cover the two bowls of the capitals that were on the top of the pillars; [13]and the 400 pomegranates for the two latticeworks, two rows of pomegranates for each latticework, to cover the two bowls of the capitals that were on the pillars. [14]He made the stands also, and the basins on the stands, [15]and the one sea, and the twelve oxen underneath it. [16]†The pots, the shovels, the forks, and all the equipment for these Huram-abi made of burnished bronze for King Solomon for the house of the Lord. [17]‡†In the plain of the Jordan the king cast them, in the clay ground between Succoth

and Zeredah.[5] 18 Solomon made all these things in great quantities, for the
weight of the bronze was not sought.

19 † So Solomon made all the vessels that were in the house of God: the
golden altar, the tables for the bread of the Presence, 20 † the lampstands and
their lamps of pure gold to burn before the inner sanctuary, as prescribed;
21 † the flowers, the lamps, and the tongs, of purest gold; 22 the snuffers,
basins, dishes for incense, and fire pans, of pure gold, and the sockets[6] of
the temple, for the inner doors to the Most Holy Place and for the doors of
the nave of the temple were of gold.

5 1 † Thus all the work that Solomon did for the house of the LORD was
finished. And Solomon brought in the things that David his father had
dedicated, and stored the silver, the gold, and all the vessels in the treasuries
of the house of God.

The Ark Brought to the Temple

2 ‡ † Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel and all the heads of the
tribes, the leaders of the fathers' houses of the people of Israel, in
Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the covenant of the Lord out of the city of
David, which is Zion. 3 † And all the men of Israel assembled before the king
at the feast that is in the seventh month. 4 ‡ And all the elders of Israel came,
and the Levites took up the ark. 5 † And they brought up the ark, the tent of
meeting, and all the holy vessels that were in the tent; the Levitical priests
brought them up. 6 And King Solomon and all the congregation of Israel,
who had assembled before him, were before the ark, sacrificing so many
sheep and oxen that they could not be counted or numbered. 7 † Then the
priests brought the ark of the covenant of the Lord to its place, in the inner
sanctuary of the house, in the Most Holy Place, underneath the wings of the
cherubim. 8 † The cherubim spread out their wings over the place of the ark,
so that the cherubim made a covering above the ark and its poles. 9 † And the
poles were so long that the ends of the poles were seen from the Holy Place
before the inner sanctuary, but they could not be seen from outside. And
they are[1] there to this day. 10 † There was nothing in the ark except the two
tablets that Moses put there at Horeb, where the Lord made a covenant with
the people of Israel, when they came out of Egypt. 11 ‡ † And when the priests
came out of the Holy Place (for all the priests who were present had
consecrated themselves, without regard to their divisions, 12 † and all the
Levitical singers, Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun, their sons and kinsmen,
arrayed in fine linen, with cymbals, harps, and lyres, stood east of the altar
with 120 priests who were trumpeters; 13 † and it was the duty of the
trumpeters and singers to make themselves heard in unison in praise and
thanksgiving to the Lord), and when the song was raised, with trumpets and
cymbals and other musical instruments, in praise to the Lord,

> "For he is good,
> for his steadfast love endures forever,"

the house, the house of the Lord, was filled with a cloud, 14 † so that the
priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the

LORD filled the house of God.

Solomon Blesses the People

6 [1]Then Solomon said, “The Lord has said that he would dwell in
thick darkness. [2]But I have built you an exalted house, a place for you to
dwell in forever.” [3]Then the king turned around and blessed all the
assembly of Israel, while all the assembly of Israel stood. [4]And he said,
“Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, who with his hand has fulfilled
what he promised with his mouth to David my father, saying, [5]‘Since the
day that I brought my people out of the land of Egypt, I chose no city out of
all the tribes of Israel in which to build a house, that my name might be
there, and I chose no man as prince over my people Israel; [6]but I have
chosen Jerusalem that my name may be there, and I have chosen David to
be over my people Israel.’ [7]Now it was in the heart of David my father to
build a house for the name of the Lord, the God of Israel. [8]But the Lord said
to David my father, ‘Whereas it was in your heart to build a house for my
name, you did well that it was in your heart. [9]Nevertheless, it is not you
who shall build the house, but your son who shall be born to you shall build
the house for my name.’ [10]Now the Lord has fulfilled his promise that he
made. For I have risen in the place of David my father and sit on the throne
of Israel, as the Lord promised, and I have built the house for the name of
the Lord, the God of Israel. [11]And there I have set the ark, in which is the
covenant of the Lord that he made with the people of Israel.”

Solomon’s Prayer of Dedication

12 ‡† Then Solomon stood before the altar of the Lord in the presence of all
the assembly of Israel and spread out his hands. 13 † Solomon had made a
bronze platform five cubits[1] long, five cubits wide, and three cubits high,
and had set it in the court, and he stood on it. Then he knelt on his knees in
the presence of all the assembly of Israel, and spread out his hands toward
heaven, 14 † and said, “O Lord, God of Israel, there is no God like you, in
heaven or on earth, keeping covenant and showing steadfast love to your
servants who walk before you with all their heart, 15 † who have kept with
your servant David my father what you declared to him. You spoke with
your mouth, and with your hand have fulfilled it this day. 16 † Now therefore,
O Lord, God of Israel, keep for your servant David my father what you have
promised him, saying, ‘You shall not lack a man to sit before me on the
throne of Israel, if only your sons pay close attention to their way, to walk
in my law as you have walked before me.’ 17 † Now therefore, O Lord, God
of Israel, let your word be confirmed, which you have spoken to your
servant David.

18 † “But will God indeed dwell with man on the earth? Behold, heaven
and the highest heaven cannot contain you, how much less this house that I
have built! 19 Yet have regard to the prayer of your servant and to his plea, O
Lord my God, listening to the cry and to the prayer that your servant prays
before you, 20 † that your eyes may be open day and night toward this house,
the place where you have promised to set your name, that you may listen to
the prayer that your servant offers toward this place. 21 † And listen to the
pleas of your servant and of your people Israel, when they pray toward this
place. And listen from heaven your dwelling place, and when you hear,
forgive.

22 † “If a man sins against his neighbor and is made to take an oath and
comes and swears his oath before your altar in this house, 23 then hear from
heaven and act and judge your servants, repaying the guilty by bringing his
conduct on his own head, and vindicating the righteous by rewarding him
according to his righteousness.

24 ‡ “If your people Israel are defeated before the enemy because they have
sinned against you, and they turn again and acknowledge your name and
pray and plead with you in this house, 25 then hear from heaven and forgive
the sin of your people Israel and bring them again to the land that you gave
to them and to their fathers.
26 ‡ † “When heaven is shut up and there is no rain because they have
sinned against you, if they pray toward this place and acknowledge your
name and turn from their sin, when you afflict[1] them, 27 † then hear in
heaven and forgive the sin of your servants, your people Israel, when you
teach them the good way[2] in which they should walk, and grant rain upon
your land, which you have given to your people as an inheritance.
28 “If there is famine in the land, if there is pestilence or blight or mildew
or locust or caterpillar, if their enemies besiege them in the land at their
gates, whatever plague, whatever sickness there is, 29 † whatever prayer,
whatever plea is made by any man or by all your people Israel, each
knowing his own affliction and his own sorrow and stretching out his hands
toward this house, 30 † then hear from heaven your dwelling place and
forgive and render to each whose heart you know, according to all his ways,
for you, you only, know the hearts of the children of mankind, 31 † that they
may fear you and walk in your ways all the days that they live in the land
that you gave to our fathers.
32 ‡ † “Likewise, when a foreigner, who is not of your people Israel, comes
from a far country for the sake of your great name and your mighty hand
and your outstretched arm, when he comes and prays toward this house,
33 † hear from heaven your dwelling place and do according to all for which
the foreigner calls to you, in order that all the peoples of the earth may
know your name and fear you, as do your people Israel, and that they may
know that this house that I have built is called by your name.
34 ‡ † “If your people go out to battle against their enemies, by whatever
way you shall send them, and they pray to you toward this city that you
have chosen and the house that I have built for your name, 35 then hear from
heaven their prayer and their plea, and maintain their cause.
36 † “If they sin against you—for there is no one who does not sin—and
you are angry with them and give them to an enemy, so that they are carried
away captive to a land far or near, 37 † yet if they turn their heart in the land

to which they have been carried captive, and repent and plead with you in the land of their captivity, saying, ‘We have sinned and have acted perversely and wickedly,’ [38]† if they repent with all their mind and with all their heart in the land of their captivity to which they were carried captive, and pray toward their land, which you gave to their fathers, the city that you have chosen and the house that I have built for your name, [39]† then hear from heaven your dwelling place their prayer and their pleas, and maintain their cause and forgive your people who have sinned against you. [40]Now, O my God, let your eyes be open and your ears attentive to the prayer of this place.

[41]†† “And now arise, O Lord God, and go to your
resting place,
you and the ark of your might.
Let your priests, O Lord God, be clothed
with salvation,
and let your saints rejoice in your
goodness.
[42]† O Lord God, do not turn away the face of
your anointed one!
Remember your steadfast love for David
your servant.”

Fire from Heaven

7 [1]‡‡†As soon as Solomon finished his prayer, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and the glory of the Lord filled the temple. [2]‡†And the priests could not enter the house of the Lord, because the glory of the Lord filled the Lord's house. [3]†When all the people of Israel saw the fire come down and the glory of the Lord on the temple, they bowed down with their faces to the ground on the pavement and worshiped and gave thanks to the Lord, saying, "For he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever."

The Dedication of the Temple

4 ‡ † Then the king and all the people offered sacrifice before the Lord.
5 King Solomon offered as a sacrifice 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep. So
the king and all the people dedicated the house of God. 6 † The priests stood
at their posts; the Levites also, with the instruments for music to the Lord
that King David had made for giving thanks to the Lord—for his steadfast
love endures forever—whenever David offered praises by their ministry;[1]
opposite them the priests sounded trumpets, and all Israel stood.

7 † And Solomon consecrated the middle of the court that was before the
house of the Lord, for there he offered the burnt offering and the fat of the
peace offerings, because the bronze altar Solomon had made could not hold
the burnt offering and the grain offering and the fat.

8 † At that time Solomon held the feast for seven days, and all Israel with
him, a very great assembly, from Lebo-hamath to the Brook of Egypt.
9 † And on the eighth day they held a solemn assembly, for they had kept the
dedication of the altar seven days and the feast seven days. 10 † On the
twenty-third day of the seventh month he sent the people away to their
homes, joyful and glad of heart for the prosperity that the Lord had granted
to David and to Solomon and to Israel his people.

If My People Pray

11 ‡ Thus Solomon finished the house of the Lord and the king's house. All
that Solomon had planned to do in the house of the Lord and in his own
house he successfully accomplished. 12 ‡ † Then the Lord appeared to
Solomon in the night and said to him: "I have heard your prayer and have
chosen this place for myself as a house of sacrifice. 13 ‡ When I shut up the
heavens so that there is no rain, or command the locust to devour the land,
or send pestilence among my people, 14 † if my people who are called by my
name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their
wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and
heal their land. 15 † Now my eyes will be open and my ears attentive to the
prayer that is made in this place. 16 † For now I have chosen and consecrated
this house that my name may be there forever. My eyes and my heart will
be there for all time. 17 ‡ ‡ And as for you, if you will walk before me as
David your father walked, doing according to all that I have commanded
you and keeping my statutes and my rules, 18 then I will establish your royal
throne, as I covenanted with David your father, saying, 'You shall not lack a
man to rule Israel.'

19 ‡ "But if you[1] turn aside and forsake my statutes and my
commandments that I have set before you, and go and serve other gods and
worship them, 20 then I will pluck you[2] up from my land that I have given
you, and this house that I have consecrated for my name, I will cast out of
my sight, and I will make it a proverb and a byword among all peoples.
21 And at this house, which was exalted, everyone passing by will be
astonished and say, 'Why has the Lord done thus to this land and to this
house?' 22 Then they will say, 'Because they abandoned the Lord, the God of
their fathers who brought them out of the land of Egypt and laid hold on
other gods and worshiped them and served them. Therefore he has brought
all this disaster on them.'"

Solomon's Accomplishments

8 [1]At the end of twenty years, in which Solomon had built the house
of the Lord and his own house, [2]†Solomon rebuilt the cities that Hiram had
given to him, and settled the people of Israel in them.
[3]†And Solomon went to Hamath-zobah and took it. [4]†He built Tadmor in
the wilderness and all the store cities that he built in Hamath. [5]‡He also
built Upper Beth-horon and Lower Beth-horon, fortified cities with walls,
gates, and bars, [6]and Baalath, and all the store cities that Solomon had and
all the cities for his chariots and the cities for his horsemen, and whatever
Solomon desired to build in Jerusalem, in Lebanon, and in all the land of
his dominion. [7]‡All the people who were left of the Hittites, the Amorites,
the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, who were not of Israel, [8]from
their descendants who were left after them in the land, whom the people of
Israel had not destroyed—these Solomon drafted as forced labor, and so
they are to this day. [9]†But of the people of Israel Solomon made no slaves
for his work; they were soldiers, and his officers, the commanders of his
chariots, and his horsemen. [10]†And these were the chief officers of King
Solomon, 250, who exercised authority over the people.
[11]†Solomon brought Pharaoh's daughter up from the city of David to the
house that he had built for her, for he said, "My wife shall not live in the
house of David king of Israel, for the places to which the ark of the Lord has
come are holy."
[12]†Then Solomon offered up burnt offerings to the Lord on the altar of the
Lord that he had built before the vestibule, [13]‡† as the duty of each day
required, offering according to the commandment of Moses for the
Sabbaths, the new moons, and the three annual feasts—the Feast of
Unleavened Bread, the Feast of Weeks, and the Feast of Booths.
[14]According to the ruling of David his father, he appointed the divisions of
the priests for their service, and the Levites for their offices of praise and
ministry before the priests as the duty of each day required, and the
gatekeepers in their divisions at each gate, for so David the man of God had
commanded. [15]And they did not turn aside from what the king had

commanded the priests and Levites concerning any matter and concerning the treasuries.

16 Thus was accomplished all the work of Solomon from[1] the day the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid until it was finished. So the house of the Lord was completed.

17 ‡†Then Solomon went to Ezion-geber and Eloth on the shore of the sea, in the land of Edom. 18 †And Hiram sent to him by the hand of his servants ships and servants familiar with the sea, and they went to Ophir together with the servants of Solomon and brought from there 450 talents[2] of gold and brought it to King Solomon.

The Queen of Sheba

9 [1]‡‡†Now when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon,
she came to Jerusalem to test him with hard questions, having a very great
retinue and camels bearing spices and very much gold and precious stones.
And when she came to Solomon, she told him all that was on her mind.
[2]And Solomon answered all her questions. There was nothing hidden from
Solomon that he could not explain to her. [3]†And when the queen of Sheba
had seen the wisdom of Solomon, the house that he had built, [4]the food of
his table, the seating of his officials, and the attendance of his servants, and
their clothing, his cupbearers, and their clothing, and his burnt offerings that
he offered at the house of the Lord, there was no more breath in her.

[5]And she said to the king, "The report was true that I heard in my own
land of your words and of your wisdom, [6]but I did not believe the[3] reports
until I came and my own eyes had seen it. And behold, half the greatness of
your wisdom was not told me; you surpass the report that I heard. [7]Happy
are your wives![4] Happy are these your servants, who continually stand
before you and hear your wisdom! [8]†Blessed be the Lord your God, who
has delighted in you and set you on his throne as king for the Lord your
God! Because your God loved Israel and would establish them forever, he
has made you king over them, that you may execute justice and
righteousness." [9]†Then she gave the king 120 talents[5] of gold, and a very
great quantity of spices, and precious stones. There were no spices such as
those that the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon.

[10]†Moreover, the servants of Hiram and the servants of Solomon, who
brought gold from Ophir, brought algum wood and precious stones. [11]†And
the king made from the algum wood supports for the house of the Lord and
for the king's house, lyres also and harps for the singers. There never was
seen the like of them before in the land of Judah.

[12]†And King Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba all that she desired,
whatever she asked besides what she had brought to the king. So she turned
and went back to her own land with her servants.

Solomon’s Wealth

13 ‡‡‡Now the weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year was 666
talents of gold, 14 †besides that which the explorers and merchants brought.
And all the kings of Arabia and the governors of the land brought gold and
silver to Solomon. 15 King Solomon made 200 large shields of beaten gold;
600 shekels[1] of beaten gold went into each shield. 16 †And he made 300
shields of beaten gold; 300 shekels of gold went into each shield; and the
king put them in the House of the Forest of Lebanon. 17 The king also made
a great ivory throne and overlaid it with pure gold. 18 †The throne had six
steps and a footstool of gold, which were attached to the throne, and on
each side of the seat were armrests and two lions standing beside the
armrests, 19 while twelve lions stood there, one on each end of a step on the
six steps. Nothing like it was ever made for any kingdom. 20 All King
Solomon’s drinking vessels were of gold, and all the vessels of the House of
the Forest of Lebanon were of pure gold. Silver was not considered as
anything in the days of Solomon. 21 †For the king’s ships went to Tarshish
with the servants of Hiram. Once every three years the ships of Tarshish
used to come bringing gold, silver, ivory, apes, and peacocks.[2]

22 †Thus King Solomon excelled all the kings of the earth in riches and in
wisdom. 23 And all the kings of the earth sought the presence of Solomon to
hear his wisdom, which God had put into his mind. 24 Every one of them
brought his present, articles of silver and of gold, garments, myrrh, spices,
horses, and mules, so much year by year. 25 And Solomon had 4,000 stalls
for horses and chariots, and 12,000 horsemen, whom he stationed in the
chariot cities and with the king in Jerusalem. 26 †And he ruled over all the
kings from the Euphrates to the land of the Philistines and to the border of
Egypt. 27 And the king made silver as common in Jerusalem as stone, and he
made cedar as plentiful as the sycamore of the Shephelah. 28 And horses
were imported for Solomon from Egypt and from all lands.

Solomon’s Death

[29]†††Now the rest of the acts of Solomon, from first to last, are they not written in the history of Nathan the prophet, and in the prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite, and in the visions of Iddo the seer concerning Jeroboam the son of Nebat? [30]Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel forty years. [31]†And Solomon slept with his fathers and was buried in the city of David his father, and Rehoboam his son reigned in his place.

The Revolt Against Rehoboam

10 [1] † Rehoboam went to Shechem, for all Israel had come to
Shechem to make him king. [2]And as soon as Jeroboam the son of Nebat
heard of it (for he was in Egypt, where he had fled from King Solomon),
then Jeroboam returned from Egypt. [3]And they sent and called him. And
Jeroboam and all Israel came and said to Rehoboam, [4]† "Your father made
our yoke heavy. Now therefore lighten the hard service of your father and
his heavy yoke on us, and we will serve you." [5]He said to them, "Come to
me again in three days." So the people went away.

[6]†Then King Rehoboam took counsel with the old men,[1] who had stood
before Solomon his father while he was yet alive, saying, "How do you
advise me to answer this people?" [7]And they said to him, "If you will be
good to this people and please them and speak good words to them, then
they will be your servants forever." [8]But he abandoned the counsel that the
old men gave him, and took counsel with the young men who had grown up
with him and stood before him. [9]And he said to them, "What do you advise
that we answer this people who have said to me, 'Lighten the yoke that your
father put on us'?" [10]And the young men who had grown up with him said
to him, "Thus shall you speak to the people who said to you, 'Your father
made our yoke heavy, but you lighten it for us'; thus shall you say to them,
'My little finger is thicker than my father's thighs. [11]†And now, whereas my
father laid on you a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke. My father
disciplined you with whips, but I will discipline you with scorpions.'"

[12]So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam the third day, as the
king said, "Come to me again the third day." [13]And the king answered them
harshly; and forsaking the counsel of the old men, [14]King Rehoboam spoke
to them according to the counsel of the young men, saying, "My father
made your yoke heavy, but I will add to it. My father disciplined you with
whips, but I will discipline you with scorpions." [15]So the king did not listen
to the people, for it was a turn of affairs brought about by God that the Lord
might fulfill his word, which he spoke by Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam
the son of Nebat.

16 †And when all Israel saw that the king did not listen to them, the people
answered the king, “What portion have we in David? We have no
inheritance in the son of Jesse. Each of you to your tents, O Israel! Look
now to your own house, David.” So all Israel went to their tents. 17But
Rehoboam reigned over the people of Israel who lived in the cities of
Judah. 18 †Then King Rehoboam sent Hadoram,[2] who was taskmaster over
the forced labor, and the people of Israel stoned him to death with stones.
And King Rehoboam quickly mounted his chariot to flee to Jerusalem.
19 †So Israel has been in rebellion against the house of David to this day.

Rehoboam Secures His Kingdom

11 [1]When Rehoboam came to Jerusalem, he assembled the house
of Judah and Benjamin, 180,000 chosen warriors, to fight against Israel, to
restore the kingdom to Rehoboam. [2]But the word of the Lord came to
Shemaiah the man of God: [3]"Say to Rehoboam the son of Solomon, king
of Judah, and to all Israel in Judah and Benjamin, [4]'Thus says the Lord,
You shall not go up or fight against your relatives. Return every man to his
home, for this thing is from me.'" So they listened to the word of the Lord
and returned and did not go against Jeroboam.

[5]Rehoboam lived in Jerusalem, and he built cities for defense in
Judah. [6]He built Bethlehem, Etam, Tekoa, [7]Beth-zur, Soco, Adullam,
[8]Gath, Mareshah, Ziph, [9]Adoraim, Lachish, Azekah, [10]Zorah, Aijalon, and
Hebron, fortified cities that are in Judah and in Benjamin. [11]He made the
fortresses strong, and put commanders in them, and stores of food, oil, and
wine. [12]And he put shields and spears in all the cities and made them very
strong. So he held Judah and Benjamin.

Priests and Levites Come to Jerusalem

13 ‡ ‡ † And the priests and the Levites who were in all Israel presented
themselves to him from all places where they lived. 14 † For the Levites left
their common lands and their holdings and came to Judah and Jerusalem,
because Jeroboam and his sons cast them out from serving as priests of the
Lord, 15 † and he appointed his own priests for the high places and for the
goat idols and for the calves that he had made. 16 † And those who had set
their hearts to seek the Lord God of Israel came after them from all the
tribes of Israel to Jerusalem to sacrifice to the Lord, the God of their fathers.
17 † They strengthened the kingdom of Judah, and for three years they made
Rehoboam the son of Solomon secure, for they walked for three years in the
way of David and Solomon.

Rehoboam’s Family

18 ‡‡‡Rehoboam took as wife Mahalath the daughter of Jerimoth the son
of David, and of Abihail the daughter of Eliab the son of Jesse, 19 and she
bore him sons, Jeush, Shemariah, and Zaham. 20 †After her he took Maacah
the daughter of Absalom, who bore him Abijah, Attai, Ziza, and Shelomith.
21 †Rehoboam loved Maacah the daughter of Absalom above all his wives
and concubines (he took eighteen wives and sixty concubines, and fathered
twenty-eight sons and sixty daughters). 22 †And Rehoboam appointed Abijah
the son of Maacah as chief prince among his brothers, for he intended to
make him king. 23 And he dealt wisely and distributed some of his sons
through all the districts of Judah and Benjamin, in all the fortified cities,
and he gave them abundant provisions and procured wives for them.[1]

Egypt Plunders Jerusalem

12 [1] ‡ † When the rule of Rehoboam was established and he was
strong, he abandoned the law of the Lord, and all Israel with him. [2] † In the
fifth year of King Rehoboam, because they had been unfaithful to the Lord,
Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem [3] † with 1,200 chariots and
60,000 horsemen. And the people were without number who came with him
from Egypt—Libyans, Sukkiim, and Ethiopians. [4] And he took the fortified
cities of Judah and came as far as Jerusalem. [5] † Then Shemaiah the prophet
came to Rehoboam and to the princes of Judah, who had gathered at
Jerusalem because of Shishak, and said to them, "Thus says the Lord, 'You
abandoned me, so I have abandoned you to the hand of Shishak.'" [6] † Then
the princes of Israel and the king humbled themselves and said, "The Lord
is righteous." [7] † When the Lord saw that they humbled themselves, the word
of the Lord came to Shemaiah: "They have humbled themselves. I will not
destroy them, but I will grant them some deliverance, and my wrath shall
not be poured out on Jerusalem by the hand of Shishak. [8] † Nevertheless,
they shall be servants to him, that they may know my service and the
service of the kingdoms of the countries."

[9] † So Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem. He took away the
treasures of the house of the Lord and the treasures of the king's house. He
took away everything. He also took away the shields of gold that Solomon
had made, [10] and King Rehoboam made in their place shields of bronze and
committed them to the hands of the officers of the guard, who kept the door
of the king's house. [11] And as often as the king went into the house of the
Lord, the guard came and carried them and brought them back to the
guardroom. [12] † And when he humbled himself the wrath of the Lord turned
from him, so as not to make a complete destruction. Moreover, conditions
were good[1] in Judah.

[13] ‡ † So King Rehoboam grew strong in Jerusalem and reigned. Rehoboam
was forty-one years old when he began to reign, and he reigned seventeen
years in Jerusalem, the city that the Lord had chosen out of all the tribes of

Israel to put his name there. His mother's name was Naamah the Ammonite.
14 † And he did evil, for he did not set his heart to seek the LORD.

15 † Now the acts of Rehoboam, from first to last, are they not written in the chronicles of Shemaiah the prophet and of Iddo the seer?[2] There were continual wars between Rehoboam and Jeroboam. 16 And Rehoboam slept with his fathers and was buried in the city of David, and Abijah[3] his son reigned in his place.

Abijah Reigns in Judah

13 [1]†In the eighteenth year of King Jeroboam, Abijah began to reign
over Judah. [2]†He reigned for three years in Jerusalem. His mother's name
was Micaiah[1] the daughter of Uriel of Gibeah.

Now there was war between Abijah and Jeroboam. [3]†Abijah went out to
battle, having an army of valiant men of war, 400,000 chosen men. And
Jeroboam drew up his line of battle against him with 800,000 chosen
mighty warriors. [4]‡†Then Abijah stood up on Mount Zemaraim that is in
the hill country of Ephraim and said, "Hear me, O Jeroboam and all Israel!
[5]†Ought you not to know that the Lord God of Israel gave the kingship over
Israel forever to David and his sons by a covenant of salt? [6]Yet Jeroboam
the son of Nebat, a servant of Solomon the son of David, rose up and
rebelled against his lord, [7]†and certain worthless scoundrels gathered about
him and defied Rehoboam the son of Solomon, when Rehoboam was young
and irresolute[2] and could not withstand them.

[8]†"And now you think to withstand the kingdom of the Lord in the hand
of the sons of David, because you are a great multitude and have with you
the golden calves that Jeroboam made you for gods. [9]†Have you not driven
out the priests of the Lord, the sons of Aaron, and the Levites, and made
priests for yourselves like the peoples of other lands? Whoever comes for
ordination[3] with a young bull or seven rams becomes a priest of what are
no gods. [10]†But as for us, the Lord is our God, and we have not forsaken
him. We have priests ministering to the Lord who are sons of Aaron, and
Levites for their service. [11]†They offer to the Lord every morning and every
evening burnt offerings and incense of sweet spices, set out the showbread
on the table of pure gold, and care for the golden lampstand that its lamps
may burn every evening. For we keep the charge of the Lord our God, but
you have forsaken him. [12]†Behold, God is with us at our head, and his
priests with their battle trumpets to sound the call to battle against you. O
sons of Israel, do not fight against the Lord, the God of your fathers, for you
cannot succeed."

13 ‡ † Jeroboam had sent an ambush around to come upon them from
behind. Thus his troops[4] were in front of Judah, and the ambush was
behind them. 14 † And when Judah looked, behold, the battle was in front of
and behind them. And they cried to the Lord, and the priests blew the
trumpets. 15 † Then the men of Judah raised the battle shout. And when the
men of Judah shouted, God defeated Jeroboam and all Israel before Abijah
and Judah. 16 ‡ The men of Israel fled before Judah, and God gave them into
their hand. 17 Abijah and his people struck them with great force, so there
fell slain of Israel 500,000 chosen men. 18 † Thus the men of Israel were
subdued at that time, and the men of Judah prevailed, because they relied on
the Lord, the God of their fathers. 19 † And Abijah pursued Jeroboam and
took cities from him, Bethel with its villages and Jeshanah with its villages
and Ephron[1] with its villages. 20 ‡ Jeroboam did not recover his power in the
days of Abijah. And the Lord struck him down, and he died. 21 But Abijah
grew mighty. And he took fourteen wives and had twenty-two sons and
sixteen daughters. 22 † The rest of the acts of Abijah, his ways and his
sayings, are written in the story of the prophet Iddo.

Asa Reigns in Judah

14 [1]†[2] Abijah slept with his fathers, and they bur-
ied him in the city of David. And Asa his son reigned in his place. In his days the land had rest for ten years. [2]‡[3] And Asa did what was good and right in the eyes of the Lord his God. [3]†He took away the foreign altars and the high places and broke down the pillars and cut down the Asherim [4]‡and commanded Judah to seek the Lord, the God of their fathers, and to keep the law and the commandment. [5]†He also took out of all the cities of Judah the high places and the incense altars. And the kingdom had rest under him. [6]‡†He built fortified cities in Judah, for the land had rest. He had no war in those years, for the Lord gave him peace. [7]†And he said to Judah, "Let us build these cities and surround them with walls and towers, gates and bars. The land is still ours, because we have sought the Lord our God. We have sought him, and he has given us peace on every side." So they built and prospered. [8]†And Asa had an army of 300,000 from Judah, armed with large shields and spears, and 280,000 men from Benjamin that carried shields and drew bows. All these were mighty men of valor.

[9]‡†Zerah the Ethiopian came out against them with an army of a million men and 300 chariots, and came as far as Mareshah. [10]†And Asa went out to meet him, and they drew up their lines of battle in the Valley of Zephathah at Mareshah. [11]†And Asa cried to the Lord his God, "O Lord, there is none like you to help, between the mighty and the weak. Help us, O Lord our God, for we rely on you, and in your name we have come against this multitude. O Lord, you are our God; let not man prevail against you." [12]†So the Lord defeated the Ethiopians before Asa and before Judah, and the Ethiopians fled. [13]‡†Asa and the people who were with him pursued them as far as Gerar, and the Ethiopians fell until none remained alive, for they were broken before the Lord and his army. The men of Judah[1] carried away very much spoil. [14]†And they attacked all the cities around Gerar, for the fear of the Lord was upon them. They plundered all the cities, for there was much plunder in them. [15]And they struck down the tents of those who had

livestock and carried away sheep in abundance and camels. Then they returned to Jerusalem.

Asa's Religious Reforms

15 [1]The Spirit of God came upon Azariah the son of Oded, [2]and
he went out to meet Asa and said to him, "Hear me, Asa, and all Judah and
Benjamin: The Lord is with you while you are with him. If you seek him, he
will be found by you, but if you forsake him, he will forsake you. [3]For a
long time Israel was without the true God, and without a teaching priest and
without law, [4]but when in their distress they turned to the Lord, the God of
Israel, and sought him, he was found by them. [5]In those times there was no
peace to him who went out or to him who came in, for great disturbances
afflicted all the inhabitants of the lands. [6]They were broken in pieces.
Nation was crushed by nation and city by city, for God troubled them with
every sort of distress. [7]But you, take courage! Do not let your hands be
weak, for your work shall be rewarded."

[8]As soon as Asa heard these words, the prophecy of Azariah the son of
Oded, he took courage and put away the detestable idols from all the land of
Judah and Benjamin and from the cities that he had taken in the hill country
of Ephraim, and he repaired the altar of the Lord that was in front of the
vestibule of the house of the Lord.[1] [9]And he gathered all Judah and
Benjamin, and those from Ephraim, Manasseh, and Simeon who were
residing with them, for great numbers had deserted to him from Israel when
they saw that the Lord his God was with him. [10]They were gathered at
Jerusalem in the third month of the fifteenth year of the reign of Asa. [11]They
sacrificed to the Lord on that day from the spoil that they had brought 700
oxen and 7,000 sheep. [12]And they entered into a covenant to seek the Lord,
the God of their fathers, with all their heart and with all their soul, [13]but
that whoever would not seek the Lord, the God of Israel, should be put to
death, whether young or old, man or woman. [14]They swore an oath to the
Lord with a loud voice and with shouting and with trumpets and with horns.
[15]And all Judah rejoiced over the oath, for they had sworn with all their
heart and had sought him with their whole desire, and he was found by
them, and the Lord gave them rest all around.

[16] † Even Maacah, his mother, King Asa removed from being queen mother because she had made a detestable image for Asherah. Asa cut down her image, crushed it, and burned it at the brook Kidron. [17] † But the high places were not taken out of Israel. Nevertheless, the heart of Asa was wholly true all his days. [18] And he brought into the house of God the sacred gifts of his father and his own sacred gifts, silver, and gold, and vessels. [19] † And there was no more war until the thirty-fifth year of the reign of Asa.

Asa's Last Years

16 [1]‡†In the thirty-sixth year of the reign of Asa, Baasha king of
Israel went up against Judah and built Ramah, that he might permit no one
to go out or come in to Asa king of Judah. [2]‡†Then Asa took silver and gold
from the treasures of the house of the Lord and the king's house and sent
them to Ben-hadad king of Syria, who lived in Damascus, saying, [3]†"There
is a covenant[2] between me and you, as there was between my father and
your father. Behold, I am sending to you silver and gold. Go, break your
covenant with Baasha king of Israel, that he may withdraw from me." [4]And
Ben-hadad listened to King Asa and sent the commanders of his armies
against the cities of Israel, and they conquered Ijon, Dan, Abel-maim, and
all the store cities of Naphtali. [5]And when Baasha heard of it, he stopped
building Ramah and let his work cease. [6]Then King Asa took all Judah, and
they carried away the stones of Ramah and its timber, with which Baasha
had been building, and with them he built Geba and Mizpah.

[7]‡†At that time Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah and said to
him, "Because you relied on the king of Syria, and did not rely on the Lord
your God, the army of the king of Syria has escaped you. [8]†Were not the
Ethiopians and the Libyans a huge army with very many chariots and
horsemen? Yet because you relied on the Lord, he gave them into your
hand. [9]†For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth,
to give strong support to those whose heart is blameless toward him. You
have done foolishly in this, for from now on you will have wars." [10]†Then
Asa was angry with the seer and put him in the stocks in prison, for he was
in a rage with him because of this. And Asa inflicted cruelties upon some of
the people at the same time.

[11]The acts of Asa, from first to last, are written in the Book of the Kings
of Judah and Israel. [12]†In the thirty-ninth year of his reign Asa was diseased
in his feet, and his disease became severe. Yet even in his disease he did not
seek the Lord, but sought help from physicians. [13]†And Asa slept with his
fathers, dying in the forty-first year of his reign. [14]†They buried him in the
tomb that he had cut for himself in the city of David. They laid him on a

bier that had been filled with various kinds of spices prepared by the perfumer’s art, and they made a very great fire in his honor.

Jehoshaphat Reigns in Judah

17 [1]Jehoshaphat his son reigned in his place and strengthened himself
against Israel. [2]†He placed forces in all the fortified cities of Judah and set
garrisons in the land of Judah, and in the cities of Ephraim that Asa his
father had captured. [3]‡†The Lord was with Jehoshaphat, because he walked
in the earlier ways of his father David. He did not seek the Baals, [4]†but
sought the God of his father and walked in his commandments, and not
according to the practices of Israel. [5]†Therefore the Lord established the
kingdom in his hand. And all Judah brought tribute to Jehoshaphat, and he
had great riches and honor. [6]†His heart was courageous in the ways of the
Lord. And furthermore, he took the high places and the Asherim out of
Judah.

[7]†In the third year of his reign he sent his officials, Ben-hail, Obadiah,
Zechariah, Nethanel, and Micaiah, to teach in the cities of Judah; [8]and with
them the Levites, Shemaiah, Nethaniah, Zebadiah, Asahel, Shemiramoth,
Jehonathan, Adonijah, Tobijah, and Tobadonijah; and with these Levites,
the priests Elishama and Jehoram. [9]†And they taught in Judah, having the
Book of the Law of the Lord with them. They went about through all the
cities of Judah and taught among the people.

[10]‡†And the fear of the Lord fell upon all the kingdoms of the lands that
were around Judah, and they made no war against Jehoshaphat. [11]†Some of
the Philistines brought Jehoshaphat presents and silver for tribute, and the
Arabians also brought him 7,700 rams and 7,700 goats. [12]And Jehoshaphat
grew steadily greater. He built in Judah fortresses and store cities, [13]†and he
had large supplies in the cities of Judah. He had soldiers, mighty men of
valor, in Jerusalem. [14]This was the muster of them by fathers' houses: Of
Judah, the commanders of thousands: Adnah the commander, with 300,000
mighty men of valor; [15]and next to him Jehohanan the commander, with
280,000; [16]†and next to him Amasiah the son of Zichri, a volunteer for the
service of the Lord, with 200,000 mighty men of valor. [17]Of Benjamin:
Eliada, a mighty man of valor, with 200,000 men armed with bow and
shield; [18]and next to him Jehozabad with 180,000 armed for war. [19]These

were in the service of the king, besides those whom the king had placed in the fortified cities throughout all Judah.

Jehoshaphat Allies with Ahab

18 [1]Now Jehoshaphat had great riches and honor, and he made a marriage alliance with Ahab. [2]After some years he went down to Ahab in Samaria. And Ahab killed an abundance of sheep and oxen for him and for the people who were with him, and induced him to go up against Ramoth-gilead. [3]Ahab king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat king of Judah, "Will you go with me to Ramoth-gilead?" He answered him, "I am as you are, my people as your people. We will be with you in the war."

[4]And Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, "Inquire first for the word of the Lord." [5]Then the king of Israel gathered the prophets together, four hundred men, and said to them, "Shall we go to battle against Ramoth-gilead, or shall I refrain?" And they said, "Go up, for God will give it into the hand of the king." [6]But Jehoshaphat said, "Is there not here another prophet of the Lord of whom we may inquire?" [7]And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "There is yet one man by whom we may inquire of the Lord, Micaiah the son of Imlah; but I hate him, for he never prophesies good concerning me, but always evil." And Jehoshaphat said, "Let not the king say so." [8]Then the king of Israel summoned an officer and said, "Bring quickly Micaiah the son of Imlah." [9]Now the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah were sitting on their thrones, arrayed in their robes. And they were sitting at the threshing floor at the entrance of the gate of Samaria, and all the prophets were prophesying before them. [10]And Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah made for himself horns of iron and said, "Thus says the Lord, 'With these you shall push the Syrians until they are destroyed.'" [11]And all the prophets prophesied so and said, "Go up to Ramoth-gilead and triumph. The Lord will give it into the hand of the king."

[12]And the messenger who went to summon Micaiah said to him, "Behold, the words of the prophets with one accord are favorable to the king. Let your word be like the word of one of them, and speak favorably." [13]But Micaiah said, "As the Lord lives, what my God says, that I will speak." [14]And when he had come to the king, the king said to him, "Micaiah, shall we go to Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall I refrain?" And he answered, "Go

up and triumph; they will be given into your hand.” 15But the king said to
him, “How many times shall I make you swear that you speak to me
nothing but the truth in the name of the Lord?” 16†And he said, “I saw all
Israel scattered on the mountains, as sheep that have no shepherd. And the
Lord said, ‘These have no master; let each return to his home in peace.’”
17And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, “Did I not tell you that he
would not prophesy good concerning me, but evil?” 18†And Micaiah said,
“Therefore hear the word of the Lord: I saw the Lord sitting on his throne,
and all the host of heaven standing on his right hand and on his left. 19And
the Lord said, ‘Who will entice Ahab the king of Israel, that he may go up
and fall at Ramoth-gilead?’ And one said one thing, and another said
another. 20†Then a spirit came forward and stood before the Lord, saying, ‘I
will entice him.’ And the Lord said to him, ‘By what means?’ 21And he said,
‘I will go out, and will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.’
And he said, ‘You are to entice him, and you shall succeed; go out and do
so.’ 22Now therefore behold, the Lord has put a lying spirit in the mouth of
these your prophets. The Lord has declared disaster concerning you.”

23††Then Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah came near and struck Micaiah
on the cheek and said, “Which way did the Spirit of the Lord go from me to
speak to you?” 24†And Micaiah said, “Behold, you shall see on that day
when you go into an inner chamber to hide yourself.” 25And the king of
Israel said, “Seize Micaiah and take him back to Amon the governor of the
city and to Joash the king’s son, 26†and say, ‘Thus says the king, Put this
fellow in prison and feed him with meager rations of bread and water until I
return in peace.’” 27And Micaiah said, “If you return in peace, the Lord has
not spoken by me.” And he said, “Hear, all you peoples!”

The Defeat and Death of Ahab

28 So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah went up to
Ramoth-gilead. 29 And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, “I will
disguise myself and go into battle, but you wear your robes.” And the king
of Israel disguised himself, and they went into battle. 30 Now the king of
Syria had commanded the captains of his chariots, “Fight with neither small
nor great, but only with the king of Israel.” 31 As soon as the captains of the
chariots saw Jehoshaphat, they said, “It is the king of Israel.” So they turned
to fight against him. And Jehoshaphat cried out, and the Lord helped him;
God drew them away from him. 32 For as soon as the captains of the chariots
saw that it was not the king of Israel, they turned back from pursuing him.
33 But a certain man drew his bow at random[1] and struck the king of Israel
between the scale armor and the breastplate. Therefore he said to the driver
of his chariot, “Turn around and carry me out of the battle, for I am
wounded.” 34 And the battle continued that day, and the king of Israel was
propped up in his chariot facing the Syrians until evening. Then at sunset he
died.

Jehoshaphat's Reforms

19 [1]†Jehoshaphat the king of Judah returned in safety to his house in
Jerusalem. [2]‡†But Jehu the son of Hanani the seer went out to meet him and
said to King Jehoshaphat, "Should you help the wicked and love those who
hate the Lord? Because of this, wrath has gone out against you from the
Lord. [3]†Nevertheless, some good is found in you, for you destroyed the
Asherahs out of the land, and have set your heart to seek God."

[4]‡†Jehoshaphat lived at Jerusalem. And he went out again among the
people, from Beersheba to the hill country of Ephraim, and brought them
back to the Lord, the God of their fathers. [5]†He appointed judges in the land
in all the fortified cities of Judah, city by city, [6]†and said to the judges,
"Consider what you do, for you judge not for man but for the Lord. He is
with you in giving judgment. [7]†Now then, let the fear of the Lord be upon
you. Be careful what you do, for there is no injustice with the Lord our God,
or partiality or taking bribes."

[8]‡†Moreover, in Jerusalem Jehoshaphat appointed certain Levites and
priests and heads of families of Israel, to give judgment for the Lord and to
decide disputed cases. They had their seat at Jerusalem. [9]And he charged
them: "Thus you shall do in the fear of the Lord, in faithfulness, and with
your whole heart: [10]†whenever a case comes to you from your brothers who
live in their cities, concerning bloodshed, law or commandment, statutes or
rules, then you shall warn them, that they may not incur guilt before the
Lord and wrath may not come upon you and your brothers. Thus you shall
do, and you will not incur guilt. [11]†And behold, Amariah the chief priest is
over you in all matters of the Lord; and Zebadiah the son of Ishmael, the
governor of the house of Judah, in all the king's matters, and the Levites
will serve you as officers. Deal courageously, and may the Lord be with the
upright!"[1]

Jehoshaphat's Prayer

20 [1]‡†After this the Moabites and Ammonites, and with them some of the Meunites,[2] came against Jehoshaphat for battle. [2]†Some men came and told Jehoshaphat, "A great multitude is coming against you from Edom, [3] from beyond the sea; and, behold, they are in Hazazon-tamar" (that is, Engedi). [3]†Then Jehoshaphat was afraid and set his face to seek the Lord, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah. [4]And Judah assembled to seek help from the Lord; from all the cities of Judah they came to seek the Lord.

[5]†And Jehoshaphat stood in the assembly of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the Lord, before the new court, [6]†and said, "O Lord, God of our fathers, are you not God in heaven? You rule over all the kingdoms of the nations. In your hand are power and might, so that none is able to withstand you. [7]‡†Did you not, our God, drive out the inhabitants of this land before your people Israel, and give it forever to the descendants of Abraham your friend? [8]And they have lived in it and have built for you in it a sanctuary for your name, saying, [9]†'If disaster comes upon us, the sword, judgment,[4] or pestilence, or famine, we will stand before this house and before you—for your name is in this house—and cry out to you in our affliction, and you will hear and save.' [10]†And now behold, the men of Ammon and Moab and Mount Seir, whom you would not let Israel invade when they came from the land of Egypt, and whom they avoided and did not destroy— [11]†behold, they reward us by coming to drive us out of your possession, which you have given us to inherit. [12]†O our God, will you not execute judgment on them? For we are powerless against this great horde that is coming against us. We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you."

[13]‡†Meanwhile all Judah stood before the Lord, with their little ones, their wives, and their children. [14]†And the Spirit of the Lord came upon Jahaziel the son of Zechariah, son of Benaiah, son of Jeiel, son of Mattaniah, a Levite of the sons of Asaph, in the midst of the assembly. [15]And he said, "Listen, all Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem and King Jehoshaphat: Thus says the Lord to you, 'Do not be afraid and do not be dismayed at this great horde, for the battle is not yours but God's.

16 † Tomorrow go down against them. Behold, they will come up by the
ascent of Ziz. You will find them at the end of the valley, east of the
wilderness of Jeruel. 17 You will not need to fight in this battle. Stand firm,
hold your position, and see the salvation of the Lord on your behalf, O
Judah and Jerusalem.' Do not be afraid and do not be dismayed. Tomorrow
go out against them, and the Lord will be with you."

18 Then Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground, and all
Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell down before the Lord,
worshiping the Lord. 19 † And the Levites, of the Kohathites and the
Korahites, stood up to praise the Lord, the God of Israel, with a very loud
voice.

20 † And they rose early in the morning and went out into the wilderness of
Tekoa. And when they went out, Jehoshaphat stood and said, "Hear me,
Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem! Believe in the Lord your God, and you
will be established; believe his prophets, and you will succeed." 21 † And
when he had taken counsel with the people, he appointed those who were to
sing to the Lord and praise him in holy attire, as they went before the army,
and say,

"Give thanks to the Lord,
for his steadfast love endures forever."

22 †† And when they began to sing and praise, the Lord set an ambush against
the men of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah,
so that they were routed. 23 † For the men of Ammon and Moab rose against
the inhabitants of Mount Seir, devoting them to destruction, and when they
had made an end of the inhabitants of Seir, they all helped to destroy one
another.

The Lord Delivers Judah

24 ‡ † When Judah came to the watchtower of the wilderness, they looked
toward the horde, and behold, there[1] were dead bodies lying on the ground;
none had escaped. 25 When Jehoshaphat and his people came to take their
spoil, they found among them, in great numbers, goods, clothing, and
precious things, which they took for themselves until they could carry no
more. They were three days in taking the spoil, it was so much. 26 ‡ † On the
fourth day they assembled in the Valley of Beracah,[2] for there they blessed
the Lord. Therefore the name of that place has been called the Valley of
Beracah to this day. 27 † Then they returned, every man of Judah and
Jerusalem, and Jehoshaphat at their head, returning to Jerusalem with joy,
for the Lord had made them rejoice over their enemies. 28 They came to
Jerusalem with harps and lyres and trumpets, to the house of the Lord.
29 ‡ † And the fear of God came on all the kingdoms of the countries when
they heard that the Lord had fought against the enemies of Israel. 30 So the
realm of Jehoshaphat was quiet, for his God gave him rest all around.

31 Thus Jehoshaphat reigned over Judah. He was thirty-five years old
when he began to reign, and he reigned twenty-five years in Jerusalem. His
mother's name was Azubah the daughter of Shilhi. 32 He walked in the way
of Asa his father and did not turn aside from it, doing what was right in the
sight of the Lord. 33 † The high places, however, were not taken away; the
people had not yet set their hearts upon the God of their fathers.

34 † Now the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, from first to last, are written
in the chronicles of Jehu the son of Hanani, which are recorded in the Book
of the Kings of Israel.

The End of Jehoshaphat's Reign

35 ‡‡‡After this Jehoshaphat king of Judah joined with Ahaziah king of
Israel, who acted wickedly. 36 †He joined him in building ships to go to
Tarshish, and they built the ships in Ezion-geber. 37 †Then Eliezer the son of
Dodavahu of Mareshah prophesied against Jehoshaphat, saying, "Because
you have joined with Ahaziah, the Lord will destroy what you have made."
And the ships were wrecked and were not able to go to Tarshish.

Jehoram Reigns in Judah

21 [1]† Jehoshaphat slept with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the city of David, and Jehoram his son reigned in his place. [2]‡† He had brothers, the sons of Jehoshaphat: Azariah, Jehiel, Zechariah, Azariah, Michael, and Shephatiah; all these were the sons of Jehoshaphat king of Israel.[1] [3]Their father gave them great gifts of silver, gold, and valuable possessions, together with fortified cities in Judah, but he gave the kingdom to Jehoram, because he was the firstborn. [4]When Jehoram had ascended the throne of his father and was established, he killed all his brothers with the sword, and also some of the princes of Israel. [5]Jehoram was thirty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem. [6]† And he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, as the house of Ahab had done, for the daughter of Ahab was his wife. And he did what was evil in the sight of the Lord. [7]† Yet the Lord was not willing to destroy the house of David, because of the covenant that he had made with David, and since he had promised to give a lamp to him and to his sons forever.

[8]‡ In his days Edom revolted from the rule of Judah and set up a king of their own. [9]† Then Jehoram passed over with his commanders and all his chariots, and he rose by night and struck the Edomites who had surrounded him and his chariot commanders. [10]† So Edom revolted from the rule of Judah to this day. At that time Libnah also revolted from his rule, because he had forsaken the Lord, the God of his fathers.

[11]‡† Moreover, he made high places in the hill country of Judah and led the inhabitants of Jerusalem into whoredom and made Judah go astray. [12]‡† And a letter came to him from Elijah the prophet, saying, “Thus says the Lord, the God of David your father, ‘Because you have not walked in the ways of Jehoshaphat your father, or in the ways of Asa king of Judah, [13]but have walked in the way of the kings of Israel and have enticed Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem into whoredom, as the house of Ahab led Israel into whoredom, and also you have killed your brothers, of your father’s house, who were better than yourself, [14]† behold, the Lord will bring a great plague on your people, your children, your wives, and all your

possessions, [15]and you yourself will have a severe sickness with a disease of your bowels, until your bowels come out because of the disease, day by day.’”

[16]‡† And the Lord stirred up against Jehoram the anger[1] of the Philistines and of the Arabians who are near the Ethiopians. [17]† And they came up against Judah and invaded it and carried away all the possessions they found that belonged to the king’s house, and also his sons and his wives, so that no son was left to him except Jehoahaz, his youngest son.

[18]And after all this the Lord struck him in his bowels with an incurable disease. [19]† In the course of time, at the end of two years, his bowels came out because of the disease, and he died in great agony. His people made no fire in his honor, like the fires made for his fathers. [20]He was thirty-two years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem. And he departed with no one’s regret. They buried him in the city of David, but not in the tombs of the kings.

Ahaziah Reigns in Judah

22 [1]‡‡‡And the inhabitants of Jerusalem made Ahaziah, his youngest
son, king in his place, for the band of men that came with the Arabians to
the camp had killed all the older sons. So Ahaziah the son of Jehoram king
of Judah reigned. [2]‡Ahaziah was twenty-two years old when he began to
reign, and he reigned one year in Jerusalem. His mother's name was
Athaliah, the granddaughter of Omri. [3]He also walked in the ways of the
house of Ahab, for his mother was his counselor in doing wickedly. [4]He did
what was evil in the sight of the Lord, as the house of Ahab had done. For
after the death of his father they were his counselors, to his undoing. [5]‡He
even followed their counsel and went with Jehoram the son of Ahab king of
Israel to make war against Hazael king of Syria at Ramoth-gilead. And the
Syrians wounded Joram, [6]and he returned to be healed in Jezreel of the
wounds that he had received at Ramah, when he fought against Hazael king
of Syria. And Ahaziah the son of Jehoram king of Judah went down to see
Joram the son of Ahab in Jezreel, because he was wounded.

[7]‡‡But it was ordained by God that the downfall of Ahaziah should come
about through his going to visit Joram. For when he came there, he went out
with Jehoram to meet Jehu the son of Nimshi, whom the Lord had anointed
to destroy the house of Ahab. [8]And when Jehu was executing judgment on
the house of Ahab, he met the princes of Judah and the sons of Ahaziah's
brothers, who attended Ahaziah, and he killed them. [9]He searched for
Ahaziah, and he was captured while hiding in Samaria, and he was brought
to Jehu and put to death. They buried him, for they said, "He is the
grandson of Jehoshaphat, who sought the Lord with all his heart." And the
house of Ahaziah had no one able to rule the kingdom.

Athaliah Reigns in Judah

10 ‡ ‡ ‡Now when Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was
dead, she arose and destroyed all the royal family of the house of Judah.
11 † But Jehoshabeath,[1] the daughter of the king, took Joash the son of
Ahaziah and stole him away from among the king's sons who were about to
be put to death, and she put him and his nurse in a bedroom. Thus
Jehoshabeath, the daughter of King Jehoram and wife of Jehoiada the priest,
because she was a sister of Ahaziah, hid him[2] from Athaliah, so that she
did not put him to death. 12 And he remained with them six years, hidden in
the house of God, while Athaliah reigned over the land.

Joash Made King

23 [1]‡‡But in the seventh year Jehoiada took courage and entered into
a covenant with the commanders of hundreds, Azariah the son of Jeroham,
Ishmael the son of Jehohanan, Azariah the son of Obed, Maaseiah the son
of Adaiah, and Elishaphat the son of Zichri. [2]‡And they went about through
Judah and gathered the Levites from all the cities of Judah, and the heads of
fathers' houses of Israel, and they came to Jerusalem. [3] † And all the
assembly made a covenant with the king in the house of God. And
Jehoiada[3] said to them, "Behold, the king's son! Let him reign, as the Lord
spoke concerning the sons of David. [4]‡‡This is the thing that you shall do:
of you priests and Levites who come off duty on the Sabbath, one third
shall be gatekeepers, [5]†and one third shall be at the king's house and one
third at the Gate of the Foundation. And all the people shall be in the courts
of the house of the Lord. [6]†Let no one enter the house of the Lord except the
priests and ministering Levites. They may enter, for they are holy, but all
the people shall keep the charge of the Lord. [7]†The Levites shall surround
the king, each with his weapons in his hand. And whoever enters the house
shall be put to death. Be with the king when he comes in and when he goes
out."

[8]†The Levites and all Judah did according to all that Jehoiada the priest
commanded, and they each brought his men, who were to go off duty on the
Sabbath, with those who were to come on duty on the Sabbath, for Jehoiada
the priest did not dismiss the divisions. [9]†And Jehoiada the priest gave to
the captains the spears and the large and small shields that had been King
David's, which were in the house of God. [10]And he set all the people as a
guard for the king, every man with his weapon in his hand, from the south
side of the house to the north side of the house, around the altar and the
house. [11]†Then they brought out the king's son and put the crown on him
and gave him the testimony. And they proclaimed him king, and Jehoiada
and his sons anointed him, and they said, "Long live the king."

Athaliah Executed

12 When Athaliah heard the noise of the people running and praising the
king, she went into the house of the Lord to the people. 13 And when she
looked, there was the king standing by his pillar at the entrance, and the
captains and the trumpeters beside the king, and all the people of the land
rejoicing and blowing trumpets, and the singers with their musical
instruments leading in the celebration. And Athaliah tore her clothes and
cried, “Treason! Treason!” 14 Then Jehoiada the priest brought out the
captains who were set over the army, saying to them, “Bring her out
between the ranks, and anyone who follows her is to be put to death with
the sword.” For the priest said, “Do not put her to death in the house of the
Lord.” 15 So they laid hands on her,[1] and she went into the entrance of the
horse gate of the king’s house, and they put her to death there.

Jehoiada's Reforms

16 ✝✝✝And Jehoiada made a covenant between himself and all the people
and the king that they should be the Lord's people. 17 ✝Then all the people
went to the house of Baal and tore it down; his altars and his images they
broke in pieces, and they killed Mattan the priest of Baal before the altars.
18 ✝And Jehoiada posted watchmen for the house of the Lord under the
direction of the Levitical priests and the Levites whom David had organized
to be in charge of the house of the Lord, to offer burnt offerings to the Lord,
as it is written in the Law of Moses, with rejoicing and with singing,
according to the order of David. 19 He stationed the gatekeepers at the gates
of the house of the Lord so that no one should enter who was in any way
unclean. 20 ✝And he took the captains, the nobles, the governors of the
people, and all the people of the land, and they brought the king down from
the house of the Lord, marching through the upper gate to the king's house.
And they set the king on the royal throne. 21 So all the people of the land
rejoiced, and the city was quiet after Athaliah had been put to death with the
sword.

Joash Repairs the Temple

24 [1]†††Joash[2] was seven years old when he began to reign, and he
reigned forty years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Zibiah of
Beersheba. [2]And Joash did what was right in the eyes of the Lord all the
days of Jehoiada the priest. [3]Jehoiada got for him two wives, and he had
sons and daughters.

[4]†After this Joash decided to restore the house of the Lord. [5]††And he
gathered the priests and the Levites and said to them, "Go out to the cities
of Judah and gather from all Israel money to repair the house of your God
from year to year, and see that you act quickly." But the Levites did not act
quickly. [6]So the king summoned Jehoiada the chief and said to him, "Why
have you not required the Levites to bring in from Judah and Jerusalem the
tax levied by Moses, the servant of the Lord, and the congregation of Israel
for the tent of testimony?" [7]†For the sons of Athaliah, that wicked woman,
had broken into the house of God, and had also used all the dedicated things
of the house of the Lord for the Baals.

[8]†So the king commanded, and they made a chest and set it outside the
gate of the house of the Lord. [9]And proclamation was made throughout
Judah and Jerusalem to bring in for the Lord the tax that Moses the servant
of God laid on Israel in the wilderness. [10]†And all the princes and all the
people rejoiced and brought their tax and dropped it into the chest until they
had finished.[1] [11]†And whenever the chest was brought to the king's officers
by the Levites, when they saw that there was much money in it, the king's
secretary and the officer of the chief priest would come and empty the chest
and take it and return it to its place. Thus they did day after day, and
collected money in abundance. [12]†And the king and Jehoiada gave it to
those who had charge of the work of the house of the Lord, and they hired
masons and carpenters to restore the house of the Lord, and also workers in
iron and bronze to repair the house of the Lord. [13]So those who were
engaged in the work labored, and the repairing went forward in their hands,
and they restored the house of God to its proper condition and strengthened
it. [14]†And when they had finished, they brought the rest of the money before
the king and Jehoiada, and with it were made utensils for the house of the

Lord, both for the service and for the burnt offerings, and dishes for incense and vessels of gold and silver. And they offered burnt offerings in the house of the Lord regularly all the days of Jehoiada.

15 ‡† But Jehoiada grew old and full of days, and died. He was 130 years old at his death. 16 † And they buried him in the city of David among the kings, because he had done good in Israel, and toward God and his house.

17 Now after the death of Jehoiada the princes of Judah came and paid homage to the king. Then the king listened to them. 18 † And they abandoned the house of the Lord, the God of their fathers, and served the Asherim and the idols. And wrath came upon Judah and Jerusalem for this guilt of theirs. 19 † Yet he sent prophets among them to bring them back to the Lord. These testified against them, but they would not pay attention.

Joash’s Treachery

20 † Then the Spirit of God clothed Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the
priest, and he stood above the people, and said to them, “Thus says God,
‘Why do you break the commandments of the Lord, so that you cannot
prosper? Because you have forsaken the Lord, he has forsaken you.’” 21 †But
they conspired against him, and by command of the king they stoned him
with stones in the court of the house of the Lord. 22 †Thus Joash the king did
not remember the kindness that Jehoiada, Zechariah’s father, had shown
him, but killed his son. And when he was dying, he said, “May the Lord see
and avenge!”[1]

Joash Assassinated

23 ‡ ‡ † At the end of the year the army of the Syrians came up against
Joash. They came to Judah and Jerusalem and destroyed all the princes of
the people from among the people and sent all their spoil to the king of
Damascus. 24 † Though the army of the Syrians had come with few men, the
LORD delivered into their hand a very great army, because Judah[2] had
forsaken the LORD, the God of their fathers. Thus they executed judgment on
Joash.
25 † When they had departed from him, leaving him severely wounded, his
servants conspired against him because of the blood of the son[3] of Jehoiada
the priest, and killed him on his bed. So he died, and they buried him in the
city of David, but they did not bury him in the tombs of the kings. 26 Those
who conspired against him were Zabad the son of Shimeath the Ammonite,
and Jehozabad the son of Shim-
rith the Moabite. 27 † Accounts of his sons and of the many oracles against
him and of the rebuilding[4] of the house of God are written in the Story of
the Book of the Kings. And Amaziah his son reigned in his place.

Amaziah Reigns in Judah

25 [1]‡†Amaziah was twenty-five years old when he began to reign,
and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was
Jehoaddan of Jerusalem. [2]†And he did what was right in the eyes of the
Lord, yet not with a whole heart. [3]And as soon as the royal power was
firmly his, he killed his servants who had struck down the king his father.
[4]†But he did not put their children to death, according to what is written in
the Law, in the Book of Moses, where the Lord commanded, "Fathers shall
not die because of their children, nor children die because of their fathers,
but each one shall die for his own sin."

Amaziah’s Victories

5 ‡†Then Amaziah assembled the men of Judah and set them by fathers’
houses under commanders of thousands and of hundreds for all Judah and
Benjamin. He mustered those twenty years old and upward, and found that
they were 300,000 choice men, fit for war, able to handle spear and shield.
6 †He hired also 100,000 mighty men of valor from Israel for 100 talents[5] of
silver. 7 †But a man of God came to him and said, “O king, do not let the
army of Israel go with you, for the Lord is not with Israel, with all these
Ephraimites. 8 But go, act, be strong for the battle. Why should you suppose
that God will cast you down before the enemy? For God has power to help
or to cast down.” 9 †And Amaziah said to the man of God, “But what shall
we do about the hundred talents that I have given to the army of Israel?”
The man of God answered, “The Lord is able to give you much more than
this.” 10 †Then Amaziah discharged the army that had come to him from
Ephraim to go home again. And they became very angry with Judah and
returned home in fierce anger. 11 †But Amaziah took courage and led out his
people and went to the Valley of Salt and struck down 10,000 men of Seir.
12 †The men of Judah captured another 10,000 alive and took them to the top
of a rock and threw them down from the top of the rock, and they were all
dashed to pieces. 13 †But the men of the army whom Amaziah sent back, not
letting them go with him to battle, raided the cities of Judah, from Samaria
to Beth-horon, and struck down 3,000 people in them and took much spoil.

Amaziah's Idolatry

14 †After Amaziah came from striking down the Edomites, he brought the
gods of the men of Seir and set them up as his gods and worshiped them,
making offerings to them. 15 ††Therefore the Lord was angry with Amaziah
and sent to him a prophet, who said to him, "Why have you sought the gods
of a people who did not deliver their own people from your hand?" 16 †But
as he was speaking, the king said to him, "Have we made you a royal
counselor? Stop! Why should you be struck down?" So the prophet stopped,
but said, "I know that God has determined to destroy you, because you have
done this and have not listened to my counsel."

Israel Defeats Amaziah

17 ‡ † Then Amaziah king of Judah took counsel and sent to Joash the son
of Jehoahaz, son of Jehu, king of Israel, saying, “Come, let us look one
another in the face.” 18 † And Joash the king of Israel sent word to Amaziah
king of Judah, “A thistle on Lebanon sent to a cedar on Lebanon, saying,
‘Give your daughter to my son for a wife,’ and a wild beast of Lebanon
passed by and trampled down the thistle. 19 You say, ‘See, I[1] have struck
down Edom,’ and your heart has lifted you up in boastfulness. But now stay
at home. Why should you provoke trouble so that you fall, you and Judah
with you?”

20 † But Amaziah would not listen, for it was of God, in order that he might
give them into the hand of their enemies, because they had sought the gods
of Edom. 21 † So Joash king of Israel went up, and he and Amaziah king of
Judah faced one another in battle at Beth-shemesh, which belongs to Judah.
22 † And Judah was defeated by Israel, and every man fled to his home.
23 † And Joash king of Israel captured Amaziah king of Judah, the son of
Joash, son of Ahaziah, at Beth-shemesh, and brought him to Jerusalem and
broke down the wall of Jerusalem for 400 cubits,[2] from the Ephraim Gate
to the Corner Gate. 24 † And he seized all the gold and silver, and all the
vessels that were found in the house of God, in the care of Obed-edom. He
seized also the treasuries of the king’s house, also hostages, and he returned
to Samaria.

25 Amaziah the son of Joash, king of Judah, lived fifteen years after the
death of Joash the son of Jehoahaz, king of Israel. 26 † Now the rest of the
deeds of Amaziah, from first to last, are they not written in the Book of the
Kings of Judah and Israel? 27 † From the time when he turned away from the
Lord they made a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem, and he fled to
Lachish. But they sent after him to Lachish and put him to death there.
28 † And they brought him upon horses, and he was buried with his fathers in
the city of David.[1]

Uzziah Reigns in Judah

26 [1]†And all the people of Judah took Uzziah, who was sixteen years
old, and made him king instead of his father Amaziah. [2]†He built Eloth and
restored it to Judah, after the king slept with his fathers. [3]‡Uzziah was
sixteen years old when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty-two years in
Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jecoliah of Jerusalem. [4]And he did what
was right in the eyes of the Lord, according to all that his father Amaziah
had done. [5]‡†He set himself to seek God in the days of Zechariah, who
instructed him in the fear of God, and as long as he sought the Lord, God
made him prosper.

[6]†He went out and made war against the Philistines and broke through
the wall of Gath and the wall of Jabneh and the wall of Ashdod, and he built
cities in the territory of Ashdod and elsewhere among the Philistines. [7]†God
helped him against the Philistines and against the Arabians who lived in
Gurbaal and against the Meunites. [8]‡The Ammonites paid tribute to Uzziah,
and his fame spread even to the border of Egypt, for he became very strong.
[9]†Moreover, Uzziah built towers in Jerusalem at the Corner Gate and at the
Valley Gate and at the Angle, and fortified them. [10]†And he built towers in
the wilderness and cut out many cisterns, for he had large herds, both in the
Shephelah and in the plain, and he had farmers and vinedressers in the hills
and in the fertile lands, for he loved the soil. [11]‡Moreover, Uzziah had an
army of soldiers, fit for war, in divisions according to the numbers in the
muster made by Jeiel the secretary and Maaseiah the officer, under the
direction of Hananiah, one of the king's commanders. [12]The whole number
of the heads of fathers' houses of mighty men of valor was 2,600. [13]†Under
their command was an army of 307,500, who could make war with mighty
power, to help the king against the enemy. [14]†And Uzziah prepared for all
the army shields, spears, helmets, coats of mail, bows, and stones for
slinging. [15]†In Jerusalem he made engines, invented by skillful men, to be
on the towers and the corners, to shoot arrows and great stones. And his
fame spread far, for he was marvelously helped, till he was strong.

Uzziah's Pride and Punishment

16 †But when he was strong, he grew proud, to his destruction. For he was
unfaithful to the Lord his God and entered the temple of the Lord to burn
incense on the altar of incense. 17But Azariah the priest went in after him,
with eighty priests of the Lord who were men of valor, 18and they withstood
King Uzziah and said to him, "It is not for you, Uzziah, to burn incense to
the Lord, but for the priests, the sons of Aaron, who are consecrated to burn
incense. Go out of the sanctuary, for you have done wrong, and it will bring
you no honor from the Lord God." 19†Then Uzziah was angry. Now he had a
censer in his hand to burn incense, and when he became angry with the
priests, leprosy[1] broke out on his forehead in the presence of the priests in
the house of the Lord, by the altar of incense. 20And Azariah the chief priest
and all the priests looked at him, and behold, he was leprous in his
forehead! And they rushed him out quickly, and he himself hurried to go
out, because the Lord had struck him. 21†And King Uzziah was a leper to
the day of his death, and being a leper lived in a separate house, for he was
excluded from the house of the Lord. And Jotham his son was over the
king's household, governing the people of the land.

22†Now the rest of the acts of Uzziah, from first to last, Isaiah the prophet
the son of Amoz wrote. 23†And Uzziah slept with his fathers, and they
buried him with his fathers in the burial field that belonged to the kings, for
they said, "He is a leper." And Jotham his son reigned in his place.

Jotham Reigns in Judah

27 [1]Jotham was twenty-five years old when he began to reign, and he
reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jerushah the
daughter of Zadok. [2]And he did what was right in the eyes of the Lord
according to all that his father Uzziah had done, except he did not enter the
temple of the Lord. But the people still followed corrupt practices. [3]‡† He
built the upper gate of the house of the Lord and did much building on the
wall of Ophel. [4]† Moreover, he built cities in the hill country of Judah, and
forts and towers on the wooded hills. [5]‡† He fought with the king of the
Ammonites and prevailed against them. And the Ammonites gave him that
year 100 talents[2] of silver, and 10,000 cors[3] of wheat and 10,000 of barley.
The Ammonites paid him the same amount in the second and the third
years. [6]So Jotham became mighty, because he ordered his ways before the
Lord his God. [7]† Now the rest of the acts of Jotham, and all his wars and his
ways, behold, they are written in the Book of the Kings of Israel and Judah.
[8]He was twenty-five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned
sixteen years in Jerusalem. [9]† And Jotham slept with his fathers, and they
buried him in the city of David, and Ahaz his son reigned in his place.

Ahaz Reigns in Judah

28 [1] ‡ † Ahaz was twenty years old when he began to reign, and he
reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. And he did not do what was right in the
eyes of the Lord, as his father David had done, [2] † but he walked in the ways
of the kings of Israel. He even made metal images for the Baals, [3] † and he
made offerings in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom and burned his sons as
an offering,[1] according to the abominations of the nations whom the Lord
drove out before the people of Israel. [4] † And he sacrificed and made
offerings on the high places and on the hills and under every green tree.

Judah Defeated

5 ‡ † Therefore the Lord his God gave him into the hand of the king of
Syria, who defeated him and took captive a great number of his people and
brought them to Damascus. He was also given into the hand of the king of
Israel, who struck him with great force. 6 † For Pekah the son of Remaliah
killed 120,000 from Judah in one day, all of them men of valor, because
they had forsaken the Lord, the God of their fathers. 7 And Zichri, a mighty
man of Ephraim, killed Maaseiah the king's son and Azrikam the
commander of the palace and Elkanah the next in authority to the king.

8 † The men of Israel took captive 200,000 of their relatives, women, sons,
and daughters. They also took much spoil from them and brought the spoil
to Samaria. 9 ‡ † But a prophet of the Lord was there, whose name was Oded,
and he went out to meet the army that came to Samaria and said to them,
"Behold, because the Lord, the God of your fathers, was angry with Judah,
he gave them into your hand, but you have killed them in a rage that has
reached up to heaven. 10 † And now you intend to subjugate the people of
Judah and Jerusalem, male and female, as your slaves. Have you not sins of
your own against the Lord your God? 11 Now hear me, and send back the
captives from your relatives whom you have taken, for the fierce wrath of
the Lord is upon you."

12 Certain chiefs also of the men of Ephraim, Azariah the son of Johanan,
Berechiah the son of Meshillemoth, Jehizkiah the son of Shallum, and
Amasa the son of Hadlai, stood up against those who were coming from the
war 13 † and said to them, "You shall not bring the captives in here, for you
propose to bring upon us guilt against the Lord in addition to our present
sins and guilt. For our guilt is already great, and there is fierce wrath against
Israel." 14 So the armed men left the captives and the spoil before the princes
and all the assembly. 15 † And the men who have been mentioned by name
rose and took the captives, and with the spoil they clothed all who were
naked among them. They clothed them, gave them sandals, provided them
with food and drink, and anointed them, and carrying all the feeble among
them on donkeys, they brought them to their kinsfolk at Jericho, the city of
palm trees. Then they returned to Samaria.

16 †At that time King Ahaz sent to the king[2] of Assyria for help. 17 ††For
the Edomites had again invaded and defeated Judah and carried away
captives. 18 † And the Philistines had made raids on the cities in the
Shephelah and the Negeb of Judah, and had taken Beth-shemesh, Aijalon,
Gederoth, Soco with its villages, Timnah with its villages, and Gimzo with
its villages. And they settled there. 19 †For the Lord humbled Judah because
of Ahaz king of Israel, for he had made Judah act sinfully[1] and had been
very unfaithful to the Lord. 20 ††So Tiglath-pileser[2] king of Assyria came
against him and afflicted him instead of strengthening him. 21 For Ahaz took
a portion from the house of the Lord and the house of the king and of the
princes, and gave tribute to the king of Assyria, but it did not help him.

Ahaz's Idolatry

22 ‡‡In the time of his distress he became yet more faithless to the Lord—
this same King Ahaz. 23 †For he sacrificed to the gods of Damascus that had
defeated him and said, "Because the gods of the kings of Syria helped them,
I will sacrifice to them that they may help me." But they were the ruin of
him and of all Israel. 24 † And Ahaz gathered together the vessels of the
house of God and cut in pieces the vessels of the house of God, and he shut
up the doors of the house of the Lord, and he made himself altars in every
corner of Jerusalem. 25 †In every city of Judah he made high places to make
offerings to other gods, provoking to anger the Lord, the God of his fathers.
26 †Now the rest of his acts and all his ways, from first to last, behold, they
are written in the Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel. 27 †And Ahaz slept
with his fathers, and they buried him in the city, in Jerusalem, for they did
not bring him into the tombs of the kings of Israel. And Hezekiah his son
reigned in his place.

Hezekiah Reigns in Judah

29 [1]‡†Hezekiah began to reign when he was twenty-five years old,
and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was
Abijah[3] the daughter of Zechariah. [2]And he did what was right in the eyes
of the LORD, according to all that David his father had done.

Hezekiah Cleanses the Temple

3 ‡In the first year of his reign, in the first month, he opened the doors of
the house of the Lord and repaired them. 4 †He brought in the priests and the
Levites and assembled them in the square on the east 5 ‡†and said to them,
“Hear me, Levites! Now consecrate yourselves, and consecrate the house of
the Lord, the God of your fathers, and carry out the filth from the Holy
Place. 6 For our fathers have been unfaithful and have done what was evil in
the sight of the Lord our God. They have forsaken him and have turned
away their faces from the habitation of the Lord and turned their backs.
7 †They also shut the doors of the vestibule and put out the lamps and have
not burned incense or offered burnt offerings in the Holy Place to the God
of Israel. 8 †Therefore the wrath of the Lord came on Judah and Jerusalem,
and he has made them an object of horror, of astonishment, and of hissing,
as you see with your own eyes. 9 For behold, our fathers have fallen by the
sword, and our sons and our daughters and our wives are in captivity for
this. 10 †Now it is in my heart to make a covenant with the Lord, the God of
Israel, in order that his fierce anger may turn away from us. 11 †My sons, do
not now be negligent, for the Lord has chosen you to stand in his presence,
to minister to him and to be his ministers and make offerings to him.”
12 ‡†Then the Levites arose, Mahath the son of Amasai, and Joel the son
of Azariah, of the sons of the Kohathites; and of the sons of Merari, Kish
the son of Abdi, and Azariah the son of Jehallelel; and of the Gershonites,
Joah the son of Zimmah, and Eden the son of Joah; 13 and of the sons of
Elizaphan, Shimri and Jeuel; and of the sons of Asaph, Zechariah and
Mattaniah; 14 and of the sons of Heman, Jehuel and Shimei; and of the sons
of Jeduthun, Shemaiah and Uz-
ziel. 15 ‡†They gathered their brothers and consecrated themselves and went
in as the king had commanded, by the words of the Lord, to cleanse the
house of the Lord. 16 †The priests went into the inner part of the house of the
Lord to cleanse it, and they brought out all the uncleanness that they found
in the temple of the Lord into the court of the house of the Lord. And the
Levites took it and carried it out to the brook Kidron. 17 †They began to
consecrate on the first day of the first month, and on the eighth day of the

month they came to the vestibule of the Lord. Then for eight days they consecrated the house of the Lord, and on the sixteenth day of the first month they finished. [18]Then they went in to Hezekiah the king and said, “We have cleansed all the house of the Lord, the altar of burnt offering and all its utensils, and the table for the showbread and all its utensils. [19]All the utensils that King Ahaz discarded in his reign when he was faithless, we have made ready and consecrated, and behold, they are before the altar of the Lord.”

Hezekiah Restores Temple Worship

20 ‡ † Then Hezekiah the king rose early and gathered the officials of the
city and went up to the house of the Lord. 21 † And they brought seven bulls,
seven rams, seven lambs, and seven male goats for a sin offering for the
kingdom and for the sanctuary and for Judah. And he commanded the
priests, the sons of Aaron, to offer them on the altar of the Lord. 22 † So they
slaughtered the bulls, and the priests received the blood and threw it against
the altar. And they slaughtered the rams, and their blood was thrown against
the altar. And they slaughtered the lambs, and their blood was thrown
against the altar. 23 † Then the goats for the sin offering were brought to the
king and the assembly, and they laid their hands on them, 24 † and the priests
slaughtered them and made a sin offering with their blood on the altar, to
make atonement for all Israel. For the king commanded that the burnt
offering and the sin offering should be made for all Israel.

25 And he stationed the Levites in the house of the Lord with cymbals,
harps, and lyres, according to the commandment of David and of Gad the
king's seer and of Nathan the prophet, for the commandment was from the
Lord through his prophets. 26 † The Levites stood with the instruments of
David, and the priests with the trumpets. 27 Then Hezekiah commanded that
the burnt offering be offered on the altar. And when the burnt offering
began, the song to the Lord began also, and the trumpets, accompanied by
the instruments of David king of Israel. 28 The whole assembly worshiped,
and the singers sang, and the trumpeters sounded. All this continued until
the burnt offering was finished. 29 † When the offering was finished, the king
and all who were present with him bowed themselves and worshiped.
30 † And Hezekiah the king and the officials commanded the Levites to sing
praises to the Lord with the words of David and of Asaph the seer. And they
sang praises with gladness, and they bowed down and worshiped.

31 ‡ † Then Hezekiah said, "You have now consecrated yourselves to[1] the
Lord. Come near; bring sacrifices and thank offerings to the house of the
Lord." And the assembly brought sacrifices and thank offerings, and all who
were of a willing heart brought burnt offerings. 32 The number of the burnt
offerings that the assembly brought was 70 bulls, 100 rams, and 200 lambs;

all these were for a burnt offering to the LORD. 33And the consecrated
offerings were 600 bulls and 3,000 sheep. 34†But the priests were too few
and could not flay all the burnt offerings, so until other priests had
consecrated themselves, their brothers the Levites helped them, until the
work was finished—for the Levites were more upright in heart than the
priests in consecrating themselves. 35†Besides the great number of burnt
offerings, there was the fat of the peace offerings, and there were the drink
offerings for the burnt offerings. Thus the service of the house of the LORD
was restored. 36And Hezekiah and all the people rejoiced because God had
prepared for the people, for the thing came about suddenly.

Passover Celebrated

30 [1]†Hezekiah sent to all Israel and Judah, and wrote letters also to Ephraim and Manasseh, that they should come to the house of the Lord at Jerusalem to keep the Passover to the Lord, the God of Israel. [2]†For the king and his princes and all the assembly in Jerusalem had taken counsel to keep the Passover in the second month— [3]†for they could not keep it at that time because the priests had not consecrated themselves in sufficient number, nor had the people assembled in Jerusalem— [4]and the plan seemed right to the king and all the assembly. [5]† So they decreed to make a proclamation throughout all Israel, from Beersheba to Dan, that the people should come and keep the Passover to the Lord, the God of Israel, at Jerusalem, for they had not kept it as often as prescribed. [6]†So couriers went throughout all Israel and Judah with letters from the king and his princes, as the king had commanded, saying, "O people of Israel, return to the Lord, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, that he may turn again to the remnant of you who have escaped from the hand of the kings of Assyria. [7]Do not be like your fathers and your brothers, who were faithless to the Lord God of their fathers, so that he made them a desolation, as you see. [8]†Do not now be stiff-necked as your fathers were, but yield yourselves to the Lord and come to his sanctuary, which he has consecrated forever, and serve the Lord your God, that his fierce anger may turn away from you. [9]†For if you return to the Lord, your brothers and your children will find compassion with their captors and return to this land. For the Lord your God is gracious and merciful and will not turn away his face from you, if you return to him."

[10]†So the couriers went from city to city through the country of Ephraim and Manasseh, and as far as Zebulun, but they laughed them to scorn and mocked them. [11]† However, some men of Asher, of Manasseh, and of Zebulun humbled themselves and came to Jerusalem. [12]The hand of God was also on Judah to give them one heart to do what the king and the princes commanded by the word of the Lord.

[13]†And many people came together in Jerusalem to keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread in the second month, a very great assembly. [14]†They set to work and removed the altars that were in Jerusalem, and all the altars for

burning incense they took away and threw into the Kidron Valley. 15 ‡ † And they slaughtered the Passover lamb on the fourteenth day of the second month. And the priests and the Levites were ashamed, so that they consecrated themselves and brought burnt offerings into the house of the Lord. 16 † They took their accustomed posts according to the Law of Moses the man of God. The priests threw the blood that they received from the hand of the Levites. 17 For there were many in the assembly who had not consecrated themselves. Therefore the Levites had to slaughter the Passover lamb for everyone who was not clean, to consecrate it to the Lord. 18 † For a majority of the people, many of them from Ephraim, Manasseh, Issachar, and Zebulun, had not cleansed themselves, yet they ate the Passover otherwise than as prescribed. For Hezekiah had prayed for them, saying, "May the good Lord pardon everyone 19 † who sets his heart to seek God, the Lord, the God of his fathers, even though not according to the sanctuary's rules of cleanness."[1] 20 † And the Lord heard Hezekiah and healed the people. 21 † And the people of Israel who were present at Jerusalem kept the Feast of Unleavened Bread seven days with great gladness, and the Levites and the priests praised the Lord day by day, singing with all their might[2] to the Lord. 22 † And Hezekiah spoke encouragingly to all the Levites who showed good skill in the service of the Lord. So they ate the food of the festival for seven days, sacrificing peace offerings and giving thanks to the Lord, the God of their fathers.

23 ‡ † Then the whole assembly agreed together to keep the feast for another seven days. So they kept it for another seven days with gladness. 24 † For Hezekiah king of Judah gave the assembly 1,000 bulls and 7,000 sheep for offerings, and the princes gave the assembly 1,000 bulls and 10,000 sheep. And the priests consecrated themselves in great numbers. 25 † The whole assembly of Judah, and the priests and the Levites, and the whole assembly that came out of Israel, and the sojourners who came out of the land of Israel, and the sojourners who lived in Judah, rejoiced. 26 So there was great joy in Jerusalem, for since the time of Solomon the son of David king of Israel there had been nothing like this in Jerusalem. 27 † Then the priests and the Levites arose and blessed the people, and their voice was heard, and their prayer came to his holy habitation in heaven.

Hezekiah Organizes the Priests

31 [1]†Now when all this was finished, all Israel who were present
went out to the cities of Judah and broke in pieces the pillars and cut down
the Asherim and broke down the high places and the altars throughout all
Judah and Benjamin, and in Ephraim and Manasseh, until they had
destroyed them all. Then all the people of Israel returned to their cities,
every man to his possession.

[2]†And Hezekiah appointed the divisions of the priests and of the Levites,
division by division, each according to his service, the priests and the
Levites, for burnt offerings and peace offerings, to minister in the gates of
the camp of the LORD and to give thanks and praise. [3]†The contribution of
the king from his own possessions was for the burnt offerings: the burnt
offerings of morning and evening, and the burnt offerings for the Sabbaths,
the new moons, and the appointed feasts, as it is written in the Law of the
LORD. [4]‡†And he commanded the people who lived in Jerusalem to give the
portion due to the priests and the Levites, that they might give themselves
to the Law of the LORD. [5]†As soon as the command was spread abroad, the
people of Israel gave in abundance the firstfruits of grain, wine, oil, honey,
and of all the produce of the field. And they brought in abundantly the tithe
of everything. [6]†And the people of Israel and Judah who lived in the cities
of Judah also brought in the tithe of cattle and sheep, and the tithe of the
dedicated things that had been dedicated to the LORD their God, and laid
them in heaps. [7]†In the third month they began to pile up the heaps, and
finished them in the seventh month. [8]†When Hezekiah and the princes came
and saw the heaps, they blessed the LORD and his people Israel. [9]And
Hezekiah questioned the priests and the Levites about the heaps. [10]†Azariah
the chief priest, who was of the house of Zadok, answered him, “Since they
began to bring the contributions into the house of the LORD, we have eaten
and had enough and have plenty left, for the LORD has blessed his people, so
that we have this large amount left.”

[11]†Then Hezekiah commanded them to prepare chambers in the house of
the LORD, and they prepared them. [12]And they faithfully brought in the
contributions, the tithes, and the dedicated things. The chief officer in

charge of them was Conaniah the Levite, with Shimei his brother as second,
13 † while Jehiel, Azaziah, Nahath, Asahel, Jerimoth, Jozabad, Eliel,
Ismachiah, Mahath, and Benaiah were overseers assisting Conaniah and
Shimei his brother, by the appointment of Hezekiah the king and Azariah
the chief officer of the house of God. 14 † And Kore the son of Imnah the
Levite, keeper of the east gate, was over the freewill offerings to God, to
apportion the contribution reserved for the Lord and the most holy
offerings. 15 † Eden, Miniamin, Jeshua, Shemaiah, Amariah, and Shecaniah
were faithfully assisting him in the cities of the priests, to distribute the
portions to their brothers, old and young alike, by divisions, 16 † except those
enrolled by genealogy, males from three years old and upward—all who
entered the house of the Lord as the duty of each day required—for their
service according to their offices, by their divisions. 17 The enrollment of the
priests was according to their fathers' houses; that of the Levites from
twenty years old and upward was according to their offices, by their
divisions. 18 They were enrolled with all their little children, their wives,
their sons, and their daughters, the whole assembly, for they were faithful in
keeping themselves holy. 19 And for the sons of Aaron, the priests, who were
in the fields of common land belonging to their cities, there were men in the
several cities who were designated by name to distribute portions to every
male among the priests and to everyone among the Levites who was
enrolled.

20 † Thus Hezekiah did throughout all Judah, and he did what was good
and right and faithful before the Lord his God. 21 † And every work that he
undertook in the service of the house of God and in accordance with the law
and the commandments, seeking his God, he did with all his heart, and
prospered.

Sennacherib Invades Judah

32 [1]‡†After these things and these acts of faithfulness, Sennacherib
king of Assyria came and invaded Judah and encamped against the fortified
cities, thinking to win them for himself. [2]‡And when Hezekiah saw that
Sennacherib had come and intended to fight against Jerusalem, [3]† he
planned with his officers and his mighty men to stop the water of the
springs that were outside the city; and they helped him. [4]†A great many
people were gathered, and they stopped all the springs and the brook that
flowed through the land, saying, "Why should the kings of Assyria come
and find much water?" [5]†He set to work resolutely and built up all the wall
that was broken down and raised towers upon it,[1] and outside it he built
another wall, and he strengthened the Millo in the city of David. He also
made weapons and shields in abundance. [6]†And he set combat commanders
over the people and gathered them together to him in the square at the gate
of the city and spoke encouragingly to them, saying, [7]† "Be strong and
courageous. Do not be afraid or dismayed before the king of Assyria and all
the horde that is with him, for there are more with us than with him. [8]†With
him is an arm of flesh, but with us is the Lord our God, to help us and to
fight our battles." And the people took confidence from the words of
Hezekiah king of Judah.

Sennacherib Blasphemes

9 ‡† After this, Sennacherib king of Assyria, who was besieging Lachish
with all his forces, sent his servants to Jerusalem to Hezekiah king of Judah
and to all the people of Judah who were in Jerusalem, saying, 10 "Thus says
Sennacherib king of Assyria, 'On what are you trusting, that you endure the
siege in Jerusalem? 11 Is not Hezekiah misleading you, that he may give you
over to die by famine and by thirst, when he tells you, "The Lord our God
will deliver us from the hand of the king of Assyria"? 12 Has not this same
Hezekiah taken away his high places and his altars and commanded Judah
and Jerusalem, "Before one altar you shall worship, and on it you shall burn
your sacrifices"? 13 Do you not know what I and my fathers have done to all
the peoples of other lands? Were the gods of the nations of those lands at all
able to deliver their lands out of my hand? 14 Who among all the gods of
those nations that my fathers devoted to destruction was able to deliver his
people from my hand, that your God should be able to deliver you from my
hand? 15 ‡ Now, therefore, do not let Hezekiah deceive you or mislead you in
this fashion, and do not believe him, for no god of any nation or kingdom
has been able to deliver his people from my hand or from the hand of my
fathers. How much less will your God deliver you out of my hand!'"

16 And his servants said still more against the Lord God and against his
servant Hezekiah. 17 † And he wrote letters to cast contempt on the Lord, the
God of Israel, and to speak against him, saying, "Like the gods of the
nations of the lands who have not delivered their people from my hands, so
the God of Hezekiah will not deliver his people from my hand." 18 † And
they shouted it with a loud voice in the language of Judah to the people of
Jerusalem who were on the wall, to frighten and terrify them, in order that
they might take the city. 19 And they spoke of the God of Jerusalem as they
spoke of the gods of the peoples of the earth, which are the work of men's
hands.

The Lord Delivers Jerusalem

20 ‡ † Then Hezekiah the king and Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz,
prayed because of this and cried to heaven. 21 † And the Lord sent an angel,
who cut off all the mighty warriors and commanders and officers in the
camp of the king of Assyria. So he returned with shame of face to his own
land. And when he came into the house of his god, some of his own sons
struck him down there with the sword. 22 ‡ † So the Lord saved Hezekiah and
the inhabitants of Jerusalem from the hand of Sennacherib king of Assyria
and from the hand of all his enemies, and he provided for them on every
side. 23 And many brought gifts to the Lord to Jerusalem and precious things
to Hezekiah king of Judah, so that he was exalted in the sight of all nations
from that time onward.

Hezekiah's Pride and Achievements

24 ‡‡‡In those days Hezekiah became sick and was at the point of death,
and he prayed to the Lord, and he answered him and gave him a sign. 25But
Hezekiah did not make return according to the benefit done to him, for his
heart was proud. Therefore wrath came upon him and Judah and Jerusalem.
26†But Hezekiah humbled himself for the pride of his heart, both he and the
inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the wrath of the Lord did not come upon
them in the days of Hezekiah.

27 ‡ And Hezekiah had very great riches and honor, and he made for
himself treasuries for silver, for gold, for precious stones, for spices, for
shields, and for all kinds of costly vessels; 28storehouses also for the yield of
grain, wine, and oil; and stalls for all kinds of cattle, and sheepfolds. 29He
likewise provided cities for himself, and flocks and herds in abundance, for
God had given him very great possessions. 30†This same Hezekiah closed
the upper outlet of the waters of Gihon and directed them down to the west
side of the city of David. And Hezekiah prospered in all his works. 31And so
in the matter of the envoys of the princes of Babylon, who had been sent to
him to inquire about the sign that had been done in the land, God left him to
himself, in order to test him and to know all that was in his heart.

32†Now the rest of the acts of Hezekiah and his good deeds, behold, they
are written in the vision of Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz, in the Book
of the Kings of Judah and Israel. 33†And Hezekiah slept with his fathers,
and they buried him in the upper part of the tombs of the sons of David, and
all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem did him honor at his death. And
Manasseh his son reigned in his place.

Manasseh Reigns in Judah

33 [1]†††Manasseh was twelve years old when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty-five years in Jerusalem. [2]†And he did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, according to the abominations of the nations whom the Lord drove out before the people of Israel. [3]†For he rebuilt the high places that his father Hezekiah had broken down, and he erected altars to the Baals, and made Asherahs, and worshiped all the host of heaven and served them. [4]And he built altars in the house of the Lord, of which the Lord had said, "In Jerusalem shall my name be forever." [5]†And he built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the Lord. [6]†And he burned his sons as an offering in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, and used fortune-telling and omens and sorcery, and dealt with mediums and with necromancers. He did much evil in the sight of the Lord, provoking him to anger. [7]And the carved image of the idol that he had made he set in the house of God, of which God said to David and to Solomon his son, "In this house, and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, I will put my name forever, [8]and I will no more remove the foot of Israel from the land that I appointed for your fathers, if only they will be careful to do all that I have commanded them, all the law, the statutes, and the rules given through Moses." [9]† Manasseh led Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem astray, to do more evil than the nations whom the Lord destroyed before the people of Israel.

Manasseh’s Repentance

10 ‡ † The Lord spoke to Manasseh and to his people, but they paid no
attention. 11 † Therefore the Lord brought upon them the commanders of the
army of the king of Assyria, who captured Manasseh with hooks and bound
him with chains of bronze and brought him to Babylon. 12 ‡ † And when he
was in distress, he entreated the favor of the Lord his God and humbled
himself greatly before the God of his fathers. 13 He prayed to him, and God
was moved by his entreaty and heard his plea and brought him again to
Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the Lord was God.
14 † Afterward he built an outer wall for the city of David west of Gihon,
in the valley, and for the entrance into the Fish Gate, and carried it around
Ophel, and raised it to a very great height. He also put commanders of the
army in all the fortified cities in Judah. 15 † And he took away the foreign
gods and the idol from the house of the Lord, and all the altars that he had
built on the mountain of the house of the Lord and in Jerusalem, and he
threw them outside of the city. 16 † He also restored the altar of the Lord and
offered on it sacrifices of peace offerings and of thanksgiving, and he
commanded Judah to serve the Lord, the God of Israel. 17 † Nevertheless, the
people still sacrificed at the high places, but only to the Lord their God.
18 † Now the rest of the acts of Manasseh, and his prayer to his God, and
the words of the seers who spoke to him in the name of the Lord, the God of
Israel, behold, they are in the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel. 19 † And his
prayer, and how God was moved by his entreaty, and all his sin and his
faithlessness, and the sites on which he built high places and set up the
Asherim and the images, before he humbled himself, behold, they are
written in the Chronicles of the Seers.[1] 20 † So Manasseh slept with his
fathers, and they buried him in his house, and Amon his son reigned in his
place.

Amon’s Reign and Death

21 ‡ ‡ Amon was twenty-two years old when he began to reign, and he
reigned two years in Jerusalem. 22 And he did what was evil in the sight of
the Lord, as Manasseh his father had done. Amon sacrificed to all the
images that Manasseh his father had made, and served them. 23 And he did
not humble himself before the Lord, as Manasseh his father had humbled
himself, but this Amon incurred guilt more and more. 24 And his servants
conspired against him and put him to death in his house. 25 But the people of
the land struck down all those who had conspired against King Amon. And
the people of the land made Josiah his son king in his place.

Josiah Reigns in Judah

34 [1]‡‡Josiah was eight years old when he began to reign, and he
reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem. [2]†And he did what was right in the
eyes of the Lord, and walked in the ways of David his father; and he did not
turn aside to the right hand or to the left. [3]†For in the eighth year of his
reign, while he was yet a boy, he began to seek the God of David his father,
and in the twelfth year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem of the high
places, the Asherim, and the carved and the metal images. [4]† And they
chopped down the altars of the Baals in his presence, and he cut down the
incense altars that stood above them. And he broke in pieces the Asherim
and the carved and the metal images, and he made dust of them and
scattered it over the graves of those who had sacrificed to them. [5]†He also
burned the bones of the priests on their altars and cleansed Judah and
Jerusalem. [6]‡‡And in the cities of Manasseh, Ephraim, and Simeon, and as
far as Naphtali, in their ruins[2] all around, [7]he broke down the altars and
beat the Asherim and the images into powder and cut down all the incense
altars throughout all the land of Israel. Then he returned to Jerusalem.

The Book of the Law Found

8 †‡†Now in the eighteenth year of his reign, when he had cleansed the
land and the house, he sent Shaphan the son of Azaliah, and Maaseiah the
governor of the city, and Joah the son of Joahaz, the recorder, to repair the
house of the Lord his God. 9†They came to Hilkiah the high priest and gave
him the money that had been brought into the house of God, which the
Levites, the keepers of the threshold, had collected from Manasseh and
Ephraim and from all the remnant of Israel and from all Judah and
Benjamin and from the inhabitants of Jerusalem. 10And they gave it to the
workmen who were working in the house of the Lord. And the workmen
who were working in the house of the Lord gave it for repairing and
restoring the house. 11†They gave it to the carpenters and the builders to buy
quarried stone, and timber for binders and beams for the buildings that the
kings of Judah had let go to ruin. 12†And the men did the work faithfully.
Over them were set Jahath and Obadiah the Levites, of the sons of Merari,
and Zechariah and Meshullam, of the sons of the Kohathites, to have
oversight. The Levites, all who were skillful with instruments of music,
13†were over the burden-bearers and directed all who did work in every kind
of service, and some of the Levites were scribes and officials and
gatekeepers.

14†While they were bringing out the money that had been brought into the
house of the Lord, Hilkiah the priest found the Book of the Law of the Lord
given through Moses. 15Then Hilkiah answered and said to Shaphan the
secretary, “I have found the Book of the Law in the house of the Lord.” And
Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan. 16Shaphan brought the book to the king,
and further reported to the king, “All that was committed to your servants
they are doing. 17They have emptied out the money that was found in the
house of the Lord and have given it into the hand of the overseers and the
workmen.” 18Then Shaphan the secretary told the king, “Hilkiah the priest
has given me a book.” And Shaphan read from it before the king.

19†And when the king heard the words of the Law, he tore his clothes.
20†And the king commanded Hilkiah, Ahikam the son of Shaphan, Abdon
the son of Micah, Shaphan the secretary, and Asaiah the king’s servant,

saying, [21] † "Go, inquire of the Lord for me and for those who are left in Israel and in Judah, concerning the words of the book that has been found. For great is the wrath of the Lord that is poured out on us, because our fathers have not kept the word of the Lord, to do according to all that is written in this book."

Huldah Prophesies Disaster

22 ‡ † So Hilkiah and those whom the king had sent[1] went to Huldah the
prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of Tokhath, son of Hasrah, keeper
of the wardrobe (now she lived in Jerusalem in the Second Quarter) and
spoke to her to that effect. 23 And she said to them, “Thus says the Lord, the
God of Israel: ‘Tell the man who sent you to me, 24 † Thus says the Lord,
Behold, I will bring disaster upon this place and upon its inhabitants, all the
curses that are written in the book that was read before the king of Judah.
25 † Because they have forsaken me and have made offerings to other gods,
that they might provoke me to anger with all the works of their hands,
therefore my wrath will be poured out on this place and will not be
quenched. 26 † But to the king of Judah, who sent you to inquire of the Lord,
thus shall you say to him, Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: Regarding
the words that you have heard, 27 † because your heart was tender and you
humbled yourself before God when you heard his words against this place
and its inhabitants, and you have humbled yourself before me and have torn
your clothes and wept before me, I also have heard you, declares the Lord.
28 † Behold, I will gather you to your fathers, and you shall be gathered to
your grave in peace, and your eyes shall not see all the disaster that I will
bring upon this place and its inhabitants.’” And they brought back word to
the king.

29 ‡ Then the king sent and gathered together all the elders of Judah and
Jerusalem. 30 † And the king went up to the house of the Lord, with all the
men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem and the priests and the
Levites, all the people both great and small. And he read in their hearing all
the words of the Book of the Covenant that had been found in the house of
the Lord. 31 And the king stood in his place and made a covenant before the
Lord, to walk after the Lord and to keep his commandments and his
testimonies and his statutes, with all his heart and all his soul, to perform
the words of the covenant that were written in this book. 32 ‡ Then he made
all who were present in Jerusalem and in Benjamin join in it. And the
inhabitants of Jerusalem did according to the covenant of God, the God of
their fathers. 33 † And Josiah took away all the abominations from all the

territory that belonged to the people of Israel and made all who were present in Israel serve the LORD their God. All his days they did not turn away from following the LORD, the God of their fathers.

Josiah Keeps the Passover

35 [1]‡†Josiah kept a Passover to the Lord in Jerusalem. And they slaughtered the Passover lamb on the fourteenth day of the first month. [2]‡He appointed the priests to their offices and encouraged them in the service of the house of the Lord. [3]†And he said to the Levites who taught all Israel and who were holy to the Lord, “Put the holy ark in the house that Solomon the son of David, king of Israel, built. You need not carry it on your shoulders. Now serve the Lord your God and his people Israel. [4]‡†Prepare yourselves according to your fathers’ houses by your divisions, as prescribed in the writing of David king of Israel and the document of Solomon his son. [5]And stand in the Holy Place according to the groupings of the fathers’ houses of your brothers the lay people, and according to the division of the Levites by fathers’ household. [6]†And slaughter the Passover lamb, and consecrate yourselves, and prepare for your brothers, to do according to the word of the Lord by Moses.”

[7]†Then Josiah contributed to the lay people, as Passover offerings for all who were present, lambs and young goats from the flock to the number of 30,000, and 3,000 bulls; these were from the king’s possessions. [8]And his officials contributed willingly to the people, to the priests, and to the Levites. Hilkiah, Zechariah, and Jehiel, the chief officers of the house of God, gave to the priests for the Passover offerings 2,600 Passover lambs and 300 bulls. [9]Conaniah also, and Shemaiah and Nethanel his brothers, and Hashabiah and Jeiel and Jozabad, the chiefs of the Levites, gave to the Levites for the Passover offerings 5,000 lambs and young goats and 500 bulls.

[10]When the service had been prepared for, the priests stood in their place, and the Levites in their divisions according to the king’s command. [11]†And they slaughtered the Passover lamb, and the priests threw the blood that they received from them while the Levites flayed the sacrifices. [12]†And they set aside the burnt offerings that they might distribute them according to the groupings of the fathers’ houses of the lay people, to offer to the Lord, as it is written in the Book of Moses. And so they did with the bulls. [13]†And they roasted the Passover lamb with fire according to the rule; and they boiled

the holy offerings in pots, in cauldrons, and in pans, and carried them quickly to all the lay people. [14]†And afterward they prepared for themselves and for the priests, because the priests, the sons of Aaron, were offering the burnt offerings and the fat parts until night; so the Levites prepared for themselves and for the priests, the sons of Aaron. [15]†The singers, the sons of Asaph, were in their place according to the command of David, and Asaph, and Heman, and Jeduthun the king's seer; and the gatekeepers were at each gate. They did not need to depart from their service, for their brothers the Levites prepared for them.

[16]So all the service of the Lord was prepared that day, to keep the Passover and to offer burnt offerings on the altar of the Lord, according to the command of King Josiah. [17]And the people of Israel who were present kept the Passover at that time, and the Feast of Unleavened Bread seven days. [18]No Passover like it had been kept in Israel since the days of Samuel the prophet. None of the kings of Israel had kept such a Passover as was kept by Josiah, and the priests and the Levites, and all Judah and Israel who were present, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. [19]In the eighteenth year of the reign of Josiah this Passover was kept.

Josiah Killed in Battle

20 ‡ † After all this, when Josiah had prepared the temple, Neco king of
Egypt went up to fight at Carchemish on the Euphrates, and Josiah went out
to meet him. 21 ‡ † But he sent envoys to him, saying, “What have we to do
with each other, king of Judah? I am not coming against you this day, but
against the house with which I am at war. And God has commanded me to
hurry. Cease opposing God, who is with me, lest he destroy you.”
22 † Nevertheless, Josiah did not turn away from him, but disguised himself
in order to fight with him. He did not listen to the words of Neco from the
mouth of God, but came to fight in the plain of Megiddo. 23 And the archers
shot King Josiah. And the king said to his servants, “Take me away, for I am
badly wounded.” 24 † So his servants took him out of the chariot and carried
him in his second chariot and brought him to Jerusalem. And he died and
was buried in the tombs of his fathers. All Judah and Jerusalem mourned for
Josiah. 25 † Jeremiah also uttered a lament for Josiah; and all the singing men
and singing women have spoken of Josiah in their laments to this day. They
made these a rule in Israel; behold, they are written in the Laments. 26 ‡ Now
the rest of the acts of Josiah, and his good deeds according to what is
written in the Law of the Lord, 27 † and his acts, first and last, behold, they
are written in the Book of the Kings of Israel and Judah.

Judah's Decline

36 [1]‡‡The people of the land took Jehoahaz the son of Josiah and
made him king in his father's place in Jerusalem. [2]Jehoahaz was twenty-
three years old when he began to reign, and he reigned three months in
Jerusalem. [3]†Then the king of Egypt deposed him in Jerusalem and laid on
the land a tribute of a hundred talents of silver and a talent[1] of gold. [4]†And
the king of Egypt made Eliakim his brother king over Judah and Jerusalem,
and changed his name to Jehoiakim. But Neco took Jehoahaz his brother
and carried him to Egypt.

[5]‡Jehoiakim was twenty-five years old when he began to reign, and he
reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. He did what was evil in the sight of the
Lord his God. [6]†Against him came up Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and
bound him in chains to take him to Babylon. [7]†Nebuchadnezzar also carried
part of the vessels of the house of the Lord to Babylon and put them in his
palace in Babylon. [8]Now the rest of the acts of Jehoiakim, and the
abominations that he did, and what was found against him, behold, they are
written in the Book of the Kings of Israel and Judah. And Jehoiachin his son
reigned in his place.

[9]†Jehoiachin was eighteen[2] years old when he became king, and he
reigned three months and ten days in Jerusalem. He did what was evil in the
sight of the Lord. [10]†In the spring of the year King Nebuchadnezzar sent and
brought him to Babylon, with the precious vessels of the house of the Lord,
and made his brother Zedekiah king over Judah and Jerusalem.

[11]‡Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he began to reign, and he
reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. [12]†He did what was evil in the sight of
the Lord his God. He did not humble himself before Jeremiah the prophet,
who spoke from the mouth of the Lord. [13]‡†He also rebelled against King
Nebuchadnezzar, who had made him swear by God. He stiffened his neck
and hardened his heart against turning to the Lord, the God of Israel. [14]†All
the officers of the priests and the people likewise were exceedingly
unfaithful, following all the abominations of the nations. And they polluted
the house of the Lord that he had made holy in Jerusalem.

15 † The Lord, the God of their fathers, sent persistently to them by his
messengers, because he had compassion on his people and on his dwelling
place. 16 † But they kept mocking the messengers of God, despising his
words and scoffing at his prophets, until the wrath of the Lord rose against
his people, until there was no remedy.

Jerusalem Captured and Burned

17 ‡ ‡ ‡ Therefore he brought up against them the king of the Chaldeans,
who killed their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary
and had no compassion on young man or virgin, old man or aged. He gave
them all into his hand. 18 And all the vessels of the house of God, great and
small, and the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the
king and of his princes, all these he brought to Babylon. 19 † And they burned
the house of God and broke down the wall of Jerusalem and burned all its
palaces with fire and destroyed all its precious vessels. 20 † He took into exile
in Babylon those who had escaped from the sword, and they became
servants to him and to his sons until the establishment of the kingdom of
Persia, 21 † to fulfill the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the
land had enjoyed its Sabbaths. All the days that it lay desolate it kept
Sabbath, to fulfill seventy years.

The Proclamation of Cyrus

22 ‡‡Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom and also put it in writing: 23 ‡“Thus says Cyrus king of Persia, ‘The Lord, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he has charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever is among you of all his people, may the Lord his God be with him. Let him go up.’”

2 Chronicles

The Book named as 2 Chronicles in English Bibles was not called that in the early Hebrew tradition. Both 1 Chronicles and 2 Chronicles were one long document, as the flow of the story itself shows (see outline, pp 630–31). Hebrew scribes titled the work "The Words of the Days" or, less literally, "The Events of the Days Past." The document was divided into two books at a later date. For an introduction to the entire document, see pp 628–31.

Footnotes

Footnotes for 2 Chronicles, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:5 Or *him*
- [1] 1:13 Septuagint, Vulgate; Hebrew *to*
- [2] 1:17 A *shekel* was about 2/5 ounce or 11 grams

Footnotes for 2 Chronicles, Chapter 2

- [3] 2:1 Ch 1:18 in Hebrew
- [4] 2:2 Ch 2:1 in Hebrew
- [5] 2:10 A *cor* was about 6 bushels or 220 liters
- [6] 2:10 A *bath* was about 6 gallons or 22 liters

Footnotes for 2 Chronicles, Chapter 3

- [1] 3:1 Septuagint; Hebrew lacks *the* LORD
- [2] 3:3 Syriac; Hebrew *foundations*
- [3] 3:3 A *cubit* was about 18 inches or 45 centimeters
- [4] 3:4 Compare 1 Kings 6:3; the meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain
- [5] 3:8 A *talent* was about 75 pounds or 34 kilograms
- [6] 3:9 A *shekel* was about 2/5 ounce or 11 grams
- [7] 3:10 Septuagint; the meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain
- [8] 3:10 Hebrew *they overlaid*
- [9] 3:13 Hebrew *they*

- [10] 3:16 Hebrew *chains in the inner sanctuary*

Footnotes for 2 Chronicles, Chapter 4

- [1] 4:1 A *cubit* was about 18 inches or 45 centimeters
- [2] 4:3 Compare 1 Kings 7:24; Hebrew *oxen*; twice in this verse
- [3] 4:5 A *handbreadth* was about 3 inches or 7.5 centimeters
- [4] 4:5 A *bath* was about 6 gallons or 22 liters
- [5] 4:17 Spelled *Zarethan* in 1 Kings 7:46
- [6] 4:22 Compare 1 Kings 7:50; Hebrew *the entrance of the house*

Footnotes for 2 Chronicles, Chapter 5

- [1] 5:9 Hebrew *it is*

Footnotes for 2 Chronicles, Chapter 6

- [1] 6:13 A *cubit* was about 18 inches or 45 centimeters
- [1] 6:26 Septuagint, Vulgate; Hebrew *answer*
- [2] 6:27 Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate (compare 1 Kings 8:36); Hebrew *toward the good way*

Footnotes for 2 Chronicles, Chapter 7

- [1] 7:6 Hebrew *by their hand*
- [1] 7:19 The Hebrew for *you* is plural here

- [2] 7:20 Hebrew *them*; twice in this verse

Footnotes for 2 Chronicles, Chapter 8

- [1] 8:16 Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate; Hebrew *to*
- [2] 8:18 A *talent* was about 75 pounds or 34 kilograms

Footnotes for 2 Chronicles, Chapter 9

- [3] 9:6 Hebrew *their*
- [4] 9:7 Septuagint (compare 1 Kings 10:8); Hebrew *men*
- [5] 9:9 A *talent* was about 75 pounds or 34 kilograms
- [1] 9:15 A *shekel* was about 2/5 ounce or 11 grams
- [2] 9:21 Or *baboons*

Footnotes for 2 Chronicles, Chapter 10

- [1] 10:6 Or *the elders*; also verses 8, 13
- [2] 10:18 Spelled *Adoram* in 1 Kings 12:18

Footnotes for 2 Chronicles, Chapter 11

- [1] 11:23 Hebrew *and sought a multitude of wives*

Footnotes for 2 Chronicles, Chapter 12

- [1] 12:12 Hebrew *good things were found*
- [2] 12:15 After *seer*, Hebrew adds *according to genealogy*
- [3] 12:16 Spelled *Abijam* in 1 Kings 14:31

Footnotes for 2 Chronicles, Chapter 13

- [1] 13:2 Spelled *Maacah* in 1 Kings 15:2
- [2] 13:7 Hebrew *soft of heart*
- [3] 13:9 Hebrew *to fill his hand*
- [4] 13:13 Hebrew *they*
- [1] 13:19 Or *Ephrain*

Footnotes for 2 Chronicles, Chapter 14

- [2] 14:1 Ch 13:23 in Hebrew
- [3] 14:2 Ch 14:1 in Hebrew
- [1] 14:13 Hebrew *they*

Footnotes for 2 Chronicles, Chapter 15

- [1] 15:8 Hebrew *the vestibule of the LORD*

Footnotes for 2 Chronicles, Chapter 16

- [2] 16:3 Or *treaty*; twice in this verse

Footnotes for 2 Chronicles, Chapter 18

- [1] 18:33 Hebrew *in his innocence*

Footnotes for 2 Chronicles, Chapter 19

- [1] 19:11 Hebrew *the good*

Footnotes for 2 Chronicles, Chapter 20

- [2] 20:1 Compare 26:7; Hebrew *Ammonites*
- [3] 20:2 One Hebrew manuscript; most Hebrew manuscripts *Aram* (Syria)
- [4] 20:9 Or *the sword of judgment*
- [1] 20:24 Hebrew *they*
- [2] 20:26 *Beracah* means *blessing*

Footnotes for 2 Chronicles, Chapter 21

- [1] 21:2 That is, Judah
- [1] 21:16 Hebrew *spirit*

Footnotes for 2 Chronicles, Chapter 22

- [1] 22:11 Spelled *Jehosheba* in 2 Kings 11:2
- [2] 22:11 That is, Joash

Footnotes for 2 Chronicles, Chapter 23

- [3] 23:3 Hebrew *he*
- [1] 23:15 Or *they made a passage for her*

Footnotes for 2 Chronicles, Chapter 24

- [2] 24:1 Spelled *Jehoash* in 2 Kings 12:1
- [1] 24:10 Or *until it was full*
- [1] 24:22 Hebrew *and seek*
- [2] 24:24 Hebrew *they*
- [3] 24:25 Septuagint, Vulgate; Hebrew *sons*
- [4] 24:27 Hebrew *founding*

Footnotes for 2 Chronicles, Chapter 25

- [5] 25:6 A *talent* was about 75 pounds or 34 kilograms
- [1] 25:19 Hebrew *you*
- [2] 25:19 A *cubit* was about 18 inches or 45 centimeters
- [1] 25:28 Hebrew *of Judah*

Footnotes for 2 Chronicles, Chapter 26

- [1] 26:19 *Leprosy* was a term for several skin diseases; see Leviticus 13

Footnotes for 2 Chronicles, Chapter 27

- [2] 27:5 A *talent* was about 75 pounds or 34 kilograms
- [3] 27:5 A *cor* was about 6 bushels or 220 liters

Footnotes for 2 Chronicles, Chapter 28

- [1] 28:3 Hebrew *made his sons pass through the fire*
- [2] 28:16 Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate (compare 2 Kings 16:7); Hebrew *kings*
- [1] 28:19 Or *wildly*
- [2] 28:20 Hebrew *Tilgath-pilneser*

Footnotes for 2 Chronicles, Chapter 29

- [3] 29: Spelled *Abi* in 2 Kings 18:2
- [1] 29:31 Hebrew *filled your hand for*

Footnotes for 2 Chronicles, Chapter 30

- [1] 30:19 Hebrew *not according to the cleanness of holiness*
- [2] 30:21 Compare 1 Chronicles 13:8; Hebrew *with instruments of might*

Footnotes for 2 Chronicles, Chapter 32

- [1] 32:5 Vulgate; Hebrew *and raised upon the towers*

Footnotes for 2 Chronicles, Chapter 33

- [1] 33:19 One Hebrew manuscript, Septuagint; most Hebrew manuscripts *of Hozai*

Footnotes for 2 Chronicles, Chapter 34

- [2] 34:6 The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain
- [1] 34:22 Syriac, Vulgate; Hebrew lacks *had sent*

Footnotes for 2 Chronicles, Chapter 36

- [1] 36:3 A *talent* was about 75 pounds or 34 kilograms
- [2] 36:9 Septuagint (compare 2 Kings 24:8); most Hebrew manuscripts *eight*

Study Notes

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Chs 1–9** The reign of Solomon. The Chronicler presents Solomon's reign in a different light than does the author of 1Ki. See "Omissions," p 629. Here the image of Solomon is that of the ideal ruler of an ideal kingdom. Two epochs are closely identified with each other—the reigns of David and Solomon. Everything that is present in David is fully realized in Solomon. David planned the temple; Solomon built it. David came to the throne by acclamation of all Israel; Solomon was acclaimed by all Israel. David was a victorious warrior; Solomon reigned in perfect peace. David established Israel as a world power; Solomon received the bounty of other nations. These chapters provide a glimpse of the fully realized messianic kingdom. If Saul is seen as an example, or type, of rebellion and divine retribution (1Ch 10), then David is the example of restoration. If David is the example of restoration, then Solomon brings the full manifestation of the ultimate kingdom. The reigns of the succeeding kings of Judah would continue the pattern of rebellion, retribution, and restoration, following the types set by Saul and David. At the time the Chronicler writes, the Judeans are awaiting the rise of a new David and the final establishment of the everlasting Kingdom promised to David. So the Church on earth sees in David's Son, the Lord Christ, both the new Davidic age and the coming of the everlasting Solomonic age.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 1:1–13 Similar to 1Ki 2:12–14; 3:1–15; and 4:1, but with significant differences.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 1:1 *God was with him*. See "be with," p 5. *exceedingly great*. Cf vv 7–13.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 1:2 *thousands*. See p 217. *judges*. See note, Jgs 2:16.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 1:3 *high place*. See p 526. *Gibeon*. Chosen because the Tent of Meeting was there, in conformity with Lv 17:8–9. See p 495.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 1:5 *bronze altar*. Made by Bezalel of acacia wood and overlaid with bronze. The king and divinely instituted worship of the Lord are intimately connected.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 1:6 *Solomon … offered*. Though Solomon at times acted in a priestly manner (cf 6:3), the priests likely offered all these

sacrifices on Solomon's behalf.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 1:1–6 The Lord greatly blesses Solomon, who worships at the Tent of Meeting set up at Gibeon. Today, the Lord meets with us and blesses us at the services of His Word and Sacraments. Do not neglect His appointed means of grace. Through these humble means, the Lord grants us the blessings of Jesus' sacrifice. In this way, He meets with us as He did with Solomon. • Greet us, dearest Savior, at the tabernacle of Your Word, by which we may confidently call upon Your name. Amen.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 1:7–10 Solomon's dream in 1Ki 3:5 is described here as a prophetic encounter such as David's. Solomon is the king who sacrifices properly and receives the prophetic word: he becomes a messianic figure as the king, priest, and prophet. See note, 1Ch 25:2.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 1:7 *God appeared*. See note, 1Ki 3:5.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 1:8 *steadfast love*. See p 843.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 1:9 *word to David*. See notes, 2Sm 7:12–14. *numerous as the dust of the earth*. See note, 1Ch 27:23–24.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 1:10 *wisdom*. See pp 775–78. *go out and come in*. Expression for carrying out his public duties. See note, 2Ki 11:8.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 1:11–12 The Lord's reply. The Chronicler's version of Solomon's prayer is abbreviated, as here he asks only for "wisdom and knowledge" (v 10; cf 1Ki 3:9). The Lord not only grants Solomon's request for wisdom but also promises him riches, possessions, and honor greater than any king before or after him. The reign of Solomon is thus established as the ultimate kingdom, never to be equaled by his successors in Judah. Aug: "In the beginning of his reign he was inflamed with a desire for wisdom, but after he had attained it through spiritual love, he lost it through carnal lust" (*NPNF* 1 2:565).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 1:13 The Chronicler does not mention how Solomon displayed his wisdom in the lawsuit of the two women, recorded in 1Ki 3:16–28.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 1:7–13 See application note, 1Ki 3:1–15.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 1:14–17 Catalogs the tremendous wealth Solomon gained in fulfillment of the Lord's promise (v 12). The list is repeated at the end of Solomon's reign (9:25–28). *chariots and horsemen*. See notes, 1Ki 10:26–29. *Shephelah*. See color map 2. *Egypt and Kue*. Buying up Egyptian and Hittite military goods. See color map 3.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 1:14–17 Chronicles emphasizes how Solomon used the Lord's wisdom in the kingly activities of administration and trade, which strengthened his kingdom. As the Lord blesses your service, use your gifts to bless those who work with you and for you. Remember how the Lord works on your behalf in all things, and how He administers the greatest blessings of all: the treasures of His mercy in Christ. • O Lord, I yield my treasure, my life, and all things in wise service to Your kingdom and care for my neighbor. Amen.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 2:1 *purposed to build*. Solomon's first concern was to secure the necessary labor and materials. His appeal to the king of Tyre for aid met with a favorable reply (vv 11–16). See notes, 1Ki 5. *temple*. Hbr "house." *royal palace*. Cf 7:11; 8:1; 9:11. The Chronicler omits the description of the building of the palace given in 1Ki 7:1–12, focusing entirely on Solomon and the temple.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 2:2 Massive workforce is assembled, totaling 150,000 workers plus 3,600 supervisors.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 2:3–10 While related to 1Ki 5:2–11, the material is reorganized. In the Chronicler's account, Solomon initiated the correspondence with Hiram (v 3; cf 1Ki 5:1). The divinely instituted worship rites of the temple and the uniqueness of Israel's God are emphasized in vv 4–6 (but not in 1Ki). Further, the Chronicler connects Solomon's planning to David's by asking for an artisan to join those "whom David my father provided" (v 7). This artisan is skilled in more specialties than 1Ki 7:13–14 reports.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 2:3 *Solomon sent*. Delegation from Hiram assured him that friendly relations between the two nations were to continue (1Ki 5:1). Exchange between Solomon and Hiram (Hbr "Huram") is expanded from 1Ki 5:1–12. *Tyre*. See color map 1.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 2:4 *house for the name of the* LORD. See note, 1Ki 8:18; see also "name," p 843.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 2:8 *algum timber*. See note, 1Ki 10:11.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 2:11–16 Hiram's reply to Solomon. Cf 1Ki 5:7–9.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 2:11–12 The Chronicler notes that Hiram blessed the Lord (see note, 1Ki 5:7) and includes his additional words "God of Israel, who made heaven and earth." The glory of Solomon caused even a pagan king to acknowledge the omnipotence of the Lord.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 2:13 *Huram-abi*. See note, v 3. Abi means "my father" or "master of "; thus, the king's craftsman. The mother of this master craftsman, "a woman of the daughters of Dan" (v 14), apparently also had been a resident of Naphtali (1Ki 7:14).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 2:14 *engraving*. See note, Ex 20:4. See also p 141.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 2:17–18 Cf 1Ki 5:12–18. The Chronicler notes that these were "resident aliens" who were pressed into labor (cf 1Ki 9:20–22).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 2:17 *aliens*. On their identity and number, see notes, 1Ki 5:15–16. In addition to them, "Solomon drafted forced labor out of all Israel" (1Ki 5:13).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Ch 2** See application note, 1Ki 5.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 3:1–5:1 Loosely based on 1Ki 6:1–7:51 but with numerous differences in selected material. Compare the texts by consulting the center column references. These chapters provide the transition from Solomon's ascension to the throne and preparation for building (1Ch 29:21–2Ch 2:18) to the ark's arrival (5:2–6:11) and the dedication of the temple (6:12–7:22). Cf Heb 9.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 3:1–14 Cf 1Ki 6. The Chronicler omits 1Ki 6:4–18, 21–22, 29–38.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 3:1 *Mount Moriah*. Specific location on Mount Zion (see p 844). Only Chronicles mentions this location for the temple, a term that occurs nowhere else in the OT except in the story of Abraham's sacrifice of his son Isaac (see note, Gn 22:2). The Chronicler connects the temple to Abraham's sacrifice of faith and to the Lord's appearance to David. Moriah is not an ordinary site but one marked twice by God's miraculous intervention. The multitude of animal sacrifices to be offered over the centuries in the temple would ultimately end when God provided the final sacrifice, the descendant of Abraham and Isaac, of David and Solomon: Jesus.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 3:2 See "Sequence and Length of Events," p 339.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 3:3 *old standard*. Different standard for the cubit seems to have been in use at the time the writer composed Chronicles. *cubits*. See p cx.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 3:4 See diagram, p 541.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 3:5–7 Some details are unique to 2Ch.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 3:5 *palms and chains*. Decorative designs.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 3:6 *Parvaim*. More commonly called Ophir (1Ch 29:4; 2Ch 8:18).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 3:7 *cherubim*. See note, Ezk 10:1.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 3:9 *gold … nails*. Likely refers to gold plating on the nail heads, because gold is too soft to be used for nails and the amount of gold is relatively small (just over 1 lb).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 3:10–13 See p 141.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 3:14 *Veil.* The curtain in the Most Holy Place (cf Ex 26:31–35; Heb 9). In Herod's temple, it would be torn at the moment of Jesus' death (Mt 27:51; Heb 10:19–25).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 3:15–4:22 Hiram's work in the temple. Cf 1Ki 7:15–50; see note, 2Ch 4:11–16.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 3:15 *two pillars*. Cf 1Ki 7:15–22.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 3:17 *Jachin … Boaz*. See note, 1Ki 7:21; see also diagram, p 672.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Ch 3** Through sacrifices offered by Abraham, David, and now Solomon, the Lord affirms the site for Solomon's temple on Moriah. This third affirmation, in the raising and blessing of Solomon's temple, demonstrates the Lord's patient planning for our salvation in Christ, who gave His life for our sins in view of this hill of sacrifice. • Grant me patience, gracious Lord, for the unfolding of Your plan for Your Church. Amen.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 4:1 *altar*. Cf 1Ki 9:25.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 4:3 *figures of gourds*. Ornamental knobs on the molten sea. Here their shape is said to resemble oxen. In Hbr, the words for "oxen" and "gourds" are similar; a copyist could easily confuse them. Decorative symbols were strung around the 30-cubit circumference of the great basin in a symmetric pattern so that there were 10 in every cubit.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 4:4 *oxen*. See note, 1Ki 7:29–36; see also p 141.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 4:5 *3,000 baths*. See ESV note; see also note, 1Ki 7:26.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 4:6 *sea was for the priests*. Used for ceremonial washing of priests. Other basins were built for washing objects (vv 14–16). In the NT, the priests of God (i.e., believers) are washed not in

a temple basin but in the water of Holy Baptism. Through that Sacrament, as with the priests of ancient Israel, one is made clean to enter God's presence.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 4:7–9 Some of these details are unique to 2Ch. Solomon, as charged by David, precisely followed the plan for the temple.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 4:7 *lampstands*. Divinely mandated plans were given to David (1Ch 28:15), who measured out the gold for the work. The statement "as prescribed" probably applies to the tables and golden basins of v 8 as well (cf 1Ch 28:16–17).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 4:8 *ten tables*. Not mentioned in 1Ki, they seemingly had some connection with the lampstands (v 7). *basins*. See note, v 11.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 4:9 *court of the priests*. Restricted to use by priests, it was smaller than "the great court," where the people assembled and where Solomon erected his bronze platform (6:13).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 4:11–16 While Hiram, the master craftsman, did the work (cf 2:13–14), he did so as a "subcontractor" for King Solomon (vv 11, 16), who remained the primary builder.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 4:11 *pots … shovels … basins*. For handling food, ashes, blood, and whatever else was involved with offering sacrifices. Cf 1Sm 2:12–17; Ezk 46:19–24 for insights into the handling of the sacrifices.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 4:16 *burnished bronze*. Utensils were often wrought from sheets of copper.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 4:17–22 Cf 1Ki 7:46–50. Summary crediting Solomon with the making of all the contents of the temple.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 4:17 *plain of the Jordan … Zeredah*. See note, 1Ki 7:46.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 4:19 *tables*. Only one table is mentioned in 13:11; 29:18; 1Ki 7:48. The 10 tables (cf 1Ch 28:16) for exhibiting the bread of the Presence are not explained.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 4:20 *as prescribed*. See note, v 7.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 4:21 *flowers*. Design element. Cf v 11.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 5:1 *was finished*. Before dedicating the finished temple, Solomon deposited in it "the things that David … had dedicated" to the Lord (cf 1Ch 18:7–11; 22:3–4, 14; 26:26–28; 29:2–5),

giving closure to the story of the building (3:1–5:1). *treasuries*. See note, 1Ki 7:51.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 4:1–5:1 See application note, 1Ki 7:13–51.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 5:2 Cf 7:9. The Chronicler specifically notes that Israel's leaders came to King Solomon. *assembled the elders*. Elders of Israel were gathered in Jerusalem for the Feast of Booths (v 3). See notes, 1Ki 8:1–9:9 for an explanation of the dedicatory rites. *Zion*. See p 844.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 5:3 *feast … in the seventh month*. Feast of Booths. See note, 1Ki 8:2.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 5:4–10 The Chronicler specifies "Levites" rather than "priests" (as in 1Ki) to show precise accord with Mosaic Law. See note, 1Ch 13:9–12.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 5:5 *tent of meeting*. See note, Ex 27:21.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 5:7 *cherubim*. See note, Ezk 10:1.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 5:8 *poles*. Used by the Levites for carrying the ark.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 5:9 *to this day*. See note, 1Ki 8:8.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 5:10 *except the two tablets*. Original contents were the tablets, manna, and Aaron's staff (Ex 16:32–34; 31:18; 32:15–16; Nu 17:10–11; Dt 10:1–5). Some have speculated that the Philistines or the men of Beth-shemesh removed these things when they held the ark (1Sm 4:11; 6:19). *covenant*. See p 127.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 5:11–14 Cf 1Ki 8:10–11. The Chronicler includes further details about the priests and Levites in his characteristic emphasis on their role in Israel's divinely instituted worship of the Lord (see "Authorship and the Author's Interests," p 628). He notes the presence of the cloud, i.e., the glory of the Lord (cf Ex 40:34–38).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 5:11 *all the priests*. In 11b–13a, the writer of Chronicles reports two facts not found in Kings: (1) all the priests and "all the Levitical singers" participated at this occasion, not only those on duty in Jerusalem at the time; (2) the theme song of the singers, accompanied by instrumental music, was a liturgical refrain (v 13b) that David had used (1Ch 16:34; cf Ps 118:1–4, 29). *consecrated*. See p 6. *divisions*. See notes, 1Ch 24:1–19; 24:1–5, 19.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 5:12 *cymbals, harps, and lyres*. See p 993.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 5:13 Cf 1Ch 16:5–43, esp vv 34–36, 42, and notes. *in unison*. Lit, "one voice." *He is good*. The Chronicler uses an excerpt from the very psalms used by Solomon's father, David. Cf 7:1–3. *steadfast love*. See p 843.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 5:14 *cloud … glory*. See notes, Ex 40:34–38.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 5:2–14 See application note, 1Ki 8:1–11.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:1–7:10 Cf 1Ki 8:12–66. The Chronicler adds material from Ps 132; 136 (6:41–42; 7:3b), as well as material characteristic of the Chronicler's theological interests (6:13; 7:1–3, 6; see also "Authorship and the Author's Interests," p 628).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:1–2 Solomon's initial address to the Lord. *dwell in thick darkness*. See note, Ex 20:21.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:3 *turned around*. Solomon apparently faced the altar and temple when directing his praise and worship toward the Lord. He faced the people to speak God's blessing over them. *blessed*. Compare to David's blessing of the people in 1Ch 16:2 (cf 1Ch 15:25–29; 21:26). Like his father, David, Solomon acted as a priestly king. *Israel stood*. See p 1277.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:4–11 The Chronicler utilizes material found in God's message to David in 1Ch 17 and David's words in 1Ch 28:2–7. By using this material, he directly links Solomon and the temple's dedication to the Lord's promises to David.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:5 *My name … there*. See note, 1Ki 8:18; see also "name," p 843. *prince*. Word choice implies that the Lord is the king. See note, 1Sm 8:7.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:11 *covenant*. Ten Commandments. See note, Ex 20:1.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:1–11 See application note, 1Ki 8:12–21.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:12 *stood … spread out his hands*. See p 1277. For more on Solomon's prayer, see notes, 1Ki 8:22, 27, 38; 8:31–53.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:13 *platform*. Rim of Solomon's dais may have curved upward to resemble a basin. *knelt*. See p 1276.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:14 *steadfast love*. See p 843.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:15 *kept … what you declared*. Cf 2Sm 7:12–16.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:16 *walk*. See p 6. *My law*. See p 971.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:17 The Chronicler will conclude the prayer with the same theme of remembrance of David (v 42), though 1Ki 8 does not.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:18 Miraculously, the transcendent Lord did dwell amid His people in the temple. Cf 7:2; see notes, Lk 1:31–35. Cyr Jer: "His coming down from heaven was not known by men. … For [by comparison] rain, coming down into a fleece, comes down noiselessly: so that the Magi, not knowing the mystery of the Nativity, say, 'Where is He that is born King of the Jews?' " (*NPNF* 2 7:74).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:20 *set Your name*. See note, 1Ki 8:18.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:21 *pray toward this place*. See "bow," p 1276. *hear, forgive*. God would hear the confession of their sins. See note, 1Ki 8:30.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:22 *made to take an oath*. See "oath," p 7.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:24–25 Important concept in the Chronicler's unique warfare narratives throughout the history of the divided kingdom is set forth here. Defeat comes as retribution for sin, and repentance will reverse or lessen the consequences of such defeat.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:26–31 The temple will be a place of prayer and repentance when natural disasters strike the nation.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:26 *acknowledge Your name*. Calling on the Lord in faith.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:27 *inheritance*. See note, Jsh 1:6; see also "portion," p 7.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:29 *stretching out his hands*. See p 1277.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:30 *according to all his ways … hearts*. Our ways manifest our hearts and faith.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:31 *fear*. See p 1001.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:32–33 The temple will be a place of prayer for all people, including Gentiles. Cf Is 56:6–8; Zec 8:20–23; 14:16–21; Ps 87. Israel was to be a light to the world, that all might know the true God.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:32 *for the sake of … name*. See p 842.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:33 *all … may know Your name*. Faith in Yahweh would spread from Jerusalem as Israel faithfully confessed its Lord. *fear*. See p 1001.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:34–39 Solomon prophetically anticipated the captivity of the northern tribes in 722 BC under the Assyrians and the southern tribes in 587 BC under the Babylonians. Again the themes of rebellion, retribution, repentance, and restoration are outlines and serve as a paradigm for all of the history of Judah and Israel, esp the final days before and after Babylon (cf ch 36).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:34 *city … chosen*. See note, 3:1.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:36 *no one who does not sin*. See note, Rm 3:23. Luth: "He alone has righteousness whom God mercifully regards as righteous because of his confession of his own unrighteousness and because of his prayer for the righteousness of God and whom God wills to be considered righteous before Him. Therefore we are all born in iniquity, that is, in unrighteousness, and we die in it, and we are righteous only by the imputation of a merciful God through faith in His Word" (AE 25:274).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:37 *turn … repent*. See p 1080.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:38 *all … all*. See note, Dt 6:5.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:39 *Your dwelling place*. See note, 1Ki 8:30.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:41–42 The Chronicler focuses on the theme of David by citing Ps 132:8–10 in vv 41–42a and Ps 132:1 in v 42b. The psalm itself is connected with the temple and the ark, so Solomon's reciting of it is appropriate. His final clause (v 42b) also reflects Is 55:3b and closes out this portion of the prayer by bringing it full circle to its opening words (vv 14–15).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:41 *arise*. While the final words of Solomon's prayer in 1Ki 8:52–53 are not included here, the Chronicler supplies an ending in poetic form, also given in Ps 132:8–10 with minor changes. *resting place*. See note, v 18. *clothed with salvation*. See note, Is 61:10; see also "salvation," p 843.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:42 *turn away*. In rejection. *Your anointed one!* Solomon, the anointed king, entreated the Lord to fulfill the promise of a kingdom forever, made to his father, David (1Ch 17:1–15; Ps 89:49). See notes, 2Sm 7:12–14. *steadfast love*. See p 843.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 6:12–42 See application note, 1Ki 8:22–53.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 7:1–11 The Chronicler makes a significant omission of 1Ki 8:54b–61, Solomon's blessing of the people (see note, 6:3).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 7:1 *fire came down*. Probably lightning. See note, Jb 1:16. God approved the dedicatory "burnt offering and the sacrifices" with fire from heaven, an event also associated with Aaron, Elijah, and David (see note, 1Ch 21:26). Cf Jgs 6:21. *glory of the* LORD. See pp 6–7.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 7:2–3 Recalls 5:11–14 and esp Ps 136:1. See note, 2Ch 5:13. This is positive proof that the Lord accepted this temple as His dwelling place.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 7:2 *priests could not enter*. Cf 5:14.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 7:3 *bowed*. See p 1276. *good … steadfast love*. Cf Ps 136.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 7:1–3 The Lord shows His approval of the temple by igniting the sacrifices and filling the temple with His glory. Today, many people crave such miracles and affirmation for their work and decisions. Remember that in all things the Lord guides us through His Word, which ignites our hearts and fills our minds with His affirmation. His goodness and steadfast love are surely ours in Christ. • Move my heart to trust You, Lord, whether or not I witness miracles. Ever lead me by Your affirming Word. Amen.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 7:4 *offered sacrifice*. Dedicatory offerings continued for seven days (cf v 8).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 7:6 Uniquely, the Chronicler includes this note as evidence of the fulfillment of David's plans concerning the temple musicians (1Ch 23:5; 25). *steadfast love*. See p 843. *trumpets … stood*. See pp 993, 1277.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 7:7 *consecrated*. See p 6.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 7:8 *Lebo-hamath to the Brook of Egypt*. The kingdom's northern and southern boundaries ("Lebo" refers to Lebanon). See color map 1.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 7:9 *the eighth day*. Of the Festival of Booths. See notes, 5:2, 3. *solemn assembly*. Work would stop for the festival. *dedication of the altar*. The Chronicler emphasizes the temple as a place of sacrifice as well as prayer.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 7:10 Differs slightly from 1Ki 8:66. Note the emphasis on David and Solomon as a continuous headship of Israel.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 7:4–10 See application note, 1Ki 8:62–66.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 7:12–22 The Lord visited Solomon a second time. The first visit was at Gibeon (1:3–13).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 7:12 *appeared to Solomon*. Cf 1:7.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 7:13–16 Unique to 2Ch; the Lord's response to specific petitions of Solomon's prayer (6:26–31; 1Ki 8:35–40). Its inclusion serves the larger purpose of validating the temple as the place not only of sacrifice but also of prayer, and it brings forward the theme of repentance and restoration following rebellion and retribution.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 7:14 *called by My name*. In the blessing of the priests, the Lord's name was placed on the people. See note, Nu 6:27. *humble … pray … seek … turn*. The Lord uses a string of verbs to emphasize the actions of sincere repentance. *hear … forgive … heal*. Second string of verbs emphasizes the Lord's response to His people's repentance. See p 127.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 7:15 Cf 1Ki 8:52.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 7:16 *My name … forever*. Because the people repeatedly rebelled, the special role of the temple did not last. See "name," p 843.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 7:17–22 Cf 1Ki 9:4–9.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 7:17–18 A definite messianic reference is found in the "man to rule Israel" (cf Mi 5:2), a stronger statement than in 1Ki 9:5. The everlasting nature of David's kingship would not be fulfilled by just any descendant, including Solomon. It would be fulfilled in the great and final Son of David, who lived and died but also rose again and lives forever.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 7:19–22 The Lord anticipated the people's rebellion and the exile, recorded at the end of 2Ch. "From the beginning He has utterly uprooted all idolatry. Because of idolatry, He has uprooted both heathen people and Jewish people. To this day He overthrows all false worship, so that all who remain therein must finally perish" (LC I 35).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 7:11–22 See application note, 1Ki 9:1–9.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Chs 8–9** The building of the temple is the focal point in the account of Solomon's reign. Ch 1 is a prologue, explaining why it was possible for him to undertake the project. The rather detailed report of construction and dedication of the temple is followed by this epilogue. There is a series of more or less unrelated episodes, which make the point that under the temple builder's reign, it was possible for all

Israel to worship in the dedicated sanctuary "according to the ruling of David" (8:14).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 8:2 Emphasizes Solomon's control over all Israelite territory and the protection of its borders against possible invaders (vv 2–10). Apparently as the result of negotiations, Hiram returned to him the 20 cities ceded to the king of Tyre to finance the building program in Jerusalem (vv 1–2; cf 1Ki 9:10–13).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 8:3 *Hamath-zobah*. On the northern frontier, Solomon had to reassert his sway over a territory that had come under David's control (1Ch 18:3–10).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 8:4 *Tadmor in the wilderness … Hamath*. Along the desert road through Palmyra. See note, 1Ki 9:18.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 8:5–6 Cities of Beth-horon lay on a strategic route from the plains of Philistia up to Jerusalem. See map, p 534.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 8:7–10 Solomon's labor force. Cf 1Ki 9:20–23; 1Ch 22:2; 2Ch 2:17.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 8:9 *no slaves*. See note, 1Ki 9:22.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 8:10 *chief officers*. For their number, see note, 1Ki 5:16.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 8:11 *Pharaoh's daughter*. The Chronicler had omitted the earlier reference to Solomon's marriage to the daughter of Pharaoh (1Ki 3:1) but acknowledges it here with his source. He presents his account with different emphases. E.g., it is not Pharaoh's daughter who "went up" as in 1Ki 9:24, but Solomon who "brought Pharaoh's daughter up," emphasizing his royal authority. *My wife*. Or, "one of my wives." *ark of the* LORD. Located in Zion; perhaps had even been held on David's property. Since she was a Gentile, and perhaps because she was a female (cf Lv 15:19–30), she was not to come near the ark. Such concern was also demonstrated in Herod's temple with the separate court for women. See diagram, p 1838.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 8:12 *vestibule*. Pillared entryway. See diagram, p 541; cf 1Ki 9:25. The Chronicler retains information depicting Solomon acting as a priestly king.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 8:13–16 Unique to 2Ch. While 1Ki 9:25 speaks only of three sacrifices a year, the Chronicler completes the picture of Solomon's faithful offering of sacrifices throughout the year "according to the commandment of Moses," including Sabbaths and new moons (Lv

23; Nu 28–29). He oversaw the divisions of priests and Levites for temple service "according to the ruling of David his father" (cf 1Ch 23–27).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 8:13 *duty*. Lit, "the word." *commandment of Moses*. Dedicatory sacrifices initiated the observance of all ritual prescriptions for offerings.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 8:17–18 Solomon's maritime venture with Hiram. At the time, open trade routes went to the south of Arabia and the Red Sea. This is important in the queen of Sheba's visit (9:1–12) and the report of Solomon's wealth (9:13–28).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 8:17 *Ezion-geber … Eloth … Edom*. See color map 3.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 8:18 *ships and servants*. Solomon's fleet of ships, built and manned by Hiram's servants. See note, 1Ki 9:26–27. *Ophir*. See note, Jb 22:24; see also map, p 780.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Ch 8** See application note, 1Ki 9:10–28.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 9:1–12 Highlights Solomon's wealth and wisdom. Expansion of Israel's interests toward the southern part of Arabia may have prompted the queen's visit (see note, 8:17–18).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 9:1 *queen*. Her visit to the temple builder was evidence that, in addition to providing safety and peace at home, Solomon had friendly and profitable relations with a country as distant and rich in resources as Sheba (vv 1–12). See notes on the parallel account in 1Ki 10:1–13. *Sheba*. See note, Jb 1:15; see also Sabea on map, p 780. *test*. Reports of Solomon's wisdom seemed too good to be true.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 9:3 *wisdom*. See pp 775–78.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 9:8 A major difference between Chronicles and Kings regarding the queen of Sheba's visit is noted here. The Chronicler reports her stating that God has "set you on His throne as king for the LORD your God," whereas Kings reports her words as "set you on the throne of Israel" (1Ki 10:9). This reflects the Chronicler's emphasis on the Davidic throne as the divine throne (1Ch 17:14; 28:5; 2Ch 13:8). *Blessed be the LORD*. See note, 2:11–12. *justice … righteousness*. See pp 842, 843.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 9:9 See note, 1Ki 10:10.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 9:10 *Ophir*. See note, Jb 22:24; see also map, p 780.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 9:11 *algum wood*. See note, 1Ki 10:11.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 9:12 *all that she desired*. See note, 1Ki 10:13.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 9:1–12 See application note, 1Ki 10:1–13.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 9:13–28 Both Solomon's wealth (vv 13–21, 24–28) and wisdom (vv 22–23) were beyond the degree of any king before or after him. He was the ideal king.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 9:13 *weight of gold*. The gold and silver lavished by Solomon on the temple did not exhaust his supply. He had enough of the precious metal for ornaments and drinking vessels in his palace (vv 13–21). See notes, 1Ki 10:14–25.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 9:14 *Arabia*. See map, p 33. *brought gold*. As trade or tribute.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 9:16 *House of the Forest of Lebanon*. See note, 1Ki 7:2.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 9:18 *lions*. Symbols of regal strength. Chem: "Solomon made two lions for his ivory throne and 12 small lions for the steps. This example established the civil use of images" (*LTh* 2:374). See p 141.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 9:21 *Tarshish*. Indicates that he had ships capable of going a long distance. See note, 1Ki 10:22. The Chronicler emphasizes Solomon's glory by accenting not Hiram's ships but the sailors sent as crews for the ships given to Solomon (8:18).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 9:22 For the parallel of this final reference to Solomon's illustrious reign, cf 1Ki 10:23–29.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 9:26 *ruled over all the kings*. They were his vassals.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 9:13–28 See application note, 1Ki 10:14–29.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 9:29–31 The Chronicler doesn't raise the issues of Solomon's apostasy (1Ki 11:1–10) and adversaries (1Ki 11:11–40). Significantly, this excludes the dramatic prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite and his condemnation of Solomon for the splitting of the kingdom after his death (1Ki 11:28–40). The Chronicler will emphasize the blame of Solomon's son Rehoboam.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 9:29 *acts of Solomon*. The writer of Chronicles refers his readers to records kept by three prophetic writers (cf

1Ki 11:41). From these sources, no longer in existence today, he selected accounts that served his immediate purpose: to teach the people after the exile that they cannot be God's people without honoring Him in worship acceptable to Him. See pp 335–37. *history … prophecy … visions*. See "Additions," p 629.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 9:31 See note, 1Ki 2:10.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 9:29–31 Solomon begins and finishes his reign under the watchful eyes of the Lord's prophets (cf 1Ki 1:45), who reviewed his accomplishments and likely also reviewed his failures. Today, treasure the faithful spiritual leaders the Lord provides for your wisdom and counsel. Both their rebuke and their blessing stem from the Lord's good purposes for you: to call you to repentance and to make you wise unto salvation in Christ. • Grant me ready ears and a sincere heart, O Lord, to welcome the counsel You provide. Amen.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Chs 10–12** The Chronicler has minimal interest in the events of the Northern Kingdom and omits information focused on Jeroboam I of Israel (1Ki 12:25–14:20). The issue of fault in the rebellion is taken up more fully by the Chronicler in the unique material of 2Ch 13. The remaining chapters of 2Ch describe the kings of Judah, the Davidic successors of Solomon. Rulers of the Northern Kingdom receive mention only when relations with the schismatic tribes affect the kings in Jerusalem.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 10:1 *all Israel*. Worship in the temple by a united nation came to an end after Solomon's death. *Shechem*. See color map 3.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 10:4 *yoke*. The 10 northern tribes (Israel) objected particularly to Solomon's conscription of forced labor. See notes, 1Ki 5:13, 15; 11:26. Luth: "There is nothing they forget more rapidly than kindnesses. Solomon reigned wisely, in peace and with great wealth; but as soon as Solomon had died, they immediately began to complain about 'the yoke of Solomon' (2 Chron. 10:4), and there was no remembrance of his deeds of kindness. Regardless of what the state of the world has been, it has always seemed intolerable to the world. … When the Gospel began, everyone ran to it eagerly; but once the Gospel has prevailed, we are bored and forget the great blessings. … Therefore if anyone wants to serve the world with wisdom, justice, or any other good things, let him expect nothing from it except the worst. Thus David and Solomon, the best of

kings, loved good men and hated evil men. But the people did not acknowledge their love and forgot all their kindnesses and good deeds" (AE 15:144–45).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 10:6 *King Rehoboam*. Though possibly not yet anointed king for all Israel, he would be the leader of his tribe, Judah, by default.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 10:11 *whips … scorpions*. See note, 1Ki 12:11.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 10:16 Foreshadows the battle of ch 13. Contrast with 2Sm 20:1; 1Ch 12:19.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 10:18 *Hadoram*. Also called Adoniram.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 10:19 *to this day*. See note, 1Ch 4:41.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Ch 10** See application note, 1Ki 12:1–15.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 11:1–4 Battle between Rehoboam and Jeroboam was averted by Rehoboam's obedience to the word of Yahweh spoken by Shemaiah the prophet. This same prophet makes a second appearance during the reign of Rehoboam in the Chronicler's expansion of the war with Shishak (12:5–8) and in the citation of sources (12:15).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 11:1 *180,000*. Rehoboam's force is small compared with the 1,100,000 men of military age in David's census (1Ch 21:5), the 580,000 under Asa (2Ch 14:8), the 307,500 under Uzziah (2Ch 26:13), the 300,000 under Amaziah (2Ch 25:5), or the 1,160,000 troops under Jehoshaphat (2Ch 17:14–18).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 11:2 *word of the LORD came*. See p 1080.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 11:3 *all Israel*. See note, 10:1. Seceding tribes may be called Israel to distinguish them politically from the people "in Judah and Benjamin" (cf 10:3, 16). The kingdom of Judah would become the people of the promise (cf 2Sm 7).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 11:4 *your relatives*. The Lord sought to avert the massive blood feud by reminding the people that, beyond the politics, they are family. Luth: "When Rehoboam wanted to bring back the Ten Tribes, he was forbidden to do it. … God also at times allows the Turk and the pope to go on a rampage, and again, when it is His will, He represses both. For He who has set a limit for the sea has also appointed definite boundaries for the ragings of the devil and the world, just as Christ says in the garden (Luke 22:51): 'Let them have their way for now.' But

God permits all these things to be done that He may teach us to pray, cry out, and groan" (AE 6:223).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 11:5–23 The Chronicler develops three themes in this section: Rehoboam's building program (vv 5–12), his religious policy (vv 13–17), and his large family (vv 18–23). All three themes are marks of divine favor. By heeding the Lord's word through His prophet Shemaiah, Rehoboam brought prosperity to himself and Judah.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 11:5–12 Rehoboam's building program. Such building marked periods of prosperity and blessing from God because of obedience to Him (1Ch 11:8–9; 2Ch 8:1–6; 11:5–12; 14:6; 17:12; 26:9–10; 27:3–4; 32:5–6a; 33:14). Each period of building in Chronicles is accompanied by a note that the reigning king either did what was right in the eyes of the Lord or, having sinned, repented, and was restored.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 11:5 *cities for defense*. King fortified the approaches to Jerusalem from the south and southwest, the direction from which an Egyptian invasion came (12:1–12). Circumstances suggest that these events are not set down in chronological order. Rehoboam may have strengthened these existing border defenses in order to prevent another attack from the same enemy.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 11:6–10 Defended territory incorporated only the Shephelah and the Judean hills, but the sites chosen for fortification were strategic because they were located along major roads. The list of fortified cities formed lines of protection on the eastern flank from north to south (Bethlehem, Etam, Tekoa, Beth-zur), on the southern flank from west to east (Lachish, Adoraim, Ziph, Hebron), and on the western flank from north to south (Aijalon, Zorah, Gath, Azekah, Soco, Adullam, Mareshah). The northern flank lacked a line of defense, perhaps because Rehoboam wished to keep open the possibility of reunion with the north, or he may not have felt threatened from that direction.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 11:9 *Lachish*. Archaeological remains show a hilltop location, an outer wall, an inner wall, a six-chambered gate, and an inner fortress that also may have served as a palace. Some of these mighty fortifications may date from Rehoboam's work.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 11:1–12 See application note, 1Ki 12:16–24.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 11:13–17 The Chronicler introduces for the first time the theme of religious infidelity in the north and describes how the

faithful there came to worship at Jerusalem. Periods of prosperity inevitably involve religious reform and revival.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 11:13 *presented themselves*. Border between the two kingdoms remained open (see note, vv 6–10). Priests, Levites, and others in all Israel who refused to take part in the false worship at Bethel and Dan (1Ki 12:28–30) crossed over "to Jerusalem to sacrifice to the LORD" (v 16). *him*. Rehoboam.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 11:14 *cast them out*. The northern apostasy is demonstrated by their rejection of the priests and Levites. Jeroboam appointed his own priests in their place (1Ki 12:32; 13:33 report that he appointed priests from among the people who were not of the Levites).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 11:15 The north was committed to idolatry; the south, to the true worship of Yahweh. The Chronicler reinforces this by reporting more about Jeroboam's idolatry, also recorded in 1Ki 12:25–33. *goat idols*. Demons were thought to be in the form of male goats. See note, Lv 17:7.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 11:16 *seek the LORD*. See p 843.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 11:17 *walked*. See p 7. *three years*. Rehoboam later "abandoned the law of the LORD" (12:1).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 11:13–17 Priests, Levites, and citizens of Israel seek the Lord at His temple in Jerusalem, despite the personal and professional hardships it brings. When faithfulness to the Lord comes with challenges, still choose to follow the way of faithfulness, seeking the fellowship of the faithful in the Church. Your Lord, who is always faithful, will strengthen and sustain you in the fellowship of His Word and Sacraments. • Deliver us from evil, O Lord, and grant us faithful leaders and fellow believers who can help us in our time of need. Amen.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 11:18–23 Rehoboam's large family (18 wives, 60 concubines, 28 sons, and 60 daughters) indicates divine favor in the Chronicler's writings (cf 1Ch 3:1–9; 14:2–7; 25:4–5; 26:4–5; 2Ch 13:21; 21:1–3).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 11:18 *Jerimoth*. Not mentioned in the list of David's sons (1Ch 3:1–8). May have been the son of a concubine.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 11:20 *Maacah*. According to 2Sm 14:27, Absalom had only one daughter, Tamar. Hbr words for son and daughter may also refer to grandchildren.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 11:21 *eighteen wives*. Rehoboam's polygamous marriage relations no doubt accounted for the fact that "he abandoned the law of the LORD" (12:1; cf 1Ki 11:4). See note, Gn 16:2. *concubines*. See pp 54–55.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 11:22 *chief prince*. If the order of birth is that of the order in the text, Rehoboam bypassed his older sons born of Abihail (vv 18–19). The law of Dt 21:15–17 sought to protect the rights of the firstborn and specifically prohibited the transferal of rights to a younger son born of a woman more loved by the husband. Normally, the right of a firstborn son of a king included the crown (cf 21:3). However, the firstborn had been set aside before (Gn 17:19–21; 48:13–20; 2Sm 3:2–4; 1Ki 1:32–37; 1Ch 26:10).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 11:18–23 Rehoboam cleverly exploits family relationships to strengthen his hold on Judah. Yet his purposes conflict with the Lord's purposes for families. A family is not a political tool but a gift from our gracious heavenly Father, whereby we may nurture one another in His love. Thanks be to God, He works within our families to strengthen faith and extend His peace through mutual care in His Word. • Make me a blessing to my family, O Lord, by word and by deed. Amen.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 12:1–12 War of Rehoboam and Shishak, greatly expanded from 1Ki 14:21–31. While 1Ki is content to note that Shishak "came up against Jerusalem" (1Ki 14:25), the Chronicler adds a battle report, complete with the appearance of the prophet Shemaiah (vv 3–8).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 12:1 The Chronicler introduces the war with Shishak with a theological observation on the reign of Rehoboam. *rule … established*. Cf 11:16–17, 23. Rehoboam acted shrewdly by emphasizing worship at the Jerusalem temple, which ensured the loyalty of many people living in Israel. *abandoned*. Key concept in the Chronicler's theological vocabulary. The same Hbr word, also translated "forsaken," is used elsewhere for irregular worship (13:10–11; 21:10–11; 28:6; 29:6) or the worship of foreign gods (7:19, 22; 24:18; 34:25).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 12:2 *Shishak*. Ruler 945–924 BC, founder of the Twenty-second Egyptian Dynasty. His invasion of Judah and Israel is documented by a well-known inscription on the temple wall in Karnak. More than 150 conquered cities are mentioned in this inscription, though Jerusalem is not among them.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 12:3 *without number*. See note, 11:1. *Sukkiim*. Known to have had a part in other Egyptian military operations, but mentioned only here in the OT.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 12:5 *Shemaiah*. Cf v 15. *abandoned*. See note, v 1. This kind of wordplay occurs three times in Chronicles, here and in 15:2; 24:20. In each case, it is spoken by an inspired prophet, part of the material unique to Chronicles, and within the context of warfare.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 12:6 *humbled themselves*. The word of Shemaiah was received with a confession of guilt. *The LORD is righteous*. Used also in the more extensive confessions of Ex 9:27; Ezr 9:15; Ne 9:33; Ps 119:137; 129:4; Dn 9:14. See "righteous," p 843. Humility brings mercy from the Lord (cf 7:14).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 12:7 In response to Judah's humility, the Lord grants three things, listed in v 7b. *word of the LORD came*. See p 1080. *some deliverance*. Or, "deliverance within a short time." God tempered the severity of the punishment, as He did when Moses interceded for the people (see note, Ex 32:14).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 12:8 *know My service*. Invasion was to teach that the alternative to serving the Lord was servitude to "the kingdoms of the countries," the rod of His anger for apostasy (Is 10:5). Implied here is the opportunity to learn the difference between serving the Lord and other kings and the promise that they may have future opportunities to serve the Lord.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 12:9 *took away everything*. Tribute, to make peace. Cf v 8; see note, 1Ki 14:26.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 12:12 *good*. Prosperity prevailed again after the enemy left.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 12:13–16 Customary formula for summarizing a king's reign.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 12:13 *put His name there*. See note, 1Ki 8:18. *Naamah the Ammonite*. One of Solomon's foreign wives. See note, Nu 21:24.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 12:14 *did evil*. Cf 1Ki 14:22–24.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 12:15 While 1Ki 14:29 cites "the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah," here the Chronicler cites two prophetic works. See ESV note; see "Additions," p 629.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Ch 12** The Lord proves Himself righteous toward Rehoboam and Judah by punishing their abandonment of His Law and by hearing their confession of sin. The Lord is always ready to hear our confession and to forgive us. In applying His Law, He always has in mind our good, our repentance, and our salvation. • Hear my cry, O righteous Lord, and answer me according to Your mercy in Christ. Amen.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Ch 13** Cf 1Ki 15:1–8. The son of Rehoboam undergoes rehabilitation in the Chronicler's history; here he receives no condemnation but leads a just war against the north and becomes a model king. The Chronicler does not follow his source in condemning Abijah (1Ki 15:3–4), and he adds a lengthy account of warfare (vv 3–18).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 13:1 *Abijah*. A significant modification is the change in name from Abijam ("my father is Yam," a Canaanite god), the consistent name in Kings, to Abijah ("my father is the LORD"). This may be merely a spelling variant, or it could be the difference between a given name and a throne name.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 13:2 *Micaiah*. Also appears in the form Maacah (11:20–22). Abijah's mother was the granddaughter of Absalom. *Gibeah*. Town in Benjamin associated with Israel's first king, Saul.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 13:3 *400,000*. Hbr word for "thousand" here is also a special military term. See note, 1Ki 20:29; see also p 217.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 13:4–12 Abijah's speech. The Chronicler includes the kingdom of Israel as the kingdom of Yahweh (cf 1Ch 17:14; 28:5; 29:11, 23; 2Ch 9:8). Note the vocabulary of the Chronicler's retribution theology ("forsaken," vv 10–11; "succeed," v 12). Abijah declared the legitimacy of two things: the Davidic dynasty (vv 4b–7) and the divinely instituted worship of the Lord at Jerusalem (vv 8–11). The speech of Abijah and the battle that follows (vv 13–18) are not included in Kings.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 13:4 *Zemaraim*. C 9 mi N of Jerusalem; cf Jsh 18:22. *Ephraim*. See color map 2. *Hear me*. Addressees are apparent later in the speech, but Jeroboam is not among them. In vv 6–8, Jeroboam is spoken of in the third person. The appeal in v 12 is to the "sons of Israel." Jeroboam is not addressed at all.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 13:5 *covenant of salt?* Probably refers to a perpetual covenant (salt is a preservative). In Lv 2:13, salt was necessary

for the covenant to be effective. A meal, which probably included salt, was sometimes part of the ratification of a covenant (cf Gn 26:30; 31:54; Ex 24:11; 2Sm 3:20). It may also be an allusion to the "covenant of salt" in Nu 18:19, linking the Mosaic covenant to the Davidic covenant. See p 127.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 13:7 Crucial to understanding the speech of Abijah. *worthless scoundrels*. See note, Jgs 19:22. *him*. The immediate antecedent is "lord" in v 6. This then references the failings of Rehoboam in ch 10. *young*. Inexperienced. Statement likely describes Rehoboam's upbringing, although Solomon had called himself "a little child" (1Ki 3:7) because he lacked administrative discretion.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 13:8 *kingdom of the* LORD. By warring against Rehoboam, Jeroboam was in effect trying to dethrone God, who would rule in Israel through the sons of David (1Ch 28:5). The Chronicler equates the Davidic throne with that of the Lord (cf 1Ch 29:23). See pp 1565–66. *have with you*. They may have brought the idols to the battle. Cf 1Sm 4:3. *golden calves*. Cf 11:15. Rebellion of the north is defined not only as rebellion against the divinely appointed king but also as a religious rebellion exemplified in false worship practices never established or instituted by the Lord.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 13:9 *like the peoples*. When Jeroboam "made priests" in defiance of God's Law, the worship the priests conducted at Bethel and Dan was just as offensive as the idolatrous rites of the Gentiles surrounding Israel. *Whoever comes for ordination*. See ESV note. Common technical term for "ordain" or "consecrate." See note, Ex 29:9. *young bull or seven rams*. Emphasizes the offerings rather than the consecration, as in Ex 29:1. Jeroboam put the office of priest up for sale. *no gods*. A climactic denunciation of Israel's gods.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 13:10 Counters the conclusion of v 9. *the* LORD *is our God*. Just as Israel's false king is countered by Judah's true king, so also the false deities are countered by the true God. *We have priests … for their service*. Northern priests lack correct lineage, whereas true priests (as the boast continues in v 11) maintain the Lord's divinely instituted worship requirements.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 13:11 Such lists of divinely instituted worship practices and duties are common to the Chronicler's work, in which the temple and priesthood play a major role.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 13:12 *sound the call*. See notes, Nu 10:2, 8–9. Main point of the speech: Israel cannot win the battle. More than a confrontation of two armies, it is a confrontation of theologies. The Chronicler's claim of victory for the south is a claim of orthodoxy represented in the Davidic kingship and the divinely instituted worship of the Lord (1Ch 17:16; 2Ch 2:5–6; 14:11; 20:6, 12; 32:7–8).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 13:13–21 Battle of Abijah.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 13:13 *ambush*. Common strategy in both ancient and modern warfare (cf Jsh 8:2; Jgs 20:29). The larger, northern army, deployed in a clever manner, would have routed Judah if God had not "defeated Jeroboam and all Israel" (v 15). For other instances where God fights for those who rely on Him, giving the enemy into their hand, cf Jsh 10:14, 42; 23:3; 1Ch 16:12.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 13:14 *cried to the* LORD. Their prayer became their battle cry. The ambush caught Judah's army by surprise, but their reaction was one engendered by trust in Yahweh (v 18). *trumpets*. Hbr term is used c 30 times in the OT. See p 993.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 13:15 *shout*. Also see Gideon's defeat of Midian with the cry "A sword for the LORD and for Gideon!" (Jgs 7:20) and Saul's battle with the Philistines (1Sm 17:20, 52). Simultaneous with the trumpet blast and battle shout, the Lord acts to defeat Jeroboam and all Israel.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 13:16–17 Of 800,000 Israelite soldiers, only 300,000 survived.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 13:18 The north chose to fight against Yahweh, the God of their fathers (v 12). In contrast, the south "relied on the LORD, the God of their fathers" (cf v 14). This concludes not only the battle but also the statement of its theological significance.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 13:19 *took cities*. Bethel, where Jeroboam erected a golden calf (1Ki 12:28–29), was north of Jerusalem but south of Jeshanah and Ephron. These border towns soon reverted to Israel. Baasha, the next northern king, fortified Ramah, only 5 mi N of Jerusalem (16:1). See border region map on p 558.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 13:20–21 Personal fates of the two kings, Jeroboam and Abijah, serve respectively as a final notice of the Lord's disfavor and favor.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 13:22 Concluding formula for a king's reign. The Chronicler's source is "the story of the prophet Iddo," which helps explain the different material he presents. See "Additions," p 629.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Ch 13** The Lord fights against Jeroboam for the sake of Abijah and Judah. Today, when trouble assails and surrounds you, call out confidently to the Lord. He fights mightily on your behalf and in ways beyond your comprehension, as demonstrated in His victory over Satan at the cross. • Hear my cry, O Mighty Ruler, and overthrow the enemies of Your kingdom. Amen.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Chs 14–16** The Chronicler's account is a major expansion of the rather brief treatment in 1Ki 15:8b–24a. However, 1Ki provides the framework.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 14:1 See note, 1Ki 2:10. The Chronicler drives home the lesson his readers were to learn from history: the blessing of covenant faithfulness and the dire results of apostasy. Asa's prosperous reign is related directly to his purging the land of idolatry (vv 1–8). He was spared a foreign invasion because "the LORD defeated the Ethiopians" (v 12), who attacked his southern and western borders (vv 9–15). *rest*. A theme developed in two ways. First, it is associated with the temple, where Yahweh takes up His rest among the people (1Ch 28:2; 2Ch 6:41; Ps 132:8). Second, it is associated with the reign of Solomon (1Ch 22:9) and later Judean kings when they are faithful to the Lord, esp in the cases of Asa and Jehoshaphat.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 14:2–5 Asa's first reformation. Cf 1Ki 15:12. The temple worship reforms of 1Ki are radically different here. The Chronicler makes no mention of "the male cult prostitutes," nor does he refer to "all the idols that his [Asa's] fathers had made." The Chronicler's favorable accounts of the reigns of Solomon, Rehoboam, and esp Abijah would preclude the mention of these idols.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 14:3 *high places*. See p 526; see also note, 15:17. Demonstrates resilience of false religions. Similar problem occurred in the reign of Jehoshaphat (see note, 17:6). *pillars … Asherim*. See notes, Gn 28:18; Ex 34:13.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 14:4–5 Asa's first reform is specifically tied to the cities of Judah and was broader than his unilateral removal of idolatrous cult objects from Judah's cities. The entire nation was involved in

the reform. *seek the* LORD. Pious king leads the nation toward proper worship. See p 843.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 14:5 *rest*. See note, v 1.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 14:6–7 Asa's building program is unique to 2Ch. Asa's reforms brought peace and rest and an opportunity to build. Building programs were undertaken, not only by Rehoboam and Asa, but also by Jehoshaphat (17:12), Uzziah (26:9–10), Jotham (27:3), Hezekiah (32:5), and Manasseh after his repentance (33:14). The opposite situation came about in the latter phase of Asa's reign (2Ch 16:9).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 14:6 *fortified cities*. See note, 1Ki 15:22; cf 2Ch 11:5–12. *no war*. V 1 gives the round figure of 10 years for the period when "the land had rest." Then hostilities broke out with the northern king Baasha (16:1–6), who began his 24-year reign in the third year of Asa's reign (1Ki 15:33).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 14:7 *sought the* LORD. See p 843.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 14:8 Tally of Asa's army. Theme of peace and prosperity now shifts dramatically to war and its instruments. Asa commands an army of 580,000 composed of Judean infantry and Benjaminite "artillery," i.e., archers. *large shields*. See note, Ps 35:2. *men of valor*. See note, Jsh 1:14.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 14:9–12 Battle with Ethiopia. Tremendous Judean army is met by an enemy army of even greater dimensions, a million men and 300 chariots led by Zerah the Ethiopian (Hbr, Cushite), an otherwise unknown individual, who likely served as a general for one of the pharaohs.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 14:9 *Zerah*. Name may be Nubian in origin. *Mareshah*. City c 25 mi SW of Jerusalem; fortified by Asa's grandfather Rehoboam (11:8). See map, p 615.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 14:10 *Valley of Zephathah*. Exact location unknown.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 14:11 Asa's prayer functions as an application and paradigm of Solomon's dedicatory prayer (6:34), which prescribed prayer in time of war. *help … Help*. See note, Ps 70:5.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 14:12 The Lord responded to the prayer of pious Asa. Similar wording is used in 13:15b–16a. Cf Ex 14:14; Dt 20:4; 1Sm 17:47. In Abijah's battle with Jeroboam (ch 13), the people participated in a limited way by blowing the trumpets and raising the battle

shout. In Asa's battle, even such minimal participation is omitted. The Lord acts alone in response to the prayer of Asa.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 14:13–15 Aftermath of the battle. The taking of booty by a victorious Judean army is described both here and in Jehoshaphat's war in 20:25. Conversely, the plundering of Judah also occurred when Judah met defeat (e.g., at the hands of Shishak in 12:9–11). Some of Asa's booty is sacrificed to the Lord (15:11; cf Dt 2:34–35).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 14:13 *Gerar*. Located in the Philistine plain 25 mi SW of Mareshah. *His army*. Asa's troops served the Lord (cf 1Ch 12:22–23).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 14:14 *Gerar*. See color map 1. *fear of the* LORD. Cf 1Sm 11:7, where the same phrase is translated "the dread of the LORD." See also p 1001.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Ch 14** See application note, 1Ki 15:9–24.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Ch 15** Here the Chronicler records the message of Azariah, the second reformation, and the covenant celebration it brought.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 15:1–7 Message of Azariah the son of Oded. Three elements are common in prophetic speeches in Chronicles. First, a call for attention: "Hear me" (v 2; cf 1Ch 28:2; 2Ch 13:4; 20:20; 29:15). Second, a statement of truth: "The LORD is with you while you are with Him" (v 2; cf 1Ch 28:9; 2Ch 10:10–11, 14; 20:20; see "be with," p 5). Third, a promise of assistance: "He will be found by you" (v 2; cf 1Ch 14:15; 17:2; 28:20; 2Ch 13:12; 19:11; 20:15, 17; 32:8; 36:23).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 15:1 *Azariah*. Otherwise unknown prophet.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 15:2 See note, vv 1–7.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 15:3 *For a long time*. See note, v 5. *teaching priest*. Instruction in the Law was a priestly duty (Lv 10:11). Cf 17:9; Dt 33:10; Jer 18:18; Hos 4:6–7; Mal 2:7 for examples of its performance. *teaching … law*. From same Hbr root. See "Law," p 971.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 15:5 *those times*. Though the era is not explicit, his hearers would realize that he was describing the period of the judges, one of the worst eras in Israel's history. See pp 380–81. *out … in*. See note, 1:10.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 15:7 *Do not let your hands be weak*. Expression about becoming discouraged or demoralized (cf Is 13:7; Jer 6:24; 50:43; Ezk 7:17; Zep 3:16). *rewarded*. Luth: "What is the meaning of

the word ‘reward’ which occurs so frequently in the Scriptures? ‘Your work,’ it says, ‘shall be rewarded’ [II Chron. 15:7]; ‘I am your exceeding great reward’ [Gen. 15:1]; also, ‘Who renders to every man according to his works’ [Rom. 2:6 f.]; and Paul in Romans 2[:7] says: ‘To those who seek it by patience in good works, [he will give] eternal life’; and there are many similar passages. The answer is that by all these passages nothing is proved but a consequence of reward, and by no means a worthiness of merit. For it is clear that those who do good things do them in no servile and mercenary spirit for the sake of gaining eternal life, yet they are seeking eternal life in the sense that they are on the road by which they will arrive at and find eternal life. Hence ‘to seek’ means to strive earnestly and endeavor with prompt diligence toward that which is the regular result of a good life” (AE 33:153).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 15:8–19 Asa’s response to Azariah: the second reformation (cf 1Ki 15:13–15). The reforms are linked to Azariah’s sermon by the repetition that Asa “took courage” in v 8 (cf v 7).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 15:8 The account of the first reforms by Asa (14:2–5) specifically took place in the cities of Judah. This reform is broader in that it took place in all the land of Judah and Benjamin as well as the cities of the hill country of Ephraim.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 15:9–15 Covenant celebration.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 15:9 As happened during the reign of Rehoboam (11:16–17), members of the tribes of Ephraim, Manasseh, and Simeon deserted to Asa. *Simeon*. It is unclear why this tribe, which was south of Judah and to a great extent absorbed by it, should be mentioned together with the sojourners from the northern tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh (see note, 1Ki 11:32). Perhaps the Simeonites declared their full solidarity with the Southern Kingdom at this time.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 15:10 *gathered … in the third month*. For Pentecost. See pp 200–201. Tying this festival to the war with Zerah, they sacrificed from the spoils of war.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 15:12 *covenant*. See p 127. King and people solemnly reconsecrate themselves “to seek the LORD,” who at Mount Sinai had pledged Himself to make the Israelites “a kingdom of priests and a holy nation” (Ex 19:6) without any merit or worthiness on their part (see note, Ex 19:6). *seek*. See p 843. *all … all*. See note, Dt 6:5.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 15:13 *put to death*. Cf Dt 13:6–10; 17:2–7.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 15:14 *oath*. See p 7. *trumpets and with horns*. See p 993.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 15:16 *queen mother*. See notes, 1Ki 15:10, 13. *Asherah*. See note, Ex 34:13. *Kidron*. See note, 1Ki 15:13; see also color map 1.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 15:17 *high places … not taken out*. See p 526. In his intentions, Asa was blameless. But evidently the people found ways of circumventing his orders so that he did not succeed in eradicating an entrenched custom. His successors fared no better (17:6; 20:33). *Israel*. Not a reference to the Northern Kingdom. Under the Davidic kings of Judah, Israel in the religious sense continued to exist, despite much unfaithfulness (see note, 11:3).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 15:19 *thirty-fifth year*. See note, 16:1.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Ch 15** When Azariah speaks God's Word to Asa, the king courageously brings reform to Judah and to members of the tribes of Israel. Today, the Lord likewise calls you to courageous action on behalf of others who need to hear His Word. Take courage! The Lord's Word accomplishes His purposes for the sake of His people, especially His purpose of salvation. • O Lord, we seek Your blessing in accord with Your Word. Grant us courage to call others to repentance and faith in Your name. Amen.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Ch 16** The Chronicler makes a major addition at vv 7–10. He divides Asa's reign into good (14:1–15:19) and evil (ch 16). Both periods brought their appropriate rewards or punishments. See note, 14:1.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 16:1–6 To prevent Baasha from building at Ramah and blockading Judah at that point (v 1), Asa bought an alliance with Ben-hadad of Syria (vv 2–4). The alliance accomplished its goal: Baasha stopped building Ramah (v 5), and Asa removed the timbers to build Geba and Mizpah (v 6).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 16:1 According to 1Ki 15:33, Baasha ruled 24 years, beginning in the third year of Asa. Hence, in Asa's 36th regnal year, the northern king had been dead for nearly 10 years. Apparently a copyist's error has distorted the text. A proposed transposition of two letters (which the Hbr could use to represent numbers) yields a reading of 16 years, which accords with 1Ki 15:33. *built Ramah*. See notes on the parallel account in 1Ki 15:16–22.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 16:2–6 See map, p 558.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 16:2 *Asa took … from the treasures*. Temple treasury seems to have served the kings of Judah; a number of them used it to pay tribute (cf 2Ki 12:18; 16:8; 18:15). Although the treasury supported the work of the priests, it may have doubled as a royal bank. See note, 1Ch 26:20–28.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 16:3 *covenant … covenant*. See p 127.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 16:7–10 Prophecy of Hanani, unique to 2Ch, explains both the continuous wars of Asa and ultimately his death. Is 7 and its condemnation of Ahaz is a likely parallel: Both kings respond to a threat from the north (2Ch 16:1; Is 7:1–2). Both obtain alliances with a third power (2Ch 16:2–4; 2Ki 16:7–9). Both fail to rely on the Lord (2Ch 16:7; Is 7:9b). Both face worse disasters in the future (2Ch 16:9b; Is 7:17–25).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 16:7 *Hanani*. Known only through association with Jehu, the son of Hanani, who prophesied against Baasha (1Ki 16:1) and Jehoshaphat (19:2). Jehu is cited by the Chronicler as a source for the account of Jehoshaphat's reign (20:34). *relied … rely*. Cf Is 10:20.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 16:8 *Ethiopians … Libyans*. Asa's failure to trust in the Lord is compared to his battle with Zerah in ch 14. Difference is that in the earlier battle, Asa relied on the Lord. In this second war, he relied instead on the king of Syria.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 16:9 *blameless*. See note, Jb 1:1. *foolishly*. No distinction is made between the secular and the religious. For Judah, and for its king in particular, the religious and secular arenas are inseparable (unlike the situation in the NT; see pp 1565–66). Thus the secular consequence of the religious problem is spelled out by the prophet. See p 1016.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 16:10 *prison*. Incredible that a man so zealous for the Lord (ch 15) should be the first king of Judah to persecute God's messenger (cf 1Co 10:12). The cruelty is similar to Ahab's treatment of Micaiah (18:26; 1Ki 22:26–27) and Jeremiah's treatment at the hands of Pashhur the priest (Jer 20:2).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 16:12 *diseased in his feet*. Exact nature of disease cannot be determined with certainty, but the fact that it affected the feet may be related to his putting Hanani in stocks and thus directly correlated to Hanani's suffering. Cf 26:19–21. *physicians*. Term used of

netherworld deities, it may refer to mediums, as in the case of the medium at En-dor (1Sm 28). If these physicians actually were such deities, the unfaithfulness of Asa is even more pronounced.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 16:13 See note, 1Ki 2:10.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 16:14 *fire*. Lit, "a great burning," not of the corpse but of the spices (cf Jer 34:5). His grandson Jehoram was not given such an honorable burial (21:19). See note, 1Sm 31:11–12.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Ch 16** Asa stumbles in his faith, but rather than repent, he foolishly lashes out at the Lord's prophet. You, too, will stumble. In every challenge, daily rely on the Lord by calling on Him in prayer and by requesting His forgiveness. Because of His righteousness, He will declare you blameless for the sake of His Son. • O Lord, give me Your strong support, for I rely on You alone. Amen.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Chs 17–20** Theological points of chs 14–16 continue in the expanded story of Jehoshaphat. The Chronicler's account of Jehoshaphat's reign is based on the pattern established by the account of Asa's reign. Both kings are for the most part pious. Both interact with different prophets (Asa, with Azariah and Hanani; Jehoshaphat, with Jehu, Jahaziel, and Eliezer) and are rebuked for foreign entanglements (16:7–9; 19:1–3; 20:35–37).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Ch 17** The Lord established Jehoshaphat as king because he was faithful to God and His commands (vv 1–6). Jehoshaphat not only abolished idolatry but also introduced a program of mass education in God's Law (vv 7–9). God's blessings were evident as Jehoshaphat grew strong and prosperous at home and abroad (vv 10–19). Cf 1Ki 15:24.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 17:2 *fortified cities of Judah*. Built by Rehoboam; cf 11:5–12. See note, 1Ki 15:22. *cities of Ephraim*. Cf 13:19; 15:8. Jehoshaphat's military maneuvering is developed in vv 12–19.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 17:3–4, 6 Despite his alliance with the north (ch 18), Jehoshaphat remained loyal to the Lord.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 17:3 *The* LORD *was with Jehoshaphat*. No one has the right to demand God's gracious presence. But God blessed Jehoshaphat with "riches and honor" (v 5). See "be with," p 5.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 17:4 *sought … God*. See p 843.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 17:5 *tribute*. Jehoshaphat is the recipient of wealth and honor from Judah, a theme expanded in vv 10–12a. Similar

notes are made of David (1Ch 29:2–5, 28), Solomon (2Ch 9:13–28), Uzziah (2Ch 26:8, 15), and Hezekiah (2Ch 32:27).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 17:6 *courageous in the ways of the* LORD. Zealous in applying God's teachings by enforcing His Law and encouraging faith in His promised blessings through the covenant, Jehoshaphat showed himself to be the ideal king of Dt 17:18–20. See "ways," p 844. *high places*. See p 526. *Asherim*. See note, Ex 34:13.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 17:7 *officials*. Jehoshaphat delegated teaching authority to five princes or officials, nine Levites, and two priests. (Obadiah and Zechariah were common names. The prophets so named are from a later era. See pp 1077–83.) Though the teaching duty of temple personnel is often mentioned in the OT (Lv 10:11; Dt 33:10; 2Ch 15:3; Jer 18:18; Hos 4:6; Mal 2:7), it is unusual for laity to be listed with Levites and priests as teachers. See note, 15:3.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 17:9 *Book of the Law of the* LORD. Cf 34:14. The Books of Moses. After the return from the Babylonian exile, it was read at assemblies of the people (Ne 8:2–8; 9:3). The teaching priests (cf 15:3) were assisted by Levites.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 17:10–12a The riches and honor given to Jehoshaphat were far greater than those from Judah alone (cf v 5). His strength was that of an international power.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 17:10 *fear of the* LORD. See notes, 14:14; 1Ch 14:17. Here it explains why the surrounding nations "made no war against Jehoshaphat." However, see p 1001.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 17:11 The Lord let Jehoshaphat's might grow to such proportions that the Philistines and the Arabians feared even to initiate the kind of invasion that Jehoshaphat's father, Asa, had repulsed (14:9–15). Peace among nations depends on God.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **17:12b–19** Two types of military appear to be described here: a standing, or professional, army and a militia. Their units and numbers, totaling 1,160,000, are listed in vv 14–18.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 17:13 *mighty men of valor*. See note, Jsh 1:14.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 17:16 *volunteer for the service of the* LORD. How he served is not explained.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Ch 17** The Lord strengthens faithful Jehoshaphat so that the fear of the Lord falls upon the nations. As the Lord

strengthens you, use that strength to honor His name. The Lord still has the nations in mind as He works in our lives. He desires salvation and peace for all people, as taught in His Word. • Lord, provide us with strength in all realms of our lives, that we may in every way give testimony to Your generosity. Amen.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 18:1 *great riches and honor*. Reprise of the words of 17:5 and the themes of ch 17. *marriage alliance*. See note, 1Ki 3:1–2. Such an alliance was common in the ancient world for political or financial reasons, but Jehoshaphat needed neither. The marriage of his son Jehoram to Ahab's daughter Athaliah (21:6) would bring disaster (22:10–12).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 18:2 *went down … Samaria*. Samaria is lower in elevation. See color map 1. *abundance*. Impressive feast, perhaps to mark a political covenant. *induced*. The same Hbr word is used for seduction into apostasy in Dt 13:6. In Chronicles, it is used for prompting toward evil actions (cf 1Ch 21:1; 2Ch 32:11, 15). Greg: "When we are unwarily joined in friendship with the wicked, we are bound in their sins. Whence Jehoshaphat, who is extolled by so many praises of his previous life, is rebuked for his friendship with King Ahab as though nigh unto destruction" (*NPNF* 2 12:49). *Ramoth-gilead*. See color map 3.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 18:3–34 In the account of Jehoshaphat's alliance with Ahab and their subsequent battle with Ramoth-gilead, the Chronicler deals primarily with the role of prophets. War oracles are often given through the prophets as mouthpieces of the divine warrior (cf 1Ki 12:21–24; 1Ki 20:13, 28; 2Ki 3:11–19; 6:12–22; 7:1–7; 13:14–20; 2Ch 20:14–19; Is 7:3–25; Jer 21).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 18:5 *prophets*. Of Baal. See note, 1Ki 22:7.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 18:8 *Micaiah the son of Imlah*. Minority voice of truth. Cf 2Ki 17:13–15; 2Ch 36:16; Ne 9:26; Jer 25:4; 26:4–5; 28; 29:24–32.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 18:9–17 Battle of prophets ensues between Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah, leader of the 400, and Micaiah.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 18:9 *thrones*. See note, 1Ki 1:46. *robes*. Ceremonial attire. *entrance of the gate of Samaria*. See p 792.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 18:10 *horns of iron*. See note, 1Ki 22:11.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 18:14 *Go up and triumph*. Likely sarcastic.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 18:16 *return … in peace*. Breaking the war alliance.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 18:18 *I saw the LORD*. See note, Ex 24:10. *sitting on His throne*. Ironic contrast with v 9. *host of heaven*. See note, Dt 4:19; cf Jb 15:8; Ps 82:1; Jer 23:18; Dn 7:10. The divine council ordinarily gathers the heavenly army to fight for Israel (Is 13:1–13; Jl 3:9–12; 2Ki 6:15–19; 7:6), but in this case the divine council plots against Israel and Ahab. See p 1291.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 18:20–21 *spirit … lying spirit*. Demon. See notes, 1Ki 22:20–22; Jb 1:12.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 18:23–27 After he again encounters Zedekiah, Micaiah is imprisoned by Ahab, an act similar to Asa's imprisonment of Hanani (16:10).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 18:23 *Which way*. See note, 1Ki 22:24.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 18:24 *inner chamber*. Things would turn out so badly that even the king's chief prophet would need to hide. See note, Am 6:10.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 18:26 We are never told whether Micaiah was released from prison. Ahaziah, Israel's next king, notoriously followed his father's evil ways (1Ki 22:51–53). Micaiah would have stood under Ahaziah's judgment.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 18:1–27 See application note, 1Ki 22:13–28.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 18:29 See notes, 1Ki 22:30, 32.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 18:31 *cried out*. To the Lord (cf 6:34–35; 1Ch 5:20; 2Ch 13:14–15; 14:11–12; 20:9; 32:20–21; 33:13). *helped*. See note, Gn 2:18; cf 1Ch 5:20; 2Ch 14:11; 25:8; 26:7, 15; 32:8.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 18:33 *scale armor … breastplate*. Because solid armor would restrict movement too much, ancient armor had gaps at relatively less vulnerable points (e.g., around the armpits and neck). See the list of armaments in 26:14.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 18:28–34 See application note, 1Ki 22:29–40.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Ch 19** Prophecy of Jehu and the second reform (cf 17:6). This reform (vv 4–11) is the crucial link between the defeat of ch 18 and the victory of ch 20. Jehoshaphat reforms his kingdom's judicial structure and affirms the centrality of Jerusalem and the temple's

worship personnel. One of those Levites, Jahaziel, will serve as battle prophet (20:14–17); other Levitical personnel will serve as musicians (20:19, 21).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 19:1 *in safety*. God spared Jehoshaphat's life (cf 18:16). But the prophet Jehu would make it clear that by his disobedience, Jehoshaphat had incurred "wrath … from the LORD" (v 2).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 19:2–3 Prophecy of Jehu. Righteous kings must avoid foreign entanglements and trust solely in the Lord (cf 16:1–9; 20:35–37; 25:6–8; 28:16–23).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 19:2 *Jehu*. Asa, father of Jehoshaphat, had imprisoned Hanani, Jehu's father (16:10). Now the sons—Jehoshaphat and Jehu—meet shortly after Ahab imprisoned another prophet, Micaiah (18:25–26; 1Ki 22:26–27). One prophet may be imprisoned, but the Lord raises another to announce His judgment. *love those who hate the LORD?* Genuine love for one's neighbors means helping them to believe and to do what is right. Jehoshaphat is rebuked for supporting Ahab while he remained unrepentant and unjust.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 19:3 *Asherahs*. See note, Ex 34:13. *seek God*. See p 843.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 19:4–11 Jehu's prophetic warning after the warfare account of ch 18 is linked by way of a judicial reform to Jehoshaphat's dramatic victory in the warfare account of ch 20. This judicial reform included the appointment of judges in the fortified cities of Judah (vv 5–7) and the appointment of Levites and priests and heads of clans in Jerusalem (vv 8–11). Luth: "A prince should trust his officials and allow them to act, but only in such a way that he will still keep the reins of government in his own hands. He must not be overconfident but keep his eyes open and attend to things, and (like Jehoshaphat did [II Chron. 19:4–7]) ride through the land and observe everywhere how the government and the law are being administered. In this way he will learn for himself that one cannot place complete trust in any man. You have no right to assume that somebody else will take as deep an interest in you and your land as you do yourself, unless he be a good Christian filled with the Spirit. The natural man will not. And since you cannot know whether he is a Christian or how long he will remain one, you cannot safely depend upon him" (AE 45:121–22).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 19:4 *at Jerusalem*. Jehu had reproved the king for going abroad to join Ahab. Jehoshaphat restricted himself to activities he could accomplish in Judah, with headquarters in Jerusalem. *Beersheba … Ephraim*. Rather than persecute the Lord's messenger, as his father had (16:10), Jehoshaphat renewed his efforts to bring "back to the LORD" all the people under his jurisdiction. See color map 2.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 19:5 *judges*. Not identified by name or by group. Centralization of control had already begun under David and Solomon (1Ch 26:29; 2Ch 1:2); Jehoshaphat builds on that foundation. *fortified cities*. Cf 17:2. See note, 11:6–10.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 19:6 *judge … for the LORD*. Luth: "You see, therefore, what attitude he must have whose duty it is to discharge the office of judge and sword, namely, to subdue all feelings of fear, love, favor, sympathy, greed, ambition, reputation, life, or death, and to be a simple lover of simple truth and just judgment. … A judge must bear the hatred of many; he must be in peril because of hostility and be tempted by sympathy and gain. He will not be able to overcome these shocks and stand firm unless he looks to God alone" (AE 9:163). *He is with you*. Judicial authority derived from the Lord through the king. See note, Gn 9:6. See also Moses' admonition to the judges in Dt 1:17. Cf Ps 82:1. Luth: "God Himself appoints and preserves all authority, and if He no longer held it up, it would all fall down, even though all the world held it fast—therefore it is rightly called a divine thing, a divine ordinance. And such persons are rightly called divine, godlike, or gods [Ps 82:6; Jn 10:34–35]; especially is this so when, beside the institution itself, we have a word or command of God for it, as among the people of Israel, where the priests, princes, and kings were appointed by the oral command and word of God" (AE 13:44).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 19:7 *fear of the LORD*. Reform was not a political maneuver or innovation but a restoration of God's rule over His chosen people. See note, 17:10. The judges were God's representatives, appointed to administer legislation that expressed His will. Cf Dt 1:17; 16:18–20; 17:8–13. *taking bribes*. Cf Ex 23:6–8; Dt 1:17; 16:18–20; 1Sm 8:3; Pr 17:23; Is 1:21–23; 5:22–23; Mi 3:11; 7:3.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 19:8–11 Second arena of the judicial reform, centered in Jerusalem, is rooted in religious devotion (v 9). The expressions "fear of the LORD," "faithfulness," and "whole heart" are characteristic of Chronicles. Religious renewal begins with the king and is mediated through

his appointees. Wholehearted devotion to Yahweh is the standard. The Jerusalem court serves as a court for disputed cases (v 8) as well as more serious cases (v 10; cf Dt 17:8–13).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 19:8 *disputed cases*. These were to be brought before a superior court in Jerusalem, presided over by the governor of Judah (v 11).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 19:10 *law … commandment … statutes … rules*. See p 971.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 19:11 *matters of the* LORD *… the king's matters*. Jehoshaphat divides the administration within his kingdom into religious and civil matters. Yet he allows the Levites (servants of the temple) to have an official role in civil affairs. Luth: "There are two kingdoms, one the kingdom of God, the other the kingdom of the world. … Anyone who knows how to distinguish rightly between these two kingdoms … will also properly understand the passages about mercy. God's kingdom is a kingdom of grace and mercy, not of wrath and punishment. In it there is only forgiveness, consideration for one another, love, service, the doing of good, peace, joy, etc. But the kingdom of the world is a kingdom of wrath and severity. In it there is only punishment, repression, judgment, and condemnation to restrain the wicked and protect the good. For this reason it has the sword, and Scripture calls a prince or lord 'God's wrath,' or 'God's rod' (Isaiah 14 [:5–6]). The Scripture passages which speak of mercy apply to the kingdom of God and to Christians, not to the kingdom of the world, for it is a Christian's duty not only to be merciful, but also to endure every kind of suffering—robbery, arson, murder, devil, and hell. It goes without saying that he is not to strike, kill, or take revenge on anyone. But the kingdom of the world, which is nothing else than the servant of God's wrath upon the wicked and is a real precursor of hell and everlasting death, should not be merciful, but strict, severe, and wrathful in fulfilling its work and duty. Its tool is not a wreath of roses or a flower of love, but a naked sword; and a sword is a symbol of wrath, severity, and punishment. It is turned only against the wicked, to hold them in check and keep them at peace, and to protect and save the righteous [Rom. 13:3–4]. … This shows that in the exercise of their office, worldly rulers cannot and ought not be merciful—though out of grace, they may take a day off from their office" (AE 46:69–70).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Ch 19** The Lord calls Jehoshaphat to serve Him with His whole heart—halfhearted commitment simply will not do. This is no less true for us. The Lord desires our wholehearted commitment, for He committed Himself wholly to us in the person of His beloved Son. • Dearest Lord, I yield my whole heart to Your service, that reform may begin with me. Amen.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 20:1 *Moabites*. See note, Gn 19:37. *Ammonites*. See note, Jgs 3:13. *Meunites*. Inhabitants of Mount Seir (vv 10, 22) in the region of Edom. See color map 2. Perhaps encouraged by the Syrians' victory, several tribes east and south of the Salt Sea joined forces in an attack on Judah.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 20:2 *Edom*. Sometimes confused with Aram (Syria). See ESV note; see also note, 1Ki 11:14.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 20:3 *afraid*. Jehoshaphat had a strong army (17:14–18), but he knew that all its efforts would be in vain if the enemy was God's rod of wrath against him (19:2; cf Is 10:5–6). *seek*. See p 843. *fast*. See note, Lv 16:29. The effect of the invading army on Judah resulted in a national seeking after Yahweh, first for Jehoshaphat himself and then for the people. Such a fast was common in times of war or natural calamities (Jgs 20:26; 1Sm 7:6; 31:13; Jl 2:12–16; Jnh 3:6–9). The piety established by the prophetic rebuke and resulting reforms of ch 19 now bears fruit.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 20:5 *assembly … before the new court*. Reference to the large court (4:9) or to an area of the second temple, giving the postexilic readers a specific point to which they can relate.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 20:6 *God in heaven?* Reminiscent of Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the temple, summarized in part in v 9 (cf 1Ki 8:22–53).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 20:7–9 Review of history (cf 1Ch 17:5, 7–8; 2Ch 15:3–6). The point that Abraham was the friend of God is a comfort. The significance of the land and the promises to Abraham and his descendants finds fulfillment in the building of the temple and, by implication, temple-centered worship.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 20:7 *Your friend?* So called because he trusted God.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 20:9 *Your name is in this house*. See note, 1Ki 8:18.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 20:10 *Ammon and Moab and Mount Seir*. See color map 2. *invade … destroy*. Jehoshaphat's complaint to the Lord draws on the themes of the historical review (vv 7–9) and applies them to the situation. Israel had not destroyed these peoples when they came from Egypt because the Lord forbade them to do so (Dt 2:4–5, 9, 19).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 20:11 *Your possession*. Jehoshaphat boldly shifts the responsibility for the safety of the land to God, pointing out that it belongs to Him. This is a good example of how to wrestle with God in prayer and prevail (cf Gn 32:28).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 20:12 Jehoshaphat's petition. Like Asa his father, Jehoshaphat addresses the Lord with the relational expression "our God," admits powerlessness, and confesses trust in the Lord (cf 14:11).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 20:13–17 Message of Jahaziel. Jehoshaphat had spoken of the exodus of the people from Egypt (v 10). Here vv 15–17 parallel the wording and ideas of the Red Sea epic (cf Ex 14:13–14).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 20:13 *little ones … children*. See note, Dt 1:39.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 20:14 *Spirit of the Lord*. Jahaziel's words had divine authority (cf v 20). *Jahaziel*. A Levite not mentioned otherwise.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 20:16 *Ziz*. Near the west coast of the Dead Sea.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 20:19 *Kohathites and the Korahites*. Descendants of Levi who were temple musicians (1Ch 6:1, 22, 31). The Levites and their ministry play a central role in this warfare account, from the national lament in the temple (vv 5–13) to the prophetic activity of the Asaphite Jahaziel (vv 14–17) to the praise of the Kohathites and Korahites and the music of the singers (v 21). Cf 1Ch 25.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 20:20 *Tekoa*. Town c 6 mi S of Bethlehem; home of Amos and a certain wise woman (Am 1:1; 2 Sm 14:2). *Believe … be established*. In Hbr, these verbs are different forms of the same root, meaning "to be firm, stable." Standing unwaveringly on God's Word is faith. Such trust in God gives a firm foundation for life, regardless of outward circumstances. *believe His prophets, and you will succeed*. The prophet's Word is the Lord's Word. To hear the prophet is to hear the Lord.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 20:21 Normally, a battle begins with the war cry of the entire army. Here it begins with music from the worship leaders. *holy attire*. Cf Ex 28.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 20:22–23 The victory here is clearly the Lord's. Because the Judeans were told to stand still and watch (v 17), the heavenly army is the agent of victory (cf 2Sm 5:24; 2Ki 7:5–7; 19:35; Is 13:4). The complete lack of participation by Judah's army in ch 20 differs from their minimal participation in chs 13–14.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 20:22 *ambush*. Lit, "liers in wait." We are not told who they were, only that their attack was so unexpected and mysterious that the enemy was completely confused. God similarly routed the Midianites before Gideon's army (Jgs 7:22) and the Philistines when Saul was king (1Sm 14:20).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 20:23 *devoting them to destruction*. See p 6.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 20:1–23 By promise, prayer, and praise, the Lord accomplishes Judah's deliverance. The people are saved by faith (v 20c). Faith in God's promises is still how we relate to and rely on our gracious Lord. Above all blessings, He gives us saving faith in the cross of His beloved Son. • We praise You, O Lord, for delivering us from evil and most of all for delivering us from our sins. Amen.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 20:24 *watchtower of the wilderness*. In Tekoa, looking southeast toward the Dead Sea. See map, p 558.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 20:26–28 As before the battle (vv 18–19), the people worship God after the battle. The first ritual on the battlefield describes the army gathering for a worship celebration after taking the spoils. The postbattle ritual at the temple immediately follows. Having begun at the house of the Lord (v 5), the warfare account now ends at the house of the Lord (v 28). The prayer Jehoshaphat offered there (vv 6–12) has been answered.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 20:26 *Valley of Beracah*. Slope begins near Tekoa and runs to the middle of the west shore of the Salt Sea, near Engedi. See map, p 558.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 20:27 *made them rejoice*. Praising God for His salvation involves commemoration of His enemies' defeat.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 20:29–30 Answers rhetorical question of v 6. Yes, Yahweh is God in heaven. He alone rules over all the kingdoms of the nations. A righteous king and his realm enjoy peace and rest from enemies. They are held in awe and respect by other nations. These blessings are given to Judah under Jehoshaphat.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 20:29 *fear of God*. See note, 14:14.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 20:33 *high places*. Royal decree for their removal (17:6) did not have popular support. See note, 15:17; see also p 526. 1Ki 22:43–44 places the blame for the continuing existence of the high places on Jehoshaphat. The Chronicler notes the blame of the people (33b).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 20:34 *Book of the Kings*. 1 and 2Ki.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 20:24–34 The Lord makes Judah rejoice over their enemies, the Moabites, Ammonites, and Meunites. Though gloating over the troubles of others is sinful, God's people cannot fail to praise the Lord for the victory and the good they receive from Him. Daily offer praise to God for His merciful kindness toward you and your loved ones. Daily rejoice in His greatest victory: the cross and resurrection of Jesus. • Grant us quiet and rest all around, dear Lord, except when we praise You loudly for Your good gifts. Amen.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 20:35–37 Reign of this pious king ends on a disappointing note. Jehoshaphat again enters into an alliance with Israel, as he did in ch 18. And just as he was rebuked for the first alliance by the prophet Jehu (19:1–3), here he is rebuked by another prophet, Eliezer. In both cases, Jehoshaphat receives little more than the words of rebuke, though in this case his ships are also destroyed. This warning signals the danger that will develop in the next chapters.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 20:35 *Ahaziah*. After Ahab's death (18:34), his son Jehoram reigned in Israel for 12 years (2Ki 3:1) and was succeeded by Ahaziah.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 20:36 *to go to Tarshish*. Indicates what kind of ships they were. See note, 9:21.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 20:37 *joined*. According to 1Ki 22:49, Jehoshaphat refused to cooperate with Ahaziah in another similar expedition.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 20:35–37 See application note, 1Ki 22:41–50.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Ch 21** Reign of Jehoram. By comparison, the parallel account in 2Ki 8:16–24 is exceedingly brief. Jehoram is the first king of Judah whose reign can be characterized from beginning to end as evil. This account of his reign serves as a sermon for the Chronicler's contemporaries. The Jerusalem temple was to be the sole sanctuary of the Lord, the God of Abraham. Any infidelity to that temple would result in the wrath of the Lord, with disastrous warfare following. The result is the polar opposite of the military and political blessings bestowed on the kingdom during times of fidelity in temple worship, illustrated by the reigns of Abijah, Asa, and Jehoshaphat.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 21:1 See note, 1Ki 2:10.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 21:2–4 Unique to 2Ch. Jehoram, the eldest brother, is given the kingdom, but Jehoshaphat follows the pattern established by Rehoboam in dispersing sons throughout the fortified cities (11:23). Immediately after the accession of Jehoram, the theme of danger to David's house is brought forward, a theme that recurs in 21:17; 22:8–11. Ironically, by these murders Jehoram sets in motion events that culminate in the near obliteration of his own line (21:17).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 21:2 *Azariah*. Unclear why the first and fourth sons have the same name.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 21:6 The marriage alliance Jehoshaphat made with Ahab (18:1) had more serious consequences than unsuccessful military and maritime ventures undertaken jointly by the two kingdoms (18:2–34; 20:35–37). For some time, Judah came directly under the evil influence of the house of Ahab. See the parallel account in 2Ki 8:16–19.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 21:7 *not willing to destroy*. The Lord withholds destruction of the house of David for the sake of David. Jehoram was the only "lamp" left to the Davidic dynasty; his life would be preserved. Hope must be directed to future generations, both at the time of Jehoram and at the time of the Chronicler. See notes, 2Sm 7:12–14.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 21:8–10 Jehoram's initial battle is a victory of sorts but sets the stage for later defeat by the Philistines and Arabians (vv 16–17) following Jehoram's apostasy (v 11), a war not reported in 2Ki 8:16–24.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 21:9 *by night … struck*. Uncommon tactic.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 21:10 *to this day*. See note, 1Ch 4:41. *Libnah*. See map, p 615.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 21:11–19 Unique to Chronicles.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 21:11 *high places*. See p 526. *whoredom*. Jehoram's sin differs from that of his predecessors. They failed to remove the high places; he built the high places. Jehoram's wickedness will be punished (vv 12–15). Judah was invaded (vv 16–17), and the king died of a horrible disease (vv 18–19).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 21:12–15 Letter of rebuke from Elijah, announcing two punishments. Vv 16–19 describe their fulfillment.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 21:12 *letter*. See pp 1081–83, 1900. *Elijah*. He had little contact with the kings of Judah, but sudden, unannounced appearances were characteristic of his ministry. The arrival of a letter from

him seems unusual; he likely wrote it before he was taken to heaven (2Ki 2:1).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 21:14 *plague*. Hbr means a severe "blow," which may take the form of a disease or epidemic. In 1Sm 4:17, it is translated "slaughter."

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 21:16–19 First of the prophesied punishments is fulfilled by the invasion of the Philistines and the Arabians. The Lord intervenes against Judah, and the endangerment of the Davidic line is clear. Second, like his grandfather Asa, Jehoram suffers before his death. Whatever his illness, it exceeded the grotesqueness of Asa's disease (16:12). Jehoram's bowels prolapsed before his death. Cf 16:11–14; 26:19–21.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 21:16 *Ethiopians*. Similar group of raiders was repulsed by Jehoram's grandfather Asa (14:9–13).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 21:17 *Jehoahaz*. Commonly called Ahaziah (22:1). Both names mean "the LORD took" (Hbr verb *'achaz* may appear at the beginning or end of the name). Jehoahaz becomes the lamp of the house of David (v 7; 2Ki 8:19), the sole bearer of the Davidic line and promise.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 21:19 *no fire*. People did not burn spices in his honor as they had at his grandfather's funeral (16:14).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Ch 21** Through a letter from Elijah the prophet, the Lord warns Jehoram that he must face God's punishment. A harsh letter is difficult to write and harder still to receive. Yet as sinners, we all need the rebuke of God's Law against our sins. Above all, we need the call to repentance, forgiveness, and new life that the Lord is always ready to offer. • Lord, lead me to receive Your Word as a letter for my instruction and restoration. Amen.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 22:1–9 Reign of Ahaziah of Judah. The Chronicler's concern here, as elsewhere, is the kingdom of Judah, not Israel.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 22:1 *youngest son*. Ahaziah was the sole survivor of the raid on "the camp" of Judah. See note, 21:17.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 22:2–4 *Athaliah*. Daughter of Ahab and granddaughter of Omri was Ahaziah's counselor for evil. Therefore, his downfall at the hands of Jehu (vv 7–9; 2Ki 9:27–28) was from God. The Chronicler esp notes Athaliah's influence and her northern retinue of advisers as the cause of Ahaziah's undoing.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 22:5–6 *followed their counsel*. The Chronicler's concern for Judah prompts him to introduce the war account with the explanation that Ahaziah allied himself with Joram because of the advice of wicked counselors. *Syria … Ramoth-gilead … Jezreel … Ramah*. See map, p 558.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 22:7–9 Cf 2Ki 9:14–29. Alliance with Joram explains Ahaziah's death. His death was "ordained by God," as was Saul's (1Ch 10:13–14). All of Ahaziah's family is killed either here by Jehu or later by Athaliah, except for one son, Joash (vv 10–11), who continued the Davidic and messianic line. The Chronicler assumes the reader knows this history and presents this matter to illustrate his theology of retribution.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 22:7 *anointed*. See note, 1Sm 10:1.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 22:1–9 The Lord wills and brings about the downfall of Ahaziah and the house of Ahab. No family is perfect; all are within reach of God's punishment. Pray for your household, that God's Word and peace may prevail among you and rule your hearts. Our heavenly Father greatly desires to show mercy to all people. • Pour out, O Lord, Your Spirit of peace upon us, and grant all our family Your abiding grace. Amen.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 22:10–12 Athaliah rules over Judah. Unique period in Judah, when a non-Davidic ruler sits on the throne, a queen who destroys her own descendants in order to secure her rule (her husband, Jehoram, acts similarly in 21:4). As with the end of Saul's reign in 1Ch 10, God ordained the death of one king (Ahaziah) in order to raise up another (Joash).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 22:10 *destroyed all the royal family*. Despotic, cruel, and iron-willed, Athaliah did not shrink from killing her own grandsons, fearing they could challenge her usurpation of power.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 22:11 *Jehoshabeath*. Heroine preserves the life of her nephew Joash, the last remaining descendant of the Davidic line. The Lord's kingdom can be threatened and attacked, but it is truly the Lord's; He will act in history to preserve it (1Ch 17:14; 2Ch 13:8).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 22:10–12 See application note, 2Ki 11:1–3.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Chs 23–24** Joash, the sole surviving son of Ahaziah, ascended to the throne at age 7. Ch 23 follows 2Ki 11:4–20 with only a few differences. In both accounts, Joash is initially a good king under the tutelage of Jehoiada the priest. Whereas 2Ki simply reports the events,

the Chronicler attempts to explain them. Joash's reign is marked by three periods: (1) reign of Athaliah is brought to an end, and Joash's claim is secured (23:1–21); (2) Joash reigns righteously (24:1–16); (3) Joash's reign becomes wicked, an account largely unique to the Chronicler (24:17–27).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Ch 23** The Chronicler highlights similarities to Saul and David. As the wicked king Saul had died at the Lord's command (1Ch 10:13–14), so had Ahaziah (22:7). As David had been declared king by all Israel (1Ch 11:1–3), so Joash is declared king by all Judah (23:2–3) because of the Lord's promise to David.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 23:1 *covenant*. See note, v 11. *commanders of hundreds*. Cf 1Sm 22:7.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 23:2–3 Unique to 2Ch. The Chronicler tells of the national support for Joash, including Levites from every city and the heads of families throughout Israel. This reflects the level of support received by David at the beginning of his reign (1Ch 11–12).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 23:3 *the* LORD *spoke*. God's promise to David (2Sm 7:12, 16; 2Ch 6:16).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 23:4–7 The Chronicler uniquely specifies that the Levites and priests are to perform all duties in the house of the Lord. Even in emergency situations, God's people must not act contrary to their divinely instituted office.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 23:4 *gatekeepers*. Cf 1Ch 26:1–19.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 23:5 *courts of the house*. See note, 2Ch 4:9.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 23:6 *charge of the* LORD. Areas of the temple complex were restricted by degrees of holiness.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 23:7 *weapons*. See note, v 9.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 23:8 *divisions*. Levites who acted as temple guards.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 23:9 Temple storage rooms, or the treasuries, served as an armory for the temple guards. See note, 1Ch 26:20–28.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 23:11 *testimony*. Elsewhere translated "covenant" (here understood to be the same covenant referred to in vv 1, 3). Likely refers to the document required to be given to a king (Dt 17:18–20), to which David alluded at the succession of Solomon (1Ch 29:19). *anointed*. See note, 1Sm 10:1.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 23:12–15 See notes, 2Ki 11:13–16.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 23:12 *people running*. The Chronicler adds this detail about the people's excited support.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 23:1–15 See application note, 2Ki 11:4–20.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 23:16–21 See notes, 2Ki 11:17–20. The Chronicler adds that gatekeepers were stationed at the gates (v 19). As with the coronations of David (1Ch 12:38–40) and Solomon (1Ch 29:21–22), Joash's coronation is met with rejoicing (v 21).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 23:16 *covenant*. See note, v 11; see also p 127.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 23:17 *house of Baal*. Pagan temple had been furnished with sacred objects from the Lord's temple (24:7).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 23:18 *posted watchmen … Levites*. Or, "placed the offices of the house into the hands of the priests and the Levites." According to Mosaic prescriptions, the priests were "to offer burnt offerings," and the Levites were gatekeepers.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 23:20 *upper gate to the king's house*. The palace was apparently near the temple. See note, 2 Ki 11:16.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 23:16–21 On behalf of the boy king Joash, the priest Jehoiada makes a covenant with the people of Judah based on the Law of Moses. Through sound leadership, the Lord renews the mercies of temple service and the good administration of the kingdom. Just as Joash needed the faithful guidance of Jehoiada, children today need faithful guides in life (pastors, teachers, coaches, etc.). Seek such faithful guides and pray for them. Our faithful Lord will raise up godly men and women who know and duly apply His Holy Word for our instruction in righteousness. • Dearest Lord, hear our prayer on behalf of our families and our communities, that we may prosper before You. Amen.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 24:1–14 First phase of Joash's reign; a time of righteousness under the tutelage of Jehoiada (vv 2, 14). This ends when Jehoiada dies (vv 17–18).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 24:1 *seven years*. Jehoiada acted as regent. *Beersheba*. See color map 1.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 24:4 *house of the Lord*. Temple.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 24:5–11 The Chronicler adds details not found in 2Ki 12:4–10: (1) the reason for the repair of the temple (v 7); (2) the explanation that the tax to be collected was levied by Moses (vv 6, 9);

and (3) the note that the people dropped the tax into the chest under the supervision of the priests (vv 10–11). On temple treasuries, see notes, 1Ch 26:20–28; 26:20.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 24:5 *Levites*. Supplementing the account in Kings, the writer of Chronicles makes repeated reference to the Levites (vv 6, 11). Joash directs both priests and Levites to gather money for temple renovations (cf 2Ki 12:5).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 24:7 See note, 23:17.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 24:8 *chest*. Temple offerings were gathered this way (cf Lk 21:1). Offering plates are a modern development.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 24:10 *rejoiced*. Restoration of worship and its proper practice brings joy to God's people.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 24:11 *king's secretary … officer of the chief priest*. Both branches of the administration were represented in order to avoid misuse of funds.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 24:12–14 The Chronicler reports not only the restoration of the building but also the furnishings made after the restoration was completed.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 24:14 *offerings … regularly*. See pp 170–71.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 24:15–22 Unique to 2Ch. After the death of Jehoiada, the king listened to new counselors (v 17), causing Judah to abandon the Lord's house (v 18). These verses form the context for the Chronicler's account of the shift in both the character and fortunes of Joash.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 24:15 *130 years old*. Jehoiada was likely born while Solomon was building the temple, and he would have witnessed many changes under seven kings.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 24:16 *among the kings*. While Joash would be denied burial "in the tombs of the kings" (v 25), this honor is accorded to Jehoiada, the priest who was regent while Joash was a minor and whose wife was a royal princess (22:11).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 24:18 Joash is swayed by fawning courtiers (v 17) to serve idols despite repeated warnings by God's spokesmen (v 19). Joash sinks so low that he has Zechariah executed, the first prophet in Judah to suffer martyrdom (vv 20–22). *Asherim*. See note, Ex 34:13.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 24:19 *would not pay attention*. The Lord sent prophets, but the people hardened their hearts by not listening to the

Lord's Word. This attitude toward the Lord's prophets would ultimately cause Judah's downfall under Babylon (36:15–21).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 24:20 *clothed*. See notes, 1Ch 12:18; Jgs 6:34.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 24:21 *stoned*. Cf Ex 19:13. Cypr: "The camp of Christ, unconquered and firm with the Lord's protection, [does not] yield to threats. The priest of God holding fast the Gospel and keeping Christ's precepts may be slain; he cannot be conquered" (*ANF* 5:345).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 24:22 *avenge!* Or, "require," i.e., the penalty for shedding the blood of a fellow human being (see notes, Gn 9:5, 6). In contrast, Christ on the cross asked that the Father would forgive His executioners (Lk 23:34; cf Ac 7:60).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 24:1–22 The Lord guides Joash through the priest Jehoiada and his son Zechariah, but Joash finally rejects the Lord's ways. Each of us needs good counsel, especially God's Law and Gospel, which reveal the Lord's ways to us. When others point out your weaknesses, do not harden your heart toward them or toward the Lord. The Lord's great desire is to bring you back, restoring you through confession and forgiveness. • Call me back to You, O Lord, through the faithful words of Your prophets. Amen.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 24:23–24 Unlike the divine intervention on behalf of Judah in the earlier wars of Abijah, Asa, and Jehoshaphat, the Lord gives victory to the enemy in this war.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 24:23 *At the end of the year*. Soon after the death of Zechariah comes God's punishment through the Syrians. *destroyed all the princes*. Cf v 17. *Damascus*. See color map 2.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 24:24 *they*. Syrians.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 24:25–26 When Joash is wounded, and in a weakened state, he is murdered by conspirators. Joash meets this end because of his unfaithfulness to the Lord. *Ammonite … Moabite*. Not reported in 2Ki. Detail is ironic because these are the very people defeated by Jehoshaphat in ch 20. The mothers of the conspirators had married into important Judean families. See note, 1Ki 3:1–2.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 24:27 *oracles*. See p 1079. *Book of the Kings*. 1 and 2Ki.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 24:23–27 See application note, 2Ki 12:19–21.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Ch 25** Amaziah was co-regent with Uzziah. See p 529. Though the Chronicler usually divides the reigns of kings into periods of good and evil, here he describes Amaziah as uncommitted (vv 1–4), giving a detailed report of Amaziah's first battle (vv 5–13), apostasy (v 14), and prophetic rebuke (vv 15–16).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 25:1 *Amaziah*. Tenth king in Davidic monarchy.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 25:2 *whole heart*. See note, Dt 6:5.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 25:4 *each one shall die for his own sin*. See note, Dt 24:16.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 25:1–4 See application note, 2Ki 14:1–22.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 25:5–16 The Chronicler uses the warfare account to explain the theological reasons for the victory over Edom and the rejection of Israel.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 25:5 *assembled*. A military census was taken to determine the forces available (cf 1Ch 21; 27:23–24; 2Ch 13:3; 14:8; 17:14–19). Though 300,000 troops could be mustered, the number was far fewer than Asa's 580,000 or Jehoshaphat's 1,160,000.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 25:6 *mighty men of valor*. See notes, Jsh 1:14; Ru 2:1.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 25:7 *man of God*. Unidentified prophet. *all these Ephraimites*. Such alliances imply a lack of trust in Yahweh. An important theme in the Chronicler's theology is the necessity of trusting in the Lord and rejecting all foreign alliances (cf 16:2–9; 19:1–3; 20:15–17, 35–37; 32:7–8), emphasizing the idea of the Lord fighting for the few against the many (cf Jgs 7; 1Sm 14:6; 1Ki 20:27; 2Ch 13:3–18; 14:8–15).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 25:9 *much more*. Cf Pr 16:8.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 25:10 Unique to 2Ch. Amaziah's response to the prophet's words was to discharge the mercenaries, only to have them ransack and murder throughout Judah (v 13).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 25:11 *Valley of Salt*. See map, p 500. *Seir*. Another name for Edom (cf 20:22). See notes, 20:1–2.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 25:12 *threw them down*. No reason is given for this massacre of prisoners—perhaps it is in retaliation for the Edomites' earlier attacks. See notes, 20:1–2.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 25:13 *Beth-horon*. C 10–12 mi NW of Jerusalem.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 25:14 Unique to 2Ch. Amaziah makes a bizarre choice, previously unparalleled by a Judean king (Ahaz would later worship the gods of the victorious enemy in 28:22–23). His idolatry explains his defeat by Jehu of Israel (vv 17–24; cf 1Ch 10:13–14; 2Ch 22:7–9). *Seir*. See map, p 60.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 25:15–16 Unique to 2Ch. Yahweh foretells Amaziah's subsequent defeat through another unnamed prophet.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 25:15 *did not deliver*. Worshiping gods who could not protect their devotees was as absurd as it was sinful.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 25:16 *royal counselor?* Some prophets did serve as counselors. See pp 1077–81. *Stop!* Though Amaziah had begun well (v 2), had listened to another one of God's prophets (vv 7–10a), and had won a victory on this account, he hardened his heart to God's Word. Chem: "Satan is the efficacious cause in the sons of disobedience when they put the Word of the Lord out of their sight" (*LTh* 1:196). *struck down?* Amaziah accuses the prophet of treason.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 25:5–16 Though the Lord grants him victories, Amaziah continues in rebellion. Today, we likewise feel the constant pressure to compromise the truth and follow the Lord halfheartedly. By His faithful and gracious Word, the Lord, who has power to help, will unstop our ears and turn our hearts to hear Him. • Speak, O Lord, that I may know Your ways and walk in them by faith. Amen.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 25:17–24 Amaziah, after gaining victory over the Edomites, challenges Joash of Israel (v 17) and is defeated. Challenge was prompted by the actions of the Israelite mercenaries (v 13).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 25:17 *look one another in the face*. Have a conference to negotiate relations.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 25:18 *thistle … cedar*. Parable. See note, 2Ki 14:9.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 25:20 *they had sought the gods of Edom*. The Chronicler blames the people as well as the king.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 25:21 *Beth-shemesh*. See map, p 558.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 25:22 *every man fled to his home*. Expression for a complete rout (cf 1Sm 4:10).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 25:23 *Ephraim Gate*. On the road to Ephraim (the Northern Kingdom); called the Damascus Gate today. *Corner Gate*. At the extreme west end of the wall, where it formed an "Angle" (26:9) with the wall from the south.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 25:24 *Samaria*. See color map 1.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 25:26 *Book of the Kings*. 1 and 2Ki.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 25:27 *they*. Likely refers to Judah's leading families. *Lachish*. See color map 1. One of the cities fortified by Rehoboam, Solomon's son (11:5–12).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 25:28 *upon horses*. Lit, "upon the horses." Perhaps the assassins' animals were used to transport the body back c 30 mi over the Judean hills.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 25:17–28 See application note, 2Ki 14:1–22.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Ch 26** Uzziah (Azariah in Kings) is initially a good king who does what is right in the eyes of the Lord (v 4), but then he comes to a sad end. The Chronicler's account serves to explain the transition from a good beginning to Uzziah's leprous death.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 26:1 *all the people*. The nation still favored Davidic succession, even though a conspiracy swept away the previous occupant of the throne. *Uzziah*. The Chronicler may have chosen this variation of the name to avoid confusion with Azariah the priest in vv 17–20. *sixteen years old*. Uzziah was made king before Amaziah died (he fled to Lachish and ruled there, 25:27). There was a period of co-regency between father and son.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 26:2 *Eloth*. Also spelled Elath. For its location and significance, cf 1Ki 9:26; 2Ch 8:17.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 26:3–4 The Chronicler does not report that the high places remained in Judah under Uzziah (2Ki 15:4).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 26:5–21 The Chronicler's account gives the reason for Uzziah's initial successes (vv 5–15) as well as his unfaithfulness (vv 16–19a) and resulting leprosy (vv 19b–21).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 26:5 *Zechariah*. Perhaps the same person who attested Isaiah's message (Is 8:2). Like Joash (24:2), Uzziah prospered under the tutelage of a godly adviser in the early part of his reign. *fear of God*. Lit, "vision of God." Cf 1Ch 13:12; 2Ch 6:31, 33; 19:9. *sought the LORD*. See p 843.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 26:6 *Gath … Jabneh … Ashdod*. See color map 1. Uzziah recaptured and fortified cities on the western and southwestern borders. Gath had fallen into David's hands (1Ch 18:1).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 26:7 *Meunites*. See note, 20:1. While Uzziah was faithful, he enjoyed military victory, exactly as his forefathers Rehoboam, Joash, and Amaziah had. But all of them met disaster when they turned away from the Lord.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 26:8–15 Uzziah's faithfulness is marked by other indicators of divine favor. He was held in respect and received tribute from other nations (v 8), engaged in building programs (vv 9–10), and maintained a well-equipped army of 307,500 men (vv 11–15).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 26:9 *Corner Gate*. See note, 25:23. *Valley Gate*. Opened into the Valley of Hinnom, west and south of the city. *the Angle*. Lit, "at the turning," i.e., where the wall turned in another direction. See note, 25:23.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 26:10 *Shephelah … plain*. See color map 2. *loved the soil*. Uzziah made the land productive and safe. He promoted agriculture in various parts of the country: in the wilderness, the grazing lands south and southeast of Jerusalem; in the Shephelah, or lowlands, where the hills of Judah fall away toward the Great Sea; in the plain, the tableland east of the Jordan and the Salt Sea; and in the hill country as well as in the more fertile lands.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 26:11–12 Uzziah put his army under the command of 2,600 "mighty men of valor," i.e., professional soldiers. See notes, Jsh 1:14; Ru 2:1. Their forces could be augmented by calling up a militia for service in divisions.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 26:13 *307,500*. See note, 25:5.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 26:14 Army was completely outfitted with current armor and weapons.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 26:15 *engines*. Devices such as catapults. *marvelously helped*. By the Lord.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 26:16–19a Downfall of Uzziah. Just as Rehoboam abandoned the Law of the Lord when he had grown strong (12:1), Uzziah did the same. The writer supplies the reason why the Lord makes Uzziah a leper (v 20): pride. Not even the king was permitted to assume worship functions reserved by divine Law for "the priests, the sons of Aaron" (v 18). David and Solomon had acted as priestly kings by

pronouncing God's blessing over the people (1Ch 16:1–3; 2Ch 1:2–10), but unfaithful Uzziah could not do so, though he was a son of David. Pride, humankind's undoing from the beginning, has not lost its appeal for the children of Adam (cf Gn 3:6; Pr 16:18; 29:23).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 26:19 *leprosy*. Refers to a broad range of afflictions, not necessarily to the disease we call leprosy today. Cf Lv 13 and the diseases of Asa (16:12–14) and Jehoram (21:18–19).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 26:21 *governing*. Uzziah's son Jotham exercised the functions of government while Uzziah was still alive.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 26:22 *Isaiah*. Called to prophetic office "in the year that King Uzziah died" (Is 6:1). The Chronicler drew on Isaiah's writings for details about Uzziah's prosperity and his fall, which the writer of Kings did not incorporate (cf 2Ki 15:6).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 26:23 See note, 1Ki 2:10. *field*. Due to his leprosy, Uzziah was buried in a graveyard rather than the tomb of the kings (cf 2Ki 15:7).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Ch 26** See application note, 2Ki 15:1–7.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Ch 27** Parallel account is found in 2Ki 15:32–38. The Chronicler does not report a war in which the Lord sent Rezin of Syria and Pekah of Israel against Judah (2Ki 15:37); conversely, Jotham's victory over the Ammonites (vv 5–6) is not recorded in 2Ki.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 27:3–4 Building projects are characteristic of faithful kings. See note, 11:5–12.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 27:3 *upper gate*. Gave access to the king's house from the temple (cf 23:20). *Ophel*. Southern part of the temple hill.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 27:4 *cities … forts … towers*. Defensive garrisons to guard the boundaries. Messengers and signal fires were used to communicate between garrisons. *wooded hills*. See note, Jgs 9:48.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 27:5–6 Unique to 2Ch.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 27:5 *Ammonites*. Jotham completely subjugated the Ammonites, who had already been defeated and made a tributary by his father (26:7–8). *cors*. See p cx. *second … third years*. Tribute was likely cut off by an Ammonite rebellion.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 27:7 *all his wars*. No serious invasion from the north seems to have occurred during Jotham's lifetime.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 27:9 See note, 1Ki 2:10.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Ch 27** Jotham orders his ways before the Lord and grows mighty as a result. He learns from both the good example and the bad example of his father, Uzziah. Learn to respect and emulate all that is good in your parents, for they are God's gift to you. Also seek to grow in the ways of your heavenly Father, who gives life everlasting in the might of His Son. • Order my ways, dear Father, that I may emulate Your goodness. Amen.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Ch 28** The Chronicler presents the life of Ahaz with no positive comments. Ahaz's reign is shown as a mirror image of Abijah's in ch 13, with idolatry and defeat now belonging to Judah instead of Israel. The Chronicler supplements the account of Ahaz's reign given in 2Ki 16 and Is 7 by adding details to the characterization of Ahaz (vv 1–4; see notes, 2Ki 16:3, 4) and giving a fuller description of the losses inflicted on Judah by Rezin of Syria and Pekah of Israel (vv 5–7). Ahaz was in dire straits, pressed from the north by Israel and Syria, from the south by the Edomites, and from the southwest by the Philistines. In desperation, he appealed to the Assyrians for help. However, the heavy tribute Ahaz had to pay Tiglath-pileser only added to Judah's distress (vv 16–21).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 28:1 *Ahaz*. One of the worst of the Davidic kings.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 28:2 *metal images*. Indicates a special measure of devotion and recalls the golden calves made by Jeroboam I of Israel (11:15; 13:8). Baal was often depicted on upright stones.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 28:3 *Hinnom*. See note, 2Ki 23:10. *burned his sons*. Pagan practice condemned in Lv 20:1–5 (cf Jer 7:31–32 and Manasseh's renewal of the practice in 2Ch 33:6). Luth: "This is why it is often stated in the histories of this people that the Children of Israel cried out to the Lord and yet were not heard and liberated. For they wanted to appease God with sacrifices and the slaying of victims, yes, even of their children and their own bodies, which they cut up with knives and lancets until they were covered with blood. Or they lived a very hard life in some other way. But they were idolaters and served God with false acts of worship. Therefore they were not heard. … But by all this God is irritated rather than appeased or prevailed upon to give help" (AE 8:275).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 28:4 *high places*. See p 526.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 28:1–4 See application note, 2Ki 16.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 28:5 *God gave him into the hand*. Cf 24:23–24. *Syria*. See color map 2. *defeated him*. As a result of his religious corruption, war came upon Ahaz from Rezin of Syria and Pekah of Israel. The outcome is the reverse of the victory the Lord had given to faithful Abijah (13:16–17). *Damascus*. See color map 2.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 28:6 *forsaken the* LORD. Key concept in Chronicles that brings condemnation and defeat (see note, 12:1; cf 7:19, 22; 12:5; 15:2; 21:8–10; 24:17–22; 29:6; 34:25). Precisely the sin of the north that Abijah speaks of in 13:9–11.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 28:8 *Samaria*. See color map 1.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 28:9–15 Prophecy of Oded. The Chronicler, living in the postexilic period, may have included this history as an appeal for reunification with his contemporaries of the northern tribes. Note the conciliatory tone of Oded's speech ("the LORD, the God of your fathers"; "your relatives") and the north's repentance.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 28:9 *Oded*. An otherwise unknown prophet, although a man by that name is mentioned in 15:1, 8. Elisha also urged the release of prisoners of war (2Ki 6:20–23). *killed them in a rage*. Specific Judeans are mentioned in v 7.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 28:10 *slaves*. See p 101.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 28:13 *guilt*. Because of the enslavement of the Judeans.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 28:15 *clothed … provided … anointed*. The Ephraimites show exceptional kindness to the prisoners and return them to Judean territory. *Jericho*. See color map 1.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 28:16 *Assyria*. See map, p 717. *help*. Ahaz sought a foreign alliance, which the Chronicler views as sinful. See note, 25:7.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 28:17–19 Judah's defeat at the hands of the Edomites and Philistines precipitates the attempt to gain Assyria's help (v 16).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 28:17 *Edomites*. They were in a position to even the score with their former Judean overlords because Rezin had retaken Elath, where the Edomites lived (2Ki 16:6).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 28:18 *Philistines*. Ahaz lost control of the cities that his grandfather had taken from the Philistines (26:6–7), who proceeded to invade the Shephelah (cf 26:10) and the Negeb, the southland

of Judah. *Shephelah … Beth-shemesh, Aijalon, Gederoth, Soco … Timnah … Gimzo*. Western Judah.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 28:19 *unfaithful to the* LORD. Judah's alliance with Assyria brought corruption and decline. See note, 1Ch 10:13.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 28:20–21 Ahaz had called on Assyria for help (v 16), but foreign alliances are treacherous. Judah is thus reduced to a vassal of a foreign oppressor because they allied themselves with the kingdoms of the world rather than with the Lord, the God of their fathers.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 28:20 *Tiglath-pileser*. See notes, 1Ch 5:6, 26.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 28:5–21 When Syria and Israel overrun Judah and lead away numerous prisoners, the Lord shames the Israelites for mistreating their southern prisoners. Mistreating one's relatives, as the Israelites did, is doubly shameful. God calls us to treat our extended family with respect and care to lead them to repentance and life. Thankfully, the Lord treats us mercifully by forgiving our sins and reconciling us to the family of God. • Grant our families peace and unity, O Lord, that we may extend Your kindness to all. Amen.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 28:22–25 Unlike prior kings, Ahaz does not come to repentance but grows more apostate. The gods of Damascus become the object of his worship, a story more fully told in 2Ki 16:10–18. The temple desecration under Ahaz is more fully described in the context of Hezekiah's reformation (29:7, 18–19).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 28:23 *gods of Damascus*. Such as the chief Syrian god, Hadad, or Nibhaz and Tartak (2Ki 17:31).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 28:24 *vessels*. Ahaz mutilated some of them; others he discarded (29:19). *shut up the doors*. Official service to the Lord was ended.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 28:25 *high places*. Ahaz favored the sites that had rivaled the temple. See p 526.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 28:26 *Book of the Kings*. 1 and 2Ki.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 28:27 See note, 1Ki 2:10. *they buried him in the city*. Leaders of Judah showed their disrespect for Ahaz by excluding him from the tombs of the kings (cf 21:20; 24:25; 26:23; 33:20). *kings of Israel*. Tombs dated from the era of the united monarchy.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 28:22–27 See application note, 2Ki 16.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Chs 29–32** Reign of Hezekiah, who becomes like a new David. From the ashes of faithlessness and defeat (i.e., Ahaz, who parallels Saul) arises one who leads God's people to renewed fidelity and glory (i.e., Hezekiah, who parallels David). Still, Hezekiah does not rise to the level of Solomon, of whom the Chronicler records no sin or war. Hezekiah, like David, was a warrior who became proud but repented (32:25–26). The Chronicler's account of Hezekiah's reign tells a more complete story of the restoration of true worship than Kings does. Hezekiah (1) cleanses the temple and rededicates it to the Lord's service (ch 29); (2) restores the observance of the annual festival days by keeping the Passover (ch 30); and (3) reinstitutes the other services in the temple, also providing for the livelihood of the priests and Levites (ch 31).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:1 *Zechariah*. Common name; may be the priest who instructed Uzziah (26:5).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:3–4 The temple, desecrated by Ahaz (28:24), was reopened and repaired. Hezekiah's first acts, like those of David, pertain to the proper worship of the Lord in Jerusalem (1Ch 13; 15–16).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:4 *square on the east*. In front of the temple. See note, 4:9.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:5–11 Hezekiah addresses the priests and Levites by rehearsing the recent history under Ahaz (vv 6–9), noting that they had been unfaithful and had abandoned the Lord (see note, 12:1). That apostasy, which had focused on the temple (vv 6b–7), and its devastating consequences (vv 8–9), can be reversed only by the restoration of the temple and the proper functioning of the priesthood (vv 5, 10–11). Like David, Hezekiah insists on the divinely mandated and consecrated ministry (cf 1Ch 15:11–15).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:5 *consecrate yourselves*. Remove all ceremonial defilement (see note, 1Ch 15:12; see p 6). *filth*. After years of neglect, the temple needed a thorough housecleaning. Hezekiah assigned the task to the authorized personnel: the priests and the Levites. First, however, both groups had to make themselves ceremonially clean. It took 16 days to make the entire temple complex ready for the dedication ceremonies (v 17).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:7 *vestibule*. See note, 8:12. *burnt offerings*. See pp 170–71.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:8 *wrath … came*. Cf 28:16–21. The destruction of Jerusalem was the climax of disgrace. *hissing*. Derision by heathen nations.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:10 *covenant*. Cf 15:12; 23:16; 34:31; Ne 9:38 for other renewals of the covenant relationship. See p 127.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:11 *My sons*. King emphasizes his closeness to the ministers of the temple. He may have been related to them. See note, v 1.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:12–14 List of Levitical families follows the pattern established by David (cf 1Ch 6; 15:4–10; 23:6; 25).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:12 *Levites*. Levi's sons through Gershon, Kohath, and Merari had special assignments in the transport of the tabernacle (Nu 3:14–37).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:15–36 Three stages of the restoration of the temple: (1) desecrated house is cleansed (vv 15–19); (2) cleansed temple is rededicated (vv 20–30); (3) people present their offerings (vv 31–36).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:15 *words of the* LORD. A king's command had divine authority because it was based on God's command laid down in the Law of Moses or because it was directly communicated by a prophet. The Lord and the king made sure these actions were fulfilled (cf 30:12).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:16 Events of v 16 may have followed those of v 17. *inner part*. The Holy Place. *uncleanness*. Ahaz may have introduced articles of false religion. *Kidron*. Immediately outside the city walls (cf 15:16; 30:14).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:17 *came to the vestibule*. Describes the progress of the cleansing, which began in the courts of the temple.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:1–19 Hezekiah leads the priests and Levites in cleansing the temple and restoring the sacrifices. Renewal is always more than outward cleansing. Through the Word, the Lord cleanses and changes hearts. In Jesus' sacrifice, He atones for all our sins. • Wipe away the filth of my sins, O Savior, and cleanse me by Your precious blood. Amen.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:20–30 The cleansed temple is rededicated.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:20 *rose early*. Possibly to attend the morning sacrifice at dawn.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:21 *sin offering*. According to Mosaic Law (Lv 4:1–5:13; Nu 18:17) and the examples of David and Solomon (1Ch 15:25–16:3; 21:25–26; 2Ch 1:2–6; 7:7–11). See pp 170–71. *commanded*. The king exercised considerable authority over the priests.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:22 *received the blood and threw it*. Caught in basins and thrown against the altar, as prescribed in Lv 1:3–5.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:23 *laid their hands*. Symbolically transferring their guilt to the sacrificial animal (cf Lv 4:13–15; 8:14–15; Nu 8:12).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:24 *atonement*. See p 5.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:26 *instruments of David*. The Levites played "cymbals, harps, and lyres" (v 25; cf 1Ch 23:5). *trumpets*. At the dedication of the temple, 120 priests sounded the trumpets (5:12). See p 993.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:29 *bowed*. See p 1276.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:30 *Asaph*. A psalmist. See note, Ps 50.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:31–36 The people present their offerings. With the sin offering complete, burnt offerings, peace offerings, and drink offerings in abundance were brought (cf Ex 29:40; 7:11–12; Nu 15:1–10). These offerings reestablished the proper temple service (v 35b), causing both king and people to rejoice (v 36; cf 1Ch 12:38–40; 29:21–22; 2Ch 20:26–28).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:31 *consecrated*. See p 6. *assembly*. The dedicatory service, conducted by the priests and Levites, resulted in a surge of popular enthusiasm for worship. For the large numbers of animals offered (3,970), see note, 1Ki 8:62–64; see also pp 170–71.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:34 *flay*. Sacrifices were butchered; tough, physical work. *Levites were more upright*. They had not come under the influence of the renegade high priest Uriah (2Ki 16:10–16). See note, Jb 1:1.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:35 *offerings*. See pp 170–71.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 29:20–36 Hezekiah fully restores the temple services according to God's Word and the examples of David and Solomon. The bloody sacrifices cleanse God's repentant people from their sins, anticipating Christ's perfect sacrifice on the cross. Today, the Lord cleanses and consecrates us through Holy Baptism, for in Baptism we are

joined to Christ's atoning death and resurrection. • O Lord, consecrate Your servants, that we may offer sincere worship in Your name. Amen.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Ch 30** Like Josiah (35:1–19), Hezekiah begins a restoration of the Passover celebration (Ex 12; Dt 16:1–8 describe the Mosaic regulations).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 30:1 *all Israel and Judah*. Israel had fallen to the Assyrians in 722 BC just before Hezekiah's reign. Hezekiah reaches out to the people of Israel who had not been deported by the Assyrians. He envisions a nation united as it had been when it crowned David at Hebron and celebrated Solomon's coronation. The Chronicler intends this as an invitation to the descendants of Israel in his own day to reunite as one people around the festivals and the temple.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 30:2 *Passover*. As soon as possible after the rededication of the temple, Hezekiah restored the observance of Israel's great festivals. The first on the calendar was Passover, also called the Feast of Unleavened Bread (vv 13, 21; cf Lv 23:4–7; Nu 28:16–17; Dt 16:1–8; see calendar, p 262). Its observance under Hezekiah reestablished Israel's covenant relationship, reconstituting the nation as God's chosen people (cf 29:10).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 30:3 *at that time*. The 14th day of Abib, the first month (Ex 34:18; Lv 23:5; see calendar, p 262). In Ex 12:2, 6; Dt 16:1–8, the Passover was commanded to be celebrated on the 14th day of the first month of the sacred year. However, the Law provided for a later celebration if it was impossible to be ready by the regular date (Nu 9:10–11). Sixteen days of the month had been taken up with cleansing the temple (29:17). Hezekiah, the leaders, and the assembly agreed to celebrate it in the second month. This apparently was due to a lack of consecrated priests and to travel time for the people.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 30:5 *Beersheba to Dan*. See note, Jgs 20:1.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 30:6 *Israel*. Hezekiah reminded the northern tribes (called Israel to distinguish them from Judah) that they, too, were descendants and heirs of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel. But they needed to repent. Because of their apostasy, God had punished them in "His fierce anger" (v 8). Many had been taken into exile by kings of Assyria such as Tiglath-pileser (2Ki 15:29; 16:9). *remnant*. See p 1080. *Assyria*. See map, p 717.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 30:8 *stiff-necked*. See note, Ex 32:9.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 30:9 *gracious and merciful*. See note, Ex 34:6–7. *return*. See p 1080.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 30:10 *Ephraim and Manasseh*. See map, p 365. *Zebulun*. Northernmost of the tribes mentioned. Apparently, the couriers did not get beyond its borders, but cf vv 11, 18.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 30:11 *humbled themselves*. The proud would continue in the religions and politics of the Northern Kingdom (v 10), but these men sought a return to the previous faith and life that had existed under the leadership of Davidic kings.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 30:13 *second month*. Cf v 2; see note, v 3.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 30:14 *altars*. Ones Ahaz had made (28:24). People followed the king's example, extending the cleanup of the temple to the entire city and making it a fit place to celebrate the Passover. *Kidron Valley*. See note, 29:16; see also map, p 548.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 30:15–22 The Passover celebration (cf Ex 12:6; Dt 16:6). Because some participants were not ritually clean, the Levites slaughtered the lambs for them (v 17). Further, they participated in the eating of the Passover meal even if they were not ritually clean (v 18a; cf Jn 11:55). Hezekiah interceded for them (vv 18b–19), and the Lord healed them (v 20; cf 7:14). God received His people, welcoming those with repentant hearts to His table.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 30:15 *ashamed*. The laity, by their greater readiness to worship, shamed the clergy into action.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 30:16 *threw the blood*. See note, Ex 29:16.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 30:18 *Ephraim, Manasseh, Issachar, and Zebulun*. See map, p 365.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 30:19 *seek God*. See p 843. *cleanness*. Worshipers did not "die in their uncleanness" (Lv 15:31) because they did not willfully disregard the ritual prescriptions. As "the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath" (Mk 2:27), all other ceremonial laws were not an end in themselves.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 30:20 *healed*. See note, Dt 32:39.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 30:21 *Feast of Unleavened Bread*. See note, v 2. *singing with all their might*. See note, Dt 6:5.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 30:22 *peace offerings*. See pp 170–71.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 30:23–27 The Passover observance is extended for a second week.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 30:23 For a similar extension of festivities when Solomon dedicated the temple, cf 1Ki 8:65–66; 2Ch 7:8–10. This feast was greater than any since Solomon's feast (v 26), and at its conclusion the people received the blessings of the priests and Levites.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 30:24 *bulls … sheep*. Total of 19,000 sacrificial animals. The generous offerings would help feed the visitors. See note, 1Ki 8:62–64.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 30:25 *sojourners*. Hbr word is translated "stranger" in Ex 12:48, which stipulates that such a non-Israelite could eat the Passover if he was circumcised.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 30:27 *blessed*. See p 842. *holy habitation in heaven*. See note, Heb 9:24.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Ch 30** Hezekiah renews the Passover celebration to call the people back to the Lord. Today, we regularly celebrate the new Passover—the Holy Supper of Christ, who offered Himself in compassion for our salvation. • Grant that I return to You, blessed Lamb of God, and have one heart with my brothers and sisters. Amen.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Ch 31** Intimate relationship between faithful Hezekiah and the priesthood prompts the Chronicler to include this information about the king's provisions for the priesthood.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 31:1 *cities*. Eradication of idolatry spread from the temple (29:3–19) to the city (30:14) and from Jerusalem to the outlying districts, even to cities of the Northern Kingdom, of which Ephraim and Manasseh were the representative tribes. *Asherim*. See note, Ex 34:13. *high places*. See p 526.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 31:2 After Hezekiah rededicated the temple (29:20–30), he restored regular worship services, which had been suspended by his father (29:7). *divisions*. Like David and Solomon, Hezekiah brought order to the priests and Levites by structuring them into divisions at the altar, as musicians and as gatekeepers (cf 1Ch 23–26; 2Ch 8:14). *gates of the camp*. The temple courts were likely filled with tents or booths during the festivals of ch 30. The returning exiles of the Chronicler's day likewise would have camped when they first returned to the destroyed city of Jerusalem.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 31:3 *Law*. Legislation regarding sacrifices for various occasions is written in Nu 28–29. See also p 971. As David gave

of his own possessions to endow the temple (1Ch 29:3–5), so does Hezekiah. Judah again attains regularity in divinely established worship practices (cf 13:11).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 31:4–7 People of Judah, both in Jerusalem (v 4) and throughout the land (v 6), respond by bringing in their tithes (cf Dt 12:5–19; 14:22–27).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 31:4 *portion due to the priests*. Cf Nu 18. *give themselves to the Law*. By restoring the offerings, the priests would be able to return to full-time service at the temple.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 31:5 *honey*. Though this could not be used in burnt offerings (Lv 2:11), it might have been used in grain offerings. *tithe*. Cf Lv 27:30.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 31:6 Mosaic Law prescribes no tithe of cattle, sheep, and dedicated things. Nu 18:8–20 provides the firstfruits for the priests; Nu 18:21–32 provides the tithe for the Levites.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 31:7 *third … seventh month*. Contributions of various kinds of produce came in during the harvesting season, which began in the third month. The Feast of Booths, also called the Feast of Ingathering, in the seventh month marked its end. See calendar, p 262.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 31:8 *heaps*. People gave enthusiastically. *blessed the* LORD. See p 842.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 31:10 *Azariah*. Person by the same name was "the chief officer of the house of God" (v 13). Another Azariah was high priest during the reign of a king who himself bore that name (26:17; 2Ki 15:1). *house of Zadok*. See note, 1Sm 22:20. See also pp 1557–58.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 31:11 *chambers*. Solomon built side chambers into the walls of the temple. See diagram, p 541.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 31:13 *chief officer*. See note, v 10.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 31:14 *freewill offerings*. See note, Ex 35:29.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 31:15–19 To make sure no one was overlooked, an enrollment of the priests and the Levites was made in the Levitical cities as well as outside the cities. Vv 17–18 tell how the two groups were registered.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 31:16 *from three years old*. Weaned and able to partake of the sacrifices (cf 1Sm 1:23).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 31:20–21 Cf 2Ki 18:5–7a.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 31:21 *law … commandments*. See p 971. *seeking his God*. See p 843.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Ch 31** The Lord blesses Judah under Hezekiah's rule, and Hezekiah reestablishes the support of the priests and Levites. Today, the Lord's people must take account of the need to support their pastors, teachers, and all who are dedicated to the Lord's work. Pray for wisdom in managing the offerings presented at God's house. Bless the Lord for the ministry of the Word, which brings comfort, peace, and hope through Christ, our great High Priest. • Bless all servants of the Word, O Lord, and make me a blessing to them. Amen.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON **Ch 32** The Chronicler's emphasis on Hezekiah's religious activity cannot be separated from his presentation of the warfare in this chapter. Overall, the Chronicler focuses on Hezekiah as a great reformer, not as a warrior. As with David and Solomon, the Chronicler omits material that casts Hezekiah in a negative light.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 32:1 *Sennacherib*. See note, 2Ki 18:13. *Assyria … Judah … fortified cities*. See note, 11:6–10.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 32:2–8 Hezekiah prepares for war. Rather than portraying the king as looking to Egypt for help (2Ki 18:20–25), the Chronicler speaks of Hezekiah's trust in the Lord.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 32:3 *planned*. Before the siege began, Hezekiah cut off the supply of water outside the city (vv 3–4); strengthened the city's fortifications and stepped up the production of weaponry (v 5); converted the city into a military camp, setting "combat commanders over the people" (v 6); bolstered the morale of the defenders, reminding them that the enemy, "an arm of flesh" (v 8), was no match for the Lord, who would fight their battles (vv 7–8).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 32:4 *brook*. The Gihon. Cf v 30; see note, 2Ki 20:20. Archaeologists have discovered foundations of huge defensive towers around these water supplies. Water formerly flowed down to the Kidron Valley, irrigating gardens.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 32:5 *Millo*. Part of the city's fortification, it needed periodic repair (cf 1Ki 9:15; 11:27).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 32:6 *square at the gate*. See note, 1Ki 22:10.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 32:7 *Do not be afraid*. See note, 1Ch 28:20. *more with us*. See note, 2Ki 6:16.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 32:8 *with us is the LORD*. See "be with," p 5. *fight our battles*. See note, Ex 15:3.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 32:9–19 Message of Sennacherib's servants and the challenge they present to Judah on behalf of the king of Assyria (cf 2Ki 18:17–35; Is 36:2–20).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 32:9 *Lachish*. See color map 1. *servants*. Sennacherib's attempt to cajole and frighten Hezekiah and the people into surrender (v 18) is described in greater detail in 2Ki 18:14–37; 19:8–14.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 32:15–18 Each verse directly reflects or paraphrases a portion of the accounts found in 2Ki 18–19; Is 36–37, the bulk of which are omitted by the Chronicler: v 15 (2Ki 18:29; Is 36:14); vv 16–17 (2Ki 19:14; Is 37:14); v 18 (2Ki 18:28; Is 36:13).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 32:17 *letters to cast contempt*. Curse letters were used in ancient times.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 32:18 *language of Judah*. Hebrew.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 32:1–19 See application note, 2Ki 18:13–37.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 32:20 *prayed … cried*. Cf 2Ki 19:15–34 for Hezekiah's prayer and God's answer through Isaiah. There, however, the prophet's intercession is not mentioned.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 32:21 Battle occurs quickly and decisively. In all three accounts (cf 2Ki 19:35–36; Is 37:36–37), an angel of the Lord accomplishes the victory; the army of Judah does not fight at all. The victory of Hezekiah is, for the Chronicler, the victory of a righteous king.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 32:22–23 Summary of Hezekiah's reign. Like David and Solomon (1Ch 14:17; 2Ch 9:23–24), Hezekiah was honored by the nations.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 32:22 *He provided for them*. Lit, "He led them."
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 32:20–23 See application note, 2Ki 19:20–37.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 32:24–26 Hezekiah becomes prideful, just as David had when he took a census (1Ch 21:1–4).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 32:24 *sick*. Cf 2Ki 20:1–11 for a more complete report of Hezekiah's recovery from illness.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 32:26 See note, 2Ki 20:3.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 32:27–29 Unique to 2Ch. Hezekiah, like David and Solomon, was the recipient of great honor and wealth. Archaeologists have found large storage rooms at Hazor, Samaria, Jerusalem, and Lachish.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 32:30 *waters of Gihon*. See diagram, p 1627; see also note, v 4.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 32:32 *vision of Isaiah*. Cf Is 1:1. *Book of the Kings*. 1 and 2Ki.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 32:33 See note, 1Ki 2:10. *upper part*. A rise in the terrain led to the royal sepulchers. *did him honor*. For rites to honor the dead, see note, 16:14.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 32:24–33 Hezekiah, blessed with great wealth and power, struggles with pride. This threatens to destroy him, his kingdom, and his descendants. Even if you are able to fend off all other threats, pride will still assault and defeat you if the Lord does not come to your aid. Like Hezekiah, humble yourself before the Lord and ask for His forgiveness. Recognize your successes as signs of His kindness, which He extends through the blessings of creation and the mercy of Jesus Christ. • Grant me sincere humility, O Lord, like that of Jesus, who became obedient until death, even death on a cross, for my salvation. Amen.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 33:1–9 The Chronicler includes the list of evils characterizing Manasseh's reign. Sinful patterns of Ahaz became the model for his grandson Manasseh, who reversed Hezekiah's reforms by rebuilding pagan sanctuaries and erecting false altars in the temple (cf 28:24–25; 29:15–19; 31:1). He effectively swayed the people's religious devotion over his long reign.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 33:1 Manasseh's 55-year reign, longer than that of any other king, also set a record for apostasy. For decades the detestable practices of the Canaanites held sway. Like Ahaz, he sacrificed his sons; like Saul, he engaged in demonic practices. *twelve*. Probably guided by a regent.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 33:2 *abominations*. See note, Pr 6:16.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 33:3 *high places*. See p 526. *Baals*. See note, Nu 25:3. *Asherahs*. See note, Ex 34:13. *host of heaven*. See note, 2Ki 17:16.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 33:5 *two courts*. See note, 4:9.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 33:6 See notes, 2Ki 23:10; Dt 18:10.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 33:9 *nations*. The Canaanites. See p 345.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 33:1–9 See application note, 2Ki 21:1–9.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 33:10 *spoke*. The Chronicler notes the sending of prophets, also noting that they were not listened to (cf 2Ki 21:10). This was also an issue in the death of Saul and the final destruction of Judah by Babylon (cf 1Ch 10:13–14; 2Ch 36:15).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 33:11 *captured Manasseh*. Assyrian ruler Esarhaddon (681–669 BC) records the tribute of 22 kings west of the Euphrates, and Manasseh is listed among them. *hooks*. See note, Am 4:2.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 33:12–16 Unique to 2Ch. Manasseh's repentance reflects the prayer of Solomon at the temple dedication (7:14). Gr Naz: "I know of a Fifth [baptism] also, which is that of tears, and is much more laborious, received by him who washes his bed every night and his couch with tears; … who goeth mourning and of a sad countenance; who imitates the repentance of Manasseh and the humiliation of the Ninevites upon which God had mercy" (*NPNF* 2 7:358). Luth: "Why shall we have any doubt that God in His heart considers and counts the afflictions of His children and that He measures our tears and records them on unbreakable tablets which the enemies of the church are completely unable to destroy except by repentance? Manasseh was a very great tyrant and a most terrible persecutor of the godly. Therefore his exile and captivity would not have been sufficient to atone for those sins; but when he recognizes his sin and is truly repentant, the Lord shows him mercy" (AE 1:289).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 33:12 *favor*. See p 6.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 33:14 *built*. See note, 11:5–12. *Gihon*. See note, 32:30. *Fish Gate*. See note, Zep 1:10. *fortified cities*. See note, 11:6–10.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 33:15 *mountain*. Zion. See p 844.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 33:16 *restored*. By consecration or even by physically bringing it back to its rightful place. *offerings*. See pp 170–71.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 33:17 *high places*. See p 526. Manasseh's reformation, which came at the end of his life, failed to eradicate worship at the high places. But by every act of sacrifice contrary to God's ordinance, the people heaped up wrath for themselves (cf Jer 15:4). Even the king's son remained unregenerate (vv 21–25).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 33:18 Cf 2Ki 21:17. *Chronicles*. See pp 335–37.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 33:19 *prayer*. Such a prayer is found in the apocryphal writings. See p 1526–64. *Asherim*. See note, Ex 34:13.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 33:20 See note, 1Ki 2:10.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 33:10–20 Through distress and the admonitions of the prophets, the Lord leads Manasseh to repentance. Like a patient father, the Lord disciplines us and even allows us to learn our lessons the hard way, through error and pain. Yet He is always ready to hear us, just as He heard and had compassion on the wicked king Manasseh. • O Lord, instruct me through the words of Your prophets, and grant me sincere repentance day by day, that I may know You alone as my God. Amen.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 33:21–25 Like Manasseh, Amon's reign began in idolatry. Unlike Manasseh, Amon did not humble himself but increased his guilt (v 23; unique to 2Ch). For this, Amon is assassinated (v 24).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 33:21–25 See application note, 2Ki 21:19–26.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 34:1–7 At the beginning of Josiah's reign, idolatry was as entrenched in Judah as it had been at his grandfather Hezekiah's time, if not more so. Following in Hezekiah's footsteps, the young king and his regent began a campaign to destroy the images and altars of heathen worship.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 34:2 *walked*. See p 7. *right … left*. Not referring to political mainstream, as we might use this expression today, but to singular faithfulness to the covenant laws and promises.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 34:3 *eighth year*. At age 16, Josiah began to seek the Lord. *seek*. See p 843. *high places*. See p 526. *Asherim*. See note, Ex 34:13.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 34:4 *Baals*. See note, Nu 25:3. *over the graves*. See note, 2Ki 23:6.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 34:5 *burned the bones*. See note, 2Ki 23:20. Josiah's aggressive destruction of idolatrous institutions and priests has inspired similar destructive outbursts by religious groups (e.g., early Christian mobs at times destroyed pagan temples; iconoclastic mobs in the medieval and Reformation eras destroyed things they regarded as idolatrous). It should be noted that as king, Josiah had jurisdiction in these

matters, in contrast to angry, destructive mobs. The Lord would not have us fulfill His Word by destroying our neighbor's property. He calls us as individual believers to share the Word peaceably and so change people's hearts.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 34:6–7 Josiah's reform began in Judah and Jerusalem (v 3) but extended to Manasseh, Ephraim, and even Naphtali, the northern part of the now-fallen kingdom of Israel. His concern for all Israel reflects that of Hezekiah (30:1). After the failure of Amon (33:21–25), a new son of David is given to Israel, one who cleanses "all the land of Israel" (v 7).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 34:6 *Manasseh, Ephraim, and Simeon … Naphtali*. See map, p 365.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 34:1–7 Josiah seeks the Lord and destroys the idolatrous shrines in Judah and all Israel. Sincere faith is expressed not only by service to the Lord but also by leaving behind and removing those things that tempt us and would divide our devotion. The Holy Spirit will lead you not only to confess your sin but also to put away and avoid temptation. The Lord alone is your God; He is the only Savior. • O one true God, grant me an undivided heart, that I may serve You truly. Amen.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 34:8–21 The Chronicler provides more detail than the account in Kings. The involvement of all Israel is noted esp in v 9 with the Chronicler's reference to a collection from both north and south, which expresses the unity of the people under a Davidic king faithful in the worship of the Lord.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 34:8 *repair the house*. See notes, 2Ki 22:3, 6.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 34:9 *remnant*. See p 1080.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 34:11 *buildings*. Lit, "houses" (cf 1Ch 28:11; 29:4). *go to ruin*. Cf v 8.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 34:12 *Levites … Merari … Kohathites*. See note, 1Ch 6:1–15. The Levites are a focus of the Chronicler. See pp 628–29.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 34:13 *burden-bearers*. See note, 2:17–18. *scribes … officials … gatekeepers*. See notes, 1Ch 2:55; 9:17–33; 18:17; 26:1–19; 28:1.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 34:14 *found*. Possibly with the money. *Book of the Law*. See pp 335–37.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 34:19 *tore*. See note, Jb 1:20.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 34:20 *Abdon*. Identified as "Achbor the son of Micaiah" (2Ki 22:12).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 34:21 Hbr word for "inquire" is the same as "seek" in v 3. See p 843. *not kept … this book*. Priests had apparently continued their service based on traditions passed down from one generation to the next but had failed to return to the source of the traditions: Scripture itself. This would explain how, over time in a largely oral society, true and false worship practices could become mixed.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 34:22–28 After the reading of the Book of the Law (v 18), the curses are now applied (cf Dt 27:9–26; 28:15–68; 29:20).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 34:22 See note, 2Ki 22:14. *prophetess*. See p 389. Huldah's husband is called "the son of Tikvah, son of Harhas." *Second Quarter*. See note, 2Ki 22:14.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 34:24 *I will bring disaster*. Cf Dt 32:23.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 34:25 See note, Dt 32:39.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 34:26 *inquire*. See "seek," p 843.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 34:27 *tender*. Or, "fearful." See note, 19:8–11. *torn*. See note, Jb 1:20.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 34:28 *gather you to your fathers*. See note, 1Ki 2:10. *peace*. Josiah would be fatally wounded in battle (35:23), but Huldah's point is that he would not witness the destruction of the kingdom, which God threatens in vv 24–25.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 34:29–33 Response of Josiah and the people. This ceremony of covenant renewal is in a worship context; a procession goes to the temple, and a solemn oath is taken by the king to pledge fidelity to it.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 34:30 *Levites*. 2Ki 23:2 reads "prophets." Levites could also serve as prophets. See note, 1Ch 25:1.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 34:32–33 All Israel pledged faithfulness to the Book of the Covenant. Further removal of abominations from "all the territory" takes place. Josiah's reformation spread through the whole land. Cf 2Ki 23:3. *covenant*. See p 127.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 34:33 *abominations*. See note, Pr 6:16. *all the territory … Israel*. Josiah extended his influence and rule into the area of Israel recently conquered by the Assyrians. See map, p 558.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 34:8–33 See application note, 2Ki 22:8–20.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 35:1 *Passover*. One of the highlights of Hezekiah's reformation was a memorable observance of the Passover, described at length in 30:1–27. Josiah did more than merely issue the order to celebrate; he provided sacrificial animals in great numbers (vv 7–9). The Chronicler notes that the Passover was kept at the proper time. This is in accord with Lv 23:5, not according to Hezekiah's exception (ch 30; see notes, 30:2, 3).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 35:2–3 Like Hezekiah, Josiah is concerned that the proper ministry be in place for the Passover (cf 29:34; 30:3). On the role of Levites as teachers of Israel, see note, 17:9.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 35:3 *holy to the* LORD. See note, Ex 28:36. *ark*. See note, Ex 25:10. *need not carry it*. Apparently the ark would be moved (perhaps from storage) for ceremonial observances, since it had lost its place in the temple. See p 495.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 35:4–17 Josiah reinstitutes the Davidic organization and divisions of the Levites (1Ch 23, 25–26). The Chronicler emphasizes the command of the king (vv 10, 16), the roles of David and Solomon (vv 4, 15), and the authority of Moses (vv 6, 12).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 35:4 *divisions*. Cf 8:14; 1Ch 23; 25–26. *writing … document*. May refer to an official document that is now lost. See pp 335–37.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 35:6 *consecrate*. See p 6.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 35:7 *lay people*. Lit, "sons of the people." *bulls*. Not a typical part of the Passover celebration (cf Ex 12). Such sacrifices were given not only to honor God but also to feed the people who had traveled to the ceremony. The oxen were "holy offerings" (v 13), or peace offerings, that were partly burned on the altar and partly eaten by the worshipers (cf Lv 3). See "peace offerings," pp 170–71.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 35:11 *slaughtered the Passover lamb*. See note, 30:15–22. *threw the blood*. See note, 29:22. *flayed*. See note, 29:34.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 35:12 *Book of Moses*. See note, 17:9.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 35:13 *roasted*. After its wool was removed by boiling the animal. See notes, Lv 6:26; Ex 12:8–9.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 35:14 *prepared for themselves*. Priests and Levites had focused on the needs of the people to their own neglect. They

now enacted better management.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 35:15 Service rendered in various ways by the Levites receives special mention, a characteristic touch of Chronicles. *singers*. Cf 1Ch 25 for the three divisions of singers. *gate*. See p 792.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 35:1–19 Josiah leads the people in an exceptional celebration of the Lord's Passover. At times, the Church's observances may seem routine, even dull, to our hardened hearts. Bring praise to your Lord by commemorating His love through renewed observance of the sacred festivals. Through the word of His mercy, He will consecrate you anew. • We praise Your name this day, O Lord, commemorating the works of Your love and receiving anew the testimonies of Your gracious deliverance. Amen.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 35:20 *Neco*. See note, 2Ki 23:29. *Carchemish … Euphrates*. See color map 3.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 35:21–23 Unique to 2Ch. Account in 2Ki 23:29–30a raises a serious theological question: how could a good king such as Josiah die in defeat? Here the Chronicler provides material not found in Kings, to answer that question. 2Ki and 2Ch give different perspectives on Josiah's defeat and death. According to Kings, the death of Josiah is attributable to the Lord's wrath against Manasseh (2Ki 23:26–27). According to the Chronicler, it is attributable to Josiah's failure to heed the Word of the Lord (35:21–22).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 35:21 *the house*. Emerging Babylonian world power.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 35:22 *words of Neco*. Neco claimed divine sanction for his campaign, no doubt referring to an oracle that he ascribed to his own god. However, in this instance the oracle also expressed the will of the true God concerning Judah. In effect, Josiah was "opposing God" (v 21) in his attempt to deflect the threatened judgment on the apostate nation (34:24). It is common in the Chronicler's history for speeches to announce divine blessing or warning (11:1–4; 13:4–12; 16:7–9; 18:16–22; 25:17–19). In this case, it is spoken by the foreign king Neco. Despite Josiah's auspicious beginning, he did not always heed God's Word. This passage illustrates how difficult it can be to recognize God's will in earthly matters. The Lord has given us the Word to guide us in matters of faith. He has given us counsel for discerning true prophets from false prophets (Dt 18:22). However, He has not promised to reveal His will in all matters. (The

kings and priests of Israel could consult the Lord using the Urim and Thummim. See note, Ex 28:30.) The Lord calls us to live freely before Him according to the wisdom He provides. (See pp 775–78.) Luth: "All of them, even the greatest kings from the beginning of the world, have not governed their realms without great errors and injustices. This is intended to make you realize that it is impossible to govern an earthly commonwealth without sin—something that is unknown to certain raving preachers and to the mob, who are quick to pick up the errors of princes and kings. It is also a special fraud of Satan that we so quickly notice and pay attention to the errors of princes. Some peasant who has lived like a pig for twenty years or more and has never paid any attention to any of his sins is most eloquent regarding some slight sin of his prince, and meanwhile he swallows whole seas and forests of his own private sins" (AE 12:240).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 35:24 *second chariot*. Lit, "the chariot of the second," which may mean the second in command or "next in authority" (28:7). Josiah died on the way to Jerusalem (2Ki 23:30). Luth: "We see God at work as Judge in the outcome of almost all wars, so that those who first stir up war and forsake the peace are always defeated. So also king Josiah fell when he despised the peace which had been offered and started the war against the king of Egypt" (AE 9:203). *tombs of his fathers*. To accord with Huldah's prophecy (34:28; 2Ki 22:22). Cf Zec 14:1.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 35:25 *Jeremiah*. See pp 1202–6. *to this day*. Likely the time of the Chronicler. See note, 1Ch 4:41. *Laments*. Not the Book of Lamentations. Solemn chanting was a typical funeral custom (cf Jer 9:17–18).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 35:26–27 Both Joash and Josiah came to the throne as children (24:1; 34:1); both led Judah in renovations of the temple, funded by collections (24:9–14; 34:8–14); both were involved in a national renewal of the covenant (23:16–17; 34:29–32). Josiah would remain faithful to the end (34:2, 33), but Joash remained faithful only during the days of Jehoiada (24:2, 15–18).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 35:27 *Book of the Kings*. 1 and 2Ki.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 35:20–27 See application note, 2Ki 23:28–30.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 36:1–4 Reign of Jehoahaz. The son of Josiah is placed on the throne by the people, the last king to be enthroned by them. Each succeeding king will be appointed by a foreign power.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 36:3 *Egypt deposed him*. Judah came under the rule of Neco of Egypt, a nation once an ally (cf 2Ki 18:21), and was required to pay tribute of 100 talents of silver (c 3¾ tons) and a talent of gold (c 75 lb).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 36:4 Not only did Neco take Jehoahaz to Egypt as his prisoner, but he also changed the new king's name from Eliakim to Jehoiakim. *his brother*. Jehoiakim was Jehoahaz's older brother.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 36:5–8 Jeremiah provides additional information, not found in 2Ki or 2Ch, about Jehoiakim's reign (Jer 22:18–23; 25:1–26:24; 36).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 36:6 *Babylon*. See map, p 717. *bound him*. Jehoiakim was bound, but apparently the plan to take him in fetters to Babylon was not carried out. In 605 BC, the critical battle of Carchemish took place, establishing Babylonian ascendancy and Jehoiakim's submission to the victor. In 601 BC, another battle was fought between Egypt and Babylon. This likely caused Jehoiakim to withhold tribute from Babylon.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 36:7 *vessels*. Nebuchadnezzar took sacred objects from the Jerusalem temple to his temple in Babylon.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 36:9 Reign of Jehoiachin. *evil in the sight of the LORD*. The Babylonian Chronicle dates these events in the seventh year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign on the second day of Adar.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 36:10 *brother*. A wider range of meanings than a biological brother; may also refer to a relative. Zedekiah was his brother in the broader sense. Strictly speaking, he was Jehoiachin's father's brother, thus an uncle. Jehoiachin disappears from the Chronicler's history at this point, but he appears at the end of Kings as the recipient of kindness by King Evil-merodach of Babylon (2Ki 25:27–30). Jehoiachin is the legitimate Davidic king; thus it is he, not Zedekiah, through whom the Chronicler traces the royal lineage in the genealogy of 1Ch 3:16–24. *Zedekiah*. Also known as Mattaniah. King of Babylon changed his name to Zedekiah.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 36:11–16 Rather than dwell on the events of Jerusalem's last days, as given in 2Ki 24:18–25:21, the writer of Chronicles takes pains to make clear why the city was doomed. God was long-suffering, but finally there came a point when His wrath "rose against His people, until there was no remedy" (v 16). Let no one mistakenly believe

that mocking God's messengers, despising His Word, and scoffing at the threat of punishment is a less offensive crime today than it was when Jerusalem received the wages of sin (Gal 6:7).
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 36:12 *Jeremiah*. Cf Jer 34:8–22; 37:1–2 for rejection of his message by Zedekiah and the people.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 36:13–16 Unique to 2Ch.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 36:13 *swear*. See p 7. *stiffened his neck*. See note, Ex 32:9. *hardened his heart*. See notes, Ex 4:21; 9:12.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 36:14 *abominations*. See note, Pr 6:16. *polluted*. See p 300.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 36:15 *His messengers*. Prophets. *compassion*. Hbr *chamal*, "to feel pity" or "to spare." *dwelling place*. Temple.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 36:16 *mocking … despising … scoffing*. Emphasize the disdain the people expressed toward the Word and the prophets. See SC, Third Commandment, p xxxv.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 36:1–16 The Chronicler quickly describes the last kings of Judah (Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah), who were dominated by Babylon. He likewise records how stubbornness dominates the people of Judah (vv 15–16). Though persistence can be a helpful trait, stubbornness leads to self-destruction. Always check your will against God's will, recorded in Scripture, so that He may teach you persistence in faith and break your sinful stubbornness. Thanks be to God, He has a remedy for all your faults through His gift of forgiveness, His Spirit, and instruction in righteousness. • Remedy my faults, Great Physician, and grant me a willing heart to believe Your Word. Amen.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 36:17–21 The Chronicler noted that Saul died because the Lord killed him (1Ch 10:13–14). Here he notes that the Lord brings the Chaldeans (Babylonians) to punish Judah.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 36:17 *no compassion*. See note, v 15.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 36:19 Babylonians razed the city to make it indefensible and prevent future rebellions.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 36:20 *servants*. Slaves. See p 101. *until … Persia*. See note, Ezr 1:1.
2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 36:21 Unique to 2Ch. *the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah*. Cf 29:10; 37:2. *Sabbaths*. Cf Lv 26:34, 40–45 for

the description of the exile as a Sabbath. This was a purifying time of rest and repentance and, despite its pain and horror, a time of hope for the future (cf Jer 29:10–14). Seventy years is a round or symbolic figure for the length of the exile. Some captives were carried off 20 years before the city fell in 587 BC (Dn 1:1–6). In 538 BC, the first exiles were permitted to return. Cf Ezr 1:1.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 36:17–21 See application note, 2Ki 25:1–21.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 36:22–23 The Chronicler includes the return prophesied by Jeremiah and Isaiah, assuring the reader that the chosen people would not remain in the Babylonian captivity. See the same intimation of hope at the end of Kings (2Ki 25:27). *mouth of Jeremiah*. See note, v 21.

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 36:23 *Lord, the God of heaven*. Cyrus's declaration implies he knew Yahweh, the true God (see notes, 1Ki 5:7; 10:9). However, he may express himself this way for the sake of the Judeans he ruled (i.e., "Your God told me to do this, so listen"; and "may the Lord his [a Judean's] God" [v 23b]).

2 CHRONICLES—NOTE ON 36:22–23 The Lord stirs the Persian king Cyrus to declare that the Judeans could return home from exile. Ironically, the people who would not hear God's Word from the prophets now hear His decree from the mouth of a foreign ruler who may have been a pagan. The Lord goes to great lengths to reach His people. How great is His patience and mercy toward us! • Fulfill Your Word for me, O Lord, according to Your mercy in Christ, who set me free. Amen.

Ezra

Ezra 1 | Ezra 2 | Ezra 3 | Ezra 4 | Ezra 5 | Ezra 6 | Ezra 7 | Ezra 8 | Ezra 9 | Ezra 10

- Introduction to Ezra
  - Overview
  - Reading Ezra
  - Luther on Ezra
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

The Proclamation of Cyrus

1 [1]†In the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the Lord
by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the Lord stirred up the spirit of
Cyrus king of Persia, so that he made a proclamation throughout all his
kingdom and also put it in writing:

[2]† "Thus says Cyrus king of Persia: The Lord, the God of heaven, has
given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he has charged me to build him
a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. [3]†Whoever is among you of all his
people, may his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is
in Judah, and rebuild the house of the Lord, the God of Israel—he is the
God who is in Jerusalem. [4]† And let each survivor, in whatever place he
sojourns, be assisted by the men of his place with silver and gold, with
goods and with beasts, besides freewill offerings for the house of God that
is in Jerusalem."

[5]†Then rose up the heads of the fathers' houses of Judah and Benjamin,
and the priests and the Levites, everyone whose spirit God had stirred to go
up to rebuild the house of the Lord that is in Jerusalem. [6]And all who were
about them aided them with vessels of silver, with gold, with goods, with
beasts, and with costly wares, besides all that was freely offered. [7]†Cyrus
the king also brought out the vessels of the house of the Lord that
Nebuchadnezzar had carried away from Jerusalem and placed in the house
of his gods. [8]† Cyrus king of Persia brought these out in the charge of
Mithredath the treasurer, who counted them out to Sheshbazzar the prince
of Judah. [9]†And this was the number of them: 30 basins of gold, 1,000
basins of silver, 29 censers, [10]30 bowls of gold, 410 bowls of silver, and
1,000 other vessels; [11]†all the vessels of gold and of silver were 5,400. All
these did Sheshbazzar bring up, when the exiles were brought up from
Babylonia to Jerusalem.

The Exiles Return

2 [1]†Now these were the people of the province who came up out of
the captivity of those exiles whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon
had carried captive to Babylonia. They returned to Jerusalem and Judah,
each to his own town. [2]‡‡They came with Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Nehemiah,
Seraiah, Reelaiah, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispar, Bigvai, Rehum, and Baanah.

The number of the men of the people of Israel: [3]the sons of Parosh, 2,172.
[4]The sons of Shephatiah, 372. [5]The sons of Arah, 775. [6]The sons of Pahath-
moab, namely the sons of Jeshua and Joab, 2,812. [7]The sons of Elam, 1,254.
[8]The sons of Zattu, 945. [9]The sons of Zaccai, 760. [10]The sons of Bani, 642.
[11]The sons of Bebai, 623. [12]The sons of Azgad, 1,222. [13]The sons of
Adonikam, 666. [14]The sons of Bigvai, 2,056. [15]The sons of Adin, 454. [16]The
sons of Ater, namely of Hezekiah, 98. [17]The sons of Bezai, 323. [18]The sons
of Jorah, 112. [19]The sons of Hashum, 223. [20]The sons of Gibbar, 95. [21]‡‡The
sons of Bethlehem, 123. [22]The men of Netophah, 56. [23]The men of
Anathoth, 128. [24]The sons of Azmaveth, 42. [25]The sons of Kiriath-arim,
Chephirah, and Beeroth, 743. [26]The sons of Ramah and Geba, 621. [27]The
men of Michmas, 122. [28]The men of Bethel and Ai, 223. [29]The sons of
Nebo, 52. [30]The sons of Magbish, 156. [31]The sons of the other Elam, 1,254.
[32]The sons of Harim, 320. [33]The sons of Lod, Hadid, and Ono, 725. [34]The
sons of Jericho, 345. [35]The sons of Senaah, 3,630.

[36]The priests: the sons of Jedaiah, of the house of Jeshua, 973. [37]The sons
of Immer, 1,052. [38]The sons of Pashhur, 1,247. [39]The sons of Harim, 1,017.

[40]†The Levites: the sons of Jeshua and Kadmiel, of the sons of Hodaviah,
74. [41]The singers: the sons of Asaph, 128. [42]The sons of the gatekeepers: the
sons of Shallum, the sons of Ater, the sons of Talmon, the sons of Akkub,
the sons of Hatita, and the sons of Shobai, in all 139.

[43]†The temple servants: the sons of Ziha, the sons of Hasupha, the sons of
Tabbaoth, [44]the sons of Keros, the sons of Siaha, the sons of Padon, [45]the
sons of Lebanah, the sons of Hagabah, the sons of Akkub, [46]the sons of
Hagab, the sons of Shamlai, the sons of Hanan, [47]the sons of Giddel, the

sons of Gahar, the sons of Reaiah, [48]the sons of Rezin, the sons of Nekoda, the sons of Gazzam, [49]the sons of Uzza, the sons of Paseah, the sons of Besai, [50]the sons of Asnah, the sons of Meunim, the sons of Nephisim, [51]the sons of Bakbuk, the sons of Hakupha, the sons of Harhur, [52]the sons of Bazluth, the sons of Mehida, the sons of Harsha, [53]the sons of Barkos, the sons of Sisera, the sons of Temah, [54]the sons of Neziah, and the sons of Hatipha.

[55] † The sons of Solomon's servants: the sons of Sotai, the sons of Hassophereth, the sons of Peruda, [56]the sons of Jaalah, the sons of Darkon, the sons of Giddel, [57]the sons of Shephatiah, the sons of Hattil, the sons of Pochereth-hazzebaim, and the sons of Ami.

[58] † All the temple servants and the sons of Solomon's servants were 392.

[59] † The following were those who came up from Tel-melah, Tel-harsha, Cherub, Addan, and Immer, though they could not prove their fathers' houses or their descent, whether they belonged to Israel: [60]the sons of Delaiah, the sons of Tobiah, and the sons of Nekoda, 652. [61]Also, of the sons of the priests: the sons of Habaiah, the sons of Hakkoz, and the sons of Barzillai (who had taken a wife from the daughters of Barzillai the Gileadite, and was called by their name). [62] † These sought their registration among those enrolled in the genealogies, but they were not found there, and so they were excluded from the priesthood as unclean. [63] † The governor told them that they were not to partake of the most holy food, until there should be a priest to consult Urim and Thummim.

[64] † The whole assembly together was 42,360, [65] † besides their male and female servants, of whom there were 7,337, and they had 200 male and female singers. [66]Their horses were 736, their mules were 245, [67]their camels were 435, and their donkeys were 6,720.

[68] † Some of the heads of families, when they came to the house of the Lord that is in Jerusalem, made freewill offerings for the house of God, to erect it on its site. [69] † According to their ability they gave to the treasury of the work 61,000 darics[1] of gold, 5,000 minas[2] of silver, and 100 priests' garments.

[70] † Now the priests, the Levites, some of the people, the singers, the gatekeepers, and the temple servants lived in their towns, and all the rest of Israel[3] in their towns.

Rebuilding the Altar

3 [1]†† When the seventh month came, and the children of Israel were in
the towns, the people gathered as one man to Jerusalem. [2] † Then arose
Jeshua the son of Jozadak, with his fellow priests, and Zerubbabel the son
of Shealtiel with his kinsmen, and they built the altar of the God of Israel, to
offer burnt offerings on it, as it is written in the Law of Moses the man of
God. [3] † They set the altar in its place, for fear was on them because of the
peoples of the lands, and they offered burnt offerings on it to the Lord, burnt
offerings morning and evening. [4] † And they kept the Feast of Booths, as it is
written, and offered the daily burnt offerings by number according to the
rule, as each day required, [5] † and after that the regular burnt offerings, the
offerings at the new moon and at all the appointed feasts of the Lord, and
the offerings of everyone who made a freewill offering to the Lord. [6] † From
the first day of the seventh month they began to offer burnt offerings to the
Lord. But the foundation of the temple of the Lord was not yet laid. [7] † So
they gave money to the masons and the carpenters, and food, drink, and oil
to the Sidonians and the Tyrians to bring cedar trees from Lebanon to the
sea, to Joppa, according to the grant that they had from Cyrus king of
Persia.

Rebuilding the Temple

8 ‡ † Now in the second year after their coming to the house of God at
Jerusalem, in the second month, Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and Jeshua
the son of Jozadak made a beginning, together with the rest of their
kinsmen, the priests and the Levites and all who had come to Jerusalem
from the captivity. They appointed the Levites, from twenty years old and
upward, to supervise the work of the house of the Lord. 9 And Jeshua with
his sons and his brothers, and Kadmiel and his sons, the sons of Judah,
together supervised the workmen in the house of God, along with the sons
of Henadad and the Levites, their sons and brothers.
10 † And when the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the Lord,
the priests in their vestments came forward with trumpets, and the Levites,
the sons of Asaph, with cymbals, to praise the Lord, according to the
directions of David king of Israel. 11 † And they sang responsively, praising
and giving thanks to the Lord,

> "For he is good,
> for his steadfast love endures forever toward
> Israel."

And all the people shouted with a great shout when they praised the Lord,
because the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid. 12 † But many of
the priests and Levites and heads of fathers' houses, old men who had seen
the first house, wept with a loud voice when they saw the foundation of this
house being laid, though many shouted aloud for joy, 13 so that the people
could not distinguish the sound of the joyful shout from the sound of the
people's weeping, for the people shouted with a great shout, and the sound
was heard far away.

Adversaries Oppose the Rebuilding

4 [1]‡†Now when the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin heard that the returned exiles were building a temple to the Lord, the God of Israel, [2]†they approached Zerubbabel and the heads of fathers' houses and said to them, "Let us build with you, for we worship your God as you do, and we have been sacrificing to him ever since the days of Esarhaddon king of Assyria who brought us here." [3]†But Zerubbabel, Jeshua, and the rest of the heads of fathers' houses in Israel said to them, "You have nothing to do with us in building a house to our God; but we alone will build to the Lord, the God of Israel, as King Cyrus the king of Persia has commanded us."

[4]†Then the people of the land discouraged the people of Judah and made them afraid to build [5]†and bribed counselors against them to frustrate their purpose, all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even until the reign of Darius king of Persia.

[6]‡†And in the reign of Ahasuerus, in the beginning of his reign, they wrote an accusation against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem.

The Letter to King Artaxerxes

7 ‡† In the days of Artaxerxes, Bishlam and Mithredath and Tabeel and the
rest of their associates wrote to Artaxerxes king of Persia. The letter was
written in Aramaic and translated.[1] 8 † Rehum the commander and Shimshai
the scribe wrote a letter against Jerusalem to Artaxerxes the king as follows:
9 † Rehum the commander, Shimshai the scribe, and the rest of their
associates, the judges, the governors, the officials, the Persians, the men of
Erech, the Babylonians, the men of Susa, that is, the Elamites, 10 † and the
rest of the nations whom the great and noble Osnappar deported and settled
in the cities of Samaria and in the rest of the province Beyond the River.
11 ‡ (This is a copy of the letter that they sent.) “To Artaxerxes the king: Your
servants, the men of the province Beyond the River, send greeting. And
now 12 † be it known to the king that the Jews who came up from you to us
have gone to Jerusalem. They are rebuilding that rebellious and wicked city.
They are finishing the walls and repairing the foundations. 13 † Now be it
known to the king that if this city is rebuilt and the walls finished, they will
not pay tribute, custom, or toll, and the royal revenue will be impaired.
14 † Now because we eat the salt of the palace and it is not fitting for us to
witness the king’s dishonor, therefore we send and inform the king, 15 † in
order that search may be made in the book of the records of your fathers.
You will find in the book of the records and learn that this city is a
rebellious city, hurtful to kings and provinces, and that sedition was stirred
up in it from of old. That was why this city was laid waste. 16 † We make
known to the king that if this city is rebuilt and its walls finished, you will
then have no possession in the province Beyond the River.”

The King Orders the Work to Cease

17 ‡‡‡The king sent an answer: “To Rehum the commander and Shimshai
the scribe and the rest of their associates who live in Samaria and in the rest
of the province Beyond the River, greeting. And now 18 the letter that you
sent to us has been plainly read before me. 19 †And I made a decree, and
search has been made, and it has been found that this city from of old has
risen against kings, and that rebellion and sedition have been made in it.
20 †And mighty kings have been over Jerusalem, who ruled over the whole
province Beyond the River, to whom tribute, custom, and toll were paid.
21 †Therefore make a decree that these men be made to cease, and that this
city be not rebuilt, until a decree is made by me. 22 †And take care not to be
slack in this matter. Why should damage grow to the hurt of the king?”

23 †Then, when the copy of King Artaxerxes’ letter was read before
Rehum and Shimshai the scribe and their associates, they went in haste to
the Jews at Jerusalem and by force and power made them cease. 24 †Then the
work on the house of God that is in Jerusalem stopped, and it ceased until
the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia.

Rebuilding Begins Anew

5 [1] ‡ † Now the prophets, Haggai and Zechariah the son of Iddo,
prophesied to the Jews who were in Judah and Jerusalem, in the name of the
God of Israel who was over them. [2] † Then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel
and Jeshua the son of Jozadak arose and began to rebuild the house of God
that is in Jerusalem, and the prophets of God were with them, supporting
them.

[3] † At the same time Tattenai the governor of the province Beyond the
River and Shethar-bozenai and their associates came to them and spoke to
them thus: “Who gave you a decree to build this house and to finish this
structure?” [4] † They[1] also asked them this: “What are the names of the men
who are building this building?” [5] † But the eye of their God was on the
elders of the Jews, and they did not stop them until the report should reach
Darius and then an answer be returned by letter concerning it.

Tattenai's Letter to King Darius

6 This is a copy of the letter that Tattenai the governor of the province
Beyond the River and Shethar-bozenai and his associates, the governors
who were in the province Beyond the River, sent to Darius the king. 7 They
sent him a report, in which was written as follows: "To Darius the king, all
peace. 8 Be it known to the king that we went to the province of Judah, to
the house of the great God. It is being built with huge stones, and timber is
laid in the walls. This work goes on diligently and prospers in their hands.
9 Then we asked those elders and spoke to them thus: 'Who gave you a
decree to build this house and to finish this structure?' 10 We also asked them
their names, for your information, that we might write down the names of
their leaders.[2] 11 And this was their reply to us: 'We are the servants of the
God of heaven and earth, and we are rebuilding the house that was built
many years ago, which a great king of Israel built and finished. 12 But
because our fathers had angered the God of heaven, he gave them into the
hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, the Chaldean, who destroyed this
house and carried away the people to Babylonia. 13 However, in the first
year of Cyrus king of Babylon, Cyrus the king made a decree that this
house of God should be rebuilt. 14 And the gold and silver vessels of the
house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple that was
in Jerusalem and brought into the temple of Babylon, these Cyrus the king
took out of the temple of Babylon, and they were delivered to one whose
name was Sheshbazzar, whom he had made governor; 15 and he said to him,
"Take these vessels, go and put them in the temple that is in Jerusalem, and
let the house of God be rebuilt on its site." 16 Then this Sheshbazzar came
and laid the foundations of the house of God that is in Jerusalem, and from
that time until now it has been in building, and it is not yet finished.'
17 Therefore, if it seems good to the king, let search be made in the royal
archives there in Babylon, to see whether a decree was issued by Cyrus the
king for the rebuilding of this house of God in Jerusalem. And let the king
send us his pleasure in this matter."

The Decree of Darius

6 [1]†† Then Darius the king made a decree, and search was made in
Babylonia, in the house of the archives where the documents were stored.
[2]† And in Ecbatana, the capital that is in the province of Media, a scroll was
found on which this was written: "A record. [3]† In the first year of Cyrus the
king, Cyrus the king issued a decree: Concerning the house of God at
Jerusalem, let the house be rebuilt, the place where sacrifices were offered,
and let its foundations be retained. Its height shall be sixty cubits[1] and its
breadth sixty cubits, [4]† with three layers of great stones and one layer of
timber. Let the cost be paid from the royal treasury. [5]† And also let the gold
and silver vessels of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took out of
the temple that is in Jerusalem and brought to Babylon, be restored and
brought back to the temple that is in Jerusalem, each to its place. You shall
put them in the house of God."

[6]† "Now therefore, Tattenai, governor of the province Beyond the River,
Shethar-bozenai, and your associates the governors who are in the province
Beyond the River, keep away. [7]† Let the work on this house of God alone.
Let the governor of the Jews and the elders of the Jews rebuild this house of
God on its site. [8]† Moreover, I make a decree regarding what you shall do
for these elders of the Jews for the rebuilding of this house of God. The cost
is to be paid to these men in full and without delay from the royal revenue,
the tribute of the province from Beyond the River. [9]† And whatever is
needed—bulls, rams, or sheep for burnt offerings to the God of heaven,
wheat, salt, wine, or oil, as the priests at Jerusalem require—let that be
given to them day by day without fail, [10]† that they may offer pleasing
sacrifices to the God of heaven and pray for the life of the king and his
sons. [11]† Also I make a decree that if anyone alters this edict, a beam shall be
pulled out of his house, and he shall be impaled on it, and his house shall be
made a dunghill. [12]† May the God who has caused his name to dwell there
overthrow any king or people who shall put out a hand to alter this, or to
destroy this house of God that is in Jerusalem. I Darius make a decree; let it
be done with all diligence."

The Temple Finished and Dedicated

13 ‡ † Then, according to the word sent by Darius the king, Tattenai, the
governor of the province Beyond the River, Shethar-bozenai, and their
associates did with all diligence what Darius the king had ordered. 14 † And
the elders of the Jews built and prospered through the prophesying of
Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo. They finished their
building by decree of the God of Israel and by decree of Cyrus and Darius
and Artaxerxes king of Persia; 15 † and this house was finished on the third
day of the month of Adar, in the sixth year of the reign of Darius the king.

16 † And the people of Israel, the priests and the Levites, and the rest of the
returned exiles, celebrated the dedication of this house of God with joy.
17 † They offered at the dedication of this house of God 100 bulls, 200 rams,
400 lambs, and as a sin offering for all Israel 12 male goats, according to
the number of the tribes of Israel. 18 † And they set the priests in their
divisions and the Levites in their divisions, for the service of God at
Jerusalem, as it is written in the Book of Moses.

Passover Celebrated

19 ‡ †On the fourteenth day of the first month, the returned exiles kept the
Passover. 20 † For the priests and the Levites had purified themselves
together; all of them were clean. So they slaughtered the Passover lamb for
all the returned exiles, for their fellow priests, and for themselves. 21 †It was
eaten by the people of Israel who had returned from exile, and also by every
one who had joined them and separated himself from the uncleanness of the
peoples of the land to worship the Lord, the God of Israel. 22 †And they kept
the Feast of Unleavened Bread seven days with joy, for the Lord had made
them joyful and had turned the heart of the king of Assyria to them, so that
he aided them in the work of the house of God, the God of Israel.

Ezra Sent to Teach the People

7 [1]‡†Now after this, in the reign of Artaxerxes king of Persia, Ezra the
son of Seraiah, son of Azariah, son of Hilkiah, [2]son of Shallum, son of
Zadok, son of Ahitub, [3]son of Amariah, son of Azariah, son of Meraioth,
[4]son of Zerahiah, son of Uzzi, son of Bukki, [5]son of Abishua, son of
Phinehas, son of Eleazar, son of Aaron the chief priest— [6]†this Ezra went
up from Babylonia. He was a scribe skilled in the Law of Moses that the
Lord, the God of Israel, had given, and the king granted him all that he
asked, for the hand of the Lord his God was on him.

[7]†And there went up also to Jerusalem, in the seventh year of Artaxerxes
the king, some of the people of Israel, and some of the priests and Levites,
the singers and gatekeepers, and the temple servants. [8]And Ezra[1] came to
Jerusalem in the fifth month, which was in the seventh year of the king.
[9]†For on the first day of the first month he began to go up from Babylonia,
and on the first day of the fifth month he came to Jerusalem, for the good
hand of his God was on him. [10]†For Ezra had set his heart to study the Law
of the Lord, and to do it and to teach his statutes and rules in Israel.

[11]‡† This is a copy of the letter that King Artaxerxes gave to Ezra the
priest, the scribe, a man learned in matters of the commandments of the
Lord and his statutes for Israel: [12]†"Artaxerxes, king of kings, to Ezra the
priest, the scribe of the Law of the God of heaven. Peace.[2] And now [13]I
make a decree that anyone of the people of Israel or their priests or Levites
in my kingdom, who freely offers to go to Jerusalem, may go with you.
[14]†For you are sent by the king and his seven counselors to make inquiries
about Judah and Jerusalem according to the Law of your God, which is in
your hand, [15]and also to carry the silver and gold that the king and his
counselors have freely offered to the God of Israel, whose dwelling is in
Jerusalem, [16]†with all the silver and gold that you shall find in the whole
province of Babylonia, and with the freewill offerings of the people and the
priests, vowed willingly for the house of their God that is in Jerusalem.
[17]†With this money, then, you shall with all diligence buy bulls, rams, and
lambs, with their grain offerings and their drink offerings, and you shall

offer them on the altar of the house of your God that is in Jerusalem. 18 †Whatever seems good to you and your brothers to do with the rest of the silver and gold, you may do, according to the will of your God. 19 †The vessels that have been given you for the service of the house of your God, you shall deliver before the God of Jerusalem. 20 †And whatever else is required for the house of your God, which it falls to you to provide, you may provide it out of the king's treasury.

21 ‡†"And I, Artaxerxes the king, make a decree to all the treasurers in the province Beyond the River: Whatever Ezra the priest, the scribe of the Law of the God of heaven, requires of you, let it be done with all diligence, 22 †up to 100 talents[1] of silver, 100 cors[2] of wheat, 100 baths[3] of wine, 100 baths of oil, and salt without prescribing how much. 23 †Whatever is decreed by the God of heaven, let it be done in full for the house of the God of heaven, lest his wrath be against the realm of the king and his sons. 24 †We also notify you that it shall not be lawful to impose tribute, custom, or toll on anyone of the priests, the Levites, the singers, the doorkeepers, the temple servants, or other servants of this house of God.

25 †"And you, Ezra, according to the wisdom of your God that is in your hand, appoint magistrates and judges who may judge all the people in the province Beyond the River, all such as know the laws of your God. And those who do not know them, you shall teach. 26 †Whoever will not obey the law of your God and the law of the king, let judgment be strictly executed on him, whether for death or for banishment or for confiscation of his goods or for imprisonment."

27 ‡†Blessed be the Lord, the God of our fathers, who put such a thing as this into the heart of the king, to beautify the house of the Lord that is in Jerusalem, 28 †and who extended to me his steadfast love before the king and his counselors, and before all the king's mighty officers. I took courage, for the hand of the Lord my God was on me, and I gathered leading men from Israel to go up with me.

Genealogy of Those Who Returned with Ezra

8 [1] ‡ ‡These are the heads of their fathers’ houses, and this is the genealogy of those who went up with me from Babylonia, in the reign of Artaxerxes the king: [2] †Of the sons of Phinehas, Gershom. Of the sons of Ithamar, Daniel. Of the sons of David, Hattush. [3]Of the sons of Shecaniah, who was of the sons of Parosh, Zechariah, with whom were registered 150 men. [4]Of the sons of Pahath-moab, Eliehoenai the son of Zerahiah, and with him 200 men. [5]Of the sons of Zattu,[4] Shecaniah the son of Jahaziel, and with him 300 men. [6]Of the sons of Adin, Ebed the son of Jonathan, and with him 50 men. [7]Of the sons of Elam, Jeshaiah the son of Athaliah, and with him 70 men. [8]Of the sons of Shephatiah, Zebadiah the son of Michael, and with him 80 men. [9]Of the sons of Joab, Obadiah the son of Jehiel, and with him 218 men. [10]Of the sons of Bani,[5] Shelomith the son of Josiphiah, and with him 160 men. [11]Of the sons of Bebai, Zechariah, the son of Bebai, and with him 28 men. [12]Of the sons of Azgad, Johanan the son of Hakkatan, and with him 110 men. [13]Of the sons of Adonikam, those who came later, their names being Eliphelet, Jeuel, and Shemaiah, and with them 60 men. [14]Of the sons of Bigvai, Uthai and Zaccur, and with them 70 men.

Ezra Sends for Levites

15 ‡†I gathered them to the river that runs to Ahava, and there we camped
three days. As I reviewed the people and the priests, I found there none of
the sons of Levi. 16 † Then I sent for Eliezer, Ariel, Shemaiah, Elnathan,
Jarib, Elnathan, Nathan, Zechariah, and Meshullam, leading men, and for
Joiarib and Elnathan, who were men of insight, 17 †and sent them to Iddo,
the leading man at the place Casiphia, telling them what to say to Iddo and
his brothers and[1] the temple servants at the place Casiphia, namely, to send
us ministers for the house of our God. 18 ‡And by the good hand of our God
on us, they brought us a man of discretion, of the sons of Mahli the son of
Levi, son of Israel, namely Sherebiah with his sons and kinsmen, 18; 19 also
Hashabiah, and with him Jeshaiah of the sons of Merari, with his kinsmen
and their sons, 20; 20 †besides 220 of the temple servants, whom David and
his officials had set apart to attend the Levites. These were all mentioned by
name.

Fasting and Prayer for Protection

21 ‡ † Then I proclaimed a fast there, at the river Ahava, that we might
humble ourselves before our God, to seek from him a safe journey for
ourselves, our children, and all our goods. 22 † For I was ashamed to ask the
king for a band of soldiers and horsemen to protect us against the enemy on
our way, since we had told the king, “The hand of our God is for good on
all who seek him, and the power of his wrath is against all who forsake
him.” 23 So we fasted and implored our God for this, and he listened to our
entreaty.

Priests to Guard Offerings

24 ‡ † Then I set apart twelve of the leading priests: Sherebiah, Hashabiah,
and ten of their kinsmen with them. 25 † And I weighed out to them the silver
and the gold and the vessels, the offering for the house of our God that the
king and his counselors and his lords and all Israel there present had
offered. 26 † I weighed out into their hand 650 talents[2] of silver, and silver
vessels worth 200 talents,[3] and 100 talents of gold, 27 † 20 bowls of gold
worth 1,000 darics,[4] and two vessels of fine bright bronze as precious as
gold. 28 † And I said to them, “You are holy to the Lord, and the vessels are
holy, and the silver and the gold are a freewill offering to the Lord, the God
of your fathers. 29 † Guard them and keep them until you weigh them before
the chief priests and the Levites and the heads of fathers’ houses in Israel at
Jerusalem, within the chambers of the house of the Lord.” 30 † So the priests
and the Levites took over the weight of the silver and the gold and the
vessels, to bring them to Jerusalem, to the house of our God.

31 † Then we departed from the river Ahava on the twelfth day of the first
month, to go to Jerusalem. The hand of our God was on us, and he delivered
us from the hand of the enemy and from ambushes by the way. 32 † We came
to Jerusalem, and there we remained three days. 33 † On the fourth day,
within the house of our God, the silver and the gold and the vessels were
weighed into the hands of Meremoth the priest, son of Uriah, and with him
was Eleazar the son of Phinehas, and with them were the Levites, Jozabad
the son of Jeshua and Noadiah the son of Binnui. 34 The whole was counted
and weighed, and the weight of everything was recorded.

35 † At that time those who had come from captivity, the returned exiles,
offered burnt offerings to the God of Israel, twelve bulls for all Israel,
ninety-six rams, seventy-seven lambs, and as a sin offering twelve male
goats. All this was a burnt offering to the Lord. 36 † They also delivered the
king’s commissions to the king’s satraps[1] and to the governors of the
province Beyond the River, and they aided the people and the house of God.

Ezra Prays About Intermarriage

9 [1]†After these things had been done, the officials approached me and said, “The people of Israel and the priests and the Levites have not separated themselves from the peoples of the lands with their abominations, from the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites. [2]†For they have taken some of their daughters to be wives for themselves and for their sons, so that the holy race[2] has mixed itself with the peoples of the lands. And in this faithlessness the hand of the officials and chief men has been foremost.” [3]†As soon as I heard this, I tore my garment and my cloak and pulled hair from my head and beard and sat appalled. [4]† Then all who trembled at the words of the God of Israel, because of the faithlessness of the returned exiles, gathered around me while I sat appalled until the evening sacrifice. [5]†And at the evening sacrifice I rose from my fasting, with my garment and my cloak torn, and fell upon my knees and spread out my hands to the Lord my God, [6]†saying:

“O my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift my face to you, my God, for our iniquities have risen higher than our heads, and our guilt has mounted up to the heavens. [7]†From the days of our fathers to this day we have been in great guilt. And for our iniquities we, our kings, and our priests have been given into the hand of the kings of the lands, to the sword, to captivity, to plundering, and to utter shame, as it is today. [8]† But now for a brief moment favor has been shown by the Lord our God, to leave us a remnant and to give us a secure hold[1] within his holy place, that our God may brighten our eyes and grant us a little reviving in our slavery. [9]†For we are slaves. Yet our God has not forsaken us in our slavery, but has extended to us his steadfast love before the kings of Persia, to grant us some reviving to set up the house of our God, to repair its ruins, and to give us protection[2] in Judea and Jerusalem.

[10]“And now, O our God, what shall we say after this? For we have forsaken your commandments, [11]‡†which you commanded by your servants the prophets, saying, ‘The land that you are entering, to take possession of it, is a land impure with the impurity of the peoples of the lands, with their

abominations that have filled it from end to end with their uncleanness. 12 † Therefore do not give your daughters to their sons, neither take their daughters for your sons, and never seek their peace or prosperity, that you may be strong and eat the good of the land and leave it for an inheritance to your children forever.' 13 † And after all that has come upon us for our evil deeds and for our great guilt, seeing that you, our God, have punished us less than our iniquities deserved and have given us such a remnant as this, 14 † shall we break your commandments again and intermarry with the peoples who practice these abominations? Would you not be angry with us until you consumed us, so that there should be no remnant, nor any to escape? 15 † O Lord, the God of Israel, you are just, for we are left a remnant that has escaped, as it is today. Behold, we are before you in our guilt, for none can stand before you because of this."

The People Confess Their Sin

10 [1]‡†While Ezra prayed and made confession, weeping and casting
himself down before the house of God, a very great assembly of men,
women, and children, gathered to him out of Israel, for the people wept
bitterly. [2]†And Shecaniah the son of Jehiel, of the sons of Elam, addressed
Ezra: “We have broken faith with our God and have married foreign women
from the peoples of the land, but even now there is hope for Israel in spite
of this. [3]†Therefore let us make a covenant with our God to put away all
these wives and their children, according to the counsel of my lord[3] and of
those who tremble at the commandment of our God, and let it be done
according to the Law. [4]Arise, for it is your task, and we are with you; be
strong and do it.” [5]†Then Ezra arose and made the leading priests and
Levites and all Israel take oath that they would do as had been said. So they
took the oath.

[6]†Then Ezra withdrew from before the house of God and went to the
chamber of Jehohanan the son of Eliashib, where he spent the night,[1]
neither eating bread nor drinking water, for he was mourning over the
faithlessness of the exiles. [7]†And a proclamation was made throughout
Judah and Jerusalem to all the returned exiles that they should assemble at
Jerusalem, [8]†and that if anyone did not come within three days, by order of
the officials and the elders all his property should be forfeited, and he
himself banned from the congregation of the exiles.

[9]†Then all the men of Judah and Benjamin assembled at Jerusalem within
the three days. It was the ninth month, on the twentieth day of the month.
And all the people sat in the open square before the house of God,
trembling because of this matter and because of the heavy rain. [10]‡†And
Ezra the priest stood up and said to them, “You have broken faith and
married foreign women, and so increased the guilt of Israel. [11]Now then
make confession to the Lord, the God of your fathers and do his will.
Separate yourselves from the peoples of the land and from the foreign
wives.” [12]‡Then all the assembly answered with a loud voice, “It is so; we
must do as you have said. [13]But the people are many, and it is a time of

heavy rain; we cannot stand in the open. Nor is this a task for one day or for two, for we have greatly transgressed in this matter. 14 † Let our officials stand for the whole assembly. Let all in our cities who have taken foreign wives come at appointed times, and with them the elders and judges of every city, until the fierce wrath of our God over this matter is turned away from us.” 15 † Only Jonathan the son of Asahel and Jahzeiah the son of Tikvah opposed this, and Meshullam and Shabbethai the Levite supported them.

16 ‡ † Then the returned exiles did so. Ezra the priest selected men,[2] heads of fathers’ houses, according to their fathers’ houses, each of them designated by name. On the first day of the tenth month they sat down to examine the matter; 17 and by the first day of the first month they had come to the end of all the men who had married foreign women.

Those Guilty of Intermarriage

18 ‡ ‡ Now there were found some of the sons of the priests who had
married foreign women: Maaseiah, Eliezer, Jarib, and Gedaliah, some of the
sons of Jeshua the son of Jozadak and his brothers. 19 † They pledged
themselves to put away their wives, and their guilt offering was a ram of the
flock for their guilt.[1] 20Of the sons of Immer: Hanani and Zebadiah. 21Of
the sons of Harim: Maaseiah, Elijah, Shemaiah, Jehiel, and Uzziah. 22Of the
sons of Pashhur: Elioenai, Maaseiah, Ishmael, Nethanel, Jozabad, and
Elasah.

23Of the Levites: Jozabad, Shimei, Kelaiah (that is, Kelita), Pethahiah,
Judah, and Eliezer. 24†Of the singers: Eliashib. Of the gatekeepers: Shallum,
Telem, and Uri.

25 ‡ And of Israel: of the sons of Parosh: Ramiah, Izziah, Malchijah,
Mijamin, Eleazar, Hashabiah,[2] and Benaiah. 26Of the sons of Elam:
Mattaniah, Zechariah, Jehiel, Abdi, Jeremoth, and Elijah. 27Of the sons of
Zattu: Elioenai, Eliashib, Mattaniah, Jeremoth, Zabad, and Aziza. 28Of the
sons of Bebai were Jehohanan, Hananiah, Zabbai, and Athlai. 29†Of the sons
of Bani were Meshullam, Malluch, Adaiah, Jashub, Sheal, and Jeremoth.
30Of the sons of Pahath-moab: Adna, Chelal, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattaniah,
Bezalel, Binnui, and Manasseh. 31Of the sons of Harim: Eliezer, Isshijah,
Malchijah, Shemaiah, Shimeon, 32Benjamin, Malluch, and Shemariah. 33Of
the sons of Hashum: Mattenai, Mattattah, Zabad, Eliphelet, Jeremai,
Manasseh, and Shimei. 34Of the sons of Bani: Maadai, Amram, Uel,
35Benaiah, Bedeiah, Cheluhi, 36Vaniah, Meremoth, Eliashib, 37Mattaniah,
Mattenai, Jaasu. 38Of the sons of Binnui:[3] Shimei, 39Shelemiah, Nathan,
Adaiah, 40Machnadebai, Shashai, Sharai, 41Azarel, Shelemiah, Shemariah,
42Shallum, Amariah, and Joseph. 43Of the sons of Nebo: Jeiel, Mattithiah,
Zabad, Zebina, Jaddai, Joel, and Benaiah. 44†All these had married foreign
women, and some of the women had even borne children.[4]

Ezra

OVERVIEW

Author
Ezra the scribe

Date
Written c 440 BC

Places
Persia; Jerusalem in Judea; Beyond the River; Babylon; Ecbatana in Media; Ahava; Casiphia

People
Heads of fathers' houses; priests; Levites; Zerubbabel; Jeshua; temple servants; Solomon's servants; Cyrus; peoples of the land; Darius; Artaxerxes; Haggai; Zechariah; Tattenai; Ezra; Shecaniah

Purpose
To show the Judeans how God controls the nations of the earth for His saving purposes

Law Themes
Exile due to sin; persecution; broken faith by illegal marriages

Gospel Themes
God fulfills His promises of mercy; God's providence in restoring the temple and its sacrifices of atonement; the hand of God guides history for the sake of His people; the remnant restored

Memory Verses
Temple dedication (3:10–13); Ezra's heart (7:10); Ezra's prayer (9:6–9)

Introduction to Ezra

Reading Ezra

He can nearly recite the text by heart, but, to be certain of the wording, he still seeks out the passage. His hand unrolls the large scroll and stops at the precise column of the text he needs. The letters are copied neatly in his own hand. He reads aloud and explains the text line by line for those who have consulted him.

Ezra is the first priest in Scripture titled "the scribe" (7:11–12). The title literally means a writer, a secretary who prepares scrolls (cf 4:8). But with Ezra, it means a scholar of the Law of Moses, the first recorded member of a special group in Judea. About 200 years before Ezra's time, during the reform of Hezekiah (715–686 BC), there arose a special interest in the proverbs of Solomon and in education (Pr 1:8; 25:1). During the reign of Hezekiah's great-grandson Josiah (640–609 BC), a neglected scroll of the Law of Moses was discovered in the temple, which led to Josiah's reform (623 BC; 2Ki 22:8–20). These events sparked new interest in the study of the Law and of God's Word in general (see pp 1077–83). As a result, a special class of priests arose who devoted themselves especially to studying and teaching. Ezra's calling marks a new era of devotion to God's Word (see "Conclusions about Wisdom," pp 776–77).

Luther on Ezra

> The Word of God has this character that it is made known and comes when man is most desperate over everything, when he thinks that nothing is less likely to happen than what the Word of God says most certainly will happen. You see, it does not come to the lazy or the pleasure-seekers. To them it is a source of laughter. Rather it comes to the weak and the oppressed, to those in need. These also finally receive it in such a way that all human boasting vanishes and nothing is credited to our own strength and energies, but all to God alone….
>
> You see, here the rebuilding of the temple is ordered against very powerful, very bitter foes. The command is given, I say, to a weak people, few in number, a people against whom stand powerful princes and powerful nations, which lived round about and daily threatened imminent destruction, as one may see in Ezra. For the violence of the neighboring peoples was such that the Jews were forced to build with one hand and to fight with the other to ward off the hostile nations. Yet, against all these fierce and powerful foes this one weak prophet here dares to rise up and prophesy about rebuilding the temple. So he orders this handful of people, who had just recently been snatched from a most burdensome captivity, to stand up against a mad and inflated king who didn't want them to rebuild the temple…. Yet it is the Word of God which commands such things, and to it we must listen even though the whole world resists it as the Jews also did listen.
>
> You see, when we thus attribute to God the glory of truth, then it happens that everything which first was opposed to us now is compelled to promote and help us in our plans. This is what happened here, where all the very heavy burdens and bitter hindrances were changed into peaceful allies. After all, as the account shows, the king ordered the princes to help the people, whereas before that they had been ordered to resist and oppose them. So, what appeared impossible earlier became very easy because of God's plan. Obviously, this is the way divine mercy, working wonderfully, turns all things into good for those who believe; judgment is turned into salvation for them, sin into righteousness, etc., enemies into friends and subjects. For God, …

(“The Almighty”), holds all things in His hand. The whole world, kings and princes, too, must obey Him. (AE 18:369–70)

Challenges for Readers

Relationship to Chronicles, Nehemiah, and Esther. From the Hebrew Bible, it is clear that Ezra and Nehemiah were combined as one scroll and continuous work, even though they must originally have been separate compositions (cf Ne 1:1). The style of these books is likewise similar to that of Chronicles and Esther, books written during the same era. Similarities in style have prompted some scholars to conclude that one author or one editor (e.g., the Chronicler) wrote or compiled these works. At least a portion of Ezra (chs 7:27–9:15) was clearly written by Ezra himself, reporting in the first person ("I").

End of Ezra. The Book ends abruptly. However, the report of Ezra's career does not end here. He reappears on the scene 12 years later and makes a positive contribution to the spiritual upbuilding of the postexilic community (Ne 7–10). There is no information as to what he did in the meantime. He may have been recalled to the Persian court after his commission in Judah expired.

Imperial Aramaic. The correspondence and account in Ezr 4:7–6:18; 7:12–28 is written entirely in Aramaic, the official language of the Persian Empire. The writer had access to either an official archive or a collection of such documents. Aramaic is a Northwest Semitic language originally spoken in Syria (Aram), a kingdom north of Israel that was annexed by the Assyrians in the eighth century BC (see notes, 2Ki 15:29, 37). Biblical Hebrew is a close cousin to Imperial Aramaic, which was also used by the Assyrian (2Ki 18:26) and Babylonian Empires and subsequently adopted by the Persians. Aramaic largely replaced Hebrew in Judea and Galilee (see p 1835). Jesus and the apostles spoke Aramaic (Mk 5:41; Ac 21:40), and there is a great body of early Christian literature in Syriac, a dialect of Aramaic that has survived to modern times in the liturgy of a small number of Syriac Christians living in Lebanon, Iraq, and other places.

Additions to Ezra. On the apocryphal additions to Ezra, known as the Books of Esdras, see Luther's comments on p 1563. See also "Different Texts of Daniel" (pp 1394–95) for an illustration of the issues.

Blessings for Readers

As you read Ezra, consider how the Lord is at work now in the lives of world leaders in order to bring about good for His people. As Luther notes above, when things seem their worst and everything opposes God's people, there God is at work to dramatically change matters. Therefore, like Ezra and his contemporaries, take confidence in God's promises and their fulfillment for your sake.

OUTLINE

I. First Return of Exiles and Rebuilding of the Temple (chs 1–6)
- A. Proclamation of Cyrus (1:1–4)
- B. Response to the Proclamation (1:5–11)
- C. List of Returnees (ch 2)
  1. Introduction to the list (2:1–2a)
  2. People of Israel by families (2:2b–20)
  3. People of Israel by location (2:21–35)
  4. Priests of Israel (2:36–39)
  5. Levites, singers, and gatekeepers (2:40–42)
  6. Temple servants (2:43–54)
  7. Sons of Solomon's servants (2:55–58)
  8. Those who could not prove their descent (2:59–63)
  9. Numbers for the whole assembly (2:64–67)
  10. Freewill offerings for the house of God (2:68–69)
  11. Note on location of returnees (2:70)
- D. Rebuilding the Altar (3:1–7)
- E. Rebuilding the Temple (3:8–13)
- F. Adversaries Oppose Rebuilding (4:1–6)
- G. Adversaries' Letter to King Artaxerxes (4:7–16)
- H. King Artaxerxes Orders Rebuilding to Cease (4:17–24)
- I. Rebuilding Begins Again (5:1–5)
- J. Tattenai's Letter to King Darius (5:6–17)
- K. Decree of King Darius (6:1–12)
  1. Decree of Cyrus found (6:1–5)
  2. Response of King Darius to Tattenai (6:6–12)

L. Temple Finished (6:13–15)
M. Temple Dedicated (6:16–18)
N. First Passover in New Temple (6:19–22)

II. Second Return of Exiles under Ezra (chs 7–8)
A. Ezra's Lineage, Company, and Mission (7:1–10)
B. King Artaxerxes' Letter to Ezra (7:11–26)
C. Ezra's Grateful Response (7:27–28)
D. Genealogy of Those Who Returned with Ezra (8:1–14)
E. Ezra Sends for Levites (8:15–20)
F. Fasting and Prayer for Safe Journey (8:21–23)
G. Priests and Levites Carry the Treasure (8:24–30)
H. Return to Jerusalem (8:31–36)

III. Ezra's Reforms Ban Intermarriage (chs 9–10)
A. Problem of Intermarriage with Foreign Women (9:1–5)
B. Ezra Prays about Intermarriage (9:6–15)
C. People's Confession and Covenant to End Unlawful Marriages (10:1–6)
D. Decision of Assembly concerning Intermarriage (10:7–17)
E. Those Guilty of Intermarriage (10:18–44)

Footnotes

Footnotes for Ezra, Chapter 2

- [1] 2:69 A *daric* was a coin weighing about 1/4 ounce or 8.5 grams
- [2] 2:69 A *mina* was about 1 1/4 pounds or 0.6 kilogram
- [3] 2:70 Hebrew *all Israel*

Footnotes for Ezra, Chapter 4

- [1] 4:7 Hebrew *written in Aramaic and translated in Aramaic*, indicating that 4:8–6:18 is in Aramaic; another interpretation is *The letter was written in the Aramaic script and set forth in the Aramaic language*

Footnotes for Ezra, Chapter 5

- [1] 5:4 Septuagint, Syriac; Aramaic *We*
- [2] 5:10 Aramaic *of the men at their heads*

Footnotes for Ezra, Chapter 6

- [1] 6:3 A *cubit* was about 18 inches or 45 centimeters

Footnotes for Ezra, Chapter 7

- [1] 7:8 Aramaic *he*
- [2] 7:12 Aramaic *Perfect* (probably a greeting)
- [1] 7:22 A *talent* was about 75 pounds or 34 kilograms
- [2] 7:22 A *cor* was about 6 bushels or 220 liters
- [3] 7:22 A *bath* was about 6 gallons or 22 liters

Footnotes for Ezra, Chapter 8

- [4] 8:5 Septuagint; Hebrew lacks *of Zattu*
- [5] 8:10 Septuagint; Hebrew lacks *Bani*
- [1] 8:17 Hebrew lacks *and*
- [2] 8:26 A *talent* was about 75 pounds or 34 kilograms
- [3] 8:26 Revocalization; the number is missing in the Masoretic Text
- [4] 8:27 A *daric* was a coin weighing about 1/4 ounce or 8.5 grams
- [1] 8:36 A *satrap* was a Persian official

Footnotes for Ezra, Chapter 9

- [2] 9:2 Hebrew *offspring*

- [1] 9:8 Hebrew *nail*, or *tent-pin*
- [2] 9:9 Hebrew *a wall*

Footnotes for Ezra, Chapter 10

- [3] 10:3 Or *of the Lord*
- [1] 10:6 Probable reading; Hebrew *where he went*
- [2] 10:16 Syriac; Hebrew *And there were selected Ezra …*
- [1] 10:19 Or *as their reparation*
- [2] 10:25 Septuagint; Hebrew *Malchijah*
- [3] 10:38 Septuagint; Hebrew *Bani, Binnui*
- [4] 10:44 Or *and they put them away with their children*

Study Notes

EZRA—NOTE ON 1:1 *Cyrus*. Founder of the Persian Empire, located between the Persian Gulf and Caspian Sea, far east of the Holy Land. (Iran was formerly known as Persia.) See map, p 717. Cyrus triumphed over the Babylonians at Opis on the Tigris River and captured the city of Babylon, Oct 539 BC. In 538 BC, he allowed exiled Judeans to return home. Before anyone knew the name of this conqueror, the Lord had anointed Cyrus to "fulfill all [His] purpose" (see notes, Is 44:27–28; 44:28). *word of the* LORD *by the mouth of Jeremiah.* God had foretold the end of the 70-year exile (see note, 2Ch 36:21; cf Jer 29:10–14). Luth: "Here the flesh is greatly offended. It cannot understand the counsel of God about miraculously fulfilling these promises. The Lord had promised an eternal kingdom, a glorious return from captivity. All the Jews, therefore, kept thinking that they would be saved and brought back, that they would be placed in that new and glorious kingdom…. Only very few of the devout were after some years brought back from Babylon, namely, those whose spirit God had touched, as the account in Ezra 1:5 says. Therefore He is separating the faithful from the wicked and says that the latter will remain in an eternal captivity, while the former will be brought back and glorified" (AE 18:241). *stirred up the spirit*. Our heavenly King moved Cyrus to action (cf Is 41:2, 25). See pp 719–20. *proclamation.* Put into writing; referred to again in 5:13; 6:3.

EZRA—NOTE ON 1:2 *LORD*. Cyrus was not likely a believer (see note, 2Ch 36:23). He learned the name of Israel's God from the Judean exiles. Cyrus was tolerant of all religions, letting conquered peoples retain their national gods. *God of heaven*. Used repeatedly in Ezr, this name is appropriate to the exiles, who formerly may have associated their God with a specific land (Israel) but now knew Him to be God over all. See p 1227. *charged me*. Perhaps the Lord stirred up Cyrus through a prophet, someone like Daniel, to order the rebuilding of the temple. Cf Dn 6:28. *Judah*. Name given the Persian province (2:1) in the area where the tribe of Judah had originally settled.

EZRA—NOTE ON 1:3 *God who is in Jerusalem*. "The God of heaven" (v 2) revealed His earthly presence in Jerusalem's temple (2Ch 7:1–3; Ps 84:1).

EZRA—NOTE ON 1:4 *men of his place*. Neighbors were to assist the exiles as at the time of the exodus from Egypt (Ex 12:35–36). *silver and gold, with goods and with beasts*. Items useful for the exiles.
EZRA—NOTE ON 1:5 *heads of the fathers' houses*. The leading members of each family (usually the oldest, i.e., "elders") exercised civil leadership. See note, Ex 3:16; see also p 228. *God had stirred to go up*. As the Lord had stirred up Cyrus (v 1), so He moved the hearts of many laypeople of Judah, priests, and Levites to break away from their homes in Babylonia and return to Judah (cf Zec 2:7). Luth: "Such are the wondrous counsels of God. He orders the prophets to declare both destruction and salvation, but the former for the wicked, the latter for the devout. It is very important to note this in all the prophets. In this way those wonderful counsels of divine majesty made fools of the wicked. In fact, even the devout were unable to understand them" (AE 18:237).
EZRA—NOTE ON 1:7 *vessels*. Precious items used for worship, originally made for Solomon's temple (1Ch 28:13–18; 2Ch 5:1). *Nebuchadnezzar*. King of Babylon (604–562 BC), a country located between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers (present-day Iraq) to which many Judeans and the temple vessels were carried off in 587 BC (2:1; 2Ch 36:10, 18; Jer 27:19–22).
EZRA—NOTE ON 1:8 *Sheshbazzar*. Appointed governor of Judah by Cyrus (5:14–16), he apparently died soon after returning to Jerusalem. His successor, Zerubbabel, resumed rebuilding the temple (5:1–2; Hg 1:14). *prince*. Hbr *nasi'*, usually a royal title, but also given to other leaders (1Ch 2:10). See p 228.
EZRA—NOTE ON 1:9–10 *basins ... censers ... bowls*. Vessels for use in temple worship (v 7). Cf Ex 25:29.
EZRA—NOTE ON 1:11 *all the vessels ... 5,400*. Items listed in vv 9–10 add up to 2,499, far short of the reported total, suggesting that not all vessels had been itemized. *brought up*. The exiles were likely provided with some kind of escort (8:21–23; Ne 2:9).
EZRA—NOTE ON **Ch 1** The Lord stirs Cyrus the Persian to send home a remnant of the Judean exiles, as prophesied by Isaiah and Jeremiah. Today, the Lord of heaven and earth continues to govern the nations for the good of His people. Though the news we hear each day is often bad, we can rejoice that the Lord of heaven is at work amid tumultuous events. Consider how He wrought our salvation through the decisions of Roman and Judean

rulers who crucified our Savior! • Lord of history, stir my heart to praise You and to serve my neighbor according to Your merciful goodness. Amen.
EZRA—NOTE ON 2:1 *province*. Judah (1:2). Other known Persian provinces west of the Euphrates include Samaria, Moab, and Ammon. *own town*. Not only Jerusalem but other towns in the area were also resettled (cf vv 21–35).
EZRA—NOTE ON 2:2–67 This list is a testimony to God's goodness in preserving the identity of His chosen people during their captivity in a foreign country. An important document, it represented a kind of charter of the newly founded province of Judah. New names and numbers may have been added from time to time to keep the record current. Nine groups are distinguished: the leaders (v 2a; Ne 7:7 adds a 12th name); "men of the people of Israel," some listed by family names, others by towns (vv 2b–35); priests (vv 36–39); all Levites (vv 40–42); Levitical singers (v 41); Levitical gatekeepers (v 42); temple servants (vv 43–54); sons of Solomon's servants (vv 55–58); and some people without certified family ties (vv 59–63).
EZRA—NOTE ON 2:2 *Zerubbabel*. Later governor of Judah and active in rebuilding the temple (3:8; Hg 1:1). *Nehemiah*. Bore the same name as the governor who arrived in Jerusalem some 90 years later (Ne 1:1).
EZRA—NOTE ON 2:21 *Bethlehem*. C 5 mi S of Jerusalem.
EZRA—NOTE ON 2:21–35 Towns clustered about Jerusalem within a radius of c 30 mi. If the list is complete, the Persian province was considerably smaller than the territory of preexilic Judah. See map, p 615. The community was hemmed in on all sides by various racial groups (3:3; 4:1, 4; Ne 4:7).
EZRA—NOTE ON 2:40 *Levites*. Total number of Levites was 341, while that of the priests was 4,289. Normally, these two groups of temple officiants would be in reverse proportion (cf 2Ch 29:34). The prospect of serving as assistants to the priests may have kept the Levites from leaving Babylonia. Later, Ezra found "none of the sons of Levi" in the group that volunteered to return to Jerusalem with him (8:15).
EZRA—NOTE ON 2:43 *temple servants*. See note, v 58.
EZRA—NOTE ON 2:55 *Solomon's servants*. See note, v 58.
EZRA—NOTE ON 2:58 *temple servants*. Descendants of the Gibeonites and other groups. See notes, Jsh 9:21; 1Ch 9:2. *Solomon's servants*.

Descendants of Canaanite tribes, who became Solomon's house slaves. Cf 1Ki 9:20–21.
EZRA—NOTE ON 2:59 *Tel-melah ... Immer.* Probably places in Babylonia. *prove their fathers' houses*. From genealogy records (v 62), demonstrating the importance of lists such as those found in 1Ch 1–9.
EZRA—NOTE ON 2:62 *excluded from the priesthood.* Only those with proven ancestral credentials could serve as priests. *unclean.* See p 300.
EZRA—NOTE ON 2:63 *governor*. Hbr *tirshatha;* probably a Persian word designating the men appointed by Persian kings to administer affairs in the restored community of Judah (Ne 7:65, 70; 10:1). The governor is not named. *most holy food*. See pp 700–71. *Urim and Thummim*. See note, Ex 28:30.
EZRA—NOTE ON 2:64 The total given is far larger than the sum of the individual contingents recorded in the previous verses (29,818). Ne 7:66 gives the same total, but the individual entries there add up to only 31,089. The names of some families or groups were evidently omitted from these lists.
EZRA—NOTE ON 2:65 *singers*. Likely singers for secular entertainment, not "the sons of Asaph" (v 41). Females did not participate in temple worship, though they sang praises to God after the exodus (Ex 15:20–21) and had some role of service at the entrance to the tabernacle (Ex 38:8).
EZRA—NOTE ON 2:68 *heads.* Cf 1:5. *freewill*. Voluntary; not prescribed by law (Lv 22:17–25; Nu 15:1–10; Dt 12:17). See note, Ex 35:29.
EZRA—NOTE ON 2:69 *darics ... minas*. See ESV notes. Earliest biblical reference to minted coins (which were valued by weight). The Persians allowed the Judeans to mint their own coins, which had Aramaic markings for the province "Judah." *priests' garments*. Cf Ex 29:21; Ezr 3:10.
EZRA—NOTE ON 2:70 *temple servants*. See note, v 58. *their towns*. The clergy and some of the people no doubt settled in Jerusalem and nearby towns, while the rest went to other towns named in vv 20–35. See note, Jsh 14:4.
EZRA—NOTE ON **Ch 2** Although 42,360 people respond to Cyrus's invitation to return to Judah, relatively few Levites—key temple workers—appear on the list. As then, the Lord gives each of us a role of service in our congregation. The services of God's house require our faithful support in word and deed. When you are discouraged or overwhelmed by the needs of your congregation, entrust your cares to the Lord of heaven, who oversees

all things for your benefit. He will bless you through the service of Word and Sacrament offered in His name. • Dearest Father, grant me joy and contentment in my calling. Help me to see the greater purpose and need of my congregation. Amen.

EZRA—NOTE ON 3:1 *seventh month*. Tishri (in autumn) of the first year after the children of Israel had settled in their various towns (2:70). See calendar, p 262. They assembled in Jerusalem for a "holy convocation" (Nu 29:1).

EZRA—NOTE ON 3:2 *Jeshua*. Later high priest (Hg 1:1; Zec 3:1). Also spelled "*Joshua*"; a popular name (cf 2:2, 36, 40), making individual identifications difficult. *Zerubbabel*. Cf 2:2. Likely that Cyrus had originally commissioned Sheshbazzar to head up the temple rebuilding project (1:8; 5:14–16), but he soon disappeared from the scene. Zerubbabel and Jeshua became the leaders (5:1–2). *built the altar ... Law of Moses*. Follows the example of what Moses had commanded when the children of Israel first entered Canaan (Dt 27:6–7).

EZRA—NOTE ON 3:3 *in its place*. Lit, "upon its base," the site where it formerly stood. See diagram, p 730. *fear*. Returnees wanted the altar built in order to have a place where they might gather to implore God's help against the surrounding "peoples of the lands." *offerings morning and evening*. Daily sacrifices (the Tamid) consisted of lambs with flour, oil, and wine. See pp 170–71.

EZRA—NOTE ON 3:4 *Feast of Booths*. Third of the annual festivals, celebrated from the 15th to the 21st day of the seventh month (Lv 23:33–43). Circumstances may have permitted only a token observance of its elaborate festivities. The first complete celebration came after the temple had been built (Ne 8:17). See pp 200–201.

EZRA—NOTE ON 3:5 *offerings*. See pp 170–71.

EZRA—NOTE ON 3:6 *foundation ... not yet laid.* Cf v 10.

EZRA—NOTE ON 3:7 *Sidonians … Tyrians*. People from the Great Sea coastal cities of Sidon and Tyre. Solomon made a similar agreement with them for building materials. See note, 1Ki 5. *grant*. Rebuilding costs were taken from the royal treasury (6:4).

EZRA—NOTE ON 3:1–7 Within about a year of Cyrus's decree, the Judeans are settling in their homeland and beginning to work on the altar to restore the sacrifices, showing their sincere desire for true worship and for honoring their emperor's decree. As you offer daily sacrifices of thanks and

praise to the Lord, request a deep and lively sincerity for yourself, your family, and your congregation. The Lord sincerely receives your worship and requests; He has promised to answer according to His goodwill and the mercy He demonstrated in His Son, your Redeemer. • Grant me a sincere and thankful heart, dear Lord, that my mind, hands, and feet may carry out Your good and gracious will. Amen.

EZRA—NOTE ON 3:8 The following year in our Apr/May (Ziv 536; see calendar, p 262), Zerubbabel and Jeshua, assisted by clergy and laypeople, began construction on the temple. Priests and Levites served as supervisors (v 9). *twenty years*. Age when Levites began temple service as specified by King David, corresponding to the age when men of other tribes became warriors. See note, Nu 1:2–18. *work*. Construction on the temple's foundation.

EZRA—NOTE ON 3:10 Completion of the foundation called for a service of praise, much as we do when a church's cornerstone is laid. *vestments*. Garments worn by the priests (cf Ex 28; Lv 8). *directions of David*. The celebration at the dedication of Solomon's temple had similar features (2Ch 5:11–14; 7:3).

EZRA—NOTE ON 3:11 *responsively*. Two groups (or leader and group) sing alternately, as is still practiced in liturgical worship. See note, Ps 136; see also p 959. *For He is good*. Common refrain of praise to God, based on Ex 34:6–7 (Ps 136:1). *steadfast love*. See p 843. *shouted*. See p 959. *the foundation of the house of the* LORD *was laid*. No doubt some of the stones from the ruins of the first temple were used in providing a solid base for the new building. See note, v 3.

EZRA—NOTE ON 3:12 *old men … wept*. Their memories went back 50 years to the grandeur of "the first house," built with the resources of Solomon's empire. No doubt some of the tears were salted with remorse over the folly that had destroyed temple and nation. The glory had "departed from Israel" (1Sm 4:21) because their great guilt "mounted up to the heavens" (9:6). *shouted aloud for joy.* Many other voices were raised in thanksgiving for this new beginning. Their shouts were heard "far away" (v 13).

EZRA—NOTE ON 3:8–13 The service dedicating the foundation for the new temple stirs deep emotions for the Judeans because of the memory of their shortcomings and because they are eyewitnesses to God's renewed mercy for them. God's Word of Law and Gospel will likewise move your

heart. That Word is your focus for comfort and for hope. By the Word, the Lord lays a foundation for new life and peace in your life. • All I am, good Lord, belongs to You, including my tears and my shouts of joy. May I praise You in thought, word, and deed. Amen.

EZRA—NOTE ON 4:1 *adversaries*. Also called "people of the land" (see note, v 4). One reason the Judeans set up the altar was out of fear of these people (3:3). Opposition from outsiders to the various building projects is a recurring theme in both Ezr (4:6–23) and Ne (4:1–9). *Israel*. God's covenant people of the OT. See pp 1905–6.

EZRA—NOTE ON 4:2 *heads of fathers' houses*. See note, 1:5. *build with you ... worship*. After Assyria had captured the northern Israelite capital of Samaria in 722 BC, various outsiders were imported into the land of Israel by several Assyrian kings, including Esarhaddon (681–669 BC). These had received some training in how to worship the God of Israel (see notes, 2Ki 17:26, 29), but they likely mingled the worship practices of Moses with pagan religious practices.

EZRA—NOTE ON 4:3 The returned exiles, fearing they would commit themselves to a false worship, refused the offer of these neighbors to jointly build the temple. *Cyrus ... commanded us*. They justified this refusal by citing Cyrus's order.

EZRA—NOTE ON 4:4 *people of the land.* Native population, a mixture of racial strains and blend of religious beliefs (6:21; 2Ki 17:24–33). Later, they came to be known as Samaritans. *afraid to build*. Fear, evident previously (3:3), now grew so great that work on the temple ceased.

EZRA—NOTE ON 4:5 *bribed counselors*. The "people of the land" (v 4) turned the Persian advisers and governing officials against the Judeans not only with words but also with money. Cf 7:14. *frustrate … Darius*. Cyrus was evidently persuaded to back off from supporting the temple rebuilding. His successor, Cambyses (528–523 BC), continued the same policy. The returnees had to wait until the second year of the third Persian king, Darius (522–486 BC), before they were permitted to resume the project, a delay of some 15 years and a great loss of momentum.

EZRA—NOTE ON 4:6–23 These letters record later attempts by the adversaries to frustrate the building of the walls of Jerusalem.

EZRA—NOTE ON 4:6 *Ahasuerus*. Hbr name of the Persian king the Greeks called Xerxes (486–465 BC). Esther became his queen (Est 2:16–17). *accusation*. Perhaps this accusation, about which there is no further

information, was somehow related to the fact that Xerxes, in his first year as king, was occupied with putting down a revolt in Egypt.

EZRA—NOTE ON 4:1–6 To maintain pure worship, the Judeans reject the offer from the people of the land, who insist on taking part in building the temple and in joining the worship services. When God's people today consider the boundaries of pure and faithful worship, and also God's calling to reach out to others, they may feel challenged as they work to fulfill both callings. Clear boundaries in doctrine and practice are necessary because a corrupt gospel is no Gospel at all (cf Gal 1:8). Thanks be to God for maintaining the preaching and teaching of His life-giving Word, which has spanned the centuries to reach us too. What a joy to share that blessed message with those who repent. • Preserve Your mission of grace among us, O Lord, and grant us clear understanding of the boundaries between true and false worship. Amen.

EZRA—NOTE ON 4:7 *Artaxerxes*. Persian king (464–424 BC), successor to Xerxes. He authorized Ezra's return to Jerusalem (7:6). *letter.* Like the letter in vv 11–16, this was evidently hostile to the Judeans. *Aramaic*. See note, 2Ki 18:26; see also "Imperial Aramaic," p 720.

EZRA—NOTE ON 4:8 *Rehum ... Shimshai*. Two Persian officials who also wrote a letter (preserved in vv 11–16) to Artaxerxes against Jerusalem. *commander*. High Persian civilian official who gives orders or issues edicts. *scribe*. Responsible for drafting official correspondence (cf 7:6).

EZRA—NOTE ON 4:9 Rehum and Shimshai added the names of others who signed the accusation. The signatories held various offices and had come to Samaria from several different places in the East. *Susa*. Ancient capital of Elam and later of Persia; east of Babylonia. See map, p 609.

EZRA—NOTE ON 4:10 *Osnappar*. Probably refers to the Assyrian king Ashurbanipal (668–c 627 BC). *Samaria*. Refers both to the former capital of Israel and to the territory around that city, c 40 mi N of Jerusalem. See map, p 615. *Beyond the River*. For administrative purposes, the Persian Empire was divided into 20 districts, called satrapies. The fifth of these was known as Beyond the River because it was made up of territory beyond, or west of, the Euphrates. See note, 1Ki 5:4. Its satrap was responsible to the emperor for Syria, Samaria, and Cyprus. "The province of Judah" (5:8) constituted a smaller unit of control within his satrapy. See note, 2:1.

EZRA—NOTE ON 4:11–16 Rehum's letter to Artaxerxes.

EZRA—NOTE ON 4:12 *Jews*. Aram *yehudaye'*, "the Judeans." Not to be confused with modern practitioners of the Jewish religion, which was a later development. See "Judah," p 1079. *rebellious and wicked city*. Jerusalem's past history justified this description, though it was hardly the only city deserving such characterization. See note, 2Ki 25:8–9. *finishing the walls*. Work that Nehemiah eventually completed (Ne 6:15). A walled city was defensible and, therefore, more likely to rebel.
EZRA—NOTE ON 4:13 *tribute, custom, or toll*. Various taxes owed to the king. Jerusalem lay between the major trade routes from Egypt to Mesopotamia (see map, p 717). A Judean rebellion could significantly affect trade relations.
EZRA—NOTE ON 4:14 *salt of the palace*. Possibly refers to a ceremony in which salt was eaten to ratify an oath or covenant (cf 2Ch 13:5).
EZRA—NOTE ON 4:15 *book of the records*. Historical records (some of which survive) of ancient kingdoms such as Babylonia and Persia. The most complete book of ancient records is the Bible. See pp 335–37. *laid waste*. See note, 6:11.
EZRA—NOTE ON 4:16 *make known to the king*. Bureaucrats sought to avoid future charges of negligence. *no possession*. Hyperbole. Judah had not firmly controlled the region since the time of Solomon, nearly 500 years earlier.
EZRA—NOTE ON 4:7–16 Ezra illustrates the strong and unreasonable opposition that the Judean settlers faced from regional Persian officials. Today, God's people may face similar bureaucratic opposition when seeking building permits, etc., for churches and schools. Pray for your governing officials who do not seem to recognize the valuable contribution God's people make in civil life. Give thanks for faithful officials who do recognize the benefits of godly service. Through the Gospel, the King of heaven will transform hearts and minds so that all may see His merciful goodness. • O Lord, make me salt and light for my community by faithfully and patiently bearing witness to Your Word and will. Amen.
EZRA—NOTE ON 4:17–21 Artaxerxes responded to Rehum's letter by issuing a decree that Jerusalem not be rebuilt immediately.
EZRA—NOTE ON 4:17 *Rehum … Shimshai*. See note, v 8. *Beyond the River*. See note, v 10.
EZRA—NOTE ON 4:19 *rebellion and sedition.* Cf vv 12, 15.
EZRA—NOTE ON 4:20 *mighty kings.* E.g., David and Solomon.

EZRA—NOTE ON 4:21 Artaxerxes does not rule out permitting the building of the walls sometime in the future. His letter anticipates further governmental investigation. The walls were finally built under Nehemiah (Ne 2:8; 6:15).
EZRA—NOTE ON 4:22 *hurt of the king?* Reflects the prediction made in v 16.
EZRA—NOTE ON 4:23 *Jews*. See note, v 12. *by force*. Rehum's use of force to stop the rebuilding of the walls is described in Ne 1:3: "The wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates are destroyed by fire."
EZRA—NOTE ON 4:24 Repeats the report in vv 4–5, that work on the temple stopped for the remainder of Cyrus's reign, during the entire rule of Cambyses (528–523 BC), until the second year of Darius's reign (522–486 BC). Though the official letters of ch 4 concern the walls of Jerusalem, they prevent work on the temple as well. *second year of the reign of Darius*. 520 BC (5:1–2; Hg 1:14–15).
EZRA—NOTE ON 4:17–24 Artaxerxes' response and the violent intervention of local officials stop the civil building projects in Jerusalem, most notably the work on the temple. Underlying the physical struggles of our world are always spiritual struggles. Through Scripture, keep aware of spiritual struggles and make them the focus of your prayers against Satan. Take courage from the Lord's mastery of His creation and the manner in which He works for the good of His people, especially shown in the civil punishment and glorious resurrection of His Son for our redemption. • Hear the cry of Your people, mighty King, and work among us for our blessing. Amen.
EZRA—NOTE ON 5:1 *Now*. Or, "And," indicating the second year of Darius (4:24), when the prophets Haggai and Zechariah roused the people to renew their efforts to build the temple (Hg 1:8; Zec 8:9). *prophesied ... in the name*. Spoke the Word of the Lord in His divine name, which had "dwelt" in the temple at Jerusalem. Cf 1Ki 5:5; see "name," p 843. *Jews*. Judeans. See note, 4:12.
EZRA—NOTE ON 5:2 *Zerubbabel ... Jeshua*. Directed the rebuilding project (2:2; 3:2, 8). *rebuild*. Work was resumed on the temple despite opposition described in ch 4.
EZRA—NOTE ON 5:3 *Tattenai*. Governor of the large satrapy Beyond the River (4:10) investigated the project. *Shethar-bozenai.* Perhaps the scribe

(cf 4:8). *decree.* Rebuilding a temple required official approval, given under Cyrus (1:3).
EZRA—NOTE ON 5:4 *What are the names*. Names of Judean elders (vv 5, 9) may have been included with the letter Tattenai sent to Darius (vv 7–17). Adversaries prepare to penalize specific people, a new level of intimidation.
EZRA—NOTE ON 5:5 *the eye … was on*. Similar to the words of the blessing "the LORD make His face to shine upon you" (Nu 6:25), meaning to look with favor. *Jews*. Judeans. See note, 4:12. *they did not stop.* Tattenai did not interfere with the project on his own authority, and the prophets continued their support (v 2). *Darius*. Persian king (4:24).
EZRA—NOTE ON 5:1–5 God's prophets boldly call His people back to the work of the Jerusalem temple. Today, when your cause is right in the Lord's eyes, do not hesitate to act and to call others to peaceable action. Act confidently, because the Lord will watch over you, bless you, and keep you through Christ. • Stir Your people to bold action, O Lord, in the cause of pure and faithful worship. Help us to stare down all who would oppose Your good purposes. Amen.
EZRA—NOTE ON 5:6 *Beyond the River*. See note, 4:10.
EZRA—NOTE ON 5:7–17 Tattenai reported the matter to Darius as objectively as possible, requesting confirmation of the claim that Cyrus had some 20 years earlier "made a decree that this house of God should be rebuilt" (v 13).
EZRA—NOTE ON 5:8 *we went.* It was the governor's duty to find out what was happening in Jerusalem. *province*. See note, 2:1. *great God*. Leaders of Judah had told Tattenai that they were "servants of the God of heaven and earth" (v 11), which may have influenced him to describe this God as "great." *huge stones … timber is laid in the walls*. Cf 6:4; 1Ki 6:10.
EZRA—NOTE ON 5:11 *God of heaven*. See note, 1:2.
EZRA—NOTE ON 5:12 *Chaldean*. Region in south Babylonia. See map, p 717. *carried away.* Exiled in 587 BC (cf 1:7).
EZRA—NOTE ON 5:13 *Cyrus king of Babylon.* Cyrus of Persia conquered Babylon and so is called its king (6:22).
EZRA—NOTE ON 5:14 *Sheshbazzar*. See notes, 1:8; 5:16.
EZRA—NOTE ON 5:15 *put them in the temple*. Cyrus referred to the new temple in Jerusalem as though the building were already completed.
EZRA—NOTE ON 5:16 *Sheshbazzar came and laid the foundations*. Cyrus had authorized Sheshbazzar to rebuild the temple (v 15), which he likely

started, but work on the foundation was completed by Zerubbabel and Jeshua (3:8–10). There is no further mention of Sheshbazzar.

EZRA—NOTE ON 5:17 *search ... in the royal archives.* Tattenai wants Darius to verify existence of Cyrus's decree.

EZRA—NOTE ON 5:6–17 The Persian governor Tattenai discovers the truth about the rebuilding of the Jerusalem temple to the "great God" of heaven. Thanks be to God for faithful government officials who seek and report the truth! Pray for them. Vote for them. Encourage good people to seek public office. The God of heaven rules among us through faithful leaders in both church and state. The great God of our salvation cares for every aspect of our lives. • O great God of heaven, work for the peace of Your servants on earth. Amen.

EZRA—NOTE ON 6:1 *house of the archives*. Lit, "house of scrolls." Such libraries or depositories of documents have been uncovered by archaeologists. The search for the decree was begun in Babylonia, from where the exiles had departed.

EZRA—NOTE ON 6:2 *Ecbatana.* Capital of Media and summer residence of Persian kings, c 300 mi NE of Babylon. See map, p 609. Cyrus is known to have spent some time there during the first year of his reign. *scroll*. Documents were typically preserved in this form. *A record*. The oral proclamation of Cyrus's decree, as the exiles heard it from his heralds (1:2–4), differed in some details from this written document found in the archives (vv 3–5).

EZRA—NOTE ON 6:3 *sixty cubits*. 90 ft (see ESV note). No figures are given for the length of the building. Dimensions of Solomon's temple were 60 cubits long, 20 cubits wide, and 30 cubits high (1Ki 6:2).

EZRA—NOTE ON 6:4 *one layer of timber*. Solomon's temple was similarly constructed (1Ki 7:12), perhaps to counter the effects of an earthquake.

EZRA—NOTE ON 6:5 *You shall put them in the house of God*. Concludes the royal decree of Cyrus.

EZRA—NOTE ON 6:6 *Tattenai … Shethar-bozenai*. See note, 5:3. *keep away*. King Darius ordered the governor to refrain from interfering with the temple rebuilding.

EZRA—NOTE ON 6:7 *Jews*. Judeans. See note, 4:12.

EZRA—NOTE ON 6:8 *a decree*. Darius issued specific orders, implementing the original directive by Cyrus. *The cost*. For building

materials and possibly labor.
EZRA—NOTE ON 6:9 *whatever is needed*. Persian authorities would have known what the priests would typically require for sacrifices. Sponsorship of the sacrifices by a pagan ruler perhaps did not cause conflict because he attached no stipulations except that prayers be said on his behalf. *God of heaven*. See notes, 1:2; 5:8.
EZRA—NOTE ON 6:10 *pray for the life of the king.* Darius expected the priests in Judah to offer prayers and sacrifices for his own welfare and for that of the state.
EZRA—NOTE ON 6:11 *a beam*. Used like a floor or roof joist. *impaled*. To pierce a person's body with the beam. This Persian practice was inherited from the Assyrians. *dunghill*. Aram term is unclear; it is translated "laid in ruins" in Dn 2:5; 3:29. To include a curse on anyone tampering with an official document was routine in the ancient Near East. See "curse," p 6.
EZRA—NOTE ON 6:12 *I Darius make a decree.* The king's signature, perhaps added personally; typically, scribes wrote official correspondence on the king's behalf. See pp 1899–1901.
EZRA—NOTE ON 6:1–12 The emperor Darius approves the building of the temple, sponsors its sacrifices, and curses those who would interfere. The God of heaven has so radically changed the circumstances that the government that opposed the project becomes its sponsor. Today, do not fail to offer prayers for your officials. Who knows what changes God may bring? Above all, offer thanks to Him for your salvation by Jesus' sacrifice.
• Great God of heaven, bless our officials, and guide their service for the benefit of Your Church. Amen.
EZRA—NOTE ON 6:13 *Tatttenai … Shethar-bozenai*. See note, 5:3.
EZRA—NOTE ON 6:14 The temple building project went well and was finished. *Jews*. Judeans. See note, 4:12. *Cyrus and Darius and Artaxerxes*. Three Persian kings who took actions benefiting the temple. Some 50 years after the temple was completed (early in the reign of Darius), Artaxerxes contributed sorely needed funds for its maintenance when he sent Ezra to Jerusalem (4:7; 7:12–26).
EZRA—NOTE ON 6:15 *house was finished … third day … Adar … sixth year*. Temple was completed on Feb 21, 516 BC.
EZRA—NOTE ON 6:16 *dedication*. Ceremonies at the dedication of Solomon's temple were duplicated as much as possible (1Ki 8).

EZRA—NOTE ON 6:17 *They offered.* One difference between the dedication of "this house" and Solomon's temple was the smaller number of animals sacrificed (cf 1Ki 8:5, 63). *sin offering for all Israel*. The sin offering (Lv 4:22–26) of 12 male goats represented a declaration of the reconstituted solidarity of the chosen people, again consisting of the 12 tribes of Israel as it did at Solomon's time. See pp 170–71. After the fall of Samaria in 722 BC, some people from the northern tribes had joined the kingdom of Judah. There was also an effort to draw descendants of the northern tribes back to Judah after the Assyrian conquest. Cf 2Ch 30:1–12.

EZRA—NOTE ON 6:18 Concludes this portion of Ezr written in Aram, which began at 4:8. *divisions*. Priests and Levites were organized in working units as stipulated by David, reflecting the Law of Moses. *Book of Moses*. Restored community observed the Mosaic regulations governing the eligibility and responsibilities of those who served in the temple (Ex 29; Lv 8; Nu 3).

EZRA—NOTE ON 6:13–18 God's people rejoice in the atonement for all Israel celebrated at the dedication of the Jerusalem temple. This week, praise God for the blessings of forgiveness you hear and receive in your congregation. There is no greater cause of joy than the pardon of our heavenly King. • "I was glad when they said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the LORD!'" (Ps 122:1). Amen.

EZRA—NOTE ON 6:19 *fourteenth day of the first month*. Day on which Passover was instituted in Egypt. *Passover*. The first observance of Passover in Egypt marked the birth of Israel as a nation. This celebration after the exile proclaimed its rebirth and fulfilled Ezk 45:21–25.

EZRA—NOTE ON 6:20 *purified*. Priests and Levites who were contaminated by a physical, ritual, or moral impurity could not minister in the temple. Mosaic Law set down rules concerning purification (e.g., Lv 21–22). See "consecrate," p 6. *clean*. See p 300. *slaughtered the Passover lamb.* Priests and Levites killed the lambs that were then roasted and eaten by the people in private dwellings (v 21; Mt 26:17–19). *fellow priests*. Lit, "their brethren the priests."

EZRA—NOTE ON 6:21 *separated*. People of the land who had removed themselves from the false worship of their neighbors. They may have been either converts to faith in Yahweh or Israelites whose faith had been corrupted but who were now returning to the Lord.

EZRA—NOTE ON 6:22 *Feast of Unleavened Bread*. The seven days that followed Passover when only unleavened bread could be eaten (Dt 16:1–8). See pp 200–201. *turned*. Or, "changed." Not to be confused with the Hbr expression for repentance (see "turn," p 1080). *king of Assyria*. Persian rulers such as Darius are so described because they replaced the kings of the Assyrian and Babylonian empires (5:13). *aided them*. People recognized the miraculous change God had wrought in government.

EZRA—NOTE ON 6:19–22 The Judeans rejoice in the cleansing and blessings associated with the celebration of the first Passover at the new temple, including the conversion of some people of the land. What joy stirs God's people to see hearts turned to the Lord. How great is our calling to proclaim God's mercy and cleansing! For the Lord has set us apart, washing away our sins in the consecration of Holy Baptism. • Holy Lord, as You have set apart my life for Your kingdom, set my heart now to share Your Gospel with others. Amen.

EZRA—NOTE ON 7:1 *Now after this*. Spans an interval of more than five decades from the dedication of the temple in 516 BC to "the seventh year of Artaxerxes" (v 7). Biblical record passes over in silence the years of Darius's successor, Xerxes (486–465 BC; cf 4:6), king at the time of Esther. Events recorded in the rest of Ezr and all of Ne transpired in the reign of Artaxerxes, nicknamed "Long Hand" (464–424 BC; cf 4:7).

EZRA—NOTE ON 7:1–5 *Ezra the son of Seraiah … Aaron the chief priest*. To certify Ezra as a priest, his genealogy is traced from Seraiah—high priest when Jerusalem was destroyed (2Ki 25:18)—back to Aaron, brother of Moses (Nu 3:1–3). However, not all ancestral links are included in vv 1–5. See "Genealogies and Ages," p 9; see also note, 1Ch 6:1–30.

EZRA—NOTE ON 7:6 A half century after the temple of stone and wood was erected, it was apparent that a rebuilding of Israel's moral integrity was needed if the rehabilitation of the chosen people was not to end in national dissolution. Ezra was the man who cleared away the rubbish of abuses and laid new spiritual foundations. *scribe*. High-level official in the ancient Near East who functioned as a secretary, but also oversaw the temple treasury (2Ki 12:10–11), was sent on important missions (2Ki 19:2–7), and engaged in negotiations involving a knowledge of foreign languages (2Ki 18:18–27). A long line of scribes down to and beyond NT times claim Ezra as the founder of their guild, devoted to copying, preserving, and interpreting the sacred writings. See pp 719–720. *the king*. Artaxerxes. *the*

hand of the LORD *his God was on him*. Expression repeated in Ezr, with variations, to show that success depended on the Lord (vv 9, 28; 8:18, 22, 31).

EZRA—NOTE ON 7:7 *seventh year of Artaxerxes*. 457 BC. *some of the people of Israel.* Caravan that went to Jerusalem with Ezra was similar to one described in ch 2. *temple servants*. See note, 2:58.

EZRA—NOTE ON 7:9 *first day of the first month.* The month of Nisan (Feb/Mar), in which Passover was celebrated. Children of Israel also left Egypt in this month (6:19). *Babylonia … to Jerusalem*. C 800 mi. *fifth month*. Month of Ab, in midsummer. See calendar, p 262. *good hand*. Cf v 6.

EZRA—NOTE ON 7:10 *study the Law ... do it ... teach.* Ezra was a model for leaders of God's people. *statutes and rules.* Pairing of these terms for God's Law is found often in Lv and Dt. See p 971.

EZRA—NOTE ON 7:11–26 *letter*. The letter of Artaxerxes to Ezra was written in Aramaic (see pp 719–20). The decree authorized Ezra to (1) journey to Jerusalem, accompanied by other volunteers; (2) inquire about conditions there, using God's Law as a guide; (3) deliver various donations, freewill offerings, and temple vessels; (4) draw on the king's treasury for additional money; (5) offer sacrifices; (6) appoint judges and magistrates to teach and enforce God's Law.

EZRA—NOTE ON 7:11 *commandments ... statutes.* Pairing similar to that in v 10. See p 971.

EZRA—NOTE ON 7:12 *king of kings*. Commonly used in Persian official documents. Near Eastern empires ruled over smaller, local kingdoms, which paid tribute (tax) and participated in imperial campaigns. *Peace*. See ESV note. Letter's salutation ends with a word equivalent to our "et cetera," abbreviating amenities of typical greetings.

EZRA—NOTE ON 7:14 *seven counselors*. Intimate circle of advisers who "sat first in the kingdom" (Est 1:14). *inquiries*. To ascertain to what extent the laws were being observed.

EZRA—NOTE ON 7:16 *province of Babylonia*. Many Judeans continued to live in Babylonia and no doubt sent with Ezra gifts of silver and gold (8:24–30).

EZRA—NOTE ON 7:17 *with all diligence*. Phrase (also in v 21) stresses scrupulous compliance with king's desire that money be used for items specified.

EZRA—NOTE ON 7:18 Whatever was left over was to go into a discretionary fund, presumably to be used for religious purposes.
EZRA—NOTE ON 7:19 *vessels*. Ezra delivered costly bowls and vessels to the proper authorities in Jerusalem (8:26–27, 33).
EZRA—NOTE ON 7:20 *king's treasury.* Cf 6:4, 8.
EZRA—NOTE ON 7:21–24 Addressed not to Ezra but to government officials.
EZRA—NOTE ON 7:21 God was obviously at work in the heart of this Persian king, stirring his spirit for Israel's benefit (1:1). *with all diligence*. See note, v 17.
EZRA—NOTE ON 7:22 Limits up to which Ezra could draw on the provincial treasuries involved huge sums (see ESV notes).
EZRA—NOTE ON 7:23 Persian kings thought it wise to placate the national gods of the peoples incorporated into the empire. The immediate threat to Persia at this time was a revolt in Egypt, helped by an Athenian fleet.
EZRA—NOTE ON 7:24 *tribute, custom, or toll*. See note, 4:13. All personnel serving the temple were to be exempt from taxation, including the servants (e.g., 2:43–54). *temple servants*. See note, 2:58.
EZRA—NOTE ON 7:25 *wisdom … in your hand*. Reference to God's Law (cf v 14). See also pp 775–78. *magistrates and judges*. Appointment of these officials recalls provisions in the Law of Moses (Dt 1:16–17; 17:8–13). Perhaps Ezra participated in writing the king's decree. *teach.* Judges were also to be teachers of the Law. See note, 2Ch 17:7.
EZRA—NOTE ON 7:26 Decree ends with a threat of punishment, as had the decree of Darius (6:11–12). *judgment*. Ezra's commission gave him powers equal to the authority of a governor, even though it is not explicitly said that he held this office. *executed on him*. Four penalties were listed: death, banishment, confiscation of property, and imprisonment. Not only murder but also such crimes as idolatry and adultery were capital offenses according to the Law of Moses (Ex 22:20; Lv 20:10).
EZRA—NOTE ON 7:27–9:15 Personal memoirs of Ezra.
EZRA—NOTE ON 7:27–28 Ezra's doxology ("word of praise") was written in Hbr and in the first person. Ezra praised God for moving the heart of King Artaxerxes to grant such favors, which would greatly benefit temple worship. The apostle Paul urged believers to give thanks for rulers (1Tm 2:1–2).

EZRA—NOTE ON 7:28 *steadfast love*. See p 843. *I took courage*. Evidence of the Lord's steadfast love heartened Ezra as he was about to leave his home in Babylonia and make the long journey to Jerusalem. *from Israel*. From the people of Israel.

EZRA—NOTE ON **Ch 7** Through the decree of the pagan ruler Artaxerxes, the Lord provides for the instruction of His people in His Word, as led by Ezra. Though the emperor provides numerous gifts, God's Word stands out as the greatest gift, by which the Lord converts hearts and extends His gracious rule. • We bless You, O Lord, for Your good Word, delivered for our salvation. Amen.

EZRA—NOTE ON 8:1 *heads of their fathers' houses*. See note, 1:5; cf 2:59; 4:2. Vv 3–14 list 12 families. *genealogy of those who went up with me.* Group that returned from Babylonia with Ezra in 458 BC is much smaller than the one that had returned earlier in 538 BC (ch 2).

EZRA—NOTE ON 8:2 *sons of Phinehas ... Ithamar.* Two surviving branches of priests named after sons of Aaron (Nu 3:2; 25:11). *sons of David, Hattush.* Fourth-generation descendant of Zerubbabel of the royal family of David (1Ch 3:19–22).

EZRA—NOTE ON 8:1–14 More leaders and members of their families return from the exile in Babylonia. Near the head of the list are members of the royal household, which had nearly been destroyed. The Lord preserved the house of David, thereby preserving for you the promise of a Savior, the Son of David, Jesus. • Praise be to Your name, faithful Lord, for fulfilling Your Word to David and to me. Amen.

EZRA—NOTE ON 8:15 *Ahava*. Unidentified place on a river of the same name near Babylonia. *I reviewed*. Likely when Ezra compiled his list of names. *I found there none of the sons of Levi*. Situation must have disappointed Ezra. For reluctance on the part of Levites to return to Jerusalem, see note, 2:40.

EZRA—NOTE ON 8:16 *men of insight.* Specially skilled musicians, such as Chenaniah in David's time (1Ch 15:22).

EZRA—NOTE ON 8:17 *Casiphia*. Site remains unidentified. Ezra was aware that there were Levites here, perhaps at a training school for temple personnel. *temple servants*. See note, 2:58. *ministers*. From Hbr *sharath*; describes temple attendants in distinction from priests, who presided over the services.

EZRA—NOTE ON 8:18–19 *good hand of our God.* Ezra acknowledged God's blessing in discovering these temple personnel. *Mahli*. Levi's grandson. Cf Ex 6:19. *Sherebiah ... Hashabiah ... Jeshaiah*. Three of the 38 Levites who were recruited are named. All three have names ending with the divine syllable "iah" (such as Isaiah, Jeremiah, Hezekiah), derived from the name Yahweh.

EZRA—NOTE ON 8:20 Temple servants (Hbr *nethinim*) assisted the Levites. See note, 1Ch 9:2. Only priests, descendants of Aaron, could preside at temple worship. The rest of the descendants of the tribe of Levi ("Levites") were given other responsibilities, including serving as musicians (Nu 3:5–10; 1Ch 25). *all mentioned by name*. Names of the 220 temple servants were known to Ezra, but he did not record them here.

EZRA—NOTE ON 8:15–20 The Lord helps Ezra discover the Levites and temple servants whose roles at the temple were going unfulfilled. Today, each believer has a valuable role of service to fulfill in his or her church, whether leading or attending to other duties. Do not despise anyone's office of service, for any unfulfilled office disrupts the work of all. Along with your office, the Lord will grant you His Spirit and gifts, which will build you up. • Lord, Your Son, Jesus, humbled Himself to serve us. Teach me my role in my congregation, and equip me for every good work of my calling. Amen.

EZRA—NOTE ON 8:21 *fast there ... that we might humble ourselves*. Refraining from food was meant to heighten the feeling of shame and self-denial and so enhance humble prayer. See notes, Lv 16:29, 31. *children.* Though Ezra lists only the names of males, women and children were included in the caravans.

EZRA—NOTE ON 8:22 *I was ashamed.* Ezra, who had committed himself prayerfully to "the hand of our God," believed it would be a humiliating reflection on his faith if he now accepted a military escort from the king. However, Nehemiah demonstrated that taking such a precautionary measure need not be evidence of lack of trust (Ne 2:7, 9). *enemy*. Gangs of bandits were a threat to ambush caravans at isolated spots along the trail (v 31).

EZRA—NOTE ON 8:21–23 The Lord listens as Ezra's caravan prays for protection. Likewise, the Lord hears our prayers, and He answers according to His loving-kindness in Christ. • Make me wise to pray and fast, O Lord, and to focus on Your kindness. Amen.

EZRA—NOTE ON 8:24 *set apart twelve of the leading priests:* The colon after "priests" suggests that two of them were named Sherebiah and Hashabiah. However, these two names were also used for Levites in vv 18–19. Ezra likely selected 12 priests and 12 Levites to transport silver, gold, and vessels (cf v 30).
EZRA—NOTE ON 8:25 *Israel there present*. God's people living in Babylonia. Cf 7:16.
EZRA—NOTE ON 8:26 *talents*. See ESV note. If the figures for the silver and gold in the text have been correctly understood, the total value of the gifts would be the equivalent of millions of dollars, which explains the urgency of prayer and fasting in vv 21–23.
EZRA—NOTE ON 8:27 *darics*. See note, 2:69.
EZRA—NOTE ON 8:28 *holy to the LORD*. Removed from the secular realm and consecrated for divine service. This emphasis was meant to discourage theft. *holy*. See p 7; see also note, Ex 28:36.
EZRA—NOTE ON 8:29 *Guard ... keep ... weigh.* Ezra carefully inventoried the treasures entrusted to these 24 men, who were to act as trustees and guardians.
EZRA—NOTE ON 8:30 *took over the weight.* Based on current calculations of the figures given, the total weight of the silver and gold would be over 35 tons, plus the weight of the vessels.
EZRA—NOTE ON 8:31 Report of the journey to Jerusalem in 7:7–9 was a summary in the third person. Here, Ezra gives his first-person ("we") report. *hand of our God ... hand of the enemy.* Ezra's confidence in the Lord was not misplaced (vv 21–23).
EZRA—NOTE ON 8:32 *remained three days*. Three-day pause was a repeat of what Ezra had done at the river Ahava at the beginning of the journey (v 15). Before Joshua and the people of Israel crossed the Jordan River into the Promised Land, they also paused for three days (Jsh 3:1–2).
EZRA—NOTE ON 8:33 After the three-day rest, the priests and Levites appointed by Ezra (v 24) transferred the treasure into the hands of the temple authorities, two priests and two Levites, who carefully recorded everything. *Meremoth*. Name found written on ostraca (potsherds) near the temple site.
EZRA—NOTE ON 8:35 *burnt offerings*. Bulls, rams, and goats were sacrificed in multiples of 12, signifying the tribes of Israel. Lambs were sacrificed in multiples of seven. See p 217.

EZRA—NOTE ON 8:36 *commissions*. The orders issued by the king (7:21–24) to his highest representatives, the satraps, and his minor officials, the governors. For the administration of the Persian Empire, see note, 4:10. *aided*. Financial support for temple worship.

EZRA—NOTE ON 8:24–36 By the hand of God, Ezra's caravan successfully delivers their offerings to Jerusalem. Like Ezra, commit yourself body and soul to the Lord's service. For the Lord supports the service of His people; He serves them graciously in Christ. • Bless our service, dear Lord, and lead us by Your hand to heaven's promised land. Amen.

EZRA—NOTE ON 9:1 *officials*. Lay leaders in the province of Judah, which was divided into six districts. Their report to Ezra came about four months after his return to Jerusalem (10:9). *priests ... Levites*. Even clergy were guilty of intermarrying (v 14), thus not separating themselves from the peoples of the lands. *peoples of the lands*. See note, 4:4. *abominations*. Repeated for emphasis in vv 11, 14. Worship of false gods included sexual immorality, incest, and human sacrifice (Dt 18:9; 2Ki 16:3; Mal 2:11). See note, Pr 6:16. *Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, ... the Amorites*. Listed in Dt 7:1–5 as people whom Israelites were not to marry. Marriage with such people posed the same spiritual threat in Ezra's day as in the days of Moses (Ex 34:10–16). See p 345.

EZRA—NOTE ON 9:2 *holy race*. Lit, "holy seed" (Is 6:13) or "offspring." From Israel came the Offspring of Abraham, "who is Christ" (Gal 3:16). Intermarriage with Canaanites could work at cross-purposes with God's design. He had separated the Israelites from other peoples that they might be a holy nation, a people set aside to bring to pass His eternal counsel and will (Ex 19:6; Lv 20:26). See note, Ru 4:11–12. *hand of the officials*. Probably not the same officials as in v 1 but others in positions of leadership. *foremost*. Common citizens followed the example of prominent leaders.

EZRA—NOTE ON 9:3 *tore my garment ... pulled hair*. Ezra's actions showed his shock and displeasure. See note, Jb 1:20. These actions drew public attention to Ezra's protest. *sat appalled*. Distress and disgust again expressing protest (cf v 4).

EZRA—NOTE ON 9:4 *all who trembled at the words*. Devout followers of Ezra, who were likely hated by their fellow Israelites. *returned exiles*.

Evidently some who returned with Ezra were among the faithless. *evening sacrifice*. See pp 170–71.

EZRA—NOTE ON 9:5 *fasting.* Ezra had also fasted prior to making the journey to Jerusalem (8:21). *fell upon my knees.* Unusual posture; normally Judeans prayed standing. *spread out my hands*. See p 1277.

EZRA—NOTE ON 9:6 *I am ashamed.* Ezra was ashamed to request a military escort from the king (8:22). His shame, as he prayed to God, was greater still. *lift my face*. See p 1276. Though God is everywhere, humans think of Him as being "up" in heaven. *my God ... our guilt.* Ezra began his prayer with the singular pronoun but changed to the plural to show that he identified himself with the people for whom he was confessing sin and interceding. *iniquities have risen higher*. Figure of speech comparing guilt to a flood (perhaps Noah's flood) that overwhelms us and reaches as high as heaven itself.

EZRA—NOTE ON 9:7 *days of our fathers to this day*. People in Ezra's day had not learned the lesson that God had tried to teach their ancestors by putting them through the destruction of Jerusalem and captivity in Babylonia. See note, Jsh 4:9.

EZRA—NOTE ON 9:8 *favor*. See p 6. *remnant*. Refers to small band of survivors who returned to Jerusalem from Babylonia (Zep 2:7; Hg 1:12; Zec 8:6, 11–12). See p 1080. *secure hold.* See ESV note; indicates that the remnant was immovably anchored within God's holy place (Is 33:20). *brighten our eyes*. Spiritual enlightenment producing hope and joy. Cf 1Sm 14:27. *reviving*. Or, "refreshment"; a noun for "life," as though raised from the dead (used again in v 9).

EZRA—NOTE ON 9:9 *slaves*. Though the Persian government permitted some religious freedom, Israel was still in servitude to a foreign power. *not forsaken.* Though God had not forsaken His people, they had forsaken His commandments (v 10). *steadfast love*. See p 843. *reviving*. See note, v 8.

EZRA—NOTE ON 9:11 *servants the prophets*. Standard designation for the prophetic succession, beginning with Moses and culminating in Christ (Dt 18:15–18; Jer 7:25–26; Ac 3:13).

EZRA—NOTE ON 9:11–12 Summary of commandments forbidding intermarriage with people of other nations (cf v 1). Israel's prophets often warned against being "yoked with unbelievers" (2Co 6:14), becoming one with them in their abominations.

EZRA—NOTE ON 9:12 *do not give your daughters*. After the exile, economic advantages made the temptation particularly great to "intermarry with the peoples who practice[d] these abominations" (v 14). *peace or prosperity*. Economic and social aspects of marriage were much stronger then, surpassing the modern interest in romantic love as the basis for marriage. *inheritance … forever*. See "portion," p 7.
EZRA—NOTE ON 9:13 *remnant*. See note, v 8.
EZRA—NOTE ON 9:14 *until You consumed us.* For Israelites to continue to intermarry with foreigners was dangerous. God would be justified in consuming them "so that there should be no remnant, nor any to escape."
EZRA—NOTE ON 9:15 *just*. See p 842. *remnant*. See note, v 8.
EZRA—NOTE ON **Ch 9** Ezra expresses remorse and shame when he learns of the unfaithful Judeans' marriages. Today, few topics have grown more sensitive than the issues surrounding marriage. This is ultimately because families fail to believe in or teach what God's Word teaches about the holy blessings of marriage. Like Ezra, express your shame, remorse, and prayers to God when sinful notions of marriage tear at your family. Study and share the teachings of God's Word about marriage (see esp notes, Gn 2:18, 22, 24; Eph 5:22, 25, 28, 31–32, 33). Christ the Bridegroom is also our Redeemer, who removes all our shame and comforts our remorseful hearts. • Jesus, hear my prayers for family and friends, that they would enjoy the blessings of holy wedlock according to Your Word. Amen.
EZRA—NOTE ON **Ch 10** Ezra's actions are now described in the third person, unlike "Ezra's memoirs" (7:27–9:15), which were in the first person.
EZRA—NOTE ON 10:1 Ezra, surrounded by weeping people, had fallen to his knees (9:5) in the courtyard of the temple. This would also be the place where all the people later assembled (10:9). *casting himself down.* See p 1276.
EZRA—NOTE ON 10:2 *Shecaniah … of the sons of Elam*. Family of Elam was mentioned in 2:7 and 8:7, but not Shecaniah. Six sons of Elam were among those who married foreign wives (10:26). *broken faith*. See note, 1Ch 2:7. *there is hope*. The Lord promised to forgive the sins of those who repent (Dt 30:1–10).
EZRA—NOTE ON 10:3 *covenant with our God.* Marriage itself was regarded as a covenant. See p 127. *to put away all these wives*. Shecaniah's harsh proposal to stop the problem immediately. In contrast with most

divorce situations today, these marriages were illegal from the start. See note, Dt 7:3; cf Ezk 44:22; Hos 2:4. *counsel of my lord.* This course of action had likely been advised by Ezra. *tremble.* Action had the support of those who truly wished to follow God's Law (9:4). *according to the Law*. Before Israel entered Canaan, a land populated by various foreign nations, God told His people: "You shall not intermarry with them, giving your daughters to their sons or taking their daughters for your sons" (Dt 7:3). For an Israelite to enter such a union was illegal in God's sight and needed to be remedied. NT believers are under no such obligation or command to divorce an unbelieving spouse (see note, 1Co 7:12–13).

EZRA—NOTE ON 10:5 Though Ezra was himself a priest, it seems that his main support came from laypeople, making it esp important for him to get the leading clergy to accept the covenant (v 3).

EZRA—NOTE ON 10:6 *withdrew.* Ezra needed to prepare himself for the solemn assembly that would deal with the marriage problem. *Jehohanan*. Common name; he is not further identified. *mourning*. Cf v 1; 9:3–5.

EZRA—NOTE ON 10:7 *proclamation*. King Artaxerxes had authorized Ezra to make sure that God's Law was enforced in Judah (7:25–26).

EZRA—NOTE ON 10:8 Those who failed to attend the assembly scheduled on the third day in Jerusalem would find themselves ostracized from the community, even losing their property.

EZRA—NOTE ON 10:9 *ninth month*. Our Dec, four months after Ezra had returned (7:8). See calendar, p 262. *heavy rain*. Ninth month normally was "a time of heavy rain" (v 13), when the weather was cold and miserable.

EZRA—NOTE ON 10:10–11 Ezra addressed the crowd, identifying the sin and calling for repentance and its fruit.

EZRA—NOTE ON 10:10 *broken faith*. See note, 1Ch 2:7.

EZRA—NOTE ON 10:12–13 Assembly's suggestion that action be delayed and a commission appointed was reasonable. The large crowd, inclement weather, and seriousness of the problem made immediate action unwise.

EZRA—NOTE ON 10:14 *officials.* Perhaps the same officials who had originally brought this matter to Ezra's attention (9:1). *with them the elders and judges*. No doubt to give evidence to the officials based on local information and to protect the rights of the innocent. *fierce wrath*. Ezra had confessed that a just God had every reason to consume the ungrateful remnant, leaving none to escape (9:14). The assembly wanted to avert such a disaster.

EZRA—NOTE ON 10:15 Unclear whether these four men opposed the proposed procedure or any delay in taking action. *Meshullam*. Men with the same name are mentioned in 8:16; 10:29.
EZRA—NOTE ON 10:16–17 The commission took three months to examine the situation of intermarriages.
EZRA—NOTE ON 10:16 *heads of fathers' houses*. See note, 1:5. It is not clear whether these men appointed by Ezra are the "officials" suggested by the assembly (v 14).
EZRA—NOTE ON 10:1–17 To resolve the problem of illegal marriages, some Judeans make a harsh proposal for immediate divorces, but the counsel of the community wisely requests investigation so they can learn the extent of the problem and propose the best solution. Have confidence in the wisdom of God's people, as informed by God's Word. Call for their counsel, and listen patiently. Above all, God's Word must prevail in the congregation's worship and, thereby, its decisions. At all times, we may confess our sins and receive God's Word of absolution, by which He constantly blesses us with mercy. • Have mercy on us, O Lord, and lead us by Your Law and Gospel. Amen.
EZRA—NOTE ON 10:18–43 This list of men who had married foreign women was meant to emphasize the seriousness of their sin. Names are grouped according to the customary classification (ch 2; 8:1–14): 17 priests, 6 Levites, 1 singer, 3 gatekeepers, and 84 sons of Israel or laymen for a total of 111. Compared to the total population, this number may not appear alarming. See note, 2:64. However, the danger of assimilation by the peoples of the land was very real in view of the fact that the clergy, officials, and chief men were "foremost" (9:2). When "the sons of Jeshua," high priest in Zerubbabel's day (5:2; 10:18), set the fashion, the whole populace was tempted to follow their example.
EZRA—NOTE ON 10:19 *guilt offering*. Prescribed for someone who "commits a breach of faith and sins unintentionally in any of the holy things of the LORD" (Lv 5:15). See pp 170–71.
EZRA—NOTE ON 10:24 *singers ... gatekeepers*. Cf 1Ch 25:1–26:19.
EZRA—NOTE ON 10:25–43 *the sons of.* Many of the 11 family names appeared in ch 2 and 8:1–14.
EZRA—NOTE ON 10:29 *Bani*. Also appears in v 34. There may have been two men with the same name or it may have been a mistake in copying (perhaps should be Bigvai, as in 2:14; 8:14).

EZRA—NOTE ON 10:44 *All these had married foreign women.* Sentence hearkens back to v 17, illustrating a literary device in which the Hbr forms a unit of thought (*inclusio*). *some of the women had even borne children*. See ESV note; the Hbr text lacks clarity. This may have been a reminder that the separation that took place disrupted family ties and must have caused grief and hardships. (Today, convicted criminals who serve time in prison inflict similar disgrace and suffering on their families.) The Judeans likely provided some measure of support so that innocent victims of the reform were not left to fend for themselves. See note, Gn 34:12. God often commanded Israel to care for the needy (e.g., Dt 10:18–19; 24:17–18).

EZRA—NOTE ON 10:18–44 As a result of the earlier investigation, 111 illegal marriages are identified and ended. These circumstances teach us about the gravity of God's Law, of marriage, and of vows. Enter into such matters thoughtfully and informed by God's Word. The Lord Himself has vowed to guide and care for your family and to save you through the life of His Son, Jesus. • Lord, lead me to understand and keep my vows and to bring honor to my family and to Your name. Amen.

Nehemiah

Nehemiah 1 | Nehemiah 2 | Nehemiah 3 | Nehemiah 4 | Nehemiah 5 | Nehemiah 6 | Nehemiah 7 | Nehemiah 8 | Nehemiah 9 | Nehemiah 10 | Nehemiah 11 | Nehemiah 12 | Nehemiah 13

- Introduction to Nehemiah
  - Overview
  - Reading Nehemiah
  - Luther on Nehemiah
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

Report from Jerusalem

1 [1] ††The words of Nehemiah the son of Hacaliah.

Now it happened in the month of Chislev, in the twentieth year, as I was in Susa the capital,[1] [2] †that Hanani, one of my brothers, came with certain men from Judah. And I asked them concerning the Jews who escaped, who had survived the exile, and concerning Jerusalem. [3] †And they said to me, “The remnant there in the province who had survived the exile is in great trouble and shame. The wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates are destroyed by fire.”

Nehemiah’s Prayer

4 ‡ † As soon as I heard these words I sat down and wept and mourned for
days, and I continued fasting and praying before the God of heaven. 5 † And I
said, “O Lord God of heaven, the great and awesome God who keeps
covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his
commandments, 6 † let your ear be attentive and your eyes open, to hear the
prayer of your servant that I now pray before you day and night for the
people of Israel your servants, confessing the sins of the people of Israel,
which we have sinned against you. Even I and my father’s house have
sinned. 7 † We have acted very corruptly against you and have not kept the
commandments, the statutes, and the rules that you commanded your
servant Moses. 8 ‡ Remember the word that you commanded your servant
Moses, saying, ‘If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the peoples,
9 † but if you return to me and keep my commandments and do them, though
your outcasts are in the uttermost parts of heaven, from there I will gather
them and bring them to the place that I have chosen, to make my name
dwell there.’ 10 † They are your servants and your people, whom you have
redeemed by your great power and by your strong hand. 11 † O Lord, let your
ear be attentive to the prayer of your servant, and to the prayer of your
servants who delight to fear your name, and give success to your servant
today, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man.”

Now I was cupbearer to the king.

Nehemiah Sent to Judah

2 [1]†† In the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes,
when wine was before him, I took up the wine and gave it to the king. Now
I had not been sad in his presence. [2]† And the king said to me, “Why is your
face sad, seeing you are not sick? This is nothing but sadness of the heart.”
Then I was very much afraid. [3]† I said to the king, “Let the king live forever!
Why should not my face be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers’
graves, lies in ruins, and its gates have been destroyed by fire?” [4]† Then the
king said to me, “What are you requesting?” So I prayed to the God of
heaven. [5]† And I said to the king, “If it pleases the king, and if your servant
has found favor in your sight, that you send me to Judah, to the city of my
fathers’ graves, that I may rebuild it.” [6]† And the king said to me (the queen
sitting beside him), “How long will you be gone, and when will you
return?” So it pleased the king to send me when I had given him a time.
[7]† And I said to the king, “If it pleases the king, let letters be given me to the
governors of the province Beyond the River, that they may let me pass
through until I come to Judah, [8]† and a letter to Asaph, the keeper of the
king’s forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of the
fortress of the temple, and for the wall of the city, and for the house that I
shall occupy.” And the king granted me what I asked, for the good hand of
my God was upon me.

Nehemiah Inspects Jerusalem's Walls

9 ‡† Then I came to the governors of the province Beyond the River and
gave them the king's letters. Now the king had sent with me officers of the
army and horsemen. 10 † But when Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the
Ammonite servant heard this, it displeased them greatly that someone had
come to seek the welfare of the people of Israel.
11 † So I went to Jerusalem and was there three days. 12 † Then I arose in the
night, I and a few men with me. And I told no one what my God had put
into my heart to do for Jerusalem. There was no animal with me but the one
on which I rode. 13 ‡ I went out by night by the Valley Gate to the Dragon
Spring and to the Dung Gate, and I inspected the walls of Jerusalem that
were broken down and its gates that had been destroyed by fire. 14 Then I
went on to the Fountain Gate and to the King's Pool, but there was no room
for the animal that was under me to pass. 15 Then I went up in the night by
the valley and inspected the wall, and I turned back and entered by the
Valley Gate, and so returned. 16 † And the officials did not know where I had
gone or what I was doing, and I had not yet told the Jews, the priests, the
nobles, the officials, and the rest who were to do the work.
17 † Then I said to them, "You see the trouble we are in, how Jerusalem lies
in ruins with its gates burned. Come, let us build the wall of Jerusalem, that
we may no longer suffer derision." 18 † And I told them of the hand of my
God that had been upon me for good, and also of the words that the king
had spoken to me. And they said, "Let us rise up and build." So they
strengthened their hands for the good work. 19 † But when Sanballat the
Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite servant and Geshem the Arab heard of
it, they jeered at us and despised us and said, "What is this thing that you
are doing? Are you rebelling against the king?" 20 † Then I replied to them,
"The God of heaven will make us prosper, and we his servants will arise
and build, but you have no portion or right or claim[1] in Jerusalem."

Rebuilding the Wall

3 [1]†Then Eliashib the high priest rose up with his brothers the priests,
and they built the Sheep Gate. They consecrated it and set its doors. They
consecrated it as far as the Tower of the Hundred, as far as the Tower of
Hananel. [2]†And next to him the men of Jericho built. And next to them[2]
Zaccur the son of Imri built.

[3]†The sons of Hassenaah built the Fish Gate. They laid its beams and set
its doors, its bolts, and its bars. [4]And next to them Meremoth the son of
Uriah, son of Hakkoz repaired. And next to them Meshullam the son of
Berechiah, son of Meshezabel repaired. And next to them Zadok the son of
Baana repaired. [5]†And next to them the Tekoites repaired, but their nobles
would not stoop to serve their Lord.[3]

[6]†Joiada the son of Paseah and Meshullam the son of Besodeiah repaired
the Gate of Yeshanah.[4] They laid its beams and set its doors, its bolts, and
its bars. [7]†And next to them repaired Melatiah the Gibeonite and Jadon the
Meronothite, the men of Gibeon and of Mizpah, the seat of the governor of
the province Beyond the River. [8]†Next to them Uzziel the son of Harhaiah,
goldsmiths, repaired. Next to him Hananiah, one of the perfumers, repaired,
and they restored Jerusalem as far as the Broad Wall. [9]†Next to them
Rephaiah the son of Hur, ruler of half the district of[1] Jerusalem, repaired.
[10]Next to them Jedaiah the son of Harumaph repaired opposite his house.
And next to him Hattush the son of Hashabneiah repaired. [11]†Malchijah the
son of Harim and Hasshub the son of Pahath-moab repaired another section
and the Tower of the Ovens. [12]Next to him Shallum the son of Hallohesh,
ruler of half the district of Jerusalem, repaired, he and his daughters.

[13]†Hanun and the inhabitants of Zanoah repaired the Valley Gate. They
rebuilt it and set its doors, its bolts, and its bars, and repaired a thousand
cubits[2] of the wall, as far as the Dung Gate.

[14]Malchijah the son of Rechab, ruler of the district of Beth-haccherem,
repaired the Dung Gate. He rebuilt it and set its doors, its bolts, and its bars.

[15]†And Shallum the son of Col-hozeh, ruler of the district of Mizpah,
repaired the Fountain Gate. He rebuilt it and covered it and set its doors, its

bolts, and its bars. And he built the wall of the Pool of Shelah of the king's garden, as far as the stairs that go down from the city of David. [16]†After him Nehemiah the son of Azbuk, ruler of half the district of Beth-zur, repaired to a point opposite the tombs of David, as far as the artificial pool, and as far as the house of the mighty men. [17]†After him the Levites repaired: Rehum the son of Bani. Next to him Hashabiah, ruler of half the district of Keilah, repaired for his district. [18]After him their brothers repaired: Bavvai the son of Henadad, ruler of half the district of Keilah. [19]†Next to him Ezer the son of Jeshua, ruler of Mizpah, repaired another section opposite the ascent to the armory at the buttress.[3] [20]‡After him Baruch the son of Zabbai repaired another section from the buttress to the door of the house of Eliashib the high priest. [21]After him Meremoth the son of Uriah, son of Hakkoz repaired another section from the door of the house of Eliashib to the end of the house of Eliashib. [22]After him the priests, the men of the surrounding area, repaired. [23]† After them Benjamin and Hasshub repaired opposite their house. After them Azariah the son of Maaseiah, son of Ananiah repaired beside his own house. [24]After him Binnui the son of Henadad repaired another section, from the house of Azariah to the buttress [25]† and to the corner. Palal the son of Uzai repaired opposite the buttress and the tower projecting from the upper house of the king at the court of the guard. After him Pedaiah the son of Parosh [26]†and the temple servants living on Ophel repaired to a point opposite the Water Gate on the east and the projecting tower. [27]†After him the Tekoites repaired another section opposite the great projecting tower as far as the wall of Ophel.

[28]†Above the Horse Gate the priests repaired, each one opposite his own house. [29]After them Zadok the son of Immer repaired opposite his own house. After him Shemaiah the son of Shecaniah, the keeper of the East Gate, repaired. [30]†After him Hananiah the son of Shelemiah and Hanun the sixth son of Zalaph repaired another section. After him Meshullam the son of Berechiah repaired opposite his chamber. [31]†After him Malchijah, one of the goldsmiths, repaired as far as the house of the temple servants and of the merchants, opposite the Muster Gate,[4] and to the upper chamber of the corner. [32]†And between the upper chamber of the corner and the Sheep Gate the goldsmiths and the merchants repaired.

Opposition to the Work

4 [1]‡†[1] Now when Sanballat heard that we were building the wall, he
was angry and greatly enraged, and he jeered at the Jews. [2]†And he said in
the presence of his brothers and of the army of Samaria, “What are these
feeble Jews doing? Will they restore it for themselves?[2] Will they
sacrifice? Will they finish up in a day? Will they revive the stones out of the
heaps of rubbish, and burned ones at that?” [3]†Tobiah the Ammonite was
beside him, and he said, “Yes, what they are building—if a fox goes up on it
he will break down their stone wall!” [4]‡Hear, O our God, for we are
despised. Turn back their taunt on their own heads and give them up to be
plundered in a land where they are captives. [5]Do not cover their guilt, and
let not their sin be blotted out from your sight, for they have provoked you
to anger in the presence of the builders.

[6]†So we built the wall. And all the wall was joined together to half its
height, for the people had a mind to work.

[7]†[3] But when Sanballat and Tobiah and the Arabs and the Ammonites
and the Ashdodites heard that the repairing of the walls of Jerusalem was
going forward and that the breaches were beginning to be closed, they were
very angry. [8]†And they all plotted together to come and fight against
Jerusalem and to cause confusion in it. [9]†And we prayed to our God and set
a guard as a protection against them day and night.

[10]‡†In Judah it was said,[4] “The strength of those who bear the burdens is
failing. There is too much rubble. By ourselves we will not be able to
rebuild the wall.” [11]And our enemies said, “They will not know or see till
we come among them and kill them and stop the work.” [12]†At that time the
Jews who lived near them came from all directions and said to us ten times,
“You must return to us.”[5] [13]†So in the lowest parts of the space behind the
wall, in open places, I stationed the people by their clans, with their swords,
their spears, and their bows. [14]†And I looked and arose and said to the
nobles and to the officials and to the rest of the people, “Do not be afraid of
them. Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight for your
brothers, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your homes.”

The Work Resumes

15 † When our enemies heard that it was known to us and that God had
frustrated their plan, we all returned to the wall, each to his work. 16 † From
that day on, half of my servants worked on construction, and half held the
spears, shields, bows, and coats of mail. And the leaders stood behind the
whole house of Judah, 17 † who were building on the wall. Those who carried
burdens were loaded in such a way that each labored on the work with one
hand and held his weapon with the other. 18 † And each of the builders had
his sword strapped at his side while he built. The man who sounded the
trumpet was beside me. 19 And I said to the nobles and to the officials and to
the rest of the people, “The work is great and widely spread, and we are
separated on the wall, far from one another. 20 In the place where you hear
the sound of the trumpet, rally to us there. Our God will fight for us.”
21 † So we labored at the work, and half of them held the spears from the
break of dawn until the stars came out. 22 † I also said to the people at that
time, “Let every man and his servant pass the night within Jerusalem, that
they may be a guard for us by night and may labor by day.” 23 † So neither I
nor my brothers nor my servants nor the men of the guard who followed
me, none of us took off our clothes; each kept his weapon at his right hand.
[1]

Nehemiah Stops Oppression of the Poor

5 [1]‡†Now there arose a great outcry of the people and of their wives
against their Jewish brothers. [2]†For there were those who said, “With our
sons and our daughters, we are many. So let us get grain, that we may eat
and keep alive.” [3]†There were also those who said, “We are mortgaging our
fields, our vineyards, and our houses to get grain because of the famine.”
[4]†And there were those who said, “We have borrowed money for the king’s
tax on our fields and our vineyards. [5]†Now our flesh is as the flesh of our
brothers, our children are as their children. Yet we are forcing our sons and
our daughters to be slaves, and some of our daughters have already been
enslaved, but it is not in our power to help it, for other men have our fields
and our vineyards.”

[6]†I was very angry when I heard their outcry and these words. [7]†I took
counsel with myself, and I brought charges against the nobles and the
officials. I said to them, “You are exacting interest, each from his brother.”
And I held a great assembly against them [8]†and said to them, “We, as far as
we are able, have bought back our Jewish brothers who have been sold to
the nations, but you even sell your brothers that they may be sold to us!”
They were silent and could not find a word to say. [9]†So I said, “The thing
that you are doing is not good. Ought you not to walk in the fear of our God
to prevent the taunts of the nations our enemies? [10]†Moreover, I and my
brothers and my servants are lending them money and grain. Let us
abandon this exacting of interest. [11]†Return to them this very day their
fields, their vineyards, their olive orchards, and their houses, and the
percentage of money, grain, wine, and oil that you have been exacting from
them.” [12]†Then they said, “We will restore these and require nothing from
them. We will do as you say.” And I called the priests and made them swear
to do as they had promised. [13]†I also shook out the fold[2] of my garment
and said, “So may God shake out every man from his house and from his
labor who does not keep this promise. So may he be shaken out and
emptied.” And all the assembly said “Amen” and praised the Lord. And the
people did as they had promised.

Nehemiah’s Generosity

14 ††Moreover, from the time that I was appointed to be their governor in
the land of Judah, from the twentieth year to the thirty-second year of
Artaxerxes the king, twelve years, neither I nor my brothers ate the food
allowance of the governor. 15 †The former governors who were before me
laid heavy burdens on the people and took from them for their daily ration[1]
forty shekels[2] of silver. Even their servants lorded it over the people. But I
did not do so, because of the fear of God. 16 †I also persevered in the work
on this wall, and we acquired no land, and all my servants were gathered
there for the work. 17 †Moreover, there were at my table 150 men, Jews and
officials, besides those who came to us from the nations that were around
us. 18 †Now what was prepared at my expense[3] for each day was one ox and
six choice sheep and birds, and every ten days all kinds of wine in
abundance. Yet for all this I did not demand the food allowance of the
governor, because the service was too heavy on this people. 19 †Remember
for my good, O my God, all that I have done for this people.

Conspiracy Against Nehemiah

6 [1]‡†Now when Sanballat and Tobiah and Geshem the Arab and the rest of our enemies heard that I had built the wall and that there was no breach left in it (although up to that time I had not set up the doors in the gates), [2]†Sanballat and Geshem sent to me, saying, “Come and let us meet together at Hakkephirim in the plain of Ono.” But they intended to do me harm. [3]And I sent messengers to them, saying, “I am doing a great work and I cannot come down. Why should the work stop while I leave it and come down to you?” [4]And they sent to me four times in this way, and I answered them in the same manner. [5]†In the same way Sanballat for the fifth time sent his servant to me with an open letter in his hand. [6]†In it was written, “It is reported among the nations, and Geshem[4] also says it, that you and the Jews intend to rebel; that is why you are building the wall. And according to these reports you wish to become their king. [7]†And you have also set up prophets to proclaim concerning you in Jerusalem, ‘There is a king in Judah.’ And now the king will hear of these reports. So now come and let us take counsel together.” [8]†Then I sent to him, saying, “No such things as you say have been done, for you are inventing them out of your own mind.” [9]†For they all wanted to frighten us, thinking, “Their hands will drop from the work, and it will not be done.” But now, O God,[5] strengthen my hands.

[10]†Now when I went into the house of Shemaiah the son of Delaiah, son of Mehetabel, who was confined to his home, he said, “Let us meet together in the house of God, within the temple. Let us close the doors of the temple, for they are coming to kill you. They are coming to kill you by night.” [11]†But I said, “Should such a man as I run away? And what man such as I could go into the temple and live?[6] I will not go in.” [12]†And I understood and saw that God had not sent him, but he had pronounced the prophecy against me because Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him. [13]†For this purpose he was hired, that I should be afraid and act in this way and sin, and so they could give me a bad name in order to taunt me. [14]†Remember Tobiah and Sanballat, O my God, according to these things that they did, and also the

prophetess Noadiah and the rest of the prophets who wanted to make me afraid.

The Wall Is Finished

15 ‡†So the wall was finished on the twenty-fifth day of the month Elul, in
fifty-two days. 16 † And when all our enemies heard of it, all the nations
around us were afraid and fell greatly in their own esteem, for they
perceived that this work had been accomplished with the help of our God.
17 †Moreover, in those days the nobles of Judah sent many letters to Tobiah,
and Tobiah's letters came to them. 18 †For many in Judah were bound by
oath to him, because he was the son-in-law of Shecaniah the son of Arah:
and his son Jehohanan had taken the daughter of Meshullam the son of
Berechiah as his wife. 19 †Also they spoke of his good deeds in my presence
and reported my words to him. And Tobiah sent letters to make me afraid.

7 1 †Now when the wall had been built and I had set up the doors, and
the gatekeepers, the singers, and the Levites had been appointed, 2 ‡†I gave
my brother Hanani and Hananiah the governor of the castle charge over
Jerusalem, for he was a more faithful and God-fearing man than many.
3 †And I said to them, "Let not the gates of Jerusalem be opened until the
sun is hot. And while they are still standing guard, let them shut and bar the
doors. Appoint guards from among the inhabitants of Jerusalem, some at
their guard posts and some in front of their own homes." 4 †The city was
wide and large, but the people within it were few, and no houses had been
rebuilt.

Lists of Returned Exiles

5 ✝ ✝ Then my God put it into my heart to assemble the nobles and the
officials and the people to be enrolled by genealogy. And I found the book
of the genealogy of those who came up at the first, and I found written in it:
6 ✝ These were the people of the province who came up out of the captivity
of those exiles whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried into
exile. They returned to Jerusalem and Judah, each to his town. 7 ✝ They came
with Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Nehemiah, Azariah, Raamiah, Nahamani,
Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispereth, Bigvai, Nehum, Baanah.

The number of the men of the people of Israel: 8 the sons of Parosh, 2,172.
9 The sons of Shephatiah, 372. 10 The sons of Arah, 652. 11 The sons of
Pahath-moab, namely the sons of Jeshua and Joab, 2,818. 12 The sons of
Elam, 1,254. 13 The sons of Zattu, 845. 14 The sons of Zaccai, 760. 15 The sons
of Binnui, 648. 16 The sons of Bebai, 628. 17 The sons of Azgad, 2,322. 18 The
sons of Adonikam, 667. 19 The sons of Bigvai, 2,067. 20 The sons of Adin,
655. 21 The sons of Ater, namely of Hezekiah, 98. 22 The sons of Hashum,
328. 23 The sons of Bezai, 324. 24 The sons of Hariph, 112. 25 The sons of
Gibeon, 95. 26 The men of Bethlehem and Netophah, 188. 27 The men of
Anathoth, 128. 28 The men of Beth-azmaveth, 42. 29 The men of Kiriath-
jearim, Chephirah, and Beeroth, 743. 30 The men of Ramah and Geba, 621.
31 The men of Michmas, 122. 32 The men of Bethel and Ai, 123. 33 The men of
the other Nebo, 52. 34 The sons of the other Elam, 1,254. 35 The sons of
Harim, 320. 36 The sons of Jericho, 345. 37 The sons of Lod, Hadid, and Ono,
721. 38 The sons of Senaah, 3,930.

39 The priests: the sons of Jedaiah, namely the house of Jeshua, 973. 40 The
sons of Immer, 1,052. 41 The sons of Pashhur, 1,247. 42 The sons of Harim,
1,017.

43 The Levites: the sons of Jeshua, namely of Kadmiel of the sons of
Hodevah, 74. 44 The singers: the sons of Asaph, 148. 45 The gatekeepers: the
sons of Shallum, the sons of Ater, the sons of Talmon, the sons of Akkub,
the sons of Hatita, the sons of Shobai, 138.

[46]The temple servants: the sons of Ziha, the sons of Hasupha, the sons of Tabbaoth, [47]the sons of Keros, the sons of Sia, the sons of Padon, [48]the sons of Lebana, the sons of Hagaba, the sons of Shalmai, [49]the sons of Hanan, the sons of Giddel, the sons of Gahar, [50]the sons of Reaiah, the sons of Rezin, the sons of Nekoda, [51]the sons of Gazzam, the sons of Uzza, the sons of Paseah, [52]the sons of Besai, the sons of Meunim, the sons of Nephushesim, [53]the sons of Bakbuk, the sons of Hakupha, the sons of Harhur, [54]the sons of Bazlith, the sons of Mehida, the sons of Harsha, [55]the sons of Barkos, the sons of Sisera, the sons of Temah, [56]the sons of Neziah, the sons of Hatipha.

[57]The sons of Solomon's servants: the sons of Sotai, the sons of Sophereth, the sons of Perida, [58]the sons of Jaala, the sons of Darkon, the sons of Giddel, [59]the sons of Shephatiah, the sons of Hattil, the sons of Pochereth-hazzebaim, the sons of Amon.

[60]All the temple servants and the sons of Solomon's servants were 392.

[61]The following were those who came up from Tel-melah, Tel-harsha, Cherub, Addon, and Immer, but they could not prove their fathers' houses nor their descent, whether they belonged to Israel: [62]the sons of Delaiah, the sons of Tobiah, the sons of Nekoda, 642. [63]Also, of the priests: the sons of Hobaiah, the sons of Hakkoz, the sons of Barzillai (who had taken a wife of the daughters of Barzillai the Gileadite and was called by their name). [64]These sought their registration among those enrolled in the genealogies, but it was not found there, so they were excluded from the priesthood as unclean. [65]The governor told them that they were not to partake of the most holy food until a priest with Urim and Thummim should arise.

Totals of People and Gifts

66 † The whole assembly together was 42,360, 67 besides their male and
female servants, of whom there were 7,337. And they had 245 singers, male
and female. 68 Their horses were 736, their mules 245,[1] 69 their camels 435,
and their donkeys 6,720.

70 † Now some of the heads of fathers' houses gave to the work. The
governor gave to the treasury 1,000 darics[2] of gold, 50 basins, 30 priests'
garments and 500 minas[3] of silver.[4] 71 And some of the heads of fathers'
houses gave into the treasury of the work 20,000 darics of gold and 2,200
minas of silver. 72 And what the rest of the people gave was 20,000 darics of
gold, 2,000 minas of silver, and 67 priests' garments.

73 † So the priests, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the singers, some of the
people, the temple servants, and all Israel, lived in their towns.

And when the seventh month had come, the people of Israel were in their
towns.

Ezra Reads the Law

8 [1]‡†And all the people gathered as one man into the square before the Water Gate. And they told Ezra the scribe to bring the Book of the Law of Moses that the Lord had commanded Israel. [2]†So Ezra the priest brought the Law before the assembly, both men and women and all who could understand what they heard, on the first day of the seventh month. [3]†And he read from it facing the square before the Water Gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of the men and the women and those who could understand. And the ears of all the people were attentive to the Book of the Law. [4]†And Ezra the scribe stood on a wooden platform that they had made for the purpose. And beside him stood Mattithiah, Shema, Anaiah, Uriah, Hilkiah, and Maaseiah on his right hand, and Pedaiah, Mishael, Malchijah, Hashum, Hashbaddanah, Zechariah, and Meshullam on his left hand. [5]†And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was above all the people, and as he opened it all the people stood. [6]†And Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God, and all the people answered, "Amen, Amen," lifting up their hands. And they bowed their heads and worshiped the Lord with their faces to the ground. [7]† Also Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, the Levites,[1] helped the people to understand the Law, while the people remained in their places. [8]†They read from the book, from the Law of God, clearly,[2] and they gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading.

This Day Is Holy

9 ‡† And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe,
and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, “This day is
holy to the Lord your God; do not mourn or weep.” For all the people wept
as they heard the words of the Law. 10 † Then he said to them, “Go your way.
Eat the fat and drink sweet wine and send portions to anyone who has
nothing ready, for this day is holy to our Lord. And do not be grieved, for
the joy of the Lord is your strength.” 11 So the Levites calmed all the people,
saying, “Be quiet, for this day is holy; do not be grieved.” 12 † And all the
people went their way to eat and drink and to send portions and to make
great rejoicing, because they had understood the words that were declared
to them.

Feast of Booths Celebrated

13 ‡ ‡ † On the second day the heads of fathers' houses of all the people,
with the priests and the Levites, came together to Ezra the scribe in order to
study the words of the Law. 14 And they found it written in the Law that the
Lord had commanded by Moses that the people of Israel should dwell in
booths[1] during the feast of the seventh month, 15 † and that they should
proclaim it and publish it in all their towns and in Jerusalem, "Go out to the
hills and bring branches of olive, wild olive, myrtle, palm, and other leafy
trees to make booths, as it is written." 16 † So the people went out and
brought them and made booths for themselves, each on his roof, and in their
courts and in the courts of the house of God, and in the square at the Water
Gate and in the square at the Gate of Ephraim. 17 † And all the assembly of
those who had returned from the captivity made booths and lived in the
booths, for from the days of Jeshua the son of Nun to that day the people of
Israel had not done so. And there was very great rejoicing. 18 † And day by
day, from the first day to the last day, he read from the Book of the Law of
God. They kept the feast seven days, and on the eighth day there was a
solemn assembly, according to the rule.

The People of Israel Confess Their Sin

9 [1]†Now on the twenty-fourth day of this month the people of Israel were assembled with fasting and in sackcloth, and with earth on their heads. [2]†And the Israelites separated themselves from all foreigners and stood and confessed their sins and the iniquities of their fathers. [3]†And they stood up in their place and read from the Book of the Law of the Lord their God for a quarter of the day; for another quarter of it they made confession and worshiped the Lord their God. [4]†On the stairs of the Levites stood Jeshua, Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani, and Chenani; and they cried with a loud voice to the Lord their God. [5]Then the Levites, Jeshua, Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabneiah, Sherebiah, Hodiah, Shebaniah, and Pethahiah, said, "Stand up and bless the Lord your God from everlasting to everlasting. Blessed be your glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise.

[6]†[2] "You are the Lord, you alone. You have made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them; and you preserve all of them; and the host of heaven worships you. [7]†You are the Lord, the God who chose Abram and brought him out of Ur of the Chaldeans and gave him the name Abraham. [8]†You found his heart faithful before you, and made with him the covenant to give to his offspring the land of the Canaanite, the Hittite, the Amorite, the Perizzite, the Jebusite, and the Girgashite. And you have kept your promise, for you are righteous.

[9]"And you saw the affliction of our fathers in Egypt and heard their cry at the Red Sea, [10]†and performed signs and wonders against Pharaoh and all his servants and all the people of his land, for you knew that they acted arrogantly against our fathers. And you made a name for yourself, as it is to this day. [11]And you divided the sea before them, so that they went through the midst of the sea on dry land, and you cast their pursuers into the depths, as a stone into mighty waters. [12]By a pillar of cloud you led them in the day, and by a pillar of fire in the night to light for them the way in which they should go. [13]†You came down on Mount Sinai and spoke with them from heaven and gave them right rules and true laws, good statutes and

commandments, 14 † and you made known to them your holy Sabbath and
commanded them commandments and statutes and a law by Moses your
servant. 15 † You gave them bread from heaven for their hunger and brought
water for them out of the rock for their thirst, and you told them to go in to
possess the land that you had sworn to give them.

16 † "But they and our fathers acted presumptuously and stiffened their
neck and did not obey your commandments. 17 † They refused to obey and
were not mindful of the wonders that you performed among them, but they
stiffened their neck and appointed a leader to return to their slavery in
Egypt. But you are a God ready to forgive, gracious and merciful, slow to
anger and abounding in steadfast love, and did not forsake them. 18 Even
when they had made for themselves a golden[1] calf and said, 'This is your
God who brought you up out of Egypt,' and had committed great
blasphemies, 19 you in your great mercies did not forsake them in the
wilderness. The pillar of cloud to lead them in the way did not depart from
them by day, nor the pillar of fire by night to light for them the way by
which they should go. 20 † You gave your good Spirit to instruct them and did
not withhold your manna from their mouth and gave them water for their
thirst. 21 † Forty years you sustained them in the wilderness, and they lacked
nothing. Their clothes did not wear out and their feet did not swell.

22 † "And you gave them kingdoms and peoples and allotted to them every
corner. So they took possession of the land of Sihon king of Heshbon and
the land of Og king of Bashan. 23 You multiplied their children as the stars of
heaven, and you brought them into the land that you had told their fathers to
enter and possess. 24 † So the descendants went in and possessed the land,
and you subdued before them the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites,
and gave them into their hand, with their kings and the peoples of the land,
that they might do with them as they would. 25 † And they captured fortified
cities and a rich land, and took possession of houses full of all good things,
cisterns already hewn, vineyards, olive orchards and fruit trees in
abundance. So they ate and were filled and became fat and delighted
themselves in your great goodness.

26 † "Nevertheless, they were disobedient and rebelled against you and cast
your law behind their back and killed your prophets, who had warned them
in order to turn them back to you, and they committed great blasphemies.

27 †Therefore you gave them into the hand of their enemies, who made them
suffer. And in the time of their suffering they cried out to you and you heard
them from heaven, and according to your great mercies you gave them
saviors who saved them from the hand of their enemies. 28But after they had
rest they did evil again before you, and you abandoned them to the hand of
their enemies, so that they had dominion over them. Yet when they turned
and cried to you, you heard from heaven, and many times you delivered
them according to your mercies. 29 †And you warned them in order to turn
them back to your law. Yet they acted presumptuously and did not obey
your commandments, but sinned against your rules, which if a person does
them, he shall live by them, and they turned a stubborn shoulder and
stiffened their neck and would not obey. 30 †Many years you bore with them
and warned them by your Spirit through your prophets. Yet they would not
give ear. Therefore you gave them into the hand of the peoples of the lands.
31 †Nevertheless, in your great mercies you did not make an end of them or
forsake them, for you are a gracious and merciful God.

32 † “Now, therefore, our God, the great, the mighty, and the awesome
God, who keeps covenant and steadfast love, let not all the hardship seem
little to you that has come upon us, upon our kings, our princes, our priests,
our prophets, our fathers, and all your people, since the time of the kings of
Assyria until this day. 33 †Yet you have been righteous in all that has come
upon us, for you have dealt faithfully and we have acted wickedly. 34Our
kings, our princes, our priests, and our fathers have not kept your law or
paid attention to your commandments and your warnings that you gave
them. 35Even in their own kingdom, and amid your great goodness that you
gave them, and in the large and rich land that you set before them, they did
not serve you or turn from their wicked works. 36 †Behold, we are slaves this
day; in the land that you gave to our fathers to enjoy its fruit and its good
gifts, behold, we are slaves. 37And its rich yield goes to the kings whom you
have set over us because of our sins. They rule over our bodies and over our
livestock as they please, and we are in great distress.

38 † [1] “Because of all this we make a firm covenant in writing; on the
sealed document are the names of[2] our princes, our Levites, and our
priests.

The People Who Sealed the Covenant

10 [1]† [3] “On the seals are the names of [4] Nehemiah the governor, the
son of Hacaliah, Zedekiah, [2] † Seraiah, Azariah, Jeremiah, [3]Pashhur,
Amariah, Malchijah, [4]Hattush, Shebaniah, Malluch, [5]Harim, Meremoth,
Obadiah, [6]Daniel, Ginnethon, Baruch, [7]Meshullam, Abijah, Mijamin,
[8]Maaziah, Bilgai, Shemaiah; these are the priests. [9]†And the Levites: Jeshua
the son of Azaniah, Binnui of the sons of Henadad, Kadmiel; [10]and their
brothers, Shebaniah, Hodiah, Kelita, Pelaiah, Hanan, [11]Mica, Rehob,
Hashabiah, [12]Zaccur, Sherebiah, Shebaniah, [13]Hodiah, Bani, Beninu. [14]†The
chiefs of the people: Parosh, Pahath-moab, Elam, Zattu, Bani, [15]Bunni,
Azgad, Bebai, [16]Adonijah, Bigvai, Adin, [17]Ater, Hezekiah, Azzur, [18]Hodiah,
Hashum, Bezai, [19]Hariph, Anathoth, Nebai, [20]Magpiash, Meshullam, Hezir,
[21]Meshezabel, Zadok, Jaddua, [22]Pelatiah, Hanan, Anaiah, [23]Hoshea,
Hananiah, Hasshub, [24]Hallohesh, Pilha, Shobek, [25]Rehum, Hashabnah,
Maaseiah, [26]Ahiah, Hanan, Anan, [27]Malluch, Harim, Baanah.

The Obligations of the Covenant

28 † “The rest of the people, the priests, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the
singers, the temple servants, and all who have separated themselves from
the peoples of the lands to the Law of God, their wives, their sons, their
daughters, all who have knowledge and understanding, 29 † join with their
brothers, their nobles, and enter into a curse and an oath to walk in God’s
Law that was given by Moses the servant of God, and to observe and do all
the commandments of the Lord our Lord and his rules and his statutes.
30 † We will not give our daughters to the peoples of the land or take their
daughters for our sons. 31 † And if the peoples of the land bring in goods or
any grain on the Sabbath day to sell, we will not buy from them on the
Sabbath or on a holy day. And we will forego the crops of the seventh year
and the exaction of every debt.

32 † “We also take on ourselves the obligation to give yearly a third part of
a shekel[1] for the service of the house of our God: 33 † for the showbread, the
regular grain offering, the regular burnt offering, the Sabbaths, the new
moons, the appointed feasts, the holy things, and the sin offerings to make
atonement for Israel, and for all the work of the house of our God. 34 † We,
the priests, the Levites, and the people, have likewise cast lots for the wood
offering, to bring it into the house of our God, according to our fathers’
houses, at times appointed, year by year, to burn on the altar of the Lord our
God, as it is written in the Law. 35 † We obligate ourselves to bring the
firstfruits of our ground and the firstfruits of all fruit of every tree, year by
year, to the house of the Lord; 36 † also to bring to the house of our God, to
the priests who minister in the house of our God, the firstborn of our sons
and of our cattle, as it is written in the Law, and the firstborn of our herds
and of our flocks; 37 † and to bring the first of our dough, and our
contributions, the fruit of every tree, the wine and the oil, to the priests, to
the chambers of the house of our God; and to bring to the Levites the tithes
from our ground, for it is the Levites who collect the tithes in all our towns
where we labor. 38 † And the priest, the son of Aaron, shall be with the
Levites when the Levites receive the tithes. And the Levites shall bring up
the tithe of the tithes to the house of our God, to the chambers of the

storehouse. [39]†For the people of Israel and the sons of Levi shall bring the contribution of grain, wine, and oil to the chambers, where the vessels of the sanctuary are, as well as the priests who minister, and the gatekeepers and the singers. We will not neglect the house of our God.”

The Leaders in Jerusalem

11 [1]†Now the leaders of the people lived in Jerusalem. And the rest of
the people cast lots to bring one out of ten to live in Jerusalem the holy city,
while nine out of ten[2] remained in the other towns. [2]† And the people
blessed all the men who willingly offered to live in Jerusalem.

[3]‡†These are the chiefs of the province who lived in Jerusalem; but in the
towns of Judah everyone lived on his property in their towns: Israel, the
priests, the Levites, the temple servants, and the descendants of Solomon's
servants. [4]† And in Jerusalem lived certain of the sons of Judah and of the
sons of Benjamin. Of the sons of Judah: Athaiah the son of Uzziah, son of
Zechariah, son of Amariah, son of Shephatiah, son of Mahalalel, of the sons
of Perez; [5]and Maaseiah the son of Baruch, son of Col-hozeh, son of
Hazaiah, son of Adaiah, son of Joiarib, son of Zechariah, son of the
Shilonite. [6]† All the sons of Perez who lived in Jerusalem were 468 valiant
men.

[7]And these are the sons of Benjamin: Sallu the son of Meshullam, son of
Joed, son of Pedaiah, son of Kolaiah, son of Maaseiah, son of Ithiel, son of
Jeshaiah, [8]and his brothers, men of valor, 928.[1] [9]† Joel the son of Zichri was
their overseer; and Judah the son of Hassenuah was second over the city.

[10]‡Of the priests: Jedaiah the son of Joiarib, Jachin, [11]† Seraiah the son of
Hilkiah, son of Meshullam, son of Zadok, son of Meraioth, son of Ahitub,
ruler of the house of God, [12]and their brothers who did the work of the
house, 822; and Adaiah the son of Jeroham, son of Pelaliah, son of Amzi,
son of Zechariah, son of Pashhur, son of Malchijah, [13]and his brothers,
heads of fathers' houses, 242; and Amashsai, the son of Azarel, son of
Ahzai, son of Meshillemoth, son of Immer, [14]† and their brothers, mighty
men of valor, 128; their overseer was Zabdiel the son of Haggedolim.

[15]And of the Levites: Shemaiah the son of Hasshub, son of Azrikam, son
of Hashabiah, son of Bunni; [16]† and Shabbethai and Jozabad, of the chiefs of
the Levites, who were over the outside work of the house of God; [17]† and
Mattaniah the son of Mica, son of Zabdi, son of Asaph, who was the leader
of the praise,[2] who gave thanks, and Bakbukiah, the second among his

brothers; and Abda the son of Shammua, son of Galal, son of Jeduthun.
18 All the Levites in the holy city were 284.

19 †The gatekeepers, Akkub, Talmon and their brothers, who kept watch at
the gates, were 172. 20 † And the rest of Israel, and of the priests and the
Levites, were in all the towns of Judah, every one in his inheritance. 21 ††But
the temple servants lived on Ophel; and Ziha and Gishpa were over the
temple servants.

22 The overseer of the Levites in Jerusalem was Uzzi the son of Bani, son
of Hashabiah, son of Mattaniah, son of Mica, of the sons of Asaph, the
singers, over the work of the house of God. 23 † For there was a command
from the king concerning them, and a fixed provision for the singers, as
every day required. 24 †And Pethahiah the son of Meshezabel, of the sons of
Zerah the son of Judah, was at the king's side[3] in all matters concerning the
people.

Villages Outside Jerusalem

25 And as for the villages, with their fields, some of the people of Judah
lived in Kiriath-arba and its villages, and in Dibon and its villages, and in
Jekabzeel and its villages, 26 and in Jeshua and in Moladah and Beth-pelet,
27 in Hazar-shual, in Beersheba and its villages, 28 in Ziklag, in Meconah
and its villages, 29 in En-rimmon, in Zorah, in Jarmuth, 30 Zanoah,
Adullam, and their villages, Lachish and its fields, and Azekah and its
villages. So they encamped from Beersheba to the Valley of Hinnom.
31 The people of Benjamin also lived from Geba onward, at Michmash,
Aija, Bethel and its villages, 32 Anathoth, Nob, Ananiah, 33 Hazor, Ramah,
Gittaim, 34 Hadid, Zeboim, Neballat, 35 Lod, and Ono, the valley of
craftsmen. 36 And certain divisions of the Levites in Judah were assigned to
Benjamin.

Priests and Levites

12 [1] ‡ These are the priests and the Levites who came up with
Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua: Seraiah, Jeremiah, Ezra,
[2] Amariah, Malluch, Hattush, [3] Shecaniah, Rehum, Meremoth, [4] Iddo,
Ginnethoi, Abijah, [5] Mijamin, Maadiah, Bilgah, [6] Shemaiah, Joiarib, Jedaiah,
[7] Sallu, Amok, Hilkiah, Jedaiah. These were the chiefs of the priests and of
their brothers in the days of Jeshua.

[8] ‡ And the Levites: Jeshua, Binnui, Kadmiel, Sherebiah, Judah, and
Mattaniah, who with his brothers was in charge of the songs of
thanksgiving. [9] † And Bakbukiah and Unni and their brothers stood opposite
them in the service. [10] ‡ And Jeshua was the father of Joiakim, Joiakim the
father of Eliashib, Eliashib the father of Joiada, [11] Joiada the father of
Jonathan, and Jonathan the father of Jaddua.

[12] ‡ † And in the days of Joiakim were priests, heads of fathers' houses: of
Seraiah, Meraiah; of Jeremiah, Hananiah; [13] of Ezra, Meshullam; of
Amariah, Jehohanan; [14] of Malluchi, Jonathan; of Shebaniah, Joseph; [15] of
Harim, Adna; of Meraioth, Helkai; [16] of Iddo, Zechariah; of Ginnethon,
Meshullam; [17] of Abijah, Zichri; of Miniamin, of Moadiah, Piltai; [18] of
Bilgah, Shammua; of Shemaiah, Jehonathan; [19] of Joiarib, Mattenai; of
Jedaiah, Uzzi; [20] of Sallai, Kallai; of Amok, Eber; [21] of Hilkiah, Hashabiah; of
Jedaiah, Nethanel.

[22] † In the days of Eliashib, Joiada, Johanan, and Jaddua, the Levites were
recorded as heads of fathers' houses; so too were the priests in the reign of
Darius the Persian. [23] As for the sons of Levi, their heads of fathers' houses
were written in the Book of the Chronicles until the days of Johanan the son
of Eliashib. [24] † And the chiefs of the Levites: Hashabiah, Sherebiah, and
Jeshua the son of Kadmiel, with their brothers who stood opposite them, to
praise and to give thanks, according to the commandment of David the man
of God, watch by watch. [25] † Mattaniah, Bakbukiah, Obadiah, Meshullam,
Talmon, and Akkub were gatekeepers standing guard at the storehouses of
the gates. [26] † These were in the days of Joiakim the son of Jeshua son of

Jozadak, and in the days of Nehemiah the governor and of Ezra, the priest and scribe.

Dedication of the Wall

27 †And at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem they sought the Levites
in all their places, to bring them to Jerusalem to celebrate the dedication
with gladness, with thanksgivings and with singing, with cymbals, harps,
and lyres. 28 †And the sons of the singers gathered together from the district
surrounding Jerusalem and from the villages of the Netophathites; 29 †also
from Beth-gilgal and from the region of Geba and Azmaveth, for the singers
had built for themselves villages around Jerusalem. 30 †And the priests and
the Levites purified themselves, and they purified the people and the gates
and the wall.

31 †Then I brought the leaders of Judah up onto the wall and appointed
two great choirs that gave thanks. One went to the south on the wall to the
Dung Gate. 32 And after them went Hoshaiah and half of the leaders of
Judah, 33 and Azariah, Ezra, Meshullam, 34 Judah, Benjamin, Shemaiah, and
Jeremiah, 35 and certain of the priests' sons with trumpets: Zechariah the son
of Jonathan, son of Shemaiah, son of Mattaniah, son of Micaiah, son of
Zaccur, son of Asaph; 36 † and his relatives, Shemaiah, Azarel, Milalai,
Gilalai, Maai, Nethanel, Judah, and Hanani, with the musical instruments of
David the man of God. And Ezra the scribe went before them. 37 †At the
Fountain Gate they went up straight before them by the stairs of the city of
David, at the ascent of the wall, above the house of David, to the Water
Gate on the east.

38 †The other choir of those who gave thanks went to the north, and I
followed them with half of the people, on the wall, above the Tower of the
Ovens, to the Broad Wall, 39 †and above the Gate of Ephraim, and by the
Gate of Yeshanah,[1] and by the Fish Gate and the Tower of Hananel and the
Tower of the Hundred, to the Sheep Gate; and they came to a halt at the
Gate of the Guard. 40 †So both choirs of those who gave thanks stood in the
house of God, and I and half of the officials with me; 41 and the priests
Eliakim, Maaseiah, Miniamin, Micaiah, Elioenai, Zechariah, and Hananiah,
with trumpets; 42 and Maaseiah, Shemaiah, Eleazar, Uzzi, Jehohanan,
Malchijah, Elam, and Ezer. And the singers sang with Jezrahiah as their
leader. 43 †And they offered great sacrifices that day and rejoiced, for God

had made them rejoice with great joy; the women and children also rejoiced. And the joy of Jerusalem was heard far away.

Service at the Temple

44 ‡ † On that day men were appointed over the storerooms, the
contributions, the firstfruits, and the tithes, to gather into them the portions
required by the Law for the priests and for the Levites according to the
fields of the towns, for Judah rejoiced over the priests and the Levites who
ministered. 45 † And they performed the service of their God and the service
of purification, as did the singers and the gatekeepers, according to the
command of David and his son Solomon. 46 † For long ago in the days of
David and Asaph there were directors of the singers, and there were songs[2]
of praise and thanksgiving to God. 47 † And all Israel in the days of
Zerubbabel and in the days of Nehemiah gave the daily portions for the
singers and the gatekeepers; and they set apart that which was for the
Levites; and the Levites set apart that which was for the sons of Aaron.

Nehemiah’s Final Reforms

13 [1]On that day they read from the Book of Moses in the hearing
of the people. And in it was found written that no Ammonite or Moabite
should ever enter the assembly of God, [2]for they did not meet the people of
Israel with bread and water, but hired Balaam against them to curse them—
yet our God turned the curse into a blessing. [3]As soon as the people heard
the law, they separated from Israel all those of foreign descent.

[4] Now before this, Eliashib the priest, who was appointed over the
chambers of the house of our God, and who was related to Tobiah,
[5]prepared for Tobiah a large chamber where they had previously put the
grain offering, the frankincense, the vessels, and the tithes of grain, wine,
and oil, which were given by commandment to the Levites, singers, and
gatekeepers, and the contributions for the priests. [6]While this was taking
place, I was not in Jerusalem, for in the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes
king of Babylon I went to the king. And after some time I asked leave of the
king [7]and came to Jerusalem, and I then discovered the evil that Eliashib
had done for Tobiah, preparing for him a chamber in the courts of the house
of God. [8]And I was very angry, and I threw all the household furniture of
Tobiah out of the chamber. [9]Then I gave orders, and they cleansed the
chambers, and I brought back there the vessels of the house of God, with
the grain offering and the frankincense.

[10]I also found out that the portions of the Levites had not been given to
them, so that the Levites and the singers, who did the work, had fled each to
his field. [11]So I confronted the officials and said, “Why is the house of God
forsaken?” And I gathered them together and set them in their stations.
[12]Then all Judah brought the tithe of the grain, wine, and oil into the
storehouses. [13] And I appointed as treasurers over the storehouses
Shelemiah the priest, Zadok the scribe, and Pedaiah of the Levites, and as
their assistant Hanan the son of Zaccur, son of Mattaniah, for they were
considered reliable, and their duty was to distribute to their brothers.
[14]Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and do not wipe out my good
deeds that I have done for the house of my God and for his service.

15 † In those days I saw in Judah people treading winepresses on the
Sabbath, and bringing in heaps of grain and loading them on donkeys, and
also wine, grapes, figs, and all kinds of loads, which they brought into
Jerusalem on the Sabbath day. And I warned them on the day when they
sold food. 16 † Tyrians also, who lived in the city, brought in fish and all
kinds of goods and sold them on the Sabbath to the people of Judah, in
Jerusalem itself! 17 † Then I confronted the nobles of Judah and said to them,
"What is this evil thing that you are doing, profaning the Sabbath day?
18 † Did not your fathers act in this way, and did not our God bring all this
disaster[1] on us and on this city? Now you are bringing more wrath on
Israel by profaning the Sabbath."

19 † As soon as it began to grow dark at the gates of Jerusalem before the
Sabbath, I commanded that the doors should be shut and gave orders that
they should not be opened until after the Sabbath. And I stationed some of
my servants at the gates, that no load might be brought in on the Sabbath
day. 20 Then the merchants and sellers of all kinds of wares lodged outside
Jerusalem once or twice. 21 † But I warned them and said to them, "Why do
you lodge outside the wall? If you do so again, I will lay hands on you."
From that time on they did not come on the Sabbath. 22 † Then I commanded
the Levites that they should purify themselves and come and guard the
gates, to keep the Sabbath day holy. Remember this also in my favor, O my
God, and spare me according to the greatness of your steadfast love.

23 † In those days also I saw the Jews who had married women of Ashdod,
Ammon, and Moab. 24 † And half of their children spoke the language of
Ashdod, and they could not speak the language of Judah, but only the
language of each people. 25 † And I confronted them and cursed them and
beat some of them and pulled out their hair. And I made them take oath in
the name of God, saying, "You shall not give your daughters to their sons,
or take their daughters for your sons or for yourselves. 26 Did not Solomon
king of Israel sin on account of such women? Among the many nations
there was no king like him, and he was beloved by his God, and God made
him king over all Israel. Nevertheless, foreign women made even him to
sin. 27 Shall we then listen to you and do all this great evil and act
treacherously against our God by marrying foreign women?"

28 † And one of the sons of Jehoiada, the son of Eliashib the high priest,
was the son-in-law of Sanballat the Horonite. Therefore I chased him from
me. 29 † Remember them, O my God, because they have desecrated the
priesthood and the covenant of the priesthood and the Levites.
30 † Thus I cleansed them from everything foreign, and I established the
duties of the priests and Levites, each in his work; 31 † and I provided for the
wood offering at appointed times, and for the firstfruits.
Remember me, O my God, for good.

Nehemiah

OVERVIEW

Author
Nehemiah, governor of Judah

Date
c 445–432 BC

Places
Susa; Jerusalem's gates, walls, and villages; Beyond the River

People
Nehemiah; Eliashib; Ezra; Artaxerxes; Sanballat; Tobiah; Geshem

Purpose
To demonstrate that all things are possible by God's gracious and providential care

Law Themes
Exile due to sin; illegal marriages; persecution; broken faith by failing to keep God's Word

Gospel Themes
God fulfills His promises of grace; God's providence; restored atonement at the temple; God's hand guides history and the lives of His people, the remnant

Memory Verses
Nehemiah's prayer (1:4–11); building the wall (4:18–23); attending to the Word (8:7b–8)

Introduction to Nehemiah

Reading Nehemiah

Although work had ceased, dust continued to rise, stirred by the evening breeze. The dust caked a workman's sweaty brow. As he surveyed the destruction of the walls and the amount of work left to complete them, tears welled in his eyes and rolled down his dusty cheeks, creating glistening streams of sorrow. He faced the setting sun imagining that Jerusalem would never be rebuilt, wondering whether this was the sunset for his people or the darkness before dawn.

Around the dark hilltop of Jerusalem walked Nehemiah, a Judean who had risen to authority in the Persian Empire. His energy, sincerity, and leadership were literally a Godsend to the Judeans trying to recover and restore their once great capital, Jerusalem. Nehemiah illustrates the need for godly leadership and how the Lord constantly hears and answers the cries of His people. Nehemiah's story will inspire you to pray, organize, and overcome.

Luther on Nehemiah

The word of God—that Jerusalem should be restored and built—went forth in the second year of Darius, about the time that Nehemiah came from Cambyses and began to rebuild Jerusalem, etc. For this was a great event, begun by many—and even promoted by angels, as Zechariah 1[:7–17] declares—yet not by everybody at once on the same day or at the same hour [Ezra 1–6]. (AE 35:304)

The church is the work of God's hands, and His children are His cultivation. "Therefore [God says] command Me. You cannot bring the matter to a successful issue. I will do it. Believe Me." Ezra and Nehemiah carefully read these words of comfort and consoled the people and the king by means of the Word. Let God handle the matter, He will do it properly. (AE 17:129–30)

I fear the time will come when schoolmasters, pastors, and preachers alike will have to quit, let the word go, and turn to a trade or some other means of stilling the pangs of hunger; just as the Levites had to abandon the worship of God to till the fields, as Nehemiah writes [Neh. 13:10]. Isn't it a crying shame? Up to now, a town with four or five hundred population could turn over to the mendicant monks alone the equivalent of five, six, or seven hundred gulden, besides what bishops, officials, and other bloodsuckers, together with beggars and relic hawkers, have already wrung from them…. But when they are asked to contribute one or two hundred gulden toward good schools and pulpits, they cry, "You would reduce us to rags and make beggars of us! We would have nothing left"; then covetousness and concern for livelihood take over, and the people think they will die of hunger. (AE 45:318–19)

Challenges for Readers

Relationship to Chronicles, Ezra, and Esther. See pp 719–21.

Nehemiah's Zeal. After decades in exile, Nehemiah and other people of Judah returned to their homeland with a new passion against breaches of the Law. The harsh conditions amid the rubble of Jerusalem demanded harsh discipline. Nehemiah pushed the Judeans to complete the walls of Jerusalem under danger of attack (ch 4). When the people of the land continued to intermarry with foreigners—worshipers of other gods—Nehemiah responded forcefully because he feared that the people would fall into idolatry again (ch 13). Nehemiah's violent outburst against lawbreakers (13:25) does not set the best example for us. But his discipline, humility, prayer, and commitment to God's Word are examples of excellent leadership.

Divorces from Foreigners. A confusing situation, found in Ezra and Nehemiah, is the marriage of some Judeans to non-Judeans. Ezra and Nehemiah insist that such marriages end, even counseling divorce from the foreign women. Such passages should not be used to justify divorce today. They involve particular laws of the OT, which forbade certain marriages for Israelites generally and for priests in particular. (See notes, Ezr 9:1–2; 10:3.) The apostle Paul addresses the issues raised by such marriages under the new covenant (see note, 1Co 7:12–13).

Blessings for Readers

Nehemiah, a faithful layman, gives all God's people a remarkable example of courage and leadership. As you study the Book of Nehemiah, consider how the Lord not only preserved His people during the exile but also replanted them in the Holy Land against incredible odds through servants like Nehemiah. He did these things out of love for them and for you—to keep His promise to send a Savior for all people.

OUTLINE

I. Nehemiah's First Visit (chs 1–12)
- A. Nehemiah Hears of the Situation in Jerusalem and Prays (ch 1)
- B. Nehemiah Takes Action (ch 2)
  1. He travels to Jerusalem (2:1–10)
  2. He secretly inspects walls and gates (2:11–16)
  3. He organizes repairs in face of opposition (2:17–20)
- C. Builders of Walls Listed by Section (ch 3)
- D. Opposition to Rebuilding (ch 4)
  1. Sanballat and Tobiah (4:1–5)
  2. Plot to attack the workers (4:6–14)
  3. Rebuilding the walls (4:15–23)
- E. Problems Arise (ch 5)
  1. Complaints from the oppressed (5:1–5)
  2. New direction under the Law (5:6–13)
  3. Leading by example (5:14–19)
- F. Completing the Walls (ch 6)
  1. Opposition (6:1–9)
  2. False prophets (6:10–14)
  3. Work on the walls (6:15–19)
- G. Lists of Exiles (7:1–73a)
  1. Protecting Jerusalem (7:1–4)
  2. Discovering and recording the list (7:5–72)
  3. Settling the exiles (7:73a)
- H. Covenant Renewal and Revival (7:73b–10:39)
  1. Ezra reads God's Word (7:73b–8:12)

2. God's people celebrate Feast of Booths (8:13–18)
3. God's people fast (9:1–5a)
4. God's history of grace toward Israel (9:5b–31)
5. God's people confess their sins (9:32–37)
6. God's people commit themselves to righteous living (9:38–10:39)

I. New Residents of Jerusalem (ch 11)
1. Volunteers (11:1–2)
2. Leaders (11:3–24)
3. Villages outside Jerusalem (11:25–36)

J. Priests, Levites, and the Wall (ch 12)
1. Returning priests and Levites (12:1–26)
2. Dedication of the wall (12:27–43)
3. Regulation of offerings and services (12:44–47)

II. Nehemiah's Second Visit (ch 13)

A. Two Problems (13:1–5)
1. Mixed marriages (13:1–3)
2. Tobiah's chamber (13:4–5)

B. Nehemiah's Solutions (13:6–31)
1. Tobiah expelled (13:6–9)
2. Care for Levites (13:10–14)
3. Sabbath (13:15–22)
4. Mixed marriages (13:23–29)
5. Additional care for Levites (13:30–31)

Articles and Resources Related to Nehemiah

- Passion for the Prophets

Passion for the Prophets

I confronted them and cursed them," wrote Nehemiah, "and beat some of them and pulled out their hair" (Ne 13:25). After decades in exile, Nehemiah and the other people of Judah returned to their homeland with a new passion against breaches of the Law. This new passion represented a dramatic change in their religion.

Before the exile in Babylon, the prophets seemed to preach to deaf ears. For the most part, the people did not heed their impassioned message of repentance. But through suffering and disappointments, through the persistent word of the prophets, the people of Judah (from which we get the word *Judaism*) returned to their homeland zealous for purity amidst the lawlessness of the nations. In the hope that they would never again suffer exile, the Judean people passionately followed the teachings of the Law and the Prophets.

Scribes and Scrolls

Before the exile in Babylon, the Israelite Bible consisted of "the book," the Law of God ("Torah")—the five books recorded by the prophet Moses (8:8). After the exile, scribes such as Ezra collected the writings of the prophets, preserving them for public reading and study (8:13; this work would include the books of the "Former Prophets" and the "Latter Prophets"; see pp 1077–83). They laid the foundation for the Judaic synagogue gatherings in Jesus' day.

The scribes preserved the passionate preaching of the prophets. The harsh conditions amid the rubble of Jerusalem demanded harsh discipline. For example, as Nehemiah and the people labored to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, false prophets opposed them and prophesied against them (6:10–14). When the people of the land continued to marry foreigners—worshipers of other gods—Nehemiah and Ezra responded forcefully (Ezr 10; Ne 13:23–29). They feared that the people would fall into idolatry again.

Foreign Tongues

An important feature of Nehemiah's zeal had to do with languages. He noted that when Judean people married foreigners, many of their children grew up speaking a foreign language (13:23–24). The children would not grow up hearing and reading the message of the prophets in the Hebrew language. He saw in these marriages the destruction of God's people. Even a son of the high priest had married the daughter of Sanballat, a Babylonian governor in Samaria (13:28).

In an effort to remain faithful to the message of the prophets, Nehemiah drove the high priest's son out of Jerusalem. He cursed the people who married foreigners and demanded that they take an oath not to let their sons and daughters marry outsiders. His zeal for the Law and concern for cultural boundaries became a characteristic of later Judaism. His concern about foreign languages was the beginning of a long debate in Judaism about which language was appropriate for prayer. Many rabbis came to regard Hebrew as the language of the temple and the only language appropriate for prayer. Like Nehemiah, they wanted to preserve the original language of the prophets.

A Message for All Nations

Harsh times demand harsh measures. Who can fault Nehemiah's zeal or concern for purity in the wake of a national tragedy such as the destruction of Jerusalem? However, the message of the prophets was about more than purity. The prophets foresaw the repentance of all nations (Is 2:1–5). Instead of fearing the inclusion of outsiders, the prophets anticipated a day when God would gather people of all nations and all languages to Himself (Ps 102:12–22). They preached a message of repentance and forgiveness for all people.

Thanks be to God, this message has circled the globe to reach your ears and call you to faith in Jesus Christ. Today, the Gospel of Jesus has reached almost every nation. The message of the prophets has been translated into thousands of languages.

Don't settle for simply reading and studying the Prophets. Look for opportunities to share that message of freedom and forgiveness with those who have not yet heard or believed. Support the preaching of the Gospel in your area and among the nations.

Whereas Nehemiah rebuked his countrymen and called down curses on them for marrying foreigners, we praise God and bless Him for delivering His forgiveness to foreigners. Each time you gather with God's people, call down His blessing upon them and your community. Rejoice in the forgiveness and new life available to you and all people through Christ, the Savior.

Footnotes

Footnotes for Nehemiah, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:1 Or *the fortified city*

Footnotes for Nehemiah, Chapter 2

- [1] 2:20 Or *memorial*

Footnotes for Nehemiah, Chapter 3

- [2] 3:2 Hebrew *him*
- [3] 3:5 Or *lords*
- [4] 3:6 Or *of the old city*
- [1] 3:9 Or *foreman of half the portion assigned to*; also verses 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18
- [2] 3:13 A *cubit* was about 18 inches or 45 centimeters
- [3] 3:19 Or *corner*; also verses 20, 24, 25
- [4] 3:31 Or *Hammiphkad Gate*

Footnotes for Nehemiah, Chapter 4

- [1] 4:1 Ch 3:33 in Hebrew

- [2] 4:2 Or *Will they commit themselves to God?*
- [3] 4:7 Ch 4:1 in Hebrew
- [4] 4:10 Hebrew *Judah said*
- [5] 4:12 The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain
- [1] 4:23 Probable reading; Hebrew *each his weapon the water*

Footnotes for Nehemiah, Chapter 5

- [2] 5:13 Hebrew *bosom*
- [1] 5:15 Compare Vulgate; Hebrew *took from them with food and wine afterward*
- [2] 5:15 A *shekel* was about 2/5 ounce or 11 grams
- [3] 5:18 Or *prepared for me*

Footnotes for Nehemiah, Chapter 6

- [4] 6:6 Hebrew *Gashmu*
- [5] 6:9 Hebrew lacks *O God*
- [6] 6:11 Or *would go into the temple to save his life*

Footnotes for Nehemiah, Chapter 7

- [1] 7:68 Ezra 2:66 and the margins of some Hebrew manuscripts; Hebrew lacks *Their horses ... 245*
- [2] 7:70 A *daric* was a coin weighing about 1/4 ounce or 8.5 grams
- [3] 7:70 A *mina* was about 1 1/4 pounds or 0.6 kilogram
- [4] 7:70 Probable reading; Hebrew lacks *minas of silver*

Footnotes for Nehemiah, Chapter 8

- [1] 8:7 Vulgate; Hebrew *and the Levites*
- [2] 8:8 Or *with interpretation*, or *paragraph by paragraph*
- [1] 8:14 Or *temporary shelters*

Footnotes for Nehemiah, Chapter 9

- [2] 9:6 Septuagint adds *And Ezra said*
- [1] 9:18 Hebrew *metal*
- [1] 9:38 Ch 10:1 in Hebrew
- [2] 9:38 Hebrew lacks *the names of*

Footnotes for Nehemiah, Chapter 10

- [3] 10:1 Ch 10:2 in Hebrew
- [4] 10:1 Hebrew lacks *the names of*
- [1] 10:32 A *shekel* was about 2/5 ounce or 11 grams

Footnotes for Nehemiah, Chapter 11

- [2] 11:1 Hebrew *nine hands*
- [1] 11:8 Compare Septuagint; Hebrew *Jeshaiah, and after him Gabbai, Sallai, 928*
- [2] 11:17 Compare Septuagint, Vulgate; Hebrew *beginning*
- [3] 11:24 Hebrew *hand*

Footnotes for Nehemiah, Chapter 12

- [1] 12:39 Or *of the old city*
- [2] 12:46 Or *leaders*

Footnotes for Nehemiah, Chapter 13

- [1] 13:18 The Hebrew word can mean *evil*, *harm*, or *disaster*, depending on the context

Study Notes

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 1:1 *Nehemiah*. Means "the Lord has comforted." Prominent man exiled from Judah; served as cupbearer (v 11) to Persia's King Artaxerxes I (464–424 BC) and was later appointed governor of Judah (5:14). *Chislev.* Nov/Dec. See calendar, p 262. *twentieth year*. Of the reign of Artaxerxes I (2:1); 444 BC. Some 12 years intervene between the end of the Book of Ezra and this chapter. Artaxerxes I was the son of Ahasuerus, the ruler noted in Ezr 4:6 and Est. *I was.* Parts of the Book of Nehemiah are written in the first person; these are sometimes referred to as "Nehemiah's Memoirs." *Susa*. Located in what is now southern Iran; capital of ancient Elam, c 200 mi E of Babylon. Cf Dn 8:2; see map, p 609. Persian kings used Susa as a winter residence.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 1:2 *Hanani*. Nehemiah's brother; one of a group that brought a firsthand report of conditions in Judah. *Judah*. A province of the Persian Empire (v 3; see note, Ezr 2:1). *Jews*. Judeans. See note, Ezr 4:12. *escaped ... survived the exile*. Exiles from Judah who had left Babylon and successfully returned to Judah.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 1:3 *trouble and shame*. Despite the previous work of Ezra (Ezr 7–10), conditions in Judah were still far from ideal. The remnant living there was mocked by enemies and hindered in their rebuilding efforts (Ezr 4:7–23). *destroyed*. Walls and gates of Jerusalem had not been repaired since their destruction 140 years earlier by the Babylonians.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 1:1–3 Nehemiah recalls the report about Jerusalem that prompted his decision to travel there and assist God's people. Today, as you hear of other people's needs, take them to heart as a matter of prayer and concern. Your gracious Savior, who knows and bears all your cares, will likewise care for you as you support your brothers and sisters in Christ. • O Lord, hear my plea for those in need, and grant me a heart ready to serve them. Amen.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 1:4 *sat down*. Usual posture when a person "wept and mourned" (cf Jb 2:13; Ps 137:1). See p 1277. *wept.* Because of the remnant's "great trouble and shame" (v 3). *fasting.* Refraining from food was meant to heighten feelings of shame and self-denial and so enhance humble prayer. See note, Lv 16:29. *praying.* In abject humility,

Nehemiah implored God in a prayer similar to Ezra's (Ezr 9:6–15). Though a layperson and not a scribe or priest, he couched his prayer in phrases and sentences from Scripture, particularly from Dt.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 1:5 *God of heaven*. Address to the Ruler of nations was appropriate, because Nehemiah's prayer dealt with an international situation, as did Abraham's prayer many centuries earlier (Gn 24:7). *steadfast love*. See note, Dt 7:9; see also p 843.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 1:6 *we*. Nehemiah, a high-ranking political figure, identified himself with his downtrodden people in confessing his sins and theirs (cf Ezr 9:7).

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 1:7 *very corruptly*. List of curses in Dt 27:15–26 suggests ways in which the people had acted corruptly. *commandments ... statutes ... rules*. See p 971.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 1:8–9 Quotation here is not a specific verse in the Book of Moses but is a summary of Mosaic teaching in such passages as Lv 26:33–45; Dt 4:27–31; 30:1–4.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 1:9 *place that I have chosen*. The Lord selected Jerusalem as the place where His name would dwell (1Ki 14:21; Is 8:18).

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 1:10 *redeemed*. Refers to the exodus from Egypt (Ex 6:6). See p 843. *hand*. See p 842.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 1:11 *fear*. See note, Dt 4:10; see also p 1001. *Your name*. See note, Ex 6:3. *man*. King Artaxerxes I, whose permission Nehemiah needed to journey to Jerusalem. *cupbearer*. Nehemiah was more than a wine steward at the royal table; he was an important official. The king relied on him for protection against assassination by poisoning (cf Gn 40:21; 1Ki 10:5).

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 1:4–11 On behalf of those struggling in Jerusalem, Nehemiah fasts and prays with great empathy as guided by God's Word. God's Word grants confidence in prayer. As you call on the Lord to confess your sins and to plead for others, use God's promises as your guide, for all His promises to you are "Yes" and "Amen" in Christ the Savior. • Holy Spirit, increase in me the desire to know the Word and to pray according to it in all things. Amen.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 2:1 *Nisan*. Mar/Apr. See calendar, p 262. *twentieth year*. See note, 1:1. More than three months passed before Nehemiah had a good opportunity to request permission from King Artaxerxes to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. The king had previously

issued a decree that the city not be rebuilt (Ezr 4:21). This decree would have to be reversed. Nehemiah also had to observe the rule of the Persian court that no one was to speak unless first spoken to by the king. Nehemiah wanted to do nothing that might jeopardize the cause he was about to champion. *wine was before him*. Probably a banquet was taking place, where a large container of wine was present. Nehemiah would draw the wine for the king.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 2:2 *sad*. Court personnel were usually cheery in the king's presence (v 1). *nothing*. King could have suspected Nehemiah was hiding an evil plot against him, but such a concern is quickly dismissed (cf v 3). *afraid*. Nehemiah likely feared that the king suspected him of harboring thoughts of a rebellion and that he might be put to death if he presented his request. Cf Gn 40:1–2.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 2:3 *fathers' graves*. Nehemiah did not mention Jerusalem by name because its enemies branded the city a hotbed of "rebellion and sedition" (Ezr 4:19). Rather, he diplomatically referred to it as an ancestral burial place that needed to be preserved from desecration (v 5; 3:16).

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 2:4 *requesting?* Nehemiah was given permission to state his concern. *prayed*. He had time to send heavenward a quick sigh for help. Throughout his career, Nehemiah remained a man of prayer (1:4–11; 4:4; 5:19; 6:9, 14; 13:14).

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 2:5 *rebuild*. Nehemiah dared to ask Artaxerxes to reverse his previous decree (Ezr 4:21). The request was risky because the king could be convinced that rebuilding Jerusalem's walls was the first step in a conspiracy to end Persian control.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 2:6 *queen*. Mention of her suggests that perhaps she was to some extent responsible for the king's favorable reply. Cf Est, which describes the reign of Artaxerxes' father, and the influence wielded by women at the Persian court.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 2:7 *letters*. Served as passports. Example from Nehemiah's era was discovered in a leather postbag, providing for travel from Babylon to Damascus. *Beyond the River*. See note, Ezr 4:10.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 2:8 *forest*. Possibly the forest of Lebanon that supplied lumber for Solomon's buildings as well as for structures at the Persian court. *fortress of the temple*. May have included the Tower of Hananel and the Tower of the Hundred (3:1). Perhaps occupied the same

site, north of the temple, as the Hasmonean citadel (1Macc 13:52). *good hand of my God*. See note, Ezr 7:6. Luth: "Where the king himself, where Ezra and Nehemiah, proclaimed clouds and consolations, there the earth was opened, and many Israelites arose as from sleep and saw that a state of safety had returned and the earth was sprouting righteousness. No one can understand this result of prayer unless he has been so deeply afflicted by trials that he sighs with unutterable groaning. Let everyone apply this text to his own trials" (AE 17:126–27).

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 2:1–8 Nehemiah asks for an opportunity to help rebuild his homeland, and the king answers favorably, because God is guiding the matter. God's hand is constantly at work in history, though we rarely can foresee and determine what He will do. Pray that the Lord will work for the good of His people even now. His hand is on His children to guide them with the love He has for them in Christ. • Take my hand, O Lord, and lead me in the way of life. Amen.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 2:9 *Beyond the River.* See note, Ezr 4:10. *letters.* See note, v 7.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 2:10 *Sanballat*. Probably governor of Samaria, one of the governors who received the king's letters (v 9). Mentioned by Judeans in Elephantine Egypt as one who petitioned the governor of Judah regarding the rebuilding of the temple of "Yaho" (i.e., Yahweh). He had a Babylonian name and is called a Horonite, perhaps because he was a descendant of the foreigners settled by the Assyrians in Beth-horon, c 12 mi NW of Jerusalem. See map, p 534. *Tobiah*. Means "the Lord is good." *Ammonite servant.* May have been Sanballat's assistant or the king's servant as governor of Ammon, a land east of the Jordan. See color map 3. *displeased*. Sanballat and Tobiah saw their power and prestige threatened if Jerusalem were again fortified and became the center of a separate province, headed by a governor.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 2:11 *Jerusalem.* Excavations have discovered settlements, but only within the city of David (south end of Jerusalem). See color map 1.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 2:12 *night ... few men*. Nehemiah wanted to inspect the walls as inconspicuously as possible because opposition was already developing. *what my God had put into my heart*. Nehemiah attributed to God his burning desire to serve his countrymen. See the report

(1:3) and the promise (1:9) by which God moved him. *no animal*. Nehemiah did all he could to avoid detection.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 2:13–15 Impossible to locate with certainty the gates, spring, and pool. Nehemiah left by the Valley Gate, which was in the west wall and opened into the Tyropeon Valley (see note, 2Ch 26:9). Proceeding southward, he passed the Dragon Spring (location unknown) and the Dung Gate at the extreme south end of the wall. Turning north, he came to the Fountain Gate, perhaps located near a spring named En-rogel (see note, 1Ki 1:9). Next, he came to the King's Pool, apparently another name for the Pool of Siloam (or Shelah; 3:15). The path close to the ruins grew so impassable that he was forced to continue through the Kidron Valley before turning back and entering again at the Valley Gate. These extensive ruins, likewise noted by archaeologists, show the great destruction brought by the Babylonian conquest. See map, p 548.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 2:16 *Jews*. Judeans. See note, Ezr 4:12. *who were to do the work*. Those whose help Nehemiah planned to enlist were not yet aware of his rebuilding project.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 2:17 *suffer derision*. From people such as Sanballat, Tobiah, and other outsiders living in the area (4:4; 5:9).

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 2:18 *strengthened their hands*. With an emotional determination to rebuild the walls.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 2:19 *Geshem*. Chieftain of desert tribes in northern Arabia who aligned himself with Sanballat and Tobiah. *jeered.* Cf v 10. *rebelling against the king?* Obviously a false charge.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 2:20 *God of heaven*. See note, Ezr 1:2. *you have no portion or right or claim in Jerusalem*. Declaration of independence on behalf of Judah. Nehemiah rejected outside intervention in any form, just as Zerubbabel had rejected the Samaritan offer to help build the temple (Ezr 4:1–3).

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 2:9–20 The Word moves Nehemiah's heart to begin plans for rebuilding Jerusalem's walls. As you read God's Word, recognize that He will move you as well to serve Him and His people. Studying the Word is never an end in itself, because the purpose of the Word is to console you in Christ and equip you by the Holy Spirit. • Console and equip me this day, dear Savior, to overcome all obstacles to Your good and gracious will. Amen.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 3** This account of the repair and rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem lists the names of many individuals and the specific places where they worked. The 41 work details represent various social and professional classes: the high priest and other priests, goldsmiths and perfumers, rulers of districts, Levites, temple servants, merchants. This is an important source of information for the political and social life of Judah in fifth century BC. From it, we have a better understanding of the geography of Jerusalem, though the exact location of the 9 gates and 18 other features mentioned cannot be identified with absolute certainty. However, enough of the topography is known to establish that the walls on the four sides of the city are described in the following order: north wall (vv 1–5), west wall (vv 6–12), south wall (vv 13–14), east wall (vv 15–32). The original line of the east wall had to be abandoned and a new wall built on the ridge overlooking the Kidron Valley. See map, p 548. The systematic manner of the project reflects Nehemiah's stature and character. Also deserving recognition is the way the people shouted enthusiastically, "Let us … build" (2:18), which showed they actually "had a mind to work" (4:6).

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 3:1 *Sheep Gate*. Near the temple at the northeast corner of the city. Sheep to be sacrificed were driven through this gate. The survey of other sections of the wall begins here and proceeds in a counterclockwise direction around the city, ending where it began (v 32). *consecrated*. Gate received a priestly blessing because of its significant use. See p 6. *Tower of the Hundred … Tower of Hananel*. Probably guarded the north wall, direction from which attacks would most likely come.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 3:2 *Jericho*. 15 mi NE of Jerusalem in the Jordan Valley. See color map 1.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 3:3 *Fish Gate*. In the north wall, perhaps where a fish market was located. See note, Zep 1:10.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 3:5 *Tekoites*. From Tekoa, 10 mi S of Jerusalem, home of Amos (Am 1:1). Cf v 27. *would not stoop*. Possibly Geshem the Arab (2:19) had influenced them not to help. *Lord*. Refers either to the Lord God or to an earthly lord such as Nehemiah (see ESV note).

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 3:6 *Gate of Yeshanah*. Northwest corner; sometimes translated "Old Gate" (see ESV note).

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 3:7 *Gibeon*. C 6 mi NW of Jerusalem. See color map 1. *Mizpah*. Near Gibeon; Babylonian administrative center of Judah

following the destruction of Jerusalem in 587 BC (Jer 40:10, 12).
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 3:8 *Broad Wall*. Location unknown. May be a separate wall running to the west.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 3:9 *ruler of half the district*. Apparently the province was divided into five districts (see ESV note), which were further subdivided.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 3:11 *Tower of the Ovens*. Along the west wall; used either for baking or firing pottery.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 3:13 *Valley Gate … Dung Gate*. See note, 2:13–15.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 3:15 *Fountain Gate ... Pool of Shelah*. See note, 2:13–15. *king's garden*. Perhaps planned by King Hezekiah (2Ki 20:20). *stairs that go down.* Steps probably led down from Ophel (see note, v 26) through the Fountain Gate to En-rogel (2:13–15).
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 3:16 *tombs of David*. Where kings in David's family were buried. *house of the mighty men*. Meaning uncertain. See note, Ru 2:1.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 3:17 *Levites*. Temple workers. See note, Ezr 8:20. *district of Keilah*. 20 mi SW of Jerusalem.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 3:19 *armory at the buttress*. Storage place for weapons, perhaps located at an abutment projecting from the east wall.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 3:20–22 *house of Eliashib*. Private dwelling along the east wall (v 1).
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 3:23 *Azariah.* One with this name is listed among the Levites who helped the people understand the Law (8:7)
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 3:25 *house of the king*. Probably refers to area where royal palace once stood.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 3:26 *Ophel*. Knoll on hill where original city of David stood, south of the temple area (2Sm 5:9; 2Ch 33:14). *Water Gate*. Entrance in the east wall that probably led to Gihon Spring.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 3:27 *Tekoites.* See note, v 5.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 3:28 *Horse Gate*. Entrance for cavalry; overlooked Kidron Valley. *his own house*. Priests living in this area each worked near his own house.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 3:30 *his chamber*. He probably lived in one room. See note, 2Sm 18:33.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 3:31 *Muster Gate*. Near north end of the east wall, perhaps the place where the temple or palace guard assembled (2Ch 32:6). *upper chamber*. May have been a lookout point with a good view to the north.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 3:32 *Sheep Gate*. See note, v 1.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 3** The Judeans eagerly begin work on the walls and gates of Jerusalem under Nehemiah's able leadership. God's people still today have civic duties to fulfill, sharing in the burdens of their family and neighbors. As the Lord gives you strength, support the good works of others, which creates life and improves its quality. The Lord Jesus, who passed through the gates of Jerusalem, will sanctify your service through the blessings of His Word and in answer to your prayers. • Open to me, O Lord, the gates of heaven, that I may enter there by Your grace alone. Amen.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 4:1 *Sanballat ... angry ... and he jeered*. See note, 2:10. *Jews*. Judeans. See note, Ezr 4:12.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 4:2 *army*. Militia that Sanballat probably commanded. *Samaria*. C 40 mi N of Jerusalem; former capital of Northern Kingdom and now the Persian administrative center. See color map 1. *What are these feeble ... burned ones at that?* Sanballat inferred that it would take a miracle for the Judeans to achieve their goal of rebuilding the walls.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 4:3 *Tobiah*. See note, 2:10. *a fox ... will break*. Ridicule.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 4:4–5 *Hear, O our God.* Nehemiah's prayer put the ridicule of the adversaries into sharp contrast with his trust in God. Opposition to work enjoined by God is defiance of His will and comes under His curse. People of strong faith ask God to break and hinder "every evil plan and purpose of the devil, the world, and our sinful nature, which do not want us to hallow God's name or let His kingdom come" (SC, Third Petition, p xxxviii).
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 4:6 The taunts of the enemies (vv 2–3) did not stop work on the wall as segments were linked together to form an unbroken circuit around the city. *half its height*. Full height of finished wall is not reported.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 4:7 *Ashdodites*. Inhabitants of Philistine city of Ashdod, 35 mi W of Jerusalem. See color map 1.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 4:8 *fight*. Likely by guerrilla attacks. They hardly would have risked open warfare in defiance of "the king's letters" (2:9).
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 4:9 *prayed … and set*. Illustration of Latin proverb *ora et labora* ("pray and work").
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 4:10–11 Strength of the workers was spent, and fear of enemy attacks nearly paralyzed them.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 4:10 *In Judah it was said*. Or, "people of Judah said."
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 4:12 *Jews*. Judeans. See note, Ezr 4:12. *lived near them*. Builders who came from nearby towns. *You must return to us*. Because of the danger to their lives.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 4:13 *open places*. Cleared of rubble. *stationed the people*. Nehemiah placed guards in walled areas, but near breaches in the walls (cf v 7), to prevent enemies from entering. *clans*. Family groups. See pp 54–55.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 4:14 *Remember the Lord.* Nehemiah encouraged his work crew to fight hard, knowing that the powerful Lord was with them.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 4:1–14 The weary and wary Judeans support one another with the counsel of Nehemiah. Today, do not let the taunts of unbelievers or naysayers keep you from fulfilling your calling. The great and powerful Lord—He who stooped to bear our burdens and save us in Christ—is with you in your work. • Great and awesome Lord, I remember and praise Your good works. Work on my behalf, O Lord, that I may fulfill Your purpose for me. Amen.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 4:16 *servants*. Probably Nehemiah's personal servants who formed a kind of militia (v 21; 5:15–16).
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 4:17 Those carting away rubble also carried weapons.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 4:18 *sword.* Short sword, which we might regard as a long knife, that would not impede the work. *trumpet*. Bugler stood beside Nehemiah, ready to rally reinforcements to the point of attack (v 20). See p 993.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 4:21 *half of them*. Refers to Nehemiah's servants (v 16).
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 4:22 *within Jerusalem*. Nonresidents (cf v 12) capable of bearing arms were ordered to stay overnight in Jerusalem rather

than going to their own homes.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 4:23 *none … took off our clothes*. To bathe or rest. *weapon at his right hand*. Nehemiah and his close companions set an example of vigilance.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 4:15–23 Nehemiah encourages ever more vigilant service by reminding the workers that "our God will fight for us." Whether the struggle is physical, mental, or spiritual, the Lord rallies to our side. Enact every sound plan with confidence in His blessing. Just as He overcame Satan at the cross, He will overcome the obstacles you, too, may face. • Grant me full confidence in Your will, O Lord, that I may take the battle to my enemies with boldness. Amen.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 5:1 *outcry of the people and of their wives*. Families of common people were being oppressed by economic practices of nobles and officials (v 7). *Jewish brothers*. Fellow Judeans. See note, Ezr 4:12.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 5:2 *get grain*. Perhaps the time spent working on the walls took farmers away from raising crops, or there may have been several bad harvests resulting in a famine (v 3).

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 5:3 *mortgaging our fields*. Necessary in order for the poor to buy food.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 5:4 *king's tax*. Aram word translated "tribute" in Ezr 4:13; 7:24. Levied by the Persian king on subjugated peoples.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 5:5 *our flesh … our children*. Both rich and poor were Judeans. *enslaved*. Families were forced to sell their children as slaves in order to pay debts or buy food. See note, Mt 18:25.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 5:6 Social and economic inequities (vv 1–5) deeply troubled Nehemiah and threatened the stability of the community.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 5:7 *took counsel with myself*. Mulled over in his mind what to do. *interest*. For the injunction against taking interest, see note, Lv 25:36. *assembly*. Mass meeting of all the people (Ezr 10:1).

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 5:8 *bought back*. Nehemiah and other leaders such as Ezra had brought Judeans back from captivity in Babylon.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 5:9 *prevent the taunts of the nations*. Social inequities found in Judah invited ridicule of neighboring nations.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 5:10 *lending*. Nehemiah set an example by lending money and grain without charging interest (v 7).

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 5:11 *percentage*. Interest paid on money that had been loaned was to be returned.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 5:12 *priests*. They witnessed oaths sworn by nobles and officials. See p 228.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 5:13 *shook out the fold*. Used like a pocket. See note, Ex 28:16. Nehemiah's words interpret the meaning of this symbolic gesture, calling on God to punish anyone who broke his promise. *praised the* LORD. Spontaneous outpouring of praise because of the favorable outcome of the assembly.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 5:1–13 Governor Nehemiah addresses the problems caused by excessive interest rates and taxes and sets an example of generosity for the leaders. In politics, words are cheap but goodwill is rare and good deeds are rarer still. When people are unfairly burdened, we can follow Nehemiah's example by relieving them, whether by providing for fairer laws or by helping them directly. At all times, let us give praise to Christ, who sets more than a good example, for He freely bore our debt of sin and guilt. • We praise Your generous ways, O Lord, and thank You for Your mercy. Amen.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 5:14 *appointed*. By King Artaxerxes. *twentieth year to the thirty-second year*. 444–433/2 BC (1:1). *food allowance of the governor*. This allowance, granted by the Persian government, would have been a drain on the resources of the province (cf 1Ki 2:7). Nehemiah's ability to pay the maintenance of his official household suggests he was a man of considerable personal wealth.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 5:15 *governors*. Sheshbazzar (Ezr 5:14), Zerubbabel (Hg 1:1), and unnamed others. *the fear of God*. Nehemiah several times expressed his reverence and devotion to God (2:8, 18; 4:14; 5:9). See p 1001.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 5:16 *servants*. See note, 4:16.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 5:17 *at my table 150 men*. Probably included his servants.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 5:18 *did not demand the food allowance.* See note, v 14.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 5:19 *Remember*. See note, 13:29. King Hezekiah expressed a similar request (see note, 2Ki 20:3). *my good*. Nehemiah was eager for God's blessing on what he had done.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 5:14–19 Nehemiah sets an excellent example for his countrymen of generosity that honors the Lord, our Maker. As the Lord grants you opportunity, lead others by good example. Call for the Lord's blessing. He who blessed you through Baptism and faith in His name will provide for your every need in Christ. • Grant me a heart for sincere service, O Lord, that I may bless my neighbors and colleagues. Amen.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 6:1 *Sanballat ... Tobiah ... Geshem.* See notes, 2:10, 19.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 6:2 Nehemiah both frustrated the attempts of enemies to sabotage the building project (ch 4) and resolved internal dissension (ch 5). Now opponents resorted to plots against his life. It was obvious to Nehemiah that the meeting was only a ruse to get him to leave the protecting walls of Jerusalem and its armed citizenry. *Hakkephirim in the plain of Ono*. C 30 mi NW of Jerusalem.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 6:5 *open letter*. Not sealed to keep it private. See note, Jer 32:10.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 6:6 Nehemiah's enemies charged him with secretly planning to lead a rebellion against Persia and set himself up as king of Judah. *nations*. Such as Ammon, Philistia, and Moab.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 6:7 *prophets*. Nathan was among those prophets who proclaimed Solomon king (1Ki 1:34–40). Conspirators do not say which prophets they had in mind. *the king*. Artaxerxes I. *take counsel together.* Nehemiah does not record their plan.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 6:8 Nehemiah dismisses all allegations as fabrication.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 6:9 *O God*. Nehemiah's prayer is obviously addressed to God, though His name is lacking in Hbr (see ESV note).
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 6:10 *Shemaiah*. Known to Nehemiah, though his office is not stated. Common name in Levitical and prophetic circles (1Ch 9:14; Jer 26:20). Nehemiah's adversaries enlisted him in their plot. *confined*. Presumably for some religious reason (e.g., fulfillment of a vow, some ritual impurity).
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 6:11 *go into the temple and live?* Laypeople were forbidden to enter the temple under sentence of death (Nu 18:7).
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 6:12 *prophecy*. Understood in broad sense of delivering a message; in this case, encouraging Nehemiah to enter the temple.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 6:13 *sin*. Cf v 11. Nehemiah might have regarded running away to be a sin, showing lack of faith.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 6:14 *prophetess Noadiah*. Along with other unnamed prophets, this unknown woman was part of the plot to eliminate Nehemiah in one way or another. See p 389. On prophecy in general, see pp 1077–83.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 6:1–14 False prophets attempt to deceive Nehemiah and bring about his death. God's people must always test claims of prophetic authority against the sure Word of prophecy: Holy Scripture (Dt 18:20–22; 1Jn 4:1–3). Abide in God's Word, which is able to make you wise for life and for eternal life through Christ. • Now, O God, strengthen my hands according to Your Word. Amen.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 6:15 *Elul*. Aug/Sept. See calendar, p 262. *fifty-two days*. Speedy completion of the project is a tribute both to Nehemiah's resourceful management and to the people's devotion. Yet, in the final analysis, success was possible only with God's help (v 16).
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 6:16 *nations ... fell greatly*. Awe of God forced them to acknowledge His hand in the Judeans' accomplishments.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 6:17 *Tobiah.* See note, 2:10.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 6:18 *son-in-law of Shecaniah*. Tobiah, ally of Samaritan governor Sanballat, had married into a prominent Jerusalem family. Shecaniah was the son of Arah, head of a clan (7:10). There were family ties also with Berechiah, supervisor of a contingent of workers on the wall (3:4, 30). These relatives were Tobiah's channels for a campaign of propaganda and intimidation.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 6:19 *his good deeds*. Tobiah's relatives spoke well of him to undermine morale and Nehemiah's good name.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 7:1 *gatekeepers*. Guarded the entrances to the temple, preserved ritual purity, and looked after furniture and supplies (1Ch 26:12–19; 2Ch 8:14).
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 7:2–3 With the walls completed and the temple personnel in place, Nehemiah turned his attention to strengthening Jerusalem's security.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 7:2 *brother Hanani*. See note, 1:2. *Hananiah.* Men with similar names (some suggest these are spelling variants for the same name) were given charge over Jerusalem. *governor of the castle.* Commander of the temple fortress.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 7:3 *until the sun is hot*. Midmorning to midday. *guards*. Residents were appointed.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 7:4 *few*. Reference to sparse population serves as a transition to the account of Nehemiah's efforts to move more people into Jerusalem (11:1–2). *no houses*. Hyperbole to describe general conditions in Jerusalem, since v 3 referred to people standing in front of their homes.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 6:15–7:4 Nehemiah appoints faithful colleagues to ensure good progress on the next phase of the work. Today, take joy in the faithful brothers and sisters who work with you in the Lord by showing your appreciation for them. How great a blessing is a shared burden in service to the One who bore all our burdens at the cross and will share heaven with us too. • I praise You, Lord, for my faithful colleagues. Grant us success in God-pleasing service. Amen.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 7:5 As Nehemiah was about to take a census to determine by genealogy who the real members in Judah were, he came upon the book listing those who had returned to Jerusalem when Cyrus first issued his decree c 90 years earlier (Ezr 1:2–4). This roster of registered families was considered so vital for the welfare of the province that it was made a part of the record, duplicating for the most part the list in Ezr 2. *God put it into my heart*. See note, 2:12. Nehemiah's insistence that his decision was prompted by God contrasts with David, who was incited by Satan to number Israel (1Ch 21:1).
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 7:6–65 *the people*. List contains essentially same names as in Ezr 2. See note, Ezr 2:2–67.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 7:7 *Nehemiah.* Not the same man as author/Persian governor.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 7:66 *whole assembly*. For the totals given in these verses, see note, Ezr 2:64.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 7:70–72 *gave*. Contributions, summarized in Ezr 2:68–69, are enumerated here according to various donors.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 7:73 *seventh month*. Tishri, our Sept/Oct, the month after Elul (6:15). See calendar, p 262. Years earlier, the people had gathered in the seventh month to celebrate rebuilding of the altar (Ezr 3:1–3). Now they would gather as one body to hear the reading of the Law (8:1).
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 7:5–73 See application note, Ezr 2.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 8:1 *Water Gate*. See note, 3:26. *told Ezra the scribe*. People took initiative in asking Ezra to read from God's Law. Ezra's previous history is recorded in Ezr 7–10. See note, Ezr 7:6. One task Ezra set for himself was to teach God's "statutes and rules in Israel" (Ezr 7:10), a responsibility assigned to him by King Artaxerxes (Ezr 7:25). *Law of Moses*. Five Books of Moses (Gn–Dt).

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 8:2 *women and all who could understand*. Women and older children were included in the assembly. *on the first day of the seventh month*. Tishri (see note, 7:73). The Lord had ordained that this was to be a holy day, the Feast of Trumpets. See pp 200–201. "This is the simple meaning of the [third] commandment: People must have holidays. Therefore, such observances should be devoted to hearing God's Word so that the special function of this day of rest should be the ministry of the Word for the young and the mass of poor people [Nehemiah 8:2–3, 8]. Yet the resting should not be strictly understood to forbid any work that comes up, which cannot be avoided" (LC I 86).

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 8:3 *he read from it*. Ezra had to limit himself to selected portions of the Law (he probably read mostly from Dt). *early morning until midday*. C six hours.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 8:4 *wooden platform*. Lit, "a tower of wood" that had to accommodate at least 14 people. *Mattithiah ... Meshullam*. These 13 on Ezra's right and left were probably laypeople demonstrating their support. Anaiah, Maaseiah, Hashum, and Meshullam were "chiefs of the people" who signed the covenant (10:14, 18, 20, 22, 25).

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 8:5 *all the people stood*. Out of respect for the Law. See p 1277.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 8:6 *Amen, Amen*. Chem: "Prayers and invocations are ended with this expression, not only to show that in a general way we approve of the prayer but also that it may be applied to us personally" (*LTh* 2:492). *lifting up their hands*. Hands were raised during prayer (Ps 28:2; Lm 2:19). *faces to the ground*. Sign of humility and repentance (Ezr 9:5; 10:1). See p 1276.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 8:7 *Jeshua ... Pelaiah*. These 13 Levites assisted Ezra in helping the people understand the Law. Four of them may have taken part in the service of repentance (9:4–5), and seven may be named among the signers of the covenant (10:9–13).

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 8:8 *clearly, and they gave the sense*. Levites repeated the words loudly and distinctly for all to hear and perhaps paraphrased in Aram what Ezra read in Hbr for those who no longer understood the original language. Some rabbis regarded this as the beginning of synagogues and the Aram Targums.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 8:1–8 Nehemiah's efforts result in an opportunity for Ezra and others to teach God's Word to the Judeans. God's Word is our source of peace and blessing. Support the proclamation of the Word not only by your offerings and service but, most important, by hearing and studying it. The clear teachings of Scripture will clear your heart of doubts and grant you abiding faith. • Grant us, O Lord, faithful preachers and teachers that we may receive Your Word with peaceful hearts. Amen, Amen.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 8:9 *Nehemiah*. In the report of the religious activities (chs 8–10), Nehemiah's name occurs only here and in 10:1. *day is holy.* Set aside for "a holy convocation," "proclaimed with blast of trumpets" (Lv 23:24). Completion of the walls made this day particularly joyous for the people of Judah. *all the people wept*. Evidently, what the people heard Ezra read made them realize that they had cause to grieve in repentance for their sins, as King Josiah did under similar circumstances (2Ki 22:11, 19). Grief over breaking God's Law was in order; the proper time to express this was coming (ch 9).

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 8:10 *sweet wine*. Good quality wine, not bitter or sour. *joy of the LORD is your strength*. One pleased and content in the Lord is secure from the attacks of others, just as soldiers within a stronghold are secure from attack. *joy*. The Hbr word is used only here and in 1Ch 16:27.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 8:12 *make great rejoicing*. Their mourning turned to joy as the people recognized what great things the Lord had done for them (Ps 100).

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 8:9–12 God's Word moves the hearts of the Judeans, who sanctify the day of celebration by Word and faith. When sorrow overwhelms you, celebrate the holiness of your Lord, who sanctifies you by the Word. Sing the Word in joyful hymns, for in their words, He will grant you strength. • O Savior, we eat and drink and take joy in Your holy reign, taking all comfort in Your Word. Amen.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 8:13–14 As the leaders of the community continued to study the Law, they found that another joyous festival was to

be observed from the 15th to the 22nd day of the seventh month, the Feast of Booths, or Tabernacles (Ex 23:16; Nu 29:12–38; Dt 16:13–15). See calendar, p 262. The Day of Atonement, which fell on the 10th day of the seventh month, is not mentioned (Lv 23:26–32). See pp 200–201.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 8:13 *second day.* Following Ezra's public reading of God's Law (v 2).

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 8:15 *proclaim it and publish*. Lit, "make the report heard and make it pass." *as it is written*. Not a verbatim citation of any one passage, but a summary of how to observe the feast.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 8:16 *roof*. This was flat. See note, Jsh 2:6. *square at the Water Gate*. See note, 3:26. *Gate of Ephraim*. In the north wall close to the temple. See note, 2Ki 14:13.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 8:17 *Jeshua.* Variant of "Joshua," who led the people of Israel into the Promised Land. *had not done so*. Feast of Booths had been observed often since the days of Joshua, but not with the same degree of joy and fervor. Cf 2Ch 35:18. This celebration was particularly meaningful because it marked the reestablishment of Jerusalem as the center of faith and life.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 8:18 *day by day*. Moses required that the Law be read in the hearing of all Israel every seven years at the Feast of Booths.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 8:13–18 By studying Scripture, the Judeans learn that they had overlooked celebrating a key feast. How often we may overlook God's teachings because we do not know the Word! Each day, the Lord's people need to partake of God's Word—a feast for the soul. Consume and study the Scriptures daily, for by them the Lord nurtures faith and grants life. • I rejoice, O Savior, in the goodness of Your Word, my daily good news in this sad, sin-broken world. Amen.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 9:1 In the seventh month (8:2), two days after the Feast of Booths had concluded (8:13–18), the people were again assembled, this time for a day of repentance. Already at the first convocation, "the people wept as they heard the words of the Law" (8:9). Continued reading (8:18) made them even more aware of "their sins and the iniquities of their fathers" (9:2). *fasting and in sackcloth, and with earth on their heads*. Symbolizing humility and repentance (1:4; Jb 2:12; Jnh 3:5).

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 9:2 *separated themselves*. Foreigners could not be expected to join with the Judeans in confessing their own and their ancestors' sins. See notes, Ezr 6:21; 9:2. *iniquities of their fathers*.

Confession recounts history of sinning (vv 6–37), including also wickedness of the present generation (vv 33, 37). Such confession acknowledges enduring effects of original sin and actual sins.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 9:3 *in their place*. Wooden platform (8:4). *Book of the Law*. Cf 8:1, 3. *quarter of the day*. Reading continued for about three hours, followed by confession of sins and worship.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 9:4–5 *stairs*. Ascent to the platform (8:4). *cried with a loud voice*. Levites needed to speak loudly so all could hear their praise and psalm of repentance. *Levites*. Two groups of eight Levites are listed, though five of the names are duplicates (Jeshua, Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, and Sherebiah; a Bani is named twice in the first list). Levites led the assembly in prayer and confession (8:7). *Stand up and bless*. Levites invited people to rise and give worshipful attention to the psalm of repentance they would speak. See p 1277. *Blessed be Your glorious name*. Introduction to a psalm similar to Ps 106.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 9:6 LXX attributes these words to Ezra (see ESV note). Hbr text attributes the psalm to the Levites, who may have chanted it. *host*. Angelic creatures (1Ki 22:19; Ps 103:21). See p 1291. "He is the maker and preserver of all things, visible and invisible" (AC I 2).
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 9:7 *Ur*. In the valley of the Euphrates River in ancient Babylon. See map, p 780. *Chaldeans*. Babylonians.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 9:8 *Canaanite ... Girgashite*. See p 345. *righteous*. Abraham "believed the LORD, and He counted it to him as righteousness" (Gn 15:6; cf Rm 4:9). See p 843.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 9:10 *made a name*. Nations recognized what great things the Lord had accomplished (6:16; Ex 15:14–18).
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 9:13 *rules ... laws ... statutes ... commandments*. See p 971. Terms here appear with adjectives, uncommon for such a list.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 9:14 *You made known ... Your holy Sabbath*. Only the Third Commandment was mentioned specifically because keeping the Sabbath was a distinguishing mark of a Judean, and breaking it was a capital offense (Ex 31:13; 35:1–3).
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 9:15 *bread from heaven*. Manna. See notes, Ex 16:14, 15.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 9:16 *and our fathers*. Response of Israel's ancestors to God's material and spiritual blessings grew more disappointing as His favors mounted. Were it not for His "great mercies" (v 19), they

would have been left to perish in the wilderness. *acted presumptuously and stiffened their neck*. Arrogant and stubborn attitudes. See note, Ex 32:9.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 9:17 *return*. Cf Nu 14:1–4. *ready to forgive, gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love*. See note, Ex 34:6.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 9:20 *Your good Spirit*. The Lord bestowed His Spirit on the 70 elders whom Moses chose to be his assistants (Nu 11:16–29). In this survey of the past, all action is attributed directly to God; there is no mention of Israel's great men, not even Moses or David. See p 1815.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 9:21 *clothes ... feet*. Cf Dt 8:4.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 9:22 *every corner*. Expressed God's abundant blessing of land.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 9:24 *they might do with them as they would*. Israel was able to work its will on the nations living in Canaan because God had given this power (Dt 7:1–5).

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 9:25 *cisterns*. Pits for storing water. See note, Jer 2:13.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 9:26 *killed Your prophets*. Cf Jer 26:23.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 9:27 *saviors*. Judges (see notes, Jgs 3:9, 15).

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 9:29 *shall live*. Israel did not earn the right to live because of observing God's laws. Escape from eternal death was solely a gift of God's grace offered and bestowed in the covenant. Obedience to the Commandments showed a grateful acceptance of this unearned mercy (cf Ezk 20:11).

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 9:30 *years*. More than 600 years elapsed between Israel's entrance into the Promised Land and the fall of Jerusalem. *peoples of the lands*. Nations such as Assyria and Babylon. Cf 2Ki 17:7–23.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 9:31 *great mercies*. "Where sin increased" throughout Israel's history, "grace abounded all the more" (Rm 5:20). In the wilderness (v 17), during the occupation of Canaan (v 27), even in the Babylonian exile, God did not "make an end of them" as they fully deserved. A plea for continued mercy and pledge of covenant faithfulness (vv 32–38) could be made without fear of rejection.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 9:32 Judah's current situation was described. *steadfast love*. See p 843. *kings … people*. Nehemiah ranks the people in five groups, down to household leaders. *kings of Assyria*. Israel's hardship

peaked with Assyria's capture of the Northern Kingdom and Babylon's destruction of Jerusalem and deportation into exile of many inhabitants. In Nehemiah's day, the chosen people were "slaves" to the Persians and were not an independent community.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 9:33 *You have been righteous*. Beginning (v 8) and end of this psalm affirm that God is righteous, that He is free of blame for what had happened, and that He has the power to save. See p 843.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 9:36 *slaves*. Though the Judeans were not literally slaves, they were subject to the heavy burden of taxation (5:4; Ezr 4:13; 7:24) and other oppressive measures (v 37).

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 9:38 *covenant*. See p 127. People of Ezra's time felt the need to renew their pledge of loyalty to the same covenant after hearing the Book of the Law read repeatedly (8:3, 18). *sealed document*. The solemn, public commitment to God's Law was put into writing, and the document was sealed. The clerical and lay leadership signed their names on the outside of the document (ch 10).

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 9** The people confess the Lord's enduring mercy promised in the covenant. They were saved by God's grace, not by their obedience. You, too, are saved only by God's grace, which He offers faithfully through Christ Jesus. • We confess You alone, O Lord, our Maker, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. Amen.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 10:1 *seals*. See note, 9:38. *Nehemiah*. See note, 8:9. List of signatories was headed by the name of the governor (5:14). Ezra did not appear among the priestly signers, though "Azariah" (v 2) is an alternate form of his name. *Zedekiah.* In the Hbr text, this name is preceded by "and," suggesting he might be Nehemiah's assistant or scribe.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 10:2–8 *priests*. Some of the names of the 21 priests occur again in 12:1–7. *Jeremiah … Obadiah … Daniel*. Common biblical names. Prophets by these names were not in Jerusalem at this time.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 10:9–13 *Levites*. List of 17 Levites includes some named in 9:4–5.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 10:14–27 *chiefs of the people.* Lists 44 lay leaders in the community, the "heads of fathers' houses of all the people" (8:13). See p 228.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 10:28 *rest of the people.* Those who did not sign the document (9:38) but agreed with it. *gatekeepers, the singers, the temple servants.* Temple assistants. Cf 1Ch 25–26; see note, Ezr 2:58. *separated*

themselves. Cf 9:2. *all who have knowledge and understanding*. Could refer to older children (cf 8:2), but certainly describes those listed here who were instructed and committed to God's Word (9:38).

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 10:29 *curse and an oath*. Whole assembly was willing to "enter into the sworn covenant of the LORD" (Dt 29:12), invoking a curse on themselves should they break their pledge (Dt 28:15–19). See pp 6, 7. *commandments ... rules ... statutes*. See p 971.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 10:30 *not give our daughters*. People vowed to refrain from intermarriage with foreigners (13:23–27; Ezr 9:1–2; 10:11).

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 10:31 *not buy.* They pledged not to buy from outsiders who were selling on the Sabbath. *crops of the seventh year*. Law required that land should lie idle every seventh year. See p 206.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 10:32–39 Final section of the document required contributions for the support of temple worship and its ministers. *third part*. A half shekel was required by law (Ex 30:13). If computed according to Persian currency, the obligation that the people laid on themselves was perhaps equal in value to the required civil tax.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 10:33 *showbread*. See note, 1Ch 9:31–32. *atonement*. See p 5.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 10:34 *wood offering ... written in the Law*. Law stipulated that "fire shall be kept burning on the altar continually" (Lv 6:12–13). People devised a system of casting lots to determine who would supply the wood.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 10:35 *firstfruits*. See note, Lv 2:12. First of the crop belonged to the Lord, the giver of all good things.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 10:36 *firstborn of our sons*. See notes, Ex 13:2; 22:29.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 10:37 *chambers*. Storage rooms in the temple (13:5, 9). See diagram, p 730. *collect the tithes in all our towns*. The Levites collected the tithes with which the people supported them (see notes, Nu 18:21, 28).

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 10:38 *priest ... shall be with the Levites*. Levites were supervised by priests.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 10:39 *vessels*. Used for various purposes in the temple, including storage of grain, wine, and oil (13:9, 12).

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 10** People offer thanks to the Lord for the blessings of the covenant and the atonement provided through the

sacrifices. As the Lord blesses us, we also respond with offerings of thanks for His gracious gifts in Christ. • We will not neglect Your house, O God, by which You bless us in the hearing of Your Gospel. Amen.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 11:1 *cast lots*. To repopulate Jerusalem, as "the people within it were few" (7:4), it was agreed that one person in 10 living outside the city would be selected by lot to become an urban resident. May have also been for purposes of defense (cf vv 6, 8). See note, Jsh 14:2.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 11:2 *willingly offered*. Those chosen by lot were praised for being willing to move.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 11:3–36 Following the report of the additions to Jerusalem's population, a list of those who lived there (vv 3–24) and in the Judean villages (vv 25–36) was attached. This city directory has almost the same names found in 1Ch 9:2–34. It is arranged under five categories: laypeople (vv 3–9); priests (vv 10–14); Levites (vv 15–18); gatekeepers and temple servants (vv 19, 21); officials (vv 22–24).

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 11:3 *chiefs*. See note, 10:14–27. *Israel.* Common people, children of Israel. *temple servants ... Solomon's servants*. See note, Ezr 2:58.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 11:4 *sons of Judah ... sons of Benjamin.* Lay leaders from these two tribes.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 11:6 *valiant men*. Respectable men, fit for fighting. See note, Ru 2:1.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 11:9 *overseer*. Military commander.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 11:10–14 See note, 1Ch 9:13.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 11:11 *ruler*. High priest.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 11:14 *mighty men of valor.* See note, v 6.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 11:16 *outside work*. Exterior maintenance of the temple.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 11:17 *Asaph.* Ps 50; 73–83 are attributed to a man with this name. See p 840. *leader of the praise*. Singers, sometimes mentioned separately (10:28), are listed with the Levites.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 11:19 *gatekeepers*. See note, 7:1.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 11:20 *inheritance*. Property outside Jerusalem inherited from one's ancestors.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 11:21–24 Before listing villages of Judah (vv 25–35), three notes about Jerusalem residents were inserted.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 11:21 Temple servants lived just south of the temple. *Ophel*. See note, 3:26.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 11:23 *king*. Perhaps King Artaxerxes. *provision ... as every day required*. Support for the daily needs of the temple singers was provided from the king's treasury.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 11:24 Pethahiah was the king's adviser.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 11:25–36 See color map 1. Not all locations are known.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 11:25 *villages*. Apparently, many people preferred to live in unwalled towns "with their fields" rather than in the close quarters of fortified Jerusalem. There were 17 villages in the territory of Judah, 15 in Benjamin. *Kiriath-arba.* Ancient name for Hebron, 19 mi S of Jerusalem. *Dibon.* Probably Debir, 15 mi E of Beersheba. *Jekabzeel*. Or Kabzeel (Jsh 15:21), c 6 mi NE of Beersheba.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 11:26 *Jeshua.* Probably Shema, 17 mi E of Beersheba. *Moladah.* C 4 mi NE of Beersheba.*Beth-pelet*. Location unknown (Jsh 15:27).
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 11:27 *Hazar-shual, in Beersheba*. Ancient site is c 2 mi E of the modern city, c 45 mi SW of Jerusalem. Southernmost area inhabited by Judeans.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 11:28 *Ziklag.* C 14 mi NW of Beersheba. *Meconah*. Location unknown.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 11:29 *En-rimmon.* C 9 mi N of Beersheba. *Zorah.* C 15 mi W of Jerusalem. *Jarmuth*. C 17 mi SW of Jerusalem.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 11:30 *Zanoah.* C 15 mi SW of Jerusalem. *Adullam.* C 18 mi SW of Jerusalem. *Lachish.* 28 mi SW of Jerusalem. *fields*. Lachish may not have had small, surrounding settlements like some of the towns. *Azekah.* Near Jarmuth (v 29). *encamped*. Type of dwelling in which people lived varied; some undoubtedly lived in tents. *Valley of Hinnom*. Deep valley just south of Jerusalem (2Ki 23:10).
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 11:31 *Geba*. C 7 mi N of Jerusalem in territory of Benjamin. *Michmash.* Just north of Geba. *Aija.* Same as Ai, 10 mi N of Jerusalem. *Bethel*. Just west of Ai.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 11:32 *Anathoth.* C 3 mi N of Jerusalem, home of Jeremiah. *Nob.* Just east of Jerusalem. *Ananiah*. May be Bethany, not far to the east.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 11:33 *Hazor.* C 5 mi NW of Jerusalem, not to be confused with the large city north of the Sea of Chinnereth. *Ramah.* C 6 mi N of Jerusalem. *Gittaim*. Perhaps Gath, 23 mi NW of Jerusalem.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 11:34 *Hadid.* North of Gittaim (v 33). *Zeboim.* Near Lod (v 35). *Neballat*. Northwest of Lod.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 11:35 *Lod.* C 25 mi NW of Jerusalem. *Ono, the valley of craftsmen*. Ravine running northwest of Lod.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 11:36 *assigned to Benjamin*. Some Levites lived in Benjamin.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 11** For the sake of security and good order, a number of people willingly agree to occupy Jerusalem, which was only beginning to be restored. Volunteer service has great value and may involve great sacrifice. Prayerfully consider how you may voluntarily serve your Lord, your Church, and your community. As you pray, give thanks for the willing heart of Jesus, who paid the greatest sacrifice to render the greatest service: your salvation. • Grant me a willing heart, good order, and fruitful service, O Savior. Amen.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 12:1–7 Names of 22 leaders of priestly families who came up with Zerubbabel and Jeshua from Babylon to Jerusalem c 100 years earlier (Ezr 2:2). Many of these names also appeared on the list of recent covenant signers, which means these are likely family names, not those of individuals (10:2–8).
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 12:8–9 List of Levitical leaders and temple singers who came with Zerubbabel.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 12:9 *opposite*. For alternate or antiphonal singing. See p 959.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 12:10–11 Six high priests from the time of Zerubbabel until the writing of Ne. Some names are likely missing, or perhaps the office was vacant at times.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 12:12–21 Individuals who represented priestly families in the days of the chief priest Joiakim (v 10). Names of some priests appear on Judean coins, which demonstrates the important relationship of the priests to the Persian government. It may also mean that a mint was established in connection with the temple.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 12:12 *fathers' houses*. Priestly families.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 12:22 *Darius the Persian*. Darius II (423–405 BC), one of three Persian kings who had the same name. Lists found in Ne

were likely gathered during the reign of Darius II.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 12:24 *opposite*. See note, v 9. *man of God*. God chose David to arrange temple worship (2Ch 8:14). *watch by watch*. Hbr expression describes stations in the temple from which the groups sang responsively.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 12:25 *standing guard*. The gatekeepers were responsible for guarding the temple's storage areas (7:1).
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 12:26 *Joiakim*. High priest prior to the coming of Ezra and Nehemiah. *days of Nehemiah*. 445–c 415 BC.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 12:27 *dedication of the wall*. Previously, it had been reported that the wall of Jerusalem was finished (6:15). The dedication ceremony is not dated, so it may also have taken place when the wall was finished but is only described now as the capstone to Nehemiah's achievements. *sought.* Levites from the countryside around Jerusalem were summoned for the occasion.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 12:28 *sons of the singers*. Members of the guild of singers are noted particularly because the festivities called for jubilant vocal and instrumental music. *Netophathites*. From Netophah, 6 mi S of Jerusalem.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 12:29 *Beth-gilgal.* Gilgal, 17 mi NE of Jerusalem. *Geba.* See note, 11:31. *Azmaveth*. C 6 mi N of Jerusalem.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 12:30 *purified themselves*. Purification rites for Levites are described in Nu 8:5–22. Ceremonial cleanness of priests was demanded in Lv 21:1–9; 22:1–9 (cf Ezr 6:20; Ne 13:22). Removal of uncleanness was required of the people (Nu 19:11–22). When the temple was reconsecrated at the time of Hezekiah, Levites who had sanctified themselves "brought out all the uncleanness" from the sanctuary (2Ch 29:12–16). See "consecrate," p 6.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 12:31 *I brought.* Nehemiah's first-person account resumes (see note, 1:1). *south*. One choir processed south from the point of departure in the west wall, the Valley Gate (see note, 2:13–15). *Dung Gate*. At the very south end of the wall.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 12:36 *musical instruments of David*. Some are listed in v 27. See note, 2Ch 29:26. See also p 993.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 12:37 *Fountain Gate … stairs of the city of David*. See note, 3:15. *Water Gate*. See note, 3:26.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 12:38 *north.* Second choir moved north from the Valley Gate (cf v 31). This group included Nehemiah. *Tower of the Ovens.* See note, 3:11. *Broad Wall*. See note, 3:8.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 12:39 Cf 3:1–6. *Gate of Ephraim.* Not far from the northwest corner. *Gate of the Guard*. Probably refers to the Muster Gate (see note, 3:31).
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 12:40 *stood in the house of God*. Two choirs (vv 31, 38) converged at the temple on the northeast side.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 12:43 *sacrifices*. As when the altar and temple were dedicated (Ezr 3:3–5; 6:17), so sacrifices of thanksgiving were offered to the Lord to celebrate completion of the walls.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 12:44–47 As with 13:1–3, a brief supplement loosely connected to the dedication ceremony. Both emphasize that the community was united in observance of the Law.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 12:44 *appointed.* Persons were assigned to administer the items brought to the temple for the support of the clergy. *contributions.* Cf 10:32–34, 39. *firstfruits.* Cf 10:35–37a. *tithes*. Cf 10:37b–38.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 12:45 *purification*. Duty of the Levites was "to assist the sons of Aaron" in "the cleansing of all that is holy," i.e., set aside for sacred use (1Ch 23:28). *David and his son.* David's organization of the temple officiants (1Ch 23–26) was put into operation by his son Solomon (2Ch 8:14).
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 12:46 *long ago*. More than 500 years earlier. *Asaph*. See note, 11:17; cf 1Ch 15:16–17; 16:5.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 12:47 *Zerubbabel*. Under his governorship, the temple was built (Ezr 5:2; 6:14–15), and Nehemiah surrounded it with protecting walls. *daily portions*. The people provided for the daily needs of temple personnel. *set apart*. Tithe (10:38).
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 12** With careful organization, the priests and Levites lead God's people in worship and in dedicating the walls of Jerusalem. Though some today insist that spontaneity is a most important quality of Spirit-led worship, Scripture describes carefully organized services for God's people. The most important feature of genuine worship is focus on the Lord and His blessings of salvation and care. • I dedicate to You, O Lord, all that I am and have. Amen.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 13:1–3 See note, 12:44–47.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 13:1 *Book of Moses*. Based on the action that followed, the reading likely was from Dt. *Ammonite or Moabite.* Ammon and Moab were countries east of Judah, beyond the Jordan River and Salt Sea. *assembly.* Worshiping community.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 13:2 *Balaam*. Cf Nu 22–24. *blessing.* God did not allow Balaam to curse Israel but forced him to speak blessings (Nu 24:10–13). See p 842.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 13:3 *separated*. Excluded foreigners from the worship assembly (see note, 9:2).
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 13:4 *Now before this*. Suggests that the separation from those of foreign descent (v 3) was related to the following episode. *Eliashib.* Identified as a priest, but not likely the same man as the high priest (v 28). *appointed over the chambers*. Eliashib was put in charge of the storage rooms in the temple. *Tobiah*. From Ammon (see note, 2:10), from whose people the Judeans separated (v 1). He had mocked the rebuilding of the walls (4:3). Yet his family connections (6:18–19) allowed him to enjoy a room in the temple.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 13:5 *large chamber*. For storage of provisions to support temple personnel.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 13:6 *While this was taking place.* Nehemiah was back in Persia at this time. *thirty-second year of Artaxerxes*. 433/2 BC. Nehemiah had come to Jerusalem in 445 BC (5:14). *king of Babylon*. One of several titles claimed by the Persian kings. *after some time.* Appears that Nehemiah's stay in Persia was several years. Artaxerxes died in 424 BC.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 13:7 *evil that Eliashib had done for Tobiah.* Eliashib had allowed an enemy to live in the room designated for temple contributions.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 13:8 *very angry*. Nehemiah's anger and expulsion of Tobiah are understandable. See notes, vv 4, 7.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 13:9 *cleansed the chambers.* Room was readied for its proper use.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 13:10 *portions*. For their daily maintenance. See p 7. *fled each to his field.* Levites and singers discontinued their service in the temple and took up farming to support themselves.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 13:11 Impression of Governor Nehemiah is of a contentious individual; he probably needed to be so in order to get things done. *officials.* Those in charge while Nehemiah was gone.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 13:13 *appointed ... Shelemiah ... Zadok ... Pedaiah ... Hanan.* Treasurers were a priest, scribe, Levite, and singer.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 13:14 *Remember me*. See note, v 29. *good deeds*. Hbr *chesed*; emphasizes faithfulness and loyalty. Nehemiah's good deeds resulted from his faith in God (2:8, 18). See "steadfast love," p 843.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 13:15 *Sabbath*. Another evil that Nehemiah corrected was the desecration of the Sabbath. People were engaged in forbidden activities. See pp 200–201. *warned.* May have included a reminder of the covenant, which had been signed (10:31).
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 13:16 *Tyrians*. Phoenician city of Tyre was a center of world trade. Cf Ezk 27:12–36; 28:16 for its commercial fame.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 13:17 Nehemiah confronted the civic leaders ("nobles"; cf v 11) rather than the priests.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 13:18 *fathers act in this way*. Rejection of warnings against profaning the Sabbath had brought God's wrath on the city in the past and was certain to do so again (cf Is 56:4, 6; 58:13; Ezk 20:12, 20; 44:24).
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 13:19 Nehemiah ordered that the city gates be closed on Friday at sundown and not opened until the Sabbath was over. See pp 200–201. Locking of the gates each night was probably normal practice. *servants.* See note, 4:16.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 13:21 *I will lay hands on you*. Physically drive these sellers away.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 13:22 *purify*. Levites needed to be ritually clean before taking on what Nehemiah considered a sacred duty, keeping the Sabbath day holy. *Remember.* See note, v 29.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 13:23 *Jews*. Judeans. See note, Ezr 4:12. *married*. Nehemiah was infuriated by this relapse into the evil of mixed marriages, which violated one of the promises made previously in the covenant (10:30). See note, Ezr 10:3. *Ashdod.* Philistine city, c 35 mi W of Jerusalem. Its inhabitants were among those who had tried to prevent the building of the walls (4:7). *Ammon, and Moab*. Cf v 1.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 13:24 *language of Ashdod.* Perhaps a residue of the Philistine language or a mixture of Aram dialects. *language of Judah*. Hebrew. See p 751.
NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 13:25 *confronted ... cursed ... beat ... pulled out their hair*. Nehemiah again displayed an impulsive, even intemperate nature

(see notes, v 11; 5:6). *You shall not give … for yourselves.* Wording of oath is based on Dt 7:3. Decree after Ezra's return to Jerusalem included divorce of foreign wives (Ezr 10:11, 19). See "Divorce from Foreigners," pp 738–39.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 13:28 Grandson of high priest Eliashib married the daughter of Sanballat, an inveterate enemy of the people (2:10; 4:1; 6:1). Nehemiah expelled him from the community.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 13:29 *Remember*. Nehemiah often called on God to watch over himself and the people. See p 843. *desecrated the priesthood*. High priests such as Eliashib and Jehoiada (v 28) manifested the same spiritual depravity as did Caiaphas at Christ's trial (Mt 26:62–66; 27:1)

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 13:30 *everything foreign*. Foreign desecration of the Sabbath and mixed marriages.

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON 13:31 *wood offering*. See note, 10:34. *firstfruits*. See note, 10:35. *Remember me*. Book closes with Nehemiah's oft-repeated prayer (see note, v 29). The curtain falls on his career. He and Ezra drop from sight as suddenly as they first appeared. What they did to promote the kingdom of God is a matter of record, "written down for our instruction" (1Co 10:11). Their full life's story is known only to God. He has inscribed their names in the Book of Life, making them citizens of "the holy city, new Jerusalem," which John saw "coming down out of heaven from God" (Rv 21:2).

NEHEMIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 13** Nehemiah confronts ongoing issues of the Law and holiness, even losing his composure when people violated the covenant (v 25). As you serve the Lord, you will also have frustrating experiences. Pray for the Lord to grant you strength as a leader, to control your anger, and to maintain proper focus on the Word. When frustration gets the better of you, count on the Lord to forgive you and strengthen you for continued service. • Remember, O my God, the needs of Your people, and give us grace under pressure. Amen.

Esther

Esther 1 | Esther 2 | Esther 3 | Esther 4 | Esther 5 | Esther 6 | Esther 7 | Esther 8 | Esther 9 | Esther 10

- Introduction to Esther
  - Overview
  - Reading Esther
  - Luther on Esther
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

The King’s Banquets

1 [1]‡†Now in the days of Ahasuerus, the Ahasuerus who reigned from India to Ethiopia over 127 provinces, [2]†in those days when King Ahasuerus sat on his royal throne in Susa, the capital,[1] [3]†in the third year of his reign he gave a feast for all his officials and servants. The army of Persia and Media and the nobles and governors of the provinces were before him, [4]†while he showed the riches of his royal glory and the splendor and pomp of his greatness for many days, 180 days. [5]† And when these days were completed, the king gave for all the people present in Susa, the citadel, both great and small, a feast lasting for seven days in the court of the garden of the king’s palace. [6]‡There were white cotton curtains and violet hangings fastened with cords of fine linen and purple to silver rods[2] and marble pillars, and also couches of gold and silver on a mosaic pavement of porphyry, marble, mother-of-pearl and precious stones. [7]Drinks were served in golden vessels, vessels of different kinds, and the royal wine was lavished according to the bounty of the king. [8]†And drinking was according to this edict: “There is no compulsion.” For the king had given orders to all the staff of his palace to do as each man desired. [9]†Queen Vashti also gave a feast for the women in the palace that belonged to King Ahasuerus.

Queen Vashti’s Refusal

10 On the seventh day, when the heart of the king was merry with wine,
he commanded Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha and Abagtha, Zethar
and Carkas, the seven eunuchs who served in the presence of King
Ahasuerus, 11 to bring Queen Vashti before the king with her royal crown,[3]
in order to show the peoples and the princes her beauty, for she was lovely
to look at. 12 But Queen Vashti refused to come at the king’s command
delivered by the eunuchs. At this the king became enraged, and his anger
burned within him.

13 Then the king said to the wise men who knew the times (for this was
the king’s procedure toward all who were versed in law and judgment,
14 the men next to him being Carshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres,
Marsena, and Memucan, the seven princes of Persia and Media, who saw
the king’s face, and sat first in the kingdom): 15 “According to the law, what
is to be done to Queen Vashti, because she has not performed the command
of King Ahasuerus delivered by the eunuchs?” 16 Then Memucan said in
the presence of the king and the officials, “Not only against the king has
Queen Vashti done wrong, but also against all the officials and all the
peoples who are in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus. 17 For the queen’s
behavior will be made known to all women, causing them to look at their
husbands with contempt, since they will say, ‘King Ahasuerus commanded
Queen Vashti to be brought before him, and she did not come.’ 18 This very
day the noble women of Persia and Media who have heard of the queen’s
behavior will say the same to all the king’s officials, and there will be
contempt and wrath in plenty. 19 If it please the king, let a royal order go
out from him, and let it be written among the laws of the Persians and the
Medes so that it may not be repealed, that Vashti is never again to come
before King Ahasuerus. And let the king give her royal position to another
who is better than she. 20 So when the decree made by the king is proclaimed
throughout all his kingdom, for it is vast, all women will give honor to their
husbands, high and low alike.” 21 This advice pleased the king and the
princes, and the king did as Memucan proposed. 22 He sent letters to all the
royal provinces, to every province in its own script and to every people in

its own language, that every man be master in his own household and speak according to the language of his people.

Esther Chosen Queen

2 [1] After these things, when the anger of King Ahasuerus had abated, he remembered Vashti and what she had done and what had been decreed against her. [2] Then the king's young men who attended him said, "Let beautiful young virgins be sought out for the king. [3] And let the king appoint officers in all the provinces of his kingdom to gather all the beautiful young virgins to the harem in Susa the capital, under custody of Hegai, the king's eunuch, who is in charge of the women. Let their cosmetics be given them. [4] And let the young woman who pleases the king be queen instead of Vashti." This pleased the king, and he did so.

[5] Now there was a Jew in Susa the citadel whose name was Mordecai, the son of Jair, son of Shimei, son of Kish, a Benjaminite, [6] who had been carried away from Jerusalem among the captives carried away with Jeconiah king of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had carried away. [7] He was bringing up Hadassah, that is Esther, the daughter of his uncle, for she had neither father nor mother. The young woman had a beautiful figure and was lovely to look at, and when her father and her mother died, Mordecai took her as his own daughter. [8] So when the king's order and his edict were proclaimed, and when many young women were gathered in Susa the citadel in custody of Hegai, Esther also was taken into the king's palace and put in custody of Hegai, who had charge of the women. [9] And the young woman pleased him and won his favor. And he quickly provided her with her cosmetics and her portion of food, and with seven chosen young women from the king's palace, and advanced her and her young women to the best place in the harem. [10] Esther had not made known her people or kindred, for Mordecai had commanded her not to make it known. [11] And every day Mordecai walked in front of the court of the harem to learn how Esther was and what was happening to her.

[12] Now when the turn came for each young woman to go in to King Ahasuerus, after being twelve months under the regulations for the women, since this was the regular period of their beautifying, six months with oil of myrrh and six months with spices and ointments for women— [13] when the young woman went in to the king in this way, she was given whatever she

desired to take with her from the harem to the king's palace. [14] † In the evening she would go in, and in the morning she would return to the second harem in custody of Shaashgaz, the king's eunuch, who was in charge of the concubines. She would not go in to the king again, unless the king delighted in her and she was summoned by name.

[15] † When the turn came for Esther the daughter of Abihail the uncle of Mordecai, who had taken her as his own daughter, to go in to the king, she asked for nothing except what Hegai the king's eunuch, who had charge of the women, advised. Now Esther was winning favor in the eyes of all who saw her. [16] † And when Esther was taken to King Ahasuerus, into his royal palace, in the tenth month, which is the month of Tebeth, in the seventh year of his reign, [17] † the king loved Esther more than all the women, and she won grace and favor in his sight more than all the virgins, so that he set the royal crown[1] on her head and made her queen instead of Vashti. [18] † Then the king gave a great feast for all his officials and servants; it was Esther's feast. He also granted a remission of taxes to the provinces and gave gifts with royal generosity.

Mordecai Discovers a Plot

19 ‡ † Now when the virgins were gathered together the second time,
Mordecai was sitting at the king's gate. 20 † Esther had not made known her
kindred or her people, as Mordecai had commanded her, for Esther obeyed
Mordecai just as when she was brought up by him. 21 † In those days, as
Mordecai was sitting at the king's gate, Bigthan and Teresh, two of the
king's eunuchs, who guarded the threshold, became angry and sought to lay
hands on King Ahasuerus. 22 † And this came to the knowledge of Mordecai,
and he told it to Queen Esther, and Esther told the king in the name of
Mordecai. 23 † When the affair was investigated and found to be so, the men
were both hanged on the gallows.[1] And it was recorded in the book of the
chronicles in the presence of the king.

Haman Plots Against the Jews

3 [1]†After these things King Ahasuerus promoted Haman the Agagite,
the son of Hammedatha, and advanced him and set his throne above all the
officials who were with him. [2]†And all the king's servants who were at the
king's gate bowed down and paid homage to Haman, for the king had so
commanded concerning him. But Mordecai did not bow down or pay
homage. [3]†Then the king's servants who were at the king's gate said to
Mordecai, "Why do you transgress the king's command?" [4]†And when they
spoke to him day after day and he would not listen to them, they told
Haman, in order to see whether Mordecai's words would stand, for he had
told them that he was a Jew. [5]†And when Haman saw that Mordecai did not
bow down or pay homage to him, Haman was filled with fury. [6]†But he
disdained to lay hands on Mordecai alone. So, as they had made known to
him the people of Mordecai, Haman sought to destroy all the Jews, the
people of Mordecai, throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus.

[7]†In the first month, which is the month of Nisan, in the twelfth year of
King Ahasuerus, they cast Pur (that is, they cast lots) before Haman day
after day; and they cast it month after month till the twelfth month, which is
the month of Adar. [8]†Then Haman said to King Ahasuerus, "There is a
certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the peoples in all the
provinces of your kingdom. Their laws are different from those of every
other people, and they do not keep the king's laws, so that it is not to the
king's profit to tolerate them. [9]†If it please the king, let it be decreed that
they be destroyed, and I will pay 10,000 talents[1] of silver into the hands of
those who have charge of the king's business, that they may put it into the
king's treasuries." [10]†So the king took his signet ring from his hand and
gave it to Haman the Agagite, the son of Hammedatha, the enemy of the
Jews. [11]†And the king said to Haman, "The money is given to you, the
people also, to do with them as it seems good to you."

[12]†Then the king's scribes were summoned on the thirteenth day of the
first month, and an edict, according to all that Haman commanded, was
written to the king's satraps and to the governors over all the provinces and
to the officials of all the peoples, to every province in its own script and

every people in its own language. It was written in the name of King Ahasuerus and sealed with the king's signet ring. [13]† Letters were sent by couriers to all the king's provinces with instruction to destroy, to kill, and to annihilate all Jews, young and old, women and children, in one day, the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month of Adar, and to plunder their goods. [14]A copy of the document was to be issued as a decree in every province by proclamation to all the peoples to be ready for that day. [15]† The couriers went out hurriedly by order of the king, and the decree was issued in Susa the citadel. And the king and Haman sat down to drink, but the city of Susa was thrown into confusion.

Esther Agrees to Help the Jews

4 [1]†When Mordecai learned all that had been done, Mordecai tore his clothes and put on sackcloth and ashes, and went out into the midst of the city, and he cried out with a loud and bitter cry. [2]† He went up to the entrance of the king's gate, for no one was allowed to enter the king's gate clothed in sackcloth. [3]† And in every province, wherever the king's command and his decree reached, there was great mourning among the Jews, with fasting and weeping and lamenting, and many of them lay in sackcloth and ashes.

[4]†When Esther's young women and her eunuchs came and told her, the queen was deeply distressed. She sent garments to clothe Mordecai, so that he might take off his sackcloth, but he would not accept them. [5]† Then Esther called for Hathach, one of the king's eunuchs, who had been appointed to attend her, and ordered him to go to Mordecai to learn what this was and why it was. [6]Hathach went out to Mordecai in the open square of the city in front of the king's gate, [7]†and Mordecai told him all that had happened to him, and the exact sum of money that Haman had promised to pay into the king's treasuries for the destruction of the Jews. [8]†Mordecai also gave him a copy of the written decree issued in Susa for their destruction, that he might show it to Esther and explain it to her and command her to go to the king to beg his favor and plead with him on behalf of her people. [9]And Hathach went and told Esther what Mordecai had said. [10]Then Esther spoke to Hathach and commanded him to go to Mordecai and say, [11]†"All the king's servants and the people of the king's provinces know that if any man or woman goes to the king inside the inner court without being called, there is but one law—to be put to death, except the one to whom the king holds out the golden scepter so that he may live. But as for me, I have not been called to come in to the king these thirty days."

[12]And they told Mordecai what Esther had said. [13]†Then Mordecai told them to reply to Esther, "Do not think to yourself that in the king's palace you will escape any more than all the other Jews. [14]†For if you keep silent at this time, relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews from another place,

but you and your father's house will perish. And who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" [15]Then Esther told them to reply to Mordecai, [16]†"Go, gather all the Jews to be found in Susa, and hold a fast on my behalf, and do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my young women will also fast as you do. Then I will go to the king, though it is against the law, and if I perish, I perish." [17]†Mordecai then went away and did everything as Esther had ordered him.

Esther Prepares a Banquet

5 [1]‡†On the third day Esther put on her royal robes and stood in the
inner court of the king's palace, in front of the king's quarters, while the
king was sitting on his royal throne inside the throne room opposite the
entrance to the palace. [2]†And when the king saw Queen Esther standing in
the court, she won favor in his sight, and he held out to Esther the golden
scepter that was in his hand. Then Esther approached and touched the tip of
the scepter. [3]†And the king said to her, "What is it, Queen Esther? What is
your request? It shall be given you, even to the half of my kingdom." [4]†And
Esther said, "If it please the king, let the king and Haman come today to a
feast that I have prepared for the king." [5]†Then the king said, "Bring Haman
quickly, so that we may do as Esther has asked." So the king and Haman
came to the feast that Esther had prepared. [6]†And as they were drinking
wine after the feast, the king said to Esther, "What is your wish? It shall be
granted you. And what is your request? Even to the half of my kingdom, it
shall be fulfilled." [7]Then Esther answered, "My wish and my request is: [8]†If
I have found favor in the sight of the king, and if it please the king to grant
my wish and fulfill my request, let the king and Haman come to the feast
that I will prepare for them, and tomorrow I will do as the king has said."

Haman Plans to Hang Mordecai

9 ‡ † And Haman went out that day joyful and glad of heart. But when
Haman saw Mordecai in the king's gate, that he neither rose nor trembled
before him, he was filled with wrath against Mordecai. 10 † Nevertheless,
Haman restrained himself and went home, and he sent and brought his
friends and his wife Zeresh. 11 ‡ And Haman recounted to them the splendor
of his riches, the number of his sons, all the promotions with which the king
had honored him, and how he had advanced him above the officials and the
servants of the king. 12 Then Haman said, "Even Queen Esther let no one but
me come with the king to the feast she prepared. And tomorrow also I am
invited by her together with the king. 13 † Yet all this is worth nothing to me,
so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate." 14 † Then his
wife Zeresh and all his friends said to him, "Let a gallows[1] fifty cubits[2]
high be made, and in the morning tell the king to have Mordecai hanged
upon it. Then go joyfully with the king to the feast." This idea pleased
Haman, and he had the gallows made.

The King Honors Mordecai

6 [1]‡†On that night the king could not sleep. And he gave orders to
bring the book of memorable deeds, the chronicles, and they were read
before the king. [2]†And it was found written how Mordecai had told about
Bigthana and Teresh, two of the king's eunuchs, who guarded the threshold,
and who had sought to lay hands on King Ahasuerus. [3]And the king said,
"What honor or distinction has been bestowed on Mordecai for this?" The
king's young men who attended him said, "Nothing has been done for him."
[4]†And the king said, "Who is in the court?" Now Haman had just entered
the outer court of the king's palace to speak to the king about having
Mordecai hanged on the gallows[1] that he had prepared for him. [5]And the
king's young men told him, "Haman is there, standing in the court." And
the king said, "Let him come in." [6]†So Haman came in, and the king said to
him, "What should be done to the man whom the king delights to honor?"
And Haman said to himself, "Whom would the king delight to honor more
than me?" [7]And Haman said to the king, "For the man whom the king
delights to honor, [8]†let royal robes be brought, which the king has worn,
and the horse that the king has ridden, and on whose head a royal crown[2] is
set. [9]And let the robes and the horse be handed over to one of the king's
most noble officials. Let them dress the man whom the king delights to
honor, and let them lead him on the horse through the square of the city,
proclaiming before him: 'Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king
delights to honor.'" [10]†Then the king said to Haman, "Hurry; take the robes
and the horse, as you have said, and do so to Mordecai the Jew, who sits at
the king's gate. Leave out nothing that you have mentioned." [11]†So Haman
took the robes and the horse, and he dressed Mordecai and led him through
the square of the city, proclaiming before him, "Thus shall it be done to the
man whom the king delights to honor."

[12]†Then Mordecai returned to the king's gate. But Haman hurried to his
house, mourning and with his head covered. [13]†And Haman told his wife
Zeresh and all his friends everything that had happened to him. Then his
wise men and his wife Zeresh said to him, "If Mordecai, before whom you

have begun to fall, is of the Jewish people, you will not overcome him but will surely fall before him."

Esther Reveals Haman's Plot

14 ‡† While they were yet talking with him, the king's eunuchs arrived and
hurried to bring Haman to the feast that Esther had prepared.

7 1 So the king and Haman went in to feast with Queen Esther. 2 † And
on the second day, as they were drinking wine after the feast, the king again
said to Esther, "What is your wish, Queen Esther? It shall be granted you.
And what is your request? Even to the half of my kingdom, it shall be
fulfilled." 3 † Then Queen Esther answered, "If I have found favor in your
sight, O king, and if it please the king, let my life be granted me for my
wish, and my people for my request. 4 † For we have been sold, I and my
people, to be destroyed, to be killed, and to be annihilated. If we had been
sold merely as slaves, men and women, I would have been silent, for our
affliction is not to be compared with the loss to the king." 5 † Then King
Ahasuerus said to Queen Esther, "Who is he, and where is he, who has
dared[3] to do this?" 6 † And Esther said, "A foe and enemy! This wicked
Haman!" Then Haman was terrified before the king and the queen.

Haman Is Hanged

7 ‡† And the king arose in his wrath from the wine-drinking and went into
the palace garden, but Haman stayed to beg for his life from Queen Esther,
for he saw that harm was determined against him by the king. 8 † And the
king returned from the palace garden to the place where they were drinking
wine, as Haman was falling on the couch where Esther was. And the king
said, “Will he even assault the queen in my presence, in my own house?”
As the word left the mouth of the king, they covered Haman’s face. 9 † Then
Harbona, one of the eunuchs in attendance on the king, said, “Moreover, the
gallows[1] that Haman has prepared for Mordecai, whose word saved the
king, is standing at Haman’s house, fifty cubits[2] high.” 10 † And the king
said, “Hang him on that.” So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had
prepared for Mordecai. Then the wrath of the king abated.

Esther Saves the Jews

8 [1]†On that day King Ahasuerus gave to Queen Esther the house of Haman, the enemy of the Jews. And Mordecai came before the king, for Esther had told what he was to her. [2]†And the king took off his signet ring, which he had taken from Haman, and gave it to Mordecai. And Esther set Mordecai over the house of Haman.

[3]†Then Esther spoke again to the king. She fell at his feet and wept and pleaded with him to avert the evil plan of Haman the Agagite and the plot that he had devised against the Jews. [4]†When the king held out the golden scepter to Esther, [5]†Esther rose and stood before the king. And she said, "If it please the king, and if I have found favor in his sight, and if the thing seems right before the king, and I am pleasing in his eyes, let an order be written to revoke the letters devised by Haman the Agagite, the son of Hammedatha, which he wrote to destroy the Jews who are in all the provinces of the king. [6]†For how can I bear to see the calamity that is coming to my people? Or how can I bear to see the destruction of my kindred?" [7]†Then King Ahasuerus said to Queen Esther and to Mordecai the Jew, "Behold, I have given Esther the house of Haman, and they have hanged him on the gallows,[3] because he intended to lay hands on the Jews. [8]†But you may write as you please with regard to the Jews, in the name of the king, and seal it with the king's ring, for an edict written in the name of the king and sealed with the king's ring cannot be revoked."

[9]†The king's scribes were summoned at that time, in the third month, which is the month of Sivan, on the twenty-third day. And an edict was written, according to all that Mordecai commanded concerning the Jews, to the satraps and the governors and the officials of the provinces from India to Ethiopia, 127 provinces, to each province in its own script and to each people in its own language, and also to the Jews in their script and their language. [10]†And he wrote in the name of King Ahasuerus and sealed it with the king's signet ring. Then he sent the letters by mounted couriers riding on swift horses that were used in the king's service, bred from the royal stud, [11]†saying that the king allowed the Jews who were in every city to gather and defend their lives, to destroy, to kill, and to annihilate any

armed force of any people or province that might attack them, children and women included, and to plunder their goods, [12]† on one day throughout all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month of Adar. [13]† A copy of what was written was to be issued as a decree in every province, being publicly displayed to all peoples, and the Jews were to be ready on that day to take vengeance on their enemies. [14]So the couriers, mounted on their swift horses that were used in the king's service, rode out hurriedly, urged by the king's command. And the decree was issued in Susa the citadel.

[15]† Then Mordecai went out from the presence of the king in royal robes of blue and white, with a great golden crown[1] and a robe of fine linen and purple, and the city of Susa shouted and rejoiced. [16]† The Jews had light and gladness and joy and honor. [17]† And in every province and in every city, wherever the king's command and his edict reached, there was gladness and joy among the Jews, a feast and a holiday. And many from the peoples of the country declared themselves Jews, for fear of the Jews had fallen on them.

The Jews Destroy Their Enemies

9 [1]‡†Now in the twelfth month, which is the month of Adar, on the thirteenth day of the same, when the king's command and edict were about to be carried out, on the very day when the enemies of the Jews hoped to gain the mastery over them, the reverse occurred: the Jews gained mastery over those who hated them. [2]†The Jews gathered in their cities throughout all the provinces of King Ahasuerus to lay hands on those who sought their harm. And no one could stand against them, for the fear of them had fallen on all peoples. [3]†All the officials of the provinces and the satraps and the governors and the royal agents also helped the Jews, for the fear of Mordecai had fallen on them. [4]†For Mordecai was great in the king's house, and his fame spread throughout all the provinces, for the man Mordecai grew more and more powerful. [5]†The Jews struck all their enemies with the sword, killing and destroying them, and did as they pleased to those who hated them. [6]†In Susa the citadel itself the Jews killed and destroyed 500 men, [7]‡and also killed Parshandatha and Dalphon and Aspatha [8]and Poratha and Adalia and Aridatha [9]and Parmashta and Arisai and Aridai and Vaizatha, [10]the ten sons of Haman the son of Hammedatha, the enemy of the Jews, but they laid no hand on the plunder.

[11]‡That very day the number of those killed in Susa the citadel was reported to the king. [12]And the king said to Queen Esther, "In Susa the citadel the Jews have killed and destroyed 500 men and also the ten sons of Haman. What then have they done in the rest of the king's provinces! Now what is your wish? It shall be granted you. And what further is your request? It shall be fulfilled." [13]†And Esther said, "If it please the king, let the Jews who are in Susa be allowed tomorrow also to do according to this day's edict. And let the ten sons of Haman be hanged on the gallows."[1] [14]†So the king commanded this to be done. A decree was issued in Susa, and the ten sons of Haman were hanged. [15]† The Jews who were in Susa gathered also on the fourteenth day of the month of Adar and they killed 300 men in Susa, but they laid no hands on the plunder.

16 † Now the rest of the Jews who were in the king's provinces also
gathered to defend their lives, and got relief from their enemies and killed
75,000 of those who hated them, but they laid no hands on the plunder.
17 † This was on the thirteenth day of the month of Adar, and on the
fourteenth day they rested and made that a day of feasting and gladness.
18 †But the Jews who were in Susa gathered on the thirteenth day and on the
fourteenth, and rested on the fifteenth day, making that a day of feasting and
gladness. 19 †Therefore the Jews of the villages, who live in the rural towns,
hold the fourteenth day of the month of Adar as a day for gladness and
feasting, as a holiday, and as a day on which they send gifts of food to one
another.

The Feast of Purim Inaugurated

20 ‡ † And Mordecai recorded these things and sent letters to all the Jews
who were in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, both near and far,
21 † obliging them to keep the fourteenth day of the month Adar and also the
fifteenth day of the same, year by year, 22 † as the days on which the Jews got
relief from their enemies, and as the month that had been turned for them
from sorrow into gladness and from mourning into a holiday; that they
should make them days of feasting and gladness, days for sending gifts of
food to one another and gifts to the poor.

23 † So the Jews accepted what they had started to do, and what Mordecai
had written to them. 24 ‡ For Haman the Agagite, the son of Hammedatha, the
enemy of all the Jews, had plotted against the Jews to destroy them, and had
cast Pur (that is, cast lots), to crush and to destroy them. 25 But when it came
before the king, he gave orders in writing that his evil plan that he had
devised against the Jews should return on his own head, and that he and his
sons should be hanged on the gallows.[1] 26 Therefore they called these days
Purim, after the term Pur. Therefore, because of all that was written in this
letter, and of what they had faced in this matter, and of what had happened
to them, 27 the Jews firmly obligated themselves and their offspring and all
who joined them, that without fail they would keep these two days
according to what was written and at the time appointed every year, 28 that
these days should be remembered and kept throughout every generation, in
every clan, province, and city, and that these days of Purim should never
fall into disuse among the Jews, nor should the commemoration of these
days cease among their descendants.

29 † Then Queen Esther, the daughter of Abihail, and Mordecai the Jew
gave full written authority, confirming this second letter about Purim.
30 † Letters were sent to all the Jews, to the 127 provinces of the kingdom of
Ahasuerus, in words of peace and truth, 31 † that these days of Purim should
be observed at their appointed seasons, as Mordecai the Jew and Queen
Esther obligated them, and as they had obligated themselves and their
offspring, with regard to their fasts and their lamenting. 32 † The command of

Queen Esther confirmed these practices of Purim, and it was recorded in writing.

The Greatness of Mordecai

10 [1]†King Ahasuerus imposed tax on the land and on the coastlands
of the sea. [2]†And all the acts of his power and might, and the full account of
the high honor of Mordecai, to which the king advanced him, are they not
written in the Book of the Chronicles of the kings of Media and Persia?
[3]†For Mordecai the Jew was second in rank to King Ahasuerus, and he was
great among the Jews and popular with the multitude of his brothers, for he
sought the welfare of his people and spoke peace to all his people.

Esther

OVERVIEW

Author
Unknown

Date
Written c 400 BC

Places
Susa; Persian Empire from India to Ethiopia

People
Esther; Mordecai; Hegai; Ahasuerus (Xerxes); Vashti; Memucan; Haman

Purpose
To record the Lord's providential deliverance of the Judeans from destruction by their enemies in the Persian Empire

Law Themes
Weakness before one's enemies due to disobedience; the Lord thwarts grudges and hatred

Gospel Themes
Preservation of God's people from whom Jesus would be born; the Lord works constantly for the deliverance of His people

Memory Verses
Mordecai's counsel about courage (4:13–17)

Introduction to Esther

Reading Esther

She had heard and seen them before, but now she lived among them and had to adjust to their speech, their manners, and their food. In her heart, she wanted to stay faithful to her heritage, but in appearance she had pleased a foreign king. She was chosen for him, but not yet by him. Would he have her? Should she desire him?

Life for Esther, a Judean whose culture and faith encouraged purity from foreign ways, was faced with a personal dilemma when chosen for the harem of King Ahasuerus of Persia. After becoming his queen, Esther faced a national dilemma: the complete destruction of the Judean people from whom she had come. The plot of her story describes the tensions under which God's people lived after the destruction of Jerusalem.

Luther on Esther

> The greater part [of a nation] always belongs to the devil and is idolatrous. Thus there is no doubt that … Mordecai and Esther, gained many people. But they were not able to correct the kingdoms in their entirety. (AE 8:93)
>
> Simple garb and adornment is more fitting for a woman than a wagonload of pearls. I do not want to interpret this [1Tm 2:9] too scrupulously—that rich clothing is forbidden to women. Here we must make exceptions for weddings…. a woman adorns herself in honor of her groom but goes about in common fashion otherwise, etc., Scripture commends the adornment for a spouse, etc…. After all, a queen must bedeck herself, as did Esther. If she clothes herself with care and good taste, she is not decorating herself but acting in accord with the custom of and allegiance to the people with whom she lives. If it were the custom, then it would be a matter of choice for her so to adorn herself or not. In allegiance to her groom, in honor of her wedding and husband, she should dress otherwise than one dresses in church, where one ought to wear proper clothing. (AE 28:273–74)
>
> The church, which is thoroughly sanctified in the cross of Christ, has holiness, because she abstains from all that is of the world and the flesh, and she has majesty in all riches, goods, houses, costs, etc. But this majesty [of the church], which is spiritual, is altogether opposite to what men have known. For it does not do great things according to the world; indeed, in this way the lowest contempt and squalor are in her. But she builds magnificent spiritual houses (cf. Prov. 9:1 ff.) crammed full with costly banquets, very famous for throngs of peoples and nobles, so that the feast of Ahasuerus [Est 1:5–7] is as nothing here, but in the eyes of the spiritual and the angels. (AE 11:264–65)

Challenges for Readers

Relationship to Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah. See pp 719–21.

God's Name Never Used. A confusing feature of the Book of Esther is that God is never directly mentioned or named, even though numerous references to devotional practices are made in chs 4–9 (e.g., fasting and observance of Purim, which would involve prayer). Some have regarded this as a cause for excluding the Book from Scripture (even Luther raised this question; AE 33:110). However, Mordecai clearly alludes to the work of God's hand—what we call providence—in 4:14. The theme of God working "behind the scenes" is also found in Ezra and Nehemiah and must be regarded as a quality of the literature Israel produced in this era of exile, enslavement, and persecution.

Revenge and Self-Defense. See application note, ch 8.

Additions to Esther. On the apocryphal additions to Esther, see Luther's comments on p 1564. See also "Different Texts of Daniel" (pp 1394–95) for an illustration of the issues.

Blessings for Readers

The Book of Esther is a beautiful portrayal of courage in the face of danger and the triumph of good in the face of powerful, sinister forces. Although the name of God is not mentioned, the Book of Esther implies divine providence throughout.

As you study Esther, remember why God worked through Esther and Mordecai to deliver the people of Judah. It was all part of God's plan that the Savior would be born to that people in the land God had designated, and at just the right moment, "when the fullness of time had come" (Gal 4:4).

OUTLINE

A number of commentators note the structure of the Book of Esther (chiasm; see pp 777–78). Banquets and other episodes in the first half (chs 1–5) coincide with parallel incidents in the second half (chs 7–10), pivoting on ch 6. While the parallels do not account for all of the material in the Book of Esther, they do establish the framework of an outline. The Book is clearly divided in two—the first half depicts the threat to the Judeans, and the second relates the deliverance of the Judeans.

I. Threat to Judeans (chs 1–5)
- A. King's Banquets (1:1–9)
- B. Queen Vashti's Refusal (1:10–22)
- C. Esther Chosen Queen (2:1–18)
- D. Mordecai Discovers a Plot (2:19–23)
- E. Haman Plots against Judeans (ch 3)
- F. Esther Agrees to Help Judeans (ch 4)
- G. Esther Prepares a Banquet (5:1–8)
- H. Haman Plans to Hang Mordecai (5:9–14)

II. Deliverance of Judeans (chs 6–10)
- A. King Honors Mordecai (6:1–13)
- B. Esther Reveals Haman's Plot (6:14–7:6)
- C. Haman Is Hanged (7:7–10)
- D. Esther Saves Judeans (ch 8)
- E. Judeans Destroy Enemies (9:1–19)
- F. Feast of Purim Inaugurated (9:20–32)

G. Greatness of Mordecai (ch 10)

Footnotes

Footnotes for Esther, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:2 Or *the fortified city*
- [2] 1:6 Or *rings*
- [3] 1:11 Or *headdress*

Footnotes for Esther, Chapter 2

- [1] 2:17 Or *headdress*
- [1] 2:23 Or *suspended on a stake*

Footnotes for Esther, Chapter 3

- [1] 3:9 A *talent* was about 75 pounds or 34 kilograms

Footnotes for Esther, Chapter 5

- [1] 5:14 Or *stake*; twice in this verse
- [2] 5:14 A *cubit* was about 18 inches or 45 centimeters

Footnotes for Esther, Chapter 6

- [1] 6:4 Or *suspended on a stake*
- [2] 6:8 Or *headdress*

Footnotes for Esther, Chapter 7

- [3] 7:5 Hebrew *whose heart has filled him*
- [1] 7:9 Or *stake*; also verse 10
- [2] 7:9 A *cubit* was about 18 inches or 45 centimeters

Footnotes for Esther, Chapter 8

- [3] 8:7 Or *stake*
- [1] 8:15 Or *headdress*

Footnotes for Esther, Chapter 9

- [1] 9:13 Or *stake*
- [1] 9:25 Or *suspended on a stake*

Study Notes

ESTHER—NOTE ON 1:1 *Ahasuerus*. Persian king (486–465 BC), son of Darius I (522–486 BC). Grandson of Cyrus the Great (559–530 BC), who had issued the decree allowing the Judeans in captivity to return to their homeland (Ezr 1:2–4). "Ahasuerus" is Hbr rendering of Persian title "mighty man," a title the king used on monumental inscriptions. He is better known by his Gk name, Xerxes. *India to Ethiopia*. Persia's territory exceeded that of any previous empire, extending from the Indus River, far to the southeast, to the borders of Greece and the region below Egypt, far to the southwest. *127 provinces.* Vast empire was divided into satrapies and provinces. See note, Ezr 2:1.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 1:2 *Susa*. Winter residence of Persian kings, 200 mi NE of Babylon, one of four royal cities. See map, p 609. Ahasuerus had made extensive renovations to the acropolis area above the city.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 1:3 *third year*. Gk historian Herodotus tells of a gathering of Ahasuerus's mighty men one year before his disastrous military campaign against Greece (482–479 BC). *feast*. The Hbr can be translated "drinking party" or "banquet." Ancient Gk historians report that the Persians gave lavish banquets. Banquets are the settings for important plot developments in Est.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 1:4 *180 days*. For half a year, Ahasuerus displayed the ostentatious grandeur of the royal opulence inherited from his father, Darius. Rarely has such extravagance been exhibited.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 1:5 At the conclusion of the half-year feast, Ahasuerus lavished his generosity on commoners, who were welcomed into his private quarters for a weeklong celebration. Some scholars suggest that this was a wedding feast because a week was the normal length of marriage celebrations.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 1:6–7 Detailed description attests to the historical accuracy of this account, underscoring the luxurious indulgence of the Persian court. Numerous rare words portray images of flamboyant beauty and luxury. *cotton*. Mentioned directly only here in Scripture. First cultivated in India, cotton slowly found a place alongside linen in the West.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 1:8 *There is no compulsion*. Rule requiring guests to drink only when the king raised his goblet was set aside. They were

permitted to drink as they desired.
ESTHER—NOTE ON 1:9 *Vashti.* From Persian word *vahista,* "best." *feast for the women.* Vashti hosted her own banquet, just for women, simultaneously with her husband's grand party.
ESTHER—NOTE ON 1:1–9 Ahasuerus celebrates his accession to the throne with extravagant drinking parties for government officials and common citizens. Some people today find it necessary to build ever bigger houses and to buy more expensive cars. Christians must resist societal influences that encourage extravagant materialism. God graciously cares for us, providing us with the necessities of daily living (1Tm 6:8). His kingdom and His righteousness are the very best of all His gifts (Mt 6:33). • Thank You, Lord, for all the material blessings You daily supply. Increase my appreciation for Your gifts, and move me to share generously with others. Amen.
ESTHER—NOTE ON 1:10 *seventh day.* The king's weeklong drinking party was coming to an end (v 5). *eunuchs*. See note, 2Ki 9:32.
ESTHER—NOTE ON 1:12 *refused to come*. Although no reason is stated, Queen Vashti's impertinence may have stemmed from her revulsion at being displayed publicly before the king's drunken and lascivious lackeys merely as an ornamental object. *enraged ... anger burned.* Vashti's refusal to obey was a public humiliation for the powerful king.
ESTHER—NOTE ON 1:13 *wise men who knew the times*. Probably royal astronomers who knew the inner workings of the kingdom, the previous legal precedents, the pulse of the nation, and the most propitious astrological signs to guide the king's decisions.
ESTHER—NOTE ON 1:14 *Persia*. Between the Caspian Sea and the Persian Gulf, present-day Iran (cf v 1). *Media*. Northwest of Persia. Joined with Babylon in overthrowing Assyrian Empire (612 BC). Later conquered by Cyrus the Great and often linked with Persia in Scripture (Dn 5:31). See map, p 609. *saw the king's face*. Had access to the Persian king, allowing them to converse with him as intimate cabinet advisers.
ESTHER—NOTE ON 1:16–20 Memucan overreacts and imagines a national crisis. His concern was that wifely contempt for husbands could disrupt the empire by lowering male authority and provoking wrath (v 18).
ESTHER—NOTE ON 1:19 The king took this advice and dismissed his defiant wife from attending him; a divorce was decreed. Vashti was not

killed; she reappears in historical documents as a powerful adviser to her son Artaxerxes until her death in 424 BC.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 1:22 *own script*. Persian cuneiform script, Egyptian hieroglyphs, and the Hebrew alphabet are very different. Messages, esp laws, had to be communicated in regional languages. E.g., a Persian document from the reign of Artaxerxes III (358–338 BC) was recorded in Imperial Aramaic (see p 720), Greek, and Lycian. Texts emphasize different points, based on interests of local people. *every man be master in his own household*. Decree actually publicized the king's weakness and humiliation. Because of his own failed marriage, he issued an empire-wide law ordering male rule. His decree of male mastery breathes a spirit far different from St Paul's inspired directives on the God-ordained roles of husbands and wives, which are motivated by Christ's love (Eph 5:22–33). *language of his people*. Language of the husband was to be spoken in the home of a mixed marriage.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 1:10–22 Ahasuerus and Vashti are not models of moral virtue for believers. God uses the king's dismissal of his wife to prepare the way for Esther to become queen. God will often use evil deeds to work His will. Joseph said to his brothers, "You meant evil against me, but God meant it for good" (Gn 50:20). Nothing demonstrates this truth more clearly than Jesus' death on the cross. Because of His death, we have life. • Heavenly King, I am sometimes disturbed by the way government officials conduct themselves and the laws they enact. Help me remember that You rule over all things and can bring good from evil. Amen.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 2:1 *After these things*. For several years, Ahasuerus was engaged in a futile attempt to conquer Greece. His thoughts would not have been on domestic affairs such as his lack of a queen. *remembered Vashti*. Perhaps the king realized that Vashti had not been such a bad wife after all and that his decision had been rash.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 2:2 *young virgins*. Maidens in their teens who were sexually pure.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 2:3 *harem*. Lit, "the house of the women," where the king's wives and concubines were kept. No one would have access to them except the king. The number of wives was a mark of wealth and power (cf 1Ki 11:3). *cosmetics*. Lit, "bodily rubbings." Beauty treatments and massages enhanced the natural beauty of these girls. Oils and perfumes

were applied to soften sun-dried skin and to cleanse pores. Eye painting in shades of dark red, black, and green was also common.
ESTHER—NOTE ON 2:4 *who pleases the king*. Lit, "who is good in the king's eyes." Implies irresistible attractiveness. Yet, these young virgins had to please the king in other ways (cf v 14), which would have involved compromises for a faithful Judean woman.
ESTHER—NOTE ON 2:5 *Jew*. Hbr term refers to citizens of the province of Judah. Judeans attained prominent positions of wealth and authority in many Medo-Persian cities. *Mordecai.* May be the Persian form of "Marduk," a heathen god. *Shimei … Kish*. Names found in the family of King Saul more than 500 years earlier (1Sm 9:1–2; 2Sm 16:5). *Benjaminite*. Of the tribe of Benjamin, like Saul (1Sm 9:1–2). Tribe became part of the kingdom of Judah. See note, 1Ki 11:32.
ESTHER—NOTE ON 2:6 Mordecai's ancestors had been carried into exile. *Jeconiah*. Variant spelling of Judah's king Jehoiachin, who was exiled in 597 BC along with the upper classes of Judah (2Ki 24:8–17). Suggests that Mordecai may have had some prestige or nobility.
ESTHER—NOTE ON 2:7 *Hadassah.* Hbr, "myrtle." *Esther*. Persian name that comes from *stareh*, meaning "star," and is associated with Ishtar, the Babylonian goddess of love, or the Canaanite goddess Ashtoreth. See note, Ex 34:13. Interestingly, "Esther" has a verbal root in Hbr (*str*), which means "to conceal." Jewish rabbis later associated her name with God's hiddenness: "I will surely hide (*'astir*) My face" (Dt 31:18). *she had neither father nor mother*. Her father's name was Abihail (v 15), but nothing is said about how she lost her parents and came under her cousin's protection. *beautiful figure and was lovely to look at*. Lit, "beautiful of form and good in appearance." Esther excelled in both her noble carriage and irresistible attractiveness.
ESTHER—NOTE ON 2:8 Esther was not only an exile from her homeland but also was taken captive by the king's men. She faced the prospect of being doubly violated, both as a woman and a Judean. She is forced to make the best of a bad situation.
ESTHER—NOTE ON 2:9 *young woman pleased him.* Esther captivated Hegai, the keeper of the royal harem, with her charm. *favor*. Hbr *chesed* is often used for God's steadfast love and carries ideas of covenantal loyalty and undeserved affection. Hegai showed some of these characteristics. See "steadfast love," p 843. *seven chosen young women*. Specially selected

companions for Esther's development, serving as royal advisers. *best place*. Hegai provided Esther with the best apartment, perhaps in close proximity to the king. Archaeological reconstruction of the royal harem indicates that most bedrooms were so small that even a single occupant had little personal space.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 2:10 *commanded her*. Mordecai demanded secrecy regarding Esther's nationality lest she jeopardize her chances for advancement. Esther's willingness to hide her Judean heritage likely resulted in some religious and cultural compromises (e.g., diet, Sabbath observance).

ESTHER—NOTE ON 2:11 Mordecai observed Esther's progress from a distance, probably through the columned courtyards. He may have had some minor government position.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 2:12 *regulations for the women*. Process provided opportunities for training in aristocratic etiquette. *six months*. Regimen of skin-lightening and skin-softening treatments required a significant length of time. *myrrh*. Often associated with sexual situations (cf Ps 45:8; Pr 7:17; Sg 1:13; 5:1–13).

ESTHER—NOTE ON 2:13 *whatever*. Perhaps perfume, jewelry, or a luxurious garment likely to please the king and provoke erotic feelings.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 2:14 Only one night with the king was common practice, unless the girl pleased him and the king asked her back. (In the tale *A Thousand and One Nights,* the king took young girls each night until charming Scheherazade captivated him with her stories.) This is a far cry from God's intentions for marriage. *concubines*. After having slept with the king, these girls acquired a new status as a sexual partner who received protection and provision but had no rights to inheritance as a wife. Unfortunately, most women would never leave this second home. See pp 54–55.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 2:15 *Abihail*. Means "my father is mighty." Esther's full family name was given when her turn came to go in to the king. *she asked for nothing except what Hegai … advised*. No one would be more familiar with the king's most intimate preferences than Hegai.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 2:16 *tenth month … Tebeth*. Sometime in Dec/Jan. *seventh year.* 479/478 BC, four years after Vashti's rejection.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 2:17 *loved*. Hbr word signifies a spectrum of emotions from casual affection to overwhelming devotion, including sexual

desire. *favor.* See note, v 9. *set the royal crown on her head.* Apparently, Ahasuerus stopped his search for a queen with the appearance of Esther.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 2:18 *great feast.* Fourth of 10 banquets reported in Est. *remission of taxes*. Hbr means "caused a rest," understood here as canceling some taxes. In 10:1, Ahasuerus "imposed tax on the land." Some understand the king's action to mean something like "proclaimed a holiday."

ESTHER—NOTE ON 2:1–18 After careful preparation, beautiful Esther meets Ahasuerus, gains his favor, and becomes queen of Persia. At this point, her future looks bright. But perilous times were coming for her and for her people. In all that happens, God is silently at work directing affairs. At the critical moment, Esther would be in a position to play a decisive role in delivering Israel. "God moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform" (*LSB* 765:1). We walk by faith and not by sight. • Help me, Lord, to pass through good times and bad, always trusting Your loving guidance. Amen.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 2:19 *virgins were gathered together*. We are not told why this second group of virgins was gathered. Perhaps Ahasuerus desired more concubines who could both serve his personal interests and be ladies-in-waiting for the new queen. *king's gate*. A city's main gate was a place for business as well as for gossip and rumors. See p 792. Mordecai's presence here allowed him contact with many officials of the realm and may indicate his status as a respected citizen. (By way of illustration, the gate area at Persepolis was nearly half the size of a football field.)

ESTHER—NOTE ON 2:20 See note, v 10.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 2:21 *guarded the threshold.* Guardians of the king's private chamber had easy access to Ahasuerus in his most vulnerable moments. *became angry … sought to lay hands on.* Intrigue and assassination plots against rulers were common in Persian history. Esther would also have been at risk if this plot had been carried out. In 465 BC, Ahasuerus was in fact assassinated by men who guarded his royal entranceway.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 2:22 Esther, referred to by her royal title for the first time, reported the conspiracy to her husband, giving credit to Mordecai for providing the information. Persian kings were renowned for rewarding benefactors.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 2:23 *hanged on the gallows.* Refers not to strangulation by a rope but probably to impalement on a sharp stake and slow death by starvation, the Persian mode of execution from which the Romans got the idea of crucifixion (see ESV note). *chronicles.* Official records of the Persian government, where later Ahasuerus read of what Mordecai had done (6:1).

ESTHER—NOTE ON 2:19–23 Mordecai's discovery of a plot against Ahasuerus means that the king owes him a favor. At a crucial time in the future, when the fate of many Judeans will hang in the balance, Mordecai's good deed will have saving consequences. Events that seem unconnected come together in God's plan to save His people. • Lord, at times I feel unrewarded for the good I do. Forgive my discontent, and keep me fervent in my desire to serve You always. Amen.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 3:1 *After these things.* Nearly five years had elapsed since Mordecai's discovery of the plot against the king's life (cf v 7). *Haman the Agagite*. Haman is introduced abruptly, and no reason is given for his promotion to high office. Perhaps Haman is meant to be identified as a descendant of the Amalekite king Agag, an enemy of King Saul of Israel (1Sm 15:7–8), with whose family and tribe Mordecai was linked (2:5). God decreed continual enmity between Amalek and Israel (Ex 17:8–16). The trouble extended all the way back to Jacob and Esau! (Amalek was Esau's descendant; Gn 36:12). *above all the officials*. Haman was like a prime minister, secretary of state, or grand vizier of Ahasuerus.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 3:2 *homage*. In ancient times, respect was shown to a superior by bowing one's head or falling prostrate to the ground. *Mordecai did not bow down or pay homage*. No specific reason is given for Mordecai's refusal to bow to Haman (see note, v 1), but his refusal to bow had serious consequences. See p 1276.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 3:3 Ahasuerus's servants were puzzled by Mordecai's stubborn refusal to bow to Haman, which was against the king's command (v 2).

ESTHER—NOTE ON 3:4 *spoke to him day after day*. Trying to convince him to obey the king by honoring Haman. *words would stand*. Mordecai may have suggested that Haman would not be able to overcome him because of his nationality (cf 4:14; 6:13). *Jew*. Judean. See note, Ezr 4:12. For the first time, Mordecai revealed his nationality.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 3:5 *fury.* Hbr *chemah,* which sounds similar to Haman's name. His extreme anger seems out of proportion to the slight he received from Mordecai. Haman's animosity for Mordecai and the Judeans may have been building for a long time. Aph: "Mordecai also was persecuted as Jesus was persecuted. Mordecai was persecuted by the wicked Haman; and Jesus was persecuted by the rebellious People. Mordecai by his prayer delivered his people from the hands of Haman; and Jesus by His prayer delivered His people from the hands of Satan. Mordecai was delivered from the hands of his persecutor; and Jesus was rescued from the hands of His persecutors" (*NPNF* 2 13:400).
ESTHER—NOTE ON 3:6 *to lay hands on*. To arrest and punish. *destroy all the Jews*. Haman's hatred for Judeans caused him to seek their extermination, a genocidal hatred. See note, Ezr 4:12.
ESTHER—NOTE ON 3:7 *first month ... Nisan*. Mar/Apr, month of Passover. See calendar, p 262. According to Babylonian records, human fates were fixed by the gods during the first month of the year. *twelfth year*. 474 BC. *Pur.* Borrowed from Old Babylonian *puru*, meaning "stone" or "lot," which appears to refer to the stones thrown to determine an auspicious day. Colored or numbered pebbles or clay cubes were possibly used as dice. Hbr plural form *purim* became the name of the festival that commemorated divine providence overruling the fatal lots (9:26). *they cast lots*. Perhaps appointed priests or wise men cast the lots for Haman. Seeking supernatural guidance for auspicious occasions was common practice in ancient times. *twelfth month*. Our Feb/Mar. Haman found favorable omens for his "lucky" day, even if it meant waiting almost a year. *Adar.* The month when the extermination of the Judeans would begin; means "be darkened."
ESTHER—NOTE ON 3:8 *certain people.* Haman never told Ahasuerus who these people were. *Their laws are different.* Haman probably thought esp of dietary laws, circumcision, and keeping the Sabbath.
ESTHER—NOTE ON 3:9 *destroyed.* Hbr *'abad* is different from *shamad* in vv 6, 13. *'Abad* sounds like the Hbr word for "enslave," which suggests that Haman might have been trying to deceive Ahasuerus about his true plans. *I will pay 10,000 talents*. Haman offered an exorbitant bribe to facilitate his request (see ESV note). He was possibly bluffing or may have hoped to realize that amount from plundering the Judeans (v 13).

ESTHER—NOTE ON 3:10 *signet ring.* Used to impress a distinctive design into the seal of a document; served as the king's signature (cf 1Ki 21:8). By giving Haman his signet ring, Ahasuerus is authorizing him to do whatever he wants. See note, Jer 32:10. *enemy of the Jews.* Agagites continued to hate the Judeans across generations. See note, v 1.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 3:11 *The money is given to you*. Based on Mordecai's statement in 4:7, it seems that Ahasuerus accepted the bribe, and with these words meant to say that Haman had the right to use his money however he wished.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 3:12 *thirteenth day of the first month*. Haman issued the decree to annihilate the Judeans on the day before their annual Passover celebration (14th of Nisan). See calendar, p 262. *satraps*. Herodotus reports that Darius I had organized the empire into more than 20 satrapies. *governors.* In charge of the 127 provinces. *officials*. Local appointees. *own script.* See note, 1:22.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 3:13 *couriers.* Cyrus the Great established an empire-wide postal system, similar to the Pony Express. *to destroy, to kill, and to annihilate*. The piling up of the three verbs conveys the idea of total elimination of the Judeans. The people's situation goes from bad to worse: captivity, enslavement, and now legalized genocide. *thirteenth day of the twelfth month*. Day determined by lots (v 7). The 11-month delay in carrying out the edict gave Mordecai and Esther an opportunity to come to the aid of their people.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 3:15 *Susa*. See note, 1:2. *drink.* Another reference to feasting (see note, 2:18); this one a private affair. *thrown into confusion*. In contrast to Haman's merriment, common citizens were horrified and perplexed by the change of attitude and lethal machinations of the decree.

ESTHER—NOTE ON **Ch 3** Haman's extreme prejudice against the Judeans threatens them with annihilation. Bigotry and intolerance continue in our modern world. The danger is that we criticize these attitudes in others but fail to see the log in our own eye (Lk 6:41). Our prejudices can put barriers in the way of people hearing the Good News of salvation. To become better witnesses, the Holy Spirit must root out the sin of Haman from our hearts. For God "desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (1Tm 2:4). • When prejudice limits my vision, open my eyes, dear Savior, to see Your vast forgiving love for me and all people, which resulted in Your sacrifice on the cross. Amen.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 4:1 *tore his clothes and put on sackcloth and ashes*. Visible demonstration of sorrow (see notes, Jb 1:20; 2:12). *went out into the midst of the city ... loud and bitter cry.* Mordecai obviously wanted to attract as much attention to himself as possible.
ESTHER—NOTE ON 4:2 Mordecai provoked confrontation by public protest and violation of palace dress code. *king's gate*. See note, 2:19.
ESTHER—NOTE ON 4:3 Judeans across the empire joined Mordecai's public expression of grief over their impending destruction. Although unmentioned, prayer would accompany these actions (Ezr 8:21–23; Jl 2:12; Jnh 3:8).
ESTHER—NOTE ON 4:4 *deeply distressed*. Hbr word suggests writhing in anxiety, being physically and emotionally agitated. *sent garments to clothe Mordecai.* Esther's distress seemed not to have been caused by Haman's decree but by Mordecai's behavior. *he would not accept them.* Must have suggested to Esther that the situation was serious.
ESTHER—NOTE ON 4:5 *go to Mordecai to learn*. Confined within the palace harem, Esther heard little outside news. She needed to find out why Mordecai was so upset. She may have experienced a growing sense of danger in her own situation.
ESTHER—NOTE ON 4:7 *exact sum ... Haman had promised*. For Mordecai to have this information showed that he was well-connected within the palace. He also realized that the king had much to gain financially if this plot was carried out.
ESTHER—NOTE ON 4:8 *a copy of the written decree*. Mordecai's access to the actual document suggests that he might have been a government scribe. *explain it to her*. The decree's implications may not have been immediately apparent to Esther. Mordecai wanted her to understand all that was involved, as well as how she should help. *on behalf of her people.* Previously, Mordecai had told Esther to keep quiet about her Judean heritage (2:10). (Haman seems unaware of her nationality. Cf 5:11–12.) Mordecai now seems determined to call attention to Esther's heritage. Esther perhaps felt she was getting "mixed signals" from him.
ESTHER—NOTE ON 4:11 *put to death*. Persian law protected the king from assassination as well as from the vexations of citizens' petty concerns. Herodotus noted that anyone approaching the Persian king unsummoned would be killed unless the king gave immediate pardon. Esther may have recalled what happened to Vashti (1:19), and she chided Mordecai for not

realizing her perilous situation. *golden scepter*. Stylized weapon emblematic of royal authority. The whole story hinges on whether the king will hold out the golden scepter to Esther. *these thirty days*. Esther's marriage to Ahasuerus obviously lacked a close husband-wife relationship.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 4:13–14 Illustrates that royal family members could often turn on one another. Mordecai reminded Esther that the king's palace was not a safe haven for her, that her life was in jeopardy whether or not she approached Ahasuerus.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 4:14 *relief and deliverance will rise.* See "deliver," p 842. *another place.* Closest thing in Est to an overt reference to God's presence and power. In any other book of the Bible, we would expect God to be named as the One providing deliverance for His people. But throughout Est, God remains behind the scenes, doing His work in secret. See pp 760–61. *your father's house will perish*. Not a curse but an emphasis on the personal nature of the danger. *And who knows ... time as this?* Mordecai's question showed that he was beginning to realize why Esther had become queen of Persia. God was directing affairs so that His people might be saved from destruction.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 4:16 *hold a fast … three days*. Fasting often occurred from morning until evening, over one day's duration (Jgs 20:26; 2Sm 1:12). Esther's severe fast showed how critical this time was for her and her people. See note, 2Ch 20:3. The fast stands in contrast to the feasts that occur throughout Est. Fasting normally included praying, so Esther's request became an invitation for the Judeans to petition divine deliverance. See p 189. *if I perish, I perish.* These oft-quoted words show Esther's faith, courage, and humility. She did not assume that she was going to accomplish her mission, and she was ready to sacrifice herself in the attempt. 1 Clem: "Esther also, being perfect [complete] in faith, exposed herself to no less danger, in order to deliver the twelve tribes of Israel from impending destruction. For with fasting and humiliation she entreated the everlasting God, who sees all things; and He, perceiving the humility of her spirit, delivered the people for whose sake she had encountered peril" (*ANF* 1:20).

ESTHER—NOTE ON 4:17 *ordered*. Esther had matured and was no longer taking orders from Mordecai. As queen, she gave direction and leadership, and Mordecai quietly and quickly obeyed.

ESTHER—NOTE ON **Ch 4** Mordecai is shocked by Haman's edict and goes into public mourning. Esther gradually comes to realize the

seriousness of the situation and pledges her life in an attempt to save her people. Like Esther, God may provide us with positions, wealth, and talents that enable us to serve the cause of God's people and the Gospel. Yet, we all have been guilty of exhibiting weak faith by our failure to act. Thanks be to God, in the fullness of time He sent our Deliverer to redeem us from every failure. Unlike Esther, our Deliverer had to die for His people and the whole world. He freed us to serve under His rule as His witnesses. • Dear Jesus, Your kingdom expands through Word and Sacraments. Grant me golden opportunities to be Your witness. Amen.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 5:1 Esther stood, dressed in royal robes, where the king could see her. *On the third day.* After the three-day fast (4:16).

ESTHER—NOTE ON 5:2 *held out to Esther the golden scepter.* At this tense moment, the king, by extending his scepter, indicated that he was willing to hear what Esther had to say (4:11). Herodotus characterized Ahasuerus as a man easily swayed by feminine beauty. *touched the tip of the scepter*. Sign of gratitude and respect.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 5:3 *half of my kingdom*. Hyperbole. Ahasuerus extravagantly offered Esther virtually anything she wanted. He repeats this offer in v 6 and 7:2. An identical offer was made by Herod Antipas to Salome (Mk 6:23).

ESTHER—NOTE ON 5:4 *king and Haman come today to a feast.* Esther's modest request shows that she has carefully thought about the best way to accomplish her ultimate purpose. In the ancient Near East, one never made the major request right away but paved the way with minor entreaties.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 5:5 *came to the feast.* Sixth feast reported in Est.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 5:6 *drinking wine.* Ahasuerus would have been in a mellow mood after the meal, seemingly a good time for Esther to beg his mercy for the Judeans. Her delay builds tension for the reader and allows other events to take place.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 5:8 *come to the feast ... tomorrow*. By requesting attendance at yet another banquet, Esther piqued the king's curiosity and aroused Haman's short-lived arrogance (v 12).

ESTHER—NOTE ON 5:1–8 Esther does not make her intentions known immediately, but waits for exactly the right time. Ultimately, it is God who inspires Esther's delay in order to give Haman more rope with which to hang himself. We are often impatient, eager to hurry things along. When God seems to act too slowly on our behalf, we may still trust His wisdom

and continue to pray with confidence, "Your good and gracious will be done." • Loving Father, give me patience to wait in hope for Your saving help. Amen.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 5:9 *Haman ... joyful and glad of heart.* Esther's banquet had its desired effect on this enemy of the Judeans. *neither rose nor trembled*. Mordecai escalated his civil disobedience by failing to rise before Haman, filling him with greater wrath.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 5:10 *Haman restrained himself and went home*. Previously, Haman had "disdained to lay hands on Mordecai" (3:6). Perhaps this is a sign of personal cowardice.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 5:11–12 With his wife and friends as the audience, Haman enumerated his many achievements and honors. These included the opportunity to dine twice with the king and queen within 24 hours. Obviously, Haman was totally unaware of Esther's national origin.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 5:13 *worth nothing to me.* Haman's obsessive hatred of Mordecai had become irrational.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 5:14 *fifty cubits high*. Gallows are 75 ft, the height of a six-story building. See note, 2:23. The height illustrated Haman's wrath. *tell the king to have Mordecai hanged.* Irony. Haman's wife and friends suggested that he first erect the gallows and then tell the king what to do. Their plan would misfire badly.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 5:9–14 "Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall" (Pr 16:18). These words warn us not to walk in the footsteps of Haman. God humbles those who glorify themselves. Outwardly, Haman has everything going for him, but because of his rage, he cannot enjoy what he has. In striking contrast to Haman is Christ Jesus, who "did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped," but humbled Himself for our salvation (Php 2:6–8). • O Holy Spirit, destroy in me all sinful pride, and lead me to kneel humbly in faith before the cross of Jesus, my Savior. Amen.

ESTHER—NOTE ON **Ch 6** A near-comic turning point in the plot.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 6:1 *chronicles*. See note, 2:23.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 6:2 Ahasuerus heard the report of how Mordecai had uncovered an assassination plot against him.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 6:4 *Who is in the court?* Ahasuerus wanted to consult with an adviser about how to reward Mordecai. *Haman ... having*

Mordecai hanged. Vicious irony. Haman arrived at the palace early in the morning, eager to tell the king that Mordecai must be executed.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 6:6 Ahasuerus and Haman had totally different agendas. The wording of the king's question is repeated six times in vv 6–11. The repetition becomes more humorous as Haman, swelled by his egotistical fantasies, vainly imagines that he is the one the king wants to honor. Ironically, the king keeps this person's identity secret, just as Haman had done when he requested the king to destroy a "certain people" (3:8).

ESTHER—NOTE ON 6:8 *royal robes ... royal crown.* Great significance was attached to the king's garments. To wear the king's clothing was to partake of his power, stature, and fame. Haman's suggestion would not only bring great honor to the recipient but also be flattering to the king. A turban, resembling a crown, was even placed on the horse's head.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 6:10 *Hurry.* Repeated in vv 12, 14. Developments in chs 1–5 move rapidly to their destined conclusion. *do so to Mordecai the Jew.* The king's command must have floored Haman. That Ahasuerus should so honor a Judean suggests that he was unaware of Haman's written decree to destroy this people (3:12–14).

ESTHER—NOTE ON 6:11 *Haman ... dressed Mordecai.* Sweetest irony. Haman removed Mordecai's hair shirt and burden at about the same time Haman had planned for Mordecai's execution. The outcome determined by Pur (see note, 3:7) is reversed, revealing the powerlessness of fate and divination.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 6:12 *with his head covered*. A gesture of mourning (cf Jer 14:3–4) or embarrassment.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 6:13 Reversal of Haman's fortunes was so shocking that his wife and friends concluded that his impending downfall was certain. They recognized the irresistible hidden force working on behalf of the Judeans.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 6:1–13 Ahasuerus, who is unable to sleep, hears of Mordecai's good deed and decides to honor him. Haman happens to arrive at the court just in time to become the king's agent appointed to honor the hated Mordecai. A skeptic might call this "luck," but believers see these events as a display of God's providence. A loving Father, not random chance, governs world affairs and rules all things for the good of His people. The hands that were nailed to the cross are the hands of God, who

cares for you and me. • Thank You, Lord, for seeing the big picture in my life and for bringing me to this time and place. Amen.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 6:14 *hurried ... to the feast.* Haman was engrossed in his own injured pride and might have forgotten the queen's feast had he not been summoned. He must have gone with great misgivings.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 7:2 *half of my kingdom.* See note, 5:3.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 7:3 *If ... if.* Esther prefaced her request with two conditional phrases. *wish ... request.* Ahasuerus had used these words when asking Esther what she wanted (v 2). She repeated them as she begged for her own life and that of her people, whom she did not identify. By patiently honoring her husband, Esther won his sincere care—a subtheme in Est. Consider Ahasuerus's concern for Queen Esther in contrast with his earlier contempt for Queen Vashti.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 7:4 *sold.* Bribe paid by Haman to Ahasuerus. *destroyed ... killed ... annihilated.* Esther quoted the wording of Haman's written decree (3:13). *slaves.* May reflect how Haman deceived the king when making his original request (see note, 3:9). *loss to the king*. Esther intimated that the king would suffer a great loss if he executed the decree.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 7:5 Ahasuerus was either pretending ignorance of Haman's decree or was oblivious to what he had permitted (3:8–11).

ESTHER—NOTE ON 7:6 *A foe and enemy! This wicked Haman!* In breathless excitement, Esther labeled Haman as her people's vicious adversary. *Haman was terrified.* Haman knew there was little hope for him. The fear previously felt by the Judeans (4:3) now filled his heart.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 6:14–7:6 Haman hid from Ahasuerus the full consequences of his murderous plan to wipe out the people of Judah. The king may be deceived, but God is not. God also sees our motives and our inner meanness. God sees our every fault, large and small, open and hidden. But if we confess our sins—also those done in secret—He will forgive and cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1Jn 1:9). • Forgiving Lord, You see my secret sins and forgive them in Christ. By Your Spirit, help me amend my life and conform it more fully to reflect Your love. Amen.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 7:7 *king arose in his wrath.* Ahasuerus was obviously angry at Haman but may also have realized his own guilt. *went into the palace garden*. He left the wine to pursue sober reflection on what to do in light of the changing situation. Dismissing a high official, such as Haman, would likely have significant political implications for the king.

That Haman still held his office is perhaps shown by the fact that the king left Haman and Esther together. *beg for his life.* Irony. Haman now begs a Judean for mercy.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 7:8 *falling on the couch*. Esther was reclining on a cushion during the feast (see note, Mt 8:11). How ironic that Haman, who wished to slay all Judeans because of Mordecai's refusal to bow to him, now bowed to Esther the Judean. *assault the queen.* Ahasuerus perceived Haman's action as an attack on the queen, who had revealed his ill will. Such an assault would be high treason. *covered Haman's face*. In preparation for his coming execution. Once again, the bag goes over Haman's head (see note, 6:12).

ESTHER—NOTE ON 7:9 *gallows ... standing at Haman's house.* Towering gallows erected by Haman were widely visible. See note, 5:14.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 7:10 *hanged Haman.* Haman was punished for a crime he did not commit (assaulting the queen), just as he had intended to destroy Mordecai and the people of Judah, though they were innocent of any crime.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 7:7–10 Haman's end fulfills the words of Pr 26:27: "Whoever digs a pit will fall into it, and a stone will come back on him who starts it rolling." St Paul makes the same point: "Whatever one sows, that will he also reap" (Gal 6:7). When we find ourselves entangled in sin and its consequences, our only escape is to turn in repentance to Christ and receive from Him forgiveness and renewal. • Lord, when I fall, lift me up. When I stray, restore me to the paths of righteousness. Amen.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 8:1 *house of Haman*. Typical that the property of an executed criminal would be confiscated and awarded to someone else. *Esther had told what he was to her*. Ahasuerus finally learned of the relationship between his queen and Mordecai.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 8:2 *signet ring*. The king's signet ring authorized Mordecai to sign royal edicts, a power that had previously been granted to Haman (see note, 3:10). *over the house of Haman*. Further evidence that Mordecai had replaced Haman. Ambr: "That commendable friendship which maintains virtue is to be preferred most certainly to wealth, or honours, or power. It is not wont to be preferred to virtue indeed, but to follow after it" (*NPNF* 2 10:87).

ESTHER—NOTE ON 8:3 *fell at his feet and wept and pleaded*. Esther's plea, accompanied by emotional gestures, was intended to move the king to

be merciful to the Judeans. *pleaded*. Same Hbr word was used in 4:8, when Mordecai asked Esther to approach the king on behalf of her people. *avert the evil plan of Haman.* Haman was dead, but his edict lived on (3:12–15).
ESTHER—NOTE ON 8:4 *golden scepter.* See notes, 4:11; 5:2.
ESTHER—NOTE ON 8:5 *If it please the king*. Esther prefaced her previous request to the king with similar conditional phrases (7:3) but here adds two more. *revoke the letters devised by Haman*. Esther asked Ahasuerus to nullify Haman's decree, which had gone out in the king's name.
ESTHER—NOTE ON 8:6 *calamity*. Lit, "evil." *my people? … my kindred?* Esther unabashedly identified herself with the Judeans. *destruction*. Lit, "perishing."
ESTHER—NOTE ON 8:7 *Mordecai the Jew*. Mordecai's Judean heritage is emphasized (cf 5:13; see note, 2:5). *he intended to lay hands on the Jews*. Actually, Ahasuerus had initially ordered Haman's execution because of his perceived attack on the queen (7:8–10).
ESTHER—NOTE ON 8:8 *you may write as you please*. Previously Haman had held that right (3:11). *edict ... cannot be revoked*. Though it was impossible for the Persian king to rescind any decree that had gone out in his name, issuing a second decree countered the effects of the first.
ESTHER—NOTE ON 8:9 *third month ... twenty-third day*. Second decree was issued 70 days after the first (3:12). *each ... language*. Scribes had to translate the edict in the languages of the 127 provinces of the Persian Empire. *also to the Jews ... language*. Edict was translated in Hbr, indicating that the Judeans had retained their own language.
ESTHER—NOTE ON 8:10 *mounted couriers riding on swift horses*. See note, 3:13.
ESTHER—NOTE ON 8:11 Every element in Haman's decree (3:13) had its counterpoint in the edict issued by Mordecai. *to gather and defend their lives*. Haman's decree had stated that the Persians were to attack the Judeans, who were now permitted to counterattack in defense. *destroy ... kill ... annihilate any armed force*. Mordecai used Haman's wording with one significant difference: the Judeans would be fighting in self-defense, not as aggressors determined to kill. *children and women included*. Judean women and children who might be attacked. *plunder their goods*. Haman had authorized plunder of the condemned people, and Mordecai gave that

same permission to his people. However, the Judeans did not plunder the possessions of their enemies.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 8:12 *on one day*. Time limit was set so that the killing would not go on indefinitely. *thirteenth day ... Adar*. The original day chosen by lot for the destruction of the Judeans (see notes, 3:7, 13). See calendar, p 262.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 8:13 *take vengeance on their enemies*. Concept of revenge was deeply rooted in the ancient biblical world and also recognized in Mosaic Law (Dt 19:21: "life for life, eye for eye"; cf 1Ki 2:31). Mordecai permitted the Judeans to retaliate against enemies who would seek to harm them. Remember that Esther and Mordecai's first choice was simply to revoke Haman's edict, which Ahasuerus could not do (see notes, vv 5, 8).

ESTHER—NOTE ON 8:15 *royal robes of blue and white*. After Haman's edict, Mordecai had "put on sackcloth and ashes" (4:1). Now, he dressed in royal clothing, because the previous situation was completely reversed. *great golden crown*. Mordecai was second only to the king. *city of Susa shouted and rejoiced*. Earlier, the inhabitants of Susa were "thrown into confusion" (3:15) by the edict against the Judeans. Now, they were exultant. See map, p 609.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 8:16 Mourning, fasting, weeping, and lamenting (4:3) were replaced by celebration among the Judeans. This verse is still recited in synagogue services to mark the end of the Sabbath.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 8:17 *feast.* The eighth reference to a banquet or feast. *declared themselves Jews*. People of the land identified with the Judeans, not by converting to faith in Yahweh, but by siding with the Judeans in an ethnic sense. *fear of the Jews had fallen on them*. People were afraid to attack the Judeans because they knew the Judeans would fight back and defeat them.

ESTHER—NOTE ON **Ch 8** King Ahasuerus gives Mordecai permission to issue a decree that countermands Haman's decree. The Judeans are given the right to defend themselves if attacked and so take vengeance on their enemies. Self-defense is not forbidden in Scripture, but Jesus has overturned the law of revenge for believers (cf Mt 5:38–39). Leave vengeance to the Lord and the governing officials, who are called to administer justice (Rm 12:19; 13:3–4). If God would deal with us as our sins deserve, we would all be destroyed in hell. But the holy God has

reversed the decree of eternal death against us because of His Son's sacrifice on the cross. His love for us moves us to love even our enemies (Mt 5:44). • Lord God, You have issued a decree of deliverance for me. Cause the joy and gladness in my heart to shine forth every day in my words and actions as I share this good news with others. Amen.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 9:1 *month of Adar, on the thirteenth day*. Nine months have passed since Mordecai's edict was sent out. See calendar, p 262. Both his edict (8:12) and that of Haman (3:13) were to be carried out on the same day. Enemies of Judeans had the legal right to kill them. Judeans had the right to defend themselves and destroy their attackers. *the reverse occurred: the Jews gained mastery over those who hated them*. The theme of Est is summarized by this single phrase. Hatred of Judeans was obviously widespread, and many people in Persia hoped to annihilate this foreign race. Instead, the attackers found themselves overwhelmed.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 9:2 *in their cities*. Some Persian cities no doubt had a greater population of Judeans. *fear of them had fallen on all peoples*. People were afraid because Mordecai now wielded the power that Haman once had, and Judeans had been given power to defend themselves.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 9:3 *All the officials of the provinces … helped the Jews*. It was to their political advantage to get on the good side of those who were now in power. *fear of Mordecai had fallen on them*. The king's servants had once wondered if Mordecai's "words would stand" (3:4), and Haman was told by his wife that he would "surely fall before" Mordecai (6:13). What once seemed impossible had come to pass.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 9:4 *the man Mordecai*. Mordecai was no longer referred to as a Judean (see note, 8:7) but as "the man," suggesting his importance. This expression is also applied to Moses (Nu 12:3).

ESTHER—NOTE ON 9:5 *did as they pleased*. Judeans were given a free hand to kill their enemies without interference from government officials.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 9:6 *killed and destroyed 500 men*. Likely that at least some of those killed in Susa were members of the royal court.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 9:7–10 *ten sons of Haman*. Killing Haman's sons guaranteed that they would not seek to avenge their father's death or regain his office. Esther later requested the king to hang their bodies on the gallows (v 13). *laid no hand on the plunder*. Judeans had been given permission to plunder the property of their enemies, but they refused to do

so (repeated in vv 15, 16). In a culture where such action was expected, their upright behavior would be noticed and remembered.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 9:11–12 *What then have they done*. Ahasuerus seemed appalled by what was happening in the land but made no move to stop the bloodshed. *Now what is your wish?* The king was ready to continue answering the requests of his queen. How completely Ahasuerus has changed since his dealings with Vashti (1:12–22).

ESTHER—NOTE ON 9:13 *Susa … this day's edict*. Esther requested another day for the resistance to be wiped out in Susa, where enemies still remained. Condition that Judeans were to fight only in self-defense still applied.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 9:14 *ten sons of Haman were hanged*. See note, vv 7–10. The Philistines had hung the dead body of Saul on the wall of Beth-shan to mock Esther and Mordecai's ancestors (1Sm 31:8–10).

ESTHER—NOTE ON 9:15 *fourteenth day … killed 300 men in Susa*. Only in Susa was there a second day of killing, which resulted in feasting on the 15th day of Adar (v 18).

ESTHER—NOTE ON 9:16 Report of what happened in the 127 Persian provinces is brief. *defend their lives*. Self-defense is again emphasized. *got relief*. Hbr word means "quiet" or "rest." *killed 75,000*. An incredibly large number, but no more than that of people killed in other uprisings in history. Remember, the decree went throughout the vast Persian Empire. We need not assume that all Judeans acted from pure motives of self-defense; they may well have displayed a vengeful spirit.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 9:17 *on the fourteenth day … feasting and gladness*. Judeans in the provinces celebrated deliverance from their enemies with feasting and rejoicing on the 14th of Adar.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 9:18 *on the fifteenth day*. Festival in Susa was a day later because Judeans there had been fighting on the 13th and 14th. *feasting and gladness*. Tenth and final reference to feasting in Est.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 9:19 Holiday was observed annually in outlying areas on the 14th of Adar. *gifts of food to one another*. Unlike the festivals commanded of God's people in the Law of Moses, this festival did not include bringing sacrifices to the temple. Its emphasis was rather on communal celebrating, feasting, and giving gifts of food.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 9:1–19 When the 13th of Adar arrives, the Judeans ably defend themselves. They destroy those who hate them but take

no plunder from their enemies. In this way, God preserves His OT people because from them would come the Savior of the world. God controls history to preserve His elect and fulfill His promises. That is still true today. The Church has been called to witness to the Gospel in a world that is often contemptuous and hostile. By God's grace, we can be sure that no matter how "the nations rage and the peoples plot" (Ps 2:1), "the gates of hell shall not prevail" against the Church (Mt 16:18). God keeps us close to our Savior so that we might be His throughout all eternity. • Praise be to Your name, Lord God, for calling me to faith in Your Son and promising Your loving protection for me and all believers, now and forever. Amen.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 9:20 Mordecai's letters reviewed how Judeans were saved from their enemies, an event to be celebrated annually at the Festival of Purim. See pp 200–201. Written documents carried special authority throughout the Persian Empire, and Est frequently mentions them. Cf vv 23, 26, 27, 29, 30, 32.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 9:21 There had been feasting in the villages on the 14th of Adar and in Susa on the 15th (vv 17–18). Mordecai required Judeans to celebrate on both days.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 9:22 *sorrow into gladness*. Future generations of God's people would recall the time when sorrow was turned into joy and mourning into celebration. *sending gifts of food … and gifts to the poor*. Part of the festivities, emphasizing community and compassion.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 9:23 The Judeans agreed to celebrate on an annual basis what they had initially done spontaneously.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 9:24–25 In explaining the reason for the holiday, credit is given to the king for hanging Haman and his sons. No mention is made of the contributions of Esther and Mordecai and the battles fought between the Judeans and their enemies. *cast Pur*. See note, 3:7. *he gave orders in writing*. Refers to document Mordecai requested from Ahasuerus to counteract Haman's decree.

ESTHER—NOTE ON **9:26a** *Purim*. Became a major holiday, along with the festivals commanded in Mosaic Law. Purim is not mentioned in the NT (nor is Est quoted), but shortly after the time of Christ, official Jewish worship regulations included a whole section devoted to its observance. Today, it is usually celebrated on only one day, the 14th of Adar (Feb/Mar). An important aspect is the public reading of the Book of Esther. During this reading, people use noisemakers, cheer at the mention of Mordecai's name,

and hiss when Haman's name is mentioned. Children wear costumes and paint their faces for this victory celebration.

ESTHER—NOTE ON **9:26b–28** *all who joined them*. Some Gentiles become worshipers of the true God and join the Judeans in observing all the festivals. *among their descendants*. Judeans obligate themselves (v 21) to observe this festival throughout every generation. Like the other festivals, Purim keeps them separate from other nations and contributes to their survival as a people.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 9:29 *Queen Esther … gave full written authority*. She added the weight of her royal authority to Mordecai's letter instituting this new festival.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 9:30 Letters that went out to the provinces were worded in a friendly manner and stressed the facts of what had transpired. Some Judeans may have questioned celebrating Purim because it was not authorized in Mosaic Law.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 9:31 *obligated … obligated themselves*. People had agreed to do what Mordecai and Esther required of them (vv 21, 27). *their fasts and their lamenting*. Many later kept the 13th of Adar as a day of fasting.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 9:32 The authority of Esther, a secular ruler, is again cited as the reason to observe Purim.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 9:20–32 The Festival of Purim is established by Mordecai and Esther to celebrate the destruction of Haman and other Persian enemies. God works behind the scenes to bring about this victory. Later, God intervenes in a very public, yet mysterious, way to overcome the spiritual enemies of all people: sin, death, and the devil. We were helpless, but God rescued us by sending His Son, who took our sin, our punishment, and our death upon Himself, paying the price for our redemption. We have gotten relief from our enemies. Our sorrow has been turned to joy and our mourning into feasting because the Holy Spirit has worked faith in our hearts. We celebrate our victory at the festivals of Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost. • Loving Father, You sent Jesus to rescue me from eternal death and the Spirit to create faith in my heart. My celebration of joy and gladness has begun, and I look forward to it continuing with You forever in heaven. Amen.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 10:1 *imposed tax*. One function of government is to levy and collect taxes. During the chaotic period surrounding the events of

the 13th of Adar, it is likely that this activity was disrupted. King Ahasuerus then reasserted his authority and imposed tax on the entire land, including the coastland of Asia Minor, which the Persians controlled. Cf 2:18, where the king "granted a remission of taxes."

ESTHER—NOTE ON 10:2 *written in the Book of the Chronicles of the kings of Media and Persia?* This statement, patterned after those made about the kings of Israel (1Ki 14:29; 16:14, 20), is meant to authenticate the accuracy of Est. The official history of this period in the Persian archives recounted the acts of Ahasuerus and the high honor of Mordecai (see note, 2:23). The two kingdoms, Media and Persia, are mentioned in chronological order, suggesting that this official history covered several centuries. These particular chronicles have not been preserved by history.

ESTHER—NOTE ON 10:3 *second in rank*. Mordecai was second only to the king in authority and probably functioned something like a prime minister (note how the Lord raised up Joseph in Gn 41). *he sought the welfare of his people*. Mordecai was concerned not about increasing his own power in the empire but in promoting the best interests of his fellow Judeans. *peace*. Hbr *shalom* has the broad sense of prosperity, health, security, and good of every kind. By securing the welfare of his own people throughout the empire, Mordecai would secure the welfare of others as well. He would be great and popular, not only among Judeans, but also among other nations and tribes.

ESTHER—NOTE ON **Ch 10** This postscript to Est praises Ahasuerus and Mordecai for providing the people with good government and for seeking their welfare. Martin Luther included "pious and faithful rulers" and "good government" among the blessings for which we pray in the Fourth Petition of the Lord's Prayer (p xxxviii). Sometimes we fail to appreciate this gift from God but rather murmur and complain about our leaders. St Paul reminds believers that God instituted earthly authority (Rm 13:1), and Christians humbly accept their leaders as evidence of God's providential care for us and others. • Almighty Father, forgive my grumbling about persons in positions of leadership, and move me to give thanks for the blessings You give through them. Amen.

JOB THROUGH SONG OF SOLOMON

The Books of Wisdom and Poetry

> **F**ROM WHERE, THEN, DOES WISDOM come? … God understands the way to it, and He knows its place…. And He said to man, "Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to turn away from evil is understanding." (Jb 28:20, 23, 28)

With these poetic lines, Job reaches an important conclusion in his debate with three friends. They have come to mourn with him because of his deep suffering and to explain to him why things are the way they are. Job disagrees with them and, in the passage above, concludes that only God understands how things really work in life, death, and suffering. Their debate has to do with wisdom, which, as Job explains, is difficult to find and understand. The issues are described in poetry, which also can be difficult to understand.

This essay will explore unique features of the Books of Wisdom and Poetry, which stand together in the Old Testament because of their forms, themes, and authorship. It will help you understand these unique and challenging passages of God's Word and their important message.

The Ways of the Creator

The biblical term *wisdom* (Hbr *chokmah*) occurs most often in Job, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes (c three-fifths of all usages). Whereas numerous psalms recount the history of early Israel and draw wise observations from that history, the main Books of Wisdom and Poetry never talk about the earliest history of Israel (e.g., Abraham, Jacob, and Moses are never mentioned in Job, Proverbs, or Ecclesiastes). These Books of Wisdom and Poetry mention some of Israel's important rulers (e.g., Proverbs mentions David, Solomon, and Hezekiah), but their main focus has to do with God's orderly creation and living in harmony with that order.

Hebrew wisdom was not theoretical or speculative but practical and based on God's ways observed in creation. However, biblical wisdom is not simply a natural knowledge of God and His ways. Nor is it derived from human reason. As Jb 28 shows, wisdom is something God understands (v 23). He has declared it and spoken it (vv 27–28). Wisdom could not be "the fear of the Lord" (v 28) unless the Lord made Himself known. Biblical wisdom is a special revelation from God, as surely as the Ten Commandments or the sermons of the prophets. Ultimately, it is knowledge leading to repentance and faith in the Lord.

Wisdom is the art of life, living the way God intended. As a result, biblical wisdom focuses on ethics and spiritual conduct—the way of righteousness. This wise way of life comes from a personal God who is righteous and holy; wisdom is one of His attributes. (When you read the mundane details about life in Proverbs, see in them the intimacy of the Creator's care for His creation.) Wisdom is distinct from philosophy (as recorded by the Greeks), though these disciplines share a common interest in created order, an interest that ultimately developed into what we call science.

Common Themes in Biblical Wisdom

The Books of Wisdom and Poetry display common themes in the following introductory and concluding passages:

> There was a man … whose name was Job … who feared God and turned away from evil. (Jb 1:1)
>
> The LORD knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish. (Ps 1:6)
>
> The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction. (Pr 1:7)
>
> Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. For God will bring every deed into judgment, with every secret thing, whether good or evil. (Ec 12:13–14)

The themes of (1) fear toward God, (2) the difference between the righteous and the wicked, and (3) the Lord's role as judge appear repeatedly. Wisdom teaches that people may walk along one of two ways or paths: one leading to destruction, the other leading to life.

An exception among the Books of Wisdom and Poetry is the Song of Solomon, which celebrates the wonder of love that "is strong as death…. Its flashes are flashes of fire, the very flame of the LORD" (8:6). Here is the only reference to the Lord in the Song, connecting the bond of marital love with His power. The Song of Solomon probably stands with the other Wisdom Books because of its poetic form and its authorship by Solomon the Wise.

Wise Men and Counselors

The Books of Wisdom and Poetry likely had their start as wise sayings offered by judges and teachers in Israel. Their poetic form has it root in the oral culture of the ancient Near East (see "Biblical Poetry," pp 777–78). Numerous biblical passages refer to wise men and counselors who guided the decision making for kings and communities (cf Ex 18:13–27; Ru 4:1–2; 1Ki 12:6–8; Jer 18:18; Ezk 7:26). Their wise sayings were collected for instructing the young (1Ki 4:29–34; Pr 25:1). For example, Pr 1–9 presents a series of educational speeches from a father to a son, or from a teacher to his student. Leaders in Israel expected their people to learn wisdom—in fact, the Lord commanded it. Children were expected to learn the texts of the Commandments (Dt 6:4–9), and citizens were expected to learn certain songs (Dt 31:19; 2Sm 1:17–18; Ps 60). Education in wisdom had personal, family, clan, and national importance.

Many teachings in Israelite wisdom overlap with wise sayings from other cultures. For example, Pr 22:17–24:22 is similar to the Egyptian "Wisdom of Amenemope," which dates from before the time of Solomon. In part, such overlaps occurred because the problems of living are much the same everywhere, regardless of religion, culture, and history. Naturally, similar observations would arise. Yet Scripture also tells us that Solomon "collected" wise sayings. He probably did not limit his collecting to the sayings of Israelites (see chart below). Since wisdom was based on God's created order, all true wisdom naturally belonged to God and His people.

Conclusions about Wisdom

The early Christian apologist Justin Martyr (c 100–c 165) reflected on the universal presence of God's wisdom as follows:

> Whatever things were rightly said among all men, are the property of us Christians. For next to God, we worship and love the Word who is from the unbegotten and ineffable God, since also He became man for our sakes, that, becoming a partaker of our sufferings, He might also bring us healing. For all the [ancient] writers were able to see realities darkly through the sowing of the implanted word that was in them. (*ANF* 1:193)

Justin's attitudes reflect a long-standing approach to wisdom in ancient Israel, in Judaism, and among the first Christians. Since truth comes from God, whatever is true belongs to God's people. Yet biblical wisdom is different from that of other cultures and religions because it emphasizes one God as the source of all knowledge and understanding; it focuses on right and wrong and is fulfilled in Christ, our righteousness.

Over time, biblical wisdom focused more and more on the Scriptures—God's Word—where God's ways are faithfully recorded (Ps 1; 119). Just as God's creation is orderly and harmonious, so God's Word is harmonious and orders our steps in the way of life. Biblical wisdom illustrates the faithful living found in the "legal" sections of the Books of Moses. Ultimately, wisdom embodied two things: Scripture as Wisdom (pursued by Judaism and Christianity) and Christ as Wisdom (pursued by Christianity as described in Colossians and John). The Lutheran hymn writer Erdmann Neumeister (1671–1756) expressed all this most beautifully:

> I know my faith is founded
> On Jesus Christ, my God and Lord;
> And this my faith confessing,
> Unmoved I stand on His sure Word.
> Our reason cannot fathom
> The truth of God profound;
> Who trusts in human wisdom

Relies on shifting ground.
God's Word is all-sufficient,
It makes divinely sure,
And trusting in its wisdom,
My faith shall rest secure. (*LSB* 587:1)

Biblical Poetry

One-quarter to one-third of the Old Testament is poetry. In most ancient literature of the Near East, poetry is the preferred form of expression. The biblical Wisdom Books of Job, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes are almost entirely poetic. Therefore, it was natural for scribes to group together the Wisdom Books with other Poetic Books such as Psalms and the Song of Solomon. However, poetry is also found throughout the Historical Books and is especially common in the Prophetic Books.

The common poetic style for wisdom is based on the *mashal* (translated "proverb"), which builds on strong contrasts such as good and evil, righteousness and wickedness, life and death. The wise insights are collected into short, pithy sayings. These sayings are often presented in longer speeches (e.g., Jb 3:1–42:6; Pr 1–9).

As stated above, Hebrew poetry is rooted in speech and was probably composed orally. Poetry has its roots in ancient, oral composition, when people told stories or expressed ideas in memorable forms that they would also commit to writing. Today, writing is exactly how we remember things. (Who hasn't said, "Wait, let me get a pen," while on the phone?)

Some prose passages of Scripture may be based on earlier poems. For example, the song of Deborah in Jgs 5 probably predates the prose account in Jgs 4. Moses and the author of Joshua may be quoting earlier poetic works when writing their histories (e.g., note the poetry at Gn 1:27; 2:4, 23; 3:14–19; 4:23–24; 9:6, 25–27; and Jsh 10:12–13).

The Form of Hebrew Poetry

The ESV translators make it easy for you to recognize poetic passages by presenting them in poetic format from short lines (cola) to poetic paragraphs (strophes and refrains) to stanzas (longer passages separated by extra space). In Hebrew, poetry and prose are distinguished by the presence or lack of prose markers—three Hebrew terms commonly found in prose but not often found in poetry. Two of these prose markers are frequently translated as "which" (relative pronoun) and "the" (definite article). The third prose marker is not translated. It stands before a noun to show what the direct object in the sentence is. Because these prose markers appear six to eight times more often in prose, poetic passages feel lean or terse as one reads them in Hebrew.

Attempts to discover and describe a grand system of Hebrew poetry have been challenging. Hebrew poems can have formal meter and structure, but they do not consistently appear in rhyme, cadence, or rhythms of long and short syllables (commonly found in Greek and English poems). Nor do Hebrew poems have a strict number of syllables (like Japanese haiku). In fact, even though a Hebrew poem may evidence clear form in its lines and structure, it is not likely that it shares that same form and structure with other Hebrew poems. Perhaps this is a result of free, oral composition. Masters probably passed on their way of composing a poem to their students, which would explain why many poems show similarity, yet do not conform to specific patterns. Forms are there, guiding the composers but not restricting them. Acrostic poems, which have their outline from the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet, have the most obvious structure. Yet even these poems differ significantly from one another, since they may arrange each colon by the alphabet (e.g., Ps 111) or by as many as eight lines for each letter (e.g., Ps 119).

Categories of Hebrew Poems

Specific types of Hebrew poetry are difficult to identify. We have some Hebrew names for poetic compositions (e.g., *shir*, *mizmor*, *maskil*, and *qinah*). But the writers did not explain for us the specific features of these poems. We are left to wonder whether these terms describe a specific type of poetry or a poem's content.

Theologian Hermann Gunkel (1862–1932) distinguished a variety of categories for Hebrew psalms: (1) hymns, (2) thanksgiving psalms, (3) royal psalms, (4) laments, (5) penitential psalms, and (6) imprecatory psalms. (Some of Gunkel's categories were based on ancient uses for psalms; e.g., the "seven penitential psalms" were used liturgically by the early Christians.) Such categories can be helpful but should not be applied too strictly, since they are modern categories that may not truly reflect how God's people viewed their poems. Goals or functions can also be used to distinguish Hebrew poems. Some have suggested the following: didactic poetry, liturgical poetry, love poetry, and prophetic poetry.

Parallelism

The most important feature of Hebrew poetry is the use of parallel words, thoughts, sounds, and forms of grammar. Poetic lines (usually two, called *bicola*) may have one or more of these parallels. The parallels may contrast with each other, compare to each other, or build upon each other in a variety of ways. Here are some common examples of parallels:

Parallel Grammar

He judges the world with righteousness;
He judges the peoples with uprightness. (Ps 9:8)

These lines have the same grammatical structure: noun, verb, noun, prepositional phrase.

Parallel Sounds

> Can papyrus grow [*hayig'eh*] where there is no [*belo'*] marsh?
> Can reeds flourish [*yisgeh*] where there is no [*beli*] water? (Jb 8:11)
> The sounds of the first line are echoed in the second.

Parallel Thought (comparison)

Like a lame man's legs, which hang useless,
Is a proverb in the mouth of fools. (Pr 26:7)

Parallel Thought (contrast)

Weeping may tarry for the night,
But joy comes with the morning. (Ps 30:5b)

Parallel Thoughts in Steps

The LORD is a stronghold for the oppressed,
A stronghold in times of trouble. (Ps 9:9)

The second line builds on the thought about "stronghold" introduced in the first line.

Word pairs provide the basic building blocks for many parallels. They are words people commonly associate with one another. Examples of English

word pairs would be *cat* and *mouse*, *man* and *woman*, *night* and *day*. The Hebrews and other ancient composers (such as the Canaanites at Ras Shamra) used word pairs to create and organize their poetic lines. They also paired words with similar meanings or contrasting meanings. Examples of word pairs in the Hebrew poetry above are *world* and *peoples*, *weeping* and *joy*, *night* and *morning*, *oppressed* and *trouble*.

Conclusions about Poetry

Recognizing parallels is an important tool for interpreting Hebrew poems. Since one line relates to the next, the lines often clarify or explain one another. As you read and seek to apply God's Word written in poems, be sure to look for these parallels. They will reveal not just the poem's beauty but, most important, its meaning.

Hebrew word pairs also often work hand in hand with the basic teachings of God's Word: Law and Gospel. Many contrasting word pairs are used again and again in Hebrew poetry and help the reader to distinguish Law and Gospel. Here are some classic Law and Gospel word pairs: *curse* and *bless*, *hate* and *love*, *sin* and *mercy*, *wicked* and *righteous*.

Job

Job 1 | Job 2 | Job 3 | Job 4 | Job 5 | Job 6 | Job 7 | Job 8 | Job 9 | Job 10 | Job 11 | Job 12 | Job 13 | Job 14 | Job 15 | Job 16 | Job 17 | Job 18 | Job 19 | Job 20 | Job 21 | Job 22 | Job 23 | Job 24 | Job 25 | Job 26 | Job 27 | Job 28 | Job 29 | Job 30 | Job 31 | Job 32 | Job 33 | Job 34 | Job 35 | Job 36 | Job 37 | Job 38 | Job 39 | Job 40 | Job 41 | Job 42

- Introduction to Job
  - Overview
  - Reading Job
  - Central Question and Theme
  - Luther on Job
  - Job's Example
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

Job’s Character and Wealth

1 [1]†† There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job, and that
man was blameless and upright, one who feared God and turned away from
evil. [2] † There were born to him seven sons and three daughters. [3]He
possessed 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen, and 500 female
donkeys, and very many servants, so that this man was the greatest of all
the people of the east. [4]†His sons used to go and hold a feast in the house of
each one on his day, and they would send and invite their three sisters to eat
and drink with them. [5]†And when the days of the feast had run their course,
Job would send and consecrate them, and he would rise early in the
morning and offer burnt offerings according to the number of them all. For
Job said, “It may be that my children have sinned, and cursed[1] God in their
hearts.” Thus Job did continually.

Satan Allowed to Test Job

6 ‡ † Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present
themselves before the Lord, and Satan[2] also came among them. 7 †The Lord
said to Satan, “From where have you come?” Satan answered the Lord and
said, “From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking up and down
on it.” 8 †And the Lord said to Satan, “Have you considered my servant Job,
that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, who
fears God and turns away from evil?” 9 ‡Then Satan answered the Lord and
said, “Does Job fear God for no reason? 10 Have you not put a hedge around
him and his house and all that he has, on every side? You have blessed the
work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. 11 †But
stretch out your hand and touch all that he has, and he will curse you to
your face.” 12 †And the Lord said to Satan, “Behold, all that he has is in your
hand. Only against him do not stretch out your hand.” So Satan went out
from the presence of the Lord.

Satan Takes Job's Property and Children

13 ‡ † Now there was a day when his sons and daughters were eating and
drinking wine in their oldest brother's house, 14 † and there came a
messenger to Job and said, "The oxen were plowing and the donkeys
feeding beside them, 15 † and the Sabeans fell upon them and took them and
struck down the servants[1] with the edge of the sword, and I alone have
escaped to tell you." 16 † While he was yet speaking, there came another and
said, "The fire of God fell from heaven and burned up the sheep and the
servants and consumed them, and I alone have escaped to tell you."
17 † While he was yet speaking, there came another and said, "The Chaldeans
formed three groups and made a raid on the camels and took them and
struck down the servants with the edge of the sword, and I alone have
escaped to tell you." 18 ‡ While he was yet speaking, there came another and
said, "Your sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest
brother's house, 19 † and behold, a great wind came across the wilderness and
struck the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young people, and
they are dead, and I alone have escaped to tell you."

20 † Then Job arose and tore his robe and shaved his head and fell on the
ground and worshiped. 21 † And he said, "Naked I came from my mother's
womb, and naked shall I return. The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken
away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

22 † In all this Job did not sin or charge God with wrong.

Satan Attacks Job's Health

2 [1]†† Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present
themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them to present
himself before the Lord. [2]And the Lord said to Satan, "From where have you
come?" Satan answered the Lord and said, "From going to and fro on the
earth, and from walking up and down on it." [3]† And the Lord said to Satan,
"Have you considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the
earth, a blameless and upright man, who fears God and turns away from
evil? He still holds fast his integrity, although you incited me against him to
destroy him without reason." [4]† Then Satan answered the Lord and said,
"Skin for skin! All that a man has he will give for his life. [5]† But stretch out
your hand and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse you to your
face." [6]† And the Lord said to Satan, "Behold, he is in your hand; only spare
his life."

[7]† So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord and struck Job with
loathsome sores from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. [8]† And he
took a piece of broken pottery with which to scrape himself while he sat in
the ashes.

[9]† Then his wife said to him, "Do you still hold fast your integrity? Curse
God and die." [10]But he said to her, "You speak as one of the foolish women
would speak. Shall we receive good from God, and shall we not receive
evil?"[1] In all this Job did not sin with his lips.

Job’s Three Friends

11 ‡ † Now when Job’s three friends heard of all this evil that had come
upon him, they came each from his own place, Eliphaz the Temanite,
Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite. They made an appointment
together to come to show him sympathy and comfort him. 12 † And when
they saw him from a distance, they did not recognize him. And they raised
their voices and wept, and they tore their robes and sprinkled dust on their
heads toward heaven. 13 † And they sat with him on the ground seven days
and seven nights, and no one spoke a word to him, for they saw that his
suffering was very great.

Job Laments His Birth

3 [1]†After this Job opened his mouth and cursed the day of his birth.
[2]And Job said:

[3]†"Let the day perish on which I was born,
and the night that said,
'A man is conceived.'
[4]† Let that day be darkness!
May God above not seek it,
nor light shine upon it.
[5]† Let gloom and deep darkness claim it.
Let clouds dwell upon it;
let the blackness of the day terrify it.
[6]† That night—let thick darkness seize it!
Let it not rejoice among the days of the year;
let it not come into the number of the
months.
[7]† Behold, let that night be barren;
let no joyful cry enter it.
[8]† Let those curse it who curse the day,
who are ready to rouse up Leviathan.
[9]† Let the stars of its dawn be dark;
let it hope for light, but have none,
nor see the eyelids of the morning,
[10]† because it did not shut the doors of my
mother's womb,
nor hide trouble from my eyes.

[11]†"Why did I not die at birth,
come out from the womb and expire?
[12]† Why did the knees receive me?
Or why the breasts, that I should nurse?

13 For then I would have lain down and been
quiet;
I would have slept; then I would have been
at rest,
14 with kings and counselors of the earth
who rebuilt ruins for themselves,
15 or with princes who had gold,
who filled their houses with silver.
16 Or why was I not as a hidden stillborn child,
as infants who never see the light?
17 There the wicked cease from troubling,
and there the weary are at rest.
18 There the prisoners are at ease together;
they hear not the voice of the taskmaster.
19 The small and the great are there,
and the slave is free from his master.

20 "Why is light given to him who is in misery,
and life to the bitter in soul,
21 who long for death, but it comes not,
and dig for it more than for hidden
treasures,
22 who rejoice exceedingly
and are glad when they find the grave?
23 Why is light given to a man whose way is
hidden,
whom God has hedged in?
24 For my sighing comes instead of[1] my bread,
and my groanings are poured out like
water.
25 For the thing that I fear comes upon me,
and what I dread befalls me.
26 I am not at ease, nor am I quiet;
I have no rest, but trouble comes."

Eliphaz Speaks: The Innocent Prosper

4 [1]†Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said:

[2]†"If one ventures a word with you, will you be
impatient?
Yet who can keep from speaking?
[3] Behold, you have instructed many,
and you have strengthened the weak hands.
[4] Your words have upheld him who was
stumbling,
and you have made firm the feeble
knees.
[5]† But now it has come to you, and you are
impatient;
it touches you, and you are dismayed.
[6]† Is not your fear of God[2] your confidence,
and the integrity of your ways your hope?

[7]†"Remember: who that was innocent ever
perished?
Or where were the upright cut off?
[8] As I have seen, those who plow iniquity
and sow trouble reap the same.
[9]† By the breath of God they perish,
and by the blast of his anger they are
consumed.
[10]† The roar of the lion, the voice of the fierce
lion,
the teeth of the young lions are broken.
[11] The strong lion perishes for lack of prey,
and the cubs of the lioness are scattered.

12 ‡ “Now a word was brought to me stealthily;
my ear received the whisper of it.
13 Amid thoughts from visions of the night,
when deep sleep falls on men,
14 dread came upon me, and trembling,
which made all my bones shake.
15 ‡ A spirit glided past my face;
the hair of my flesh stood up.
16 ‡ It stood still,
but I could not discern its appearance.
A form was before my eyes;
there was silence, then I heard a voice:
17 ‡ ‘Can mortal man be in the right before[1] God?
Can a man be pure before his Maker?
18 ‡ Even in his servants he puts no trust,
and his angels he charges with error;
19 ‡ how much more those who dwell in houses
of clay,
whose foundation is in the dust,
who are crushed like the moth.
20 Between morning and evening they are
beaten to pieces;
they perish forever without anyone
regarding it.
21 ‡ Is not their tent-cord plucked up within
them,
do they not die, and that without wisdom?’

5 1 ‡ “Call now; is there anyone who will answer you?
To which of the holy ones will you turn?

2 ‡ Surely vexation kills the fool,
and jealousy slays the simple.
3 ‡ I have seen the fool taking root,
but suddenly I cursed his dwelling.

4 His children are far from safety;
they are crushed in the gate,
and there is no one to deliver them.
5† The hungry eat his harvest,
and he takes it even out of thorns,[2]
and the thirsty pant[3] after his[4] wealth.
6† For affliction does not come from the dust,
nor does trouble sprout from the ground,
7† but man is born to trouble
as the sparks fly upward.

8†† "As for me, I would seek God,
and to God would I commit my cause,
9 who does great things and unsearchable,
marvelous things without number:
10 he gives rain on the earth
and sends waters on the fields;
11 he sets on high those who are lowly,
and those who mourn are lifted to safety.
12 He frustrates the devices of the crafty,
so that their hands achieve no success.
13† He catches the wise in their own craftiness,
and the schemes of the wily are brought to a
quick end.
14† They meet with darkness in the daytime
and grope at noonday as in the night.
15 But he saves the needy from the sword of
their mouth
and from the hand of the mighty.
16† So the poor have hope,
and injustice shuts her mouth.

17† "Behold, blessed is the one whom God reproves;
therefore despise not the discipline of

the Almighty.
18 For he wounds, but he binds up;
he shatters, but his hands heal.
19 He will deliver you from six troubles;
in seven no evil[1] shall touch you.
20 In famine he will redeem you from death,
and in war from the power of the sword.
21 You shall be hidden from the lash of the
tongue,
and shall not fear destruction when it comes.
22 At destruction and famine you shall laugh,
and shall not fear the beasts of the earth.
23 For you shall be in league with the stones of
the field,
and the beasts of the field shall be at peace
with you.
24 You shall know that your tent is at peace,
and you shall inspect your fold and miss
nothing.
25 You shall know also that your offspring shall
be many,
and your descendants as the grass of the
earth.
26 You shall come to your grave in ripe old age,
like a sheaf gathered up in its season.
27 Behold, this we have searched out; it is
true.
Hear, and know it for your good."[2]

Job Replies: My Complaint Is Just

6 [1]Then Job answered and said:

[2]"Oh that my vexation were weighed,
and all my calamity laid in the balances!
[3] For then it would be heavier than the sand of the sea;
therefore my words have been rash.
[4] For the arrows of the Almighty are in me;
my spirit drinks their poison;
the terrors of God are arrayed against me.
[5] Does the wild donkey bray when he has grass,
or the ox low over his fodder?
[6] Can that which is tasteless be eaten without salt,
or is there any taste in the juice of the mallow?[1]
[7] My appetite refuses to touch them;
they are as food that is loathsome to me.[2]

[8]"Oh that I might have my request,
and that God would fulfill my hope,
[9] that it would please God to crush me,
that he would let loose his hand and cut me off!
[10] This would be my comfort;
I would even exult[3] in pain unsparing,
for I have not denied the words of the Holy One.
[11] What is my strength, that I should wait?
And what is my end, that I should be patient?

12 Is my strength the strength of stones, or is my
flesh bronze?
13† Have I any help in me,
when resource is driven from me?

14†“He who withholds[4] kindness from a friend
forsakes the fear of the Almighty.
15† My brothers are treacherous as a torrent-bed,
as torrential streams that pass away,
16 which are dark with ice,
and where the snow hides itself.
17 When they melt, they disappear;
when it is hot, they vanish from their place.
18† The caravans turn aside from their course;
they go up into the waste and perish.
19 The caravans of Tema look,
the travelers of Sheba hope.
20 They are ashamed because they were
confident;
they come there and are disappointed.
21† For you have now become nothing;
you see my calamity and are afraid.
22† Have I said, ‘Make me a gift’?
Or, ‘From your wealth offer a bribe for me’?
23 Or, ‘Deliver me from the adversary’s hand’?
Or, ‘Redeem me from the hand of the
ruthless’?

24“Teach me, and I will be silent;
make me understand how I have gone
astray.
25 How forceful are upright words!
But what does reproof from you reprove?
26† Do you think that you can reprove words,

when the speech of a despairing man
is wind?
27† You would even cast lots over the fatherless,
and bargain over your friend.

28‡“But now, be pleased to look at me,
for I will not lie to your face.
29 Please turn; let no injustice be done.
Turn now; my vindication is at stake.
30† Is there any injustice on my tongue?
Cannot my palate discern the cause of
calamity?

Job Continues: My Life Has No Hope

7 [1]“ Has not man a hard service on earth, and are not his days like the
days of a hired hand?

[2] Like a slave who longs for the shadow,
and like a hired hand who looks for
his wages,
[3] so I am allotted months of emptiness,
and nights of misery are apportioned to me.
[4] When I lie down I say, ‘When shall I arise?’
But the night is long,
and I am full of tossing till the dawn.
[5] My flesh is clothed with worms and dirt;
my skin hardens, then breaks out afresh.
[6] My days are swifter than a weaver’s shuttle
and come to their end without hope.

[7]“Remember that my life is a breath;
my eye will never again see good.
[8] The eye of him who sees me will behold me
no more;
while your eyes are on me, I shall be gone.
[9] As the cloud fades and vanishes,
so he who goes down to Sheol does not
come up;
[10] he returns no more to his house,
nor does his place know him anymore.

[11]“Therefore I will not restrain my mouth;
I will speak in the anguish of my spirit;
I will complain in the bitterness of my
soul.

12† Am I the sea, or a sea monster,
that you set a guard over me?
13 When I say, ‘My bed will comfort me,
my couch will ease my complaint,’
14† then you scare me with dreams
and terrify me with visions,
15 so that I would choose strangling
and death rather than my bones.
16† I loathe my life; I would not live forever.
Leave me alone, for my days are a breath.
17† What is man, that you make so much of
him,
and that you set your heart on him,
18 visit him every morning
and test him every moment?
19† How long will you not look away from me,
nor leave me alone till I swallow my spit?
20† If I sin, what do I do to you, you watcher of
mankind?
Why have you made me your mark?
Why have I become a burden to you?
21† Why do you not pardon my transgression
and take away my iniquity?
For now I shall lie in the earth;
you will seek me, but I shall not be.”

Bildad Speaks: Job Should Repent

8 [1]†Then Bildad the Shuhite answered and said:

[2]†"How long will you say these things,
and the words of your mouth be a great
wind?
[3]† Does God pervert justice?
Or does the Almighty pervert the right?
[4]† If your children have sinned against him,
he has delivered them into the hand of their
transgression.
[5] If you will seek God
and plead with the Almighty for mercy,
[6]† if you are pure and upright,
surely then he will rouse himself for you
and restore your rightful habitation.
[7]† And though your beginning was small,
your latter days will be very great.

[8]‡"For inquire, please, of bygone ages,
and consider what the fathers have
searched out.
[9] For we are but of yesterday and know
nothing,
for our days on earth are a shadow.
[10] Will they not teach you and tell you
and utter words out of their understanding?

[11]‡"Can papyrus grow where there is no marsh?
Can reeds flourish where there is no
water?

12 While yet in flower and not cut down,
they wither before any other plant.
13 Such are the paths of all who forget God;
the hope of the godless shall perish.
14† His confidence is severed,
and his trust is a spider's web.[1]
15 He leans against his house, but it does not
stand;
he lays hold of it, but it does not endure.
16 He is a lush plant before the sun,
and his shoots spread over his garden.
17 His roots entwine the stone heap;
he looks upon a house of stones.
18† If he is destroyed from his place,
then it will deny him, saying, 'I have
never seen you.'
19† Behold, this is the joy of his way,
and out of the soil others will spring.

20†"Behold, God will not reject a blameless man,
nor take the hand of evildoers.
21 He will yet fill your mouth with laughter,
and your lips with shouting.
22† Those who hate you will be clothed with
shame,
and the tent of the wicked will be no more."

Job Replies: There Is No Arbiter

9 [1]Then Job answered and said:

[2]† "Truly I know that it is so:
But how can a man be in the right before God?
[3] If one wished to contend with him,
one could not answer him once in a thousand times.
[4]† He is wise in heart and mighty in strength
—who has hardened himself against him, and succeeded?—
[5] he who removes mountains, and they know it not,
when he overturns them in his anger,
[6]† who shakes the earth out of its place,
and its pillars tremble;
[7]† who commands the sun, and it does not rise;
who seals up the stars;
[8]† who alone stretched out the heavens
and trampled the waves of the sea;
[9]† who made the Bear and Orion,
the Pleiades and the chambers of the south;
[10] who does great things beyond searching out,
and marvelous things beyond number.
[11]† Behold, he passes by me, and I see him not;
he moves on, but I do not perceive him.
[12]† Behold, he snatches away; who can turn him back?
Who will say to him, 'What are you doing?'

13 “God will not turn back his anger;
beneath him bowed the helpers of Rahab.
14 How then can I answer him,
choosing my words with him?
15 Though I am in the right, I cannot answer him;
I must appeal for mercy to my accuser.[1]
16 If I summoned him and he answered me,
I would not believe that he was listening to
my voice.
17 For he crushes me with a tempest
and multiplies my wounds without cause;
18 he will not let me get my breath,
but fills me with bitterness.
19 If it is a contest of strength, behold, he is
mighty!
If it is a matter of justice, who can summon
him?[2]
20 Though I am in the right, my own mouth
would condemn me;
though I am blameless, he would prove me
perverse.
21 I am blameless; I regard not myself;
I loathe my life.
22 It is all one; therefore I say,
He destroys both the blameless and the
wicked.
23 When disaster brings sudden death,
he mocks at the calamity[1] of the innocent.
24 The earth is given into the hand of the wicked;
he covers the faces of its judges—
if it is not he, who then is it?

25 “My days are swifter than a runner;
they flee away; they see no good.

26† They go by like skiffs of reed,
like an eagle swooping on the prey.
27 If I say, ‘I will forget my complaint,
I will put off my sad face, and be of good
cheer,’
28 I become afraid of all my suffering,
for I know you will not hold me innocent.
29† I shall be condemned;
why then do I labor in vain?
30† If I wash myself with snow
and cleanse my hands with lye,
31† yet you will plunge me into a pit,
and my own clothes will abhor me.
32 For he is not a man, as I am, that I might
answer him,
that we should come to trial together.
33† There is no[2] arbiter between us,
who might lay his hand on us both.
34 Let him take his rod away from me,
and let not dread of him terrify me.
35 Then I would speak without fear of him,
for I am not so in myself.

Job Continues: A Plea to God

10 [1]"I loathe my life;
I will give free utterance to my complaint;
I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.

[2] I will say to God, Do not condemn me;
let me know why you contend against me.
[3] Does it seem good to you to oppress,
to despise the work of your hands
and favor the designs of the wicked?
[4] Have you eyes of flesh?
Do you see as man sees?
[5] Are your days as the days of man,
or your years as a man's years,
[6] that you seek out my iniquity
and search for my sin,
[7] although you know that I am not guilty,
and there is none to deliver out of your
hand?
[8] Your hands fashioned and made me,
and now you have destroyed me altogether.
[9] Remember that you have made me like clay;
and will you return me to the dust?
[10] Did you not pour me out like milk
and curdle me like cheese?
[11] You clothed me with skin and flesh,
and knit me together with bones and
sinews.
[12] You have granted me life and steadfast love,
and your care has preserved my spirit.
[13] Yet these things you hid in your heart;
I know that this was your purpose.
[14] If I sin, you watch me

and do not acquit me of my iniquity.
15 If I am guilty, woe to me!
If I am in the right, I cannot lift up my
head,
for I am filled with disgrace
and look on my affliction.
16† And were my head lifted up,[1] you would hunt
me like a lion
and again work wonders against me.
17† You renew your witnesses against me
and increase your vexation toward me;
you bring fresh troops against me.

18“Why did you bring me out from the womb?
Would that I had died before any eye had
seen me
19 and were as though I had not been,
carried from the womb to the grave.
20† Are not my days few?
Then cease, and leave me alone, that I may
find a little cheer
21† before I go—and I shall not return—
to the land of darkness and deep shadow,
22 the land of gloom like thick darkness,
like deep shadow without any order,
where light is as thick darkness.”

Zophar Speaks: You Deserve Worse

11 [1]†Then Zophar the Naamathite answered and said:

[2]†"Should a multitude of words go unanswered,
and a man full of talk be judged right?
[3]† Should your babble silence men,
and when you mock, shall no one shame
you?
[4]† For you say, 'My doctrine is pure,
and I am clean in God's[2] eyes.'
[5]† But oh, that God would speak
and open his lips to you,
[6]† and that he would tell you the secrets of
wisdom!
For he is manifold in understanding.[1]
Know then that God exacts of you less
than your guilt deserves.

[7]†"Can you find out the deep things of God?
Can you find out the limit of the Almighty?
[8]† It is higher than heaven[2]—what can
you do?
Deeper than Sheol—what can you know?
[9]† Its measure is longer than the earth
and broader than the sea.
[10]† If he passes through and imprisons
and summons the court, who can turn
him back?
[11]† For he knows worthless men;
when he sees iniquity, will he not
consider it?

12 But a stupid man will get understanding
when a wild donkey's colt is born a man!

13 "If you prepare your heart,
you will stretch out your hands toward
him.
14 If iniquity is in your hand, put it far away,
and let not injustice dwell in your tents.
15 Surely then you will lift up your face
without blemish;
you will be secure and will not fear.
16 You will forget your misery;
you will remember it as waters that have
passed away.
17 And your life will be brighter than the
noonday;
its darkness will be like the morning.
18 And you will feel secure, because there is hope;
you will look around and take your rest in
security.
19 You will lie down, and none will make you
afraid;
many will court your favor.
20 But the eyes of the wicked will fail;
all way of escape will be lost to them,
and their hope is to breathe their last."

Job Replies: The Lord Has Done This

12 [1]†Then Job answered and said:

[2]†"No doubt you are the people,
and wisdom will die with you.
[3]† But I have understanding as well as you;
I am not inferior to you.
Who does not know such things as these?
[4]† I am a laughingstock to my friends;
I, who called to God and he answered me,
a just and blameless man, am a
laughingstock.
[5]† In the thought of one who is at ease there is
contempt for misfortune;
it is ready for those whose feet slip.
[6]† The tents of robbers are at peace,
and those who provoke God are secure,
who bring their god in their hand.[1]

[7]†††"But ask the beasts, and they will teach you;
the birds of the heavens, and they will tell you;
[8] or the bushes of the earth,[2] and they will
teach you;
and the fish of the sea will declare to you.
[9]† Who among all these does not know
that the hand of the Lord has done this?
[10]† In his hand is the life of every living thing
and the breath of all mankind.
[11]† Does not the ear test words
as the palate tastes food?
[12]† Wisdom is with the aged,
and understanding in length of days.

13 “With God[3] are wisdom and might;
he has counsel and understanding.
14 If he tears down, none can rebuild;
if he shuts a man in, none can open.
15 If he withholds the waters, they dry up;
if he sends them out, they overwhelm the land.
16 With him are strength and sound wisdom;
the deceived and the deceiver are his.
17 He leads counselors away stripped,
and judges he makes fools.
18 He looses the bonds of kings
and binds a waistcloth on their hips.
19 He leads priests away stripped
and overthrows the mighty.
20 He deprives of speech those who are trusted
and takes away the discernment of the elders.
21 He pours contempt on princes
and loosens the belt of the strong.
22 He uncovers the deeps out of darkness
and brings deep darkness to light.
23 He makes nations great, and he destroys them;
he enlarges nations, and leads them away.
24 He takes away understanding from the chiefs of the people of the earth
and makes them wander in a pathless waste.
25 They grope in the dark without light,
and he makes them stagger like a drunken man.

Job Continues: Still I Will Hope in God

13 [1] “ Behold, my eye has seen all this, my ear has heard and understood it.

[2] What you know, I also know;
I am not inferior to you.
[3] But I would speak to the Almighty,
and I desire to argue my case with God.
[4] As for you, you whitewash with lies;
worthless physicians are you all.
[5] Oh that you would keep silent,
and it would be your wisdom!
[6] Hear now my argument
and listen to the pleadings of my lips.
[7] Will you speak falsely for God
and speak deceitfully for him?
[8] Will you show partiality toward him?
Will you plead the case for God?
[9] Will it be well with you when he searches
you out?
Or can you deceive him, as one deceives a
man?
[10] He will surely rebuke you
if in secret you show partiality.
[11] Will not his majesty terrify you,
and the dread of him fall upon you?
[12] Your maxims are proverbs of ashes;
your defenses are defenses of clay.

[13] “Let me have silence, and I will speak,
and let come on me what may.
[14] Why should I take my flesh in my teeth

and put my life in my hand?
15 † Though he slay me, I will hope in him;[1]
yet I will argue my ways to his face.
16 † This will be my salvation,
that the godless shall not come before him.
17 †† Keep listening to my words,
and let my declaration be in your ears.
18 † Behold, I have prepared my case;
I know that I shall be in the right.
19 † Who is there who will contend with me?
For then I would be silent and die.
20 † Only grant me two things,
then I will not hide myself from your face:
21 † withdraw your hand far from me,
and let not dread of you terrify me.
22 † Then call, and I will answer;
or let me speak, and you reply to me.
23 † How many are my iniquities and my sins?
Make me know my transgression and my
sin.
24 † Why do you hide your face
and count me as your enemy?
25 † Will you frighten a driven leaf
and pursue dry chaff?
26 † For you write bitter things against me
and make me inherit the iniquities of my
youth.
27 † You put my feet in the stocks
and watch all my paths;
you set a limit for[2] the soles of my feet.
28 † Man[3] wastes away like a rotten thing,
like a garment that is moth-eaten.

Job Continues: Death Comes Soon to All

14 [1] “ Man who is born of a woman is few of days and full of trouble.

[2] He comes out like a flower and withers;
he flees like a shadow and continues not.
[3] And do you open your eyes on such a one
and bring me into judgment with you?
[4] Who can bring a clean thing out of an
unclean?
There is not one.
[5] Since his days are determined,
and the number of his months is with
you,
and you have appointed his limits that he
cannot pass,
[6] look away from him and leave him alone,[1]
that he may enjoy, like a hired hand, his
day.

[7] “For there is hope for a tree,
if it be cut down, that it will sprout again,
and that its shoots will not cease.
[8] Though its root grow old in the earth,
and its stump die in the soil,
[9] yet at the scent of water it will bud
and put out branches like a young plant.
[10] But a man dies and is laid low;
man breathes his last, and where is he?
[11] As waters fail from a lake
and a river wastes away and dries up,
[12] so a man lies down and rises not again;

till the heavens are no more he will not
awake
or be roused out of his sleep.
13 Oh that you would hide me in Sheol,
that you would conceal me until your
wrath be past,
that you would appoint me a set time, and
remember me!
14 If a man dies, shall he live again?
All the days of my service I would wait,
till my renewal[2] should come.
15 You would call, and I would answer you;
you would long for the work of your
hands.
16 For then you would number my steps;
you would not keep watch over my sin;
17 my transgression would be sealed up in a
bag,
and you would cover over my iniquity.

18 "But the mountain falls and crumbles away,
and the rock is removed from its place;
19 the waters wear away the stones;
the torrents wash away the soil of the earth;
so you destroy the hope of man.
20 You prevail forever against him, and he passes;
you change his countenance, and send him
away.
21 His sons come to honor, and he does not
know it;
they are brought low, and he perceives it
not.
22 He feels only the pain of his own body,
and he mourns only for himself."

Eliphaz Accuses: Job Does Not Fear God

15 [1]†Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said:

[2]†"Should a wise man answer with windy
knowledge,
and fill his belly with the east wind?
[3] Should he argue in unprofitable talk,
or in words with which he can do no good?
[4]† But you are doing away with the fear of God[1]
and hindering meditation before God.
[5] For your iniquity teaches your mouth,
and you choose the tongue of the crafty.
[6] Your own mouth condemns you, and not I;
your own lips testify against you.

[7]"Are you the first man who was born?
Or were you brought forth before the
hills?
[8]† Have you listened in the council of God?
And do you limit wisdom to yourself?
[9] What do you know that we do not know?
What do you understand that is not clear to
us?
[10]† Both the gray-haired and the aged are
among us,
older than your father.
[11]† Are the comforts of God too small for you,
or the word that deals gently with you?
[12] Why does your heart carry you away,
and why do your eyes flash,
[13] that you turn your spirit against God
and bring such words out of your mouth?

14 † What is man, that he can be pure?
Or he who is born of a woman, that he can
be righteous?
15 † Behold, God[2] puts no trust in his holy
ones,
and the heavens are not pure in his sight;
16 † how much less one who is abominable
and corrupt,
a man who drinks injustice like water!

17 "I will show you; hear me,
and what I have seen I will declare
18 † (what wise men have told,
without hiding it from their fathers,
19 to whom alone the land was given,
and no stranger passed among them).
20 The wicked man writhes in pain all his days,
through all the years that are laid up
for the ruthless.
21 † Dreadful sounds are in his ears;
in prosperity the destroyer will come upon
him.
22 He does not believe that he will return out of
darkness,
and he is marked for the sword.
23 He wanders abroad for bread, saying, 'Where
is it?'
He knows that a day of darkness is ready at
his hand;
24 † distress and anguish terrify him;
they prevail against him, like a king ready
for battle.
25 Because he has stretched out his hand against
God
and defies the Almighty,

26† running stubbornly against him
with a thickly bossed shield;
27† because he has covered his face with his fat
and gathered fat upon his waist
28 and has lived in desolate cities,
in houses that none should inhabit,
which were ready to become heaps of ruins;
29 he will not be rich, and his wealth will not
endure,
nor will his possessions spread over the
earth;[1]
30† he will not depart from darkness;
the flame will dry up his shoots,
and by the breath of his mouth he will
depart.
31 Let him not trust in emptiness, deceiving
himself,
for emptiness will be his payment.
32† It will be paid in full before his time,
and his branch will not be green.
33† He will shake off his unripe grape like the vine,
and cast off his blossom like the olive tree.
34 For the company of the godless is barren,
and fire consumes the tents of bribery.
35† They conceive trouble and give birth to evil,
and their womb prepares deceit.”

Job Replies: Miserable Comforters Are You

16 [1]Then Job answered and said:

[2]†"I have heard many such things;
miserable comforters are you all.
[3] Shall windy words have an end?
Or what provokes you that you answer?
[4] I also could speak as you do,
if you were in my place;
I could join words together against you
and shake my head at you.
[5]† I could strengthen you with my mouth,
and the solace of my lips would assuage
your pain.

[6]"If I speak, my pain is not assuaged,
and if I forbear, how much of it leaves me?
[7]† Surely now God has worn me out;
he has[1] made desolate all my company.
[8] And he has shriveled me up,
which is a witness against me,
and my leanness has risen up against me;
it testifies to my face.
[9]† He has torn me in his wrath and hated me;
he has gnashed his teeth at me;
my adversary sharpens his eyes against me.
[10] Men have gaped at me with their mouth;
they have struck me insolently on the cheek;
they mass themselves together against me.
[11] God gives me up to the ungodly
and casts me into the hands of the wicked.
[12] I was at ease, and he broke me apart;

he seized me by the neck and dashed me to
pieces;
he set me up as his target;
13† his archers surround me.
He slashes open my kidneys and does not
spare;
he pours out my gall on the ground.
14† He breaks me with breach upon breach;
he runs upon me like a warrior.
15† I have sewed sackcloth upon my skin
and have laid my strength in the dust.
16 My face is red with weeping,
and on my eyelids is deep darkness,
17† although there is no violence in my hands,
and my prayer is pure.

18†† "O earth, cover not my blood,
and let my cry find no resting place.
19† Even now, behold, my witness is in heaven,
and he who testifies for me is on high.
20 My friends scorn me;
my eye pours out tears to God,
21† that he would argue the case of a man with
God,
as[2] a son of man does with his neighbor.
22† For when a few years have come
I shall go the way from which I shall not
return.

Job Continues: Where Then Is My Hope?

17 [1]“ My spirit is broken; my days are extinct; the graveyard is ready for me.

[2]† Surely there are mockers about me,
and my eye dwells on their provocation.

[3]†“Lay down a pledge for me with yourself;
who is there who will put up security
for me?
[4]† Since you have closed their hearts to
understanding,
therefore you will not let them triumph.
[5]† He who informs against his friends to get a
share of their property—
the eyes of his children will fail.

[6]†“He has made me a byword of the peoples,
and I am one before whom men spit.
[7]† My eye has grown dim from vexation,
and all my members are like a shadow.
[8] The upright are appalled at this,
and the innocent stirs himself up against the
godless.
[9]† Yet the righteous holds to his way,
and he who has clean hands grows stronger
and stronger.
[10]† But you, come on again, all of you,
and I shall not find a wise man among you.
[11] My days are past; my plans are broken off,
the desires of my heart.

12 They make night into day:
‘The light,’ they say, ‘is near to the
darkness.’[1]
13 If I hope for Sheol as my house,
if I make my bed in darkness,
14 if I say to the pit, ‘You are my father,’
and to the worm, ‘My mother,’ or ‘My
sister,’
15 where then is my hope?
Who will see my hope?
16 Will it go down to the bars of Sheol?
Shall we descend together into the dust?”

Bildad Speaks: God Punishes the Wicked

18 [1]†Then Bildad the Shuhite answered and said:

[2]"How long will you hunt for words?
Consider, and then we will speak.
[3]† Why are we counted as cattle?
Why are we stupid in your sight?
[4]† You who tear yourself in your anger,
shall the earth be forsaken for you,
or the rock be removed out of its place?

[5]†"Indeed, the light of the wicked is put out,
and the flame of his fire does not shine.
[6] The light is dark in his tent,
and his lamp above him is put out.
[7] His strong steps are shortened,
and his own schemes throw him down.
[8] For he is cast into a net by his own feet,
and he walks on its mesh.
[9] A trap seizes him by the heel;
a snare lays hold of him.
[10] A rope is hidden for him in the ground,
a trap for him in the path.
[11] Terrors frighten him on every side,
and chase him at his heels.
[12] His strength is famished,
and calamity is ready for his stumbling.
[13]† It consumes the parts of his skin;
the firstborn of death consumes his limbs.
[14]† He is torn from the tent in which he trusted
and is brought to the king of terrors.
[15] In his tent dwells that which is none of his;

sulfur is scattered over his habitation.
16 His roots dry up beneath,
and his branches wither above.
17 His memory perishes from the earth,
and he has no name in the street.
18 He is thrust from light into darkness,
and driven out of the world.
19† He has no posterity or progeny among his people,
and no survivor where he used to live.
20 They of the west are appalled at his day,
and horror seizes them of the east.
21† Surely such are the dwellings of the unrighteous,
such is the place of him who knows not God.”

Job Replies: My Redeemer Lives

19 [1]Then Job answered and said:

[2]"How long will you torment me
and break me in pieces with words?
[3]† These ten times you have cast reproach
upon me;
are you not ashamed to wrong me?
[4]† And even if it be true that I have erred,
my error remains with myself.
[5]† If indeed you magnify yourselves
against me
and make my disgrace an argument
against me,
[6]† know then that God has put me in the
wrong
and closed his net about me.
[7]† Behold, I cry out, 'Violence!' but I am not
answered;
I call for help, but there is no justice.
[8] He has walled up my way, so that I cannot
pass,
and he has set darkness upon my paths.
[9] He has stripped from me my glory
and taken the crown from my head.
[10] He breaks me down on every side, and I am
gone,
and my hope has he pulled up like a tree.
[11] He has kindled his wrath against me
and counts me as his adversary.
[12] His troops come on together;
they have cast up their siege ramp[1]

against me
and encamp around my tent.

13 “He has put my brothers far from me,
and those who knew me are wholly
estranged from me.
14 † My relatives have failed me,
my close friends have forgotten me.
15 The guests in my house and my maidservants
count me as a stranger;
I have become a foreigner in their eyes.
16 † I call to my servant, but he gives me no
answer;
I must plead with him with my mouth for
mercy.
17 † My breath is strange to my wife,
and I am a stench to the children of my
own mother.
18 Even young children despise me;
when I rise they talk against me.
19 All my intimate friends abhor me,
and those whom I loved have turned
against me.
20 † My bones stick to my skin and to my flesh,
and I have escaped by the skin of my teeth.
21 Have mercy on me, have mercy on me, O you
my friends,
for the hand of God has touched me!
22 Why do you, like God, pursue me?
Why are you not satisfied with my flesh?

23 † “Oh that my words were written!
Oh that they were inscribed in a book!
24 † Oh that with an iron pen and lead

they were engraved in the rock forever!
25 ‡† For I know that my Redeemer lives,
and at the last he will stand upon
the earth.[1]
26 † And after my skin has been thus destroyed,
yet in[2] my flesh I shall see God,
27 whom I shall see for myself,
and my eyes shall behold, and not another.
My heart faints within me!
28 If you say, ‘How we will pursue him!’
and, ‘The root of the matter is found in
him,’
29 † be afraid of the sword,
for wrath brings the punishment of the
sword,
that you may know there is a judgment.”

Zophar Speaks: The Wicked Will Suffer

20 [1]†Then Zophar the Naamathite answered and said:

[2]†“Therefore my thoughts answer me,
because of my haste within me.
[3]† I hear censure that insults me,
and out of my understanding a spirit
answers me.
[4] Do you not know this from of old,
since man was placed on earth,
[5]† that the exulting of the wicked is short,
and the joy of the godless but for a
moment?
[6] Though his height mount up to the heavens,
and his head reach to the clouds,
[7] he will perish forever like his own dung;
those who have seen him will say, ‘Where
is he?’
[8]† He will fly away like a dream and not be
found;
he will be chased away like a vision of the
night.
[9] The eye that saw him will see him no more,
nor will his place any more behold him.
[10] His children will seek the favor of the poor,
and his hands will give back his wealth.
[11] His bones are full of his youthful vigor,
but it will lie down with him in the dust.

[12]“Though evil is sweet in his mouth,
though he hides it under his tongue,
[13] though he is loath to let it go

and holds it in his mouth,
14 yet his food is turned in his stomach;
it is the venom of cobras within him.
15 He swallows down riches and vomits them up
again;
God casts them out of his belly.
16† He will suck the poison of cobras;
the tongue of a viper will kill him.
17 He will not look upon the rivers,
the streams flowing with honey
and curds.
18 He will give back the fruit of his toil
and will not swallow it down;
from the profit of his trading
he will get no enjoyment.
19 For he has crushed and abandoned the poor;
he has seized a house that he did not build.

20 "Because he knew no contentment in his
belly,
he will not let anything in which he delights
escape him.
21 There was nothing left after he had eaten;
therefore his prosperity will not endure.
22† In the fullness of his sufficiency he will be in
distress;
the hand of everyone in misery will come
against him.
23† To fill his belly to the full,
God[1] will send his burning anger against him
and rain it upon him into his body.
24† He will flee from an iron weapon;
a bronze arrow will strike him through.
25† It is drawn forth and comes out of his body;
the glittering point comes out of

his gallbladder;
terrors come upon him.
26 † Utter darkness is laid up for his treasures;
a fire not fanned will devour him;
what is left in his tent will be consumed.
27 † The heavens will reveal his iniquity,
and the earth will rise up against him.
28 † The possessions of his house will be carried away,
dragged off in the day of God's[2] wrath.
29 This is the wicked man's portion from God,
the heritage decreed for him by God."

Job Replies: The Wicked Do Prosper

21 [1]Then Job answered and said:

[2]†"Keep listening to my words,
and let this be your comfort.
[3] Bear with me, and I will speak,
and after I have spoken, mock on.
[4] As for me, is my complaint against man?
Why should I not be impatient?
[5]† Look at me and be appalled,
and lay your hand over your mouth.
[6] When I remember, I am dismayed,
and shuddering seizes my flesh.
[7] Why do the wicked live,
reach old age, and grow mighty in power?
[8] Their offspring are established in their
presence,
and their descendants before their eyes.
[9]† Their houses are safe from fear,
and no rod of God is upon them.
[10] Their bull breeds without fail;
their cow calves and does not miscarry.
[11] They send out their little boys like a flock,
and their children dance.
[12] They sing to the tambourine and the lyre
and rejoice to the sound of the pipe.
[13]† They spend their days in prosperity,
and in peace they go down to Sheol.
[14] They say to God, 'Depart from us!
We do not desire the knowledge of your ways.
[15] What is the Almighty, that we should serve
him?
And what profit do we get if we pray to him?'

16 Behold, is not their prosperity in their hand?
The counsel of the wicked is far from me.

17 “How often is it that the lamp of the wicked is
put out?
That their calamity comes upon them?
That God[1] distributes pains in his anger?
18 That they are like straw before the wind,
and like chaff that the storm carries away?
19 You say, ‘God stores up their iniquity for
their children.’
Let him pay it out to them, that they
may know it.
20 Let their own eyes see their destruction,
and let them drink of the wrath of the
Almighty.
21 For what do they care for their houses after
them,
when the number of their months is cut
off?
22 Will any teach God knowledge,
seeing that he judges those who are on
high?
23 One dies in his full vigor,
being wholly at ease and secure,
24 his pails[2] full of milk
and the marrow of his bones moist.
25 Another dies in bitterness of soul,
never having tasted of prosperity.
26 They lie down alike in the dust,
and the worms cover them.

27 “Behold, I know your thoughts
and your schemes to wrong me.

28† For you say, ‘Where is the house of the
prince?
Where is the tent in which the wicked
lived?’
29 Have you not asked those who travel the
roads,
and do you not accept their testimony
30† that the evil man is spared in the day of
calamity,
that he is rescued in the day of wrath?
31 Who declares his way to his face,
and who repays him for what he has
done?
32† When he is carried to the grave,
watch is kept over his tomb.
33† The clods of the valley are sweet to him;
all mankind follows after him,
and those who go before him are
innumerable.
34 How then will you comfort me with empty
nothings?
There is nothing left of your answers but
falsehood.”

Eliphaz Speaks: Job's Wickedness Is Great

22 [1]†Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said:

[2]††"Can a man be profitable to God?
Surely he who is wise is profitable to
himself.
[3]† Is it any pleasure to the Almighty if you are in
the right,
or is it gain to him if you make your ways
blameless?
[4]† Is it for your fear of him that he reproves you
and enters into judgment with you?
[5]† Is not your evil abundant?
There is no end to your iniquities.
[6]†† For you have exacted pledges of your
brothers for nothing
and stripped the naked of their clothing.
[7] You have given no water to the weary to
drink,
and you have withheld bread from the
hungry.
[8] The man with power possessed the land,
and the favored man lived in it.
[9] You have sent widows away empty,
and the arms of the fatherless were
crushed.
[10] Therefore snares are all around you,
and sudden terror overwhelms you,
[11] or darkness, so that you cannot see,
and a flood of water covers you.

12 “Is not God high in the heavens?
See the highest stars, how lofty they are!
13 But you say, ‘What does God know?
Can he judge through the deep darkness?
14 Thick clouds veil him, so that he does not see,
and he walks on the vault of heaven.’
15 Will you keep to the old way
that wicked men have trod?
16 They were snatched away before their time;
their foundation was washed away.
17 They said to God, ‘Depart from us,’
and ‘What can the Almighty do to us?’[1]
18 Yet he filled their houses with good things—
but the counsel of the wicked is far from me.
19 The righteous see it and are glad;
the innocent one mocks at them,
20 saying, ‘Surely our adversaries are cut off,
and what they left the fire has consumed.’

21 “Agree with God, and be at peace;
thereby good will come to you.
22 Receive instruction from his mouth,
and lay up his words in your heart.
23 If you return to the Almighty you will
be built up;
if you remove injustice far from your tents,
24 if you lay gold in the dust,
and gold of Ophir among the stones of the
torrent-bed,
25 then the Almighty will be your gold
and your precious silver.
26 For then you will delight yourself in the
Almighty
and lift up your face to God.

27† You will make your prayer to him, and he
will hear you,
and you will pay your vows.
28† You will decide on a matter, and it will be
established for you,
and light will shine on your ways.
29† For when they are humbled you say, ‘It is
because of pride’;[2]
but he saves the lowly.
30† He delivers even the one who is not
innocent,[3]
who will be delivered through the
cleanness of your hands.”

Job Replies: Where Is God?

23 [1]Then Job answered and said:

[2]†“Today also my complaint is bitter;[4]
my hand is heavy on account of my
groaning.
[3]† Oh, that I knew where I might find him,
that I might come even to his seat!
[4]† I would lay my case before him
and fill my mouth with arguments.
[5]† I would know what he would answer me
and understand what he would say to me.
[6]† Would he contend with me in the greatness
of his power?
No; he would pay attention to me.
[7]† There an upright man could argue with him,
and I would be acquitted forever by my
judge.

[8]†“Behold, I go forward, but he is not there,
and backward, but I do not perceive him;
[9]† on the left hand when he is working, I do not
behold him;
he turns to the right hand, but I do not see
him.
[10]† But he knows the way that I take;
when he has tried me, I shall come out as
gold.
[11]† My foot has held fast to his steps;
I have kept his way and have not turned
aside.
[12]† I have not departed from the commandment

of his lips;
I have treasured the words of his mouth
more than my portion of food.
13 But he is unchangeable,[1] and who can turn
him back?
What he desires, that he does.
14 For he will complete what he appoints for me,
and many such things are in his mind.
15 Therefore I am terrified at his presence;
when I consider, I am in dread of him.
16 God has made my heart faint;
the Almighty has terrified me;
17 yet I am not silenced because of the
darkness,
nor because thick darkness covers my face.

24 1 "Why are not times of judgment kept by the Almighty,
and why do those who know him never see his days?

2 Some move landmarks;
they seize flocks and pasture them.
3 They drive away the donkey of the fatherless;
they take the widow's ox for a pledge.
4 They thrust the poor off the road;
the poor of the earth all hide themselves.
5 Behold, like wild donkeys in the desert
the poor[2] go out to their toil, seeking
game;
the wasteland yields food for their children.
6 They gather their[3] fodder in the field,
and they glean the vineyard of the wicked
man.
7 They lie all night naked, without clothing,
and have no covering in the cold.
8 They are wet with the rain of the mountains

and cling to the rock for lack of shelter.
9 (There are those who snatch the fatherless
child from the breast,
and they take a pledge against the poor.)
10 They go about naked, without clothing;
hungry, they carry the sheaves;
11 among the olive rows of the wicked[1] they
make oil;
they tread the winepresses, but suffer thirst.
12 From out of the city the dying groan,
and the soul of the wounded cries for
help;
yet God charges no one with wrong.

13 "There are those who rebel against the light,
who are not acquainted with its ways,
and do not stay in its paths.
14 The murderer rises before it is light,
that he may kill the poor and needy,
and in the night he is like a thief.
15 The eye of the adulterer also waits for the
twilight,
saying, 'No eye will see me';
and he veils his face.
16 In the dark they dig through houses;
by day they shut themselves up;
they do not know the light.
17 For deep darkness is morning to all of
them;
for they are friends with the terrors of deep
darkness.
18 "You say, 'Swift are they on the face of
the waters;
their portion is cursed in the land;
no treader turns toward their vineyards.

[19]† Drought and heat snatch away the snow
waters;
so does Sheol those who have sinned.
[20]† The womb forgets them;
the worm finds them sweet;
they are no longer remembered,
so wickedness is broken like a tree.’

[21]“They wrong the barren, childless woman,
and do no good to the widow.
[22]† Yet God[2] prolongs the life of the mighty by his
power;
they rise up when they despair of life.
[23] He gives them security, and they are
supported,
and his eyes are upon their ways.
[24]† They are exalted a little while, and then are
gone;
they are brought low and gathered up like
all others;
they are cut off like the heads of grain.
[25] If it is not so, who will prove me a liar
and show that there is nothing in what I say?”

Bildad Speaks: Man Cannot Be Righteous

25 [1]†Then Bildad the Shuhite answered and said:

[2]†“Dominion and fear are with God;[3]
he makes peace in his high heaven.
[3]† Is there any number to his armies?
Upon whom does his light not arise?
[4]† How then can man be in the right before God?
How can he who is born of woman
be pure?
[5]† Behold, even the moon is not bright,
and the stars are not pure in his eyes;
[6]† how much less man, who is a maggot,
and the son of man, who is a worm!”

Job Replies: God's Majesty Is Unsearchable

26 [1]Then Job answered and said:

[2]"How you have helped him who has no
power!
How you have saved the arm that has no
strength!
[3] How you have counseled him who has no
wisdom,
and plentifully declared sound knowledge!
[4] With whose help have you uttered words,
and whose breath has come out from you?
[5] The dead tremble
under the waters and their inhabitants.
[6] Sheol is naked before God,[1]
and Abaddon has no covering.
[7] He stretches out the north over the void
and hangs the earth on nothing.
[8] He binds up the waters in his thick
clouds,
and the cloud is not split open under them.
[9] He covers the face of the full moon[2]
and spreads over it his cloud.
[10] He has inscribed a circle on the face of the
waters
at the boundary between light and
darkness.
[11] The pillars of heaven tremble
and are astounded at his rebuke.
[12] By his power he stilled the sea;
by his understanding he shattered Rahab.
[13] By his wind the heavens were made fair;
his hand pierced the fleeing serpent.

[14] † Behold, these are but the outskirts of
his ways,
and how small a whisper do we hear of
him!
But the thunder of his power who can
understand?”

Job Continues: I Will Maintain My Integrity

27 [1]And Job again took up his discourse, and said:

[2]"As God lives, who has taken away my right,
and the Almighty, who has made my soul
bitter,
[3] as long as my breath is in me,
and the spirit of God is in my nostrils,
[4] my lips will not speak falsehood,
and my tongue will not utter deceit.
[5] Far be it from me to say that you are right;
till I die I will not put away my integrity
from me.
[6] I hold fast my righteousness and will not let
it go;
my heart does not reproach me for any of
my days.

[7]"Let my enemy be as the wicked,
and let him who rises up against me be as
the unrighteous.
[8] For what is the hope of the godless when
God cuts him off,
when God takes away his life?
[9] Will God hear his cry
when distress comes upon him?
[10] Will he take delight in the Almighty?
Will he call upon God at all times?
[11] I will teach you concerning the hand of God;
what is with the Almighty I will not conceal.
[12] Behold, all of you have seen it yourselves;
why then have you become altogether vain?

13 “This is the portion of a wicked man with
God,
and the heritage that oppressors receive
from the Almighty:
14 If his children are multiplied, it is for the
sword,
and his descendants have not enough bread.
15 Those who survive him the pestilence buries,
and his widows do not weep.
16 Though he heap up silver like dust,
and pile up clothing like clay,
17 he may pile it up, but the righteous will
wear it,
and the innocent will divide the silver.
18 He builds his house like a moth’s,
like a booth that a watchman makes.
19 He goes to bed rich, but will do so no more;
he opens his eyes, and his wealth is gone.
20 Terrors overtake him like a flood;
in the night a whirlwind carries him off.
21 The east wind lifts him up and he is gone;
it sweeps him out of his place.
22 It[1] hurls at him without pity;
he flees from its[2] power in headlong flight.
23 It claps its hands at him
and hisses at him from its place.

Job Continues: Where Is Wisdom?

28 [1]“ Surely there is a mine for silver, and a place for gold that they refine.

[2]† Iron is taken out of the earth,
and copper is smelted from the ore.
[3] Man puts an end to darkness
and searches out to the farthest limit
the ore in gloom and deep darkness.
[4]† He opens shafts in a valley away from where
anyone lives;
they are forgotten by travelers;
they hang in the air, far away from mankind;
they swing to and fro.
[5]† As for the earth, out of it comes bread,
but underneath it is turned up as by fire.
[6] Its stones are the place of sapphires,[1]
and it has dust of gold.

[7]†“That path no bird of prey knows,
and the falcon’s eye has not seen it.
[8]† The proud beasts have not trodden it;
the lion has not passed over it.

[9]‡“Man puts his hand to the flinty rock
and overturns mountains by the roots.
[10]† He cuts out channels in the rocks,
and his eye sees every precious thing.
[11]† He dams up the streams so that they do not
trickle,
and the thing that is hidden he brings out to
light.

12 †“But where shall wisdom be found?
And where is the place of understanding?
13 Man does not know its worth,
and it is not found in the land of the
living.
14 The deep says, ‘It is not in me,’
and the sea says, ‘It is not with me.’
15 It cannot be bought for gold,
and silver cannot be weighed as its price.
16 † It cannot be valued in the gold of Ophir,
in precious onyx or sapphire.
17 † Gold and glass cannot equal it,
nor can it be exchanged for jewels of fine
gold.
18 No mention shall be made of coral or of
crystal;
the price of wisdom is above pearls.
19 † The topaz of Ethiopia cannot equal it,
nor can it be valued in pure gold.

20 †“From where, then, does wisdom come?
And where is the place of understanding?
21 † It is hidden from the eyes of all living
and concealed from the birds of the air.
22 † Abaddon and Death say,
‘We have heard a rumor of it with our ears.’

23 †“God understands the way to it,
and he knows its place.
24 For he looks to the ends of the earth
and sees everything under the heavens.
25 † When he gave to the wind its weight

and apportioned the waters by measure,
26 when he made a decree for the rain
and a way for the lightning of the thunder,
27† then he saw it and declared it;
he established it, and searched it out.
28† And he said to man,
'Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom,
and to turn away from evil is
understanding.'"

Job's Summary Defense

29 [1]And Job again took up his discourse, and said:

[2]"Oh, that I were as in the months of old,
as in the days when God watched over me,
[3] when his lamp shone upon my head,
and by his light I walked through darkness,
[4] as I was in my prime,[1]
when the friendship of God was upon my tent,
[5] when the Almighty was yet with me,
when my children were all around me,
[6] when my steps were washed with butter,
and the rock poured out for me streams of oil!
[7] When I went out to the gate of the city,
when I prepared my seat in the square,
[8] the young men saw me and withdrew,
and the aged rose and stood;
[9] the princes refrained from talking
and laid their hand on their mouth;
[10] the voice of the nobles was hushed,
and their tongue stuck to the roof of their mouth.
[11] When the ear heard, it called me blessed,
and when the eye saw, it approved,
[12] because I delivered the poor who cried for help,
and the fatherless who had none to help him.
[13] The blessing of him who was about to perish came upon me,
and I caused the widow's heart to sing for

joy.
14 † I put on righteousness, and it clothed me;
my justice was like a robe and a turban.
15 † I was eyes to the blind
and feet to the lame.
16 I was a father to the needy,
and I searched out the cause of him whom
I did not know.
17 I broke the fangs of the unrighteous
and made him drop his prey from his teeth.
18 † Then I thought, 'I shall die in my nest,
and I shall multiply my days as the sand,
19 † my roots spread out to the waters,
with the dew all night on my branches,
20 † my glory fresh with me,
and my bow ever new in my hand.'

21 "Men listened to me and waited
and kept silence for my counsel.
22 After I spoke they did not speak again,
and my word dropped upon them.
23 † They waited for me as for the rain,
and they opened their mouths as for
the spring rain.
24 I smiled on them when they had no confidence,
and the light of my face they did not cast
down.
25 † I chose their way and sat as chief,
and I lived like a king among his troops,
like one who comforts mourners.

30 1 †"But now they laugh at me,
men who are younger than I,

whose fathers I would have disdained
to set with the dogs of my flock.

2 What could I gain from the strength of their
hands,
men whose vigor is gone?
3† Through want and hard hunger
they gnaw the dry ground by night
in waste and desolation;
4† they pick saltwort and the leaves of bushes,
and the roots of the broom tree for their food.[1]
5†† They are driven out from human company;
they shout after them as after a thief.
6 In the gullies of the torrents they must dwell,
in holes of the earth and of the rocks.
7† Among the bushes they bray;
under the nettles they huddle together.
8 A senseless, a nameless brood,
they have been whipped out of the land.

9†"And now I have become their song;
I am a byword to them.
10 They abhor me; they keep aloof from me;
they do not hesitate to spit at the sight
of me.
11† Because God has loosed my cord and
humbled me,
they have cast off restraint[2] in my presence.
12 On my right hand the rabble rise;
they push away my feet;
they cast up against me their ways of
destruction.
13 They break up my path;
they promote my calamity;
they need no one to help them.

14 † As through a wide breach they come;
amid the crash they roll on.
15 Terrors are turned upon me;
my honor is pursued as by the wind,
and my prosperity has passed away like a
cloud.

16 “And now my soul is poured out within me;
days of affliction have taken hold of me.
17 The night racks my bones,
and the pain that gnaws me takes no rest.
18 † With great force my garment is disfigured;
it binds me about like the collar of my tunic.
19 God[3] has cast me into the mire,
and I have become like dust and ashes.
20 † I cry to you for help and you do not answer me;
I stand, and you only look at me.
21 † You have turned cruel to me;
with the might of your hand you
persecute me.
22 You lift me up on the wind; you make me ride
on it,
and you toss me about in the roar of the
storm.
23 † For I know that you will bring me to death
and to the house appointed for all living.

24 † “Yet does not one in a heap of ruins stretch
out his hand,
and in his disaster cry for help?[1]
25 Did not I weep for him whose day was hard?
Was not my soul grieved for the needy?
26 But when I hoped for good, evil came,
and when I waited for light, darkness

came.
27† My inward parts are in turmoil and never still;
days of affliction come to meet me.
28† I go about darkened, but not by the sun;
I stand up in the assembly and cry for help.
29† I am a brother of jackals
and a companion of ostriches.
30† My skin turns black and falls from me,
and my bones burn with heat.
31† My lyre is turned to mourning,
and my pipe to the voice of those who
weep.

Job's Final Appeal

31 [1]† "I have made a covenant with my eyes; how then could I gaze
at a virgin?

[2]† What would be my portion from God above
and my heritage from the Almighty on
high?
[3] Is not calamity for the unrighteous,
and disaster for the workers of iniquity?
[4] Does not he see my ways
and number all my steps?

[5]"If I have walked with falsehood
and my foot has hastened to deceit;
[6]† (Let me be weighed in a just balance,
and let God know my integrity!)
[7]† if my step has turned aside from the way
and my heart has gone after my eyes,
and if any spot has stuck to my hands,
[8]† then let me sow, and another eat,
and let what grows for me[2] be rooted out.

[9]"If my heart has been enticed toward a
woman,
and I have lain in wait at my neighbor's
door,
[10]† then let my wife grind for another,
and let others bow down on her.
[11]† For that would be a heinous crime;
that would be an iniquity to be punished
by the judges;

12† for that would be a fire that consumes as far
as Abaddon,
and it would burn to the root all my
increase.

13“If I have rejected the cause of my manservant
or my maidservant,
when they brought a complaint against me,
14† what then shall I do when God rises up?
When he makes inquiry, what shall I
answer him?
15† Did not he who made me in the womb
make him?
And did not one fashion us in the womb?

16†† “If I have withheld anything that the poor
desired,
or have caused the eyes of the widow to
fail,
17† or have eaten my morsel alone,
and the fatherless has not eaten of it
18† (for from my youth the fatherless[1] grew up
with me as with a father,
and from my mother’s womb I guided the
widow[2]),
19 if I have seen anyone perish for lack of
clothing,
or the needy without covering,
20 if his body has not blessed me,[3]
and if he was not warmed with the fleece of
my sheep,
21† if I have raised my hand against the
fatherless,
because I saw my help in the gate,

22 then let my shoulder blade fall from my
shoulder,
and let my arm be broken from its
socket.
23† For I was in terror of calamity from God,
and I could not have faced his majesty.

24†† "If I have made gold my trust
or called fine gold my confidence,
25 if I have rejoiced because my wealth was
abundant
or because my hand had found much,
26† if I have looked at the sun[4] when it shone,
or the moon moving in splendor,
27† and my heart has been secretly enticed,
and my mouth has kissed my hand,
28 this also would be an iniquity to be
punished by the judges,
for I would have been false to God
above.

29 "If I have rejoiced at the ruin of him who
hated me,
or exulted when evil overtook him
30† (I have not let my mouth sin
by asking for his life with a curse),
31 if the men of my tent have not said,
'Who is there that has not been filled with
his meat?'
32† (the sojourner has not lodged in the
street;
I have opened my doors to the traveler),
33† if I have concealed my transgressions as
others do[1]

by hiding my iniquity in my bosom,
34 because I stood in great fear of the
multitude,
and the contempt of families terrified me,
so that I kept silence, and did not go out of
doors—
35† Oh, that I had one to hear me!
(Here is my signature! Let the
Almighty answer me!)
Oh, that I had the indictment written by
my adversary!
36† Surely I would carry it on my shoulder;
I would bind it on me as a crown;
37† I would give him an account of all my steps;
like a prince I would approach him.

38"If my land has cried out against me
and its furrows have wept together,
39† if I have eaten its yield without payment
and made its owners breathe their last,
40 let thorns grow instead of wheat,
and foul weeds instead of barley."

The words of Job are ended.

Elihu Rebukes Job's Three Friends

32 [1] †So these three men ceased to answer Job, because he was righteous in his own eyes. [2] †Then Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite, of the family of Ram, burned with anger. He burned with anger at Job because he justified himself rather than God. [3] †He burned with anger also at Job's three friends because they had found no answer, although they had declared Job to be in the wrong. [4] †Now Elihu had waited to speak to Job because they were older than he. [5] And when Elihu saw that there was no answer in the mouth of these three men, he burned with anger.

[6] †And Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite answered and said:

"I am young in years,
and you are aged;
therefore I was timid and afraid
to declare my opinion to you.
[7] I said, 'Let days speak,
and many years teach wisdom.'
[8] † But it is the spirit in man,
the breath of the Almighty, that makes
him understand.
[9] It is not the old[1] who are wise,
nor the aged who understand what is right.
[10] Therefore I say, 'Listen to me;
let me also declare my opinion.'

[11] "Behold, I waited for your words,
I listened for your wise sayings,
while you searched out what to say.
[12] I gave you my attention,
and, behold, there was none among you
who refuted Job
or who answered his words.

13† Beware lest you say, ‘We have found
wisdom;
God may vanquish him, not a man.’
14 He has not directed his words against me,
and I will not answer him with your
speeches.

15“They are dismayed; they answer no more;
they have not a word to say.
16 And shall I wait, because they do not speak,
because they stand there, and answer no
more?
17 I also will answer with my share;
I also will declare my opinion.
18† For I am full of words;
the spirit within me constrains me.
19† Behold, my belly is like wine that has no vent;
like new wineskins ready to burst.
20 I must speak, that I may find relief;
I must open my lips and answer.
21 I will not show partiality to any man
or use flattery toward any person.
22 For I do not know how to flatter,
else my Maker would soon take me
away.

Elihu Rebukes Job

33 [1]†“But now, hear my speech, O Job, and listen to all my words.

[2] Behold, I open my mouth;
the tongue in my mouth speaks.
[3]† My words declare the uprightness of my heart,
and what my lips know they speak sincerely.
[4]† The Spirit of God has made me,
and the breath of the Almighty gives me life.
[5] Answer me, if you can;
set your words in order before me; take your stand.
[6]† Behold, I am toward God as you are;
I too was pinched off from a piece of clay.
[7] Behold, no fear of me need terrify you;
my pressure will not be heavy upon you.

[8]“Surely you have spoken in my ears,
and I have heard the sound of your words.
[9] You say, ‘I am pure, without transgression;
I am clean, and there is no iniquity in me.
[10]† Behold, he finds occasions against me,
he counts me as his enemy,
[11]† he puts my feet in the stocks
and watches all my paths.’

[12]“Behold, in this you are not right. I will answer you,

for God is greater than man.
13 Why do you contend against him,
saying, ‘He will answer none of man’s[1]
words’?[2]
14† For God speaks in one way,
and in two, though man does not perceive it.
15 In a dream, in a vision of the night,
when deep sleep falls on men,
while they slumber on their beds,
16† then he opens the ears of men
and terrifies them with warnings,
17 that he may turn man aside from his deed
and conceal pride from a man;
18 he keeps back his soul from the pit,
his life from perishing by the sword.

19†“Man is also rebuked with pain on his bed
and with continual strife in his bones,
20 so that his life loathes bread,
and his appetite the choicest food.
21 His flesh is so wasted away that it cannot be
seen,
and his bones that were not seen stick out.
22† His soul draws near the pit,
and his life to those who bring death.
23†† If there be for him an angel,
a mediator, one of the thousand,
to declare to man what is right for him,
24† and he is merciful to him, and says,
‘Deliver him from going down into the pit;
I have found a ransom;
25† let his flesh become fresh with youth;
let him return to the days of his youthful
vigor’;

26† then man[3] prays to God, and he accepts him;
he sees his face with a shout of joy,
and he restores to man his righteousness.
27† He sings before men and says:
'I sinned and perverted what was right,
and it was not repaid to me.
28† He has redeemed my soul from going
down into the pit,
and my life shall look upon the light.'

29†"Behold, God does all these things,
twice, three times, with a man,
30† to bring back his soul from the pit,
that he may be lighted with the light
of life.
31 Pay attention, O Job, listen to me;
be silent, and I will speak.
32† If you have any words, answer me;
speak, for I desire to justify you.
33 If not, listen to me;
be silent, and I will teach you wisdom."

Elihu Asserts God's Justice

34 [1]Then Elihu answered and said:

[2]"Hear my words, you wise men,
and give ear to me, you who know;
[3] for the ear tests words
as the palate tastes food.
[4] Let us choose what is right;
let us know among ourselves what is good.
[5] For Job has said, 'I am in the right,
and God has taken away my right;
[6] in spite of my right I am counted a liar;
my wound is incurable, though I am
without transgression.'
[7] What man is like Job,
who drinks up scoffing like water,
[8] who travels in company with evildoers
and walks with wicked men?
[9] For he has said, 'It profits a man nothing
that he should take delight in God.'

[10]"Therefore, hear me, you men of
understanding:
far be it from God that he should do
wickedness,
and from the Almighty that he should do
wrong.
[11] For according to the work of a man he will
repay him,
and according to his ways he will make it
befall him.
[12] Of a truth, God will not do wickedly,

and the Almighty will not pervert
justice.
13 Who gave him charge over the earth,
and who laid on him[1] the whole world?
14 If he should set his heart to it
and gather to himself his spirit and his
breath,
15 all flesh would perish together,
and man would return to dust.

16 "If you have understanding, hear this;
listen to what I say.
17 Shall one who hates justice govern?
Will you condemn him who is righteous
and mighty,
18 who says to a king, 'Worthless one,'
and to nobles, 'Wicked man,'
19 who shows no partiality to princes,
nor regards the rich more than the poor,
for they are all the work of his hands?
20 In a moment they die;
at midnight the people are shaken and pass
away,
and the mighty are taken away by no
human hand.

21 "For his eyes are on the ways of a man,
and he sees all his steps.
22 There is no gloom or deep darkness
where evildoers may hide themselves.
23 For God[1] has no need to consider a man
further,
that he should go before God in judgment.
24 He shatters the mighty without investigation

and sets others in their place.
25† Thus, knowing their works,
he overturns them in the night, and they
are crushed.
26† He strikes them for their wickedness
in a place for all to see,
27† because they turned aside from following him
and had no regard for any of his ways,
28† so that they caused the cry of the poor to
come to him,
and he heard the cry of the afflicted—
29† When he is quiet, who can condemn?
When he hides his face, who can behold him,
whether it be a nation or a man?—
30† that a godless man should not reign,
that he should not ensnare the people.
31†"For has anyone said to God,
' I have borne punishment; I will not offend
any more;
32† teach me what I do not see;
if I have done iniquity, I will do it no
more'?
33† Will he then make repayment to suit you,
because you reject it?
For you must choose, and not I;
therefore declare what you know.[1]
34† Men of understanding will say to me,
and the wise man who hears me will say:
35†'Job speaks without knowledge;
his words are without insight.'
36† Would that Job were tried to the end,
because he answers like wicked men.
37† For he adds rebellion to his sin;
he claps his hands among us
and multiplies his words against God."

Elihu Condemns Job

35 [1]†And Elihu answered and said:

[2]†"Do you think this to be just?
Do you say, 'It is my right before God,'
[3]† that you ask, 'What advantage have I?
How am I better off than if I had sinned?'
[4]† I will answer you
and your friends with you.
[5]† Look at the heavens, and see;
and behold the clouds, which are higher
than you.
[6]† If you have sinned, what do you accomplish
against him?
And if your transgressions are multiplied,
what do you do to him?
[7]† If you are righteous, what do you give to
him?
Or what does he receive from your hand?
[8]† Your wickedness concerns a man like
yourself,
and your righteousness a son of man.

[9]†"Because of the multitude of oppressions
people cry out;
they call for help because of the arm of the
mighty.[2]
[10]† But none says, 'Where is God my Maker,
who gives songs in the night,
[11]† who teaches us more than the beasts of the
earth
and makes us wiser than the birds of the

heavens?’
12 There they cry out, but he does not answer,
because of the pride of evil men.
13 Surely God does not hear an empty cry,
nor does the Almighty regard it.
14 How much less when you say that you do
not see him,
that the case is before him, and you
are waiting for him!
15 And now, because his anger does not punish,
and he does not take much note
of transgression,[1]
16 Job opens his mouth in empty talk;
he multiplies words without knowledge.”

Elihu Extols God's Greatness

36 [1]†And Elihu continued, and said:

[2]†"Bear with me a little, and I will show you,
for I have yet something to say on God's
behalf.
[3]† I will get my knowledge from afar
and ascribe righteousness to my Maker.
[4]† For truly my words are not false;
one who is perfect in knowledge is with you.

[5]†"Behold, God is mighty, and does not despise
any;
he is mighty in strength of understanding.
[6]† He does not keep the wicked alive,
but gives the afflicted their right.
[7]† He does not withdraw his eyes from the
righteous,
but with kings on the throne
he sets them forever, and they are exalted.
[8] And if they are bound in chains
and caught in the cords of affliction,
[9] then he declares to them their work
and their transgressions, that they
are behaving arrogantly.
[10]† He opens their ears to instruction
and commands that they return from iniquity.
[11]† If they listen and serve him,
they complete their days in prosperity,
and their years in pleasantness.
[12]† But if they do not listen, they perish by the

sword
and die without knowledge.

13 “The godless in heart cherish anger;
they do not cry for help when he binds
them.
14 They die in youth,
and their life ends among the cult
prostitutes.
15 He delivers the afflicted by their
affliction
and opens their ear by adversity.
16 He also allured you out of distress
into a broad place where there was no
cramping,
and what was set on your table was full
of fatness.

17 “But you are full of the judgment on the
wicked;
judgment and justice seize you.
18 Beware lest wrath entice you into scoffing,
and let not the greatness of the ransom turn
you aside.
19 Will your cry for help avail to keep you from
distress,
or all the force of your strength?
20 Do not long for the night,
when peoples vanish in their place.
21 Take care; do not turn to iniquity,
for this you have chosen rather than affliction.
22 Behold, God is exalted in his power;
who is a teacher like him?

[23] Who has prescribed for him his way,
or who can say, ‘You have done wrong’?

[24] “Remember to extol his work,
of which men have sung.
[25] All mankind has looked on it;
man beholds it from afar.
[26] Behold, God is great, and we know him not;
the number of his years is unsearchable.
[27] For he draws up the drops of water;
they distill his mist in rain,
[28] which the skies pour down
and drop on mankind abundantly.
[29] Can anyone understand the spreading of the clouds,
the thunderings of his pavilion?
[30] Behold, he scatters his lightning about him
and covers the roots of the sea.
[31] For by these he judges peoples;
he gives food in abundance.
[32] He covers his hands with the lightning
and commands it to strike the mark.
[33] Its crashing declares his presence;[1]
the cattle also declare that he rises.

Elihu Proclaims God's Majesty

37 [1]"At this also my heart trembles and leaps out of its place.

[2]† Keep listening to the thunder of his voice
and the rumbling that comes from his mouth.
[3]† Under the whole heaven he lets it go,
and his lightning to the corners of the earth.
[4]† After it his voice roars;
he thunders with his majestic voice,
and he does not restrain the lightnings[2]
when his voice is heard.
[5]† God thunders wondrously with his voice;
he does great things that we
cannot comprehend.
[6] For to the snow he says, 'Fall on the earth,'
likewise to the downpour, his mighty
downpour.
[7]† He seals up the hand of every man,
that all men whom he made may know it.
[8] Then the beasts go into their lairs,
and remain in their dens.
[9]† From its chamber comes the whirlwind,
and cold from the scattering winds.
[10]† By the breath of God ice is given,
and the broad waters are frozen fast.
[11]† He loads the thick cloud with moisture;
the clouds scatter his lightning.
[12]† They turn around and around by
his guidance,
to accomplish all that he commands them
on the face of the habitable world.
[13]† Whether for correction or for his land
or for love, he causes it to happen.

14 “Hear this, O Job;
stop and consider the wondrous works of
God.
15 Do you know how God lays his command
upon them
and causes the lightning of his cloud to
shine?
16 Do you know the balancings[1] of the clouds,
the wondrous works of him who is perfect
in knowledge,
17 you whose garments are hot
when the earth is still because of the south
wind?
18 Can you, like him, spread out the skies,
hard as a cast metal mirror?
19 Teach us what we shall say to him;
we cannot draw up our case because
of darkness.
20 Shall it be told him that I would speak?
Did a man ever wish that he would be
swallowed up?

21 “And now no one looks on the light
when it is bright in the skies,
when the wind has passed and cleared
them.
22 Out of the north comes golden splendor;
God is clothed with awesome majesty.
23 The Almighty—we cannot find him;
he is great in power;
justice and abundant righteousness he will
not violate.
24 Therefore men fear him;

he does not regard any who are wise in their own conceit."[2]

The Lord Answers Job

38 [1]†† Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind and said:

[2]† "Who is this that darkens counsel by
words without knowledge?
[3]† Dress for action[3] like a man;
I will question you, and you make it known
to me.

[4]† "Where were you when I laid the foundation
of the earth?
Tell me, if you have understanding.
[5] Who determined its measurements—surely
you know!
Or who stretched the line upon it?
[6] On what were its bases sunk,
or who laid its cornerstone,
[7]† when the morning stars sang together
and all the sons of God shouted for joy?

[8]† "Or who shut in the sea with doors
when it burst out from the womb,
[9] when I made clouds its garment
and thick darkness its swaddling band,
[10] and prescribed limits for it
and set bars and doors,
[11] and said, 'Thus far shall you come, and no
farther,
and here shall your proud waves be
stayed'?

12 “Have you commanded the morning since
your days began,
and caused the dawn to know its place,
13 that it might take hold of the skirts of the
earth,
and the wicked be shaken out of it?
14 It is changed like clay under the seal,
and its features stand out like a garment.
15 From the wicked their light is withheld,
and their uplifted arm is broken.

16 “Have you entered into the springs of the sea,
or walked in the recesses of the deep?
17 Have the gates of death been revealed to
you,
or have you seen the gates of deep
darkness?
18 Have you comprehended the expanse of the
earth?
Declare, if you know all this.

19 “Where is the way to the dwelling of light,
and where is the place of darkness,
20 that you may take it to its territory
and that you may discern the paths to its
home?
21 You know, for you were born then,
and the number of your days is great!

22 “Have you entered the storehouses of the
snow,
or have you seen the storehouses of the
hail,

23 which I have reserved for the time of
trouble,
for the day of battle and war?
24 What is the way to the place where the light
is distributed,
or where the east wind is scattered upon the
earth?

25 “Who has cleft a channel for the torrents of
rain
and a way for the thunderbolt,
26 to bring rain on a land where no man is,
on the desert in which there is no man,
27 to satisfy the waste and desolate land,
and to make the ground sprout with grass?

28 † “Has the rain a father,
or who has begotten the drops of dew?
29 † From whose womb did the ice come forth,
and who has given birth to the frost of
heaven?
30 The waters become hard like stone,
and the face of the deep is frozen.

31 † “Can you bind the chains of the Pleiades
or loose the cords of Orion?
32 † Can you lead forth the Mazzaroth[1] in their
season,
or can you guide the Bear with its children?
33 † Do you know the ordinances of the heavens?
Can you establish their rule on the earth?

34 “Can you lift up your voice to the clouds,
that a flood of waters may cover you?
35 Can you send forth lightnings, that they may go
and say to you, ‘Here we are’?
36 Who has put wisdom in the inward parts[2]
or given understanding to the mind?[3]
37 † Who can number the clouds by wisdom?
Or who can tilt the waterskins of the heavens,
38 when the dust runs into a mass
and the clods stick fast together?

39 † “Can you hunt the prey for the lion,
or satisfy the appetite of the young lions,
40 when they crouch in their dens
or lie in wait in their thicket?
41 † Who provides for the raven its prey,
when its young ones cry to God for help,
and wander about for lack of food?

39 1 † “Do you know when the mountain goats give birth?

Do you observe the calving of the does?
2 Can you number the months that they fulfill,
and do you know the time when they give
birth,
3 when they crouch, bring forth their offspring,
and are delivered of their young?
4 Their young ones become strong; they grow
up in the open;
they go out and do not return to them.

5 “Who has let the wild donkey go free?
Who has loosed the bonds of the swift
donkey,

6 † to whom I have given the arid plain for his
home
and the salt land for his dwelling place?
7 He scorns the tumult of the city;
he hears not the shouts of the driver.
8 He ranges the mountains as his pasture,
and he searches after every green thing.

9 †"Is the wild ox willing to serve you?
Will he spend the night at your manger?
10 Can you bind him in the furrow with ropes,
or will he harrow the valleys after you?
11 Will you depend on him because his strength
is great,
and will you leave to him your labor?
12 Do you have faith in him that he will return
your grain
and gather it to your threshing floor?

13 ††"The wings of the ostrich wave proudly,
but are they the pinions and plumage of
love?[1]
14 For she leaves her eggs to the earth
and lets them be warmed on the ground,
15 forgetting that a foot may crush them
and that the wild beast may trample them.
16 † She deals cruelly with her young, as if they
were not hers;
though her labor be in vain, yet she has no
fear,
17 because God has made her forget wisdom
and given her no share in understanding.
18 When she rouses herself to flee,[2]
she laughs at the horse and his rider.

19 “Do you give the horse his might?
Do you clothe his neck with a mane?
20 Do you make him leap like the locust?
His majestic snorting is terrifying.
21 He paws[3] in the valley and exults in his strength;
he goes out to meet the weapons.
22 He laughs at fear and is not dismayed;
he does not turn back from the sword.
23 Upon him rattle the quiver,
the flashing spear, and the javelin.
24 With fierceness and rage he swallows the ground;
he cannot stand still at the sound of the trumpet.
25 When the trumpet sounds, he says ‘Aha!’
He smells the battle from afar,
the thunder of the captains, and the shouting.

26 “Is it by your understanding that the hawk soars
and spreads his wings toward the south?
27 Is it at your command that the eagle mounts up
and makes his nest on high?
28 On the rock he dwells and makes his home,
on the rocky crag and stronghold.
29 From there he spies out the prey;
his eyes behold it from far away.
30 His young ones suck up blood,
and where the slain are, there is he.”

40 [1]And the LORD said to Job:

[2]"Shall a faultfinder contend with the
Almighty?
He who argues with God, let him
answer it."

Job Promises Silence

3 Then Job answered the Lord and said:

4 “Behold, I am of small account; what shall I
answer you?
I lay my hand on my mouth.
5 I have spoken once, and I will not answer;
twice, but I will proceed no further.”

The Lord Challenges Job

6 Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind and said:

7 "Dress for action[1] like a man;
I will question you, and you make it known to me.
8 Will you even put me in the wrong?
Will you condemn me that you may be in the right?
9 Have you an arm like God,
and can you thunder with a voice like his?

10 "Adorn yourself with majesty and dignity;
clothe yourself with glory and splendor.
11 Pour out the overflowings of your anger,
and look on everyone who is proud and abase him.
12 Look on everyone who is proud and bring him low
and tread down the wicked where they stand.
13 Hide them all in the dust together;
bind their faces in the world below.[2]
14 Then will I also acknowledge to you
that your own right hand can save you.
15 "Behold, Behemoth,[3]
which I made as I made you;
he eats grass like an ox.
16 Behold, his strength in his loins,
and his power in the muscles of his belly.
17 He makes his tail stiff like a cedar;

the sinews of his thighs are knit together.
18 His bones are tubes of bronze,
his limbs like bars of iron.

19 "He is the first of the works[4] of God;
let him who made him bring near his sword!
20 For the mountains yield food for him
where all the wild beasts play.
21 Under the lotus plants he lies,
in the shelter of the reeds and in the marsh.
22 For his shade the lotus trees cover him;
the willows of the brook surround him.
23 Behold, if the river is turbulent he is not
frightened;
he is confident though Jordan rushes against
his mouth.
24 Can one take him by his eyes,[5]
or pierce his nose with a snare?

41 1[6] "Can you draw out Leviathan[7] with a fishhook

or press down his tongue with a cord?
2 Can you put a rope in his nose
or pierce his jaw with a hook?
3 Will he make many pleas to you?
Will he speak to you soft words?
4 Will he make a covenant with you
to take him for your servant forever?
5 Will you play with him as with a bird,
or will you put him on a leash for your girls?
6 Will traders bargain over him?
Will they divide him up among the
merchants?
7 Can you fill his skin with harpoons

or his head with fishing spears?
8 Lay your hands on him;
remember the battle—you will not do it
again!
9 [1] Behold, the hope of a man is false;
he is laid low even at the sight of him.
10 No one is so fierce that he dares to stir him up.
Who then is he who can stand before me?
11 Who has first given to me, that I should
repay him?
Whatever is under the whole heaven is
mine.

12 "I will not keep silence concerning his limbs,
or his mighty strength, or his goodly frame.
13 Who can strip off his outer garment?
Who would come near him with a bridle?
14 Who can open the doors of his face?
Around his teeth is terror.
15 His back is made of[2] rows of shields,
shut up closely as with a seal.
16 One is so near to another
that no air can come between them.
17 They are joined one to another;
they clasp each other and cannot be
separated.
18 His sneezings flash forth light,
and his eyes are like the eyelids of the dawn.
19 Out of his mouth go flaming torches;
sparks of fire leap forth.
20 Out of his nostrils comes forth smoke,
as from a boiling pot and burning rushes.
21 His breath kindles coals,
and a flame comes forth from his mouth.
22 In his neck abides strength,

and terror dances before him.
23 The folds of his flesh stick together,
firmly cast on him and immovable.
24† His heart is hard as a stone,
hard as the lower millstone.
25 When he raises himself up the mighty[3] are
afraid;
at the crashing they are beside themselves.
26 Though the sword reaches him, it does not
avail,
nor the spear, the dart, or the javelin.
27† He counts iron as straw,
and bronze as rotten wood.
28 The arrow cannot make him flee;
for him sling stones are turned to stubble.
29† Clubs are counted as stubble;
he laughs at the rattle of javelins.
30† His underparts are like sharp potsherds;
he spreads himself like a threshing sledge
on the mire.
31† He makes the deep boil like a pot;
he makes the sea like a pot of ointment.
32 Behind him he leaves a shining wake;
one would think the deep to be
white-haired.
33 On earth there is not his like,
a creature without fear.
34† He sees everything that is high;
he is king over all the sons of pride.”

Job's Confession and Repentance

42 [1]Then Job answered the LORD and said:

[2]"I know that you can do all things,
and that no purpose of yours can
be thwarted.
[3]'Who is this that hides counsel without
knowledge?'
Therefore I have uttered what I did not
understand,
things too wonderful for me, which I did
not know.
[4]'Hear, and I will speak;
I will question you, and you make it known
to me.'
[5] I had heard of you by the hearing of the
ear,
but now my eye sees you;
[6] therefore I despise myself,
and repent[1] in dust and ashes."

The Lord Rebukes Job's Friends

7 ‡† After the Lord had spoken these words to Job, the Lord said to Eliphaz
the Temanite: "My anger burns against you and against your two friends,
for you have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has. 8 † Now
therefore take seven bulls and seven rams and go to my servant Job and
offer up a burnt offering for yourselves. And my servant Job shall pray for
you, for I will accept his prayer not to deal with you according to your folly.
For you have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has." 9 † So
Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite
went and did what the Lord had told them, and the Lord accepted Job's
prayer.

The Lord Restores Job's Fortunes

10 ‡† And the Lord restored the fortunes of Job, when he had prayed for his
friends. And the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before. 11 † Then
came to him all his brothers and sisters and all who had known him before,
and ate bread with him in his house. And they showed him sympathy and
comforted him for all the evil[1] that the Lord had brought upon him. And
each of them gave him a piece of money[2] and a ring of gold.

12 † And the Lord blessed the latter days of Job more than his beginning.
And he had 14,000 sheep, 6,000 camels, 1,000 yoke of oxen, and 1,000
female donkeys. 13 † He had also seven sons and three daughters. 14 † And he
called the name of the first daughter Jemimah, and the name of the second
Keziah, and the name of the third Keren-happuch. 15 † And in all the land
there were no women so beautiful as Job's daughters. And their father gave
them an inheritance among their brothers. 16 † And after this Job lived 140
years, and saw his sons, and his sons' sons, four generations. 17 † And Job
died, an old man, and full of days.

Job

OVERVIEW

Author
Job or a contemporary

Date
Late third or early second millennium BC (age of Patriarchs)

Places
Land of Uz, east of Canaan

People
Job; Eliphaz; Bildad; Zophar; Elihu

Purpose
The Lord shows He is our Redeemer, despite what we may suffer in this life

Law Themes
People suffer unduly in a sinful, broken world; no one can justify himself or herself before God; Satan can tempt people and inflict suffering

Gospel Themes
God accomplishes His righteous purposes amid and through suffering; the Lord is our Redeemer; the resurrection of the body

Memory Verses
Job's resolve (1:21; 2:9–10); Job's comfort (19:25–27); the Lord's answer (38:1–2)

Introduction to Job

Reading Job

Stubs of pillars and walls interrupt the graceful arcs of hills throughout the Near East. At twilight, silhouettes of these ruins meld with the hills like permanent features
of the landscape. But in truth, they testify that nothing here is permanent. All things and all people suffer decay in our sin-broken world. The life and work of every person ends in ashes, dust, and ruins.

The prophet Job sat in ashes and dust for seven days (2:13) and considered the ruins of his once-great estate. Neither mourning nor the wisdom of his friends offered comfort. In fact, Job's friends accused him of bringing ruin upon himself and his family.

Central Question and Theme

The accusations of Job's friends seem minor when compared with the accusation of Satan, who asks the central question in the Book of Job and sets the theme: "Does Job fear God *for no reason* ?" (Hbr *hinnam* ; 1:9). In other words, why should Job or any other person fear, love, and trust in God? Satan wants to show that a person only serves God because He rewards obedience or punishes disobedience. Job's three friends take up this understanding—our relationship to the Almighty is simply a matter of punishment for disobedience or reward for obedience—and they argue with Job about this issue for most of the Book (cf chs 3–31).

However, Job understands that something greater is at work between God and humanity. Job confesses faith in a Redeemer, that the Lord is his Savior (9:33–35; 13:15–16; 14:13–14; 16:19–21; 19:24–27); he has learned true wisdom from the Lord, which comes from "fear" (i.e., trust; see p 1001) and repentance. Despite Job's insights and legendary patience, he sins by attempting to justify himself in his final appeal (ch 31).

At this point in the story, the young man Elihu interrupts the debate (chs 32–37) to condemn Job's self-justification and the self-righteous condemnations of Job offered by Job's friends. Elihu comes closest to understanding the situation. He defends God's justice and builds on Job's insights about repentance and redemption. He perceives that the Lord "delivers the afflicted by their affliction and opens their ear by adversity" (36:15). He hits upon an important biblical truth: God redeems amid and even through suffering.

After the Lord confronts Job (chs 38–41), Job puts into practice what he had earlier confessed. He repents "in dust and ashes" and receives the Lord's redemption (ch 42). In this way, Satan's initial question is answered —Job does not fear the Lord for the sake of wealth or prosperity. He fears the Lord because He calls people to repentance and redeems them.

Luther on Job

Luther states that the Book of Job "is written for our comfort." It teaches that all people sin and that God's justice is not like human justice:

> The book of Job deals with the question, whether misfortune comes from God even to the righteous. Job stands firm and contends that God torments even the righteous without cause other than that this be to God's praise, as Christ also testifies in John 9[:3] of the man who was born blind.
>
> Job's friends take the other side. They make a big and lengthy palaver [empty talk] trying to maintain God's justice, saying that he does not punish a righteous man, and if he does punish, then the man who is punished must have sinned. They have a worldly and human idea of God and his righteousness, as though he were just like men and his justice like the justice of the world.
>
> To be sure, when Job is in danger of death, out of human weakness he talks too much against God, and in his suffering sins. Nevertheless Job insists that he has not deserved this suffering more than others have, which is, of course, true. Finally, however, God decides that Job, by speaking against God in his suffering, has spoken wrongly, but that in contending against his friends about his innocence before the suffering came Job has spoken the truth. So the book
> carries this story ultimately to this conclusion: God alone is righteous, and yet one man is more righteous than another, even in the sight of God.
>
> But this is written for our comfort, that God allows even his great saints to falter, especially in adversity. For before Job comes into fear of death, he praises God at the theft of his goods and the death of his children. But when death is in prospect and God withdraws himself, Job's words show what kind of thoughts a man—however holy he may be—holds toward God: he thinks that God is not God, but only a judge and wrathful tyrant, who storms ahead and cares nothing about the goodness of a person's life. This is the finest part of this book. It is understood only by those who also experience and feel what it is to suffer the wrath and judgment of God, and to have his grace hidden.

The language of this book is more vigorous and splendid than that of any other book in all the Scriptures…. So, for example, when he says something like this, “The thirsty will pant after his wealth” [Job 5:5], that means “robbers shall take it from him”; or when he says, “The children of pride have never trodden it” [Job 28:8], that means “the young lions that stalk proudly”; and many similar cases. Again, by “light” he means good fortune, by “darkness” misfortune [Job 18:8], and so forth. (AE 35:251–52)

Job's Example

In the Book of Ezekiel, Job is given a place of honor beside Noah and Daniel as a righteous man (Ezk 14:14, 20). James reminds his readers of Job's "steadfastness" (Jas 5:11). A better example of a tenacious faith is hard to find.

From the story of Job comes, furthermore, the reassuring reminder that God "will not let you be tempted beyond your ability." Satan cannot "harass" Job beyond endurance. In His own way and at His own time, God provides "the way of escape" (1Co 10:13; 2Co 12:7–10).

New Testament believers have advantages over Job. The Gospel of fulfillment proclaims that humankind's need, demonstrated in the Book of Job, has been met in the perfect obedience and innocent suffering of Jesus Christ. However, we cannot do without a Joblike faith. We, too, are asked to believe that "for those who love God all things work together for good" (Rm 8:28), no matter how bad things look. Our trials may be even more baffling than Job's. We may be tempted to ask whether a God who claims to love us so much that He gave His Son to die for us should not have exempted us from suffering.

Nor are present-day believers more immune to the temptation to serve God for selfish reasons, even though we have received fuller revelation regarding life eternal. Instead of thinking of heaven as a gift of grace, we remain susceptible to the satanic suggestion that God is under obligation to reward our virtues either in this world or in the world to come. Furthermore, the promise of reigning with Christ may fail to satisfy us when we look for relief from distress in the here and now.

Challenges for Readers

Suffering. Some commentators have charged that the Book of Job never answers the questions it raises about suffering. This misunderstanding usually arises from trying to read Job as an explanation of human suffering rather than as a book about fear of God and redemption.

Date of Composition. Various dates have been proposed for the Book of Job. Critics often date the writing of Job to the sixth or fifth century BC or even later, though it describes a setting from the patriarchal period (late third millennium or early second millennium). The money Job describes (42:11), the Sabean and Chaldean raiders (1:15, 17), Job's great age (42:16), and way of sacrifice (1:5) all correspond to a time before the establishment of the Israelite priesthood and tabernacle. The great events of the exodus and conquest are never mentioned. The style of the Hebrew is archaic and very difficult, the most interpretive in the OT (see Luther's comments above about translation). All these features point to an early date. See note, 20:24.

Doctrinal Use. Readers should be cautious about using the dialogues in Jb 3:1–37:24 for supporting doctrine, because Job and his friends do not get everything quite right in their conversation about God's ways (38:1–2; 42:7). The chief value of the dialogues is to show how difficult it is for us to understand the Lord's purposes and to interpret the prosperity or suffering we experience. The Lord commends Job for speaking "what is right" about Him (42:7), since Job ultimately expresses his faith in the Lord's redemption.

The Redeemer. The greatest failure of critics is in not recognizing Job's prophecy about the Redeemer and the resurrection of the body (19:23–29). In this passage, Job beautifully points forward to Jesus of Nazareth, who suffers Satan's accusations, temptation, and finally endures the cross in order to redeem all people from sin. These themes are wonderfully drawn together by the English hymn writer Samuel Medley (1738–99): "I know that my Redeemer lives; What comfort this sweet sentence gives! He lives, He lives, who once was dead; He lives, my ever-living head" (*LSB* 461:1).

Blessings for Readers

Despite Job's lack of understanding and inability to explain his suffering, he clings to his belief that God is still his Redeemer. The Book of Job teaches that suffering is not simply God's judgment for sin (though it certainly can be that); suffering may be a trial permitted by God for our good or for the good of another. Most important, human suffering is part of God's redemptive plan for the salvation of all (demonstrated by Jesus' suffering). Job trusts that a Mediator-Redeemer will justify him. And in the end, God leads Job to sincere repentance and renewed faith in His mercy.

As you study Job, pray for the patience, wisdom, and faith shown by this saint. No matter what you may suffer, confess your Redeemer and call on Him. He will deliver you!

OUTLINE

Job has an exceptionally clear and well-marked outline. The prologue and epilogue are prose. All of the speeches are poetry and are clearly demarcated by statements identifying the speaker. A simple outline:

1. Prologue in Narrative Prose (chs 1–2)
2. Dialogue of Speeches in Poetry (3:1–42:6)
3. Epilogue in Narrative Prose (42:7–17)

A detailed outline:

I. Prologue in Narrative Prose (chs 1–2)

II. Dialogue of Speeches in Poetry (3:1–42:6)

A. Dialogue between Job and His Three Friends (chs 3–31). These dialogues have three cycles of speeches. After Job's opening lament (ch 3), in each cycle the order of speakers is this: Eliphaz, Job, Bildad, Job, Zophar, Job. In the third cycle, however, Bildad runs short on words and Zophar is at a loss for words. Hence, in the third cycle, Zophar has no speech and Job has no response to Zophar.

1. Job's opening lament (ch 3)
2. First cycle (chs 4–14)
   a. Eliphaz (chs 4–5)
   b. Job (chs 6–7)
   c. Bildad (ch 8)

d. Job (chs 9–10)
e. Zophar (ch 11)
f. Job (chs 12–14)

3. Second cycle (chs 15–21)
a. Eliphaz (ch 15)
b. Job (chs 16–17)
c. Bildad (ch 18)
d. Job (ch 19)
e. Zophar (ch 20)
f. Job (ch 21)

4. Third cycle (chs 22–26)
a. Eliphaz (ch 22)
b. Job (chs 23–24)
c. Bildad (ch 25)
d. Job (ch 26)

B. Job's Monologue (chs 27–31)
C. Elihu's Speeches (chs 32–37)
D. Yahweh's Two Speeches and Job's Two Responses (38:1–42:6)
1. Yahweh's first speech (38:1–40:2)
2. Job's first response (40:3–5)
3. Yahweh's second speech (40:6–41:34)
4. Job's second response (42:1–6)

III. Epilogue in Narrative Prose: God's Verdict and Job's Restoration (42:7–17)

Articles and Resources Related to Job

- The Meaning of *Sheol*
- Legal Language in Job
- Job's Wisdom and His Knowledge of the Creator
- The Countenance of Job

The Meaning of *Sheol*

This word, occurring 65 times in the Hebrew OT, is still obscure. Since the derivation of the word is uncertain, the context must determine the meaning in each case.

1. *Sheol* can mean the resting place of mankind's mortal remains (Jb 17:16; Is 38:10).

2. *Sheol* can also mean "realm of the dead," into which all enter who depart this life, righteous as well as wicked (e.g., Gn 37: 35; Jb 7:9; Ps 16:10; 31:17; 89:48). In this sense, it is a general term used very much like the English phrase "the hereafter" or "the beyond." The phrase "to go down into Sheol" means "to die, to depart from the land of the living." But it should be noted that when the righteous are said to descend into Sheol, their fate beyond is rarely taken into account. The hope of the pious in the OT is expressed differently (e.g., Ps 73: 24).

3. *Sheol* can mean the place where God's judgment overtakes evildoers. In this sense, Sheol receives those who are taken away in God's anger. Korah's rebel band went down to Sheol because they had provoked the Lord (Nu 16: 30, 33). Harlots go to Sheol (Pr 5:5). The anger of the Lord burns to the depths of Sheol (Dt 32:22). According to Ps 49, all people die physically, the righteous as well as the ungodly (v 10), but there is a difference in their existence in the hereafter. The confidence of the psalmist is expressed in the words "They [i.e., the wicked] are appointed for Sheol; Death shall be their shepherd…. But God will ransom my soul from the power of Sheol, for He will receive me" (v v 14–15). Clearly, there is a sharp contrast between the doom of the ungodly and the glorious hope of the believer, who hopes to rest securely in the hands of God (Ps 73).

Legal Language in Job

In the ancient Near East, the elders of a community would typically hold court in a city gate (Jb 29:7). In the ancient city of Gezer, archaeologists have found stone benches in the gate chambers where the elders sat. The elders likely wore garments that distinguished their service (Jb 29:14). Parties in dispute would approach them at the gate, explain their case, and count on a wise ruling (see pp 775–77). Job served as such an elder, and his friends likely did as well. The Book of Job never mentions that its setting is the city gate, but its dialogues are filled with the legal language of such proceedings (e.g., 10: 2; 23:1–7; 29:7–17, 21–25; 31:11, 13, 21, 35–37).

The separate roles of judge, jury, and lawyer may not have been clear in these proceedings; participants probably discussed and argued their way through the issue, trying to convince one another. In some communities, bribes would change hands (Jb 6: 22). Crowds might gather to watch and participate (cf Jb 12:4; 30:1, 8–15).

Instead of supporting Job's case, his friends have supported the suit against him (6:14–23; 8:1–6). Though Job himself had heard and argued in such cases and he was famous for defending the defenseless (29:15–17), he did not have the skill to argue his case before the ultimate judge: the Lord (9: 3, 14–15, 19–20, 29–35). In ch 9, he begins to see that he needs help, an arbitrator (v 33). This realization becomes the basis for Job's later cry, "I know that my Redeemer lives" (19: 25).

Job's Wisdom and His Knowledge of the Creator

Zophar [Job's friend] had said bombastically that "the wisdom of God reached all the way to heaven, was deeper than hell, longer than the earth, broader than the sea" [11:7–9]. Therefore, Job responds that it is not necessary to seek further documentation of divine wisdom and majesty because those lower things that are visible to the eyes of all bear enough witness and more about that wisdom and majesty. If we were to consider the structure of the limbs in animals or the powers of herbs and things born of the earth, surely they provide clear witnesses of divine wisdom. In Job [38–39] God Himself cites some outstanding, admirable works in the preservation and governance of His created things. Therefore in a figurative way of speaking the holy man commands that they ask the beasts and birds, that they address the earth because the goodness, wisdom, and power of the Creator can be learned from these by careful consideration and meditation….

If we recognize and admire the wisdom of their [human] manufacturers from the marvelous making of clocks and from their sure movements, why should we not recognize the marvelous wisdom of God the Creator from the miraculous and stunning manufacture of the heavens? "Who among all these does not know," asks Job, "that the hand of the Lord has done this?" [12:9]. That is, even the most illiterate person acknowledges that these are the works of God's hands. It would be ridiculously childish if a person were to admire the canvas of a painter and not praise the artist nor his artistry….

Although one can in some way know not only the essence of God but also His providence from the principles born in us and from contemplation of created things, nevertheless the knowledge of divine providence taken from the book of nature was weakened in the minds of the heathen by a consideration of this inequality: the good often appear to experience the worst fortune while the wicked, on the other hand, enjoy good fortune (Job 21:7–8; Ps 73:17; etc.).

We must distinguish between a knowledge of creation and of the Creator Himself, for we cannot go from only the contemplation of created things to an understanding of the creation specifically and literally—that God created all things out of nothing within a definite time (six days). Heb 11: 3: "By

faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible." Nevertheless we can arrive at a knowledge of the Creator from looking at creatures, namely, that there is some supreme uncreated being from whom all things have come.

Adapted from Johann Gerhard, *Theological Commonplaces*, Exegesis 2, *On the Nature of God* (St. Louis: Concordia, 2007), § 65–66.

The Countenance of Job

Early in the Reformation, Dr. Martin Luther wrestled with issues of salvation, suffering, and divine punishment similar to those in the Book of Job. He noted that some theologians argued simply that if people obtained grace by doing righteous acts, God would reward them, and if people lived in unrighteousness, God would punish them. This approach to theology left little room for righteous suffering or salvation based on God's righteousness.

Suffering and Righteousness

At the Heidelberg Disputation in April 1518, Luther presented the following points (nos. 16–18). They introduce a biblical perspective on righteousness and suffering.

> The person who believes that he can obtain grace by doing what is in him adds sin to sin so that he becomes doubly guilty.
>
> Nor does speaking in this manner give cause for despair, but for arousing the desire to humble oneself and seek the grace of Christ.
>
> It is certain that man must utterly despair of his own ability before he is prepared to receive the grace of Christ.

Luther went on to argue that theologians who taught people to seek God's grace through good works and victorious living mislead people about how God works through suffering. They could never truly understand the good and the sufferings that the righteous experience in life (nos. 20–24).

> He deserves to be called a theologian, however, who comprehends the visible and manifest things of God seen through suffering and the cross.
>
> A theologian of glory calls evil good and good evil. A theologian of the cross calls the thing what it actually is.
>
> That wisdom which sees the invisible things of God in works as perceived by man is completely puffed up, blinded, and hardened.
>
> The law brings the wrath of God, kills, reviles, accuses, judges, and condemns everything that is not in Christ (Rom. 4:15).
>
> Yet that wisdom is not of itself evil, nor is the law to be evaded; but without the theology of the cross man misuses the best in the worst manner. (AE 31:40–41)

In his explanation of these points, Luther described the righteousness of Christ as "the countenance of Job" (AE 31:64). God called wounded and suffering Job to intercede for his friends and avert God's wrath (Jb 42:8). In a similar way, the wounded and suffering Christ interceded for all sinners, averts God's wrath from us, and grants us His righteousness. The Lord looked upon the diseased and battered countenance of Job and heard Job's plea for his friends. In a similar way, when the Lord looks upon the battered face of His Son, He hears Christ's pleas on our behalf.

The Theology of the Cross

The righteous *do* suffer! And through their suffering God works His mercy and salvation. Later that same year, in his explanations of the Ninety-five Theses, Luther commented further on the theology of the cross:

> A theologian of the cross (that is, one who speaks of the crucified and hidden God), teaches that punishments, crosses, and death are the most precious treasury of all…. Indeed fortunate and blessed is he who is considered by God to be so worthy that these treasures of the relics of Christ should be given to him; rather, who understands that they are given to him. For to whom are they not offered? As St. James says, "Count it all joy, my brethren, when you meet various trials" (Jas. 1: 2). For not all have this grace and glory to receive these treasures, but only the most elect of the children of God. (AE 31: 225–26)

When Trials Come

In this sin-broken world, you will experience suffering. When trials come, do not automatically conclude that God is punishing you for a sin. Certainly confess and repent of whatever sins you know. But also entrust your body and life to the One who accomplishes His purposes in the midst of suffering. See the world with Job's eyes, and behold the countenance of Jesus, your Redeemer, who bore the price of your salvation.

> Troubles are not always punishments or signs of wrath. Indeed, terrified consciences should be taught that there are more important purposes for afflictions (2 Corinthians 12:9), so that they do not think God is rejecting them when they see nothing but God's punishment and anger in troubles. The other more important purposes are to be considered, that is, that God is doing His strange work so that He may be able to do His own work. (Ap XIIB 61)

Footnotes

Footnotes for Job, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:5 The Hebrew word *bless* is used euphemistically for *curse* in 1:5, 11 ; 2:5, 9
- [2] 1:6 Hebrew *the Adversary* ; so throughout chapters 1–2
- [1] 1:15 Hebrew *the young men* ; also verses 16, 17

Footnotes for Job, Chapter 2

- [1] 2:10 Or *disaster* ; also verse 11

Footnotes for Job, Chapter 3

- [1] 3:24 Or *like* ; Hebrew *before*

Footnotes for Job, Chapter 4

- [2] 4:6 Hebrew lacks *of God*
- [1] 4:17 Or *more than* ; twice in this verse

Footnotes for Job, Chapter 5

- [2] 5:5 The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain
- [3] 5:5 Aquila, Symmachus, Syriac, Vulgate ; Hebrew could be read as *and the snare pants*
- [4] 5:5 Hebrew *their*
- [1] 5:19 Or *disaster*
- [2] 5:27 Hebrew *for yourself*

Footnotes for Job, Chapter 6

- [1] 6:6 The meaning of the Hebrew word is uncertain
- [2] 6:7 The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain
- [3] 6:10 The meaning of the Hebrew word is uncertain
- [4] 6:14 Syriac, Vulgate (compare Targum) ; the meaning of the Hebrew word is uncertain

Footnotes for Job, Chapter 8

- [1] 8:14 Hebrew *house*

Footnotes for Job, Chapter 9

- [1] 9:15 Or *to my judge*
- [2] 9:19 Compare Septuagint ; Hebrew *me*
- [1] 9:23 The meaning of the Hebrew word is uncertain
- [2] 9:33 Or *Would that there were an*

Footnotes for Job, Chapter 10

- [1] 10:16 Hebrew lacks *my head*

Footnotes for Job, Chapter 11

- [2] 11:4 Hebrew *your*
- [1] 11:6 The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain
- [2] 11:8 Hebrew *The heights of heaven*

Footnotes for Job, Chapter 12

- [1] 12:6 The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain
- [2] 12:8 Or *speak to the earth*
- [3] 12:13 Hebrew *him*

Footnotes for Job, Chapter 13

- [1] 13:15 Or *Behold, he will slay me ; I have no hope*
- [2] 13:27 Or *you marked*
- [3] 13:28 Hebrew *He*

Footnotes for Job, Chapter 14

- [1] 14:6 Probable reading ; Hebrew *look away from him, that he may cease*
- [2] 14:14 Or *relief*

Footnotes for Job, Chapter 15

- [1] 15:4 Hebrew lacks *of God*
- [2] 15:15 Hebrew *he*
- [1] 15:29 Or *nor will his produce bend down to the earth*

Footnotes for Job, Chapter 16

- [1] 16:7 Hebrew *you have* ; also verse 8
- [2] 16:21 Hebrew *and*

Footnotes for Job, Chapter 17

- [1] 17:12 The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain

Footnotes for Job, Chapter 19

- [1] 19:12 Hebrew *their way*
- [1] 19:25 Hebrew *dust*
- [2] 19:26 Or *without*

Footnotes for Job, Chapter 20

- [1] 20:23 Hebrew *he*
- [2] 20:28 Hebrew *his*

Footnotes for Job, Chapter 21

- [1] 21:17 Hebrew *he*
- [2] 21:24 The meaning of the Hebrew word is uncertain

Footnotes for Job, Chapter 22

- [1] 22:17 Hebrew *them*
- [2] 22:29 Or *you say, 'It is exaltation'*
- [3] 22:30 Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate ; Hebrew *him that is not innocent*

Footnotes for Job, Chapter 23

- [4] 23:2 Or *defiant*
- [1] 23:13 Or *one*

Footnotes for Job, Chapter 24

- [2] 24:5 Hebrew *they*

- [3] 24:6 Hebrew *his*
- [1] 24:11 Hebrew *their olive rows*
- [2] 24:22 Hebrew *he*

Footnotes for Job, Chapter 25

- [3] 25:2 Hebrew *him*

Footnotes for Job, Chapter 26

- [1] 26:6 Hebrew *him*
- [2] 26:9 Or *his throne*

Footnotes for Job, Chapter 27

- [1] 27:22 Or *He* (that is, God) ; also verse 23
- [2] 27:22 Or *his* ; also verse 23

Footnotes for Job, Chapter 28

- [1] 28:6 Or *lapis lazuli* ; also verse 16

Footnotes for Job, Chapter 29

- [1] 29:4 Hebrew *my autumn days*

Footnotes for Job, Chapter 30

- [1] 30:4 Or *warmth*
- [2] 30:11 Hebrew *the bridle*
- [3] 30:19 Hebrew *He*
- [1] 30:24 The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain

Footnotes for Job, Chapter 31

- [2] 31:8 Or *let my descendants*
- [1] 31:18 Hebrew *he*
- [2] 31:18 Hebrew *her*
- [3] 31:20 Hebrew *if his loins have not blessed me*
- [4] 31:26 Hebrew *the light*
- [1] 31:33 Or *as Adam did*

Footnotes for Job, Chapter 32

- [1] 32:9 Hebrew *many* [in years]

Footnotes for Job, Chapter 33

- [1] 33:13 Hebrew *his*
- [2] 33:13 Or *He will not answer for any of his own words*
- [3] 33:26 Hebrew *he*

Footnotes for Job, Chapter 34

- [1] 34:13 Hebrew lacks *on him*
- [1] 34:23 Hebrew *he*
- [1] 34:33 The meaning of the Hebrew in verses 29-33 is uncertain

Footnotes for Job, Chapter 35

- [2] 35:9 Or *the many*

- [1] 35:15 Theodotion, Symmachus (compare Vulgate); the meaning of the Hebrew word is uncertain

Footnotes for Job, Chapter 36

- [1] 36:33 Hebrew *declares concerning him*

Footnotes for Job, Chapter 37

- [2] 37:4 Hebrew *them*
- [1] 37:16 Or *hoverings*
- [2] 37:24 Hebrew *in heart*

Footnotes for Job, Chapter 38

- [3] 38:3 Hebrew *Gird up your loins*
- [1] 38:32 Probably the name of a constellation
- [2] 38:36 Or *in the ibis*
- [3] 38:36 Or *rooster*

Footnotes for Job, Chapter 39

- [1] 39:13 The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain
- [2] 39:18 The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain
- [3] 39:21 Hebrew *They paw*

Footnotes for Job, Chapter 40

- [1] 40:7 Hebrew *Gird up your loins*
- [2] 40:13 Hebrew *in the hidden place*
- [3] 40:15 A large animal, exact identity unknown
- [4] 40:19 Hebrew *ways*

- [5] 40:24 Or *in his sight*

Footnotes for Job, Chapter 41

- [6] 41:1 Ch 40:25 in Hebrew
- [7] 41:1 A large sea animal, exact identity unknown
- [1] 41:9 Ch 41:1 in Hebrew
- [2] 41:15 Or *His pride is in his*
- [3] 41:25 Or *gods*

Footnotes for Job, Chapter 42

- [1] 42:6 Or *and am comforted*
- [1] 42:11 Or *disaster*
- [2] 42:11 Hebrew *a qesitah* ; a unit of money of unknown value

Study Notes

JOB—NOTE ON 1:1 *a man*. Hbr word order ("a man there was") indicates the beginning of a report. Cf 1Sm 25:2; 2Sm 12:1; Est 2:5. This man, as a member of the human race, would demonstrate that all children of Adam had to look beyond themselves for a Savior from Satan and from their own sinful nature. *land of Uz*. Exact location uncertain. See map, p 780. *Job*. Mentioned in Ezk 14:14, 20, Job is seen as an ancient hero of faith along with Noah and Daniel (most likely the biblical Daniel, not Danel the Ugaritic hero). If the name Job is derived from Hbr, it means "one exposed to hostility"; from Arabic, possibly "one who returns or repents." Unlike other biblical patriarchs, Job is introduced without genealogy or reference to his tribe or clan and without historical context. Job is a real person, whose life teaches all humanity about their plight. *blameless*. Hbr *tam*, "complete," "sound." The term often designates a sacrificial animal as spotless, without blemish. When used of a human, it means personal integrity, not sinless perfection (Jsh 24:14; Jgs 9:16, 19). The blameless person walks closely with God (Gn 17:1) and delights in obeying God's Law (Ps 119:1). This does not mean that Job was sinless, for later he admits he is a sinner (6:24; 7:21; 42:6). Even Job's first recorded act—offering sacrifices for sin (1:5)—indicates his understanding that he is a sinner. *upright*. Frequent term in Ps and Pr; means "straightness," "faithful adherence to God's statutes." "Blameless" and "upright" are juxtaposed in Ps 25:21 and parallel in Ps 37:37. Together, the words indicate the peak of moral perfection, an honest, compassionate manner in relating to others. Job demonstrated this esp in the way he treated his servants with fairness and justice (31:13–23). *feared God*. Throughout biblical Wisdom Literature, fear of God is the foundation for true wisdom (28:28; Pr 1:7; 9:10; see p 1001). *turned away from evil*. Those who fear God avoid the very appearance of evil (Pr 16:6; Jb 31:1–12), and they do not trust in any other god (31:24–28).

JOB—NOTE ON 1:2–3 *seven sons and three daughters*. Numbers three, seven, and ten may indicate completeness, perfection. Job's life was filled not only with wealth (livestock, servants) but also with a rich lineage (sons and daughters). *3,000 camels*. Suggests participation in caravan trade. *500*

yoke of oxen. Indicates that Job was not a nomad but a farmer with extensive farmlands (v 14).

JOB—NOTE ON 1:4 *his day*. Most likely this feast occurred on the son's birthday, since the same Hbr word is also used in 3:1. The happy and healthy family circle of Job's children was strengthened with the observance of annual feasts. These festive gatherings of the family set the stage for the later disaster (vv 18–19).

JOB—NOTE ON 1:5 *Job would send and consecrate them*. As head of the family, Job was a priest before God for his children (cf Gn 12:7; 15:9–10; 35:1). He was a wonderful example of a parent offering intercessory prayer for his children. *burnt offerings*. Usually made for unintentional sins (Lv 4:1–5:6); they atoned for human sin in general. *cursed*. Hbr *barak*. Normally means "to bless"; here the context indicates the opposite. The sin of cursing is pivotal to the Book of Job. E.g., Job is concerned with his children cursing God; Satan will argue that Job would curse God, esp if Job were to suffer loss. Even Job's wife will urge him to curse God and die (2:9). Cypr: "In the spiritual and heavenly life, the larger the number of children you have, the greater ought to be the outlay of your labors…. Since there cannot daily fail to be sins committed in the sight of God, there [lacked] not daily sacrifices wherewith the sins might be cleansed away…. If, then, you truly love your children, if you show to them the full and paternal sweetness of love, you ought to be the more charitable, that by your righteous works you may commend your children to God" (*ANF* 5:481).

JOB—NOTE ON 1:1–5 Job is unique in being as faultless as one can be (1:8; 2:3). He has a wonderful—even "perfect"—family and life. Yet Job's devotion to God is not based on self-righteousness. He recognizes the sinful, corrupt nature at work within his family and seeks God's forgiveness (v 5). Even when all seems right in our families, the Lord calls us to daily repentance, because true peace and devotion flow from His mercy. • Lord, give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses through the perfect offering of Your beloved Son. Amen.

JOB—NOTE ON 1:6 *a day*. Suggests God had appointed a time for this gathering. *the sons of God*. Also in 2:1; 38:7 (cf Ps 89:6–7; possible parallel in Gn 6:2, 4). They are God's created attendants called "angels" (Gn 32:1; Ps 103:20); also described as God's agents or supervisors of God's realm (Dn 4:13, 17, 23), occasionally active in human dealings (Zec 1:10–17;

6:4–8). Also called "gods" (Ps 97:7) or spirits (lit, "winds"; Zec 6:5). When gathered together, they constitute "the assembly of the holy ones" (Ps 89:5) or "the council of the holy ones" (Ps 89:7). *before the* LORD. Hbr expression for God's nearer presence; see "presence," p 843; for divine name "Yahweh," see p 1227. *Satan*. A title, not yet a proper name. "The accuser," with the definite article (cf Zec 3:1–2). OT uses the term to denote various human antagonists or adversaries (1Sm 29:4; 2Sm 19:22; 1Ki 5:4; 11:14; Ps 109:6) or to designate the archenemy of humanity, an enemy who did not keep his position among the heavenly hosts (Jude 6). The definite article stigmatizes "the Satan" as the greatest enemy of humanity. *came among them*. Though some see Satan as the prosecutor in the heavenly council, ready to accuse and indict his victim (cf Rv 12:10), others interpret the phrase to refer to an intruder who has no right to be present at this council. (Satan alone is asked his business.) Satan's insolence shows a mind twisted away from God, not a loyal servant. The Lord is finally the one who brings the case against Job (chs 38–41).

JOB—NOTE ON 1:7 *From where have you come?* The Lord knows the answer but invites Satan to state his business. Greg: "What then is it to say to Satan, 'Where do you come from?' but to condemn his ways, as though unknown. The light of truth then knows nought of the darkness, which it reproves" (*ALF* 18:71). *to and fro*. Roaming around looking for trouble or an opportunity to do harm; prowling "around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour" (1Pt 5:8). Chrys: "And if he [Satan] should not be able by wealth to cast us out of our portion there [heaven], he comes another way, the way of poverty; as he did with respect to Job. That is, when he saw that wealth did him no harm, he weaves his toils by poverty, expecting on that side to get the better of him" (*NPNF*1 10:84).

JOB—NOTE ON 1:8 *considered*. The Lord brings Job to Satan's attention. *My servant*. Term of honor. *none like him*. The Lord made this comparison to test Satan. We should not judge ourselves by the deeds of others but in view of God's commands. *blameless and upright man*. The Lord uses the evidence given in vv 1, 5 to support His praise of Job.

JOB—NOTE ON 1:9–10 *for no reason*. Hbr *hinnam*. Reveals Satan's cynicism, insinuating that all good deeds spring from selfish motives. It questions, "Why should a person fear, love, and trust in God?" This is the central question of Jb, which may be answered in two ways: (1) a person serves God to gain God's blessings and to avoid punishment, and (2) a

person serves God because He is the merciful Redeemer and only hope of humankind. Aug: "This was true light, this the light of the living, that *gratis* [without reward] Job should worship God. God saw in the heart of His servant his gratuitous worship. For that heart was pleasing in the sight of the Lord" (*NPNF*1 8:224). Aug: "If when He gives earthly goods, you do rejoice, how much more ought you to rejoice when He gives you Himself, who made heaven and earth? So then God must be loved for His own sake" (*NPNF*1 6:398). *hedge*. Thorny, protective fence (Hos 2:6) against threats to Job's well-being. Luther notes that God gave us His Commandments "to build a hedge round about [us]" (LC I 205). In 3:23, Job complains that God has "hedged" him in with troubles.

JOB—NOTE ON 1:11 *to Your face*. In open defiance of God.

JOB—NOTE ON 1:12 *in your hand*. Yahweh grants Satan full power over Job's possessions, but not over his body. Satan will act as God's servant, as an instrument for testing Job. Luth: "God sends no sickness into the world but through the devil. All sadness and sickness are of the devil, not of God. For God permits the devil to harm us because He receives little regard from us (Acts 10:38; Luke 13:11). Whatever, therefore, pertains to death is the handiwork of the devil; and, conversely, whatever pertains to life is the blessed work (*beneficium*) of God…. The devil must be our Lord God's executioner" (*WLS* § 1183).

JOB—NOTE ON 1:6–12 Is the Lord sacrificing Job to His own pride? No! The Lord also puts Satan to the test in order to prove something marvelous for you: Satan cannot snatch you out of the Lord's hand (Jn 10:28–29). • Though suffering and doubt grip me, O Lord, You cling to me and will never forsake me. Amen.

JOB—NOTE ON 1:13 *in their oldest brother's house*. Stage is set using information from v 4. The order of destruction is the opposite of the blessings given (a chiastic arrangement):

Order of Blessing (vv 2–3): Sons and daughters
Order of Loss (vv 13–19): Herds and donkeys
Order of Blessing (vv 2–3): Flocks and camels
Order of Loss (vv 13–19): Flocks and camels
Order of Blessing (vv 2–3): Herds and donkeys
Order of Loss (vv 13–19): Sons and daughters

JOB—NOTE ON 1:14 *messenger*. In 4:18; 33:23, this term means an "angel"; here, a servant of Job reports the first disaster ending his peaceful

estate. *oxen were plowing*. Job was a farmer, not just a herder (v 3).
JOB—NOTE ON 1:15 *Sabeans*. Semitic people probably from southern Arabia (modern Yemen), whose descendants became wealthy traders in spices, gold, and precious stones (see queen of Sheba, 1Ki 10:1–13; cf Ps 72:10, 15; Is 60:6; Jer 6:20; Ezk 27:22; Jl 3:8). Jb 6:19 calls the Sabeans traveling merchants and associates them with Tema (c 350 mi SE of Jerusalem).
JOB—NOTE ON 1:16 *The fire of God*. Word usually used for lightning (20:26; Ex 9:23; 1Ki 18:38; 2Ki 1:10–14), but volcanic fallout in Gn 19:24.
JOB—NOTE ON 1:17 *Chaldeans*. Seminomadic marauders, forerunners of the famous Neo-Babylonian Empire, of whom Nebuchadnezzar in the sixth century BC was most notable. *formed three groups*. Their attack is well organized.
JOB—NOTE ON 1:18–19 Four disasters symbolize totality of destruction.
JOB—NOTE ON 1:19 *great wind*. Desert wind, sometimes known as a "sirocco"; a wind with sudden and violent gusts (Jer 13:24).
JOB—NOTE ON 1:20 *tore his robe*. Customary gesture of grief (Gn 37:34; Jsh 7:6; 2Sm 1:11; 3:31; Est 4:1). An outer robe was worn by nobility and men of standing (1Sm 18:4; 24:4, 11; Ezk 26:16). *shaved his head*. Also a standard gesture of grief (Is 22:12; Jer 7:29; 16:6; 47:5; 48:37; Ezk 7:18; Am 8:10); such a rite was forbidden in the Law of Moses (Lv 19:27–28; Dt 14:1). *fell on the ground and worshiped*. Job drops to the ground, not to curse God, but to worship Him (Gn 23:7, 12; Ex 18:7; 1Ki 2:19). Chrys: "If he rent his clothes and shaved his head, marvel not. For he was a father and a loving father: and it was [fitting] that both the compassion of his nature should be shown, and also the self-command of his spirit" (*NPNF*1 12:166). Job became a model of sincere grief and piety in times of tragedy.
JOB—NOTE ON 1:21 *naked*. Having nothing (Ec 5:14; 1Tm 6:7). *The* LORD *gave*. Yahweh is the source of everything. Cf 1Sm 3:18 for similar formula. *blessed be the name of the* LORD. Cf Ps 113:2 for similar blessing. Satan is foiled, for Job does not curse the Lord, but blesses Him.
JOB—NOTE ON 1:22 *wrong*. Much debated Hbr term; refers elsewhere to insipid, worthless food (cf 6:7; Jer 23:13).
JOB—NOTE ON 1:13–22 Job's actions display the depths of his grief. But rather than curse God, Job blesses and worships Him. He displays no regret, as though he suspects his loss is the result of sin by someone in his family. He sees God's hand at work in his suffering. Though Job loses

virtually all his possessions, he does not lose trust in the Lord. • "And take they our life, Goods, fame, child, and wife, Though these all be gone, Our vict'ry has been won; The Kingdom ours remaineth." Amen. (*LSB* 656:1)

JOB—NOTE ON 2:1–3 Almost identical passage to 1:6–8. Satan, who earlier accused Job of having ulterior motives, now is seen as having an ulterior motive himself—to discredit the Lord through Job.

JOB—NOTE ON 2:3 *integrity*. From same root as "blameless." Used in 2:9; 27:5; 31:6; elsewhere in the OT only in Pr 11:3. *incited me*. Used in a derogatory sense here and in 36:18; 1Sm 26:19; 2Sm 24:1.

JOB—NOTE ON 2:4 *Skin for skin!* Proverbial saying that could mean a person would exchange anything he or she has for something else of similar or better value.

JOB—NOTE ON 2:5 *his bone and his flesh*. Together, means "his body." Bones were considered the seat of illness (Lm 1:13); thus Satan has in mind a debilitating disease.

JOB—NOTE ON 2:6 *in your hand*. Cf 1:12. Greg: "The safeguard of protection goes along with the permission to smite…. And so with the very justice of the permission there is mixed a certain measure of pity, that in one and the same contest, both His lowly servant might rise by oppression, and the towering enemy be brought down by the permission" (*ALF* 18:133).

JOB—NOTE ON 2:7 *loathsome sores*. Singular noun in Hbr. A nontechnical term for a grievous inflammation, a boil. Some associate this description with leprosy, though the exact disease is unknown. The disease is characterized with infections, darkened and peeling skin (30:28, 30), and broken and festering skin (7:5). Other symptoms could include emaciation (19:20), fever (30:30b), fits of depression (7:16; 30:15–17), weeping (16:16a), sleeplessness (7:4), nightmares (7:14), putrid breath (19:17), failing vision (16:16b), rotting teeth (19:20), and haggard looks (2:12). Such torturing disfigurement points to the Suffering Servant of Isaiah, whose "appearance was so marred, beyond human semblance…. He had no form or majesty that we should look at Him" (Is 52:14; 53:2). This is the last time Satan is heard or seen in Jb.

JOB—NOTE ON 2:8 *piece of broken pottery*. Broken pottery had many uses; here a potsherd is used for scraping or scratching the sores. *sat in the ashes*. Custom associated with grief (2Sm 13:19; Est 4:1, 3; Dn 9:3; Jnh 3:6).

JOB—NOTE ON 2:9 *wife*. Only time we hear from her. Mentioned by Job in his complaint (19:17) and oath (31:10). Though she is not physically afflicted, she also suffers the loss of children and wealth. *hold fast your integrity?* Echo of 2:3 and Yahweh's words there. Words are used here in derision, as a temptation aiding Satan. *Curse God and die*. Possibly an indirect way of encouraging suicide.

JOB—NOTE ON 2:1–10 Job demonstrates great reserve, but also a sense of fatalism. He feels there is nothing he can do. Though he certainly cannot aid himself, he can pray for the Lord's deliverance. This is the Lord's promise and great comfort in the face of all adversity: We can call on the Lord Almighty in prayer; He has promised to answer. • Lord, lead us to call upon Your name in every trouble, pray, praise, and give thanks. Amen.

JOB—NOTE ON 2:11 *Eliphaz*. Edomite name that means "God is fine gold"; also the name of one of Esau's sons and a ruler of his people (Gn 36:4, 6–12, 15–16). *Temanite*. Teman was a son of Eliphaz (Gn 36:11, 15, 42) and also the name of a large Edomite area, southeast of the Salt Sea, famous for its wisdom (Jer 49:7). The Edomites were descendants of Esau (aka Edom; Gn 25:30), brother of Jacob (aka Israel; Gn 32:28), father of the Israelites. Edom led many invasions against Israel (1Sm 14:47; Ezk 25:14), for which the prophet Obadiah announced God's judgment against them (Ob 1–14). *Bildad the Shuhite*. Possible descendant of Shuah, Abraham's son by his concubine Keturah and founder of a desert tribe related to the nomadic Midianites (Gn 25:2; 1Ch 1:32). *Zophar the Naamathite*. Name is unique to Jb, as is the location. These friends presumably traveled some distance to visit Job. Little is known about them.

JOB—NOTE ON 2:12 *they did not recognize him*. Likely a result of Job's disease. *tore their robes*. In grief, just as Job had done (1:20). *sprinkled dust on their heads*. Flinging dust into the air so that it fell on the head was another sign of grief.

JOB—NOTE ON 2:13 *sat with him on the ground*. Another gesture of grief. *seven days and seven nights*. Normal period of mourning.

JOB—NOTE ON 2:11–13 An important subtheme is Job's friendships. Job's friends display genuine, appropriate sorrow and care. When friends and family mourn and suffer, abide with them. Share their grief, and look for opportunities to comfort them. Pray to the "God of all comfort" on their behalf, for "through Christ we share abundantly in comfort too" (2Co 1:3,

5). • Shelter me, O Lord, with the blessed wounds of Jesus, who is the friend of sinners. Amen.

JOB—NOTE ON **Chs 3–37** These dialogues of Job with his friends do not always reflect divine truth. Therefore, they should be used cautiously. See pp 779–82. In the ensuing battle of words, the movement of thought from one point of contention to the next is circular. Each speaker draws concentric circles of argumentation around the central topic, repeating the issue and elaborating proof and rebuttal from various points of view. It is very effective in its total impact. See "Legal Language, " p 792.

JOB—NOTE ON 3:1 *After this*. After seven days of silence. *cursed the day of his birth*. Lit, "his day" (see note, 1:4). Contrary to his wife's advice (2:9), Job curses himself. Today, we would describe Job as depressed.

JOB—NOTE ON 3:3 Introduces the rest of the chapter by giving a synopsis: vv 4–5 condemn the day, and vv 6–9 condemn the night. Ambr: "Job had recognized that to be born is the beginning of all woes, and therefore wished that the day on which he was born might perish, so that the origin of all troubles might be removed, and wished that the day of his birth might perish that he might receive the day of resurrection" (*NPNF*2 10:178).

JOB—NOTE ON 3:4 *Let that day be darkness!* Opposite from the command of God at creation, "Let there be light" (Gn 1:3). *May God above not seek it*. Since God's interest gives existence to a day and a season, Job wishes that God above would not even seek or show interest in the day, causing it to perish.

JOB—NOTE ON 3:5 *deep darkness*. Hbr term is same as "shadow of death" (Ps 23:4). Cf 10:21–22; 12:22; 16:16; 24:17; 28:3; 34:22; 38:17. *blackness of the day*. Eclipse of the sun.

JOB—NOTE ON 3:6 *let it not come into the number of the months*. Poetic; eliminate the day from the calendar, much as there is no Feb 30 on our calendar.

JOB—NOTE ON 3:7 *barren*. Originally, rocky soil that fails to yield crops (Is 49:21). *joyful cry*. At the birth of a child.

JOB—NOTE ON 3:8 *who curse*. Professional sorcerers. *the day*. Same consonants in Hbr, but supplied with different vowels, give the word "sea" or "day." *Leviathan*. Sea monster that turns beauty into dust and confusion. See note, 41:1; cf Is 27:1; Ps 74:14; 104:26; Ezk 29:3–5. Early Church

translators and interpreters regarded Leviathan as a whale (see Greg, *ALF* 18:193).

JOB—NOTE ON 3:9 *stars of its dawn*. Morning stars, planets that shine before the rising sun (Venus, Jupiter, Mars, Mercury, or Saturn). *eyelids of the morning*. Poetic; description of the dawn.

JOB—NOTE ON 3:10 Job feels the day of his birth should be cursed because it allowed him to be born.

JOB—NOTE ON 3:11 Introduces a section (vv 11–19) expressing a longing for death. *Why*. Rhetorical question; Job has found no answer.

JOB—NOTE ON 3:12 *knees receive me?* Suggests a parent's acceptance of the newborn.

JOB—NOTE ON 3:13 Death itself holds no terrors for Job. In this state of mind, Job thinks himself better off dead.

JOB—NOTE ON 3:14 *kings and counselors of the earth*. Job envisions his grave among majestic tombs. *ruins*. Everyone's efforts end in ruins.

JOB—NOTE ON 3:16 *stillborn child*. Used elsewhere only in Ps 58:8 and Ec 6:3.

JOB—NOTE ON 3:17–18 *the wicked … the prisoners*. Those accustomed to trouble are quiet in death.

JOB—NOTE ON 3:20 Introduces a section (vv 20–23) that expresses a hatred of life. *misery*. Same root as "trouble" in v 10. *bitter in soul*. Biting dejection that attends a crushing defeat. Cf 1Sm 1:10; 22:2; 2Sm 17:8; Pr 31:7.

JOB—NOTE ON 3:21–22 *long for death … rejoice exceedingly*. Job's wish for death (suicide) was never acted upon. Only someone whose life is full of misery would long for death.

JOB—NOTE ON 3:23 *hedged in?* For the first time, Job holds God directly responsible for his situation. This hedge is no longer one of protection (1:10), but one to prevent his escape from the prison of life.

JOB—NOTE ON 3:24–26 Very thing Job fears (the loss of God's favor) has happened to him.

JOB—NOTE ON **ch 3** Even the most optimistic people will reach despair when overwhelmed by pain and suffering, as the examples of prisoners of war demonstrate. The mind snaps just as bones do. Scripture does not teach that death is a friend to those who suffer—death is always an enemy (1Co 15:26), but one overcome by the Lord. Commend those who despair to Jesus, who likewise cried, "My God, My God, why have You

forsaken Me?" (Mt 27:46) and rose from the dead to say, "Peace be with you" (Jn 20:21). "Job is excused though he was not troubled by past evil deeds (Job 2:3–10). Therefore, troubles are not always punishments or signs of wrath. Indeed, terrified consciences should be taught that there are more important purposes for afflictions (2 Corinthians 12:9), so that they do not think God is rejecting them when they see nothing but God's punishment and anger in troubles" (Ap XIIB 61). • Lord, train my heart by Your Word in the midst of afflictions, that I may have a quiet conscience, at peace by Your grace. Amen.

JOB—NOTE ON 4:1 *Temanite*. See note, 2:11.

JOB—NOTE ON 4:2 *impatient?* Captures the idea of weariness, whether of mind, spirit, or body. Cf v 5.

JOB—NOTE ON 4:5 *it*. Unexpected disaster that has come upon Job, who has lost his family, wealth, social position, and health all at once. Without warning, his life is destroyed, and he reacts with dismay.

JOB—NOTE ON 4:6 *fear of God*. Includes saving faith as well as submission to God's will. Eliphaz challenges Job to remember the relationship he has had with God up to now and the way he has lived his faith. In genuine faith, Job has lived an ethically upright and moral life, yet he is experiencing tremendous loss.

JOB—NOTE ON 4:7 Main point of Job's friends: bad times are God's punishment for sin. If you have not done anything wrong, you do not have anything to fear. Eliphaz has no room in his philosophy for suffering as part of God's plan for His people. See p 837.

JOB—NOTE ON 4:9 *breath of God*. Instrument of God's all-powerful action at creation (cf Gn 2:7) or in judgment (cf Is 30:33). Eliphaz thinks God always rewards the righteous with good things and punishes the evildoers during their earthly lives. If Eliphaz is right, then Job is trying to hide some secret sin that God is punishing.

JOB—NOTE ON 4:10–11 A lion projects strength and ferocity and often serves as a symbol for the wicked (e.g., Ps 22:13, 21). God "break[s] the teeth" of these lions (Ps 58:6), and they are destroyed. Eliphaz uses this image as an illustration from nature of God's judgment and punishment of the wicked (v 9).

JOB—NOTE ON 4:12 Eliphaz relates a supernatural experience to back up his point and to add the idea that nobody is perfect. Even the righteous

should expect to suffer a little because even they are not entirely without fault before God.

JOB—NOTE ON 4:15 *A spirit*. In his terrifying nighttime experience, Eliphaz does not identify the "spirit" (Hbr *ruach*) that brushed by his face and appeared before him.

JOB—NOTE ON 4:16 *form*. In Nu 12:6–8, God tells Aaron and Miriam that He normally appears to prophets in visions and in dreams, but with Moses He speaks personally. Moses beholds the "form" of the Lord, unlike ordinary prophets. It is likely that the "spirit" of v 15 is either the Lord or an angel He has sent.

JOB—NOTE ON 4:17 Eliphaz makes the point that there are no human beings who can be righteous on their own before God. Eliphaz's own reaction of terror in the presence of the Lord (or an angel) illustrates this point. But this does not really help Job or answer the more serious question: how can God justify a sinful person (9:2)?

JOB—NOTE ON 4:18 *servants … angels*. Begins Eliphaz's response to the revelation of v 17. God judged even the angels, the mightiest created beings known in Scripture. The Bible never reveals the reason some angels fell into sin and rebellion against God, but pride may have been their downfall (cf Is 14:12–15).

JOB—NOTE ON 4:19 *in houses of clay*. God created man from the dust of the ground (Gn 2:7) and, after death, man returns to the earth (Gn 3:19). A clay house may not last long and is fragile, vulnerable to attacks. So, too, the human being lives only a short time in a fragile body, much weaker and humbler than angels. If God condemns the fallen angels for their sin, how much more will He condemn sinful humankind?

JOB—NOTE ON 4:21 *tent-cord*. Pulling up a tent-cord causes the whole tent to collapse. Seen from a purely human perspective, life soon ends and, like waves against sand castles on the beach, time soon erases human accomplishments and memory.

JOB—NOTE ON 5:1 *holy ones*. Angels that serve the Lord (cf Dt 33:2). No angel could serve as mediator between God and Job. Not even these extremely powerful beings could intercede for him before the Lord.

JOB—NOTE ON 5:2 *fool*. One who denies God and lives a life of self-indulgent wickedness (cf Ps 10; 14; see p 1016). Job was no fool. *vexation*. Eliphaz wants to make the general point that a constant state of anger or jealousy destroys a person's health (Pr 14:29–30). Eliphaz warns Job that if

he continues in his agitated emotional state, he will suffer the same fate as the "fool" or the "simple," even though Job was neither.

JOB—NOTE ON 5:3 *I cursed his dwelling*. The "fool" opposes God, seeks his own welfare, acts aggressively toward his neighbors, and refuses instruction. In contrast to the security of the righteous believer (v 24), the home, business, and family of the "fool" are fleeting. Eliphaz vividly draws the distinction between the fool's eventual outcome and the believer's final disposition. See p 1016.

JOB—NOTE ON 5:5 *even out of thorns*. Desolation of the fool (the wicked) will be so complete that even the hard-to-reach grains (those that sprouted among thorns and produced little) will be lost to others.

JOB—NOTE ON 5:6 Eliphaz points out that people reap what they sow; those who reap trouble and loss (as did Job) do so because they did something wrong. In other words, trouble does not just happen—it happens for a reason.

JOB—NOTE ON 5:7 *as the sparks fly upward*. As surely as sparks from a fire fly upward on the heated air, so people are born to a life of trouble, sorrow, and endless toil. "Sparks" may refer to the Canaanite god Rephesh, associated with fire.

JOB—NOTE ON 5:8–16 Eliphaz praises God as the One who provides for all people and rescues the poor and downtrodden. By implication, Job should entrust his problems to the Lord and bear his present (temporary) troubles in confidence.

JOB—NOTE ON 5:8 *seek God*. In contrast to the "fool" who ignores God, Eliphaz turns to God for direction, purpose, and meaning in life. In times of trouble, he advises Job, turn to God for help (as David advises in Ps 37:5). See "seek," p 843.

JOB—NOTE ON 5:13 God's wisdom seems foolish to humanity's sinful nature (Paul's point when he quotes this verse in 1Co 3:19). All the plans and crafty schemes of wicked people eventually come to nothing because God rules the world with perfect justice.

JOB—NOTE ON 5:14 Instead of enlightening, human wisdom darkens the mind. Human wisdom leads away from the true light, God, and seeks only its own welfare. This blindness is no accident—it is inspired by Satan and empowered by human will. Cf 2Co 4:4.

JOB—NOTE ON 5:16 Although Eliphaz ends his hymn of praise on a note of hope, he has not helped Job at all. Job knows God, appreciates God's

providence, and understands God's rescue of the poor and downtrodden. Eliphaz's worldview assumes that suffering happens only in response to sin. Even Job, generally righteous, must have sinned somehow to bring about his suffering. Eliphaz thinks this suffering will not last long and that God will eventually rescue Job. Human wisdom has no room for a theology of the cross. See p 837.

JOB—NOTE ON 5:17 *God reproves*. Eliphaz reminds Job that suffering can serve to show people their sin and as a discipline to correct rebellious behavior before it is too late (cf Heb 12:3–11). *Almighty*. Hbr *shaddai*. Title used 30 times in Jb, almost twice as often as in all other OT books.

JOB—NOTE ON 5:18–27 The Lord does not deliver Job from his troubles right away. Eliphaz suggests that Job should cheer up because God will eventually restore him when he had suffered enough. Throughout his speech, Eliphaz misses the point entirely.

JOB—NOTE ON 5:19 *six … seven*. Rhetorical device to indicate complete protection from all evil (cf Pr 6:16).

JOB—NOTE ON 5:21 *lash of the tongue*. Poetic; accusation and slander from enemies (cf Ps 64).

JOB—NOTE ON 5:22 *shall not fear the beasts of the earth*. Wild animals, as distinct from domestic animals (cf Gn 1:24–25). Wild animals, such as lions, leopards, and crocodiles, were a real threat to people throughout Canaan.

JOB—NOTE ON 5:24 *fold*. Sheepfold, protective enclosure for livestock.

JOB—NOTE ON 5:25 *your offspring*. All Job's children are dead! Eliphaz paints a rosy picture for those favored by the Almighty. No doubt Eliphaz's "comfort" hurt Job deeply and galled him immensely, making him feel much worse.

JOB—NOTE ON 5:27 *it is true*. Eliphaz shared the day's conventional wisdom. Those who have not experienced the loss, suffering, and grief of Job offer "expert" advice and proclaim it "true."

JOB—NOTE ON **Chs 4–5** Eliphaz, the first friend who tries to comfort Job, only adds to Job's misery. His "encouragement" discourages Job because Eliphaz never really connects with Job or his pain. He only offers platitudes. When you reach out to a friend or family member, do not give answers that simply bandage deep hurts. Listen carefully to the sufferer and learn to share the pain. God does use adversity to discipline His people, as Eliphaz pointed out (5:17–18; cf Heb 12:1–13). In the midst of trial, we

might doubt God's love for us. But the cross shows us the measure of God's love. By the power of the Holy Spirit, we can see suffering as a tool to refine faith and strengthen our relationship with God in Jesus Christ. Luth: "When faith begins, God does not forsake it; He lays the holy cross on our backs to strengthen us and to make faith powerful in us…. Where suffering and the cross are found, there the Gospel can show and exercise its power. It is a Word of life. Therefore it must exercise all its power in death. In the absence of dying and death it can do nothing, and no one can become aware that it has such power and is stronger than sin and death" (AE 30:126). • Father, strengthen us by Your Holy Spirit so that we do not despair or falter when pressed by trial and tribulation; for Jesus' sake. Amen.

JOB—NOTE ON 6:2–3 *vexation*. Eliphaz says that "vexation" kills the fool (5:2). *sand*. Job responds as if to say, "My vexation weighs more than all the sand in the sea." (Wet sand was proverbially heavy; Pr 27:3.) Eliphaz completely fails to grasp the dimensions of Job's suffering. *rash*. Job does not apologize for his outbursts but challenges Eliphaz and others to understand why he cannot exercise self-restraint in such catastrophic circumstances.

JOB—NOTE ON 6:4 *arrows of the Almighty*. Spiritual and mental anguish. In 7:20, the Lord uses Job as a target. Job thinks God has become his enemy. Job is unaware of the conversation between God and Satan in chs 1–2 and cannot perceive God's love and confidence in him.

JOB—NOTE ON 6:5 Animals are content when fed but make noise when they feel the pain of hunger. Job vents his grief and anger because of the pain of the catastrophes.

JOB—NOTE ON 6:6 *mallow?* Any plant from the genus *malva*, which produces an unappealing slime. In other words, the speech of Eliphaz in chs 4–5 is bland, shallow, and insipid.

JOB—NOTE ON 6:9 *crush me*. Job asks God to take his life, "crushing" him back into the dust from which he was made (Gn 3:19). Even in deep despair, Job does not consider suicide. He leaves the decision to God.

JOB—NOTE ON 6:10 *not denied*. Job has not yet yielded to the temptation to "curse God and die" (2:9). If God would end Job's life at this point, then Job would at least have the comfort of knowing that he died with his integrity intact (a point even Eliphaz admitted, 4:6). *the words of the Holy One*. Eliphaz claims a special revelation (4:16b–21) but does not clearly

reveal who spoke to him. Job has also received revelation and knows its source: the Holy One.

JOB—NOTE ON 6:13 *any help in me*. Job finds nothing in himself that helps—no strength, no patience, no power, no confidence. He only wishes to die before he breaks completely.

JOB—NOTE ON 6:14 *He*. Job's overcritical remarks apply not only to Eliphaz but also to all who came to offer their "help." In his great pain, Job does not acknowledge their friendship or recognize their attempts to comfort him.

JOB—NOTE ON 6:15–17 Job compares his friends ("brothers") to the wadis or creek beds in the Near East that overflow in the rainy season (when the extra water is not needed) and dry up in the summer (when farmers could really use the water). They are fair-weather friends, unreliable when really needed.

JOB—NOTE ON 6:18–20 Sometimes commercial caravans, desperate for water, left the highway in search of a stream (v 18). Finding only dry riverbeds, they died (a vivid and harsh picture of Job's own situation). Even experienced traders from Tema and Sheba could find themselves in this predicament. Confident of finding water, they become disappointed ("ashamed") to find only dry creeks. Job expects his friends to stand by him (like the caravan travelers expected water), but they fail to provide any help at all (like dry riverbeds).

JOB—NOTE ON 6:21 *you*. Plural; all those who advised Job. Since they have not ever been in his situation, they are unable to understand it. Their "help" has been no help at all.

JOB—NOTE ON 6:22–23 *Redeem me*. Hbr *padah*, "ransom," "redeem." Job first uses the language of redemption that will become central to the Book. *Padah* is used in parallel with *ga'al* ("redeem"; cf Hos 13:14; Jer 31:11), from which the word "Redeemer" comes (19:25). Job does not ask his friends for money or to expose themselves to danger. He asks them to understand his despair, but they cannot do so.

JOB—NOTE ON 6:26 Job's friends try to correct his "words" or "speech," the symptom of his pain, without addressing the cause of those words. They are responding to what Job said (mere "wind") rather than the root of the problem—his suffering. Job wants them to feel his anguish, not discuss a theory of suffering.

JOB—NOTE ON 6:27 *cast lots*. Job compares their heartlessness to the callous disregard of a person who would "cast lots" (like rolling dice) for the sale of orphans or to negotiate the price of a "friend."
JOB—NOTE ON 6:28–29 Job appeals to his friends as a friend. Again, he wants their understanding, support, and sympathy.
JOB—NOTE ON 6:30 *Cannot my palate discern*. Using the picture of a tongue and palate that still sense accurately what is placed on them, Job assures his friends that he knows the difference between right and wrong.
JOB—NOTE ON **ch 6** Job harshly accuses Eliphaz and his other friends of failing to provide even the smallest amount of comfort or help. When we are down and out, we should avoid attacking those who try to help. Do not expect someone who has never experienced your kind of loss to understand. However, we should welcome their friendship and good intentions. Only God truly understands your situation. In Christ Jesus, He has experienced the full range of human suffering (Heb 4:14–16). • Father, when we are at our lowest point, turn our faces to the cross of Christ. Open our hearts so that we know You truly understand our loss and suffering. Help us find strength in Jesus. "What a friend we have in Jesus, All our sins and griefs to bear! What a privilege to carry Ev'rything to God in prayer!" Amen. (*LSB* 770:1)
JOB—NOTE ON **Ch 7** Job turns his complaint away from his friends and toward God.
JOB—NOTE ON 7:2 A slave longed for the evening shadows, a signal that the day's labor was finished. The hired man normally received his pay at the end of each day, a necessity for buying food for the next day.
JOB—NOTE ON 7:3–4 Job complains that he gets no "pay" at all for months, not just days, of hard labor. The shade of night brings no rest; depression frequently causes sleeplessness.
JOB—NOTE ON 7:5 Job emphasizes the physical symptoms of his disease. His skin disease constantly breaks out in some places as it heals in others. See note, 2:7.
JOB—NOTE ON 7:6 *weaver's shuttle*. Shuttle for a handloom glides back and forth rapidly to create the final product. Job lost all hope for physical and emotional recovery prior to his impending death.
JOB—NOTE ON 7:7–21 Job addresses God directly.
JOB—NOTE ON 7:9 *Sheol*. Hbr for "grave" (as here) or, in some contexts, for "hell." Job emphasizes the disappearance of a person upon death,

similar to the vanished cloud in the sky. From a purely natural perspective, a person dies, is buried, and is seen no more. See p 792.
JOB—NOTE ON 7:12 *a sea monster*. The sea and the largest creatures in it are sometimes used to symbolize God's most powerful enemies (e.g., Ps 74:13–14; cf Jb 41). Job complains that he is neither God's enemy nor is he powerful, yet God has treated him as though he were both.
JOB—NOTE ON 7:14 *You*. Job blames God for the dreams and visions that interrupt his sleep and exhaust him at night.
JOB—NOTE ON 7:16 The depth of Job's hopelessness is revealed in the plaintive cry to God: "Leave me alone."
JOB—NOTE ON 7:17 *You*. For a similar question in a much more positive context, cf Ps 8:4–8. Job can see only his own pain, and it colors his view of everything else.
JOB—NOTE ON 7:19 *swallow my spit?* Ancient proverb, used in Arabic even today, meaning "a very short time."
JOB—NOTE ON 7:20 *watcher of mankind?* Ordinarily, "watcher" refers to God, who "watches over" human beings, protecting and providing for them. Job, however, describes God watching humankind as an enemy army watches a besieged city, waiting to attack a weak spot. *mark?* Target (cf 6:4).
JOB—NOTE ON 7:21 Job acknowledges his sinfulness and pleads for mercy. Bern: "Throwing down the weight of my own will, I may breathe easily under the light burden of charity; that I may not be overborne any longer by servile fear, nor allured by selfish cupidity, but may be impelled by Your spirit, the spirit of liberty, which is that of Your children" (*SLSB*, p 199).
JOB—NOTE ON **ch 7** In his grief and bitter pain, Job turns to God with this desperate cry: "Leave me alone" (v 16). Painful experiences, such as being diagnosed with a terminal illness or the sudden death of a loved one, can leave us angry with God. By the cross, we understand that God loves us and works through everything in our lives for our salvation (Rm 8:28). In Christ alone, we receive full assurance of God's love for us. Luth: "This consignment into Satan's hands which is held up to your eyes and heart is a temptation for an hour and a moment of time, not for your perdition but to try you, for your salvation and endless gain" (AE 6:95). • Lord, teach me each day to beg Your pardon and believe Your promise that even amid suffering, You are working for my good. Amen.

JOB—NOTE ON 8:1 *Shuhite*. See note, 2:11.
JOB—NOTE ON 8:2 Bildad attacks Job for the things he said (chs 6–7). Picking up the cry "How long" from 7:19, Bildad applies it to Job.
JOB—NOTE ON 8:3 Bildad defends God's integrity and justice, a key issue.
JOB—NOTE ON 8:4 For Bildad, the death of Job's children is proof they sinned and deserved to die. How cruel can a well-intentioned "friend" be?
JOB—NOTE ON 8:6 *if you are pure and upright*. Bildad thinks God saves only the pure, not sinners. If Job is indeed innocent, God will eventually restore him. Like Eliphaz, Bildad believes only the guilty suffer.
JOB—NOTE ON 8:7 *latter days … great*. Bildad speaks more truthfully than he realizes. Cf 1:3; 42:10–17.
JOB—NOTE ON 8:8–10 *fathers*. Eliphaz appealed to a supernatural experience to confirm his understanding of suffering (4:12–16). Bildad turns to previous generations ("bygone ages" is equivalent to "the fathers" in this verse) for confirmation of his simplistic and mechanical view of suffering and reward. Their ancestors formulated and handed down the traditional teaching that people suffer because God punishes them for sin.
JOB—NOTE ON 8:11–13 *they wither before any other plant*. Bildad uses the image of the papyrus and reed plants to illustrate his "wisdom." When the water source for these plants dries up, they wither and die prematurely just like wicked people. Bildad wrongly holds that if you are righteous, God blesses you with health and wealth. If you are wicked, He punishes you with suffering.
JOB—NOTE ON 8:14 *spider's web*. A spider's web (Hbr *beth*, "house") lasts only a short time and tears easily. Wicked people place their confidence in other things besides God and are inevitably brought to ruin.
JOB—NOTE ON 8:18 *it will deny him*. When a wicked person is gone, no lasting memory remains. Even the place where that person lived and worked will deny having seen him.
JOB—NOTE ON 8:19 *joy*. Bildad apparently uses "joy" ironically; the "joy" a wicked person experiences lasts briefly. *out of the soil others will spring*. When that individual is gone, others move in (as new plants replace dead ones in a flower bed). No memory of the wicked remains whatsoever.
JOB—NOTE ON 8:20–21 *God will not reject*. Bildad summarizes his philosophy in v 20 and applies it to Job in vv 21–22. He speaks positively,

as though Job were pure. If Job will repent and seek God (vv 5–6), then God will reward him (v 7).

JOB—NOTE ON 8:22 *Those who hate you*. The wicked generally hate the righteous (Ps 35). Jb names no personal enemies of Job, other than Satan (1:9). *be no more*. Bildad's speech ends with the same Hbr word as that in Job's speech (7:21).

JOB—NOTE ON **ch 8** Bildad argues backward: sin produces suffering; therefore, all who suffer must have sinned against God. The Bible does teach that sin brought suffering and death (Rm 5:12), but this does not mean that an individual's suffering is the direct consequence of some particular sin against God. In Christ Jesus, our perfectly righteous Savior, God atoned for all sin (Rm 3:21–26). In the midst of trials, we need constant and regular reassurance of God's love for us, anchored in the cross of Christ. Luth: "People who have gone through spiritual trials know how necessary it is to support their heart with a sure and strong comfort that will finally bring them back to the hope of grace and help them to forget the wrath. Often a single day or a single month is insufficient for this purpose; but just as the alleviation of sickness requires a long time, so these wounds of the heart are not cured at once or by a single word" (AE 2:118). • Cure my heart and bind my wounds, O Redeemer, with Your grace, which is ever new. Amen.

JOB—NOTE ON 9:2–3 *it is so*. Job agrees with Bildad's theological statement that God does not pervert justice (8:3). *how can a man be in the right before God?* Reflects the key issue of Jb (1:8–9). He notes that people cannot vindicate themselves before God. The great power of God makes it impossible for mortal humans to defend themselves against Him. All this shows Job that he must have an arbiter or mediator (vv 15, 33).

JOB—NOTE ON 9:4 *hardened*. Stubborn resistance against God is futile.

JOB—NOTE ON 9:6 *pillars*. The earth and also the heavens are poetically described as resting on pillars (1Sm 2:8). However, 26:7 states that God "hangs the earth on nothing."

JOB—NOTE ON 9:7 *does not rise*. If He does not want the sun to shine, it will not (e.g., during an eclipse). God controls even the celestial bodies.

JOB—NOTE ON 9:8 Themes of God's power as Creator and Redeemer also come together in Is 44:24. The point: trust God, who has power to save!

JOB—NOTE ON 9:9 *Bear … Orion … Pleiades*. Three well-known constellations. See note, 38:31. *chambers*. Perhaps another constellation or

a reference to the stars south of the constellations.
JOB—NOTE ON 9:11 *passes by me*. Job laments that he cannot establish contact with God to plead his case. For Job, God is like a shadowy figure that quickly passes by without stopping or turning aside.
JOB—NOTE ON 9:12 *snatches away*. God takes what He wants—who can stop Him or call Him to account?
JOB—NOTE ON 9:13 *helpers*. Less-powerful military allies that joined with Rahab (cf Is 51:9). *Rahab*. Figure borrowed from Babylonian creation myth; she symbolizes God's powerful enemies, which He has defeated.
JOB—NOTE ON 9:15 *I must appeal for mercy to my accuser*. Courtroom imagery; Job acknowledges that he cannot argue with God, even though Job thinks he is in the right. God is too powerful, and His anger is overwhelming. The best Job can do is plead for mercy (which he cannot do without losing his integrity).
JOB—NOTE ON 9:16 *listening to my voice*. Job despairs of getting a fair hearing before God, even if Job were to speak with Him directly.
JOB—NOTE ON 9:17 *wounds without cause*. Job argues that his suffering is disproportionate to his offense, whatever that may be. He cannot yet see any reason for his pain and loss.
JOB—NOTE ON 9:20 *prove me perverse*. Even if God allowed Job to call Him to account, Job fears he could not make a reasonable defense—he would condemn himself in the presence of God Almighty.
JOB—NOTE ON 9:21 *blameless*. See note, 1:1. Job will not beg for mercy, because he is convinced he has done nothing wrong. He continues to maintain his integrity.
JOB—NOTE ON 9:22–23 *It is all one*. Job portrays God as treating all people the same. Regardless of their actions, He destroys them. *He mocks*. God derides the wicked and innocent together (cf Ps 2, esp v 4).
JOB—NOTE ON 9:24 Job unwittingly describes what happened in chs 1–2. He holds God responsible for his suffering and for injustice in the world. Nowhere else in Job's speeches does he come so close to accusing God of injustice. Remember that Job speaks from great pain, anguish, and grief. He sees everything through the eyes of his own suffering and is unaware of God's plan and purpose.
JOB—NOTE ON 9:26 *skiffs of reed*. Light rowboats or small sailing ships. These were often made of papyrus (reed), a plant that grows in marshy

areas in the Near East. Propelled by a good wind, a light ship would move across the water very fast.
JOB—NOTE ON 9:29 Job thinks any effort to defend himself would be useless.
JOB—NOTE ON 9:30 *lye*. Even the most powerful cleaning agents cannot purify him.
JOB—NOTE ON 9:31 *pit*. Place of burial; associated with decomposing bodies. *my own clothes will abhor me*. He is so filthy that his own clothes would refuse to stay on him.
JOB—NOTE ON 9:33 *arbiter*. Hbr *mokiach*. A person who settles quarrels, sets things right. Job laments the lack of a mediator between God and himself who could resolve this problem and reconcile them. *lay his hand on us both*. Concrete image of someone who could reach out to these two hostile parties (God and Job) and bring them together again. Greg: "The Redeemer of Mankind, who was made the Mediator between God and Man through the flesh … did both convict man, that he might not sin, and withstand God, that He might not smite; He gave examples of innocency that He took upon Him the punishment due to wickedness" (*ALF* 18:541).
JOB—NOTE ON **ch 9** Job has no hope of fixing the problem with God. God is too powerful and there is no one to mediate between him and God—not even Job's friends. When we are at our lowest, we might agree with Job that there is no hope. If we focus on our pain or problems and look only to ourselves or others for help, we should not be surprised to find only despair. Without a mediator, we face the full wrath of God. Looking back on his first service as a priest, Luther recounted: "[When I] thought I had to speak to God without a Mediator, I felt like fleeing from the world like Judas. Who can bear the majesty of God without Christ as Mediator?" (AE 54:234; cf 1Tm 2:5). • Thank You, heavenly Father, for sending Your Son, our Savior Jesus, to reconcile us to You through the cross and to intercede for us every day (1Jn 2:1). Amen.
JOB—NOTE ON 10:3–7 *the work of Your hands*. Job wonders why God would treat him so badly. A mere human might treat another person this way, but God is no mere human. In fact, all creation (including humanity) is the work of God's hands. Job personalizes this truth in vv 8–12.
JOB—NOTE ON 10:8 "God created the body and soul of Adam and Eve before the fall. But He also created our bodies and souls after the fall. Even

though they are corrupt, God still acknowledges them as His work" (FC Ep I 4). Cf Ps 139:14.

JOB—NOTE ON 10:10 Manufacture of cheese requires careful measurement, attention to detail, and patient waiting. If God took such care in creating Job, why would God treat him so harshly?

JOB—NOTE ON 10:14 *do not acquit me*. Job pictures God as unwilling to forgive his iniquity for any reason. Guilty or not, God has decided to punish Job as if he was guilty of some heinous sin. Typically, people would offer sacrifices for their sin (cf 1:5; 42:8); however, Job has nothing to sacrifice (1:14–17).

JOB—NOTE ON 10:16 *like a lion*. Hosea also pictures God as a lion hunting his prey (Hos 5:14; 11:10). Hosea warned his generation that God will hunt down the guilty, but Job feels that if he were to try to take a stand against God, God would come after him with savage fury and renewed hostility.

JOB—NOTE ON 10:17 *fresh troops*. Shifting his imagery, Job fears that if he should make an effort to defend himself, God would send in reinforcements for even greater attacks on him.

JOB—NOTE ON 10:20 *find a little cheer*. In his despair, Job can only wish for God to leave him alone in the little time remaining to him.

JOB—NOTE ON 10:21–22 *land of darkness*. Abandoning any explicit hope, Job paints the darkest picture possible of death and the grave. Only deep blackness awaits him. See p 792. Job's hope will eventually reappear (as in 19:25–27), but for now, his depression overwhelms him.

JOB—NOTE ON **ch 10** God can do with Job as He pleases (v 15), so Job sees his own position as a "lose/lose" situation. If he has sinned, then he has no hope before God, since God is righteous and punishes sinners. If he has not sinned, he still has no hope before God, because God is all-powerful, the Creator and Lord. We must remind ourselves and others that God provides hope for all sinners in Christ Jesus. Luth: "So only the knowledge of Christ preserves me. From this I conclude: The devil and God are two enemies. Therefore, while God loves life, the devil hates life. The knowledge of God can consequently be so pictured as if it is God's will to be angry, and one may be led to think that our Lord God and the devil are both intent on strangling us. To this one must reply, 'Life is God's aim, and so he will not slay you'" (AE 54:34). • Father, shine the light of Jesus, even when everything else is deep darkness. Amen.

JOB—NOTE ON 11:1 *Zophar*. Third of Job's friends to speak. Being last suggests that Zophar was the youngest or perhaps simply the least respected; in contrast to Eliphaz and Bildad, who each speak three times, Zophar speaks twice. *Naamathite*. See note, 2:11.
JOB—NOTE ON 11:2 *multitude of words*. Zophar accuses Job of talking too much; Zophar will go on to add the accusations that Job is self-righteous (vv 4–6), opinionated (vv 7–12), and headstrong (vv 13–20). In all of this, he exaggerates. *a man full of talk*. Lit, "a man of lips"; in general, Hbr is concrete and uses strong images rather than abstractions.
JOB—NOTE ON 11:3 *Should your babble silence men*. Zophar continues the rhetorical questions of the previous verse. To him, the answers are obvious: Job needs to be answered and refuted.
JOB—NOTE ON 11:4 *For you say, "My doctrine is pure."* Not a fair summary. While Job has protested his innocence, he has claimed neither that his doctrine or teaching was pure nor that he was "clean in God's eyes." Job admitted he was a sinner (7:21) and he simply wanted to get a hearing with God (9:14), although he was arguing his case too strongly.
JOB—NOTE ON 11:5 *But oh, that God would speak*. Zophar wishes that God would speak to Job, confident that He would agree with Zophar's position. *open His lips*. Zophar contrasts God's silence with Job's verbosity (v 2).
JOB—NOTE ON 11:6 *secrets of wisdom!* According to Zophar, Job needs to be enlightened. *manifold in understanding*. Lit, "twofold"; wisdom is not simply one-sided or simple, but it has a hidden side as well as the obvious. Zophar wants God to enlarge Job's understanding so that he will see the error of his ways. *God exacts less of you than your guilt deserves*. Lit, "God is forgetting [much of] your guilt."
JOB—NOTE ON 11:7 *find out the deep things*. Zophar says that Job is unable to understand God, esp since he refuses to accept God as Zophar presents Him.
JOB—NOTE ON 11:8 *higher than heaven*. God Himself expresses a parallel thought in Is 55:9. *Sheol*. Here used to mean the place or abode of the dead. It swallows up everyone—both the wicked and the righteous—for all must die. See note, 7:9, see also p 792.
JOB—NOTE ON 11:9 *longer … broader*. Darkness of death into which all must pass is vast and incomprehensible.

JOB—NOTE ON 11:10 *imprisons and summons the court*. God is in control and acts as both arresting officer and sentencing judge who calls the court to order. God is the all-powerful Lord of nature and also the dispenser of justice. *who can turn Him back?* Again Zophar uses rhetorical questions to make his point.
JOB—NOTE ON 11:11 *worthless men*. Carries idea of "men of emptiness"; we might say "hollow men." Zophar's language is insulting, implying that Job is among these people.
JOB—NOTE ON 11:12 *when a wild donkey's colt is born a man!* Proverb. Job cannot accept Zophar's insights anymore than a wild ass can give birth to a person. Zophar will argue that if Job repents, there is still a chance for him.
JOB—NOTE ON 11:13–20 As wise King Solomon noted, "There is nothing new under the sun" (Ec 1:9). Zophar would fit well with many today who preach "victorious" living. He asserts that we are able to live a good life and that when we do, God will bless us abundantly. He allows little place for suffering in the life of the godly, because, by his definition, godly living goes hand in hand with a life of comfort and blessings, while suffering belongs with the wicked.
JOB—NOTE ON 11:13 *stretch out your hands*. If your heart is right with God, outward worship—as symbolized by hands outstretched in prayer—will follow. See p 1277. Individuals must prepare their own hearts and behavior.
JOB—NOTE ON 11:14 *put it far away*. Zophar's human-centered religion is esp clear here, where he asserts that individuals can put away their own iniquity.
JOB—NOTE ON 11:15 *face without blemish*. When you put sin out of your life, Zophar contends, you will be spotless. In contrast, biblical teaching says that it is impossible to save ourselves because by nature we "were dead in the trespasses and sins" (Eph 2:1).
JOB—NOTE ON 11:16–17 *forget your misery … brighter than the noonday*. Zophar continues with the argument that Job can change his condition of suffering once he changes his behavior.
JOB—NOTE ON 11:18 *feel secure*. Zophar's idea of security rests in a person's control over his or her own spiritual destiny.
JOB—NOTE ON 11:19 *many will court your favor*. Rather than fearing what might happen from others, Zophar's good man will be honored by

others. History has shown the falseness of this notion, since the righteous are often persecuted and hated by the world.

JOB—NOTE ON 11:20 *their hope*. Zophar closes his argument by contrasting the end of the wicked with what he has just described as the lot of the godly. The only hope that the wicked have is to escape this miserable life in death. But wicked people often prosper in this life, while the God-fearing suffer (Ps 73:5). Rather than wanting to die, the psalmist says that "they have no pangs until death" (73:4).

JOB—NOTE ON **ch 11** Of the three friends, Zophar is the most vehement in his denunciation of Job. He does not appeal to visions (Eliphaz) or tradition (Bildad). He simply knows Job is a terrible sinner, for how else can Job's extreme sufferings be explained? This is the natural religion of humans in its clearest form: there is no Gospel, only Law. As Zophar focuses on condemning the sinner, he has no room for sympathy or even tact. • Heavenly Father, keep us from all self-righteousness, which sees our blessings as coming from our flawed and feeble efforts rather than from Your almighty and gracious hand. Amen.

JOB—NOTE ON 12:1 *Then Job answered*. Having responded to Eliphaz and Bildad, Job begins his third monologue in answer to his would-be comforters. It is the longest, covering three chapters. Job's concept of God is much loftier and more awesome than that of Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar. Although Job cannot reason out God's dealings, he does comprehend that God's ways are far above the puny insights and efforts of mortal man. In this way, Job shows how limited and small their outlooks are.

JOB—NOTE ON 12:2 *the people*. Seems to be a sarcastic reference to Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar as the great or outstanding people in the land. Expression has to do with the landed gentry, the upper class or elite.

JOB—NOTE ON 12:3 *not inferior*. Job counters that he knows as much as his friends. Indeed, Job will go on to show that he is superior (42:8). *Who does not know*. Job says they have nothing to offer but clichés, which are of no help. Moreover, Job will show that true common sense is on his side.

JOB—NOTE ON 12:4 *laughingstock*. Once the most powerful and influential man in the land, Job is now, in his fallen condition, so lowly that anyone can mock him and laugh at him—and they do. (Cf 19:18.)

JOB—NOTE ON 12:5 *contempt for misfortune*. When life is going smoothly, it is easy for people to become arrogant and condescending

toward those who are down and out. But that life of ease could be turned upside down overnight.

JOB—NOTE ON 12:6 *robbers are at peace*. Job asserts that God does not punish the wicked (cf Ps 73). Ultimately, of course, those who reject God are punished (Ps 73:27). *who bring their god in their hand*. Idol worshipers, who must carry their gods about by hand. Cf Jer 10:5. Most idols were doll-sized and could easily be carried. Cf Gn 31:19, 34.

JOB—NOTE ON 12:7–12 Based on God's creation—including our own experiences—we can draw conclusions about reality. Job concludes that obviously many things in life—in particular, human suffering—are beyond human control. Contrary to what his friends have been arguing, our welfare is not a simple cause-effect relationship with our righteousness or sinfulness. Rather, God is in control. What He does frequently has no apparent relationship to our efforts to do what is right. This is the heart of Job's dilemma.

JOB—NOTE ON 12:7–8 *beasts … birds … bushes … fish*. In referring to these creatures and plant life, Job alludes to all of nature. The words are reminiscent of Gn 1, which recounts God's creation of everything in six days. See p 792.

JOB—NOTE ON 12:9 *hand of the LORD has done this?* Rich poetic language of Jb is evident in this verse, as Job enlists various figures of speech. One is anthropomorphism, in which human characteristics are applied to God (as a spirit [Jn 4:24], God does not have physical hands). Another figure of speech is synecdoche, in which a part of something represents the whole. "The hand" represents God's power.

JOB—NOTE ON 12:10 *In His hand*. God controls everything.

JOB—NOTE ON 12:11 *ear … palate*. Job turns from all of nature to the individual person. He argues that our senses, through which we experience life, enable us to verify what is true or false. Later, Elihu will echo these words (34:3).

JOB—NOTE ON 12:12 *Wisdom … understanding*. With the accumulation of experience, we gain wisdom and understanding.

JOB—NOTE ON 12:13 *With God are wisdom and might … counsel and understanding*. Job begins a doxology or poem of praise for God's wisdom and power (vv 13–25). In contrast to his friends, Job maintains an outlook that is God centered, not human centered. He appeals to what is called the "natural knowledge of God" to make his point that God is in control of His

creation. Job's reference to God's attributes brings to mind Paul's famous doxology (Rm 11:33–36). Though Job acknowledges that God's ways are beyond us, he is not yet ready to praise God. Instead, he questions why God acts as He does. Rather than accept the Almighty's mysterious ways, Job wants to argue.

JOB—NOTE ON 12:14–15 Nothing can resist God, not an individual person or the forces of nature. Job's doxology declares that God is the originator of both pain and pleasure.

JOB—NOTE ON 12:16 *the deceived and the deceiver are His*. Some human beings are gullible, and others are deceptive. Neither can mock or fool God. Indeed, while Job does not speak of God as a prankster, he does insinuate that God toys with people for seemingly arbitrary reasons known only to Him.

JOB—NOTE ON 12:17–21 *stripped*. Job lists those who rely on wisdom for their authority: counselors, judges, kings, priests, elders, and princes. Job says that God takes away what knowledge they have. Paul would later echo the words of Job (and Is 29:14): "I [God] will destroy the wisdom of the wise…. Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?" (1Co 1:19–20). *binds a waistcloth*. In some ancient wrestling matches, the winner would remove the belt of the defeated, which symbolized the removal of the person's power. With so many examples, Job shows that, unlike Zophar, he is not speaking theoretically. God can and does bring down the mighty. History is replete with examples. Moreover, people in Job's day, as in our own, could no doubt look at contemporary examples of this truth.

JOB—NOTE ON 12:22 *uncovers the deeps out of darkness*. Job breaks away from what God can do against specific people to a more general statement of God's power. God can bring to light what is hidden to human beings. Zophar had wished that God would enlighten Job. Job responds that God can indeed cast light on the mysterious. Both Job and Zophar are confident that if and when God does make His purpose clear, they will be vindicated.

JOB—NOTE ON 12:23 *He makes nations great*. In making his case for divine control over all of life, Job gave examples from the natural world and from human leaders; he now points to nations. God can and does set up and bring down nations (40:15–23).

JOB—NOTE ON 12:24 *He takes away understanding*. What understanding leaders have is a gift from God, but God can remove that insight and thus

hasten the downfall of nations, as even "the chiefs of the people … wander in a pathless waste."

JOB—NOTE ON 12:25 *stagger like a drunken man*. The line between the high and mighty and the lowly and mocked is thin. Job satirizes an earlier statement by Eliphaz (5:14).

JOB—NOTE ON **ch 12** Whereas Zophar has wrongly focused on people's supposed ability to shape their own destiny, Job correctly recognizes God's control. Our righteousness does not determine our well-being, or lack thereof. Rather, it is all in God's hands. When we become discouraged, it is vital that we remember God's wisdom and power. Although Job does not acknowledge God's use of these attributes for our good, in Christ "we know that for those who love God all things work together for good" (Rm 8:28). • Lord, keep us always in this blessed assurance! Amen.

JOB—NOTE ON 13:1–5 These verses may fit better with what precedes them than with what follows. Job summarizes his claims to wisdom and understanding, in distinction to Zophar (and the other two friends). Job overstates his knowledge. He wants desperately to show that his insights are as good as or better than those of his friends.

JOB—NOTE ON 13:2 *I am not inferior to you*. Job is quite defensive. Given everything he has been through, his attitude is understandable, esp since his friends have shown little sympathy and even less understanding.

JOB—NOTE ON 13:3 *the Almighty*. Hbr *'el-shaddai*, "God Almighty." See note, 5:17. All of Job's friends have now spoken against him. Finding no support, Job appeals to the omnipotent God. *argue my case with God*. Job's sense of suffering unjustly is so deep that he wants to argue with God (cf Ps 44). In this he was not—and is not—unique. When confronted with hardships, we all have a tendency to think we are getting a worse deal than we deserve.

JOB—NOTE ON 13:4 *whitewash with lies*. Cover the truth with lies to make themselves look good. *worthless physicians*. They had come to help him, but they only make things worse!

JOB—NOTE ON 13:5 *keep silent*. Job wishes that instead of opening their mouths in worthless and untrue advice, his friends would simply keep silent. Job's wish was not to be granted.

JOB—NOTE ON 13:6 *Hear now my argument*. Job asks for his friends' attention as he makes his case.

JOB—NOTE ON 13:7 *Will you speak falsely for God*. Job admitted that he did not fully understand God's ways. The friends, however, had presumed to speak for God. Yet, as Job showed in his response, what they had said did not square with reality.
JOB—NOTE ON 13:8 *show partiality*. Lit, "lift up the face to someone." Refers to the granting of a special favor from the wrong motives. *Will you plead the case for God?* Job asks if they are trying to win God's favor by acting as His lawyers and arguing His case for Him. Human beings, esp those who consider themselves very religious, can make the mistake of thinking that God needs them to defend Him. Job shows that this is not at all true, for God is in control of everything and perfectly capable of defending Himself. He calls us to confess Him, not to defend Him. Job acts as a lawyer probing his accusers with a series of questions.
JOB—NOTE ON 13:9 *can you deceive Him*. Answer to this rhetorical question is no. Job implies that his friends think their accusations against Job will please God. God sees through all human duplicity. "Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap" (Gal 6:7).
JOB—NOTE ON 13:10 *if in secret you show partiality*. People see only outward appearances, but God looks into hearts and sees secret motives. He sizes up people accordingly (1Sm 16:7).
JOB—NOTE ON 13:11 *majesty terrify*. As the Israelites experienced at Mount Sinai, no one can stand in God's glorious presence without being terrified. Toward the beginning of Jesus' ministry, Peter experienced the same terror when he saw Christ's supernatural power in the miraculous catch of fish. Peter exclaimed, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man" (Lk 5:8). It is our own sin and accusing conscience that make us tremble when confronted with the glory of the almighty and holy God.
JOB—NOTE ON 13:12 *proverbs of ashes … defenses of clay*. Picturesque way of saying that their advice and arguments will not hold up in the light of truth. Like ashes, they blow away; like a clay pot, they shatter. Job has been right in asserting that God was not pleased with their behavior and their arguments (42:7–9).
JOB—NOTE ON 13:13 *let come on me what may*. After Job is finished, he will welcome God's verdict. The friends are merely spouting conventional wisdom, without testing it against reality.

JOB—NOTE ON 13:14 *take my flesh in my teeth*. Figure of speech; occurs only here in the OT. It may refer to a person in such pain that he or she bites his or her own flesh to keep from screaming or complaining. While the meaning is uncertain, the parallel line of the verse suggests that it is another way of saying that he is taking his life in his hands by his boldness in confronting God.
JOB—NOTE ON 13:15 *I will hope in Him*. See ESV note. Could be translated either as an expression of hope or of hopelessness. Given Job's confidence in God's power and his own willingness to confront God, the positive and bolder rendering is more likely. Other passages commend this understanding (19:25–27). *argue my ways*. Job's determination to present his case borders on self-righteousness. He has not yet appreciated God's use of suffering as discipline (cf Heb 12:6), but he is confident that he can trust God even in his dire condition.
JOB—NOTE ON 13:16 *salvation*. Hbr *yeshu'ah* (also translated as the names Joshua and Jesus). Job's salvation—his deliverance from pain, dishonor, and even God's apparent anger—can only come from God. His only hope is to turn to the very One who seems hostile toward him! See p 843.
JOB—NOTE ON 13:17–28 In this section, Job is appealing to God. He wants to speak, even to argue, with God and find salvation in God.
JOB—NOTE ON 13:17 *Keep listening*. Job knows that his friends are more interested in asserting their preconceived ideas than in hearing his case. He repeatedly appeals for silence (vv 5–6, 13) over the cacophony of their debate.
JOB—NOTE ON 13:18 *I know that I shall be in the right*. Some might see this as pride on Job's part. However, Job constantly looks beyond himself. Although he erroneously thinks he can argue with the Almighty, he is right in wanting to communicate with the one source of help in time of trouble.
JOB—NOTE ON 13:19 *who will contend with me?* Apart from God, there is no one who can dispute Job's case. *be silent and die*. If someone could argue against him, Job would simply give up.
JOB—NOTE ON 13:20 *grant me two things*. Job makes special requests of the Almighty. *not hide myself from Your face*. Job does not want to be separated from God, as when Cain exclaimed, "Behold, You [God] have driven me today away from the ground, and from Your face I shall be hidden" (Gn 4:14).

JOB—NOTE ON 13:21 *withdraw Your hand*. Job pleads for God's mercy. God's hand can be either a blessing (e.g., Ne 2:18) or an affliction (Ps 139:5); here, Job views it in the latter sense. *let not dread*. Freedom from suffering is not enough. Job asks that it be accompanied by freedom from dread of God. To be physically comfortable yet spiritually terrified is a horrible condition. "The Gospel teaches that through faith in Christ the forgiveness of sins and reconciliation are received, and the terrors of sin and of death are overcome" (Ap V 170).

JOB—NOTE ON 13:22 *answer … reply*. What Job longs for is to communicate with God, to speak with Him and to hear from Him. As Christians, we know that we enjoy exactly that privilege: God speaks to us in His Word, the Bible, and we reply as we speak to Him in prayer.

JOB—NOTE ON 13:23 *Make me know my transgression*. Job asks God to show him his sin. At the end of Jb, this request will be granted, as Job will come to true repentance (ch 42).

JOB—NOTE ON 13:24 *hide Your face*. God is, in Luther's words, the "hidden God." We catch glimpses of His power and wisdom in nature. We learn of Him as our Savior only as He reveals Himself through His Word.

JOB—NOTE ON 13:25 *driven leaf*. Job refers to the process of winnowing grain: the light leaves and useless husks of chaff blow away, while the heavier, good grain falls to the ground (cf Ps 1:4). Job wonders why God wants to frighten what is already fragile.

JOB—NOTE ON 13:26 *write bitter things*. Job sees God as writing up an indictment against him. *iniquities of my youth*. Job admits he is not sinless. His words are reminiscent of the psalmist's prayer "Remember not the sins of my youth" (Ps 25:7).

JOB—NOTE ON 13:27 *stocks*. Device for restraining slaves, criminals, or captives. Job feels hemmed in. Sufferings remind us of how limited we are and how dependent we are on God for every breath we take. *a limit for the soles of my feet*. See ESV note. God has either treated Job like a prisoner by limiting where he can go or has tattooed or branded his feet, as might happen to a slave (the latter is mentioned in the legal Code of Hammurabi). In either case, Job is stating that he is held in check by the Almighty.

JOB—NOTE ON 13:28 *rotten thing*. Human beings are in a state of decay and death.

JOB—NOTE ON **ch 13** Job rightly sees that the world is in a state of frustration; sin is still so powerfully at work in our world, and even in our

lives as believers. St Paul wrote, "The whole creation has been groaning together" (Rm 8:22). We long for deliverance. That deliverance cannot come through our own frail efforts. Only God can bring it about. He has done this through His Son, Jesus Christ, who "has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows" so that "with His stripes [of suffering] we are healed" (Is 53:4–5). • O Lord, amid life's sufferings and sorrows, show us that in Christ we are assured of Your love both now and for eternity. Amen.

JOB—NOTE ON 14:1–2 *few of days and full of trouble*. One might properly understand this passage in two ways: (1) life is short and full of trouble, or (2) already when we are only a few days old, we face many troubles. This and the following verse are often quoted at funerals. *like a flower*. The older we get, the more we realize how quickly life flies by. Flowers bloom and flourish in their beauty, only to wither and die in a short time (cf Is 40:6–8).

JOB—NOTE ON 14:3 *bring me into judgment*. Given the brevity of life, Job wonders aloud why God should even notice and judge a person.

JOB—NOTE ON 14:4 *clean thing out of an unclean?* We are all born in sin (cf Ps 51:5). It seems unfair to Job that God should judge us since life is short and filled with trouble and we are born into an unclean (sinful) condition. How can God expect much of any of us? *not one*. Job answers his own question.

JOB—NOTE ON 14:5 *his days*. Job asserts that God controls the length of our brief life. LXX includes the words "on earth." David expresses it this way: "But I trust in You, O LORD.... My times are in Your hand" (Ps 31:14–15).

JOB—NOTE ON 14:6 *like a hired hand*. A manager doesn't expect a great deal out of a mere hired hand. Job wonders why God should be so interested in what we do.

JOB—NOTE ON 14:7–9 *hope for a tree*. After some species of trees are cut down, they will sprout new shoots (suckers) from their roots. *its root grow old … like a young plant*. Isaiah also uses this picture to describe the Savior coming from the "stump of Jesse" (father of King David and ancestor of Christ; Is 11:1–2). Centuries later, long after the royal line of David seemed dead, Jesus would fulfill these words. Contrary to what religions of reincarnation (e.g., Hinduism and Buddhism) teach, an individual does not come back. The Bible teaches that we die once and then face the judgment (Heb 9:27).

JOB—NOTE ON 14:10 *where is he?* More than a rhetorical question. Later in this ch and more explicitly in 19:25–27, Job expresses hope in the life to come.
JOB—NOTE ON 14:11–12 *rises not again*. Job seems to say there is no resurrection; though it is possible he has not yet come to the conviction of life after death, more likely he is referring to the passing away of this world (cf vv 13–17).
JOB—NOTE ON 14:13 *hide me in Sheol*. Job wants to escape this life of suffering and asks God to take him into the realm of the dead. See p 792. *appoint me a set time*. The moment God's anger passes, Job wants the Lord to remember him. *remember*. Hbr *zakar*. Job asks God to remember him beyond death. When the Lord "remembers" us, He acts on our behalf.
JOB—NOTE ON 14:14 *days of my service*. As Job's life prior to all his suffering showed, he believed that we are on earth to serve and worship God. *my renewal*. Though this may refer to renewal in this life, the context shows that Job sees renewal even after death.
JOB—NOTE ON 14:15 *I would answer you*. Job longs to speak with God and serve Him. He envisions God also longing to be in a relationship with His servant.
JOB—NOTE ON 14:16–17 *not keep watch over my sin*. Aug: "See how Job, too, confesses his sins, and says how sure he is that there is none righteous before the Lord. So he is sure of this also, that if we say we have no sin, the truth is not in us. While, therefore, God bestows on him His high testimony of righteousness, according to the standard of human conduct, Job himself, taking his measure from the rule of righteousness [says] … 'How shall a mortal man be just before the Lord?'" (*NPNF*1 5:50). Job sees forgiveness as coming from the hand of the Almighty. *my transgression*. Contrary to what Zophar argued, forgiveness is not accomplished by our efforts. *sealed up*. Merchants sealed bags of goods with a signet stamped onto the binding. Job pictures forgiveness as a sealing up of sin (so it does not contaminate) and a covering (so it is no longer visible).
JOB—NOTE ON 14:18 *mountain falls*. Job notes the awesome power of the Almighty, similar to what the psalmist writes: "God is our refuge and strength … though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea" (Ps 46:1–2). God holds power over all of nature, even the seemingly indestructible mountains. The psalm speaks of God's protective power; here Job refers only to the power, but not the protection.

JOB—NOTE ON 14:19 *destroy the hope of man*. Job sees God's awesome power in nature as a sign of His condemning power over sinful people. Nature's force points toward God's Law and judgment.
JOB—NOTE ON 14:20 *You change his countenance*. Job is saying that God can crush the human spirit and sadden our expression. He can do this through suffering or simply through the ravages of old age.
JOB—NOTE ON 14:21–22 *perceives it not*. In the pain of suffering or old age, we are not even aware of what is happening with our own children—whether they are being honored or brought down. When we die, of course, we are even less aware. *only for himself*. Pain can be so overpowering that we are unable even to see what is going on beyond our own body. On this outcry, Job ends his refutation of Zophar and the first round of discussions.
JOB—NOTE ON **ch 14** Job expresses the hope of forgiveness and life, but struggles with an overwhelming awareness of God's heavy hand upon weak and sinful human beings like himself. In other words, Job has focused on the condemning power of God's Law, rather than on the forgiving and renewing power of the Gospel. We are like that when we suffer. We tend to see only the anger and condemnation, but we fail to see that even in the darkest hour, God is a God of forgiveness and love. On the cross, Christ suffered not only inscrutable pain physically, emotionally, and mentally for us, but He also suffered hellish spiritual anguish. Through Him we enjoy God's love, now and eternally. Our sufferings can remind us of His greater sufferings on our behalf. They also remind us that this earth is not our permanent home—heaven is our home. • Almighty God, forgive our many doubts, strengthen our faith, and lead us through this life to the joys of heaven. Amen.
JOB—NOTE ON 15:1 *Temanite*. See note, 2:11.
JOB—NOTE ON 15:2 *windy*. Not empty and unsubstantial, but like the "east wind"—a destructive, scorching wind. Unlike God's words, Job's words are not only unprofitable but also destructive. See note, 4:9.
JOB—NOTE ON 15:4 *fear of God*. See ESV note. Short for the "fear of God" that is equated with wisdom. See p 1001. By casting such wisdom aside, Job diminishes the ability to have meditative prayer. Eliphaz is concerned that Job is destroying his faith. *meditation*. Lit, "concern"; what focuses the mind.
JOB—NOTE ON 15:8 *council of God?* Eliphaz accuses Job of claiming privileged access to the council of God as if he is the wisest human of all.

The "council" is the gathering of the heavenly hosts before God's throne, as leading officials would gather at the throne room of a king (cf 1:6; 2:1; 1Ki 22:19).
JOB—NOTE ON 15:10 Eliphaz appears to be speaking of his generation. He and Job are mature men. The LXX reads that Job lived 170 years after his trial to the age of 240. According to this tradition, Job was 70 when he was sorely afflicted.
JOB—NOTE ON 15:11 *comforts of God … word that deals gently*. Eliphaz thinks Job is haughty to reject the consolations of God transmitted "gently" by Eliphaz. Eliphaz thinks his own words are inspired (4:12–16).
JOB—NOTE ON 15:14 Cf 4:17–21; 14:1–4, where Job concedes the negative answer. Eliphaz says that if Job admitted mankind's mortality and frailty in general, he should also concede his own particular wickedness. In this context, it is impossible for a person to be accounted righteous, because humans are morally weak by nature.
JOB—NOTE ON 15:15 *holy ones*. Even the angels and the heavens are finite and consequently are not absolutely beyond the possibility of sin and contamination. I.e., these superior spirits are still so inferior to God that He does not entrust His secrets to them. See note, v 8.
JOB—NOTE ON 15:16 Not referring to just Job, but to any human being. Such an absolute standard does not cancel the distinction between good persons and evil.
JOB—NOTE ON 15:18–19 *from their fathers*. See note, 8:8–10. Eliphaz tells Job he can trust these words because they come from the wise, whose teaching was reviewed by an earlier generation. The tradition goes back three long generations. *the land … no stranger*. The fathers lived where no foreign influence corrupted their teaching.
JOB—NOTE ON 15:21 *prosperity*. Hbr *shalom*, "peace." *destroyer will come*. Dreading the loss of security, the wicked keep hearing the sound of their impending doom.
JOB—NOTE ON 15:24 *distress and anguish terrify him*. Inner anguish and distress dominate the life of the wicked; they are forever plagued by an awareness of their doom. Does not contradict v 26; the wicked remain defiant toward God in their terror.
JOB—NOTE ON 15:26 *thickly bossed shield*. Shield made in a bulging shape; thick embossment forms a hump. Symbolic for the insane

stubbornness and hostility the unrepentant display against God; they are thickheaded and thick hearted.
JOB—NOTE ON 15:27 *covered his face with his fat*. Describes fleshly security against all unrest and pain. The wicked person's fatness is a mark of strength and is also ascribed to the arrogant. It signifies trust in self, instead of in God.
JOB—NOTE ON 15:30 *he will depart*. The wicked die like plant life stripped of its vitality; they breathe their last breath.
JOB—NOTE ON 15:32 *branch*. Offspring. *not be green*. Renewal is not possible for this tree because its life is squeezed out of it.
JOB—NOTE ON 15:33 New growth symbolizes life and fruitfulness. The wicked suffer devastation of their blooms long before the harvest.
JOB—NOTE ON 15:35 *birth to evil*. "Evil" has the sense of "self-deception, vanity." People who mischievously plan (or birth) evil for others deceive themselves.

JOB—NOTE ON **ch 15** Eliphaz admonishes Job to receive his inspired counsel, since he feels that Job thinks too highly of himself and his own wisdom. Today, we must not assume that someone's mental, emotional, and/or spiritual agony is the result of unrepentant rebellion; it could very well be that God is refining that person's faith. Just as the afflictions of Christ overflow into our lives, so also our comfort in Christ overflows; we are being made like our Savior (1Co 1:5; Php 3:10). When we are perplexed in our affliction, may we—through the eyes of faith—see Christ, whose affliction saved us from sin and death! • Lord, may the pains and struggles I experience teach me the wisdom of fearing You, and may Your comforts and gentle words quench the flames of distress. Through the merits of Jesus. Amen.
JOB—NOTE ON 16:2 *miserable comforters*. Oxymoron; the more comfort they offer, the more pain they inflict.
JOB—NOTE ON 16:5 Job knows the difference between mere words and real deeds of love. He believes he could comfort them if they were suffering.
JOB—NOTE ON 16:7 *my company*. His entire intimate social world (cf 19:13–20). Job is alone in his misery.
JOB—NOTE ON 16:9 *hated*. Hbr *satam* ; likely refers to Satan. Job describes what he perceives as God's strange or alien character as the

destroying beast raging against mortals. His description is reminiscent of Satan (cf 1Pt 5:8).

JOB—NOTE ON 16:13 *my gall*. Job feels as if God has torn open his vital organs, mortally wounding him. The gallbladder symbolizes something bitter and pictures Job's emotions and affections as spilling bitterness.

JOB—NOTE ON 16:14 *breach*. God's forces break down Job's defenses and penetrate his interior world.

JOB—NOTE ON 16:15 *sackcloth*. Hbr *saq* ; rough cloth woven from goat or camel hair. He wears the tokens of grief. See note, 1:20. All his power and dignity had been covered with the deepest humiliation.

JOB—NOTE ON 16:17 Job uses language similar to the liturgical confession of worshipers entering the temple precinct (cf Ps 24:4). He sees no transgression that would account for God's hostility.

JOB—NOTE ON 16:18–19 As Moses called heaven and earth as witnesses (Dt 4:26; 32:1), so Job calls on earth and heaven to testify about God's flagrant violation of justice.

JOB—NOTE ON 16:18 *cover not my blood*. Innocent Abel's blood cried to God for justice "from the ground" (Gn 4:10). Job does not want the earth to let his blood be silenced until God acts on his plea for a favorable verdict.

JOB—NOTE ON 16:19–21 *He who testifies for me is on high*. This heavenly "witness" is God Himself. Job appeals to God (v 20) against God (v 21). He appeals to the God of justice and forgiveness, as he knows the true God must really be, and against the strange and raging God he is experiencing. The "witness" here, like the "arbiter" of 9:33, is more likely an intercessor or intermediary who will plead with God like a "man does with his neighbor" (v 21). This longing for an advocate before God, who Himself is God, became a reality in Christ (1Jn 2:1–2). See note, Jb 19:25.

JOB—NOTE ON 16:21 *a son of man*. Representative of fallen humanity. See p 2098.

JOB—NOTE ON 16:22 *the way*. The way of no return (cf 10:21), to the land of the dead. See p 792.

JOB—NOTE ON **ch 16** Job's misery only increased through the aggravating words of his friends. Everyone has abandoned him. Even God treated Job as His enemy. But Job confesses that God will nevertheless be his witness and intermediary at the coming judgment. I.e., Job properly keeps justification as something outside of himself; his witness/intermediary will deliver him. Regardless of the circumstances and

the depth of darkness you may face, call on Jesus Christ, the only mediator between God and all people (1Tm 2:5). No matter how bad things may be, Christ is now interceding for you at the right hand of God (Rm 8:34). • We rejoice, O Father, that Your Son intercedes for us. Hear our plea. Amen.

JOB—NOTE ON 17:2 *mockers*. Not necessarily his friends. A crowd may have gathered. While they jeer him, his eyes focus on the hostility reflected in their faces.

JOB—NOTE ON 17:3 *security*. Lit, "striking hands"; gesture confirms the agreement. Since Job has no witness for his security (someone who will lay down a pledge for him in the heavenly court), he prays that God Himself will be merciful and be that witness. The Christian knows that this hope is indeed fulfilled in God's Son, but it is not known how clearly Job himself saw this. Job has taken a decisive step toward his certain conviction and declaration, recorded in 19:25–27.

JOB—NOTE ON 17:4 *You … them*. God closed the mockers' hearts.

JOB—NOTE ON 17:5 Not a curse, but a proverbial saying. His detractors deserve the punishment of those who denounce their friends in order to enrich themselves.

JOB—NOTE ON 17:6 *byword*. Public disgrace. Entire community scorns him.

JOB—NOTE ON 17:7 *dim from vexation … members … a shadow*. Physicians in ancient times believed that the eye had a source of light within it, perhaps because of the way the eye reflects light outward. Job is further distressed over the deterioration of his body. His eyes are so dim that objects flit before them like shadows.

JOB—NOTE ON 17:9 *righteous*. Job says he must hold to what he believes is right. Aug: "A man may be called righteous, who has gone so far towards perfection in righteousness as to be very near it; and this we do not deny to have been in the power of many even in this life, when they walk in it by faith" (*NPNF* 1 5:167). Truly, the one who clings to the Righteous One is righteous.

JOB—NOTE ON 17:10 *come on again*. The friends may have begun to leave.

JOB—NOTE ON 17:13–16 *hope for Sheol as my house*. See p 792. To find relief from his pain.

JOB—NOTE ON 17:14 *pit*. The grave or Sheol.

JOB—NOTE ON 17:16 *bars*. Wooden beams used to secure gates; may depict Sheol as a prison. See p 792.

JOB—NOTE ON **ch 17** After Job's great confession of faith in his heavenly witness-mediator, he begins to consider his outward circumstances once again. He describes how the situation was becoming bleaker. As you see your own weakness, "draw near to God, and He will draw near to you" (Jas 4:8). God "put up security" for you when Christ laid down His life, giving His precious blood! • We praise You, O Christ, for covering us with Your perfect righteousness! Amen.

JOB—NOTE ON 18:1 *Shuhite*. See note, 2:11.

JOB—NOTE ON 18:3 *counted as cattle?* Considered stupid like cattle.

JOB—NOTE ON 18:4 *forsaken for you*. For Bildad, the moral order is deeply connected with the natural order. Asking for a change in the moral order—for God to restore Job apart from repentance—is like asking God to change the physical world.

JOB—NOTE ON 18:5 *light of the wicked*. Prosperity of the wicked will be utterly destroyed.

JOB—NOTE ON 18:13 *firstborn of death*. Death's most important ally, which brings the greatest devastation. *death*. Hbr *maweth*. Likely the disease afflicting Job. *consumes*. Mot, the Canaanite god of the dry season, was depicted as eating people. Drought brings famine, hunger, and death.

JOB—NOTE ON 18:14 *king of terrors*. Among the terrors besetting people, death reigns supreme.

JOB—NOTE ON 18:19–20 Death will find its prey regardless of where the victims flee. *They of the west … them of the east*. News about the death of the wicked spreads everywhere.

JOB—NOTE ON 18:21 *knows not God*. Does not recognize God or honor Him in the proper manner. Chapter seems to emphasize the moral disobedience of the wicked rather than their ignorance of doctrine. Bildad implies that Job needs to consider the moral ramifications of his refusal to repent of the sin that has caused his misery.

JOB—NOTE ON **ch 18** Bildad implies that unless Job repents, he will suffer the ravages of death. (Yet Bildad's idea of justification is legalistic; Job must get his act together.) Certainly "the king of terrors" (v 14) threatens us, because "death spread to all men because all sinned" (Rm 5:12) and "the wages of sin is death" (Rm 6:23). However, we remember the joyous message of Scripture that in Christ we have "passed from death

to life" (Jn 5:24). • O Christ, by Your death You opened to me the dwellings of the righteous. Lead me, I pray, by strong steps in the path of life. Amen.
JOB—NOTE ON 19:3 *ten times*. Round number for "repeatedly" or "often"; a full measure.
JOB—NOTE ON 19:4 *my error remains with myself*. Job will have to deal with his sin. No one else can take God's office to punish him or place his transgression on another person.
JOB—NOTE ON 19:5 Chrys: "Not only was there no one to soothe him but many even on many sides beset him with taunts. And you see him lamenting this bitterly" (*NPNF*1 9:196).
JOB—NOTE ON 19:6 Job asserts that God has entrapped or tricked him into sinning, the way a fowler lures and traps wild birds.
JOB—NOTE ON 19:7 *no justice*. God appears to treat Job with unprovoked anger. As a result, Job receives neither an answer to his prayer about why he is suffering nor any relief from his persistent pain. God has not, however, ever revealed Himself as Job's enemy. In fact, this alien work of God (see note, Is 28:21) is part of God's way of leading Job to the great climactic description of the Redeemer (v 25).
JOB—NOTE ON 19:14 Job is denied solace of company, respect, and intimacy of family. Bonds of moral obligation and affection are shamelessly severed. See note, 42:11. Like the Servant of the Lord (Is 53), Job is treated as an outcast.
JOB—NOTE ON 19:16 Those who did the daily chores in Job's house now regard their master as a stranger. The servants' high esteem for Job has turned to contempt. Chrys: "Let the sufferings of that man [Job] then be the medicines for our ills, and his grievous surging sea the harbor of our sufferings, and in each of the accidents which befall us, let us consider this saint. Seeing one person exhausting the misfortunes of the universe, we shall conduct ourselves bravely in those [misfortunes] which fall to our share, and—as to some affectionate mother, stretching forth her hands on all sides, and receiving and reviving her terrified children—so let us always flee to this book [of Job]. Even if the pitiable troubles of all men assail us, let us take sufficient comfort for all and so depart" (*NPNF*1 9:196–97).
JOB—NOTE ON 19:17 *breath*. Hbr *ruach*, "spirit," "life's breath." *strange to my wife*. Those who ought to empathize with Job find him repulsive both physically and spiritually.

JOB—NOTE ON 19:20 *bones stick to my skin*. His body is so wasted away that the skin has tightened around his bones. *escaped by the skin of my teeth*. Likely a reference to the effects of his disease (cf v 17). The "skin" may be Job's gums or the skin surrounding his teeth. This saying has become an English proverb for a narrow escape. Job expresses amazement that his body continues to sustain any life at all.

JOB—NOTE ON 19:23 *inscribed*. Suggests carving upon some durable substance. Writing and composition were highly developed by the second millennium BC. *book!* Permanent written record of his testimony. A "book" might be a scroll or a tablet of clay, a metal plate, or a stone slab.

JOB—NOTE ON 19:24 *iron pen*. Job wants his case to become a matter of indelible record. "Pen" is used not only for a reed pen or brush for writing with ink but also for an iron stylus or chisel used on stone. See note, 20:24.

JOB—NOTE ON 19:25–27 "We affirm that no one but God alone can separate human nature and this corruption of human nature from each other. This will fully come to pass through death, in the 'blessed' resurrection. At that time our nature, which we now bear, will rise and live eternally without original sin and be separated and divided from it. As it is written in Job 19:26–27, 'After my skin has been thus destroyed, yet in my flesh I shall see God, whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold'" (FC Ep I 10). Life after death is undeniably prominent in these verses. Three times Job confidently asserts, I shall see God. Mention of "flesh," "eyes," and "heart" (lit, "kidneys") shows that Job thinks of his future, vindicated existence in bodily terms.

JOB—NOTE ON 19:25 *Redeemer*. Hbr *go'el*. See "redeem," p 843. Comparable to "arbiter" of 9:33 and "witness" of 16:18–22. The Redeemer is God. Job appeals to God against God (see note, 16:19–21). In light of the fuller biblical revelation, we know that Christ, the God-man, fulfills the description of the Redeemer. In support of this view that Job appeals to God Himself are the following: (1) Job consistently recognizes God as the ultimate arbiter in all matters of justice; (2) Job knows that nothing can deliver a person from the wrath of God's Law other than God Himself; (3) the Lord Himself confirms all of this in chs 40–41; (4) in Job's final plea (ch 31), he puts his legal case solely into the hands of God. As Christians, we know this appeal is to Jesus Christ, the Second Person of the Trinity, who as a person is distinct from the other two persons of the Godhead. *at*

the last. The ultimate Last Day, as in Mt 25:31–46 and Rv 20:11–15. Job yearns for public acquittal of the righteous.

JOB—NOTE ON 19:26 *destroyed*. Death. *yet in my flesh I shall see God*. Job is certain that there will be a glorious resurrection of the body on the Last Day, that the very skin that clothed him during his mortal life will again cover the flesh that has become subject to decay and corruption. From this very same body, Job knows that he will see God. 1 Clem: "Do we then deem it any great and wonderful thing for the Maker of all things to raise up again those that have piously served Him in the assurance of a good faith? … Job says, 'You shall raise up this flesh of mine, which has suffered all these things'" (*ANF* 1:12). Aug: "No doubt [these words] were a prophecy of the resurrection of the flesh" (*NPNF* 1 2:508; cf Chem, *LTh* 1:320).

JOB—NOTE ON 19:29 *be afraid … judgment*. Job is warning his friends that, by siding with God against an innocent victim, they can expect retribution by the sword. When the dust settles, the friends will also know there is a time of judgment, a time when accounts will be settled. In view of the Redeemer who will stand at the last, the judgment of v 29 is the Last Judgment.

JOB—NOTE ON **ch 19** When Job's physical condition grows closer to death and he considers a permanent memorial to record his innocence, his spirit soars to his only hope: the Redeemer, God Himself. The divine Redeemer will stand on the earth on the Last Day. Job will receive his vindication in his resurrected body, from which he will see the Redeemer with his own eyes. Today, the Redeemer sees you in your helpless state. As a true Redeemer who buys back His kinsman from bondage, Christ has won you for Himself at the cost of His own flesh and blood. • Come, Lord Jesus, raise up Your saints! Amen.

JOB—NOTE ON 20:1 *Naamathite*. See note, 2:11.

JOB—NOTE ON 20:2 *haste within me*. Zophar expresses deep agitation at Job's discrediting his wisdom. He is defensive, and so he retorts.

JOB—NOTE ON 20:3 *spirit answers me*. He claims to have received a special revelation, either from his "understanding" (reason) or a divine source.

JOB—NOTE ON 20:5 Zophar concedes that the wicked may indeed prosper, having something to shout or sing about, but this cause for celebration is short-lived.

JOB—NOTE ON 20:8 *he will be chased away like a vision of the night*. As the morning light chases away a night vision, so the memory of the evildoer will be chased quickly away. Cf 4:13.
JOB—NOTE ON 20:16–18 Suddenly struck down as if bitten by "a viper," the wicked will no longer feast their eyes on their prosperity. They will not enjoy the results of their labor to the full; they will not participate in celebrating earth's blessings. The wicked are described literally as not being able to swallow, referring to the ill-gotten gain as convulsing them or causing them to vomit up their gains. They cannot enjoy them.
JOB—NOTE ON 20:22 *hand of everyone in misery*. Hands of all the destitute—not just those the wicked have made destitute—will come upon the evildoers to avenge the injustice done to the needy. The full force of misery will "come against" them in the military sense, as in an attack.
JOB—NOTE ON 20:23 *To fill his belly to the full*. For once, the wicked may have enough and more than enough. They may have thought they knew the satisfaction of greed, but the wicked will not know what full satisfaction is until they are filled with the wrath of God!
JOB—NOTE ON 20:24 *iron weapon*. Some have contended that the Book of Job must have been written late, since he mentions iron implements and the iron age does not begin until c 1300 BC. However, a smelted iron blade has been discovered at Tell Asmar, Iraq, and dated to c 2800 BC. Also, the Egyptians are known to have used iron tools beginning c 2500 BC.
JOB—NOTE ON 20:25 *gallbladder*. Physical injury likened to an arrow through the gallbladder means certain death and also points to divine justice. Punishment reaches to the core of the wicked person's corruption.
JOB—NOTE ON 20:26 *Utter darkness*. Recurring symbol of death and destruction (3:4–5; 12:25; 15:22–23; 18:18); represents the gloomy domain of the underworld (10:21–22; 17:13). The wicked belong to the darkness for they have rebelled against the light (24:13–17).
JOB—NOTE ON 20:27 *heavens … earth*. Heaven and earth function as enduring witnesses (e.g., Dt 32:1). Two witnesses are the legal minimum required for a verdict. Cf Dt 19:15.
JOB—NOTE ON 20:28 *day of God's wrath*. Final public judgment, the decisive day of retribution against the evildoer.
JOB—NOTE ON **ch 20** Zophar elaborates his list of calamities for the wicked. In doing this, however, he assumes that the truly righteous are somehow exempt from external miseries and must enjoy prosperity now

("theology of glory"; see p 837). Such misunderstanding tempts us to lose our proper motivation for clinging to the Lord. Our goal is not this earth, which is fading, but "the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (Php 3:14). • "Rejoice insofar as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when His glory is revealed" (1Pt 4:13). Amen.

JOB—NOTE ON 21:2 *comfort*. Instead of bringing him "the comforts of God," as they professed (15:11), his friends turned out to be miserable comforters. The only consolation they can offer is to listen while he unburdens himself of complaints.

JOB—NOTE ON 21:5–6 *lay your hand over your mouth*. Cover your mouth in awe, a common gesture of someone in shock. Mystery of God's inscrutable ways produces dismay and "shuddering."

JOB—NOTE ON 21:9 *rod of God*. Discipline was commonly applied with a stick. Punishment Job feels (9:34) does not fall upon the wicked.

JOB—NOTE ON 21:13 *in peace they go down to Sheol*. Or, "they die in an instant," without lingering agony of disease or disaster.

JOB—NOTE ON 21:17 *the lamp*. A healthy life; "put out" refers to premature death. Job, however, is saying that this does not characterize the lives of the wicked.

JOB—NOTE ON 21:19 *Let him pay it out to them, that they may know it*. Refers to punishment for iniquity. Job maintains that the wicked, not their children, should suffer for their own crimes and face their own judgment.

JOB—NOTE ON 21:23–26 *One*. First of two types of people who are not classified as good and bad, righteous and wicked, but as fortunate and unfortunate, regardless of moral character (cf vv 23–24, 25–26). Life is complicated and does not disclose clear patterns of reward and punishment. From the well-nourished rich man in vv 23–24, whose body is filled with vigor, strength, and health, to the bitter, poor person in v 25, death always has the final say, and it says the same thing to all people, regardless of their moral condition.

JOB—NOTE ON 21:28 *prince … wicked*. Two descriptions are tied together: the prince has risen to his exalted position by extortion and violence.

JOB—NOTE ON 21:30 *evil man is spared in the day of calamity*. Travelers of v 29 have seen the houses of the wicked still standing after a natural

disaster. While Job offers no other evidence for his belief, the general principle is undeniable.

JOB—NOTE ON 21:32 *watch is kept over his tomb*. Endowments are prepared by the rich, which may include employed servants to ensure the proper care of their tomb.

JOB—NOTE ON 21:33 *clods*. Lumps or masses of earth or clay. In this case, clods are "sweet" because the wicked rest in peace in their great grave that honors them.

JOB—NOTE ON **ch 21** Job's friends ignore the observable fact that many among the wicked prosper and live seemingly easy lives. By truthfully describing life on earth, Job is reminded to look beyond this life for his hope and righteousness. We, too, must look beyond the injustice we observe and continually confess that our outward predicament does not define God's attitude toward us. While the houses of the wicked remain after earthly storms, the spiritual houses of those in Christ endure forever against sin, the world, and the devil because they are built on the rock that is Christ (Mt 7:24–27). • Dear Lord Jesus Christ, assure us that nothing will ever take us from Your hands (Jn 10:28), that even our death will be precious to You (Ps 116:15), and that we, like Your servant Job, will see You with our own eyes when our bodies are raised from the grave (19:26–27). Amen.

JOB—NOTE ON 22:1 *Temanite*. See note, 2:11.
JOB—NOTE ON 22:2–5 Rhetorical questions. Grammar demands a negative answer in vv 2–4. People were created solely because of God's grace and mercy, not for divine profit. Eliphaz argues that if God should chastise someone, it must not be for a selfish purpose, but because of human sin.
JOB—NOTE ON 22:2 *profitable*. Can also be translated "useful."
JOB—NOTE ON 22:3 *is it gain to him if you make your ways blameless?* Though God does not personally benefit from the blameless deeds of the righteous, He certainly takes pleasure in them (1:8) and uses such deeds to benefit others. Cf Mt 5:14–16.
JOB—NOTE ON 22:4 *Is it for your fear of Him that He reproves you*. With this sarcastic question, Eliphaz makes Job responsible for his own suffering, suggesting that God was punishing Job for his sins.
JOB—NOTE ON 22:5 *Is not your evil abundant?* Grammar demands a positive answer. Observing Job's sorry condition, Eliphaz concludes that Job must certainly be horribly evil. Yet righteousness or wickedness is not determined by appearances, but solely by God's gift of faith. Cf Rm 1:16–17.
JOB—NOTE ON 22:6–11 Accusations have no basis other than Eliphaz's imagination, as he attempts to think of reasons for Job's suffering. Against this, Job maintains his innocence (23:7, 11).
JOB—NOTE ON 22:6 *exacted pledges*. In order to borrow money, people needed to provide a pledge (e.g., cloak or donkey) as collateral. Eliphaz accuses Job of treating his poorer neighbor ruthlessly, perhaps by demanding too much collateral or by foreclosing on the loan early, thereby keeping the collateral.
JOB—NOTE ON 22:12 *high in the heavens?* Though Scripture speaks of God in this way (Ps 2:4; 113:5–6), it does not mean He is far from us. Such phrases mean that He is present everywhere (e.g., Eph 4:10).
JOB—NOTE ON 22:13 *but you say*. After accusing Job of sinning against his neighbor (vv 5–9), Eliphaz now accuses him of despising God.
JOB—NOTE ON 22:14 *clouds veil Him*. Eliphaz puts words into Job's mouth, suggesting that Job acts in unrepentance because he thinks God is unable to see him. *vault of heaven*. Firmament or "expanse" (see note, Gn 1:6). Eliphaz refers to this as the place where God walks.

JOB—NOTE ON 22:15 *Will you keep to the old way*. Eliphaz's call to repentance for the wickedness he supposed Job committed. In Eliphaz's estimation, the only way to cure Job's suffering is for Job to turn and do good.
JOB—NOTE ON 22:16 *their foundation*. Perhaps refers to the flood (Gn 6–8). Everything the wicked had built their lives on was destroyed in the water of God's judgment.
JOB—NOTE ON 22:17–20 Here Eliphaz echoes what Job said in 21:14–16, but in the context of his entire speech, Eliphaz applies these words to Job himself.
JOB—NOTE ON 22:18 *Yet He filled their houses with good things*. "God certainly gives daily bread to everyone without our prayers, even to all evil people" (SC, Fourth Petition, p xxxviii). Cf Mt 5:45.
JOB—NOTE ON 22:20 *what they left the fire has consumed*. Where v 16 possibly alludes to the flood, the reference to fire here evokes the memory of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gn 19). The things the wicked accumulate as evidence of their power and greatness will at last be destroyed. Scripture also associates the Last Day with destructive fire. Cf Heb 10:27; 2Pt 3:7.
JOB—NOTE ON 22:21–26 Eliphaz's call to repentance contains many good points. What he says about God is often correct. Sinners must not only recognize their sin (v 21) but also hear and believe the Word (v 22). Acts that show love for God rather than for money are also part of repentance. The problem is that Eliphaz's exhortation is completely irrelevant in Job's case. Eliphaz fails to recognize that Job is already repentant (19:25–27) and that Job's suffering has nothing to do with unrepentant sin or divine punishment (1:6–12).
JOB—NOTE ON 22:21 *Agree with God*. Eliphaz argues that Job must first admit his accusations (22:6–10, 13–14) are true before God will relieve his suffering.
JOB—NOTE ON 22:23 *return*. From Hbr *shub* ; common term for repentance. See note, v 21.
JOB—NOTE ON 22:24 *Ophir*. Known for its fine gold. Cf Ps 45:9. Exact location unknown. Solomon later received 420 talents of gold from Ophir (cf 1Ki 9:26–28). *stones of the torrent-bed*. Stones from the creek bottom. Eliphaz wants Job to throw away all of his riches.
JOB—NOTE ON 22:27 *pay your vows*. Voluntary expression of love for God, often a special sacrifice offered to God. Other vows could also be

taken. Cf Nu 6:1–21. Once undertaken, a vow could not be broken. See p 7.
JOB—NOTE ON 22:28 *it will be established for you*. Eliphaz assumes that when people repent of their sin, everything automatically improves and goes well for them. Job is living proof that this is not so.
JOB—NOTE ON 22:29 *they*. This pronoun could refer to "your ways" (v 28) or to "the lowly" (v 29) because of the parallelism of the poetry. The latter best fits the sense of the passage. *It is because of pride*. See ESV note. Translation is difficult. Expression of encouragement may be intended, as we say, "Take pride." *the lowly*. Hbr expression unique to Job; lit, "one lowly of eyes," a person who looks downward in humility.
JOB—NOTE ON 22:30 *delivered through the cleanness of your hands*. Intercessory prayer by a believer, similar to Abraham's prayer for Sodom. Cf Gn 18:22–33. See Jesus' words to Peter: "When you have turned again, strengthen your brothers" (Lk 22:32).
JOB—NOTE ON **ch 22** Eliphaz's speech calls Job to repentance, and as such, this chapter is profitable for meditating on one's own sin and the need for God's deliverance. Putting ourselves in Job's place for a moment, who can argue with Eliphaz when he accuses us of failing to love both neighbor (vv 5–9) and God (vv 12–14) alike? Surely Eliphaz is also correct when he declares that God will listen to our repentant prayers (v 27)! Yet the sufferings Job bears are not because of his sin, as Eliphaz assumes. The Lord humbles him in order to exalt him. This is truly the way of the cross. See p 837. • O Lord, in all circumstances, grant us sincere repentance, delight us in Your ways, and lift our faces to behold You. Amen.
JOB—NOTE ON 23:2 *my hand is heavy*. Job's agony tempts him to lose self-control, and he must discipline himself to keep himself in check. Cf 1Co 1:27.
JOB—NOTE ON 23:3 *Him*. The heavenly Father, who allowed Job to suffer in this way. Cf 1:6–12. *seat!* God's judgment throne.
JOB—NOTE ON 23:4 *arguments*. Job envisions a court scene in which he could present his case to God. See p 792. When God later gives Job opportunity to speak (40:1–5), Job changes his mind and wisely declines to argue.
JOB—NOTE ON 23:5 After presenting his arguments (v 4), Job would await God's righteous judgment, anticipating that God would find him innocent of Eliphaz's charges in 22:6–7, 13–14.

JOB—NOTE ON 23:6 *pay attention*. Job knows that God would condescend to hear Job's plea and self-defense and not overwhelm Job with His majesty. Job's insight offers comfort to all Christians who cry out to God. God will happily incline His ear to their prayers, just as an earthly father does not turn his children away but welcomes and listens to their requests (SC, Lord's Prayer Introduction, p xxxvii).
JOB—NOTE ON 23:7 *upright man*. Likely refers to Job, but perhaps Job's recognition that he has a righteous advocate with the Father (1Jn 2:1) who will obtain Job's justification on his behalf. *acquitted*. The heavenly courtroom is one of the most ancient images of God's relation to people. Cf 1Ki 22:19; Ps 103:19–22. Job is confident that God will declare him innocent. See p 792.
JOB—NOTE ON 23:8 *not there*. Job's senses cannot perceive God's eternal presence. God's invisibility requires Job and all people to live by faith and not by sight. Cf 2Co 5:7.
JOB—NOTE ON 23:9 *not behold*. Job wishes to see God with his naked eye—something that will happen for him and for all in the resurrection. Cf 19:25–27.
JOB—NOTE ON 23:10 *tried*. See note, v 7. *I shall come out as gold*. Job believes a trial would prove him innocent, as pure as smelted gold. Where Eliphaz earlier called on Job to regard God as more precious than gold (22:25), here Job confesses his belief that God will regard him likewise.
JOB—NOTE ON 23:11 *His steps … His way*. Cf Dt 30:15–18. Job maintains that he has lived faithfully.
JOB—NOTE ON 23:12 *commandment*. Though God later speaks directly to Job in chs 38–41, God's commands were also written into Job's heart. Cf Rm 2:15. Aug: "Behold the meek man, behold one taught in the law of God, the eternal law of God I mean. For that law on tables was not yet given to the Jews in the time of Job, but in the hearts of the godly there remained still the eternal law, from which that which was given to the people was copied" (*NPNF*1 6:353).
JOB—NOTE ON 23:13 *He is unchangeable*. Lit, "He [God] is in one." See ESV note. Statement of God's uniqueness, which anticipates the ancient creed of Israel, "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one" (Dt 6:4). *turn*. Hbr *shub*, "who can change Him?"
JOB—NOTE ON 23:14 *appoints for me*. God seems like Job's enemy, acting randomly and maliciously. Job recognizes that God makes and

carries out His own plan for His servants, even if they do not understand how or why.
JOB—NOTE ON 23:17 *because of the darkness*. While Job fears God (v 15), he refuses to be afraid of anything else. Even though Job can perceive only darkness and gloom (see note, v 8), God alone remains both his terror (v 16) and his confidence.
JOB—NOTE ON 24:1 *His days?* When God passes judgment and the wicked are called to account.
JOB—NOTE ON 24:2 *move landmarks*. Steal land by rearranging boundaries. Cf Dt 27:17.
JOB—NOTE ON 24:3 *pledge*. See note, 22:6.
JOB—NOTE ON 24:4 *thrust the poor off the road*. Charge does not seem as serious as the others Job mentions here, unless it describes how the wicked deprive the poor of the basic rights due them as fellow citizens. *hide themselves*. The poor consider it much better simply to "disappear" and live anonymously, rather than to suffer the open derision and spite of the wicked.
JOB—NOTE ON 24:5–12 Job inventories the misery that the poor must suffer at the hands of the rich.
JOB—NOTE ON 24:5 *wild donkeys in the desert*. Like beasts, the poor must search arid and desolate places for their food, while the rich occupy the fertile areas. *seeking game*. Without flocks or herds, the poor must hunt for meat.
JOB—NOTE ON 24:6 *fodder*. Food for animals, which the poor must eat for lack of anything else. *glean*. Following after the harvester to pick up leftover stalks of grain. Cf Ru 2:3.
JOB—NOTE ON 24:9 *snatch the fatherless child*. Taking an infant into slavery because of its mother's debts. *take a pledge*. See note, 22:6. In a slave-owning society, even children could be collateral for a loan.
JOB—NOTE ON 24:10 *hungry, they carry the sheaves*. The poor are not even allowed a portion of the grain they harvest and store for the rich. Cf Dt 25:4; Lk 15:16.
JOB—NOTE ON 24:11 *olive rows*. Olive orchard.
JOB—NOTE ON 24:12 *God charges no one with wrong*. Job complains that the wicked seem to get away with their crimes, while he must suffer for no apparent reason. Jeremiah voiced a similar complaint (cf Jer 12:1–4).

JOB—NOTE ON 24:13–15 *light*. Criminals work at night. Darkness evoked images of death, Sheol, and the absence of God. Cf 3:4–7; 10:21–22. Light indicated safety, life, and truth.
JOB—NOTE ON 24:16 *dig through houses*. Thieves could enter a house by creating a hole in its mud-brick wall.
JOB—NOTE ON 24:17 *deep darkness is morning*. As many people rise in the morning to go about their work, so the murderer (v 14), the adulterer (v 15), and the thief (v 16) rise at nightfall and pursue their craft under the cover of darkness.
JOB—NOTE ON 24:18–24 As with 26:5–14 and 27:13–23, Job appears to endorse his friends' principle of divine retribution on the wicked (e.g., 22:29–30). However, Job consistently denies that this principle applies in his own case.
JOB—NOTE ON 24:18 *You*. One who observes the wicked of vv 13–17 and concludes they shall soon be judged. *on the face of the waters*. Like autumn leaves in a rushing stream, the wicked will quickly come to ruin. *portion*. Wealth and inheritance.
JOB—NOTE ON 24:19 *snow waters*. As warm weather melts snow, so shall the wicked disappear. *Sheol*. See p 792.
JOB—NOTE ON 24:20 *broken like a tree*. As a tree splits in a powerful wind, so shall the wicked be broken.
JOB—NOTE ON 24:22 *by His power*. In His wisdom, God allows the wicked to remain for a while. *they rise up*. The wicked appear to prosper quickly but soon become dissatisfied with success. As part of their punishment, God robs them of their zest for life.
JOB—NOTE ON 24:24 *cut off*. Separated from all others, mired in the isolation of Sheol. Cf v 19.
JOB—NOTE ON **Chs 23–24** Job complains that God seemed distant and impossible to find (23:3). Yet he remains convinced—by faith and not by sight (2Co 5:7)—that God does not change His will (23:13–14). Though you suffer poverty and injustice, know that the Lord wills your good and desires your salvation. • O almighty and merciful Lord, draw near. Acquit my guilt and calm my fears. Answer me gently through Christ Jesus, my Lord. Amen.
JOB—NOTE ON 25:1 *Shuhite*. See note, 2:11.
JOB—NOTE ON 25:2 *Dominion and fear are with God*. God alone is all-powerful. No one succeeds in opposing Him, because His dominion is too

great. *makes peace in His high heaven*. His reign extends everywhere. Ancient conflict between God and Satan resulted in Satan's expulsion from heaven (cf Lk 10:18; Rv 12:7–9). Cf 26:13.

JOB—NOTE ON 25:3 *His armies?* The angels, the hosts of heaven. See p 1291.

JOB—NOTE ON 25:4 *can man be in the right before God?* Bildad realizes that sinful humankind has no way to justify itself. His argument implies that "might makes right." *he who is born of woman*. Any person. *pure?* Truly, all people are born impure and sinful and need God's cleansing. Cf 5:7; Ps 51:5.

JOB—NOTE ON 25:5 As the sun outshines all other heavenly bodies, so God's greatness outshines all other things. By contrasting the heavenly bodies with the greatness of God, Bildad casts humankind into an even deeper shadow.

JOB—NOTE ON 25:6 *man, who is a maggot*. Though the image seems unbecoming, it expresses humility before God. Cf Ps 22:6. Luth: "We have no right to indulge in much bragging and boasting when we step before God. Even if we were members of the highest aristocracy on earth … before God we would still be nothing but bags of worms or bags of manure, infested with lice, maggots, stinking and foul" (AE 22:133).

JOB—NOTE ON **ch 25** The brevity of this last speech by Job's friends shows they have finally run out of arguments. Bildad's speech is a good sermon for Job and for everyone. He calls us to humility and contrition before God. We can offer no defense for ourselves and for our sins; we must throw ourselves entirely on God's mercy. • Praise be to God! "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1Jn 1:9). Amen.

JOB—NOTE ON 26:1–4 Job uses bitter sarcasm to respond to Bildad's speech (ch 25). Bildad's words concerning God's greatness and humankind's lowliness offer very little comfort to Job as he sits in the ashes (2:8) and suffers.

JOB—NOTE ON 26:5 *dead tremble under the waters*. In the judgment and darkness of Sheol. See p 792. *their inhabitants*. Sea creatures. Where Bildad measured God's greatness by looking up into the sky (25:5), Job probes the depths of the earth and the seas to find anything like God. The Lord will surpass Job's efforts (chs 40–41).

JOB—NOTE ON 26:6 *Sheol*. See note, 7:9. *naked before God*. No one hides from God, not even those in Sheol. Cf Ps 139:7–10; see p 792. *Abaddon*. Bottomless pit; another name for Sheol. Word comes from a verb meaning "to destroy" and describes a place of death and damnation (28:22; 31:12) that is known to God. Cf Pr 15:11; Rv 9:11.
JOB—NOTE ON 26:7 *the void … hangs the earth on nothing*. God created the earth out of nothing, solely by the power of His Word. Cf Heb 11:3. By the same power, all things now remain in their right place, dependent on nothing but God.
JOB—NOTE ON 26:8 *binds up the waters in His thick clouds*. Reference to work God began on second day of creation and continues to do. Cf Gn 1:6–8.
JOB—NOTE ON 26:10 *a circle*. Cf Gn 1:7–8. *boundary*. Horizon, from which dawn and sunset begin.
JOB—NOTE ON 26:11 *pillars of heaven*. Figurative for the towering mountains (cf 9:5–6; see note, 9:6).
JOB—NOTE ON 26:12 *Rahab*. See note, 9:13.
JOB—NOTE ON 26:13 *fleeing serpent*. Elsewhere called "Leviathan." See notes, 3:8; 41:1.
JOB—NOTE ON 26:14 *outskirts*. God's mighty deeds recorded in vv 7–13 are relatively small things that He effortlessly performed. *whisper … thunder*. We have heard only a little of God's work. How much more remarkable to hear the rest!
JOB—NOTE ON **ch 26** The almighty God has created the heavens and the earth (v 7) and still controls all things (vv 8–10). But this work is merely the "outskirts of His ways" (v 14)—as if the entire creation were a little fringe hanging from the edge of His cloak! As great as the creation appears in our eyes, our Creator towers above it. Yet, for our salvation, the limitless Creator allowed Himself to be confined to the limits of our humanity when Jesus Christ was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. • Cover me, O Lord, in Your robe of righteousness, and tower over my foes. Amen.
JOB—NOTE ON 27:1 *discourse*. A speech. Job's friends remain silent, so Job continues to build his defense.
JOB—NOTE ON 27:2 *As God lives*. Job swears in God's name that he will not lie. Others who spoke oaths in God's name include Abraham's servant

(Gn 24:3) and Jesus (Mt 26:63–64). See "vow," p 7. *made my soul bitter*. Job's repeated complaint. Cf 7:11; 10:1; 21:25.
JOB—NOTE ON 27:3 *the spirit of God*. Hbr *ruach 'eloah* ; synonym for "soul" or "life." *in my nostrils*. Suggests that this spirit is the breath of life, not the Holy Spirit. Cf Gn 2:7.
JOB—NOTE ON 27:5 *you*. Job's friends. *till I die*. Job vows to maintain his innocence unto death.
JOB—NOTE ON 27:6 *I hold fast my righteousness*. Or, "I will not let go of my righteousness." Job does not claim to be sinless; he claims only to be innocent of the great sins of which his friends have accused him. *my heart does not reproach*. His conscience is clear.
JOB—NOTE ON 27:7–8 David likewise prays for the death of his enemies. Cf Ps 5:10; 54:5. The martyrs pray similarly in Rv 6:10. Such prayers call on God to avenge those who suffer at the hands of the wicked. Cf Dt 32:43; Rm 12:19.
JOB—NOTE ON 27:9 *Will God hear his cry*. When God's patience with the wicked finally expires, He closes His ears to their cries for mercy. Cf 35:13; Is 1:15.
JOB—NOTE ON 27:11 *hand of God*. God's act of discipline and/or judgment.
JOB—NOTE ON 27:13 *portion*. That which the wicked shall "inherit" from God.
JOB—NOTE ON 27:14 God elsewhere threatens to punish lawbreakers to the third and fourth generation (Ex 20:5).
JOB—NOTE ON 27:15 *pestilence*. Hbr *maweth* ; lit, "death." See note, 18:13. Weapons of God's judgment will strike those who are wicked until none survive. Similar waves of judgment occur in Ex 7:14–10:29; 12:29–32; Rv 16.
JOB—NOTE ON 27:16–17 The wicked may hoard wealth for themselves, but in the day of God's wrath, those who are righteous and innocent—the very people exploited in pursuit of wealth—will divide their goods. Cf Pr 13:22.
JOB—NOTE ON 27:18 Place of the wicked is temporary.
JOB—NOTE ON 27:20 *Terrors*. Job echoes Eliphaz's earlier accusation, 22:10–11.
JOB—NOTE ON 27:21 *east wind*. The sirocco, a hot, dusty wind that blows in from the desert, creating sleeplessness and unrest (cf 1:9). Inability

to sleep gives opportunity for the consciences of the wicked to torment them and to create panic at the ominous, blowing sounds outside.
JOB—NOTE ON 27:22–23 *It*. East wind is the relentless agent of God's wrath. *headlong flight*. Running like a terrorized animal, he attempts to escape the blowing sand. *clasps … hisses*. Taunts. Words paired because of their similar sound in Hbr.
JOB—NOTE ON **ch 27** Job refuses to abandon his confidence. He knows and confesses "what is with the Almighty" (v 11), namely, that he will finally be vindicated (v 6), while his enemies will be swept away (vv 13–23). Job's faith in God grows stronger in the face of his difficulties, just as iron is strengthened on the anvil and in the forge. No matter what befalls him, Job entrusts all things to his Creator. • Lord, no matter what struggle we may endure in this earthly life, we know that "by God's power [we] are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (1Pt 1:5). Amen.
JOB—NOTE ON **Ch 28** Job makes another declaration of faith of similar importance to that in ch 19.
JOB—NOTE ON 28:2 Mining was already an established trade in Job's day and included ore collection by hand, smelting, and the casting of metal objects. Prosperous mines were in Egypt, Edom, Syria, and the Arabian Peninsula, among other places. See map, p 780.
JOB—NOTE ON 28:4 *away from where anyone lives*. Ancient miners would travel far from inhabited areas in their quest for precious ore. *they hang in the air*. Miners—usually slaves—would be lowered by ropes into vertical mine shafts, where they would swing precariously back and forth as they attempted to dig ore from the walls of the shaft.
JOB—NOTE ON 28:5 *turned up as by fire*. Miners would sometimes build a large fire near the wall of the tunnel, heating up the water in the rocks to make them crack open.
JOB—NOTE ON 28:7 *falcon's eye*. Despite notoriously good vision, falcons cannot see the paths people dig deep beneath the earth.
JOB—NOTE ON 28:8 *lion*. Considered the most courageous of beasts.
JOB—NOTE ON 28:9–11 Unlike the beasts mentioned in vv 7–8, human ingenuity has enabled people to explore the depths of the earth, uncovering amazing treasures that no one could ever dream of finding. But for all their great successes, people cannot find wisdom (v 12).

JOB—NOTE ON 28:10 *channels*. Same word is used for the Nile River Delta and refers to the network of shafts that miners dig through the earth.
JOB—NOTE ON 28:11 *streams*. Springs deep within the earth are a source for aboveground streams and rivers.
JOB—NOTE ON 28:12 *wisdom*. Knowledge and understanding that is not available through exploration or observation, but given only by God. Cf vv 20–28; Is 11:2; 1Co 1:18–25. See pp 775–78.
JOB—NOTE ON 28:16 *Ophir*. See note, 22:24.
JOB—NOTE ON 28:17 *glass*. Testimony to ingenuity and power of human invention, glass was highly valued in the ancient world. Egypt and Phoenicia were both famous for glassware.
JOB—NOTE ON 28:19 *Ethiopia*. Hbr *kush* ; the Upper Nile region of East Africa, named after Noah's grandson (Gn 10:6).
JOB—NOTE ON 28:20 *From where, then, does wisdom come?* After arraying all of the world's riches (vv 15–19) and all the hard work dedicated to finding them (vv 1–11), Job declares wisdom to be greater and more elusive than all riches.
JOB—NOTE ON 28:21 *concealed from the birds*. See note, v 7. If the sharp-eyed birds of the air cannot see the hidden elements beneath the earth, how much more is wisdom hidden from their view!
JOB—NOTE ON 28:22 *Abaddon and Death say*. Personification. See note, 26:6.
JOB—NOTE ON 28:23 *it*. Wisdom (v 20), which is known and given only by God.
JOB—NOTE ON 28:25 *its weight*. Describing the wind's ability to bend trees and fill the sails of ships.
JOB—NOTE ON 28:27 *He saw it*. God does not discover wisdom as though He previously did not know where to find it. Rather, Job juxtaposes the keenest vision of the great birds (vv 7, 21) with God's all-seeing eye. Cf 2Ch 16:9; Pr 15:3. Wisdom is virtually given a "bodily" form: not only was wisdom present at creation (v 25), but God saw it (as if wisdom were visible) and He established it (i.e., gave it a firm position). Some scholars compare v 27 to Pr 8:22–31, where wisdom again is described in substantive, personified terms. *declared*. Hbr *saphar*, "count," "proclaim." Word is also used to form "scroll," on which reports were written. The Lord prepares for humankind His report on wisdom, delivered in v 28.

JOB—NOTE ON 28:28 *the fear of the Lord*. See note, 1:1. God reveals that which cannot be discovered by any human effort. Wisdom is not merely scientific knowledge or technological ability. See pp 775–78; cf Ps 111:10; Pr 9:10; Is 11:2. *Lord*. Hbr *'adonai*, "master," commonly used of God, but occurs only here in Jb.

JOB—NOTE ON **ch 28** People cannot find wisdom by their own reason or strength. God alone can give it through His declaration—His Word. St Paul calls Christ Jesus "our wisdom and our righteousness and sanctification and redemption" (1Co 1:30). Christ, our Wisdom, was revealed to us in the manner described by Job here: God the Father has revealed Him to us in His powerful declaration (v 27), the Scriptures, so that we may "fear" Him. • All-knowing Lord, grant me wisdom through Your Son, my Savior and the only source of true wisdom. Amen.

JOB—NOTE ON 29:2–3 *lamp*. Symbol for God's blessing and guidance.

JOB—NOTE ON 29:4 *friendship of God*. Job enjoyed God's intimate counsel. God instructed him so that he prospered and enjoyed his family.

JOB—NOTE ON 29:6 *washed with butter*. Figurative for wealth and prosperity, because the person had sufficient milk to make butter. *streams of oil!* Olive oil pouring from a stone press. Job's prosperity is described as streaming from him for the benefit of the needy (vv 12–13; 15–16). See p 236. In 1Ki 17:12, the lack of oil and flour spelled death for the widow of Zarephath and her son.

JOB—NOTE ON 29:7 The city gates were the places in which public business was conducted, contracts executed, legal judgments handed down, and government administered (Gn 23; Dt 22:15). See p 792. Job had high standing in his community and was known as the preeminent wise man of his day (1:3).

JOB—NOTE ON 29:8 *withdrew*. Young men of the community showed deep respect by retreating into the background. *rose and stood*. Elders rose and, advancing toward Job, stood until he had seated himself.

JOB—NOTE ON 29:10 *tongue stuck*. Everyone was silent, waiting for Job to speak. These verses (v v 7–11) show the unqualified respect accorded Job.

JOB—NOTE ON 29:12 *delivered the poor*. Job used his resources to rescue the needy in their distress. Here, charity to the needy was not a function of government but a sign of Job's compassion.

JOB—NOTE ON 29:14 Clothing was often symbolic of station (cf v 25). However, here clothing represented gifts of God. Job was covered with the divine gifts.
JOB—NOTE ON 29:15 Luth: "Any person can be eye, soul, and belly to another, when he guides him, gives life to him, and preserves him in life and carefully bears him in the womb" (AE 10:143). Chrys: "He who does not turn aside from the calamities of others, will not suffer even in his own misfortunes, because he has learned to sympathize. He who will not bear the griefs of sympathy, will learn all sorrow in his own person. In the case of a bodily disease, when the foot is mortified, if the hand does not sympathize by cleansing the wound—washing away the discharge, and applying a plaster—it will suffer the like disease of its own. So she who will not minister to another when she is not herself afflicted, will have to bear sufferings of her own. For the evil spreading from the other part will reach to this [part] also, and the question will not be of ministering to the other, but of its own cure and relief. So it is here also. He that will not relieve others, will be a sufferer himself" (*NPNF*1 13:504).
JOB—NOTE ON 29:18 *I shall die in my nest*. Job expected that he would live out his days under God's care in his snug home, like a bird in its nest with its family. This expectation was overturned by the onslaught of the adversary.
JOB—NOTE ON 29:19 Job describes his expectation of prosperity and long life as a tree planted by a stream, which always has sufficient water.
JOB—NOTE ON 29:20 *bow ever new*. Wood of his bow would not dry out; therefore, the bowstring would not lose its tautness. Symbol of manly strength (Ps 18:34).
JOB—NOTE ON 29:23 People awaited Job's words like children eagerly awaited the first sweet drops of a spring rain to fall in their mouths (cf Zec 10:1).
JOB—NOTE ON 29:25 Job describes his condescension to those he helped. He helped the people in need by choosing the best way for them to go. He lived with them so he could share even in their suffering of bereavement and comfort them in their losses.
JOB—NOTE ON 30:1 *dogs of my flock*. Vicious insult. Dogs were regarded with contempt, despite their use in protecting flocks. These people were unworthy even to keep company with sheepdogs.

JOB—NOTE ON 30:3 *gnaw the dry ground*. Pictures deplorable state resulting from starvation. Starving people may try to fill their empty bellies with dirt, just as persons deprived of certain minerals are driven to eat dirt.
JOB—NOTE ON 30:4 *saltwort*. Plant that grows in salty regions of the Near East. In extreme need, roots of this plant could be ground to make a crude flour for bread.
JOB—NOTE ON 30:5–8 These brutish people are the outcasts, true troglodytes, considered unfit to live in human society. Those for whom Job once provided charity now consider themselves superior to him.
JOB—NOTE ON 30:5 *They*. Lowly people who now taunt Job. More respectable people would drive these lowly drifters out of their towns and farmsteads.
JOB—NOTE ON 30:7 *bray*. Mournful and inarticulate cry from those who have been driven out of their human community.
JOB—NOTE ON 30:9 *byword*. Job's fall into suffering has already made him a proverb of scorn and derision. See note, 17:6.
JOB—NOTE ON 30:11 *loosed my cord*. Job is like a bow "unstrung" by God (cf 29:20), making him liable to abuse. *cast off restraint*. Those who once would have shown deep respect for Job now find that he is at their mercy. Job's authority and honor no longer restrain them.
JOB—NOTE ON 30:14 *breach*. Hole broken in a fortress by attackers.
JOB—NOTE ON 30:18 *binds me*. Job's garments, once flowing and opulent, now bind and chafe his sore, swollen skin.
JOB—NOTE ON 30:20 *I stand*. Common posture for prayer. See p 1277.
JOB—NOTE ON 30:21 *turned cruel*. Job feels that God has become his fierce and unrelenting enemy. Luth: "The fiercer our sufferings are, the greater and more wonderful are the things that are worked in the saints. It is a proof of grace and God's goodwill when they are disciplined by the cross and afflictions" (AE 6:355). Luth: "In sudden terrors and dangers [our nature] is turned from the true God because it believes He is wrathful, as Job did…. But this is to imagine another god and not to remain in the simplicity of the faith that there is one God. Nor is God cruel, but He is 'the Father of comfort' (2 Cor. 1:3). Because He delays His help, our hearts make a wrathful idol of God, who is always like Himself and constant" (AE 12:374).
JOB—NOTE ON 30:23 *bring me to death*. Ultimate end of suffering is death itself; the Lord allows Job to reach the brink of death.

JOB—NOTE ON 30:24 *heap of ruins*. A Hbr term related to the word for "Ai," the ruins used as a fortification in Jsh 8; it means "disaster" and is another term for "ruins." *ruins … disaster*. Describes Job's desperate situation. *cry for help?* See ESV note. The LXX wrongly suggests that Job considers taking his life by his own hand or by asking someone else to kill him. The Hbr more likely means that Job appealed to God as desperately as a man threatened with the total collapse of his world or as frantically as a drowning person stretches out his hand for help.
JOB—NOTE ON 30:27 *inward parts*. Churning in his belly or inner emotional turmoil (Ps 42:5).
JOB—NOTE ON 30:28 *darkened*. Result of his disease or a sorrowful mood.
JOB—NOTE ON 30:29 *ostriches*. In ancient times, ostriches lived in the Near East. They make a haunting, lonely sound at night.
JOB—NOTE ON 30:30 *skin turns black*. Skin disease. Cf v 28; 7:5.
JOB—NOTE ON 30:31 *lyre*. Multistringed instrument in the harp family. *pipe*. Reed flute or whistle. Musical instruments were signs of celebration and joy, but Job's distress turned them to instruments of mourning.
JOB—NOTE ON **Chs 29–30** Luth: "Job did not deserve such punishments by his life; for he was God-fearing, guileless, and virtuous…. It tends to instruct and comfort us when we learn that God often causes even the innocent to experience the most serious misfortunes and punishments, merely in order to test them. When faint hearts feel the punishments, they immediately think of sin, and believe that these are punishments for sin. But one must maintain that the godly experience many evils, solely in order that they may be tested" (AE 2:319). • Merciful Lord, test me and prove me not on my own merits or strength. For then, I would surely fail. But test and prove me on the merits of Jesus Christ, who cannot fail to redeem me when I stumble. Amen.
JOB—NOTE ON 31:1 *covenant with my eyes*. Job promised to avoid looking upon young women so as not to give an opportunity to lust. Cf Mt 6:22–23. Hipp: "He who looks upon a woman, even though he escape the temptation, does not come away pure of all lust. And why should one have trouble, if he can be chaste and free of trouble? See what Job says: 'I made a covenant with mine eyes, that I should not think of another's wife.' Thus well does he know the power of abuse. And Paul for this reason kept 'under his body, and brought it into subjection' [1Co 9:27]" (*ANF* 5:173).

JOB—NOTE ON 31:2 *portion … heritage*. Job applies his argument of 27:13. Ch 31 presents the "rewards" from God due him for various sins. Yet he disagrees with the accusation of Zophar in 20:29, who presumed that Job is suffering because of wickedness.
JOB—NOTE ON 31:6 *weighed*. Job believes that he is blameless before God on the basis of his works. He believes that if he is put into the balance of justice, he will be proved just in God's sight. Job is again arguing that God has been unrighteous by permitting suffering to strike him.
JOB—NOTE ON 31:7 *my heart has gone after my eyes*. Job consciously avoided the desires of his heart, thinking that he would remain morally clean (Ec 2:10). *spot has stuck*. A moral blemish through action is like a blotch on the hand that mars its physical perfection (cf Dn 1:4).
JOB—NOTE ON 31:8 Invoking a curse on himself.
JOB—NOTE ON 31:10 *grind for another*. Grinding meal is a service of low status in another's household. The imagery has sexual connotations, perhaps due to the bowed position of the person grinding or the association of the mill's handle with a phallus. *bow down on her*. Implying sexual intercourse.
JOB—NOTE ON 31:11 *punished by the judges*. Community's legal system dealt with disorder caused by sexual relations outside of marriage. Breaking the marriage vow breaks the foundational bond of society and hurts not just husband and wife but also children, neighbors, community, and finally the Creator of holy marriage.
JOB—NOTE ON 31:12 *Abaddon*. See note, 26:6. *all my increase*. Refers to products of the agricultural harvest (2Ki 8:6). Job understands that adultery is a disordering sin that can have devastating effects in the community, including economic effects.
JOB—NOTE ON 31:14 *God rises up?* To bring witness against the wickedness Job describes (Dt 19:16–17).
JOB—NOTE ON 31:15 *fashion us in the womb?* Each person is created specially by God, and God Himself sees to a person's protection.
JOB—NOTE ON 31:16–22 Job is calling down a divine curse upon himself if he has not cared for the poor and needy.
JOB—NOTE ON 31:16 *poor*. Those who have fallen on hard times and are pressed to find enough to eat. Caring for the poor is a blessing to the giver (Ps 41:1). The Lord promises to rescue the poor through the Messiah's ministry (Is 11:4). *widow*. A woman without a husband was in a socially

ambiguous position. She was a special object of charity because she was often impoverished (Ru 2:2; Dt 14:29).
JOB—NOTE ON 31:17 *fatherless*. The fatherless are seen in the same disadvantaged category as widows and the poor.
JOB—NOTE ON 31:18 Job describes his lifelong practice of caring for the poor. In caring for many, he became a surrogate parent.
JOB—NOTE ON 31:21 *my help in the gate*. Job never used his influence with the courts to cover up violence against the helpless. See p 792.
JOB—NOTE ON 31:23 *terror of calamity*. Job admits that his works were motivated by fear rather than love. Such works may serve our neighbor but do not truly glorify God.
JOB—NOTE ON 31:24–28 Job explains what he has not done wrong.
JOB—NOTE ON 31:24 *fine gold*. Perhaps polished or completely refined gold. Emphasizes monetary value of Job's fortune.
JOB—NOTE ON 31:26 *sun … moon*. Objects of idolatrous worship in the ancient Near East.
JOB—NOTE ON 31:27 *my mouth has kissed my hand*. Figure of speech describing narcissistic self-absorption. Luth: "It is iniquity to kiss one's own hand, Job 31:27, to establish one's own works, to refuse obedience under the guise of something good or better, and thus iniquitously to prefer one's own opinion to that of a superior, of Christ and of God, etc." (AE 11:292).
JOB—NOTE ON 31:30 *curse*. Job had not pronounced a wish that those who had hurt him should have evil befall them.
JOB—NOTE ON 31:32 *sojourner*. Foreigner. Providing lodging for travelers was basic hospitality.
JOB—NOTE ON 31:33 *hiding my iniquity in my bosom*. Sin hidden away and unconfessed, just as Adam tried to hide his iniquity. See ESV note.
JOB—NOTE ON 31:35 *my signature!* Lit, "my tav." Hbr letter *tav* was shaped like a plus mark or cross and could stand as a signature. Cf Ezk 9:4, 6. *indictment*. Hbr *sepher*; a book or legal document. *adversary!* Lit, "man of my dispute." In this judicial proceeding before God (Dt 25:1), Job believes that God will vindicate him against the indictment of his three friends. See p 792.
JOB—NOTE ON 31:36 *carry it on my shoulder*. Written indictment against him (v 35) was worn as a matter of pride, so certain was Job that God would vindicate him. *as a crown*. Job was even luxuriating in this misbegotten accusation against him, turning it into a crown (1Pt 4:14–16).

JOB—NOTE ON 31:37 *like a prince*. Job approaches the Almighty confident of his status before Him. Note the difference between Job and Adam (Gn 3:8).
JOB—NOTE ON 31:39 Job had sharecroppers on his land whom he never left destitute.
JOB—NOTE ON **ch 31** Job bases his speech on the idea that moral behavior merits God's favor and that immoral behavior earns God's displeasure. If anyone could be justified before God based on good works, it would have been Job. But God's justice is too uncompromising, and His ways on earth are hidden. Job will learn that God has His purpose in suffering. There is no way for humans to see behind the mask of God, to know God's will apart from Scripture. He reveals His gracious will through the Word, not by reason or experience. • Set before our eyes Your good and gracious will toward us in the suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus. Amen.
JOB—NOTE ON **Ch 32** It was customary for people to sit together after calamity and try to determine the cause (Jnh 1:7; Jsh 7), esp if the calamity fell on the whole community.
JOB—NOTE ON 32:1 *righteous in his own eyes*. Author hints that Job was vindicated only in his own eyes and not before God. Elihu's speeches (chs 32–37) are aimed at correcting this basic flaw in Job's relationship to God. Job was not serving God "for no reason" (1:9). Because he expected a reward for his piety, he ranted against God's administration of justice. Before God Himself appears on the scene (chs 38–42), Elihu plays the role of His defense attorney. He has "something to say on God's behalf" in order to "ascribe righteousness to" his Maker (36:2–3). In defending divine providence, he operates in part with the principles advocated by Job's three friends. However, he does not attempt to relate them primarily and directly to Job's situation, as they did, but rather urges him to see himself in the perspective of God's absolute perfection. God, he points out, is just—for the simple reason that He is God, the almighty Creator of the universe and the omniscient Ruler of heaven and earth. God is not affected in His being by the behavior of puny people; nevertheless, He is concerned about the destiny of the work of His hand. According to His good and gracious will, He uses affliction to correct and purify humankind.
JOB—NOTE ON 32:2 *Elihu*. "He is my God." *Barachel*. "El (God) blesses." Elihu comes from a godly family. *Buzite*. Probably a native of Buz

in eastern Arabia. He is an outsider in this circle of friends, which makes him all the more hesitant to speak.
JOB—NOTE ON 32:3 *answer*. Job's three friends were unable to muster a response to Job's self-defense.
JOB—NOTE ON 32:4 *older than he*. Honor of speaking first was given to those who were thought to be wiser due to their age.
JOB—NOTE ON 32:6 *young*. Cf v 4.
JOB—NOTE ON 32:8 *breath of the Almighty*. Only God the Lord gives true spiritual wisdom. See note, 4:9.
JOB—NOTE ON 32:13 *God may vanquish him, not a man*. Elihu warns against the pride in Job's friends. They presume that if they could not overcome Job's self-righteousness, only God could—no other person could.
JOB—NOTE ON 32:18 *spirit*. Here Elihu is speaking of the strong conviction within himself. In Jb, "spirit" refers to the Spirit of God only once (33:4).
JOB—NOTE ON 32:19 When wine is fermenting, it produces carbon dioxide. The gas causes pressure in the container and will cause its lid to blow if not properly vented. Elihu is compelled to speak a word to Job, as though under pressure (cf Jer 20:9).
JOB—NOTE ON **ch 32** Martin Luther believed God allowed Job's suffering to try and test his faith. When we feel such trials, we, too, can be comforted knowing that God is not punishing us because of our sin, but is strengthening our faith through testing. • Lord, guide me by the answers of Your Word, and silence the opinions of those who break counsel with You. Amen.
JOB—NOTE ON **Ch 33** Elihu is talking about redemption and forgiveness, in contrast to the others. Despite what Job sees and experiences in the suffering around him, Elihu is recommending that Job still trust in God. He cannot believe that Job's suffering implies divine wrath. Luth: "This is the constant course of the church at all times, namely, that promises are made and that then those who believe the promises are treated in such a way that they are compelled to wait for things that are invisible, to believe what they do not see, and to hope for what does not appear. He who does not do this is not a Christian. For Christ Himself entered into His glory only by first descending into hell. When He is about to reign, He is crucified. When He is to be glorified, He is spit on. For He must suffer first and then at length be glorified. Moreover, God does this in order to test our hearts, whether we

are willing to do without the promised blessings for a time. We shall not do without them forever. This is certain. And if God did not test us and postpone His promises, we would not be able to love Him wholeheartedly. For if He immediately gave everything He promises, we would not believe but would immerse ourselves in the blessings that are at hand and forget God" (AE 5:202). Job's only hope is in the redeeming mercy of God, not in self-justifying speeches.

JOB—NOTE ON 33:1 Elihu's approach is conciliatory and more intimate in tone than the formal and more aloof style of the three friends, who did not address Job by name.

JOB—NOTE ON 33:3 Elihu is not claiming that he is righteous before God. He claims his own speech to Job is righteous because God Himself is the origin of the speech (v 12).

JOB—NOTE ON 33:4 God is the ultimate source of all life. Elihu uses terms from creation.

JOB—NOTE ON 33:6 *toward God*. "Over against God" is how life is lived in faith. Comparisons based on conventional definitions of morality are impossible because they come from self-justifying evasions. *pinched off from a piece of clay*. Elihu is claiming that he is a mere human being and living over against God, just as Job is. Elihu's human solidarity with Job is once again drawn from creation (Gn 2:7).

JOB—NOTE ON 33:10 *He*. God. Elihu describes the position of Job, often using Job's earlier words (9:21; 16:17; 12:4; 10:7). He summarizes Job's view that God has been unfair toward Job, arbitrarily finding "occasions against" him.

JOB—NOTE ON 33:11 *feet in the stocks*. Restraint assured that those who fled would trip and fall. Elihu thinks God places such close restraints that there is no escape from spiritual collapse.

JOB—NOTE ON 33:14–15 *one way, and in two*. Idiom meaning "in several ways." God reveals Himself in more than one way. Elihu argues that God has given a clear witness to His gracious will, and that a person is at fault who does not perceive this good will (1Tm 2:4). God certainly speaks two messages: Law and Gospel (vv 16–17). *dream … vision of the night*. These would occur in a deep sleep (4:13). See p 74.

JOB—NOTE ON 33:16 Clear communication of God's wrath against sin and His ultimate judgment. Through the Law, God drives us to repentance. See Ap XIIA 28–29.

JOB—NOTE ON 33:19 God warns us of our weakness so that we might cast ourselves upon His mercy alone. Luth: "We are reminded of our weakness in order that no matter how great the gifts are that we possess, we may not exalt ourselves but may remain humble and fear God. From those who do not do this He turns His face away, and trouble and perplexity follow" (AE 3:8).
JOB—NOTE ON 33:22 *the pit*. Death. See p 792. *those*. Divine messengers who bring death.
JOB—NOTE ON 33:23–24 Job (and perhaps Elihu) understands the messenger is the preincarnate Christ (19:25), who is the "one mediator between God and men" (1Tm 2:5). See p 39.
JOB—NOTE ON 33:23 *one of the thousand*. Elihu is speaking conditionally and may not believe in a mediator who is "one of the thousand," i.e., the number of witnesses to what is right.
JOB—NOTE ON 33:24 *ransom*. Atoning price to deliver from death (Ps 49:7–8).
JOB—NOTE ON 33:25 *fresh with youth*. Rescue of dramatic proportions, as though youth has been restored by this return from the brink of death (Ps 103:5).
JOB—NOTE ON 33:26 *accepts him*. God accepts people by grace because of the work of the Redeemer. *restores to man his righteousness*. Righteousness is a gift from God. "Those reconciled are counted as righteous and as God's children. This is not because of their own purity, but through mercy for Christ's sake, provided only that they receive this mercy through faith" (Ap IV 86).
JOB—NOTE ON 33:27 *not repaid*. God does not deal with humans as they deserve. He does not pay back, or we would instantly perish.
JOB—NOTE ON 33:28 *redeemed my soul*. Rescue from "the pit," which is death (see p 792).
JOB—NOTE ON 33:29 *twice, three times*. Not a limitation of divine mercy. In the speech of Elihu, the Lord repeatedly seeks the good of people.
JOB—NOTE ON 33:30 *the light of life*. God is the source of all life. To have the gift of life is to be rescued from the darkness (Gn 1:3).
JOB—NOTE ON 33:32 *justify you*. Elihu does not believe that Job will be able to respond adequately to his speeches (32:3, 13).
JOB—NOTE ON **ch 33** "God puts His saints to work in various ways and often holds back the rewards of works-righteousness. He does this so

that they may learn not to trust in their own righteousness and may learn to seek God's will rather than the rewards. This can be seen with Job, Christ, and other saints" (Ap V 77). Elihu argues that there is no clear correlation between our experience of suffering (or good) and the will of God. Christ is the typical example, in that the Chosen One is arrested, beaten, shamefully mocked and brutally put to death on the cross, and yet He is the very beloved treasure of His Father. There are no signs of His value in His quiet and humble life or in His willing suffering and death, yet to whom else has God said, "You are My Son, today I have begotten You" (Heb 1:5)? Only faith sees that the crucified man is the beloved Son and dearest treasure of His Father. • Lord, teach us to see our suffering and understand its meaning through the lens of the suffering of Christ, Your beloved Son. If He so suffered and could also be and remain the Beloved of God, so also may we suffer without fear that You have forfeited divine grace toward us. Amen.

JOB—NOTE ON 34:1–9 As young Elihu begins his second speech, he directs his first words toward Job's friends, doing so in a manner that sounds boastful and haughty, possibly detracting from the reception his message receives. In our youth, we may at times speak in a manner that is offensive to others, but as with Elihu, God can use our imperfect efforts to teach important truths.

JOB—NOTE ON 34:1 *Then Elihu answered*. Indication that an argument is being continued. Elihu's second speech follows, continuing until v 37.

JOB—NOTE ON 34:2 *wise men*. Elihu addresses the three friends, speaking ironically, for he considers himself to be wiser than they. *you who know*. More irony. Elihu considers himself the teacher. Because of his boastful manner, Elihu's reputation has suffered. He is, however, a young man of some wisdom, and he offers helpful counsel to Job, showing new ways to look at his suffering and stressing God's persistent love and mercy toward His people.

JOB—NOTE ON 34:3 *ear tests words … palate tastes food*. Ear judges between true and false, even as the mouth judges between good and bad. Elihu claims a superior ability to test words.

JOB—NOTE ON 34:4 *choose … know*. For his listeners' benefit, Elihu announces his intention to analyze Job's claims.

JOB—NOTE ON 34:5 *For*. Links v 4 to Job's claims, explaining why they must be looked into. Elihu summarizes the heart of Job's complaints. *in the*

right. Cf 9:15, 20. Job has claimed to be innocent of any overt wrongdoing. *my right*. Job has claimed that his right to justice has been denied.
JOB—NOTE ON 34:6 *I am counted a liar*. Job also has claimed that he is considered a liar, that onlookers conclude from his dire circumstances that he cannot be innocent. *my wound*. Lit, "my arrow." Poetically, the instrument for wounding stands for the wound it caused. Cf 6:4; 16:12. Job's wound is deeper than his external injuries.
JOB—NOTE ON 34:7 *drinks up scoffing*. Elihu berates Job for his capacity to scoff commonly held beliefs, doing so as easily as one might drink water. *scoffing*. Job's scorn of moral truth.
JOB—NOTE ON 34:8 *evildoers … wicked men?* Because of Job's insistence of innocence (v 5), Elihu places him in the company of overt evildoers. A man of God does not walk in such company.
JOB—NOTE ON 34:9 *he has said*. Not a known quote of Job but Elihu's representation of Job's opinion. *profits a man nothing*. Job has lamented that nothing is to be gained by being on good terms with God. Elihu sees this as scoffing God. Cf 9:22–24, where Job states that disaster and calamity befall both the blameless and the wicked.
JOB—NOTE ON 34:10 *Therefore*. Introduces Elihu's opinion in contrast to Job's in v 9. *men of understanding*. Lit, "men of heart," the heart being the seat of intelligence in Hbr thought. Continuation of the irony in v 2. *far be it*. Same term as in Gn 18:25, introducing an emphatic negative statement (e.g., "God would never do such a thing!"). *wrong*. To Elihu's way of thinking, Job's conviction in v 9 comes close to charging God with wrongdoing (12:4–6; 24:1–12) and is nothing short of wickedness.
JOB—NOTE ON 34:11 *according to the work of a man he will repay him*. Elihu states his understanding of divine justice: God will pay back people according to what they have done, good for good and evil for evil. This general principle, found frequently in OT Wisdom Literature and in NT descriptions of the final judgment, is correctly understood only in light of the scriptural truths that doing evil is the cause of a person's damnation (Rm 6:23) and that doing good is the result and evidence—never the cause—of a person's salvation by grace, for Christ's sake, through faith (Eph 2:8–10; Heb 11:6).
JOB—NOTE ON 34:12 Elihu assumes the role of God's defender against the position taken by Job and summarized in v 9.

JOB—NOTE ON 34:13 *Who gave Him charge*. Rhetorical question anticipating the response "no one." God's power and authority are derived from Himself, and He reports to no one. Elihu supports his statement in v 12 by zealously defending God's glory.
JOB—NOTE ON 34:14–15 *His spirit and His breath*. Divine breath and the human spirit are related (Gn 2:7). *flesh*. All living things, as in 12:10 and 28:21. God demonstrates His grace every moment by granting life and breath to humankind. When He withdraws His breath, human beings return to dust (Ec 12:7). A warning to Job of the danger of challenging God—to do so is to risk one's life.
JOB—NOTE ON 34:16 *hear this*. Hbr is singular. Elihu speaks directly to Job, intent on correcting Job's attitude regarding God's justice. He believes his point should be obvious to anyone, belittling Job.
JOB—NOTE ON 34:17 *justice govern?* In ancient thought, there was no separation of power in government. Justice and governing power were ideally united in the ruler. The word for "govern" can also be translated as "bind up," as in Hos 6:1, where it speaks of bandaging wounds (cf Ps 147:2–3). God cannot be thought of as hating justice.
JOB—NOTE ON 34:18 *Worthless one*. Most depraved and despicable of society, the opposite of a king (except when the king governs unjustly). God holds accountable such kings and nobles. Cf Dt 13:13–14.
JOB—NOTE ON 34:19 *princes … rich … poor*. All people, from the wealthy upper class to the powerless, depend on God for their existence and are accountable to Him for their conduct. *all the work of His hands?* The reason why all are treated alike.
JOB—NOTE ON 34:20 *In a moment they die*. God's impartiality is shown in the way the great and small alike die, esp when they do not expect it. *shaken and pass away*. OT elsewhere speaks of the shaking back and forth of mountains (Ps 18:7) or the sea (Jer 5:22). Although the rich and powerful are seen to be the most stable, they are as vulnerable as the poor to sudden catastrophe. *by no human hand*. Idiom suggesting that death happens effortlessly, as with the flick of a finger. Death's suddenness is seen as evidence of God's involvement. The manner in which God rules the world proves He is righteous and mighty. His justice is not thwarted by the mightiest of the mighty, nor is it bent in favor of the richest of the rich. While we often view what happens to us and around us from the much smaller perspective of our own lives and times, the proper picture of God's

rule is much larger. He has greater things in mind for us that diminish present circumstances.
JOB—NOTE ON 34:21 *His eyes*. God is able to hold people accountable because He sees every person's behavior (24:23). He sees every misstep and keeps a record of human faults. Cf Ps 1:6.
JOB—NOTE ON 34:22 *gloom or deep darkness*. Cf 3:7; Ps 139:11–12; Jer 23:24. God's eyes penetrate the cover of darkness sought by evildoers.
JOB—NOTE ON 34:23 *go before God*. Job had asked for an opportunity to face God, as in 9:32 and 24:1. God has no need for additional opportunity to examine a human. He is too exalted to be asked to give an accounting of His rule.
JOB—NOTE ON 34:24 *without investigation*. No further investigation is necessary, even for the mighty. God knows how they act and He responds as necessary, deposing powerful rulers and giving their positions to others.
JOB—NOTE ON 34:25 *overturns*. God takes away power and authority. *in the night*. God acts when least expected.
JOB—NOTE ON 34:26 *strikes*. Lit, "to clap hands" in anger (Nu 24:10; Ezk 21:17) or "to beat one's thighs" in mourning (Jer 31:19), expressions describing actions that cause shame. *in a place for all to see*. While the wickedness of the powerful is often clandestine, punishment of the powerful brings shame on them in the public square.
JOB—NOTE ON 34:27 *turned aside*. Their behavior is serious and their punishment public because their rejection was deliberate, not following or rightly regarding God's laws and teachings.
JOB—NOTE ON 34:28 *cry of the poor*. God sides with the poor. The oppressive manner of the evildoers arouses God's anger. In this way, evildoers effectively bring about their own punishment.
JOB—NOTE ON 34:29 *When He is quiet*. Elihu intends to answer Job's complaint about God's silence. God may allow affairs on earth to take their ordinary course for a time, but He also sets things right in His time. *When He hides His face*. At times, God seems to withdraw from a nation or an individual entirely.
JOB—NOTE ON 34:30 *should not reign*. Continues the thought begun in v 28. In due time, God no longer permits godless rulers to remain in power and to do harm to the people in their care. God's slowness to act does not mean that He will be unjust.

JOB—NOTE ON 34:31 *will not offend any more*. Elihu intends in an indirect manner to put repentant words into Job's mouth, beginning with a confession borne out of affliction.
JOB—NOTE ON 34:32 *teach me*. Second element of repentance, willingness to learn from God. *do it no more?* A third element of repentance, a resolve not to continue in sin.
JOB—NOTE ON 34:33 *repayment to suit you*. Job has demanded that God prove his innocence. Elihu suggests to Job that it is foolish for him to expect God to respond on such terms. *you must choose, and not I*. Elihu cannot do the right thing for Job. *declare*. Perhaps Elihu pauses here to await response from Job. Since Job does not answer, Elihu goes on.
JOB—NOTE ON 34:34 *Men of understanding*. Cf v 10. Elihu boldly states that anyone with any understanding will recognize the truth of what he has said versus what Job has spoken.
JOB—NOTE ON 34:35 *without knowledge*. Eliphaz accused Job of "windy knowledge" (15:2). *without insight*. Job's complaints against God and his avowal of innocence are senseless.
JOB—NOTE ON 34:36 *tried to the end*. Elihu gets caught up in emotion and calls down judgment on Job for his stubbornness. *answers*. By his silence, Job holds fast to earlier speeches, the kind of answers only an evil person would give.
JOB—NOTE ON 34:37 *rebellion*. Job's attitude and words have fostered unbelief among the people, adding to his offense. *claps*. May refer to a gesture that incites rebellion, such as the modern gesture of thumbing one's nose. See p 1276.
JOB—NOTE ON **ch 34** Elihu maintains that when Job, a mere human, dictates to God how or when He must act, Job must be charged with rebellion. Questioning God's actions in our lives or world may lead to serious sin. But God is patient with us, even as He was with Job. • Gracious Lord, forgive our rebelliousness and impatience, and strengthen our faith that we may truly accept Your will for our lives. Amen.
JOB—NOTE ON 35:1 *answered*. Elihu's third speech follows, continuing until v 16.
JOB—NOTE ON 35:2 *this*. Seemingly contradictory statement and questions made by Job, which Elihu will now address. *right*. Word commonly used by Job in his claim to be "right, innocent, not guilty of wrongdoing." See note, v 3.

JOB—NOTE ON 35:3 *How am I better off*. Second point made by Job, that it apparently makes no difference to God whether one sins or does not sin. Elihu maintains that it is inconsistent to expect vindication because of innocence and at the same time maintain that God does not care how a person acts. Elihu here overreacts and fails to allow Job to express his feelings, as did the psalmist in Ps 42; 43.
JOB—NOTE ON 35:4 *friends*. Those who share Job's ideas, some of whom are probably present and listening to Elihu's speech. But Job is foremost on his mind, and Elihu is confident that he will be able to help him.
JOB—NOTE ON 35:5 *heavens*. Like Zophar in 11:7–8, Eliphaz in 22:12, and even Job in 9:8–9, and in the spirit of Ps 8:3, Elihu appeals to creation beyond the reach of human beings to support his answer that follows.
JOB—NOTE ON 35:6 *accomplish against Him … do to Him?* Elihu asserts that God is so far above people that there is nothing, good or bad, that they can do to affect His essential nature.
JOB—NOTE ON 35:7 *give to Him … receive from your hand?* While moral behavior has consequences on earth, it cannot be used to compel or persuade God.
JOB—NOTE ON 35:8 *wickedness … righteousness*. Elihu grants that moral behavior works to the good or ill of others and therefore has significance, but it does not affect the heavenly realm.
JOB—NOTE ON 35:9 *people cry out*. Job has charged that God lets oppressions go unrequited and that His silence only serves to encourage the wicked (24:1–12).
JOB—NOTE ON 35:10 *none says*. Elihu charges that while people like Job pray for help, they often are so turned in on themselves and their troubles that they fail fully to trust the justice and goodness of their Maker and turn to Him. *gives songs in the night*. Elihu argues that the cries of the people often are not properly focused into earnest petitions for God's help, which would enable them to sing even in darkest times. In OT times, and still today, God's people sustain themselves by singing psalms (cf Ps 30:4–5; 143:7–10), expressing their disappointment in a broken world, and fostering hope that God will deliver them.
JOB—NOTE ON 35:11 *teaches us more*. In 12:7–8, Job said that the beasts and birds could teach his friends. Here, Elihu states that there is more to be learned by turning to God Himself.

JOB—NOTE ON 35:12 *they*. "People" of v 9. They are "evil men" because of their failure to call upon God, who has so much help to give.
JOB—NOTE ON 35:13 *does not hear an empty cry*. According to Elihu, the emptiness of the cry can cause God not to answer. Cries addressed to no one are fruitless.
JOB—NOTE ON 35:14 *How much less*. Serious blow to Job. Elihu does not give gentle advice. If God does not hear the cries of the oppressed when they are mistakenly directed, it is even less likely that He will hear the cries of Job, who is so mistaken in his ideas and attitude.
JOB—NOTE ON 35:15 *He does not take much note of transgression*. Cf v 3. Job was convinced that God judges independently of people's conduct. This adds another reason why God does not hear his cries. Job's false notions number him with the "pride of evil men" in v 12.
JOB—NOTE ON 35:16 *empty talk*. Lit, "wind," "whiff of air." Job's many words lack substance.
JOB—NOTE ON **ch 35** Elihu believes that Job has added unbelief to his sin by complaining so bitterly. In doing so, Elihu fails to consider some understandable human emotion on Job's part. Not all lamenting represents unbelief. Yet our own complaints about the conditions of our lives, though humanly understandable, can betray a weakness of faith. God may use affliction to strengthen our faith and to refocus our lives on the affliction endured by His Son for our salvation. • Gracious Lord, grant that the varying circumstances of our lives will always serve to strengthen us in faith and life. Amen.
JOB—NOTE ON 36:1 *continued*. Elihu's tone becomes more compassionate, believing that he still has important wisdom from God to share with whoever is listening. Elihu's fourth and final speech continues until 37:24.
JOB—NOTE ON 36:2 *Bear with me*. Elihu remains confident that he can convince his audience if they will be patient. *on God's behalf*. Elihu intends to strengthen the case for God's goodness and justice.
JOB—NOTE ON 36:3 *knowledge from afar*. Since the source of knowledge determines its validity, Elihu claims that he can be trusted because his knowledge comes from where God dwells (i.e., his words are inspired). *ascribe righteousness*. To show that someone is just or fair.
JOB—NOTE ON 36:4 *one*. Elihu, totally confident in his ability to communicate. *perfect in knowledge*. Also used in 37:16 with reference to

God, but with different Hbr usage. Same Hbr word for "perfect" is used in 1:1; 1:8; and 2:3 to characterize Job. Here, Elihu claims knowledge of speech that is perfect or complete, i.e., beyond reproof or rebuttal.

JOB—NOTE ON 36:5 *strength of understanding*. Lit, "strength of heart." See note, 34:10. God punishes the wicked and defends the just without fail.

JOB—NOTE ON 36:6 *wicked … afflicted*. In response to Job's rhetorical question (21:7), Elihu asserts that God does deliver justice to the afflicted by judging the wicked and terminating their successes.

JOB—NOTE ON 36:7–9 *the righteous*. Those who are faithful to God in due time are exalted like kings, as in the story of Joseph (Gn 37; 39–50). *they*. The "righteous" from v 7 can fall victim to pride when elevated to important positions and then stray from the right way. *bound in chains*. Chains used for captives kept them from escaping as in Na 3:10. *cords of affliction*. Affliction makes those who err conscious that they are bound in sins. *declares to them their work*. Elevation to important positions may make them proud and arrogant.

JOB—NOTE ON 36:10 *opens their ears*. God makes them pay attention. *to instruction*. Lit, "to His warning." God continues to work with them though they have fallen into sin, causing them to accept obediently what is being taught, as in Is 50:4–5. *return*. Repent and turn away from evildoing. See note, 22:23. God uses affliction to cause the righteous who have sinned to return to a faithful way of life.

JOB—NOTE ON 36:11 *listen*. One of two possible responses to affliction. The first is to recognize God speaking through affliction, submit to His instruction, and experience a pleasant change in one's life. See note, v 12 for the second response. *complete their days*. They will live a full and long life. *prosperity … pleasantness*. From Hbr words similar in meaning: "happiness," "success," "well-being" (i.e., "the greatest happiness").

JOB—NOTE ON 36:12 *perish by the sword*. Second of two possible responses to affliction by the righteous who have fallen into sin. See note, v 11. If those who suffer do not obey God's instruction through affliction, they will meet with a premature end. *die without knowledge*. Reason for their early death. Since they have rejected God, He has withdrawn His breath (34:14), and they perish.

JOB—NOTE ON 36:13 *godless in heart*. Those who do not believe and trust in God (cf 8:13). *cherish anger*. They become obstinate and stay angry at their circumstances and at God. *binds them*. Describes the extent of the

conditions God has brought upon them. Elihu understands that the basic spiritual need of people stems from their hardness of heart—including their refusal to yield to God, to cry out to Him in distress (Ps 107:13), or to hear His voice in suffering.

JOB—NOTE ON 36:14 *cult prostitutes*. Lit, "among the male prostitutes." Speaks of dying in shame. Alludes to the short lives of temple prostitutes of the Canaanite religions.

JOB—NOTE ON 36:15 Summary statement by Elihu as he teaches Job and his friends how God uses affliction and adversity to deliver the righteous when they have fallen into sin. See p 837.

JOB—NOTE ON 36:16 *allured*. Same verb as in 2:3, where God says that Satan "incited" Him against His servant Job. Elihu thinks there is still hope for Job. God, with tender compassion, delivers His people (Hos 2:14). *out of distress*. Lit, "from the jaws of distress." God is endeavoring to pull Job away from even greater sorrow. *a broad place*. In Hbr thought, broad, open spaces symbolized deliverance or prosperity, while cramped, narrow places symbolized distress and oppression. *table was full of fatness*. Elihu wants Job to believe that God intends to restore him to prosperity with a large household and a table piled high with rich food.

JOB—NOTE ON 36:17 *you*. Job is full of judgment, not prosperity. *judgment on the wicked*. Judgment rightly due to wicked people.

JOB—NOTE ON 36:18 *wrath … scoffing*. Job's anger could interfere with God's instruction and returning to Him. *ransom*. Hbr *kopher*, lit, "covering," "atonement," used to end trouble (Yom Kippur, "day of atonement"). Word can be used in the context of a bribe (1Sm 12:3). Elihu wants Job to return to God without resentment. See "redeem," p 843.

JOB—NOTE ON 36:19 *cry for help … force of your strength?* Rhetorical question. Elihu warns Job that none of his own resources will help him escape his afflictions brought about by his sin.

JOB—NOTE ON 36:20 *long for the night*. Job often ends his speeches by speaking of his death, which is associated with darkness (7:21; 10:18–22; 17:13–16). Elihu encourages Job not to look for escape in premature death but to learn from his suffering. *vanish*. Sudden, quiet departure in death.

JOB—NOTE ON 36:21 *this you have chosen*. Elihu is fearful that Job has already made the wrong choice by seeking to avoid his affliction rather than learning from it.

JOB—NOTE ON 36:22 *God is exalted*. Important part of God's teaching is the use of discipline.
JOB—NOTE ON 36:23 *prescribed for Him*. Rhetorical questions. No one has the right to tell God how to act, so no one can accuse Him of failing to act in the right way.
JOB—NOTE ON 36:24 *Remember to extol*. People are to praise God, not challenge Him. *men have sung*. Luth: "When sadness comes to you and threatens to gain the upper hand, then say: Come, I must play our Lord Christ a song on the organ (be it the *Te Deum laudamus* or the *Benedictus*); for Scripture teaches me that He loves to hear joyful song and stringed instruments. And strike the keys with a will, and sing out until the thoughts disappear, as David and Elisha (1Sam. 16:23; 2 Kings 3:15) did. If the devil returns and suggests cares or sad thoughts, then defend yourself with a will and say: Get out, devil, I must now sing and play to my Lord Christ" (*WLS* § 3105).
JOB—NOTE ON 36:25 *it*. God's power displayed in creation.
JOB—NOTE ON 36:26 *know Him not … unsearchable*. We cannot fully know God's greatness or fathom His age in human years.
JOB—NOTE ON 36:27–38:1 Although Scripture does not tell us specifically what was happening as Elihu spoke, the context suggests that there was a storm brewing and then breaking loose during this time, which culminated in the Lord's appearance in the whirlwind.
JOB—NOTE ON 36:27 *draws up the drops of water*. Elihu demonstrates a good understanding of the water cycle. Cf Ec 1:7.
JOB—NOTE ON 36:28 *drop on mankind*. "Man" (Hbr *'adam*) is related to Hbr word for "earth" (*'adamah*). As the earth receives its rain, so also does mankind.
JOB—NOTE ON 36:29 *Can anyone understand*. Grammar anticipates a negative answer. *pavilion?* In 27:18, the same Hbr word refers to the hut of a watchman. Here, it refers to God's abode in heaven.
JOB—NOTE ON 36:30 *covers the roots of the sea*. Lightning's brightness reveals even the depths of the sea.
JOB—NOTE ON 36:31 *by these He judges*. Elihu believes the water cycle and storms are under God's control, used by Him not only to provide food in abundance but also to discipline the peoples of the earth.
JOB—NOTE ON 36:32 *covers His hands with the lightning*. Lit, "upon hands He covers light." God takes hold of lightning like a tool. Despite its

zigzag route, lightning follows God's command. "O Thou strong and almighty God, I hear Thy voice in the clouds; I see Thy lightnings flash, and listen to the roar and noise of Thy thunder. Strong is Thine arm and great Thy might; if Thou choosest, Thou canst in the twinkling of an eye dash me and all men, together with all creatures, to the ground. But, O Lord, Lord, remember Thy tender mercies and Thy loving-kindness; for they have been ever of old. Remember not the sins of my youth nor my transgressions; according to Thy mercy remember Thou me for Thy goodness' sake. Rebuke me not in Thine anger, neither chasten me in Thy hot displeasure" (Starck, p 467).

JOB—NOTE ON 36:33 *cattle also declare*. Cattle seem to know when a storm is coming.

JOB—NOTE ON **ch 36** Elihu counsels Job that the Lord uses affliction not just for our punishment but also for our deliverance. Allow affliction to open your ears (v 15b) to learn the Lord's purposes, and to open your mouth in praises (v 24). Praise Christ most highly, who delivers you from evil by His agony and bloody sweat. • O Lord, lay Your hands on the cross, and use that tool for my instruction and deliverance. Amen.

JOB—NOTE ON **Ch 37** Elihu sees storms as acts of God that display His lordship. Fear of an approaching storm can produce a wildly beating heart. Throughout this section, Elihu reveals an impressive understanding of atmospheric conditions and their effects.

JOB—NOTE ON 37:2 *Keep listening*. Addressed to Job and his friends. *His voice*. Cf 28:26; Ps 29. *rumbling*. In Is 31:4, the verb form of this word is used of the growling of a lion. Job has been disturbed by God's activity in his life. Elihu is telling Job that God's presence will naturally unsettle him.

JOB—NOTE ON 37:3 *it*. Lightning. *corners*. Lit, "fringes," "borders," as of a carpet. The earth is described like a carpet with four corners.

JOB—NOTE ON 37:4 *After it*. Elihu recognizes the cause and effect of lightning and thunder.

JOB—NOTE ON 37:5 *cannot comprehend*. Summary statement pertaining not only to storms but also to the following verses, which speak of God's wondrous power.

JOB—NOTE ON 37:7 *seals up the hand*. Human activity is affected by the weather, which can halt planting and harvest.

JOB—NOTE ON 37:9 *chamber*. Ancients believed various winds were stored in chambers in heaven; when God willed, He opened the doors of the

appropriate chamber. *the scattering winds*. Winds from the north that brought the cold, driving rain.
JOB—NOTE ON 37:10 *breath of God ice*. Metaphor for a chilling wind. *frozen fast*. Words used of molten metal becoming a solid mass.
JOB—NOTE ON 37:11 *loads*. Corresponding noun form in Is 1:14 is translated "burden." *moisture*. Hbr word occurs only here. Some translators suggest it means "hail."
JOB—NOTE ON 37:12 *around and around*. Brings to mind cloud action in a tornado. *accomplish all*. Despite technological advances, people remain at the mercy of the weather, but it is not out of control. The clouds are carrying out God's commands.
JOB—NOTE ON 37:13 *correction*. Lit, "whip"; symbol of punishment. *His land*. Through the weather, God attends to the needs of His chosen people. *causes it to happen*. According to Elihu, rain can be violent or gentle, scarce or overabundant, but never without purpose.
JOB—NOTE ON 37:14 *Hear this*. Elihu does not want this teaching moment to pass for Job. *stop and consider*. He is confident that if Job would just pause a moment and pay attention, Job would see that his position has been foolish.
JOB—NOTE ON 37:15–20 *Do you know*. First of five rhetorical questions (vv 15, 16–17, 18, 20a, 20b). Of course, Job does not know how God actually commands clouds and lightning.
JOB—NOTE ON 37:16 *balancings*. See ESV note. Hbr word occurs only here in the OT.
JOB—NOTE ON 37:17 When the sirocco blows off the desert, life stands still, and every creature seeks shade. Clothing becomes unbearably hot.
JOB—NOTE ON 37:18 *cast metal mirror?* Mirrors were made of polished bronze. Ancients thought of the sky as a hard dome, a firmament, an "expanse" (see note, Gn 1:6). When the sirocco blows, the sky looks as though it has been poured out like a molten liquid, hard and unbreakable, giving no rain.
JOB—NOTE ON 37:19 *Teach us*. "Cause us to know." Elihu uses sarcasm, suggesting Job must have a level of enlightenment not possessed by those around him, who are speechless before such a majestic and powerful Creator. Job had called for an audience with God (31:35).
JOB—NOTE ON 37:20 *I would speak?* Elihu indicates that he would never assume to speak directly to God (cf Ex 20:18–19). *Did a man ever wish*.

Elihu's final rhetorical question. To presume to speak directly to God would be tantamount to a death wish.
JOB—NOTE ON 37:21 *no one looks*. The sky becomes impossible to look at when the wind first sweeps the clouds aside and the sun breaks through.
JOB—NOTE ON 37:22 *Out of the north*. From the same direction as the rains come. Cf Ps 48:2. Elihu prepares Job for the coming storm in which God will appear (chs 38–41). *golden splendor*. When sunlight plays on the clouds, the colors are majestic, reminding us of God's majesty.
JOB—NOTE ON 37:23 *find*. Job speaks of finding God in 23:3. Elihu states that God is beyond such reach. *power; justice*. These two qualities, often separated on earth, are inseparable in God (34:17). *abundant righteousness*. Result of power and justice in perfect combination.
JOB—NOTE ON 37:24 *fear*. Reverence and trust (1:1; 28:28). Elihu returns to the most important theme of wisdom (see pp 779–82).
JOB—NOTE ON **ch 37** The awesome power of a storm reminds us how truly small we are. Elihu tells Job to abandon obstinacy and, with proper fear and trust, to submit to God as his Lord, thereby preparing Job for God's visit in the whirlwind (38:1). All of the days of our lives are spent in such preparation. Though we may become distracted by many things in this life, both bane and blessing, God prepares us for His visitation, when all that will matter will be our confidence in His grace through Jesus Christ, our Lord. • Gracious God, prepare me for Your appearing. Amen.
JOB—NOTE ON 38:1 *the* LORD. Hbr *yahweh* is used as in the opening chapters. By this name, God revealed Himself to Moses as the Savior and as the God who established a gracious covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Ex 3:15). *answered*. Theophany. See p 39. *whirlwind*. Mighty tornadolike tempest threatens Job with destruction, in marked contrast to the "still small voice" that came to Elisha (1Ki 19:12). God often appeared in storms (Ex 19:16; 2Ki 2:1; Ps 18:12–14; Zec 9:14). The Lord comes to Job as Job had requested (23:3–5), answering Job's blustery and windy words (16:3). Earlier, Job stated that if the Lord came to him in a whirlwind, He would crush Job (9:17). Instead of crushing him, the Lord speaks with him as Job had hoped (23:6–7) and as Elihu had assured him (33:14–17). His confrontation is a loving, gracious response to Job's many questions. *said*. Instead of answering Job's specific questions, the Lord floods Job with further questions to demonstrate His creative power and continuing presence in the midst of the ambiguities of this life.

JOB—NOTE ON 38:2 *darkens counsel*. Job's questions, which he thought would teach the Lord, were corrupted by his ignorance of the Lord's inscrutable ways (cf Ac 2:23; Rm 11:31–33). Job did not just cloud the issue; he spoke out of ignorance. Elihu warned Job that no mortal could stand before the Lord in a legal battle (34:23). Yet the Lord graciously and caringly restrains judgment. God's theme throughout the following two speeches is that His design of creation needed no counsel or cooperation by humanity.

JOB—NOTE ON 38:3 *Dress for action*. See ESV note. To free the legs for running, people would gird their loins by binding their flowing garments around their waists. Now is the time for Job to "roll up his sleeves" and prepare himself for verbal combat and to talk like God—if he dares.

JOB—NOTE ON 38:4 *laid the foundation*. The Lord speaks of creation in terms of building a house with plans (v 5) that are known to the Architect of the universe, but not to the laborers in the building. The Lord echoes Eliphaz's sarcastic comment about Job being born "before the hills" (15:7). With sarcastic questions, the Lord shows Job how little he knows. All is under His control, as Job had acknowledged earlier (12:13). *understanding*. Comes only from the One who is Wisdom Himself, the Word who was with God and who was God (Jn 1:1) at creation.

JOB—NOTE ON 38:7 *morning stars sang together*. Chem: "He adds this regard to the angels" (*LTh* 1:165). Angels sang festively at creation. They rejoiced again at re-creation, which began at the incarnation of Jesus and culminated in Christ's resurrection and ascension. There was celestial joy at the beginning of time, and there will be joy at the end of the world (Rv 19:1–3). The preeminent Morning Star is Jesus Himself (Rv 22:16). Yet Job was unaware of these heavenly hosts. *sons of God*. See note, 1:6.

JOB—NOTE ON 38:8 *when it burst out from the womb*. Personifies creation of the seas as a birthing event. The infant waters gush into the swaddling cloths of the clouds (v 9). Many in the ancient Near East thought of water as an evil element, but it is a gracious gift from God, always under His caring dominion and delimitation (vv 10–11). Babylonian mythology described the creation as the destruction of a monster, Tiamat, whose body was used to construct the world.

JOB—NOTE ON 38:13 *skirts of the earth*. Edges of daylight—dusk and dawn—are portrayed as folds of a tablecloth or blanket, under which evil activities occur. *shaken*. As the sun rises, the wicked are shaken out of the

dark folds of their sinful practices and exposed by the bright light of God's justice (cf Jn 3:19–21).

JOB—NOTE ON 38:14 Once a seal is pressed into the clay, the image is clear. See note, Jer 32:10. So also once the sunlight begins to brighten the eastern skies, the beautiful contours of creation take on greater clarity and details. Earth's colors become visible in the Lord's sunlight, as the texture of a garment becomes clear in daylight.

JOB—NOTE ON 38:15 *uplifted arm*. Although the wicked literally raise their arms in violence, the Lord hampers them in His own ways. In the very midst of their evil acts, God has the power to intervene mercifully, as in the case of Abimelech (Gn 20:6) and Abraham (Gn 22:12).

JOB—NOTE ON 38:16 The ocean's depth continues to be explored today. Only God knows the full, extravagant beauty and oddities of nature.

JOB—NOTE ON 38:17 The Lord is refuting Job's earlier assertions about Sheol (10:21–22; 14:13–14; 17:13–16; see p 792). Earlier, Job and Zophar had spoken about death and the place of the dead as though they understood it (7:9; 11:8; 26:5–6; cf 33:18), but now such audacity is silenced. *death … deep darkness?* Hbr *maweth … tsalmaweth*; wordplay. Deepest depths are easily within the Lord's providential care.

JOB—NOTE ON 38:19 *dwelling*. At creation, the Lord set the limits of light and darkness by separating them into their own "areas" (Gn 1:4). In this verse, they are personified as residents of two distinct regions, completely unknown to Job and unable to be controlled by him (v 20).

JOB—NOTE ON 38:21 Sarcasm. A ridiculous suggestion to silence Job's impudence. Job was not very old in terms of the age of the rest of creation, perhaps 70, but he spoke as though he knew things about the very act of creation itself. There is no biblical evidence that Job or others existed as spirits before birth.

JOB—NOTE ON 38:22–25 Rain is a blessing (Dt 28:12). From the Lord's celestial arsenal, natural elements become weapons of mass destruction. On several occasions, the Lord used the weather to help His people, particularly in times of battle (cf Ex 9:18–26; Jsh 10:11; Is 30:30–32; Jer 10:13; Ezk 13:11, 13; 38:22). So the Lord continues providentially to supervise every aspect of the world and individual lives.

JOB—NOTE ON 38:28–30 The Lord implies that He alone is the cause of the natural world. *father*. The Lord not only creates but also cares for His

creation, just as a good earthly father begets, nurtures, and cares for his family.

JOB—NOTE ON 38:29 Rather than being the work of mythical (and pagan) deities, dew, frost, rain, and snow are products of the Lord's continuing preservation of the world.

JOB—NOTE ON 38:31 *Pleiades … Orion?* Well known constellations. Pleiades is sometimes popularly called "the Seven Sisters." The stars of constellations were thought to be held together by chains. The ancients used constellations as celestial timekeepers and guides, marking the arrival of the fall and winter seasons (9:9). Already by 4000 BC, the Pleiades announced the vernal equinox. Today, they are still recognized for their seasonal significance.

JOB—NOTE ON 38:32 *Mazzaroth*. Difficult Hbr term; transliterated here. Refers to a star or a constellation (*Mazzaloth* in 2Ki 23:5) that appeared only at certain times of the year as part of a zodiacal sign. *Bear*. Lit, "the lion." Constellation Ursa Major, "Big Bear," contains the Big Dipper, the stars of which are often called "children." These star clusters are all under God's providential dominion.

JOB—NOTE ON 38:33 *rule*. Constellations' patterns of appearances have always provided guidance for human beings, particularly for ancient astronomers. According to the Lord's own divine creation (Gn 1:14), they were created "to rule the day and … rule the night" (Gn 1:16).

JOB—NOTE ON 38:37 *waterskins of the heavens*. Hides of animals were used as containers for liquids, particularly for water and wine. Although God sends rain on all people (Mt 5:45), the rain does not always water the same area. The Lord is precise in ordering where rain lands and what it waters.

JOB—NOTE ON 38:39 *lion*. The Lord now turns to the kingdom of wild animals. Asian lions, smaller and more aggressive than African lions, once roamed throughout southeastern Europe, the Near East, North Africa, and into India. The Lord cared for them, providing instinctual direction (v 40) and unique abilities.

JOB—NOTE ON 38:41 Young ravens are similarly cared for by the Lord. The psalmist reminds us, "The eyes of all look to You, and … You satisfy the desire of every living thing" (Ps 145:15–16).

JOB—NOTE ON 39:1–4 *mountain goats*. Perhaps ibex, which live on extremely steep cliffs even today in Israel. Known to give birth speedily

and without complications. A newborn kid is able to walk within a day and to run and jump within 48 hours. The Lord has established the orderly times for all these nearly miraculous events, in the complete ignorance of human beings.

JOB—NOTE ON 39:6 *salt land*. Asiatic wild donkeys can live where vegetation and water are very scarce and where no other large animal could be supported. Researchers have observed that the wild donkey can live without water longer than any other animal in the horse family. These donkeys were unperturbed by the fear of being domesticated (v 7). They lived in relative safety on the open salt flats near the Salt Sea, where they could see humans from a great distance.

JOB—NOTE ON 39:9 *wild ox*. Hbr uncertain. Suggests an enormous beast with great horns, probably a kind of bison. Word is sometimes translated "unicorn" (KJV), but with no justification; word implies the animal had two large horns. Ancient rulers hunted wild buffalo; their extraordinary strength was proverbial (Nu 24:8). Undomesticated animals in this section of God's speech are still cared for by the Lord Himself.

JOB—NOTE ON 39:13–18 This description of the ostrich provides a comic shift.

JOB—NOTE ON 39:13 *plumage of love?* See ESV note. *love?* Hbr *chasidah* ; can be translated as "gracious"; i.e., the ostrich's wings are graceful, yet lack an actual functional purpose for flight.

JOB—NOTE ON 39:16 *deals cruelly*. Ostriches often clumsily trample on their own nests and break their own eggs. This gave rise to the folk saying "cruel as ostriches." Yet the ostrich is capable of great speed when running and is respected for that fact (v 18). Not a bird for flight, the ostrich still is able to laugh at horses (v 18).

JOB—NOTE ON 39:19 *horse*. Only domesticated animal in this list. Horses, employed chiefly in warfare, were imported from the steppes of Central Asia, first appearing in Mesopotamia and Egypt around 2000 BC. Horses were valued for their speed, strength, and aggressiveness. Thus, in Job's time, horses were seen as awesome wonder-animals.

JOB—NOTE ON 39:21 Battle imagery. Mighty chargers often brought terror to warriors who were used to fighting on foot. Spirited steeds of beauty, strength, and speed were nearly fearless; they reflected a superior confidence in their own Creator.

JOB—NOTE ON 39:24 *swallows the ground*. Distances were quickly diminished as the horses sped across the open plains.
JOB—NOTE ON 39:26 *hawk*. Large bird of prey, perhaps a falcon (Lv 11:16 and Dt 14:15 are the only other places where the word is used). These birds follow the thermal updrafts as they effortlessly soar above the earth. They picture humanity's desire for freedom in their awesome ability for unfettered flight.
JOB—NOTE ON 39:27 *eagle*. Another bird of prey, perhaps a vulture. Eagles always locate their nests in the tops of trees or in craggy overhangs in rocky heights. In Ex 19:4, God says He carried Israel as on "eagles' wings." So Job has been carried by the Lord, despite his ignorance of God's preserving presence (2:6)
JOB—NOTE ON 38:1–40:2 In the whirlwind, Job comes face-to-face with the reality of his humanity. Although Job accused the Lord of being unfair, God responded with a mild, yet firm counteraccusation. The Lord reminded Job that He not only created the world but also continues to care for it. We, too, question God and wonder whether He is actually in charge of the daily events of our lives. Coming face-to-face with our Creator brings us to our knees. Yet the fearsome face of the Creator also smiles on Job and shows him mercy. • Thank You, Lord, for answering us face-to-face in the person of Your Son. His life, death, and resurrection give us answers to our deepest questions. Your love is awesome. Amen.
JOB—NOTE ON 40:4–5 In the face of God's overwhelming questions, Job remains silent. *I am … small*. He is humbled by the Lord's questions, just as he was made small by the afflictions of his life. Job must stop himself from even responding. Earlier (6:24), he had agreed to be silent. Job seems ready to drop his case, but the Lord is not done with him.
JOB—NOTE ON 40:3–5 Like Job, we, too, may become silent before the Lord, but it is often to plan our further defense or to pout in rebellious self-righteousness. How much we miss by trying to justify our own lives! God continues to wait for us and loves us with a never-ending love, which is ours in Christ. With the hymn writer, we can break our silence and sing, • "When darkness veils His lovely face, I rest on His unchanging grace; In ev'ry high and stormy gale My anchor holds within the veil. On Christ, the solid rock, I stand; All other ground is sinking sand." Amen. (*LSB* 575:2)
JOB—NOTE ON 40:6–41:34 Second round of questions. Again illustrates Job's lack of understanding and thoughtless inquisitiveness. By describing

the most incomprehensible land and sea monsters to Job, God demonstrates His power over all things. In fact, the words about Behemoth and Leviathan hint at God's conflict with and supremacy over Satan—the most dangerous "beast" in creation.

JOB—NOTE ON 40:6 *whirlwind*. See note, 38:1.

JOB—NOTE ON 40:7 *Dress for action*. See note, 38:3.

JOB—NOTE ON 40:9 *thunder*. See note, 37:2.

JOB—NOTE ON 40:10–14 *glory and splendor*. The Lord's brilliant appearance fills the heavens (Ps 96:6; 104:1; 111:3). If Job would be God, he should also demonstrate divine ability to execute justice on the wicked (vv 11–12). Then he would be able to save himself (v 14). Otherwise, the Lord is graciously present, ruling everything justly, and willing and able to help Job in his times of greatest need.

JOB—NOTE ON 40:15 *Behemoth*. From common Hbr word for "animal" or "beast." Unique plural form used with singular verbs, "the Beast." Scholars often suggest that the animal being described is a hippopotamus, because at this point in the speech the term depicts a rather docile, gargantuan herbivore. Some see in the description an antediluvian sauropodlike dinosaur. Because of the plural form, some scholars understand the term as typological, representing the worst form of bestial behaviors and not a real animal at all. This unusual creature teaches Job how the Lord's mysterious ways are beyond human understanding.

JOB—NOTE ON 40:18 *iron*. One of the most abundant elements on earth that was known among the earliest civilizations (28:2; Gn 4:22). See note, 20:24. Mention of iron and bronze gives the sense that Behemoth is "hard as nails."

JOB—NOTE ON 40:19 *first*. Hbr expression, "the best," "the chief." Does not mean that Behemoth was the first creature that God created. *sword!* Even the Lord arms Himself before approaching.

JOB—NOTE ON 40:21 *lotus … lies*. Not the water-lily lotus, but a treelike thorny plant (*Zizyphus lotus*) that grew in swampy regions of Israel as well as in Africa. Under such large and lush vegetation, many animals would rest. Behemoth takes its place as the monarch of the marshland.

JOB—NOTE ON 40:22 *lotus trees*. Cf v 21. *willows*. Trees growing near banks of rivers and in watery places where Behemoth would rest secure.

JOB—NOTE ON 40:23 *Jordan*. The Lord connects the Israelite readers to this text by referring to a Jordanlike stream. Hippos (see note, v 15) at one

time lived in eastern Mediterranean rivers (e.g., the Orantes River). Job probably lived farther east.

JOB—NOTE ON 41:1 *Leviathan*. Hbr term; scholars debate its meaning. Many suggest it is a crocodile; others suggest it is a whale or dinosaurlike creature. The description goes beyond a literal explanation to depict something completely and monstrously evil, a force opposed to the Lord Himself. Ultimately, Leviathan represents the devil, the serpent (Gn 3) whom God defeats (cf Is 27:1). Though God may play with Leviathan (Ps 104:26), in the end, He crushes Leviathan's heads (Ps 74:14; in light of Gn 3:15). *fishhook*. In ancient times, bronze and iron hooks were used not only to catch fish but also to control wild animals and subdue prisoners (hooks were placed in their mouth [v 2] and attached to a lead rope). *press down his tongue*. Leviathan cannot be muzzled by using a cord bridling his mouth.

JOB—NOTE ON 41:3 Sarcasm. This animal will not plead his case by asking for leniency or mercy, as Job had been doing. Leviathan will remain defiant.

JOB—NOTE ON 41:5 *bird*. Sparrows and doves were considered suitable pets for children to hold and care for. Leviathan cannot be domesticated. The imagery is ludicrous.

JOB—NOTE ON 41:9 *laid low*. Bowing down in obeisance was a common custom for showing respect. Leviathan's opponents' knees buckle, and they lose hope. People cringe before Leviathan, since they have no ability to resist its horrible presence. Leviathan stands at the end of Job as a symbol of Satan's power and opposition to the Almighty. (See Jesus' words in Jn 12:31; 14:30; 16:11.)

JOB—NOTE ON 41:14 *doors of his face?* Leviathan's mouth is like a set of doors. They cannot be pried open or clamped shut (vv 1–2). Terror fills his mouth!

JOB—NOTE ON 41:18–21 *sneezings flash forth light*. Description of Leviathan is beyond that of any known animal. Some interpreters have suggested that this verse speaks of a dragon, while others see this merely as a way of developing poetic imagery in v 18. *eyelids of the dawn*. The boundary of the horizon. See note, 26:10.

JOB—NOTE ON 41:24 Leviathan cannot be killed; its heart cannot be pierced. *millstone*. Commonly made from black basalt, a fine-grained volcanic stone.

JOB—NOTE ON 41:27 *iron*. See note, 20:24.
JOB—NOTE ON 41:29 No weapon was capable of destroying this unique animal. Whether attacked by sword or spear, dart or javelin (v 26), this monster's skin is impenetrable. Stones and clubs are just as ineffective.
JOB—NOTE ON 41:30 *potsherds*. Smaller pieces of broken pottery may look similar to the scales of a reptile. *sledge*. Used for breaking grain away from stalks. Usually made up of two boards with a large rock placed on top to weigh it down, then dragged over the grain on the threshing floor to separate the kernels of grain from the stalks. As Leviathan moves over the floor of a body of water, it smoothes out the mud. Leviathan slithers on its belly (cf Gn 3:14).
JOB—NOTE ON 41:31 *the sea*. Estuarine (or saltwater) crocodiles are known to swim miles out into the ocean. When a crocodile vocalizes, the vibrations make the water bubble. Other large beasts produce similar results. The sea becomes like a bubbling apothecary's cauldron.
JOB—NOTE ON 41:34 *sons of*. In Semitic usage, such family expressions are used for describing other relations. A "brotherhood" of proud beings is meant. *pride*. In 28:8, same term is used for "proud beasts." Cf Is 14:13–14 for example of a sinfully proud ruler.
JOB—NOTE ON 40:6–41:34 Job finally recognizes his real insignificance in comparison with Leviathan's might and defiance. Today, many view defiance as a virtue, but reliance on the Lord is the only hope we, like Job, have. Though we can tame or cage most any animal today, the beasts of war, disease, and turmoil constantly break free and trample us. They overpower us and certainly remove our self-reliance. Yet God's own greatness and love for us overcomes them all. Despite the seemingly insurmountable nature of evils around us, God is not only in control, He is also working for us in Christ. • "Though devils all the world should fill, All eager to devour us, We tremble not, we fear no ill; They shall not overpow'r us. This world's prince may still Scowl fierce as he will, He can harm us none. He's judged; the deed is done; One little word can fell him." Amen. (*LSB* 656:3)
JOB—NOTE ON 42:2 *purpose*. Term can refer to God's goodwill (Jer 23:20) or people's evil will or schemes (Ps 139:20; Pr 12:2).
JOB—NOTE ON 42:3–4 Although Job does not receive a direct answer to his questions, he admits the foolishness of his past comments by citing God's speech. He is sorry for sitting in judgment of his Creator's justice. He

admits that he questioned the Lord out of ignorance of the Lord's might and mercy. He thought God was unfair according to human standards, when, in fact, the Lord always acts according to His own mysterious purposes (Rm 11:33). Job breaks his silence and speaks from his heart.

JOB—NOTE ON 42:5 *hearing of the ear*. Job trusted in the Lord, but his knowledge of the Lord had been like hearsay. He had lived according to the word he had learned. Now, however, through the whirlwind, he has seen directly the Lord's might and mercy. See p 39.

JOB—NOTE ON 42:6 *repent*. Hbr *nacham*, "to regret," "be sorry." Job recognizes himself as being a mere man (Gn 3:19). See note, 1:20. Dust is a biblical symbol for mortality (4:19). An ancient practice of repentance was to cover one's head with ashes (2:8, 12; Is 58:5; Jnh 3:8). Dust and ashes have strong connotations of self-negation and worthlessness, yet they identify Job with the patriarchs as a humble suppliant. Repentance is never solely a human act, but something that happens to the individual when confronted by God. A change of heart occurs. This change worked by God's Holy Spirit through the Word affects Job's attitude as well as his life. He regrets his imprudent indictments of God's injustice.

JOB—NOTE ON 42:1–6 Job represents all of humanity's failure in trying to avoid the wages of sin (Rm 5:12). Finally, we must admit that we seldom can comprehend God's ways, because sin clouds our understanding. We need not put on sackcloth and ashes; God wants only "a contrite heart" (Ps 51:17). What Job could not do to save himself, God did by sending "His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life" (Jn 3:16). • Lord, we thank You for Jesus and for taking control of our lives by Your divine Spirit. Amen.

JOB—NOTE ON 42:7 *Temanite*. See note, 2:11. *against you*. Eliphaz, the leader of Job's three friends, is addressed by God. The three friends had sinned against the Lord. Job's friends portrayed the Lord as a cold, heartless being who punished sinners in proportion to their sins but did not readily have mercy. They measured the Lord according to human standards of justice, thereby misleading Job into questioning divine justice. *as My servant Job has*. Job is now vindicated. Although no absolution is spoken, the Lord's action provides the clear forgiveness desired by Job. Job depended on a personal mediator—the Lord. Job's relationship is once again restored to what it was at the beginning (1:8; 2:3). The Lord has accepted Job's recantation and gives Job the title "My servant." This

suggests a close relationship of mutual friendship and high honor as referenced in the beginning of the story (1:8). Other noteworthy "servants" include Moses, Joshua, and Isaiah's Suffering Servant (see p 1178).

JOB—NOTE ON 42:8 *seven bulls and seven rams*. Equivalent to several years' wages for an individual person, or what was required of nobility (Nu 23:1; 1Ch 15:25–26). *a burnt offering … pray … prayer*. To appease the Lord's righteous anger. See pp 170–71. Job, in remarkable irony, becomes the mediator for his friends. He is appointed the priestly task of praying for them. In other words, Job returns to the duties of his spiritual leadership (1:5), acting as the patriarchs had prior to the establishment of a formal priesthood. Job can approach the Lord directly, knowing He will always do what is right and proper.

JOB—NOTE ON 42:9 *prayer*. Job's prayers for reconciliation are heard and answered, so that Job's friends are forgiven (Jas 5:16; 1Jn 5:16). Job serves as priest and mediator, anticipating Jesus' role for us (1Tm 2:5–6). Job's experience of suffering becomes a greater model later in the OT (Is 53:12) and ultimately in the NT (Lk 23:34; Heb 7:24–28), when Jesus approaches the Lord's throne and makes intercession for all sinners (Rm 8:34). The irony of Job praying for his friends is enhanced by the fact that they argued that God was angry with Job. The reality is that their comments so displeased God that only Job can be their mediator! Even their offerings were insufficient.

JOB—NOTE ON 42:7–9 Here we see Job praying for his friends, who, though they acted friendly, were actually his spiritual enemies. Job did not accuse his friends and ask for judgment, but followed the Lord's gracious lead and acted as their mediator before the Lord. Jesus, who suffered for us, also pleads for us daily. He is our priestly intercessor and our personal Savior from sin, death, and the devil. • Lord, teach us the friendly arts of intercession and patience, for You have shown such friendship to us. Amen.

JOB—NOTE ON 42:10 *prayed*. Job's restoration is an act of grace, not a reward for faithfulness. His mediating actions again show that he is no longer the accuser of the Lord, but one who in repentance and recognition receives double from a gracious God. As vv 11–15 show, the Lord provides for those who experience the cross. *twice as much*. Job's blessings exceed what he had originally possessed. Yet that was not his motivation for service. Only the Lord's vindication avails for him, and the Lord is seen as a life-giving healer.

JOB—NOTE ON 42:11 *Then came to him*. During his time of affliction, Job had complained that he was ostracized (19:13–19). Now the family returns, and Job becomes a host once again. Hospitality was one of the supreme characteristics of nobility in biblical times. Job has been blessed with sufficient wealth that he can be generous to all who have needs or desires. In biblical times, eating together showed that a relationship was strong or restored (Dt 14:26b). We do not know why Job's family was not at his side throughout the earlier chapters, but the Lord does not criticize them for failing to visit Job. *each of them gave*. Job's family and friends brought great riches to him, providing literally "silver pieces" (unique term used only here, in Gn 33:19, and in Jsh 24:32, suggesting this was an early form of money and worth much) as well as gold rings—either finger rings or earrings (Gn 35:4; Jgs 8:24). Job's riches come from God, although God uses Job's friends and family as divine instruments of providence. God has apparently blessed them also, so that they can be generous to Job.

JOB—NOTE ON 42:12 Job's possessions increase twofold as a sign of God's gracious beneficence. All that he had lost (1:3) in terms of sheep, camels, yokes of oxen, and female donkeys are returned to him with interest (Ex 22:4).

JOB—NOTE ON 42:13 Job's restoration is composed not only of material possessions. Children are given to him again. Because children are priceless gifts from God, they cannot be replaced like cattle or property on a two-for-one basis. (The LXX doubles the number of children.) Because his original sons and daughters were in heaven, it can be understood that he did have his family double in size. Chrys: "He suffered afflictions, you say. True. But those afflictions were the occasion of great good. His substance was doubled, his reward increased, his righteousness enlarged, his crown was splendid, his prize glorious. Both his spiritual and temporal blessings were augmented. He lost his children, but he received, not these restored, but others in their room, and those too he had safe for the Resurrection. Had they been restored, the number would have been diminished, but now having given others in their stead, He will present them also at the Resurrection" (*NPNF*1 13:504).

JOB—NOTE ON 42:14 Each name is symbolic of something beautiful. Their Hbr names, transliterated in the text, can be translated as "Turtle Dove," "Cassia" (Cinnamon), and "(Flask of) Antimony" (an ebony-colored powder used as eye shadow in ancient times).

JOB—NOTE ON 42:15 *an inheritance among their brothers*. According to Mosaic Law, a man's inheritance was divided among the sons in the family (Nu 27:1–8; 36). However, Job is so blessed with property and goods, and his daughters are so pleasing, that he divides his goods among both sons and daughters. Job's experience of the Lord's fairness, justice, and equality in life is demonstrated in his own family dealings. Curiously, Job's wife is not mentioned here, although because the children are identified, we can assume that she remained at his side as he remained faithful to her (31:9–10).

JOB—NOTE ON 42:16 *140 years*. See note, 15:10. As in his other blessings, Job's life is lengthened as well, considering that the normal life span after the flood was closer to 70 years (Ps 90:10). If he was 70 at the time of his affliction, he would have lived longer than Terah (205), Abraham (175), Isaac (180), and Jacob (147). The length of Job's life points to his living during the patriarchal era of Israel. He also is blessed to see his children's children's children, a true blessing (Ps 128:6; Pr 17:6).

JOB—NOTE ON 42:17 *Job died*. No mention of an afterlife is given here. Certainly, his death was like that of patriarchs and faithful servants where the epitaph "full of days" was used: Abraham (Gn 25:8), Isaac (Gn 35:29), David (1Ch 29:28), and the priest Jehoiada (2Ch 24:15). In the certain confidence of one who believes God, the author does not need to reaffirm Job's resurrection faith; he will see God (19:25–27). One may wonder why there is no mention of Satan at the end of the story. It is likely that chs 40–41, which describe the Lord's power over Behemoth and Leviathan, also signify His power over Satan. See notes for those chapters. Ephr: "[Death boasted to Satan,] You went down to contend with Job, and he conquered you and came up; but I, after he had conquered you, then conquered him" (*NPNF*2 13:207). Yet death loses its boast before Job's Redeemer! Jerome: "[Job] hopes for a resurrection; no, rather he knew and saw that Christ, his Redeemer, was alive, and at the Last Day would rise again from the earth. The Lord had not yet died, and the athlete of the Church saw his Redeemer rising from the grave" (*NPNF*2 6:439).

JOB—NOTE ON 42:10–17 We often take our blessings in life for granted: our families, our friends, even our possessions. If they would be taken away, we would undoubtedly be filled with remorse and regret for not valuing them as we ought. Even when everything is wonderful, we can forget about God's gracious providence and gift of justification. The Book

of Job returns us to the roots of our existence—our faithful Lord. In the midst of suffering comes the bright light of victory in our Redeemer—Christ. Lutheran hymn writer Paul Gerhardt penned Joblike hymn stanzas during the difficult Thirty Years' War, a century after the Reformation: • "Why should cross and trial grieve me? Christ is near With His cheer; Never will He leave me. Who can rob me of the heaven That God's Son For me won When His life was given? When life's troubles rise to meet me, Though their weight May be great, They will not defeat me. God, my loving Savior, sends them; He who knows All my woes Knows how best to end them." Amen. (*LSB* 756:1–2)

Psalms

Psalms 1 | Psalms 2 | Psalms 3 | Psalms 4 | Psalms 5 | Psalms 6 | Psalms 7 | Psalms 8 | Psalms 9 | Psalms 10 | Psalms 11 | Psalms 12 | Psalms 13 | Psalms 14 | Psalms 15 | Psalms 16 | Psalms 17 | Psalms 18 | Psalms 19 | Psalms 20 | Psalms 21 | Psalms 22 | Psalms 23 | Psalms 24 | Psalms 25 | Psalms 26 | Psalms 27 | Psalms 28 | Psalms 29 | Psalms 30 | Psalms 31 | Psalms 32 | Psalms 33 | Psalms 34 | Psalms 35 | Psalms 36 | Psalms 37 | Psalms 38 | Psalms 39 | Psalms 40 | Psalms 41 | Psalms 42 | Psalms 43 | Psalms 44 | Psalms 45 | Psalms 46 | Psalms 47 | Psalms 48 | Psalms 49 | Psalms 50 | Psalms 51 | Psalms 52 | Psalms 53 | Psalms 54 | Psalms 55 | Psalms 56 | Psalms 57 | Psalms 58 | Psalms 59 | Psalms 60 | Psalms 61 | Psalms 62 | Psalms 63 | Psalms 64 | Psalms 65 | Psalms 66 | Psalms 67 | Psalms 68 | Psalms 69 | Psalms 70 | Psalms 71 | Psalms 72 | Psalms 73 | Psalms 74 | Psalms 75 | Psalms 76 | Psalms 77 | Psalms 78 | Psalms 79 | Psalms 80 | Psalms 81 | Psalms 82 | Psalms 83 | Psalms 84 | Psalms 85 | Psalms 86 | Psalms 87 | Psalms 88 | Psalms 89 | Psalms 90 | Psalms 91 | Psalms 92 | Psalms 93 | Psalms 94 | Psalms 95 | Psalms 96 | Psalms 97 | Psalms 98 | Psalms 99 | Psalms 100 | Psalms 101 | Psalms 102 | Psalms 103 | Psalms 104 | Psalms 105 | Psalms 106 | Psalms 107 | Psalms 108 | Psalms 109 | Psalms 110 | Psalms 111 | Psalms 112 | Psalms 113 | Psalms 114 | Psalms 115 | Psalms 116 | Psalms 117 | Psalms 118 | Psalms 119 | Psalms 120 | Psalms 121 | Psalms 122 | Psalms 123 | Psalms 124 | Psalms 125 | Psalms 126 | Psalms 127 | Psalms 128 | Psalms 129 | Psalms 130 | Psalms 131 | Psalms 132 | Psalms 133 | Psalms 134 | Psalms 135 | Psalms 136 | Psalms 137 | Psalms 138 | Psalms 139 | Psalms 140 | Psalms 141 | Psalms 142 | Psalms 143 | Psalms 144 | Psalms 145 | Psalms 146 | Psalms 147 | Psalms 148 | Psalms 149 | Psalms 150

- Introduction to Psalms
  - Overview
  - Reading Psalms
  - Luther on Psalms

    - Key Terms and Phrases in the Psalms
    - Challenges for Readers
    - Blessings for Readers
    - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

BOOK ONE

The Way of the Righteous and the Wicked

1 [1]†Blessed is the man[1]

who walks not in the counsel of the
wicked,
nor stands in the way of sinners,
nor sits in the seat of scoffers;

[2]† but his delight is in the law[2] of the LORD,
and on his law he meditates day and night.

[3]† He is like a tree
planted by streams of water
that yields its fruit in its season,
and its leaf does not wither.
In all that he does, he prospers.

[4]† The wicked are not so,
but are like chaff that the wind drives
away.

[5]† Therefore the wicked will not stand in the
judgment,
nor sinners in the congregation of the
righteous;

[6]† for the LORD knows the way of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked will perish.

The Reign of the Lord's Anointed

2 [1]Why do the nations rage[3]

and the peoples plot in vain?

[2]† The kings of the earth set themselves,
and the rulers take counsel together,
against the Lord and against his Anointed,
saying,
[3]† "Let us burst their bonds apart
and cast away their cords from us."

[4]† He who sits in the heavens laughs;
the Lord holds them in derision.
[5] Then he will speak to them in his wrath,
and terrify them in his fury, saying,
[6]† "As for me, I have set my King
on Zion, my holy hill."

[7]† I will tell of the decree:
The Lord said to me, "You are my Son;
today I have begotten you.
[8] Ask of me, and I will make the nations
your heritage,
and the ends of the earth your possession.
[9]† You shall break[1] them with a rod of iron
and dash them in pieces like a potter's
vessel."

[10]† Now therefore, O kings, be wise;
be warned, O rulers of the earth.

[11]† Serve the Lord with fear,
and rejoice with trembling.
[12]† Kiss the Son,
lest he be angry, and you perish in the way,
for his wrath is quickly kindled.
Blessed are all who take refuge in him.

Save Me, O My God

3 A Psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom his son.

1 O Lord, how many are my foes!
Many are rising against me;
2† many are saying of my soul,
there is no salvation for him in God. *Selah*[2]

3† But you, O Lord, are a shield about me,
my glory, and the lifter of my head.
4† I cried aloud to the Lord,
and he answered me from his holy hill.
Selah

5† I lay down and slept;
I woke again, for the Lord sustained me.
6 I will not be afraid of many thousands of people
who have set themselves against me all around.

7† Arise, O Lord!
Save me, O my God!
For you strike all my enemies on the cheek;
you break the teeth of the wicked.

8 Salvation belongs to the Lord;
your blessing be on your people! *Selah*

Answer Me When I Call

4 To the choirmaster: with stringed instruments. A Psalm of David.

1† Answer me when I call, O God of
my righteousness!
You have given me relief when I was in
distress.
Be gracious to me and hear my prayer!

2† O men,[1] how long shall my honor be turned
into shame?
How long will you love vain words and seek
after lies? *Selah*
3† But know that the Lord has set apart the
godly for himself;
the Lord hears when I call to him.

4† Be angry,[2] and do not sin;
ponder in your own hearts on your beds,
and be silent. *Selah*
5† Offer right sacrifices,
and put your trust in the Lord.

6† There are many who say, "Who will show us
some good?
Lift up the light of your face upon us,
O Lord!"
7† You have put more joy in my heart
than they have when their grain and wine
abound.

8 In peace I will both lie down and sleep;
for you alone, O LORD, make me dwell in
safety.

Lead Me in Your Righteousness

5 To the choirmaster: for the flutes. A Psalm of David.

1 Give ear to my words, O Lord;
consider my groaning.
2† Give attention to the sound of my cry,
my King and my God,
for to you do I pray.
3† O Lord, in the morning you hear my voice;
in the morning I prepare a sacrifice for you[3]
and watch.

4 For you are not a God who delights in
wickedness;
evil may not dwell with you.
5† The boastful shall not stand before your
eyes;
you hate all evildoers.
6 You destroy those who speak lies;
the Lord abhors the bloodthirsty
and deceitful man.

7† But I, through the abundance of your steadfast
love,
will enter your house.
I will bow down toward your holy temple
in the fear of you.
8† Lead me, O Lord, in your righteousness
because of my enemies;
make your way straight before me.

9† For there is no truth in their mouth;
their inmost self is destruction;
their throat is an open grave;
they flatter with their tongue.
10 Make them bear their guilt, O God;
let them fall by their own counsels;
because of the abundance of
their transgressions cast them out,
for they have rebelled against you.

11† But let all who take refuge in you rejoice;
let them ever sing for joy,
and spread your protection over them,
that those who love your name may exult
in you.
12† For you bless the righteous, O Lord;
you cover him with favor as with a shield.

O Lord, Deliver My Life

6 To the choirmaster: with stringed instruments; according to The Sheminith.[1]
A Psalm of David.

1 O Lord, rebuke me not in your anger,
nor discipline me in your wrath.
2† Be gracious to me, O Lord, for I am
languishing;
heal me, O Lord, for my bones are
troubled.
3 My soul also is greatly troubled.
But you, O Lord—how long?

4† Turn, O Lord, deliver my life;
save me for the sake of your steadfast love.
5† For in death there is no remembrance
of you;
in Sheol who will give you praise?

6 I am weary with my moaning;
every night I flood my bed with tears;
I drench my couch with my weeping.
7 My eye wastes away because of grief;
it grows weak because of all my foes.

8† Depart from me, all you workers of evil,
for the Lord has heard the sound of my
weeping.
9 The Lord has heard my plea;
the Lord accepts my prayer.
10† All my enemies shall be ashamed and greatly

troubled;
they shall turn back and be put to shame
in a moment.

In You Do I Take Refuge

7 A Shiggaion[2] of David, which he sang to the Lord concerning the words of Cush, a Benjaminite.

1 O Lord my God, in you do I take refuge;
save me from all my pursuers and
deliver me,
2† lest like a lion they tear my soul apart,
rending it in pieces, with none to deliver.

3† O Lord my God, if I have done this,
if there is wrong in my hands,
4 if I have repaid my friend[1] with evil
or plundered my enemy without cause,
5† let the enemy pursue my soul and overtake it,
and let him trample my life to the ground
and lay my glory in the dust. *Selah*

6† Arise, O Lord, in your anger;
lift yourself up against the fury of my
enemies;
awake for me; you have appointed a
judgment.
7† Let the assembly of the peoples be gathered
about you;
over it return on high.

8† The Lord judges the peoples;
judge me, O Lord, according to
my righteousness
and according to the integrity that is in me.

9† Oh, let the evil of the wicked come to an
end,
and may you establish the righteous—
you who test the minds and hearts,[2]
O righteous God!
10 My shield is with God,
who saves the upright in heart.
11† God is a righteous judge,
and a God who feels indignation every day.

12† If a man[3] does not repent, God[4] will whet his
sword;
he has bent and readied his bow;
13† he has prepared for him his deadly weapons,
making his arrows fiery shafts.
14† Behold, the wicked man conceives evil
and is pregnant with mischief
and gives birth to lies.
15 He makes a pit, digging it out,
and falls into the hole that he has made.
16 His mischief returns upon his own head,
and on his own skull his violence descends.

17 I will give to the Lord the thanks due to his
righteousness,
and I will sing praise to the name of the
Lord, the Most High.

How Majestic Is Your Name

8 To the choirmaster: according to The Gittith.[5] A Psalm of David.

1† O Lord, our Lord,
how majestic is your name in all the earth!
You have set your glory above the heavens.
2† Out of the mouth of babies and infants,
you have established strength because of your foes,
to still the enemy and the avenger.

3 When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars, which you have set in place,
4† what is man that you are mindful of him,
and the son of man that you care for him?

5† Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings[1]
and crowned him with glory and honor.
6† You have given him dominion over the works of your hands;
you have put all things under his feet,
7 all sheep and oxen,
and also the beasts of the field,
8† the birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea,
whatever passes along the paths of the seas.

9 O LORD, our Lord,
how majestic is your name in all the
earth!

I Will Recount Your Wonderful Deeds

9 [2] To the choirmaster: according to Muth-labben.[3] A Psalm of David.

1 I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole
heart;
I will recount all of your wonderful
deeds.
2 I will be glad and exult in you;
I will sing praise to your name, O Most
High.

3† When my enemies turn back,
they stumble and perish before[4] your
presence.
4† For you have maintained my just cause;
you have sat on the throne,
giving righteous judgment.

5† You have rebuked the nations; you have
made the wicked perish;
you have blotted out their name forever
and ever.
6 The enemy came to an end in everlasting
ruins;
their cities you rooted out;
the very memory of them has perished.

7† But the Lord sits enthroned forever;
he has established his throne for justice,
8 and he judges the world with righteousness;
he judges the peoples with uprightness.

9† The LORD is a stronghold for the oppressed,
a stronghold in times of trouble.
10† And those who know your name put their trust in you,
for you, O LORD, have not forsaken those who seek you.

11† Sing praises to the LORD, who sits enthroned in Zion!
Tell among the peoples his deeds!
12† For he who avenges blood is mindful of them;
he does not forget the cry of the afflicted.

13† Be gracious to me, O LORD!
See my affliction from those who hate me,
O you who lift me up from the gates of death,
14† that I may recount all your praises,
that in the gates of the daughter of Zion
I may rejoice in your salvation.

15 The nations have sunk in the pit that they made;
in the net that they hid, their own foot has been caught.
16† The LORD has made himself known; he has executed judgment;
the wicked are snared in the work of their own hands. *Higgaion*.[1] *Selah*

17† The wicked shall return to Sheol,
all the nations that forget God.

18 For the needy shall not always be forgotten,
and the hope of the poor shall not perish
forever.

19 Arise, O Lord! Let not man prevail;
let the nations be judged before you!
20 Put them in fear, O Lord!
Let the nations know that they are
but men! *Selah*

Why Do You Hide Yourself?

10 [1]†Why, O Lord, do you stand far away?
Why do you hide yourself in times
of trouble?

[2]†† In arrogance the wicked hotly pursue the poor;
let them be caught in the schemes that they
have devised.
[3]† For the wicked boasts of the desires of his soul,
and the one greedy for gain curses[2] and
renounces the Lord.
[4]† In the pride of his face[3] the wicked does not
seek him;[4]
all his thoughts are, "There is no God."
[5]† His ways prosper at all times;
your judgments are on high, out of his
sight;
as for all his foes, he puffs at them.
[6] He says in his heart, "I shall not be moved;
throughout all generations I shall not meet
adversity."
[7]† His mouth is filled with cursing and deceit
and oppression;
under his tongue are mischief and iniquity.
[8]† He sits in ambush in the villages;
in hiding places he murders the innocent.
His eyes stealthily watch for the helpless;
[9]† he lurks in ambush like a lion in
his thicket;
he lurks that he may seize the poor;
he seizes the poor when he draws him into
his net.
[10] The helpless are crushed, sink down,

and fall by his might.
11 He says in his heart, “God has forgotten,
he has hidden his face, he will never see it.”

12 Arise, O Lord; O God, lift up your hand;
forget not the afflicted.
13 Why does the wicked renounce God
and say in his heart, “You will not call to
account”?
14† But you do see, for you note mischief and
vexation,
that you may take it into your hands;
to you the helpless commits himself;
you have been the helper of the
fatherless.
15 Break the arm of the wicked and evildoer;
call his wickedness to account till you find
none.

16† The Lord is king forever and ever;
the nations perish from his land.
17† O Lord, you hear the desire of the afflicted;
you will strengthen their heart; you will
incline your ear
18† to do justice to the fatherless and the
oppressed,
so that man who is of the earth may strike
terror no more.

The Lord Is in His Holy Temple

11 [1] †To the choirmaster. Of David.

In the Lord I take refuge;
how can you say to my soul,
"Flee like a bird to your mountain,

[2] for behold, the wicked bend the bow;
they have fitted their arrow to the string
to shoot in the dark at the upright in heart;
[3] † if the foundations are destroyed,
what can the righteous do?"[1]

[4] † The Lord is in his holy temple;
the Lord's throne is in heaven;
his eyes see, his eyelids test the children of
man.
[5] † The Lord tests the righteous,
but his soul hates the wicked and the one
who loves violence.
[6] † Let him rain coals on the wicked;
fire and sulfur and a scorching wind shall
be the portion of their cup.
[7] For the Lord is righteous;
he loves righteous deeds;
the upright shall behold his face.

The Faithful Have Vanished

12 To the choirmaster: according to The Sheminith.[1] A Psalm of David.

1† Save, O Lord, for the godly one is gone;
for the faithful have vanished from among
the children of man.
2† Everyone utters lies to his neighbor;
with flattering lips and a double heart they
speak.

3† May the Lord cut off all flattering lips,
the tongue that makes great boasts,
4† those who say, "With our tongue we will
prevail,
our lips are with us; who is master
over us?"

5† "Because the poor are plundered, because the
needy groan,
I will now arise," says the Lord;
"I will place him in the safety for which he
longs."
6† The words of the Lord are pure words,
like silver refined in a furnace on the
ground,
purified seven times.

7† You, O Lord, will keep them;
you will guard us[2] from this generation
forever.
8 On every side the wicked prowl,

as vileness is exalted among the children of man.

How Long, O Lord?

13 [1]† To the choirmaster. A Psalm of David.

How long, O Lord? Will you forget me
forever?
How long will you hide your face from me?

[2]† How long must I take counsel in my soul
and have sorrow in my heart all the day?
How long shall my enemy be exalted
over me?

[3]† Consider and answer me, O Lord my God;
light up my eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of
death,
[4]† lest my enemy say, "I have prevailed over
him,"
lest my foes rejoice because I am shaken.

[5]† But I have trusted in your steadfast love;
my heart shall rejoice in your salvation.
[6]† I will sing to the Lord,
because he has dealt bountifully with me.

The Fool Says, There Is No God

14 [1]† To the choirmaster. Of David.

The fool says in his heart, “There is no
God.”
They are corrupt, they do abominable
deeds,
there is none who does good.

[2]† The Lord looks down from heaven on
the children of man,
to see if there are any who understand,[1]
who seek after God.
[3]† They have all turned aside; together they have
become corrupt;
there is none who does good,
not even one.

[4]† Have they no knowledge, all the
evildoers
who eat up my people as they eat bread
and do not call upon the Lord?

[5]† There they are in great terror,
for God is with the generation of the
righteous.
[6] You would shame the plans of the poor,
but[2] the Lord is his refuge.

[7]† Oh, that salvation for Israel would come out
of Zion!
When the Lord restores the fortunes of his

people,
let Jacob rejoice, let Israel be glad.

Who Shall Dwell on Your Holy Hill?

15 [1]† A Psalm of David.

O Lord, who shall sojourn in your tent?
Who shall dwell on your holy hill?

[2]† He who walks blamelessly and does what is right
and speaks truth in his heart;
[3]† who does not slander with his tongue
and does no evil to his neighbor,
nor takes up a reproach against his friend;
[4]† in whose eyes a vile person is despised,
but who honors those who fear the Lord;
who swears to his own hurt and does not change;
[5]† who does not put out his money at interest
and does not take a bribe against the innocent.
He who does these things shall never be moved.

You Will Not Abandon My Soul

16

1 †A Miktam[1] of David.

Preserve me, O God, for in you
I take refuge.

2 † I say to the Lord, “You are my Lord;
I have no good apart from you.”

3 † As for the saints in the land, they are the
excellent ones,
in whom is all my delight.[2]
4 † The sorrows of those who run after[3] another
god shall multiply;
their drink offerings of blood I will not pour
out
or take their names on my lips.

5 † The Lord is my chosen portion and my cup;
you hold my lot.
6 † The lines have fallen for me in pleasant places;
indeed, I have a beautiful inheritance.

7 † I bless the Lord who gives me counsel;
in the night also my heart instructs me.[4]
8 † I have set the Lord always before me;
because he is at my right hand, I shall not
be shaken.

9 † Therefore my heart is glad, and my whole
being[5] rejoices;
my flesh also dwells secure.
10 † For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol,
or let your holy one see corruption.[6]
11 † You make known to me the path of life;
in your presence there is fullness of joy;
at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

In the Shadow of Your Wings

17 [1]† A Prayer of David.
Hear a just cause, O Lord; attend to my
cry!
Give ear to my prayer from lips free of
deceit!

[2] From your presence let my vindication come!
Let your eyes behold the right!

[3]† You have tried my heart, you have visited
me by night,
you have tested me, and you will find
nothing;
I have purposed that my mouth will not
transgress.
[4]† With regard to the works of man, by the word
of your lips
I have avoided the ways of the violent.
[5] My steps have held fast to your paths;
my feet have not slipped.

[6]† I call upon you, for you will answer me,
O God;
incline your ear to me; hear my words.
[7]† Wondrously show[1] your steadfast love,
O Savior of those who seek refuge
from their adversaries at your right hand.
[8]† Keep me as the apple of your eye;
hide me in the shadow of your wings,
[9] from the wicked who do me violence,
my deadly enemies who surround me.

10 They close their hearts to pity;
with their mouths they speak arrogantly.
11 They have now surrounded our steps;
they set their eyes to cast us to the ground.
12 He is like a lion eager to tear,
as a young lion lurking in ambush.

13 Arise, O Lord! Confront him, subdue him!
Deliver my soul from the wicked by your sword,
14 from men by your hand, O Lord,
from men of the world whose portion is in this life.[2]
You fill their womb with treasure;[3]
they are satisfied with children,
and they leave their abundance to their infants.

15 As for me, I shall behold your face in righteousness;
when I awake, I shall be satisfied with your likeness.

The Lord Is My Rock and My Fortress

18 To the choirmaster. A Psalm of David, the servant of the Lord, who addressed the words of this song to the Lord on the day when the Lord rescued him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul. He said:

1 I love you, O Lord, my strength.
2† The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my
deliverer,
my God, my rock, in whom I take
refuge,
my shield, and the horn of my salvation,
my stronghold.
3† I call upon the Lord, who is worthy to
be praised,
and I am saved from my enemies.

4† The cords of death encompassed me;
the torrents of destruction assailed me;[1]
5† the cords of Sheol entangled me;
the snares of death confronted me.

6† In my distress I called upon the Lord;
to my God I cried for help.
From his temple he heard my voice,
and my cry to him reached his ears.

7†† Then the earth reeled and rocked;
the foundations also of the mountains
trembled
and quaked, because he was angry.
8 Smoke went up from his nostrils,[2]

and devouring fire from his mouth;
glowing coals flamed forth from him.
9† He bowed the heavens and came down;
thick darkness was under his feet.
10† He rode on a cherub and flew;
he came swiftly on the wings of the wind.
11† He made darkness his covering, his canopy
around him,
thick clouds dark with water.
12 Out of the brightness before him
hailstones and coals of fire broke through his
clouds.

13 The Lord also thundered in the heavens,
and the Most High uttered his voice,
hailstones and coals of fire.
14 And he sent out his arrows and scattered
them;
he flashed forth lightnings and routed them.
15† Then the channels of the sea were seen,
and the foundations of the world were laid
bare
at your rebuke, O Lord,
at the blast of the breath of your nostrils.

16† He sent from on high, he took me;
he drew me out of many waters.
17† He rescued me from my strong enemy
and from those who hated me,
for they were too mighty for me.
18 They confronted me in the day of my
calamity,
but the Lord was my support.

19† He brought me out into a broad place;
he rescued me, because he delighted in me.

20† The Lord dealt with me according to my
righteousness;
according to the cleanness of my hands he
rewarded me.
21† For I have kept the ways of the Lord,
and have not wickedly departed from my
God.
22 For all his rules[1] were before me,
and his statutes I did not put away from me.
23 I was blameless before him,
and I kept myself from my guilt.
24 So the Lord has rewarded me according to
my righteousness,
according to the cleanness of my hands in
his sight.

25†† With the merciful you show yourself
merciful;
with the blameless man you show yourself
blameless;
26 with the purified you show yourself pure;
and with the crooked you make yourself
seem tortuous.
27 For you save a humble people,
but the haughty eyes you bring down.
28† For it is you who light my lamp;
the Lord my God lightens my darkness.
29† For by you I can run against a troop,
and by my God I can leap over a wall.
30† This God—his way is perfect;[2]
the word of the Lord proves true;

he is a shield for all those who take refuge
in him.

31† For who is God, but the Lord?
And who is a rock, except our God?—
32† the God who equipped me with strength
and made my way blameless.
33† He made my feet like the feet of a deer
and set me secure on the heights.
34† He trains my hands for war,
so that my arms can bend a bow of bronze.
35† You have given me the shield of your
salvation,
and your right hand supported me,
and your gentleness made me great.
36† You gave a wide place for my steps under
me,
and my feet did not slip.
37† I pursued my enemies and overtook them,
and did not turn back till they were
consumed.
38 I thrust them through, so that they were not
able to rise;
they fell under my feet.
39 For you equipped me with strength for the
battle;
you made those who rise against me sink
under me.
40 You made my enemies turn their backs
to me,[3]
and those who hated me I destroyed.
41 They cried for help, but there was none to
save;
they cried to the Lord, but he did not
answer them.

42 I beat them fine as dust before the wind;
I cast them out like the mire of the streets.

43† You delivered me from strife with the people;
you made me the head of the nations;
people whom I had not known served me.
44† As soon as they heard of me they
obeyed me;
foreigners came cringing to me.
45 Foreigners lost heart
and came trembling out of their
fortresses.

46† The LORD lives, and blessed be my rock,
and exalted be the God of my salvation—
47† the God who gave me vengeance
and subdued peoples under me,
48† who delivered me from my enemies;
yes, you exalted me above those who rose
against me;
you rescued me from the man of violence.

49† For this I will praise you, O LORD, among the
nations,
and sing to your name.
50† Great salvation he brings to his king,
and shows steadfast love to his anointed,
to David and his offspring forever.

The Law of the Lord Is Perfect

19 [1]†To the choirmaster. A Psalm of David.

The heavens declare the glory of God,
and the sky above[1] proclaims his
handiwork.

[2]† Day to day pours out speech,
and night to night reveals knowledge.
[3]† There is no speech, nor are there words,
whose voice is not heard.
[4]† Their voice[2] goes out through all the
earth,
and their words to the end of the world.
In them he has set a tent for the sun,
[5] which comes out like a bridegroom leaving
his chamber,
and, like a strong man, runs its course with
joy.
[6] Its rising is from the end of the heavens,
and its circuit to the end of them,
and there is nothing hidden from its heat.

[7]†† The law of the Lord is perfect,[3]
reviving the soul;
the testimony of the Lord is sure,
making wise the simple;
[8] the precepts of the Lord are right,
rejoicing the heart;
the commandment of the Lord is pure,
enlightening the eyes;
[9] the fear of the Lord is clean,
enduring forever;

the rules[4] of the Lord are true,
and righteous altogether.
10 More to be desired are they than gold,
even much fine gold;
sweeter also than honey
and drippings of the honeycomb.
11 Moreover, by them is your servant
warned;
in keeping them there is great reward.

12 Who can discern his errors?
Declare me innocent from hidden
faults.
13 Keep back your servant also
from presumptuous sins;
let them not have dominion over me!
Then I shall be blameless,
and innocent of great transgression.

14 Let the words of my mouth and
the meditation of my heart
be acceptable in your sight,
O Lord, my rock and my redeemer.

Trust in the Name of the Lord Our God

20 [1]†† To the choirmaster. A Psalm of David.

May the Lord answer you in the day of
trouble!
May the name of the God of Jacob protect
you!

[2]† May he send you help from the sanctuary
and give you support from Zion!
[3]† May he remember all your offerings
and regard with favor your burnt sacrifices!
Selah

[4]† May he grant you your heart's desire
and fulfill all your plans!
[5]† May we shout for joy over your salvation,
and in the name of our God set up
our banners!
May the Lord fulfill all your petitions!

[6]† Now I know that the Lord saves his
anointed;
he will answer him from his holy heaven
with the saving might of his right hand.
[7]† Some trust in chariots and some in
horses,
but we trust in the name of the Lord our
God.
[8]† They collapse and fall,
but we rise and stand upright.

9† O LORD, save the king!
May he answer us when we call.

The King Rejoices in the Lord's Strength

21 [1]† To the choirmaster. A Psalm of David.

O Lord, in your strength the king rejoices,
and in your salvation how greatly he
exults!

[2]† You have given him his heart's desire
and have not withheld the request of his
lips. *Selah*

[3]† For you meet him with rich blessings;
you set a crown of fine gold upon his head.

[4]† He asked life of you; you gave it to him,
length of days forever and ever.

[5]† His glory is great through your salvation;
splendor and majesty you bestow on him.

[6]† For you make him most blessed forever;[1]
you make him glad with the joy of your
presence.

[7]† For the king trusts in the Lord,
and through the steadfast love of the Most
High he shall not be moved.

[8]† Your hand will find out all your enemies;
your right hand will find out those who hate
you.

[9]† You will make them as a blazing oven
when you appear.
The Lord will swallow them up in his wrath,
and fire will consume them.

[10]† You will destroy their descendants from the
earth,
and their offspring from among the children of

man.
11 Though they plan evil against you,
though they devise mischief, they will not
succeed.
12 For you will put them to flight;
you will aim at their faces with your
bows.

13† Be exalted, O LORD, in your strength!
We will sing and praise your power.

Why Have You Forsaken Me?

22 To the choirmaster: according to The Doe of the Dawn. A Psalm of David.

1 † My God, my God, why have you
forsaken me?
Why are you so far from saving me, from
the words of my groaning?
2 O my God, I cry by day, but you do not
answer,
and by night, but I find no rest.
3 † Yet you are holy,
enthroned on the praises[1] of Israel.
4 † In you our fathers trusted;
they trusted, and you delivered them.
5 To you they cried and were rescued;
in you they trusted and were not put
to shame.

6 † But I am a worm and not a man,
scorned by mankind and despised by the
people.
7 † All who see me mock me;
they make mouths at me; they wag their
heads;
8 † “He trusts in the Lord; let him deliver him;
let him rescue him, for he delights in him!”

9 † Yet you are he who took me from the womb;
you made me trust you at my mother’s
breasts.
10 † On you was I cast from my birth,

and from my mother's womb you have
been my God.
11 Be not far from me,
for trouble is near,
and there is none to help.

12† Many bulls encompass me;
strong bulls of Bashan surround me;
13 they open wide their mouths at me,
like a ravening and roaring lion.

14† I am poured out like water,
and all my bones are out of joint;
my heart is like wax;
it is melted within my breast;
15† my strength is dried up like a potsherd,
and my tongue sticks to my jaws;
you lay me in the dust of death.

16† For dogs encompass me;
a company of evildoers encircles me;
they have pierced my hands and feet[2]—
17† I can count all my bones—
they stare and gloat over me;
18† they divide my garments among them,
and for my clothing they cast lots.

19†† But you, O Lord, do not be far off!
O you my help, come quickly to my aid!
20 Deliver my soul from the sword,
my precious life from the power of the
dog!
21† Save me from the mouth of the lion!

You have rescued[3] me from the horns of the
wild oxen!

22† I will tell of your name to my brothers;
in the midst of the congregation I will praise
you:
23† You who fear the Lord, praise him!
All you offspring of Jacob, glorify him,
and stand in awe of him, all you offspring of
Israel!
24† For he has not despised or abhorred
the affliction of the afflicted,
and he has not hidden his face from him,
but has heard, when he cried to him.

25† From you comes my praise in the
great congregation;
my vows I will perform before those who
fear him.
26† The afflicted[1] shall eat and be satisfied;
those who seek him shall praise the Lord!
May your hearts live forever!

27† All the ends of the earth shall remember
and turn to the Lord,
and all the families of the nations
shall worship before you.
28 For kingship belongs to the Lord,
and he rules over the nations.

29† All the prosperous of the earth eat and
worship;
before him shall bow all who go down to

the dust,
even the one who could not keep himself
alive.
30 Posterity shall serve him;
it shall be told of the Lord to the
coming generation;
31 they shall come and proclaim his
righteousness to a people yet unborn,
that he has done it.

The Lord Is My Shepherd

23 [1]† A Psalm of David.

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall
not want.

[2]† He makes me lie down in green pastures.
He leads me beside still waters.[2]
[3]† He restores my soul.
He leads me in paths of righteousness[3]
for his name's sake.

[4]† Even though I walk through the valley
of the shadow of death,[4]
I will fear no evil,
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff,
they comfort me.

[5]† You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.
[6]† Surely[1] goodness and mercy[2] shall follow me
all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell[3] in the house of the Lord
forever.[4]

The King of Glory

24 [1]† A Psalm of David.
The earth is the Lord's and the fullness
thereof,[5]
the world and those who dwell therein,

[2]† for he has founded it upon the seas
and established it upon the rivers.

[3]† Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord?
And who shall stand in his holy place?
[4]† He who has clean hands and a pure heart,
who does not lift up his soul to what is false
and does not swear deceitfully.
[5]† He will receive blessing from the Lord
and righteousness from the God of his
salvation.
[6]† Such is the generation of those who seek
him,
who seek the face of the God of Jacob.[6]
Selah

[7]†† Lift up your heads, O gates!
And be lifted up, O ancient doors,
that the King of glory may come in.
[8] Who is this King of glory?
The Lord, strong and mighty,
the Lord, mighty in battle!
[9] Lift up your heads, O gates!
And lift them up, O ancient doors,
that the King of glory may come in.

[10] † Who is this King of glory?
The LORD of hosts,
he is the King of glory! *Selah*

Teach Me Your Paths

25 [1]† [1] Of David.

To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.

2 O my God, in you I trust;
let me not be put to shame;
let not my enemies exult over me.
3† Indeed, none who wait for you shall be put
to shame;
they shall be ashamed who
are wantonly treacherous.

4† Make me to know your ways, O Lord;
teach me your paths.
5 Lead me in your truth and teach me,
for you are the God of my salvation;
for you I wait all the day long.

6† Remember your mercy, O Lord, and your
steadfast love,
for they have been from of old.
7† Remember not the sins of my youth or my
transgressions;
according to your steadfast love remember
me,
for the sake of your goodness, O Lord!

8† Good and upright is the Lord;
therefore he instructs sinners in the way.
9 He leads the humble in what is right,

and teaches the humble his way.
10† All the paths of the Lord are steadfast love
and faithfulness,
for those who keep his covenant and his
testimonies.

11† For your name's sake, O Lord,
pardon my guilt, for it is great.
12 Who is the man who fears the Lord?
Him will he instruct in the way that he
should choose.
13† His soul shall abide in well-being,
and his offspring shall inherit the land.
14† The friendship[2] of the Lord is for those who
fear him,
and he makes known to them his covenant.
15† My eyes are ever toward the Lord,
for he will pluck my feet out of the net.

16 Turn to me and be gracious to me,
for I am lonely and afflicted.
17 The troubles of my heart are enlarged;
bring me out of my distresses.
18† Consider my affliction and my trouble,
and forgive all my sins.

19 Consider how many are my foes,
and with what violent hatred they
hate me.
20 Oh, guard my soul, and deliver me!
Let me not be put to shame, for I
take refuge in you.

[21] † May integrity and uprightness preserve me,
for I wait for you.

[22] † Redeem Israel, O God,
out of all his troubles.

I Will Bless the Lord

26

1 † Of David.

Vindicate me, O Lord,
for I have walked in my integrity,
and I have trusted in the Lord without
wavering.

2 † Prove me, O Lord, and try me;
test my heart and my mind.[1]
3 For your steadfast love is before my eyes,
and I walk in your faithfulness.

4 I do not sit with men of falsehood,
nor do I consort with hypocrites.
5 † I hate the assembly of evildoers,
and I will not sit with the wicked.

6 † I wash my hands in innocence
and go around your altar, O Lord,
7 † proclaiming thanksgiving aloud,
and telling all your wondrous deeds.

8 † O Lord, I love the habitation of your
house
and the place where your glory dwells.
9 Do not sweep my soul away with sinners,
nor my life with bloodthirsty men,
10 in whose hands are evil devices,
and whose right hands are full of bribes.
11 But as for me, I shall walk in my integrity;
redeem me, and be gracious to me.

12 † My foot stands on level ground;
in the great assembly I will bless the
LORD.

The Lord Is My Light and My Salvation

27 [1]† Of David.

The Lord is my light and my
salvation;
whom shall I fear?
The Lord is the stronghold[2] of my life;
of whom shall I be afraid?

[2]† When evildoers assail me
to eat up my flesh,
my adversaries and foes,
it is they who stumble and fall.

[3]† Though an army encamp against me,
my heart shall not fear;
though war arise against me,
yet[3] I will be confident.

[4]† One thing have I asked of the Lord,
that will I seek after:
that I may dwell in the house of the Lord
all the days of my life,
to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord
and to inquire[1] in his temple.

[5]† For he will hide me in his shelter
in the day of trouble;
he will conceal me under the cover of his
tent;
he will lift me high upon a rock.

6† And now my head shall be lifted up
above my enemies all around me,
and I will offer in his tent
sacrifices with shouts of joy;
I will sing and make melody to the Lord.

7 Hear, O Lord, when I cry aloud;
be gracious to me and answer me!
8† You have said, “Seek[2] my face.”
My heart says to you,
“Your face, Lord, do I seek.”[3]
9 Hide not your face from me.
Turn not your servant away in anger,
O you who have been my help.
Cast me not off; forsake me not,
O God of my salvation!
10† For my father and my mother have
forsaken me,
but the Lord will take me in.

11 Teach me your way, O Lord,
and lead me on a level path
because of my enemies.
12† Give me not up to the will of my adversaries;
for false witnesses have risen against me,
and they breathe out violence.
13† I believe[4] that I shall look upon the goodness
of the Lord
in the land of the living!
14† Wait for the Lord;
be strong, and let your heart take courage;
wait for the Lord!

The Lord Is My Strength and My Shield

28 [1]†Of David.

To you, O Lord, I call;
my rock, be not deaf to me,
lest, if you be silent to me,
I become like those who go down to
the pit.

[2]† Hear the voice of my pleas for mercy,
when I cry to you for help,
when I lift up my hands
toward your most holy sanctuary.[5]

[3]† Do not drag me off with the wicked,
with the workers of evil,
who speak peace with their neighbors
while evil is in their hearts.
[4] Give to them according to their work
and according to the evil of their deeds;
give to them according to the work of their
hands;
render them their due reward.
[5]† Because they do not regard the works of the
Lord
or the work of his hands,
he will tear them down and build them up no
more.
[6] Blessed be the Lord!
For he has heard the voice of my pleas for
mercy.
[7]† The Lord is my strength and my shield;
in him my heart trusts, and I am helped;

my heart exults,
and with my song I give thanks to him.

8 † The Lord is the strength of his people;[1]
he is the saving refuge of his anointed.
9 † Oh, save your people and bless your
heritage!
Be their shepherd and carry them forever.

Ascribe to the Lord Glory

29 [1]A Psalm of David.

Ascribe to the Lord, O heavenly beings,[2]
ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.

[2]† Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name;
worship the Lord in the splendor of
holiness.[3]

[3]†† The voice of the Lord is over the waters;
the God of glory thunders,
the Lord, over many waters.
[4] The voice of the Lord is powerful;
the voice of the Lord is full of majesty.

[5]† The voice of the Lord breaks the cedars;
the Lord breaks the cedars of Lebanon.
[6]† He makes Lebanon to skip like a calf,
and Sirion like a young wild ox.

[7]† The voice of the Lord flashes forth flames of
fire.
[8]† The voice of the Lord shakes the wilderness;
the Lord shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.

[9]† The voice of the Lord makes the deer give
birth[4]
and strips the forests bare,
and in his temple all cry, “Glory!”

10 † The Lord sits enthroned over the flood;
the Lord sits enthroned as king forever.
11 May the Lord give strength to his people!
May the Lord bless[5] his people with peace!

Joy Comes with the Morning

30 A Psalm of David. A song at the dedication of the temple.

1 † I will extol you, O Lord, for you have drawn
me up
and have not let my foes rejoice over me.
2 † O Lord my God, I cried to you for help,
and you have healed me.
3 † O Lord, you have brought up my soul
from Sheol;
you restored me to life from among those
who go down to the pit.[1]

4 † Sing praises to the Lord, O you his saints,
and give thanks to his holy name.[2]
5 † For his anger is but for a moment,
and his favor is for a lifetime.[3]
Weeping may tarry for the night,
but joy comes with the morning.

6 † As for me, I said in my prosperity,
"I shall never be moved."
7 † By your favor, O Lord,
you made my mountain stand strong;
you hid your face;
I was dismayed.

8 To you, O Lord, I cry,
and to the Lord I plead for mercy:
9 † "What profit is there in my death,[4]
if I go down to the pit?[5]

Will the dust praise you?
Will it tell of your faithfulness?
10 † Hear, O Lord, and be merciful to me!
O Lord, be my helper!”

11 † You have turned for me my mourning into dancing;
you have loosed my sackcloth
and clothed me with gladness,
12 † that my glory may sing your praise and not be silent.
O Lord my God, I will give thanks to you forever!

Into Your Hand I Commit My Spirit

31 [1]† To the choirmaster. A Psalm of David.

In you, O Lord, do I take refuge;
let me never be put to shame;
in your righteousness deliver me!

[2]† Incline your ear to me;
rescue me speedily!
Be a rock of refuge for me,
a strong fortress to save me!

[3]† For you are my rock and my
fortress;
and for your name's sake you lead
me and guide me;
[4]† you take me out of the net they have
hidden for me,
for you are my refuge.
[5]† Into your hand I commit my spirit;
you have redeemed me, O Lord, faithful
God.

[6]† I hate[1] those who pay regard to
worthless idols,
but I trust in the Lord.
[7]† I will rejoice and be glad in your steadfast
love,
because you have seen my affliction;
you have known the distress of my soul,
[8]† and you have not delivered me into the hand
of the enemy;
you have set my feet in a broad place.

9† Be gracious to me, O Lord, for I am in
distress;
my eye is wasted from grief;
my soul and my body also.
10† For my life is spent with sorrow,
and my years with sighing;
my strength fails because of my iniquity,
and my bones waste away.

11 Because of all my adversaries I have
become a reproach,
especially to my neighbors,
and an object of dread to my acquaintances;
those who see me in the street flee from me.
12† I have been forgotten like one who is dead;
I have become like a broken vessel.
13† For I hear the whispering of many—
terror on every side!—
as they scheme together against me,
as they plot to take my life.

14 But I trust in you, O Lord;
I say, “You are my God.”
15† My times are in your hand;
rescue me from the hand of my enemies and
from my persecutors!
16† Make your face shine on your servant;
save me in your steadfast love!
17† O Lord, let me not be put to shame,
for I call upon you;
let the wicked be put to shame;
let them go silently to Sheol.
18† Let the lying lips be mute,

which speak insolently against the
righteous
in pride and contempt.

19 Oh, how abundant is your goodness,
which you have stored up for those who fear
you
and worked for those who take refuge in
you,
in the sight of the children of mankind!
20† In the cover of your presence you hide them
from the plots of men;
you store them in your shelter
from the strife of tongues.

21† Blessed be the LORD,
for he has wondrously shown his steadfast
love to me
when I was in a besieged city.
22† I had said in my alarm,[2]
"I am cut off from your sight."
But you heard the voice of my pleas for
mercy
when I cried to you for help.
23†† Love the LORD, all you his saints!
The LORD preserves the faithful
but abundantly repays the one who acts in
pride.
24† Be strong, and let your heart take
courage,
all you who wait for the LORD!

Blessed Are the Forgiven

32 [1]† A Maskil[1] of David.

Blessed is the one whose transgression is
forgiven,
whose sin is covered.

[2]† Blessed is the man against whom the Lord
counts no iniquity,
and in whose spirit there is no deceit.

[3]†† For when I kept silent, my bones wasted
away
through my groaning all day long.
[4]† For day and night your hand was heavy
upon me;
my strength was dried up[2] as by the heat of
summer. *Selah*
[5]† I acknowledged my sin to you,
and I did not cover my iniquity;
I said, "I will confess my transgressions to
the Lord,"
and you forgave the iniquity of my sin. *Selah*

[6]† Therefore let everyone who is godly
offer prayer to you at a time when you may
be found;
surely in the rush of great waters,
they shall not reach him.
[7]† You are a hiding place for me;
you preserve me from trouble;
you surround me with shouts of
deliverance. *Selah*

[8] † I will instruct you and teach you in the way
you should go;
I will counsel you with my eye upon you.
[9] † Be not like a horse or a mule, without
understanding,
which must be curbed with bit and bridle,
or it will not stay near you.

[10] † Many are the sorrows of the wicked,
but steadfast love surrounds the one
who trusts in the Lord.
[11] † Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, O righteous,
and shout for joy, all you upright in heart!

The Steadfast Love of the Lord

33 [1] † Shout for joy in the Lord, O you righteous! Praise befits the upright.

[2] † Give thanks to the Lord with the lyre;
make melody to him with the harp of ten strings!
[3] † Sing to him a new song;
play skillfully on the strings, with loud shouts.

[4] † For the word of the Lord is upright,
and all his work is done in faithfulness.
[5] † He loves righteousness and justice;
the earth is full of the steadfast love of the Lord.

[6] † By the word of the Lord the heavens were made,
and by the breath of his mouth all their host.
[7] † He gathers the waters of the sea as a heap;
he puts the deeps in storehouses.

[8] † Let all the earth fear the Lord;
let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him!
[9] † For he spoke, and it came to be;
he commanded, and it stood firm.

10† The Lord brings the counsel of the nations
to nothing;
he frustrates the plans of the peoples.
11† The counsel of the Lord stands forever,
the plans of his heart to all generations.
12† Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord,
the people whom he has chosen as his
heritage!

13† The Lord looks down from heaven;
he sees all the children of man;
14 from where he sits enthroned he looks out
on all the inhabitants of the earth,
15† he who fashions the hearts of them all
and observes all their deeds.
16 The king is not saved by his great army;
a warrior is not delivered by his great strength.
17† The war horse is a false hope for salvation,
and by its great might it cannot rescue.

18† Behold, the eye of the Lord is on those who
fear him,
on those who hope in his steadfast love,
19† that he may deliver their soul from death
and keep them alive in famine.

20†† Our soul waits for the Lord;
he is our help and our shield.
21† For our heart is glad in him,
because we trust in his holy name.
22† Let your steadfast love, O Lord, be upon us,
even as we hope in you.

Taste and See That the Lord Is Good

34 [1] Of David, when he changed his behavior before Abimelech, so that he drove him out, and he went away.

1† I will bless the Lord at all times;
his praise shall continually be in my mouth.
2† My soul makes its boast in the Lord;
let the humble hear and be glad.
3† Oh, magnify the Lord with me,
and let us exalt his name together!

4† I sought the Lord, and he answered me
and delivered me from all my fears.
5† Those who look to him are radiant,
and their faces shall never be ashamed.
6† This poor man cried, and the Lord heard
him
and saved him out of all his troubles.
7† The angel of the Lord encamps
around those who fear him, and delivers
them.

8†† Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good!
Blessed is the man who takes refuge in
him!
9† Oh, fear the Lord, you his saints,
for those who fear him have no lack!
10† The young lions suffer want and hunger;
but those who seek the Lord lack no good
thing.

11† Come, O children, listen to me;
I will teach you the fear of the Lord.
12† What man is there who desires life
and loves many days, that he may
see good?
13† Keep your tongue from evil
and your lips from speaking deceit.
14† Turn away from evil and do good;
seek peace and pursue it.

15† The eyes of the Lord are toward the
righteous
and his ears toward their cry.
16† The face of the Lord is against those who do
evil,
to cut off the memory of them from the
earth.
17† When the righteous cry for help, the Lord
hears
and delivers them out of all their troubles.
18† The Lord is near to the brokenhearted
and saves the crushed in spirit.

19† Many are the afflictions of the righteous,
but the Lord delivers him out of them all.
20† He keeps all his bones;
not one of them is broken.
21† Affliction will slay the wicked,
and those who hate the righteous will be
condemned.
22† The Lord redeems the life of his servants;
none of those who take refuge in him will
be condemned.

Great Is the Lord

35 [1]†Of David.

Contend, O Lord, with those who contend
with me;
fight against those who fight against me!

[2]† Take hold of shield and buckler
and rise for my help!
[3]† Draw the spear and javelin[1]
against my pursuers!
Say to my soul,
“ I am your salvation!”

[4]†† Let them be put to shame and dishonor
who seek after my life!
Let them be turned back and disappointed
who devise evil against me!
[5]† Let them be like chaff before the wind,
with the angel of the Lord driving them
away!
[6]† Let their way be dark and slippery,
with the angel of the Lord pursuing them!

[7]† For without cause they hid their net for me;
without cause they dug a pit for my life.[1]
[8] Let destruction come upon him when he
does not know it!
And let the net that he hid ensnare him;
let him fall into it—to his destruction!

9 Then my soul will rejoice in the Lord,
exulting in his salvation.
10† All my bones shall say,
"O Lord, who is like you,
delivering the poor
from him who is too strong for him,
the poor and needy from him who robs
him?"

11† Malicious[2] witnesses rise up;
they ask me of things that I do not know.
12† They repay me evil for good;
my soul is bereft.[3]
13† But I, when they were sick—
I wore sackcloth;
I afflicted myself with fasting;
I prayed with head bowed[4] on my chest.
14 I went about as though I grieved for my
friend or my brother;
as one who laments his mother,
I bowed down in mourning.

15† But at my stumbling they rejoiced and
gathered;
they gathered together against me;
wretches whom I did not know
tore at me without ceasing;
16† like profane mockers at a feast,[5]
they gnash at me with their teeth.

17† How long, O Lord, will you look on?
Rescue me from their destruction,
my precious life from the lions!

18† I will thank you in the great congregation;
in the mighty throng I will praise you.

19† Let not those rejoice over me
who are wrongfully my foes,
and let not those wink the eye
who hate me without cause.
20† For they do not speak peace,
but against those who are quiet in the land
they devise words of deceit.
21† They open wide their mouths against me;
they say, “Aha, Aha!
Our eyes have seen it!”

22† You have seen, O Lord; be not silent!
O Lord, be not far from me!
23 Awake and rouse yourself for my
vindication,
for my cause, my God and my Lord!
24† Vindicate me, O Lord, my God,
according to your righteousness,
and let them not rejoice over me!
25 Let them not say in their hearts,
“Aha, our heart’s desire!”
Let them not say, “We have swallowed
him up.”

26† Let them be put to shame and disappointed
altogether
who rejoice at my calamity!
Let them be clothed with shame and
dishonor
who magnify themselves against me!

27 ††Let those who delight in my righteousness
shout for joy and be glad
and say evermore,
"Great is the LORD,
who delights in the welfare of his
servant!"
28 Then my tongue shall tell of your
righteousness
and of your praise all the day long.

How Precious Is Your Steadfast Love

36 To the choirmaster. Of David, the servant of the Lord.

1 Transgression speaks to the wicked
deep in his heart;[1]
there is no fear of God
before his eyes.
2 For he flatters himself in his own eyes
that his iniquity cannot be found out and
hated.
3 The words of his mouth are trouble and
deceit;
he has ceased to act wisely and do good.
4 He plots trouble while on his bed;
he sets himself in a way that is not good;
he does not reject evil.

5 Your steadfast love, O Lord, extends to the
heavens,
your faithfulness to the clouds.
6 Your righteousness is like the mountains of God;
your judgments are like the great deep;
man and beast you save, O Lord.

7 How precious is your steadfast love, O God!
The children of mankind take refuge in the
shadow of your wings.
8 They feast on the abundance of your
house,
and you give them drink from the river
of your delights.

9 For with you is the fountain of life;
in your light do we see light.

10 Oh, continue your steadfast love to those
who know you,
and your righteousness to the upright of
heart!
11 Let not the foot of arrogance come upon me,
nor the hand of the wicked drive me away.
12 There the evildoers lie fallen;
they are thrust down, unable to rise.

He Will Not Forsake His Saints

37 [1] ✝[1] Of David.

Fret not yourself because of evildoers;
be not envious of wrongdoers!

2 For they will soon fade like the grass
and wither like the green herb.

3 ✝ Trust in the Lord, and do good;
dwell in the land and befriend
faithfulness.[2]
4 ✝ Delight yourself in the Lord,
and he will give you the desires of your heart.

5 ✝ Commit your way to the Lord;
trust in him, and he will act.
6 ✝ He will bring forth your righteousness as the
light,
and your justice as the noonday.

7 ✝ Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for
him;
fret not yourself over the one who prospers
in his way,
over the man who carries out evil devices!

8 Refrain from anger, and forsake wrath!
Fret not yourself; it tends only to evil.
9 ✝ For the evildoers shall be cut off,

but those who wait for the Lord shall
inherit the land.

10 In just a little while, the wicked will be no
more;
though you look carefully at his place, he
will not be there.
11 But the meek shall inherit the land
and delight themselves in abundant peace.

12 The wicked plots against the righteous
and gnashes his teeth at him,
13 but the Lord laughs at the wicked,
for he sees that his day is coming.

14 The wicked draw the sword and bend their
bows
to bring down the poor and needy,
to slay those whose way is upright;
15 their sword shall enter their own heart,
and their bows shall be broken.

16 Better is the little that the righteous has
than the abundance of many wicked.
17 For the arms of the wicked shall be broken,
but the Lord upholds the righteous.

18 The Lord knows the days of the blameless,
and their heritage will remain forever;
19 they are not put to shame in evil times;
in the days of famine they
have abundance.

20 But the wicked will perish;
the enemies of the Lord are like the glory of
the pastures;
they vanish—like smoke they vanish away.

21 The wicked borrows but does not pay back,
but the righteous is generous and gives;
22 for those blessed by the Lord [1] shall inherit
the land,
but those cursed by him shall be cut off.

23 The steps of a man are established by the
Lord,
when he delights in his way;
24 though he fall, he shall not be cast
headlong,
for the Lord upholds his hand.

25 I have been young, and now am old,
yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken
or his children begging for bread.
26 He is ever lending generously,
and his children become a blessing.

27 Turn away from evil and do good;
so shall you dwell forever.
28 For the Lord loves justice;
he will not forsake his saints.
They are preserved forever,
but the children of the wicked shall be
cut off.

29 The righteous shall inherit the land
and dwell upon it forever.

30† The mouth of the righteous utters wisdom,
and his tongue speaks justice.
31† The law of his God is in his heart;
his steps do not slip.

32 The wicked watches for the righteous
and seeks to put him to death.
33† The LORD will not abandon him to his power
or let him be condemned when he is
brought to trial.

34† Wait for the LORD and keep his way,
and he will exalt you to inherit the land;
you will look on when the wicked are
cut off.

35 I have seen a wicked, ruthless man,
spreading himself like a green laurel tree.[1]
36 But he passed away,[2] and behold, he was no
more;
though I sought him, he could not be found.

37† Mark the blameless and behold the upright,
for there is a future for the man of peace.
38† But transgressors shall be
altogether destroyed;
the future of the wicked shall be cut off.

39 ✝ The salvation of the righteous is from the
LORD;
he is their stronghold in the time of
trouble.
40 The LORD helps them and delivers them;
he delivers them from the wicked and saves
them,
because they take refuge in him.

Do Not Forsake Me, O Lord

38 [1]† A Psalm of David, for the memorial offering.

O Lord, rebuke me not in your
anger,
nor discipline me in your wrath!

[2]†† For your arrows have sunk into me,
and your hand has come down on me.

[3]† There is no soundness in my flesh
because of your indignation;
there is no health in my bones
because of my sin.
[4]† For my iniquities have gone over my head;
like a heavy burden, they are too heavy
for me.

[5]† My wounds stink and fester
because of my foolishness,
[6]† I am utterly bowed down and prostrate;
all the day I go about mourning.
[7]† For my sides are filled with burning,
and there is no soundness in my flesh.
[8]† I am feeble and crushed;
I groan because of the tumult of my heart.

[9]† O Lord, all my longing is before you;
my sighing is not hidden from you.
[10]† My heart throbs; my strength fails me,
and the light of my eyes—it also has gone
from me.

11 ✝✝ My friends and companions stand aloof
from my plague,
and my nearest kin stand far off.

12 ✝ Those who seek my life lay their snares;
those who seek my hurt speak of ruin
and meditate treachery all day long.

13 ✝ But I am like a deaf man; I do not hear,
like a mute man who does not open
his mouth.
14 I have become like a man who does not
hear,
and in whose mouth are no rebukes.

15 ✝ But for you, O Lord, do I wait;
it is you, O Lord my God, who will
answer.
16 For I said, “Only let them not rejoice over
me,
who boast against me when my foot slips!”

17 ✝ For I am ready to fall,
and my pain is ever before me.
18 ✝ I confess my iniquity;
I am sorry for my sin.
19 ✝ But my foes are vigorous, they are mighty,
and many are those who hate
me wrongfully.
20 Those who render me evil for good
accuse me because I follow after good.

[21]† Do not forsake me, O Lord!
O my God, be not far from me!
[22]† Make haste to help me,
O Lord, my salvation!

What Is the Measure of My Days?

39 To the choirmaster: to Jeduthun. A Psalm of David.

1 I said, “I will guard my ways,
that I may not sin with my tongue;
I will guard my mouth with a muzzle,
so long as the wicked are in my presence.”
2 I was mute and silent;
I held my peace to no avail,
and my distress grew worse.
3 My heart became hot within me.
As I mused, the fire burned;
then I spoke with my tongue:
4 “O Lord, make me know my end
and what is the measure of my days;
let me know how fleeting I am!
5 Behold, you have made my days a few handbreadths,
and my lifetime is as nothing before you.
Surely all mankind stands as a mere breath!
6 Surely a man goes about as a shadow!
Surely for nothing[1] they are in turmoil;
man heaps up wealth and does not know who will gather!

7 “And now, O Lord, for what do I wait?
My hope is in you.
8 Deliver me from all my transgressions.
Do not make me the scorn of the fool!
9 I am mute; I do not open my mouth,
for it is you who have done it.
10 Remove your stroke from me;

I am spent by the hostility of your hand.
11 † When you discipline a man
with rebukes for sin,
you consume like a moth what is dear
to him;
surely all mankind is a mere breath! *Selah*

12 † "Hear my prayer, O LORD,
and give ear to my cry;
hold not your peace at my tears!
For I am a sojourner with you,
a guest, like all my fathers.
13 † Look away from me, that I may smile again,
before I depart and am no more!"

My Help and My Deliverer

40 [1]†To the choirmaster. A Psalm of David.

I waited patiently for the Lord;
he inclined to me and heard my cry.

[2]† He drew me up from the pit of destruction,
out of the miry bog,
and set my feet upon a rock,
making my steps secure.
[3]† He put a new song in my mouth,
a song of praise to our God.
Many will see and fear,
and put their trust in the Lord.

[4]† Blessed is the man who makes
the Lord his trust,
who does not turn to the proud,
to those who go astray after a lie!
[5]† You have multiplied, O Lord my God,
your wondrous deeds and your thoughts
toward us;
none can compare with you!
I will proclaim and tell of them,
yet they are more than can be told.

[6]† In sacrifice and offering you have not
delighted,
but you have given me an open ear.[1]
Burnt offering and sin offering
you have not required.
[7]† Then I said, “Behold, I have come;
in the scroll of the book it is written

of me:
8 † I delight to do your will, O my God;
your law is within my heart.”

9 † I have told the glad news of
deliverance[2]
in the great congregation;
behold, I have not restrained my lips,
as you know, O Lord.
10 † I have not hidden your deliverance within my
heart;
I have spoken of your faithfulness and your
salvation;
I have not concealed your steadfast love and
your faithfulness
from the great congregation.

11 † As for you, O Lord, you will not restrain
your mercy from me;
your steadfast love and your faithfulness will
ever preserve me!
12 † For evils have encompassed me
beyond number;
my iniquities have overtaken me,
and I cannot see;
they are more than the hairs of my head;
my heart fails me.

13 † Be pleased, O Lord, to deliver me!
O Lord, make haste to help me!
14 † Let those be put to shame and disappointed
altogether
who seek to snatch away my life;
let those be turned back and brought to

dishonor
who delight in my hurt!
15 † Let those be appalled because of their shame
who say to me, “Aha, Aha!”

16 † But may all who seek you
rejoice and be glad in you;
may those who love your salvation
say continually, “Great is the Lord!”
17 † As for me, I am poor and needy,
but the Lord takes thought for me.
You are my help and my deliverer;
do not delay, O my God!

O Lord, Be Gracious to Me

41 [1] ††To the choirmaster. A Psalm of David.

Blessed is the one who considers the poor![1]
In the day of trouble the Lord delivers him;

[2] † the Lord protects him and keeps him alive;
he is called blessed in the land;
you do not give him up to the will of his enemies.
[3] † The Lord sustains him on his sickbed;
in his illness you restore him to full health.[2]

[4] † As for me, I said, "O Lord, be gracious to me;
heal me,[3] for I have sinned against you!"
[5] † My enemies say of me in malice,
"When will he die, and his name perish?"
[6] † And when one comes to see me, he utters empty words,
while his heart gathers iniquity;
when he goes out, he tells it abroad.
[7] † All who hate me whisper together about me;
they imagine the worst for me.[4]

[8] † They say, "A deadly thing is poured out[5] on him;
he will not rise again from where he lies."
[9] † Even my close friend in whom I trusted,
who ate my bread, has lifted his heel against me.

[10]† But you, O Lord, be gracious to me,
and raise me up, that I may repay them!

[11]† By this I know that you delight in me:
my enemy will not shout in triumph over me.
[12]† But you have upheld me because
of my integrity,
and set me in your presence forever.

[13]† Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel,
from everlasting to everlasting!
Amen and Amen.

BOOK TWO

Why Are You Cast Down, O My Soul?

42 To the choirmaster. A Maskil[1] of the Sons of Korah.

1† As a deer pants for flowing streams,
so pants my soul for you, O God.
2† My soul thirsts for God,
for the living God.
When shall I come and appear before God?[2]
3† My tears have been my food
day and night,
while they say to me all the day long,
"Where is your God?"
4† These things I remember,
as I pour out my soul:
how I would go with the throng
and lead them in procession to the house of God
with glad shouts and songs of praise,
a multitude keeping festival.

5†† Why are you cast down, O my soul,
and why are you in turmoil within me?
Hope in God; for I shall again praise him,
my salvation[3] 6† and my God.

My soul is cast down within me;
therefore I remember you
from the land of Jordan and of Hermon,
from Mount Mizar.
7† Deep calls to deep
at the roar of your waterfalls;
all your breakers and your waves
have gone over me.

[8]† By day the LORD commands his steadfast
love,
and at night his song is with me,
a prayer to the God of my life.
[9]† I say to God, my rock:
"Why have you forgotten me?
Why do I go mourning
because of the oppression of the enemy?"
[10]† As with a deadly wound in my bones,
my adversaries taunt me,
while they say to me all the day long,
"Where is your God?"

[11]† Why are you cast down, O my soul,
and why are you in turmoil within me?
Hope in God; for I shall again praise him,
my salvation and my God.

Send Out Your Light and Your Truth

43 [1]† Vindicate me, O God, and defend my cause
against an ungodly people,
from the deceitful and unjust man
deliver me!

[2]† For you are the God in whom I take refuge;
why have you rejected me?
Why do I go about mourning
because of the oppression of the enemy?

[3]† Send out your light and your truth;
let them lead me;
let them bring me to your holy hill
and to your dwelling!
[4]† Then I will go to the altar of God,
to God my exceeding joy,
and I will praise you with the lyre,
O God, my God.

[5]† Why are you cast down, O my soul,
and why are you in turmoil within me?
Hope in God; for I shall again praise him,
my salvation and my God.

Come to Our Help

44 To the choirmaster. A Maskil [1] of the Sons of Korah.

1† O God, we have heard with our ears,
our fathers have told us,
what deeds you performed in their days,
in the days of old:
2† you with your own hand drove out the nations,
but them you planted;
you afflicted the peoples,
but them you set free;
3† for not by their own sword did they win the land,
nor did their own arm save them,
but your right hand and your arm,
and the light of your face,
for you delighted in them.

4† You are my King, O God;
ordain salvation for Jacob!
5† Through you we push down our foes;
through your name we tread down those who rise up against us.
6 For not in my bow do I trust,
nor can my sword save me.
7 But you have saved us from our foes
and have put to shame those who hate us.
8† In God we have boasted continually,
and we will give thanks to your name forever. *Selah*

9† But you have rejected us and disgraced us
and have not gone out with our armies.
10† You have made us turn back from the foe,
and those who hate us have gotten spoil.
11† You have made us like sheep for slaughter
and have scattered us among the nations.
12† You have sold your people for a trifle,
demanding no high price for them.
13 You have made us the taunt of our
neighbors,
the derision and scorn of those around us.
14† You have made us a byword among the
nations,
a laughingstock[1] among the peoples.
15 All day long my disgrace is before me,
and shame has covered my face
16† at the sound of the taunter and reviler,
at the sight of the enemy and the avenger.

17† All this has come upon us,
though we have not forgotten you,
and we have not been false to your
covenant.
18 Our heart has not turned back,
nor have our steps departed from your
way;
19† yet you have broken us in the place
of jackals
and covered us with the shadow of death.
20† If we had forgotten the name of our God
or spread out our hands to a foreign god,
21† would not God discover this?
For he knows the secrets of the heart.
22† Yet for your sake we are killed all the day
long;

we are regarded as sheep to be
slaughtered.

23† Awake! Why are you sleeping, O Lord?
Rouse yourself! Do not reject us forever!
24† Why do you hide your face?
Why do you forget our affliction and
oppression?
25 For our soul is bowed down to the dust;
our belly clings to the ground.
26† Rise up; come to our help!
Redeem us for the sake of your steadfast
love!

Your Throne, O God, Is Forever

45 To the choirmaster: according to Lilies. A Maskil[2] of the Sons of Korah;
a love song.

1 † My heart overflows with a pleasing theme;
I address my verses to the king;
my tongue is like the pen of a ready
scribe.

2 † You are the most handsome of the sons of
men;
grace is poured upon your lips;
therefore God has blessed you forever.
3 † Gird your sword on your thigh, O mighty one,
in your splendor and majesty!

4 † In your majesty ride out victoriously
for the cause of truth and meekness and
righteousness;
let your right hand teach you awesome
deeds!
5 Your arrows are sharp
in the heart of the king's enemies;
the peoples fall under you.

6 † Your throne, O God, is forever and ever.
The scepter of your kingdom is a scepter of
uprightness;
7 † you have loved righteousness and hated
wickedness.
Therefore God, your God, has anointed you

with the oil of gladness beyond your
companions;
8 your robes are all fragrant with myrrh and
aloes and cassia.
From ivory palaces stringed instruments
make you glad;
9 daughters of kings are among your ladies of
honor;
at your right hand stands the queen in gold
of Ophir.

10 Hear, O daughter, and consider, and incline
your ear:
forget your people and your father's house,
11 and the king will desire your beauty.
Since he is your lord, bow to him.
12 The people[1] of Tyre will seek your favor
with gifts,
the richest of the people.[2]

13 All glorious is the princess in her chamber,
with robes interwoven with gold.
14 In many-colored robes she is led to the
king,
with her virgin companions following
behind her.
15 With joy and gladness they are led along
as they enter the palace of the king.

16 In place of your fathers shall be your sons;
you will make them princes in all the earth.
17 I will cause your name to be remembered in
all generations;

therefore nations will praise you forever and ever.

God Is Our Fortress

46 To the choirmaster. Of the Sons of Korah. According to Alamoth.[1] A Song.

1 † God is our refuge and strength,
a very present[2] help in trouble.
2 † Therefore we will not fear though the earth
gives way,
though the mountains be moved into the
heart of the sea,
3 † though its waters roar and foam,
though the mountains tremble at its
swelling. *Selah*

4 † There is a river whose streams make
glad the city of God,
the holy habitation of the Most High.
5 † God is in the midst of her; she shall not be
moved;
God will help her when morning dawns.
6 † The nations rage, the kingdoms totter;
he utters his voice, the earth melts.
7 † The Lord of hosts is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress. *Selah*

8 † Come, behold the works of the Lord,
how he has brought desolations on the earth.
9 † He makes wars cease to the end of the earth;
he breaks the bow and shatters the spear;
he burns the chariots with fire.
10 † "Be still, and know that I am God.

I will be exalted among the nations,
I will be exalted in the earth!”
11 † The Lord of hosts is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress. *Selah*

God Is King over All the Earth

47 To the choirmaster. A Psalm of the Sons of Korah.

1† Clap your hands, all peoples!
Shout to God with loud songs of joy!
2† For the Lord, the Most High, is to be feared,
a great king over all the earth.
3† He subdued peoples under us,
and nations under our feet.
4† He chose our heritage for us,
the pride of Jacob whom he loves. *Selah*

5† God has gone up with a shout,
the Lord with the sound of a trumpet.
6 Sing praises to God, sing praises!
Sing praises to our King, sing praises!
7† For God is the King of all the earth;
sing praises with a psalm![1]

8 God reigns over the nations;
God sits on his holy throne.
9† The princes of the peoples gather
as the people of the God of Abraham.
For the shields of the earth belong to God;
he is highly exalted!

Zion, the City of Our God

48 [1]†A Song. A Psalm of the Sons of Korah.

Great is the Lord and greatly to be
praised
in the city of our God!
His holy mountain, [2]† beautiful in elevation,
is the joy of all the earth,
Mount Zion, in the far north,
the city of the great King.

[3] Within her citadels God
has made himself known as a fortress.

[4]†† For behold, the kings assembled;
they came on together.
[5] As soon as they saw it, they were astounded;
they were in panic; they took to flight.
[6] Trembling took hold of them there,
anguish as of a woman in labor.
[7]† By the east wind you shattered
the ships of Tarshish.
[8]† As we have heard, so have we seen
in the city of the Lord of hosts,
in the city of our God,
which God will establish forever. *Selah*

[9]† We have thought on your steadfast love,
O God,
in the midst of your temple.
[10]† As your name, O God,
so your praise reaches to the ends of the earth.
Your right hand is filled with righteousness.

11 Let Mount Zion be glad!
Let the daughters of Judah rejoice
because of your judgments!

12 Walk about Zion, go around her,
number her towers,
13 consider well her ramparts,
go through her citadels,
that you may tell the next generation
14 that this is God,
our God forever and ever.
He will guide us forever.[1]

Why Should I Fear in Times of Trouble?

49 To the choirmaster. A Psalm of the Sons of Korah.

1 Hear this, all peoples!
Give ear, all inhabitants of the world,
2 both low and high,
rich and poor together!
3 My mouth shall speak wisdom;
the meditation of my heart shall be
understanding.
4 I will incline my ear to a proverb;
I will solve my riddle to the music of the
lyre.

5 Why should I fear in times of trouble,
when the iniquity of those who cheat me
surrounds me,
6 those who trust in their wealth
and boast of the abundance of their riches?
7 Truly no man can ransom another,
or give to God the price of his life,
8 for the ransom of their life is costly
and can never suffice,
9 that he should live on forever
and never see the pit.

10 For he sees that even the wise die;
the fool and the stupid alike must perish
and leave their wealth to others.
11 Their graves are their homes forever,[1]
their dwelling places to all generations,

though they called lands by their own
names.
12† Man in his pomp will not remain;
he is like the beasts that perish.

13† This is the path of those who have foolish
confidence;
yet after them people approve of their
boasts.[2] *Selah*
14† Like sheep they are appointed for Sheol;
death shall be their shepherd,
and the upright shall rule over them in the
morning.
Their form shall be consumed in Sheol,
with no place to dwell.
15† But God will ransom my soul from the
power of Sheol,
for he will receive me. *Selah*

16 Be not afraid when a man becomes rich,
when the glory of his house increases.
17† For when he dies he will carry nothing away;
his glory will not go down after him.
18† For though, while he lives, he counts
himself blessed
—and though you get praise when you do
well for yourself—
19† his soul will go to the generation of his
fathers,
who will never again see light.
20† Man in his pomp yet without understanding is
like the beasts that perish.

God Himself Is Judge

50 [1]†A Psalm of Asaph.

The Mighty One, God the Lord,
speaks and summons the earth
from the rising of the sun to its
setting.

[2]† Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty,
God shines forth.

[3]† Our God comes; he does not keep silence;[1]
before him is a devouring fire,
around him a mighty tempest.
[4]† He calls to the heavens above
and to the earth, that he may judge his
people:
[5]† "Gather to me my faithful ones,
who made a covenant with me by
sacrifice!"
[6]† The heavens declare his righteousness,
for God himself is judge! *Selah*
[7]† "Hear, O my people, and I will speak;
O Israel, I will testify against you.
I am God, your God.
[8]†† Not for your sacrifices do I rebuke you;
your burnt offerings are continually before
me.
[9] I will not accept a bull from your house
or goats from your folds.
[10]† For every beast of the forest is mine,
the cattle on a thousand hills.
[11] I know all the birds of the hills,

and all that moves in the field is mine.
12 “If I were hungry, I would not tell you,
for the world and its fullness are mine.
13 Do I eat the flesh of bulls
or drink the blood of goats?
14 Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving,[2]
and perform your vows to the Most High,
15 and call upon me in the day of trouble;
I will deliver you, and you shall glorify
me.”

16 But to the wicked God says:
“What right have you to recite my
statutes
or take my covenant on your lips?
17 For you hate discipline,
and you cast my words behind you.
18 If you see a thief, you are pleased with him,
and you keep company with adulterers.
19 “You give your mouth free rein for evil,
and your tongue frames deceit.
20 You sit and speak against your brother;
you slander your own mother’s son.
21 These things you have done, and I have
been silent;
you thought that I[1] was one like yourself.
But now I rebuke you and lay the charge
before you.

22 “Mark this, then, you who forget God,
lest I tear you apart, and there be none to
deliver!
23 The one who offers thanksgiving as his
sacrifice glorifies me;

to one who orders his way rightly
I will show the salvation of God!”

Create in Me a Clean Heart, O God

51 To the choirmaster. A Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet went to him,
after he had gone in to Bathsheba.

1 † Have mercy on me,[2] O God,
according to your steadfast love;
according to your abundant mercy
blot out my transgressions.
2 † Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,
and cleanse me from my sin!

3 For I know my transgressions,
and my sin is ever before me.
4 † Against you, you only, have I sinned
and done what is evil in your sight,
so that you may be justified in your words
and blameless in your judgment.
5 † Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity,
and in sin did my mother conceive me.
6 † Behold, you delight in truth in the inward
being,
and you teach me wisdom in the secret
heart.

7 † Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;
wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.
8 † Let me hear joy and gladness;
let the bones that you have broken rejoice.
9 Hide your face from my sins,
and blot out all my iniquities.
10 † Create in me a clean heart, O God,

and renew a right[1] spirit within me.
11 Cast me not away from your presence,
and take not your Holy Spirit from me.
12 Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
and uphold me with a willing spirit.

13 Then I will teach transgressors your ways,
and sinners will return to you.
14 Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God,
O God of my salvation,
and my tongue will sing aloud of
your righteousness.
15 O Lord, open my lips,
and my mouth will declare your praise.
16 For you will not delight in sacrifice, or I
would give it;
you will not be pleased with a burnt
offering.
17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit;
a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will
not despise.

18 Do good to Zion in your good pleasure;
build up the walls of Jerusalem;
19 then will you delight in right sacrifices,
in burnt offerings and whole burnt
offerings;
then bulls will be offered on your altar.

The Steadfast Love of God Endures

52 To the choirmaster. A Maskil [2] of David, when Doeg, the Edomite, came and told Saul, "David has come to the house of Ahimelech."

1 † Why do you boast of evil, O mighty man?
The steadfast love of God endures all the day.

2 † Your tongue plots destruction,
like a sharp razor, you worker of deceit.
3 † You love evil more than good,
and lying more than speaking what is right.
Selah
4 You love all words that devour,
O deceitful tongue.

5 † But God will break you down forever;
he will snatch and tear you from your tent;
he will uproot you from the land of the living. *Selah*
6 † The righteous shall see and fear,
and shall laugh at him, saying,
7 "See the man who would not make
God his refuge,
but trusted in the abundance of his riches
and sought refuge in his own destruction!"[1]

[8] † But I am like a green olive tree
in the house of God.
I trust in the steadfast love of God
forever and ever.
[9] † I will thank you forever,
because you have done it.
I will wait for your name, for it is
good,
in the presence of the godly.

There Is None Who Does Good

53 To the choirmaster: according to Mahalath.
A Maskil [2] of David.

1 ††† The fool says in his heart, “There is no God.”
They are corrupt, doing abominable iniquity;
there is none who does good.

2 † God looks down from heaven
on the children of man
to see if there are any who understand,[3]
who seek after God.

3 They have all fallen away;
together they have become corrupt;
there is none who does good,
not even one.

4 † Have those who work evil no knowledge,
who eat up my people as they eat bread,
and do not call upon God?

5 † There they are, in great terror,
where there is no terror!
For God scatters the bones of him who
encamps against you;
you put them to shame, for God has
rejected them.

[6]† Oh, that salvation for Israel would come out
of Zion!
When God restores the fortunes of his people,
let Jacob rejoice, let Israel be glad.

The Lord Upholds My Life

54 To the choirmaster: with stringed instruments. A Maskil [1] of David, when the Ziphites went and told Saul, "Is not David hiding among us?"

1 † O God, save me by your name,
and vindicate me by your might.
2 O God, hear my prayer;
give ear to the words of my mouth.

3 † For strangers[2] have risen against me;
ruthless men seek my life;
they do not set God before themselves.
Selah

4 † Behold, God is my helper;
the Lord is the upholder of my life.
5 † He will return the evil to my enemies;
in your faithfulness put an end to
them.

6 † With a freewill offering I will sacrifice to
you;
I will give thanks to your name,
O Lord, for it is good.
7 For he has delivered me from every trouble,
and my eye has looked in triumph on my
enemies.

Cast Your Burden on the Lord

55 To the choirmaster: with stringed instruments. A Maskil [3] of David.

1 † Give ear to my prayer, O God,
and hide not yourself from my plea for
mercy!
2 Attend to me, and answer me;
I am restless in my complaint and
I moan,
3 † because of the noise of the enemy,
because of the oppression of the wicked.
For they drop trouble upon me,
and in anger they bear a grudge against me.

4 † My heart is in anguish within me;
the terrors of death have fallen upon me.
5 Fear and trembling come upon me,
and horror overwhelms me.
6 † And I say, “Oh, that I had wings like a dove!
I would fly away and be at rest;
7 † yes, I would wander far away;
I would lodge in the wilderness; *Selah*
8 I would hurry to find a shelter
from the raging wind and tempest.”

9 † Destroy, O Lord, divide their tongues;
for I see violence and strife in the city.
10 † Day and night they go around it
on its walls,
and iniquity and trouble are within it;
11 ruin is in its midst;

oppression and fraud
do not depart from its marketplace.

12 For it is not an enemy who taunts me—
then I could bear it;
it is not an adversary who deals insolently
with me—
then I could hide from him.
13 But it is you, a man, my equal,
my companion, my familiar friend.
14 We used to take sweet counsel together;
within God's house we walked in the throng.
15 Let death steal over them;
let them go down to Sheol alive;
for evil is in their dwelling place and in their
heart.

16 But I call to God,
and the LORD will save me.
17 Evening and morning and at noon
I utter my complaint and moan,
and he hears my voice.
18 He redeems my soul in safety
from the battle that I wage,
for many are arrayed against me.
19 God will give ear and humble them,
he who is enthroned from of old, *Selah*
because they do not change
and do not fear God.

20 My companion[1] stretched out his hand against his friends;
he violated his covenant.
21 His speech was smooth as butter,
yet war was in his heart;

his words were softer than oil,
yet they were drawn swords.

22† Cast your burden on the LORD,
and he will sustain you;
he will never permit
the righteous to be moved.

23† But you, O God, will cast them down
into the pit of destruction;
men of blood and treachery
shall not live out half their days.
But I will trust in you.

In God I Trust

56 To the choirmaster: according to The
Dove on Far-off Terebinths. A Miktam[1]
of David, when the Philistines seized him
in Gath.

1 † Be gracious to me, O God, for man tramples
on me;
all day long an attacker oppresses me;
2 my enemies trample on me all day long,
for many attack me proudly.
3 When I am afraid,
I put my trust in you.
4 † In God, whose word I praise,
in God I trust; I shall not be afraid.
What can flesh do to me?

5 † All day long they injure my cause;[2]
all their thoughts are against me for
evil.
6 They stir up strife, they lurk;
they watch my steps,
as they have waited for my life.
7 † For their crime will they escape?
In wrath cast down the peoples, O God!

8 † You have kept count of my tossings;[3]
put my tears in your bottle.
Are they not in your book?
9 † Then my enemies will turn back
in the day when I call.
This I know, that[4] God is for me.

10† In God, whose word I praise,
in the LORD, whose word I praise,
11 in God I trust; I shall not be afraid.
What can man do to me?

12† I must perform my vows to you, O God;
I will render thank offerings to you.
13† For you have delivered my soul from death,
yes, my feet from falling,
that I may walk before God
in the light of life.

Let Your Glory Be over All the Earth

57 To the choirmaster: according to Do Not Destroy. A Miktam[1] of David, when he fled from Saul, in the cave.

1 † Be merciful to me, O God, be merciful to me,
for in you my soul takes refuge;
in the shadow of your wings I will take refuge,
till the storms of destruction pass by.
2 † I cry out to God Most High,
to God who fulfills his purpose for me.
3 † He will send from heaven and save me;
he will put to shame him who tramples
on me. *Selah*
God will send out his steadfast love and his
faithfulness!

4 † My soul is in the midst of lions;
I lie down amid fiery beasts—
the children of man, whose teeth are spears
and arrows,
whose tongues are sharp swords.

5 † Be exalted, O God, above the heavens!
Let your glory be over all the earth!

6 They set a net for my steps;
my soul was bowed down.
They dug a pit in my way,
but they have fallen into it themselves.
Selah
7 † My heart is steadfast, O God,

my heart is steadfast!
I will sing and make melody!
8 † Awake, my glory![2]
Awake, O harp and lyre!
I will awake the dawn!
9 † I will give thanks to you, O Lord, among the peoples;
I will sing praises to you among the nations.
10 † For your steadfast love is great to the heavens,
your faithfulness to the clouds.

11 † Be exalted, O God, above the heavens!
Let your glory be over all the earth!

God Who Judges the Earth

58 To the choirmaster: according to Do Not Destroy. A Miktam[3] of David.

1† Do you indeed decree what is right, you gods?[4]
Do you judge the children of man uprightly?
2† No, in your hearts you devise wrongs;
your hands deal out violence on earth.

3† The wicked are estranged from the womb;
they go astray from birth, speaking lies.
4† They have venom like the venom of
a serpent,
like the deaf adder that stops its ear,
5 so that it does not hear the voice of charmers
or of the cunning enchanter.

6† O God, break the teeth in their mouths;
tear out the fangs of the young lions,
O Lord!
7† Let them vanish like water that runs away;
when he aims his arrows, let them be
blunted.
8† Let them be like the snail that dissolves into
slime,
like the stillborn child who never sees the
sun.
9† Sooner than your pots can feel the heat
of thorns,
whether green or ablaze, may he sweep
them away![1]

10 † The righteous will rejoice when he sees the
vengeance;
he will bathe his feet in the blood of the
wicked.
11 † Mankind will say, “Surely there is a reward
for the righteous;
surely there is a God who judges on earth.”

Deliver Me from My Enemies

59 To the choirmaster: according to Do Not Destroy. A Miktam [2] of David, when Saul sent men to watch his house in order to kill him.

1 Deliver me from my enemies, O my God;
protect me from those who rise up against me;
2 deliver me from those who work evil,
and save me from bloodthirsty men.

3† For behold, they lie in wait for my life;
fierce men stir up strife against me.
For no transgression or sin of mine, O Lord,
4 for no fault of mine, they run and make ready.
Awake, come to meet me, and see!
5† You, Lord God of hosts, are God of Israel.
Rouse yourself to punish all the nations;
spare none of those who treacherously plot evil. *Selah*

6† Each evening they come back,
howling like dogs
and prowling about the city.
7† There they are, bellowing with their mouths
with swords in their lips—
for "Who," they think,[1] "will hear us?"

8 But you, O Lord, laugh at them;
you hold all the nations in derision.

9 O my Strength, I will watch for you,
for you, O God, are my fortress.
10† My God in his steadfast love[2] will meet me;
God will let me look in triumph on my
enemies.

11† Kill them not, lest my people forget;
make them totter[3] by your power and bring
them down,
O Lord, our shield!
12† For the sin of their mouths, the words of
their lips,
let them be trapped in their pride.
For the cursing and lies that they utter,
13† consume them in wrath;
consume them till they are no more,
that they may know that God rules over Jacob
to the ends of the earth. *Selah*

14† Each evening they come back,
howling like dogs
and prowling about the city.
15 They wander about for food
and growl if they do not get their fill.

16† But I will sing of your strength;
I will sing aloud of your steadfast love in the
morning.
For you have been to me a fortress
and a refuge in the day of my distress.
17 O my Strength, I will sing praises to you,
for you, O God, are my fortress,
the God who shows me steadfast love.

He Will Tread Down Our Foes

60 To the choirmaster: according to Shushan Eduth. A Miktam [4] of David; for instruction; when he strove with Aram-naharaim and with Aram-zobah, and when Joab on his return struck down twelve thousand of Edom in the Valley of Salt.

1† O God, you have rejected us, broken our
defenses;
you have been angry; oh, restore us.
2† You have made the land to quake; you have
torn it open;
repair its breaches, for it totters.
3† You have made your people see hard things;
you have given us wine to drink that made
us stagger.

4† You have set up a banner for those who fear
you,
that they may flee to it from the bow.[1]
Selah
5† That your beloved ones may be delivered,
give salvation by your right hand and
answer us!

6† God has spoken in his holiness:[2]
"With exultation I will divide up Shechem
and portion out the Vale of Succoth.
7† Gilead is mine; Manasseh is mine;
Ephraim is my helmet;
Judah is my scepter.
8† Moab is my washbasin;
upon Edom I cast my shoe;
over Philistia I shout in triumph."[3]

9† Who will bring me to the fortified city?
Who will lead me to Edom?
10† Have you not rejected us, O God?
You do not go forth, O God, with our armies.
11† Oh, grant us help against the foe,
for vain is the salvation of man!
12 With God we shall do valiantly;
it is he who will tread down our foes.

Lead Me to the Rock

61 To the choirmaster: with stringed instruments. Of David.

1 Hear my cry, O God,
listen to my prayer;
2† from the end of the earth I call to you
when my heart is faint.
Lead me to the rock
that is higher than I,
3 for you have been my refuge,
a strong tower against the enemy.

4† Let me dwell in your tent forever!
Let me take refuge under the shelter of
your wings! *Selah*
5† For you, O God, have heard my vows;
you have given me the heritage of those
who fear your name.

6† Prolong the life of the king;
may his years endure to all generations!
7† May he be enthroned forever before God;
appoint steadfast love and faithfulness to
watch over him!

8† So will I ever sing praises to your name,
as I perform my vows day after day.

My Soul Waits for God Alone

62 To the choirmaster: according to Jeduthun. A Psalm of David.

1 For God alone my soul waits in
silence;
from him comes my salvation.
2 He only is my rock and my salvation,
my fortress; I shall not be greatly
shaken.

3 How long will all of you attack a man
to batter him,
like a leaning wall, a tottering fence?
4 They only plan to thrust him down from
his high position.
They take pleasure in falsehood.
They bless with their mouths,
but inwardly they curse. *Selah*

5 For God alone, O my soul, wait in silence,
for my hope is from him.
6 He only is my rock and my salvation,
my fortress; I shall not be shaken.
7 On God rests my salvation and my glory;
my mighty rock, my refuge is God.

8 Trust in him at all times, O people;
pour out your heart before him;
God is a refuge for us. *Selah*

9† Those of low estate are but a breath;
those of high estate are a delusion;
in the balances they go up;
they are together lighter than a breath.
10† Put no trust in extortion;
set no vain hopes on robbery;
if riches increase, set not your heart on
them.

11†† Once God has spoken;
twice have I heard this:
that power belongs to God,
12† and that to you, O Lord, belongs steadfast
love.
For you will render to a man
according to his work.

My Soul Thirsts for You

63 A Psalm of David, when he was in the wilderness of Judah.

1† O God, you are my God; earnestly I seek you;
my soul thirsts for you;
my flesh faints for you,
as in a dry and weary land where there is
no water.
2† So I have looked upon you in the sanctuary,
beholding your power and glory.
3† Because your steadfast love is better than life,
my lips will praise you.
4† So I will bless you as long as I live;
in your name I will lift up my hands.

5† My soul will be satisfied as with fat and rich
food,
and my mouth will praise you with joyful lips,
6† when I remember you upon my bed,
and meditate on you in the watches of the
night;
7† for you have been my help,
and in the shadow of your wings I will sing
for joy.
8† My soul clings to you;
your right hand upholds me.

9† But those who seek to destroy my life
shall go down into the depths of the
earth;
10† they shall be given over to the power of the
sword;

they shall be a portion for jackals.
11† But the king shall rejoice in God;
all who swear by him shall exult,
for the mouths of liars will be stopped.

Hide Me from the Wicked

64 [1] To the choirmaster. A Psalm of David.
Hear my voice, O God, in my
complaint;
preserve my life from dread of the enemy.

[2] Hide me from the secret plots of the
wicked,
from the throng of evildoers,
[3] who whet their tongues like swords,
who aim bitter words like arrows,
[4] shooting from ambush at the blameless,
shooting at him suddenly and without
fear.
[5] They hold fast to their evil purpose;
they talk of laying snares secretly,
thinking, "Who can see them?"
[6] They search out injustice,
saying, "We have accomplished a diligent
search."
For the inward mind and heart of a man
are deep!

[7] But God shoots his arrow at them;
they are wounded suddenly.
[8] They are brought to ruin, with their
own tongues turned against them;
all who see them will wag their
heads.
[9] Then all mankind fears;
they tell what God has brought about
and ponder what he has done.

10 † Let the righteous one rejoice in
the LORD
and take refuge in him!
Let all the upright in heart exult!

O God of Our Salvation

65 [1]† To the choirmaster. A Psalm of David. A Song.

Praise is due to you,[1] O God, in Zion,
and to you shall vows be performed.

[2]† O you who hear prayer,
to you shall all flesh come.
[3]† When iniquities prevail against me,
you atone for our transgressions.
[4]† Blessed is the one you choose and bring near,
to dwell in your courts!
We shall be satisfied with the goodness of your house,
the holiness of your temple!

[5]† By awesome deeds you answer us with righteousness,
O God of our salvation,
the hope of all the ends of the earth
and of the farthest seas;
[6]† the one who by his strength established the mountains,
being girded with might;
[7] who stills the roaring of the seas,
the roaring of their waves,
the tumult of the peoples,
[8]† so that those who dwell at the ends of the earth are in awe at your signs.
You make the going out of the morning and the evening to shout for joy.

9 † You visit the earth and water it;[2]
you greatly enrich it;
the river of God is full of water;
you provide their grain,
for so you have prepared it.
10 † You water its furrows abundantly,
settling its ridges,
softening it with showers,
and blessing its growth.
11 † You crown the year with your bounty;
your wagon tracks overflow with
abundance.
12 † The pastures of the wilderness overflow,
the hills gird themselves with joy,
13 † the meadows clothe themselves with flocks,
the valleys deck themselves with grain,
they shout and sing together for joy.

How Awesome Are Your Deeds

66 [1]† To the choirmaster. A Song. A Psalm.
Shout for joy to God, all the earth;

[2]† sing the glory of his name;
give to him glorious praise!
[3]† Say to God, "How awesome are your
deeds!
So great is your power that your
enemies come cringing to you.
[4]† All the earth worships you
and sings praises to you;
they sing praises to your name." *Selah*

[5] Come and see what God has done:
he is awesome in his deeds toward the
children of man.
[6]† He turned the sea into dry land;
they passed through the river on foot.
There did we rejoice in him,
[7]† who rules by his might forever,
whose eyes keep watch on the nations—
let not the rebellious exalt themselves. *Selah*

[8]† Bless our God, O peoples;
let the sound of his praise be heard,
[9]† who has kept our soul among the living
and has not let our feet slip.
[10]† For you, O God, have tested us;
you have tried us as silver is tried.
[11]† You brought us into the net;
you laid a crushing burden on our backs;

12† you let men ride over our heads;
we went through fire and through water;
yet you have brought us out to a place
of abundance.

13† I will come into your house with burnt
offerings;
I will perform my vows to you,
14† that which my lips uttered
and my mouth promised when I was in
trouble.
15† I will offer to you burnt offerings of fattened
animals,
with the smoke of the sacrifice of rams;
I will make an offering of bulls and goats. *Selah*

16† Come and hear, all you who fear God,
and I will tell what he has done for my soul.
17 I cried to him with my mouth,
and high praise was on[1] my tongue.[2]
18† If I had cherished iniquity in my heart,
the Lord would not have listened.
19 But truly God has listened;
he has attended to the voice of my prayer.

20 Blessed be God,
because he has not rejected my prayer
or removed his steadfast love from me!

Make Your Face Shine upon Us

67 To the choirmaster: with stringed instruments. A Psalm. A Song.

1† May God be gracious to us and bless us
and make his face to shine upon us, *Selah*
2† that your way may be known on earth,
your saving power among all nations.
3† Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you!

4† Let the nations be glad and sing for joy,
for you judge the peoples with equity
and guide the nations upon earth. *Selah*
5† Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you!

6† The earth has yielded its increase;
God, our God, shall bless us.
7† God shall bless us;
let all the ends of the earth fear
him!

God Shall Scatter His Enemies

68 [1]† To the choirmaster. A Psalm of David. A Song.
God shall arise, his enemies shall
be scattered;
and those who hate him shall flee before
him!

[2] As smoke is driven away, so you shall drive
them away;
as wax melts before fire,
so the wicked shall perish before God!
[3]† But the righteous shall be glad;
they shall exult before God;
they shall be jubilant with joy!

[4]† Sing to God, sing praises to his name;
lift up a song to him who rides through the
deserts;
his name is the Lord;
exult before him!
[5]† Father of the fatherless and protector of
widows
is God in his holy habitation.
[6]† God settles the solitary in a home;
he leads out the prisoners to prosperity,
but the rebellious dwell in a parched land.

[7]† O God, when you went out before your
people,
when you marched
through the wilderness, *Selah*
[8]† the earth quaked, the heavens poured down

rain,
before God, the One of Sinai,
before God, the God of Israel.
9 † Rain in abundance, O God, you shed abroad;
you restored your inheritance as it
languished;
10 your flock[1] found a dwelling in it;
in your goodness, O God, you provided for
the needy.

11 † The Lord gives the word;
the women who announce the news are a
great host:
12 "The kings of the armies—they flee, they
flee!"
The women at home divide the spoil—
13 though you men lie among the
sheepfolds—
the wings of a dove covered with silver,
its pinions with shimmering gold.
14 † When the Almighty scatters kings there,
let snow fall on Zalmon.

15 † O mountain of God, mountain of Bashan;
O many-peaked[2] mountain, mountain of
Bashan!
16 Why do you look with hatred, O many-
peaked mountain,
at the mount that God desired for his abode,
yes, where the LORD will dwell forever?
17 † The chariots of God are twice ten thousand,
thousands upon thousands;
the Lord is among them; Sinai is now in the
sanctuary.

18 You ascended on high,
leading a host of captives in your train
and receiving gifts among men,
even among the rebellious, that the Lord
God may dwell there.

19 Blessed be the Lord,
who daily bears us up;
God is our salvation. *Selah*
20 Our God is a God of salvation,
and to God, the Lord, belong deliverances
from death.
21 But God will strike the heads of his enemies,
the hairy crown of him who walks in his
guilty ways.
22 The Lord said,
"I will bring them back from Bashan,
I will bring them back from the depths of the
sea,
23 that you may strike your feet in their blood,
that the tongues of your dogs may have
their portion from the foe."

24 Your procession is[1] seen, O God,
the procession of my God, my King, into
the sanctuary—
25 the singers in front, the musicians last,
between them virgins playing
tambourines:
26 "Bless God in the great congregation,
the Lord, O you[2] who are of Israel's
fountain!"
27 There is Benjamin, the least of them, in the
lead,

the princes of Judah in their throng,
the princes of Zebulun, the princes of
Naphtali.

28 † Summon your power, O God,[3]
the power, O God, by which you have
worked for us.
29 Because of your temple at Jerusalem
kings shall bear gifts to you.
30 Rebuke the beasts that dwell among the
reeds,
the herd of bulls with the calves of the
peoples.
Trample underfoot those who lust after
tribute;
scatter the peoples who delight in war.[4]
31 Nobles shall come from Egypt;
Cush shall hasten to stretch out her hands
to God.

32 † O kingdoms of the earth, sing to God;
sing praises to the Lord, *Selah*
33 to him who rides in the heavens, the
ancient heavens;
behold, he sends out his voice, his mighty
voice.
34 Ascribe power to God,
whose majesty is over Israel,
and whose power is in the skies.
35 Awesome is God from his[5] sanctuary;
the God of Israel—he is the one who
gives power and strength to his
people.
Blessed be God!

Save Me, O God

69 To the choirmaster: according to Lilies. Of David.

1 Save me, O God!
For the waters have come up to my neck.[6]
2 I sink in deep mire,
where there is no foothold;
I have come into deep waters,
and the flood sweeps over me.
3 I am weary with my crying out;
my throat is parched.
My eyes grow dim
with waiting for my God.

4 More in number than the hairs of my head
are those who hate me without cause;
mighty are those who would destroy me,
those who attack me with lies.
What I did not steal
must I now restore?
5 O God, you know my folly;
the wrongs I have done are not hidden from you.

6 Let not those who hope in you be put to shame through me,
O Lord God of hosts;
let not those who seek you be brought to dishonor through me,
O God of Israel.

7† For it is for your sake that I have borne
reproach,
that dishonor has covered my face.
8† I have become a stranger to my brothers,
an alien to my mother's sons.

9† For zeal for your house has consumed me,
and the reproaches of those who reproach
you have fallen on me.
10† When I wept and humbled[1] my soul with
fasting,
it became my reproach.
11 When I made sackcloth my clothing,
I became a byword to them.
12† I am the talk of those who sit in the gate,
and the drunkards make songs about me.

13† But as for me, my prayer is to you, O Lord.
At an acceptable time, O God,
in the abundance of your steadfast love
answer me in your saving faithfulness.
14 Deliver me
from sinking in the mire;
let me be delivered from my enemies
and from the deep waters.
15 Let not the flood sweep over me,
or the deep swallow me up,
or the pit close its mouth over me.

16 Answer me, O Lord, for your steadfast love
is good;
according to your abundant mercy, turn to me.
17† Hide not your face from your servant;
for I am in distress; make haste to

answer me.
18 † Draw near to my soul, redeem me;
ransom me because of my enemies!

19 † You know my reproach,
and my shame and my dishonor;
my foes are all known to you.
20 Reproaches have broken my heart,
so that I am in despair.
I looked for pity, but there was none,
and for comforters, but I found none.
21 † They gave me poison for food,
and for my thirst they gave me sour wine
to drink.

22 †† Let their own table before them become a
snare;
and when they are at peace, let it become a
trap.[2]
23 Let their eyes be darkened, so that they
cannot see,
and make their loins tremble continually.
24 Pour out your indignation upon them,
and let your burning anger overtake them.
25 † May their camp be a desolation;
let no one dwell in their tents.
26 For they persecute him whom you have
struck down,
and they recount the pain of those you
have wounded.
27 Add to them punishment upon punishment;
may they have no acquittal from you.[1]
28 † Let them be blotted out of the book of the

living;
let them not be enrolled among the righteous.

29 But I am afflicted and in pain;
let your salvation, O God, set me on high!

30 I will praise the name of God with a song;
I will magnify him with thanksgiving.
31 This will please the LORD more than an ox
or a bull with horns and hoofs.
32 When the humble see it they will be glad;
you who seek God, let your hearts revive.
33 For the LORD hears the needy
and does not despise his own people who
are prisoners.

34 Let heaven and earth praise him,
the seas and everything that moves in them.
35 For God will save Zion
and build up the cities of Judah,
and people shall dwell there and possess it;
36 the offspring of his servants shall inherit it,
and those who love his name shall dwell in it.

O Lord, Do Not Delay

70 To the choirmaster. Of David, for the memorial offering.

1 Make haste, O God, to deliver me!
O Lord, make haste to help me!
2 Let them be put to shame and
confusion
who seek my life!
Let them be turned back and brought to
dishonor
who delight in my hurt!
3 Let them turn back because of their shame
who say, “Aha, Aha!”

4 May all who seek you
rejoice and be glad in you!
May those who love your salvation
say evermore, “God is great!”
5 But I am poor and needy;
hasten to me, O God!
You are my help and my deliverer;
O Lord, do not delay!

Forsake Me Not When My Strength Is Spent

71 [1]†In you, O Lord, do I take refuge;
let me never be put to shame!

[2]† In your righteousness deliver me and
rescue me;
incline your ear to me, and save me!
[3]† Be to me a rock of refuge,
to which I may continually come;
you have given the command to save me,
for you are my rock and my fortress.

[4]† Rescue me, O my God, from the hand of the
wicked,
from the grasp of the unjust and cruel
man.
[5] For you, O Lord, are my hope,
my trust, O Lord, from my youth.
[6]† Upon you I have leaned from before my
birth;
you are he who took me from my mother's
womb.
My praise is continually of you.

[7]† I have been as a portent to many,
but you are my strong refuge.
[8] My mouth is filled with your praise,
and with your glory all the day.
[9]† Do not cast me off in the time of old age;
forsake me not when my strength is
spent.
[10] For my enemies speak concerning me;

those who watch for my life consult
together
11 and say, “God has forsaken him;
pursue and seize him,
for there is none to deliver him.”

12† O God, be not far from me;
O my God, make haste to help me!
13† May my accusers be put to shame and
consumed;
with scorn and disgrace may they be
covered
who seek my hurt.
14† But I will hope continually
and will praise you yet more and more.
15 My mouth will tell of your righteous acts,
of your deeds of salvation all the day,
for their number is past my knowledge.
16† With the mighty deeds of the Lord God I will
come;
I will remind them of your righteousness,
yours alone.

17†† O God, from my youth you have taught me,
and I still proclaim your wondrous deeds.
18† So even to old age and gray hairs,
O God, do not forsake me,
until I proclaim your might to another
generation,
your power to all those to come.
19† Your righteousness, O God,
reaches the high heavens.
You who have done great things,
O God, who is like you?

20† You who have made me see many troubles
and calamities
will revive me again;
from the depths of the earth
you will bring me up again.
21† You will increase my greatness
and comfort me again.

22† I will also praise you with the harp
for your faithfulness, O my God;
I will sing praises to you with the lyre,
O Holy One of Israel.
23 My lips will shout for joy,
when I sing praises to you;
my soul also, which you have redeemed.
24† And my tongue will talk of your righteous
help all the day long,
for they have been put to shame and
disappointed
who sought to do me hurt.

Give the King Your Justice

72 [1]†Of Solomon.

Give the king your justice, O God,
and your righteousness to the royal son!

[2]† May he judge your people with
righteousness,
and your poor with justice!
[3]† Let the mountains bear prosperity for the
people,
and the hills, in righteousness!
[4] May he defend the cause of the poor of the
people,
give deliverance to the children of the needy,
and crush the oppressor!

[5]† May they fear you[1] while the sun endures,
and as long as the moon, throughout all
generations!
[6] May he be like rain that falls on the mown
grass,
like showers that water the earth!
[7] In his days may the righteous flourish,
and peace abound, till the moon be no
more!

[8]† May he have dominion from sea to sea,
and from the River[2] to the ends of
the earth!
[9]† May desert tribes bow down before him,
and his enemies lick the dust!
[10]† May the kings of Tarshish and of the

coastlands
render him tribute;
may the kings of Sheba and Seba
bring gifts!
11 May all kings fall down before him,
all nations serve him!

12 For he delivers the needy when he calls,
the poor and him who has no helper.
13 He has pity on the weak and the needy,
and saves the lives of the needy.
14 From oppression and violence he redeems
their life,
and precious is their blood in his
sight.

15 Long may he live;
may gold of Sheba be given to him!
May prayer be made for him continually,
and blessings invoked for him all the day!
16 May there be abundance of grain in
the land;
on the tops of the mountains may it wave;
may its fruit be like Lebanon;
and may people blossom in the cities
like the grass of the field!
17 May his name endure forever,
his fame continue as long as the sun!
May people be blessed in him,
all nations call him blessed!

18 Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel,
who alone does wondrous things.
19 Blessed be his glorious name forever;

may the whole earth be filled with his
glory!
Amen and Amen!

[20] † The prayers of David, the son of Jesse, are
ended.

BOOK THREE

God Is My Strength and Portion Forever

73 [1]† A Psalm of Asaph.

Truly God is good to Israel,
to those who are pure in heart.

[2]† But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled,
my steps had nearly slipped.
[3]† For I was envious of the arrogant
when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

[4]† For they have no pangs until death;
their bodies are fat and sleek.
[5] They are not in trouble as others are;
they are not stricken like the rest of
mankind.
[6] Therefore pride is their necklace;
violence covers them as a garment.
[7] Their eyes swell out through fatness;
their hearts overflow with follies.
[8] They scoff and speak with malice;
loftily they threaten oppression.
[9] They set their mouths against the heavens,
and their tongue struts through the earth.
[10] Therefore his people turn back to them,
and find no fault in them.[1]
[11] And they say, “How can God know?
Is there knowledge in the Most High?”
[12] Behold, these are the wicked;
always at ease, they increase in riches.
[13]† All in vain have I kept my heart clean
and washed my hands in innocence.
[14]† For all the day long I have been stricken

and rebuked every morning.
15 If I had said, “I will speak thus,”
I would have betrayed the generation of
your children.

16 But when I thought how to understand this,
it seemed to me a wearisome task,
17 until I went into the sanctuary of God;
then I discerned their end.

18 Truly you set them in slippery places;
you make them fall to ruin.
19 How they are destroyed in a moment,
swept away utterly by terrors!
20 Like a dream when one awakes,
O Lord, when you rouse yourself, you
despise them as phantoms.
21 When my soul was embittered,
when I was pricked in heart,
22 I was brutish and ignorant;
I was like a beast toward you.

23 Nevertheless, I am continually with you;
you hold my right hand.
24 You guide me with your counsel,
and afterward you will receive me to glory.
25 Whom have I in heaven but you?
And there is nothing on earth that I desire
besides you.
26 My flesh and my heart may fail,
but God is the strength[1] of my heart and
my portion forever.

27 † For behold, those who are far from you shall
perish;
you put an end to everyone who
is unfaithful to you.
28 But for me it is good to be near God;
I have made the Lord God my refuge,
that I may tell of all your works.

Arise, O God, Defend Your Cause

74 [1] †A Maskil [2] of Asaph.

O God, why do you cast us off
forever?
Why does your anger smoke against the
sheep of your pasture?

[2] † Remember your congregation, which you
have purchased of old,
which you have redeemed to be the tribe
of your heritage!
Remember Mount Zion, where you have
dwelt.
[3] † Direct your steps to the perpetual ruins;
the enemy has destroyed everything in the
sanctuary!

[4] † Your foes have roared in the midst of your
meeting place;
they set up their own signs for signs.
[5] They were like those who swing axes
in a forest of trees.[3]
[6] And all its carved wood
they broke down with hatchets and hammers.
[7] They set your sanctuary on fire;
they profaned the dwelling place of your
name,
bringing it down to the ground.
[8] † They said to themselves, “We will utterly
subdue them”;
they burned all the meeting places of God in
the land.

9† We do not see our signs;
there is no longer any prophet,
and there is none among us who knows
how long.
10 How long, O God, is the foe to scoff?
Is the enemy to revile your name forever?
11† Why do you hold back your hand, your right
hand?
Take it from the fold of your garment[1] and
destroy them!

12†† Yet God my King is from of old,
working salvation in the midst of the earth.
13 You divided the sea by your might;
you broke the heads of the sea monsters[2]
on the waters.
14 You crushed the heads of Leviathan;
you gave him as food for the creatures of the
wilderness.
15 You split open springs and brooks;
you dried up ever-flowing streams.
16 Yours is the day, yours also the night;
you have established the heavenly lights
and the sun.
17 You have fixed all the boundaries of the earth;
you have made summer and winter.

18† Remember this, O Lord, how the enemy scoffs,
and a foolish people reviles your name.
19† Do not deliver the soul of your dove to the
wild beasts;
do not forget the life of your poor forever.

20 † Have regard for the covenant,
for the dark places of the land are full of the
habitations of violence.
21 † Let not the downtrodden turn back in
shame;
let the poor and needy praise your name.

22 † Arise, O God, defend your cause;
remember how the foolish scoff at you all
the day!
23 Do not forget the clamor of your foes,
the uproar of those who rise against you,
which goes up continually!

God Will Judge with Equity

75 To the choirmaster: according to Do Not Destroy. A Psalm of Asaph. A Song.

1† We give thanks to you, O God;
we give thanks, for your name is near.
We[3] recount your wondrous deeds.

2† "At the set time that I appoint
I will judge with equity.
3† When the earth totters, and all
its inhabitants,
it is I who keep steady its pillars. *Selah*
4† I say to the boastful, 'Do not boast,'
and to the wicked, 'Do not lift up your
horn;
5† do not lift up your horn on high,
or speak with haughty neck.'"

6† For not from the east or from the west
and not from the wilderness comes
lifting up,
7 but it is God who executes judgment,
putting down one and lifting up another.
8† For in the hand of the Lord there is a cup
with foaming wine, well mixed,
and he pours out from it,
and all the wicked of the earth
shall drain it down to the dregs.

[9] † But I will declare it forever;
I will sing praises to the God of Jacob.
[10] † All the horns of the wicked I will cut off,
but the horns of the righteous shall be
lifted up.

Who Can Stand Before You?

76 To the choirmaster: with stringed instruments. A Psalm of Asaph. A Song.

1 † In Judah God is known;
his name is great in Israel.
2 † His abode has been established in Salem,
his dwelling place in Zion.
3 † There he broke the flashing arrows,
the shield, the sword, and the weapons of
war. *Selah*

4 † Glorious are you, more majestic
than the mountains of prey.
5 † The stouthearted were stripped of their spoil;
they sank into sleep;
all the men of war
were unable to use their hands.
6 † At your rebuke, O God of Jacob,
both rider and horse lay stunned.

7 † But you, you are to be feared!
Who can stand before you
when once your anger is roused?
8 From the heavens you uttered judgment;
the earth feared and was still,
9 when God arose to establish judgment,
to save all the humble of the earth. *Selah*

10 † Surely the wrath of man shall praise you;
the remnant[1] of wrath you will put on like a
belt.

11 † Make your vows to the Lord your God and
perform them;
let all around him bring gifts
to him who is to be feared,
12 who cuts off the spirit of princes,
who is to be feared by the kings of the earth.

In the Day of Trouble I Seek the Lord

77 To the choirmaster: according to Jeduthun. A Psalm of Asaph.

1 I cry aloud to God,
aloud to God, and he will hear me.
2 In the day of my trouble I seek the Lord;
in the night my hand is stretched out
without wearying;
my soul refuses to be comforted.
3 When I remember God, I moan;
when I meditate, my spirit faints. *Selah*

4 You hold my eyelids open;
I am so troubled that I cannot speak.
5 I consider the days of old,
the years long ago.
6 I said,[1] "Let me remember my song in the
night;
let me meditate in my heart."
Then my spirit made a diligent search:
7 "Will the Lord spurn forever,
and never again be favorable?
8 Has his steadfast love forever ceased?
Are his promises at an end for all time?
9 Has God forgotten to be gracious?
Has he in anger shut up his compassion?"
Selah

10 Then I said, "I will appeal to this,
to the years of the right hand of the Most
High."[2]

11† I will remember the deeds of the LORD;
yes, I will remember your wonders of old.
12 I will ponder all your work,
and meditate on your mighty deeds.
13† Your way, O God, is holy.
What god is great like our God?
14 You are the God who works wonders;
you have made known your might among
the peoples.
15† You with your arm redeemed your people,
the children of Jacob and Joseph. *Selah*

16†† When the waters saw you, O God,
when the waters saw you, they were afraid;
indeed, the deep trembled.
17† The clouds poured out water;
the skies gave forth thunder;
your arrows flashed on every side.
18 The crash of your thunder was in the
whirlwind;
your lightnings lighted up the world;
the earth trembled and shook.
19† Your way was through the sea,
your path through the great waters;
yet your footprints were unseen.[3]
20† You led your people like a flock
by the hand of Moses and Aaron.

Tell the Coming Generation

78 1 ✝A Maskil [4] of Asaph.
Give ear, O my people, to my teaching;
incline your ears to the words of
my mouth!

2 I will open my mouth in a parable;
I will utter dark sayings from of old,
3 ✝ things that we have heard and known,
that our fathers have told us.
4 We will not hide them from their children,
but tell to the coming generation
the glorious deeds of the Lord, and his might,
and the wonders that he has done.

5 ✝ He established a testimony in Jacob
and appointed a law in Israel,
which he commanded our fathers
to teach to their children,
6 that the next generation might know them,
the children yet unborn,
and arise and tell them to their children,
7 ✝ so that they should set their hope in God
and not forget the works of God,
but keep his commandments;
8 ✝ and that they should not be like their fathers,
a stubborn and rebellious generation,
a generation whose heart was not steadfast,
whose spirit was not faithful to God.

9 ✝ The Ephraimites, armed with[1] the bow,
turned back on the day of battle.

10 They did not keep God's covenant,
but refused to walk according to his law.
11 They forgot his works
and the wonders that he had shown them.
12 † In the sight of their fathers he performed
wonders
in the land of Egypt, in the fields of Zoan.
13 † He divided the sea and let them pass
through it,
and made the waters stand like a heap.
14 In the daytime he led them with a cloud,
and all the night with a fiery light.
15 He split rocks in the wilderness
and gave them drink abundantly as from the
deep.
16 He made streams come out of the rock
and caused waters to flow down like rivers.

17 † Yet they sinned still more against him,
rebelling against the Most High in the
desert.
18 They tested God in their heart
by demanding the food they craved.
19 They spoke against God, saying,
"Can God spread a table in the wilderness?
20 He struck the rock so that water gushed out
and streams overflowed.
Can he also give bread
or provide meat for his people?"

21 Therefore, when the LORD heard, he was full
of wrath;
a fire was kindled against Jacob;
his anger rose against Israel,

22 because they did not believe in God
and did not trust his saving power.
23 Yet he commanded the skies above
and opened the doors of heaven,
24 and he rained down on them manna to eat
and gave them the grain of heaven.
25 Man ate of the bread of the angels;
he sent them food in abundance.
26 He caused the east wind to blow in the
heavens,
and by his power he led out the south wind;
27 he rained meat on them like dust,
winged birds like the sand of the seas;
28 he let them fall in the midst of their camp,
all around their dwellings.
29 And they ate and were well filled,
for he gave them what they craved.
30 But before they had satisfied their craving,
while the food was still in their mouths,
31 the anger of God rose against them,
and he killed the strongest of them
and laid low the young men of Israel.

32 In spite of all this, they still sinned;
despite his wonders, they did not believe.
33 So he made their days vanish like[1] a
breath,[2]
and their years in terror.
34 When he killed them, they sought him;
they repented and sought God earnestly.
35 They remembered that God was their rock,
the Most High God their redeemer.
36 But they flattered him with their mouths;
they lied to him with their tongues.

37 Their heart was not steadfast toward him;
they were not faithful to his covenant.
38 Yet he, being compassionate,
atoned for their iniquity
and did not destroy them;
he restrained his anger often
and did not stir up all his wrath.
39 He remembered that they were but flesh,
a wind that passes and comes not again.
40 How often they rebelled against him in the wilderness
and grieved him in the desert!
41 They tested God again and again
and provoked the Holy One of Israel.
42 They did not remember his power[3]
or the day when he redeemed them from the foe,
43 when he performed his signs in Egypt
and his marvels in the fields of Zoan.
44 He turned their rivers to blood,
so that they could not drink of their streams.
45 He sent among them swarms of flies, which devoured them,
and frogs, which destroyed them.
46 He gave their crops to the destroying locust
and the fruit of their labor to the locust.
47 He destroyed their vines with hail
and their sycamores with frost.
48 He gave over their cattle to the hail
and their flocks to thunderbolts.
49 He let loose on them his burning anger,
wrath, indignation, and distress,
a company of destroying angels.
50 He made a path for his anger;
he did not spare them from death,

but gave their lives over to the plague.
51 He struck down every firstborn in Egypt,
the firstfruits of their strength in the tents
of Ham.
52 Then he led out his people like sheep
and guided them in the wilderness like a flock.
53 He led them in safety, so that they were not
afraid,
but the sea overwhelmed their enemies.
54 And he brought them to his holy land,
to the mountain which his right hand
had won.
55 He drove out nations before them;
he apportioned them for a possession
and settled the tribes of Israel in their tents.

56 Yet they tested and rebelled against the
Most High God
and did not keep his testimonies,
57 but turned away and acted treacherously like
their fathers;
they twisted like a deceitful bow.
58 For they provoked him to anger with
their high places;
they moved him to jealousy with
their idols.
59 When God heard, he was full of wrath,
and he utterly rejected Israel.
60 He forsook his dwelling at Shiloh,
the tent where he dwelt among mankind,
61 and delivered his power to captivity,
his glory to the hand of the foe.
62 He gave his people over to the sword
and vented his wrath on his heritage.
63 Fire devoured their young men,

and their young women had no marriage
song.
64 Their priests fell by the sword,
and their widows made no lamentation.
65† Then the Lord awoke as from sleep,
like a strong man shouting because of wine.
66 And he put his adversaries to rout;
he put them to everlasting shame.

67† He rejected the tent of Joseph;
he did not choose the tribe of Ephraim,
68†† but he chose the tribe of Judah,
Mount Zion, which he loves.
69† He built his sanctuary like the high heavens,
like the earth, which he has founded
forever.
70 He chose David his servant
and took him from the sheepfolds;
71† from following the nursing ewes he brought
him
to shepherd Jacob his people,
Israel his inheritance.
72 With upright heart he shepherded them
and guided them with his skillful hand.

How Long, O Lord?

79

1 A Psalm of Asaph.

O God, the nations have come into your inheritance;
they have defiled your holy temple;
they have laid Jerusalem in ruins.

2 They have given the bodies of your servants
to the birds of the heavens for food,
the flesh of your faithful to the beasts of
the earth.
3 They have poured out their blood like water
all around Jerusalem,
and there was no one to bury them.
4 We have become a taunt to our neighbors,
mocked and derided by those around us.

5 How long, O Lord? Will you be
angry forever?
Will your jealousy burn like fire?
6 Pour out your anger on the nations
that do not know you,
and on the kingdoms
that do not call upon your name!
7 For they have devoured Jacob
and laid waste his habitation.

8 Do not remember against us our former
iniquities;[1]
let your compassion come speedily to
meet us,
for we are brought very low.
9 Help us, O God of our salvation,

for the glory of your name;
deliver us, and atone for our sins,
for your name's sake!
10 Why should the nations say,
"Where is their God?"
Let the avenging of the outpoured blood of your servants
be known among the nations before our eyes!

11† Let the groans of the prisoners come before you;
according to your great power, preserve those doomed to die!
12† Return sevenfold into the lap of our neighbors
the taunts with which they have taunted you, O Lord!
13† But we your people, the sheep of your pasture,
will give thanks to you forever;
from generation to generation we will recount your praise.

Restore Us, O God

80 To the choirmaster: according to Lilies. A Testimony. Of Asaph, a Psalm.

1 † Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel,
you who lead Joseph like a flock!
You who are enthroned upon the
cherubim, shine forth.
2 † Before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh,
stir up your might
and come to save us!

3 † Restore us,[2] O God;
let your face shine, that we may be saved!

4 † O Lord God of hosts,
how long will you be angry with your
people's prayers?
5 † You have fed them with the bread of tears
and given them tears to drink in full
measure.
6 You make us an object of contention for
our neighbors,
and our enemies laugh among themselves.

7 † Restore us, O God of hosts;
let your face shine, that we may be
saved!

8 †† You brought a vine out of Egypt;
you drove out the nations and planted it.

9 You cleared the ground for it;
it took deep root and filled the land.
10 The mountains were covered with its
shade,
the mighty cedars with its branches.
11† It sent out its branches to the sea
and its shoots to the River.[1]
12† Why then have you broken down its walls,
so that all who pass along the way pluck its
fruit?
13† The boar from the forest ravages it,
and all that move in the field feed on it.

14† Turn again, O God of hosts!
Look down from heaven, and see;
have regard for this vine,
15† the stock that your right hand planted,
and for the son whom you made strong for
yourself.
16† They have burned it with fire; they have cut
it down;
may they perish at the rebuke of your face!
17† But let your hand be on the man of your
right hand,
the son of man whom you have made strong
for yourself!
18† Then we shall not turn back from you;
give us life, and we will call upon your
name!

19† Restore us, O Lord God of hosts!
Let your face shine, that we may be saved!

Oh, That My People Would Listen to Me

81 To the choirmaster: according to The Gittith.[2] Of Asaph.

1 Sing aloud to God our strength;
shout for joy to the God of Jacob!
2 Raise a song; sound the tambourine,
the sweet lyre with the harp.
3 Blow the trumpet at the new moon,
at the full moon, on our feast day.

4 For it is a statute for Israel,
a rule[1] of the God of Jacob.
5 He made it a decree in Joseph
when he went out over[2] the land of Egypt.
I hear a language I had not known:
6 "I relieved your[3] shoulder of the burden;
your hands were freed from the basket.
7 In distress you called, and I delivered you;
I answered you in the secret place of thunder;
I tested you at the waters of Meribah. Selah
8 Hear, O my people, while I admonish you!
O Israel, if you would but listen to me!
9 There shall be no strange god among you;
you shall not bow down to a foreign god.
10 I am the Lord your God,
who brought you up out of the land of Egypt.
Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it.

11 “But my people did not listen to my voice;
Israel would not submit to me.
12† So I gave them over to their stubborn
hearts,
to follow their own counsels.
13† Oh, that my people would listen to me,
that Israel would walk in my ways!
14 I would soon subdue their enemies
and turn my hand against their foes.
15†† Those who hate the Lord would cringe
toward him,
and their fate would last forever.
16† But he would feed you[4] with the finest of the
wheat,
and with honey from the rock I would
satisfy you.”

Rescue the Weak and Needy

82

[1] †A Psalm of Asaph.

God has taken his place in the divine
council;
in the midst of the gods he holds
judgment:

[2] †† "How long will you judge unjustly
and show partiality to the wicked? *Selah*
[3] Give justice to the weak and the fatherless;
maintain the right of the afflicted and the
destitute.
[4] Rescue the weak and the needy;
deliver them from the hand of the wicked."

[5] † They have neither knowledge nor
understanding,
they walk about in darkness;
all the foundations of the earth are shaken.

[6] † I said, "You are gods,
sons of the Most High, all of you;
[7] † nevertheless, like men you shall die,
and fall like any prince."[1]

[8] † Arise, O God, judge the earth;
for you shall inherit all the nations!

O God, Do Not Keep Silence

83 [1]A Song. A Psalm of Asaph.

O God, do not keep silence;
do not hold your peace or be still,
O God!

[2]† For behold, your enemies make an uproar;
those who hate you have raised their
heads.
[3]† They lay crafty plans against your people;
they consult together against your treasured
ones.
[4]† They say, “Come, let us wipe them out as a
nation;
let the name of Israel be remembered no
more!”
[5]† For they conspire with one accord;
against you they make a covenant—
[6]† the tents of Edom and the Ishmaelites,
Moab and the Hagrites,
[7] Gebal and Ammon and Amalek,
Philistia with the inhabitants of Tyre;
[8]† Asshur also has joined them;
they are the strong arm of the children
of Lot. *Selah*

[9]† Do to them as you did to Midian,
as to Sisera and Jabin at the river Kishon,
[10]† who were destroyed at En-dor,
who became dung for the ground.
[11] Make their nobles like Oreb and Zeeb,
all their princes like Zebah and Zalmunna,

12† who said, “Let us take possession for
ourselves
of the pastures of God.”

13 O my God, make them like whirling dust,[2]
like chaff before the wind.
14† As fire consumes the forest,
as the flame sets the mountains ablaze,
15† so may you pursue them with your tempest
and terrify them with your hurricane!
16† Fill their faces with shame,
that they may seek your name, O Lord.
17 Let them be put to shame and dismayed
forever;
let them perish in disgrace,
18† that they may know that you alone,
whose name is the Lord,
are the Most High over all the earth.

My Soul Longs for the Courts of the Lord

84 To the choirmaster: according to The Gittith.[1] A Psalm of the Sons of Korah.

1† How lovely is your dwelling place,
O Lord of hosts!
2† My soul longs, yes, faints
for the courts of the Lord;
my heart and flesh sing for joy
to the living God.

3† Even the sparrow finds a home,
and the swallow a nest for herself,
where she may lay her young,
at your altars, O Lord of hosts,
my King and my God.
4† Blessed are those who dwell in your house,
ever singing your praise! *Selah*

5† Blessed are those whose strength is in you,
in whose heart are the highways to Zion.[2]
6† As they go through the Valley of Baca
they make it a place of springs;
the early rain also covers it with
pools.
7† They go from strength to strength;
each one appears before God in
Zion.

8† O Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer;
give ear, O God of Jacob! *Selah*

9† Behold our shield, O God;
look on the face of your anointed!

10† For a day in your courts is better
than a thousand elsewhere.
I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house
of my God
than dwell in the tents of wickedness.
11† For the Lord God is a sun and shield;
the Lord bestows favor and honor.
No good thing does he withhold
from those who walk uprightly.
12† O Lord of hosts,
blessed is the one who trusts in you!

Revive Us Again

85 To the choirmaster. A Psalm of the Sons of Korah.

1 † Lord, you were favorable to your land;
you restored the fortunes of Jacob.
2 † You forgave the iniquity of your people;
you covered all their sin. *Selah*
3 You withdrew all your wrath;
you turned from your hot anger.

4 † Restore us again, O God of our salvation,
and put away your indignation toward us!
5 Will you be angry with us forever?
Will you prolong your anger to all generations?
6 † Will you not revive us again,
that your people may rejoice in you?
7 † Show us your steadfast love, O Lord,
and grant us your salvation.

8 † Let me hear what God the Lord will speak,
for he will speak peace to his people, to
his saints;
but let them not turn back to folly.
9 † Surely his salvation is near to those who fear
him,
that glory may dwell in our land.

10 † Steadfast love and faithfulness meet;
righteousness and peace kiss each other.
11 Faithfulness springs up from the ground,
and righteousness looks down from the sky.

12 † Yes, the LORD will give what is good,
and our land will yield its increase.
13 † Righteousness will go before him
and make his footsteps a way.

Great Is Your Steadfast Love

86 [1]† A Prayer of David.
Incline your ear, O Lord, and
answer me,
for I am poor and needy.

[2] Preserve my life, for I am godly;
save your servant, who trusts in you—you
are my God.
[3] Be gracious to me, O Lord,
for to you do I cry all the day.
[4]† Gladden the soul of your servant,
for to you, O Lord, do I lift up my soul.
[5]† For you, O Lord, are good and forgiving,
abounding in steadfast love to all who call
upon you.
[6]† Give ear, O Lord, to my prayer;
listen to my plea for grace.
[7]† In the day of my trouble I call upon you,
for you answer me.

[8]† There is none like you among the gods,
O Lord,
nor are there any works like yours.
[9] All the nations you have made shall come
and worship before you, O Lord,
and shall glorify your name.
[10] For you are great and do wondrous things;
you alone are God.
[11]† Teach me your way, O Lord,
that I may walk in your truth;
unite my heart to fear your name.

12 I give thanks to you, O Lord my God, with
my whole heart,
and I will glorify your name forever.
13† For great is your steadfast love toward me;
you have delivered my soul from the
depths of Sheol.

14† O God, insolent men have risen up against
me;
a band of ruthless men seeks my life,
and they do not set you before them.
15† But you, O Lord, are a God merciful and
gracious,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast
love and faithfulness.
16† Turn to me and be gracious to me;
give your strength to your servant,
and save the son of your maidservant.
17† Show me a sign of your favor,
that those who hate me may see and be put
to shame
because you, LORD, have helped me and
comforted me.

Glorious Things of You Are Spoken

87 [1]† A Psalm of the Sons of Korah. A Song.
On the holy mount stands the city he
founded;

[2]† the Lord loves the gates of Zion
more than all the dwelling places of Jacob.
[3]† Glorious things of you are spoken,
O city of God. *Selah*

[4]† Among those who know me I
mention Rahab and Babylon;
behold, Philistia and Tyre, with Cush[1]—
"This one was born there," they say.
[5]† And of Zion it shall be said,
"This one and that one were born in her";
for the Most High himself will establish
her.
[6]† The Lord records as he registers the
peoples,
"This one was born there." *Selah*

[7]† Singers and dancers alike say,
"All my springs are in you."

I Cry Out Day and Night Before You

88 A Song. A Psalm of the Sons of Korah. To the choirmaster: according to Mahalath Leannoth. A Maskil [1] of Heman the Ezrahite.

1 † O Lord, God of my salvation;
I cry out day and night before you.
2 Let my prayer come before you;
incline your ear to my cry!

3 † For my soul is full of troubles,
and my life draws near to Sheol.
4 I am counted among those who go down to the pit;
I am a man who has no strength,
5 † like one set loose among the dead,
like the slain that lie in the grave,
like those whom you remember no more,
for they are cut off from your hand.
6 † You have put me in the depths of the pit,
in the regions dark and deep.
7 † Your wrath lies heavy upon me,
and you overwhelm me with all your waves. *Selah*

8 † You have caused my companions to shun me;
you have made me a horror[2] to them.
I am shut in so that I cannot escape;
9 † my eye grows dim through sorrow.
Every day I call upon you, O Lord;
I spread out my hands to you.

10 † Do you work wonders for the dead?
Do the departed rise up to praise you? Selah
11 † Is your steadfast love declared in the grave,
or your faithfulness in Abaddon?
12 † Are your wonders known in the darkness,
or your righteousness in the land
of forgetfulness?

13 But I, O LORD, cry to you;
in the morning my prayer comes before you.
14 † O LORD, why do you cast my soul away?
Why do you hide your face from me?
15 † Afflicted and close to death from my
youth up,
I suffer your terrors; I am helpless.[3]
16 Your wrath has swept over me;
your dreadful assaults destroy me.
17 They surround me like a flood all day long;
they close in on me together.
18 † You have caused my beloved and my friend
to shun me;
my companions have become darkness.[4]

I Will Sing of the Steadfast Love of the Lord

89 1 †A Maskil [5] of Ethan the Ezrahite.

I will sing of the steadfast love of the Lord,
forever;
with my mouth I will make known
your faithfulness to all generations.

2 For I said, "Steadfast love will be built up
forever;
in the heavens you will establish
your faithfulness."
3 † You have said, "I have made a covenant
with my chosen one;
I have sworn to David my servant:
4 † 'I will establish your offspring forever,
and build your throne for all generations.'"
Selah

5 † Let the heavens praise your wonders,
O Lord,
your faithfulness in the assembly of the
holy ones!
6 † For who in the skies can be compared to the
Lord?
Who among the heavenly beings[1] is like the
Lord,
7 † a God greatly to be feared in the council
of the holy ones,
and awesome above all who are around
him?
8 † O Lord God of hosts,
who is mighty as you are, O Lord,
with your faithfulness all around you?

9 You rule the raging of the sea;
when its waves rise, you still them.
10† You crushed Rahab like a carcass;
you scattered your enemies with
your mighty arm.
11† The heavens are yours; the earth also is yours;
the world and all that is in it, you
have founded them.
12† The north and the south, you have created
them;
Tabor and Hermon joyously praise your
name.
13 You have a mighty arm;
strong is your hand, high your right hand.
14† Righteousness and justice are the foundation
of your throne;
steadfast love and faithfulness go
before you.
15† Blessed are the people who know the festal
shout,
who walk, O Lord, in the light of
your face,
16 who exult in your name all the day
and in your righteousness are exalted.
17† For you are the glory of their strength;
by your favor our horn is exalted.
18† For our shield belongs to the Lord,
our king to the Holy One of Israel.

19† Of old you spoke in a vision to your godly
one,[2] and said:
"I have granted help to one who is mighty;
I have exalted one chosen from the people.
20† I have found David, my servant;
with my holy oil I have anointed him,

21 so that my hand shall be established with him;
my arm also shall strengthen
him.
22 The enemy shall not outwit him;
the wicked shall not humble him.
23 I will crush his foes before him
and strike down those who hate him.
24 My faithfulness and my steadfast love shall
be with him,
and in my name shall his horn be exalted.
25 I will set his hand on the sea
and his right hand on the rivers.
26 He shall cry to me, ‘You are my Father,
my God, and the Rock of my salvation.’
27 And I will make him the firstborn,
the highest of the kings of the earth.
28 My steadfast love I will keep for him forever,
and my covenant will stand firm[1] for him.
29 I will establish his offspring forever
and his throne as the days of the
heavens.
30 If his children forsake my law
and do not walk according to my rules,[2]
31 if they violate my statutes
and do not keep my commandments,
32 then I will punish their transgression
with the rod
and their iniquity with stripes,
33 but I will not remove from him my steadfast
love
or be false to my faithfulness.
34 I will not violate my covenant
or alter the word that went forth from
my lips.
35 Once for all I have sworn by my holiness;

I will not lie to David.
36† His offspring shall endure forever,
his throne as long as the sun before me.
37† Like the moon it shall be established forever,
a faithful witness in the skies.” Selah

38† But now you have cast off and rejected;
you are full of wrath against your anointed.
39† You have renounced the covenant with your
servant;
you have defiled his crown in the dust.
40 You have breached all his walls;
you have laid his strongholds in ruins.
41† All who pass by plunder him;
he has become the scorn of his
neighbors.
42† You have exalted the right hand of his foes;
you have made all his enemies rejoice.
43 You have also turned back the edge of his
sword,
and you have not made him stand in battle.
44 You have made his splendor to cease
and cast his throne to the ground.
45† You have cut short the days of his youth;
you have covered him with shame. *Selah*

46 How long, O Lord? Will you hide yourself
forever?
How long will your wrath burn like fire?
47† Remember how short my time is!
For what vanity you have created all the
children of man!
48† What man can live and never see death?

Who can deliver his soul from the power
of Sheol? *Selah*

49† Lord, where is your steadfast love of old,
which by your faithfulness you swore to
David?
50† Remember, O Lord, how your servants are
mocked,
and how I bear in my heart the insults[1] of
all the many nations,
51† with which your enemies mock, O Lord,
with which they mock the footsteps of
your anointed.

52† Blessed be the Lord forever!
Amen and Amen.

BOOK FOUR

From Everlasting to Everlasting

90 [1]† A Prayer of Moses, the man of God.

Lord, you have been our dwelling place[2]
in all generations.

[2]† Before the mountains were brought forth,
or ever you had formed the earth and the world,
from everlasting to everlasting you are God.

[3]† You return man to dust
and say, “Return, O children of man!”[3]
[4]† For a thousand years in your sight
are but as yesterday when it is past,
or as a watch in the night.

[5]† You sweep them away as with a flood; they are like a dream,
like grass that is renewed in the morning:
[6] in the morning it flourishes and is renewed;
in the evening it fades and withers.

[7]† For we are brought to an end by your anger;
by your wrath we are dismayed.
[8]† You have set our iniquities before you,
our secret sins in the light of your presence.

9 For all our days pass away under your
wrath;
we bring our years to an end like a sigh.
10 The years of our life are seventy,
or even by reason of strength eighty;
yet their span[4] is but toil and trouble;
they are soon gone, and we fly away.
11 Who considers the power of your anger,
and your wrath according to the fear of
you?

12 So teach us to number our days
that we may get a heart of wisdom.
13 Return, O LORD! How long?
Have pity on your servants!
14 Satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast
love,
that we may rejoice and be glad all our
days.
15 Make us glad for as many days as you
have afflicted us,
and for as many years as we have seen evil.
16 Let your work be shown to your servants,
and your glorious power to their children.
17 Let the favor[1] of the Lord our God be
upon us,
and establish the work of our hands
upon us;
yes, establish the work of our hands!

My Refuge and My Fortress

91 [1]†He who dwells in the shelter of the Most
High
will abide in the shadow of the Almighty.

[2] I will say[2] to the Lord, “My refuge and
my fortress,
my God, in whom I trust.”

[3]† For he will deliver you from the snare of the
fowler
and from the deadly pestilence.
[4]† He will cover you with his pinions,
and under his wings you will find refuge;
his faithfulness is a shield and buckler.
[5]† You will not fear the terror of the night,
nor the arrow that flies by day,
[6] nor the pestilence that stalks in darkness,
nor the destruction that wastes at noonday.

[7]† A thousand may fall at your side,
ten thousand at your right hand,
but it will not come near you.
[8]† You will only look with your eyes
and see the recompense of the wicked.

[9] Because you have made the Lord your
dwelling place—
the Most High, who is my refuge[3]—
[10]† no evil shall be allowed to befall you,
no plague come near your tent.

11 For he will command his angels concerning
you
to guard you in all your ways.
12 On their hands they will bear you up,
lest you strike your foot against a stone.
13 You will tread on the lion and the adder;
the young lion and the serpent you
will trample underfoot.

14 “Because he holds fast to me in love, I will
deliver him;
I will protect him, because he knows my
name.
15 When he calls to me, I will answer him;
I will be with him in trouble;
I will rescue him and honor him.
16 With long life I will satisfy him
and show him my salvation.”

How Great Are Your Works

92 [1] A Psalm. A Song for the Sabbath.
It is good to give thanks to the Lord,
to sing praises to your name,
O Most High;

[2] to declare your steadfast love in the morning,
and your faithfulness by night,
[3] to the music of the lute and the harp,
to the melody of the lyre.
[4] For you, O Lord, have made me glad by your work;
at the works of your hands I sing for joy.

[5] How great are your works, O Lord!
Your thoughts are very deep!
[6] The stupid man cannot know;
the fool cannot understand this:
[7] that though the wicked sprout like grass
and all evildoers flourish,
they are doomed to destruction forever;
[8] but you, O Lord, are on high forever.
[9] For behold, your enemies, O Lord,
for behold, your enemies shall perish;
all evildoers shall be scattered.

[10] But you have exalted my horn like that of the wild ox;
you have poured over me[1] fresh oil.
[11] My eyes have seen the downfall of my

enemies;
my ears have heard the doom of my evil
assailants.

12† The righteous flourish like the palm tree
and grow like a cedar in Lebanon.
13 They are planted in the house of the LORD;
they flourish in the courts of our God.
14† They still bear fruit in old age;
they are ever full of sap and green,
15† to declare that the LORD is upright;
he is my rock, and there
is no unrighteousness in him.

The Lord Reigns

93 [1]†† The Lord reigns; he is robed in majesty;
the Lord is robed; he has put on strength
as his belt.
Yes, the world is established; it shall never be
moved.

[2] Your throne is established from of old;
you are from everlasting.

[3]† The floods have lifted up, O Lord,
the floods have lifted up their voice;
the floods lift up their roaring.
[4] Mightier than the thunders of many
waters,
mightier than the waves of the sea,
the Lord on high is mighty!

[5]† Your decrees are very trustworthy;
holiness befits your house,
O Lord, forevermore.

The Lord Will Not Forsake His People

94 [1]† O Lord, God of vengeance,
O God of vengeance, shine forth!

[2]† Rise up, O judge of the earth;
repay to the proud what they
deserve!
[3] O Lord, how long shall the wicked,
how long shall the wicked exult?
[4] They pour out their arrogant words;
all the evildoers boast.
[5]† They crush your people, O Lord,
and afflict your heritage.
[6]† They kill the widow and the sojourner,
and murder the fatherless;
[7] and they say, "The Lord does not see;
the God of Jacob does not perceive."

[8]†† Understand, O dullest of the people!
Fools, when will you be wise?
[9] He who planted the ear, does he not hear?
He who formed the eye, does he not see?
[10] He who disciplines the nations, does he not
rebuke?
He who teaches man knowledge—
[11]† the Lord—knows the thoughts of man,
that they are but a breath.[1]

[12]† Blessed is the man whom you discipline,
O Lord,
and whom you teach out of your law,

13 to give him rest from days of trouble,
until a pit is dug for the wicked.
14 For the Lord will not forsake his people;
he will not abandon his heritage;
15 for justice will return to the righteous,
and all the upright in heart will follow it.

16 Who rises up for me against the wicked?
Who stands up for me against evildoers?
17 If the Lord had not been my help,
my soul would soon have lived in the land
of silence.
18 When I thought, "My foot slips,"
your steadfast love, O Lord, held me up.
19 When the cares of my heart are many,
your consolations cheer my soul.
20 Can wicked rulers be allied with you,
those who frame injustice by statute?
21 They band together against the life of the
righteous
and condemn the innocent to death.[2]
22 But the Lord has become my stronghold,
and my God the rock of my refuge.
23 He will bring back on them their iniquity
and wipe them out for their
wickedness;
the Lord our God will wipe them out.

Let Us Sing Songs of Praise

95 [1]‡‡Oh come, let us sing to the LORD;
let us make a joyful noise to the rock of
our salvation!

[2]‡ Let us come into his presence with
thanksgiving;
let us make a joyful noise to him
with songs of praise!
[3]‡ For the LORD is a great God,
and a great King above all gods.
[4]‡ In his hand are the depths of the earth;
the heights of the mountains are his also.
[5] The sea is his, for he made it,
and his hands formed the dry land.

[6]‡ Oh come, let us worship and bow down;
let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker!
[7]‡ For he is our God,
and we are the people of his pasture,
and the sheep of his hand.
Today, if you hear his voice,
[8]‡‡ do not harden your hearts, as at Meribah,
as on the day at Massah in the wilderness,
[9]‡ when your fathers put me to the test
and put me to the proof, though they had
seen my work.
[10]‡ For forty years I loathed that generation
and said, “They are a people who go astray
in their heart,
and they have not known my ways.”

[11] † Therefore I swore in my wrath,
“They shall not enter my rest.”

Worship in the Splendor of Holiness

96 [1]†Oh sing to the Lord a new song;
sing to the Lord, all the earth!

[2]†† Sing to the Lord, bless his name;
tell of his salvation from day to day.
[3] Declare his glory among the nations,
his marvelous works among all the peoples!
[4]† For great is the Lord, and greatly to be
praised;
he is to be feared above all gods.
[5]† For all the gods of the peoples are worthless
idols,
but the Lord made the heavens.
[6]† Splendor and majesty are before him;
strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.

[7] Ascribe to the Lord, O families of the peoples,
ascribe to the Lord glory and strength!
[8]† Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name;
bring an offering, and come into his courts!
[9]† Worship the Lord in the splendor of holiness;[1]
tremble before him, all the earth!

[10]† Say among the nations, "The Lord reigns!
Yes, the world is established; it shall never
be moved;
he will judge the peoples with equity."

[11]† Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth
rejoice;

let the sea roar, and all that fills it;
12 let the field exult, and everything in it!
Then shall all the trees of the forest sing
for joy
13† before the LORD, for he comes,
for he comes to judge the earth.
He will judge the world in righteousness,
and the peoples in his faithfulness.

The Lord Reigns

97 [1]†The Lord reigns, let the earth rejoice;
let the many coastlands be glad!

[2]† Clouds and thick darkness are all around him;
righteousness and justice are the foundation
of his throne.
[3] Fire goes before him
and burns up his adversaries all around.
[4] His lightnings light up the world;
the earth sees and trembles.
[5] The mountains melt like wax before the
Lord,
before the Lord of all the earth.

[6]† The heavens proclaim his righteousness,
and all the peoples see his glory.
[7]† All worshipers of images are put to
shame,
who make their boast in worthless
idols;
worship him, all you gods!

[8]† Zion hears and is glad,
and the daughters of Judah rejoice,
because of your judgments, O Lord.
[9]† For you, O Lord, are most high over all the
earth;
you are exalted far above all gods.

10 † O you who love the Lord, hate evil!
He preserves the lives of his saints;
he delivers them from the hand of the
wicked.
11 † Light is sown[1] for the righteous,
and joy for the upright in heart.
12 Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous,
and give thanks to his holy name!

Make a Joyful Noise to the Lord

98 [1]†A Psalm.

Oh sing to the Lord a new song,
for he has done marvelous things!
His right hand and his holy arm
have worked salvation for him.

[2] The Lord has made known his salvation;
he has revealed his righteousness in the
sight of the nations.
[3]† He has remembered his steadfast love and
faithfulness
to the house of Israel.
All the ends of the earth have seen
the salvation of our God.

[4]† Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the
earth;
break forth into joyous song and sing
praises!
[5]† Sing praises to the Lord with the lyre,
with the lyre and the sound of melody!
[6] With trumpets and the sound of the horn
make a joyful noise before the King, the
Lord!

[7]† Let the sea roar, and all that fills it;
the world and those who dwell in it!
[8] Let the rivers clap their hands;
let the hills sing for joy together
[9]† before the Lord, for he comes
to judge the earth.

He will judge the world with righteousness,
and the peoples with equity.

The Lord Our God Is Holy

99 [1]†The Lord reigns; let the peoples tremble!
He sits enthroned upon the cherubim; let
the earth quake!

[2]† The Lord is great in Zion;
he is exalted over all the peoples.
[3]† Let them praise your great and awesome name!
Holy is he!
[4]† The King in his might loves justice.[1]
You have established equity;
you have executed justice
and righteousness in Jacob.
[5]† Exalt the Lord our God;
worship at his footstool!
Holy is he!

[6]† Moses and Aaron were among his priests,
Samuel also was among those who called
upon his name.
They called to the Lord, and he answered
them.
[7]† In the pillar of the cloud he spoke to
them;
they kept his testimonies
and the statute that he gave them.

[8]† O Lord our God, you answered them;
you were a forgiving God to them,
but an avenger of their wrongdoings.
[9]† Exalt the Lord our God,

and worship at his holy mountain;
for the LORD our God is holy!

His Steadfast Love Endures Forever

100 [1] A Psalm for giving thanks.

Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the
earth!

[2] Serve the Lord with gladness!
Come into his presence with singing!

[3] Know that the Lord, he is God!
It is he who made us, and we are his;[1]
we are his people, and the sheep of his
pasture.

[4] Enter his gates with thanksgiving,
and his courts with praise!
Give thanks to him; bless his name!

[5] For the Lord is good;
his steadfast love endures forever,
and his faithfulness to all generations.

I Will Walk with Integrity

101

[1] A Psalm of David.

I will sing of steadfast love and
justice;
to you, O Lord, I will make music.

[2] I will ponder the way that is
blameless.
Oh when will you come to me?
I will walk with integrity of heart
within my house;
[3] I will not set before my eyes
anything that is worthless.
I hate the work of those who fall away;
it shall not cling to me.
[4] A perverse heart shall be far from me;
I will know nothing of evil.

[5] Whoever slanders his neighbor secretly
I will destroy.
Whoever has a haughty look and an
arrogant heart
I will not endure.

[6] I will look with favor on the faithful in the
land,
that they may dwell with me;
he who walks in the way that is blameless
shall minister to me.

7 No one who practices deceit
shall dwell in my house;
no one who utters lies
shall continue before my eyes.

8 Morning by morning I will destroy
all the wicked in the land,
cutting off all the evildoers
from the city of the LORD.

Do Not Hide Your Face from Me

102 A Prayer of one afflicted, when he is faint and pours out his complaint before the Lord.

1 Hear my prayer, O Lord;
let my cry come to you!
2† Do not hide your face from me
in the day of my distress!
Incline your ear to me;
answer me speedily in the day when I call!

3†† For my days pass away like smoke,
and my bones burn like a furnace.
4† My heart is struck down like grass and has withered;
I forget to eat my bread.
5† Because of my loud groaning
my bones cling to my flesh.
6† I am like a desert owl of the wilderness,
like an owl[1] of the waste places;
7 I lie awake;
I am like a lonely sparrow on the housetop.
8† All the day my enemies taunt me;
those who deride me use my name for a curse.
9† For I eat ashes like bread
and mingle tears with my drink,
10† because of your indignation and anger;
for you have taken me up and thrown me down.
11† My days are like an evening shadow;
I wither away like grass.

12 † But you, O Lord, are enthroned forever;
you are remembered throughout all
generations.
13 You will arise and have pity on Zion;
it is the time to favor her;
the appointed time has come.
14 † For your servants hold her stones dear
and have pity on her dust.
15 Nations will fear the name of the Lord,
and all the kings of the earth will fear your
glory.
16 For the Lord builds up Zion;
he appears in his glory;
17 he regards the prayer of the destitute
and does not despise their prayer.

18 † Let this be recorded for a generation to
come,
so that a people yet to be created may
praise the Lord:
19 † that he looked down from his holy height;
from heaven the Lord looked at the earth,
20 † to hear the groans of the prisoners,
to set free those who were doomed
to die,
21 † that they may declare in Zion the name of
the Lord,
and in Jerusalem his praise,
22 when peoples gather together,
and kingdoms, to worship the Lord.

23† He has broken my strength in midcourse;
he has shortened my days.
24 “O my God,” I say, “take me not away
in the midst of my days—
you whose years endure
throughout all generations!”

25† Of old you laid the foundation of the
earth,
and the heavens are the work of your
hands.
26 They will perish, but you will remain;
they will all wear out like a garment.
You will change them like a robe, and they
will pass away,
27† but you are the same, and your years have
no end.
28† The children of your servants shall dwell
secure;
their offspring shall be established before
you.

Bless the Lord, O My Soul

103

1 Of David.

Bless the Lord, O my soul,
and all that is within me,
bless his holy name!

2 Bless the Lord, O my soul,
and forget not all his benefits,
3 who forgives all your iniquity,
who heals all your diseases,
4 who redeems your life from the pit,
who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy,
5 who satisfies you with good
so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

6 The Lord works righteousness
and justice for all who are oppressed.
7 He made known his ways to Moses,
his acts to the people of Israel.
8 The Lord is merciful and gracious,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.
9 He will not always chide,
nor will he keep his anger forever.
10 He does not deal with us according to our sins,
nor repay us according to our iniquities.
11 For as high as the heavens are above the earth,
so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him;

12 as far as the east is from the west,
so far does he remove our transgressions
from us.
13† As a father shows compassion to his children,
so the Lord shows compassion to those
who fear him.
14† For he knows our frame;[1]
he remembers that we are dust.

15† As for man, his days are like grass;
he flourishes like a flower of the field;
16 for the wind passes over it, and it is gone,
and its place knows it no more.
17† But the steadfast love of the Lord is from
everlasting to everlasting on those who
fear him,
and his righteousness to children's
children,
18† to those who keep his covenant
and remember to do his commandments.
19† The Lord has established his throne in the
heavens,
and his kingdom rules over all.

20†† Bless the Lord, O you his angels,
you mighty ones who do his word,
obeying the voice of his word!
21† Bless the Lord, all his hosts,
his ministers, who do his will!
22† Bless the Lord, all his works,
in all places of his dominion.
Bless the Lord, O my soul!

O Lord My God, You Are Very Great

104

1 ✝Bless the Lord, O my soul!
O Lord my God, you are very great!
You are clothed with splendor and majesty,

2 ✝✝ covering yourself with light as with a
garment,
stretching out the heavens like a tent.
3 ✝ He lays the beams of his chambers on
the waters;
he makes the clouds his chariot;
he rides on the wings of the wind;
4 he makes his messengers winds,
his ministers a flaming fire.

5 ✝ He set the earth on its foundations,
so that it should never be moved.
6 You covered it with the deep as with a
garment;
the waters stood above the mountains.
7 At your rebuke they fled;
at the sound of your thunder they took to
flight.
8 The mountains rose, the valleys sank down
to the place that you appointed for them.
9 You set a boundary that they may not pass,
so that they might not again cover
the earth.

10 ✝ You make springs gush forth in the
valleys;
they flow between the hills;

11 they give drink to every beast of the field;
the wild donkeys quench their thirst.
12 Beside them the birds of the heavens dwell;
they sing among the branches.
13† From your lofty abode you water the
mountains;
the earth is satisfied with the fruit of your
work.

14† You cause the grass to grow for the livestock
and plants for man to cultivate,
that he may bring forth food from the earth
15† and wine to gladden the heart of man,
oil to make his face shine
and bread to strengthen man's heart.

16† The trees of the LORD are watered abundantly,
the cedars of Lebanon that he planted.
17 In them the birds build their nests;
the stork has her home in the fir trees.
18 The high mountains are for the wild goats;
the rocks are a refuge for the rock badgers.

19 He made the moon to mark the seasons;[1]
the sun knows its time for setting.
20† You make darkness, and it is night,
when all the beasts of the forest creep about.
21 The young lions roar for their prey,
seeking their food from God.
22 When the sun rises, they steal away
and lie down in their dens.
23† Man goes out to his work
and to his labor until the evening.

24 O Lord, how manifold are your works!
In wisdom have you made them all;
the earth is full of your creatures.
25 Here is the sea, great and wide,
which teems with creatures innumerable,
living things both small and great.
26 There go the ships,
and Leviathan, which you formed to play
in it.[1]

27 These all look to you,
to give them their food in due season.
28 When you give it to them, they gather it up;
when you open your hand, they are filled
with good things.
29 When you hide your face, they are dismayed;
when you take away their breath, they die
and return to their dust.
30 When you send forth your Spirit,[2] they are
created,
and you renew the face of the ground.

31 May the glory of the Lord endure forever;
may the Lord rejoice in his works,
32 who looks on the earth and it trembles,
who touches the mountains and they
smoke!
33 I will sing to the Lord as long as I live;
I will sing praise to my God while I have
being.
34 May my meditation be pleasing to him,
for I rejoice in the Lord.

35† Let sinners be consumed from the earth,
and let the wicked be no more!
Bless the LORD, O my soul!
Praise the LORD!

Tell of All His Wonderful Works

105 [1]†† Oh give thanks to the Lord; call upon his name;
make known his deeds among the peoples!

[2]† Sing to him, sing praises to him;
tell of all his wondrous works!
[3] Glory in his holy name;
let the hearts of those who seek the Lord
rejoice!
[4] Seek the Lord and his strength;
seek his presence continually!
[5]† Remember the wondrous works that he has
done,
his miracles, and the judgments he uttered,
[6] O offspring of Abraham, his servant,
children of Jacob, his chosen ones!

[7]† He is the Lord our God;
his judgments are in all the earth.
[8] He remembers his covenant forever,
the word that he commanded, for a
thousand generations,
[9] the covenant that he made with Abraham,
his sworn promise to Isaac,
[10] which he confirmed to Jacob as a statute,
to Israel as an everlasting covenant,
[11] saying, “To you I will give the land of
Canaan
as your portion for an inheritance.”

12† When they were few in number,
of little account, and sojourners in it,
13 wandering from nation to nation,
from one kingdom to another people,
14 he allowed no one to oppress them;
he rebuked kings on their account,
15† saying, “Touch not my anointed ones,
do my prophets no harm!”

16†† When he summoned a famine on the land
and broke all supply[1] of bread,
17 he had sent a man ahead of them,
Joseph, who was sold as a slave.
18† His feet were hurt with fetters;
his neck was put in a collar of iron;
19† until what he had said came to pass,
the word of the Lord tested him.
20 The king sent and released him;
the ruler of the peoples set him free;
21 he made him lord of his house
and ruler of all his possessions,
22† to bind[2] his princes at his pleasure
and to teach his elders wisdom.

23† Then Israel came to Egypt;
Jacob sojourned in the land of Ham.
24 And the Lord made his people very fruitful
and made them stronger than their foes.
25† He turned their hearts to hate his people,
to deal craftily with his servants.

26† He sent Moses, his servant,
and Aaron, whom he had chosen.

27 They performed his signs among them
and miracles in the land of Ham.
28 He sent darkness, and made the land dark;
they did not rebel[3] against his words.
29 He turned their waters into blood
and caused their fish to die.
30 Their land swarmed with frogs,
even in the chambers of their kings.
31 He spoke, and there came swarms of flies,
and gnats throughout their country.
32 He gave them hail for rain,
and fiery lightning bolts through their land.
33 He struck down their vines and fig trees,
and shattered the trees of their country.
34 He spoke, and the locusts came,
young locusts without number,
35 which devoured all the vegetation in their land
and ate up the fruit of their ground.
36 He struck down all the firstborn in their land,
the firstfruits of all their strength.

37 † Then he brought out Israel with silver and gold,
and there was none among his tribes who stumbled.
38 Egypt was glad when they departed,
for dread of them had fallen upon it.

39 He spread a cloud for a covering,
and fire to give light by night.
40 They asked, and he brought quail,
and gave them bread from heaven in

abundance.
41 He opened the rock, and water gushed
out;
it flowed through the desert like a river.
42 For he remembered his holy promise,
and Abraham, his servant.

43 So he brought his people out with joy,
his chosen ones with singing.
44 And he gave them the lands of the nations,
and they took possession of the fruit of the
peoples' toil,
45 that they might keep his statutes
and observe his laws.
Praise the LORD!

Give Thanks to the Lord, for He Is Good

106 [1]† Praise the Lord!
Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is
good,
for his steadfast love endures forever!

[2]† Who can utter the mighty deeds of the
Lord,
or declare all his praise?
[3]† Blessed are they who observe justice,
who do righteousness at all times!

[4]† Remember me, O Lord, when you show
favor to your people;
help me when you save them,[1]
[5]† that I may look upon the prosperity of
your chosen ones,
that I may rejoice in the gladness of your
nation,
that I may glory with your inheritance.

[6]†† Both we and our fathers have sinned;
we have committed iniquity; we have done
wickedness.
[7]† Our fathers, when they were in Egypt,
did not consider your wondrous
works;
they did not remember the abundance of
your steadfast love,
but rebelled by the sea, at the Red Sea.
[8]† Yet he saved them for his name's sake,
that he might make known his mighty

power.
9 He rebuked the Red Sea, and it became dry,
and he led them through the deep as
through a desert.
10† So he saved them from the hand of the foe
and redeemed them from the power of
the enemy.
11 And the waters covered their adversaries;
not one of them was left.
12† Then they believed his words;
they sang his praise.

13† But they soon forgot his works;
they did not wait for his counsel.
14† But they had a wanton craving in the
wilderness,
and put God to the test in the desert;
15† he gave them what they asked,
but sent a wasting disease among them.

16† When men in the camp were jealous of
Moses
and Aaron, the holy one of the LORD,
17† the earth opened and swallowed up Dathan,
and covered the company of Abiram.
18 Fire also broke out in their company;
the flame burned up the wicked.

19† They made a calf in Horeb
and worshiped a metal image.
20† They exchanged the glory of God
for the image of an ox that eats grass.
21 They forgot God, their Savior,

who had done great things in Egypt,
22† wondrous works in the land of Ham,
and awesome deeds by the Red Sea.
23† Therefore he said he would destroy
them—
had not Moses, his chosen one,
stood in the breach before him,
to turn away his wrath from destroying
them.

24† Then they despised the pleasant land,
having no faith in his promise.
25 They murmured in their tents,
and did not obey the voice of the Lord.
26 Therefore he raised his hand and swore to
them
that he would make them fall in the
wilderness,
27 and would make their offspring fall among the
nations,
scattering them among the lands.

28† Then they yoked themselves to the Baal of
Peor,
and ate sacrifices offered to the dead;
29 they provoked the Lord to anger with their
deeds,
and a plague broke out among them.
30† Then Phinehas stood up and intervened,
and the plague was stayed.
31† And that was counted to him as
righteousness
from generation to generation forever.

32† They angered him at the waters of
Meribah,
and it went ill with Moses on their
account,
33 for they made his spirit bitter,[1]
and he spoke rashly with his lips.

34† They did not destroy the peoples,
as the Lord commanded them,
35 but they mixed with the nations
and learned to do as they did.
36† They served their idols,
which became a snare to them.
37† They sacrificed their sons
and their daughters to the demons;
38† they poured out innocent blood,
the blood of their sons and daughters,
whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan,
and the land was polluted with blood.
39† Thus they became unclean by their acts,
and played the whore in their deeds.

40† Then the anger of the Lord was kindled
against his people,
and he abhorred his heritage;
41 he gave them into the hand of the nations,
so that those who hated them ruled over
them.
42 Their enemies oppressed them,
and they were brought into subjection under
their power.
43 Many times he delivered them,
but they were rebellious in their purposes

and were brought low through their
iniquity.

44† Nevertheless, he looked upon their distress,
when he heard their cry.
45† For their sake he remembered his covenant,
and relented according to the abundance
of his steadfast love.
46† He caused them to be pitied
by all those who held them captive.

47 Save us, O LORD our God,
and gather us from among the nations,
that we may give thanks to your holy name
and glory in your praise.

48† Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel,
from everlasting to everlasting!
And let all the people say, "Amen!"
Praise the LORD!

BOOK FIVE

Let the Redeemed of the Lord Say So

107 [1]†† Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good,
for his steadfast love endures forever!

[2]† Let the redeemed of the Lord say so,
whom he has redeemed from trouble[1]
[3]† and gathered in from the lands,
from the east and from the west,
from the north and from the south.

[4]† Some wandered in desert wastes,
finding no way to a city to dwell in;
[5] hungry and thirsty,
their soul fainted within them.
[6]† Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble,
and he delivered them from their distress.
[7] He led them by a straight way
till they reached a city to dwell in.
[8]† Let them thank the Lord for his steadfast love,
for his wondrous works to the children of
man!
[9]† For he satisfies the longing soul,
and the hungry soul he fills with good
things.

[10]† Some sat in darkness and in the shadow of
death,
prisoners in affliction and in irons,
[11]† for they had rebelled against the words of
God,
and spurned the counsel of the Most High.

12† So he bowed their hearts down with hard
labor;
they fell down, with none to help.
13† Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble,
and he delivered them from their distress.
14† He brought them out of darkness and the
shadow of death,
and burst their bonds apart.
15 Let them thank the Lord for his steadfast love,
for his wondrous works to the children of
man!
16† For he shatters the doors of bronze
and cuts in two the bars of iron.

17† Some were fools through their sinful ways,
and because of their iniquities suffered
affliction;
18† they loathed any kind of food,
and they drew near to the gates of death.
19 Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble,
and he delivered them from their distress.
20† He sent out his word and healed them,
and delivered them from their destruction.
21 Let them thank the Lord for his steadfast love,
for his wondrous works to the children of
man!
22 And let them offer sacrifices of thanksgiving,
and tell of his deeds in songs of joy!

23† Some went down to the sea in ships,
doing business on the great waters;
24 they saw the deeds of the Lord,
his wondrous works in the deep.
25 For he commanded and raised the stormy

wind,
which lifted up the waves of the sea.
26 They mounted up to heaven; they went down
to the depths;
their courage melted away in their evil plight;
27 they reeled and staggered like drunken men
and were at their wits' end.[2]
28 Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble,
and he delivered them from their distress.
29 He made the storm be still,
and the waves of the sea were hushed.
30 Then they were glad that the waters[1] were
quiet,
and he brought them to their desired haven.
31 Let them thank the LORD for his steadfast love,
for his wondrous works to the children of
man!
32 Let them extol him in the congregation of
the people,
and praise him in the assembly of the elders.

33 He turns rivers into a desert,
springs of water into thirsty ground,
34 a fruitful land into a salty waste,
because of the evil of its inhabitants.
35 He turns a desert into pools of water,
a parched land into springs of water.
36 And there he lets the hungry dwell,
and they establish a city to live in;
37 they sow fields and plant vineyards
and get a fruitful yield.
38 By his blessing they multiply greatly,
and he does not let their livestock diminish.

39 When they are diminished and brought low
through oppression, evil, and sorrow,
40 he pours contempt on princes
and makes them wander in trackless
wastes;
41† but he raises up the needy out of affliction
and makes their families like flocks.
42 The upright see it and are glad,
and all wickedness shuts its mouth.

43† Whoever is wise, let him attend to these things;
let them consider the steadfast love of the
LORD.

With God We Shall Do Valiantly

108 [1]A Song. A Psalm of David.

My heart is steadfast, O God!
I will sing and make melody with all my being![2]

[2] Awake, O harp and lyre!
I will awake the dawn!
[3] I will give thanks to you, O Lord, among the peoples;
I will sing praises to you among the nations.
[4] For your steadfast love is great above the heavens;
your faithfulness reaches to the clouds.

[5] Be exalted, O God, above the heavens!
Let your glory be over all the earth!
[6] That your beloved ones may be delivered,
give salvation by your right hand and answer me!

[7] God has promised in his holiness:[3]
"With exultation I will divide up Shechem
and portion out the Valley of Succoth.
[8] Gilead is mine; Manasseh is mine;
Ephraim is my helmet,
Judah my scepter.
[9] Moab is my washbasin;
upon Edom I cast my shoe;
over Philistia I shout in triumph."

10 Who will bring me to the fortified city?
Who will lead me to Edom?
11 Have you not rejected us, O God?
You do not go out, O God, with our
armies.
12 Oh grant us help against the foe,
for vain is the salvation of man!
13 With God we shall do valiantly;
it is he who will tread down our foes.

Help Me, O Lord My God

109 [1]To the choirmaster. A Psalm of David.
Be not silent, O God of my praise!

[2]† For wicked and deceitful mouths are opened
against me,
speaking against me with lying tongues.
[3] They encircle me with words of hate,
and attack me without cause.
[4]† In return for my love they accuse me,
but I give myself to prayer.[1]
[5] So they reward me evil for good,
and hatred for my love.

[6]† Appoint a wicked man against him;
let an accuser stand at his right hand.
[7]† When he is tried, let him come forth
guilty;
let his prayer be counted as sin!
[8]† May his days be few;
may another take his office!
[9]† May his children be fatherless
and his wife a widow!
[10]† May his children wander about and beg,
seeking food far from the ruins they
inhabit!
[11] May the creditor seize all that he has;
may strangers plunder the fruits of his toil!
[12] Let there be none to extend kindness to
him,
nor any to pity his fatherless children!
[13] May his posterity be cut off;

may his name be blotted out in the second
generation!
14 May the iniquity of his fathers be
remembered before the LORD,
and let not the sin of his mother be blotted
out!
15 Let them be before the LORD continually,
that he may cut off the memory of them
from the earth!

16 For he did not remember to show
kindness,
but pursued the poor and needy
and the brokenhearted, to put them to
death.
17 He loved to curse; let curses come[2] upon
him!
He did not delight in blessing; may it be
far[3] from him!
18 He clothed himself with cursing as his coat;
may it soak[4] into his body like water,
like oil into his bones!
19 May it be like a garment that he wraps
around him,
like a belt that he puts on every day!
20 May this be the reward of my accusers from
the LORD,
of those who speak evil against my life!

21 But you, O GOD my Lord,
deal on my behalf for your name's sake;
because your steadfast love is good,
deliver me!
22 For I am poor and needy,

and my heart is stricken within me.
23 I am gone like a shadow at evening;
I am shaken off like a locust.
24 My knees are weak through fasting;
my body has become gaunt, with
no fat.
25 I am an object of scorn to my accusers;
when they see me, they wag their heads.

26† Help me, O Lord my God!
Save me according to your steadfast love!
27 Let them know that this is your hand;
you, O Lord, have done it!
28† Let them curse, but you will bless!
They arise and are put to shame, but your
servant will be glad!
29 May my accusers be clothed with dishonor;
may they be wrapped in their own shame
as in a cloak!

30 With my mouth I will give great thanks to the
Lord;
I will praise him in the midst of the
throng.
31 For he stands at the right hand of the needy
one,
to save him from those who condemn his
soul to death.

Sit at My Right Hand

110

1 † A Psalm of David.

The Lord says to my Lord:
"Sit at my right hand,
until I make your enemies your footstool."

2 † The Lord sends forth from Zion
your mighty scepter.
Rule in the midst of your enemies!
3 † Your people will offer themselves freely
on the day of your power,[1]
in holy garments;[2]
from the womb of the morning,
the dew of your youth will be yours.[3]
4 † The Lord has sworn
and will not change his mind,
"You are a priest forever
after the order of Melchizedek."

5 † The Lord is at your right hand;
he will shatter kings on the day of his wrath.
6 † He will execute judgment among the nations,
filling them with corpses;
he will shatter chiefs[4]
over the wide earth.
7 † He will drink from the brook by the way;
therefore he will lift up his head.

Great Are the Lord's Works

111 [1]† [5] Praise the Lord!
I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart,
in the company of the upright, in the
congregation.

[2]†† Great are the works of the Lord,
studied by all who delight in them.
[3] Full of splendor and majesty is his work,
and his righteousness endures forever.
[4] He has caused his wondrous works to
be remembered;
the Lord is gracious and merciful.
[5]† He provides food for those who fear him;
he remembers his covenant forever.
[6]† He has shown his people the power of his
works,
in giving them the inheritance of the
nations.
[7] The works of his hands are faithful and just;
all his precepts are trustworthy;
[8] they are established forever and ever,
to be performed with faithfulness and
uprightness.
[9] He sent redemption to his people;
he has commanded his covenant forever.
Holy and awesome is his name!
[10]† The fear of the Lord is the beginning of
wisdom;
all those who practice it have a good
understanding.
His praise endures forever!

The Righteous Will Never Be Moved

112 [1]† [1] Praise the Lord!
Blessed is the man who fears the
Lord,
who greatly delights in his
commandments!

[2]† His offspring will be mighty in the
land;
the generation of the upright will be
blessed.
[3]† Wealth and riches are in his house,
and his righteousness endures forever.
[4]† Light dawns in the darkness for the
upright;
he is gracious, merciful, and righteous.
[5]† It is well with the man who deals
generously and lends;
who conducts his affairs with justice.
[6]† For the righteous will never be moved;
he will be remembered forever.
[7]† He is not afraid of bad news;
his heart is firm, trusting in the Lord.
[8] His heart is steady; he will not be afraid,
until he looks in triumph on his
adversaries.
[9]† He has distributed freely; he has given to
the poor;
his righteousness endures forever;
his horn is exalted in honor.
[10]† The wicked man sees it and is angry;
he gnashes his teeth and melts away;
the desire of the wicked will perish!

Who Is like the Lord Our God?

113

1 †Praise the Lord!
Praise, O servants of the Lord,
praise the name of the Lord!

2 Blessed be the name of the Lord
from this time forth and forevermore!
3† From the rising of the sun to its setting,
the name of the Lord is to be praised!

4† The Lord is high above all nations,
and his glory above the heavens!
5 Who is like the Lord our God,
who is seated on high,
6 who looks far down
on the heavens and the earth?
7† He raises the poor from the dust
and lifts the needy from the ash heap,
8 to make them sit with princes,
with the princes of his people.
9† He gives the barren woman a home,
making her the joyous mother of
children.
Praise the Lord!

Tremble at the Presence of the Lord

114 [1]When Israel went out from Egypt, the house of Jacob from a
people of strange language,

[2]† Judah became his sanctuary,
Israel his dominion.

[3]† The sea looked and fled;
Jordan turned back.
[4] The mountains skipped like rams,
the hills like lambs.

[5] What ails you, O sea, that you flee?
O Jordan, that you turn back?
[6] O mountains, that you skip like rams?
O hills, like lambs?

[7]† Tremble, O earth, at the presence of the Lord,
at the presence of the God of Jacob,
[8] who turns the rock into a pool of water,
the flint into a spring of water.

To Your Name Give Glory

115 [1]†Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to your name give glory,
for the sake of your steadfast love and your
faithfulness!

[2] Why should the nations say,
"Where is their God?"
[3]† Our God is in the heavens;
he does all that he pleases.

[4]† Their idols are silver and gold,
the work of human hands.
[5] They have mouths, but do not speak;
eyes, but do not see.
[6] They have ears, but do not hear;
noses, but do not smell.
[7] They have hands, but do not feel;
feet, but do not walk;
and they do not make a sound in their throat.
[8]† Those who make them become like them;
so do all who trust in them.

[9]† O Israel,[1] trust in the Lord!
He is their help and their shield.
[10] O house of Aaron, trust in the Lord!
He is their help and their shield.
[11] You who fear the Lord, trust in the Lord!
He is their help and their shield.

[12]† The Lord has remembered us; he will bless us;
he will bless the house of Israel;

he will bless the house of Aaron;
13 he will bless those who fear the LORD,
both the small and the great.

14 † May the LORD give you increase,
you and your children!
15 May you be blessed by the LORD,
who made heaven and earth!

16 † The heavens are the LORD's heavens,
but the earth he has given to the children of
man.
17 † The dead do not praise the LORD,
nor do any who go down into silence.
18 † But we will bless the LORD
from this time forth and forevermore.
Praise the LORD!

I Love the Lord

116 [1]† I love the Lord, because he has heard my voice and my pleas for mercy.

[2] Because he inclined his ear to me,
therefore I will call on him as long as I live.
[3]† The snares of death encompassed me;
the pangs of Sheol laid hold on me;
I suffered distress and anguish.
[4]† Then I called on the name of the Lord:
"O Lord, I pray, deliver my soul!"

[5]† Gracious is the Lord, and righteous;
our God is merciful.
[6]† The Lord preserves the simple;
when I was brought low, he saved me.
[7]† Return, O my soul, to your rest;
for the Lord has dealt bountifully with you.

[8] For you have delivered my soul from death,
my eyes from tears,
my feet from stumbling;
[9]† I will walk before the Lord
in the land of the living.

[10]† I believed, even when[1] I spoke,
"I am greatly afflicted";
[11]† I said in my alarm,
"All mankind are liars."

12† What shall I render to the Lord
for all his benefits to me?
13† I will lift up the cup of salvation
and call on the name of the Lord,
14† I will pay my vows to the Lord
in the presence of all his people.

15† Precious in the sight of the Lord
is the death of his saints.
16† O Lord, I am your servant;
I am your servant, the son of your
maidservant.
You have loosed my bonds.
17† I will offer to you the sacrifice of
thanksgiving
and call on the name of the Lord.
18† I will pay my vows to the Lord
in the presence of all his people,
19† in the courts of the house of the Lord,
in your midst, O Jerusalem.
Praise the Lord!

The Lord's Faithfulness Endures Forever

117 [1] †Praise the Lord, all nations!
Extol him, all peoples!

[2] For great is his steadfast love toward us,
and the faithfulness of the Lord endures
forever.
Praise the Lord!

His Steadfast Love Endures Forever

118 [1]†† Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is
good;
for his steadfast love endures forever!

[2]† Let Israel say,
"His steadfast love endures
forever."
[3] Let the house of Aaron say,
"His steadfast love endures forever."
[4] Let those who fear the Lord say,
"His steadfast love endures forever."

[5]†† Out of my distress I called on the Lord;
the Lord answered me and set me free.
[6]† The Lord is on my side; I will not fear.
What can man do to me?
[7] The Lord is on my side as my helper;
I shall look in triumph on those who
hate me.

[8] It is better to take refuge in the Lord
than to trust in man.
[9] It is better to take refuge in the Lord
than to trust in princes.

[10]† All nations surrounded me;
in the name of the Lord I cut them off!
[11] They surrounded me, surrounded me on
every side;
in the name of the Lord I cut them off!

12 † They surrounded me like bees;
they went out like a fire among thorns;
in the name of the Lord I cut them off!
13 † I was pushed hard,[1] so that I was falling,
but the Lord helped me.

14 † The Lord is my strength and my song;
he has become my salvation.
15 Glad songs of salvation
are in the tents of the righteous:
"The right hand of the Lord does valiantly,
16 the right hand of the Lord exalts,
the right hand of the Lord does valiantly!"

17 † I shall not die, but I shall live,
and recount the deeds of the Lord.
18 † The Lord has disciplined me severely,
but he has not given me over to death.

19 †† Open to me the gates of righteousness,
that I may enter through them
and give thanks to the Lord.
20 † This is the gate of the Lord;
the righteous shall enter through it.
21 I thank you that you have answered me
and have become my salvation.
22 † The stone that the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone.[2]
23 † This is the Lord's doing;
it is marvelous in our eyes.
24 † This is the day that the Lord has made;
let us rejoice and be glad in it.

25† Save us, we pray, O Lord!
O Lord, we pray, give us success!

26† Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!
We bless you from the house of the Lord.
27† The Lord is God,
and he has made his light to shine upon us.
Bind the festal sacrifice with cords,
up to the horns of the altar!

28 You are my God, and I will give thanks to you;
you are my God; I will extol you.
29† Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
for his steadfast love endures forever!

Your Word Is a Lamp to My Feet

Aleph

119 1 † [1] Blessed are those whose way is blameless,
who walk in the law of the Lord!

2 † Blessed are those who keep his testimonies,
who seek him with their whole heart,
3 who also do no wrong,
but walk in his ways!
4 † You have commanded your precepts
to be kept diligently.
5 Oh that my ways may be steadfast
in keeping your statutes!
6 Then I shall not be put to shame,
having my eyes fixed on all your
commandments.
7 I will praise you with an upright heart,
when I learn your righteous rules.[2]
8 † I will keep your statutes;
do not utterly forsake me!

Beth

9 † How can a young man keep his way
pure?
By guarding it according to your word.
10 † With my whole heart I seek you;
let me not wander from your
commandments!
11 † I have stored up your word in my heart,
that I might not sin against you.

12† Blessed are you, O Lord;
teach me your statutes!
13† With my lips I declare
all the rules[3] of your mouth.
14 In the way of your testimonies I delight
as much as in all riches.
15† I will meditate on your precepts
and fix my eyes on your ways.
16 I will delight in your statutes;
I will not forget your word.

Gimel

17† Deal bountifully with your servant,
that I may live and keep your word.
18† Open my eyes, that I may behold
wondrous things out of your law.
19† I am a sojourner on the earth;
hide not your commandments from me!
20† My soul is consumed with longing
for your rules[1] at all times.
21† You rebuke the insolent, accursed ones,
who wander from your commandments.
22 Take away from me scorn and contempt,
for I have kept your testimonies.
23† Even though princes sit plotting against me,
your servant will meditate on your statutes.
24† Your testimonies are my delight;
they are my counselors.

Daleth

25† My soul clings to the dust;
give me life according to your word!

26† When I told of my ways, you answered me;
teach me your statutes!
27† Make me understand the way of your
precepts,
and I will meditate on your
wondrous works.
28† My soul melts away for sorrow;
strengthen me according to your word!
29 Put false ways far from me
and graciously teach me your law!
30† I have chosen the way of faithfulness;
I set your rules before me.
31 I cling to your testimonies, O Lord;
let me not be put to shame!
32† I will run in the way of your commandments
when you enlarge my heart![2]

He

33† Teach me, O Lord, the way of your statutes;
and I will keep it to the end.[3]
34† Give me understanding, that I may keep your
law
and observe it with my whole heart.
35† Lead me in the path of your commandments,
for I delight in it.
36 Incline my heart to your testimonies,
and not to selfish gain!
37† Turn my eyes from looking at worthless things;
and give me life in your ways.
38† Confirm to your servant your promise,
that you may be feared.
39 Turn away the reproach that I dread,
for your rules are good.

40† Behold, I long for your precepts;
in your righteousness give me life!

Waw

41† Let your steadfast love come to me,
O Lord,
your salvation according to your promise;
42† then shall I have an answer for
him who taunts me,
for I trust in your word.
43 And take not the word of truth utterly out of
my mouth,
for my hope is in your rules.
44 I will keep your law continually,
forever and ever,
45† and I shall walk in a wide place,
for I have sought your precepts.
46† I will also speak of your testimonies before
kings
and shall not be put to shame,
47† for I find my delight in your commandments,
which I love.
48† I will lift up my hands toward your
commandments, which I love,
and I will meditate on your statutes.

Zayin

49† Remember your word to your servant,
in which you have made me hope.
50† This is my comfort in my affliction,
that your promise gives me life.
51† The insolent utterly deride me,

but I do not turn away from your law.
52 When I think of your rules from of old,
I take comfort, O Lord.
53 Hot indignation seizes me because of the wicked,
who forsake your law.
54 Your statutes have been my songs
in the house of my sojourning.
55 I remember your name in the night, O Lord,
and keep your law.
56 This blessing has fallen to me,
that I have kept your precepts.

Heth

57 The Lord is my portion;
I promise to keep your words.
58 I entreat your favor with all my heart;
be gracious to me according to your
promise.
59 When I think on my ways,
I turn my feet to your testimonies;
60 I hasten and do not delay
to keep your commandments.
61 Though the cords of the wicked ensnare me,
I do not forget your law.
62 At midnight I rise to praise you,
because of your righteous rules.
63 I am a companion of all who fear you,
of those who keep your precepts.
64 The earth, O Lord, is full of your steadfast
love;
teach me your statutes!

Teth

65 † You have dealt well with your servant,
O LORD, according to your word.
66 Teach me good judgment and knowledge,
for I believe in your commandments.
67 † Before I was afflicted I went astray,
but now I keep your word.
68 You are good and do good;
teach me your statutes.
69 The insolent smear me with lies,
but with my whole heart I keep your
precepts;
70 † their heart is unfeeling like fat,
but I delight in your law.
71 † It is good for me that I was afflicted,
that I might learn your statutes.
72 The law of your mouth is better to me
than thousands of gold and silver pieces.

YODH

73 † Your hands have made and fashioned me;
give me understanding that I may learn your
commandments.
74 † Those who fear you shall see me and
rejoice,
because I have hoped in your word.
75 † I know, O LORD, that your rules are
righteous,
and that in faithfulness you have
afflicted me.
76 † Let your steadfast love comfort me
according to your promise to your
servant.
77 Let your mercy come to me, that I may

live;
for your law is my delight.
78† Let the insolent be put to shame,
because they have wronged me with
falsehood;
as for me, I will meditate on your
precepts.
79 Let those who fear you turn to me,
that they may know your testimonies.
80 May my heart be blameless in your
statutes,
that I may not be put to shame!

Kaph

81† My soul longs for your salvation;
I hope in your word.
82 My eyes long for your promise;
I ask, “When will you comfort me?”
83† For I have become like a wineskin in the
smoke,
yet I have not forgotten your statutes.
84 How long must your servant endure?[1]
When will you judge those who
persecute me?
85† The insolent have dug pitfalls for me;
they do not live according to your law.
86 All your commandments are sure;
they persecute me with falsehood; help me!
87 They have almost made an end of me on
earth,
but I have not forsaken your precepts.
88† In your steadfast love give me life,
that I may keep the testimonies of your
mouth.

Lamedh

89† Forever, O Lord, your word
is firmly fixed in the heavens.
90 Your faithfulness endures to all generations;
you have established the earth, and
it stands fast.
91† By your appointment they stand this day,
for all things are your servants.
92 If your law had not been my delight,
I would have perished in my affliction.
93† I will never forget your precepts,
for by them you have given me life.
94† I am yours; save me,
for I have sought your precepts.
95† The wicked lie in wait to destroy me,
but I consider your testimonies.
96† I have seen a limit to all perfection,
but your commandment is
exceedingly broad.

Mem

97† Oh how I love your law!
It is my meditation all the day.
98 Your commandment makes me wiser than
my enemies,
for it is ever with me.
99† I have more understanding than all my
teachers,
for your testimonies are my meditation.
100† I understand more than the aged,[2]
for I keep your precepts.

101 I hold back my feet from every evil way,
in order to keep your word.
102† I do not turn aside from your rules,
for you have taught me.
103† How sweet are your words to my taste,
sweeter than honey to my mouth!
104† Through your precepts I get understanding;
therefore I hate every false way.

Nun

105† Your word is a lamp to my feet
and a light to my path.
106† I have sworn an oath and confirmed it,
to keep your righteous rules.
107† I am severely afflicted;
give me life, O Lord, according to your word!
108† Accept my freewill offerings of praise, O Lord,
and teach me your rules.
109† I hold my life in my hand continually,
but I do not forget your law.
110 The wicked have laid a snare for me,
but I do not stray from your precepts.
111† Your testimonies are my heritage forever,
for they are the joy of my heart.
112 I incline my heart to perform your statutes
forever, to the end.[1]

Samekh

113† I hate the double-minded,
but I love your law.

114 You are my hiding place and my shield;
I hope in your word.
115† Depart from me, you evildoers,
that I may keep the commandments of my God.
116 Uphold me according to your promise, that I may live,
and let me not be put to shame in my hope!
117 Hold me up, that I may be safe
and have regard for your statutes continually!
118 You spurn all who go astray from your statutes,
for their cunning is in vain.
119† All the wicked of the earth you discard like dross,
therefore I love your testimonies.
120† My flesh trembles for fear of you,
and I am afraid of your judgments.

Ayin

121† I have done what is just and right;
do not leave me to my oppressors.
122† Give your servant a pledge of good;
let not the insolent oppress me.
123 My eyes long for your salvation
and for the fulfillment of your righteous promise.
124 Deal with your servant according to your steadfast love,
and teach me your statutes.
125 I am your servant; give me understanding,

that I may know your testimonies!
126† It is time for the Lord to act,
for your law has been broken.
127 Therefore I love your commandments
above gold, above fine gold.
128† Therefore I consider all your precepts to be
right;
I hate every false way.

Pe

129 Your testimonies are wonderful;
therefore my soul keeps them.
130† The unfolding of your words gives light;
it imparts understanding to the simple.
131† I open my mouth and pant,
because I long for your commandments.
132 Turn to me and be gracious to me,
as is your way with those who love your
name.
133† Keep steady my steps according to your
promise,
and let no iniquity get dominion over me.
134† Redeem me from man's oppression,
that I may keep your precepts.
135† Make your face shine upon your servant,
and teach me your statutes.
136† My eyes shed streams of tears,
because people do not keep your law.

Tsadhe

137 Righteous are you, O Lord,
and right are your rules.

138 You have appointed your testimonies
in righteousness
and in all faithfulness.
139† My zeal consumes me,
because my foes forget your words.
140† Your promise is well tried,
and your servant loves it.
141† I am small and despised,
yet I do not forget your precepts.
142† Your righteousness is righteous forever,
and your law is true.
143 Trouble and anguish have found me out,
but your commandments are my delight.
144 Your testimonies are righteous forever;
give me understanding that I may live.

Qoph

145 With my whole heart I cry; answer me,
O Lord!
I will keep your statutes.
146 I call to you; save me,
that I may observe your testimonies.
147† I rise before dawn and cry for help;
I hope in your words.
148† My eyes are awake before the watches of the
night,
that I may meditate on your promise.
149† Hear my voice according to your steadfast love;
O Lord, according to your justice give
me life.
150† They draw near who persecute me with evil
purpose;
they are far from your law.
151 But you are near, O Lord,

and all your commandments are true.
152 Long have I known from your testimonies
that you have founded them forever.

Resh

153 Look on my affliction and deliver me,
for I do not forget your law.
154† Plead my cause and redeem me;
give me life according to your promise!
155† Salvation is far from the wicked,
for they do not seek your statutes.
156† Great is your mercy, O Lord;
give me life according to your rules.
157 Many are my persecutors and my adversaries,
but I do not swerve from your testimonies.
158 I look at the faithless with disgust,
because they do not keep your commands.
159† Consider how I love your precepts!
Give me life according to your steadfast love.
160† The sum of your word is truth,
and every one of your righteous rules
endures forever.

Sin and Shin

161† Princes persecute me without cause,
but my heart stands in awe of your words.
162† I rejoice at your word
like one who finds great spoil.
163 I hate and abhor falsehood,
but I love your law.
164† Seven times a day I praise you
for your righteous rules.

165† Great peace have those who love your law;
nothing can make them stumble.
166 I hope for your salvation, O Lord,
and I do your commandments.
167 My soul keeps your testimonies;
I love them exceedingly.
168† I keep your precepts and testimonies,
for all my ways are before you.

Taw

169† Let my cry come before you, O Lord;
give me understanding according to your word!
170† Let my plea come before you;
deliver me according to your word.
171 My lips will pour forth praise,
for you teach me your statutes.
172 My tongue will sing of your word,
for all your commandments are right.
173 Let your hand be ready to help me,
for I have chosen your precepts.
174† I long for your salvation, O Lord,
and your law is my delight.
175 Let my soul live and praise you,
and let your rules help me.
176† I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek your servant,
for I do not forget your commandments.

Deliver Me, O Lord

120

[1] A Song of Ascents.

In my distress I called to the Lord,
and he answered me.

[2] Deliver me, O Lord,
from lying lips,
from a deceitful tongue.

[3] What shall be given to you,
and what more shall be done to you,
you deceitful tongue?
[4] A warrior's sharp arrows,
with glowing coals of the broom tree!

[5] Woe to me, that I sojourn in Meshech,
that I dwell among the tents of
Kedar!
[6] Too long have I had my dwelling
among those who hate peace.
[7] I am for peace,
but when I speak, they are for war!

My Help Comes from the Lord

121

[1] A Song of Ascents.

I lift up my eyes to the hills.
From where does my help come?

[2] My help comes from the Lord,
who made heaven and earth.

[3] He will not let your foot be moved;
he who keeps you will not slumber.
[4] Behold, he who keeps Israel
will neither slumber nor sleep.

[5] The Lord is your keeper;
the Lord is your shade on your right hand.
[6] The sun shall not strike you by day,
nor the moon by night.

[7] The Lord will keep you from all evil;
he will keep your life.
[8] The Lord will keep
your going out and your coming in
from this time forth and forevermore.

Let Us Go to the House of the Lord

122 [1] A Song of Ascents. Of David.

I was glad when they said to me,
"Let us go to the house of the Lord!"

[2] Our feet have been standing
within your gates, O Jerusalem!

[3] Jerusalem—built as a city
that is bound firmly together,
[4] to which the tribes go up,
the tribes of the Lord,
as was decreed for[1] Israel,
to give thanks to the name of the Lord.
[5] There thrones for judgment were set,
the thrones of the house of David.

[6] Pray for the peace of Jerusalem!
"May they be secure who love you!
[7] Peace be within your walls
and security within your towers!"
[8] For my brothers and companions' sake
I will say, "Peace be within you!"
[9] For the sake of the house of the Lord
our God,
I will seek your good.

Our Eyes Look to the Lord Our God

123 [1]A Song of Ascents.

To you I lift up my eyes,
O you who are enthroned in the heavens!

[2] Behold, as the eyes of servants
look to the hand of their master,
as the eyes of a maidservant
to the hand of her mistress,
so our eyes look to the Lord our God,
till he has mercy upon us.

[3] Have mercy upon us, O Lord, have mercy upon us,
for we have had more than enough of contempt.
[4] Our soul has had more than enough
of the scorn of those who are at ease,
of the contempt of the proud.

Our Help Is in the Name of the Lord

124 [1] A Song of Ascents. Of David.

If it had not been the Lord who was on
our side—
let Israel now say—
[2] if it had not been the Lord who was on our
side
when people rose up against us,
[3] then they would have swallowed us up
alive,
when their anger was kindled against us;
[4] then the flood would have swept us away,
the torrent would have gone over us;
[5] then over us would have gone
the raging waters.

[6] Blessed be the Lord,
who has not given us
as prey to their teeth!
[7] We have escaped like a bird
from the snare of the fowlers;
the snare is broken,
and we have escaped!

[8] Our help is in the name of the Lord,
who made heaven and earth.

The Lord Surrounds His People

125

1 † A Song of Ascents.

Those who trust in the Lord are like
Mount Zion,
which cannot be moved, but abides
forever.

2 † As the mountains surround Jerusalem,
so the Lord surrounds his people,
from this time forth and forevermore.

3 † For the scepter of wickedness shall not
rest
on the land allotted to the righteous,
lest the righteous stretch out
their hands to do wrong.

4 † Do good, O Lord, to those who are good,
and to those who are upright in their
hearts!

5 But those who turn aside to their crooked
ways
the Lord will lead away with evildoers!
Peace be upon Israel!

Restore Our Fortunes, O Lord

126

1 † A Song of Ascents.
When the Lord restored the fortunes
of Zion,
we were like those who dream.

2 Then our mouth was filled with
laughter,
and our tongue with shouts of joy;
then they said among the nations,
"The Lord has done great things for them."
3 The Lord has done great things for us;
we are glad.

4 † Restore our fortunes, O Lord,
like streams in the Negeb!
5 Those who sow in tears
shall reap with shouts of joy!
6 † He who goes out weeping,
bearing the seed for sowing,
shall come home with shouts of joy,
bringing his sheaves with him.

Unless the Lord Builds the House

127 [1] A Song of Ascents. Of Solomon.

Unless the Lord builds the house,
those who build it labor in vain.
Unless the Lord watches over the city,
the watchman stays awake in vain.

[2] It is in vain that you rise up early
and go late to rest,
eating the bread of anxious toil;
for he gives to his beloved sleep.

[3] Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord,
the fruit of the womb a reward.
[4] Like arrows in the hand of a warrior
are the children[1] of one's youth.
[5] Blessed is the man
who fills his quiver with them!
He shall not be put to shame
when he speaks with his enemies in the gate.[2]

Blessed Is Everyone Who Fears the Lord

128 [1] A Song of Ascents.
Blessed is everyone who fears the
Lord,
who walks in his ways!

[2] You shall eat the fruit of the labor of your
hands;
you shall be blessed, and it shall be well
with you.

[3] Your wife will be like a fruitful vine
within your house;
your children will be like olive shoots
around your table.
[4] Behold, thus shall the man be blessed
who fears the Lord.

[5] The Lord bless you from Zion!
May you see the prosperity of Jerusalem
all the days of your life!
[6] May you see your children's children!
Peace be upon Israel!

They Have Afflicted Me from My Youth

129 [1] A Song of Ascents.

"Greatly[1] have they afflicted me from
my youth"—
let Israel now say—

[2] "Greatly have they afflicted me from my
youth,
yet they have not prevailed against me.
[3] The plowers plowed upon my back;
they made long their furrows."
[4] The Lord is righteous;
he has cut the cords of the wicked.
[5] May all who hate Zion
be put to shame and turned backward!
[6] Let them be like the grass on the
housetops,
which withers before it grows up,
[7] with which the reaper does not fill his hand
nor the binder of sheaves his arms,
[8] nor do those who pass by say,
"The blessing of the Lord be upon you!
We bless you in the name of the Lord!"

My Soul Waits for the Lord

130

[1] A Song of Ascents.

Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord!

[2] O Lord, hear my voice!
Let your ears be attentive
to the voice of my pleas for mercy!

[3] If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities,
O Lord, who could stand?
[4] But with you there is forgiveness,
that you may be feared.

[5] I wait for the Lord, my soul waits,
and in his word I hope;
[6] my soul waits for the Lord
more than watchmen for the morning,
more than watchmen for the morning.

[7] O Israel, hope in the Lord!
For with the Lord there is steadfast love,
and with him is plentiful redemption.
[8] And he will redeem Israel
from all his iniquities.

I Have Calmed and Quieted My Soul

131

[1] A Song of Ascents. Of David.

O Lord, my heart is not lifted up;
my eyes are not raised too high;
I do not occupy myself with things
too great and too marvelous for me.

[2] But I have calmed and quieted my soul,
like a weaned child with its mother;
like a weaned child is my soul
within me.

[3] O Israel, hope in the Lord
from this time forth and forevermore.

The Lord Has Chosen Zion

132

1 A Song of Ascents.

Remember, O Lord, in David's favor,
all the hardships he endured,

2 how he swore to the Lord
and vowed to the Mighty One of
Jacob,
3 "I will not enter my house
or get into my bed,
4 I will not give sleep to my eyes
or slumber to my eyelids,
5 until I find a place for the Lord,
a dwelling place for the Mighty One of
Jacob."

6 Behold, we heard of it in Ephrathah;
we found it in the fields of Jaar.
7 "Let us go to his dwelling place;
let us worship at his footstool!"

8 Arise, O Lord, and go to your resting place,
you and the ark of your might.
9 Let your priests be clothed
with righteousness,
and let your saints shout for joy.
10 For the sake of your servant David,
do not turn away the face of your anointed
one.

11 † The Lord swore to David a sure oath
from which he will not turn back:
“One of the sons of your body[1]
I will set on your throne.
12 † If your sons keep my covenant
and my testimonies that I shall teach them,
their sons also forever
shall sit on your throne.”

13 † For the Lord has chosen Zion;
he has desired it for his dwelling place:
14 “This is my resting place forever;
here I will dwell, for I have desired it.
15 † I will abundantly bless her provisions;
I will satisfy her poor with bread.
16 † Her priests I will clothe with salvation,
and her saints will shout for joy.
17 † There I will make a horn to sprout for
David;
I have prepared a lamp for my
anointed.
18 † His enemies I will clothe with shame,
but on him his crown will shine.”

When Brothers Dwell in Unity

133 [1]† A Song of Ascents. Of David.

Behold, how good and pleasant it is
when brothers dwell in unity![2]

[2]† It is like the precious oil on the head,
running down on the beard,
on the beard of Aaron,
running down on the collar of his robes!
[3]† It is like the dew of Hermon,
which falls on the mountains of Zion!
For there the Lord has commanded the
blessing,
life forevermore.

Come, Bless the Lord

134

[1] A Song of Ascents.

Come, bless the Lord, all you servants of the Lord,
who stand by night in the house of
the Lord!

[2] Lift up your hands to the holy place
and bless the Lord!

[3] May the Lord bless you from Zion,
he who made heaven and earth!

Your Name, O Lord, Endures Forever

135

1 †Praise the Lord!
Praise the name of the Lord,
give praise, O servants of the Lord,

2† who stand in the house of the Lord,
in the courts of the house of our God!
3† Praise the Lord, for the Lord is good;
sing to his name, for it is pleasant![1]
4† For the Lord has chosen Jacob for himself,
Israel as his own possession.

5 For I know that the Lord is great,
and that our Lord is above all gods.
6† Whatever the Lord pleases, he does,
in heaven and on earth,
in the seas and all deeps.
7† He it is who makes the clouds rise at the end
of the earth,
who makes lightnings for the rain
and brings forth the wind from
his storehouses.

8† He it was who struck down the firstborn of
Egypt,
both of man and of beast;
9 who in your midst, O Egypt,
sent signs and wonders
against Pharaoh and all his servants;
10 who struck down many nations
and killed mighty kings,

11 Sihon, king of the Amorites,
and Og, king of Bashan,
and all the kingdoms of Canaan,
12† and gave their land as a heritage,
a heritage to his people Israel.

13 Your name, O Lord, endures forever,
your renown,[2] O Lord, throughout all
ages.
14† For the Lord will vindicate his people
and have compassion on his servants.

15† The idols of the nations are silver and gold,
the work of human hands.
16 They have mouths, but do not speak;
they have eyes, but do not see;
17 they have ears, but do not hear,
nor is there any breath in their mouths.
18 Those who make them become like them,
so do all who trust in them!

19†† O house of Israel, bless the Lord!
O house of Aaron, bless the Lord!
20† O house of Levi, bless the Lord!
You who fear the Lord, bless the Lord!
21† Blessed be the Lord from Zion,
he who dwells in Jerusalem!
Praise the Lord!

His Steadfast Love Endures Forever

136 [1]‡‡Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good,
for his steadfast love endures forever.

[2]† Give thanks to the God of gods,
for his steadfast love endures forever.
[3]† Give thanks to the Lord of lords,
for his steadfast love endures forever;

[4]‡ to him who alone does great wonders,
for his steadfast love endures forever;
[5] to him who by understanding made
the heavens,
for his steadfast love endures forever;
[6] to him who spread out the earth above the
waters,
for his steadfast love endures forever;
[7] to him who made the great lights,
for his steadfast love endures forever;
[8] the sun to rule over the day,
for his steadfast love endures forever;
[9] the moon and stars to rule over the night,
for his steadfast love endures forever;

[10]‡ to him who struck down the firstborn of
Egypt,
for his steadfast love endures forever;
[11] and brought Israel out from among them,
for his steadfast love endures forever;
[12] with a strong hand and an outstretched
arm,

for his steadfast love endures forever;
13 to him who divided the Red Sea in two,
for his steadfast love endures forever;
14 and made Israel pass through the midst of it,
for his steadfast love endures forever;
15 but overthrew[1] Pharaoh and his host in the
Red Sea,
for his steadfast love endures forever;
16 to him who led his people through the
wilderness,
for his steadfast love endures forever;

17† to him who struck down great kings,
for his steadfast love endures forever;
18 and killed mighty kings,
for his steadfast love endures forever;
19 Sihon, king of the Amorites,
for his steadfast love endures forever;
20 and Og, king of Bashan,
for his steadfast love endures forever;
21 and gave their land as a heritage,
for his steadfast love endures forever;
22 a heritage to Israel his servant,
for his steadfast love endures forever.

23†† It is he who remembered us in our low
estate,
for his steadfast love endures forever;
24 and rescued us from our foes,
for his steadfast love endures forever;
25 he who gives food to all flesh,
for his steadfast love endures forever.

[26] † Give thanks to the God of heaven,
for his steadfast love endures forever.

How Shall We Sing the Lord's Song?

137 [1]† By the waters of Babylon,
there we sat down and wept,
when we remembered Zion.

[2]† On the willows[1] there
we hung up our lyres.
[3]† For there our captors
required of us songs,
and our tormentors, mirth, saying,
"Sing us one of the songs of Zion!"

[4]† How shall we sing the Lord's song
in a foreign land?
[5]† If I forget you, O Jerusalem,
let my right hand forget its skill!
[6]† Let my tongue stick to the roof of my
mouth,
if I do not remember you,
if I do not set Jerusalem
above my highest joy!

[7]† Remember, O Lord, against the
Edomites
the day of Jerusalem,
how they said, "Lay it bare, lay it bare,
down to its foundations!"
[8]†† O daughter of Babylon, doomed to be
destroyed,
blessed shall he be who repays you
with what you have done to us!
[9]† Blessed shall he be who takes your little

ones
and dashes them against the rock!

Give Thanks to the Lord

138

1 † Of David.

I give you thanks, O Lord, with my whole heart;
before the gods I sing your praise;

2 † I bow down toward your holy temple
and give thanks to your name for your steadfast love and your faithfulness,
for you have exalted above all things
your name and your word.[1]

3 † On the day I called, you answered me;
my strength of soul you increased.[2]

4 † All the kings of the earth shall give you thanks, O Lord,
for they have heard the words of your mouth,

5 † and they shall sing of the ways of the Lord,
for great is the glory of the Lord.

6 † For though the Lord is high, he regards the lowly,
but the haughty he knows from afar.

7 † Though I walk in the midst of trouble,
you preserve my life;
you stretch out your hand against the wrath of my enemies,
and your right hand delivers me.

8 † The Lord will fulfill his purpose for me;
your steadfast love, O Lord, endures

forever.
Do not forsake the work of your hands.

Search Me, O God, and Know My Heart

139 [1]† To the choirmaster. A Psalm of David.

O Lord, you have searched me and
known me!

[2] You know when I sit down and when I
rise up;
you discern my thoughts from afar.
[3] You search out my path and my lying down
and are acquainted with all my ways.
[4] Even before a word is on my tongue,
behold, O Lord, you know it altogether.
[5]† You hem me in, behind and before,
and lay your hand upon me.
[6] Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;
it is high; I cannot attain it.

[7]† Where shall I go from your Spirit?
Or where shall I flee from your presence?
[8]† If I ascend to heaven, you are there!
If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there!
[9]† If I take the wings of the morning
and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,
[10]† even there your hand shall lead me,
and your right hand shall hold me.
[11]† If I say, "Surely the darkness shall cover me,
and the light about me be night,"
[12] even the darkness is not dark to you;
the night is bright as the day,
for darkness is as light with you.

13† For you formed my inward parts;
you knitted me together in my mother's
womb.
14† I praise you, for I am fearfully and
wonderfully made.[1]
Wonderful are your works;
my soul knows it very well.
15† My frame was not hidden from you,
when I was being made in secret,
intricately woven in the depths of the
earth.
16† Your eyes saw my unformed substance;
in your book were written, every one of
them,
the days that were formed for me,
when as yet there was none of them.

17† How precious to me are your thoughts,
O God!
How vast is the sum of them!
18† If I would count them, they are more
than the sand.
I awake, and I am still with you.

19† Oh that you would slay the wicked, O God!
O men of blood, depart from me!
20 They speak against you with malicious
intent;
your enemies take your name in vain![2]
21† Do I not hate those who hate you,
O Lord?
And do I not loathe those who rise up
against you?

22† I hate them with complete hatred;
I count them my enemies.

23† Search me, O God, and know my heart!
Try me and know my thoughts![3]
24† And see if there be any grievous way in me,
and lead me in the way everlasting![4]

Deliver Me, O Lord, from Evil Men

140 [1] † To the choirmaster. A Psalm of David.

Deliver me, O Lord, from evil men;
preserve me from violent men,

[2] who plan evil things in their heart
and stir up wars continually.
[3] † They make their tongue sharp as a serpent's,
and under their lips is the venom of asps.
Selah

[4] Guard me, O Lord, from the hands of the wicked;
preserve me from violent men,
who have planned to trip up my feet.
[5] † The arrogant have hidden a trap for me,
and with cords they have spread a net;[1]
beside the way they have set snares for me.
Selah

[6] I say to the Lord, You are my God;
give ear to the voice of my pleas for mercy, O Lord!
[7] † O Lord, my Lord, the strength of my salvation,
you have covered my head in the day of battle.
[8] Grant not, O Lord, the desires of the wicked;
do not further their[2] evil plot, or they will be exalted! *Selah*

9† As for the head of those who surround me,
let the mischief of their lips overwhelm
them!
10† Let burning coals fall upon them!
Let them be cast into fire,
into miry pits, no more to rise!
11 Let not the slanderer be established in the
land;
let evil hunt down the violent man speedily!

12† I know that the LORD will maintain the cause
of the afflicted,
and will execute justice for the needy.
13† Surely the righteous shall give thanks to your
name;
the upright shall dwell in your presence.

Give Ear to My Voice

141 [1]A Psalm of David.

O Lord, I call upon you; hasten to me!
Give ear to my voice when I call to you!

[2]† Let my prayer be counted as incense before you,
and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice!

[3]‡† Set a guard, O Lord, over my mouth;
keep watch over the door of my lips!
[4]† Do not let my heart incline to any evil,
to busy myself with wicked deeds
in company with men who work iniquity,
and let me not eat of their delicacies!

[5]† Let a righteous man strike me—it is a kindness;
let him rebuke me—it is oil for my head;
let my head not refuse it.
Yet my prayer is continually against their evil deeds.
[6]† When their judges are thrown over the cliff,[1]
then they shall hear my words, for they are pleasant.
[7]† As when one plows and breaks up the earth,
so shall our bones be scattered at the mouth of Sheol.[2]

8 But my eyes are toward you, O God,
my Lord;
in you I seek refuge; leave me not
defenseless![3]
9 Keep me from the trap that they have laid
for me
and from the snares of evildoers!
10 Let the wicked fall into their own nets,
while I pass by safely.

You Are My Refuge

142 A Maskil [4] of David, when he was in the cave.
A Prayer.

1 With my voice I cry out to the Lord;
with my voice I plead for mercy to the Lord.
2† I pour out my complaint before him;
I tell my trouble before him.

3† When my spirit faints within me,
you know my way!
In the path where I walk
they have hidden a trap for me.
4 Look to the right and see:
there is none who takes notice of me;
no refuge remains to me;
no one cares for my soul.

5† I cry to you, O Lord;
I say, "You are my refuge,
my portion in the land of the living."
6† Attend to my cry,
for I am brought very low!
Deliver me from my persecutors,
for they are too strong for me!
7† Bring me out of prison,
that I may give thanks to your name!
The righteous will surround me,
for you will deal bountifully with me.

My Soul Thirsts for You

143

[1] A Psalm of David.

Hear my prayer, O Lord;
give ear to my pleas for mercy!
In your faithfulness answer me, in your righteousness!

[2] Enter not into judgment with your servant,
for no one living is righteous before you.

[3] For the enemy has pursued my soul;
he has crushed my life to the ground;
he has made me sit in darkness like those long dead.
[4] Therefore my spirit faints within me;
my heart within me is appalled.

[5] I remember the days of old;
I meditate on all that you have done;
I ponder the work of your hands.
[6] I stretch out my hands to you;
my soul thirsts for you like a parched land.
Selah

[7] Answer me quickly, O Lord!
My spirit fails!
Hide not your face from me,
lest I be like those who go down to the pit.
[8] Let me hear in the morning of your steadfast love,
for in you I trust.

Make me know the way I should go,
for to you I lift up my soul.

9 † Deliver me from my enemies, O Lord!
I have fled to you for refuge![1]
10 † Teach me to do your will,
for you are my God!
Let your good Spirit lead me
on level ground!

11 † For your name's sake, O Lord, preserve my life!
In your righteousness bring my soul out of trouble!
12 † And in your steadfast love you will cut off my enemies,
and you will destroy all the adversaries of my soul,
for I am your servant.

My Rock and My Fortress

144

1 † Of David.

Blessed be the Lord, my rock,
who trains my hands for war,
and my fingers for battle;

2 he is my steadfast love and my fortress,
my stronghold and my deliverer,
my shield and he in whom I take refuge,
who subdues peoples[1] under me.

3 † O Lord, what is man that you regard him,
or the son of man that you think of him?
4 Man is like a breath;
his days are like a passing shadow.

5 † Bow your heavens, O Lord, and come down!
Touch the mountains so that they smoke!
6 † Flash forth the lightning and scatter them;
send out your arrows and rout them!
7 † Stretch out your hand from on high;
rescue me and deliver me from the many waters,
from the hand of foreigners,
8 † whose mouths speak lies
and whose right hand is a right hand of falsehood.

9 † I will sing a new song to you, O God;
upon a ten-stringed harp I will play to you,

10 who gives victory to kings,
who rescues David his servant from the
cruel sword.
11 † Rescue me and deliver me
from the hand of foreigners,
whose mouths speak lies
and whose right hand is a right hand of
falsehood.

12 † May our sons in their youth
be like plants full grown,
our daughters like corner pillars
cut for the structure of a palace;
13 † may our granaries be full,
providing all kinds of produce;
may our sheep bring forth thousands
and ten thousands in our fields;
14 may our cattle be heavy with young,
suffering no mishap or failure in bearing;[2]
may there be no cry of distress in our
streets!
15 † Blessed are the people to whom such
blessings fall!
Blessed are the people whose God is the
LORD!

Great Is the Lord

145

1 † [3] A Song of Praise. Of David.

I will extol you, my God and King,
and bless your name forever and ever.

2 Every day I will bless you
and praise your name forever and ever.

3 † Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised,
and his greatness is unsearchable.

4 † One generation shall commend your works to another,
and shall declare your mighty acts.

5 † On the glorious splendor of your majesty,
and on your wondrous works, I will meditate.

6 They shall speak of the might of your awesome deeds,
and I will declare your greatness.

7 They shall pour forth the fame of your abundant goodness
and shall sing aloud of your righteousness.

8 † The Lord is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

9 The Lord is good to all,
and his mercy is over all that he has made.

10 † All your works shall give thanks to you,
O LORD,
and all your saints shall bless you!
11 † They shall speak of the glory of your kingdom
and tell of your power,
12 to make known to the children of man your[1]
mighty deeds,
and the glorious splendor of your kingdom.
13 †† Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,
and your dominion endures throughout all
generations.
[The LORD is faithful in all his words
and kind in all his works.][2]
14 The LORD upholds all who are falling
and raises up all who are bowed down.
15 † The eyes of all look to you,
and you give them their food in due season.
16 † You open your hand;
you satisfy the desire of every living thing.
17 † The LORD is righteous in all his ways
and kind in all his works.
18 † The LORD is near to all who call on him,
to all who call on him in truth.
19 † He fulfills the desire of those who fear him;
he also hears their cry and saves them.
20 † The LORD preserves all who love him,
but all the wicked he will destroy.

21 † My mouth will speak the praise of the LORD,
and let all flesh bless his holy name forever
and ever.

Put Not Your Trust in Princes

146 [1]Praise the Lord!
Praise the Lord, O my soul!

[2]† I will praise the Lord as long as I live;
I will sing praises to my God while I have
my being.

[3]† Put not your trust in princes,
in a son of man, in whom there is no
salvation.
[4]† When his breath departs, he returns to
the earth;
on that very day his plans perish.

[5]† Blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob,
whose hope is in the Lord his God,
[6]† who made heaven and earth,
the sea, and all that is in them,
who keeps faith forever;
[7]† who executes justice for the oppressed,
who gives food to the hungry.

The Lord sets the prisoners free;
[8]† the Lord opens the eyes of the blind.
The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down;
the Lord loves the righteous.
[9]† The Lord watches over the sojourners;
he upholds the widow and the fatherless,
but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin.

10 The LORD will reign forever,
your God, O Zion, to all generations.
Praise the LORD!

He Heals the Brokenhearted

147 [1]Praise the LORD!
For it is good to sing praises to our
God;
for it is pleasant,[1] and a song of praise is
fitting.

[2]† The LORD builds up Jerusalem;
he gathers the outcasts of Israel.
[3]† He heals the brokenhearted
and binds up their wounds.
[4]† He determines the number of the stars;
he gives to all of them their names.
[5] Great is our Lord, and abundant in
power;
his understanding is beyond measure.
[6] The LORD lifts up the humble;[2]
he casts the wicked to the ground.

[7]† Sing to the LORD with thanksgiving;
make melody to our God on the lyre!
[8] He covers the heavens with clouds;
he prepares rain for the earth;
he makes grass grow on the hills.
[9]† He gives to the beasts their food,
and to the young ravens that cry.
[10] His delight is not in the strength of the horse,
nor his pleasure in the legs of a man,
[11] but the LORD takes pleasure in those who fear
him,
in those who hope in his steadfast love.

12 Praise the LORD, O Jerusalem!
Praise your God, O Zion!
13† For he strengthens the bars of your gates;
he blesses your children within you.
14 He makes peace in your borders;
he fills you with the finest of the wheat.
15† He sends out his command to the earth;
his word runs swiftly.
16 He gives snow like wool;
he scatters hoarfrost like ashes.
17 He hurls down his crystals of ice like crumbs;
who can stand before his cold?
18† He sends out his word, and melts them;
he makes his wind blow and the waters
flow.
19† He declares his word to Jacob,
his statutes and rules[1] to Israel.
20† He has not dealt thus with any other nation;
they do not know his rules.[2]
Praise the LORD!

Praise the Name of the Lord

148 [1]†Praise the Lord!
Praise the Lord from the heavens;
praise him in the heights!

[2]† Praise him, all his angels;
praise him, all his hosts!

[3]† Praise him, sun and moon,
praise him, all you shining stars!
[4]† Praise him, you highest heavens,
and you waters above the heavens!

[5]† Let them praise the name of the Lord!
For he commanded and they were created.
[6]† And he established them forever and ever;
he gave a decree, and it shall not pass away.[3]

[7]† Praise the Lord from the earth,
you great sea creatures and all deeps,
[8]† fire and hail, snow and mist,
stormy wind fulfilling his word!

[9] Mountains and all hills,
fruit trees and all cedars!
[10] Beasts and all livestock,
creeping things and flying birds!

11 Kings of the earth and all peoples,
princes and all rulers of the earth!
12 Young men and maidens together,
old men and children!

13 Let them praise the name of the LORD,
for his name alone is exalted;
his majesty is above earth and heaven.
14† He has raised up a horn for his people,
praise for all his saints,
for the people of Israel who are near to
him.
Praise the LORD!

Sing to the Lord a New Song

149

1 †Praise the Lord!
Sing to the Lord a new song,
his praise in the assembly of the godly!

2† Let Israel be glad in his Maker;
let the children of Zion rejoice in
their King!
3† Let them praise his name with dancing,
making melody to him with tambourine
and lyre!
4 For the Lord takes pleasure in his people;
he adorns the humble with salvation.
5† Let the godly exult in glory;
let them sing for joy on their beds.
6† Let the high praises of God be in their throats
and two-edged swords in their hands,
7 to execute vengeance on the nations
and punishments on the peoples,
8 to bind their kings with chains
and their nobles with fetters of iron,
9† to execute on them the judgment written!
This is honor for all his godly ones.
Praise the Lord!

Let Everything Praise the Lord

150 [1] Praise the Lord!
Praise God in his sanctuary;
praise him in his mighty heavens![1]

[2] Praise him for his mighty deeds;
praise him according to his
excellent greatness!

[3] Praise him with trumpet sound;
praise him with lute and harp!
[4] Praise him with tambourine and dance;
praise him with strings and pipe!
[5] Praise him with sounding cymbals;
praise him with loud clashing cymbals!
[6] Let everything that has breath praise the
Lord!
Praise the Lord!

Psalms

OVERVIEW

Author
King David; Asaph; the Sons of Korah; others (see p 840)

Date
Eleventh century to sixth century BC

Places
Chiefly Jerusalem

People
King David; the nation of Israel; "the righteous"

Purpose
To express hope in the Lord God for salvation, using prayers and praises spoken by God's people at the tabernacle and temple or by individuals

Law Themes
Persecutors assail God's people; suffering brought by personal failures; waiting for God's deliverance; exile in Babylon

Gospel Themes
The Lord's saving righteousness and steadfast love; the Lord provides for and protects His people; prophecies of the Messiah, Jesus; God's gift of life through the Word

Memory Verses
The Shepherd Psalm (23); sincere repentance (51:7–12); the Lord reigns (110); the Psalm of the Word (119:105–7); the Mission Psalm (145:4–13)

Introduction to Psalms

Reading Psalms

The shepherd's weathered hand gently worked the strings of the harp. He created a sequence of harmonious tones that ascended and descended the rolling Judean hills. Poetry flowed from his lips like a meadow spring, recounting the day's experiences and offering heavenward thanks.

The shepherd boy David learned to play and sing in just such a setting, while watching his father's flocks of sheep or goats. The Lord made David a warrior-poet and a prophet who united the tribes of Israel as a harmonious kingdom. His collection of songs accompanied by the harp is the basis of the Psalter, one of the most beloved books of the Holy Bible.

Luther on the Psalms

Many of the holy fathers prized and praised the Psalter above all the other books of the Scripture. To be sure, the work itself gives praise enough to its author; nevertheless we must give evidence of our own praise and thanks.

Over the years a great many legends of the saints, … books of examples, and histories have been circulated … [and] the Psalter has been neglected. It has lain in such obscurity that not one psalm was rightly understood. Still it gave off such a fine and precious fragrance that all pious hearts felt the devotion and power in the unknown words and for this reason loved the book.

I hold, however, that no finer book of examples or of the legends of the saints has ever come, or can come, to earth than the Psalter. If one were to wish that from all the examples, legends, and histories, the best should be collected and brought together and put in the best form, the result would have to be the present Psalter. For here we find not only what one or two saints have done, but what he has done who is the very head of all saints. We also find what all the saints still do, such as the attitude they take toward God, toward friends and enemies, and the way they conduct themselves amid all dangers and sufferings. Beyond that there are contained here all sorts of divine and wholesome teachings and commandments.

The Psalter ought to be a precious and beloved book, if for no other reason than this: it promises Christ's death and resurrection so clearly —and pictures his kingdom and the condition and nature of all Christendom—that it might well be called a little Bible. In it is comprehended most beautifully and briefly everything that is in the entire Bible. It is really a fine enchiridion or handbook. In fact, I have a notion that the Holy Spirit wanted to take the trouble himself to compile a short Bible and book of examples of all Christendom or all saints, so that anyone who could not read the whole Bible would here have anyway almost an entire summary of it, comprised in one little book.

[The Words of the Saints.] Beyond all that, the Psalter has this noble virtue and quality. Other books make much ado about the works of the

saints, but say very little about their words. The Psalter is a gem in this respect. It gives forth so sweet a fragrance when one reads it because it relates not only the works of the saints, but also their words, how they spoke with God and prayed, and still speak and pray. Compared to the Psalter, the other legends and examples present to us nothing but mere silent saints; the Psalter, however, pictures for us real, living, active saints.

Compared to a speaking man, a silent one is simply to be regarded as a half-dead man; and there is no mightier or nobler work of man than speech. For it is by speech, more than by his shape or by any other work, that man is most distinguished from other animals. By the carver's art even a block of wood can have the shape of a man; and an animal can see, hear, smell, sing, walk, stand, eat, drink, fast, thirst—and suffer from hunger, frost, and a hard bed—as well as a man.

[The Hearts of the Saints.] Moreover the Psalter does more than this. It presents to us not the simple, ordinary speech of the saints, but the best of their language, that which they used when they talked with God himself in great earnestness and on the most important matters. Thus the Psalter lays before us not only their words instead of their deeds, but their very hearts and the inmost treasure of their souls, so we can look down to the foundation and source of their words and deeds. We can look into their hearts and see what kind of thoughts they had, how their hearts were disposed, and how they acted in all kinds of situations, in danger and in need. The legends and examples, which speak only of the deeds and miracles of the saints, do not and cannot do this, for I cannot know how a man's heart is, even though I see or hear of many great deeds that he does. And just as I would rather hear what a saint says than see the deeds he does, so I would far rather see his heart, and the treasure in his soul, than hear his words. And this the Psalter gives us most abundantly concerning the saints, so that we can be certain of how their hearts were toward God and of the words they spoke to God and every man….

What is the greatest thing in the Psalter but this earnest speaking amid these storm winds of every kind? Where does one find finer words of joy than in the psalms of praise and thanksgiving? There you look into the hearts of all the saints, as into fair and pleasant gardens, yes, as into heaven itself. There you see what fine and pleasant flowers

of the heart spring up from all sorts of fair and happy thoughts toward God, because of his blessings. On the other hand, where do you find deeper, more sorrowful, more pitiful words of sadness than in the psalms of lamentation? There again you look into the hearts of all the saints, as into death, yes, as into hell itself. How gloomy and dark it is there, with all kinds of troubled forebodings about the wrath of God! So, too, when they speak of fear and hope, they use such words that no painter could so depict for you fear or hope, and no Cicero or other orator so portray them.

And that they speak these words to God and with God, this, I repeat, is the best thing of all. This gives the words double earnestness and life. For when men speak with men about these matters, what they say does not come so powerfully from the heart; it does not burn and live, is not so urgent. Hence it is that the Psalter is the book of all saints; and everyone, in whatever situation he may be, finds in that situation psalms and words that fit his ease, that suit him as if they were put there just for his sake, so that he could not put it better himself, or find or wish for anything better.

[The Communion of Saints.] This also serves well another purpose. When these words please a man and fit his case, he becomes sure that he is in the communion of saints, and that it has gone with all the saints as it goes with him, since they all sing with him one little song. It is especially so if he can speak these words to God, as they have done; this can only be done in faith, for the words [of the saints] have no flavor to a godless man.

Finally there is in the Psalter security and a well-tried guide, so that in it one can follow all the saints without peril. The other examples and legends of the silent saints present works that one is unable to imitate; they present even more works which it is dangerous to imitate, works which usually start sects and divisions, and lead and tear men away from the communion of saints. But the Psalter holds you to the communion of saints and away from the sects. For it teaches you in joy, fear, hope, and sorrow to think and speak as all the saints have thought and spoken.

In a word, if you would see the holy Christian Church painted in living color and shape, comprehended in one little picture, then take up the Psalter. There you have a fine, bright, pure mirror that will show

you what Christendom is. Indeed you will find in it also yourself and the true [“Know yourself”], as well as God himself and all creatures….

To this may God the Father of all grace and mercy help us, through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom be praise and thanks, honor and glory, for this German Psalter and for all his innumerable and unspeakable blessings to all eternity. Amen, Amen. (AE 35:253–57)

[Types of Psalms.] The entire Psalter may be treated in a fivefold fashion, that is, we may divide it into five groups. First, some psalms *prophesy*. They speak, for example, of Christ and the church or what will happen to the saints. This class includes all the psalms that contain promises and warnings—promises for the godly and warnings for the ungodly. Second, there are psalms of *instruction*, which teach us what we should do and what we should avoid, in accordance with the law of God. This class includes all the psalms that condemn human doctrines and praise the Word of God. Third, there are psalms of *comfort*, which strengthen and comfort the saints in their troubles and sorrows but rebuke and terrify the tyrants. This class includes all the psalms that comfort, exhort, stimulate endurance, or rebuke the tyrants. Fourth are the psalms of *prayer*, in which we call on God, praying in all kinds of distress. To this class belong all the psalms that lament or mourn or cry out against our foes. Fifth, are the psalms of *thanks*, in which God is praised and glorified for all his blessings and help. This class includes all the psalms that praise God for his works. These are the psalms of the first rank, and for their sake the Psalter was created; therefore it is called in Hebrew *Sefer Tehillim*, that is, a praise book or book of thanksgiving.

Now, we should understand that the Psalms, with all their verses, cannot always be classified so precisely and exactly into these groups. At times one psalm might contain two, three, or even all five classifications, so that one psalm may belong in all five divisions, with prophecy, instruction, comfort, prayer, and thanksgiving lying next to one another. However, this is the intention, that the reader may understand that the Psalter deals with these five topics. The classifications are a help, so that we might more easily understand the Psalter, become adapted to it, and also be able to learn and keep it. (*PIML*, pp 6–7)

HEBREW NAMES FOR PSALMS

Psalm superscriptions use different names for the psalms. Scholars don't always understand the meaning of these names. They perhaps identify different types of psalms.

Name: *Mizmor*
Translation: "Psalm"; refers to sound made by strings of a harp
Examples: 3; 4; etc.

Name: *Shir*
Translation: Song
Examples: 18

Name: *Shir yedidoth*
Translation: Song of love
Examples: 45

Name: *Shir hammaloth*
Translation: Song of ascents
Examples: 120–34

Name: *Shir tehillah*
Translation: Song of praise
Examples: 145

Name: *Tepillah*
Translation: Prayer
Examples: 17; 86

Name: *Miktam*
Translation: (meaning unknown)
Examples: 16; 56–60

Name: *Maskil*
Translation: Skilled or artistic piece?
Examples: 32; 42; 45; 52–55; 74; 78; 88–89; 142

Name: *Shiggaion*
Translation: (meaning unknown)
Examples: 7

For more of Luther's insights on this Book, see *Lectures on the Psalms I, II* and *Selected Psalms I*, *II*, and *III* (AE 10–14) and *Exhortation of Psalm 127* (AE 45:311–37).

Key Terms and Phrases in the Psalms

To learn more about how the Psalms describe God and His work, and how His people responded in prayer and praise, read the definitions below. These pages will unlock many of the common mysterious expressions and practices of the Israelites.

The Lord's "righteousness" and "steadfast love" dominate theology in the Psalms. Key phrases and imagery gather around these attributes of Yahweh, which are the basis for praying, praising, and trusting in Him. For an overview of this theology, and to grow more familiar with the Psalms and how they anticipate the work of Jesus, "the Son of David," read through the following definitions. Take note of how they relate to one another. Include these rich expressions in your own prayers and praise. To study specific examples of these terms, refer to the concordance (pp 2243–2372). For other lists of key terms, see pp 5–7; pp 1078–80; pp 1901–4.

arm. In Israelite thought, an image of strength. See *hand* and *right hand*.

bless. Hbr *barak*, "To bestow ability for success" (from the greater person to the lesser) or "to praise a person's ability for success" (from the lesser person to the greater). Refers to bending the knees, perhaps to kneel and receive a pronouncement of inheritance with all its wealth (cf Gn 27). "Bless the Lord" has the sense of "greet" and is common in the Psalms, expressing thanks and praise (34:1; 145:1, 10). In faith, praise is the greatest gift we can offer to our Lord. The blessing that came from the temple at Jerusalem now resonates through the Church, brought by pastors, missionaries, teachers, and other Christians who proclaim the Gospel of Christ's sacrifice. See "curse," p 6.

blessed. Hbr *'ashar*, "happy, blissful" having God's gifts. See note, Gn 12:3. However, see also p 879.

call. Hbr *qara'*, "to call upon," "name," or "summon." "Call on God's name" describes speaking God's name in prayer, repentance, or consulting the Lord by Urim and Thummim, administered by the high priest. See *seek*.

courts of the Lord. The various courtyards that surrounded the tabernacle and temple were restricted by the various standards of holiness. To enter these holy places was to enter God's presence. See layout of Herod's late temple, p 1838. See also *presence*.

deliver. Translates various Hbr terms. Primarily *natsal*, which has the sense "to pull or draw out," therefore, "to rescue, save" as the Lord delivered Israel in the exodus from Egypt (cf Col 1:13). See p 1902.

faithfulness. From Hbr *'aman*, "to be steady, faithful, true," from which our term "Amen" comes. An attribute of God celebrated in the Psalms. See *steadfast love* ; see also "love," p 1903.

fear. Hbr *yare'*, as in "fear the Lord" and "fear God"—common expressions in the Psalms. They mean to "trust in the Lord." See p 1001.

for Your name's sake. That is, "for the sake of the Lord's good reputation." The preciousness of God's name is illustrated by the way He guards it and by the delight He takes when people use His name well. Everything God does for His people reveals Himself and demonstrates His character. It brings glory to His name. See *name*.

gracious. From Hbr *chanan*, "to be gracious, generous, compassionate." An attribute of God celebrated in the Psalms. See p 1902; see also "favor," p 6.

great congregation. From Hbr *qahal*, "assembly." The gathering of God's people at the tabernacle or temple.

hand. Hbr *yad*, "hand, including the forearm." An image for God's saving power. See *right hand* and *arm*.

horn. An image of power. Animals with horns are bold; in Israelite thought, a horned animal with its head held high symbolized strength and triumph.

just. See *righteous*.

justice. See *righteousness*.

meditate. Translates Hbr *hagah* and *siach*, terms about speaking. A person holds his attention by uttering words of Scripture or prayers to focus his thoughts. The Israelites meditated on God's Word by reciting it. The believer explores God's Word, since "there is always something left over to understand and to do. Therefore you must never be proud, as if you were already full" (Luth, AE 11:434). Chem: "Each person, in whatever station or calling he has, may meditate on the law of the Lord and speak of His testimonies" (*LTh* 2:380). Luther suggests that this verb recalls the singing of the birds, "so the church continuously fills its mouth with preaching in joy and gladness like that of the little birds" (AE 11:437, n 23).

mercy. Translates various Hbr terms (see *steadfast love* and *gracious*). Hbr *rachamim*, "tender mercy," "compassion" from the term for "womb," it pictures the tender love a mother has for her children. See note, Is 49:15.

name. Hbr *shem*. Its meanings can include "reputation," "fame," and "memory." Yahweh's name bears His being and power to save (54:1). See *call*, *seek*, and *for Your name's sake*.

new song. Hbr *shir chadash*, a song written to celebrate God's new work of salvation. The "old song" was the Song of Moses, which celebrated the redemption from Egypt (Ex 15:1–18). The "new song" in the Psalms often celebrated redemption from exile (cf Ne 12:27). Rv 5:8–9 says the "new song" is about the final redemption through Jesus.

path(s). See *way(s)*.

Praise the Lord. Hbr *hallelu yah*, "praise Yah[weh]." An exclamation of thankful praise to the one true God.

presence. Hbr *panim*, "face," so "to be in front of someone/something." To "enter God's presence" typically refers to visiting the temple or tabernacle for worship. See *courts of the Lord*. An advancing warrior naturally "faced" his enemies, so the Lord's "presence" or "face" is fearsome to His enemies. See "be with," p 5.

redeem. Translates two terms. Hbr *ga'al*, "to ransom, deliver, buy back" (see note, Ru 2:20). Hbr *padah*, "to ransom," used esp by Moses for the ransoming of
the firstborn from sacrifice (cf Ex 13:13). The Lord redeemed Israel by rescuing them from slavery. In the NT, "redeem" and "ransom" describe Jesus' work (Eph 1:7; 1Pt 1:18–19). See "atonement," p 5; see also p 1904.

remember. Hbr *zakar*, "to recall" or "keep in mind." God could not forget His covenant with His people. When He "remembers" them, He actively works to keep His promise to protect and save them.

right hand. In Israelite thought, the right hand was the favored one. As such, it symbolized the place of privilege or strength. The chief court official was seated at the king's right hand as a symbol of his power and authority. The term can describe God's chosen servant (e.g., King David). See *hand*.

righteous. Hbr *tsadaq*, "proved right" or "in good order." Used to describe a person in a right relationship with God, trusting God's promised salvation and living by the covenant promise. The Psalms describe how

the wicked plot against the righteous, but the Lord watches over the righteous and delivers them. God is righteous because He faithfully and justly keeps His Word.

righteousness. Hbr *tsedaqah*, "blamelessness, honesty, justice." An attribute of God praised in the Psalms. The expression "in Your righteousness deliver me" (71:2; cf 5:8; 31:1; 89:16; 119:40; 143:11) describes the psalmist asking God to keep His promise of salvation (see "righteous acts" and "deeds of salvation" in 71:15). He is the source of righteousness (4:1), which is the basis for the biblical teaching of righteousness or justification through faith (cf Gn 15:6; Rm 3:21–5:11). See p 792.

rock. Translates two terms: Hbr *sela'*, "rock" or "cliff face"; Hbr *tsur*, "massive rock" or "boulder." Psalms use the terms interchangeably for a place of refuge or hiding. The Lord is "the Rock of my salvation" (89:26). See *Zion*.

saints. Translates two terms: Hbr *qedoshim*, those "set apart, holy," God's chosen people who serve Him; Hbr *chasidim*, those "loyal, devout, faithful" (see *steadfast love*). Nearly always with possessive pronoun (e.g., "His saints"). God's people are declared holy because of God's work, not their own. See "holy," p 7.

salvation. Hbr *yeshu'ah*, "deliverance." Sometimes translated as "victory" because of military imagery. God defeated Pharaoh and his army during the exodus, and subsequently conquered all enemies that would separate His people from Him. His righteousness is victorious over wickedness, and thus salvation comes to His people solely because of Him. See *redeem* and *deliver*. Chem: "In the Psalms for the first time the word *ya¯sha*, from which is derived the name 'Jesus' begins to be used in reference to the matter of salvation" (*LTh* 2:458).

seek. Translates two terms: Hbr *baqash*, "look for"; Hbr *darash*, "care about, examine, inquire." The Lord is sought in three ways: (1) through calling on His name in prayer, (2) by consulting Him through Urim and Thummim administered by the high priest, and (3) through the study of His Word. A visit to the tabernacle or temple is frequently implied. Unbelievers do not seek God. Believers seek Him in an attitude of repentance, not selfishness. See *call*.

Selah. A Hbr musical notation. See p 993.

steadfast love. Hbr *chesed*, "loyalty" to one's community; most common term for God's grace in the Psalms (125 times). Luther described *chesed* as "goodness in action" (AE 14:50). See next entry. God's unwavering devotion to the salvation of His people finds its fulfillment in the cross of Christ. See "love," p 1903.

steadfast love and faithfulness. A common word pair in the Psalms, epitomizing the Lord's care for His people. See *steadfast love*, *faithfulness*. See note, Ex 34:6.

upholds. Hbr *samak*, "sustain, support." The arms of the wicked will not support them before God on the Last Day, while the Lord's arms are under the righteous to hold them up. See *arm*, *hand*, and *right hand*.

way(s). Hbr *derek*, "trodden path," used for a "pattern of behavior or custom." "The way of the Lord" is twofold: He punishes sinfulness, but He also shows mercy to the repentant (see note, Ex 33:13). See p 1904; see also "walk," p 7.

Zion. A Hbr name that could be derived from a Semitic term for "defend" (as in a fortress) or "to be bald" (as in a defendable rocky space; see *rock*). Zion is the defensive hill before the temple mount, between the Kidron and Tyropean valleys (see map, p 493). It was captured by David from the Jebusites (2Sm 5:6–7). In the Psalms, *Zion* often describes the Temple Mount, where God dwelt among His people and where they sought Him; by extension, it can include Jerusalem, Israel, and God's people here and in eternity (i.e., the Church). See *presence*.

Challenges for Readers

Organization. The authors, dates, and circumstances for a number of psalms are not clear. These lapses in our knowledge can make it difficult to understand certain passages. Though the Psalms should be thought of as a single book, attempts by scholars to provide a comprehensive explanation for their arrangement and relationships have not been fully convincing. Psalms can appear in groups based on a specific type or author (see p 840). But deeper connections do not always come through. Some commentators have noted that different parts of the Psalms tend to use different names for God (*Yahweh* or *Elohim*) but they cannot, in a satisfying way, explain why.

Poetic Format. Psalms at times express themselves in difficult ways (see pp 777–78). Various notes hint at their musical format and use.

Violence. The most difficult psalms are the imprecatory psalms, which express surprising anger and violence (see p 879).

Superscriptions. The Hebrew text and the LXX have significant differences in their superscriptions. For example, the LXX attributes 13 more psalms to David than does the Hebrew. Scholars had assumed that the superscriptions were written late, during the Maccabean Age. But recent study has suggested that some superscriptions are as old as the psalms they describe. The superscriptions were certainly ancient by the time the psalms were translated into Greek, since the translators clearly did not understand many of the poetic and musical terms. Thirteen psalms contain historical information, describing events in David's life (3; 7; 18; 34; 51; 52; 54; 56; 57; 59; 60; 63; and 142).

Blessings for Readers

The Israelites used two different names for the Psalms as a collection of holy writings: *tepillot* ("prayers," cf Ps 72:20) and *tehillim* ("praises"). These are the chief uses of the Psalms in all ages, as described by Luther above. The Psalms have a way of connecting with the daily concerns of our lives and guiding us in heartfelt prayer and worship. For these reasons, they remain the most devotional portion of Scripture and the inspiration for hymnals and prayer books.

A third important use for the Psalms is instruction. They teach so much about the blessings and challenges of walking in the Lord's ways. They constantly point forward to the appearance of Jesus for our salvation. NT interpreters saw the life and words of David as foretastes and prophecies of the Son of David, the Messiah. Christological psalms include 2; 22; 41; 45; 69; and 110.

OUTLINE

The Psalms are divided into ancient collections or "books," each ending with a doxology (41:13; 72:18–20; 89:52; 106:48; 150 or 145–50). These divisions for the Psalms may have taken place as early as the third century BC. Early Jewish commentaries suggested that the five Books of the Psalms are comparable to the Five Books of Moses (Gn through Dt).

Book: I. Ps 1–41
Principal Authors: Intensely personal psalms of David
Possible Historical Context: Life of David; 11th century BC; time of the tabernacle
Book: II. Ps 42–72
Principal Authors: Psalms of David and the kingdom; nationalistic
Possible Historical Context: Reigns of David and Solomon; 11th and 10th centuries BC; time of the first temple
Book: III. Ps 73–89
Principal Authors: Psalms of Asaph and the Sons of Korah; nationalistic
Possible Historical Context: Reign of Solomon; 10th century BC; some difficult to date
Book: IV. Ps 90–106

Principal Authors: Anonymous psalms and laments
Possible Historical Context: Historical context less clear; some of the psalms refer to earlier writers such as Moses (Ps 90) and David (e.g., Ps 122), but others refer to the time of exile in Babylon (Ps 137), 6th century BC
Book: V. Ps 107–50
Principal Authors: Songs of ascents and praise; psalms of David
Possible Historical Context
Ps 73–89 are often associated with early writers but may reflect use for later events. Older Ps may have been adapted according to the needs of the worshipers, making the dating of Ps esp difficult (cf Ps 79 introduction). Many believe Ps 90–106 were brought together after both Israel and Judah had fallen. The hopes of a great nation established by King David had been crushed by the Babylonian captivity. In answer to that defeat, these psalms direct the people's attention to God as the everlasting King.

Articles and Resources Related to Psalms

- Names in the Psalms
- Table of Psalms for Daily Prayer
- Categories of the Psalms
- Violence in the Psalms
- Complaining to God
- Ancient Use of Psalms in Worship
- Types of Sin
- God's Word in Psalm 119
- Life's God-Given Value
- Music and Instruments in Israel

Names in the Psalms

Nearly two-thirds of the Psalms have names of OT figures associated with them. However, scholars cannot always tell whether they were written by these persons, for these persons, or about these persons. The chart below shows the names associated with various psalms.

Categories of the Psalms

Some psalms may be in two or more categories.

1. **Wisdom psalms:** 1, 19:8–15, 34, 37, 49, 73, 78, 111, 112, 119, 127, 128, 133, and 139
2. **Messianic/Royal psalms:** 2, 20, 21, 45, 72, 89, 101, 110, 132, 144, and enthronement psalms: 47, 93, and 96–99
3. **Individual Laments:** 3–7, 10–14, 16, 17, 22, 23, 25–28, 31, 35, 36, 38–43, 51–59, 61–64, 69, 71, 73, 86, 88, 102, 109, and 130
4. **Community Laments:** 44, 60, 74, 77, 79, 80, 83, 85, 89, 90, 94, 123, 126, 129, and 137
5. **Imprecatory psalms:** 35, 69, 79, and 109
6. **Individual psalms of praise:** 9, 18, 30–32, 40, 66, 92, 116, and 138
7. **Psalms of trust:** 23, 27, 62, 63, 71, and 131
8. **Community psalms of praise:** 106, 124, and 129
9. **Hymns/psalms of descriptive praise:** 8, 19, 29, 33, 57, 65, 66, 89, 100, 103, 104, 111, 113, 117, 134–136, 139, and 145–150
10. **Psalms of creation:** 8, 19, 104, and 139
11. **Psalms of Zion:** 46, 48, 76, 84, and 87
12. **Liturgical psalms:** 24, 66, 107, 118, 121, 122. Ps 120–134 are Songs of Ascent to the temple for Feast of Weeks. The Hallel psalms (113–118) were sung at the Passover meal and at other major festivals.

See also pp 775–78.
From *Reading the Psalms with Luther* (St. Louis: Concordia, 2007), p 357.

Violence in the Psalms

The Imprecatory, or Curse, Psalms
Ps 35; 55; 59; 69; 79; 109; and 137

> O daughter of Babylon, doomed to be destroyed, blessed shall he be who repays you with what you have done to us! Blessed shall he be who takes your little ones and dashes them against the rock! (Ps 137:8–9)

A number of psalms use curses and express themselves so violently that modern readers find them shocking and even wonder how they could appear in the Sacred Scriptures. When the psalmist's emotions spill over into violence, it is important to understand why.

Israel's Calling and Frustration

The psalmists were among God's chosen people, Abraham's descendants, to whom God said, "I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed" (Gn 12:2–3). These promises included the responsibility to bear witness to Yahweh by showing mercy to foreigners but also the violent punishment of the Canaanite tribes, whose works offended God (e.g., child sacrifice; see p 345). See also "devote to destruction," p 6.

In their day-to-day lives, the psalmists could not always see the broad fulfillment of God's promises and calling. Instead, they experienced all manner of persecution and suffering, even from those whom they had not harmed (Ps 35:12; 109:4–5). Since Israel's enemies were also God's enemies (Ex 23:22), the psalmists struggled to understand why the Lord did not come to their aid (Ps 35:17, 22–23). In these reflections, the psalmists often realized that their own unfaithfulness caused their struggles. Amid doubts and frustrations, the psalmists expressed their zeal (Ps 119:139) for what they knew was good, right, and true, which God's enemies mocked and destroyed.

Suffering and Feelings of Revenge

Ps 137:1–2 shows the context for the horribly violent statement that ends the psalm (v 9). The psalm opens with Judeans in Babylon, enslaved and mocked by their captors. When the captors demand "songs of Zion," the prisoners remember the violent destruction of their city by the Babylonians and the slaughter of Judeans who fled the city, pursued by Edomites (v 7).

With zeal and envy, the psalmist relished the truth that the Babylonians and Edomites—instruments of God's punishment on sinful Judah—were also doomed to destruction (v 8). In this way, the psalm illustrates feelings of violent revenge on God's enemies (cf Rv 6:10).

The term translated "blessed" in 137:8–9 does not invoke God's blessing on the violence. The Hebrew term describes the glee of the one who brings punishment. See "blessed," p 842.

Praying the Imprecatory Psalms

Christians should understand that the violent outbursts in these psalms are not prescriptions for the behavior of God's people but illustrations of emotions that God's people will indeed experience. Christians today who lose loved ones to war or to violent criminals will have these same feelings of anger and revenge. Praying the imprecatory psalms can help God's people express their anguish before God rather than act out their feelings in an unjust way. Imprecatory psalms prayed with psalms of repentance and hope can guide troubled hearts through the feelings they cannot escape.

God called Israel to be a blessing to all nations (Gn 12:3). He has likewise called us to bear witness to His grace. Along with this high calling, our knowledge of God's approaching judgment on the wicked and our painful experiences in life drive us to anticipate the day of wrath, which will end injustices. For these reasons, the imprecatory psalms still have an important role to play in the prayers of God's people.

Complaining to God

In these psalms [Ps 6, 44, 74, 88, 90] the psalmists experience God's wrath as the heart of their problem and the cause of their present distress. They interpret the distress in the light of Yahweh as the Lord of life who promises a life rich in blessings to all who would be faithful to Him. They know that those who are unfaithful are entitled to a broken relationship with Yahweh that ends in death and misery. In some of the psalms it is assumed that God originally was provoked to anger by the people's sin. His wrath, however, has dragged on beyond what is [considered] reasonable. In other psalms no explanation is given for why God should be angry. God appears to act contrary to His character, contrary to His way of acting in the past, in violation of the relationship into which He has entered with His people, and in violation of His promises. The result is that His own reputation suffers.

In this situation the psalmists hold these discrepancies up to God's nose. They tell Him exactly how they experience His current actions and inactivity toward them. They complain and protest and ask God to be the one He has told the people He is and the one He has revealed in the past. They firmly believe, in total disregard of present evidence, that God is still rich in steadfast love and compassion, that He is still the one who forgives sin, that His promises and covenant are still valid and unchangeable, and that His former actions when He made Israel into His people are still characteristic of the way He deals with His people. They protest God's work of wrath as not being His proper work, and they seek His steadfast love and help that is given for the sake of His steadfast love.

They further assume that they matter to God. Because He has chosen them to be His people, He is "stuck" with them. Thus their situation affects His reputation. God is zealous for the first commandment (Ex 20:2–5) and does not want to have His reputation damaged among the nations.

The psalmists do not explain away their suffering either by pretending that it is not real or by seeing it as what one simply has to expect in this world. They do not grant that anything is beyond their God's control.

Ingvar Fløysvik, *When God Becomes My Enemy: The Theology of the Complaint Psalms* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1997), 175–76.

Ancient Use of Psalms in Worship

Ritual Acts: Pilgrimage
References: Ps 120–34
Notes: Israelites were required to make annual pilgrimages to the sanctuary (cf Ex 23:17). Singing psalms was part of the journey.
Ritual Acts: Procession
References: Ps 24:7, 9; 48; 118:19–20; 132
Notes: Ps 132 may have been used as a reenactment of the moving of the ark of the covenant (2Sm 6).
Ritual Acts: Dancing
References: Ps 149:3; 150:4; cf Ex 15:20; Jgs 21:16–24; 2Sm 6:14, 16
Notes: Dance was not an individualistic action, as in modern times, but a liturgical act. (E.g., in Ex 32:19, Moses was angry at the dancing before the golden calf because the Israelites were performing a ritual dance as idol worship.) Israelites probably used ritual dances in processions to the sanctuary.
Ritual Acts: Entrance Liturgies
References: Ps 15; 24:3–6
Notes: Priests or Levites may have asked the questions found in these psalms. The people may have voiced the responses before entering the worship area.
Ritual Acts: Invocation
References: Ps 33:1; 111:1; 113:1; 146–50
Notes: These psalms seem to have opened a service of praise, prayer, or sacrifice. They invite the congregation to participate with the priests and Levites.
Ritual Acts: Versicle and Response
References: Ps 124; 129; 136
Notes: Ps 124:1 and 129:1 command, "Let Israel now say." May be a cue from a priest or Levite for the congregation to recite a response.
Ritual Acts: Choirs
References: Ps 4; 5; 6; etc.
Notes: Many psalms were written for the choirmaster.
Ritual Acts: Ceremonial Washings
References: Ps 26:6; 51:7

Notes: Washing was a regular part of service at the temple because of the animal sacrifices, but it was also an expression of forgiveness and purity.

Ritual Acts: Offering

References: Ps 66:13–15

Notes: The Law of Moses does not prescribe words to accompany the sacrificial acts of the priests. The psalms seem to serve as "words of institution" for the sacrifices.

Ritual Acts: Lament/Fasting

References: Ps 44; 60; 74; 79; etc.

Notes: In times of national crisis, and perhaps also during festivals, Israelites used lament psalms and fasted.

The Jewish intertestamental book 4 Maccabees remarks that the psalms were used in the home (18:9–10, 15). Parents were responsible for teaching them to their children.

Types of Sin

The three most common expressions for disobedience to God's will are (1) *transgressions*, (2) *iniquity*, and (3) *sin*. Each of these is associated with a different action for removing sin: (1) Transgressions are like an ugly blotch on a page or an entry of a debt that must be blotted out, i.e., expunged from the record (Is 43:25; Ps 109:14; Nu 5:23; Ac 3:19; Col 2:14). (2) Iniquity is like a filthy garment that must be washed thoroughly. In ancient times, this required vigorous action. Clothes were beaten on flat stones in a stream or were trampled to loosen the dirt (on ceremonial cleanness, cf Ex 19:10). (3) Sin is a stain that "lye" and "much soap" cannot remove (Jer 2:22); it yields only to God's cleansing action. The blood of animals was applied to the altar to symbolize that it was hallowed "from the uncleannesses of the people of Israel" (Lv 16:19).

But the blood of bulls and goats did not have the power to do what became a reality in the blood of Jesus, which "cleanses us from all sin" and from "all unrighteousness" (cf 1Jn 1:7, 9; Heb 10:14).

God's Word in Psalm 119

In Ps 119, eight words repeatedly describe God's Word. Several of these words are used in each stanza, with all eight appearing in stanzas *Waw* (vv 41–48), *Heth* (vv 57–64), *Yodh* (vv 73–80), *Kaph* (vv 81–88), and *Pe* (vv 129–36). Since each term describes God's Word, Hebrew poetry uses them in parallel lines, complementing one another in meaning (see pp 777–78). God's promise gives life because of God's trustworthy nature (Pr 30:5; see note, Ps 119:38).

Law. Hbr *torah*, "instruction" or "direction," including God's Commandments as well as His proclamation of love and mercy in the Messiah, Jesus. Torah eventually came to describe the Five Books of Moses (Gn; Ex; Lv; Nu; Dt). The Torah provides God's instructions and truth, which guide our steps in all situations.

testimonies. Hbr *'eduth*, the "witnesses" of the covenant. The 10 "words" written on the tablets of the Law (Ex 20:2–17), which Moses stored in the ark of the covenant. See *commandments*.

precepts. Hbr *piqqudim*, things "deserving attention," "appointed for observation" (the verb means "to visit" or "attend to"). Each teaching of God's precious Word deserves the attention of His people.

statutes. Hbr *chuqqoth*, thing "prescribed" or "due" (the verb means "to engrave" or "inscribe"). Things written as decrees.

commandments. Hbr *mitswoth*, things "charged," "commanded," or "commissioned" by the Lord.

rules. Hbr *mishpatim*, "judgments." A legal term for the decisions of a judge. This can include rules to be followed as well as declarations of freedom and innocence. Therefore, the term frequently describes justification and God's mercy.

word. Hbr *dabar*, something "spoken." Used for all manner of messages (edicts, reports, commands, promises) or a "matter" about which one speaks.

promises. Hbr *'amaroth*, "utterances" or "sayings," esp those of command or promise. When the saying involves fulfillment, "promise" is the preferred translation.

Some of these terms might make us think of dry, dead rules by which one has to live. Certainly God's Word proclaims rules for us to keep. However, Ps 119 repeatedly emphasizes that God gives life "according to" His Word. Generally, this phrase comes at the end of a verse, clinching the request with the certainty of God's previous promise. The psalmist prays according to "Your word" (vv 9, 25, 28, 65, 107, 169, 170), "Your promise" (vv 41, 58, 76, 133, 154), "Your rules" (v 156), and "Your steadfast love" (v v 124, 149, 159). (He also notes that the insolent do not live according to the Law [v 85].)

"According to" God's Word, the psalmist asks for direction in life (v 9), for life itself (vv 25, 107), for strength (v 28), for understanding (v 169), for deliverance (v 170), and he acknowledges God's blessings (v 65). Just as God's Word created the world (Gn 1) and God's breath gave Adam life (Gn 2:7), God's spoken and written Word gives life, hope, and salvation. In the NT, Jesus, the Word, "became flesh" for our salvation (Jn 1:14).

Life's God-Given Value

In 1920, two German physicians published a book called *The Permission to Destroy Life Unworthy of Life*. In it, they argued that "death assistance" should be extended to "empty shells of human beings" such as those with brain damage, some psychiatric conditions, and mental retardation. They argued that money spent to care for "meaningless life" could be used by those socially and physically fit. It was just a matter of determining which lives were worthy of life. History demonstrates that such thinking led to brutal Nazi experiments and death camps, forced sterilization programs in some European countries, and radical "eugenics" movements in Britain and the United States.

God Gives Value to Life

The value of human life does not depend upon what someone is able to do or not to do. God creates life. God made the first two human beings in His image (Gn 1:26–27). Even though this image was lost when sin came into the world, this original, lofty position still gives value to human life (cf Gn 9:6).

First, when God told Adam and Eve to be fruitful and multiply (Gn 1:28), He set in motion a biological process for procreation. But God is still involved in this process. "For You formed my inward parts; You knitted me together in my mother's womb. I praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are Your works" (Ps 139:13–14; cf Jb 10:8–12; 31:15). You are handmade by God! Everyone is. Whether you are an embryo growing in a womb, a young man in his prime, or a grandma in a nursing-home bed—every human life has this God-given value.

Second, God redeemed human life. God loved what He made with His hands so much that He sent His Son to pay the price to buy all human life back from sin and death. "You were bought with a price," Paul says (1Co 6:20). You know what that price was. It was not with "silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ" (1Pt 1:18–19). The hands that knit you in your mother's womb stretched out on a cross, were pierced with nails, and bled the cleansing blood of forgiveness. Every human being is a human being for whom Jesus Christ died. The embryo in the Petri dish, the child with Down syndrome yet to be born, the young woman who is brain damaged, and the elderly man with Alzheimer's disease have all been bought with a price. That price gives them value regardless of their stage of development or their condition.

Finally, God gives special value to those He calls as His own. God's grace given in Baptism flows to the infirm as well as to the healthy. The mentally retarded little girl is as much a child of God as the pastor who baptizes her. Value comes from what God is able to do in and through His children, not from the capabilities of His children. Paul says that God is able to do "far more abundantly than all we ask or think" and that this abundant power of God is "at work within us" (Eph 3:20; cf Eph 4:24; Col 3:10). We minimize God's power when we say He cannot be at work in and give value to the deformed baby who lives only a few hours. We minimize

God’s power when we say He cannot be at work in and give value to the grandma who has lived 95 years but no longer remembers her family.

Life Worthy of Life!

An elderly pastor living in a nursing home struggled each day to care for his wife, who had lost virtually all physical strength and the ability to communicate. Despite these troubles, her husband visited with her each day, recalling the life of love and commitment they still shared. They little realized that their simple gestures were carefully and thoughtfully observed by a young man working at the nursing home. The couple's loving interaction moved the young man to consider dedicating himself to the pastoral ministry.

"Why is God keeping me around?" "The quality of Grandma's life just isn't what it used to be." You may have said similar things. Take note: such statements reflect a view of the value of life based on people's abilities rather than on God's ability. Assigning value to human life based on mental or physical capacity can lead to the foreboding conclusion that maybe there is life not worthy of life.

Not so! All life is worthy of life, because God makes it so. He created life with His hands. You and every life have handmade value! God redeemed life with His outstretched hands. You and every life have been bought with a price! God's power is at work in those He calls His own. You and every child of God are instruments of His power (Jer 1:5). Thank God for the gift of life! Thank God for the value He gives to every life!

Adapted from James I. Lamb, Executive Director, Lutherans For Life, www.lutheransforlife.org.

Note: Life is a gift from God, but it is impossible to know God's purpose in all circumstances. If you are struggling with a seemingly untimely loss of life, see note, 1Ki 14:13. If you are feeling guilt for helping to end a new life through abortion, see note, 1Jn 3:20.

Music and Instruments in Israel

At times, the psalm prescripts give titles of tunes. Here are examples: "The Death of the Son" (9), "The Doe of the Morning" (22), "Lilies" (45; 69), "A Dove on Distant Oaks" (56), "Do Not Destroy" (57–59; 75), "Lily of the Covenant" (60; 80), and "Suffering of Affliction" (88). Such titles inspire the imagination, pointing to the range of sorrow, beauty, and joy expressed in ancient Israelite music.

The Jewish Talmud records that the Levites usually played cymbals for beating time, nine soprano harps for melody, and two bass harps (cf 1Ch 25:1, 6). Hebrew has a variety of words for stringed instruments, but harps seem to be the basic instruments of worship. Large orchestras were formed for special services (2Ch 5:12–13). See Bach's comment in the note for 1Ch 25.

bell. Small bronze bells were sewn to the hem of the high priest's garment so that they sounded as he walked. Cf Ex 28:33–35.

castanets. Small shells or pieces of wood or ivory fastened to thumb and finger and then clicked together. Cf 2Sm 6:5.

choir. The chief "instrument" for praising God is the human voice, which can make music in combination with God's own Word. Cf Ne 12:40. See *voice*.

choirmaster. Probably a liturgical notation, indicating either that the director of music should collect the psalm for Israel's worship services or that the leader of the Levitical choir should speak this psalm (cf 1Ch 23:5, 30; 25; Ne 11:17).

clapping. Even hands can keep rhythm in praise to God. Cf Ps 47:1.

cymbals. Copper or bronze percussion instruments (1Ch 15:19). Hbr term describes "ringing" or "resounding." Cf Ps 150:5.

dance. See note, 149:3. Hbr words for *dance* mean to skip, hop, leap, and whirl. Dances could be performed in a circle. Women are described dancing together (cf Ex 15:20). David danced in priestly garb when the ark was brought to Jerusalem (2Sm 6:14–16). This is the only specific reference to male dancing. See p 959.

flute. Hbr *chalil*; from a term meaning "to pierce" or "to bore." A double-piped flute with holes bored in it for creating different musical notes. Cf

1Sm 10:5–6. Numerous clay figurines have been discovered depicting the playing of this instrument.

harp. Hbr *nebel*. Name refers to the instrument's shape, like that of a bottle or jar. It was a large instrument with 10 or 12 strings of varying length, which were plucked. Cf Ps 33:2.

lute. Hbr *kinor*. Smaller than the harp, with five or so strings, which were plucked or strummed with a plectrum.

lyre. See *lute*.

pipes. See *flute*.

Selah. Hbr; untranslatable. Mainly in the first two books of Psalms. Probably refers to the accompaniment of the harps during the psalm.

strings. See *harp*.

tambourine. Hbr term includes hand drums. These were usually played by women (Ex 15:20), as shown by numerous clay figurines of women playing such instruments.

trumpet. Hbr *shophar*, "ram's horn." Most frequently mentioned instrument in the Bible, it had both religious and military uses. Priests sounded the trumpet to call people to worship (Ps 81:3–4; 98:6). Its loud blast was used as a signal rather than as music. Cf 2Sm 6:15. Trumpets were not played with other instruments.

trumpet(s). Hbr *chatsotserah*, "bugle." Instrument, made of silver or bronze, was long and straight and had limited musical range. Like the *shophar,* this instrument had sacred and military functions. It marked the progress of the offerings (Nu 10:1–10; 98:6). Trumpets were not played with other instruments.

voice. Most common and best instrument of music, because it can convey God's Word. Cf 2Ch 29:27–28; Ps 47:6. See *choir*.

Note: Some Protestant churches do not use musical instruments to accompany their singing and even forbid their use in worship. They argue that the New Testament does not teach the use of musical instruments for worship. The Psalms clearly record how important instrumental music was for worshipers who gathered at the temple (e.g., Ps 47; 150). Likewise, the Book of Revelation notes the use of musical instruments in heaven! (Note the mention of harps in Rv 5:8; 15:2 and trumpets in Rv 8:2, 6, 13.)

Footnotes

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:1 The singular Hebrew word for *man* (*ish*) is used here to portray a representative example of a godly person; see preface
- [2] 1:2 Or *instruction*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 2

- [3] 2:1 Or *nations noisily assemble*
- [1] 2:9 Revocalization yields (compare Septuagint) *You shall rule*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 3

- [2] 3:2 The meaning of the Hebrew word *Selah*, used frequently in the Psalms, is uncertain. It may be a musical or liturgical direction

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 4

- [1] 4:2 Or *O men of rank*
- [2] 4:4 Or *Be agitated*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 5

- [3] 5:3 Or *I direct my prayer to you*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 6

- [1] 6:1 Probably a musical or liturgical term

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 7

- [2] 7:1 Probably a musical or liturgical term
- [1] 7:4 Hebrew *the one at peace with me*
- [2] 7:9 Hebrew *the hearts and kidneys*
- [3] 7:12 Hebrew *he*
- [4] 7:12 Hebrew *he*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 8

- [5] 8:1 Probably a musical or liturgical term
- [1] 8:5 Or *than God*; Septuagint *than the angels*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 9

- [2] 9:1 Psalms 9 and 10 together follow an acrostic pattern, each stanza beginning with the successive letters of the Hebrew alphabet. In the Septuagint they form one psalm
- [3] 9:1 Probably a musical or liturgical term
- [4] 9:3 Or *because of*
- [1] 9:16 Probably a musical or liturgical term

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 10

- [2] 10:3 Or *and he blesses the one greedy for gain*
- [3] 10:4 Or *of his anger*
- [4] 10:4 Or *the wicked says, "He will not call to account"*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 11

- [1] 11:3 Or *for the foundations will be destroyed; what has the righteous done?*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 12

- [1] 12:1 Probably a musical or liturgical term
- [2] 12:7 Or *guard him*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 14

- [1] 14:2 Or *that act wisely*

- [2] 14:6 Or *for*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 16

- [1] 16:1 Probably a musical or liturgical term
- [2] 16:3 Or *To the saints in the land, the excellent in whom is all my delight, I say:*
- [3] 16:4 Or *who acquire*
- [4] 16:7 Hebrew *my kidneys instruct me*
- [5] 16:9 Hebrew *my glory*
- [6] 16:10 Or *see the pit*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 17

- [1] 17:7 Or *Distinguish me by*
- [2] 17:14 Or *from men whose portion in life is of the world*
- [3] 17:14 Or *As for your treasured ones, you fill their womb*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 18

- [1] 18:4 Or *terrified me*
- [2] 18:8 Or *in his wrath*
- [1] 18:22 Or *just decrees*
- [2] 18:30 Or *blameless*
- [3] 18:40 Or *You gave me my enemies' necks*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 19

- [1] 19:1 Hebrew *the expanse*; compare Genesis 1:6-8
- [2] 19:4 Or *Their measuring line*
- [3] 19:7 Or *blameless*
- [4] 19:9 Or *just decrees*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 21

- [1] 21:6 Or *make him a source of blessing forever*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 22

- [1] 22:3 Or *dwelling in the praises*
- [2] 22:16 Some Hebrew manuscripts, Septuagint, Vulgate, Syriac; most Hebrew manuscripts *like a lion* [they are at] *my hands and feet*
- [3] 22:21 Hebrew *answered*
- [1] 22:26 Or *The meek*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 23

- [2] 23:2 Hebrew *beside waters of rest*
- [3] 23:3 Or *in right paths*
- [4] 23:4 Or *the valley of deep darkness*
- [1] 23:6 Or *Only*
- [2] 23:6 Or *steadfast love*
- [3] 23:6 Or *shall return to dwell*
- [4] 23:6 Hebrew *for length of days*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 24

- [5] 24:1 Or *and all that fills it*
- [6] 24:6 Septuagint, Syriac, and two Hebrew manuscripts; Masoretic Text *Jacob, who seek your face*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 25

- [1] 25:1 This psalm is an acrostic poem, each verse beginning with the successive letters of the Hebrew alphabet
- [2] 25:14 Or *The secret counsel*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 26

- [1] 26:2 Hebrew *test my kidneys and my heart*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 27

- [2] 27:1 Or *refuge*
- [3] 27:3 Or *in this*
- [1] 27:4 Or *meditate*
- [2] 27:8 The command (*seek*) is addressed to more than one person
- [3] 27:8 The meaning of the Hebrew verse is uncertain
- [4] 27:13 Other Hebrew manuscripts *Oh! Had I not believed*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 28

- [5] 28:2 Hebrew *your innermost sanctuary*
- [1] 28:8 Some Hebrew manuscripts, Septuagint, Syriac; most Hebrew manuscripts *is their strength*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 29

- [2] 29:1 Hebrew *sons of God*, or *sons of might*
- [3] 29:2 Or *in holy attire*
- [4] 29:9 Revocalization yields *makes the oaks to shake*
- [5] 29:11 Or *The* LORD *will give … The* LORD *will bless*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 30

- [1] 30:3 Or *to life, that I should not go down to the pit*
- [2] 30:4 Hebrew *to the memorial of his holiness* (see Exodus 3:15)
- [3] 30:5 Or *and in his favor is life*
- [4] 30:9 Hebrew *in my blood*
- [5] 30:9 Or *to corruption*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 31

- [1] 31:6 Masoretic Text; one Hebrew manuscript, Septuagint, Syriac, Jerome *You hate*
- [2] 31:22 Or *in my haste*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 32

- [1] 32:1 Probably a musical or liturgical term
- [2] 32:4 Hebrew *my vitality was changed*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 34

- [1] 34:1 This psalm is an acrostic poem, each verse beginning with the successive letters of the Hebrew alphabet

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 35

- [1] 35:3 Or *and close the way*
- [1] 35:7 The word *pit* is transposed from the preceding line; Hebrew *For without cause they hid the pit of their net for me; without cause they dug for my life*
- [2] 35:11 Or *Violent*
- [3] 35:12 Hebrew *it is bereavement to my soul*
- [4] 35:13 Or *my prayer shall turn back*
- [5] 35:16 The meaning of the Hebrew phrase is uncertain

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 36

- [1] 36:1 Some Hebrew manuscripts, Syriac, Jerome (compare Septuagint); most Hebrew manuscripts *in my heart*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 37

- [1] 37:1 This psalm is an acrostic poem, each stanza beginning with the successive letters of the Hebrew alphabet
- [2] 37:3 Or *and feed on faithfulness*, or *and find safe pasture*
- [1] 37:22 Hebrew *by him*
- [1] 37:35 The identity of this tree is uncertain
- [2] 37:36 Or *But one passed by*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 39

- [1] 39:6 Hebrew *Surely as a breath*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 40

- [1] 40:6 Hebrew *ears you have dug for me*
- [2] 40:9 Hebrew *righteousness*; also verse 10

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 41

- [1] 41:1 Or *weak*
- [2] 41:3 Hebrew *you turn all his bed*
- [3] 41:4 Hebrew *my soul*
- [4] 41:7 Or *they devise evil against me*
- [5] 41:8 Or *has fastened*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 42

- [1] 42:1 Probably a musical or liturgical term
- [2] 42:2 Revocalization yields *and see the face of God*
- [3] 42:5 Hebrew *the salvation of my face*; also verse 11 and 43:5

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 44

- [1] 44:1 Probably a musical or liturgical term
- [1] 44:14 Hebrew *a shaking of the head*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 45

- [2] 45:1 Probably a musical or liturgical term
- [1] 45:12 Hebrew *daughter*
- [2] 45:12 Or *The daughter of Tyre is here with gifts, the richest of people seek your favor*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 46

- [1] 46:1 Probably a musical or liturgical term
- [2] 46:1 Or *well proved*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 47

- [1] 47:7 Hebrew *maskil*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 48

- [1] 48:14 Septuagint; another reading is (compare Jerome, Syriac) *He will guide us beyond death*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 49

- [1] 49:11 Septuagint, Syriac, Targum; Hebrew *Their inward thought was that their homes were forever*
- [2] 49:13 Or *and of those after them who approve of their boasts*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 50

- [1] 50:3 Or *May our God come, and not keep silence*
- [2] 50:14 Or *Make thanksgiving your sacrifice to God*
- [1] 50:21 Or *that the I AM*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 51

- [2] 51:1 Or *Be gracious to me*
- [1] 51:10 Or *steadfast*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 52

- [2] 52:1 Probably a musical or liturgical term
- [1] 52:7 Or *in his work of destruction*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 53

- [2] 53:1 Probably musical or liturgical terms
- [3] 53:2 Or *who act wisely*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 54

- [1] 54:1 Probably a musical or liturgical term
- [2] 54:3 Some Hebrew manuscripts and Targum *insolent men* (compare Psalm 86:14)

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 55

- [3] 55:1 Probably a musical or liturgical term
- [1] 55:20 Hebrew *He*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 56

- [1] 56:1 Probably a musical or liturgical term
- [2] 56:5 Or *they twist my words*

- [3] 56:8 Or *wanderings*
- [4] 56:9 Or *because*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 57

- [1] 57:1 Probably a musical or liturgical term
- [2] 57:8 Or *my whole being*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 58

- [3] 58 Probably a musical or liturgical term
- [4] 58:1 Or *mighty lords* (by revocalization; Hebrew *in silence*)
- [1] 58:9 The meaning of the Hebrew verse is uncertain

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 59

- [2] 59: Probably a musical or liturgical term
- [1] 59:7 Hebrew lacks *they think*
- [2] 59:10 Or *The God who shows me steadfast love*
- [3] 59:11 Or *wander*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 60

- [4] 60: Probably musical or liturgical terms
- [1] 60:4 Or *that it may be displayed because of truth*
- [2] 60:6 Or *sanctuary*

- [3] 60:8 Revocalization (compare Psalm 108:10); Masoretic Text *over me, O Philistia, shout in triumph*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 65

- [1] 65: Or *Praise waits for you in silence*
- [2] 65:9 Or *and make it overflow*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 66

- [1] 66:17 Hebrew *under*
- [2] 66:17 Or *and he was exalted with my tongue*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 68

- [1] 68:10 Or *your congregation*
- [2] 68:15 Or *hunch-backed*; also verse 16
- [1] 68:24 Or *has been*
- [2] 68:26 The Hebrew for *you* is plural here
- [3] 68:28 Probable reading; Hebrew *Your God has summoned your power*
- [4] 68:30 The meaning of the Hebrew verse is uncertain
- [5] 68:35 Septuagint; Hebrew *your*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 69

- [6] 69:1 Or *waters threaten my life*
- [1] 69:10 Hebrew lacks *and humbled*
- [2] 69:22 Hebrew; a slight revocalization yields (compare Septuagint, Syriac, Jerome) *a snare, and retribution and a trap*
- [1] 69:27 Hebrew *may they not come into your righteousness*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 72

- [1] 72:5 Septuagint *He shall endure*
- [2] 72:8 That is, the Euphrates

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 73

- [1] 73:10 Probable reading; Hebrew *the waters of a full cup are drained by them*
- [1] 73:26 Hebrew *rock*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 74

- [2] 74:1 Probably a musical or liturgical term
- [3] 74:5 The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain
- [1] 74:11 Hebrew *from your bosom*
- [2] 74:13 Or *the great sea creatures*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 75

- [3] 75:1 Hebrew *They*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 76

- [1] 76:10 Or *extremity*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 77

- [1] 77:6 Hebrew lacks *I said*
- [2] 77:10 Or *This is my grief: that the right hand of the Most High has changed*
- [3] 77:19 Hebrew *unknown*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 78

- [4] 78:1 Probably a musical or liturgical term
- [1] 78:9 Hebrew *armed and shooting*
- [1] 78:33 Hebrew *in*
- [2] 78:33 Or *vapor*
- [3] 78:42 Hebrew *hand*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 79

- [1] 79:8 Or *the iniquities of former generations*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 80

- [2] 80:3 Or *Turn us again*; also verses 7, 19
- [1] 80:11 That is, the Euphrates

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 81

- [2] 81: Probably a musical or liturgical term
- [1] 81:4 Or *just decree*
- [2] 81:5 Or *against*
- [3] 81:6 Hebrew *his*; also next line
- [4] 81:16 That is, Israel; Hebrew *him*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 82

- [1] 82:7 Or *fall as one man, O princes*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 83

- [2] 83:13 Or *like a tumbleweed*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 84

- [1] 84: Probably a musical or liturgical term
- [2] 84:5 Hebrew lacks *to Zion*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 87

- [1] 87:4 Probably *Nubia*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 88

- [1] 88: Probably musical or liturgical terms
- [2] 88:8 Or *an abomination*
- [3] 88:15 The meaning of the Hebrew word is uncertain
- [4] 88:18 Or *darkness has become my only companion*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 89

- [5] 89:1 Probably a musical or liturgical term
- [1] 89:6 Hebrew *the sons of God*, or *the sons of might*
- [2] 89:19 Some Hebrew manuscripts *godly ones*
- [1] 89:28 Or *will remain faithful*
- [2] 89:30 Or *my just decrees*
- [1] 89:50 Hebrew lacks *the insults*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 90

- [2] 90:1 Some Hebrew manuscripts (compare Septuagint) *our refuge*
- [3] 90:3 Or *of Adam*
- [4] 90:10 Or *pride*
- [1] 90:17 Or *beauty*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 91

- [2] 91:2 Septuagint *He will say*
- [3] 91:9 Or *For you, O LORD, are my refuge! You have made the Most High your dwelling place*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 92

- [1] 92:10 Compare Syriac; the meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 94

- [1] 94:11 Septuagint *they are futile*
- [2] 94:21 Hebrew *condemn innocent blood*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 96

- [1] 96:9 Or *in holy attire*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 97

- [1] 97:11 Most Hebrew manuscripts; one Hebrew manuscript, Septuagint, Syriac, Jerome *Light dawns*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 99

- [1] 99:4 Or *The might of the King loves justice*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 100

- [1] 100:3 Or *and not we ourselves*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 102

- [1] 102:6 The precise identity of these birds is uncertain

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 103

- [1] 103:14 Or *knows how we are formed*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 104

- [1] 104:19 Or *the appointed times* (compare Genesis 1:14)
- [1] 104:26 Or *you formed to play with*
- [2] 104:30 Or *breath*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 105

- [1] 105:16 Hebrew *staff*
- [2] 105:22 Septuagint, Syriac, Jerome *instruct*
- [3] 105:28 Septuagint, Syriac omit *not*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 106

- [1] 106:4 Or *Remember me, O LORD, with the favor you show to your people; help me with your salvation*

- [1] 106:33 Or *they rebelled against God's Spirit*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 107

- [1] 107:2 Or *from the hand of the foe*
- [2] 107:27 Hebrew *and all their wisdom was swallowed up*
- [1] 107:30 Hebrew *they*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 108

- [2] 108:1 Hebrew *with my glory*
- [3] 108:7 Or *sanctuary*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 109

- [1] 109:4 Hebrew *but I am prayer*
- [2] 109:17 Revocalization; Masoretic Text *curses have come*
- [3] 109:17 Revocalization; Masoretic Text *it is far*
- [4] 109:18 Revocalization; Masoretic Text *it has soaked*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 110

- [1] 110:3 Or *on the day you lead your forces*
- [2] 110:3 Masoretic Text; some Hebrew manuscripts and Jerome *on the holy mountains*
- [3] 110:3 The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain

- [4] 110:6 Or *the head*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 111

- [5] 111:1 This psalm is an acrostic poem, each line beginning with the successive letters of the Hebrew alphabet

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 112

- [1] 112:1 This psalm is an acrostic poem, each line beginning with the successive letters of the Hebrew alphabet

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 115

- [1] 115:9 Masoretic Text; many Hebrew manuscripts, Septuagint, Syriac *O house of Israel*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 116

- [1] 116:10 Or *believed, indeed*; Septuagint *believed, therefore*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 118

- [1] 118:13 Hebrew *You* (that is, the enemy) *pushed me hard*
- [2] 118:22 Hebrew *the head of the corner*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 119

- [1] 119:1 This psalm is an acrostic poem of twenty-two stanzas, following the letters of the Hebrew alphabet; within a stanza, each verse begins with the same Hebrew letter
- [2] 119:7 Or *your just and righteous decrees*; also verses 62, 106, 160, 164
- [3] 119:13 Or *all the just decrees*
- [1] 119:20 Or *your just decrees*; also verses 30, 39, 43, 52, 75, 102, 108, 137, 156, 175
- [2] 119:32 Or *for you set my heart free*
- [3] 119:33 Or *keep it as my reward*
- [1] 119:84 Hebrew *How many are the days of your servant*?
- [2] 119:100 Or *the elders*
- [1] 119:112 Or *statutes; the reward is eternal*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 122

- [1] 122:4 Or *as a testimony for*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 127

- [1] 127:4 Or *sons*
- [2] 127:5 Or *They shall not be put to shame when they speak with their enemies in the gate*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 129

- [1] 129:1 Or *Often*; also verse 2

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 132

- [1] 132:11 Hebrew *of your fruit of the womb*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 133

- [2] 133:1 Or *dwell together*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 135

- [1] 135:3 Or *for he is beautiful*
- [2] 135:13 Or *remembrance*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 136

- [1] 136:15 Hebrew *shook off*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 137

- [1] 137:2 Or *poplars*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 138

- [1] 138:2 Or *you have exalted your word above all your name*
- [2] 138:3 Hebrew *you made me bold in my soul with strength*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 139

- [1] 139:14 Or *for I am fearfully set apart*
- [2] 139:20 Hebrew lacks *your name*
- [3] 139:23 Or *cares*
- [4] 139:24 Or *in the ancient way* (compare Jeremiah 6:16)

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 140

- [1] 140:5 Or *they have spread cords as a net*
- [2] 140:8 Hebrew *his*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 141

- [1] 141:6 Or *When their judges fall into the hands of the Rock*
- [2] 141:7 The meaning of the Hebrew in verses 6, 7 is uncertain
- [3] 141:8 Hebrew *refuge; do not pour out my life!*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 142

- [4] 142: Probably a musical or liturgical term

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 143

- [1] 143:9 One Hebrew manuscript, Septuagint; most Hebrew manuscripts *To you I have covered*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 144

- [1] 144:2 Many Hebrew manuscripts, Dead Sea Scroll, Jerome, Syriac, Aquila; most Hebrew manuscripts *subdues my people*
- [2] 144:14 Hebrew *with no breaking in or going out*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 145

- [3] 145:1 This psalm is an acrostic poem, each verse beginning with the successive letters of the Hebrew alphabet
- [1] 145:12 Hebrew *his*; also next line
- [2] 145:13 These two lines are supplied by one Hebrew manuscript, Septuagint, Syriac (compare Dead Sea Scroll)

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 147

- [1] 147: Or *for he is beautiful*
- [2] 147:6 Or *afflicted*
- [1] 147:19 Or *and just decrees*
- [2] 147:20 Or *his just decrees*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 148

- [3] 148:6 Or *it shall not be transgressed*

Footnotes for Psalms, Chapter 150

- [1] 150:1 Hebrew *expanse* (compare Genesis 1:6-8)

Study Notes

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Book One** Ps 1–41; see p 844.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 1** Author and date of composition unknown. Based on the psalm's high regard for God's Word, the author may have been a scholar of the Law.

Format: V v 1–2, the blessed; v v 3–4, a contrast; v v 5–6, the wicked.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 1:1 *Blessed*. Happy condition of person described in v v 1–3. See p 842. *walks … stands … sits*. A progression from following after to settling in with the worst kind of sinners. *wicked*. Hbr *resha'im*, people who disobey God's Law and are excluded from public worship and the covenant community. *sinners*. People who habitually sin. *scoffers*. People who robustly mock and ridicule God's Law. The progression describes people who, perhaps naively, begin to imitate those who despise God's Law and replace it with what suits their own whims. Imitation leads to alliance, and alliance leads to assimilation. This leads to outright rejection and even ridicule of God and His Word. Those who refuse to tread this path avoid this downward spiral. As such, they are truly blessed.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 1:2 *law*. See p 971. *meditates*. See p 842. "The Law is a mirror in which God's will and what pleases Him are exactly portrayed. This mirror should be constantly held up to the believers and be diligently encouraged for them without ceasing" (FC SD VI 4). *day and night*. Constantly. Luth: "This blessed man has his love, the Law of God, always in his mouth, always in his heart and, if possible, always in his ear" (AE 14:298). Chem: "The Spirit of renewal works a willingness of this kind in the believers" (*LTh* 2:341).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 1:3 *like a tree*. The Egyptian "Wisdom of Amenemope" contrasted a tree in a field with a tree in a garden, i.e., a hot-tempered wild person with a silent, cultivated person. *fruit*. He produces something from which others benefit. *does not wither*. Is strong despite adverse circumstances. *prospers*. Luth: "Beware that prosperity is not understood as prosperity of the flesh. This prospering is hidden; it is so deep within the spirit that if you do not hold fast to it in faith, you might rather call it the greatest adversity. For just as the devil violently hates the 'leaves' and the Word of God, so he also hates those who teach it and listen to it;

and he persecutes them with the help of the powers of the whole world. So you are witness to the greatest of all miracles when you hear that everything prospers which the blessed man does. For what is more wonderful than that the believers increase when they are destroyed, that they multiply when they are diminished, that they overcome when they are subdued, that they enter when they are cast out, that they are victorious when they are defeated? … Thus God exalts His saints, that the height of misfortune becomes the height of prosperity" (AE 14:304).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 1:4 *drives away*. Winnowing farmers harvested the grain and, on a breezy evening, would throw it into the air. Since the chaff was lighter than the grain, the breeze would blow the chaff away. Accumulated chaff was burned—a vivid picture of the end of a life divorced from God!

PSALMS—NOTE ON 1:5 *the judgment*. God's final judgment. The wicked will not be able to withstand the final judgment. *congregation*. Israelites who gather for public worship. Also can refer to all those who trust in God for their salvation gathering at the final judgment.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 1:6 *way of the righteous … way of the wicked*. See p 844. Not simply the behavior of these two types of people, but particular dispositions toward God and theologies. The wicked hold God's Word in contempt and utter disregard. The righteous order their lives and view the world according to God's Word and wisdom. See pp 775–78.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 1** Shows us the destiny of both the righteous and the wicked. The wicked will, at the final judgment, find themselves alienated from God and, ultimately, inheritors of eternal damnation. No one is exempt from this most frightening fate. Yet God has provided a different way. He sets us on the way of righteousness and keeps us on it through His Word. The means of grace forever remind us—even when we have succumbed to the various temptations of life—that, through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, our destination is certain. We will stand holy before God in the final judgment as members of the congregation of the righteous. • O Lord, bless our meditation on the accomplished fact of our salvation, through Christ Jesus. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 2** Ascribed to David in Ac 4:25 (perhaps because the whole Psalter is associated with him). The context of the psalm may be David's coronation or the coronation of one of Jerusalem's other kings. The first strophe (v v 1–3) may hint at the later wars of David (cf 2Sm 8; 10).

Format: V v 1–3, the nations oppose the Lord; v v 4–6, the Lord establishes His king; v v 7–9, the Son's rule; v v 10–12, a warning.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 2:2 *Anointed*. One consecrated by having oil poured on his head (e.g., David was anointed king by the prophet Samuel; 1Sm 16:13). See note, 1Sm 10:1.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 2:3 *cast away their cords*. Pictures independence sought by vassal kingdoms.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 2:4 *laughs*. God, in His infinite splendor, is not so far removed from creation that He is unaware of human deeds. Ever mindful of His creation, He mocks those who have the audacity to circumvent His laws and plans as Creator. Luth: "Let us laugh at raging Satan and the world (yes, even at sin and our conscience in us). Truly, because the punishment of the godless is delayed up to now, it is certain that God is also laughing, God, who is in heaven and cannot be driven from there by impious men. Therefore He rightly laughs at their vain attempts. We may think that we would also laugh if we were seated in such a high place and a fortress so fortified…. But these thoughts reveal our lack of faith. For all of us who believe in Christ are most truly in that same heaven in which the Lord dwells, if not in the flesh, nevertheless in faith and in the Word" (AE 12:25).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 2:6 *Zion*. See p 844.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 2:7 *decree*. God's announcement of a king (e.g., the prophet Nathan announced David's appointment as Saul's successor; 2Sm 7:5–17). This was ultimately fulfilled in Jesus. *You are My Son … I have begotten You*. Cf 2Sm 7:14. Just: "His generation would take place for men" (*ANF* 1:244). Mel: "He is by nature the Son into whom the substance of the Father has been propagated" (Chem, *LTh* 1:88). Chem: "In Hebrew the word is *yalad* … to beget from the essence" (*LTh* 1:101).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 2:9 *break*. In Mesopotamian texts, a king's rule was often likened to the act of smashing pottery. Thus, "break" here means to rule (see ESV note). *iron … potter's vessel*. Synonyms for strength and weakness.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 2:10 "It should be the first care of kings to advance God's glory" (Tr 54).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 2:11 *fear … rejoice with trembling*. God's mercy and protection cause His subjects to rejoice. At the same time, His righteousness shakes the disobedient. See p 843.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 2:12 *Kiss*. A subject acknowledged the dominance of a king by kissing the hem of his garment or his hand. *the Son*. See note, v 7. *quickly kindled*. The irreverent are subject to the king's wrath. *take refuge*. To acknowledge and surrender to the one whom God, in His infinite wisdom, has chosen to rule.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 2** Those who plot against God's elect incite God's wrath. The Lord, not human beings, anointed Israel's king and elected this nation for His plan of salvation. Ultimately, the Messiah—the Anointed One—was born from the nation of Israel. God preserved Israel so that through the offspring of one of David's descendants, Mary, the Savior of humankind was born. Those who "take refuge in Him"—i.e., trust in Him for their salvation—are truly blessed. • Lord Jesus, despite our miserable and constant rebellion, You rescue us from sin. Lead us to embrace Your gracious rule with joyful hearts. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 3** This psalm of David describes Absalom's attempt to undermine his father's rule (2Sm 15–17). It was written toward the end of David's reign.

Format: Vv 1–2, rising foes; v v 3–4, the Lord's protection; v v 5–6, not afraid; v 7, a prayer for salvation; v 8, salvation and blessing.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 3:2 *Selah*. See p 993.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 3:3 *shield about me*. God's protection is all-encompassing. *glory*. I.e., the source of David's glory, since his fame came from God.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 3:4 *holy hill*. Zion (see p 844).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 3:5 When vigilance waned, God continued to protect and sustain.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 3:7–8 *Save me … Salvation*. See p 843. In warfare, victory came only if God fought for and through His people.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 3** This psalm recounts a dark period in David's life. His enemies, including his own son, have overwhelmed and opposed him. Despite his foes' claim that David's sins preclude him from salvation, David remains confident that God will protect and deliver him. Despite our miserable condition (and certain end), God shields us from our foes, lifts us, and directs our eyes to His great mercy displayed in the cross of Christ. He assures us that salvation belongs to Him and is given to those who trust in Him. • "You, O LORD, are a shield about me, my glory, and the lifter of my head. Arise, O LORD! Save me, O my God!" Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 4** This psalm was for the director of Israel's worship services, or perhaps it was to be spoken or sung by the director of a liturgical choir. *choirmaster*. See p 993. *stringed instruments*. See p 993.

Format: V v 1–3, the Lord hears; v v 4–5, trust the Lord; v v 6–7, joy from the Lord; v 8, peace from the Lord.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 4:1 *my righteousness!* See p 843.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 4:2 *O men, how long*. Bern: "You are deaf to the voice of truth, and you know not the purpose of Him who thinks thoughts of peace, who also speaks peace to His people, and to His saints, and to such as are converted in heart" (*SLSB*, p 159). *Selah*. See p 993.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 4:3 *set apart*. God separates and protects those who hear and obey His Word.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 4:4 *Be angry*. "Tremble." Psalmist exhorts his readers to fear, for he has called God to his aid (v 3), and God has promised to protect the godly. *do not sin*. Mel: "Rule over your sorrow and bend your mind so that you may willingly be obedient to God in your anguish" (Chem, *LTh* 2:367).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 4:5 *right sacrifices*. In addition to fearing God, which implies guilt, the psalmist urges foes to make atonement.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 4:6 *light of Your face*. Allusion to the Aaronic blessing in Nu 6:24–26, requesting that God direct His kindness toward His people.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 4:7 *they*. Psalmist's foes.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 4** David complains that his enemies are speaking ill of him as king in an attempt to shame him. He reminds them that God sets apart the godly from those who behave in such a manner. How often do we find ourselves speaking ill of people in positions of authority? of colleagues and peers? God's Word condemns unjust complaints. Through David, God encourages us to turn from our sinful ways and "trust in the LORD" (v 5). Such trust brings peace of mind and eternal peace. • You alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety. Teach me to judge rightly and dwell in peace. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 5** *choirmaster*. See p 993. *flutes*. See p 993.

Format: V v 1–3, prayer and sacrifice; v v 4–6, God's hate; v v 7–8, God's love; v v 9–10, prayer against enemies; v v 11–12, bless the righteous.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 5:2 *King*. King David acknowledges Yahweh as King of kings.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 5:3 *morning*. Prayer is the most important part of the day. In other words, the day will start, be filled, and end with prayer. *watch*. Wait in expectation.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 5:5 *hate*. Chem: "God hates sin and is exceedingly angry not only at the original fall into sin but at our actual sins…. It cannot be said that God is the will which causes anyone to sin" (*LTh* 1:191, 218). If God did not hate evil, His love would not be holy and just. Mel: "He has poured out His great wrath against sin upon His Son who was put to death for us and paid our penalty. By the intercession of this payment we are received" (Chem, *LTh* 2:657).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 5:7 *steadfast love*. See p 843. *Your house … holy temple*. The tabernacle or the heavenly temple, where God and human beings will dwell together. The great temple of Jerusalem was built by Solomon after his father David's death.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 5:8 *way straight*. To offer protection and guidance on the path of life.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 5:9 *inmost self*. One's physical and emotional core. *open grave*. Devoid of life.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 5:11 *spread Your protection*. "He daily preserves and defends us against all evil and misfortune" (LC II 17). *love Your name*. His name, made known through His deeds and Word, evokes love and causes joy.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 5:12 *favor*. See p 6.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 5** Boasting and deceit inevitably lead to destruction. David's petition reveals that God leads us out of such sins and covers us with His favor. God declares us righteous and thus covers us with His favor through faith in Christ's atoning sacrifice for all of our sins. • Keep us ever mindful of this great gift of righteousness by faith alone, O Lord. Through Word and Sacrament, cover us and remind us of Your constant and protective favor. Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 6** One of seven penitential psalms (cf 32; 38; 51; 102; 130; 143). The exact context of this prayer for deliverance is uncertain. As he writes this, David seems to be extremely ill as a result of mental anguish over sin. *choirmaster*. See p 993. *Sheminith*. Lit, "the eighth," which may refer to a musical setting or to an eight-stringed instrument.

Format: V v 1–3, a prayer for mercy; v v 4–5, life and death; v v 6–7, mourning; v v 8–10, the Lord hears.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 6:2 *heal me*. Beyond physical restoration, this appeal can extend to both body and soul. *troubled*. "[A] conscience feels God's wrath against sin. This is unknown to secure people living according to the flesh" (Ap XIIA 32).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 6:4 *Turn*. Psalmist feels God has turned His attention elsewhere. To turn toward the psalmist again is to deliver him from adversity and, in this context, the fear of death. *deliver … save … steadfast love*. See pp 842–43.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 6:5 *no remembrance*. No worship. *Sheol*. See p 792.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 6:8 *workers of evil*. Any habitual sinner with evil designs.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 6:10 *turn back*. Retreat, acknowledgment of defeat.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 6** David pleads with the Lord for deliverance from anxiety, physical discomfort, and sickness caused by a growing awareness of his sinful condition. Luther referred to such mental torment as *Anfechtung*, a German term for the state of despair and doubt we human beings experience when coming to terms with the consequences of our failure to meet the demands of God's Law. Scripture clearly reveals that the result of sin is death (Rm 6:23), but how seriously do we take this threat? Consider this: nearly 2,000 years ago, our sinful condition was so desperate that God sent His own Son to pay the price. God be praised! Through faith in Christ's redemption, our sins have been forgiven. • Lord, hear my plea, and accept my prayer through the merits of Jesus, who prays for me. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 7** *Shiggaion*. Rare Hbr word, possibly a liturgical device; see note, Hab 3:1. Some scholars argue that it borrows from an ancient Assyrian (or Akkadian) word that means "to complain" or "to lament." *Cush, a Benjaminite*. Since Cush was from the tribe of Benjamin, he was almost certainly an ally of David's enemy Saul.

Format: V v 1–2, pursuers are like lions; v v 3–5, vow of innocence; v v 6–7, appointed judgment; v v 8–11, shield of the righteous; v v 12–16, punish the unrepentant; v 17, vow to thank and praise.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 7:2 *tear my soul*. As a shepherd, David was certainly familiar with the destruction a lion could cause as it picked apart a carcass.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 7:3 *this*. Charges brought against David in v 4.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 7:5 *my glory*. Honor. *Selah*. See p 993.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 7:6 *awake*. Hyperbole, for the Lord does not sleep (cf 121:4), emphasizing David's feelings and dire situation.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 7:7 *assembly*. Not just David's enemies, but also God's enemies.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 7:8 *judges*. Statement of fact: God judges all people. The penalty may be immediate or delayed, but it is certain (cf v 11). David asks that he not be treated by an unfair standard. He is confident about God's gracious outpouring and crediting of righteousness upon those who repent (cf v v 10–11). "When David boasts in other places about his righteousness, he speaks about his own cause against the persecutors of God's Word. He does not speak of his personal purity" (Ap V 205). May we, too, be so confident in the blessings of repentance credited to us by God through faith.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 7:9 *test*. Examine or search.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 7:11 *righteous judge*. Judge who deliberates fairly and without error on the basis of the law. See p 792. *feels indignation*. Is moved to righteous anger.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 7:12 *repent*. See p 1080. God's Word turns our thoughts back to Him. The first step in repentance is acknowledging the truth of what God has told us about ourselves: we are conceived and born sinful creatures in dire need of God's mercy. *whet*. To sharpen on a whetstone in preparation for battle. God is not idle when His judgment is delayed.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 7:13 *fiery*. Flaming arrows; God shoots lightning.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 7:14 *conceives … is pregnant … gives birth*. Lies are premeditated and nurtured by the wicked. *evil*. Chem: "The corrupt inclination of our nature which produces evil desires, even if the intention has not been made" (*LTh* 2:429).
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 7** David, confident of his righteousness, petitions the Lord to judge him and his enemies justly. He repeatedly asserts that the righteousness of God's justice must destroy unrepentant sinners, and he compares God's wrath to that of a soldier preparing to meet his foe. What a startling image for those who refuse to repent of their sins! Yet the Lord also offers salvation through Christ Jesus. • O God, readily forgive and

turn away Your righteous indignation from me. Put a new song on my lips —"praise to the name of the LORD, the Most High." Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 8** References to the moon and stars make this psalm esp appropriate for evening worship. *choirmaster*. See p 993. *Gittith*. Meaning unclear; perhaps a musical instrument or particular melody.

Format: V v 1–2, Your majestic name; v v 3–4, humankind seems unimportant; v v 5–8, the Lord gives dominion to humankind; v 9, chorus.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 8:1 *LORD*. Hbr *yahweh*, the personal, revealed name of God (cf Ex 3:14; 6:2–8). *our Lord*. Hbr *'adonai*, common term used to address a king, ruler, or anyone in position of authority. See p 1227. The psalm begins by crying out the name of the one and only true God, then confesses Him to be our ruler. *majestic*. The name of Yahweh is rightfully described. Yahweh alone is, always has been, and always will be the one who exists and, by extension, is always present to act on behalf of humankind for our salvation. *glory*. God's majesty is tangibly revealed on earth in the wonderful details and design of creation (esp in Christ's human nature and work) and extends beyond our view into the heavens.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 8:2 *babies and infants … established strength*. God's majesty and glory are found throughout the created order. They are most clearly and personally displayed in the incarnation of His Son and the reconciliation of humankind through the Holy Child, Jesus. This is God's most glorious and majestic work, but it is also a paradox. See p 837. Luth: "This is the way Christ's kingdom is established, namely, not with human force, wisdom, counsel or power, but with the Word and the Gospel preached by infants and sucklings…. By 'infants' He does not mean young children who cannot talk … but plain, simple, unsophisticated people, who are like infant children in that they set aside all reason, grasp and accept the Word with simple faith, and let themselves be led and directed by God like children. Such people are also the best scholars and pupils in Christ's kingdom" (AE 12:108). "Children should be constantly urged and moved to honor God's name and to have it always upon their lips for everything that may happen to them" (LC I 70).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 8:4 *what is man*. David considers the place of human beings in the created order and, more important, their significance to God. *son of man*. Hbr *ben 'adam*, "son of Adam." Human beings enjoy a

special relationship with their Creator. V v 5–8 explain the special status and role that human beings enjoy over the rest of creation.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 8:5 Emphasizes the special status God bestows on humans who enjoy His care and attention. Luther translates: "Thou wilt let Him be forsaken of God for a little while," and applies the passage to Christ (AE 12:124). *the heavenly beings*. Hbr *'elohim*, "God," or "divine beings." The LXX identifies them as angels (cf Heb 2:5, 7).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 8:6 *dominion*. Gn 1:26–27 refers to the inborn duty of human beings to rule over creation. *works*. Or, created ones, possibly referring to the heavenly beings (v 5). Though human beings have been given an extraordinary responsibility and great authority, David reminds us that creation is the work of God's hands. Thus, human beings see themselves as God's humble and responsible servants in their role as rulers over creation.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 8:8 *paths of the seas*. Currents in the oceans used by sailors as trade routes.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 8** Luth: "David concludes this psalm just the way he began it. He thanks the Lord, our Ruler, for His great and inestimable blessing, for establishing such a kingdom and calling and gathering His church, which gloriously praises His name throughout the world and thanks Him in heaven. Let us follow the example of this singer of praises as he prophesies to us. The Lord is our Ruler, too, and His kingdom is established and founded from the mouths of babes and sucklings. We entered it by Baptism, and we are called to it daily through Word and Gospel. With David we also hope to come to where we shall see the heavens, the work of His fingers, the moon and the stars which He will prepare. He won the kingdom with great trouble and anguish. Now He is crowned with honor and adornment and has everything under His feet. For this we give God our praise and thanks, but especially for the fact that He has brought us to a light and knowledge that does not spring up out of human reason but out of Christ. He is our Sun, who died for us and was raised from the dead, lives and reigns, so that through Him we might be saved. To this end may God help us all. Amen. Glory to God alone" (AE 12:135–36).
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 9** Based on the LXX, Ps 9 and 10 are understood by many scholars to comprise one psalm. Some commentators suggest that the psalm was composed later in David's lifetime, after the ark of the

covenant was brought to and permanently kept in Jerusalem (v 11). *choirmaster*. See p 993. *Muth-labben*. Probably a musical notation.

Format: V v 1–2, thanks and praise; v v 3–4, righteous judgment; v v 5–6, the wicked rebuked; v v 7–8, the Lord's justice; v v 9–10, the Lord is a stronghold; v v 11–12, enthroned in Zion; v v 13–14, prayer for graciousness; v v 15–16, nations trapped; v 17, end of the wicked; v 18, not forgotten; v v 19–20, judge the nations.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 9:3 *Your presence*. See p 843.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 9:4 *just cause*. As the anointed king of Israel, God's elect, David knew his cause was just, so long as it was informed by God's counsel.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 9:5 *blotted out … forever*. Utter destruction so as to disappear from the historical register, like the Canaanites, whom Israel overthrew. An even more harrowing truth is suggested here. The Creator forgets those who die outside the bounds of His grace, i.e., apart from faith in Christ Jesus.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 9:7 God will always remain the ruler of the nations and, moreover, will always uphold the cause of righteousness, on behalf of those who trust in Him. See pp 1565–66.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 9:9 *stronghold*. Fortress or place of refuge.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 9:10 *seek You*. See p 843.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 9:11 *Zion!* See p 844.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 9:12 *avenges blood*. Cf Dt 32:43.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 9:13 *gates of death*. Ancient Mesopotamians believed that, immediately after death, the deceased passed through seven gates on the way to the netherworld. But Scripture uses this term in reference to hell. See notes, Jb 17:16; Mt 16:18.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 9:14 *daughter of Zion*. Personification of Jerusalem. See p 1079.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 9:16 *made Himself known*. Revealed Himself—His will and His Law—in the text of Scripture and, more appropriate to this context, through various miraculous interventions in history. *Higgaion*. Hbr term of uncertain meaning; probably a musical notation, perhaps indicating an interlude. *Selah*. See p 993.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 9:17 *Sheol*. See p 792.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 9** "The wicked are snared in the work of their own hands," David observes in this psalm. How timeless is this truth! How

often do we dig ourselves deeper into sin just to cover up a previous sin? Ultimately, our sin carries the most frightening of consequences—death and damnation. However, as David reminds us, if we acknowledge our sin and God's wonderful deeds on our behalf, especially through Christ, we can be confident of His mercy toward us so we, too, can "be glad and exult" (v 2) in His name. • Dear Lord Jesus, we continually recount, through praise and thanksgiving, Your wonderful deeds. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 10** See Ps 9 intro.

Format: V 1, the Lord is hidden; v v 2–11, the wicked's thoughts and deeds; v v 12–15, the Lord helps the afflicted; v v 16–18, the Lord hears and does justice.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 10:1 *hide Yourself*. Because of the deeds of wicked men and women, it seems that God is hidden away, unwilling, at least presently, to intervene.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 10:2–11 Deeds of the wicked are listed.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 10:2 *wicked*. See note, 1:1.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 10:3 *curses*. Those who acquire goods and wealth through dubious and wicked means and out of sheer greed often praise God for their gain. This praise, however, is empty and insincere. To God, it is the same as if the wicked were cursing Him. See note, Gn 12:3; see also p 6.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 10:4 *seek Him*. See p 843. *There is no God*. The self-deluding thought that there is no God is the height of wickedness, for all of creation testifies to the existence of a Creator. See note, Rm 1:20.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 10:5 *His*. The wicked's. When the wicked happen to experience prosperity, they continue in their arrogance, thinking they will continue to prosper "at all times." It appears that the ways of wicked human beings and God's justice will never meet. However, there will be an end to the wicked's prosperity when God returns to judge both the living and the dead.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 10:7 *mouth … tongue*. Bern: "Let divine fear transfix your flesh, that the desire of the flesh may not deceive you. It flatters, but under its tongue is suffering and sorrow; it weeps, but betrays; it betrays to catch the poor when it has attracted him" (*SLSB*, p 184).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 10:8 *ambush*. A tactic most characteristic of the wicked, who are hostile without warning.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 10:9 *poor*. Those who have few resources to defend themselves make the easiest targets.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 10:14 *take it into Your hands*. To deal with it.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 10:16 *nations*. Reference to the Canaanites, who, due to their wickedness, had been crushed and ceased to exist. See note, 9:5.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 10:17 *strengthen their heart*. Give courage and provide hope for the future. "God also requires that you weep and ask … so that you may kindle your heart to stronger and greater desires and make wide your cloak to receive much" (LC III 27).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 10:18 *of the earth*. Emphasizes that human beings are mere creatures and, as such, are nothing compared to God's power.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 10** The psalmist confidently prays that God will root out those who are wicked and take advantage of the weak and poor throughout Israel so that they "may strike terror no more" (v 18). Such behavior, David reminds us, will be called into account. There is hope, however, whether we have taken advantage of the weak or have been the victim of oppression. The Lord has compassion on those oppressed by sin. • In mercy, Lord, bring "justice to the fatherless and the oppressed." Eradicate terror and injustice from the earth. Forgive us, and come quickly to establish Your kingdom. Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 11** Written during a time in which the danger posed by David's enemies was so great that even the king's counselors encouraged him to retreat into hiding (2Sm 15–17). *choirmaster*. See p 993.

Format: V v 1–3, plight of the righteous; v v 4–5, the holy Lord tests the righteous; v v 6–7, wicked and righteous contrasted.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 11:1 *you*. Probably David's well-intended but cowardly friend(s) or adviser(s) who had counseled him to flee from impending danger. *your mountain*. The Israelites often took refuge in the wooded mountains. David hid when pursued by Saul.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 11:3 *foundations*. World's underlying structure or order. Luther referred to this underlying structure as "stations," meaning (1) religion, or spiritual life, (2) power, or political life, and (3) domestic economy, or family life. Luth: "Where such stations operate as they should, there things go well in the world, and there is the very righteousness of God. But where such stations are not maintained, it makes for unrighteousness. Now God declares concerning these stations that they must remain if the world is to stand, even though many oppose and rage against them. Therefore the psalmist says that His righteousness endures

forever. All sects and man-made righteousness will finally perish, but these stations remain and preserve [secular] righteousness in the world" (AE 13:358; cf AE 54:446).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 11:4 Though the Lord's heavenly throne seems remote, God remains interested in human affairs. Therefore, He continues to test or examine the deeds and intentions of human beings (v 5).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 11:5 *tests*. See note, v 4. *hates*. Holiness and justice, as God's attributes, must cause revulsion against the wicked designs of humans. Oh, that we would have such a righteous hate toward our own sin! See note, 5:5.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 11:6 *a scorching wind*. Utter destruction caused by a storm of fire and sulfur, reminiscent of a volcanic eruption's fiery cloud. This wind would ensure that anything that survived would be snuffed out. See p 879. *portion of their cup*. Due reward or punishment. See note, Is 51:17.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 11** David confesses his confidence in the Lord's unmovable favor. The Lord, David writes, "tests the righteous" (v 5). Our faith is often tested and often found wanting. God's faithfulness and mercy toward us, however, never wanes or fails. Despite our lack of faith and even our wicked deeds, He extends His grace as a refuge from our sinful nature and the sinful works of others. He does so audibly and visibly through Word and Sacrament, as a testament of His great and unending love for us. • In You, O Lord, we take refuge. Though we are found wanting for righteousness, save us by the righteousness of Christ. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 12** As a youth, David was repeatedly mistreated by King Saul (e.g., 1Sm 18:6–11). Later, King David was the target of further intrigues, including the famous one involving his son Absalom (2Sm 15–18). *choirmaster*. See p 993. *Sheminith*. Lit, "the eighth," a note about musical setting; meaning uncertain.

Format: V v 1–2, everyone lies; v v 3–4, flattery and boasting judged; v v 5–6, the Lord's words are pure; v v 7–8, the Lord guards us.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 12:1 *Save, O LORD*. See "salvation," p 843; cf Mt 14:30.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 12:2 *double heart*. The human heart is often the source of duplicity and deceit (Mk 7:21–23).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 12:3 *cut off*. David's proposed solution to the treachery surrounding him is drastic. The expression often means to execute someone.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 12:4 *our lips are with us*. The evil express their confidence to one another. In stark contrast is the boast of the righteous, "God is with us."
PSALMS—NOTE ON 12:5 *poor … needy*. God's people who suffer for the sake of righteousness (cf Mt 5:3).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 12:6 *pure words*. God's Word is the opposite of what the wicked utter. Whereas the evil use words to deceive and destroy, God's Holy Word delivers life and salvation. See notes, 19:7; 33:4. *purified seven times*. Thoroughly. See p 217. Chem: "[God] purges and separates the opinions of reason and the Law that have intruded themselves into the doctrine of justification" (*LTh* 2:464). See notes, Mal 3:2–3.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 12:7 *this generation forever*. At times, the wicked prevail, but they shall not prevail in eternity. Jesus also spoke against "this generation" in Mt 11:16; 12:41.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 12** A cry for help in the face of treachery and deceit. Unchecked wickedness sometimes leads us to doubt that God is watching out for us. Such despair is a great evil and can ruin our souls, but it can also help us to appreciate our complete dependence on God and His unfailing promises to save and defend us. • Lord, use the surrounding evil and the threats they pose to drive us once again to a lively hope in our promised salvation; through Christ Jesus, our Lord. Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 13** Best understood as having been written while David was being pursued by King Saul. On numerous occasions, David was nearly killed. *choirmaster*. See p 993.

Format: V v 1–2, waiting on the Lord; v v 3–4, prayer for an answer; v v 5–6, the Lord's bountiful love and salvation.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 13:1 *hide*. Psalmist expresses dismay and frustration that God seems indifferent to his suffering. David's feeling of abandonment is not the result of a sin he has committed (as in Ps 51). Rather, he fears that his enemies will succeed in their plan to kill him.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 13:2 *counsel in my soul*. Describes pain in the soul, which fits well with the next poetic line.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 13:3 *light up my eyes*. See note, Jb 17:7. *sleep of death*. David is afraid to rest his eyes. King Saul tried long and hard to kill

the youthful David as recorded in 1Sm.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 13:4 If David's enemies succeed in their plan to kill him, people might think that God Himself is against him. David seems esp disturbed that his death would be taken as a sign of God's judgment.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 13:5 *steadfast love*. See p 843.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 13:6 *bountifully*. God sets right what is wrong in our lives. Thus, after the Lord deals "bountifully" with the psalmist in 116:7, his soul is once again allowed to come to rest (cf Mt 11:28–30).
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 13** In moments of fear and frustration, our prayers can easily slip into blaming God for our problems. Asking "How long, O LORD?" (v 1) is okay. Casting blame on the Lord and reproving His failure to act according to our wishes and timetables, however, comes close to blasphemy. When our prayers question God and His ways, we do well to remember that Jesus not only commanded us to pray but also graciously promised to hear our prayers and intercede for us before the Father. No matter how weak our prayers or deep our frustration, Jesus' grace makes up for their shortcomings. • Lord Jesus, You conquered death and the grave and, therefore, can handle anything, including our impatient or even disrespectful prayers. Teach us to know that You are greater than all things, so that we pray confidently, Thy will be done. Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 14** Continual warning against unbelief; vivid picture of what the righteous ought always to avoid. *choirmaster*. See p 993.

Format: Each verse has three poetic lines except v v 5–6, which together make four lines.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 14:1 *There is no God*. Atheism, while increasingly common, is nothing new. The fool described here denies God "in his heart." There are people whose actions deny God's existence, even though they do not profess atheism. *abominable*. Behaviors that betray a particularly profound darkness of the heart and soul. As v 4 attests, abominable deeds usually involve the abuse of others. *none who does good*. Quoted as a blanket condemnation of all people in Rm 3:12. Apart from Christ, we cannot please God.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 14:2 *seek after God*. See p 843.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 14:3 Cited by Paul, Rm 3:12. Our works cannot make us righteous before God (cf Rm 3:23).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 14:4 *call upon the LORD?* See p 842.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 14:5–6 In due time, God will act on behalf of the poor, as v 7 makes clear.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 14:7 *Zion!* See p 844. *Jacob … Israel*. References to God's chosen people.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 14** Though atheism and irreligion are increasingly accepted, indeed even fashionable in modern societies, they are destructive beliefs that finally lead to moral abandon and eternal death. Because this psalm clarifies the depth of human sinfulness, it also illumines the greatness in Jesus' redemption. He atoned for all the sins of all people and graciously calls all, even the most perverse, to forgiveness and eternal life. • Lord Jesus, when we despair because of the world's increasing hostility or indifference to You, help us also to see the greatness of Your love and grace. Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 15** Many scholars think that Ps 15 was an entry prayer that reminded the Israelites of their need for holiness in God's presence. Chem: "He is not describing the cause of our justification or the means of apprehending righteousness, nor the form wherein our righteousness actually consists, but He is describing it by its fruits and who they are who have attained true righteousness and dwell in the church of God" (*LTh* 2:641).

Format: V 1, Your holy hill; v v 2–5, a description of the worthy.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 15:1 Poses a daunting question: Who is worthy to enter and remain in God's holy presence? *Your tent?* The tabernacle. (See diagram, p 139.) Later, God's dwelling was the Jerusalem temple, built on Mount Zion.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 15:2 *blamelessly*. See note, Jb 1:1. *truth in his heart*. Sincerity. This quality is necessary for one to approach God, for He can read the heart and is not swayed by appearances (1Sm 16:7; cf Lk 18:9–14).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 15:3 The three vices listed in this verse contrast sharply with the three godly behaviors described in the preceding verse.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 15:4 *swears*. See note, Nu 30:2. *to his own hurt*. The righteous promise to do something harmful to themselves for the good of others. Though the righteous despise a vile person, they still have mercy for others.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 15:5 *money at interest*. In contrast to the surrounding pagan cultures, where loans often led to enslavement (cf Mt 18:23–24), lending of money in ancient Israel was intended to help the poor

(Ex 22:25; Lv 25:35–37; Dt 23:19–20). The prophets repeatedly rail against any abuse of the poor and vulnerable.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 15** Sincerity and the righteous treatment of others, as taught in the Ten Commandments, are emphasized as the foundation to genuine worship. Sad to say, there are times that we come to worship God in an unworthy manner. E.g., we may remain unreconciled with others or persist in behaviors we know to be wrong. As God's true temple and the mercy seat where full forgiveness is freely given, our Lord Jesus Christ still calls us unto Himself. Through His grace, we are made right with God and counted worthy to stand before the Father's throne. • Almighty God, grant that all our worship and life may be acceptable in Your sight; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 16** Luth: "A prophecy of the suffering and resurrection of Christ, as the apostles themselves powerfully indicate (Acts 2:25 and 13:35)" (*PIML*, p 22). *Miktam*. See p 841.

Format: V v 1–2, prayer for refuge; v 3, saints; v 4, idolaters; v v 5–6, inheritance of God's people; v v 7–8, the Lord's counsel; v v 9–10, rescue from corruption; v 11, joy at God's right hand.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 16:1 This first verse, which expresses confidence in God's ability to save even as it cries out for help, sets the tone for the entire psalm. The psalmist expresses a confidence in the Lord that extends beyond the grave.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 16:2 *no good apart from You*. David emphasizes the Lord as his one source of blessing, a criticism of idolatry.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 16:3 *saints*. See p 843.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 16:4 *drink offerings*. Surrounding nations often worshiped their gods by pouring libations on the ground or on an altar. *take their names on my lips*. David refuses to invoke or confess any pagan deity.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 16:5 *chosen portion … lot*. Cf Jsh 13–19; 21 for Joshua's distribution of the Promised Land after the conquest. David claims that the Lord is as precious to him as his ancestral plot of land. *portion*. See p 7. *cup*. Psalmist offers his drink offering to the Lord, not the surrounding pagan deities. See note, Lv 23:37.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 16:6 *beautiful inheritance*. David offers thanks and praise for a beautiful estate and holding of property. However, David also refers to his eternal dwelling (cf v v 10–11).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 16:7 *counsel*. Throughout the Psalms, the Lord is praised for the counsel He gives by means of the Torah (or written Word; cf 119:24). *in the night also my heart instructs me*. David prayed and meditated on God's Word nightly.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 16:8 *at my right hand*. David writes as though the Lord stands beside him and holds his hand, like a father caring for his son. See p 843. The Lord is the focus of David's service and his ally.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 16:9 The knowledge that the Lord is always present and active in his life leaves David with a profound sense of well-being and security.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 16:10 *Sheol*. See p 792. *corruption*. Because of his enduring relationship with the giver and sustainer of life, David is confident that the righteous will endure despite physical death. This prophesies Jesus' resurrection (Ac 2:25–28).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 16:11 *at Your right hand*. Because David keeps the Lord at his right hand (so we read in v 8), he also has a sure and certain hope that God will keep him at His right hand, where there is fullness of eternal joy. See p 843.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 16** The psalm praises the Lord for numerous earthly blessings but moves toward a climactic expression of hope for life in God's presence beyond the grave. Far too often our prayers are simply laundry lists of earthly desires. This psalm reminds us of our greater need to thank and praise God and make spiritual blessings a priority (see note, Eph 1:3). Those who have the Lord have the source of all good things, even everlasting life. We who are in Christ have been set at God's right hand, where we can never be removed. • Lord, keep us in Your presence throughout our earthly pilgrimage, that we may come to the fullness of Your joy in heaven; through Jesus Christ, our resurrected Lord. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 17** Possibly another of David's cries for deliverance during the time King Saul was trying to kill him, as recorded throughout 1Sm.

> Format: V v 1–2, prayer for vindication; v v 3–5, tested by the Lord; v v 6–7, prayer for an answer; v v 8–9, prayer for safety; v v 10–12, the arrogant attack; v v 13–14, prayer for deliverance; v 15, satisfied with the Lord.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 17:1–2 The theme: David pleads for vindication from God, the source of his justification. *Your presence*. See p 843.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 17:3 *tried … visited … tested*. David's plea (v v 1–2) introduces his case (v v 3–5). He testifies that the Lord has repeatedly examined his heart and tested him. *visited me by night*. Surprise inspection.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 17:4 *the word of Your lips*. The Lord's instructions and promises.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 17:6 *call upon You*. See p 842.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 17:7 *steadfast love*. See p 843. *right hand*. See p 843.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 17:8–9 David uses a pair of vivid images as he begs for protection from his enemies. *apple of Your eye*. Eye's pupil. *shadow of Your wings*. The cherubim of God's throne were winged (Ex 25:20). A mother hen hides her chicks under her wings to protect them. Cf Lk 13:34; see notes, 57:1; Ezk 10:1.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 17:10–12 David portrays his persecutors as hard-hearted and arrogant, as predatory as a wild beast.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 17:11 *our*. If David wrote this psalm when Saul was after him, David refers to the men who joined him in the wilderness (cf 1Sm 27:2).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 17:12 *He*. Perhaps King Saul.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 17:13 Scripture depicts God fighting on behalf of His people at the Red Sea, at Jericho, and in David's own battle against Goliath (1Sm 17).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 17:14 *portion is in this life*. Those who despise God's Word and His ways can enjoy life only in this world. Unrepentant wickedness finally forfeits a share of heaven.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 17:15 *behold Your face … likeness*. David is thinking forward to eternity (1Jn 3:2).
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 17** David begs for protection from a bloodthirsty enemy. A tragic consequence of the world's fall into sin is that we often suffer through no particular fault of our own. Job is the classic case of one who suffers innocently. God's ability to turn injustice into good is best illustrated by Jesus' innocent death on the cross. That horrible miscarriage of justice worked life and salvation for all people. • Lord, keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith. He saved us by enduring great injustice and now sits at Your right hand. Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 18** Royal thanksgiving hymn. Twin themes of gratitude and praise permeate the psalm. *choirmaster*. See p 993. *his*

enemies … Saul. Along with a variant form of Ps 18, superscription also appears in 2Sm 22:1, which provides the historical setting.

Format: V v 1–3, the deliverer; v v 4–5, cords of death; v 6, the Lord hears; v v 7–12, the Lord comes down; v v 13–15, the Lord attacks; v v 16–19, the Lord rescues; v v 20–24, rewarded for righteousness; v v 25–30, the Lord protects the humble; v v 31–42, equipped by the Lord; v v 43–45, forgiveness subdued; v v 46–48, God be blessed; v v 49–50, salvation for David's offspring.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 18:2 *horn*. See p 842. *stronghold*. In Israel, mountain strongholds (such as Masada) were high and inaccessible.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 18:3–6 Psalmist recollects perils that assailed him and his desperate cry to the Lord.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 18:4 *cords of death*. Lit, "the labor pains of death surrounded me."

PSALMS—NOTE ON 18:5 *cords of Sheol*. See p 792. No less than death and the grave had taken hold of David.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 18:6 *temple*. The tabernacle, God's dwelling on earth (cf 2Sm 6), where David prayed.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 18:7–19 David rehearses God's powerful response to his cries for mercy.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 18:7–8 David reports the way God responded to his prayer, evoking images of divine glory that occurred when God gave the Law at Mount Sinai (Ex 19:16–20:21). Thunder, lightning, fire, smoke, and earthquakes accompanied God's action.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 18:9 *bowed the heavens*. Imagery of the Lord stretching open a hole in the atmosphere so that He can descend to earth. *thick darkness*. Additional aspects of the Lord's manifestation on Sinai (cf v 11; Dt 4:11).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 18:10 *cherub*. Angelic creature that appears with manifestations of the divine glory. See note, Ezk 10:1. *wings of the wind*. The Lord is portrayed as riding cherubim and flying like the wind.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 18:11–14 *coals of fire*. Amid the darkness already described, there are also flashes of fire and lightning, poetically described in v 14 as the Lord's arrows. The Lord's voice thundered from Mount Sinai.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 18:15 *channels … foundations*. Cf God's deliverance at the Red Sea (Ex 14:21–31).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 18:16 *many waters*. See "torrents," v 4.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 18:17–18 Reminder that David's perils resulted from enemies amassed against him, not from forces of nature.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 18:19 *broad place*. Opposite of a tight spot; a secure place, the fortress and stronghold mentioned in v 2.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 18:20 *according to my righteousness*. David does not claim sinlessness here and in the following verses, but rather asserts that he is the innocent victim of human jealousy and unprovoked intrigue.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 18:21–24 *the ways of the* LORD. See p 844. The Lord promised reward to those who followed His teaching. David refers to human righteousness in this passage, which remains imperfect. Only the righteousness given through faith in Christ is judged perfect before God (Rm 3:22–28).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 18:25–50 God is repeatedly thanked and praised for His goodness.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 18:25–26 While God is good and gracious to all, He does not treat iniquity and righteousness alike. God is merciful to those reflecting divine attributes.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 18:28 God is the source of physical light (Gn 1:3) and spiritual light (Ps 27:1).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 18:29 *by You I can run against a troop … leap over a wall*. Picturing an indefensible assault (cf Php 4:13).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 18:30 *proves true*. Is always vindicated. The theme of vindication appears throughout the Psalms (e.g., 26:1; 35:24; 43:1; 54:1).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 18:31 See SC, First Commandment, p xxxv; cf Ex 20:3; Is 43:10; 44:6; 45:5, 21.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 18:32 Here David acknowledges that both physical strength and moral uprightness are God's gracious gifts.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 18:33 *like the feet of a deer*. Sure in the most difficult circumstances.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 18:34 *trains my hands for war*. Strength training from the ultimate warrior.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 18:35 *right hand*. See p 843. *Your gentleness made me great*. Lit, "your humility made me great." It is exceedingly rare in the Scriptures that humility is attributed to God. Cf Php 2:5–11, where Christ's humility and obedience unto death is praised.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 18:36 *wide place*. See note, v 19.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 18:37–42 Shocking as it may sound to modern ears, the OT frequently depicts God as commanding and then helping to carry out the annihilation of Israel's enemies. He destroyed the Egyptians at the Red Sea (Ex 14) and leveled Jericho (Jsh 6). This clarifies David's boasts (v v 37–38, 42). See p 879.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 18:43 *people*. Nations surrounding Israel.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 18:44 *foreigners*. Including the Philistines, whose defeat at David's hand is related in 2Sm 21:15–22.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 18:46 *The* LORD *lives*. Canaanites similarly asserted that "Baal lives," yet only the Lord could make good on the claim. His repeated acts of salvation prove this.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 18:47 *vengeance*. Typically includes ideas of spitefulness and hard-heartedness. When the Lord gives vengeance, however, He restores, turns injustice into peace, and so moves us to rejoice. See p 879.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 18:48 *man of violence*. Probably Saul.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 18:49 *among the nations*. Psalmist declares God's deliverance before all people. The Gospel is always universal in scope. This song is also our song, to be prayed by all believers.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 18:50 *anointed … offspring forever*. According to the covenant given by the Lord to David in 2Sm 7, one of his descendants would sit on the throne forever. David's greater Son, Jesus Christ, fulfills this promise. "Of the increase of His government and of peace there will be no end" (Is 9:7).

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 18** David exults, "The LORD … is worthy to be praised" (v 3). This truth makes our failures to render Him thanks and praise a grievous affront. In this psalm, David recounts a time when the very cords of death were dragging him down into the abyss. The deliverance God provided him reminds us of our own victory over the grave, achieved for us by the risen Lord Jesus. • Grant me Your grace, Lord Jesus, that I fervently sing the praises of what You have done and make Your name known to all people. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 19** Luth: "A prophecy. It speaks of how the Gospel would spread to all the world, as far as the heavens extend. Day and night it would be spread, not only in Hebrew but in all languages" (*PIML*, p 27). *choirmaster*. See p 993.

Format: V v 1–6, the heavens declare God's glory; v v 7–11, the Lord's Word is rewarding; v v 12–13, deliverance from error; v 14, prayer of meditation.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 19:1 *heavens declare … sky above proclaims*. Theme of first major portion (v v 1–6): creation bears witness to God and, in its own way, sets forth His praise.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 19:2 *Day to day pours out speech*. Each new day effectively bears witness to God's creative power and providential care.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 19:3–4 Difficult poetry. The testimony and praise borne by the heavens are both unmistakable and universal.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 19:4–6 Psalmist gets specific about how the heavens declare God's glory. The sun daily runs its course through the firmament, giving life and heat to the entire world. In contrast to the surrounding pagan religions, which worshiped the sun as a deity, the Israelite faith understood it to be a creation that fulfilled its Creator's bidding. *like a bridegroom leaving his chamber*. A wedding took place under a special canopy. See pp 54–55. God, like a father, sets up such a canopy for the sun. The sun emerges each day as joyful as a new husband.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 19:7–9 *law … testimony … precepts … commandment … fear … rules*. Synonymous terms and parallel thoughts. The psalmist repeatedly echoes his praise of God's perfect Word. See p 971.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 19:7 *The law of the* LORD *is perfect*. His Law completely recounts what the Lord has done to redeem His people. See note, 12:6. Bern: "[The Law] alone which can turn away the mind from the love of itself and of the world and direct it towards God. Neither fear nor selfish love converts the soul. They change sometimes the outward appearance or the actions, but never affect the heart" (*SLSB*, p 196).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 19:10–11 The culmination of this psalm's second major section. *honeycomb*. A delicacy. *warned*. Hbr *zahab*, "shining." Light could guide or warn the viewer away from danger. God's Word instructs us and reminds us of the promised rewards for faithfulness. *reward*. Or, "consequence."

PSALMS—NOTE ON 19:12–13 Confession of unworthiness and plea for God's grace. "Our churches teach that private Absolution should be retained in the churches, although listing all sins is not necessary for Confession. For, according to the Psalm, it is impossible. 'Who can discern his errors?'" (AC XI 1–2). "Original sin is not a minor corruption. It is so deep a

corruption of human nature that nothing healthy or uncorrupt remains in man's body or soul, in his inward or outward powers [Romans 3:10–12]. As the Church sings: Through Adam's fall is all corrupt, Nature and essence human. This damage cannot be fully described. It cannot be understood by reason, but only from God's Word" (FC Ep I 8–9). *presumptuous sins*. Sins that result from unbridled pride. In keeping with his plea for grace, the psalmist also asks for humility.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 19:14 *acceptable in Your sight*. Connected to the foregoing confession and pleas for God's grace. Apart from God's grace, nothing can find favor with Him. *redeemer*. See "redeem," p 843.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 19** The heavens continually declare God's praise, and the forces of nature daily show forth His glory as they faithfully carry out the duties He has assigned them. Too bad we so often fail in the fulfillment of our divinely appointed tasks. Marvelous as the heavens are, and eloquent as nature's testimony to the greatness of the Creator, God's forgiveness and grace as revealed in His Word are even more glorious. • "O LORD, my rock and my redeemer: Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight" (v 14); through Christ Jesus. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 20** Possibly an antiphonal prayer offered before King David led his troops into battle. Likely used in times of peace as well, just as the British regularly sing "God Save the Queen." *choirmaster*. See p 993.

Format: V v 1–3, blessing in the Lord's name; v v 4–5, hope for answered prayer; v v 6–8, trust in the Lord's name; v 9, a prayer for the king.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 20:1–5 *you*. Directed to Israel's king, the current monarch.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 20:1 *name … protect*. See p 843. The Lord's name was placed on His people (Nu 6:22–27). Since they belong to Him, He will protect them.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 20:2 *sanctuary … Zion!* The tabernacle was God's dwelling place on earth and the place from which God's blessings issued forth. David moved it to Mount Zion. Cf 2Sm 6.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 20:3 *offerings … burnt sacrifices!* As the OT attests elsewhere, special sacrifices (1Sm 7:7–11; 13:7–13) and prayers (1Ki 8:44–

45) were frequently offered before Israel's troops waged war. *Selah*. See p 993.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 20:4 *desire … plans!* Strategies in the upcoming struggle.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 20:5 *banners!* To set up one's banner means to prevail in battle. Depictions of troops raising their flags are modern examples of this metaphor.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 20:6 *Lord saves His anointed*. The king speaks about himself. See note, 2:2.*right hand*. See p 843.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 20:7 *chariots … horses*. Cutting-edge military equipment possessed by the Philistines. See note, 1Sm 13:5. *we trust in the name*. Through prayer, the faithful place their trust in the Lord and His reputation as a warrior.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 20:8 *They collapse and fall*. End of those who place their hope in horses and chariots.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 20:9 *He*. The Lord alone is able to hear and save.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 20** The people desire God's blessing for their king as he prepares to lead them into battle. In modern developed countries we are easily tempted to place our confidence in certain leaders and technological wonders rather than in God. Doing so, however, is little more than old-fashioned idolatry. When we humbly pray for the authorities God has placed over us, He unfailingly answers and acts on our behalf in accord with His good and gracious will. • Guide and direct our rulers, O King of kings and Lord of lords, so that they ever acknowledge You rather than trust in their earthly might. Lead us in the way of righteousness and peace. Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 21** Luth: "A prophecy of the kingdom of Christ, the kingdom which is and remains eternally and spiritually before God" (*PIML*, p 29). *choirmaster*. See p 993.

Format: V v 1–2, the king rejoices; v v 3–7, blessings for the king; v v 8–12, destruction for his enemies; v 13, the Lord's power.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 21:1 *strength … salvation*. Twin motives for the king's joy; leading themes of the psalm.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 21:2 The king has received everything he asked for and could have hoped for. *Selah*. See p 993.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 21:3 *You meet him*. Often refers to the access granted through prayer and worship at the tabernacle or temple.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 21:4 *asked life*. David sought God's deliverance from Saul and other enemies.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 21:5 *glory*. Not the result of the king's efforts, but honor the Lord has graciously bestowed on him.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 21:6 *blessed forever*. Cf v 4; the blessings pertain to eternal life. *joy of Your presence*. One of the greatest blessings of heaven, of course, is basking in the fullness of God's presence (cf Rv 21:3). See p 843.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 21:7 *not be moved*. The result of trusting steadfastly in the Lord is that one cannot be so much as shaken, let alone toppled over.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 21:8–12 Psalm shifts from addressing God to addressing the king. Series of encouragements are spoken directly to the king.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 21:9 *blazing oven*. Those who set themselves against the Lord's anointed king will get burned (cf Heb 12:29).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 21:10 *destroy their descendants*. Passages such as this raise ethical concerns. The reason for a take-no-prisoners approach was to keep idolatrous Canaanite ways from infecting God's people. God commanded that the Israelites utterly destroy the Canaanites when they took possession of the Promised Land (Dt 20:16–18). See p 879.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 21:13 Cf v 1.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 21** This psalm not only offers thanks to God for Israel's king (v v 1–7) but also encourages him with promises of the Lord's blessing (v v 8–12). Part of our Christian responsibility, as this psalm and St Paul remind us, is to offer thanksgiving and petitions on behalf of our ruling authorities. Failing to do so is an act of ingratitude. The Scriptures testify throughout that God establishes and uses the various governments of the world not only to serve His people's earthly needs, but even to further the spread of the Gospel. • "God bless our native land; Firm may she ever stand Through storm and night…. Thou who art ever nigh, Guarding with watchful eye, To Thee aloud we cry: God save the state!" Amen. (*LSB* 965:1–2)
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 22** Just: "The whole Psalm refers … to Christ" (*ANF* 1:248). *choirmaster*. See p 993. *The Doe of the Dawn*. Possibly the name of the tune that accompanied this text.

Format: V v 1–2, no answer or rest; v v 3–5, our fathers trusted You; v v 6–8, scorned and despised; v v 9–11, trust from birth; v v 12–13, surrounded by bulls; v v 14–15, strength is gone; v v 16–18,

encircled by dogs; v v 19–21, prayer for rescue; v v 22–24, encouragement to praise the Lord; v v 25–26, praise in the congregation; v v 27–28, the Lord rules all nations; v v 29–31, all shall serve Him.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 22:1 *forsaken*. Psalm expresses profound loneliness: God seems completely absent. Jesus quoted from this verse on the cross (Mt 27:46; Mk 15:34), as He paid the penalty of human sin. Ter: "If you shall still seek for predictions of the Lord's cross, [this] Psalm will at length be able to satisfy you, containing as it does the whole passion of Christ" (*ANF* 3:166). Mel: "This … describes His obedience at the time when God poured out His wrath upon the Son against the sins of the human race…. He willingly assumed these infirmities for us in order that He might become the sacrifice" (Chem, *LTh* 1:89). *far from saving*. God is omnipresent, but suffering makes relief seem impossibly distant.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 22:3 *holy*. Despite the questions and concerns raised in v v 1–2, the speaker knows that God is holy and above reproach. He is not the source of these problems. *enthroned on the praises*. In the tabernacle, God was enthroned over the ark of the covenant, flanked by cherubim. The praises of His people testify to His identity. See diagrams, pp 139, 541, 842.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 22:4 *You delivered them*. God delivered Israel from oppression, particularly in the exodus. David asks God to deliver him also. See p 842.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 22:6 Contrast with v v 3–5. *worm*. The lowest, most helpless creature, held in contempt. The Messiah was despised by many who saw Him (Is 53).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 22:7 *mock*. Vividly fulfilled at Jesus' crucifixion (Lk 23:35–37). *make mouths*. Others look at him with their mouths hanging open in disgust or mockery.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 22:8 *he delights in Him!* The sufferer trusts God.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 22:9 *took me*. Safely brought me through childbirth. *trust You*. From infancy, the speaker has had God's gift of faith. As a baby is loved and fed by its mother and trusts her, so God's child continually receives His blessings and responds in faith. Cf 8:2.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 22:10 *cast from my birth … my God*. Throughout his life, David was utterly reliant on God. Chem: "The making by God

applies not only to the raw material, the dust of the ground but also to the procreation of men of all time" (*LTh* 1:169).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 22:12 *bulls*. The sufferer feels alone even though surrounded by others. He compares the people to bulls, ready to gore or crush their victim. *Bashan*. Grazing area east of the Sea of Chinnereth, famous for producing large bulls. See color map 2.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 22:14 *poured out*. The exhausted sufferer can no more hold himself up than water can hold a specific shape.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 22:15 *dust of death*. He is nearly dead and ready to be buried. Humanity, created of dust, will return to dust at death (Gn 3:19).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 22:16 *dogs*. The oppressors, earlier compared to bulls (v 12), are likened to a pack of wild dogs, attacking a helpless victim. *pierced*. As dogs bite the limbs of their victim, so evildoers have wounded the sufferer. These verses find their highest fulfillment in Jesus' crucifixion.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 22:17 *count all my bones*. The speaker, deprived of food, is in a pitiful, emaciated state. On the cross, Jesus' body was stretched out, making His bones easy to discern.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 22:18 *cast lots*. They randomly chose someone to receive Jesus' clothing. John cites this verse as a fulfilled prophecy when the soldiers cast lots for Jesus' clothing (Jn 19:24).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 22:19–21 The focus turns from the oppressors to God, his only hope. Just: "The remainder of the Psalm makes it manifest that He knew His Father would grant to Him all things which He asked, and would raise Him from the dead" (*ANF* 1:252).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 22:19 *my help*. God Himself.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 22:21 *wild oxen!* Again, his enemies are compared to wild beasts. Here they are oxen, ready to gore their victim.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 22:22 *brothers … congregation*. God's deliverance moves believers to worship. Heb 2:12–13 applies this verse to Jesus and identifies us as these brothers.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 22:23 *you … offspring … offspring*. Three parallel phrases declare that all of God's people should praise Him. *fear the* LORD. See p 842.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 22:24 *afflicted*. God notices and responds to all human needs (cf v 26). This applies to Christ, who was afflicted by God (Is 53:4).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 22:25 *great congregation*. God's people gathered for worship at the tabernacle. God's deliverance is cause for worship. *vows*. Cf v 22. He repeats his promise, confident in the Lord's deliverance. See p 842.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 22:26 *afflicted*. A proverb. God delivers His people, and they should respond in worship. *eat*. Response to God's blessings could include a peace offering. Cf Lv 3; 7:15.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 22:27 *ends of the earth*. Christ's Great Commission foreshadowed (Mt 28:18–20). *turn*. See p 1080. *all the families of the nations shall worship*. Not every person will come to faith, but the Gospel will spread to all nations.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 22:29 *eat and worship*. People from all nations will join in the worship depicted in v 26. *down to the dust … the one*. All mortals, anyone subject to death.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 22:30–31 *it … it*. God's great deliverance will not be forgotten. He has brought deliverance in countless ways, but most wonderfully in Christ's crucifixion and resurrection.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 22** Facing great opposition, the psalmist initially feels that God has forsaken him and is ignoring his prayers. After remembering God's faithfulness and deliverance, he believes that God will deliver him and commits himself to telling that message to others. We, too, may feel alone and forsaken by God. Truly we deserve to be forsaken by Him because of our sinfulness. But, as this psalm foretells, God Himself came to be our Redeemer. While many human beings have shared these feelings, this psalm finds its greatest fulfillment in Jesus Christ, who spoke it from the cross (Mt 27:46). Christ truly was forsaken by His Father and died alone so that we could be reconciled to our God. We are never alone because our crucified, resurrected Savior is with us. • Loving Savior, Your death and resurrection have made us Your people. Lead us to proclaim Your constant care. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 23** Luth: "A psalm of thanks in which a Christian heart praises and thanks God for teaching him and keeping him on the right way, comforting and protecting him in every danger through His holy Word" (*PIML*, p 32).

Format: V v 1–3, the Lord leads; v 4, the Lord is present; v v 5–6, the Lord provides forever.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 23:1 *shepherd*. Common term describing kings in Near Eastern culture. As a shepherd cares for all the needs of his flock, God cares for every human need: physical, emotional, and spiritual. *not want*. This does not mean that he has no desires; rather, all of his needs will be met. A proper host supplies the basics: food, drink, and protection. Chrys: "This is great wealth, this is treasure. If we have the fear of God, we want nothing; if we have not this, though we have royalty itself, we are the poorest of all men" (*NPNF*1 13:197).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 23:2 *pastures*. God provides abundantly and daily. "The Sacrament is given as a daily pasture and sustenance, that faith may refresh and strengthen itself so that it will not fall back in such a battle, but become ever stronger and stronger. The new life must be guided so that it continually increases and progresses" (LC V 24–25). *still waters*. Sheep cannot safely drink from swift streams; they need quiet pools. God not only gives us what we need, but He also gives it to us in the best possible way.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 23:3 *restores*. A shepherd protected his sheep and kept them alive by his care. The Good Shepherd does even more. He cares for every human need. Ultimately, Christ alone restores our soul as He

sacrifices His life for His sheep (Jn 10:11). *paths of righteousness*. Or, "the right path." See p 843. Shepherds lead sheep along safe paths, to the proper destination. Jesus Himself is the way, the righteous path (Jn 14:6).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 23:4 *valley of the shadow of death*. Or, "very deep shadow of death." Even in life's most frightening situations, we can be confident of God's guiding presence. Indeed, when God is with us, the valley of the shadow of death is one of the "paths of righteousness." *with me*. The Good Shepherd does not send His sheep into places He will not go; He leads and is with us always (Mt 28:20). *rod*. A club c 2 ft long. *staff*. A long, straight walking stick used to guide the sheep and pull down leafy branches for them.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 23:5 *prepare a table*. Emblem of hospitality and trust. In Christ, God gives us not only ordinary food but also the gift of Christ's body and blood in the Lord's Supper. *presence of my enemies*. David, like all of God's people, experienced God's providential care even when facing adversity. *anoint*. A banquet guest might be given oil to put on his head as a sign of hospitality. The oil acted like lotion, soothing the skin. Shepherds carried such oil in cattle- or ram-horn containers.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 23:6 *follow me*. God does not give His blessings once; His goodness and mercy are continually given to His children. *in the house of the* LORD *forever*. More than worship in the tabernacle. God's people not only know His blessings in this life but will live with Him in heaven forever.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 23** In faith, David declares that since Yahweh is his shepherd, he "shall not want" (v 1). Our Good Shepherd lovingly provides everything that we need in this life, but we often fail to recognize that these gifts come from Him. Instead, we focus on things that we want, but do not need. How wonderful that our Shepherd does not withhold His blessings from us, but still cares for these needs and more: He gives us His own Son! • Good Shepherd, open our eyes to see Your blessing. Open our ears to hear Your voice. Open our hearts that we may love You. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 24** This psalm, which may have been written for the return of the ark of the covenant to the tabernacle (2Sm 6:12–15) calls God's people to worship, noting His creation and glory.

Format: V v 1–2, the earth is the Lord's; v v 3–6, those who seek the Lord; v v 7–10, the King of glory enters.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 24:1 *the LORD's*. All creation belongs to God the Creator.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 24:2 *upon the seas*. On the third day of creation, God separated the dry land from the sea (Gn 1:9–10; 2Pt 3:5). The order He gave the earth continues to this day.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 24:3 *hill of the LORD*. Mount Zion, with its focal point, the tabernacle. See Ps 48 intro. These verses may have been responsively spoken by worshipers going to the temple. See p 959.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 24:4 *clean hands … pure heart*. By joining an external part (hands) with an internal part (heart), David asserts that both ritual and moral purity are important. The OT ceremonial law was fulfilled by Christ and no longer binds us. Our only purity is given to us by Christ. *lift up his soul*. An expression meaning to trust, dedicate your life, or worship something. The true worshiper lifts his soul to God alone (25:1).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 24:5 *receive blessing … righteousness*. God's children are not righteous by their own works; God declares them righteous for the sake of Christ (Gal 3:6).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 24:6 *seek Him*. See p 843. *Selah*. See p 993.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 24:7–10 Likely sung responsively by worshipers, intensifying as they repeat their cry for the gates to open. The response identifies the Lord three times (v v 8, 10), implying the triune nature of God. Cf Nu 6:24–26.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 24:7 *gates*. Worshipers ascending to the tabernacle reach Jerusalem's gates and call for them to open before God. David personifies the gates, showing that it is an honor to be in God's presence. If the gates are to lift up their heads in honor, how much more should God's people rejoice in His gracious presence.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 24:10 *King of glory?* Bern: "The Firstbegotten from the dead, He who opened to believers the kingdom of Heaven, the Lamb of the tribe of Judah, who opens and no more shuts, at whose entrance with complete authority [this song] was sung by the heavenly powers" (*SLSB*, p 170).
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 24** Those who worship the Lord need "clean hands and a pure heart" (v 4). Sinful human beings are neither prepared nor worthy to be in God's presence or worship Him. Yet God forgives us, covers us with Christ's righteousness, and enables us to worship Him. This is why worship begins with Confession of sins and Absolution. By God's

grace, we worship with clean hands and a pure heart. • Merciful Lord, I confess all my sins to You, trusting in Your promises. Forgive me, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 25** Acrostic psalm; see pp 777–78.

Format: V v 1–3, prayer for victory; v v 4–5, prayer for teaching; v v 6–7, appeal to God's memory; v v 8–10, the Lord instructs sinners; v v 11–15, those who fear the Lord; v v 16–18, prayer for forgiveness; v v 19–21, prayer for deliverance; v 22, prayer for redemption.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 25:1 *lift up*. Gesture of offering. David's life is dedicated to God.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 25:3 *wait*. Though God's child requests many things from God in prayer, God acts in His own time. David waits for God to answer, but he has confident hope.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 25:4 *Your ways*. See p 844.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 25:6 *mercy … steadfast love*. See pp 842–43.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 25:7 *sins of my youth*. David does not excuse past sins or claim that they were not sinful, nor does he teach an age of accountability. Rather, he confesses that sin has affected his entire life. All sins require God's forgiveness.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 25:8–9 God does not require humans to earn His forgiveness or gifts. He teaches sinners and leads the humble (those not esteemed by the world).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 25:10 *keep His covenant*. Those who live in the Lord's covenant (by faith) receive the blessings of God's steadfast love and faithfulness. Faith does not earn these blessings, but receives them.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 25:11 *For Your name's sake*. See p 842.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 25:13 *inherit the land*. God once promised the land of Israel to His people if they kept the covenant. Part of their responsibility was to teach His commands to their children (Dt 6:7). When the children lived in the covenant, they would continue to possess the land. See "portion," p 7.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 25:14 *friendship*. Those who have faith live in a close, personal relationship with God.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 25:15 *the net*. A poetic description of David's affliction by his enemies. He depicts himself as a helpless animal, trapped in a net.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 25:18 *forgive all my sins*. V v 16–20 summarize David's afflictions. His problems are not all external. He is a sinner who deserves some of these calamities. He rightly pleads for God's forgiveness.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 25:21 *May integrity and uprightness preserve me*. Having already confessed his sinfulness and being confident in God's grace, David prays for God's help that he may have integrity and be upright.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 25:22 *Redeem*. See p 843. David's personal plea is expanded to include the whole nation.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 25** David prays, "For You I wait all the day long" (v 5). God promises to answer prayer, but we may be impatient or tempted to question His answers. Even when our faithfulness fails, God is faithful. He hears our prayers and truly acts for our good. In faith, we patiently wait for Him. • Almighty God, give us the trust and patience to wait for You and the faith to believe Your promises. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 26** The plea of a man who has been falsely accused of wrongdoing. This psalm may have been sung by worshipers as they entered the temple gates.

Format: V v 1–3, a prayer for vindication; v v 4–5, separated from the wicked; v v 6–7, at the Lord's altar; v v 8–10, a prayer for distinction from the wicked; v v 11–12, determination to bless the Lord.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 26:1 *Vindicate*. Facing false accusations, David calls for God's perfect examination that will exonerate him. *walked in my integrity*. He has not been deceitful or hypocritical.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 26:2 God's perfect knowledge is not limited to external behavior. He knows our hearts, thoughts, and intentions. Only He truly knows us.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 26:5 *assembly of evildoers*. Contrasting David's desire to worship in the "great assembly" (v 12), he rejects the "assembly of evildoers," those who reject God. See note, 1:1.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 26:6 *wash*. Washing hands could indicate innocence (Mt 27:24) or ceremonial cleanness (Ex 30:17–21). Either way, David again asserts the falsehood of the charges against him. *Your altar*. A person could approach God's altar only through the forgiveness of sins.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 26:7 *telling*. Worship included remembrance and celebration of God's saving acts. David not only goes to the tabernacle, but

he also proclaims the Lord's work.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 26:8 *habitation*. David loves being in God's house, where he finds sanctuary, protection, and God's loving presence. *glory dwells*. He doesn't love the tabernacle for its beauty, but because God promised to be there. John says that Christ is God's tabernacle, and we see God's glory in Him (Jn 1:14).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 26:12 *great assembly*. See "great congregation," p 842. Aug: "I will not hide Your blessing, O Lord, from those whom You have called; for next to the love of You I join the love of my neighbor" (*NPNF*1 8:64). *bless the* LORD. See p 842.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 26** In faith, David worships, proclaiming God's wondrous deeds. He loves worship and being in God's presence (v 8). In worship, we sometimes focus on ourselves instead of on God. God calls us to repentance so that He may bless us and forgive us. Strengthened in faith, we respond by telling others of the great things He has done. • Blessed Trinity, forgive us, and empower us to worship You in faith and joy. Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 27** Note the change of mood: the first six verses express David's confidence in God; v v 7–13 are a prayer for His help, forgiveness, and guidance. This structure may indicate that this psalm was used as part of the tabernacle liturgy. If so, a sacrifice and prayer may have been offered after v 6.

Format: V 1, fearless with the Lord; v 2, foes fall; v 3, confident; v 4, a prayer to dwell in the Lord's house; v 5, the Lord's protection; v 6, sacrifices of joy; v v 7–10, a prayer for the Lord to answer; v v 11–12, a prayer for guidance; v v 13–14, wait for the Lord.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 27:1 *light*. Reveals things for what they are, dispelling the darkness of sin, evil, or despair. Jesus is the "light of the world" (Jn 8:12). Aug: "The Lord is … my light, for He removes my ignorance; my salvation, for He takes away my infirmity" (*NPNF*1 3:264). *stronghold*. Offering safety and protection. With God's protection, we have nothing to fear. See note, 18:2.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 27:2 *eat up my flesh*. Figure of speech for giving false witness. Gossip and lies are destructive.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 27:3 *confident*. In faith, David is not anxious about the outcome of a battle or any other crisis.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 27:4 *seek*. See p 843. *dwell in the house of the* LORD. David is not asking to become a priest; he wants to enjoy God's presence throughout his life. See "presence," p 843. *beauty of the* LORD. As sinners, we cannot physically see God in worship, but we recognize God's goodness and character. God's children who come in faith do not find a wrathful, terrifying God. God is beautiful to those who receive the Gospel. *inquire*. To seek God's counsel by coming to the tabernacle. May also be translated "meditate," in which case David is restating his desire to worship. *temple*. Tabernacle. See note, 5:7.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 27:5 *His shelter … His tent*. The tabernacle, God's dwelling place. God offers safety and protection to those who come into His home.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 27:6 *head shall be lifted up*. Depicting victory. His enemies will be brought low, but he will be exalted in honor. He can hold his head up high. *His tent*. See note, v 5. *shouts of joy*. He will worship not from obligation but in response to God's gifts. David will add his own joyful shouts and music to the sacrifices offered.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 27:8 *Seek My face*. See p 843.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 27:10 Likely a hypothetical statement, since there is no biblical record of David's parents forsaking him. Even if his family abandoned him, God would remain faithful.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 27:12 David does not specifically identify these enemies. May refer to a specific crisis or, in general terms, to those who opposed his kingship.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 27:13 *land of the living!* Although it's possible to see this as a reference to heaven, more likely it affirms God's action in this world. David saw God's protection and blessing in this life.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 27:14 *wait*. See note, 25:3.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 27** David recognizes that when the Lord is on his side, he has nothing to fear. Human beings are prone to fearful responses. We worry about problems in this life, acting as if we face them alone. Yet God is our light and our salvation. Since He has redeemed us, we have nothing to fear. "If God is for us, who can be against us?" (Rm 8:31). • O Christ, my light and my salvation, comfort me and strengthen my faith. Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 28** A prayer for help, followed by words of praise in anticipation of God's answer. It may come from the time when Absalom

rebelled against David. David is troubled by his enemies' duplicity and lack of faith, fearing for his life (v 1). These words also apply to other trying times. Faced with affliction, we rely on God's help and anticipate His blessing.

Format: V v 1–2, a prayer to be heard; v v 3–5, repay the evil; v v 6–7, the Lord's help; v v 8–9, save Your people.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 28:1 *rock*. See p 843. *pit*. The grave. He fears for his life. See p 792.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 28:2 *lift up my hands*. Gesture of worship. See p 1276. *Your most holy sanctuary*. Place where God has promised to be present.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 28:3 *speak peace*. David's enemies are deceitful and hypocritical. They speak favorably, but secretly plot evil.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 28:5 David may be specifically referring to their attack on the monarchy God established, but this equally applies to any failure to recognize God's work. *works … work of His hands*. David's enemies have done evil with their hands (v 4), but they do not see what God is doing.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 28:7 *strength … shield*. God provides help for offense (strength) and defense (shield) against David's enemies. David does not rely on his own power; his only hope is in the Lord's power and protection (cf v 8).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 28:8 *strength*. As God strengthened David, so He blesses all His people. *anointed*. As king, David was the Lord's anointed. Likewise, the nation has been anointed as a kingdom of priests (Ex 19:6). See note, 2:2.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 28:9 *shepherd and carry*. Cf Ps 23.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 28** Facing personal crisis, David realizes he is unable to protect and save himself. He needs God to be his strength and shield. As sinners, we cannot save ourselves. We recognize our helplessness and need for God's grace. Our Savior comes, giving us His strength and protecting us from our enemies by paying the penalty of our sins. • Lord Jesus, my strength and my shield, I trust in You. Be my shepherd and carry me forever. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 29** Luth: "A prophecy of the Gospel, that it shall resound with power in all the world…. He established the flood, Baptism, in which the old Adam is drowned and the new man arises" (*PIML*, p 38).

Format: V v 1–2, ascribe glory to the Lord; v v 3–4, the Lord's voice; v v 5–6, Lebanon's response; v v 7–8, the Lord's voice; v 9, others respond; v v 10–11, the Lord enthroned.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 29:2 *splendor of holiness*. As the priests in the tabernacle wore special vestments for worship, the angels are adorned with holiness.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 29:3–9 Luth: "People think: If I could hear God speaking in His own Person, I would run so fast to hear Him that my feet would bleed…. If in former times someone had said: I know of a place in the world where God speaks, and when you arrive there, you hear God Himself talking; and if I had come there, had seen a poor preacher baptize and preach, and people had said: This is the place; there God is speaking through the preacher: he is teaching God's Word—then I no doubt would have said: Ha! I have taken pains to come here, and I see only a minister! We should like to have God speak with us in His majesty; but I advise you: Do not go there. So experience certainly teaches. If He were to speak in His majesty, you would see what a running would begin, as there at Mount Sinai, where, after all, only the angels spoke; yet the mountain smoked and trembled. But now you have the Word of God in church, in books, in your home; and this is as certainly God's Word as if God Himself were speaking" (*WLS* § 4719).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 29:3 *voice of the* LORD. Exalts the glory of God's voice. He who called the universe into being speaks, and it is done (cf Jn 1:1). *over the waters*. Cf Gn 1:2. *thunders*. Human beings cannot adequately describe the power and wonder of God's voice. Here it is compared to thunder, a comparison repeated in Jn 12:29.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 29:5 *cedars*. Lebanon was famous for its tall, strong cedar trees. Canaanite worship honored such trees. With a word, the Lord breaks the trees.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 29:6 *Lebanon*. Mountain range and surrounding region in Syria, north of Israel. See color map 2. *skip*. The formidable mountains are likened to calves that flee from loud noises. *Sirion*. Hermon, the tallest mountain in Syria (Dt 3:9).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 29:7 *flashes*. God's voice, already compared to thunder, is depicted as lightning bolts.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 29:8 *Kadesh*. Likely refers to the desert that surrounds Mount Sinai. God's voice is heard far to the north and far to the

south of Israel.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 29:9 *deer give birth*. Possibly the sound of God's voice frightens the deer, causing them to give birth early. However, the consonants in "deer" are the same as those in "oaks" (see ESV note); this reading continues the idea that God's voice shakes the trees. *Glory*. The angels praise God (v v 1–2). Likewise, nature declares His glory. If heaven and earth praise God, His people should also declare His glory.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 29:10 *enthroned over the flood*. God is greater than the greatest natural powers. Here David remembers the great flood (Gn 6–8), through which God saved Noah and his family.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 29** God's power is a terrifying thing. The sound of His voice brings forth creation, shakes the mountains and trees, and unleashes the great flood that destroyed the earth. We sinners might be destroyed by the power of His holy, powerful voice. Yet "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (Jn 1:14). God came to us in Jesus to speak His love and grace. In Baptism, flood and voice combine to cleanse us (this psalm was traditionally used at Baptisms). Hearing His gracious voice, we join heaven and earth in praise. • O Word of God, You became flesh to be our Savior. Let us hear Your powerful voice. Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 30** In 2Sm 24 and 1Ch 21, David took a census of all men capable of fighting, indicating a reliance on human power over God's strength. As a consequence for this rebellion, a plague came on Israel, and 70,000 men died. In repentance, David bought land, built an altar, and offered a sacrifice to the Lord. This psalm was likely written to dedicate this land, the place where God's temple would later be built. *of the temple*. Lit, "for the house."

Format: V v 1–3, restored by the Lord; v v 4–5, praiseworthy favor; v v 6–7, strength in His favor; v v 8–10, appeal for help; v v 11–12, joy and thanks.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 30:1 *drawn me up*. As water from a well, David has been lifted up from death and despair.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 30:2 *healed me*. Physical healing (elsewhere used for salvation).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 30:3 *Sheol*. See p 792. *pit*. The grave or death. David did not literally die but feared for his life before God spared him.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 30:4 *saints*. See p 843. Holy ones. Saints are not holy because of their own righteousness but because God redeemed them

and declares them holy.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 30:5 *moment … lifetime*. This contrast beautifully portrays the distinction between the Law and the Gospel. God rightly condemns and punishes sin, but because of Christ's work, His Gospel and favor continue forever. The Gospel predominates. *favor*. See p 6.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 30:6 *moved*. David confesses that he has had sinful confidence in his wealth.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 30:7 *mountain*. David's kingdom, centered in Jerusalem, which was built on mountains. The mountain contrasts with the pit (v 3). *hid*. God turned His face, His blessing, away from David for a time.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 30:9 *pit*. See note, v 3. David may still usefully serve God and others if he does not die.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 30:10 *helper!* Direct, personal plea for assistance. David has turned from self-reliance to trust in God.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 30:11 Complete change of attitude from sorrow to joy. *dancing*. Though Egyptians mourned through dance at funerals, Israelites danced for joyous occasions and in praise to God (cf Ex 15:20; 2Sm 6:14). See p 959. *sackcloth*. Rough clothing worn in mourning and humility. See note, Jb 16:15.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 30:12 *my glory*. Poetic way of describing David's soul—the most glorious part of himself.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 30** David summarizes his feelings and God's response in v 5. Sorrowful times in life are sometimes caused by things outside of our control and sometimes by our own sins. Trusting in God's deliverance, David knows that the sorrow he feels will be replaced with joy as God comforts him. We, too, are confident in God's promise to comfort us and dry our tears (Rv 7:17). • O God, comfort me with Your presence, and fill me with joy. Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 31** Perhaps written when Saul's forces were pursuing David (e.g., 1Sm 23). *choirmaster*. See p 993.

Format: V v 1–2, prayer for rescue; v v 3–5, confession of God's care; v v 6–8, joy in God's rescue; v v 9–10, effects of iniquity; v v 11–13, adversaries; v v 14–18, prayer for rescue; v v 19–20, goodness stored up; v v 21–22, prayer under siege; v v 23–24, take courage.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 31:1 *in Your righteousness*. See p 843. Luth: "It does not say 'in my' but 'in thy righteousness,' that is, in the righteousness

of Christ my God which becomes ours through faith and by the grace and mercy of God" (AE 31:299).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 31:2 *rock of refuge*. See p 843; cf v 3.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 31:3 *for Your name's sake*. See p 842.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 31:4 *they*. Possibly the servants of Saul who sought to apprehend David in 1Sm 23.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 31:5 *commit my spirit*. His life is in God's hands. The speaker's suffering, and trust in God, came clearly into focus when Jesus spoke these words from the cross. "It is also useful that we form the habit of daily commending ourselves to God, with soul and body, wife, children, servants, and all that we have, against every need that may arise" (LC I 73). *redeemed*. See p 843. God's saving redemption puts the rest of life's challenges in perspective.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 31:6 *hate*. Rejection of idolatry, not seething hatred of other persons.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 31:7 *steadfast love*. See p 843.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 31:8 *broad place*. See note, 18:19.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 31:9 *eye is wasted*. Poetic description for the extent of his tears. We might say he "cried his eyes out."
PSALMS—NOTE ON 31:10 *because of my iniquity*. His own sin has contributed to his suffering.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 31:12 *forgotten*. Other people act as if he is dead, giving no thought to him or his condition. *a broken vessel*. Pots that broke during firing or during a fall were a disappointment. They might be further crushed for mortar or used to scrape what you would not touch with your hands (cf Jb 2:7–8).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 31:13 *hear the whispering of many*. Those who do remember him are secretly plotting against him. *they*. His enemies, likely Saul's forces.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 31:15 *My times are in Your hand*. God is in control every moment.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 31:16 *face shine*. See note, Nu 6:25.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 31:17 *Sheol*. See p 792.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 31:18 David does not curse his enemies, but prays that God will deal with their injustice and stop their lies.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 31:20 *cover of Your presence*. As God's presence protected Israel from the pursuing Egyptian army (Ex 14:19–20), so He

protected David. Similarly, Christ covers us with His justifying righteousness. *Your shelter*. The tabernacle, where God promised to be present, was a place of safety.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 31:21 *Blessed*. See p 842. *besieged city*. Cf 1Sm 23. After David delivered the city of Keilah from the Philistines, Saul attacked the city, hoping to capture him.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 31:22 Panic gives way to confidence from the Lord's faithfulness. See FC SD XI 74.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 31:23–24 Final word on God's faithfulness.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 31:23 *saints!* See p 843.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 31:24 *wait*. David applies his experiences to others. God was faithful to him; others who pray to God for deliverance should patiently wait for God to deliver them.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 31** David says that he hates those who trust in worthless idols; he trusts in the Lord (v 6). Too often, we devote our lives to worthless things and despise the things of God. Yet as God delivered David from his sin and enemies, He delivers us as well. Christ paid for our idolatry and indifference. His Spirit gives us the gift of faith so that we trust in the only true God. Now we join David in rejoicing in God's great salvation. • O triune God, strengthen my faith that I may worship You alone. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 32** Numbered with other penitential psalms (6; 38; 51; 102; 130; 143). *Maskil*. Penitential psalm of Confession and Absolution. Luther saw these psalms as instructive in the sense of wisdom and understanding within a spiritual and holy context over against a worldly context (cf 14:2; 53:2).

Format: V v 1–2, blessed in forgiveness; v v 3–4, wasting away; v 5, confession; v v 6–7, the Lord is a hiding place; v v 8–9, instruction; v v 10–11, proverbs of trust in the Lord.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 32:1 *Blessed*. See p 842. *covered*. Hbr *kasah*. God grants a verdict of not guilty in light of true confession (cf LC III 92). Christ's very blood (cf Heb 9:13–14) covers and cleanses us from all our sin. Aug: "Not by the merits of works, but by the grace of God, man is delivered, confessing his sins" (*NPNF*1 8:70). Luth: "The salvation of Christ is called 'salvations' and 'mercies' (cf. Ps. 28:8; 17:7; 25:6), because it saves many and ascribes a manifold salvation to all" (AE 10:146).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 32:2 *no iniquity*. When sin is confessed and Absolution occurs for the sake of Christ, God does not hold that sin against the penitent sinner. *no deceit*. Forgiven by God, the believer sincerely acknowledges his sin and does not try to excuse or cover it up. Aug: "Nor has he in his mouth boastings of righteousness, when his conscience is full of sins" (*NPNF*1 8:70).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 32:3–7 David speaks to God in the presence of the assembly; his discourse is for their benefit as well (cf Ap V 42).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 32:3 *kept silent … wasted away*. Luth: "For one who keeps silent (that is, who does not confess), his bones quickly grow old, that is, his powers in which he formerly stood in good things are always reduced more and more by sins" (AE 10:147).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 32:4 *hand was heavy upon me*. He presses us toward contrition, confession, and repentance (cf Rm 7). *Selah*. See p 993.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 32:5 *acknowledged … did not cover*. Cf v 1. *confess*. "Confession is mentioned at different times in the Psalms…. Such confession of sin, which is made to God, is contrition in itself. When confession is made to God, it must be made with the heart, not only with the voice, like actors on the stage. Confession is contrition in which, feeling God's anger, we confess that God is justly angry and that He cannot be reconciled by our works. Yet, we seek for mercy because of God's promise" (Ap XIIB 10). *Forgave*. Hbr *kasah*, "to cover up." When we intentionally cover our sin, it troubles both body and mind. When we confess our iniquity, God is faithful and just to forgive our sins (cf 51:1–2; Rm 4:7–8; 1Jn 1:8–9; see Ap XII 10; see also SC, Confession, p xl).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 32:6 "He shows that even saints ought to seek forgiveness of sins. They are more than blind who do not realize that wicked desires in the flesh are sins" (Ap V 47–48). *when You may be found*. Before the hour of judgment. See "seek," p 843. *great waters*. God may use extreme measures to disturb the routine of one's life in order to show His anger due to sin (cf 69:1–2; 144:7; Jb 7:12; Jer 5:22; 47:2). Aug: "Let none think, when the end has come suddenly, as in the days of Noah, that there remains a place of confession, whereby he may draw nigh unto God" (*NPNF*1 8:71).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 32:7 *hiding place … shouts of deliverance*. God takes David from seclusion to public acknowledgement from those who see God's work of salvation.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 32:8 *eye upon you*. Cf Lk 22:61. God graciously watches for the soul's welfare and its sinful desire to stray from Him.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 32:9 *bit and bridle*. Luth: "Through adversities they are drawn away from good times and are thus by scourge and chain led forcibly (as horses and mules are controlled by the bit) to faith and the church" (AE 10:149).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 32:10 *the wicked*. Impenitent and hardened hearts. They suffer because sin naturally brings sorrow.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 32:11 *righteous*. See p 843. *upright in heart!* The truly repentant confess their sins and, therefore, have every reason to be glad and rejoice in God's gifts of forgiveness, life, and salvation.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 32** Luth: "The beginning of this psalm teaches two things: first, that all are in sins [no one is righteous] and no one is blessed; second, that no one is capable of meriting the forgiveness of sin, but it is the Lord alone who forgives freely by not imputing [guilt]" (AE 10:147). Ps 32 also shows the physical, mental, and spiritual implications of being silent in sin. God calls us to confess our sins quickly with contrite hearts in order to receive Absolution. Only He can relieve the troubled heart. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1Jn 1:9). • Lord Jesus Christ, grant me the honesty to examine my life according to Your Ten Commandments. Show me my sin, to know and feel it in my heart and disdain it. Most of all, grant forgiveness by Your gracious hand. Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 33** Reference to a "new song" (v 3) suggests a national deliverance, such as Judah experienced in the time of Jehoshaphat (2Ch 20) or Hezekiah (2Ki 19); cf v v 10–11, 16–17. This is a liturgy of praise toward God, most likely accompanied by the voices of the Levitical choir (cf 1Ch 16:7–36; 25:1).

Format: V v 1–3, rejoice and praise; v v 4–5, the Lord's Word and work; v v 6–7, His Word and work in creation; v v 8–9, awe at His Word; v v 10–12, the Lord's counsel; v v 13–17, the Lord sees all; v v 18–19, the Lord sees those who fear Him; v v 20–22, hope in the Lord.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 33:1 *righteous! … the upright*. See p 843. God's people direct their very best praise to the Almighty for special as well as everyday reasons. Praise is always to be on our lips (cf 119:171; Eph 5:19). Luth: "Some *rejoice* in the Lord by taking pleasure in the blessings of

spiritual salvation. It is these the apostle encourages with the words (Phil. 4:4): 'Brethren, rejoice in the Lord, and again I say, rejoice'" (AE 10:152).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 33:2 *Give thanks*. Hbr *yadah*. See note, 106:6. *lyre … harp of ten strings!* See p 993.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 33:3 *new song*. See p 843. *loud shouts*. Jubilant character of praise.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 33:4 *word of the* LORD. His infallible and inerrant revelation (written or spoken) to all humankind that describes His divine attributes and His mighty works of creation, mercy, forgiveness, and salvation through His Son, Jesus Christ. See note, v 6. See also notes, 12:6; 19:7.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 33:5 *steadfast love*. See p 843.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 33:6 *word of the* LORD. The spoken Word of God brought into existence all things and sustains and governs all things. *by the breath*. God's Word creates the righteous and makes them strong, and by His Holy Spirit works saving faith. Chem: "The work of creation is proper to the Trinity or the Deity. Therefore it is attributed also to the Holy Spirit…. Therefore the Holy Spirit is truly God" (*LTh* 1:137). *host*. Stars of heaven.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 33:7 *sea as a heap*. Or, "wall." Shows the consummate ease of God Almighty (cf Gn 1:9–10; Jb 38:8–11; Pr 8:29; Jer 5:22).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 33:8 *fear the* LORD. See p 842. *inhabitants*. All are invited to praise God for His divine works. All—faithful and faithless, saint and sinner—receive God's creative gifts and sovereign rule.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 33:9 God's will and Word create all things. This moves souls to praise Him. Mel: "That things were created out of nothing is taught by this statement" (Chem, *LTh* 1:151).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 33:10 Aug: "[God brings down] them that seek not His Kingdom, but kingdoms of their own … them that covet earthly happiness … them that seek to rule over such peoples" (*NPNF*1 8:72).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 33:11 *counsel*. His ways and thoughts are higher and oppose the "counsel of the nations" (v 10).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 33:12 *nation … chosen as His heritage!* Israel is God's chosen people (cf Dt 9:29). See "portion," p 7.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 33:13–14 *looks down from heaven*. See note, Jb 22:12. Heaven is described as being above the earth and hell below, placed

in an earthly context for our understanding. Heaven and hell are, however, not specifically located according to earthly terms in Holy Scripture. Heaven is God's throne from which He orchestrates all things, sustains all things, and sees all who dwell upon the earth.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 33:15 *fashions the hearts*. Bestowing the powers of the mind and will. *observes*. He watches to see how they will use His gifts. Chem: "The providence of God includes both His care and His governance" (*LTh* 1:167).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 33:17 *war horse*. See note, Jb 39:19.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 33:18 *eye of the* LORD. Human attribute ascribed to God, who is Spirit.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 33:19 *famine*. When the threat of sudden death or disaster comes, the Lord delivers. When famine threatens others, He miraculously sustains His own people as He did Elijah. God gives the nourishment of His Word and the bread of everlasting truth.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 33:20–22 Three-verse response to praise. The king is the protector of the citizen and God is the protector of His chosen people, Israel (cf 84:11; 91:4; 115:9–11; Dt 33:29; Pr 30:5).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 33:20 *help*. See note, Gn 2:18.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 33:21 *His holy name*. Yahweh (Ex 3:14). See p 1227.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 33:22 *steadfast love*. See p 843.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 33** God's people are always to put their trust in Him alone and not in arms, generals, national defenses, and so on. Through His Word and Spirit, almighty God grants us faith in His Christ and His steadfast love. Thus, He gives us hope in our hearts and minds and certainty of His salvation in His Son, Jesus Christ. All praise, laud, and worship belong to our God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. • O Lord Jesus Christ, through Your precious blood You redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, and called me to be Your very own. Renew my heart in righteousness and holiness that I may praise and adore You. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 34** *he changed his behavior*. Cf 1Sm 21:10–15.

Format: V v 1–3, bless the Lord; v v 4–7, the Lord answers; v v 8–10, the Lord is good; v v 11–14, teaching the fear of the Lord; v v 15–18, the Lord hears and delivers; v v 19–22, the Lord redeems His servants.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 34:1 *bless the* LORD. See p 842. Aug: "When He gives them, bless; and when He takes them away, bless. For it is He who gives, it is He that takes away" (*NPNF*1 8:73).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 34:2 *boast in the* LORD. Boasting and humility are contrasted. The former is praise and rejoicing that outwardly proclaims God's gracious love and deeds toward His children. The psalmist emboldens the lowly.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 34:3 *magnify*. Lit, "make great" by praising. *with me … together!* Praise and worship in the congregation is much deeper and more meaningful than individual worship.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 34:4 *sought the* LORD. See "seek," p 843. Deliverance was sought from the Lord in prayer, and He answered that prayer. Aug: "Seek not from the Lord anything [else], but seek the Lord Himself, and He will hear you, and while you yet speak, He will say, 'Lo, here I am'" (*NPNF*1 8:74).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 34:5 *radiant*. Their faces will not be red with shame and embarrassment. God's children will have peaceful faces because they know that when they speak, God will listen and answer.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 34:6 *poor man*. David could not secure his salvation from Achish (cf 1Sm 21:10–12) but called upon the Lord, who delivered him from all his trouble. Like David, we depend on God for salvation from sin and death, both temporal and eternal.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 34:7 *angel of the* LORD. Hbr *mal'ak yahweh*, God's messenger sent to protect those who fear the Lord and to carry out His divine will on earth, namely, salvation (cf 35:5–6). Aug: "Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself is called in Prophecy, the Angel of the great Counsel, the Messenger of the great Counsel; so the Prophets called Him" (*NPNF*1 8:75). See p 1227.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 34:8–14 Note the series of 10 imperatives in this stanza, which invites the hearer to believe and trust in the Lord for salvation and all good things (referenced four times; v v 8, 10, 12, 14). A similar gracious exhortation is provided through the prophet Isaiah (55:1–3). The imperatives and promises combine to evoke faith, confidence, and good works. Cf Rm 10:8–13; 1Pt 3:8–12.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 34:8 *taste and see*. Perceive. Invitation for the saints to experience the Lord's trustworthiness. If you do not taste, you will not see.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 34:9 *fear the* LORD. See p 842. s*aints*. See p 843. *have no lack!* There will always be poverty, but in the grand scheme of God's creation and redemption, He allows none of His children to suffer want. See "Application," p 997.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 34:10 *young lions*. The strong and independent of a pride and cubs. Yet even they suffer hunger. *lack no good thing*. Chem: "God is daily at work in His world and embracing with His fatherly care especially those to whom He has given His Word" (*LTh* 1:158).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 34:11 Psalmist engages in teaching. See pp 995–98. *O children*. See note, Pr 1:8.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 34:12 *desires life and loves many days*. Life is meant to be full and rich and viewed as God's gift.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 34:13 *Keep your tongue from evil*. Aug: "Such are those men who would both do evil, and swear falsely, and speak blasphemy against God, and murmur, and defraud" (*NPNF*1 8:76).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 34:14 *seek peace and pursue it*. Not peace in the heart that he should seek from God, but as our Lord taught: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God" (Mt 5:9; cf Ps 37:37; 120:7; Pr 12:20; Zec 8:16–17, 19).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 34:15 *righteous*. See p 843.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 34:16 *face … against*. Turned with focused intention, in this case, to punish. When Jesus became sin in our stead on the cross, His heavenly Father turned His face away from Him so that He might bear our punishment and be our Savior.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 34:17 Aug: "Fear not: only do what He commands; and if He delivers you not bodily, He will deliver you spiritually" (*NPNF*1 8:77).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 34:18 *brokenhearted*. Christians are not excluded from disappointments, temptations to sin, and other experiences that can test one's faith or crush it. Yet the Lord is near, and He saves! Aug: "A great mystery, Brethren. God is above all: you raise yourself, and touch Him not: you humble yourself, and He descends to you" (*NPNF*1 8:77).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 34:19 *afflictions*. Hbr *ra'oth*, "evils." That evil befalls the ungodly is understood, and yet God's children suffer the same troubles. We are not isolated from the evils of sin in this broken world, but we are saved by grace through faith in Christ. The righteous, after many

tribulations, shall come to everlasting peace, where they will suffer no evil. See p 837.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 34:20 *keeps all his bones*. Specific example of God's care. See treatment of bones during the Passover meal and Jesus' crucifixion (Ex 12:46; Jn 19:36).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 34:21 *Affliction will slay the wicked*. Sin brings punishment and death as surely as gravity brings broken bones. If you defy God's created order, afflictions will follow.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 34:22 *redeems*. See p 843. Christ came to free us from the prison of sin, death, and the devil by means of His incarnation, sinless life, preaching, brutal cross, and glorious resurrection. *condemned*. People are conceived and born into sin and, as such, stand condemned at the moment of conception.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 34** The Lord turns His countenance of favor toward His children, saves them, and blesses them. The Lord turns His countenance away from the wicked and condemns them to eternal death, though His will is to save all people by grace through faith in Christ. • Dear heavenly Father, blessed are those who hear Your Word and fear You, for they seek Your grace and righteousness. Move us to praise and worship You with joyful hearts because of Your Word, Jesus, that we might inherit life everlasting. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 35** Men close to David have developed a destructive disdain for him. This psalm is most likely set during Saul's time (cf 1Sm 20; 23–26). Someone sought David's life and slandered him. In 1Sm 24:12, 15, David appeals to God as the righteous judge.

Format: V v 1–3, fight the enemies; v v 4–6, drive them to retreat; v v 7–8, pursuers' evil acts; v v 9–10, delivering the poor; v v 11–14, mourning the sick; v v 15–16, mockery; v v 17–18, a prayer for rescue; v v 19–21, treacherous foes; v v 22–25, a prayer for vindication; v 26, shame the foes; v v 27–28, delight in God's greatness.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 35:1 *fight against*. Battle of actions and words (cf Ex 15:1–18, 21, the songs of Moses and Miriam).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 35:2 *buckler*. Body-length shield with bowed surface, made of animal hide. God is asked to protect His faithful when the struggle against evil becomes too great.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 35:3 *salvation*. See p 843. David calls God to block the path of his pursuers with spear and javelin (cf Gn 3:23–24). *Soul*.

Equivalent here to personal pronoun "I." See note, 103:1–2.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 35:4–8 Imprecatory prayers. See p 879.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 35:4 Cf messianic Ps 22:16–18. *them*. Those making plans against David.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 35:5–6 *chaff before the wind*. See note, 1:4. David's pursuers are considered oppressive, yet worthless. *angel of the* LORD. See p 1227.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 35:6 *dark and slippery*. Aug: "These two ills are the great punishments of men: darkness, ignorance; a slippery way, luxury" (*NPNF*1 8:80).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 35:7 *without cause*. Those who were once David's compatriots (v 14) have now turned against him, plotting to take his life (10:8; 11:2; 64:4; 140:5). Cf Mt 21–27; Lk 23:2, where the plotting of the religious leaders of Jerusalem to put Jesus to death was certainly politically and religiously motivated (from the temporal standpoint).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 35:10 *bones shall say*. Aug: "In the Body of the Lord the name of bones is given to all the righteous, the firm in heart, the strong, yielding to no persecutions, no temptations" (*NPNF*1 8:82).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 35:11 *witnesses*. They keep plying him with questions about deeds of violence he knows nothing about (cf Ex 23:1–9; Mt 26:57–68). The charges are false. Our Lord's mock trial and beatings were a result of desperate, trumped-up charges. *I do not know*. Luth: "What is foreign to the deed is foreign to the conscience…. The Lord, who does not know sin, was not aware of sin. Therefore He suffered in ignorance, that is, without knowing" (AE 10:167).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 35:12 *my soul is bereft*. Luth: "They repaid Me with barrenness, though I had brought fertility…. Because they [wicked men] cut Christ in the flesh, by that very fact they were cut and scourged in their heart" (AE 10:167–68).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 35:13 *they*. His current oppressors. *sackcloth*. See note, Jb 16:15. *afflicted myself with fasting*. Cf Lv 16:29–34.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 35:15 *my stumbling*. Any mishap (cf 9:3; 27:2; 37:24; 56:13; 119:165). See note, Hos 4:5. *wretches whom I did not know*. David's experience makes his former friends glad. If there were once positive relationships, they are meaningless now.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 35:16 *mockers at a feast*. Lit, "profane men," "mockers for cake," or "table jesters." Though they appear harmless and

upright at the table, they are plotting destruction. *gnash*. Describes potent rage as a result of hatred (cf Mt 13:42). Like carnivores, they want to trap, tear, and devour. Aug: "Wherever men find a Christian, they are wont to insult, to persecute, to deride him, to call him dull, senseless, of no spirit, of no knowledge" (*NPNF*1 8:84).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 35:17 *How long, O Lord, will You look on?* Such blatant injustice requires divine intervention. *the lions!* See note, v 16; cf 10:9; 17:12; 22:12–13, 21; 57:4; 58:6; 124:6.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 35:18 David always thought of how his experience would be profitable for his people. *great congregation*. See p 842.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 35:19 *wink the eye*. See note, Pr 6:13–14; cf Ps 109:3; 119:161.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 35:20 *quiet in the land*. The meek, who live simply by God's Word.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 35:21 *Aha*. Expression of malicious joy. *seen it!* I.e., David's imagined fault or mistake, which justifies their condemnation of him.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 35:22 *You have seen*. The Lord sees the real fault deserving condemnation. *be not silent!* He will testify against David's foes. David prays with confidence that given God's omniscience, He is the righteous and just witness (cf v 11).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 35:24 *Vindicate*. Justify. See note, 26:1. *according to Your righteousness*. See p 843.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 35:26 *dishonor*. Hbr describes blushing red. Accusers leave the scene with embarrassed red faces, burdened with the disgrace they have merited.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 35:27–28 *my righteousness … Your righteousness*. See p 843.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 35:27 *His servant*. His chosen, or anointed, one.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 35** David appeals to God Almighty as divine warrior and righteous judge. He prays that God will come to his defense and rescue him from those who were once close friends but who now accuse, slander, and condemn him with malice. The Lord forbids that we accuse an innocent person (Eighth Commandment), that he or she might be wrongly punished in body, property, or reputation (cf Pr 22:1). He bids us to err on the side of the Gospel in the case of our neighbor, unless guilt is clear (cf Mt 18:15–18). As we endeavor to treat our neighbors fairly and with

mercy, our merciful Lord justifies us according to His righteousness. • O Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior of the world, move us, we pray, to shun lies and to speak well of our neighbor. Build a strong bulwark around our name, reputation, and integrity that we might be protected from malicious gossip and deceitful tongues; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 36** *choirmaster*. See p 993. A common superscription (55 psalms). *servant of the* LORD. David serves in an official capacity as a leader and instructor of the people.

Format: V v 1–4, way of the wicked; v v 5–6, the Lord's steadfast love; v v 7–9, blessings of His steadfast love; v v 10–12, end of evildoers.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 36:1 *the wicked*. David explains the enormity of iniquity. *fear of God*. See p 842. The wicked have totally lost the restraining dread of God's power, which curbs wickedness (cf Rm 3:18). Luther translates as "I am speaking from deepest conviction about the ungodly that there is no fear of God before their eyes."

PSALMS—NOTE ON 36:2 *flatters*. Hbr "makes smooth." The wicked have the illusion that their sin is not immediately found out or punished by God. In their warped thinking, they justify their iniquity, not considering God's righteous punishment.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 36:3 *deceit*. Luth: "A sham friend is more hateful than an open enemy" (AE 10:170). Cf 41:9; 55:13.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 36:4 *on his bed*. Since the fall, sin is our most basic impulse. The wicked lie awake at night, unable to rest because they just have to develop some evil scheme. (In contrast, the righteous meditate on God's Word both day and night; see note, 1:2.) The heart and mind determine the life, as Jesus would teach (cf Mt 12:33–37; Mk 7:21–23). Aug: "Our bed is our heart: there we suffer the tossing of an evil conscience; and there we rest when our conscience is good" (*NPNF*1 8:87).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 36:5–6 God's attributes are revealed in His actions: steadfast love, faithfulness, righteousness, judgment, and salvation extended to all creation, for the sake of His Son (cf 33:5; 89:14; 97:2; Hos 2:19–20; Is 9:7; Jer 9:24). See pp 842–43. Aug: "The Mercy [of God] which You give to Your Saints, is Heavenly, not earthly; is Eternal, not temporal…. For who could know the Heavenly Mercy of God, unless God should declare it unto men?" (*NPNF*1 8:88).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 36:6 *mountains of God*. Hills of Zion. *man and beast*. Aug: "Is not the saving of beasts also from God? For He who made man, made also beasts; He made both, saves both; but the saving of beasts is temporal" (*NPNF*1 8:88–89). Cf Gn 7:22–23; LC II 13–14.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 36:7 *shadow of Your wings*. See note, 17:8–9.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 36:8 *abundance of Your house*. Abundance of God's creation (food and drink). At the tabernacle, God's children feasted on the sacrifices. See pp 170–71.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 36:9 *fountain of life*. God and His Word are compared to refreshing waters (Pr 18:4; Is 55:1). God gives life in both the temporal and eternal realms. Ultimately, for sinners, God provides the water of life through Jesus Christ. *Your light*. Apart from Him, we are in darkness. Knowing Him brings enlightenment and joy.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 36:10–12 Closing prayer asking for God's mercy and protection. *upright of heart*. Sincere.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 36:11 *foot… hand*. Luth: "The foot of pride is the father of heretics, schismatics, sects, rebels, and apostates. Then follows the *hand*, the works and merits of their own life which they set up for themselves as righteousness" (AE 10:172). *the wicked*. People who try to make their way in the world either as a law to themselves (cf 10:2–11; 31:18; 73:6) or by relying on false gods (Jer 13:9–10).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 36:12 *lie fallen … thrust down*. Success and prosperity of the ungodly are fleeting. This psalm ends with the nature and ultimate destiny of wickedness. God has already overthrown all evil and wickedness through His Son, our Savior.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 36** • O heavenly Father, we rely on Your grace and protection in the midst of sin and the wicked works of those who test our faith. Your Word is truth. Do not allow courage to build in the hearts of Your enemies, who despise Your Word and Your Son. Do not let them proudly boast, "Where is your God?" Answer, we pray, those who oppress Your Holy Word. Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 37** Acrostic poem, with two verses for each letter of the alphabet (irregular). See pp 777–78. This psalm provides teaching and comfort in the manner of Proverbs. It reconciles the tension between the prosperity of the wicked and the slander of the righteous (cf Ps 36). The crux of the poem is that leaders fail to trust in the Lord (cf v v 3–5, 7, 34, 39).

Format: V v 1–2, evildoers fade away; v v 3–4, trust the Lord; v v 5–6, He will act; v 7, wait patiently; v v 8–9, don't get angry; v v 10–11, wicked and meek contrasted; v v 12–13, the Lord laughs at the wicked; v v 14–15, wicked attack; v v 16–17, wicked and righteous contrasted; v v 18–19, blameless remain forever; v 20, wicked vanish; v v 21–22, wicked and righteous contrasted; v v 23–24, the Lord upholds the righteous; v v 25–26, the righteous and his children; v v 27–29, the righteous are preserved; v v 30–31, the righteous described; v v 32–33, the Lord guards the righteous; v 34, appeal for patience; v v 35–36, the wicked passed away; v v 37–38, future of the blameless and the wicked; v v 39–40, the Lord delivers.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 37:1–2 *Fret not … not envious*. The problem and the answer (cf Pr 24:19). *evildoers*. People who plot, scheme, default on debts, use political power to gain advantage and thus seem to flourish. "God puts His saints to work in various ways and often holds back the rewards of works-righteousness. He does this so that they may learn not to trust in their own righteousness and may learn to seek God's will rather than the rewards. This can be seen with Job, Christ, and other saints. And many psalms teach us about this" (Ap V 77). *wither*. Vegetation in the Holy Land dies quickly and can be used as fuel (cf Mt 3:10). Aug: "For now it is the season of winter. Your glory does not as yet appear. But if your love has but a deep root, like that of many trees during winter, the frost passes away, the summer (that is, the Day of Judgment) will come…. The root is within; where our root is, there is our life also, for there our love is fixed. And your life is hid with Christ in God" (*NPNF*1 8:91). Cf Col 3:1.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 37:3 *Trust in the Lord*. Leave things in God's hands as you perform your normal functions. *befriend faithfulness*. Despite persecution, stand fast where God has placed you and fulfill your calling.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 37:4 *the desires of your heart*. Aug: "Distinguish the 'desires of your heart' from the desires of your flesh; distinguish as much as you can" (*NPNF*1 8:92). "God wishes to give you everything exceedingly and abundantly according to your heart's desire. He who despises and casts this promise to the winds is not worthy ever to hear a word about God" (LC I 166).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 37:5 *Commit … He will act*. Cast your burden from yourself and upon Him (cf 1Pt 5:7). We pray, and He listens and answers, though He may delay.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 37:6 *your righteousness*. See p 843.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 37:7–8 *Be still*. Quiet waiting for the Lord's action. *fret not*. Aug: "The 'way of the ungodly' is but a transitory happiness…. Its termination leads to the pit of hell. Now, your way is narrow; and 'few there be' that enter in through it: but into how ample a field it comes at the last, you ought to consider" (*NPNF*1 8:93).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 37:9 *cut off*. See note, 12:3. *wait for the* LORD. See note, 25:3. Waiting does not mean doing nothing. Rather, believers should continue to fulfill their present calling until the Lord presents a new opportunity in His time. E.g., David knew he would be king but had to wait (1Sm 16). *inherit*. Hbr *yarash*, a chief blessing of the covenant. See "portion," p 7.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 37:10–11 *meek*. Hbr *'anaw*, "humble." They depend only on the Lord's goodness and grace. Aug: "Peace shall be your gold. Peace shall be your silver. Peace shall be your lands. Peace shall be your life, your God Peace" (*NPNF*1 8:94).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 37:12 *gnashes his teeth*. As if to consume God's righteous people.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 37:13 *the Lord laughs … his day is coming*. Cf 1Sm 26:10; Jb 18:20. Aug: "The day of the unjust, which God foresees, will come. What day is that? The day for all vengeance!" (*NPNF*1 8:94).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 37:14 *sword … bows … bring down the poor and needy*. Most cruel and brutal attack possible on the poor and defenseless.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 37:15 Cf 45:5. The wicked may hold sway in the temporal realm, but their injustice will be condemned, and they shall suffer eternal damnation on the Last Day.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 37:16 *the little*. God has not promised a life of ease and unbounded prosperity this side of heaven.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 37:17 *upholds*. See pp 843–44.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 37:18 *blameless*. See note, Jb 1:1.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 37:19 *famine*. Common challenge in an agricultural society. Even in famine, the blameless will survive because the Lord knows His own.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 37:20 *glory of the pastures*. Grass withers when winter comes.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 37:21 *generous and gives*. Blameless people repay their debts and give to their neighbor in need (cf Dt 15:6; 28:12, 44).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 37:22 *blessed … cursed*. See p 842.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 37:23 *steps … established by the* LORD. Aug: "If the Lord did not order the steps of man, so crooked are they naturally, that they would always be going through crooked paths, and by pursuing crooked ways, would be unable to return again. He however came, and called us, and redeemed us, and shed His blood; He has given this ransom; He has done this good, and suffered these evils. Consider Him in what He has done, He is God! Consider Him in what He has suffered, He is Man!" (*NPNF*1 8:97).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 37:24 *fall*. At the same time saint and sinner, the righteous are tempted, turn, and commit actual sin, thus falling into the pit (cf Pr 24:16). Luth: "But the righteous are lifted up, because the wicked rely on dead things, while the righteous rely on the living Lord" (AE 10:174).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 37:25 *forsaken … begging*. In a corrupt and sinful world, the righteous can experience temporal need, but the Lord does not forsake them. "Here, then, you have a rich Lord. He is certainly enough for you" (LC I 253).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 37:26 *lending generously … blessing*. See note, v 21.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 37:27 *Turn away*. Repent. See p 1080. *dwell forever*. Temptation can temporarily cause the Christian to depart from the path of the righteous. When these temptations come, dismiss them by the Lord's power.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 37:28 *saints*. See p 843.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 37:30 *utters wisdom*. See pp 775–78.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 37:31 *law*. See p 971. Aug: "The 'word of God in the heart' frees from the snare" (*NPNF*1 8:101).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 37:33 Aug: "Some [the martyrs] they slew with the sword; some they crucified; some they delivered to the beasts; some they burnt by fire; others they led about in chains, till wasted out by a long protracted decay. Assuredly 'the Lord forsakes not His Saints'" (*NPNF*1 8:101).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 37:34 *Wait for the* LORD. Dependence on and faithfulness to the Lord always go hand in hand with faithful obedience to His Commandments. *way*. See p 844.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 37:37 *man of peace*. One who loves peace and is at peace in the midst of trouble.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 37:38 *future of the wicked*. See note, v 13. *cut off*. See note, 12:3.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 37:39–40 Comforting conclusion; the Lord will deliver the righteous. Aug: "At present therefore let the righteous bear with the sinner; let the wheat bear with the tares; let the grain bear with the chaff: for the time of separation will come, and the good seed shall be set apart from that which is to be consumed with fire" (*NPNF*1 8:102). Cf Mt 13:30.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 37** This psalm stresses two things: the righteous are blessed of God in due season, and divine punishment will overtake the wicked. Our Lord does not abandon us, His children, to the schemes of the wicked, but on the Last Day He will fulfill our salvation and eternally deliver us from our enemies of sin, death, and the devil. • Heavenly Father, You have begun Your good work in us. Continue, we pray, to fill us with the wisdom and knowledge of Your life-giving Word. Grant that our cross and sufferings may direct our hearts and minds to You, O Christ, our sure and blessed hope. Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 38** Acrostic. See pp 777–78. One of seven penitential psalms. Jewish tradition has the second half of the psalm as a liturgical prayer that accompanied the offering of Azkarah (memorial; cf Lv 24:7; Ps 70:1). David knows he has sinned and attributes his suffering to God's wrath.

Format: V v 1–2, the Lord's discipline; v v 3–4, heavy iniquities; v v 5–8, my sinful condition; v v 9–11, alone in my suffering; v 12, my foes; v v 13–14, deaf and mute; v v 15–16, waiting for the Lord; v v 17–20, confession; v v 21–22, plea for help.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 38:1 *rebuke … discipline … wrath!* David prays to be delivered from his deserved punishment from God. He prays for God's mercy to replace His heavy hand of wrath.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 38:2–8 David's argument as to why God should hear his plea. V v 3, 5–8 describe the totality of his affliction. All is not right between David and the Lord; the illness is punishment for sin.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 38:2 *arrows*. Cf Lm 3:12; Ezk 5:16.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 38:3 *no soundness in my flesh … Your indignation*. God may chastise us physically.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 38:4 *heavy burden*. Psychological and physical effects of his sin are described in v v 5–8. While this may not be confession, it is a sober acknowledgement. Sin is (1) a tyrant that constantly draws the

sinner toward evil, while (2) simultaneously pushing downward, more and more increasing the pressure of sin, which (3) can result in bodily penalties and evils that go beyond our capacity to cope or turn back (cf Jer 10:19).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 38:5 *wounds*. Sin corrupts the whole body. Luth: "The sores are pride and the inborn sickness and remains of original sin. For that reason man is now swollen by nature and automatically stinks, that is, he creates scandal and is dissolved with festering" (AE 10:178).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 38:6 David is unable to raise himself to an upright position and suffers such pain that he mourns all his waking hours.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 38:7 *sides*. Variously translated as back, loins, or side. No small affliction affects his tender flesh.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 38:8 *feeble … crushed … tumult of my heart*. Feeling of desolation attacks his whole being.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 38:9 *sighing is not hidden*. The Lord hears his groaning. He does not despise or abhor his words. The penitent confesses his sins and asks for Absolution.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 38:10 *light of my eyes*. See note, Jb 17:7.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 38:11–14 Describes the betrayal of his false friends.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 38:11 *stand aloof … stand far off*. Psalmist's friends move from before him to contemplate their decision. Then they place themselves at a distance. Christ's friends did the same. Aug: "To those who wished to be near [Christ's] exaltation, yet thought not of His humility, He answered and said to them, 'Can you drink of the cup that I shall drink of?' … They 'drew nigh' in the body, but 'stood afar off' in their heart" (*NPNF*1 8:107–8). Cf Mt 20:22.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 38:12 Depicts a courtroom scene, where false witnesses condemn an innocent victim.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 38:13–14 *I do not hear … like a mute man*. Hearing and answering false charges is futile when faced with prearranged accusation and damning false witness (cf Is 53:7; Mt 26:57–68).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 38:15 *O Lord my God, who will answer*. Like a deaf-mute, David relies on God to answer his accusers (cf 1Sm 25:32–39).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 38:17 *fall*. Death seems imminent.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 38:18 *confess*. See note, v 9.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 38:19 Psalmist confessed his sin (v 18) but also his dismay that people he had not wronged were attacking him. Despite their blatant wickedness, his foes seem to go unpunished. Aug: "[My enemies]

are well off: they rejoice in worldly prosperity; while I am suffering, and 'roaring with the groaning of my heart.' … This is their life; this life they praise; this they set their hearts upon: this they hold fast to their own ruin" (*NPNF*1 8:110).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 38:21 *forsake*. Hbr *'azab*, "abandon." One of the psalmist's greatest fears. The prophets accused Israel of forsaking God.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 38:22 *O Lord, my salvation!* Beautiful pronouncement that deliverance comes only through almighty God. *salvation!* See p 843.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 38** The Lord chastises His children in order to turn them from temptation and sin and to keep them safe and faithful to Him. Sin that is not confessed becomes a burden on our bodies and souls and causes great despair. The Law as a guide accuses us and shows us our sin (cf Rm 3:20; 7:7). Here we see that God's divine will is ultimately for our good as believers. "O Lord, my salvation!" (v 22) is the beautiful confession that through the healing balm of the Lord's mercy, there is deliverance and Absolution. • O Lord God Almighty, we are in Your hands. You pronounce us sinners, and we accept the truth of Your Word. May we be quick to confess our sin. Thank You for leading us to this confession through Your Law and promises. Keep us alive, O blessed and faithful Redeemer, for in You alone do we trust. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 39** While Ps 38 spoke of silence before the enemy, Ps 39 speaks of silence before God. Both are prayers in times of illness (God's "discipline," v 11; 38:1); both acknowledge sin and express deep trust in God. *choirmaster*. See p 993. *Jeduthun*. One of David's three musicians (1Ch 6:44; 15:12; 16:41–42; 25:1, 6; 2Ch 5:12; 35:15). See p 840. Why this psalm was put into Jeduthun's (Ethan's) hands is unclear, as is David's specific life situation.

Format: V v 1–3, silence; v v 4–6, shortness of life; v v 7–11, deliver me from Your discipline; v v 12–13, prayer to be heard.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 39:1 *tongue*. Aug: "It is not without reason that the tongue is set in a moist place, but because it is so prone to slip" (*NPNF* 1 8:112).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 39:2 Luth: "[Holding our peace] is very hard to do when we suffer injury from those whom we have benefited, because we are generally quick to exaggerate and magnify the good we have done and the ingratitude of those people, and so we make accusations on a grand scale. And then grief is renewed, because it is a particularly sharp sorrow to receive injury and malice from one whom we have helped and at the same time to keep silent about the good we have done him and let it be construed as something evil" (AE 10:184).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 39:3 *fire burned*. The heart (center of thinking in Hbr) is being consumed with a rage of injustice, i.e., his languishing in psychological and physical torment (cf Jer 20:8–9). Finally he speaks.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 39:4 *measure of my days*. See note, 56:8, about the intimacy of God's attention to us.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 39:5 *Selah*. See p 993.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 39:6 *shadow!* A vapor, a mere breath in a vanity of vanities existence (cf Ec 1:1). This is an expression of extreme bitterness. Luth: "The sense that all things are vanity is not a matter of the things themselves but of the man who uses them vainly" (AE 10:186).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 39:7 *My hope is in You*. A wholesome transition.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 39:8 *Deliver*. See p 842. David didn't speak up in v 2, but in his heart he questioned God's reason for allowing him to fall into this pit. He didn't want to speak for fear of being "the scorn of the fool!" (cf 22:6–8; 69:6–12). Aug: "In no other way then can you be perfect in this life, than by knowing that you cannot be perfect in this life" (*NPNF* 1 8:116).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 39:9 *I am mute*. Cf v v 1–3.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 39:10 *stroke … hostility of Your hand*. God is the enemy of the unrepentant.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 39:11 *like a moth*. Depicts quiet, unsuspected ruin. *all mankind … mere breath!* Mel: "The calamities of this world are punishments for the sins of the whole race" (Chem, *LTh* 2:379).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 39:12 *hold not Your peace*. Tears move David to this modest prayer that God will no longer be silent but will absolve. *sojourner … like all my fathers*. We live under God's special care as strangers. God has welcomed us by His Word and Sacraments and makes us His children eternally. We are heirs of His kingdom of heaven. Aug: "The place where I am to abide for ever, should be rather called my home…. It is with God that I am a sojourner, with whom I am hereafter to abide, when I have reached my home" (*NPNF* 1 8:118). Cf 2Co 5:1.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 39:13 *Look away*. See note, 34:16.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 39** Veiled in uncertainty is a flickering faith that puts its hope in God and in His strength and promise to rescue all who call on His name. In the midst of this life of vapors, phantoms, and threats, we often push God away. Despite this, He hears and answers our prayers. For we are His children through His Word and Holy Baptism, and He is our safe harbor and anchor of salvation and protection. • Heavenly Father, what would we be if You forsook us, if You withdrew Your Word and Your hand? Enlighten us with Your Word. Let us walk in the light of Your blessed Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 40** From an earlier time in David's life as an outlaw fleeing from Saul. Cf v 6; 1Sm 15:22. *choirmaster*. See p 993.

Format: V v 1–3, delivered by the Lord; v v 4–5, His deeds multiplied; v v 6–8, His desires; v v 9–10, His love declared; v v 11–12, hope for preservation; v v 13–15, disappoint my foes; v v 16–17, God is my help.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 40:1 *waited patiently for the* LORD. Aug: "I waited for the consolation of no mere mortal, who may be consumed by sorrow of his own, before he gives me comfort…. Let us mourn in company; let us weep together, let us 'wait patiently' together, let us join our prayers together also" (*NPNF* 1 8:119).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 40:2 *pit of destruction*. Mud remains after the water dries up. Cf Jer 38:1–6.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 40:3 *new song*. See p 843. *fear … trust*. See p 842.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 40:4 *Blessed*. See p 842. *turn to the proud*. The arrogant and self-sufficient boast of their success apart from the one true God.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 40:5 *Your wondrous deeds … thoughts*. Salvation history is expounded before the faithful at the sanctuary. *more than can be told*. People cannot completely comprehend or number God's mighty works.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 40:6 *In sacrifice and offering You have not delighted*. See note, 51:10. *open ear*. Open by God's grace to hear and believe His Word (cf Rm 10:17) and live it (cf Pr 28:9; Is 48:8; 50:4–5). Luth: "We have two ears, first, so that we may be more apt to learn than to teach, to hear than to be heard, to yield to one speaking rather than to speak" (AE 10:188). "You have offered me Your Word that I may hear it, and You do require that I believe Your Word and Your promises. You truly desire to care for me and to help" (Ap XXIV 29). *Burnt offering and sin offering*. See p 170–71.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 40:7 *I have come*. David is at the tabernacle to pay his vows. *scroll of the book*. God's Word or Law. Leather scrolls were rolled up for carrying or for storage.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 40:8 *delight*. To find pleasure in one's inmost being by hearing God's Word and doing His will (cf Dt 6:6; Pr 3:3; 7:3). *law*. See p 971. *within my heart*. See note, 1:2.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 40:9 *glad news of deliverance*. See "deliver," p 842. *great congregation*. See p 842. *not restrained my lips*. We are duty bound to confess the virtues of His righteousness in corporate worship.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 40:10 *not hidden … not concealed*. Aug: "He believes; he 'lives by faith.' … He has not said in his heart, 'I do indeed believe in Christ; but I will not tell what I believe to this persecutor, who is raging against me, and threatening me'" (*NPNF* 1 8:125). *steadfast love … faithfulness*. See p 843.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 40:11 *mercy*. See pp 842–43. *steadfast love … faithfulness*. See p 843.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 40:12 *encompassed me beyond number*. Consequences of David's sins are catching up with him. *more than the hairs of my head*. Aug: "Who is there can calculate the number of the hairs of his head? Much less can he tell the number of his sins…. You have guarded against great ones; you do not now commit adultery, or murder; you do not

plunder the property of others; you do not blaspheme; and do not bear false witness; those are the weightier kind of sins. You have guarded against great sins, what are you doing about your smaller ones?" (*NPNF* 1 8:126). *I cannot see*. Until enlightened by God's Word; then sin becomes painfully clear.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 40:13 *deliver*. See p 842.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 40:14 Cf 38:12; 39:8; 41:5, 7. He prays that his ill-willed enemies, who want nothing less than to murder him, might be brought to shame.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 40:15 *Aha*. An expression of malicious joy.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 40:16 *seek You*. See p 843. *Great is the* LORD*!* Common and natural confession and word of praise.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 40:17 *poor and needy*. One who cannot draw himself from the pit of sin or secure salvation on his own. Aug: "It is He that makes rich those who are the true poor; and makes poor those who are falsely rich" (*NPNF* 1 8:128). *deliverer*. See "deliver," p 842.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 40** One who has fallen away from God now cries out for His fatherly kindness and mercy. As saint and sinner, we are unable to keep God's Law perfectly, though He requires that we do so. By the power of His Word and Spirit and by faith, He instills in us a new desire. Our Lord Christ kept the Law perfectly and died on our behalf that we might live with Him in His kingdom. • O my Lord, help me, that by Your grace I might learn Your Commandments more completely each day. Preserve me, I earnestly pray, that by Your Holy Spirit I will never become ungrateful and seek after the world's vanity or other gods, but cling truly and solely to You, dear God and Father. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 41** David is sick, and his enemies are vengeful. The psalm can be placed within the time of Absalom's rebellion (cf 2Sm 14–15). *choirmaster*. See p 993.

Format: V v 1–3, the merciful blessed; v v 4–7, enemies; v v 8–10, betrayal; v v 11–12, God's delight; v 13, blessing.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 41:1–3 Chem: "[The] turning away of punishments, that is to say, in the midst of their troubles they will feel the reward for their kindnesses" (*LTh* 2:644).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 41:1 *considers the poor!* As king, David is to defend the powerless. He expects reward from the Lord (cf Mt 5:7). Luth: "O how often Christ speaks about a lowly heart and person, and nobody pays

attention. But when a great and rich man speaks, all are filled with admiration" (AE 10:190).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 41:2 *blessed*. See p 842.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 41:3 *The* LORD *sustains him*. David depended on healing for past illnesses and for the illness he now experiences. Sometimes people view health as equaling God's blessing and illness as equaling God's curse (see pp 779–82). Following God's Word can deliver one from calamity, disease, and misfortune, but believers will still suffer the effects of sin. Sin can be confessed and absolved, but its effects may have lifelong, widespread consequences.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 41:4 *heal*. Hbr *rapha'*. David literally prays for the healing of his soul (see ESV note). *I have sinned*. Troubles come as a result of sin, and we fully merit God's corrective hand, which at times is difficult to bear.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 41:5 *enemies*. Unprincipled and godless men plot against David in a time of weakness.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 41:6 *comes to see me*. Picture of court intrigue. A false friend spies on David's condition so he may report to David's enemies. *empty words*. False comfort.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 41:7 *hate … whisper … imagine*. Enemies engage in this threefold scheme to destroy David. Perhaps this refers to Absalom's scheme to take his father's kingdom.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 41:8 *A deadly thing*. Physical disability.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 41:9 *close friend*. Lit, "the man of my peace," one in whom David had full confidence (2Sm 16:23), who ate at his royal table and attended his court. A common meal was a strong expression of hospitality and trust. *lifted his heel against me*. Preparing for a hard blow as one would stomp an insect or a snake. The "close friend" is probably Ahithophel (2Sm 15:12; 17:1–4). Jesus quotes part of v 9 in Jn 13:18, referring to Judas's imminent betrayal. The psalm is messianic, because it foreshadows in the person of David our Lord's ministry, betrayal, crucifixion, and resurrection. As great David's greater Son, Jesus would experience betrayal like David did. Judas sat with Jesus at the Last Supper and even received bread from Jesus' hand. Could there be a more bitter betrayal? Aug: "Who is this man of His peace? Judas" (*NPNF* 1 8:131).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 41:10 *raise me up … repay them!* Request for healing and vengeance. This is David's duty, because God appointed him as

king (cf 1Sm 25:33; 2Sm 3:39).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 41:11 *my enemy will not shout in triumph over me*. God will not leave David dead on the ground.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 41:12 *integrity*. Virtuous conduct before God. *presence*. See p 843. David is the divinely appointed royal servant of Israel's heavenly King (cf 101:7; 1Sm 16:22). *forever*. Cf 2Sm 7:15–16.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 41:13 The doxology that closes Book One of Psalms. *Blessed*. See p 842. *Amen and Amen*. See "faithfulness," p 842.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 41** Two experiences afflict David: he is sick, and he suffers at the hands of enemies (traitors) who want his throne and his life. The Lord allows suffering in our lives, that our sins might be punished in the temporal sense, though we often cannot tell why we are suffering. Whatever the case, repent of your sins and pray for the Lord's mercy and guidance according to His Word. The Lord is gracious and merciful toward His precious children. Though His discipline may never seem to end, we know His love and mercy still abound for us. • Dear Father, thank You for Your infinite love and goodness toward us, Your dear children. Even when we are disciplined, we know You love us. Keep us in Your Word, in faith and in prayer. Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Book Two** Ps 42–72, distinguished from Book One by its use of the word "God" (Hbr *'elohim*) rather than "the LORD" (*yahweh*). See p 844.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 42** Ps 42 and 43 appear separately, but are connected by a common refrain and lament (42:5, 11 and 43:5; 42:9 and 43:2). The connection is reinforced because Ps 43 has no superscription. The two psalms form three cycles focused on intense yearning for God and communion with Him at the temple. In distress, the psalmist wishes only for the temple in Jerusalem, the Lord's earthly location. Luth: "[The psalmist] desires to come to God's house and be comforted by the face of God…. For God's house is that place where God's Word is, and God's face is His presence, through which He makes Himself known and by means of His Word, reveals His grace" (*PIML*, pp 58–59). *Maskil*. See p 841. *Sons of Korah*. Descendants of Levi, temple musicians (1Ch 6:1, 22, 31).

Format: V v 1–4, longing for God; v v 5–6a, refrain of hope; v v 6b–10, life in exile; v 11, refrain of hope.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 42:1 *flowing streams*. Psalmist desires worship in God's house, where God's presence preserves his life. (Cf Jn 7:37–39, Jesus

in the temple.) "As a deer with anxious and trembling eagerness strains toward a fresh, flowing stream, so I yearn anxiously and tremblingly for God's Word" (BEC 33).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 42:2 *living God*. No idol of metal or wood, but the giver of life. *appear before God?* Israel's worship was entry into God's presence, located in His earthly sanctuary. All male Israelites were required to worship together three times each year (Ex 23:17; Dt 16:16). See ESV note.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 42:3 *they*. Enemies who ridicule both God and His people.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 42:4 *lead them in procession*. Suggests past leadership in the temple liturgy that he longs to repeat. *festival*. Cf Dt 16.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 42:5–6 This refrain captures the reality of faith: sorrow amid trials, yet certainty in God's care.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 42:5 *cast down*. Conversing with his soul, the psalmist recognizes intense grief (v v 6, 11; 43:5). Consider Christ in Gethsemane (Mt 26:38). Jerome: "Never let suggestions of evil grow on you … Slay the enemy while he is small … nip the evil in the bud" (*NPNF* 2 6:24). *Hope in God*. Self-admonition to trust in God during exile and sorrows. *my salvation*. See p 843.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 42:6 *land of Jordan … Hermon*. Psalmist's temporary home (he may be in exile) at the source of the Jordan River, beyond the northern border of Israel. See color map 2. *Mount Mizar*. Lit, "hill of littleness"; location unknown.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 42:7 *Deep calls to deep*. Imagery of thirsting for water in v v 1–2 changes to that of God-sent floods that overwhelm.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 42:8 *commands His steadfast love*. See p 843. Psalm centers on this hope in the middle of every trouble. *His song*. Perhaps this very psalm, which declares the Lord's mercies.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 42:9 *forgotten me?* Desperate but confident prayer; psalmist asks if God has abandoned him, though he knows He has not.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 42:10 *deadly wound*. Blasphemous mockery cuts the psalmist painfully.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 42:11 *Hope in God*. Emphatic repetition of v v 5–6; through sorrow and turmoil, our God is the true Savior.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 42** The psalmist experiences despair at the seeming victory of the godless and his separation from God's merciful

presence at the temple. We, too, should desire God's presence, hear His Word in public worship, and receive the salvation that He gives in the Word. In the midst of our suffering and troubles, and against all appearances to the contrary, our Lord Jesus is our Savior and dwells among us in preaching and Communion to save us. • O living God, I thirst for Your mercy. Answer my prayer, for You are my salvation. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 43** See Ps 42 intro.

Format: V v 1–2, plea for vindication; v v 3–4, guidance back to the temple; v 5, refrain of hope.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 43:1 *Vindicate*. Courtroom language. Psalmist appeals to God as a just judge. *ungodly*. All who set themselves against God and His people, whether ancient or modern.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 43:2 *rejected me?* See note, 42:9. The oppressed psalmist makes his complaint against God, yet takes refuge in Him by prayer. *enemy*. See note, v 1.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 43:3 *Send out*. God is source of all light and truth, which come from Him as gifts. E.g., Jesus is incarnate light (Jn 8:12; Ps 27:1) and truth (Jn 14:6). *holy hill*. Mount Zion, the place of the temple in Jerusalem. There God, who is present everywhere, mercifully located Himself for His people. See "Zion," p 844.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 43:4 *altar of God*. Either the altar of incense in the Holy Place or the burnt offering altar. See notes, Ex 27:1–8; 30:1–10. Though any Israelite might bring a sacrifice, it was presented by the priests alone. The author may have performed liturgical duties in the temple. See note, 42:4. *lyre*. Levites who were sons of Korah played stringed instruments for temple worship. See p 993.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 43:5 See note, 42:5.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 43** The psalmist desires vindication for the cause of his sufferings. He asks God for the light and truth that come from His dwelling so that he might return to His sanctuary in joyful worship. In an ungodly world, you, too, are assailed by sin, death, and the devil. Yet God will comfort you by His life-sustaining Word. • Lead me to Your dwelling, O God, my God, and open my mouth with Your praise and song. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 44** Lament in which Israel complains to God after suffering some national calamity and/or military defeat. They are

chastened and confused that God has permitted this to befall them. *Maskil*. See p 841. *Sons of Korah*. See Ps 42 intro.

Format: V v 1–8, God has helped in the past; v v 9–16, where is God now?; v v 17–22, God's people declare their innocence; v v 23–26, bold prayer for relief.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 44:1 *our fathers have told us*. Fathers were responsible for teaching the faith (Dt 6:7), as well as general education. See note, Pr 1:8; see also pp 775–78. *deeds … in their days*. God's mighty acts of deliverance for His people; deliverance of the 12 tribes from slavery in Egypt and the giving of the Promised Land when He made them a nation (Ex 10:2; Dt 6:20–25; Ps 78:3–4).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 44:2 *drove out the nations*. Not human might, but God alone gave the land by driving out Israel's enemies (Jsh 3:10; Ps 78:55). *peoples*. Former inhabitants of Canaan.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 44:3 *right hand and Your arm*. See p 843. *light of Your face*. Biblical expression for the Lord's gracious favor shining on us like a bright, storm-free sky (4:6; Nu 6:25–26). Psalmist describes God in human terms as having "hand," "arm," and "face." In Christ, God has taken flesh fully. *delighted*. "All this [giving] He does only out of fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in me" (SC, First Article, p xxxvi).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 44:4 *my King*. See "I," "me" in v v 6, 15. Even under a human king, the psalmist recognizes God personally as the true King. See pp 1565–66. *Jacob!* The human father of Israel (Gn 32:28) for whom, and through whom, God ordains salvation in the promise of blessing, fulfilled in Christ.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 44:5 *through Your name*. The Lord's name (Hbr *yahweh*) is not just a label by which He is known. Every attribute of His divine, saving character stands behind this name. Cf Ex 3:14–15. See "name," p 843.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 44:8 *boasted*. When Israel was attacked in the past, God won the victory and was the ground for their boasting. *thanks to Your name*. God made Himself accessible through His name in the place where He resided on earth for His people: the tabernacle and Jerusalem temple (cf Dt 12:5, 11). The psalm switches between the singular ("my," v 4) and plural ("we," v 5) as the psalmist speaks for the nation but also prays as an individual within the nation. *Selah*. See p 993.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 44:9 *not gone out*. From the nation's perspective, God's behavior has changed: Israel's armies now go into battle without God. His absence causes their defeat.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 44:10 *spoil*. As Israel retreats, their abandoned camp becomes booty for the enemy.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 44:11 *among the nations*. Israel's defeat makes many Israelites slaves to other nations.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 44:12 Complaint that God has cheaply sold His people to their enemies. He has made a bad bargain, dishonoring His own name among the nations.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 44:14 *byword … laughingstock*. Because their God seems powerless to help, they are held in contempt, the butt of jokes.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 44:16 *avenger*. Vengeful enemy holding up defeated Israel to scorn.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 44:17 *Your covenant*. Without explicitly accusing God of being unfaithful, Israel maintains their faithfulness to the covenant given in Ex 19–24.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 44:19 *place of jackals*. Desolate place, suitable only for scavenging animals, which eat the bodies of the fallen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 44:20 *spread out our hands*. Posture of prayer. See p 1277.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 44:21 *He knows*. Psalmist calls God as witness to their faithfulness.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 44:22 *for Your sake we are killed*. Cry of God's people, who charge that God is hostile and indifferent. Although God allows suffering for reasons known to Him alone, we can yet be certain of His steadfast love (v 26; Rm 8:36). A great reversal: for *our* sake, *He* is killed! The innocent One who suffered all things, even death for us, then rose as Conqueror (Rm 8:31–39).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 44:23 *sleeping*. Charge against God for His slowness to help the pious, while the godless escape. The Lord rests (Gn 2:2), but He does not sleep as we do.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 44:24 *hide … forget*. God is accused of withholding mercy and refusing to answer prayer (13:1).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 44:26 *Rise up … Redeem*. Final appeal that their Redeemer God deliver them. *steadfast love!* See p 843.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 44** The psalmist recounts God's past faithfulness but complains that God is now against His people, letting them suffer defeat despite their faithfulness to Him. They petition Him to help them once more. As we undergo affliction, we are tempted to believe that God has deserted us or is unfairly punishing us. God is always "for you" despite everything you see, feel, or think to the contrary. God is not sleeping but helps, redeems, and loves—indeed, "He … did not spare His own Son but gave Him up for us all" (Rm 8:32). • Awake, O Lord, and come to our side. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 45** Royal psalm celebrating the marriage of the ideal king to his bride. Shows the close connection between the song of the temple, where God dwelled, and the royal court, where His king sat enthroned. It enlarges the scope of the messianic prophecy recorded in Ps 2 (cf 2:1–11; 2Sm 7). The prayer addressed to God (v v 3, 6), as well as this king (v v 1, 7), depicts the "anointed" in a way that would have exceeded any Davidic king. Whoever the king of the original setting is, he foreshadows that future One "greater than Solomon" (Mt 12:42). Our Lord Jesus Christ gave Himself up for, and is intimately united to, His Bride, the Church (cf Eph 5:25–27). Luth: "[This] is a prophecy of the Gospel and the kingdom of Christ, adorned with magnificent, splendid, and powerful words. For it portrays Christ as a king—with all kingly splendor, … having likewise a fine castle, a grand host of ladies-in-waiting, a beautiful queen and children forever. This is all nothing else than a spiritual picture of the Gospel of Christ, His Spirit, grace, church, and eternal life, of war against sin, death, law, devil, flesh, world, and all evil" (*PILM*, p 62). *according to Lilies*. Probably a name for a specific melody (cf the likewise Christological Ps 69). *Maskil*. See p 841. *Sons of Korah*. See Ps 42 intro. *a love song*. Luth: "wedding lyric" (AE 12:200). Actually plural, "a song of loves," that refers to bridal virgins or maidens, including the bride herself, or possibly a reference to accompaniment for the female vocal range, namely, the soprano key. The psalm likely contains features of the wedding ceremony.

Format: V 1, announcement; v v 2–3, address to king; v v 4–5, appeal for action; v v 6–9, the king's splendor; v v 10–12, address to bride; v v 13–15, the bride's splendor; v v 16–17, the couple's future.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 45:1 *a pleasing theme*. Lit, "a good word." Ambr: "He is the Word given forth from the heart of the Father, because He

came forth from the Father" (*NPNF* 2 10:279). *king*. No specific ruler of the Davidic house is named, but each Davidic king foreshadows the great King, the coming Messiah. *ready scribe*. His expert "tongue" faithfully speaks the "verses" of this psalm as one inspired to write and speak from the Holy Spirit.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 45:2 *grace is poured upon Your lips*. This king is a man, but more than an ordinary man by the "grace" that pours out in His speech. *blessed*. See p 842.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 45:3 *Gird Your sword on Your thigh*. Like a true king, He is a warrior ready to battle for His people. *O mighty one*. Hbr *gibbor*, divine name, messianic title (cf Is 9:6; Lk 1:49).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 45:4 *right hand*. This kingly hero and groom inspires awe by His victorious acts. See p 843.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 45:6 *Your throne, O God*. This king is thoroughly human, a son of David, and therefore subject to death. Yet He is also addressed as, and must be, none other than the true God. *scepter*. Heb 1:8–9 applies 45:6–7 to prove Christ's divinity by His superiority over the angels as His rule extends over all things.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 45:7 *anointed You*. Verbal form of the word "Messiah." As in a coronation ceremony (cf 1Sm 10:1; 16:3). God anoints and sends Him forth. The Anointed is addressed as, and truly is, God worthy of all worship. Iren: "The Spirit designates both [of them] by the name of God—both Him who is anointed as Son, and Him who does anoint, that is, the Father" (*ANF* 1:419). Jn D: "Scripture often uses the past tense instead of the future…. For as yet God was not seen nor did He dwell among men when this was said [prophetically]" (*NPNF* 2 9:76b). *oil of gladness*. Joy and abundance of the Holy Spirit (Is 61:1, 3). *companions*. Guests who have come from every place for this royal occasion.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 45:8 *myrrh and aloes and cassia*. Expensive perfumes and spices. Cf Pr 7:17; Sg 4:14. *ivory palaces*. Describes richest of royal dwellings, decorated with ivory inlay or carvings. Neighboring Phoenicians were famous for their ivory work, which they exported to Israel. Carvings include depictions of plants, animals, humans, and sphinxes. See diagram, p 544. *instruments*. Festive music and songs praise the exalted King. See p 993.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 45:9 *ladies of honor*. Ladies-in-waiting and "daughters of kings" join the wedding procession. *queen*. Hus: "This

Jerusalem, our mother, the temple of the Lord, the kingdom of heaven and the city of the Great King; and this whole church" (*The Church*, p 5). *gold of Ophir*. Gifts of gold adorn the chosen queen (source of Solomon's gold; cf 1Ki 9:26–28).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 45:10 *daughter*. King calls to his bride just as Christ calls and regenerates His Bride, the Church, by the Gospel. *father's house*. The bride leaves her former life and relationships to be joined with her adoring husband.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 45:11 *your lord*. The royal wife submits to her husband's love and care, just as the Church submits to Christ, her Lord and Savior (Eph 5:22–24). *bow*. Possibly part of the marriage rite. On Israelite weddings, see pp 54–55.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 45:12 *Tyre*. Ancient Phoenician city on the Great Sea known for its wealth. Its king was the first to officially recognize David's reign (2Sm 5:11). Representing all nations, it is here a shadow of the King and His kingdom's universal reach. *gifts*. Seeking the favor of this desirable bride.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 45:13–15 Bride and her maids would dress richly and be led to the groom's home. Such garments were often dyed scarlet and embroidered with gold thread (2Sm 1:24; Ezk 16:13). See note, Sg 2:4.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 45:13 *princess*. The "daughter" of v 10, the bride. *her chamber*. Wherein she prepared for the wedding call. *interwoven with gold*. Her clothing is majestically embroidered, just as the Church is clothed by the grace and perfect righteousness of her Christ.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 45:14 *many-colored*. Embroidered. Further describing the bride's beauty, which symbolizes the unsurpassed beauty of God's true people. *virgin companions*. As the King has "companions" (v 7), so does the bride have bridesmaids. Cf Mt 25:1–13.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 45:15 *palace of the king*. Bride and her attendants depart from her father's house and joyfully process to the home of the king for marriage and the consummation. (For betrothal language and the heavenly joys of life with Christ, cf 2Co 11:2.)

PSALMS—NOTE ON 45:16 *all the earth*. The royal "sons" of this marriage will share in the expansive rule of this kingdom (cf 1Pt 2:9; Rv 5:10, which talk of believers as royalty).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 45:17 *Your name*. Psalmist's song will extol our great God and King into eternity.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 45** The psalmist uses a royal wedding to portray our King, who is God, and the fulfillment of His kingdom in His Son. The grand picture of this King and this marriage—illustrating Christ and His Bride, the Church—stands in contrast to the hard realities of suffering and death that we continue to see in the Church and endure in life. Behind the weak appearances of our life in the Church, Jesus Christ forgives, cleanses, and nourishes us by the baptismal washing and holy food He gives for His Bride (Eph 5:26, 29). • Though our lives are yet hidden with Christ in God, Your throne and reign, O God, are forever and ever. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 46** Song of complete trust in God as a strong refuge, particularly in the face of crisis, and the basis of Luther's best-known hymn. The "Most High" (v 4), the "LORD of hosts … [and] the God of Jacob" (v 7) has chosen to dwell in an earthly location. By God's grace, "the city of God" (v 4) was among His people Israel (v v 5, 7) in Jerusalem on little Mount Zion. Luther paraphrased this psalm in the hymn "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God," asking the question, "Ask ye, Who is this?" and answering boldly, "Jesus Christ it is, Of Sabaoth Lord, And there's none other God" (*LSB* 656:2). See the related theme of Ps 48. *To the choirmaster*. See p 993. *Sons of Korah*. See Ps 42 intro. *A Song*. Suggests vocal arrangement, without instrumental accompaniment.

Format: V v 1–3, confidence in God; v v 4–7, the Lord is with us; v v 8–9, the Lord settles the matter; v v 10–11, the Lord is with us.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 46:1 *God is our refuge and strength*. As we experience fear or trouble, we can remember that God is identified as "very present" and a "well proved" (see ESV note) place of protection.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 46:2 *earth gives way*. Any turmoil that threatens body or soul (e.g., a tsunami, cancer, death of a loved one, satanic assaults). Ultimately, it is a glimpse of the final judgment.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 46:3 *Selah*. See p 993.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 46:4 *river*. Located on a mountain, Jerusalem has no literal river, though it does have springs. The imagery depicts a source of never-ending refreshment or inner strength. Ambr: "The Holy Spirit is the River [Is 66:12]" (*NPNF* 2 10:113). Cf Rv 22:1–3; Jn 4:10; and 7:37–39, where out of Christ flow rivers of living water that "make glad" by bringing life. Note that with God the chaotic waters (v 3) have calmed and changed to be a source of life and gladness. Bern: "All joy from other sources is

sorrow, all pleasure is pain, all sweetness is bitter, all beauty is mean, everything else, in fine, whatever may have power to please, is irksome" (*SLSB*, p 223). *city of God*. Occurs only in Korah psalms (46:4; 48:1; 87:3). The mighty ruler of the universe makes the odd but marvelous choice to reside on earth with His people. This located presence is different than omnipresence, by which God fills all things. In His Church—the NT "city of God"—the Lord dwells as a refuge for sinners in the flesh-and-blood Jesus (cf Heb 12:22–26).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 46:5 *in the midst*. God is located in the place under assault, where fear and trouble try to rule.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 46:6 *He utters His voice, the earth melts*. Depicts thunder and lightning. God's "voice" is His Word, which renders judgment but also creates (Gn 1), raises from the dead (Jn 11:43), and absolves (Mt 9:2).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 46:7 *Lord of hosts*. Not Hbr *'elohim,* as expected in Book Two of the Psalter, but *yahweh*, the almighty commander of heaven's armies and defender against all enemies (see p 1291). *God of Jacob*. Recalls the promise (Gn 28:11–16; 32:22–30) and grace by which God chose Jacob (Mal 1:2–3; Rm 9:13). The refrain sings of both God's might and grace (v 11).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 46:8 *desolations*. The Lord carries out mighty works of judgment that ultimately bring peace (v v 9–10).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 46:9 *makes wars cease*. Only God, not people, can do this, even as Christ alone defeated our enemies of sin, death, and the devil. Cf Is 65:17–25.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 46:10 *Be still*. God's rebuke to a restless, raging world that must obey, just as wind and sea obeyed Christ's identical word during a storm (Mk 4:39).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 46:11 Repetition of v 7, emphasizing both the reason and source of our confidence.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 46** The almighty and Most High God controls nature, safeguards His chosen city against attacking foes, and stands over all nations at war. He is our sure fortress. In mercy, He makes Himself accessible and is, therefore, "God with us." We as individuals, and as the Church, experience many troubles in this life on account of the devil, the world, and our own sinful nature. Yet amid every crisis of body or soul, God is with us in His Son so that we may face every upheaval. • O Lord,

make us to know You as our refuge and strength, our very present help in every trouble. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 47** Psalm in praise of both the kingship of the Lord and the universal reign of the "God of Abraham" (v 9). The psalmist addresses no less than "all peoples," insisting that all should praise the Lord for what He has done in Israel. Luth: "The 47th psalm is a prophecy of Christ, that He shall rise up and become king over all the world, without a battle, simply through shouts, songs, and trumpet calls, that is, through the joyful preaching of the Gospel, just as the walls of Jericho fell by trumpet blasts and shouts, without any weapons at all" (*PIML*, p 64). The psalm indicates a liturgical procession ("gone up" to the temple mount, v 5) and was possibly used in the temple worship during a chief festival, such as the Feast of Tabernacles, Weeks, or Booths, which included the "sound of a trumpet" (v 5; cf Lv 23:34). *Sons of Korah*. See Ps 42 intro.

Format: V v 1–4, praise the great king; v v 5–7, God ascends to His throne; v v 8–9, God reigns.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 47:1 *loud songs of joy!* Excitement greets the great king, who is God (v v 2, 6–7). Joash was acclaimed with loud clapping at his enthronement (2Ki 11:12).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 47:2 *feared*. See p 842. The great king, not merely over some local tribe but over all the earth. See pp 1565–66.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 47:3 *subdued*. The conquest of Canaan, when God delivered the Promised Land to His chosen people by fighting for them.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 47:4 *chose our heritage*. Inheritance by which God made them a people with a land and gave the promise of the coming Messiah (Gn 12:2–3; Dt 7:6–9). He does all this out of mercy, without any merit or worthiness in Jacob. *Selah*. See p 993.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 47:5 *gone up with a shout*. Height and center of the psalm, where the King who came down has, so to speak, completed His task and "gone up" to reign on His holy throne (v 8). Yet He is with His people. The same words are used in 2Sm 6:15 to recall the ark of the Lord going up to the city of David, making it the place of God's dwelling. Christ ascended to "fill all things" (Eph 4:9–10) after once coming down to atone for sins when He ascended the throne of the cross. Chem: "Christ, having completed the work of redemption and having defeated death and the devil, ascended into heaven. Therefore Christ is truly God" (*LTh* 1:98).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 47:7 *King of all the earth*. See note, v 2. He is transcendent, but also present with His people. *psalm*. A title for 13 psalms (Hbr *maskil*), here it refers to a special song of praise. See p 841.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 47:9 *God of Abraham*. Countless princes of the non-Israelite peoples are to be included in the covenant. God brings worldwide blessing through the exclusive promise given Abraham, through whom "all the families of the earth shall be blessed" (Gn 12:3; Rm 4; Gal 3:7–9). Believers are true children of Abraham (Jn 8:39). *shields*. The princes, so called because they were to protect their subjects.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 47** All nations are called to praise God for what He has done for and in Israel. Israel is called to praise Him as their great King, demonstrating His universal rule and salvation. God's promised salvation is for all nations and has been carried out in time and history by His Son, who became man precisely to be "lifted up" on the cross and so "draw all people" to Himself (Jn 12:32). • Sing praises to our God, for He is the King of all the earth, which He has saved through His Son. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 48** Song of Zion (v v 2, 11–12; cf 76; 84; 87) that, like previous psalms (46–47), takes up the theme that the Lord Most High, the "great king over all the earth" (47:2) dwells in little Jerusalem, "the city of our God" (48:1, 2, 8; cf 46:4; 87:3). No specific event or attack is named; the psalm breathes a setting greater than just a local conflict. Accordingly, this place is the "joy of all the earth" (v 2), a "fortress" against every enemy (v v 3–4), and the place of His "steadfast love" (v 9) for His congregation. Jewish writings collected in the Mishnah indicate that the Levitical choir sang Ps 48 (LXX Ps 47) as the assigned psalm for the second day of the week for the morning and evening sacrifices (cf 2Ch 2:4) before the temple was destroyed in AD 70 (Tamid 7:4). *Sons of Korah*. See Ps 42 intro.

Format: V v 1–3, royal Zion; v v 4–8, the king's panic; v v 9–11, joy in God's love and righteousness; v v 12–14, God will guide us forever.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 48:1 *city of our God!* See Ps 48 intro; see also note, 46:4. The phrase "our God" appears as a frame (v v 1, 14) and as thematic center for the psalm (v 8).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 48:2 *joy of all the earth*. Jerusalem is only an earthly city. Yet God is present to save sinners by His service in the temple sacrifice and later by His Son, who is to be crucified just outside the walls.

This brings the joy of salvation to all the earth. *Zion*. See p 844. *far north*. Moriah, north of Zion. It rejected the Canaanite notion that the seat of the gods on Mount Zaphon was the center of the universe (Ezk 28:2; Is 14:13). See map, p 493. *city of the great King*. Cf 47:2.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 48:4–8 The nations fear God's present wrath but are not driven to repentance by it.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 48:4 *kings*. Not identified. Perhaps Sennacherib, who took the name "great king" (2Ki 18:19), and "kings" under him (Is 10:8) who were defeated in the days of Hezekiah (2Ki 19:35–36). Regardless, God's people of any time can sing this psalm with the victory of Christ and even the final judgment in mind.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 48:7 Psalmist shifts and speaks to God directly here and in v v 9–11. *east wind … shattered*. Notorious gale. God shows that even the mighty cannot withstand His power. *ships of Tarshish*. Great merchant ships. *Tarshish*. May be Phoenician colony of Tartessus in Spain.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 48:8 *As we have heard, so have we seen*. What they had heard of God's greatness from their fathers (cf 44:1), they now see "in the city of the LORD" where the God of Jerusalem delivers them. *Selah*. See p 993.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 48:9 *steadfast love*. See p 843. *temple*. Earthly location of God's love and mercy (e.g., 2Ch 5:13), as demonstrated by the blood sacrifices He commands and gives (pointing to Christ).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 48:10 *name … reaches to the ends of the earth*. It reveals Him to His people and the whole world (cf 44:5, 8; 45:17). By it, He graciously "reaches" out from His temple to all peoples. *right hand*. See p 843.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 48:11 *daughters of Judah*. Pictures towns clustering about a city as its "daughters."

PSALMS—NOTE ON 48:12–13 *towers … ramparts … citadels*. Although the city was less imposing than other great cities, Jerusalem was a formidable fortress in its day.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 48:14 *this is God*. His dwelling is in Jerusalem, evidenced by His saving deeds. See Ps 48 intro.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 48** The Lord of heaven and earth makes His abode with humankind, where He is a strong fortress that shatters every enemy. He is, therefore, worthy of all praise, and we rightly "tell the next generation" (v 13) what He has done. What Mount Zion and temple

worship were for ancient Israel, Christ's Church at worship is for us—the place where God mercifully dwells to save by His Word. • May we consider well Your steadfast love, O God, in the midst of Your temple. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 49** Wisdom psalm that instructs on the futility of wealth and worldliness, which stand in contrast to God's power to redeem from death. The refrain "Man in his pomp … is like the beasts that perish" (v v 12, 20) points to the certainty of death (v 9, "pit"; v 15, "Sheol"). The psalm teaches God's power to ransom the soul out of death (v 15). Wisdom (cf Pr 8:22–31) is ultimately fulfilled in and personified by Jesus Christ (cf Mt 11:19; Lk 11:49; also 1Co 1:24, 30). *Sons of Korah*. See Ps 42 intro.

Format: V v 1–4, appeal to hear wisdom; v v 5–9, insights about preciousness of human life; v v 10–12, everyone dies; v v 13–15, God rescues me from Sheol; v v 16–20, the proud are like beasts.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 49:1 *all peoples!* Not only Israel, but "all inhabitants of the world," who exist for a brief lifetime do well to hear this message.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 49:3 *meditation*. See p 842.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 49:4 *proverb … riddle*. This wisdom saying from God promises also to answer the vexing question that only God can reveal. *lyre*. See p 993.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 49:5 People trust in wealth as though it could bring happiness and immunity from death (cf v v 6–7). *cheat*. They use their wealth to make this life miserable.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 49:7–9 Wisdom sees that death is the great leveler of rich and poor. *Truly no man*. Only the God-man Jesus, "who gave Himself as a ransom for all" (1Tm 2:6; cf Mt 20:28), can fully pay the debt so that they "live on forever." These verses reveal the flaw of every false religion that seeks salvation through human effort.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 49:7 *another*. Lit, "brother."

PSALMS—NOTE ON 49:9 *pit*. See p 792.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 49:10 *he*. Everyone can observe that no one escapes death. *leave their wealth*. Status does not follow people into death.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 49:11 *homes forever*. Narrow grave site is permanent.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 49:12 *like the beasts*. People, created in God's image but pompously strutting in sin and wealth, die like brutish animals. Cf v 20. Iren: "Having been created a rational being, he lost the true

rationality, and living irrationally, opposed the righteousness of God" (*ANF* 1:466).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 49:13 *people approve of their boasts*. The foolish who admire and follow their confidence in riches will eventually join in death also. *Selah*. See p 993.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 49:14 *sheep … shepherd*. They are like sheep herded away by death as their shepherd. *appointed for Sheol*. Destination of all. See p 792. *death*. See note, Jb 18:13. *upright shall rule*. Formerly oppressed, now they prevail. *consumed*. Death eats up flesh as it rots away.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 49:15 *ransom my soul*. God's solution for the universal human problem of v v 7–9. God can pay the ransom no person can raise to redeem his or her soul. Christ's victory swallowed death and paid the ransom in full (1Co 15:54; Is 25:7–8). See "redeem," p 843. *receive*. Same verb used of God's action when He took Enoch and Elijah (Gn 5:24; 2Ki 2:3, 5).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 49:17 *he will carry nothing away*. Cf Lk 12:16–21. *his glory will not go down after him*. See notes, v v 13–14.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 49:18 Switches from "he" to "you." Psalmist rhetorically reminds everyone—even you, dear reader—about the ultimate folly of trusting in wealth. Bern: "One man praises the Lord because He is mighty; another because He is good unto him; and again, another simply because He is good. The first is a slave, and fears for himself; the second mercenary, and desires somewhat for himself; but the third is a son, and gives praises to his Father" (*SLSB*, p 196).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 49:19 *go to the generation*. All people will die as their ancestors did before. *never again*. Both the artificial "light" of wealth and the light of life eternal are gone.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 49:20 See note, v 12.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 49** Wealth and earthly goods cannot buy off death. Those who foolishly rely on them find a very different end than those whose fortune and trust is in the Lord. In a culture saturated with great personal and national prosperity, our own relative wealth and advantage easily become false "gods" to which we look for all good things. Neither the god of money nor any person can pay the ransom price for sin or overcome death. Christ alone has done this for us by His death and resurrection. • Thanks be to God, who has ransomed my soul from the power of the grave and made me rich in blessings. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 50** This Asaph psalm is separated from the rest of the Asaph psalms (73–83) that begin Book Three of the Psalter. God speaks in the first person (v v 5, 7–15, 16b–23). Note the piling up of divine names from the beginning: v 1, "The Mighty One" (*'El*), "God" (*'elohim*), "the LORD" (*yahweh*), a combination found elsewhere only in Jsh 22:22; v 6 "judge"; v 14, "Most High"; v 21, "I Am" (see ESV note); v 22, "God" (rare Hbr word *'eloah*). The divine judge is calling His people to account! See p 1227. *Asaph*. One of the Levites appointed by David to provide music for the temple services (1Ch 15:16–24; 25:1; 2Ch 29:30). The psalm gives an almost visionary scene that depicts a past, present, and future theophany (see p 39).

Format: V v 1–6, God the Lord comes to judge; v v 7–11, all belongs to Him; v v 12–15, God wants thanksgiving, fulfilled vows, and prayer; v v 16–18, neglect of God's Word; v v 19–21, evil speech; v v 22–23, God's threat and promise.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 50:1 *summons the earth*. Israel's Lord, the covenant God, has a grievous complaint to make against His unfaithful people. But the whole world will hear it.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 50:2 *Zion*. See p 844. *God shines forth*. Manifests His glory in both power and mercy.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 50:3 *God comes*. He is present at the temple as on Sinai. *devouring fire … mighty tempest*. Recalls Mount Sinai, where God first delivered His covenant to the frightened nation (Ex 19:18, 20; 20:18–19).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 50:4 *He calls to the heavens*. God issues a subpoena for all creation to appear as witnesses when He judges His people (cf Dt 31:28; 32:1; 1Pt 4:17).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 50:5 *covenant*. Israel stands in a special relationship to God by virtue of the first sacrifices (Ex 24:5–8; cf Gn 15:9–18), which the covenant worship forms kept in effect.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 50:6 *heavens declare*. Bearing witness to His righteousness. *God Himself is judge!* God alone is just and the judge, whether this visionary scene takes place in the past, present, or on the Last Day. See p 792. *Selah*. See p 993.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 50:7 *testify against you*. God acts as prosecuting attorney as well as judge (see p 792). There will be no rebuttal witnesses against His truth.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 50:8 *sacrifices*. Daily temple services are done by rote, suggesting that God depends on such works. "Such passages do not condemn works, which God certainly had commanded as outward exercises in this government. They condemn the godless opinion that people thought, that by their works they appeased God's wrath, and so cast away faith" (Ap V 86).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 50:8–9 God's Law and sacrifices are not obsolete, but God's people are perverting the purpose of sacrifices and burnt offerings if they think they can put God under obligation to them by giving Him what He already owns (v v 7–11). Sacrifices are not magic, automatically bending God to grant wishes.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 50:10 *every beast*. Nothing that already belongs to our Creator can be "given" to Him! Right sacrifice is trust that acknowledges our need for His deliverance (v v 14–15).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 50:12 *hungry*. Priests received food portions from the temple sacrifices, but God does not hunger.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 50:13–14 Slain animals are an insult to God unless the sacrifice is offered to Him in humble recognition of total dependence on His unearned mercy (cf Lv 7:12–13). *vows*. Payment of vows (Lv 7:16) likewise is a sign of gratitude to God for answering prayer. See p 7.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 50:15 *call upon Me*. See p 842. All our acts of worship and our entire lives are now offered to and accepted by God through His Son, the personal Savior whom we call upon in times of trouble, and who, without condition, promises to deliver us (cf Heb 13:15). *glorify Me*. Glorifying is never our work, but calling upon God and receiving His deliverance in thanksgiving (faith!) is the worship that glorifies Him. (See note, v v 13–14.) "God wants Himself to be known, He wants Himself to be worshiped, so that we receive benefits from Him and receive them because of His mercy, not because of our merits" (Ap IV 60; see XXIV 29).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 50:16 *recite My statutes … covenant on your lips?* God shifts from addressing the mindlessly religious (v v 7–15) to the outright "wicked" of Israel (v v 16–21). They could rattle off the statutes and the covenant as at the reading of the Law (Dt 31:10–13) or during covenant renewal (2Ki 23:1–3). Public allegiance hides private evil.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 50:17 *hate discipline*. Ignoring God's covenant and the instruction of His Word. *cast My words behind you*. Defying God as

described in v v 18–20.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 50:18 *thief … adulterers*. Ter: "It is not enough that we do no such things ourselves, unless we break all connection also with those who do" (*ANF* 3:86). Cf Rm 1:32; 2:21–24.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 50:19 *your tongue*. Lies and slander are condemned in the Eighth Commandment.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 50:20 *your own mother's son*. Slander of the closest blood relative was considered the most heartless kind of betrayal.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 50:21 *have been silent*. God is not deaf, dumb, and blind to wickedness. He patiently awaits our repentance! Cf Rm 2:3–4. *one like yourself*. They show their contempt for God by viewing Him as tolerant of evil like themselves.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 50:23 *orders his way*. Shows the fruit of faith. Bern: "When your breasts are beaten with penitent hands, and your pavements worn with your knees, your altars heaped with vows and devout prayers, your cheeks furrowed with tears; when groan and sighs resound on all sides and the sacred roofs echo with spiritual songs instead of worldly pleadings, there is nothing which the citizens of heaven more love to look upon, nothing is more agreeable to the eyes of the Heavenly King" (*SLSB*, p 77). *salvation*. See p 843. Luth: "The last verse teaches us that to call upon God in distress and thank Him is the true worship, the most pleasing offering, and the right way to salvation" (*PIML*, p 68).
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 50** God comes as a judge to reprimand His people for the unbelief that hides behind careless ritualism and hypocritical religiosity. We mask our sin by hiding behind false piety, or merely "going through the motions" of Christian worship (confessing, hearing, communing), ignoring the deadly seriousness of sin. Sin is not magically waved away; true repentance turns away from sin as the horror and poison that it is, and clings to the perfect, once for all sacrifice of God's Son dying on the cross. • O Lord, we receive Jesus and all the benefits of His sacrifice in Word and Sacrament. We praise and glorify You for this great salvation! Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 51** Fourth of seven penitential psalms (cf 6; 32; 38; 102; 130; 143). David confesses his sin with Bathsheba in this intensely personal lament that has become significant for the Church's liturgy (v v 10–12 in the Offertory, v 15 in the opening sentences of Matins and Vespers and as the Introit for Ash Wednesday). David not only explains sin and its

deadly consequences as powerfully present in all people, but he also unfolds God's re-creative mercy as He works repentance and forgiveness. *To the choirmaster … gone in to Bathsheba*. David's confession (cf 2Sm 11:1–12:25) is intended for public worship, for the whole nation to pray (cf v v 18–19).

Format: V v 1–2, opening appeal for mercy; v v 3–6, confession of sin; v v 7–12, prayers for cleansing; v v 13–17, willing service of a contrite heart; v v 18–19, prayer for Zion.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 51:1 *steadfast love … abundant mercy*. David appeals not to God's justice but to His loving-kindness. See p 843.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 51:2 *Wash me*. Filthy with evil deeds, David petitions God as the only one who can cleanse him (cf v 7).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 51:4 *You only*. Sin against our neighbors is ultimately against God, who created neighbors and put them there for us to love. *justified*. God (e.g. in condemning David through Nathan, 2Sm 12:7) always declares the right judgment: evil must be called evil. Like the thief on the cross (Lk 23:41), David accepts God's verdict. Cited in Rm 3:4 as Paul describes God alone as "true" and everyone else a "liar." See Ap XIIB 11.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 51:5 *brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me*. Sexual union of husband and wife, which initiates life, is not itself sinful but commanded by God (Gn 1:28). David knows that it is not only what he occasionally does wrong that he must confess. His evil act brought to the surface the depth of his sinfulness (Gn 8:21; Ps 58:3). "This hereditary sin is such a deep corruption of nature that no reason can understand it. Rather, it must be believed from the revelation of Scripture. (See Psalm 51:5; Romans 6:12–13; Exodus 33:3; Genesis 3:7–19)" (SA III I 3). Mel: "He does not deplore the sin of [his] mother, but his own…. There was born with me an aversion away from God and a corrupted tendency. Therefore he testifies that there is sin in human beings which they bring with them when they are born" (Chem, *LTh* 1:272).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 51:6 *inward being*. More than just the soul (139:13–16; Jb 38:36).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 51:7 *Purge … wash me*. By God's hand alone, the stain of sin is removed. Chem: "He indicates that this is the proper use of these ceremonies, namely, that through them the merits of the Messiah are applied, and faith confirmed and sealed, as happens with us in the case of

the sacraments" (*LTh* 2:649).*hyssop*. Plant with hairy branches, used to apply blood on doorposts at Passover, to sprinkle water for purification on those who had touched a corpse, and to cleanse leprosy.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 51:8 *You have broken*. Even the body felt the crush of spiritual anguish (which can include physical illness) and relief by the joy of God's absolution.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 51:10 *Create in me a clean heart*. As God called "the heavens and the earth" into existence (Gn 1:1), so the coming into being of a clean heart requires the Word of the Creator. Chem: "[He means] a heart which rightly believes that it has been purified by God through faith" (*LTh* 2:572). Gr Naz: "The first wisdom is a life worthy of praise, and kept pure for God, or [rather] being purified for Him Who is all-pure and all-luminous, Who demands of us, as His only sacrifice, purification—that is, a contrite heart and the sacrifice of praise, and a new creation in Christ, and the new man…. By this a crew of fishermen have taken the whole world in the meshes of the Gospel-net" (*NPNF* 2 7:247). In the liturgy, v v 10–12 are the Offertory sung in response to God's Word and preaching. See p 959; see also FC SD II 26.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 51:11–12 *Your presence*. To be denied access to the earthly tabernacle of God's mercy is the worst of all possibilities to David. *take not*. The tragic example of Saul's rejection (1Sm 16:14) might have motivated this urgent request as David contemplated the ultimate end of a hardened heart: separation from God. "When holy people—still having and feeling original sin and daily repenting and striving against it—happen to fall into manifest sins (as David did into adultery, murder, and blasphemy [2 Samuel 11]), then faith and the Holy Spirit have left them. The Holy Spirit does not permit sin to have dominion, to gain the upper hand so it can be carried out, but represses and restrains it from doing what it wants [Romans 6:14]. If sin does what it wants, the Holy Spirit and faith are not present" (SA III III 43–44). *Holy Spirit … willing spirit*. Bas: "It is called 'Spirit of God,' 'Spirit of truth which proceeds from the Father,' 'right Spirit,' 'a leading Spirit.' … Names are borne by the Spirit in common with the Father and the Son, and He gets these titles from His natural and close relationship" (*NPNF* 2 8:15, 30).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 51:13 *I will teach*. God's forgiveness transforms the sinner as it does this king. A fruit of repentance is leading others to

mercy as this psalm has done for generations. Cf Lk 22:32, Jesus' command to Peter.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 51:14 *bloodguiltiness*. Lit, "bloods"; Hbr expression for guilt. David's plot to cover up his adultery led to the bloody death of Uriah and others (cf 2Sm 11:17; 12:9), adding also this guilt to David.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 51:15 *open my lips*. David asks to now joyfully declare God's praise. Prayed in the liturgy, this verse is a profound part of the Christian's sacrifice of prayer and praise. "Such promises certainly ought to encourage and kindle our hearts to pray with pleasure and delight. For He testifies with His own Word that our prayer is heartily pleasing to Him. Furthermore, it shall certainly be heard and granted, in order that we may not despise it or think lightly of it and pray based on chance" (LC III 20).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 51:16 *not be pleased with a burnt offering*. God commanded ritual sacrifice for sins but not for empty formalism. The sincere heart trusts in the blood and sacrifice of the Lamb, who "takes away the sin of the world!" (Jn 1:29). Cf v 19, which does not contradict but interprets this verse.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 51:17 *a broken spirit*. Even the best sacrifice is nothing if done without a contrite heart, which knows it owes everything to God, deserves nothing from Him, and has forgiveness, life, and salvation in Him alone.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 51:18 *Zion*. See p 844.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 51:19 *right sacrifices*. Rejected burnt offerings (v 16) give place to right ones offered by sinners transformed and accepted by God's grace. They are now offered with a contrite heart, which God creates by His Word.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 51** This anguished cry of confession from the depths of guilt finds God's absolution and renewal on the certain footing of grace alone (*sola gratia*). Sin is an inheritance, born in us, ever damaging us. None of our works can ever set us free from terror, despair, or death. However, God has blotted out even the worst of our sins—adultery and murder—by Jesus' sacrifice. • Holy Spirit, create me new again, giving joy for sadness. Have mercy on me, O God, and cleanse me from my sin. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 52** Deeply personal lament of David as he speaks directly to a vicious enemy (v v 1–7). He fearlessly faces this evil one, who

has a twisted moral sense ("you love evil … and lying" [v 3]). David announces God's judgment (v 5) and comforts himself in God's "steadfast love" (v 8 echoes v 1). The tone is similar to that of Is 22:15–19. *Maskil*. See p 841. *Doeg … Ahimelech*. Chief of Saul's herdsmen, Doeg denounced Ahimelech the priest to Saul after he saw the fugitive David receive aid from him (1Sm 21:1–9). Bloodthirsty Saul declared Ahimelech guilty by association with David and ordered Doeg to slaughter Ahimelech, his family, 85 priests, and the whole city of Nob (1Sm 22:6–23).

Format: V v 1–4, deceitful tongue; v v 5–7, end of the deceitful; v v 8–9, life of the godly.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 52:1 *mighty man?* Specifically Doeg, but ultimately all who stand as self-satisfied liars against God and "boast of evil." David employs sarcasm; this is no heroic warrior but only Saul's shepherd acting big. David likely speaks this psalm against Saul, the chief culprit, since Doeg is only a secondary figure.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 52:2 *sharp razor*. Like the traitorous tongue whose testimony doomed Ahimelech, or the very sword that Doeg used to strike him down (1Sm 22:18–19).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 52:3 *Selah*. See p 993.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 52:5 *tent*. God will "snatch" and "tear" the evil man from his dwelling. *from the land of the living*. In contrast, the psalmist dwells securely like a deeply rooted "tree" in the "house of God" (v 8).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 52:6 *laugh*. Not simple vengeful glee but the assurance that God frustrates the evil designs of the "worker of deceit" (v 2).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 52:8 *green olive tree*. David finds refuge in God's steadfast love, even thriving like a firmly rooted, long-living tree. *house of God*. The temple in Jerusalem was not yet built, but God was accessible in His tabernacle.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 52:9 *wait for Your name*. God has not only revealed His name but also locates it, and so Himself and His mercy, for His people. See notes, 44:5, 8; 48:10; see also "name," p 843.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 52** Confident prayer remembers God's promises, and it trusts and waits on God's justice and love. In an unbelieving world, the wicked attack what is good, boast, and even thrive in their evil. Does God care? Yes! God has overruled the way of the wicked by sending His own Son to suffer and even die at the hand of evil people so

that, by His death and resurrection, He might comfort us by His enduring love. • I will thank You forever because You have done it! I will wait upon Your good name. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 53** Almost identical to Ps 14. In v v 2, 4, 5, and 6, the divine name *Lord* (*Yahweh*) is replaced, as one would expect in Book Two of the Psalter, by the term *God* (*Elohim*). In v 5, the content of 14:5–6 is recast. The superscription of Ps 53 is more elaborate than that of Ps 14. The order of the stories about men in 1Sm (ch 22 for Doeg; ch 25 for Nabal; and ch 26 for the Ziphites) is duplicated in three psalms: Ps 52 for Doeg; Ps 53 for the "fool" (Hbr *nabal*); and Ps 54 for the Ziphites. *Mahalath*. May mean a musical setting or a melody about sorrow. Appears also in Ps 88. *Maskil*. See p 841.

Format: Each verse is a separate stanza.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 53:1–3 (also 14:1–3) Cited by Paul in Rm 3:10–12 to make his case about the universal corruption of all people and thus their universal need for Christ's salvation.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 53:1 *There is no God*. By nature, all people act as if there were no God. *none who does good*. David and the other psalmists also count themselves as unrighteous (e.g., 130:3; 143:2).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 53:2 *seek after God*. See p 843.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 53:4 *eat up my people*. Evildoers satisfy their voracious appetites at the expense of others without any qualms or inhibitions.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 53:5 *no terror!* These words begin the chief difference between this and the nearly identical Ps 14, which may have been recast for this specific situation. God addresses His people by saying that there is no real cause for terror, for He will destroy the enemy "who encamps against" them. *scatters the bones*. God is already scattering their bones! They will not have the dignity of burial.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 53:6 *Zion*. See p 844; see also intros, Ps 46; 48. *fortunes*. God's deliverance from the present evil, pointing to that ultimate restoration by His messianic rule. *Jacob*. See note, 44:4. With its synonym, "Israel," Jacob designates not only God's people of the OT but the Church of all times.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 53** When evil fools encamp against God's people, He saves and restores them. We are all foolishly corrupt, doing iniquity and not good. We do not understand or seek after God where He

gives Himself. We all fall away from Him. The salvation that comes for us out of Zion is Jesus, who took our foolishness—our iniquity and corruption, our sin and death—and saved us by the seeming foolishness of His cross (1Co 1:18–25). • Though we have all alike become corrupt, O God, send Your salvation and restore our fortunes in Christ. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 54** Brief lament of David during another experience of betrayal (cf Ps 52) that nonetheless ends with thanksgiving and confidence in God's sure deliverance. Luth: "A psalm of prayer against the persecutors who seek the life of the godly on account of the Word of God. Thus Saul and those in Ziph had attempted to kill David on account of the Word of God, through which he had been called and consecrated to be king. He prays for deliverance from his enemies and vengeance upon them" (*PIML*, p 72). As David fled from Saul's murderous intent, he hid in the wilderness of Ziph in the southern part of Judah. In order to gain favor from Saul, the Ziphites betrayed David's whereabouts (1Sm 23:15–24; 26:1). *choirmaster*. See p 993. *stringed instruments*. See p 993. *Maskil*. See p 841.

Format: V v 1–2, appeal for salvation; v 3, ruthless attack; v v 4–5, God is my helper; v v 6–7, thanks for deliverance.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 54:1 *by Your name … by Your might*. Parallel phrases. God's name is synonymous with God Himself, who welcomes this prayer and will save from this treachery. Cf v 6.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 54:3 *strangers*. Ziphites, from whom David did not expect such a murderous threat. The Ziphites were a clan, or family, descended from noble Caleb (Jsh 15:24; 1Ch 2:42; 4:16). *set God before themselves*. Acting like those outside Israel who do not keep God in mind (cf 53). *Selah*. See p 993.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 54:4 *my helper*. David looks to none but God. This centerpiece of the psalm expresses confidence in God, even as enemies attack. See note, Gn 2:18.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 54:5 *put an end to them*. God will redress the situation and mete out proper punishment for their evil. See p 879.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 54:6 *freewill offering*. Expression of gratitude, not required by the Law (Ex 35:29; 36:3–5; Lv 7:16). Pledged as confidently as if the deliverance were an accomplished fact. *thanks to Your name, O LORD, for it is good*. With the spontaneous offering, a vow to praise God, whose goodness is seen in this pleasing outcome.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 54** The psalmist prays for deliverance amidst persecution by family and even strangers! He is confident that God will help as He always has. In times of sudden testing and unexpected trouble, we easily become disillusioned and wonder if God has abandoned us. However, in every trouble, God is our sure helper. The deliverance He provides in Christ, who Himself knew persecution unto death, makes us triumphant despite every appearance to the contrary. • God, thank You for being my helper, the upholder of my life. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 55** Author asks God for help because he finds himself in a dangerous city, betrayed by a close friend, and in great peril. He shares his situation in order to teach wisdom. Some have seen in this psalm a reference to Ahithophel's betrayal of David (2Sm 16:20–23) during the revolt led by David's son Absalom (2Sm 15–17). Due to a lack of specific reference in the psalm, no certain identification of the historical context is possible. *choirmaster*. See p 993. *stringed instruments*. See p 993. *Maskil*. See p 841.

Format: V v 1–3, appeal for God to hear; v v 4–8, terror; v v 9–11, violence in the city; v v 12–15, betrayal by a friend; v v 16–19, call on the Redeemer; v v 20–21, deception by a companion; v v 22–23, God treats the righteous and the wicked in different ways.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 55:1 *hide not*. Translated as "ignore" in Dt 22:4. A vivid way of asking for help.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 55:3 *drop trouble*. His enemies are like clouds that rain down trouble and affliction upon him. In 140:10, David turns the figure of speech around, wishing that hot coals would fall upon his enemies.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 55:4 *terrors of death*. Psalmist finds himself in such great peril that his life is clearly in jeopardy. The dread of death and the grave weigh heavily on his heart.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 55:6 *I would fly away*. David longs to escape his predicament but, for whatever reason, cannot flee. Jerome records this verse used as an early Christian prayer when facing death: "When the pain which she [Paula] bore with such wonderful patience darted through her, as if she saw the heavens opened she would say: 'Oh that I had wings like a dove!'" (*NPNF* 2 6:196).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 55:7 *Selah*. See p 993.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 55:9 *Destroy*. See p 879. *divide their tongues*. God divided the people of earth into different languages at Babel (Gn 11:5–9) in

order to stop their plans to build together in pride and power. The psalmist asks God to do the same thing to his enemies who are conspiring against him.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 55:10 *they go around it on its walls*. Violence and strife (v 9) are described as guards that walk along their assigned routes on the city wall.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 55:12–14 *not an enemy … my equal, my companion*. The cruelest blow—a close friend, a man of equal social stature, and a companion in thick and thin, has betrayed him.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 55:12 Note the sevenfold description of the city's character: violence, strife (v 9); iniquity, trouble (v 10); ruin, oppression, fraud (v 11). Seven, as in all the days of the week, often symbolized fullness. See p 217.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 55:14 *God's house … throng*. Close fellowship he enjoyed with this (formerly) close friend extended even to matters of faith. Together, they had worshiped at God's house with the others who had gathered for feast days and holy assemblies.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 55:15 *Sheol alive*. See p 792. Psalmist calls for swift judgment against his enemies, including his former friend. He wishes the earth would open and swallow his adversaries immediately, as it did the sons of Korah (cf Nu 16).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 55:17 *Evening and morning*. Hours of sacrifice and prayer at the tabernacle. People in the OT considered evening to be the beginning of the new day (cf Gn 1:5, 8, 13, 19, 23, and 31). *noon*. Like Daniel (Dn 6:10), this psalmist offers prayer three times each day. He prays to the Lord from the beginning to the end of each day, entrusting his life to God's care.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 55:18 *battle that I wage*. Author focuses on the physical danger and conflict he faces in the evil city, but his trust and confidence in God transcends every danger, physical or spiritual, that he may experience.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 55:19 *do not change*. Psalmist's enemies refuse to change their attitude toward him or repent of their sin before God. As a result, God will respond to them with discipline and judgment.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 55:20 *My companion … his covenant*. Traitor of v v 12–14 broke the bond (covenant) of peace not only with the psalmist but also with all his previous friends when he turned against him. See p 127.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 55:22 *Cast your burden on the* LORD. God does not promise to keep His people from all harm. He does promise, however, to be with His children and work all things together for their good (Rm 8:28). The psalmist reminds himself and us to give to the Lord all burdens, cares, and troubles because He faithfully keeps His promise (1Pt 5:7). *never … moved*. Hbr construction expresses the certainty of the believer and the dependability of God when troubles come.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 55:23 *pit of destruction*. See p 792. *half their days*. Those who live by the sword will die by the sword (Mt 26:52), living out only part of their natural life span. *But I will trust in You*. No matter how the current situation plays out, the author will confidently rely on God for his safety and security.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 55** The author finds himself in a town full of wickedness and violence, betrayed by a trusted friend and colleague, with no one to help except God. He turns to the Lord in prayer, entrusting his life to God's hand with confidence. When troubles press hard, we may find it easy to give in to our feelings and give up on God. The psalmist's steadfastness challenges us to trust in God's mercy. Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Righteous One, faced a city full of violence and plots against His life. Betrayed by Judas, He endured the cross, where He turned to the Father with confidence and gave His life as the ransom price for ours. • Lord, inscribe and keep Your promises in my heart. Hold me firm in faith and confidence, even if terror and distress befall me. In Christ, I am unafraid, and I look to You for help, for I know You will come and rescue me. Amen. (See AE 24:16.)

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 56** Psalmist finds himself in great peril from enemies and turns to God with confidence. In 1Sm 21:10–15, David flees from King Saul (who wants to kill him) to the Philistine city of Gath. Since David had killed a great many Philistines, he feared for his life. He survived by pretending to be crazy until he was able to escape back into safe territory. *The Dove on Far-off Terebinths*. Directions to the choirmaster for musical accompaniment. *Miktam*. See p 841.

Format: V v 1–4, trust in God; v v 5–7, ill will of the attackers; v v 8–11, God is for me; v v 12–13, thanks to God.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 56:1–2 *Be gracious*. See p 842. *man … attacker … enemies*. David refers specifically to the Philistines who seek his life. They wait in ambush, carefully watching for a time to strike.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 56:4 *What can flesh do to me?* God's people should not fear mere human beings—all they can harm is the physical self (cf Mt 10:28).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 56:5 *injure my cause*. David's enemies say things that make his precarious situation worse, planning together and conspiring against him. David often felt himself the target of verbal attacks (cf 5:9).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 56:7 *In wrath cast down*. David prays that God will turn the tables on those who plot against him, speak against him, and seek his life (cf 5:10). *peoples*. Those who have one thing in common—their enmity toward David.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 56:8 *tossings*. God cares for His people and pays attention to their pain, fear, and grief. Though David tossed and turned in the night, stressed with anxiety, God has taken careful note of every single moment. *my tears in Your bottle*. God does not forget a single tear shed in grief (cf Rv 21:4). *bottle*. An animal hide prepared to hold wine, milk, or water. *in Your book?* Permanently recorded on a scroll or tablet. Such is the comforting depth of God's love for His children.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 56:9 *I know, that God is for me*. David knows that God is with him because God chose him to be king (1Sm 16:1–13), empowered him to defeat Goliath (1Sm 17), gave him victory in many battles, and protected him from King Saul and other enemies. In short, David and we know God loves us regardless of the circumstances in which we find ourselves.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 56:10 *God … Lord*. In poetic fashion, David confesses his faith in the one true God, who has rescued His people time and again (*Yahweh*, the great "I AM" of Ex 3:14). See p 1227.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 56:12 *my vows … thank offerings*. David will return to the tabernacle to fulfill his commitments in joy and thanksgiving, publicly proclaiming God's salvation. See p 7. "Sacrifices of praise … are the preaching of the Gospel, faith, prayer, thanksgiving, confession, the troubles of saints, yes, all good works of saints. These sacrifices are not satisfactions for those making them, nor can they be applied to others to merit the forgiveness of sins or reconciliation" (Ap XXIV 25).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 56:13 *walk before God*. See p 7; see also "way," p 844. *light of life*. David anticipates living a life pleasing to God, in the light of His love and salvation. Luth: "[Christ] ushers in the morning and the day. He teaches us how to be saved and how to be delivered from death and sin.

Therefore He says: 'I am the Light which illumines the whole world'; for He alone liberates from sin, death, the devil, and hell" (AE 23:324).

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 56** Even in the midst of danger, David rejoices in God's love and His certain deliverance from death. When we face trials, we may be tempted to worry about our own welfare or feel like giving up in hopelessness. Instead, we can remember that our problems are nothing new and that God is able to help in every situation. Through these experiences, He strengthens our faith and draws us closer to Jesus Christ, our Savior. • Father, by Your Spirit, help us walk before You in faith, joy, and humble obedience. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 57** *choirmaster*. See p 993. *Do Not Destroy*. May be a popular tune; also mentioned in Ps 58; 59; 75. Associated with prayer to God to save someone and bring blessing out of trouble (cf Is 65:8). *Miktam*. See p 841. *cave*. In 1Sm 22:1–2, David found refuge in the cave of Adullam. King Saul was after him (cf 1Sm 24), and he had only narrowly escaped from the Philistine city of Gath (1Sm 21:10–15; cf Ps 56). Since his life was in danger from a variety of enemies, David turned to God for help.

Format: V v 1–3, confident plea for God's mercy; v 4, in the midst of lions; v 5, a refrain exalting God; v v 6–10, praise to the Lord; v 11, a refrain exalting God.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 57:1 *shadow of Your wings … storms of destruction*. When storms come, a bird gathers her chicks under her protective wing until the danger is past. Using this vivid picture, the psalmist portrays God's secure love and powerful protection (cf Mt 23:37). See note, 17:8–9.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 57:2 *fulfills His purpose for me*. David submits to God's will, knowing that God works for his good (cf Rm 8:28).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 57:3 *send from heaven … God will send out*. As a king sends powerful servants to help his people, so God sends His mercy and faithfulness, more powerful than any other force in the universe. *steadfast love and His faithfulness!* See p 843.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 57:4 *midst of lions … fiery beasts … teeth … tongues*. Though confident in God for help, David still finds himself in the midst of danger. He characterizes his enemies as lions stalking their prey (cf 7; 22; 35), burning with desire to destroy him. (Cf 1Pt 5:8.)

PSALMS—NOTE ON 57:5 Refrain; high note of praise (cf v 11). David does not wait for God to deliver him before praising Him; in the midst of

his trouble, and confident of God's love, David glorifies God.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 57:7 *heart is steadfast*. Psalmist confidently expects God to intervene. Repetition surrounds the source of his confidence: God. Luth: "So then, before a person begins to pray, he should examine and probe himself to ascertain whether he believes or doubts that his prayer will be fulfilled. If he finds that he doubts or is uncertain, or that he prays at random, the prayer is nothing" (AE 42:76).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 57:8 *my glory!* Equivalent to "myself" (as also "my heart," v 7). Hbr has no reflexive pronoun ("myself"), so writers use phrases such as these to refer to their whole being. *harp and lyre!* See p 993. *awake the dawn!* His joy rouses him before the sun; his praise and adoration of God awaken the sun, so great is his exultation.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 57:9 *the peoples … the nations*. David will not limit his public praise and thanksgiving to an audience of Israel alone. He will shout God's glory to all the world so all nations and peoples know the God who saves.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 57:10 *steadfast love*. See p 843. *great to the heavens*. God and His mercy are not limited to Israel—they reach over all the earth and as high as the heavens themselves.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 57:11 See note, v 5.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 57** David turns to God for help. Chased by Saul, his king and father-in-law, David flees for his life and hides in a cave to avoid discovery. He confidently asks God for deliverance and praises God for rescuing him even before it happens (cf 2Sm 22). We often pray with uncertainty and hesitation, doubting God's love and interest in our lives. Trusting in Jesus, we have confidence that God listens to us as a loving father listens to his beloved children. • Exalted Savior, make my heart steadfast in faith and prayer. Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 58** *choirmaster*. See p 993. *Do Not Destroy*. See Ps 57 intro. *Miktam*. See p 841. David does not refer to a concrete historical situation as he does in Ps 51; 52; 54; 56; 57; 59; and 60. See p 879.

Format: V v 1–2, judgment against gods; v v 3–5, state of the wicked; v v 6–9, condemnation of the wicked; v v 10–11, rejoicing of the righteous.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 58:1 *you gods?* Sometimes used to describe earthly rulers. Rulers and judges have great power over ordinary people ("children

of man"). Unlike the supreme judge (God), human leaders may distort justice and pervert righteousness.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 58:2 *in your hearts*. Cf Mt 15:19.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 58:3 *estranged from the womb*. All people begin life as sinners, rebels against God and self-centered (even David, 51:5). In the case of the "wicked," this becomes a way of life, unrestrained by love for God or people.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 58:4–5 *deaf adder … charmers … enchanter*. Snake charmers seem to control deadly serpents by their music (although snakes actually follow the motion of the musical instrument). Wicked people, like serpents, have sealed their ears against God's warnings and the pleas of people.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 58:6 *teeth in their mouths*. Shifting metaphors from snakes to lions (both serious dangers in ancient Israel), David asks God to render the wicked powerless, unable to harm him or anyone else.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 58:7 *vanish like water*. Like water flowing into the hot sand, leaving no trace behind. *blunted*. Like a dull blade, their selfish schemes and wicked plans are ineffective.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 58:8 *dissolves into slime*. According to popular tradition, a snail or slug dissolves to form its slimy path. *stillborn child*. Or, miscarriage. Author hopes the wicked have no more future and no greater accomplishments in life than a stillborn child. See p 879.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 58:9 *heat of thorns*. Thorns (dry or green) burn very quickly, almost in an instant. He prays that God will frustrate their plans even more quickly than the time it would take for a flame to reach the cooking pot above it.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 58:10 *rejoice when he sees the vengeance … bathe his feet in the blood of the wicked*. Graphically depicted, the ultimate outcome of the wicked under the administration of a just and righteous God will be their defeat and the exoneration of the righteous. See p 879.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 58:11 *reward*. Just as sin produces fruit that leads to condemnation (cf Gal 5:19–21), so faith shows itself through action and ultimately receives God's approval (cf Mt 25:31–46). It might look as though people get away with all kinds of wickedness on earth, but God's justice will finally prevail.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 58** David challenges the leaders of the people (judges and rulers) by condemning the unjust and dishonest. When you find

yourself in a position of power over someone, treat that person as one precious to God, purchased by the blood of Christ. Jesus suffered unjustly before the Jewish Council (the Sanhedrin) and the Roman governor. The plans of both sets of judges came to nothing; ultimate justice was served on the cross (condemnation of sin) and at the empty tomb (public vindication of Jesus as our Savior). • Heavenly Father, lead us to do the right thing, even when it seems no one notices. Lead us to live for You and remember that You set all things right in the end. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 59** V v 1–7 are a prayer for help in time of need; v v 8–17 reflect the author's assurance of deliverance. Both end on a note of praise for God, our strength and security (v v 9, 17). *choirmaster*. See p 993. *Do Not Destroy*. See Ps 57 intro. *Miktam*. See p 841. Scripture does not record a specific event that fits this superscription. However, Saul's hatred of David is well attested (1Sm 19–31).

Format: V v 1–2, prayer for deliverance; v v 3–5, faultless; v v 6–7, my enemies are like dogs; v v 8–10, God's protection; v v 11–13, appeal to trap but not kill enemies; v v 14–15, my enemies are like wandering dogs; v v 16–17, God is a fortress and refuge.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 59:3 *lie in wait*. Saul sent men to spy on David to catch him in some "crime" for which execution would be the remedy. *no transgression*. David pleads innocence. He has given Saul no reason to seek his life.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 59:5 *Lord God of hosts*. *Yahweh* ("I AM," Ex 3:14) is God's personal, covenant name. "God" is a general term, but when coupled with "hosts" (Hbr *tseba'oth*), it depicts God as the commanding general of all the angelic armies. See p 1227. *God of Israel*. Recalls the personal connection between God and His people. David calls upon God, who has committed Himself to His people and has the power to intervene anywhere and at any time. *the nations*. Not only did God's chosen leaders face enemies from within God's own people, but Gentiles also often plotted Israel's ruin. The personal relationship between God and David extends to God's faithful people. *Selah*. See p 993.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 59:6 *like dogs*. Dogs were unsavory, half-wild, and vicious scavengers that lay low during the day but hunted the cities at night for food. Any city in the Near East hosted such packs (cf v v 14–15).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 59:7 *swords in their lips*. Pictures words as weapons. *hear us*. David's enemies mock God, thinking He does not notice

their lies (cf 3:2).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 59:10 *meet me*. God will come to his aid and stand beside him.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 59:11 *Kill them not*. People forget easily. If all enemies are swept away, God's people will be tempted to forget God. Cf 1Sm 24; 26. *O Lord, our shield!* Psalm is both personal and corporate, including all of God's faithful people. Cf 28:7.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 59:12 *trapped*. Dogs (v 6) may be caught and domesticated. *cursing*. Calling down misfortune on another by magical incantations or other supernatural means (cf 10:7; curses, lies, and threats were used as weapons by the enemy).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 59:13 *rules over Jacob to the ends of the earth*. Special covenant relationship between God and Israel ("Jacob") foreshadows special relationship God has with His people that forms the foundation for the Good News of a Savior who will give His life for all people of every nation.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 59:14–15 *dogs*. See note, v 6.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 59:16 *steadfast love*. See p 843. *day of my distress*. Time of trouble, danger, and fear.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 59** When surrounded by enemies (or difficult circumstances), we turn to God in confidence and trust. Whatever He wills for us is best, even if we don't understand it at the time. The world and all that is in it is passing away. Empires come and go. Only God and His promise of salvation in Jesus Christ stand firm, stand fast, and stand forever.
• O mighty Fortress, our trusty Shield and Weapon, deliver us from the snaps and snarls of the wicked. Trap them with Your Law and turn their hearts by Your Gospel. Let Your people know peace amid strife. Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 60** Israel faced many enemies throughout her long history. During David's reign, wars were fought with Syria to the north and with Edom to the southeast (as well as other countries). Of course, biblical writers do not record every battle or even every war. Apparently a hostile nation defeated Israel (Edom?), and David turned to the Lord for help. 2Sm 8 and 1Ch 18 record God's gracious answer and the victorious outcome. Though God has seemingly turned a deaf ear to His people (v v 1–3), David prays for God's help in battle (v v 4–8) and ends this psalm on a note of confidence (v v 10–12). *choirmaster*. See p 993. *Shushan Eduth*. May mean "The Lily of the Testimony." A tune or a type of musical

accompaniment for the psalm. *Miktam*. See p 841. *for instruction*. Hbr *lamad*, "to teach." Probably means that the reader should use this psalm to encourage and uplift when suffering defeat or another type of setback. Songs were also used to instruct the young and the nation. See note, Pr 1:8.

Format: V v 1–3, the Lord rejects Israel; v v 4–5, Israel's banner; v v 6–8, Israel is the Lord's chosen army; v v 9–12, plea for victory.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 60:1 *rejected us*. Defeat in battle testified to a break in the covenant relationship between God and Israel. As a result of some sin, God had given victory to the enemy (cf Jsh 7). However, not all suffering is punishment for sin. See p 837. *restore us*. David prays for God to grant victory in battle.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 60:2 *quake*. Metaphor describing effect of defeat on national confidence.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 60:3 *made us stagger*. God's people are dazed and discouraged by the defeat they have suffered. See note, Is 51:17.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 60:4 *banner*. Flag or standard to rally retreating troops for a victorious counterattack. The Lord Himself raises such a flag for those who trust Him (cf Ex 17:14–16; Sg 2:4). *fear*. See p 842. *Selah*. See p 993.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 60:5 *right hand*. See p 843.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 60:6 *in His holiness*. God keeps His promises and threats. He has promised all the land of Canaan to His people (Gn 15:18–21) and, despite this defeat, He will deliver it to them. *Shechem … Vale of Succoth*. From the west (Shechem) to east of the Jordan (Vale of Succoth), across the center of Israel. See color map 1.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 60:7 *Gilead … Manasseh … Ephraim … Judah*. Locations east, west, north, and south in Israel. God rules as sovereign over all of the Promised Land. *helmet … scepter*. Ephraim and other tribes lay north of Judah, forming a protective buffer from invading armies. From Judah would come the Messiah, the eternal King, symbolized by the royal scepter.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 60:8 *Moab … Edom*. People southeast of Israel, related to God's people (Moab from Lot, Abraham's nephew; Edom from Esau, Jacob's twin brother). Sadly, both were traditional enemies of Israel. *cast my shoe*. Perhaps to step on the property as a claim to ownership or as a sign of redemption (cf Ru 4:7–9). *Philistia*. Located west and south of Israel, also a traditional enemy (cf 1Sm 17). See color map 2.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 60:9 *fortified city?* Capital city of Edom, Sela, was almost impregnable.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 60:10 *You do not go forth*. Only God can accomplish the overthrow of Israel's enemies, yet He has refused to do so.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 60:11 *vain is the salvation of man!* Human help is worthless against such enemies. Salvation comes only from God. See "salvation," p 843.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 60** God disciplines those He loves, and He tests His people to build their faith and strengthen the relationship of grace. Whether you experience victory or defeat, persist in prayer and service to your Lord. In His care, you "shall do valiantly" (v 12). • When we face defeat, O Lord, keep our eyes on Your promises. When we experience loss, keep our hearts filled with Your peace. When we don't understand Your plan for us, keep the cross of Christ always before us—the depth and breadth and height of Your love for us. Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 61** David may have written this psalm when he "fled" during Absalom's attempted coup (as he says explicitly in Ps 3; cf 2Sm 15–17). *choirmaster*. See p 993. *stringed instruments*. See p 993.

Format: V v 1–3, God is my refuge; v v 4–5, dwelling with God; v v 6–7, preserve the king; v 8, constant praise.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 61:2 *the end of the earth*. Exaggeration or reference to border of Israel, to convey the isolation and loneliness David feels. *heart is faint*. Having exhausted his own physical and emotional resources, the psalmist turns to God for help. *the rock*. See p 843. Luth: "It is the purpose of the cross and adversities of all kinds to enable one to differentiate between the false and the true faith. God afflicts us in this way in order that our faith may be proved and made manifest before the world, with the result that others are attracted to the faith" (AE 30:17).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 61:4 *Your tent*. Perhaps the tabernacle in Jerusalem (God's embassy on earth), but it may be more general—to live with God and enjoy His blessing forever (cf 23:6; 27:5; Heb 9:11–12). *Your wings*. Figurative for God's protection and providence. See note, 57:1. "He has taken us as His own property under His shelter and protection so that He may govern us by His righteousness, wisdom, power, life, and blessedness" (LC II 30). *Selah*. See p 993.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 61:5 *vows*. Promises to God. See p 7. *heritage*. The Promised Land, its people, and ultimately salvation (cf Heb 11:8–10). See

"portion," p 7. *fear Your name*. See p 842.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 61:6 *the king*. David. *may his years endure to all generations!* God promised David that his descendant would rule forever (2Sm 7:16, fulfilled in Jesus, the messianic King).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 61:7 *steadfast love and faithfulness*. Attributes personified as guardian angels. See p 843.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 61:8 *my vows*. See p 7. The right response to God's saving acts is praise, which David promises to do every day (cf 7:17).
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 61** David turns once more to God for help in time of need, asking God to restore him to his throne in Jerusalem and bless him in the years and generations ahead. God often uses difficult times to strengthen our faith and redefine our priorities. If we have drifted away from the Lord, He can use a reversal of fortune in our earthly circumstance to make us aware of our precarious spiritual situation and bring us back to Him. David's prayer that the King would reign forever (v 7) is ultimately fulfilled in Christ Jesus, who embodies God's steadfast love and faithfulness forever. • O God, let me take refuge under the shelter of Your wings. Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 62** Hymn of peace and confidence in God, who alone provides security and hope. David does not identify the historical context, but the wisdom embodied in the psalm and the hint of weakness in v 3 suggest a time late in David's life (cf 2Sm 23:1–7). *choirmaster*. See p 993. *Jeduthun*. Either the name of a musician (or his family; cf 1Ch 25:1; Ps 39 intro) or a tune associated with him (cf 77:1).

Format: V v 1–2, only God brings salvation; v v 3–4, enemy plan; v v 5–7, on God rests salvation; v 8, appeal to trust God; v v 9–10, life is unsure; v v 11–12, power and love belong to God.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 62:1 *my soul waits in silence*. Calm attitude produced by confidence and peace in the Lord.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 62:2 *rock*. See p 843.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 62:3 *leaning wall*. Stone walls and fences are weakened by the passing seasons; so, too, are rulers.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 62:4 *high position*. The rich and powerful suffer the same fate as the weak and vulnerable. If anything, by virtue of their high position the powerful attract even more enemies than do common people. *bless … curse*. Enemies speak well of their victims to their face while seeking their destruction. See note, 59:12. *Selah*. See p 993.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 62:5 Psalmist addresses his soul, based on v v 1–2.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 62:7 *glory*. David's honor and reputation rest in God's powerful hands just as his life and throne do.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 62:8 *pour out your heart*. Author calls upon God's people to pray openly and honestly, turning to God for help in every need. Fran: "Do not therefore keep back anything for yourselves that He may receive you entirely who gives Himself up entirely to you" (*WSFA* 115).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 62:9 *low estate … high estate*. Lit, "sons of man … sons of [a noble] man." Whether from the lower or upper classes, poor or rich, unknown or famous, our time on earth is fleeting. What the world thinks is important is a waste of time. *balances*. If accurately measured, the priorities and values of the world are worthless. Ancient scales had two pans balanced against each other (Jb 31:6).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 62:10 Material goods, acquired legally or illegally, must pass away. "You can't take it with you."
PSALMS—NOTE ON 62:11 *Once … twice*. Vivid way of emphasizing the certainty of the statement that follows. See Pr 30 intro. *God has spoken*. Throughout David's life, God spoke to him and through him by the Holy Spirit (cf 2Sm 23:2).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 62:11–12 *power … steadfast love*. God has the power to condemn or to save, and, because He loves us, He wants to save us.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 62:12 *render to a man*. See note, 18:21–24.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 62** Wealth deceives people by promising happiness. In the end, wealth, power, and fame turn out to be lies because they do not deliver what they seem to promise. Even when our lives fall apart, our center and foundation hold firm: Nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rm 8:38–39). • "The Church's one foundation Is Jesus Christ, her Lord; She is His new creation By water and the Word. From heav'n He came and sought her To be His holy bride; With His own blood He bought her, And for her life He died." Amen. (*LSB* 644:1)
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 63** Psalm reflecting David's faith in the Lord and his willing submission to God's plans. Most likely, the psalm refers to David's flight from Absalom into the wilderness of Judea (2Sm 15–17), a time when the king fled Jerusalem and left his fate in the Lord's hands (2Sm 15:24–26).

Format: V v 1–4, longing for God; v v 5–8, contentment with God; v v 9–11, God will defeat the king's enemies.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 63:1 *my God*. Even in the wilderness and on the run, David expresses his faith and trust in God. *dry and weary land*. Either the arid place where David has taken refuge, or figurative for the difficult times in life when God seems far off. Luth: "With our own concerns and thoughts we torture ourselves and stew over trying to pull this off our neck and to get rid of it. There is an evil and clever devil riding me and other people and frequently playing these tricks on me in my temptation or anxiety, whether it has to do with spiritual or with secular affairs. He immediately butts in and makes you start stewing over it. In this way he snatches us from our prayer and makes us so dizzy that we do not even think of praying…. We should develop the habit, whenever we see anguish or need, to fall on our knees immediately and to spread the need before God, on the basis of this admonition and promise" (AE 21:232).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 63:2 *sanctuary*. David has the tabernacle and the ark of the covenant in mind, the "embassy" of heaven on earth. *beholding*. God's presence, perhaps similar to Isaiah's vision at his call to prophetic office in Is 6.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 63:3 *better than life*. God's love is precious on earth but leads to eternal life (cf 23:6).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 63:4 *bless*. See p 842. *lift up my hands*. See p 1276. Common posture of prayer was standing, with face raised to the heavens, arms held out and up with palms upward.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 63:5 *satisfied*. Metaphor for calm heart and quiet soul of a believer even in times of trouble and danger. *fat and rich food*. The most flavorful and therefore the best, which David left behind at his palace (cf 2Sm 15:13–16). God is not stingy when He gives His gifts.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 63:6 *meditate*. Hbr *hagah*, "ponder" by speaking to oneself. To remember God's gracious saving acts and apply the lessons of the past to the present situation. See p 842. *watches of the night*. The night was divided into several watches, segments of three or four hours, for sentry duty. See notes, Is 21:6–12.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 63:7 *shadow of Your wings*. See notes, 17:8–9; 57:1.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 63:8 *right hand*. See p 843; cf Jn 10:27–29.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 63:9 *those*. Probably Absalom's fellow conspirators. *depths of the earth*. See p 792.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 63:10 *jackals*. Doglike scavengers.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 63:11 *swear by Him*. Such oath-taking served as a confession of faith and an acknowledgment of the Lord as the one true God. See p 7.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 63** On the run, cut off from God's tabernacle and the capital city, Jerusalem, David turns to God in prayer and praise for His love and salvation. When we are in the "wilderness" and God seems distant, we may find ourselves tempted to focus on our troubles rather than turning to God in faith and confidence. David shows us the way to handle disaster and doubt: meditate on the Lord in prayer and thanksgiving (cf Php 4:4–7). Faith looks beyond the circumstances to the cross of Christ and sees God's love, holding fast to His promises to His children. • "My soul clings to You; Your right hand upholds me" (v 8). Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 64** *choirmaster*. See p 993.

Format: V v 1–6, the enemies' plots; v v 7–9, God defeats the enemies; v 10, rejoice in the Lord.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 64:1–2 *enemy … wicked … evildoers*. Psalmist's unnamed enemies, who plot against him.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 64:3 *whet*. To sharpen a sword or knife by drawing its edge along a fine-grained stone. The Hbr expression for *blade* is "mouth"; the tongue is the blade of the mouth. *bitter words*. Accusations. Luth: "Christian suffering … requires not merely all sorts of tortures and troubles, but more; their good name must be spit upon and slandered, and the world must boast loudly that in murdering the Christians it has executed the worst kind of criminal, whom the earth could no longer carry, and that it has done God the greatest and most acceptable service, as Christ says (John 16:2). Thus no name has ever appeared on earth so slanderous and disreputable as the name 'Christian.' No nation has ever experienced so much bitter opposition and attack by wicked and poisonous tongues as have the Christians" (AE 21:49).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 64:4 *blameless*. Innocent of any action that would justify the hostility of his enemies. See note, Jb 1:1.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 64:5 *snares*. Traps for small animals. People think they won't get caught in their lies and conspiracy (cf Jer 20:10).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 64:6 *inward mind and heart … are deep!* People's motives and secret thoughts cannot be easily fathomed (cf Pr 20:5).

People's capacity for evil is great, but God's capacity for love and mercy is greater (cf Ps 92:5; Is 55:6–9).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 64:7 *God shoots His arrow*. A surprise attack. Like a distant archer, God will suddenly act to rescue.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 64:8 *wag their heads*. Near Eastern gesture of contempt and derision (prophesied also of the Messiah at His crucifixion; cf 22:7). See p 1277.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 64:10 *righteous one*. See p 843.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 64** The psalmist's enemies conspire against him and seek his destruction, but he turns to the Lord in prayer and receives deliverance. When false rumors fly and your reputation suffers, seek divine justice. Turn to the Lord and put the situation in His hands. Do not try to "get even," but leave the outcome to God. Jesus also endured all kinds of plots against His life and slander during His ministry (Mk 15, especially v v 29–32). He knows how to justify you. • Lord, I exalt in You, my refuge. Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 65** Given the beauty of the psalm and its close connection to Ps 66–68, it may well have been written for a festival or as a liturgical praise song. *choirmaster*. See p 993. *Song*. See Ps 46 intro.

Format: V v 1–4, God draws us to Himself; v v 5–8, He governs creation; v v 9–13, He makes creation flourish.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 65:1 *Zion*. See p 844. *vows be performed*. Appropriate response to God's faithfulness, offering vows can be in the form of a thank offering, a public act of worship and praise, or some other demonstration of joyful trust in God, who answers prayer. See p 7.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 65:2 *all flesh*. All humanity.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 65:3 *atone*. Penalty for sin is death (Ezk 18:4; Rm 6:23). God "atones" (pays for) our sin through the death of the messianic King (cf Rm 3:24–25). See p 5.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 65:4 *the one You choose*. Faith is God's gift, not a human choice. God draws a person to Him by grace (cf Eph 2:8–9). *dwell in Your courts!* All believers continue to live in fellowship with God. See "courts of the Lord," p 842. *temple!* The tabernacle; the temple of Solomon was not yet built. See note, 5:7.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 65:5 *awesome deeds*. Deeds that create fear and terror in the hearts of God's enemies but inspire joy and celebration in His people (e.g., saving acts, such as the exodus, cf 66:5–6). *righteousness*. See

p 843. *the hope of all the ends of the earth*. God makes atonement for the sin of the whole world, vividly pictured as the "ends of the earth." God is the only hope for humanity.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 65:6 *girded*. As a person puts on a belt or other article of clothing for work or war, so God is portrayed as putting on almighty power to do the awesome deed of salvation.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 65:8 *ends of the earth*. See note, v 5. *You make the going out of the morning and the evening to shout for joy*. Wherever the sun rises and sets, God works wonders. God blesses believers and unbelievers alike with peace and prosperity (Mt 5:45).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 65:9 *visit the earth*. To take care of it (Jas 1:27). *river of God*. Vivid way of referring to rain, which falls over all the earth and brings forth crops (cf Ps 36:8). Luth: "Is it a small thing just because it happens every day? If the sun did not shine for ten days, then it would be a great thing. If there were no fire on earth except at one place, then, I think, it would be more precious than all the gold and silver in the world. If there were only one well in all the world, then I imagine that a drop of water would be worth more than a hundred thousand gulden, and in comparison beer and wine would be so much garbage…. God showers upon them such great and rich miracles, and they do not consider even one of them or thank Him for it! But if some clown shows up who can walk a tightrope or who has monkeys to display, him they admire, praise, and exalt. Therefore the psalmist says here that the works of God are great, but only in the eyes of the upright" (AE 13:367).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 65:10 The Lord orchestrates the rains and other natural phenomena that produce food for people. The planting and rains of v 10 are followed by the bountiful harvest of v 11.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 65:11 *crown*. Metaphorical for "bless," "bestow." *wagon tracks overflow*. Abundant rain fills the tracks (cf v v 9–10). Wherever the Lord passes by (pictured as riding in a wagon or chariot), abundance follows (cf 104:3).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 65:12–13 *pastures … hills … meadows*. Emphasis on herding. The psalmist paints a wonderful picture of lush vegetation sprouting up everywhere, almost like the Garden of Eden.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 65:13 The beauty of a hillside covered with sheep or a field waving in the wind inspires those who see it to praise God. *grain*.

One reference to crops. *shout and sing together for joy*. Perhaps the psalm was composed for a harvest festival, similar to a Thanksgiving service.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 65** David praises God for the forgiveness of sins, peace in the world, and prosperity in the land—a straightforward song of praise to God for His awesome grace. We have nothing except what God gives us, and the appropriate response to such amazing generosity, both spiritual and physical, is praise. David begins the list of gifts with the most important, the forgiveness of sins and the gift of faith. • "Blessed is the one You choose and bring near," O Lord! (v 4) Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 66** Psalm that can be offered by any believer in any time of hardship. The Lord's deliverance at the time of Hezekiah (2Ki 19:8–37; Is 37:8–38) may have been the original occasion that gave rise to this psalm. *Song*. See Ps 46 intro.

Format: V v 1–4, all the earth worships; v v 5–7, God's awesome deeds; v v 8–12, God tests His people; v v 13–15, offerings; v v 16–19, God hears me; v 20, closing blessing.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 66:1 *all the earth*. God is so great, all humanity and all creation are invited to praise Him (148:1–4, 7–12). All creation will acknowledge Him in eternity, though the unbelieving will do so only by compulsion (Is 45:23; Rm 14:11–12; Php 2:10–11; Col 2:15). Cf v 4.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 66:2 *name*. See p 843. God's name is not to be taken in vain (Ex 20:7) but is to be used to bless (Nu 6:22–27). "That is the true honor of His name, to look to it and call upon it for all consolation [Psalm 66:2; 105:1]" (LC I 70).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 66:3 *enemies come cringing to You*. It often appears that God's enemies triumph, but He has won the victory, and in eternity that will be clear to all (see notes, v 1; Php 2:10).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 66:4 *All the earth worships*. Or, "let all the earth worship" (cf v 1). *Selah*. See p 993.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 66:6 *sea into dry land*. Refers to both Israel's crossing of the Red Sea at the exodus and the people's crossing the Jordan into the Promised Land.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 66:7 *rules*. God's rule may be hidden at present; it will be clearly seen in eternity. See pp 1565–66. *the rebellious*. All who reject God through unbelief.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 66:8 *Bless*. See p 842.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 66:9 *kept our soul among the living*. God delivers us from death.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 66:10 *tested*. The Lord uses hardship to test the faith of His people, just as He tested the faith of Abraham (Gn 22:1–14). Believers should look upon all their hardships in this light. See p 837.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 66:11 *net … burden*. Their testing of faith is compared to the capture and domestication of an animal.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 66:12 *brought us out*. The exodus, and also a more general application to any hardship from which God delivers His people.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 66:13 *house*. The Lord's temple or tabernacle. *burnt offerings*. Kings usually offered whole burnt offerings (Lv 1), a sign of total devotion to the Lord. *vows*. The whole burnt offering would have been a visible expression of a vow of loyalty. See p 7.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 66:14 *when I was in trouble*. See Ps 66 intro.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 66:15 *burnt offerings*. See note, v 13.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 66:16 *Come and hear*. Possibly a public proclamation by the Israelite king, perhaps Hezekiah, in his official role as one who was to promote right faith and worship within Israel (cf 1Ki 8:12–21).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 66:18 *the Lord would not have listened*. Cf Pr 15:29; Is 1:15; 59:2–3. The Lord listened to the psalmist's prayer not because of the psalmist's worthiness but out of God's own "steadfast love" (v v 19–20).
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 66** The Lord's deeds of salvation, culminating in the ministry of Christ, assure His people that He will make all things, even hardships, work out for their ultimate good (Rm 8:28–29). Hardships may tempt us to abandon the faith, yet knowing that the Lord uses hardship to test our faith will strengthen us to hold on to our faith. • Bless You Lord, for Your saving deeds and promises. Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 67** Perhaps intended for corporate worship, before or after the benediction; v 6 suggests the possibility of its use in connection with the harvest. *choirmaster*. See p 993. *stringed instruments*. See p 993. *Song*. See Ps 46 intro.

Format: V v 1–3, a prayer for grace; v v 4–5, the Lord is fair to the nations; v v 6–7, a promise of blessing.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 67:1 Virtual quotation of the Aaronic benediction (Nu 6:24–26). Through His Word, such as the benediction, God bestows

His blessings. *Selah*. See p 993.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 67:2 *Your way … Your saving power*. God's way of salvation through faith. This verse expresses a purpose of God's word of blessing: that God's salvation might be "known," i.e., received, through faith. See p 844. *all nations*. God's salvation is for all (1Tm 2:3–4), and He appointed Israel to bring that salvation to all nations.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 67:3 Refrain; cf v 5. Since the saved cannot help but praise their Savior, the psalmist is in effect praying for the salvation of the nations.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 67:4 *glad … joy*. God's salvation also brings genuine gladness and joy to the believer. *judge the peoples with equity*. Courtroom language. God judges us to be justified (not guilty), not because of our merit but because of what He has done for us by grace (Mi 6:1–8; Rm 3:23–25). See p 792.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 67:5 Refrain; cf v 3. Suggests that this psalm was used in corporate worship (cf v v 1, 3).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 67:6 *earth*. May refer to the "land" of Israel; God's blessing of a good harvest serves as a witness for Israel's God to the other nations. *bless*. See p 842. The faith of God's people in times of poor harvest can also serve as a witness (Hab 3:17–19). This verse may be read as a prayer.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 67:7 *let all the ends of the earth fear Him!* God's salvation is for all people. *fear*. See p 842.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 67** There is only one way of salvation, which Israel's God provided in the work of His Son, Jesus Christ. Thus, we believe in God's salvation through Christ and proclaim it to all the world. • "Thine over all shall be the praise And thanks of ev'ry nation; And all the world with joy shall raise The voice of exultation." Amen. (*LSB* 823:2)

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 68** Psalm seems to be an "order of service" for a procession at the Jerusalem temple (or at the tabernacle). Parts of the psalm use imagery similar to that used by the Canaanites when describing their god Baal, which is ironic because the psalm describes the defeat of Canaanite kings. *choirmaster*. See p 993. *Song*. See Ps 46 intro.

Format: V v 1–6, the Lord has brought salvation to Israel in the exodus; v v 7–10, wilderness wanderings; v v 11–14, conquest of the Promised Land; v v 15–18; dwelling in God's sanctuary; v v 19–23, God dispenses forgiveness and salvation for all who trust in Him; v v

24–27, God is worthy of praise at His sanctuary; v v 28–31, all the nations praise God; v v 32–35, God empowers Israel.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 68:1 *arise*. God acts on behalf of His people (12:5). *enemies*. Any (human or demonic) who reject Him by unbelief.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 68:3 *righteous*. See p 843.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 68:4 *to His name*. God's name reveals His very being and identity (Ex 3:13–15). See p 843. *rides through the deserts*. Alludes to the Lord leading Israel out of Egypt at the time of the exodus.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 68:5 *holy habitation*. See note, v v 28–31.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 68:6 Another way of saying that "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble" (1Pt 5:5).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 68:7 Recalls that the Lord led Israel through the wilderness in safety and salvation. *Selah*. See p 993.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 68:8 May refer to God's giving of His covenant to Israel at Sinai (Ex 19:16).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 68:9–10 The Lord provided for Israel during the wilderness wanderings (Ex 16–17; Nu 11).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 68:11–13 With v 14, refers to the Lord leading Israel in the conquest of the Promised Land. The women announce the happy events and divide the spoil (v 13).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 68:14 *snow*. Figurative for sun-bleached bones or glittering equipment of slain enemies lying on the darker hillsides.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 68:15–16 *Bashan*. This region east and north of the Sea of Chinnereth was home to impressive Mount Hermon, more than 9,000 ft above sea level. Zion, though much lower in height, is more significant. See color map 2. In the services there, God made Himself present to forgive.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 68:17 *chariots of God*. Refers to God's angels. See note, Ezk 10:1. *Sinai is now in the sanctuary*. The divine majesty displayed in giving the Law at Sinai is now on display in forgiveness at the tabernacle, which points to God's forgiveness in Christ (Jn 2:19–22).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 68:18 *host of captives*. Tabernacle points to the risen and ascended Christ. "Christ has overcome the devil, and has given to us the promise and the Holy Spirit, in order that—by divine aid—we ourselves may also overcome" (Ap V 18).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 68:19–23 The God revealed at the OT tabernacle brings salvation to those who trust in Him and judgment to those who

oppose Him.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 68:21 *hairy crown*. Cf Dt 32:42. Enemy soldiers may have taken an oath not to cut their hair until they had victory.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 68:23 *strike your feet in their blood*. Illustrated by 1Ki 21:23; 22:38; 2Ki 9:36.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 68:24–25 *procession*. Evidently a procession to the temple or tabernacle (sanctuary) was a part of Israel's worship; it acknowledged the Lord as the true King of Israel. Perhaps this psalm was composed specifically for such a procession and describes its arrangement. See p 959.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 68:26 *fountain!* Patriarch Jacob.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 68:27 Two southern tribes and two northern tribes are mentioned to represent all of Israel.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 68:28–31 Tabernacle worship is seen to have worldwide significance. Even non-Israelites will come to this forgiveness (cf Is 2:1–5; 60:1–6; Eph 2:11–22).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 68:32–35 Procession concludes with all nations invited to join the Israelites in praising the Lord, who is enthroned in His temple. The OT tabernacle was an earthly counterpart to God's heavenly throne (v v 33–34), from which He rules the universe.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 68** In His sanctuary, God provides His salvation. Without this sanctuary, there is only judgment. Thus, we turn to the Lord and His Word in faith, and we give Him praise. • Summon Your power, O God, by which You have worked among us. Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 69** David offers this prayer for help in the midst of attacks and sufferings imposed on him by his enemies. As Jesus is the promised Son of David (2Sm 7:8–16), these afflictions of David foreshadow the even greater afflictions of Christ; hence, this psalm is quoted in the NT with reference to Christ (see center-column notes in v v 4, 9, 22, 25). *choirmaster*. See p 993. *Lilies*. Probably the melody to which this psalm was sung.

Format: V v 1–3, waiting for God; v v 4–5, my suffering and folly; v v 6–8, dishonor; v v 9–12, zeal for God's house; v v 13–15, prayer for deliverance; v v 16–18, plea for quick answer; v v 19–21, no comforters; v v 22–28, anger against the wicked; v 29, affliction; v v 30–33, honor God with praise; v v 34–36, God will save Zion.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 69:1–2 David's afflictions are so severe, he feels as though he is drowning in them (cf v v 14–15). *neck*. Hbr *nephesh*, "throat, life." A person's breath of life can be described as residing in the throat. Cf Gn 2:7.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 69:3 *dim*. Distress can cloud one's vision of God (cf v v 16–17).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 69:4 *hate … lies*. Enemies impose these unjust sufferings; the psalmist is unjustly accused of stealing.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 69:5 *folly*. David confesses that he is a sinner. See p 1016.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 69:6 *shame … dishonor through me*. Psalmist prays that his sin may not cause any to stumble in their faith.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 69:7 *for Your sake*. Although he has sinned (v 5), David's sufferings are not punishment or discipline from God but persecution imposed by unbelievers.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 69:8 *stranger to my brothers*. Suffering for the faith can even include alienation from one's own family (Mt 10:34–39).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 69:9 *zeal for Your house*. Psalmist is suffering on account of his zealous faith in the Lord, who reveals Himself at the tabernacle. Ambr: "Faith … must not be a mere matter of performance" (*NPNF* 2 10:203). Because Jesus displayed perfect zeal for the Lord of the temple, His enemies persecuted Him to death.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 69:10–11 *fasting … sackcloth … a byword to them*. His enemies mock him for his faith and piety. See note, Jb 16:15.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 69:12 *gate*. Place for legal matters (Ru 4:1; Ps 127:5) as well as malicious gossip (2Sm 15:2–3). See p 792. *songs about me*. Songs of contempt and ridicule.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 69:13 *acceptable time*. A way of praying according to God's will (Lk 22:42; 1Jn 5:14–15).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 69:17 *face*. David prays for what God has promised in the priestly benediction (Nu 6:24–26).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 69:18 *redeem … ransom*. See p 843.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 69:19–20 *reproach … shame … dishonor … despair*. In some form or another, these come into the life of every believer: Mk 8:34–35; Rm 8:17; 2Tm 3:12; 1Pt 4:12–14.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 69:21 *poison … sour wine*. Hostility led to actual physical harm.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 69:22–28 Psalmist is here inspired to speak God's words of judgment against the evildoers; see p 879.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 69:22–23 Cited by the apostle Paul about his fellow Israelites who do not put their faith in Christ for salvation (Rm 11:9–10).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 69:25 Referred to by Peter when he speaks of what befell Judas for having betrayed Jesus (Ac 1:20).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 69:28 *blotted out of the book of the living*. God's judgment; may refer to eternal damnation (Rv 21:27) and/or to death as the end of this life.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 69:29 *salvation*. As before, David appeals to God's work for deliverance. See p 843.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 69:30–31 Sacrifice was a divinely ordained part of Israel's worship, yet some people were simply going through the motions when they brought an offering. The psalmist's songs of praise and thanksgiving will be sincere. 1 Clem: "The Lord, brethren, stands in need of nothing; and He desires nothing of anyone, except that confession be made to Him" (*ANF* 1:19).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 69:31 *horns and hoofs*. Animals acceptable for sacrifice had to be mature (horns) and be classified as clean (cloven hoofed; Lv 11:3).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 69:32 *humble*. Those who trust in the Lord; see note, 37:10–11.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 69:35 *save Zion*. This phrase, alongside v 33, makes it plain that David's prayer is one that all God's people may make their own. See "Zion," p 844.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 69:36 *inherit*. Cf 37:11; see "portion," p 7.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 69** Though afflicted, we still confess our sins before God. We also turn to Him in faith for deliverance from those who persecute us, asking for His strength and deliverance, lest we fail to remain faithful to Him. • Save me, O God! I will praise the name of God with a song. Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 70** *choirmaster*. See p 993. *memorial offering*. Parts of certain offerings were burned as a "memorial portion" for a pleasing aroma to the Lord (Lv 2:2, 9, 16; 6:15). In this way, God would remember the worshiper (Ps 8:4) and would remember his sins no more (Jer 31:34). In this psalm, the worshiper asks God for such "remembrance."

Format: V v 1–3, turn back the wicked; v v 4–5, hasten to help.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 70:1–5 Virtually identical with 40:13–17. David may have made this psalm more general so that it could be prayed by other worshipers.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 70:1 Used by the Church at the beginning of Matins and Vespers to pray for God's temporal and eternal deliverance.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 70:2 *them*. In contrast to the believers of v 4, these are people hostile to God and His servants; ultimately, they serve the purposes of Satan. *seek my life!* Not just physical harm, but also spiritual and eternal harm (Eph 6:12; 1Pt 5:8).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 70:3 *Aha, Aha!* An expression of malicious joy.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 70:4 *seek You*. See p 843.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 70:5 *poor and needy*. Not necessarily economically; these words often refer to the humble and repentant attitude of God's people (e.g., Mt 5:3; Lk 6:20). *help*. Hbr *'ezer*, "ally." The same term describes Eve in Gn 2:18, 20. *do not delay!* The worshiper expresses the fervent longing of his faith; he is acutely aware of how helpless and hopeless he is without God's salvation.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 70** With the psalmist, we acknowledge our spiritual poverty before God. Part of that acknowledgment is being watchful, lest through pride or faithlessness we ourselves turn away from Him. We seek God in His Word and Sacraments; He remembers us by forgiving our sins (Mt 26:28; 1Co 11:25). In this way, He will provide deliverance—if not in this life, then certainly in the life to come. • "Make haste, O God, to deliver me!" (v 1). You are great in Your forgiveness. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 71** A psalm for an older believer struggling with assaults on his faith, including temptations to think that his faith was in vain. Since Ps 70 is "of David" and Ps 72 is "of Solomon," perhaps this is a Davidic psalm composed near the end of his life. By proclaiming the saving deeds of the Lord, he meets the challenges of old age with faith, hope, faithfulness, witness, and praise. In Hbr, this psalm lacks poetic artistry, yet richly proclaims the faith.

Format: V v 1–3, take refuge in the Lord; v v 4–6, trust since youth; v v 7–11, do not forsake God, even in old age; v v 12–16, tell of God's acts; v v 17–21, God's righteousness knows no bounds; v v 22–24, praise to God.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 71:1 Statement of supreme trust in the Lord, a theme that emerges at many points in this psalm.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 71:2 *righteousness*. See p 843.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 71:3 *rock*. See p 843. The Lord's righteousness makes our trust firm.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 71:4 *the grasp of the unjust*. Believers are often subjected to unjust suffering by others.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 71:6 *before my birth*. God wills our salvation from eternity (Jer 1:5; Gal 1:15).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 71:7 *portent*. Sign (cf Ex 7:3; Dt 6:22). Psalmist has been an example of faith, but now his troubles seem to be proof of the uselessness of his faith, as seen also in the enemies' comments, v 11. He calls on God to rescue him.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 71:9 Author holds to his faith despite the temptations of old age to forsake the Lord. Cf v 18; Ec 12:1–8.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 71:12 *far from me*. Psalmist's difficult circumstances seem to prove that God is far away. Therefore, he prays for the Lord to help him and to vindicate his faith.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 71:13 Human accusers echo the accusations of the accuser, Satan (Rv 12:10–11). The condemnation of Satan means condemnation for all who serve his purposes, whether intentionally or unintentionally. See note, Jb 42:7.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 71:14–15 Psalmist's life of faith and hope will show itself in witness and praise.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 71:16 *I will come*. Psalmist will carry on his way of life with witness and praise. Bern: "When he entered into the spiritual

powers of God he would be freed from all the infirmities of the flesh, and would have no longer to think of them, but would be occupied only with the perfections of God" (*SLSB*, p 203). *them*. His enemies.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 71:17–18 Mel: "The royal psalmist King David, in that golden jewel of his psalms … prays this earnest and ardent prayer for the church in its old age" (*LTh* 2:560).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 71:17 *You have taught me*. God's Word sustains us in faith and hope, from youth to old age (v v 9, 18).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 71:18 *might*. Lit, "arm." See p 842.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 71:19 *reaches the high heavens*. God's acts of righteousness and salvation make Him worthy of the highest praise.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 71:20 *revive … depths of the earth*. In his old age, the psalmist confidently anticipates his resurrection from the grave; cf Jb 19:23–27; Is 25:8; 26:19; Dn 12:2–3.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 71:21 *increase my greatness*. Our future in heaven surpasses anything in this life.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 71:22 *harp … lyre*. Stringed musical instruments, perhaps an indication that David is the author (1Sm 16:14–23). See p 993.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 71:24 *they*. Psalmist's accusers; cf v 13.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 71** Truths of the faith learned in childhood are of no advantage if they are forsaken later in life. The Lord is faithful in His righteous, saving deeds. They are always the source of our eternal life. Let us cling to these in faith and faithfully give witness and praise. • "My mouth will tell of Your righteous acts" (v 15). "I will remind them of Your righteousness, Yours alone" (v 16). Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 72** *Of Solomon*. Hbr could mean "for Solomon" or "by Solomon" (or perhaps both) for the occasion of his coronation; it may well have been used at the coronation of other kings from David's line. In accord with the promise of 2Sm 7:8–17, the line of Davidic kings prophetically pointed to the ultimate Son of David, Jesus. Just: "It [Ps 72] refers also to our Christ" (*ANF* 1:211).

Format: V v 1–4, prayer for the king; v v 5–7, may the righteous flourish; v v 8–11, may all other kings serve the king; v v 12–14, the king has pity; v v 15–17, may the king's name endure forever; v v 18–19, bless the Lord; v 20, colophon for an early edition of the Psalter (Books One and Two; Ps 1–72).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 72:1 *Give the king Your justice … Your righteousness*. Justice and righteousness would be desirable attributes of a king's rule. See p 843.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 72:2 *your poor*. Faithful followers of the one true God (see note, 70:5).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 72:3 King's rule is so extraordinary that it has a positive effect on the entire land, even the whole creation.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 72:5–7 Figurative depiction of the splendor of eternity. Ambr: "The divine Scriptures promised us this rain upon the whole earth, to water the world with the dew of the Divine Spirit at the coming of the Savior…. So now we drink, who before were thirsty" (*NPNF* 2 10:94).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 72:8 *sea to sea … the River*. See ESV note. The farthest geographical extent of the land of Israel (achieved under the reign of Solomon). Even as the land promised to Israel pointed beyond itself to life in heaven (Heb 11:14–16), so the expression here points to the universal extent of Christ's dominion (Mt 28:18), seen also from v 11.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 72:9 *desert tribes*. Unruly tribes in the wilderness of the Arabian Peninsula. *lick the dust!* Description of submission. See note, Gn 3:14.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 72:10 *Tarshish*. See note, Jnh 1:3. *Sheba and Seba*. Kingdoms south of Egypt or on the southern Arabian Peninsula, known for their riches. *gifts!* Hbr term was found written on a potsherd at Kadesh-barnea, an oasis south of Judah in the Negeb, from which trade could go toward Egypt or toward the Red Sea. The inscription may have marked tribute to Israel or from Israel. Ezk 27:15 tells of a similar "payment." See color map 3.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 72:12–14 Describes an ideal rule; the Israelites pray that their king might rule this way.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 72:15 *prayer … blessings*. Cf 1Tm 2:1–2.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 72:17 These words point to Jesus as the fulfillment of the promise of 2Sm 7:8–17.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 72:18–19 Doxology concludes not merely this psalm but the entire Book Two of the Psalter (Ps 42–72). See p 844.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 72:20 Editorial note may indicate that at one time the entire Psalter ended here. In Book Three (Ps 73–89), only Ps 86 is attributed to David. See p 844.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 72** The psalmist realizes that even the best of the Davidic kings fell short of the ideal. So we also often fail to live as we should. Yet our hope is in David's Son and Lord, Jesus Christ, who has brought us eternal salvation. • "Hail to the Lord's anointed, Great David's greater Son! Hail, in the time appointed, His reign on earth begun! He comes to break oppression, To set the captive free, To take away transgression And rule in equity." Amen. (*LSB* 398:1)

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Book Three** Ps 73–89; difficult to date. See p 844.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 73** Deals with the same issues as the Book of Job (Jb 21:7–15 bears many similarities to v v 3–14). The psalmist expresses his doubts and struggles, yet passes through them to a faith renewed by God's faithfulness and promises. *Asaph*. One of the tabernacle song leaders appointed by David (1Ch 6:31, 39). His work, including that of composing songs or psalms, may have been carried on by his descendants and/or successors. (See Ps 74 intro.)

Format: V v 1–3, envy of the arrogant; v v 4–15, the arrogant prosper; v v 16–17, struggle to understand; v v 18–22, the end of the arrogant; v v 23–26, God is our strength and portion; v v 27–28, be near God.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 73:1 *Israel … pure in heart*. Those genuine in their faith and life toward the Lord.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 73:2 *slipped*. Figurative description of psalmist's struggles of faith and doubt.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 73:3 Believers struggle when the wicked and unbelieving seem to fare as well if not better than those who sincerely believe; cf Mt 13:24–30, 36–43. Prosperity, of itself, is not evil or righteous.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 73:4–12 The wicked seem to have no pain (v 4) and no trouble or pangs of conscience (v 5); they are arrogant (v 6), prosperous and happy (v 7), and enjoy popularity (v 10), ease, and riches (v 12) despite their arrogant and even blasphemous attitude toward God (v v 8–9), whom they treat as though He were a naive fool (v 11).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 73:13 *washed my hands in innocence*. Language of true faith and piety based on the ritual of sacrifice (26:6–7; see pp 170–71); the psalmist thinks that his faith and piety have brought him no advantage.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 73:14 *I have been stricken*. Cf Mt 10:24–25; 16:24–25.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 73:15 Psalmist begins to turn from his envy to God's truth.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 73:16 Answer he seeks is beyond human grasp.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 73:17 *I went into the sanctuary of God*. The tabernacle or temple as the place where God reveals Himself and His ways through His Word. See diagram, p 541. *discerned their end*. The glory of the believing and judgment on the unbelieving are often hidden in this life but are revealed at the end of all things (cf Mt 13:24–30, 36–43).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 73:18 *slippery places*. The wicked's seeming advantages actually are dangers; if they do not repent, they are destined to fall into judgment.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 73:19–20 God's judgment is swift and thorough, whether in this life (e.g., Nu 16:31–33) or in the life to come (1Th 5:3).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 73:21–22 Psalmist repents of his thoughts and feelings, for they have been more like those of a brute rather than one possessing the wisdom of faith (cf Jb 40:3–5; 42:1–6).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 73:23 Even when we struggle with doubt, God will never let us go. *right hand*. See p 843.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 73:24–25 True value of what we have as believers is known only in light of the glory of eternity (Rm 8:18).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 73:26 *my portion forever*. This life will end; the life to come when Christ returns will never end. See p 7. Jerome: "Christ is all, that he who has left all for Christ may find One in place of all" (*NPNF* 2 6:138).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 73:27–28 Psalmist has passed through his struggles with doubt, and his faith is stronger for it. *that I may tell*. Strengthened faith will express itself by witnessing (perhaps to others struggling with similar doubts).
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 73** Being troubled by doubt and envy does not mean that we have lost our faith. We are called to struggle against doubt and envy. We find strength to do so in the certainty of the final outcome of God's promises. • Lord, forgive me for the times I have been envious and ungrateful, and strengthen me to believe Your promises and to seek Your eternal kingdom. Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 74** Seems to have been written after the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in 587 BC. The absence of a prophet (v 9) would reflect the time after Jeremiah was carried into Egypt

(Jer 43), with the ministries of Ezekiel and Daniel being confined to Babylon. *Maskil*. See p 841. *Asaph*. Family name, referring to "sons of Asaph," who were active in Israelite worship at least as late as the time of Josiah (2Ch 35:15; see Ps 73 intro).

Format: V v 1–3, remember Your flock; v v 4–8, the sanctuary burned; v v 9–11, how long will the foe scoff?; v v 12–17, God conquered and created; v v 18–19, do not forget Your people; v v 20–21, remember Your covenant; v v 22–23, defend against the scoffers.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 74:1 *cast us off*. Describes divine judgment; cf 2Th 1:9.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 74:2 *redeemed*. See p 843.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 74:3 *perpetual*. Apparently, the temple has been in ruins for a number of years.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 74:4–6 The temple was desecrated by the presence of unbelievers, their symbols of pagan religion, or their military standards.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 74:8 *meeting places*. Likely refers to the temple courts rather than the high places.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 74:9 *our signs … prophet*. Real tragedy is that God's Word through prophets and His forgiveness in the sacrifices ("signs") of the temple worship had been removed; cf Am 8:11.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 74:11 *hand*. See p 842.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 74:12–17 Psalmist points to God's mighty works in both creation and the exodus (the act of creating Israel); God's gracious deeds are the reason why the Almighty should grant the psalmist's prayers for deliverance. These mighty acts included the crossing of the Red Sea (v 13) and the defeat of Egypt (v 14), providing water during the wilderness wanderings (v 15), the crossing of the Jordan (v 15), and the creation of days and seasons (v v 16–17).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 74:12 Gr Nys: "Of God's eternity … we have heard from prophecy…. We define Him to be earlier than any beginning, and exceeding any end" (*NPNF* 2 5:97–98). *working salvation*. See p 844.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 74:18 Cf v 22.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 74:19 *soul of your dove*. Pictures how precious Israel is to the Lord.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 74:20 *covenant*. God's covenant (Gn 12:1–3; 15; 17:1–14; Ex 19:4–6; Dt 4:10–13; Ps 89:3–4) is His promise of blessing and

salvation. The psalmist entreats the Lord to forgive and deliver Israel on account of this covenant. Cf Mt 26:28.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 74:21 *poor and needy*. See note, 70:5.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 74:22–23 Psalmist entreats the Lord to defend His honor by keeping His promises to save His people; cf Ex 32:11–14; Nu 14:13–19; Dt 9:26–29.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 74** When calamity strikes, we ought to see God calling us to repentance in it (Lk 13:1–5). In repentance, we flee to God for mercy, not because of anything in us but by what He Himself has done for our redemption. • You, O Lord, are my Redeemer; deliver my life. Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 75** Seems to have been written when Israel was assaulted by unbelieving enemies (e.g., 2Ki 18–19). *choirmaster*. See p 993. *Do Not Destroy*. See Ps 57 intro. *Asaph*. See intros, Ps 73; 74. *Song*. See Ps 46 intro.

Format: V 1, giving thanks; v v 2–3, God will judge; v v 4–5, do not be proud; v v 6–8, recounting God's judgment; v v 9–10, God promises justice.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 75:1 Cf 9:1. *Your name is near*. God's name often means God Himself (Ex 3:14); cf Mt 28:19–20; see p 843. *wondrous deeds*. Cf 1Pt 2:9, where "excellencies" could be rendered "wonderful deeds."
PSALMS—NOTE ON 75:2 *set time that I appoint*. The Lord acts according to His own timetable, also with respect to judging the wicked. *judge with equity*. Cf Rm 12:19.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 75:3 *earth totters*. Crises often make everything about this life uncertain. *steady its pillars*. Figurative way of referring to the Creator's ability to preserve the world and hence keep His people in His care. *Selah*. See p 993.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 75:4 *lift up your horn*. See p 842.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 75:5 *haughty neck*. Symbol of arrogance.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 75:6 *east … west … wilderness*. "Wilderness" may refer to the area south of Jerusalem; if the original occasion of this psalm was the event of 2Ki 18–19, then the attackers would have come from the north. Hence, the other directions would be potential avenues for help; however, all help comes from the Lord (cf v v 7–8).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 75:8 *cup with foaming wine*. Thick wine was mixed with water. The cup of God's wrath is a common and vivid biblical picture

of divine judgment. See note, Is 51:17.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 75:9 Believers respond to God's judgment with proclamation and praise.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 75:10 By proclaiming God's Word, believers become agents of God's work (of both judging the wicked and exalting the believing). *horns*. See p 842.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 75** God judges the wicked and delivers the believer according to His timetable, not ours. His seeming delay in this should not cause us to lose heart but to continue in repentance and faith. As He has fulfilled all His promises in the past, so He will act in both judgment and salvation. • We give thanks to You, O God, and recount Your wondrous deeds. Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 76** May be compared with Ps 46; 48; 87. Many have conjectured that the deliverance from the invasion of Sennacherib (Is 36–37) may have been the occasion for its composition. *choirmaster*. See p 993. *stringed instruments*. See p 993. *Asaph*. See intros, Ps 73; 74. *Song*. See Ps 46 intro.

Format: V v 1–3, God dwells in Zion; v v 4–6, victory over warmongers; v v 7–9, God roused in anger; v v 10–12, vows and gifts to the Lord.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 76:1 *Judah … Israel*. Names for God's people, the Northern and Southern Kingdoms (see map, p 558). *known … great*. God's mighty deeds (described in the following verses) reveal His majesty and saving power.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 76:2 *abode*. The temple. *Salem*. Lit, "peace." Like Zion, Salem is another name for Jerusalem.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 76:3 *There He broke … weapons of war*. May be a reference to Is 37:36. *Selah*. See p 993.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 76:4 *mountains of prey*. Unusual phrase that seems to indicate that the Lord has won a great victory in a mountainous region (Jerusalem itself is situated on a hilltop).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 76:5–6 Portrays the utter defeat of the opposing army.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 76:6 *rebuke*. Denotes the power in God's Word; cf Is 55:10–11; Jn 18:6; Rm 1:16–17. See "uttered," v 8.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 76:7–9 *feared … judgment … save … humble*. God's deeds portend judgment for those who oppose Him and therefore

make them afraid. The "humble" are those who trust in the Lord (cf 25:9; 37:9; Mt 5:3, 5). His mighty deeds save them; hence, their fear of Him is one of faith and reverent awe (cf v 11). See p 842.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 76:10 *wrath of man*. Even those who oppose the Lord will one day praise Him; if they do not do so willingly, out of faith, then in eternity they will be compelled to acknowledge His power and righteousness (Is 45:23; Rm 14:11–12; Php 2:10–11; Col 2:15).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 76:11 *vows … gifts*. One form of worship in OT Israel consisted of gifts and offerings vowed to the Lord (Dt 12:6, 11, 17, 26). See p 7.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 76** God is majestic in both judgment and salvation. We must tremble in fear before His judgment over our sins. Yet we also trust in and rejoice in His mighty deeds for our salvation, by which He has delivered us from those who would seek our eternal, spiritual harm (Col 2:15). • Glorious are You, O God, when You judge and when You save. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 77** Similarities of thought between v v 16–19 and Hab 3:8–10 suggest that this psalm comes from the time of Habakkuk. The author expresses certain struggles of faith and doubt, which plague many believers. *choirmaster*. See p 993. *Jeduthun*. See Ps 62 intro. *Asaph*. See intros, Ps 73; 74.

Format: V v 1–3, crying to the Lord; v v 4–9, sleeplessness and doubt; v 10, an appeal; v v 11–15, God's way is holy; v v 16–20, a path through the storm.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 77:1–3 *cry aloud … my hand is stretched out … refuses to be comforted … I moan … my spirit faints*. Psalmist's impassioned words express the anguish he is experiencing. *Selah*. See p 993.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 77:4 *hold my eyelids open*. The distress has produced insomnia.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 77:5–6 *consider … my song … meditate … search*. Even leaders of worship may be troubled by challenges to their faith. The psalmist seeks refuge in God's Word, in particular, God's Word regarding His past deeds of rescue, also as those recounted in Israel's psalms, some of which the psalmist himself may have written. Yet there remain challenges to his faith, as related in v v 7–9.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 77:7–9 Psalmist feels that God has abandoned him and broken His promises. He feels tempted to abandon the faith altogether. The details may change, but all believers may find themselves from time to time struggling with similar thoughts that tempt them to forsake the faith; cf Lk 8:13.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 77:10–20 Even in the midst of doubting God, the psalmist finds strength to believe God's Word regarding His mighty, saving deeds (cf Rm 1:16–17; 1Co 1:23–24).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 77:10 *years … right hand*. See p 843. Reflection (cf v 12) on the Lord's saving deeds would provide the power to rekindle and strengthen faith.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 77:11 *deeds of the LORD … wonders of old*. The exodus (v v 16, 19).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 77:13–14 Similar to the celebration of the Red Sea crossing in Ex 15:11. Such wonderful, mighty deeds show that the Lord alone is holy and is God.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 77:15 *arm redeemed*. See pp 842–43.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 77:16–19 Cf Hab 3:8–10.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 77:16 *waters saw You*. Personification gives a vivid description of Israel crossing the sea (Ex 14–15).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 77:17–18 Ex 14:19–20 speaks of darkness and of a pillar of cloud that "lit up the night"; these verses describe the same event as a tremendous thunderstorm. "When he reflected on his own lust and desire for revenge, the poor sinner might have laughed rather than wept—unless he had either been truly struck by the lightning of the Law [Psalm 77:18] or had been tormented by the devil with a sorrowful spirit [1 Samuel 16:14]" (SA III III 18).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 77:19 The unseen Lord led Israel through the sea.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 77:20 God's redemptive acts in the exodus give the believer a sense of calm and trust.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 77** Even strong believers and spiritual leaders among God's people may find themselves troubled by times of weakness in their faith. But God's powerful Word strengthens us. As we focus on the Gospel, the message of God's mighty deeds for our redemption, He will strengthen our faith. • Lord, "I believe; help my unbelief!" (Mk 9:24). Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 78** Second-longest psalm in the Psalter. Seems to have originated during the days of the division of the land between the Northern (Israel) and Southern (Judah) Kingdoms (v 67, recounted in 1Ki 12), after the construction of Solomon's temple (v 69). Thus, it may have been written by a descendant of Asaph. The psalm culminates in God's deeds to and through David, highlighting the importance of the covenant with David (2Sm 7:1–17) and its fulfillment in Christ. *Maskil*. See p 841. *Asaph*. See intros, Ps 73; 74.

Format: V v 1–4, teaching for the next generation; v v 5–8, God appointed a Law; v v 9–16, the exodus; v v 17–20, rebellion in the wilderness; v v 21–31, God is just, yet gracious; v v 32–55, testing God again and again; v v 56–66, the Lord punishes His people and His adversaries; v v 67–72, Judah and David chosen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 78:1–2 *teaching … parable … dark sayings*. Psalmist is teaching the meaning of Israel's salvation history, a meaning unknown when not revealed by God. Mt 13:35 quotes v 2 to indicate that Jesus' parables, which were "dark sayings" to those who did not receive them through faith, also proclaimed God's saving acts. See also "Enigmatic Sayings," p 1775.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 78:3–4 *fathers … tell to the coming generation*. The faith is to be taught as much by the leaders of each family (Eph 6:4) as it is by the leaders of the community of faith (clergy); cf v 6. See note, Pr 1:8; see also pp 775–78. *deeds … might … wonders*. Object of the teaching is God's mighty deeds for our salvation (Ac 2:11, 22–36).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 78:5 *testimony*. The covenant, e.g., Ex 19:3–6; 24; hence, the entire exodus is God's mighty deed. See p 971.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 78:7 *set their hope in God*. God's saving works are taught so that the hearers may believe. Cf Ac 2:11, 38, 44; Rm 10:17.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 78:8 *stubborn and rebellious generation*. Because Israel had a long history of unfaithfulness to the Lord and His covenant, the psalmist warns about the dangers of unfaithfulness.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 78:9–11 Symbolic reference to the faithlessness of Israel. *Ephraimites*. One of the larger Israelite tribes. Often refers to all of Israel or, after the division, to the Northern Kingdom.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 78:12 *Zoan*. City in the eastern part of the Nile Delta, known in Gk as Tanis (cf Nu 13:22). See map, p 609.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 78:13–16 Psalmist relates God's saving deeds in the exodus; cf Ex 13:21–15:21; 17:1–7; Nu 20:1–13.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 78:17–31 Israel responded to the Lord's saving acts with ingratitude; they brought God's wrath upon themselves; cf Ex 15:22–16:36; Nu 11:4–34. Their ingratitude arose from a lack of faith and trust (cf v 22).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 78:24–25 *manna … grain of heaven … bread of the angels*. Poetic ways of indicating that this bread was provided in a miraculous fashion. *angels*. Lit, "powerful ones," though translated by rabbis as "angels."
PSALMS—NOTE ON 78:32 *they still sinned*. They did not believe God would give them the land He promised; cf Nu 13:25–14:10.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 78:33 Decriptive of their death in the wilderness (Nu 14:21–38).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 78:34–37 Israel's repentance was often insincere and superficial. "We must examine our heart and conscience [1 Corinthians 11:28; 2 Corinthians 13:5], and we must act like people who desire to be right with God [Psalm 78:37]. The more this is done, the more the heart will be warmed and enkindled, so it may not become entirely cold" (LC V 54).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 78:38–39 Cf Ex 34:6–7; Ps 103:2–5, 14. God's forgiveness accomplishes what we cannot do for ourselves by any means.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 78:38 *restrained*. Chem: "God did not pour out His total wrath in these punishments" (*LTh* 1:112).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 78:40–55 Israel continued to be disobedient and unbelieving despite God's repeated acts of mercy and salvation. Six of the ten plagues recorded in Ex 7–12 are mentioned here: the first, fourth, second, eighth, seventh, and tenth.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 78:49 *destroying angels*. Agents of God's wrath.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 78:50 *path for His anger*. Describes God's judgment against Egypt by the slaying of all their firstborn.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 78:51 *Ham*. Another name for Egypt, as the Egyptians were among the descendants of Noah's son Ham (see notes, Gn 10:6–20).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 78:52 *led out His people like sheep*. Cf Nu 27:17; Is 63:11.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 78:53–55 The exodus (v 53) and taking of the Promised Land (v v 54–55, recounted in the Book of Joshua) were the

climax of God's deeds of salvation early in the OT. *right hand*. See p 843.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 78:56–57 Faithlessness continued to be a problem within Israel, as attested esp in Jgs. *twisted like a deceitful bow*. As in v 9, a symbolic depiction of faithlessness.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 78:58 *high places*. Where false gods were worshiped. See p 526.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 78:59 *utterly rejected*. As the subsequent history of Israel proves, this does not mean that God permanently rejected all the Israelites. He preserved a remnant.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 78:60–61 *dwelling at Shiloh*. The tabernacle at Shiloh was bereft of the ark of the covenant by Israel's enemies as a judgment from God. In fact, the entire tabernacle at Shiloh may have been destroyed by the Philistine attack, which started at Aphek, 25 mi W. See map, p 558. According to archaeologists, the Israelite settlement at Shiloh was violently destroyed c 1060 BC. *captivity*. Refers to the capture of the ark of the covenant. See p 495.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 78:65 *Lord awoke*. Depicts God's care and rescue of His people, though He had ignored them due to their unfaithfulness. *like a strong man shouting because of wine*. The anger of a drunken brawler describes God's wild response to Israel's enemies.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 78:67 *Joseph … Ephraim*. Both names refer to the Northern Kingdom of Israel after the division of the tribes into the kingdoms of Israel and Judah. God rejected the Northern Kingdom on account of its persistent unbelief and idolatry. The ark was not returned to Shiloh in the territory of Joseph (Ephraim) but was taken to Jerusalem in the territory of Judah.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 78:68–70 *Judah … David*. God's saving deeds reach a high point with David, whose family led the Southern Kingdom of Israel. The Lord chose the lowliest son of Jesse (1Sm 16:1, 11–13) to be the leader of His people. With David, the Lord made a covenant (2Sm 7:1–17), promising that a son of David will rule forever. This covenant promise is fulfilled in Jesus' birth and ministry (Rm 1:3–4).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 78:68 *Mount Zion*. See p 844.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 78:69 *sanctuary*. David's son Solomon built the temple as a part of the fulfillment of God's covenant with David; this temple itself points to Christ and His redemptive ministry (Jn 2:19–22).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 78:71–72 *shepherd*. David had been a shepherd (1Sm 16:11), but as God's anointed king, he became another kind of shepherd, the leader of God's people in right faith and worship. This aspect of David's life pointed to his descendant Jesus (Ezk 34:23–24; 37:24; Mi 5:2–4), whose ministry provides us with the ultimate shepherd's care and deliverance (Mt 2:6; Jn 10:11, 17–18; Rv 7:17). He continues to provide for us through the work of ministers of the Gospel ("pastor" lit means "shepherd"; Ac 20:28; 1Pt 5:2–4).

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 78** God's dealings with Israel of old point to His acts toward us today. Israel's history teaches us to see and to repent of our own lack of faith. Also, God's saving deeds in Israel's history, especially in His acts toward and through David, point us to what Christ has done so that we may have God's ongoing forgiveness and salvation. • "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for He has … raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant David" (Lk 1:68–69). Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 79** Perhaps written during the Babylonian exile, this psalm may lament the destruction of Jerusalem in 587 BC. *Asaph*. Perhaps not the one who served during David's reign (2Ch 35:15). Perhaps the writer is a descendant, or is of the "school" of Asaph. See intros, Ps 73; 74. Recognizing the invasion as divine judgment (v v 5, 8), he begs for God's mercy and restoration.

Format: V v 1–4, Jerusalem destroyed; v v 5–7, appeal to God's anger; v v 8–10, prayer for atonement; v v 11–13, save the prisoners, take revenge on our enemies.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 79:1 *inheritance*. Either the land God promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (e.g., Gn 50:24) or God's people themselves (e.g., Ps 78:62). Here it likely refers to the land. See "portion," p 7. *defiled*. No Gentile was allowed into the temple (cf Ezk 44:9).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 79:2–3 Unburied bodies of Israel's slain litter the streets, left exposed to scavenging animals. No one remained to bury them. Normally, even executed criminals were buried (Dt 21:22–23).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 79:4 *neighbors*. Gentile nations bordering Israel who taunted and mocked the sufferers.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 79:6 *Pour out*. Wordplay (cf v 3). Just as the Babylonians "poured out" Israel's blood, so Israel calls upon God to "pour out" His avenging wrath. See p 879. *call upon Your name!* See p 842.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 79:8 *former iniquities*. Lit, "iniquities of forefathers," referring collectively to those in Israel's history as being guilty before God. But the psalmist does not blame his ancestors for God's judgment. He realizes that the present generation participates in the same sins.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 79:9 *deliver … atone*. "Deliver us" may refer to the present captivity, but "atone for our sins" anticipates the much greater deliverance that only Christ can give (1Jn 2:2; see "deliver," p 842; see "atone," p 5).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 79:11 *prisoners*. After the Babylonians destroyed Israel, the most promising of Israel's youth were taken into captivity. Cf Dn 1:1–4.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 79:12 *Return*. Asking God to completely repay those who have destroyed Israel. This is a "give them everything they have coming" prayer. *sevenfold*. See p 217.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 79:13 *people, the sheep of Your pasture*. Favorite image for God's people (Ezk 34:11–17; Mi 2:12; Heb 13:20), particularly in the Psalms (23:1–4; 74:1; 95:7; 100:3).

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 79** Originally written as a lament over Babylon's destruction of Israel, this psalm remains applicable to all Christians who suffer hardship and struggle at the hands of unbelievers. Christians throughout the world become the taunt of the unbelievers around them, as they are either explicitly derided or condescendingly treated because of their faith and trust in God. This psalm is well-prayed by such sufferers, as it assures us that God is reliable and His deliverance is trustworthy. • Give me steadfastness and strength, O Lord, to wait upon You in every difficulty and trial. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 80** References to Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh (v 2), representing the Northern Kingdom of Israel, suggest that this psalm may have been written in response to the Assyrian campaign of 2Ki 17:1–6. Refugees from the Northern Kingdom have come to the Jerusalem sanctuary in the Southern Kingdom to pray for restoration and peace. *choirmaster*. See p 993. *Lilies*. See Ps 45 intro. *Asaph*. See intros, Ps 73; 74.

Format: V v 1–2, appeal to the Shepherd of Israel; v 3, refrain of restoration; v v 4–6, full of tears; v 7, refrain of restoration; v v 8–13,

Israel as a vine; v v 14–18, prayer for the vine; v 19, refrain of restoration.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 80:1 *Shepherd of Israel*. Image for God that speaks not only of protection (cf 23:4) but also of divine self-sacrifice for the sheep (Mt 9:36; Jn 10:11–15). *enthroned upon the cherubim*. A reference to the lid of the ark of the covenant, upon which God promised to dwell among His people (Ex 25:22). See note, Ezk 10:1.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 80:2 *Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh*. See Ps 80 intro.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 80:3 *face shine*. Comparison of the warm, shining sun to the face of God (Nu 6:24–26).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 80:4 *Lord God of hosts*. He is God of both the armies of Israel and the angelic armies of heaven. See p 1291.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 80:5 *bread of tears … tears to drink*. Poetic expressions found also in Canaanite literature. Their sorrow and grief have become so great that it seems every part of their lives is defiled by tears.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 80:7 *God of hosts*. See note, v 4. *face shine*. Cf v 3. With v v 14, 19, a variation of v v 3–4. Repetition is common in Hbr poetry. See pp 777–78.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 80:8–10 Notice Israel's dependence upon God's careful nurture: He transplanted the vine, cleared its ground, and provided for its continued growth, which was so great that it began to influence the nations (i.e., "mountains") around it.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 80:8 *a vine*. OT describes God's people as a vine (Jer 2:21; Hos 10:1); Jesus appropriated the image for Himself (Jn 15:1, 5). *out of Egypt … drove out the nations*. Reference to Israel's exodus from Egypt and subsequent entry into Canaan.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 80:11 *the sea*. Likely the Great [Mediterranean] Sea.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 80:12 *walls*. A vinedresser protects his vineyard by building a protective wall around it (cf Mt 21:33), so that enemies or wild animals cannot enter it. God has broken down Israel's protective wall, so to speak, so that the "boar from the forest ravages it" (v 13).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 80:13 *boar*. The Assyrians. See Ps 80 intro.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 80:14 *God of hosts!* See note, v 4. *Look down from heaven*. Reminiscent of the prayer offered at the time of giving an offering

(Dt 26:15), this prayer does not speak of God as far away, but as all-powerful. *vine*. See note, v 8.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 80:15 *stock*. Lit, "son." *the son*. Refers to the Davidic king of Israel; this word also anticipates the coming of the Messiah (cf Gn 3:15).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 80:16 *rebuke of Your face!* Unrighteousness of Israel's enemies cannot stand before God's righteousness. Cf Is 6:5.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 80:17 *man of Your right hand … son of man*. With v 15, these phrases speak about the king of Israel from David's line, pointing toward the coming of the Messiah. Jesus is the true "son of man" who sits at God's "right hand." See p 843.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 80:18 *give us life, and we will call upon Your name!* Psalmist describes his people's forsaken condition as lifeless, reminiscent of the clay into which God breathed life while making Adam (Gn 2:7).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 80:19 *LORD God of hosts!* See p 1291. *face shine*. See note, v 3.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 80** This psalm begs God to restore His people after their fall before foreign armies. The psalmist recognizes that God's acts of salvation in the past speak assurances for His salvation in the future. Israel repeatedly turned away from the Lord, thus incurring His judgment as a call to repentance. In what ways have we suffered as a result of our turning away? God's pattern of salvation through history provides reliable assurances: God has saved us before; He shall yet save again! • As You have delivered Your people of old, dear Lord, so also deliver me for the sake of Your Son, Jesus. Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 81** Possibly written for tabernacle festival usage (v 3), this psalm of unknown date speaks about a time when Israel's worship practices were not impeded by war or exile. References to the exodus (v v 5, 10) and wilderness journey (v 7) illustrate how Israel's worship focused on God's past deeds of deliverance, anticipating the coming of the Messiah and the greater, future deliverance He would bring (v 15). *choirmaster*. See p 993. *Gittith*. See Ps 8 intro. *Asaph*. See intros, Ps 73; 74.

Format: V v 1–3, sing with instruments; v v 4–7, deliverance; v v 8–10, no idolatry; v v 11–16, God delivers those who listen to Him.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 81:1 *Jacob!* Both a forefather and a synonym for Israel (Gn 32:28).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 81:2–3 See p 993.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 81:3 *new moon … full moon*. Celebrations from the Israelite liturgical calendar. See calendar, p 262.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 81:4–5 *statute … rule … decree*. Repetition for emphasis. See p 971.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 81:5 *went out over*. Reference to Ex 12:29–30, if not to the entire period of Israel's exodus. See ESV note. *language*. Reference to God's people living in the foreign land of Egypt.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 81:6 God now speaks.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 81:7 *In distress you called, and I delivered you*. Cf Ex 3:7–8. *secret place of thunder*. Refers to the abode of God in heaven. Cf 18:11–12. *tested*. Cf Ex 17:1–7. *Selah*. See p 993.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 81:8–9 *admonish*. God subjected Israel to distress because of their continual flirtations with idolatry (e.g., Ex 32). Although He had delivered them from the bondage of Egypt, they felt continually tempted by the strange and foreign gods of the Canaanites.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 81:10 *fill it*. Just as God provided for Israel during the exodus (e.g., Ex 16) and after their entry into Canaan (cf Jsh 5:12), so also shall He gladly provide daily bread to His people, filling their every need.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 81:12 *gave them over*. God gave them the desires of their unfaithful hearts, just as He had given them the king they demanded (1Sm 8). Similarly, Moses allowed divorce because the people would have it no other way (Mt 19:1–8).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 81:13 God reveals His heart's desire.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 81:15–16 As in v v 1–5a, the psalmist speaks about God. But God has the final word in 16b ("and with honey …").
PSALMS—NOTE ON 81:15 *cringe*. Expecting not a blessing, but only wrath. *forever*. Term of their punishment.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 81:16 *honey from the rock*. Miraculous nourishment. God satisfies a "hunger" that people cannot. Cf Dt 32:13.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 81** Even while worshiping the one true God, His people were not listening to His Word. Here God laments the plugging of their ears (v 11), longing for the day they will turn again in repentance. God loves to speak to His people! He especially loves to tell you repeatedly of His great love for you, shown to you in the death and resurrection of His Son. With His Word God feeds His people (v 16), nourishing them with

eternal life. • Let me never grow sated, dear heavenly Father, but allow me always to hunger for Your Word and to listen attentively to it. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 82** This psalm alerts faithful Israelites and all believers that God concerns Himself with the care of individuals. The "gods" of v 1 have been charged with the duty of administering justice on God's behalf. However, rather than faithfully acting as divine representatives, these "gods" have thwarted justice (v v 2–4). *Asaph*. See intros, Ps 73; 74.

Format: V v 1–2, divine council; v v 3–4, justice; v 5, leaders lack understanding; v v 6–7, verdict of the leaders; v 8, plea for God to judge.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 82:1 *God … gods*. Hbr *'elohim* used in both cases (see p 1227). Most commentators agree that the second use of the word in this verse refers to the earthly judges and rulers whom God has established (cf Rm 13:1–17). Luth: "For we are all the children of God [v 6], … and therefore we are gods" (AE 11:111). *the divine council*. Also translated "congregation" or "assembly," this refers ultimately to the Church.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 82:2–4 God speaks to the "gods" of v 1. *Selah*. See p 993.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 82:2 *you*. Refers to the "gods" of v 1. *show partiality*. Cf Jas 2:1–13.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 82:5 *darkness*. Gr Nys: "He who has been rendered hostile to the true Light cannot keep his soul in light" (*NPNF* 2 5:226). *foundations of the earth*. Not a reference to creation, but to the foundations upon which community life is built. When neighbor fails to treat neighbor in the manner prescribed in v v 2–4, society begins to disintegrate.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 82:6 *sons*. Believers. See note, v 1. "To God above all you owe the duty to preserve sound teaching and hand it down to future generations, to defend those who teach what is right. For God demands this when He honors kings with His own name, calling them gods, saying, 'I said, "You are gods"'" (Ap XXI 44).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 82:7 *like men you shall die*. Because of the persistence of sinful flesh, believers enter the grave just like unbelievers do. The good news is that when God judges the earth on the Last Day, they shall yet be His inheritance (v 8) and in His council (v 1).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 82:8 *judge the earth*. Cf Mt 25:31–46. *inherit*. See "portion," p 7; cf Heb 1:2.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 82** Our Father in heaven carefully looks after each believer. No believer who suffers injustice in the world will be overlooked by God. Injustice, weakness, exploitation, continued trial and suffering—such afflictions can make the believer feel isolated and forgotten by God. Your heavenly Father has already judged you impartially by laying all of your sins upon Jesus. This provides you with salvation and endurance, even in the face of worldly injustice. • Thank You, dear Jesus, that You fully bore the justice that was once due to me. Give me Your Holy Spirit so that I may bear the injustices that are visited upon me. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 83** Likely written after King Solomon's death (1Ki 11:41–43) but before the Assyrian invasion (2Ki 17:1–6). The psalmist prays that God would destroy the nations that have conspired against Israel (v v 6–8), just as He previously destroyed those who opposed Israel during the days of the judges (v v 10–11). *Song*. See Ps 46 intro. *Asaph*. See intros, Ps 73; 74.

Format: V v 1–8, plans of the nations; v v 9–12, prayer for the nations' defeat; v v 13–18, shame the nations.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 83:2 *enemies*. Nations of v v 6–8. *raised their heads*. In defiance against God.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 83:3 *treasured ones*. God's people.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 83:4 *They*. God's enemies. *them*. The "treasured ones" of v 3.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 83:5 *covenant*. Here, a military alliance.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 83:6–8 Ten of Israel's closest neighbors and constant adversaries are listed as making a covenant against God's covenant people. *Edom*. Esau's descendants. Cf Gn 25:30. *Ishmaelites*. Descendants of Ishmael, Abraham's son through Hagar. Cf Gn 25:12–18. *Moab* … *Ammon*. Lot's descendants through incest. Cf Gn 19:36–38. *Hagrites*. Possibly descendants of Hagar, Abraham's concubine. *Gebal*. City of Phoenicia. *Amalek*. Descendants of Esau through his son Eliphaz. Cf Gn 36:12. *Philistia*. Descendants of Ham through his son Egypt. Cf Gn 10:6, 13. Philistines were Israel's persistent enemy, living on a small strip of land between Israel and the Great Sea. See p 345. See also color map 2. *Tyre*. See note, 45:12. *Asshur*. Assyria.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 83:8 *children of Lot*. Moabites and Ammonites, Lot's descendants (Gn 19:36–38) who later turned away from the faith of Lot. *Selah*. See p 993.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 83:9–11 Psalmist recalls some of God's stunning victories for Israel during the days of the exodus and the conquest of Canaan. *Midian*. Defeated by Moses and Gideon. Cf Nu 31:1–12; Jgs 7. *Sisera*. Canaanite military commander under Jabin. *Jabin*. Canaanite king. Sisera and Jabin were killed in the days of Deborah. Cf Jgs 4. *Oreb and Zeeb*. Canaanite kings defeated by Gideon. Cf Jgs 7:25. *Zebah and Zalmunna*. Canaanite kings defeated by Gideon. Cf Jgs 8:11–12.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 83:10 *dung for the ground*. Their bodies decayed into the earth.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 83:12 *pastures of God*. Land promised to Abraham, in which God's people live like a flock. Cf Gn 15:18–20.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 83:14 *flame sets the mountains ablaze*. Mountaintops were tree covered, so one spark could cause a huge fire. See note, Jsh 17:15.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 83:15 *Your tempest … Your hurricane!* Pictures the "storm" of God's judgment and wrath.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 83:16 *Your name*. References to God's name often signify His presence (see p 843).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 83:18 *name is the* LORD. See p 1227. *Most High*. See p 1227.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 83** The psalmist feels overwhelmed by his enemies, who plot against him. His only recourse is to run to God Most High, whose great deeds he remembers in prayer. God's children do not stop praying, even when He appears to keep silent. God is faithful. He answers your prayers in His time and according to His good pleasure, yet always acting for your benefit and eternal life (Rm 8:28). • Act on my behalf, O God, as You have acted so many times before. Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 84** References to "dwelling places" (plural, v 1), "courts" (v 2), and "altars" (v 3) might suggest that this psalm was written fairly late, and the psalmist could be referencing God's dwelling both in the Jerusalem temple and in the tabernacle that preceded it. This is the prayer of someone separated from the sanctuary, longing to stand within its precincts in God's presence (v 2). The unknown reason for the separation makes the psalm more universal, aptly prayed by shut-ins, prisoners, travelers, Sunday workers, and all who have been temporarily separated from congregational worship. *choirmaster*. See p 993. *Gittith*. See Ps 8 intro. *Sons of Korah*. See Ps 42 intro.

Format: V v 1–2, longing for the temple; v v 3–4, the blessed dwell there; v v 5–7, travel to Zion; v 8, appeal for God to hear; v 9, appeal for God to see; v v 10–12, God's temple courts are blessed.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 84:1 *lovely*. Not merely beautiful, but dear to the psalmist's heart. *dwelling place*. Lit, "dwelling places." *O LORD of hosts!* See p 1291.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 84:2 *courts of the LORD*. See p 842; see also Ps 84 intro.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 84:3 *at Your altars*. See Ps 84 intro. *O LORD of hosts*. See p 1291.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 84:4 *those who dwell in Your house*. Not only priests and Levites, but all those who dwell with the Lord in spiritual fellowship are gathered in the sanctuary. *Selah*. See p 993.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 84:5 *highways to Zion*. They have memorized the route; they travel through life by faith and trust in God (cf 116:9). *Zion*. See p 844.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 84:6 *Valley of Baca*. Also translated "valley of tears"; it is not known whether this is a literal place or a symbolic place, similar to Luther's "valley of sorrow" (SC, Seventh Petition, p xxxix). *early rain*. Spring rains. See calendar, p 262.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 84:7 *appears before God*. God keeps careful track of each of His beloved people (cf 34:15; Mt 10:29–31).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 84:8 *O LORD God of hosts*. See p 1291.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 84:9 *our shield … Your anointed!* The Messiah. God Himself is our shield (cf v 11), and the psalmist asks God to look upon "our shield." This prayer asks the Father to look on His people graciously, for the sake of the Son. The Son's righteousness shields our unrighteousness before the Father (cf Gal 3:27) because He has been anointed by the Father for the work of salvation. *anointed*. See note, 2:2.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 84:10 *better than a thousand elsewhere … doorkeeper*. A lowly place in salvation is much better than a lavish life ending in eternal condemnation. Cf Mt 5:3, 5.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 84:11 *sun and shield*. See note, v 9. *No good … withhold*. God faithfully provides His people with everything they need. Cf Php 1:6; 4:19.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 84:12 *O LORD of hosts*. See p 1291. *blessed*. See p 842.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 84** Someone who has been separated from the sanctuary, where God is rightly worshiped, now longs to return. Many homebound and shut-in Christians long for worship in God's house, yearning for the days they were strong enough to go. Meanwhile, many other Christians, especially those in the height of their strength, neglect the worship of the Lord to their own detriment. God gives strength to His people (v v 5–7) through the hearing of His Word, specifically through His Gospel promises of salvation on account of Christ. • Teach me to love the hearing of Your Word, O Lord, and the reception of Your gifts, that I may carry them to those in need. When I am separated from Your congregation, stir my desire to return again according to Your mercy. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 85** Possibly written soon after the return of the exiles from Babylon (v v 1–3), this psalm expresses the psalmist's feelings of distress and exposure to danger (cf the opposition to rebuilding Jerusalem's walls after the return, Ne 4:16–23). *choirmaster*. See p 993. *Sons of Korah*. See Ps 42 intro.

Format: V v 1–3, restoration; v v 4–7, plea to restore again; v v 8–9, God will speak peace; v v 10–13, the Lord gives what is good.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 85:1 *restored the fortunes*. God returned to His people what they lost in the Babylonian exile. See p 1080.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 85:2 *covered all their sin*. Explains the first half of this verse. God does not forgive by dismissing sin, but by covering it, or atoning for it. Later, God the Son would atone for the world's sin in the same way—by covering it with His blood. See "atonement," p 5. *Selah*. See p 993.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 85:4 *Restore us again*. First restoration of v v 1–2 may refer to the return from Babylonian exile; the second restoration mentioned here may be a reference to the hard labor of rebuilding Israel after the return.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 85:6 *revive us again*. See note, v 4.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 85:7 *steadfast love*. See p 843. Whether God disciplines harshly or tenderly speaks to His people, both arise out of His unchanging love.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 85:8 *will speak*. Possibly a reference to Ne 8:2–3. *saints*. All of God's holy people; in the same way, "communion of saints" is used in the Apostles' Creed (SC, p xxxvii). See p 843.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 85:9 *fear Him*. See p 842.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 85:10–11 *steadfast love … faithfulness … righteousness … peace*. See pp 842–43. Through His steadfast love, God gives us faith and makes us righteous so we may live in peace.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 85:12 *land will yield its increase*. Even the earth rejoices in God's goodness.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 85:13 *make His footsteps a way*. Personification of righteousness similar to that in Pr 14:34. Here God's righteousness creates a pathway for His saints to follow.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 85** The psalmist feels distress and fear at his exposure to his enemies. Many people, even Christians, suffer from deep fears and insecurities. Rightly heeded, these fears chase us to Jesus. When we are overcome by fears, though, they threaten us with despair and unbelief. When God forgave your iniquity and covered your sin (v 2) through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, He destroyed your enemies of sin, death, and hell. Having defeated these great enemies for you, He will surely protect you from all other enemies. • Help me, Lord, in the midst of my fears, to trust solely in You. Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 86** Only Davidic psalm included in Book Three (Ps 73–89). Similar to the others in this book, it asks God for protection against enemies (v 14) and expresses confidence that the Lord shall indeed act (v v 5, 15–17). This is a personal psalm, apparently originating as a prayer of David before God.

Format: V v 1–7, plea for grace; v v 8–13, You alone are God; v v 14–17, show a sign of Your favor.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 86:1 *Incline Your ear*. Stoop down and listen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 86:4 *lift up my soul*. From the depths of despair, the psalmist cries out to God for help. See note, 24:4.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 86:5 *steadfast love*. See p 843. *call upon You*. See p 842.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 86:6 *grace*. See p 842.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 86:7 *trouble … call*. See note, 50:15.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 86:8 *among the gods*. Idols to which pagan religions pray (cf 1Co 8:4–6). *works like Yours*. Works of the demons stand behind the false gods (1Co 10:19–20), but God's works are greater and more powerful.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 86:11 *way … walk*. OT way of describing faith and living by faith. See p 7. *unite my heart*. Lit, "make my heart one."

Undivided between competing loyalties (cf Mt 6:24). *fear Your name*. See p 842.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 86:13 *steadfast love*. See p 843. *depths of Sheol*. Not a reference to hell, but the grave. Jacob, e.g., spoke of dying as going to Sheol (Gn 37:35). See p 792.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 86:14 *insolent men*. People who do not accept David's royal authority over them. *do not set You before them*. They do not keep the First Commandment of loving God above all things (cf Ex 20:3; Mt 22:37–38).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 86:15 Very close parallel with Ex 34:6–7. God's nature is one of patience and mercy. He does not deal hastily with His people on account of their sins, but He forbears, awaiting their repentance.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 86:16 *Turn to me*. See p 1080. *Your maidservant*. David's mother, apparently, was also a believer in God.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 86:17 *sign of Your favor*. David seeks assurances of God's grace. See p 6.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 86** Ascribed to King David, this psalm points to God's steadfast love (v v 5, 13, 15) as the reason why prayers are answered. Rather than feeling overwhelmed by the obstacles that confront us (v 14), keep the eyes of your faith focused upon the Lord, for He alone is God (v 10). Because of the Lord's steadfast love, He cannot overlook or neglect His children. Their care and preservation is part of His very nature —He cannot and will not fail to act according to His mercy and grace. • Lord, help me and comfort me so that I may enjoy peace of mind and spirit. Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 87** Psalm includes Gentiles in God's salvation (v 4). Also, the Lord carefully records the name of each person born in Zion (v v 5–6). *Sons of Korah*. See Ps 42 intro. *Song*. See Ps 46 intro.

Format: V v 1–3, Zion; v v 4–6, the Lord established Zion and His people; v 7, dancing in Zion.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 87:1 *holy mount*. Lit, "hills of holiness"; Jerusalem covers a number of hills. *city He founded*. Zion. Cf Gn 28:10–17; Rv 21:1–4; see p 844.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 87:2 *the gates of Zion*. Referring to the temple, where God dwells among people. *Zion*. See p 844.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 87:3 *O city of God*. Cf v 1; see note, 46:4. *Selah*. See p 993.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 87:4 *Me*. God is speaking. *Rahab*. Name of a mythological monster used to describe Egypt (cf Is 30:7). *Babylon … Philistia … Tyre … Cush*. Collection of nations representing Gentile converts from all over the world. *This one*. Individual Gentile who by faith is included among the saints.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 87:5 *of Zion … born in her*. God's people are described here as a family into which believers are "born." Jesus later used birth imagery to describe the miracle of Baptism (Jn 3:3–8).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 87:6 *registers*. God is pictured as keeping a record of people who are granted the privilege of citizenship in His holy city (cf Php 4:3; Rv 20:15).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 87:7 Singing and dancing are rooted in the joy that results from God's acts of salvation (Cf Ex 15:1–21; 1Sm 18:6; 2Sm 6:12–15).
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 87** God includes people of all nations among His believers, all of whom may claim to be born in Zion (v 5). Your true identity before God is not rooted in your nationality, your language, your family ties, your wealth, or any other earthly thing. God claims you to be His own in Baptism, through which you become His own child (v v 5–6), no matter who you are or from where you came (v 4). • Thank You, dear heavenly Father, that You regard me as Your child through Jesus Christ. Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 88** Personal psalm, prayed by someone whose suffering sounds a lot like Christ's own suffering. Lamenting the troubles that God has visited upon him (v v 7–8, 16, 18), the psalmist clings to the hope that God shall yet save him (v 1). Cyr Jer: "Christ speaks in the Prophets … see how they show the exact point of the Hour, and of the Passion, and of the Resurrection?" (*NPNF* 2 7:96). *Song*. See Ps 46 intro. *Sons of Korah*. See Ps 42 intro. *choirmaster*. See p 993. *Mahalath Leannoth*. May refer to the tune; see Ps 53 intro. *Maskil*. See p 841. *Ezrahite*. Possibly referring to a descendant of Zerah (1Ch 2:6), whose sons included Heman and Ethan (cf Ps 89 intro).

Format: V v 1–2, appeal to God to hear; v v 3–7, depth of the pit; v v 8–12, questions about the grave; v v 13–18, suffering God's terrors.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 88:1 *day and night before You*. Not necessarily a reference to continual worship in the temple, as in the case of Anna (Lk 2:36–37), but more likely a reference to continual prayer, as in 1Th 5:17.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 88:3–4 *Sheol … pit*. Death. See note, 86:13; see also p 792.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 88:5 *set loose among the dead … You remember no more*. Unbelievers under God's judgment and abandonment.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 88:6–7 Psalmist realizes that God has allowed this suffering (cf Jb 2).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 88:7 *Selah*. See p 993.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 88:8 *shun*. Perhaps implying that the psalmist's physical afflictions are such that his friends find it difficult to look at him. *shut in*. With no escape except that which God provides.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 88:9 *spread out my hands*. Posture of prayer and supplication. See p 1277.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 88:10–12 Not a reference to the resurrection, but rhetorical questions to God, essentially asking, "If You let me die, how will I be able to praise You?"
PSALMS—NOTE ON 88:11 *steadfast love*. See p 843. *Abaddon*. Lit, "ruin"; Hbr name for the "angel of the bottomless pit" (Rv 9:11). Here, it is another reference to the pit (v 4) itself.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 88:12 *land of forgetfulness*. Cf v 5.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 88:14 Although God has not done these things, the psalmist feels lonely and abandoned, as if God truly has cast him away.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 88:15 *Your terrors*. The accusations of the Law terrorize sinners. "Contrition is the true terror of conscience, which feels that God is angry with sin and grieves that it has sinned" (Ap XIIA 29). *helpless*. Unable to defend against the righteous and accurate accusations of God's Law.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 88:18 *my beloved and my friend*. People closest to the psalmist. *my companions have become darkness*. Psalmist cannot perceive the comforting presence and support of his friends and family. He feels alone.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 88** This psalm evokes feelings of sadness and abandonment. The psalmist is so overcome by troubles that he wonders if God will hear him. Surely the loneliness spoken of here has been felt by many suffering Christians! Yet even in sorrow and suffering, God inclines His ear (v 2) toward His people, always ready to hear and answer us according to His mercy. • Thank You, O Lord, that no matter how low I sink, I never disappear from Your sight. Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 89** Speaks of the rise and fall of David's kingdom, suggesting a date during the time of the kings. Because David's sons, the kings of Judah, did not remain faithful to God (v 30), God has visited judgment upon His people (v v 38–45). Lamenting this harsh treatment, the psalmist calls upon God to relent and to restore His people once again. *Maskil*. See p 841. *Ezrahite*. See Ps 88 intro.

Format: V v 1–4, God's steadfast love; v v 5–18, God's wonders; v v 19–37, God's word to David; v v 38–45, rejection by God; v v 46–48, how long?; v v 49–51, appeal to God to remember His faithfulness to David; v 52, closing blessing.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 89:1 *steadfast love … faithfulness*. See p 843. Cf 2Tm 2:13, where Paul quotes an ancient poem or hymn with similar wording.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 89:3 *covenant*. Defined in v 4. The promise was spoken to David in 2Sm 7:8–16, to Judah before him (Gn 49:10), and is repeated here in v 4. *chosen one … David My servant*. Samuel referred to David as a king after God's own heart (1Sm 13:14).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 89:4 *offspring*. Singular. Similar to the promise God spoke to Adam and Eve and to Abraham (see notes, Gn 3:15; Gal 3:16). This promise looks past David's son Solomon toward his greater Son, Jesus Christ (cf Mt 1:1). See note, v 3. *Selah*. See p 993.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 89:5 *assembly of the holy ones!* Worshipers of God, including angels.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 89:6 *heavenly beings*. Stars or angels.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 89:7 *council of the holy ones*. See note, v 5. See notes, Jb 1:6; 15:8.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 89:8 *O LORD God of hosts*. See p 1291.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 89:10 *Rahab*. Refers to neither the famous Gentile believer of Jsh 2, nor Egypt (Is 30:7), but possibly is another name for Leviathan, monster of the deep (see note, Jb 9:13).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 89:11 *Yours*. God has right of ownership as Creator.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 89:12–13 *Tabor*. Mountain near the site of Deborah and Barak's victory over the Canaanite king Jabon (Jgs 4:6). *Hermon*. Mountain once ruled by Og, King of Bashan (Jsh 13:11–12), whom Moses defeated. In both cases, God's "mighty arm" gave the Israelites the victory.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 89:14 *Your throne*. God's reign. *steadfast love and faithfulness*. See p 843.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 89:15 *festal shout*. Joyful reaction to the good news of God's salvation.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 89:17 *favor*. See p 6. *horn is exalted*. Israel's king. See p 842.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 89:18 *shield*. Israel's king, who protects God's people from harm.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 89:19 *godly one*. Samuel, who anointed David as king (1Sm 16).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 89:20 Cf v 3.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 89:21 *My hand*. Expression of God's power; Jesus is later described as sitting at God's right hand (Lk 22:69). See p 842.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 89:24 *horn*. See p 842.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 89:25 Reference to the extent of David's rule, which stretched from the Great Sea, going beyond the Jordan to the Euphrates River. See map, p 534.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 89:26 *Father … Rock of my salvation*. David lived by faith and trust in God. See "rock," p 843.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 89:27 *firstborn*. A title. The man of God's own choosing, David was granted preeminence above all monarchs on earth.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 89:28 *covenant*. Cf v 3.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 89:29 *offspring*. See note, v 4.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 89:30–31 *law … rules … statutes … commandments*. Repetition to emphasize the point that David's successors are to keep the Word of the Lord. See p 971.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 89:32–33 *rod … stripes*. Both refer to God's acts of judgment, executed by the Gentile nations. Chem: "Because the regenerate still have sinned against the Law, therefore these punishments also remain, e.g., physical death; but because their sins have been forgiven and covered, the punishments are mitigated" (*LTh* 2:358).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 89:33–35 *faithfulness … holiness*. God swears by His attributes that He will keep His promises. See p 842; see also "holy," p 7.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 89:36 *offspring*. See note, v 4. *as the sun*. Cyr Jer: "See that the discourse is of Christ, not of Solomon. For Solomon's throne endured not as the sun" (*NPNF* 2 7:78).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 89:37 *witness*. The moon is a reliable witness to God's faithfulness in that God has never failed to keep it in its patterns and seasons.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 89:38 *You*. Psalmist now speaks directly to God, lamenting the judgment brought upon Israel.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 89:39 God's punishment makes it seem as though He has forgotten His promises, even though He remains faithful always.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 89:41 *neighbors*. Nations.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 89:42 *foes*. Rivals in Israel. The king's enemies have become powerful against him.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 89:45 *covered him with shame*. The king's guilt is undeniable.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 89:47 Psalmist longs to see Israel quickly restored. *For … vanity*. Human existence is brief and weak.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 89:48 Only Jesus Christ, the God-man, can do this. *Sheol*. See p 792.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 89:49 *steadfast love*. See p 843. *of old*. Extending into the most ancient days of creation.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 89:50 *Remember … bear in my heart the insults*. See ESV note. Speaker feels the weight of Israel's troubles and sins.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 89:51 *mock the footsteps*. The king's enemies mock his repentance and his desire to follow God's Word.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 89:52 This doxology ends Book Three of the Psalter. *Blessed*. See p 842.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 89** Speaks primarily of David, who enjoyed God's faithfulness (v v 2, 24) and promises. Even when David sinned and felt the weight of God's Law (v v 38–47), he still relied completely upon God. "How long, O LORD?" (v 46) easily comes to the lips of all who, because of their sins, have suffered under the weight of God's Law. God's steadfast love of old (v 49) and His faithfulness (v v 2, 24) are shown most clearly in Christ, whose death and resurrection provide the remedy for all troubles (v 48). • "Blessed be the LORD forever!" Preserve the faithful, O Lord, and provide for their future security and service. Amen and Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Book Four** Ps 90–106; see p 844.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 90** Does not name any specific event or crisis, so this psalm is suited for any time of lament, when the frailty of life stands in stark contrast to God's eternal strength.

Format: V v 1–2, God's eternal nature; v v 3–6, brevity of human life; v v 7–11, human sinfulness causes the dismal state of the human race; v v 12–17, prayer for wisdom and grace.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 90:1 *dwelling place*. In contrast to the temporary and uncertain nature of human life, God is a refuge for all generations (see ESV note). He is the One to go to for security, for He is before creation and will be for eternity (cf Heb 13:8).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 90:2 *earth … world*. Repetition emphasizes that the everlasting God made all things.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 90:3 *return man to dust*. As punishment for the first sin in Eden, death now runs through the whole human race, indeed, the whole creation. In Gn 3:19, death is pictured as a return to the dust out of which God created Adam. The focus in this psalm, however, is not so much on death, but on the shortness of life and, in v v 7–11, the difficulties of life under this divine sentence.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 90:4 *thousand years*. God is beyond time. Psalmist contrasts God's permanence with human life. From God's perspective, a thousand years is fleeting. Some rabbis later concluded that God had a "day" that lasted a thousand years. This conclusion led to speculation and computation about the ages of the earth and God's timing for Judgment Day. Such speculation cannot be based on this text. Aug: "No one may imagine a thousand years are reckoned by God as one day, as if with God days were so long, when this is only said in contempt of the extent of time: he adds, 'and as a watch in the night:' which only lasts three hours" (*NPNF* 1 8:442). *watch*. See note, Is 21:6 –12. *night*. Suggests sleep, where there is no sense of time passing.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 90:5–6 Human frailty and mortality are like a dream quickly forgotten or grass withering in a day's heat. Time carries life away like a raging flood sweeps away everything in its path. Taken with v v 3–4, we face the harsh and despairing reality that life is too quickly gone.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 90:7–11 It's not just the brevity of life that brings such despair. God's anger over sin causes life's transient nature (Gn 3). Just to survive is burdensome, characterized by toil and trouble as sin wreaks havoc in the whole creation. Life comes to an end with a sigh, probably referring to the somber sounds of mourning. Worse, though, is God's wrath, which consumes human life and consigns the sinful to eternal death.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 90:8 *secret sins*. Sins that are "hidden from our thinking unless it be revealed in the law of God" (Chem, *LTh* 1:276). God's wrath brings to light every violation of His holy will.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 90:10 *years of our life*. Different cultures describe ideal ages. E.g., in Egypt the ideal life span was 110 years. Archaeologists conclude that a typical life span for this era was c 40 years. *fly away*. Poetic language that again evokes the despair of life's all-too-rapid flight into death and God's everlasting punishment.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 90:12 This request for wisdom leads to a series of petitions, beginning with a true understanding of human life, that we realize how few are the days we actually have and how we need to turn to God for security and refuge. *wisdom*. See pp 775–78.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 90:12–17 Prayer for God to turn His anger into steadfast love.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 90:13–16 *Return, O Lord!* The plea is for God's punishment to last no longer and to end the despair that goes with it; the psalmist longs to see God's glorious power. *morning*. A picturesque reversal from grass withering in the evening (v 6) to the renewal God brings in the morning.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 90:15 Prayer that life's joys will balance out life's sorrows. God's answer to this prayer goes much further (Rm 8:18–39).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 90:16 *Your work be shown*. God's work of salvation (cf 96:2–3). The psalmist seeks deliverance from crisis, whether famine, enemies, sickness, or injustice. Ultimately, the answer to the prayer is Jesus, who shows God's glorious works of salvation in loving and merciful fullness.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 90:17 *favor*. See p 6; see also ESV note. *establish the work*. Burden of work that comes from the first sin is replaced with enduring service in the Lord's wisdom and name.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 90** How quickly life flies by: grass withering in the summer heat, leaves falling and blowing away in autumn, trees standing bare in winter. Even more heartbreaking is to stand by a casket and stare at a lifeless body or to look in a mirror and see age steal youth and energy. Yet in spring the flowers bloom and the grass turns green. The grave is empty on Easter morning. Jesus has risen! God has taken pity on us and given us everlasting life in Christ. • Lord, give us wisdom to number our days as Your servants, so we will look forward to dwelling with You from everlasting to everlasting. Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 91** This strong confession of faith and example of a life entrusted to God's protective safety urges all readers to seek the Lord's refuge when fearful times arise.

Format: V v 1–2, God as our protection; v v 3–13, God's power over the many perils of life; v v 14–16, God's promises for anyone who trusts in Him.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 91:1–2 *shelter … shadow … refuge … fortress*. These metaphors depict the sure defense found in the Lord God. The shadow is not ominous, but comforting, as that of the shadow of a mother bird's wings (v 4; 17:8). Four names for God correspond to the metaphors, and each gives the basis for the strong confession of faith in God's protection. "Almighty" and "Most High" esp depict God's incomparable power over any threat or danger. See p 1227.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 91:3 *you*. Not specified; the psalm can be read as personal encouragement to every believer. *snare of the fowler*. A trap to catch birds, referring to hidden dangers or sudden lethal attacks. *deadly pestilence*. A general term for illness and deadly diseases. At its worst, the pestilence is an epidemic. The Hbr consonants of "pestilence" also spell "word," which the enemy used for snaring God's people.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 91:4 *wings*. Possible reference to the wings of the cherubim over the ark of the covenant in the temple (symbolizing a protective shield in a sacred place; see note, Ezk 10:1) or more broadly to any mother bird protecting her chicks. *buckler*. A bowed, round shield.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 91:5–6 God's security surrounds us whenever danger comes. *terror of the night*. The demonic realm could cause this fear, but it includes all unseen danger lurking in the darkness. *arrow*. Danger also comes from war. An arrow is a silent and deadly attack weapon.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 91:7 *thousand … ten thousand*. In Hbr poetry, the larger number follows the smaller as a way to emphasize the amount. The psalmist confesses the Lord's protection no matter how many are affected by war or plague.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 91:8 *recompense*. God will punish those judged wicked. *the wicked*. Those who have rebelled against God and cut themselves off from His steadfast love and mercy (1:1).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 91:10 Those who take refuge in the Lord are not exempt from these dangers, but will be protected in the midst of them. God will not let these threats separate us from Him so that we end up like the wicked (Rm 8:31–39).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 91:11–12 In answer to demonic terrors of the night, God sends His angels to watch over His people. Satan used this psalm to tempt Jesus (Mt 4:5–7). Jesus welcomed the angelic help when He needed strength during His redemptive suffering and sacrifice for the lost (Mt 4:11). However, He would not test the Father's love for Him by forcing

God to protect Him as Satan proposed (Mt 26:53–54). Chem: "With one hand they [the angels] protect the believers … and with the other they pursue and attack Satan and godless men…. As you go about your daily work, the angels carry you in their hands" (*LTh* 1:178).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 91:13 *tread … trample*. Dangerous animals are often used to symbolize adversaries who attack unexpectedly. In addition to protection, God gives strength to stomp these enemies in victory.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 91:14–16 Promises from God. God assures all who trust in Him that He will be an ever-present help, fulfilled in Jesus (Jn 10:28–29).

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 91** How quickly life can go from smooth and routine to troubled and fearful! How encouraging it is to know of God's protection. Our security comes from His promises kept. Jesus trampled Satan once and for all when He gloriously rose from the dead. We walk in victory even during dangerous times because He is with us and will not let us be separated from His love. • Thank You, Lord, for Your security and strength in this perilous world. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 92** Only psalm tied specifically to the Sabbath. While the Sabbath could be described by what could not be done on that day, this psalm shows what should be done: praise and celebration of God's great works.

Format: V v 1–4, it is good to praise God; v v 5–9, fate of God's foolish enemies; v v 10–11, psalmist enjoys victory; v v 12–15, flourishing of God's faithful people.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 92:1–3 *morning … night*. Praise is continuously sung and accompanied by a variety of musical instruments. *lute … harp … lyre*. See p 993. *steadfast love … faithfulness*. See p 843.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 92:4 *works of Your hands*. God as Creator is also reason for praise.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 92:5 *deep!* Profound, mysterious, at times beyond human understanding. Aug: "Verily, my brethren, there is no sea so deep as these thoughts of God, who makes the wicked flourish, and the good suffer: nothing so profound, nothing so deep: therein every unbelieving soul is wrecked, in that depth, in that profundity. Do you wish to cross this depth? Remove not from the wood of Christ's cross: you shall not sink: hold yourself fast to Christ" (*NPNF* 1 8:454).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 92:6 *stupid*. Morally corrupt. The fool lacks discernment of God's power and majesty, rejecting His wisdom and rule over life. See p 1016.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 92:7 *doomed to destruction forever*. Although the wicked may do well in this life, their end is determined by God's justice.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 92:9 *enemies*. Those who stand as foolish evildoers before God bring His judgment; they are totally destroyed as they perish in eternal death.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 92:10 *exalted my horn … wild ox*. To be made strong and powerful. *horn*. See p 842. *poured over me fresh oil*. Anointing could express great joy, such as a victory over enemies, or it could signify consecration to serve the Lord in a special way. See note, 1Sm 10:1.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 92:12–13 *palm tree*. Grows tall and graceful at an oasis in the desert; its fruit is valuable for food, and its deep roots seek out water. *cedar*. Grows tall; prime source of fine wood. Palms and cedars convey a picture of strength, majesty, and dignity. *planted in the house of the* LORD. Gardens may have been planted in the inner and outer courts of the temple. *flourish*. While the wicked are like the withering grass (v 7), the righteous flourish in God's presence.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 92:14 Youthful vigor even in old age. Maturity and wisdom that come with age are retained, then combined with the fresh vitality of youth.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 92:15 *upright … no unrighteousness*. The Lord is just. No wrong is found in Him. So the wicked will be judged and punished, while the righteous will flourish forever with God. See note, Jb 1:1.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 92** In worship, you receive the strength of God's steadfast love and faithfulness. No doubt, there are days you wonder if going to worship is worth the effort. But focus on what God has done for you in Jesus, who is faithful to His promises. One day justice will be served on the wicked, but we who believe will flourish in the strength of Christ's resurrection. • Lord, bring forth praises out of our hearts, for the works of Your hands make us glad indeed. Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 93** Many religions celebrated the enthronement of their gods. Here, the writer affirms that the Lord has always reigned and will do so forever. This confident confession celebrates God's almighty and eternal reign over even the most chaotic powers of creation. The fall Festival of Booths or Tabernacles may have used this psalm. Cf 47; 95–99.

Format: V v 1–2, God's power over the world; v v 3–4, God's rule over destructive forces; v 5, praise for God's holiness.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 93:1–2 *world*. All creation. *throne*. God's power and rule. The psalm focuses on the Lord's everlasting reign. The repetition of themes (robed, belt, throne) here and in v v 3–4 (floods, waters, waves) emphasize, much like exclamation marks, the Lord's eternal and unshakable sovereignty.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 93:1 *robed … belt*. Magnificent clothes worn only by a king, which depict God's strength and splendor.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 93:3–4 Imagery of waves pounding against rocks or a flood relentlessly attacking whatever is in its path. Even these destructive forces are no match for God's power (cf Mk 4:35–41).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 93:5 *decrees*. God's promises, warnings, and commands by which He reveals Himself. *holiness befits Your house*. God's holy presence adorns the temple, making it beautiful. Since His holiness is everlasting, that holiness now adorns the Church today (1Co 3:17) and heaven itself. It also calls those who worship to holiness: "You shall be holy, for I the LORD Your God am holy" (Lv 19:2).

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 93** The Lord reigns! Yet a storm may still crash into a church. The members may come back to see destruction, not beauty. Does the Lord reign? Indeed, He does. Many years ago, Jesus spoke, and a deadly storm was silenced. Wind and waves were calmed in an instant. Such is God's power. And more! By His resurrection, He rules over our lives now and forever. • Lord, despite the evil we see and the destruction around us, lead us to confess that Your words are trustworthy. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 94** Ps 93; 95; 96; 97; 99 declare that the Lord reigns! However, the social and political situation seems to say that the wicked reign. Tension between trust that the Lord is in control and agony of seeing injustice and evil prevail dominates the beginning of Ps 94. Worse, that wickedness could very well be from Israel's religious and political leaders, not merely a foreign power attacking the people. Internal corruption in the highest places has made life oppressive. Ps 94 is a plea for God to repay these oppressors so that justice returns (see p 879); it trusts that God will be victorious and will discipline and care for His faithful people.

Format: V v 1–7, calls for God to act; v v 8–11, ridicule for unbelievers; v v 12–16, praise for those who trust the Lord; v v 17–19, the writer's struggles; v v 20–23, confidence that God's justice will prevail.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 94:1 *God of vengeance, shine forth!* In Dt 32:35, God tells of His responsibility to judge and avenge the wicked. This psalm pleas for God to show that righteous judgment so His name and people will be vindicated.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 94:2–4 *proud … wicked … evildoers*. Foreign powers or Israel's own leaders, misusing their offices for personal gain. *how long*. Question affirms God's rule on earth but shows the psalmist's struggle as he waits for God to silence the haughty arrogance of the wicked (v 4).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 94:5 *heritage*. See "portion," p 7. Hbr poetry often takes one line and repeats it with slightly different words to amplify the thought. See pp 777–78; cf 33:12.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 94:6 *widow … sojourner … fatherless*. Ps 68:5–6 shows that God has special concern for those who are poor, helpless, and vulnerable. He is their Father. Dt 10:17–19 calls for God's people likewise to protect and care for those who are not able to defend themselves.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 94:8–11 Of course, the Lord hears, sees, rebukes, knows. These verses denounce the foolish assertion made by the wicked that the Lord doesn't care or know what's happening to His people (v 7).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 94:8 *dullest*. Lacking spiritual discernment (cf 92:6).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 94:11 *thoughts … but a breath*. Ability to think and reason is a gift from God and is not disparaged here. Rather, the wicked schemes and thoughts of those who rebel against God's wisdom, esp in terms of justice for those in need, are nothing more than puffs of air. Cf 92:5–6; 1Co 3:20.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 94:12 *Blessed*. See p 842. *Your law*. See p 971.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 94:13 *rest*. Inner quietness and peace despite outward difficulties. This rest arises from the confidence that the wicked will be judged. *pit*. The grave. See p 792.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 94:14 *heritage*. God will not abandon His people (cf v 5). The psalmist firmly believes that God's justice will prevail, thereby blessing those who follow the Lord's Law (*torah;* see p 971).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 94:16–19 Personal testimony that the Lord does not forsake His people.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 94:17 *land of silence*. Place of death.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 94:18 *foot slips*. Signaling imminent death, indicating the serious nature of the threats to the psalmist. *steadfast love*. See p 843. Aug: "See how God loves confession…. The moment you begin to slip or waver, confess that slip, that you may not bewail your total fall" (*NPNF* 1 8:465).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 94:19 *consolations*. Hbr word connected in Is 66:10–13 with the tender image of a mother nursing her child. Aug: "Many sorrows, but many consolations: bitter wounds, and sweet remedies" (*NPNF* 1 8:465).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 94:20 Another rhetorical question. In no way can the God of justice be aligned with those who pervert the legal system against the righteous.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 94:22 Psalmist finishes with one last strong confession of faith. *stronghold … rock*. See p 843.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 94:23 God will silence the gloating arrogance (v v 4, 7) and justly punish those who did such evil. The separation of the just from the unjust will one day happen, and it will have eternal consequences. In Mt 13:40–43, Jesus says the righteous will shine like the sun in God's kingdom, but the wicked will be left weeping and gnashing their teeth in the fires of hell.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 94** The psalmist pleads for God to take vengeance on His enemies. Jesus, however, says to pray for our enemies, even love them (Mt 5:43–44). What are we to do? Final judgment will bring vengeance on those who arrogantly reject the Lord. Meanwhile, we pray that all will see the glory of God's justice in Jesus on the cross, turn from their wicked ways, and join with us in the life of righteousness, which includes caring for and protecting widows, orphans, and others who are helpless and oppressed. • Lord, help us to pray—even for our enemies! Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 95** In the midst of national crisis, this psalm would assure people that God is King over all, even when they suffer defeat and death (cf Ps 90). The psalm references temple practices such as procession and bowing. See p 959. The text may have prepared people to

hear the reading of God's Word, such as at the Festival of Booths or Tabernacles.

Format: V v 1–5, call to exuberant and joyful worship because God still reigns; v v 6–11, stern warning not to rebel as the Israelites did.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 95:1–7 *Oh come*. Lat *Venite*. See canticle in *LSB*, pp 220–21.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 95:1 *rock*. See p 843.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 95:2 *come into His presence*. See p 843.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 95:3 *gods*. There is only one true God. See note, 96:5.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 95:4 *In His hand*. God's hands are pictured as holding what He has made (v 5) and caring for His people (v 7). See p 842. *depths … heights*. Along with vast expanses of the sea and dry land in v 5, these images picture all the earth as God's possession; indeed, the whole universe is His.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 95:6 *bow … kneel*. See p 1276.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 95:7 *people of His pasture … sheep of His hand*. As a shepherd protects and provides for his flock, a good king cares for the people of his nation. (Kings were often referred to as shepherds.) David, Israel's great king, was a shepherd in his youth. God is the great King (v 3) who protects and provides for His people. Jesus would later say He is the Good Shepherd (Jn 10:11–17). Aug: "See how elegantly he has transposed the order of the words … that we may understand these very same to be the sheep, who are also His people" (*NPNF* 1 8:469). *hear*. Includes both listening to the words and obeying what is said.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 95:8–11 Recalls Israel's 40 years of wilderness wandering, when the people often complained and rebelled against Moses and God's provision for them.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 95:8 *harden your hearts*. To stubbornly rebel against what God has said. See notes, Ex 4:21; 9:12. *Meribah*. "Dispute." *Massah*. "Testing." Cf Ex 17:7. Even after God had brought them out of Egyptian slavery, the people still questioned whether God was with them. In Heb 3:7–4:12, this stubborn refusal to take God at His word is applied to all who hear God's Word but reject it. The "today" of v 7 is every day (Heb 3:13), and the warning is that we not become hardened by the deceitfulness of sin as the Israelites had, but listen and obey God's voice in His Word.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 95:9 *My work*. God's rescue of Israel, which included such awesome works as the plagues, the parting of the Red Sea, the pillars of fire and cloud to lead them in safety, and food and drink for all the people (Ex 1–19).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 95:10 *loathed*. God's reaction to rebellion is one of disgust and revulsion. *My ways*. See p 844.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 95:11 *swore*. What God says, He will do. He said that the exodus generation would not enter the Promised Land, so they wandered for 40 years until a new generation had grown up. His warning still stands. *My rest*. For those coming out of slavery in Egypt, God's rest was the Promised Land, a place to live in peace. But Heb 3–4 expands that rest to include salvation: our eternal rest in God's presence.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 95** The opening verses have been sung in the Church for centuries as the *Venite* (Latin for "O come"). Some days we struggle to come into God's presence with such exuberance and humility. Thankfully, the psalmist directs us not to self-generated emotions, but to remember the God we worship. He is our Creator, who has formed and protected us by His strong hands. And wonderfully more—He is our Good Shepherd, who has made us the sheep of His loving hand. • Shepherd and King, lead us into Your presence with thanksgiving and joy. Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 96** A psalm for two joyous occasions. In 1Ch 16:23–34, David uses this song of praise as he brings the ark of the covenant into Jerusalem in victory. Also, the LXX titles this psalm as the one used when the temple was rebuilt after the Babylonian captivity. God is the King who reigns, and His glorious victories call for all nations, indeed all creation, to join in the joyful exaltation of His holy name.

Format: V v 1–6, praise for God's greatness; v v 7–10, call for all nations to worship at the temple; v v 11–13, call for all creation to worship.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 96:1 *a new song*. See p 843.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 96:2–3 *tell … Declare*. Psalmist first directs our singing to God, then has us speak to others. Evangelism is proclaiming to others this message of grace: God shows His glory through His wonderful deeds of salvation on behalf of all people (cf Ac 2:11). Chem: "These passages … unquestionably foretell the future preaching in the era of the new covenant" (*LTh* 2:446).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 96:2 *bless His name*. See p 842.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 96:4 *feared*. See p 842.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 96:5 *worthless idols*. Contempt for the unreal gods made by human hands. How useless to worship some element of creation, when the Creator God is alone worthy of all adoration and praise!
PSALMS—NOTE ON 96:6 *His sanctuary*. The temple in ancient Jerusalem was an earthly copy, a shadow, of the heavenly temple (Heb 8:5). The psalm could refer to both temples, because God's presence is both on earth and in heaven. The description of God depicts His attributes as King.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 96:8 *bring an offering, and come into His courts*. It could be any type of offering given in the open areas of the temple. With songs and prayers, an offering gives glory to God. See "courts of the Lord," p 842.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 96:9 *splendor of holiness*. Three possible meanings: the temple's beauty, the worshipers' and priests' garb (see ESV note), or God's radiant glory. Cf 29:2. *tremble*. Not so much physical shaking as an attitude of awe and reverence similar to "feared" in v 4.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 96:10 *never be moved*. God set the earth in motion at creation, and nothing can stop His rule over all that He has made.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 96:11–12 Psalmist calls creation to join in the praise and exultation along with all the nations. Rm 8:19 says all creation waits for the final day of redemption. When the Lord returns on the Last Day, all effects of sin will be gone, and the created realm will enjoy the new heavens and earth.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 96:13 *to judge*. On Judgment Day. The Lord certainly reigns now, but a day will come when He will decisively judge the unbelievers in equity, righteousness, and faithfulness. It will be a day of joy for God's chosen people.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 96** Proclaim the marvelous deeds of God's salvation to all nations! In our world, too many people see faith in God as a relic of the past with little to say about life today. People turn away from the true God in idolatrous pursuits of money and success; they trust in technology or revel in pleasure. Do we give up? No! First, sing to the Lord. Join with others in worshiping the splendor and majesty of the Creator. Then, speak of His salvation in Jesus day after day, until the resurrected Savior returns to judge all nations in faithfulness. • The Lord still reigns! O Lord, through us proclaim Your glory. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 97** Joins Ps 93; 95; 96; 98; 99 in joyfully proclaiming the power and majesty of God's rule over all creation. However, in this psalm we glimpse a fearsome side to God's rule as He comes with destructive power against those who worship false gods.

Format: V v 1–5, God's awesome majesty; v v 6–9, contrast idolaters with God's faithful children; v v 10–12, praise God, who defends His people.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 97:1 *coastlands*. Even the most remote areas of the world are to praise God. His reign is universal.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 97:2–5 *Clouds and thick darkness … Fire … lightnings … melt like wax*. Acts of nature that give us a peek at God's awesome power. To meet God as His adversary is horrifying. To speak of mountains—figures of stability and permanence—melting like wax is to show that no one can stand against the Lord's anger.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 97:6 *righteousness*. See p 843.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 97:7 *put to shame*. Those who worship false gods will be humiliated and dismayed at God's judgment. *worship Him, all you gods!* Perhaps ironic satire. Even worthless idols will worship God, exposing the folly of worshiping anyone except the true God. Cf 1Sm 5:1–4.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 97:8 *daughters of Judah*. Towns and villages surrounding Zion (Jerusalem).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 97:9 *exalted far above all gods*. In contrast to the utter worthlessness of worshiping false gods, the God above all is praised for His righteous judgments (cf Ps 48).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 97:10 *hate evil!* See note, 5:5. *saints*. See p 843. They rejoice because He protects them from the wicked and preserves their lives for all eternity.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 97:11 *Light is sown*. Metaphor for salvation (cf 27:1).

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 97** When people stand before God to be judged, only two responses are possible: terrified humiliation or joyful thanksgiving. Which will it be for us? The cross is where God's justice is served and His anger appeased on our behalf. The empty tomb is the assurance that we are preserved for life everlasting. We rejoice because His judgment is that we are His saints, the upright in heart, through faith. •

Lord, smash the idols we are tempted to revere. Let us worship You alone. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 98** Focuses exclusively on the Lord. Similar to Ps 96. Other gods or enemies are absent. The psalm's sole purpose is to praise the victorious God and His marvelous works.

Format: V v 1–3, joyous worship begins with Israel; v v 4–6, it expands to all the earth; v v 7–9, it includes the whole creation.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 98:1 *a new song*. See p 843. *marvelous things!* One word in Hbr; also translated as "wonders" (Ex 3:20). *right hand and His holy arm*. See p 843; cf Ex 15:6, 12. *salvation*. See p 843.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 98:3 *remembered*. See p 843. *steadfast love and faithfulness*. See p 843. *salvation*. See p 843.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 98:4–6 Praises of worship are joyous, unrestrained, and exuberant. The psalmist calls for outburst of song and music, words and acclamation for God's marvelous victories on behalf of His people. Aug: "Praise Him not with the voice only; take up works, that you may not only sing, but work also" (*NPNF* 1 8:481).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 98:5–6 *lyre* … *melody* … *trumpets* … *horn*. See p 993.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 98:7–8 See note, 96:11–12 for creation joining in praise.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 98:9 *judge*. See note, 96:13.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 98** The defeats of life are discouraging. Thanks be to God that He is victorious for us! Sin and death are conquered. Satan's head is crushed. Eternally, we are God's children. All creation is waiting for that final day of redemption. For the Lord's victory is an empty tomb on Easter morning. • Thank You, Lord, for the glorious victory of our salvation, which only You could give us! Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 99** Like Ps 93 and 97, this psalm begins with "The LORD reigns." It proclaims Him King over all creation; it highlights God's holiness, which evokes awe, reverence, even fear. He alone is worthy of worship, prayer, and devotion. Although Moses, Aaron, and Samuel are mentioned, the psalm cannot be dated or identified with any particular historical event. These men represent the priestly and prophetic offices of ancient Israel and demonstrate both God's justice and forgiveness for His people.

Format: Three sections correspond to "holy"; v v 1–3, God's holiness in all the earth; v v 4–5, His holiness in His justice; v v 6–9, His holiness in restoring His people.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 99:1 *cherubim*. See notes, Ezk 1:5–15; 10:1. In Ps 18:7–15, the sight of these beings is fearful and majestic. The awesome power and mobility of God's rule makes people, indeed, all creation shake in reverent fear.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 99:2 *Zion … all the peoples*. God is exalted, supreme, not only over Jerusalem (and all those who are His people) but over the whole world. See p 844.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 99:3 *Holy*. God's holiness is His essential difference from the created realm. He is unique, totally unlike anything else that has been made. He is pure; we are not. Cf Is 6:3–5. See p 7.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 99:4 *equity … justice … righteousness*. Poetic repetition of nearly synonymous words emphasizes that God's justice will be done. His laws are for the good of all, and He orders the social world so the needs of everyone are protected. He wants people to do what is right according to His wisdom and revelation. See p 843. *Jacob*. Refers to Israel the nation, God's chosen people.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 99:5 *His footstool!* Could refer to the temple or to the ark of the covenant. As a king would sit on his throne and have a footstool for his feet, so God's reign was symbolized by the ark as His earthly throne or the footstool to His throne. See p 495. *Holy*. See note, v 3.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 99:6 *called upon*. Moses, Aaron, and Samuel interceded for the people. In a time of national crisis (see note, 90:16), the psalm recalls God's powerful answers to their prayers for help.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 99:7 *pillar of the cloud*. Cf Ex 33:9; Nu 12:5. Showed God's presence among His people in the wilderness. *testimonies … statute*. See p 971. *kept*. Held on in faith to His salvation and, consequently, responded in obedience because of God's forgiveness.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 99:8 *forgiving God … avenger of their wrongdoings*. Even Moses, Aaron, and Samuel had sinned before God. The distance sin brings between God and His creation is bridged only by His justice (sin is taken seriously and must be punished) and forgiveness (that sin is taken away by someone else bearing the punishment). God's justice and forgiveness merge in the death of the Savior, Jesus Christ.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 99:9 *holy mountain*. Site of the temple. Cf 2:6. *the* LORD *our God is holy!* Climactic praise confesses "our" God is holy (see note, v 3), asserting the close relationship between the holy Lord and His people.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 99** Despite the psalmist's confidence that God in all His holiness reigns, we see an ordinary world ruled by powers and people who are too often distant from God's ways and words. Yet the holy Savior is present just as He was in the Most Holy Place when we, His people, gather together to praise His holy name. • O Lord, You tabernacle in ordinary bread and wine, where Your holy body and blood are given for our forgiveness. We see God's holiness in Jesus, the Holy One of God! Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 100** Ps 93; 95–99 proclaim "The LORD reigns." Ps 100 is the thankful doxology named *Jubilate* (Lat "O be joyful").

Format: V v 1–2, call to worship; v 3, God's flock; v 4, enter the temple courts; v 5, who Yahweh is.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 100:1 *all the earth!* Cf 96:11–12; 98:7–8. Thanksgiving is not limited to God's chosen people, but all creation is to praise Him. Nor is praise limited to singing, but includes joyfully serving Him (v 2).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 100:2 *Come into His presence*. See p 843.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 100:3 *sheep of His pasture*. See note, 95:7. Mel: "We are not born by accident, nor do we live … by our own thoughts and powers, but we live with God, who gives us life and preserves us" (Chem, *LTh* 1:152).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 100:4 *His gates … courts*. While the temple in ancient Jerusalem is pictured, the emphasis is that these gates and courts are the Lord's. He will be there for His people. See "courts of the Lord," p 842. *praise!* Aug: "Your praise of Him is like food: the more you praise Him, the more you acquire strength, and He whom you praise becomes the more sweet" (*NPNF* 1 8:491). *bless*. See p 842.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 100:5 *steadfast love … faithfulness*. See p 843.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 100** The text of the common Doxology (*LSB* 805), sung to the tune "Old Hundredth." Forever joined together are the Church's much-loved song of praise and the psalm that calls for such praise. How unfortunate when we fail to make a joyful noise to the Lord. Yet even then, we know that He is good. In fact, He gave His Good Shepherd, Jesus, to make one day particularly good. We call it Good Friday. • We are the

sheep of Your hand, O Lord. Fill us with joyful praise as we seek to serve You. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 101** Promises made by the king fit a coronation ceremony. Perhaps used at an annual celebration of the king's enthronement. David is named as author, but even this greatest of Israel's kings could not live up to these lofty standards. Only David's greatest Son, Jesus Christ, perfectly fulfills the promises.

Format: The high ideals break into two sections: v v 1–4, the king's pledges; v v 5–8, the king's demands.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 101:1 *steadfast love … justice*. See p 843. Aug: "God neither loses the severity of judgment in the bounty of mercy, nor in judging with severity loses the bounty of mercy" (*NPNF* 1 8:491).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 101:2 First vow given is for personal integrity. *way that is blameless*. The king will study diligently what is the wise and right way for him to live. *when will You come to me?* The king asks the Lord to grant wisdom. *within my house*. Not just within the king's own family, but in his rule over the whole nation.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 101:3–4 The king denounces what does not belong in his reign. *hate*. See note, 5:5. *perverse heart*. Opposite of the blameless integrity sought by the king in v 2. While humans may promise such integrity, sinful hearts make it impossible, except by the ideal King—Jesus Christ.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 101:5–8 The king pledges to lead the people to live with the same just and loyal integrity as will characterize his rule. *destroy … not endure*. Such harsh punishments for cited misdeeds reveal the king's deep desire for only God's justice to be known in the land. *way that is blameless*. Those who study this (v 2) are the very people the king wants in his courts and as citizens. *Morning by morning*. The hour to try cases and dispense justice. This indicates the king's diligence. Cf 122:5; Jer 21:12.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 101** No nation has the kind of political leaders described here. Even King David failed miserably, as his many sins involving Bathsheba demonstrate (2Sm 11). No nation has the kind of citizens described here. Even we in the Church know we have not always been people of integrity. But Jesus was blameless, a man of perfect integrity. He comes to us with His royal and loyal love, shown perfectly on the cross. He brings us into the one "nation" made blameless in Christ's

blood—the Church. • We pray, Lord, come to us and make us people of integrity in Your Church and in our nation. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 102** Writer of this penitential psalm (cf Ps 6; 32; 38; 51; 130; 143) is not identified, but his condition is. *faint*. Weariness that envelops heart, body, and soul. He is near despair. Much has gone wrong in his personal life, including the humiliation of his nation (v v 14, 17, 20). The lament still confesses a deep faith in the Lord's care and the security that comes from God's creative and eternal strength.

Format: V v 1–2, cry for help; v v 3–11, the individual's miserable state; v v 12–17, the psalmist calls God to hear the cries of the destitute; v v 18–22, praises for the Savior; v v 23–28, confession of God's eternal nature.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 102:2 *hide*. God seems absent from His people (cf 13:1). See note, Is 45:15.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 102:3–11 Section captures the agony of anyone in deep distress.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 102:3 *bones burn*. Perhaps a high fever or the heat of arthritis.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 102:4 *heart*. Not just the emotions involved, but the whole person. Every fiber of one's being is affected—physically, emotionally, spiritually, and mentally. *I forget to eat*. He has lost his appetite or is too weak to eat.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 102:5 *bones cling*. He is emaciated; similar to the saying "nothing but skin and bones."

PSALMS—NOTE ON 102:6–7 *desert owl … sparrow*. Though the exact species are unknown, they are separated from the rest of the flock, an allusion to someone wasting away in loneliness, unable even to sleep.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 102:8 *use my name for a curse*. His condition is so horrendous that others can simply use his name as a way to wish the same misery on someone else.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 102:9 *ashes … tears*. Both typically accompany humiliation and mourning (Is 61:3; Ps 42:3).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 102:10 *thrown me down*. Despair deepens in that now he claims that he suffers because God's anger has thrown him away as something worthless.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 102:11–17 His mood changes drastically as hope replaces despair. God hears his prayer.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 102:12 *enthroned*. Many preceding psalms (Ps 93; 95–99) declare "The LORD reigns." The basis of hope is God remembering His people with both almighty power and loving pity.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 102:14 *stones … dust*. Broad description of Israel's national crisis, not just the individual's suffering. Though once great Jerusalem ("Zion") has been reduced to rubble, the psalmist is confident that the Lord will reveal His glory by restoring the nation, bringing fear to other nations, and listening to the destitute. God brings Israel out of exile, and Jerusalem is rebuilt. But the greater answer to this prayer is the new Jerusalem awaiting God's people at the end of time, because Jesus has restored hope (Gal 4:26; Heb 12:22).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 102:18 *Let this be recorded*. Future generations can read what God will do as if it had already happened.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 102:19 *holy height … heaven*. Hbr poetic device to emphasize the thought. Both words picture God looking down to see those in desperate need. He enters their lives with love and favor.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 102:20 *prisoners*. Israelites in exile or perhaps any prisoners of war. *set free*. Rv 21:3–4 pictures the ultimate freedom from tears, pain, and death that comes from Jesus stepping into human life and bringing His chosen nation (1Pt 2:9–10) into the heavenly Jerusalem.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 102:21–22 *declare … praise … gather … worship*. In heaven, God's people worship the Lord in endless praise.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 102:23 *my*. The individual returns to his misery. *midcourse*. Prime of life. Emphasis is still on the Lord, contrasting His permanence to the fleeting nature of all created life.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 102:25–27 Heb 1:10–12 uses these verses to show Jesus' superiority to the angels. He is Creator of the heavens and earth (cf Jn 1:1–3).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 102:27 *You are the same*. Cf 90:1.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 102:28 *offspring shall be established*. Because God is eternal, His people are assured that they, too, will be eternally safe (2Sm 7:24).
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 102** The tears, fever, lost appetite, despair, and doubt in this psalm are eerily identical to what we go through when a personal crisis erupts in our life or a disaster rips through our town or nation. Yet it is written with confident hope because attention is turned to the God who listens to the pleas of the destitute. When you lament, turn

your attention to God's answer to these prayers: Jesus Christ. He stepped into our world and took on our groans and death, restoring confident hope at the appointed time on Easter morning. • Risen Lord, establish the new Jerusalem for us forever. Answer our prayers, in Your dear name. Alleluia! Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 103** Ps 103–6 are united by their calls to praise the Lord and are a fitting conclusion to Book Four of the Psalter (see p 844). While Ps 103 is ascribed to King David, we cannot determine its particular time or situation.

Format: V v 1–5, the individual praises the Lord; v v 6–14, whole community called to praise; v v 15–19, human life contrasted with God's eternal nature; v v 20–22, call for all creation to honor the Lord.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 103:1–2 *Bless*. See p 842. Threefold emphasis. *soul*. More than just the spiritual center; refers to whole person ("all that is within me")—body, mind, emotions, will, personality. *benefits*. Cf v v 3–14, but also whatever good God has done.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 103:3–5 *your*. I.e., "my soul" (v 1). Psalmist names personal blessings for which he is thankful. Forgiveness tops the list.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 103:3 *heals*. The Lord can and does heal His people, according to His good and gracious will.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 103:4 *redeems … crowns*. See p 843. Could simply refer to God's delivering the psalmist from a premature death. When reading this verse from the perspective of Christ's empty tomb, the redemption encompasses deliverance from the grave through the final resurrection. *pit*. Death or Sheol. See p 792.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 103:5 *like the eagle's*. Describes a strength that is renewed and even soaring.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 103:6–8 *righteousness … justice … ways*. See pp 843–44.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 103:8 God used these adjectives in Ex 34:6–7 to describe Himself to Moses; here they are the basis of praise.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 103:9 God should punish for sin, but instead He shows limitless compassion to forgive and remove iniquity. *chide*. Offer a rebuke or accusation.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 103:11–12 *as high as … as far as*. Too vast to measure. Cf Is 55:8–9. God's removal of transgressions knows no bounds.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 103:13 *As a father*. Family imagery adds warmth to this picture of God's forgiveness.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 103:14 *frame … dust*. Cf Gn 2:7. God knows who we are because He formed us out of the dust.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 103:15–16 *wind*. Cf Jb 27:21.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 103:17 *steadfast love … everlasting*. In contrast with the brief and frail nature of human life. See p 843.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 103:18 *keep His covenant*. Show faith in God's redeeming forgiveness and love. *do His commandments*. Obedience that flows from faith follows, worked by God's grace (cf Rm 1:1–5, esp v 5).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 103:19 *throne in the heavens … kingdom rules*. Cf 93:2; 102:12. God's power and authority over all creation.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 103:20–22 This final call urges all creation, including the heavenly creatures, to give glory to God.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 103:20 *angels … mighty ones*. Possibly a military image: God's mighty warriors or His angelic army.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 103:21 *hosts … ministers*. Those who carry out God's will from heaven (cf Heb 1:14), much as officials in a royal court carry out the commands of a human king. See p 1291.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 103:22 *works*. Hbr "created ones," usually describing human beings. People and angels will praise God in all times and places.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 103** How many times do we need God's forgiveness? It's impossible to count. Day after day, our transgressions should bring His anger. But over and over again, He removes our iniquities. Where are they sent? To the cross, where Jesus takes the anger and gives us compassion instead. • "Bless the LORD, O my soul!" (v 1). I thank You for redeeming me from death so that I may join the angelic hosts in praising Your holy name from everlasting to everlasting. Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 104** As in Ps 103, the psalmist summons himself to praise the Lord. The focus, however, is on God as Creator and Preserver of creation. Gn 1 is background, but the orderly description of creation from Gn becomes a more spontaneous display of the wonders of God's creation. "He causes all created things to serve for the uses and necessities of life" (LC II 14). The psalm became part of the temple worship and could have been used on a festival day, such as the New Year. (Similar themes are found in the Egyptian Hymn to the Aten.) Chem: "There is a progression in

creation, as indicated by the distinction noted in Genesis 1. No more appropriate division of the process of creation can be developed than the six day cycle of Moses" (*LTh* 1:162; comparison between Gn 1 and Ps 104 follows, pp 162–64).

Format: V v 1–4, extol the wondrous God; v v 5–13, God set the waters into place; v v 14–23, human life crowns creation; v v 24–26, God's creative power on both land and sea; v v 27–30, a confident confession; v v 31–35, joyous praise for God's glory revealed in creation.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 104:1 *Bless … my soul!* See p 842.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 104:2–4 Poetic imagery and vivid comparisons give a glimpse of God's majesty.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 104:2 *light as with a garment*. People wear clothes; God is dressed in dazzling light. Cf Rv 21:23; Mt 17:2. *tent*. God creates the heavenly realm as easily as lifting the flaps of a tent.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 104:3–4 *clouds … wind*. A king may ride in a chariot, but God's majesty is portrayed by His riding these high and lofty elements of nature. *chariot … messengers … ministers*. Each can refer to the cherubim or angels. Some rabbis concluded from these verses that angels were created along with other elements, prior to the creation of Adam and Eve on the sixth day. *ministers*. See note, 103:21. *flaming fire*. Possibly lightning bolts.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 104:5–9 Cf Gn 1:6–10. Mighty waters rush with chaotic and devastating power at the beginning of creation. Here, the psalm pictures that same time of creation, as God controls even the "deep" (waters) to "set the earth on its foundations." Continents and land formations are not eternal, but God has so securely and firmly built them that even the chaos of the waters must stay in their designated places. Cf Mk 4:39.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 104:10–13 God's power turns the waters to beneficial uses, watering the earth to sustain life. Though gravity was not fully understood, its force was recognized and attributed to God's care for the earth.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 104:13 *the fruit of Your work*. Aug: "Let no man glory in his own works…. With Your grace he is satisfied, when he is satisfied: let him not say that grace was given for his own merits" (*NPNF* 1 8:513).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 104:14–23 In Gn 1, creation proceeds with vegetation on day 3; stars, sun, moon, and other heavenly lights on day 4; birds and sea creatures on day 5; and animals and humans on day 6. The psalm pictures these days of creation in everyday scenes. A man cultivating the fields, birds building nests, goats in the mountains, and the other scenes from these verses all show God's creation in its beauty and activity. God's sustaining and ordering hand is behind the interrelatedness of creation.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 104:15 *wine*. See note, Pr 21:17. *oil*. Olive oil was used to clean and restore the face as we use lotion or ointment today.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 104:16 *cedars of Lebanon*. See note, 92:12–13. Tall and strong due to extensive rainfall. Pictures a place bursting with life.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 104:20 *make darkness*. Along with "the sun rises" in v 22, the rhythms of daily life as marked by day and night are portrayed (Gn 1:14–19).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 104:23 People generally lived in walled villages and worked during the day in the surrounding fields.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 104:24–26 *In wisdom*. Creation is not by chance or randomness. God's wisdom alone has made such an intricate world teeming with life. See note, Pr 8:30. *Leviathan*. Frightening sea creature (cf Jb 41), seen here as just one more created life, made by God to play in the ocean. The alternate reading (see ESV note) has God playing with Leviathan, much like a pet.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 104:27–28 *all look to You*. All are dependent on God for food and everything else needed to sustain life. Ps 145:15–16 repeats this firm conviction. See Luther's Daily Prayers (SC, p xli–xlii). "Creatures are only the hands, channels, and means by which God gives all things. So He gives to the mother breasts and milk to offer to her child, and He gives corn and all kinds of produce from the earth for nourishment [Psalm 104:27–28; 147:8–9]. None of these blessings could be produced by any creature of itself" (LC I 26).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 104:29–30 *You take away their breath*. As in Gn 2:7, God gives and sustains life. His Spirit creates and renews each generation of all that lives. All living things would "return to their dust" if God were to withdraw from His creation. Hence, God also holds every individual's life and death in His wise and caring hands.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 104:31–32 This prayer, that all creation will continue to show God's glory so that He is pleased with it, reflects Gn 1,

when God first saw His creation and proclaimed it good. In addition, the psalmist confesses that God's power is so incomparably beyond creation that a simple look or touch overwhelms even the mighty mountains.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 104:33–34 *meditation*. See p 842.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 104:35 *Let sinners … be no more!* Somber note at the end of a high hymn of praise. Every evil, wickedness, and sinful disobedience that mars God's creation needs to be eradicated so that only joyful praise is heard from God's creation.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 104** More and more, we hear about nature with no mention of the Creator. Visit a museum, read a science textbook, or watch a nature program, and you will see everything explained as some incredibly long process by which all life has evolved into what we see today. Yet God is indeed Creator of all. He continues to care for His world. Remember the word Jesus spoke over a violent storm: "Peace! Be still!" (Mk 4:39). And all was calm. Even death cannot compare to God's power, as a stone obeyed His command and rolled away from the tomb on Easter morning. • Lord, we make the bold confession that You in Your wisdom made the earth and all its creatures and continue to sustain it. Praise the Lord. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 105** Ps 105 and 106 stand together as they recall God's promise to Abraham to bring Israel into the Promised Land and the mighty ways He kept that promise. Ps 105 focuses on God's grace, while Ps 106 describes the people's rebellion and their continued need for mercy. Ps 105:1–15 appears in 1Ch 16:8–22 at the joyous occasion of David's bringing the ark to Jerusalem, indicating it was used in worship on festival occasions celebrating the covenant God made with His people.

Format: V v 1–6, call to praise; v v 7–11, God's promise of a land; v v 12–15, the Lord's care for the patriarchs; v v 16–25, Joseph; v v 26–36, Moses and the plagues; v v 37–42, the exodus; v v 43–45, conquest of Canaan.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 105:1–6 *call … make known … Sing … Glory … seek His presence*. "That is the true honor of His name, to look to it and call upon it for all consolation" (LC I 70). *seek*. See p 843.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 105:1 Aug: "This confession is to be understood as praise, … whence the Lord's Prayer itself has at the commencement a very brief praise, in these words, 'Our Father which art in Heaven.' The things prayed for, then follow" (*NPNF* 1 8:520).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 105:2 Aug: "Praise Him both by word and deed; for we sing with the voice, while we play with an instrument, that is, with our hands" (*NPNF* 1 8:520).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 105:5 *Remember … works … miracles*. Basis for this joyful worship, particularly God's rescuing His people from slavery and giving them the Promised Land. *judgments He uttered*. Righteous decisions God rendered for the benefit of His people and against those who had oppressed Israel (cf 48:11).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 105:7–11 *covenant … word … promise … statute*. Words built on one another to stress that God will remember His pledge to His people. The covenant is entirely God's initiative. See p 971. God chooses Israel as His people, delivers them, and reveals to them how they are to respond both in faith to Him and in trusting obedience to His Law. *forever … thousand generations … everlasting*. Emphasizes that God will never forget the promises He made to Abraham (Gn 17:8), Isaac (Gn 26:3–4), and Jacob (Gn 28:13–14).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 105:12–15 *they*. Patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Although the promise had been given, the land was not yet theirs.

Israel's humble beginnings are as seminomads, wandering from place to place, chosen (Dt 7:7) and protected (Gn 20:2–7) by God's grace.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 105:15 *My anointed … My prophets*. The patriarchs spoke for God to His people.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 105:16–22 Summary of Gn 37–50.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 105:16 *summoned a famine*. Joseph's rise to greatness is not attributed to his own efforts but to God's direction. The Lord uses disasters and what was intended for evil (Gn 50:20) to save His people.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 105:18 Aug: "That Joseph was put in irons, we do not indeed read; but we ought no ways to doubt that it was so. For some things might be passed over in that history, which nevertheless would not escape the Holy Spirit, who speaks in these Psalms" (*NPNF* 1 8:523).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 105:19 *he*. Joseph, interpreter of Pharaoh's dreams.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 105:22 *to bind*. Dramatic reversal. The one once bound (Gn 39:20) now binds or rules those who had imprisoned him. *elders wisdom*. Old age and wisdom are strongly associated in Scripture.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 105:23–25 *Ham*. Egypt (see note, 78:51). Israel comes to Egypt during the famine (Gn 46), rapidly increases in numbers (Ex 1:7), and a new pharaoh enslaves them (Ex 1:8–16).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 105:25 *turned their hearts*. Aug: "It was not then by making their hearts evil, but by doing good to His people, that He turned [the Egyptians'] hearts, that were evil of their own accord, to hatred" (*NPNF* 1 8:524).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 105:26–36 Poetic summary of Ex 1–12. The order of plagues is treated with some liberty as the ninth plague, darkness, is mentioned first (emphasizes the thought of Ex 11:3). The plagues of flies and gnats are reversed. Two plagues, cattle sickness and boils, are omitted. Aug: "Praisegiving is free from the law which binds one who is relating or composing a history" (*NPNF* 1 8:524).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 105:37–42 God richly keeps His promise by leading His people out of Egypt (Ex 12:33–36) and giving His divine protection (Dt 8:4). He guides and provides for His people as they travel through the wilderness (Ex 13:21–22; 16:13–15; 17:1–7).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 105:43–44 Echo of the great songs of thanksgiving when God led Israel to the victories that would give them the Promised Land (Jsh 11:23).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 105:45 *keep His statutes and observe His laws*. See p 971. The focus has been almost exclusively on what God has done for His people. Now, the people respond with obedience. Keeping God's laws flows from faith, out of the relationship God gave to these people when He chose them as His own.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 105** God frees His people from slavery. Christ has rescued us from sin and its eternal punishment. All God's promises find their fulfillment in Jesus, who hung on the cross and then ushered in a new era by rising from the grave. Abraham's true descendants are those whose faith in Christ is counted to them as righteousness (Gal 3:6–9). Gathered together by Jesus, we now belong to the Church, which knows no geographical boundaries. • Praise the Lord, for in Christ we received the blessings promised to Abraham. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 106** Last psalm in Book Four. (See p 844.) Ps 105 and 106 begin and end with praise to the Lord. Although Ps 106 begins with praise and thanksgiving, it moves to confession. Luth: "This psalm teaches the true praise of divine goodness, namely, that to confess one's own evil to God is to give thanks to the Lord, for He is good" (AE 11:345). Ps 106 covers many of the same historical events as Ps 105, but it praises the Lord for His wonderful salvation of a sinful people. Since v 47 appeals to the Lord to gather His people from among the nations, many think Ps 106 was written after the exile. However, v v 1b–c and 47–48 are included in David's hymn of thanksgiving (1Ch 16:34–36), when the ark was returned to Israel. This, along with its place at the conclusion of Book Four, indicates that it might be an earlier composition.

Format: V v 1–3, call to praise; v v 4–5, call to remember; v v 6–12, confession of sins during the exodus; v v 13–15, confession of sins in the wilderness; v v 16–18, jealousy of Dathan and Abiram; v v 19–23, the golden calf; v v 24–31, rebellion at Canaan's border; v v 32–33, Meribah; v v 34–39, failures after the conquest; v v 40–43, the Lord's anger during the time of the judges; v v 44–46, the Lord remembered the covenant; v v 47–48, appeal for salvation.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 106:1 *give thanks*. Hbr *yadah* can mean "to give thanks" or "to confess." *steadfast love*. See p 843. God is faithful and just to forgive our sins. Cf 118:1; 119:41; 136:1; 1Jn 1:9.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 106:2 The true believer, as described in v 3, praises God.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 106:3 *Blessed*. See p 842.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 106:4 *help me when You save them*. See ESV note. As the psalmist considers God's promises to all of Israel for salvation, he also looks directly to the Lord for his personal salvation.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 106:5 *chosen*. The Lord chose Israel because He loved them, not because of something in them (Dt 7:7–8; 9:4–5). *inheritance*. Israel is the Lord's "possession."
PSALMS—NOTE ON 106:6–46 Confession of sin.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 106:6 *we ... have sinned*. See note, v 1, where the Hbr *yadah* can mean "to confess."
PSALMS—NOTE ON 106:7 *rebelled by the sea*. Could be understood as they rebelled "concerning the sea," wondering why Moses led them there (Ex 14:10–11). The historian Josephus records that the Israelites wanted to stone Moses by the sea (*Ant* 2:327). The Hbr verb form is used only for rebellion against God.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 106:8 *for His name's sake*. See p 842.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 106:10 *redeemed*. See p 843.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 106:12 *Then they believed His words*. Though God's marvelous works are important, ultimately it is God's Word that converts a person (Lk 16:19–29).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 106:13 *counsel*. Israel's greatest problem—and ours—is turning away from God's Word.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 106:14 *wanton craving*. Such craving seeks and loves the things of the world and ignores the things of God.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 106:15 *wasting disease*. Lit, "leanness." In Nu 11:33, God satisfied the people's craving with quail but punished them with disease so that the nourishment did nothing for them. Though they ate, they were wasting away.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 106:16 *holy one*. Aaron was called by God to serve as high priest. As such, he wore a plate that was engraved "Holy to the LORD" (Ex 28:36).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 106:17 *Dathan … Abiram*. Cf Nu 16. Along with Korah, these men accused Moses of foisting his leadership upon Israel. God destroyed their company with an earthquake, fire, and plague.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 106:19 *Horeb*. Mount Sinai. See map, p 120.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 106:20 At Sinai, God had revealed His glory. The people turned that glory into a miserable idol.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 106:22 *Ham*. Descendants of the second son of Noah are associated with Egypt and Africa. See notes, Gn 10:6–20.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 106:23 *chosen one*. Moses was specifically called by God (Nu 16:5). *stood in the breach*. Ex 32:11–14. Moses pleaded for the people of Israel.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 106:24 *pleasant land*. At Kadesh, Israel refused to enter the Promised Land because they feared the inhabitants (Nu 13:26–14:4; Dt 1:26–27).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 106:28 *yoked*. Metaphor describing working together and marriage (2Co 6:14). People joined themselves in the sexually immoral worship of Baal of Peor (Nu 25). *Baal*. See note, Nu 25:3.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 106:30 *Phinehas*. Grandson of Aaron and high priest during the time of Joshua. As Israel was preparing to cross the Jordan, many among them were tempted to the false religion and immorality of Baal of Peor. Phinehas drove a spear through an adulterous Israelite named Zimri and his Midianite lover as they were entwined, an act that appeased God's wrath (Nu 25:10–18).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 106:31 *righteousness*. See p 843. *forever*. Each generation would learn of Phinehas's faith and zeal. Through faith, the Lord would grant everlasting life.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 106:32 *Meribah*. Means "quarreling." Twice, Israel complained about the lack of water, and God provided water from a rock. However, the second time, Moses' patience had run out. Instead of speaking to the rock to generate the water, he struck it twice. This disobedience prevented Moses from entering the Promised Land (cf Ex 17:1–7; Nu 20:2–13).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 106:34 *destroy the peoples*. God commanded the destruction of the Canaanites because of their wickedness (Dt 7:1–6; 9:1–4; 20:16–18).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 106:36 *idols*. See note, Is 44:6. *snare*. Joshua warned that the Canaanites would ensnare the Israelites if they mixed with them (Jsh 23:13).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 106:37 *demons*. Dt 32:17 uses the same Hbr term to relate idolatry and demon worship.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 106:38 *innocent*. Chem: "The blood is innocent because they were not killed on account of crimes that they had committed,

as thieves are, but at an age which cannot deserve civil punishment for any action" (*LTh* 1:300).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 106:39 *unclean*. Cf Lv 18:24. Canaanites were removed from the land because they had defiled it with false worship. Israel would commit the same sin (Jer 2:23–25; Ezk 20:30–31; 22:3–4).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 106:40 *abhorred*. God promised severe repercussions for Israel's disobedience (Lv 26:25–26, 33, 38–39; Dt 28:25, 36–37, 48–57, 64–68). *heritage*. See note, v 5.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 106:44 *heard their cry*. Cf Ex 2:23–24; 3:7–9; Nu 20:16; 1Sm 9:16; 2Ch 20:6–12; Ne 9:27–28.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 106:45 *steadfast love*. See p 843.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 106:46–47 *pitied*. Israel eventually found pity from her captors and was allowed to return to the Promised Land (1Ki 8:50; 2Ch 30:9; Ezr 9:9; Jer 42:12).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 106:48 *Blessed*. See p 842. *let all the people say, "Amen!"* Psalms are the prayers and praises of Israel; they are not only to be studied but also to be used in worship!

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 106** One of the most important words in this psalm is "nevertheless" (v 44). Despite Israel's persistent disobedience, God consistently upheld His promises and saved them. As we struggle with temptation (Gal 5:17), we can be sure that God will remain faithful (2Tm 2:13), granting us true repentance and new life in Christ. • O Lord, we must also confess with ancient Israel that we have sinned. Nevertheless, You have faithfully saved us through Jesus' obedience, suffering, death, and resurrection. Praise to the Lord! Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Book Five** Ps 107–150, the last section of the Psalter. See p 844.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 107** Ps 105–7 are related by their focus on different aspects of Israel's history: Ps 105 focuses on the early history of Israel; Ps 106 focuses on Israel from the time of the exodus to the exile; Ps 107 focuses on the time of restoration from the exile.

Format: V v 1–3, call to worship; v v 4–9, wanderers in the desert; v v 10–16, those in darkness and prison; v v 17–22, the foolish; v v 23–32, those in a storm at sea; v v 33–38, the Lord grants water and fruitfulness; v v 39–42, the weak are delivered and the mighty humbled; v 43, appeal to wisdom.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 107:1–3 Call for the redeemed to praise the Lord.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 107:1 *steadfast love*. See p 843. Ps 106:1; 118:1 begin the same way.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 107:2 *redeemed … say so*. See p 843. Four examples of people redeemed from trouble: those lost in the wilderness, prisoners, the foolish, and sailors facing storms. All cry out to the Lord, and He delivers them. Those redeemed from trouble are encouraged to thank the Lord. In a sense, we all experience some aspect of these four perils. They probably reflect the overall peril of the captivity rather than any particular situation.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 107:3 *gathered in*. Israel had been scattered first by the Assyrians (2Ki 17:6) and then by the Babylonians (2Ki 24:14, 16; 25:11; Jer 52:28–30). See maps, pp 609, 717.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 107:4 First of four examples of those redeemed (see note, v 2). *Some wandered*. Hbr simply says, "They wandered."
PSALMS—NOTE ON 107:6 *they cried*. Israel's history involved many situations in which they cried out to the Lord. See note, 106:44.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 107:8 *Let them thank the* LORD. Each section is followed by the same refrain of praise (v v 15, 21, 31).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 107:9 *longing*. Hbr also means "to run or rush about."
PSALMS—NOTE ON 107:10 *shadow of death*. It seemed to Israel that their captivity was their end; their despair was deep. (Cf 23:4.)
PSALMS—NOTE ON 107:11 Their imprisonment was not due to any civil violation. Rather, they had rebelled against God by ignoring His Word. (Cf Zec 1:4.)
PSALMS—NOTE ON 107:12 *bowed their hearts down with hard labor*. The labor broke their will to resist (cf 31:10; Ne 4:10; Is 40:30; Zec 12:8).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 107:13 *cried*. See notes, v 6; 106:44.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 107:14 *shadow of death*. See note, v 10.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 107:16 Either this verse is quoted from Is 45:2 or both verses quote an established saying. *doors of bronze*. City gates are normally made of wood; here proverbially they are bronze, the strongest gates then imaginable (Jer 1:18). *bars of iron*. Bars that secured the city gates (Dt 3:5; Jer 51:30) were usually made of wood (Na 3:13) but sometimes of bronze (1Ki 4:13). (Iron denotes strength, cf Jer 15:12.)
PSALMS—NOTE ON 107:17 *fools*. See p 1016; cf 38:5.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 107:18 *gates of death*. Cf 9:13; Mt 16:18.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 107:20 *sent out His word and healed them*. God's Word gives life.See notes, 147:15, 18; cf Is 55:11; Mal 4:2.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 107:23–32 To the Israelites, the sea was a perilous place, symbolic of trouble (32:6).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 107:27 Israel is compared to sailors suffering seasickness and helplessness against the sea's ravages.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 107:31 *Let them thank the* LORD. Last of four refrains (cf v v 8, 15, 21); underscores the psalm's theme.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 107:32 *extol Him in the congregation*. Suggests a national assembly where the chiefs of the nation sit—perhaps in the temple—in order to praise God.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 107:33 Psalmist changes his approach and uses two different images to show that success and failure, prosperity and calamity are in God's control. *thirsty ground*. Many streams ("wadis") are empty during the dry season, but this psalm describes extreme drought.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 107:41 God's will ultimately serves the purposes He has for His people.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 107:43 Psalm's conclusion echoes Hos 14:9: evil will be overcome by God's providence.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 107** History unfolds the prevailing deeds of God's steadfast love. Because of sin, this world is chaotic and inhospitable. But in Jesus God has restored the peace we long for. Our sins are forgiven, and where there is forgiveness of sins, there is life and every blessing. • O Lord, do not let us be overwhelmed by the confusion around us. Remind us of Your steadfast love that delivers us. Thank You, Jesus. Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 108** Drawn from 57:7–11 and 60:5–12, with a few variations. Each of these psalms of David was a response to stress (being hunted in 57 and being defeated in 60). Ps 108 combines the sections that emphasize God's help. See notes, 57:7–11; 60:5–11. Interpreters are not sure why these two psalms are pieced together here. The psalm may reflect an unresolved problem with Edom following the exile. Edom had rejoiced at the downfall of Judah (137:7).

Format: V v 1–4, intent to praise God's steadfast love; v v 5–6, call for deliverance; v v 7–9, triumph for Israel; v v 10–13, prayer for help for the armies.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 108** From time to time, old defeats come back to haunt us. Perhaps a future challenge reminds us of a past failure. At times like this, we remember that God, who delivered us in the past, is with us in the present and the future. • O Lord, Satan would remind me of my past failures. Forgive all my sins—past, present, and future. "Keep steady my steps according to Your promise, and let no iniquity get dominion over me" (119:133). Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 109** Falsely accused, David responds by calling for judgment and punishment. Imprecatory (cursing) psalms (see p 879) can be difficult to harmonize with Jesus' command to "love your enemies" (Mt 5:44). However, we do not know the hearts of David's enemies. His calls for destruction are his prayers for salvation. If he is to be saved, and if they refuse to repent, then they must be defeated. He believes that his enemies have removed themselves beyond the reach of God's grace. Ultimately, all who persecute Christ and His followers and refuse to repent will experience God's judgment.

Format: V v 1–5, David's suffering; v v 6–15, prayer for the defeat of the wicked; v v 16–20, curse turned back to the one who curses; v v 21–25, appeal for the Lord's help; v v 26–29, appeal for blessing; v v 30–31, praise for the Savior.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 109:2 These words may apply to certain people who betrayed David, such as Ahithophel (2Sm 15:31; 16:20–17:23) and Doeg (1Sm 22:6–23).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 109:4 *I give myself to prayer*. David's typical response when put into a stressful situation. See note, 1Sm 30:6.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 109:6 *accuser*. Hbr *satan* is prominent in this psalm and is the biblical name for the devil (Rv 12:10).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 109:7 *prayer be counted as sin!* When people are motivated by evil, everything they do is sinful.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 109:8 *office!* Appointed duty. Peter applies this verse to Judas in Ac 1:20.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 109:9 David prays for an untimely death, assuming the accuser is incorrigible.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 109:10 *children wander*. Punishments upon the accuser's family are difficult to understand, because children are not to be punished for a parent's sin (Ezk 18). But punishment is understandable if the children continue in the sins of their parents (Ex 20:5). See p 879.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 109:26 *steadfast love!* See p 843.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 109:28 *Let them curse, but You will bless!* Reminder of God's covenant with Abraham (Gn 12:3). See p 842.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 109** As we look to God for salvation, we know His justice will prevail upon our enemies who remain in sin. He declares us justified and His dear children through Jesus. • In the face of the "mystery of lawlessness" (2Th 2:7), we must sometimes cry out with the saints in heaven, "O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before You will judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" (Rv 6:10). Have mercy for Jesus' sake. Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 110** One the most quoted of all psalms, used 17 times in the NT. Jesus quoted it (Mk 12:36) to show that He was the Messiah—David's Lord, not just David's descendant. Critics have complained that its meaning is hindered by textual problems. Yet Christ and the apostles interpret and apply the psalm boldly. Aug: "We are utterly unable to doubt that Christ is announced in the Psalm, since we are now Christians, and believe the Gospel" (*NPNF* 1 8:541).

Format: V 1, the Lord addresses the king; v v 2–4, the king commissioned; v v 5–7, the Lord gives the king victory.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 110:1 *LORD says to my Lord*. The second Lord is greater than David and has both divine (sits at the Lord's right hand) and human characteristics (earthly enemies). *my Lord*. Hbr *'adonai*, a respected or superior person, used for kings and dignitaries. *Your footstool*. In biblical times, the conqueror placed his foot on his enemies to indicate triumph. Mel: "Christ argues that He is not only the Son but also the Lord of David. Now both in the political realm and in nature a son or a successor is never the lord of the father or of the previous king" (Chem, *LTh* 1:87).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 110:2 *Zion*. See p 844.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 110:3 *offer themselves freely*. Lit, "are freewill offerings." See note, Ex 35:29; cf 119:106. "The converted person does good spontaneously" (FC SD II 64). *day of Your power*. While v 2 describes His universal rule over all, even His enemies, this verse describes His gracious rule with those who join Him in battle.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 110:4 *sworn*. God had promised the eternal reign of David's line (2Sm 7:5–16; Ps 89:35–37). *You are a priest … Melchizedek*. Office of king and priest are joined. These offices were kept

separate in the Law of Moses. However, Melchizedek represents a different order of priesthood, established long before the Law of Moses (Gn 14:17–20). Heb 4–10 explains and applies this unique arrangement to Jesus. See note, Lk 3:23–38.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 110:5 *right hand*. Jesus the king-priest will not be frustrated by opposing forces of evil, because He sits at the Lord's right hand. See p 843.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 110:6 *execute judgment*. While the priestly office is acknowledged, the focus is on the kingly office. In Rv 19, we have a similar picture of God's judgment.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 110:7 Complete victory of this king is emphasized by this picture of Him being refreshed and lifting up His head. A ritual act may be described (bowing to drink and rising up again). Luther associates His drinking from the brook with the humiliation of Jesus and the lifting up of His head with Jesus' exaltation (AE 13:345–46).

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 110** The world looks for the visible manifestation of God. David sees that manifestation prophetically in one of his future descendants. In this second Lord, the divine and the human become one in order to destroy the enemies of God and of His creation. • Dear Jesus, David's Lord and mine, I thank You that You have come to be my Priest who sacrifices all for my sins and to be my King to deliver me from evil. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 111** Praises the Lord for His words and works.

Format: Ps 111–12 are acrostic, or alphabetical. Each line begins with a sequential letter of the Hbr alphabet. See Ps 119 intro.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 111:1 *Praise the* LORD*!* Introduces a series of hallelujah psalms (Ps 111–18). See p 843. *company of the upright*. Other psalms also commend us to corporate praise (26:12; 107:32; 68:26).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 111:2–4, 6–7 *work*. God's works include creation, the exodus from Egypt, and entrance into the Promised Land.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 111:2 *Great are the works of the* LORD. Cf Jn 6:28–29. Luther said God's greatest work is the creation of believers (AE 11:374–75). Cf also v v 4, 9.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 111:5 *remembers His covenant*. See p 843.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 111:6 *inheritance*. Canaan was occupied by 12 nations, which were displaced by Israel. See p 345.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 111:10 *fear*. See p 842. *wisdom … practice it*. When people believe the words of God (His covenant) proven by the works of God (creation, redemption, provision), they have wisdom. But wisdom also proves itself in the practice of living by faith. See pp 775–78.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 111** Luther suggested that the words of v 4, "the LORD is gracious and merciful," should be painted in golden letters around a portrait of the Lord's Supper (AE 13:375), for in this Supper Christians continue to remember both the words and works of the Lord. • Gracious and merciful Lord, we look to You for the remission of our sins in Jesus, who speaks Your faithful words and performs the mighty work of our salvation. Hallelujah! Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 112** Emphasis is on the person who fears the Lord by keeping in mind His words and works.

Format: Alphabetic acrostic; Ps 112 takes up where Ps 111 leaves off. See Ps 111 intro.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 112:1 *Blessed*. See p 842. *fears … delights*. Luth: "A childlike and loving fear, of the sort with which a friend fears to offend a friend, or a son his father…. The Law did not have this fear, but the Spirit of fear gave it" (AE 11:384).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 112:2 *generation of the upright*. Descendants of believers. All humankind is corrupted by sin, but by God's gift of faith, we are created anew.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 112:3 The blessed person not only receives earthly gifts from God to varying degrees but also the right attitude to enjoy them and use them in God's service.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 112:4 *Light dawns in the darkness*. The upright see through this dark world by faith. They imitate God's attributes (Ex 34:6).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 112:5 *lends*. The upright use their blessings to help others as God has helped them.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 112:6 *never be moved*. Supported and sustained by God, the upright cannot be moved from their beliefs or forgotten. See note, 121:3.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 112:7 *bad news*. Upright people do not fear setbacks and do not constantly worry about what could be lost. They know God will never lose them.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 112:9 *horn*. See p 842.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 112:10 *gnashes his teeth*. Extreme anguish. See p 1276.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 112** Paul quotes v 9 in 2Co 9:9, the great stewardship chapter. The fear of the Lord leads us in the wisdom of generosity and contentment. • O Lord, give us a firm heart to trust in You, subduing our selfish nature in repentance and reviving us in Your righteousness. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 113–18** Known as the "Egyptian Hallel," the six hallelujah ("praise the LORD") psalms sung before (113–14) and after (115–18) Passover. See p 840.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 113** Begins the Hallel. It is a general call to praise, echoing Hannah's song of praise and anticipating Mary's Magnificat (1Sm 2:1–10; Lk 1:46–55).

Format: V 1, call to praise; v v 2–3, praise continuously; v v 4–9, no one compares to the Lord.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 113:1 *the LORD*. Triple repetition of the divine name was a common feature in the call to worship, just as believers today worship in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 113:3 *rising … setting*. Those who worship the Lord do so at all times and places. Morning and evening were also the times of sacrifice and prayer.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 113:4–6 The uniqueness of God is that He is exalted to the highest heaven, yet He cares for those in the lowest places.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 113:7 *raises the poor*. The Lord has always made provision for the poor (Lv 19:10; 1Sm 2:8; Pr 19:17; Is 25:4; Lk 4:18).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 113:9 *gives the barren woman a home*. Israelite women who did not have children had no social network to care for them. See pp 54–55.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 113** Sometimes it might seem to us that the good things of this world are overwhelmed by the bad. But the Lord is not overwhelmed. He is exalted on high, and He reaches down low with His salvation. • We praise You, O Lord, because You come down to save us in Christ. Hallelujah! Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 114** Of the six hallelujah psalms (113–18) sung at Passover, only this one points directly back to the exodus. Ps 113 taught

that the Lord lifts the needy. Ps 114 shows how the Lord did this in the exodus and conquest.

Format: V v 1–2, Israel is the Lord's sanctuary; v v 3–4, creation reacts; v v 5–6, the psalmist questions creation; v v 7–8, the presence of the Lord.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 114:2 *sanctuary*. Israel became a "kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Ex 19:6) with God in their midst (Dt 23:14).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 114:3–6 Personifies the sea and the mountains to show that all creation obeyed God's will.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 114:7 *presence of the Lord*. See p 843; cf Rv 20:11.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 114** "Tremble" in v 7 could also be translated "dance." On the one hand, we tremble before the presence of the Lord because of our sins. Yet, since He comes to save, it is also true that we can dance with joy. • Lord Jesus, we praise You as You come to us to lead us out of death and sin into life eternal. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 115** Many date this psalm to after the exile, when Israel was at its lowest point. The psalmist encouraged Israel not to look to the outward manifestations of strength as did the idol worshipers, but to remember God's steadfast love.

Format: V 1, glory to God; v v 2–3, God's freedom; v v 4–8, idols' weaknesses; v v 9–11, call to trust the Lord; v v 12–15, the Lord's blessings; v v 16–18, the living bless the Lord. Changes between singular and plural pronouns likely represent antiphonal speaking or singing in the temple liturgy.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 115:1 *glory*. Psalmist responds to the taunt in v 2. Mankind glorifies itself in its idolatry. *steadfast love … faithfulness*. See p 843. Luth: "The coming of Christ into the flesh was given out of the pure mercy of the promising God, and was neither bestowed by the merits of human nature nor denied by demerits" (AE 11:396).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 115:3 *in the heavens*. The true God cannot be contained in human works. *all that He pleases*. Chem: "He absolutely does foreknow what is going to happen, and yet He is a totally free agent. For all things which He wills He does" (*LTh* 1:207).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 115:4 *silver and gold*. Substance of idols is natural, but their form is the mere reflection of human false teaching. See note, Ps 135:15–18; cf Jer 10:8.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 115:8 *Those who make them become like them*. Luth: "A remarkable love of one's own powers does all these things, a love which changes the lover into the beloved" (AE 11:399).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 115:9–11 Israel, her priests, and even proselytes (first mentioned in 1Ki 8:41–43) fear the Lord and trust in Him.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 115:12–13 God's promise to bless those who trust in Him is affirmed. These verses may have been chanted by the people.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 115:14–15 A blessing is pronounced. These verses may have been chanted by the priests. See "Versicle and Response," p 959.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 115:16 *Lord's heavens*. People exist on earth and have some understanding of it. Human idols are bound to earth. God's existence covers all realms, even the realm of heaven, where His perfect will operates without hindrance.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 115:17 Death ends our bodily life as God intended it; our mouths, intended for praise, fall silent.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 115:18 *forevermore*. Our praise of God will continue somehow forever. Rv explains this more fully in its teaching of the resurrection of the Last Day.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 115** Idols are essentially an outward representation of human imagination. Nothing could be more fleeting or self-glorifying. Through the promises of His blessings, God calls His people beyond imagination to the truth of His existence. • Lord, we praise You for revealing Yourself to us in Your Word. Give us faith to hold fast to the truth, and grant us Your blessings. Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 116** Although originally generating from one person's experience, this psalm was appropriate for Israel's celebration of the Passover, as the whole nation nearly succumbed to extinction in Egypt (Ex 1:22). Luther viewed this psalm as referring to Christ throughout (AE 11:400). It is awesome to think that this was one of the last hymns our Lord sang before His "exodus" (Lk 9:31) on the cross.

Format: V v 1–4, love for the deliverer; v v 5–7, the deliverer's character; v v 8–9, the deliverer's deeds; v v 10–14, the psalmist's faith and thanks; v v 15–19, the Lord's servant at the temple.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 116:1–2 *I*. Simply states the reason for the psalm: the Lord answered his cry for help. The rest of the psalm elaborates the details of an individual who has been rescued from death.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 116:3 *snares of death … pangs of Sheol*. Psalmist was helpless in the grip of death. See p 792.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 116:4 *called on the name*. See p 842.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 116:5 *Gracious … righteous … merciful*. God's undeserved love, His perfect love, and His tender love are captured in one short sentence.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 116:6 *the simple*. Those open to instruction. Cf Pr 1:4. *brought low*. Aug: "The pain which the physician causes by his knife is not penal, but salutary" (*NPNF* 1 8:555).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 116:7 *your rest*. Anxiety of impending death is removed. *bountifully*. See note, 119:17.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 116:9 *before the LORD*. In the presence of the Lord. See "presence," p 843.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 116:10 Paul quotes this verse from the LXX in 2Co 4:13 to explain his motivation for proclaiming the Gospel. He speaks of the entire psalm and of God's deliverance from death in general. In the narrow sense, this particular verse stresses that the psalmist held on in faith even while suffering affliction.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 116:11 *All mankind are liars*. "They do not think correctly about God" (Ap II 34). All who do not believe are liars. Luth: "People become truthful only by the truth of faith" (AE 11:403). The psalmist recognizes that he will find no help in mankind.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 116:12 Psalmist ponders what God really wants. Aug: "This man seeks what he might return unto the Lord, and finds not, save out of those things which the Lord Himself returns [to him]" (*NPNF* 1 8:556).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 116:13 *the cup of salvation*. May refer specifically to one of the cups of the Passover used by Christ in His Last Supper (Mt 26:27), or it may refer to the drink offering (Nu 15:10). The words "of salvation" do not suggest an offering but the receiving of God's gifts (Ps 23:5). *call on the name*. See p 842.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 116:14 *vows*. Luth: "For we can return nothing to God except the vows of praise and confession, for we have all things from Him and He needs nothing of our goods" (AE 11:404; see p 7). *presence of all His people*. Public worship is important so believers can be mutually encouraged.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 116:15 *Precious … is the death*. A saint is one made holy by God's grace. All that happens to such a person is very important, esp suffering and death. This thought suggests the singing of this verse at funerals. Bern: "Let your soul die the death of the righteous, that your last end also may be like [Christ's]…. How can you live where you dare not die?" (*SLSB*, p 214).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 116:16 *son of Your maidservant*. Psalmist rejoices in his opportunity to serve the Lord and thanks Him for the faithful service of his own mother.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 116:17 "He asks us to hope, and says that this is a righteous sacrifice, meaning that other sacrifices are not true and righteous sacrifices" (Ap XXIV 29).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 116:18 Repetition (cf v 14) for emphasis. See "Parallelism," p 778.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 116:19 *courts of the house*. Temple courts. See "courts of the Lord," p 842.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 116** All people are at some point "frightened to death." Death's grip is terrible because it is the result of our sin and separation from God. But this psalm reminds us that God cares deeply about our mortality and has released us from its permanent bonds through the suffering, death, and resurrection of His Son. • Let me walk in integrity, O Lord, and show forth Your love. Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 117** Only two verses, this shortest of all psalms has an unlimited range of vision. It celebrates God's grace, which began in Israel but is extended to all nations through Christ.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 117:1 *all nations*. Luther and Augustine refer to the Gentile saints who believed and praised God, even though they did not follow the Law of Moses: Job, Lot, Naaman, and the widow of Zarephath (AE 14:19; *NPNF* 1 2:389–90). St Paul quotes this psalm together with other passages from the OT to proclaim that God's plan of salvation became a full reality in Christ Jesus (Rm 15:9–12; cf Gal 3:28; Col 3:11).
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 117** If God's love had to be merited, there would be no reason to praise Him. His love would also be severely limited. But because His love is His alone to give, it is great, and it reaches to people of all nations. • O Lord, I praise You for Your steadfast love for me and for all people. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 118** Luth: "This is my own beloved psalm. Although the entire Psalter and all of Holy Scripture are dear to me as my only comfort and source of life, I fell in love with this psalm especially. Therefore I call it my own" (AE 14:45). It may have been written for celebrations at the time of David or for the celebrations of the second temple. As the last song of the Hallel (see Ps 113–18 intro), it was used as thanksgiving for national deliverance. However, it was destined to find greater fulfillment when sung at the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem (v 26; Jn 12:13) and when He Himself referred to it regarding His death and resurrection (v v 22–23; Mt 21:42–44).

Format: V 1, call to give thanks; v v 2–4, the Lord's everlasting love; v v 5–7, the Lord is on my side; v v 8–9, refuge in the Lord; v v 10–13, enemies cut off; v v 14–16, the Lord's right hand; v v 17–18, the Lord's discipline; v v 19–21, the gate of righteousness; v v 22–24, the cornerstone; v 25, prayer for salvation; v v 26–27, entering the temple; v v 28–29, giving thanks.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 118:1–4 Call to praise found in other passages (Ps 105–7; 136; 1Ch 16:8, 34; 2Ch 20:21).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 118:1 *steadfast love*. See p 843.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 118:2–4 Threefold appeal (cf 115:9–13)

PSALMS—NOTE ON 118:5–21 *I*. Best understood to be a representative of Israel or the Messiah.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 118:5 *distress*. V v 10–21 indicate that the nation of Israel is threatened with extermination.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 118:6 *What can man do to me?* David's cry in 56:11 and ours in Heb 13:6.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 118:10 *cut them off!* God did not permit Israel to be destroyed by her earthly enemies, nor did He allow His Messiah to be overwhelmed by the forces of evil.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 118:12 *like bees*. Luther says that persecutors of Christ were like bees that stung His humanity but could not touch His divinity. Believers can also be stung in the same way, but they cannot be destroyed. *like a fire among thorns*. Bees die when they lose their stingers. The thorns burn quickly, and soon the fire is out. So it is with persecution; its heat cannot last. (See AE 11:412–13.)

PSALMS—NOTE ON 118:13 *I was pushed hard*. See ESV note, although here the "you" might refer to the Lord, who allowed the chastening (Dt 8:2–

5; Is 54:8). Aug: "Those who fall away from piety do so not by the work of God but by their own will, and they are not forced to fall" (Chem, *LTh* 1:217).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 118:14 Quoted from the victory song at the Red Sea (Ex 15:2a).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 118:17 Luther's personal motto (AE 14:45, n 4).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 118:18 *disciplined me severely*. Israel understood the chastening of the Lord (Dt 8:5), as must we (Heb 12:6). However, Jesus endured the ultimate chastening for the sins of the whole world (1Pt 2:24). "Here, contrition is contained in the first clause, and how we are revived in contrition is clearly described in the second. We are revived by God's Word, which offers grace" (Ap XIIA 49). Cf 119:28.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 118:19–21 Ritual approach and entry into the temple, perhaps between temple workers and a gatekeeper. See "courts of the Lord," p 842.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 118:19 *gates of righteousness*. In its original setting, this psalm pictures priests, or Levites, approaching the Lord, who alone is righteous and gives righteousness to those who believe in Him. See p 843.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 118:20 Aug: "Cursed, therefore, is he that comes in his own name" (*NPNF* 1 8:559).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 118:22 *cornerstone*. Or, keystone on which the building depends. Israel was rejected by her neighbors. But little, insignificant Israel was destined for greatness as God determined. The cornerstone foreshadows the Messiah, whom God would send through Israel. Even the leaders of Israel would reject this cornerstone. Yet God would build His "nation" of believers upon it (Mt 21:42; Rm 9:32–33; Eph 2:20; 1Pt 2:6–8). Hus: "Christ Himself is the foundation of the apostles and the whole Church, and in Him it is fitly framed together" (*The Church*, p 77).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 118:23 *This is the LORD's doing*. God reminds us that the plan of salvation through the rejected stone was His idea. *marvelous*. The Bible is replete with "marvelous acts" of God, but the sending of the Messiah is the greatest of all.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 118:24 *This is the day*. When the cornerstone of salvation is laid (i.e., Easter).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 118:25 *Save us*. Hbr *hoshi'ah na*, "Hosanna," sung by the crowds on Palm Sunday (Mt 21:9; Mk 11:9; Jn 12:13). See

"salvation," p 843.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 118:26 *bless you*. Plural in Hbr, indicating that the King/Messiah and all who join Him in His victory are blessed. See p 842.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 118:27 Cf Ex 34:6. The Lord reveals His steadfast love and salvation in the Messiah, enabling His people to worship. Although the last phrase is difficult to translate, it obviously points to worship.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 118:29 Psalm closes as it began, as a prayer of thanksgiving.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 118** We may sometimes wonder, "Where is the steadfast love of God?" Where is that "good action" of God for His people? He revealed His steadfast love in humble Israel, in the Child of the Virgin Mary. He veiled His greatest gift in what is least among people so that His gift might be received by all. • O Lord, when I cry, "Hosanna! Save now!" I know that I do not have to rise up to You, for You have lowered Yourself to save me. Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 119** Difficult to date, as no author is given. However, the Law's central role in the author's life and the opposition he faced fit well with the sixth or fifth century BC. (Daniel also knew conflict over his faith [Dn 6]. See note, v 141.) The psalmist likely intends that his words of devotion be as timeless as the Word of God, which he loves. "By this very act [of prayer] they declare that they cannot get those things that they ask of God from their own natural powers. For example, in Psalm 119 alone, David prays more than ten times that God would give him understanding, that he might rightly comprehend and learn the divine teaching" (FC SD II 15). Hbr *berith*, "covenant," does not appear in Ps 119. The idea of a covenant as a promise from God to His people may be understood in the use of words such as *'imrah* ("promise") or the broader *torah* ("God's Law"). Also, the concept of a covenant, if it is understood as God's distinct agreement with one people at one time, might be too narrow for the scope of Ps 119. The psalm describes God's universal actions and nature, which are offered to all people in His Word.

Format: Structured by the 22 letters of the Hbr alphabet, having eight-line stanzas in which all eight lines begin with the same letter. Ps 119 is the longest instance of the acrostic pattern. Cf Ps 9–10; 25; 34; 37; 111–12; and 145. See pp 777–78. By using the acrostic pattern, the

psalmist shows how God's Word commands every part of language and life.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:1 *Blessed*. See p 842. *walk in the law*. The blessing of the Law encompasses all the believer does. Dt 6:6–7 commands the Law to be remembered when sitting, walking, lying, and rising. *law*. See p 971.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:2 *seek Him*. See p 843.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:4 *diligently*. God's precepts are observed more intensely than other interests.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:8 *utterly forsake me!* Confronted with God's commands, the psalmist knows his own failings but appeals to God's merciful promises to preserve him. Far from being self-righteous, he depends on God's help alone.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:9 *young man*. Hbr *na'ar*, perhaps in his teens or early twenties (e.g., Isaac [Gn 22:5, 12] and Joseph [Gn 37:2]). *way*. See p 844. *guarding it according to Your word*. God's Word, like a sword (Eph 6:17), enables believers to guard and keep their life. See note, v 170.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:10 *seek*. See p 843.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:11 *stored up*. God's Word is treasured through memorization; it is brought out through action so that, by thought and deed, the believer may be kept before God. "We should daily be engaged with God's Word and carry it in our hearts and upon our lips" (LC I 89).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:12 *Blessed*. Luth: "Because You, the Blessed One, bestow blessing, I want to be taught by You, for You are such a lawgiver who gives blessing" (AE 11:419). See p 842.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:13 *lips*. Words from God's mouth are graciously allowed on our lips to savor, recount, and rehearse. *declare*. Hbr *saphar*, related to the noun *sapher*, "book."

PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:15 *meditate*. See p 842.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:17 *bountifully*. God deals graciously with His servants, rescuing them and giving them far more than they deserve. See note, 13:6; cf 116:7; 142:7.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:18 *Open my eyes*. Psalmist asks that God would enlighten his eyes to see the goodness that God declares, His goodness out of evil, and His mercy from His Law. Paul prays similarly for the Ephesians (Eph 1:18).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:19 *sojourner on the earth*. Recalls the wandering of Moses and the people following the exodus. Though this present life is not yet the Promised Land to come, the Commandments contain that promise of a gracious rest. Aug: "We are tenants or strangers upon earth, because we have found our country above, whence we have received a pledge, and where when we have arrived we shall never depart" (*NPNF* 1 8:563).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:20 *consumed with longing*. Continuing the theme from v 19 of a wandering sojourner, the psalmist longs for the refreshing clarity of the direction of the Law. *rules*. See p 971.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:21 *insolent*. The scornful seethe in their rebellion against God. Rather than allowing them to wander, God finally rebukes their insolence. See note, v 51.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:23 *princes*. See note, v 161. *meditate*. See p 842. If he listens to what princes say of him, the psalmist will hear only their slander. Instead, he strains to hear God's quiet voice in His guiding and gracious statutes. Notice how the image of the psalmist as God's servant begins the stanza (v 17) and returns now near the end.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:24 *counselors*. God's Word has become a personal witness and confidant to the psalmist. His wisdom promises a home to the sojourning servant (73:24).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:25 *clings to the dust*. Not only is the psalmist a sojourner on the earth (v 19), but he is also reduced to the earth. He is dust drawing nearer to dust (44:25). *give me life according to Your word!* As Adam was dust enlivened by God's breath, so the psalmist is revived by God's Word. The Word gives life and righteousness (v v 28, 37, 40). See note, v 170.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:26 *told of my ways*. Even when the psalmist recounts his deeds, God is not put off. He forgives the missteps, which He already knows (56:8). Aug: "I have confessed my sins, and You have heard me; that is, so that You would remit them" (*NPNF* 1 8:564). *ways*. Hbr *derek*, used five times in this stanza (v v 26, 27, 29, 30, 32), contrasting the psalmist's way with God's perfect path. See p 844.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:27 *meditate*. See p 842.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:28 *strengthen me according to Your word!* Left only to itself in its body of dust (v 25), the soul trembles. However, God's

Word strongly establishes the psalmist and us by confirming all of God's promises (v v 25, 37, 40). See note, v 170.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:30 *I have chosen*. Psalmist chooses God's way because God shows Himself to be trustworthy and gracious. *faithfulness*. See p 842.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:32 *run*. In this stanza focused on life as a "way," it is fitting to end by running. The psalmist no longer clings to the dust (v 25), but dashes forward on the certainty of God's way. *enlarge my heart!* The heart is opened by insight (v 18), freed from the weight of guilt (v 31), and able to trust in the path marked by God. Aug: "The widening of the heart is the delight we take in righteousness. This is the gift of God, the effect of which is, that we are not straitened in His commandments through the fear of punishment, but widened through love, and the delight we have in righteousness" (*NPNF* 1 8:564–65).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:33 *way … it*. See p 844. Psalmist wishes God to establish a single, clear path through the maze of possible human laws.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:34 *Give me understanding*. See note, v 73. Chem: "The prayers of the faithful clearly give testimony to the captivity and bondage of free choice" (*LTh* 1:240).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:35 Chem: "The benefits of the Holy Spirit are demonstrated … for those who walk in newness of life, by directing their will and heart toward obedience, by His contending against the flesh, by leading those who have been converted into His way of thinking" (*LTh* 1:148).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:37 *give me life in Your ways*. A familiar theme in v v 25, 28, and 40 is that life and strength are found in the way of God's Word. In the context of v v 35–37, the psalmist asks that his attention be turned solely to the good that lasts. See note, v 50. *ways*. V v 3, 14, 27, 30, 32, 33 also speak of God's Word as a way or path. See p 844.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:38 *Your promise*. See p 971. The promise of this verse, and also v v 41, 50, is the whole counsel of God's Word and Law along with the certainty of His action (Nu 23:19).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:40 *in Your righteousness give me life!* See p 843. Aug: "And in Him [Christ] I find Your commandments, which I have coveted, that in Your righteousness, that is, in Him, You may quicken me" (*NPNF* 1 8:566). See note, v 50.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:41 *steadfast love*. See p 843. *according to Your promise*. See notes, v v 38, 170.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:42 *him*. The one who taunts the psalmist, cutting him with reproach, is defeated with the sharper sword of God's Word (Eph 6:17; Heb 4:12).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:45 *wide place*. Related to the Hbr words for "enlarge" (v 32) and "exceedingly broad" (v 96), giving the image of security and prosperity (cf Eph 3:18–19).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:46 The keeping of God's Word opens even palace doors. The psalmist can speak God's truth, which is beyond any reproach (Lk 21:15). See note, v 161.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:47 *delight … love*. Psalmist loves the Commandments because they are a connection with the God who loves him. The Commandments can be loved, first, because God has kept them for us through Christ, and, second, because God's indwelling strengthens us to keep them still today (Eph 2:10). See the attitude toward the Law in Jn 13:34–35; 14:15.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:48 *lift up my hands*. Likely in praise of the Commandments, which, like the temple, are the connection between God and His people. Also may be an act of prayer (Lm 2:19), signifying the truth of what one says (Dt 32:40), or an act of blessing (Lv 9:22). Ps 28:2 speaks of hands lifted to the temple's sanctuary, and Ps 134:2 urges hands be lifted to the holy place. See p 1276. *meditate*. See p 842. As one could study the beauty of the temple's stones and gold, so the psalmist studies God's whole counsel for its intricate design.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:49 *Remember*. See p 843. Aug: "The desire of him who prays is displayed, because he asks for what was promised; God is not admonished, as if the promise had escaped from His mind" (*NPNF* 1 8:568). *made me hope*. God's Word creates hope based on God's promises and character (33:22). Frequently in Ps 119, the psalmist says that he has hope in God's Word (v v 74, 81, 114, 147). Luther explains that the Church in distress learns to live by unseen faith: "For hope which is seen is not hope (Rom. 8:24), therefore hope is in the Word, not immediately in demonstration" (AE 11:453).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:50 *Your promise gives me life*. Appeals for life occur frequently in Ps 119 (v v 17, 25, 37, 40, 77, 88, 107, 116, 144, 149, 154, 156, 159). See p 971. *life*. Cf v v 25, 37, 40.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:51 *insolent*. Those who scorn the psalmist are also rebelling against God. The insolent lie against the psalmist (v 69) and prepare traps for him (v 85), but God can be depended upon to defend the psalmist against them (v v 21, 78, 122). See note, v v 155–58. Luth: "I have not therefore turned away; indeed, being contemptuous of their contempt and mocking their mockery, I have drawn near all the more" (AE 11:453).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:52 Psalmist turns to the eternal consolation of God's Word and character (25:6; Is 63:16). See p 971.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:53 *Hot indignation*. A rare word that can refer to raging heat or scorching wind (11:6). Righteous zeal burns against those opposing God (69:9; 119:139; Jn 2:17).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:54 *my songs*. God's statutes are joyous songs (95:2). *house of my sojourning*. In v 19, the psalmist declares he is a sojourner. While the house of the psalmist may be temporary, he fills it with songs of God's permanent statutes.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:55 *remember Your name*. Songs of the day (v 54) turn to the quiet, prayerful remembrance of God's name in the night. God's promises (v 50) comfort the psalmist in the dark. See note, v 147.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:56 Blessings outlined in the preceding verses have come from devotion to God's Word (16:6).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:57 *portion*. The Lord was the portion given to the Levites when the Promised Land was divided and given to the 12 tribes (Nu 18:20). God graciously allows His servants to claim Him as their portion, their life's lot (73:26; 142:5). See p 7.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:58 *according to Your promise*. See notes, v v 38, 170.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:61 *cords*. Figuratively describes the restraints of evil people and their attempt to bring pain to the psalmist. Elsewhere in Scripture, the evil person is described as the one "held fast in the cords of his sin" (Pr 5:22), one who draws "iniquity with cords of falsehood" (Is 5:18). Contrast this attempted restriction by evil with the breadth described in v 45.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:62 *midnight*. Darkness becomes a time to remember and glorify God. While many wake to nightmares, the psalmist's heart is so turned to God's grace that he wakes with praise (cf 63:5–6). See note, v 147.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:63 *companion*. In contrast to the solitude of midnight (v 62), the psalmist is now among those of similar character. His devotion to God is genuine in private and bold in public. *fear You*. See p 842. He joins those who reverence God. In v v 74 and 79, he invites others to see and join him as one who honors God.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:64 *is full*. God's Word of love is like the sun, filling and brightening everything it touches. In light of God's mercy, the world might still hear an echo of God's description of Eden (Gn 1:31). *steadfast love*. See p 843; see also note, v 41.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:65 *according to Your word*. See note, v 170.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:67 Psalmist sees the humbling as a discipline from God that restores him to God's Word (v 75; cf v v 71, 107).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:70 *unfeeling like fat*. Hearts of the insolent have no more feeling than the fat that surrounds them.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:71 *It is good for me that I was afflicted*. See note, v 67. Luth: "It is good that You took my wisdom away from me so that You might give me Yours" (AE 11:464–65). Affliction sensitized the psalmist in heart and mind so he could learn God's Word. "God's truly believing, elect, and regenerate children need the daily instruction and admonition, warning, and threatening of the Law in this life" (FC SD VI 9).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:73 Psalmist wants God to complete His handiwork. *understanding*. Hbr *bin*, "to be attentive," "to have discernment and insight." Used frequently in Ps 119; cf v v 27, 34, 100, 104, 125, 130, 144, 169. Understanding brings insight into God's continued direction for our life.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:74 *fear*. See p 842.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:75 *in faithfulness You have afflicted me*. God's humbling afflictions are those of a faithful Father, who draws His child closer (Pr 3:11–12; Heb 12:5–11). See note, v 67. *faithfulness*. See p 842.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:76 *steadfast love*. See p 843. See note, v 159. *according to Your promise*. See notes, v v 38, 170.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:78 *insolent*. See notes, v v 51, 155–58. *meditate*. See p 842.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:81–88 Psalmist longs for deliverance.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:83 *wineskin in the smoke*. Items stored in crossbeams of the roof could be ruined if hung too close to the hearth's heat and smoke. The psalmist says he has become shriveled and darkened from

the heat and smoke, forgotten by others and even, seemingly, by God. But he has not forgotten God's Word.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:85 *according to*. See note, v 170.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:88 *steadfast love*. See p 843. In v v 84–87, the psalmist described his enemies. Now he looks to God's constant love as his sole source of life. See note, v 159. *give me life*. See note, v 50.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:89 *firmly fixed in the heavens*. God's Word preceded the visible heavens, created the heavens ("And God said" [Gn 1:6]), and will outlast the visible heavens (Mt 24:35). The heavens are a framework around a more precious, lasting Word.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:91 *they*. Luther suggests that "they" are "the founding of the earth, the continuance of days, and the service of all" (AE 11:477–78). These are the things created by God's Word that continue to serve Him. *all things are Your servants*. God controls creation, despite sin's rebellion. Cf Col 1:16–17.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:93 *by them You have given me life*. Similar to the psalmist's appeal for God to give life (v 50); here, God's precepts are the unforgettable support of life.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:94 *I am Yours; save me*. Luther learned to use this as a motto from John Staupitz, his Father-Confessor. Hbr *hoshi'eni*, "save me," is the basis for "Hosanna." God's creation of all (v v 90–91) makes the psalmist bold to expect God's salvation.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:95 *wicked*. Cf 1:1; 119:119; see note, 155–58. Psalmist is at peace in God's promises about the wicked (1:6).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:96 The most that human wisdom can see is still blinded to God's wisdom, power, and grace in Christ (1Co 1:20–30; Jb 38:1–42:6). Human wisdom will end (1Co 13:8–12), but God's Commandments are a limitless wisdom (Rm 11:33).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:97 *meditation*. See p 842.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:99 *all my teachers*. The Law gives prudent understanding and more insight than any teacher can find apart from it. Cf Dt 4:6. *meditation*. See p 842.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:100 *aged*. Elders were respected for their wisdom, but even they are surpassed by the Law's wisdom. If the aged depend only on traditions, they miss the Word's eternal and divine wisdom.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:102 Aug: "You have laid down a law within my heart by Your Spirit, as it were by Your fingers, that I might not fear it as a

slave without love, but might love it with a chaste fear as a son, and fear it with a chaste love" (*NPNF* 1 8:577).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:103 *How sweet*. Sweeter even than honey, the Law is a pleasant, agreeable food. Joy in the Word is fresh, abundant, and freely given (19:10; Jer 15:16; Ezk 3:3; Pr 16:24; 24:13–14). *words*. Both God's Commandments (Law) and His promises (Gospel).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:104 *hate*. In contrast to the love that begins this stanza (v 97), the psalmist hates the deception and bitterness of every way other than God's Law. Cf v 128.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:105 Luther notes that the Word's light is not for our eyes and our seeing but for our feet and path. But our feet cannot be lit and our paths cannot see. So this verse describes the Word's work of faith. "It guides the feet and the heart, and faith does not require understanding…. Thus faith does not enlighten the understanding, indeed, it blinds it, but rather the heart. Faith leads it where it will be saved, and it does so through the hearing of the Word" (AE 11:485). See note, Pr 6:23; cf 2Pt 1:19. "We believe, teach, and confess that the only rule and norm according to which all teachings, together with 'all' teachers, should be evaluated and judged [2 Timothy 3:15–17] are the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures of the Old and New Testament alone" (FC Ep Sum 1).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:106 *sworn an oath*. Luther recalls here the promise in Baptism by which one renounces the devil and his evil deeds (AE 11:486). The psalmist has begun a journey (v v 105–12) and promises to finish it in God's Word.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:107 *according to Your word!* See note, v 170.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:108 *freewill offerings of praise*. Praises come voluntarily and will be acceptable if God instructs him. Cf 110:3.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:109 Psalmist's life is endangered. Rather than guarding it, he offers it openly to God and the direction of His Law. Cf 19:14; 25:1–2.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:111 *my heritage*. The believer's adoption by grace into God's family brings the inheritance of the Father's Word. Cf Eph 1:5–6; Ps 37:18.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:113 *double-minded*. Psalmist hates those who are divided in their thinking and allegiance. See note, 1Ki 18:17–40; cf Rv 3:15–16.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:115 *evildoers*. Those who would tempt the psalmist away from the Law. See note, v v 155–58; cf Mt 23:1–35.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:119 *wicked*. Rebels, guilty in God's judgment. Cf v v 53, 95; see note, v v 155–58. *discard like dross*. Dross is worthless metal slag removed from valuable molten metal. Cf v 140; Is 1:22.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:120 Psalmist tingles and quivers in fear of the judgment of his holy God. Luth: "My hairs have bristled and stood on end from the judgments of condemnation" (AE 11:494, n 86).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:121 *oppressors*. Oppressors would surround the psalmist except for the protection of God and His Word. See note, v v 155–58.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **119:122, 124–25** *servant*. Hbr *'ebed*. The servant depends on God's mercy (v 124) against his enemies (v 122). Cf Is 65:8–9, 13–15. *according to Your steadfast love*. See notes, v v 159, 170.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:122 *insolent*. God's pledge of protection is the psalmist's hope against the rebellious and insolent. The psalmist will survive only if God will speak for him. See notes, v v 51, 155–58. The insolent are well-defined in Pr 21:24.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:126 *It is time for the* LORD *to act*. Psalmist sees the Law's relationship between people and God as broken. The time for action has come. Defend Your people and Your Law!
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:128 *consider*. Hbr *yashar*, also translated "make straight" in Is 40:3. *I hate every false way*. Psalmist has esteemed God's commands to be the only true path; he despises the temptations of falsehood. See note, v 104.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:130 *unfolding of Your words*. God's Word is a doorway opening to the believer. A welcoming light pours out from these gracious words (cf Lk 15:11–32). *understanding to the simple*. Cf 19:7; Mt 11:25.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:131 *pant*. Like an exhausted runner, the psalmist gasps for the reviving of God's Commandments. They are his breath and God's very breath within him. Luth: "'So,' he says, 'I have opened my mouth, that I might not want to offer what is mine, but desire to receive what is Yours'" (AE 11:500). Cf Ps 42:1.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:133 *according to Your promise*. See notes, v v 38, 170. *dominion over me*. Psalmist could easily misstep into the evil that

wishes to master him. He pleads for God's protection and clear direction. Cf Est 9:1; Ec 8:9.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:134 *Redeem*. See p 843.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:135 *make Your face shine*. Psalmist echoes the blessing of Aaron (Nu 6:24–26), asking God to allow him to see His face through the Word. He asks that this clear view of God's face would bless him rather than scorch him. Cf Gn 32:30; Ps 11:7; 17:15.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:136 Rejection of God's Law saddens the psalmist. One might expect him to rejoice in his enemies' rejection of the Law and God's approaching judgment over them (cf Jnh 4). However, he is sorrowful both for the sake of the Law and for those who break it. Eventually, they will be punished and the Law vindicated, but now he is impatient during this time of waiting. His sorrow is paired with the "hot indignation" of v 53. The psalmist has both anger over the wicked and tears over their destruction. See note, v v 155–58.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:139 Psalmist's impatience for the keeping of God's Word is a burning fire, a jealousy for God's honor. This fire feeds on the careless forgetting of the Word by the wicked. Cf v 53; Jn 2:17.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:140 *well tried*. Often refers to the smelting of precious metals (66:10; Zec 13:9; cf Ps 119:72, 119, 127). God's promises are both pure and repeatedly tested. Precious as gold, unbreakable as steel, they are the perfect end of God's refining. See the parallel thought in v 151.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:141 *I am small and despised*. Psalmist appears to be a young man (v v 9, 100), familiar with teachers (v 99), and often persecuted for his zeal (v v 23, 42, 51, 69, 85–87, 95, 110, 150, 157). He contrasts his relatively low position with that of the nobility who plot against him and before whom he will appear (v v 23, 46, 161). Although he knows his own weaknesses (v v 67, 176), he frequently boasts of his keeping of the Law, both as a promise (v v 57, 106) and as what he has already accomplished (v v 112, 121, 129).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:142 *Your law is true*. Psalmist is perhaps continuing the theme of God's promises being tested and refined (v 140), showing the certainty of God's righteousness and affirming that all of God's Law is true. *true*. Hbr *'emeth* can also be translated "faithfulness" or "reliability." God's truthfulness is a certainty (71:22; 86:15; 91:4; 117:2; Jer 10:10).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:147 *I rise before dawn and cry for help*. Psalmist uses the entire day to hear and speak with God. Seven times a day (v 164), he praises, including before the night watches (v 148), at night (v 55), at midnight (v 62), and at dawn (v 147). In this verse, he eagerly anticipates the dawn, pushing back the dark and hurrying the sun with his prayer for help. (Cf 18:6; 22:25.)
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:148 As in v 147 (which begins with the same Hbr verb), the psalmist shows eagerness to ponder God's promises. The slow passage of the night watch allows him to meditate on God's Word in a lingering way. Cf 63:6. Luth: "You have promised Christ and His grace … but no matter how unworthy I am, You are truthful, who made the promise…. Your mercy, as of the One promising, has made me bold to pray before merits and out of season" (AE 11:511). *meditate*. See p 842.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:149 *according to Your steadfast love*. See notes, v v 159, 170.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:150–51 *draw near … are near*. Same Hbr verb, *qarab*. Although the enemies come closer, they remain distant from God. However, the psalmist draws near to God through the Law. *Your commandments are true*. See the parallel thought in v 140.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:154 *Plead my cause and redeem me*. In Hbr, this verse begins with two similar words, the verb *rib* ("plead" or "contend, strive") followed by the noun *ribi* ("cause" or "strife, dispute"). "Strive for my strife," the psalmist is asking. Cf 35:1; 43:1; 74:22. *give me life according to Your promise!* Here and in v 156, the psalmist sees the Word with its promises and rules as a fountain of life. One remembers Jesus' promise in Jn 10:10. See notes, v v 38, 40, 50, 170.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:155–58 Psalmist's enemies are the "wicked" (v v 53, 61, 95, 110, 119, 155), "persecutors" (v v 157, 150), "adversaries" (v 157), and the "faithless" (v 158). Other enemies noted earlier included the "insolent" (v v 51, 69, 78, 85, 122); "evildoers" (v 115); and "oppressors" (v 121). Just as there are several words used to describe the different facets of the Law, so these seven words describe the different aspects of rebellion against God and His Word. His enemies drive the psalmist nearer to God's Word as his one refuge and dependable hope.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:156 *give me life according to Your rules*. While there are many enemies listed in v 157, there are equal saving multitudes of mercies in God's rules. See notes, v v 40, 50, 154, 170. Aug: "Even our

seeking out Your righteousness, then, comes of Your mercies" (*NPNF* 1 8:585–86). *rules*. See p 971.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:159 *Give me life according to Your steadfast love*. Psalmist does not exchange his love for God's love, thereby expecting a reward of life. He loves—and lives—because of God's loving Word and action, which come first. Cf 1Jn 4:10, 19. See note, v 170.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:160 *sum*. Hbr *ro'sh*, "head," "top," "chief."

PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:161 *Princes persecute me*. Despite opposition from princes and kings, the psalmist fears only God. Cf v 46. *stands in awe*. Hbr *pachad*, "dread," "thrill," "fear." Cf 27:1; Is 60:5.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:162 *like one who finds great spoil*. God's Word is the hidden treasure, the fortune reserved both on earth and in heaven. Cf Mt 6:19–20; 13:44–46. Aug: "Many spoils were found, when, admiring the endurance of the Martyrs, even the persecutors believed" (*NPNF* 1 8:587).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:164 *Seven times*. Psalmist regularly praises God, regardless of the outcome of each hour and day. Augustine notes that the number seven suggests completion, as in the number of days in the week (*NPNF* 1 8:587). See p 217. This verse, Luther notes, is foundational for the practice of seven worship services in a day: Matins, Prime, Terce, Sext, Nones, Vespers, and Compline (AE 11:525). See note, v 147.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:165 Aug: "He who loves the law of God, honors in it even what he does not understand; and what seems to him to sound absurd, he judges rather that he does not understand, and that there is some great meaning hidden: thus the law of God is not an offense to him" (*NPNF* 1 8:587).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:168 *all my ways are before You*. Psalmist keeps God's commands, because every turn in his life is known before God. Cf 139:1–16; Eph 1:4–5. See note, v 26.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:169 *according to Your word!* See note, v 170.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:170 *deliver me*. See p 842. *according to*. Used frequently and in various ways in Ps 119. Psalmist asks for God's help in accord with many aspects of God's Word and character. Generally, this phrase comes at the end of a verse, clinching the request with the certainty of God's previous promise. He asks according to "Your word" (v v 9, 25, 28, 65, 107, 169, 170), "Your promise" (v v 41, 58, 76, 133, 154), "Your rules" (or "judgments," v 156), and "Your steadfast love" (v v 124, 149, 159). He also notes that the insolent do not live according to the Law (v 85).

According to God's Word, the psalmist asks for direction in life (v 9), for life itself (v v 25, 107), for strength (v 28), for understanding (v 169), for deliverance (v 170), and he acknowledges God's blessings (v 65).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:174 *Your law is my delight*. Psalmist finds joy in the Lord's teaching. Cf v v 16, 47, 70, 77.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 119:176 Psalmist modestly acknowledges his errors but depends on God's gracious search as his Shepherd. The final verse contrasts with the blessings promised to those whose way is blameless (v 1). However, God's Word brings blessings by grace for those who have faltered. While the psalm repeatedly urges a close devotion to the Word, blessings come according to the Word and not according to the righteousness of the believer's life. Luth: "Thus this verse is extremely emotional and full of tears, for truly we are all thus going astray, so that we must pray to be visited, sought, and carried over by the most godly Shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is God blessed forever. Amen" (AE 11:534). See note, v 141.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 119** God's Word is our beloved guide to life. It reveals God's trustworthy promises and eternal mercy. The psalm's length presents God's Word like a diamond with 22 facets, each displaying a distinct light. By exhausting every letter of the alphabet, the psalmist demonstrates the breadth of the Word and his own boundless dedication to it. Luther spoke of the making of a theologian on the basis of Ps 119. A theologian, he held, came from three actions: prayer (*oratio*), reading or study (*meditatio*), and affliction (*tentatio*). Ps 119 is an excellent expression of all three. The Gospel radiates through the psalm as the psalmist describes God's promises, which save His people (e.g., v v 41, 58). God's Word is loved because of its message of steadfast love (e.g., v v 76, 88, 159). God is merciful, and this mercy brings life (e.g., v 156). • Lord, give us the spirit of Ps 119. Teach us to love Your Word. Show us Your steadfast mercy in every verse. Give us the faith to believe that all You have said is true and that all Your promises will be fulfilled in Christ. Let us seek You with our whole heart and find You in Your Word. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 120–34** Known as the "Psalms of Ascents," based on their titles. Exact meaning of the title is unknown, but two possibilities are likely. "Ascents" could refer to the 15 steps in the temple between the Court of the Women and the Court of the Israelites. See "courts of the Lord," p 842. The psalms were perhaps read or sung on the steps

during the great festivals. The title could also refer to the religious pilgrimages each year going up to Jerusalem. These psalms would be sung as the worshipers approached Jerusalem's hills (121:1; 122:1–2). The Psalms of Ascents have no single theme, though they are all short and frequently mention Zion and Jerusalem.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 120** Historic background uncertain; no specific author or setting is given. Perhaps it was written after the exile (587 BC), when enemies oppressed God's people.

Format: V v 1–2, the Lord's deliverance; v v 3–7, a warrior's wanderings.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 120:1 *distress*. Psalmist appears to have traveled extensively (v 5) under the threat of war (v 7). *He answered me*. General statement of God's rescue, as in 18:6.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 120:2 Contrast the truth of God's Word in Ps 119 with the deceitful tongue of the people in Ps 120. The psalmist's enemies speak lies concerning him and call for war. Cf 5:9; 31:18.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 120:4 *broom tree!* Desert shrub, reaching as high as 12 ft. Its wood burns particularly hot and long. The psalmist wishes this enduring heat would descend on the deceitful tongue.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 120:5 *Meshech*. Generally identified as a nation or tribe in the far north, perhaps near the Black Sea. *Kedar!* Area south of Damascus in the Syrian desert. See map, p 717. Surrounded by slanderers, the psalmist feels as though he is far from home among a heathen people.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 120:6 *those who hate peace*. Psalmist dwells among those who enjoy ravaging others, perhaps reflecting the situation of refugees living among their captors. Aug: "The body wanders in places, the soul wanders in its affections. If you love the earth, you wander from God: if you love God, you rise unto God" (*NPNF* 1 8:590).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 120:7 *when I speak*. Returning to the theme of the tongue and speech, a war of words erupts whenever he speaks. He would counsel peace, but his enemies reflexively know only war.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 120** The tongue is a powerful tool of peace or war. We can use it to call on God for help, but we might be surrounded by others who use the tongue for deceit. God warns us of His approaching judgment on lying lips that are eager for war. However, He also invites us to call on Him for peace and salvation. • O Lord, answer us with Your sure Word and rescue us by its power. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 121** Written for a pilgrim viewing Jerusalem's hills, or by a psalmist when he is feeling overwhelmed. He finds that God, who created all things, is his helper.

Format: V v 1–2, search for help; v v 3–4, the Lord keeps Israel; v v 5–6, the Lord protects at all times; v v 7–8, the Lord will keep you forevermore.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 121:1 *to the hills*. Psalmist may be looking up to the hills of Jerusalem as he approaches for one of the festivals. Also, the hills or

mountains frequently symbolize God's creation, command, and power. Cf Gn 22:2; Ex 3:1–2; 19:2–3; 1Ki 18:20; Ps 125:2; 133:3. See intro, Ps 120–34. See map, p 971.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 121:2 *help*. The Lord is our ally (cf Gn 2:20).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 121:3 *foot be moved*. To totter and slip. Psalms often speak of God's protection, which keeps the righteous from moving or falling. Cf 15:5; 16:8; 21:7; 62:6; 112:6.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 121:4 *slumber nor sleep*. God does not become drowsy and inattentive. He does not sleep while His people struggle.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 121:5 *keeper*. God is a keeper, a watchman who preserves His people when they cannot see their own danger. See note, 127:1. *shade on your right hand*. God's help is like sitting in the shade at noon. As seen also in v 6, His protection is timeless. For other uses of this word for "shade" or "shadow," cf 17:8; 57:1; 63:7; Is 4:6; 25:4.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 121:6 *sun … moon*. People rightly feared the sun's heat, but they may also have feared the moon's eerie light.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 121:8 Final verse includes both distance, "going … coming" and time, "this time forth and forevermore." God's protection always covers a person.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 121** We are pilgrims on a journey to our heavenly home (Php 3:20–21). This psalm reminds us to focus on the Lord, who oversees our journey. Do not allow the mountains, moon, sun, or anything else in creation to frighten you. Our God is eternally alert and goes above and before us. • O Lord, we trust in Your vigilant love. You will preserve us in order to bring us home. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 122** Focuses on the entry to Jerusalem as the place of God's judgment and the peaceful gathering of His people (cf Ps 121). From the time of David on, Jerusalem served as the center of worship and justice. Peace with God and peace between the people of Israel are both found in Jerusalem.

Format: V v 1–2, going to the Lord's house; v v 3–5, the tribes go to Jerusalem; v v 6–9, prayer of peace for Jerusalem.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 122:1 *house of the LORD!* Given the Davidic attribution, this is likely the tabernacle, particularly once the ark of the covenant had come into Jerusalem (2Sm 6:12–15). The tabernacle was called the "house of the LORD" elsewhere (Jgs 19:18; 1Sm 1:7; 2Sm 12:20).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 122:3 *bound firmly*. May refer to the city wall, which brought together settlements on the eastern hill and the western hill.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 122:4 *tribes go up*. In Jerusalem, the tribes have a single city in which to meet. This gathering fulfills God's command that all Israel should gather three times a year (Ex 23:17; 34:23; Dt 16:16).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 122:5 *thrones for judgment*. Beginning with David, the king of Israel in Jerusalem provided the courts of justice. Cf 2Sm 8:15; Ps 101:8. *house of David*. David's kingly line was to bring justice (Jer 21:12). Is 16:5 prophesies that a just judge will sit on the throne in David's tent. Jesus' final judgment fulfills this hope.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 122:6–9 In Hbr, these verses use wordplay on the sounds of *shalom* ("salem," "peace"), which forms the last part of "Jerusalem."
PSALMS—NOTE ON 122:8 *brothers and companions'*. David sees the gathering of relatives among the 12 tribes. There is also a return to the pilgrimage idea of v 1, as the traveling companions going to Jerusalem come into view. *Peace be within you!* The travelers may have greeted one another with "Peace be to you," and now this greeting is extended to Jerusalem. Recall also Jesus' weeping over Jerusalem, wishing to gather it to Himself (Mt 23:37–39; Lk 13:34–35).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 122:9 *your good*. A wish for peace on Jerusalem, where God and His people meet. Cf Heb 12:22–24.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 122** Like David, we are welcomed to the Lord's house and can rejoice at the invitation. We are drawn to a heavenly Jerusalem (Heb 12:22). At the throne of Christ, the eternal Son of David, we find a place of peace (Rm 5:1; 8:1). • May God give us a place among all His people who walk by faith in Christ (Gal 6:16). Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 123** Lacks the travel imagery of Ps 121–22. Could describe pilgrims who act as servants, following God's direction to appear annually before Him. During the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, refugees returning to Jerusalem were esp mocked for their hope in the Lord and His plans (Ne 2:10, 19; 4:1–4).
Format: V v 1–2, looking to God; v v 3–4, appeal for mercy.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 123:2 *as the eyes of servants … mistress*. Servants watch their master's hand both for the good that comes and for the direction that puts them into action. *our eyes … God*. We watch God's hand for His good and direction (Ezr 7:6, 9, 28; 8:18, 22, 31). *till He has mercy upon us*.

Believers trust that God's mercy will come in its time, sent from His timeless grace. Cf Lk 18:1–8.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 123:3–4 *for we have had more than enough of contempt*. Tired, the psalmist looks for his Master to protect him. He is an attentive servant, but others mock him for his devotion to God.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 123:3 *Have mercy*. See pp 842–43.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 123** Our eyes are to be upon God, both to receive His blessings and to do His bidding. We are servants of a merciful Lord. However, when our time of service is filled with contempt from others, we grow tired of waiting for God's justice. The Lord does indeed have mercy for us in Christ Jesus. • I do not despair, O Lord, but pray to the One who sees my service and my enemies. May Your reward and Your justice come. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 124** Ascription to David suggests a time of his own conflicts with Saul and the Philistines. Might also recall the struggles of the exodus and the entry into the Promised Land. If used by the pilgrims going up to Jerusalem, along with the other Psalms of Ascents (120–134), then it recalls all that God did in leading Israel to their land.

Format: V v 1–5, a threat to the Lord's people; v v 6–7, their escape; v 8, help in the Lord's name.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 124:1 *let Israel now say*. Likely said responsively. The lector could read v v 1–5; the response could be v v 6–8. Or, the cantor could have simply introduced the psalm with v 1 and the remainder could have been said by the people. The invitation for speech in v 1 and the repetition of the opening phrase in v 2 support this second option. *now*. Hbr expresses urgency.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 124:2 *people rose up against us*. Recalls the proud, contemptuous enemies of 123:4. From David's time on, Israel's enemies often outnumbered its people.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 124:4–5 *flood … torrent … raging waters*. Imagery could refer to David's experiences with the Philistines or to the opposition he faced from Saul (18:4; 2Sm 5:20). Also, the psalm could refer to the crossing of the Red Sea by the Israelites.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 124:6 *Blessed*. See p 842.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 124:7 *snare of the fowlers*. Imagery of earthbound people nearly drowned in the flood (v v 4–5) is followed by a comparison of people to birds caught in the subtlety of a snare. The flood's danger is

open and frightening; the snare is hidden and tempting. But God delivers from both extremes.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 124:8 *name*. See p 843. God's providence "includes both God's creation and His watchful care" (Chem, *LTh* 1:166).

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 124** We need this psalm's reminder that our strength and safety come only by God's hand. We are in danger from flood and snare, the overwhelming and the enticing. But God is faithful for His name's sake. He rescues us so that we will continue to bless and call on His name. • Lead us safely, Lord, so we may always give glory to Your name. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 125** Possibly written at the time of Nehemiah, following the exile. The mountains surrounding Jerusalem (v 2) are reminders of the lasting apportionment of the land and the promise that God will be gracious to the righteous.

Format: V v 1–3, security of Zion; v v 4–5, prayer for goodness.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 125:1 *Mount Zion*. See p 844. The mountains and the city are immovable due to God's protection (cf 46; 48; 128:5; 132:13–17).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 125:2 *mountains surround Jerusalem*. The hills encompassing Jerusalem are like sentinels, reminders of God's watchfulness. See note, 121:1.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 125:3 *scepter of wickedness*. The scepter is the symbol of authority. The evil rule over Jerusalem, following the exile, will not continue forever. *allotted*. Allotment of the land (Jsh 18–19) was God's directive, which will displace the temporary reign of foreign kings.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 125:4 *Do good, O* LORD, *to those who are good*. God has promised to bless the upright and to turn against the evil (cf Ps 1). Although God needs no reminder, His people need to remember Him as the source of this goodness.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 125** God's blessing transforms us into mountains surrounding His dwelling place. We are built on His Word as an unchanging rock, and we become pillars by His grace. • Make us upright in heart, Lord, that we might be preserved before You. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 126** Likely written after the captives returned from the Babylonian exile. See note, v 1.

Format: V v 1–3, celebrating restoration; v v 4–6, reaping joy.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 126:1 *restored the fortunes of Zion*. Restoration of the captives after the Babylonian exile may well be the setting for this psalm (cf Ezr, Ne). See p 1080. *dream*. Like dreaming sleepwalkers, who wake to find that the dream is true, the captives return to Jerusalem.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 126:4 *like streams in the Negeb!* Sudden storms turn dry riverbeds into flowing streams, causing flowers to appear. So God's mercy overflows to the people caught in the barren life of exile. Cf Is 41:17–20.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 126:6 Beginning of the exile was in tears, but the seeds sown then bring this joyful harvest as the captives return home. First comes struggle as they support one another in the midst of hardship, then comes relief. Aug: "What shall we sow? Good works. Works of mercy are our seeds…. [The farmer] looks to the sky, sees it lowering, shivers with cold, nevertheless goes forth, and sows … [not] awaiting sunshine" (*NPNF* 1 8:605).
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 126** May God give us the expectation that times of sudden refreshing will come from Him. Perhaps now you are in a time of sowing with bitter tears; do not despair of His grace. Trust in His power to do the unimaginable through overflowing kindness. • By faith we rejoice, O Lord, in the sowing of Jesus' body on Good Friday and the harvest of blessings He prepared on Easter morn. Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 127** Credited to Solomon; may well be read with his advice in Pr concerning the building of the home and the value of children. May refer to his building of the temple. Solomon was considered the master builder in Israel.

Format: V v 1–2, without the Lord, our labor is in vain; v v 3–5, the Lord blesses us with children.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 127:1 *builds the house*. Lit, "a house." Houses or households built apart from the blessing and foundation of God and His Word will stand only until the first storm. Cf Mt 7:24–27. *watchman*. The Lord is the only watchman who is always alert in His duty and is able to overwhelm all enemies. He is never surprised, nor does He ever call for help. Cf 121:3–8.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 127:2 *He gives to His beloved sleep*. Under His watchful care, His children can rest, committing their cares to His loving hand. Cf 1Pt 5:7.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 127:3 *children are a heritage*. Children filling a house (v 1) are God's continued blessing. *reward*. Children are God's inheritance given by grace. The ongoing family line continued to receive the inheritance of the land (Nu 27:8–11).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 127:4–5 In Bible times, the man with several sons was well defended. Though he aged, his youth lived on through his vigorous sons, who spoke for him against his enemies.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 127** Our houses and the families within them are God's gifts. However, our walls are fragile and our rooms are empty without His blessing. The Lord leads us to value His gifts and to commit them to His watchful care. He will preserve us unto life everlasting. • Fill our homes with devout children, our heritage from You. Give us this faith and help us build our homes and families on the security of Your Word. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 128** Likely a pilgrim song, recited by the travelers in the company of their families as the mountains of Jerusalem come into view.

Format: V v 1–2, blessed are those who fear the Lord; v v 3–4, a family that fears the Lord is blessed; v v 5–6, blessings from Zion.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 128:1 *fears the* LORD. See p 842. *His ways!* See p 844.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 128:2 *blessed … well*. As the psalm begins with blessing, so this first pair of verses ends with an assurance of blessing. See p 842. Rabbis associated "blessed" with this life and "well" with the life to come.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 128:3 *within your house*. Hbr refers to the most private chamber, reserved for marital relations. The blessings of a wife and children are compared to the most important fruit-bearing plants, which fill the house with life. Cf 127:4. *table*. Ancient tables commonly stood no more than a foot above the floor, where families sat or reclined on cushions during meals.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 128:4 *fears the* LORD. The blessing of the fear of the Lord, which began the psalm, returns here. See p 842.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 128:5–6 *May you see the prosperity … your children's children!* The extent of the blessings promised in v v 1 and 4 is to be seen both within the house and family of the one blessed and in the larger setting of Jerusalem, God's dwelling place.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 128:5 *Zion*. See p 844.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 128** May God grant us the blessings of a life lived under the fear and respect of God. May we see our families as the kindness of God. In our relationships with our children and our grandchildren, God shows His power and mercy. • O Lord, open our eyes to appreciate Your gifts and praise You for their richness. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 129** Likely written after the Babylonian exile, though any time of oppression against Israel is possible. Some measure of God's protection and justice has already been seen (v v 2–4), but a more complete judgment is still looked for (v v 5–8).

Format: V 1, lifelong affliction; v v 2–3, affliction continues; v v 4–8, the Lord's judgment.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 129:1 *they*. This psalm gives the Israelites a single voice. Their oppressors could be any nation from Assyria on through Babylon. *let Israel now say*. See note, 124:1.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 129:3 Image is more severe even than that of a whip scourging someone's back. Like a plow's furrows, the cuts made upon Israel are deep and long.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 129:4 *cut the cords*. The Lord cuts the harness of the oxen pulling the scourging plow of v 3. Israel's oppression is stopped.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 129:5 *all who hate Zion*. Enemies of Israel, but perhaps esp the Babylonians, who destroyed Jerusalem in the sixth century BC. *turned backward!* Turned back to their own land.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 129:6 *grass on the housetops*. The wicked are like worthless grass, without grain, growing thinly on the meager soil of a rooftop. Cf 1:4; Is 40:6–8.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 129:8 Although pilgrims say this blessing to one another, let no such kindness come onto those who hate Zion and have spurned the Lord's name. The psalmist leads the people in a prayer that the Lord would deliver them from evil.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 129** We may feel some part of the afflictions of this psalm. Yet, the afflictions shall not prevail! The blessings of the Lord are with us through Christ. • Lord, show Your power and justice over our enemies. Lead us to call on Your name and receive the blessings that come from You. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 130** Sixth of the seven penitential psalms (cf Ps 6; 32; 38; 51; 102; 143). Because of its eloquent expression of desperate

sorrow, the Church has often used it in the funeral liturgy. When Luther was asked what were the best psalms of all, he cited Ps 130—along with 32, 51, and 143—calling them the "Pauline Psalms." For Luther, these are like Paul's Epistles in setting forth the realities of human sin, God's grace, and Christ's redemption.

Format: V v 1–2, appeal to the Lord; v v 3–4, forgiveness; v v 5–6, waiting on the Lord; v v 7–8, appeal to Israel.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 130:1 *the depths*. We speak of "depression" or "being down," spatial metaphors that express the feeling of emotional desolation. The Hbr here is even more graphic, referring to deep waters, to the sense of being overwhelmed and sinking into the depths of the sea.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 130:2 *hear my voice!* Even from the depths of suffering, God hears our cries and is "attentive" to our "pleas for mercy."

PSALMS—NOTE ON 130:3 *mark iniquities*. Remembering, preserving, and recording our sins for future punishment. Imagery is of writing down our offenses as a legal record. The speaker is in the depths of guilt. "Here [the psalmist] confesses his sins and does not list his merits…. He comforts himself by his trust in God's mercy" (Ap IV 58).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 130:4 Knowing God's forgiveness increases our sense of awe before Him.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 130:5 *wait*. Luth: "Those who wait for the Lord ask … for mercy; but they leave it to God's gracious will when, how, where, and by what means He helps them" (AE 14:192). "Because You have promised the forgiveness of sins, I am sustained by Your promise" (Ap IV 58).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 130:6 *watchmen*. Guards who watch over the city. *for the morning*. The soul waits in darkness, anticipating the dawning of God's light. The repetition emphasizes the sense of yearning and protracted waiting.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 130:7 *steadfast love*. See p 843. *plentiful redemption*. See "redeem," p 843. Luth: "Although our sin is great, yet His redemption is greater" (AE 14:194). See SA III III 8.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 130** The psalmist is in a state of emotional desolation, overwhelmed with misery and guilt. Yet, as he realizes God hears his pleas and grants him full forgiveness, his darkness slowly gives way to light and the hope of "plentiful redemption" (v 7). If we are honest with ourselves, we must admit the depths of our sinfulness. When we are

overwhelmed, God hears our pleas for mercy. He does not remember our sins, but rather grants us free forgiveness through the work of Christ, who gives us hope. Christ plunges into our depths to raise us in salvation. • O Lord, in our happy times we often forget You, but in our suffering we turn to You, and in our weakness we find Your strength. Speak to us the word of Your promise. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 131** Because Ps 132 refers to David's triumphant entry with the ark of the covenant, some scholars relate this song of David to his expression of humility in 2Sm 6:20–22.

Format: V v 1–2, humility and quietness; v 3, hope in the Lord.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 131:1 *not lifted up*. He does not exalt himself. He has given up on pride. *things too great*. The human mind is small and limited, a vessel too small to take in the mysteries of life or to understand the workings of the infinite God.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 131:2 *like a weaned child*. Not a nursing baby, whose fretting and crying are only stilled by the mother's milk, but a weaned child (see note, Gn 21:8), who is content simply to be with its mother. Likewise, the soul is calmed and quieted simply by being in the Lord's presence.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 131:3 *hope in the* LORD. The individual's childlike humility and trust is applied to God's people. The Church must always remain humble and rest in Christ, the ground of its hope.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 131** Before God and the mysteries of existence, we are like little children. And like little children, we can find solace in God's love for us in Jesus Christ, who likewise became a little child on our behalf. While some believe that a child cannot have faith, Christ points to children as models for faith. • Give us the faith of children, Lord. Calm us and quiet us by Your presence in Word and Sacrament. In the name of the Christ Child. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 132** Remembers how David brought the ark of the covenant into Jerusalem (2Sm 6–7). Likely written by Solomon to underscore the significance of his bringing the ark out of the tabernacle and into the new temple he had built (2Ch 5; cf 2Ch 6:41, when Solomon uses v v 8–11). The psalm is also a meditation on God's promises to David and his descendants.

Format: V v 1–5, a place for the Lord; v v 6–7, a place found; v v 8–10, procession with the ark; v v 11–12, David's throne; v v 13–18,

Zion chosen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 132:1 *in David's favor*. See Ps 132 intro.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 132:2 *swore … vowed*. Interplay between what David swore to God and what God swore to David. See "oath," p 7.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 132:3–5 Psalm is about David's vow to the Lord, but it is not specifically ascribed to David, as he is referred to in past tense (v 1). See Ps 132 intro.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 132:5 *dwelling place*. God was specially present above the mercy seat of the ark of the covenant (Ex 25:17–22). In bringing the ark and the sacrificial service of the tabernacle to Jerusalem, David understood that the Lord would dwell with His people. See p 495.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 132:6 *we*. The Israelites, who heard about the ark of the covenant, came from far and near to witness its installation in Jerusalem and to worship where God dwells. *Ephrathah*. Bethlehem, where both David and Jesus were born. *fields of Jaar*. Kiriath-jearim (cf 1Sm 6:21). The ark of the covenant had been kept here before David brought it to Jerusalem.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 132:7 *dwelling place*. The tabernacle. *His footstool!* The ark, as the point of contact between heaven and earth (cf Is 66:1).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 132:8 *ark of Your might*. Where God is present in His holiness is a place of power, as poor Uzzah discovered (2Sm 6:5–8).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 132:9 *clothed with righteousness*. See p 843. Imagery is often used in Scripture (e.g., Gn 3:21; Jb 29:14; Eph 6:14; Rv 7:13–14) and is reflected in the white garments of the priests (Ex 28:39). *saints*. See p 843.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 132:10 *anointed one*. A king was installed by being anointed with oil (e.g., 1Sm 10:1; 2Sm 2:4; 5:3; 2Ki 9:3). Christ means "the Anointed One." The anointed kings in David's line point forward to their descendant Jesus, who was anointed by the Holy Spirit to be Savior and King. He will not turn away His face from those who call on Him.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 132:11 *The LORD swore*. God's promise to David is given in 2Sm 7:12. *sons of your body*. Not just the establishment of David's lineage as the true kings of Israel, but a prophecy of the "one" who will hold the throne "forever"; i.e., Christ.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 132:12 *keep My covenant*. A treaty, usually between a greater king and a lesser, establishing the terms of the relationship. Many

kings in David's dynasty fell away from God. Jesus, the Son of David, fulfilled all of God's Law on our behalf, thus establishing this promise.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 132:13 *Zion*. See p 844.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 132:15 God will "abundantly" provide for Jerusalem's physical needs, and the temple will supply spiritual nourishment. Looks forward to the Church and the "bread" of the Sacrament.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 132:16 *clothe with salvation*. Parallels v 9, making it clear that righteousness comes only from salvation, both of which must be "put on" (Eph 4:22–24; Col 3:10–14), as we are robed in Christ. *saints*. The blessing goes from David, to the priests, to all the people. See p 843.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 132:17 *horn*. See p 842. David will have a descendant of unusually great power (cf Lk 1:69). *a lamp for My anointed*. Cf 119:105.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 132:18 *clothe with shame*. Ironic parallel to v v 9, 16; God's enemies are clothed not with righteousness and salvation but with the shame of their own guilt. *crown*. Diadem, a thin gold circlet.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 132** One of David's sons, the Anointed One, will be enthroned forever. He will clothe His people with righteousness and salvation. This psalm curses the enemies of God's Anointed, and He will "clothe [them] with shame" (v 18). Our sins would make us God's enemies. And yet, God dwells with us and clothes us with His righteousness and salvation. In David's Son, Jesus Christ, the incarnate God tabernacles with His people. He is still actually present in His Church through His Word and Sacraments. God swore an oath to work this salvation, and, like David, we can trust His promises. • O, Lord, we praise You for dwelling with us. Clothe us with the righteousness and salvation of Your Anointed One, Jesus Christ, our King. In His name. Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 133** All of the Israelites would come from far and near to Mount Zion to offer their sacrifices (Dt 12). The psalm celebrates the unity the people felt with one another as they gathered to worship the one God and to receive His blessings.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 133:1 *brothers dwell in unity!* References to the Levitical priesthood (v 2) and to Zion, the site of the sacrificial worship in the tabernacle and then the temple (v 3), indicate that the emphasis is on religious unity. Agreement in spirit, doctrine, and practice is objectively "good" to achieve and inwardly "pleasant" to experience.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 133:2 *oil*. Pressed from olives and used medicinally to eliminate or prevent lice and soothe the skin (as we would use lotion). Anointing was probably associated with mutual care and a kindness extended to visitors at one's home. *running down*. Vivid description of what it felt like to be anointed by oil, here referring specifically to Aaron and thus to the ordination of priests (Ex 30:22–33). As the priest felt the oil pouring over him in the presence of the congregation, he must have felt a great sense of unity with the people he was ordained to represent.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 133:3 *dew of Hermon … Zion!* Mount Hermon is a tall, snow-covered mountain at the northern-most border of the Promised Land, part of the range that is the source of the Jordan River. Moisture comes from those mountains to fall on the dry land of Israel. The imagery of dew falling on the mountains of Jerusalem is one of refreshing moisture falling on dry ground. Such is the blessing of spiritual unity. *the blessing, life forevermore*. From Jerusalem comes the promise of everlasting salvation, symbolized on the temple mount but fulfilled on that other mountain of Zion—Calvary, where Christ was crucified.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 133** Living in unity is as soothing as being anointed with oil, as refreshing as dew from the mountains on a parched desert. Descriptions of the goodness and pleasure of unity and brotherhood remind us that we often experience discord, strife, and disunity instead. This is true of our families, our communities, and our churches. Yet Christ's prayer is "that they may be one, even as We are one" (Jn 17:11). He bestows that unity through the Holy Spirit in the refreshing waters of Baptism. • We praise You, Lord, for the unity we have through You with all our fellow Christians. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 134** Last and shortest of the Psalms of Ascents.

Format: V v 1–2, possibly recited as a call at the changing of the night watch in the temple; v 3, response.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 134:1 *bless the* LORD. See p 842. *servants*. General reference to God's "servants" is made specific in the parallel line, referring to the priests and Levites who guard the temple during the night. *stand by night*. The night watch, during which time the priests on duty, carrying torches, would make things ready for the ministry of the coming day.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 134:2 *Lift up your hands*. Gesture of prayer and supplication. See note, 119:48; see also p 1276. *holy place*. The first chamber of the tabernacle or temple, where the altar of incense and the

table for the bread of the Presence were kept. The gesture of the worshipers directs their praise toward God, enthroned in His temple.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 134:3 *bless you from Zion*. "You" is singular. Liturgical blessing. See p 842.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 134** The priests on duty at the temple during the night are urged to bless the Lord, and yet the Lord blesses us. The night is an emblem of darkness and sorrow. Yet Christ is present in the darkness. He gives His blessing from the sacrificial mountain in Jerusalem by the continual ministry of the Church through Word and Sacrament. • We bless You, Lord, even in the darkness. And You bless us through Your Son, who went into the darkness of death to bring us into His light. Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 135** Evidently sung as a celebration in the temple by the whole worshiping community.

Format: V v 1–4, opening praise; v v 5–7, God's greatness in creation; v v 8–12, the exodus and conquest; v v 13–14, the Lord's renown; v v 15–18, worthless idols; v v 19–21, Israel blesses the Lord.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 135:1 *servants*. Refers to priests and Levites standing at their posts and to the whole worshiping community present in the temple courts.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 135:2 *house of the* LORD *… courts*. See p 842.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 135:3 *for it is pleasant!* May refer to God's name or to the pleasure of singing His praises.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 135:4 *chosen Jacob*. The patriarch, his descendants, and, by extension, those who share his faith (Heb 11). *possession*. God's people belong to Him.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 135:6 Vivid statement of God's omnipotence, which makes Him incomparably greater than everything. His power is limitless, contingent only upon His will.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 135:7 *makes the clouds rise*. The power of the storm is His creation. *storehouses*. The metaphor refers to the potentialities of God's power, the source of all the impulses of nature.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 135:8–12 God's greatness lies not only in His acts of creation but also in His acts of redemption, as He intervenes in history to deliver His people and fulfill His promises. Cf Ex 7–15; Nu 21:21–35; Dt 4:38.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 135:12 *heritage*. See "portion," p 7.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 135:14 *vindicate His people*. God's judgment will be in their favor, due to His grace and mercy.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 135:15–18 The true God is contrasted with the false gods manufactured by human beings. Those who worship idols come to share their lack of sense and reason. See note, 115:4–8.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 135:19–20 *house of Israel … house of Aaron … house of Levi*. Each group in the temple—the congregation, the priests, the worship assistants—is urged to unite in the praise of God.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 135:19 *bless the LORD!* See p 842.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 135:20 *fear the LORD*. See p 842.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 135:21 *dwells in Jerusalem!* God is truly present in the temple.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 135** God's almighty power is evident in His creation and in His acts of redemption. The true God is contrasted with the man-made deities of false religions. When we know God only through His creation—the lightning and the storm—He can be terrifying. And in His dealings with human beings, He punishes sin, as He did with Pharaoh, the Canaanite kings, and worshipers of false gods. Yet God has compassion on His people, those whom He has chosen and claims as His own. The true God was incarnate in Jesus Christ as true man, one with us. In Baptism, He makes us His possession. • O Lord, we praise You for redeeming us and all Your people throughout history. May pastors, teachers, musicians, choirs, and the whole congregation bless You for Your presence in Your Church. Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 136** The Lord's steadfast love endures.

Format: V v 1–3, the God of gods; v v 4–9, wonders of creation; v v 10–16, wonders of the exodus; v v 17–22, wonders of the conquest; v v 23–25, God's loving care; v 26, closing. The psalm's refrain suggests that it was used liturgically in the temple, with a solo voice recounting God's works in the first half of the verse and the whole community responding with the recognition of His mercy in the second half. Simple oral responses were probably common, since many participants could not read written responses. See pp 1081–83.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 136:1–3 Note the threefold naming of the Lord. See notes, Nu 6:22–27.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 136:1 *Give thanks*. The community is exhorted to give thankful praise to God for His goodness in Himself and as expressed in

His works of creation and redemption detailed in this psalm. *steadfast love*. See p 843. The refrain, repeated in every verse, emphasizes God's grace that is manifest with all of His works.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 136:2 *God of gods*. The true God is above all the deities of false religions.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 136:3 *Lord of lords*. The true God is above all other authorities.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 136:4–9 Praises the goodness and steadfast love of God as expressed in His creation.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 136:10–16 Describes God's work of redemption in delivering His people from slavery in Egypt.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 136:17–22 Describes God's work of redemption in giving His people the Promised Land in their conquest of Canaan.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 136:23 *low estate*. When God's people were slaves in Egypt. By extension, this also describes our fallen, sinful condition.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 136:23–26 Describes God's works of redemption in His people's lives during their slavery, the exodus, the conquest, and today.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 136:26 *God of heaven*. Transcending everything mundane. Comprehensive listing of God's works and mercies culminates with His rule in heaven, where all His saints will enjoy His steadfast love forever.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 136** This great psalm of thanksgiving praises God for His acts of creation and redemption, both in history and in the lives of His people. Every detail, at every stage, is a sign of God's steadfast love, which, throughout human history, endures forever. The psalm is all about God's action, not ours. • O, Lord, we thank You that as we live our lives, with all the highs and lows, joys and trials, Your steadfast love is there for us at every moment; it endures forever. Through Christ, our redemption. Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 137** Imprecatory psalm; see p 879. Generation after generation, God's unfaithful people practiced idolatry. They refused to heed the warnings of God's prophets, choosing instead to conform to the dominant cultures of the pagan world, including infant sacrifice. At last, God's people experienced His judgment. In the Babylonian captivity, God's people mourned for their sin and its consequences. They learned to cling to God's promises of deliverance in His Word as delivered by the prophets.

Format: V v 1–3, captive in Babylon; v v 4–6, remember Jerusalem; v v 7–9, vengeance on Edom and Babylon.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 137:1 *waters of Babylon*. The exiles, who either live by the rivers and canals of Babylon or gather there to mourn, are weeping at the memories of what they have lost.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 137:2 *hung up our lyres*. In no mood to sing, the exiles hung their musical instruments in the trees beside the water. *lyres*. See p 993.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 137:3 *captors … required of us songs*. Babylonian victors mock the exiles, forcing them to sing the joyous songs of the temple —such as the preceding psalms—while they are in abject defeat.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 137:4 *LORD's song*. Answer to captors' requests in v 3. How can the people sing the songs of the temple worship in Jerusalem when both the temple and Jerusalem have been destroyed?

PSALMS—NOTE ON 137:5 Though Jerusalem is gone, its people can, at least, remember all that it meant. *right hand forget its skill!* Unable to play the lyre, which was used for healing troubled spirits (cf 1Sm 16:23).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 137:6 *tongue stick*. Let my mouth be unable to sing.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 137:7 *Edomites*. Judah's neighbors and kinsmen, the people of Edom, went over to the Babylonian side and rejoiced in the destruction of Jerusalem (cf Ob). *day of Jerusalem*. When the holy city was destroyed.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 137:8–9 *Blessed*. See p 842.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 137:8 *doomed*. God had promised to bring judgment on the tormentors, the mighty empire of Babylon (Is 13; 47). *blessed shall he be who repays you*. What the Babylonians did to the people of Jerusalem, including the killing of children, will be done to Babylon (Is 47:6–9). The text is not clear whether "he" refers to God or to a nation He chooses to administer judgment.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 137:9 Bitter passage is a horrific expression of the psalmist's craving for unrepentant Babylon to be utterly annihilated, with no new generation possible to restore its power. That the conquering Medes would do this to Babylonian infants is specifically prophesied in Is 13:16. See p 879.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 137** By abandoning God for false religions and the evil ways of the surrounding cultures, the people lost everything. Now, in their exile, they appreciate what they threw away. We, too, are

exiles in the new Babylon—the world system with its abominations and its beast (Rv 18)—and must endure its temptations and tribulations. We, too, know that sin brings regret, grief, self-loathing, and bitterness. (Such emotions are signs of repentance.) Yet we can also look for our deliverance, clinging to God's promises of redemption delivered by one wholly innocent, Jesus, God's own Child. • O Lord, as we, too, are exiles in this ungodly world, teach us to mourn for our sins. Give us the gift of repentance, so that we may escape the judgment we deserve. Deliver us from our captivity to sin, through Your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 138** A psalm of David, who exults in how God delivered him from one of the many crises he endured.

Format: V v 1–3, calling on the Lord; v v 4–6, kings shall call on the Lord; v v 7–8, the Lord preserves us.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 138:1 *gods*. Hbr *'elohim*; could refer to angelic hosts (see note, 8:5) or the deities of the surrounding nations.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 138:2 *bow down*. Wherever they were, ancient Israelites faced in the direction of the temple in Jerusalem to pray. Cf Dn 6:10. *steadfast love and Your faithfulness*. See p 843. *exalted … Your name and Your word*. In keeping His word of promise, God exceeded previous deeds done in His name (Ex 33:18–34:9).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 138:3 *answered*. God answered David's prayer and gave him inner strength to deal with his trials. God promises the same for us.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 138:4 *kings of the earth*. God, who is above all earthly authorities, will make Himself known to all nations and their rulers. This is a prophecy of the conversion of the Gentiles. At the last judgment, everyone will acknowledge the Lord. Cf Php 2:9–11; Rv 21:24. *heard the words*. God's Word preached by the prophets and written in Scripture.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 138:5 *sing of the ways*. All kings will join in the worship and praise of God. *glory*. God's dealings with us demonstrate His immeasurable exaltation.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 138:6 *the lowly*. God attends those who approach Him in a spirit of repentance and humility. This is true even of the kings of the earth. *knows from afar*. The arrogant can only know God at a distance. They have separated themselves far from God's mercy.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 138:7 *right hand delivers*. See pp 843, 842.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 138:8 *The Lord will fulfill His purpose for me*. Just as God has kept His promises in the past, so He will never forsake us and will bring His plans for us to fruition. *work of Your hands*. We are God's creation.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 138** God's name and Word are above everything, including all of the claims of the false gods. He cares for His children, the work of His hands, and His hands will protect them and bring His plans for them to completion. God's hand is against His enemies. David's victories prefigure the victories of David's Son, Jesus Christ, and the victories of those who have been baptized into Him. Salvation is not only for David or for the Israelites but for all nations who will come to faith through God's Word. • O Lord, we thank You that in Your Word You extend to us such great promises. Grant us full assurance of Your grace, protection, and spiritual care. Fulfill Your purpose in our lives through Jesus Christ. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 139** Though the notation "to the choirmaster" suggests a use in public worship, this psalm of David is deeply personal and contemplative.

Format: V v 1–6, the Lord knows His people; v v 7–12, the Lord is everywhere present; v v 13–16, the Lord created every person; v v 17–18, God's thoughts are vast; v v 19–22, the Lord's enemies; v v 23–24, the Lord leads.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 139:1 *searched me and known me!* God is omniscient; i.e., He knows everything. This includes knowing us—our actions, our thoughts, even our future—with perfect intimacy.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 139:5 *hem me in*. God surrounds us. We cannot escape Him. *lay Your hand*. See p 842.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 139:7 *Spirit?* Chem: "Lest anyone argue that the Holy Spirit is called God and Lord in only a metaphorical sense, we should examine also the passages which attribute to the Holy Spirit those qualities which belong only to the true God, such as the work of creation and preservation of all things" (*LTh* 1:139). *presence?* God is omnipresent. Wherever we go, God is there.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 139:8 *Sheol*. See p 792. God's presence spans the greatest polarities, from the highest skies to the depths of the earth, from heaven to hell.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 139:9 *wings of the morning*. Pictures the sun's rays coming up over the horizon. Similar poetic language describes other poles of God's presence, from the horizon to the depths of the sea, from light to darkness (v 11).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 139:10 *right hand*. God is not only present but also providentially cares for and directs us. See p 843.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 139:11 *light about me be night*. God sees through darkness as if it were light.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 139:13 *inward parts*. Our very bodies, with their inner organs and biological complexity, as we developed in the womb, are the work of God. *knitted*. Connotes plaiting and interweaving, as with muscles, nerves, and veins. The human body is described as an artistically designed network. See p 983.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 139:14 "God created the body and soul of Adam and Eve before the fall. But He also created our bodies and souls after the fall. Even though they are corrupt, God still acknowledges them as His work" (FC Ep I 4).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 139:15 *My frame*. The skeleton and, by extension, the state of being. *woven in the depths of the earth*. This metaphor for the womb recalls that God shaped us as He shaped Adam, and that we, too, are dust and to dust we will return (Gn 3:19).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 139:16 *unformed substance*. An embryo. *Your book*. Some have seen a parallel with the way the genetic "language" encoded in DNA directs the development of the child in the womb. More broadly, God has written out the course of our days, from our conception to our death. *written*. "All things, whether they are past or future, are clear and present before God" (FC SD XI 4).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 139:17 *thoughts*. The mind of God is unfathomable, but the psalmist cherishes being able to contemplate God's wisdom in creation and revelation. *sum*. Hbr *ro'sh*, "head," "top," "chief."
PSALMS—NOTE ON 139:18 *I awake, and I am still with You*. Imagery is of someone counting God's thoughts, which are more numerous than the grains of sand, until falling asleep. Upon awakening, the person is still contemplating God's thoughts and enjoying His presence. The Hbr for "to awake" and "come to an end" are similar, so wordplay may be intended.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 139:19 *wicked*. Though God is wise, loving, and good, many people hate Him, blaspheme His name, and rebel against Him.

men of blood. People who cause others to shed blood, destroying the lives of those God has so lovingly made! See p 879.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 139:21 May refer to the oaths used in covenants, forming allegiance between parties. To love righteousness is to hate unrighteousness. To love God is to hate whatever opposes Him. See note, 5:5.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 139:22 *complete hatred*. God hates sin; the psalmist shares that complete abhorrence.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 139:23 *Search me*. Psalmist applies God's stringent standards to himself. Returning to the theme of v 1, he asks God to extend His omniscience to his inner life, to search out the traces of sin in his life, so that God's presence might lead him to everlasting life.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 139:24 *grievous way*. That which causes the pain and misery that is punishment for sin.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 139** A meditation on God's attributes: His omniscience, His omnipresence, His omnipotence, and His holiness. The psalmist's wonder segues into anger at those who hate God and destroy His gift of life. That God knows our every thought, word, and deed can be terrifying to a sinner. This psalm also gives a clear answer to today's controversy about the value of human life and when life begins, clearly condemning abortion and other assaults on developing children. And yet, this psalm, above all, proclaims God's love, which He expresses in His personal care and involvement in all of His creation. God's knowledge, power, and presence were manifest most fully when He Himself assumed our substance, with a human body knit together in the womb of the Virgin Mary, and grew up to bear in that body God's hatred of sin at the cross. • O Lord, thank You for knowing us so completely! Confound the abortionists, the "men of blood" (v 19) and others who would abuse and harm the bodies You have made. Lead us to agree with Your judgment against sin, especially with the sin in our own lives. Cleanse us with Christ's blood, born of the Virgin Mary, who is present for our salvation in His Word and Sacraments. Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 140** Imprecatory psalm; see p 879. David was the target of the plots and slanders of "evil men" throughout his life. King Saul tried to kill him (1Sm 19). David's own son Absalom usurped his throne (2Sm 15). Shimei cursed him (2Sm 16:5–13). Sheba persuaded his subjects to reject his kingship (2Sm 20).

Format: V v 1–3, violent men; v v 4–5, guard and preserve; v v 6–8, the Lord saves; v v 9–11, prayer against the violent men; v v 12–13, the Lord's care.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 140:1 *evil men*. "Enemies" referred to in the Psalms often signify our spiritual enemies, namely, Satan and his devils. But here, they are clearly evil "men." Believers can expect opposition, slander, and even physical assault from other people in this sinful world (Jn 15:20).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 140:3 *tongue sharp*. Words of evil people sting. *venom of asps*. Their words are poisonous.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 140:5 Evil, arrogant people lay traps, such as the nets and snares designed to catch animals.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 140:7 *O LORD, my Lord*. Expression of true personal faith. *covered my head*. Metaphor is of a helmet, protecting one from a deadly blow. See "helmet of salvation" (Is 59:17; Eph 6:17).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 140:9 *head*. God protects the psalmist's head (v 7), but the head of his enemies will be subject to God's judgment.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 140:10 *into fire, into miry pits*. Judgment is expressed in terms of both fire and water, perils that cannot be escaped. Raining fire from the heavens and being swallowed up by the earth are common images of judgment in Scripture (Gn 19:24; Ex 9:23; 15:12; Nu 16:28–32).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 140:12–13 Expresses assurance that God indeed has intervened, both for Himself and for those in need.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 140:13 *dwell in Your presence*. See p 843; cf Jn 14:2–3.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 140** God's judgment is harsh against those who use their words to harm others—through lies, gossip, slander, or other "poisonous" speech—as well as those who harm others through violence or subtle traps. God is on the side of the poor, the weak, and the oppressed. Those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake are blessed with the kingdom of heaven (Mt 5:10–11). They are bearing the cross, in that Jesus too—the Son of David prefigured in this psalm—endured the vicious words and violent actions of "evil men" (v 1; Mt 26:57–68; 27:32–44). In Christ, we receive our vindication, our forgiveness, and assurance. • O Lord, protect us from "evil men." Protect us, too, from being evil ourselves—forgive us for hurting other people through our words or deeds. We turn to Christ, who was despised and afflicted, for our refuge and healing. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 141** May reflect the time when David, driven out of Jerusalem by his son Absalom, could not worship on Mount Zion, where sacrifices were held. Yet, he associates his prayers with the evening service, with its incense and sacrifices (v 2).

Format: V v 1–2, O Lord, listen; v v 3–4, guard me from wickedness; v v 5–7, contrast between the righteous and the wicked; v v 8–10, God, the refuge.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 141:2 *as incense*. Clouds of fragrant incense rise to the heavens, signifying prayers pleasing to God. *lifting up of my hands*. A posture of prayer. See p 1276. *evening sacrifice!* Incense was mixed with the grain that was burned as part of the final sacrifice of the day (Lv 2:1–11). The external details of worship are related to personal prayers of the worshiper.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 141:3–4 *mouth … heart*. The mouth reveals what is in the heart (cf Mt 15:18–19; Rm 10:8–10; Ps 19:14; 49:3).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 141:3 Asks God to prevent bad speech from coming out of his mouth, like a guard regulating who passes through a door.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 141:4 *men who work iniquity*. Psalmist prays for delivery from the temptations that come from keeping company with people engaged in sin. *delicacies!* Sensual pleasures that sin can offer.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 141:5 *righteous man*. See p 843. Better to be chastised by a good person than praised by a bad one. *strike me*. Even severe admonitions from a fellow believer should be welcomed because they help keep us from sin. *oil for my head*. The rebuke is soothing, healing, an anointing that contributes to sanctification. See note, 133:2.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 141:6 When authorities who govern evil people are overthrown—casting off a cliff being an ancient means of execution, sometimes called "stoning" (cf Ac 4:29)—they will appreciate what the psalmist is saying.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 141:7 In physical death, our bones are scattered above the realm of the dead. But our death and burial are like plowing a field in preparation for the new life to rise from the earth (1Co 15:42–44). *Sheol*. See p 792.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 141:9–10 *snares … nets*. May evildoers fall into their own traps, while the righteous escape from them.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 141** Sinners will fall into the traps they have made for themselves and will ultimately be cast down. God, through the

Office of the Ministry and other authorities, rebukes us for our sins. These are all to bring us to repentance. The "evening sacrifice" (v 2) of Christ's final atonement for sin makes our prayers acceptable before God. In Him, we will "pass by" (v 10) the snares and punishments of the wicked, and He will be our refuge. • O Lord, keep me from sinning! Guard my mouth, lest I say something I should not. Keep me away from people who would lead me into sin. Make me open to correction and utterly dependent on Your grace in Christ. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 142** When David was pursued by King Saul, he hid in a cave, both in Adullam (1Sm 22:1–2) and at Engedi (1Sm 24). A sense of imprisonment, of being buried, of being in the depths—both literally and emotionally—provoked fervent and honest prayer. Since his persecutors were too strong for him, David could only depend on God, who indeed did deliver and exalt him.

Format: V v 1–2, David's cry to the Lord; v v 3–4, there is no refuge; v v 5–7, the Lord is the refuge.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 142:2 *complaint … trouble*. David is praying out loud, giving voice to his inward distress, pouring out his emotions before God.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 142:3 *spirit faints*. David is utterly exhausted, worn down to his lowest point. *they*. His persecutors.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 142:5 *my portion*. See p 7. Here, the earthly inheritance is spiritualized to encompass "the land of the living"—i.e., life itself—in which God is our true inheritance.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 142:6 *persecutors*. David's enemies—such as Saul and his forces, from whom he is hiding in the cave—have the upper hand; he cannot save himself with his own strength.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 142:7 *prison*. Most likely the cave to which David has fled. Some think this could apply to an actual prison, where David is confined unjustly. Or, by extension, it could be a symbol of inescapable trouble. *righteous*. David is not completely alone, as it had seemed. Rather, he is part of a community of faith who await his deliverance. *bountifully*. See note, 119:17.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 142** David prays to the Lord, pouring out his complaints and troubles. God restores him to the fellowship of faith. We often find ourselves in a "prison" of our own making. Our sins isolate us from others. We are shut out of the community of the righteous. These

words of David are even more true of David's Son, Jesus Christ. He, more than anyone, was persecuted, deserted, imprisoned, and tormented. At His burial, He was imprisoned in a cave. But His Father raised Him from the dead to live in the company of those made righteous through His blood. • Heavenly Father, when I have no one to turn to, help me realize that I can turn to You. Be my defender, my refuge, my portion in Christ. Bring me out of my prison and into the company of Your Church, now on earth and in eternity. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 143** Original context of this penitential psalm (cf Ps 6; 32; 38; 51; 102; 130) is thought to be David's desolation after being driven from his throne by his son Absalom. The last of the seven penitential psalms, it has historically been used in the Church during Lent. See Ps 130 intro. Luth: "Every psalm, all Scripture, calls to grace, extols grace, searches for Christ, and praises only God's work, while rejecting all the works of man…. The life of a saint is more a taking from God than a giving; more a desiring than a having; more a becoming pious than a being pious…. Not on account of the work I do, but on account of the faith Thou givest me" (AE 14:196).

Format: V v 1–2, call for the Lord's righteous answer; v v 3–4, crushed by the enemy; v v 5–6, meditation on God's works; v v 7–8, call for the Lord to answer quickly; v v 9–10, asking for the Lord to lead; v v 11–12, the Lord's servant.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 143:1 *faithfulness … righteousness!* Not our faithfulness and righteousness, observes Luther, but God's, which He bestows on us (AE 14:196). See pp 842, 843.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 143:2 *no one living is righteous before You*. The accused usually protest their innocence and ask for justice, but here the psalmist admits that he cannot stand before God's judgment. "This passage denies absolutely—even to all saints and servants of God—the glory of righteousness, if God does not forgive, but judges and convicts their hearts" (Ap V 205).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 143:3 *enemy*. Psalmist's persecutor, and so, by extension, the enemy of the "soul," namely, Satan.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 143:4 *spirit faints*. Psalmist is at such a low point, his inmost life is fading.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 143:5 *days of old*. Psalmist remembers the past, when it was evident that God was with him, including God's great

redemptive acts in the history of His people.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 143:6 *stretch out my hands*. Gesture of prayer turns into a reaching, a sign of thirst and longing. See p 1277.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 143:7 *spirit fails!* Luth: "The disconsolate soul which finds nothing in itself is God's most cherished sacrifice, especially when it cries for His grace" (AE 14:200). *Hide*. Someone who is hiding is present but not seen. The psalmist pleads with God not to hide His face in anger against his sin. See note, Is 45:15. *the pit*. Pointing to condemnation in Sheol. See p 792.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 143:8 *steadfast love*. See p 843. Luth: "Thus God speaks peace to the hearts of His people, and He does this 'early,' that is, speedily" (AE 14:201). *lift up my soul*. Luth: "A man can say to his God: 'Behold, take my heart, and lead me according to Thy will. I surrender myself wholly to Thee'" (AE 14:202).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 143:9 *enemies*. Now plural; cf v 3. Luth: "The enemies of the righteous are trying only to mislead them and clutch them to themselves, into their way of life" (AE 14:22).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 143:10 *lead me*. Chem: "[The Spirit] directs and governs our course, so that we do not stumble or go astray … just as a horseman guides his horse" (*LTh* 1:246). *level ground!* Easy, pleasant way.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 143:11 *For Your name's sake*. That God's name be honored, as opposed to "the self-righteous [who] honor their own names" (Luth, AE 14:203). See p 842.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 143:12 *steadfast love*. See p 843.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 143** The psalmist pleads for God's mercy, admitting that neither he nor anyone else can stand before God's judgment. He trusts in God's righteousness and in His name, not his own. This penitential psalm is a profound description of a repentant heart, which receives God's grace. The psalmist, giving up on himself, trusts in God's "steadfast love" (v 8). • O Lord, I confess that I am sinful and unclean. By Your steadfast love, take away from me every shred of pride and self-righteousness. Trusting in Your grace, I come before You not in my own righteousness, but clothed in Jesus' righteousness. Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 144** Joyful song of victory by King David—who mentions his own name in v 10—after defeating enemies in battle.

Format: V v 1–2, the Lord as trainer for war; v v 3–4, the people are like a breath; v v 5–8, call for the Lord to come down; v v 9–11,

song for victory; v v 12–15, blessings.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 144:1 *Blessed*. See p 842. *my rock*. See p 843. *for war*. God is the source of the abilities we exercise in our various callings. God has achieved the victory by means of the warrior-king.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 144:3–4 Despite his victory, the king feels his insignificance, marveling at God's gracious regard for a mere human being, whose life is short and insubstantial. Cf Heb 2:6–8, which ties "the son of man" to Christ. Bern: "Because he has a foretaste of Your love he does not blush to make return of love. Now in Your brightness it becomes clear, Oh! Light … [the psalmist] loves not undeservedly, because he was loved without deserving it; and his love is for everlasting, because he knows that he has been loved from everlasting" (*SLSB*, p 155).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 144:5 *Bow Your heavens*. The king prays for a theophany (see p 39), that God would descend to the earth and appear in His holiness; he asks for an event, as at Sinai (Ex 19:16–18), that would be accompanied by terrifying storms and volcano-like eruptions.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 144:6 *lightning … arrows*. This poetry, with parallelism and figurative language, speaks of the bolts of lightning as God's arrows.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 144:7 *foreigners*. Hostile nations that surround Israel and with which the king is at war.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 144:8 *right hand of falsehood*. As a parallel to "lies," these words picture those who raise their hand in an oath, but swear falsely.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 144:9 *new song*. See p 843. *ten-stringed harp*. David was a skilled harpist (1Sm 16:23). See p 993.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 144:11 *foreigners … right hand of falsehood*. Repetition of v v 7–8, emphasizing the need for God's intervention.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 144:12 Prayer that their children may reach their full stature and potential, as the chief blessing of prosperity for God's people.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 144:13 *thousands … ten thousands*. Poetic for the idea of multiplying without number.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 144:15 People with material prosperity are blessed, but even more blessed are those who know God, the source of every blessing. See "blessed," p 842.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 144** We are indeed like a breath, a shadow, before God. In our sins—such as our propensity for lying and swearing falsely, as mentioned here—we are God's enemies. And yet, God shows us His favor, despite our insignificance, particularly through the Son of Man, the Son of David, Jesus Christ. The Church has historically seen this psalm as foreshadowing Christ, our true King. • Blessed are You, Lord Christ, our King! You have come down to us, not in Your glory, but as one of us. You have won the victory over sin, the devil, and death itself. May we share Your victory and its blessings as we cling to You in faith. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 145** *A Song of Praise*. Lit, a word translated "psalm." This is the only poem so labeled, though the entire collection goes by that name. It is a poetic acrostic, each line beginning with one of the letters in the Hbr alphabet (though one letter, *nun*, is mysteriously left out). Cf 9; 10; 25; 34; 37; 111; 112; 119; 146. As a psalm of David, we have a king paying homage to his King, whose dominion goes beyond Israel, to "all flesh" (v 21) and to the universe itself. This "Mission Psalm" describes the calling of God's people to proclaim His Word.

Format: V v 1–3, the Lord is great; v v 4–7, declare His works; v v 8–9, the Lord is good to all; v v 10–13a, the glory of God's kingdom; v v 13b–20, the Lord's works; v 21, speaking about the Lord.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 145:1 *King*. It is one thing to believe God exists, but another to acknowledge Him as your King, to acknowledge His authority over you. *bless Your name*. See p 843. *forever and ever*. Psalmist's praise will never cease, but will continue both now and into eternity. This is an OT example of belief in eternal life.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 145:3 *unsearchable*. We can never plumb the depths of God's greatness; it is inexhaustible, beyond our comprehension. (Cf Rm 11:33–35.)

PSALMS—NOTE ON 145:4 What God has done is to be told by parents to their children, passed down from one generation to another. "We saw how the declaration of the pure Christian doctrine we sent could be fortified and strengthened by the testimonies of Holy Scripture against corruptions and perversions. Then, in time, godless doctrines would not be concealed under its name. Instead, a completely unvarnished declaration of the pure truth might be passed on to future generations" (*Concordia,* Preface 13).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 145:5 *meditate*. See p 842.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 145:8 Profound statement of God's grace, found throughout the OT; cf Ex 34:6; Nu 14:18; Ne 9:17; Ps 86:15; 103:8. See notes, Ex 34:6–7.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 145:10 *works shall give thanks*. Everything God made is a witness to His love. *saints*. See p 843.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 145:11–12 God's people tell others of His glory and His redeeming acts, spreading His kingdom throughout the world. Chem: "Although the heathen can see the works of God, the creation and the sustaining of the universe, yet they fail to recognize the true God, because they neglect the Word" (*LTh* 1:55).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 145:13–20 Celebrates what the King does for His subjects.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 145:13 *kingdom … dominion*. God is the King (v 1), and His kingdom is universal, extending to all of His creation, through all generations and into eternity. See pp 1565–66.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 145:15 *eyes of all*. Metaphor recalls hungry pets or farm animals looking up to their master to be fed. Chem: "Even brutes and creatures which act by natural instinct or some other form of reasoning perceive or in some way acknowledge His preservation and sustenance" (*LTh* 1:169). *due season*. God provides food at the proper time; i.e., as His creatures need it. See Luther's Daily Prayers (SC, p xli–xlii).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 145:16 *open Your hand*. God provides for and sustains His creation. The image is of a person feeding doves. This King providentially cares for and sustains each of His creatures, from the amoeba to the angels.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 145:17 *righteous*. See p 843.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 145:18 *near*. God will draw close to those who pray to Him "in truth," i.e., in sincerity, honesty, and fidelity to His Word.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 145:19–20 *those who fear Him … all who love Him*. Both phrases refer to the same people, who trust in the Lord.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 145:20 *but all the wicked He will destroy*. God's justice manifests itself in His destruction of evildoers.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 145:21 *all flesh … forever*. Psalmist wants everyone to praise God for eternity.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 145** God is our King, and all generations and all the earth must hear about Him. He abounds in mercy, which extends to

all His works. The Lord will draw near to those who fear Him (who have been broken by the Law). He drew near to us in Christ, our King. His Word resounds from generation to generation, bringing the kingdom of God to all the world and to us. • O Christ, our King, Your righteousness is unsearchable. Though I should be counted among the wicked, You have redeemed me. Proclaim this good news to all the world through me. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 146** First of five hallelujah psalms (hallelujah means "praise the LORD!") that conclude the Psalter. Also known as the final Hallel. An acrostic poem, each line begins with the next letter in the Hbr alphabet. See pp 777–78. LXX notations associate this psalm with the postexilic prophets Haggai and Zechariah.

Format: V v 1–2, lifelong praise; v v 3–4, unreliable princes; v v 5–7a, God's blessings; v v 7b–9, the Lord's deeds; v 10, the Lord reigns forever.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 146:2 *while I have my being*. Psalmist's continued life will be a constant praising.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 146:3 *son of man*. See p 2098.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 146:4 When descendants of Adam no longer breathe, they die; their bodies are buried and decay into dust (cf Gn 3:19).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 146:5 *Blessed*. See p 842.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 146:6 *keeps faith*. God keeps His promises.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 146:7 *executes justice*. As in a courtroom. *prisoners*. God gives a verdict of acquittal.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **146:7b–9** List of the disadvantaged, whom the Lord protects. Cf Lk 4:17–21; Is 61:1–2.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 146:8 *bowed down*. Weighed down by burdens of life.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 146:9 *sojourners*. Resident aliens, usually treated with scorn. See note, 94:6. "Since [the poor man] can complain to no one else, he will cry and call to heaven (Psalm 20:6; 146:8–9). Then beware (I say again) as of the devil himself. For such groaning and calling will be no joke. It will have a weight that will prove too heavy for you and all the world. For it will reach Him who takes care of the poor, sorrowful hearts" (LC I 247).

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 146** Do not put your faith in human beings—in politicians, social elites, or individuals, none of whom can save and all of whom will die. Rather, put your trust in God. Your Lord is Christ, the Son

of Man in whom there is salvation, who on earth fed the hungry, healed the blind, and ministered to everyone in need. You were buried with Him in Baptism so you can share His new life and claim all of these promises. • O Lord, help us not to put our trust in people, but in You alone. Forgive us for mistreating others and for looking down on people different from ourselves. Thank You for keeping all of Your promises through Christ. Amen.

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 147** Second of five hallelujah psalms (see Ps 146 intro). Jerusalem had been destroyed and God's people sent into exile in Babylon. But, as recorded in Ezr and Ne, God brought His people back to the land He had promised them. Jerusalem and its walls were rebuilt, and the temple reestablished. This psalm was perhaps composed to celebrate this restoration. LXX notations associate this psalm with the postexilic prophets Haggai and Zechariah.

Format: V v 1–6, praise the Lord for His great works; v v 7–11, sing the wonders of His creation; v v 12–20, praise the Lord for His love for His people.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 147:2 *outcasts*. God's people have been exiles, but now He has restored Jerusalem and brought them back (cf Ezr 1–3).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 147:3 *brokenhearted*. God heals His people's pain, both physical and emotional.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 147:4 *their names*. God alone knows the stars' true nature. Naming something involves knowledge and assertion of authority over it, the right of lordship.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 147:7 *lyre!* When Jerusalem was rededicated, musicians of the Levites played David's musical instruments (Ne 12:36). See p 993.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 147:9–11 See Luther's Daily Prayers (SC, pp xli–xlii).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 147:13 *bars*. Newly built gates of Jerusalem, which could be closed and bolted for the security of the city.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 147:15 *word runs swiftly*. Bern: "His Word … which burdened and weighed down the hands of Moses himself, when lightened by Grace, and placed upon the wheels of the Gospel, ran swiftly over the whole earth" (*SLSB*, pp 63–64). Luth: "Everything that God wills happens quickly, instantly…. 'His Word,' not 'our technique,' makes and accomplishes all things" (AE 14:124, 125).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 147:18 God's creative Word controls nature (see note, v 15).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 147:19 *word … statutes … rules*. See p 971.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 147:20 God chose the nation of Israel and revealed to them His Word. Cf Rm 9:4–5. Luth: "Let it happen that others are rich and we poor, they powerful and we weak, they happy and we sad, they admired and we despised, they alive and we dead, they everything and we nothing—what of it? … You have God's Word; they don't!" (AE 14:134).
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 147** God has built Jerusalem and brought the exiles home. His Word that governs nature has been given to the children of Israel in Scripture. The Lord has forgiven those whom He had punished, gathered them from exile, and restored the Holy City. We need not depend on our strength, but we can "hope in His steadfast love" (v 11). The same Word that called the universe into existence and still governs its every detail is manifest in the Holy Scriptures and proclaimed in the Church for our salvation. • O Lord, You have made the crystals of ice, and You have made the stars. And yet, You show Your love for us. You have forgiven our sins and gathered us to Yourself. Above all of Your other blessings, You have given us Your Word. And that Word became flesh and dwelt among us. In His name we come before You. Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 148** Third of five hallelujah psalms (see Ps 146 intro). LXX notations associate this psalm with the postexilic prophets Haggai and Zechariah. Moving from the heavens to the earth, it catalogs the whole range of the created order, from angels to children, from stars to snowflakes. The praise of creation culminates with praise for God's own redeemed people.

Format: V v 1–2, angelic praise; v v 3–4, heavenly praise; v v 5–6, God's creative power; v v 7–8, God created the sea and sky; v v 9–10, He created earth and life; v v 11–12, kings and commoners praise Him; v v 13–14, Israel belongs to Him.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 148:1 *heights!* Heights of heaven. Lit, "the heaven of heavens."
PSALMS—NOTE ON 148:2 *hosts!* Lit, "army." See p 1291.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 148:3–4 Asking inanimate objects to "praise" God, even though they have no voice or consciousness, uses the poetic device of apostrophe, or addressing a personified object rhetorically. And yet, the created order does testify to God's glory (cf Rm 8:21).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 148:4 *waters above the heavens!* Celestial waters beyond the sky (see note, Gn 1:7).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 148:5 *He commanded and they were created*. God created the universe by means of His Word. Chem: "The matter or material from which creation took place did not exist from eternity, but all things were created out of nothing, that is, since there was nothing which was in existence, when God spoke, then things began to exist" (*LTh* 1:157).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 148:6 God establishes each entity as it is. Laws of nature are set by God's Word, and His creatures cannot change them.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 148:7 *great sea creatures*. Whales, giant squid, and other huge denizens of the ocean. See note, Jb 7:12.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 148:8 *stormy wind fulfilling His word!* Chem: "Such things as snow, hail, and tempests … fulfill His Word" (*LTh* 1:186).
PSALMS—NOTE ON 148:14 *horn*. See p 842. Indicates not only a king, but points to Christ (Lk 1:69). *saints*. See p 843. *near*. God's people are close to His presence.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 148** Our insensibility to God's goodness and glory is a sign of how far we have fallen. In all of His manifold creation, God has "raised up a horn for His people" (v 14). This is a prophecy of Christ, as evident in the words of Zechariah, John the Baptist's father (Lk 1:68–69). Through Christ, God has gathered together His own people into the Church, declaring them to be His saints and dwelling near them with His very presence in Word and Sacrament. • O Lord, may the nebulas of outer space and each atom that You have crafted praise You! May everything living praise You, from archangels to microorganisms! May men and women, old and young, from every nation and culture praise You! O Christ, come quickly, and bring all things to their fulfillment. Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 149** Fourth of five hallelujah psalms (see Ps 146 intro). Describes a festival procession to the Temple Mount, apparently in celebration of a victory. Date uncertain.

Format: V v 1–4, praising the Lord for His care; v v 5–9, victory for the godly.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 149:1 *new song*. See p 843. *assembly*. See "great congregation," p 842. Mel: "There is no greater or better work of man than to have true knowledge of God, to pray to Him, and to proclaim Him" (*LTh* 1:49). "Our churches teach that one holy Church is to remain forever. The Church is the congregation of saints" (AC VII I).

PSALMS—NOTE ON 149:2 *Zion*. See p 844. *King*. On Zion, God is the King.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 149:3 *dancing*. Though there are no indications of dancing in temple worship, it was employed in festival processions. People would go up to Mount Zion dancing, as David did when he brought the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem (2Sm 6:14–15; see p 959). *tambourine … lyre!* Musical instruments also used in festive processions. See p 993.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 149:5 *on their beds*. Not only in festive worship with others, but alone—as they are about to go to sleep—God's people should rejoice in Him.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 149:6–9 In Luther's time, Thomas Münzer used these verses to ignite the Peasants' War, urging the peasants to rise up and kill their masters to bring in God's kingdom. A few generations later, Caspar Scloppius used the same text in the Thirty Years' War to urge Roman Catholics to overthrow the Lutheran princes. But the Church must remember that "the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh" (2Co 10:4). The sword Christians wield is God's Word (Eph 6:17; Heb 4:12). Lutherans traditionally have interpreted the two edges of God's Word-sword as the Law and the Gospel. See note, Lk 3:14.
PSALMS—NOTE ON 149:9 *judgment written!* God used the children of Israel to execute His judgment on the Canaanites (Nu 33:50–56). In the last days, the Church will play some role in judging the earth (1Co 6:2–3). Today, God's Word takes captive even the mighty of this world. *honor*. All Christians have the glory of being soldiers of the cross (2Tm 2:3).
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 149** Joyous praise of God is interrupted with invocations for God's "vengeance" and "punishments" (v 7). And yet, despite God's judgment, He "adorns the humble with salvation" (v 4). Salvation is a gift, a kind of clothing, and the pleasure the Lord takes in His people is not on account of their works. They rejoice in their King, who was bound and suffered the punishment due to the nations. We have fellowship with Him in the Church. • O Christ, our King, we praise You in the Church! When we worship and when we are alone, we adore You. Give us courage to engage in spiritual warfare—against the world, our flesh, and the devil—with the two-edged sword of Your Word, and grant us the victory. Amen.
PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 150** Final hallelujah psalm (see Ps 146 intro). Sacred music played an important role in ancient worship. This seems to describe a festival procession.

Format: V v 1–2, earth and heaven join in praise; v v 3–6, all musicians join in praise.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 150:1 *sanctuary … heavens!* Earthly and heavenly places of worship and God's dwelling are mentioned together.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 150:3–5 Instruments listed here are given English names for ancient equivalents. Most have been identified through archaeological research. They probably did not have modern tuning capabilities that would allow them to accompany singing, so they surely would sound like a "joyful noise" (98:4–6). See p 993.

PSALMS—NOTE ON 150:6 *has breath*. Not just the children of Israel but everyone living should praise the Lord. Musical instruments also, in creating soundwaves in the air, can be said to have "breath."

PSALMS—NOTE ON **Ps 150** A tenfold "hallelujah!" in the heavens and in the place of worship, with every musical instrument; everything that breathes should praise the Lord because of His mighty deeds and His "excellent greatness"! Of the many reasons to praise God, for us the most joyous are "His mighty deeds" (v 2) by which He has redeemed us in Christ and brought us to faith. • O Lord, may the praises in the Psalms, the praises in the Church, and the praises in heaven equip me to join in praising You! Amen.

Proverbs

Proverbs 1 | Proverbs 2 | Proverbs 3 | Proverbs 4 | Proverbs 5 | Proverbs 6 | Proverbs 7 | Proverbs 8 | Proverbs 9 | Proverbs 10 | Proverbs 11 | Proverbs 12 | Proverbs 13 | Proverbs 14 | Proverbs 15 | Proverbs 16 | Proverbs 17 | Proverbs 18 | Proverbs 19 | Proverbs 20 | Proverbs 21 | Proverbs 22 | Proverbs 23 | Proverbs 24 | Proverbs 25 | Proverbs 26 | Proverbs 27 | Proverbs 28 | Proverbs 29 | Proverbs 30 | Proverbs 31

- Introduction to Proverbs
  - Overview
  - Reading Proverbs
  - Central Theme
  - Luther on Proverbs
  - Types of Proverbs
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

The Beginning of Knowledge

1 [1] The proverbs of Solomon, son of David, king of Israel:

[2] To know wisdom and instruction,
to understand words of insight,
[3] to receive instruction in wise dealing,
in righteousness, justice, and equity;
[4] to give prudence to the simple,
knowledge and discretion to the
youth—
[5] Let the wise hear and increase in learning,
and the one who understands obtain
guidance,
[6] to understand a proverb and a saying,
the words of the wise and their riddles.

[7] The fear of the Lord is the beginning of
knowledge;
fools despise wisdom and instruction.

The Enticement of Sinners

8 Hear, my son, your father's instruction,
and forsake not your mother's teaching,
9 for they are a graceful garland for your head
and pendants for your neck.
10 My son, if sinners entice you,
do not consent.
11 If they say, "Come with us, let us lie in wait
for blood;
let us ambush the innocent without reason;
12 like Sheol let us swallow them alive,
and whole, like those who go down to
the pit;
13 we shall find all precious goods,
we shall fill our houses with plunder;
14 throw in your lot among us;
we will all have one purse"—
15 my son, do not walk in the way with them;
hold back your foot from their paths,
16 for their feet run to evil,
and they make haste to shed blood.
17 For in vain is a net spread
in the sight of any bird,
18 but these men lie in wait for their own blood;
they set an ambush for their own lives.
19 Such are the ways of everyone who is greedy
for unjust gain;
it takes away the life of its possessors.

The Call of Wisdom

20 Wisdom cries aloud in the street,
in the markets she raises her voice;
21 at the head of the noisy streets she cries out;
at the entrance of the city gates she speaks:
22 "How long, O simple ones, will you love
being simple?
How long will scoffers delight in their
scoffing
and fools hate knowledge?
23 If you turn at my reproof,[1]
behold, I will pour out my spirit to you;
I will make my words known to you.
24 Because I have called and you refused to
listen,
have stretched out my hand and no one
has heeded,
25 because you have ignored all my counsel
and would have none of my reproof,
26 I also will laugh at your calamity;
I will mock when terror strikes you,
27 when terror strikes you like a storm
and your calamity comes like a whirlwind,
when distress and anguish come upon you.
28 Then they will call upon me, but I will
not answer;
they will seek me diligently but will
not find me.
29 Because they hated knowledge
and did not choose the fear of the LORD,
30 would have none of my counsel
and despised all my reproof,
31 therefore they shall eat the fruit of their

way,
and have their fill of their own devices.
32 For the simple are killed by their turning away,
and the complacency of fools destroys
them;
33 but whoever listens to me will dwell secure
and will be at ease, without dread of
disaster.”

The Value of Wisdom

2 [1] † My son, if you receive my words and treasure up my
commandments with you,

[2] making your ear attentive to wisdom
and inclining your heart to understanding;
[3] yes, if you call out for insight
and raise your voice for understanding,
[4]† if you seek it like silver
and search for it as for hidden treasures,
[5]† then you will understand the fear of
the Lord
and find the knowledge of God.
[6]† For the Lord gives wisdom;
from his mouth come knowledge and
understanding;
[7]† he stores up sound wisdom for the upright;
he is a shield to those who walk in
integrity,
[8]† guarding the paths of justice
and watching over the way of his saints.
[9]† Then you will understand righteousness and
justice
and equity, every good path;
[10]† for wisdom will come into your heart,
and knowledge will be pleasant to
your soul;
[11]† discretion will watch over you,
understanding will guard you,
[12]† delivering you from the way of evil,
from men of perverted speech,
[13] who forsake the paths of uprightness
to walk in the ways of darkness,

14 who rejoice in doing evil
and delight in the perverseness of evil,
15 men whose paths are crooked,
and who are devious in their ways.

16 So you will be delivered from the forbidden[1]
woman,
from the adulteress[2] with her smooth
words,
17 who forsakes the companion of her youth
and forgets the covenant of her God;
18 for her house sinks down to death,
and her paths to the departed;[3]
19 none who go to her come back,
nor do they regain the paths of life.

20 So you will walk in the way of the good
and keep to the paths of the righteous.
21 For the upright will inhabit the land,
and those with integrity will remain in it,
22 but the wicked will be cut off from
the land,
and the treacherous will be rooted
out of it.

Trust in the Lord with All Your Heart

3 [1]‡‡‡My son, do not forget my teaching, but let your heart keep my commandments,

[2]† for length of days and years of life
and peace they will add to you.

[3]† Let not steadfast love and faithfulness
forsake you;
bind them around your neck;
write them on the tablet of your heart.
[4]† So you will find favor and good success[1]
in the sight of God and man.

[5]† Trust in the Lord with all your heart,
and do not lean on your own
understanding.
[6]† In all your ways acknowledge him,
and he will make straight your paths.
[7]† Be not wise in your own eyes;
fear the Lord, and turn away from evil.
[8]† It will be healing to your flesh[2]
and refreshment[3] to your bones.

[9]‡‡ Honor the Lord with your wealth
and with the firstfruits of all your produce;
[10]† then your barns will be filled with plenty,
and your vats will be bursting with wine.

[11] My son, do not despise the Lord's discipline
or be weary of his reproof,
[12] for the Lord reproves him whom he loves,
as a father the son in whom he delights.

Blessed Is the One Who Finds Wisdom

13 Blessed is the one who finds wisdom,
and the one who gets understanding,
14 for the gain from her is better than gain from silver
and her profit better than gold.
15 She is more precious than jewels,
and nothing you desire can compare with her.
16 Long life is in her right hand;
in her left hand are riches and honor.
17 Her ways are ways of pleasantness,
and all her paths are peace.
18 She is a tree of life to those who lay hold of her;
those who hold her fast are called blessed.

19 The Lord by wisdom founded the earth;
by understanding he established the heavens;
20 by his knowledge the deeps broke open,
and the clouds drop down the dew.

21 My son, do not lose sight of these—
keep sound wisdom and discretion,
22 and they will be life for your soul
and adornment for your neck.
23 Then you will walk on your way securely,
and your foot will not stumble.
24 If you lie down, you will not be afraid;
when you lie down, your sleep will be sweet.
25 Do not be afraid of sudden terror
or of the ruin[1] of the wicked, when it comes,

26 for the Lord will be your confidence
and will keep your foot from being caught.
27 Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due,[2]
when it is in your power to do it.

28 Do not say to your neighbor, “Go, and come again,
tomorrow I will give it”—when you have it with you.
29 Do not plan evil against your neighbor,
who dwells trustingly beside you.
30 Do not contend with a man for no reason,
when he has done you no harm.
31 Do not envy a man of violence
and do not choose any of his ways,
32 for the devious person is an abomination to the Lord,
but the upright are in his confidence.
33 The Lord’s curse is on the house of the wicked,
but he blesses the dwelling of the righteous.
34 Toward the scorners he is scornful,
but to the humble he gives favor.[3]
35 The wise will inherit honor,
but fools get[4] disgrace.

A Father’s Wise Instruction

4 [1] Hear, O sons, a father’s instruction, and be attentive, that you
may gain[5] insight,

[2] for I give you good precepts;
do not forsake my teaching.
[3] When I was a son with my father,
tender, the only one in the sight of my
mother,
[4] he taught me and said to me,
“Let your heart hold fast my words;
keep my commandments, and live.
[5] Get wisdom; get insight;
do not forget, and do not turn away from
the words of my mouth.
[6] Do not forsake her, and she will keep you;
love her, and she will guard you.
[7] The beginning of wisdom is this: Get wisdom,
and whatever you get, get insight.
[8] Prize her highly, and she will exalt you;
she will honor you if you embrace her.
[9] She will place on your head a graceful garland;
she will bestow on you a beautiful crown.”

[10] Hear, my son, and accept my words,
that the years of your life may be many.
[11] I have taught you the way of wisdom;
I have led you in the paths of uprightness.
[12] When you walk, your step will not be
hampered,
and if you run, you will not stumble.
[13] Keep hold of instruction; do not let go;

guard her, for she is your life.
14 Do not enter the path of the wicked,
and do not walk in the way of the evil.
15 Avoid it; do not go on it;
turn away from it and pass on.
16 For they cannot sleep unless they have done
wrong;
they are robbed of sleep unless they have
made someone stumble.
17 For they eat the bread of wickedness
and drink the wine of violence.
18 But the path of the righteous is like the light
of dawn,
which shines brighter and brighter
until full day.
19 The way of the wicked is like deep darkness;
they do not know over what they stumble.

20 My son, be attentive to my words;
incline your ear to my sayings.
21 Let them not escape from your sight;
keep them within your heart.
22 For they are life to those who find them,
and healing to all their[1] flesh.
23 Keep your heart with all vigilance,
for from it flow the springs of life.
24 Put away from you crooked speech,
and put devious talk far from you.
25 Let your eyes look directly forward,
and your gaze be straight before you.
26 Ponder[1] the path of your feet;
then all your ways will be sure.
27 Do not swerve to the right or to the left;
turn your foot away from evil.

Warning Against Adultery

5 [1]My son, be attentive to my wisdom; incline your ear to my understanding,

[2]† that you may keep discretion,
and your lips may guard knowledge.
[3]† For the lips of a forbidden[2] woman drip honey,
and her speech[3] is smoother than oil,
[4]† but in the end she is bitter as wormwood,
sharp as a two-edged sword.
[5]† Her feet go down to death;
her steps follow the path to[4] Sheol;
[6]† she does not ponder the path of life;
her ways wander, and she does not know it.

[7]† And now, O sons, listen to me,
and do not depart from the words of my mouth.
[8]† Keep your way far from her,
and do not go near the door of her house,
[9]† lest you give your honor to others
and your years to the merciless,
[10]† lest strangers take their fill of your strength,
and your labors go to the house of a foreigner,
[11]† and at the end of your life you groan,
when your flesh and body are consumed,
[12] and you say, “How I hated discipline,
and my heart despised reproof!
[13]† I did not listen to the voice of my teachers
or incline my ear to my instructors.

14 I am at the brink of utter ruin
in the assembled congregation.”

15 Drink water from your own cistern,
flowing water from your own well.
16 Should your springs be scattered abroad,
streams of water in the streets?
17 Let them be for yourself alone,
and not for strangers with you.
18 Let your fountain be blessed,
and rejoice in the wife of your youth,
19 a lovely deer, a graceful doe.
Let her breasts fill you at all times with
delight;
be intoxicated[1] always in her love.
20 Why should you be intoxicated, my son,
with a forbidden woman
and embrace the bosom of an
adulteress?[2]
21 For a man’s ways are before the eyes of the
Lord,
and he ponders[3] all his paths.
22 The iniquities of the wicked ensnare
him,
and he is held fast in the cords of his sin.
23 He dies for lack of discipline,
and because of his great folly he is led
astray.

Practical Warnings

6 [1]My son, if you have put up security for your neighbor, have
given your pledge for a stranger,

[2] if you are snared in the words of your mouth,
caught in the words of your mouth,
[3] then do this, my son, and save yourself,
for you have come into the hand of your
neighbor:
go, hasten,[4] and plead urgently with your
neighbor.
[4] Give your eyes no sleep
and your eyelids no slumber;
[5] save yourself like a gazelle from the hand of
the hunter,[5]
like a bird from the hand of the fowler.

[6] Go to the ant, O sluggard;
consider her ways, and be wise.
[7] Without having any chief,
officer, or ruler,
[8] she prepares her bread in summer
and gathers her food in harvest.
[9] How long will you lie there, O sluggard?
When will you arise from your sleep?
[10] A little sleep, a little slumber,
a little folding of the hands to rest,
[11] and poverty will come upon you like a robber,
and want like an armed man.

12 A worthless person, a wicked man,
goes about with crooked speech,
13 winks with his eyes, signals[1] with his feet,
points with his finger,
14 with perverted heart devises evil,
continually sowing discord;
15 therefore calamity will come upon him
suddenly;
in a moment he will be broken beyond
healing.

16 There are six things that the Lord hates,
seven that are an abomination to him:
17 haughty eyes, a lying tongue,
and hands that shed innocent blood,
18 a heart that devises wicked plans,
feet that make haste to run to evil,
19 a false witness who breathes out lies,
and one who sows discord among brothers.

Warnings Against Adultery

20 My son, keep your father's commandment,
and forsake not your mother's teaching.
21 Bind them on your heart always;
tie them around your neck.
22 When you walk, they[2] will lead you;
when you lie down, they will watch over you;
and when you awake, they will talk with you.
23 For the commandment is a lamp and the teaching a light,
and the reproofs of discipline are the way of life,
24 to preserve you from the evil woman,[3]
from the smooth tongue of the adulteress.[4]
25 Do not desire her beauty in your heart,
and do not let her capture you with her eyelashes;
26 for the price of a prostitute is only a loaf of bread,[1]
but a married woman[2] hunts down a precious life.
27 Can a man carry fire next to his chest
and his clothes not be burned?
28 Or can one walk on hot coals
and his feet not be scorched?
29 So is he who goes in to his neighbor's wife;
none who touches her will go unpunished.
30 People do not despise a thief if he steals
to satisfy his appetite when he is hungry,
31 but if he is caught, he will pay sevenfold;
he will give all the goods of his house.

32 He who commits adultery lacks sense;
he who does it destroys himself.
33 He will get wounds and dishonor,
and his disgrace will not be wiped away.
34 For jealousy makes a man furious,
and he will not spare when he takes
revenge.
35 He will accept no compensation;
he will refuse though you multiply gifts.

Warning Against the Adulteress

7 [1]†My son, keep my words and treasure up my commandments with you;

[2]† keep my commandments and live;
keep my teaching as the apple of your eye;
[3] bind them on your fingers;
write them on the tablet of your heart.
[4]† Say to wisdom, “You are my sister,”
and call insight your intimate friend,
[5] to keep you from the forbidden[3] woman,
from the adulteress[4] with her smooth words.

[6]† For at the window of my house
I have looked out through my lattice,
[7]† and I have seen among the simple,
I have perceived among the youths,
a young man lacking sense,
[8]† passing along the street near her corner,
taking the road to her house
[9]† in the twilight, in the evening,
at the time of night and darkness.

[10] And behold, the woman meets him,
dressed as a prostitute, wily of heart.[5]
[11]† She is loud and wayward;
her feet do not stay at home;
[12] now in the street, now in the market,
and at every corner she lies in wait.
[13]† She seizes him and kisses him,
and with bold face she says to him,

14 “I had to offer sacrifices,[1]
and today I have paid my vows;
15 so now I have come out to meet you,
to seek you eagerly, and I have found you.
16 I have spread my couch with coverings,
colored linens from Egyptian linen;
17 I have perfumed my bed with myrrh,
aloes, and cinnamon.
18 Come, let us take our fill of love till morning;
let us delight ourselves with love.
19 For my husband is not at home;
he has gone on a long journey;
20 he took a bag of money with him;
at full moon he will come home.”

21 With much seductive speech she persuades
him;
with her smooth talk she compels him.
22 All at once he follows her,
as an ox goes to the slaughter,
or as a stag is caught fast[2]
23 till an arrow pierces its liver;
as a bird rushes into a snare;
he does not know that it will cost him his life.

24 And now, O sons, listen to me,
and be attentive to the words of my
mouth.
25 Let not your heart turn aside to her ways;
do not stray into her paths,
26 for many a victim has she laid low,
and all her slain are a mighty throng.
27 Her house is the way to Sheol,
going down to the chambers of death.

The Blessings of Wisdom

8 [1]†Does not wisdom call? Does not understanding raise her voice?

[2]† On the heights beside the way,
at the crossroads she takes her stand;
[3] beside the gates in front of the town,
at the entrance of the portals she cries
aloud:
[4]† "To you, O men, I call,
and my cry is to the children of man.
[5]† O simple ones, learn prudence;
O fools, learn sense.
[6]† Hear, for I will speak noble things,
and from my lips will come what is right,
[7]† for my mouth will utter truth;
wickedness is an abomination to my lips.
[8] All the words of my mouth are righteous;
there is nothing twisted or crooked in
them.
[9]† They are all straight to him who
understands,
and right to those who find knowledge.
[10]† Take my instruction instead of silver,
and knowledge rather than choice gold,
[11] for wisdom is better than jewels,
and all that you may desire cannot compare
with her.

[12]† "I, wisdom, dwell with prudence,
and I find knowledge and discretion.
[13]† The fear of the Lord is hatred of evil.
Pride and arrogance and the way of evil

and perverted speech I hate.
14 I have counsel and sound wisdom;
I have insight; I have strength.
15 By me kings reign,
and rulers decree what is just;
16 by me princes rule,
and nobles, all who govern justly.[1]
17 I love those who love me,
and those who seek me diligently find me.
18 Riches and honor are with me,
enduring wealth and righteousness.
19 My fruit is better than gold, even fine gold,
and my yield than choice silver.
20 I walk in the way of righteousness,
in the paths of justice,
21 granting an inheritance to those who love me,
and filling their treasuries.

22 "The LORD possessed[2] me at the beginning of his
work,[3]
the first of his acts of old.
23 Ages ago I was set up,
at the first, before the beginning of the earth.
24 When there were no depths I was brought
forth,
when there were no springs abounding with water.
25 Before the mountains had been shaped,
before the hills, I was brought forth,
26 before he had made the earth with its fields,
or the first of the dust of the world.
27 When he established the heavens, I was there;
when he drew a circle on the face of the
deep,
28 when he made firm the skies above,

when he established[1] the fountains of the
deep,
29 when he assigned to the sea its limit,
so that the waters might not transgress his
command,
when he marked out the foundations of the
earth,
30 then I was beside him, like a master
workman,
and I was daily his[2] delight,
rejoicing before him always,
31 rejoicing in his inhabited world
and delighting in the children of man.

32 "And now, O sons, listen to me:
blessed are those who keep my ways.
33 Hear instruction and be wise,
and do not neglect it.
34 Blessed is the one who listens to me,
watching daily at my gates,
waiting beside my doors.
35 For whoever finds me finds life
and obtains favor from the LORD,
36 but he who fails to find me injures himself;
all who hate me love death."

The Way of Wisdom

9 [1]†††Wisdom has built her house; she has hewn her seven pillars.

[2]† She has slaughtered her beasts; she
has mixed her wine;
she has also set her table.
[3]† She has sent out her young women to call
from the highest places in the town,
[4]† "Whoever is simple, let him turn in here!"
To him who lacks sense she says,
[5]† "Come, eat of my bread
and drink of the wine I have mixed.
[6]† Leave your simple ways,[1] and live,
and walk in the way of insight."

[7]†† Whoever corrects a scoffer gets himself abuse,
and he who reproves a wicked man incurs
injury.
[8]† Do not reprove a scoffer, or he will hate you;
reprove a wise man, and he will love you.
[9]† Give instruction[2] to a wise man, and he will
be still wiser;
teach a righteous man, and he will increase
in learning.
[10]† The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom,
and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight.
[11]† For by me your days will be multiplied,
and years will be added to your life.
[12]† If you are wise, you are wise for yourself;
if you scoff, you alone will bear it.

The Way of Folly

13 The woman Folly is loud;
she is seductive[3] and knows nothing.
14 She sits at the door of her house;
she takes a seat on the highest places of the town,
15 calling to those who pass by,
who are going straight on their way,
16 “Whoever is simple, let him turn in here!”
And to him who lacks sense she says,
17 “Stolen water is sweet,
and bread eaten in secret is pleasant.”
18 But he does not know that the dead[4] are there,
that her guests are in the depths of Sheol.

The Proverbs of Solomon

10 [1]†††††The proverbs of Solomon. A wise son makes a glad father,
but a foolish son is a sorrow to his mother.

[2]† Treasures gained by wickedness do not profit,
but righteousness delivers from death.
[3]† The Lord does not let the righteous go hungry,
but he thwarts the craving of the wicked.
[4] A slack hand causes poverty,
but the hand of the diligent makes rich.
[5] He who gathers in summer is a prudent son,
but he who sleeps in harvest is a son who
brings shame.
[6]††† Blessings are on the head of the righteous,
but the mouth of the wicked conceals
violence.
[7]† The memory of the righteous is a blessing,
but the name of the wicked will rot.
[8] The wise of heart will receive
commandments,
but a babbling fool will come to ruin.
[9] Whoever walks in integrity walks securely,
but he who makes his ways crooked will be
found out.
[10]† Whoever winks the eye causes trouble,
but a babbling fool will come to ruin.
[11]† The mouth of the righteous is a fountain of life,
but the mouth of the wicked conceals violence.
[12]† Hatred stirs up strife,
but love covers all offenses.
[13]† On the lips of him who has understanding,
wisdom is found,
but a rod is for the back of him who lacks

sense.
14 The wise lay up knowledge,
but the mouth of a fool brings ruin near.
15 A rich man's wealth is his strong city;
the poverty of the poor is their ruin.
16† The wage of the righteous leads to
life,
the gain of the wicked to sin.
17 Whoever heeds instruction is on the path to life,
but he who rejects reproof leads others astray.
18† The one who conceals hatred has lying lips,
and whoever utters slander is a fool.
19 When words are many, transgression is not
lacking,
but whoever restrains his lips is prudent.
20† The tongue of the righteous is choice silver;
the heart of the wicked is of little worth.
21 The lips of the righteous feed many,
but fools die for lack of sense.
22† The blessing of the LORD makes rich,
and he adds no sorrow with it.[1]
23 Doing wrong is like a joke to a fool,
but wisdom is pleasure to a man of
understanding.
24††† What the wicked dreads will come upon
him,
but the desire of the righteous will be
granted.
25† When the tempest passes, the wicked is no
more,
but the righteous is established forever.
26† Like vinegar to the teeth and smoke to the
eyes,
so is the sluggard to those who send him.
27† The fear of the LORD prolongs life,

but the years of the wicked will be short.
28 † The hope of the righteous brings joy,
but the expectation of the wicked will
perish.
29 † The way of the Lord is a stronghold to the
blameless,
but destruction to evildoers.
30 The righteous will never be removed,
but the wicked will not dwell in the land.
31 † The mouth of the righteous brings forth
wisdom,
but the perverse tongue will be cut off.
32 The lips of the righteous know what is
acceptable,
but the mouth of the wicked, what is perverse.

11 1 ††A false balance is an abomination to the Lord, but a just weight
is his delight.

2 † When pride comes, then comes disgrace,
but with the humble is wisdom.
3 † The integrity of the upright guides them,
but the crookedness of the treacherous
destroys them.
4 † Riches do not profit in the day of wrath,
but righteousness delivers from death.
5 The righteousness of the blameless keeps his
way straight,
but the wicked falls by his own wickedness.
6 † The righteousness of the upright delivers
them,
but the treacherous are taken captive by
their lust.
7 † When the wicked dies, his hope will perish,
and the expectation of wealth[1] perishes

too.
8 The righteous is delivered from trouble,
and the wicked walks into it instead.
9† With his mouth the godless man would
destroy his neighbor,
but by knowledge the righteous are
delivered.
10† When it goes well with the righteous, the city
rejoices,
and when the wicked perish there are
shouts of gladness.
11† By the blessing of the upright a city is
exalted,
but by the mouth of the wicked it is
overthrown.
12† Whoever belittles his neighbor lacks sense,
but a man of understanding remains silent.
13† Whoever goes about slandering reveals
secrets,
but he who is trustworthy in spirit keeps a
thing covered.
14 Where there is no guidance, a people falls,
but in an abundance of counselors there is
safety.
15† Whoever puts up security for a stranger will
surely suffer harm,
but he who hates striking hands in pledge is
secure.
16† A gracious woman gets honor,
and violent men get riches.
17 A man who is kind benefits himself,
but a cruel man hurts himself.
18 The wicked earns deceptive wages,
but one who sows righteousness gets a sure
reward.
19† Whoever is steadfast in righteousness will

live,
but he who pursues evil will die.
20† Those of crooked heart are an abomination
to the LORD,
but those of blameless ways are his delight.
21 Be assured, an evil person will not go
unpunished,
but the offspring of the righteous will be delivered.
22† Like a gold ring in a pig's snout
is a beautiful woman without discretion.
23† The desire of the righteous ends only in good;
the expectation of the wicked in wrath.
24† One gives freely, yet grows all the richer;
another withholds what he should give, and
only suffers want.
25† Whoever brings blessing will be enriched,
and one who waters will himself be watered.
26† The people curse him who holds back grain,
but a blessing is on the head of him
who sells it.
27 Whoever diligently seeks good seeks favor,[1]
but evil comes to him who searches for it.
28 Whoever trusts in his riches will fall,
but the righteous will flourish like a green
leaf.
29 Whoever troubles his own household will
inherit the wind,
and the fool will be servant to the wise of
heart.
30† The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life,
and whoever captures souls is wise.
31† If the righteous is repaid on earth,
how much more the wicked and the sinner!

12 [1] † Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge, but he who hates
reproof is stupid.

[2] A good man obtains favor from the LORD,
but a man of evil devices he condemns.
[3] † No one is established by wickedness,
but the root of the righteous will never be
moved.
[4] † An excellent wife is the crown of her
husband,
but she who brings shame is like rottenness in his bones.
[5] The thoughts of the righteous are just;
the counsels of the wicked are deceitful.
[6] † The words of the wicked lie in wait for
blood,
but the mouth of the upright delivers them.
[7] † The wicked are overthrown and are no
more,
but the house of the righteous will stand.
[8] A man is commended according to his good
sense,
but one of twisted mind is despised.
[9] † Better to be lowly and have a servant
than to play the great man and lack bread.
[10] † Whoever is righteous has regard for the life of
his beast,
but the mercy of the wicked is cruel.
[11] Whoever works his land will have plenty of
bread,
but he who follows worthless pursuits lacks sense.
[12] †† Whoever is wicked covets the spoil of
evildoers,
but the root of the righteous bears fruit.
[13] An evil man is ensnared by the transgression
of his lips,

but the righteous escapes from trouble.
14 From the fruit of his mouth a man is satisfied
with good,
and the work of a man's hand comes back
to him.
15 The way of a fool is right in his own eyes,
but a wise man listens to advice.
16† The vexation of a fool is known at once,
but the prudent ignores an insult.
17 Whoever speaks[1] the truth gives honest
evidence,
but a false witness utters deceit.
18† There is one whose rash words are like sword
thrusts,
but the tongue of the wise brings healing.
19 Truthful lips endure forever,
but a lying tongue is but for a moment.
20† Deceit is in the heart of those who devise
evil,
but those who plan peace have joy.
21† No ill befalls the righteous,
but the wicked are filled with trouble.
22† Lying lips are an abomination to the LORD,
but those who act faithfully are his
delight.
23† A prudent man conceals knowledge,
but the heart of fools proclaims folly.
24 The hand of the diligent will rule,
while the slothful will be put to forced labor.
25† Anxiety in a man's heart weighs him down,
but a good word makes him glad.
26 One who is righteous is a guide to his
neighbor,[1]
but the way of the wicked leads them astray.
27† Whoever is slothful will not roast his game,

but the diligent man will get precious
wealth.[2]
28 In the path of righteousness is life,
and in its pathway there is no death.

13 1 † A wise son hears his father's instruction, but a scoffer does not
listen to rebuke.

2 † From the fruit of his mouth a man eats what
is good,
but the desire of the treacherous is for
violence.
3 Whoever guards his mouth preserves his life;
he who opens wide his lips comes to ruin.
4 The soul of the sluggard craves and gets
nothing,
while the soul of the diligent is richly
supplied.
5 † The righteous hates falsehood,
but the wicked brings shame[3] and disgrace.
6 Righteousness guards him whose way is
blameless,
but sin overthrows the wicked.
7 † One pretends to be rich, yet has nothing;
another pretends to be poor, yet has great
wealth.
8 † The ransom of a man's life is his wealth,
but a poor man hears no threat.
9 † The light of the righteous rejoices,
but the lamp of the wicked will be put out.
10 By insolence comes nothing but strife,
but with those who take advice is wisdom.
11 Wealth gained hastily[4] will dwindle,
but whoever gathers little by little will
increase it.

12 † Hope deferred makes the heart sick,
but a desire fulfilled is a tree of life.
13 † Whoever despises the word brings
destruction on himself,
but he who reveres the commandment will
be rewarded.
14 † The teaching of the wise is a fountain of life,
that one may turn away from the snares of
death.
15 Good sense wins favor,
but the way of the treacherous is their ruin.[5]
16 † In everything the prudent acts with
knowledge,
but a fool flaunts his folly.
17 A wicked messenger falls into trouble,
but a faithful envoy brings healing.
18 † Poverty and disgrace come to him who
ignores instruction,
but whoever heeds reproof is honored.
19 A desire fulfilled is sweet to the soul,
but to turn away from evil is an abomination
to fools.
20 † Whoever walks with the wise becomes wise,
but the companion of fools will suffer harm.
21 † Disaster[1] pursues sinners,
but the righteous are rewarded with good.
22 A good man leaves an inheritance to his
children's children,
but the sinner's wealth is laid up for the
righteous.
23 † The fallow ground of the poor would yield
much food,
but it is swept away through injustice.
24 † Whoever spares the rod hates his son,
but he who loves him is diligent to discipline

him.[2]
25 The righteous has enough to satisfy his
appetite,
but the belly of the wicked suffers want.

14 1 †The wisest of women builds her house, but folly with her own
hands tears it down.

2† Whoever walks in uprightness fears the Lord,
but he who is devious in his ways despises
him.
3 By the mouth of a fool comes a rod for his
back,[3]
but the lips of the wise will preserve them.
4† Where there are no oxen, the manger is
clean,
but abundant crops come by the strength of
the ox.
5 A faithful witness does not lie,
but a false witness breathes out lies.
6† A scoffer seeks wisdom in vain,
but knowledge is easy for a man of
understanding.
7 Leave the presence of a fool,
for there you do not meet words of
knowledge.
8 The wisdom of the prudent is to discern his
way,
but the folly of fools is deceiving.
9† Fools mock at the guilt offering,
but the upright enjoy acceptance.[4]
10† The heart knows its own bitterness,
and no stranger shares its joy.
11 The house of the wicked will be
destroyed,

but the tent of the upright will flourish.
12 There is a way that seems right to a man,
but its end is the way to death.[5]
13 Even in laughter the heart may ache,
and the end of joy may be grief.
14 The backslider in heart will be filled with the
fruit of his ways,
and a good man will be filled with the fruit
of his ways.
15 The simple believes everything,
but the prudent gives thought to his steps.
16 One who is wise is cautious[1] and turns away
from evil,
but a fool is reckless and careless.
17 A man of quick temper acts foolishly,
and a man of evil devices is hated.
18 The simple inherit folly,
but the prudent are crowned with
knowledge.
19 The evil bow down before the good,
the wicked at the gates of the righteous.
20 The poor is disliked even by his neighbor,
but the rich has many friends.
21 Whoever despises his neighbor is a sinner,
but blessed is he who is generous to the
poor.
22 Do they not go astray who devise evil?
Those who devise good meet[2] steadfast
love and faithfulness.
23 In all toil there is profit,
but mere talk tends only to poverty.
24 The crown of the wise is their wealth,
but the folly of fools brings folly.
25 A truthful witness saves lives,
but one who breathes out lies is deceitful.

26 † In the fear of the Lord one has strong
confidence,
and his children will have a refuge.
27 † The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life,
that one may turn away from the snares of
death.
28 In a multitude of people is the glory of a
king,
but without people a prince is ruined.
29 Whoever is slow to anger has great
understanding,
but he who has a hasty temper exalts folly.
30 † A tranquil[3] heart gives life to the flesh,
but envy[4] makes the bones rot.
31 † Whoever oppresses a poor man insults
his Maker,
but he who is generous to the needy honors him.
32 † The wicked is overthrown through his
evildoing,
but the righteous finds refuge in his death.
33 † Wisdom rests in the heart of a man of
understanding,
but it makes itself known even in the midst
of fools.[5]
34 † Righteousness exalts a nation,
but sin is a reproach to any people.
35 A servant who deals wisely has the king's
favor,
but his wrath falls on one who acts
shamefully.

15 [1]† A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.

[2] The tongue of the wise commends knowledge,
but the mouths of fools pour out folly.
[3]† The eyes of the Lord are in every place,
keeping watch on the evil and the good.
[4]† A gentle[6] tongue is a tree of life,
but perverseness in it breaks the spirit.
[5] A fool despises his father's instruction,
but whoever heeds reproof is prudent.
[6]† In the house of the righteous there is much
treasure,
but trouble befalls the income of the wicked.
[7] The lips of the wise spread knowledge;
not so the hearts of fools.[1]
[8]† The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination
to the Lord,
but the prayer of the upright is acceptable to him.
[9] The way of the wicked is an abomination to
the Lord,
but he loves him who pursues righteousness.
[10]† There is severe discipline for him who
forsakes the way;
whoever hates reproof will die.
[11]† Sheol and Abaddon lie open before the Lord;
how much more the hearts of the children
of man!
[12] A scoffer does not like to be reproved;
he will not go to the wise.
[13] A glad heart makes a cheerful face,
but by sorrow of heart the spirit is crushed.
[14] The heart of him who has understanding
seeks knowledge,
but the mouths of fools feed on folly.
[15]† All the days of the afflicted are evil,

but the cheerful of heart has a continual
feast.
16 † Better is a little with the fear of the Lord
than great treasure and trouble with it.
17 † Better is a dinner of herbs where love is
than a fattened ox and hatred with it.
18 A hot-tempered man stirs up strife,
but he who is slow to anger quiets
contention.
19 † The way of a sluggard is like a hedge
of thorns,
but the path of the upright is a level highway.
20 † A wise son makes a glad father,
but a foolish man despises his mother.
21 † Folly is a joy to him who lacks sense,
but a man of understanding walks straight
ahead.
22 Without counsel plans fail,
but with many advisers they succeed.
23 To make an apt answer is a joy to a man,
and a word in season, how good it is!
24 † The path of life leads upward for the prudent,
that he may turn away from Sheol beneath.
25 † The Lord tears down the house of the proud
but maintains the widow's boundaries.
26 † The thoughts of the wicked are an
abomination to the Lord,
but gracious words are pure.
27 Whoever is greedy for unjust gain troubles
his own household,
but he who hates bribes will live.
28 The heart of the righteous ponders how to
answer,
but the mouth of the wicked pours out evil
things.

29 † The Lord is far from the wicked,
but he hears the prayer of the righteous.
30 † The light of the eyes rejoices the heart,
and good news refreshes[1] the bones.
31 The ear that listens to life-giving reproof
will dwell among the wise.
32 Whoever ignores instruction despises
himself,
but he who listens to reproof gains
intelligence.
33 † The fear of the Lord is instruction in wisdom,
and humility comes before honor.

16 1 † † The plans of the heart belong to man, but the answer of the tongue is from the Lord.

2 † All the ways of a man are pure in his own eyes,
but the Lord weighs the spirit.
3 † Commit your work to the Lord,
and your plans will be established.
4 † The Lord has made everything for its
purpose,
even the wicked for the day of trouble.
5 † Everyone who is arrogant in heart is an
abomination to the Lord;
be assured, he will not go unpunished.
6 † By steadfast love and faithfulness iniquity is
atoned for,
and by the fear of the Lord one turns away
from evil.
7 When a man's ways please the Lord,
he makes even his enemies to be at peace
with him.
8 Better is a little with righteousness
than great revenues with injustice.

9 The heart of man plans his way,
but the Lord establishes his steps.
10 An oracle is on the lips of a king;
his mouth does not sin in judgment.
11 A just balance and scales are the Lord's;
all the weights in the bag are his work.
12 It is an abomination to kings to do evil,
for the throne is established by righteousness.
13 Righteous lips are the delight of a king,
and he loves him who speaks what is right.
14 A king's wrath is a messenger of death,
and a wise man will appease it.
15 In the light of a king's face there is life,
and his favor is like the clouds that bring
the spring rain.
16 How much better to get wisdom than gold!
To get understanding is to be chosen rather
than silver.
17 The highway of the upright turns aside from
evil;
whoever guards his way preserves his life.
18 Pride goes before destruction,
and a haughty spirit before a fall.
19 It is better to be of a lowly spirit with the
poor
than to divide the spoil with the proud.
20 Whoever gives thought to the word[2] will
discover good,
and blessed is he who trusts in the Lord.
21 The wise of heart is called discerning,
and sweetness of speech increases
persuasiveness.
22 Good sense is a fountain of life to him who
has it,
but the instruction of fools is folly.

23 The heart of the wise makes his speech judicious
and adds persuasiveness to his lips.
24 Gracious words are like a honeycomb,
sweetness to the soul and health to the body.
25† There is a way that seems right to a man,
but its end is the way to death.[1]
26† A worker's appetite works for him;
his mouth urges him on.
27 A worthless man plots evil,
and his speech[2] is like a scorching fire.
28† A dishonest man spreads strife,
and a whisperer separates close friends.
29 A man of violence entices his neighbor
and leads him in a way that is not good.
30† Whoever winks his eyes plans[3] dishonest
things;
he who purses his lips brings evil to pass.
31† Gray hair is a crown of glory;
it is gained in a righteous life.
32† Whoever is slow to anger is better than the
mighty,
and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city.
33† The lot is cast into the lap,
but its every decision is from the Lord.

17 1 ††Better is a dry morsel with quiet than a house full of feasting[4]
with strife.

2† A servant who deals wisely will rule over a
son who acts shamefully
and will share the inheritance as one of the
brothers.
3† The crucible is for silver, and the furnace is for
gold,
and the Lord tests hearts.

4 An evildoer listens to wicked lips,
and a liar gives ear to a mischievous tongue.
5 Whoever mocks the poor insults his Maker;
he who is glad at calamity will not
go unpunished.
6† Grandchildren are the crown of the aged,
and the glory of children is their fathers.
7†† Fine speech is not becoming to a fool;
still less is false speech to a prince.
8† A bribe is like a magic stone in the eyes of the
one who gives it;
wherever he turns he prospers.
9 Whoever covers an offense seeks love,
but he who repeats a matter separates close
friends.
10 A rebuke goes deeper into a man of
understanding
than a hundred blows into a fool.
11 An evil man seeks only rebellion,
and a cruel messenger will be sent against
him.
12† Let a man meet a she-bear robbed of her cubs
rather than a fool in his folly.
13 If anyone returns evil for good,
evil will not depart from his house.
14† The beginning of strife is like letting out water,
so quit before the quarrel breaks out.
15† He who justifies the wicked and he
who condemns the righteous
are both alike an abomination to the LORD.
16† Why should a fool have money in his hand to
buy wisdom
when he has no sense?
17† A friend loves at all times,
and a brother is born for adversity.

18 † One who lacks sense gives a pledge
and puts up security in the presence of his neighbor.
19 † Whoever loves transgression loves strife;
he who makes his door high seeks destruction.
20 A man of crooked heart does not discover good,
and one with a dishonest tongue falls into calamity.
21 † He who sires a fool gets himself sorrow,
and the father of a fool has no joy.
22 † A joyful heart is good medicine,
but a crushed spirit dries up the bones.
23 † The wicked accepts a bribe in secret[1]
to pervert the ways of justice.
24 † The discerning sets his face toward wisdom,
but the eyes of a fool are on the ends of the earth.
25 †† A foolish son is a grief to his father
and bitterness to her who bore him.
26 To impose a fine on a righteous man is not good,
nor to strike the noble for their uprightness.
27 † Whoever restrains his words has knowledge,
and he who has a cool spirit is a man of understanding.
28 Even a fool who keeps silent is considered wise;
when he closes his lips, he is deemed intelligent.

18 1 † Whoever isolates himself seeks his own desire; he breaks out against all sound judgment.

2 A fool takes no pleasure in understanding,
but only in expressing his opinion.
3 When wickedness comes, contempt comes
also,
and with dishonor comes disgrace.
4 The words of a man's mouth are deep
waters;
the fountain of wisdom is a bubbling brook.
5 It is not good to be partial to[1] the wicked
or to deprive the righteous of justice.
6 A fool's lips walk into a fight,
and his mouth invites a beating.
7 A fool's mouth is his ruin,
and his lips are a snare to his soul.
8 The words of a whisperer are like delicious
morsels;
they go down into the inner parts of the
body.
9 Whoever is slack in his work
is a brother to him who destroys.
10 The name of the Lord is a strong tower;
the righteous man runs into it and is safe.
11 A rich man's wealth is his strong city,
and like a high wall in his imagination.
12 Before destruction a man's heart is haughty,
but humility comes before honor.
13 If one gives an answer before he hears,
it is his folly and shame.
14 A man's spirit will endure sickness,
but a crushed spirit who can bear?
15 An intelligent heart acquires knowledge,
and the ear of the wise seeks knowledge.
16 A man's gift makes room for him
and brings him before the great.
17 The one who states his case first seems right,

until the other comes and examines him.
18† The lot puts an end to quarrels
and decides between powerful
contenders.
19† A brother offended is more unyielding than a
strong city,
and quarreling is like the bars of a castle.
20† From the fruit of a man's mouth his stomach
is satisfied;
he is satisfied by the yield of his lips.
21 Death and life are in the power of
the tongue,
and those who love it will eat its fruits.
22† He who finds a wife finds a good thing
and obtains favor from the Lord.
23† The poor use entreaties,
but the rich answer roughly.
24† A man of many companions may come to
ruin,
but there is a friend who sticks closer than
a brother.

19 1†Better is a poor person who walks in his integrity than one who
is crooked in speech and is a fool.

2 Desire[1] without knowledge is not good,
and whoever makes haste with his feet
misses his way.
3† When a man's folly brings his way to ruin,
his heart rages against the Lord.
4† Wealth brings many new friends,
but a poor man is deserted by his friend.
5 A false witness will not go unpunished,
and he who breathes out lies will not
escape.

6† Many seek the favor of a generous man,[2]
and everyone is a friend to a man who
gives gifts.
7† All a poor man's brothers hate him;
how much more do his friends go far from
him!
He pursues them with words, but does not have them.[3]
8† Whoever gets sense loves his own soul;
he who keeps understanding will discover
good.
9 A false witness will not go unpunished,
and he who breathes out lies will perish.
10† It is not fitting for a fool to live in luxury,
much less for a slave to rule over princes.
11 Good sense makes one slow to anger,
and it is his glory to overlook an offense.
12† A king's wrath is like the growling of a lion,
but his favor is like dew on the grass.
13†††† A foolish son is ruin to his father,
and a wife's quarreling is a continual
dripping of rain.
14† House and wealth are inherited from fathers,
but a prudent wife is from the Lord.
15 Slothfulness casts into a deep sleep,
and an idle person will suffer hunger.
16 Whoever keeps the commandment keeps his
life;
he who despises his ways will die.
17† Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the
Lord,
and he will repay him for his deed.
18† Discipline your son, for there is hope;
do not set your heart on putting him to
death.
19† A man of great wrath will pay the

penalty,
for if you deliver him, you will only have to
do it again.
20 Listen to advice and accept instruction,
that you may gain wisdom in the future.
21 Many are the plans in the mind of a man,
but it is the purpose of the LORD that will
stand.
22† What is desired in a man is steadfast love,
and a poor man is better than a liar.
23† The fear of the LORD leads to life,
and whoever has it rests satisfied;
he will not be visited by harm.
24† The sluggard buries his hand in the dish
and will not even bring it back to his mouth.
25† Strike a scoffer, and the simple will learn
prudence;
reprove a man of understanding, and he will
gain knowledge.
26 He who does violence to his father and chases
away his mother
is a son who brings shame and reproach.
27 Cease to hear instruction, my son,
and you will stray from the words of
knowledge.
28 A worthless witness mocks at justice,
and the mouth of the wicked devours
iniquity.
29 Condemnation is ready for scoffers,
and beating for the backs of fools.

20 1 †Wine is a mocker, strong drink a brawler, and whoever is led astray by it is not wise.[1]

2 The terror of a king is like the growling of a
lion;
whoever provokes him to anger forfeits his
life.
3 It is an honor for a man to keep aloof from
strife,
but every fool will be quarreling.
4† The sluggard does not plow in the autumn;
he will seek at harvest and have nothing.
5† The purpose in a man's heart is like deep
water,
but a man of understanding will draw it out.
6† Many a man proclaims his own steadfast
love,
but a faithful man who can find?
7 The righteous who walks in his integrity—
blessed are his children after him!
8† A king who sits on the throne of judgment
winnows all evil with his eyes.
9† Who can say, "I have made my heart pure;
I am clean from my sin"?
10 Unequal[2] weights and unequal measures
are both alike an abomination to the LORD.
11† Even a child makes himself known by his acts,
by whether his conduct is pure and upright.[3]
12† The hearing ear and the seeing eye,
the LORD has made them both.
13 Love not sleep, lest you come to poverty;
open your eyes, and you will have plenty of
bread.
14† "Bad, bad," says the buyer,
but when he goes away, then he boasts.
15 There is gold and abundance of costly stones,
but the lips of knowledge are a precious
jewel.

16 † Take a man's garment when he has put up
security for a stranger,
and hold it in pledge when he puts up
security for foreigners.[4]
17 † Bread gained by deceit is sweet to a man,
but afterward his mouth will be full
of gravel.
18 † Plans are established by counsel;
by wise guidance wage war.
19 Whoever goes about slandering reveals
secrets;
therefore do not associate with a simple
babbler.[1]
20 If one curses his father or his mother,
his lamp will be put out in utter darkness.
21 † An inheritance gained hastily in the beginning
will not be blessed in the end.
22 † Do not say, "I will repay evil";
wait for the Lord, and he will deliver you.
23 Unequal weights are an abomination to the
Lord,
and false scales are not good.
24 † A man's steps are from the Lord;
how then can man understand his way?
25 † It is a snare to say rashly, "It is holy,"
and to reflect only after making vows.
26 † A wise king winnows the wicked
and drives the wheel over them.
27 † The spirit[2] of man is the lamp of the Lord,
searching all his innermost parts.
28 Steadfast love and faithfulness preserve the
king,
and by steadfast love his throne is upheld.
29 The glory of young men is their strength,
but the splendor of old men is their gray hair.

30† Blows that wound cleanse away evil;
strokes make clean the innermost parts.

21 1†† The king's heart is a stream of water in the hand of the Lord;
he turns it wherever he will.

2† Every way of a man is right in his own eyes,
but the Lord weighs the heart.
3† To do righteousness and justice
is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice.
4† Haughty eyes and a proud heart,
the lamp[3] of the wicked, are sin.
5 The plans of the diligent lead surely to
abundance,
but everyone who is hasty comes only to
poverty.
6 The getting of treasures by a lying tongue
is a fleeting vapor and a snare of death.[4]
7 The violence of the wicked will sweep them
away,
because they refuse to do what is just.
8 The way of the guilty is crooked,
but the conduct of the pure is upright.
9† It is better to live in a corner of the
housetop
than in a house shared with a quarrelsome
wife.
10 The soul of the wicked desires evil;
his neighbor finds no mercy in his eyes.
11 When a scoffer is punished, the simple
becomes wise;
when a wise man is instructed, he gains
knowledge.
12 The Righteous One observes the house of
the wicked;

he throws the wicked down to ruin.
13 Whoever closes his ear to the cry of the
poor
will himself call out and not be answered.
14† A gift in secret averts anger,
and a concealed bribe,[1] strong wrath.
15 When justice is done, it is a joy to the
righteous
but terror to evildoers.
16† One who wanders from the way of good
sense
will rest in the assembly of the dead.
17† Whoever loves pleasure will be a poor
man;
he who loves wine and oil will not be rich.
18† The wicked is a ransom for the righteous,
and the traitor for the upright.
19 It is better to live in a desert land
than with a quarrelsome and
fretful woman.
20† Precious treasure and oil are in a wise man's
dwelling,
but a foolish man devours it.
21 Whoever pursues righteousness and
kindness
will find life, righteousness, and honor.
22 A wise man scales the city of the mighty
and brings down the stronghold in which
they trust.
23 Whoever keeps his mouth and his tongue
keeps himself out of trouble.
24 "Scoffer" is the name of the arrogant,
haughty man
who acts with arrogant pride.
25† The desire of the sluggard kills him,

for his hands refuse to labor.
26 All day long he craves and craves,
but the righteous gives and does not hold back.
27† The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination;
how much more when he brings it with evil intent.
28 A false witness will perish,
but the word of a man who hears will endure.
29 A wicked man puts on a bold face,
but the upright gives thought to[2] his ways.
30 No wisdom, no understanding, no counsel
can avail against the Lord.
31† The horse is made ready for the day of battle,
but the victory belongs to the Lord.

22 1†A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches, and favor is better than silver or gold.

2† The rich and the poor meet together;
the Lord is the maker of them all.
3† The prudent sees danger and hides himself,
but the simple go on and suffer for it.
4† The reward for humility and fear of the Lord
is riches and honor and life.[1]
5† Thorns and snares are in the way of the crooked;
whoever guards his soul will keep far from them.
6† Train up a child in the way he should go;
even when he is old he will not depart

from it.

7 † The rich rules over the poor,
and the borrower is the slave of the lender.

8 † Whoever sows injustice will reap calamity,
and the rod of his fury will fail.

9 † Whoever has a bountiful[2] eye will be
blessed,
for he shares his bread with the poor.

10 † Drive out a scoffer, and strife will go out,
and quarreling and abuse will cease.

11 † He who loves purity of heart,
and whose speech is gracious, will have the
king as his friend.

12 † The eyes of the Lord keep watch over
knowledge,
but he overthrows the words of the traitor.

13 † The sluggard says, “There is a lion outside!
I shall be killed in the streets!”

14 † The mouth of forbidden[3] women is a deep pit;
he with whom the Lord is angry will fall
into it.

15 † Folly is bound up in the heart of a child,
but the rod of discipline drives it far from
him.

16 † Whoever oppresses the poor to increase his
own wealth,
or gives to the rich, will only come to
poverty.

Words of the Wise

17 Incline your ear, and hear the words of the
wise,
and apply your heart to my knowledge,
18 for it will be pleasant if you keep them within
you,
if all of them are ready on your lips.
19 That your trust may be in the Lord,
I have made them known to you today,
even to you.
20 Have I not written for you thirty sayings
of counsel and knowledge,
21 to make you know what is right and true,
that you may give a true answer to those who sent you?

22 Do not rob the poor, because he is poor,
or crush the afflicted at the gate,
23 for the Lord will plead their cause
and rob of life those who rob them.
24 Make no friendship with a man given to anger,
nor go with a wrathful man,
25 lest you learn his ways
and entangle yourself in a snare.
26 Be not one of those who give pledges,
who put up security for debts.
27 If you have nothing with which to pay,
why should your bed be taken from under
you?
28 Do not move the ancient landmark
that your fathers have set.
29 Do you see a man skillful in his work?
He will stand before kings;
he will not stand before obscure men.

23 [1]When you sit down to eat with a ruler, observe carefully what[1]
is before you,

[2] and put a knife to your throat
if you are given to appetite.
[3] Do not desire his delicacies,
for they are deceptive food.
[4] Do not toil to acquire wealth;
be discerning enough to desist.
[5] When your eyes light on it, it is gone,
for suddenly it sprouts wings,
flying like an eagle toward heaven.
[6] Do not eat the bread of a man who
is stingy;[1]
do not desire his delicacies,
[7] for he is like one who is inwardly
calculating.[2]
"Eat and drink!" he says to you,
but his heart is not with you.
[8] You will vomit up the morsels that you have
eaten,
and waste your pleasant words.
[9] Do not speak in the hearing of a fool,
for he will despise the good sense of your
words.
[10] Do not move an ancient landmark
or enter the fields of the fatherless,
[11] for their Redeemer is strong;
he will plead their cause against you.
[12] Apply your heart to instruction
and your ear to words of knowledge.
[13] Do not withhold discipline from a child;
if you strike him with a rod, he will not die.
[14] If you strike him with the rod,

you will save his soul from Sheol.
15 My son, if your heart is wise,
my heart too will be glad.
16 My inmost being[3] will exult
when your lips speak what is right.
17 Let not your heart envy sinners,
but continue in the fear of the Lord all the day.
18 Surely there is a future,
and your hope will not be cut off.

19 Hear, my son, and be wise,
and direct your heart in the way.
20 Be not among drunkards[4]
or among gluttonous eaters of meat,
21 for the drunkard and the glutton will come to poverty,
and slumber will clothe them with rags.

22 Listen to your father who gave you life,
and do not despise your mother when she is old.
23 Buy truth, and do not sell it;
buy wisdom, instruction, and understanding.
24 The father of the righteous will greatly rejoice;
he who fathers a wise son will be glad in him.
25 Let your father and mother be glad;
let her who bore you rejoice.

26 My son, give me your heart,
and let your eyes observe[1] my ways.
27 For a prostitute is a deep pit;
an adulteress[2] is a narrow well.
28 She lies in wait like a robber
and increases the traitors among
mankind.

29 Who has woe? Who has sorrow?
Who has strife? Who has complaining?

Who has wounds without cause?
Who has redness of eyes?
30 Those who tarry long over wine;
those who go to try mixed wine.
31 Do not look at wine when it is red,
when it sparkles in the cup
and goes down smoothly.
32 In the end it bites like a serpent
and stings like an adder.
33 Your eyes will see strange things,
and your heart utter perverse things.
34 You will be like one who lies down in the
midst of the sea,
like one who lies on the top of a mast.[3]
35 "They struck me," you will say,[4] "but I was
not hurt;
they beat me, but I did not feel it.
When shall I awake?
I must have another drink."

24 1 Be not envious of evil men, nor desire to be with them,

2 for their hearts devise violence,
and their lips talk of trouble.

3 By wisdom a house is built,
and by understanding it is established;
4 by knowledge the rooms are filled
with all precious and pleasant riches.
5 A wise man is full of strength,
and a man of knowledge enhances his
might,
6 for by wise guidance you can wage your war,
and in abundance of counselors there is
victory.
7 Wisdom is too high for a fool;
in the gate he does not open his mouth.

8 Whoever plans to do evil
will be called a schemer.
9 The devising[5] of folly is sin,
and the scoffer is an abomination to
mankind.

10 If you faint in the day of adversity,
your strength is small.
11 Rescue those who are being taken away to
death;
hold back those who are stumbling to the
slaughter.
12 If you say, “Behold, we did not know this,”
does not he who weighs the heart
perceive it?
Does not he who keeps watch over your soul know it,
and will he not repay man according to
his work?

13 My son, eat honey, for it is good,
and the drippings of the honeycomb are
sweet to your taste.
14 Know that wisdom is such to your soul;
if you find it, there will be a future,
and your hope will not be cut off.

15 Lie not in wait as a wicked man against the
dwelling of the righteous;
do no violence to his home;
16 for the righteous falls seven times and rises
again,
but the wicked stumble in times of
calamity.

17 Do not rejoice when your enemy falls,
and let not your heart be glad when he
stumbles,
18 lest the Lord see it and be displeased,
and turn away his anger from him.

19 Fret not yourself because of evildoers,
and be not envious of the wicked,
20 for the evil man has no future;
the lamp of the wicked will be put out.

21 My son, fear the Lord and the king,
and do not join with those who do
otherwise,
22 for disaster will arise suddenly from
them,

and who knows the ruin that will come
from them both?

More Sayings of the Wise

23 These also are sayings of the wise.
Partiality in judging is not good.

24 Whoever says to the wicked, “You are in the
right,”
will be cursed by peoples, abhorred by
nations,
25 but those who rebuke the wicked will have
delight,
and a good blessing will come upon them.
26 Whoever gives an honest answer
kisses the lips.

27 Prepare your work outside;
get everything ready for yourself in the field,
and after that build your house.

28 Be not a witness against your neighbor
without cause,
and do not deceive with your lips.
29 Do not say, “I will do to him as he has done
to me;
I will pay the man back for what he has done.”

30 I passed by the field of a sluggard,
by the vineyard of a man lacking sense,
31 and behold, it was all overgrown with thorns;
the ground was covered with nettles,
and its stone wall was broken down.
32 Then I saw and considered it;

I looked and received instruction.
33 A little sleep, a little slumber,
a little folding of the hands to rest,
34 and poverty will come upon you like a
robber,
and want like an armed man.

More Proverbs of Solomon

25 1 These also are proverbs of Solomon which the men of Hezekiah
king of Judah copied.

2 It is the glory of God to conceal things,
but the glory of kings is to search things
out.
3 As the heavens for height, and the earth for
depth,
so the heart of kings is unsearchable.
4 Take away the dross from the silver,
and the smith has material for a vessel;
5 take away the wicked from the presence of
the king,
and his throne will be established in
righteousness.
6 Do not put yourself forward in the king's
presence
or stand in the place of the great,
7 for it is better to be told, "Come up here,"
than to be put lower in the presence of a
noble.

What your eyes have seen
8 do not hastily bring into court,
for[1] what will you do in the end,
when your neighbor puts you to shame?
9 Argue your case with your neighbor himself,
and do not reveal another's secret,
10 lest he who hears you bring shame upon you,
and your ill repute have no end.

11 A word fitly spoken
is like apples of gold in a setting of silver.
12 Like a gold ring or an ornament of gold
is a wise reprover to a listening ear.
13 Like the cold of snow in the time of harvest
is a faithful messenger to those who send him;
he refreshes the soul of his masters.
14 Like clouds and wind without rain
is a man who boasts of a gift he does not give.

15 With patience a ruler may be persuaded,
and a soft tongue will break a bone.
16 If you have found honey, eat only enough for you,
lest you have your fill of it and vomit it.
17 Let your foot be seldom in your neighbor's house,
lest he have his fill of you and hate you.
18 A man who bears false witness against his neighbor
is like a war club, or a sword, or a sharp arrow.
19 Trusting in a treacherous man in time of trouble
is like a bad tooth or a foot that slips.
20 Whoever sings songs to a heavy heart
is like one who takes off a garment on a cold day,
and like vinegar on soda.
21 If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat,
and if he is thirsty, give him water to drink,
22 for you will heap burning coals on his head,
and the LORD will reward you.

23 The north wind brings forth rain,
and a backbiting tongue, angry looks.
24 It is better to live in a corner of the housetop
than in a house shared with a
quarrelsome wife.
25 Like cold water to a thirsty soul,
so is good news from a far country.
26 Like a muddied spring or a polluted fountain
is a righteous man who gives way before
the wicked.
27 It is not good to eat much honey,
nor is it glorious to seek one's own glory.[2]
28 A man without self-control
is like a city broken into and left without
walls.

26 1 Like snow in summer or rain in harvest, so honor is not fitting for
a fool.

2 Like a sparrow in its flitting, like a swallow
in its flying,
a curse that is causeless does not alight.
3 A whip for the horse, a bridle for the donkey,
and a rod for the back of fools.
4 Answer not a fool according to his folly,
lest you be like him yourself.
5 Answer a fool according to his folly,
lest he be wise in his own eyes.
6 Whoever sends a message by the hand of a fool
cuts off his own feet and drinks violence.
7 Like a lame man's legs, which hang useless,
is a proverb in the mouth of fools.
8 Like one who binds the stone in the sling
is one who gives honor to a fool.
9 Like a thorn that goes up into the hand of a

drunkard
is a proverb in the mouth of fools.
10 Like an archer who wounds everyone
is one who hires a passing fool or drunkard.[1]
11 Like a dog that returns to his vomit
is a fool who repeats his folly.
12 Do you see a man who is wise in his own
eyes?
There is more hope for a fool than for him.
13 The sluggard says, “There is a lion in the road!
There is a lion in the streets!”
14 As a door turns on its hinges,
so does a sluggard on his bed.
15 The sluggard buries his hand in the dish;
it wears him out to bring it back to his mouth.
16 The sluggard is wiser in his own eyes
than seven men who can answer sensibly.
17 Whoever meddles in a quarrel not his own
is like one who takes a passing dog by the
ears.
18 Like a madman who throws firebrands,
arrows, and death
19 is the man who deceives his neighbor
and says, “I am only joking!”
20 For lack of wood the fire goes out,
and where there is no whisperer,
quarreling ceases.
21 As charcoal to hot embers and wood to fire,
so is a quarrelsome man for kindling strife.
22 The words of a whisperer are like delicious
morsels;
they go down into the inner parts of the
body.
23 Like the glaze[2] covering an earthen vessel
are fervent lips with an evil heart.

24 Whoever hates disguises himself with his lips
and harbors deceit in his heart;
25† when he speaks graciously, believe him not,
for there are seven abominations in his
heart;
26† though his hatred be covered with deception,
his wickedness will be exposed in the
assembly.
27 Whoever digs a pit will fall into it,
and a stone will come back on him who
starts it rolling.
28 A lying tongue hates its victims,
and a flattering mouth works ruin.

27 1†Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day
may bring.

2† Let another praise you, and not your own
mouth;
a stranger, and not your own lips.
3 A stone is heavy, and sand is weighty,
but a fool's provocation is heavier than both.
4† Wrath is cruel, anger is overwhelming,
but who can stand before jealousy?
5†† Better is open rebuke
than hidden love.
6† Faithful are the wounds of a friend;
profuse are the kisses of an enemy.
7† One who is full loathes honey,
but to one who is hungry everything bitter
is sweet.
8† Like a bird that strays from its nest
is a man who strays from his home.
9† Oil and perfume make the heart glad,
and the sweetness of a friend comes from

his earnest counsel.[1]

10 Do not forsake your friend and your father's
friend,
and do not go to your brother's house in the
day of your calamity.
Better is a neighbor who is near
than a brother who is far away.

11 Be wise, my son, and make my heart glad,
that I may answer him who reproaches me.

12 The prudent sees danger and hides himself,
but the simple go on and suffer for it.

13 Take a man's garment when he has put up
security for a stranger,
and hold it in pledge when he puts up
security for an adulteress.[2]

14 Whoever blesses his neighbor with a loud
voice,
rising early in the morning,
will be counted as cursing.

15 A continual dripping on a rainy day
and a quarrelsome wife are alike;

16 to restrain her is to restrain the wind
or to grasp[3] oil in one's right hand.

17 Iron sharpens iron,
and one man sharpens another.[4]

18 Whoever tends a fig tree will eat its fruit,
and he who guards his master will be
honored.

19 As in water face reflects face,
so the heart of man reflects the man.

20 Sheol and Abaddon are never satisfied,
and never satisfied are the eyes of man.

21 The crucible is for silver, and the furnace is for
gold,
and a man is tested by his praise.

22 Crush a fool in a mortar with a pestle
along with crushed grain,
yet his folly will not depart from him.

23 Know well the condition of your flocks,
and give attention to your herds,
24 for riches do not last forever;
and does a crown endure to all generations?
25 When the grass is gone and the new growth
appears
and the vegetation of the mountains is
gathered,
26 the lambs will provide your clothing,
and the goats the price of a field.
27 There will be enough goats' milk for your
food,
for the food of your household
and maintenance for your girls.

28 1 The wicked flee when no one pursues, but the righteous are bold as a lion.

2 When a land transgresses, it has many rulers,
but with a man of understanding and
knowledge,
its stability will long continue.
3 A poor man who oppresses the poor
is a beating rain that leaves no food.
4 Those who forsake the law praise the
wicked,
but those who keep the law strive against
them.
5 Evil men do not understand justice,
but those who seek the LORD understand it
completely.

6 Better is a poor man who walks in his
integrity
than a rich man who is crooked in his
ways.
7 The one who keeps the law is a son with
understanding,
but a companion of gluttons shames his
father.
8† Whoever multiplies his wealth by interest
and profit[1]
gathers it for him who is generous to the poor.
9† If one turns away his ear from hearing the law,
even his prayer is an abomination.
10 Whoever misleads the upright into an evil
way
will fall into his own pit,
but the blameless will have a goodly
inheritance.
11† A rich man is wise in his own eyes,
but a poor man who has
understanding will find him out.
12 When the righteous triumph, there is great
glory,
but when the wicked rise, people hide
themselves.
13† Whoever conceals his transgressions will not
prosper,
but he who confesses and forsakes them
will obtain mercy.
14† Blessed is the one who fears the Lord always,
but whoever hardens his heart will fall into
calamity.
15 Like a roaring lion or a charging bear
is a wicked ruler over a poor people.
16† A ruler who lacks understanding is a
cruel oppressor,

but he who hates unjust gain will prolong
his days.
17 If one is burdened with the blood of another,
he will be a fugitive until death;[2]
let no one help him.
18 Whoever walks in integrity will be
delivered,
but he who is crooked in his ways will
suddenly fall.
19 Whoever works his land will have plenty of
bread,
but he who follows worthless pursuits will
have plenty of poverty.
20 A faithful man will abound with blessings,
but whoever hastens to be rich will not
go unpunished.
21 To show partiality is not good,
but for a piece of bread a man will do wrong.
22 A stingy man[1] hastens after wealth
and does not know that poverty will come
upon him.
23 Whoever rebukes a man will afterward find
more favor
than he who flatters with his tongue.
24 Whoever robs his father or his mother
and says, “That is no transgression,”
is a companion to a man who destroys.
25 A greedy man stirs up strife,
but the one who trusts in the Lord will be
enriched.
26 Whoever trusts in his own mind is a fool,
but he who walks in wisdom will be
delivered.
27 Whoever gives to the poor will not want,
but he who hides his eyes will get many a
curse.

28 † When the wicked rise, people hide
themselves,
but when they perish, the righteous increase.

29 1 †He who is often reproved, yet stiffens his neck, will suddenly be broken beyond healing.

2 When the righteous increase, the people
rejoice,
but when the wicked rule, the people groan.
3 He who loves wisdom makes his father glad,
but a companion of prostitutes squanders
his wealth.
4 † By justice a king builds up the land,
but he who exacts gifts[2] tears it down.
5 † A man who flatters his neighbor
spreads a net for his feet.
6 An evil man is ensnared in his transgression,
but a righteous man sings and rejoices.
7 A righteous man knows the rights of the poor;
a wicked man does not understand such
knowledge.
8 † Scoffers set a city aflame,
but the wise turn away wrath.
9 † If a wise man has an argument with a fool,
the fool only rages and laughs, and there
is no quiet.
10 Bloodthirsty men hate one who is blameless
and seek the life of the upright.[3]
11 † A fool gives full vent to his spirit,
but a wise man quietly holds it back.
12 If a ruler listens to falsehood,
all his officials will be wicked.
13 † The poor man and the oppressor meet
together;

the LORD gives light to the eyes of both.
14 If a king faithfully judges the poor,
his throne will be established forever.
15 The rod and reproof give wisdom,
but a child left to himself brings shame to
his mother.
16 When the wicked increase, transgression
increases,
but the righteous will look upon their
downfall.
17 Discipline your son, and he will give you rest;
he will give delight to your heart.
18 Where there is no prophetic vision the
people cast off restraint,[1]
but blessed is he who keeps the law.
19 By mere words a servant is not disciplined,
for though he understands, he will not
respond.
20 Do you see a man who is hasty in his words?
There is more hope for a fool than for him.
21 Whoever pampers his servant from childhood
will in the end find him his heir.[2]
22 A man of wrath stirs up strife,
and one given to anger causes much
transgression.
23 One's pride will bring him low,
but he who is lowly in spirit will obtain
honor.
24 The partner of a thief hates his own life;
he hears the curse, but discloses nothing.
25 The fear of man lays a snare,
but whoever trusts in the LORD is safe.
26 Many seek the face of a ruler,
but it is from the LORD that a man gets
justice.

27 An unjust man is an abomination to the
righteous,
but one whose way is straight is an
abomination to the wicked.

The Words of Agur

30 1 † The words of Agur son of Jakeh. The oracle.[3] The man
declares, I am weary, O God; I am weary, O God, and worn out.[4]

2 Surely I am too stupid to be a man.
I have not the understanding of a man.
3 I have not learned wisdom,
nor have I knowledge of the Holy One.
4† Who has ascended to heaven and come down?
Who has gathered the wind in his fists?
Who has wrapped up the waters in a garment?
Who has established all the ends of the
earth?
What is his name, and what is his son's name?
Surely you know!

5† Every word of God proves true;
he is a shield to those who take refuge in
him.
6† Do not add to his words,
lest he rebuke you and you be found a liar.

7 Two things I ask of you;
deny them not to me before I die:
8 Remove far from me falsehood and lying;
give me neither poverty nor riches;
feed me with the food that is needful for
me,
9† lest I be full and deny you
and say, "Who is the Lord?"
or lest I be poor and steal
and profane the name of my God.

10 Do not slander a servant to his master,
lest he curse you, and you be held guilty.

11 There are those[1] who curse their fathers
and do not bless their mothers.
12 There are those who are clean in their own
eyes
but are not washed of their filth.
13 There are those—how lofty are their eyes,
how high their eyelids lift!
14 There are those whose teeth are swords,
whose fangs are knives,
to devour the poor from off the earth,
the needy from among mankind.

15 The leech has two daughters:
Give and Give.[2]
Three things are never satisfied;
four never say, “Enough”:
16 Sheol, the barren womb,
the land never satisfied with water,
and the fire that never says, “Enough.”

17 The eye that mocks a father
and scorns to obey a mother
will be picked out by the ravens of the valley
and eaten by the vultures.

18 Three things are too wonderful for me;
four I do not understand:
19 the way of an eagle in the sky,

the way of a serpent on a rock,
the way of a ship on the high seas,
and the way of a man with a virgin.

20 This is the way of an adulteress:
she eats and wipes her mouth
and says, “I have done no wrong.”

21 Under three things the earth trembles;
under four it cannot bear up:
22 a slave when he becomes king,
and a fool when he is filled with food;
23 an unloved woman when she gets a husband,
and a maidservant when she displaces her
mistress.

24 Four things on earth are small,
but they are exceedingly wise:
25 the ants are a people not strong,
yet they provide their food in the summer;
26 the rock badgers are a people not mighty,
yet they make their homes in the cliffs;
27 the locusts have no king,
yet all of them march in rank;
28 the lizard you can take in your hands,
yet it is in kings’ palaces.

29 Three things are stately in their tread;
four are stately in their stride:
30 the lion, which is mightiest among beasts
and does not turn back before any;
31 the strutting rooster,[1] the he-goat,
and a king whose army is with him.[2]

32 If you have been foolish, exalting yourself,
or if you have been devising evil,
put your hand on your mouth.
33 For pressing milk produces curds,
pressing the nose produces blood,
and pressing anger produces strife.

The Words of King Lemuel

31 [1]†† The words of King Lemuel. An oracle that his mother taught him:

[2]† What are you doing, my son?[3] What are you
doing, son of my womb?
What are you doing, son of my vows?
[3]† Do not give your strength to women,
your ways to those who destroy kings.
[4]† It is not for kings, O Lemuel,
it is not for kings to drink wine,
or for rulers to take strong drink,
[5] lest they drink and forget what has been
decreed
and pervert the rights of all the afflicted.
[6]† Give strong drink to the one who is
perishing,
and wine to those in bitter distress;[4]
[7] let them drink and forget their poverty
and remember their misery no more.
[8] Open your mouth for the mute,
for the rights of all who are destitute.[5]
[9] Open your mouth, judge righteously,
defend the rights of the poor and needy.

The Woman Who Fears the Lord

10 [6] An excellent wife who can find?
She is far more precious than jewels.
11 The heart of her husband trusts in her,
and he will have no lack of gain.
12 She does him good, and not harm,
all the days of her life.
13 She seeks wool and flax,
and works with willing hands.
14 She is like the ships of the merchant;
she brings her food from afar.
15 She rises while it is yet night
and provides food for her household
and portions for her maidens.
16 She considers a field and buys it;
with the fruit of her hands she plants a vineyard.
17 She dresses herself[1] with strength
and makes her arms strong.
18 She perceives that her merchandise is profitable.
Her lamp does not go out at night.
19 She puts her hands to the distaff,
and her hands hold the spindle.
20 She opens her hand to the poor
and reaches out her hands to the needy.
21 She is not afraid of snow for her household,
for all her household are clothed in scarlet.[2]
22 She makes bed coverings for herself;
her clothing is fine linen and purple.
23 Her husband is known in the gates
when he sits among the elders of the land.

24 † She makes linen garments and sells them;
she delivers sashes to the merchant.
25 † Strength and dignity are her clothing,
and she laughs at the time to come.
26 She opens her mouth with wisdom,
and the teaching of kindness is on her
tongue.
27 She looks well to the ways of her household
and does not eat the bread of idleness.
28 Her children rise up and call her blessed;
her husband also, and he praises her:
29 "Many women have done excellently,
but you surpass them all."
30 †† Charm is deceitful, and beauty is vain,
but a woman who fears the LORD is to be
praised.
31 Give her of the fruit of her hands,
and let her works praise her in the gates.

Proverbs

Overview

Authors
Solomon; Agur; Lemuel; Lemuel's mother; unnamed wise men

Date
Tenth century BC for most of the Book; late eighth or early seventh for some parts (see "Authorship," p 997)

Places
Jerusalem; Israel

People
King Solomon; Solomon's son (Rehoboam) or a student; King Hezekiah; court officials; Agur; Lemuel and his mother; a woman who fears the Lord

Purpose
To bestow God's wisdom

Law Themes
Because foolishness is rebellion against God, fools condemn themselves to destruction; instruction curbs the misdeeds of fools and guides the deeds of the wise

Gospel Theme
Christ, God's wisdom, delivers us from self-destruction and brings forth righteousness

Memory Verses
Fear of the Lord (1:2–7); Wisdom and creation (8:22–31); the woman who fears the Lord (31:30–31)

Introduction to Proverbs

Reading Proverbs

Clinking bits of silver, shouting merchants, and bleating herds distract a young man as he passes through the streets of Jerusalem. He pauses to wonder at the piles of goods on display, bartered wildly by shoppers and shopkeepers. At the corner, he catches a whiff of myrrh and cinnamon from where a sultry woman caresses the doorframe of her house. She winks and smiles. From the city gate, the young man hears the voice of one calling, "The LORD gives wisdom; from His mouth come knowledge and understanding" (2:6).

Above the clamor of Jerusalem's streets, King Solomon could see and reflect on the temptations of his subjects—temptations to which he himself succumbed. He saw clearly the need for instruction, for wisdom that parents could pass on to their children and teachers could share with their students. The Book of Proverbs is the result of Solomon's God-given wisdom, experience, and concern (1Ki 3:5–15).

Central Theme

Proverbs emphasizes the central theme of Israelite wisdom: "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction" (1:7). This thought appears throughout the Book (1:7; 2:5; 8:13; 9:10; 10:27; 14:27; 15:33; 19:23; 22:4; 31:30), especially in the portions contributed by Solomon. In the proverbs that the men of Hezekiah collected (chs 25–29), the fear of the Lord is not the central theme. Instead, this portion of the collection focuses on the contrast between the righteous and the wicked, preparing young men for service in the royal court.

In Proverbs, wisdom is an attribute of God and of His people. God alone can give wisdom. It is His great gift to His people. Wisdom is frequently portrayed as a woman—a dear mother or beloved bride. (See "Supposed Remnants of Goddess Worship," p 997.) This feminine imagery does not prevent Solomon from describing wisdom as God's "master workman," who is God the Son, begotten in eternity and working with the Father at creation (Pr 8:22–31; Jn 1:1–18; 1Co 1:24, 30; Col 2:2–3). See pp 775–78.

Though "wisdom" and "righteous" stand together only in one proverb (10:31), the Book equates wise people with the righteous (e.g., 9:8–10). As a result, these proverbs are always more than practical advice on proper morals. They illustrate the faith and life of one made righteous through faith in the Lord, the giver of wisdom.

For more on biblical wisdom, see pp 775–78.

Luther on Proverbs

[Proverbs] may properly be called a book of good works, for in it [Solomon] teaches how to lead a good life before God and the world.

He pays special attention to the young people. In fatherly fashion he instructs them in God's commandments, with reassuring promises of how well things shall be with the righteous, and threats as to how the wicked will have to be punished. For young people are of themselves inclined to all evil. Because of their inexperience, they do not understand the wiles and wickedness of the world and the devil. They are far too weak to withstand bad examples and the causes of offense, neither are they able to govern themselves. If they are not instructed, they are ruined and lost even before they get their bearings.

Therefore young people need and must have teachers and rulers who will exhort, warn, rebuke, and chastise them, who will hold them constantly to the fear of God and to his commandments in order to ward off the devil, the world, and the flesh. This, then, is what Solomon does abundantly and with all diligence in this book. He puts his teaching into proverbs, so that it can be grasped the more easily and kept the more readily. Anyone who intends to become righteous might well take this as a handbook or prayerbook for his daily use, read it often, and ponder his own life in it.

For a man must go one of two ways: either he must let his father chastise him or he must let the executioner punish him. As they say, "You may escape me, but you will not escape the hangman." And it would be good to impress this constantly on the young people, so that they might know without any doubt that they must suffer either the father's rod or the executioner's sword, just as, in this book, Solomon is constantly threatening the disobedient with death. There is no other way out, for God leaves nothing unpunished. We see in our own experience that disobedient knaves perish in strange ways; they finally come into the executioner's hands just when they least expect it and feel most secure. Public testi-
mony and signs of all this are the gallows, wheels, and places of execution at the gates of all the cities. Through his temporal

government God has put them there to terrify all those who will not obey their elders and let themselves be instructed in God's word.

Therefore in this book Solomon calls all those who despise God's word "fools," and all those who deport themselves according to God's commandments "wise." This does not apply solely to young people—though it is primarily they whom he has undertaken to teach—but to people of all stations from the highest to the very lowest. For just as youth has its own particular offenses against God's commandments, so every other group has its vices as well; and these are worse than the vices of youth. As they say, "The older they are, the worse they get"; and again, "Age is no cure for folly."

Even if there were nothing evil in the other and higher stations, no greed, pride, hatred, envy, etc., nevertheless this one vice would be bad enough, namely, that they try to be shrewd and smart when they ought not to be; everybody is inclined to do something else than what is committed to him, and to leave undone that which is committed to him. For example, whoever is in the spiritual office tries to be wise and active in the worldly office, and there is no end to his wisdom in this regard; in turn, whoever is in the worldly office has a head too small to hold all his superfluous knowledge about the conduct of the spiritual office.

Of such fools all lands, all cities, all homes are full, and in this book they are diligently rebuked. Everyone is exhorted to take care of his own affairs and to do faithfully and diligently that which is committed to him; there is indeed no virtue beyond that of obedience, attending to that which is given him to do. Such people are called wise men; the disobedient are called fools, even though they do not want to be, or be called, disobedient men or fools. (AE 35:258–60)

Types of Proverbs

Though the first part of Proverbs is a carefully crafted speech delivered by a father to his son (chs 1–9), much of Proverbs is a collection of wise sayings. These sayings come in different forms. Here are a few common examples:

Complete Sentences. Some proverbs state things in a straightforward way. For example, "Whoever trusts in his riches will fall, but the righteous will flourish like a green leaf" (11:28). The grammar is complete and the meaning is clear.

Juxtaposition. Many proverbs simply place two things or persons alongside each other without any verb. Here is a literal translation of one example: "A gold ring in a pig's snout—a beautiful woman without discretion" (11:22). Translators supply words such as *is* and *like* to render the passage clearly for us. Other verses include words such as *like* or *but* so the reader may easily determine that they present a comparison or a contrast. Some juxtapositions are very difficult to interpret and require great reflection.

Better and Worse Sayings. This is a special form of comparison in which the parts compare the benefits or detriments of someone or something. For example, "Better is a little with righteousness than great revenues with injustice" (16:8).

Numerical Sayings. Some sayings give lists of examples (30:24–28). Others grade the list by adding the final example as supreme (30:29–31). This is a common device in Israelite literature. See note, ch 30.

Challenges for Readers

Certain features of Proverbs have confused readers. Likewise, critics have challenged various features of the Book.

Moralistic Instruction. Proverbs does not frequently describe God's gift of righteousness or His mercy. As a result, some regard Proverbs as legalistic or human centered. However, careful reading of the Book demonstrates that a person's success in life stems from the Lord's mercy alone. Proverbs emphasizes wisdom's ability to curb violent outbursts of sin (theologians call this the first use of the Law) and what a wise person should or should not do to please the Lord. All our ways "are before the eyes of the LORD" (5:21). The ability to fear and love God in these ways comes from Him who gives wisdom (1:7; 2:6).

Application. A common struggle readers experience with Proverbs is that the outcome a proverb describes may not always be fulfilled. For example, parents have remarked regarding 22:6, "I trained my children to do what is right, but now they no longer come to church or listen to reason. Where did I go wrong?" Readers should note that Proverbs often gives observations about life and common outcomes for behavior. Generally speaking, children raised well will live well. This is a sound observation. However, there are exceptions, otherwise some admonitions in Proverbs would also not apply (e.g., 5:1–2, which emphasizes the child's responsibility to listen). Proverbs can give specific commandments or prohibitions, which the reader is simply expected to accept. However, most proverbs include an observation about life and a conclusion for the reader to ponder and act on.

Authorship. Some critics regard attribution of authorship to Solomon as only honorary. They have proposed late dates for the writing of Proverbs, after Israel returned from exile. However, according to the Book itself, several authors wrote or compiled Proverbs from the tenth century to about the seventh century BC. Studies of the vocabulary, thought, and expression in the sections attributed to Solomon show great unity. Also, sections attributed to other authors are distinct in these features ("The Wise," 22:17–24:34; Agur, ch 30; Lemuel, 31:1–9; Unknown author, 31:10–31). These findings bear out what the Book itself states about authorship. The dates and authorship proposed by critics stem from their mistrust of biblical history rather than the Book's content. Because the text addresses

Solomon's "son" (likely Rehoboam), the earliest date Solomon could have written his portion is c 971 BC. The latest Solomon could have written is 931 BC, when his reign ended. These dates provide the biblical boundaries for Solomon's work. The reign of Hezekiah (715–686 BC) provides a second important boundary for the Book's composition.

Elitism. Others have criticized Proverbs as reflecting the worldview and values of the intellectually elite in Israel rather than typical Israelites. For example, chs 25–29 are clearly associated with the concerns of King Hezekiah's court. However, much of the wisdom of the Book happens at "street level," where Israelites interacted with one another at the market or in the home. Though Proverbs certainly gives counsel on how to ascend in society, it emphasizes the blessings of wisdom and goodness for all people.

Supposed Remnants of Goddess Worship. Solomon frequently describes wisdom as a dear mother or beloved bride (e.g., 1:20–33; 3:13–18; 8:1–11; 9:1–6). This should not be interpreted to mean that "Lady Wisdom" in Proverbs is a remnant of a goddess or consort for Yahweh, similar to the goddesses associated with the god Baal in Canaanite culture. There is a better explanation. Like most languages, Hebrew categorizes nouns as feminine or masculine (English does not do this). The Hebrew word for "wisdom" (*chokmah*) is grammatically feminine. By characterizing wisdom as a woman, Solomon uses this grammar for a play on words, which is simply a feature of Solomon's writing style. But he also breaks away from the feminine imagery. For example, in 8:22–31 he writes a first-person address of wisdom as the Lord's "master workman."

Organization. For people reading Proverbs in English, the Book may seem disorganized. The connections between various sayings—where the same or similar Hebrew words unite a collection of sayings—are not always clear. The outline below and the study notes will highlight thematic collections of proverbs.

Blessings for Readers

As you read Proverbs, bear in mind the central theme of the Book: "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge" (1:7). Proverbs promises that you will not face life alone or without good counsel. When you face the practical dilemmas of life, the Lord is with you to establish your steps (16:9). Call on His name (18:10), and wisdom will answer (1:33; 2:4–6). "You are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption" (1Co 1:30).

OUTLINE

I. Introduction (1:1–7)
- A. Superscription (1:1)
- B. Solomon's Preface (1:2–7)

II. Extended Discourses on Wisdom (1:8–9:18)
- A. First Address to a Son: Avoid the Company of Sinners (1:8–19)
- B. First Poem about Wisdom: Wisdom's Call and the Fate of Those Who Refuse to Listen to Her (1:20–33)
- C. Second Address to a Son (ch 2)
  - 1. Wisdom comes from God to protect you (2:1–15)
  - 2. An example of wisdom's protection: protection from the adulterous woman (2:16–19)
  - 3. Admonition to live righteously (2:20–22)
- D. Third Address to a Son: Wisdom Leads to a Proper Relationship with Yahweh (3:1–20)
- E. Fourth Address to a Son: Wisdom Leads to a Proper Relationship with One's Neighbor (3:21–35)
- F. An Address to Sons: Solomon's Parents Taught Him to Value Wisdom (4:1–9)
- G. Fifth Address to a Son: Wisdom Teaches the Difference between Wicked and Righteous People (4:10–19)
- H. Sixth Address to a Son: Advice for Living a Righteous Life (4:20–27)
- I. Seventh Address to a Son: Wisdom Teaches How to Avoid Adultery (ch 5)
- J. Eighth Address to a Son (6:1–19)

1. Wisdom allows you to avoid entanglements with your neighbor (6:1–5)
2. Wisdom is not compatible with laziness (6:6–11)
3. Dishonesty leads to disaster (6:12–15)
4. Seven things that are an abomination to Yahweh (6:16–19)

K. Ninth Address to a Son: A Father Teaches His Son to Avoid Adultery (6:20–35)

L. Tenth Address to a Son: Wisdom Will Keep You from Adultery and Its Final Result: Death (ch 7)

M. Second Poem about Wisdom (ch 8)
1. Wisdom's invitation to all people (8:1–11)
2. Wisdom's benefit (8:12–21)
3. Wisdom as Christ, the Creator (8:22–31)
4. Wisdom as the giver of life (8:32–36)

N. Third Poem about Wisdom: The Contrast with Folly (ch 9)
1. Wisdom's banquet (9:1–6)
2. Wisdom's proverbs (9:7–12)
3. Folly's banquet (9:13–18)

III. Solomon's Proverbs (10:1–22:16)

A. Instruction in Wisdom (10:1–17:6)
1. Wisdom and righteousness for a wise son (chs 10–12)
a. Introduction to wisdom and righteousness (10:1–5)
b. Proverbs about the use of the mouth (10:6–23)
c. Contrast: righteous and wicked (10:24–32)
d. The wisdom of righteousness (chs 11–12)
2. How a wise son should live (13:1–15:19)
3. A wise son brings joy to others (15:20–17:6)
a. Advice to a wise son (15:20–16:7)
b. Wisdom for a king and his subjects (16:8–24)
c. Advice to a wise son (16:25–17:6)

B. Warning about Foolishness (17:7–22:16)
1. Introduction to fools and folly: The consequences of being a fool (17:7–24)
2. Fools bring grief to others (17:25–19:12)
3. Fools bring ruin to themselves and others (19:13–20:30)
4. Yahweh controls both wise and foolish people (21:1–22:16)

IV. The Words of Wise People (22:17–24:22)

A. Introduction (22:17–21)
B. Advice for Living with Your Neighbor (22:22–23:14)
C. Advice from Your Father (23:15–24:22)

V. More Words of Wise People (24:23–34)

VI. Solomon's Proverbs Copied by Hezekiah's Men (chs 25–29)
A. Superscription (25:1)
B. Advice for Kings (25:2–27)
C. All about Fools (25:28–27:4)
D. Dealing with Family, Friends, and Other People (27:5–22)
E. Guidance for Kings (27:23–29:27)
1. Pay attention to your flock (27:23–27)
2. Justice for poor people (28:1–11)
3. Beware of wicked people (28:12–28)
4. Wicked people endanger a kingdom (29:1–15)
5. Final advice for a king (29:16–27)

VII. Agur's Proverbs (ch 30)
A. Superscription (30:1)
B. Agur's Prayers and Advice (30:2–10)
C. Numerical Sayings (30:11–33)

VIII. King Lemuel's Proverbs (31:1–9)
A. Superscription (31:1)
B. Three Pieces of Advice for Kings (31:2–9)

IX. An Acrostic Poem about an Ideal Wife (31:10–31)

- The Fear of the Lord
- Christ as Wisdom
- Fools in Proverbs

The Fear of the Lord

Each of us knows what it's like to have a friend or family member suddenly pop in on us and make us jump right out of our skin. The fear evoked by the sudden appearance of the angel of the Lord is repeatedly mentioned in the Scriptures, from the prophet Moses to the Virgin Mary. But "the fear of the Lord" is something more than surprise or terror.

Proverbs teaches that, far from cowering in dread before the Lord, the person who fears the Lord clings to Him. Solomon's father, King David (reigned 1009–970 BC), summed it up well:

> I sought the Lord, and He answered me and delivered me from all my fears. … The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear Him, and delivers them. … Oh, fear the Lord, you His saints, for those who fear Him have no lack! (Ps 34:4, 7, 9)

In other words, when we fear God, there is nothing to be afraid of!

Appropriate Fear

"The fear of the LORD" is a key concept throughout the OT. Unfortunately, the Hebrew noun *yir'ah* that is translated "fear" (or the verb "to fear") does not communicate itself through any single word in English translation. What does "the fear of the LORD" really mean?

For us, the word *fear* often has a negative connotation, namely, to be afraid of something or someone. The Hebrew term can mean that. For example, when Jacob prepared to meet his brother, Esau, he feared. Jacob had fled from Esau years before because he had tricked Esau out of his birthright. Jacob prayed to God, "Please deliver me from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau, for I *fear* him, that he may come and attack me, the mothers with the children" (Gn 32:11). But the word *fear* can have other shades of meaning. When referring to a person of high position, it takes on the idea of standing in awe or reverence before that individual. God wants us to fear Him in this sense. He is our Creator, and He is our Savior. How can we ever think of God with indifference or treat Him lightly?

Abraham illustrates a proper "fear of the LORD." When Abraham traveled into the region ruled by Abimelech, he sensed that the king and his people were ruthless and would kill him just to get his beautiful wife Sarah. "Abraham said, 'I did it because I thought, There is no fear of God at all in this place, and they will kill me because of my wife' " (Gn 20:11). The Lord God wants us to have a healthy reverence of Him so that we respect Him and His Word as Abraham did.

Fear in Proverbs

Proverbs points out that true wisdom begins with such fear. The opening verses sum up the entire Book:

> The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction. (Pr 1:7)

This fear is closely related to trust because we can truly respect and reverence God only when we believe that He is truly everything that His Word, the Bible, says He is. Understanding "fear of the LORD" as trust helps us understand other enigmatic Bible passages such as Ps 130:4:

> But with You there is forgiveness, that You may be feared.

The idea of fearing God occurs repeatedly throughout the Book of Proverbs: 1:7, 29; 2:5; 3:7; 8:13; 9:10; 10:27; 14:2, 16, 26, 27; 15:16, 33; 16:6; 19:23; 22:4; 23:17; 24:21; 28:14; 31:30. See note, 2:5.

Christ as Wisdom

According to Proverbs, Wisdom was present already in eternity, before the creation of the world and, consequently, before there even was such a thing as time. Along the same lines, Jesus said, “And now, Father, glorify Me in Your own presence with the glory that I had with You before the world existed” (Jn 17:5). In Pr 8, Wisdom is given birth by God, even though Wisdom was present from eternity. Likewise, Jesus is God’s only-begotten Son; that is, “His only Son” (Jn 3:16).

John’s Gospel begins with a description of Jesus as “the Word.” This description connects Jesus with the Wisdom of Proverbs, which calls out and makes its appeals. John declares, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God” (Jn 1:1–2). Wisdom was also present with God in the beginning (Pr 8:22).

An Ancient Yet Modern Controversy

In the fourth century after Christ, a controversy broke out in the Christian churches. Focusing on this portion of Proverbs, the followers of the priest Arius argued that the Son of God was a created being and not eternal God. They argued that there was a time when the Son of God did not exist. Much of their argument rested on a faulty Greek translation of Pr 8:22: "The LORD *created* Me," instead of "The LORD possessed Me."

In our day, the Jehovah's Witnesses have taken up this ancient heresy and contend that Jesus, the Son of God, is not true God. To support their false doctrine, they even mistranslate Scripture, such as Jn 1:1. Their *New World Translation* says, "The Word was *a god*," instead of, "The Word was God." Their false translation makes Jesus a second-level god alongside the heavenly Father. Clearly, this teaching does not fit with Holy Scripture, which teaches that there is only one God! (Cf Is 45:18–21; see p 1815.)

At the time of creation, Wisdom said, "I was beside [God], like a master workman" (Pr 8:30). Passages in the NT attribute this to Christ, e.g., Col 1:15–17; *firstborn* in this passage is used in a specific sense. It does not mean the first child born into a family. Rather, it refers to the inheritance rights of the one who held the honors of a firstborn son. (E.g., King David is called "firstborn" in Ps 89:27, even though he was the youngest son in his family [1Sm 16:11–13]. In view of this, when Paul calls Jesus "the firstborn of all creation," he means that Jesus rules all creation, not that He was created, for "all things were created through Him and for Him.")

Faithful Christians in the Early Church, led by the great Church Father Athanasius, carefully studied Pr 8 and other passages of Holy Scripture. They recognized that while the Son of God is begotten, He is also co-eternal with God the Father. Out of this research into God's Word came the Nicene Creed, by which Christians still confess faith in Jesus Christ as "the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made."

When we come face-to-face with the eternally begotten Son and other mysteries concerning the triune God, we are in realms beyond human comprehension. We can no more capture the eternal, omnipotent God within our minds than we can hold the ocean in a bucket. The wonder of it

all is that the almighty Creator has come to us to save us. Jesus is God. He is also our Brother (Heb 2:11) who has suffered, died, and risen for us.

Clear through Christ

It is often said that the OT is revealed in the NT, while the NT is concealed in the OT. In other words, what is not entirely clear in the OT becomes clear in the light of the coming of Jesus the Christ. That is what has happened with Pr 8.

The NT explicitly states that Jesus is the one “in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Col 2:3). Or, as St Paul puts it in 1Co 1:24, Christ is “the wisdom of God.” As you read Proverbs, hear the voice of your Redeemer. As the “Word of God,” these are His words for you.

Fools in Proverbs

God often teaches the way of wisdom by using contrast. As a skilled artist sets his or her subject matter against a contrasting background, so the Lord, through His inspired writers, sets the bright gem of wisdom against the dismal backdrop of foolishness.

When the Bible in general—and Proverbs in particular—speaks of foolishness, the first and most important point to remember is that it describes a moral and *spiritual* condition. We should not confuse foolishness with lack of academic prowess or a low IQ. Some people who are brilliant may, in God's eyes, be fools. For example, Ps 14:1 and 53:1 state, "The fool says in his heart, 'There is no God.'" In Proverbs, the fool is one who does not have a proper fear of the Lord. Consequently, such a person is likely to deny God's Word.

The Hebrew language in which Proverbs was originally written makes a distinction among different kinds of foolishness or fools. Awareness of these differences will help you more fully appreciate the message of Proverbs.

The simple: Hbr *pethi*, the person who is easily lured or deceived; gullible. Of the various types of fools, this one is the least hardened in his or her foolishness. These naive and inexperienced people drift along aimlessly, until they fall easy prey to temptation (14:15). Such gullibility, of course, is not an excuse for sinning. Gullible people are responsible for their actions and may even end up killing themselves (1:32). In Pr 7, Solomon observes the gullible people and notes one who is drifting along aimlessly, ripe for a prostitute's picking. If they are to escape their ways "and live," the gullible need wisdom (9:4–6). Indeed, wisdom invites them by calling out, "Whoever is gullible, turn in here!"

The fool: Hbr *kesil*; if the gullible person doesn't learn, he or she may well move to the next level of foolishness and become a regular fool. This Hbr word is used 50 times in Proverbs and is the Book's most common term for fool. In the end, "fools die for lack of sense" (10:21).

Stubborn fool: Hbr *'ewil*, occurs 20 times in Proverbs. What can be said about the "generic fool" can also be said about this fool. As the term "stubborn" implies, however, the individual at this level of foolishness is

more hardened and persistent. “Fools mock at the guilt offering, but the upright enjoy acceptance” (14:9). This category of fool is connected to the word for foolishness and stupidity, or folly. Sadly, it’s a trait often found in children: “Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline drives it far from him” (22:15). As the child becomes a grown-up, the trait is even more difficult to correct: “Crush a fool in a mortar with a pestle along with crushed grain, yet his folly will not depart from him” (27:22).

The godless fool: Hbr *nabal*, appears only three times in Proverbs. This is the word used in the psalms quoted earlier in this article. Those people who say to themselves, “There is no God.” Their mind is closed; they have rejected the Lord. This word is used in Pr 30:21–23, which states that one of four things under which the earth trembles is “a fool when he is filled with food.” Once such a person’s physical needs are satisfied, who knows what havoc he or she will bring to others? We find the epitome of this boorish and domineering fool in the man named Nabal (1Sm 25). He was “harsh and badly behaved” (v 3), and one of his own servants said of him, “He is such a worthless man that one cannot speak to him” (v 17).

Scripture and the Fool

As we look closely at the fool in Proverbs and the rest of Scripture, we come face-to-face with sinful human beings and with the "natural man." In other words, we see ourselves. The believer realizes, "There but for the grace of God go I." Even the author and compiler of Proverbs, wise King Solomon, became such a fool that he fell into idolatry (1Ki 11:4–11). As long as we are in this world, we will struggle against giving in to our sinful, foolish tendencies.

The remedy for foolishness is for God's Word to remain our daily companion (Pr 2:1). The foolishness of the world is overcome by the foolishness of Christ. As the apostle Paul says, "If anyone among you thinks that he is wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise" (1Co 3:18). It comes down to this: to know Christ and Him crucified is to know God's wisdom (1Co 1:23–25). His forgiveness destroys our sinful foolishness. Through the Savior, we become truly wise and able to offer that wisdom to others as well.

Footnotes

Footnotes for Proverbs, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:23 Or *Will you turn away at my reproof?*

Footnotes for Proverbs, Chapter 2

- [1] 2:16 Hebrew *strange*
- [2] 2:16 Hebrew *foreign woman*
- [3] 2:18 Hebrew *to the Rephaim*

Footnotes for Proverbs, Chapter 3

- [1] 3:4 Or *repute*
- [2] 3:8 Hebrew *navel*
- [3] 3:8 Or *medicine*
- [1] 3:25 Hebrew *storm*
- [2] 3:27 Hebrew *Do not withhold good from its owners*
- [3] 3:34 Or *grace*
- [4] 3:35 The meaning of the Hebrew word is uncertain

Footnotes for Proverbs, Chapter 4

- [5] 4:1 Hebrew *know*
- [1] 4:22 Hebrew *his*
- [1] 4:26 Or *Make level*

Footnotes for Proverbs, Chapter 5

- [2] 5:3 Hebrew *strange* ; also verse 20
- [3] 5:3 Hebrew *palate*
- [4] 5:5 Hebrew *lay hold of*
- [1] 5:19 Hebrew *be led astray* ; also verse 20
- [2] 5:20 Hebrew *a foreign woman*
- [3] 5:21 Or *makes level*

Footnotes for Proverbs, Chapter 6

- [4] 6:3 Or *humble yourself*
- [5] 6:5 Hebrew lacks *of the hunter*
- [1] 6:13 Hebrew *scrapes*
- [2] 6:22 Hebrew *it* ; three times in this verse
- [3] 6:24 Revocalization (compare Septuagint) yields *from the wife of a neighbor*
- [4] 6:24 Hebrew *the foreign woman*
- [1] 6:26 Or (compare Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate) *for a prostitute leaves a man with nothing but a loaf of bread*
- [2] 6:26 Hebrew *a man's wife*

Footnotes for Proverbs, Chapter 7

- [3] 7:5 Hebrew *strange*

- [4] 7:5 Hebrew *the foreign woman*
- [5] 7:10 Hebrew *guarded in heart*
- [1] 7:14 Hebrew *peace offerings*
- [2] 7:22 Probable reading (compare Septuagint, Vulgate, Syriac) ; Hebrew *as an anklet for the discipline of a fool*

Footnotes for Proverbs, Chapter 8

- [1] 8:16 Most Hebrew manuscripts ; many Hebrew manuscripts, Septuagint *govern the earth*
- [2] 8:22 Or *fathered* ; Septuagint *created*
- [3] 8:22 Hebrew *way*
- [1] 8:28 The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain
- [2] 8:30 Or *daily filled with*

Footnotes for Proverbs, Chapter 9

- [1] 9:6 Or *Leave the company of the simple*
- [2] 9:9 Hebrew lacks *instruction*
- [3] 9:13 Or *full of simpleness*
- [4] 9:18 Hebrew *Rephaim*

Footnotes for Proverbs, Chapter 10

- [1] 10:22 Or *and toil adds nothing to it*

Footnotes for Proverbs, Chapter 11

- [1] 11:7 Or *of his strength*, or *of iniquity*
- [1] 11:27 Or *acceptance*

Footnotes for Proverbs, Chapter 12

- [1] 12:17 Hebrew *breathes out*
- [1] 12:26 Or *The righteous chooses his friends carefully*
- [2] 12:27 Or *but diligence is precious wealth*

Footnotes for Proverbs, Chapter 13

- [3] 13:5 Or *stench*
- [4] 13:11 Or *by fraud*
- [5] 13:15 Probable reading (compare Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate) ; Hebrew *is rugged*, or *is an enduring rut*
- [1] 13:21 Or *Evil*
- [2] 13:24 Or *who loves him disciplines him early*

Footnotes for Proverbs, Chapter 14

- [3] 14:3 Or *In the mouth of a fool is a rod of pride*
- [4] 14:9 Hebrew *but among the upright is acceptance*
- [5] 14:12 Hebrew *ways of death*
- [1] 14:16 Or *fears* [the LORD]
- [2] 14:22 Or *show*
- [3] 14:30 Or *healing*
- [4] 14:30 Or *jealousy*

- [5] 14:33 Or *Wisdom rests quietly in the heart of a man of understanding, but makes itself known in the midst of fools*

Footnotes for Proverbs, Chapter 15

- [6] 15:4 Or *healing*
- [1] 15:7 Or *the hearts of fools are not steadfast*
- [1] 15:30 Hebrew *makes fat*

Footnotes for Proverbs, Chapter 16

- [2] 16:20 Or *to a matter*
- [1] 16:25 Hebrew *ways of death*
- [2] 16:27 Hebrew *what is on his lips*
- [3] 16:30 Hebrew *to plan*

Footnotes for Proverbs, Chapter 17

- [4] 17:1 Hebrew *sacrifices*
- [1] 17:23 Hebrew *a bribe from the bosom*

Footnotes for Proverbs, Chapter 18

- [1] 18:5 Hebrew *to lift the face of*

Footnotes for Proverbs, Chapter 19

- [1] 19:2 Or *A soul*
- [2] 19:6 Or *of a noble*
- [3] 19:7 The meaning of the Hebrew sentence is uncertain

Footnotes for Proverbs, Chapter 20

- [1] 20:1 Or *will not become wise*
- [2] 20:10 Or *Two kinds of* ; also verse 23
- [3] 20:11 Or *Even a child can dissemble in his actions, though his conduct seems pure and upright*
- [4] 20:16 Or *for an adulteress* (compare 27:13)
- [1] 20:19 Hebrew *with one who is simple in his lips*
- [2] 20:27 Hebrew *breath*

Footnotes for Proverbs, Chapter 21

- [3] 21:4 Or *the plowing*
- [4] 21:6 Some Hebrew manuscripts, Septuagint, Latin ; most Hebrew manuscripts *vapor for those who seek death*
- [1] 21:14 Hebrew *a bribe in the bosom*
- [2] 21:29 Or *establishes*

Footnotes for Proverbs, Chapter 22

- [1] 22:4 Or *The reward for humility is the fear of the* LORD*, riches and honor and life*
- [2] 22:9 Hebrew *good*
- [3] 22:14 Hebrew *strange*

Footnotes for Proverbs, Chapter 23

- [1] 23:1 Or *who*
- [1] 23:6 Hebrew *whose eye is evil*
- [2] 23:7 Or *for as he calculates in his soul, so is he*
- [3] 23:16 Hebrew *My kidneys*
- [4] 23:20 Hebrew *those who drink too much wine*
- [1] 23:26 Or *delight in*
- [2] 23:27 Hebrew *a foreign woman*
- [3] 23:34 Or *of the rigging*
- [4] 23:35 Hebrew lacks *you will say*

Footnotes for Proverbs, Chapter 24

- [5] 24:9 Or *scheming*

Footnotes for Proverbs, Chapter 25

- [1] 25:8 Hebrew *or else*
- [2] 25:27 The meaning of the Hebrew line is uncertain

Footnotes for Proverbs, Chapter 26

- [1] 26:10 Or *hires a fool or passersby*
- [2] 26:23 By revocalization ; Hebrew *silver of dross*

Footnotes for Proverbs, Chapter 27

- [1] 27:9 Or *and so does the sweetness of a friend that comes from his earnest counsel*
- [2] 27:13 Hebrew *a foreign woman* ; a slight emendation yields (compare Vulgate ; see also 20:16) *foreigners*
- [3] 27:16 Hebrew *to meet with*
- [4] 27:17 Hebrew *sharpens the face of another*

Footnotes for Proverbs, Chapter 28

- [1] 28:8 That is, profit that comes from charging interest to the poor
- [2] 28:17 Hebrew *until the pit*
- [1] 28:22 Hebrew *A man whose eye is evil*

Footnotes for Proverbs, Chapter 29

- [2] 29:4 Or *who taxes heavily*
- [3] 29:10 Or *but the upright seek his soul*
- [1] 29:18 Or *the people are discouraged*
- [2] 29:21 The meaning of the Hebrew word rendered *his heir* is uncertain

Footnotes for Proverbs, Chapter 30

- [3] 30:1 Or *Jakeh, the man of Massa*
- [4] 30:1 Revocalization ; Hebrew *The man declares to Ithiel, to Ithiel and Ucal*
- [1] 30:11 Hebrew *There is a generation* ; also verses 12, 13, 14
- [2] 30:15 Or *"Give, give," they cry*
- [1] 30:31 Or *the magpie*, or *the greyhound* ; Hebrew *girt-of-loins*
- [2] 30:31 Or *against whom there is no rising up*

Footnotes for Proverbs, Chapter 31

- [3] 31:2 Hebrew *What, my son?*
- [4] 31:6 Hebrew *those bitter in soul*
- [5] 31:8 Hebrew *are sons of passing away*
- [6] 31:10 Verses 10-31 are an acrostic poem, each verse beginning with the successive letters of the Hebrew alphabet
- [1] 31:17 Hebrew *She girds her loins*
- [2] 31:21 Or *in double thickness*

Study Notes

PROVERBS—NOTE ON **Ch 1** The title of the Book (v 1) is expanded into five verses (2–6) that, in heaped synonyms and parallel statements, provide the purpose of these collections of proverbs: to teach wisdom. Immediately following the introductory statement of purpose, the course gets under way. The remaining verses (8–33) and chs 2–9 present versified units of instruction. They are not proverbs in our sense of the term but poems of varying length praising wisdom and urging everyone to pursue it. The individual lessons are not always clearly marked off. They treat a variety of subjects, using the pedagogical principle of repetition.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 1:1 *Solomon … David*. The greatest kings of Israel, who each reigned for 40 years. King Solomon was the son of the warrior-king David by Bathsheba, with whom David had committed adultery. God gave Solomon wisdom and a keen intellect (see pp 995–97); Solomon wrote 3,000 proverbs and 1,005 songs, as well as works on botany and zoology (1Ki 4:32–33).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 1:2 *wisdom*. Hbr *chokmah*, appears 37 times in Pr. Elsewhere in OT, it may refer to an artisan's skills. Wisdom is practical truth revealed by God. To know wisdom is to know of God Himself. God's people receive and apply wisdom through the working of the Holy Spirit (1Co 2:13). *instruction*. Hbr *musar*, "discipline," "chastisement." Education is inherently a moral activity, a worthy goal for all who belong to God through faith in Christ Jesus.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 1:3 *equity*. Hbr root means "level" or "straight," therefore, "just."

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 1:4 *simple*. Root meaning is "to be open," depicting those ready to receive direction, i.e., those in need of God's guidance (Ps 19:7; 116:6), esp the young.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 1:5 *wise … one who understands*. One with emerging maturity in knowing, perceiving, and discerning. (Cf 1Co 13:12.) *learning*. See note, 4:2.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 1:6 *proverb*. See pp 777–78. *riddles*. Puzzles or mysteries requiring complex applications of knowledge and understanding (e.g., 23:29–30).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 1:7 *fear of the* LORD *is the beginning of knowledge*. The First Commandment teaches that "We should fear, love, and trust in God above all things" (SC, p xxxv). God is the giver of all human comprehensions; He desires for His people to regard Him in awe, respect, and love. Ter: "Fear has its origin in knowledge, for how will a man fear that of which he knows nothing?" (*ANF* 3:130). "So childlike fear can be clearly defined as anxiety that has been connected with faith, that is, where faith comforts and sustains the anxious heart" (Ap XIIA 38). Ambr: "First stands faith, which is a sign of wisdom, as Solomon says" (*NPNF* 2 10:42). Such wisdom—given by God through Word and Sacrament, making us His children—is the theme for the Book of Proverbs. True wisdom begins with an individual's apprehension in knowledge and trust of Jesus Christ as the Son of God and Savior. See note, 2:5; see also p 1001. *fools*. Those who hatefully reject God and the wisdom and instruction He freely offers through faith. See p 1016.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 1:1–7 Solomon's introduction reminds us of the difference between true wisdom and the wisdom of the world. True wisdom is from the Lord, a message that is foolishness to those who reject it but God's very power to us who are being saved (1Co 1:18). • Lord, teach us true wisdom and give us its power to love and serve You. Amen.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 1:8–19 The first address to a son.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 1:8 *Hear, my son*. A mature generation, including both fathers and mothers, encourages the next generation to follow the treasures of true wisdom, esp the knowledge of salvation by grace through faith. Note: In the ancient Near East, the term "son" was often applied to a student, signifying the closeness of the relationship between teacher and pupil. The OT emphasizes the duty of parents to teach children (Dt 6:6–9). The address "my son" in Pr may often be regarded as indicating chapter headings. It is used 13 times for this purpose (1:8; 2:1; 3:1, 11, 21; 4:1, 10, 20; 5:1; 6:1, 20; 7:1, 24). "For this purpose He has given us children and issued this command: we should train and govern them according to His will. Otherwise, He would have no purpose for a father and a mother. Therefore, let everyone know that it is his duty, on peril of losing the divine favor, to bring up his children in the fear and knowledge of God above all things" (LC I 173–74). *teaching*. See note, 28:4.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 1:9 *garland … pendants*. Possibly alludes to an award for achievement. Two silver scroll amulets (c mid-seventh century

BC) bearing the Aaronic Benediction (Nu 6:24–26) were found in cave 25 of Ketef Hinnom, Jerusalem. Like decorations and jewelry, instruction and teaching are attractive when recognized among youth; the wisdom of the boy Jesus possessed this kind of appeal (Lk 2:52).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 1:10 *if sinners entice*. Peers hold ready influence among the young. The intensive form of the Hbr word for sinners shows that there are people for whom sin has become a habit.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 1:11 Temptations toward reckless evil, without regard for consequences, entice the young with the promise of adventure, gain, and belonging.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 1:12 *Sheol*. The grave. See p 792.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 1:14 *one purse*. Promise of acceptance and camaraderie by sharing wealth. The head of the family controlled the wealth, so youth were tempted to gain some money illegally outside family constraints.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 1:15 *hold back your foot*. Resist by God's power, which is the Gospel (Ti 2:11–12).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 1:17 Through instruction, God's people can flee entrapment, like birds aware of a net.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 1:18 *their own blood*. All sin leads to punishment. Sin is often its own punishment.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 1:19 *everyone who is greedy*. First counsel regarding the pursuit of easy money and violence. Greed and covetousness characterize the fallen human condition.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 1:8–19 Solomon warns against joining sinners in their adventurous plots, cautioning that the greedy and violent finally receive their punishment. Through the means of grace, God in Christ strengthens and preserves His people, just as He forgives all our sins for Jesus' sake. • O Lord, lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 1:20–33 First poem about wisdom.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 1:20 Wisdom, personified as a woman, freely, clearly, and directly proclaims to all, excluding no one. See "Supposed Remnants of Goddess Worship," p 997.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 1:21 *noisy streets … city gates*. Gathering places in ancient communities. See p 792. In social situations, godly wisdom is often challenged.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 1:22 *simple … scoffers … fools*. A cry against those content in their immaturity, those who delight in scoffing, and those who resist the way of the Lord.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 1:23 *turn*. Hbr *shub*, common OT word for repentance. Wisdom does not simply compel us to get an education but to repent and trust in the Lord (cf v 29b). See p 1080. *I will pour out my spirit to you*. The Law is pronounced (v 22) so that the Good News of God's love and grace might be proclaimed to receptive hearers. *spirit*. Hbr *ruach*, here the Spirit of the Lord, who works through the Word.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 1:26 *laugh at your calamity*. Words expressing righteous recognition of the true consequences for failing to listen to wisdom's call.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 1:27 *storm*. Hbr signifies a crashing storm that results in great devastation.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 1:28 *I will not answer*. God comes to us; we cannot come to Him. Those who consistently reject God and His grace finally shut out the Holy Spirit entirely; this is the unforgivable sin (Mt 12:31–32). *seek*. See p 843.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 1:29 *fear of the LORD*. Theme of Pr. See notes, v 7; 2:5.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 1:32 Those who deny and reject God so they may continue in sin have plotted their own destruction.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 1:33 *whoever listens*. God's grace gives peace and security to His own.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 1:20–33 God's will is freely proclaimed and may be universally received. His Law and His grace are for all people, for He desires all to be saved (1Tm 2:4). Those who turn their backs on God and His will face condemnation. But those who believe in Jesus as their Savior can rest secure, now and forever, in His love and care. • Lord, keep us steadfast in Your Word and faith. Amen.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON **Ch 2** The second address to a son.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 2:1 *treasure up*. Store, guard, value. *commandments*. Refers not only to the Ten Commandments but to all of God's words, which "are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus" (2Tm 3:15). See p 971.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 2:4 *seek … search*. Wisdom remains hidden from those who do not request it by prayer and faith. The search for wisdom

is lifelong.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 2:5 *fear of the LORD*. Luth: "The fear of God is reverence for God and spiritual worship of Him, for in this meaning Scripture everywhere uses the expression 'the fear of God.' For the truest worship of God does not consist in works, no matter how great and holy they may be, but in true and proper respect" (AE 19:13). *knowledge*. Always means more than mere cognitive awareness. It means an intimate relationship as well. God promises to give understanding and knowledge to those who revere Him as their God and Father. See note, 1:7; see also p 1001.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 2:6 *His mouth*. God equips and enlightens us through His Word.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 2:7 *walk*. See p 7. *integrity*. Hbr *tom*, "perfection," "completeness," "innocence." God enables His people to make sound judgments rooted in His wisdom rather than in the wisdom and norms of the world.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 2:8 *way of His saints*. God guards and guides. Pr contrasts two paths—the way of righteousness and the way of evil (v 12). *Did*: "There are two ways, one of life and one of death; but a great difference between the two ways" (*ANF* 7:377). See p 844.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 2:9 *equity*. See note, 1:3.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 2:10 *heart*. In Hbr thought, the heart is the center not only of emotions but also of capacities such as insight, critical evaluation, and human will.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 2:11 *discretion*. Adeptness at good decision making. God guides and empowers this ability through the reading and studying of His Word.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 2:12 *way of evil*. Pr often teaches a "two ways" theology: the way of goodness, followed by those who trust in the Lord for salvation (see note, v 8), and the way of evil, followed by the ungodly.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 2:14 Those who leave the right path for the way of evil eventually come to rejoice and delight in the way they have chosen. Through the effective working of the devil, what repulses at first becomes interesting, then acceptable, and finally a source of sinful delight. Cf Is 5:20.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 2:16 *forbidden woman … adulteress*. See ESV notes. Examples of women outside the realm of acceptability for God's

child, yet appealing, attractive, and enticing. Solomon's instruction here is sadly ironic because he was born of the union of King David and Bathsheba, a relationship that began with adultery. Also, sadly, Solomon "loved many foreign women" (1Ki 11:1–8).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 2:17 *covenant of her God*. Her marriage vow—part of her vow to remain faithful to God. God made a "marriage" covenant with His people when He brought them out of Egypt (Jer 31:32). They were to remain faithful to Him, just as husband and wife are to remain faithful to each other.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 2:18–19 Realities intended to inform and warn. Warnings about unfaithfulness to God in issues of sexuality also apply to other aspects of unfaithfulness to God.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 2:18 *house*. Her very house is death, because of the deadly entrapment a young man would certainly find there.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 2:19 *go to her*. A common euphemism for sex.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 2:20 *way of the good*. See note, v 8.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON **Ch 2** Two roads exist for every person—the way of righteousness and the way of evil. The way of evil is populated with those who reject God and His good and gracious will. The way of evil leads to certain and eternal death. The way of righteousness is traveled by God's forgiven children through faith in Christ Jesus, kept on the narrow path (Mt 7:13–14) by the working of the Holy Spirit through the means of grace. The path of righteousness leads to certain and eternal life. • Lord, keep us faithful in reading and studying Your Word and in receiving Your grace through the Sacraments. Amen.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 3:1–20 The third address to a son.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 3:1 *heart*. See note, 2:10. *commandments*. In keeping with the Fourth Commandment, Solomon asks his son to honor him by adhering to the wisdom he has been taught, God's holy will (the Ten Commandments).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 3:2 *peace*. Hbr *shalom*. Everything that provides wholesomeness, completeness, satisfaction. See note, 1Ch 22:9; see also p 1903.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 3:3 *steadfast love*. Hbr *chesed*. See p 843. *around your neck*. See note, 1:9. *tablet*. Can describe the tablets of the Ten Commandments (Ex 24:12). God's Spirit, working through the father's inspired words, tells the son to internalize God's commands (steadfast love

and faithfulness). This internalization takes place as the Spirit works through the same Word of God, guiding people to identify with and act according to God's will. The commands and the Word of God are closely associated with the working of the Spirit: "No prophet, neither Elijah nor Elisha, received the Spirit without the Ten Commandments 'or the spoken Word'" (SA III VIII 11).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 3:4 *favor*. Hbr *chen*, "approval" or "affection." See p 6. *good success*. A recognizable effect of the Word in the lives of those who follow God's instruction.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 3:5 *Trust*. Hbr *batach*, "feel safe," "confident." Demonstrates complete reliance on God's grace and guidance.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 3:6 *acknowledge*. Apply what you have learned from the Lord in everything you do.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 3:7 *fear the* LORD. See notes, 1:7; 2:5.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 3:8 Complete wholeness and well-being.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 3:9–10 In agricultural societies, even young children understand the connection between producing and storing crops. The language of sacrifice and offerings reflects the agricultural heritage of Israel.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 3:9 *firstfruits*. The Israelites were to sacrifice to the Lord the first fruit and grain of their harvests (Ex 23:16). See p 6.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 3:10 *filled … bursting*. God promises abundance to those who honor Him with their wealth and possessions. Cf Mal 3:10; Lk 6:38. Generally, those who live wisely before the Lord will prosper. However, the Lord also tells us to expect struggle and suffering in this sinful world (Ac 14:22).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 3:11 *do not despise*. Solomon's instructions tell what to do and what not to do in order to lead a God-pleasing life. See "Law," p 971. *discipline*. Hbr *musar*, "correction," "instruction." Through punishment and correction, parents chasten their children with the goal of teaching them. This is evidence of love and distinguishes discipline from simple punishment, which may only have the goal of curbing or preventing bad behavior.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 3:12 *him whom He loves*. Not all of God's training is pleasant at the time. Sometimes, in retrospect, God's love is most clearly evident in times of severe reproof and discipline. (Cf Heb 12:5–6.)

Ter: “O blessed servant, on whose amendment the Lord is intent! with whom He deigns to be wroth!” (*ANF* 3:714).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 3:1–12 God punishes those who stubbornly resist His mercy and refuse to follow His commands. But He promises abundant blessings to all who, in faith, receive His gracious love and salvation through the merits of Jesus Christ. • Heavenly Father, lead me to dedicate myself to You and to trust in You with my whole heart, to know and live according to Your will. Send me Your Spirit to bless the use of my time, abilities, and possessions so that I may serve You faithfully and effectually. Amen.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 3:13 *one who finds wisdom*. Cf the “finding” in v 4. True wisdom and understanding come only from God.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 3:14–15 *better than … silver … gold … more precious than jewels*. According to 1Ki, during Solomon’s reign, Israel enjoyed peaceful trade relations with the seafaring city of Tyre (9:10–14), caravan traders of Arabian Sheba (Yemen; 10:1–10), Ophir, in Arabia or on the Horn of Africa (Somalia; 10:11–12), and the Hittite kingdom in Asia Minor (Turkey; 10:29). Solomon’s wealth through trade became legendary (10:14–29). Yet treasures of true wisdom are far better than earthly valuables. Jesus encourages believers to store up treasure in heaven rather than on earth (Mt 6:19–21).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 3:16 *Long life*. Blessings of fulfilling and satisfying existence are connected here and elsewhere in Scripture with obedience to God’s commands. Cf Ex 20:12. *right hand … left*. Some see this as a reference to a wisdom goddess figurine, such as the Egyptian goddess Maat. However, similar language is used for invisible Yahweh (Ps 16:11; Hbr “at Your right hand”).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 3:18 *tree of life*. First of four such references in Pr (11:30; 13:12; 15:4). The tree of life found in Eden was able to impart eternal life to those who ate its fruit (Gn 2:9). Cherubim guarded the tree so fallen people would not eat of it and live forever in their sin (Gn 3:22, 24). For believers, the tree of life signifies the eternal salvation Jesus freely offers. Aug: “The tree of life would seem to have been in the [earthly] Paradise what the wisdom of God is in the spiritual [Paradise]” (*NPNF* 1 2:256).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 3:19 *founded the earth*. Wisdom was an instrument of God, the Creator. Cf 8:22–31. Iren: “The Word, namely the

Son, was always with the Father; and that Wisdom also, which is the Spirit, was present with Him, [before all] creation" (*ANF* 1:488). In early trinitarian theology, the Word and Wisdom are often closely associated. See p 1012.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 3:20 *deeps … dew*. Water is essential for life, a most basic element of creation. God gives all life. Today, through the waters of Baptism, God gives us new life through faith in Him (Mk 16:16).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 3:21–35 The fourth address to a son. Keeping wisdom and discretion is explained in human relationships, introduced by "do not" in vv 21, 25–31.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 3:22 Wisdom and discretion are inwardly received and outwardly evidenced. *adornment*. Hbr *chen*. See notes, v 4; 1:9.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 3:23 God's Word makes us secure and steady as we walk in His path (Ps 119:105).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 3:26 *confidence*. The righteous have confidence rooted and originating in the Lord. Cf 2Co 3:4–5. They do not miss a step, though they see others suffer consequences of sin.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 3:27 *those to whom it is due*. Those in need. We sin not only when we do wrong (sin of commission) but also when we fail to do what is right when the opportunity presents itself (sin of omission).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 3:30 *no reason*. There are times when contention is necessary, when one has just cause.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 3:32 *devious person*. A malicious, unrepentant sinner is an abomination to the Holy God. The end of such a person is everlasting torment because he or she has rejected God's gift of salvation. *confidence*. Translated as "friendship" in Ps 25:14 ("secret counsel" in ESV note). God reveals certain knowledge and understandings only to the faithful, while withholding them from unbelievers (Mt 13:11–17).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 3:33 *Lord's curse*. Punishment and torment, ultimately eternal damnation for disobedience to God's Law (Dt 27:26). (See SC, Close of the Commandments, p xxxvi.) *house*. Household; family.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 3:34 Quoted in Jas 4:6 and 1Pt 5:5 as "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble." Mary, the mother of our Lord, expresses a similar thought in the Magnificat (Lk 1:52). Humility in this context describes contrite sinners, who are declared holy and righteous by the Lord's mercy. *favor*. See p 6.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 3:35 Ultimately, the wise, rejected and scoffed by those who are evil, will be exalted through their inheritance as God's children. In contrast, those without spiritual wisdom will receive eternal punishment and disgrace.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 3:13–35 Solomon, parent and teacher, emphasizes the blessings God gives through the wisdom He imparts. These blessings include the treasures of peace, security, and confidence, apportioned to those who trust in the Lord for forgiveness, new life, and eternal salvation. The blessings of those possessing true wisdom contrast with the condemnation accorded those who resist and scorn God's favor. • Triune God, make us humble before You so that we may receive and ever hold fast the treasures of Your grace. Enable us to live according to the wisdom that comes only from You. Amen.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 4:1–9 An address to sons.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 4:1 *sons*. Solomon now addresses several sons instead of an individual child. Though instruction may be delivered to a group, wisdom must be acquired individually.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 4:2 *precepts*. Hbr *lekach*. Translated "learning" in 1:5. Root means to "take" or "receive." These are not new or untried concepts, but rather a collection of truths passed from generation to generation among God's people.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 4:3 *my father … my mother*. David and Bathsheba (cf 1:8; 6:20).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 4:4–9 Solomon's direct and simple statement encourages his offspring to acquire, retain, and cherish that which has true and enduring value. No truth is of greater value and consequence than knowing and believing in the Savior.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 4:7 *The beginning*. What is truly important. Cf 1:7.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 4:8 Hipp: "There are virtues in our power which exalt the knowledge of God … practice, study, and the whole chain of other virtues. And the man who observes these, honors wisdom. And the reward is, to be exalted to be with her, and to be embraced by her in the chamber of heaven" (*ANF* 5:172).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 4:9 *graceful garland … beautiful crown*. See note, 1:9. Metaphors for honor, signifying a praiseworthy accomplishment or position.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 4:10–19 The fifth address to a son builds on the previous words directed to sons, making a personal application of wisdom.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 4:11 Recipient is no longer a young child. Much teaching and learning has already taken place.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 4:12 *walk … run*. Whatever the pace of life, even during harried and frantic times, God's Spirit will guard our progress.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 4:13 *she is your life*. Possessing faith in the Lord and obtaining the Spirit's power to obey God's will through the means of grace are key to a full, complete, and eternal life. Wise teachers impart this truth; wise students receive it.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 4:14 *path … way*. Lifestyle. See p 844.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 4:16 Description of the misdirected zeal of the ungodly.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 4:17 *eat … drink*. Those who go the way of evil are sustained and nourished by a diet of wickedness and violence.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 4:18–19 *light of dawn … deep darkness*. The Lord is both the path and the light of the world (Jn 8:12). Those without the Lord know only darkness. Those in darkness try to make others stumble (4:16), but they themselves stumble because they are in the dark and do not even know what caused them to stumble. In contrast, those who walk in the light of the Lord enjoy not only His love and forgiveness but also the support and friendship (fellowship) of other believers (1Jn 1:5–7).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 4:18 *brighter and brighter*. Enlightened as the Spirit works through the Word, God's people grow in grace, coming more fully into the light (Jn 3:20–21).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 4:19 The way of the wicked is the natural human condition. Those who do evil do not want the light to expose them. Rather, they are content to stumble without light in the darkness of evil. Cf Jn 3:19–20.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 4:20–27 The sixth address to a son refers to serving and honoring God with the parts of our body. Cf Rm 12:1.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 4:20 *incline your ear*. Pay attention.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 4:22 *life … healing*. God promises eternal life as well as temporal healing.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 4:23 *from it flow the springs*. As water gushes from an underground spring, so wise action originates in inner convictions and drives. Through God's Word, the Holy Spirit dwells in the heart of the

believer, from which flows life-giving power (Jn 7:38–39). Only by God's power will the young man be able to follow his father's advice.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 4:24 The two parts of this verse may have slightly different meanings: (1) God desires that His people do not speak sinfully; and (2) that they avoid those who utter sinful speech.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 4:25 Focus on God and things of God. It is not enough to have wisdom begun; it must be sustained. God sustains wisdom in His people through the means of grace.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 4:26 *Ponder*. See ESV note. Weigh, consider, examine. The root word can describe the pointer on a balance scale (16:11).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 4:27 *Do not swerve to the right or to the left*. The youth is advised to remain upright, to remain focused on God and the things of God, and with intentionality and certitude to turn away from evil.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON **Ch 4** Little or no formal education existed in OT times. Instead, the head of the household taught his family, including small children, in the ways of the Lord. Through this instruction, Israelites came to understand their identity as God's chosen people, to know God's saving love and promises, and to anticipate the coming of the Savior (e.g., Ex 12:24–27; Dt 4:6–7). Godly parents warn their children of the temporal and eternal consequences of wickedness. The heavenly Father assures us of the grace and blessings God offers to those who love and trust in their Savior and who, relying on His Spirit's power, seek to walk in His light.
• Lord, forgive our sins and help us each day to walk in the bright light of the new life You have given us in Baptism. Help us correctly and appropriately to teach others of Your will and love. Amen.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON **Ch 5** The seventh address to a son, in which a new lesson in wisdom begins; this one focuses on withstanding the seduction of an adulteress, who is likely also a prostitute. Cf 7:13–14, 19–20.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 5:2 Discretion or good judgment is a goal when seduction is the enemy. *your lips may guard knowledge*. Knowledge of God's truth is to be spoken aloud in real-life situations. Cf Ps 119:43–48. A similar description is made of a priest in Mal 2:7. The lips of the faithful student here will be contrasted with the lips of the adulteress.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 5:3 *lips*. Her lips carry the appeal of both kisses and seductive speech. The imagery here of honey and oil shows them to be both sweet and smooth. *forbidden woman*. Lit, "strange." This is a woman

who does not belong with the one she seduces. She is foreign and therefore forbidden to him. She is also living outside the moral boundaries God has set for His people.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 5:4 *wormwood*. *Artemisia judaica,* one of several artemisia plant varieties native to Israel. Its juices have a bitter taste. *two-edged sword*. This violent weapon can bring death and destruction, as in Dt 32:25. Clearly, the adulteress's promises (v 3) differ from what she delivers.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 5:5 *death … Sheol*. The immoral life leads to its ultimate consequence: death, both physical and spiritual. See p 792.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 5:6 *ponder*. See note, 4:26. In contrast, this woman gives no thought to where her sin might take her. Solomon describes the consequences of sinful behavior to keep his son from sinning. He shows the end of this woman's road, revealing the tragedy of her ignorance for herself and anyone who sins with her.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 5:7 *sons*. See note, 4:1.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 5:8 Avoidance remains one of the wisest strategies when facing temptation. Joseph used the strategy (Gn 39:11–12), and Paul counseled Timothy in the same way (2Tm 2:22).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 5:9 *honor*. Reputation in the community. Solomon begins a list showing the high price to be paid in the future for a moment of moral weakness. *to others*. People will mercilessly use blackmail and extortion until all wealth is gone.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 5:10 *strangers … foreigner*. The reference here may be to the husband of the foreign adulteress who might demand and exact compensation for his "loss."

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 5:11–14 Solomon takes his son to old age and to the regrets that follow moral compromise, long past. See conclusion in v 23.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 5:13 *teachers … instructors*. May refer to an array of wisdom teachers. More likely, though, they are the son's primary teachers, his own father and mother (1:8; 4:3–4; 6:20).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 5:14 *assembled congregation*. Though he stands amid God's people, he stands as a hypocrite who consorted with strangers and foreigners (v 10). In the Law, adultery is a capital offense (Lv 20:10).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 5:15–20 Having shown the costs of yielding to sexual temptation outside marriage, Solomon turns to a vivid celebration of the gift of sexual intimacy within marriage.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 5:15 *your own cistern … your own well*. In an arid climate, having one's own source of water is a blessing. So having one's own wife is a blessing to be cherished—like a cistern, well, spring, stream, or fountain. For another use of water imagery to show the blessing of one's wife, cf Sg 4:12, 15.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 5:16 *springs*. One's wife and children, who are under a husband's protection (Sg 4:12). *in the streets?* Keep sexual intimacy within the bonds of marriage, where it belongs. Guard the honor of your spouse and your offspring. The implication is that the adulteress does not truly belong to anyone (7:12).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 5:17 *for yourself alone … not for strangers with you*. God clearly intends for faithfulness within marriage between one man and one woman. Cf Mal 2:13–16.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 5:18 *blessed*. Sexual delight in marriage is God given. Years of growing intimacy characterize God's design for the estate of marriage.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 5:19 *deer*. Illustrates the beauty and gracefulness of one's wife as in Sg 8:14. *doe*. Lit, a female mountain goat or ibex. The dark eyes of these animals would resemble a woman's eyes adorned with black eye makeup. *always in her love*. Solomon presents the rich intimacy within marriage characterized by constant love. He points his son to the beauty and fulfillment of God's design for marriage.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 5:20 *intoxicated*. See ESV note, v 19. Contrasting the blessing of v 19 is the mere physical intoxication (minus the love) that characterizes adultery.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 5:21 *a man's ways are before the eyes of the* LORD. We are accountable for our decisions not only to the faith community in which we live (v 14) but also to God Himself. When we sin, we sin against God (Gn 39:9). *ponders*. See note, 4:26.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 5:22 Solomon shows how sinners become caught in a trap of their own making. David provided the same insight in Ps 7:14–16. Solomon exposes here both the habitual nature of particular sins and their accompanying tangled web of deception and destructive consequences.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 5:23 *dies for lack of discipline*. Once again, Solomon takes his son to the end of the road of moral compromise and lack of discipline. (Cf vv 11–14.)

PROVERBS—NOTE ON **Ch 5** So much of God's teaching of the Law is exposé. God shows us what sin looks like, why we sin, and where sin takes us. That is what Solomon does with his son. He gives him a vivid look at the road to and from adultery. What's more, he shows the sheer joy of deep, lasting intimacy within marriage. Sin is never just a moral lapse or isolated infraction of one of God's Commandments; its consequences lead ultimately to death (Rm 6:23). How many of us might have been spared the horrific aftermath of sin if only we had looked beyond the sin to its consequences! The Gospel of Jesus Christ motivates us to take the higher road. We honor faithfulness in marriage and in all our relationships because of Him who was faithful to us in all things. • Wise Father, You have given us marriage as an estate in which we can know the blessings of lifelong faithfulness between a man and a woman. In Your grace, You have shown us faithfulness in Jesus, Your Son. Confirm in us, O Lord, a desire to do what pleases You in all of our relationships, that we may be faithful as husbands and wives, parents and children, friends and neighbors. In Jesus' name. Amen.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 6:1–19 The eighth address to a son focuses on practices that threaten living by God's wisdom: guaranteeing another's loan, laziness, and lying.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 6:1 *put up security for your neighbor*. Guaranteeing another's loan in case of default is discouraged elsewhere in Pr (11:15; 17:18; 20:16; 22:26; 27:13). The practice may be motivated by the promise of an easy profit in return for risk. *given your pledge*. Similar to our handshake, people would strike their hands to mark a binding agreement in front of witnesses.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 6:2 *snared … caught*. Entering into such an obligation is like an animal entering a trap. The trap here is not merely a potential liability but a desire for more and more easy money. Love of money, rather than wisdom, can take hold of a person's heart (Heb 13:5).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 6:3–5 The one held captive by the debts of another must do everything possible, and immediately, to urge the debtor to pay off the debts.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 6:6–11 Solomon shows the dangers of laziness.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 6:6 *ant*. The harvester ant, common in Israel, gathers grain to its nests for winter. Chem: "Does God will that we seek and consider these marks of His divinity in our own minds and in the entire

nature of things? The answer is yes. … Solomon in Prov. 6:6 directs the lazy man to the ant" (*LTh* 1:53–54). *sluggard*. Hbr "idle," "lazy." We would say "lazybones."

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 6:7 *Without … chief*. The ant does not have to be ordered or motivated by authority as a parent must often motivate a lazy child. The ant is a picture of motivation from within—a picture of wisdom.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 6:8 LXX includes additional verses after v 8 describing the hard work of the bee, considered by ancient Greek culture to be wise and productive, despite its small size.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 6:9 *How long will you lie there, O sluggard?* Question catches the waiting mode of those who lie with the lazy.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 6:10 *A little … little … little*. Laziness works in small increments, in lame excuses that value present comforts at the risk of future calamity.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 6:11 *poverty*. Crucial to understanding sin is a look at its consequences. One consequence of laziness is finding oneself suddenly and unexpectedly poor, as if having been robbed. Cf 2Th 3:6–12, where Christ is the motivation to be productive.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 6:12–19 Lesson on the dangers of lies and deception.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 6:12 *A worthless person … with crooked speech*. Solomon labels the deceptive person as one who is good for nothing and whose mouth is corrupt. The corrupt speech here can include slander, gossip, misrepresentation, or schemes that call for fast talk with skilled deception. Cf Jas 4:11–12 for an understanding of speaking evil of another as playing judge, a role belonging only to God.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 6:13–14 Not only does the mouth participate in deceit but also the winking eye, pointing finger, scraping (shuffling) feet, and perverted heart. Hbr here points to continual, habitual body language. These could be signals to others who are scheming or to looks and gestures that give away the insincerity behind the words.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 6:14 *continually sowing discord*. Ripping at people's reputations, passing rumors, or scheming toward a hidden end can lead to conflict in any community.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 6:15 *calamity … suddenly … in a moment … broken*. Emphasizing that, once found out, the deceiver is ruined.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 6:16–19 Solomon presents the first of the numerical sayings in Pr. The move from six to seven indicates comprehensiveness. See notes, ch 30; Jb 5:19. The seventh abomination is the deceiving lies and resulting conflict discussed in vv 12–15, making it the most memorable.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 6:16 *abomination*. Hbr is plural; it indicates religious or cultural taboos. Expression used 12 times in Pr to denote evil acts that will bring God's wrath on those who do them. *to Him*. Lit, "of His soul."

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 6:17 *hands that shed innocent blood*. That the flagrant sin of murder is listed amid other sins more subtle and often hard to prove and punish seems surprising. All sins are hated by God, even the ones missed or camouflaged by humans. Solomon's student will learn that God sees into the heart of the sinner.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 6:1–19 God's Law shows us not only our sins but also their motivations and consequences. Consider a thought, an action, or a word by asking, Why am I doing this? Where could it take me? Can I do this in the name of the Lord? God hates sin so deeply that He sent His Son to take away sin's power—its curses and its eternal consequences. In Christ, we are forgiven and empowered to overcome sin. Good-for-nothings are made into God's precious and valuable sons and daughters. • Lord, You know my heart. Forgive those times when sin, not Your grace and Spirit, has motivated me. Take my words, Lord, my hands, and my feet, and use them for Your good purposes. May all who follow You speak well of one another and know the peace that comes with wisdom rooted in Your Word. In Jesus' name. Amen.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 6:20–35 Solomon returns to the topic of adultery as he begins a ninth address to his son.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 6:20–24 Reflects God's commands regarding His Law in Dt 6:4–9 and culminates in specific warnings against adultery.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 6:21 See note, 1:9.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 6:23 *a lamp … a light … the way*. These metaphors reveal the use of God's Commandments to teach us, to show us the good way to go. The Law shows us a way of life. Jesus, the Word and the Way (Jn 1:14; 14:6), takes us there.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 6:24 *evil woman … adulteress*. See ESV notes. Often in chs 1–9, wisdom is contrasted with adultery. Cf 7:4–5. When this

topic is discussed, it is often a contrast involving two women (here, "your mother" [v 20] and the adulteress).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 6:25 *beauty … eyelashes*. A first caution: do not let her beauty take you in. Israelite women painted their eyelids to accent their beauty.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 6:26 *loaf of bread*. Another caution against the prostitute: her price may be as cheap as a loaf of bread because she may merely seek to survive on the street. *precious life*. Adultery has a double threat: the husband's revenge, and capital punishment under the Law (Dt 22:22).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 6:27–29 Two fiery metaphors—carrying fire and walking on coals—point to the inevitability of getting "burned" by fornication.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 6:30–31 Metaphor that likens fornication to theft. If a thief steals food out of hunger, people may sympathize with his situation, but if he is caught, he will have to make compensation anyway—far beyond the cost of the items (Ex 22:1–9). Again, fornication and adultery are costly sins, demanding consequences.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 6:32–35 *lacks sense*. Physical harm (disease), disgrace, and the insatiable jealousy and revenge of the adulterer's spouse all make adultery not just unwise but downright stupid.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 6:20–35 The Sixth Commandment, "You shall not commit adultery," holds high God's institution of marriage and protects us from the deadly consequences of sexual immorality. Pr teaches us to weigh the heavy consequences of sexual immorality before we act. Personal health, reputation, family, and career are at stake—and our relationship with God. Wisdom weighs the consequences and counts the costs. Wisdom, who is Jesus Christ, brings us the power and motivation to live worthy of our holy calling, especially where sexual purity is concerned. • Father, in Your wisdom You call Your people to purity, reserving sexual intimacy for marriage. Give me the wisdom to walk away from temptation and to overcome it by Your Word and Spirit; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, my Lord. Amen.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON **Ch 7** The tenth and final address to a son also concerns adultery. This includes an object lesson (vv 6–23) framed by cautions (vv 1–5, 24–27).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 7:1 *with you*. Keeping God's Law is not mere obedience to external commands; it is a matter of the heart (v 3). When we store God's words within us, God keeps us from sinning (Ps 119:11).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 7:2 *live*. Life at its fullest comes to those who fear, love, and trust in God and His commands and promises. *the apple of your eye*. Lit, "the little man of the eye"; refers to the reflection that appears on the eye as a person watches what is precious to him or her.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 7:4–5 Once again, wisdom is contrasted with the adulteress. When we keep intimate company with God's wisdom ("my sister … intimate friend"), we will be kept from adultery.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 7:6 *lattice*. Windows in ancient Israel had no glass. To keep birds out and air flowing, wooden lattices covered the openings.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 7:7 *a young man lacking sense*. Echoing 6:32, Solomon singles out one young man who shows his lack of wisdom by approaching the haunts of an adulteress.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 7:8 *passing along the street near her corner*. In 1:20, wisdom was personified as a woman crying out in the streets. Here, Solomon shows that in those same streets, sexual temptation cries out. He presents the struggle between the two in the heart of one young man.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 7:9 *night and darkness*. Practically, the darkness provides cover for the young man's approach to sin. Spiritually, it symbolizes his lack of wisdom, for wisdom is walking in the light (Ps 119:105).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 7:11 *loud and wayward*. The woman is depicted as brash and aggressive toward the young man, oblivious to social customs requiring public modesty by a woman, who should have been home at night.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 7:13 *seizes him and kisses him*. The bold greeting stirs the young man's sexual appetite. With that aroused, she will help him make excuses for his sin.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 7:14 *I had to offer sacrifices … paid my vows*. The woman presents herself as religious, as having just made a peace offering in connection with a vow. (Cf Lv 7:12–16.) Some of the meat in a peace offering could be eaten by the person making the offering, but it had to be eaten within two days. What a wily invitation! The woman turns her temptation to sin into an invitation to a fellowship meal. Her brashness

probably also shows that these religious meals had been secularized over time (e.g., the secularization of the Christmas feast into Christmas parties).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 7:15 *you … you … you*. She emphasizes that she has been seeking him in particular, appealing to his pride and prowess. In truth, any unwitting "trick" would have satisfied her.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 7:16 *colored linens from Egyptian linen*. Very expensive (Ezk 27:7). In what follows, she offers the young man not a cheap thrill but an experience in lavish living, befitting the rich and famous.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 7:17 *myrrh*. Imported, highly fragrant gum extracted from *burseraceae* trees. *aloes*. Costly imported products made from aromatic resin secreted by older eaglewood trees. *cinnamon*. Imported spice made from the inner bark of a tropical evergreen tree in the laurel family. See note, Sg 4:13–15.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 7:18 *let us take our fill of love*. She makes her proposition, inviting the man to sexual pleasures likened to a sumptuous meal (cf Sg 4:10–5:1).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 7:19 *my husband is not at home*. Lest the young man fear being caught by the woman's husband, she assures him that he is gone on a long business journey. She continues to anticipate his reasons for rejecting her offer.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 7:20 *money*. Lit, "silver." See note, Jsh 24:32. *at full moon*. No doubt that was days away.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 7:21 *smooth talk*. Lit, "smooth lips"; may also refer to her kisses. Her mouth breathes seduction. In v 5, her words were said to be smooth.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 7:22 *All at once*. The downfall of the young man is immediate; he is unwittingly trapped and killed.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 7:23 *cost him his life*. See note, 6:26. The young man has left behind the life God's wisdom brings. To choose sin is to choose the way that leads to death (14:12; 16:25; Rm 6:23).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 7:24–27 Solomon summarizes the point of the illustration, describing the deadly consequences of a turn off wisdom's path. The repetition enhances learning, as Solomon restates from 2:18 and 5:5 that this woman's road leads to death.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 7:27 *Sheol*. See p 792.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON **Ch 7** Whether male or female, husband or wife, the one who commits adultery chooses immediate gratification over

faithfully keeping one's commitments to God and spouse. The breaking of the Sixth Commandment has repeatedly brought death to marriage, family, friendships, and career. More significant, this willful sin walks away from God and God's order in His creation, in which He reserves sexual intimacy for the marriage of one man and one woman. No talk of love, youthful naiveté, or even shared religious values can camouflage the destructive force of the sin of sexual intimacy outside marriage. The One who is faithful in all things offers forgiveness for all who have taken this deadly turn. The apostle Paul likens God's relationship with us to a marriage characterized by service and sacrifice (Eph 5:22–27). God's Word and wisdom light the way to sexual purity and marital faithfulness. • Lord Christ, Wisdom of God, plant Your Word in my heart that I may be faithful in my sexuality. Save me from wanton sins of immediate pleasure, which make no sense for those who live by Your light and truth. Lord Jesus, be for me the way that leads from death to life. In Your strong name. Amen.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON **Ch 8** Second poem about wisdom. The first poem was 1:20–33.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 8:1 *Does not wisdom call?* Opening rhetorical question assumes that everyone reading is aware of wisdom's invitation. *her*. Wisdom is personified as a good woman, in stark contrast to the adulterous woman of ch 7. See "Supposed Remnants of Goddess Worship," p 997.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 8:2 *at the crossroads she takes her stand*. Here and in vv 3–4, wisdom stations herself to be heard in the midst of life. She calls out for travelers on their way in and out of the town.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 8:4 *men … children of man*. Wisdom's invitation is for all; her call is universal.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 8:5 *simple ones … fools*. Here, as elsewhere in Pr, wisdom offers her message and benefits to those who are unschooled and vulnerable. Because sin taints every human mind and heart, all people meet her description.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 8:6 *noble … right*. Wisdom's message fills the mind and heart with all good things. Paul reflects this call to things noble and true in Php 4:8. To these, add truth (v 7) and righteousness (v 8). This is the first time these virtuous descriptors are clearly tied to wisdom's message. Solomon is bringing his students to a new level of understanding wisdom.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 8:7–8 *wickedness*. Solomon contrasts the virtues of wisdom's message with its opposites. The parallelism of the contrasting realities clarifies and heightens the value of wisdom's virtues.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 8:9 Wisdom's message is grasped rightly by those who have the knowledge of God (2:5).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 8:10–11 *instead of silver … rather than choice gold*. Unlike Lady Folly, wisdom asks no money. The riches she offers surpass any object of human desire.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 8:12–14 Wisdom's attributes parallel the gifts of the Spirit of the Messiah in Is 11:1–3, clearly identifying Christ as our wisdom.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 8:13 *The fear of the LORD is hatred of evil*. See notes, 1:7; 2:5. The more we lovingly revere God, trusting exclusively in His wisdom, the more we will hate and shun evil. In this sense, we take on God's own character in detesting what is evil in His sight (6:16–19). See note, Ps 5:5.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 8:15–16 *kings … rulers … princes … nobles*. Wisdom is a crucial asset for those who govern. Their just government evidences the wisdom of God, who sets governments in place and uses them for His purposes (Rm 13:4).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 8:17 *I love those who love me*. Wisdom is set into the context of an intimate relationship. The verse's second line adds to the thought of the first, promising that those who love and seek Wisdom will find her. Cf 1Co 12:8, 31. *seek … find*. Words used often in Proverbs for the quest for wisdom (2:4–5; 3:13; 4:22).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 8:18–19 *enduring wealth … fruit … yield*. Agricultural language accents Wisdom as a renewing resource, promising future blessings, in contrast with the stagnant wealth of precious metals and gems.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 8:20 *the way … the paths*. Wisdom walks with those who seek righteousness and justice. See p 844. Jesus described Himself as the way (Jn 14:6).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 8:21 *granting an inheritance to those who love me*. Riches that come to those who follow God's Wisdom, the Christ, are celebrated in several NT passages: Eph 2:7; 3:8–10; Php 4:19; Col 1:27; 2:2. *granting an inheritance*. Paul celebrates the rich inheritance of those who are in Christ (Eph 1:13–14; Col 1:10–12).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 8:22–31 Poem about God's use of wisdom in creation.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 8:22 *possessed Me at the beginning*. See ESV note. Just as Solomon's students are encouraged to acquire or possess Wisdom (1:5; 4:5, 7), so the Lord possesses Wisdom in eternity, even before His act of creation. This personification of wisdom points to the eternal nature of the pre-incarnate Christ, present at creation (Jn 1:1–3). Just: "The Word of Wisdom, who is Himself this God begotten of the Father of all things, and Word, and Wisdom, and Power, and the Glory of the Begetter, will bear evidence to me, when He speaks by Solomon" (*ANF* 1:227).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 8:23 *set up*. Hbr word here is used elsewhere in the Bible only for God's coronation of a king (Ps 2:6). Variant of the word can also mean "to weave," as woven or knit in the womb (Ps 139:13), here then referring to Wisdom begotten of God. For Christ as appointed Messiah before creation, cf Mi 5:2; Jn 17:5.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 8:24–26 *brought forth … brought forth*. Special form of Hbr verb *chul*. Term can describe various forms of movement, such as dancing or writhing in pain (as in giving birth). This anticipates the NT language describing Jesus as "begotten," the eternal generation of the Son from the Father, before time and space were created. *Before … before … before*. Threefold repetition shows Wisdom to be eternal (cf "before all things" [Col 1:17], clearly not a part of creation).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 8:26 *dust*. Plural in Hbr. The countless particles that make up the world.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 8:27–29 Provides a picture of the first three days of creation (Gn 1:3–10), placing Wisdom there from the creation of the heavens to the creation of the earth's foundations. Wisdom saw it all, from the heights to the depths of creation.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 8:27 *circle*. Cf Gn 1:7–8.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 8:30–31 *delight … rejoicing … rejoicing … delighting*. Chiastic arrangement links the joy between the Lord and Wisdom to the joy between the Lord and humanity at creation. Ath: "In whom does the Father rejoice, except as seeing Himself in His own Image, which is His Word?" (*NPNF* 2 4:393).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 8:30 *beside Him*. The universe was created by God's Word, a powerful companion to His presence. God said, "Let there be," and there was (Gn 1:3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24, 26). God spoke

(wisdom), and things that never were came to be (Heb 11:3). *like a master workman*. More than just an observer, Wisdom crafted creation. Earlier, wisdom is depicted as a woman. However, in this poem (vv 22–31), the feminine imagery is replaced by a first-person address ("Me," "I") and depiction of wisdom as a "workman." This points forward to the description of the man Jesus as God's Wisdom in the NT. *I was daily His delight*. Wisdom, Christ, the Son of God, was and is an object of delight and pleasure for the Father (Mt 3:17). *rejoicing before Him always*. As the Father finds pleasure in the Son, the Son delights in His Father. The reciprocity within the Trinity is evident here as the close mutual relationship between Father and Son is clear (Mt 11:27; Lk 10:22; Jn 5:19–21). This could also refer to the Son's daily pleasure in creation, which His Father declared good (Gn 1:31).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 8:31 *delighting in the children of man*. As the creation account ends with the creation of mankind (Gn 1:26–28), so this poetic presentation of creation recalls Wisdom's pleasure in seeing human beings created in God's image (Gn 1:31; Ps 8:3–5).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 8:32–36 Concluding address returns to the appeal of vv 1–21.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 8:34 *waiting beside my doors*. In 5:8, Solomon counseled students not to go near the door of the adulterous woman. Here, though, they are encouraged to wait eagerly at Wisdom's doorstep. Wisdom alone grants entry into her home.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 8:35 *life*. The adulterous woman brings death (5:5; 7:27); Wisdom brings life (cf promises in Jn 3:16; 8:51; 10:10). *favor*. See p 6. Wisdom's invitation, like that of Christ, is one that offers God's favor (2Co 6:1–2; Lk 4:19).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 8:36 *all who hate me love death*. Stakes are high where following Wisdom is concerned.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON **Ch 8** The Lord is our Wisdom. His words and atoning works call from the heights and the crossroads of life for all humanity to hear. Like Wisdom in ch 8, Christ calls us from worldly foolishness, judgment, and death to obedience, God's favor, and abundant life. Christ's eternal nature, His relationship with the Father, and His work in creation all mark Him as the very wisdom of God. As such, He hates the sins of pride, arrogance, evil, and perverted speech (v 13). He calls us to do the same (Rm 12:9). He reaches out in love to all who love Him and

diligently seek Him. In Christ, our Wisdom, we are rich beyond any human measure! • Lord Christ, Your wisdom brings life. You favor both the great and the humble, rulers and children, calling us from foolish sins to righteousness and truth. When we have lost our way, You are the door to all that is good and right, noble and true. Lord, make us wise unto Your salvation, that by Your gracious wisdom we may truly live. In Your name. Amen.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON **Ch 9** Third poem about wisdom.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 9:1–6 Wisdom, again personified as a woman, prepares a house and a feast for all who answer her invitation.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 9:1 *Wisdom*. Plural in Hbr, perhaps to amplify wisdom's honor. *seven pillars*. Israelite houses were built with pillars on the ground floor to support the upper room, where the family dwelt. As seven is often a sacred number (see p 217), the house with seven pillars or foundations may refer to the whole earth. (Pillars or foundations are said to support the earth in Jb 38:6; Ps 104:5.) In Pr 8, Wisdom's call is universal. Here, her house may be worldwide. Cf 14:1.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 9:2 *set her table*. Wisdom prepares for her feast as if by checklist.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 9:3 *her young women*. Wisdom's servant girls remind one of the servants announcing the wedding feast in Jesus' parable (Mt 22:2–4). *highest places in the town*. As in 8:2, the invitation goes out for all to hear.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 9:4 *simple … lacks sense*. The audience for Wisdom's invitation is all who lack wisdom but have not yet rejected her. They may not be seeking Wisdom, but she seeks their attention.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 9:5 *wine I have mixed*. Wine was often mixed with spices.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 9:6 *live*. Wisdom promises life to all who share her feast, which gives life (8:35). The way of Wisdom leads to abundant life.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 9:7–12 These verses bridge between Wisdom's banquet (vv 1–6) and Folly's banquet (vv 13–18).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 9:7 Foolish people are not open to correction and may respond to admonition with defensiveness and counterattack.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 9:8 *reprove a wise man*. Those who are wise are open to correction and reproof. They know the value of wisdom, even when

it hurts.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 9:9 *wiser*. Wisdom is not simply attained all at once. Eager for growth, wise people are teachable. The more they learn, the wiser they are.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 9:10 *fear of the LORD … knowledge*. See notes, 1:7; 2:5. Iren: "The sense of sin leads to repentance, and God bestows His compassion upon those who are penitent" (*ANF* 1:457). *Holy One*. Used for God in Pr only here and in 30:3.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 9:11 As in 3:1–2, those who live by Wisdom will be blessed with a long life.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 9:12 God gives wisdom, and the wise are blessed. Those who reject Wisdom's invitation have no one to blame but themselves for the sad plight of their lives. The wise receive grace's gift, deliverance from the way of death. Those on their way with Folly will get what they deserve and bear it all alone.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 9:1–12 The gracious invitation of Wisdom extends to all who live apart from the life she longs to bring. Jesus Christ calls the world to His banquet (Jn 6:32–59). Those who respond in faith will live forever in the company of Christ and His banqueting guests. Those who foolishly reject Him are dead in their sins. • Lord Jesus, save me from the folly of rejecting You. Make me wise to the truth of Your love. Help me to know You and love You so deeply that in Your life-giving presence I will grow more like You. For Your name's sake. Amen.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 9:13 *woman Folly*. Lit, "the woman of foolishness." This feminine form appears only here; someone who is the embodiment of simple-minded gullibility, the opposite of wisdom.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 9:14 *sits at the door of her house*. Unlike Wisdom, busy with banquet preparations, Folly just sits and waits for the next gullible victim. Cf 5:8. *takes a seat on the highest places*. Cf v 3. Here Folly, perhaps mocking Wisdom, calls to those far and near. Note that lazy Folly also sits on the heights. Ironically, she enthrones herself where she does not belong.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 9:16 Same appeal as v 4, revealing that one must distinguish between the invitations of these two opposing women.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 9:17 *Stolen water … bread eaten in secret*. Folly's banquet of water and bread does not compare with Wisdom's

banquet of wine and meat. What's worse, Folly's food and drink are stolen goods, symbolizing the stolen pleasures of adultery.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 9:18 *the dead are there*. Wisdom brings life (9:6, 11). Folly brings death. Her banquet is cheap and phony, a stolen parody. Once again, Solomon presents a horrible picture of dead people eating, meant to shock the foolish into seeing folly for what it is—a way to death (2:18–19). Rm 6:23 presents a similar stark contrast between death and life in terms of our justification. *Sheol*. See p 792.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 9:13–18 God's Law warns against the deadly foolishness all around us. Life in the Gospel saves us from a naive gullibility that sets us up for moral and spiritual disaster. The Law is the light that shows us the dirt in the house of our lives. The Gospel is the broom that sweeps it clean. The Gospel moves us from lazy moral laxity to wise discipline. The folly of sin gets a just punishment—death. The wisdom of our God-given faith brings eternal life. • Lord, save me from the folly of going my own way, for in the end folly abandons me in the company of the dead. Give me a discerning mind to know how folly's call would take me from wisdom to a table for the dead. Then, by Your grace and Spirit, bring me to a feast of life, rich with Your presence, lasting forever. Amen.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 10:1–22:16 *The proverbs of Solomon*. General collection of Solomon's proverbs. This "royal" collection reflects only a portion of the proverbs spoken by Solomon (1Ki 4:32). Unlike the first nine chs, which consist of several tightly organized addresses, these 12½ chapters are less closely knit together. The purpose of these sections accounts for the difference. Chs 1–9 encourage the reader to turn from sin and folly and pursue wisdom and the fear of the Lord; 10:1–22:16 demonstrates what wisdom and folly look like in practice. Reading 10:1–22:16 reminds us of our own folly, our own rebellion against God. Most of the proverbs in chs 10–15 are two lines long, expressing a contrast designed to give instruction in wisdom.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 10:1–5 *son*. Links this collection with the 10 sections of chs 1–9 also addressed to a son. The use of this term in vv 1 and 5 frames this section as a literary unit, emphasizing the blessings that come to a family through diligent and honest labor. *father … mother*. Many proverbs connect a son's behavior or character with the well-being of his parents (15:20; 17:25; 19:13; 23:24–25; 28:7; 29:3). The good works of

Jesus' followers likewise reflect the glory of their heavenly Father (Mt 5:16).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 10:2 *Treasures gained by wickedness*. Not only by outright theft but also by acts of fraud and dishonesty that may appear to be right on the surface. Both the Seventh and Ninth Commandments forbid this type of stealing. *righteousness delivers from death*. Not the outward righteousness evidenced by honest labor but the righteousness that comes through faith in the Lord. It is a gift of God through faith and is not earned through obedience to the Law. See p 843.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 10:3 *The Lord does not let … thwarts*. Because it is the Lord who ultimately delivers the righteous and who frustrates the wicked, a person's relationship with Him will always figure more prominently than any human works in the reception of spiritual or material blessing.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 10:1–5 The material blessings enjoyed by families should be pursued by prudent and diligent work done honestly. God blesses such labor and uses it to provide for the needs of His people. We should be careful not to forget that it is God who provides us with all that we need to support our body and life. Likewise, we must never resort to wickedness or dishonesty in an attempt to secure a better profit for ourselves. The righteousness that comes through faith in Jesus not only delivers from death, but it also ensures that our heavenly Father will provide us with everything we need. • Heavenly Father, grant me to believe that because You did not spare Your own Son, You will now graciously give me every needed thing (Rm 8:32). Amen.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 10:6–23 *mouth*. Most of these proverbs have to do with the use of the mouth.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 10:6 *Blessings are on the head*. Much as a crown is worn on the head, bringing honor to the one on whom it rests. See note, 1:9.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 10:7 *wicked will rot*. Like the repugnance of rotting and decaying matter, the very names of the wicked reek with the offensiveness of their evil deeds (e.g., the names Cain, Jezebel, and Judas).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 10:10 *winks the eye*. Gesture connected to evil intent (6:13; 16:30), perhaps as a signal between those involved in sinful schemes.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 10:11 *fountain of life*. Powerful imagery for readers in the arid Near East. The words of the righteous are like life-giving water for those who hear them. Jesus attributed this flow of "living water" to the work of the Holy Spirit among believers (Jn 7:37–39).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 10:12 *love covers all offenses*. Instead of escalating strife by speaking words of hatred, the righteous speak words of forgiveness, prompted by love (Col 3:13; 1Pt 4:8). "Even though these offenses occur, love overlooks, forgives, and yields to them, not carrying all things to the extremity of justice" (Ap V 121).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 10:13 *rod*. Flogging was a common form of punishment. The ceremonial scepter held by rulers symbolized their authority to judge and discipline. Children are best "trained with kindness and delight. For children who must be forced with rods and blows will not develop into a good generation" (LC I 76).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 10:16 Wealth can be a blessing from God for the righteous and can strengthen their ability to serve God's purposes, but it only contributes to the downfall of those who lack faith and godliness.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 10:18 *lying lips … slander*. Sins specifically forbidden by the Eighth Commandment (SC, p xxxvi).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 10:20 *choice*. Hbr "tested." The best quality, purified or tested by fire.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 10:22 *blessing of the LORD*. Both spiritual and material riches come from God. Thanksgiving, rather than pride, should accompany the acquisition of any riches.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 10:6–23 The words we speak can be either a source of life and comfort, edifying those around us, or a source of strife and wickedness, stirring up hatred and division. Always choose your words prudently, being careful never to speak gossip, lies, or slander about another person. Defend those whose reputation is under assault and forgive those who sin against you. Jesus was a victim of false accusations; the blood He shed on the cross covers all of our offenses. • Lord, may Your saving love and forgiveness always be expressed through our lips. Amen.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 10:24–32 *the wicked … the righteous*. The contrast between these two groups is the central theme through the end of ch 10.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 10:24 *What the wicked dreads*. Terror, calamity, distress, and anguish (1:27).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 10:25 *established forever*. Like the wise man who built his house on the rock (Mt 7:24–27), the righteous are immovable and steadfast even amidst raging tempests. Solomon expresses hope in eternal life.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 10:26 *vinegar to the teeth*. An irritant. Hbr term for vinegar means "sharp." Vinegar was sour wine, which was diluted with water and drunk by peasants.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 10:27 *fear of the* LORD. The theme of wisdom; a reverence for the Lord prompted by love. See notes, 1:7; 2:5.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 10:28 *joy*. Not the absence of pain or other daily hardships but the ability to see beyond them and to look to the Lord in confident expectation (1Pt 1:6–9). Aspirations of the wicked, by contrast, amount to little more than wishful thinking.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 10:29 *way*. An important and prevalent figure of speech in Solomon's proverbs, used here to express both Law and Gospel. The evildoer who does not walk in this way, or deviates from it, can expect only destruction. Yet those who are blameless through faith know that to walk in the way of the Lord is a gift from God Himself and not a result of human effort (16:9; 20:24). See note, 2:12.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 10:31 *cut off*. Not implying physical mutilation but indicating a complete silencing of all ungodly speech. "If you meet an idle tongue that betrays and slanders someone, contradict such a person promptly to his face (Proverbs 10:31), so he may blush" (LC I 273).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 10:24–32 Both the righteous and the wicked face tempests and challenges. Yet the righteous, who travel the way of the Lord and who live in the fear of the Lord, are blessed with stability, joy, and the promise of everlasting life. The Lord is your hope, health, stronghold, and way. • Lord Jesus, keep us from straying from the path You have set before us, and renew our hope in You. Amen.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 11:1 *false balance*. Using dishonest weights and measures to commit fraud, a prevalent form of theft in ancient Israel. *abomination*. See note, 6:16.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 11:2 *pride*. Elevation of self over God, breaking the First Commandment.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 11:3 *integrity … guides*. Integrity does not ensure the absence of trouble or hardship in one's life, but it does guide one away from the ultimate destruction that awaits the wicked.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 11:4 *righteousness delivers from death*. See note, 10:2.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 11:6 *righteousness … delivers*. See note, 10:2.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 11:7 *his hope will perish*. Wealth or other worldly power and influence have no effect for those who die in their sin. Cf Heb 9:27.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 11:9 *With his mouth … destroy*. Highlights the powerfully destructive force of words; forbidden by Jas 3:5 and the Eighth Commandment.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 11:10 *the city rejoices*. Even civil society is often able to distinguish between the righteous and the wicked. God also uses civic leaders as His servants to punish evildoers and to commend those who do what is right. Cf Rm 13:1–7.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 11:11 *exalted … overthrown*. Character of public discourse can either edify a society or tear it down by inciting strife and violence.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 11:1–11 The distinction between the righteous and the wicked is not confined to the private or spiritual realms of life but also manifests itself in public words and actions. As you seek to live with integrity that reflects the righteousness we have received, express your righteousness in public ways—among your neighbors, in matters of commerce, and in your community. Although we may sometimes feel reluctant or unqualified to do this, by grace Jesus calls us the "salt of the earth" and the "light of the world" (Mt 5:13–16). • Lord Jesus, give us courage to shine the light of Your truth in every area of our lives. Amen.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 11:12 *silent*. Cf 10:19. Merciful silence concerning the faults and sins of one's neighbor fulfills the Eighth Commandment.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 11:13 *keeps a thing covered*. By holding one's tongue. "There is a great difference between these two things: judging sin and knowing about sin. You may indeed know about it, but you are not to judge it (Matthew 7:1–5). I can indeed see and hear that my neighbor sins. But I have no command to report it to others. Now, if I rush in, judging and passing sentence, I fall into a sin that is greater than his. But if you know about it, do nothing other than turn your ears into a grave and cover it, until you are appointed to be judge and to punish by virtue of your office" (LC I 266).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 11:15 *puts up security*. Taking responsibility for the debt of another. See note, 6:1. *striking hands*. See note, 6:1.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 11:16 *A gracious woman*. Cf 31:10–31. *violent men get riches*. Riches can be acquired through any number of means, including violence. But honor comes to those who are gracious, i.e., kind and forgiving.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 11:19 *will live … will die*. Unlike those who sow righteousness and receive a sure reward (v 18), those who pursue evil will find the very thing they seek to evade, that is, death.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 11:20 *abomination*. See note, 6:16.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 11:22 *gold ring*. Worn by women on the finger, ear, or nose (25:12; Gn 24:22; Is 3:21). *in a pig's snout*. A vivid comparison designed to help both men and women distinguish between mere outward beauty (the gold ring) and an inner lack of discretion (the pig). In Israel, the pig was considered an "unclean" animal to be scrupulously avoided. *discretion*. The ability to make God-pleasing moral and ethical decisions. Cf 1Pt 3:3–5.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 11:23 *desire of the righteous ends only in good*. A general promise that God is able to fulfill in specific ways.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 11:24 *gives freely … grows all the richer*. St Paul encourages the same generosity in 2Co 9:6–9.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 11:25 *waters*. Reference to irrigation and its fruitfulness. The Kidron Valley, east of Jerusalem, was irrigated by the Gihon Spring.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 11:26 *holds back grain*. Selfishly hoarding it, perhaps intending to drive up the price.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 11:30 *tree of life*. As the righteous bear the fruit of good deeds, they become a source of life and blessing for all. See note, 3:18. Hipp: "The fruit of righteousness and the tree of life is Christ. He alone, as man, fulfilled all righteousness. And with His own underived life He has brought forth the fruits of knowledge and virtue like a tree" (*ANF* 5:173). *captures*. Hbr *lakach*, "to pick or harvest fruit" when used in connection with a tree or plant. The righteous are not only passive instruments for blessing but are also active in leading other souls to receive the righteousness of God through faith.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 11:31 *the righteous is repaid on earth*. General observation; does not mean that the righteous can always expect to be

repaid on earth. They will indeed be paid back according to God's good pleasure in this life, and esp in the life to come.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 12:1 *stupid*. Hbr root of this word is closely related to the Hbr term for cattle. One who rejects correction is like a beast.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 12:3 *root of the righteous*. Righteous are rooted in God and in His promises fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Cf Ps 1:3; Is 61:3.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 12:4 *crown*. Evidence of honor. Cf 31:10–31.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 12:6 *lie in wait for blood*. Words of the wicked are likened to a band of murderers, waiting to ambush the unsuspecting.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 12:7 *house … will stand*. Cf Mt 7:24–27.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 12:9 *have a servant*. Describes someone of moderate means who could afford a servant.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 12:10 *the life of his beast*. Compassion of the righteous extends even to animals. Our heavenly Father also cares for all living things. Cf Mt 6:26.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 12:12 *covets*. To have a sinful desire for someone or something that belongs to one's neighbor. Coveting is forbidden by both the Ninth and Tenth Commandments.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 12:16 *vexation of a fool*. Fools lack a calm, measured response to insults. Prudent people are more skilled at managing their emotions when attacked.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 12:18 *like sword thrusts*. Thoughtless, reckless words have the power to wound others, even if they are not intended to cause harm. *brings healing*. Because those who are wise know God through faith, their words can be a source of healing and life.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 12:20 *have joy*. Could refer either to joy in the heart or to the anticipatory joy that accompanies plans for peace.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 12:21 *No ill befalls the righteous*. The righteous do suffer. But for them even long-term earthly suffering will eventually resolve into eternal joy in the presence of the Lord. The righteous are guarded from the ultimate ill—eternal separation from God (Jn 10:28).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 12:22 *abomination*. See note, 6:16.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 12:23 *A prudent man conceals knowledge*. Prudent people are capable managers of their words and emotions (v 16). They are able to distinguish between "a time to keep silence, and a time to speak" (Ec 3:7).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 12:25 *Anxiety … weighs … down*. Luth: "We should let God do the worrying. Your labor and effort are not contrary to faith; they are useful for the curbing of the flesh. But worrying is opposition to God" (*WLS* § 5003). Cf 1Pt 5:6–7. *a good word makes him glad*. Esp when that "good word" expresses the "good news" of God's promises.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 12:27 *will not roast his game*. He is too lazy to prepare the game he has successfully hunted. Cf 19:24.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON **Chs 11–12** Pr teaches the wisdom of living by righteousness as taught by the Lord. Worldly logic tells us that we become wealthy by hoarding what we have. But God's Word tells us that true riches come to those who give generously. We should always return a portion of our income to the service of God (who gives us all things) and support our neighbors according to their need. After all, this is God's wonderful way of dealing with His children. He has generously given us all that we need, including the life of His one and only Son for our salvation. • Lord, we rejoice in the great blessings You have given us. Lead us to believe that with You as our God, we will never suffer want. Amen.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 13:1 *hears*. Verb is supplied from the second line and does not actually appear in the Hbr text. See "Juxtaposition," p 996. This proverb accentuates the responsibilities of both son and father. To the same degree that a son must heed his father's instruction, a father is also responsible for imparting wise instruction to his son. *rebuke*. Correction that is expressed passionately and loudly. But the scoffer ignores all correction, no matter how forcefully it is expressed.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 13:2 *fruit of his mouth*. Wise words of correction and encouragement.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 13:5 *hates falsehood*. In contrast to the attitude of indifference so prevalent today, the righteous, like their Lord, hate all falsehood (Jn 8:43–44).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 13:7 *pretends*. Concise observation that things are not always as they appear.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 13:8 Could mean that the rich are often victims of blackmail or kidnapping because they are able to pay a ransom to their tormentors who, however, do not find it profitable to make threatening demands of the poor. Cf Ec 5:12–13. *ransom*. Hbr *kopher*, commonly used for atoning for or covering sins, but here it refers to a bribe or a ransom paid

to a kidnapper. *hears no threat*. The Hbr words are identical with the close of v 1: "does not listen to rebuke."

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 13:9 *light … lamp*. Metaphorical expressions denoting the eternal condition of the righteous and the wicked. Cf Dn 12:2–3.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 13:12 *desire fulfilled*. Not just random wish fulfillment, but here reflecting the ultimate desire of all the righteous for the gift of eternal life with God, which corresponds to the "tree of life" in paradise (Rv 2:7). *tree of life*. See note, 3:18. Compare to "fountain of life" in v 14.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 13:13 *the word*. Including esp God's Word, the Holy Scriptures. God's Word and breath create and sustain life (Gn 1:3; 2:7). Cf Lk 11:28.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 13:14 *fountain of life*. Cf v 12; see note, 10:11.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 13:16 *flaunts his folly*. Spreads it out like a merchant displaying his wares.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 13:18 Cf v 1.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 13:20 The company one keeps, whether wise or foolish, is always influential. Companions should be chosen carefully.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 13:21 General observation concerning the consequences of behavior. Timing of both disaster and reward is left to God.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 13:23 *swept away through injustice*. As king of Israel, Solomon would have been concerned with abolishing all forms of injustice, as injustice most frequently victimizes the poor and powerless.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 13:24 Appropriate discipline from parents is always an expression of love. Conversely, parents who do not discipline create lasting pain and difficulty for their children. "We must hold the commandment before them, and constantly teach it, so that we bring them up not only with punishment, but also in reverence and fear of God (Ephesians 6:4)" (LC I 61). Although giving and receiving discipline is sometimes difficult, parents and children can look to our heavenly Father, who also disciplines those He loves (3:11–12). Cf Heb 12:4–11.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 14:1 *builds her house*. Task of running the household was primarily fulfilled by women in Solomon's time (9:1; 31:10–31). This was a great responsibility, which included not only

domestic chores but also the nurture and instruction of their children in the faith (31:26).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 14:2 *fears the* LORD. See notes, 1:7; 2:5.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 14:4 Oxen were used for plowing and threshing. Enjoying the benefits of life (such as an abundant harvest) requires that certain expenses be paid (such as the cost of filling the manger to feed the oxen). Such resources and investments should be managed wisely.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 14:6 *A scoffer*. His own arrogance will not allow him to receive wise instruction from others. Cf 13:1.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 14:9 *guilt offering*. One of several offerings prescribed by God in the OT. An act of confession may have preceded the guilt offering. Cf Lv 5:14–6:7. *upright*. Not those without sin but, as this proverb implies, those who confess their sin and rely on God's mercy (see note, Jb 1:1). Through faith, they enjoy God's acceptance.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 14:10 *no stranger shares its joy*. The deepest emotions of the heart cannot always be fully shared with others. Jesus, however, always knows exactly how we feel. (Cf Jn 10:14–15.)
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 14:12 *way to death*. Plural (see ESV note). There are many ways leading off the one straight way of the Lord.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 14:13 Do not let outward expressions deceive you.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 14:14 *backslider*. Hbr *sug*, "to deviate," "be disloyal." One who turns from God, undoing repentance (cf 1:23).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 14:15 *believes everything*. Ambr: "They know not what deceit is, they gladly believe of others what they themselves are, while they cannot suspect others to be what they themselves are not" (*NPNF* 2 10:78).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 14:21 *blessed*. Honored recipients of God's favor. Their faith in Christ is expressed by their trust in God (16:20), by their observance of His Word (29:18), and here by their generosity to the poor. See p 842.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 14:22 *meet*. See ESV note. Hbr text is unclear. Those who do good can either "receive" steadfast love for themselves or "show" that love to others.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 14:24 *crown of the wise is their wealth*. Does not mean that all the wise are wealthy but contrasts the benefits of wisdom

(monetary or spiritual) with the folly of fools, which never offers any reward.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 14:26 *fear of the* LORD. See notes, 1:7; 2:5.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 14:27 This verse is nearly identical to 13:14. *fountain of life*. See note, 10:11.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 14:30 *makes the bones rot*. Like a cancer, envy destroys from the inside.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 14:31 *insults his Maker … honors Him*. Jesus accords similar importance to the good works we do, or fail to do, for the needy (Mt 25:40, 45).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 14:32 *but the righteous finds refuge in his death*. Because God gives eternal life. Luth: "For if death is feared on account of sin, it should be desired much more on account of sins, because death alone puts an end to sin and slays it. Therefore death, the murderer of sin, should be loved as much as sin is feared" (AE 29:138).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 14:33 *makes itself known*. So-called wisdom will be greatly discussed among fools but will never be allowed to settle and provide its benefits.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 14:34 *Righteousness*. See p 843. *exalts a nation*. Reminder aimed esp at rulers and other public servants that their good example is beneficial to the entire nation. Their sin, likewise, affects and disgraces all who live under their rule. Israel received blessings from the Lord through faithfulness. The Canaanites were cursed and cast out. See note, Gn 9:25.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 15:1 Answers are received favorably, not only because of their content but also because of the manner in which they are offered.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 15:3 God is both omniscient (all-knowing) and omnipresent (present everywhere). While these attributes are a source of comfort and joy for those made righteous through faith, they strike fear in the hearts of those who are evil. Cf 1Pt 3:12.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 15:4 *tree of life*. See note, 3:18. The tongue is a source of life, esp as it is used to apply the Gospel to human souls.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 15:6 *house of the righteous*. The righteous always enjoy the enduring wealth of God's love and blessing, regardless of fluctuating income and possessions.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 15:8 Although God hears all and knows all, only those who trust Him may pray and confidently expect to be heard.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 15:10 *the way*. The way of righteousness. See note, 10:29.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 15:11 *Sheol and Abaddon*. Represent the end of temporal life and what lies beyond it. See p 792. The point of the proverb concerns God's omniscience. If He is knowledgeable even about Sheol and Abaddon, then He also knows the human heart perfectly.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 15:15 *the afflicted*. Perhaps referring to those who are oppressed by their own lack of contentment.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 15:16 *fear of the* LORD. See notes, 1:7; 2:5.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 15:17 *dinner of herbs*. An unsatisfying meal when compared to a more luxurious entrée such as fattened ox.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 15:19 *hedge of thorns*. The sluggard's progress is impeded by his own laziness. He finds diligent work to be painful, similar to the pain inflicted by thorns.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 12:12–15:19 In these proverbs, the characteristics of foolish and wise people are contrasted. The foolish are gullible and believe everything. They are reckless, careless, and quick-tempered. But because wise people thoughtfully evaluate everything on the basis of God's Word, their words and actions are always prudent and cautious. • Lord God, temper our rash and impetuous urges. Lead us, instead, to walk by faith, always expressing ourselves with the gentleness and self-control that come from You. Amen.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 15:20 *father … mother*. See note, 10:1–5. *despises his mother*. The Fourth Commandment tells us to honor our parents (see p xxxv).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 15:21 *walks straight ahead*. Could be understood figuratively, i.e., "stays straight on course" or "walks aright."
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 15:24 *upward*. Refers to heavenly life after death, in contrast with "Sheol beneath."
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 15:25 *widow's boundaries*. In Solomon's time, property boundaries were marked by stones. It was relatively easy for unscrupulous people to move the boundary stones of helpless widows, thus stealing some of their property. Cf Dt 19:14.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 15:26 *gracious words*. Pleasant, God-pleasing words, which stand in sharp contrast to the thoughts of the wicked. Such

words often convey God's truth. Cf 23:8.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 15:29 *hears the prayer*. See note, v 8.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 15:30 *light of the eyes*. A twinkle of the eyes, which can bring joy to another's heart. See note, Jb 17:7.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 15:33 *fear of the LORD*. See notes, 1:7; 2:5.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 16:1–22:16 Made up mostly of complementary proverbs; the second half of a verse usually completes the idea set forth by the first half. Cf 16:3: "Commit your work to the LORD, and your plans will be established." This is different from chs 10–15, where most proverbs describe contrasting behaviors. Pr 10:1, e.g., contrasts the pride of a wise son's father with the grief of a foolish son's mother.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 16:1 *plans*. Chem: "The thoughts, deliberations, and desires in men which are subject to the reason and senses" (*LTh* 1:243). *the answer … is from the LORD*. People may make plans, but truth comes from the Lord (e.g., the words of Caiaphas in Jn 11:49–52).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 16:2 *weighs the spirit*. The Lord evaluates humans differently from their methods of self-evaluation, considering even hidden motives and agendas.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 16:3 *Commit your work*. Human work is committed to the Lord when it is undertaken in faith and when it is accompanied by the prayer that God's will should be done on earth as in heaven. Cf 1Co 10:31; Heb 11:6.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 16:4 Chem: "He is not speaking about guilt, as if God for His own sake wills or brings about ungodliness; but he is speaking of the punishment … because the ungodly has ignored His justice and judgment" (*LTh* 1:198). God earnestly desires that all people be saved (Ezk 33:11; 2Pt 3:9). Yet, see note, Ex 4:21.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 16:5 Mel: "This evil can more clearly be seen in heroic people, yet all are subject to the disease" (Chem, *LTh* 2:367).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 16:6 *fear of the LORD*. See notes, 1:7; 2:5.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 16:10 *An oracle*. Hbr term could be translated "divination," and usually has negative connotations (1Sm 28:8; 2Ki 17:17). May refer to making decisions by casting lots (see note, 18:18). Given such background, this proverb may be sarcastic. *king*. Rulers are God's representatives. As such, they should judge well and so be honored and obeyed (Rm 13:1–7).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 16:11 *weights in the bag*. In Solomon's time, merchants often strapped to their belts a bag of stones, which were used as measuring weights. In matters of both commerce and justice, God desires impartiality and fairness.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 16:15 *light of a king's face*. Brightening countenance signifies the king's favor. Like the needed spring rain, such

favor is always beneficial.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 16:18 *Pride*. See note, 11:2.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 16:19 *divide the spoil*. To share in the abundance of newly acquired goods or treasure.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 16:20 *word*. God's Word of Law and Gospel is always a source of good and blessing. See note, Ps 1:2. *blessed*. See p 842.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 16:21 *sweetness of speech*. Pleasant speech enables one's words to be well received.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 16:10–21 These proverbs are especially directed to kings and other public servants. Their authority has been instituted by God (Rm 13:1), and for that reason we owe them honor and obedience. God uses them for the welfare of those who act righteously and as agents of wrath for those who do evil. • Lord God, give Your wisdom to our leaders, that they might always carry out their duties in justice and mercy. Amen.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 16:25 Identical to 14:12.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 16:26 *appetite … mouth*. Parallel in meaning.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 16:28 *a whisperer*. One who causes discord through gossip—a transgression of the Eighth Commandment. God's people are called to be agents of peace (Mt 5:9) and reconciliation (2Co 5:18).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 16:30 *winks his eyes*. See note, 10:10.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 16:31 *Gray hair*. Long life. Promise connected to the Fourth Commandment. Cf Ex 20:12; Dt 5:16; Eph 6:2–3.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 16:32 *slow to anger is better*. Ambr: "He who wishes to prove his anger is righteous only gets the more inflamed, and quickly falls into sin" (*NPNF* 2 10:17).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 16:33 Casting lots among God's people was not a random method for choosing action but a way to leave the matter in God's hands because He controlled the outcome. See note, 18:18.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 17:1 *feasting with strife*. Lit, "sacrifices with strife." Sacrificial meat that was to be eaten in the home made the meal a festive occasion because meat was in short supply. Only a rich man could afford a house full of feasting.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 17:2 *will rule*. A wise servant could be given authority and even freed by his or her master. Slaves in the ancient world

often had oversight of young heirs (Gal 4:1–2) and might inherit a master's estate in the absence of a biological son (Gn 15:2). If an existent heir proved unworthy, a faithful slave might either become responsible for managing the estate at the master's death or share in the inheritance with the master's children. This proverb cautions the reader not to rely on privilege and position. See p 101.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 17:3 *crucible … furnace*. Cf Ps 7:9; 17:3; 66:10; Jer 6:27; 9:7; 1Pt 1:7. Both were used for refining and testing gold and silver. *tests*. Hbr *bachan*; could also be translated "tempts." God tempts no one (Jas 1:13) in the way that Satan tries to achieve our fall. But God tests and tries us. He tested Abraham to teach him (Heb 11:17), and it is through many trials that we enter God's kingdom (Ac 14:22). Scripture assures us that we will not be tested beyond what we can endure (1Co 10:13). Peter speaks of testing and refining the genuineness of faith (1Pt 1:6–7).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 17:6 *glory of children is their fathers*. A large family is regarded as a blessing. Old age crowns the righteous life with the blessings of children and grandchildren (16:31). Godly parents and grandparents are likewise God's precious gifts to children (Eph 6:4). E.g., Timothy had both Eunice and Lois to teach him the faith (2Tm 1:5). We have such cherished "fathers" as Abraham, Isaac, Moses and the prophets, the holy apostles and evangelists, and other faithful teachers.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 17:1–6 The Fourth Commandment not only teaches children to honor their parents but also teaches parents to cherish and take seriously God's gift of raising their children. God did not give us "children for our pleasure or amusement" (LC I 170) but that we would train them up in the way they should go (22:6). Parents, are you taking seriously your responsibility to instruct your children in the Scriptures and the catechism (Dt 6:6–8)? Children, are you respecting your parents, holding them in the highest esteem, recognizing what good gifts God has provided you through them (Ex 20:12)? Our heavenly Father has given us His highest good in His Son, Jesus, and because Jesus delighted to do His Father's will, God now delights in you and me. In Jesus, we will receive the true crown of righteousness (2Tm 4:8), and by Him we call God our Father.

• Dear Father, teach us to cherish the gifts You provide in our families—both as parents and as children—and lead us to dutifully carry out the responsibilities You give us. In Jesus' name. Amen.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 17:7 One should not expect words excelling in wisdom on the lips of a fool. Still more out of place is deception on the lips of a noble character.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 17:8 *magic stone*. Lit, "stone of favor." A bribe works like magic on the wicked (v 23).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 17:12 *a she-bear robbed of her cubs*. Expression of deadliness. Image is also used of fierce warriors in 2Sm 17:8 and of God's merciless wrath in Hos 13:8. God used the wrath of she-bears to punish boys who mocked His prophet in 2Ki 2:24. Nevertheless, the proverb teaches that even such merciless destruction is more bearable than the mayhem of a fool. *robbed of her cubs*. Lit, "childless."
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 17:14 *letting out water*. Greg: "To let out water is to let loose the tongue to a flux of speech" (*NPNF* 2 12:38). The breaching of a dam begins with a trickle, after which a raging flood sweeps a wide path of destruction. Backing away before a quarrel breaks out is like plugging the proverbial hole in the dike.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 17:15 *justifies the wicked*. This does not apply to God's work of justifying sinners but describes the acts of "an unjust judge in justifying or acquitting a guilty man" (Chem, *LTh* 2:479). Only God can truly acquit the guilty, charging our sins against His innocent Son. In His mercy, God chose to look upon Jesus as the only sinner there is, while considering us as innocent as Jesus (2Co 5:21).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 17:16 *buy wisdom*. Wisdom cannot be gained by money alone (see note, 23:23). Only an inner desire for it is an acceptable price.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 17:17 *loves at all times*. Description of true friendship, which does not change based on circumstances. *brother is born for adversity*. A brother will offer support even in the worst of times.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 17:18 *pledge*. Lit, "clasps hands," as when shaking hands to confirm a deal. See note, 6:1. Hastily made promises entrap the foolish, who commit themselves to vows they have neither the ability nor determination to keep (Ec 5:4). Obviously, the person is not being taught to refuse help or to ignore the command to lend to someone in need, even without interest (Lv 25:35–36; Mt 5:42). *security*. To guarantee another's debt or obligation. While God's people should be generous, esp in matters of forgiveness and love, we are to exercise wisdom and prudence in temporal affairs (e.g., Ex 22:14).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 17:19 *makes his door high*. Difficult and disputed phrase. May mean that the one who builds a high and impressive fortress gate invites an attack. It may also condemn those who raise the "door" of their mouth in boasting and pride.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 17:21 *He who sires a fool*. The risk every parent takes! When parents ignore their duty under the Fourth Commandment, "Because this matter is disregarded, God so fearfully punishes the world that there is no discipline, government, or peace. We all complain about this but do not see that it is our own fault. The way we train children and subjects spoils them and makes them disobedient." (LC I 177).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 17:22 *spirit*. Chem: "Refers to the created emotions or impulses of men" (*LTh* 1:134).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 17:23 *in secret*. See ESV note. The folds of the garment serving as a pocket (6:27).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 17:24 *on the ends of the earth*. The thoughts of fools wander. St Paul says that a time is coming when people will not put up with sound doctrine but will go wherever their "itching ears" lead them (2Tm 4:3). This proverb reminds us to remain in the Word and not to be led away by other "gospels" that are no Gospel at all (Gal 1:6–9).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 17:7–24 God's people are not to use the Gospel as grounds for partiality in judging (24:23–24), for calling good evil or evil good (Is 5:20), or for failing to protect the innocent. The Father is our goodness and glory, whom we honor by faith. • Dear Father, give us life always by the Gospel, being sure of our forgiveness for Jesus' sake and looking past the sins of those who repent. As we carry out our individual responsibilities within this world, guide us to judge rightly between good and evil, upholding what pleases You and condemning what does not. In Jesus' name. Amen.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 17:25–19:12 Section shows how fools bring grief to others.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 17:27 *cool spirit*. Patient, restrained; opposite of being hot-tempered. Self-control ultimately comes from the knowledge that God Himself vindicates us in Christ Jesus.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 18:1 *isolates himself*. Those who declare themselves independent of community restraints, particularly from the congregation of the Lord, will give free rein to selfish drives and, as a result, make peaceful relations with others impossible. God's Word calls us

away from our own opinions (18:2). Not only is it selfish to remove ourselves from the fellowship of God's people, but it is also inconsistent with true faith and love (Ac 2:42–47).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 18:2 *his opinion*. Fools do not know enough to hide their lack of discrimination by silence. They reveal their stupidity by talking nonsense.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 18:3 Chem: "The Lord puts to shame those who despise Him because their sins are their punishments for sins until finally the sinner comes into the abyss" (*LTh* 1:198).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 18:4 *deep waters*. Indicates the obscure nature of what lies within and proceeds out of sinful humans. The psalmist asks, "Who can discern his errors?" (Ps 19:12), indicating that a person's faults are more than even he or she can fathom (Mt 7:22–23; 1Co 2:11). In contrast, God has spoken clearly (Heb 1:1–2). In Him, we have the living water that wells up to eternal life in all who believe (Jn 4:10; 7:38; Rv 7:17).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 18:5 *partial*. See ESV note. To favor those who do evil while depriving the righteous of justice. Representatives of God's authority must be impartial (Rm 2:11). To absolve the unrepentant is to make a mockery of both the Law, which aims to call sinners to repentance, and the Gospel, which forgives those who repent and want to do better.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 18:8 *inner parts*. Choice bits of slander, eagerly gobbled up, leave a deep-seated impression. Gossip is a threat to the hearer who swallows it.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 18:10 Only here does Pr use the phrase "the name of the LORD [Yahweh]."

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 18:11 As walls of a fortified city provide safety against invasion, so wealth is protection against the hardships resulting from poverty. But when the rich put their trust in wealth rather than in the Lord (v 10), the protection they seek may turn out to exist only in their imagination.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 18:12 *humility*. One must first learn to bow under the Lord's discipline if one is to have the right attitude to receive honor from others.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 18:14 People can stand up under physical suffering; but once their spirit is broken, they collapse.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 18:16 *makes room*. Generous people make friends. The good will they create opens avenues for their advancement.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 18:18 *The lot*. Though cast by human hands, God determines the decision it is to effect. Casting lots was a common way of making decisions. At certain times, God approved such a method of decision making. E.g., the high priest had the Urim and the Thummim (Ex 28:30). By the casting of lots, God instructed Aaron to divide the goats on the Day of Atonement (Lv 16:8). Casting lots was used for choosing in matters that were morally equal (using lots to choose whether to sin or not would be inappropriate). Lots were not a matter of chance but a divinely appointed means by which the Lord revealed His will (Jsh 18:8, 10; Ac 1:24–26). The NT does not give a promise that the Lord will operate through the same means today. He has given us His external Word by which to know His good and gracious will.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 18:19 *A brother offended*. In a feud, reconciliation gets more difficult the closer the parties are related to one another. *quarreling is like the bars of a castle*. As bars of a castle prove unyielding, so do quarreling friends. In the heat of anger, repentance and forgiveness are often not sought, even among God's people. Cf Eph 4:26–27.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 18:20 We reap what our words sow (12:14; 13:2; 18:21). Oratory skill, esp in a media-driven age, often brings profit and success. To speak well is a valuable gift. We may hear in this proverb a caution against those who would lie and deceive by God's name, profiteering by the Gospel or from false teaching. It is also true that laborers deserve their wages (1Tm 5:18), and godly and faithful pastors should receive their living from speaking the Gospel (1Co 9:14). Christians ought to share all good things with their instructors (Gal 6:6–7), adequately providing for the continuation of the ministry of Word and Sacraments in their midst.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 18:22 *good thing*. "Every good gift and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights" (Jas 1:17). Here is high esteem for God's favor received through a godly spouse; a recognition that in marriage God provides to a husband a wife to be defended with his life, and to a wife a husband in whom she may see the caring, tender headship of the Lord Himself (Eph 5:22–33).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 18:23 *entreaties*. Supplications for favor. The poor can do nothing but beg, while the rich have a boastful air. It is the poor in spirit who are blessed by the Lord with the gift of His kingdom (Mt 5:3), not because poverty is a virtue, but because they have no hope but that God is gracious and merciful and will give them the kingdom freely. Thus, the man who could not even raise his eyes to heaven was declared righteous, while the man who had something to boast about was declared unrighteous (Lk 18:10–14).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 18:24 *companions*. Some people will cut a friend to pieces if it is to their advantage. Such an experience, however, should not lead to cynicism. It is possible to find a friend who will remain loyal, no matter the cost (17:17; 1Sm 18:1–3). Popularity does not always win friends in hard times. Even our Lord, who attracted crowds by feeding them fish and bread, watched them turn away from His hard saying regarding the eating and drinking of His body and blood (Jn 6:66). Not only the crowds but also His closest disciples abandoned Him in His hour of need. Although sinful people prove untrustworthy, our Lord remains faithful. He is our friend who sticks closer than any blood relation, who died for those who abandoned Him, and who prayed for the forgiveness of His enemies.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 19:1 *poor person*. Poor people who refuse to violate their integrity are better than those who stoop to deception in order to get rich. Poverty itself is no virtue, but neither is it to be abhorred. Poverty is preferable to a life of sin (16:19; 19:22). One may be honorable in poverty; God's people may demonstrate faithfulness and generosity with their wealth (2Co 8:2). Our Lord's parents were both godly and poor (Lk 2:24; cf Lv 12:8), and it is out of His poverty in expending Himself completely for our sake on the cross that we are rich in God's mercy (2Co 8:9). *walks in his integrity*. See note, 2:7.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 19:3 We may blame God for the disaster we foolishly bring on ourselves. We may ask, "Why is God doing this to me?" when we should learn to repent of our own folly and look to Him for forgiveness. Aug: "Whenever you read in the Scriptures of Truth, that men are led aside, or that their hearts are blunted and hardened by God, never doubt that some ill deserts of their own have first occurred, so that they justly suffer these things" (*NPNF* 1 5:463). However, note well that not all suffering is the result of a particular sin. See p 837.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 19:4 *friends*. Cf 18:24. Wealth has its earthly advantages, and the money of the rich often gains them many associates (14:20; 19:6). However, since the poor are abandoned by fair-weather friends (19:7), this proverb warns against relying too heavily on friendships gained by wealth.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 19:6 *generous man*. One word in Hbr, also translated "prince" and "noble" (8:16; 17:7, 26; 25:7). Such a person can buy favor and allegiance with gifts.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 19:7 *hate him*. People who constantly implore for help are not tolerated long. V 7 consists of three lines, whereas all other proverbs in this section are limited to two. *but does not have them*. May be rendered "but they are not," i.e., people flee to escape a person's persistent begging.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 19:8 *gets sense*. Lit, "buys" or "seeks heart." The heart was considered the organ of understanding.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 19:10 *live in luxury*. Affluence only makes a more flamboyant display of a fool's folly. *a slave to rule over princes*. Most slaves were uneducated and not accustomed to handling wealth, which was starkly different from the training and means available to princes. Scripture often refers to practices such as slavery without specifically advocating or condemning them. Headship and authority may be abused, but they are not evil in themselves. See p 101.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 19:12 A king's wrath and a lion's growl both spell disaster, but a king's favor is as refreshing as the dew that waters the grass in the morning. Here, Law and Gospel, anger and mercy, are contrasted.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 17:25–19:12 The Eighth Commandment warns against false testimony against our neighbor. We should put a stop to gossip before it begins, not only by defending the reputation of the one spoken about but also by calling the gossiper to repentance and safeguarding ourselves from what may do irreparable damage. How have you been at keeping yourself from listening to the juicy tidbits sinners have to say about one another? What a difference between us and God! Our Lord has blessedly promised to put our sins as far from us as the east is from the west (Ps 103:12) and to remember our sins no more (Jer 31:34; Heb 8:12; 10:17). He will entertain no charge against us, now that there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus (Rm 8:1). What joy it

would be if we let our Lord's forgiveness teach us to be as silent about the sins and shortcomings of our neighbor as God is pleased to be toward ours for Jesus' sake! • Heavenly Father, teach us by Your Holy Absolution to keep both our lips and our ears from the evil that may be spoken of others. In Jesus' name. Amen.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 19:13–20:30 Warns about a foolish son, esp how fools bring ruin to themselves and others.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 19:13 *continual dripping*. Cf Ec 10:18.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 19:14 A man may get much from his parents, but he gets something even more precious from the Lord when he gets a wise and reasonable wife. Pr 31:10–31 teaches us about a godly wife's prudence. A godly and devout husband is equally a treasure from the Lord. Ultimately, the husband-wife relationship is a reflection of that between the Lord and His people (Eph 5:22–33).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 19:17 *lends to the* LORD. Using the Lord's earthly gifts for the good of others has the promise of temporal reward (LC I 252). We may gain friends for ourselves (Lk 16:9) and reap many other benefits, both bodily and spiritual (1Co 3:8; 2Co 9:6; Ap V 245). Eternal life, however, comes only because of God's promise to be generous to poor, miserable sinners for Jesus' sake. Iren: "We make offering to Him, not as though He stood in need of it, but rendering thanks for His gift, and thus sanctifying what has been created" (*ANF* 1:486).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 19:18 Parents who do not discipline their children are, in effect, signing a death warrant for them. Parents are not to let up on discipline, thinking that their children can no longer be turned from wrong. When parents fail to carry out their duty under the Fourth Commandment, other authorities, whose judgment may be even more severe, step in (Rm 13:1–4), maybe even costing the child his life. Likewise, God lovingly disciplines us in this life (Heb 12:5–11) so that we do not suffer the greater judgment of eternal death.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 19:19 *do it again*. People who have a bad temper are incurable. They will only get into trouble again.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 19:22 *better than a liar*. Though poor people lack the resources to prove their desire to help, they are more faithful friends than people of means whose promises of aid prove to be lies.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 19:23 *fear of the* LORD. See notes, 1:7; 2:5. *leads to life*. Those who fear the Lord go to sleep well-fed and without fear of

harm. From faith in the promise of the Gospel comes security (Php 4:7).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 19:24 *bring it back*. Touch of ironic humor: some people are too lazy even to put food into their mouth (26:15).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 19:25 *scoffer*. Someone who stubbornly scorns God's wisdom. *the simple will learn prudence*. Punishment is a deterrent for the simple (see note, 1:4), who take warning from the fate of the wicked. Simple people must actually see what consequences come from disobedience. This is an indictment to us all—we may know well enough that lawlessness has its price, but we change our behavior only when the threat of punishment is near!
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 20:1 *a mocker*. Wine has a stupefying affect in the drunk's mockery of God and brawling (23:29–35). *strong drink*. Not a distilled liquor but an alcoholic beverage fermented from grain, primarily barley. Sometimes translated "beer." Forms of this word are used negatively in Scripture to condemn drunkenness. However, several occurrences of strong drink (31:6; Gn 43:34; Nu 28:7; Dt 14:26) remind us that it is not alcoholic beverages themselves that Scripture condemns, but the abuse of them. Ambr: "It is a mark of liberality to receive the stranger, to clothe the naked, to redeem the captives, to help the needy. It is wasteful to spend money on expensive banquets and much wine" (*NPNF* 2 10:60).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 20:4 *plow in the autumn*. Plowing fields following the harvest was important to prepare for the next planting, which occurred before the winter rains. The sluggard does not sow in due season and so reaps nothing at harvest.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 20:5 *draw it out*. Some people may use careful language in order to keep their real intentions hidden in deep secrecy, but "a man of understanding" knows how to uncover them by probing beneath the surface of the schemer's words.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 20:6 *proclaims*. Professions of loyalty to others are plentiful, but people are rarely faithful to their promises to help.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 20:8 *winnows*. Scatters or fans in the air, the means of separating grain from the worthless chaff. Tossing both in the air allowed the breeze to carry away the lighter chaff, leaving the heavier grain to fall back to the ground and be collected. A king separates truth from falsehood, good from evil, innocent from guilty, by the examination of his eye. This proverb serves as a reminder that if standing before such earthly

authority is frightening, how much more ought we to fear the heavenly king who sees all (Ps 33:13–15)?

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 20:9 *Who can say*. The self-evident answer is no one (Ap V 205–6). This confession of universal human failure to keep the heart clean of sin applies also to "a righteous man who walks in his integrity" (v 7; cf Ps 14:3; see notes, Jb 14:4; Ps 51:5).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 20:11 *Even a child*. The kind of character training an individual needs is apparent at an early age. Those who deny original sin are missing the witness borne by children's selfishness, disobedience, bickering, temper tantrums, lying, and rebellion. See note, Ps 51:5.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 20:12 *hearing … seeing*. Senses with which the Creator has endowed us are to make us aware of the way of life that conforms to God's revealed will (Jer 5:21; Ezk 12:2). See SC, First Article, p xxxvi.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 20:14 *when he goes away, then he boasts*. Humorously reveals how buyers try to cheat sellers, devaluing the merchandise when negotiating a price, but later boasting of the bargain they made. Cheating happens on both sides of the counter.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 20:16 *garment*. Clothing had much greater value in ancient times because everything had to be made by hand. The outer garment was deposited by the borrower as security for a loan (Ex 22:25–27). See note, 6:1. This proverb seems to say with subtle irony that once you have made a speculative investment with unknown foreigners, all you can do is vainly hold them to their contract, which will likely prove worthless. We should be wary of lending to those who are likely to default. What better security than to take a person's clothing?

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 20:17 Warning against dishonest gain.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 20:18 If plans are not to go wrong, they should be reviewed by "many advisers" (15:22; 11:14). The disastrous results of an ill-advised war demonstrate the need for counsel on a large scale.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 20:21 Impatience with respect to gaining riches often leads to wastefulness, poverty, and desperation. The parable of the prodigal son is a classic example (Lk 15:11–32).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 20:22 Vengeance belongs to God, and so God's people are counseled against private revenge (25:21–22; Dt 32:35; Rm 12:17–21). We are not thereby forbidden from reasonable self-defense or

from using a godly means of redress when we are injured by another. We may serve in law enforcement, the armed forces, and as agents of the judicial process, since earthly government is God's means of punishing wrongdoers and protecting those who keep the law (Rm 13:1–5; AC XVI).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 20:24 By His Word, God directs the path of His people (Ps 1:1–2, 6; 119:97–105). He is not the author of sin (AC XIX), so we may not blame God for our wayward steps. Chem: "The human mind, to be sure, has a residue of that gift of free choice in civil matters, but how can man see all of these things and take care that he not be deceived in his choices? Thus there is need for divine guidance and aid" (*LTh* 1:235).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 20:25 In a momentary rapture of emotions, people sometimes make a rash vow in sacred things. They may find themselves caught in the predicament of being unable to pay for or do what they have pledged. *holy*. To consecrate or devote something to the Lord. *making vows*. Sacred vows should not be made hastily, since God expects us to keep them. See note, Nu 30:2. We should prepare carefully before taking vows, such as in marriage, confirmation, ordination, and in a court of law.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 20:26 *winnows*. See note, v 8. *drives the wheel*. First step in winnowing was to roll a heavy weight over the stalks of grain, separating the grain from its stalks and hulls (Jb 21:18; Ps 1:4; Is 28:27–28; Am 1:3). Lawful governments will use sound jurisprudence to separate the guilty from the innocent and apply firm judgment to punish lawbreakers.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 20:27 *spirit*. "The breath of life" God breathed into Adam's nostrils distinguishes humankind from all other creatures (Gn 2:7). It penetrates, illumines, and energizes every human faculty. God judges the heart and knows who are His (1Sm 16:7; 2Tm 2:19). It is a terrible prospect for God to look at our hearts, considering what lies therein (Mt 15:19; Rm 7:18).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 20:30 *Blows that wound*. See note, 13:24. In educating His adult children, the heavenly Father also resorts to "strokes" of adversity to "cleanse away evil" entrenched in "the innermost parts" of our being.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 19:13–20:30 Children are born fools, since they are born sinful. No one should be surprised by their excesses and ill manners. Yet no one should abandon them to their sinfulness but nurture and admonish them through God's Word. God's dear Son became a fool for

our sakes, pierced and lashed to rescue us from foolishness and to deliver us into the arms of our dear Father. • O Father, welcome me now—Your prodigal child—for Brother Jesus has borne the blows and strokes of my cleansing. Amen.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 21:1–22:16 Describes the Lord's control over both wise and foolish people.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 21:1 A stream of water has no mind of its own. In the hand of the Lord, even a king's thoughts are like water in an irrigation canal, which farmers can divert into the channels they select. However, we are not to blame God for the abuse of power. But neither are we to despair that wicked people are in control, thinking that God's hand is not at work. The specifics of His work remain hidden, and the atrocities perpetrated seem confounding. Yet even through rulers like Pharaoh, God is glorified (Ex 14:4) and His will is done.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 21:2 *weighs the heart*. Cf Dn 5:27. The Egyptian Book of the Dead uses similar imagery.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 21:3 *sacrifice*. Cf Ps 40:6; Is 1:10–17; Am 5:21–24. Outward ceremonies as such are not useless; sacrificial offerings of various kinds were required by the Law of Moses. We lay on God's altar the sacrifice of self-will and the offering of wholehearted consecration. Cf Ps 51:16–17; Jer 6:20; 7:22–23; Hos 6:6. True worship does not begin with giving to God but with receiving from Him in humble faith. Then we live in fervent love toward one another, esp toward those in need (Mi 6:8; Jas 1:27).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 21:4 *the lamp*. See ESV note. Some Hbr manuscripts read "land ready to be farmed." Pride and arrogance are sin, producing a wicked harvest and leading down blind paths.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 21:9 *corner of the housetop*. Lonely and cramped space in which to live. This verse is repeated at 25:24. Cf 21:19. Flat roofs were common in the ancient world, and people often slept on them when weather permitted. Constant exposure to the elements—mild or severe—is preferable to living in a house where the storms of bickering are always brewing. While limited separation may be necessary in a troubled marriage, this proverb underscores both the importance of living at peace with one another (2Co 13:11) and the self-sacrifice and patience spouses may need to exercise for the sake of the union.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 21:14 *concealed bribe*. Cf 17:23. Does not endorse bribery but points out the effectiveness of worldly and sinful methods, which God's people should not encourage (Rm 12:1–2).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 21:16 See p 792.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 21:17 *loves wine and oil*. Wine and oil are symbolic of luxury and leisure, by which many people ruin themselves. While all good gifts come from God, we are to use them in moderation, to God's glory, and in service to others.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 21:18 *ransom*. Cf Is 43:3, where the catastrophes inflicted on the Egyptians are said to be the ransom that freed Israel from slavery. See "redeem," p 843.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 21:20 *Precious treasure*. Because wise people do not squander their money on "pleasure" (v 17), they always have on hand a store of things their family desires for comfort. *oil*. A staple in Near Eastern households, it also served to make life pleasant (Ps 104:15).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 21:25 *desire*. Because sluggards desire always to be at ease, they die of privation (6:6–11; 19:24; 26:13–16).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 21:27 *brings it with evil intent*. It is an abomination to offer a sacrifice to God in hope of gaining His favor. Apart from faith, nothing is pleasing to God (Heb 11:6). Condemned is all worship that is done hypocritically or in an effort to appease God (Ps 50:9–23), to gain the praises of others (Mt 6:1–2), or heedless of our need for repentance and forgiveness (Mt 5:23–24).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 21:31 *horse*. Used for war, not farming or travel. *victory belongs to the* LORD. Outcomes of human conflict are guided by the Lord. Luth: "Histories are nothing else than a demonstration, recollection, and sign of divine action and judgment, how He upholds, rules, obstructs, prospers, punishes, and honors the world, and especially men, each according to his just desert, evil or good" (AE 34:275–76).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 22:1 *favor*. Hbr *chen*, "approval," "affection." Here, human favor. *silver*
… *gold*. Wisdom is also compared to silver and gold (2:4; 3:14; 8:10, 19; 16:16).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 22:2 Does not directly address the question of who is responsible for differences in economic standing, only that all people share a common Creator. The implications here include respect for those of a different economic class.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 22:3 Same as 27:12. *The prudent … hides himself*. To be prudent is not to be blindly optimistic, but sensible; foolishness equates optimism with faith.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 22:4 *riches and honor and life*. Cf 3:16, where these gifts are the reward for wisdom. Throughout Pr, wisdom is to be thought of as the life of faith in Christ, who is Wisdom Incarnate. Wisdom leads one to be humble before God and to fear Him above all things. God may reward this faith with temporal goods, such as wealth, honor, and life. However, the godly are not to sin when they see the wicked prosper (cf 23:17–18).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 22:5 *Thorns and snares*. Ancient roads could become overgrown at times with thorns. Snares were often placed on paths to capture animals and even people. Here, thorns and snares refer to the problems that result from sin.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 22:6 *Train up*. Hbr term has the sense of "dedicate." (Cf LC I 75–77.) *in the way he should go*. Scholars debate whether this phrase refers to the moral route or to the child's career path. The child's training as a whole is in view.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 22:7 "Rich" is singular and "poor" plural, since the wealthy are fewer in number and have power over many people. This verse does not argue that the wealthy are better or more pleasing to God. Nor does it justify any oppression on the part of a lender. It simply states a fact of economic life, one that a potential borrower would do well to heed.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 22:8 *sows … reap*. The Bible often speaks of reaping and sowing as a metaphor for cause and effect. Cf Ps 126:5; Ec 11:4; Hos 8:7; 10:12; 2Co 9:6; Gal 6:7–8. *rod of his fury*. The unjust will be unable to inflict punishment on those whom they seek to harm.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 22:9 *bountiful eye*. Lit, "good eye." Generous people not only give bountifully with their hand, but their eye is always eager to see those in need. The eye directs the body (cf Lk 11:34).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 22:10 *scoffer*. Scoffers can stir up trouble out of nothing. Because they mock everything and do not fear God, they are always discontent. Scoffers stir up dissensions even among people who would otherwise have been at peace.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 22:11 Scoffers may stir up trouble, but people who are pure of heart and of gracious speech will be well-liked by kings. Truthful speech that is also gracious is rare.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 22:12 *knowledge*. Human beings cannot always discern the truth of the situation, but God knows all things. *overthrows the words of the traitor*. God makes sure that those who would lie to or betray their neighbor will not succeed in the end.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 22:13 *sluggard*. Lazy person. See note, 6:6. *"There is a lion outside!"* Asian lions would not be found on a city street but in the remote wooded areas of Israel; the excuse is ridiculous. Lazy people will use the most unreasonable fears to excuse their behavior. *I shall be killed*. Lit, "I will be murdered"—as if a person who asked him to go to work had criminal intent. These words further undercut the sluggard's credibility.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 22:14 *forbidden women*. See note, 5:3. Chs 1–9 were full of admonitions to avoid them (cf 2:16; 5:3; 5:20; 7:5). *deep pit*. One would fall in but be unable to climb out. So too those who commit adultery can end up trapping themselves.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 22:15 *heart of a child*. We tend to think of children as morally neutral at worst. The Bible does not. It knows that we are born with a sinful nature—folly, in other words. Godly education means not merely bringing the child's good talents to light but also driving out the bad. *rod*. The Bible approves of corporal punishment. However, as 23:13 makes clear, it does not envision the sort of abuse that would maim or kill a child, but rather it promotes discipline that instructs.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 22:16 *gives to the rich*. Bribes them.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 10:1–22:16 Folly is more than mere stupidity. It is an act of rebellion against God. It not only brings bad consequences in this life but also damns us for eternity. True wisdom does not come from studying hard in school or even from having much life experience. True wisdom flows out of trust in the Lord ("the fear of the LORD"). By putting our trust in God and in His Son—Jesus Christ, Wisdom in human flesh—we are delivered from the consequences of our folly and we grow in the righteous behavior marked by wisdom. • Dear heavenly Father, forgive us for the many ways that we have shown the folly of our hearts. Drive from us the folly that results whenever we fear, love, and trust idols rather than You. Strengthen our trust in You and in Your Son's death and resurrection so that we will grow in wisdom, grace, and the knowledge of our Savior. Amen.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 22:17–23:14 Since the "Wisdom of Amenemope" was discovered in Egypt in 1922, scholars have noted a number of parallels between Amenemope's sayings and these verses of Pr. More recently it has become clear that Amenemope's work was written at least a century before Solomon lived. This would imply that Solomon borrowed from the Egyptian, rather than the other way around. Moreover, Solomon seems to have structured 22:17–24:22 into 30 sayings. Amenemope had structured his work with 30 divisions. Does this mean that this portion of Holy Scripture is but a copy of pagan Egyptian thought? Not at all. Solomon did not slavishly copy the "Wisdom of Amenemope." In fact, only 22 of the 63 verses have any parallel with a statement found in "Amenemope" and all are to be found in the first section of the 30 sayings (22:17–23:14). Even the thoughts Solomon quoted have been altered significantly. Solomon had urged his readers to learn from other wise people (1:6). See pp 775–78.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 22:17 *wise*. Hbr noun is plural here and in 24:23. Solomon himself had stated that we can learn from other wise people (1:6). In putting together these sayings of the wise, Solomon's primary concern is to teach his readers to trust the Lord (v 19). The verses most heavily influenced by the "Wisdom of Amenemope" are filled with commands such as "do not" (cf 22:22, 24, 26, 28; 23:3, 4, 6, 9, 10, 13)—a clear exposition of God's Law.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 22:18 *within you … on your lips*. Lit, "in your heart, on your lips." Biblical way of saying "both inwardly and outwardly." *ready on your lips*. Able to recite them and explain the connections between them.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 22:20 *thirty sayings*. A spelling variance in the Hbr has confused translators over the centuries. Some see the words as a reference to repetition or excellence (e.g., see KJV). However, as Amenemope had written a book with 30 chapters of proverbs, Solomon may have liked the idea of collecting 30 sayings here. He used some of Amenemope's ideas, but he also incorporated the sayings of other wise people (cf v 17) and has reworked these sayings to apply to the Israelites. E.g., Amenemope warns against oppressing the poor, but Solomon adds that the Lord will defend the poor against their oppressors (v 23).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 22:21 *a true answer to those who sent you?* Wise people will be able to do their tasks honestly and justly, whatever they

might be. Solomon assumes that most of his readers will be under other people's authority and need wisdom in the performance of their work.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 22:22 *at the gate*. City walls were many feet thick—big enough to serve as homes for people (Jsh 2:15; 2Ki 18:26–27)—and the gates equally massive. When the powerful citizens would gather there, they might easily complain about the poor who would not typically attend a gathering of the wealthy and influential. See p 792.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 22:24–25 Angry people tend to exploit others; if we associate with them, we learn to think as they do.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 22:27 *bed be taken from under you?* God's Law did not permit people's cloaks (which doubled as bed linens) to be held overnight as collateral (Ex 22:26–27). However, not everyone would operate ethically. It would not be wise to put oneself at the mercy of unscrupulous lenders.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 22:28 *ancient landmark*. There were no title deeds or surveyors' equipment in common usage in ancient Israel. Property boundaries were marked by stones. A dishonest neighbor could stealthily move the landmark farther and farther into his neighbor's property, stealing farm ground that was the basis of their existence. Such dishonesty would be hard to prove in court. *fathers have set*. Some rabbis later viewed such passages as referring to respect for traditions, not just to landmarks.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 22:29 *skillful in his work?* Lit, "quick in his work." The competent individual is recognized and rewarded.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 23:1–8 As the previous proverb indicated, competence raises one's station in life, but the proverbs that begin this chapter warn about the dangers of climbing the social ladder foolishly. The mighty are not always as welcoming as they appear (vv 1–3). Wealth is not all there is to life (vv 4–5). The stingy feign generosity, but their hospitality will cost you in the long run (vv 6–8).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 23:2 *put a knife to your throat*. Curb your appetite.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 23:3 *deceptive food*. The king appears to have put a lavish fare in front of you, but this is only to test you, to see whether you have the discipline to eat moderately.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 23:5 *eyes light on it*. I.e., as soon as your eyes fall upon the wealth. Hbr has a play on words: "When your eyes fly over to it, it flies away."

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 23:6 *stingy*. Lit, "evil of eye." Just as a generous giver was described as having "a bountiful eye" (22:9; see ESV note), a stingy person is called "evil of eye." "The eye is the lamp of the body," Jesus warned in Mt 6:22. How we look at life determines how we live.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 23:7 *inwardly calculating*. He is adding up the value of the food his guests are consuming and intends to make them pay for it later.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 23:8 *vomit up the morsels*. Figuratively; stingy hosts will make their guests wish that they had never eaten at their house. *pleasant words*. As the guests become aware of the host's true character, they realize that the exchange of pleasantries was a waste of breath.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 23:9 *he will despise the good sense of your words*. Fools only want to hear their own "wisdom" (18:2). One cannot directly correct a fool and expect to make headway.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 23:10 *ancient landmark*. See note, 22:28. *enter the fields of the fatherless*. Fatherless and widows often fell victim to predators, since there was no male adult to protect them. God warned those who thought to harm these vulnerable people that He esp protected widows and the fatherless (Dt 10:18; 27:19).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 23:11 *Redeemer*. See note, Jb 19:25.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 23:13 *if you strike him with a rod, he will not die*. Can be understood in two ways. First, a child will not die from the blows inflicted. Second, a child will learn wisdom from being disciplined and so will not come to an early grave, as the next verse makes clear.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 23:14 *Sheol*. See p 792; cf Dt 21:18–21.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 23:15–28 Teaching about parents and children. These verses contain three direct appeals of a father to his son (vv 15, 19, 26), much as Solomon had addressed his son directly 15 times in chs 1–9 (e.g., 1:8; 2:1; 3:1). These proverbs give pointed advice that the young need to hear: do not envy sinners (vv 17–18) and their drunken orgies (vv 19–21); instead, listen to your parents and make them happy (vv 22–25); do not give in to youthful passions (vv 26–28). The admonition on wine (vv 29–35) can be seen as a continuation of this appeal to avoid the sins of youth.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 23:15 *My son*. Vv 13–14 instructed parents about how they were to raise their children. This verse and the ones that follow ask children to take their parents' instruction seriously.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 23:16 *inmost being*. Lit, "kidneys." Israelites spoke of the kidneys as the seat of extreme emotions, while the heart was the seat of both the intellect and less intense emotions. *what is right*. Lit, "straight" or "level" things.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 23:17 *envy sinners*. See note, 24:1–2. *fear of the LORD*. See notes, 1:7; 2:5.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 23:20–21 *drunkards … gluttonous eaters*. Drunkenness and gluttony are linked here as well as in other passages of Scripture (Dt 21:20; Mt 11:19; Lk 7:34) because they are both sins of overindulgence that attempt to satisfy through food and drink the God-sized hole in the human heart. This warning follows shortly after the warning not to envy sinners but to fear the Lord. We are most tempted to envy sinners when we see how they indulge themselves in alcohol and food. *come to poverty*. True wisdom allows us to see beyond momentary pleasure and discern the long-term consequence of overindulgence: poverty.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 23:23 *Buy truth*. Could refer to payment for education. Although truth and wisdom cannot be bought outright, they have a cost: the diligence of those who pursue them. *truth … wisdom, instruction, and understanding*. We should not understand these items as only abstract pieces of knowledge or merely practical information. Jesus Christ is the Truth (Jn 14:6) and He is Wisdom (Pr 8:22; see p 1012). The invitation to learn and grow in understanding is an invitation to deepen one's faith.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 23:24–25 Good parents rejoice when they see their children growing wisely. This brings them more joy than if their children become rich or successful in school or work.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 23:27–28 *deep pit*. Deep pits were frequently used to capture wild animals. *adulteress*. Described at length in ch 7. See note, 2:16. *narrow well*. A person who fell down a narrow well might sink into the mud and die. Cf Jer 38:6. In the same way, adultery traps a person. *lies in wait*. Cf 7:12, where the adulteress also lurks to see whom she may snare.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 23:29–35 This teaching about wine is the longest series of verses devoted to any one topic in Pr since chs 1–9 and the most comprehensive exposition on drunkenness found in the Scriptures. The passage begins with a riddle (v 29), followed by its answer (v 30). After a

warning (v 31), the rest of the passage looks at the consequences of drunkenness (vv 32–35).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 23:30 *mixed wine*. Wine was often mixed with spices.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 23:31 *when it is red*. Wine was usually diluted, but some preferred to drink it straight (i.e., when it was pure red). The Hbr for "when the eye of the wine is red" is a play on words with "Who has redness of eyes?" (v 29).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 23:32 *adder*. Poisonous snake of the Near East.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 23:33 *see strange things*. Those who abuse alcohol may see hallucinations. *utter perverse things*. Often, people who are drunk say things that they would never say when sober.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 23:34 *midst of the sea*. Israel lacks natural ports; few people were sailors. Drunkenness makes one as unsteady as a novice at sea.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 23:35 *I was not hurt*. So drunk they do not feel the blows. *When shall I awake?* People who are drunk sleep fitfully. They often wait until they are sober enough to rise and then drink away their headache.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 24:1–2 Earlier, Solomon had warned against envying sinners (23:17–18), then he warned against drunkenness (23:19–21). Now he follows his teaching about drunkenness (23:29–35) with another warning against envying sinners. Whereas his earlier warning had emphasized the future that awaited those who feared the Lord, here Solomon shows the consequences of evil deeds.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 24:3–22 Strength and courage of wisdom. These verses explore how the wise are mightier than brute force (vv 5–6) and how wisdom equips one for action (vv 10–12). Fools are not taken seriously in the public arena (v 7). Although evil people can plot as shrewdly as the wise, their schemes ultimately come to naught (vv 8–9, 15–16). Knowing this keeps the wise from brooding about the wicked (vv 1–2, 17–20).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 24:3–4 *By wisdom a house is built*. The house serves as a metaphor for life. Rooms filled up by knowledge refer to the various activities and pursuits of life.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 24:5–6 *A wise man is full of strength*. Brute force can be defeated by lesser force, if wisely employed. As any general can tell,

it is not merely the size of the armies that determines the outcome of the battle, but how those armies are used.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 24:7 *in the gate*. See p 792.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 24:8 *schemer*. One who is as shrewd as a wise person (cf Lk 16:8) but uses knowledge for evil.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 24:9 *devising of folly*. Sin is the opposite of fearing, loving, and trusting in God above all things. The fact that people devote much time, energy, and brainpower to planning defiant behavior against God does not hide the truth that such behavior is folly. *the scoffer is an abomination*. Since scoffers are always stirring up trouble (cf 22:10), nobody really likes them. See note, 6:16.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 24:10 *faint*. Or, "fail to act." This same word is used to describe the failure of the Israelites to take over the Promised Land (Jsh 18:3). Of course, even the bravest feel fear, but it does not prevent them from taking action. *adversity … small*. Wordplay; Hbr for these words is similar.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 24:11 *taken away to death*. Ap Const: "Sums of money as are collected … appoint [them] to be laid out in the redemption of the saints, the deliverance of slaves, and of captives, and of prisoners, and of those that have been abused, and of those that have been condemned by tyrants to single combat and death on account of the name of Christ" (*ANF* 7:435). *stumbling to the slaughter*. Although this may refer to people under the threat of an unjust execution, it most likely refers to victims of street crime.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 24:12 *we did not know this*. Some people pretend not to see muggings and other forms of violence, much as the priest and the Levite pretended not to see the man who was robbed in the parable of the Good Samaritan (Lk 10:31–32). But claiming ignorance will not work with God, who knows whether or not we saw people in need and refused to help them. *He who weighs*. See note, 21:2.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 24:13 *eat honey*. Gathered from wild bees, which built their hives in the rocks (Dt 32:13). Chiefly used as a sweetener in baked goods. However, this is not dietary advice; it sets up the next proverb. Wisdom, like honey, is equally sweet. Hipp: "He uses 'honey' figuratively, meaning divine doctrine, which restores the spiritual knowledge of the soul" (*ANF* 5:172). See note, Ps 119:103.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 24:15–16 Solomon does not appeal to any sense of right and wrong held by the wicked but describes the futility of their plots. *as a wicked man*. Direct address ("O wicked man") to anyone tempted to harm a righteous person.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 24:16 Though the righteous fall daily, God always raises them up again. The righteous also look forward to an eternity of bliss. Meanwhile, the wicked stumble just once and are down for good, since God does not help them back up again. *seven times*. See note, Ps 119:164.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 24:17 Warning to the godly, who might be tempted to rejoice when the wicked suffer. God does not desire the death of sinners but rather their repentance (Ezk 18:23). Passages of Scripture that celebrate the defeat of enemies (e.g., Ex 15) usually praise God for His deliverance rather than focusing on the destruction of the enemy. *your enemy*. Your personal enemy rather than a national foe.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 24:18 *from him*. Toward the one who rejoiced at his enemy's fall (v 17).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 24:19 *envious of the wicked*. Cf 23:17; see note, 24:1–2.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 24:20 *the lamp*. Symbol of joy and life (cf 13:9). When the lamp of the wicked is extinguished, they, unlike the righteous, have no future (cf 23:18).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 24:21–22 Both the Lord and the king inflict punishment on those who disobey them.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 24:21 *fear the Lord*. See notes, 1:7; 2:5. *and the king*. Kings and rulers are servants of God and are, therefore, to be honored as such (Rm 13:1–2, 5–6; 1Pt 2:17). Moreover, the kings of ancient Israel were to be governed by God's Law and to implement it (Dt 17:18–20). Just as Pr 1–9 begins and ends with an appeal to fear the Lord (1:7 and 9:10), so this section ends with the same appeal. The advice of these chs is to be understood from the viewpoint of faith in the Lord.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 22:17–24:22 Solomon knows that true piety is more than simply avoiding evil but is based on trust in God. Thus, he urges us not to envy sinners but to fear the Lord, for the Lord has graciously promised us a glorious future (23:17–18; 24:1–4, 13–14). • Lord, as we learn in secular institutions and from pagan neighbors, may we be moved to

grow in godliness, while ever remembering that true righteousness is ours through Christ alone. Amen.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 24:23–34 Seems to be a second compilation of proverbs of other wise men collected by Solomon and are distinct from the first compilation (22:17–24:22). These two compilations serve as appendixes to Solomon's preface (chs 1–9) and the collections of his own proverbs (10:1–22:16).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 24:23 *the wise*. Plural, as in 22:17. Sayings in vv 23–34 are Solomon's collection of proverbs from unnamed wise men. *Partiality*. Favoritism is evil because God judges justly (2Ch 19:7), and judges are God's representatives in the courts.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 24:24 God abhors injustice, esp when people call wickedness good. Even when God justifies us sinners, He does not ignore the evil we have done. Only because Christ paid the penalty for our sins can we be declared righteous.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 24:26 *kisses*. Symbolize friendship and love. An honest answer, even if it contains a rebuke, is a sign of true friendship and love.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 24:27 *Prepare your work outside*. Get the crops in first. Then build a house and settle permanently. This proverb has a particularly useful application to marriage. One ought to be financially and spiritually stable before getting married.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 24:28 *Be not a witness*. Warning against perjury. In biblical times, the outcome of a trial could easily be determined by one false witness supporting the lies of another. Even if someone had been maligned by a neighbor, that person should not commit perjury. (Cf v 29.) See p 792.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 24:29 *I will do to him as he has done to me*. Opposite of the Golden Rule (Mt 7:12). Settling scores with enemies is pagan morality (Mt 5:44–47).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 24:30 *sluggard*. See note, 6:6.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 24:31 *thorns*. Exact plant is unknown. *nettles*. Unlike thorn-bearing plants, nettles grow primarily in areas that were formerly cultivated but now neglected, as is this vineyard.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 24:33–34 Nearly identical to 6:10–11.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 24:23–34 These verses comprise two sets of three topics: conduct in court (23–25, 28), speaking (26, 29), and work (27,

30–34). We are told to be just in judging and honest in our testimony. We are to speak the truth to our neighbor in all circumstances. We are to work hard on the most important priorities and not shirk work like the sluggard. In short, these verses admonish us to engage in the sort of decent conduct that enables societies to flourish. While all societies recognize the value of these behaviors, we Christians seek to live in such ways because the Gospel frees us to serve our neighbors in a God-pleasing way. • Heavenly Father, grant us justice, honesty, and industrious service. Through Christ's death and resurrection change our hearts and our society. Amen.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON **Chs 25–29** *proverbs of Solomon*. 1Ki 4:32 indicates that Solomon spoke 3,000 proverbs, which were more than likely preserved in royal archives. See "Additions," p 629. Pr 25–29 were "copied" from these sayings some 200 years later by "the men of Hezekiah," probably the king's secretary, Shebnah, and his recorder, Joah the son of Asaph (cf 2Ki 18:18, 37). Under King Hezekiah (715–686 BC) and his reforms, a renewed interest in God's Word took place.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 25:2–27 Content of this collection of Solomon's proverbs shows that it was intended for instructing kings and their courts. Vv 2–5 introduce the nature of kingship; vv 6–15 provide advice for dealing with kings; vv 16–26 explain the manner in which a king should deal with wicked people; v 27 concludes the section.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 25:2 *conceal things*. God's glory is manifested in many ways, e.g., creation, intervention in history, and, specifically, human redemption through His Son. Yet His ways and will are often hidden from human comprehension. *search things out*. The glory and greatness of kings, however, is manifested in their ability to make God's ways known to those under their rule. Solomon emphasizes wisdom as research. This would eventually lead to what we call science (see pp 775–78).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 25:3 A king's intentions may not always be known.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 25:4 *dross*. Impurities removed when refining silver.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 25:5 Luther noted that it was the duty of kings and secular officials to force "those who do not want to be good and righteous … to become good and righteous in the eyes of the world." In doing so they carry out God's will, for "although God will not reward this kind of righteousness with eternal life … he still wishes peace to be

maintained among men" (AE 46:99–100). The peace that results from the removal of wickedness under the jurisdiction of rulers establishes what is called "civil righteousness."
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 25:6 *the great*. People in positions of authority (e.g., kings, elders).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON **25:7b–10** Though lawsuits may be necessary in some cases, it is wise to settle disputes between parties involved instead of seeking out a third party for legal representation before a court of law (cf Mt 5:25; 7:1–5). See p 792.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 25:11 *apples of gold in a setting of silver*. Metaphor for jewelry. Some botanists believe the fruit was apricots.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 25:13 *cold of snow in the time of harvest*. Probably snow that was brought down from a mountain to cool and refresh workers in the harvest field, for snowfall during harvesttime would not have been a blessing but a curse.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 25:15 *soft tongue*. Kind and humble speech.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 25:16 *vomit it*. Overindulgence leads to harm.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 25:19 *foot that slips*. A lame foot.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 25:20 *heavy heart*. Someone in deep despair. Songs can provoke a fight with such a person. *vinegar on soda*. Pouring vinegar on soda makes it foam up.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 25:21–22 *you will heap burning coals on his head*. You will shame him. Aug: "Interpret the coals of fire as the burning groans of penitence by which a man's pride is cured who bewails that he has been the enemy of one who came to his assistance in distress" (*NPNF* 1 2:563). As Rm 12:14–21 indicates, treating enemies with kindness overcomes evil with good.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 25:23 *brings forth rain*. Lit, "writhes with the birth pangs of rain." The north wind signals the coming of a low-pressure system and the ensuing west wind with its rain. *backbiting tongue*. That of a malicious whisperer or gossiper.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 25:26 *gives way before the wicked*. Succumbs to sinful temptations.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 25:1–27 Righteous people who compromise their principles disappoint us. Hope remains not in the possibility of renewing their righteousness by trying harder next time but rather in God's righteousness, which is credited to all who trust in the Lord's mercy. This

righteousness is passive (i.e., it is credited us apart from anything done on our part, solely through Christ's work on the cross). This passive righteousness frees, strengthens, and moves us to pursue what can be called "active" righteousness by keeping the Law to thank the Lord for His mercy.
• Merciful Lord, You hid Your power in the weakness of Your Son that we might seek it wisely by faith. Refresh us this day with the faithful message of Your love that we may search out what is glorious and pleasing to You. Amen.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 25:28–27:4 Solomon's extensive comments on the nature of fools.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 26:2 *does not alight*. A curse pronounced without provocation (i.e., not expressed in response to transgressions of God's Law) has no chance of being fulfilled. See note, Gn 12:3.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 26:3 *a rod for the back of fools*. See note, 10:13; cf 19:29.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 26:4–5 *according to his folly*. Whether a fool should be answered or not varies with circumstances. Do not let a fool take your silence as approval or inability to answer.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 26:6 *drinks violence*. Revels in violent behavior and speech; asks for trouble.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 26:8 *binds the stone*. Loads a slingshot.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 26:10 *passing fool*. Hiring someone just to fill the position inevitably leads to more harm than good.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 26:11 Quoted in 2Pt 2:22. Dogs were considered one of the filthiest animals in ancient Israel. These unclean animals (according to Levitical law) naturally returned to their uncleanness.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 26:12 *wise in his own eyes?* Such people are not teachable.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 26:13 Absurd ploy to avoid leaving the house and engaging in labor. See note, 22:13.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 26:14 Humorously describes the ease with which a sluggard rolls over in bed (when he or she is supposed to be awake).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 26:15 *buries his hand in the dish*. Solomon is poking fun at people who are too lazy to finish what they started, esp necessary tasks.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 26:16 *seven*. See p 217.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 26:17 Dogs in ancient Israel typically roamed the streets in packs (Ex 22:31; 1Ki 14:11; 16:4; 21:19–24; 22:38; 2Ki 9:10, 36; Ps 22:20; 59:6, 14–15; Jer 15:3). If you grabbed one by the ears, you would be unable to let go lest you be bitten and, at the same time, unable to hang on, since the other dogs in the pack would attack you.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 26:18–19 Good humor between mutual friends is not condemned, but rather the covering up of malicious deceit with a joke.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 26:20–22 Gossip and unsubstantiated rumors cause disputes and often sustain them. *kindling*. Lit, "to make hotter." Gossipy whispers linger in a person's imagination.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 26:23–26 Warning against those who disguise their malicious intent with the appearances of goodwill.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 26:25 *seven abominations*. See note, 6:16–19.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 26:26 *assembly*. Hbr *qahal*. General public or religious gathering; in the public eye.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 27:1 Cf Jas 4:13–16.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 27:2 True praise comes from others. See note, 27:21.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 27:4 *Wrath … anger*. Typically brief emotions. Jealousy persists for a longer period of time.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 27:5–22 New section; offers advice for dealing with family, friends, and other people but also contains the greatest concentration of enigmatic sayings in the entire Book.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 27:5 *hidden love*. Love that does not take action.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 27:6 *Faithful are the wounds of a friend*. Emotional wounds caused by loving concern. *kisses of an enemy*. Insincere signs of affection from an enemy.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 27:7 Those who lack the necessities of life will endure suffering to attain them.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 27:8 Warning against adultery. Cf ch 7. Also, counsel to those who despise their family.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 27:9 *Oil and perfume*. Scents were mixed with olive oil for anointing the body (today, perfume is usually mixed with alcohol). See note, Sg 4:14. *sweetness*. Value or worth.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 27:10 Warning against overreacting to adversity by imposing on family members.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 27:11 Cf Ps 127:3–5.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 27:13 *garment … pledge … security*. See note, 20:16.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 27:14 Poorly timed or insincere compliments are not compliments at all.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 27:17 *Iron sharpens iron*. Characteristics of the people with whom you associate will eventually shape or hone your character. While this can be positive, as this text implies, it can also be negative for those who keep bad company.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 27:18 Loyalty pays off in any vocation.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 27:20 *Sheol and Abaddon*. See p 792. Sheol takes one person after another.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 27:21 *tested by his praise*. How people react to praise often reveals their nature. Persons who pride themselves on flattery are self-centered. Luth: "There must be great diligence and care lest honor and good reputation puff up the heart and the heart find pleasure in them. … Few and most spiritual men must they be who, when honored and praised, remain indifferent and unchanged, so that they do not care for it, nor feel pride and pleasure in it, but remain entirely free, ascribe all their honor and fame to God, offering it to Him alone, and using it only for the glory of God and the edification of their neighbors" (*WLS* § 2063). May we be humble, by receiving praise without pride and by acknowledging every gift and talent as a blessing from God to be used in service to our neighbor! God, grant us such hearts for the sake of Christ!
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 27:22 *mortar*. Stone bowl. *pestle*. Stone tool for grinding grain in the mortar. Hardened fools cannot be separated from their foolishness.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 27:23–27 Exhortations for rulers regarding governance of their people.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 27:23 Kings were often referred to as shepherds in the OT (1Ki 22:17; Ps 78:70–71; Jer 6:3; Ezk 34:23; Mi 5:2–4). As such, they are called to guard and protect their people as a shepherd tends his flock. This mandate also applies to fathers: "He gives to the father of a family a domestic precept, that he should use what is his own and refrain from what is another's. Solomon commands the father to take good care of his own property. Yet he should do so in such a way that, with his mind occupied with the increase of his resources, he should not cast away the fear of God or faith or care in God's Word" (Ap XIIB 9).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 27:24 Successful governing requires constant attention. Prosperity and the right or ability to rule are not automatic.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 27:25–27 Kings are to watch over their people who, in return, will cause everyone to flourish.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 27:27 *maintenance for your girls*. Nourishment for female servants.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON **Chs 28–29** Additional advice for kings.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 28:1 *bold as a lion*. Those who trust in the Lord will be vindicated.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 28:3 Kings need to be mindful not only of the wealthy and influential but also of those unjustly treated and neglected among the poor.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 28:4 *law*. Hbr *torah*, "religious instruction"; not a specific canon of statutes and regulation such as the Ten Commandments, though it does not exclude such specific laws. See p 971.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 28:8 Usury or the charging of interest for profit was forbidden among the Israelites (cf Ex 22:25; Lv 25:35–37; Dt 23:19–20; Ezk 22:12). Those who gathered wealth in this way could have it confiscated.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 28:9 *law*. See note, v 4. Those who disregard right religious instruction and still pray perform an idolatrous act by addressing an ill-conceived god. "If your faith and trust is right, then your god is also true. On the other hand, if your trust is false and wrong, then you do not have the true God" (LC I 3). "Even if [or: Even if we were to concede that] all people outside Christianity … believe in and worship only one true God, they still do not know what His mind toward them is and cannot expect any love or blessing from Him. Therefore, they abide in eternal wrath and damnation. For they do not have the Lord Christ, and, besides, are not illumined and favored by any gifts of the Holy Spirit [1 Corinthians 2:9–16; Hebrews 6:4–6]" (LC II 66).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 28:11 Wealth is not always a sign of wisdom.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 28:13 *confesses and forsakes*. Written for rulers and their subjects. The passage describes sincere repentance. *mercy*. Forgiveness given by God to those who acknowledge their sinfulness.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 28:14 *fears the* LORD. See notes, 1:7; 2:5. Bern: "The fear which I wish to inspire [in you] is not that which falls into the nets of desperation, but which brings to us the hope of blessedness" (*SLSB*,

p 99). By fearing and trusting in God, we receive His promises by faith. Today, the Lord, our King, calls us to live by His promises received at Baptism, when we hear His Word, and when we partake in His Supper. *hardens his heart*. Develops a stubborn rebelliousness and lack of repentance.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 28:16 *cruel oppressor*. As in v 15, the nature of such overbearing and tyrannical rulers, whose ways can only keep their people poor and impoverished, stands in stark contrast to those who stamp out the unjust treatment of the poor and oppressed.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 28:17 *burdened with the blood of another*. Either the weight of a guilty conscience or the pressures felt by the pursuit of the authorities. See note, 1Ki 2:31.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 28:20 Both God and fellow human beings will bless a trustworthy person. Those who are in a hurry to obtain wealth and riches do so at the expense of others. They will eventually pay for their dishonesty.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 28:22 See ESV note. Warning against corruption.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 28:23 Making guilty persons feel good about themselves will not earn the respect and fear required for good authority-subject relationships.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 28:24 *a man who destroys*. A vandal.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 28:25 *the one who trusts in the LORD will be enriched*. The wisest of all investments. Trust in wealth is faith in temporal things, rather than the eternal—the Lord. True and lasting riches can only be found in that which truly lasts.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 28:26 Defines precisely what a fool is: someone who trusts in his or her own abilities rather than God's wisdom and promises handed down to human beings in the Scriptures. *delivered*. See p 842.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 28:27 *hides his eyes*. Fails to see the needs of others.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 28:28 Under a wicked regime, people contribute less to the common good. They fear that a corrupt government will use the fruits of their labor for its own purposes, and not for all people.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 29:1 *stiffens his neck*. Is stubborn. See note, Ex 32:9.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 29:4 *exacts gifts*. Is guilty of corruption, using public resources for private purposes (see ESV note).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 29:5 *spreads a net*. Weaves a web of flattery that traps him.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 29:8 *set a city aflame*. Stir up trouble. *turn away wrath*. Bring peace to disputes.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 29:9 *argument with a fool*. See note, 26:4–5.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 29:11 Fools express their opinions and emotions whenever they please. They also commit sinful deeds without restraint.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 29:13 *the LORD gives light to the eyes of both*. All people are God's creatures and servants and, therefore, receive His blessings. As this proverb is advice for kings, it reminds those who are in a position of power that they are to be impartial in their dealings with their subjects. See note, Jb 17:7.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 29:14 *established forever*. Reputation of the ruler will continue as an example for other rulers to emulate. All will welcome the leadership of the ruler's descendants.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 29:15 Luth: "When a child is permitted to do what it pleases, and parents say: Whatever our little daughter does is good, that girl is certainly headed for prostitution. And later on shame rests on the father and ignominy on the mother. This is their penalty for having neglected to train their child. God wants youth to be ruled and coerced by discipline, for this age is very weak and inexperienced and thinks only of foolish, childish, and harmful things. Accordingly, [the child] cannot rule itself and cannot see what is good for itself" (*WLS* § 5078).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 29:16 Cf 28:28; 29:2.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 29:17 Parents who discipline their young children reap a blessing in the future, esp when their children are grown and independent.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 29:18 *prophetic vision*. Hbr *chazon*, revelation from God, which has been preserved in the Scriptures. The Lord moved the prophets to preach His Word lest the people circumvent and distort the moral law through sinful reasoning. Secular moral philosophy cannot sustain a nation. See pp 1077–83.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 29:19 Physical punishment or removal of privilege is needed.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 29:20 *hasty in his words*. Speaking without thinking of the meaning or possible consequences.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 29:21 *will … find him his heir*. See ESV note. LXX reads, "he will have grief over himself." Those who pamper their servants from their youth will cause grief to themselves later on in life, for the slaves will not possess the wisdom to serve their master well.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 29:24 *discloses nothing*. During legal proceedings, such a person is found in contempt of court for not testifying.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 29:26 Reminds rulers that many people will attempt to influence them. Also instructs subjects of human authorities that, although their secular officials are responsible for ensuring peace and justice, real justice and righteousness comes from God. God is the final arbiter over all people throughout history. A more profound truth is revealed here as well: not only is God the ultimate judge, dispensing justice when and where He sees fit, but He is also the ultimate advocate. See "The Redeemer," p 782.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON **Chs 25–29** Israel was not holy, or set apart, because of their own greatness but because of God's extraordinary kindness in calling them to be His people, the people from whom the future Messiah would be born. By crushing the work of Satan, this Messiah would deliver the final blow to the catastrophic effects and consequences of sin upon humanity (Gn 3:15). This establishes the necessary context for reading these proverbs and instructions on human righteousness. For the righteousness of rulers and their subjects is borne out of the divine righteousness reckoned to human beings through faith in God's promises. The righteousness that saves is a righteousness that *only* comes through faith in God's promise; Christ's righteousness was substituted for our wickedness. • We thank You, O Lord, for Your greatest act of justice, the sending of Your own Son to die on our behalf! In assurance and eternal hope, enable me to freely serve my neighbor, community, and authorities. Amen.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON **Ch 30** We do not know who Agur son of Jakeh was, nor do we know when he spoke these words or when they were recorded. The words of Agur feature "numerical sayings" (seven sayings in vv 11–14, 15–16, 18–19, 21–23, 24–28, 29–31, 32–33). These sayings involve a list of examples that stand together to illustrate a truth. The sayings often appear in a formula stating a number for the list and then

adding one. The sayings also have the feel of a riddle, inviting the listener to guess what the uniting point of the list is or what items might appear in the list. Other such sayings appear in 6:16–19; Jb 5:19; Am 1:3–15; 1Sm 18:7; 21:11; 29:5.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 30:1 *oracle*. Prophetic message. *The man*. Agur. In vv 1–3, he confesses his weariness and inherent weakness in trying to attain true wisdom, understanding, and knowledge of the Holy One by his own reason and strength (cf 9:10).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 30:4 Agur's questions challenge his audience to acknowledge their total reliance on God for the attainment of wisdom, just as God challenged Job (Jb 38:4–39:30). *son's name*. Chem: "The clearest passage where He is called the Son of God without respect to His human nature" (*LTh* 1:92). *Surely you know!* Agur even uses the very same words that God used (Jb 38:5).

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 30:5 *word of God*. Having demonstrated to his audience their inability to attain true wisdom, understanding, and knowledge, Agur points them to the source and purveyor of all these things. God's Word is the only tried, tested, and proven shelter from false wisdom that leads, ultimately, to damnation. Chem: "These mysteries are known from the Word and we must believe nothing else about God than what He has revealed" (*LTh* 1:92). May our gracious Lord, through the Holy Spirit, increase our reliance on His Holy Word! See note, Ps 18:30.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 30:6 *Do not add*. Do not change God's Word.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 30:9 Sometimes, people who become full or blessed with riches are tempted to rely on these things rather than God. Conversely, poor people are sometimes tempted to steal. Either sin makes a mockery of God's name.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 30:10 *slander*. Malicious falsehood told about another person. Those whose reputation is unjustly damaged by a lie may curse the slanderer, and before God the slanderer is absolutely guilty. *curse*. See note, Gn 12:3.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 30:11–14 Four kinds of people whose attitudes prevent them from obtaining true wisdom.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 30:13 *lofty … eyes … high … eyelids*. Picturing arrogance and haughtiness.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 30:15–16 *leech*. Hbr word is found only here. A leech has a sucker at each end of its body. Agur means the person is a

parasite, who seems to have two mouths. *daughters*. Used because "leech" is grammatically feminine. "Sheol," "womb," "land," and "fire" are also feminine; the writer is using wordplay to relate all these observations.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 30:16 *Sheol*. See p 792.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 30:18–19 First three things move in extraordinary ways (without legs). Human love is also mysterious, particularly when expressed physically.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 30:20 *eats and wipes her mouth*. She sees no fault in taking what does not belong to her.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 30:21–23 *three … four*. See ch 30 intro.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 30:24–28 *Four things*. See ch 30 intro. *the lizard you can take in your hands*. While a lizard can easily be caught, because it is able to scale walls it can also find its way into the most secure of places.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 30:29–31 *Three … four*. See ch 30 intro.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 30:32–33 Wise people do not express boastful thoughts or evil schemes they may have had. Instead, they keep their mouth shut. However, wicked fools express them and, as a result, cause strife and conflict in their community by pressing the issues.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON **Ch 30** Agur demonstrates the futility of life without wisdom, and also the blessings obtained from God's Word. We cannot obtain enough insight, correct every injustice, or curb some of the most common sins. It is only through knowledge of the Holy One—God's only Son, Jesus Christ, who was crucified, died, and resurrected—that we are rescued from pressure of inadequacy, failure, and, ultimately, eternal damnation. Knowledge and soundness of mind gained from the Lord enable us to approach life in this world with confidence. • O Lord, raise us up in newness of life, so that we may love and serve our neighbors. Amen.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 31:1 *King Lemuel*. Means "dedicated to God." Some biblical scholars suggest that it may be a pseudonym for King Hezekiah (2Ki 18:5) or possibly King Josiah (2Ki 23:25). *his mother taught him*. Mothers were expected to provide the earliest lessons for children. However, Lemuel's mother played a larger role in preparing her son to be king. She was even given words of instruction either directly from God or from a prophet. In any case, because she taught and ingrained God's Word into her son's mind, these words became his words.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 31:2 *son of my vows?* Marriage vows or perhaps a vow like Hannah's, who offered her son Samuel in service to the Lord

(1Sm 1:11).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 31:3 *Do not give your strength to women*. Warning against sexual immorality.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 31:4 *strong drink*. See note, 23:29–35.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 31:6–7 Does not condone the abuse of alcohol or drunkenness, just as vv 4–5 do not absolutely prohibit alcohol. Alcohol was valued as medication and for relaxation.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 31:1–9 King Lemuel was taught God's Word by his mother in order to equip him to serve his subjects. While we may never find ourselves in such a high position of authority, let us learn from his mother's example. Rather than focusing her teaching on how he could achieve financial and material success or how to increase his power, she taught him God's Word. God's Word from cover to cover bears witness first and foremost to another son: God's Son, who, at the appropriate time, took on human flesh and was born to a virgin mother. He did so to fulfill God's promise to bless all nations (Gn 12:2–3). Indeed, His death for the sins of the entire world (1Jn 2:2) opened up the gates to heaven. • O Christ, the Word of God, You came to serve humankind. Guide us to bring hope to others and serve even the poorest of our neighbors. Amen.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 31:10–31 Acrostic poem; each line begins with a letter of the Hbr alphabet. No indication who wrote this final section of Pr. See pp 777–78. On account of its different style, this poem is probably not an extension of King Lemuel's words. Yet this is a wonderful poem, praising virtuous women. It also serves to instruct men in what to look for in a potential spouse. The woman described here is truly remarkable. While it is often assumed that women played a subservient role in the home and society of ancient Israel, this woman defies such description. Not only is she the manager of the household, she is also a shrewd businesswoman (and is praised for it). Notice, however, that everything she does is for her family and, by extension, her community. She lives and works for the well-being and livelihood of others. She is not interested in promoting her own self-worth, but her worth is demonstrated by her service, which is ultimately motivated by her love for God. Such a woman should be treasured and honored. See "Standing of Women," p 213.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 31:13 *flax*. Used to make linen, a costly material worn by the wealthy.

PROVERBS—NOTE ON 31:14 *like the ships of the merchant*. She is enterprising and industrious. In providing for her family, she supplies not only what is convenient but also adds variety and novelty.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 31:15 *her maidens*. Her servants.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 31:16 Activities normally associated with men in the OT. However, Israelite women enjoyed more freedom than has sometimes been granted by commentators.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 31:18 *Her lamp does not go out at night*. She could afford to have enough oil to keep the lamps burning throughout the night in case any family members awoke in the dark and had to move about in the house.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 31:21 *clothed in scarlet*. Due to her industriousness and shrewdness, she clothes her family with the highest quality and most expensive clothes.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 31:22 *purple*. Expensive dye.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 31:23 *gates … elders*. Her accomplishments and good reputation bring additional respect to her husband. See p 792.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 31:24 *linen*. See note, v 13. In addition to her household duties, she also makes a profit through the work she does, and does well, on the side.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 31:25 *she laughs at the time to come*. Her godly diligence protects her against the future. May we all, trusting that God will always provide for us, continue to work hard in our vocations and stations in life for the sake of our family, neighbors, and communities!
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 31:30 *fears the LORD*. See notes, 1:7; 2:5. Essential characteristic of an exceptional woman (and man) is fear of the Lord—for only those who fear the Lord will obtain the wisdom to accomplish all the other attributes described above.
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 31:30–31 Men should not take their wives for granted. Not only should they love and praise them in the home but also in public. Bern: "You have been enabled to reject the deceitful glory of the world. … you deserve to be praised for not being deceived" (*SLSB*, p 216).
PROVERBS—NOTE ON 31:10–31 The most basic human relationship, according to God's design, is the joining of a man and woman in holy matrimony. However, due to our active rebellion, this relationship has been undermined. In His mercy, God still blesses our marriages. Since our relationship with the Creator is restored in Christ, this likewise serves to

restore our marriages and all other human relationships. • O Lord, grant a faithful and diligent spouse to Your child. Bind the hearts of all who marry in lasting love and mutual care, through Christ Jesus, who gave His life for His Bride, the Church. Amen.

Ecclesiastes

Ecclesiastes 1 | Ecclesiastes 2 | Ecclesiastes 3 | Ecclesiastes 4 | Ecclesiastes 5 | Ecclesiastes 6 | Ecclesiastes 7 | Ecclesiastes 8 | Ecclesiastes 9 | Ecclesiastes 10 | Ecclesiastes 11 | Ecclesiastes 12

- Introduction to Ecclesiastes
  - Overview
  - Reading Ecclesiastes
  - Writing, Setting, and Perspective
  - Luther on Ecclesiastes
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

All Is Vanity

1 [1]‡† The words of the Preacher,[1] the son of David, king in Jerusalem.

[2]† Vanity[2] of vanities, says the Preacher,
vanity of vanities! All is vanity.
[3]‡† What does man gain by all the toil
at which he toils under the sun?
[4]† A generation goes, and a generation comes,
but the earth remains forever.
[5]† The sun rises, and the sun goes down,
and hastens[3] to the place where it rises.
[6]† The wind blows to the south
and goes around to the north;
around and around goes the wind,
and on its circuits the wind returns.
[7]† All streams run to the sea,
but the sea is not full;
to the place where the streams flow,
there they flow again.
[8]† All things are full of weariness;
a man cannot utter it;
the eye is not satisfied with seeing,
nor the ear filled with hearing.
[9]‡† What has been is what will be,
and what has been done is what will be done,
and there is nothing new under the sun.
[10]† Is there a thing of which it is said,
"See, this is new"?
It has been already
in the ages before us.
[11]† There is no remembrance of former things,[1]
nor will there be any remembrance

of later things[2] yet to be
among those who come after.

The Vanity of Wisdom

12 ‡ ‡ ‡ I the Preacher have been king over Israel in Jerusalem. 13 † And I
applied my heart[3] to seek and to search out by wisdom all that is done
under heaven. It is an unhappy business that God has given to the children
of man to be busy with. 14 † I have seen everything that is done under the
sun, and behold, all is vanity and a striving after wind.[4]

15 † What is crooked cannot be made straight,
and what is lacking cannot be counted.

16 † I said in my heart, “I have acquired great wisdom, surpassing all who
were over Jerusalem before me, and my heart has had great experience of
wisdom and knowledge.” 17 ‡ And I applied my heart to know wisdom and to
know madness and folly. I perceived that this also is but a striving after
wind.

18 † For in much wisdom is much vexation,
and he who increases knowledge increases
sorrow.

The Vanity of Self-Indulgence

2 [1]I said in my heart, “Come now, I will test you with pleasure;
enjoy yourself.” But behold, this also was vanity. [2]I said of laughter, “It is
mad,” and of pleasure, “What use is it?” [3]I searched with my heart how to
cheer my body with wine—my heart still guiding me with wisdom—and
how to lay hold on folly, till I might see what was good for the children of
man to do under heaven during the few days of their life. [4]I made great
works. I built houses and planted vineyards for myself. [5]I made myself
gardens and parks, and planted in them all kinds of fruit trees. [6]I made
myself pools from which to water the forest of growing trees. [7]I bought
male and female slaves, and had slaves who were born in my house. I had
also great possessions of herds and flocks, more than any who had been
before me in Jerusalem. [8]I also gathered for myself silver and gold and the
treasure of kings and provinces. I got singers, both men and women, and
many concubines,[1] the delight of the children of man.

[9]So I became great and surpassed all who were before me in Jerusalem.
Also my wisdom remained with me. [10]And whatever my eyes desired I did
not keep from them. I kept my heart from no pleasure, for my heart found
pleasure in all my toil, and this was my reward for all my toil. [11]Then I
considered all that my hands had done and the toil I had expended in doing
it, and behold, all was vanity and a striving after wind, and there was
nothing to be gained under the sun.

The Vanity of Living Wisely

12 ‡† So I turned to consider wisdom and madness and folly. For what can
the man do who comes after the king? Only what has already been done.
13 †Then I saw that there is more gain in wisdom than in folly, as there is
more gain in light than in darkness. 14† The wise person has his eyes in his
head, but the fool walks in darkness. And yet I perceived that the same
event happens to all of them. 15†Then I said in my heart, “What happens to
the fool will happen to me also. Why then have I been so very wise?” And I
said in my heart that this also is vanity. 16†For of the wise as of the fool
there is no enduring remembrance, seeing that in the days to come all will
have been long forgotten. How the wise dies just like the fool! 17†So I hated
life, because what is done under the sun was grievous to me, for all is vanity
and a striving after wind.

The Vanity of Toil

18 ‡ † I hated all my toil in which I toil under the sun, seeing that I must
leave it to the man who will come after me, 19 † and who knows whether he
will be wise or a fool? Yet he will be master of all for which I toiled and
used my wisdom under the sun. This also is vanity. 20 † So I turned about and
gave my heart up to despair over all the toil of my labors under the sun,
21 † because sometimes a person who has toiled with wisdom and knowledge
and skill must leave everything to be enjoyed by someone who did not toil
for it. This also is vanity and a great evil. 22 ‡ What has a man from all the
toil and striving of heart with which he toils beneath the sun? 23 † For all his
days are full of sorrow, and his work is a vexation. Even in the night his
heart does not rest. This also is vanity.

24 † There is nothing better for a person than that he should eat and drink
and find enjoyment[1] in his toil. This also, I saw, is from the hand of God,
25 † for apart from him[2] who can eat or who can have enjoyment? 26 † For to
the one who pleases him God has given wisdom and knowledge and joy,
but to the sinner he has given the business of gathering and collecting, only
to give to one who pleases God. This also is vanity and a striving after
wind.

A Time for Everything

3 [1] For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter
under heaven:

[2] a time to be born, and a time to die;
a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what
is planted;
[3] a time to kill, and a time to heal;
a time to break down, and a time to build up;
[4] a time to weep, and a time to laugh;
a time to mourn, and a time to dance;
[5] a time to cast away stones, and a time
to gather stones together;
a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from
embracing;
[6] a time to seek, and a time to lose;
a time to keep, and a time to cast away;
[7] a time to tear, and a time to sew;
a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;
[8] a time to love, and a time to hate;
a time for war, and a time for peace.

The God-Given Task

9 ‡‡What gain has the worker from his toil? 10 I have seen the business that
God has given to the children of man to be busy with. 11 †He has made
everything beautiful in its time. Also, he has put eternity into man's heart,
yet so that he cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the
end. 12 †I perceived that there is nothing better for them than to be joyful and
to do good as long as they live; 13 †also that everyone should eat and drink
and take pleasure in all his toil—this is God's gift to man.

14 †I perceived that whatever God does endures forever; nothing can be
added to it, nor anything taken from it. God has done it, so that people fear
before him. 15 †That which is, already has been; that which is to be, already
has been; and God seeks what has been driven away.[1]

From Dust to Dust

16 †Moreover, I saw under the sun that in the place of justice, even there
was wickedness, and in the place of righteousness, even there was
wickedness. 17 †I said in my heart, God will judge the righteous and the
wicked, for there is a time for every matter and for every work. 18 †I said in
my heart with regard to the children of man that God is testing them that
they may see that they themselves are but beasts. 19 † For what happens to
the children of man and what happens to the beasts is the same; as one dies,
so dies the other. They all have the same breath, and man has no advantage
over the beasts, for all is vanity. 20 †All go to one place. All are from the
dust, and to dust all return. 21 †Who knows whether the spirit of man goes
upward and the spirit of the beast goes down into the earth? 22 †So I saw that
there is nothing better than that a man should rejoice in his work, for that is
his lot. Who can bring him to see what will be after him?

Evil Under the Sun

4 [1]†Again I saw all the oppressions that are done under the sun. And
behold, the tears of the oppressed, and they had no one to comfort them! On
the side of their oppressors there was power, and there was no one to
comfort them. [2]And I thought the dead who are already dead more fortunate
than the living who are still alive. [3]†But better than both is he who has not
yet been and has not seen the evil deeds that are done under the sun.

[4]†Then I saw that all toil and all skill in work come from a man's envy of
his neighbor. This also is vanity and a striving after wind.

[5]†The fool folds his hands and eats his own flesh.

[6]† Better is a handful of quietness than two hands full of toil and a
striving after wind.

[7]† Again, I saw vanity under the sun: [8]†one person who has no other,
either son or brother, yet there is no end to all his toil, and his eyes are never
satisfied with riches, so that he never asks, "For whom am I toiling and
depriving myself of pleasure?" This also is vanity and an unhappy business.

[9]†Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil.
[10]†For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone
when he falls and has not another to lift him up! [11]Again, if two lie together,
they keep warm, but how can one keep warm alone? [12]†And though a man
might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him—a threefold
cord is not quickly broken.

[13]††Better was a poor and wise youth than an old and foolish king who
no longer knew how to take advice. [14]†For he went from prison to the
throne, though in his own kingdom he had been born poor. [15]†I saw all the
living who move about under the sun, along with that[1] youth who was to
stand in the king's[2] place. [16]†There was no end of all the people, all of
whom he led. Yet those who come later will not rejoice in him. Surely this
also is vanity and a striving after wind.

Fear God

5 [1] † † [3] Guard your steps when you go to the house of God. To draw
near to listen is better than to offer the sacrifice of fools, for they do not
know that they are doing evil. [2] † [1] Be not rash with your mouth, nor let
your heart be hasty to utter a word before God, for God is in heaven and
you are on earth. Therefore let your words be few. [3] † For a dream comes
with much business, and a fool's voice with many words.

[4] † When you vow a vow to God, do not delay paying it, for he has no
pleasure in fools. Pay what you vow. [5] It is better that you should not vow
than that you should vow and not pay. [6] † Let not your mouth lead you[2] into
sin, and do not say before the messenger[3] that it was a mistake. Why
should God be angry at your voice and destroy the work of your hands?
[7] † For when dreams increase and words grow many, there is vanity;[4] but
God is the one you must fear.

The Vanity of Wealth and Honor

8 ‡† If you see in a province the oppression of the poor and the violation
of justice and righteousness, do not be amazed at the matter, for the high
official is watched by a higher, and there are yet higher ones over them.
9 †But this is gain for a land in every way: a king committed to cultivated
fields.[5]

10 †He who loves money will not be satisfied with money, nor he who
loves wealth with his income; this also is vanity. 11 †When goods increase,
they increase who eat them, and what advantage has their owner but to see
them with his eyes? 12 †Sweet is the sleep of a laborer, whether he eats little
or much, but the full stomach of the rich will not let him sleep.

13 † There is a grievous evil that I have seen under the sun: riches were
kept by their owner to his hurt, 14 †and those riches were lost in a bad
venture. And he is father of a son, but he has nothing in his hand. 15 † As he
came from his mother's womb he shall go again, naked as he came, and
shall take nothing for his toil that he may carry away in his hand. 16 †This
also is a grievous evil: just as he came, so shall he go, and what gain is there
to him who toils for the wind? 17 †Moreover, all his days he eats in darkness
in much vexation and sickness and anger.

18 †Behold, what I have seen to be good and fitting is to eat and drink and
find enjoyment[6] in all the toil with which one toils under the sun the few
days of his life that God has given him, for this is his lot. 19 †Everyone also
to whom God has given wealth and possessions and power to enjoy them,
and to accept his lot and rejoice in his toil—this is the gift of God. 20 †For he
will not much remember the days of his life because God keeps him
occupied with joy in his heart.

6 1 †There is an evil that I have seen under the sun, and it lies heavy on
mankind: 2 †a man to whom God gives wealth, possessions, and honor, so
that he lacks nothing of all that he desires, yet God does not give him power
to enjoy them, but a stranger enjoys them. This is vanity; it is a grievous
evil. 3 †If a man fathers a hundred children and lives many years, so that the
days of his years are many, but his soul is not satisfied with life's good

things, and he also has no burial, I say that a stillborn child is better off than
he. 4 †For it comes in vanity and goes in darkness, and in darkness its name
is covered. 5 †Moreover, it has not seen the sun or known anything, yet it
finds rest rather than he. 6 †Even though he should live a thousand years
twice over, yet enjoy[1] no good—do not all go to the one place?

7 † All the toil of man is for his mouth, yet his appetite is not satisfied.[2]
8 For what advantage has the wise man over the fool? And what does the
poor man have who knows how to conduct himself before the living?
9 †Better is the sight of the eyes than the wandering of the appetite: this also
is vanity and a striving after wind.

10 †Whatever has come to be has already been named, and it is known
what man is, and that he is not able to dispute with one stronger than he.
11 †The more words, the more vanity, and what is the advantage to man?
12 †For who knows what is good for man while he lives the few days of his
vain life, which he passes like a shadow? For who can tell man what will be
after him under the sun?

The Contrast of Wisdom and Folly

7 [1] A good name is better than precious ointment,
and the day of death than the day of birth.

[2] It is better to go to the house of mourning
than to go to the house of feasting,
for this is the end of all mankind,
and the living will lay it to heart.
[3] Sorrow is better than laughter,
for by sadness of face the heart is made
glad.
[4] The heart of the wise is in the house of
mourning,
but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth.
[5] It is better for a man to hear the rebuke of
the wise
than to hear the song of fools.
[6] For as the crackling of thorns under a pot,
so is the laughter of the fools;
this also is vanity.
[7] Surely oppression drives the wise into
madness,
and a bribe corrupts the heart.
[8] Better is the end of a thing than its beginning,
and the patient in spirit is better than the
proud in spirit.
[9] Be not quick in your spirit to become angry,
for anger lodges in the bosom of fools.
[10] Say not, “Why were the former days better
than these?”
For it is not from wisdom that you ask this.
[11] Wisdom is good with an inheritance,
an advantage to those who see the sun.

[12]† For the protection of wisdom is like the
protection of money,
and the advantage of knowledge is that
wisdom preserves the life of him
who has it.
[13]† Consider the work of God:
who can make straight what he has made
crooked?

[14] † In the day of prosperity be joyful, and in the day of adversity consider: God has made the one as well as the other, so that man may not find out anything that will be after him.

[15]In my vain life I have seen everything. There is a righteous man who perishes in his righteousness, and there is a wicked man who prolongs his life in his evildoing. [16]††Be not overly righteous, and do not make yourself too wise. Why should you destroy yourself? [17] †Be not overly wicked, neither be a fool. Why should you die before your time? [18]†It is good that you should take hold of this, and from that withhold not your hand, for the one who fears God shall come out from both of them.

[19]† Wisdom gives strength to the wise man more than ten rulers who are in a city.

[20]†Surely there is not a righteous man on earth who does good and never sins.

[21]†Do not take to heart all the things that people say, lest you hear your servant cursing you. [22]Your heart knows that many times you yourself have cursed others.

[23]†All this I have tested by wisdom. I said, “I will be wise,” but it was far from me. [24]†That which has been is far off, and deep, very deep; who can find it out?

[25]† I turned my heart to know and to search out and to seek wisdom and the scheme of things, and to know the wickedness of folly and the foolishness that is madness. [26]†And I find something more bitter than death: the woman whose heart is snares and nets, and whose hands are fetters. He who pleases God escapes her, but the sinner is taken by her. [27]Behold, this is what I found, says the Preacher, while adding one thing to another to find

the scheme of things— [28]† which my soul has sought repeatedly, but I have not found. One man among a thousand I found, but a woman among all these I have not found. [29]† See, this alone I found, that God made man upright, but they have sought out many schemes.

Keep the King’s Command

8 [1]Who is like the wise?

And who knows the interpretation of a thing?
A man’s wisdom makes his face shine,
and the hardness of his face is changed.

[2] I say:[1] Keep the king’s command, because of God’s oath to him.[2] [3]Be not hasty to go from his presence. Do not take your stand in an evil cause, for he does whatever he pleases. [4]For the word of the king is supreme, and who may say to him, “What are you doing?” [5]Whoever keeps a command will know no evil thing, and the wise heart will know the proper time and the just way. [6]For there is a time and a way for everything, although man’s trouble[3] lies heavy on him. [7]For he does not know what is to be, for who can tell him how it will be? [8]No man has power to retain the spirit, or power over the day of death. There is no discharge from war, nor will wickedness deliver those who are given to it. [9] All this I observed while applying my heart to all that is done under the sun, when man had power over man to his hurt.

Those Who Fear God Will Do Well

10 ††Then I saw the wicked buried. They used to go in and out of the holy
place and were praised[4] in the city where they had done such things. This
also is vanity. 11 †Because the sentence against an evil deed is not executed
speedily, the heart of the children of man is fully set to do evil. 12 †Though a
sinner does evil a hundred times and prolongs his life, yet I know that it will
be well with those who fear God, because they fear before him. 13 †But it
will not be well with the wicked, neither will he prolong his days like a
shadow, because he does not fear before God.

Man Cannot Know God’s Ways

14 ‡ † There is a vanity that takes place on earth, that there are righteous
people to whom it happens according to the deeds of the wicked, and there
are wicked people to whom it happens according to the deeds of the
righteous. I said that this also is vanity. 15 † And I commend joy, for man has
no good thing under the sun but to eat and drink and be joyful, for this will
go with him in his toil through the days of his life that God has given him
under the sun.

16 When I applied my heart to know wisdom, and to see the business that
is done on earth, how neither day nor night do one’s eyes see sleep, 17 † then
I saw all the work of God, that man cannot find out the work that is done
under the sun. However much man may toil in seeking, he will not find it
out. Even though a wise man claims to know, he cannot find it out.

Death Comes to All

9 [1]†† But all this I laid to heart, examining it all, how the righteous and
the wise and their deeds are in the hand of God. Whether it is love or hate,
man does not know; both are before him. [2]† It is the same for all, since the
same event happens to the righteous and the wicked, to the good and the
evil,[1] to the clean and the unclean, to him who sacrifices and him who does
not sacrifice. As the good one is, so is the sinner, and he who swears is as he
who shuns an oath. [3]† This is an evil in all that is done under the sun, that
the same event happens to all. Also, the hearts of the children of man are
full of evil, and madness is in their hearts while they live, and after that they
go to the dead. [4]† But he who is joined with all the living has hope, for a
living dog is better than a dead lion. [5]† For the living know that they will
die, but the dead know nothing, and they have no more reward, for the
memory of them is forgotten. [6]Their love and their hate and their envy have
already perished, and forever they have no more share in all that is done
under the sun.

Enjoy Life with the One You Love

7 ‡† Go, eat your bread with joy, and drink your wine with a merry heart,
for God has already approved what you do.
8 ‡† Let your garments be always white. Let not oil be lacking on your
head.
9 † Enjoy life with the wife whom you love, all the days of your vain life
that he has given you under the sun, because that is your portion in life and
in your toil at which you toil under the sun. 10 † Whatever your hand finds to
do, do it with your might,[1] for there is no work or thought or knowledge or
wisdom in Sheol, to which you are going.

Wisdom Better than Folly

11 Again I saw that under the sun the race is not to the swift, nor the
battle to the strong, nor bread to the wise, nor riches to the intelligent, nor
favor to those with knowledge, but time and chance happen to them all.
12 For man does not know his time. Like fish that are taken in an evil net,
and like birds that are caught in a snare, so the children of man are snared at
an evil time, when it suddenly falls upon them.
13 I have also seen this example of wisdom under the sun, and it seemed
great to me. 14 There was a little city with few men in it, and a great king
came against it and besieged it, building great siegeworks against it. 15 But
there was found in it a poor, wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the
city. Yet no one remembered that poor man. 16 But I say that wisdom is
better than might, though the poor man's wisdom is despised and his words
are not heard.
17 The words of the wise heard in quiet are better than the shouting of a
ruler among fools. 18 Wisdom is better than weapons of war, but one sinner
destroys much good.

10 1 Dead flies make the perfumer's ointment give off a stench;
so a little folly outweighs wisdom and honor.

2 A wise man's heart inclines him to the right,
but a fool's heart to the left.
3 Even when the fool walks on the road, he
lacks sense,
and he says to everyone that he is a fool.
4 If the anger of the ruler rises against you, do
not leave your place,
for calmness[2] will lay great offenses to rest.

5 There is an evil that I have seen under the sun, as it were an error
proceeding from the ruler: 6 folly is set in many high places, and the rich
sit in a low place. 7 I have seen slaves on horses, and princes walking on
the ground like slaves.

8 He who digs a pit will fall into it,
and a serpent will bite him who breaks
through a wall.
9 He who quarries stones is hurt by them,
and he who splits logs is endangered by
them.
10 If the iron is blunt, and one does not sharpen
the edge,
he must use more strength,
but wisdom helps one to succeed.[1]
11 If the serpent bites before it is charmed,
there is no advantage to the charmer.

12 The words of a wise man's mouth win him
favor,[2]
but the lips of a fool consume him.
13 The beginning of the words of his mouth is
foolishness,
and the end of his talk is evil madness.
14 A fool multiplies words,
though no man knows what is to be,
and who can tell him what will be after
him?
15 The toil of a fool wearies him,
for he does not know the way to the
city.

16 Woe to you, O land, when your king is a
child,
and your princes feast in the morning!
17 Happy are you, O land, when your king is the
son of the nobility,
and your princes feast at the proper time,
for strength, and not for drunkenness!

18 Through sloth the roof sinks in,
and through indolence the house leaks.
19† Bread is made for laughter,
and wine gladdens life,
and money answers everything.
20† Even in your thoughts, do not curse the king,
nor in your bedroom curse the rich,
for a bird of the air will carry your voice,
or some winged creature tell the matter.

Cast Your Bread upon the Waters

11 [1]†Cast your bread upon the waters, for you will find it after many
days.

[2]† Give a portion to seven, or even to eight,
for you know not what disaster may happen
on earth.
[3] If the clouds are full of rain,
they empty themselves on the earth,
and if a tree falls to the south or to the north,
in the place where the tree falls, there it will
lie.
[4]† He who observes the wind will not sow,
and he who regards the clouds will not reap.

[5]†As you do not know the way the spirit comes to the bones in the womb[3] of a woman with child, so you do not know the work of God who makes everything.

[6]†In the morning sow your seed, and at evening withhold not your hand, for you do not know which will prosper, this or that, or whether both alike will be good.

[7]Light is sweet, and it is pleasant for the eyes to see the sun.

[8]†So if a person lives many years, let him rejoice in them all; but let him remember that the days of darkness will be many. All that comes is vanity.

[9]† Rejoice, O young man, in your youth, and let your heart cheer you in the days of your youth. Walk in the ways of your heart and the sight of your eyes. But know that for all these things God will bring you into judgment.

[10]†Remove vexation from your heart, and put away pain[1] from your body, for youth and the dawn of life are vanity.

Remember Your Creator in Your Youth

12 [1]‡†Remember also your Creator in the days of your youth, before
the evil days come and the years draw near of which you will say, “I have
no pleasure in them”; [2]‡†before the sun and the light and the moon and the
stars are darkened and the clouds return after the rain, [3]†in the day when the
keepers of the house tremble, and the strong men are bent, and the grinders
cease because they are few, and those who look through the windows are
dimmed, [4]† and the doors on the street are shut—when the sound of the
grinding is low, and one rises up at the sound of a bird, and all the daughters
of song are brought low— [5]†they are afraid also of what is high, and terrors
are in the way; the almond tree blossoms, the grasshopper drags itself
along,[2] and desire fails, because man is going to his eternal home, and the
mourners go about the streets— [6]‡before the silver cord is snapped, or the
golden bowl is broken, or the pitcher is shattered at the fountain, or the
wheel broken at the cistern, [7]†and the dust returns to the earth as it was, and
the spirit returns to God who gave it. [8]† Vanity of vanities, says the
Preacher; all is vanity.

Fear God and Keep His Commandments

9 ‡‡Besides being wise, the Preacher also taught the people knowledge,
weighing and studying and arranging many proverbs with great care. 10 The
Preacher sought to find words of delight, and uprightly he wrote words of
truth.

11 † The words of the wise are like goads, and like nails firmly fixed are
the collected sayings; they are given by one Shepherd. 12 †My son, beware
of anything beyond these. Of making many books there is no end, and much
study is a weariness of the flesh.

13 †The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God and keep his
commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.[1] 14 †For God will bring
every deed into judgment, with[2] every secret thing, whether good or evil.

Ecclesiastes

OVERVIEW

Author
King Solomon

Date
c 931 BC (end of Solomon's reign)

Places
Kingdom of Israel; Jerusalem; the temple

People
The "Preacher" (Solomon); King David; the wise and the foolish; "the messenger" (5:6); high officials and laborers; the Creator

Purpose
Life without God (i.e., "under the sun") is empty; the only rescue from such emptiness comes from God as He brings us to fear, love, and trust in Him and His Word

Law Themes
For natural man, life and success have no real significance; foolishness hastens destruction; life is dissatisfying

Gospel Themes
Favoring us on account of Christ, the Creator graciously provides for us in every season and time; by bringing us to fear, love, and trust in Him, He gives us true wisdom

Memory Verses
Vanity (1:2–3; 2:9–11); seasons and times under heaven (3:1–8); the end of the matter (12:13–14)

Introduction to Ecclesiastes

Reading Ecclesiastes

His whole body was filled with delight. The aroma was so good, so tempting, it merited a closer look. At the jar's edge, the scent overwhelmed him. He settled upon it and gorged himself with sticky sweetness. But then he could not pull away. Although he beat his wings until they buzzed, the ointment clung to him and drew him down to silence.

Similarly, Solomon's pursuits and experiences drew him down like a fly stuck in the proverbial ointment (10:1). Though he had greater wisdom than all, and greater wealth than most, in the end he could not enjoy them. Ecclesiastes records how Solomon viewed life and its pleasures as a trap that brings deadly silence. Yet, Solomon breaks this silence by calling out "the end of the matter" (12:13), wisdom's abiding treasure: the fear of the Lord. He even anticipates the hope of the resurrection (12:7).

Writing, Setting, and Perspective

According to Christian and Jewish tradition, Solomon wrote his Song early in his reign, Proverbs toward the middle of his reign, and Ecclesiastes at the end. Statements from these Books and from 1Ki 1–11 fit well with themes in Ecclesiastes. For example, Solomon strayed from the Lord later in his life because he allowed his many idolatrous wives and concubines to lead him into idolatry (1Ki 11). The writer crassly describes his pursuit of power and pleasure, which only led to emptiness. This could explain the desperation, even unbelief, expressed repeatedly in Ecclesiastes, which seems depressing with its droning, negative outlook.

This negative outlook rings true with our bitter experiences and is a key feature of Ecclesiastes. However, the Book's conclusion pulls the reader back from the brink of despair with firm confessions of God's care and wisdom (12:7, 13–14). Solomon offers hope that there is more to life, and, in the one "greater than Solomon" (Mt 12:42), readers can find the fullness of wisdom and life embodied. Jesus Christ is the answer to the questions and mysteries that Ecclesiastes poses about life.

Luther on Ecclesiastes

> This book is called in Hebrew *Qoheleth*, that is, "One who speaks publicly in a congregation." For *Qahal* means a congregation assembled together, that which in Greek is called *ekklesia*…. Now this book ought really to have a title [to indicate] that it was written against the free will. For the entire book tends to show that the counsels, plans, and undertakings of men are all in vain and fruitless, and that they always have a different outcome from that which we will and purpose. Thus Solomon would teach us to wait in confident trust and to let God alone do everything, above and against and without our knowledge and counsel. Therefore you must not understand this book to be reviling God's creatures when it says, "All is vanity and a striving after wind." For God's creatures are all good, Genesis 1[:31] and II Timothy 4 [I Tim. 4:4]; and this book itself says that a man shall be happy with his wife and enjoy life, etc. [Eccles. 9:9]. It teaches, rather, that the plans and undertakings of men in their dealings with the creatures all go wrong and are in vain, if one is not satisfied with what is presently at hand but wants to be their master and ruler for the future. That's how it always goes—backward—so that a man has had nothing but wasted toil and anxiety; things turn out anyway as God wills and purposes, not as we will and purpose.
>
> To put it briefly, Christ says in Matthew 6[:34], "Do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will have its own anxiety; it is enough that every day has its own evil." This saying is really the interpretation and content of this book. Anxiety about us is God's affair; our anxiety goes wrong anyhow, and produces nothing but wasted toil. (AE 35:263–64)

For more of Luther's insights on this Book, see *Notes on Ecclesiastes* (AE 15:1–187).

Challenges for Readers

Dating and Authorship. Some critics challenge the traditional view that King Solomon wrote Ecclesiastes. They point out that Solomon is never actually named in the Book and that references to the "king over Israel in Jerusalem" (1:12) do not appear after ch 1. They conclude that Ecclesiastes must be from a later author. (See "Loan Words" below.) However, the Book's content fits well with what we know of Solomon's life and reign (see pp 1048–49). The Book also has clearly unified language, content, and themes.

Loan Words. Some scholars believe the form of Hebrew in Ecclesiastes is from a time well after that of Solomon. They refer to terms they regard as Persian and date the Book from the time of Judah's exile (sixth century BC) or later. However, the Solomonic era was known for its peaceful, international trade, so the appearance of foreign terms or unusual forms in Solomon's Hebrew is understandable. Also, biblical Hebrew shows northern and southern dialectical differences. Northern Hebrew was influenced by nations on its northern borders.

Expressions of Wisdom. Certain terms preferred in Wisdom Literature can be confusing for English readers. See pp 1001, 971.

The Epilogue. Critics have maintained that a later editor added 12:9–14. However, the opening (1:1–11) and the conclusion reflect similar themes and unity.

Blessings for Readers

Whereas much of Scripture describes life from the viewpoint of heaven, Solomon provides a very earthy, human perspective in Ecclesiastes ("under the sun"). The Book connects powerfully with our frustrations and disappointments as well as our fears about life now and eternally. Despite all the sad points of wisdom and experiences, Solomon ends on a clear word of hope. In this way, the Book illustrates the unconquerable good news of God's care and mercy. It affirms the meaningfulness of life's basics: the pleasure of youth and good health, honest work, the love of a faithful spouse, and the hope of eternal life with God.

OUTLINE

I. Prologue: Without God, All Is Vanity (1:1–11)
II. Only God Gives Meaning in Life (1:12–6:12)
  A. The Vanity of Wisdom (1:12–18)
  B. The Vanity of Pleasure (2:1–11)
  C. Both the Wise and the Foolish Die (2:12–17)
  D. Human Labor Is in Vain (2:18–23)
  E. God Alone Gives Meaning to Life (2:24–26)
  F. God Gives a Proper Time and Purpose for Every Activity (3:1–8)
  G. What God Does Endures Forever (3:9–15)
  H. God Will Judge (3:16–22)
  I. People Suffer Injustice, but Believers Have Hope (ch 4)
  J. Worship God in Fear and Faith (5:1–9)
  K. God Alone Gives Joy in Life (5:10–6:12)
III. Divine Wisdom Enables You to Live Wisely (7:1–12:8)
  A. Wisdom versus Folly (7:1–24)
  B. Sin Has Corrupted Relationships (7:25–29)
  C. Wisdom about Human Authorities (8:1–9)
  D. The Wicked Receive Human Praise (8:10–13)
  E. The Righteous Suffer, the Wicked Prosper (8:14–17)
  F. The Righteous and the Wicked Will Physically Die (9:1–6)
    1. Those still alive have time to repent (9:4–5a)
    2. For the dead it is too late to repent (9:5b–6)

G. God Desires That We Enjoy Life (9:7–10)
H. Victory Goes to the Humble (9:11–18)
I. Foolish and Wise Leadership (ch 10)
J. Perform Your God-Given Vocation (11:1–8)
K. In Your Youth Rejoice and Believe in Your Creator (11:9–12:8)

IV. Conclusion: Fear God and Obey His Commandments (12:9–14)

Footnotes

Footnotes for Ecclesiastes, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:1 Or *Convener*, or *Collector* ; Hebrew *Qoheleth* (so throughout Ecclesiastes)
- [2] 1:2 Hebrew *vapor* (so throughout Ecclesiastes)
- [3] 1:5 Or *and returns panting*
- [1] 1:11 Or *former people*
- [2] 1:11 Or *later people*
- [3] 1:13 The Hebrew term denotes the center of one's inner life, including mind, will, and emotions
- [4] 1:14 Or *a feeding on wind* ; compare Hosea 12:1 (so throughout Ecclesiastes)

Footnotes for Ecclesiastes, Chapter 2

- [1] 2:8 The meaning of the Hebrew word is uncertain
- [1] 2:24 Or *and make his soul see good*
- [2] 2:25 Some Hebrew manuscripts, Septuagint, Syriac ; most Hebrew manuscripts *apart from me*

Footnotes for Ecclesiastes, Chapter 3

- [1] 3:15 Hebrew *what has been pursued*

Footnotes for Ecclesiastes, Chapter 4

- [1] 4:15 Hebrew *the second*
- [2] 4:15 Hebrew *his*

Footnotes for Ecclesiastes, Chapter 5

- [3] 5:1 Ch 4:17 in Hebrew
- [1] 5:2 Ch 5:1 in Hebrew
- [2] 5:6 Hebrew *your flesh*
- [3] 5:6 Or *angel*
- [4] 5:7 Or *For when dreams and vanities increase, words also grow many*
- [5] 5:9 The meaning of the Hebrew verse is uncertain
- [6] 5:18 Or *and see good*

Footnotes for Ecclesiastes, Chapter 6

- [1] 6:6 Or *see*
- [2] 6:7 Hebrew *filled*

Footnotes for Ecclesiastes, Chapter 8

- [1] 8:2 Hebrew lacks *say*
- [2] 8:2 Or *because of your oath to God*
- [3] 8:6 Or *evil*

- [4] 8:10 Some Hebrew manuscripts, Septuagint, Vulgate ; most Hebrew manuscripts *forgotten*

Footnotes for Ecclesiastes, Chapter 9

- [1] 9:2 Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate ; Hebrew lacks *and the evil*
- [1] 9:10 Or *finds to do with your might, do it*

Footnotes for Ecclesiastes, Chapter 10

- [2] 10:4 Hebrew *healing*
- [1] 10:10 Or *wisdom is an advantage for success*
- [2] 10:12 Or *are gracious*

Footnotes for Ecclesiastes, Chapter 11

- [3] 11:5 Some Hebrew manuscripts, Targum ; most Hebrew manuscripts *As you do not know the way of the wind, or how the bones grow in the womb*
- [1] 11:10 Or *evil*

Footnotes for Ecclesiastes, Chapter 12

- [2] 12:5 Or *is a burden*
- [1] 12:13 Or *the duty of all mankind*
- [2] 12:14 Or *into the judgment on*

Study Notes

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON **Ch 1** Solomon burns at the injustice and disappointment of life and mourns the passing of youth and the universality of inescapable death even as he bids us not to set our hearts on earthly things but on God, in whom alone is "eternity" and "forever" (3:11, 14; cf Mt 6:19–21; 7:7–8).

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 1:1 *Preacher*. Hbr *qoheleth*, "teacher" or "leader of the assembly." *son of David*. King Solomon (1Ki 8; cf 1Ki 11:42). Luth: "I think that these words were spoken by Solomon in some assembly of his retinue, perhaps after dinner or even during dinner to some great and prominent men who were present. He spoke this way after he had thought long and hard to himself about the condition and the vanity of human affairs, or rather of human affections. Then he poured this out to those who were present, as usually happens, and afterwards what he said was put down and assembled by the leaders of the community or of the church. Therefore they also acknowledge at the end (12:11) that they have received and gathered these things from one Shepherd. In the same way it could happen that one of us would discourse about human affairs while seated at table and others would take it down. This is, then, a public sermon which they heard from Solomon" (AE 15:12).

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 1:2 *Vanity*. Hbr *hebel*, "mere breath" (cf Jas 4:13–14). By repetition, he describes life that drones on and on until death, life that is empty apart from the Lord. Luth: "This is a Hebraism…. They say "Song of Songs," that is, the supreme and most excellent song that Solomon composed. Vanity of vanities, that is, the greatest and highest vanity of all, total and utter vanity" (AE 15:13). Vanity is the seemingly endless loop of life searching for meaning and absolute contentment but never really finding satisfaction. *Vanity of vanities*. Translated in LXX as "frustration" (or "futility," Rm 8:18–22) to reflect the condition of creation, the despair of a world without God. Jesus Christ, by virtue of His cross and resurrection, has redeemed us from this meaninglessness and vanity. Luth: "Solomon introduced courtly language; and as courtiers make it a practice to avoid the simple language of their fathers, especially in writing, so Solomon does also, to avoid giving the impression that he speaks as the common people do. He departs from the simplicity not only of his father

but also of Moses" (AE 15:13). *All*. Everything that is looked to for meaning in life, including wealth, pleasure, and philanthropy.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 1:3–11 Excursus indicating that human effort appears to be without benefit or purpose and demonstrates the restless cycling of human history and creation. Apart from the Lord, life is a fleeting vapor, yet by the power of God's Word, creation continues in its cyclical rhythm and souls are saved for His eternal kingdom. Ephr: "The righteousness of man is as nothing accounted. The work of men, what is it? His labor is altogether vanity. Of You, O Lord, of Your grace it is that in our nature we should become good. Of You is righteousness, that we from men should become righteous. Of You is the mercy and favor, that we from the dust should become Your image" (*NPNF* 2 13:331–32).

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 1:3 *toils*. Hbr '*amal*; toil is cyclical and dissatisfying. Generation after generation rises and falls in this broken world. We must not forget the simple pleasures of life (cf 2:24–26; 3:12–13, 22; 5:18–20; 8:15; 9:7–10; 11:7–10) that come from the gracious hand of our heavenly Father and are to be accepted gratefully (see note, 2:10–11). *under the sun?* I.e., on earth. The fleeting sense of this world contrasts with the permanence of heaven.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 1:4 When creation is compared with the vanity of life, it seems eternal and unchangeable, though all things in the world are changeable. Only almighty God is eternal and unchanging.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 1:5 God's Word created these things out of nothing (Gn 1:14–19), and His first Word of creation still sustains them.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 1:6 *wind*. Ever shifting, the wind and vanity are repeatedly compared.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 1:7 Continual movement of the water cycle: evaporation, condensation, precipitation. Dry stream beds (wadis) in Israel become uncontrollable torrents during heavy rain.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 1:8 *eye is not satisfied … nor the ear*. Eye and ear covet new and tantalizing things. The things mentioned in vv 4–7 seem never ending. Although we are to be grateful for God's gifts, we can even grow weary of His fatherly kindness toward us.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 1:9–11 Luth: "This passage creates very great difficulties for the sophists, because they read in Sacred Scripture that many new things have been done. For example, the nativity of Christ is something new, and it is a new thing that His mother was a virgin. Again

(Is. 65:17): ‘I create new heavens and a new earth’; also (Rev. 21:5): ‘I make all things new’; and again (Num. 16:30): ‘The Lord creates something new on the earth.’ These passages caused them to perpetrate enormous kinds of nonsense as they sought to harmonize what Solomon says here with what these passages say. But this happened because of an ignorance of Solomon’s way of speaking, because they did not pay attention to what he means when he says *under the sun*. For if you take this to refer to the things and works of God themselves, it is not true; for God is constantly doing new things. But it is we who do nothing new, because the same old Adam is present in all of us” (AE 15:20–21).

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 1:9 *nothing new under the sun*. Generations, winds, waters, and even heavenly bodies simply repeat their circuits. We keep searching for something new with meaning and purpose, but life has meaning only through the redemption in Jesus Christ. Jn D: “God being perfect becomes perfect man, and brings to perfection the newest of all new things, the only new thing under the Sun, through which the boundless might of God is manifested. For what greater thing is there, than that God should become Man?” (*NPNF* 2 9:45).

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 1:10 *See, this is new?* The old falls and reappears as something new to a new generation. In contrast, in Christ we become a new creation (2Co 5:17).

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 1:11 Famous names or achievements may be discussed by new generations. Many find satisfaction in this. Yet many who were great in their age are no longer remembered.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 1:1–11 Our lives, no matter how well lived, will not win favor in God’s sight on the Last Day. Life is fleeting and has no meaning apart from God’s love in Christ Jesus. Faith worked in us by the power of the Gospel brings meaning to life and the certainty of forgiveness, life, and salvation. • Lord God, our heavenly Father, through Your Holy Spirit, You have enlightened the hearts of all believers by the Gospel of Your beloved Son. Through that same Spirit, grant us a right understanding that we might always rejoice in His salvation, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 1:12–13 Luth: “Let us learn, therefore, to submit ourselves to the counsels of God and to refrain from the cares and thoughts that God has not commanded. There is nothing safer or more acceptable to God than if we refrain from our own counsels and rely on His

Word. There we shall find sufficient guidance about what we ought to do. His commands to us are faith, love, and bearing the cross. With these things, I say, we can happily occupy ourselves. Let us deal with everything else as it comes into our hands, leaving to Him the concern about its outcome" (AE 15:25).

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 1:12 *I the Preacher*. The author now speaks personally about his experiences and study.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 1:13 *an unhappy business*. Politics and human affairs are complex and become a burden upon body and soul. The Preacher's exploration of wisdom was vigorous and constant as he gained insight into philosophy, mathematics, trade, merchandise, mechanics, history, kingdoms, law, etc.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 1:14 Wind can be used (e.g., in sailing ships), but never captured. People cannot master the world, lay bare its foundational secrets, or break the bonds of sin and death (cf Jb 38–39). Life apart from the Lord is chasing after something that cannot be captured (cf Jn 16:33).

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 1:15 We do not know God's hidden will, so we must trust in His mercy and clearly see His will revealed in the Word.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 1:16 *all who were over Jerusalem before me*. David and the Jebusite kings prior to David. Jerusalem became the Israelite capital during David's time. See notes, 2Sm 5:5, 7, 9.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 1:17–18 Wisdom speaks of prudent people, madness and folly of foolish, self-aggrandizing people. See p 1016. Human wisdom alone creates madness and folly, bringing injustice and sorrow. But godly wisdom reveals the imperfection and vanity of life "under the sun." *wisdom*. Hbr *chokmah*, see pp 775–78. Wisdom naturally unveils the injustice and corruption of humankind. To see and understand such corruption due to sin is difficult apart from seeing the world in light of Holy Scripture.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 1:18 *knowledge*. Luth: "Knowledge does not refer to speculative knowledge, but to a practical and experiential insight, a discretion in the performance of actions, what we call experience and practice in human affairs, as in the psalm (Ps. 119:66): 'Teach me good judgment and knowledge.' Wisdom, on the other hand, is the insight by which I know how the state ought to be established and administered; this is then modified by knowledge or experience, in accordance with things as

they are at present and with circumstances, in the manner and pattern that the facts and the times warrant" (AE 15:28).

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 1:12–18 Our minds cannot fathom God's wisdom, which is hidden in Christ (cf Jas 3:13–18; 1Co 1:30). We know His mercy only through the wisdom revealed to us in Holy Scripture. • O God of all mercies, You have begun Your good work in us. Continue, we pray, to fill us with all dimensions of wisdom and knowledge. Grant that the devil would have no power over us, but that our hearts and minds might be directed to the blessed hope of the coming of our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 2:1 Solomon examines the rewards of reason and nonreason, sensual and aesthetic pleasure, the creative enterprise, the connoisseur, the collector and activist. His goal is to explore what life might be for the ideally gifted and advantaged. Luth: "We should not find enjoyment in happiness, goods, our own counsels, or any other thing; only as God has given them should we use them. One should let God have His way. It is not up to us to prescribe the place, the person, or the manner; if we do, we shall go wrong. This does not mean that happiness is condemned as something evil or vain. What is condemned is human striving and planning, when we ourselves want or try to create happiness without respect to the will of God. But as both come from God, so let us use them…. Sorrow, happiness, and all such things, whether external or internal, must not be measured on the basis of places, times, etc.; but as they come from God in His complete freedom, so one should use them in complete freedom" (AE 15:30).

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 2:2 Diversion can bring relief, but in excess it can bring foolishness and fruitlessness. Diversion cannot appease a guilty conscience, heal a sorrowful spirit, or satisfy the soul. *pleasure*. Lit, "good."

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 2:3 *cheer my body with wine*. Solomon explores the pleasures of the palate and flesh. *lay hold on folly*. He intentionally acquainted himself with wisdom to carefully manage his use of sensual pleasures. *under heaven … few days*. Wordplay in Hbr (*shamayim … yeme*). The brevity of life and service to the Lord should be guided by His Word, not by seeking pleasure alone. It is good to do the work of the Lord.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 2:4–6 Cf 1Ki 4–11; 6:38. Archaeology confirms Solomon's extensive building projects throughout Israel. See note,

1Ki 9:15.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 2:4 *great works*. Building a great empire might bring lasting satisfaction and great dignity (cf 1Ki 4–11).
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 2:5–6 Solomon attempts to make paradise on earth. But the re-creation of all things can only happen at Christ's return in glory (Rv 21–22). *gardens … pools*. Orchards and timber trees were irrigated by pools through aqueducts (cf 2Sm 2:13; 4:12).
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 2:7 *slaves*. Purchased and intentionally propagated to do physical labor, thousands of slaves were required. Cf 1Ki 5:13; 9:22; also p 101. *herds and flocks*. Signs of wealth in agrarian cultures. Solomon's family started as shepherds. He does not talk about his wife and children but about extended family, namely, slaves and concubines in his household.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 2:8 *concubines*. Hbr for "harem" occurs only here in Scripture but is similar to the Canaanite term used for concubines. Solomon had 300 concubines and 700 wives (1Ki 3:1; 11:1–13). Such marriages typically involved diplomatic, political, and business relationships.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 2:9 *wisdom remained with me*. From vv 1–9, wisdom discovered the good (v 1) and the worthwhile (v 3).
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 2:10–11 Terms for "toil" and "work" appear more than 25 times in Ec. Work brought pleasure. But reviewing the pleasure he sought and the great accomplishments gained, Solomon gained no advantage or satisfaction because there was no profit "under the sun." Even with wisdom, toil is meaningless apart from the fear of God. See note, 1:3.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 2:1–11 The pursuit of pleasure can draw us away from the Lord and toward other altars, as Solomon turned to other gods and idols before returning to God (cf Mt 6:19–24). When we return thanks to God for His gracious and simple gifts—house and home, flocks and herds, spouse and children—we focus on His fatherly mercy and kindness. • O Lord Christ, help us! Strengthen our faith and trust in You. We receive all of our treasures in You alone. We are poor; You are rich. Grant us Your faith and righteousness that we might trust and remain in Your everlasting love for all eternity, through Jesus Christ. Amen.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 2:12 *what can the man do who comes after the king?* Wealth, pomp, and grandeur of Solomon's kingdom could be

inherited; his wisdom could not. His heir (Rehoboam; 1Ki 12) needed to gain wisdom by study and experience. The Lord had allowed Solomon to build the temple and palace, but Solomon may still have felt insignificant in the eyes of Israel when compared with his father, King David.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 2:13 Pleasure of wisdom, though not enough to make people happy, is better than folly. Folly eclipses and clouds the mind.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 2:14 *eyes in his head*. Refers to wisdom, which discovers danger and advantage; it knows where to step. *darkness*. Makes one lose the way and perchance fall into a pit from which there is no rescue. A fool (Pr 1:22) is one who disdains knowledge. Wisdom reveres God; foolishness does not.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 2:15 The same dangers can overcome both the wise and foolish, and death, the great equalizer, ultimately devours both. Only faith in the Lord saves. Luth: "Wisdom is beneficial, then, if I do what I know is pleasing to God and commit to Him what He wishes to be accomplished through me. If we did this, then at last we would be truly wise" (AE 15:42).

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 2:16 *no enduring remembrance*. Those who are wise and foolish by the world's standards have their names written in the dust of the earth (cf 1Co 1:20). The believer's name is written in heaven (Lk 10:20).

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 2:17 Solomon soon became weary of his labor and looked upon it with contempt. It burdened and fatigued him as he aged and his sorrow increased. This world is a vale of tears even for the privileged. Those who are burdened are invited to come to the Lord for rest (Mt 11:28).

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 2:12–17 In the end, life is vanity apart from faith in the Lord. The end is the same for the wise and the foolish. All that is done in the absence of faith will become chaff thrown into the devouring fire. Christ bids us to come to Him and be yoked to His light burden. Seek first His kingdom and His gifts, and all other things shall be given. • Heavenly Father, everlasting God, where would we be if You were to forsake us? How quickly the educated become infants; the prudent, simple; the wise, fools! Keep us in the fervor of faith and daily increase it through Jesus Christ, our Redeemer. Amen.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 2:18 Death ultimately separates from us our profits (cf Jb 8:9). They pass to the next generation (cf v 21; Lk 12:20). *toil*. See note, vv 10–11.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 2:19 A wise person increases an inheritance; a fool squanders it and undoes the master's work (cf Mt 25:14–30). Solomon is likely considering his son Rehoboam and other potential heirs. Rehoboam's high taxation (1Ki 12:1–20; 2Ch 10) led Israel to revolt.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 2:20 *despair*. Meaninglessness creates despair and depression.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 2:21 See notes, vv 18, 19.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 2:22–23 Humans cannot add a single moment to their life span (Mt 6:27; Lk 12:16–21). Disappointment is guaranteed.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 2:23 When overcome by daily business and hopeful for evening rest, one spends the night with eyes open, heart pounding, brain in full process worrying about things to come.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 2:24 *find enjoyment*. Theme is repeated in 3:12–13, 22; 5:18–20; 8:15; 9:7. Blatant hedonism is not suggested here. We are to receive God's gifts and use them cheerfully, knowing they will never bring absolute happiness (12:13). *toil*. See note, vv 10–11. *from the hand of God*. See SC, Fourth Petition, p xxxviii; cf Ps 145:15–16; Ac 17:28; Eph 5:20.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 2:25 See note, 12:13.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 2:26 *sinner*. For the sinner, gifts are easily corrupted and exploited for pleasure. They tantalize, tyrannize, and imprison. True wisdom comes from God alone (cf Ps 111:10; Pr 2:6; Christ is wise: 1Co 1:24, 30). The passage describes God's judgment over both faith and works. *give to one who pleases God*. Not necessarily the righteous, but whomever God allows to inherit.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 2:18–26 Toil and labor "under the sun" can drive one to the brink of grievous despair. The so-called significant things of this life can become idols that ultimately pass away and provide no lasting value in the context of forgiveness, life, and salvation in Christ (cf Mt 6:19–24). Our gracious heavenly Father extends His hand and provides all we need for this temporal life and life everlasting through His Son, our Lord. • Most precious heavenly Father, You have given us many priceless gifts by Your gracious hand. We ask not for silver or gold but for a

strong and firm faith. Let us not live for pleasure in the things of the world, but comfort and refresh us in Your blessed and healing Word. Then, in right faith, we may trust in Your grace to the very end. Amen.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 3:1 Solomon introduces the following poem (vv 2–8) and connects it with what has appeared previously by describing changing human affairs and God's unchanging will. Throughout Ec, he frequently changes his tone, describing both the frustrations of life and the firmness of God's Word and blessing. Luth: "All human works and efforts have a certain and definite time of acting, of beginning, and of ending, beyond human control. Thus this is spoken in opposition to free will. It is not up to us to prescribe the time, the manner, or the effect of the things that are to be done; and so it is obvious that here our strivings and efforts are unreliable. Everything comes and goes at the time that God has appointed. He proves this on the basis of examples of human works whose times lie outside the choice of man" (AE 15:49).

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 3:2–8 Note the chiastic sequence. The wise grasp the rhythms of life and live in agreement with them. Gr Naz: "Who was so pleasant when you met him … [Basil]? Who was more kindly in his stories, more refined in his wit, more tender in his rebukes? His reproofs gave rise to no arrogance, his relaxation to no dissipation, but avoiding excess in either, he made use of both in reason and season, according to the rules of Solomon, who assigns to every business a season" (*NPNF* 2 7:417). *a time*. We are subject to times and changes over which we have little control. This contrasts with God's eternity. (LXX has *kairos*, "a proper season.")

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 3:2 *born … die*. The appointed time is painfully short. *plant … pluck*. Human lives are as fleeting as the agricultural season—planted and cut off.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 3:3 *kill*. God gives rulers the authority to engage in just wars, to dispel chaos, to punish evildoers, and to protect citizens from harm (cf Rm 13:4).

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 3:4 Contrasts wailing at a funeral with fancy-free activity. In Egypt, dancing was part of funeral ceremonies. This does not seem to be the case in Israel, where dancing expressed joy (Ps 30:11).

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 3:5 *cast away … gather*. Destruction of fortifications in war, disaster, etc., and their rebuilding. *embrace … refrain*.

To embrace one's neighbor in friendship; to distance oneself from a person suspected of a crime.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 3:7 *tear* … *sew*. A time to undo what we have done and to repair what we have undone. Cf Gn 3:7. *silence* … *speak*. Slow to speak—quick to listen. A time to be silent when words violate the Eighth Commandment, and a time to speak the healing balm of God's Word. Greg: "The times for changes should be discreetly weighed, lest either, when the tongue ought to be restrained, it run loose to no profit in words, or when it might speak with profit, it slothfully restrain itself" (*NPNF* 2 12:38).

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 3:8 War does not last forever, nor does peace. True peace is found only in the Lord, our peacemaker. Hatred and death are found everywhere.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 3:1–8 God's will is unsearchable. He will judge the living and the dead on the Last Day. Temporal things cannot satisfy God's people. Eternity and the consummation of salvation are in Christ alone (cf Rm 8:18). • Dear heavenly Father, give us our daily bread, good seasons, and health. Protect us from war, famine, disease, and drought, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 3:9–10 Work diverts our attention from the heartaches and struggles in life (cf Php 4:11–13). The fall required Adam and Eve to labor outside the Garden of Eden by the sweat of their brows. We produce in order to consume.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 3:11 *beautiful*. Hbr *yapheh*, here used as "right" or "fitting." All living things have their proper development and beauty. *in its time*. They mature, yet time takes their beauty away too. *put eternity*. The Law (written on the heart of all people [Rm 2:15] and given to Israel through Moses) confesses the enduring truth that there is one true God. *cannot find out*. Human reason cannot comprehend God and His purposes. E.g., when a house is being built, one can only anticipate the beauty of the finished product or its eventual collapse.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 3:12 *to be joyful and to do good*. Comfort one another, cheerfully receive God's gifts, and further benefit your neighbor by generosity. Joy and purpose come by self-giving, a lifestyle that mimics God's ways.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 3:13 Rejoice in the good of your labor as a gift of God and an expression of His love toward His children. Return

thanks; He is the source of joy.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 3:14 Like God's Word, His works are perfect, and no human effort can add or detract from that perfection. We are not equal partners. This sums up the message of Ec (cf 12:13).
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 3:15 *God seeks what has been driven away*. God's Word and His renewal of creation will always remain constant in a changing world.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 3:16 Many OT kings and priests were wicked and idolatrous. Those who were to serve as advocates for the people oppressed them. Those who judge in iniquity will be judged righteously (e.g., the Sanhedrin Council's mock trials of Christ; Mt 26:57–68).
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 3:17 *God will judge*. Both in this temporal world and on the Last Day before human beings and angels (cf 12:14). The past is not meaningless to God as it often is to people, nor will sin go unnoticed.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 3:18 *God is testing them*. God's Word allows the believer to judge character and learn where, by God's grace, amendment of life should be made. *beasts*. The unbeliever, on the other hand, is as mortal as any animal.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 3:19 *same breath*. God breathes life into His creatures and withdraws it according to His divine will (cf Ps 104:27–30). *no advantage*. People and animals die in much the same way. See note, 9:1.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 3:20 *All are from the dust*. To our eyes, people die just like animals. *to dust all return*. All were created from the dust of the earth and shall return to dust. This is not a reference to heaven and hell but to bodily death and the grave as equalizers (cf Gn 3:19; Ps 103:14). Luth: "God, he says, permits both men and cattle to go about and live in the same manner and form. But God permits this in order to test men, whether they look only at these external things, and whether they are persuaded by these arguments, to which the wicked pay attention without believing otherwise. But the godly are exercised in this way so that they may acquire more faith. They go in the same way as the wicked and the beasts do, but inwardly, in the spirit, they receive comfort and peace" (AE 15:60).
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 3:21 *Who knows whether the spirit*. Or "Who knows the spirit?" The Lord knows who. He redeems sinful

humankind. Everlasting life is considered in 12:7 and fully realized in Christ.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 3:22 *what will be after him?* Independent of God's revelation, we cannot know the future. Even when we are called into the majesty of heaven, it is unlikely that we shall see what is after us (cf Jb 14:21), but in the midst of eternal blessedness, would we really care? Only when toil and labor are received as God's gifts can they be of enduring worth.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 3:9–22 We, as human beings, are hard pressed to answer eternal questions. "God will judge the righteous and the wicked, for there is a time for every matter and for every work" (3:17). The faithful in Christ will be in His glorious and immediate presence in the majesty of heaven. • Dear Lord, we have never kept Your Law. We continually sin and fear death. We know through Your Holy Gospel by faith that all Your merits are ours freely through Christ. Death cannot harm us, for it will be swallowed up in victory. Praise be to You, O Lord! Amen.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 4:1–2 Oppressed are discontented and impatient (cf Hab 1:1–4). Masters oppress servants, creditors oppress debtors, landlords oppress tenants, etc. Solomon expresses supreme pessimism. Deep in oppression, death seems more favorable than life (cf Jer 20:14–18; Ac 20:24; Rm 8:35–39; 2Co 1:8; Heb 12:1–3). Consider St Paul, who desires to be with Christ, yet remains a servant of the Gospel (Php 1:23–24). Ambr: "What is more wretched than we, who are sent into this life as it were plundered and naked, with frail bodies, deceitful hearts, weak minds, anxious in respect of cares, slothful as to labor, prone to pleasures" (*NPNF* 2 10:178).

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 4:3 New life holds great potential. The unborn are precious in God's sight. To be alive at any age is to glorify God.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 4:4 *envy*. The root of violating Commandments 4–10 (esp 9 and 10). Cain envied Abel, Esau envied Jacob, and Saul envied David for the blessings received through faith (cf Pr 14:30). Those who excel in virtue will always attract criticism.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 4:5 *eats his own flesh*. Ultimate result of idleness: the person wastes away. The sluggard folds his hands to keep them warm. With malice, he refuses to labor (cf 2Th 3:6–13). Luth: "This again is a Hebrew phrase, meaning, 'He torments himself.' There is a similar statement in Job (13:14): 'I will take my flesh in my teeth.' He wants to say:

‘An inept and foolish man of this kind does not do himself any good, but he harms and opposes others, he envies others and tortures himself.’ In the state such a man is a rust or a worm, harmful to himself and to others” (AE 15:66).

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 4:6 *quietness … striving*. Seek a happy medium between doing nothing and doing too much.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 4:7 Solomon fixes his gaze on the fact that the more people gain, the more they want. Their drive for more robs them of enjoyment.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 4:8 The highest foolishness is to labor and gain when one has no dependent spouse or offspring. If you gain wealth, share it.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 4:9 *Two are better*. Value of companionship or friendship. God designed us as social beings (cf Gn 2:18). Consider the gifts of marriage, children, congregation, community, and nation.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 4:10–11 God’s people encourage one another to mercy, love, and good works (cf Mt 5:23–24; 18:15–18; Gal 6:1–2).

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 4:12 Two or three people make work a pleasure and strengthen one another. Together, they reap greater blessings. Luth: “A certain wise father, when he was about to die, commands his sons to be present. He gives them a bundle of sticks to break. Although they could not break them all at the same time, they did break them individually. In this way he taught his sons that their riches would be secure if they were in concord with one another and mutually assisted one another. For through concord small things grow, but through discord they are scattered and brought to naught” (AE 15:69).

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 4:13–14 The Almighty God lifts up and He deposes. He places people in positions of authority as His servants and as servants of His people.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 4:13 It is better to be wise, young, and unknown than to be a foolish public servant. There is no security in the crown (cf Pr 27:24), and it is foolish to reject admonition, counsel, and accountability. Titles among people do not bring absolute respect.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 4:14 Consider the rise of Joseph to serve Pharaoh (Gn 39–41) instead of the sovereign king born to his inheritance. The latter will not be admonished and must resign his crown.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 4:15 *that youth*. The prince. People look to the king's successor as one who will serve justly and equitably.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 4:16 *will not rejoice in him*. A wise ruler's success is soon forgotten.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON **Ch 4** Hold sacred the gifts of marriage, children, family, and the authorities put in place among us. Do not regard the accolades and accoutrements of the world as more important than the Lord and His gracious gifts. Though we continually search for contentment in this "under the sun" existence, Christ is our eternal Lord and King of kings. • Dear God and Father, thank You for Your infinite goodness and love toward us. You keep us in Your Word, in faith, and in prayer. By this we are humbled and do not depend on our own wisdom, but glory alone in Your power, for when we are weak, You are strong. Amen.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 5:1 *Guard*. Avoid hypocritical religion and devotion. *house of God*. Temple built by Solomon (1Ki 5–6). The temple was not merely a place of sacrifice, but also a place of teaching. *listen*. Do not despise God's Word and the preaching of it, but inwardly digest and ruminate upon the Word. *sacrifice of fools*. Offering of the torn, sick, lame, and worthless (see pp 170–71; cf Pr 21:3, 7; Is 1:11–15; Jer 6:20). This is an abomination to the Lord. Those who cheat God cheat their own souls. Luth: "When senseless people hear this doctrine, that we should have such a quiet and peaceful heart that we commit everything to God, they draw this inference: 'If everything is in the hand of God, we shall not do any works.' In the same way others sin in the opposite direction by being excessively solicitous and wanting to measure and control everything in every way. But one should travel on the royal road. Let us work hard and do whatever we can in accordance with the Word of God; let us not, however, measure the work on the basis of our efforts, but commit every effort and plan and outcome to the wisdom of God. Therefore Solomon seems to me to be anticipating an objection here and addressing a salutary exhortation to those who are not traveling on the middle road but are either too negligent of their work or too concerned about it. He advises them to let themselves be governed by the Word of God and meanwhile to work diligently" (AE 15:74–75).
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 5:2 *a word before God*. A vow (see note, Nu 30:2; cf Mt 5:33–37; 15:8–9). See note, vv 4–6. *heaven … earth*. Gr Nys: "He shows, I think, … by their distance, how far the divine nature is above

the speculations of human reason … as high above earthly calculation as the stars are above the touch of our fingers; or rather, many times more than that" (*NPNF* 2 5:260).

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 5:3 Hectic pace of labor disturbs our sleep. In prayer, a fool is known by a multiplicity of words (cf 5:7; Pr 10:8, 10).

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 5:4–6 *vow*. Hbr *neder*. An offering expresses thanksgiving to God (Nu 21:1–3; Ps 116:14; Na 1:15). *paying*. Offering an animal (cf Lv 27:9–13). To make a vow and not fulfill it incurs the guilt of treachery and perjury; it is simply lying to God (see p 7; cf Dt 6:13; Heb 6:16).

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 5:6 *the messenger*. Hbr *mal'ak*, cf Mal 2:7. The priest is to teach the Law of Moses (Lv 10:11; Zep 3:4; Hg 2:11) as one by whom the people could inquire of God.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 5:7 *dreams*. Cf v 3; Jer 23:25–40.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 5:1–7 The wicked and foolish sin against God in acts of religious complacency, empty devotion, and unfulfilled vows. Despite superficial religion and meaningless vows, God is faithful and just. Upon our confession, He will absolve us of our sins for the sake of Christ. • O merciful and eternal God, You speak to us of the greatest and highest things, of life eternal and blessed innocence in Your kingdom of heaven. We are dust and ashes and stand in need of Your Word constantly. Grant us Your grace and enlighten us with Your truth. Amen.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 5:8 *amazed*. Do not be surprised at such oppression and perversion of justice, for these are in the hearts of sinful people (cf Jn 2:24–25). God's eyes are on the self-exalted (cf Jb 24:22–24). *watched by a higher*. Presidents, governors, senators, judges, etc., are necessary for good order and all are accountable to God.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 5:9 Sinful leaders abuse their God-given authority and hoard instead of serve (cf Ps 68:6; Lk 12:15). *gain*. Income obtained on the earth for the comfort of human life. *cultivated fields*. In a farming economy, nothing was more important.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 5:10 Corrupt desires are insatiable. Consider the difference between need and desire (cf Mt 6:19–21, 24–34; 1Tm 6:9–10).

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 5:11 Great wealth brings greater anxiety (see SC, Ninth and Tenth Commandments, p xxxvi). The more one has, the more one covets.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 5:12 True rest is found in the Lord, not in abundance (cf Lk 12:13–21).
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 5:13 *to his hurt*. Hoarding wealth can invite charlatans, sin, pride, and love of money, thus drawing one away from the Lord and His Word.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 5:14 *bad venture*. Things are not always as they seem. Entrepreneurs often have debt that exceeds their assets, making their apparent fortune worthless. This man is even unable to provide for his child.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 5:15 *As he came … he shall go again*. Cradle to grave. We come into the world with nothing and depart the same way (cf Lk 12:14–21). The rich and the poor are equalized.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 5:16 *grievous evil*. Temporal world is fleeting and retreats from us at death.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 5:17 He eats the bread of sorrows. This is not a repentant sorrow before God (cf Ps 77:2) but anger in old age, where affliction and failing health beg the question as to the worthiness of laboring "under the sun."
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 5:18 Theme of 2:24–25; 3:12–13, 22 returns. Only in God does life have meaning and true pleasure. Without Him, nothing satisfies. True pleasure comes only when we acknowledge and revere God (12:13).
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 5:19 *gift*. Cf Ps 145:15–16. Life is God's gift, as is the enjoyment of life. He appoints the number of days we have to serve Him with joy and gladness of heart (Jb 14:5).
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 5:20 A cheerful heart is a gift of God. It allows life's most difficult experiences to pale in comparison with the inexpressible love He has first demonstrated to us by grace alone.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 6:1 *an evil*. When riches increase, there is a temptation to rest our hearts on them rather than the Lord and His gifts.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 6:2 *God does not give him power to enjoy them*. Riches, wealth, and honor are God's gifts. He desires that we serve His kingdom and our neighbors with His gifts. The ability to enjoy God's blessings is a bonus—a gift of God, not a right or guarantee. God calls that person a fool who forgets this truth.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 6:3 Life is not meaningless. Life is a gift of the Lord. *not satisfied*. Silver and gold may fill our hands but not our souls.

no burial. The burial of an unbeliever appears little different from that of a dumb animal. *stillborn child*. See note, Ps 58:8.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 6:4 A stillborn child (v 3) may have no name, no identity.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 6:5 Solomon asserts that the stillborn child has more rest than a covetous miser. *seen the sun*. Luth: "[This is] Hebrew for 'to enjoy things and take pleasure in them.' … Thus the wicked begin their hell in this life, because they are deprived of the use of all the creatures and gifts of God, so that they never see the sun, which we nevertheless have every day. In other words, they do not rejoice in the gifts of God but are always looking for something else" (AE 15:96, 97). Cf Nu 6:25.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 6:6 The grave is the end, no matter if the person lives a thousand years or one hour. This begs the question, "Is there life after this life?" See note, 12:7.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 6:7 The flesh is never satiated. The soul finds bondage, not satisfaction, in wealth.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 6:9 It is better to make the best of what one has (contentment) than to wander in the ways of desire (covetousness).
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 6:10 *already been named*. Known by divine foreknowledge. This does not teach fatalism or determinism, which denies the God of Holy Scripture. See note, Rm 8:29. *one stronger*. God; cf Jb 33:12.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 6:11 *more words, the more vanity*. Most ideas prove meaningless. Without God's Word, we do not know how to advise others or how to act.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 6:12 "The Lord" is the answer to these questions. We live, move, and have our being in Him.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 5:8–6:12 In the latter part of ch 5, Solomon shows how to make a comfortable use of God's gifts. In ch 6, he shows the evil uses of wealth and asks, "Will the amassing of wealth bring happiness?" What person is better for his or her wealth, pleasure, and honor when standing before God at the final judgment? Jesus Christ is the way and the truth and the life (Jn 14:6; Ac 4:12). He is the author and perfecter of our faith, so that we do not grow weary and lose heart (cf Heb 12:2–3).
• O God of all comfort, by Your Word and Holy Spirit grant us a firm, glad, and grateful faith, that by it we may overcome every trial and at length hear

the Word of Your dear Son: "Take heart; I have overcome the world" (Jn 16:33). Amen.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 7:1–13 Common thread in these verses is that, in all of life's ups and downs, the wise person will trust that God works things out for good (Rm 8:28).

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 7:1 *name*. One's reputation. See p 843. *better than precious ointment*. Expensive possessions do not make up for a bad reputation, referred to as a stench (Gn 34:30; Ex 5:21). *day of death than … birth*. Unusually pessimistic proverb grouped with two other comparative proverbs. Each uses repetition and similar sounds, which perhaps led Solomon to group them.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 7:2 *lay it to heart*. The living may consider what will come at the end of their lives. Death teaches them to spend their lives well.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 7:3 Rather than take shortcomings and failures in a lighthearted or even mocking way, one who is sorrowful over shortcomings and sins will find comfort and forgiveness from God.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 7:4 See note, v 2. Ambr: "He shall be saved in the future who has wept [tears of repentance] most in this age" (*NPNF* 2 10:352).

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 7:6 *the crackling of thorns*. Thorns placed in a fire burn rapidly and make a lot of noise. The quick flash of heat does not burn long enough to cook a meal. *the laughter of the fools*. Even though correction may not be pleasant, it is preferred over someone making light of a situation (Ps 141:5).

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 7:8 *patient in spirit*. The patient person demonstrates confidence in God's working things for our good (Heb 11). Luth: "Perseverance crowns the work; wait for the end. It is not how you begin that matters, but how you follow through" (AE 15:116).

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 7:9 One who lashes out at injustices or hardships has likely forgotten God's promises to help in such times, and so rejects God's wisdom.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 7:10 *not from wisdom*. Wisdom lies in understanding God and how He works in our lives, knowing that He works things for good for all who love Him (Rm 8:28).

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 7:11 *Wisdom is good with an inheritance*. Or, "Wisdom is as good as an inheritance."

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 7:12 Luth: "He who sees and hears much has a great opportunity for sorrow and indignation, because he sees and experiences the things that bring injury to the heart…. Solomon is not speaking about foolish men, who do not care at all about wisdom and human affairs, but about the best of men, those who want to help human affairs, men such as those in public office and in the management of households. For those who administer public or private business come to experience the fraud and perfidy of men. This fact has frightened many men away from public office…. Christians should be exhorted to live in the very midst of the crowd, to marry, to govern their household, etc. Moreover, when their efforts are hindered by the malice of men, they should bear it patiently and not cease their good works. Do not desert the battlefield but stick it out" (AE 15:105–6). *like the protection of money*. Or, "better than the protection of money." This points us toward the wisdom God provides in His Word (Pr 8:35).
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 7:13 Jacob is a good example; God made him limp after the encounter at Jabbok (Gn 32:22–32). God also renamed him Israel and changed him from a schemer to a patriarch.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 7:14 All days belong to the Lord. Even from the evil that happens to us, God can work something good (Gn 50:20).
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 7:16–17 Luth: "Forget about the highest law; measure yourself by your own foot and sing, 'Know thyself.' Then you will find in your own breast a lengthy catalog of vices, and you will say: 'Look, I myself am still unrighteous, and yet I am tolerated by God and am not banished by people. Then why am I so carried away with fury that I harshly require of others what I do not achieve myself?' This is what it means to be 'righteous overmuch' " (AE 15:122).
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 7:16 *overly righteous*. Good example would be the Pharisees, who could not recognize their need for repentance. *do not make yourself too wise*. Adding our own "wisdom" to God's can also distort the truth and lead to our ruin.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 7:17 Be restrained from doing evil things, but remember you will still sin.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 7:18 *one who fears God*. See p 1001. *come out from both of them*. The wise person will admit the tendency to be self-righteous as well as the inability to stop sinning. Such a person will find relief in the forgiveness God offers.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 7:19 Having 10 proven warriors or administrators will not defend or govern a city as well as having one godly, wise person.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 7:20 Solomon also says this in his prayer dedicating the temple (2Ch 6:36). The OT shows that every person sins and needs a Savior (Rm 3:10–20). Those who find favor in God's sight recognize His forgiveness and undeserved love.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 7:21 *servant cursing you*. The servant may have cause to be angry at his master (cf v 9), and others may speak ill of him. But believers should look to God for a helpful assessment of their life. See note, Gn 12:3.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 7:23 *far from me*. Cf Is 55:8–9; Rm 11:33.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 7:24 Cf 1Co 2:9–16.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 7:25 *wickedness of folly*. Abandoning God's wisdom and love amounts to wickedness and stupidity.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 7:26 Pr 7:6–27 goes into detail about a loose woman, comparing the threat and risk of adultery to idolatry. Cf Col 2:8; Jas 3:15. Avoiding the temptations of following our own designs comes only through God's help.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 7:28 Few people possess wisdom, fewer still pursue it, and even Solomon did not hold on to it. Christ embodied wisdom and called Himself greater than Solomon (Mt 12:42). *all these*. All humankind, whom Solomon weighed for uprightness and wisdom. Ironically, he chastened women for lacking wisdom, though he had foolishly chased after them! Cf 1Ki 11:1–4.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 7:29 *God made man upright*. See note, Jb 1:1. Ath: "She [the human soul] is made to see God, and to be enlightened by Him; but of her own accord in God's stead she has sought corruptible things and darkness" (*NPNF* 2 4:7). *schemes*. Chem: "This is the same word which in Gen. 6:5 and 8:21 describes the evil figment of man's imagination" (*LTh* 1:257).
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON **Ch 7** Avoiding God's wisdom is wickedness and folly, but finding such wisdom—as God gives it—preserves our life and gives us hope in the face of all frustrations. Other sources of wisdom offer little or no hope, certainly none in the face of God's final judgment. The only way to acquire wisdom is in the revelation that God has given us of Himself. • Thank You, O God, that despite our

inclination to folly and wickedness, You chose to reveal Your good and gracious will for us. The source of all wisdom is Your Son. By sending Him, You showed us infinite love and forgiveness, hope for now and eternity. Amen.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 8:1 *hardness*. Stern appearance. *changed*. Suggesting that in God's wisdom, one finds mercy.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 8:2 *because of God's oath to him*. Pictures the king as God's agent. See note, Rm 13:1; see also "vow," p 7.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 8:3 *go from his presence*. Kings might execute those subjects who entered or left their presence without permission (Est 4:10–11).

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 8:6 The difficulties we encounter should not drive us to hasty action, esp to reject God or His ways.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 8:8 *power to retain the spirit, or power over the day of death*. To lengthen our life beyond what God allows, or to shorten it, is not our decision (Ps 31:15; Jas 4:13–15). *discharge from war*. A war is going on between God and His opponents. Believers, those joined to God's side, cannot avoid the conflict.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 8:1–9 No matter in which nation we dwell, we are in the service of the King of heaven and earth and do well only by heeding His Word and by being ready and willing to serve. In our King, we find the hope of things to come and can face the end of life with confidence. • Lord, help us to endure the struggle. You not only know the end already at the beginning, but You also have the outcome securely in hand. Amen.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 8:10 This text sets up a contrast to vv 12–13 and provides a match for v 14.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 8:11 A ruler may delay punishment in order to allow time for repentance, but delay may prompt even more wickedness.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 8:12 *fear God*. See p 1001.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 8:13 *prolong his days like a shadow*. Shadows can appear much longer than the person casting them. Yet, shadows vanish at sunset. The long life of the wicked is an illusion that disappears in the light of God's judgment.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 8:10–13 In this life, the wicked may fare better than those who do right. Although we see others getting away with doing wrong, we should not follow them. Instead, we should continue to

follow God's will and commit ourselves to His judgments, which will be favorable to the believer in the end. • God, grant us patience as we see the temporary successes of the ungodly, while we struggle with difficulties and hardships. Also remind us of the final outcome You have prepared for us in Christ. Amen.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 8:14 This verse takes a slightly different approach from vv 10–13. Being good and doing right often seem to be useless, more a frustration than a benefit.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 8:15 *joy*. Hbr *simchah*, "taking pleasure" in something. *joyful … will go with him*. Abiding joy finds cause to give thanks to God in any situation.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 8:17 *I saw all the work of God*. Solomon strove to determine what many seek and cannot find, "What has God done in my life, and why?" *the work that is done*. God's involvement in our affairs. *cannot find it out*. Even with good speculation about God's reasons for the events in our lives, we cannot be certain of God's specific purpose behind each event.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 8:14–17 Rather than trying to make sense of everything that happens in life, recognize that God's purpose and plan prevail. Look for reasons to give thanks to Him each day, especially in the mercy He extends to you in Christ. • We thank You, God, that each day You bring evidence of Your involvement in our lives. Lead us to trust Your judgments. Amen.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 9:1 God is the Creator and Sustainer of life, but this passage also implies His role as Judge over the lives of all people. *both are before him*. The problem of 8:14 is addressed again. Chem: "We must not and cannot determine on the basis of the outcome whether we are pleasing to God" (*LTh* 2:513).

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 9:2 *same event*. Death, followed by judgment before God's throne (cf 3:19; Ps 49:10; Heb 9:27).

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 9:3 *an evil*. The fact that righteous people die like wicked people seems to us to be an injustice. *madness*. The human mind is hindered by irrational thinking.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 9:4 *has hope*. Is focused on what may still happen in this life. Nevertheless, the life to come is the greater hope for believers. Luth: "A good minister of the Word of God preaches the Word of God on account of the good citizens, regardless of how many people find

fault with him. If a teacher has two good pupils, he should work for the sake of these, even though he may have 20 others who are lazy and hopeless. A magistrate should also do his duty even if he cannot keep the entire state in its appointed task; he will still find one or another citizen with whom he can accomplish something. Therefore Solomon is saying this to keep us from either being crushed by despair or becoming presumptuous. One should not despair about the living as one does about the dead, about whom one cannot have any hope" (AE 15:146).

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 9:5 Those still alive can influence others, pursue their interests and passions, and make preparations for their end; those who are dead have whatever influence their memory affords them as it fades from the thoughts of those still living.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 9:1–6 From a human, mortal perspective, it appears unfair that all people must die, as death deals equally with evil people as well as those who follow God. We need something to counter the hopelessness that there is nothing after death. For that reason, God comforts us with His promises of love and mercy. • Thank You, God, that we do not see death as the end of our lives. Your promises, fulfilled in Christ, give us the sure and certain hope of being with You forever. Amen.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 9:7 Believers are reminded that God has displayed favor toward them and toward whatever deeds are done in faith.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 9:8–9 In Tablet 10iii of the Old Babylonian Gilgamesh Epic, the "ale-wife" expresses similar thoughts about enjoying feasting, dancing, and one's spouse. See pp 775–77.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 9:8 *garments … white*. White clothes were more expensive to make and maintain, so they were only for wealthier people. The reader is being encouraged to be indulgent. Luth: "The Romans and Greeks favor a purple garment; but the Orientals, and especially the Jews, favor a white one, on account of the washings and cleanliness which they practiced so scrupulously" (AE 15:149). *oil*. People anointed their heads on festive occasions.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 9:9 *wife whom you love*. Positive reference to a beloved wife contrasts with 7:26, 28. God's blessings to us in marriage, esp in expressing and experiencing love, grant comfort and encouragement in the difficulties of life.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 9:10 Time for growing, for learning, for receiving God's grace, for doing things that may benefit others is before we

reach the grave (Jn 9:4). *Sheol*. See p 792.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 9:7–10 God looks with favor upon the one who lives by faith. When God blesses you with wealth, enjoy that blessing and be a blessing to others. Make proper use of the time God gives in life. Know that denying yourself simple pleasures does not gain God's favor. Simple and godly pleasures are only the beginning of the gifts of His love and forgiveness that He grants in Christ. • We thank You, Lord, that we can look at the simple blessings in life as a source of true joy. We receive all such things as signs of Your love and mercy. Amen.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 9:11 God is in control. He may allow events contrary to our expectations so we are reminded of His impending judgment upon us.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 9:12 *an evil time*. A time of calamity or distress. The person has trusted his or her abilities and gone on unaware of God's work. Luth: "A fish snaps at the bait and swallows the hook. Birds confidently enter and eat, with nothing further from their minds than a trap; and then suddenly they are captured. So it is that when we have chosen something good and hoped for it, we are deceived. And when it seems that something evil is impending, it is something good that is impending…. Experience itself teaches us that human affairs are carried out not by our plans but usually contrary to our plans. This is the source of the statement of luckless people: 'That is not what I had in mind!' " (AE 15:153).

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 9:13–16 Cf 2Sm 20:16–22, where Solomon's Uncle Joab besieges a city for one person who has taken refuge there. One woman in the city convinced the rest to hand over the person Joab was seeking, and Joab spared the city. The woman's name is not recorded.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 9:15–16 No great recognition is given to the man's wisdom or the part it played in saving the city.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 9:17 Even a king's forceful advice cannot help those who are incompetent or unwilling to succeed. Wisdom is greater than authority.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 9:18 *one sinner destroys much good*. Cf Gn 3, Adam and Eve's fall into sin.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 10:1 *Dead flies … stench*. Dead flies would make sacred oil unfit for temple use. Cf 9:18.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 10:2 *right … left*. Terms of good versus evil, honesty versus deception and lying. (Lat "sinister" means "left.") The right-hand side is also a position of honor, prestige, or power for a ruler. See "right hand," p 843. Evil goes along with folly and arises out of the heart.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 10:3 *walks on the road*. Even in simple things, it is possible for one to be foolish.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 10:4 *do not leave your place*. Don't flee or quit, which would imply guilt. Cf 1Pt 2:13–25.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 10:6–7 Being rich and being wise are often paired and should further result in positions of honor, prestige, and responsibility. The author is offended about a reversal of fortune.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 10:7 Horses were used by those with power and authority (esp for war). Here, people who would make better princes and leaders are often the ones oppressed by those less capable, less honorable, or less noble. Such false princes often obtain their position in ways deserving punishment.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 10:8–10 Dangerous activities that demand wisdom in order to avoid injury or death. *serpent … wall*. Walls often had hollow spaces, a good habitat for snakes.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 10:10 Wisdom is compared to the sharpened ax, which will work better with less effort. The wise person will use wisdom to diminish the danger of hazardous occupations, as well as the overall hazards of life.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 10:11 Inattentive snake charmers who allow themselves to be bitten are seen as foolish. They receive no sympathy and surely no money for their performance.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 10:12 *words*. Primary means of sharing wisdom with others. Words also make it clear when someone is foolish.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 10:13 Folly, rooted in rejection of God's wisdom, is not neutral, but shows itself to be evil.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 10:15 The fool finds even the most obvious and well-known things difficult and therefore tiring (e.g., following well-marked and well-known roads).
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 10:16–17 *feast in the morning*. In Israel, the proper time for feasting was later in the day, to sustain one's strength for labor. Such feasting did not include alcoholic beverages.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 10:16 *king is a child*. A child ruler or a ruler acting childishly. Such rulers seek to satisfy their own needs before attending to the needs of the people. This is not the "poor and wise youth" of 4:13.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 10:17 *son of the nobility*. Suggests a wise person capable of governing with sensible moderation and attention to the needs of all.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 10:19 *Bread … wine*. What sustains life is meant to be enjoyed. A caution against excess should not cause a person to forsake any and all pleasures of life (cf 9:7). *money answers everything*. The Preacher has already indicated that money is not the final solution for all things (5:10–14). Yet, money can provide relief from certain problems (e.g., protection in 7:12).
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 10:20 *bird of the air*. Common proverb in many cultures. Be careful; others are listening.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 9:11–10:20 The twists and turns of life often tempt one to be foolish, because wisdom does not always quickly gain respect or results. Still, it is better, and possible, to follow the course of God's wisdom. No matter how much foolishness may control every level of our society and life, we are to avoid it. Because God encourages us to wisdom, we may expect something more in the outcome of our life than just death. He promises life everlasting in Christ, our Wisdom. • Lord, as we ask for Your wisdom to carry us through life, teach us also to be patient with foolish people. Keep us mindful of the outcome You have prepared for us in Your Son's death and resurrection. Amen.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 11:1 Do not be overly cautious due to arbitrary and unexpected outcomes in this life. This passage describes sending ships to sea with trade goods and waiting to realize a profit. V 2 encourages helping those in need, which realizes a greater profit.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 11:2 Second encouragement to be generous, not keeping track of how many people you help. Be generous while you have the means to do so.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 11:4 There will always be some uncertainty about whether the time is right. Therefore, the planting, plowing, or reaping will be put off to a better time.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 11:5 *the spirit comes to the bones*. Scientific understanding of how conception occurs may reduce the impact of this

comparison. Yet conception and life remain mysteries: how does God make us something radically different from an animal?

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 11:6 Plant the seed and reap the harvest. Don't be paralyzed by indecision. See note, v 4.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 11:8 *days of darkness*. See note, Jb 20:26. The light of life comes to an end in death. Looking at those who have gone before us, hundreds or thousands of years ago, we see that it may also be a long time between when the light goes out in our life and when we see the new light of the resurrection. Enjoy life; make something of it while you can, and not after it's gone.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 11:9 Pursue life as you perceive it and understand it. Yet know that you will make mistakes and face judgment. We are accountable before God for all we do. *youth*. The Hbr is not very distinct here, encompassing ages from small children to unmarried adults. The Israelites saw this time as a transition to the important stage of life: adulthood, when one was most productive and had full social standing.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 11:10 Elsewhere, the Preacher discusses what vexes, angers, or frustrates us (1:18; 2:23; 5:16; 7:3, 9). We are urged here to avoid frustration over the vain things of this life. Ephr: "[However,] for your sins you should be constant in sadness [i.e., repentant]" (*NPNF* 2 13:334).

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON **Ch 11** We don't know what may come, and we will never know everything we may want to. We take advantage of our opportunities, especially those to help others. We understand, as we conduct our lives, that God has the final say. His Word to us in Christ is joy, light, and peace. He daily does us good and has prepared a joyous future for us in Christ. • Lord, Your promises abide for us. Teach us to face life cheerfully and fearlessly as we place all things in Your hands. Amen.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 12:1 *evil days*. Days of distress. *no pleasure*. It may be more difficult to have joy as one grows older and nearer to death.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 12:2–7 The Preacher gives us powerful and vivid images of old age and approaching death to rouse us from complacency or resignation due to troubles. We are to address the matter early in life, while we are able, so that failure does not sneak up on us.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 12:2 *sun … darkened*. Describing death. See note, 11:8.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 12:3 *grinders cease*. Poetic language. Teeth of an older person are compared with stones for grinding grain. *those who look*. Figuratively, the eyes, which in older age function less effectively.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 12:4 *doors on the street*. Describing the mouth and ability to speak or the ears and ability to hear. *at the sound of a bird*. Though the hearing of enjoyable sounds is reduced in the elderly, their sleep is still easily disturbed, such as early in the morning when the songs of birds begin.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 12:5 *almond tree*. One of the first to blossom and lose its petals in the spring. *grasshopper drags*. Formerly nimble gait is replaced with overall difficulty in movement. *desire fails*. Loss of appetite and impending death make it difficult to be enthusiastic about enjoying any earthly pleasure.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 12:6–7 Repeats theme of vv 1–2. *cord … bowl … pitcher … wheel*. Placement of these four images suggests they represent life in some way. Their destruction implies the end of life. We are to remember our Creator before all this happens. *silver cord … golden bowl*. Precious objects indicate how valuable life is. *pitcher … wheel*. Practical objects are needed daily. A clay pitcher was attached by a rope, which wrapped around a wheel, making it easier to draw life-giving water.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 12:7 *dust*. The body (Gn 3:19; Ps 104:29). *and the spirit returns*. Or "but the spirit returns." The immaterial aspect of a person is separated from the body by death. Solomon's expression anticipates everlasting life with God.
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 12:8 *all is vanity*. With this we are taken back to the beginning of Ec. Instead of being the close of this section (vv 1–7), this verse could also be the opening of the final section (vv 9–14).
ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 12:1–8 The aches of old age make it difficult to envision anything hopeful and positive. Such bodily changes may overwhelm any joy we still have in life. Yet, the same God who consigned us to the grave because of sin has also promised us that we will be rescued from the grave and His eternal judgment. Through hearing the Word in our youth, He will prepare us. His promises will stay with us. • Lord, we thank You for all the opportunities You give us to learn about our life: where it is going, and what You have prepared for us. Teach us Your Word early so that we may look forward to our end, not with fear or discouragement, but with hope and joy. Especially keep us ever mindful of

what You have done for us in Your Son, Jesus Christ, who overcame death and the grave. Amen.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 12:9–10 *the Preacher also taught*. Not necessarily an addition by a later editor of the Book; the author also writes in the third person elsewhere. *arranging many proverbs*. Another indication that the author of this work is Solomon. Later, rabbis regarded Solomon as comparable to Moses in wisdom (or philosophy).

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 12:11 *words … goads*. Advice from God may be like cattle prods, as we are sluggish and resistant to go the way God desires for us (Ac 2:37; 26:14). His Word is powerful to move us. *nails*. God's words fasten the loose parts of our lives together and make them solid. *one Shepherd*. God is the Shepherd of His people (Ps 23:1; 28:9; Is 40:11; Ez 34:15; Mi 7:14). These words of wisdom have come from God.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 12:12 *My son*. Possibly a personal note to the author's son (Rehoboam?), but also a general encouragement to any reader of this work. The relation between teacher and student should be like father and son. See note, Pr 1:8. *beyond these*. The sayings "given by one Shepherd" (v 11) should be our primary focus, for anything else would be the words of a fool. The author has strongly claimed divine assistance in what he has written. He now urges the reader not to get worn down investigating all other writings that claim to be helpful, important, and wise. Luth: "One king, who is the shepherd, has appointed wise men to acknowledge and approve books. These men, I say, recognized the Holy Spirit in this book and approved it for the people. In this way the Gospels were taken up and approved by the fathers; that is, the fathers themselves recognized the Holy Spirit. But one must not infer from this: 'Therefore the church or the fathers are above the Gospel,' any more than it is valid to say: 'I recognize the true and living God and His Word; therefore I am above God and His Word.' Just as one is not superior to a prince whom one acknowledges or to a parent whom one acknowledges, so it is here. These men do not teach this shepherd, but they receive from one shepherd" (AE 15:185).

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 12:13 *the matter*. Questions raised in ch 1. *Fear God … duty of man*. Everything that he had explored, all his reflections, have brought the Preacher back to consider the Creator. Everything is not in vain when God enters the picture and we recognize our relationship to Him. *Fear God*. Though these words include an element of

being afraid, a recognition of having to stand before God's judgment, they are also a Hbr idiom for faith and trust. See p 1001. *keep*. Hbr *shamar*, "to guard or protect." The Word is precious to a believer. *commandments*. Hbr *mitswah*, God's Law. See p 971. w*hole duty of man*. Not just a duty to learn about God, but that we are complete and have met the purpose for which God created us when we have a proper relationship with Him. This is not a rejection of the ethic of pleasure Solomon described earlier, but an affirmation that our pleasure is in God and His Word.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 12:14 *bring every deed into judgment*. For condemnation or acquittal by grace.

ECCLESIASTES—NOTE ON 12:9–14 The one searching for meaning in life should have come to the conclusion offered here. To avoid a meaningless life, one needs a right relationship with God, i.e., justification based on God's favor toward us on account of Christ and received through faith. God has given His Word, and through it we have the ability to know His Commandments and promises. More important, we can know Him and how to avoid a meaningless life now and in eternity. • Heavenly Father, prepare me for Your judgment through Your Word and the marvelous news that You have already judged me as worthy of life through the death and resurrection of Your Son, our Savior. Amen.

The Song of Solomon

The Song of Solomon 1 | The Song of Solomon 2 | The Song of Solomon 3 | The Song of Solomon 4 | The Song of Solomon 5 | The Song of Solomon 6 | The Song of Solomon 7 | The Song of Solomon 8

- Introduction to The Song of Solomon
  - Overview
  - Reading the Song of Solomon
  - Luther on the Song of Solomon
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

1 [1]The Song of Songs, which is Solomon’s.

The Bride Confesses Her Love

SHE[1]

2 Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth!
For your love is better than wine;
3 your anointing oils are fragrant;
your name is oil poured out;
therefore virgins love you.
4 Draw me after you; let us run.
The king has brought me into his chambers.

OTHERS

We will exult and rejoice in you;
we will extol your love more than wine;
rightly do they love you.

SHE

5 I am very dark, but lovely,
O daughters of Jerusalem,
like the tents of Kedar,
like the curtains of Solomon.
6 Do not gaze at me because I am dark,
because the sun has looked upon me.
My mother's sons were angry with me;
they made me keeper of the vineyards,
but my own vineyard I have not kept!
7 Tell me, you whom my soul loves,
where you pasture your flock,
where you make it lie down at noon;
for why should I be like one who veils

herself
beside the flocks of your companions?

Solomon and His Bride Delight in Each Other

He

8 If you do not know,
O most beautiful among women,
follow in the tracks of the flock,
and pasture your young goats
beside the shepherds' tents.
9 I compare you, my love,
to a mare among Pharaoh's chariots.
10 Your cheeks are lovely with ornaments,
your neck with strings of jewels.

Others

11 We will make for you[1] ornaments of gold,
studded with silver.

She

12 While the king was on his couch,
my nard gave forth its fragrance.
13 My beloved is to me a sachet of myrrh
that lies between my breasts.
14 My beloved is to me a cluster of henna
blossoms
in the vineyards of Engedi.

He

15 Behold, you are beautiful, my love;
behold, you are beautiful;

your eyes are doves.

She

16 † Behold, you are beautiful, my beloved,
truly delightful.
Our couch is green;
17 the beams of our house are cedar;
our rafters are pine.

2 1 †I am a rose[2] of Sharon, a lily of the valleys.

He

2 As a lily among brambles,
so is my love among the young women.

She

3 As an apple tree among the trees of the forest,
so is my beloved among the young men.
With great delight I sat in his shadow,
and his fruit was sweet to my taste.
4 † He brought me to the banqueting house,[3]
and his banner over me was love.
5 † Sustain me with raisins;
refresh me with apples,
for I am sick with love.
6 His left hand is under my head,
and his right hand embraces me!
7 † I adjure you,[4] O daughters of Jerusalem,
by the gazelles or the does of the field,
that you not stir up or awaken love
until it pleases.

The Bride Adores Her Beloved

8 The voice of my beloved!
Behold, he comes,
leaping over the mountains,
bounding over the hills.
9 My beloved is like a gazelle
or a young stag.
Behold, there he stands
behind our wall,
gazing through the windows,
looking through the lattice.
10 My beloved speaks and says to me:
"Arise, my love, my beautiful one,
and come away,
11 for behold, the winter is past;
the rain is over and gone.
12 The flowers appear on the earth,
the time of singing[1] has come,
and the voice of the turtledove
is heard in our land.
13 The fig tree ripens its figs,
and the vines are in blossom;
they give forth fragrance.
Arise, my love, my beautiful one,
and come away.
14 O my dove, in the clefts of the rock,
in the crannies of the cliff,
let me see your face,
let me hear your voice,
for your voice is sweet,
and your face is lovely.
15 Catch the foxes[2] for us,
the little foxes

that spoil the vineyards,
for our vineyards are in blossom.”

16 † My beloved is mine, and I am his;
he grazes[3] among the lilies.
17 † Until the day breathes
and the shadows flee,
turn, my beloved, be like a gazelle
or a young stag on cleft mountains.[4]

The Bride's Dream

3 [1]†† On my bed by night
I sought him whom my soul loves;

I sought him, but found him not.
[2]† I will rise now and go about the city,
in the streets and in the squares;
I will seek him whom my soul loves.
I sought him, but found him not.
[3]†† The watchmen found me
as they went about in the city.
"Have you seen him whom my soul loves?"
[4]† Scarcely had I passed them
when I found him whom my soul loves.
I held him, and would not let him go
until I had brought him into my mother's
house,
and into the chamber of her who
conceived me.
[5]† I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem,
by the gazelles or the does of the field,
that you not stir up or awaken love
until it pleases.

Solomon Arrives for the Wedding

6 What is that coming up from the wilderness
like columns of smoke,
perfumed with myrrh and frankincense,
with all the fragrant powders of a merchant?
7 Behold, it is the litter[1] of Solomon!
Around it are sixty mighty men,
some of the mighty men of Israel,
8 all of them wearing swords
and expert in war,
each with his sword at his thigh,
against terror by night.
9 King Solomon made himself a carriage[2]
from the wood of Lebanon.
10 He made its posts of silver,
its back of gold, its seat of purple;
its interior was inlaid with love
by the daughters of Jerusalem.
11 Go out, O daughters of Zion,
and look upon King Solomon,
with the crown with which his mother
crowned him
on the day of his wedding,
on the day of the gladness of his heart.

Solomon Admires His Bride's Beauty

He

4 [1]†† Behold, you are beautiful, my love,
behold, you are beautiful!

Your eyes are doves
behind your veil.
Your hair is like a flock of goats
leaping down the slopes of Gilead.
[2]† Your teeth are like a flock of shorn ewes
that have come up from the washing,
all of which bear twins,
and not one among them has lost its young.
[3]† Your lips are like a scarlet thread,
and your mouth is lovely.
Your cheeks are like halves of a pomegranate
behind your veil.
[4]† Your neck is like the tower of David,
built in rows of stone;[3]
on it hang a thousand shields,
all of them shields of warriors.
[5] Your two breasts are like two fawns,
twins of a gazelle,
that graze among the lilies.
[6]† Until the day breathes
and the shadows flee,
I will go away to the mountain of myrrh
and the hill of frankincense.
[7] You are altogether beautiful, my love;
there is no flaw in you.
[8]† Come with me from Lebanon, my bride;
come with me from Lebanon.

Depart[4] from the peak of Amana,
from the peak of Senir and Hermon,
from the dens of lions,
from the mountains of leopards.

9 † You have captivated my heart, my sister, my bride;
you have captivated my heart with one glance of your eyes,
with one jewel of your necklace.
10 How beautiful is your love, my sister, my bride!
How much better is your love than wine,
and the fragrance of your oils than any spice!
11 † Your lips drip nectar, my bride;
honey and milk are under your tongue;
the fragrance of your garments is like the fragrance of Lebanon.
12 † A garden locked is my sister, my bride,
a spring locked, a fountain sealed.
13 †† Your shoots are an orchard of pomegranates
with all choicest fruits,
henna with nard,
14 † nard and saffron, calamus and cinnamon,
with all trees of frankincense,
myrrh and aloes,
with all choice spices—
15 † a garden fountain, a well of living water,
and flowing streams from Lebanon.

16 Awake, O north wind,
and come, O south wind!
Blow upon my garden,
let its spices flow.

Together in the Garden of Love

She

Let my beloved come to his garden,
and eat its choicest fruits.

He

5 [1]† I came to my garden, my sister, my bride,
I gathered my myrrh with my spice,
I ate my honeycomb with my honey,
I drank my wine with my milk.

Others

Eat, friends, drink,
and be drunk with love!

The Bride Searches for Her Beloved

She

2 I slept, but my heart was awake.
A sound! My beloved is knocking.
"Open to me, my sister, my love,
my dove, my perfect one,
for my head is wet with dew,
my locks with the drops of the night."
3 I had put off my garment;
how could I put it on?
I had bathed my feet;
how could I soil them?
4 My beloved put his hand to the latch,
and my heart was thrilled within me.
5 I arose to open to my beloved,
and my hands dripped with myrrh,
my fingers with liquid myrrh,
on the handles of the bolt.
6 I opened to my beloved,
but my beloved had turned and gone.
My soul failed me when he spoke.
I sought him, but found him not;
I called him, but he gave no answer.
7 The watchmen found me
as they went about in the city;
they beat me, they bruised me,
they took away my veil,
those watchmen of the walls.
8 I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem,
if you find my beloved,
that you tell him
I am sick with love.

9† What is your beloved more than another
beloved,
O most beautiful among women?
What is your beloved more than another
beloved,
that you thus adjure us?

The Bride Praises Her Beloved

She

10 ‡‡‡ My beloved is radiant and ruddy,
distinguished among ten thousand.
11 His head is the finest gold;
his locks are wavy,
black as a raven.
12 † His eyes are like doves
beside streams of water,
bathed in milk,
sitting beside a full pool.[1]
13 † His cheeks are like beds of spices,
mounds of sweet-smelling herbs.
His lips are lilies,
dripping liquid myrrh.
14 His arms are rods of gold,
set with jewels.
His body is polished ivory,[2]
bedecked with sapphires.[3]
15 † His legs are alabaster columns,
set on bases of gold.
His appearance is like Lebanon,
choice as the cedars.
16 His mouth[4] is most sweet,
and he is altogether desirable.
This is my beloved and this is my friend,
O daughters of Jerusalem.

Others

6 [1] Where has your beloved gone,
O most beautiful among women?
Where has your beloved turned,
that we may seek him with you?

Together in the Garden of Love

SHE

2 ☩☩ My beloved has gone down to his garden
to the beds of spices,
to graze[5] in the gardens
and to gather lilies.
3 I am my beloved’s and my beloved is mine;
he grazes among the lilies.

Solomon and His Bride Delight in Each Other

He

4 † You are beautiful as Tirzah, my love,
lovely as Jerusalem,
awesome as an army with banners.
5 † Turn away your eyes from me,
for they overwhelm me—
Your hair is like a flock of goats
leaping down the slopes of Gilead.
6 † Your teeth are like a flock of ewes
that have come up from the washing;
all of them bear twins;
not one among them has lost its young.
7 † Your cheeks are like halves of a pomegranate
behind your veil.
8 † There are sixty queens and eighty
concubines,
and virgins without number.
9 † My dove, my perfect one, is the only one,
the only one of her mother,
pure to her who bore her.
The young women saw her and called her
blessed;
the queens and concubines also, and they
praised her.

10 "Who is this who looks down like the dawn,
beautiful as the moon, bright as the sun,
awesome as an army with banners?"

She

11 † I went down to the nut orchard
to look at the blossoms of the valley,
to see whether the vines had budded,
whether the pomegranates were in bloom.
12 † Before I was aware, my desire set me
among the chariots of my kinsman, a prince.[1]

OTHERS

13 †[2] Return, return, O Shulammite,
return, return, that we may look upon you.

HE

Why should you look upon the
Shulammite,
as upon a dance before two armies?[3]

7 1 How beautiful are your feet in sandals,
O noble daughter!
Your rounded thighs are like jewels,
the work of a master hand.

2 † Your navel is a rounded bowl
that never lacks mixed wine.
Your belly is a heap of wheat,
encircled with lilies.
3 Your two breasts are like two fawns,
twins of a gazelle.
4 † Your neck is like an ivory tower.
Your eyes are pools in Heshbon,
by the gate of Bath-rabbim.
Your nose is like a tower of Lebanon,
which looks toward Damascus.

5† Your head crowns you like Carmel,
and your flowing locks are like purple;
a king is held captive in the tresses.

6 How beautiful and pleasant you are,
O loved one, with all your delights![4]
7 Your stature is like a palm tree,
and your breasts are like its clusters.
8 I say I will climb the palm tree
and lay hold of its fruit.
Oh may your breasts be like clusters of the vine,
and the scent of your breath like apples,
9† and your mouth[5] like the best wine.

SHE

It goes down smoothly for my beloved,
gliding over lips and teeth.[1]

10 I am my beloved's,
and his desire is for me.

The Bride Gives Her Love

11 Come, my beloved,
let us go out into the fields
and lodge in the villages;[2]
12 let us go out early to the vineyards
and see whether the vines have budded,
whether the grape blossoms have opened
and the pomegranates are in bloom.
There I will give you my love.
13 The mandrakes give forth fragrance,
and beside our doors are all choice fruits,
new as well as old,
which I have laid up for you, O my beloved.

Longing for Her Beloved

8 [1] Oh that you were like a brother to me
who nursed at my mother's breasts!
If I found you outside, I would kiss you,
and none would despise me.

[2] I would lead you and bring you
into the house of my mother—
she who used to teach me.
I would give you spiced wine to drink,
the juice of my pomegranate.
[3] His left hand is under my head,
and his right hand embraces me!
[4] I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem,
that you not stir up or awaken love
until it pleases.

[5] Who is that coming up from the
wilderness,
leaning on her beloved?

Under the apple tree I awakened you.
There your mother was in labor with you;
there she who bore you was in labor.

[6] Set me as a seal upon your heart,
as a seal upon your arm,
for love is strong as death,
jealousy[3] is fierce as the grave.[4]
Its flashes are flashes of fire,
the very flame of the LORD.

7† Many waters cannot quench love,
neither can floods drown it.
If a man offered for love
all the wealth of his house,
he[5] would be utterly despised.

Final Advice

OTHERS

8 We have a little sister,
and she has no breasts.
What shall we do for our sister
on the day when she is spoken for?
9 If she is a wall,
we will build on her a battlement of silver,
but if she is a door,
we will enclose her with boards of cedar.

SHE

10 I was a wall,
and my breasts were like towers;
then I was in his eyes
as one who finds[1] peace.

11 Solomon had a vineyard at Baal-hamon;
he let out the vineyard to keepers;
each one was to bring for its fruit a
thousand pieces of silver.
12 My vineyard, my very own, is before me;
you, O Solomon, may have the thousand,
and the keepers of the fruit two hundred.

HE

13 O you who dwell in the gardens,
with companions listening for your voice;
let me hear it.

SHE

14 † Make haste, my beloved,
and be like a gazelle
or a young stag
on the mountains of spices.

The Song of Solomon

OVERVIEW

Author
King Solomon

Date
c 970 BC (beginning of Solomon's reign)

Places
Jerusalem; sites throughout Israel (esp the north); Shunem

People
Solomon ("my beloved"); the Shulammite ("my sister, my bride") and her brothers; daughters of Jerusalem/Zion; the watchmen; David; Bathsheba

Purpose
God's love in Christ for you is "the very flame of the Lord," which alone conquers death and enables you to be faithful to Him and to the person with whom you are united in marital love

Law Theme
Religious promiscuity and unfaithfulness (idolatry), like sexual promiscuity and unfaithfulness, are destructive

Gospel Theme
In faithful love, God sent Christ to save the world; He grants to believers the priceless blessings of love for Him and marital love for spouses

Memory Verses
Love that pleases (2:3–7); captivated by the bride (4:9–10); the flame of the Lord (8:6–7)

Introduction to The Song of Solomon

Reading the Song of Solomon

The Song begins with the highest note of passionate excitement, with the bride entering the king's chamber (1:2–4). This is not where the relationship between the main characters began. The Song does not move in chronological order but cycles among the themes of courtship, wedding, and consummation (see outline, p 1067). (ESV translators have provided poetic divisions and headings to keep track of the movements and the messages of the characters.)

Much of the text describes the couple's longing for each other, which includes vivid imagery from God's creation and beautiful landmarks from throughout Israel and the nations Israel dominated during Solomon's reign: from Damascus and Lebanon in the north (6:4) to Pharaoh's chariots in the south (1:9). References to landmarks in northern Israel abound, and Solomon's Hebrew has elements of the northern dialect. His espoused, the

Shulammite (6:13), is likely from the town of "Shulem" or "Shunem," in the region of the northern tribe of Issachar. Though Solomon reigned from Jerusalem, he supported extensive building projects in northern Israel, as 1Ki 1–11 and archaeology show. These elements provide historical context for the events described in the Book.

The Song is not mere erotic literature, as many critics argue. It wrestles with the tension between the beauty and sensuality of the human body and the wisdom of reserving the body for marriage and genuine love. Wisdom counsels the listener "[do] not stir up or awaken love until it pleases" (2:7; 3:5; 8:4). The individual and the family have a responsibility to reserve sex for the wedding night (8:8–10). The Song connects the passion of love to the power of the Lord, comparing love to "the very flame of the LORD" (8:6). Also, wisdom admonishes that love is too valuable to be bought (8:7). For these reasons, the Song fits naturally with OT Wisdom Literature (see pp 775–78). Rightly understood, the Song is especially appropriate for teaching about the goodness of marriage and love in distinction from promiscuity (cf this theme in Pr 7).

Interpreters have long recognized in this Song allusions to the Lord's love for and governance of His people. The prophets regarded Israel as the Lord's bride (Is 54:5; Jer 31:32; Hos 2:16), a theme that always describes God's gracious relationship with His people, who inherit His blessings. In this way, the Song anticipates the NT teaching that the Church is Christ's beloved Bride and family. He seals and purifies her through Holy Baptism and graciously governs her (Eph 1:11–14; 5:22–6:4; cf Sg 8:6–9).

Luther on the Song of Solomon

> The third book [the Song of Solomon] is a song of praise, in which Solomon praises God for obedience, as for a gift of God. For where God is not himself the householder and ruler, there is neither obedience nor peace in any station of life. But where there is obedience and good governing, there God dwells, he kisses and embraces his dear bride with his word, which is the kiss of his lips. Therefore when things go in a land or a home as nearly as possible according to the first two of these books [Proverbs and Ecclesiastes], then one may well sing this third book and thank God. For God has not only taught us this, but has himself also done it. Amen. (AE 35:260–61)

For more of Luther's insights on this Book, see *Lectures on the Song of Solomon* (AE 15:189–264).

Challenges for Readers

Difficult Poetry. The Song of Solomon is a complex work of art written in a style different from modern English poetry. Therefore, readers must carefully work through the text, keeping in mind its structure and style (see outline, p 1067; see also pp 777–78).

Sensuality. Modest readers may wonder how this Book could be included in the Holy Bible. Some interpreters hunt for explicit sexual content in every detail of the poem's imagery. A balanced approach is required for understanding and applying the poem's teachings. Solomon described the passions of love honestly and joyfully; these passions are blessed by God in the context of holy wedlock.

Canonicity. As noted above, some have wondered how the Song of Solomon was included in the Bible, given its sensual character. According to Jewish historians, some rabbis raised this issue at the Jewish Council of Jamnia (c AD 100). However, the rabbis retained the Book as Sacred Scripture. Christians accepted the Book unquestioningly; this attitude prevailed until modern criticism. The Song of Solomon, interpreted as a depiction of Christ and the Church, was one of the most commonly taught books of Scripture during the ancient and medieval eras. Rightly interpreted and applied, the Song celebrates one of the most important aspects of human life: marital love, from which human life springs anew. This important theme is deeply rooted in scriptural faith (cf Gn 1:27–28; 2:18–25; Ps 127–28).

Blessings for Readers

The Song of Solomon is not the first book people should study from the OT. Nor is it the chief book for establishing Christian doctrine. Nonetheless, it is essential reading for God's people because life is more than precepts. God created us beautiful and passionate. To celebrate these blessings is to celebrate our Creator and His passionate love for us. As you read the Song of Solomon, consider this: if earthly love and life are so wondrous and stirring, how much more wonderful will eternal love and life be?

Much of this introductory material was adapted from Christopher W. Mitchell, *The Song of Songs*, CC (St. Louis: Concordia, 2003).

OUTLINE

The overall structure appears to consist of four themes arranged in sections in the following order. The letters a, b, c, and d below refer to the four themes, or stages, in the relationship:

a. The longing anticipation of courtship
b. The excitement and splendor of the wedding ceremony
c. The bliss of the couple's marriage consummation
d. The infatuation and delight of married love

Within d appear three other themes, expanding the topic of marriage:

a'. Married search and courtship: Solomon and the Shulammite are apart and yearn for reunion

b'. Married appreciation of beauty: these are descriptions in praise of the beauty of the spouse, not unlike the premarriage descriptions of the beloved adorned in wedding attire for the marriage ceremony

c'. Married consummation anew: the married couple reunites in joyful bliss

Divisions of the Book	**Poetic Order of Themes**
I. The Union: Four Cycles (1:2–5:1)	
A. First Cycle (1:2–17)	
1. Consummation (1:1–4)	c
2. Courtship (1:5–8)	a
3. Wedding (1:9–11)	b
4. Consummation (1:12–17)	c

B. Second Cycle (ch 2)
1. Wedding-Consummation (2:1–7) b-c
2. Courtship (2:8–15) a
3. Wedding (2:16) b
4. Consummation (2:17) c

C. Third Cycle (3:1–4:7)
1. Courtship (3:1–5) a
2. Wedding (3:6–11) b
3. Wedding-Consummation (4:1–7) b-c

D. Fourth Cycle (4:8–5:1)
1. Courtship (4:8–11) a
2. Wedding (4:12–15) b
3. Consummation (4:16–5:1) c

II. The Reunion: Married Love (5:2–8:14)

A. Fifth Cycle (5:2–6:10)
1. Search (5:2–8) a’
2. Praise (5:9–16) b’
3. Garden dialogue (6:1–3) a’
4. Garden dialogue (6:4–10) b’-c’

B. Sixth Cycle (6:11–8:4)
1. Search (6:11–13) a’
2. Praise (7:1–9) b’
3. Invitation (7:10–13) a’
4. Longing (8:1–4) c’

C. Conclusion (8:5–14)
1. Love: theological highlight (8:5–7) b’-c’
2. Love: application (8:8–12) b’-c’
3. Final appeal (8:13–14) c’

Footnotes

Footnotes for The Song of Solomon, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:1 The translators have added speaker identifications based on the gender and number of the Hebrew words
- [1] 1:11 The Hebrew for *you* is feminine singular

Footnotes for The Song of Solomon, Chapter 2

- [2] 2:1 Probably a bulb, such as a crocus, asphodel, or narcissus
- [3] 2:4 Hebrew *the house of wine*
- [4] 2:7 That is, I put you on oath ; so throughout the Song
- [1] 2:12 Or *pruning*
- [2] 2:15 Or *jackals*
- [3] 2:16 Or *he pastures his flock*
- [4] 2:17 Or *mountains of Bether*

Footnotes for The Song of Solomon, Chapter 3

- [1] 3:7 That is, the couch on which servants carry a king
- [2] 3:9 Or *sedan chair*

Footnotes for The Song of Solomon, Chapter 4

- [3] 4:4 The meaning of the Hebrew word is uncertain
- [4] 4:8 Or *Look*

Footnotes for The Song of Solomon, Chapter 5

- [1] 5:12 The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain
- [2] 5:14 The meaning of the Hebrew word is uncertain
- [3] 5:14 Hebrew *lapis lazuli*
- [4] 5:16 Hebrew *palate*

Footnotes for The Song of Solomon, Chapter 6

- [5] 6:2 Or *to pasture his flock* ; also verse 3
- [1] 6:12 Or *chariots of Ammi-Nadib*
- [2] 6:13 Ch 7:1 in Hebrew
- [3] 6:13 Or *dance of Mahanaim*

Footnotes for The Song of Solomon, Chapter 7

- [4] 7:6 Or *among delights*
- [5] 7:9 Hebrew *palate*
- [1] 7:9 Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate ; Hebrew *causing the lips of sleepers to speak*
- [2] 7:11 Or *among the henna plants*

Footnotes for The Song of Solomon, Chapter 8

- [3] 8:6 Or *ardor*
- [4] 8:6 Hebrew *as Sheol*
- [5] 8:7 Or *it*
- [1] 8:10 Or *brings out*

Study Notes

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 1:1 *Song of Songs*. Hbr expression for the best and greatest of all. See note, Ec 1:2. *Solomon's*. Solomon was the second son of David and Bathsheba (2Sm 12:15b–25). He prefigured our Lord, who is likewise called "the Son of David" (Mt 1:1). Solomon is said to have penned 1,005 songs (1Ki 4:32), and this poem is his greatest. Songs in the ancient world were often accompanied by instrumentation, which assisted the singing or chanting of lyrics. Luth: "I place music next to theology and give it the highest praise. And we see how David and all saints put their pious thoughts into verse, rhyme, and songs, because music reigns in times of peace" (*WLS* § 3091).

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 1:1 In the Song, Solomon elevates our sensibilities to their highest level. Nothing is so worthy of praise as that which extols God's love and devotion toward His beloved, His Bride, His people. Throughout history, the songs of God's people have been of the highest caliber, inspired by the Holy Spirit Himself, with names such as the Sanctus, the Kyrie, and the Gloria in Excelsis. The highest praise is always sounding from the mouths of the baptized as well as ringing in their ears. • O Lord, continue to let the Word of Christ dwell among us as we teach and admonish one another, "singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in [our] hearts to God" (Col 3:16). Amen.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 1:2 *him*. Solomon, the husband and lover who is the subject of his bride's affections. *me*. The beloved bride of Solomon, called the Shulammite in 6:13 (see note). *kisses of his mouth!* More than friendly affection; the intimate kiss of married lovers. *your love is better than wine*. Luth: "[Wine] makes the heart glad (Ps. 104:15). Wine is thus metaphorically used for all the world's delights and gratifications" (AE 15:197).

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 1:3 *anointing oils*. Used at ordination of priests, inauguration of kings, and appointment of prophets to consecrate and endow with the gifts and Spirit required for a particular calling (cf 1Sm 16:13; Is 61:1). Fragrant oils were also applied at festive occasions such as wedding feasts or in preparation for burial (Mk 14:3–9). *your name is oil poured out*. To hear his name was soothing.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 1:4 *The king*. Solomon. See pp 1065–66. *chambers*. Bedroom, bridal chamber. Plural is unusual, but may imply a large, palatial dwelling with many rooms. *Others*. This heading was inserted by the ESV editors throughout the Song to denote passages from a choir, most likely the daughters of Jerusalem. *you*. The king, but ultimately the Lord Himself. Luth: "[Solomon's] words *in You* are emphatic. It is as if he were saying: 'Outside Your solace and aid one experiences nothing but toils' " (AE 15:199).

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 1:5 *I am very dark, but lovely*. The Song returns to the period of courtship prior to the wedding, when the Shulammite confesses her lowly state. She is darkened, perhaps by exposure to the sun, indicating a life of manual labor. Though weathered by hard work, she is beautiful in the eyes of her fiancé (cf Ru 2:2–13). Cf Is 61:10; Eph 5:27; Rv 21:2. *O daughters of Jerusalem*. Implied audience of the Song. Taught by the king's bride (8:2), they stand as an image of younger women learning from older women (cf 2Tm 1:5; Ti 2:3–5). *tents of Kedar*. Perhaps wordplay, referencing the bride's dark complexion, because nomadic tents were dark in color to diminish the desert sun's glare. Kedar may refer to a nomadic tribe of the Syrian-Arabian desert, south of Jerusalem, descendants of Ishmael (cf Gn 25:13; see note, Ps 120:5). *curtains of Solomon*. The curtains in Solomon's palace or temple must have also been dark, but lovely. The bride's adornment is not merely outward, but hidden, as God's glory in the tabernacle or temple, and in God's holy people throughout history (cf 1Pt 3:1–6).

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 1:6 *Do not gaze*. Because the Shulammite is darkened by her labor in the sun, the daughters of Jerusalem look on her with contempt. Yet she is beautiful in the eyes of her bridegroom. *angry with me … keeper*. Her brothers are angry that she failed to keep the family vineyards. Instead of concerning herself with her family's well-being, she may have given all of the proceeds of her vineyard to her husband (Sg 8:11–12).

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 1:7 *you*. Solomon. *veils herself*. Context suggests a negative sense to this veiling, as though she were covering herself for mourning or even prostitution (cf Gn 38:15).

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 1:2–7 The Shulammite is of lowly birth. Her skin is weathered, and she is easily despised, but she is the love of her husband-king. The Church, too, is the beloved of our

Bridegroom, Christ Jesus. Her sins may be obvious, even to other sinners, but her Husband-King calls her holy and forgiven, beautiful and radiant in the glory of His grace. • Lord, lead us not to judge ourselves or one another by outward appearance, but to listen to Your Word, which calls us God-pleasing in Your sight, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 1:8 *follow in the tracks*. The Shulammite is gently rebuked by her husband, who suggests she should know where to find him. The tracks of his flock will guide her. *shepherds' tents*. She should care for her flock, keeping them close to the tents so the shepherds will make sure they dwell in peace and safety.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 1:9 *mare among Pharaoh's chariots*. Image of nobility. Not a stable beast, but a stately, regal creature in one of the finest armies of the ancient Near East.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 1:10 *ornaments*. Though of lowly origin, Solomon's bride is decorated in splendor for her wedding.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 1:12 *king*. The Song returns to the theme of consummated love. Solomon is on his "couch" for dining, suggesting the richness and festivity with which this regal marriage will be consummated. *nard*. See note, Jn 12:3. The Shulammite bride's anticipation of her husband is rich with sensory appeal. She is a pleasing aroma to her bridegroom.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 1:13 *sachet of myrrh*. Bride and groom were adorned with aromatics in ancient weddings.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 1:14 *henna blossoms*. Like nard and myrrh, henna blossoms were made into perfume. *Engedi*. Lit, "the spring of the goat," an oasis on the western shore of the Salt Sea, where balsam incense was produced. Seals on the pottery at Engedi suggest that the industry was owned by the royal household.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 1:16 *couch is green*. Lush, verdant, leafy. Perhaps denotes fertility or reflects the couple's union beneath the rafters of cedar and pine (1:17).

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 2:1 *rose*. Hbr likely describes a crocus-type flower (meadow saffron, narcissus, or asphodel). *Sharon*. Fertile coastal plain extending from Joppa northward to Caesarea. "Rose of Sharon" is used as an image of the Virgin Mary, who bore and gave birth to God's Son; it is also an image of the Church. The medieval hymn "Lo, How

a Rose E'er Blooming" (*LSB* 359) associates the Rose of Sharon with Christ Himself.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 2:4 *banqueting house*. Lit, "house of wine," in which are enjoyed the delicacies of raisins and apples (2:5). It is a place of feasting on rich food and aged wine (Is 25:6); a place where God's people may "taste and see that the LORD is good" (Ps 34:8). *banner*. Usually a military banner or battle standard. The Shulammite bride is escorted safely to the banquet hall under the standard of Solomon's love, even as Israel traveled beneath standards to the Promised Land (Nu 1:52; 2:2).

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 2:5 *apples*. Perhaps apricots. *sick with love*. Love-induced weakness.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 2:7 *adjure*. Legal term, putting someone under a vow or oath. *not stir up or awaken love*. God's people are to live in faith according to His love and will. We spurn that love and will when we disregard the order that pleases God. In holy matrimony, husband and wife may enjoy a God-pleasing arousal and fulfillment of love, each one pleasing the other.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 1:8–2:7 In a world of immediate gratification, it is tempting to satisfy our desires as quickly as they awaken. Such unbridled arousal of passion leads to many sorrows, complications, and sins. But God, in His passion to save us, sent forth His Son, born of a virgin, to redeem all who are under the Law's judgment and curse. In Christ, your sins have been forgiven, and now, as He told the woman caught in adultery, "Neither do I condemn you; go, and from now on sin no more" (Jn 8:11). • Father, by Your love for us in Christ Jesus, teach us that we are truly set free from condemnation and sin. Keep the banner of Your love in Christ Jesus ever between us and our enemies—sin, death, and our own flesh—who do not want us to hallow Your name or let Your kingdom come. Amen.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 2:9 *he stands behind our wall, gazing*. Return to courtship and yearning as the bridegroom comes near, but has not yet entered in to the fullness of wedded bliss—an image that develops the tension between promised love and consummation.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 2:10–11 Spring has come and the wedding is drawing near, so Solomon invites his bride to begin a new life with him. Grooms would often send a representative to negotiate with

her family (cf Gn 24), but here, Solomon himself comes to the Shulammite. *the rain is over*. The rainy season (Oct–Apr) is past, and the earth is watered and springing to life. See calendar, p 262.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 2:12 *time of singing*. Or, "time of pruning." Springtime brings with it the responsibility of pruning or cutting back branches so they will produce more fruit in the fall. It also brings singing, esp the songs of love. Either meaning is possible here. *turtledove*. Turtledoves returned to Israel in April, after the rainy season (2:11).

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 2:14 *clefts of the rock*. See "rock," p 843. God's people may be typified as doves (Mt 10:16) who take refuge in the Lord.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 2:15 *the foxes*. Real threat to vineyards by their devouring of fruit and digging. Vineyards usually had walls to keep out wild animals. Little things often eat away at and erode love in marriage. St Paul warns that even a "little leaven" can threaten "the whole lump" (1Co 5:6). Thus, Luther warns against "false brethren in the church, and also heresies" which "worm their way in" and slowly wreak havoc on God's vineyard (AE 15:221).

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 2:16 *mine, and I am his*. Husband and wife belong to each other in the bonds of God's marriage covenant, where two become one flesh (Gn 2:18–25; Mt 19:4–6). There is real reciprocity in marriage (1Co 7:3–5; Eph 5:21–23), reflecting, however imperfectly, love created by God, who makes us His own in the bond of Christ (Lv 26:12; 1Pt 2:9–10).

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 2:17 *day breathes*. Indicates either the early morning breezes stirred by the warming of the earth at the rising of the sun or the cooling breezes at dusk, when shadows lengthen and take their flight. *gazelle*. See note, 8:14.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 2:8–17 Carelessness can ruin any earthly relationship. Mutual conversation and attention to each other is essential. How much more is required in that mysterious and wonderful union between Christ and His Church! Our Lord wants to hear our confession and our prayers, and even more so, He wants to give us His consolation and forgiveness. • Lord, speak tenderly to us, and let us hear. Pour out Your love within Your Word and Sacraments, and teach us to live by all You give us. Amen.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 3:1 *On my bed by night I sought him*. The Song cycles back to the time of courtship, when the Shulammite searches for her bridegroom, longing for their wedding and its consummation. The Church father Bede compared the searching of the Shulammite with Mary Magdalene coming to the tomb while it was still dark, searching for the Christ (Jn 20:1, 11–18). *whom my soul loves*. Expression of deep communion.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 3:2 *squares*. Broad city plazas used for gatherings. Various gates of Jerusalem had adjacent plazas or squares.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 3:3–4 No reason is given for Solomon's wandering at night.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 3:3 *watchmen*. City guards who patrol at night. See note, Is 21:6–12.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 3:4 *mother's house*. Mothers of both the Shulammite and Solomon play a supportive role in their marriage (cf 3:6–11; 8:1–2, 5). *chamber*. The Shulammite brings Solomon to the bedchamber of her mother, as she would later arouse Solomon beneath the apple tree where his mother conceived and gave birth to him (8:5).

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 3:5 See note, 2:7.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 3:1–5 The Shulammite earnestly sought her bridegroom. What occupies our dreams and aspirations, our hopes and desires? The Lord commends to us the excellent and praiseworthy. His Word sets our hearts upon our Savior. • Lord, teach us a proper and timely desire for all good, earthly gifts. Above all, teach us to find our joy in You, who sought us when we sought You not. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 3:6–11 Loose description of the marriage rite. Groom and friends would travel to the bride's home, where she was veiled and adorned with jewelry. The groom and a singing and dancing crowd would escort her to his home. When she entered his home, they were married. (Cf Ps 45:13–15; Is 49:18; 61:10; Jer 2:32; 7:34; Ezk 16:12–13.)

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 3:6 *wilderness*. Desert between the land of Israel and Egypt. The wedding procession of Solomon and the Shulammite is here described in terms reminiscent of Israel, as God's bride, coming up out of her wilderness wandering and entering the Promised

Land. *myrrh and frankincense*. Perfumes worn by and associated with the Shulammite (cf 4:6, 14; 5:5), but also associated with both Solomon and Christ (1:13; 5:13; Mt 2:11). Luth: "Myrrh is a symbol of the Word, but frankincense is a symbol of prayer" (AE 15:231). *fragrant powders*. Spice finely ground into a powder, associated with international trade, indicating the richness that adorns this wedding procession.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 3:7 *litter*. Bier or portable couch, carried by porters. *mighty men*. Bodyguards.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 3:8 *terror by night*. Most likely thieves.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 3:9 *carriage*. Hbr word occurs only here; probably a chair, litter, or palanquin.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 3:10 *inlaid with love*. Solomon's carriage is described in terms reminiscent of the tabernacle, temple, and palace.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 3:11 *Zion*. See p 844. *mother crowned him*. This wedding is described as a coronation, inaugurating the king's reign in a new way as he consummates his union with his bride. Cf Eph 5:21–33; Rv 19:7–9.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 3:6–11 Like Solomon, our Lord spares no expense preparing for the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom. In fact, with something more precious than gold and silver, with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death, He has readied the feast! • Lord God, our heavenly Bridegroom, we seek Your face and rejoice in Your presence. Sanctify us and keep us steadfast in the foretaste of the feast to come, that we may be gathered with all the faithful on that glorious day in the heavenly banquet that is yet to come. Amen.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 4:1 *doves*. Solomon describes his bride's eyes, which he sees through her wedding veil. *Gilead*. Hilly region east of Jerusalem, where Jacob made a covenant with Laban (Gn 31:44–54).

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 4:2 *washing*. Newly shorn sheep, smooth from sheering and then wet from washing, make an apt comparison to glistening wet teeth in the mouth. *bear twins*. The simile suggests that the Shulammite's teeth are well-matched and symmetrical. Cf AE 15:228–29.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 4:3 *scarlet thread*. Crimson in color and vividly eye-catching. *pomegranate*. Rich, red fruit; an apt

description of the rosy-cheeked bride.
THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 4:4 *tower of David*. Probably a tower in Jerusalem built by David to fortify his defenses. *shields*. Polished for decoration. Perhaps indicating a necklace the Shulammite wears.
THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 4:6 *day breathes*. See note, 2:17. *myrrh … frankincense*. Here may allude to the Shulammite's breasts, esp following v 5.
THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 4:8 *Lebanon*. Mountainous region to the north known for its cedars and junipers, which Solomon imported for building the temple and his palace. The Shulammite's family home may have been in Shunem, near Lebanon, but still in Israel. Solomon may have escorted his bride to the lofty ranges of Lebanon to show her his kingdom. *Amana*. In the Anti-Lebanon range, north of Israel. *Senir and Hermon*. Possible synonyms for Mount Hermon, the tallest peak in the Anti-Lebanon mountain range. See color map 2. *dens of lions … mountains of leopards*. In the company of her bridegroom, the Shulammite will be safe, even amidst such wild creatures as lions and leopards, which may also refer to the people of that region; Solomon calls his bride out of association with them (cf Rv 18:4).
THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 4:9 *sister*. Implies the intimacy of the bride and her husband, as though they were of one blood and one flesh (Gn 2:24; Eph 5:31).
THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 4:11 *lips drip nectar, my bride; honey and milk are under your tongue*. May refer to the sweetness of the Shulammite's breath, her speech, or to the pleasure derived from her kiss.
THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 4:12 *garden locked … a spring locked, a fountain sealed*. Vivid description of her premarital virginity and chastity. Luther says this description is indicative of the Church's being sealed and set apart from all others by God's gifts of "Word, Baptism, and the Sacrament of the Altar" (AE 15:234).
THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 4:13–15 Thorough list of Near Eastern spices, demonstrating the Shulammite's lavish virtues.
THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 4:13 *shoots*. Expansion of the metaphor of the Shulammite bride as a garden. Similarly, Scripture often describes God's people as a vineyard (Mt 20:1–16; Jn 15:5). *henna with nard*. See notes, 1:12, 14.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 4:14 *calamus*. The spice reed, an aromatic plant. *cinnamon*. Included with calamus and myrrh in the ingredients for anointing oil and used for consecrating the tabernacle (Ex 30:23). *frankincense*. Specified for use in the tabernacle (Ex 30:34–38), grain offerings (Lv 2:1–2, 15–16), and the bread of the Presence (Lv 24:7). *aloes*. Associated with a description of the King's robes in Ps 45:8.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 4:15 *living water*. Flowing, not stagnant.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 4:1–16a Like Solomon calling the Shulammite, our Lord calls us to come out of our worldliness and to reside in communion with Him. He calls us holy, beautiful, stainless, pure. He calls us forgiven in His Gospel. • Lord, teach us how much You love us, how beautiful we are in Your eyes, how washed, how clean, how holy and pure. Amen.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 5:1 *my sister, my bride*. See note, 4:9. *drunk with love!* Chorus describes passion as a kind of intoxication. See note, v 8.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON **4:16b–5:1** We indulge heartily in the things of this world. How much greater to partake of the things of God! • Lord, teach us to enjoy the good of this life, but to consume with zeal Your Word, reading, marking, learning, and inwardly digesting the revelation of Your great love for us in Jesus. May our breath become fragrant with the message of Your salvation as we speak to others. Amen.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 5:2–3 The Shulammite has been asleep in bed when Solomon comes knocking. Unprepared, she is unwilling to respond.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 5:4 *latch*. Solomon eagerly desires to be with his bride. This overture of the bridegroom reaching to open the door stirs the Shulammite's heart. The door would have had a fist-sized keyhole through which one would reach with a key that matched a set of pins, which held the bolt in place.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 5:5 *myrrh … liquid myrrh*. Oil of myrrh, dripping from her hand onto the door handle. This experience (vv 2–6) may be a half-waking dream (cf v 6). *the bolt*. The Shulammite reaches to open the same door that Solomon had set his hand to earlier.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 5:7 *watchmen*. See note, 3:3. *beat … bruised … took*. Watchmen's treatment of the Shulammite is in stark contrast to their behavior during her previous search in 3:1–5. We are not explicitly told why.
THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 5:8 *sick with love*. Despite suffering, she remains ever focused on the one her heart desires. There is no curing her sickness except to have the one she seeks. See note, 2:5.
THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 5:9 *adjure us*. See note, 2:7. *us*. Daughters of Jerusalem.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 5:2–9 Life is often confusing. When our Lord comes to us, we may be slow to hear and to believe. We may look for Him and not find Him where or as we want. In such times of confusion, call on the Lord in prayer and seek Him in His Word. He promises to hear and to comfort you. • O Lord, we need You. Do not forsake us, for if we are left to ourselves, we will surely perish. Amen.
THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 5:10–16 More intimate portrait of Solomon than provided elsewhere in the Song.
THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 5:10 *ruddy*. Red, full of life and vigor. Solomon's father, David, is described as ruddy in 1Sm 16:12.
THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 5:12 *beside streams of water, bathed in milk*. His eyes are clear, reflective, bathed in the abundance of God's favor.
THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 5:13 *liquid myrrh*. See note, v 5.
THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 5:15 *alabaster columns*. White, strong, sturdy, like the magnificent pillars of a king's palace (cf Est 1:6). *Lebanon*. See note, 4:8.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 5:10–6:1 Pray for your spouse (even if you have not yet met your spouse). If you are or were married, consider celebrating God's gift of a spouse by describing your spouse's best qualities. Whether you are married or single, rejoice in the love of Your Lord. • O Lord, You speak well of us in Jesus! Teach us to speak well of all whom You have covered in His righteousness, especially those nearest to us. Help husbands and wives to love and honor each other, and as Christians, help us to speak well of our Bridegroom, Jesus, so that all the world would want to seek Him. Amen.
THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 6:2 *beds of spices*. Terraces on which spices were grown. The Shulammite reflects on the absence of her

beloved, who is called away by other duties.
THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 6:4 *Tirzah*. Following Jeroboam's apostasy (c 922 BC), the capital city of northern Israel for over 100 years. See map, p 558.
THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 6:5 *Gilead*. See note, 4:1.
THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 6:6 *teeth*. See note, 4:2.
THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 6:7 *cheeks … pomegranate*. See note, 4:3.
THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 6:8 *sixty queens … virgins without number*. The Shulammite is a queen among queens, receiving the loftiest position among Solomon's many wives. The number 60 here indicates an earlier period in his reign; he eventually had 700 wives and 300 concubines (1Ki 11:3). See pp 54–55. The virgins are likely among those who admired Solomon (1:3), but are not yet married to him.
THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 6:9 *only one of her mother*. The Shulammite had brothers (1:6), but she may have been the only daughter. However, as Solomon considers her his "only one" among 60 queens, 80 concubines, and countless virgins, "the only one of her mother" may indicate a favored position among these other women. (Medieval interpreters used allegory to make this one of the chief proof texts for the unity of the Church.) *queens and concubines*. See note, v 8. Solomon's self-indulgence led to idolatry and casts a shadow over his serving as a type of Christ.
THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 6:11 *I went down*. Solomon made many royal gardens (Ec 2:5), and the Shulammite visits one of them.
THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 6:12 The Shulammite's desire has led her to a garden, seeking her beloved. Suddenly, she finds herself among the chariots and entourage of her kingly husband, beckoning her to return with him (v 13).
THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 6:13 *Shulammite*. See pp 1065–66. First place the text calls the bride "the Shulammite." She may be Abishag the Shunammite, the beautiful woman chosen to care for David in his old age (1Ki 1:1–4, 15; 2:17, 21–22). Or it may also be a feminine noun formed from the name Solomon, indicating their relation as husband and wife.
THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 7:2 *mixed wine*. Wine to which was added powdered spice (and perhaps pomegranate juice), thus

enhancing its flavor.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 7:4 *Heshbon*. Located c 30 mi E of Jerusalem and 21 mi E of Jericho. *Bath-rabbim*. Perhaps the name of a gate in Heshbon, or a place to which one could travel after going through the gate. *Lebanon*. See note, 4:8. *Damascus*. Ancient Aramaean city, east of Mount Hermon and far from Jerusalem. See color map 2.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 7:5 *Carmel*. Mountain ridge south of Haifa, along Israel's coast, lower than the peaks of Lebanon. *purple*. This color, associated with royalty, was produced along the coast of Israel. The Shulammite's hair, while not actually purple, evokes the image of royal allure.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 7:9 *your mouth like the best wine*. See note, 5:1.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 6:2–7:10 Out of all the queens, concubines, and virgins that Solomon had available to him, the Shulammite was his "only one." But later, Solomon turned his heart away from her and from the Lord toward other interests (1Ki 11:3–4). In marriage vows, we promise to forsake all others. Thanks be to God that He does not forsake us when our hearts or thoughts stray. • Heavenly Father, You devoted Yourself to us in sending Your Son, who spared no expense for our salvation. Deliver us from all false and divided affections, that we may live for You only, in true faith and in fervent love toward those around us. Amen.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 7:11 *fields … villages*. See ESV note; cf vv 12–13. The Shulammite envisions the exchange of marital intimacy among the flora of the field (v 12). This imagery is like the bliss encountered earlier in the Song (1:16; 2:8–13).

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 7:12 *budded*. As spring approaches, plants begin to blossom. See note, 2:10–11.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 7:13 *mandrakes*. Believed to be an aphrodisiac or aid to conception (Gn 30:14–16). *new as well as old*. Fresh as well as dried or preserved fruit. Sign of abundance, as the previous year's harvest has not run out.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 7:11–13 Within the blessing of holy wedlock, the intimacy of husband and wife is to be cherished and not neglected (1Co 7:3–5). The Lord calls husband and wife to give each other their love and bear its fruit (Gn 1:28; Ps 127:3–5; cf Sg 7:12). • Dear

Lord, You desire to keep us close to You, tenderly caring for us with Your love in Word and Sacrament. Grant us fruitful marriages that do not neglect the physical aspects of our nature. Grant husband and wife time alone together to renew the bonds of holy, conjugal love. Amen.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 8:1 *like a brother*. The Shulammite desires unbridled public freedom to openly express her love for Solomon, as she would publicly express love for a brother. *outside, I would kiss you*. In ancient Israel, it was not customary to express marital intimacy publicly.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 8:2 *teach me*. The Shulammite's mother doubtlessly trained her from youth in the way she should live (Pr 22:6). Mature women are to continue to instruct and set examples for younger women (Ti 2:3–4). *spiced wine*. See note, 7:2.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 8:4 *adjure*. See note, 2:7.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 8:5 *wilderness*. See note, 3:6. *labor with you; there she who bore you*. Consummation of their marital love occurs at the place where the bridegroom was conceived, namely, beneath the apple tree.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 8:6 *seal*. Cylindrical seal or signet ring, often marked with one's name or monogram, was pressed into wax or clay as a legal mark of authentication. May have been an amulet, dangling above the heart. If the Shulammite were Solomon's "seal," then she bore his name. *love*. Hbr *'ahabah*. The love that is personified in the Song makes one think of God's love. *death*. Hbr *maweth* was also personified at this time by pagan deities such as the Ugaritic god Mot (see note, Jb 18:13). It may also refer to the place of the dead, Sheol (see p 792). In strength, love matches death. *flame of the* LORD. This likely refers to the Lord's Passion (cf Heb 12:29). The fire of the Lord involves judgment, but also the purifying and cleansing work that Christ performs in His ministry (Mt 3:10–17; Lk 3:16–22), even through trials (1Pt 1:6–7).

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 8:7 *waters cannot quench love*. Ultimately, it is God's love that withstands the onslaught of life's raging floods. God rescued Israel on the shores of the Red Sea, when He used water to crush the army of Egypt.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 8:1–7 Are we lukewarm when it comes to God's desire to save us? God loves us with a passion (Ex 20:5–6). • O Lord, You are a consuming fire. Seal us in the promise of Your

Gospel, which You poured out on us generously in Christ Jesus through Holy Baptism, so that the perils of this life, the threats of the Law, the trials and tribulations that You send us for the testing of our faith might not destroy us, but always draw us near to You. Amen.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 8:8 *has no breasts*. Still very young, before breasts had formed. *What shall we do … spoken for?* Question is directed to her elder brothers, who have a responsibility to safeguard the chastity of their little sister. *the day … spoken for*. When she is betrothed to another.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 8:9 Families ought to curb their children's rebellion and commend them in godly living. We are to consider ourselves the keeper of our sister or brother in the faith, that the coming day of Christ's return may be a day of gladness for His people. *a wall*. Figurative for virginity. The girl's brothers are to continue to protect, extol, and even adorn her with all that her virtue deserves. *a door*. Figurative for promiscuity. A promiscuous girl's brothers are to do what they can to rescue her, calling her to repentance and putting a stop to her wicked ways.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 8:10 *as one who finds peace*. The temporal, marital peace the Shulammite finds may derive from her virtuous living.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 8:11–12 What Solomon has belongs to his bride; what the Shulammite has is freely given her husband (see note, 1:6). They are one flesh in marriage, sharing all things, even wealth, in common. *Baal-hamon*. Place-name of uncertain location. May mean "possessor of abundance" and was intended to reinforce the description of the vineyard. *a thousand pieces of silver*. Caretakers would bring in money from selling the vineyard's produce, and a portion of that was returned to the owner (Mt 21:33–34).

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 8:13 *you … companions*. The Shulammite and Solomon, perhaps years after their wedding day, have an abundance of gardens wherein the Shulammite and her companions gather.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 8:14 *like a gazelle*. Swift and strong.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON—NOTE ON 8:8–14 We are not to conform ourselves to the pattern of this world, but remain holy, set apart as a wall (v 10). The Lord wants to preserve His dear ones till the end. • Come, Jesus, fill the hearts of Your faithful, and kindle in them the fire of Your love. Stir

up our hearts that at Your second coming we may worship You in purity and in truth. Amen.

ISAIAH THROUGH MALACHI

The Books of the Prophets

THE 17 BOOKS OF THE MAJOR AND MINOR Prophets form an important division of the Old Testament, as confirmed by early Jewish literature (Ecclus 49:10; 2Macc 15:9; 4 Maccabees 18:10) and the New Testament (cf Mt 5:17; 7:12; Lk 16:29; 24:27, 44; Ac 13:15; 24:14; 28:23). The ministry of these "Latter Prophets," as they came to be known among the Jews, spanned from the eighth century BC to the fifth century BC, after which the prophets ceased to speak (see pp 1553–58, 1081–83).

Whereas the Former Prophets wrote historically and chronologically (see "Books of History," pp 335–37), the Latter Prophets wrote what feel to us like sermons. However, even though the Latter Prophets wrote portions of their books in prose, they frequently gave their messages in poetry (see p 775–78).

At the time of the New Testament, the Sadducees held the Books of Moses as authoritative Scripture in distinction from other writings or traditions (Jos, *Ant* 13:297; 18:16). The Samaritans likewise had their edition of the Books of Moses but did not accept other Old Testament books. The Egyptian Jewish scholar Philo (c 20 BC–c AD 50) referred to the Psalms and the Prophets as sacred and inspired (*De ebrietate* 143; *On the Cherubim* 49). But he almost never cited them, focusing constantly on the Books of Moses. Later rabbinic Judaism regarded the Psalms and Prophets as authoritative. Yet they distinguished the Books of Moses as most important.[1] But this is not how the early Christians received the Prophets. Christians received the prophetic writings as God's very Word, of equal authority to any other part of Holy Scripture, a matter that the prophets themselves greatly emphasized (see "Thus says the LORD," p 1080).

Luther described two great contributions of the Prophetic Books: (1) their prophecies of salvation in Christ and (2) their preaching of the Commandments. He wrote:

> We Christians ought not to be such shameful, satiated, ungrateful know-it-alls, but rather read and use the prophets with earnestness and

profit. For, in the first place, the prophets proclaim and bear witness to the kingdom of Christ in which we now live, and in which all believers in Christ have heretofore lived, and will live until the end of the world. For us there is strong comfort and comforting strength in having for our Christian life such mighty and ancient witnesses. By them our Christian faith is greatly comforted in the confidence that before God it is the right station or stance [*stand*], over against all other wrong, false, human holiness and sects. For these all are a source of great offense and affliction [*anfechten*] to a weak heart, because they make such a good appearance and have such a multitude of adherents, and also because of the cross and of the small number of those who hold to Christian faith….

For this, then, the prophets are useful to us, as St. Peter boasts in I Peter 1[:11–12] that the prophets were not serving themselves in the things which were revealed to them, but us. It was us, he says, that they were serving. For they have served us thus with their

prophesying, in order that he who would be in Christ's kingdom might know that he himself must first suffer many things before he comes to glory, and govern himself accordingly. By this we become sure of two things: first, that the great glory of Christ's kingdom is surely ours, and will come hereafter; and, second, that it is nevertheless preceded by crosses, shame, misery, contempt, and all kinds of suffering for the sake of Christ. The purpose is that we shall not grow discouraged through impatience or unbelief, or despair of that future glory, which is to be so great that even the angels desire to see it [I Pet. 1:12].

In the second place the prophets show us many great examples and experiences which illustrate the first commandment. They explicate it in masterly fashion, in both words and examples, so as to drive us powerfully to the fear of God and to faith, and to keep us in them. For after they have prophesied of Christ's kingdom, all the rest is nothing but examples of how God has so strictly and severely confirmed his first commandment. So to read or hear the prophets is surely nothing else than to read and hear how God threatens and comforts. God threatens the godless, who feel proud and secure. And if threatening does not help, he backs it up with penalties, pestilence, famine, war, until they are destroyed. Thus does God make good his threat in the first commandment [Exod. 20:5]. But he comforts those who fear him, who are in all kinds of need, and backs it up also with aid and counsel, by means of all kinds of wonders and signs, against all the might of the devil and the world. Thus does God make good also his comfort in the first commandment [Exod. 20:6].

With sermons and examples like these the prophets repeatedly serve us more than abundantly, in order that we should not be offended when we see with what pride and assurance the godless despise God's word and pay no attention to his threatenings, as though God were an utter nonentity. For in the prophets we see that things have never turned out well for any man who has despised God's threatening, even though they were the mightiest emperors and kings or the holiest and most learned people on whom the sun ever shone. On the other hand we see that no one has ever been deserted who has dared to rely upon God's comforts and promises, even though they were the most miserable and the poorest sinners and beggars that were ever on the earth, indeed, even though it were a slain Abel and a swallowed Jonah. By this the

prophets prove to us that God holds fast to his first commandment and wills to be a gracious Father to the poor and believing, and that for him no one is too small or too despised. He wills, however, to be an angry Judge to the godless and the proud; and for him no one is too great, too mighty, too wise, too holy….

To be sure, there is in the prophets more of threatening and rebuke than of comfort and promise. And it is good to observe the reason for this. The godless always outnumber the righteous. Therefore one must always inculcate the law much more than the promises. Even without the promises, the godless feel secure; they are most agile in applying the divine comforts and promises to themselves, and the threats and rebukes to others. Nor do they let themselves be turned away, by any means, from this perverted notion and false hope. For their motto is "Peace and security; all is well." They stick to that, and by it go merrily to destruction, as St. Paul says, "Destruction comes upon them suddenly [I Thess. 5:3]." (AE 35:265–68)

The Work of a Prophet

The Books of the Prophets and other portions of the Old Testament show that a prophet was not simply a preacher who explained and applied an existing text of the Bible. God delivered messages directly to the prophets.

The background of the most common Hebrew term for "prophet" (*nabi'*) is disputed. Some believe the root word means "to pour forth," as though speaking in an ecstatic trance. These interpreters point to passages such as 1Sm 10:9–13; 1Ki 22:8; and Jer 29:26 as examples of this idea (they also point to examples of ecstatic behavior from other ancient religions). Notably, when the Hebrew verb "prophesy" is used of false prophets, it occurs in a special form and may be translated "rave" (1Sm 18:10; 1Ki 18:29). This shows that the Israelites may have distinguished the extreme behaviors of false prophets. Most commonly, "prophet" describes a spokesman for God and does not assume an ecstatic experience (see "Thus says the LORD," "declares the LORD," and "word of the LORD [that] came," pp 1079–80).

Another important term is "seer" (Hebrew *chozeh*, from a verb for "seeing" or "perceiving"; 1Sm 9:9). The Lord often showed or revealed things to the prophets in a dream or dreamlike state (see p 74).

Ultimately, the prophets were men sent to speak the Lord's Word. Their chief task was to confront the people's sin, to bring them to repentance, and so restore them to a right relationship with God (cf 2Ki 17:13, 23; 21:10–12).

On the service of prophetesses, see p 389.

Key Terms and Phrases in the Books of the Prophets

Though the prophets clearly build upon earlier writers such as Moses, their writings include many unique expressions. For more about the word lists in *TLSB*, see the introductory comments, p 5.

ah. See *woe*.

backsliding. From Hbr *shub* (see *turn*). Describes a person turning away from the Lord to follow his own way. ESV also translates with Eng "apostasy."

burden. Hbr *massa'* (cf Zec 9:1; 12:1). Also translated "oracle" (Is 13:1; Mal 1:1), emphasizing that what the prophets spoke were words of the Lord and not their own words. The translation "burden" emphasizes that the prophet must deliver a word of judgment on the Lord's enemies (Jer 23:33).

captivity. Hbr *galuth*. Singular noun that may describe a group of people taken into exile. Through Moses (Dt 28:41), the Lord warned that Israel would be taken from the Promised Land if they disobeyed the covenant (see "portion," p 7). The prophets later announced the captivity, and Jeremiah gave it special emphasis. The term was used almost exclusively for the Judean exiles who suffered the Babylonian captivity.

comfort. Hbr *nacham*, "to be sorry," "to regret," or "to pity," leading to acts of care for those who were hurt. Isaiah esp emphasizes that the Lord comforts His people (cf Is 40:1; 49:13; 51:3, 12, 19). See *relent*.

daughter(s) of Jerusalem/Judah/Zion. First appears chronologically in a psalm of David (Ps 9:14). Plural "daughters" occurs in Sg. Otherwise, these expressions are associated with the prophets and are very common in Lam. They may refer to the cities or towns surrounding Jerusalem (see note, Ps 97:8) but often refer to the young women in and around Jerusalem who celebrated the victories of the city or mourned its siege and destruction. The important role of women as singers may stand behind these expressions (cf Ex 15:20–21; Jgs 11:34; 1Sm 18:6; Ps 68:25; Jer 31:4; Zep 3:14; Zec 2:10; 9:9). See p 389.

day of the Lord. Refers to a time (not strictly 24 hours) in which God dramatically reveals and/or executes His judgment by condemning the

wicked and delivering the righteous. The prophets often use this phrase with reference to the end of history (cf 2Pt 3:10), yet it does not always have this ultimate sense. See notes, Jl 1:15; Am 5:18–20.

declares the LORD. The second most common indicator of a prophetic statement, occurring over 340 times. See *Thus says the* LORD.

Ephraim. The dominant and centrally located tribe in northern Israel; it became synonymous with the 10 tribes of the Northern Kingdom of Israel after they divided from the Southern Kingdom of Judah. See map, p 558. See also *Israel* and *Judah*. Cf Gn 48:20; Dt 33:17; 2Sm 2:8–9; 1Ki 12.

exiles. See *captivity*.

idols. Hbr *gilulim*, "dung pellets" (always plural; related terms used in Jb 20:7; 1Ki 14:10; Ezk 4:12, 15; Zep 1:17). Expresses the utter derision the prophets felt toward pagan idols. One of 10 OT terms for idols; Ezk uses it repeatedly (38 of 47 appearances in the OT).

in that day. See *on that day*.

Israel. The name God gave to the patriarch Jacob (Gn 32:28); it became (1) the name for the 12 tribes of the nation that descended from Jacob and (2) the name of the Northern Kingdom of Israel (see *Ephraim*). In the NT, Israel becomes a name for the Church, which constitutes believers from all nations (Rm 9:6; Gal 6:16). God had chosen ancient Israel for His special purposes (cf Dt 7) and gave them covenant promises. The same promises do not apply to the modern political state of Israel.

Jacob. See *Israel*.

Judah. The royal tribe of ancient Israel (prophesied in Gn 49:8–12) that supported David in strengthening and extending the kingdom of Israel (2Sm 2–5). When Israel split under Rehoboam (1Ki 12), descendants of David continued to rule the southern tribes as the separate "kingdom of Judah." See map, p 558. After exile in Babylon, people of Judah resettled their former territory and rebuilt the temple. See note, Ezr 4:12. See also *Ephraim* and *Israel*.

know that I am the LORD. Phrase first spoken to Moses to describe a result of the exodus (Ex 6:7). However, over 80 percent of its uses are as a "recognition formula" in Ezk. When used in pronouncing judgment, it

describes how the people must learn the truth through punishment (e.g., Eng expression "learn the hard way"). However, this phrase often follows announcements of God's mercy, affirming the sincerity of believers' repentance and faith.

latter days. See *on that day.*

on that day. Can simply mean "then," but appears often in the Prophets with reference to the "day of the LORD" (see above). Cf Is 24:18–20; 29:5–8; 66:15; Hos 3:5; Jl 2:30–3:16; Am 5:18–20; Zep 1:14–18; Zec 14:1–5.

oracle. See *burden*.

prophet. See pp 1077–78, 1080–83.

relent. Hbr *nacham.* See *comfort*, which translates the same term. "The LORD relented/repented" is a metaphor of the Lord changing a previous pronouncement of judgment. The metaphor appears at some key junctures in Scripture: the flood (Gn 6:6), the Sinai revelation (Ex 32:12–14), and the institution of the monarchy (1Sm 15:11, 35). It also appears in psalmody and creedal statements (cf Ps 106:45; Jer 18:7–10; Jl 2:13; Jnh 4:2). In 35 examples, the Lord is the subject of this verb. At first, these passages may appear to contradict other statements that He does not change previous decisions (Nu 23:19; 1Sm 15:29; Ps 110:4; Jer 4:28; 20:16; Ezk 24:14; Hos 13:14; Zec 8:14). However, the passages listed here divide into two types: (1) There are certain promises the Lord has made that He will never change. Five describe the Lord's refusal to change His decision concerning the judgment of 587 BC, and one (Ps 110:4) speaks of His unwillingness to change the eternal priesthood and order of Melchizedek. (2) Two passages speak of His refusal to change His will (Nu 23:19; 1Sm 15:29). These are statements of principle (i.e., God is not a man that He should go against a prior decision). He is constant with respect to His Gospel promises made to Abraham and David (cf Ezk 18:23, 32). He is unchangeable in His nature (Ps 102:27; Mal 3:6; Jas 1:17).

remnant. Hbr *she'ar*, "rest, remainder." A common term that gains special use in the Prophetic Books. The term may express God's condemnation (Is 10:22) or His mercy (Is 37:31). Though destruction would come upon God's chosen people, He would not annihilate them. God would keep His

promises and preserve a remnant of people who would reconstitute the holy people, which becomes the Church in the NT.

repent. See *turn*.

restore the fortunes. Yet another use of Hbr *shub.* Lit, "return the things turned over [to someone]." So, this is not a request for mere luck. The idea is closely related to the blessings of the new creation depicted as the new land of Israel (Ezk 47:3–12). In the NT, restoration describes what God effects through the coming of the messianic kingdom (cf Mt 17:11; Ac 1:6; 15:16; 1Pt 5:10).

return. See *turn*.

shepherd. Common title for Israel's leaders (cf Jer 23; 25; Ezk 34; Mi 5; Zec 11). This title provides the NT basis for the office of pastor (cf Jn 21:15–17; 1Pt 2:25; 5:2–4). On leadership in Israel, see p 228.

son of man. Appears early in statements of non-Israelites (cf Nu 23:19; Jb 16:21; 25:6; 35:8), which may characterize their non-Hebrew language(s). However, c 85 percent of OT examples appear later in Ezk, who was exiled among Aram speakers in Babylon (cf Dn 7:13; 8:17). The expression is likely borrowed from Aram, where it simply means a human being, a person. For its transformation in the NT, see note, Dn 7:13; see also p 2098.

Thus says the LORD. The most common indicator of a prophetic statement, used over 400 times in the OT, mostly in the Books of the Prophets. Indicates a personal, supernatural communication from God to the prophet (see note, Zec 4:9). The prophets typically do not identify their statements as their own messages, nor as something resulting from a collaborative effort with the Lord. Such expressions affirm that the prophets truly spoke the Word of God, which must be fulfilled (see notes, Dt 18:15–22). See *declares the* LORD and *word of the* LORD *(that) came*.

turn. Hbr *shub*, "to turn, turn around." A very common verb, used over 1,000 times in the OT. Appropriately translated "repent" in more than 100 cases, most often in Jer (Is rarely uses the term this way). Repentance is God's work (see note, Jer 31:18) that leads a person to renounce sin—requesting God's mercy and returning to His way (see "way," p 842). For a classic OT example, see David's confession and prayer in Ps 51.

woe. Hbr *'oy* and *hoy*, also translated "oh!" or "alas." Interjection expressing sadness or warning. The prophets frequently begin pronouncements of judgment with this term, which may introduce a series of condemnations.

woman in labor. Common metaphor in the Prophetic Books; describes the greatest distress a person can experience.

word of the Lord (that) came. Used over 100 times in the OT, mostly in the Books of the Prophets. Prophetic revelations are described as a "word" that God delivered to the prophets and through them. (Cf Jer 1:1–2; Ezk 1:3; Jl 1:1; Jnh 1:1; Mi 1:1; Zep 1:1; Hg 1:1; Zec 1:1; Mal 1:1). Sometimes the "word" is accompanied by a vision (Is 1:1; Ezk 1:1) or is somehow "seen" (Am 1:1; Mi 1:1; Hab 1:1). See *Thus says the Lord* and *declares the Lord*.

word that came ... from the Lord. Introductory statement used by Jeremiah. See *word of the Lord (that) came*.

Observations about Israelite Literature

Some nineteenth-century critical scholars insisted that most Israelite literature developed later than the Bible describes, or, most radically, that all the Old Testament Scriptures were written after the Babylonian exile (587 BC). However, a careful assessment of the prophets' writings shows important contradictions to such theories.

The prophets often use expressions that well fit the kingdom period of Israel's history (1048 BC–587 BC), during which the prophets were most active. These same expressions rarely or never occur in earlier Israelite literature (the Books of Moses, Jsh, Jgs, and Jb). Here are some examples:

Phrases. The prophets use "declares the Lord" more than 300 times, an expression that almost never appears in writings before the kingdom period (exceptions being Gn 22:16; Nu 14:28). "Day of the Lord" is a distinct expression of the prophets. "Daughters of Israel" appears in some earlier texts (Dt 23:17; Jgs 11:40; 2Sm 1:24), but it is eclipsed by the prophets' frequent use of "daughter(s) of Jerusalem/Judah/Zion."

Titles. " Lord of hosts" and "Holy One of Israel" do not occur in the earlier literature but are common during the time of the prophets.

Metaphors. The idea of the Lord as King appears in a few verses of the earlier literature (Nu 23:21; Dt 33:5; Jb 18:14; two of these examples are from non-Israelites). But the idea of the Lord's kingship expands greatly during the kingdom period. The prophets even develop royal titles to

express this thought. Also, the prophets often use the metaphor of "a woman in labor" to describe the distress coming with God's judgment. This metaphor does not occur in the earlier texts.

Idols/Idolatry. Prophetic Books before the exile often rail against problems of idolatry or mention names of specific deities. The postexilic prophets (Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi) hardly mention idolatry as an issue or complain about abuse of the "high places" where pagan sacrifices often occurred (see pp 526–27). This corresponds well to what is known from archaeological remains, in which idols are frequently found prior to the exile but disappear afterward. See note, Ex 34:13.

Examples such as these show that nineteenth-century critical assumptions about the writing of the Bible did not comprehend the long history of Israelite literature or its reliability. See pp 3–7, 335–37.

Articles and Resources Related to The Books of the Prophets

- All the Prophets

All the Prophets

Breaks and intermissions punctuated the ministry of the prophets. The charts below list the names of men in the Bible called prophets, seers, and visionaries or men participating in these activities. Use these charts to get a complete picture of the ministry of the prophets. To learn more about prophetesses and their service, see p 389. (The names of writing prophets are italic. Dates are approximate.)

There is silence for about 400 years; prophets seem to come and go throughout Israel's history. During Israel's time in Egypt, no prophets are described. At times, it seems that the ministry of the prophets goes away.

There is silence for about 300 years; after the death of Moses, a virtual silence about prophets occurs in Scripture.

There is silence for about 400 years, as described by 1 Maccabees, a Jewish book written after the time of the Old Testament. See pp 1553–58.

Throughout Scripture, you can find examples of God working through His prophets. However, you will also discover significant times when God did not speak through prophets. Sometimes the silence of the prophets was a punishment from God for the people's disobedience (Am 8:11; Mi 3:4, 7). At other times, it seems that God simply chose to deliver His Word in another way, such as preaching through the elders and pastors of the New Testament.

Today, various religious leaders claim the gifts and calling of a prophet. But many of these leaders have failed to show the accuracy and faithfulness that God expects of His prophets in Scripture (cf Dt 18:15–22; see p 307). Before you put your confidence in any self-proclaimed prophet, judge his or her teachings in view of the teachings of God's prophets as recorded in the Bible. (Note how Paul applies this in 1Co 14:32–33, 37–38.) Most important, consider whether any teacher faithfully proclaims and serves the Gospel of Jesus Christ. For, as the apostle John recorded, "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy" (Rv 19:10; see p 1245).

Ultimately, true prophets proclaim Jesus Christ and the promise of salvation God offers through Him. While prophecies about the end times (and the rise and fall of nations and leaders) may attract attention, salvation through Christ is the heart of prophecy. Jesus guides the future and has

given you His written Word as a guide for your life in these changing times. In the Word of Christ, receive the peace and satisfaction that He alone can give. Praise Him for the ministry of the prophets, recorded in Scripture for your benefit.

Isaiah

Isaiah 1 | Isaiah 2 | Isaiah 3 | Isaiah 4 | Isaiah 5 | Isaiah 6 | Isaiah 7 | Isaiah 8 | Isaiah 9 | Isaiah 10 | Isaiah 11 | Isaiah 12 | Isaiah 13 | Isaiah 14 | Isaiah 15 | Isaiah 16 | Isaiah 17 | Isaiah 18 | Isaiah 19 | Isaiah 20 | Isaiah 21 | Isaiah 22 | Isaiah 23 | Isaiah 24 | Isaiah 25 | Isaiah 26 | Isaiah 27 | Isaiah 28 | Isaiah 29 | Isaiah 30 | Isaiah 31 | Isaiah 32 | Isaiah 33 | Isaiah 34 | Isaiah 35 | Isaiah 36 | Isaiah 37 | Isaiah 38 | Isaiah 39 | Isaiah 40 | Isaiah 41 | Isaiah 42 | Isaiah 43 | Isaiah 44 | Isaiah 45 | Isaiah 46 | Isaiah 47 | Isaiah 48 | Isaiah 49 | Isaiah 50 | Isaiah 51 | Isaiah 52 | Isaiah 53 | Isaiah 54 | Isaiah 55 | Isaiah 56 | Isaiah 57 | Isaiah 58 | Isaiah 59 | Isaiah 60 | Isaiah 61 | Isaiah 62 | Isaiah 63 | Isaiah 64 | Isaiah 65 | Isaiah 66

- Introduction to Isaiah
  - Overview
  - Reading Isaiah
  - Luther on Isaiah
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

1 [1] The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.

The Wickedness of Judah

2 † Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth;
for the Lord has spoken:
"Children[1] have I reared and brought up,
but they have rebelled against me.
3 † The ox knows its owner,
and the donkey its master's crib,
but Israel does not know,
my people do not understand."

4 † Ah, sinful nation,
a people laden with iniquity,
offspring of evildoers,
children who deal corruptly!
They have forsaken the Lord,
they have despised the Holy One of Israel,
they are utterly estranged.

5 † Why will you still be struck down?
Why will you continue to rebel?
The whole head is sick,
and the whole heart faint.
6 † From the sole of the foot even to the head,
there is no soundness in it,
but bruises and sores
and raw wounds;
they are not pressed out or bound up
or softened with oil.

7 † Your country lies desolate;
your cities are burned with fire;
in your very presence

foreigners devour your land;
it is desolate, as overthrown by foreigners.
8 And the daughter of Zion is left
like a booth in a vineyard,
like a lodge in a cucumber field,
like a besieged city.

9 If the Lord of hosts
had not left us a few survivors,
we should have been like Sodom,
and become like Gomorrah.

10 Hear the word of the Lord,
you rulers of Sodom!
Give ear to the teaching[2] of our God,
you people of Gomorrah!
11 "What to me is the multitude of your sacrifices?
says the Lord;
I have had enough of burnt offerings of
rams
and the fat of well-fed beasts;
I do not delight in the blood of bulls,
or of lambs, or of goats.

12 "When you come to appear before me,
who has required of you
this trampling of my courts?
13 Bring no more vain offerings;
incense is an abomination to me.
New moon and Sabbath and the calling of
convocations—
I cannot endure iniquity and solemn assembly.
14 Your new moons and your appointed feasts
my soul hates;

they have become a burden to me;
I am weary of bearing them.
15† When you spread out your hands,
I will hide my eyes from you;
even though you make many prayers,
I will not listen;
your hands are full of blood.
16†† Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean;
remove the evil of your deeds from before my eyes;
cease to do evil,
17† learn to do good;
seek justice,
correct oppression;
bring justice to the fatherless,
plead the widow's cause.

18† "Come now, let us reason[1] together, says the
LORD:
though your sins are like scarlet,
they shall be as white as snow;
though they are red like crimson,
they shall become like wool.
19 If you are willing and obedient,
you shall eat the good of the land;
20† but if you refuse and rebel,
you shall be eaten by the sword;
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

The Unfaithful City

21 How the faithful city
has become a whore,[1]
she who was full of justice!
Righteousness lodged in her,
but now murderers.
22 Your silver has become dross,
your best wine mixed with water.
23 Your princes are rebels
and companions of thieves.
Everyone loves a bribe
and runs after gifts.
They do not bring justice to the fatherless,
and the widow's cause does not come to
them.

24 Therefore the Lord declares,
the Lord of hosts,
the Mighty One of Israel:
"Ah, I will get relief from my enemies
and avenge myself on my foes.
25 I will turn my hand against you
and will smelt away your dross as with lye
and remove all your alloy.
26 And I will restore your judges as at the first,
and your counselors as at the beginning.
Afterward you shall be called the city of
righteousness,
the faithful city."

27 Zion shall be redeemed by justice,
and those in her who repent, by

righteousness.
28† But rebels and sinners shall be broken together,
and those who forsake the LORD shall be
consumed.
29† For they[2] shall be ashamed of the oaks
that you desired;
and you shall blush for the gardens
that you have chosen.
30† For you shall be like an oak
whose leaf withers,
and like a garden without water.
31† And the strong shall become tinder,
and his work a spark,
and both of them shall burn together,
with none to quench them.

The Mountain of the Lord

2 [1]†† The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and
Jerusalem.

[2]† It shall come to pass in the latter days
that the mountain of the house of the Lord
shall be established as the highest of the
mountains,
and shall be lifted up above the hills;
and all the nations shall flow to it,
[3]† and many peoples shall come, and say:
"Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord,
to the house of the God of Jacob,
that he may teach us his ways
and that we may walk in his paths."
For out of Zion shall go the law,[1]
and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.
[4]† He shall judge between the nations,
and shall decide disputes for many peoples;
and they shall beat their swords into
plowshares,
and their spears into pruning hooks;
nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
neither shall they learn war anymore.

[5]† O house of Jacob,
come, let us walk
in the light of the Lord.

The Day of the Lord

6 For you have rejected your people,
the house of Jacob,
because they are full of things from the east
and of fortune-tellers like the Philistines,
and they strike hands with the children of
foreigners.
7 Their land is filled with silver and gold,
and there is no end to their treasures;
their land is filled with horses,
and there is no end to their chariots.
8 Their land is filled with idols;
they bow down to the work of their
hands,
to what their own fingers have made.
9 So man is humbled,
and each one is brought low—
do not forgive them!
10 Enter into the rock
and hide in the dust
from before the terror of the Lord,
and from the splendor of his majesty.
11 The haughty looks of man shall be brought low,
and the lofty pride of men shall be humbled,
and the Lord alone will be exalted in that day.

12 For the Lord of hosts has a day
against all that is proud and lofty,
against all that is lifted up—and it shall be
brought low;
13 against all the cedars of Lebanon,
lofty and lifted up;
and against all the oaks of Bashan;

14 against all the lofty mountains,
and against all the uplifted hills;
15 against every high tower,
and against every fortified wall;
16† against all the ships of Tarshish,
and against all the beautiful craft.
17 And the haughtiness of man shall be humbled,
and the lofty pride of men shall be brought
low,
and the Lord alone will be exalted in that day.
18 And the idols shall utterly pass away.
19† And people shall enter the caves of the rocks
and the holes of the ground,[1]
from before the terror of the Lord,
and from the splendor of his majesty,
when he rises to terrify the earth.

20† In that day mankind will cast away
their idols of silver and their idols of gold,
which they made for themselves to worship,
to the moles and to the bats,
21† to enter the caverns of the rocks
and the clefts of the cliffs,
from before the terror of the Lord,
and from the splendor of his majesty,
when he rises to terrify the earth.
22† Stop regarding man
in whose nostrils is breath,
for of what account is he?

Judgment on Judah and Judah and Jerusalem

3 [1]†††† For behold, the Lord God of hosts
is taking away from Jerusalem and from Judah
support and supply,[2]
all support of bread,
and all support of water;

[2]† the mighty man and the soldier,
the judge and the prophet,
the diviner and the elder,
[3]† the captain of fifty
and the man of rank,
the counselor and the skillful magician
and the expert in charms.
[4]† And I will make boys their princes,
and infants[3] shall rule over them.
[5] And the people will oppress one another,
every one his fellow
and every one his neighbor;
the youth will be insolent to the elder,
and the despised to the honorable.

[6]† For a man will take hold of his brother
in the house of his father, saying:
"You have a cloak;
you shall be our leader,
and this heap of ruins
shall be under your rule";

[7]† in that day he will speak out, saying:
"I will not be a healer;[1]
in my house there is neither bread nor cloak;

you shall not make me
leader of the people.”
8† For Jerusalem has stumbled,
and Judah has fallen,
because their speech and their deeds are
against the Lord,
defying his glorious presence.[2]

9† For the look on their faces bears witness
against them;
they proclaim their sin like Sodom;
they do not hide it.
Woe to them!
For they have brought evil on themselves.
10† Tell the righteous that it shall be well with them,
for they shall eat the fruit of their deeds.
11 Woe to the wicked! It shall be ill with him,
for what his hands have dealt out shall be done to him.
12† My people—infants are their oppressors,
and women rule over them.
O my people, your guides mislead you
and they have swallowed up[3] the course of
your paths.

13† The Lord has taken his place to contend;
he stands to judge peoples.
14† The Lord will enter into judgment
with the elders and princes of his people:
“It is you who have devoured[4] the vineyard,
the spoil of the poor is in your houses.
15† What do you mean by crushing my people,
by grinding the face of the poor?”
declares the Lord God of hosts.

16 ‡† The Lord said:
Because the daughters of Zion are haughty
and walk with outstretched necks,
glancing wantonly with their eyes,
mincing along as they go,
tinkling with their feet,
17 † therefore the Lord will strike with a scab
the heads of the daughters of Zion,
and the Lord will lay bare their secret
parts.

18 ‡In that day the Lord will take away the finery of the anklets, the headbands, and the crescents; 19the pendants, the bracelets, and the scarves; 20the headdresses, the armlets, the sashes, the perfume boxes, and the amulets; 21the signet rings and nose rings; 22the festal robes, the mantles, the cloaks, and the handbags; 23the mirrors, the linen garments, the turbans, and the veils.

24 † Instead of perfume there will be rottenness;
and instead of a belt, a rope;
and instead of well-set hair, baldness;
and instead of a rich robe, a skirt of
sackcloth;
and branding instead of beauty.
25 Your men shall fall by the sword
and your mighty men in battle.
26 † And her gates shall lament and mourn;
empty, she shall sit on the ground.

4 1 †And seven women shall take hold of one man in that day, saying, “We will eat our own bread and wear our own clothes, only let us be called by your name; take away our reproach.”

The Branch of the Lord Glorified

2 ‡ †In that day the branch of the Lord shall be beautiful and glorious, and
the fruit of the land shall be the pride and honor of the survivors of Israel.
3 †And he who is left in Zion and remains in Jerusalem will be called holy,
everyone who has been recorded for life in Jerusalem, 4 † when the Lord
shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion and cleansed the
bloodstains of Jerusalem from its midst by a spirit of judgment and by a
spirit of burning.[1] 5 †Then the Lord will create over the whole site of Mount
Zion and over her assemblies a cloud by day, and smoke and the shining of
a flaming fire by night; for over all the glory there will be a canopy. 6 †There
will be a booth for shade by day from the heat, and for a refuge and a
shelter from the storm and rain.

The Vineyard of the Lord Destroyed

5 [1]†††† Let me sing for my beloved
my love song concerning his vineyard:
My beloved had a vineyard
on a very fertile hill.

[2]† He dug it and cleared it of stones,
and planted it with choice vines;
he built a watchtower in the midst of it,
and hewed out a wine vat in it;
and he looked for it to yield grapes,
but it yielded wild grapes.

[3]† And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem
and men of Judah,
judge between me and my vineyard.
[4]† What more was there to do for my vineyard,
that I have not done in it?
When I looked for it to yield grapes,
why did it yield wild grapes?

[5]† And now I will tell you
what I will do to my vineyard.
I will remove its hedge,
and it shall be devoured;[1]
I will break down its wall,
and it shall be trampled down.
[6]† I will make it a waste;
it shall not be pruned or hoed,
and briers and thorns shall grow up;
I will also command the clouds
that they rain no rain upon it.

7 † For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts
is the house of Israel,
and the men of Judah
are his pleasant planting;
and he looked for justice,
but behold, bloodshed;[2]
for righteousness,
but behold, an outcry![3]

Woe to the Wicked

8 Woe to those who join house to house,
who add field to field,
until there is no more room,
and you are made to dwell alone
in the midst of the land.
9 The Lord of hosts has sworn in my hearing:
"Surely many houses shall be desolate,
large and beautiful houses, without
inhabitant.
10 For ten acres[4] of vineyard shall yield but one
bath,
and a homer of seed shall yield but an
ephah."[5]

11 Woe to those who rise early in the morning,
that they may run after strong drink,
who tarry late into the evening
as wine inflames them!
12 They have lyre and harp,
tambourine and flute and wine at their
feasts,
but they do not regard the deeds of the Lord,
or see the work of his hands.

13 Therefore my people go into exile
for lack of knowledge;[6]
their honored men go hungry,[7]
and their multitude is parched with thirst.
14 Therefore Sheol has enlarged its appetite
and opened its mouth beyond measure,
and the nobility of Jerusalem[1] and her

multitude will go down,
her revelers and he who exults in her.
15 Man is humbled, and each one is brought
low,
and the eyes of the haughty[2] are brought low.
16† But the Lord of hosts is exalted[3] in justice,
and the Holy God shows himself holy in
righteousness.
17† Then shall the lambs graze as in their pasture,
and nomads shall eat among the ruins of
the rich.

18† Woe to those who draw iniquity with cords
of falsehood,
who draw sin as with cart ropes,
19† who say: “Let him be quick,
let him speed his work
that we may see it;
let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw
near,
and let it come, that we may know it!”
20† Woe to those who call evil good
and good evil,
who put darkness for light
and light for darkness,
who put bitter for sweet
and sweet for bitter!
21 Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes,
and shrewd in their own sight!
22† Woe to those who are heroes at drinking
wine,
and valiant men in mixing strong drink,
23† who acquit the guilty for a bribe,
and deprive the innocent of his right!

24 Therefore, as the tongue of fire devours the
stubble,
and as dry grass sinks down in the
flame,
so their root will be as rottenness,
and their blossom go up like dust;
for they have rejected the law of the Lord of
hosts,
and have despised the word of the Holy
One of Israel.
25 Therefore the anger of the Lord was kindled
against his people,
and he stretched out his hand against them
and struck them,
and the mountains quaked;
and their corpses were as refuse
in the midst of the streets.
For all this his anger has not turned away,
and his hand is stretched out still.

26 He will raise a signal for nations far away,
and whistle for them from the ends of the
earth;
and behold, quickly, speedily they come!
27 None is weary, none stumbles,
none slumbers or sleeps,
not a waistband is loose,
not a sandal strap broken;
28 their arrows are sharp,
all their bows bent,
their horses' hoofs seem like flint,
and their wheels like the whirlwind.
29 Their roaring is like a lion,
like young lions they roar;
they growl and seize their prey;
they carry it off, and none can rescue.

30 † They will growl over it on that day,
like the growling of the sea.
And if one looks to the land,
behold, darkness and distress;
and the light is darkened by its clouds.

Isaiah’s Vision of the Lord

6 [1]‡†In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a
throne, high and lifted up; and the train[1] of his robe filled the temple.
[2]†Above him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings: with two he covered
his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. [3]†And one
called to another and said:

> “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts;
> the whole earth is full of his glory!”[2]

[4]†And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him who
called, and the house was filled with smoke. [5]†And I said: “Woe is me! For
I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a
people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!”
[6]†Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a burning coal
that he had taken with tongs from the altar. [7]†And he touched my mouth and
said: “Behold, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away, and your
sin atoned for.”

Isaiah's Commission from the Lord

8 And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and
who will go for us?" Then I said, "Here am I! Send me." 9 And he said, "Go,
and say to this people:

"'Keep on hearing,[1] but do not understand;
keep on seeing,[2] but do not perceive.'

10 Make the heart of this people dull,[3]
and their ears heavy,
and blind their eyes;
lest they see with their eyes,
and hear with their ears,
and understand with their hearts,
and turn and be healed."
11 Then I said, "How long, O Lord?"
And he said:
"Until cities lie waste
without inhabitant,
and houses without people,
and the land is a desolate waste,
12 and the Lord removes people far away,
and the forsaken places are many in the
midst of the land.
13 And though a tenth remain in it,
it will be burned[4] again,
like a terebinth or an oak,
whose stump remains
when it is felled."
The holy seed[5] is its stump.

Isaiah Sent to King Ahaz

7 1 In the days of Ahaz the son of Jotham, son of Uzziah, king of
Judah, Rezin the king of Syria and Pekah the son of Remaliah the king of
Israel came up to Jerusalem to wage war against it, but could not yet mount
an attack against it. 2 When the house of David was told, "Syria is in league
with[6] Ephraim," the heart of Ahaz[7] and the heart of his people shook as
the trees of the forest shake before the wind.

3 And the Lord said to Isaiah, "Go out to meet Ahaz, you and Shear-
jashub[8] your son, at the end of the conduit of the upper pool on the
highway to the Washer's Field. 4 And say to him, 'Be careful, be quiet, do
not fear, and do not let your heart be faint because of these two smoldering
stumps of firebrands, at the fierce anger of Rezin and Syria and the son of
Remaliah. 5 Because Syria, with Ephraim and the son of Remaliah, has
devised evil against you, saying, 6 "Let us go up against Judah and terrify
it, and let us conquer it[1] for ourselves, and set up the son of Tabeel as king
in the midst of it," 7 thus says the Lord God:

"'It shall not stand,
and it shall not come to pass.
8 For the head of Syria is Damascus,
and the head of Damascus is Rezin.
And within sixty-five years
Ephraim will be shattered from being ay
people.
9 And the head of Ephraim is Samaria,
and the head of Samaria is the son of
Remaliah.
If you[2] are not firm in faith,
you will not be firm at all.'"

The Sign of Immanuel

10 †Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz, 11 †"Ask a sign of the Lord your[3] God;
let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven." 12 †But Ahaz said, "I will not ask,
and I will not put the Lord to the test." 13 †And he[4] said, "Hear then, O
house of David! Is it too little for you to weary men, that you weary my
God also? 14 †Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the
virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.[5]
15 †He shall eat curds and honey when he knows how to refuse the evil and
choose the good. 16 †For before the boy knows how to refuse the evil and
choose the good, the land whose two kings you dread will be deserted.
17 †The Lord will bring upon you and upon your people and upon your
father's house such days as have not come since the day that Ephraim
departed from Judah—the king of Assyria."

18 †In that day the Lord will whistle for the fly that is at the end of the
streams of Egypt, and for the bee that is in the land of Assyria. 19 And they
will all come and settle in the steep ravines, and in the clefts of the rocks,
and on all the thornbushes, and on all the pastures.[1]

20 †In that day the Lord will shave with a razor that is hired beyond the
River—with the king of Assyria—the head and the hair of the feet, and it
will sweep away the beard also.

21 †In that day a man will keep alive a young cow and two sheep, 22 and
because of the abundance of milk that they give, he will eat curds, for
everyone who is left in the land will eat curds and honey.

23 †In that day every place where there used to be a thousand vines, worth
a thousand shekels[2] of silver, will become briers and thorns. 24 †With bow
and arrows a man will come there, for all the land will be briers and thorns.
25 †And as for all the hills that used to be hoed with a hoe, you will not come
there for fear of briers and thorns, but they will become a place where cattle
are let loose and where sheep tread.

The Coming Assyrian Invasion

8 [1]†† Then the Lord said to me, “Take a large tablet and write on it in
common characters,[3] ‘Belonging to Maher-shalal-hash-baz.’[4] [2]† And I will
get reliable witnesses, Uriah the priest and Zechariah the son of
Jeberechiah, to attest for me.”

[3]† And I went to the prophetess, and she conceived and bore a son. Then
the Lord said to me, “Call his name Maher-shalal-hash-baz; [4]† for before the
boy knows how to cry ‘My father’ or ‘My mother,’ the wealth of Damascus
and the spoil of Samaria will be carried away before the king of Assyria.”

[5]The Lord spoke to me again: [6]† “Because this people has refused the
waters of Shiloah that flow gently, and rejoice over Rezin and the son of
Remaliah, [7]† therefore, behold, the Lord is bringing up against them the
waters of the River, mighty and many, the king of Assyria and all his glory.
And it will rise over all its channels and go over all its banks, [8]† and it will
sweep on into Judah, it will overflow and pass on, reaching even to the
neck, and its outspread wings will fill the breadth of your land, O
Immanuel.”

[9]† Be broken,[1] you peoples, and be shattered;[2]
give ear, all you far countries;
strap on your armor and be shattered;
strap on your armor and be shattered.
[10]† Take counsel together, but it will come to
nothing;
speak a word, but it will not stand,
for God is with us.[3]

Fear God, Wait for the Lord

11 ‡ †For the Lord spoke thus to me with his strong hand upon me, and
warned me not to walk in the way of this people, saying: 12 †“Do not call
conspiracy all that this people calls conspiracy, and do not fear what they
fear, nor be in dread. 13 †But the Lord of hosts, him you shall honor as holy.
Let him be your fear, and let him be your dread. 14 †And he will become a
sanctuary and a stone of offense and a rock of stumbling to both houses of
Israel, a trap and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. 15 And many shall
stumble on it. They shall fall and be broken; they shall be snared and
taken.”

16 †Bind up the testimony; seal the teaching[4] among my disciples. 17 †I
will wait for the Lord, who is hiding his face from the house of Jacob, and I
will hope in him. 18 †Behold, I and the children whom the Lord has given me
are signs and portents in Israel from the Lord of hosts, who dwells on
Mount Zion. 19 †And when they say to you, “Inquire of the mediums and the
necromancers who chirp and mutter,” should not a people inquire of their
God? Should they inquire of the dead on behalf of the living? 20 † To the
teaching and to the testimony! If they will not speak according to this word,
it is because they have no dawn. 21 ‡ They will pass through the land,[5]
greatly distressed and hungry. And when they are hungry, they will be
enraged and will speak contemptuously against[6] their king and their God,
and turn their faces upward. 22 And they will look to the earth, but behold,
distress and darkness, the gloom of anguish. And they will be thrust into
thick darkness.

For to Us a Child Is Born

9 [1]†† [1] But there will be no gloom for her who was in anguish. In the former time he brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time he has made glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.[2]

[2]† [3] The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness,
on them has light shined.
[3]† You have multiplied the nation;
you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you
as with joy at the harvest,
as they are glad when they divide the spoil.
[4]† For the yoke of his burden,
and the staff for his shoulder,
the rod of his oppressor,
you have broken as on the day of Midian.
[5]† For every boot of the tramping warrior in
battle tumult
and every garment rolled in blood
will be burned as fuel for the fire.
[6]† For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given;
and the government shall be upon[4] his
shoulder,
and his name shall be called[5]
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
[7]† Of the increase of his government and of
peace
there will be no end,

on the throne of David and over his
kingdom,
to establish it and to uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time forth and forevermore.
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

Judgment on Arrogance and Oppression

8 The Lord has sent a word against Jacob,
and it will fall on Israel;
9 and all the people will know,
Ephraim and the inhabitants of Samaria,
who say in pride and in arrogance of heart:
10 "The bricks have fallen,
but we will build with dressed stones;
the sycamores have been cut down,
but we will put cedars in their place."
11 But the Lord raises the adversaries of Rezin
against him,
and stirs up his enemies.
12 The Syrians on the east and the Philistines on
the west
devour Israel with open mouth.
For all this his anger has not turned away,
and his hand is stretched out still.

13 The people did not turn to him who struck
them,
nor inquire of the Lord of hosts.
14 So the Lord cut off from Israel head and tail,
palm branch and reed in one day—
15 the elder and honored man is the head,
and the prophet who teaches lies is the
tail;
16 for those who guide this people have been
leading them astray,
and those who are guided by them are
swallowed up.
17 Therefore the Lord does not rejoice over their
young men,

and has no compassion on their fatherless
and widows;
for everyone is godless and an evildoer,
and every mouth speaks folly.[1]
For all this his anger has not turned away,
and his hand is stretched out still.

18† For wickedness burns like a fire;
it consumes briers and thorns;
it kindles the thickets of the forest,
and they roll upward in a column of smoke.
19† Through the wrath of the Lord of hosts
the land is scorched,
and the people are like fuel for the fire;
no one spares another.
20† They slice meat on the right, but are still hungry,
and they devour on the left, but are not
satisfied;
each devours the flesh of his own arm,
21† Manasseh devours Ephraim, and Ephraim
devours Manasseh;
together they are against Judah.
For all this his anger has not turned away,
and his hand is stretched out still.

10 1† Woe to those who decree iniquitous decrees, and the writers who keep writing oppression,

2† to turn aside the needy from justice
and to rob the poor of my people of their
right,
that widows may be their spoil,
and that they may make the fatherless their
prey!
3† What will you do on the day of punishment,

in the ruin that will come from afar?
To whom will you flee for help,
and where will you leave your wealth?
4† Nothing remains but to crouch among the
prisoners
or fall among the slain.
For all this his anger has not turned away,
and his hand is stretched out still.

Judgment on Arrogant Assyria

5 ‡† Ah, Assyria, the rod of my anger;
the staff in their hands is my fury!
6 † Against a godless nation I send him,
and against the people of my wrath I
command him,
to take spoil and seize plunder,
and to tread them down like the mire of the
streets.
7 † But he does not so intend,
and his heart does not so think;
but it is in his heart to destroy,
and to cut off nations not a few;
8 for he says:
"Are not my commanders all kings?
9 † Is not Calno like Carchemish?
Is not Hamath like Arpad?
Is not Samaria like Damascus?
10 † As my hand has reached to the kingdoms of
the idols,
whose carved images were greater than
those of Jerusalem and Samaria,
11 † shall I not do to Jerusalem and her idols
as I have done to Samaria and her images?"

12 † When the Lord has finished all his work on Mount Zion and on Jerusalem, he[1] will punish the speech of the arrogant heart of the king of Assyria and the boastful look in his eyes. 13 †For he says:

"By the strength of my hand I have done it,
and by my wisdom, for I have
understanding;
I remove the boundaries of peoples,
and plunder their treasures;

like a bull I bring down those who sit on
thrones.
14 My hand has found like a nest
the wealth of the peoples;
and as one gathers eggs that have been
forsaken,
so I have gathered all the earth;
and there was none that moved a wing
or opened the mouth or chirped.”

15 Shall the axe boast over him who hews
with it,
or the saw magnify itself against him who
wields it?
As if a rod should wield him who lifts it,
or as if a staff should lift him who is not wood!
16 Therefore the Lord God of hosts
will send wasting sickness among his stout
warriors,
and under his glory a burning will be
kindled,
like the burning of fire.
17 The light of Israel will become a fire,
and his Holy One a flame,
and it will burn and devour
his thorns and briers in one day.
18 The glory of his forest and of his fruitful land
the Lord will destroy, both soul and body,
and it will be as when a sick man wastes
away.
19 The remnant of the trees of his forest will be
so few
that a child can write them down.

The Remnant of Israel Will Return

20 ‡ † In that day the remnant of Israel and the survivors of the house of
Jacob will no more lean on him who struck them, but will lean on the Lord,
the Holy One of Israel, in truth. 21 † A remnant will return, the remnant of
Jacob, to the mighty God. 22 † For though your people Israel be as the sand of
the sea, only a remnant of them will return. Destruction is decreed,
overflowing with righteousness. 23 † For the Lord God of hosts will make a
full end, as decreed, in the midst of all the earth.

24 † Therefore thus says the Lord God of hosts: "O my people, who dwell
in Zion, be not afraid of the Assyrians when they strike with the rod and lift
up their staff against you as the Egyptians did. 25 † For in a very little while
my fury will come to an end, and my anger will be directed to their
destruction. 26 † And the Lord of hosts will wield against them a whip, as
when he struck Midian at the rock of Oreb. And his staff will be over the
sea, and he will lift it as he did in Egypt. 27 † And in that day his burden will
depart from your shoulder, and his yoke from your neck; and the yoke will
be broken because of the fat."[1]

28 ‡ He has come to Aiath;
he has passed through Migron;
at Michmash he stores his baggage;
29 † they have crossed over the pass;
at Geba they lodge for the night;
Ramah trembles;
Gibeah of Saul has fled.
30 Cry aloud, O daughter of Gallim!
Give attention, O Laishah!
O poor Anathoth!
31 Madmenah is in flight;
the inhabitants of Gebim flee for safety.
32 † This very day he will halt at Nob;
he will shake his fist

at the mount of the daughter of Zion,
the hill of Jerusalem.

33† Behold, the Lord God of hosts
will lop the boughs with terrifying power;
the great in height will be hewn down,
and the lofty will be brought low.
34† He will cut down the thickets of the forest
with an axe,
and Lebanon will fall by the Majestic One.

The Righteous Reign of the Branch

11 [1]† There shall come forth a shoot from the
stump of Jesse,
and a branch from his roots shall bear
fruit.

[2]†† And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon
him,
the Spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the Spirit of counsel and might,
the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the
Lord.
[3]†† And his delight shall be in the fear of the Lord.
He shall not judge by what his eyes see,
or decide disputes by what his ears hear,
[4]† but with righteousness he shall judge the
poor,
and decide with equity for the meek of the
earth;
and he shall strike the earth with the rod of
his mouth,
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill
the wicked.
[5]† Righteousness shall be the belt of his
waist,
and faithfulness the belt of his loins.

[6]† The wolf shall dwell with the lamb,
and the leopard shall lie down with the
young goat,
and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf
together;
and a little child shall lead them.

7 The cow and the bear shall graze;
their young shall lie down together;
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.
8 The nursing child shall play over the hole of
the cobra,
and the weaned child shall put his hand on
the adder's den.
9† They shall not hurt or destroy
in all my holy mountain;
for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of
the LORD
as the waters cover the sea.

10†In that day the root of Jesse, who shall stand as a signal for the peoples —of him shall the nations inquire, and his resting place shall be glorious.
11†In that day the Lord will extend his hand yet a second time to recover the remnant that remains of his people, from Assyria, from Egypt, from Pathros, from Cush,[1] from Elam, from Shinar, from Hamath, and from the coastlands of the sea.

12† He will raise a signal for the nations
and will assemble the banished of Israel,
and gather the dispersed of Judah
from the four corners of the earth.
13† The jealousy of Ephraim shall depart,
and those who harass Judah shall be cut off;
Ephraim shall not be jealous of Judah,
and Judah shall not harass Ephraim.
14† But they shall swoop down on the shoulder of
the Philistines in the west,
and together they shall plunder the people
of the east.
They shall put out their hand against Edom
and Moab,
and the Ammonites shall obey them.
15† And the LORD will utterly destroy[2]

the tongue of the Sea of Egypt,
and will wave his hand over the River
with his scorching breath,[3]
and strike it into seven channels,
and he will lead people across in sandals.
16 And there will be a highway from Assyria
for the remnant that remains of his people,
as there was for Israel
when they came up from the land of Egypt.

The Lord Is My Strength and My Song

12 1 You[1] will say in that day:
“ I will give thanks to you, O Lord,
for though you were angry with me,
your anger turned away,
that you might comfort me.

2 “Behold, God is my salvation;
I will trust, and will not be afraid;
for the Lord God [2] is my strength and my
song,
and he has become my salvation.”

3 With joy you[3] will draw water from the wells of salvation. 4 And you will say in that day:

“Give thanks to the Lord,
call upon his name,
make known his deeds among the peoples,
proclaim that his name is exalted.

5 “Sing praises to the Lord, for he has done
gloriously;
let this be made known[4] in all the earth.
6 Shout, and sing for joy, O inhabitant of Zion,
for great in your[5] midst is the Holy One of
Israel.”

The Judgment of Babylon

13 [1]† The oracle concerning Babylon which Isaiah the son of Amoz saw.

[2]† On a bare hill raise a signal;
cry aloud to them;
wave the hand for them to enter
the gates of the nobles.
[3]† I myself have commanded my consecrated ones,
and have summoned my mighty men to execute my anger,
my proudly exulting ones.[6]

[4]†† The sound of a tumult is on the mountains
as of a great multitude!
The sound of an uproar of kingdoms,
of nations gathering together!
The Lord of hosts is mustering
a host for battle.
[5]† They come from a distant land,
from the end of the heavens,
the Lord and the weapons of his indignation,
to destroy the whole land.[7]

[6]† Wail, for the day of the Lord is near;
as destruction from the Almighty[8] it will come!
[7]† Therefore all hands will be feeble,
and every human heart will melt.
[8]† They will be dismayed:
pangs and agony will seize them;

they will be in anguish like a woman in labor.
They will look aghast at one another;
their faces will be aflame.

9 Behold, the day of the LORD comes,
cruel, with wrath and fierce anger,
to make the land a desolation
and to destroy its sinners from it.
10 For the stars of the heavens and their
constellations
will not give their light;
the sun will be dark at its rising,
and the moon will not shed its light.
11 I will punish the world for its evil,
and the wicked for their iniquity;
I will put an end to the pomp of the arrogant,
and lay low the pompous pride of the ruthless.
12 I will make people more rare than fine gold,
and mankind than the gold of Ophir.
13 Therefore I will make the heavens tremble,
and the earth will be shaken out of its place,
at the wrath of the LORD of hosts
in the day of his fierce anger.
14 And like a hunted gazelle,
or like sheep with none to gather them,
each will turn to his own people,
and each will flee to his own land.
15 Whoever is found will be thrust through,
and whoever is caught will fall by the sword.
16 Their infants will be dashed in pieces
before their eyes;
their houses will be plundered
and their wives ravished.

17 † Behold, I am stirring up the Medes against
them,
who have no regard for silver
and do not delight in gold.
18 † Their bows will slaughter[1] the young men;
they will have no mercy on the fruit of the
womb;
their eyes will not pity children.
19 † And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms,
the splendor and pomp of the Chaldeans,
will be like Sodom and Gomorrah
when God overthrew them.
20 †† It will never be inhabited
or lived in for all generations;
no Arab will pitch his tent there;
no shepherds will make their flocks lie
down there.
21 † But wild animals will lie down there,
and their houses will be full of howling
creatures;
there ostriches[2] will dwell,
and there wild goats will dance.
22 Hyenas[1] will cry in its towers,
and jackals in the pleasant palaces;
its time is close at hand
and its days will not be prolonged.

The Restoration of Jacob

14 [1] ‡ ‡For the Lord will have compassion on Jacob and will again
choose Israel, and will set them in their own land, and sojourners will join
them and will attach themselves to the house of Jacob. [2] ‡And the peoples
will take them and bring them to their place, and the house of Israel will
possess them in the Lord's land as male and female slaves. They will take
captive those who were their captors, and rule over those who oppressed
them.

Israel's Remnant Taunts Babylon

3 ‡ † When the Lord has given you rest from your pain and turmoil and the
hard service with which you were made to serve, 4 ‡ † you will take up this
taunt against the king of Babylon:

"How the oppressor has ceased,
the insolent fury[2] ceased!
5 † The Lord has broken the staff of the wicked,
the scepter of rulers,
6 that struck the peoples in wrath
with unceasing blows,
that ruled the nations in anger
with unrelenting persecution.
7 † The whole earth is at rest and quiet;
they break forth into singing.
8 † The cypresses rejoice at you,
the cedars of Lebanon, saying,
' Since you were laid low,
no woodcutter comes up against us.'
9 ‡ Sheol beneath is stirred up
to meet you when you come;
it rouses the shades to greet you,
all who were leaders of the earth;
it raises from their thrones
all who were kings of the nations.
10 All of them will answer
and say to you:
'You too have become as weak as we!
You have become like us!'
11 † Your pomp is brought down to Sheol,
the sound of your harps;
maggots are laid as a bed beneath you,
and worms are your covers.

12 “How you are fallen from heaven,
O Day Star, son of Dawn!
How you are cut down to the ground,
you who laid the nations low!
13 You said in your heart,
‘I will ascend to heaven;
above the stars of God
I will set my throne on high;
I will sit on the mount of assembly
in the far reaches of the north;[1]
14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds;
I will make myself like the Most High.’
15 But you are brought down to Sheol,
to the far reaches of the pit.
16 Those who see you will stare at you
and ponder over you:
‘Is this the man who made the earth tremble,
who shook kingdoms,
17 who made the world like a desert
and overthrew its cities,
who did not let his prisoners go home?’
18 All the kings of the nations lie in glory,
each in his own tomb;[2]
19 but you are cast out, away from your grave,
like a loathed branch,
clothed with the slain, those pierced by the
sword,
who go down to the stones of the pit,
like a dead body trampled underfoot.
20 You will not be joined with them in burial,
because you have destroyed your land,
you have slain your people.

“May the offspring of evildoers
nevermore be named!

21 † Prepare slaughter for his sons
because of the guilt of their fathers,
lest they rise and possess the earth,
and fill the face of the world with cities.”

22 †“I will rise up against them,” declares the Lord of hosts, “and will cut
off from Babylon name and remnant, descendants and posterity,” declares
the Lord. 23 †“And I will make it a possession of the hedgehog,[3] and pools
of water, and I will sweep it with the broom of destruction,” declares the
Lord of hosts.

An Oracle Concerning Assyria

24 The Lord of hosts has sworn:
"As I have planned,
so shall it be,
and as I have purposed,
so shall it stand,
25 that I will break the Assyrian in my land,
and on my mountains trample him
underfoot;
and his yoke shall depart from them,
and his burden from their shoulder."

26 This is the purpose that is purposed
concerning the whole earth,
and this is the hand that is stretched out
over all the nations.
27 For the Lord of hosts has purposed,
and who will annul it?
His hand is stretched out,
and who will turn it back?

An Oracle Concerning Philistia

28 In the year that King Ahaz died came this oracle:

29 Rejoice not, O Philistia, all of you,
that the rod that struck you is broken,
for from the serpent's root will come forth an adder,
and its fruit will be a flying fiery serpent.
30 And the firstborn of the poor will graze,
and the needy lie down in safety;
but I will kill your root with famine,
and your remnant it will slay.
31 Wail, O gate; cry out, O city;
melt in fear, O Philistia, all of you!
For smoke comes out of the north,
and there is no straggler in his ranks.

32 What will one answer the messengers of the nation?
"The LORD has founded Zion,
and in her the afflicted of his people find refuge."

An Oracle Concerning Moab

15 [1]† An oracle concerning Moab.

Because Ar of Moab is laid waste in a night,
Moab is undone;
because Kir of Moab is laid waste in a night,
Moab is undone.
[2]† He has gone up to the temple,[1] and to Dibon,
to the high places[2] to weep;
over Nebo and over Medeba
Moab wails.
On every head is baldness;
every beard is shorn;
[3]† in the streets they wear sackcloth;
on the housetops and in the squares
everyone wails and melts in tears.
[4]† Heshbon and Elealeh cry out;
their voice is heard as far as Jahaz;
therefore the armed men of Moab cry
aloud;
his soul trembles.
[5]† My heart cries out for Moab;
her fugitives flee to Zoar,
to Eglath-shelishiyah.
For at the ascent of Luhith
they go up weeping;
on the road to Horonaim
they raise a cry of destruction;
[6]† the waters of Nimrim
are a desolation;
the grass is withered, the vegetation fails,
the greenery is no more.
[7]† Therefore the abundance they have gained

and what they have laid up
they carry away
over the Brook of the Willows.
8† For a cry has gone
around the land of Moab;
her wailing reaches to Eglaim;
her wailing reaches to Beer-elim.
9† For the waters of Dibon[1] are full of blood;
for I will bring upon Dibon even more,
a lion for those of Moab who escape,
for the remnant of the land.

16 1†Send the lamb to the ruler of the land,
from Sela, by way of the desert,
to the mount of the daughter of Zion.

2† Like fleeing birds,
like a scattered nest,
so are the daughters of Moab
at the fords of the Arnon.

3‡† "Give counsel;
grant justice;
make your shade like night
at the height of noon;
shelter the outcasts;
do not reveal the fugitive;
4† let the outcasts of Moab
sojourn among you;
be a shelter to them[2]
from the destroyer.
When the oppressor is no more,
and destruction has ceased,
and he who tramples underfoot has vanished
from the land,

5† then a throne will be established in steadfast
love,
and on it will sit in faithfulness
in the tent of David
one who judges and seeks justice
and is swift to do righteousness.”

6† We have heard of the pride of Moab—
how proud he is!—
of his arrogance, his pride, and his insolence;
in his idle boasting he is not right.
7† Therefore let Moab wail for Moab,
let everyone wail.
Mourn, utterly stricken,
for the raisin cakes of Kir-hareseth.

8† For the fields of Heshbon languish,
and the vine of Sibmah;
the lords of the nations
have struck down its branches,
which reached to Jazer
and strayed to the desert;
its shoots spread abroad
and passed over the sea.
9† Therefore I weep with the weeping of Jazer
for the vine of Sibmah;
I drench you with my tears,
O Heshbon and Elealeh;
for over your summer fruit and your harvest
the shout has ceased.
10 And joy and gladness are taken away from
the fruitful field,
and in the vineyards no songs are sung,
no cheers are raised;
no treader treads out wine in the presses;

I have put an end to the shouting.
[11]† Therefore my inner parts moan like a lyre for
Moab,
and my inmost self for Kir-hareseth.

[12]†And when Moab presents himself, when he wearies himself on the high place, when he comes to his sanctuary to pray, he will not prevail.

[13]†This is the word that the Lord spoke concerning Moab in the past. [14]†But now the Lord has spoken, saying, “In three years, like the years of a hired worker, the glory of Moab will be brought into contempt, in spite of all his great multitude, and those who remain will be very few and feeble.”

An Oracle Concerning Damascus

17 [1] An oracle concerning Damascus.

Behold, Damascus will cease to be a city
and will become a heap of ruins.
[2] The cities of Aroer are deserted;
they will be for flocks,
which will lie down, and none will make them afraid.
[3] The fortress will disappear from Ephraim,
and the kingdom from Damascus;
and the remnant of Syria will be
like the glory of the children of Israel,
declares the Lord of hosts.

[4] And in that day the glory of Jacob will be brought low,
and the fat of his flesh will grow lean.
[5] And it shall be as when the reaper gathers standing grain
and his arm harvests the ears,
and as when one gleans the ears of grain
in the Valley of Rephaim.
[6] Gleanings will be left in it,
as when an olive tree is beaten—
two or three berries
in the top of the highest bough,
four or five
on the branches of a fruit tree,
declares the Lord God of Israel.

7 †In that day man will look to his Maker, and his eyes will look on the
Holy One of Israel. 8 †He will not look to the altars, the work of his hands,
and he will not look on what his own fingers have made, either the Asherim
or the altars of incense.
9 †In that day their strong cities will be like the deserted places of the
wooded heights and the hilltops, which they deserted because of the
children of Israel, and there will be desolation.

10 † For you have forgotten the God of your salvation
and have not remembered the Rock of your
refuge;
therefore, though you plant pleasant plants
and sow the vine-branch of a stranger,
11 † though you make them grow[1] on the day that
you plant them,
and make them blossom in the morning that
you sow,
yet the harvest will flee away[2]
in a day of grief and incurable pain.

12 † Ah, the thunder of many peoples;
they thunder like the thundering of the sea!
Ah, the roar of nations;
they roar like the roaring of mighty waters!
13 † The nations roar like the roaring of many
waters,
but he will rebuke them, and they will flee
far away,
chased like chaff on the mountains before
the wind
and whirling dust before the storm.
14 † At evening time, behold, terror!
Before morning, they are no more!
This is the portion of those who loot us,
and the lot of those who plunder us.

An Oracle Concerning Cush

18 [1]†† Ah, land of whirring wings
that is beyond the rivers of Cush,[3]

[2]† which sends ambassadors by the sea,
in vessels of papyrus on the waters!
Go, you swift messengers,
to a nation, tall and smooth,
to a people feared near and far,
a nation mighty and conquering,
whose land the rivers divide.

[3]† All you inhabitants of the world,
you who dwell on the earth,
when a signal is raised on the mountains, look!
When a trumpet is blown, hear!
[4]† For thus the Lord said to me:
"I will quietly look from my dwelling
like clear heat in sunshine,
like a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest."
[5]† For before the harvest, when the blossom is over,
and the flower becomes a ripening grape,
he cuts off the shoots with pruning hooks,
and the spreading branches he lops off and clears away.
[6]† They shall all of them be left
to the birds of prey of the mountains
and to the beasts of the earth.
And the birds of prey will summer on them,
and all the beasts of the earth will winter on them.

[7]† At that time tribute will be brought to the Lord of hosts

from a people tall and smooth,
 from a people feared near and far,
a nation mighty and conquering,
 whose land the rivers divide,

to Mount Zion, the place of the name of the LORD of hosts.

An Oracle Concerning Egypt

19 [1]†† An oracle concerning Egypt.

Behold, the Lord is riding on a swift cloud
and comes to Egypt;
and the idols of Egypt will tremble at his presence,
and the heart of the Egyptians will melt within them.
[2]† And I will stir up Egyptians against Egyptians,
and they will fight, each against another
and each against his neighbor,
city against city, kingdom against kingdom;
[3]† and the spirit of the Egyptians within them will be emptied out,
and I will confound[1] their counsel;
and they will inquire of the idols and the sorcerers,
and the mediums and the necromancers;
[4]† and I will give over the Egyptians
into the hand of a hard master,
and a fierce king will rule over them,
declares the Lord God of hosts.

[5]† And the waters of the sea will be dried up,
and the river will be dry and parched,
[6] and its canals will become foul,
and the branches of Egypt's Nile will diminish and dry up,
reeds and rushes will rot away.
[7] There will be bare places by the Nile,
on the brink of the Nile,

and all that is sown by the Nile will be
parched,
will be driven away, and will be no more.
8† The fishermen will mourn and lament,
all who cast a hook in the Nile;
and they will languish
who spread nets on the water.
9† The workers in combed flax will be in
despair,
and the weavers of white cotton.
10† Those who are the pillars of the land will be
crushed,
and all who work for pay will be grieved.

11† The princes of Zoan are utterly foolish;
the wisest counselors of Pharaoh give stupid
counsel.
How can you say to Pharaoh,
"I am a son of the wise,
a son of ancient kings"?
12 Where then are your wise men?
Let them tell you
that they might know what the Lord of
hosts has purposed against Egypt.
13† The princes of Zoan have become fools,
and the princes of Memphis are deluded;
those who are the cornerstones of her tribes
have made Egypt stagger.
14† The Lord has mingled within her a spirit of
confusion,
and they will make Egypt stagger in all its deeds,
as a drunken man staggers in his vomit.
15† And there will be nothing for Egypt
that head or tail, palm branch or reed, may do.

Egypt, Assyria, Israel Blessed

16 ‡‡‡In that day the Egyptians will be like women, and tremble with fear
before the hand that the Lord of hosts shakes over them. 17 †And the land of
Judah will become a terror to the Egyptians. Everyone to whom it is
mentioned will fear because of the purpose that the Lord of hosts has
purposed against them.
18 ‡‡In that day there will be five cities in the land of Egypt that speak the
language of Canaan and swear allegiance to the Lord of hosts. One of these
will be called the City of Destruction.[1]
19 †In that day there will be an altar to the Lord in the midst of the land of
Egypt, and a pillar to the Lord at its border. 20 †It will be a sign and a witness
to the Lord of hosts in the land of Egypt. When they cry to the Lord because
of oppressors, he will send them a savior and defender, and deliver them.
21 † And the Lord will make himself known to the Egyptians, and the
Egyptians will know the Lord in that day and worship with sacrifice and
offering, and they will make vows to the Lord and perform them. 22 †And the
Lord will strike Egypt, striking and healing, and they will return to the Lord,
and he will listen to their pleas for mercy and heal them.
23 †In that day there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria, and Assyria
will come into Egypt, and Egypt into Assyria, and the Egyptians will
worship with the Assyrians.
24 ‡‡In that day Israel will be the third with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing
in the midst of the earth, 25 †whom the Lord of hosts has blessed, saying,
“Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel
my inheritance.”

A Sign Against Egypt and Cush

20 [1] In the year that the commander in chief, who was sent by
Sargon the king of Assyria, came to Ashdod and fought against it and
captured it— [2] at that time the Lord spoke by Isaiah the son of Amoz,
saying, "Go, and loose the sackcloth from your waist and take off your
sandals from your feet," and he did so, walking naked and barefoot.
[3] Then the Lord said, "As my servant Isaiah has walked naked and
barefoot for three years as a sign and a portent against Egypt and Cush,[1]
[4] so shall the king of Assyria lead away the Egyptian captives and the
Cushite exiles, both the young and the old, naked and barefoot, with
buttocks uncovered, the nakedness of Egypt. [5] Then they shall be dismayed
and ashamed because of Cush their hope and of Egypt their boast. [6] And
the inhabitants of this coastland will say in that day, 'Behold, this is what
has happened to those in whom we hoped and to whom we fled for help to
be delivered from the king of Assyria! And we, how shall we escape?'"

Fallen, Fallen Is Babylon

21 [1]†The oracle concerning the wilderness of the sea.

As whirlwinds in the Negeb sweep on,
it comes from the wilderness,
from a terrible land.
[2]† A stern vision is told to me;
the traitor betrays,
and the destroyer destroys.
Go up, O Elam;
lay siege, O Media;
all the sighing she has caused
I bring to an end.
[3]† Therefore my loins are filled with anguish;
pangs have seized me,
like the pangs of a woman in labor;
I am bowed down so that I cannot hear;
I am dismayed so that I cannot see.
[4]† My heart staggers; horror has appalled me;
the twilight I longed for
has been turned for me into trembling.
[5]† They prepare the table,
they spread the rugs,[1]
they eat, they drink.
Arise, O princes;
oil the shield!
[6]† For thus the Lord said to me:
"Go, set a watchman;
let him announce what he sees.
[7]† When he sees riders, horsemen in pairs,
riders on donkeys, riders on camels,
let him listen diligently,
very diligently."

8† Then he who saw cried out:[2]
"Upon a watchtower I stand, O Lord,
continually by day,
and at my post I am stationed
whole nights.
9† And behold, here come riders,
horsemen in pairs!"
And he answered,
"Fallen, fallen is Babylon;
and all the carved images of her gods
he has shattered to the ground."
10† O my threshed and winnowed one,
what I have heard from the LORD of hosts,
the God of Israel, I announce to you.

11†The oracle concerning Dumah.

One is calling to me from Seir,
"Watchman, what time of the night?
Watchman, what time of the night?"
12† The watchman says:
"Morning comes, and also the night.
If you will inquire, inquire;
come back again."

13†The oracle concerning Arabia.

In the thickets in Arabia you will lodge,
O caravans of Dedanites.
14† To the thirsty bring water;
meet the fugitive with bread,
O inhabitants of the land of Tema.
15 For they have fled from the swords,
from the drawn sword,
from the bent bow,
and from the press of battle.

16 †For thus the Lord said to me, “Within a year, according to the years of
a hired worker, all the glory of Kedar will come to an end. 17And the
remainder of the archers of the mighty men of the sons of Kedar will be
few, for the Lord, the God of Israel, has spoken.”

An Oracle Concerning Jerusalem

22 [1]† The oracle concerning the valley of vision.

What do you mean that you have gone up,
all of you, to the housetops,
[2]† you who are full of shoutings,
tumultuous city, exultant town?
Your slain are not slain with the sword
or dead in battle.
[3]† All your leaders have fled together;
without the bow they were captured.
All of you who were found were captured,
though they had fled far away.
[4]† Therefore I said:
"Look away from me;
let me weep bitter tears;
do not labor to comfort me
concerning the destruction of the daughter
of my people."

[5]† For the Lord God of hosts has a day
of tumult and trampling and confusion
in the valley of vision,
a battering down of walls
and a shouting to the mountains.
[6]† And Elam bore the quiver
with chariots and horsemen,
and Kir uncovered the shield.
[7]† Your choicest valleys were full of chariots,
and the horsemen took their stand at the
gates.
[8]† He has taken away the covering of Judah.

In that day you looked to the weapons of the House of the Forest, [9]† and you saw that the breaches of the city of David were many. You collected the waters of the lower pool, [10]† and you counted the houses of Jerusalem, and you broke down the houses to fortify the wall. [11]† You made a reservoir between the two walls for the water of the old pool. But you did not look to him who did it, or see him who planned it long ago.

[12]† In that day the Lord God of hosts
called for weeping and mourning,
for baldness and wearing sackcloth;
[13]† and behold, joy and gladness,
killing oxen and slaughtering sheep,
eating flesh and drinking wine.
"Let us eat and drink,
for tomorrow we die."
[14]† The Lord of hosts has revealed himself in my ears:
"Surely this iniquity will not be atoned for you
until you die,"
says the Lord God of hosts.

[15]† Thus says the Lord God of hosts, "Come, go to this steward, to Shebna, who is over the household, and say to him: [16]† What have you to do here, and whom have you here, that you have cut out here a tomb for yourself, you who cut out a tomb on the height and carve a dwelling for yourself in the rock? [17]† Behold, the Lord will hurl you away violently, O you strong man. He will seize firm hold on you [18]† and whirl you around and around, and throw you like a ball into a wide land. There you shall die, and there shall be your glorious chariots, you shame of your master's house. [19]† I will thrust you from your office, and you will be pulled down from your station. [20]† In that day I will call my servant Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, [21]† and I will clothe him with your robe, and will bind your sash on him, and will commit your authority to his hand. And he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and to the house of Judah. [22]† And I will place on his shoulder the key of the house of David. He shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open. [23]† And I will fasten him like a peg in a secure place, and he will become a throne of honor to his father's

house. [24]†And they will hang on him the whole honor of his father's house, the offspring and issue, every small vessel, from the cups to all the flagons. [25]†In that day, declares the Lord of hosts, the peg that was fastened in a secure place will give way, and it will be cut down and fall, and the load that was on it will be cut off, for the Lord has spoken."

An Oracle Concerning Tyre and Sidon

23 [1]† The oracle concerning Tyre.

Wail, O ships of Tarshish,
for Tyre is laid waste, without house or harbor!
From the land of Cyprus[1]
it is revealed to them.
[2]† Be still, O inhabitants of the coast;
the merchants of Sidon, who cross the sea, have filled you.
[3]† And on many waters
your revenue was the grain of Shihor,
the harvest of the Nile;
you were the merchant of the nations.
[4]† Be ashamed, O Sidon, for the sea has spoken,
the stronghold of the sea, saying:
"I have neither labored nor given birth,
I have neither reared young men
nor brought up young women."
[5]† When the report comes to Egypt,
they will be in anguish[1] over the report about Tyre.
[6]† Cross over to Tarshish;
wail, O inhabitants of the coast!
[7]† Is this your exultant city
whose origin is from days of old,
whose feet carried her
to settle far away?
[8]† Who has purposed this
against Tyre, the bestower of crowns,
whose merchants were princes,

whose traders were the honored of the earth?
9 † The Lord of hosts has purposed it,
to defile the pompous pride of all glory,[2]
to dishonor all the honored of the earth.
10 † Cross over your land like the Nile,
O daughter of Tarshish;
there is no restraint anymore.
11 † He has stretched out his hand over the sea;
he has shaken the kingdoms;
the Lord has given command concerning
Canaan
to destroy its strongholds.
12 † And he said:
"You will no more exult,
O oppressed virgin daughter of Sidon;
arise, cross over to Cyprus,
even there you will have no rest."

13 †Behold the land of the Chaldeans! This is the people that was not;[3] Assyria destined it for wild beasts. They erected their siege towers, they stripped her palaces bare, they made her a ruin.

14 Wail, O ships of Tarshish,
for your stronghold is laid waste.

15 †In that day Tyre will be forgotten for seventy years, like the days[4] of one king. At the end of seventy years, it will happen to Tyre as in the song of the prostitute:

16 † "Take a harp;
go about the city,
O forgotten prostitute!
Make sweet melody;
sing many songs,
that you may be remembered."

[17] † At the end of seventy years, the Lord will visit Tyre, and she will return
to her wages and will prostitute herself with all the kingdoms of the world
on the face of the earth. [18] † Her merchandise and her wages will be holy to
the Lord. It will not be stored or hoarded, but her merchandise will supply
abundant food and fine clothing for those who dwell before the Lord.

Judgment on the Whole Earth

24 [1]†Behold, the Lord will empty the earth[5]
and make it desolate,
and he will twist its surface and scatter its
inhabitants.

[2]† And it shall be, as with the people, so with
the priest;
as with the slave, so with his master;
as with the maid, so with her mistress;
as with the buyer, so with the seller;
as with the lender, so with the borrower;
as with the creditor, so with the debtor.
[3] The earth shall be utterly empty and utterly
plundered;
for the Lord has spoken this word.

[4]† The earth mourns and withers;
the world languishes and withers;
the highest people of the earth languish.
[5]† The earth lies defiled
under its inhabitants;
for they have transgressed the laws,
violated the statutes,
broken the everlasting covenant.
[6]† Therefore a curse devours the earth,
and its inhabitants suffer for their guilt;
therefore the inhabitants of the earth are
scorched,
and few men are left.
[7] The wine mourns,
the vine languishes,
all the merry-hearted sigh.

8 The mirth of the tambourines is stilled,
the noise of the jubilant has ceased,
the mirth of the lyre is stilled.
9† No more do they drink wine with singing;
strong drink is bitter to those who drink it.
10†† The wasted city is broken down;
every house is shut up so that none can
enter.
11 There is an outcry in the streets for lack of wine;
all joy has grown dark;
the gladness of the earth is banished.
12† Desolation is left in the city;
the gates are battered into ruins.
13† For thus it shall be in the midst of the earth
among the nations,
as when an olive tree is beaten,
as at the gleaning when the grape harvest is
done.

14†† They lift up their voices, they sing for joy;
over the majesty of the LORD they shout
from the west.[1]
15 Therefore in the east[2] give glory to the LORD;
in the coastlands of the sea, give glory to the
name of the LORD, the God of Israel.
16† From the ends of the earth we hear songs of
praise,
of glory to the Righteous One.
But I say, “I waste away,
I waste away. Woe is me!
For the traitors have betrayed,
with betrayal the traitors have betrayed.”

17 Terror and the pit and the snare[3]
are upon you, O inhabitant of the earth!
18† He who flees at the sound of the terror
shall fall into the pit,
and he who climbs out of the pit
shall be caught in the snare.
For the windows of heaven are opened,
and the foundations of the earth tremble.
19† The earth is utterly broken,
the earth is split apart,
the earth is violently shaken.
20 The earth staggers like a drunken man;
it sways like a hut;
its transgression lies heavy upon it,
and it falls, and will not rise again.

21† On that day the Lord will punish
the host of heaven, in heaven,
and the kings of the earth, on the earth.
22† They will be gathered together
as prisoners in a pit;
they will be shut up in a prison,
and after many days they will be punished.
23† Then the moon will be confounded
and the sun ashamed,
for the Lord of hosts reigns
on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem,
and his glory will be before his elders.

God Will Swallow Up Death Forever

25 [1]†O Lord, you are my God;
I will exalt you; I will praise your name,
for you have done wonderful things,
plans formed of old, faithful and sure.

[2]† For you have made the city a heap,
the fortified city a ruin;
the foreigners' palace is a city no more;
it will never be rebuilt.
[3]† Therefore strong peoples will glorify you;
cities of ruthless nations will fear you.
[4]† For you have been a stronghold to the
poor,
a stronghold to the needy in his distress,
a shelter from the storm and a shade from the
heat;
for the breath of the ruthless is like a storm
against a wall,
[5]† like heat in a dry place.
You subdue the noise of the foreigners;
as heat by the shade of a cloud,
so the song of the ruthless is put down.

[6]† On this mountain the Lord of hosts will make
for all peoples
a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged
wine,
of rich food full of marrow, of aged wine
well refined.
[7]† And he will swallow up on this mountain
the covering that is cast over all peoples,
the veil that is spread over all nations.

[8] † He will swallow up death forever;
and the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces,
and the reproach of his people he will take away from all the earth,
for the Lord has spoken.
[9] † It will be said on that day,
"Behold, this is our God; we have waited for
him, that he might save us.
This is the Lord; we have waited for him;
let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation."
[10] † For the hand of the Lord will rest on this
mountain,
and Moab shall be trampled down in his
place,
as straw is trampled down in a dunghill.[1]
[11] † And he will spread out his hands in the midst
of it
as a swimmer spreads his hands out to
swim,
but the Lord will lay low his pompous pride
together with the skill[2] of his hands.
[12] † And the high fortifications of his walls he will
bring down,
lay low, and cast to the ground, to the dust.

You Keep Him in Perfect Peace

26 [1]† In that day this song will be sung in the land of Judah:

"We have a strong city;
he sets up salvation
as walls and bulwarks.
[2]† Open the gates,
that the righteous nation that keeps faith
may enter in.
[3]† You keep him in perfect peace
whose mind is stayed on you,
because he trusts in you.
[4]† Trust in the Lord forever,
for the Lord God is an everlasting rock.
[5]† For he has humbled
the inhabitants of the height,
the lofty city.
He lays it low, lays it low to the ground,
casts it to the dust.
[6] The foot tramples it,
the feet of the poor,
the steps of the needy."

[7]† The path of the righteous is level;
you make level the way of the righteous.
[8]† In the path of your judgments,
O Lord, we wait for you;
your name and remembrance
are the desire of our soul.
[9]† My soul yearns for you in the night;
my spirit within me earnestly seeks you.
For when your judgments are in the earth,
the inhabitants of the world learn

righteousness.
10 If favor is shown to the wicked,
he does not learn righteousness;
in the land of uprightness he deals corruptly
and does not see the majesty of the LORD.
11 O LORD, your hand is lifted up,
but they do not see it.
Let them see your zeal for your people, and
be ashamed.
Let the fire for your adversaries consume
them.
12 O LORD, you will ordain peace for us,
for you have indeed done for us all our works.
13 O LORD our God,
other lords besides you have ruled over us,
but your name alone we bring to
remembrance.
14 They are dead, they will not live;
they are shades, they will not arise;
to that end you have visited them with
destruction
and wiped out all remembrance of them.
15 But you have increased the nation, O LORD,
you have increased the nation; you are
glorified;
you have enlarged all the borders of the land.

16 O LORD, in distress they sought you;
they poured out a whispered prayer
when your discipline was upon them.
17 Like a pregnant woman
who writhes and cries out in her pangs
when she is near to giving birth,
so were we because of you, O LORD;
18 we were pregnant, we writhed,

but we have given birth to wind.
We have accomplished no deliverance in the
earth,
and the inhabitants of the world have not fallen.
19† Your dead shall live; their bodies shall rise.
You who dwell in the dust, awake and sing
for joy!
For your dew is a dew of light,
and the earth will give birth to the dead.
20†† Come, my people, enter your chambers,
and shut your doors behind you;
hide yourselves for a little while
until the fury has passed by.
21† For behold, the LORD is coming out from his
place
to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity,
and the earth will disclose the blood shed on it,
and will no more cover its slain.

The Redemption of Israel

27 [1]† In that day the Lord with his hard and great and strong sword
will punish Leviathan the fleeing serpent, Leviathan the twisting serpent,
and he will slay the dragon that is in the sea.

[2]† In that day,
"A pleasant vineyard,[1] sing of it!
[3] I, the Lord, am its keeper;
every moment I water it.
Lest anyone punish it,
I keep it night and day;
[4]† I have no wrath.
Would that I had thorns and briers to battle!
I would march against them,
I would burn them up together.
[5]† Or let them lay hold of my protection,
let them make peace with me,
let them make peace with me."

[6]† In days to come[2] Jacob shall take root,
Israel shall blossom and put forth shoots
and fill the whole world with fruit.

[7]† Has he struck them as he struck those who
struck them?
Or have they been slain as their slayers were slain?
[8]† Measure by measure,[3] by exile you contended
with them;
he removed them with his fierce breath[4] in
the day of the east wind.
[9]† Therefore by this the guilt of Jacob will be
atoned for,

and this will be the full fruit of the removaly
of his sin:[5]
when he makes all the stones of the altars
like chalkstones crushed to pieces,
no Asherim or incense altars will remain
standing.
10 † For the fortified city is solitary,
a habitation deserted and forsaken, like the
wilderness;
there the calf grazes;
there it lies down and strips its branches.
11 † When its boughs are dry, they are broken;
women come and make a fire of them.
For this is a people without discernment;
therefore he who made them will not have
compassion on them;
he who formed them will show them no favor.

12 †In that day from the river Euphrates to the Brook of Egypt the Lord will thresh out the grain, and you will be gleaned one by one, O people of Israel. 13 †And in that day a great trumpet will be blown, and those who were lost in the land of Assyria and those who were driven out to the land of Egypt will come and worship the Lord on the holy mountain at Jerusalem.

Judgment on Ephraim and Jerusalem

28 [1]†† Ah, the proud crown of the drunkards of
Ephraim,
and the fading flower of its glorious beauty,
which is on the head of the rich valley of
those overcome with wine!

[2]† Behold, the Lord has one who is mighty and
strong;
like a storm of hail, a destroying tempest,
like a storm of mighty, overflowing waters,
he casts down to the earth with his hand.
[3]† The proud crown of the drunkards of
Ephraim
will be trodden underfoot;
[4]† and the fading flower of its glorious beauty,
which is on the head of the rich valley,
will be like a first-ripe fig before the summer:
when someone sees it, he swallows it
as soon as it is in his hand.

[5]†† In that day the Lord of hosts will be a crown of
glory,[1]
and a diadem of beauty, to the remnant of
his people,
[6]† and a spirit of justice to him who sits in
judgment,
and strength to those who turn back the
battle at the gate.

[7]† These also reel with wine
and stagger with strong drink;

the priest and the prophet reel with strong
drink,
they are swallowed by[2] wine,
they stagger with strong drink,
they reel in vision,
they stumble in giving judgment.
8 For all tables are full of filthy vomit,
with no space left.

9† "To whom will he teach knowledge,
and to whom will he explain the message?
Those who are weaned from the milk,
those taken from the breast?
10† For it is precept upon precept, precept upon
precept,
line upon line, line upon line,
here a little, there a little."

11† For by people of strange lips
and with a foreign tongue
the LORD will speak to this people,
12† to whom he has said,
"This is rest;
give rest to the weary;
and this is repose";
yet they would not hear.
13† And the word of the LORD will be to them
precept upon precept, precept upon precept,
line upon line, line upon line,
here a little, there a little,
that they may go, and fall backward,
and be broken, and snared, and taken.

A Cornerstone in Zion

14 Therefore hear the word of the Lord, you
scoffers,
who rule this people in Jerusalem!
15 Because you have said, “We have made a
covenant with death,
and with Sheol we have an agreement,
when the overwhelming whip passes through
it will not come to us,
for we have made lies our refuge,
and in falsehood we have taken shelter”;
16 therefore thus says the Lord God,
“Behold, I am the one who has laid[1] as a
foundation in Zion,
a stone, a tested stone,
a precious cornerstone, of a sure foundation:
‘Whoever believes will not be in haste.’
17 And I will make justice the line,
and righteousness the plumb line;
and hail will sweep away the refuge of lies,
and waters will overwhelm the shelter.”
18 Then your covenant with death will be
annulled,
and your agreement with Sheol will not
stand;
when the overwhelming scourge passes
through,
you will be beaten down by it.
19 As often as it passes through it will take you;
for morning by morning it will pass through,
by day and by night;
and it will be sheer terror to understand the
message.
20 For the bed is too short to stretch oneself on,

and the covering too narrow to wrap
oneself in.
21† For the LORD will rise up as on Mount
Perazim;
as in the Valley of Gibeon he will be roused;
to do his deed—strange is his deed!
and to work his work—alien is his work!
22† Now therefore do not scoff,
lest your bonds be made strong;
for I have heard a decree of destruction
from the Lord GOD of hosts against the
whole land.

23 Give ear, and hear my voice;
give attention, and hear my speech.
24† Does he who plows for sowing plow continually?
Does he continually open and harrow his
ground?
25† When he has leveled its surface,
does he not scatter dill, sow cumin,
and put in wheat in rows
and barley in its proper place,
and emmer[1] as the border?
26 For he is rightly instructed;
his God teaches him.

27† Dill is not threshed with a threshing sledge,
nor is a cart wheel rolled over cumin,
but dill is beaten out with a stick,
and cumin with a rod.
28† Does one crush grain for bread?
No, he does not thresh it forever;[2]
when he drives his cart wheel over it
with his horses, he does not crush it.

29 † This also comes from the LORD of hosts;
he is wonderful in counsel
and excellent in wisdom.

The Siege of Jerusalem

29 [1]† Ah, Ariel, Ariel,
the city where David encamped!
Add year to year;
let the feasts run their round.

[2]† Yet I will distress Ariel,
and there shall be moaning and lamentation,
and she shall be to me like an Ariel.[3]
[3]† And I will encamp against you all around,
and will besiege you with towers
and I will raise siegeworks against you.
[4]† And you will be brought low; from the earth
you shall speak,
and from the dust your speech will be
bowed down;
your voice shall come from the ground like
the voice of a ghost,
and from the dust your speech shall whisper.

[5]† But the multitude of your foreign foes shall be
like small dust,
and the multitude of the ruthless like passing
chaff.
And in an instant, suddenly,
[6]† you will be visited by the Lord of
hosts
with thunder and with earthquake and great noise,
with whirlwind and tempest, and the flame
of a devouring fire.
[7]†† And the multitude of all the nations that fight
against Ariel,
all that fight against her and her stronghold

and distress her,
shall be like a dream, a vision of the night.
8 † As when a hungry man dreams he is eating
and awakes with his hunger not satisfied,
or as when a thirsty man dreams he is
drinking
and awakes faint, with his thirst not
quenched,
so shall the multitude of all the nations be
that fight against Mount Zion.

9 † Astonish yourselves[1] and be astonished;
blind yourselves and be blind!
Be drunk, but not with wine;
stagger, but not with strong drink!
10 † For the LORD has poured out upon you
a spirit of deep sleep,
and has closed your eyes (the prophets),
and covered your heads (the seers).

11 †And the vision of all this has become to you like the words of a book that is sealed. When men give it to one who can read, saying, “Read this,” he says, “I cannot, for it is sealed.” 12And when they give the book to one who cannot read, saying, “Read this,” he says, “I cannot read.”

13 † And the Lord said:
“Because this people draw near with their
mouth
and honor me with their lips,
while their hearts are far from me,
and their fear of me is a commandment
taught by men,
14 † therefore, behold, I will again
do wonderful things with this people,
with wonder upon wonder;
and the wisdom of their wise men shall

perish,
and the discernment of their discerning men
shall be hidden.”

15 † Ah, you who hide deep from the Lord your
counsel,
whose deeds are in the dark,
and who say, “Who sees us? Who
knows us?”
16 † You turn things upside down!
Shall the potter be regarded as the clay,
that the thing made should say of its maker,
“He did not make me”;
or the thing formed say of him who
formed it,
“He has no understanding”?

17 † Is it not yet a very little while
until Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful
field,
and the fruitful field shall be regarded as a
forest?
18 †† In that day the deaf shall hear
the words of a book,
and out of their gloom and darkness
the eyes of the blind shall see.
19 † The meek shall obtain fresh joy in the Lord,
and the poor among mankind shall exult in
the Holy One of Israel.
20 † For the ruthless shall come to nothing
and the scoffer cease,
and all who watch to do evil shall be cut off,
21 † who by a word make a man out to be an
offender,
and lay a snare for him who reproves in the

gate,
and with an empty plea turn aside him who is in the right.

22 †Therefore thus says the Lord, who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob:

"Jacob shall no more be ashamed,
no more shall his face grow pale.
23 † For when he sees his children,
the work of my hands, in his midst,
they will sanctify my name;
they will sanctify the Holy One of Jacob
and will stand in awe of the God of Israel.
24 † And those who go astray in spirit will come
to understanding,
and those who murmur will accept instruction."

Do Not Go Down to Egypt

30 1 “Ah, stubborn children,” declares the
LORD,

“who carry out a plan, but not mine,
and who make an alliance,[1] but not of my
Spirit,
that they may add sin to sin;
2 who set out to go down to Egypt,
without asking for my direction,
to take refuge in the protection of Pharaoh
and to seek shelter in the shadow of Egypt!
3 Therefore shall the protection of Pharaoh turn
to your shame,
and the shelter in the shadow of Egypt to
your humiliation.
4 For though his officials are at Zoan
and his envoys reach Hanes,
5 everyone comes to shame
through a people that cannot profit them,
that brings neither help nor profit,
but shame and disgrace.”

6 An oracle on the beasts of the Negeb.

Through a land of trouble and anguish,
from where come the lioness and the lion,
the adder and the flying fiery serpent,
they carry their riches on the backs of
donkeys,
and their treasures on the humps of camels,
to a people that cannot profit them.
7 Egypt’s help is worthless and empty;

therefore I have called her
“Rahab who sits still.”

A Rebellious People

8 And now, go, write it before them on a tablet
and inscribe it in a book,
that it may be for the time to come
as a witness forever.[1]
9 For they are a rebellious people,
lying children,
children unwilling to hear
the instruction of the Lord;
10 who say to the seers, “Do not see,”
and to the prophets, “Do not prophesy to us
what is right;
speak to us smooth things,
prophesy illusions,
11 leave the way, turn aside from the path,
let us hear no more about the Holy One of
Israel.”
12 Therefore thus says the Holy One of Israel,
“Because you despise this word
and trust in oppression and perverseness
and rely on them,
13 therefore this iniquity shall be to you
like a breach in a high wall, bulging out, and
about to collapse,
whose breaking comes suddenly, in an
instant;
14 and its breaking is like that of a potter’s
vessel
that is smashed so ruthlessly
that among its fragments not a shard is found
with which to take fire from the hearth,
or to dip up water out of the cistern.”
15 For thus said the Lord God, the Holy One of
Israel,

“In returning[2] and rest you shall be saved;
in quietness and in trust shall be your strength.”
But you were unwilling, 16 † and you said,
“No! We will flee upon horses”;
therefore you shall flee away;
and, “We will ride upon swift steeds”;
therefore your pursuers shall be swift.
17 † A thousand shall flee at the threat of one;
at the threat of five you shall flee,
till you are left
like a flagstaff on the top of a mountain,
like a signal on a hill.

The Lord Will Be Gracious

18 ‡† Therefore the Lord waits to be gracious to you,
and therefore he exalts himself to show
mercy to you.
For the Lord is a God of justice;
blessed are all those who wait for him.

19 †For a people shall dwell in Zion, in Jerusalem; you shall weep no more. He will surely be gracious to you at the sound of your cry. As soon as he hears it, he answers you. 20 †And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, yet your Teacher will not hide himself anymore, but your eyes shall see your Teacher. 21 †And your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, “This is the way, walk in it,” when you turn to the right or when you turn to the left. 22 †Then you will defile your carved idols overlaid with silver and your gold-plated metal images. You will scatter them as unclean things. You will say to them, “Be gone!”

23 ‡† And he will give rain for the seed with which you sow the ground, and bread, the produce of the ground, which will be rich and plenteous. In that day your livestock will graze in large pastures, 24 †and the oxen and the donkeys that work the ground will eat seasoned fodder, which has been winnowed with shovel and fork. 25 †And on every lofty mountain and every high hill there will be brooks running with water, in the day of the great slaughter, when the towers fall. 26 †Moreover, the light of the moon will be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun will be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day when the Lord binds up the brokenness of his people, and heals the wounds inflicted by his blow.

27 † Behold, the name of the Lord comes from afar,
burning with his anger, and in thick rising smoke;[1]
his lips are full of fury,
and his tongue is like a devouring fire;
28 † his breath is like an overflowing stream
that reaches up to the neck;
to sift the nations with the sieve of destruction,

and to place on the jaws of the peoples a bridle that leads
astray.

29 † You shall have a song as in the night when a holy feast is kept, and
gladness of heart, as when one sets out to the sound of the flute to go to the
mountain of the Lord, to the Rock of Israel. 30 And the Lord will cause his
majestic voice to be heard and the descending blow of his arm to be seen, in
furious anger and a flame of devouring fire, with a cloudburst and storm
and hailstones. 31 ‡ † The Assyrians will be terror-stricken at the voice of the
Lord, when he strikes with his rod. 32 † And every stroke of the appointed
staff that the Lord lays on them will be to the sound of tambourines and
lyres. Battling with brandished arm, he will fight with them. 33 † For a
burning place[2] has long been prepared; indeed, for the king it is made
ready, its pyre made deep and wide, with fire and wood in abundance; the
breath of the Lord, like a stream of sulfur, kindles it.

Woe to Those Who Go Down to Egypt

31 [1]†Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help
and rely on horses,
who trust in chariots because they are many
and in horsemen because they are very strong,
but do not look to the Holy One of Israel
or consult the Lord!

[2]† And yet he is wise and brings disaster;
he does not call back his words,
but will arise against the house of the evildoers
and against the helpers of those who work
iniquity.
[3]† The Egyptians are man, and not God,
and their horses are flesh, and not spirit.
When the Lord stretches out his hand,
the helper will stumble, and he who is
helped will fall,
and they will all perish together.

[4]† For thus the Lord said to me,
"As a lion or a young lion growls over his prey,
and when a band of shepherds is called out
against him
he is not terrified by their shouting
or daunted at their noise,
so the Lord of hosts will come down
to fight[1] on Mount Zion and on its hill.
[5]† Like birds hovering, so the Lord of hosts
will protect Jerusalem;
he will protect and deliver it;
he will spare and rescue it."
[6]†Turn to him from whom people[2] have deeply revolted, O children of

Israel. [7]†For in that day everyone shall cast away his idols of silver and his idols of gold, which your hands have sinfully made for you.

[8]† “And the Assyrian shall fall by a sword, not of
man;
and a sword, not of man, shall devour him;
and he shall flee from the sword,
and his young men shall be put to forced
labor.
[9]† His rock shall pass away in terror,
and his officers desert the standard in
panic,”
declares the Lord, whose fire is in Zion,
and whose furnace is in Jerusalem.

A King Will Reign in Righteousness

32 [1]†† Behold, a king will reign in righteousness,
and princes will rule in justice.

[2]† Each will be like a hiding place from the wind,
a shelter from the storm,
like streams of water in a dry place,
like the shade of a great rock in a weary
land.
[3]† Then the eyes of those who see will not be
closed,
and the ears of those who hear will give
attention.
[4]† The heart of the hasty will understand and
know,
and the tongue of the stammerers will
hasten to speak distinctly.
[5]† The fool will no more be called noble,
nor the scoundrel said to be honorable.
[6]† For the fool speaks folly,
and his heart is busy with iniquity,
to practice ungodliness,
to utter error concerning the Lord,
to leave the craving of the hungry unsatisfied,
and to deprive the thirsty of drink.
[7] As for the scoundrel—his devices are evil;
he plans wicked schemes
to ruin the poor with lying words,
even when the plea of the needy is right.
[8] But he who is noble plans noble things,
and on noble things he stands.

Complacent Women Warned of Disaster

9 Rise up, you women who are at ease, hear
my voice;
you complacent daughters, give ear to my
speech.
10 In little more than a year
you will shudder, you complacent women;
for the grape harvest fails,
the fruit harvest will not come.
11 Tremble, you women who are at ease,
shudder, you complacent ones;
strip, and make yourselves bare,
and tie sackcloth around your waist.
12 Beat your breasts for the pleasant fields,
for the fruitful vine,
13 for the soil of my people
growing up in thorns and briers,
yes, for all the joyous houses
in the exultant city.
14 For the palace is forsaken,
the populous city deserted;
the hill and the watchtower
will become dens forever,
a joy of wild donkeys,
a pasture of flocks;
15 until the Spirit is poured upon us from on
high,
and the wilderness becomes a fruitful field,
and the fruitful field is deemed a forest.
16 Then justice will dwell in the wilderness,
and righteousness abide in the fruitful field.
17 And the effect of righteousness will be peace,
and the result of righteousness, quietness
and trust[1] forever.

18 My people will abide in a peaceful habitation,
in secure dwellings, and in quiet resting
places.
19† And it will hail when the forest falls down,
and the city will be utterly laid low.
20† Happy are you who sow beside all waters,
who let the feet of the ox and the donkey
range free.

O Lord, Be Gracious to Us

33 [1]†Ah, you destroyer,
who yourself have not been destroyed,
you traitor,
whom none has betrayed!
When you have ceased to destroy,
you will be destroyed;
and when you have finished betraying,
they will betray you.

[2]† O Lord, be gracious to us; we wait for you.
Be our arm every morning,
our salvation in the time of trouble.
[3]† At the tumultuous noise peoples flee;
when you lift yourself up, nations are
scattered,
[4]† and your spoil is gathered as the caterpillar
gathers;
as locusts leap, it is leapt upon.

[5]† The Lord is exalted, for he dwells on high;
he will fill Zion with justice and righteousness,
[6]† and he will be the stability of your times,
abundance of salvation, wisdom, and
knowledge;
the fear of the Lord is Zion's[1] treasure.

[7]†† Behold, their heroes cry in the streets;
the envoys of peace weep bitterly.
[8] The highways lie waste;
the traveler ceases.
Covenants are broken;

cities[2] are despised;
there is no regard for man.
9 The land mourns and languishes;
Lebanon is confounded and withers away;
Sharon is like a desert,
and Bashan and Carmel shake off their
leaves.

10 "Now I will arise," says the LORD,
"now I will lift myself up;
now I will be exalted.
11 You conceive chaff; you give birth to stubble;
your breath is a fire that will consume you.
12 And the peoples will be as if burned to lime,
like thorns cut down, that are burned in the
fire."

13 Hear, you who are far off, what I have done;
and you who are near, acknowledge my
might.
14 The sinners in Zion are afraid;
trembling has seized the godless:
"Who among us can dwell with the
consuming fire?
Who among us can dwell with everlasting
burnings?"
15 He who walks righteously and speaks uprightly,
who despises the gain of oppressions,
who shakes his hands, lest they hold a bribe,
who stops his ears from hearing of bloodshed
and shuts his eyes from looking on evil,
16 he will dwell on the heights;
his place of defense will be the fortresses of
rocks;

his bread will be given him; his water will be
sure.

17† Your eyes will behold the king in his beauty;
they will see a land that stretches afar.
18† Your heart will muse on the terror:
"Where is he who counted, where is he
who weighed the tribute?
Where is he who counted the towers?"
19† You will see no more the insolent people,
the people of an obscure speech that you
cannot comprehend,
stammering in a tongue that you cannot
understand.
20† Behold Zion, the city of our appointed feasts!
Your eyes will see Jerusalem,
an untroubled habitation, an immovable
tent,
whose stakes will never be plucked up,
nor will any of its cords be broken.
21† But there the LORD in majesty will be for us
a place of broad rivers and streams,
where no galley with oars can go,
nor majestic ship can pass.
22† For the LORD is our judge; the LORD is our
lawgiver;
the LORD is our king; he will save us.

23† Your cords hang loose;
they cannot hold the mast firm in its place
or keep the sail spread out.
Then prey and spoil in abundance will be
divided;
even the lame will take the prey.
24† And no inhabitant will say, "I am sick";

the people who dwell there will be forgiven
their iniquity.

Judgment on the Nations

34 1 Draw near, O nations, to hear,
and give attention, O peoples!
Let the earth hear, and all that fills it;
the world, and all that comes from it.

2† For the Lord is enraged against all the
nations,
and furious against all their host;
he has devoted them to destruction,[1] has
given them over for slaughter.
3† Their slain shall be cast out,
and the stench of their corpses shall rise;
the mountains shall flow with their
blood.
4† All the host of heaven shall rot away,
and the skies roll up like a scroll.
All their host shall fall,
as leaves fall from the vine,
like leaves falling from the fig tree.

5† For my sword has drunk its fill in the heavens;
behold, it descends for judgment upon Edom,
upon the people I have devoted to
destruction.
6† The Lord has a sword; it is sated with blood;
it is gorged with fat,
with the blood of lambs and goats,
with the fat of the kidneys of rams.
For the Lord has a sacrifice in Bozrah,
a great slaughter in the land of Edom.
7† Wild oxen shall fall with them,
and young steers with the mighty bulls.

Their land shall drink its fill of blood,
and their soil shall be gorged with fat.

8 † For the Lord has a day of vengeance,
a year of recompense for the cause of Zion.
9 † And the streams of Edom[1] shall be turned into
pitch,
and her soil into sulfur;
her land shall become burning pitch.
10 † Night and day it shall not be quenched;
its smoke shall go up forever.
From generation to generation it shall lie waste;
none shall pass through it forever and ever.
11 † But the hawk and the porcupine[2] shall
possess it,
the owl and the raven shall dwell in it.
He shall stretch the line of confusion[3] over it,
and the plumb line of emptiness.
12 † Its nobles—there is no one there to call it a
kingdom,
and all its princes shall be nothing.

13 Thorns shall grow over its strongholds,
nettles and thistles in its fortresses.
It shall be the haunt of jackals,
an abode for ostriches.[4]
14 † And wild animals shall meet with hyenas;
the wild goat shall cry to his fellow;
indeed, there the night bird[5] settles
and finds for herself a resting place.

15 † There the owl nests and lays
and hatches and gathers her young in her
shadow;

indeed, there the hawks are gathered,
each one with her mate.
16† Seek and read from the book of the LORD:
Not one of these shall be missing;
none shall be without her mate.
For the mouth of the LORD has commanded,
and his Spirit has gathered them.
17† He has cast the lot for them;
his hand has portioned it out to them with
the line;
they shall possess it forever;
from generation to generation they shall
dwell in it.

The Ransomed Shall Return

35 [1]† The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad;
the desert shall rejoice and blossom like the crocus;

[2]† it shall blossom abundantly
and rejoice with joy and singing.
The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,
the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.
They shall see the glory of the LORD,
the majesty of our God.

[3]† Strengthen the weak hands,
and make firm the feeble knees.
[4]† Say to those who have an anxious heart,
"Be strong; fear not!
Behold, your God
will come with vengeance,
with the recompense of God.
He will come and save you."

[5]† Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;
[6] then shall the lame man leap like a deer,
and the tongue of the mute sing for joy.
For waters break forth in the wilderness,
and streams in the desert;
[7] the burning sand shall become a pool,
and the thirsty ground springs of water;
in the haunt of jackals, where they lie down,
the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

8 And a highway shall be there,
and it shall be called the Way of Holiness;
the unclean shall not pass over it.
It shall belong to those who walk on the way;
even if they are fools, they shall not go astray.[1]
9 No lion shall be there,
nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it;
they shall not be found there,
but the redeemed shall walk there.
10 And the ransomed of the Lord shall return
and come to Zion with singing;
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;
they shall obtain gladness and joy,
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Sennacherib Invades Judah

36 [1]†In the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the fortified cities of Judah and took them. [2]† And the king of Assyria sent the Rabshakeh[2] from Lachish to King Hezekiah at Jerusalem, with a great army. And he stood by the conduit of the upper pool on the highway to the Washer's Field. [3]†And there came out to him Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, who was over the household, and Shebna the secretary, and Joah the son of Asaph, the recorder.

[4]† And the Rabshakeh said to them, "Say to Hezekiah, 'Thus says the great king, the king of Assyria: On what do you rest this trust of yours? [5]Do you think that mere words are strategy and power for war? In whom do you now trust, that you have rebelled against me? [6]†Behold, you are trusting in Egypt, that broken reed of a staff, which will pierce the hand of any man who leans on it. Such is Pharaoh king of Egypt to all who trust in him. [7]†But if you say to me, "We trust in the Lord our God," is it not he whose high places and altars Hezekiah has removed, saying to Judah and to Jerusalem, "You shall worship before this altar"? [8]† Come now, make a wager with my master the king of Assyria: I will give you two thousand horses, if you are able on your part to set riders on them. [9]How then can you repulse a single captain among the least of my master's servants, when you trust in Egypt for chariots and for horsemen? [10]†Moreover, is it without the Lord that I have come up against this land to destroy it? The Lord said to me, Go up against this land and destroy it.'"

[11]†Then Eliakim, Shebna, and Joah said to the Rabshakeh, "Please speak to your servants in Aramaic, for we understand it. Do not speak to us in the language of Judah within the hearing of the people who are on the wall." [12]†But the Rabshakeh said, "Has my master sent me to speak these words to your master and to you, and not to the men sitting on the wall, who are doomed with you to eat their own dung and drink their own urine?"

[13]† Then the Rabshakeh stood and called out in a loud voice in the language of Judah: "Hear the words of the great king, the king of Assyria! [14]Thus says the king: 'Do not let Hezekiah deceive you, for he will not be

able to deliver you. 15Do not let Hezekiah make you trust in the Lord by saying, “The Lord will surely deliver us. This city will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria.” 16†Do not listen to Hezekiah. For thus says the king of Assyria: Make your peace with me[1] and come out to me. Then each one of you will eat of his own vine, and each one of his own fig tree, and each one of you will drink the water of his own cistern, 17†until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of grain and wine, a land of bread and vineyards. 18†Beware lest Hezekiah mislead you by saying, “The Lord will deliver us.” Has any of the gods of the nations delivered his land out of the hand of the king of Assyria? 19† Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim? Have they delivered Samaria out of my hand? 20Who among all the gods of these lands have delivered their lands out of my hand, that the Lord should deliver Jerusalem out of my hand?’”

21† But they were silent and answered him not a word, for the king’s command was, “Do not answer him.” 22†Then Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, who was over the household, and Shebna the secretary, and Joah the son of Asaph, the recorder, came to Hezekiah with their clothes torn, and told him the words of the Rabshakeh.

Hezekiah Seeks Isaiah's Help

37 [1]‡†† As soon as King Hezekiah heard it, he tore his clothes and covered himself with sackcloth and went into the house of the Lord. [2]† And he sent Eliakim, who was over the household, and Shebna the secretary, and the senior priests, covered with sackcloth, to the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz. [3]† They said to him, "Thus says Hezekiah, 'This day is a day of distress, of rebuke, and of disgrace; children have come to the point of birth, and there is no strength to bring them forth. [4]† It may be that the Lord your God will hear the words of the Rabshakeh, whom his master the king of Assyria has sent to mock the living God, and will rebuke the words that the Lord your God has heard; therefore lift up your prayer for the remnant that is left.'"

[5]† When the servants of King Hezekiah came to Isaiah, [6]† Isaiah said to them, "Say to your master, 'Thus says the Lord: Do not be afraid because of the words that you have heard, with which the young men of the king of Assyria have reviled me. [7]† Behold, I will put a spirit in him, so that he shall hear a rumor and return to his own land, and I will make him fall by the sword in his own land.'"

[8]† The Rabshakeh returned, and found the king of Assyria fighting against Libnah, for he had heard that the king had left Lachish. [9]† Now the king heard concerning Tirhakah king of Cush,[1] "He has set out to fight against you." And when he heard it, he sent messengers to Hezekiah, saying, [10]"Thus shall you speak to Hezekiah king of Judah: 'Do not let your God in whom you trust deceive you by promising that Jerusalem will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria. [11]† Behold, you have heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all lands, devoting them to destruction. And shall you be delivered? [12]† Have the gods of the nations delivered them, the nations that my fathers destroyed, Gozan, Haran, Rezeph, and the people of Eden who were in Telassar? [13]† Where is the king of Hamath, the king of Arpad, the king of the city of Sepharvaim, the king of Hena, or the king of Ivvah?'"

Hezekiah's Prayer for Deliverance

14 ‡‡‡Hezekiah received the letter from the hand of the messengers, and
read it; and Hezekiah went up to the house of the Lord, and spread it before
the Lord. 15And Hezekiah prayed to the Lord: 16†"O Lord of hosts, God of
Israel, enthroned above the cherubim, you are the God, you alone, of all the
kingdoms of the earth; you have made heaven and earth. 17†Incline your ear,
O Lord, and hear; open your eyes, O Lord, and see; and hear all the words
of Sennacherib, which he has sent to mock the living God. 18Truly, O Lord,
the kings of Assyria have laid waste all the nations and their lands, 19†and
have cast their gods into the fire. For they were no gods, but the work of
men's hands, wood and stone. Therefore they were destroyed. 20†So now, O
Lord our God, save us from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may
know that you alone are the Lord."

Sennacherib's Fall

21 Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah, saying, "Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: Because you have prayed to me concerning
Sennacherib king of Assyria, 22 this is the word that the Lord has spoken
concerning him:

"'She despises you, she scorns you—
the virgin daughter of Zion;
she wags her head behind you—
the daughter of Jerusalem.

23 "'Whom have you mocked and reviled?
Against whom have you raised your voice
and lifted your eyes to the heights?
Against the Holy One of Israel!
24 By your servants you have mocked the Lord,
and you have said, With my many chariots
I have gone up the heights of the mountains,
to the far recesses of Lebanon,
to cut down its tallest cedars,
its choicest cypresses,
to come to its remotest height,
its most fruitful forest.
25 I dug wells
and drank waters,
to dry up with the sole of my foot
all the streams of Egypt.

26 "'Have you not heard
that I determined it long ago?
I planned from days of old
what now I bring to pass,
that you should make fortified cities

crash into heaps of ruins,
27† while their inhabitants, shorn of strength,
are dismayed and confounded,
and have become like plants of the field
and like tender grass,
like grass on the housetops,
blighted[1] before it is grown.

28† “‘I know your sitting down
and your going out and coming in,
and your raging against me.
29† Because you have raged against me
and your complacency has come to my ears,
I will put my hook in your nose
and my bit in your mouth,
and I will turn you back on the way
by which you came.’

30†“And this shall be the sign for you: this year you shall eat what grows of itself, and in the second year what springs from that. Then in the third year sow and reap, and plant vineyards, and eat their fruit. 31 † And the surviving remnant of the house of Judah shall again take root downward and bear fruit upward. 32†For out of Jerusalem shall go a remnant, and out of Mount Zion a band of survivors. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

33†“Therefore thus says the Lord concerning the king of Assyria: He shall not come into this city or shoot an arrow there or come before it with a shield or cast up a siege mound against it. 34By the way that he came, by the same he shall return, and he shall not come into this city, declares the Lord. 35†For I will defend this city to save it, for my own sake and for the sake of my servant David.”

36†And the angel of the Lord went out and struck down a hundred and eighty-five thousand in the camp of the Assyrians. And when people arose early in the morning, behold, these were all dead bodies. 37 † Then Sennacherib king of Assyria departed and returned home and lived at

Nineveh. [38] † And as he was worshiping in the house of Nisroch his god, Adrammelech and Sharezer, his sons, struck him down with the sword. And after they escaped into the land of Ararat, Esarhaddon his son reigned in his place.

Hezekiah's Sickness and Recovery

38 [1]In those days Hezekiah became sick and was at the point of death. And Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz came to him, and said to him, "Thus says the Lord: Set your house in order, for you shall die, you shall not recover."[1] [2]Then Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed to the Lord, [3]and said, "Please, O Lord, remember how I have walked before you in faithfulness and with a whole heart, and have done what is good in your sight." And Hezekiah wept bitterly.

[4]Then the word of the Lord came to Isaiah: [5]"Go and say to Hezekiah, Thus says the Lord, the God of David your father: I have heard your prayer; I have seen your tears. Behold, I will add fifteen years to your life.[2] [6]I will deliver you and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria, and will defend this city.

[7]"This shall be the sign to you from the Lord, that the Lord will do this thing that he has promised: [8]Behold, I will make the shadow cast by the declining sun on the dial of Ahaz turn back ten steps." So the sun turned back on the dial the ten steps by which it had declined.[3]

[9]A writing of Hezekiah king of Judah, after he had been sick and had recovered from his sickness:

[10] I said, In the middle[4] of my days
I must depart;
I am consigned to the gates of Sheol
for the rest of my years.
[11] I said, I shall not see the Lord,
the Lord in the land of the living;
I shall look on man no more
among the inhabitants of the world.
[12] My dwelling is plucked up and removed
from me
like a shepherd's tent;
like a weaver I have rolled up my life;

he cuts me off from the loom;
from day to night you bring me to an end;
13† I calmed myself[5] until morning;
like a lion he breaks all my bones;
from day to night you bring me to an end.

14† Like a swallow or a crane I chirp;
I moan like a dove.
My eyes are weary with looking upward.
O Lord, I am oppressed; be my pledge of
safety!
15† What shall I say? For he has spoken to me,
and he himself has done it.
I walk slowly all my years
because of the bitterness of my soul.

16† O Lord, by these things men live,
and in all these is the life of my spirit.
Oh restore me to health and make me live!
17† Behold, it was for my welfare
that I had great bitterness;
but in love you have delivered my life
from the pit of destruction,
for you have cast all my sins
behind your back.
18† For Sheol does not thank you;
death does not praise you;
those who go down to the pit do not hope
for your faithfulness.
19† The living, the living, he thanks you,
as I do this day;
the father makes known to the children
your faithfulness.

[20]† The Lord will save me,
and we will play my music on stringed
instruments
all the days of our lives,
at the house of the Lord.

[21]†Now Isaiah had said, “Let them take a cake of figs and apply it to the boil, that he may recover.” [22]†Hezekiah also had said, “What is the sign that I shall go up to the house of the Lord?”

Envoys from Babylon

39 [1] † At that time Merodach-baladan the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent envoys with letters and a present to Hezekiah, for he heard that he had been sick and had recovered. [2] † And Hezekiah welcomed them gladly. And he showed them his treasure house, the silver, the gold, the spices, the precious oil, his whole armory, all that was found in his storehouses. There was nothing in his house or in all his realm that Hezekiah did not show them. [3] ‡ Then Isaiah the prophet came to King Hezekiah, and said to him, "What did these men say? And from where did they come to you?" Hezekiah said, "They have come to me from a far country, from Babylon." [4] He said, "What have they seen in your house?" Hezekiah answered, "They have seen all that is in my house. There is nothing in my storehouses that I did not show them."

[5] † Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, "Hear the word of the Lord of hosts: [6] ‡ Behold, the days are coming, when all that is in your house, and that which your fathers have stored up till this day, shall be carried to Babylon. Nothing shall be left, says the Lord. [7] † And some of your own sons, who will come from you, whom you will father, shall be taken away, and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon." [8] † Then said Hezekiah to Isaiah, "The word of the Lord that you have spoken is good." For he thought, "There will be peace and security in my days."

Comfort for God's People

40 [1]††Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.

[2]† Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and cry to her
that her warfare[1] is ended,
that her iniquity is pardoned,
that she has received from the LORD's hand
double for all her sins.

[3]† A voice cries:[1]
"In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD;
make straight in the desert a highway
for our God.
[4] Every valley shall be lifted up,
and every mountain and hill be made low;
the uneven ground shall become level,
and the rough places a plain.
[5]† And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,
and all flesh shall see it together,
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

The Word of God Stands Forever

6 A voice says, “Cry!”
And I said,[2] “What shall I cry?”
All flesh is grass,
and all its beauty[3] is like the flower of the
field.
7 The grass withers, the flower fades
when the breath of the Lord blows on it;
surely the people are grass.
8 The grass withers, the flower fades,
but the word of our God will stand forever.

The Greatness of God

9 Get you up to a high mountain,
O Zion, herald of good news;[4]
lift up your voice with strength,
O Jerusalem, herald of good news;[5]
lift it up, fear not;
say to the cities of Judah,
"Behold your God!"
10 Behold, the Lord GOD comes with might,
and his arm rules for him;
behold, his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him.
11 He will tend his flock like a shepherd;
he will gather the lambs in his arms;
he will carry them in his bosom,
and gently lead those that are with young.

12 Who has measured the waters in the hollow
of his hand
and marked off the heavens with a span,
enclosed the dust of the earth in a measure
and weighed the mountains in scales
and the hills in a balance?
13 Who has measured[1] the Spirit of the LORD,
or what man shows him his counsel?
14 Whom did he consult,
and who made him understand?
Who taught him the path of justice,
and taught him knowledge,
and showed him the way of understanding?
15 Behold, the nations are like a drop from a
bucket,
and are accounted as the dust on the scales;

behold, he takes up the coastlands like fine
dust.
16 Lebanon would not suffice for fuel,
nor are its beasts enough for a burnt offering.
17† All the nations are as nothing before him,
they are accounted by him as less than
nothing and emptiness.

18 To whom then will you liken God,
or what likeness compare with him?
19† An idol! A craftsman casts it,
and a goldsmith overlays it with gold
and casts for it silver chains.
20† He who is too impoverished for an offering
chooses wood[2] that will not rot;
he seeks out a skillful craftsman
to set up an idol that will not move.

21† Do you not know? Do you not hear?
Has it not been told you from the beginning?
Have you not understood from the
foundations of the earth?
22† It is he who sits above the circle of the earth,
and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers;
who stretches out the heavens like a curtain,
and spreads them like a tent to dwell in;
23† who brings princes to nothing,
and makes the rulers of the earth as
emptiness.

24† Scarcely are they planted, scarcely sown,
scarcely has their stem taken root in the
earth,
when he blows on them, and they wither,

and the tempest carries them off like
stubble.

25† To whom then will you compare me,
that I should be like him? says the Holy One.
26† Lift up your eyes on high and see:
who created these?
He who brings out their host by number,
calling them all by name,
by the greatness of his might,
and because he is strong in power
not one is missing.

27† Why do you say, O Jacob,
and speak, O Israel,
"My way is hidden from the Lord,
and my right is disregarded by my God"?
28† Have you not known? Have you not heard?
The Lord is the everlasting God,
the Creator of the ends of the earth.
He does not faint or grow weary;
his understanding is unsearchable.
29 He gives power to the faint,
and to him who has no might he increases
strength.
30 Even youths shall faint and be weary,
and young men shall fall exhausted;
31† but they who wait for the Lord shall renew their
strength;
they shall mount up with wings like eagles;
they shall run and not be weary;
they shall walk and not faint.

Fear Not, For I Am with You

41 [1]†† Listen to me in silence,
O coastlands;
let the peoples renew their strength;
let them approach, then let them speak;
let us together draw near for judgment.

[2]† Who stirred up one from the east
whom victory meets at every step?[1]
He gives up nations before him,
so that he tramples kings underfoot;
he makes them like dust with his sword,
like driven stubble with his bow.
[3]† He pursues them and passes on safely,
by paths his feet have not trod.
[4]† Who has performed and done this,
calling the generations from the beginning?
I, the Lord, the first,
and with the last; I am he.

[5]† The coastlands have seen and are afraid;
the ends of the earth tremble;
they have drawn near and come.
[6]† Everyone helps his neighbor
and says to his brother, "Be strong!"
[7] The craftsman strengthens the goldsmith,
and he who smooths with the hammer him
who strikes the anvil,
saying of the soldering, "It is good";
and they strengthen it with nails so that it
cannot be moved.

[8] But you, Israel, my servant,
Jacob, whom I have chosen,
the offspring of Abraham, my friend;
[9] you whom I took from the ends of the earth,
and called from its farthest corners,
saying to you, “You are my servant,
I have chosen you and not cast you off”;
[10] fear not, for I am with you;
be not dismayed, for I am your God;
I will strengthen you, I will help you,
I will uphold you with my righteous right
hand.

[11] Behold, all who are incensed against you
shall be put to shame and confounded;
those who strive against you
shall be as nothing and shall perish.
[12] You shall seek those who contend with you,
but you shall not find them;
those who war against you
shall be as nothing at all.
[13] For I, the Lord your God,
hold your right hand;
it is I who say to you, “Fear not,
I am the one who helps you.”

[14] Fear not, you worm Jacob,
you men of Israel!
I am the one who helps you, declares the Lord;
your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel.
[15] Behold, I make of you a threshing sledge,
new, sharp, and having teeth;
you shall thresh the mountains and crush them,
and you shall make the hills like chaff;
[16] you shall winnow them, and the wind shall

carry them away,
and the tempest shall scatter them.
And you shall rejoice in the Lord;
in the Holy One of Israel you shall glory.

17 ‡† When the poor and needy seek water,
and there is none,
and their tongue is parched with thirst,
I the Lord will answer them;
I the God of Israel will not forsake them.
18 † I will open rivers on the bare heights,
and fountains in the midst of the valleys.
I will make the wilderness a pool of water,
and the dry land springs of water.
19 I will put in the wilderness the cedar,
the acacia, the myrtle, and the olive.
I will set in the desert the cypress,
the plane and the pine together,
20 † that they may see and know,
may consider and understand together,
that the hand of the Lord has done this,
the Holy One of Israel has created it.

The Futility of Idols

21 Set forth your case, says the Lord;
bring your proofs, says the King of Jacob.
22 Let them bring them, and tell us
what is to happen.
Tell us the former things, what they are,
that we may consider them,
that we may know their outcome;
or declare to us the things to come.
23 Tell us what is to come hereafter,
that we may know that you are gods;
do good, or do harm,
that we may be dismayed and terrified.[1]
24 Behold, you are nothing,
and your work is less than nothing;
an abomination is he who chooses you.

25 I stirred up one from the north, and he has come,
from the rising of the sun, and he shall call
upon my name;
he shall trample on rulers as on mortar,
as the potter treads clay.
26 Who declared it from the beginning, that we
might know,
and beforehand, that we might say, “He is
right”?
There was none who declared it, none who
proclaimed,
none who heard your words.
27 I was the first to say[1] to Zion, “Behold, here
they are!”
and I give to Jerusalem a herald of good news.
28 But when I look, there is no one;

among these there is no counselor
who, when I ask, gives an answer.
29† Behold, they are all a delusion;
their works are nothing;
their metal images are empty wind.

The Lord's Chosen Servant

42 [1]†††Behold my servant, whom I uphold,
my chosen, in whom my soul delights;
I have put my Spirit upon him;
he will bring forth justice to the nations.

[2]† He will not cry aloud or lift up his voice,
or make it heard in the street;
[3]† a bruised reed he will not break,
and a faintly burning wick he will not quench;
he will faithfully bring forth justice.
[4]† He will not grow faint or be discouraged[2]
till he has established justice in the earth;
and the coastlands wait for his law.

[5]††† Thus says God, the Lord,
who created the heavens and stretched
them out,
who spread out the earth and what comes
from it,
who gives breath to the people on it
and spirit to those who walk in it:
[6]† "I am the Lord; I have called you in
righteousness;
I will take you by the hand and keep you;
I will give you as a covenant for the people,
a light for the nations,
[7]† to open the eyes that are blind,
to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon,
from the prison those who sit in darkness.
[8]† I am the Lord; that is my name;
my glory I give to no other,
nor my praise to carved idols.

9† Behold, the former things have come to pass,
and new things I now declare;
before they spring forth
I tell you of them.”

Sing to the Lord a New Song

10 Sing to the Lord a new song,
his praise from the end of the earth,
you who go down to the sea, and all that
fills it,
the coastlands and their inhabitants.
11 Let the desert and its cities lift up their voice,
the villages that Kedar inhabits;
let the habitants of Sela sing for joy,
let them shout from the top of the
mountains.
12 Let them give glory to the Lord,
and declare his praise in the coastlands.
13 The Lord goes out like a mighty man,
like a man of war he stirs up his zeal;
he cries out, he shouts aloud,
he shows himself mighty against his foes.

14 For a long time I have held my peace;
I have kept still and restrained myself;
now I will cry out like a woman in labor;
I will gasp and pant.
15 I will lay waste mountains and hills,
and dry up all their vegetation;
I will turn the rivers into islands,[1]
and dry up the pools.
16 And I will lead the blind
in a way that they do not know,
in paths that they have not known
I will guide them.
I will turn the darkness before them into light,
the rough places into level ground.
These are the things I do,

and I do not forsake them.
17† They are turned back and utterly put to shame,
who trust in carved idols,
who say to metal images,
"You are our gods."

Israel's Failure to Hear and See

18 Hear, you deaf,
and look, you blind, that you may see!
19 Who is blind but my servant,
or deaf as my messenger whom I send?
Who is blind as my dedicated one,[2]
or blind as the servant of the Lord?
20 He sees many things, but does not observe them;
his ears are open, but he does not hear.
21 The Lord was pleased, for his righteousness' sake,
to magnify his law and make it glorious.
22 But this is a people plundered and looted;
they are all of them trapped in holes
and hidden in prisons;
they have become plunder with none to rescue,
spoil with none to say, "Restore!"
23 Who among you will give ear to this,
will attend and listen for the time to come?
24 Who gave up Jacob to the looter,
and Israel to the plunderers?
Was it not the Lord, against whom we have sinned,
in whose ways they would not walk,
and whose law they would not obey?
25 So he poured on him the heat of his anger
and the might of battle;
it set him on fire all around, but he did not understand;
it burned him up, but he did not take it to heart.

Israel's Only Savior

43 [1]†But now thus says the Lord,
he who created you, O Jacob,
he who formed you, O Israel:
"Fear not, for I have redeemed you;
I have called you by name, you are mine.

[2]† When you pass through the waters, I will be
with you;
and through the rivers, they shall not
overwhelm you;
when you walk through fire you shall not be
burned,
and the flame shall not consume you.
[3]† For I am the Lord your God,
the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.
I give Egypt as your ransom,
Cush and Seba in exchange for you.
[4]† Because you are precious in my eyes,
and honored, and I love you,
I give men in return for you,
peoples in exchange for your life.
[5]†† Fear not, for I am with you;
I will bring your offspring from the east,
and from the west I will gather you.
[6] I will say to the north, Give up,
and to the south, Do not withhold;
bring my sons from afar
and my daughters from the end of the earth,
[7]† everyone who is called by my name,
whom I created for my glory,
whom I formed and made."

[8] Bring out the people who are blind, yet have
eyes,
who are deaf, yet have ears!
[9] All the nations gather together,
and the peoples assemble.
Who among them can declare this,
and show us the former things?
Let them bring their witnesses to prove them right,
and let them hear and say, It is true.
[10] "You are my witnesses," declares the Lord,
"and my servant whom I have chosen,
that you may know and believe me
and understand that I am he.
Before me no god was formed,
nor shall there be any after me.
[11] I, I am the Lord,
and besides me there is no savior.
[12] I declared and saved and proclaimed,
when there was no strange god among you;
and you are my witnesses," declares the
Lord, "and I am God.
[13] Also henceforth I am he;
there is none who can deliver from my hand;
I work, and who can turn it back?"

[14] Thus says the Lord,
your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel:
"For your sake I send to Babylon
and bring them all down as fugitives,
even the Chaldeans, in the ships in which
they rejoice.
[15] I am the Lord, your Holy One,
the Creator of Israel, your King."

16† Thus says the Lord,
who makes a way in the sea,
a path in the mighty waters,
17 who brings forth chariot and horse,
army and warrior;
they lie down, they cannot rise,
they are extinguished, quenched like a
wick:
18† "Remember not the former things,
nor consider the things of old.
19†† Behold, I am doing a new thing;
now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?
I will make a way in the wilderness
and rivers in the desert.
20† The wild beasts will honor me,
the jackals and the ostriches,
for I give water in the wilderness,
rivers in the desert,
to give drink to my chosen people,
21 the people whom I formed for myself
that they might declare my praise.

22†† "Yet you did not call upon me, O Jacob;
but you have been weary of me,
O Israel!
23† You have not brought me your sheep for burnt
offerings,
or honored me with your sacrifices.
I have not burdened you with offerings,
or wearied you with frankincense.
24† You have not bought me sweet cane with
money,
or satisfied me with the fat of your sacrifices.
But you have burdened me with your sins;
you have wearied me with your iniquities.

25† “I, I am he
who blots out your transgressions for my
own sake,
and I will not remember your sins.
26† Put me in remembrance; let us argue
together;
set forth your case, that you may be proved right.
27† Your first father sinned,
and your mediators transgressed against me.
28† Therefore I will profane the princes of the
sanctuary,
and deliver Jacob to utter destruction
and Israel to reviling.

Israel the Lord's Chosen

44 [1]†† "But now hear, O Jacob my servant,
Israel whom I have chosen!

[2]† Thus says the Lord who made you,
who formed you from the womb and will help you:
Fear not, O Jacob my servant,
Jeshurun whom I have chosen.
[3]† For I will pour water on the thirsty land,
and streams on the dry ground;
I will pour my Spirit upon your offspring,
and my blessing on your descendants.
[4]† They shall spring up among the grass
like willows by flowing streams.
[5]† This one will say, 'I am the Lord's,'
another will call on the name of Jacob,
and another will write on his hand, 'The Lord's,'
and name himself by the name of Israel."

Besides Me There Is No God

6 Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel
and his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts:
"I am the first and I am the last;
besides me there is no god.
7 Who is like me? Let him proclaim it.[1]
Let him declare and set it before me,
since I appointed an ancient people.
Let them declare what is to come, and what
will happen.
8 Fear not, nor be afraid;
have I not told you from of old and declared
it?
And you are my witnesses!
Is there a God besides me?
There is no Rock; I know not any."

The Folly of Idolatry

9 ‡‡†All who fashion idols are nothing, and the things they delight in do
not profit. Their witnesses neither see nor know, that they may be put to
shame. 10Who fashions a god or casts an idol that is profitable for nothing?
11 †Behold, all his companions shall be put to shame, and the craftsmen are
only human. Let them all assemble, let them stand forth. They shall be
terrified; they shall be put to shame together.
12 †The ironsmith takes a cutting tool and works it over the coals. He
fashions it with hammers and works it with his strong arm. He becomes
hungry, and his strength fails; he drinks no water and is faint. 13 †The
carpenter stretches a line; he marks it out with a pencil. He shapes it with
planes and marks it with a compass. He shapes it into the figure of a man,
with the beauty of a man, to dwell in a house. 14†He cuts down cedars, or he
chooses a cypress tree or an oak and lets it grow strong among the trees of
the forest. He plants a cedar and the rain nourishes it. 15‡†Then it becomes
fuel for a man. He takes a part of it and warms himself; he kindles a fire and
bakes bread. Also he makes a god and worships it; he makes it an idol and
falls down before it. 16Half of it he burns in the fire. Over the half he eats
meat; he roasts it and is satisfied. Also he warms himself and says, “Aha, I
am warm, I have seen the fire!” 17And the rest of it he makes into a god, his
idol, and falls down to it and worships it. He prays to it and says, “Deliver
me, for you are my god!”
18 †They know not, nor do they discern, for he has shut their eyes, so that
they cannot see, and their hearts, so that they cannot understand. 19†No one
considers, nor is there knowledge or discernment to say, “Half of it I burned
in the fire; I also baked bread on its coals; I roasted meat and have eaten.
And shall I make the rest of it an abomination? Shall I fall down before a
block of wood?” 20†He feeds on ashes; a deluded heart has led him astray,
and he cannot deliver himself or say, “Is there not a lie in my right hand?”

The Lord Redeems Israel

21 ‡† Remember these things, O Jacob,
and Israel, for you are my servant;
I formed you; you are my servant;
O Israel, you will not be forgotten by me.
22 † I have blotted out your transgressions like a
cloud
and your sins like mist;
return to me, for I have redeemed you.

23 † Sing, O heavens, for the Lord has done it;
shout, O depths of the earth;
break forth into singing, O mountains,
O forest, and every tree in it!
For the Lord has redeemed Jacob,
and will be glorified[1] in Israel.

24 † Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer,
who formed you from the womb:
"I am the Lord, who made all things,
who alone stretched out the heavens,
who spread out the earth by myself,
25 † who frustrates the signs of liars
and makes fools of diviners,
who turns wise men back
and makes their knowledge foolish,
26 † who confirms the word of his servant
and fulfills the counsel of his messengers,
who says of Jerusalem, 'She shall be
inhabited,'
and of the cities of Judah, 'They shall be built,
and I will raise up their ruins';

[27]†† who says to the deep, ‘Be dry;
I will dry up your rivers’;
[28]† who says of Cyrus, ‘He is my shepherd,
and he shall fulfill all my purpose’;
saying of Jerusalem, ‘She shall be built,’
and of the temple, ‘Your foundation shall be
laid.’”

Cyrus, God's Instrument

45 [1]†† Thus says the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus,
whose right hand I have grasped,
to subdue nations before him
and to loose the belts of kings,
to open doors before him
that gates may not be closed:

[2]† "I will go before you
and level the exalted places,[1]
I will break in pieces the doors of bronze
and cut through the bars of iron,
[3] I will give you the treasures of darkness
and the hoards in secret places,
that you may know that it is I, the Lord,
the God of Israel, who call you by your
name.
[4]† For the sake of my servant Jacob,
and Israel my chosen,
I call you by your name,
I name you, though you do not know me.
[5]† I am the Lord, and there is no other,
besides me there is no God;
I equip you, though you do not know me,
[6]† that people may know, from the rising of the
sun
and from the west, that there is none
besides me;
I am the Lord, and there is no other.
[7]† I form light and create darkness,
I make well-being and create calamity,
I am the Lord, who does all these
things.

8† “Shower, O heavens, from above,
and let the clouds rain down
righteousness;
let the earth open, that salvation and
righteousness may bear fruit;
let the earth cause them both to sprout;
I the Lord have created it.

9† “Woe to him who strives with him who
formed him,
a pot among earthen pots!
Does the clay say to him who forms it, ‘What
are you making?’
or ‘Your work has no handles’?
10† Woe to him who says to a father, ‘What are
you begetting?’
or to a woman, ‘With what are you in
labor?’”

11† Thus says the Lord,
the Holy One of Israel, and the one who
formed him:
“Ask me of things to come;
will you command me concerning my
children and the work of my hands?[2]
12† I made the earth
and created man on it;
it was my hands that stretched out the
heavens,
and I commanded all their host.
13† I have stirred him up in righteousness,
and I will make all his ways level;
he shall build my city
and set my exiles free,

not for price or reward,”
says the Lord of hosts.

The Lord, the Only Savior

14 Thus says the Lord:
"The wealth of Egypt and the merchandise of
Cush,
and the Sabeans, men of stature,
shall come over to you and be yours;
they shall follow you;
they shall come over in chains and bow
down to you.
They will plead with you, saying:
'Surely God is in you, and there is no other,
no god besides him.'"

15 Truly, you are a God who hides himself,
O God of Israel, the Savior.
16 All of them are put to shame and
confounded;
the makers of idols go in confusion
together.
17 But Israel is saved by the Lord
with everlasting salvation;
you shall not be put to shame or confounded
to all eternity.

18 For thus says the Lord,
who created the heavens
(he is God!),
who formed the earth and made it
(he established it;
he did not create it empty,
he formed it to be inhabited!):
"I am the Lord, and there is no other.
19 I did not speak in secret,

in a land of darkness;
I did not say to the offspring of Jacob,
'Seek me in vain.'[1]
I the LORD speak the truth;
I declare what is right.

20 "Assemble yourselves and come;
draw near together,
you survivors of the nations!
They have no knowledge
who carry about their wooden idols,
and keep on praying to a god
that cannot save.
21 Declare and present your case;
let them take counsel together!
Who told this long ago?
Who declared it of old?
Was it not I, the LORD?
And there is no other god besides me,
a righteous God and a Savior;
there is none besides me.

22 "Turn to me and be saved,
all the ends of the earth!
For I am God, and there is no other.
23 By myself I have sworn;
from my mouth has gone out in
righteousness
a word that shall not return:
'To me every knee shall bow,
every tongue shall swear allegiance.'[2]

24 "Only in the LORD, it shall be said of me,
are righteousness and strength;

to him shall come and be ashamed
all who were incensed against him.
25† In the LORD all the offspring of Israel
shall be justified and shall glory.”

The Idols of Babylon and the One True God

46 [1]†Bel bows down; Nebo stoops;
their idols are on beasts and livestock;
these things you carry are borne
as burdens on weary beasts.

[2]† They stoop; they bow down together;
they cannot save the burden,
but themselves go into captivity.

[3]†† "Listen to me, O house of Jacob,
all the remnant of the house of Israel,
who have been borne by me from before your birth,
carried from the womb;
[4]† even to your old age I am he,
and to gray hairs I will carry you.
I have made, and I will bear;
I will carry and will save.

[5] "To whom will you liken me and make me equal,
and compare me, that we may be alike?
[6]† Those who lavish gold from the purse,
and weigh out silver in the scales,
hire a goldsmith, and he makes it into a god;
then they fall down and worship!
[7] They lift it to their shoulders, they carry it,
they set it in its place, and it stands there;
it cannot move from its place.
If one cries to it, it does not answer
or save him from his trouble.

8 “Remember this and stand firm,
recall it to mind, you transgressors,
9 remember the former things of old;
for I am God, and there is no other;
I am God, and there is none like me,
10 declaring the end from the beginning
and from ancient times things not yet done,
saying, ‘My counsel shall stand,
and I will accomplish all my purpose,’
11 calling a bird of prey from the east,
the man of my counsel from a far country.
I have spoken, and I will bring it to pass;
I have purposed, and I will do it.

12 “Listen to me, you stubborn of heart,
you who are far from righteousness:
13 I bring near my righteousness; it is not far off,
and my salvation will not delay;
I will put salvation in Zion,
for Israel my glory.”

The Humiliation of Babylon

47 [1]†Come down and sit in the dust,
O virgin daughter of Babylon;
sit on the ground without a throne,
O daughter of the Chaldeans!
For you shall no more be called
tender and delicate.

[2]† Take the millstones and grind flour,
put off your veil,
strip off your robe, uncover your legs,
pass through the rivers.
[3]† Your nakedness shall be uncovered,
and your disgrace shall be seen.
I will take vengeance,
and I will spare no one.
[4]† Our Redeemer—the Lord of hosts is his name—
is the Holy One of Israel.

[5]† Sit in silence, and go into darkness,
O daughter of the Chaldeans;
for you shall no more be called
the mistress of kingdoms.
[6]† I was angry with my people;
I profaned my heritage;
I gave them into your hand;
you showed them no mercy;
on the aged you made your yoke exceedingly heavy.
[7] You said, “I shall be mistress forever,”
so that you did not lay these things to heart
or remember their end.

[8] Now therefore hear this, you lover of
pleasures,
who sit securely,
who say in your heart,
"I am, and there is no one besides me;
I shall not sit as a widow
or know the loss of children":
[9] These two things shall come to you
in a moment, in one day;
the loss of children and widowhood
shall come upon you in full measure,
in spite of your many sorceries
and the great power of your enchantments.

[10] You felt secure in your wickedness,
you said, "No one sees me";
your wisdom and your knowledge led you
astray,
and you said in your heart,
"I am, and there is no one besides me."
[11] But evil shall come upon you,
which you will not know how to charm away;
disaster shall fall upon you,
for which you will not be able to atone;
and ruin shall come upon you suddenly,
of which you know nothing.

[12] Stand fast in your enchantments
and your many sorceries,
with which you have labored from your
youth;
perhaps you may be able to succeed;
perhaps you may inspire terror.
[13] You are wearied with your many counsels;
let them stand forth and save you,

those who divide the heavens,
who gaze at the stars,
who at the new moons make known
what shall come upon you.

14† Behold, they are like stubble;
the fire consumes them;
they cannot deliver themselves
from the power of the flame.
No coal for warming oneself is this,
no fire to sit before!
15 Such to you are those with whom you have
labored,
who have done business with you from your
youth;
they wander about, each in his own direction;
there is no one to save you.

Israel Refined for God's Glory

48 [1]†† Hear this, O house of Jacob,
who are called by the name of Israel,
and who came from the waters of Judah,
who swear by the name of the Lord
and confess the God of Israel,
but not in truth or right.

[2]† For they call themselves after the holy city,
and stay themselves on the God of Israel;
the Lord of hosts is his name.

[3]† "The former things I declared of old;
they went out from my mouth, and I
announced them;
then suddenly I did them, and they came to
pass.
[4]† Because I know that you are obstinate,
and your neck is an iron sinew
and your forehead brass,
[5] I declared them to you from of old,
before they came to pass I announced them
to you,
lest you should say, 'My idol did them,
my carved image and my metal image
commanded them.'

[6]† "You have heard; now see all this;
and will you not declare it?
From this time forth I announce to you new
things,
hidden things that you have not known.

7 They are created now, not long ago;
before today you have never heard of them,
lest you should say, ‘Behold, I knew them.’
8 † You have never heard, you have never
known,
from of old your ear has not been opened.
For I knew that you would surely deal
treacherously,
and that from before birth you were called a
rebel.

9 † “For my name’s sake I defer my anger,
for the sake of my praise I restrain it for you,
that I may not cut you off.
10 † Behold, I have refined you, but not as silver;
I have tried[1] you in the furnace of affliction.
11 † For my own sake, for my own sake, I do it,
for how should my name[2] be profaned?
My glory I will not give to another.

The Lord's Call to Israel

12 ‡‡‡ "Listen to me, O Jacob,
and Israel, whom I called!
I am he; I am the first,
and I am the last.
13 ‡ My hand laid the foundation of the earth,
and my right hand spread out the heavens;
when I call to them,
they stand forth together.

14 ‡ "Assemble, all of you, and listen!
Who among them has declared these things?
The Lord loves him;
he shall perform his purpose on Babylon,
and his arm shall be against the Chaldeans.
15 I, even I, have spoken and called him;
I have brought him, and he will prosper in
his way.
16 ‡ Draw near to me, hear this:
from the beginning I have not spoken in
secret,
from the time it came to be I have been
there."
And now the Lord God has sent me, and his
Spirit.

17 ‡ Thus says the Lord,
your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel:
"I am the Lord your God,
who teaches you to profit,
who leads you in the way you should go.
18 ‡ Oh that you had paid attention to my
commandments!

Then your peace would have been like a
river,
and your righteousness like the waves of
the sea;
19 your offspring would have been like the sand,
and your descendants like its grains;
their name would never be cut off
or destroyed from before me.”

20 Go out from Babylon, flee from Chaldea,
declare this with a shout of joy, proclaim it,
send it out to the end of the earth;
say, “The Lord has redeemed his servant Jacob!”
21 They did not thirst when he led them through
the deserts;
he made water flow for them from the rock;
he split the rock and the water gushed out.

22 “There is no peace,” says the Lord, “for the
wicked.”

The Servant of the Lord

49 [1]†† Listen to me, O coastlands,
and give attention, you peoples from afar.
The Lord called me from the womb,
from the body of my mother he named my name.

[2]† He made my mouth like a sharp sword;
in the shadow of his hand he hid me;
he made me a polished arrow;
in his quiver he hid me away.
[3]† And he said to me, "You are my servant,
Israel, in whom I will be glorified."[1]
[4]† But I said, "I have labored in vain;
I have spent my strength for nothing and vanity;
yet surely my right is with the Lord,
and my recompense with my God."

[5]† And now the Lord says,
he who formed me from the womb to be his servant,
to bring Jacob back to him;
and that Israel might be gathered to him—
for I am honored in the eyes of the Lord,
and my God has become my strength—
[6]† he says:
"It is too light a thing that you should be my servant
to raise up the tribes of Jacob
and to bring back the preserved of Israel;
I will make you as a light for the nations,
that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth."

7 † Thus says the Lord,
the Redeemer of Israel and his Holy One,
to one deeply despised, abhorred by the nation,
the servant of rulers:
"Kings shall see and arise;
princes, and they shall prostrate themselves;
because of the Lord, who is faithful,
the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen you."

The Restoration of Israel

8 Thus says the Lord:
"In a time of favor I have answered you;
in a day of salvation I have helped you;
I will keep you and give you
as a covenant to the people,
to establish the land,
to apportion the desolate heritages,
9 saying to the prisoners, 'Come out,'
to those who are in darkness, 'Appear.'
They shall feed along the ways;
on all bare heights shall be their pasture;
10 they shall not hunger or thirst,
neither scorching wind nor sun shall strike them,
for he who has pity on them will lead them,
and by springs of water will guide them.
11 And I will make all my mountains a road,
and my highways shall be raised up.
12 Behold, these shall come from afar,
and behold, these from the north and from the west,[1]
and these from the land of Syene."[2]

13 Sing for joy, O heavens, and exult, O earth;
break forth, O mountains, into singing!
For the Lord has comforted his people
and will have compassion on his afflicted.

14 But Zion said, "The Lord has forsaken me;
my Lord has forgotten me."

15 “Can a woman forget her nursing child,
that she should have no compassion on the
son of her womb?
Even these may forget,
yet I will not forget you.
16 Behold, I have engraved you on the palms of
my hands;
your walls are continually before me.
17 Your builders make haste;[1]
your destroyers and those who laid you
waste go out from you.
18 Lift up your eyes around and see;
they all gather, they come to you.
As I live, declares the Lord,
you shall put them all on as an
ornament;
you shall bind them on as a bride does.

19 “Surely your waste and your desolate places
and your devastated land—
surely now you will be too narrow for your
inhabitants,
and those who swallowed you up will be far
away.
20 The children of your bereavement
will yet say in your ears:
‘The place is too narrow for me;
make room for me to dwell in.’
21 Then you will say in your heart:
‘Who has borne me these?
I was bereaved and barren,
exiled and put away,
but who has brought up these?
Behold, I was left alone;
from where have these come?’”

22 † Thus says the Lord God:
"Behold, I will lift up my hand to the nations,
and raise my signal to the peoples;
and they shall bring your sons in their bosom,
and your daughters shall be carried on their
shoulders.
23 † Kings shall be your foster fathers,
and their queens your nursing mothers.
With their faces to the ground they shall bow
down to you,
and lick the dust of your feet.
Then you will know that I am the Lord;
those who wait for me shall not be put to
shame."

24 † Can the prey be taken from the mighty,
or the captives of a tyrant[2] be rescued?
25 For thus says the Lord:
"Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken,
and the prey of the tyrant be rescued,
for I will contend with those who contend
with you,
and I will save your children.
26 † I will make your oppressors eat their own
flesh,
and they shall be drunk with their own
blood as with wine.
Then all flesh shall know
that I am the Lord your Savior,
and your Redeemer, the Mighty One of
Jacob."

Israel's Sin and the Servant's Obedience

50 [1]†Thus says the LORD:
"Where is your mother's certificate of
divorce,
with which I sent her away?
Or which of my creditors is it
to whom I have sold you?
Behold, for your iniquities you were sold,
and for your transgressions your mother was
sent away.

[2]†† Why, when I came, was there no man;
why, when I called, was there no one to
answer?
Is my hand shortened, that it cannot
redeem?
Or have I no power to deliver?
Behold, by my rebuke I dry up the sea,
I make the rivers a desert;
their fish stink for lack of water
and die of thirst.
[3] I clothe the heavens with blackness
and make sackcloth their covering."

[4]† The Lord GOD has given me
the tongue of those who are taught,
that I may know how to sustain with a word
him who is weary.
Morning by morning he awakens;
he awakens my ear
to hear as those who are taught.
[5]† The Lord GOD has opened my ear,
and I was not rebellious;

I turned not backward.
6† I gave my back to those who strike,
and my cheeks to those who pull out the
beard;
I hid not my face
from disgrace and spitting.

7† But the Lord God helps me;
therefore I have not been disgraced;
therefore I have set my face like a flint,
and I know that I shall not be put to shame.
8 He who vindicates me is near.
Who will contend with me?
Let us stand up together.
Who is my adversary?
Let him come near to me.
9† Behold, the Lord God helps me;
who will declare me guilty?
Behold, all of them will wear out like a garment;
the moth will eat them up.

10† Who among you fears the Lord
and obeys the voice of his servant?
Let him who walks in darkness
and has no light
trust in the name of the Lord
and rely on his God.
11† Behold, all you who kindle a fire,
who equip yourselves with burning torches!
Walk by the light of your fire,
and by the torches that you have kindled!
This you have from my hand:
you shall lie down in torment.

The Lord's Comfort for Zion

51 [1]†"Listen to me, you who pursue righteousness,
"you who seek the Lord:
look to the rock from which you were hewn,
and to the quarry from which you were dug.

[2]† Look to Abraham your father
and to Sarah who bore you;
for he was but one when I called him,
that I might bless him and multiply him.
[3]† For the Lord comforts Zion;
he comforts all her waste places
and makes her wilderness like Eden,
her desert like the garden of the Lord;
joy and gladness will be found in her,
thanksgiving and the voice of song.

[4]†† "Give attention to me, my people,
and give ear to me, my nation;
for a law[1] will go out from me,
and I will set my justice for a light to the
peoples.
[5]† My righteousness draws near,
my salvation has gone out,
and my arms will judge the peoples;
the coastlands hope for me,
and for my arm they wait.
[6]† Lift up your eyes to the heavens,
and look at the earth beneath;
for the heavens vanish like smoke,
the earth will wear out like a garment,
and they who dwell in it will die in like
manner;[2]

but my salvation will be forever,
and my righteousness will never be dismayed.

7 † “Listen to me, you who know righteousness,
the people in whose heart is my law;
fear not the reproach of man,
nor be dismayed at their revilings.
8 † For the moth will eat them up like a garment,
and the worm will eat them like wool;
but my righteousness will be forever,
and my salvation to all generations.”

9 † Awake, awake, put on strength,
O arm of the Lord;
awake, as in days of old,
the generations of long ago.
Was it not you who cut Rahab in pieces,
who pierced the dragon?
10 † Was it not you who dried up the sea,
the waters of the great deep,
who made the depths of the sea a way
for the redeemed to pass over?
11 † And the ransomed of the Lord shall return
and come to Zion with singing;
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;
they shall obtain gladness and joy,
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

12 † “I, I am he who comforts you;
who are you that you are afraid of man who
dies,
of the son of man who is made like grass,
13 † and have forgotten the Lord, your Maker,
who stretched out the heavens

and laid the foundations of the earth,
and you fear continually all the day
because of the wrath of the oppressor,
when he sets himself to destroy?
And where is the wrath of the oppressor?
14† He who is bowed down shall speedily be released;
he shall not die and go down to the pit,
neither shall his bread be lacking.
15† I am the Lord your God,
who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar—
the Lord of hosts is his name.
16† And I have put my words in your mouth
and covered you in the shadow of my hand,
establishing[1] the heavens
and laying the foundations of the earth,
and saying to Zion, 'You are my people.'"

17† Wake yourself, wake yourself,
stand up, O Jerusalem,
you who have drunk from the hand of the Lord
the cup of his wrath,
who have drunk to the dregs
the bowl, the cup of staggering.
18† There is none to guide her
among all the sons she has borne;
there is none to take her by the hand
among all the sons she has brought up.
19† These two things have happened to you—
who will console you?—
devastation and destruction, famine and sword;
who will comfort you?[2]
20† Your sons have fainted;
they lie at the head of every street
like an antelope in a net;

they are full of the wrath of the LORD,
the rebuke of your God.

21 Therefore hear this, you who are afflicted,
who are drunk, but not with wine:
22 Thus says your Lord, the LORD,
your God who pleads the cause of his people:
"Behold, I have taken from your hand the cup
of staggering;
the bowl of my wrath you shall drink no more;
23 and I will put it into the hand of your
tormentors,
who have said to you,
'Bow down, that we may pass over';
and you have made your back like the ground
and like the street for them to pass over."

The Lord's Coming Salvation

52 [1]†† Awake, awake,
put on your strength, O Zion;
put on your beautiful garments,
O Jerusalem, the holy city;
for there shall no more come into you
the uncircumcised and the unclean.

[2]† Shake yourself from the dust and arise;
be seated, O Jerusalem;
loose the bonds from your neck,
O captive daughter of Zion.

[3]† For thus says the Lord: "You were sold for nothing, and you shall be redeemed without money."
[4]† For thus says the Lord God: "My people went down at the first into Egypt to sojourn there, and the Assyrian oppressed them for nothing. [5]† Now therefore what have I here," declares the Lord, "seeing that my people are taken away for nothing? Their rulers wail," declares the Lord, "and continually all the day my name is despised. [6]† Therefore my people shall know my name. Therefore in that day they shall know that it is I who speak; here am I."

[7]† How beautiful upon the mountains
are the feet of him who brings good news,
who publishes peace, who brings good news
of happiness,
who publishes salvation,
who says to Zion, "Your God reigns."
[8]† The voice of your watchmen—they lift up
their voice;
together they sing for joy;
for eye to eye they see
the return of the Lord to Zion.

9† Break forth together into singing,
you waste places of Jerusalem,
for the Lord has comforted his people;
he has redeemed Jerusalem.
10† The Lord has bared his holy arm
before the eyes of all the nations,
and all the ends of the earth shall see
the salvation of our God.

11† Depart, depart, go out from there;
touch no unclean thing;
go out from the midst of her; purify
yourselves,
you who bear the vessels of the Lord.
12† For you shall not go out in haste,
and you shall not go in flight,
for the Lord will go before you,
and the God of Israel will be your rear guard.

He Was Wounded for Our Transgressions

13 ††† Behold, my servant shall act wisely;[1]
he shall be high and lifted up,
and shall be exalted.
14 † As many were astonished at you—
his appearance was so marred, beyond
human semblance,
and his form beyond that of the children of
mankind—
15 † so shall he sprinkle[2] many nations;
kings shall shut their mouths because of
him;
for that which has not been told them they
see,
and that which they have not heard they
understand.

53 1 †Who has believed what he has heard from
us?[3]
And to whom has the arm of the Lord been
revealed?

2 † For he grew up before him like a young plant,
and like a root out of dry ground;
he had no form or majesty that we should
look at him,
and no beauty that we should desire him.
3 † He was despised and rejected[4] by men;
a man of sorrows,[5] and acquainted with[6]
grief;[7]
and as one from whom men hide their faces[8]
he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

4† Surely he has borne our griefs
and carried our sorrows;
yet we esteemed him stricken,
smitten by God, and afflicted.
5† But he was wounded for our transgressions;
he was crushed for our iniquities;
upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace,
and with his stripes we are healed.
6† All we like sheep have gone astray;
we have turned—every one—to his own way;
and the Lord has laid on him
the iniquity of us all.

7† He was oppressed, and he was afflicted,
yet he opened not his mouth;
like a lamb that is led to the slaughter,
and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent,
so he opened not his mouth.
8† By oppression and judgment he was taken away;
and as for his generation, who considered
that he was cut off out of the land of the living,
stricken for the transgression of my people?
9† And they made his grave with the wicked
and with a rich man in his death,
although he had done no violence,
and there was no deceit in his mouth.

10† Yet it was the will of the Lord to crush him;
he has put him to grief;[1]

when his soul makes[2] an offering for guilt,
he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong
his days;
the will of the LORD shall prosper in his
hand.

11† Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see[3] and be satisfied;
by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my
servant,
make many to be accounted righteous,
and he shall bear their iniquities.
12† Therefore I will divide him a portion with the
many,[1]
and he shall divide the spoil with the
strong,[2]
because he poured out his soul to death
and was numbered with the
transgressors;
yet he bore the sin of many,
and makes intercession for the
transgressors.

The Eternal Covenant of Peace

54 [1]"Sing, O barren one, who did not bear;
break forth into singing and cry aloud,
you who have not been in labor!
For the children of the desolate one will be more
than the children of her who is married," says the LORD.

[2] "Enlarge the place of your tent,
and let the curtains of your habitations be
stretched out;
do not hold back; lengthen your cords
and strengthen your stakes.
[3] For you will spread abroad to the right and to
the left,
and your offspring will possess the nations
and will people the desolate cities.

[4] "Fear not, for you will not be ashamed;
be not confounded, for you will not be
disgraced;
for you will forget the shame of your youth,
and the reproach of your widowhood you
will remember no more.
[5] For your Maker is your husband,
the LORD of hosts is his name;
and the Holy One of Israel is your
Redeemer,
the God of the whole earth he is called.
[6] For the LORD has called you
like a wife deserted and grieved in spirit,
like a wife of youth when she is cast off,
says your God.
[7] For a brief moment I deserted you,

but with great compassion I will gather
you.
8 † In overflowing anger for a moment
I hid my face from you,
but with everlasting love I will have
compassion on you,”
says the Lord, your Redeemer.

9 ††† “This is like the days of Noah[1] to me:
as I swore that the waters of Noah
should no more go over the earth,
so I have sworn that I will not be angry with
you,
and will not rebuke you.
10 † For the mountains may depart
and the hills be removed,
but my steadfast love shall not depart from you,
and my covenant of peace shall not be
removed,”
says the Lord, who has compassion on you.

11 † “O afflicted one, storm-tossed and not
comforted,
behold, I will set your stones in antimony,
and lay your foundations with sapphires.[2]
12 I will make your pinnacles of agate,[3]
your gates of carbuncles,[4]
and all your wall of precious stones.
13 † All your children shall be taught by the Lord,
and great shall be the peace of your
children.
14 In righteousness you shall be established;
you shall be far from oppression, for you
shall not fear;
and from terror, for it shall not come near

you.
15† If anyone stirs up strife,
it is not from me;
whoever stirs up strife with you
shall fall because of you.
16† Behold, I have created the smith
who blows the fire of coals
and produces a weapon for its purpose.
I have also created the ravager to destroy;
17† no weapon that is fashioned against you
shall succeed,
and you shall confute every tongue that rises
against you in judgment.
This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD
and their vindication[5] from me, declares the
LORD.”

The Compassion of the Lord

55 [1]†“Come, everyone who thirsts,
come to the waters;
and he who has no money,
come, buy and eat!
Come, buy wine and milk
without money and without price.

[2]† Why do you spend your money for that which
is not bread,
and your labor for that which does not
satisfy?
Listen diligently to me, and eat what is good,
and delight yourselves in rich food.
[3]† Incline your ear, and come to me;
hear, that your soul may live;
and I will make with you an everlasting
covenant,
my steadfast, sure love for David.
[4]† Behold, I made him a witness to the peoples,
a leader and commander for the peoples.
[5]† Behold, you shall call a nation that you do not
know,
and a nation that did not know you shall
run to you,
because of the Lord your God, and of the
Holy One of Israel,
for he has glorified you.

[6]† “Seek the Lord while he may be found;
call upon him while he is near;
[7]† let the wicked forsake his way,
and the unrighteous man his thoughts;

let him return to the LORD, that he may have
compassion on him,
and to our God, for he will abundantly
pardon.
8 For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
neither are your ways my ways, declares the
LORD.
9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
so are my ways higher than your ways
and my thoughts than your thoughts.

10 "For as the rain and the snow come down from
heaven
and do not return there but water the earth,
making it bring forth and sprout,
giving seed to the sower and bread to the
eater,
11 so shall my word be that goes out from my
mouth;
it shall not return to me empty,
but it shall accomplish that which I purpose,
and shall succeed in the thing for which I
sent it.

12 "For you shall go out in joy
and be led forth in peace;
the mountains and the hills before you
shall break forth into singing,
and all the trees of the field shall clap their
hands.
13 Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress;
instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle;
and it shall make a name for the LORD,
an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off."

Salvation for Foreigners

56 [1]‡‡Thus says the Lord:
"Keep justice, and do righteousness,
for soon my salvation will come,
and my deliverance be revealed.

[2]† Blessed is the man who does this,
and the son of man who holds it fast,
who keeps the Sabbath, not profaning it,
and keeps his hand from doing any evil."

[3]‡‡ Let not the foreigner who has joined himself
to the Lord say,
"The Lord will surely separate me from his
people";
and let not the eunuch say,
"Behold, I am a dry tree."
[4]† For thus says the Lord:
"To the eunuchs who keep my Sabbaths,
who choose the things that please me
and hold fast my covenant,
[5]† I will give in my house and within my walls
a monument and a name
better than sons and daughters;
I will give them an everlasting name
that shall not be cut off.

[6]† "And the foreigners who join themselves to
the Lord,
to minister to him, to love the name of the
Lord,
and to be his servants,

everyone who keeps the Sabbath and does
not profane it,
and holds fast my covenant—
7 † these I will bring to my holy mountain,
and make them joyful in my house of prayer;
their burnt offerings and their sacrifices
will be accepted on my altar;
for my house shall be called a house of prayer
for all peoples.”
8 † The Lord God,
who gathers the outcasts of Israel,
declares,
“I will gather yet others to him
besides those already gathered.”

Israel's Irresponsible Leaders

9 All you beasts of the field, come to devour—
all you beasts in the forest.
10 His watchmen are blind;
they are all without knowledge;
they are all silent dogs;
they cannot bark,
dreaming, lying down,
loving to slumber.
11 The dogs have a mighty appetite;
they never have enough.
But they are shepherds who have no
understanding;
they have all turned to their own way,
each to his own gain, one and all.
12 "Come," they say, "let me get wine;
let us fill ourselves with strong drink;
and tomorrow will be like this day,
great beyond measure."

Israel's Futile Idolatry

57 [1]†† The righteous man perishes,
and no one lays it to heart;
devout men are taken away,
while no one understands.
For the righteous man is taken away from
calamity;

[2]† he enters into peace;
they rest in their beds
who walk in their uprightness.
[3]† But you, draw near,
sons of the sorceress,
offspring of the adulterer and the loose
woman.
[4]†† Whom are you mocking?
Against whom do you open your mouth
wide
and stick out your tongue?
Are you not children of transgression,
the offspring of deceit,
[5]† you who burn with lust among the oaks,[1]
under every green tree,
who slaughter your children in the valleys,
under the clefts of the rocks?
[6]†† Among the smooth stones of the valley is
your portion;
they, they, are your lot;
to them you have poured out a drink offering,
you have brought a grain offering.
Shall I relent for these things?
[7]† On a high and lofty mountain
you have set your bed,
and there you went up to offer sacrifice.

[8]† Behind the door and the doorpost
you have set up your memorial;
for, deserting me, you have uncovered your
bed,
you have gone up to it,
you have made it wide;
and you have made a covenant for yourself
with them,
you have loved their bed,
you have looked on nakedness.[2]
[9]† You journeyed to the king with oil
and multiplied your perfumes;
you sent your envoys far off,
and sent down even to Sheol.
[10]† You were wearied with the length of your way,
but you did not say, “It is hopeless”;
you found new life for your strength,
and so you were not faint.[3]

[11]† Whom did you dread and fear,
so that you lied,
and did not remember me,
did not lay it to heart?
Have I not held my peace, even for a long
time,
and you do not fear me?
[12]† I will declare your righteousness and your
deeds,
but they will not profit you.
[13]† When you cry out, let your collection of idols
deliver you!
The wind will carry them off,
a breath will take them away.
But he who takes refuge in me shall possess

the land
and shall inherit my holy mountain.

Comfort for the Contrite

14 And it shall be said,
"Build up, build up, prepare the way,
remove every obstruction from my people's
way."
15 For thus says the One who is high and
lifted up,
who inhabits eternity, whose name is
Holy:
"I dwell in the high and holy place,
and also with him who is of a contrite and
lowly spirit,
to revive the spirit of the lowly,
and to revive the heart of the contrite.
16 For I will not contend forever,
nor will I always be angry;
for the spirit would grow faint before me,
and the breath of life that I made.
17 Because of the iniquity of his unjust gain I
was angry,
I struck him; I hid my face and was angry,
but he went on backsliding in the way of his
own heart.
18 I have seen his ways, but I will heal him;
I will lead him and restore comfort to him
and his mourners,
19 creating the fruit of the lips.
Peace, peace, to the far and to the near," says
the LORD,
"and I will heal him.
20 But the wicked are like the tossing sea;
for it cannot be quiet,
and its waters toss up mire and dirt.

[21] † There is no peace," says my God, "for the
wicked."

True and False Fasting

58 [1]†“Cry aloud; do not hold back;
lift up your voice like a trumpet;
declare to my people their transgression,
to the house of Jacob their sins.

[2]† Yet they seek me daily
and delight to know my ways,
as if they were a nation that did righteousness
and did not forsake the judgment of their God;
they ask of me righteous judgments;
they delight to draw near to God.
[3]† ‘Why have we fasted, and you see it not?
Why have we humbled ourselves, and you take no knowledge of it?’
Behold, in the day of your fast you seek your own pleasure,[1]
and oppress all your workers.
[4]† Behold, you fast only to quarrel and to fight
and to hit with a wicked fist.
Fasting like yours this day
will not make your voice to be heard on high.
[5]† Is such the fast that I choose,
a day for a person to humble himself?
Is it to bow down his head like a reed,
and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him?
Will you call this a fast,
and a day acceptable to the Lord?

[6]† “Is not this the fast that I choose:
to loose the bonds of wickedness,
to undo the straps of the yoke,

to let the oppressed[1] go free,
and to break every yoke?
7 Is it not to share your bread with the hungry
and bring the homeless poor into your
house;
when you see the naked, to cover him,
and not to hide yourself from your own flesh?
8 Then shall your light break forth like the dawn,
and your healing shall spring up speedily;
your righteousness shall go before you;
the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard.
9 Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer;
you shall cry, and he will say, 'Here I am.'
If you take away the yoke from your midst,
the pointing of the finger, and speaking
wickedness,
10 if you pour yourself out for the hungry
and satisfy the desire of the afflicted,
then shall your light rise in the darkness
and your gloom be as the noonday.
11 And the Lord will guide you continually
and satisfy your desire in scorched places
and make your bones strong;
and you shall be like a watered garden,
like a spring of water,
whose waters do not fail.
12 And your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt;
you shall raise up the foundations of many
generations;
you shall be called the repairer of the breach,
the restorer of streets to dwell in.

13 "If you turn back your foot from the Sabbath,
from doing your pleasure[2] on my holy day,
and call the Sabbath a delight

and the holy day of the Lord honorable;
if you honor it, not going your own ways,
or seeking your own pleasure,[3] or talking
idly;[4]
14 † then you shall take delight in the Lord,
and I will make you ride on the heights of the earth;[5]
I will feed you with the heritage of Jacob your
father,
for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.”

Evil and Oppression

59 [1]†† Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened,
that it cannot save,
or his ear dull, that it cannot hear;

[2]† but your iniquities have made a separation
between you and your God,
and your sins have hidden his face from you
so that he does not hear.
[3]† For your hands are defiled with blood
and your fingers with iniquity;
your lips have spoken lies;
your tongue mutters wickedness.
[4]† No one enters suit justly;
no one goes to law honestly;
they rely on empty pleas, they speak lies,
they conceive mischief and give birth to iniquity.
[5]† They hatch adders' eggs;
they weave the spider's web;
he who eats their eggs dies,
and from one that is crushed a viper is hatched.
[6] Their webs will not serve as clothing;
men will not cover themselves with what they make.
Their works are works of iniquity,
and deeds of violence are in their hands.
[7] Their feet run to evil,
and they are swift to shed innocent blood;
their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity;
desolation and destruction are in their highways.

8 † The way of peace they do not know,
and there is no justice in their paths;
they have made their roads crooked;
no one who treads on them knows
peace.

9 † Therefore justice is far from us,
and righteousness does not overtake us;
we hope for light, and behold, darkness,
and for brightness, but we walk in gloom.
10 † † We grope for the wall like the blind;
we grope like those who have no eyes;
we stumble at noon as in the twilight,
among those in full vigor we are like dead
men.
11 † We all growl like bears;
we moan and moan like doves;
we hope for justice, but there is none;
for salvation, but it is far from us.
12 † For our transgressions are multiplied before
you,
and our sins testify against us;
for our transgressions are with us,
and we know our iniquities:
13 † transgressing, and denying the Lord,
and turning back from following our God,
speaking oppression and revolt,
conceiving and uttering from the heart lying
words.
14 † Justice is turned back,
and righteousness stands far away;
for truth has stumbled in the public
squares,
and uprightness cannot enter.
15 Truth is lacking,

and he who departs from evil makes himself
a prey.

Judgment and Redemption

The Lord saw it, and it displeased him[1]
that there was no justice.

16 He saw that there was no man,
and wondered that there was no one to
intercede;
then his own arm brought him salvation,
and his righteousness upheld him.
17 He put on righteousness as a breastplate,
and a helmet of salvation on his head;
he put on garments of vengeance for clothing,
and wrapped himself in zeal as a cloak.
18 According to their deeds, so will he repay,
wrath to his adversaries, repayment to his
enemies;
to the coastlands he will render repayment.
19 So they shall fear the name of the Lord from the
west,
and his glory from the rising of the sun;
for he will come like a rushing stream,[2]
which the wind of the Lord drives.

20 "And a Redeemer will come to Zion,
to those in Jacob who turn from
transgression," declares the Lord.

21 "And as for me, this is my covenant with them," says the Lord: "My Spirit that is upon you, and my words that I have put in your mouth, shall not depart out of your mouth, or out of the mouth of your offspring, or out of the mouth of your children's offspring," says the Lord, "from this time forth and forevermore."

The Future Glory of Israel

60 [1]‡‡Arise, shine, for your light has come,
and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.

[2] For behold, darkness shall cover the
earth,
and thick darkness the peoples;
but the Lord will arise upon you,
and his glory will be seen upon you.
[3]‡ And nations shall come to your light,
and kings to the brightness of your
rising.

[4]‡‡ Lift up your eyes all around, and see;
they all gather together, they come to you;
your sons shall come from afar,
and your daughters shall be carried on the
hip.
[5] Then you shall see and be radiant;
your heart shall thrill and exult,[1]
because the abundance of the sea shall be
turned to you,
the wealth of the nations shall come to
you.
[6]‡ A multitude of camels shall cover you,
the young camels of Midian and Ephah;
all those from Sheba shall come.
They shall bring gold and frankincense,
and shall bring good news, the praises of the
Lord.
[7]‡ All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered to
you;
the rams of Nebaioth shall minister to you;

they shall come up with acceptance on my altar,
and I will beautify my beautiful house.

8 Who are these that fly like a cloud,
and like doves to their windows?
9† For the coastlands shall hope for me,
the ships of Tarshish first,
to bring your children from afar,
their silver and gold with them,
for the name of the LORD your God,
and for the Holy One of Israel,
because he has made you beautiful.

10†† Foreigners shall build up your walls,
and their kings shall minister to you;
for in my wrath I struck you,
but in my favor I have had mercy on you.
11† Your gates shall be open continually;
day and night they shall not be shut,
that people may bring to you the wealth of
the nations,
with their kings led in procession.
12† For the nation and kingdom
that will not serve you shall perish;
those nations shall be utterly laid waste.
13† The glory of Lebanon shall come to you,
the cypress, the plane, and the pine,
to beautify the place of my sanctuary,
and I will make the place of my feet
glorious.
14† The sons of those who afflicted you
shall come bending low to you,
and all who despised you
shall bow down at your feet;

they shall call you the City of the Lord,
the Zion of the Holy One of Israel.

15 Whereas you have been forsaken and
hated,
with no one passing through,
I will make you majestic forever,
a joy from age to age.
16 You shall suck the milk of nations;
you shall nurse at the breast of kings;
and you shall know that I, the Lord, am your
Savior
and your Redeemer, the Mighty One of
Jacob.

17 Instead of bronze I will bring gold,
and instead of iron I will bring silver;
instead of wood, bronze,
instead of stones, iron.
I will make your overseers peace
and your taskmasters righteousness.
18 Violence shall no more be heard in your
land,
devastation or destruction within your
borders;
you shall call your walls Salvation,
and your gates Praise.

19 The sun shall be no more
your light by day,
nor for brightness shall the moon
give you light;[1]
but the Lord will be your everlasting light,
and your God will be your glory.[2]

20 † Your sun shall no more go down,
nor your moon withdraw itself;
for the Lord will be your everlasting light,
and your days of mourning shall be ended.
21 † Your people shall all be righteous;
they shall possess the land forever,
the branch of my planting, the work of my
hands,
that I might be glorified.[3]
22 † The least one shall become a clan,
and the smallest one a mighty nation;
I am the Lord;
in its time I will hasten it.

The Year of the Lord's Favor

61 [1]†The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me,
because the Lord has anointed me
to bring good news to the poor;[4]
he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and the opening of the prison to those who are bound;[5]

[2]† to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor,
and the day of vengeance of our God;
to comfort all who mourn;
[3]† to grant to those who mourn in Zion—
to give them a beautiful headdress instead of
ashes,
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,
the garment of praise instead of a faint
spirit;
that they may be called oaks of
righteousness,
the planting of the Lord, that he may be glorified.[1]
[4]† They shall build up the ancient ruins;
they shall raise up the former devastations;
they shall repair the ruined cities,
the devastations of many generations.

[5]† Strangers shall stand and tend your flocks;
foreigners shall be your plowmen and
vinedressers;
[6]† but you shall be called the priests of the Lord;
they shall speak of you as the ministers of
our God;
you shall eat the wealth of the nations,
and in their glory you shall boast.

7† Instead of your shame there shall be a double
portion;
instead of dishonor they shall rejoice in their
lot;
therefore in their land they shall possess a
double portion;
they shall have everlasting joy.

8† For I the LORD love justice;
I hate robbery and wrong;[2]
I will faithfully give them their
recompense,
and I will make an everlasting covenant
with them.
9† Their offspring shall be known among the
nations,
and their descendants in the midst of the
peoples;
all who see them shall acknowledge
them,
that they are an offspring the LORD has
blessed.

10† I will greatly rejoice in the LORD;
my soul shall exult in my God,
for he has clothed me with the garments of
salvation;
he has covered me with the robe of
righteousness,
as a bridegroom decks himself like a priest
with a beautiful headdress,
and as a bride adorns herself with her
jewels.
11† For as the earth brings forth its sprouts,
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to

sprout up,
so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and
praise
to sprout up before all the nations.

Zion's Coming Salvation

62 [1]†For Zion's sake I will not keep silent,
and for Jerusalem's sake I will not be quiet,
until her righteousness goes forth as brightness,
and her salvation as a burning torch.

[2]† The nations shall see your righteousness,
and all the kings your glory,
and you shall be called by a new name
that the mouth of the Lord will give.
[3]† You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of
the Lord,
and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.
[4]† You shall no more be termed Forsaken,[1]
and your land shall no more be termed
Desolate,[2]
but you shall be called My Delight Is in Her,[3]
and your land Married;[4]
for the Lord delights in you,
and your land shall be married.
[5]† For as a young man marries a young woman,
so shall your sons marry you,
and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride,
so shall your God rejoice over you.

[6]†† On your walls, O Jerusalem,
I have set watchmen;
all the day and all the night
they shall never be silent.
You who put the Lord in remembrance,
take no rest,
[7] and give him no rest

until he establishes Jerusalem
and makes it a praise in the earth.
8† The Lord has sworn by his right hand
and by his mighty arm:
"I will not again give your grain
to be food for your enemies,
and foreigners shall not drink your wine
for which you have labored;
9† but those who garner it shall eat it
and praise the Lord,
and those who gather it shall drink it
in the courts of my sanctuary."[5]

10† Go through, go through the gates;
prepare the way for the people;
build up, build up the highway;
clear it of stones;
lift up a signal over the peoples.
11† Behold, the Lord has proclaimed
to the end of the earth:
Say to the daughter of Zion,
"Behold, your salvation comes;
behold, his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him."
12† And they shall be called The Holy People,
The Redeemed of the Lord;
and you shall be called Sought Out,
A City Not Forsaken.

The Lord's Day of Vengeance

63 [1]†††Who is this who comes from Edom,
in crimsoned garments from Bozrah,
he who is splendid in his apparel,
marching in the greatness of his strength?
"It is I, speaking in righteousness,
mighty to save."

[2]† Why is your apparel red,
and your garments like his who treads in
the winepress?

[3]† "I have trodden the winepress alone,
and from the peoples no one was
with me;
I trod them in my anger
and trampled them in my wrath;
their lifeblood[1] spattered on my garments,
and stained all my apparel.
[4]† For the day of vengeance was in my heart,
and my year of redemption[2] had come.
[5]† I looked, but there was no one to help;
I was appalled, but there was no one to
uphold;
so my own arm brought me salvation,
and my wrath upheld me.
[6]† I trampled down the peoples in my anger;
I made them drunk in my wrath,
and I poured out their lifeblood on the
earth."

The Lord's Mercy Remembered

7 I will recount the steadfast love of the Lord,
the praises of the Lord,
according to all that the Lord has granted us,
and the great goodness to the house of Israel
that he has granted them according to his compassion,
according to the abundance of his steadfast love.
8 For he said, "Surely they are my people,
children who will not deal falsely."
And he became their Savior.
9 In all their affliction he was afflicted,[3]
and the angel of his presence saved them;
in his love and in his pity he redeemed them;
he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old.

10 But they rebelled
and grieved his Holy Spirit;
therefore he turned to be their enemy,
and himself fought against them.
11 Then he remembered the days of old,
of Moses and his people.[4]
Where is he who brought them up out of the sea
with the shepherds of his flock?
Where is he who put in the midst of them
his Holy Spirit,
12 who caused his glorious arm
to go at the right hand of Moses,
who divided the waters before them
to make for himself an everlasting name,
13 who led them through the depths?

Like a horse in the desert,
they did not stumble.
14 † Like livestock that go down into the valley,
the Spirit of the Lord gave them rest.
So you led your people,
to make for yourself a glorious name.

Prayer for Mercy

15 Look down from heaven and see,
from your holy and beautiful[1] habitation.
Where are your zeal and your might?
The stirring of your inner parts and your
compassion
are held back from me.
16 For you are our Father,
though Abraham does not know us,
and Israel does not acknowledge us;
you, O Lord, are our Father,
our Redeemer from of old is your name.
17 O Lord, why do you make us wander from
your ways
and harden our heart, so that we fear you
not?
Return for the sake of your servants,
the tribes of your heritage.
18 Your holy people held possession for a little
while;[2]
our adversaries have trampled down your
sanctuary.
19 We have become like those over whom you
have never ruled,
like those who are not called by your name.

64 1 Oh that you would rend the heavens and come down,
that the mountains might quake at your presence—

2 [3] as when fire kindles brushwood
and the fire causes water to boil—
to make your name known to your
adversaries,

and that the nations might tremble at your
presence!
3 When you did awesome things that we did
not look for,
you came down, the mountains quaked at
your presence.
4† From of old no one has heard
or perceived by the ear,
no eye has seen a God besides you,
who acts for those who wait for him.
5† You meet him who joyfully works
righteousness,
those who remember you in your ways.
Behold, you were angry, and we sinned;
in our sins we have been a long time, and
shall we be saved?[4]
6† We have all become like one who is unclean,
and all our righteous deeds are like a
polluted garment.
We all fade like a leaf,
and our iniquities, like the wind, take us
away.
7† There is no one who calls upon your name,
who rouses himself to take hold of you;
for you have hidden your face from us,
and have made us melt in[1] the hand of our
iniquities.

8† But now, O Lord, you are our Father;
we are the clay, and you are our potter;
we are all the work of your hand.
9 Be not so terribly angry, O Lord,
and remember not iniquity forever.
Behold, please look, we are all your people.
10† Your holy cities have become a wilderness;

Zion has become a wilderness,
Jerusalem a desolation.
11 † Our holy and beautiful[2] house,
where our fathers praised you,
has been burned by fire,
and all our pleasant places have become ruins.
12 † Will you restrain yourself at these things,
O LORD?
Will you keep silent, and afflict us so terribly?

Judgment and Salvation

65 [1]†† I was ready to be sought by those who did not ask for me;
I was ready to be found by those who did not seek me.
I said, “Here am I, here am I,”
to a nation that was not called by[3] my name.

[2]† I spread out my hands all the day
to a rebellious people,
who walk in a way that is not good,
following their own devices;
[3]† a people who provoke me
to my face continually,
sacrificing in gardens
and making offerings on bricks;
[4]† who sit in tombs,
and spend the night in secret places;
who eat pig’s flesh,
and broth of tainted meat is in their vessels;
[5]† who say, “Keep to yourself,
do not come near me, for I am too holy for
you.”
These are a smoke in my nostrils,
a fire that burns all the day.
[6]† Behold, it is written before me:
“I will not keep silent, but I will repay;
I will indeed repay into their bosom
[7]† both your iniquities and your fathers’ iniquities together,
says the Lord;

because they made offerings on the
mountains
and insulted me on the hills,

I will measure into their bosom
payment for their former deeds."[1]

8 Thus says the Lord:
"As the new wine is found in the cluster,
and they say, 'Do not destroy it,
for there is a blessing in it,'
so I will do for my servants' sake,
and not destroy them all.
9 I will bring forth offspring from Jacob,
and from Judah possessors of my
mountains;
my chosen shall possess it,
and my servants shall dwell there.
10 Sharon shall become a pasture for flocks,
and the Valley of Achor a place for herds to
lie down,
for my people who have sought me.
11 But you who forsake the Lord,
who forget my holy mountain,
who set a table for Fortune
and fill cups of mixed wine for Destiny,
12 I will destine you to the sword,
and all of you shall bow down to the
slaughter,
because, when I called, you did not
answer;
when I spoke, you did not listen,
but you did what was evil in my eyes
and chose what I did not delight in."

13 Therefore thus says the Lord God:
"Behold, my servants shall eat,
but you shall be hungry;
behold, my servants shall drink,

but you shall be thirsty;
behold, my servants shall rejoice,
but you shall be put to shame;
14† behold, my servants shall sing for gladness of
heart,
but you shall cry out for pain of heart
and shall wail for breaking of spirit.
15† You shall leave your name to my chosen for
a curse,
and the Lord God will put you to death,
but his servants he will call by another
name.
16† So that he who blesses himself in the land
shall bless himself by the God of truth,
and he who takes an oath in the land
shall swear by the God of truth;
because the former troubles are forgotten
and are hidden from my eyes.

New Heavens and a New Earth

17 “For behold, I create new heavens
and a new earth,
and the former things shall not be
remembered
or come into mind.
18 But be glad and rejoice forever
in that which I create;
for behold, I create Jerusalem to be a joy,
and her people to be a gladness.
19 I will rejoice in Jerusalem
and be glad in my people;
no more shall be heard in it the sound of
weeping
and the cry of distress.
20 No more shall there be in it
an infant who lives but a few days,
or an old man who does not fill out his
days,
for the young man shall die a hundred years
old,
and the sinner a hundred years old shall be
accursed.
21 They shall build houses and inhabit them;
they shall plant vineyards and eat their
fruit.
22 They shall not build and another inhabit;
they shall not plant and another eat;
for like the days of a tree shall the days of my
people be,
and my chosen shall long enjoy[1] the work of
their hands.
23 They shall not labor in vain
or bear children for calamity,[2]

for they shall be the offspring of the blessed
of the Lord,
and their descendants with them.
24 † Before they call I will answer;
while they are yet speaking I will hear.
25 † The wolf and the lamb shall graze together;
the lion shall eat straw like the ox,
and dust shall be the serpent's food.
They shall not hurt or destroy
in all my holy mountain,"
says the Lord.

The Humble and Contrite in Spirit

66 [1]†† Thus says the Lord:
"Heaven is my throne,
and the earth is my footstool;
what is the house that you would build for me,
and what is the place of my rest?

[2]† All these things my hand has made,
and so all these things came to be,
declares the Lord.
But this is the one to whom I will look:
he who is humble and contrite in spirit
and trembles at my word.

[3]† "He who slaughters an ox is like one who kills
a man;
he who sacrifices a lamb, like one who
breaks a dog's neck;
he who presents a grain offering, like one who
offers pig's blood;
he who makes a memorial offering of
frankincense, like one who blesses an
idol.
These have chosen their own ways,
and their soul delights in their abominations;
[4]† I also will choose harsh treatment for them
and bring their fears upon them,
because when I called, no one answered,
when I spoke, they did not listen;
but they did what was evil in my eyes
and chose that in which I did not delight."

5 ‡‡ Hear the word of the Lord,
you who tremble at his word:
"Your brothers who hate you
and cast you out for my name's sake
have said, 'Let the Lord be glorified,
that we may see your joy';
but it is they who shall be put to shame.

6 "The sound of an uproar from the city!
A sound from the temple!
The sound of the Lord,
rendering recompense to his enemies!

Rejoice with Jerusalem

7 “Before she was in labor
she gave birth;
before her pain came upon her
she delivered a son.
8 Who has heard such a thing?
Who has seen such things?
Shall a land be born in one day?
Shall a nation be brought forth in one moment?
For as soon as Zion was in labor
she brought forth her children.
9 Shall I bring to the point of birth and not cause to bring forth?”
says the Lord;
“shall I, who cause to bring forth, shut the womb?”
says your God.

10 “Rejoice with Jerusalem, and be glad for her,
all you who love her;
rejoice with her in joy,
all you who mourn over her;
11 that you may nurse and be satisfied
from her consoling breast;
that you may drink deeply with delight
from her glorious abundance.”[1]

12 For thus says the Lord:
“Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river,
and the glory of the nations like an overflowing stream;

and you shall nurse, you shall be carried
upon her hip,
and bounced upon her knees.
13 † As one whom his mother comforts,
so I will comfort you;
you shall be comforted in Jerusalem.
14 † You shall see, and your heart shall rejoice;
your bones shall flourish like the grass;
and the hand of the Lord shall be known to his servants,
and he shall show his indignation against
his enemies.

Final Judgment and Glory of the Lord

15 ‡† “For behold, the Lord will come in fire,
and his chariots like the whirlwind,
to render his anger in fury,
and his rebuke with flames of fire.
16 † For by fire will the Lord enter into
judgment,
and by his sword, with all flesh;
and those slain by the Lord shall be many.

17 † “Those who sanctify and purify themselves to go into the gardens, following one in the midst, eating pig’s flesh and the abomination and mice, shall come to an end together, declares the Lord.

18 †“For I know[2] their works and their thoughts, and the time is coming[3] to gather all nations and tongues. And they shall come and shall see my glory, 19 † and I will set a sign among them. And from them I will send survivors to the nations, to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, who draw the bow, to Tubal and Javan, to the coastlands far away, that have not heard my fame or seen my glory. And they shall declare my glory among the nations. 20 †And they shall bring all your brothers from all the nations as an offering to the Lord, on horses and in chariots and in litters and on mules and on dromedaries, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, says the Lord, just as the Israelites bring their grain offering in a clean vessel to the house of the Lord. 21 †And some of them also I will take for priests and for Levites, says the Lord.

22 † “For as the new heavens and the new earth
that I make
shall remain before me, says the Lord,
so shall your offspring and your name
remain.
23 † From new moon to new moon,
and from Sabbath to Sabbath,

all flesh shall come to worship before me,
declares the LORD.

24 † “And they shall go out and look on the dead bodies of the men who have rebelled against me. For their worm shall not die, their fire shall not be quenched, and they shall be an abhorrence to all flesh.”

Isaiah

Overview

Author
Isaiah the prophet

Date
c 740–681 BC

Places
Israel (Ephraim); Judah; Zion; Syria; Assyria

People
Isaiah; the prophetess; Shear-jashub; Maher-shalal-hash-baz; Uzziah; Jotham; Ahaz; Hezekiah; Rezin

Purpose
To comfort God's people with the good news of Zion's redemption

Law Themes
Judgment on false worship; Judgment Day; selfishness; woes against Israel and the nations; defeat by Assyria and Babylon; idolatry condemned

Gospel Themes
The remnant preserved; Immanuel; the Messiah's just reign; salvation promised to Ethiopia, Assyria, and the nations; the feast; mercy for Hezekiah; God's comfort for Zion; the Lord's Servant; Zion's deliverance; new heavens and a new earth

Memory Verses
Let us reason together (1:18–19); song of the vineyard (5:1–7); temple vision (6:1–13); Immanuel and His reign (7:14; 9:2–7); the Branch and the Spirit (11:1–9); the feast (ch 25); comfort (40:1–5); the Suffering Servant

(52:13–53:12); the Lord’s ways (55:6–11); new heavens and a new earth (65:17–25)

Introduction to Isaiah

Reading Isaiah

With one hand, she slips the ivory comb through her wavy black hair. With the other, she checks her progress in a polished bronze mirror. Setting aside the comb, she begins to darken her eyelids, using an alabaster wand to spread the black paint. A pendant for each ear; a ring for the nose. She slides one bangle after another over her wrist until she clinks musically with each movement. Over her head and neck, she lowers a delicate necklace, which suspends a small silver scroll, the gift of her father, a priest. Inside is scribed the benediction he pronounces over the people at the temple on Mount Zion, including the sacred name of Yahweh. As she rises to leave, she adds one more item: a second necklace, heavy with beads. At its center hangs an amulet in the figure of Bes, a troll-like Egyptian god of good luck.

Isaiah records the longest list of clothing and accessories in all of Scripture (3:6–4:1), which he cites as evidence of Judah's affluence, idolatry, and growing indifference to God's Word. As a Jerusalem insider, with access to the king's court, Isaiah saw firsthand the extravagance, injustice, and spiritual failure of Judah's leaders. He would witness the lean years during the siege by the Assyrians. He would prophesy Judah's downfall to the Babylonians. He would see the daughters of Zion in chains but then set free, worshiping the Lord with those who had formerly oppressed them (19:19–25).

Luther on Isaiah

If anyone would read the holy prophet Isaiah with profit and understand him better, let him not ignore this advice and instruction of mine, unless he has better advice or is himself better informed. In the first place let him not skip the title, or beginning, of this book [Isa. 1:1], but learn to understand it as thoroughly as possible, in order that he may not imagine he understands Isaiah very well, and then have someone charge him with never having even understood the title and first line, let alone the whole prophet. For this title is to be regarded really as a gloss and a light upon the whole book. Isaiah himself, as though with his finger, points his readers to this title as stating the occasion and reason for his book. I say to him who ignores or does not understand the title that he should let the prophet Isaiah alone, or at least that he will not understand him thoroughly. For it is impossible to mark or perceive the prophet's words and meaning properly and clearly without this thorough understanding of the title.

When I speak of the title [1:1], I do not mean only that you should read or understand the words "Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, kings of Judah," etc., but that you should take in hand the last book of Kings and the last book of Chronicles and grasp them well, especially the events, the speeches, and the incidents that occurred under the kings named in the title [of Isaiah], clear to the end of those books. For if one would understand the prophecies, it is necessary that one know how things were in the land, how matters lay, what was in the mind of the people—what plans they had with respect to their neighbors, friends, and enemies—and especially what attitude they took in their country toward God and toward the prophet, whether they held to his word and worship or to idolatry.

Lands Surrounding Israel and Judah

In addition it would be well also to know how these lands were situated with reference to one another, so that the strange and unfamiliar words and names might not make reading unpleasant and impede or obscure understanding. To do my simple Germans a service, I shall briefly describe the country surrounding Jerusalem or Judah,

where Isaiah lived and preached, so that they may better see whither the prophet turned when he prophesied to the south or the north, etc. [geography follows; see map, p 558] …

These are really the lands and the names about which Isaiah prophesies, the neighbors—enemies and friends—surrounding the land of Judah like wolves around a sheepfold. With some of them Judah made alliances and counter-alliances, but it did not help her at all.

What the Prophet Isaiah Treats

After this, you must divide the prophet Isaiah into three parts. In the first part, like the other prophets, he handles two things. First he preaches a good deal to his people and rebukes their many sins, especially the manifold idolatry which has got the upper hand among the people. As godly preachers now and always do and must do with their people, so Isaiah too keeps the people in check with threats of punishment and promises of good.

Second he prepares and disposes them to expect the coming kingdom of Christ, of which he prophesies more clearly and in more ways than any other prophet. In chapter 7 he even describes the mother of Christ, the Virgin Mary, how she is to conceive and bear him with her virginity intact. In chapter 53 Isaiah even describes Christ's passion together with his resurrection from the dead, proclaiming his kingdom as powerfully and plainly as if it had just happened, already at that time. This must have been a splendid and highly enlightened prophet. For all the prophets do the same: they teach and rebuke the people of their time, and they proclaim the coming and the kingdom of Christ, directing and pointing the people to him as the common Savior of both those who have gone before and those who are yet to come. Only, one of the prophets does more of this than another, one does it more extensively than another. Isaiah, however, does it most of all, and more extensively than any of the others.

In the second part Isaiah has to do especially with the empire of Assyria and the Emperor Sennacherib. He also prophesies more and at greater length about this than does any other prophet, namely, about how the emperor would subdue all neighboring lands, including the kingdom of Israel, and inflict much misfortune on the kingdom of Judah. But there he stands like a rock, with his promise that Jerusalem

shall be defended and freed by him from Sennacherib. And this is one of the greatest miracles to be found in the Scripture, not only because of the event, that so mighty an emperor should be defeated before Jerusalem, but also because of the faith with which men believed it. It is a miracle, I say, that anyone at Jerusalem could have believed him in such an impossible thing. Isaiah must, without doubt, have heard many bad words from unbelievers. Yet he did it; he defeated the emperor and defended the city. He must have stood well with God and been a precious man in his sight!

In the third part Isaiah has to do with the empire at Babylon. Here he prophesies of the Babylonian captivity, whereby the people were to be punished and Jerusalem destroyed by the emperor at Babylon. It is here that he does his greatest work, comforting and upholding a people yet to be, in this destruction and captivity yet to come, in order that they might not despair, as if they were vanquished and Christ's kingdom would not be coming and all prophecy were false and vain. How rich and full his preaching: Babylon shall in turn be destroyed, and the Jews will be released and will return to Jerusalem. With proud defiance of Babylon, Isaiah even gives the names of the kings who shall destroy it, namely the Medes and Elamites, or Persians. He mentions particularly the king who shall release the Jews and help them back to Jerusalem, namely Cyrus, whom Isaiah calls "God's anointed" [Isa. 45:1]. He does all this long before there is a kingdom in Persia. For he is concerned altogether with the Christ, that his future coming and the promised kingdom of grace and salvation shall not be despised or be lost and in vain because of unbelief and great misfortune and impatience amongst his people. This, indeed, would be the case, unless the people expected it and believed confidently that it would come. These, then, are the three things with which Isaiah deals. (AE 35:273–77)

For more of Luther's insights on this Book, see *Lectures on Isaiah, Chapters 1–39; 40–66* (AE 16, 17).

Challenges for Readers

Authorship. Critics have proposed that numerous authors wrote the Book of Isaiah, typically dividing the Book between three proposed authors: First Isaiah (chs 1–39), Second Isaiah (chs 40–55), and Third Isaiah (chs 56–66). The latter two proposed authors are regarded as disciples or students of either the original Isaiah or of his school of thought. Although Isaiah certainly had students or disciples (8:16), the critical divisions and attributions are entirely speculative. Thematic arguments can be proposed for these divisions (as Luther points out above), but no early traditions or manuscript evidence supports the critical proposals. As a result, the critics' divisions of the Book have become increasingly suspect. The traditional view—attributing the whole work to Isaiah—is again receiving favor. The only historically attested division of the Book is in the great Isaiah scroll of Qumran (1QIsa[a]), which has a three-line break after 33:24.

Scope of Chronology. From the death of King Uzziah of Judah (740 BC; Is 6:1) to the reign of Emperor Cyrus of Persia (539 BC; Is 45:1), Isaiah's prophecies involve at least 200 years of OT history (not to mention prophecies of the Messiah and Judgment Day). Because the prophecies do not appear in a clear chronological order, interpreting the Book can be confusing (e.g., see "Authorship" above). The following OT historical events are mentioned in the prophecies: (1) the Syro-Ephraimitic crisis and outcome (735–732 BC); (2) the Neo-Assyrian assault on Judah and Jerusalem (705–701 BC); (3) the threat of Babylon (c 610–587 BC); (4) the time of Cyrus (c 540 BC); and (5) life in the rebuilt Jerusalem (c 520–480 BC). On prophetic perspective, see p 1258.

The Servant Songs. See p 1178.

Blessings for Readers

No other OT prophet is quoted as often in the NT as the prophet Isaiah. This is due to the breadth of topics he covered and to his frequent descriptions of the coming Messiah and His kingdom, which find fulfillment in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Isaiah prophesies so often about the coming Messiah that some commentators have called his prophecy the "Fifth Gospel."

Read Isaiah for his pointed declarations of God's Law and also for beautiful words of comfort, to which he always returns.

OUTLINE

I. Judgment on Judah and Jerusalem (chs 1–12)
- A. Title and Overview of the Book (ch 1)
- B. Second Title and the Pilgrimage of the Nations to Zion—the Theme of the Book (2:1–5)
- C. The Day of the LORD (2:6–22)
- D. Social and Moral Chaos (3:1–15)
- E. The Destiny of Zion's Daughters (3:16–4:1)
- F. Peace after Judgment (4:2–6)
- G. The Song of the Vineyard (5:1–7)
- H. A Series of Woes (5:8–30)
- I. Isaiah's Call/Commission (ch 6)
- J. Isaiah and Ahaz: The First Foreign Crisis (7:1–17)
- K. Disasters of War (7:18–25)
- L. The Child of Plunder (8:1–4)
- M. The Assyrian Deluge (8:5–10)
- N. Isaiah and His Followers (8:11–15)
- O. Waiting for the Lord (8:16–22)
- P. A New Ruler for a New Age (9:1–7)
- Q. The Wrath of the Lord (9:8–21)
- R. More Woes against Israel (10:1–4)
- S. Woe against Assyria (10:5–14)
- T. Response to Assyrian Pride (10:15–34)
- U. The Peaceful Kingdom (11:1–9)

V. The Reunited Kingdoms (11:10–16)
W. Concluding Hymn of Praise (ch 12)

II. Oracles about the Nations (chs 13–23)
A. The Fall of Babylon and Universal Judgment (ch 13)
B. Salvation for Jacob (14:1–2)
C. The King of Babylon in Sheol (14:3–23)
D. The Plans of the Lord against Assyria (14:24–27)
E. An Oracle against Philistia (14:28–32)
F. Oracles against Moab (15:1–16:14)
G. The Destiny of Syria and Israel (17:1–11)
H. The End of Oppression (17:12–14)
I. An Oracle against an Alliance with Egypt (ch 18)
J. An Oracle concerning Egypt (ch 19)
K. Isaiah Stripped and Barefoot (ch 20)
L. Babylon's Fall (21:1–10)
M. An Oracle against Edom (21:11–17)
N. The Valley of Vision (22:1–14)
O. An Oracle about Palace Leaders (22:15–25)
P. An Oracle against Tyre and Sidon (ch 23)

III. Cosmic Judgment (chs 24–27)
A. A Curse on the Earth and Its People (24:1–13)
B. The Day of Wrath (24:14–23)
C. The First Thanksgiving Song (25:1–5)
D. The Eschatological Banquet (25:6–8)
E. The Second Thanksgiving Song (25:9–12)
F. The Third Thanksgiving Song (26:1–6)
G. An Eschatological Psalm (26:7–27:1)
H. The Vineyard Revisited (27:2–6)
I. The Final Destiny of the City and the Lord's People (27:7–13)

IV. Ephraim (Samaria) and Jerusalem (chs 28–32)
A. The Future of Samaria and Its Leaders (28:1–13)
B. The Deal with Death (28:14–22)
C. The Good Farmer (28:23–29)
D. Jerusalem's Reversal (29:1–8)
E. The Blind and Stubborn (29:9–14)
F. The Limits to Politics (29:15–24)
G. The Folly of Aligning with Egypt (30:1–5)

H. An Oracle against the Negeb (30:6–7)
I. A Written Warning for the Ages (30:8–14)
J. Defeat Is Waiting (30:15–17)
K. Mercy Is on Every Side (30:18–26)
L. Assyria: Its Final Phase (30:27–33)
M. The Alliance with Egypt (ch 31)
N. The Righteous King (32:1–8)
O. Lamentations, but Not Forever (32:9–20)
P. The Tyrant Judged (33:1)
Q. A Psalm (33:2–6)

V. The Hinge of the Book (chs 33–35)
A. Social and Physical Disaster (33:1–13)
B. A Teaching on Morality (33:14–16)
C. A Future without Fear (33:17–24)
D. Oracle against Edom and the Nations (ch 34)
E. The Final Journey to Zion (ch 35)

VI. Isaiah and Hezekiah (chs 36–39)
A. Jerusalem Threatened and Delivered (chs 36–37)
B. Hezekiah's Sickness and Healing (ch 38)
C. The Babylonians Visit Hezekiah (ch 39)

VII. Comfort for the Lord's Weary People, the Israelites (ch 40)
A. Comfort's Announcement: Three Voices (40:1–11)
B. Comfort's Source: The Lord, the Incomparable God (40:12–26)
1. Incomparable to nations (40:12–17)
2. Incomparable to idols (40:18–20)
3. Incomparable to rulers (40:21–24)
4. Incomparable to stars (40:25–26)
C. Weary Israel Can Still Hope in the Lord (40:27–31)

VIII. The Lord Chooses Israel, His Servant (41:1–42:17)
A. The Nations and Their Idols Tremble (41:1–7)
B. Those the Lord Chooses Need Not Fear (41:8–20)
C. Those Who Choose Idols Will Fear (41:21–29)
D. The Lord's Chosen Servant Brings Justice (42:1–9)
E. All People Sing a New Song (42:10–17)

IX. The Redemption of Israel (42:18–44:23)
A. Deaf, Blind, and Heartless Israel (42:18–25)
B. Israel's Redemption (43:1–7)

C. Israel Witnesses the Redemption of the Nations (43:8–13)
D. The Exodus and Freedom from Babylon (43:14–21)
E. Israel's Past Failures (43:22–28)
F. Israel's Future Redemption (44:1–5)
G. There Is No God like Israel's King and Redeemer (44:6–23)

X. Freedom from Babylon (44:24–48:22)
A. Cyrus, the Lord's Anointed (44:24–28)
B. The Lord's Message to Cyrus (45:1–13)
C. The Creator Saves, Not Idols (45:14–25)
D. The Lord Carries Israel; Babylon Carries Its Idols (46:1–7)
E. The Lord's Message to Stubborn Babylon (46:8–13)
F. The Lord Disgraces Babylon (ch 47)
G. The Former and the New (48:1–11)
H. Freedom from Babylon (48:12–22)

XI. The Suffering Servant and Redeemed Israel (chs 49–55)
A. The Servant and His Salvation of Israel and the Nations (49:1–13)
B. Zion Is Not Forgotten (49:14–26)
C. Israel's Disobedience; the Servant's Obedience (ch 50)
D. The Call to Listen (51:1–8)
E. The Call to Awaken (51:9–52:12)
F. The Suffering Servant (52:13–53:12)
G. Barren Israel Bears Children (ch 54)
H. The Lord's Invitation (ch 55)

XII. Understanding Divine Character (chs 56–66)
A. The Inability of Man (56:1–59:15a)
B. The Servant/Messiah Conquers (59:15b–63:6)
C. The New Heavens and a New Earth (63:7–66:24)
1. Reflection, contrition, confession, and petition (63:7–64:12)
2. The Lord's response—servants or rebels (65:1–16)
3. All things renewed (65:17–25)
4. Judgment and hope (ch 66)

Articles and Resources Related to Isaiah

- The Isaiah Scroll
- Isaiah's City of God
- Five Reasons to Give Tithes and Offerings
- Holy, Holy, Holy
- Isaiah's Triptych of Christ
- The Joy of Deliverance
- Teach History, Illustrate by Allegory
- The Wrath of God
- God's Remnant
- Walking with the Lord
- The Suffering Servant King
- A New Eden

The Isaiah Scroll

During the turmoil following World War II, Bedouin shepherds of the Ta'amireh tribe stepped from a cave near the northwest shore of the Dead Sea. They carried a number of ancient artifacts found in the cave. In a large jar was a leather scroll over 24 feet long. It was made from 17 sheepskins sewn together with linen thread. The shepherds journeyed to Bethlehem, where they sold their discovery to a cobbler called Kando. They did not realize that they had made the first find of the greatest archaeological discovery of the twentieth century: the Dead Sea Scrolls.

The great scroll discovered by the shepherds is known today as 1QIsa^{a}, meaning "Qumran cave 1, Isaiah scroll *a*." It is an almost complete copy of the Book of Isaiah, arranged in 54 columns, dating from the second century before Christ. Until this discovery, the oldest Hebrew manuscripts of Isaiah were copies made in Russia (the Masoretic texts) and dating to c AD 1000.

As scholars began to compare the Qumran copy of Isaiah with the later copies, they expected to find significant differences between them. After all, the manuscripts were scribed more than 11 centuries apart. The scholars had been taught by critics of the Bible that ancient books developed over long periods of time through the efforts of many authors. They assumed that centuries of copying would have added considerable changes. Instead, the scholars discovered that the Isaiah scroll nearly matched the later Masoretic texts. The most numerous changes were variations in spelling, done to help the second-century BC readers correctly pronounce the words. For thousands of years, scribes had faithfully copied Isaiah's text, preserving for us the words of the prophet!

A Sure Prophetic Word

As you unfold the prophecies of Isaiah, bear in mind these surprising discoveries by Bedouins and scholars. Read Isaiah as something more than the words of a great Hebrew poet. Hear, through Isaiah, the voice of God, who called the prophet to write and who guided him to speak an everlasting message of repentance, faith, and faithfulness. Most important, rejoice in Isaiah's prophecies about the One whom other shepherds discovered at Bethlehem: Immanuel (Is 7:14).

Isaiah's City of God

Zion is the place where Yahweh located His gracious presence for people and made Himself accessible (see p 844). In the Old Testament, it is where one goes to commune and have fellowship with the Lord. Zion is a key term and theme for Isaiah. It represents God's people, free from their oppressors and made faithful by His Word. In the New Testament, Zion becomes a name for God's Church (Heb 12:22–23; Rv 14:1).

Isaiah’s Visions of Zion

Zion, the place where Yahweh rules as King
6:1–5; 24:21–23
Take refuge in the God who dwells in Zion
14:32 (cf 30:1–5)
God will purge and purify Zion
1:21–31; 4:2–6
God will protect Zion
10:24–27; 17:12–14; 29:1–8; chs 36–37
Zion’s exiles will return
11:11–16; 14:1–3; 27:12–13; 35:10; ch 49; 51:11
Zion will draw all nations to herself
2:2–4; 18:7; 25:6–9; ch 60

Five Reasons to Give Tithes and Offerings

The Lord speaks against insincere offerings intended to impress other people (Is 1:10–17; Mt 6:2–4; Mk 12:41–44). He desires that we give cheerfully and that we honor His generous gifts to us. Scripture includes the following good reasons to present tithes and offerings to God:

Thankfulness to God for the blessings He provides us through the Gospel (Dt 14:22–29; Rm 15:25–28; 2Co 9:7).

Desire to support the mission of preaching the Gospel so that others may partake of God's peace and salvation (Rm 15:28b; Php 1:3–5; 4:14–20).

Desire to show support and care for church workers (Nu 18:21–24; Ne 12:44; Gal 6:6–7; 1Tm 5:17–18).

God commanded tithing under the Old Testament, by which He has set before us an enduring example of faithful giving (Lv 27:32; Gn 14:18–20; Heb 7:1–10).

God challenged His people to test His generosity by demonstrating their generosity in giving to His temple (Mal 3:6–12).

Early in Israel's history, the priests at the temple received offerings of grain, fruit, or animals. Later, offerings of bit-silver or money were placed in a chest at the temple, which stood by the entryway so that people could deposit their money (2Ki 12:9; 2Ch 24:4–11); the passing of offering plates is a modern innovation.

Holy, Holy, Holy

God, the Holy One of Israel, is absolutely perfect, pure, and sinless. His absolute righteousness cannot tolerate the slightest error. He demands that we be perfect, as He is perfect (Mt 5:48; cf Lv 11:44). Yet, we are sinful, error-prone, and rebellious against our Maker. Because our sin separates us from His presence, our heavenly Father sent His Holy One—Jesus—to sanctify us. His blood purifies us so that we might live with Him and serve as His holy people.

I Have Seen God!

In the last year of King Uzziah's life, Isaiah had a vision of God sitting upon His throne in the heavenly temple. He saw the seraphim, the six-winged angels, flying above the throne. They shouted out to each other: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts" (Is 6:3). Isaiah stood in the presence of the Thrice Holy: God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Like Moses and Gideon (Ex 33:20; Jgs 6:20–23), Isaiah was frightened because he knew that no one could see God and live. In the presence of the Holy One of Israel, Isaiah was instantly aware of how sinful he was. He was impure in a place that required perfect purity. Consider, for example, how embarrassing it is to spill something on your shirt at a formal gathering. How much greater shame Isaiah must have felt! In His mercy, God sent one of the seraphim to take a coal from the altar of sacrifice and touch it to Isaiah's lips. This purged the prophet of his sins. Isaiah was made fit to bear God's Word to His people. When God asked, "Whom shall I send?" Isaiah replied, "Here am I! Send me" (Is 6:8).

The Holy One of Israel

This heavenly vision made a deep impression on Isaiah. One of his favorite titles for God became "the Holy One of Israel." The prophet uses this name for Yahweh 24 times. (The name appears only six other times in God's Word.) Isaiah warned the people who mocked the Holy One of Israel while believing that God would not bring judgment on them (5:18–19). He condemned them for trying to silence the Lord's messengers (30:9–11). If God's people would repent and trust in Him, they would be saved. Instead, they chose to depend on their foreign resources (30:16; 31:1). In His anger, God called the foreign nations to come and destroy His nation (5:26).

But God's vengeance is not satisfied with the humbling of His people. In his pride, the king of Assyria had blasphemed and insulted the Holy One of Israel. God promised to send sickness to kill Assyria's soldiers and fire to destroy their forests (10:16–17). Although this army would destroy Judah, God would preserve some of His people. They would look to Him for salvation (17:7). They would rejoice that the Holy One of Israel was with them (29:19).

God kept these promises during the reign of faithful King Hezekiah. The Assyrian army captured all of Judah except for Jerusalem. The angel of the Lord struck down 185,000 of His people's enemies. King Sennacherib of Assyria withdrew the remaining forces to his capital, where his own sons assassinated him. During the remaining years of Hezekiah's reign, Judah lived in peace. Yet Isaiah knew the people of Judah would soon disobey the Holy One of Israel again. He warned Hezekiah that the day would come when Babylon would carry Judah into exile (chs 38–39).

Although the Holy One of Israel kept His promise to free a remnant of His people, He had even greater plans in store—for Jew and Gentile alike. He would be their Helper, Redeemer, and Savior (41:14; 43:3, 14; 47:4; 48:17; 49:7; 54:5). He sent His Holy One, Jesus, to live a perfect, sinless, and holy life for us. God's sinless Son became the sacrifice to pay the price for our sins and gain our salvation. Now when God sees us, He sees us clothed in the righteousness of Christ. We are now holy in His sight (Col 1:22).

Saints and Sinners at the Same Time

Before God made the world, He chose us in Christ Jesus to be His children (Eph 1:4). Just as Isaiah was cleansed when the coal from the altar touched his lips, so our Father cleansed us in the waters of our Baptism by joining us to Christ in His death and resurrection (Rm 6:1–14). In Christ, He made us new creations who love Him, trust in Him, and have His power to live holy lives. We are now His saints, a word that means "holy ones."

Yet our old sinful nature still lives within us. It urges us to give in to the temptations of the unholy trinity—the devil, the world, and our flesh. We often yield to them, bringing evil into our lives. We often serve ourselves first, try to please our friends, and attempt to fit into our world, satisfying our urge to seek pleasure and comfort at all costs. We are saints and sinners at the same time.

As we strive to live as the saints God created us to be, we are not alone. The Thrice Holy—God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—is with us always. In Baptism, God made us His own. In the Lord's Supper, we receive strength for our journey. When our sins depress us so that we cry out, "Woe is me!" and wonder if God can ever forgive us, we hear, in the voice of our pastor, God's pardon for every evil we have done. As we contemplate death, we have the same vision of God's throne as Isaiah, St John, and all the saints who have entered the heavenly temple before us. With them we cannot help but say, "Here am I! Send me!"

What, Then, Does *Holy* Mean?

The word *holy* in Hebrew means "separate" (see p 7). Thus, the Holy One of Israel is separate from His people in His perfection, power, and loving-kindness (and many other characteristics). God's holiness shines forth in such events as the burning bush, where the angel of the Lord appeared to Moses. He was told, "Take your sandals off your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground" (Ex 3:2, 5). The Holy One of Israel is uncompromising in His expectation of faithfulness from His people; anything less brings destruction.

The answer for His people's sinful lives was to receive the salvation that the Holy One of Israel offers. That salvation required punishment for sin—or God would no longer be holy. In order to "be just [holy] and the justifier [who declares the sinner as holy and forgiven]" (Rm 3:26), God in His great love let His own Son suffer the punishment we deserve. Through Him, we might have complete forgiveness and be counted as holy in His sight (Is 41:14; 48:17).

Isaiah's Triptych of Christ

Isaiah displays the coming Savior in a threefold way. As you read Isaiah, take note of the different kinds of promises, which all are fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth.

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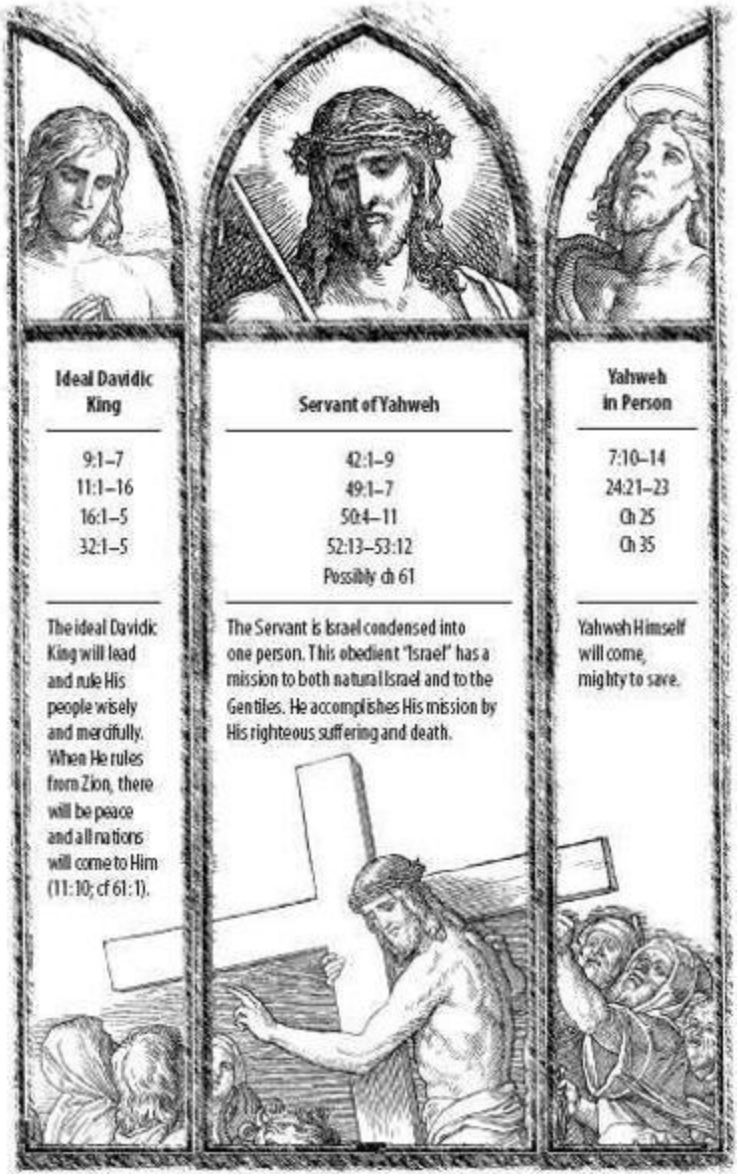


The Joy of Deliverance

Isaiah 12] describes the joy of deliverance, but it is not limited to *description*; it is rather a praise song of God's people, gratitude to God for His miraculous gifts.

It is obvious that this song of praise had a liturgical meaning, because one may see a number of parallels here with the other hymns of praise, most notably with the *Hallel* psalms that the Old Testament Church was singing at the Passover (and other celebrations) while thanking God for the gift of deliverance.

Our chapter has much in common with Psalm 118. … Salvation is a major theme of both the Psalter and [this] text from Isaiah. The key word here is [Hbr] *yoshuakh*, which is related to the name of our Saviour. … We also sing another part of Psalm 118 every Sunday. We sing "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" when we greet Christ who comes to us in the sacrament of the Eucharist.

God comes to save us. Just as the people of old had been saved from Egyptian slavery, so also we have been saved from the slavery of sin and death through the death and Resurrection of the Son of God Jesus Christ. … He brings salvation to us as a gift. He does not require from us to redeem our own sins, but grants forgiveness to repentant sinners at every liturgy. And it is only in Him that a soul of a sinner who is thirsty for forgiveness and reconciliation with God may find rest.

Vsevolod Lytkin, "Sermon on Cantate Sunday," The Siberian Lutheran Mission Society 7, no. 1 (May 2008): 4. To view the entire sermon, go to www.tslms.org.

Teach History, Illustrate by Allegory

Playing games with the Sacred Scriptures has the most injurious consequences if the text and its grammar are neglected. From history we must learn well and much, but little from allegory. You use allegory as an embellishment by which the discourse is illustrated but not established.

Let history remain honest. It teaches, which allegory does not do. But this is what it means to teach: to instruct the conscience about what and how it should know, to nourish faith and the fear of God. In history you have the fulfillment of either promises or threats. Allegory does not pertain to doctrine, but to doctrine already established it can be added as color. The painter's color does not build the house.

The human body does not consist of a garland or a beautiful garment. Even so faith is not established by means of allegories. Here [in Is 13] you have the threats against Babylon that it would be destroyed, although this seemed impossible to the whole world. You also have the promise that Israel would be liberated, which likewise seemed impossible.

Console yourself with this in every trouble. Do not lose hope, consider that God is truthful and that He can accomplish what He has promised, even though there were a hundred Babylons to be destroyed. Israel was held in physical captivity, you in a spiritual one. If you have faith, God will deliver you in the same way and will not forsake you. In this way the histories must be treated, and allegories [comparing them to our life and times] will be profitable. (AE 16:136–37)

The Wrath of God

For people accustomed to New Testament declarations such as "God is love" (1Jn 4:16), Isaiah's oracles against the nations (chs 13–23) sting like a slap on the face. God's wrath presses hard realities upon us—basically three in number. First, we human beings are not our own gods as Satan would have us believe, but the Lord is the one divine being. Second, our relationship with God is fatally afflicted by sin, for which we are fully accountable and subject to God's judgment. Third, wrath ultimately imposes God's perfect justice in full measure. Wrath, therefore, offers no hope. If hope exists at all, it must come as the totally unexpected gift of God's mercy.

We would be wrong to think that God simply experiences the emotion of anger when one or more of His laws are broken—even repeatedly. First of all, human beings cannot understand God's "feelings" in terms of emotions and sentiment as we know them. Emotions of all sorts come and go in us like changing weather patterns. But God's anger and wrath are very different from this. They are passionate actions of divine holiness—measured, purposeful, appropriate, and just. Disobedience (especially the disobedience of the called and chosen people of God's covenant) is worse than breaking a rule, law, or statute. Disobedience tramples on divine love!

Love Spurned Leads to Wrath

Divine love appears before wrath. Divine love is, after all, the essence of God, as the apostle John has written (1Jn 4:16). And it was divine love that initiated God's covenant with Israel.

> g
> It was not because you were more in number than any other people that the LORD set His love on you and chose you, for you were the fewest of all peoples, but it is because the LORD loves you and is keeping the oath that He swore to your fathers. (Dt 7:7–8)

But when God's love is violated by the sinful rebellion, betrayal, and disobedience of those He has loved, God's wrath responds passionately. "I will fall upon them like a bear robbed of her cubs; I will tear open their breast" (Hos 13:8). Isaiah says of God's wrath, "Strange is His deed! … Alien is His work!" (Is 28:21). But it is God's work nonetheless, as real as God's love.

God’s Wrath in Isaiah

Is 24–27 expresses the coming day of God’s wrath upon the whole world and all the forces of evil (cf 24:21). In contrast to this destruction, Israel hoped in the deliverance of God (25:9). But the prophecy also applied to the chosen Israel. “Woe” was shouted against the Northern Kingdom. Its priests and prophets were described as being drunk on their own intoxicating visions and wisdom instead of being filled with the true Spirit of God. As a result, only a remnant of the people would find favor in the Day of the Lord —a day in which the judgment of God would be spoken “by people [oppressive foreign nations] of strange lips and with a foreign tongue” (28:5–13).

This dark prophecy enveloped the Southern Kingdom of Judah as well. God accused its rulers of making a covenant with death and an agreement with the grave (28:15), as if safety could be negotiated and the holy God sidestepped (29:13).

What a tragedy! God’s chosen people had chosen to turn away from God, making the resulting doom under wrath inevitable (30:9–11). Still, God did not withdraw His offer of mercy. God’s love probed for an opening, but Israel’s continuing stubbornness under sin’s self-absorption refused God’s love (30:15; cf Am 8:12). So it was that Assyria and Babylon became God’s instruments of wrath.

God's Surprising Grace

But something curious was afoot—the surprise of divine grace. Even as God's wrath poured out to devastate first the Northern Kingdom and then Judah, a promise of hope was revealed. This hope did not participate in the wishful fantasies of sin, but it was revealed with the same breath that warned so sternly of doom. God's Word of wrath and God's Word of hope advanced together. Wrath was not denied; all would suffer as the result of sinful disobedience. But God chose to limit His wrath. The Lord would return a remnant of the people to Himself in joy—a faithful remnant who "will no more lean on him who struck them, but will lean on the LORD, the Holy One of Israel" (Is 10:20). This remnant would exist as the creation of God's grace, a creation every bit as unexpected as Israel's creation as a covenant people. Its signs would be unexpected miracles of grace—giving sight to blind eyes and sound to deaf ears, strength to helpless limbs and joyous songs to mute tongues: "They shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away" (35:10).

This divine vision of hope is recognized as real, however, only because God's wrath upon sin is equally real. Wrath does not point beyond itself—even when God limits it. Wrath ultimately ends everything in the perfectly just consequence of death. God is God; no pretender stands before Him. All are accountable and subject to judgment, which will finally be complete in its fairness and consequence. Those are the realities of wrath. That God should here limit His wrath softened none of this.

Mercy, Love, and Hope

Hope consists of this: after God's wrath has punished the love-trampling disobedience of sin, God retains the divine prerogative to create anew. And that is "what no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love Him," namely, Jesus Christ (1Co 2:9; cf Is 64:4).

Mercy, not wrath, is God's last word—even as God's love, not His wrath, is His first word. But love, wrath, and mercy are all God's Word. And this Word God has made flesh in Jesus Christ. In Jesus, God's perfect love is manifest. In Jesus, God's wrath against all sin was not only witnessed, but also was suffered and absorbed to the full. This is the great surprise of grace. Wrath that was held back before (not poured out on the sinner) is emptied upon the Christ (Rm 3:23–25; 2Co 5:21). In Jesus, therefore, forgiving mercy rises up to present new and eternal life to all who believe in Him as Savior and Lord. But wrath remains in all its fullness for those who do not receive Him by faith. Wrath, therefore, will yet have its sad day. Then punishment of the godless—as well as the salvation of believers in Christ—will be complete.

God’s Remnant

The prophet Isaiah places special emphasis on a certain name for God’s people: the remnant. This article connects this important theme in Isaiah with other parts of the Holy Scriptures.

The Old Testament Remnant

One of the earliest names for God's people mentioned in the Bible is *remnant*, from the Hebrew *yether*, "remainder," or "whatever remains." This name appears almost 100 times in the Old Testament. For example, in Jgs 7:1–7, Gideon separates the 300 men God will use to defeat the Midianites from the rest of his 32,000 troops.

In a spiritual sense, the remnant designates those who, by God's grace, survived great catastrophe, such as the flood in which Noah and his family were the only persons spared because "Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation. Noah walked with God" (Gn 6:9).

As in the days of Noah, the sinfulness of the people seemingly overwhelmed Isaiah, the greatest of the prophets. Like the silver lining in every cloud, so the hope and assurance of a surviving remnant accompanies the prophet's warnings about the inevitable judgment of God on Israel. Already in the first chapter, a ray of light pierces the darkness: "If the Lord of hosts had not left us a few survivors, we should have been like Sodom, and become like Gomorrah" (Is 1:9; cf 28:21–29).

Typical of the picture language used regarding the return of the exiles is this prediction: "there will be a highway from Assyria for the remnant that remains of His people, as there was for Israel when they came up from the land of Egypt" (11:16).

The apostle Paul quoted from Is 59:20 to apply the salvation of the remnant to those of Israel who would come to faith in Christ (Rm 11:26–27). The saving of this remnant would be solely by the grace of God (His unmerited favor toward sinful humanity through Christ), and not by human effort. This is a major theme in Rm 10.

The New Testament Remnant

Elsewhere in the New Testament, the remnant is called the Church, the kingdom of God, and the kingdom of heaven.

Why can we equate the remnant with the Church? Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians is helpful. After praising God for bestowing on us every spiritual blessing in Christ, he continues: "He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world" (Eph 1:4–5, 7).

In Eph 2, we come across this familiar passage: "You are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints" (2:19–20). The apostle then points to the "mystery" of Christ, which is "that the Gentiles are fellow heirs … partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel" (3:6).

In the remainder of Ephesians, God's people are instructed in holy living: becoming mature in their faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God, not being deceived by false teachers, not given to impurity (5:1–21).

The Remnant as God's Kingdom

In a number of His parables, our Lord presents various perspectives on the Kingdom, His Church. Not everyone who hears the saving Gospel finds a place in the Kingdom. This is demonstrated in the parable of the sower, in which four kinds of hearers are described: those who fail to grasp the message while they are hearing it, those who receive it with joy but lose it when they might have to suffer because of the Word, those who allow the deceit of wealth to choke it, and those who hold fast to the message and therefore are assured of a place in the Kingdom as they show its salutary effects in how they live (Mt 13:1–23).

The humble, insignificant beginnings of the Kingdom in Jesus also hold God's power to accomplish the full growth of His kingdom in His time. This is pictured in the parables of the mustard seed and the leaven (Mt 13:31–33). Who of the 120 believers who met to select a successor to Judas could have dreamed that their number would be increased by 3,000 at the following Pentecost? Just as leaven (yeast) works secretly and invisibly, an unseen power, so the Gospel "is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes" (Rm 1:16).

Another facet of the Kingdom surfaces in the parables of the weeds and the net (Mt 13:24–30, 36–43, 47–50). In this life, believers and unbelievers —wheat and weeds, good fish and bad fish—are not separated. The separation will be performed by the angels on Judgment Day. While it may be easier to separate good fish from bad fish, greater scrutiny is required in the case of the wheat and the weeds. The weed Jesus speaks of (probably darnel) looks very much like wheat as it grows, so we are cautioned against attempting to identify who is and who is not a believer. This is God's business (1Co 4:5).

There is always the temptation to make a judgment as to why people say or do things, so 1Co 4:5 refers to purposes, or motives. Only God is privy to this information. Only God can read the heart. Not only that, but believers and unbelievers alike often act from mixed motives. Even our legal system, as careful as it is regarding evidence and witnesses, often enters the unknown when prosecutors ascribe certain motives to persons accused of wrongdoing.

In the parable of the weeds, Jesus indicated that the good seed stands for children (lit, sons) of the Kingdom. “Children” involves a legal right, the right of inheritance (Gal 3:26, 29).

Jesus compares the sheep with the goats in another familiar picture story. While the sheep, the righteous, did indeed demonstrate their faith by deeds of mercy, they enter heaven by virtue of their inheritance (Mt 25:34).

Conclusion

The remnant, the Church, the kingdom of grace—now the Church Triumphant—inherits the kingdom of glory. With joy and confidence, we confess with the apostle: “The Lord will rescue me from every evil deed and bring me safely into His heavenly kingdom. To Him be the glory forever and ever. Amen” (2Tm 4:18).

Walking with the Lord

More than 2,700 years ago, God inspired His prophet Isaiah to record a most comforting message: “Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are Mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you. For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior” (Is 43:1b–3a).

A Sure and Certain Promise for Israel

The Lord's promise through Isaiah must have seemed incredible. Instead of walking on the Lord's path, instead of following His way, the Israelites walked "in a way that [was] not good, following their own devices" (Is 65:2). The Lord's path was one of light and safety and certainty. Rather than walking on His path in the light of His Word, Israel chose to leave His path and walk in the darkness of self-centered sin. By wandering off the Lord's path, they had wandered into great danger. Off the path, in the darkness of sin, prowled Satan, "seeking someone to devour" (1Pt 5:8). Off the path, "on every side the wicked prowl, as vileness is exalted among the children of man" (Ps 12:8).

For more than 800 years, the Lord sent His prophets out to call His people back to Him, back to His path, back to the light. But they wanted it their way, wandering away from the Lord's way, doing what was "right" in their own eyes, loving other gods who were incapable of love, and ignoring the one true God, who is love. As stubborn and stiff-necked as these people were, they remained God's people, a people called out of darkness. So in love, God sent them walking into exile (587 BC) far from the temple, far from His promised place of presence. They may have thought He had left them to walk alone, but He remained their God and they remained His people. He loved them despite their sin, and through His prophet Isaiah, He promised them they would not walk alone through the trials and tribulations they faced. They would not walk alone as they left captivity in Babylon and returned to Jerusalem (538 BC). He would walk with them, because He had redeemed them and called them by name. They were His.

A Sure and Certain Promise for You

Often, we are like these ancient Israelites. We want it our way instead of God's way. We want to walk our walk instead of His. The Lord is certainly patient. God promises to walk with you as you walk through the hazards of this life. He promises you, His called and chosen people, that you shall never walk alone. He promises to be with you as you endure fierce storms and fiery trials. This is a sure and certain promise for you.

You can be certain of this promise because the Lord has redeemed you. He has purchased and won you with His Son's holy, precious blood poured out for you on His cross. He has bought you with "His innocent suffering and death" that you may "be His own and live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness" (SC, Second Article, p xxxvii). You are of great value to God because your redemption cost Him dearly. As a consequence, when you endure the fiery trials of this life, He promises you will never be lost (Is 43:2b).

You can be certain of this promise because the Lord has called you by name. He has washed you clean in the pristine waters of Holy Baptism and given you His name (Mt 28:19). You have been baptized into Him; therefore, you are His.

You'll Never Walk Alone

Nevertheless, Christians can expect to suffer much in this life. St Luke wrote, "Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God" (Ac 14:22). Satan will assault you and afflict you in body and soul. He will cast uncertainty on God's certain promises. He will attempt to lead you off the Lord's lighted path into certain danger and destruction by urging you to do what is right in your own eyes and to walk your own walk in the darkness of sin.

In this hostile world filled with sin-wrought suffering, when you stray from the Lord's lighted path and attempt to walk in dark danger, God will never abandon you or give up on you. He will walk with you to the gates of heaven. He promises to take the same stormy circumstances in life that Satan plans to use for evil and use them instead for your eternal good (Rm 8:28; Is 43:1b–3a).

The Suffering Servant King

You have heard the familiar verses. Perhaps you have learned them by heart: "He was wounded for our transgressions; He was crushed for our iniquities; upon Him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with His stripes we are healed" (Is 53:5). "A bruised reed He will not break" (42:3). He "was numbered with the transgressors; yet He bore the sin of many" (53:12). You have sung the familiar hymns: "O Sacred Head, Now Wounded" (*LSB* 449), "Stricken, Smitten, and Afflicted" (*LSB* 451), and "A Lamb Goes Uncomplaining Forth" (*LSB* 438). Some of the more familiar Scripture passages are part of the songs of the Suffering Servant. For centuries, hymn writers have mined the rich imagery of the Servant Songs to create hymns of lasting comfort.

The Holy Spirit inspired Isaiah to record four separate songs of the Suffering Servant (42:1–9; 49:1–13; 50:4–11; 52:13–53:12). With remarkable clarity, 700 years before the Servant was born, Isaiah vividly portrayed His life from manger to grave to resurrection. He wrote how the Servant, born of a virgin, would atone for the sins of the world with His own suffering and death. No other human could fulfill the mission of the Servant.

The Servant Is a Humble King

In the Old Testament, the king of Israel, the temple, and the land bear rich theological imagery. We hear of God accomplishing the salvation of His people through His king, dwelling with His people in His temple, and restoring His people to the land promised long ago. Isaiah further defined God's kingly role as that of a Servant. The Messiah, a royal descendant of King David, would be a King radically different from all previous kings. True, this King would bring forth justice to the Gentiles, even to all the earth (42:1, 4), but He would come quietly and humbly (53:2). This King would come not to be served by His subjects, but to serve them. He would offer His life for all people.

In the Servant Songs, God provided His prophet Isaiah a glimpse of the future, far beyond the impending judgment of Jerusalem and exile in Babylon. Isaiah wrote about the day when God Himself would dwell in human flesh with His people to serve them and all nations. For example, in ch 49, the Servant Himself speaks of His commission to bring salvation to Israel and to be a light to the Gentiles. He would take the sins of the world —past, present, and future—upon Himself and offer Himself as the perfect sacrifice to make satisfaction for that sin.

A King like No Other

This King would not draw attention to Himself (42:2). Subjected to great humiliation (52:14), His appearance would startle and amaze other kings (52:15). Despised and rejected by people, He would be a man of sorrows, a man not highly esteemed (53:3). When accused, this innocent King would not defend Himself but would stand silent (53:7). The King would "bring forth justice to the nations" (42:1) in what would appear to be a gross miscarriage of justice, since the guilty would be released and the innocent condemned to die (53:8).

Scorned by His own people, the Suffering Servant would be worshiped by princes. Despised by the common man, kings would arise to see Him (49:7). This King would be smitten, stricken, and spat upon (53:4). He would be bruised, berated, and beaten (53:5). He would turn His cheek to allow His beard to be pulled and plucked (50:6). Although innocent of violence and deceit, He would be killed with criminals and buried with the wicked and the rich (53:9). Who is like this Servant King?

Set Apart by the Father

Is 42:1 records the Father's introduction of this Suffering Servant and His work: "Behold My servant, whom I uphold, My chosen, in whom My soul delights; I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the nations." This Servant is the Father's singular chosen Servant. The Father unhesitatingly acknowledges Him. He is the One elected by the Father for this unique position of honor. He is the One in whom the Father greatly delights. Knowing the difficulty of the mission He has assigned to this Servant King, the Father confers His Spirit on Him to equip Him for His peculiar work.

Centuries after Isaiah completed his prophetic work, when John baptized Jesus in the Jordan River, the Father's voice boomed from heaven with reference to the Servant Song, "This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased" (Mt 3:17; cf Is 42:1). The Spirit descended from the heavens in the form of a dove and came to rest upon the Son (cf Is 42:1). Later (Lk 4:18), the Suffering Servant began His public ministry by reading the words of Is 61:1, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me." Then He proclaimed, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing" (Lk 4:21). Later, when the Servant turned to Jerusalem and His bloody mission on the cross, the Father again affirmed His pleasure with His Son and His work by saying, "This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased" (Mt 17:5).

The Servant Suffers for You

"But He was wounded for our transgressions; He was crushed for our iniquities; upon Him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with His stripes we are healed" (Is 53:5). With these poetic words, Isaiah drives the prophecy home. He explains why it was necessary for the Servant King to suffer. The almighty God took on human flesh in order that He might be humiliated, tortured, and killed to take away your sins! He was wounded—for you. He was crucified to bring about peace with God—for you. Through His work as the Suffering Servant, He brings healing—for you. Who is like this Servant King? Who is like this God?

> Tell me, ye who hear Him groaning,
> Was there ever grief like His?
> Friends through fear His cause disowning,
> Foes insulting His distress;
> Many hands were raised to wound Him,
> None would intervene to save;
> But the deepest stroke that pierced Him
> Was the stroke that justice gave. (*LSB* 451:2)

There is no other God who loves and forgives like your God (Mi 7:18). He is the Suffering Servant King who died for you, that you might live eternally like a king with Him.

A New Eden

In the beginning, God created a perfect universe. When He had completed His work, God declared the universe and all its features and creatures to be "very good" (Gn 1:31). Life prevailed. Animals lived in peace. Mankind lived in peace. Mankind and animals walked together without fear of one another. There was no sickness. There was no death.

The universe was perfect in every way. God had given mankind everything they needed. In fact, God had given them all that was good and had withheld no good thing.

But mankind wanted more. They wanted what God had not given them, and they took what God had withheld for their good. With this act of defiance came death—not only death to mankind but also death to the entire universe. Disease, death, and decay replaced the life, concord, and order God had created.

But God knew this before He began His work of creation. God knew people would destroy His perfect universe. God knew they would bring death upon themselves. So God prepared a plan, a way to rescue people from the situation they had created for themselves. God, the Creator of all, would become a man and die the death people had brought upon themselves in order that they could once again live. God sent His Son into the world in human flesh to bring about this new creation.

When Jesus' work was completed on the sixth day of the week, He cried out, "It is finished," and then He rested in His tomb on the Sabbath. On Easter Sunday, the first day of the new creation, the God-man who had died arose victorious over death and the grave to usher in the new creation, in which those who die shall live and those who live shall never die (Jn 11:25–26). God provided Isaiah a glimpse of this new creation more than 700 years before God became flesh in Christ.

The New Creation

Isaiah recorded God's plan of creating new heavens and a new earth so unique, so beautiful, so wondrous, that the "former things shall not be remembered" (Is 65:17). In this new creation, neither the sound of weeping nor cries of distress would be heard (v 19). The glorious new life in Christ would never be cut short by death. Predator and prey would dwell together in harmony: "the wolf and the lamb shall graze together" (v 25). Carnivores would once again be herbivores: "the lion shall eat straw like the ox" (v 25). Once again, animals would live together in peace. People would live in peace. People and animals would once again walk together without fear of the other. Just as God had created the original creation, so there would be no destruction or violence in this new world. There would be no crime or terrorism. " 'They shall not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain,' says the LORD" (v 25). In this creation, God would preserve mankind and angels from falling into sin. Never again would sin, Satan, or death stalk God's creatures.

The Future Is Now

This new creation is not merely a future hope. It is also a present reality. Christ completed the work of the new creation on the cross. Already, now, you are a new creation. No longer are you bound by sin and death. With new life created by the Holy Spirit through Word and Sacrament, the old has passed away for you. St Paul wrote, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come" (2Co 5:17).

You live in the time of "now, but not yet." God's new creation is a present reality (your new life in Christ is the evidence), but the totality of this creation has not yet been revealed. As a result, the old Adam lives alongside the new man in constant daily struggle. We live in a world ripe with the consequences of sin, a world engulfed with the suffering that will be absent in the new world. Though we suffer these consequences of sin—sickness, suffering, pain, and death—all of creation groans with us as we await the redemption of our bodies (Rm 8:22–23).

Conclusion

We know not all the details of the new creation, such as how old our bodies will be or what daily life will be like, but this we know: the reality will exceed our expectations and "the former things shall not be remembered" (Is 65:17).

As you await with all of creation the redemption of your body, read Is 65:17–25 again. Close your eyes and ponder anew the new creation God has made for you. "For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former things shall not be remembered or come into mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in that which I create" (Is 65:17–18).

Footnotes

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:2 Or *Sons*; also verse 4
- [2] 1:10 Or *law*
- [1] 1:18 Or *dispute*
- [1] 1:21 Or *become unchaste*
- [2] 1:29 Some Hebrew manuscripts *you*

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 2

- [1] 2:3 Or *teaching*
- [1] 2:19 Hebrew *dust*

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 3

- [2] 3:1 Hebrew *staff*
- [3] 3:4 Or *caprice*
- [1] 3:7 Hebrew *binder of wounds*
- [2] 3:8 Hebrew *the eyes of his glory*
- [3] 3:12 Or *they have confused*
- [4] 3:12 Or *grazed over*; compare Exodus 22:5

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 4

- [1] 4:4 Or *purging*

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 5

- [1] 5:5 Or *grazed over*; compare Exodus 22:5
- [2] 5:7 The Hebrew words for *justice* and *bloodshed* sound alike
- [3] 5:7 The Hebrew words for *righteous* and *outcry* sound alike
- [4] 5:10 Hebrew *ten yoke*, the area ten yoke of oxen can plow in a day
- [5] 5:10 A *bath* was about 6 gallons or 22 liters; a *homer* was about 6 bushels or 220 liters; an *ephah* was about 3/5 bushel or 22 liters
- [6] 5:13 Or *without their knowledge*
- [7] 5:13 Or *die of hunger*
- [1] 5:14 Hebrew *her nobility*
- [2] 5:15 Hebrew *high*
- [3] 5:16 Hebrew *high*

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 6

- [1] 6:1 Or *hem*
- [2] 6:3 Or *may his glory fill the whole earth*
- [1] 6:9 Or *Hear indeed*
- [2] 6:9 Or *see indeed*
- [3] 6:10 Hebrew *fat*
- [4] 6:13 Or *purged*
- [5] 6:13 Or *offspring*

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 7

- [6] 7:2 Hebrew *Syria has rested upon*
- [7] 7:2 Hebrew *his heart*
- [8] 7:3 *Shear-jashub* means *A remnant shall return*
- [1] 7:6 Hebrew *let us split it open*
- [2] 7:9 The Hebrew for *you* is plural in verses 9, 13, 14
- [3] 7:11 The Hebrew for *you* and *your* is singular in verses 11, 16, 17
- [4] 7:13 That is, Isaiah
- [5] 7:14 *Immanuel* means *God is with us*
- [1] 7:19 Or *watering holes*, or *brambles*
- [2] 7:23 A *shekel* was about 2/5 ounce or 11 grams

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 8

- [3] 8:1 Hebrew *with a man's stylus*
- [4] 8:1 *Maher-shalal-hash-baz* means *The spoil speeds, the prey hastens*
- [1] 8:9 Or *Be evil*
- [2] 8:9 Or *dismayed*
- [3] 8:10 The Hebrew for *God is with us* is *Immanuel*
- [4] 8:16 Or *law*; also verse 20
- [5] 8:21 Hebrew *it*
- [6] 8:21 Or *speak contemptuously by*

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 9

- [1] 9:1 Ch 8:23 in Hebrew
- [2] 9:1 Or *of the Gentiles*
- [3] 9:2 Ch 9:1 in Hebrew
- [4] 9:6 Or *is upon*
- [5] 9:6 Or *is called*

- [1] 9:17 Or *speaks disgraceful things*

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 10

- [1] 10:12 Hebrew *I*
- [1] 10:27 The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 11

- [1] 11:11 Probably *Nubia*
- [2] 11:15 Hebrew *devote to destruction*
- [3] 11:15 Or *wind*

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 12

- [1] 12:1 The Hebrew for *you* is singular in verse 1
- [2] 12:2 Hebrew *for Yah, the LORD*
- [3] 12:3 The Hebrew for *you* is plural in verses 3, 4
- [4] 12:5 Or *this is made known*
- [5] 12:6 The Hebrew for *your* in verse 6 is singular, referring to the *inhabitant of Zion*

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 13

- [6] 13:3 Or *those who exult in my majesty*
- [7] 13:5 Or *earth*; also verse 9

- [8] 13:6 The Hebrew words for *destruction* and *almighty* sound alike
- [1] 13:18 Hebrew *dash in pieces*
- [2] 13:21 Or *owls*
- [1] 13:22 Or *foxes*

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 14

- [2] 14:4 Dead Sea Scroll (compare Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate); the meaning of the word in the Masoretic Text is uncertain
- [1] 14:13 Or *in the remote parts of Zaphon*
- [2] 14:18 Hebrew *house*
- [3] 14:23 Possibly *porcupine*, or *owl*

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 15

- [1] 15:2 Hebrew *the house*
- [2] 15:2 Or *temple, even Dibon to the high places*
- [1] 15:9 Dead Sea Scroll, Vulgate (compare Syriac); Masoretic Text *Dimon* (twice in this verse)

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 16

- [2] 16:4 Some Hebrew manuscripts, Septuagint, Syriac; Masoretic Text *let my outcasts sojourn among you; as for Moab, be a shelter to them*

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 17

- [1] 17:11 Or *though you carefully fence them*
- [2] 17:11 Or *will be a heap*

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 18

- [3] 18:1 Probably *Nubia*

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 19

- [1] 19:3 Or *I will swallow up*
- [1] 19:18 Dead Sea Scroll and some other manuscripts *City of the Sun*

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 20

- [1] 20:3 Probably *Nubia*

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 21

- [1] 21:5 Or *they set the watchman*
- [2] 21:8 Dead Sea Scroll, Syriac; Masoretic Text *Then a lion cried out*, or *Then he cried out like a lion*

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 23

- [1] 23:1 Hebrew *Kittim*; also verse 12
- [1] 23:5 Hebrew *they will have labor pains*
- [2] 23:9 The Hebrew words for *glory* and *hosts* sound alike
- [3] 23:13 Or *that has become nothing*
- [4] 23:15 Or *lifetime*

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 24

- [5] 24:1 Or *land*; also throughout this chapter
- [1] 24:14 Hebrew *from the sea*
- [2] 24:15 Hebrew *in the realm of light*
- [3] 24:17 The Hebrew words for *terror*, *pit*, and *snare* sound alike

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 25

- [1] 25:10 The Hebrew words for *dunghill* and for the Moabite town *Madmen* (Jeremiah 48:2) sound alike
- [2] 25:11 Or *in spite of the skill*

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 27

- [1] 27:2 Many Hebrew manuscripts *A vineyard of wine*
- [2] 27:6 Hebrew *In those to come*
- [3] 27:8 Or *By driving her away*; the meaning of the Hebrew word is uncertain
- [4] 27:8 Or *wind*
- [5] 27:9 Septuagint *and this is the blessing when I take away his sin*

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 28

- [1] 28:5 The Hebrew words for *glory* and *hosts* sound alike
- [2] 28:7 Or *confused by*
- [1] 28:16 Dead Sea Scroll *I am laying*
- [1] 28:25 A type of wheat

- [2] 28:28 Or *Grain is crushed for bread; he will surely thresh it, but not forever*

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 29

- [3] 29:2 *Ariel* could mean *lion of God*, or *hero* (2 Samuel 23:20), or *altar hearth* (Ezekiel 43:15–16)
- [1] 29:9 Or *Linger awhile*

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 30

- [1] 30:1 Hebrew *who weave a web*
- [1] 30:8 Some Hebrew manuscripts, Syriac, Targum, Vulgate, and Greek versions; Masoretic Text *forever and ever*
- [2] 30:15 Or *repentance*
- [1] 30:27 Hebrew *in weight of uplifted clouds*
- [2] 30:33 Or *For Topheth*

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 31

- [1] 31:4 The Hebrew words for *hosts* and *to fight* sound alike
- [2] 31:6 Hebrew *they*

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 32

- [1] 32:17 Or *security*

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 33

- [1] 33:6 Hebrew *his*
- [2] 33:8 Masoretic Text; Dead Sea Scroll *witnesses*

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 34

- [1] 34:2 That is, set apart (devoted) as an offering to the Lord (for destruction); also verse 5
- [1] 34:9 Hebrew *her streams*
- [2] 34:11 The identity of the animals rendered *hawk* and *porcupine* is uncertain
- [3] 34:11 Hebrew *formlessness*
- [4] 34:13 Or *owls*
- [5] 34:14 Identity uncertain

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 35

- [1] 35:8 Or *if they are fools, they shall not wander in it*

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 36

- [2] 36:2 *Rabshakeh* is the title of a high-ranking Assyrian military officer
- [1] 36:16 Hebrew *Make a blessing with me*

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 37

- [1] 37:9 Probably *Nubia*
- [1] 37:27 Some Hebrew manuscripts and 2 Kings 19:26; most Hebrew manuscripts *like a field*

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 38

- [1] 38:1 Or *live*; also verses 9, 21
- [2] 38:5 Hebrew *to your days*
- [3] 38:8 The meaning of the Hebrew verse is uncertain
- [4] 38:10 Or *In the quiet*
- [5] 38:13 Or (with Targum) *I cried for help*

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 40

- [1] 40:2 Or *time of service*
- [1] 40:3 Or *A voice of one crying*
- [2] 40:6 Revocalization based on Dead Sea Scroll, Septuagint, Vulgate; Masoretic Text *And someone says*
- [3] 40:6 Or *all its constancy*
- [4] 40:9 Or *O herald of good news to Zion*
- [5] 40:9 Or *O herald of good news to Jerusalem*
- [1] 40:13 Or *has directed*
- [2] 40:20 Or *He chooses valuable wood*

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 41

- [1] 41:2 Or *whom righteousness calls to follow?*
- [1] 41:23 Or *that we may both be dismayed and see*
- [1] 41:27 Or *Formerly I said*

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 42

- [2] 42:4 Or *bruised*
- [1] 42:15 Or *into coastlands*
- [2] 42:19 Or *as the one at peace with me*

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 44

- [1] 44:7 Or *Who like me can proclaim it?*
- [1] 44:23 Or *will display his beauty*

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 45

- [1] 45:2 Masoretic Text; Dead Sea Scroll, Septuagint *level the mountains*
- [2] 45:11 A slight emendation yields *will you question me about my children, or command me concerning the work of my hands*?
- [1] 45:19 Hebrew *in emptiness*
- [2] 45:23 Septuagint *every tongue shall confess to God*

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 48

- [1] 48:10 Or *I have chosen*
- [2] 48:11 Hebrew lacks *my name*

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 49

- [1] 49:3 Or *I will display my beauty*
- [1] 49:12 Hebrew *from the sea*
- [2] 49:12 Dead Sea Scroll; Masoretic Text *Sinim*
- [1] 49:17 Dead Sea Scroll; Masoretic Text *Your children make haste*
- [2] 49:24 Dead Sea Scroll, Syriac, Vulgate (see also verse 25); Masoretic Text *of a righteous man*

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 51

- [1] 51:4 Or *for teaching*; also verse 7
- [2] 51:6 Or *will die like gnats*
- [1] 51:16 Or *planting*
- [2] 51:19 Dead Sea Scroll, Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate; Masoretic Text *how shall I comfort you*

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 52

- [1] 52:13 Or *shall prosper*
- [2] 52:15 Or *startle*

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 53

- [3] 53:1 Or *Who has believed what we have heard?*
- [4] 53:3 Or *forsaken*
- [5] 53:3 Or *pains*; also verse 4
- [6] 53:3 Or *and knowing*
- [7] 53:3 Or *sickness*; also verse 4
- [8] 53:3 Or *as one who hides his face from us*
- [1] 53:10 Or *he has made him sick*
- [2] 53:10 Or *when you make his soul*
- [3] 53:11 Masoretic Text; Dead Sea Scroll *he shall see light*
- [1] 53:12 Or *with the great*
- [2] 53:12 Or *with the numerous*

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 54

- [1] 54:9 Some manuscripts *For this is as the waters of Noah*
- [2] 54:11 Or *lapis lazuli*
- [3] 54:12 Or *jasper*, or *ruby*
- [4] 54:12 Or *crystal*
- [5] 54:17 Or *righteousness*

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 57

- [1] 57:5 Or *among the terebinths*
- [2] 57:8 Or *on a monument* (see 56:5); Hebrew *on a hand*
- [3] 57:10 Hebrew *and so you were not sick*

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 58

- [1] 58:3 Or *pursue your own business*
- [1] 58:6 Or *bruised*
- [2] 58:13 Or *business*
- [3] 58:13 Or *pursuing your own business*
- [4] 58:13 Hebrew *or speaking a word*
- [5] 58:14 Or *of the land*

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 59

- [1] 59:15 Hebrew *and it was evil in his eyes*
- [2] 59:19 Hebrew *a narrow river*

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 60

- [1] 60:5 Hebrew *your heart shall tremble and grow wide*
- [1] 60:19 Masoretic Text; Dead Sea Scroll, Septuagint, Targum add *by night*
- [2] 60:19 Or *your beauty*
- [3] 60:21 Or *that I might display my beauty*

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 61

- [4] 61:1 Or *afflicted*
- [5] 61:1 Or *the opening* [of the eyes] *to those who are blind*; Septuagint *and recovery of sight to the blind*
- [1] 61:3 Or *that he may display his beauty*
- [2] 61:8 Or *robbery with a burnt offering*

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 62

- [1] 62:4 Hebrew *Azubah*
- [2] 62:4 Hebrew *Shemamah*
- [3] 62:4 Hebrew *Hephzibah*
- [4] 62:4 Hebrew *Beulah*
- [5] 62:9 Or *in my holy courts*

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 63

- [1] 63:3 Or *their juice*; also verse 6
- [2] 63:4 Or *the year of my redeemed*
- [3] 63:9 Or *he did not afflict*
- [4] 63:11 Or *Then his people remembered the days of old, of Moses*
- [1] 63:15 Or *holy and glorious*
- [2] 63:18 Or *They have dispossessed your holy people for a little while*

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 64

- [3] 64:2 Ch 64:1 in Hebrew
- [4] 64:5 Or *in your ways is continuance, that we might be saved*
- [1] 64:7 Masoretic Text; Septuagint, Syriac, Targum *have delivered us into*
- [2] 64:11 Or *holy and glorious*

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 65

- [3] 65:1 Or *that did not call upon*
- [1] 65:7 Or *I will first measure their payment into their bosom*
- [1] 65:22 Hebrew *shall wear out*
- [2] 65:23 Or *for sudden terror*

Footnotes for Isaiah, Chapter 66

- [1] 66:11 Or *breast*
- [2] 66:18 Septuagint, Syriac; Hebrew lacks *know*
- [3] 66:18 Hebrew *and it is coming*

Study Notes

ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 1** Isaiah's messages are not arranged in strictly chronological order (e.g., compare 1:1 with 6:1–13). Ch 1 introduces two topics elaborated in all subsequent chapters: (1) God's wrath consumes impenitent sinners, and (2) God's mercy offers penitent sinners redemption and salvation. Both threat and promise are backed by "the Holy One of Israel" (v 4).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 1:1 *vision*. God supernaturally revealed these things to Isaiah, showing coming events in light of His eternal plan of salvation (cf 2:1; 13:1). *Isaiah*. Hbr nouns comprising this name suggest his calling to proclaim the Lord's salvation. *Amoz*. Not the prophet Amos. We do not know Isaiah's ancestry (on his social standing, see note, 6:6); far more important than his background is what the vision enabled and compelled him to say. *Judah and Jerusalem*. Area remaining loyal to Davidic dynasty after Solomon's death when northern tribes seceded (two centuries before Isaiah). Isaiah saw the role Judah and Jerusalem were to play in God's plan of salvation. *days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah*. Kings who reigned during Isaiah's ministry (Uzziah [792–740], Jotham [750–735], Ahaz [735–715], Hezekiah [715–686]). In these years, Judah and Israel were at their peak of power, prosperity, and territorial expansion. Only David and Solomon's reigns were greater. See chronology, p xcix–c.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 1:2 *Hear, O heavens*. Israel is summoned to stand trial in a covenant lawsuit. God calls heaven and earth as witnesses (cf Dt 4:26; 30:19). He summons creation to testify (Dt 32:1; Ps 50:4) because it witnessed the critical events. *Children*. They were children not just because of creation, but because God redeemed them from Egypt (Ex 4:22; Hos 11:1). *rebelled*. By rejecting God's ways despite His blessings (Dt 32:6, 18, 20). A disobedient child deserved death (Ex 21:15, 17).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 1:3 Animals are intelligent enough to recognize that their owner provides for them, but God's people lacked this basic wisdom. Luth: "They think they know everything, and the prophet calls their wisdom and knowledge sheer stupidity and ignorance" (AE 16:9).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 1:4 *offspring of evildoers*. Sinful parents bear sinful children. The children repeat the same sinful corruption that plagued their parents. *Holy One of Israel*. See p 1227.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 1:5 *whole head … faint*. Judah suffers collectively and individually. Sin is no minor problem; it affects the entire being.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 1:6 *no soundness*. Illness and injury are metaphors for sin. Spiritually, the nation resembled a person beaten to a pulp and wounded from head to foot (cf Dt 28:35), but who would not seek healing. *pressed out or bound up or softened with oil*. Pus was pressed out of boils or infected wounds. Cuts were bound with bandages; scabs and sores were soothed with olive oil.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 1:7 *Your country … with fire*. Coming destruction. *foreigners*. During Isaiah's lifetime, Judah suffered destructive raids by several enemies. The worst came with an invasion by the Assyrian king Sennacherib (cf 2Ki 18:13). *desolate*. Ravaged and with few people; many would be killed or exiled into captivity.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 1:8 *booth in a vineyard … lodge in a cucumber field*. Minimal shelter, useful only for short periods of time. Depicts subsistence, not comfort.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 1:9 *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291. *Sodom … Gomorrah*. OT's ultimate expression of rebellion (Gn 18–19; cf Jude 7). Unlike these sinful cities, Judah and Jerusalem were not completely annihilated. In mercy, God left a remnant (6:13; 11:1, 11). Gr Naz: "Whenever I hear Isaiah threaten the people of Sodom and rulers of Gomorrah … I am almost filled with horror, and melted to tears. It is impossible, he says, to find any blow to add … so completely have you run through the whole, and exhausted every form of chastisement, ever calling upon yourselves some new one by your wickedness" (*NPNF* 2 7:252–53).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 1:11 *sacrifices?* They claimed to worship God at the same time they violated His laws. On God's emphatic rejection of outward formality without inward participation, cf Ps 40:6; Am 5:21–24; Mi 6:7–8. Luth: "The ungodly disregard faith and consider sacrifice to be the supreme worship of God … they despise the kernel and admire the husk" (AE 16:15). *had enough*. God instituted the sacrificial system, but it is worthless without faith (Heb 11:6). Mere repetition does not help. See note, Mt 6:7. *do not delight*. Without faith, the means that God established were not pleasing to Him.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 1:12 *trampling of My courts?* People are not worshiping, but acting like animals (v 3). Luth: "God requires our works, and He does not require them. How is this? I answer: He simply requires

them, not as if they themselves were necessary or as if He wanted to be appeased by them. Thus, on the other hand, He does not require them. But consider the folly of men. We reverse the order and want to serve God with works and men with faith. Thus they say that what has been presented to the sacrificing priests has been given to God and must not be turned to profane uses. Of course, it has been given to them that they might serve God. But to serve and come to the aid of neighbors, to those who are needy, this they do not consider to be a service of God. For this reason they are taken to task here" (AE 16:16).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 1:13 *vain*. Empty, worthless. See note, Ec 1:2. *incense*. Offered with sacrifices in the temple. See pp 170–71. *abomination*. See note, Pr 6:16. Wrongly offered without faith, the gift to God became a curse. *New moon and Sabbath*. Monthly offerings (Nu 28:11–14) and weekly worship on the day of rest. *convocations*. Religious festivals. Isaiah may be specifically referring to the Feast of Booths or Yom Kippur. *iniquity and solemn assembly*. Summary of the faithless hypocrisy already condemned.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 1:14 *hates*. God's righteous and holy rejection of sin. See note, Ps 5:5. *bearing*. God had tolerated their actions, but will not continue to do so.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 1:15 *spread out your hands*. A gesture in prayer. See p 1277. *full of blood*. Guilt of unconfessed and unforgiven sin.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 1:16–18 Gr Nys: "These then are indications in deed and act of regeneration by Baptism. Let us … consider the prophecies of it" (*NPNF* 2 5:522). "The prophet both urges repentance and adds the promise. . . . He insists that such works are necessary in the new life. At the same time, he means that the forgiveness of sins is received through faith. So the promise is added" (Ap V 137).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 1:16 God must do this through His means; we cannot deliver ourselves. Chem: "Is righteousness given because of these works? Absolutely not! For the prophet himself says in 45:24, 'In the Lord is my righteousness' " (*LTh* 2:641).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 1:17 *seek justice … widow's cause*. Careless treatment of the helpless revealed lack of faith.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 1:18 *reason together*. Israel, summoned to the court of divine justice (see note, v 2), is guilty. Instead of passing sentence, the Judge proposes a full pardon. The appropriate question is whether the

accused will throw themselves on the mercy of the court (cf Rm 4:5; 11:6). If God's promise restores their faith, it will also move and enable them to be willing and obedient believers (v 19) instead of rebellious evildoers (v 4). *scarlet*. Deep-red permanent dye; its stain was impossible to remove from clothing. *snow*. Pure white; the scarlet of sin is removed. Ambr: "Purge my ears, that no stains of the infidelity they have heard remain anywhere. Cleanse thoroughly, then, our ears, not with water of well, river, or rippling and purling brook, but with words cleansing like water, clearer than water, purer than any snow" (*NPNF* 2 10:222). *crimson … become like wool*. Restatement for emphasis. Wool means undyed (white) cloth. Luth: "Why did He not rather say black sins? Black denotes sadness, but red denotes bloodguiltiness. Sins are red when we are guilty of blood. . . . White is the sign of innocence and justice" (AE 16:20).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 1:20 *eaten by the sword*. In Hbr, a "blade," lit, has a "mouth." God provides for His faithful people, but the rebellious face destruction from enemy armies, whose swords "eat them," consuming their life.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 1:1–20 The Lord accuses Israel of ignorance and rebellion, yet plans for their repentance and forgiveness. A chief sin is corruption and indifference in their worship services. Today, the Lord calls you to purity in prayer and worship as taught by His Word. When you confess your sins, He promises faithfully to forgive you on account of Jesus' pure sacrifice. • Precious Lord Jesus, Your blood cleanses away the stain of my sin. Teach me sincerity in worship. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 1:21 *faithful city*. Jerusalem, the heart of Judah. Described (with all God's people) as His Bride (Rv 21:2). *whore*. Rejecting God's perfect love and choosing sin and idolatry is as offensive and foolish as adultery. Cf Hos 4:13.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 1:22 *dross*. Worthless material in metal ore, discarded after metal is refined. See p 1543. *mixed with water*. God still provides for the wicked, but His blessings are diluted and not recognized.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 1:23 Symptoms of faithlessness. Those who love God will be opposed to such things.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 1:24 *Lord of hosts … Mighty One*. Titles that recall God's power. See p 1291. *My enemies*. When humans rebel, they become God's enemies, deserving His wrath and retribution. Cf Rm 5:10. *avenge*. Though God gives authority to leaders, vengeance ultimately belongs to

God (Rm 12:19), who alone is just and righteous. God brings justice to unjust people and will punish wickedness.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 1:25 *lye*. Caustic substance used for cleaning. *alloy*. Combination of other substances that are removed when metal is refined. See note, v 22.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 1:26 *judges … counselors*. Unjust officers are another symptom of lacking faith.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 1:27 *redeemed by justice … righteousness*. Not their own righteousness or justice, but that of the Messiah. See p 843. Luth: "This means that the Lord is always concerned about preserving the rest, lest they perish. By justice, not by laws. If the kingdom must be restored, this will certainly not be done by the laws of men; but it will be done by justice, that is, by killing the old life and turning it away from injustice, in order that we may become acceptable to God. For a reward follows righteousness, even when it is external; but punishment follows unrighteousness. This is the way to reform men so that they become upright and preserve judgment and justice. Then God will be favorably disposed toward them. Who will then be against them, Righteousness, that is, the righteousness whereby we are accounted righteous before God, although some interpret it as mercy, which is justifying grace. Therefore Zion is brought back by the Spirit and by faith, and then the political administration is also restored. The Hebrews have no impersonal words, and in their place they use the third person plural. Thus in the Gospel we have 'they shall give good measure' (cf. Luke 6:38) instead of 'it shall be given.' Thus here we have 'they shall restore' instead of 'it shall be restored' " (AE 16:25).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 1:28 *broken together*. Judgment, experienced individually, affects all. *be consumed*. By God's wrath (cf v 20).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 1:29 *oaks … gardens*. They engaged in the immoral rites of Canaanite worship, carried on in gardens and groves of trees (57:5; 2Ki 16:4).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 1:30 Not a literal drought, but a simile for the loss of personal goods.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 1:31 *the strong*. The self-sufficient also faced judgment. Wealth, strength, or status cannot save.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 1:21–31 The Lord describes Jerusalem's injustice but plans for its justification. In our sinfulness, we stand as God's enemies. However, rather than utterly destroy us, He longs to purify us by His

righteousness. • Melt away, O Lord, the imperfections of my heart, that sincerity of faith may remain and serve Your graciousness. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Chs 2–4** Expresses contrast between the ideal Israel God desires and the historical reality of the Southern Kingdom (Judah and Jerusalem) in Isaiah's day. The chapters go from the ideal to the reality and back again, showing how Israel can be restored only by God's mercy and grace if first brought low in judgment.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 2:1 Same wording as 1:1 introduces this section.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 2:2 *latter days*. Lit, "in the end of days." Also translated "in days to come" (Gn 49:1; Dt 31:29), when God fulfills this prophecy. *highest of the mountains … lifted up*. Not a physical reshaping of the earth or the formation of a political world empire, but a figurative description of what God will accomplish through the Messiah. The Jerusalem that God promises to create is His Church (28:16; 1Pt 2:4–8; Eph 2:19–22), made of people from all nations (v 3; Rv 5:9). Cf Rv 21:9–27. *all the nations*. Frequent theme in Is (cf 25:6–8; 42:6; 66:18–23). *nations shall flow*. As Israel once traveled in the desert to holy Mount Sinai to receive the Law (Ex 19), the nations (fulfilling Gn 12:2–3) now travel on pilgrimage to Mount Zion. Luth: "The kingdom of Christ has been put in progress because it is placed in public view with its powers and gifts. Here one sees truth, pure doctrine, safety, peace; the Gospel is heard, and nothing can give greater joy. For it promises an abundance of things and salvation both here and hereafter, and a man stands safe in this Word against everything that opposes him, even against the gates of hell (Matt. 16:18). Behold, these virtues should influence the nations to make them come. They are proclaimed through the Word, namely, that Christ is the King of mercy and of peace. Moses preaches the Law and is the minister of sin and death. Nobody runs to him. On the contrary, they are terrified. Christ, on the other hand, is the Minister of righteousness, of life, and of peace. Therefore the people flow to Him just as water flows by its own effort and needs no one to push it" (AE 16:29).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 2:3 *let us go up*. Technical term for pilgrimage to the sanctuary (see note, Ps 120–34). See map, p 493. *house*. The temple where God promised to meet His people. This is now embodied in the Messiah (Jn 1:14), who dwells in the midst of His Church. *God of Jacob*. Israel's God, the only true God. *ways … law … word*. Synonyms, repeated for emphasis. See p 971. Luth: "This is what will influence and draw the nations, so that

they flow to Christ and learn, namely, the Word. . . . From this place the scepter of Christ's kingdom was sent forth through the apostles without force in supreme peace, and the sweetness of this peace takes hold of the nations. But behold here the promise of a new word, a new law, namely, one that is different from that which was given from the cloud and on Sinai. Here a place different from Sinai is designated. *Law*, that is, proclamation. The prophecy stands that a proclamation shall flow from Jerusalem into all nations. This was done through the apostles. . . . 'Their voice has gone out to all the earth' (Rom. 10:18). By the Word alone, therefore, the church is recognized, and in the glory of the Word the reign of Christ is described. The Word draws the people, makes them willing and joyful. Thus the church is exalted and triumphs against tyrants and heretics even in the midst of tribulation, in order that they may be forced to confess that this is true" (AE 16:31–32).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 2:4 *judge … decide disputes*. Characteristics of the Messiah (11:3–4). *plowshares*. Weapons are unnecessary in this Kingdom. The spiritual benefits available to all nations in the latter-day "Jerusalem" are pictured as the restoration of the bliss of Eden: undisturbed peace, harmony in the animal world, paradisiacal fertility of the earth (11:1–9; 32:15–20; 65:17–25). Turning weapons into agricultural instruments is reversed in Jl 3:10. *neither shall they learn war*. Military training will not be necessary.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 2:5 *walk*. See p 7. *light of the LORD*. Example of God's action motivates ethical action (cf 1Jn 3:2b–3).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 2:1–5 The Lord will gather the nations to His Church (the latter day "Zion") through the Word. He calls you to fulfill this prophecy by sharing the Word with your family, friends, and neighbors. The Lord works through that illustrious Word to change your heart and those around you. • May Your light illumine my heart, O Lord, and lead me in the way of peace as I share Your Word with others. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 2:6 *You have rejected*. Isaiah addresses God. He is justified in withholding His favor from this people chosen to bear His promises (vv 2–4), who are now guilty of sins of the heathen. They trust alliances with foreigners. *things from the east*. Pagan customs learned from Gentiles in Arabia and along the Euphrates River. *fortune-tellers*. Example of pagan customs; condemned in Lv 19:26. *Philistines*. Pagan customs were also found closer to home. Cf 1Sm 6:2; see note, Dt 18:10–11. *strike hands*.

Either ecstatic pagan worship, or similar to our handshake, sealing an agreement. See p 1277.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 2:7–8 Gentile culture, exerting a bad influence on Judah. Horses and chariots were regarded as excesses.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 2:9 *humbled*. Bowing to idols does not bring people favor; it only lowers them. *do not forgive them!* Not a call to withhold God's true forgiveness, but a plea that idolatry, too significant to ignore, be decisively ended. See note, Jer 7:16.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 2:10 *into the rock*. Self-sufficiency vanishes as sinners vainly seek refuge from "the terror of the LORD" (vv 19, 21). *splendor of His majesty*. Glory of the living God, contrasted with dead idols that have no power.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 2:11 *in that day*. See p 1079.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 2:12 Judah will not escape punishment by insisting that God preserve His chosen people regardless of their behavior (cf Am 5:18–20; Mt 3:7–10; 23:33). God's presence humbles all human efforts. *LORD of hosts*. See p 1291. *a day*. Isaiah's description foreshadows the universal and final judgment to come when "heaven and earth pass away" (Mt 5:18). This day of wrath is described more fully in chs 24 and 34.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 2:13 *cedars of Lebanon*. The tall, straight cedar tree remains a symbol of Lebanon to this day. *oaks of Bashan*. Used here as a parallel to Lebanon, Bashan lay east of the Jordan and extended northward to Mount Hermon. Oaks are strong trees; hence, they were symbols of a nation's strength. See color map 2; cf Ezk 27:3–6.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 2:16 *ships of Tarshish*. Symbolic of human strength and accomplishment. See notes, 1Ki 10:22; Jnh 1:3; see also map, p 1479.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 2:19 *when He rises*. When God moves to fulfill His promised judgment.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 2:20 Seeing the true God, they reject their false idols, but it is too late.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 2:21 Like Adam in Eden (Gn 3:8), fools vainly try to hide from God.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 2:22 *breath*. Fools trust mortal man instead of God. God gives mankind life (cf Gn 2:7), and it soon passes from sinners.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 2:6–22 The Lord describes His wrath against idolatry. Like Judah, many lands today are filled with idols (wealth, power, beauty, and fascination with new religions). These cannot compare to the

true God, who is powerful to judge and to save as He will when Christ returns. • Return, O Lord, and deliver us from our self-destructive ways. Grant us satisfaction in Your goodness. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 3:1–3 Consequences of Israel's defiance and its inevitable results. God is ready to enact the covenant curses described in Lv 26:14–46 and Dt 28:15–68.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 3:1 *Lord God of hosts*. See p 1291. *support and supply*. Everything basic for life and civility, from food and water to government.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 3:2 *mighty man*. Those protecting with military service. See note, Ru 2:1. *diviner*. Interpreter of omens. Sorcery and soothsaying were strictly forbidden (Dt 18:10–12).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 3:3 *counselor*. King's closest adviser. *skillful magician*. Or, skilled craftsman. This either continues the theme of illicit occult behaviors (ch 2) or indicates an overreliance on human abilities. Either way, the people's trust is not in God. *expert in charms*. Sorcerer.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 3:4 *infants shall rule*. Leaders with no experience or wisdom, thus easily manipulated.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 3:6 *in the house*. Leaders will be selected secretly, in private places. *cloak … be our leader*. Frivolous qualifications for leadership; possessing a cloak does not make one wise to lead. The chosen leader rejects this offer for equally ludicrous reasons when he denies that he has a cloak or bread (v 7).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 3:7 *I will not be a healer*. He cannot heal Israel's "wounds" (1:6). No one will want the job of leader in so desperate a situation.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 3:8 *stumbled*. See notes, Ezk 3:20; Hos 4:5. *speech … deeds*. Sin manifests itself in words and actions. *glorious presence*. Even God's manifest glory did not restrain them from sin.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 3:9 *the look on their faces*. As with children, facial expressions reveal their guilt. *proclaim their sin like Sodom*. They have lost all shame. *they have brought evil on themselves*. Sin is its own punishment because it debases them and its consequences affect them (v 11b). See notes, Rm 1:18–26.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 3:10 The judgments in vv 9, 11 do not apply to the faithful, whom God will protect (2Pt 2:9). *the righteous*. See p 843. *fruit of their deeds*. Their faithfulness has beneficial consequences in life.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 3:12 *infants are their oppressors*. Inexperienced leaders (v 4) exploit the people. Poor leadership is a recurring theme in chs 1–39. *women rule over them*. As infants are controlled by their mothers, inexperienced leaders are not really in control; they are being manipulated.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 3:13 *His place to contend*. The court scene (1:18) returns with the Lord bringing charges against Israel. See p 792.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 3:14 *elders and princes*. See p 228. Their indictment does not excuse the equally corrupt people.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 3:15 *Lord* GOD *of hosts*. See p 1291.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 3:16–23 Zion's women are singled out as one example of the nation's pride. Prophecy often addresses a whole category by depicting one aspect of it, rather than by making abstract statements about the whole category.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 3:16 *daughters of Zion*. Women of Jerusalem, representing the entire nation. Members of Judah and Levi, the royal and priestly tribes, would have populated Zion. *Zion*. See p 844. *outstretched necks*. Proudly flaunting their beauty. *glancing wantonly with their eyes*. Luth: "He is speaking of the misuse of the eyes, because they certainly would not use the face itself for modesty, but for lust. Therefore he calls them liars" (AE 16:47). *mincing*. Taking small steps, perhaps due to the anklets they wore, to attract attention. We might call this "strutting." See p 1276. *tinkling*. Sounds made by excessive jewelry. Bern: "If the daughters of Belial reproach you … decked out and adorned like the Temple, answer them: My kingdom is not of this world (S. John xviii. 36)" (*SLSB*, p 218).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 3:17 *scab*. Scalp disease, producing baldness. *lay bare*. Their beautiful hair would fall out, and their coverings would be removed, bringing shame.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 3:18–23 Eight types of fashionable clothing and 13 accessories make up the most complete list of finery in the Bible. See p 1084. It apparently did not concern them that these expensive articles were acquired by exploiting the poor (v 15).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 3:24 *branding*. Mark of slavery replaces articles of beauty.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 3:26 *gates*. Key location of battle in a city, here littered with fallen warriors. The change from a "rich robe" to "sackcloth" (v 24) will come when Jerusalem is ravaged by war.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 4:1 The male population will be so decimated that once-proud women will experience the "reproach" of lacking children and husbands unless they degrade themselves by becoming concubines. See pp 54–55. *called by your name*. Women will forego normal cultural patterns of marriage in desperate attempts to find a husband to support them. This exemplifies the nation's fate.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 3:1–4:1 The Lord prophesies that Judah will suffer due to a lack of sound leadership, despite its current prosperity. No matter how great the wealth you amass, the risk of loss is unavoidable. Invest in the true source of security and contentment: the Lord. His name, applied to you in Holy Baptism, covers your reproach. • Jesus, cover me in the robe of Your righteousness. Grant me honest shame and true repentance. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 4:2 Luth: "Here again he consoles the remnant of the people, as in Jerusalem. Those who are left are only one cluster, yet no matter how much He afflicts them, He preserves and comforts a remnant, because the Lord will be favorably inclined to His servants, and 7,000 do not bend the knee before Baal. Consider the song of Moses (Ex. 15:1 ff.). *In that day*, namely, now, after Jerusalem has been laid waste. The *Branch* is Christ. Yet there is nothing that He seems to do less than grow. The world would rather say that Christ and His Christians are a dried up tree trunk. But they are not regarded as such before God" (AE 16:51). *In that day*. Phrase previously depicted God's wrath (e.g., 2:12; 3:7; 4:1). Here it describes God's healing and restoration. See p 1079. *branch of the* LORD. Reference to the Messiah, centering the work not on the people, but on the Redeemer (6:13; 11:1; Jer 23:5–6).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 4:3 *holy*. People are not holy of themselves; the Messiah calls or declares them holy. See p 7. *recorded for life*. God knows His people. He chose us and wrote our names in the Lamb's Book of Life (cf Mal 3:16–18; Rv 20:11–14).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 4:4 *filth*. Excrement. *bloodstains*. Another type of excrement or evidence of violence. Symbols of sin. *spirit of burning*. See ESV note. Hbr *ruach*, "spirit," can also be translated "wind." This spirit of judgment is a cleansing process. Just as soiled cloths would be burned to dispose of them, the Lord would send fiery judgment.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 4:5 *cloud … smoke … fire*. They will have the presence, guidance, and protection God once manifested in a pillar of cloud and fire during the exodus (Ex 40:34–38). *a canopy*. His glory stands over

all Zion and its assemblies. Instead of the terror that His presence creates in 2:10, it now brings shelter and comfort. God has not forgotten His covenant; His living presence will be among His people again, but in a greater way than when He filled the temple (1Ki 8:11; Ezk 43:1–5).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 4:6 *booth … shelter*. Set up in the fields to provide places of rest and cover for workers. See note, 21:6–12. Here God is the protector. Luth: "In all things Christ is our Defense. But all of these attacks are not perceived and not felt without suffering. The sectarians will someday feel the sun without shade, because they go to meet the naked majesty of God nakedly, casting aside the humanity and flesh of Christ. This is possible only for a time. I have often advised and still advise younger theologians today that they must so study the Holy Scriptures that they refrain from investigating the Divine Majesty and His terrible works. God does not want us to learn to know Him in this way. You cannot nakedly associate with His naked Godhead. But Christ is our way to God. Those who speculate about the majesty are crushed and led to despair by Satan" (AE 16:54–55).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 4:2–6 After judgment, Israel will receive rest and shelter. Isaiah describes God's gracious heart in the coming rule of the Messiah. The Lord's great desire is to cleanse and cover you. • Cover my guilt, O Lord. Shelter my head from the storms of sin's destruction. Call me holy by the work of Your Holy Spirit through the Word. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 5:1–7 This skillful parable was likely proclaimed at the Feast of Booths (Lv 23:34–43; Dt 16:13–15), when Israel celebrated God's blessings of the harvest. It begins in the style of a joyful love song, filled with harvest imagery, but soon turns into an indictment (v 3). Parables of this type are designed to get listeners to pass judgment upon themselves. The narrator elicits his listeners' outrage at a hypothetical injustice. Their response is then applied to a real situation involving the audience. Only then do they realize that the story is about them (cf Mt 21:33–46).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 5:1 *beloved*. God. *vineyard*. Israel, whom the Lord "planted" in the Promised Land (Ex 15:17; Ps 80:8–18; Jer 2:21; Mk 12:1–9). *fertile hill*. Lit, "on a horn, a son of oil." This phrase, used only here in the OT, describes a geological formation that is superabundant in fertility. The vineyard is positioned for maximum productivity.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 5:2 *dug it*. Tilled the ground. This may have been done by hand instead of with an animal-drawn plow because vineyards

were sometimes planted on steep hills. *choice vines*. Cultivated vines known to produce excellent fruit. The varietals are unknown. *watchtower*. To protect the vineyard from animals or thieves. See note, 21:6–12. *wine vat*. Anticipating a good harvest, the owner hollowed out a rock that would serve as a winepress. Aph: "*I surrounded it with a fence* of heavenly Watchers *and I built its tower*, the holy Temple. *And I dug out its winepress*, the baptism of the priests. And I brought down rain upon it, the words of My Prophets. And I pruned it and trimmed it, from the works of the Amorites" (*NPNF* 2 13:360). *wild grapes*. Inferior fruit that does not reflect the effort of the beloved.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 5:3 The Lord begins to speak. The hearers are asked to pass judgment on the fate of the vineyard that yielded sour fruit.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 5:4 *wild grapes?* See note, v 2.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 5:5 *My vineyard*. Common description of God's relationship to His people (see note, v 1). *hedge ... wall*. Protective barriers around the vineyard. *trampled*. Lacking a wall, the vineyard becomes an open field to be grazed by animals or damaged by people.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 5:6 *briers and thorns*. Cultivated land, once neglected, grows the worst kinds of weeds. *command the clouds*. God withholds rain, a sign of judgment. Cf 1Ki 17–18.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 5:7 *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291. *Israel … Judah*. Though Isaiah's audience is the Southern Kingdom, these words apply to all of God's people. *outcry!* Pleas for help. Israel is not hearing the cry of the oppressed.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 5:1–7 The Lord describes Israel's unfaithfulness and unfruitfulness. Consider what care and instruction the Lord has permitted for your life. Does the fruit of your service match the generosity of His nurture? Purge the wild fruit! Through the Spirit's work, the Lord brings forth in our lives fruit worthy of repentance (Gal 5:22–23). • Though the world goes wild, O Lord, make me a garden in which You delight, secure in Your righteousness. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 5:8–30 God condemns six sins: (1) exploiting others (vv 8–10); (2) drunkenness (vv 11–12); (3) taking pride in sins (vv 18–19); (4) twisting moral standards (v 20); (5) conceit (v 21); and (6) perverting justice (vv 22–24). Because of these sins, He will discipline Israel (v 25), using the Assyrian army (cf vv 26–30).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 5:8 *house to house*. The wealthy used various means to take more houses and farms until no more property was left for the small landowner to call his own (Am 5:10–13). They refused to follow God's property laws (Lv 25:23–34; cf 1Ki 21).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 5:10 *ten acres*. A vineyard this size should produce a great volume of wine. *one bath*. Several vines would normally yield this much wine, but not in these bleak conditions. *homer … ephah*. See p cx.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 5:11 *strong drink*. See note, Pr 20:1.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 5:12 *lyre and harp, tambourine and flute*. They spent money on diverse entertainment, but their priorities were misplaced; they pursued pleasure rather than seeking the Lord and doing His work. See p 993. *deeds of the LORD*. In their stupor, the revelers gave no thought to the wonders God had done for them (Ps 78:11).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 5:13 *go into exile*. The prophet sees punishment as an accomplished fact. The Assyrians conquered the Northern Kingdom in 722 BC and exiled the royalty and upper citizenry. See map, p 609. *lack of knowledge*. They lack knowledge of righteousness: what pleases God.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 5:14 *Sheol*. See p 792. *enlarged its appetite and opened its mouth*. Death is like an insatiable beast (cf 1:19–20). In Semitic mythology, death opens its mouth with lips touching heaven and earth. See note, Jb 18:13. No one can escape. Here, Sheol, the land of the dead, serves the Lord. *nobility*. Wealth cannot overcome death. *revelers*. Those just described, who celebrate in sin while neglecting righteousness.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 5:16 *LORD of hosts*. See p 1291. *exalted*. This justice glorifies God. He alone is worthy of such exaltation. *justice … holy in righteousness*. Parallel concepts, repeated for emphasis. See "righteousness," p 843.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 5:17 *nomads shall eat*. The city becomes a wasteland; anyone can enter and do what he wills. Some versions follow an alternate reading with a change of one Hbr letter that reads "kids shall eat," which repeats the thought from the first line of the verse.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 5:18 *draw iniquity*. They want to sin and voluntarily pull sin closer. *cords of falsehood*. Sin is ultimately a lie: promising pleasure but bringing suffering. See note, 3:9. Luth: "*Cords* are laws and statutes. Elijah was called father, chariot, and driver (2 Kings 2:12). So the priests and magistrates were chariots and drivers, but such as were empty and void. As a result there were empty cords, empty laws; and the formula

of these people is: 'Isaiah, let not that which you mention below in chapter 28 come; "We have made a covenant with death, etc." (Is. 28:15), we are God's and Abraham's children.' So all prophets are judged to be liars. The reason for this is self-righteousness, which puffs up" (AE 16:64). *cart ropes*. They defy God to do something about their sin, to which they are bound like animals to a cart.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 5:19 They challenge Isaiah to enact the threats in the preceding chapters. *Holy One of Israel*. See p 1227.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 5:20 Sin brings the ultimate confusion. God's counsel condemns human folly and wickedness.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 5:22 A deriding judgment. They think themselves great, but their "greatness" is sinful. Their "heroism" is drunkenness.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 5:23 Judges and other authorities do not serve justice but themselves.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 5:24 *dry grass sinks*. Grass "sinks" as it dies and falls to the ground, where it is quickly burned. *go up like dust*. As plants die and decay into dust, so wickedness will perish. *law*. Hbr *torah*, "instruction," the Word of God. See p 971. *Lord of hosts … Holy One of Israel*. See p 1227.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 5:25 *stretched out His hand*. God acts in judgment. Cf Ex 6:6. *quaked*. The Creator's power shakes the earth. Israel lies on a major fault line. *His hand is stretched out still*. God would not bring this judgment a single time; He continues to punish sin. See "hand," p 842.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 5:26 *raise a signal … whistle for them*. God uses the pagan Assyrian army. He "whistles" and, as an animal obeys its master, they come equipped for battle. See "whistle," p 1277.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 5:27 Describes the tireless Assyrian army.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 5:30 *growling of the sea*. Overwhelming roar, like an ocean storm.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 5:8–30 Because Israel will not repent, the Lord will send Assyria to punish them with conquest and exile. Today, popular culture longs to be "bad," and our "heroes" corrupt basic morality. Reject the excuses of pop culture and instead revel in the community of faith, which knows right from wrong. The Lord our Counsel will guide us to true joy and lasting pleasure in the goodness of life. • Lord, snap the tethers of sin that hold me back and rob me of genuine freedom in Christ. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 6** Isaiah's vision is the climax of his message in chs 1–5. This glimpse of God's glory (vv 1–5; Jn 12:41), validates his message from God in this Book.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 6:1 *year that King Uzziah died*. 740 BC. *Uzziah*. Also called Azariah. Powerful king of Judah (792–740 BC; 2Ki 15:1–7; 2Ch 26). Human monarchs come and go, but God always reigns. *saw the Lord*. In a vision. See note, Ex 24:10. Hil: "Isaiah says that he has seen no God but Him. For he did actually see the glory of God, the mystery of Whose taking flesh from the Virgin he foretold. . . . He gazed upon the Divine glory, and men were filled with envy at such honour vouchsafed to his prophetic greatness. For this was the reason why the Jews [Judeans] passed sentence of death upon him" (*NPNF* 2 9:95). See p 39. *throne*. The King of the universe is described in images of power and might. The ark of the covenant, kept in the Most Holy Place in the temple, was covered with two cherubim. God is "enthroned on the cherubim" (1Sm 4:4; 2Sm 6:2; Ps 80:1). See note, Ezk 10:1. *train of His robe*. The long flowing trail of the royal garment in which the King of kings appeared to Isaiah was so large that it "filled the temple." (May refer to the smoke of the incense offering; cf vv 4, 6.)

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 6:2 *Above*. Flanking the throne as an honor guard, much as the gold cherubim flanked the ark of the covenant. *stood … flew*. "Stood" means positioned, as in "stood guard." They did this by flying around the throne and praising God. Some rabbis held that angels were created on the fifth day of creation with the birds because they could fly. *seraphim*. Hbr plural noun, occurring only here and in v 6 as a name for celestial beings. Hbr *saraph* suggests that they were glowing or fiery beings. Though their description is somewhat cryptic, the point of this vision is God's glory, not the details of His attendants. See p 495. *covered his face … feet*. Seraphim covered their faces in reverence before God's holy presence. They also covered their bodies in modesty. This is the antithesis of pagan worship that featured illicit sexuality.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 6:3 Cf Rv 4:8. *called*. Though God's people today sing the words of this verse in the Divine Service, Isaiah does not necessarily indicate that the seraphim sang. *Holy, holy, holy*. Refers to God in His totally separated state from humanity. In Hbr, repetition expresses a superlative; God is supremely holy. This threefold repetion is also evocative of the three persons of the Trinity. Ambr: "They say it, not once, lest you

should believe that there is but one; not twice, lest you should exclude the Spirit; they say not holies, lest you should imagine that there is plurality, but they repeat three times and say the same word, that even in a hymn you may understand the distinction of Persons in the Trinity, and the oneness of the Godhead and while they say this they proclaim God" (*NPNF* 2 10:151). *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291. *full of His glory!* The revelation of His presence, either in nature (Ps 19:1) or in history (1Ki 8:11; Jn 1:14). *glory!* See "glory of the Lord," pp 6–7.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 6:4 *foundations of the thresholds shook*. The earth shook in the holy presence of the Lord, down to the bedrock of the Temple Mount. *voice of him*. The seraph.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 6:5 *Woe*. Isaiah's cry indicates that he is as good as dead. Ex 33:20 declares no one may see God and live. See note, Ex 24:10; see also "clean," p 6. *unclean*. Ceremonial impurity. Impure people were barred from the temple (cf Ps 15).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 6:6 *burning coal*. Fire from the altar of incense. *tongs*. Needed to arrange the burning coals. *altar*. The altar of incense in the Holy Place. See diagram, p 139. The context could imply that Isaiah was a priest serving in the temple. While there was an altar for burning incense in the temple, Isaiah likely saw a vision of heaven. (Cf Ex 25:9, 40; 26:30 for possible references to a tabernacle in heaven; early Jewish and Christian tradition noted these texts.) The angel would get this burning coal from the altar in heaven. This image reinforces the truth that God's people in the earthly temple were in God's presence, but God was not confined to a building. Rather, He promised to meet them in the temple. See notes, Heb 8:1–2.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 6:7 *touched my mouth*. Only when God has forgiven Isaiah will he be able and ready to proclaim God's Holy Word. This holiness is not from Isaiah's own works but is God's gracious gift; Holy Communion is also God's gracious gift. Jn D: "Let us apply our eyes and lips and brows and partake of the divine coal. . . . Isaiah saw the coal. But coal is not plain wood but wood united with fire; in like manner also the bread of the communion is not plain bread but bread united with divinity" (*NPNF* 2 9:83). *guilt is taken away … sin atoned*. Parallel concepts emphasizing God's forgiveness. Isaiah did nothing for this forgiveness: the Lamb of God took his guilt and atoned for his sin. Ambr: "Shall take away, he [the Seraph] says, and shall purge, not I will take away, but that fire from

the altar of God, that is, the grace of the Spirit. . . . Certainly not the wood of the forests, nor the soot and coals. . . . It was revealed by the mouth of Isaiah that all men should be cleansed by the passion of Christ, Who as a coal according to the flesh burnt up our sins" (*NPNF* 2 10:108). *atoned*. See p 5.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 6:1–7 The Lord appears to Isaiah and calls him as a prophet. In your Baptism and through the Word, the Lord calls you too as His messenger. Relate to others what you have heard and seen about the Lord. Do not let the shame of past sins silence you. The Lord Jesus has made atonement for you in the tabernacle of God's presence on high. • Touch my mouth, O Savior, that I may sing: "Holy, holy, holy Lord God of pow'r and might: Heaven and earth are full of Your glory. Hosanna. Hosanna. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest." Amen. (*LSB*, p 161)

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 6:8 *voice of the Lord*. No longer the seraphim (v 7), now God Himself speaks. In contrast to the fear that followed the seraphim's voice, here the prophet is encouraged by the Lord's voice. *go for Us?* God, who "is one" (Dt 6:4), speaks in the first person plural (cf Gn 1:26; 3:22; 11:7). While "us" might refer to God and the seraphim, it more likely refers to God's triune nature. God is calling Isaiah to represent Him to the people. See note, Gn 1:26. *Send me*. Newly forgiven, the once-fearful Isaiah (v 5) is now bold and eager.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 6:10 *Make the heart … dull*. Isaiah's message is to preach Law before Gospel, judgment before grace, death before life. The result of Isaiah's preaching and its purpose are viewed together. "Due to their hardness of heart" (Mk 6:52; Eph 4:18), God's warning of judgment to come will be rejected by "this people" and seal their doom (cf Mk 4:12; Ac 28:26–27; Rm 11:8). *healed*. Forgiven and restored. See note, Dt 32:39.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 6:11 Conquest and exile would come before repentance.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 6:12 Ultimately fulfilled when Judah was defeated and exiled (587 BC).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 6:13 *tenth*. Only 10 percent of the people would remain in the land. *burned again*. Further destruction after the exile. *terebinth*. A large, long-living tree, similar to the oak. The Lord compared Israel to a large tree in Jer 11:16. *stump remains*. While the tree appears

dead, it is not; life remains in the stump, which will sprout suckers from its roots. *seed*. This devastation will come, but Israel is not dead. God will bring life out of apparent death through His Son, the Seed of the woman (Gn 3:15), who alone is holy and able to give life. Jb 14:7–9 demonstrates how a shoot from a root is a symbol of an indestructible life. Luth: "Then comes the seraph, that is, the preacher of the Gospel, which is the fiery coal, and promises the forgiveness of sins for Christ's sake and lifts one up to righteousness. Therefore 'through the Law comes knowledge of sin' (Rom. 3:20), through the Gospel comes the knowledge and reception of grace and righteousness. The glowing coal is the Word kindled by the Holy Spirit in love, whereby those who have been put to death are revived by the cry of the seraphim. To touch the mouth is to strike the heart with the Gospel, which is sweet to the bitter heart. Then the heart is a fit vessel for honor, because it will go for the Lord, that is, it will be His instrument for teaching others, hearing and breaking through, even though with danger, the last comfort. A remnant will be saved, even though not all hear the Word and many spit it out" (AE 16:77).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 6:8–13 The Lord sends Isaiah out with a message of condemnation, which must precede the hope that will arise through the Messiah. Throughout history, and in your life, the Lord works in two basic ways: Law and Gospel. Unlike Israel, walk in these ways daily, confessing your sins and asking His forgiveness. Though He chastens you, He will restore you through Jesus, the holy Seed. • O Lord, may the root of Your goodness spring forth in my life. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 7:1 *days of Ahaz*. 735–715 BC. Cf 2Ki 16; 2Ch 28. *Jotham*. 750–735 BC. Cf 2Ki 15:32–38; 2Ch 27. Israelites listed the father's or grandfather's name to help distinguish persons because many people might share the same name (consider our practice of using a family name or surname). *Pekah*. 742–732 BC. Cf 2Ki 15:25–31. *Jerusalem to wage war … could not yet mount an attack*. They fought against Judah and besieged Jerusalem, but they could not break the city's defenses.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 7:2 *Ephraim*. The Northern Kingdom, also called Israel (see note, 9:9). *his people*. The fearful citizens of Judah and Jerusalem.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 7:3 *meet Ahaz*. Likely while the king was inspecting the city's water supply, needed for the siege. *Shear-jashub*. Lit, "a remnant shall return," Isaiah's older son was a living proclamation of Israel's

survival. See "remnant," p 1080. *Washer's Field*. A place where clothing was washed and bleached. See note, 36:2.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 7:4 *smoldering stumps*. The army of the two-nation coalition (Syria [aka Aram] and Israel) is as insignificant as stumps of wood smoldering just before they burn out.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 7:6 *son of*. Hbr and Semitic expression, which can mean the epitome, sum, or result of something. *Tabeel*. No known person. May simply mean "a good for nothing," a puppet king for Judah's enemies.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 7:8–9 What the two enemies plan "shall not come to pass" (v 7). They cannot destroy Jerusalem, according to the will of the King of kings. *sixty-five years*. Specific prophecy of destruction and exile. *shattered*. Even the inhabitants of the Northern Kingdom who did not go into exile under the Assyrians would not recover as a separate people. Foreigners became part of their population after the fall of Samaria (2Ki 17:24) and again during the reign of the Assyrian king Esarhaddon (681–669 BC), six decades after Isaiah began his ministry. *not firm in faith … not be firm at all*. Different form of same Hbr verb is used to describe faith and results of faith. As long as believers remain steadfast in faith, they can be confident that they will be established in the land. They have solid ground under their feet (Ps 46:2).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 7:1–9 The Lord sends Isaiah to confront King Ahaz and to call him to firmly trust the Lord. No matter what circumstances confront you, turn to the Lord in trust and in prayer. The enemy may rob you of all good, but he cannot rob you of faith and the kingdom of heaven, which Christ won for you. • "The Word they still shall let remain Nor any thanks have for it; He's by our side upon the plain With His good gifts and Spirit. And take they our life, Goods, fame, child, and wife, Though these all be gone, Our vict'ry has been won; The Kingdom ours remaineth." Amen. (*LSB* 656:4)
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 7:11 *a sign*. Ahaz is to name a sign so that God might tangibly confirm what He has spoken and move Ahaz to believe. The Lord occasionally grants such help to weak consciences (Jgs 6:17–21). *Lord your God*. Though Ahaz doubted, the Lord is still God. Doubts do not remove His deity! *deep as Sheol or high as heaven*. No limits were put on Ahaz's request; God would do anything. *Sheol*. See p 792.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 7:12 Ahaz responds in false piety, trying to avoid a blatant statement of disbelief, but God is not fooled.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 7:13 *house of David!* Ahaz was in the Davidic line. The following words apply to the whole nation. *my God*. Isaiah has turned the reference to God from "your" God (v 11) to "my" God. Ahaz is faithless, but Isaiah believes.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 7:14–17 *sign*. Luth: "He foretells two signs: The one is hidden, the other open. The latter he explains in chapter 8[:3] in a way not much different from Hosea, chapter 1. But Isaiah includes both signs. The first one does not apply to Ahaz, because he did not live to see it, but the second does. But since he now resists the Word of God and refuses a sign, how can his faith be strengthened? Therefore the prophet speaks of a sign to come, against which they will dash, just as the sign of Jonah was given to the Jews (cf. Matt. 12:39), and those who refuse to believe will perish. Nevertheless, it is a sign of lifting up and building up and strengthening for those who believe (Matt. 12:39; 16:4). And this is the summary of this chapter until the end, because he says that this prediction is already in the process of fulfillment in these unbelievers" (AE 16:84). *virgin*. Hbr *ʿ almah* can clearly mean "virgin maiden" and is closely related to the Hbr *bethulah,* which also normally means "virgin." The LXX properly translated it with the Gk *parthenos*, "virgin." As Luther notes, there are two signs. On the one hand, the Lord was promising Ahaz that in short order—during the nine months and weaning process of a typical childbirth—He would deliver Judah from the two kings (v 16) threatening them. In fact, their subjects would be fully swept away by exile. On the other hand, the Lord promised something remarkably different from a typical pregnancy, a miracle that would have shocked Ahaz's unbelieving heart: a virgin would conceive (v 14)! The Lord has eternal salvation in view, not simply Judah's temporal deliverance. The NT reveals the meaning of the Immanuel sign. The Son of God would be born of the Virgin Mary by the work of the Holy Spirit. Iren: "Jesus Christ, who was announced by the prophets, who from the fruit of David's body was Emmanuel, [is] 'the messenger of great counsel of the Father' … He whom God promised David that He would raise up from the fruit of his belly … an eternal King, is the same who was born of the Virgin, herself of the lineage of David" (*ANF* 1:441, 453). Ath: "But what does [this passage] mean, if not that God has come in the Flesh?" (*NPNF* 2 4:577). *Immanuel*. Lit, "God with us." This name reflects both salvation and judgment. On the one hand, God with us (8:10) promises protection against foreign attack. On the other hand,

Assyria "will sweep on into Judah" like a flood (8:8). Thus "Immanuel" functions as Law or Gospel, depending on the king's response. In ch 7, the house of David (e.g., Ahaz) did not accept the Lord's offer of a sign; but later this house of David—embodied in the Davidic descendant Joseph of Nazareth—accepts the sign about the Child. In Mt 18:20 and 28:20, the promise of Immanuel will be repeated. Born of a virgin, the incarnate Son of God is truly Immanuel, "God with us."

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 7:15 *curds and honey*. The land would recover slowly from the ravages of soldiers quartered among them. Instead of living on the products of agriculture such as grain and meat, the survivors of the invasion would sustain themselves with food derived from a pastoral way of life: cheese from flocks and honey gathered from trees in the woods (vv 21–25). Still, this is the beginning of the restoration of normal life.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 7:16 *boy knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good*. No exact age is given, only a mark of maturation within childhood. Ephraim (the Northern Kingdom) and Syria (Aram) will be destroyed by the Assyrians before a child could mature. *refuse … choose*. Wording emphasizes development of the will. As children mature, they are governed less and less by raw instinct. The prophet does not mean that infants and small children are sinless or not accountable for their sins, as some interpreters wrongly assume. Sin corrupts all stages of human development, and a person is always accountable before God. See notes, Ps 51:5; Rm 3:23; 5:12. *deserted*. Assyrians will decimate these countries.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 7:17 The coming war with Assyria would be the worst since Israel split into two kingdoms.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 7:18 Summoned by God, the executors of His judgment will descend on Israel like infesting swarms of flies and bees. The land would become the battleground of the Assyrians and the Egyptians, both determined to annex it to their empires. *streams of Egypt*. Streams that fed the Nile at the farthest reaches of Egypt.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 7:20 Assyria, the nation Ahaz foolishly hired to ease the pressure from Syria and Israel, is now described as a razor. It will denude the land from one end to the other.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 7:21–22 See note, v 15.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 7:23 As in v 22, the people survive on minimal resources, as the crops have been destroyed.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 7:24 *bow and arrows*. To hunt wild animals where once a productive vineyard grew.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 7:25 Reiterates the prophecy of 5:5–7.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 7:10–25 The Lord promises deliverance from Assyria, but has the greatest deliverance in view—the blessing of a true, eternal King (cf 9:6–7). The virgin birth of Jesus is one of God's greatest miracles and gifts to humanity. Christ reigns now in patience, calling those who doubt to repentance. Our King shall soon appear to exile the stubborn and to dwell with those He has chosen by grace through faith. • "O holy Child of Bethlehem, Descend to us, we pray; Cast out our sin, and enter in, Be born in us today. We hear the Christmas angels The great glad tidings tell; O come to us, abide with us, Our Lord Immanuel!" Amen. (*LSB* 361:4)
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 8:1 *large tablet*. Sized for public display and reading. *common characters*. Large letters of ordinary script. The name was to be read and its meaning understood by the general reading public. Isaiah's action assumes a significant reading population in Jerusalem. See pp 1081–83. Chem: "The prophet is commanded to write … with proper, clear, and commonly understood words, so that there be no ambiguous, unclear, difficult, or intricate meanings, but words which can be understood by each individual" (*LTh* 1:37). *Maher-shalal-hash-baz*. See ESV note. As the name given Isaiah's older son foretold the ultimate failure of the enemies to conquer Jerusalem (see note, 7:3), so this name was a prophetic proclamation that Damascus, capital of Syria, and Samaria, capital of the Northern Kingdom, would be defeated.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 8:2 *witnesses … attest*. To verify the message. *Zechariah*. Not the prophet. Cannot be identified further.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 8:3 *went to the prophetess*. Had sexual relations with his wife. *prophetess*. See p 389. Certainly not the virgin of 7:14 because she already had a son (7:3). *Maher-shalal-hash-baz*. See note, v 1.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 8:4 *before … 'My mother.'* One or two years old. Cf 7:15–16. *carried away*. 722 BC.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 8:6 *this people*. Judah. *waters of Shiloah*. The Gihon stream/canal, flowing gently along Jerusalem's southeastern wall, was used for irrigation and emptied into a reservoir within the city (the Pool of Siloam; cf 7:3); it symbolizes the assurance of God's care.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 8:7 *waters of the River*. Symbol of Assyria, the heart of whose kingdom was between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. *rise over*

all its channels. Poetic description of Assyria's might.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 8:8 *outspread wings will fill*. Assyria would dominate the entire region. *Immanuel*. The inhabitants of the land are so addressed because they would remain unharmed if they would be "firm in faith" (7:9) and express their faith by saying, "Immanuel," "God is with us" (v 10; see note, 7:14).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 8:9 *you peoples*. Nations opposing Judah. *be shattered*. God does not leave His people completely devastated. Isaiah predicts Assyria's fall and the fall of all who oppose God's people. Their power will be shattered.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 8:10 *speak a word*. The nations' decrees cannot surpass God's power; He is with His people.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 8:1–10 Ahaz does not heed the Lord's signs, so a different sign is given through the birth and name of Isaiah's second son. Judah would be all but swept away by Assyria. Yet the Lord would still abide with and protect His people. The Lord abides with us still, even amid judgment and devastation. He is our Immanuel, and nothing can sweep Him away. • Merciful Lord, defend me even as You chasten me. Lead me to sincere confession and enduring faith. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 8:11 *strong hand upon me*. God's powerful, guiding presence (cf Ezk 1:3; 3:14).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 8:12 Isaiah spoke against seeking foreign lands, like Assyria, to defend God's people, knowing that they would eventually harm Judah. Some called his warning treason or conspiracy. Cf Jer 26.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 8:13 *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291. *honor as holy*. God is holy, and we should remember this and worship Him accordingly. See p 7.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 8:14 *sanctuary*. As the temple gave asylum to certain individuals (cf Ex 21:13), so God protected His people. *offense … stumbling*. God's presence can be received as Gospel (a sanctuary), but those who reject Him find it to be Law (a rock of stumbling). Faith finds safety, while rejection stumbles (vv 14–15). The function of the "stone" and "rock" are described in further detail in 28:16; Ps 118:22; 1Pt 2:6. See note, Ezk 3:20. *houses of Israel*. Israel (Ephraim) and Judah.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 8:16 *Bind up … seal*. Convinced that what the Lord spoke through him will occur, Isaiah directs his disciples to keep a written and sealed record of his words. The prophets recognized the truth and divine source of their words by carefully preserving them (see p 1087).

See note, Jer 32:10. *the testimony*. Isaiah's prophecy, the true Word of God. See p 971. *teaching*. Hbr *torah*; see "Law," p 971. *disciples*. Hbr *limud*, a "learned" or "practiced" person. Prophets had apprentices or scribes (see p 555) who studied the Word. It is not enough to "have the Spirit." Leaders among God's people must have and cling to the Word as well. See note, Mt 5:1.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 8:17 *wait for the* LORD. Isaiah trusts God's timing. *house of Jacob*. Israel and Judah.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 8:18 *I and the children*. Here applies to Isaiah's family; the NT applies this to Christ and His people (Heb 2:13). Luth: "This depicts the course and success of the Word. Though some do not accept it when it is proclaimed, it still is not without disciples. Therefore he rejoices in both the fruit and power of the Word. An honest teacher always has disciples. This is also Christ's word for His faithful ones. 'Children.' Hbr: 'Little infants.' Peter had this in view when he said in 1 Peter 2:2: 'Like newborn babes.' They are the least complicated human beings and depend entirely on their mother's breast. So Christians depend entirely on the simplicity of Scripture. They have the 'pure milk' without guile, that is, they do nothing but seek the breasts; they do not pass judgment nor argue much about the Word, but they simply accept it as it is given to them, the way babes accept milk" (AE 16:93). Bern: "The holy place is open and accessible only to the children of Christ" (*SLSB*, p 76). *signs and portents*. Isaiah's own name ("the LORD saves") and the names he gave his sons indicate what the future will bring (see notes, 7:3; 8:1). *LORD of hosts*. See p 1291. *dwells on Mount Zion*. God has chosen to dwell with His people and so is distinguished from false gods. See "Zion," p 844.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 8:19 *mediums … necromancers … inquire of the dead*. Resorting to occult means of gaining knowledge was rejection of the Lord (cf Lv 19:31; Dt 18:10–12; 1Sm 28). *chirp and mutter*. Practitioners of divination and spiritism often made their voices sound mysterious and unearthly. Gr Naz: "It is very shameful, and not only shameful, but very foolish, to take from things below a guess at things above, and from a fluctuating nature at the things that are unchanging, and as Isaiah says, to seek the Living among the dead" (*NPNF* 2 7:321).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 8:20 *teaching … testimony!* See note, v 16. Isaiah's prophecy. *they have no dawn*. They live in spiritual darkness.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 8:21–22 *turn their faces upward … look to the earth*. They desperately seek to understand, but will not see God's answers. *thick darkness*. Bleak description of their emotional and spiritual state.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 8:11–22 Isaiah urges his hearers to repent, learn, and cling to the Word of God rather than to false spirituality. Beware of any religious person who directs you to a spiritual source other than the Word of God, which we have from His prophets and apostles. Even if you are frustrated in searching the Scriptures for answers, "wait for the LORD … hope in Him" (v 17). He will answer you from His Word and seal you with His peace. • Lord, deliver us from false witnesses who would rob us of Your Word. Grant us peace in Jesus. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 9:1 *her*. The people of God who turn to Him. *former time*. When the Assyrians attacked the Northern Kingdom of Israel. *Zebulun … Naphtali*. Hereditary lands of these two tribes constituted Israel's northern border west of the Jordan. *latter time*. Still in the future for Isaiah. This was fulfilled by Christ's ministry in Galilee. *way of the sea*. East-west road through Zebulun, Naphtali, and Galilee, which then runs southward along the Great Sea. *land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations*. Region east of the Jordan, occupied by various peoples. Because the invading enemy came from the north, these outlying districts would be the first to fall victim to the conqueror's might and the last to be freed from his domination.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 9:2 *people … darkness*. All people walking in darkness without God's salvation. *great light*. The light that will appear is the presence of the Lord (cf 10:17; Jn 8:12).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 9:3 *joy at the harvest*. Harvest is a time of rejoicing. A bountiful harvest ensures survival and prosperity. *divide the spoil*. As the victors in battle.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 9:4 *yoke … staff … rod*. Tools of enslavement. Yokes controlled animals and prisoners. A staff and rod brought discipline. *day of Midian*. God's coming deliverance is compared to the victory of Gideon, who freed the northern tribes of Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali (Jgs 6:35) also by means of a "great light." Their defeat by a handful of Israelites is cited as evidence that mighty foes must fail when they oppose the kingdom God promises to establish.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 9:5 *boot … garment rolled in blood*. Clothes that had been bloodstained in battle were unclean. *fuel for the fire*. All traces of bloody conflict will vanish.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 9:6 *child … son*. The reason for joy. This was the child prophesied in 7:14, the sign scorned by Ahaz but fulfilled by Christ. *a son is given*. Signifies the accession of a new king (cf Ps 2:7). *upon His shoulder*. His strength upholds the nation. *His name … Prince of Peace*. Throne names describe the power and authority of the new king. Ps 72 defines what these characteristics mean for the Davidic king. Jesus, from David's kingly line (Lk 2:4), fulfills all of these promises and with the Kingdom brings all of these gifts for people (cf Mk 1:15). While these titles might apply, in part, to an earthly king, in their fullness they belong only to God. Luth: "In the kingdom of Christ there is grace, comfort, forgiveness of sins, joy, peace. He does not deal with the transgressor in sternness, but as a father. The forgiveness of sins is justification, and peace follows justification. This peace is not only peace of mind but also plenty and soundness of mind and good health of the body. Such is the reign of Christ: It is extended by killing; it is fertilized by the blood of the believers; and the more distress there is, the more peace grows in the heart" (AE 16:101). Ath: "His Only-begotten Son might … be called 'Father' by His Father. . . . [He] is at once Father of the coming age, and mighty God, and Ruler. And it is shown clearly all things whatsoever the Father has are His" (*NPNF* 2 4:89).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 9:7 *no end*. The Messiah alone can have an eternal Kingdom. *throne of David*. The Messiah must come from David's line, yet Scripture teaches that He is also David's Lord (Mt 22:42–45). *zeal of the Lord*. No opposition can thwart His ardent desire to establish and to uphold His kingdom forevermore (63:15). See pp 1565–66.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 9:1–7 The Lord promises a future, everlasting Kingdom, fulfilling His promises to David and to Isaiah (7:14). The typically joyous birth announcement takes on even greater significance. Even the expectation of a prince's birth is surpassed here, for this child will deliver the oppressed and govern "with justice and with righteousness" as the Lord declares us just and sets us right through forgiveness and new life. • "Savior of the nations, come, Virgin's Son, make here Your home! Marvel now, O heav'n and earth, That the Lord chose such a birth. For You are the

Father's Son Who in flesh the vict'ry won. By Your mighty pow'r make whole All our ills of flesh and soul." Amen. (*LSB* 332:1, 6)
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 9:8 *sent a word*. Everyone in Ephraim (Northern Kingdom) should know about this event's origins: the Lord.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 9:9 *Ephraim*. One of the tribes in the Northern Kingdom; here it is a synonym for the nation. *Samaria*. Capital of the Northern Kingdom.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 9:10 *stones … cedars*. Proverb people quoted to express their perverse determination to pursue their wicked course despite the reverses by which God was calling them to repentance. They intended to rebuild and replant with nicer materials.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 9:11 *adversaries of Rezin*. The Assyrians, who overran Syria and its king, Rezin, before attacking the Northern Kingdom. Before Rezin and Pekah, king of Israel, united forces against Judah (the Southern Kingdom), several Syrian kings had made serious inroads into Israelite territory (2Ki 10:32–33; 13:22).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 9:12 *Syrians … Philistines*. Israel's neighbors sought her destruction. *His anger … hand is stretched out still*. See note, 5:25.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 9:13 *turn*. To believe and trust in the Lord. See p 1080. *struck*. God's discipline through Assyrian attacks. *inquire*. See "seek," p 843.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 9:14 *head and tail, palm branch and reed*. Judah's leaders. The head and tail of the nation are the elders and prophets (v 15). Because of the people's blind acceptance of these leaders (cf 3:6–8), all are punished, from the young men to the widow and the orphan.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 9:15 *prophet who teaches lies*. Instead of guiding the rulers, the prophets do what the officials want.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 9:17 *the Lord does not rejoice*. God is not pleased by their lives. *for everyone is godless*. The entire nation, even those typically downtrodden, is corrupt. *hand is stretched out still*. See note, 5:25.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 9:18 *burns like a fire*. The Lord's wrath is revealed as the wicked destroy one another.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 9:19 God uses sinful people to bring punishment on themselves and others. See notes, Ex 20:5; Rm 1:18.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 9:20 *They slice … not satisfied*. They are "consuming" as much as they can take from one another, but it is not enough. They keep destroying themselves and others. *devours … his own*

arm. When people act solely out of selfish motives, they injure not only their fellowman but ultimately destroy themselves as they in turn become victims of the law of the jungle. See note, 3:9. In the feeding frenzy, they think they are taking from others, but they are hurting themselves. Isaiah compares this to cannibalism.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 9:21 The Northern Kingdom is fighting itself. This is depicted as the two sons of Joseph—Manasseh and Ephraim—fighting against each other. These in turn also fight with the Southern Kingdom, and the fire of the wickedness spreads (v 19). Yet God's wrath still remains. *hand is stretched out still*. See note, 5:25.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 10:1 *Woe*. A lament. Terrible things are coming to such people (cf 5:11, 20). See p 1080. *those*. Judah's powerful but corrupt leaders, who cared only for themselves. *writing oppression*. Corrupt lawmakers who do not serve justice, but only themselves.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 10:2 *needy … poor … widows … fatherless*. Most vulnerable members of Israel's society (cf 1:17; Jas 1:27).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 10:3 *day of punishment*. When Assyrians came with God's judgment. A greater, final judgment will come when Christ returns. *come from afar?* Assyrian army first brought judgment. *leave your wealth?* The riches that they gained by cheating the weak will be abandoned as the Assyrians attack.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 10:4 *prisoners … slain*. All that will be left for those who are leaders will be to live among the prisoners or die. *hand is stretched out still*. See note, 5:25.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 9:8–10:4 The Lord rebukes the wealthy and the greedy for destroying themselves and the helpless. When the Lord blesses you with abundance, do not forget the suffering and the needy. Prosperity and power are not the truest sign of God's blessing, but goodness and mercy are. In Jesus' goodness and mercy is your refuge. • Lord, in prosperity or want our hope is in You. Stretch out Your hand to us in sweet mercy. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 10:5 God used Assyria to accomplish His will.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 10:6 *godless nation*. Israel is godless because they do not follow the one true God. *mire of the streets*. Assyria crushes Judah as dirt and refuse are trampled in the street. See note, Mi 7:10.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 10:7 Assyrian conqueror thought that he served only himself and did not believe that he did God's bidding. *his*. Assyria.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 10:9 Cities mentioned were captured by Assyrians in their march southward against Jerusalem. See color map 3. The southernmost of these was Samaria, capital of the Northern Kingdom; the most distant was Carchemish, more than 300 mi to the north. The other cities lay between these two points. By 717 BC, these nations had all submitted to Assyrian power.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 10:10 Many nations, all with their own gods, had fallen before Assyria.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 10:11 *her idols*. Although professing faith in Yahweh, the one true God, Jerusalem was littered with false gods, causing her neighbors to assume she was no different from any other people. E.g., see note, Ex 34:13. Assyria arrogantly assumed that Israel's God was just another powerless idol. The king of Assyria did not realize that the living God was sending him to do His bidding.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 10:12 *all His work*. Assyria was acting, but God was using that action to accomplish His will. *He will punish*. Even before the Assyrian king finishes his proud tirade, a reminder is inserted that the Lord is in control. The Lord will let the blasphemous boaster do no more than the specific task assigned to him.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 10:13 The king of Assyria arrogantly took credit for God's work. *like a bull*. With unstoppable power.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 10:14 *gathers eggs*. The Assyrian hordes conquered and plundered peoples with as little effort as it takes to gather eggs from a nest forsaken by a bird. Ath: "Such in a word, are [the devil's] boasts and professions that they may deceive the godly. But not even then ought we, the faithful, to fear his appearance or give heed to his words. For [Satan] is a liar" (*NPNF* 2 4:202). *all the earth*. Assyrian king thought that he had plundered the entire earth; no nation was greater than Assyria. *none … chirped*. No one defended the nations.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 10:15 Wood and iron remain inert and passive even when made into tools. They do not determine their shape or use. God, having fashioned the Assyrians into instruments of judgment, will destroy them if they refuse to be of service to Him.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 10:16 *Lord God of hosts*. See p 1291. *send wasting sickness*. God will humble this mighty army with disease. See note, Ps 106:15. *a burning will be kindled*. They will be destroyed by God's glory.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 10:17 *light of Israel*. The true God enlightens His people and helps them see. *Holy One a flame*. He is a holy light, consuming His enemies. See p 1227. *devour … in one day*. In a single day, God can destroy this mighty army. *his thorns*. Assyria's.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 10:18 *destroy … soul and body*. God can utterly destroy this mighty nation. *sick man wastes away*. As individuals would grow weak and die (v 16), so Assyria would be no more.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 10:19 *child can write them down*. Very small number.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 10:5–19 The Lord plans to use, humble, and punish the proud Assyrians. The Lord calls all nations and individuals to genuine humility, which can only come about by seeing ourselves clearly in relation to the Lord and the standards He has commanded. Take note of how the Lord accomplishes His purposes with the arrogant. Just as He brought judgment on Judah through the Assyrians, He brought about our justification from sin by the hands of Jerusalem's leaders and the Romans who crucified Jesus, our Savior. • Lord, work Your good purpose in my life, granting all humility and trust in Your mercy. Amen.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 10:20 The day will come when the people of God will no longer look to the oppressor for support as Ahaz did in ch 7. Instead, Israel will trust God. *remnant of Israel*. See p 1080. *lean on him who struck them*. Rely on Assyrian power. *Holy One of Israel*. See p 1227.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 10:21 *return*. To the land and life God gave them.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 10:22 *only a remnant*. See p 1080.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 10:23 The Lord will complete what He has decreed, proving His power to determine the destiny of "all the earth." *Lord God of hosts*. See p 1291. *midst of all the earth*. All nations will see this "full end," not just Israel or Assyria.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 10:24 *Lord God of hosts*. See p 1291. *rod … staff*. With human power and authority. See note, 9:4. *as the Egyptians did*. As God broke the power of Egypt before the exodus, so He will defeat Assyria.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 10:25 *My fury*. God's judgment and wrath.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 10:26 *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291. *wield against them a whip*. Because the Assyrians abused the assignment to be God's "rod" and "staff" on Israel (vv 5, 24), they themselves will be punished. *struck Midian*. A little band under Gideon's command, armed only with torches and trumpets, crushed the dreaded Midianite hordes (Jgs 7). *Oreb*. Where the Ephraimites killed Oreb, ruler of Midian. *over the sea … lift it*. All

Moses had to do to destroy Pharaoh's army was to stretch his rod over the sea at God's direction (Ex 14:16–29).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 10:27 *burden … yoke*. Oppression by the Assyrians. *because of the fat*. See ESV note. This may mean that the growing strength of the Israel (the ox) would break the oppression of Assyria. This is God's gift. The abundance of their blessings will break the yoke.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 10:28–34 Traces the advance of the enemy through towns situated immediately north of Jerusalem. It is a direct and unimpeded route, meant to convince the hearers of the reality of God's threats to punish Judah. See map, p 468.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 10:29 *Gibeah of Saul*. Where Saul held court, a stronghold of the tribe of Benjamin. See notes, 1Sm 10:5, 26.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 10:32 *he*. Assyria. *Zion*. See p 844.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 10:33 *Lord God of hosts*. See p 1291. *lop the boughs*. Once the Assyrians have served God's purpose, He will cut down their blasphemous pride.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 10:34 The destruction of this threatening menace Assyria—pictured as the felling of a great cedar of Lebanon—ushers in the promise of new life for God's people (cf 11:1). *Majestic One*. The Lord, who alone is God.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 10:20–34 The Lord notes that a remnant of Judah will turn away from the nations from which they have sought support. The Holy One, the Lord God of hosts, will always welcome our repentance and turn our hearts toward Him. Just as the Lord had pity on Judah and Israel, preserving a remnant, He will have pity on His people (the Church) today.
• O Lord, deliver us from false saviors who would rob us of Your blessings given through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 11:1 Pictures life rising from death and destruction. *a shoot*. The coming Messiah. See note, 6:13. Luth: "This is what he called Christ, and such is the beginning of the rising spiritual kingdom. It is obviously different from that of an earthly kingdom, where an assembly of people is provided with a king. In this case the King is born first, and then He gathers a people for Himself. At first there will be a single Sprout risen out of the root, from the old and hopeless trunk, which is nevertheless watered with a divine strength" (AE 16:117). *stump of Jesse*. Assyrians were cut down like a tree (10:33–34). Now, Isaiah sees what was to happen several decades later. The axe of divine judgment would cut

down the kingdom of David, the son of Jesse. The use of "Jesse" rather than "David" here and in v 10 indicates that this new king is not only of the lineage of David, but indeed a new David (Jer 30:9; Ezk 34:23–24; Hos 3:5). This promise of a Messiah is fulfilled in Jesus (Mt 1:6, 17; Lk 2:4; Ac 13:22–23). *a branch*. Designates a human king in Dn 11:7. Isaiah beholds a king, from David's line, whose rule will affect human history to the end of time. This Son of David is greater than Solomon and all kings of human origin (Mt 12:42). He is the promised Messiah. *bear fruit*. The coming Messiah will fully be what God desires and will fully do what God desires (cf Jn 15:5).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 11:2–3 *Spirit* … *Lord* … *Him*. All three persons of the Trinity are referenced here. "God the Father has given His Spirit to Christ, His beloved Son, according to the received humanity. (Because of this He is called also *Messiah*; i.e., the Anointed.) He has not received His gifts with limits as other saints. For on Christ the Lord, according to His received human nature, rests 'the Spirit of wisdom and understanding' " (FC SD VIII 72).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 11:2 *Spirit* … *shall rest*. The Spirit of the Lord rested upon Saul and David when God chose them to rule His people (1Sm 10:10; 16:13). There will be no end to the flow of the Spirit's gifts equipping great David's greater Son, the Savior, with every trait and ability to make Him a perfect Ruler (42:1; 61:1–3; Ac 10:38). Ambr: "Let it not trouble you that either here it is said, 'rivers,' or elsewhere 'seven Spirits,' for by the sanctification of these seven gifts of the Spirit, as Isaiah said, is signified the fulness of all virtue. . . . One, then, is the River, but many the channels of the gifts of the Spirit. This River, then, goes forth from the Fount of Life" (*NPNF* 2 10:114). Gr Naz: "Seven precious spirits are named; for I think Isaiah loves to call the activities of the Spirit spirits" (*NPNF* 2 7:379). Cyr Jer: "The Spirit is one and undivided, but His operations various. . . . Though the titles of the Holy Ghost be different, He is one and the same; living and subsisting, and always present together with the Father and the Son" (*NPNF* 2 7:123, 125). *Him*. The Messiah. *wisdom* … *fear of the Lord*. Such attributes are called for in a leader of the people in Dt 1:13. The words refer to the judicial capacity of a king, which determines his activity in internal and foreign policy (cf 1Ki 3:16–28; Jer 23:5–6). The first pair of attributes is used for all who observe the Law (Dt 4:6). See pp 775–78, 1001. *Spirit of counsel and might*. Used to describe two of the four names

given of the messianic King in 9:6. Mentioned in Pr 8:14 to describe someone who is wise.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 11:3–4 *He shall not judge … meek of the earth*. Fruits of the indwelling of the Spirit in this King's administration contrast with the traits of the leaders depicted in 1:21–23; 5:18–23. This king will see things as they really are and not judge by mere outward appearance (1Sm 16:7). The king manifests righteousness by helping the poor and needy, the widows and orphans (v 2; Ex 22:22; Ps 45:4) and is thereby the work of the Lord Himself (Ps 9:9; 68:5). He will also punish the evildoer (Jb 4:9; Ps 139:19; 2Th 2:8).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 11:3 *fear of the* LORD. Attributes in vv 3–4 are rooted in faith, the fear of the Lord (Pr 1:7; 9:10; 15:33; see p 1001); to ignore this proper fear is to do evil (Ps 14:4). Submission to the ways of the Holy One of Israel grants success to this king, as emphasized at the beginning of v 3.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 11:4 *righteousness*. Justice. God rules rightly and fairly, not in self-interest or exploitation. See p 843. *rod of His mouth*. The weight of His Word. Cf 49:2; Hos 6:5; Rv 1:16. *breath of His lips*. His Word is powerful and brings about what it says.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 11:5 *belt of His waist … belt of His loins*. Parallel concepts for emphasis. Isaiah also uses the image of the breastplate of righteousness in 59:16–17 to depict the Lord's action to intercede for His people. This image is picked up by Paul in Eph 6:14 to describe the gifts of armor the Lord gives to the baptized.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 11:6 *The wolf … with the lamb*. Image of creation restored (Ezk 34:23–31; 37:26). Animals that were once prey (lamb, young goat, fattened calf) dwell safely with former predators (wolf, leopard, lion), without fear.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 11:9 *They*. All creatures. *holy mountain*. Where the Lord dwells (8:18), and where perfect peace is given (2:2–4) by the Prince of Peace (9:6). All is safe under the protecting watch of the King because of the change in the creatures of the earth. *knowledge of the* LORD. All will know the Lord (cf Jer 31:34), hence there will be peace. This knowledge is contrasted with the lack of understanding depicted in 1:3; 6:9–10. Ath: "If a man will but look up to heaven, he sees its Order, or if he cannot raise his face to heaven, but only to man, he sees [the Lord's] power … shown by His works, and learns that He alone among men is God the Word" (*NPNF* 2 4:61).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 11:10 *In that day*. Final establishment of the Messiah's kingdom. See p 1079. *root of Jesse*. The Messiah (cf Rv 5:5; 22:16). *signal*. Peoples and nations will flock to Him as loyal troops rally around a flag. *inquire*. Seek God's direction. See "seek," p 843. *resting place*. Where He dwells.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 11:11 *In that day*. See p 1079. Luth: "The prophet, abounding with spiritual joys, now adorns and enriches the matter which he treats by means of allegories. He is now saying the same thing as before, except that he uses different words and speaks in a different manner. The prophets were the best masters of their own allegories. The meaning of this passage is: With the Jews and Gentiles brought together into one church, there will now be a true exodus from Egypt. In that day, namely when the Ensign is raised up for the nations and they seek the Root of Jesse, that is, Christ" (AE 16:125). *second time*. Recalls the exodus, when God brought Israel out of Egypt with an outstretched arm (Ex 3:19–20). *remnant*. See p 1080. *Assyria … coastlands of the sea*. Egypt, Pathros, and Cush are all in northeast Africa, to the south of Israel. To the east is Assyria, and farther east are Elam and Shinar, which is Babylon (Gn 11:1–9; Zec 5:5–11). To the north lies Hamath, and to the west are the coastlands of the sea. See map, p 609.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 11:12 The people return from all directions to the signal of the King (Lk 13:29). *signal*. See note, v 10.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 11:13 *Ephraim … Judah*. Strife between Northern and Southern Kingdoms of Israel is extinguished. Dissension and rivalry will vanish as people come under the sway of the Prince of Peace.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 11:14 *they*. Reunited kingdoms of Israel. *shoulder*. Seen from the Judean hill country, the territory occupied by the Philistines resembled the shoulder of a man. *Philistines … people of the east … Edom and Moab … Ammonites*. David and Solomon ruled over these nations. Once Israel is unified under the Messiah, they will swoop down upon the nations around them (63:1–6). The manner in which this is accomplished is not revealed here, but in Ac 1:8.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 11:15 *utterly destroy … tongue of the Sea of Egypt*. The sea once blocked the Israelites from escaping from Egypt until God parted it for them (Ex 14:15–16). Here, it symbolizes any opposition to the remnant's return. *the River*. The mighty Euphrates could hinder travel, but God will remove all obstacles. *scorching breath*. God's power, able to dry these waters He created. *seven channels*. He will break a mighty river into small waterways, easily crossed. *across in sandals*. As at the parting of the Red Sea, they will cross on dry ground.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 11:16 *highway*. God will prepare the way for His people. Where once they saw obstacles, now they will have an easy path. Nothing stops His plan. See notes, 19:23; 35:8; 40:3; 62:10. *remnant*. See p 1080.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 11** The Lord describes the coming rule of the Messiah. As believers in Christ, we already enjoy the benefits of His wise rule, having received His Spirit, wisdom, peace, and other blessings. The Spirit equips us to spread word of this blessed reign to all nations. • Pour out Your sevenfold Spirit, O Lord, that we may boldly proclaim Your goodness. Amen.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 12:1–3 *You*. The movement of the chapter is from an individual (v 1) to a group (v 3). An individual may have sung or recited these first verses. See ESV note; see also "Versicle and Response," p 959.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 12:1 *give thanks*. Isaiah's first song of praise, a liturgical response to what is being proclaimed. *anger … comfort*. Though God's people have deserved His wrath, He is no longer angry. This is not attributable to Israel, but is the Lord's doing. The comfort announced here anticipates the double "Comfort, comfort" in 40:1. In the fullness of time,

the Father sent His Son (Gal 4:4), who also sends the Holy Spirit (Gal 4:6), the Comforter ("Helper," Jn 16:7).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 12:2 *my salvation*. Deliverance from all enemies: physical and spiritual. See p 843. Luth: "This is a description of the peace that comes after the forgiveness of sins has been received" (AE 16:129). *Lord God*. See ESV note; see also p 1227. *strength … song*. God is our only strength. He has won the victory, and He alone is worthy of praise.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 12:3 *you*. Plural instead of the singular (see note, vv 1–3), perhaps signaling the singing of a choir. *wells of salvation*. Reminiscent of God's rescue of Israel out of Egypt (cf Ex 14:21–31). Immediately after this water deliverance, the Lord turned bitter water into sweet water (Ex 15:23–25). When Isaiah envisions a new exodus, it also includes the Lord's miraculous provision of water (Is 43:19). Jesus Christ offers living water (Jn 4:6–14) that comes from His pierced side (Jn 19:34) because He thirsted (Jn 19:28), suffered, and died.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 12:4 *call upon His name*. Worship and prayer to God alone. *make known His deeds*. Praise God by telling others about Him.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 12:5 *made known in all the earth*. Israel is a missionary people (cf Gn 12:1–3), commissioned to be God's priests or representatives to the nations (Ex 19:5–6).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 12:6 *great in your midst*. God has demonstrated His power and character among His people by saving them. See note, 7:14. *Holy One of Israel*. See p 1227.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 12** The Lord's people break out in song because of their salvation, proclaiming God's deeds to all people. Those who know the Word are obligated and blessed to proclaim the Lord's saving work. The Lord gives us strength to bear this song before the nations, to testify what He accomplishes in Jesus Christ. • "I will give thanks to You, O Lord, for though You were angry with me, Your anger turned away, that You might comfort me" (v 1). Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Chs 13–23** Collection of 11 oracles. With the exception of ch 22, all are directed against heathen nations.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 13:1 *oracle*. See p 1079. *Babylon*. All Assyria. In the NT, Babylon is used symbolically as the embodiment of hostility to God and His people (Rv 14:8; 16:19; 17:5). *Isaiah … saw*. God revealed these things to Isaiah in a vision.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 13:2 *signal … wave the hand*. Summoning God's people to His cause. See p 1277. *cry aloud*. The terms "raise," "cry aloud," and "wave the hand" are all second person plural verbs, indicating that many are prepared to carry out the Lord's instructions. God is gathering an army to do His bidding. *them*. All who answer the call to God's service.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 13:3 *consecrated ones*. See "holy," p 7.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 13:4–5 The multitude has gathered together under the Lord of hosts. The Lord is behind the creation of these armies, and their purpose is to punish the iniquitous (vv 9, 11). Just as Assyria was once a weapon of the Lord's wrath (10:5), so now another army—yet unnamed—will judge Assyria. The agent of judgment is later judged.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 13:4 *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 13:5 *end of the heavens*. The farthest horizon, where the sky appears to meet the earth. We would say "the ends of the earth." *weapons*. God uses these people to do His will.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 13:6 *day of the Lord*. See p 1079.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 13:7 Powerlessness in both action and emotion. See notes, Jsh 2:9–11.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 13:8 *anguish*. Image of a woman in labor involves not only her intensity but also the suddenness and inevitability of the event. See "woman in labor," p 1080. *aflame*. Flushed red in fear or panic.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 13:9 *day of the Lord*. See p 1079.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 13:10 The moving of the heavens to darkness is an appropriate image of judgment. God is light (Ps 139:11–12; 1Jn 1:5); when His blessing is removed and replaced with His wrath, light is replaced by darkness. This lack of light is a sign of the Lord's coming (Is 5:30).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 13:11–12 God punishes the earth's prideful people, nearly resulting in human extinction.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 13:12 *Ophir*. See note, Jb 22:24.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 13:13 Human sin has affected the rest of creation, so creation feels the wrath of the Lord (Jer 12:4; Rm 8:19–23). *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 13:14 Vision changes from that of the Lord and His army's action to the reaction of the people. They will run like a fleeing gazelle or defenseless sheep.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 13:16 *infants … pieces*. The defenseless, down to infants, will be killed. Infants were often killed in war in order to destroy

the next generation, who might rebel against the conquering nation. Also, nations did not have effective or compassionate ways to deal with refugees or prisoners of war. For these reasons, ancient warfare was often esp brutal. *wives ravished*. Wives of those killed were often raped and forced into prostitution by the invaders (Am 7:17). These verses describe the harshness of war, but do not condone these practices. Sin is sometimes punished by sin. On how God's people should view such issues and violence, see pp 376, 879.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 13:17 *Medes*. Neo-Babylonian Empire, also called Chaldea (cf 23:13). Chaldea made an ideal center from which to wage guerrilla warfare against the Assyrians. In 612 BC, these Chaldeans were responsible for the final destruction of Nineveh, Assyria's capital. See pp 1498–99; see also map, p 717.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 13:18 See note, v 16.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 13:19 *Babylon*. Refers to Assyria (which ruled Babylon for a time), as it does throughout chs 13–14. *Chaldeans*. See note, v 17. *like Sodom and Gomorrah*. Recalls the complete divine destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah for their sins (3:9). Such a comparison is also used in the NT for the end times (Lk 17:28–30; Rm 9:29; Rv 11:8).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 13:20–22 Depicts complete abandonment and judgment on Assyria. Every aspect of their life will be gone. A once-great empire will go back to nature.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 13:20 *It will never … all generations*. This great destruction foreshadows the final destruction on Judgment Day, when these words will be completely fulfilled. *no Arab*. Too desolate even for Bedouin tribes.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 13:21 *wild goats*. Or, "goat demons," emphasizing the superstitious horror that would leave the city uninhabited (2Ch 11:15). See note, Lv 17:7. Reflects a curse that a rebellious city would be inhabited by wild beasts following its destruction (Is 14:23).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 13** The Lord of hosts will consecrate an army for the destruction of Babylon. The punishment depicted here will find its most severe expression on Judgment Day, when sinners will face agonizing punishment and swift destruction. We, too, should fear God's wrath and repent of all evil, iniquity, and pride. The Father consecrated Jesus to receive the punishment for our sins. His innocent hands were nailed to the cross; His side was pierced for our sins in the darkness of Good Friday, that

He might become our light and salvation. • Lord of hosts, teach us to fear Your wrath and honor Your Commandments. Give us grace to lay aside all pride and arrogance and to rely solely on Jesus' mercy. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 14:1 *compassion … choose*. See p 5. *Jacob*. God once chose Jacob and renamed him Israel (Gn 32:28). Now He chooses and renames His people again. *sojourners*. The exiles are returning to their land. See map, p 1396. Instead of being joined to the foreign nations, the foreigners come to Israel to be a part of the nation. See note, Ex 12:19.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 14:2 The return from Babylon (cf 40:3–5), likened to the rescue of enslaved Israel from Egyptian bondage, serves as a type of the subjection of "all rule and authority and power" to the Redeemer of all people (Eph 1:21). *Lord's land*. Territory of Israel, lent to His people as stewards. *male and female slaves*. Complete role reversal. Israel is now the master, not the servant. *rule over*. Another depiction of the role reversal.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 14:1–2 Moved by compassion, the Lord will reverse the fortunes of Israel. As the chosen of the Lord, Israel will rule her enemies and settle in the land the Lord gives. Whenever our relationship with the Lord stands in need of restoration because of our disobedience, our own actions and prayers alone cannot make things right. It is always God's compassion in Jesus Christ that restores us again and again. Through the waters of Holy Baptism, the Lord chose us to live in His blessed land forever. • Gracious Lord, look upon us with Your compassion, and restore us when we go astray. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 14:3 *hard service*. All the suffering and afflictions they had faced.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 14:4–21 Ode beginning at v 4 unleashes a torrent of ridicule on God's enemies. Line after line cuts down the pretensions of arrogant men. They are such ludicrous figures because they must leave all their pomp behind as they go down to the grave and its decay. In vv 12–21, the futility of death-bound men wanting to "be like God" (Gn 3:5) is made graphic by a parable drawn from a pagan tale about a celestial deity. This magnificent satire, with the force of a proverb, applies whenever anti-God powers set out to defy and to destroy the kingdom of heaven. Vv 4b–8 describe the reaction of the people on the earth to the death of the king. Vv 9–11 share the reaction of those in Sheol.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 14:4 *taunt*. Hbr *mashal*, "to be like, to be similar"; as a noun translated "parable" or "allegory" (Ps 78:2; Ezk 17:2; 24:3). When

such comparisons illustrate generally accepted truths, they come under the category of proverbs (Ps 49:4; Pr 1:1; Ezk 12:22–23); when the point to be made in a parable or proverb is mockery, the word is rendered "taunt song" or simply "taunt" (Jer 24:9; Hab 2:6; Mi 2:4). See pp 775–78. *king of Babylon*. Sargon II (reigned 721–705 BC) had achieved a pinnacle of world dominance that none of his predecessors had known. He even styled himself as "Lord of the universe." This pride fits the description of the king in vv 3–27. But Sargon also fits these verses in another way. Less than a year after his palace in Dur-Sharrukin was dedicated in 706 BC, he suffered a fate unknown among Assyrian monarchs: he was killed on the battlefield. Mystery surrounds the event, but plainly it was viewed as the ultimate disgrace. Hence, in contrast to most other Assyrian kings, his son Sennacherib does not identify his father. Dur-Sharrukin was soon abandoned, and all Sargon's glory was forgotten. *ceased*. Sargon's death in 705 BC on a battlefield in Anatolia and the impossibility of burying him in a royal grave caused a wave of joy throughout the ancient Near East. Subject nations believed they could liberate themselves from Assyria. When Sennacherib ascended the throne in 704 BC, his annals record widespread mutiny throughout the Assyrian Empire.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 14:5 *broken the staff … scepter*. Symbol of Sargon II's power and his conquering nature. The Lord has destroyed that staff, as well as the power behind it.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 14:7 *earth is at rest*. Peace followed the demise of Sargon II, and the result was the celebration. The boast of the conqueror is replaced with the song of the redeemed (24:14, 16; 26:1, 19).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 14:8 The Assyrian tyrants, holding dominion over many people, do not take care of the earth (cf Gn 2:15; Dt 20:19). Instead, they boast of their ability to destroy it, in particular the cypress and Lebanon cedar (Is 37:24). Therefore, nature also rejoices at the downfall of this king.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 14:9–10 *Sheol*. See p 792. *rouses the shades*. The kings who went before Sargon II welcome the new arrival to the grave and remark on how he looks like them.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 14:11 *Sheol*. See p 792. *maggots … worms*. Elsewhere, the worm is cited as an agent of the Lord's judgment (Dt 28:39) and a vicious consumer of human remains (Is 66:24; Mk 9:47–48).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 14:12–15 Ancient Near Eastern mythology contains stories of war in the heavens, but not of a person challenging God. This particular depiction does not correspond to any one myth, but instead is an image that Isaiah has constructed on the myths of neighboring nations.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 14:12 *you*. Sargon II. Jesus may allude to this passage (Lk 10:18; Rv 12:8–9) in describing Satan's fall from heaven. *fallen from heaven*. He lost his important position. *Day Star*. Likely the planet Venus (Hbr word occurs only here). The translation "Lucifer" (light-bearer) in the KJV is derived from the Lat name for Venus. In Babylonian and Canaanite mythology, celestial bodies were associated with gods. *son of Dawn!* Synonym for Day Star.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 14:13 *You*. Sargon II. *above the stars*. Above all things. Stars may refer to angels. *mount of assembly*. Aspiration of the king is similar to that of the nation at Babel (Gn 11:1–9; cf Ps 48:1–2; Am 9:2–3). *north*. Hbr *tsaphon*; Mount Zaphon, in Canaanite mythology, was the place of their gods.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 14:14 *like the Most High*. See note, Gn 3:5.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 14:15 *Sheol*. See p 792.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 14:16 *the man*. Third view of Sargon II's demise. The nations react again. Instead of being remembered fondly, the very memory of the tyrant is repressed. The death of the king causes people to ponder and stare, considering the difference between reputation and reality.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 14:17 *not let his prisoners go home?* He kept captives in permanent exile. See map, p 609.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 14:18 *glory … tomb*. Buried with honor.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 14:19 *cast out*. Even the king's body is treated with scorn. He is not buried with the other kings in the tombs, but set apart in shame. Not receiving a proper burial was a certain sign of being cursed (Ezk 37:1–14). *loathed branch*. Translated "shoot" in Is 11:1. A sprout, snapped off before it grows into a sturdy oak, is considered of no value. So the oppressor will cast it out on the rubbish heap. This is the opposite of the branch of Jesse's root, which bears fruit (11:1; cf 60:21). *clothed with the slain*. Sargon II's royal raiment is stripped away, and his body is thrown into a pile.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 14:21 *Prepare slaughter … fathers*. OT forbade Israel to punish children for the sins of the father (Dt 24:16; Ezk 18). But the Lord may end royal lines, that the remnant of those who believe will not

be led astray (1Ki 15:25–30; 16:2–4, 9–13; 21:17–29) and create a land of unbelief, as in the time before Noah (Gn 6:5–7; 2Pt 2:4–9). *cities*. Condemns influence of paganism through growing cities of foreign countries.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 14:22 *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 14:23 *possession of the hedgehog*. Cf 13:21–22. *pools*. The land would revert to its marshy state. *broom of destruction*. Swept away. *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 14:3–23 The demise of Babylon's king demonstrates the final outcome for all who rely on oppression and wickedness to achieve their aims. His fall is a warning to never put ourselves in the place of God. While the glorious king of Babylon remained in the grave, our King, the Lord Jesus Christ, rose from the grave. Through faith in Him, our guilt is taken away, and our resurrection is assured. • Lord God, even as we are surrounded by the anger and wickedness of the powerful, give us comfort and joy in knowing that You have destroyed death for us. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 14:24 *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291. *planned*. God is carrying out His perfect plan for His people. These are not random events.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 14:25 *My land*. See note, v 2. *them*. Israel.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 14:26 *whole earth*. God's plan is not limited to Israel but encompasses all. *hand … stretched out*. See note, 5:25.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 14:27 *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291. *hand is stretched out*. See note, 5:25. *who will turn it back?* No one can stop God or hinder His will for His people. "God's eternal election does not just foresee and foreknow the salvation of the elect. From God's gracious will and pleasure in Christ Jesus, election is a cause that gains, works, helps, and promotes our salvation and what belongs to it" (FC SD XI 8).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 14:24–27 The Lord's gracious plans and purposes will be accomplished, not just for Israel, but for the whole earth. God's people will be delivered from Assyria and all other enemies. Faith in this promise moves the believer to pray that God "breaks and hinders every evil plan and purpose of the devil, the world, and our sinful nature, which do not want us to hallow God's name or let His kingdom come" (SC, Third Petition, p xxxviii). God's people walk by faith, not by sight (2Co 5:7). God's greatest plans and purposes were accomplished through Jesus, who

redeemed us from sin. • Heavenly Father, help us to remember that nothing can separate us from Your love in Christ Jesus. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 14:28 *King Ahaz died*. 715 BC. *oracle*. See p 1079.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 14:29 *Philistia*. See color map 2. *rod that struck you*. David. He created a great portion of his dynasty on the backs of the Philistines (1Sm 17:50; 19:8; 23:1–5). *serpent's root*. Refers to Ex 4:2–3; 7:10–12, showing that the Lord's power is in the house of David. See imagery of Gn 49:17. *adder*. A greater Davidic king, referring to Hezekiah and the Lord's victory over Sennacherib (Is 36–37). *flying fiery serpent*. See note, Is 30:6. One comes from the line of David, who is even greater than the adder. See note, Nu 21:6.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 14:30 *firstborn of the poor*. The poorest and most needy of Israel will be safe, but Philistia will fall completely. Famine for Philistia implies siege warfare, the basic principle being to starve them until they opened their gates (29:8). *kill your root*. Completely destroyed with no hope of recovery.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 14:31 *gate*. See p 792. Philistines at all levels will be crying out when the army from the north comes. *smoke comes out of the north*. Gath refused to pay the tribute to Assyria and was sacked in 734 BC. The Philistine cities were plotting with Egypt against Assyria and so lost Ashkelon and Gath to Sargon II in 720 BC. Ashdod, another Philistine city and part of the famous Philistine Pentapolis, rebelled in 712 BC. Ashkelon rebelled again in 705 and was quelled by Sennacherib in 701 BC. *no straggler*. A disciplined force marching quickly upon them (5:26–30). *his*. The Assyrian enemy.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 14:32 *founded Zion*. Judah depends on the Lord alone (ch 12; Dt 6:4) and needs no alliances with pagan nations.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 14:28–32 Assyria would destroy Philistia with fearsome efficiency. But in Zion, the Lord founded a place of refuge for His afflicted people. Earthly alliances and human relationships are a source of safety. Yet we should enjoy these relationships as gifts from God and never allow them to replace God as the object of our highest trust and love. Our refuge and safety are found in Jesus. In His Holy Church, our Zion, Jesus tends to those afflicted by sin. He grants forgiveness, life, and salvation. • We praise You, O God, for Your Holy Church throughout the world, and also for our own congregations. Though sin afflicts us, we flee to Your Church for safety and refuge in Jesus Christ. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 15** Moab and Israel had a long history of both friendship and discord (Gn 19:37; Dt 2:9). Kinship is expressed in genealogies, in the story of Ruth, as well as in similarity of language. But there was also animosity between them. The two nations had fought against each other since Israel came to claim the Promised Land. Moabites also fought with Israel over the former land of the Ammonites, which was claimed by Reuben and Gad. Thus, Isaiah exhibits both triumph and grief over the destruction of Moab.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 15:1 *oracle*. See p 1079. *Ar … Kir*. The list relates the thoroughness of the destruction wrought on Moab. Ar is on the border of Moab (Dt 2:18). Kir-hareseth is in central Moab, c 12 mi E of the Salt Sea (Is 16:7, 11; 2Ki 3:25). Exact location of some places can no longer be determined. See color map 2.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 15:2 *He*. Moab's ruler. *temple*. The people go up to their temple and the high places to weep, which signifies the failure of their god Chemosh to save them (Jer 48:35). *Dibon*. North of the river Arnon. *high places*. See p 526. *Nebo*. Mountain on the north end of the Salt Sea, on which Moses stood to survey the Promised Land. *Medeba*. C 5 mi SE of Nebo. See map, p 1555. *baldness … shorn*. Baldness and shaving emphasizes the mourning of the nation (Is 22:12; Jer 41:5; Mi 1:16). See note, Dt 14:1.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 15:3 *sackcloth*. See note, Jb 16:15. *housetops*. Public mourning. Jer 19:13 indicates that incense was sometimes offered on housetops. See note, Jsh 2:6.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 15:4 *Heshbon … Elealeh … Jahaz*. Cities in the northern section of Moab. See map, p 250. Jahaz is c 16 mi S of the other two cities. The army of Moab can do nothing except cry aloud, each person trembling in the face of destruction. *his*. Ruler of Moab.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 15:5 *My heart*. Mourner is the Lord (cf v 9). Not only does He lament over His people Israel (Hos 11:8–9), but He also wails over Moab (cf Ps 145:9). *Zoar*. Mentioned in Gn 19:21–22, located in the southern Salt Sea area. See map, p 33. The list of places likely includes Moabite cities in the southwest sector of the country, away from the fighting in the north. *Eglath-shelishiyah*. Lit, "a heifer of three years," but indicates a place (Jer 48:34); location unknown. *Luhith … Horonaim*. Locations unknown.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 15:6 *Nimrim*. Probably Wadi Numeirah in southern Moab (variant spellings in Nu 32:3; Jsh 13:27). This oasis became barren and dry, a further reflection on the destruction.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 15:7 *carry away*. Refugees flee from the conflict, keeping only what they can carry. *Brook of the Willows*. Or, "Ravine of the Poplars." Possibly the Zered River that was the border with Edom (Nu 21:12; Dt 2:13).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 15:8 *Eglaim … Beer-elim*. Locations unknown. May be cities on opposing borders, thus emphasizing the loss of the whole nation.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 15:9 *Dibon*. Circles back to term in v 2, wrapping up this image of Moab's destruction. Though blood fills the waters, punishment continues. We are not told who executes judgment on Moab. Subdued by various invaders, it vanished from the face of the earth. *a lion*. Shows inevitability of destruction. Though they run from the armies, the lion takes them (Am 1:2; 3:8; 5:19).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 16:1 *Send the lamb*. Traditional tribute from the Moabites. Partial fulfillment of 2:1–5. *Sela*. City in Edom (Jgs 1:36). The leaders of Moab have fled into Edom and are sending for help from there. *way of the desert*. The desert surrounding the Salt Sea lay between Sela and Jerusalem. See color map 2.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 16:2 *fleeing birds*. People of Moab wait at the border, desiring to flee into Judah for safety. (See the reverse in Ru 1:1–2.) *fords of the Arnon*. Boundary of Moab.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 16:3–4a Shows the Moabites' willingness to put themselves under the authority of Judah.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 16:3 *justice*. See p 842. *shade like night*. Covering completely. *outcasts … fugitive*. Refugees from Moab. A plea that God would protect the Moabites.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 16:4 *the destroyer*. Assyria.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 16:5 *throne … tent of David*. A time is envisioned when the oppressors of Moab will vanish and the people will find blessing in the Davidic king. This is a longing for the messianic King (9:2–7; 11:1–5), when all the nations will come to Zion and experience peace (2:1–5). The vision is fulfilled in Jesus, David's greatest Son, whose genealogy includes Ruth, a Moabite woman (Mt 1:5). *steadfast love … faithfulness … justice … righteousness*. See pp 842–43. Luth: "Steadfast love is a divine

blessing and favor, the remission of sins, and the gift of the Holy Spirit. He says that there will not be a hypocrite there but that pure truth and faithfulness will reign. This King will not only judge for His own Person and in His office deliver the oppressed, the poor, and the widows, but He will also seek justice, that is, He will see to it that the other magistrates of the kingdom will judge in this way, and He will swiftly get justice done and not drag it out for many years. This is the glory and the duty of every prince. But it is a gift of God that is now exceedingly uncommon" (AE 16:150).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 16:6 *pride*. Instead of love, Moab chose arrogance, pride, insolence, and boasting (25:10–11). As a consequence, Moab is caused to wail (v 7) and is brought low (2:12–18). Pride is the sin at the root of rebellion against God (Gn 3:5).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 16:7 *raisin cakes*. Used in various feasts (see distribution of food in 2Sm 6:19; see also p 236). The vineyards and fields that produced the ingredients of these delicacies will be destroyed (cf Sg 2:5). In Hos 3:1, "cakes of raisins" are associated with idol worship, in which the Moabites also indulged (Is 16:12). *Kir-hareseth*. Capital city of Moab.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 16:8 *Heshbon … Sibmah*. Locations unknown. *Jazer*. Beyond northern border of Moab (Nu 21:32; Jsh 13:25). *shoots spread abroad*. Depicts spreading of Moab's influence, perhaps through trade in wine to surrounding nations. These vines are destroyed by the lords of the nations (Is 15).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 16:9 *I weep*. The Lord is speaking. *Elealeh*. C 1 mi NE of Heshbon (15:4). *summer fruit*. Grape harvest. See calendar, p 262. *shout*. In celebration of a good harvest. The joy and activity normally associated with the harvest of grapes is taken away because of war, destruction, and the dispersed people (Jer 48:33).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 16:11 *inner parts … inmost self*. Deepest seat of emotion (63:15; Jer 31:20; Lm 2:11). See note, Ps 103:1–2. *like a lyre*. As if he were playing a lament in his heart. See p 993. *Kir-hareseth*. See note, v 7.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 16:12 *presents himself*. Before his god Chemosh. *wearies himself*. All the effort of pagan worship is wasted because idols cannot help. *high place*. See p 526.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 16:13 Not the first warning to Moab, but now God gives them a timeline.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 16:14 Isaiah finishes this view of the demise of Moab with a time frame for the oracle to come to pass. In three years, Moab will fall; their pride will be removed. In his oracles about the nations (chs 13–23), Isaiah also specifically predicts time periods.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Chs 15–16** The complicated history of friendship and enmity between Israel and Moab would come to an end with Moab's bloody destruction. Yet even Moab's refugees will find shelter in the tent of the coming Davidic king. Pride was the downfall of Moab, and it is our downfall too. The Lord desires not our destruction, but that we turn to Him in repentant faith. In Jesus, He offers steadfast love and righteousness. • Heavenly Father, in Your steadfast love, You sent Your Son to save the lost. Lead us to repentance over every arrogant act, and teach us to depend on the love and faithfulness of Jesus in every endeavor. Amen.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 17:1 *oracle*. See p 1079. *Damascus*. Capital of Aram, or Syria, north of Israel. See color map 2.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 17:2 *Aroer*. Probably the city in Syria rather than the city named in Nu 32:34, east of the Jordan.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 17:3 *fortress*. Damascus acted as a bulwark against the Assyrian advance southward into Israel. *Ephraim … Damascus*. The Northern Kingdom, also called Ephraim and Jacob (vv 3–4), threw in its lot with its neighbor to the north (ch 7). Both states were to share the same fate (17:1–9). In 732 BC, the Assyrians captured Damascus. Ten years later, Samaria, capital of Israel, fell before the same invaders. *remnant*. Those surviving the attack. If Syria shares the fate of Israel, it will be destroyed down to a remnant (7:16; 8:4). But then it will also have that remnant preserved, which fits with the hope to the Gentiles in 18:7. *the glory of the children of Israel*. Remnant of Israel. *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 17:4 *in that day*. See p 1079. *glory of Jacob*. Israel.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 17:5 *it*. God's judgment. *Valley of Rephaim*. Fertile valley southwest of Jerusalem. Cf Jsh 15:8; 18:16.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 17:6 *Gleanings*. Cf Ru 2:15–16. A remnant will be left, but will only be as large, and as important, as the few olives left on the tree after harvest.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 17:7 *man*. Any person seeing the folly of idolatry. *Holy One of Israel*. See p 1227.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 17:8 *work of his hands*. The eyes of all turn from their idolatry and back to the Lord, which is emphasized by the use of Maker (v 7) against what is man-made. *Asherim*. See note, Ex 34:13. *altars of incense*. Linked with Baal (2Ch 14:3–5). See note, Nu 25:3.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 17:9 *deserted places*. All of the cities will be desolated, repeating the image of v 2. Strong cities offered protection to a person seeking refuge, but in this case, Damascus will be desolate.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 17:10 *you*. Those engaged in idolatry (v 8). *salvation*. See p 843. *Rock*. See p 843; cf 26:4; Ex 17:1–7, when water gushed from the rock and provided salvation (cf 1Co 10:4). *pleasant plants*. Paganism was dedicated to the mysterious forces of fertility in man, beast, and vegetation. The blossoming of plants symbolized the deity's return to life after winter's cold had killed him.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 17:11 *harvest will flee away*. Despite growth and blossoms, the plants fail to produce fruit/grain for the harvest.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 17:12 *roar*. The nations, perhaps the multinational force of Assyria, have such vast numbers that the sound is as the roar of the sea.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 17:13 *He*. The Lord. *chased like chaff*. They are small, insignificant, and easily scattered by a greater force. See note, Ps 1:4.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 17:14 The seemingly great army is gone in a day (37:36–37). *portion … lot*. What they deserved.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 17** Even great urban centers such as Damascus can offer no security against disaster. Yet, as with Israel, the Lord will preserve a remnant. Those who trust in the works of their own hands are guilty of idolatry. When we fear, love, and trust in created things more than in the Maker of all things, we have forgotten the God of our salvation, who sent His Son, Jesus, to bear our sins of idolatry and to bless us with the refuge of His forgiveness. With faith in Him, we can live without fear. • Maker and Refuge, You are the giver of every good gift. May we never forget You, but always remember that we walk in Your sight. Amen.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 18:1–7 In ch 17, Isaiah exposed the folly of putting confidence in an alliance with Israel's northern neighbor. Now, he warns against making a defensive pact with a nation far to the south.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 18:1 *whirring wings*. May correspond to the boats mentioned in v 2, alluding to the sails or the oars of the messengers sent out from this far-flung land. Another interpretation is that this is actually against

the nation of Cush, and that Israel is to send messengers to them to give God's response. *rivers of Cush*. Canals and branches (19:6) that constitute the Nile. Cush was in the Upper Nile region, of which Ethiopia and Nubia were a part. See color map 3.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 18:2 *vessels of papyrus*. Light, fast boats made of papyrus reeds. *smooth*. Likely refers to their clean-shaven appearance. *near and far*. Widely known. *rivers divide*. Rivulets and channels of the Nile south of Egypt.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 18:3 *signal … trumpet*. The Lord's message to the world is plain to see. There is a visual element in the signal (cf 11:10) and an audible element in the trumpet (cf 27:13). The people are commanded to look and to hear, leaving them without excuse of ignorance. *mountains*. Heights in plain sight.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 18:4 *dwelling*. Heaven or the temple in Jerusalem. The gaze of the Lord is enough to make His presence felt. He waits for the right moment to act.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 18:5 *before the harvest*. Just when all seems to be going well for the nations, when all of the work is at the moment of paying off, the Lord enacts His own harvest—judgment (Rv 14:15). *He cuts off … clears away*. Pruning of power and authority. Pruning normally took place after the harvest. God's judgment comes at an unexpected time.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 18:6 *They*. The people. *birds … winter on them*. So devastating that animals will feed on the nation all seasons without ceasing (Ezk 39:17).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 18:7 *tribute*. The remnant of the once-great people mentioned in v 2 comes to the Lord to pay homage (cf 2:2–3; 11:9). The promise is for the Gentiles as well as the people of Israel (e.g., Ps 76:11–12). *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291. *smooth*. See note, v 2. *rivers divide*. See note, v 2.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 18** The Lord's plans are clearly signaled and sounded. All who dwell on earth should look and listen. The Lord makes known His message of salvation with unmistakable clarity—of Law and Gospel, of judgment and grace. Those who refuse to look and listen will be cut off from the Lord at an unexpected time. The Lord promises grace and every blessing to those who look to Him and hear His Word in faith. Through Jesus, we will be welcomed into the Lord's presence in the heavenly Mount Zion. • O Lord, give us ears to hear Your Word and to

believe it. And as we hear Your Word, bless us with faith, hope, and love. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 19:1 *oracle*. See p 1079. *riding on a swift cloud*. Expresses His power over nature as well as the Egyptian pantheon of gods (Ps 68:33). *idols of Egypt*. The possibility of another exodus that again judges the gods of Egypt causes the idols and their makers to tremble and melt.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 19:2 God works His judgment through civil war.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 19:3 *spirit*. Their will and self-esteem. *emptied out*. They have lost hope in their abilities. *counsel*. Advice of their sages (cf Ex 7:1–13). *inquire*. To seek guidance. *idols … sorcerers … mediums … necromancers*. Worthless idols, spirits, or the dead. God condemns all divination. See notes, Dt 18:9–12.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 19:4 *a hard master*. Too vague to pinpoint a particular ruler; could be Piankhi of Ethiopia (reigned 741–715 BC), Sargon II (cf 20:1), Sennacherib, or Esarhaddon (reigned 681–669 BC). Or it could have been fulfilled multiple times in various reigns. *Lord God of hosts*. See p 1291.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 19:5–7 The drought's thoroughness will dry up the river and seriously affect Egypt. The Nile River is Egypt's center of prosperity and vitality. See notes, Ex 1:22; 7:20.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 19:8 *spread nets on the water.* See note, Mt 13:47–48.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 19:9 *combed flax*. Woven into linen fabric, a key Egyptian industry.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 19:10 *pillars*. Egypt's rich and mighty will be affected, as will be the workers.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 19:11 *Zoan*. Northeastern Nile Delta. Would have been the first region encountered by any who traveled from Israel to Egypt. *wisest counselors*. The thorough breaking of Egypt continues in these verses with the loss of their wisdom, for which they had been known. See p 776. Isaiah stresses the total loss of direction and wise leadership by associating Pharaoh, the princes, the wisest counselors, and wise men with foolishness, stupid counsel, and delusion (v 12; cf 41:20; 44:25; 47:12–15; 1Co 1:20).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 19:13 *Memphis*. A former capital of Egypt. See color map 3. The image of the cornerstones of Egypt causing her to stagger

conveys Egypt's full lack of wisdom and strength.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 19:14 *spirit of confusion*. The result of the hand of the Lord against Egypt is that the once-proud nation is as a drunken man (cf 5:11, 22; 28:7–8), unable to support itself or know where to turn for support, and thus rendered impotent (Ezk 29:8–12; 2Th 2:11–12). See note, Is 51:17.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 19:15 *head or tail, palm branch or reed*. Neither the highest nor the lowest. All are powerless.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 19:1–15 As the Lord stirs up civil war in Egypt, the Egyptians will seek after wisdom, but will find only foolish counsel. The Lord forbids all forms of divination and satanic arts. We should instead call on the Lord's name in every time of trouble (Second Commandment). Although the river waters of Egypt dried up in judgment, we are cleansed with a river of blessing through faith in Jesus Christ. We have the wise counsel of His Word, which promises forgiveness and everlasting life. • We praise You, O God, for claiming us as Your own through Holy Baptism. By that washing, help us die to sin every day and live before You in righteousness and purity forever. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 19:16–17 The result of the ruinous actions of vv 1–15 is again exemplified. It is explicit that the Egyptians know the cause of their terror and problems—it is the Lord who sends Judah to confront them.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 19:16 *In that day*. See p 1079. *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 19:17 *the land of Judah*. The Lord's earthly base of operations, from which He brought terror to the Egyptians. *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 19:18–25 Egypt and Assyria convert.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 19:18 *In that day*. See p 1079. *five cities*. Not named. *language of Canaan*. Hbr language, used by Israel to worship the Lord. *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291. *City of Destruction*. Probably a reference to the city of On, a famous center of sun worship near Cairo, which the Greeks called Heliopolis. Hbr words for sun and destruction are almost identical. A wordplay may be intended, so when the citizens swore allegiance to the Creator of heaven and earth, veneration of the sun was abolished. For this reason, it received special mention.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 19:19 *In that day*. See p 1079. *altar to the Lord … pillar to the Lord*. Worship of the Lord spreads across the whole land, from

the midst to the border. Abraham and Jacob used the pillar and altar for worship. See note, Gn 28:18. Luth: "Before Christ no other place was to be established for the worship of God beside Jerusalem. Therefore the prophet is speaking of the time when the Gospel was spread" (AE 16:164).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 19:20 *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291. *savior*. Motif of the exodus is repeated here, but this time the Lord rescues the Egyptians. See pp 380–81. *deliver*. See p 842.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 19:21 *know the Lord*. The goal of all interaction with the Lord is being achieved—that God would make Himself known to the people and they would know and serve Him (43:10; Jer 9:23–24; Php 3:10). *vows*. They respond to God's deliverance by pledging themselves to Him. See p 7. Luth: "The vows of the Old Testament concerned themselves with external and temporal things, such as were in their power. The vows of the New Testament are to commit oneself to Christ, to worship Him by faith, praise, and confession and praise. For God is not worshiped except by faith. Thus the field is cultivated for the sake of the produce. The believers humble and condemn themselves, but they proclaim and glorify Christ and His works. These are the vows of the New Testament. Civil vows have the emperor and the laws in view. Vows made in impossible things are ungodly and devilish, as are those made even in possible things for the purpose of being made righteous by means of their performance" (AE 16:167).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 19:22 *striking and healing*. God disciplines Egypt that He may restore it. See note, Dt 32:39. *return*. See p 1080. *mercy*. See pp 842–43. *heal*. Restore them as He sees fit. Cf Ex 15:26.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 19:23 *In that day*. See p 1079. *highway*. Egypt and Assyria are connected to the Lord's people (cf 35:8; 62:10). *worship with the Assyrians*. Scope of the healing and restoration now extends from Egypt, across civilization, to the other major nation of the known lands. These enemies of Israel will begin to worship the Lord together.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 19:24–25 Incorporation of the nations is evident by the use of "My people" (cf 10:24; Ex 6:7; Hos 1:10) to describe Egypt and "the work of My hands" (cf Is 60:21; 64:8; Ps 138:8) to describe Assyria. Even long-standing foes will be welcomed (cf Mt 8:5; Lk 9:52).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 19:24 *In that day*. See p 1079. *blessing*. Those who have been blessed by God respond by being a blessing to others. See p 842.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 19:25 *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291. *My people … My hands … My inheritance*. All the nations belong to God, and people from

all nations will be part of His kingdom.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 19:16–25 The Lord destroys Egypt with a purpose: the Egyptians will come to know the Lord and worship Him alone. The Lord will accomplish Egypt's deliverance through both discipline and restoration. God carries out His saving work in the lives of people as He disciplines and heals them. Although no discipline is pleasant, we endure it as part of the Lord's loving design for our salvation (Heb 12:5–11). The same God who delivered Israel from Egypt now offers deliverance to Egypt —and all people on earth—through Jesus Christ, the Savior. • Merciful Lord, turn the hearts of those who do not know You, that they may rejoice in the Savior's deliverance and worship You forever. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 20:1 *year*. 711 BC. *commander*. Assyrian title. Not named. Referenced in an Assyrian inscription discovered at Ashdod. *Sargon*. Sargon II was one of the most powerful of the Assyrian kings (see note, 14:4). Mentioned only here in Scripture, his name vanished until archaeologists unearthed the ruins of the empire he helped build. His reign began shortly after Samaria, capital of the Northern Kingdom, became a victim of the Assyrian war machine. *Ashdod*.

C 20 mi NE of Gaza, near the Great Sea. See color map 1.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 20:2 *sackcloth*. Rough cloth worn by mourners and, at times, prophets (2Ki 1:8; cf Mt 3:4). *naked and barefoot*. Isaiah, who walks and talks with kings (Is 7; 36–39), is commanded to walk naked. He is not told to proclaim anything. Action, rather than words, provides the key element. See p 1220.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 20:3 *sign … portent*. Walking naked symbolizes the Egyptians, who will be defeated by Assyria and whose captives will walk naked into exile. Prisoners were stripped to humiliate them. See note, 2Sm 10:4.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 20:4 *lead away*. Fulfilled in 671 BC.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 20:5 *they*. Presumably political leaders in Judah, who might have hoped, according to vv 5–6, that Egypt would offer help to Judah in the face of pressure from the Neo-Assyrian Empire. In light of the impotence of Egypt in 19:1–15 and the sign of Isaiah here in ch 20, the Lord emphasizes that there is no hope in other nations. Rather, Judah is to look to Him.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 20:6 *inhabitants of this coastland*. Anyone (Jew or Gentile) in the region who thought an alliance with Egypt or Cush could

save them. Only God could.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 20** The Lord commands Isaiah to walk naked and barefoot for three years as a sign to Cush and Egypt of their impending Assyrian exile. Through this unusual act, Isaiah proclaims the futility of earthly alliances that oppose the Lord's will. Although we are not called to imitate Isaiah's unusual witness to the world, our actions and words should show that escape from God's wrath comes only through saving faith in Jesus. Christ clothes all who are ashamed and exposed because of sin. He covers our sin with His forgiveness. • Dearest Lord Jesus, grant that our words and actions confess that You alone are the way, the truth, and the life. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 21:1 *oracle*. See p 1079. *wilderness of the sea*. Location unclear; may be Babylon, the subject of v 9 (the Euphrates River traversing the flat plains of Babylon may be regarded as a sea). *Negeb*. Desert region south of Judah. See color map 2.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 21:2 *vision is told*. Revealed. *traitor … destroyer*. Babylon. The Lord is stirring up the nations against Babylon to act out His judgment. *Elam … Media*. Instrumental in the fall of Babylon in 539 BC. See map, p 609. *she*. Babylon.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 21:3 Vision of Babylon's downfall strikes Isaiah emotionally. The judgment of the Lord means the victory of the righteous, but the day of wrath is still terrible to behold (2Th 1:6–10).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 21:4 *twilight I longed for*. End of Babylon's domination.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 21:5 *They*. Babylonians. *oil the shield!* Ordinary maintenance. They are unaware of impending doom. The surprise nature of God's judgment is a repeated motif: Sodom and Gomorrah (Gn 19:14), Belshazzar (Dn 5), and earth's inhabitants on the Last Day (Mk 13:35–36).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 21:6–12 Ancient Israel had different types of watchmen: (1) those who were posted in the fields during harvesttime so that thieves would not steal the crops (5:2); (2) those who patrolled city streets (Sg 3:1–3); and (3) those who were positioned on the city walls, towers, and hills to detect troop movements by the enemy or to admit messengers. Ch 21 refers to this last type (cf Hab 2:1–4; Ezk 3:17; 33:2, 6–7).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 21:7 *riders*. Messengers bringing news from distant lands.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 21:8 *by day … stationed whole nights*. No ordinary watchman would take endless shifts. Isaiah is constantly watching for the fulfillment of the Lord's promises.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 21:9 *Fallen*. Particular instance of the city's demise is uncertain. It may be when Darius the Mede takes over the throne from Belshazzar in 539 BC (Dn 5). *Babylon*. Repeated attempts to gain independence from Assyrian domination failed. In 689 BC, Sennacherib captured and sacked the rebel city. However, it later became the center of the empire that was to swallow up Judah. In the NT, Babylon is symbolic of hostility to God. *carved images*. Her idols were destroyed.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 21:10 *threshed and winnowed*. See p 422. God has disciplined His people, removing the chaff so they will be the people He desires.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 21:11 *oracle*. See p 1079. *Dumah*. Named after a son of Ishmael; mentioned as a city that was to go to Judah. *Seir*. Suggests that this oracle is toward a region of Edom (Gn 32:3). See map, p 60. *Watchman*. The questioner wants to know the time, and a watchman should know the exact answer.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 21:12 The watchman's vague answer shows that the coming judgment will be unexpected.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 21:13 *oracle*. See p 1079. *Arabia*. The next oracle concerns the nomadic peoples whose main base of operations was the Arabian Peninsula along the Red Sea (13:20; Jer 3:2). *thickets*. Instead of the clear, open trade routes they normally traveled, they will seek to hide in any cover. *Dedanites*. Tribe known for their trading caravans, based c 200 mi E of the Red Sea.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 21:14 *fugitive*. Presumably refugees from the conflict of Assyria and Babylon, which was eventually quelled, first by Sargon II and later by Sennacherib. Bern: "I welcome the fellow-citizens of the saints and servants of God. How gladly, according to the prophet's command, do I assist with my bread those that flee" (*SLSB*, p 167). *Tema*. Important caravan center; an oasis c 200 mi E of the Red Sea. See map, p 717.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 21:16 *Within a year*. The Lord will make short work of Kedar. *years of a hired worker*. May refer to mercenary service. *glory of Kedar*. Tribe living in Arabia (perhaps standing for all the tribes of Arabia). They were paying tribute to Assyria at least in 738 BC. The forces of Kedar

amounted to nothing. All of this is sure because the Lord has spoken (40:8; 55:10–11).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 21** The Lord appoints Isaiah to serve as a watchman and announce God's mighty acts, in particular the fall of Babylon. Although every Christian serves as a watchman, God specially calls pastors to serve publicly as His watchmen, proclaiming both God's threats and promises. In every matter to which the Lord has spoken, the outcome is certain because the results are His doing. For this reason, we can confidently rejoice in the salvation Jesus has won for us and in the promises of forgiveness and everlasting life announced by His watchmen. • Dear Lord, as You appointed Isaiah to serve as a watchman, be with our pastor(s). Grant them eloquence and strength to speak Your truth, even in times of anguish. In Jesus' name. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 22:1 *oracle*. See p 1079. *valley of vision*. Intent unclear. A prophecy about Jerusalem (vv 8–10). By including Jerusalem in the oracles about the nations (chs 13–23), Isaiah indicates that the city of David has acted no differently than the nations. *you*. Jerusalem's residents. *housetops*. From which they could look out and see the army coming. They were falsely confident of their success. See note, Jsh 2:6.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 22:2–3 The people celebrate now, but their future is one of humiliating death and capture, in which the army does not fight and the leaders flee (cf 2Ki 25:4).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 22:3 *captured*. The enemy will catch them in retreat.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 22:4 *destruction of the daughter*. Jerusalem (Ps 48:11; Jer 8:19). Used only here in Is.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 22:5 *Lord* GOD *of hosts*. See p 1291. *valley of vision*. See note, v 1.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 22:6 *Elam*. See note, 11:11. *Kir*. Region of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. Not the Kir of Moab in 15:1.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 22:7 *stand at the gates*. As a line of last defense for the city.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 22:8 *covering of Judah*. During the exodus, God supplied Israel with a cloud covering for its protection. *In that day you looked*. So certain is the prophecy that Isaiah puts it in the past tense. *weapons of the House of the Forest*. Built from cedars of Lebanon by Solomon to store weapons and wealth (1Ki 7:2–12).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 22:9 *lower pool*. New system of supplying the city with water for the siege. See note, 2Ki 20:20.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 22:10 *broke down the houses to fortify*. They used reclaimed building materials to repair Jerusalem's walls. See note, Jsh 2:15. Evidence of such activity was found in Jerusalem fortifications, likely representing Hezekiah's preparations to oppose Sennacherib.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 22:11 *reservoir*. To store enough water to endure a siege. *old pool*. Jerusalem's older but still useful source of water. *did not look*. They did not turn to God for help, though He supplied the water.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 22:12 *Lord* GOD *of hosts*. See p 1291. *called … sackcloth*. Marks of repentance. See note, Jb 16:15.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 22:13 *Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die*. Exactly the opposite of what God expects. They celebrate instead of repent.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 22:14 *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291. *atoned … you die*. Unrepentant people will suffer the wrath of the Lord. The use of "Surely" is the language of an oath (cf 14:24; Dt 1:34; Jer 22:5). Jerusalem will not receive the gift of atonement; Isaiah did (Is 6:7). God established the Day of Atonement (Lv 16) so all of Israel could be forgiven.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 22:15 *Lord* GOD *of hosts*. See p 1291. *Shebna*. This steward, a high official responsible directly to the king, was a glaring example of the self-seeking pride of which Isaiah accused the people in vv 1–14.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 22:16 *tomb for yourself*. Shebna carved a tomb for himself that he might be remembered; example of man's narcissism (cf 14:13–14; Gn 11:4). Fine architectural tombs were found in Siloam, near Jerusalem. See p 1651.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 22:17 *hurl you away*. His plans will come to nothing because the Lord will send him into exile.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 22:18 *your glorious chariots*. Shebna also loses the trappings of his ostentatious lifestyle. His property will be given to one more worthy. *master's house*. Judah's monarchy.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 22:19 *office … station*. See note, v 15.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 22:20–21 Transfer of the implements of authority clearly shows the change of authority figures (cf 1Sm 18:1–4). Authority was to serve the people.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 22:21 *robe … sash … authority*. Signs of the office of steward. *a father*. He would use his position to care for the people, not to

serve himself.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 22:22 *on his shoulder*. Burden of responsibility was on him. *key of the house of David … shall open*. Power to use the assets and resources of the kingdom on behalf of the king and people. This terminology is also used of Christ and is reminiscent of the power Christ gives to His Church (Mt 16:19). See note, Sg 5:4.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 22:23 *like a peg*. Used to secure tents; a theme of trust and responsibility that surrounds the leadership of Eliakim. *throne of honor*. His position will bring honor and respect to his family.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 22:24 *honor … offspring and issue*. His children will also be honored by his position.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 22:25 *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291. *give way … cut down*. Eliakim seems the ideal leader, but he is only a man. Collapse will come both from within the man and from the Lord without. Apart from the Lord, no one is sufficient. The result of trusting in a man, even one as capable as Eliakim, is deadly (cf 40:7–8).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 22** Just as the Lord has spoken concerning the destruction of the nations, He speaks here of the destruction of Jerusalem. God's own people would experience His wrath, for they had lived in ways indistinguishable from the nations. When we do not live lives of repentance, we are also indistinguishable from unbelievers. As baptized children of God, we are called to drown our old Adam by daily contrition and repentance. The living Christ, who descended from the house of David, holds the key to heaven, which He graciously opens for all who believe. • Lord Jesus Christ, lead us each day in the glad confidence that You have atoned for our iniquity and opened the kingdom of heaven for us. Amen.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON **23:1, 4** Isaiah uses personification to dramatize the suffering of the people in these regions.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 23:1 *oracle*. See p 1079. *Tyre*. See note, 1Ki 5:1. *Tarshish*. Tarsus in Cilicia, c 5 mi from the coast, on the river Cadnos, a river that was navigable in antiquity. Tarsus played a strategic role, as its control assured the control of the Cilician ports. It lies at the opening of the passage from the central mountains, known for their mineral content. *Cyprus*. Designates either the island of Cyprus or the city of Kition (Roman Citium) on the southeast coast of the island. See map, p 609. *it*. The oracle.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 23:2 *Sidon*. C 23 mi N of Tyre on the coast of the Great Sea. According to Gn 10:15, considered the firstborn of Canaan. By

the ninth century BC, due to increased Assyrian power, Sidon began to lose much of her power and prestige. By the eighth century BC, the city was clearly under the rule of the king of Tyre. This relationship continued up to Sennacherib's campaign in 701 BC. *filled you*. Coastal cities have, in effect, been taken over by merchants from Sidon.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 23:3 *Shihor*. River or body of water in the northeast Nile Delta region; precise identification is uncertain. *merchant of the nations*. Wealthy through international commerce.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 23:4 The sea, personified mother of Sidon, laments the disappearance of ships as though she had never given birth to them.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 23:5 *anguish*. Relationship between Egypt and Tyre goes back at least to 1600 BC. Their close relationship was shown during the reign of Ethbaal (c 940–908 BC), when the artificial southern port was built and named the Egyptian Port.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 23:6 Summary statement of vv 1–5. The focus shifts to traveling west and north for security. The verse is addressed to the inhabitants of Tyre. The annals of Sennacherib refer to the flight of King Luli from Sidon to Cyprus (701 BC).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 23:7 *feet carried her*. Commerce once allowed Tyre to have a strong international influence.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 23:8 *bestower of crowns*. Tyre's economic power gave her tremendous political influence in other nations.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 23:9 *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291. *all … all*. Tyre is an example of the Lord's worldwide plan to debase all human pride. *dishonor all the honored*. The Lord will disgrace those whose honor is only from worldly things (Lk 1:52).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 23:10 Destruction of Tyre and Sidon set their colonies free. Tarshish, bound to being one of Tyre's trade partners, will soon be free to roam like the Nile.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 23:11 *stretched out His hand*. See note, 5:25. *Canaan*. Stands for Phoenicia, the region of Tyre and Sidon.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 23:12 *cross over*. When the Assyrians attacked Tyre, her king fled to Cyprus.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 23:13 *Chaldeans!* The Babylonian ruling class, which brought on the destruction of their capital as the result of rebellion against Assyrian domination. The same kind of disaster awaits Tyre. *people that was not*. Their future disappeared when the Assyrians conquered them.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 23:15 *In that day*. See p 1079. *seventy years*. Sometimes a round figure for a lifetime (Ps 90:10). Refers to the years following Phoenicia's surrender to Sennacherib (second half of the seventh century BC). *song of the prostitute*. Tyre is compared to a prostitute who sings alluring songs to attract attention to herself. On behavior, cf Pr 7:11–13.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 23:16 *forgotten prostitute!* Other nations had forgotten about Tyre. Now she seeks their business.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 23:17 Tyre's commerce is compared to prostitution. She sells for pleasure with no regard to the consequences.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 23:18 *her wages will be holy*. God's people will receive and use the profits of her trade. *those who dwell before the LORD*. Israel.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 23** The Lord will lay waste Tyre and Sidon because of their pride. Lively commerce and fair trade are blessings from the Lord. But the wealth and prosperity they generate must never be treated as a source of security. With repentant faith in Jesus, who for our salvation became poor (2Co 8:9), our trade and commerce can be carried out fairly and with honor. Our heavenly Father will deal generously with us by His surpassing grace. • Lord God, grant that the wealth and prosperity You have given us might never separate us from Your love. May it be a source of blessing for all the inhabitants of the earth. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Chs 24–27** A unit in the larger structure of Is. The Lord now addresses the whole earth instead of individual nations. See outline, p 1086.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 24:1 *Behold*. Always introduces new or important material (e.g., 7:14; 25:9; 26:21). *empty the earth*. Continues the language from the beginning of the previous section (13:9). *scatter its inhabitants*. As at the tower of Babel (Gn 11:9). Once more, the Lord will scatter the peoples of the earth in judgment.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 24:2–3 Judgment will spare no one and will be without partiality or favoritism (Rm 2:11).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 24:4 *earth*. Personified here with descriptions of mourning and languishing. Paul echoes this idea in Rm 8:21–22.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 24:5 *earth lies defiled*. Sin affects all creation. Gn 3:17 explains that one of the results of the fall is a cursing of the earth. *laws*

… *statutes*. See p 971. *everlasting covenant*. Made with Noah and, by extension, with everyone and everything (Gn 9:9–17). See p 127.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 24:6 *curse*. A devouring and scorching fire burning through a field, an image seen throughout Is (e.g., 5:24; 10:16–17; 29:6). See p 6; cf Lv 26:14–39; Dt 28:15–68.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 24:9 *strong drink*. Beer or other fermented beverages, main ingredients for festivals and joyous times. Because of the Lord's judgment, all merrymaking ceases.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 24:10–12 *city*. Though any city may be meant because these effects are global, Isaiah likely refers to Babylon. See note, 25:2.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 24:10 *wasted*. See note, Gn 1:2, "without form and void." Isaiah uses the word first here and then frequently throughout the rest of Is (40:17; 41:29; 45:18) to describe the Lord's reversal of creation.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 24:12 *Desolation*. Reminiscent of exile, echoing 5:9.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 24:13 *olive tree … grape harvest*. Repeats 17:5–6. There, the idea was that a remnant would be left among the people of Israel. Here, it refers to a remnant of the nations. *gleaning*. The very last fruit is sought out in these desperate conditions. See note, Ru 2:16; see also "remnant," p 1080.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 24:14–16 *lift up their voices*. The remnant, left over after the gleaning of the previous verse. These people rejoice in song that they have been spared the judgment. *the west … ends of the earth*. People from everywhere join in this song (cf Rv 7:9).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 24:16 *Righteous One*. God, who has been faithful and gracious. See p 842. *I … Woe is me!* Isaiah himself has a very different reaction to being spared. His response to this destruction is similar to his response in 22:4. He can only mourn at the sight, crying out the same words as at his commissioning in 6:5. *For the traitors … betrayed*. None is without guilt.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 24:18 *He who flees … in the snare*. The reason for Isaiah's reaction to the destruction is now understood. No one will escape! Whether one falls into a pit or is caught in a snare, everyone will be captured (cf Am 9:1–4). *windows of heaven*. Allusion to the destruction by the great flood.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 24:19–20 Earthquakes are frequently associated with the presence of the Lord (e.g., Jgs 5:4; 2Sm 22:8–16; Jer 10:10; Jl 2:10). In

the NT, earthquakes may be a sign of salvation (e.g., Mt 27:51–52; Ac 16:26).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 24:21 *On that day*. See p 1079. *host of heaven*. Fallen angels will be judged along with humans on Judgment Day.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 24:22 *prisoners in a pit*. This prison finds its way into the NT by means of 1Pt 3:19–20; 2Pt 2:4; Jude 6; Rv 9:1–3, 11; 20:1–3. Prison bars are the background to the words of Jesus in Mt 16:18: "The gates of hell shall not prevail against [the Church]."

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 24:23 *Then the moon … ashamed*. Jerusalem will no longer need the sun or moon for light; instead, the Lord Himself will be its light. This promise is fulfilled in the new Jerusalem (cf Rv 21:23). *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291. *Mount Zion*. See p 844; cf Is 8:18. *before His elders*. God will be revealed to His people (cf Ex 24:9–10). See p 228.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 24** No one, and not even the earth itself, is spared the coming devastation. Along with all of earth's other inhabitants, we stand before God as poor, miserable sinners. In thought, word, and deed, we have transgressed, violated, and broken His covenant. Although we deserve to suffer for our guilt, we can sing for joy that the Righteous One, Jesus Christ, has suffered in our place. "He was wounded for our transgressions; He was crushed for our iniquities" (53:5). • Gracious Lord, we praise and glorify You for the salvation You have accomplished for us through Your dear Son, Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 25:1 Now that the kings of heaven and earth have been dethroned and the Lord has been exalted as King, Isaiah takes up the song he heard in 24:14. At that time, he could not yet sing because of all the destruction, but now that the Lord has been enthroned, Isaiah can celebrate. *plans*. God planned and controlled all of these things. He will accomplish His will.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 25:2 *the city*. Same city as in 24:10. In light of 21:9 and Rv 17–18, the city is Babylon, the ancient and perennial enemy of God's people.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 25:3 *strong peoples*. Those who have been humbled (cf chs 13–24).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 25:4 *stronghold*. God Himself, not human resources, gave refuge to the poor and needy. *storm against a wall*. Threats of the strong nations cause no harm to the people God protected.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 25:5 *noise of the foreigners*. God silences the enemy's victory song (cf Ps 8:2).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 25:6 *mountain*. Zion. See p 844. *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291. *a feast*. At Sinai, a similar feast was held, at which God's people ate and drank with Him (Ex 24:9–11). Jesus speaks on several occasions about God's feast for His people (e.g., Mt 8:11; 22:1–14; 25:10). See p 1689. *rich food*. Delicacies. *well-aged wine*. Left on its fermented sediment to improve strength and flavor. *full of marrow*. Healthy and desirable. Descriptive terms refer to the absolute best that money could buy. This will be a feast like no other. See note, Ps 63:5.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 25:7 Now, death "swallows" life. On that day, death itself will die (see note, v 8). *the veil*. Symbol of death and mourning (cf 2Sm 15:30; Jer 14:3; 2Co 3:12–18).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 25:8 In Canaanite mythology, the gods destroyed death, but the enemy returned with the changing of the seasons. Here, the Lord demonstrates His kingly authority by swallowing up death forever. See note, Jb 18:13. John quotes this verse in describing "the marriage supper of the Lamb," which will take place after "the former things have passed away" (Rv 19:9; 21:1–4). *all faces*. The redeemed among all nations. *reproach*. The accusation and the penalty for sin is destroyed. Luth: "Christ destroys death. As a plague consumes the body little by little, so Christ is the pestilence of our death and of our old Adam" (AE 16:197).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 25:9 Trusting God's promises in life, His people now see them powerfully fulfilled. *save … salvation*. See p 843.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 25:10 *hand … will rest*. God will act for His people and against His enemies. See "hand," p 842. *Moab*. Contrast here between two mountains, the mountain of Zion and the mountain of Moab. Mount Zion will continue to stand tall as the dwelling place of the Lord (cf Heb 12:22–24; Rv 14:1), while Moab, representing those opposed to God, will fall (cf Is 34:5; 63:1). *dunghill*. It will be cast away as worthless.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 25:11 *spread out his hands*. Deepest humiliation, swimming in dung. Despite Moab's attempts to "keep its head above water," the Lord will take it down. *skill of his hands*. Human efforts fail; God succeeds.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 25:12 *high fortifications*. Walls and towers. *lay low*. God will destroy their defenses.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 25** On Mount Zion, the Lord of hosts will prepare a feast and will swallow up death forever. Death is what we deserve as the just penalty for our sin. No human efforts or resources can shelter us from this reproach. By Jesus' resurrection, death has been swallowed up in victory (1Co 15:54). As we await the day of our own bodily resurrection, we are invited to eat and drink with the Lord in His Holy Supper, a foretaste of the feast to come. • Lord of Life, teach us to live each day in the joy and gladness of knowing that because Jesus lives, we shall live also. Amen.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 26:1 *In that day*. The day of the Lord's return, celebrated in ch 25. See p 1079. *He*. The Lord. *walls and bulwarks*. Likely refers to the double wall on the east side of Jerusalem. The salvation of God will protect His people as walls protected ancient cities.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 26:2 *righteous nation*. Being righteous enough to merit God's salvation is not possible (57:12; 64:6). Rather, righteousness is a gift that is accounted to God's people because of the suffering of the Lord's Righteous One, the Suffering Servant (53:11). See "righteous," p 843. *keeps faith*. God declares us righteous through faith. See notes, 1Ch 2:7; Rm 3:22.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 26:3 *perfect peace*. Lit, "peace, peace," which comes only from the Lord (cf 2:4), the Prince of Peace (9:6; cf Jn 14:27; Php 4:7). *trusts*. Knowing God's perfect care gives true peace. Luth: "This is the origin of peace, namely, hope and faith, as Paul says in Rom. 5:1: 'Since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God,' that is, we shall be

harmonious, of one mind. That which you perform does not happen to those who seek peace in various things. What we have, namely, Christ and His grace, is not an ordinary good. No one has more than the other, and therefore there cannot be discord, but peace, because in the Lord we are all equal in the likeness of hope and confidence, but not of customs, as some have thought" (AE 16:200–201).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 26:4 *Trust*. Cf v 13; see "steadfast love and faithfulness," p 843. *rock*. See p 843.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 26:5 *inhabitants of the height*. One reason that God's people can trust in Him; He has laid waste the enemy's stronghold, Babylon (cf 21:9; Rv 17–18).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 26:7 *righteous*. See p 843. *level*. Walking on roads that went up and down was grueling. It was comforting to hear that the path was level (cf 40:3–4).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 26:8 *In the path of Your judgments*. According to God's will. *Your name … our soul*. God's people long for Him above all others.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 26:9 *inhabitants*. "Wicked" of v 10.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 26:10 God allows humanity to face sin's consequences, in part, to teach us. If He rewarded sin, we would not learn to shun it. Bern: "The vengeance, most severe and most secret, of God the Judge, just and terrible in his dealings with the children of men, watches ceaselessly over his creatures, gifted with reason but doomed on account of sin. The awe-stricken beholder, I repeat, here regards God, who by a just and secret judgment neither washes away the evil actions of those who are reprobate nor accepts their good actions" (*WDC*, p 168). *righteousness*. See p 843. *majesty of the* LORD. God is glorified in the truth that His grace is undeserved. This shows His character. Luth: "The ungodly are in the land and on the way of uprightness, where uprightness, sincerity, and good behavior are learned through the Word, and yet they have no taste for it. The church is the land of uprightness, of good and true behavior, the daughter of the true Word. In this church there are also many ungodly people. It is not surprising if the church in our time has many ungodly people. For the church must needs be attacked from without by tyrants and from within by false brethren, sects, heresies, and schisms. Let no one hope for a church that is without ungodly people, openly or under cover. Therefore the body of the church and the Word are unfairly accused of

harboring ungodly people. By no means. For the human body is not blamed if it defecates, spits, and vomits, since these are its acts of purification. The body is not therefore unsound though it has festering eyes and a scabby skin, because these are purged out with the excrement. Even so the ungodly heretics are not members of the church, but refuse" (AE 16:204–5).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 26:11 *hand is lifted up*. See note, 5:25. *Let the fire … consume*. Those who reject God ultimately experience judgment.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 26:12 Human works are nothing. Even the works that Christians do come from God working through us. See note, Eph 2:10.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 26:13 *other lords*. Foreign rulers whom they were forced to serve.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 26:14 *shades … will not arise*. Dead and gone, they will not live on earth again to enslave its inhabitants.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 26:15 In fulfilling prophecy, God blessed and by grace increased Israel by incorporating Gentiles into His people.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 26:16 *sought*. They turned to God, not to themselves, for help. *whispered prayer*. Humble requests. *discipline*. God had them endure these things in order to form them, as a father disciplines the children he loves (Heb 12:5–11). "Afflictions are a discipline by which God exercises the saints. Likewise, afflictions are inflicted because of present sin, since in the saints they put to death and extinguish lustful desires, so that they may be renewed by the Spirit" (Ap XIIB 54–55).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 26:17 Their afflictions were like birth pangs; they feel great pain and distress.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 26:18 *birth to wind*. A woman in the pangs of childbirth is rewarded by the emergence of new life. The chastening the Judeans suffered was as painful but seemed unproductive of anything desirable. *no deliverance*. Their "labor" produced nothing good.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 26:19 *Your dead shall live*. God's power does not stop at the grave. At His command, corpses of individuals come to life. Therefore, He can order also the resurrection of a whole nation, seemingly entombed forever in exile. *dew of light*. As rain or dew gives life to dry dust, so God's light gives life and resurrection to the dead. *birth to the dead*. Resurrection from the dead is not a foreign concept in the OT. This verse, along with 25:8, demonstrates that Isaiah foresaw the coming resurrection of all who believe in Christ (cf Ezk 37:1–14; Hos 6:2; 1Co 15). See notes, Jb 19:25–27.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 26:20–21 The Lord told Noah about a similar judgment in Gn 6:13–18 and also Lot in Gn 19:12–13. His wrath lasts but for a little while; His favor lasts a lifetime (Ps 30:5).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 26:20 *chambers … hide yourselves*. God's people are hidden from His wrath when they are in His protection. We hide in Him (vv 1, 4; see "rock," p 843).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 26:21 *His place*. Heaven. *the earth … its slain*. The dead will be raised at Christ's return.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 26** The Lord will keep in perfect peace those who trust in Him. Those made righteous through faith will experience the resurrection of their bodies and life everlasting. Although we are blessed to live and work under the leadership of many rulers and lords, only the Lord is deserving of our faith and remembrance. We should always recognize that earthly authorities are only mortals through whom the Lord works on behalf of His people. Through His death and resurrection, Jesus has accomplished the salvation of sinners. His work guarantees that our bodies will also rise. • Lord Jesus, grant to us the perfect peace that is found only through faith in You. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 27:1 *In that day*. See p 1079. *sword*. God's power. Scripture also calls God's Word a sword (Eph 6:17). *Leviathan … dragon that is in the sea*. Several ancient Near Eastern mythologies contain a story about a god killing a dragon from the sea, which represented chaos and disorder. The OT sometimes picks up this imagery to describe the Lord's might (cf Ps 104:26). See notes, Jb 38:8; 41:1. This imagery may describe Satan, the prince of the demons. See notes, Rv 13:1–18; 15:2–3; 20:10. Everything will be made subject to Christ and then, in turn, to God the Father (1Co 15:24–28). The Lord controls, restrains, and ultimately defeats evil (1Jn 3:8). Luth: "It seems to me the prophet is speaking about the kings of Syria, of the Egyptians and others, and about the kings and princes of the Jews at the time of Christ, all of whose kingdoms were to be made subject to the Roman rule. When Christ's kingdom and the Gospel were already imminent, the Roman rule came first and established peace throughout the world, so that the Gospel could be preached by the apostles everywhere on safe roads. . . . For the Roman rule was harsh and was quick to use the sword" (AE 16:211).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 27:2–3 Israel is the vineyard, and the Lord is the vine dresser (cf Jn 15:1–8). In ch 5, however, the Lord is intent on destroying

His vineyard because it had failed to produce good fruit.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 27:4 *no wrath*. Peace follows His judgment of Israel (ch 26). The wicked may escape the fires of divine wrath if they "make peace with" God (v 5).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 27:5 Without God's grace and protection, we are not a pleasant vineyard but are thorns and briers to be destroyed. In Him, we are grafted to Jesus, the true vine (Jn 15:1–6).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 27:6 Israel will once more be the people God desires, filling the whole world as Jews and Gentiles together in God's vineyard.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 27:7 *He*. The Lord. *who struck them?* The nations God used as a chastening rod against Israel were punished as well, to a greater degree than Israel was.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 27:8 *Measure by measure*. See ESV note. Hbr may also be rendered "by a frightening sound," the kind that flushes animals from their hiding place. *fierce breath*. God's breath once gave life (Gn 2:7). Now, His powerful breath defeats His enemies. See notes, Is 11:4; Rv 1:16.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 27:9 *atoned*. The Lord did not deal with His people as they deserved, but in mercy (Rm 5:20). See p 5. *fruit*. The people will want no other gods and so will destroy all items related to foreign gods. *altars*. To other gods. *chalkstones*. Broken into powder like chalk. *Asherim*. See note, Ex 34:13. *incense altars*. Used to worship Baal. See note, Nu 25:3.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 27:10 *fortified city*. The once-great Babylon, now conquered. *calf grazes*. Only animals inhabit the ruined city.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 27:11 Those who reject God and His grace face the consequences they deserve. They will not be spared like those who trust Him.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 27:12 *river Euphrates*. In Babylon. *Brook of Egypt*. The Nile. *thresh*. Metaphor of harvesting and bringing the good grain into the barn describes how the Lord will gather His people to Himself on the Last Day. Cf Mt 13:24–30; Rv 14:15–16. *gleaned*. See note, Ru 2:15.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 27:13 *in that day*. See p 1079. *great trumpet*. The sound that accompanies the Lord's return (Zec 9:14; 1Co 15:52; 1Th 4:16). *holy mountain*. The Lord dwells on Zion in Jerusalem (Is 2:1–5; 8:18; 11:9).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 27** Following judgment, the Lord will keep and protect His people as a pleasant vineyard. Though the Lord delights to produce the fruit of good works in His people, our sinful nature continually

aims to hinder the harvest of this fruit. Jesus, the true vine, has made us His living branches (Jn 15:5). Through faith in Him, our guilt has been atoned for, and our sin has been removed. • Lord Jesus, we receive from You life and strength. Grant that the fruit of good works that You produce in our lives might bless the whole world. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 28:1 *proud crown*. Samaria, which sat on the top of a hill like a crown sits on a head. *Ephraim*. The Northern Kingdom, Israel. *rich valley*. The land surrounding Samaria. Modern archaeological work confirms that Samaria was a place of luxury (cf Am 4:1; 6:1–6).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 28:2 *one*. Assyria. *mighty and strong*. A fearsome enemy. See map, p 609. *casts down*. God uses the Assyrians to bring His judgment.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 28:3 *proud crown*. See note, v 1.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 28:4 *rich valley*. See note, v 1. *first-ripe fig*. As one who finds the first fruit of the season eats it with gusto, so the conqueror will satisfy his appetite for conquest without delay. See note, Mk 11:13.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 28:5–6 A flash of light penetrates the impending gloom, giving Isaiah a view of a bright scene that was to emerge from the threatened destruction. God's judgment is designed to preserve a "remnant of His people" who will not be drunk with self-trust but to whom "the LORD of hosts will be a crown of glory."

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 28:5 *In that day*. See p 1079. *LORD of hosts*. See p 1291. *crown … diadem*. In contrast to the people who thought their city was glorious and beautiful, their true glory and beauty will be the Lord. The widespread use of the crown in the NT (e.g., Jas 1:12; 1Pt 5:4; Rv 2:10) signifies for the baptized the crown of victory. *remnant*. See p 1080.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 28:6 *justice*. See p 842. *turn back the battle*. Defend the city.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 28:7 *These also*. Even the remnant (Southern Kingdom of Judah in Jerusalem) who survive the Assyrian attack are not without fault. *strong drink*. See note, 24:9. *priest and the prophet*. Leaders, who should set an example, are here condemned for their own sin. See p 228. *reel in vision*. Intoxication, not God's Word, shapes their explanation of events. *stumble in giving judgment*. They give faulty counsel, a symptom of faithlessness.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 28:9 *He*. God. *Those who are … from the breast?* Since the remnant of Israel is not even worthy to be taught anymore, little

babies are the only ones fit to be instructed by the Lord (cf Ps 8:2; Mt 11:25; 21:16; 1Co 3:1–2; Heb 5:12–14). This is meant to humble Isaiah's listeners.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 28:10 Repetition used in vv 10, 13 with a play on sounds. While one may hear individual sounds and thus teachings, the hearer cannot make sense of the whole. Like the babble of a child, God's teaching seems only to be chopped-up phrases with no coherency. They do not get the big picture.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 28:11 *people*. Assyrians. *strange lips … foreign tongue*. Because the Israelites rejected words of warning, spoken plainly in their own tongue, the Lord will speak judgment through the language of the foreign conqueror. See note, 1Co 14:21–22; see also p 1969. Luth: "Summary: I will teach you My Gospel through My apostles; and when this is ridiculed, I will speak to you in another tongue and will deride you, reject your whole righteousness, reject you, and in your place I will receive the foolish Gentiles" (AE 16:225).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 28:12 Had they heeded God's proposal to give them repose and safety, they could have avoided catastrophe.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 28:13 See note, v 10.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 28:1–13 A remnant—those who trust in the Lord—will find rest and repose in Him. When Ephraim stumbled in its own glory, it ignored the knowledge of the Lord and the beauty of His precepts. We, too, must be careful not to become drunk with love of self, but always to seek the Lord in the beauty of His Word. By Jesus' sacrificial death and glorious resurrection, He offers rest for every weary soul. All who believe will receive His unfading crown of glory. • "Crown Him the Lord of life, Who triumphed o'er the grave And rose victorious in the strife For those He came to save. His glories now we sing, Who died and rose on high, Who died eternal life to bring And lives that death may die." Amen. (*LSB* 525:4)

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 28:14 *scoffers*. People who despise God and His Word (cf Ps 1:1; Pr 21:24). Referring to the people of Judah as "this people" signals that they are no longer the Lord's covenant people, to whom He always refers as "My people" (e.g., Is 40:1).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 28:15 *covenant with death*. Isaiah is not quoting the people; he is mocking their covenant with Egypt (30:1–7) and their proclamation of peace (cf 48:22). In the face of imminent danger, these people believe that they are potentially immortal; in reality, they have made

a covenant with death. *Sheol*. See p 792. *overwhelming whip*. The coming Assyrian attack. *lies our refuge*. Isaiah mocks their plans and shows their foolishness.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 28:16 *foundation*. Faith in God, not in human resources, provides the only solid basis for hope. He will carry out His threat to destroy Jerusalem. But He will not give up His plan to build an indestructible Zion, made up of living stones and founded on a precious cornerstone. The NT proclaims the fulfillment in Jesus Christ and His Church (Eph 2:20). Hus: "Behold how these two Roman apostles and bishops, Peter and Paul, prove from Scripture that the Lord Jesus Christ is himself the stone and the Rock of foundation" (*The Church*, pp 76–77). *a precious cornerstone*. Not necessarily a stone laid on or below ground, but a stone chosen to strengthen a corner and keep the wall in alignment. Luth: "Christ is a tested stone, that is, distressed and afflicted, or He is a testing stone, that is, a stone by whose shape all other stones are tested, so that we may be conformed to the image of the Son of God (Rom. 8:29). As Christ was polished, hewn, and squared by the promise, by death and the cross, so we, in His image, should become well polished by such suffering and such a cross. Therefore it behooves all the godly to be thoroughly tested by cross and persecution. For this reason the flesh which shrinks from the cross remains unpolished in its desires and unsuited to this stone" (AE 16:229–30). "Confidence is to be placed in Christ's intercession, because this alone has God's promise. We know that Christ's merits alone atone for us. Because of His merits we are regarded righteous when we believe in Him" (Ap XXI 31). *not be in haste*. Those who have faith will not flee in terror because they know they are safe with God.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 28:17 *justice … righteousness*. See p 843. *line … plumb*. A line helps level the top of a wall. A long string with a weight at its end (plumb line) was hung from the top of a corner of a building to determine whether the walls were straight. The tools guide construction of a new building (Ezk 47:3), but also judge whether an old building is fit for demolition (cf Is 34:11; Am 7:7–9). *refuge of lies*. Cf v 15.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 28:18 *covenant with death*. See note, v 15. *Sheol*. See p 792. *overwhelming scourge*. Assyria (cf vv 2–4). *it*. Scourge of Assyria.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 28:19–20 Alludes to the angel of death from the plagues (Ex 12:1–30) by using the language of death ("passes through") and bed/covering (the angel of death came at night, while all were sleeping).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 28:19 *the message*. God is giving a powerful message through the Assyrian army.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 28:20 *too short … too narrow*. May be a proverbial saying that Isaiah quotes to illustrate his point: all human efforts to defy God will prove ineffective.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 28:21 *rise up*. God is moving to act. *Mount Perazim … Valley of Gibeon*. At these places, God once intervened to give Israel victory over foes. *strange … alien is His work!* Now He will be on the side of the enemy and thus inflict punishment for the breaking of His Law, no matter how strange it may appear in light of His original gracious intentions. "He calls it the 'strange' work of the Lord when He terrifies, because to make alive and comfort is God's own proper work. But He terrifies, Isaiah says, for this reason—that there may be a place for comfort and making alive. For hearts that are secure and do not feel God's wrath hate consolation. In this manner Scripture is accustomed to join these two, the terrors and the consolation. . . . Into these two works all Scripture has been distributed. The one part is the *Law*, which shows, reproves, and condemns sins. The other part is the *Gospel*, that is, the promise of grace bestowed in Christ" (Ap XIIA 52–53).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 28:22 *bonds be made strong*. If they don't listen to God, their punishment will increase. *decree of destruction*. God is causing their defeat through the Assyrians. *Lord* GOD *of hosts*. See p 1291. *whole land*. Entire nation would be affected.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 28:24–25, 27–28 Isaiah's message for the remnant is a farming parable. Though the farmer must "plow for sowing," this destructive work will eventually come to an end. Further, though the farmer must beat the dill out with a stick and cumin with a rod and drive his cart and horses over the grain, the end product will be that the farmer saves the dill, cumin, and grain for bread. In other words, though there is much wrath to be endured, in the end, the remnant who trust in the Lord will be saved. See note, 7:3. This is why the Lord is "wonderful in counsel" (cf 9:6) and "excellent in wisdom" (cf 11:2).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 28:25 *scatter*. Sow seed. See note, Mk 4:3. *dill … cumin*. Small seeds used as spices. *emmer … the border?* A hardy grain, planted to give shelter to more fragile plants. See p 236.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 28:27 *threshing sledge*. See note, 41:15; see also p 422.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 28:28 *thresh*. To break up stalks of grain so that the seed can be separated from the chaff. *cart wheel*. Sometimes used as a means of threshing.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 28:29 *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 28:14–29 Jerusalem faces destruction because her inhabitants sought shelter in lies and falsehood instead of in the Word of the Lord. Yet the Lord will preserve a remnant founded on a precious cornerstone. Like the people of Jerusalem, we are often tempted to take refuge in pleasant-sounding lies. Instead, we should gladly learn the wonderful counsel of God's Word.
Jesus is God's promised and precious cornerstone. Whoever believes and builds on this foundation will find the power of sin and death annulled.
• Heavenly Father, open our ears always to give attention to Your Word, that we may find refuge in Your wonderful counsel. Amen.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 29:1 *Ariel*. Hbr "hearth of God." See note, Ezk 43:15. Jerusalem was the location for the altar hearth of Judah, i.e., the place where they made sacrifices to their God. This is a fitting name for Jerusalem because of the chapter's emphasis on the mistaken religious practices of Judah. *Add … round*. Much time has passed since David's day.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 29:2 *I*. God will do this through foreign armies. *like an Ariel*. The city where sacrifices were made will become the actual sacrifice.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 29:3 *towers … siegeworks*. Used by the Assyrians to conquer walled cities. They wheeled large towers to the base of the wall. At the bottom was a battering ram and at top a platform, from which attackers could jump to the top of the wall. See note, 2Ki 18:14.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 29:4 *earth … dust … ground*. Parallel descriptions of death. *the voice of a ghost*. The dead do not speak; they are silent and powerless.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 29:5 *small dust … passing chaff*. Irony. The Lord's promise to Abraham included a nation whose descendants would be as numerous as the sand on the seashore (Gn 22:17). Here, Israel's enemies are as numerous as fine dust and chaff.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 29:6 *visited*. God sees and determines what will happen to a person or group, whether they are under blessing or curse, whether they are placed in battle or rescued from danger. It may indicate His presence to bestow mercy and grace (Ru 1:6; 1Sm 2:21; Jer 29:10).

Here, the visit will usher in devastation. *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291. *with thunder … devouring fire*. God comes with destruction.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 29:7–8 When the hordes attack Jerusalem (in Isaiah's day, the Assyrians in 701 BC), their plans for victory will be useless, like a deceptive dream.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 29:7 *Ariel*. See note, v 1.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 29:8 The nations will be able to satisfy their lust for conquest as little as a dream can provide a man with the food and drink he craves.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 29:9 *strong drink!* See note, 24:9. The prophets and seers lack the ability to see what is happening. It is as if they are drunk, though truly God has restricted them.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 29:10 *deep sleep*. Because they "blind" themselves, prophetic preaching will make them totally insensitive to God's call to repentance. Isaiah was told to expect this reaction to his ministry (6:9–10). *closed … covered*. Their abilities are removed. *seers*. See note, 1Sm 9:9.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 29:11 *a book that is sealed*. A prose explanation of the poetry of vv 9–10. Because Judah's actions deeply offended the Lord, He will no longer allow Judah to see or understand what He is doing. See note, Jer 32:10.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 29:13 *mouth … lips*. Jesus quoted this verse to expose the hypocritical recitation of religious formulas.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 29:14 *wonderful things*. Miracles and signs of God's blessings. *wise men*. Paul cites the second half of this verse in order to demonstrate the folly of the world's wisdom. In Isaiah's day—when faced with the approaching Assyrian army—the common wisdom was to form an alliance with Egypt (30:1–3), to rely on their horses, the multitude of their chariots, and in the great strength of their horsemen (31:1). See map, p 1205.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 29:15 Isaiah pronounces a woe, or death lament, on those who think they can hide their plans from the Lord. See note, Hos 7:13.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 29:16 *upside down!* They usurp God's place. *potter*. Imagery that dates back to the account of God forming Adam (Gn 2:7). For the clay to command the potter turns things upside down, making the creature the Creator (cf Is 41:25; 45:9; 64:8).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 29:17 Soon Lebanon will be humiliated (2:13; 10:34; 37:24). Illustrates the coming divine reversal, when the exalted will be humbled and the humble will be exalted.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 29:18–19 Jesus quotes this as evidence of His ministry.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 29:18 *In that day*. See p 1079.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 29:19 *fresh*. They will experience new things that bring them joy. *Holy One of Israel*. See p 1227.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 29:20–21 The proud people described in greater detail. They deprive the poor and innocent of justice. The prophet addresses this perversion of the Law (e.g., 1:17; 5:7–8).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 29:21 *by a word*. False testimony or judgment wrongly convicts the helpless. *reproves in the gate*. They oppress anyone who testifies against them. See p 792.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 29:22 *redeemed Abraham*. Abraham's redemption was his "exodus" from his homeland, away from its idols and false gods (Jsh 24:2). The Lord brought him out of Ur of the Chaldeans to give him the Promised Land (Gn 15:7). In like manner, the Lord brought Israel out of Egypt to give them the same land (cf Ex 20:1–2). Exodus imagery runs throughout Is (e.g., Is 12:2; 43:16–17). See "redeem," p 843. *house of Jacob*. Israel. *face grow pale*. In fear of enemies.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 29:23 *sanctify My name*. They will honor God by living in His ways. Cf Ex 20:7; see "holy," p 7. *Holy One of Jacob*. See "Holy One of Israel," p 1227.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 29:24 *go astray in spirit*. Some who drifted from faith will return. *murmur*. Some who spoke against God or engaged in other religious practices will seek God's truth.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 29** The visitation of the Lord will bring death and destruction to Jerusalem. Yet the Lord promises to do wonderful things with His people. God desires genuine repentance, not hypocrisy. God has accomplished wonderful things for us through the gracious visitation of His Son in our human flesh. In Jesus' death and resurrection, God has turned the world upside down and removed our shame. • "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me" (Ps 51:10). Amen.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 30:1 *children*. Judah. *plan*. Of their own design, not God's plan. *alliance*. With Egypt, hoping to withstand Assyria. See map, p 1205. The Lord could get Israel out of Egypt (Ex 14–15), but He could

never get Egypt out of Israel (Nu 11:1–6). *not of My Spirit*. Judah's plan is contrary to God's will.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 30:2 *refuge … protection*. Hbr *'oz*, used in Ps 84:5 but translated "strength," where the person whose strength, or refuge, is in the Lord is to be praised. The exact opposite situation is at work here. To seek refuge in anyone or anything else is bound to fail (cf Ps 46:7, 11). Cf Dt 17:16. *shelter in the shadow of Egypt!* Throughout Ps, the shadow of the Lord is where His people are to seek shelter (Ps 17:8; 36:7; 91:1). Again, the exact opposite is pictured here. Pharaoh's shade is deceptive; only the Lord can shield Israel (Ps 121:5).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 30:4 *officials*. Members of Pharaoh's administration. *Zoan*. City in northern Nile Delta, also referred to as Tanis. *envoys*. Messengers from Pharaoh. *Hanes*. City in southern Egypt. Together with Zoan in the north, this indicates that a powerful dynasty is in control of the land.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 30:5 The Egyptians cannot help Judah.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 30:6 *oracle*. See p 1079. *beasts of the Negeb*. Pack animals trudging through the desert that lay between Egypt and Israel. *flying fiery serpent*. See note, Nu 21:6. This land of the Negeb was filled with lions, adders (or snakes), and fast moving ("flying") fiery serpents, which would make travel through it nearly impossible. The irony is that Israel has chosen this path in search of safety. See note, Is 14:29. *they*. Israelites taking tribute to Egypt.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 30:7 *Rahab*. Title given to Egypt elsewhere in Scripture (Ps 87:4; 89:10). In Jb 26:12–13, Rahab is a powerful sea monster. But here, Rahab sits still; trusting in Egypt is "a striving after wind" (e.g., Ec 1:14).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 30:1–7 The Lord had rescued Israel from slavery in Egypt; He forbids them from returning there for refuge. Like the stubborn children of Israel, when we believe that human governments can help and profit us more than the Lord, we are guilty of idolatry. Though the help of people and nations may prove worthless, the help Jesus offers takes away our sin and shame, providing eternal protection. • Merciful Lord, though we often act as stubborn children, graciously remove our shame and disgrace for Jesus' sake, and teach us to find refuge in You. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 30:8 *write*. Isaiah received a similar directive in 8:1. *a tablet … forever*. Permanent record of this oracle so that it will not be

forgotten.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 30:9 *they*. Judah. *instruction of the* LORD. The theme of rebellious children continues (cf 1:2–4; 30:1). Israel does not have "ears to hear" the Lord's Word (cf Dt 6:4; Mt 11:15).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 30:10 *seers … prophets*. See note, 1Sm 9:9. *smooth things*. Things to their liking, easy prophecies. *illusions*. Things that may not be true, but are easier to hear.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 30:11 *way … path*. God's ways. See p 844. *Holy One of Israel*. See p 1227.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 30:12 *this word*. Message of vv 1–7.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 30:13 *breach*. The disaster provoked by this iniquity will come as unexpectedly as when a high wall with nothing but a crack suddenly bulges and collapses in a heap.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 30:14 *potter's vessel*. Resulting demolition will be as crushing as if one smashed a pot into bits so small as to be completely useless. *shard*. Broken piece of pottery. *take fire*. No piece large enough to scoop coals from a fire.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 30:15 *Holy One of Israel*. See p 1227. *returning*. See p 1080. *saved*. See "salvation," p 843. *in quietness and in trust*. A right relationship with God brings quietness, the ability to be calm, because one trusts Him to keep His promises.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 30:16 See notes, Jb 39:19; Ps 20:7, 8; cf Dt 17:16. Misplaced trust will result in defeat. Cf Mt 26:52. *your pursuers*. Assyrians.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 30:17 *like a flagstaff*. Alone and unprotected.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 30:8–17 The Judeans despise the Word of the Lord, preferring illusions rather than truth. Today, we should never despise preaching and God's Word in favor of smooth-sounding illusions that lead to perverseness. We should instead hold the Lord's Word sacred and gladly hear and learn it. Thanks be to God that through the sacrifice of Jesus on Calvary's holy mountain, He can return and save all who have wandered from His way. • Be merciful, O God, to those who have turned aside from Your path. Visit them with fatherly correction, that You might restore and save them. Amen.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 30:18 *the* LORD *waits*. He is prepared to be gracious if Judah will receive Him. *gracious*. See p 842. *exalts Himself*. God is glorified when His merciful character is revealed. *mercy*. See pp 842–43.

justice. See p 842. *blessed*. Relying on God is, in itself, a blessing. *wait*. Trust that God will work for our good in His perfect timing.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 30:19 *people*. The restored Judah. *Zion*. See p 844. *gracious*. See p 842. *soon … He answers you*. God is not slow to answer prayer; He answers immediately, though not always to our liking or understanding.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 30:20 *adversity … affliction*. The Assyrian sieges at the time of Ahaz (734 BC) and Hezekiah (701 BC). *Teacher*. God Himself is teaching His people through these events. *hide*. Without faith, they could not see that it was God working.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 30:21 *way*. Unlike in v 11, they now want to follow God's direction. Jesus uses this language in Jn 14:6, calling Himself the way to the Father. See p 844.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 30:22 *defile your carved idols*. They will recognize the idols for what they are and reject them. *scatter*. Discard. *unclean things*. Graphic reference to menstrual cloth, ceremonially unclean because of blood. See p 300; see also note, 64:6.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 30:23–26 This section foreshadows the eternal blessings of heaven (cf 35:5–7; 65:17–25; Rv 21:23; 22:5).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 30:23 *give rain*. The land will be restored, beginning with rain to make it fruitful. *rich and plenteous*. God will provide for their physical needs through the earth.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 30:24 *seasoned fodder*. Not stubble, but choice feed. *winnowed*. High quality, harvested feed. See p 422.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 30:25 *day of the great slaughter*. When Assyria falls.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 30:26 *light*. Brightness and joy multiply. *binds up … heals*. Restoration of God's people is depicted as physical healing. See note, Dt 32:39.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 30:27 *name of the* LORD. God's personal name, Yahweh. See p 1227. God personally comes with all His power, might, and glory.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 30:28 *sieve of destruction*. God destroys the world, yet carefully preserves His people as a sieve keeps the desired material while the rest drops away. *a bridle*. To bring them under His control.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 30:29 God's coming does not terrify the faithful. They sing with joy as when they go to the temple. *go to the mountain of the*

Lord. To the temple. *Rock*. Not Zion, but God. He is Israel's true Rock. See p 843.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 30:31–32 *rod … appointed staff*. The means God uses to defeat the Assyrians (cf 11:4).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 30:31 Fulfilled in 37:36 (cf 2Ki 19:35).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 30:32 *sound of tambourines and lyres*. God's people praise Him as they see Him act. See p 993. *brandished arm*. Using His power.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 30:33 God's judgment is described as a sacrifice in 34:6; Jer 46:10; Ezk 39:17–20. *burning place*. Hbr similar to "Topheth," site in the Hinnom Valley southwest of Jerusalem where children were burned in sacrifices (cf Jer 19:6, 10–15). See note, Mk 9:43. *pyre*. Fire that cremates corpses. *breath of the Lord*. See note, 11:4.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 30:18–33 After a time of destruction, the Lord will be gracious to His people, binding them up and healing them in mercy. God's people should view adversity as the Lord's teaching tool. In adversity, we learn to walk in the way of the Lord and hear His Word. He has been merciful to all by sending His Son. In Jesus, the Father gives His people healing from the brokenness of our sin. • Gracious Lord, have mercy on us, especially in times of adversity. Open our eyes to see You, and give us faith to wait for You in quiet confidence. Amen.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 31:1 *Woe*. See p 1080. Same Hbr word is also translated "Ah" and is used repeatedly (e.g., 28:1; 29:1, 15; 30:1; 33:1) to strengthen the unity of this section, as it laments the death of Israel and Judah. Following on the heels of the second vineyard song (27:2–6; the first was 5:1–7), these woes echo the six woes of 5:8, 11, 18, 20, 21, 22, which themselves follow a vineyard song. *rely on horses*. Abundant in Egypt, known throughout the ancient Near East as the land for horses. Cf Ps 147:10; see note, Ps 20:7. *Holy One of Israel*. See p 1227. *consult the Lord!* They sought human counsel, not divine. See "seek," p 843.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 31:2 *He is wise*. The Lord's words will make fools of the scheming politicians. *does not call back His words*. God does what He says He will.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 31:3 *stretches out His hand*. Refers to both the mighty salvation (Ex 6:6; Ac 4:30) and the mighty judgment of the Lord. The Lord had already stretched out His hand against Egypt (Ex 3:20; 7:5; Ps 138:7). He would stretch out His hand against Assyria (Is 10:5; 37) and

against His people as well (2Ki 21:13; Jer 6:12; Ezk 6:14; Zep 1:4). See note, Is 5:25.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 31:4 *growls over his prey*. A lion cannot be scared away from his meal; nothing can scare the Lord away from Mount Zion. *band of shepherds*. As lions do not fear shepherds, so God does not fear human leaders. *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291. *fight on Mount Zion … its hill*. God will defend His people; they need not ally with Egypt. See "Zion," p 844. Luth: "The lion does not flee, as if to say, 'Just come and touch me with one finger. I am only one, you are many. Come and touch me. I defy you.' So our God, though He is all alone, withstands all tyrants" (AE 16:271).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 31:5 As mother birds spread their wings over their young to protect them, so the Lord will protect Jerusalem. See note, Lk 13:34. *deliver*. See p 842.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 31:6 Despite their sin, the people matter deeply to God, who longs for their repentance.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 31:7 *in that day*. See p 1079.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 31:8 *not of man*. God's power, not a human weapon, defeats them. *forced labor*. Captured soldiers often became slaves to compensate their enemy's losses. See p 101.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 31:9 *rock*. See Moses' song in Dt 32:4, 15, 18, 31. See p 843. The Assyrian king and the god he trusts will prove to be deceptive quicksand when soldiers and officers panic and flee in terror. *desert the standard*. They flee from their military units in fear. *fire … furnace*. Jerusalem (also called Ariel) was the home of burnt offerings sacrificed to the Lord. Because of this, the Lord will punish all those who threaten this place, including the Assyrians. See note, Is 29:1.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 31** The people of Jerusalem will find no help by going down to Egypt. Only the Lord of hosts will protect and deliver Jerusalem. Today, when we rely on earthly relationships in place of the Lord, we will sinfully stumble and fall. In Jesus, we have a helper who has perished for our iniquity. By the death and resurrection of His Son, God has stretched out His hand to deliver and rescue us from the fire of hell. • Holy Lord, teach us to look to You in times of trouble. Help us to cast away every idol that would lay claim to the trust we rightfully owe You. In Jesus' name. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 32:1 This promise is ultimately fulfilled by the Messiah, though Judah would have kings who would bring blessings to the land, including Hezekiah, who reigned when God defeated the Assyrians. *righteousness … justice*. See pp 842–43. *princes*. See p 228.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 32:2 Leaders of God's people protect and provide for them, following the example of God Himself.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 32:3 *eyes … ears*. 35:5–6 envisions believers as new creations (cf 2Co 5:17) with open eyes, ears, and mouths (cf Is 42:7). Jesus' ministry opened eyes and ears and mouths (Mt 11:5). *those*. Any who believe the message. The King's reign will reverse the blindness and deafness that followed Isaiah's preaching (Is 6:8–10).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 32:4 *stammerers*. People who hesitate to state their convictions clearly because they are confused or because they are afraid to reveal what is in their minds.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 32:5 *fool*. See p 1016. Usually refers to those who do not fear, love, and trust in the Lord (Ps 14:1; 53:1; 74:18, 22). *noble*. "Fool" and "noble" sound nearly alike in Hbr. The foolish person will no longer be held in high regard. *scoundrel*. A person who does not advocate for the most needy in Israel's society (Is 1:17).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 32:6 The greatest folly is to teach wrongly about God.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 32:1–8 A coming king will reign in righteousness, opening the eyes and ears of God's people. Those who are busy with error are fools. We should instead give attention to what the Lord has revealed and speak His truth distinctly. Jesus is our King who reigns in righteousness and shares that righteousness with all who believe in Him, providing them with shelter from the storms of sin and death. • King of Righteousness, You have delivered us from sin and death. Keep our hearts free from iniquity and error and busy with the noble things You desire. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 32:9 *women. . . at ease*. Denounced for their love of luxury and warned that their false security will soon vanish. Feeling secure and complacent in this context is the opposite of repentance.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 32:10 Crop failure would have devastating consequences in this agrarian society.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 32:11–13 A call to repentance. These outward signs are warnings for their sins. The people produce thorns and briers in their

lives.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 32:13 *thorns and briers*. The vineyard (Israel) is under the Lord's curse (5:6; Gn 3:18).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 32:14 *the hill and the watchtower*. Set over the vineyard. See note, 5:2. In this comparison, it is Jerusalem. *wild donkeys*. Wild animals will run free in the once-cultivated "vineyard" of Israel.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 32:15 The Spirit, who will rest on the messianic King, will be poured upon the people, bringing about a new creation (Gal 6:15) and moving them to receive Him as their Lord (Ezk 39:29; Ac 2:1–21). Prophets often envision an outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the messianic age (Is 44:3; Ezk 36:26–27). The prophecies are fulfilled in Ac 2; 8:17; 10:44. See pp 1835, 1876.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 32:16 *justice … righteousness*. See pp 842–43.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 32:17 The result of the Spirit's coming is righteousness and peace (v 18), even in the midst of storms (v 19; cf Jn 16:33). Bern: "Righteousness is the mother, the nurse, and the guardian of all virtues" (*SLSB*, p 114).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 32:19 *hail*. Earlier seen as one of God's powers to destroy Assyria. *the forest … the city*. Figurative language to describe the defeat of forces hostile to the coming of the Kingdom. The city appears as the center of opposition (24:10; 25:2).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 32:20 *Happy*. See "blessed," p 842. People will see God's blessings after the destruction. *sow beside all waters*. Cf Nu 24:6; Ps 1:3; Jer 17:8. The eschatological stream will bring about complete healing (Rv 22:1–2).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 32:9–20 Those who are complacent will be laid low. But the pouring out of God's Spirit will make the lives of His people fruitful. The Lord calls us to repent and shudder over our fruitless lives. In the waters of Holy Baptism, God pours out His Spirit upon us. By that Spirit, we are given Jesus' righteousness, resulting in lives of peace and trust forever. • Holy Spirit, Lord and giver of life, help me to live this day trusting in my Savior, happily producing the fruit of good works. In Jesus' name. Amen.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Chs 33–35** A complex turning point in the Book. Chs 1–32 focused on the travails of Zion—its sin, punishment, salvation, polity, and relation to other nations. Chs 36–66 continue with concern for Zion but in new ways, personifying the city as a woman. In the later chapters,

concern moves beyond that of the Assyrian Empire to Babylon and the Persian king Cyrus.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 33:1 *Ah, you destroyer*. Only woe judgment oracle not addressed to Judah in a long line of such oracles (28:1; 29:1, 15; 30:1; 31:1). See "woe," p 1080. Instead, it is addressed to Assyria (10:5). The Lord's agent of judgment is judged. This is true of Assyria, and later it will be true of Babylon, for in the sixth century BC, the Lord will use Babylon to judge Judah (Jer 25:11). Afterward, Babylon, too, will be judged (Jer 25:12; 50–51). *traitor*. The attack on Zion was unprovoked. Lust for conquest motivated the enemy. However, God has him on a leash. As the rod of God's anger, he can only go as far as God allows (Is 10:5–19). There will come a time when the destroyer will be destroyed (Hab 2:6–20). *they*. People the traitor trusted. The betrayer will be betrayed.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 33:2 *gracious*. See p 842. *our arm every morning*. Dramatic change in the mind-set of God's people. In chs 29–30, the Lord pleaded with His people to put their trust in Him and not in Egypt. They refused (30:15–16; 31:6). But here, God's people call out to Him in trust. Ever since the exodus and the salvation the Lord brought for Israel in the morning (Ex 14:27), this time of the day indicates a time of deliverance and renewal (cf Ps 46:5; Mt 28:1; Rv 22:16). *salvation*. See p 843.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 33:3 *tumultuous noise*. God's voice. His Word is strong to create (Gn 1:3) or destroy (Jer 23:29). Cf Ps 29.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 33:4 *caterpillar … locusts*. When these descend on a field, they devour everything of value. So the peoples and nations will have nothing left after the Lord lets their spoilers pounce on them. See note, Jl 1:4.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 33:5 *Zion*. See p 844. *justice and righteousness*. See pp 842–43.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 33:6 *your times*. Isaiah's hearers lived to see Jerusalem delivered from the Assyrians. Believers have stability, because they know their times are in God's hands. *abundance*. They are fully delivered. See "salvation," p 843. *the fear … treasure*. A right relationship with God (Pr 1:7), given by His grace, is the most precious thing of all. Nothing else can compare. See p 1001.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 33:7–9 The horror of warfare is pictured in these images. Sennacherib's siege on Judah in 701 BC brought about crying and weeping, as well as empty highways and a wasted land.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 33:7 *their heroes*. Fearless warriors; word occurs only here. Similar in spelling to Ariel (cf 29:1). Some suggest the alternate translation "people of Ariel."
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 33:9 Most fertile areas in the region (cf 35:2). Lebanon was famous for its cedar trees. Sharon had ample pastures. Bashan had many oak trees (2:13) and animals. See color map 2.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 33:10 The Lord will arise and rescue His people from the hand of Assyria (cf ch 37). When the Lord arises, it is a sign of deliverance. The psalmists pray for Him to arise (Ps 7:6; 17:13; 35:23). The resurrection of Jesus is the ultimate act of God's rising to defeat death, the last enemy (1Co 15:26).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 33:11 *You*. Sennacherib and his Assyrian armies. They will go down in utter defeat and will therefore acknowledge the Lord's power (37:36–38). *conceive*. What the enemy plans and produces is no more enduring than chaff and stubble when thrown into a fire.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 33:12 *burned to lime*. Complete destruction. Limestone or chalk is burned to create lime powder, used in mortar.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 33:13 God calls all people to see His work and believe.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 33:14 *Zion*. See p 844. *fire … burnings?* The Lord is elsewhere described as a consuming fire (Dt 4:24; 9:3). The only ones who will survive this fire are those whose faith is authentic, as demonstrated in righteous acts. Those whose faith is not dead (Jas 2:17; Mt 25:31–46) will receive the Lord's provision (Is 33:15–16).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 33:15 God's holiness calls for human holiness. No one can attain this without His justifying grace.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 33:17 *Your eyes*. God's people will see. *in His beauty*. Not just Hezekiah when he trusts in the Lord in the face of the Assyrian siege in 701 BC, but also the ultimate King of Israel, whose beauty is foreshadowed in Ps 45. This Messiah, beautiful in salvation, is also described by Isaiah as having no beauty or majesty, nothing in His appearance that makes Him desirable (Is 53:2). The kingly beauty of Jesus is in His love. The beauty of Hezekiah's trust in the Lord brings about deliverance for God's people. The arrogant enemies (v 19), the Assyrians, are banished from Zion.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 33:18 *heart will muse*. Every fear and humiliation the citizens of Jerusalem once knew will be but a memory.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 33:19 *people of an obscure speech*. Foreign invaders are gone. See note, 28:11.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 33:20 *Zion*. See p 844. *appointed feasts!* Major festivals. Refers to the presence of the temple. *immovable tent*. Unlike the tabernacle before the days of David (see p 495). Solomon built a permanent temple (cf 1Ki 6–8).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 33:21 *the LORD in majesty will be for us*. God will be there to bless, not to destroy. *rivers and streams*. It will be a place of life-giving water. This stream that flows out of Zion is a glimpse of the river of life in Eden (Gn 2:10; Ezk 47:1–12) that will be restored in the new heavens and the new earth (Rv 22:1–2). *where no galley … can pass*. No enemy warships will be able to mount an attack.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 33:22 Zion is where the Lord is (8:18); from there He will be the judge and the giver of the Law (2:3–4). *judge*. See p 228. *save*. See "salvation," p 843.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 33:23 *Your cords … spread out*. The cords of Judah's tent "hang loose" at the present time, describing the state of Jerusalem directly after the Assyrian attacks in 701 BC. *the lame will take the prey*. Even the weakest will be well-provided.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 33:24 In the future, the conditions of v 23 will be reversed. Forgiveness lay at the heart of Isaiah's experience (6:7). He also envisions a Servant whose suffering will atone for sins and justify many (53:5, 10–11).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 33** The Lord will be gracious to His people. He will be their salvation, even through tumultuous times of terror. Today, we often fall and lack regard for the Lord's promises and the righteousness that comes through faith. Repent, for our greatest treasure is the Lord's abundant salvation. He is our King; He will save us. His beauty is seen in His love for sinners. • Lord Jesus, beautiful Savior, in every time of trouble, remind us that You have destroyed death. And hasten the day when our eyes will behold You. Amen.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 34:2 *enraged*. God's anger is esp directed against those who have exalted themselves and destroyed others. *host*. Their armies and might. A battle against spiritual darkness and wickedness in realms that transcend the human and earthly realms. Cf Gn 3:15; Jb 1:6–12; 2:2–6; Eph 6:10–18; Col 2:13–15. *devoted them to destruction*. See p 6.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 34:3 *cast out*. Cf Ezk 39:1–16, when the Lord would defeat His enemy Gog of Magog (cf Rv 20:8).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 34:4 *host of heaven*. The stars, here defiant toward God. The host or army of all the nations (v 2) is no match for the Lord of hosts (1:24). See p 1291. Heaven and earth will disintegrate at His command, just as He once ordered them into existence (13:9–10; 24:21, 23; 51:6; 2Pt 3:10). *skies roll up*. The heavens will be rolled up as a scroll, never to be opened again. *their host shall fall*. Battle encompasses all the heavenly bodies and extinguishes them. Cf Rv 8:12.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 34:5 *drunk its fill*. The "hard and great and strong sword" (27:1) of the Lord's wrath is personified as a man drunk with fury. When it descends for judgment, it will execute the total destruction once declared on Jericho (Jsh 6:21, 24). *Edom*. The descendants of Esau, Jacob's brother, are the symbol of continuous hostility to God's people (see note, Ps 137:7; cf Ezk 25:12–14; Am 1:11–12). *devoted to destruction*. See p 6. Edom represents all the nations that have opposed God and His people. He has patiently stood their attacks but has reserved their final destruction.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 34:6 God's judgment is compared with the slaughter of sacrificial animals. Cf 30:33; Jer 46:10; 51:40; Ezk 39:17–20; Zep 1:7–8. *sacrifice*. Portrayal of a bloody massacre, inflicted by the sword of divine justice, offends only those who refuse to believe that "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Heb 10:31). *Bozrah*. Chief city of Edom, 20 mi SE of the southern end of the Salt Sea. *Edom*. Region south of the Salt Sea. See color map 2.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 34:7 *Wild oxen*. Might be a metaphor describing leaders or officers of Edom.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 34:8 *day of vengeance*. Though the wicked may for a time avoid the wages of sin, God has a date fixed when they will receive the due reward of their deeds (cf 2:12). See "day of the LORD," p 1079. *vengeance*. God does not indulge in revenge as people do when they get even with an enemy. He acts as a judge who imposes the just penalty. As in a court trial, He sees to it that Edom receives just recompense for offenses against Zion (35:4; Ezk 25:14, 17; Ps 94:1). *cause of Zion*. The Lord's motivation to judge Edom. He will do anything, even die, for the sake of His people (Mk 10:45).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 34:9 *pitch … sulfur*. Recalls destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. Cf Jer 49:17–18.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 34:10 *its smoke shall go up forever*. God's wrathful judgment burns continually against Edom.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 34:11 *hawk … porcupine*. See ESV note. *confusion … emptiness*. Hbr words are rendered "without form and void" in Gn 1:2. (See note, Is 24:10.) Strikes a note of "anti-creation" and total destruction. Cf Jer 4:23. *plumb line*. Normally used in construction. Here, however, the Lord uses it to measure Edom's chaos and destruction (cf Is 28:17).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 34:12 *nobles … princes*. Edom elected its rulers, but now there will be no one left to declare a king or kingdom.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 34:14 *night bird*. Word occurs only here. Perhaps the owl (v 15), which frequents waste places. In rabbinic lore, it is the name of a female demon. See note, 13:21.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 34:15 *hawks*. Birds of prey, emblems of wildness.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 34:16 *book of the LORD*. Record of lives; described in Ps 40:7; 139:16; Dn 7:10; Mal 3:16; Rv 20:12. The Lord's decision endures forever, and Scripture will enable future generations to compare prophecy and fulfillment. *these*. Birds of v 15. *none shall be without her mate*. Just as the birds will be mated, so Isaiah's prophecies and their fulfillments will be joined. *His Spirit has gathered them*. The Spirit fulfills the judgments of God just as He watches over the smallest of His creatures.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 34:17 *cast the lot*. See note, Jsh 14:2. *portioned*. See definition of "portion," p 7.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 34** The Lord's judgments on the nations will certainly be fulfilled. This includes His judgments about you and your family. Thanks be to God, our judge declares us "not guilty" on account of Christ. His sure Word of the Gospel saves us and makes us a new creation. • Lord, create in me respect for Your judgments and love for Your Book, which records my salvation through Jesus. Fulfill this Word of mercy for me and my family. Amen.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 35:1 *wilderness*. The Arabah. See note, Jsh 3:16. *glad*. The land joins in celebrating God's redemption. Cf Rm 8:19–22. *blossom like the crocus*. In Is, a flower that suddenly springs up in the desert after a rainfall. Hbr also translated "rose" in Sg 2:1.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 35:2 *rejoice … singing*. Celebration of creation continues along Israel's coast. *glory … majesty*. See the reverse in 33:9. Places listed from northern Israel were known for their fertility. *glory of the LORD*. Common theme in Is, mentioned 37 times (e.g., 6:3; 60:1; 62:2);

denotes His real presence with Israel (cf Ex 40:34–38; 1Ki 8:10–12). See pp 6–7.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 35:3 *hands … knees*. These shake when one is afraid. As the people prepare to enter this abundant and fertile land, they are commanded to be strong.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 35:4 *fear not!* Command Isaiah uses elsewhere (8:12; 41:10, 13; 43:1; 51:7; 54:4). *vengeance … recompense*. See note, 34:8.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 35:5 *eyes … opened*. Quoted by Jesus (Mt 11:5). Cf Is 29:18; 30:20–21.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 35:8–10 For similar descriptions of the messianic age and its consummation at the end of time, cf 11:6–12; 40:1–11; 41:17–19; 43:14–21; 48:20–21; 65:17–25.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 35:8 *highway*. One of many images describing the wilderness turning into a garden, bringing the return of the exiles (41:18; 42:15). *Way of Holiness*. Language of the exodus from Egypt is another rich source of imagery (cf 11:12, 16; 51:9–10). Jesus told His disciples that He is the way (Jn 14:5–6). *unclean*. Only the clean are gathered. Cf Rv 21:27; 22:14–15; see p 300. *fools*. Those new to this path.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 35:9 *No lion*. Cf 11:6–8; 65:25. Presence of ferocious beasts is a sign of God's curse (Lv 26:22). *redeemed*. See p 843.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 35:10 *ransomed of the LORD*. Those whom God has rescued in a lasting way, foreseen by the exodus. See "redeem," p 843. *return*. They will once again dwell in Jerusalem. *Zion*. See p 844. *everlasting*. Vision points to the eternal city and rest of God's people (Rv 7:9; 21:1–3).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 35** The Lord prepares the salvation of His exiled people. Today, no matter what foolishness or fear has snared you, confess your sins in the confidence that the Lord has redeemed you by grace alone and has prepared for you a new way of life. • Take my trembling hand, Lord Jesus, and lead me to the comforts of Zion. Amen.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Chs 36–39** Historical excursus explaining how the Lord defeated Assyria but prophesied Judah's exile in Babylon. See notes, 2Ki 18–20; 2Ch 32; see also pp 1084–87.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 36:1 See note, 2Ki 18:13. *fortified cities*. Judah's line of defense along the hill country, which guarded access to Jerusalem. See note, 2Ch 11:5.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 36:2 *Rabshakeh*. Title for king's official cupbearer, not a personal name. In this case, the cupbearer also served in a military capacity. *Lachish*. See note, 2Ki 18:14. *great army*. 185,000 men. Cf 37:36. *conduit of the upper pool*. See note, 2Ki 18:17. *highway … Washer's Field*. Running east of the city in the Kidron Valley. See map, p 548; see also note, 7:3.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 36:3 *recorder*. Cf 2Sm 8:16; 1Ki 4:3; 2Ch 34:8.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 36:4 *trust*. See note, 2Ki 18:5. When Hezekiah sent Eliakim and Shebna, Sennacherib interpreted this as a sign of rebellion, a refusal to surrender. The Rabshakeh is awestruck at such a move.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 36:6 Ironically, the Israelites would not listen to their own prophet Isaiah, so the enemy must remind them of the futility in trusting Egypt. Cf 19:14–16; 30:7; 31:3; see note, 2Ki 18:21.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 36:7 See note, 2Ki 18:22. *high places and altars*. See p 526. In the eyes of polytheistic Assyria, destroying the "high places" was a ridiculous religious reform. However, Hezekiah was praised and supported by all Israel for this (cf 2Ch 31:1–21). *this altar?* In Jerusalem's temple.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 36:8 *set riders*. See note, 2Ki 18:23.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 36:10 Sennacherib argues that God has sent him to fulfill the warnings of prophets like Isaiah. As in v 6, he hits a raw nerve, repeating Isaiah's message of 8:7–8; 10:5–6, where Isaiah proclaimed that the Lord would use Assyria against the people of Israel.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 36:11 See note, 2Ki 18:26.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 36:12 See note, 2Ki 18:27.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 36:13 *loud voice*. Rather than speaking quietly in Aram, he shouts in Hbr to entice the people of Jerusalem.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 36:16 *Make your peace with me*. See ESV note. The Rabshakeh promises riches and luxury if only the people would honor Sennacherib as king. *vine … fig tree*. See note, 1Ki 4:25; cf Jl 2:22. *cistern*. During a siege, water sources would have been crowded and a point of contention.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 36:17 Threat of deportation is veiled with promise of a better land.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 36:18 *The Lord will deliver us*. See note, 2Ki 18:32.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 36:19 Sargon of Assyria occupied the Syrian city of Hamath in 720 BC. Tiglath-pileser III did the same to Arpad in 740 BC. The

Rabshakeh uses this common knowledge to demonstrate the futility in trusting in a god for deliverance from the Assyrian war machine. *Sepharvaim?* Mesopotamian city. *Samaria*. Capital of the Northern Kingdom of Israel, which fell in 722 BC.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 36:21 *silent*. The people show solidarity with their king.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 36:22 *clothes torn*. Sign of humility, sorrow, and dependence on the Lord. See note, Jb 1:20; cf 2Sm 3:31; Jer 41:5; Jl 2:13.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 36** The Rabshakeh entices and threatens Jerusalem to surrender or suffer. The people resist, remaining loyal to faithful King Hezekiah. When godly leaders are challenged, curb your complaints but cry out to the Lord on their behalf. The Lord is faithful to His Word and will deliver His people. • Lord, bless our spiritual leaders with faith and with faithfulness. Defend and prosper Your house. Amen.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 37:1–2 Like Elisha (2Ki 6:12), the prophet Isaiah was the "secret weapon" and most powerful ally of the king of Judah.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 37:1 *tore his clothes*. See note, 36:22. *sackcloth*. See note, Jb 16:15. *house of the LORD*. The temple court, where God would hear prayers of distress (1Ki 8:27–30).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 37:2 *senior priests*. High priest and leaders of priestly families. *Isaiah*. He and some other prophets were Jerusalem "insiders" and seem to have acted as counselors (formally or informally) to the royal house. Isaiah may have been a priest (see notes, 6:1–6).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 37:3 *no strength to bring them forth*. Judah is like a baby who must be delivered, but there is no strength to do so. See note, Hos 13:13. Hezekiah realizes that the city's salvation will not be by his might or power, but by the Lord (cf Zec 4:6).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 37:4 See note, 2Ki 19:4.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 37:5 *servants*. See note, v 2.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 37:6 *young men*. The Lord's people may have reverently feared Sennacherib's messengers. The Lord regards them as boys or lackeys.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 37:7 See note, 2Ki 19:7.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 37:8 *Libnah*. Referred to several times throughout the OT (Jsh 10:29–32; 12:15; 15:42; Jer 52:1). Seen as a city of refuge, but now attacked by Sennacherib. *Lachish*. See note, 2Ki 18:14.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 37:9 See note, 2Ki 19:9.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 37:11 *devoting them to destruction*. See p 6.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 37:12 See note, 2Ki 19:12.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 37:13 Cf 2Ki 18:34; 19:13. *Hamath … Arpad … Sepharvaim*. See note, 36:19. *Hena … Ivvah?* Unknown locations.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 37:1–13 Isaiah announces the Lord will rescue Jerusalem, and news comes that the king of Cush is approaching the Assyrians' southern flank. Even today, the Lord answers our prayers and guides the roles of leaders, all for the good of His people. Though troubles surround you, know that the Lord has them flanked and surrounded. • Lord, grant us faithful leaders who respect Your Word and seek counsel with the godly. Move the course of history for the sake of Your Church. Amen.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 37:14–19 See note, 2Ki 19:14–19.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 37:14 *letter*. While the Rabshakeh shouts outside the walls, Isaiah responds quietly with a private letter. *house of the* LORD. Hezekiah returns to the temple court, a place to pray and to receive the Lord's messages. *spread it before the* LORD. Before the holy place, Hezekiah demonstrates trust that Isaiah's words are from God and will be fulfilled.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 37:16 LORD *of hosts*. See p 1291. *enthroned above the cherubim*. See note, Ezk 10:1. *You alone*. See note, Dt 6:4. *made heaven and earth*. The Lord alone reigns over the whole earth and all its inhabitants, a key theme in Is.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 37:17 See note, 2Ki 19:16.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 37:19 Cf 44:9–20; Dt 4:28; 28:36, 64; 29:17; Ezk 20:32 for descriptions of other gods as nothing more than "wood and stone."
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 37:20 See note, 2Ki 19:19.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 37:14–20 In prayer at the temple, Hezekiah contrasts the idols of the nations with the one true God. We, too, worship and pray with undivided devotion and remember to proclaim the Lord's Word before the nations. The Lord will hear your prayer as surely as He heard Hezekiah's. • O Lord, make known to all nations the greatness of Your power and the gentleness of Your mercy, demonstrated in the ministry of Your Son, our King. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 37:21 See note, 2Ki 19:20.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 37:22–29 See note, 2Ki 19:21–28.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 37:22 See note, 2Ki 19:21.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 37:23 *Holy One of Israel!* See p 1227.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 37:24–25 Sennacherib boasts that he has overcome every obstacle in earth, mountains, deserts, and rivers, turning it all to his advantage. God reminds him that He has created all and has foreseen Sennacherib's every step.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 37:25 See note, 2Ki 19:24.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 37:26 *determined … planned*. Not only does the Lord know all that Sennacherib said to Hezekiah and his people, the Lord planned it (cf 14:26–27). God's foreknowledge is meant to humble proud Sennacherib because he thought he was acting independently. "He foresees and foreknows everything that is or will be, that is happening or will happen, whether it is good or bad. For all things, whether they are past or future, are clear and present before God" (FC SD XI 4). *fortified cities*. See note, 36:1.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 37:27 Though Sennacherib seems to have reduced his enemies to fragile grass, God has allowed this. The Lord views all people as grass (40:6–8).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 37:28 *I know*. See note, v 26.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 37:29 *your complacency*. Self-secure attitude. *hook … bit*. Tools used to control animals and slaves. See note, Am 4:2.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 37:30 *sign*. The Lord now speaks a promise to Hezekiah. *this year*. Autumn 701 BC. *what grows of itself*. Volunteer harvest, caused by seed dropped during the previous harvest. People had not been able to plant and harvest as usual because of war. Conditions would give way in the third year. Isaiah prophesies hardship and hope.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 37:31 *remnant*. See p 1080. People in Jerusalem. The Assyrians would have deported people captured earlier, during the battles at Lachish and Libnah.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 37:32 *zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this*. Prophetic vow. See notes, 9:7; Ex 20:5; see also p 1291.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 37:33 *siege mound*. Such mounds were found by archaeologists at Lachish.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 37:35 *for My own sake*. See p 842. *for … David*. See note, 2Sm 7:11.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 37:36 *angel of the Lord*. See note, 2Ki 19:35.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 37:37 *departed*. Sennacherib was leading the siege at Libnah. *Nineveh*. Across the Tigris River from modern Mosul (Iraq). See map, p 609. The city had been revived by Tiglath-pileser III (744–727 BC) and Sargon II, who made it his capital. Sennacherib (704–681 BC) made it the capital of the Assyrian Empire.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 37:38 *Nisroch*. Lit, "great eagle," describing the idol's form. The name is otherwise unknown; it may be the Assyrian name for the god Marduk, creator and chief god in Babylonian mythology. *his sons, struck him down*. Coup in 681 BC. Events are confirmed by Assyrian and Babylonian chronicles. *Ararat*. Region in northern Turkey. See map, p 609. *Esarhaddon*. Ruled 681–669 BC.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 37:21–38 Isaiah prophesies that the Lord will rescue Judah amid hardship. Today, the Lord will not always grant you immediate relief from difficulty. He might use hardship to chasten and to teach. Take comfort in the wisdom of His ways. He demonstrated His zeal for you in the sufferings of Jesus for your redemption. • Faithful Jesus, grant me patience and teach me wisdom, that I may glean what is good in hard times and sow Your bounty in fruitful times. Amen.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 38:1–8 See note, 2Ki 20:1–11.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 38:1 Perhaps c 712 BC. See note, 2Ki 20:12. *sick*. See note, 2Ki 20:7.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 38:2 *turned his face to the wall*. Unclear; may express sullen mood. The Targums suggest he turned toward the temple. See note, 2Ki 20:3. *prayed*. Isaiah's word was from the Lord. Hezekiah had no other resource for healing than prayer to the Lord.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 38:3 See note, 2Ki 20:3.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 38:4 *came to Isaiah*. Common expression for the prophet's experience, typically involving visions or dreams. See pp 1081–83.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 38:5 *God of David your father*. Hezekiah knew, like Moses (cf Ex 32:7–14) and Jonah (cf Jnh 4:2), that the Lord is always willing to be asked, always willing to listen to His people. See note, 2Ki 20:5. *add fifteen years*. Long enough to be seen clearly as a divine gift.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 38:6 Deliverance likely took place during the siege by the Assyrians in c 701 BC. See note, 2Ki 20:1–11.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 38:7 *sign*. See note, 2Ki 20:8.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 38:8 *dial of Ahaz*. Possibly a sundial made for or by Hezekiah's father. Egyptians developed such instruments as early as fourth millennium BC. *turn back ten steps*. Degrees marked on the dial's face. However, see note, 2Ki 20:11.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 38:10 *middle of my days*. See ESV note. *gates of Sheol*. Cf v 18; 5:14; see p 792. Hezekiah's prayer reiterates what he felt after Isaiah's word from the Lord. About to die, his initial reaction was one of hopelessness and despair. *rest of my years*. Old age to which he felt he should live.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 38:11 *see the* LORD. As He reveals His power and goodness. Cf Ps 38:10. *land of the living*. Earthly existence, where the Lord and people are at work.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 38:12 *dwelling*. Hezekiah compares his life with a shepherd's tent that can be dismantled quickly. *cuts me off*. No more will be added. *from day to night*. Sunset of his life. What had seemed so permanent (a shepherd's tent or a large piece of cloth on a loom) could be quickly taken up or cut off. Hezekiah's life could be just as quickly ended.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 38:13 *breaks all my bones*. As quickly as a lion devours a carcass and licks clean each bone.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 38:14 *chirp … moan*. He is but a weak, complaining bird compared to a lion (v 13). *looking upward*. Waiting in hope. *pledge of safety!* Using a financial expression, he requests that the Lord will intervene. See note, Pr 6:1.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 38:15 *I walk slowly all my years*. Walk of humility before God.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 38:16 *these things*. When "the word of the LORD" (v 4), spoken by Isaiah, prolonged the king's life (v 5), Hezekiah understood that "man does not live by bread alone, but … by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD" (Dt 8:3).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 38:17 *pit of destruction*. See "Sheol," p 792. *cast all my sins behind Your back*. Hezekiah sees the deliverance from death accomplished through the forgiveness of sins.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 38:18 *Sheol*. See p 792. *those who go down to the pit do not hope*. That the dead do not praise God is a common theme throughout the OT. Cf Jb 10:21–22; Ps 6:5; 30:9. However, all who die in the Lord are with the Lord (Rm 14:8; 1Co 15; 1Th 5:10), but even they long for the coming resurrection (Rv 6:9–11).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 38:19 *The living, the living*. Hezekiah's repetition savors and celebrates God's gift. *father … children*. Through a long life, fathers can teach their children. See note, Pr 1:8.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 38:20 *play my music*. Sound of joyful living. *house of the LORD*. The temple.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 38:21 See note, 2Ki 20:7.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 38:22 *sign*. See note, 2Ki 20:8. *house of the LORD?* The temple, where he would sacrifice and offer thanks.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 38** The Lord answers Hezekiah's prayer for healing and forgiveness. No matter what difficulty or diagnosis you face, do not hesitate to make your request known to the Lord. He hears, forgives, and delivers His people according to His mercy, and He works through our hands for others' good. • Lord, grant me good health, a heart of prayer, and ready hands that serve. Amen.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 39:1 See note, 2Ki 20:12.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 39:2 See note, 2Ki 20:13.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 39:3–4 See note, 2Ki 20:14–15.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 39:5 *LORD of hosts*. See p 1291.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 39:6–7 See note, 2Ki 20:17–19.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 39:7 Judah lasted for c 125 more years. Hezekiah's son Manasseh was esp noted for brutality and became the cause of the Babylonian captivity (2Ki 21:10–16). *some … sons*. Used generally, means descendants. *eunuchs*. Threat that Hezekiah's dynasty would be cut off. In mercy, the Lord preserved the heritage of Judah's kings, as promised to David and realized in the Messiah (Is 9:6–7). See note, 2Ki 20:18.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 39:8 See note, 2Ki 20:19.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 39** The Lord rebukes Hezekiah for expressing hope in Babylon as his ally against Assyria. Prayer is our ever-ready strength, and the Lord is our ever-present ally. When worries assault you, call on the Lord. His Son will rule for your benefit and deliver you peace. • Turn all my doubts, O Lord, into prayers, that I may see a secure future for Your servants. Amen.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 40:1 *Comfort, comfort*. First of three heralds in vv 1–11. The Lord's prophet reminds the Israelites that they are still His covenant people (Ex 6:7; 19:5; Lv 26:12; Dt 26:17–19). Repetition is the Hebraic way of driving home a point; Isaiah used this literary device often (e.g., Is 21:9; 51:9, 17; 52:1; 57:14; 62:10; see threefold "holy, holy, holy" in 6:3).

Luth: "God's people are those who need comfort because they have been wounded and terrified by the Law and they are an empty vessel capable of receiving comfort. Only those who are afflicted have comfort and are capable of it, because comfort means nothing unless there is a malady" (AE 17:3).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 40:2 *Speak tenderly*. Not harshly, as rebels against the King of heaven and earth should expect, but in the tone of winsome pleading with which a lover seeks to touch the heart of a maiden he is courting (Gn 34:3; Jgs 19:3). Jerusalem did nothing to deserve tender words. Her redemption would be an act of divine mercy without any merit or worthiness on her part. *warfare*. Destruction of the nation and subsequent Babylonian captivity (Is 43:14). God promised to cut short the time of "hard service" (14:3) in the exile, even though justice required that suffering for sin should never end. *double for all her sins*. People receive double in unmerited comfort (cf v 1). Penalty of her iniquity was paid, even though she could do nothing to make amends for the debt she incurred. She received from the Lord's hand good things in double proportion to the punishment she deserved for her sins (61:7; Jb 11:6).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 40:3 *A voice cries*. The second herald, John the Baptist, was commissioned to "go before the Lord to prepare His ways" (Lk 1:76–79). He did so when he preached repentance "in the wilderness of Judea" (Mt 3:1). *prepare the way of the* LORD. The double comfort of vv 1–2 will come about when the Lord breaks into history and comes to the aid of His people. The Lord has done this before (cf Dt 33:2; Jgs 5:4–5; Ps 68:7–8) and will do so again (Is 52:7–10). The prophet may also be playing on a Babylonian hymn that speaks of making straight paths for Nabu, Babylonian god of writing and wisdom. Roads were often constructed for visiting dignitaries, triumphant kings, or for idols as they were carried in procession. *highway*. According to His eternal plan, "the way of the LORD" has as its predestined goal the redemption of all humankind through His Son, Jesus Christ. All obstacles will be cleared from His highway of salvation. His chosen people will come forth from the grave of the exile and survive the rise and fall of empires in order that the Savior might be born "of the house and lineage of David" (Lk 2:4) as foretold.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 40:5 *glory of the* LORD. See pp 6–7. The Lord's presence in, with, and under a pillar of cloud or pillar of fire (cf Ex 16:10; 40:34). This phrase has played a key role throughout Is thus far (cf 4:5; 6:3;

35:2) and will continue to play an important role, esp in ch 66. *all flesh*. All people. When the Lord's glory was revealed in His incarnate Son, His purpose was not to destroy sinners but to bring the light of salvation to all peoples of the earth (52:10; 60:1–3). However, there will also come a time when "the Son of Man comes in His glory" to judge "all the nations" (Mt 25:31–32). Jn D: "The Lord did not become flesh without soul or mind, but man" (*NPNF* 2 9:66).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 40:1–5 The Lord promises comfort and restoration for the Babylonian exiles. These promises, fulfilled through John the Baptist's ministry, have personal consequences for you and for all people. Just as the Lord doubled the comfort and forgiveness for the exiles, He has doubled comfort and forgiveness for you in the person of His Son. • Lord, as You have prepared comfort for all people through Jesus, prepare my mouth and heart to speak of that comfort and peace to those around me. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 40:6 *voice*. The Lord's messenger. See note, v 3. *beauty*. Hbr *chesed*, typically
translated "steadfast love." See p 843. All of Israel's covenantal love is worthless. Their only hope is that the Lord's mercy will triumph over His judgment (Jas 2:13).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 40:7 *breath of the* LORD. The "breath" or Spirit of the Lord is normally a life-giving breath (Gn 2:7; Ps 104:30; Ezk 37:1–6; Jn 20:22). However, here it brings death. It is like the hot, dry desert winds that come upon Israel in May to turn the lush, green countryside to a brown desertlike land in less than 48 hours.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 40:8 Unlike the frailty of created things, God's Word remains for all time. Cf Jb 14:1–2; Ps 102:14; 103:15–17; Is 55:10–11; 1Pt 1:24–25. See p 1646.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 40:6–8 The Lord's messenger contrasts the Lord's faithfulness with the unfaithfulness of all people. Rather than defend your weaknesses, confess them before the Lord, who gives life through His Word. • Dear Lord, breathe on me Your life-giving Spirit through the faithful promises in Your Word. Then I will be swayed by Your mercy and bear fruit to Your glory. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 40:9 *O Zion*. See p 844. *herald of good news*. Last of the three heralds in vv 1–11 is Jerusalem. She broadcasts good news

to surrounding neighborhoods, in this case "cities of Judah." *Behold your God!* Focus is on God only—not His city, temple, or people.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 40:10 *His arm rules*. Personal strength in action. Cf 48:14; 51:5, 9; 52:10; 53:1; 62:8; 63:5, 12. See "arm," p 842. *His reward … His recompense*. The Lord brings punishment for the wicked and blessings for the faithful.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 40:11 *tend His flock*. Congregation of believers. *like a shepherd*. Those who hear His voice and follow Him can depend on Him to be kind and generous in caring for them, be they ever so helpless and weak (Ps 23:1; Lk 1:52; Jn 10:3–4). Once the Lord arrives, He will deal with Israel as a shepherd cares for his sheep. The militaristic arm of v 10 is also a shepherding arm. This change from soldier to shepherd occurs elsewhere (2Sm 5:2; 7:7; Mi 5:4). *carry them in His bosom*. Fold of a robe above the sash could hold a sick or injured lamb.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 40:12 *Who*. He whose handiwork is the vast universe (Jb 38–39; Ps 19:1; 104; Is 48:3). *scales … balance?* The Lord acts as an artisan and a merchant, designing the world with tools of the marketplace.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 40:15–16 *drop from a bucket … dust on the scales*. Of no account. Comparison elaborates v 12. *coastlands*. Synonym of "nations" referring to what lies at the edges of the land, i.e., the ends of the earth. *like fine dust*. No matter what these nations and coastlands do, burning their precious wood (Lebanon was known for its cedar forests) or even sacrificing all their bulls, the nations will not be significant compared to the Lord. Cf Is 2:6–22.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 40:17 *less than nothing*. Hbr *tohu*. See notes, 34:11; Gn 1:2.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 40:19 *idol!* Hbr word usually translated "graven image" or "carved image" (cf v 20; 10:10; 44:15). Process of manufacturing an image shows how ridiculous humans are to worship what they fabricate out of lifeless material. Cf 41:6–7; 44:9–20; 46:1–2; Jer 10:1–16.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 40:20 *too impoverished*. Sarcasm. He can make a god, but not a sacrifice. *an idol that will not move*. Gods of the nations cannot be affected or moved to compassion (1Ki 18:27–29). Isaiah treats idolatry as foolishness (41:6–7; 44:9–20; 46:5–7). Cf Hos 13:2; Ac 17:29–31.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 40:21 Rhetorical questions. Things they obviously should know. Not only could God's "eternal power and divine nature" be

clearly perceived (Rm 1:20), but He also revealed Himself by His holy prophets (Lk 1:70).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 40:22 *the circle of the earth*. Firmament. See note, Jb 22:14. Everything appears small before God. *curtain … tent*. Possible references to the heavenly tabernacle (Heb 8:1–2).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 40:23 *nothing*. Translated "emptiness" (v 17), "wasted" (24:10), "empty" (45:18), "void" (Jb 26:7).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 40:24 In vv 6–7, people are like grass in its full growth, but here they are cut short, seen as barely sprouted seeds. *tempest*. The storm blows the dried grass away as chaff. Cf Ps 1:4.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 40:25 *Me … the Holy One*. One of Isaiah's favorite titles for the Lord (1:4; 5:19; 10:17; 29:19; 43:3; 55:5). He is different and set apart from everyone and everything else. See p 1227.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 40:26 *these?* Stars. *calling them all by name*. They are like a huge army that appears overhead as if created anew every night. The stars march across the sky in unbroken ranks. Nations viewed the stars as visible representations of the gods (Am 5:26). Israel succumbed to the temptation of worshiping the stars (2Ki 17:16; 21:3), which in turn brought about exile.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 40:27 God's promises seemed meaningless to His chosen people. However, their complaint showed a lack of faith that is reproved and challenged by God's question: Why do you say such things?

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 40:28 *everlasting God*. The Lord is the sole Creator, possessing the unchangeable energy shown in the first six days. *unsearchable*. While God both loves His people and has power to save them, His plans unfold in ways we would not imagine.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 40:31 *wait for the* LORD. Hope in Him. "Wait" and "hope" in Hbr come from the same root word. *run … walk*. They will accomplish their purposes, as God wills.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 40:9–31 Israel has an incomparable God who watches over her. Though the Lord may use His power for condemnation, He acts as your Good Shepherd for your salvation. • Lord, renew the strength of faith in me, that I may renew my service to Your everlasting purposes. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 41:1 Gentile nations are called into the courtroom before the Lord and given the chance to renew their strength, just as Israel is given that opportunity in 40:31. *coastlands*. Gentile nations. *draw near*

for judgment. The question is simple: Who is ultimately in charge of world events?

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 41:2 *stirred up one from the east*. Identity of the one stirred up for service is intentionally vague. It might mean Abraham, Moses, Joshua, or someone else. It certainly fits the Persian king Cyrus (cf 44:28; 45:1). After becoming king of Persia and Media, Cyrus marched west to Lydia on the coast of the Great Sea, subduing it and all intervening peoples. In campaigns "from the north" (41:25), he conquered Babylon. *gives up nations before him*. Lit, "gives before him nations," as though casting them down to trample them.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 41:3 Conqueror's advance was so swift that his feet did not seem to touch the paths leading to his victims.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 41:4 *calling the generations*. Into existence and to face His judgment. *first … last*. The Lord's sovereign power is again affirmed. He is the first (40:28) and will be with the last ones of the earth. *I am He*. The Lord predates the beginning of history and will continue to exist after the last of temporal things has ceased to be (43:10–13). In all this, He does not change. See notes, Ex 3:14, 15; 6:3.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 41:5 *drawn near*. Distant nations gather in panic at Cyrus's advance.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 41:6–7 The coastlands feel panic but continue to finish work on their idols to make them firm before God's presence (cf 1Sm 5:1–5).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 41:8 *My servant*. Unmerited distinction for Abraham and his offspring to be chosen of all families of the earth and to be given a role in God's eternal plan of salvation. However, despite many spiritual and material blessings conferred on it, Israel turned out to be a disobedient servant—so deaf to God's guidance and so blind to His goodness that "He poured on him the heat of His anger" (42:18–25). Chastened, forgiven, redeemed from the Babylonian exile, Israel would again render service necessary for the coming of that Servant of the Lord who would be obedient to death (52:13–53:12). *chosen*. The Lord reminds Israel of His past promises by calling Abraham (Gn 12:1–3) and entering into an everlasting covenant with him (Gn 15; 17:7). Dt 7:7–8 indicates that divine election is a pure gift; Israel has done nothing to deserve this status. *My friend*. Abraham was given the same title in 2Ch 20:7; Jas 2:23.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 41:9 *I took … called*. Abraham originally came from Ur, near the natural boundaries of the Persian Gulf and Zagros mountains. *My servant*. Israel was to act as a kingdom of priests to the world (cf Ex 19:5–6). At Sinai, Israel is distinctly marked and empowered to be evangelistic; the nation is commissioned to be the go-between concerning the Lord and the nations.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 41:10 *fear not*. So God spoke to His servants of old (Abraham, Gn 15:1; Isaac, Gn 26:24; Joshua, Jsh 1:5–9). Because our sinful nature is hesitant to believe that there is nothing whatsoever to fear if God says, "I am with you," He must say again and again, "Fear not," and thus strengthen our faith. *My righteous right hand*. God's right hand fights for His people in power, while with His left hand He holds the right hand of His child Israel (v 13). See "hand," p 842.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 41:11–12 *all … those*. The nations.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 41:13 *hold your right hand*. See note, v 10.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 41:14 *worm*. Israel is compared to a worm, and their enemies to mountains (v 15). Only with the Lord can such a worm crush such mountains. *Redeemer*. Occurring more than 10 times in the following chapters, this comforting title of God describes what He must do to rescue His helpless people. See note, Jb 19:25; see also "redeem," p 843.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 41:15 *threshing sledge*. Formed with several heavy timbers tied together, with sharp rocks or metal driven into its underside; used to separate grain from husks and stalks. See p 422. Figure of speech likens the destruction of nations (cf 25:10) or enemies (e.g., 2Ki 13:7; Am 1:3–5) to the same physical circumstances as grain when it is threshed. Israel's enemies will be worn, crushed, and scattered to the winds. *mountains*. Represent the nations.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 41:16 *winnow*. See note, Ps 1:4. Every obstacle in "the way of the LORD" (40:3) will dissipate. *tempest*. Storm or tornado. *Holy One of Israel*. See p 1227. *glory*. See pp 6–7. Once helped, Israel will become a vehicle for the Lord to bless the nations so they will give glory to Israel's God (43:10; 45:20–23; 48:20; 49:6; 52:10; 56:6–8; 60:1–3; 66:18–19).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 41:17–20 Cf 40:3–5.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 41:17 *poor and needy*. Beyond help in war, the Lord also provides for the daily needs of His people. Alludes to Israelites in the wilderness after the exodus. Cf Ex 15:22–27; 17:1–7; Nu 20:2–13.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 41:18 *open rivers*. Nature springs into action at God's command. See note, Ps 107:33.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 41:20 *Holy One of Israel*. See p 1227.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 41:1–20 The Lord lowers the nations but prepares for Israel's restoration. Today, follow where the Lord leads, according to the teachings of His Word. He will take you by the hand and walk with you to clear the way, so great is His mercy in Christ. • Lord Jesus, at the Father's right hand, sanctify me and guide my steps, that I walk like Abraham, Your friend. Amen.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 41:21 *case … proofs*. Recalls 1:2, where the heavens and the earth are called to the heavenly courtroom to be witnesses against Israel (cf v 1; Hos 4:1; Mi 6:1). *King of Jacob*. The Lord is ruler of Jacob's descendants, the Israelites. See pp 1565–66.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 41:22 *them*. Nations and their idols (v 23). *former things*. Cf 14:26–27, where the Lord insists He has a plan for the nations that cannot be thwarted.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 41:23 Asking for a prediction of the future, specifically the Lord's use of Cyrus. Cf 45:1, 13. *gods*. Unless the idols can interpret history ("the former things") and foretell the future ("what is to come hereafter"), their claim to deity is a fraud.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 41:24 *you*. Idols.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 41:25 *one from the north … rising of the sun*. Cyrus (the Lord's shepherd, cf 44:28). Cyrus came from Persia, east of Babylon; his conquest of Babylon would have spread into Judah from the north. *call upon My name*. In his proclamation permitting the exiled Israelites to return to their homeland, Cyrus said, "The LORD, the God of heaven, has … charged me to build Him a house at Jerusalem" (Ezr 1:2). See "call," p 842.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 41:26 *it*. Prophecy about Cyrus.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 41:27 *they*. Glad tidings.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 41:28 *there is no one*. The court case concludes; the Gentiles have no one who will speak on their behalf. Their idols are only a delusion of sinful humanity. The Lord, therefore, is the only means of salvation (43:12; 50:2; 59:16; 63:3). *among these*. No gods could have instructed the Creator (40:13). *counselor*. See "Legal Language in Job," p 792.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 41:29 *they*. Idols.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 41:21–29 The Lord puts the nations and their idols on trial and finds them wanting. Believers today should not put their confidence in the message of false prophets, horoscopes, or other means of predicting the future, but should judge all things according to the Word. The Lord, your King, will silence all accusations against you and declare you free in Christ. • O Lord, silence my accusers, and grant me confidence to follow Your Word, which proves itself true again and again. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 42:1–9 First of four Servant Songs (42:1–9; 49:1–13; 50:4–11; 52:13–53:12). See p 1178.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 42:1 All three persons of the Trinity are mentioned here. *My servant*. God chose to call many individuals His servants. The service they rendered carried out a wide variety of assignments: Abraham (Gn 26:24; Ps 105:6), Moses (Nu 12:7–8), Caleb (Nu 14:24), David (Is 37:35), Isaiah (Is 20:3), prophets in general (2Ki 17:13; Is 44:26), Eliakim (Is 22:20), Zerubbabel (Hg 2:23), even such heathen kings as Nebuchadnezzar (Jer 25:9) and Cyrus (Is 43:10; 45:1). The title occurs also as a corporate name for all Israelites to indicate the reason for their existence as a nation (Jer 30:10; frequently in Is 40–66). However, neither an individual nor Israel collectively can qualify as the Servant described in vv 1–9 and in the other Servant Songs (49:1–13; 50:4–11; 52:13–53:12). See p 1178. In these passages, it becomes progressively clear that Isaiah is not speaking "about himself or about someone else" among his fellow Israelites but is proclaiming "the good news about Jesus" (Ac 8:30–35). In Him alone, God's soul delights without ever finding fault, as "a voice from heaven" declared at His Son's Baptism and transfiguration (Mt 3:17; 17:5). Because the Israelites, even the best among them, were in need of forgiveness, they could not save themselves, much less atone for the guilt of their companions in crime throughout the world. But God was promising a sinless Servant who could redeem not only disobedient Israel but also all the nations. The NT validates this interpretation of vv 1–4 by quoting the passage as fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Just: "In Isaiah, if you have ears to hear it, God, speaking of Christ in parable, calls Him Jacob and Israel" (*ANF* 1:261). Luth: "He is calling us away from errors and therefore showing us someone else. . . . The prophet points us to the Incarnate One and says that in this Head alone, in the unity of faith, we who were formerly scattered must be brought together. . . . This was not written for Christ's sake but for ours, so that we may be sure about His work and teaching and

may have certainty about the emptiness of our idolatry. Nobody understands these things unless he believes. You must believe that Christ is a servant. It is as Paul says (1 Cor. 2:2): 'I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.' … This Christ is an offense to the whole world. Therefore, in order to give us certainty, this commendation of Christ is necessary. We see from experience that nothing is more absurd to the wisdom of the flesh than Christ, the Servant, and His Word. All are offended because of Him. All of us want to be God's servants while we please ourselves. Everything will be taken up and entrusted to Him alone. We should receive this with thanksgiving, but we attain to it ungratefully" (AE 17:60–61). *My chosen*. The Servant's work will be part of God's greater plan. *My Spirit*. The Servant is divinely authorized and empowered to carry out His assigned mission. However, He will not bring justice to the nations by forcing His will on the world by military campaigns as Cyrus did, treading down kings and rulers "as the potter treads clay" (41:25). There will be no noisy, flamboyant victory marches "in the street" (42:2). Yet, He will bring it about that even the weakest in His worldwide dominion will have a rightful claim to the benefits He bestows.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 42:2 *not cry aloud*. The Servant is described in negative terms because there is no other basis of comparison for Him. He does not push Himself aggressively on anyone. All things and people are precious in His sight.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 42:3 *reed … wick*. Reeds were used for pens, etc. Wicks were made from broken flax fibers that could not be woven properly. Though of little value, these items are still handled carefully by the Servant. Cf 40:29; 61:1–3.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 42:4 *not grow faint or be discouraged*. The last Servant Song (52:13–53:12) makes clear how the Servant will establish His "justice in the earth." There is only a hint about suffering here. Though He may become weak and exhausted by "the anguish of His soul" (53:11), He will not give up the struggle. *justice … law*. The Servant's purpose is to establish salvation on the earth. Even the coastlands, previously zealous for their idols (41:5–7), should wait for the Law (instruction) of the Servant.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 42:5–7 The Lord gives further purpose for His Servant; He will be a light to the nations, bring freedom, and heal the blind. Cf Mt 11:4–5.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 42:5 *gives breath*. Recalls creation of Adam; God's breath animates lifeless clay.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 42:6 *called You in righteousness*. Despite the Servant's losses and wonder at God's action, God's call to Him is righteous and holy, above reproach. See "righteousness," p 843. *take You by the hand*. See note, 41:10. *a covenant*. See p 6. The Servant establishes a new covenant. Cf Mt 26:28. *a light for the nations*. Paul and Barnabas justified their bringing "the light of the world" (Jn 8:12) to the Gentiles by referring to this verse and to 49:6. (Cf Lk 2:30–32; Ac 13:47.)

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 42:7 Those trapped due to sin, such as the exiles.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 42:8 *My name*. God confirms His name (cf Ex 3:13–15) and emphasizes again His uniqueness. See note, 41:4.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 42:9 *former things*. Emphasizes, as did the earlier negative descriptions of the role of the Servant, that what is being done is something new (Jer 31:31–34; Lk 22:20; Heb 8:1–13; 9:11–28).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 42:1–9 The Servant establishes a new covenant to save the nations. Jesus Christ fulfilled this prophecy on your behalf. He frees you from your sins by His righteousness alone. • O Lord, I praise You for calling me by the Gospel and for giving me Your Holy Spirit, that I may serve You in righteousness. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 42:10 *new song*. This new song (cf Ps 96:1; 98:1) is the response to the "new things" of v 9. It is a worldwide invitation (cf Is 12:4–5) to praise the Lord for what He will do through His Servant. See p 843. *you*. Sailors, who reach far-flung places. Those far off and those near are all invited to sing this new song.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 42:11–12 People are called to praise God for the victory and deliverance He brings.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 42:11 *Kedar … Sela*. See notes, 16:1; Ps 120:5.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 42:13 *like a man of war*. See note, Ex 15:3. *His zeal*. Also translated "jealous wrath." See note, Ex 20:5.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 42:14 *I*. The Lord. *like a woman in labor*. In battle with His enemies, God is cast in the role of a mighty man of war (v 13). An even more daring comparison describes Him as a pregnant woman. *gasp and pant*. When time of delivery comes, a woman can cry out in desperation but cannot delay the birth of her child. Though He restrained

Himself for a long time, nothing can prevent the Lord from keeping His promise to open the way of forgiveness for fallen humankind.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 42:15 *rivers into islands*. Contrast with 41:18–19. Not an act of destruction. The Lord is leading the blind, so He removes all obstacles for such people.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 42:16 *paths … not known*. Way of salvation from sin. See p 843.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 42:17 *carved idols … metal images*. Despite God's care and power, idolatry will continue among those who reject the Lord and His Servant (cf Ps 2).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 42:10–17 Through the work of the Lord's Servant, the song of salvation reaches all people. Because you have received the Gospel, open your mouth to confess and to sing about Jesus' works—both His Law and His Gospel. He will lead you and never forsake you. • O Savior, open my lips, that I may declare Your praise to those near and far. Lead me in the way of peace. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 42:18–20 Whereas the previous Servant (vv 1–9) did the work of the Lord, this one (Israel, v 24) does not. This description recalls Isaiah's commission (6:9–13).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 42:21 *for His righteousness' sake*. See "righteousness" and "for Your name's sake," pp 843, 842. *magnify His law*. Israel had no excuse for its failure to perform its assigned service; it knew God's will (Lk 12:47).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 42:22 *people*. Israel. *trapped*. Exile and effects of sin. *plunder … spoil*. The Lord desired to make His Torah great in Israel so the nations would stream to Zion (2:1–5). But because of Israel's unbelief, they were allowed to be plundered and looted by these very nations.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 42:24 This situation for Israel was not caused by the Babylonians. The Lord caused this because Israel had sinned.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 42:25 *him*. Israel. *set him on fire*. Even when besieged, the people did not repent.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 42:18–25 Israel fails to believe and live as God's servant, and is punished with exile. No person should seek security in his own righteousness, for we are delivered for the sake of the Lord's righteousness alone. He calls us and delivers us according to His righteous purposes. • Open my eyes! Unstuff my ears, O Jesus! Magnify Your Word in my seeing and hearing, that I may serve You in righteousness. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 43:1 *now*. At the end of the exile. *redeemed you*. See p 843. His chosen people (Ex 6:2–8) are told to no longer fear (see note, 35:4). *called you by name*. The Lord reminds His people that He has not forgotten His covenant promises to them. Cf Gn 32:26–29.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 43:2 *waters … fire*. He will not permit any disaster or obstacle to destroy them (cf Ps 32:6; 42:7–8; 124:4–5). Crossing the Red Sea during the exodus (Ex 14:21–31) and crossing the Jordan River into the Promised Land (Jsh 3:14–17) are two examples.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 43:3 *Holy One of Israel*. See p 1227. *Savior*. See "salvation," p 843. *ransom*. See "redeem," p 843. God restructured the whole ancient world for the sake of a small people apparently sinking into oblivion in a foreign land. Israel's liberation is described as if God paid the Persians for giving the exiles freedom by giving the Persians Egypt. *Cush and Seba*. Poetic, expansive expressions for Egypt.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 43:4 *I give men in return for you*. In the exodus, Israel was "redeemed" at the expense of Egypt. Cf Pr 21:18.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 43:5–7 Though the Lord's people will be dispersed for their sins, He reminds them that they will be gathered to Him once more (11:11–12; 27:13; 60:4).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 43:5 *I am with you*. See "be with," p 5. God assures Israel of His constant presence even before they are gathered together before Him.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 43:7 *called by My name*. See note, 2Ch 7:14. So believers today are called "Christians." His name breaks their bonds and joins them as one. See "name," p 843.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 43:8 *Bring out*. When the worshipers of idols can produce no witness to vindicate their gods, the Lord calls to the stand His witnesses, His servant Israel, to testify that He saved His people.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 43:9–10 Trial imagery emphasizes that the Lord is the only true God.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 43:9 *former things?* Evidence. *witnesses*. The Lord calls on the nations to bring out their witnesses and testify what their gods have done. *It is true*. They testify under oath.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 43:10 ✠ *You are My witnesses*. Though the people of Israel became spiritually blind and deaf (42:18–25), they can attest to their experiences. The Lord calls us to testify what we learn of Him. Ironically, this verse was adapted by the disciples of Charles Taze Russell

and "Judge" Joseph F. Rutherford to form the name "Jehovah's Witnesses," a group that has deceived many with false predictions about the end of the world and other false testimony. (See p 307.) They teach that Jesus is only a "Mighty God" alongside the Almighty God, though the Lord, speaking through Isaiah, clearly rejects this doctrine. *no god*. The only true God—the Holy Trinity—is uncreated and eternal. See notes, Jn 1:1–3. Hil: "He is God from God … God is His own best interpreter, but His chosen Servant joins with Him to assure us that there is no God before Him, nor shall be after Him. His own witness concerning Himself is, indeed, sufficient, but He has added the witness of the Servant Whom He has chosen" (*NPNF* 2 9:82).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 43:11 Similar to the First Commandment (Ex 20:3) and other parts of Is (45:5, 18, 22; 46:9). *I, I am the* LORD. Emphatic confession. See note, v 25. God declares His absolute sovereignty, denying all hope of salvation based on our own works because salvation is the work of God alone. See "salvation," p 843. *besides Me there is no savior*. Verdict of the court is given in v 13, verifying Him as the true God (cf Jn 8:58).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 43:12 *declared … saved … proclaimed*. God works salvation through His Word. See note, Rm 10:17. *when*. At the time of the exodus. *strange god*. Only the true God can claim to have been active in Israel's history.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 43:13 As in the past, so also in the future, God's plans will be unstoppable.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 43:14 *your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel*. The Lord is the Redeemer because of His rescue of Judah from the Babylonians, who will be defeated. See p 1227. *fugitives*. Instead of Israel, the mighty nations become exiles. *Chaldeans*. See note, 13:17. *ships*. Prison vessels, transporting the conquered.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 43:15 The Lord rules both Israel's ancient beginning and their present state. *Holy One*. See p 1227. *King*. See pp 1565–66.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 43:16 *a way in the sea*. The Lord prefaces His claim with a reminder of the exodus and the destruction of Pharaoh's armies.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 43:18 *Remember not*. Does not mean God's people should forget the former things by which He revealed Himself (46:9). The Lord instructs them to set aside reflection on the exodus so they can consider a still more glorious future. *former things*. Things predicted and fulfilled (cf 41:22; 42:9; 43:9; 46:9; 48:3).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 43:19–21 Israel could expect something new—a miracle so marvelous as to eclipse the former things. Cf Col 2:17.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 43:19 *a new thing*. Rather than looking back on the glory days of the past exodus, the Lord wants His people to see Him as their present provider of exodus (cf Jer 23:7–8), their deliverer from Babylon. He demonstrates this by bringing life-giving water to His people living in the wilderness and desert (cf Ps 42:1; 63:1; Jn 4:14; Rv 7:16).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 43:20 *My chosen*. Like v 7, this section (vv 16–21) ends with a reminder of the people's purpose—to give praise to the Lord and spread His name among the nations (cf Gn 12:1–3).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 43:22–24 The people rejected God's invitation to call on Him; they have only burdened Him with their sins without sacrifice or apology.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 43:22 *call upon Me*. Israel failed to cry to God and so needs rescue. See p 842. *weary of Me*. Astonishing that the weak have tired of the One who is strong, but Israel has tired of receiving the Lord's strength. Cf 40:28–31.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 43:23 *burnt offerings*. Israel's worship became a performance and hypocrisy. God rejected it as an insulting abomination. See note, 1:11; see also pp 170–71.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 43:24 *sweet cane*. "Aromatic cane" or reed used in the preparation of holy anointing oil (see note, Ex 30:23). *money*. Lit, "silver." See note, Jsh 24:32. *fat*. Considered a choice part of the sacrificial animal, burned on the altar because it "is the LORD's" (Lv 3:14–16). *burdened Me with your sins*. What the Lord wanted was not only the sacrifices but a people with whom He could have fellowship, whose character reflected His own. The promises connected to the sacrificial actions were to empower a new heart and life. Because the people failed to offer these appointed sacrifices, their sins were heaped up before the Lord. Jesus echoes this language of being burdened and weary in Mt 11:28–30.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 43:25 *I, I am He*. Note two emphatic confessions (cf v 11), which refer to who God is and what God does. The teachings are inseparable, and the Lord elevates their proclamation above everything else. *blots out*. God forgives sins completely (1:18). *for My own sake*. See "for Your name's sake," p 842. *not remember*. Cf Ps 51:1, 9; Jer 31:34.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 43:26 *Put Me in remembrance*. The Lord calls Israel to focus on what matters most. *argue together*. See note, 1:18.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 43:27 *first father*. Adam was the father of all people; Abraham, of the Israelites (51:2; Jsh 24:3). *mediators*. Those appointed to intercede on behalf of Israel, such as prophets and priests.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 43:28 *princes of the sanctuary*. Chief priests.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 43** The Lord bears witness in a courtroom setting that He is the only source of salvation. Reject any god, religion, or doctrine that declares that human works or actions contribute in any way to salvation. Instead, give all glory to God alone for the salvation He vows to you through the person and work of Jesus. • O blessed Holy Trinity, one true God, declare me righteous by Your grace alone, and call me by Your name, that I may bear witness to You among the nations. Amen.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 44:1 *now*. Refers both to a change in the argument's logic and a change from past to present/future. *O Jacob My servant*. The Lord uses comforting language to describe Israel. *have chosen!* Completed action of the verbs demonstrates secure status before the Lord. See "choose," p 5.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 44:2 *formed you from the womb*. Promise given to both Jeremiah and Paul. *Fear not*. Because Israel was delivered "to utter destruction" for its sins (43:28), it had every reason to be afraid. Anyone facing destruction knows how welcome and necessary it is to be told repeatedly: fear not. If the enslaved Israelites are to cast out fear, they must see the folly of trusting idols (vv 9–20; cf 40:18–20; 41:5–7, 21–24). *Jeshurun*. "Upright," poetic name for Israel.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 44:3 *pour water*. Water brings life where there is none (43:19–20; Ps 1:3). *pour My Spirit upon your offspring*. Gift of the Holy Spirit is life-giving. Those with the Spirit are no longer grass that withers but are full of life (v 4). See note, Ezk 36:27.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 44:4 *spring up*. Blessings of the Spirit are described as having the effect of showers of rain on "thirsty land" (v 3; cf Jl 2:23–32; Ac 2).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 44:5 *This one … another*. Among the descendants (v 3) of the new Israel will be Gentiles, who cannot claim sonship by natural birth. They will give oral and written testimony of their desire to be the Lord's and will enjoy the blessings of membership in His people. *write on his hand*. Beyond calling on God's name, some place a visible reminder

of God on themselves, recalling the binding of the Word on one's hand and forehead (Dt 6:8).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 44:1–5 Through the work of God's Spirit, the chosen people grow in number. When you share God's Word with others, bear in mind that conversion and salvation are the Holy Spirit's work through the truth you share. Take comfort and confidence that He will fulfill His promises. • O gracious Lord, pour out the Holy Spirit with all His blessings, that many may hear and believe through my testimony in Your name. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 44:6 *King of Israel*. God's special relationship with His own comes through His governance. See pp 1565–66. *Redeemer*. Unlike idols, God actually delivers His people. See p 843. *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291. The uniqueness of Israel's religion recalls the words of Moses and Miriam at the Red Sea: "Who is like You, O Lord, among the gods?" (Ex 15:11). Certainly the Lord is not one god among many. *I am the first and I am the last*. As first, He has no creator; as last, He alone remains standing. See Jesus' confession, Rv 1:8, 17–18. *no god*. "Their trust is not placed in the only God, beside whom there is truly no God in heaven or upon earth [Isaiah 44:6]. Therefore, the heathen really make their self-invented notions and dreams of God an idol. Ultimately, they put their trust in that which is nothing. So it is with all idolatry. For it happens not merely by erecting an image and worshiping it, but rather it happens in the heart. For the heart stands gaping at something else. It seeks help and consolation from creatures, saints, or devils" (LC I 19–21). Hil: "It is contrary to religion to say that there are two Gods, because we remember and declare that nowhere has it been affirmed that there is more than one God" (*NPNF* 2 9:19).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 44:7 *set it before*. Again in a courtroom setting (see note, 41:1), God orders the devotees of a god "besides" Him (44:6) to act as "witnesses" (v 9) on behalf of their idol. *I appointed an ancient people*. The Lord has chosen and guided Israel with clear, concrete, historical examples such as the exodus. *them*. Idolaters.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 44:8 *My witnesses!* Contrasted with the witnesses of the idols in v 9. The Lord does concrete historical deeds for Israel that can be seen, but the idols' witnesses can tell of no concrete actions and are put to shame. *Rock*. See p 843.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 44:6–8 The Lord calls the idolaters back to court and swears that He alone is God. If you experience fear about bearing witness before others, reread the passage—even commit it to memory. The Lord of hosts is with you when you share the Word. • You are my only refuge, O Redeemer. Love, care for, and strengthen me from first to last, eternal God. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 44:9–20 Humorous, satirical indictment against idolaters. See p 1335. "What does it mean to have a god? Or, what is God? Answer: A god means that from which we are to expect all good and in which we are to take refuge in all distress. So, to have a God is nothing other than trusting and believing Him with the heart. I have often said that the confidence and faith of the heart alone make both God and an idol. If your faith and trust is right, then your god is also true. On the other hand, if your trust is false and wrong, then you do not have the true God. For these two belong together, faith and God [Hebrews 11:6]. Now, I say that whatever you set your heart on and put your trust in is truly your god" (LC I 1–3).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 44:9 *nothing*. Cf 40:23. Idol worshipers entrust themselves to a delusion, whereas the Lord is a rock—strong and unmoved in the worst storms of life. *witnesses*. Because the idols need active creators, their weakness results in silent witnesses.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 44:11 *companions*. Associated with manufacturing and veneration of idols. *only human*. Ironically, the idol, dependent on its craftsman's strength, is supposed to be the source of strength.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 44:12 *ironsmith*. Blacksmith. *cutting tool*. Translated "axe" in Jer 10:3. To make a useless idol, he destroys a useful tool. *becomes hungry*. If the idol maker himself gets hungry and tired, can he produce something less dependent?

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 44:13 *carpenter*. An idol has only the "beauty" of a man and is less than its craftsman. *line*. Simple string with marks as a tape measure. *pencil*. Craftsman limits the idol's shape with a mere pencil. *planes*. With planes and perhaps chisels, he removes the excess wood. *compass*. For drawing round shapes of the idol. *dwell in a house*. Likely refers to little niches or shrines that show the idol's limits.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 44:14 Idols need the care of the carpenter. They are not the true God, who cares for His own people.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 44:15–17 The most sophisticated idol that a man crafts with the tools of his mind is just as ludicrous as a primitive god carved out of wood. Consider modern, sophisticated pantheism, which sees creation as god and commits the same folly.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 44:15 *warms himself … bakes bread*. It is preposterous to pray to something made of the same substance that serves as heating and cooking fuel. It can be nothing more than "the figure of a man" (v 13), a likeness and projection of himself, as fallible, unreliable, and impotent as he is.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 44:18 *They*. Both the idol and those who make and worship it are blinded. *he*. Unclear whether the idolater or God is intended. *has shut*. Lit, "he plastered their eyes [to prevent] seeing." Idols had white plaster eyes with dark eyeballs painted on. See note, 6:10.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 44:19 *abomination?* Clearly the craftsmen who build idols and fires with the same wood are left ignorant by their idols. Their folly and abomination are apparent to those who worship the Lord. See note, Pr 6:16.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 44:20 *feeds on ashes*. Turns to idols, made of the same substance as ashes, for nourishment and provision. *deluded heart*. Because the idol itself is a lie, those who worship it also base their lives on lies.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 44:21–22 *these things*. These comforting truths: There is only one true God. You are His servant. He has blotted out your transgressions (43:25). He has redeemed you.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 44:21 *My servant*. Israel serves a truly powerful God rather than sustaining a weak idol. *I formed you*. Opposite of idolatry.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 44:22 *blotted out*. God silences and removes any testimony of sin against His people. *like a cloud*. He covers their sins. *return to Me*. Israel is already redeemed and, therefore, can return. See p 1080. *redeemed*. See p 843.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 44:23 *Sing, O heavens*. Witness of nature called against the people in 1:2 is now called on to rejoice in the grace of the Lord. *depths of the earth*. Rejoicing will be complete when heaven and earth are also restored (65:17–25; 66:22–23; Rm 8:19–22). *redeemed*. See p 843.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 44:24 *Redeemer*. God begins the definition of Himself first as Redeemer, not Creator or Lord, showing His love to His own people. See note, Jb 19:25. *formed you from the womb*. God creates

His people with their redemption
in Christ clearly in view. See note, v 2.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 44:25 *signs of liars*. Pagans sought omens as supernatural backing for their words. *diviners*. Babylonians were particularly noted for dependence on official diviners and horoscopes. See note, Dt 18:10–11.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 44:26 *His servant … messengers*. OT prophets and, ultimately, His Son. What spokesmen proclaim in the name of Him who "made all things" (v 24) and whom the forces of nature obey (v 27) will come true, whereas fortune-telling diviners will prove to be liars (v 25).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 44:27–28 Promise is strengthened, fulfilling the rebuilding mentioned in 41:2–3, 25. Many attempts have been made to understand how the proper name "Cyrus" could show up in a text written 200 years before the time of Cyrus II, king of Persia (2Ch 36:22–23; Ezr 1:1–3). Some think this proves a later date for the writing of Is, making it written after Cyrus II. Others think a scribe living at the time of Cyrus II inserted the proper name into the eighth-century text. The name itself appears at other times in Persia. In fact, an earlier Cyrus reigned nearer the time of Isaiah (king in Parsua, 646 BC). Attempts to explain away the text fail to understand how important the use of Cyrus's proper name is to the argument of the text itself. This is clearly a prophecy and fulfillment from God. For another example of someone named centuries before his birth, see the prediction of Josiah's reformation in 1Ki 13:1–2.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 44:27 Allusion to the exodus (cf Ex 14). The Lord's people will once again be delivered from slavery.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 44:28 *Cyrus*. The Lord shows His unrivaled status among the false gods of Babylon because He is able to predict the proper name of Cyrus before this monarch lived. The Lord can keep His promises and comfort His people Israel. Cyrus II was king of Persia and conquered Babylon in 539 BC. *My shepherd*. Calling Cyrus a shepherd brings him in line with the leaders of Israel, such as Moses (Ex 3:1) and David (2Sm 7:8). *all My purpose*. Cyrus was to show the kind of concern and guidance a shepherd provides for his flock. *Your foundation shall be laid*. Cyrus issued a decree that allowed the Israelites to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 44:9–28 The Lord prophesies the restoration of His people, centuries before the events take place. Today, despite the

difficulties that beset you, the Lord holds your future securely. In fact, He planned for your future through His beloved Son. • O Redeemer, I entrust all my days to Your care. Fulfill Your purpose for me. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 45** Infinitely merciful and patient, God does not tire to repeat Himself. Again and again He promises to deliver His fallen creatures and goes to great lengths to persuade doubting and fainthearted souls to believe the proclamation of their liberation.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 45:1 *anointed*. See note, 1Sm 10:1. *right hand*. The Lord takes hold of Cyrus's right hand, as He did with Israel. *to subdue nations*. Familiar Davidic theme (Ps 2:8–12; 110). *loose the belts*. Figurative. A man "girded up" his loins in preparation for battle and donned his weapon (Ps 45:3). The loosening would remove the weapons and make him unprepared to fight. The kings were to be deprived of power.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 45:2–3 In 539 BC, when Cyrus surrounded the city of Babylon, the priests of Marduk submitted and declared him to be Marduk's chosen monarch. They then opened the city gates to allow him and his army to enter peacefully. Jesus is the ultimate Anointed One, who opens the gates of hell (Rv 1:18) and sets prisoners free (Jn 8:36).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 45:4 *chosen*. See "choose," p 5. *I name you*. For Israel's comfort, the Lord specifically names Cyrus, who has done nothing to earn his status in the Lord's sight. *you do not know Me*. Though Cyrus used the Lord's name in his edict and attributed his success to the Lord, Isaiah notes that his words and actions do not stem from genuine faith. See note, Ezr 1:2.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 45:5 See notes, 43:10, 11.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 45:6 *that people may know*. God acts to spread the message of salvation throughout the world because He is the only God for all (Mt 28:18–20).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 45:7 *create darkness*. Indicates aspect of God that the Vulg translates in v 15 as "the hidden God" (*Deus absconditus*). In His hiddenness, the Lord brings judgment and destruction; in His revealed state, He ushers in light and life (cf Jn 1:14). *well-being and … calamity*. The Lord is not the source of evil or the cause of sin. Nothing happens without the Lord's knowledge and permission. He is the cause of well-being. He may inflict retribution, but He may also permit calamity to come through human sinfulness, through Satan, or through the sin-corrupted order of the natural world.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 45:8 *rain down righteousness*. God's righteousness is boundless, free, and refreshing. See note, Am 5:24. *righteousness*. See p 843.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 45:9 *him*. Anyone who challenges God's creation and leadership. *a pot among earthen pots!* All human beings are made from the same dust (Gn 2:7). *Does the clay say*. The silent clay accepts the potter's shaping as Israel should accept the shaping of God. *no handles*. Request for improvement.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 45:10 Child does not question the parent but is thankful for life and birth.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 45:11 *Holy One of Israel*. See p 1227. *him*. Israel. *Ask Me*. Ambr: "To God the things that are to come are present, and for Him Who foreknows all things, they are as though they were past and over" (*NPNF* 2 10:217).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 45:12 *host*. Innumerable stars, planets, and heavenly bodies.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 45:13 *him*. Cyrus. See note, v 1. *My exiles*. Cf 43:6. *not for price or reward*. Exiles had nothing to contribute to their emancipation. Their undeserved deliverance envisions the spiritual liberation of all nations held "in chains" (v 14) by Satan's bondage and ransomed "not with … silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ" (1Pt 1:18–19). *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 45:1–13 The Lord rescues Israel through Cyrus, the pagan king of Persia. The Lord uses all creation—even Satan!—to accomplish His good purposes. If the devil and an idolater can come to such notable service, will the Lord not use you to great purpose? He has already purposed your salvation through the blood of Jesus, His Anointed. • Call me to service, O heavenly Potter. I am at Your disposal. Amen.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 45:14 *Egypt … Cush … Sabeans*. See note, 43:3. *you*. Israel. *come over in chains*. Enemies are forced to acknowledge Israel as the chosen people of the only true God. *God is in you*. Nations come to faith. See note, 19:24–25.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 45:15 *a God who hides Himself*. The Lord and His plans are hidden to those who make idols (i.e., wealthy Egyptians in v 14). See note, v 7. *Savior*. Only those who turn away from idols in repentance and turn to the Lord in faith will be saved. Luth: "These are the words of the prophet, who had already predicted these words of consolation. Now he

is snatched into a trance of the Word of God, as if to say, 'Dear God, how strangely You deal with us!' "
(AE 17:131).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 45:16 *them*. Idolaters.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 45:17 *saved … everlasting salvation*. Idols of wood cannot save themselves, but God saves His own eternally. See p 843. *you*. Israel.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 45:18 *He is God!* Prophet interjects expressions or responses of faith while introducing the Lord's message.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 45:19 *not … in secret*. Though God determines how He will save His fallen creatures, He proclaims His good and gracious will to carry out His plan "from the beginning" (46:10; cf Ac 3:18, 21). *offspring of Jacob*. Israel.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 45:20 *survivors of the nations!* The Lord calls the nations to a trial to compare their idols to Him (cf 41:22, 26; 43:9).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 45:21 *your case*. Idolaters are invited to speak. *no other god besides Me*. Exclusivity of the Lord dominates this chapter (cf vv 5–6, 14, 18, 21–22).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 45:22 *saved*. See "salvation," p 843. *all the ends of the earth!* Denotes all Gentiles; an invitation for those outside of Israel to be included in the Lord's people of Israel (2:1–5; 66:18–19).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 45:23 *I have sworn*. Just as Israel took oaths in God's name, God takes oaths in His name as there is nothing more enduring. See "oath," p 7. *every knee shall bow*. See "kneel," p 1276.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 45:24 *it shall be said of Me*. An aside, explaining how the allegiance mentioned in v 23 would be expressed by all people. *righteousness*. See p 843.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 45:25 *glory*. To praise. See pp 6–7.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 45:14–25 The Lord explains that all people will confess Him and will submit in faith or in fear. In times of discouragement or persecution, God seems hidden from us. Yet when Jesus hid His divinity from us while suffering on the cross, He was serving us most decisively. When the Lord seems far away, know that He is near, and confess His glory.
• Draw near, O Lord. Return as You have promised, that we may rejoice in the fullness of salvation. Until then, grant us eyes of faith. Amen.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 46:1 *Bel … Nebo*. Chief gods in Babylonian pantheon. Bel, equivalent of "Baal" in Hbr and a component in the name

"Belshazzar," is known also as Marduk (Merodach in Jer 50:2). Nebo, his son, appears in the name "Nebuchadnezzar." *on beasts and livestock*. Idols were carried in procession; however, see note, v 2.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 46:2 Idols were loaded facedown on beasts of burden to be carted off as spoil by victorious invaders of the city. Each of them in effect bows down and stoops in abject submission to the conquerors of Babylon (vv 1–2).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 46:3–13 In contrast to the idols of Babylon, the Lord carried His people; Israel did not carry Him. Three exodus images are used in these verses: a father carrying his son (Hos 11:1–4), a shepherd carrying his sheep (Ps 28:9), and an eagle carrying its young (Ex 19:4).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 46:3 *remnant*. See p 1080. *borne by Me*. As a mother cares for her children, so the Lord cares for Israel. Cf 49:15; 66:13.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 46:4 *made … bear … carry … save*. Emphasizes God's action in love and redemption. Just as children simply receive life from parents, Israel simply receives salvation from her gracious Savior.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 46:6 *weigh out silver*. The Lord mocks the absurdity of worshiping a created idol rather than the true God by laying out the idol's origins (cf 40:18; 44:10–19; 45:20).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 46:9 *former things*. See note, 41:22.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 46:10 Describes God's predictive power, esp the foretelling of Cyrus. See note, 44:27–28.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 46:11 *bird of prey from the east*. For Cyrus's rise to power, see note, 41:2.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 46:12 *stubborn of heart*. In 45:9–10, a woe is pronounced on those who think they can dictate to God how He is to let righteousness prevail.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 46:13 *I bring near My righteousness … salvation*. Fulfilled in the return from exile, but ultimately by the birth of Jesus, God with us. *salvation in Zion*. Where the Lord's righteousness and salvation will be displayed (cf Heb 12:22–24). See pp 843–44. *My glory*. Israel was God's chosen nation. He speaks as a proud father over his son.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 46** The Lord will humble mighty Babylon when He raises up Cyrus the Persian. The power and future of all nations are in God's hands. Pray for your leaders, that they may know the Lord and His ways. However, pray most of all for the return of our Savior-King. • O

Father, I am Your child, over whom You glory. Draw near to me this day in Your mercy. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 47:1 *sit in the dust*. Babylon arrogantly assumed that she would be "mistress forever" (v 7), in defiance of the Lord of hosts. *virgin daughter*. Previously not ravished by hostile invaders. *Chaldeans!* See note, 13:17. Class of people famous for their wisdom and knowledge (v 10; cf Dn 2:2, 4, 5, 10; 4:7). *no more … tender and delicate*. No longer privileged, they will be worked as slaves.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 47:2 *grind flour*. Task of female slaves (cf Ex 11:5). *put off … strip … uncover*. Preparing to wade across the river. However, see note, Jb 31:10.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 47:3 *take vengeance*. Nations are not autonomous despite superior resources and armaments. God governs the rise and fall of empires.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 47:4 *Redeemer … LORD of hosts … Holy One of Israel*. See p 1227.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 47:5 *mistress of kingdoms*. Babylon, the imperial city, ruled over 100 lesser kingdoms by its armies. But no longer would it be the "glory of kingdoms" (13:19). Cf Rv 18 for a similar taunt against Babylon, the NT symbol for all of God's enemies.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 47:6 *angry with My people*. The Lord showed His anger by bringing Israel into exile. His anger, though lasting only a moment (cf Ps 30:5), was fully expressed when He destroyed and desecrated His temple (587 BC). Cf Ezk 10. *profaned My heritage*. Chosen to be God's own possession, a holy nation, the Israelites, at God's direction, became the prey of a profane people because they would not walk in His ways (42:24). See notes, Ex 19:5–6.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 47:8 *lover of pleasures*. The daughter (v 1). In Rv, Babylon is the symbol of wickedness (14:8; 18:2–24). *I am, and there is no one besides me*. Lit, "I and only me alone." Babylon arrogated to herself the claim made repeatedly by God (43:11; 44:6, 8; 46:9). *widow … loss of children*. Situations of greatest loss for a woman.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 47:9 *loss of children … widowhood*. Queenly city would no longer have a king; her population would be destroyed. *sorceries … enchantments*. Key elements of their religion and culture. See note, v 11.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 47:10 *I am*. See note, v 8.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 47:11 *charm*. Babylon was known throughout the ancient world for sorceries and enchantments (v 9). These were often performed to avert calamity and/or to foretell it. The means used to

accomplish such magic was astrology (cf v 13). Such astrology, though, neither averted calamity nor foretold its coming. *charm away … atone*. Disaster, like an untamable monster, cannot be placated by magic and incantations.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 47:12 *Stand fast*. Sarcasm. *perhaps you may … terror*. They hope to frighten opponents with their elaborate devotion to false gods, which the ignorant would regard as winning the gods' favor.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 47:13 *divide the heavens*. Astrology is nothing new. Ancient Babylonians grouped stars into constellations and zodiacal signs for the purpose of casting horoscopes and predicting future events. See note, v 11.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 47:14 *they*. Babylonians. *like stubble*. Though they gaze at stars, Babylonians are no more lasting than the dry grass (40:7). *No coal … is this*. Wooden idols could be burned for warmth, but while still serving as idols, they do not give even this comfort.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 47** The Babylonians regard themselves as uniquely wise and blessed through their astrological devotion, but they will be enslaved and humiliated. If you put your confidence in astrology, horoscopes, incantations, or charms, you will fall too. True wisdom comes from the Lord and His Word. He gives His blessings through the Word and in answer to prayer. • O Lord, You hold my future. Grant me wisdom in making decisions and contentment in the blessings I receive, ever seeking greater opportunity to serve You alone. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 48:1 *house of Jacob*. Israel, named for their forefather. *waters of Judah*. Compares Judah to a source or spring of the people. Isaiah's audience was chiefly from Judah. *swear*. See note, Ps 63:11. Oaths identify them as former citizens of the Holy City, Jerusalem. See p 7.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 48:2 *holy city*. Jerusalem, Zion. See p 844. *LORD of hosts*. See p 1291.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 48:3 *former things*. The Lord of hosts is indeed the Lord of history. The former things happened exactly as He declared. Doubters should believe that new things, still hidden, will come. See note, 41:22. *I did them*. No idol or "carved image" had anything to do with planning and guiding the course of events (vv 3–5).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 48:4 *iron sinew … brass*. Like animals who refused to be led in the direction their master desired (cf Dt 9:6–13; Ps 75:5).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 48:6 *You have heard*. Israel knew from experience that "former things" (v 3), pronounced by God's prophets long in advance, materialized as foretold. *new things*. The Israelites should not hesitate to believe. However, they "never heard" the prophets' teachings with penitent hearts but scoffed at them instead (v 8; 5:19; see note, 1Sm 15:20–21).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 48:8 *before birth … a rebel*. Jacob, renamed Israel in Gn 32:28. His life was typified by deceit, treachery, and dishonesty (cf Gn 27:1–29; 30:34–43).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 48:9 *For My name's sake*. See p 842.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 48:10 *refined*. See notes, Mal 3:2, 3. The Lord foretells the Babylonian captivity and return so that Israel will not attribute those events to their idols (v 5). By this, the Lord refines His people for service to His glory. *furnace of affliction*. The exodus and now the Babylonian captivity.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 48:11 *For My own sake*. See p 842. *My glory*. God would not share His honor with idols.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 48:1–11 The Lord chastens Israel for stubbornness, indifference, and idolatry, noting that they were corrupt from the beginning. You, too, started life in the corruption of sin, which continues to manifest itself in sins like those of Israel. The Lord's refinement can purge away your sins. As you reflect on your persistent weaknesses, recall also the Lord's patience (vv 9–11) and the mercy announced for you in Christ. • Lord, forgive my obstinacy, and refine my attitude. Amen.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 48:12–16 Three servants are mentioned. The Lord called Israel (v 12); Cyrus, who defeated Babylon (v 14); and the sent One (v 16b).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 48:12 *I am the first, and I am the last*. See note, 41:4. Sets the Lord apart from any god, man, or event that would seek to compete with Him.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 48:13 *My right hand*. Astrologers foolishly ask the stars what will happen next, while God holds the stars in His hand. See "right hand," p 843. *call to them*. The Lord arranges and orders the stars and knows all of them by name (Jb 38:31–32; Ps 147:4).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 48:14 *you … them*. The nations. *loves him*. As the Lord "set His love on … and chose" (Dt 7:7) the children of Israel to be "His servant" (Is 48:20), though they did not deserve this distinction (cf Dt

4:37; 7:6–8), so He let Cyrus experience His favor for the purpose of liberating the chosen people (Is 45:1–6).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 48:16 *in secret*. See note, 45:19. *And now*. Cyrus is referred to in vv 14–15. In v 16, a new Servant who was sent "to seek and to save the lost" (Lk 19:10) suddenly speaks. Made flesh in the fullness of time (Gal 4:4), the eternal Word (Jn 1:1) has more to say in the opening verses of ch 49 and in 50:4–6. *the Lord God has sent Me, and His Spirit*. The Servant will be sent, and He, with the Father, will send the Spirit (Jn 14:16–17, 26; 15:26; 16:7).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 48:17 *Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel*. See p 1227. *teaches you to profit*. See note, Ps 1:3.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 48:18 *peace … like a river … waves of the sea*. Unlike occasional flow of a seasonal stream. Amos employs this same metaphor when he calls Israel to let justice and righteousness flow like a perennial spring (Am 5:24).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 48:19 *like the sand*. Abraham, Israel's ancestor and the father of all believers, was promised countless offspring (Gn 13:16; 15:5; 17:5–6; Rm 4:16; 9:6–8; Gal 3:29; see note, Is 44:5).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 48:20 *Go out from … flee*. Complete and permanent severance from "the way of sinners" and "the seat of scoffers" is required (Ps 1:1; cf Rv 18:4–5). *redeemed*. See p 843.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 48:21 Referring to the exodus.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 48:12–22 The Lord distinguishes His people from the nations and promises enduring peace through His Servant and His Spirit. This promise was fulfilled for your sake by Jesus of Nazareth (Mt 11:27–30). • Lord Jesus, grant me Your Spirit to sustain me in God's peace. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 49** *Listen to Me*. The Speaker, unnamed as in 48:16, is the Servant (vv 3, 5–6), who now explains why "the Lord God has sent" Him (see notes, 48:16; 42:1).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 49:1 *O coastlands*. Distant lands to the west, the farthest extent of the known world. *called*. Chosen or appointed. *from the womb*. As God's spokesmen (such as Jeremiah, John the Baptist, and Paul) were chosen for their task before they were born (Lk 1:15; Gal 1:15), so the Servant was called and equipped to bring His message of salvation to a worldwide audience before He became incarnate in a virgin's womb. *He named My name*. Several OT passages speak about the mother or the birth

of the Messiah (cf Gn 3:15; Ps 22:10; Is 7:14; Mi 5:2). Jesus was named while still in His mother's womb (Mt 1:21–23).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 49:2 What they hear has the cutting edge of a sharp sword and hits its mark with the penetrating force of "a polished arrow" (cf Jer 1:10; 23:29). Nothing can blunt these words, for God's hand hides them in His scabbard and quiver. This Servant's weapons come from His mouth, i.e., His words (cf Eph 6:17; Rv 2:12, 16; 19:15).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 49:3 *servant*. God redeemed Israel, His disobedient servant, from the Babylonian exile in order to be glorified (60:21; 61:3). Yet if God was to be glorified, He needed a sinless Israelite, a Servant who "according to the flesh" was of the race of Israel (Rm 9:5), yet "separated from sinners" (Heb 7:26). Nothing but the perfect service and obedience God demanded would rescue a world of sinners, including Israel. To the Servant capable of this deliverance, God said: "You are My Son" (Ps 2:7).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 49:4 *labored in vain*. Redemption came by way of suffering and agony so intense that the Servant "in the days of His flesh … offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears" (Heb 5:7). Cf Mt 26:39; 27:46. *vanity*. The Servant speaks of the seeming ineffectiveness of His work, but nevertheless relies on the Lord for His strength. *right … recompense*. An angel appeared to assure Him of the justice of His cause and the certainty of recompense (Lk 22:43; see note, Is 40:10).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 49:5 *formed Me from the womb*. See note, v 1. *Jacob back to Him*. The One called Israel in v 3 is to bring Israel back to the Lord; this means the Servant is not the nation of Israel, but One representing the nation for its restoration. Similarly, Adam, though one man, is representative of all humanity (cf Rm 5:12; 1Co 15:45). This same "one for all" idea characterizes Jesus. His death, burial, and resurrection are given to the baptized (cf Rm 6:1–10).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 49:6 *too light a thing*. The Servant is to effect a salvation benefiting not only the "preserved of Israel" but extending "to the end of the earth." *a light for the nations*. This Servant is to be a light for the nations (Lk 2:30–32; Jn 8:12; 9:5). The nations have a prominent role throughout Is (cf 2:1–5; 11:10; 25:6–9; 40:5; 66:23). *salvation*. Hbr *yeshu'ah*, the basis for the name "Jesus" (Mt 1:21).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 49:7 *Redeemer*. Stresses the Lord's role as the One who rescues (cf 41:14). See note, Jb 19:25. *Holy One*. Focuses on the

Lord's judgment. See p 1227. *despised*. He who was to be "a light for the nations" was "abhorred by the nation[s]." But "the darkness has not overcome it" (Jn 1:5; cf 1Jn 5:4). Cf 1Tm 6:15; Is 52:15. *prostrate themselves*. Even kings and princes will be found among His subjects, humbly falling down before the King of kings and Lord of lords. *faithful*. Despite the way the world and its rulers have treated the Servant, they will still kneel before Him (52:15; 60:14). *Holy One of Israel*. See p 1227. *chosen*. See "choose," p 5.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 49:1–7 Further description of the Servant-Savior is provided by the Lord. The Servant will administer not only the "sword" of God's Law but also the salvation delivered for you through the Gospel. • Shine upon us, O Light for the nations, and extend to all people the promise of salvation. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 49:8 *time of favor*. Promises of the Year of Jubilee (cf Lv 25), during which land was returned to its original owners and prisoners were set free (cf Is 61:1; Lk 4:16–21; see p 206). *answered*. From the eternal heights, God sees the deadly struggle as a thing of the past. *You*. The Lord's Servant. *day of salvation*. God's eternal view shows that the time of humiliation has become "a time of favor"; the day of agony has turned into "a day of salvation." See "salvation," p 843. *a covenant to the people*. See note, Mt 26:28. *apportion the desolate heritages*. The Servant's suffering was an atoning sacrifice (53:5–6), and so by His victory God extended favor and salvation to the people of Israel and to all prisoners (v 9) held by Satan in the dungeon of sin and death (cf ch 42). See "portion," p 7.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 49:9 *prisoners*. Captives will be restored to their homelands and given new lands.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 49:10 Quoted in Rv 7:16–17 as a picture of heaven. *not hunger or thirst*. Restoration to God's favor by the Servant is portrayed in terms of physical safety and satisfaction of bodily needs (see note, 40:11). *He who has pity*. The Servant will guide them as a shepherd.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 49:11 *highways … raised*. Cf 35:8; 40:3–4; 62:10.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 49:12 *land of Syene*. Modern Aswan, on the first cataract of the Nile. However, the meaning of Hbr *sinim*, occurring only here, is not certain. When Judah was exiled by the Babylonians, people were scattered across the ancient Near East, even as far as Egypt (cf Jer 42–43). The Lord promises to gather His people from the four corners of the earth (cf Dt 30:4; Jer 31:8, 10; Mt 24:31). See map, p 717.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 49:13 *Sing … singing!* Song boasts not of Israel's achievements but of the fulfillment of God's promises to His people (other songs in Is include ch 12; 24:16; 25:1; 54:1; cf 30:29). See p 993. *has comforted … will have compassion*. Also used in texts that look back and move the prophecy forward (cf 12:1; 61:2).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 49:14 Deliverance of Israel and the nations, described as a certain reality (vv 1–13), is now viewed from the human standpoint of a promise to be believed (vv 14–26). The Lord pleads for faith in His tireless love and limitless power. See "Zion," p 844.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 49:15 *I will not forget you*. Even if the unthinkable happened, like a mother forgetting her child, God will never forget His own.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 49:16 *engraved you on the palms of My hands*. It was normal practice that an owner's name be engraved on his slaves; it is reversed here to show how far the Lord will go to remind Israel of His love. *walls*. Though Jerusalem's walls may be torn down, they are always in God's view.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 49:17 *builders make haste*. See ESV note. Picture is of a rebuilt Zion, a reinhabited Jerusalem. In 48:20–21, Israel streams back to Jerusalem. *destroyers*. Those returning will displace the former invaders who destroyed Jerusalem.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 49:18 *they all gather*. The "builders" (or "children") of v 17. *ornament … as a bride*. The ransomed, coming from all directions of the compass, adorn Zion as jewels on a bride's gown. As a bride treats her wedding dress, so should Israel treat the nations who believe in the Lord.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 49:19 *too narrow*. Zion, seemingly "bereaved and barren" (v 21), will become the mother of offspring so unexpectedly numerous as to overcrowd the once "devastated land." However, Israel's restored population previews a spiritual commonwealth, the people ransomed by the Servant's blood and spread across every national boundary. See notes, 1:27; 48:19; cf 54:1–3; Gal 4:26; Rv 5:9–10. *those who swallowed*. Former Babylonian captors will be distant and forgotten.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 49:20 *children of your bereavement*. Throughout the ancient world, a woman who bore many children was treasured by her husband. The reasoning was influenced by basic issues of survival (Ps 127:3–5) and economy. It was a deep disappointment if a wife had no

children (e.g., Sarah, Leah, Rachel, Hannah; cf Gn 29:31; 1Sm 1:6; Is 54:6). Isaiah refers frequently to the theme of childbirth and barrenness (7:14; 8:3; 9:6; 26:16–18; 29:23; 37:3; 44:3–5; 45:10–11; 47:8; 49:21; 54:1–3; 66:9).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 49:21 *borne me these?* Sudden increase amazes Israel in light of her former barren state.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 49:22 *lift up My hand … signal*. The Lord needs but to give a signal to the nations and their rulers to secure their readiness to promote the welfare of His sons and daughters (see note, 5:26; cf 18:3; 62:10). *bring*. The nations will not merely allow the captives to return but will bring them.
Cf 40:11.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 49:23 *Kings … queens*. Even the nobles of their former oppressors will serve them. *lick the dust*. Act of extreme humility. See note, Gn 3:14. *wait for Me*. While all this is desperately desired, there is still a time of patient waiting to come.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 49:24–25 Seems impossible that the weak should escape from the strong, yet the Lord will demonstrate His greater strength by delivering His own.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 49:26 *eat their own flesh*. Opposition to God's people is self-destructive (cf Jgs 7:22; Rv 16:4–7). *Savior*. His saving of His people will come by having Israel's enemies destroy themselves. *Redeemer*. The Lord is both Judge and Redeemer; faith is His gift that brings salvation (cf Heb 11:31 on Rahab's faith). *Mighty One*. The mighty of this earth are no match for the Mighty One of Jacob (cf Is 1:24). See p 1227.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 49:8–26 Isaiah prophesies Israel's return and prosperity in contrast with the humiliation of the oppressors. Today, regard your sins with appropriate shame, but likewise see that the Lord, your Savior, has redeemed you. He will not forget you (v 15). He longs to restore you and your family. • Dearest Jesus, the memorials of my salvation are graven on Your palms. Show them to all as a sign of Your mercy and forgiveness toward me and all sinners. Amen.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 50** As in ch 49, the Lord exhorts His doubting and despairing people to believe His promises of deliverance. Though the Servant is not expressly named, He again appears in His role as Redeemer of Israel and of the nations (cf ch 49), speaking of His mission in the timeless expressions of prophecy. Israel's liberation from the Babylonian exile and repatriation in its homeland continue to be in the forefront of

Isaiah's vision, but they become tokens of all people's salvation from the curse of sin, and pledge the restoration of all nations. Ch 50 makes unique contributions to this theme. The exiles, though punished and sent away for their iniquities and transgressions, are not like a woman irrevocably divorced from her husband. Nor are they like children whom a father sold into slavery to pay his creditors. The gracious and omnipotent God agrees to renew the bonds broken by infidelity and disobedience. The chapter can be summarized as follows: behold, sinners need not despair; behold, their sins are atoned for; behold, it is dangerous to refuse forgiveness.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 50:1 *certificate of divorce*. Cf Mt 5:31; 19:7. Prophets often compare sin to marital unfaithfulness (Is 54:4–8; Ezk 16; see "Gomer," p 1428). *creditors*. God asks Israel if they seriously believe the impossible, namely, that He would need to sell Israel to pay what he owed to some overbearing creditor. *you were sold*. Cf Ne 5:1–5.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 50:2–3 The Lord can empty the seas and rivers, though their flow and limits seem constant. Israel is to have no doubt over His power to turn the course of nations.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 50:2 *no man*. By means of Cyrus's decree in 538 BC (cf Ezr 1), the Lord began to recall His people, but many did not return home (cf Ezr 2). Many in Babylon preferred to remain there, despite the prophecy in Is 48:20. *hand shortened*. Those who had made Babylon their home feared that the Lord would not be able to do what He had promised, that is, give them hope and a future (cf Jer 29:11) and rebuild Jerusalem. *the sea … a desert*. The Lord reminds Israel of the exodus events: drying up the Red Sea, turning the Nile to blood and killing its fish, bringing darkness upon Egypt (Ex 10:21), and giving Israel light (Ex 10:23). If He did it once, He can do it again (cf Is 43:18–19).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 50:4 *Me*. The Servant, identified by title in 42:1; 49:6. *tongue of those who are taught*. The Servant is the most excellent disciple because He listens before He speaks. "To listen" is to epitomize Israel's response to the Lord (cf Dt 6:4). *him*. One in exile. *awakens My ear*. While rebellious Israel turned a deaf ear to God, the Servant would "speak just as the Father taught" Him (Jn 8:27–29). Therefore, a word from Him sufficed to sustain the weary.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 50:5 Because the Servant is listening, it follows that He cannot be rebellious. This description sets Him apart from all other servants, prophets, or leaders of Israel, as everyone else had times in which

they turned their back on the Lord (e.g., Ex 4:13; Jer 20:9, 14; Jnh 1:3). Only one Servant could truly claim such obedience to the Lord (cf Jn 8:29).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 50:6 *gave My back … those who strike*. The Servant is abused by others as Jesus was in His Passion. *beard*. This detail of Jesus' appearance, commonly depicted by artists, occurs only here. Pulling out of a beard showed contempt and disrespect for the person (cf 2Sm 10:4–5; Ne 13:25).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 50:7 *not been disgraced*. Even death is not a disgrace for the Servant, who places His life in the Lord's hands. *face like a flint*. Jesus "set His face" when he resolutely set out for Jerusalem (Lk 9:51). See Jesus' determination to fulfill everything written by the prophets (Lk 18:31; 24:44).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 50:9 *declare Me guilty?* Charged with the sins of the world, yet vindicated and acquitted when He was raised from the dead, He "is at the right hand of God," defending the innocence credited to all who appeal to Him for justification (Rm 8:31–34). *Behold, all of them … eat them up*. The Servant's enemies will be as fragile and vulnerable as cloth, which even a tiny moth can destroy.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 50:10 *His servant?* Note how the Servant and the Lord are set parallel to each other. Fear and obedience are due to both. *trust in the name*. See "name," p 843.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 50:11 Those who try to "walk by the light" of their own fire, the do-it-yourself way of spirituality, will eventually have their lights extinguished. Only those who depend on the Lord will have the true light.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 50** The Lord contrasts His Servant's humility and obedience with Israel's rebelliousness. The Servant's obedience and suffering atoned for your sins and the sins of all the world. Walk in the light of His Word. In Him there is no disgrace. • Awaken my ear, O Jesus. Rouse me each day to fear, love, and trust my Lord. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 51** We may think that God has spoken enough words of comfort through His prophet (40:1; 49:13). However, God knows how "slow of heart to believe" (Lk 24:25) those are "who seek the LORD" (Is 51:1), even those whom He calls "My people" (v 4) and who "know righteousness" (v 7). Therefore, in this chapter He again pleads for faith in His power to redeem. Four times He calls them to listen to Him (vv 1, 4, 7, 21). He makes the invitation attractive by variations on the theme.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 51:1 *pursue righteousness*. In contrast to those who trust in themselves and their do-it-yourself spirituality (50:11). See "righteousness," p 843. *seek the* LORD. See p 843. *rock … quarry*. Israel did not create itself. It came into being like stones hewn and dug from a rock vein in a quarry.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 51:2 *but one*. Abraham, "as good as dead," became many when "by faith Sarah … received power to conceive" (Rm 4:19; Heb 11:11–12; cf Ac 7:5). *called*. Chosen by God. *bless*. The barrenness of Israel's three matriarchs, Sarah (Gn 11:30), Rebekah (Gn 25:21), and Rachel (Gn 29:31), highlight the fact that the Lord chooses the weak things of the world to shame the strong (1Co 1:27–28).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 51:3 *Zion*. Envisioned as both place and person (60:14; ch 62). See p 844. *comforts all her waste places*. Other promises of paradise restored are in 4:2; 32:15; 35:1–2; 61:3–4; 65:21–22 (cf Rv 21–22). *Eden*. More than merely returning to Jerusalem of the past, the restoration will be like the perfection of Eden. Israel will be once again a well-tended garden (cf Is 5:1–2).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 51:4–5 Cf 42:1–4; 49:6. The Lord will send His Servant to bestow these gifts. The Lord comes to His waiting people, not the other way around. Note the terms set parallel here: "law," "justice," "light," "righteousness," "salvation," and "My arms."

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 51:4 ✠ *law*. See p 971. *light to the peoples*. God's Word and restoration are not restricted to Israel but will touch a wide range of nations.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 51:5 He will powerfully divide the righteous from the wicked (cf Mt 25:31–46). *My arms*. See p 842.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 51:6 *vanish … wear out … die*. Neither creation nor the enemies of God's people are eternal. The material world is transitory, but the Word of the Lord "will not pass away" (Mt 24:35; cf Mt 5:18). *forever*. Contrast is similar to that in Is 40:6–8. The salvation and righteousness of the Lord will never fail. *righteousness*. See p 843.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 51:7 *know righteousness*. They were not only informed how and why they were to be right with God, but this law or teaching was also in their heart, motivating and shaping their lives. *the people … My law*. While all people have the Law written in their hearts, not all recognize its presence and the God who wrote it. *man … their*. Hbr *'enosh* (singular), often used for all humankind in poetry.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 51:8 *moth … worm*. See note, 50:9. *forever*. See note, v 6.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 51:9 *Awake*. It appears to those crying that the Lord is asleep, insensitive to their calling. See note, Ps 7:6. *arm of the* LORD. A cry to the Lord to act with His strong arm. It is a cry of faith that He can and will act as He did before. See p 842. *days of old*. Refers primarily to the exodus. *Rahab*. Egypt. *dragon?* Pharaoh.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 51:10 *sea*. Red Sea, which the Lord parted for the Israelites.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 51:11 *ransomed … shall return*. Answer to the prayer of "the redeemed" (v 9–10) comes "while they are yet speaking" (65:24). Verse is almost identical with 35:10. See "redeem," p 843. *Zion*. See p 844. *upon their heads*. Both blessings and blame were bestowed on the head with the laying on of hands (cf Gn 48:14–20; 49:26; Lv 16:21–22; Ezk 9:10; Jsh 10:24). The head (and face) identified an individual. The faces of the redeemed would express the joy they received.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 51:12 *I, I*. See notes, 43:11, 25. *comforts*. See p 1079.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 51:13 *the* LORD, *your Maker*. While God is the merciful comforter, Israel should remember that He is also the almighty Maker, their Lord far above them. *oppressor*. E.g., Babylon.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 51:14 *the pit*. Prisoners will not die in an oppressive dungeon. *his bread*. Even hunger will be satisfied.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 51:15 *stirs up the sea*. Image emphasizes distinction proposed in vv 10–11 (cf Jb 26:12; Ps 107:25). LORD *of hosts*. See p 1291.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 51:16 *My words in your mouth*. In 49:2, the Servant's "mouth" is "made … like a sharp sword" as God's spokesman. He is also promised divine protection. Both the Servant-Redeemer and Israel, the servant to be redeemed, play a part in God's plan of salvation. Both are given the title "servant." See note, 48:12–16. God redeemed and preserved Israel so that the Servant could say, "Salvation is from the Jews" (Jn 4:22). *covered you*. As a wall of protection. *establishing … the earth*. Cf 65:17–25.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 51:17 *stand up*. People of Israel had called out to the Lord in vv 9–11, but now the Lord turns the tables. It was not He who was sleeping but they. *cup of His wrath*. The devastating effects and injuries that came with drunkenness (Pr 23:29–35) illustrated the devastating effects of God's wrath. The cup from the Lord was too much for them to bear (29:9;

63:6; Ps 75:8; Lm 4:21; Ezk 23:32–34; Ob 16; Hab 2:16; Rv 14:10), causing their sons to faint or fall down drunk. *dregs*. Sediment of the grapes, which settles to the bottom of the container. Cup of God's wrath will give them their fill of idolatrous self-destruction. *bowl*. Hbr term appears on a bronze Phoenician bowl, discovered at Megiddo. This Phoenician drinking bowl was associated with a Marzeah feast (cf Am 6:3–6) in honor of Melqart (Phoenician god) and Shamash (Babylonian god).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 51:18 *her*. Jerusalem. *none to take her by the hand*. Leaders of Jerusalem were gone (3:1–12).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 51:19 *two things*. Described by the following words. *devastation and destruction, famine and sword*. First pair (abstract) is explained by second pair (concrete).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 51:20 *fainted*. Drunk on God's wrath (v 17). *antelope in a net*. Noble, wary antelope, though nearly impossible to shoot or chase down with horses, could be fooled by snares.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 51:21–22 *drunk, but not with wine*. See note, v 17.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 51:23 *tormentors*. Babylonians. *your back like the ground*. Conquerors stepped over the prostrate bodies of their victims and the humiliated prisoners who had to bow.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 51** The Lord pleads for the people to believe in His salvation and describes the misery of living under His wrath. Unrepentance lulls us into spiritual sloth, so that we do not discern the Lord's purposes in view of His Word. Wake up and listen! The Redeemer calls daily, and His mercies are new each morning. • Draw near, O Lord, and remove the cup of wrath from my hand. Replace it with the new cup of Christ's blood. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 52:1 *Awake, awake*. Asked by fainthearted saints to "awake" from apparent unconcern for His people (51:9), the Lord again directs them to rouse themselves from the stupor of despair (51:17) and to awake from the nightmare of hopelessness. *put on your strength*. People are identified by their clothing, which signifies their relationships to others and the character of their calling (e.g., priestly garments, armor). *Zion*. See p 844. *beautiful garments*. Priestly garments. This reassures Israel that they can go back to communing with their God. *uncircumcised … unclean*. Babylonian conquerors did not observe the rites provided by God in His covenant with Israel.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 52:2 *from the dust*. Instead of sitting in the dust like Babylon (47:1), Zion may rise from it. *seated*. Settled in Jerusalem. *bonds from your neck*. Captives were sometimes bound together at the neck.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 52:3 *for nothing*. This thought, repeated in vv 4–5, underscores God's sovereign control of history and the unmerited goodness of His redemption. When He "sold" them (50:1), their masters had no permanent claim to their prey. *redeemed without money*. Persian ruler Cyrus would send the exiles home. Israel would be redeemed through the sacrifice of the Servant (52:13–53:12), ultimately fulfilled through the sacrifice of Jesus (1Pt 1:18–19).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 52:4 *Assyrian*. Destroyed and exiled the 10 tribes of the Northern Kingdom in 722 BC (2Ki 17). *for nothing*. Without discernible guilt. See note, v 3.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 52:5 *here*. In Babylon, the scene of Israel's disgrace. *wail … My name is despised*. Leaders cry out but fail to call on the Lord for help.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 52:6 *My name*. Not only the appellation "LORD" but what the great "I AM" did and said to reveal Himself. See notes, Ex 3:14; 6:3. *here am I*. To know that name is to acknowledge and accept the way of salvation revealed by Him. See "name," p 843.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 52:7 *How beautiful*. St Paul quotes from this verse to show the necessity of proclaiming the Gospel if it is to be of any benefit (Rm 10:15). *publishes*. Hbr *shama'*, "to hear" or "to cause to hear." Israel's creed was such an announcement (Dt 6:4–9). *Your God reigns*. The fall of Israel's enemies brings words of good news.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 52:8 *watchmen*. Prophets (Ezk 33:1–9; Hab 2:1–4). *eye to eye*. As clearly as when a person looks squarely into the eyes of another (cf Nu 14:14). *return*. See p 1080.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 52:9 *comforted … redeemed*. See pp 1079, 843.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 52:10 *bared His holy arm*. The power of the Lord is terrifying for impenitent sinners but joy for those declared holy in His sight (cf 6:5; 33:17, 22; Ex 24:9–11; 1Co 13:12; 1Jn 3:2; Rv 22:4). See "arm," p 842. *all the nations*. Also called "all flesh" (40:5; 49:26; 66:16, 24).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 52:11 *there*. Babylon. *unclean thing*. Levitical institutions are back in effect (Nu 1:50–53). *you*. Levites. *vessels*. Cyrus

permitted the exiles to take with them "the vessels of the house of the LORD that Nebuchadnezzar had carried away from Jerusalem" (Ezr 1:7).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 52:12 *not … in haste*. Return from the Babylonian exile, recalling the deliverance from Egypt, was quite different in many ways (Dt 16:3). *flight*. Israel may leave Babylon in peace, so secure is their salvation. *rear guard*. Instead of the Levites being the front and rear guard of the holy vessels, the Lord Himself will do this, just as He did with the pillar of cloud and fire in the exodus (Ex 14:19–20).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 52:1–12 Final announcement that the exiles will return home in safety to serve the Lord. When the Lord calls and equips you for service, loose your bonds of fear and doubt. God's gifts and calling will suffice for you, and He will protect you. • Lead me forth, O Lord. Block my retreat from Your calling, for You reign on my behalf. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 52:13–53:12 Here believers stand on "holy ground" (Ex 3:5) and in the Most Holy Place of salvation's temple. This "vision of Isaiah" (Is 1:1) says what believers feel when, in spirit, they stand at the foot of Golgotha's cross: penitent sorrow for their part in wounding Jesus, the "man of sorrows" (53:3); humble gratitude that "the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity" (53:6) for which they should have endured the torments of hell.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 52:13 Begins the last of Isaiah's four Servant Songs (42:1–9; 49:1–13; 50:4–11; 52:13–53:12) and is parallel with 53:12—in this way the Servant's "exaltation" is at the beginning and end of His ministry. Paul equates this with Christ's preincarnate state of being God (Php 2:6) as well as his final state at His second coming, when "every tongue [shall] confess that Jesus Christ is Lord" (Php 2:11; cf Ac 2:33; 3:13; Eph 1:20–23). Luth: "Here we begin chapter 53. Until now you have heard Christ's kingdom depicted in the cross and that it is carried forward by faith and the Word alone. Yet that leading of faith, the Word, and the cross is not without deliverance and protection. In this chapter the prophet speaks primarily of the Head of the Kingdom as he treats of the person of the King and the manner of His deliverance. This is
the foremost passage on the suffering and resurrection of Christ, and there is hardly another like it. Therefore we must memorize this passage. . . . This is what the text says: This King will be glorious, but after His death. This indicates that this King is different from an ordinary one, since He will begin His reign after death" (AE 17:215).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 52:14 The Suffering Servant is so disfigured and marred that His identity as a human is questioned.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 52:15 *sprinkle*. Can also be read as "startle" (see ESV note), so the thought of amazement may continue from v 14. *that which … they see … understand*. Prophecy that the nations will see and understand the report (53:2–11) and divine declaration (53:12) that follows, describing God's work through the Servant's suffering.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 53:1 *heard from us?* Over the centuries, the prophets announced the coming salvation, but here the character of God's work of salvation is revealed in shocking detail, continuing the theme of astonishment (52:14). Just: "The words are spoken as if announcing events which had already come to pass" (*ANF* 1:256). Bern: "Oh! that they would be wise and understand. But except they believe they shall not understand" (*SLSB*, p 158). *arm of the LORD*. A mystery why God's arm would appear weak and allow the injury of His own Servant. Cf 40:10; 63:12; see "arm," p 842.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 53:2 *He grew up*. Judged by human standards, the Servant appeared to be the most unlikely agent of a heavenly mission, despised by men as He was. *young plant … root … dry ground*. Not a sturdy, deeply rooted tree, but a weak sapling. God let His Son grow up in vulnerable human flesh. The Servant was indeed a shoot from the root of Jesse (11:10). However, the outward kingdom of David's house had been cut down, and in the "dry ground" of the Roman Empire, there was no prospect of its revival. *no form or majesty*. He could not show the fullness of His majesty, for then He might be honored and spared the crucifixion. *no beauty*. Not that the Servant was ugly, but He appeared common.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 53:3 *despised and rejected*. Betrayed even by His friends. See note, Ps 41:9. *a man of sorrows*. Not His alone, but the sorrows and condemnation of all people. His griefs, sorrows, and stripes are not "the due reward" of His deeds, for "this man has done nothing wrong" (Lk 23:41). *hide their faces*. None could bear to see His sorrow or their own guilt reflected in His pain. *we esteemed Him not*. The disciples learned that Jesus was the Messiah (Mt 16:16), but they fled from the horror of His arrest and the cross, which convinced them He was not the Messiah (Lk 24:18–21).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 53:4 *our griefs*. Illness and disease are the consequences of sin, which Jesus bore (1Pt 2:24). *smitten by God*. Irony is

that Israel considered this Servant as stricken by God, but initially failed to realize that His suffering was not for His sins but for the sins of the people. He was not wounded for *His* transgressions or crushed for *His* iniquities but for everyone else's. Ambr: "Not Your wounds, but mine, hurt You, Lord Jesus; not Your death, but our weakness … and we, Lord, esteemed You afflicted, when You grieved not for Yourself, but for me" (*NPNF* 2 10:230).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 53:5 Several connections to Day of Atonement in vv 4–6, esp the idea of substitutionary atonement (cf Lv 16:21–22).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 53:6 We raced from God in rebellion, yet God placed our guilt on the only One who stayed beside Him, the Servant. One innocent Lamb remained, and that Lamb of God received the punishment of the flock that fled.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 53:7 *He opened not His mouth*. He could not fully identify Himself, lest they should save Him from death. He was also silent concerning our sins, which caused His death. *like a lamb*. John the Baptist called Him "the Lamb of God" (Jn 1:29, 36). Cf 1Pt 1:18–19; Rv 5:6, 8, 12. Just: "As the blood of the passover saved those who were in Egypt, so also the blood of Christ will deliver from death those who have believed" (*ANF* 1:254).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 53:8 *His generation*. Shockingly, no one from His own generation understood what was going on. The incarnation of Christ was and remains a mystery. Hil: "Penetrate into the mystery, plunge into the darkness which shrouds that birth, where you will be alone with God the Unbegotten and God the Only-begotten. Make your start, continue, persevere. I know that you will not reach the goal, but I shall rejoice at your progress. For He who devoutly treads an endless road, though he reach no conclusion, will profit by his exertions. Reason will fail for want of words, but when it comes to a stand it will be the better for the effort made" (*NPNF* 2 9:55; see also p 58). *land of the living*. In contrast to Sheol. See p 792.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 53:9 *His grave with the wicked*. He died with the wicked, though only a thief recognized His royalty at His death (Lk 23:32, 40–43). *rich man*. He was buried in a rich man's tomb (Jn 19:38–42). *no deceit*. He told no lies, but confessed plainly who He was before His accusers (Mk 14:62).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 53:10 *the will of the* LORD. Jesus' suffering and death were part of God's plan before the creation of the world (cf Ac 2:23; Eph 1:3–10; 1Pt 1:20; Rv 13:8b). *an offering for guilt*. One word in Hbr,

translated “guilt offering” in Lv 5:15–16. Its purpose in the ritual was to make restitution for the wrong done, thus to satisfy the demand for holiness. “Isaiah interprets the Law, so that we may know Christ’s death is truly a satisfaction for our sins, or remedy, and that the ceremonies of the Law are not. He says, ‘When his soul makes an offering for sin, he shall see his offspring,’ and so on (Isaiah 53:10). The word used here means a victim for transgression (*asham*). In the Law this illustrated that a certain Victim was to come to make satisfaction for our sins and reconcile God. This was so that people might know that God wishes to be reconciled to us, not because of our own righteousnesses, but because of another’s merits: Christ” (Ap XXIV 23). *His offspring*. His disciples and all believers would be God’s children (Jn 1:10–13), the new Israel (Gal 6:15–16). *prosper*. Because the Servant paid the full penalty incurred by the sin of the world, His days did not end in death. By dying and rising again, He became the source of life to spiritual offspring without number (1Pt 1:3–4, 23; 1Jn 5:1).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 53:11 *He shall see*. Isaiah again takes up the recurring theme of “seeing” and “knowing or understanding” (see note, 52:15). In contrast to Israel (42:18–19), this Servant sees and knows. The Servant knew and did the will of God so perfectly that, for the sake of His obedience, disobedient humanity is entitled to be accounted righteous (Jn 17:19, 25). It is also true that by knowing and receiving the Servant, sinners are justified in God’s sight (Lk 1:77; Jn 17:3; 2Co 4:6). “What is Christ’s knowledge unless it means to know Christ’s benefits, the promises He has scattered throughout the world by the Gospel? To know these benefits is properly and truly to believe in Christ, to believe that He will certainly fulfill what God has promised for Christ’s sake” (Ap IV 101). *righteous one … accounted righteous*. See p 843. The Servant justifies many. In this case, “many” is the opposite of “none”; best understood as “all” in this context. The “many” is a theme of Jesus (cf Mt 26:28; Mk 10:45). In these cases, “many” also refers to all, for “in Christ God was reconciling the world to Himself” (2Co 5:19; cf 1Jn 2:2).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 53:12 *I*. The Lord pledges to honor the Servant’s sacrifice. *divide Him a portion*. See “portion,” p 7. *many … strong*. See ESV notes. *poured out*. Not the typical term for handling the blood of a sacrifice, though comparable to that term’s use in Ps 22:14. Hbr term here describes laying something “bare” or “empty,” exposing it. *soul*. Hbr *nephesh*, also translated “life.” During sacrifice, the victim’s blood/life was

laid bare, or emptied out, in the act of atonement. *intercession*. Hanging between two thieves and praying for those who crucified Him, Jesus was at the same time making atonement for all people. See "atonement," pp 5; see also p 2117.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 52:13–53:12 In this final Servant Song, the Lord sacrifices the innocent Servant for the sake of ignorant, rebellious transgressors, making atonement for them. Commit this passage to heart. Few places in Scripture describe God's surpassing mercy for you in so touching a manner. • "What wondrous love is this, O my soul, O my soul! What wondrous love is this, O my soul! What wondrous love is this That caused the Lord of bliss To bear the dreadful curse for my soul, for my soul, To bear the dreadful curse for my soul!" Amen. (*LSB* 543:1)

ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 54** The Servant's sacrifice of atonement (ch 53) opened the way for sons and daughters of Adam to become "servants of the LORD" (54:17). Redeemed, forgiven, and accounted righteous by virtue of the Servant's sacrifice for their sins, they are designated "His offspring" (53:10). They partake of His life when they are "born again … through the living and abiding word of God" (1Pt 1:23). Members of the same family, they form a community composed of "the nations" (Is 54:3). Ch 54 is a call to believe in the rebirth of Israel so that through Israel "all the families of the earth shall be blessed" (Gn 12:3).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 54:1–3 Giving birth to several children after once being barren is cause for rejoicing (cf Gn 16:1, 4–5; 30:22–24; 1Sm 1:2, 5–6, 11; Lk 1:24–25). Just as from Sarah's barren womb the Lord built a great nation (Gn 12:2) that outnumbered the descendants of Hagar ("the desolate one," Is 54:1), so the offspring of the Servant (cf 53:10) will be many. The nation will again occupy the land as during the conquest of Joshua.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 54:1 *barren one*. As Sarah, childless until age 90, did not expect to give birth to an heir (Gn 17:17), so there was no prospect, according to human reason, for Jerusalem to become alive with citizens. *her who is married*. See God's "divorce" with the Northern Kingdom (Is 50:1) and His renewed relationship with His people (54:4–8).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 54:2 *Enlarge the place of your tent*. The descendants will overflow the boundaries of their native land. *lengthen your cords*. Cords held up tents, which could be spread more broadly to encompass more space.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 54:3 *possess the nations*. Not by political or military subjugation, but by a conquest of people's hearts and minds (cf 49:7; 66:23; Gn 22:17–18; Mt 5:5). Luth: "We reign by the Word. Where the Word is preached, there we reign" (AE 17:235).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 54:4 *shame of your youth*. The humiliation of Egyptian slavery when Israel first became a nation (cf Jsh 5:9). *widowhood*. The Babylonian exile was her widowhood, since she, now mature, bore the reproach of a childless woman (cf Gn 30:1; 1Sm 1:5). See note, Ps 94:6.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 54:5 God is compared to a husband and Israel to His wife. Though He had deserted her for a time because of her unfaithfulness, He gathers her again "with great compassion" (v 7). Cf 1:21–31; 62:4–5; Ezk 16; 23; Hos 2:7–23; Rv 21:9. There never will be a time when she will have to bear the reproach of being a childless widow, for her husband, who is also her Maker, will care for her with compassion and "everlasting love" (v 8). *husband … Lord of hosts … Holy One … Redeemer ... God of the whole earth*. See p 1227. Poetic parallels exist with God being identified as husband and Redeemer in lines 1 and 3, and "Lord of hosts" and "God of the whole earth" in lines 2 and 4.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 54:6–7 *called you*. See "choose," p 5. *cast off*. The anger and judgment are but for a moment (cf Ps 30:5), just as in 61:2 "the day of vengeance" is compared to "the year of the Lord's favor." God's alien work of judgment gives way to His proper work of salvation; He is "slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love" (Ex 34:6; cf Ps 145:8; Jl 2:13; Jnh 4:2). *brief moment*. The wrath she deserved will be shortened. As the Lord kept His oath not to send another flood to destroy the earth (Gn 9:8–17), so His steadfast love will not fail to put into effect the "covenant of peace" mediated by the Servant (vv 9–10; cf 42:6; 49:8).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 54:8 *overflowing anger*. Momentary outburst of anger rather than an endless outpouring of wrath, the full wages of sin. *hid My face*. God's anger was like the thunderclouds briefly hiding the sun. See note, 64:7. *your Redeemer*. See note, Jb 19:25.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 54:9–10 The umbrella of this "covenant of peace" is extended to non-Israelites. The Lord's call to all nations is a recurring theme throughout Is (e.g., 2:1–5; 11:10; 40:5; 42:6; 49:6; 53:12; 60:1–3).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 54:9 *days of Noah*. The flood was a reversal of creation, destroying human and animal life, covering the plants and mountains, so that the earth returned to the watery chaos that existed before

the second day of creation. Noah becomes, as it were, another Adam. *I have sworn … not rebuke you*. After the flood, the Lord made an everlasting covenant with Noah and his descendants (Gn 9:9–11). See "vow," p 7.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 54:10 *mountains may depart*. Unlike the world, God's promises are permanent (cf 51:6; Ps 89:33–34; Mt 24:35). *steadfast love*. See p 843. *covenant of peace*. Promised to Noah (Gn 8:20–9:17). *compassion*. See "mercy," pp 842–43.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 54:11–12 *afflicted one*. Jerusalem. *antimony*. Mineral used by jewelers or master masons to garnish stones. The Hbr word is the same word used for mascara or eye "paint" in 2Ki 9:30 and Jer 4:30; it could refer to the black mortar used to showcase beautiful stones in a wall. *sapphires … wall of precious stones*. With reference to precious stones, the Lord promises that He will build for Israel a lavish and secure new city (cf Heb 11:16; Rv 21–22). *pinnacles of agate*. Even tall buildings are bejeweled. *carbuncles*. Rubies or crystal.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 54:13 Jesus quotes this verse to characterize those who become His disciples. On the new discipleship, see note, 2:3. Luth: "All the wisdoms of the world speak of things that are evident. Contrary to reason, Christianity teaches concerning things that are not evident, and therefore reason collapses and is offended. Therefore all who adhered to this teaching were taught not by their own powers but by way of a gift from heaven. . . . Since the church is on earth, there is need of the Word. The spoken Word is needed to produce and to keep children. *taught by the* LORD. By the Spirit of God. Both must be there. Mother church bears her children through the Word [1Co 4:15; Gal 4:19; 1Co 3:6]. . . . Everywhere in Scripture the Word and its teachers are commended. The children of the church have to hear by means of the Word and come to faith through the work of God. The Word is from the mother [the Church], the Spirit from the Father. The voice gathers us into the church, and the Spirit unites us with God. Thus a son of the church hears the Word and is a disciple of God" (AE 17:243–44).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 54:15 Antagonism against the Messiah's rule does not originate with God. Efforts to destroy what He has built cannot succeed (41:11–16). *fall*. Suffer defeat.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 54:16 *smith … produces a weapon*. Each person who builds something designed to destroy is dependent on the Creator for each new heartbeat. Cf 10:5, 12 for God's use and control of godless powers as

"the rod" of His anger. *created the ravager*. As the Lord used Assyria in the eighth century BC, so He would use Babylon in the sixth century BC. Israel is not completely destroyed; a remnant always remains (cf 28:5).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 54:17 *confute*. As no one can challenge the Servant of 50:8–9, so here none can refute His people. *heritage*. Reputation. See "portion," p 7. *vindication*. God dismisses all who would accuse His people (Rm 8:33–34).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 54** Although the Lord cast off Israel because of their sin, they will henceforth enjoy His vindication and everlasting love. As it was in the days of Noah, a flood of judgment awaits those who do not turn from their sins of shame and disgrace. But just as the Lord faithfully gathered Noah's family to safety on the ark, so will the Lord gather those whom He has redeemed in Jesus. Because of our Lord's great compassion, He will never desert us. • Heavenly Father, let the mighty mountains and hills of this world always remind us of Your steadfast love for us. Enlarge our faith in You, especially when we face affliction. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 55:1 In the OT, longing for God and His wisdom is often associated with longing for water and food (cf Ps 36:8; Pr 18:4; Jer 2:13; for more on wisdom, see pp 775–78). *Come*. Repeated cry to come mimics the sounds of the marketplace, where the staples of life—water, bread, milk, wine—could be bought. Attendance at salvation's banquet, prepared by the Servant (see p 1178), is not restricted to the socially and financially elite. As a town crier, God broadcasts the invitation: "Come, for everything is now ready" (Lk 14:17). No one is forced to obey the summons. However, those who disregard it must reckon with the possibility that they have heard it for the last time (Is 49:8; Jn 12:35; 2Co 6:2). *waters*. Though readily available in many parts of the world, water was most precious in dry Israel. *no money … buy*. This merchant offers staples at no cost, because the Suffering Servant has already paid the price (cf Is 53:11–12).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 55:2 *not bread*. Describes false teaching. Also, mere bread, and water drawn even from Jacob's well, cannot satisfy our spiritual needs (Dt 8:3; Ps 42:1–2; 63:1; Pr 9:4–6; Jn 4:10–14; 1Pt 2:2). *Listen*. By listening, people receive the Lord's good, life-giving gifts (cf Is 6:9; 50:4–5). *rich food*. Cf 25:6.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 55:3 *you*. Plural; includes Israel and the Gentiles. *everlasting covenant … David*. The promises regarding David include the

Lord's sworn oath that the Davidic house will endure forever (cf 2Sm 7:13–16; 1Ch 17; Ps 89:1–4; 110; 132). See p 127. *love for David*. The illustrious reign God graciously granted David was in turn a prophetic guarantee of the eternal Kingdom that the Son of David would establish, as Paul proclaimed in Ac 13:34 (cf Ps 21:7; 89:34–37; Ezk 34:23–24). The prophet does not spell out the full implications of this new understanding of the Davidic covenant. But in the NT, the baptized reign with Christ forever (cf 2Tm 2:12; Rv 22:5).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 55:4 *Him*. David's Son, the Messiah. *a witness*. God's testimony to "the peoples" through Israel's king reached full clarity in "Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth" (Rv 1:5; cf Jn 18:37).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 55:5 *call a nation*. Many nations, esp those thus far unknown, will stream to Israel because of the deeds of the Lord (cf 2:1–5; chs 13–23). This envisioned worldwide outreach begins with the Lord's summons to Abram (Gn 12:1–3), who will be the source of blessing to all the families of the earth (Gn 18:18; 22:18; 26:4; 28:14). The election of Israel is the very means of salvation for the nations (cf Ex 19:5–6). At Sinai, Israel is distinctly marked and empowered to be an evangelist. *Holy One of Israel*. See p 1227.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 55:6 *Seek the* LORD. The Servant reconciles the sinner to the Lord. See "seek," p 843. *He is near*. The Lord has come near through His Word. The kind of "seeking" this chapter calls for is "listening" to the Lord's Word (cf Jer 29:13–14; Hos 3:5; Am 5:6, 14).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 55:7 Though all are invited, there is no room in the kingdom of grace for those who refuse to turn from their wicked ways or for those who think only of their own righteousness and feel insulted by God's offer to "abundantly pardon" their sins. Let no one presume to come on his or her own terms, because none can comprehend God's ways and thoughts to save fallen mankind. *return to the* LORD. Done only by the Lord's Word, which accomplishes that which He purposes (cf v 11). See "turn," p 1080. *abundantly pardon*. He will pardon and have mercy on every penitent sinner, no matter how much sin is "increased" (Rm 5:20). All others remain wicked and unrighteous in His sight. See note, Is 26:10.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 55:8–9 Seeking to understand all things about the ways of the Lord is futile. His plans and reasons are beyond our understanding (Jb 38:1–40:2; Rm 11:33–36).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 55:10–11 Whether or not we understand the ways of the Lord, we can trust that His Word is true and will do what it says. Luth: "He is speaking of ways and thoughts which have to do with the Word. . . . Rain and snow are not useless, but they *water* the earth, *giving seed to the sower*. The rain can achieve everything for the earth. . . . When we experience the absence of rain, we see what the earth produces. So He takes away the glory of the earth and shows that it is not the earth that does it but that it is accomplished by the rain. So our building and promotion of the church is not the result of our works but of the Word of God which we preach" (AE 17:257–58). "This is all because of the Word, which is a heavenly, holy Word, which no one can praise enough. For it has, and is able to do, all that God is and can do" (LC IV 17).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 55:10 *do not return there*. Before the rain and the snow are again drawn up into the sky as mist (Jb 36:27), they achieve the purpose for which they were sent. *bread*. See notes, Is 55:1, 2.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 55:11 The Word is no echo devoid of results. The Word always brings about what God wants done (45:23; 46:10–11; Ps 33:9; Jer 1:9–10; Mt 13:3–8, 18–23; Heb 4:12).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 55:12 *led forth*. Picture of captives returning to Jerusalem. *mountains … clap their hands*. See note, Ps 148:3–4.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 55:13 *Instead of the thorn … cypress*. A picture of paradise restored. In Gn 3:18, the Lord tells Adam that "thorns and thistles" will inhabit the land. Now, because of the Lord's salvation, the plants of Eden will spring up again, and the Lord's people will be invited back into the lush garden. See note, Is 35:1. *make a name*. See "for Your name's sake," p 842. *sign*. Just as creation became corrupt in Adam's fall (cf Rm 8:19–21), in Christ it will be restored to its pristine beauty, a sign of God's redemption.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 55** The Lord invites all to seek Him in His Word and to receive His good and satisfying gifts. Though the Lord invites us to listen diligently to His Word, we often listen carelessly or not at all. When we shut out God's life-giving Word, we are left to labor for that which does not satisfy. Jesus has accomplished the purpose for which He was sent: the pardon for sin, which He won at the cross. He gives abundantly to those from every nation who turn to Him. • Lord God, may Your Word continue to accomplish Your purposes among us and around the

world. Teach us to hold Your Word sacred and gladly hear and learn it. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Chs 56–66** Refers to strangers, or foreigners, as servants who will work the land on behalf of the Israelites (e.g., 61:5). This denotes a reversal for the Israelites, who were slaves in foreign lands.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Chs 56–59** Focus on the proper observance of the Lord's covenant, as well as His willingness to forgive those who repent.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 56:1 *justice … righteousness*. Responding to undeserved mercy and goodness (ch 55), the redeemed find happiness in doing what is right toward their fellow man (righteousness) and toward God (the Sabbath, v 2). See pp 842–43. *salvation … deliverance*. See pp 842–43.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 56:2 *Blessed*. See p 842. *son of man*. See note, Ezk 2:1. *the Sabbath*. See pp 200–201; see also note, Ex 20:8.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 56:3–8 The blessings of salvation are granted for two classes of people who, according to Israel's laws, were not eligible to join the congregation in its services of worship: eunuchs (vv 3–5) and foreigners (vv 6–8).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 56:3 *foreigner*. Gentile. *joined himself to the LORD*. A convert who received the covenant. See p 127. *eunuch*. Declared ritually unclean because he had been emasculated by those who put him in charge of women's quarters. See note, 2Ki 9:32; cf Dt 23:1; 2Ki 9:30–32; Jer 29:2; 38:7; Ac 8:27. *a dry tree*. A eunuch could not expect to have offspring of his own to perpetuate his name. Yet, God promises him spiritual blessings "better than sons and daughters" (v 5).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 56:4 *the things that please Me*. The Sabbath was a constant reminder of what was most important (cf Mt 6:25). *My covenant*. When people observe the Sabbath, they confess that they belong wholly to the Lord. To profane this holy day is to deny the Lord and His teaching (cf Am 8:4–6). See p 127.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 56:5 *My house*. The temple as embodiment of God's household for His people. *a monument and a name*. Absalom erected a monument to himself for remembrance because he had no children to carry on his name. A "monument and a name" is the name given to the main Holocaust memorial in modern Israel. *an everlasting name*. One that will never be disowned. See "name," p 843.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 56:6 *join themselves to the* LORD. See note, v 3. *minister*. Bring their offerings and prayers; embrace the covenant.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 56:7 *My holy mountain*. See note, 2:2. *house of prayer*. See p 959. *burnt offerings … sacrifices*. The worship of all peoples (cf v 3), here described in OT forms, will be acceptable to God. See pp 170–71. *a house of prayer for all peoples*. Cf 1Ki 8:41–43 for Solomon's dedicatory prayer of the temple and the anticipated prayer by Gentiles that God will hear.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 56:8 *outcasts of Israel*. See notes, 11:11–16; 44:5; Jn 10:16. The gathering of people from all nations is a continual theme in Is (cf 19:25; 49:6–7; 51:5; 55:5).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 56:1–8 The Lord's salvation will come not only for the chosen people of Israel but also for foreigners and outcasts. Today, pray for the Lord's strength so that you believe and do not abuse His grace. Keep your hands from evil, keep justice, and do righteousness. Those who repent are not cut off from the Lord's salvation. The deliverance revealed in Jesus' death and resurrection is for you and for all peoples. • Lord Jesus Christ, thank You for gathering us into Your kingdom, and for giving us Your holy name in our Baptism. Gather more people of every nation into Your house of prayer. Amen.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 56:9–57:13 Isaiah may be condemning the practices of a Canaanite death cult that his countrymen had adopted. The references are vague, but the practices may have combined funeral rites with fertility rites associated with the worship of Baal (see note, Nu 25:3).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 56:9–12 In contrast to the comfort provided to the foreign believer who was in fear, the Lord takes to task the comfortable leaders of His people. Rather than leading His people, they indulge in worldly behavior, thinking that the day of the Lord will never come (Mt 24:45–51; Lk 12:13–21). The misuse of alcohol is also a cause for prophetic rebuke in Is 5:11, 22; Mi 2:11. See note, Pr 20:1.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 56:9 *beasts*. Foreign invaders who will find easy prey among leaderless Israel.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 56:10 *watchmen*. Prophets were to warn Israel of spiritual dangers (Ezk 33:1–9). See note, 21:6–12. *silent dogs*. The leaders do not "bark" to alert the people.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 56:11 *a mighty appetite*. The failed watchdogs turn into wolves, devouring the flock they should protect (cf Mk 12:39–40; Ac

20:29). *shepherds*. Cf Jer 23:2–4; 25:32–38; Ezk 34.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 56:12 *strong drink*. See note, Pr 20:1. *tomorrow will be like this day*. They are blind to their approaching doom, imagining that each day will feed their pleasures.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 56:9–12 Israel's leaders have forsaken their sacred duty. We, too, often pursue personal pleasure and gain at the expense of our God-given responsibilities. Unlike Israel's leaders who sought their own gain, Jesus is our Good Shepherd. He laid down His life for every sinful sheep, faithfully fulfilling God's righteous requirements for our sake. • Give us grace, dear Lord, to forsake the pursuit of personal gain and to follow You always in the way that leads to life everlasting. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 57** As the raucous drinking song (56:12) fades into the distance, the somber sounds of a dirge fill the air. Wicked leaders are summoned to draw near to hear their indictment.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 57:1 *righteous man*. See p 843. *devout men are taken*. Devastating practices (56:10–11) cause the righteous to perish. The absence of popular protest against a reign of unprincipled politicians shows that the people were just as bad as their leaders. *taken away from calamity*. The prophet laments that the good go unrecognized, though the unrighteous live lives of contentment, able to sleep in the night (cf Ps 73).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 57:2 *enters into peace*. The perfect peace in God's presence awaiting those who walk in their uprightness in "a contrite and lowly spirit" (v 15). See notes, Jb 19:25–27; Ps 49:15.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 57:3 *sons of the sorceress*. Sorcery, the practice of magical arts, was strictly forbidden because spells and incantations presume to coerce God and conflict with His lordship over human life. See notes, Ex 22:18; Dt 18:9–12. *adulterer … loose woman*. Adultery and harlotry, despicable crimes when committed physically, describe the spiritual degeneracy of Israel's union with idols (Jer 3:1–3; Ezk 16:1–52; Hos 1–3). The people, guilty of these crimes, have a depraved nature (cf Is 1:4; 57:4).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 57:4–5 Fertility cults were a perpetual problem (e.g., 2Ki 17:10; Jer 2:20; 3:13; Ezk 6:13; Hos 4:12–13). Child sacrifice was a part of the worship of Molech and Baal.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 57:4 *stick out your tongue?* The Lord calls into question the grounds on which the wicked mock the righteous. The popular Egyptian god Bes was depicted with his tongue sticking out.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 57:5 Israel's spiritual adultery expressed itself in the lascivious rites of the Canaanite fertility cult. During the reign of King Manasseh, which ended less than 40 years before the fall of Jerusalem, these rites were practiced with unchecked abandon (2Ki 16:3; 21:1–17). *oaks*. See note, 1:29. *under every green tree*. Cf Dt 12:2; see note, Ex 34:13. *slaughter your children*. Ahaz introduced child sacrifice to the royal house in Jerusalem (2Ki 16:1–4). See notes, Lv 18:21; 2Ki 23:10.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 57:6–13 Describes the inability of idols to save the faithless, in contrast to the security of those who trust in the Lord.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 57:6 *smooth stones*. See note, Gn 28:18. Idolaters foolishly gave up the living Lord for an inanimate rock as their portion and lot (Is 61:7; Ps 16:5–6; 73:26; 119:57; 142:5). *drink offering … grain offering*. See pp 170–71. *relent*. See pp 1079–80.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 57:7 Likely a reference to the adulterous Canaanite fertility cult activities. See note, v 5. *up to offer*. See p 526.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 57:8 *set up your memorial*. Instead of putting the prescribed words of allegiance to the Lord on the doorposts (Dt 6:9), they placed an inscription or a figure within their homes that dedicated them and their occupants to an idol. *uncovered your bed*. See note, v 7. *covenant for yourself*. Lifeless idols cannot agree to a covenant. *looked on nakedness*. Lit, "gazed at a hand." In the context of lewd acts, "hand" may be a euphemistic term for the male organ (cf Ezk 23:20).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 57:9 Dependency on foreign kings causes idolatry (cf Ps 20:7). *oil … perfumes*. See notes, 1Ki 10:10; Sg 3:6. *envoys … even to Sheol*. See note, Pr 5:5; see also p 792.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 57:10 Despite the unfruitful pursuit of other gods, Israel never tired of her idolatry or turned back to the Lord.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 57:11 Israel forgot the name and the graciousness of God, which should have been close to the hearts of all.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 57:12 Israel's supposed righteousness will not be enough to save them from God's coming judgment. *righteousness*. See p 843.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 57:13 *collection of idols*. The worthlessness of idols means that one is not enough and many still cannot save. *wind will carry them off*. Idols of wood and stone will be swept away as though chaff. See note, Ps 1:4. *possess … inherit*. The remnant will be in the Lord's presence, climactically made known in the new temple, Jesus Christ (cf Mt 12:6; Jn

2:19–21). *My holy mountain*. Prominent phrase in Is (e.g., 2:2–4; 66:20). The Lord dwells there (8:18b), which means it is Mount Zion. See p 844.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 57:1–13 As Israel practices idolatry through a number of degenerate acts, they are openly mocking the Lord. We, too, have our own collection of idols. Whenever we give those idols the fear, love, and trust deserved by God alone, we are guilty of deserting and mocking the Lord. As a perfectly righteous man, Jesus died in our place. Because He was taken away to bear our sins, the Lord does indeed relent from punishing us as our sins deserve. • Lord God, teach us to turn away from every idolatrous act and to call upon Your name alone in every time of trouble. Amen.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 57:14–21 For those who are contrite and lowly, the Lord will bring rejuvenation (Mt 5:3).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 57:15 *the One who is high and lifted up*. Cf 40:22; 66:1; 1Tm 6:15–16. *inhabits eternity*. God's existence is not bound by time. *Holy*. See p 7. *I dwell … holy place*. God's heaven is far beyond the mere high places of Israel's idolatrous worship (Is 57:7). *contrite and lowly spirit*. Though God lives in timeless heaven, He also dwells with the lowest person. He is present everywhere (Jer 23:24). *revive*. God's love of His creation not only gave life to Adam and Eve in Eden but also revives the weak with a renewed spirit.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 57:16 Indicates that the Lord does relent (cf v 6); He restores and grants peace (cf 2:4; 9:6; Jn 14:27; Php 4:7). *contend*. The Lord promises that His anger is brief and His mercy is endless. Cf Is 54:7–9. *breath of life*. People continue to depend on the initial breath of God placed within Adam. See note, Gn 2:7.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 57:17 *his … him*. Israel. *hid My face*. Israel depends on God's life-giving breath (v 16); the Lord warns that He will turn away His face, causing Israel to expire. See note, 64:7.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 57:18 *heal him*. God's forgiveness is not blindness to sin but a true forgiveness of the sins that are perfectly known. See note, Dt 32:39. *mourners*. See note, Mt 9:23.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 57:19 *fruit of the lips*. Israel will praise God for His redemption. *far … near*. See note, 43:5–7.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 57:20 The sea both hides its dirt beneath the depths and also unashamedly tosses its refuse on the beach. So also the wicked both hide their sins and then cast them into the full view of others.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 57:21 Cf 66:24.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 57:14–21 The Lord heals and comforts all who are of a contrite and lowly spirit. But God's comfort and peace are withheld from the wicked, including those intent on backsliding in the ways of their own hearts. Through the death and resurrection of Jesus, the obstacle of our sin has been removed. There is now healing, comfort, and peace for every contrite heart. • Holy God, high and lifted up, create in us new and contrite hearts that we, repenting of our sins, may obtain from You perfect peace and forgiveness. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Chs 58–59** Left to their own devices, all sons and daughters of Adam cannot help themselves from rushing headlong down "the way … that leads to destruction" (Mt 7:13). If there is to be a way to glory, God must provide it. And Isaiah says He did. The way to glory is constructed on the solid roadbed of God's redemptive mercy (Is 40–48). The Servant, His own Son, paid for our sins by suffering and dying in our stead (chs 49–57). The way to glory, open to all who repent and receive the sacrifice of atonement for their sins, stretches far into the future. It leads to vistas under "new heavens" and on "a new earth" (65:17; 66:22). It brings into view "the glory that is to be revealed" after "the sufferings of this present time" have passed (Rm 8:18). The reader may be puzzled to find the promises of a glorious future, recorded in the closing chs of Is, interspersed with denunciations of sin and threats of judgment. Condemnation of ungodly behavior may seem out of place amidst assurances of salvation. However, God knows how necessary the unremitting preaching of Law and Gospel is because the human "heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick" (Jer 17:9). See p 320. Two facts are stressed: it is an insult to God's redemptive grace if people only pretend to honor Him, and God's goodness cannot be trampled. Not peace but outer darkness and gnashing of teeth await those who follow the impulses of their wicked heart.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 58** The prophet renounces hypocritical observance of two religious rites (fasting and praying, while they sneer at His command not to exploit their fellowmen) and insincere Sabbath observance (vv 13–14).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 58:1 *like a trumpet*. See p 993.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 58:2 *seek Me*. See note, Hos 6:6; see also p 843. *My ways*. From the human perspective, Israel believes that they are doing what the Lord asked. They wonder why He is not acknowledging their actions. But like other abuses mentioned, the people are going through the actions

while begrudging the Lord's imposition on their lives. See "way," p 844. *draw near to God*. Israel may have a right relationship with the Lord only if they have a right relationship with one another. When God's people claim to love Him but disregard their neighbor, both tables of the Law are broken. See note, Ex 20:12–17.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 58:3 *fasted*. See note, Lv 16:29; cf Lv 23:27–32; 2Sm 12:22; Ps 69:10; Jl 1:14; Zec 8:19; see also p 189. *your own pleasure*. What was to be an occasion for self-denial became an opportunity for self-advancement at the expense of others.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 58:4 Fasting only put them in an ugly mood.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 58:5 *bow down*. Cf Mt 6:1, 16–18. *like a reed*. Bent by wind and weight, not sincerity. *sackcloth and ashes*. See note, Jb 16:15.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 58:6 The Lord calls for acts of justice and righteousness, rather than lip service. Religious observances cannot substitute for moral integrity (cf Ps 15; Mi 6:6–8). Apart from a love toward neighbor, worship and fasting deadens people to the weightier matters of justice (cf Mt 23:23). *oppressed*. The rules for enslavement of fellow Israelites and their lands (Ex 21:2–11; Lv 25:39–55; Dt 15:12–18) were often abused in order to retain people as slaves and hold their lands (cf Jer 34:8–22; 1Sm 8:10–18; 1Ki 5:13–17; 21:1–3; Is 5:8).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 58:7 Good works of a sincere heart. *into your house*. See note, Gn 18:4. *your own flesh?* People having the same parents or ancestors (cf Gn 29:14; 37:27; 2Sm 5:1).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 58:8–14 "The preaching of rewards and punishments is necessary. God's wrath is set forth in the preaching of punishments. This applies to the preaching of repentance. Grace is set forth in the preaching of rewards. Just as Scripture, in the mention of good works, often embraces faith—for it wishes righteousness of the heart to be included with the fruit—so sometimes it offers grace together with other rewards" (Ap V 244).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 58:8 *Then*. Repeated in vv 9–10. Let them show the sincerity of their allegiance to God by not mistreating their fellowmen. Then He will lead and protect them. See note, 52:12. *your light*. Light comes from doing the work of the Lord, rather than darkness of one's own works (cf 5:20; 8:20; 47:5; 60:2). *your healing*. See note, Ex 15:26. *your righteousness*. See p 843. *glory of the* LORD *shall be your rear guard*. Cf Is 52:11–12. Luth: "These are excellent and golden consolations for the conscience [2Pt 1:10; 2Co 1:12]. . . . Although we must not rely on this

[evidence of good works], yet, since we are justified, it puts my conscience at peace, that I do evil to no one, and thus I walk safely in God. This is what it means for righteousness to go before, when we boast before the world and against Satan that because the fruits of faith are there, I have not lived in vain" (AE 17:288).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 58:9 *call … answer*. See p 842. *Here I am*. Indicating that the Lord is "a very present help in trouble" (Ps 46:1). Isaiah answers the Lord's call with the same eagerness (Is 6:8). *yoke*. On their enslavement, see note, v 6. *pointing of the finger*. Accusing others to protect one's self.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 58:10 *pour yourself out*. Just as God provides breath for every living being (cf 40:29–31; 57:15–16), so His people are to pour themselves out to sustain others. *as the noonday*. The apparent, temporary eclipse of God's favor will be over, and His blessings will become evident as the sun.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 58:11 *make your bones strong*. God's renewal brings both inspiring breath and renewed bones. *a watered garden*. The image of waters that never fail is repeated in 32:15; 35:5–7; 41:17–18; 43:20; 44:3–4; 48:21; 49:10 and used by Jesus of Himself (Jn 4:10, 14). See notes, Ps 1:3; 36:9.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 58:12 The city of Jerusalem was to lie in ruins for many generations. It would be rebuilt because God would be moved to resume His plan of salvation through a penitent remnant of the chosen people.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 58:13 *the Sabbath*. See note, Ex 20:8. Luth: "The duties of the Sabbath are to sanctify God, by hearing the Word, by means of praises and thanksgiving, etc. Then it is to be celebrated by us as a holiday. Among the godly all days are equal, but for the sake of the Word and prayer certain days are chosen for the sake of those who cannot sanctify every day, although we ought to sanctify every day" (AE 17:293). *delight*. They will find the fruit of the blessing that God has promised His people. *holy day*. The Sabbath or another feast. See pp 200–201.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 58:14 *ride on the heights*. Rather than the high places being the site of idolatrous worship (57:7), the heights will host God's holy people. *heritage of Jacob*. See note, Gn 28:12.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 58** The Lord condemns all who draw near to Him only with words, those who seek their own pleasure above all else. But for those who share with their neighbors in need, the Lord promises

healing. We cannot draw near to the Lord in faith while oppressing and quarreling with our neighbors. Jesus perfectly fulfilled the law of love and would lead us to repentance. His cross is the guarantee that the Lord will answer when we call upon Him in faith. • Help us, dear Lord, to express our love for You by serving and sharing with our neighbors in need. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 59** Isaiah builds the theme announced in 57:21 and developed in ch 58: "There is no peace … for the wicked."

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 59:1 *the* LORD'S *hand is not shortened*. See note, 5:25; cf 30:19; 41:20; 58:9; 65:24.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 59:2 *your iniquities*. Israel has abandoned their God (Ps 18:41; Is 1:15–17; 58:4–5; Jer 5:23–24; 11:9–11; Ezk 39:21–24; Mt 23:37–39; Jn 9:31). *separation*. Due to sin; fixed and impenetrable as the firmament between heaven and earth (Gn 1:6). *hidden*. See note, 64:7.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 59:3 Human nature is so depraved and insolent that the parts of the body used to "make many prayers" (1:15) are also the instruments of murder and deceit.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 59:4–8 Isaiah accuses Israel of perverting justice and righteousness in 1:21; 5:7; 28:17. Here, he calls for justice. In the age to come, the Lord promises a "righteous Branch," a Davidic leader who will "execute justice and righteousness in the land" (Jer 23:5); He will be called "The LORD is our righteousness" (Jer 23:6).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 59:5 Two comparisons taken from the animal world describe these monsters of iniquity. Cf Mt 3:7. Their machinations are like a spiderweb that is designed to catch other insects and has no constructive purpose.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 59:8 *way of peace*. The evil know only crooked, destructive roads (v 7). See "way," p 844.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 59:9 *justice … righteousness*. See pp 842–43. God's people expect Him to bring judgment on evildoers and to bring salvation (vv 11, 17) to those who appeal to Him. *far from us*. See note, v 2. *overtake us*. They feel outside the possibility of fair treatment.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 59:10–15 Confession of the sins cited earlier in the chapter. Israel has lived blind in their iniquities; therefore, the nation finds no justice. Cf Dt 28:29; Jb 5:14; Is 6:9–10; 56:10; Lm 4:14; Mt 15:12–13; 23:15–36.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 59:10 Even in the brightest noon sun, they are blind because their sin has clouded over the true light of righteousness.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 59:11 They are discontented, both growling with hunger and moaning pitifully.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 59:12 *transgressions … sins … iniquities*. See p 959.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 59:13 *denying the LORD*. The accumulated sins of v 12 are essentially abandonment of God, turning from Him to idols.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 59:14 *Justice … righteousness … truth … uprightness*. Principles that are to govern the administration of justice in human courts of law. In Israel, cases were heard in public gatherings. See p 792.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 59:1–15a By their sins, the people of Israel have separated themselves from God and from His salvation. When we fail to confess our sins and do not repent, we, like Israel, separate ourselves from God. In the darkness of our iniquity, our sins testify against us. Jesus came into the world to bridge the separation between God and sinners. All of our transgressions and iniquities were laid on Him at the cross, that we might know the bright light of His forgiveness. • Heavenly Father, grant that we might not be used as instruments of wickedness. As we confess our sins and receive Your forgiveness, lead us to be instruments of Your peace and truth. Amen.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 59:16 *wondered*. God is described as a person looking in vain for someone to solve a serious problem. *no one to intercede*. All the righteous are gone. *His own arm*. The Lord Himself intervenes, not primarily for wrath, but for salvation (43:3–4; 49:8; 51:5, 16; 52:9–10; 53:1, 5).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 59:17–19 God is described as an ancient warrior preparing Himself for battle.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 59:17 *vengeance*. Exclusive to the Lord. Cf 1:24; 34:8; Lv 19:18; Nu 31:3; Dt 32:35; Rm 12:19–21; Heb 10:30–31. *zeal*. Hbr word denotes ardor prompted by jealousy (see notes, Is 9:7; Ex 20:5).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 59:19 *fear the name of the LORD*. The work of salvation, done through the Redeemer (Jb 19:25; Is 60:16; 63:16), will bring glory to God before the world (40:5). See p 1001. *He will come … drives*. The Redeemer sent by the Lord. Cf Jb 38:8–11, 25, 28–30, 34–37.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 59:20 *Redeemer*. See note, Jb 19:25. *to Zion … in Jacob*. "Salvation is from the Jews" (Jn 4:22). From this one nation, the good news of peace (Is 52:7) was to be published for the salvation of all

Israel (Rm 11:26), a spiritual commonwealth made up of Jewish and Gentile believers (the Church). *turn*. See p 1080.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 59:21 *covenant*. See note, Jer 31:31. *My Spirit … My words*. The Lord is discussing His Spirit-empowered Messiah (cf 11:2; 44:3; 61:1; Mt 11:5; Lk 4:16–21). The emphasis on the anointed leader's mouth and word connects these promises with those of the Servant Songs (42:1–7; 49:1–13; 50:4–9; 52:13–53:12), which stress the mouth of the Servant (e.g., 49:2; 53:7). Luth: "He is saying this of the spiritual coming which will always abide and prevail for the purpose of turning away evil. . . . Thus Paul and the prophet agree. This is Paul's argument [Rm 11]: The Gentiles must not despise the Jews, because God can reinstate them, since the Spirit of the Lord and the Word of the Lord will remain in the world, and by them God can reclaim some. As long as the Word remains, God can always save people through this means. . . . Not all Israelites are the seed of God. But this fall and apostasy did not happen simply for the purpose of destroying the Jews and saving the Gentiles. Hence no one has cause to boast of his election. . . . It is through the preaching of the Gospel that we receive the forgiveness of sins. Thus Paul in this discussion was at pains to show how the Jews have been rejected and, at the same time, some are saved" (AE 17:307–8).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON **59:15b–21** The Lord Himself, by His own arm, will act with zeal to accomplish both justice and salvation among His people. We are not righteous enough to achieve salvation by our own merits. In mercy, Christ Jesus has interceded on our behalf. His zeal is for our salvation, which He made possible through His suffering, death, and resurrection. His perfect righteousness is freely given to all who believe. • Merciful Redeemer, You do not repay us according to our iniquity. Grant that by Your Word and Spirit we might turn from our transgression and always rejoice in the gift of Your salvation. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 60** The way to glory is the transfiguration of mankind's gloom into the radiance of salvation. In chs 58–59, Isaiah declared "the way of peace" (59:8) barred to all who choose to love wickedness more than they love the Redeemer. In ch 60, the road to blessed communion with the Creator is bathed in "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2Co 4:6). This highway of lights is to emerge out of Israel's liberation from Babylonian slavery and the rebuilding of the city of David.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 60:1–3 Through the Redeemer, the people are brought out of the darkness of their sins (cf 59:9–10) and into the light of God's salvation. Cf 2:5; 60:5, 10, 12; Lk 1:78–79; 2:32; Jn 1:14; 17:4, 22; Rm 8:17; 1Pt 4:13–14.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 60:1 *Arise, shine*. The prophet rouses Israel from the dark night of sin and captivity. God's creative Word enlightens them like a match lighting a candle. See note, Eph 5:13–14a. *glory of the* LORD. Cf 4:5; 9:2; 24:23; 30:26; 40:9–11; 46:13; 49:14–21; 51:3; 52:7–10; 54:11–17 for flashes of its light; see pp 6–7.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 60:3 *nations shall come to your light*. Although God shows judgment through darkness upon the nations, Israel will bask in light that graciously draws the nations.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 60:4–9 Not only do the people of the Lord return, but the wealth of nations is also brought to the people of God.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 60:4 *your sons … on the hip*. The remnant comes home, perhaps carried by the nations. See note, 49:22. *from afar*. See notes, 2:2; 11:11–16; 49:18; 55:5.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 60:6 *camels of Midian*. Previous threat to Israel (Jgs 6:1–6), but now these animals employed in warfare are brought under Israel's domain. See note, Gn 12:16. *Midian and Ephah*. These nations have ancestral ties with Israel (Gn 25:1–4). *Midian*. See note, Jgs 6:1. *frankincense*. See note, Lv 2:1. *good news*. See notes, 40:9; 52:7.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 60:7 *Kedar*. See note, 21:16. *rams … on My altar*. Worship is expressed in terms of sacrifices, required by the Law of Moses but fulfilled in the new covenant. See note, 19:19. *Nebaioth*. Firstborn son of Ishmael.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 60:9 *coastlands*. From the greatest distances. See note, 11:11. *ships of Tarshish*. Cf 1Ki 22:48; 2Ch 20:35–37; see note 1Ki 10:22. *for the name of the* LORD. They will make offerings and worship in His name. *Holy One of Israel*. See p 1227. *made you beautiful*. Zion grows attractive to all.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 60:10–14 More than just rebuilding the walls of the city (Ne 2:8), the city and kingdom will be open in safety (Rv 21:25) to receive the wealth of the nations.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 60:10 *minister*. Serve. *in My wrath … mercy on you*. God's anger briefly used the foreign nations as His agents of wrath, but His mercy will employ those nations again to rebuild Israel.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 60:11 *open continually*. Demonstration of God's complete protection. Though Jerusalem did not deserve to be rebuilt, God had mercy on the penitent people. At God's direction, foreigners such as Cyrus, the Persian king, contributed to its rehabilitation. See notes, Ezr 1:1–2. These mighty acts of God furnish the prophetic design of a spiritual Jerusalem. Anyone who wants to share in the priceless peace may enter (Is 60:10–18).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 60:12 *shall perish*. Cf 2:11, 17; 13:11; Jn 3:19.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 60:13 *glory of Lebanon*. See notes, 33:9; 35:2. *place of My feet glorious*. Royal language to declare that the temple is His palace and that He is the true King of Israel (cf 6:5). See notes, Ps 99:5; 132:7.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 60:14 *sons*. See note, 19:24–25. *City of the* LORD. Cf 60:18; 62:4, 12; Ezk 48:35; Zec 8:3; Heb 12:22–23, Rv 21:2 for this and other names for the new Jerusalem. *Zion of the Holy One of Israel*. Even the sons of former enemies will know Zion's name and not begrudge calling it the city of the Holy One. God's righteousness and convincing power are both evident. See"Holy One of Israel," p 1227.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 60:15–22 These promises build on 43:18, where Israel is called to forget the past.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 60:15 *majestic forever*. See "Zion," p 844.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 60:16 *suck … nurse*. The affluence of the nations (Dt 33:19) will nourish and sustain the worshipers in God's beautiful house (Is 60:6–7). *Redeemer*. See note, Jb 19:25.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 60:17 *gold … silver*. Costly metals will replace lesser ones. *overseers … taskmasters*. Peace and righteousness will replace oppression and violence. See "salvation," p 843.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 60:19–20 Cf Rv 22:5, where the light comes from the Father and the Lamb. In Is, the end of sorrow is a theme concerning the redemption of God's people (25:8; 35:10; 51:11; 65:19). Jerusalem rebuilt after the Babylonian exile was a significant milestone on God's way to shed the light of His glory. But even when all earthly cities pass away, He will be the everlasting light in "the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven" (Rv 21:2). Its residents will swell to a multitude, "numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands" (Rv 5:11).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 60:20 *days of mourning*. Usually seven days (cf Gn 50:10). See note, Gn 50:1–3.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 60:21 *all be righteous*. Luth: "Apart from this Light [of Christ] there is no righteousness before God. These are therefore words of consolation. Just hold tight, even if you are oppressed and persecuted and your thoughts and conscience trouble you. You may know for certain: 'The Lord is my light'; you may know for certain that all who have this Light are righteous, even though we are sinners. That humility is of no avail. But when we speak of ourselves as baptized and enlightened by the Word, we are not sinners but saints and spotless through Christ, so that we can gratefully boast that we are saints" (AE 17:326–27). *branch of My planting*. Cf Ex 15:17. This image is opposite that of the song of the vineyard in Is 5:1–7. God planted the shoot; this fruitful time reflects His work (cf 27:2–6).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 60:22 *a clan*. See pp 54–55. *in its time*. Jesus announces in Lk 4:18–19 that in Him the Year of Jubilee has begun. The world of grasping and owning is rejected, and the world of gifts and trust is affirmed (cf Lk 1:51–55). See p 206.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 60** The Redeemer of Israel will bring His penitent people out of the darkness of their sin into His everlasting light. Both spiritual and temporal wealth come to us as gifts from God. We should make it our goal to use this wealth for the blessing of others, rather than selfishly seeking and searching for more. Our Savior Jesus Christ has had mercy on us. He is our light and our life. • O God, continually call us out of the darkness of our sin and into Your marvelous light, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Chs 61–62** Aglow with images of light, abundance, gardens, brilliant jewels, and costly garments. The section begins with the Servant/Messiah's announcement of His role (61:1–3) and concludes with a call for the people to enter into the Lord's salvation (62:10–12). Three major segments are united by divine promises regarding Zion and the nations: Zion will eat the wealth of the nations (61:4–11), God will show the nations that Zion is not forsaken (62:1–5), and the nations will not devour Zion's wealth (62:6–9).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 61:1 *Me*. The Lord's Servant (42:1–7; 49:1–7; 50:4–9; 52:13–53:12). *anointed Me*. See note, 1Sm 10:1. *bring good news*. A messenger announces the glory to be revealed in the messianic age. The Messiah not only has prophetic authority to speak for God, but He Himself made the promise come true (cf Ac 4:27; 10:38; Heb 1:9). In Is, the Spirit is

esp associated with the power to bring justice and righteousness on the earth, often through the spoken Word (cf 59:21). "According to [Christ's] divinity, He is of one essence with the Holy Spirit" (FC SD VIII 72). Luth: "Christ is the person sent by God and filled with the Holy Spirit to be the Preacher and Evangelist to the poor, that is, the afflicted. This was not done for Christ's sake but for our sake. . . . Note this especially, that we must be content with the God of majesty when we consider His hidden but grand and terrifying offices. When we fall into this labyrinth, we become involved in speculations about divinity, and we want to become investigators of His majesty at our peril. As for you, be content with the God incarnate. Then you will remain in peace and safety, and you will know God. Cast off speculations about divine glory, as the pope and Mohammed speculate. You stay with Christ crucified, whom Paul and others preach" (AE 17:330–31).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 61:2 *the year of the* LORD'S *favor*. See p 206. *day of vengeance*. See note, 34:8. Jesus did not include the vengeance mentioned in this prophecy when, in Nazareth, He declared the year of the Lord's favor (Lk 4:18–19). Final judgment on the wicked and simultaneous vindication of the righteous are to take place when He returns (cf Mt 24:30).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 61:3 The mourner with ashes on the head, wrapped in sackcloth, and with a spirit crushed with despair, is replaced by one who celebrates with a beautiful headdress, smelling of costly oil, and wearing a garment of praise. *oaks of righteousness*. The redeemed of the Lord, rooted by faith in His promises (cf Ps 1:3). The Servant/Messiah will not simply throw words at the poor. His words impart what they announce (cf 55:10–11).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 61:4–7 The work of the Servant/Messiah makes possible the reversal of fortunes for the people.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 61:5–6 The City of the Lord is a spiritual commonwealth (60:14, 18) with citizens from every nation under the sun. Foreigners do the labor, a recurring theme of the Lord's retribution on those who persecuted His people (14:1–2; 56:3). Having become "fellow citizens with the saints" (Eph 2:19) through faith in Christ, they willingly dedicate their labors and riches to the common good of "the household of faith" (Gal 6:10). Cf Is 60:21; Rm 15:27.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 61:6 *priests of the* LORD … *ministers*. The mediating services of the tribe of Levi will no longer be needed. All the people of God will be consecrated to offer themselves as living sacrifices (Rm 12:1) and

authorized to teach all nations the way of salvation. Cf Mt 28:19–20; 2Co 2:15.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 61:7 *double portion*. See note, Gn 25:31.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 61:8 *them*. The redeemed. *recompense*. Cf v 7. *an everlasting covenant*. The result of the work of the Servant/Messiah (49:8; 54:10; 55:5; Ezk 37:25–26). See p 127.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 61:9 God will fulfill His promise to Abraham (Gn 12:3).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 61:10 *garments of salvation*. Those whom the Lord wraps in this robe not only experience deliverance from unrighteousness but also power to live out His righteousness. *headdress*. Cf v 3; 3:20 (only other times mentioned in Is). See note, Ps 45.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 61:11 Joy is guaranteed just as the earth is guaranteed to cause seeds sown in it to sprout. If nature is reliable, how much more so is God?
ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 61** The Servant/Messiah will come, bringing good news and everlasting joy to the redeemed of Israel. As brokenhearted souls, we must confess the sinful cause of our poverty and brokenness. Our dire straits are due to our sinful condition—a condition from which we cannot free ourselves. Jesus brings liberty for all held captive by sin and death. By His death and resurrection, He has delivered us from the shame of our sin, clothed us in His own righteousness, and made us to be His holy priests. • Lord God, teach us not to rely on the tattered fabric of our own works and accomplishments. Lead us to be comforted each day in Your robe of righteousness. Amen.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 62** Proof of God's willingness to send His enlightening Word into the souls of people again and again. The way to glory is again presented as leading through Israel's release from the Babylonian exile to a salvation "proclaimed to the end of the earth" (v 11). The envisioned scene is a panoramic view of a new Jerusalem. Its walls circle the entire earth (Rm 10:12; Gal 3:28–29).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 62:1 *until her … torch*. In the darkness of Satan's dungeon, the eyes of his captives do not see "the glory of the LORD" (60:1–2; cf 2Co 3:14–16). His Word gives light and the vision of faith, enabling the blind prisoners to see the door to liberty unbarred. See note, 60:1.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 62:2 *righteousness*. See p 843. Zion becomes "the city of righteousness" (1:26) only by "the mouth of the LORD." *new name*. A

mark of God's blessings throughout Scripture (65:15; Gn 17:3–8; 32:28) that demonstrates a change in status or character.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 62:3 *crown … in the hand*. Royal scepters may have been topped with a crown. *royal diadem*. A crown.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 62:4 *Forsaken … Desolate*. If God had not taken pity on His fallen creatures, their fate would have been like that of an unfaithful wife, abandoned by her husband to live out her days amid the ruins of her wrecked life. However, the Servant lived and died to effect a reconciliation (53:6). Cf 50; 54:4. *My Delight Is in Her*. Hezekiah's wife had this name (2Ki 21:1, 3). *Married*. God puts upon Himself and Israel the bonds of marriage, which He will not break, despite Israel's unfaithfulness.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 62:5 *marry*. Hbr verb means "to take possession of a woman in marriage." Surviving sons of Israel will again claim Zion and the Promised Land.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 62:6–9 Israel lost their land and its blessings in 722 BC and 587 BC, but now it will be regained, and Israel will enjoy all of its abundance (cf Am 9:13–15).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 62:6 *watchmen*. See note, 21:6–12. *never be silent*. Faithfully calling out the hours of the watches rather than falling asleep.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 62:8 Because of the relationship of the people to the Lord, foreign nations will not take the work of the people. This indicates the renewal of the covenant blessings (Dt 28:11–12; 30–33). *sworn*. See "vow," p 7.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 62:9 *garner*. Those who harvest it shall also eat it. *courts of My sanctuary*. Reminder of joyous festivals in the temple.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 62:10 *through the gates*. The liberated slaves must believe that they are free to escape through the opened prison doors (cf 48:20; 52:11). The way to freedom is a highway "to the end of the earth" (v 11) for the peoples who march under the banner of "the root of Jesse" (11:10). See note, 49:22. *people*. The returning remnant of Israel. *a signal*. A banner. See notes, Nu 1:52; 2:2.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 62:11 *daughter of Zion*. See p 1079. *reward … recompense*. See note, 40:10.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 62:12 These titles are the result of the work in v 11, the restoration of the people who were formerly abandoned. *Holy People*. Cf Ex 19:6; 1Pt 2:9; see "saints," p 843.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 62** The mouth of the Lord announces the coming salvation that will be established in Jerusalem and proclaimed to the ends of the earth. Isaiah rightly depicts our sin as the equivalent of marital unfaithfulness. Like an unfaithful wife, we deserve to be forsaken by our Bridegroom, Jesus Christ. But He has redeemed us with His own blood. He does not treat us as we deserve, but delights to make us His own holy people, made beautiful by His forgiveness. • Lord Jesus Christ, heavenly Bridegroom, You came and sought us to be Your holy Bride; with Your own blood You bought us, and for our life You died. Amen. (Adapted from *LSB* 644:1)

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 63:1–6 No enemy is able to rob God's people of their salvation because their redemption simultaneously ushers in the "day of vengeance" on all hostile, demonic foes. Cf 59:17; 61:2; 62:11–12. The final execution of judgment will come when the peoples and kingdoms of this world will appear before the throne of the ascended Lord. Cf Rv 14:18–20.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 63:1 *Edom*. Israel's inveterate enemy stands for all forces aligned against God and His people (cf ch 34). Cf 11:14; 34:5–15; Gn 25:23; Nu 24:18; Ezk 35; Am 1:6, 11; Ob 10–16. *crimsoned garments*. A royal hue, but see note, v 2. *Bozrah*. Key city in Edom. *It is I*. Having established His people, the Lord turns to judge the unbelieving nations with a day of vengeance.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 63:2 *red*. Play on Hbr word for Edom, spelled nearly the same. The Lord's garments are stained with the blood of His defeated antagonists. The decisive battle took place on Golgotha (cf Jn 12:31–32; 16:11; see the Easter hymn by Thomas Kelly, *TLH* 209). *treads in the winepress?* Violent stomping and blood-red juice symbolize God's wrath. See note, Jl 3:13.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 63:3 Treading grapes was normally a festive community event (16:10; Jgs 9:27).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 63:4 The "day of vengeance" and the "year of redemption" are not at odds but necessarily a union. See notes, 34:8; 61:2.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 63:5 *I looked*. See note, 59:16. *My own arm brought Me salvation*. Israel's unfaithfulness left the Lord alone; His victory was His alone. *My wrath upheld Me*. No one was righteous enough to stand beside the Lord. He alone would judge.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 63:6 Continues winepress imagery (vv 2–3). God both crushes His enemies and, here, floods them with His wrath.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 63:1–6 Just as the Lord acts decisively to bring redemption for His people, His vengeance is also unleashed on every evil foe. On the Last Day, the Lord's overwhelming power will trample all His enemies, including all who reject the salvation purchased with Jesus' lifeblood. His crimson garments bear witness to His decisive defeat of sin and death through His crucifixion and resurrection. He is indeed mighty to save, giving resurrection life to all who believe. • Lord Jesus, keep us, we pray, marching in the greatness of Your mighty strength, in the way that leads to life everlasting. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 63:7–64:12 Isaiah corrects two misconceptions his hearers and readers are prone to harbor about the way God leads to glory. It is a fatal mistake to think we can "go limping between two different opinions" (1Ki 18:21). It is just as wrong to doubt God's willingness to take sinners back when they repent and plead for mercy.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 63:7–14 A recounting of the Lord's work in the exodus from Egypt.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 63:7–9 The prophet intercedes with a psalm that praises the Lord for "the great goodness to the house of Israel" (v 7; cf Ps 89; 111; 145–50).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 63:7 *steadfast love*. See p 843.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 63:8 *My people*. Israel. *children*. They disappointed the Lord. Showered with favors, they nevertheless rebelled against Him (v 10; 1:2). *He became their Savior*. During the exodus. Cf Ex 14:13; 15:2.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 63:9 *He was afflicted*. God is not a heartless tyrant. When He disciplines, He feels pain in His own heart (cf Heb 4:15). *angel of His presence*. Cf Ex 23:20; see "angel of the LORD," p 1227. *redeemed*. See p 843. *carried them all the days of old*. See note, Ex 19:4.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 63:10 The Israelites rebelled despite the Spirit among their leaders (Nu 11:17–30; cf Ps 51:11). *He turned*. See "relent," pp 1079–80.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 63:11 *remembered the days of old*. The exodus is esp remembered as the time God shepherded His people through the ministry of Moses. *put in the midst of them His Holy Spirit*. See note, Nu 11:17.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 63:12 *arm*. Besides the fire and the cloud, the Lord accompanied Moses and the people with His powerful arm. Cf 51:9; 52:10;

62:8; see "arm," p 842. *everlasting name*. See "name," p 843.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 63:14 *down into the valley*. Destination of the shepherd, the imagery used in v 11. Cf Jsh 1:13; Ps 23:1–2. *Spirit of the* LORD. Cf v 11. *to make … name*. See "name," p 843.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 63:7–14 The Lord's steadfast love for His people is beautifully epitomized in the exodus from Egypt. Just as surely as Israel rebelled against the Lord and grieved His Holy Spirit, we have done the same by our sins of thought, word, and deed. His steadfast love is given for us in Jesus Christ. He was afflicted for our sins. Through the gift of His Holy Spirit in the waters of Holy Baptism, the Lord is pleased to lead us as His people. • "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from Your presence, and take not Your Holy Spirit from me" (Ps 51:10–11). Amen.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 63:15–19 Isaiah petitions the Lord to act among His people again.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 63:15 *Your … habitation*. Heaven. *zeal*. See notes, 9:7; 42:13. *stirring of Your inner parts*. God's desire for Israel seems to be hidden. See note, Ps 103:1–2.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 63:16 *our Father*. As a father is needed for a child to be conceived, so Israel owes its existence as a nation to the Lord (cf Ex 4:22–23). As children must rely on their father to keep them alive, so Israel pleads with the Lord to be their Redeemer. *Abraham … Israel*. The Lord is the Father who is greater than their ancestors (Mt 6:8–9, 18; Jn 6:44–47; 8:38–44). *does not know us*. Though their physical ancestors are dead and gone, the Lord's fatherly love and power to redeem are constant. *Redeemer*. See note, Jb 19:25.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 63:17 *make us wander … harden our heart*. The appeal dares to complain that God is treating His people unfairly, as if their resistance to His mercy has provoked Him to harden their heart as He did Pharaoh's. See note, Ex 4:21; cf Rm 1:24, 26, 28. *Return*. See p 1080. *heritage*. See "portion," p 7.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 63:18 *a little while*. If the sanctuary is to remain destroyed forever, the period during which Israel worshiped in it was short indeed. *our adversaries*. The Babylonians. See note, 2Ki 25:8–9.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 63:19 *called by Your name*. The Lord's name was a common element of Israelite names (e.g., in Isaiah, "iah" comes from Yahweh). See note, Nu 6:27.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 64:1 God appears to have withdrawn His presence from the people crushed by adversity. They feel that He must come down from heaven to see their plight. *rend the heavens*. See note, Ps 144:5.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 64:2–3 When God shows Himself and His brilliant light and fire, mountains will quake and nations will tremble. When the Law was given at Mount Sinai, both the mountain and the people trembled (Ex 19:16, 18). *brushwood*. Useful for making a quick, hot fire.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 64:4 Cf 43:10. Paul uses this verse to marvel at the incomprehensible wisdom "God has revealed" in the Gospel of salvation (1Co 2:9–10). *wait for Him*. See note, 8:17.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 64:5 *You meet*. To greet and bless. *ways*. See p 844. *a long time … saved?* Whether translated as a statement (KJV), a question, or a wish, this clause points to the underlying cause of all distress: "We have sinned."
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 64:6 *polluted garment*. Cloth used for a woman's menstrual period, a time of uncleanness (Lv 15:19–33). "God rejoices in them [godly works] with all the angels. In comparison with these works all human holiness is just stench and filth" (LC I 198). *wind, take us away*. See note, Ps 1:4.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 64:7 *calls upon Your name*. See p 842. *hidden Your face*. Cf 8:17; see note, 45:15. Luth: "This is a Hebraism: To hide the face and to let it shine. A calm face signifies grace and goodwill. To turn away and to hide the face means that God is angry [Ps 27:9]. . . . Such were the cloud, the fiery pillar, and other signs, whereby God is perceived as being well disposed toward us. This is the meaning of God's calm face. God's face is God's very presence either in the Word, the promise and the sacraments, where God's thought is set before my conscience, or in deed, when God removes evils, pestilence, and murder. Summary: The face is called the design, or the appearance; the 'face' of a house or the 'face' of a tree. Therefore when God hides His face, both Word and deed, nothing remains but the face of the devil, of death, and of sin" (AE 17:370–71). *melt in the hand*. Cf Gn 14:20; Jb 8:4 for a similar construction. The context here also includes reference to wind removing leaves (v 6), which perhaps evoked the idea of melting, as when a pile of leaves or chaff is gradually whisked away. See note, Ps 1:4.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 64:8 *our Father*. See note, 63:16. *we are the clay … Your hand*. We are as God shapes us to be. *potter*. God created and shaped

the destiny of the chosen people as an artisan fashions clay into a vase. See note, 29:16; cf Jer 18:6.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 64:10–12 Isaiah foretold the destruction of the cities of the holy nation (Ex 19:6) and of their "holy and beautiful house" of worship. Though they should expect extinction, he gives them hope for restoration if they humbly ask the Lord not to afflict them more sorely. These words are also for all people laid low by adversities to "the end of the ages," in order that they "might have hope" (1Co 10:11–13; Rm 15:4).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 64:11 *house*. The temple.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 64:12 *keep silent*. Cf v 7.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 63:15–64:12 Confessing their sins, the Lord's penitent people pray to Him as their Father, asking Him to reclaim them. Israel's confession is like our own, for we also have wandered from the Lord's ways. In the uncleanness of our sin, all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment. In the fullness of time, God rent the heavens and came down for our salvation in the person of Jesus Christ. Through Jesus' suffering, death, and resurrection, our heavenly Father was acting on our behalf, not counting our sins against us. • Gracious Father, we confess that we have sinned against You and have withheld the fear You deserve. Forgive us, we pray, for Jesus' sake, and keep us as Your holy people. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 65:1 *I*. The Lord replies to Isaiah's petition (63:15–64:12). *Here am I*. See note, 58:9. *not called by My name*. See alternate wording in ESV note. God chose Israel. They had no merit or worthiness that attracted Him to them (see notes, Dt 7:6–8; cf Rm 9:30–10:4).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 65:2 *I spread out My hands*. God's strong arms are now spread in patient appeal. *a rebellious people*. When Israel turned a deaf ear to the Lord's repeated calls to faithfulness, they, the chosen people, sank to the level of the heathen, who likewise did not seek Him.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 65:3 *in gardens*. See notes, 1:29; 17:10. Isaiah lashes out at pagan rites and forms of divination of which Israel was guilty from the days of their fathers (v 7; cf Jgs 2:11).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 65:4 *sit in tombs*. Engaging in occult forms of divination such as consulting the dead (cf 8:19). *pig's flesh*. See notes, Lv 11, for regulations of clean and unclean food.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 65:5 *too holy*. They arrogantly regard themselves charged with supernatural forces that could prove hurtful to the uninitiated.

smoke in My nostrils. Israel's vanity (and likely burnt offerings to idols) was an irritation to God that turned His face from them.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 65:6 *not keep silent*. See note, 64:7. *repay into their bosom*. See notes, Ps 79:12; Lk 6:37.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 65:7 *fathers' iniquities*. See note, Ex 20:5. *on the mountains … hills*. See p 526.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 65:8–10 The promise of a remnant is based on the Lord's everlasting covenant with Abraham and his descendants (Gn 17:7; cf Gal 3:29). He will never nullify this promise. Therefore, though judgment may come, it is intended to remove those who claim to be members but are not (cf Jn 15:2, 6) and to purify those who are true members (cf Heb 12:7–11).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 65:8 The owner of the vineyard is told not to discard an entire cluster of grapes if some of them are dried up or rotten, because there are enough good ones left to produce excellent wine. In the same way, the Lord will not cast out the whole nation because there still are faithful servants in its midst. See note, 5:1–7. *Do not destroy.* See note, Ps 57, for the use of these words to prescribe the musical rendition of Ps 57–59. Apparently the title of a well-known vineyard song is meant (cf 16:10). *servants'*. Israel's.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 65:9 *My chosen*. See "choose," p 5.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 65:10 *Sharon*. Northern grassland along the coastline of the Great Sea, near Joppa (1Ch 27:29; Sg 2:1; Ac 9:35). *Achor*. Cf Jsh 7:24–26. Sharon and the Valley of Achor lie on opposite ends of Israel's borders and so represent the prosperity of the whole country. *sought Me*. See "seek," p 843.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 65:11 *forsake*. Refers to idolatry. *My holy mountain*. Zion. *Fortune … Destiny*. Likely names of pagan deities. Their devotees appealed to them in ritual eating and drinking to grant them good luck and a positive fate.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 65:12 *bow down to the slaughter*. Kneel for execution. *when I called*. Through the prophets.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 65:13–16 The Lord provides a contrast between His people (the servants) and those who have been disobedient. This contrast reflects the blessings and curses of Lv 26; Dt 28.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 65:13 *My servants*. The faithful of Israel. *you*. The unfaithful.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 65:14 *breaking of spirit*. Sadness and discouragement. See note, Jsh 2:11.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 65:15 *a curse*. The names of those destroyed by God's wrath will be used in an oath formula when a judgment just as severe is invoked on subsequent enemies of God and of His chosen. See p 6. *the Lord GOD will put you to death*. Possibly the wording of the curse (Nu 5:21). *call by another name*. His servants will not be named in the curse. Each will be entitled to "bless himself" by praying to "the God of truth" (v 16).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 65:16 *blesses himself*. See note, v 15. *God of truth*. Cf Ps 31:5; 2Co 1:20; Rv 3:14. *oath*. See "vow," p 7. *hidden from My eyes*. Cf 8:17.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 65:1–16 The Lord will repay the iniquities of those who reject Him, but His chosen servants—who seek Him in faith—will lie down in safety. The Lord threatens to punish all who follow their own devices and do not listen to Him. The retribution we deserve for our iniquities has been laid on Jesus. With His own blood, He made payment for all of our sinful deeds. • O Lord, in Holy Baptism You chose us to be Your servants, and You filled our lives with blessing. Help us each day to choose what You delight in and to sing for gladness of heart. Amen.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 65:17–25 The future restoration of the Lord's people and all creation. This vision further defines the new things mentioned earlier (42:9; 48:6). With earthly imagery, the prophet is trying to help his generation understand the blessings of eternal life. Luther emphasized that the blessings of God's new creation begin now for believers. Luth: "He is not speaking only of the spiritual heaven, but He makes all things new, spiritual and physical, although I do not see a new heaven and a new body in us, but only the one born of our parents. Yet we believe it. We must turn the sack inside out, and then they will appear. . . . The promise is everlasting. Rejoice in it. Peter says (1 Peter 1:9), 'As the outcome of your faith you obtain the salvation of your souls.' This salvation is already prepared. Peter is as certain as if it were already there. Then he says, 'But the revelation is awaited.' Then we shall see what we cannot now receive with the mind. . . . Therefore whoever is tormented in his feeling by sin and death, let him rise again in the Word and kingdom of Christ and say, 'My Christ lives' " (AE 17:388).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 65:17 *create*. Hbr word denotes divine action (cf Gn 1:1); it expresses great and new acts that require a divine agent. It occurs

nine times in the early chapters of Gn and 19 times in Is 40–66 (three times in Is 65:17–18). *former things*. The old creation and the sins of God's people, which have now been forgiven. Cf Ps 103:12.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 65:18–19 The center of the new creation is the new Jerusalem and its temple (Ezk 48:30–35; Zec 14:10–21; Rv 21:2–22:5).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 65:19 *it*. Jerusalem.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 65:20–25 Cf 11:6–9.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 65:20 *No more*. The usual circumstances of life and death in a sin-broken world are cast aside. In the new creation, life triumphs over death (cf 25:8). *for the young man … be accursed*. The context describes creation without the corruption of sin and death (vv 17–25), so the examples here seem confusing. But, in fact, they are hypothetical (a conditional use of Hbr *ki*, "though"; cf Jer 49:16; 51:53). One could translate it "supposing that the young man shall die." The two halves of v 20 present a contrast, and the examples of the second half are unreal—remarkably, the vulnerable infant and old man live on, but those strong by worldly standards ("young man," "sinner") would surely suffer death or a curse. *a hundred years*. Used figuratively for a great length of time. See p 217. Time will no longer have its aging effect on those who formerly were under the curse of sin.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 65:21–25 The blessings of the covenant with God are again expounded as being fully restored for His people (cf Dt 6:10–12).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 65:22 *build and another inhabit*. Unlike the futility of the exodus, when those who began neither finished the journey nor entered the Promised Land, here there is completion of the promised dwelling. *like the days of a tree*. See note, v 20.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 65:23 *bear children for calamity*. Refers to the ravages of war. *blessed of the* LORD. God's faithful people. See p 842.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 65:24 Luth: "Our prayer pleases God because He has commanded it, made promises, and given form to our prayer. For that reason He is pleased with our prayer, He requires it and delights in it, because He promises, commands, and shapes it. Therefore only the prayer of the godly is a prayer for the sake of God's excellent promises, since we know that they are acceptable and pleasing. But the prayer of the ungodly is sin. God cannot get enough of the prayers of the godly. Therefore the prayer of the godly is likened to the most attractive odor which one cannot smell

enough. Then He says *I will hear*. It is not only guaranteed, but it is actually already obtained" (AE 17:393).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 65:25 *wolf … lamb*. Proverbial opposites. The first is aggressive and voracious; the latter, weak and helpless, the wolf's natural food. *holy mountain*. Cf 27:13; 56:7; 57:13; 65:11; 66:20. Denotes paradise restored (cf Rv 21:10).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 65:17–25 In the Lord's new creation, we will completely forget the weeping and futility so characteristic of life in a fallen world. In their place shall be joy and gladness, fulfillment and satisfaction. It is the Lord's desire that His repentant people should no longer remember or be troubled by their former sins. Our place in the Lord's new creation has been secured through faith in Jesus. Through the saving work of His hands, we have the joy of sins forgiven and the gladness of life eternal. • Lord God, You who are quick to hear and answer the prayers of Your people, hasten the day when we will enjoy the fullness of Your new creation. Amen.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 66** The burning of Jerusalem by the Babylonians becomes a small-scale model of the unquenchable fire when the Lord will "enter into judgment … with all flesh" (vv 16, 24). Conversely, the return of captive Israel becomes the prophetic symbol of a universal movement when "all flesh shall come to worship" before the Lord (v 23).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 66:1 God cannot be locked up within walls. Cf Mt 5:34–37. Is 6:1 gives a similar view of the Lord, where the edge of His garment fills the temple. Yet, the One who is high and lifted up condescends to be enshrined in the heart of everyone who is "of a contrite and lowly spirit" (57:15). *what is the house … rest?* Reminiscent of the Lord's words to David through Nathan concerning the building of the temple in Jerusalem (2Sm 7:5–7).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 66:2 *My hand*. Cf 64:8. *humble and contrite … trembles*. The Lord repeats the desire for actions that stem from contrite hearts (cf Mt 5:3–4; Lk 18:13–14).

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 66:3 *slaughters … kills*. The use of prescribed offerings (ox, lamb, grain, memorial) as a magical device to immobilize the Lord is as abhorrent to Him as sacrificing human beings or unclean animals such as dogs and swine. Archaeologists have discovered remains of sacrifices at Haror, including birds, puppies, donkeys, and a person. *chosen their own ways*. Cf 58:13. *abominations*. See note, Pr 6:16.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 66:4 *bring their fears upon them*. Physical and mental punishment. *I called*. Through the prophets.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 66:5–6 The Lord reminds the remnant that He will repay their enemies, who are also His enemies. This passage of assurance culminates with a threefold call to listen to the voice from the city, the voice from the temple, and the voice of the Lord as He repays His enemies.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 66:5 Brethren who hate the devout are so degenerate that they blasphemously challenge Him to vindicate His honor and to bring joy to those suffering for His "name's sake."
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 66:1–6 The Lord delights in those who are humble and contrite in spirit. But those who pursue self-chosen ways will be put to shame. Even the offerings they outwardly present to the Lord are regarded by Him as abominations. Although the glory of the Lord spans both heaven and earth, God Himself dwelt among us in the person of Jesus Christ. He became the sacrificial Lamb of God, whose death atoned for all our sins. • Lord Jesus Christ, by Your Holy Spirit create in us humble and contrite hearts, that we might tremble at Your Word and gladly hear and learn it. Amen.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 66:7–9 The Lord here is not speaking of human birth but of how suddenly Zion's glory will return to her (cf 49:19–50:3; 54:1).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 66:7 *she*. Zion (v 8). See notes, 49:19; ch 54; Gal 4:26.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 66:8 These questions show the astonishing, impossible nature of God's restoration of Israel.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 66:9 God has prepared Israel for rebirth; surely He will deliver her.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 66:10–11 The Lord commends comfort to the ones in anguish over the state of Jerusalem and those who will mourn her destruction (Ezk 9:4).
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 66:10 *Rejoice … be glad*. In view of vv 12–14. *all you who love her*. The faithful inhabitants and friendly peoples.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 66:11 Jerusalem is a mother to the nation and its inhabitants. See "daughters of Zion," p 1079; see also note, Ps 97:8.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 66:12 *peace to her like a river*. Peace and glory will overflow without end. *glory of the nations*. See note, 61:5–6. *you shall nurse*. See note, v 11.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 66:13 *I will comfort*. The Lord speaks with the nurturing image of v 11. See notes, 1Th 2:7; 1Pt 2:2; cf Is 49:15; Mt 23:37.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 66:14 *bones shall flourish like the grass*. The opposite of the imagery Isaiah has used to show the frailty of people (37:27; 40:6–7; 51:12). *hand of the* LORD. See p 842. *His enemies*. See note, 63:1–6.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 66:7–14 The Lord will bring about a new birth of joy and delight. We should not look elsewhere for lasting satisfaction and comfort. Motherly comfort and peace like a river will satisfy and delight all God's people. Just as a child's mother meets his or her needs, so our heavenly Father meets our needs of provision and pardon. • Gracious Lord, by Your Son, Jesus Christ, You delivered us from destruction. In Holy Baptism, You caused us to be born again. Carry us and bless us with the comfort and peace that only You can give. Amen.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 66:15 *the* LORD *will come*. Judgment Day. See "day of the LORD," p 1079. *in fire*. The use of fire is an execution of judgment (1:31; 30:27; 33:11–14; 34:9–10; Mt 3:12; 2Pt 3:10; Rv 20:10, 14–15). Its purpose was the complete destruction of evil. Burning accompanied the capture and destruction of enemy cities (cf Jsh 6:24; 8:8; 11:11; Jgs 1:8). The Lord's theophanies by fire include the bush (Ex 3:2), the pillar at night (Ex 13:21–22), and Mount Sinai (Ex 19:18). In Dt 4:24 and 9:3, the Lord Himself is described as a devouring fire. Fire is used as a metaphor for the Lord's anger (Lm 2:4; Ezk 36:5; Na 1:6). Cf Ezk 10:1–2. *whirlwind*. See note, Jb 38:1.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 66:16 *by fire … by His sword*. Lightning. See note, Lv 10:2.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 66:17 *sanctify and purify*. See p 7. *the gardens*. See note, 65:3. *one in the midst*. Either the person leading the initiation rites or the goddess to whom they devote themselves. *pig's flesh … mice*. The idolatry of Israel is described as eating pigs, which are unclean (Lv 11:7; Dt 14:8). In 1Sm 6:4, mice are associated with the Philistine god Dagon (cf 1Sm 5). *abomination*. See note, Pr 6:16.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 66:18 *time is coming*. Judgment Day. See "day of the LORD," p 1079. *gather*. Cf Ezk 38–39. *glory*. See pp 6–7.
ISAIAH—NOTE ON 66:19 *a sign*. Cf 19:19–20. *survivors*. The banner of the Servant (11:10–12) and the sign of the Son of Man (Mt 24:30) will call all to the holy mountain (cf Is 2:1–5). *declare My glory*. His victory. See "glory of the LORD," pp 6–7. *the nations*. Those mentioned to symbolize

the worldwide gathering of the redeemed were on the outer perimeter of ancient Israel: Tarshish to the west (see note, 1Ki 10:22); Pul and Lud in Africa (LXX "Put," cf Ezk 38:5); Tubal and Javan to the north (Ezk 27:13). See notes, Gn 10:2–5; on the extent of ancient travel, see map, p 1479. *Javan*. Translated "Greece" in Zec 9:13.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 66:20 They will come to Zion by all means possible. See note, 2:3. *all your brothers*. Cf v 24; Rm 11:25. *offering to the* LORD … *grain offering*. See pp 170–71. *holy mountain*. See note, 11:9.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 66:21 See note, 61:6.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 66:22 As lasting as the new creation is the crown of His creation, His restored people. For the servants of the Lord, life goes on eternally in the presence of the Lord (Rv 21:2–4) with a share in His glory (Is 4:2; 11:10; 43:7; 58:8; 60:1–2, 13; 62:2). Cf v 24 for the final place of those who rebel.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 66:23 *From new moon … to Sabbath*. All time will be holy. See pp 170–71. *before Me*. Cf 45:23.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 66:24 Gruesome evidence of God's victory. *worm … fire*. Jesus used these terms to describe the torment of hell (Mk 9:43–48). *abhorrence*. Rendered "contempt" in Dn 12:2.

ISAIAH—NOTE ON 66:15–24 With hot rebuke, Isaiah closes his prophecy. Though he has emphasized God's grace and restoration in the preceding chapters, he ends with the fires of punishment because his hearers will not repent. This day, with repentant cry, lift your voice to the Maker of heaven and earth. He who has every right to condemn also has every desire to forgive you and raise you to new life as He demonstrated toward you in His Son, the Savior from sin and hell. • Holy Jesus, sanctify and purify me from all uncleanness. Quench my passion for sin, and grant me life everlasting. Amen.

Jeremiah

Jeremiah 1 | Jeremiah 2 | Jeremiah 3 | Jeremiah 4 | Jeremiah 5 | Jeremiah 6 | Jeremiah 7 | Jeremiah 8 | Jeremiah 9 | Jeremiah 10 | Jeremiah 11 | Jeremiah 12 | Jeremiah 13 | Jeremiah 14 | Jeremiah 15 | Jeremiah 16 | Jeremiah 17 | Jeremiah 18 | Jeremiah 19 | Jeremiah 20 | Jeremiah 21 | Jeremiah 22 | Jeremiah 23 | Jeremiah 24 | Jeremiah 25 | Jeremiah 26 | Jeremiah 27 | Jeremiah 28 | Jeremiah 29 | Jeremiah 30 | Jeremiah 31 | Jeremiah 32 | Jeremiah 33 | Jeremiah 34 | Jeremiah 35 | Jeremiah 36 | Jeremiah 37 | Jeremiah 38 | Jeremiah 39 | Jeremiah 40 | Jeremiah 41 | Jeremiah 42 | Jeremiah 43 | Jeremiah 44 | Jeremiah 45 | Jeremiah 46 | Jeremiah 47 | Jeremiah 48 | Jeremiah 49 | Jeremiah 50 | Jeremiah 51 | Jeremiah 52

- Introduction to Jeremiah
  - Overview
  - Reading Jeremiah
  - Luther on Jeremiah
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

1 [1]†††The words of Jeremiah, the son of Hilkiah, one of the priests
who were in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin, [2]†to whom the word of the
LORD came in the days of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah, in the
thirteenth year of his reign. [3]†It came also in the days of Jehoiakim the son
of Josiah, king of Judah, and until the end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah,
the son of Josiah, king of Judah, until the captivity of Jerusalem in the fifth
month.

The Call of Jeremiah

4 ‡‡‡Now the word of the Lord came to me, saying,

5 ‡ “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you,
and before you were born I consecrated you;
I appointed you a prophet to the nations.”

6 ‡Then I said, “Ah, Lord God! Behold, I do not know how to speak, for I am
only a youth.” 7 But the Lord said to me,

“Do not say, ‘I am only a youth’;
for to all to whom I send you, you shall go,
and whatever I command you, you shall
speak.
8 ‡ Do not be afraid of them,
for I am with you to deliver you,
declares the Lord.”

9 ‡Then the Lord put out his hand and touched my mouth. And the Lord said
to me,

“Behold, I have put my words in your mouth.
10 ‡ See, I have set you this day over nations and
over kingdoms,
to pluck up and to break down,
to destroy and to overthrow,
to build and to plant.”

11 ‡‡‡And the word of the Lord came to me, saying, “Jeremiah, what do
you see?” And I said, “I see an almond[1] branch.” 12 Then the Lord said to
me, “You have seen well, for I am watching over my word to perform it.”
13 ‡The word of the Lord came to me a second time, saying, “What do you
see?” And I said, “I see a boiling pot, facing away from the north.” 14 Then
the Lord said to me, “Out of the north disaster[2] shall be let loose upon all

the inhabitants of the land. [15]For behold, I am calling all the tribes of the kingdoms of the north, declares the Lord, and they shall come, and every one shall set his throne at the entrance of the gates of Jerusalem, against all its walls all around and against all the cities of Judah. [16]† And I will declare my judgments against them, for all their evil in forsaking me. They have made offerings to other gods and worshiped the works of their own hands. [17]But you, dress yourself for work;[3] arise, and say to them everything that I command you. Do not be dismayed by them, lest I dismay you before them. [18]† And I, behold, I make you this day a fortified city, an iron pillar, and bronze walls, against the whole land, against the kings of Judah, its officials, its priests, and the people of the land. [19]† They will fight against you, but they shall not prevail against you, for I am with you, declares the Lord, to deliver you."

Israel Forsakes the Lord

2 [1]‡‡‡The word of the Lord came to me, saying, [2]†"Go and proclaim
in the hearing of Jerusalem, Thus says the Lord,

"I remember the devotion of your youth,
your love as a bride,
how you followed me in the wilderness,
in a land not sown.
[3]† Israel was holy to the Lord,
the firstfruits of his harvest.
All who ate of it incurred guilt;
disaster came upon them,
declares the Lord."

[4]†Hear the word of the Lord, O house of Jacob, and all the clans of the
house of Israel. [5]†Thus says the Lord:

"What wrong did your fathers find in me
that they went far from me,
and went after worthlessness, and became
worthless?
[6]† They did not say, 'Where is the Lord
who brought us up from the land of
Egypt,
who led us in the wilderness,
in a land of deserts and pits,
in a land of drought and deep darkness,
in a land that none passes through,
where no man dwells?'
[7] And I brought you into a plentiful land
to enjoy its fruits and its good things.
But when you came in, you defiled my
land
and made my heritage an abomination.

8† The priests did not say, ‘Where is the Lord?’
Those who handle the law did not
know me;
the shepherds[1] transgressed against me;
the prophets prophesied by Baal
and went after things that do not profit.

9 “Therefore I still contend with you,
declares the Lord,
and with your children’s children I will
contend.
10† For cross to the coasts of Cyprus and see,
or send to Kedar and examine with care;
see if there has been such a thing.
11† Has a nation changed its gods,
even though they are no gods?
But my people have changed their glory
for that which does not profit.
12† Be appalled, O heavens, at this;
be shocked, be utterly desolate,
declares the Lord,
13† for my people have committed two evils:
they have forsaken me,
the fountain of living waters,
and hewed out cisterns for themselves,
broken cisterns that can hold no water.

14†† “Is Israel a slave? Is he a homeborn servant?
Why then has he become a prey?
15 The lions have roared against him;
they have roared loudly.
They have made his land a waste;
his cities are in ruins, without inhabitant.
16† Moreover, the men of Memphis and Tahpanhes

have shaved[2] the crown of your head.
17 Have you not brought this upon yourself
by forsaking the Lord your God,
when he led you in the way?
18† And now what do you gain by going to Egypt
to drink the waters of the Nile?
Or what do you gain by going to Assyria
to drink the waters of the Euphrates?
19† Your evil will chastise you,
and your apostasy will reprove you.
Know and see that it is evil and bitter
for you to forsake the Lord your God;
the fear of me is not in you,
declares the Lord God of hosts.

20†† "For long ago I broke your yoke
and burst your bonds;
but you said, 'I will not serve.'
Yes, on every high hill
and under every green tree
you bowed down like a whore.
21† Yet I planted you a choice vine,
wholly of pure seed.
How then have you turned degenerate
and become a wild vine?
22† Though you wash yourself with lye
and use much soap,
the stain of your guilt is still before me,
declares the Lord God.
23†† How can you say, 'I am not unclean,
I have not gone after the Baals'?
Look at your way in the valley;
know what you have done—
a restless young camel running here and
there,

24 a wild donkey used to the
wilderness,
in her heat sniffing the wind!
Who can restrain her lust?
None who seek her need weary
themselves;
in her month they will find her.
25 Keep your feet from going unshod
and your throat from thirst.
But you said, ‘It is hopeless,
for I have loved foreigners,
and after them I will go.’

26 “As a thief is shamed when caught,
so the house of Israel shall be
shamed:
they, their kings, their officials,
their priests, and their prophets,
27 who say to a tree, ‘You are my father,’
and to a stone, ‘You gave me birth.’
For they have turned their back to me,
and not their face.
But in the time of their trouble they say,
‘Arise and save us!’
28 But where are your gods
that you made for yourself?
Let them arise, if they can save you,
in your time of trouble;
for as many as your cities
are your gods, O Judah.
29 “Why do you contend with me?
You have all transgressed against me,
declares the Lord.
30 In vain have I struck your children;
they took no correction;
your own sword devoured your prophets

like a ravening lion.
31 And you, O generation, behold the word of
the Lord.
Have I been a wilderness to Israel,
or a land of thick darkness?
Why then do my people say, ‘We are free,
we will come no more to you’?
32† Can a virgin forget her ornaments,
or a bride her attire?
Yet my people have forgotten me
days without number.

33 “How well you direct your course
to seek love!
So that even to wicked women
you have taught your ways.
34† Also on your skirts is found
the lifeblood of the guiltless poor;
you did not find them breaking in.
Yet in spite of all these things
35 you say, ‘I am innocent;
surely his anger has turned from me.’
Behold, I will bring you to judgment
for saying, ‘I have not sinned.’
36† How much you go about,
changing your way!
You shall be put to shame by Egypt
as you were put to shame by Assyria.
37† From it too you will come away
with your hands on your head,
for the Lord has rejected those in whom you
trust,
and you will not prosper by them.

3 [1]†“If[1] a man divorces his wife
and she goes from him
and becomes another man’s wife,
will he return to her?

Would not that land be greatly polluted?
You have played the whore with many lovers;
and would you return to me?
declares the Lord.
[2]† Lift up your eyes to the bare heights, and see!
Where have you not been ravished?
By the waysides you have sat awaiting lovers
like an Arab in the wilderness.
You have polluted the land
with your vile whoredom.
[3]† Therefore the showers have been withheld,
and the spring rain has not come;
yet you have the forehead of a whore;
you refuse to be ashamed.
[4]† Have you not just now called to me,
‘My father, you are the friend of my youth—
[5] will he be angry forever,
will he be indignant to the end?’
Behold, you have spoken,
but you have done all the evil that you
could.”

Faithless Israel Called to Repentance

6 The Lord said to me in the days of King Josiah: “Have you seen what
she did, that faithless one, Israel, how she went up on every high hill and
under every green tree, and there played the whore? 7 And I thought, ‘After
she has done all this she will return to me,’ but she did not return, and her
treacherous sister Judah saw it. 8 She saw that for all the adulteries of that
faithless one, Israel, I had sent her away with a decree of divorce. Yet her
treacherous sister Judah did not fear, but she too went and played the whore.
9 Because she took her whoredom lightly, she polluted the land, committing
adultery with stone and tree. 10 Yet for all this her treacherous sister Judah
did not return to me with her whole heart, but in pretense, declares the
Lord.”

11 And the Lord said to me, “Faithless Israel has shown herself more
righteous than treacherous Judah. 12 Go, and proclaim these words toward
the north, and say,

“‘ Return, faithless Israel,
declares the Lord.
I will not look on you in anger,
for I am merciful,
declares the Lord;
I will not be angry forever.
13 Only acknowledge your guilt,
that you rebelled against the Lord your God
and scattered your favors among foreigners
under every green tree,
and that you have not obeyed my voice,
declares the Lord.
14 Return, O faithless children,
declares the Lord;
for I am your master;
I will take you, one from a city and two from
a family,
and I will bring you to Zion.

15 ‡ “‘And I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will feed you
with knowledge and understanding. 16 ‡ And when you have multiplied and
increased in the land, in those days, declares the Lord, they shall no more
say, “The ark of the covenant of the Lord.” It shall not come to mind or be
remembered or missed; it shall not be made again. 17 At that time Jerusalem
shall be called the throne of the Lord, and all nations shall gather to it, to the
presence of the Lord in Jerusalem, and they shall no more stubbornly follow
their own evil heart. 18 ‡ In those days the house of Judah shall join the house
of Israel, and together they shall come from the land of the north to the land
that I gave your fathers for a heritage.

19 ‡ “‘I said,
How I would set you among my sons,
and give you a pleasant land,
a heritage most beautiful of all nations.
And I thought you would call me, My Father,
and would not turn from following me.
20 ‡ Surely, as a treacherous wife leaves her
husband,
so have you been treacherous to me,
O house of Israel,
declares the Lord.’”
21 ‡ A voice on the bare heights is heard,
the weeping and pleading of Israel’s sons
because they have perverted their way;
they have forgotten the Lord their God.
22 ‡ “Return, O faithless sons;
I will heal your faithlessness.”
“Behold, we come to you,
for you are the Lord our God.
23 ‡ Truly the hills are a delusion,
the orgies[1] on the mountains.
Truly in the Lord our God
is the salvation of Israel.

[24]† “But from our youth the shameful thing has devoured all for which our
fathers labored, their flocks and their herds, their sons and their daughters.
[25]† Let us lie down in our shame, and let our dishonor cover us. For we have
sinned against the Lord our God, we and our fathers, from our youth even to
this day, and we have not obeyed the voice of the Lord our God.”

4 [1]† “If you return, O Israel,
declares the Lord,
to me you should return.

If you remove your detestable things from my
presence,
and do not waver,
[2]† and if you swear, ‘As the Lord lives,’
in truth, in justice, and in righteousness,
then nations shall bless themselves in
him,
and in him shall they glory.”

[3]†† For thus says the Lord to the men of Judah and Jerusalem:

“Break up your fallow ground,
and sow not among thorns.
[4]† Circumcise yourselves to the Lord;
remove the foreskin of your hearts,
O men of Judah and inhabitants of
Jerusalem;
lest my wrath go forth like fire,
and burn with none to quench it,
because of the evil of your deeds.”

Disaster from the North

5 †† Declare in Judah, and proclaim in Jerusalem, and say,

"Blow the trumpet through the land;
cry aloud and say,
'Assemble, and let us go
into the fortified cities!'
6 † Raise a standard toward Zion,
flee for safety, stay not,
for I bring disaster from the north,
and great destruction.
7 A lion has gone up from his thicket,
a destroyer of nations has set out;
he has gone out from his place
to make your land a waste;
your cities will be ruins
without inhabitant.
8 † For this put on sackcloth,
lament and wail,
for the fierce anger of the LORD
has not turned back from us."

9 †"In that day, declares the LORD, courage shall fail both king and officials. The priests shall be appalled and the prophets astounded." 10 †Then I said, "Ah, Lord GOD, surely you have utterly deceived this people and Jerusalem, saying, 'It shall be well with you,' whereas the sword has reached their very life."

11 †At that time it will be said to this people and to Jerusalem, "A hot wind from the bare heights in the desert toward the daughter of my people, not to winnow or cleanse, 12 †a wind too full for this comes for me. Now it is I who speak in judgment upon them."

13 Behold, he comes up like clouds;
his chariots like the whirlwind;
his horses are swifter than eagles—
woe to us, for we are ruined!
14† O Jerusalem, wash your heart from evil,
that you may be saved.
How long shall your wicked thoughts
lodge within you?
15† For a voice declares from Dan
and proclaims trouble from Mount
Ephraim.
16 Warn the nations that he is coming;
announce to Jerusalem,
"Besiegers come from a distant land;
they shout against the cities of Judah.
17 Like keepers of a field are they against her all around,
because she has rebelled against me,
declares the LORD.
18† Your ways and your deeds
have brought this upon you.
This is your doom, and it is bitter;
it has reached your very heart."

Anguish over Judah's Desolation

19 My anguish, my anguish! I writhe in pain!
Oh the walls of my heart!
My heart is beating wildly;
I cannot keep silent,
for I hear the sound of the trumpet,
the alarm of war.
20 Crash follows hard on crash;
the whole land is laid waste.
Suddenly my tents are laid waste,
my curtains in a moment.
21 How long must I see the standard
and hear the sound of the trumpet?

22 "For my people are foolish;
they know me not;
they are stupid children;
they have no understanding.
They are 'wise'—in doing evil!
But how to do good they know not."

23 I looked on the earth, and behold, it was
without form and void;
and to the heavens, and they had no light.
24 I looked on the mountains, and behold, they
were quaking,
and all the hills moved to and fro.
25 I looked, and behold, there was no man,
and all the birds of the air had fled.
26 I looked, and behold, the fruitful land was a
desert,

and all its cities were laid in ruins
before the LORD, before his fierce anger.

27 †For thus says the LORD, "The whole land shall be a desolation; yet I
will not make a full end.

28† "For this the earth shall mourn,
and the heavens above be dark;
for I have spoken; I have purposed;
I have not relented, nor will I turn back."

29† At the noise of horseman and archer
every city takes to flight;
they enter thickets; they climb among rocks;
all the cities are forsaken,
and no man dwells in them.
30† And you, O desolate one,
what do you mean that you dress in scarlet,
that you adorn yourself with ornaments of
gold,
that you enlarge your eyes with paint?
In vain you beautify yourself.
Your lovers despise you;
they seek your life.
31 For I heard a cry as of a woman in labor,
anguish as of one giving birth to her first
child,
the cry of the daughter of Zion gasping for
breath,
stretching out her hands,
"Woe is me! I am fainting before murderers."

Jerusalem Refused to Repent

5 [1] Run to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem,
look and take note!
Search her squares to see
if you can find a man,
one who does justice
and seeks truth,
that I may pardon her.

[2] Though they say, “As the Lord lives,”
yet they swear falsely.
[3] O Lord, do not your eyes look for truth?
You have struck them down,
but they felt no anguish;
you have consumed them,
but they refused to take correction.
They have made their faces harder than rock;
they have refused to repent.

[4] Then I said, “These are only the poor;
they have no sense;
for they do not know the way of the Lord,
the justice of their God.
[5] I will go to the great
and will speak to them,
for they know the way of the Lord,
the justice of their God.”
But they all alike had broken the yoke;
they had burst the bonds.

6 Therefore a lion from the forest shall strike
them down;
a wolf from the desert shall devastate them.
A leopard is watching their cities;
everyone who goes out of them shall be torn
in pieces,
because their transgressions are many,
their apostasies are great.

7 "How can I pardon you?
Your children have forsaken me
and have sworn by those who are no gods.
When I fed them to the full,
they committed adultery
and trooped to the houses of whores.
8 They were well-fed, lusty stallions,
each neighing for his neighbor's wife.
9 Shall I not punish them for these things?
declares the LORD;
and shall I not avenge myself
on a nation such as this?

10 "Go up through her vine rows and destroy,
but make not a full end;
strip away her branches,
for they are not the LORD's.
11 For the house of Israel and the house of Judah
have been utterly treacherous to me,
declares the LORD.
12 They have spoken falsely of the LORD
and have said, 'He will do nothing;
no disaster will come upon us,
nor shall we see sword or famine.
13 The prophets will become wind;

the word is not in them.
Thus shall it be done to them!’”

The Lord Proclaims Judgment

14 Therefore thus says the Lord, the God of
hosts:
"Because you have spoken this word,
behold, I am making my words in your
mouth a fire,
and this people wood, and the fire shall
consume them.
15 Behold, I am bringing against you
a nation from afar, O house of Israel,
declares the Lord.
It is an enduring nation;
it is an ancient nation,
a nation whose language you do not know,
nor can you understand what they say.
16 Their quiver is like an open tomb;
they are all mighty warriors.
17 They shall eat up your harvest and your food;
they shall eat up your sons and your
daughters;
they shall eat up your flocks and your herds;
they shall eat up your vines and your fig
trees;
your fortified cities in which you trust
they shall beat down with the sword."

18 "But even in those days, declares the Lord, I will not make a full end of you. 19 And when your people say, 'Why has the Lord our God done all these things to us?' you shall say to them, 'As you have forsaken me and served foreign gods in your land, so you shall serve foreigners in a land that is not yours.'"

20 Declare this in the house of Jacob;
proclaim it in Judah:

21 “Hear this, O foolish and senseless people,
who have eyes, but see not,
who have ears, but hear not.
22 Do you not fear me? declares the Lord.
Do you not tremble before me?
I placed the sand as the boundary for the sea,
a perpetual barrier that it cannot pass;
though the waves toss, they cannot prevail;
though they roar, they cannot pass over it.
23 But this people has a stubborn and rebellious
heart;
they have turned aside and gone away.
24 They do not say in their hearts,
‘Let us fear the Lord our God,
who gives the rain in its season,
the autumn rain and the spring rain,
and keeps for us
the weeks appointed for the harvest.’
25 Your iniquities have turned these away,
and your sins have kept good from you.
26 For wicked men are found among my people;
they lurk like fowlers lying in wait.[1]
They set a trap;
they catch men.
27 Like a cage full of birds,
their houses are full of deceit;
therefore they have become great and rich;
28 they have grown fat and sleek.
They know no bounds in deeds of evil;
they judge not with justice
the cause of the fatherless, to make it prosper,
and they do not defend the rights of the
needy.
29 Shall I not punish them for these things?
declares the Lord,

and shall I not avenge myself
on a nation such as this?”

30 An appalling and horrible thing
has happened in the land:
31 the prophets prophesy falsely,
and the priests rule at their direction;
my people love to have it so,
but what will you do when the end comes?

Impending Disaster for Jerusalem

6 [1]† Flee for safety, O people of Benjamin,
from the midst of Jerusalem!

Blow the trumpet in Tekoa,
and raise a signal on Beth-haccherem,
for disaster looms out of the north,
and great destruction.
[2]† The lovely and delicately bred I will destroy,
the daughter of Zion.[2]
[3]† Shepherds with their flocks shall come against her;
they shall pitch their tents around her;
they shall pasture, each in his place.
[4]† "Prepare war against her;
arise, and let us attack at noon!
Woe to us, for the day declines,
for the shadows of evening lengthen!
[5] Arise, and let us attack by night
and destroy her palaces!"

[6]† For thus says the Lord of hosts:
"Cut down her trees;
cast up a siege mound against Jerusalem.
This is the city that must be punished;
there is nothing but oppression within her.
[7] As a well keeps its water fresh,
so she keeps fresh her evil;
violence and destruction are heard within her;
sickness and wounds are ever before me.
[8] Be warned, O Jerusalem,
lest I turn from you in disgust,

lest I make you a desolation,
an uninhabited land."

9† Thus says the LORD of hosts:
"They shall glean thoroughly as a vine
the remnant of Israel;
like a grape-gatherer pass your hand again
over its branches."
10† To whom shall I speak and give warning,
that they may hear?
Behold, their ears are uncircumcised,
they cannot listen;
behold, the word of the LORD is to them an
object of scorn;
they take no pleasure in it.
11† Therefore I am full of the wrath of the LORD;
I am weary of holding it in.
"Pour it out upon the children in the street,
and upon the gatherings of young men, also;
both husband and wife shall be taken,
the elderly and the very aged.
12 Their houses shall be turned over to others,
their fields and wives together,
for I will stretch out my hand
against the inhabitants of the land,"
declares the LORD.
13 "For from the least to the greatest of them,
everyone is greedy for unjust gain;
and from prophet to priest,
everyone deals falsely.
14† They have healed the wound of my people
lightly,
saying, 'Peace, peace,'
when there is no peace.
15 Were they ashamed when they committed
abomination?

No, they were not at all ashamed;
they did not know how to blush.
Therefore they shall fall among those who fall;
at the time that I punish them, they shall be
overthrown,”
says the Lord.

16 † Thus says the Lord:
“Stand by the roads, and look,
and ask for the ancient paths,
where the good way is; and walk in it,
and find rest for your souls.
But they said, ‘We will not walk in it.’
17 I set watchmen over you, saying,
‘Pay attention to the sound of the trumpet!’
But they said, ‘We will not pay attention.’
18 † Therefore hear, O nations,
and know, O congregation, what will
happen to them.
19 Hear, O earth; behold, I am bringing disaster
upon this people,
the fruit of their devices,
because they have not paid attention to my
words;
and as for my law, they have rejected it.
20 † What use to me is frankincense that comes
from Sheba,
or sweet cane from a distant land?
Your burnt offerings are not acceptable,
nor your sacrifices pleasing to me.
21 † Therefore thus says the Lord:
‘Behold, I will lay before this people
stumbling blocks against which they shall
stumble;
fathers and sons together,
neighbor and friend shall perish.’”

22 † Thus says the Lord:
"Behold, a people is coming from the north country,
a great nation is stirring from the farthest parts of the earth.
23 † They lay hold on bow and javelin;
they are cruel and have no mercy;
the sound of them is like the roaring sea;
they ride on horses,
set in array as a man for battle,
against you, O daughter of Zion!"
24 We have heard the report of it;
our hands fall helpless;
anguish has taken hold of us,
pain as of a woman in labor.
25 Go not out into the field,
nor walk on the road,
for the enemy has a sword;
terror is on every side.
26 † O daughter of my people, put on sackcloth,
and roll in ashes;
make mourning as for an only son,
most bitter lamentation,
for suddenly the destroyer
will come upon us.
27 † "I have made you a tester of metals among my people,
that you may know and test their ways.
28 They are all stubbornly rebellious,
going about with slanders;
they are bronze and iron;
all of them act corruptly.

29 † The bellows blow fiercely;
the lead is consumed by the fire;
in vain the refining goes on,
for the wicked are not removed.
30 Rejected silver they are called,
for the LORD has rejected them.”

Evil in the Land

7 [1]‡‡†The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord: [2]†“Stand in the
gate of the Lord’s house, and proclaim there this word, and say, Hear the
word of the Lord, all you men of Judah who enter these gates to worship the
Lord. [3]†Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Amend your ways
and your deeds, and I will let you dwell in this place. [4]†Do not trust in these
deceptive words: ‘This is the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the
temple of the Lord.’

[5]†“For if you truly amend your ways and your deeds, if you truly execute
justice one with another, [6]if you do not oppress the sojourner, the fatherless,
or the widow, or shed innocent blood in this place, and if you do not go
after other gods to your own harm, [7]†then I will let you dwell in this place,
in the land that I gave of old to your fathers forever.

[8]‡“Behold, you trust in deceptive words to no avail. [9]†Will you steal,
murder, commit adultery, swear falsely, make offerings to Baal, and go after
other gods that you have not known, [10]†and then come and stand before me
in this house, which is called by my name, and say, ‘We are delivered!’—
only to go on doing all these abominations? [11]†Has this house, which is
called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes? Behold, I myself
have seen it, declares the Lord. [12]†Go now to my place that was in Shiloh,
where I made my name dwell at first, and see what I did to it because of the
evil of my people Israel. [13]And now, because you have done all these things,
declares the Lord, and when I spoke to you persistently you did not listen,
and when I called you, you did not answer, [14]therefore I will do to the house
that is called by my name, and in which you trust, and to the place that I
gave to you and to your fathers, as I did to Shiloh. [15]†And I will cast you
out of my sight, as I cast out all your kinsmen, all the offspring of Ephraim.

[16]†“As for you, do not pray for this people, or lift up a cry or prayer for
them, and do not intercede with me, for I will not hear you. [17]Do you not
see what they are doing in the cities of Judah and in the streets of
Jerusalem? [18]†The children gather wood, the fathers kindle fire, and the
women knead dough, to make cakes for the queen of heaven. And they pour

out drink offerings to other gods, to provoke me to anger. 19 †Is it I whom
they provoke? declares the Lord. Is it not themselves, to their own shame?
20Therefore thus says the Lord God: behold, my anger and my wrath will be
poured out on this place, upon man and beast, upon the trees of the field and
the fruit of the ground; it will burn and not be quenched."

21 ‡ †Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: "Add your burnt
offerings to your sacrifices, and eat the flesh. 22 ‡For in the day that I
brought them out of the land of Egypt, I did not speak to your fathers or
command them concerning burnt offerings and sacrifices. 23 †But this
command I gave them: 'Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and you
shall be my people. And walk in all the way that I command you, that it
may be well with you.' 24But they did not obey or incline their ear, but
walked in their own counsels and the stubbornness of their evil hearts, and
went backward and not forward. 25†From the day that your fathers came out
of the land of Egypt to this day, I have persistently sent all my servants the
prophets to them, day after day. 26†Yet they did not listen to me or incline
their ear, but stiffened their neck. They did worse than their fathers.

27†"So you shall speak all these words to them, but they will not listen to
you. You shall call to them, but they will not answer you. 28†And you shall
say to them, 'This is the nation that did not obey the voice of the Lord their
God, and did not accept discipline; truth has perished; it is cut off from their
lips.

29†"'Cut off your hair and cast it away;
raise a lamentation on the bare heights,
for the Lord has rejected and forsaken
the generation of his wrath.'

The Valley of Slaughter

30 ‡“For the sons of Judah have done evil in my sight, declares the Lord.
They have set their detestable things in the house that is called by my name,
to defile it. 31 †And they have built the high places of Topheth, which is in
the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in
the fire, which I did not command, nor did it come into my mind.
32 †Therefore, behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when it will
no more be called Topheth, or the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, but the
Valley of Slaughter; for they will bury in Topheth, because there is no room
elsewhere. 33 †And the dead bodies of this people will be food for the birds
of the air, and for the beasts of the earth, and none will frighten them away.
34 †And I will silence in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem
the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom
and the voice of the bride, for the land shall become a waste.

8 1 ‡‡“At that time, declares the Lord, the bones of the kings of Judah,
the bones of its officials, the bones of the priests, the bones of the prophets,
and the bones of the inhabitants of Jerusalem shall be brought out of their
tombs. 2 †And they shall be spread before the sun and the moon and all the
host of heaven, which they have loved and served, which they have gone
after, and which they have sought and worshiped. And they shall not be
gathered or buried. They shall be as dung on the surface of the ground.
3 †Death shall be preferred to life by all the remnant that remains of this evil
family in all the places where I have driven them, declares the Lord of
hosts.

Sin and Treachery

4 “You shall say to them, Thus says the Lord:
When men fall, do they not rise again?
If one turns away, does he not return?
5 Why then has this people turned away
in perpetual backsliding?
They hold fast to deceit;
they refuse to return.
6 I have paid attention and listened,
but they have not spoken rightly;
no man relents of his evil,
saying, ‘What have I done?’
Everyone turns to his own course,
like a horse plunging headlong into battle.
7 Even the stork in the heavens
knows her times,
and the turtledove, swallow, and crane[1]
keep the time of their coming,
but my people know not
the rules[1] of the Lord.

8 “How can you say, ‘We are wise,
and the law of the Lord is with us’?
But behold, the lying pen of the scribes
has made it into a lie.
9 The wise men shall be put to shame;
they shall be dismayed and taken;
behold, they have rejected the word of the
Lord,
so what wisdom is in them?
10 Therefore I will give their wives to others
and their fields to conquerors,
because from the least to the greatest

everyone is greedy for unjust gain;
from prophet to priest,
everyone deals falsely.
11 They have healed the wound of my people
lightly,
saying, ‘Peace, peace,’
when there is no peace.
12 Were they ashamed when they committed
abomination?
No, they were not at all ashamed;
they did not know how to blush.
Therefore they shall fall among the fallen;
when I punish them, they shall be
overthrown,
says the Lord.
13 When I would gather them, declares the Lord,
there are no grapes on the vine,
nor figs on the fig tree;
even the leaves are withered,
and what I gave them has passed away from
them.”[2]
14 Why do we sit still?
Gather together; let us go into the fortified
cities
and perish there,
for the Lord our God has doomed us to perish
and has given us poisoned water to drink,
because we have sinned against the Lord.
15 We looked for peace, but no good came;
for a time of healing, but behold, terror.

16 “The snorting of their horses is heard from
Dan;
at the sound of the neighing of their
stallions
the whole land quakes.

They come and devour the land and all that
fills it,
the city and those who dwell in it.
17 † For behold, I am sending among you serpents,
adders that cannot be charmed,
and they shall bite you,”
declares the Lord.

Jeremiah Grieves for His People

18 My joy is gone; grief is upon me;[3]
my heart is sick within me.
19 Behold, the cry of the daughter of my people
from the length and breadth of the land:
"Is the LORD not in Zion?
Is her King not in her?"
"Why have they provoked me to anger with
their carved images
and with their foreign idols?"
20 "The harvest is past, the summer is ended,
and we are not saved."
21 For the wound of the daughter of my people
is my heart wounded;
I mourn, and dismay has taken hold on me.

22 Is there no balm in Gilead?
Is there no physician there?
Why then has the health of the daughter of
my people
not been restored?

9 1 [1] Oh that my head were waters,
and my eyes a fountain of tears,
that I might weep day and night
for the slain of the daughter of my people!

2 [2] Oh that I had in the desert
a travelers' lodging place,
that I might leave my people
and go away from them!
For they are all adulterers,
a company of treacherous men.

3† They bend their tongue like a bow;
falsehood and not truth has grown strong[3] in the land;
for they proceed from evil to evil,
and they do not know me, declares the Lord.

4† Let everyone beware of his neighbor,
and put no trust in any brother,
for every brother is a deceiver,
and every neighbor goes about as a slanderer.
5 Everyone deceives his neighbor,
and no one speaks the truth;
they have taught their tongue to speak lies;
they weary themselves committing iniquity.
6 Heaping oppression upon oppression, and deceit upon deceit,
they refuse to know me, declares the Lord.

7† Therefore thus says the Lord of hosts:
“Behold, I will refine them and test them,
for what else can I do, because of my people?
8 Their tongue is a deadly arrow;
it speaks deceitfully;
with his mouth each speaks peace to his neighbor,
but in his heart he plans an ambush for him.
9† Shall I not punish them for these things?
declares the Lord,
and shall I not avenge myself
on a nation such as this?

[10]† “I will take up weeping and wailing for the
mountains,
and a lamentation for the pastures of the
wilderness,
because they are laid waste so that no one
passes through,
and the lowing of cattle is not heard;
both the birds of the air and the beasts
have fled and are gone.
[11] I will make Jerusalem a heap of ruins,
a lair of jackals,
and I will make the cities of Judah a
desolation,
without inhabitant.”

[12]Who is the man so wise that he can understand this? To whom has the mouth of the Lord spoken, that he may declare it? Why is the land ruined and laid waste like a wilderness, so that no one passes through? [13]And the Lord says: “Because they have forsaken my law that I set before them, and have not obeyed my voice or walked in accord with it, [14]† but have stubbornly followed their own hearts and have gone after the Baals, as their fathers taught them. [15]†Therefore thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Behold, I will feed this people with bitter food, and give them poisonous water to drink. [16]†I will scatter them among the nations whom neither they nor their fathers have known, and I will send the sword after them, until I have consumed them.”

[17]† Thus says the Lord of hosts:
“Consider, and call for the mourning women to
come;
send for the skillful women to come;
[18] let them make haste and raise a wailing
over us,
that our eyes may run down with tears
and our eyelids flow with water.
[19]† For a sound of wailing is heard from Zion:

‘How we are ruined!
We are utterly shamed,
because we have left the land,
because they have cast down our
dwellings.’”

20 Hear, O women, the word of the Lord,
and let your ear receive the word of his
mouth;
teach to your daughters a lament,
and each to her neighbor a dirge.
21† For death has come up into our windows;
it has entered our palaces,
cutting off the children from the streets
and the young men from the squares.
22 Speak, “Thus declares the Lord:
‘The dead bodies of men shall fall
like dung upon the open field,
like sheaves after the reaper,
and none shall gather them.’”

23†Thus says the Lord: “Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, 24†but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the Lord who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight, declares the Lord.”

25†“Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will punish all those who are circumcised merely in the flesh— 26†Egypt, Judah, Edom, the sons of Ammon, Moab, and all who dwell in the desert who cut the corners of their hair, for all these nations are uncircumcised, and all the house of Israel are uncircumcised in heart.”

Idols and the Living God

10 [1]‡†Hear the word that the Lord speaks to you, O house of Israel.
[2]†Thus says the Lord:

"Learn not the way of the nations,
nor be dismayed at the signs of the heavens
because the nations are dismayed at them,
[3]† for the customs of the peoples are vanity.[1]
A tree from the forest is cut down
and worked with an axe by the hands of a
craftsman.
[4] They decorate it with silver and gold;
they fasten it with hammer and nails
so that it cannot move.
[5] Their idols[2] are like scarecrows in a cucumber
field,
and they cannot speak;
they have to be carried,
for they cannot walk.
Do not be afraid of them,
for they cannot do evil,
neither is it in them to do good."

[6] There is none like you, O Lord;
you are great, and your name is great in
might.
[7]† Who would not fear you, O King of the nations?
For this is your due;
for among all the wise ones of the nations
and in all their kingdoms
there is none like you.
[8] They are both stupid and foolish;
the instruction of idols is but wood!

9 † Beaten silver is brought from Tarshish,
and gold from Uphaz.
They are the work of the craftsman and of the
hands of the goldsmith;
their clothing is violet and purple;
they are all the work of skilled men.
10 † But the LORD is the true God;
he is the living God and the everlasting King.
At his wrath the earth quakes,
and the nations cannot endure his
indignation.

11 †Thus shall you say to them: "The gods who did not make the heavens and the earth shall perish from the earth and from under the heavens."[1]

12 † It is he who made the earth by his power,
who established the world by his wisdom,
and by his understanding stretched out the
heavens.
13 † When he utters his voice, there is a tumult of
waters in the heavens,
and he makes the mist rise from the ends of
the earth.
He makes lightning for the rain,
and he brings forth the wind from his
storehouses.
14 Every man is stupid and without knowledge;
every goldsmith is put to shame by his idols,
for his images are false,
and there is no breath in them.
15 † They are worthless, a work of delusion;
at the time of their punishment they shall
perish.
16 Not like these is he who is the portion of
Jacob,
for he is the one who formed all things,

and Israel is the tribe of his inheritance;
the LORD of hosts is his name.

17† Gather up your bundle from the ground,
O you who dwell under siege!
18† For thus says the LORD:
"Behold, I am slinging out the inhabitants of the land
at this time,
and I will bring distress on them,
that they may feel it."

19† Woe is me because of my hurt!
My wound is grievous.
But I said, "Truly this is an affliction,
and I must bear it."
20† My tent is destroyed,
and all my cords are broken;
my children have gone from me,
and they are not;
there is no one to spread my tent again
and to set up my curtains.
21† For the shepherds are stupid
and do not inquire of the LORD;
therefore they have not prospered,
and all their flock is scattered.

22† A voice, a rumor! Behold, it comes!—
a great commotion out of the north country
to make the cities of Judah a desolation,
a lair of jackals.

23† I know, O Lord, that the way of man is not in
himself,
that it is not in man who walks to direct his
steps.
24† Correct me, O Lord, but in justice;
not in your anger, lest you bring me to
nothing.

25† Pour out your wrath on the nations that know
you not,
and on the peoples that call not on your
name,
for they have devoured Jacob;
they have devoured him and consumed him,
and have laid waste his habitation.

The Broken Covenant

11 [1]The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord: [2]† "Hear the
words of this covenant, and speak to the men of Judah and the inhabitants
of Jerusalem. [3]† You shall say to them, Thus says the Lord, the God of
Israel: Cursed be the man who does not hear the words of this covenant
[4]† that I commanded your fathers when I brought them out of the land of
Egypt, from the iron furnace, saying, Listen to my voice, and do all that I
command you. So shall you be my people, and I will be your God, [5]† that I
may confirm the oath that I swore to your fathers, to give them a land
flowing with milk and honey, as at this day." Then I answered, "So be it,
Lord."

[6]And the Lord said to me, "Proclaim all these words in the cities of Judah
and in the streets of Jerusalem: Hear the words of this covenant and do
them. [7]For I solemnly warned your fathers when I brought them up out of
the land of Egypt, warning them persistently, even to this day, saying, Obey
my voice. [8]Yet they did not obey or incline their ear, but everyone walked in
the stubbornness of his evil heart. Therefore I brought upon them all the
words of this covenant, which I commanded them to do, but they did not."

[9]Again the Lord said to me, "A conspiracy exists among the men of Judah
and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. [10]† They have turned back to the iniquities
of their forefathers, who refused to hear my words. They have gone after
other gods to serve them. The house of Israel and the house of Judah have
broken my covenant that I made with their fathers. [11]Therefore, thus says
the Lord, Behold, I am bringing disaster upon them that they cannot escape.
Though they cry to me, I will not listen to them. [12]Then the cities of Judah
and the inhabitants of Jerusalem will go and cry to the gods to whom they
make offerings, but they cannot save them in the time of their trouble.
[13]† For your gods have become as many as your cities, O Judah, and as
many as the streets of Jerusalem are the altars you have set up to shame,
altars to make offerings to Baal.

[14]† "Therefore do not pray for this people, or lift up a cry or prayer on
their behalf, for I will not listen when they call to me in the time of their
trouble. [15]† What right has my beloved in my house, when she has done

many vile deeds? Can even sacrificial flesh avert your doom? Can you then exult? 16The Lord once called you ‘a green olive tree, beautiful with good fruit.’ But with the roar of a great tempest he will set fire to it, and its branches will be consumed. 17† The Lord of hosts, who planted you, has decreed disaster against you, because of the evil that the house of Israel and the house of Judah have done, provoking me to anger by making offerings to Baal.”

18† The Lord made it known to me and I knew;
then you showed me their deeds.
19 But I was like a gentle lamb
led to the slaughter.
I did not know it was against me
they devised schemes, saying,
“Let us destroy the tree with its fruit,
let us cut him off from the land of the
living,
that his name be remembered no more.”
20† But, O Lord of hosts, who judges righteously,
who tests the heart and the mind,
let me see your vengeance upon them,
for to you have I committed my cause.

21Therefore thus says the Lord concerning the men of Anathoth, who seek your life, and say, “Do not prophesy in the name of the Lord, or you will die by our hand”— 22therefore thus says the Lord of hosts: “Behold, I will punish them. The young men shall die by the sword, their sons and their daughters shall die by famine, 23and none of them shall be left. For I will bring disaster upon the men of Anathoth, the year of their punishment.”

Jeremiah's Complaint

12 [1]†† Righteous are you, O Lord,
when I complain to you;

yet I would plead my case before you.
Why does the way of the wicked prosper?
Why do all who are treacherous thrive?
[2]† You plant them, and they take root;
they grow and produce fruit;
you are near in their mouth
and far from their heart.
[3] But you, O Lord, know me;
you see me, and test my heart toward you.
Pull them out like sheep for the slaughter,
and set them apart for the day of slaughter.
[4]† How long will the land mourn
and the grass of every field wither?
For the evil of those who dwell in it
the beasts and the birds are swept away,
because they said, "He will not see our latter end."

The Lord Answers Jeremiah

5 “If you have raced with men on foot, and they
have wearied you,
how will you compete with horses?
And if in a safe land you are so trusting,
what will you do in the thicket of the
Jordan?
6 For even your brothers and the house of your
father,
even they have dealt treacherously with
you;
they are in full cry after you;
do not believe them,
though they speak friendly words to you.”

7 “I have forsaken my house;
I have abandoned my heritage;
I have given the beloved of my soul
into the hands of her enemies.
8 My heritage has become to me
like a lion in the forest;
she has lifted up her voice against me;
therefore I hate her.
9 Is my heritage to me like a hyena’s lair?
Are the birds of prey against her all around?
Go, assemble all the wild beasts;
bring them to devour.
10 Many shepherds have destroyed my vineyard;
they have trampled down my portion;
they have made my pleasant portion
a desolate wilderness.
11 They have made it a desolation;
desolate, it mourns to me.

The whole land is made desolate,
but no man lays it to heart.
12 Upon all the bare heights in the desert
destroyers have come,
for the sword of the Lord devours
from one end of the land to the other;
no flesh has peace.
13 They have sown wheat and have reaped thorns;
they have tired themselves out but profit
nothing.
They shall be ashamed of their[1] harvests
because of the fierce anger of the Lord."

14 ‡ ‡ Thus says the Lord concerning all my evil neighbors who touch the heritage that I have given my people Israel to inherit: "Behold, I will pluck them up from their land, and I will pluck up the house of Judah from among them. 15 ‡ And after I have plucked them up, I will again have compassion on them, and I will bring them again each to his heritage and each to his land. 16 ‡ And it shall come to pass, if they will diligently learn the ways of my people, to swear by my name, 'As the Lord lives,' even as they taught my people to swear by Baal, then they shall be built up in the midst of my people. 17 But if any nation will not listen, then I will utterly pluck it up and destroy it, declares the Lord."

The Ruined Loincloth

13 [1]‡†Thus says the Lord to me, “Go and buy a linen loincloth and
put it around your waist, and do not dip it in water.” [2]So I bought a loincloth
according to the word of the Lord, and put it around my waist. [3]And the
word of the Lord came to me a second time, [4]†“Take the loincloth that you
have bought, which is around your waist, and arise, go to the Euphrates and
hide it there in a cleft of the rock.” [5]So I went and hid it by the Euphrates, as
the Lord commanded me. [6]And after many days the Lord said to me, “Arise,
go to the Euphrates, and take from there the loincloth that I commanded
you to hide there.” [7]Then I went to the Euphrates, and dug, and I took the
loincloth from the place where I had hidden it. And behold, the loincloth
was spoiled; it was good for nothing.

[8]Then the word of the Lord came to me: [9]“Thus says the Lord: Even so
will I spoil the pride of Judah and the great pride of Jerusalem. [10]†This evil
people, who refuse to hear my words, who stubbornly follow their own
heart and have gone after other gods to serve them and worship them, shall
be like this loincloth, which is good for nothing. [11]† For as the loincloth
clings to the waist of a man, so I made the whole house of Israel and the
whole house of Judah cling to me, declares the Lord, that they might be for
me a people, a name, a praise, and a glory, but they would not listen.

The Jars Filled with Wine

12 ‡‡“You shall speak to them this word: ‘Thus says the Lord, the God of
Israel, “Every jar shall be filled with wine.”’ And they will say to you, ‘Do
we not indeed know that every jar will be filled with wine?’ 13 †Then you
shall say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord: Behold, I will fill with drunkenness
all the inhabitants of this land: the kings who sit on David’s throne, the
priests, the prophets, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem. 14And I will dash
them one against another, fathers and sons together, declares the Lord. I will
not pity or spare or have compassion, that I should not destroy them.’”

Exile Threatened

15 Hear and give ear; be not proud,
for the Lord has spoken.
16 Give glory to the Lord your God
before he brings darkness,
before your feet stumble
on the twilight mountains,
and while you look for light
he turns it into gloom
and makes it deep darkness.
17 But if you will not listen,
my soul will weep in secret for your pride;
my eyes will weep bitterly and run down with
tears,
because the Lord's flock has been taken
captive.

18 Say to the king and the queen mother:
"Take a lowly seat,
for your beautiful crown
has come down from your head."
19 The cities of the Negeb are shut up,
with none to open them;
all Judah is taken into exile,
wholly taken into exile.

20 "Lift up your eyes and see
those who come from the north.
Where is the flock that was given you,
your beautiful flock?
21 What will you say when they set as head over
you
those whom you yourself have taught to be

friends to you?
Will not pangs take hold of you
like those of a woman in labor?
22 † And if you say in your heart,
‘Why have these things come upon me?’
it is for the greatness of your iniquity
that your skirts are lifted up
and you suffer violence.
23 Can the Ethiopian change his skin
or the leopard his spots?
Then also you can do good
who are accustomed to do evil.
24 † I will scatter you[1] like chaff
driven by the wind from the desert.
25 † This is your lot,
the portion I have measured out to you,
declares the Lord,
because you have forgotten me
and trusted in lies.
26 I myself will lift up your skirts over your face,
and your shame will be seen.
27 † I have seen your abominations,
your adulteries and neighings, your lewd
whorings,
on the hills in the field.
Woe to you, O Jerusalem!
How long will it be before you are made
clean?”

Famine, Sword, and Pestilence

14 [1]‡‡The word of the Lord that came to Jeremiah concerning the drought:

[2]† “Judah mourns,
and her gates languish;
her people lament on the ground,
and the cry of Jerusalem goes up.
[3]† Her nobles send their servants for water;
they come to the cisterns;
they find no water;
they return with their vessels empty;
they are ashamed and confounded
and cover their heads.
[4] Because of the ground that is dismayed,
since there is no rain on the land,
the farmers are ashamed;
they cover their heads.
[5] Even the doe in the field forsakes her
newborn fawn
because there is no grass.
[6] The wild donkeys stand on the bare heights;
they pant for air like jackals;
their eyes fail
because there is no vegetation.

[7]‡‡ “Though our iniquities testify against us,
act, O Lord, for your name’s sake;
for our backslidings are many;
we have sinned against you.
[8]† O you hope of Israel,
its savior in time of trouble,
why should you be like a stranger in the land,

like a traveler who turns aside to tarry for a
night?
9 † Why should you be like a man confused,
like a mighty warrior who cannot save?
Yet you, O Lord, are in the midst of us,
and we are called by your name;
do not leave us.”

10 † Thus says the Lord concerning this people:
“They have loved to wander thus;
they have not restrained their feet;
therefore the Lord does not accept them;
now he will remember their iniquity
and punish their sins.”

11 ‡ ‡ The Lord said to me: “Do not pray for the welfare of this people.
12 † Though they fast, I will not hear their cry, and though they offer burnt offering and grain offering, I will not accept them. But I will consume them by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence.”

Lying Prophets

13 † Then I said: “Ah, Lord God, behold, the prophets say to them, ‘You
shall not see the sword, nor shall you have famine, but I will give you
assured peace in this place.’” 14 And the Lord said to me: “The prophets are
prophesying lies in my name. I did not send them, nor did I command them
or speak to them. They are prophesying to you a lying vision, worthless
divination, and the deceit of their own minds. 15 Therefore thus says the Lord
concerning the prophets who prophesy in my name although I did not send
them, and who say, ‘Sword and famine shall not come upon this land’: By
sword and famine those prophets shall be consumed. 16 And the people to
whom they prophesy shall be cast out in the streets of Jerusalem, victims of
famine and sword, with none to bury them—them, their wives, their sons,
and their daughters. For I will pour out their evil upon them.

17 † “You shall say to them this word:
‘Let my eyes run down with tears night and
day,
and let them not cease,
for the virgin daughter of my people is
shattered with a great wound,
with a very grievous blow.
18 † If I go out into the field,
behold, those pierced by the sword!
And if I enter the city,
behold, the diseases of famine!
For both prophet and priest ply their trade
through the land
and have no knowledge.’”

19 †† Have you utterly rejected Judah?
Does your soul loathe Zion?
Why have you struck us down
so that there is no healing for us?

We looked for peace, but no good came;
for a time of healing, but behold, terror.
20 We acknowledge our wickedness, O Lord,
and the iniquity of our fathers,
for we have sinned against you.
21† Do not spurn us, for your name's sake;
do not dishonor your glorious throne;
remember and do not break your covenant
with us.
22† Are there any among the false gods of the
nations that can bring rain?
Or can the heavens give showers?
Are you not he, O Lord our God?
We set our hope on you,
for you do all these things.

The Lord Will Not Relent

15 [1]†† Then the Lord said to me, "Though Moses and Samuel stood
before me, yet my heart would not turn toward this people. Send them out
of my sight, and let them go! [2]† And when they ask you, 'Where shall we
go?' you shall say to them, 'Thus says the Lord:

"'Those who are for pestilence, to pestilence,
and those who are for the sword, to the sword;
those who are for famine, to famine,
and those who are for captivity, to captivity.'

[3]I will appoint over them four kinds of destroyers, declares the Lord: the
sword to kill, the dogs to tear, and the birds of the air and the beasts of the
earth to devour and destroy. [4]† And I will make them a horror to all the
kingdoms of the earth because of what Manasseh the son of Hezekiah, king
of Judah, did in Jerusalem.

[5] "Who will have pity on you, O Jerusalem,
or who will grieve for you?
Who will turn aside
to ask about your welfare?
[6]† You have rejected me, declares the Lord;
you keep going backward,
so I have stretched out my hand against you
and destroyed you—
I am weary of relenting.
[7]† I have winnowed them with a winnowing fork
in the gates of the land;
I have bereaved them; I have destroyed my
people;
they did not turn from their ways.
[8] I have made their widows more in number
than the sand of the seas;
I have brought against the mothers of young

men
a destroyer at noonday;
I have made anguish and terror
fall upon them suddenly.
9† She who bore seven has grown feeble;
she has fainted away;
her sun went down while it was yet day;
she has been shamed and disgraced.
And the rest of them I will give to the sword
before their enemies,
declares the Lord.”

Jeremiah's Complaint

10 † † † Woe is me, my mother, that you bore me, a man of strife and
contention to the whole land! I have not lent, nor have I borrowed, yet all of
them curse me. 11 † The Lord said, "Have I not[1] set you free for their good?
Have I not pleaded for you before the enemy in the time of trouble and in
the time of distress? 12 † Can one break iron, iron from the north, and bronze?

13 "Your wealth and your treasures I will give as spoil, without price, for
all your sins, throughout all your territory. 14 I will make you serve your
enemies in a land that you do not know, for in my anger a fire is kindled
that shall burn forever."

15 † O Lord, you know;
remember me and visit me,
and take vengeance for me on my
persecutors.
In your forbearance take me not away;
know that for your sake I bear
reproach.
16 † Your words were found, and I ate them,
and your words became to me a joy
and the delight of my heart,
for I am called by your name,
O Lord, God of hosts.
17 † I did not sit in the company of revelers,
nor did I rejoice;
I sat alone, because your hand was
upon me,
for you had filled me with indignation.
18 † Why is my pain unceasing,
my wound incurable,
refusing to be healed?
Will you be to me like a deceitful brook,
like waters that fail?

19 Therefore thus says the Lord:
"If you return, I will restore you,
and you shall stand before me.
If you utter what is precious, and not what is
worthless,
you shall be as my mouth.
They shall turn to you,
but you shall not turn to them.
20 And I will make you to this people
a fortified wall of bronze;
they will fight against you,
but they shall not prevail over you,
for I am with you
to save you and deliver you,
declares the Lord.
21 I will deliver you out of the hand of the
wicked,
and redeem you from the grasp of the
ruthless."

Famine, Sword, and Death

16 [1]‡‡The word of the Lord came to me: [2]†“You shall not take a wife,
nor shall you have sons or daughters in this place. [3]For thus says the Lord
concerning the sons and daughters who are born in this place, and
concerning the mothers who bore them and the fathers who fathered them
in this land: [4]†They shall die of deadly diseases. They shall not be lamented,
nor shall they be buried. They shall be as dung on the surface of the ground.
They shall perish by the sword and by famine, and their dead bodies shall
be food for the birds of the air and for the beasts of the earth.

[5]†“For thus says the Lord: Do not enter the house of mourning, or go to
lament or grieve for them, for I have taken away my peace from this people,
my steadfast love and mercy, declares the Lord. [6]†Both great and small shall
die in this land. They shall not be buried, and no one shall lament for them
or cut himself or make himself bald for them. [7]†No one shall break bread
for the mourner, to comfort him for the dead, nor shall anyone give him the
cup of consolation to drink for his father or his mother. [8]†You shall not go
into the house of feasting to sit with them, to eat and drink. [9]†For thus says
the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Behold, I will silence in this place,
before your eyes and in your days, the voice of mirth and the voice of
gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride.

[10]“And when you tell this people all these words, and they say to you,
‘Why has the Lord pronounced all this great evil against us? What is our
iniquity? What is the sin that we have committed against the Lord our God?’
[11]then you shall say to them: ‘Because your fathers have forsaken me,
declares the Lord, and have gone after other gods and have served and
worshiped them, and have forsaken me and have not kept my law, [12]and
because you have done worse than your fathers, for behold, every one of
you follows his stubborn, evil will, refusing to listen to me. [13]†Therefore I
will hurl you out of this land into a land that neither you nor your fathers
have known, and there you shall serve other gods day and night, for I will
show you no favor.’

The Lord Will Restore Israel

14 ‡‡‡“Therefore, behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when it
shall no longer be said, ‘As the Lord lives who brought up the people of
Israel out of the land of Egypt,’ 15 †but ‘As the Lord lives who brought up
the people of Israel out of the north country and out of all the countries
where he had driven them.’ For I will bring them back to their own land that
I gave to their fathers.
16 †“Behold, I am sending for many fishers, declares the Lord, and they
shall catch them. And afterward I will send for many hunters, and they shall
hunt them from every mountain and every hill, and out of the clefts of the
rocks. 17For my eyes are on all their ways. They are not hidden from me,
nor is their iniquity concealed from my eyes. 18 †But first I will doubly repay
their iniquity and their sin, because they have polluted my land with the
carcasses of their detestable idols, and have filled my inheritance with their
abominations.”

19 ‡ O Lord, my strength and my stronghold,
my refuge in the day of trouble,
to you shall the nations come
from the ends of the earth and say:
“Our fathers have inherited nothing but lies,
worthless things in which there is no profit.
20 Can man make for himself gods?
Such are not gods!”

21 †“Therefore, behold, I will make them know, this once I will make
them know my power and my might, and they shall know that my name is
the Lord.”

The Sin of Judah

17 [1]"The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron; with a point of
diamond it is engraved on the tablet of their heart, and on the horns of their
altars, [2] while their children remember their altars and their Asherim,
beside every green tree and on the high hills, [3]on the mountains in the open
country. Your wealth and all your treasures I will give for spoil as the price
of your high places for sin throughout all your territory. [4]You shall loosen
your hand from your heritage that I gave to you, and I will make you serve
your enemies in a land that you do not know, for in my anger a fire is
kindled that shall burn forever."

[5] Thus says the LORD:
"Cursed is the man who trusts in man
and makes flesh his strength,[1]
whose heart turns away from the LORD.
[6] He is like a shrub in the desert,
and shall not see any good come.
He shall dwell in the parched places of the
wilderness,
in an uninhabited salt land.

[7] "Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD,
whose trust is the LORD.
[8] He is like a tree planted by water,
that sends out its roots by the stream,
and does not fear when heat comes,
for its leaves remain green,
and is not anxious in the year of drought,
for it does not cease to bear fruit."

[9] The heart is deceitful above all things,
and desperately sick;

who can understand it?
10 † “I the Lord search the heart
and test the mind,[2]
to give every man according to his ways,
according to the fruit of his deeds.”

11 Like the partridge that gathers a brood that
she did not hatch,
so is he who gets riches but not by justice;
in the midst of his days they will leave him,
and at his end he will be a fool.

12 † A glorious throne set on high from the
beginning
is the place of our sanctuary.
13 † O Lord, the hope of Israel,
all who forsake you shall be put to shame;
those who turn away from you[1] shall be
written in the earth,
for they have forsaken the Lord, the
fountain of living water.

Jeremiah Prays for Deliverance

14 Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed;
save me, and I shall be saved,
for you are my praise.
15 Behold, they say to me,
"Where is the word of the Lord?
Let it come!"
16 I have not run away from being your
shepherd,
nor have I desired the day of sickness.
You know what came out of my lips;
it was before your face.
17 Be not a terror to me;
you are my refuge in the day of disaster.
18 Let those be put to shame who persecute me,
but let me not be put to shame;
let them be dismayed,
but let me not be dismayed;
bring upon them the day of disaster;
destroy them with double destruction!

Keep the Sabbath Holy

19 ‡ † Thus said the Lord to me: “Go and stand in the People’s Gate, by
which the kings of Judah enter and by which they go out, and in all the
gates of Jerusalem, 20 and say: ‘Hear the word of the Lord, you kings of
Judah, and all Judah, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, who enter by
these gates. 21 † Thus says the Lord: Take care for the sake of your lives, and
do not bear a burden on the Sabbath day or bring it in by the gates of
Jerusalem. 22 † And do not carry a burden out of your houses on the Sabbath
or do any work, but keep the Sabbath day holy, as I commanded your
fathers. 23 † Yet they did not listen or incline their ear, but stiffened their
neck, that they might not hear and receive instruction.

24 “‘But if you listen to me, declares the Lord, and bring in no burden by
the gates of this city on the Sabbath day, but keep the Sabbath day holy and
do no work on it, 25 † then there shall enter by the gates of this city kings and
princes who sit on the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses,
they and their officials, the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem.
And this city shall be inhabited forever. 26 † And people shall come from the
cities of Judah and the places around Jerusalem, from the land of Benjamin,
from the Shephelah, from the hill country, and from the Negeb, bringing
burnt offerings and sacrifices, grain offerings and frankincense, and
bringing thank offerings to the house of the Lord. 27 But if you do not listen
to me, to keep the Sabbath day holy, and not to bear a burden and enter by
the gates of Jerusalem on the Sabbath day, then I will kindle a fire in its
gates, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem and shall not be
quenched.’”

The Potter and the Clay

18 [1]‡†The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord: [2]“Arise, and go
down to the potter’s house, and there I will let you hear my words.” [3]†So I
went down to the potter’s house, and there he was working at his wheel.
[4]‡†And the vessel he was making of clay was spoiled in the potter’s hand,
and he reworked it into another vessel, as it seemed good to the potter to do.
[5]Then the word of the Lord came to me: [6]“O house of Israel, can I not do
with you as this potter has done? declares the Lord. Behold, like the clay in
the potter’s hand, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel. [7]‡If at any time
I declare concerning a nation or a kingdom, that I will pluck up and break
down and destroy it, [8]†and if that nation, concerning which I have spoken,
turns from its evil, I will relent of the disaster that I intended to do to it.
[9]And if at any time I declare concerning a nation or a kingdom that I will
build and plant it, [10]and if it does evil in my sight, not listening to my voice,
then I will relent of the good that I had intended to do to it. [11]†Now,
therefore, say to the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem: ‘Thus
says the Lord, Behold, I am shaping disaster against you and devising a plan
against you. Return, every one from his evil way, and amend your ways and
your deeds.’
[12]†“But they say, ‘That is in vain! We will follow our own plans, and will
every one act according to the stubbornness of his evil heart.’

[13]† “Therefore thus says the Lord:
Ask among the nations,
Who has heard the like of this?
The virgin Israel
has done a very horrible thing.
[14]‡† Does the snow of Lebanon leave
the crags of Sirion?[1]
Do the mountain waters run dry,[2]
the cold flowing streams?
[15] But my people have forgotten me;
they make offerings to false gods;

they made them stumble in their ways,
in the ancient roads,
and to walk into side roads,
not the highway,
16 making their land a horror,
a thing to be hissed at forever.
Everyone who passes by it is horrified
and shakes his head.
17† Like the east wind I will scatter them
before the enemy.
I will show them my back, not my face,
in the day of their calamity."

18†Then they said, "Come, let us make plots against Jeremiah, for the law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet. Come, let us strike him with the tongue, and let us not pay attention to any of his words."

19† Hear me, O LORD,
and listen to the voice of my adversaries.
20† Should good be repaid with evil?
Yet they have dug a pit for my life.
Remember how I stood before you
to speak good for them,
to turn away your wrath from them.
21† Therefore deliver up their children to
famine;
give them over to the power of the sword;
let their wives become childless and
widowed.
May their men meet death by pestilence,
their youths be struck down by the sword in
battle.
22† May a cry be heard from their houses,
when you bring the plunderer suddenly
upon them!
For they have dug a pit to take me

and laid snares for my feet.
23† Yet you, O Lord, know
all their plotting to kill me.
Forgive not their iniquity,
nor blot out their sin from your sight.
Let them be overthrown before you;
deal with them in the time of your anger.

The Broken Flask

19 [1]‡†Thus says the Lord, “Go, buy a potter’s earthenware flask, and
take some of the elders of the people and some of the elders of the priests,
[2]†and go out to the Valley of the Son of Hinnom at the entry of the Potsherd
Gate, and proclaim there the words that I tell you. [3]†You shall say, ‘Hear the
word of the Lord, O kings of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem. Thus says
the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Behold, I am bringing such disaster
upon this place that the ears of everyone who hears of it will tingle.
[4]†Because the people have forsaken me and have profaned this place by
making offerings in it to other gods whom neither they nor their fathers nor
the kings of Judah have known; and because they have filled this place with
the blood of innocents, [5]†and have built the high places of Baal to burn their
sons in the fire as burnt offerings to Baal, which I did not command or
decree, nor did it come into my mind— [6]† therefore, behold, days are
coming, declares the Lord, when this place shall no more be called Topheth,
or the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, but the Valley of Slaughter. [7]And in this
place I will make void the plans of Judah and Jerusalem, and will cause
their people to fall by the sword before their enemies, and by the hand of
those who seek their life. I will give their dead bodies for food to the birds
of the air and to the beasts of the earth. [8]†And I will make this city a horror,
a thing to be hissed at. Everyone who passes by it will be horrified and will
hiss because of all its wounds. [9]And I will make them eat the flesh of their
sons and their daughters, and everyone shall eat the flesh of his neighbor in
the siege and in the distress, with which their enemies and those who seek
their life afflict them.’

[10]‡“Then you shall break the flask in the sight of the men who go with
you, [11]and shall say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord of hosts: So will I break
this people and this city, as one breaks a potter’s vessel, so that it can never
be mended. Men shall bury in Topheth because there will be no place else
to bury. [12]Thus will I do to this place, declares the Lord, and to its
inhabitants, making this city like Topheth. [13]†The houses of Jerusalem and
the houses of the kings of Judah—all the houses on whose roofs offerings

have been offered to all the host of heaven, and drink offerings have been poured out to other gods—shall be defiled like the place of Topheth.’”

14 † Then Jeremiah came from Topheth, where the Lord had sent him to prophesy, and he stood in the court of the Lord’s house and said to all the people: 15 † “Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, behold, I am bringing upon this city and upon all its towns all the disaster that I have pronounced against it, because they have stiffened their neck, refusing to hear my words.”

Jeremiah Persecuted by Pashhur

20 [1] † Now Pashhur the priest, the son of Immer, who was chief officer in the house of the Lord, heard Jeremiah prophesying these things. [2] † Then Pashhur beat Jeremiah the prophet, and put him in the stocks that were in the upper Benjamin Gate of the house of the Lord. [3] † The next day, when Pashhur released Jeremiah from the stocks, Jeremiah said to him, "The Lord does not call your name Pashhur, but Terror On Every Side. [4] † For thus says the Lord: Behold, I will make you a terror to yourself and to all your friends. They shall fall by the sword of their enemies while you look on. And I will give all Judah into the hand of the king of Babylon. He shall carry them captive to Babylon, and shall strike them down with the sword. [5] Moreover, I will give all the wealth of the city, all its gains, all its prized belongings, and all the treasures of the kings of Judah into the hand of their enemies, who shall plunder them and seize them and carry them to Babylon. [6] † And you, Pashhur, and all who dwell in your house, shall go into captivity. To Babylon you shall go, and there you shall die, and there you shall be buried, you and all your friends, to whom you have prophesied falsely."

[7] † O Lord, you have deceived me,
and I was deceived;
you are stronger than I,
and you have prevailed.
I have become a laughingstock all the day;
everyone mocks me.
[8] For whenever I speak, I cry out,
I shout, "Violence and destruction!"
For the word of the Lord has become for me
a reproach and derision all day long.
[9] † If I say, "I will not mention him,
or speak any more in his name,"
there is in my heart as it were a burning fire
shut up in my bones,

and I am weary with holding it in,
and I cannot.
10† For I hear many whispering.
Terror is on every side!
"Denounce him! Let us denounce him!"
say all my close friends,
watching for my fall.
"Perhaps he will be deceived;
then we can overcome him
and take our revenge on him."
11 But the LORD is with me as a dread warrior;
therefore my persecutors will stumble;
they will not overcome me.
They will be greatly shamed,
for they will not succeed.
Their eternal dishonor
will never be forgotten.
12† O LORD of hosts, who tests the righteous,
who sees the heart and the mind,[1]
let me see your vengeance upon them,
for to you have I committed my cause.

13† Sing to the LORD;
praise the LORD!
For he has delivered the life of the needy
from the hand of evildoers.

14†† Cursed be the day
on which I was born!
The day when my mother bore me,
let it not be blessed!
15 Cursed be the man who brought the news to my father,
"A son is born to you,"
making him very glad.
16† Let that man be like the cities

that the Lord overthrew without pity;
let him hear a cry in the morning
and an alarm at noon,
17 † because he did not kill me in the womb;
so my mother would have been my grave,
and her womb forever great.
18 Why did I come out from the womb
to see toil and sorrow,
and spend my days in shame?

Jerusalem Will Fall to Nebuchadnezzar

21 [1]‡†This is the word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord, when
King Zedekiah sent to him Pashhur the son of Malchiah and Zephaniah the
priest, the son of Maaseiah, saying, [2]† "Inquire of the Lord for us, for
Nebuchadnezzar[2] king of Babylon is making war against us. Perhaps the
Lord will deal with us according to all his wonderful deeds and will make
him withdraw from us."

[3]Then Jeremiah said to them: [4]†"Thus you shall say to Zedekiah, 'Thus
says the Lord, the God of Israel: Behold, I will turn back the weapons of
war that are in your hands and with which you are fighting against the king
of Babylon and against the Chaldeans who are besieging you outside the
walls. And I will bring them together into the midst of this city. [5]I myself
will fight against you with outstretched hand and strong arm, in anger and
in fury and in great wrath. [6]And I will strike down the inhabitants of this
city, both man and beast. They shall die of a great pestilence. [7]Afterward,
declares the Lord, I will give Zedekiah king of Judah and his servants and
the people in this city who survive the pestilence, sword, and famine into
the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and into the hand of their
enemies, into the hand of those who seek their lives. He shall strike them
down with the edge of the sword. He shall not pity them or spare them or
have compassion.'

[8]‡†"And to this people you shall say: 'Thus says the Lord: Behold, I set
before you the way of life and the way of death. [9]†He who stays in this city
shall die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence, but he who goes out
and surrenders to the Chaldeans who are besieging you shall live and shall
have his life as a prize of war. [10]For I have set my face against this city for
harm and not for good, declares the Lord: it shall be given into the hand of
the king of Babylon, and he shall burn it with fire.'

Message to the House of David

11 “And to the house of the king of Judah say, ‘Hear the word of the Lord,
12 O house of David! Thus says the Lord:

“‘Execute justice in the morning,
and deliver from the hand of the oppressor
him who has been robbed,
lest my wrath go forth like fire,
and burn with none to quench it,
because of your evil deeds.’”

13 “Behold, I am against you, O inhabitant of the
valley,
O rock of the plain,
declares the Lord;
you who say, ‘Who shall come down
against us,
or who shall enter our habitations?’
14 I will punish you according to the fruit of
your deeds,
declares the Lord;
I will kindle a fire in her forest,
and it shall devour all that is around her.”

22 1 Thus says the Lord: “Go down to the house of the king of Judah and speak there this word, 2 and say, ‘Hear the word of the Lord, O king of Judah, who sits on the throne of David, you, and your servants, and your people who enter these gates. 3 Thus says the Lord: Do justice and righteousness, and deliver from the hand of the oppressor him who has been robbed. And do no wrong or violence to the resident alien, the fatherless, and the widow, nor shed innocent blood in this place. 4 For if you will indeed obey this word, then there shall enter the gates of this house kings who sit on the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, they and

their servants and their people. [5] †But if you will not obey these words, I swear by myself, declares the Lord, that this house shall become a desolation. [6] †For thus says the Lord concerning the house of the king of Judah:

"'You are like Gilead to me,
like the summit of Lebanon,
yet surely I will make you a desert,
an uninhabited city.[1]
[7] † I will prepare destroyers against you,
each with his weapons,
and they shall cut down your choicest cedars
and cast them into the fire.

[8]"'And many nations will pass by this city, and every man will say to his neighbor, "Why has the Lord dealt thus with this great city?" [9] †And they will answer, "Because they have forsaken the covenant of the Lord their God and worshiped other gods and served them."'"

[10] Weep not for him who is dead,
nor grieve for him,
but weep bitterly for him who goes away,
for he shall return no more
to see his native land.

Message to the Sons of Josiah

11 For thus says the Lord concerning Shallum the son of Josiah, king of
Judah, who reigned instead of Josiah his father, and who went away from
this place: “He shall return here no more, 12 but in the place where they have
carried him captive, there shall he die, and he shall never see this land
again.”

13 “Woe to him who builds his house by
unrighteousness,
and his upper rooms by injustice,
who makes his neighbor serve him for
nothing
and does not give him his wages,
14 who says, ‘I will build myself a great house
with spacious upper rooms,’
who cuts out windows for it,
paneling it with cedar
and painting it with vermilion.
15 Do you think you are a king
because you compete in cedar?
Did not your father eat and drink
and do justice and righteousness?
Then it was well with him.
16 He judged the cause of the poor and needy;
then it was well.
Is not this to know me?
declares the Lord.
17 But you have eyes and heart
only for your dishonest gain,
for shedding innocent blood,
and for practicing oppression and violence.”

18 Therefore thus says the Lord concerning Jehoiakim the son of Josiah,
king of Judah:

“They shall not lament for him, saying,
‘Ah, my brother!’ or ‘Ah, sister!’
They shall not lament for him, saying,
‘Ah, lord!’ or ‘Ah, his majesty!’
19 With the burial of a donkey he shall be buried,
dragged and dumped beyond the gates of
Jerusalem.”

20 “Go up to Lebanon, and cry out,
and lift up your voice in Bashan;
cry out from Abarim,
for all your lovers are destroyed.
21 I spoke to you in your prosperity,
but you said, ‘I will not listen.’
This has been your way from your youth,
that you have not obeyed my voice.
22 The wind shall shepherd all your shepherds,
and your lovers shall go into captivity;
then you will be ashamed and confounded
because of all your evil.
23 O inhabitant of Lebanon,
nested among the cedars,
how you will be pitied when pangs come
upon you,
pain as of a woman in labor!”

24 “As I live, declares the Lord, though Coniah the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, were the signet ring on my right hand, yet I would tear you off 25 and give you into the hand of those who seek your life, into the hand of those of whom you are afraid, even into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and into the hand of the Chaldeans. 26 I will hurl you and the mother who bore you into another country, where you were not born, and there you shall die. 27 But to the land to which they will long to return, there they shall not return.”

28 Is this man Coniah a despised,
broken pot,
a vessel no one cares for?
Why are he and his children hurled and
cast
into a land that they do not know?
29 O land, land, land,
hear the word of the Lord!
30† Thus says the Lord:
“Write this man down as childless,
a man who shall not succeed in his days,
for none of his offspring shall succeed
in sitting on the throne of David
and ruling again in Judah.”

The Righteous Branch

23 [1]‡‡“Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of
my pasture!” declares the Lord. [2]Therefore thus says the Lord, the God of
Israel, concerning the shepherds who care for my people: “You have
scattered my flock and have driven them away, and you have not attended
to them. Behold, I will attend to you for your evil deeds, declares the Lord.
[3]‡Then I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the countries where I
have driven them, and I will bring them back to their fold, and they shall be
fruitful and multiply. [4]†I will set shepherds over them who will care for
them, and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall any be
missing, declares the Lord.

[5]†“Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will raise up
for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely,
and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. [6]†In his days Judah
will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely. And this is the name by which
he will be called: ‘The Lord is our righteousness.’

[7]‡“Therefore, behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when they
shall no longer say, ‘As the Lord lives who brought up the people of Israel
out of the land of Egypt,’ [8]but ‘As the Lord lives who brought up and led the
offspring of the house of Israel out of the north country and out of all the
countries where he[1] had driven them.’ Then they shall dwell in their own
land.”

Lying Prophets

9 ††Concerning the prophets:

My heart is broken within me;
all my bones shake;
I am like a drunken man,
like a man overcome by wine,
because of the Lord
and because of his holy words.
10 † For the land is full of adulterers;
because of the curse the land mourns,
and the pastures of the wilderness are
dried up.
Their course is evil,
and their might is not right.
11 † "Both prophet and priest are ungodly;
even in my house I have found their evil,
declares the Lord.
12 Therefore their way shall be to them
like slippery paths in the darkness,
into which they shall be driven and fall,
for I will bring disaster upon them
in the year of their punishment,
declares the Lord.
13 † In the prophets of Samaria
I saw an unsavory thing:
they prophesied by Baal
and led my people Israel astray.
14 But in the prophets of Jerusalem
I have seen a horrible thing:
they commit adultery and walk in lies;
they strengthen the hands of evildoers,
so that no one turns from his evil;
all of them have become like Sodom to me,

and its inhabitants like Gomorrah."
15 † Therefore thus says the Lord of hosts
concerning the prophets:
"Behold, I will feed them with bitter food
and give them poisoned water to drink,
for from the prophets of Jerusalem
ungodliness has gone out into all the land."

16 † Thus says the Lord of hosts: "Do not listen to the words of the prophets who prophesy to you, filling you with vain hopes. They speak visions of their own minds, not from the mouth of the Lord. 17 † They say continually to those who despise the word of the Lord, 'It shall be well with you'; and to everyone who stubbornly follows his own heart, they say, 'No disaster shall come upon you.'"

18 † For who among them has stood in the
council of the Lord
to see and to hear his word,
or who has paid attention to his word and
listened?
19 † Behold, the storm of the Lord!
Wrath has gone forth,
a whirling tempest;
it will burst upon the head of the wicked.
20 † The anger of the Lord will not turn back
until he has executed and accomplished
the intents of his heart.
In the latter days you will understand it
clearly.

21 † "I did not send the prophets,
yet they ran;
I did not speak to them,
yet they prophesied.
22 † But if they had stood in my council,
then they would have proclaimed my words

to my people,
and they would have turned them from their
evil way,
and from the evil of their deeds.

23 ‡“Am I a God at hand, declares the Lord, and not a God far away? 24 Can
a man hide himself in secret places so that I cannot see him? declares the
Lord. Do I not fill heaven and earth? declares the Lord. 25 †I have heard what
the prophets have said who prophesy lies in my name, saying, ‘I have
dreamed, I have dreamed!’ 26 How long shall there be lies in the heart of the
prophets who prophesy lies, and who prophesy the deceit of their own
heart, 27 †who think to make my people forget my name by their dreams that
they tell one another, even as their fathers forgot my name for Baal? 28 †Let
the prophet who has a dream tell the dream, but let him who has my word
speak my word faithfully. What has straw in common with wheat? declares
the Lord. 29 †Is not my word like fire, declares the Lord, and like a hammer
that breaks the rock in pieces? 30 Therefore, behold, I am against the
prophets, declares the Lord, who steal my words from one another.
31 Behold, I am against the prophets, declares the Lord, who use their
tongues and declare, ‘declares the Lord.’ 32 Behold, I am against those who
prophesy lying dreams, declares the Lord, and who tell them and lead my
people astray by their lies and their recklessness, when I did not send them
or charge them. So they do not profit this people at all, declares the Lord.

33 †“When one of this people, or a prophet or a priest asks you, ‘What is
the burden of the Lord?’ you shall say to them, ‘You are the burden,[1] and I
will cast you off, declares the Lord.’ 34 And as for the prophet, priest, or one
of the people who says, ‘The burden of the Lord,’ I will punish that man and
his household. 35 Thus shall you say, every one to his neighbor and every
one to his brother, ‘What has the Lord answered?’ or ‘What has the Lord
spoken?’ 36 †But ‘the burden of the Lord’ you shall mention no more, for the
burden is every man’s own word, and you pervert the words of the living
God, the Lord of hosts, our God. 37 Thus you shall say to the prophet, ‘What
has the Lord answered you?’ or ‘What has the Lord spoken?’ 38 But if you
say, ‘The burden of the Lord,’ thus says the Lord, ‘Because you have said
these words, “The burden of the Lord,” when I sent to you, saying, “You

shall not say, ‘The burden of the LORD,’” [39]therefore, behold, I will surely lift you up and cast you away from my presence, you and the city that I gave to you and your fathers. [40]And I will bring upon you everlasting reproach and perpetual shame, which shall not be forgotten.’”

The Good Figs and the Bad Figs

24 [1] † After Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had taken into exile
from Jerusalem Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, together with
the officials of Judah, the craftsmen, and the metal workers, and had
brought them to Babylon, the Lord showed me this vision: behold, two
baskets of figs placed before the temple of the Lord. [2] † One basket had very
good figs, like first-ripe figs, but the other basket had very bad figs, so bad
that they could not be eaten. [3] And the Lord said to me, "What do you see,
Jeremiah?" I said, "Figs, the good figs very good, and the bad figs very bad,
so bad that they cannot be eaten."

[4] Then the word of the Lord came to me: [5] † "Thus says the Lord, the God
of Israel: Like these good figs, so I will regard as good the exiles from
Judah, whom I have sent away from this place to the land of the Chaldeans.
[6] I will set my eyes on them for good, and I will bring them back to this
land. I will build them up, and not tear them down; I will plant them, and
not uproot them. [7] † I will give them a heart to know that I am the Lord, and
they shall be my people and I will be their God, for they shall return to me
with their whole heart.

[8] † "But thus says the Lord: Like the bad figs that are so bad they cannot
be eaten, so will I treat Zedekiah the king of Judah, his officials, the
remnant of Jerusalem who remain in this land, and those who dwell in the
land of Egypt. [9] † I will make them a horror[1] to all the kingdoms of the
earth, to be a reproach, a byword, a taunt, and a curse in all the places
where I shall drive them. [10] And I will send sword, famine, and pestilence
upon them, until they shall be utterly destroyed from the land that I gave to
them and their fathers."

Seventy Years of Captivity

25 [1]‡†The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah (that was the first year of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon), [2]which Jeremiah the prophet spoke to all the people of Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem: [3]†“For twenty-three years, from the thirteenth year of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah, to this day, the word of the Lord has come to me, and I have spoken persistently to you, but you have not listened. [4]You have neither listened nor inclined your ears to hear, although the Lord persistently sent to you all his servants the prophets, [5]†saying, ‘Turn now, every one of you, from his evil way and evil deeds, and dwell upon the land that the Lord has given to you and your fathers from of old and forever. [6]†Do not go after other gods to serve and worship them, or provoke me to anger with the work of your hands. Then I will do you no harm.’ [7]Yet you have not listened to me, declares the Lord, that you might provoke me to anger with the work of your hands to your own harm.

[8]†“Therefore thus says the Lord of hosts: Because you have not obeyed my words, [9]†behold, I will send for all the tribes of the north, declares the Lord, and for Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and I will bring them against this land and its inhabitants, and against all these surrounding nations. I will devote them to destruction, and make them a horror, a hissing, and an everlasting desolation. [10]†Moreover, I will banish from them the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the grinding of the millstones and the light of the lamp. [11]†This whole land shall become a ruin and a waste, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. [12]Then after seventy years are completed, I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation, the land of the Chaldeans, for their iniquity, declares the Lord, making the land an everlasting waste. [13]†I will bring upon that land all the words that I have uttered against it, everything written in this book, which Jeremiah prophesied against all the nations. [14]†For many nations and great kings shall make slaves even of them, and I will recompense them according to their deeds and the work of their hands.”

The Cup of the Lord's Wrath

15 ‡† Thus the Lord, the God of Israel, said to me: "Take from my hand this
cup of the wine of wrath, and make all the nations to whom I send you
drink it. 16 They shall drink and stagger and be crazed because of the sword
that I am sending among them."
17 † So I took the cup from the Lord's hand, and made all the nations to
whom the Lord sent me drink it: 18 † Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, its
kings and officials, to make them a desolation and a waste, a hissing and a
curse, as at this day; 19 ‡ Pharaoh king of Egypt, his servants, his officials, all
his people, 20 and all the mixed tribes among them; all the kings of the land
of Uz and all the kings of the land of the Philistines (Ashkelon, Gaza,
Ekron, and the remnant of Ashdod); 21 Edom, Moab, and the sons of
Ammon; 22 all the kings of Tyre, all the kings of Sidon, and the kings of the
coastland across the sea; 23 † Dedan, Tema, Buz, and all who cut the corners
of their hair; 24 all the kings of Arabia and all the kings of the mixed tribes
who dwell in the desert; 25 all the kings of Zimri, all the kings of Elam, and
all the kings of Media; 26 † all the kings of the north, far and near, one after
another, and all the kingdoms of the world that are on the face of the earth.
And after them the king of Babylon[1] shall drink.
27 "Then you shall say to them, 'Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of
Israel: Drink, be drunk and vomit, fall and rise no more, because of the
sword that I am sending among you.'
28 † "And if they refuse to accept the cup from your hand to drink, then
you shall say to them, 'Thus says the Lord of hosts: You must drink! 29 For
behold, I begin to work disaster at the city that is called by my name, and
shall you go unpunished? You shall not go unpunished, for I am summoning
a sword against all the inhabitants of the earth, declares the Lord of hosts.'
30 ‡† "You, therefore, shall prophesy against them all these words, and say
to them:

"'The Lord will roar from on high,
and from his holy habitation utter his voice;
he will roar mightily against his fold,

and shout, like those who tread grapes,
against all the inhabitants of the earth.
31 The clamor will resound to the ends of the earth,
for the Lord has an indictment against the nations;
he is entering into judgment with all flesh,
and the wicked he will put to the sword,
declares the Lord.'

32 "Thus says the Lord of hosts:
Behold, disaster is going forth
from nation to nation,
and a great tempest is stirring
from the farthest parts of the earth!

33 "And those pierced by the Lord on that day shall extend from one end of the earth to the other. They shall not be lamented, or gathered, or buried; they shall be dung on the surface of the ground.

34 "Wail, you shepherds, and cry out,
and roll in ashes, you lords of the flock,
for the days of your slaughter and dispersion have come,
and you shall fall like a choice vessel.
35 No refuge will remain for the shepherds,
nor escape for the lords of the flock.
36 A voice—the cry of the shepherds,
and the wail of the lords of the flock!
For the Lord is laying waste their pasture,
37 and the peaceful folds are devastated
because of the fierce anger of the Lord.
38 Like a lion he has left his lair,
for their land has become a waste
because of the sword of the oppressor,
and because of his fierce anger."

Jeremiah Threatened with Death

26 [1]In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, this word came from the Lord: [2]"Thus says the Lord: Stand in the court of the Lord's house, and speak to all the cities of Judah that come to worship in the house of the Lord all the words that I command you to speak to them; do not hold back a word. [3]It may be they will listen, and every one turn from his evil way, that I may relent of the disaster that I intend to do to them because of their evil deeds. [4]You shall say to them, 'Thus says the Lord: If you will not listen to me, to walk in my law that I have set before you, [5]and to listen to the words of my servants the prophets whom I send to you urgently, though you have not listened, [6]then I will make this house like Shiloh, and I will make this city a curse for all the nations of the earth.'"

[7]The priests and the prophets and all the people heard Jeremiah speaking these words in the house of the Lord. [8]And when Jeremiah had finished speaking all that the Lord had commanded him to speak to all the people, then the priests and the prophets and all the people laid hold of him, saying, "You shall die! [9]Why have you prophesied in the name of the Lord, saying, 'This house shall be like Shiloh, and this city shall be desolate, without inhabitant'?" And all the people gathered around Jeremiah in the house of the Lord.

[10]When the officials of Judah heard these things, they came up from the king's house to the house of the Lord and took their seat in the entry of the New Gate of the house of the Lord. [11]Then the priests and the prophets said to the officials and to all the people, "This man deserves the sentence of death, because he has prophesied against this city, as you have heard with your own ears."

[12]Then Jeremiah spoke to all the officials and all the people, saying, "The Lord sent me to prophesy against this house and this city all the words you have heard. [13]Now therefore mend your ways and your deeds, and obey the voice of the Lord your God, and the Lord will relent of the disaster that he has pronounced against you. [14]But as for me, behold, I am in your hands.

Do with me as seems good and right to you. [15]Only know for certain that if you put me to death, you will bring innocent blood upon yourselves and upon this city and its inhabitants, for in truth the LORD sent me to you to speak all these words in your ears."

Jeremiah Spared from Death

16 ‡ ‡ Then the officials and all the people said to the priests and the
prophets, “This man does not deserve the sentence of death, for he has
spoken to us in the name of the Lord our God.” 17And certain of the elders
of the land arose and spoke to all the assembled people, saying, 18†“Micah
of Moresheth prophesied in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah, and said to
all the people of Judah: ‘Thus says the Lord of hosts,

> “‘Zion shall be plowed as a field;
> Jerusalem shall become a heap of ruins,
> and the mountain of the house a wooded
> height.’

19†Did Hezekiah king of Judah and all Judah put him to death? Did he not
fear the Lord and entreat the favor of the Lord, and did not the Lord relent of
the disaster that he had pronounced against them? But we are about to bring
great disaster upon ourselves.”

20 ‡ † There was another man who prophesied in the name of the Lord,
Uriah the son of Shemaiah from Kiriath-jearim. He prophesied against this
city and against this land in words like those of Jeremiah. 21† And when
King Jehoiakim, with all his warriors and all the officials, heard his words,
the king sought to put him to death. But when Uriah heard of it, he was
afraid and fled and escaped to Egypt. 22†Then King Jehoiakim sent to Egypt
certain men, Elnathan the son of Achbor and others with him, 23† and they
took Uriah from Egypt and brought him to King Jehoiakim, who struck him
down with the sword and dumped his dead body into the burial place of the
common people.

24†But the hand of Ahikam the son of Shaphan was with Jeremiah so that
he was not given over to the people to be put to death.

The Yoke of Nebuchadnezzar

27 [1]In the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah[1] the son of Josiah,
king of Judah, this word came to Jeremiah from the Lord. [2]Thus the Lord
said to me: “Make yourself straps and yoke-bars, and put them on your
neck. [3]Send word[2] to the king of Edom, the king of Moab, the king of the
sons of Ammon, the king of Tyre, and the king of Sidon by the hand of the
envoys who have come to Jerusalem to Zedekiah king of Judah. [4]Give
them this charge for their masters: ‘Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of
Israel: This is what you shall say to your masters: [5]“It is I who by my great
power and my outstretched arm have made the earth, with the men and
animals that are on the earth, and I give it to whomever it seems right to me.
[6]Now I have given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, the king
of Babylon, my servant, and I have given him also the beasts of the field to
serve him. [7]All the nations shall serve him and his son and his grandson,
until the time of his own land comes. Then many nations and great kings
shall make him their slave.

[8]“““But if any nation or kingdom will not serve this Nebuchadnezzar
king of Babylon, and put its neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, I
will punish that nation with the sword, with famine, and with pestilence,
declares the Lord, until I have consumed it by his hand. [9]So do not listen to
your prophets, your diviners, your dreamers, your fortune-tellers, or your
sorcerers, who are saying to you, ‘You shall not serve the king of Babylon.’
[10]For it is a lie that they are prophesying to you, with the result that you will
be removed far from your land, and I will drive you out, and you will
perish. [11]But any nation that will bring its neck under the yoke of the king of
Babylon and serve him, I will leave on its own land, to work it and dwell
there, declares the Lord.”””

[12]To Zedekiah king of Judah I spoke in like manner: “Bring your necks
under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him and his people and
live. [13]Why will you and your people die by the sword, by famine, and by
pestilence, as the Lord has spoken concerning any nation that will not serve
the king of Babylon? [14]Do not listen to the words of the prophets who are
saying to you, ‘You shall not serve the king of Babylon,’ for it is a lie that

they are prophesying to you. 15I have not sent them, declares the Lord, but they are prophesying falsely in my name, with the result that I will drive you out and you will perish, you and the prophets who are prophesying to you.”

16†† Then I spoke to the priests and to all this people, saying, “Thus says the Lord: Do not listen to the words of your prophets who are prophesying to you, saying, ‘Behold, the vessels of the Lord’s house will now shortly be brought back from Babylon,’ for it is a lie that they are prophesying to you. 17Do not listen to them; serve the king of Babylon and live. Why should this city become a desolation? 18If they are prophets, and if the word of the Lord is with them, then let them intercede with the Lord of hosts, that the vessels that are left in the house of the Lord, in the house of the king of Judah, and in Jerusalem may not go to Babylon. 19† For thus says the Lord of hosts concerning the pillars, the sea, the stands, and the rest of the vessels that are left in this city, 20† which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon did not take away, when he took into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, and all the nobles of Judah and Jerusalem— 21thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, concerning the vessels that are left in the house of the Lord, in the house of the king of Judah, and in Jerusalem: 22† They shall be carried to Babylon and remain there until the day when I visit them, declares the Lord. Then I will bring them back and restore them to this place.”

Hananiah the False Prophet

28 [1]†In that same year, at the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah king
of Judah, in the fifth month of the fourth year, Hananiah the son of Azzur,
the prophet from Gibeon, spoke to me in the house of the Lord, in the
presence of the priests and all the people, saying, [2]†"Thus says the Lord of
hosts, the God of Israel: I have broken the yoke of the king of Babylon.
[3]Within two years I will bring back to this place all the vessels of the Lord's
house, which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon took away from this place
and carried to Babylon. [4]I will also bring back to this place Jeconiah the son
of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, and all the exiles from Judah who went to
Babylon, declares the Lord, for I will break the yoke of the king of
Babylon."

[5]Then the prophet Jeremiah spoke to Hananiah the prophet in the
presence of the priests and all the people who were standing in the house of
the Lord, [6]†and the prophet Jeremiah said, "Amen! May the Lord do so;
may the Lord make the words that you have prophesied come true, and
bring back to this place from Babylon the vessels of the house of the Lord,
and all the exiles. [7]Yet hear now this word that I speak in your hearing and
in the hearing of all the people. [8]The prophets who preceded you and me
from ancient times prophesied war, famine, and pestilence against many
countries and great kingdoms. [9]†As for the prophet who prophesies peace,
when the word of that prophet comes to pass, then it will be known that the
Lord has truly sent the prophet."

[10]Then the prophet Hananiah took the yoke-bars from the neck of
Jeremiah the prophet and broke them. [11]And Hananiah spoke in the
presence of all the people, saying, "Thus says the Lord: Even so will I break
the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon from the neck of all the
nations within two years." But Jeremiah the prophet went his way.

[12]†Sometime after the prophet Hananiah had broken the yoke-bars from
off the neck of Jeremiah the prophet, the word of the Lord came to
Jeremiah: [13]"Go, tell Hananiah, 'Thus says the Lord: You have broken
wooden bars, but you have made in their place bars of iron. [14]†For thus says
the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: I have put upon the neck of all these

nations an iron yoke to serve Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and they shall serve him, for I have given to him even the beasts of the field.’”
15 † And Jeremiah the prophet said to the prophet Hananiah, “Listen, Hananiah, the Lord has not sent you, and you have made this people trust in a lie. 16 †Therefore thus says the Lord: ‘Behold, I will remove you from the face of the earth. This year you shall die, because you have uttered rebellion against the Lord.’”
17 †In that same year, in the seventh month, the prophet Hananiah died.

Jeremiah's Letter to the Exiles

29 [1]These are the words of the letter that Jeremiah the prophet sent
from Jerusalem to the surviving elders of the exiles, and to the priests, the
prophets, and all the people, whom Nebuchadnezzar had taken into exile
from Jerusalem to Babylon. [2]This was after King Jeconiah and the queen
mother, the eunuchs, the officials of Judah and Jerusalem, the craftsmen,
and the metal workers had departed from Jerusalem. [3]The letter was sent
by the hand of Elasah the son of Shaphan and Gemariah the son of Hilkiah,
whom Zedekiah king of Judah sent to Babylon to Nebuchadnezzar king of
Babylon. It said: [4]"Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the
exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: [5]Build
houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat their produce. [6]Take wives
and have sons and daughters; take wives for your sons, and give your
daughters in marriage, that they may bear sons and daughters; multiply
there, and do not decrease. [7]But seek the welfare of the city where I have
sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you
will find your welfare. [8]For thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel:
Do not let your prophets and your diviners who are among you deceive you,
and do not listen to the dreams that they dream,[1] [9]for it is a lie that they are
prophesying to you in my name; I did not send them, declares the Lord.

[10]"For thus says the Lord: When seventy years are completed for
Babylon, I will visit you, and I will fulfill to you my promise and bring you
back to this place. [11]For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord,
plans for welfare[1] and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. [12]Then
you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you. [13]You
will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart. [14]I will be
found by you, declares the Lord, and I will restore your fortunes and gather
you from all the nations and all the places where I have driven you, declares
the Lord, and I will bring you back to the place from which I sent you into
exile.

[15]"Because you have said, 'The Lord has raised up prophets for us in
Babylon,' [16]thus says the Lord concerning the king who sits on the throne

of David, and concerning all the people who dwell in this city, your kinsmen who did not go out with you into exile: [17]† ‘Thus says the Lord of hosts, behold, I am sending on them sword, famine, and pestilence, and I will make them like vile figs that are so rotten they cannot be eaten. [18]† I will pursue them with sword, famine, and pestilence, and will make them a horror to all the kingdoms of the earth, to be a curse, a terror, a hissing, and a reproach among all the nations where I have driven them, [19]because they did not pay attention to my words, declares the Lord, that I persistently sent to you by my servants the prophets, but you would not listen, declares the Lord.’ [20]† Hear the word of the Lord, all you exiles whom I sent away from Jerusalem to Babylon: [21]†† ‘Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, concerning Ahab the son of Kolaiah and Zedekiah the son of Maaseiah, who are prophesying a lie to you in my name: Behold, I will deliver them into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and he shall strike them down before your eyes. [22]† Because of them this curse shall be used by all the exiles from Judah in Babylon: “The Lord make you like Zedekiah and Ahab, whom the king of Babylon roasted in the fire,” [23]† because they have done an outrageous thing in Israel, they have committed adultery with their neighbors’ wives, and they have spoken in my name lying words that I did not command them. I am the one who knows, and I am witness, declares the Lord.’”

Shemaiah's False Prophecy

24 ‡‡‡To Shemaiah of Nehelam you shall say: 25 ‡"Thus says the Lord of
hosts, the God of Israel: You have sent letters in your name to all the people
who are in Jerusalem, and to Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah the priest, and
to all the priests, saying, 26 ‡ 'The Lord has made you priest instead of
Jehoiada the priest, to have charge in the house of the Lord over every
madman who prophesies, to put him in the stocks and neck irons. 27 ‡Now
why have you not rebuked Jeremiah of Anathoth who is prophesying to
you? 28For he has sent to us in Babylon, saying, "Your exile will be long;
build houses and live in them, and plant gardens and eat their produce."'"
29 ‡Zephaniah the priest read this letter in the hearing of Jeremiah the
prophet. 30 ‡Then the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah: 31"Send to all the
exiles, saying, 'Thus says the Lord concerning Shemaiah of Nehelam:
Because Shemaiah had prophesied to you when I did not send him, and has
made you trust in a lie, 32therefore thus says the Lord: Behold, I will punish
Shemaiah of Nehelam and his descendants. He shall not have anyone living
among this people, and he shall not see the good that I will do to my people,
declares the Lord, for he has spoken rebellion against the Lord.'"

Restoration for Israel and Judah

30 [1]The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord: [2]†"Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: Write in a book all the words that I have spoken to you. [3]†For behold, days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will restore the fortunes of my people, Israel and Judah, says the Lord, and I will bring them back to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall take possession of it."

[4]These are the words that the Lord spoke concerning Israel and Judah:

[5] "Thus says the Lord:
We have heard a cry of panic,
of terror, and no peace.
[6]† Ask now, and see,
can a man bear a child?
Why then do I see every man
with his hands on his stomach like a
woman in labor?
Why has every face turned pale?
[7]† Alas! That day is so great
there is none like it;
it is a time of distress for Jacob;
yet he shall be saved out of it.

[8]†"And it shall come to pass in that day, declares the Lord of hosts, that I will break his yoke from off your neck, and I will burst your bonds, and foreigners shall no more make a servant of him.[1] [9]†But they shall serve the Lord their God and David their king, whom I will raise up for them.

[10]†† "Then fear not, O Jacob my servant, declares
the Lord,
nor be dismayed, O Israel;
for behold, I will save you from far away,
and your offspring from the land of their
captivity.

Jacob shall return and have quiet and ease,
and none shall make him afraid.
11† For I am with you to save you,
declares the Lord;
I will make a full end of all the nations
among whom I scattered you,
but of you I will not make a full end.
I will discipline you in just measure,
and I will by no means leave you
unpunished.

12† "For thus says the Lord:
Your hurt is incurable,
and your wound is grievous.
13 There is none to uphold your cause,
no medicine for your wound,
no healing for you.
14† All your lovers have forgotten you;
they care nothing for you;
for I have dealt you the blow of an enemy,
the punishment of a merciless foe,
because your guilt is great,
because your sins are flagrant.
15 Why do you cry out over your hurt?
Your pain is incurable.
Because your guilt is great,
because your sins are flagrant,
I have done these things to you.
16 Therefore all who devour you shall be
devoured,
and all your foes, every one of them, shall
go into captivity;
those who plunder you shall be plundered,
and all who prey on you I will make a prey.
17† For I will restore health to you,
and your wounds I will heal,

declares the Lord,
because they have called you an outcast:
'It is Zion, for whom no one cares!'

18 "Thus says the Lord:
Behold, I will restore the fortunes of the tents
of Jacob
and have compassion on his dwellings;
the city shall be rebuilt on its mound,
and the palace shall stand where it used to be.
19 Out of them shall come songs of thanksgiving,
and the voices of those who celebrate.
I will multiply them, and they shall not be
few;
I will make them honored, and they shall
not be small.
20 Their children shall be as they were of old,
and their congregation shall be established
before me,
and I will punish all who oppress them.
21 Their prince shall be one of themselves;
their ruler shall come out from their midst;
I will make him draw near, and he shall
approach me,
for who would dare of himself to
approach me?
declares the Lord.
22 And you shall be my people,
and I will be your God."

23 Behold the storm of the Lord!
Wrath has gone forth,
a whirling tempest;
it will burst upon the head of the wicked.
24 The fierce anger of the Lord will not turn

back
until he has executed and accomplished
the intentions of his mind.
In the latter days you will understand this.

The Lord Will Turn Mourning to Joy

31 [1] ✝✝"At that time, declares the Lord, I will be the God of all the clans of Israel, and they shall be my people."

[2] Thus says the Lord:
"The people who survived the sword
found grace in the wilderness;
when Israel sought for rest,
[3]✝ the Lord appeared to him[1] from far away.
I have loved you with an everlasting love;
therefore I have continued my faithfulness
to you.
[4]✝ Again I will build you, and you shall be
built,
O virgin Israel!
Again you shall adorn yourself with
tambourines
and shall go forth in the dance of the
merrymakers.
[5] Again you shall plant vineyards
on the mountains of Samaria;
the planters shall plant
and shall enjoy the fruit.
[6]✝ For there shall be a day when watchmen will
call
in the hill country of Ephraim:
'Arise, and let us go up to Zion,
to the Lord our God.'"

[7]✝ For thus says the Lord:
"Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob,
and raise shouts for the chief of the nations;
proclaim, give praise, and say,

‘O Lord, save your people,
the remnant of Israel.’
8 † Behold, I will bring them from the north
country
and gather them from the farthest parts of
the earth,
among them the blind and the lame,
the pregnant woman and she who is in
labor, together;
a great company, they shall return here.
9 † With weeping they shall come,
and with pleas for mercy I will lead them back,
I will make them walk by brooks of water,
in a straight path in which they shall not
stumble,
for I am a father to Israel,
and Ephraim is my firstborn.

10 “Hear the word of the Lord, O nations,
and declare it in the coastlands far away;
say, ‘He who scattered Israel will gather him,
and will keep him as a shepherd keeps his
flock.’
11 † For the Lord has ransomed Jacob
and has redeemed him from hands too
strong for him.
12 † They shall come and sing aloud on the height
of Zion,
and they shall be radiant over the goodness
of the Lord,
over the grain, the wine, and the oil,
and over the young of the flock and the
herd;
their life shall be like a watered garden,
and they shall languish no more.
13 † Then shall the young women rejoice in the

dance,
and the young men and the old shall be
merry.
I will turn their mourning into joy;
I will comfort them, and give them gladness
for sorrow.
14† I will feast the soul of the priests with
abundance,
and my people shall be satisfied with my
goodness,
declares the LORD."

15†† Thus says the LORD:
"A voice is heard in Ramah,
lamentation and bitter weeping.
Rachel is weeping for her children;
she refuses to be comforted for her children,
because they are no more."
16† Thus says the LORD:
"Keep your voice from weeping,
and your eyes from tears,
for there is a reward for your work,
declares the LORD,
and they shall come back from the land of
the enemy.
17 There is hope for your future,
declares the LORD,
and your children shall come back to their own country.
18†† I have heard Ephraim grieving,
'You have disciplined me, and I was
disciplined,
like an untrained calf;
bring me back that I may be restored,
for you are the LORD my God.
19† For after I had turned away, I relented,
and after I was instructed, I struck my

thigh;
I was ashamed, and I was confounded,
because I bore the disgrace of my youth.'
20† Is Ephraim my dear son?
Is he my darling child?
For as often as I speak against him,
I do remember him still.
Therefore my heart[1] yearns for him;
I will surely have mercy on him,
declares the LORD.

21† "Set up road markers for yourself;
make yourself guideposts;
consider well the highway,
the road by which you went.
Return, O virgin Israel,
return to these your cities.
22† How long will you waver,
O faithless daughter?
For the LORD has created a new thing on the
earth:
a woman encircles a man."

23†Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: "Once more they shall use these words in the land of Judah and in its cities, when I restore their fortunes:

"'The LORD bless you, O habitation of
righteousness,
O holy hill!'

24And Judah and all its cities shall dwell there together, and the farmers and those who wander with their flocks. 25For I will satisfy the weary soul, and every languishing soul I will replenish."

26†At this I awoke and looked, and my sleep was pleasant to me.

[27]‡† “Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man and the seed of beast. [28]And it shall come to pass that as I have watched over them to pluck up and break down, to overthrow, destroy, and bring harm, so I will watch over them to build and to plant, declares the Lord. [29]† In those days they shall no longer say:

> “‘The fathers have eaten sour grapes,
> and the children’s teeth are set on edge.’

[30]† But everyone shall die for his own sin. Each man who eats sour grapes, his teeth shall be set on edge.

The New Covenant

31 ‡‡‡“Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a
new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, 32 †not like
the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by
the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they
broke, though I was their husband, declares the Lord. 33 †But this is the
covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares
the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts.
And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 34 †And no longer
shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, ‘Know the
Lord,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest,
declares the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their
sin no more.”

35 ‡‡ Thus says the Lord,
who gives the sun for light by day
and the fixed order of the moon and the
stars for light by night,
who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar—
the Lord of hosts is his name:
36 “If this fixed order departs
from before me, declares the Lord,
then shall the offspring of Israel cease
from being a nation before me forever.”

37 Thus says the Lord:
“If the heavens above can be measured,
and the foundations of the earth below can
be explored,
then I will cast off all the offspring of Israel
for all that they have done,
declares the Lord.”

38 ‡ ‡ “Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when the city shall
be rebuilt for the Lord from the Tower of Hananel to the Corner Gate.
39 ‡ And the measuring line shall go out farther, straight to the hill Gareb, and
shall then turn to Goah. 40 ‡ The whole valley of the dead bodies and the
ashes, and all the fields as far as the brook Kidron, to the corner of the
Horse Gate toward the east, shall be sacred to the Lord. It shall not be
uprooted or overthrown anymore forever.”

Jeremiah Buys a Field During the Siege

32 [1]†† The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord in the tenth
year of Zedekiah king of Judah, which was the eighteenth year of
Nebuchadnezzar. [2]† At that time the army of the king of Babylon was
besieging Jerusalem, and Jeremiah the prophet was shut up in the court of
the guard that was in the palace of the king of Judah. [3]For Zedekiah king of
Judah had imprisoned him, saying, "Why do you prophesy and say, 'Thus
says the Lord: Behold, I am giving this city into the hand of the king of
Babylon, and he shall capture it; [4]Zedekiah king of Judah shall not escape
out of the hand of the Chaldeans, but shall surely be given into the hand of
the king of Babylon, and shall speak with him face to face and see him eye
to eye. [5]†And he shall take Zedekiah to Babylon, and there he shall remain
until I visit him, declares the Lord. Though you fight against the Chaldeans,
you shall not succeed'?"

[6]Jeremiah said, "The word of the Lord came to me: [7]†Behold, Hanamel
the son of Shallum your uncle will come to you and say, 'Buy my field that
is at Anathoth, for the right of redemption by purchase is yours.' [8]†Then
Hanamel my cousin came to me in the court of the guard, in accordance
with the word of the Lord, and said to me, 'Buy my field that is at Anathoth
in the land of Benjamin, for the right of possession and redemption is yours;
buy it for yourself.' Then I knew that this was the word of the Lord.

[9]†"And I bought the field at Anathoth from Hanamel my cousin, and
weighed out the money to him, seventeen shekels of silver. [10]†I signed the
deed, sealed it, got witnesses, and weighed the money on scales. [11]†Then I
took the sealed deed of purchase, containing the terms and conditions and
the open copy. [12]†And I gave the deed of purchase to Baruch the son of
Neriah son of Mahseiah, in the presence of Hanamel my cousin, in the
presence of the witnesses who signed the deed of purchase, and in the
presence of all the Judeans who were sitting in the court of the guard. [13]I
charged Baruch in their presence, saying, [14]†'Thus says the Lord of hosts,
the God of Israel: Take these deeds, both this sealed deed of purchase and
this open deed, and put them in an earthenware vessel, that they may last

for a long time. [15]For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Houses and fields and vineyards shall again be bought in this land.’

Jeremiah Prays for Understanding

16 ‡ ‡ “After I had given the deed of purchase to Baruch the son of Neriah,
I prayed to the Lord, saying: 17 ‡ ‘Ah, Lord God! It is you who have made the
heavens and the earth by your great power and by your outstretched arm!
Nothing is too hard for you. 18 ‡ You show steadfast love to thousands, but
you repay the guilt of fathers to their children after them, O great and
mighty God, whose name is the Lord of hosts, 19 ‡ great in counsel and
mighty in deed, whose eyes are open to all the ways of the children of man,
rewarding each one according to his ways and according to the fruit of his
deeds. 20 ‡ You have shown signs and wonders in the land of Egypt, and to
this day in Israel and among all mankind, and have made a name for
yourself, as at this day. 21 You brought your people Israel out of the land of
Egypt with signs and wonders, with a strong hand and outstretched arm,
and with great terror. 22 ‡ And you gave them this land, which you swore to
their fathers to give them, a land flowing with milk and honey. 23 ‡ And they
entered and took possession of it. But they did not obey your voice or walk
in your law. They did nothing of all you commanded them to do. Therefore
you have made all this disaster come upon them. 24 ‡ Behold, the siege
mounds have come up to the city to take it, and because of sword and
famine and pestilence the city is given into the hands of the Chaldeans who
are fighting against it. What you spoke has come to pass, and behold, you
see it. 25 Yet you, O Lord God, have said to me, “Buy the field for money and
get witnesses”—though the city is given into the hands of the Chaldeans.’”

26 ‡ The word of the Lord came to Jeremiah: 27 ‡ “Behold, I am the Lord, the
God of all flesh. Is anything too hard for me? 28 ‡ Therefore, thus says the
Lord: Behold, I am giving this city into the hands of the Chaldeans and into
the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and he shall capture it.
29 ‡ The Chaldeans who are fighting against this city shall come and set this
city on fire and burn it, with the houses on whose roofs offerings have been
made to Baal and drink offerings have been poured out to other gods, to
provoke me to anger. 30 For the children of Israel and the children of Judah
have done nothing but evil in my sight from their youth. The children of
Israel have done nothing but provoke me to anger by the work of their

hands, declares the LORD. 31This city has aroused my anger and wrath, from
the day it was built to this day, so that I will remove it from my sight
32because of all the evil of the children of Israel and the children of Judah
that they did to provoke me to anger—their kings and their officials, their
priests and their prophets, the men of Judah and the inhabitants of
Jerusalem. 33† They have turned to me their back and not their face. And
though I have taught them persistently, they have not listened to receive
instruction. 34† They set up their abominations in the house that is called by
my name, to defile it. 35† They built the high places of Baal in the Valley of
the Son of Hinnom, to offer up their sons and daughters to Molech, though I
did not command them, nor did it enter into my mind, that they should do
this abomination, to cause Judah to sin.

They Shall Be My People; I Will Be Their God

36 ‡ “Now therefore thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, concerning this
city of which you say, ‘It is given into the hand of the king of Babylon by
sword, by famine, and by pestilence’: 37 † Behold, I will gather them from all
the countries to which I drove them in my anger and my wrath and in great
indignation. I will bring them back to this place, and I will make them dwell
in safety. 38 And they shall be my people, and I will be their God. 39 † I will
give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me forever, for their
own good and the good of their children after them. 40 † I will make with
them an everlasting covenant, that I will not turn away from doing good to
them. And I will put the fear of me in their hearts, that they may not turn
from me. 41 † I will rejoice in doing them good, and I will plant them in this
land in faithfulness, with all my heart and all my soul.

42 ‡ “For thus says the Lord: Just as I have brought all this great disaster
upon this people, so I will bring upon them all the good that I promise them.
43 Fields shall be bought in this land of which you are saying, ‘It is a
desolation, without man or beast; it is given into the hand of the Chaldeans.’
44 † Fields shall be bought for money, and deeds shall be signed and sealed
and witnessed, in the land of Benjamin, in the places about Jerusalem, and
in the cities of Judah, in the cities of the hill country, in the cities of the
Shephelah, and in the cities of the Negeb; for I will restore their fortunes,
declares the Lord.”

The Lord Promises Peace

33 [1]‡†The word of the Lord came to Jeremiah a second time, while
he was still shut up in the court of the guard: [2]†“Thus says the Lord who
made the earth,[1] the Lord who formed it to establish it—the Lord is his
name: [3]†Call to me and I will answer you, and will tell you great and hidden
things that you have not known. [4]†For thus says the Lord, the God of Israel,
concerning the houses of this city and the houses of the kings of Judah that
were torn down to make a defense against the siege mounds and against the
sword: [5]† They are coming in to fight against the Chaldeans and to fill
them[2] with the dead bodies of men whom I shall strike down in my anger
and my wrath, for I have hidden my face from this city because of all their
evil. [6]†Behold, I will bring to it health and healing, and I will heal them and
reveal to them abundance of prosperity and security. [7]†I will restore the
fortunes of Judah and the fortunes of Israel, and rebuild them as they were
at first. [8]†I will cleanse them from all the guilt of their sin against me, and I
will forgive all the guilt of their sin and rebellion against me. [9]†And this
city[3] shall be to me a name of joy, a praise and a glory before all the
nations of the earth who shall hear of all the good that I do for them. They
shall fear and tremble because of all the good and all the prosperity I
provide for it.

[10]“Thus says the Lord: In this place of which you say, ‘It is a waste
without man or beast,’ in the cities of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem that
are desolate, without man or inhabitant or beast, there shall be heard again
[11]†the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom
and the voice of the bride, the voices of those who sing, as they bring thank
offerings to the house of the Lord:

> “‘Give thanks to the Lord of hosts,
> for the Lord is good,
> for his steadfast love endures forever!’

For I will restore the fortunes of the land as at first, says the Lord.

12 “Thus says the Lord of hosts: In this place that is waste, without man or
beast, and in all of its cities, there shall again be habitations of shepherds
resting their flocks. 13 † In the cities of the hill country, in the cities of the
Shephelah, and in the cities of the Negeb, in the land of Benjamin, the
places about Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah, flocks shall again pass
under the hands of the one who counts them, says the Lord.

The Lord's Eternal Covenant with David

14 ‡ ‡ "Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will fulfill
the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. 15 † In those
days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David,
and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. 16 † In those days
Judah will be saved, and Jerusalem will dwell securely. And this is the name
by which it will be called: 'The Lord is our righteousness.'

17 † "For thus says the Lord: David shall never lack a man to sit on the
throne of the house of Israel, 18 † and the Levitical priests shall never lack a
man in my presence to offer burnt offerings, to burn grain offerings, and to
make sacrifices forever."

19 The word of the Lord came to Jeremiah: 20 † "Thus says the Lord: If you
can break my covenant with the day and my covenant with the night, so that
day and night will not come at their appointed time, 21 † then also my
covenant with David my servant may be broken, so that he shall not have a
son to reign on his throne, and my covenant with the Levitical priests my
ministers. 22 † As the host of heaven cannot be numbered and the sands of the
sea cannot be measured, so I will multiply the offspring of David my
servant, and the Levitical priests who minister to me."

23 The word of the Lord came to Jeremiah: 24 † "Have you not observed that
these people are saying, 'The Lord has rejected the two clans that he
chose'? Thus they have despised my people so that they are no longer a
nation in their sight. 25 † Thus says the Lord: If I have not established my
covenant with day and night and the fixed order of heaven and earth,
26 † then I will reject the offspring of Jacob and David my servant and will
not choose one of his offspring to rule over the offspring of Abraham, Isaac,
and Jacob. For I will restore their fortunes and will have mercy on them."

Zedekiah to Die in Babylon

34 [1] The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord, when Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and all his army and all the kingdoms of the earth under his dominion and all the peoples were fighting against Jerusalem and all of its cities: [2] "Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: Go and speak to Zedekiah king of Judah and say to him, 'Thus says the Lord: Behold, I am giving this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall burn it with fire. [3] You shall not escape from his hand but shall surely be captured and delivered into his hand. You shall see the king of Babylon eye to eye and speak with him face to face. And you shall go to Babylon.' [4] Yet hear the word of the Lord, O Zedekiah king of Judah! Thus says the Lord concerning you: 'You shall not die by the sword. [5] You shall die in peace. And as spices were burned for your fathers, the former kings who were before you, so people shall burn spices for you and lament for you, saying, "Alas, lord!"' For I have spoken the word, declares the Lord."

[6] Then Jeremiah the prophet spoke all these words to Zedekiah king of Judah, in Jerusalem, [7] when the army of the king of Babylon was fighting against Jerusalem and against all the cities of Judah that were left, Lachish and Azekah, for these were the only fortified cities of Judah that remained.

[8] The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord, after King Zedekiah had made a covenant with all the people in Jerusalem to make a proclamation of liberty to them, [9] that everyone should set free his Hebrew slaves, male and female, so that no one should enslave a Jew, his brother. [10] And they obeyed, all the officials and all the people who had entered into the covenant that everyone would set free his slave, male or female, so that they would not be enslaved again. They obeyed and set them free. [11] But afterward they turned around and took back the male and female slaves they had set free, and brought them into subjection as slaves. [12] The word of the Lord came to Jeremiah from the Lord: [13] "Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: I myself made a covenant with your fathers when I brought them out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, saying, [14] 'At the end of seven years each of you must set free the fellow Hebrew who has been sold to you and has served you six years; you must set him free from your

service.’ But your fathers did not listen to me or incline their ears to me.
15 †You recently repented and did what was right in my eyes by proclaiming
liberty, each to his neighbor, and you made a covenant before me in the
house that is called by my name, 16 † but then you turned around and
profaned my name when each of you took back his male and female slaves,
whom you had set free according to their desire, and you brought them into
subjection to be your slaves.
17 † “Therefore, thus says the Lord: You have not obeyed me by
proclaiming liberty, every one to his brother and to his neighbor; behold, I
proclaim to you liberty to the sword, to pestilence, and to famine, declares
the Lord. I will make you a horror to all the kingdoms of the earth. 18 †And
the men who transgressed my covenant and did not keep the terms of the
covenant that they made before me, I will make them like[1] the calf that
they cut in two and passed between its parts— 19 †the officials of Judah, the
officials of Jerusalem, the eunuchs, the priests, and all the people of the land
who passed between the parts of the calf. 20 †And I will give them into the
hand of their enemies and into the hand of those who seek their lives. Their
dead bodies shall be food for the birds of the air and the beasts of the earth.
21 †And Zedekiah king of Judah and his officials I will give into the hand of
their enemies and into the hand of those who seek their lives, into the hand
of the army of the king of Babylon which has withdrawn from you.
22 Behold, I will command, declares the Lord, and will bring them back to
this city. And they will fight against it and take it and burn it with fire. I will
make the cities of Judah a desolation without inhabitant.”

The Obedience of the Rechabites

35 [1]†The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord in the days of
Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah: [2]† "Go to the house of the
Rechabites and speak with them and bring them to the house of the Lord,
into one of the chambers; then offer them wine to drink." [3]†So I took
Jaazaniah the son of Jeremiah, son of Habazziniah and his brothers and all
his sons and the whole house of the Rechabites. [4]†I brought them to the
house of the Lord into the chamber of the sons of Hanan the son of Igdaliah,
the man of God, which was near the chamber of the officials, above the
chamber of Maaseiah the son of Shallum, keeper of the threshold. [5]Then I
set before the Rechabites pitchers full of wine, and cups, and I said to them,
"Drink wine." [6]†But they answered, "We will drink no wine, for Jonadab
the son of Rechab, our father, commanded us, 'You shall not drink wine,
neither you nor your sons forever. [7]You shall not build a house; you shall
not sow seed; you shall not plant or have a vineyard; but you shall live in
tents all your days, that you may live many days in the land where you
sojourn.' [8]We have obeyed the voice of Jonadab the son of Rechab, our
father, in all that he commanded us, to drink no wine all our days,
ourselves, our wives, our sons, or our daughters, [9]and not to build houses to
dwell in. We have no vineyard or field or seed, [10]but we have lived in tents
and have obeyed and done all that Jonadab our father commanded us. [11]But
when Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up against the land, we said,
'Come, and let us go to Jerusalem for fear of the army of the Chaldeans and
the army of the Syrians.' So we are living in Jerusalem."

[12]†Then the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah: [13]"Thus says the Lord of
hosts, the God of Israel: Go and say to the people of Judah and the
inhabitants of Jerusalem, Will you not receive instruction and listen to my
words? declares the Lord. [14]The command that Jonadab the son of Rechab
gave to his sons, to drink no wine, has been kept, and they drink none to
this day, for they have obeyed their father's command. I have spoken to you
persistently, but you have not listened to me. [15]†I have sent to you all my
servants the prophets, sending them persistently, saying, 'Turn now every
one of you from his evil way, and amend your deeds, and do not go after

other gods to serve them, and then you shall dwell in the land that I gave to you and your fathers.' But you did not incline your ear or listen to me. [16]The sons of Jonadab the son of Rechab have kept the command that their father gave them, but this people has not obeyed me. [17]Therefore, thus says the LORD, the God of hosts, the God of Israel: Behold, I am bringing upon Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem all the disaster that I have pronounced against them, because I have spoken to them and they have not listened, I have called to them and they have not answered."

[18]†But to the house of the Rechabites Jeremiah said, "Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Because you have obeyed the command of Jonadab your father and kept all his precepts and done all that he commanded you, [19]†therefore thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Jonadab the son of Rechab shall never lack a man to stand before me."

Jehoiakim Burns Jeremiah's Scroll

36 [1]†In the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah,
this word came to Jeremiah from the Lord: [2]†"Take a scroll and write on it
all the words that I have spoken to you against Israel and Judah and all the
nations, from the day I spoke to you, from the days of Josiah until today. [3]It
may be that the house of Judah will hear all the disaster that I intend to do
to them, so that every one may turn from his evil way, and that I may
forgive their iniquity and their sin."

[4]†Then Jeremiah called Baruch the son of Neriah, and Baruch wrote on a
scroll at the dictation of Jeremiah all the words of the Lord that he had
spoken to him. [5]†And Jeremiah ordered Baruch, saying, "I am banned from
going to the house of the Lord, [6]†so you are to go, and on a day of fasting in
the hearing of all the people in the Lord's house you shall read the words of
the Lord from the scroll that you have written at my dictation. You shall
read them also in the hearing of all the men of Judah who come out of their
cities. [7]†It may be that their plea for mercy will come before the Lord, and
that every one will turn from his evil way, for great is the anger and wrath
that the Lord has pronounced against this people." [8]†And Baruch the son of
Neriah did all that Jeremiah the prophet ordered him about reading from the
scroll the words of the Lord in the Lord's house.

[9]†In the fifth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, in the
ninth month, all the people in Jerusalem and all the people who came from
the cities of Judah to Jerusalem proclaimed a fast before the Lord. [10]†Then,
in the hearing of all the people, Baruch read the words of Jeremiah from the
scroll, in the house of the Lord, in the chamber of Gemariah the son of
Shaphan the secretary, which was in the upper court, at the entry of the New
Gate of the Lord's house.

[11]‡When Micaiah the son of Gemariah, son of Shaphan, heard all the
words of the Lord from the scroll, [12]†he went down to the king's house, into
the secretary's chamber, and all the officials were sitting there: Elishama the
secretary, Delaiah the son of Shemaiah, Elnathan the son of Achbor,
Gemariah the son of Shaphan, Zedekiah the son of Hananiah, and all the
officials. [13]And Micaiah told them all the words that he had heard, when

Baruch read the scroll in the hearing of the people. 14 †Then all the officials
sent Jehudi the son of Nethaniah, son of Shelemiah, son of Cushi, to say to
Baruch, “Take in your hand the scroll that you read in the hearing of the
people, and come.” So Baruch the son of Neriah took the scroll in his hand
and came to them. 15 And they said to him, “Sit down and read it.” So
Baruch read it to them. 16 †When they heard all the words, they turned one to
another in fear. And they said to Baruch, “We must report all these words to
the king.” 17 †Then they asked Baruch, “Tell us, please, how did you write
all these words? Was it at his dictation?” 18 †Baruch answered them, “He
dictated all these words to me, while I wrote them with ink on the scroll.”
19 Then the officials said to Baruch, “Go and hide, you and Jeremiah, and let
no one know where you are.”

20 ‡So they went into the court to the king, having put the scroll in the
chamber of Elishama the secretary, and they reported all the words to the
king. 21 Then the king sent Jehudi to get the scroll, and he took it from the
chamber of Elishama the secretary. And Jehudi read it to the king and all the
officials who stood beside the king. 22 †It was the ninth month, and the king
was sitting in the winter house, and there was a fire burning in the fire pot
before him. 23 As Jehudi read three or four columns, the king would cut them
off with a knife and throw them into the fire in the fire pot, until the entire
scroll was consumed in the fire that was in the fire pot. 24 †Yet neither the
king nor any of his servants who heard all these words was afraid, nor did
they tear their garments. 25 Even when Elnathan and Delaiah and Gemariah
urged the king not to burn the scroll, he would not listen to them. 26 †And the
king commanded Jerahmeel the king’s son and Seraiah the son of Azriel
and Shelemiah the son of Abdeel to seize Baruch the secretary and Jeremiah
the prophet, but the Lord hid them.

27 ‡Now after the king had burned the scroll with the words that Baruch
wrote at Jeremiah’s dictation, the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah:
28 “Take another scroll and write on it all the former words that were in the
first scroll, which Jehoiakim the king of Judah has burned. 29 And
concerning Jehoiakim king of Judah you shall say, ‘Thus says the Lord, You
have burned this scroll, saying, “Why have you written in it that the king of
Babylon will certainly come and destroy this land, and will cut off from it
man and beast?” 30 †Therefore thus says the Lord concerning Jehoiakim king

of Judah: He shall have none to sit on the throne of David, and his dead body shall be cast out to the heat by day and the frost by night. [31]And I will punish him and his offspring and his servants for their iniquity. I will bring upon them and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem and upon the people of Judah all the disaster that I have pronounced against them, but they would not hear.’”

[32]† Then Jeremiah took another scroll and gave it to Baruch the scribe, the son of Neriah, who wrote on it at the dictation of Jeremiah all the words of the scroll that Jehoiakim king of Judah had burned in the fire. And many similar words were added to them.

Jeremiah Warns Zedekiah

37 [1]‡†Zedekiah the son of Josiah, whom Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon made king in the land of Judah, reigned instead of Coniah the son of Jehoiakim. [2]†But neither he nor his servants nor the people of the land listened to the words of the Lord that he spoke through Jeremiah the prophet.

[3]†King Zedekiah sent Jehucal the son of Shelemiah, and Zephaniah the priest, the son of Maaseiah, to Jeremiah the prophet, saying, "Please pray for us to the Lord our God." [4]†Now Jeremiah was still going in and out among the people, for he had not yet been put in prison. [5]The army of Pharaoh had come out of Egypt. And when the Chaldeans who were besieging Jerusalem heard news about them, they withdrew from Jerusalem.

[6]Then the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the prophet: [7]†"Thus says the Lord, God of Israel: Thus shall you say to the king of Judah who sent you to me to inquire of me, 'Behold, Pharaoh's army that came to help you is about to return to Egypt, to its own land. [8]And the Chaldeans shall come back and fight against this city. They shall capture it and burn it with fire. [9]Thus says the Lord, Do not deceive yourselves, saying, "The Chaldeans will surely go away from us," for they will not go away. [10]For even if you should defeat the whole army of Chaldeans who are fighting against you, and there remained of them only wounded men, every man in his tent, they would rise up and burn this city with fire.'"

Jeremiah Imprisoned

11 †Now when the Chaldean army had withdrawn from Jerusalem at the
approach of Pharaoh's army, 12 †Jeremiah set out from Jerusalem to go to the
land of Benjamin to receive his portion there among the people. 13 †When he
was at the Benjamin Gate, a sentry there named Irijah the son of Shelemiah,
son of Hananiah, seized Jeremiah the prophet, saying, "You are deserting to
the Chaldeans." 14 And Jeremiah said, "It is a lie; I am not deserting to the
Chaldeans." But Irijah would not listen to him, and seized Jeremiah and
brought him to the officials. 15 †And the officials were enraged at Jeremiah,
and they beat him and imprisoned him in the house of Jonathan the
secretary, for it had been made a prison.

16 †When Jeremiah had come to the dungeon cells and remained there
many days, 17 †King Zedekiah sent for him and received him. The king
questioned him secretly in his house and said, "Is there any word from the
Lord?" Jeremiah said, "There is." Then he said, "You shall be delivered into
the hand of the king of Babylon." 18 Jeremiah also said to King Zedekiah,
"What wrong have I done to you or your servants or this people, that you
have put me in prison? 19 †Where are your prophets who prophesied to you,
saying, 'The king of Babylon will not come against you and against this
land'? 20 Now hear, please, O my lord the king: let my humble plea come
before you and do not send me back to the house of Jonathan the secretary,
lest I die there." 21 †So King Zedekiah gave orders, and they committed
Jeremiah to the court of the guard. And a loaf of bread was given him daily
from the bakers' street, until all the bread of the city was gone. So Jeremiah
remained in the court of the guard.

Jeremiah Cast into the Cistern

38 [1] ‡ † Now Shephatiah the son of Mattan, Gedaliah the son of
Pashhur, Jucal the son of Shelemiah, and Pashhur the son of Malchiah heard
the words that Jeremiah was saying to all the people, [2] †"Thus says the Lord:
He who stays in this city shall die by the sword, by famine, and by
pestilence, but he who goes out to the Chaldeans shall live. He shall have
his life as a prize of war, and live. [3] Thus says the Lord: This city shall surely
be given into the hand of the army of the king of Babylon and be taken."
[4] †Then the officials said to the king, "Let this man be put to death, for he is
weakening the hands of the soldiers who are left in this city, and the hands
of all the people, by speaking such words to them. For this man is not
seeking the welfare of this people, but their harm." [5] King Zedekiah said,
"Behold, he is in your hands, for the king can do nothing against you." [6] †So
they took Jeremiah and cast him into the cistern of Malchiah, the king's son,
which was in the court of the guard, letting Jeremiah down by ropes. And
there was no water in the cistern, but only mud, and Jeremiah sank in the
mud.

Jeremiah Rescued from the Cistern

7 When Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, a eunuch who was in the king's
house, heard that they had put Jeremiah into the cistern—the king was
sitting in the Benjamin Gate— 8 Ebed-melech went from the king's house
and said to the king, 9 "My lord the king, these men have done evil in all that
they did to Jeremiah the prophet by casting him into the cistern, and he will
die there of hunger, for there is no bread left in the city." 10 Then the king
commanded Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, "Take thirty men with you from
here, and lift Jeremiah the prophet out of the cistern before he dies." 11 So
Ebed-melech took the men with him and went to the house of the king, to a
wardrobe in the storehouse, and took from there old rags and worn-out
clothes, which he let down to Jeremiah in the cistern by ropes. 12 Then
Ebed-melech the Ethiopian said to Jeremiah, "Put the rags and clothes
between your armpits and the ropes." Jeremiah did so. 13 Then they drew
Jeremiah up with ropes and lifted him out of the cistern. And Jeremiah
remained in the court of the guard.

Jeremiah Warns Zedekiah Again

14 ‡ ‡ ‡ King Zedekiah sent for Jeremiah the prophet and received him at
the third entrance of the temple of the Lord. The king said to Jeremiah, “I
will ask you a question; hide nothing from me.” 15 Jeremiah said to
Zedekiah, “If I tell you, will you not surely put me to death? And if I give
you counsel, you will not listen to me.” 16 † Then King Zedekiah swore
secretly to Jeremiah, “As the Lord lives, who made our souls, I will not put
you to death or deliver you into the hand of these men who seek your life.”
17 † Then Jeremiah said to Zedekiah, “Thus says the Lord, the God of
hosts, the God of Israel: If you will surrender to the officials of the king of
Babylon, then your life shall be spared, and this city shall not be burned
with fire, and you and your house shall live. 18 But if you do not surrender to
the officials of the king of Babylon, then this city shall be given into the
hand of the Chaldeans, and they shall burn it with fire, and you shall not
escape from their hand.” 19 King Zedekiah said to Jeremiah, “I am afraid of
the Judeans who have deserted to the Chaldeans, lest I be handed over to
them and they deal cruelly with me.” 20 Jeremiah said, “You shall not be
given to them. Obey now the voice of the Lord in what I say to you, and it
shall be well with you, and your life shall be spared. 21 † But if you refuse to
surrender, this is the vision which the Lord has shown to me: 22 † Behold, all
the women left in the house of the king of Judah were being led out to the
officials of the king of Babylon and were saying,

> “‘Your trusted friends have deceived you
> and prevailed against you;
> now that your feet are sunk in the mud,
> they turn away from you.’

23 All your wives and your sons shall be led out to the Chaldeans, and you
yourself shall not escape from their hand, but shall be seized by the king of
Babylon, and this city shall be burned with fire.”
24 ‡ Then Zedekiah said to Jeremiah, “Let no one know of these words,
and you shall not die. 25 If the officials hear that I have spoken with you and
come to you and say to you, ‘Tell us what you said to the king and what the

king said to you; hide nothing from us and we will not put you to death,’ [26]then you shall say to them, ‘I made a humble plea to the king that he would not send me back to the house of Jonathan to die there.’” [27]Then all the officials came to Jeremiah and asked him, and he answered them as the king had instructed him. So they stopped speaking with him, for the conversation had not been overheard. [28] † And Jeremiah remained in the court of the guard until the day that Jerusalem was taken.

The Fall of Jerusalem

39 [1]‡‡‡In the ninth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, in the tenth
month, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and all his army came against
Jerusalem and besieged it. [2]†In the eleventh year of Zedekiah, in the fourth
month, on the ninth day of the month, a breach was made in the city. [3]†Then
all the officials of the king of Babylon came and sat in the middle gate:
Nergal-sar-ezer, Samgar-nebu, Sar-sekim the Rab-saris, Nergal-sar-ezer the
Rab-mag, with all the rest of the officers of the king of Babylon. [4]†When
Zedekiah king of Judah and all the soldiers saw them, they fled, going out
of the city at night by way of the king's garden through the gate between the
two walls; and they went toward the Arabah. [5]† But the army of the
Chaldeans pursued them and overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho.
And when they had taken him, they brought him up to Nebuchadnezzar
king of Babylon, at Riblah, in the land of Hamath; and he passed sentence
on him. [6]The king of Babylon slaughtered the sons of Zedekiah at Riblah
before his eyes, and the king of Babylon slaughtered all the nobles of Judah.
[7]He put out the eyes of Zedekiah and bound him in chains to take him to
Babylon. [8]† The Chaldeans burned the king's house and the house of the
people, and broke down the walls of Jerusalem. [9]†Then Nebuzaradan, the
captain of the guard, carried into exile to Babylon the rest of the people who
were left in the city, those who had deserted to him, and the people who
remained. [10]†Nebuzaradan, the captain of the guard, left in the land of Judah
some of the poor people who owned nothing, and gave them vineyards and
fields at the same time.

The Lord Delivers Jeremiah

11 †Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon gave command concerning Jeremiah
through Nebuzaradan, the captain of the guard, saying, 12 †"Take him, look
after him well, and do him no harm, but deal with him as he tells you."
13 †So Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard, Nebushazban the Rab-saris,
Nergal-sar-ezer the Rab-mag, and all the chief officers of the king of
Babylon 14 † sent and took Jeremiah from the court of the guard. They
entrusted him to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, son of Shaphan, that he
should take him home. So he lived among the people.

15 The word of the Lord came to Jeremiah while he was shut up in the
court of the guard: 16 †"Go, and say to Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, 'Thus
says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Behold, I will fulfill my words
against this city for harm and not for good, and they shall be accomplished
before you on that day. 17 †But I will deliver you on that day, declares the
Lord, and you shall not be given into the hand of the men of whom you are
afraid. 18 †For I will surely save you, and you shall not fall by the sword, but
you shall have your life as a prize of war, because you have put your trust in
me, declares the Lord.'"

Jeremiah Remains in Judah

40 [1] † The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord after
Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard had let him go from Ramah, when he
took him bound in chains along with all the captives of Jerusalem and Judah
who were being exiled to Babylon. [2] † The captain of the guard took
Jeremiah and said to him, "The Lord your God pronounced this disaster
against this place. [3]The Lord has brought it about, and has done as he said.
Because you sinned against the Lord and did not obey his voice, this thing
has come upon you. [4]†Now, behold, I release you today from the chains on
your hands. If it seems good to you to come with me to Babylon, come, and
I will look after you well, but if it seems wrong to you to come with me to
Babylon, do not come. See, the whole land is before you; go wherever you
think it good and right to go. [5]†If you remain,[1] then return to Gedaliah the
son of Ahikam, son of Shaphan, whom the king of Babylon appointed
governor of the cities of Judah, and dwell with him among the people. Or
go wherever you think it right to go." So the captain of the guard gave him
an allowance of food and a present, and let him go. [6]†Then Jeremiah went
to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, at Mizpah, and lived with him among the
people who were left in the land.

[7]†When all the captains of the forces in the open country and their men
heard that the king of Babylon had appointed Gedaliah the son of Ahikam
governor in the land and had committed to him men, women, and children,
those of the poorest of the land who had not been taken into exile to
Babylon, [8] † they went to Gedaliah at Mizpah—Ishmael the son of
Nethaniah, Johanan the son of Kareah, Seraiah the son of Tanhumeth, the
sons of Ephai the Netophathite, Jezaniah the son of the Maacathite, they
and their men. [9]Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, son of Shaphan, swore to them
and their men, saying, "Do not be afraid to serve the Chaldeans. Dwell in
the land and serve the king of Babylon, and it shall be well with you. [10]†As
for me, I will dwell at Mizpah, to represent you before the Chaldeans who
will come to us. But as for you, gather wine and summer fruits and oil, and
store them in your vessels, and dwell in your cities that you have taken."
[11] † Likewise, when all the Judeans who were in Moab and among the

Ammonites and in Edom and in other lands heard that the king of Babylon had left a remnant in Judah and had appointed Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, son of Shaphan, as governor over them, [12]then all the Judeans returned from all the places to which they had been driven and came to the land of Judah, to Gedaliah at Mizpah. And they gathered wine and summer fruits in great abundance.

[13]†Now Johanan the son of Kareah and all the leaders of the forces in the open country came to Gedaliah at Mizpah [14]† and said to him, "Do you know that Baalis the king of the Ammonites has sent Ishmael the son of Nethaniah to take your life?" But Gedaliah the son of Ahikam would not believe them. [15]Then Johanan the son of Kareah spoke secretly to Gedaliah at Mizpah, "Please let me go and strike down Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and no one will know it. Why should he take your life, so that all the Judeans who are gathered about you would be scattered, and the remnant of Judah would perish?" [16]But Gedaliah the son of Ahikam said to Johanan the son of Kareah, "You shall not do this thing, for you are speaking falsely of Ishmael."

Gedaliah Murdered

41 [1] †In the seventh month, Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, son of Elishama, of the royal family, one of the chief officers of the king, came with ten men to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, at Mizpah. As they ate bread together there at Mizpah, [2]Ishmael the son of Nethaniah and the ten men with him rose up and struck down Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, son of Shaphan, with the sword, and killed him, whom the king of Babylon had appointed governor in the land. [3]†Ishmael also struck down all the Judeans who were with Gedaliah at Mizpah, and the Chaldean soldiers who happened to be there.

[4]On the day after the murder of Gedaliah, before anyone knew of it, [5]†eighty men arrived from Shechem and Shiloh and Samaria, with their beards shaved and their clothes torn, and their bodies gashed, bringing grain offerings and incense to present at the temple of the Lord. [6]†And Ishmael the son of Nethaniah came out from Mizpah to meet them, weeping as he came. As he met them, he said to them, "Come in to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam." [7]†When they came into the city, Ishmael the son of Nethaniah and the men with him slaughtered them and cast them into a cistern. [8]†But there were ten men among them who said to Ishmael, "Do not put us to death, for we have stores of wheat, barley, oil, and honey hidden in the fields." So he refrained and did not put them to death with their companions.

[9]Now the cistern into which Ishmael had thrown all the bodies of the men whom he had struck down along with[1] Gedaliah was the large cistern that King Asa had made for defense against Baasha king of Israel; Ishmael the son of Nethaniah filled it with the slain. [10]†Then Ishmael took captive all the rest of the people who were in Mizpah, the king's daughters and all the people who were left at Mizpah, whom Nebuzaradan, the captain of the guard, had committed to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam. Ishmael the son of Nethaniah took them captive and set out to cross over to the Ammonites.

[11]†But when Johanan the son of Kareah and all the leaders of the forces with him heard of all the evil that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah had done, [12]they took all their men and went to fight against Ishmael the son of

Nethaniah. They came upon him at the great pool that is in Gibeon. [13]And when all the people who were with Ishmael saw Johanan the son of Kareah and all the leaders of the forces with him, they rejoiced. [14]So all the people whom Ishmael had carried away captive from Mizpah turned around and came back, and went to Johanan the son of Kareah. [15]But Ishmael the son of Nethaniah escaped from Johanan with eight men, and went to the Ammonites. [16]† Then Johanan the son of Kareah and all the leaders of the forces with him took from Mizpah all the rest of the people whom he had recovered from Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, after he had struck down Gedaliah the son of Ahikam—soldiers, women, children, and eunuchs, whom Johanan brought back from Gibeon. [17]† And they went and stayed at Geruth Chimham near Bethlehem, intending to go to Egypt [18]† because of the Chaldeans. For they were afraid of them, because Ishmael the son of Nethaniah had struck down Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, whom the king of Babylon had made governor over the land.

Warning Against Going to Egypt

42 [1]†Then all the commanders of the forces, and Johanan the son of Kareah and Jezaniah the son of Hoshaiah, and all the people from the least to the greatest, came near [2]and said to Jeremiah the prophet, “Let our plea for mercy come before you, and pray to the Lord your God for us, for all this remnant—because we are left with but a few, as your eyes see us— [3]†that the Lord your God may show us the way we should go, and the thing that we should do.” [4]†Jeremiah the prophet said to them, “I have heard you. Behold, I will pray to the Lord your God according to your request, and whatever the Lord answers you I will tell you. I will keep nothing back from you.” [5]†Then they said to Jeremiah, “May the Lord be a true and faithful witness against us if we do not act according to all the word with which the Lord your God sends you to us. [6]Whether it is good or bad, we will obey the voice of the Lord our God to whom we are sending you, that it may be well with us when we obey the voice of the Lord our God.”

[7]†At the end of ten days the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah. [8]Then he summoned Johanan the son of Kareah and all the commanders of the forces who were with him, and all the people from the least to the greatest, [9]and said to them, “Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, to whom you sent me to present your plea for mercy before him: [10]†If you will remain in this land, then I will build you up and not pull you down; I will plant you, and not pluck you up; for I relent of the disaster that I did to you. [11]†Do not fear the king of Babylon, of whom you are afraid. Do not fear him, declares the Lord, for I am with you, to save you and to deliver you from his hand. [12]†I will grant you mercy, that he may have mercy on you and let you remain in your own land. [13]But if you say, ‘We will not remain in this land,’ disobeying the voice of the Lord your God [14]†and saying, ‘No, we will go to the land of Egypt, where we shall not see war or hear the sound of the trumpet or be hungry for bread, and we will dwell there,’ [15]†then hear the word of the Lord, O remnant of Judah. Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: If you set your faces to enter Egypt and go to live there, [16]then the sword that you fear shall overtake you there in the land of Egypt, and the

famine of which you are afraid shall follow close after you to Egypt, and there you shall die. 17All the men who set their faces to go to Egypt to live there shall die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence. They shall have no remnant or survivor from the disaster that I will bring upon them.

18† "For thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: As my anger and my wrath were poured out on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so my wrath will be poured out on you when you go to Egypt. You shall become an execration, a horror, a curse, and a taunt. You shall see this place no more. 19† The Lord has said to you, O remnant of Judah, 'Do not go to Egypt.' Know for a certainty that I have warned you this day 20that you have gone astray at the cost of your lives. For you sent me to the Lord your God, saying, 'Pray for us to the Lord our God, and whatever the Lord our God says declare to us and we will do it.' 21And I have this day declared it to you, but you have not obeyed the voice of the Lord your God in anything that he sent me to tell you. 22Now therefore know for a certainty that you shall die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence in the place where you desire to go to live."

Jeremiah Taken to Egypt

43 [1]When Jeremiah finished speaking to all the people all these
words of the Lord their God, with which the Lord their God had sent him to
them, [2]†Azariah the son of Hoshaiah and Johanan the son of Kareah and all
the insolent men said to Jeremiah, "You are telling a lie. The Lord our God
did not send you to say, 'Do not go to Egypt to live there,' [3]†but Baruch the
son of Neriah has set you against us, to deliver us into the hand of the
Chaldeans, that they may kill us or take us into exile in Babylon." [4]So
Johanan the son of Kareah and all the commanders of the forces and all the
people did not obey the voice of the Lord, to remain in the land of Judah.
[5]†But Johanan the son of Kareah and all the commanders of the forces took
all the remnant of Judah who had returned to live in the land of Judah from
all the nations to which they had been driven— [6]†the men, the women, the
children, the princesses, and every person whom Nebuzaradan the captain
of the guard had left with Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, son of Shaphan; also
Jeremiah the prophet and Baruch the son of Neriah. [7]†And they came into
the land of Egypt, for they did not obey the voice of the Lord. And they
arrived at Tahpanhes.

[8]Then the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah in Tahpanhes: [9]†"Take in
your hands large stones and hide them in the mortar in the pavement that is
at the entrance to Pharaoh's palace in Tahpanhes, in the sight of the men of
Judah, [10]†and say to them, 'Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel:
Behold, I will send and take Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my
servant, and I will set his throne above these stones that I have hidden, and
he will spread his royal canopy over them. [11]†He shall come and strike the
land of Egypt, giving over to the pestilence those who are doomed to the
pestilence, to captivity those who are doomed to captivity, and to the sword
those who are doomed to the sword. [12]†I shall kindle a fire in the temples of
the gods of Egypt, and he shall burn them and carry them away captive.
And he shall clean the land of Egypt as a shepherd cleans his cloak of
vermin, and he shall go away from there in peace. [13]†He shall break the
obelisks of Heliopolis, which is in the land of Egypt, and the temples of the
gods of Egypt he shall burn with fire.'"

Judgment for Idolatry

44 [1]†The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the Judeans who
lived in the land of Egypt, at Migdol, at Tahpanhes, at Memphis, and in the
land of Pathros, [2]†"Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: You have
seen all the disaster that I brought upon Jerusalem and upon all the cities of
Judah. Behold, this day they are a desolation, and no one dwells in them,
[3]because of the evil that they committed, provoking me to anger, in that
they went to make offerings and serve other gods that they knew not,
neither they, nor you, nor your fathers. [4]†Yet I persistently sent to you all
my servants the prophets, saying, 'Oh, do not do this abomination that I
hate!' [5]But they did not listen or incline their ear, to turn from their evil and
make no offerings to other gods. [6]Therefore my wrath and my anger were
poured out and kindled in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem,
and they became a waste and a desolation, as at this day. [7]†And now thus
says the Lord God of hosts, the God of Israel: Why do you commit this
great evil against yourselves, to cut off from you man and woman, infant
and child, from the midst of Judah, leaving you no remnant? [8]†Why do you
provoke me to anger with the works of your hands, making offerings to
other gods in the land of Egypt where you have come to live, so that you
may be cut off and become a curse and a taunt among all the nations of the
earth? [9]Have you forgotten the evil of your fathers, the evil of the kings of
Judah, the evil of their[1] wives, your own evil, and the evil of your wives,
which they committed in the land of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem?
[10]†They have not humbled themselves even to this day, nor have they
feared, nor walked in my law and my statutes that I set before you and
before your fathers.

[11]†"Therefore thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Behold, I
will set my face against you for harm, to cut off all Judah. [12]†I will take the
remnant of Judah who have set their faces to come to the land of Egypt to
live, and they shall all be consumed. In the land of Egypt they shall fall; by
the sword and by famine they shall be consumed. From the least to the
greatest, they shall die by the sword and by famine, and they shall become
an oath, a horror, a curse, and a taunt. [13]I will punish those who dwell in the

land of Egypt, as I have punished Jerusalem, with the sword, with famine, and with pestilence, 14 so that none of the remnant of Judah who have come to live in the land of Egypt shall escape or survive or return to the land of Judah, to which they desire to return to dwell there. For they shall not return, except some fugitives."

15 Then all the men who knew that their wives had made offerings to other gods, and all the women who stood by, a great assembly, all the people who lived in Pathros in the land of Egypt, answered Jeremiah: 16 "As for the word that you have spoken to us in the name of the Lord, we will not listen to you. 17 But we will do everything that we have vowed, make offerings to the queen of heaven and pour out drink offerings to her, as we did, both we and our fathers, our kings and our officials, in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem. For then we had plenty of food, and prospered, and saw no disaster. 18 But since we left off making offerings to the queen of heaven and pouring out drink offerings to her, we have lacked everything and have been consumed by the sword and by famine." 19 And the women said,[1] "When we made offerings to the queen of heaven and poured out drink offerings to her, was it without our husbands' approval that we made cakes for her bearing her image and poured out drink offerings to her?"

20 Then Jeremiah said to all the people, men and women, all the people who had given him this answer: 21 "As for the offerings that you offered in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem, you and your fathers, your kings and your officials, and the people of the land, did not the Lord remember them? Did it not come into his mind? 22 The Lord could no longer bear your evil deeds and the abominations that you committed. Therefore your land has become a desolation and a waste and a curse, without inhabitant, as it is this day. 23 It is because you made offerings and because you sinned against the Lord and did not obey the voice of the Lord or walk in his law and in his statutes and in his testimonies that this disaster has happened to you, as at this day."

24 Jeremiah said to all the people and all the women, "Hear the word of the Lord, all you of Judah who are in the land of Egypt. 25 Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: You and your wives have declared with your mouths, and have fulfilled it with your hands, saying, 'We will surely perform our vows that we have made, to make offerings to the queen of

heaven and to pour out drink offerings to her.' Then confirm your vows and perform your vows! [26] † Therefore hear the word of the LORD, all you of Judah who dwell in the land of Egypt: Behold, I have sworn by my great name, says the LORD, that my name shall no more be invoked by the mouth of any man of Judah in all the land of Egypt, saying, 'As the Lord GOD lives.' [27]Behold, I am watching over them for disaster and not for good. All the men of Judah who are in the land of Egypt shall be consumed by the sword and by famine, until there is an end of them. [28] † And those who escape the sword shall return from the land of Egypt to the land of Judah, few in number; and all the remnant of Judah, who came to the land of Egypt to live, shall know whose word will stand, mine or theirs. [29]This shall be the sign to you, declares the LORD, that I will punish you in this place, in order that you may know that my words will surely stand against you for harm: [30] † Thus says the LORD, Behold, I will give Pharaoh Hophra king of Egypt into the hand of his enemies and into the hand of those who seek his life, as I gave Zedekiah king of Judah into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, who was his enemy and sought his life."

Message to Baruch

45 [1]†The word that Jeremiah the prophet spoke to Baruch the son of
Neriah, when he wrote these words in a book at the dictation of Jeremiah, in
the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah: [2]"Thus says
the Lord, the God of Israel, to you, O Baruch: [3]†You said, 'Woe is me! For
the Lord has added sorrow to my pain. I am weary with my groaning, and I
find no rest.' [4]†Thus shall you say to him, Thus says the Lord: Behold, what
I have built I am breaking down, and what I have planted I am plucking up
—that is, the whole land. [5]†And do you seek great things for yourself? Seek
them not, for behold, I am bringing disaster upon all flesh, declares the
Lord. But I will give you your life as a prize of war in all places to which
you may go."

Judgment on Egypt

46 [1] † The word of the Lord that came to Jeremiah the prophet concerning the nations.

[2] † About Egypt. Concerning the army of Pharaoh Neco, king of Egypt, which was by the river Euphrates at Carchemish and which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon defeated in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah:

[3] † "Prepare buckler and shield,
and advance for battle!
[4] Harness the horses;
mount, O horsemen!
Take your stations with your helmets,
polish your spears,
put on your armor!
[5] Why have I seen it?
They are dismayed
and have turned backward.
Their warriors are beaten down
and have fled in haste;
they look not back—
terror on every side!
declares the Lord.

[6] "The swift cannot flee away,
nor the warrior escape;
in the north by the river Euphrates
they have stumbled and fallen.

[7] † "Who is this, rising like the Nile,
like rivers whose waters surge?
[8] Egypt rises like the Nile,

like rivers whose waters surge.
He said, ‘I will rise, I will cover the earth,
I will destroy cities and their inhabitants.’
9 Advance, O horses,
and rage, O chariots!
Let the warriors go out:
men of Cush and Put who handle the shield,
men of Lud, skilled in handling the bow.
10 That day is the day of the Lord God of hosts,
a day of vengeance,
to avenge himself on his foes.
The sword shall devour and be sated
and drink its fill of their blood.
For the Lord God of hosts holds a sacrifice
in the north country by the river Euphrates.
11 Go up to Gilead, and take balm,
O virgin daughter of Egypt!
In vain you have used many medicines;
there is no healing for you.
12 The nations have heard of your shame,
and the earth is full of your cry;
for warrior has stumbled against warrior;
they have both fallen together.”

13 The word that the Lord spoke to Jeremiah the prophet about the coming of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon to strike the land of Egypt:

14 “Declare in Egypt, and proclaim in Migdol;
proclaim in Memphis and Tahpanhes;
say, ‘Stand ready and be prepared,
for the sword shall devour around you.’
15 Why are your mighty ones face down?
They do not stand[1]
because the Lord thrust them down.
16 He made many stumble, and they fell,
and they said one to another,

‘Arise, and let us go back to our own people
and to the land of our birth,
because of the sword of the oppressor.’
17† Call the name of Pharaoh, king of Egypt,
‘Noisy one who lets the hour go by.’

18† “As I live, declares the King,
whose name is the Lord of hosts,
like Tabor among the mountains
and like Carmel by the sea, shall one
come.
19† Prepare yourselves baggage for exile,
O inhabitants of Egypt!
For Memphis shall become a waste,
a ruin, without inhabitant.

20† “A beautiful heifer is Egypt,
but a biting fly from the north has come
upon her.
21† Even her hired soldiers in her midst
are like fattened calves;
yes, they have turned and fled together;
they did not stand,
for the day of their calamity has come upon
them,
the time of their punishment.

22† “She makes a sound like a serpent gliding
away;
for her enemies march in force
and come against her with axes
like those who fell trees.
23† They shall cut down her forest,
declares the Lord,

though it is impenetrable,
because they are more numerous than
locusts;
they are without number.
24 The daughter of Egypt shall be put to shame;
she shall be delivered into the hand of a
people from the north."

25 † The Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, said: "Behold, I am bringing punishment upon Amon of Thebes, and Pharaoh and Egypt and her gods and her kings, upon Pharaoh and those who trust in him. 26 I will deliver them into the hand of those who seek their life, into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and his officers. Afterward Egypt shall be inhabited as in the days of old, declares the Lord.

27 † "But fear not, O Jacob my servant,
nor be dismayed, O Israel,
for behold, I will save you from far away,
and your offspring from the land of their
captivity.
Jacob shall return and have quiet and ease,
and none shall make him afraid.
28 † Fear not, O Jacob my servant,
declares the Lord,
for I am with you.
I will make a full end of all the nations
to which I have driven you,
but of you I will not make a full end.
I will discipline you in just measure,
and I will by no means leave you unpunished."

Judgment on the Philistines

47 [1] † The word of the Lord that came to Jeremiah the prophet
concerning the Philistines, before Pharaoh struck down Gaza.

[2] "Thus says the Lord:
Behold, waters are rising out of the north,
and shall become an overflowing torrent;
they shall overflow the land and all that fills it,
the city and those who dwell in it.
Men shall cry out,
and every inhabitant of the land shall wail.
[3] † At the noise of the stamping of the hoofs of
his stallions,
at the rushing of his chariots, at the
rumbling of their wheels,
the fathers look not back to their children,
so feeble are their hands,
[4] † because of the day that is coming to destroy
all the Philistines,
to cut off from Tyre and Sidon
every helper that remains.
For the Lord is destroying the Philistines,
the remnant of the coastland of Caphtor.
[5] † Baldness has come upon Gaza;
Ashkelon has perished.
O remnant of their valley,
how long will you gash yourselves?
[6] † Ah, sword of the Lord!
How long till you are quiet?
Put yourself into your scabbard;
rest and be still!
[7] How can it[1] be quiet
when the Lord has given it a charge?

Against Ashkelon and against the seashore
he has appointed it.”

Judgment on Moab

48 [1]†Concerning Moab.
Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel:

"Woe to Nebo, for it is laid waste!
Kiriathaim is put to shame, it is taken;
the fortress is put to shame and broken down;
[2]† the renown of Moab is no more.
In Heshbon they planned disaster against her:
'Come, let us cut her off from being a nation!'
You also, O Madmen, shall be brought to
silence;
the sword shall pursue you.

[3]† "A voice! A cry from Horonaim,
'Desolation and great destruction!'
[4]† Moab is destroyed;
her little ones have made a cry.
[5]† For at the ascent of Luhith
they go up weeping;[2]
for at the descent of Horonaim
they have heard the distressed cry[3] of
destruction.
[6]† Flee! Save yourselves!
You will be like a juniper in the desert!
[7]† For, because you trusted in your works and
your treasures,
you also shall be taken;
and Chemosh shall go into exile
with his priests and his officials.
[8]† The destroyer shall come upon every city,
and no city shall escape;

the valley shall perish,
  and the plain shall be destroyed,
  as the Lord has spoken.

9 “Give wings to Moab,
  for she would fly away;
her cities shall become a desolation,
  with no inhabitant in them.

10 † “Cursed is he who does the work of the Lord with slackness, and cursed is he who keeps back his sword from bloodshed.

11 † “Moab has been at ease from his youth
  and has settled on his dregs;
he has not been emptied from vessel to vessel,
  nor has he gone into exile;
so his taste remains in him,
  and his scent is not changed.

12 † “Therefore, behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I shall send to him pourers who will pour him, and empty his vessels and break his[1] jars in pieces. 13 † Then Moab shall be ashamed of Chemosh, as the house of Israel was ashamed of Bethel, their confidence.

14 † “How do you say, ‘We are heroes
  and mighty men of war’?
15 † The destroyer of Moab and his cities has
    come up,
  and the choicest of his young men have
    gone down to slaughter,
  declares the King, whose name is the Lord
    of hosts.
16 The calamity of Moab is near at hand,
  and his affliction hastens swiftly.
17 † Grieve for him, all you who are around him,
  and all who know his name;

say, ‘How the mighty scepter is broken,
the glorious staff.’

18 “Come down from your glory,
and sit on the parched ground,
O inhabitant of Dibon!
For the destroyer of Moab has come up
against you;
he has destroyed your strongholds.
19 Stand by the way and watch,
O inhabitant of Aroer!
Ask him who flees and her who escapes;
say, ‘What has happened?’
20 Moab is put to shame, for it is broken;
wail and cry!
Tell it beside the Arnon,
that Moab is laid waste.

21 “Judgment has come upon the tableland, upon Holon, and Jahzah, and Mephaath, 22 and Dibon, and Nebo, and Beth-diblathaim, 23 and Kiriathaim, and Beth-gamul, and Beth-meon, 24 and Kerioth, and
Bozrah, and all the cities of the land of Moab, far and near. 25 The horn of Moab is cut off, and his arm is broken, declares the Lord.
26 “Make him drunk, because he magnified himself against the Lord, so that Moab shall wallow in his vomit, and he too shall be held in derision. 27 Was not Israel a derision to you? Was he found among thieves, that whenever you spoke of him you wagged your head?

28 “Leave the cities, and dwell in the rock,
O inhabitants of Moab!
Be like the dove that nests
in the sides of the mouth of a gorge.
29 We have heard of the pride of Moab—
he is very proud—
of his loftiness, his pride, and his arrogance,

and the haughtiness of his heart.
30 I know his insolence, declares the Lord;
his boasts are false,
his deeds are false.
31† Therefore I wail for Moab;
I cry out for all Moab;
for the men of Kir-hareseth I mourn.
32† More than for Jazer I weep for you,
O vine of Sibmah!
Your branches passed over the sea,
reached to the Sea of Jazer;
on your summer fruits and your grapes
the destroyer has fallen.
33 Gladness and joy have been taken away
from the fruitful land of Moab;
I have made the wine cease from the
winepresses;
no one treads them with shouts of joy;
the shouting is not the shout of joy.

34†"From the outcry at Heshbon even to Elealeh, as far as Jahaz they utter their voice, from Zoar to Horonaim and Eglath-shelishiyah. For the waters of Nimrim also have become desolate. 35† And I will bring to an end in Moab, declares the Lord, him who offers sacrifice in the high place and makes offerings to his god. 36† Therefore my heart moans for Moab like a flute, and my heart moans like a flute for the men of Kir-hareseth. Therefore the riches they gained have perished.

37†"For every head is shaved and every beard cut off. On all the hands are gashes, and around the waist is sackcloth. 38† On all the housetops of Moab and in the squares there is nothing but lamentation, for I have broken Moab like a vessel for which no one cares, declares the Lord. 39How it is broken! How they wail! How Moab has turned his back in shame! So Moab has become a derision and a horror to all that are around him."

40† For thus says the Lord:
"Behold, one shall fly swiftly like an eagle

and spread his wings against Moab;
41 the cities shall be taken
and the strongholds seized.
The heart of the warriors of Moab shall be in that day
like the heart of a woman in her birth pains;
42 Moab shall be destroyed and be no longer a people,
because he magnified himself against the Lord.
43 Terror, pit, and snare
are before you, O inhabitant of Moab!
declares the Lord.
44† He who flees from the terror
shall fall into the pit,
and he who climbs out of the pit
shall be caught in the snare.
For I will bring these things upon Moab,
the year of their punishment,
declares the Lord.

45†† “In the shadow of Heshbon
fugitives stop without strength,
for fire came out from Heshbon,
flame from the house of Sihon;
it has destroyed the forehead of Moab,
the crown of the sons of tumult.
46 Woe to you, O Moab!
The people of Chemosh are undone,
for your sons have been taken captive,
and your daughters into captivity.
47† Yet I will restore the fortunes of Moab
in the latter days, declares the Lord.”
Thus far is the judgment on Moab.

Judgment on Ammon

49 [1]†† Concerning the Ammonites.
Thus says the Lord:

"Has Israel no sons?
Has he no heir?
Why then has Milcom dispossessed Gad,
and his people settled in its cities?
[2]† Therefore, behold, the days are coming,
declares the Lord,
when I will cause the battle cry to be heard
against Rabbah of the Ammonites;
it shall become a desolate mound,
and its villages shall be burned with fire;
then Israel shall dispossess those who
dispossessed him,
says the Lord.

[3]† "Wail, O Heshbon, for Ai is laid waste!
Cry out, O daughters of Rabbah!
Put on sackcloth,
lament, and run to and fro among the
hedges!
For Milcom shall go into exile,
with his priests and his officials.
[4] Why do you boast of your valleys,[1]
O faithless daughter,
who trusted in her treasures, saying,
'Who will come against me?'
[5]† Behold, I will bring terror upon you,
declares the Lord God of hosts,
from all who are around you,
and you shall be driven out, every man

straight before him,
with none to gather the fugitives.

6 † "But afterward I will restore the fortunes of the Ammonites, declares the Lord."

Judgment on Edom

7 ††Concerning Edom.
Thus says the Lord of hosts:

"Is wisdom no more in Teman?
Has counsel perished from the prudent?
Has their wisdom vanished?
8 Flee, turn back, dwell in the depths,
O inhabitants of Dedan!
For I will bring the calamity of Esau upon him,
the time when I punish him.
9 If grape-gatherers came to you,
would they not leave gleanings?
If thieves came by night,
would they not destroy only enough for
themselves?
10 But I have stripped Esau bare;
I have uncovered his hiding places,
and he is not able to conceal himself.
His children are destroyed, and his brothers,
and his neighbors; and he is no more.
11 † Leave your fatherless children; I will keep
them alive;
and let your widows trust in me."

12 †For thus says the Lord: "If those who did not deserve to drink the cup must drink it, will you go unpunished? You shall not go unpunished, but you must drink. 13 †For I have sworn by myself, declares the Lord, that Bozrah shall become a horror, a taunt, a waste, and a curse, and all her cities shall be perpetual wastes."

14 † I have heard a message from the Lord,
and an envoy has been sent among the nations:
"Gather yourselves together and come against

her,
and rise up for battle!
15 For behold, I will make you small among the
nations,
despised among mankind.
16† The horror you inspire has deceived you,
and the pride of your heart,
you who live in the clefts of the rock,[2]
who hold the height of the hill.
Though you make your nest as high as the
eagle's,
I will bring you down from there,
declares the LORD.

17"Edom shall become a horror. Everyone who passes by it will be horrified and will hiss because of all its disasters. 18†As when Sodom and Gomorrah and their neighboring cities were overthrown, says the LORD, no man shall dwell there, no man shall sojourn in her. 19†Behold, like a lion coming up from the jungle of the Jordan against a perennial pasture, I will suddenly make him[3] run away from her. And I will appoint over her whomever I choose. For who is like me? Who will summon me? What shepherd can stand before me? 20†Therefore hear the plan that the LORD has made against Edom and the purposes that he has formed against the inhabitants of Teman: Even the little ones of the flock shall be dragged away. Surely their fold shall be appalled at their fate. 21†At the sound of their fall the earth shall tremble; the sound of their cry shall be heard at the Red Sea. 22†Behold, one shall mount up and fly swiftly like an eagle and spread his wings against Bozrah, and the heart of the warriors of Edom shall be in that day like the heart of a woman in her birth pains."

Judgment on Damascus

23 ††Concerning Damascus:

"Hamath and Arpad are confounded,
for they have heard bad news;
they melt in fear,
they are troubled like the sea that cannot be
quiet.
24 Damascus has become feeble, she turned to
flee,
and panic seized her;
anguish and sorrows have taken hold of her,
as of a woman in labor.
25† How is the famous city not forsaken,
the city of my joy?
26 Therefore her young men shall fall in her
squares,
and all her soldiers shall be destroyed in that
day,
declares the Lord of hosts.
27† And I will kindle a fire in the wall of
Damascus,
and it shall devour the strongholds of
Ben-hadad."

Judgment on Kedar and Hazor

28 ‡ † Concerning Kedar and the kingdoms of Hazor that Nebuchadnezzar
king of Babylon struck down.

Thus says the Lord:
"Rise up, advance against Kedar!
Destroy the people of the east!
29 Their tents and their flocks shall be taken,
their curtains and all their goods;
their camels shall be led away from them,
and men shall cry to them: 'Terror on every
side!'
30 Flee, wander far away, dwell in the depths,
O inhabitants of Hazor!
declares the Lord.
For Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon
has made a plan against you
and formed a purpose against you.

31 ‡ "Rise up, advance against a nation at ease,
that dwells securely,
declares the Lord,
that has no gates or bars,
that dwells alone.
32 ‡ Their camels shall become plunder,
their herds of livestock a spoil.
I will scatter to every wind
those who cut the corners of their hair,
and I will bring their calamity
from every side of them,
declares the Lord.
33 ‡ Hazor shall become a haunt of jackals,
an everlasting waste;

no man shall dwell there;
  no man shall sojourn in her.”

Judgment on Elam

34 ‡ ‡ The word of the Lord that came to Jeremiah the prophet concerning
Elam, in the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah.

35 † Thus says the Lord of hosts: “Behold, I will break the bow of Elam,
the mainstay of their might. 36 † And I will bring upon Elam the four winds
from the four quarters of heaven. And I will scatter them to all those winds,
and there shall be no nation to which those driven out of Elam shall not
come. 37 I will terrify Elam before their enemies and before those who seek
their life. I will bring disaster upon them, my fierce anger, declares the
Lord. I will send the sword after them, until I have consumed them, 38 and I
will set my throne in Elam and destroy their king and officials, declares the
Lord.

39 † “But in the latter days I will restore the fortunes of Elam, declares the
Lord.”

Judgment on Babylon

50 [1] The word that the Lord spoke concerning Babylon, concerning
the land of the Chaldeans, by Jeremiah the prophet:

[2] "Declare among the nations and proclaim,
set up a banner and proclaim,
conceal it not, and say:
'Babylon is taken,
Bel is put to shame,
Merodach is dismayed.
Her images are put to shame,
her idols are dismayed.'

[3] "For out of the north a nation has come up against her, which shall make her land a desolation, and none shall dwell in it; both man and beast shall flee away.

[4] "In those days and in that time, declares the Lord, the people of Israel and the people of Judah shall come together, weeping as they come, and they shall seek the Lord their God. [5] They shall ask the way to Zion, with faces turned toward it, saying, 'Come, let us join ourselves to the Lord in an everlasting covenant that will never be forgotten.'

[6] "My people have been lost sheep. Their shepherds have led them astray, turning them away on the mountains. From mountain to hill they have gone. They have forgotten their fold. [7] All who found them have devoured them, and their enemies have said, 'We are not guilty, for they have sinned against the Lord, their habitation of righteousness, the Lord, the hope of their fathers.'

[8] "Flee from the midst of Babylon, and go out of the land of the Chaldeans, and be as male goats before the flock. [9] For behold, I am stirring up and bringing against Babylon a gathering of great nations, from the north country. And they shall array themselves against her. From there

she shall be taken. Their arrows are like a skilled warrior who does not return empty-handed. [10]Chaldea shall be plundered; all who plunder her shall be sated, declares the Lord.

[11]† "Though you rejoice, though you exult,
O plunderers of my heritage,
though you frolic like a heifer in the pasture,
and neigh like stallions,
[12]† your mother shall be utterly shamed,
and she who bore you shall be disgraced.
Behold, she shall be the last of the nations,
a wilderness, a dry land, and a desert.
[13]† Because of the wrath of the Lord she shall not
be inhabited
but shall be an utter desolation;
everyone who passes by Babylon shall be
appalled,
and hiss because of all her wounds.
[14] Set yourselves in array against Babylon all
around,
all you who bend the bow;
shoot at her, spare no arrows,
for she has sinned against the Lord.
[15]† Raise a shout against her all around;
she has surrendered;
her bulwarks have fallen;
her walls are thrown down.
For this is the vengeance of the Lord:
take vengeance on her;
do to her as she has done.
[16] Cut off from Babylon the sower,
and the one who handles the sickle in time
of harvest;
because of the sword of the oppressor,
every one shall turn to his own people,
and every one shall flee to his own land.

17 † “Israel is a hunted sheep driven away by lions. First the king of
Assyria devoured him, and now at last Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon
has gnawed his bones. 18 Therefore, thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of
Israel: Behold, I am bringing punishment on the king of Babylon and his
land, as I punished the king of Assyria. 19 † I will restore Israel to his pasture,
and he shall feed on Carmel and in Bashan, and his desire shall be satisfied
on the hills of Ephraim and in Gilead. 20 † In those days and in that time,
declares the Lord, iniquity shall be sought in Israel, and there shall be none,
and sin in Judah, and none shall be found, for I will pardon those whom I
leave as a remnant.

21 † “Go up against the land of Merathaim,[1]
and against the inhabitants of Pekod.[2]
Kill, and devote them to destruction,[3]
declares the Lord,
and do all that I have commanded you.
22 The noise of battle is in the land,
and great destruction!
23 † How the hammer of the whole earth
is cut down and broken!
How Babylon has become
a horror among the nations!
24 I set a snare for you and you were taken,
O Babylon,
and you did not know it;
you were found and caught,
because you opposed the Lord.
25 † The Lord has opened his armory
and brought out the weapons of his wrath,
for the Lord God of hosts has a work to do
in the land of the Chaldeans.
26 † Come against her from every quarter;
open her granaries;
pile her up like heaps of grain, and devote her
to destruction;
let nothing be left of her.

27 Kill all her bulls;
let them go down to the slaughter.
Woe to them, for their day has come,
the time of their punishment.

28 † "A voice! They flee and escape from the land of Babylon, to declare in Zion the vengeance of the LORD our God, vengeance for his temple.

29 † "Summon archers against Babylon, all those who bend the bow. Encamp around her; let no one escape. Repay her according to her deeds; do to her according to all that she has done. For she has proudly defied the LORD, the Holy One of Israel. 30 † Therefore her young men shall fall in her squares, and all her soldiers shall be destroyed on that day, declares the LORD.

31 "Behold, I am against you, O proud one,
declares the Lord GOD of hosts,
for your day has come,
the time when I will punish you.
32 The proud one shall stumble and fall,
with none to raise him up,
and I will kindle a fire in his cities,
and it will devour all that is around him.

33 "Thus says the LORD of hosts: The people of Israel are oppressed, and the people of Judah with them. All who took them captive have held them fast; they refuse to let them go. 34 † Their Redeemer is strong; the LORD of hosts is his name. He will surely plead their cause, that he may give rest to the earth, but unrest to the inhabitants of Babylon.

35 † "A sword against the Chaldeans, declares the
LORD,
and against the inhabitants of Babylon,
and against her officials and her wise men!
36 A sword against the diviners,
that they may become fools!
A sword against her warriors,

that they may be destroyed!
37 † A sword against her horses and against her
chariots,
and against all the foreign troops in her
midst,
that they may become women!
A sword against all her treasures,
that they may be plundered!
38 † A drought against her waters,
that they may be dried up!
For it is a land of images,
and they are mad over idols.

39 “Therefore wild beasts shall dwell with hyenas in Babylon, and ostriches shall dwell in her. She shall never again have people, nor be inhabited for all generations. 40 † As when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah and their neighboring cities, declares the Lord, so no man shall dwell there, and no son of man shall sojourn in her.

41 † “Behold, a people comes from the north;
a mighty nation and many kings
are stirring from the farthest parts of the
earth.
42 They lay hold of bow and spear;
they are cruel and have no mercy.
The sound of them is like the roaring of the
sea;
they ride on horses,
arrayed as a man for battle
against you, O daughter of Babylon!

43 “The king of Babylon heard the report of them,
and his hands fell helpless;
anguish seized him,
pain as of a woman in labor.

[44]“Behold, like a lion coming up from the thicket of the Jordan against a perennial pasture, I will suddenly make them run away from her, and I will appoint over her whomever I choose. For who is like me? Who will summon me? What shepherd can stand before me? [45]Therefore hear the plan that the Lord has made against Babylon, and the purposes that he has formed against the land of the Chaldeans: Surely the little ones of their flock shall be dragged away; surely their fold shall be appalled at their fate. [46]At the sound of the capture of Babylon the earth shall tremble, and her cry shall be heard among the nations.”

The Utter Destruction of Babylon

51 [1]†Thus says the Lord:

"Behold, I will stir up the spirit of a
destroyer
against Babylon,
against the inhabitants of Leb-kamai,[1]
[2]† and I will send to Babylon winnowers,
and they shall winnow her,
and they shall empty her land,
when they come against her from every side
on the day of trouble.
[3]† Let not the archer bend his bow,
and let him not stand up in his armor.
Spare not her young men;
devote to destruction[2] all her army.
[4] They shall fall down slain in the land of the
Chaldeans,
and wounded in her streets.
[5]† For Israel and Judah have not been forsaken
by their God, the Lord of hosts,
but the land of the Chaldeans[3] is full of guilt
against the Holy One of Israel.

[6]† "Flee from the midst of Babylon;
let every one save his life!
Be not cut off in her punishment,
for this is the time of the Lord's vengeance,
the repayment he is rendering her.
[7]† Babylon was a golden cup in the Lord's
hand,
making all the earth drunken;

the nations drank of her wine;
therefore the nations went mad.
8† Suddenly Babylon has fallen and been broken;
wail for her!
Take balm for her pain;
perhaps she may be healed.
9 We would have healed Babylon,
but she was not healed.
Forsake her, and let us go
each to his own country,
for her judgment has reached up to heaven
and has been lifted up even to the skies.
10† The Lord has brought about our vindication;
come, let us declare in Zion
the work of the Lord our God.

11† "Sharpen the arrows!
Take up the shields!

The Lord has stirred up the spirit of the kings of the Medes, because his purpose concerning Babylon is to destroy it, for that is the vengeance of the Lord, the vengeance for his temple.

12† "Set up a standard against the walls of
Babylon;
make the watch strong;
set up watchmen;
prepare the ambushes;
for the Lord has both planned and done
what he spoke concerning the inhabitants of
Babylon.
13† O you who dwell by many waters,
rich in treasures,
your end has come;
the thread of your life is cut.
14† The Lord of hosts has sworn by himself:

Surely I will fill you with men, as many as
locusts,
and they shall raise the shout of victory over
you.

15 ‡† “It is he who made the earth by his power,
who established the world by his wisdom,
and by his understanding stretched out the
heavens.
16 When he utters his voice there is a tumult of
waters in the heavens,
and he makes the mist rise from the ends of
the earth.
He makes lightning for the rain,
and he brings forth the wind from his
storehouses.
17 Every man is stupid and without knowledge;
every goldsmith is put to shame by his idols,
for his images are false,
and there is no breath in them.
18 They are worthless, a work of delusion;
at the time of their punishment they shall
perish.
19 † Not like these is he who is the portion of Jacob,
for he is the one who formed all things,
and Israel is the tribe of his inheritance;
the Lord of hosts is his name.

20 † “You are my hammer and weapon of war:
with you I break nations in pieces;
with you I destroy kingdoms;
21 with you I break in pieces the horse and his
rider;
with you I break in pieces the chariot and
the charioteer;

22 with you I break in pieces man and woman;
with you I break in pieces the old man and the youth;
with you I break in pieces the young man and the young woman;
23 with you I break in pieces the shepherd and his flock;
with you I break in pieces the farmer and his team;
with you I break in pieces governors and commanders.

24 † "I will repay Babylon and all the inhabitants of Chaldea before your very eyes for all the evil that they have done in Zion, declares the LORD.

25 † "Behold, I am against you, O destroying mountain,
declares the LORD,
which destroys the whole earth;
I will stretch out my hand against you,
and roll you down from the crags,
and make you a burnt mountain.
26 No stone shall be taken from you for a corner
and no stone for a foundation,
but you shall be a perpetual waste,
declares the LORD.

27 † "Set up a standard on the earth;
blow the trumpet among the nations;
prepare the nations for war against her;
summon against her the kingdoms,
Ararat, Minni, and Ashkenaz;
appoint a marshal against her;
bring up horses like bristling locusts.
28 † Prepare the nations for war against her,
the kings of the Medes, with their

governors and deputies,
and every land under their dominion.
29 The land trembles and writhes in pain,
for the Lord's purposes against Babylon stand,
to make the land of Babylon a desolation,
without inhabitant.
30 The warriors of Babylon have ceased fighting;
they remain in their strongholds;
their strength has failed;
they have become women;
her dwellings are on fire;
her bars are broken.
31† One runner runs to meet another,
and one messenger to meet another,
to tell the king of Babylon
that his city is taken on every side;
32 the fords have been seized,
the marshes are burned with fire,
and the soldiers are in panic.
33† For thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of
Israel:
The daughter of Babylon is like a threshing
floor
at the time when it is trodden;
yet a little while
and the time of her harvest will come."

34† "Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon has
devoured me;
he has crushed me;
he has made me an empty vessel;
he has swallowed me like a monster;
he has filled his stomach with my delicacies;
he has rinsed me out.[1]
35 The violence done to me and to my kinsmen

be upon Babylon,”
let the inhabitant of Zion say.
“My blood be upon the inhabitants of Chaldea,”
let Jerusalem say.
36 † Therefore thus says the Lord:
“Behold, I will plead your cause
and take vengeance for you.
I will dry up her sea
and make her fountain dry,
37 and Babylon shall become a heap of ruins,
the haunt of jackals,
a horror and a hissing,
without inhabitant.

38 † “They shall roar together like lions;
they shall growl like lions’ cubs.
39 † While they are inflamed I will prepare them a
feast
and make them drunk, that they may
become merry,
then sleep a perpetual sleep
and not wake, declares the Lord.
40 I will bring them down like lambs to the
slaughter,
like rams and male goats.

41 † “How Babylon[2] is taken,
the praise of the whole earth seized!
How Babylon has become
a horror among the nations!
42 † The sea has come up on Babylon;
she is covered with its tumultuous waves.
43 † Her cities have become a horror,
a land of drought and a desert,
a land in which no one dwells,

and through which no son of man passes.
44† And I will punish Bel in Babylon,
and take out of his mouth what he has
swallowed.
The nations shall no longer flow to him;
the wall of Babylon has fallen.

45 “Go out of the midst of her, my people!
Let every one save his life
from the fierce anger of the Lord!
46† Let not your heart faint, and be not fearful
at the report heard in the land,
when a report comes in one year
and afterward a report in another year,
and violence is in the land,
and ruler is against ruler.

47 “Therefore, behold, the days are coming
when I will punish the images of Babylon;
her whole land shall be put to shame,
and all her slain shall fall in the midst of her.
48† Then the heavens and the earth,
and all that is in them,
shall sing for joy over Babylon,
for the destroyers shall come against them
out of the north,
declares the Lord.
49 Babylon must fall for the slain of Israel,
just as for Babylon have fallen the slain of all
the earth.

50† “You who have escaped from the sword,
go, do not stand still!
Remember the Lord from far away,

and let Jerusalem come into your mind:
51† ‘We are put to shame, for we have heard
reproach;
dishonor has covered our face,
for foreigners have come
into the holy places of the Lord’s house.’

52 “Therefore, behold, the days are coming,
declares the Lord,
when I will execute judgment upon her
images,
and through all her land
the wounded shall groan.
53† Though Babylon should mount up to heaven,
and though she should fortify her strong
height,
yet destroyers would come from me against her,
declares the Lord.

54 “A voice! A cry from Babylon!
The noise of great destruction from the land
of the Chaldeans!
55† For the Lord is laying Babylon waste
and stilling her mighty voice.
Their waves roar like many waters;
the noise of their voice is raised,
56† for a destroyer has come upon her,
upon Babylon;
her warriors are taken;
their bows are broken in pieces,
for the Lord is a God of recompense;
he will surely repay.
57† I will make drunk her officials and her wise men,
her governors, her commanders, and her
warriors;

they shall sleep a perpetual sleep and not wake,
declares the King, whose name is the Lord
of hosts.

58† "Thus says the Lord of hosts:
The broad wall of Babylon
shall be leveled to the ground,
and her high gates
shall be burned with fire.
The peoples labor for nothing,
and the nations weary themselves only for
fire."

59†† The word that Jeremiah the prophet commanded Seraiah the son of Neriah, son of Mahseiah, when he went with Zedekiah king of Judah to Babylon, in the fourth year of his reign. Seraiah was the quartermaster. 60† Jeremiah wrote in a book all the disaster that should come upon Babylon, all these words that are written concerning Babylon. 61 And Jeremiah said to Seraiah: "When you come to Babylon, see that you read all these words, 62 and say, 'O Lord, you have said concerning this place that you will cut it off, so that nothing shall dwell in it, neither man nor beast, and it shall be desolate forever.' 63 When you finish reading this book, tie a stone to it and cast it into the midst of the Euphrates, 64 and say, 'Thus shall Babylon sink, to rise no more, because of the disaster that I am bringing upon her, and they shall become exhausted.'"

Thus far are the words of Jeremiah.

The Fall of Jerusalem Recounted

52 [1]‡‡Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he became king; and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Hamutal the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. [2]And he did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, according to all that Jehoiakim had done. [3]For because of the anger of the Lord things came to the point in Jerusalem and Judah that he cast them out from his presence.

And Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon. [4]And in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, on the tenth day of the month, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came with all his army against Jerusalem, and laid siege to it. And they built siegeworks all around it. [5]So the city was besieged till the eleventh year of King Zedekiah. [6]On the ninth day of the fourth month the famine was so severe in the city that there was no food for the people of the land. [7]Then a breach was made in the city, and all the men of war fled and went out from the city by night by the way of a gate between the two walls, by the king's garden, while the Chaldeans were around the city. And they went in the direction of the Arabah. [8]But the army of the Chaldeans pursued the king and overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho. And all his army was scattered from him. [9]Then they captured the king and brought him up to the king of Babylon at Riblah in the land of Hamath, and he passed sentence on him. [10]The king of Babylon slaughtered the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and also slaughtered all the officials of Judah at Riblah. [11]He put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him in chains, and the king of Babylon took him to Babylon, and put him in prison till the day of his death.

The Temple Burned

12 † In the fifth month, on the tenth day of the month—that was the
nineteenth year of King Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon—Nebuzaradan
the captain of the bodyguard, who served the king of Babylon, entered
Jerusalem. 13 And he burned the house of the Lord, and the king's house and
all the houses of Jerusalem; every great house he burned down. 14 And all
the army of the Chaldeans, who were with the captain of the guard, broke
down all the walls around Jerusalem. 15 And Nebuzaradan the captain of the
guard carried away captive some of the poorest of the people and the rest of
the people who were left in the city and the deserters who had deserted to
the king of Babylon, together with the rest of the artisans. 16 But
Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard left some of the poorest of the land to
be vinedressers and plowmen.

17 And the pillars of bronze that were in the house of the Lord, and the
stands and the bronze sea that were in the house of the Lord, the Chaldeans
broke in pieces, and carried all the bronze to Babylon. 18 And they took
away the pots and the shovels and the snuffers and the basins and the dishes
for incense and all the vessels of bronze used in the temple service; 19 also
the small bowls and the fire pans and the basins and the pots and the
lampstands and the dishes for incense and the bowls for drink offerings.
What was of gold the captain of the guard took away as gold, and what was
of silver, as silver. 20 As for the two pillars, the one sea, the twelve bronze
bulls that were under the sea,[1] and the stands, which Solomon the king had
made for the house of the Lord, the bronze of all these things was beyond
weight. 21 As for the pillars, the height of the one pillar was eighteen cubits,
[2] its circumference was twelve cubits, and its thickness was four fingers,
and it was hollow. 22 On it was a capital of bronze. The height of the one
capital was five cubits. A network and pomegranates, all of bronze, were
around the capital. And the second pillar had the same, with pomegranates.
23 There were ninety-six pomegranates on the sides; all the pomegranates
were a hundred upon the network all around.

The People Exiled to Babylon

[24] ‡ † And the captain of the guard took Seraiah the chief priest, and Zephaniah the second priest, and the three keepers of the threshold; [25]and from the city he took an officer who had been in command of the men of war, and seven men of the king's council, who were found in the city; and the secretary of the commander of the army who mustered the people of the land; and sixty men of the people of the land, who were found in the midst of the city. [26]And Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard took them and brought them to the king of Babylon at Riblah. [27]And the king of Babylon struck them down, and put them to death at Riblah in the land of Hamath. So Judah was taken into exile out of its land.

[28] † This is the number of the people whom Nebuchadnezzar carried away captive: in the seventh year, 3,023 Judeans; [29]in the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar he carried away captive from Jerusalem 832 persons; [30] † in the twenty-third year of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carried away captive of the Judeans 745 persons; all the persons were 4,600.

Jehoiachin Released from Prison

31 And in the thirty-seventh year of the exile of Jehoiachin king of Judah,
in the twelfth month, on the twenty-fifth day of the month, Evil-merodach
king of Babylon, in the year that he became king, graciously freed[3]
Jehoiachin king of Judah and brought him out of prison. 32 And he spoke
kindly to him, and gave him a seat above the seats of the kings who were
with him in Babylon. 33 So Jehoiachin put off his prison garments. And
every day of his life he dined regularly at the king's table, 34 and for his
allowance, a regular allowance was given him by the king according to his
daily need, until the day of his death, as long as he lived.

Jeremiah

OVERVIEW

Author
Jeremiah the prophet with his scribe, Baruch

Date
628–c 580 BC

Places
Anathoth; Judah; Jerusalem; Egypt; Tahpanhes; Assyria; the Lord's house (temple); Topheth (Valley of the Son of Hinnom); Ammon; Edom; Moab; Babylon; the court of the guard

People
Jeremiah; Baruch; people of Israel and Judah; Zedekiah; Jehoiakim; false prophets; men of Anathoth; Nebuchadnezzar; Coniah (Jeconiah); the righteous Branch; Gedaliah; Nebuzaradan; Ishmael; Johanan

Purpose
To call Judah to repentance, announce the Babylonian exile, and prophesy the new covenant

Law Themes
The nations plucked up, broken down, destroyed, and overthrown; punishment of Judah by sword, famine, and pestilence; faithless shepherds; turn in repentance; forsaking the Lord and His covenant; idolatry; Judah cursed like Sodom

Gospel Themes
The nations built and planted; healing; the Lord will relent; the remnant will return; a righteous Branch to sit on David's throne; new covenant, new hearts; God's steadfast love and mercy; judgment of nations

Memory Verses

Broken cisterns (2:11–13); amend your ways (7:3); a proper boast (9:23–24); delight in the Word (15:15–21); the Lord tests the heart (17:5–10); the potter and the clay (18:6–11); the new covenant (31:31–34)

Introduction to Jeremiah

Reading Jeremiah

His wide eyes grope for light, yet they remain full of darkness. Numbness nibbles his toes and fingers. It creeps through his bones, causing them to quake. He thinks, “We have turned back too late. The way to freedom is too far.” So desperation gives way to utter despair. And then, piercing the darkness, comes one pure, clear beam of the brightest light.

Reading Jeremiah is like entering the cavernous darkness of another person’s frustration and despair (cf 4:22–26). The Lord calls Jeremiah—the “iron” prophet (1:18)—to preach a hapless message of repentance to the stony hearts of sinful Judah. Jeremiah pours out his strength in the task, hammering the people with prophecy after prophecy, firing them with repeated warnings of judgment (23:29). The result is one of the longest compositions in the Bible (52 chapters), most of which is pure rebuke or calls for the people to turn from their sin. Yet at the heart of Jeremiah,

shining brightly as a ray of light through the darkness, appears the aptly named “book of comfort” (chs 30–33), one of the brightest OT prophecies of everlasting salvation. Indeed, people in Jesus’ day even identified Jesus with Jeremiah (Mt 16:13–14).

Luther on Jeremiah

Few comments are needed for an understanding of the prophet Jeremiah, if one will only pay attention to the events that took place under the kings in whose time he preached. For his preaching had reference to the condition of the land at that time.

In the first place the land was full of vices and idolatry. The people slew the prophets and would have their own vices and idolatry go unrebuked. Therefore the first part, down to the twentieth chapter, is almost entirely rebuke and complaint of the wickedness of the Jews.

In the second place Jeremiah also foretold the punishment that was at hand, namely, the destruction of Jerusalem and of the whole land, and the Babylonian captivity, indeed the punishment of all nations as well. Yet, along with this, he gives comfort and promises that at a definite time, after the punishment is over, they shall be released and shall return to their land and to Jerusalem, etc. And this is the most important thing in Jeremiah. It was for this very thing that Jeremiah was raised up, as is indicated in the first chapter [1:11, 18], by the vision of the rod and the boiling pots coming from the north.

And this was highly necessary; for since this cruel hardship was to come upon the people, and they were to be uprooted and carried away out of their land, many pious souls—such as Daniel [Dan. 9:2] and others—would have been driven to despair of God and his promises. For they would not have been able to think otherwise than that it was all over with them, that they were utterly cast off by God, and that no Christ would ever come, but that God, in great anger, had taken back his promises because of the people's sin.

Therefore Jeremiah had to be there and proclaim the punishment and the wrath, telling the people that it would not last forever, but for a fixed time, such as seventy years [25:11–12; 29:10], and that afterward they would come into grace once again. With this promise he had also to comfort and sustain himself, or he would have had little consolation and happiness. For he was a sad and troubled prophet and lived in miserably evil days. Besides he had a peculiarly difficult ministry. For over forty years, down to the captivity, he had to say hard things to obstinately wicked people. Still it did little good. He had to look on

while the people went from bad to worse, always wanting to kill him, and putting him to much hardship.

On top of that he had to experience and see with his own eyes how the land was destroyed and the people carried away captive, amid great misery and bloodshed. Nor does this include what he had afterward to preach and suffer in Egypt, for it is believed that he was stoned to death by the Jews in Egypt.

In the third place like the other prophets, Jeremiah too prophesies of Christ and his kingdom, especially in the twenty-third and thirty-first chapters [23:5–6; 31:31–34]. There he clearly prophesies of the person of Christ, of his kingdom, of the new testament, and of the end of the old testament.

Now these three things do not follow one another in sequence; they are not separated from one another in the book in the way that they actually came along. Frequently in the first part there is something in a later chapter which really took place before that which is spoken of in an earlier chapter. So it seems as though Jeremiah did not compose these books himself, but that the parts were taken piecemeal from his utterances and written into a book. For this reason one must not worry about the order or be hindered by the lack of it.

We learn from Jeremiah among others that, as usual, the nearer the punishment, the worse the people become; and that the more one preaches to them, the more they despise his preaching. Thus we understand that when it is God's will to inflict punishment, he makes the people to become hardened so they may be destroyed without any mercy and not appease God's wrath with any repentance. So the men of Sodom long ago had to not only despise the righteous Lot, but even afflict him because he taught them—even though their own affliction was at the door [Gen. 19:1–13]. Likewise Pharaoh, when about to be drowned in the Red Sea, had to oppress the children of Israel twice as much as before [Exod. 5:6–21]. And Jerusalem had to crucify God's Son when its own final destruction was on the way.

So it goes everywhere even now. Now that the end of the world is approaching, the people rage and rave most horribly against God. They blaspheme and damn God's word, though they well know that it is God's word and the truth. Besides so many fearful signs and wonders are appearing, both in the heavens and among all creatures, which

threaten them terribly. It is indeed a wicked and miserable time, even worse than that of Jeremiah.

But so it will be, and must be. The people begin to feel secure and sing, “Peace; all is well.” They simply persecute everything that accords with the will of God and disregard all the threatening signs, until (as St. Paul says [I Thess. 5:8]) destruction suddenly surprises them and destroys them before they know it.

But Christ will be able to sustain his own, for whose sake he causes his word to shine forth in this shameful time of ours, just as at Babylon he sustained Daniel and those like him, for whose sake Jeremiah’s prophecy had to shine forth. To the same dear Lord be praise and thanks, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God over all and to eternity. Amen. (AE 35:279–82)

Challenges for Readers

Order and Chronology. As Luther notes above, Jeremiah is not written in a strict chronological order. His prophecies span three decades (25:3) and are presented in collections, or "books." To assist the reader, the notes include frequent mention of specific dates whenever possible. For more on the historical setting of Jeremiah's work, see note, ch 46, about Egypt and Babylon.

Repetition. Though Jeremiah speaks in many unique and surprising ways, he also often repeats favorite expressions, even saying the same thing word for word. This is simply an element of his style. Perhaps it is also a result of the way his prophecies were recorded, as he likely dictated them to his scribe, Baruch. (See notes, 32:10, 12. On crafting Hebrew poetry, see pp 777–78.) One may also note that ch 52 is essentially a quotation of 2Ki 24:18–25:21, 27–30, which was appended to demonstrate the fulfillment of Jeremiah's prophecies.

Numerous Persons. Jeremiah and/or his scribe, Baruch, took special interest in the names and offices of the people with whom they interacted. Several lists of persons are found in the Book, and these lists include many common names. This may cause confusion. The notes provide some commentary on individuals where further information is known.

State of the LXX Text. The Greek translation of Jeremiah is significantly shorter and does not represent c 2,700 words that appear in the traditional Hebrew text. This fact has puzzled interpreters since the second century. Also, the LXX text does not have the same order as the traditional Hebrew text. In particular, Jeremiah's oracles about the nations (chs 46–51) appear after 25:13 ("Jeremiah prophesied against all the nations") and have this order:

LXX Order: **Elam**
Traditional Hebrew Order (ESV): Egypt; 46:2–28
LXX Order: **Egypt**
Traditional Hebrew Order (ESV): Philistia; ch 47
LXX Order: **Babylon**
Traditional Hebrew Order (ESV): Moab; ch 48
LXX Order: **Philistia**
Traditional Hebrew Order (ESV): Ammon; 49:1–6

LXX Order: **Edom**
Traditional Hebrew Order (ESV): Edom; 49:7–22
LXX Order: **Ammon**
Traditional Hebrew Order (ESV): Damascus; 49:23–27
LXX Order: **Kedar**
Traditional Hebrew Order (ESV): Kedar and Hazor; 49:28–33
LXX Order: **Damascus**
Traditional Hebrew Order (ESV): Elam; 49:34–39
LXX Order: **Moab**
Traditional Hebrew Order (ESV): Babylon; chs 50–51

Fragments of a Hebrew manuscript discovered at Qumran (4QJer[b]) show that the LXX version of the text may be based on a shorter Hebrew edition (fragments of the traditional Hebrew text [4QJer[a]] were also discovered in the same cave). Jerome provided the earliest and perhaps best explanation for these differences when he proposed that the Book was shortened because of its repetitious nature. Modern commentators have noted that the LXX version drops commonly repeated phrases (e.g., "Thus says the LORD," dropped 64 times); "LORD of hosts, the God of Israel" is usually shortened to "LORD"; fathers' and grandfathers' names are dropped from descriptions of persons; and proper nouns are often replaced with pronouns. All these changes badly affect the Hebrew poetry, suggesting that the shorter version is the later edition. For these reasons, interpreters continue to prefer the traditional Hebrew text.

The Prophets and Liberal Protestantism. At the close of the nineteenth century, some Protestant interpreters of the Bible gave special attention to the prophets, regarding them as the essence of biblical faith. These interpreters set up a false contrast between an established, spiritually dead priestly religion in Israel and renewed ethical religion that the prophets preached. Jeremiah's passion and civil disobedience drew special attention. He became the model prophet, an example of true preaching and "social justice." These ideas and emphases still find expression in marches and rallies, which too often encourage violence. However, thoughtful readers should note that Jeremiah and the other prophets did not call for the destruction of the temple or the end of the priesthood but prophesied God's wrath against people's sins and called them to repentance (cf 2:8). For the prophets, reform and justice were never merely social—based on a society's ethics. They were matters of sin, repentance, and justification before God.

True prophets such as Jeremiah were often members of priestly families. They preached faithfulness to the Lord's teachings as embodied in the Books of Moses and in no way should be considered leaders of an antiestablishment movement or models for violent protests. For more on these interpretive issues, see p 5.

Doom and Hope. Judgment and lamentation are the constant themes of Jeremiah. This can make the Book unpleasant for some readers. However, consider how these dark themes are important to Jeremiah's writing strategy. Jeremiah may have written or arranged his Book to intensify the contrast between prevailing gloom in chs 1–29, 34–52, and the light of hope in chs 30–33. Known as the "book of comfort," these central chapters record beautiful and powerful Gospel prophecies that burn all the brighter amid the surrounding darkness of the other prophecies. In this way, Jeremiah highlights his most important message: God promises restoration and a new covenant in the coming Davidic King, the "righteous Branch" (33:15). This prophecy is fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

Blessings for Readers

As you read Jeremiah's prophecies, gain new appreciation for the importance of daily repentance and devotion. In Jeremiah's day, the people of Judah strayed because they neglected God's Word until they forgot what true faith and worship were. Jeremiah, the "iron" prophet, withstood the worst conditions because God's Word burned like fire within him (20:9) and continually guided his faith and life. Patient Jeremiah stands for us as an enduring example of faithfulness to the Lord amid all trials.

Recognize that no matter what troubles assail you, your faithful God stands with you (1:8). The heart of Jeremiah's message is that the Lord always has our everlasting salvation in view. God fulfilled Jeremiah's prophecies of the new covenant (31:31–34) in the life, death, and resurrection of His Son, Jesus Christ, who welcomes us into His kingdom and gives to us the new testament in His blood.

OUTLINE

I. The Call of the Prophet (ch 1)
II. Warnings and Exhortations to Judah (chs 2–35)
  A. Earliest Prophecies (chs 2–6)
  B. The Temple Message (chs 7–10)
  C. Covenant and Conspiracy (chs 11–13)
  D. The Drought (chs 14–15)
  E. Disaster and Comfort (16:1–17:18)
  F. The Sabbath and Israel's Identity (17:19–27)
  G. The Potter and Israel (chs 18–20)
  H. Condemnation of Kings, Prophets, and People (chs 21–24)
  I. Foretelling the Babylonian Exile (chs 25–29)
  J. Promises of Restoration and the New Covenant (chs 30–33)
  K. Historical Appendix (chs 34–35)
III. Suffering and Persecution of the Prophet (chs 36–38)
  A. Burning of Jeremiah's Scroll (ch 36)
  B. Imprisoning of Jeremiah (chs 37–38)
IV. The Fall of Jerusalem and Related Events (chs 39–45)
  A. The Fall of Jerusalem (ch 39)

B. Gedaliah and Jeremiah (chs 40–41)
C. Jeremiah, Baruch, and Egypt (chs 42–45)
V. Judgment against the Nations (chs 46–51)
VI. Historical Appendix (ch 52)

Articles and Resources Related to Jeremiah

- Witnessing to the Weary
- Proclaiming the Word in Every Way
- Old Testament Names for God
- Prophecies about the Coming Messiah
- Prophetic Perspective
- Postures and Gestures
- The LORD of Hosts

Witnessing to the Weary

To assure that the biblical message spoken by believers will not fall on deaf ears, witnesses to the Gospel must also pay attention to the needs and perceptions of the hearers…. God's people must first consider the situation of those who remain outside the church….

How can such people be brought to hear the Gospel? The Gospel will seem to be a foreign concept of empty words if it is spoken "from above" or "from outside," from the perspective of a safe and comfortable prosperity. That is why the "hit and run" evangelism … for only brief visits has done little to cultivate faith in those outside the church, even if their presence has been an encouragement to Christians in these lands. As Jesus joined humankind in human flesh, we Christians must join the exhausted in their need and weariness….

For He comes as the One promised to bring justice to victory and hope to the nations, the one who will not break a bruised reed or quench a smoldering wick (Matt. 12:20–21, Isa. 42:3). He is the one who invites, "Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:29). He has brought to its completion God's assurance that he will satisfy the weary and replenish all who are faithful (Jer. 31:25). For he is the one who has shared suffering and death with humankind. Much more, he has carried the worst of human burdens and individual sinfulness into the tomb, and he has come forth to restore the lives of all by declaring "Your sins are forgiven." To those whose lives are tiring and burdensome, Christians speak of the One who has relieved life of all negatives through his own suffering and resurrection. This miracle of new life in Jesus Christ stands at the heart of witnessing to the weary."

Guntis Kalme, "Conversion in a Post-Soviet Society," *Missio Apostolica 7*, no. 2 (November 1999): 74–76.

Proclaiming the Word in Every Way

Both preachers and laypeople seem to debate constantly about what makes a "good" sermon. For example, many laypeople appreciate sermons filled with illustrations or even based on an object lesson. Some preachers rejoice to adopt this style. Yet others express concern that God's Word might be obscured by such preaching. They prefer to deliver the Word without so many "props."

When you study the preaching of the prophets, you see a variety of styles and approaches. The prophets seem less concerned about preaching style than they do about truth and effective communication. This article will explore some of the ways the prophets proclaimed God's Word and will reflect on how preachers communicate today.

Declaration

Perhaps the most common way the prophets preached was through a direct announcement of God's will (judgment or salvation). Such declarations are usually introduced or concluded by the saying "declares the LORD," which occurs almost exclusively in the writings of the Old Testament prophets. For example, Jeremiah uses this expression 167 times! Other common expressions include "hear the word of the LORD," "the LORD says," "I have sworn," and "the LORD said to me." See "Thus says the LORD," p 1080. Each of these expressions emphasizes the true nature of prophecy: it is the voice of God.

Preachers who cannot say "the LORD says" should stay out of the pulpit. From the prophets to the apostles to our pastors today, God calls preachers to speak for Him. They announce God's will.

Poetry or Song

The writings of the prophets are loaded with poetry. Though the prophets "preached" as we understand that activity today, they also frequently delivered God's Word through song or in connection with music (1Sm 10:5–7; 2Ki 3:15; 1Ch 25:1). Simply start flipping pages throughout the Prophetic Books. Take note of how much text the translators have laid out as poetic verse rather than as typical paragraphs.

What we call choir music and congregational singing may have been regarded by the ancient Israelites as prophecy! (See note, 1Ch 25:1.) If you have thought of choir music or solos at church as "entertainment," think again. God desires to speak to His people through the songs they sing (Eph 5:19a). Choose music and songs with the understanding that the singers will voice the very Word of God.

Parables and Stories

The parable was the favorite preaching device of Jesus, but He was not the first to use it. Although parables and symbolism seem to have been more popular toward the end of the Old Testament era, the first biblical parable occurs in Jgs 9:7–15, where Jotham uses the example of different trees to show the people their sin.

Parables appear throughout the ministry of the prophets. For example, when the prophet Nathan confronted King David about his adultery with Bathsheba and the murder of Uriah, Nathan told a parable in order to drive home his point (2 Sm 12:1–7). Isaiah's song of the vineyard is like a parable set to music (Is 5:1–7). Ezekiel was especially fond of parables, telling stories about a useless vine (Ezk 15), an abandoned child (16:1–22), a cedar and a vine carried by eagles (17:1–10), Israel as a lioness (19:1–9), and Israel as a vine (19:10–14).

Jesus told as many as 55 parables (depending on how you count), but He also used current events to illustrate His teaching. For example, in Lk 13:1–5, Jesus reminded the crowd of a group of Galileans who had been executed by Pilate and of the fall of a tower in Siloam. He contrasted the ministry of John the Baptist with the service of God's people in the New Testament (Mt 11:11). He used the experiences of the prophets themselves to illustrate the difficulties faced by believers (Mt 5:11–12).

Of course, one must use stories discriminately. They should help teach the message and not obscure it. But preachers today should not shy away from using stories and illustrations. The prophets, inspired by the Spirit, frequently told stories in order to teach people God's Word.

Action Prophecies

Perhaps the most controversial preaching device today is the object lesson. But this, too, you will find throughout the preaching of the prophets. Although Moses and the early kingdom prophets used objects or actions to illustrate their teaching (Ex 7:19–20; 1Sm 15:27–28; 1Ki 11:29–31; 2Ki 13:15–19), Ezekiel and Jeremiah used them most frequently (Ezk 4:1–13; 5:1–4, 12; 12:1–16; Jer 13:1–11; 18:1–10; 19:1–13; 24:1–10). A prophet might break pottery, create a model, or even shave his head in order to make a point! Isaiah and Micah stripped away their garments and sandals to warn people of God's coming judgment (Is 20:1–4; Mi 1:8). Jesus also used object lessons to teach His disciples (Mk 11:12–14, 20–25; 13:1–2; Lk 9:46–48; 20:20–26; Jn 13:3–17) and to teach strangers (Jn 4:7–14).

Preachers must use object lessons with care. For example, educators warn that small children have difficulty understanding abstract associations (e.g., God's love is like a toaster because it makes me feel all warm and toasty). However, sound object lessons can effectively teach teens and adults. Our Creator invites us to consider the objects He made and use them to learn about Him (Ps 8).

Good Preaching

As you study the prophets, grow in appreciation for the many ways they proclaimed God's Word. God did not restrict them to one way of communicating. He allowed them to use a variety of ways to communicate His truth. Preaching serves best when it faithfully focuses on Jesus Christ and salvation through Him. According to Jesus, that was the point of the prophets throughout their ministry (Jn 5:39).

When you hear a good message that clearly proclaims God's Law and the Gospel of Jesus Christ, praise Him for blessing you through the talents of the preacher. Spend less time focused on what is the "right way" to preach, and instead listen intently for the blessings and encouragement God wants to give you. Offer thanks to Him through Jesus Christ, your Savior, the Word of God made flesh for your salvation.

Old Testament Names for God

Here are explanations of frequent or more significant names for God in the Old Testament. As you read these, get to know your Lord better so that you may call on His name with all confidence.

Two Hebrew words are typically translated as "name": (1) *shem*, which may come from a root meaning "mark" or "brand," and (2) *zeker*, "remembrance," "memorial" (Ex 3:15). For the Israelites, a name held who or what a person was (cf 1Sm 25:25). Naming someone expressed ownership or relationship. A name equaled one's reputation (see note, Ex 20:7; see also "for Your name's sake," p 842).

Almighty. Hbr *shaddai*. Not well understood. The tradition of translating it as "almighty" comes from the LXX. It often appears in passages about blessing and fruitfulness (e.g., Gn) as well as in passages about God's power to destroy or judge (e.g., Jb). God identified Himself to Abram by this name (Gn 17:1; cf Ex 6:3).

angel of the LORD. Hbr *mal'ak yahweh*, "messenger of Yahweh." Used 63 times. Generally, an angel is a created being who speaks for the Lord. But in many OT settings, "the angel of the LORD" and "the LORD" are used interchangeably (e.g., Gn 16:7–13; 21:17–20; 22:11–12, 15–18; 31:11–13; Ex 3:2–6). This signals an appearance of God's Son before His incarnation (cf Jn 1:1). See p 39.

Anointed. Hbr *mashiach*, a chosen person, distinguished by anointing with oil (see note, 1Sm 10:1). Prophets and even Cyrus, king of Persia, were titled this way (1Ch 16:22; Is 45:1). However, the title is most commonly used of kings Saul and David in 1Sm and 2Sm. Before Saul and David were chosen as kings, Hannah prayed that the Lord would rule the earth through "His anointed" (1Sm 2:10), a prophecy about the Savior from David's line (Ps 2:2; 45:7; Is 61:1; Dn 9:25–26). See "Christ," p 2098.

Father. Moses anticipates such a title (Dt 32:6), but it appears only later (Ps 68:5; 89:26; Is 63:16; 64:8; Jer 3:4, 19; Mal 2:10).

glory of the LORD. A theophany of God's presence, esp the pillars of cloud and fire (see note, Ex 13:21) and a human appearance in Ezekiel's visions (see note, Ezk 1:28). Also, "glory of the God of Israel" (Ezk) and "Glory of Israel" (1Sm 15:29). See p 39.

God. Translated from three Hbr terms. (1) *'elohim* appears c 2,550 times. It is the first and most commonly used word for God in the OT (cf Gn 1:1). References to the true God always take singular verbs, even though *'elohim* is a plural noun. This grammar may signal God's unique majesty and trinitarian character. See note, Gn 1:26. The Hbr term is occasionally used of men, such as judges (Ex 4:16; Ps 82:6). This may signal that Israelites understood *'elohim* to describe God's authority. (2) *'el* appears c 400 times, an ancient word for God appearing in every Semitic language except Ethiopic. It is esp common in Jb, appearing there more often than the other terms for God. See note, Jsh 3:10. (3) *'eloah* appears c 400 times. It is similar in spelling to the common Aram word for God. (Some have regarded *'eloah* as a singular form of Hbr *'elohim*, but this is not proven.) The term appears frequently in older poetry (cf Dt 32:15, 17; Jb uses it 41 times). Uses of *'eloah* outside of Jb associate the name with God's ability to defend His people.

God Most High. See *Most High*.

God of heaven. Most commonly used at the time of exile.

God of hosts. See p 1291.

God of Israel. Common title emphasizing God's covenant bond with Abraham's descendants through the chosen seed, Jacob (Gn 32:28; 35:10). See *Holy One of Israel*.

Holy One of Israel. Used 26 times in Is and only a few times elsewhere. Holiness includes all attributes of perfection that distinguish God from His creatures (see "holy," p 7). Yet, He condescended to enter a covenant relationship with Israel, His chosen servant for salvation. When Israel fell into sin, they had to fear God's holy wrath. See *God of Israel* and *Spirit*.

King. Hbr *melech*. See pp 1565–66.

living God. See notes, Jsh 3:10; Mt 16:16.

Lord. Hbr *'adonai*, used c 340 times. Plural form is used for God; singular forms (e.g., Hbr *'adon*) may also be used for God (cf Ex 34:23). On substituting this term for "Yahweh," see next entry.

Lord. God's personal name (see notes, Ex 3:14–15), presented in the ESV text as "Lord" in capital letters. It is a translation of the Hbr words *yahweh* and *yah*. *Yahweh* is used more than 6,820 times and is the most common referent for God in the Bible. Though God instructs His people to call on Him using His personal name (Ex 3:15; Ps 105:1), and doing so is presented as a sign of faith (Ps 116:13; Zep 3:9; Zec 13:9), traditions of not

saying "Yahweh" arose in Jewish circles during the intertestamental period. Apparently, people feared to speak this name because they feared breaking the Second Commandment (Ex 20:7). Jewish writers used the euphemism "the Lord" (Hbr *'adonai*) in place of God's personal name. Early Christians picked up this practice. *Yah* is an abbreviated form of *Yahweh*, appearing sometimes by itself but most often as a syllable in other names and terms (e.g., Jerem*iah*, Hallelu*iah*).

Lord God. Hbr *yahweh 'elohim* (see entries above). Generally, OT authors use one or the other term, but 385 times they are used in combination ("Yahweh God," or perhaps "the God Yahweh"). Ezk uses this combination the most (217 times). In Gn 2–3, this combination is used 20 times and a few times thereafter (cf Gn 15:2). See p 3.

Lord of hosts. See p 1291.

Mighty One. Hbr *'abbir*, from Semitic root meaning "be strong." Appears only in poetic passages (cf Gn 49:24).

Most High. Hbr *'elyon*. Used four times in Gn 14:17–22 and c 40 times elsewhere (often in Ps and Dn). God is so far above us we cannot begin to comprehend Him.

Redeemer. See note, Jb 19:25.

Rock. Hbr *tsur*. Appears five times in the Song of Moses (Dt 32:4, 15, 18, 30, 31); common in Ps. See p 843.

Spirit. Hbr *ruach*; lit, "breath, wind." Describes the life force in or from a being. The Spirit of God the Lord is titled the "Holy Spirit" (Ps 51:11; Is 63:10–11). He is an agent of creation (Gn 1:2; Jb 26:13), providence (Jb 33:4; Ps 104:30), new birth/life (Ezk 11:19; 36:26–27), inspiration and anointing for service (Nu 11). In other words, God's Spirit does God's works and has God's attributes. These OT descriptions anticipate the NT revelation of the Trinity (see notes, Is 11:2–4; 48:16). See also pp 1815, 1876, 1920.

Prophecies about the Coming Messiah

The Old Testament repeatedly prophesies the coming of a deliverer who would save and redeem God's people. Ps 2:2 and Dn 9:25–26 refer to Him as the Anointed One, or Messiah, which was translated "Christ" in the LXX and the New Testament (cf Ac 4:25–26; see p 2098). Jesus described Himself as fulfilling such prophecies, and His disciples took special note of numerous fulfillments in Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. The charts here present examples of messianic prophecies and the fulfillments in Jesus' life. (These charts were adapted from *The Books of the Old Testament* [St. Louis: Concordia, 1977], 128–29.)

Further prophecies of a kingly Messiah: Ps 2:6–8; 118:22; Is 9:6; 32:1–3; 42:1–4; Jer 23:5; Dn 2:44; 7:13–14; Zec 6:12–13; 9:10; Mal 3:1.

Further prophecies of a suffering Messiah: Is 52:14; 53:1–10; Dn 9:26; Zec 13:7.

The Importance of Prophecies

Early Christian writers devoted special attention to prophecies about the Messiah. For example, Justin recounted many of these passages as he shared the Gospel with Trypho, a Jew (*ANF* 1:194–270). Early Church historian Eusebius of Caesarea devoted even greater attention to these prophecies in two important works: *Preparation for the Gospel* and *Demonstration of the Gospel*.

For a more complete list and survey of such messianic prophecies, see the monumental classic *Christology of the Old Testament* by E. W. Hengstenberg (1802–69). Hengstenberg, a professor of theology in Berlin and a devoted Lutheran interpreter of the Bible, wrote over a thousand pages of commentary on the messianic prophecies. See pp xlv–xlvii.

Focus on Christ, Our Deliverer

Some modern theologians questioned whether the messianic prophecies were truly central to the faith taught in the Old Testament or even to Christianity. They preferred to emphasize ethics or national interests as keys to understanding Old Testament Scripture. Hengstenberg replied:

> When we observe that the Messianic announcements, [1] which are peculiar to Israel alone, [2] have their origin in the primeval age, [3] that for many successive centuries they continue to reappear again and again, [4] that they do not occur merely incidentally and in an isolated form, in the midst of other prophecies, but constitute the very centre and soul of all prophecy, [5] that they stand out in great prominence even in the Psalms, in which utterance is given to the living faith of the people of God, under the quickening influence of the law and the prophets, we cannot for a moment doubt, that to the people of the ancient covenant the anticipation of a Messiah must have been one of all-absorbing importance. (*Christology of the Old Testament and a Commentary on the Messianic Predictions*, vol. 4 [Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1856–58], 259)

Indeed, when Jesus taught His disciples about daily prayer, He made "deliver us from evil" the capstone of daily devotion (Mt 6:13). Jesus summarized His mission by declaring that He "came … to give His life as a ransom for many" (Mk 10:45). Hengstenberg noted that even this truth was anticipated and held by the rabbis, as their writings show. He wrote:

> The doctrine of a suffering and atoning Messiah existed among the Jews from the very earliest times…. After the destruction of the temple had deprived the Jews of their apparent sufficiency, their attention was more closely directed to the Messiah…. The sacrificial worship, even while it lasted, could never satisfy the longings for redemption, which were felt by the more earnest minds; and we have already seen, that they were looking with eagerness for the higher satisfaction, which the Old Testament promises set before them. (1337)

Prophetic Perspective

Figuring out prophetic passages of Scripture can be quite confusing. A major problem is that we would like the Bible to read like an encyclopedia or a popular novel. It does not. One helpful way to understand some difficult prophetic passages is the following.

Often, the writers of Scripture present the workings of God like pictures of a landscape. In a landscape picture, you might have some people in the foreground, some animals grazing off in the distance, and a huge mountain looming in the background. Many miles may separate the objects in reality, yet all of the objects appear right next to each other on the picture's surface.

In a similar way, a single prophecy often shows numerous events separated from one another not by space but by time. (See "God and Time,"

p 2167.) From our perspective looking at the text, the events can seem to occur in close succession. To make sense of these “pictures” in Scripture, we must consider what connects the different events. Once we understand the main theme of the section, the different “objects” in the text may be recognized more easily, and application of the message can be made to our lives.

Examples of Prophetic Perspective

Jer 31:31–34 presents a classic example. In vv 31–33, the prophet announces the coming of the new covenant, which is fulfilled in the death and resurrection of Jesus (Heb 8:8–12; 10:16). But in v 34, Jeremiah speaks as though there will be no need to teach the faith, which surely does not apply to our era (cf Mt 28:19).

What has happened? The prophecy in vv 31–33 stands toward the "foreground" of what Jeremiah prophesied and was fulfilled first, as the New Testament demonstrates. But v 34 stands toward the "background" and will reach fulfillment only when the Lord returns on the Last Day. Though these two aspects of the prophecy stand right next to each other in the text, they are fulfilled many years apart.

Another classic example is Jl 2:28–32, which prophesies the day of Pentecost in vv 28–29 but then prophesies about the last judgment in vv 30–31. We see the first fulfillment in Ac 2 but await the second fulfillment when Jesus comes again.

The Right Focus

Because of these features of biblical prophecy, readers need to exercise great patience, focusing on the Law and the Gospel of the passages rather than using such prophecies to concoct some timetable of world events. (On the disastrous history of such interpretations, see p 307.) The apostle Peter tells us that the prophets themselves—even the angels—could not fully understand the timing and fulfillment of what God was telling them (cf Ac 1:6–7).

> Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully, inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories. It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you, in the things that have now been announced to you through those who preached the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which angels long to look. (1Pt 1:10–12)

Though we can readily look back upon both the Old Testament and New Testament and see many prophecies fulfilled, we must also await the fulfillment of many things the Lord has promised. Like the prophets, carefully investigate what God has foretold. Pray for the Holy Spirit's help. Revel in His Word. Yet bear in mind prophetic perspective. Read and apply prophecies with patience and forbearance, while taking comfort in the salvation already revealed.

Adapted from David Baker and Timothy E. Saleska, *Psalms: Prayers and Praise* (St. Louis: Concordia, 2002), 30.

Postures and Gestures

The Bible includes many references to what we call "body language," movements or positions of the body that convey meaning within a particular culture. Israelites may have even had a form of sign language (cf Lk 1:62).

Just as words and symbolism must be interpreted, biblical postures and gestures likewise require interpretation. Many of the postures and gestures below will be the same or similar to postures and gestures you use today. However, others are surprisingly different. This list includes wording from both the ESV and the more literal/traditional KJV, which helps round out the expressions for postures and gestures that appear in the original languages. To discover more examples of an expression, consult the concordance, pp 2243–2372.

anger kindled/hot. Literally describes the "burning" of a person's nose, which grows flush red with anger (Ex 4:14).

beat the breast. Striking the chest with one or both hands to indicate sorrow (Lk 18:13).

bless. Could involve kneeling and laying on of hands (see below). See p 842.

blush. Sign of guilt or shame (Ezr 9:6).

bold face. Intensely confident (Pr 7:13).

bow. Synonymous with worship toward God (Ex 4:31; 34:8; Ps 95:6; 1Sm 1:28; see note, Ex 33:10) or respect and service for a human being (Gn 33:3; 43:26–28; 1Sm 20:41; 28:14; Est 3:2). God expressly forbade bowing to false gods (Ex 20:4–5). People also bowed to (1) greet someone (Gn 18:2; 19:1), (2) signal humility and repentance (Ezr 9:5; 10:1), and (3) express thanks (Gn 24:52). Bows were done in a variety of ways (1Ch 29:20; 1Ki 18:42; Ne 8:6) and likely included tilting the head, tilting the upper body, kneeling with one's face to the ground, or lying prostrate. The more elaborate the bow, the greater the expression of devotion or emotion (cf Gn 33:3). See *fall*.

capture with eyelashes. Probably fluttering the eyelids in order to make eye contact with a potential lover (Pr 6:25).

clap. Expressing joy (Ps 47:1) through rhythm. See p 993. However, clapping the hands at someone expresses derision (Jb 27:23).

color changed. Pale from shock or anxiety (Dn 5:6–9).

come before the LORD. Draw near to the place of sacrifice with intent to worship and pray (Mi 6:6). See "presence," p 843.

cry tears. See *weep*.

embrace. Hugging to express great affection, which may have included kissing (Gn 33:4).

face fallen. Likely refers to a frown resulting from disappointment.

face shine. To smile or "beam" at someone (Nu 6:25; Ps 4:6).

fall. Extreme form of bowing, expressing repentance (Gn 50:18), fearful submission (Nu 22:31), awe (Nu 24:4; 22:31), pleading (Nu 14:5), humility (Nu 16:4, 22, 45; 20:6; Lk 8:41), worship (Lk 17:16), or grief (Mk 14:35).

feet signals. Scraping the dirt to alert a partner (Pr 6:13). The signs made are not known.

fold the hands. Sign of idleness (Pr 6:10).

gape the mouth. Shouting widemouthed in a threatening manner (Jb 16:10).

gnash teeth. Bare and grit teeth as expression of anger (Jb 16:9).

groan. Translates various words for sighing to express mourning or complaint (Ex 2:23).

hand of fellowship. Like the modern handshake, a gesture of friendship and goodwill (2Ki 10:15; Gal 2:9).

haughty eyes. Raising eyelids or tilting head upward as gesture of superiority over another person (Ps 18:27).

hide the face. Expresses fear or shame (Ex 3:6).

hiss. Breathe out forcefully, usually to express derision (1Ki 9:8). However, it is also translated "whistle" as an act of summoning someone (Is 7:18; cf 5:26 KJV).

hold the tongue. Refrain from speaking.

incline the ear. Bend the head in order to hear someone, eager to learn from or about that person (Is 55:3).

kiss. Hbr verb may describe pursing of the lips (Pr 24:26). Kissing was a sign of greeting and great affection toward family members, friends, and countrymen. A kiss might be placed on the neck or cheek (cf Gn 33:4), the hand or foot (cf Ex 18:7; Lk 7:45), or the lips. Scripture rarely notes the placement of a kiss because the usual social customs would have been obvious to the readers. Kissing someone's hand or foot showed humility and submission. The wording of Lk 7:45 shows that kissing the feet was an

unusual gesture. Idols were kissed as an act of worship (1Ki 19:18; Hos 13:2).

kneel. Form of bowing (see "bow") sometimes used in prayer (1Ki 8:54; Ezr 9:5; Dn 6:10; Lk 22:41; Ac 7:60). Israelites usually stood while praying.

laugh. Expression of derision and scorn. See p 1335.

lay hands on. Positively, to bestow a blessing or appoint for service (see *bless*). Negatively, to arrest (Ne 13:21) or to transfer guilt to a sacrificial animal (Ex 29:10).

lift up the eyelids. See *haughty eyes*.

lift up the eyes. Expression for directing sight toward something distant (Gn 13:14).

lift up the face. To look toward someone with confidence or care (see *face shine*).

lift up hands. Various uses: (1) Common posture of prayer or praise—standing, face raised to the heavens, arms held out and up with palms upward (Ex 17:11; Lm 2:19; Ps 28:2; 63:4; 119:48; 134:2; 141:2; 1Tm 2:8). For prayer, this posture shows the need and expectancy of the one who prays. For praise, it captures both the outer and inner attitudes that accompany devotion. Early Christians regarded this posture as an emblem of Jesus' crucifixion. (2) Taking a vow to signify the truth of what one says (Dt 32:40). (3) Act of blessing (Lv 9:22; Lk 24:50).

mincing. Taking short, choppy steps; used by women to draw attention to the movement of their legs and lower torso (Is 3:16).

point. Sinister or obscene gesture (Pr 6:13; Is 58:9).

prostrate. See *bow*.

purse the lips. Gesture to kiss (with intent to deceive), or signal to a partner (Pr 16:30).

right hand. See p 843.

salute. Greeting that likely involved a gesture.

set the face. Turn toward someone or something with fixed determination.

shake hand. See *wave*.

shake the feet. Gesture of derision toward the inhabitants of a place, removing even the dust that belongs to their land (Mt 10:14; Ac 13:51).

sigh. See *groan*.

sit. Sermons and authoritative pronouncements were normally delivered while sitting (Mt 5:1–2; 23:2; Lk 4:20–21). A person sat to mourn (cf Jb 2:13; Ps 137:1; Ne 1:4). However, in 1Ch 17:16, David "sat before the LORD" while praying thankfully—the only OT reference to sitting as a position for prayer. In the examples of mourning and praying, sitting probably signifies shock or amazement.

smite. Strike someone or something as expression of anger or act of punishment (Is 53:4).

spit. To express derision. However, see note, Mk 8:23.

spread out hands. Posture of prayer (1Ki 8:22; Ps 44:20; 88:9). See *lift up hands*.

stand. Expression of readiness to serve (Gn 18:8, 22; 1Ki 17:1; 2Ch 34:31), the common posture for prayer (Jb 30:20; Mt 6:5; Mk 11:25; cf 1Ki 8:14) and also of worship (Ne 9:4–5). In Ne 8:5, the people stand to show their respect for the public reading of God's Word.

stare. Fixing eyes on someone due to amazement.

step. See *tread*.

stiffen the neck. Description of stubbornness, referring to an ox, donkey, or horse that will not turn (Jer 17:23).

stretch out hands. (1) Gesture of prayer that turns into reaching, a sign of longing for God's help (Ex 17:12; 1Ki 8:38; Ps 143:6). See *lift up hands*. (2) Directional motion (Ex 14:16, 21, 26–27; Jsh 8:18).

stretch out the neck. See *haughty eyes*.

strike the hands. Gesture showing support or agreement between two parties (Is 2:6). See note, Pr 17:18. However, see also *clap*.

tear clothes. Symbol of one's heart or feelings being ripped apart by grief (Gn 37:29).

tears. See *weep*.

tread. To walk on a place or a person symbolized ownership or dominance. See note, Ru 4:8.

wag the head. To express derision (Ps 64:8).

wail. See *weep*.

wave. Hand motion to get someone's attention. See note, Lv 7:30–35.

weep. Expression of sorrow or regret (Ne 1:4), but also of joy (Gn 46:29). On mourning practices, see note, Jb 1:20.

whistle. See *hiss*.

wink the eye. Gesture used as a signal, possibly alerting a partner to act treacherously (Pr 16:30).

The Lord of Hosts

Moses, Joshua, and Judges never use the title "Lord [God] of hosts." It was first used just before the kingdom period (1Sm 1:3, 11; c 1050 BC) and became a favorite expression for the eighth-century prophets and later writers. It appears c 275 times (often in 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi) and presents one of the most important Old Testament pictures of God and His work.

The term "host" (Hbr *tsaba'*; plural noun *tseba'oth*) refers to military service, the ranks and divisions of troops (Jgs 4:2; 2Ch 26:11–15). Though the hosts of the Lord are often angels (1Ki 22:19), they include His people Israel (Nu 1:52; 1Sm 17:45; Is 24:23), the Levites (Nu 4; 8:24–25), the "ministering women" (Ex 38:8; 1Sm 2:22) and, notably, all of creation, which God set in order and continues to rule (Gn 2:1; Is 37:16; Jer 10:11–16; Am 4:13; 5:8; 9:5–6; Zec 14:16; see pp 1565–66).

The Lord set His hosts in order so that they might serve Him (cf Jb 28:3; 38:5; 39:6; Ps 19:4–5; 104:9). The Word of God, by which He made all things (Gn 1:3), endures and gives direction to His hosts (Ps 119:89–91). The result is the orderly, natural world in which we live. Every particle, every person, is designed to fulfill a calling that gives the Lord praise (Ps 148; see pp 775–78). Luther wrote:

> God calls Himself the God of the armies or of the hosts, that is, not only of the angels or of the spirits but of the entire creation, which carries on warfare for Him and serves Him…. God created all these creatures to be in active military service. (AE 1:74)

Between the Testaments

When the Old Testament was translated into Greek, "host" in Gn 2:1 was translated as "world" (Gk *kosmos*, "arrangement"; Eng *cosmic*, "order"). But often the translators did not know what to do with the term. For example, in Isaiah, Hbr *tsaba'oth* usually is not translated at all (appears as Gk *sabaoth*). Elsewhere, it is translated as "almighty" (Gk *pantokrator*), emphasizing God's powerful rule over creation.

Jesus ben Sirach, a Jerusalem rabbi (second century BC), summed up the Old Testament teachings as follows:

> The works of the Lord have existed from the beginning by his creation, and when he made them, he determined their divisions. He arranged [Gk *kosmeo*] his works in an eternal order, and their dominion for all generations; they neither hunger nor grow weary, and they do not cease from their labors. They do not crowd one another aside, and they will never disobey his word. (Ecclus 16:26–30; cf 42:15–25)

As God's people interacted with Greek culture during the Time between the Testaments, they discovered a similar idea of order among the Greek philosophers, who judged things as "according to nature" or "contrary to nature." The philosophers concluded that order in nature was the work of a creator. Though the philosophers did not know the Lord, they recognized His handiwork and thereby should have learned what was best (see 4 Maccabees 5:5–9, 22–26). Instead, they became foolish in their nature (Wis 13:1–2). (See the Jewish writer Philo, *On the Eternity of the World* 4; Augustine would later use the expression "order of nature" in *The City of God* [*NPNF*1 2:214, 228]; Thomas Aquinas would use "order of creation" [*Summa* I V], which became a standard theological term.)

The New Testament

The orderly character of God's creation became a powerful tool for the apostle Paul as he began to preach in Greek to the Gentiles (Ac 17:22–27) and write to the churches. For example, drawing on the Old Testament and interacting with philosophies of the day, Paul argued that people should live "by nature" (Rm 2:14), that is, in agreement with God's created order. However, the creation was subject to God's wrath because people were living "contrary to nature" (Rm 1:26; cf Is 24:4–6) by violating the order God established. Through Christ, God would restore His good creation (cf Rm 8:20–22).

The blessings of the Gospel would not overthrow God's created order but would complement it. God's people would have orderly lives in the Church (1Co 14:40; Col 2:5; Eph 5:21; 1Tm 3; 1Pt 3:8; 5:1–7), in their families and households (Eph 5:22–6:9; 1Tm 2:8–15; 1Pt 3:1–7), and in the state (Rm 13:1–7; 1Pt 2:13–17). So the Lord of hosts would continue to arrange the world for the good of all but especially for the sake of His Church (see Luther's "Table of Duties," which he refers to as "holy orders" [SC, p xlii]). In commenting on Jn 1:14, Luther wrote:

> If you are a true Christian and child of God, then you will not despise this order and creation of God; but you will say: "Just *because* I have been reborn from God through faith in Christ and *because* this is my physical father, I will comply with his commands and honor my parents according to the order of creation. I will obey my rulers and faithfully serve my master and mistress." For despite the believers' rebirth from God through faith in Christ, God still upholds the position of parent and child, of master and servant, in the world; He does not permit the estate of marriage or any other estate to cease. (AE 22:94, emphasis added; see AC XXVII 18–20; Ap VII 50; XVI 58; XXIII 7; FC SD IV 4)

The Lord of Hosts and Your Life

In contrast with the biblical teaching about the Lord of hosts, who arranges and orders His creation, modern philosophers teach that life is random and accidental. They conclude that life is meaningless but that people may impose meaning on life by trying to make sense of it all. These dangerous teachings undermine a person's sense of right and wrong, the unity of the family, and public order as blessings from God. Resisting God's order in creation is like resisting gravity. The idolatrous notions we set up must finally come tumbling down, as the prophets warned (Is 40:21–31; 44:6–8; Jer 31:35–37).

Rather than pursue a personal quest for meaning, pore over the pages of Holy Scripture, where the Maker of heaven and earth explains the purpose of life. The Scriptures will reveal your calling in life and your future relationship with the eternal Father, who is ever present to care for you. Share these truths about God's good order and blessing with others. True wisdom works with the order God established (see pp 775–78), which the heavenly Father provided through His beloved Son, our Savior (Jn 1:1–5).

Footnotes

Footnotes for Jeremiah, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:11 *Almond* sounds like the Hebrew for *watching* (compare verse 12)
- [2] 1:14 The Hebrew word can mean *evil*, *harm*, or *disaster*, depending on the context; so throughout Jeremiah
- [3] 1:17 Hebrew *gird up your loins*

Footnotes for Jeremiah, Chapter 2

- [1] 2:8 Or *rulers*
- [2] 2:16 Hebrew *grazed*

Footnotes for Jeremiah, Chapter 3

- [1] 3:1 Septuagint, Syriac; Hebrew *Saying, "If*
- [1] 3:23 Hebrew *commotion*

Footnotes for Jeremiah, Chapter 5

- [1] 5:26 The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain

Footnotes for Jeremiah, Chapter 6

- [2] 6:2 Or *I have likened the daughter of Zion to the loveliest pasture*

Footnotes for Jeremiah, Chapter 8

- [1] 8:7 The meaning of the Hebrew word is uncertain
- [1] 8:7 Or *just decrees*
- [2] 8:13 The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain
- [3] 8:18 Compare Septuagint; the meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain

Footnotes for Jeremiah, Chapter 9

- [1] 9:1 Ch 8:23 in Hebrew
- [2] 9:2 Ch 9:1 in Hebrew
- [3] 9:3 Septuagint; Hebrew *and not for truth they have grown strong*

Footnotes for Jeremiah, Chapter 10

- [1] 10:3 Or *vapor*, or *mist*
- [2] 10:5 Hebrew *They*
- [1] 10:11 This verse is in Aramaic

Footnotes for Jeremiah, Chapter 12

- [1] 12:13 Hebrew *your*

Footnotes for Jeremiah, Chapter 13

- [1] 13:24 Hebrew *them*

Footnotes for Jeremiah, Chapter 15

- [1] 15:11 The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain

Footnotes for Jeremiah, Chapter 17

- [1] 17:5 Hebrew *arm*
- [2] 17:10 Hebrew *kidneys*
- [1] 17:13 Hebrew *me*

Footnotes for Jeremiah, Chapter 18

- [1] 18:14 Hebrew *of the field*
- [2] 18:14 Hebrew *Are foreign waters plucked up*

Footnotes for Jeremiah, Chapter 20

- [1] 20:12 Hebrew *kidneys*

Footnotes for Jeremiah, Chapter 21

- [2] 21:2 Hebrew *Nebuchadrezzar*, another spelling for *Nebuchadnezzar* (king of Babylon) occurring frequently from Jeremiah 21–52; this latter spelling is used throughout Jeremiah for consistency

Footnotes for Jeremiah, Chapter 22

- [1] 22:6 Hebrew *cities*

Footnotes for Jeremiah, Chapter 23

- [1] 23:8 Septuagint; Hebrew *I*
- [1] 23:33 Septuagint, Vulgate; Hebrew *What burden?*

Footnotes for Jeremiah, Chapter 24

- [1] 24:9 Compare Septuagint; Hebrew *horror for evil*

Footnotes for Jeremiah, Chapter 25

- [1] 25:26 Hebrew *Sheshach*, a code name for Babylon

Footnotes for Jeremiah, Chapter 27

- [1] 27:1 Or *Jehoiakim*
- [2] 27:3 Hebrew *Send them*

Footnotes for Jeremiah, Chapter 29

- [1] 29:8 Hebrew *your dreams, which you cause to dream*
- [1] 29:11 Or *peace*

Footnotes for Jeremiah, Chapter 30

- [1] 30:8 Or *serve him*

Footnotes for Jeremiah, Chapter 31

- [1] 31:3 Septuagint; Hebrew *me*
- [1] 31:20 Hebrew *bowels*

Footnotes for Jeremiah, Chapter 33

- [1] 33:2 Septuagint; Hebrew *it*
- [2] 33:5 That is, the torn-down houses
- [3] 33:9 Hebrew *And it*

Footnotes for Jeremiah, Chapter 34

- [1] 34:18 Hebrew lacks *them like*

Footnotes for Jeremiah, Chapter 40

- [1] 40:5 Syriac; the meaning of the Hebrew phrase is uncertain

Footnotes for Jeremiah, Chapter 41

- [1] 41:9 Hebrew *by the hand of*

Footnotes for Jeremiah, Chapter 44

- [1] 44:9 Hebrew *his*
- [1] 44:19 Compare Syriac; Hebrew lacks *And the women said*

Footnotes for Jeremiah, Chapter 46

- [1] 46:15 Hebrew *He does not stand*

Footnotes for Jeremiah, Chapter 47

- [1] 47:7 Septuagint, Vulgate; Hebrew *you*

Footnotes for Jeremiah, Chapter 48

- [2] 48:5 Hebrew *weeping goes up with weeping*
- [3] 48:5 Septuagint (compare Isaiah 15:5) *heard the cry*
- [1] 48:12 Septuagint, Aquila; Hebrew *their*

Footnotes for Jeremiah, Chapter 49

- [1] 49:4 Hebrew *boast of your valleys, your valley flows*
- [2] 49:16 Or *of Sela*
- [3] 49:19 Septuagint, Syriac *them*

Footnotes for Jeremiah, Chapter 50

- [1] 50:21 *Merathaim* means *double rebellion*
- [2] 50:21 *Pekod* means *punishment*
- [3] 50:21 That is, set apart (devote) as an offering to the Lord (for destruction)

Footnotes for Jeremiah, Chapter 51

- [1] 51:1 A code name for Chaldea
- [2] 51:3 That is, set apart (devote) as an offering to the Lord (for destruction)
- [3] 51:5 Hebrew *their land*
- [1] 51:34 Or *he has expelled me*
- [2] 51:41 Hebrew *Sheshach*, a code name for Babylon

Footnotes for Jeremiah, Chapter 52

- [1] 52:20 Hebrew lacks *the sea*
- [2] 52:21 A *cubit* was about 18 inches or 45 centimeters
- [3] 52:31 Hebrew *king, lifted up the head of*

Study Notes

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 1** Jeremiah presents credentials for his authority to speak and for his claim to be heard. He is the ambassador of the Lord God, who shapes the lives of individuals and determines the destiny of nations.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 1:1–3 Preface supplying information about the prophet: his name, parentage, birthplace, and the era of his activity.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 1:1 *Hilkiah*. Jeremiah's father likely was a member of the clan associated with Abiathar, the high priest whom Solomon banished to Anathoth (1Ki 2:26). The high priest during the reign of King Josiah (therefore a contemporary of Jeremiah) was also named Hilkiah (2Ki 22:4–14), though he belonged to a different Levitical family. *Anathoth*. Village c 3 mi NE of Jerusalem, assigned to the Levites. See map, p 615.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 1:2–3 Cf 2Ki 22–25. Three of the last five kings of Judah are mentioned; the other two reigned only three months each: Josiah's son Jehoahaz, called Shallum (2Ki 22:11), was deposed by Pharaoh Neco; Jehoiakim's son Jehoiachin, called Coniah and Jeconiah (2Ki 22:24; 24:1), was removed from office and taken to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar. See note, 3:6.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 1:3 *eleventh year … fifth month*. 587 BC. On the seventh of Av, Nebuzaradan began to destroy Jerusalem. More than 40 years elapsed from the time the Word of the Lord first came to Jeremiah in the 13th year of Josiah's reign (c 628 BC) to this tragic point in Israel's history. When it was no longer possible to date events by the regnal years of a king, "the captivity of Jerusalem" served to indicate the setting of Jeremiah's ministry (e.g., 41:1). However, no dates are supplied to establish how long he served the refugees who took him to Egypt (43:5–7).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 1:1–3 Jeremiah introduces himself and the historical context of his ministry. God sent prophets like Jeremiah to convict His people of their sin so that they might repent and return to Him. In mercy, God patiently waited, providing ample time for repentance. He is likewise patient toward you, whom He calls to repentance and true faith in Christ. • Father, I thank You for Your Word: the Law to reveal my sin and

guide my conduct, and the Gospel to show me the Savior and Your love through Him. Amen.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 1:4–10 Consecrated to the prophetic office before he was born, this youth was neither a wide-eyed visionary nor a self-appointed rabble-rouser. God commissioned Jeremiah to speak His words, charged with the power to destroy whatever opposed the kingdom of God and to build whatever would promote its coming.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 1:4 *word of the* LORD *came*. See note, v 9; see also p 1080.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 1:5 *I formed you*. Cyr Jer: "He is not ashamed to assume flesh, who is the framer of those very members… . Let the mouths of all heretics be stopped who slander their bodies, or rather Him who formed them" (*NPNF* 2 7:79). See p 983. Bern: "How beautifully the Divine oracle has distinguished between conception in the womb and birth from the womb! and showed that if the one was foreseen only, the other was blessed beforehand with the gift of holiness: that no one might think that the glory of Jeremiah consisted only in being the object of the foreknowledge of God, but also of His predestination" (*SLSB*, pp 302–3). *consecrated*. See p 6. *prophet to the nations*. For the international scene at Jeremiah's time, see pp 1202–6.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 1:6 *youth*. See note, 1Sm 17:33. Though the date of Jeremiah's birth is unknown, he was likely under 20 years old. God overcame this young man's hesitation to assume his task just as He did in the case of others called to His service (Ex 3:1–4:17; Jgs 6:11–18; cf 1Sm 17:33, 42; Gal 1:15–16; 1Tm 4:12).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 1:8 *I am with you*. See "be with," p 5. *deliver*. See p 842.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 1:9 *My words in your mouth*. Jeremiah's words are God's words. Jeremiah repeatedly uses prophetic statements such as "declares the LORD," "thus says the LORD," and "the word of the LORD came." See pp 1079–80, 971. No allowance is made for the possibility that God's Word is no longer true in all respects because it is transmitted by a fallible prophet.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 1:10 *pluck … break … destroy … overthrow*. Four verbs of destruction are used (in contrast with two verbs of construction) because destruction will dominate Jeremiah's message to sinful Judah. Mel: "The voice of the Law condemning sins must constantly

be set forth and taught in the church, and indeed it would be a monstrous crime to conceal God's judgment and His voice which announces His wrath against sin" (Chem, *LTh* 2:438). *build … plant*. Thorough destruction will clear the way for the Lord to restore the nation.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 1:11–19 It was only natural for the timid, inexperienced young man from a country town to stand aghast at the worldwide results his ministry was to produce. The Lord therefore reveals to Jeremiah that he is simply to announce what is to happen; the responsibility for bringing about the threats and promises belongs to the Lord Himself.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 1:11–12 An object lesson gives Jeremiah additional assurance that the words put in his mouth would come true because they were the Lord's. The message is conveyed by means of a wordplay on the Hbr noun *shaked* ("almond") and participle *shoked* ("watch" or "awaken"). As the almond tree awakens and blossoms early in spring, so the Creator of the universe, from the very beginning, is alert to perform His word. Similar visionary experiences were accorded the prophet Amos (Am 7:1–9; 8:1–2).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 1:11 *the word of the LORD came*. See note, v 9; see also p 1080.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 1:13–14 Because the fire under the boiling pot was fanned by a wind from the north, it would be from that direction that disaster would come. The Babylonian invaders entered Judah from the north and inundated it, as Jeremiah was ordered to prophesy (6:22; 25:9).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 1:16 *works of their own hands*. Idols.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 1:18 *fortified city, an iron pillar, and bronze walls*. All attempts to intimidate or silence Jeremiah would prove as ineffectual as attacks against the tightest of defenses. *kings … officials … priests … people of the land*. See p 228.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 1:19 *fight against you*. The Lord did not commission His prophet under the illusion that his task would win him popular acclaim. The violent opposition Jeremiah would encounter foreshadows the hostility that Jesus, the Prophet of Nazareth, had to endure.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 1:4–19 Jeremiah records the details of his call to the prophetic ministry, including two visions and God's promises to be with him. Through Jeremiah, God would warn His people of impending judgment for their sins. Idolatry and immorality eventually bring disaster

upon sinners. God wants His people to repent and turn back to Him, averting disaster and receiving God's mercy. • Grant us confidence in Your Word, O Lord. Turn us from sin so we may rejoice in Your salvation, serving You faithfully in Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 2:1–3:5 No date for this oracle is given. Jeremiah apparently gives it a leading position in the record of his prophetic activity because it provides the reader with an epitome of his preaching.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 2:1 *the word of the* LORD *came*. See note, 1:9; see also p 1080.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 2:2 *love as a bride*. Jeremiah is not idealizing the past. At the time of their espousal to the Lord, the Israelites murmured and sinned against Him, but as He led them through the wilderness, they remained His covenant people to whom He gave the Promised Land. For the marriage bond as a symbol of God's relationship to His people, cf Hos 2; Rv 21:2.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 2:3 *Israel*. See note, Gn 32:28. *holy to the* LORD. God chose Israel to be the bearer of His promise. He protected them as a farmer guards choice crops and declared "all who ate" of them guilty of theft. *holy*. See p 7. *firstfruits*. See p 6.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 2:4 Jeremiah draws on the history of both the Northern Kingdom (called Israel or Jacob) and the Southern Kingdom, consisting mainly of the tribe of Judah. Later he compares the guilt of the two "sisters" (3:6–10). See p 54–55.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 2:5 *worthlessness*. A derisive term for idols; also translated "false gods" (14:22) and "false idols" (2Ki 17:15).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 2:6 *pits*. A related term appears on the Mesha Stela (Moabite Stone), where it refers to a public underground reservoir dug by Israelite captives. For large cities, such reservoirs could hold tens of thousands of gallons. See note, v 13.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 2:8 *priests … shepherds … prophets*. Though they knew the law of God, the religious and civil leaders deliberately perverted it and so misled the people. Chs 20–38 describe Jeremiah's protracted conflict with those in authority. See p 228. *law*. See p 971. *Baal*. See note, Nu 25:3.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 2:10 *Cyprus … Kedar*. The Lord charges His people with a faithlessness not found even among the heathen nations, from the Great Sea in the west (Cyprus or Kittim) to the nomadic peoples in the

east (Kedar in the North Arabian Desert). Cf 49:28; Is 60:7; see note, Is 21:13; see also map, p 1479.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 2:11 *their glory*. See note, Ps 106:20.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 2:12 *O heavens*. See note, Is 1:2; cf Dt 32:1.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 2:13 *living waters*. See notes, Ps 36:9; Pr 18:4; Is 55:10–11. Ger: "This life is eternal, incorruptible, and will never perish… . God lives of Himself and of His own nature, but life is essential to God, and, in fact, God is life itself" (ThC E2 § 159). *cisterns*. Private reservoirs, cut into bedrock, collected rainwater that ran off housetops and courtyards. Cisterns were often bell- or bottle-shaped, with a narrow mouth covered by a stone. Porous rock required lime plaster to make it watertight. See note, v 6.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 2:14–19 Further evidence of Israel's defection was their trust in foreign alliances with godless nations rather than in God Himself. This foolish policy caused the Northern Kingdom to fall prey to the Assyrians, to whom King Ahaz earlier had appealed for help (2Ki 16:5–9). Negotiations with Egypt would also be as disastrous as they had been in the past.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 2:14 *homeborn servant?* Born of a slave woman and therefore destined to permanent slavery.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 2:16 *Memphis*. Capital of Lower Egypt. *Tahpanhes*. Stronghold on the Egyptian border where Jeremiah was taken after the fall of Jerusalem. See map, p 717.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 2:18–19 Israel's sin of faithlessness would condemn them no matter which foreign nation they turned to for relief. At Carchemish in 605 BC, the combined forces of Egypt and Assyria could not repulse the Babylonians from marching into Israel. Revolts against Babylonian domination, inspired by promises of help from Egypt, also proved futile. The struggle for supremacy between the world powers, represented by the Euphrates in the northeast and the Nile in the southwest, would end in the subjugation of Israel and Judah. See map, p 717.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 2:19 *apostasy*. See "backsliding," p 1078.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 2:20–22 Israel's refusal to trust and serve the Lord expressed itself in brazen worship of Baal, which had begun long before. Reveling shamelessly in the seductive fertility rites of this idol, the chosen people became degenerate.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 2:20 *yoke*. Egyptian slavery. *I will not serve*. Israel refused to be restrained from wickedness by the terms to which they had agreed in the covenant. *high hill … green tree*. Cf 1Ki 14:23; see p 526. The Lord's bride became a prostitute, both spiritually and physically. See note, Nu 25:1. Cf Ezk 16.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 2:21 *choice vine*. Refers to dark red grapes that grew in the Sorek Valley. See note, Is 5:2. Cyr Jer: "A fearful thing is sin, and the sorest disease of the soul is transgression, secretly cutting its sinews, and becoming also the cause of eternal fire; an evil of a man's own choosing, an offspring of the will. For that we sin of our own free will the Prophet says plainly… . The planting was good, the fruit coming from the will is evil; and therefore the planter is blameless, but the vine shall be burnt with fire; since it was planted for good, and bore fruit unto evil of its own will" (*NPNF* 2 7:8).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 2:22 *wash yourself*. The guilt of sin is an inner stain that outward ceremonies cannot remove. *lye … soap*. Solution of sodium hydroxide and/or potash, obtained from regional plants.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 2:23–24 Like female animals in heat, the people could not be restrained from seeking to gratify their insatiable lust. "The Holy Scriptures compare the heart of the unregenerate person to a hard stone [Ezekiel 36:26]. It does not yield to the one who touches it, but resists. It is like a rough block and a wild, unmanageable beast [Jeremiah 2:23–24]. This does not mean that since the fall a person is no longer a rational creature" (FC SD II 19).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 2:23 *Baals*. See note, Nu 25:3. *valley*. Children were sacrificed to Molech in the Hinnom Valley, south of Jerusalem (19:5; 2Ki 16:3; 21:6; 23:10; 2Ch 33:6). See p 403.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 2:24 *wild donkey*. The onager, a zebralike animal, never domesticated.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 2:25 *going unshod*. As slaves were forced to do.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 2:26–28 Too late the people will realize the futility of turning their back on their Creator and entrusting their fate to impotent gods. There will come a time of trouble when, like a thief caught in the act, they will be shamed to admit that the idols they made for themselves cannot save them.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 2:27 *tree*. See note, Ex 34:13. *stone*. See note, Gn 28:18.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 2:29–32 When disaster does overtake them, the people will have no reason to complain against the Lord. For them to forget their God was as abnormal and irrational as a bride forgetting to put on her wedding attire.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 2:30 *devoured your prophets*. Cf 26:20–23; 1Ki 18:13; 2Ch 24:20–21; Mt 23:29–36.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 2:32 *ornaments … attire?* Cf Ps 45:13–14; Is 49:18; Ezk 16:12–13.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 2:34 *guiltless poor*. Innocent of a crime such as breaking in to steal.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 2:36 See note, vv 14–19; see also map, p 609.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 2:37 *hands on your head*. Bound as prisoners. Such a scene is depicted on the wall of the temple at Medinet Habu, Egypt.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 3:1 The Law of Moses did not allow a man to remarry the wife he divorced after she had married another man. According to human standards, God could not be expected to let Israel return to Him after they defiled themselves with other gods. See notes, Dt 24:1, 4. But forgiveness is not a mere possibility; God pleads with sinners to receive His mercy.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 3:2 *heights*. See p 526. *like an Arab*. As a desert marauder was always on the alert for victims, so Israel eagerly sought out every opportunity to be ravished by other lovers. Cf Gn 38:14–15; Pr 7:10–12.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 3:3 *showers … spring rain*. See calendar, p 262. *forehead of a whore*. Prostitutes did not blush as other women would. See note, Gn 38:15.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 3:4–5 Fatherly chastisement in the form of drought did not keep Israel from plunging into sin. They profess filial love but do not live out their words. See "Father," p 1227.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 2:1–3:5 Through Jeremiah, God files charges against His people for breaking covenant with Him. He uses the powerful image of marital unfaithfulness—a capital crime under Mosaic Law—to drive home the seriousness of the charge. God grants time for sinners to repent, but those who refuse to do so will face His justice. His ultimate goal is always our salvation, which He accomplished through the life and death of His Son, who bore His judgment for our sins. • Keep us ever faithful to You, O Lord, by Your Holy Spirit through Jesus Christ. Amen.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 3:6–25 Though the unfaithful Israelites deserve to suffer the dire consequences of their heinous crimes, it is not too late to avert impending doom. God, who is rich in love and faithfulness, will forgive all their adulteries if only they return to Him. Yet the history of Israel, the Northern Kingdom, should teach Judah, the southern sister, that the call to repentance cannot be ignored with impunity.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 3:6 *Josiah*. Reigned in Judah 640–609 BC. The next king Jeremiah mentions is Zedekiah (21:1), the last of the kings of Judah (597–587 BC). See note, 1:2–3. *every high hill*. See p 526. *green tree*. See note, Ex 34:13.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 3:7 *sister Judah*. Cf Ezk 16. After Solomon's death, the 10 northern tribes, called Israel, seceded from the Davidic kingdom. The two remaining tribes constituted Judah. The term Israel, however, continues to be used as a general designation for the covenant nation (e.g., vv 20–21).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 3:8 *decree of divorce*. See notes, Is 50:1; Mt 1:19.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 3:9 *stone and tree*. See notes, Gn 28:18; Ex 34:13.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 3:10 *return*. See p 1080.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 3:11 *righteous*. See p 843.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 3:12–18 Ultimately, Jeremiah's preaching of repentance was in vain. The disaster he predicted overtook the apostate nation when the Babylonians invaded from the north, destroying the land and taking captive its inhabitants (1:14–15; 4:6; 6:22–24; ch 52). But even then, the way to return to the Lord would remain open. God's forgiveness would wipe the record clean. Through a surviving remnant brought back to Zion, He would usher in a time when not only the descendants of Abraham but "all nations" could become full-fledged citizens in the messianic kingdom. In this worldwide spiritual community (called the Church in the NT), the Lord has His throne, symbolized here by His presence over the ark of the covenant and in the temple at Jerusalem (Ex 25:22; 1Ki 8:10–11).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 3:12 *Return*. See p 1080. *merciful*. See pp 842–43. "Our churches teach that there is forgiveness of sins for those who have fallen after Baptism whenever they are converted. The Church ought to impart Absolution to those who return to repentance" (AC XII 1–2).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 3:14 *Return*. See p 1080. *master*. From Hbr verb *ba'al*, like the name of the Canaanite god they worshiped (Baal). See note,

Nu 25:3. *Zion*. See p 844; see also notes, Is 2:2; 61–62.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 3:15 *shepherds*. See note, 2:8.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 3:16–17 *ark*. See p 495. *throne*. See note, Ezk 10:1. *all nations*. Converted from their sinful ways, they will follow the Lord. See note, Is 2:2.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 3:18 *together*. See note, Ezr 6:17. *heritage*. See "portion," p 7.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 3:19 *My sons*. Nations besides Israel. *My Father*. See note, vv 4–5.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 3:20 Though the Lord has great plans for Israel, He emphasizes that the people of Jeremiah's time continue to be disobedient and unfaithful.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 3:21 *heights*. Where they prostituted themselves (v 2).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 3:22 *Return*. See p 1080. *heal*. See note, 6:14.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 3:23 *hills*. See pp 526–27. *salvation*. See p 843.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 3:24 *shameful thing*. Synonym for Baal (cf 11:13; Hos 9:10).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 3:25 *lie down*. Act of mourning and repentance. See "bow" p 1276.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 4:1 *return*. See p 1080.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 4:2 *swear*. See p 7. God's people are admonished to invoke the name of the Lord instead of swearing by false gods, which is idolatry (see note, Ex 20:3). *justice … righteousness*. See p 843. *bless*. See p 842. *in Him*. In the true God. All the families of the earth were to be blessed by Abraham's offspring (Gn 12:3). But when they worshiped idols and seemed doomed to extinction for their apostasy, the name of God was profaned before all people (cf Is 52:5; Ezk 36:20–23; Rm 2:24). Still, the Lord would assure the salvation of the nations.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 4:3–4 "God works through this means (i.e., the preaching and hearing of His Word). He breaks our hearts [Jeremiah 4:3–4] and draws us to Him [John 6:44]. Through the preaching of the Law, a person comes to know his sins and God's wrath. He experiences in his heart true terrors, contrition, and sorrow. Through the preaching of, and reflection on, the Holy Gospel about the gracious forgiveness of sins in Christ, a spark of faith is kindled in him. This faith accepts the forgiveness of sins for Christ's sake and comforts itself with the Gospel promise. So the Holy

Spirit (who does all this) is sent into the heart [Galatians 4:6]" (FC SD II 54).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 4:3 *fallow ground … thorns*. Plants cannot grow on the hardened surface of uncultivated soil or in places where thorns will choke them. Likewise, no fruit can grow out of a heart encased in the impervious shell of impenitence and overgrown with the weeds of sinful desires. Ter: "[The Creator] taught them even then to put off the old man and put on the new" (*ANF* 3:472). On sowing, see note, Mk 4:3.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 4:4 *remove the foreskin of your hearts*. Mere outward compliance with the law requiring the physical removal of the foreskin is no insurance against the wrath of God. The "sign of the covenant" must remove the inborn self-will from their hearts and render them responsive to the Lord (Gn 17:11; Dt 30:6; Col 2:11).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 3:6–4:4 Judah's temporary repentance is only superficial—their hearts still stray far from the Lord. Jeremiah offers a glimmer of hope for the northern tribes, revealing God's plan to rescue a remnant of their people in the future. Even as the Lord disciplines His people, He also shows His grace by rescuing a remnant in order to replant them in the Promised Land and bring a Savior from their descendants. In view of God's mercy, practice daily repentance. He will grant you the blessings of Abraham through his offspring Jesus Christ. • Father, keep us faithful to You, the only true God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 4:5 *Blow the trumpet*. See p 993.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 4:6 *standard*. Signpost to guide the refugees as they flee from the open country. *Zion*. See p 844.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 4:8 *sackcloth*. Expresses grief or dismay (cf 48:37; Gn 37:34; Is 15:3; 37:1). See note, Jb 16:15.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 4:9 On the role of leaders, see p 228.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 4:10 Jeremiah, not a disinterested spectator of the horrible scene, injects exclamations of horror and pain as he beholds the invasion and destruction of his beloved country. Cf vv 19–21.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 4:11 *hot wind*. See notes, Jb 1:19; 27:21. *winnow*. See note, Ps 1:4.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 4:12 *for this*. For separating the chaff from the grain on the threshing floor (v 11). God's judgment will fully overwhelm them.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 4:14 *wash*. See note, Ezk 36:26. *saved*. See "salvation," p 843.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 4:15 *Dan … Ephraim*. The invading foe has advanced southward from Israel's northernmost city to the hills on Judah's border, c 10 mi N of Jerusalem. See color map 2.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 4:18 *reached your very heart*. A fatal blow.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 4:5–18 Through Jeremiah, God pronounces judgment against His people and warns them of an irresistible enemy advancing quickly from the north. Like a hurricane-force wind, Babylon's armies will sweep Judah away, leaving only a few survivors. God had sent prophet after prophet to warn His people and call them to repentance because He loved them and wanted them back. Today, He calls you so that you may receive His gracious salvation. • Father, turn us from our foolish ways to walk by faith in Your Word, through Jesus Christ. Amen.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 4:19–21 As the sights and sounds of war and destruction fall on the land and the people he loves, Jeremiah cannot refrain from expressing heartfelt pain.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 4:19 *trumpet … alarm*. See p 993.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 4:20 *my tents … my curtains*. Destruction of the nation's towns and villages is a personal blow to Jeremiah. He is as a nomad whose shelter is swept away.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 4:22 The Lord reminds Jeremiah that the people deserve the decreed punishment.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 4:23 *without form and void*. Contemplating the desolation to come, Jeremiah is horrified to see how complete it is. To him, the earth looks the way it might have before God changed the primordial chaos into a habitable world.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 4:27 *not make a full end*. A ray of Gospel light: God will not let His chosen people become extinct or lose their national identity by being absorbed into other nations. A remnant will survive, and the people will again become His instruments to bless all races. Cf 3:14; Am 9:8; see note, Is 6:13.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 4:28 *relented*. See pp 1079–80.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 4:29–31 Judah will discover too late how useless it is to romance foreign nations. Her false paramours will only despise her and seek to kill her.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 4:30 *paint?* Such as antimony; see notes, Jb 42:14; Is 54:11.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 4:19–31 Jeremiah grieves for Judah and its people, lamenting their imminent destruction. The same God who created the world by His powerful Word has pronounced judgment upon His sinful and rebellious people. Even in the midst of his grief, Jeremiah voices a note of hope—all is not lost. God is faithful to His promise of salvation. Today, He also remains faithful to you, even in the midst of grief and despair. • Help us to see the consequence of our sins, O Lord, and turn to You each day for forgiveness and wisdom. In Jesus' name. Amen.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 5:1 *Search … one*. For the sake of only 10 righteous persons, God once was willing to spare the city of Sodom (cf Ezk 22:30; Zep 1:12). *justice*. See p 842. Chem: "This entire chapter is an announcement of temporal punishments. Yet in this very announcement [God] promises that He will be favorable, that is, He will either remit or lessen the punishments, if they will turn away from their sins" (*LTh* 2:643).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 5:2 *swear falsely*. They use the Lord's name in solemn oath formulas to swear to an untruth. See p 7.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 5:3 God's chosen people have become hardened and reprobate. For other instances of God's judgment on hardened hearts, see notes, Ex 4:21; 1Ki 22:20–22. *repent*. See p 1080.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 5:4 *way of the* LORD *… justice*. See pp 844, 842.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 5:5 *yoke*. Egyptian slavery.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 5:6 *lion … wolf … leopard*. Even nature turns against them. However, also note that Israel's neighbors preyed on them as they fled from the Babylonians. See note, Ob 14. *apostasies*. See "backsliding," p 1078.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 5:7 *fed them to the full*. Moses foresaw how Israel, having waxed "fat and sleek" (v 28), would repay God's bounty by turning to idols. *adultery*. See note, 2:20.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 5:8 Cf Ezk 23.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 5:12 In effect, they join with the wicked and the fool who say, "There is no God" (Ps 10:4; 14:1).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 5:13 *become wind*. Words without force. *done to them!* Jeeringly they suggest that if disaster is to come, it will strike only those who predict it.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 5:1–13 From the lowliest individual in the streets to the highest official in the temple or king's palace, all God's people have turned away from Him to other gods. Their rebellion appears clearly in their immoral behavior as they reject every prophet who calls them back to faith and to the obedience that comes from faith. Today, as you interact with others, consider the condition of your heart in view of God's Word. Repent of all pride, and pray for sincere faith and wisdom with kindness. In His mercy, God preserves His people for salvation (cf v 10); He has you on His heart. • Turn us back, O Lord, when we stray. Keep us faithful in word and deed. Amen.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 5:14 *LORD … of hosts*. See p 1291.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 5:15 See note, Is 28:11; see also p 751.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 5:16 *open tomb*. Their arrows bring death to their targets.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 5:18 *not make a full end*. See note, 4:27.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 5:21–31 Though the ocean and weather do not exceed the limits set by the Creator, the rebellion of His rational creatures knows no bounds. They respond to the material blessings God supplies by exploiting and neglecting the fatherless and the needy. To make matters worse, false prophets and unscrupulous priests confirm the people in their lawlessness, refusing to warn them that they cannot escape the wrath of God. The people are lulled to sleep in their sin.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 5:21 *see not … hear not*. See note, Is 6:10.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 5:22 *fear Me?* See p 1001. *boundary for the sea*. See note, Jb 38:8; see also p 1291.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 5:24 See calendar, p 262. Ger: "From these benefits they could and should have recognized God as their benefactor, just as we are led from brooks to their sources and as one who seeks a way to the sea makes a river his companion" (ThC E2 § 69). See p 1291.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 5:26 *fowlers*. See note, Ps 91:3.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 5:27 *cage*. Made of wicker.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 5:28 *justice*. See p 842.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 5:29 Refrainlike repetition of v 9. *avenge*. See note, Is 1:24.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 5:14–31 The people of God have refused to give up their worship of foreign gods and their abuse of the weak and powerless. Therefore, God will deliver them into the hands of a foreign

nation, rendering them weak and powerless before its armies. Today, beware of spiritual leaders who prove faithless. Consider all things in view of God's Word, and respect those who teach God's Law and Gospel. Praise God for His patience and compassion to save! By His grace, He gives us new hearts and faithful leaders. • Heavenly Father, help us to see other people as You see them in Christ Jesus, our Savior. Amen.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 6** The call to repentance comes at the center of another cycle of indictments and threats of dire consequences. Repetition in prophetic preaching testifies to God's patience and goodness and to the stubborn perversity of human nature.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 6:1 *Benjamin*. The tribes of Judah and Benjamin composed the Southern Kingdom. *Tekoa*. C 11 mi S of Jerusalem. See map, p 1205. *raise a signal*. An important function of fortresses in the Judean hill country was to raise signal fires, by which Jerusalem and other places could be warned about approaching threats. This military practice is mentioned in letters found at Lachish, a major fortress in the Judean hills. See notes, 2Ch 11:5–10. The much earlier Mari letters from the Euphrates region (eighteenth century BC) also mention this tactic. *Beth-haccherem*. C 4 mi S of Jerusalem. *out of the north*. See note, 1:13–14.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 6:2 *daughter of Zion*. See p 1079.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 6:3 *Shepherds*. Invading armies, directed by their chiefs, will denude the country as grazing flocks of sheep mow a pasture bare (see ESV note, 2:8).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 6:4 Shouts express the besiegers' disappointment that nightfall is cutting their attack short, though apparently they determine to continue despite the darkness (v 5). *Woe to us*. The besieged people of Jerusalem may have raised this shout as they saw the darkness of disaster engulfing them.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 6:6 *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291. *siege mound*. Cf 32:24; 33:4; 52:4; see note, 2Ki 18:14.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 6:9 *glean*. Cf Ru 2:15–17. *remnant*. See p 1080.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 6:10 *uncircumcised*. See note, 4:4.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 6:11 When the Lord's wrath inundates the city, all its inhabitants—from the children to the very aged—will become war casualties (cf Is 13:16; see note, Ps 137:9).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 6:14 *They have healed*. The false prophets refused to tell the people how sick they were. Claiming all was well, they

put a bandage on the nation's cancerous wound. *Peace*. Denotes more than absence of war. Its wider meaning is reflected when translated "welfare" or "prosperity," as in 29:11; 33:9. See p 7.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 6:16 *Stand by the roads*. Arriving at a crossroads, travelers must decide which direction to take: "the good way" or "the way … that leads to destruction" (Mt 7:13). *paths … way*. See p 844. *walk*. See p 7.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 6:18 *congregation*. Assembly of nations called to witness God's judgment upon His people. See p 6.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 6:20 *frankincense*. See note, Lv 2:1. *Sheba*. In southwest Arabia. See Sabea on map, p 780. *sweet cane*. Used in preparing incense; see note, Ex 30:23. *burnt offerings*. See pp 170–71. *not acceptable*. Ceremonies that do not express commitment of the heart are an abomination to the Lord (see notes, 1Sm 15:22–23; Is 1:11).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 6:21 *stumbling blocks*. God will see to it that the road of rebellious self-will ends in disaster (cf Is 8:14; Ezk 14:3–4, 7).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 6:22 *farthest parts*. Babylon was far removed from Israel.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 6:23 *O daughter of Zion!* See p 1079.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 6:26 *sackcloth*. See note, Jb 16:15. *an only son*. The heir, now lost.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 6:27–30 The Lord authorizes Jeremiah to expose the pervasive nature of Israel's wickedness. The people are like a piece of ore from which no precious metal can be smelted because it is composed of nothing but bronze and iron. See pp 1543–44.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 6:29 *bellows blow*. To fan the fire that smelts the ore in the refining process. *lead*. Used to separate the silver from the base metals. *in vain*. Israel has resisted purification; it remains a solid block of refuse, not worth saving. Cf Ezk 22:18–22.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 6** Because they have rejected God's Word and spurned His prophets, the Lord will send a foreign army against Jerusalem to destroy it and lay waste to the land. God rejects sacrifices offered without faith; He is not satisfied with token compliance. Instead, He calls us to repent and to live our faith in all we say and do. In spite of our faithless acts, God continues to be faithful through His Son, Jesus, our Savior. • Open our eyes, Father, and send us Your Spirit, that we live our lives for You, avoiding sin and helping others. In Jesus' name. Amen.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 7:1–15 Jeremiah lays bare the enormity of Judah's sin. Standing at the entrance to the temple, he charges the assembled people with acting as if the structure they had built could imprison Him whom "heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain" (1Ki 8:27). They treated the house where the Lord's name was to be revered like a cave where robbers flee for safety between raids on their hapless victims. There was no excuse for the blasphemous heresy that the temple protected the people from the consequences of their evil deeds.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 7:1 *word that came*. See p 1080.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 7:2 *in the gate of the LORD's house*. False trust in the security of the temple was one of the basic causes of Israel's downfall. Jeremiah delivers a shorter but similar sermon "in the court of the LORD's house" (26:1–6). A second warning, delivered on the very site that gave rise to this fatal heresy, would not have been superfluous. It is also possible that ch 26 gives a resume of Jeremiah's dramatic preaching in order to provide the circumstances of the prophet's brush with death that is described there.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 7:3 *Amend*. Lit, "make good."
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 7:4 *the temple of the LORD*. Repeated as a slogan of defiance.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 7:5 *justice*. See p 842.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 7:7 See "portion," p 7.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 7:8–11 They think they can escape punishment for crimes against God and fellow human beings, though they use the temple as robbers who take refuge in a cave, only to emerge from hiding for fresh adventure.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 7:9 *swear falsely*. See "oath," p 7. *Baal*. See note, Nu 25:3.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 7:10 *delivered!* See p 842. *abominations?* See note, Pr 6:16.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 7:11 *house … called by My name*. See note, 1Ki 8:18. *den of robbers*. Hypocrisy in worship, which brought these words to Jesus' lips, continues to be one of Satan's masterpieces of deception.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 7:12 The Lord reminds the people what He did to Shiloh. In this city 22 mi N of Jerusalem, the ark of the covenant was enshrined for a time. But when the sacred chest was degraded to a good-luck charm, it was captured by the Philistines, and the city was destroyed. See p 495.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 7:15 *offspring of Ephraim*. The northern tribes of Israel, exiled to Assyria (cf 2Ki 17). Their fate should serve as yet another warning that God will not forever tolerate the abuse of His goodness.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 7:16 *do not pray*. The time of grace had elapsed. Because the hour of judgment was at hand, Jeremiah was no longer to pray for them. See note, 14:11–13.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 7:18 Describes division of labor in the family. *queen of heaven*. An astral deity and goddess of fertility (possibly Ishtar) in whom the people had put their trust (cf 44:15–19, 25). *drink offerings*. See note, Lv 23:37.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 7:19–20 Their idolatry does not harmfully affect the transcendent Lord, but because it moves Him to punish them for insulting Him, they will suffer.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 7:21–29 Judah's false sense of security stemmed not only from the notion of an inviolate temple (vv 1–15) but also from a perversion of the purpose of the ceremonies performed there by divine decree. Firmly entrenched in their hardened hearts was the pernicious belief that the rites of burnt offerings and sacrifices, mechanically performed, caused God to overlook their refusal to obey all His commands. Though Jeremiah used drastic language to dislodge this heathen distortion of worship forms, he was no more successful than his predecessors, whom God had sent persistently to His stiff-necked people (cf Is 1:11; Am 5:21).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 7:21 *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291. *eat the flesh*. Unlike other sacrifices, all the meat of the animals sacrificed in burnt offerings was to be burned up by fire (see pp 170–71). But since the people's sacrifices had become an abomination to the Lord, it was of little consequence whether or not they refrained from eating what the law prohibited.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 7:22–23 Jeremiah is not denying the divine origin of Israel's sacrificial rites but is trying to arouse his hearers to the danger of attributing magical power to the mechanical offering of sacrifices. The point he categorically denies is that God prescribed ritual worship as a substitute for keeping His Commandments. For similar emphatic rhetoric on the pronouncement that God did not make a covenant with Israel's fathers, see note, Dt 5:22. "God clearly gave the fathers commands about burnt offerings and victims. But Jeremiah condemns the opinion about sacrifices that God had not delivered, namely, that these services please

Him by the outward act. Concerning faith, he adds that God had commanded this: 'Hear Me,' that is, 'believe Me that I am your God, and that I wish to be known when I care for you and help you. I do not need your sacrificial victims. Believe that I want to be God the Justifier and Savior, not because of works, but because of My Word and promise. Truly seek and expect help from Me from the heart' " (Ap XXIV 28). "Such passages do not condemn works, which God certainly had commanded as outward exercises in this government. They condemn the godless opinion that people thought, that by their works they appeased God's wrath, and so cast away faith" (Ap V 86).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 7:23 *walk*. See p 7.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 7:25 *My servants the prophets*. See p 1081–83.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 7:26 *stiffened their neck*. See note, Ex 32:9.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 7:27 *they will not listen*. Jeremiah's preaching was in vain, just as Isaiah's had been (cf Is 6:9–10).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 7:28 *discipline*. Instruction in God's Word. See note, Pr 1:2.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 7:29 *Cut off your hair*. See note, Jb 1:20. *generation of His wrath*. People whose measure of iniquity is full to overflowing (cf Mt 23:32; 1Th 2:16).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 7:1–29 God warns His people that mere possession of the temple and ritual observance of its worship laws will not save them. Without genuine, living faith, it is impossible to please God (Heb 11:6). He creates such faith through His Word. Through faith in Jesus Christ, we are acceptable to Him, and so is our worship. • Father, grant us your Word and Spirit, that our entire lives reflect the saving faith You have given us in Jesus Christ. Amen.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 7:31 *high places*. See p 526. *Topheth*. See note, 2Ki 23:10. *Hinnom*. See notes, Jer 2:23; Mk 9:43.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 7:32 Where they sacrificed their children, they themselves will be slaughtered and buried.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 7:33 The dead are cursed because of their wickedness. Desecration of corpses was considered a grievous calamity. *none will frighten them away*. Evidence of how thorough the slaughter is, since no one is left to care about the dead.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 7:34 On Israelite marriage customs, see pp 54–55.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 8:1–3 The desecrated skeletons of Judah's leaders and citizens bear ironic testimony to the folly of having worshiped astral deities (cf 7:18).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 8:1 *the bones*. Stated five times in this verse, like the tolling of the nation's death knell.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 8:2 *host of heaven*. See note, Dt 4:19.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 8:3 *remnant*. See p 1080. *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 7:30–8:3 God condemns His people for worshiping false gods, even in the temple compound, and for offering their children as burnt offerings to idols. Sin may start small, but it often grows until it takes over a person's life, leading even to such obvious evils as child sacrifice (consider today the abuse and neglect of children, who may be sacrificed to selfish interests). God still wants to save His people, calling them to repentance before the terrible events of His judgment become reality. His own dear Son bravely laid down His life to atone for all our sins. • Help us, Father, to recognize sin in its early stages and turn to You for strength and forgiveness. Amen.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 8:4 Bas: "Do not despair of salvation. Recall your recollection of how it is written in the Scriptures that he who is falling rises and he who turns away returns; the wounded is healed, the prey of beasts escapes; he who owns his sin is not rejected" (*NPNF* 2 8:147).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 8:5 *perpetual backsliding?* Behavior contrary to human experience and common sense. See p 1078.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 8:6 The Lord waited in vain for the people to repent (cf Ps 14:2). *horse plunging headlong*. See note, Jb 39:19.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 8:7 Even migratory birds, acting purely by divinely implanted instinct, are more responsive to their Maker than His rational creatures. *rules*. See p 971.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 8:8 *law*. See p 971. *scribes*. Those capable of writing and responsible for the preservation and exposition of the Law. See pp 719–20. *made it into a lie*. Also translated "deals falsely" (v 10; 6:13). The scribes are not accused of falsifying the content of the documents but of perverting the revealed truth. On the lies of the false prophets, see note, 6:14. False doctrine about the relationship between God and His people inevitably undermines social stability.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 8:10–12 Refrainlike repetition of 6:12–15.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 8:11 See note, 6:14.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 8:12 *abomination?* See note, Pr 6:16.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 8:13 *gather*. Called to repentance and faith. *no grapes*. Cf Is 5:1–7. *what I gave them has passed away*. God will deprive them of the bodily sustenance and inheritance He has provided for them in the past. See "portion," p 7.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 8:14–15 So inevitable is the threatened retribution for their wickedness that Jeremiah already hears the victims of the invasion calling to one another in a vain search for a place of safety. The people realize the error of remaining complacent in their sins rather than returning to the Lord. But it is too late; God has declared His judgment.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 8:15 *We looked for peace*. Perhaps a popular saying expressing the disillusionment of trust in a false security. *peace … healing*. See note, 6:14; see also "peace," p 7.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 8:17 *serpents, adders*. Babylonians.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 8:4–17 God's people still do not repent and turn back to Him in faith, so His judgment will fall upon them with full force. Possession of God's Word cannot save them because their teachers have misrepresented it. Today, God gives us His Word to reveal His Son, our Savior, and to lead us in all righteousness. Through the study of His Word, He blesses us with repentance and life. • O Lord, grant us sound teachers, and keep us steadfast in Your Word. Amen.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 8:18–22 The vision of the coming calamity is so vivid that Jeremiah is filled with grief. Israel's self-inflicted wound is incurable. The best balm and the ablest physician cannot heal the fatal malignancy. The end is at hand because the Lord's anger is coming upon His unfaithful people.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 8:19 *Zion?* See p 844. *King*. See pp 1565–66.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 8:20 Apparently a proverbial saying; Jeremiah hears the people in exile apply it to their situation when they despair of deliverance.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 8:22 *balm in Gilead?* The territory east of the Jordan was famous for producing and exporting a tree gum, or spice, prized for its healing qualities (cf Dt 2:36; Ezk 27:17).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 9:2 *travelers' lodging place*. See note, Ex 4:24. *adulterers*. Infidelity to God (idolatry) was the root cause of the catalog of

crimes against fellow human beings listed in the following verses. See notes, Jer 2:2, 20.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 9:3 *do not know*. They do not even recognize or acknowledge the Lord and so cannot trust in Him.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 9:4 *deceiver*. Israel reverted to the deceptive nature of their ancestor Jacob. For the wordplay on the meaning of his name, see ESV notes, Gn 25:26; 27:36.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 9:7 *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291. *refine … test*. To remove the dross of sin (6:27–30).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 9:9 *avenge*. See note, Is 1:24.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 9:10–11 Jeremiah speaks the words of v 10; then quotes the Lord in v 11.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 9:14 *Baals*. See note, Nu 25:3.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 9:15 *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291. *bitter food*. See note, Pr 5:4.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 9:16 Cf 2Ki 17.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 9:17 *skillful women*. Trained to lead the mourning at funerals (cf Mt 9:23).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 9:19 God's inspired spokesman not only predicts the Babylonian exile but also anticipates how disgraced the exiles will be after their defeat. *Zion*. See p 844.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 9:21 Death is personified to dramatize wholesale slaughter by the enemy. Cf 15:7–9; 18:21; see notes, Jb 18:13, 19–20.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 9:23 *wise man*. See pp 775–78.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 9:24 *knows Me*. Ger: "Knowledge is not merely historical but also practical, not of the letter but of the spirit, not unworking and idle but working and effective, that is, it embraces true faith in Christ inwardly in the heart [Jn 17:3] and commends itself outwardly through a zeal for good works" (ThC E2 § 3).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 9:25 *circumcised merely in the flesh*. Though physically marked by the sign of the covenant (Gn 17:11), the people were no better than the heathen. See note, 4:4.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 9:26 Israelites were not the only people to circumcise. See note, Ex 4:25. *cut the corners of their hair*. A forbidden heathen custom.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 8:18–9:26 The Lord grieves over the sin of His people, which will cause their destruction. Although it breaks His heart,

God must punish unrepentant sinners because He is just and righteous. Yet the Lord yearns to forgive His people. Today, repent and turn to Him with all your heart. Though the Lord's testing is painful, He promises to refine you through Christ. • Teach us, O Lord, to rely on You alone for our salvation, and lead us every day to live our faith in thought, word, and deed, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 10:1–16 Jeremiah's longest and most scathing exposé of Israel's trusting in idols. Similar in tone and content to Isaiah's satires on idolatry (Is 40:18–20; 41:7; 44:9–17; 45:20; cf Ps 115:3–8; 135:15–18).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 10:1 *Israel*. See note, Gn 32:28.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 10:2 *way*. Conduct or lifestyle; one of Jeremiah's characteristic expressions (e.g., 2:36; 3:21; 4:18; 5:4; 6:27; 7:3, 5, 23). See p 844. *signs of the heavens*. Eclipses of the sun and moon were considered omens of disaster. Superstitious idol worshipers were dismayed at them, but still they did not fear the true God, maker of heaven and earth.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 10:3 *vanity*. One of Jeremiah's favorite terms for idols; also translated "worthless" (v 15; 51:18), "worthlessness" (2:5), "foreign idols" (8:19), and "false gods" (14:22). Isaiah does not use the word in this sense. See note, Ec 1:2.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 10:7 *O King*. See pp 1565–66. *all the wise ones*. Sarcastic allusion to the superhuman knowledge attributed to the idols. There were so many of them that they were ranked according to authority and power so as to constitute kingdoms or hierarchies.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 10:9 *Tarshish*. See note, 1Ki 10:22; cf Ezk 27:12. *Uphaz*. Location unknown. Perhaps it is the same as Ophir, renowned for its gold (see note, 1Ki 9:28). *violet and purple*. See p 141. The idols were regally clothed, like dolls.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 10:10 *living God*. See note, Jsh 3:10. *King*. See pp 1565–66. Ambr: "We ought to believe that God is good, eternal, perfect, almighty, and true, such as we find Him in the Law and the Prophets, and the rest of the holy Scriptures, for otherwise there is no God" (*NPNF* 2 10:203).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 10:11 Verse composed not in Hbr but in Aram, the language of international diplomacy already at the time of Isaiah (see note, 2Ki 18:26; see also pp 719–20). Jeremiah anticipated the needs of the people in exile, which he describes so graphically. If the Israelites would

say these words to their captors, who tempted them to worship idols in Babylon, their answer in Aram would be understood.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 10:12 *by His wisdom*. See note, Pr 8:22.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 10:13 *storehouses*. Figurative language. Cf Ps 33:7; Jb 37:9.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 10:15 *work of delusion*. Found also in 51:18 but nowhere else in the OT; Jeremiah coined this phrase to brand idols as objects of derision.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 10:17 *bundle*. The exiles would be allowed to take with them only a few personal belongings as they set out on the trip to Babylon.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 10:18 *slinging out*. God is about to drive the inhabitants out of the city after it has been under siege by the enemy.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 10:19 *Woe*. See p 1080. *affliction*. Lit, "sickness." Recovery from it did not come as quickly as the afflicted first thought. See note, 6:14.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 10:20 *tent … cords*. See note, 4:20. In Is 54:2, the same figure of speech is used for the promise of restoration. *curtains*. Walls of a tent.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 10:21 *shepherds*. Leaders. See note, 2:8. *inquire of the* LORD. See "seek," p 843.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 10:22 In spirit, the prophet hears the great commotion created by the onslaught of the enemy invading from the north (see note, 1:13–14).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 10:23–24 People cannot change their ways themselves. Speaking for the people, Jeremiah asks God to temper His anger with justice and mercy in view of the innate weakness of human nature. Chem: "It is not in man's power, even when he has heard the Word, to undertake any spiritual movements unless God through His Spirit teach him inwardly" (*LTh* 1:234).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 10:24 *in justice*. Restrained by pity. See p 842.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 10:25 *Pour out*. See note, Ps 79:6.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 10** Jeremiah contrasts the one true God with idols. Like scarecrows, idols are inanimate objects crafted by human hands. They have no power to harm or to help. God is all-powerful, so no one can escape His justice and judgment. Because of the people's apostasy, God will bring His power to bear against them and their leaders. Yet God is

so great, He can also do the impossible: save sinners without violating His own righteousness (cf Rm 3:21–26). • Turn our eyes and hearts, O Lord, from the worthless vanities of this world to You, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 11** Jeremiah tries to rouse his hearers from their fatal complacency by labeling their apostasy a revolt against God. Their unfaithfulness is not a sin of momentary weakness but a deliberate conspiracy to defy God's claim to their loyalty.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 11:2 *covenant*. See p 127. Occurring four more times in the next eight verses, this term encompasses everything essential to the relationship the Lord established with His people. It is also used as a synonym for biblical religion (cf Gn 6:18; 17:2, 10; Ex 24:6–8; Dt 29:1). The Book of the Covenant was found in the temple early in Jeremiah's career (2Ki 22:8; 23:2).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 11:3 *Cursed*. The rebels against God's lordship made themselves liable to the threats of punishment clearly stated in Ex 20:5; Dt 27:15–26; 28:15–68. See p 6.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 11:4 *iron furnace*. See note, Dt 4:20.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 11:5 *oath*. See p 7. *flowing with milk and honey*. See p 6.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 11:10 *iniquities of their forefathers*. Cf Ex 32. *house of Israel … Judah*. See note, 3:7.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 11:13 *Baal*. See notes, Nu 14:11–13; 25:3.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 11:14 *do not pray*. See note, 7:16.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 11:15 *My beloved*. See the theme in Hos intro, pp 1427–28. *sacrificial flesh*. Offered in various kinds of rites. See pp 170–71.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 11:17 *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291. *Baal*. See note, Nu 25:3.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 11:18–23 The Lord reveals to Jeremiah that his own townspeople of Anathoth are plotting to kill him. It is not surprising that rebels conspiring to dethrone God should also seek to silence His messenger. Jeremiah does not desire personal revenge; he would have given his life to save his people. Nevertheless, as God's spokesman, his cause is also God's cause. Those who tell him not to prophesy are in effect telling God He has no right to impose His will on them. God vindicates His prophet's jealous zeal for his Lord by ordering Jeremiah to declare the

punishments of death and disaster for the people of Anathoth. See note, Is 1:24. Jesus also pronounced woes on His adversaries (cf Mt 23:33).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 11:20 *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291. *tests*. See note, Gn 22:1.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 11** The people break God's covenant, incurring the curses pronounced when their ancestors entered the Promised Land. Persistent apostasy can have only one outcome: God's judgment. Yet the Lord also stands ready to forgive His people and rescue them from impending disaster, if only they repent and return to Him in faith. • Dear Father, grant us Your Holy Spirit to work daily repentance in us and to keep us faithful to You. Amen.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 12:1 *Righteous*. See p 843. *Why … prosper?* Though Jeremiah committed his cause to the Lord, he was perplexed by the delay in the administration of divine justice. Jeremiah was not the first nor the last to question whether the prosperity of the wicked can be harmonized with God's justice. See pp 779–82; cf Ps 10; 37; 73; 94; Hab 1. Ger: "[God] does all things justly, though we do not always observe the reason of His justice" (ThC E2 § 242).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 12:2 *You plant them*. In dismay, Jeremiah reaches the point of accusing God. *near in their mouth*. Judgment on hypocrisy.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 12:4 *He will not see*. Pronoun refers either to God (i.e., "He does not shape our destiny") or to His prophet (i.e., "He will not live to see his predictions of our death come true").

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 12:1–4 Jeremiah struggles to understand how a righteous God can tolerate the wicked and even allow them to prosper. Often we are unable to understand God's justice or reconcile God's providence with the evil we experience. We do not see the big picture, and our own sense of right and wrong gets terribly twisted by sin. Yet take heart. God continually works in the world for justice and for the salvation of people, something He guarantees by the cross of Christ. • Teach us to be patient, Lord, when we do not understand "why." Lead us to the cross of Christ Jesus, and help us trust You always. Amen.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 12:5 God does not owe nor does He give Jeremiah a direct answer to his question of "why?" (v 1). The problem would not exist if Jeremiah had a firm, unquestioning faith in God's superior wisdom and limitless power to do the right thing at the right time. Jeremiah must learn to trust God's management of affairs if he is going to

survive even more severe tests of faith in the future. *thicket of the Jordan?* The banks of the Jordan were a dense jungle, a hiding place for Asiatic lions.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 12:7–8 It grieved God to see the love He showered on His chosen people abused so maliciously that He had to "hate" them for their open rebellion against Him.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 12:7 *My house … heritage*. See "portion," p 7.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 12:8 *lion in the forest*. See note, v 5.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 12:9 Judah is like a carcass; its bones will be picked clean.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 12:10 *shepherds*. See notes, 2:8; 6:3; cf 23:1. *portion*. See p 7.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 12:14–17 The enemy nations who ravish the Promised Land of God's people will be subjected to the same judgment in store for Israel. Yet they, too, will be included in the worldwide salvation to be mediated by Abraham's offspring Jesus Christ (Gal 3:16). If these nations accept the ways of the God of Israel, they will be incorporated into the people of God, a spiritual community without racial distinctions or geographical boundaries. So all believers, whether Jew or Gentile, will be saved (cf 16:19; Rm 11; see note, Is 2:2).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 12:14 *heritage*. See "portion," p 7.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 12:15 *compassion*. See "mercy," pp 842–43.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 12:16 *swear*. See note, 4:2. *Baal*. See note, Nu 25:3.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 12:5–17 God delays punishment of His people, allowing them plenty of time and opportunity to repent and return to Him in faith. Failing that, He will give them over to their enemies, and justice will be served—the land will be laid waste and its inhabitants exiled. God cannot be mocked. Sinners who resist His grace will face judgment and eternal condemnation. God is not slow to act but patiently waits for people to turn to Him and be saved. His pleasure is in our salvation. • Anchor us in Your love, O Lord, and teach us the wisdom of obedience to Your will. Amen.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 13:1 *loincloth*. An undergarment worn directly on the loins, symbolizing the closeness of God to His chosen people. Here, the material for the object lesson. *do not dip*. He was not to wash it, which would delay the corrosive action needed for the illustration.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 13:4 *Euphrates*. River on which Babylon was located. See map, p 717. In order to reach it, Jeremiah had to travel c 400 mi. Thus, some propose that the Hbr word for Euphrates (*perath*) here refers to Parah, a town only a few miles north of Jerusalem (cf Jsh 18:23). For another symbolic act carried out in full view of the people, cf 27:2. See p 1220.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 13:10 Like the loincloth that was spoiled by exposure to the disintegrating elements, the people had reached such a state of spiritual decay that they were not worth saving. As a useless garment is thrown on the refuse heap, so Judah would be thrown to their enemies.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 13:11 *loincloth clings*. Tightly wrapped. See note, v 1. *a name*. See p 843.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 13:1–11 Jeremiah uses a loincloth to illustrate God's judgment against His people. The new loincloth, ruined by the elements, now resembles the spiritual condition of God's people. As a result, God will treat them like a person treats rags. Today, we often fail to see the effect of sin in our lives until the Law, like an illustration, shows us our sins. In spite of our ruined state, God loves us so much that He sent His Son to die for us (Rm 5:8) and cleanse us from all sin. • Keep us from sin, O Lord, and daily renew us in our Baptism. Amen.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 13:12–14 Jeremiah's parable states that an empty jar must be filled. So the Lord will fill the people with drunkenness, rendering them unable to distinguish friend from foe and dooming them to die without pity or compassion.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 13:13 *drunkenness*. The execution of divine judgment is described as the stupefying result of having drunk from the cup of God's wrath (cf 25:15; 48:26; 49:12; 51:7; Ps 60:3; Is 51:17, 21; 63:6). See note, Is 51:17. *kings … priests … prophets*. See p 228. *David's throne*. See note, Jer 17:25.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 13:12–14 The Lord uses the image of a full jar of wine to illustrate the fullness of His judgment against His people. No one, rich or poor, will be spared from the coming wrath. The time for repentance eventually runs out, and unrepentant sinners must then face the fullness of God's justice. Do not test the Lord's kindness, but call on Him today with a repentant heart. The cup He longs to pour out for you is that of the new testament in His blood for the forgiveness of sins. • Lord Jesus, teach us to hunger and thirst for Your righteousness. Amen.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 13:16 *Give glory*. Confess faith in Him by declaring His praises. See "Praise the Lord," p 843, and "glory," p 1902.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 13:18 *king and the queen mother*. Jehoiachin (Coniah) and his mother. They will be stripped of their royal insignia. For the influence wielded by the queen, see note, 1Ki 2:18.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 13:19 In the sixth century BC, Arabs began to drive the Edomites out of their ancestral territory so that they invaded Judah (cf 49:7–22; Ezk 35). Cities surrounding Jerusalem would be shut up by besieging invaders even as far south as the Negeb. *wholly taken into exile*. Cf 2Ki 24:8–17; Jer 29:2.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 13:20–27 God will make the people realize that the disgrace and violence they suffer are not accidents of history but the execution of divine justice on the magnitude of their sin. God could not do otherwise, for they were permanently depraved. They could no more change their behavior than a leopard can get rid of its spots. Therefore, they will know that the dreadful lot in store for them, though apparently due to the superior might of the enemy, will be dealt them by the Lord because He will no longer tolerate their abominations and adulteries.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 13:20 *from the north*. Babylonians. *flock*. Israel's kings are called shepherds of the people (cf 10:21; 23:1–4). See p 228.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 13:22 *skirts are lifted up*. Apparently a prostitute would be humiliated in public this way.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 13:24 *chaff*. See note, Ps 1:4.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 13:25 *portion*. See p 7. *lies*. The word used for false gods in 10:14.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 13:27 *abominations*. See note, Pr 6:16. *hills*. See p 526. *clean?* See p 6.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 13:15–27 The Lord has determined to send His people into exile because of their arrogance and idolatry. Their rebellion against Him is so ingrained that it has become part of their nature, like spots on a leopard. Indeed, sin is more than skin-deep—it corrupts the depths of our hearts. However, the Lord has provided for our cleansing through Holy Baptism. He restores us by His faithful Word and makes us a new creation in Christ. • Teach us humility, Father, and create us anew in the image of Your beloved Son. Amen.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 14:1 *drought*. Hbr "droughts." The plural may indicate its severity and duration. Apparently it occurred within memory of

Jeremiah's contemporaries.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 14:2 *gates*. Figurative expression for the inhabitants of the walled cities. See note, 2Ki 7:1.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 14:3 *cisterns*. See notes, 2:13; 2Ki 3:16. *cover their heads*. Expression of grief.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 14:7–10 The chastened people profess sorrow for their sins. Yet the Lord knows the true condition of their hearts and remembers their wanton disobedience. Failing to heed His call to sincere repentance, they should expect no more than His punishment. Cf 2:27; see note, 5:3.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 14:7 *for Your name's sake*. Cf Ezk 20:9, 14, 22, 44; see p 842. *backslidings*. See note, 8:5.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 14:8 *savior*. See pp 380–81; see also note, Jgs 2:16.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 14:9 *You … are in the midst of us*. See "be with," p 5. *called by Your name*. See note, Nu 6:27.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 14:10 *wander*. Stray from the ways of the Lord; see note, 6:16.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 14:11–13 The Lord instructs Jeremiah not to intercede for his people. Yet Jeremiah continues to wrestle with God, as Abraham once did on behalf of doomed Sodom (Gn 18:22–33). He dares to approach the divine Judge again, with a new argument. He pleads for leniency for the masses because they have been misled by false prophets (v 13). However, the people have no excuse for rejecting the doctrines the Lord has persistently taught them (cf 7:13; 25:3; 35:14). For denunciations of heretical teachers, cf 5:12–13; 8:11.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 14:11 *Do not pray*. See note, 7:16.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 14:12 *fast*. Cf Is 58. *offering*. See pp 170–71. *pestilence*. See note, Ps 91:3.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 14:1–12 Jeremiah describes a drought and its effect on the land and its inhabitants. As a result of their sins, the people do not deserve God's help, but in his prayer for aid, Jeremiah appeals to God's faithfulness (v 13). Today, those who insist on a life of rebellion and self-will must eventually face God's judgment against them. As you pray for others, take heart that the Lord does not delight in destroying sinners but works continually to turn them to Him for salvation in Jesus Christ. • Grant

us persistence in faith and prayer, O Lord. Upon the drought of our soul, pour out Your most gracious favor and joy, through Jesus Christ. Amen.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 14:17 *virgin daughter*. God promised to keep His chosen people inviolate for His holy purposes, but they were unfaithful. *wound*. See note, 6:14.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 14:18 The prophets and priests should have instructed the people, led them to repentance, and "healed" them of their sin. See note, Lv 10:11; cf Dt 33:10.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 14:19–22 Jeremiah hears the humbled people confess their guilt, reject false gods, plead for healing, and affirm their hope in the true God, though this did not come about until after the ruin of the nation.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 14:19 *Zion?* See p 844. *We looked for peace*. See note, 8:15.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 14:21 *for Your name's sake*. Cf Ezk 20:9, 14, 22, 44; see p 842. *glorious throne*. In the temple. Cf Jer 17:12; see note, Ezk 10:1. *covenant*. See p 127.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 14:22 *rain?* See note, Mt 5:45.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 14:13–22 Jeremiah expresses his frustration over false prophets who tell the people that peace lies ahead, though Jeremiah has warned them that destruction is coming. People need to know they are sinners, condemned by God's Law. Then, crushed by the Law, the repentant sinner is ready for the Gospel, the healing Word of God that grants abiding peace. • Lead us to share Your Word faithfully, O Lord, and bear witness to Your grace in Jesus Christ. Amen.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 15:1 *Moses and Samuel*. Great prophets who successfully intervened on behalf of Israel. *turn*. See p 1080.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 15:2 *pestilence*. See note, Ps 91:3.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 15:4 *Manasseh*. Wicked king of Judah (cf 2Ki 21:1–18; 2Ch 33:1–20) and grandfather of Josiah, who was the king at this point in Jeremiah's ministry (1:1–2).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 15:6 *weary of relenting*. As at the time of the flood, God would no longer allow His mercy to be abused (cf Gn 6:5–7). See "relent," pp 1079–80.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 15:7 *winnowed*. Scattered them as worthless chaff carried off by the wind during threshing operations. See notes, 4:11–12.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 15:9 *bore seven*. Number used proverbially to express many sons (cf Ru 4:15). Mothers so blessed would see their sons struck down in the prime of life.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 15:1–9 God responds to Jeremiah's prayer for the people. They have refused to repent and return to Him; therefore, He will destroy them. God is righteous—He keeps His Word—and He will bring down the curses He threatened (Dt 28:15–68). "But God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Rm 5:8).
• Lift up our hearts, O Lord, and fill us with Your Holy Spirit, that we may rejoice in Your salvation and live for You. Amen.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 15:10–21 Jeremiah bares his troubled soul to God, who reproves and rehabilitates His disenchanted servant. The record of sheer warnings, delivered over and over again to an impenitent audience, helps us understand why the preacher of these ignored sermons went to pieces under the emotional strain of his frustrating assignment. In a delirium of pent-up anger, he utters such strong words against God as to make him liable to the charge of blasphemy. No longer an "iron pillar" (1:18) but a broken reed, he resents God's way of administering justice. His faith hangs by a thread. Though he rants against God, Jeremiah still turns to Him for an answer to his problem.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 15:10 *Woe*. See p 1080. *bore me*. Job also cursed the day of his birth (see note, 20:14). *lent … borrowed*. Jeremiah's associates might have had a reason to curse him if he had taken advantage of them in financial transactions.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 15:11 *Have I not set you free for their good?* Or, "Have I not strengthened you for good?" Hbr scribes recognized a spelling problem that affected the clarity of their manuscripts here. Modern translators have made numerous conjectures on the intent of this phrase. *Have I not pleaded for you*. Or, "Have I not caused an attack on you?" Either the Lord is comforting Jeremiah because He is supporting him amid troubles, or He is causing these troubles to accomplish a greater good through the prophet. Cf 21:1–2; 37:3; 42:1–2 for requests by Jeremiah's enemies to intercede for them.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 15:12 Babylonian invaders would have an unbreakable grip on their victims.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 15:15 *remember … visit*. See p 843. *take vengeance*. See note, 11:18–23.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 15:16 *I ate them*. As food is assimilated by the body, so God's words permeated Jeremiah's innermost being, bringing him joy and delight. *Lord … of hosts*. See p 1291.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 15:17 *Your hand*. Jeremiah's message was not of his own concoction but was impelled by divine commission and authority. Cf Is 8:11; Ezk 3:14; 8:1; see "hand," p 842.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 15:18 God does not answer the questions. His children "walk by faith, not by sight" (2Co 5:7). *pain … wound*. See notes, 6:14; 8:18–22. *deceitful brook*. Jeremiah is tempted to think that "the fountain of living waters" (2:13; 17:13) has become as "treacherous as a torrent-bed" (Jb 6:15), which quickly runs dry.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 15:19–21 God does not fail to come to the rescue of His blustering spokesman. Without explaining the mystery of divine providence, the Lord beckons Jeremiah to return from the wasteland of doubt to an implicit trust in Him and in the promises He made to the prophet when He called him. It will not be a life of ease, for evil men will continue to fight against him. Yet the Lord will save and deliver him.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 15:20 *wall of bronze*. See note, 1:18. *I am with you*. See "be with," p 5. *save … deliver*. See p 842.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 15:21 *redeem*. See p 843.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 15:10–21 Jeremiah complains that everyone stands against him because of his negative message. He comes close to accusing God of deceiving him into thinking that his job as prophet was going to be easier than it has been. God calls Jeremiah to repentance for his doubt and promises to strengthen him for the work ahead. We, too, are often weak and afraid to proclaim God's Word boldly, fearing the reprisals we might suffer. God's grace is sufficient for our weakness, and His Holy Spirit empowers us to share His Word faithfully. • Grant us repentance and courage, Lord, and strengthen us to do Your work in joy and confidence, through Jesus Christ. Amen.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 16:1–9 In order to be a living sign of the fearful disaster announced by the spoken word (cf Ezk 24:24), God commands Jeremiah to make three drastic lifestyle changes that ran contrary to the customary patterns of social behavior: (1) forego marriage, because whole families would be wiped out by war and disease; (2) refuse to observe the rituals expected at funerals, because death would be so widespread that no one would survive to perform the customary mourning rites; (3) reject

invitations to a house where feasting was going on because there would no longer be any reason for joyous celebrations.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 16:2 Jeremiah is the only prophet known to have received such a command.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 16:4 See note, 7:33.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 16:5 *house of mourning*. Refers to pagan Marzeah feasts. See notes, Is 51:17; Am 6:7. *peace*. See note, 6:14. *steadfast love … mercy*. See pp 842–43.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 16:6 *cut … make himself bald*. Such heathen mourning practices are also mentioned in the Babylonian Epic of Gilgamesh but are contrary to Mosaic Law. Cf 48:37; see notes, Lv 19:27–28; 21:5.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 16:7 *cup of consolation*. At a meal prepared by friends of the bereaved family, the guests drank from a common cup of wine to express their sharing in the grief.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 16:8 *house of feasting*. See note, v 5; cf v 9.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 16:9 *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 16:13 *favor*. See p 6.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 16:1–13 Jeremiah's actions will reinforce his words of judgment and condemnation. Persistent sin can only result in condemnation by God and loss of all joy. God alone will provide strength for Jeremiah in his difficult ministry, just as He provides all we need in Jesus Christ. He is the blessed Bridegroom for His beloved Bride, the Church. • Strengthen us, O Lord, to do Your will, and bring all parts of our lives into harmony with our faith in Jesus Christ. Amen.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 16:14–15 A brief burst of messianic sunlight breaks through the lowering skies of darkest gloom (cf 3:14, 18–19; 4:27; 5:10, 18; 27:22; 31:31; 33:14).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 16:14 *As the Lord lives*. An oath formula. See "oath," p 7.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 16:15 The return from exile would become the new, great example of redemption instead of the exodus from Egypt (v 14).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 16:16 The executioners of divine judgment will catch the people as easily as fishers fill their nets, and they will search out any that remain as hunters track down their quarry.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 16:18 *doubly*. To the first punishment inflicted on the people in their homeland, the Lord would add a second, unprecedented

feature: exile to a foreign land. *carcasses*. Idols, as helpless and lifeless as dead bodies, polluted the land in the same way that a person became ceremonially unclean by contact with a corpse (cf Nu 19:11–22). *inheritance*. See "portion," p 7. *abominations*. See note, Pr 6:16.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 16:19–20 Looking into the future, Jeremiah rejoiced to see the time coming when all nations would reject their man-made idols and worship the only true God. Jeremiah's vision was fulfilled in Christ.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 16:21 The Lord assured Jeremiah that the manifestation of His might and power would bring multitudes to know Him.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 16:14–21 God's grace will be known by all people—both the Judean exiles returning from a foreign land and by heathen nations who turn to the true God. However, the Lord will first deal with their sin of idolatry by destroying the people of Judah and desolating the land. God's righteousness requires the legal penalty for sin to be paid (cf Rm 6:23a). Yet God delights in mercy. He Himself paid for sin in the cross of Christ and forgives sin through faith in Him (cf Rm 6:23b). • Thank You, heavenly Father, for our Savior Jesus Christ and for Your Holy Spirit, who has brought us to faith and keeps us in the same. Amen.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 17:1 *pen of iron … diamond*. Their pattern of evil was ingrained as deeply as an inscription chiseled into stone or metal. The Copper Scroll from Qumran (3Q15) and a metallic bottle from Tell Siran, Ammon, are examples of engraved documents. See note, Pr 1:9. *horns of their altars*. The blood of sacrificial offerings, applied in a purely outward ritual of atonement, could not erase their sins. Only penitent worshipers were assured of forgiveness. Cf Lv 4:7; 16:18; see note, Ex 27:2.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 17:2 *Asherim*. See note, Ex 34:13. *high hills*. See p 526.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 17:4 *heritage*. See "portion," p 7.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 17:5 *Cursed*. See p 6. *flesh his strength*. Cf Is 40:6; Ps 103:15–16. Trust in human resources is foolish idolatry. Ter: "He forbids all implicit trust in man, and likewise in the applause of man" (*ANF* 3:369).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 17:7 *Blessed*. See p 842.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 17:9 *desperately sick*. One word in Hbr, translated "incurable" in 15:18; 30:12. See note, Ps 19:12–13. Chem: "It

refers to an incurable evil and a disease for which there is no hope of cure" (*LTh* 1:288). "Our churches teach that naming every sin is not necessary and that consciences should not be burdened with worry about naming every sin… . If only sins that can be named are forgiven, consciences could never find peace. For many sins cannot be seen or remembered" (AC XXV 7, 9).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 17:10 Aug: "From You, O Lord, unto whose eyes the depths of man's conscience are naked, what in me could be hidden though I were unwilling to confess to You? For so should I hide You from myself, not myself from You. But now, because my groaning witnesses that I am dissatisfied with myself, You shine forth, and satisfy, and are beloved and desired; that I may blush for myself, and renounce myself, and choose You, and may neither please You nor myself, except in You" (*NPNF* 1 1:142). Ger: "The omniscient God sees the most intimate, most secret recesses of the heart. We must, then, beware of the hypocrisy that veils the secret wickedness of the heart with the external appearance of honesty" (ThC E2 § 257).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 17:12 *throne*. See note, Ezk 10:1.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 17:13 *written in the earth*. Their sin is recorded in stone (v 1), but their memorial is merely scratched in the dust and so soon forgotten. Yet the Lord writes the names of the repentant in the Book of Life and engraves them on His palms (Rv 21:27; Is 49:16).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 17:1–13 The Lord explains to Jeremiah and His people the severity and magnitude of their sin. Those who turn away from the Lord must perish; only the person who trusts God and follows His Word will survive in eternity. Today, God continues to offer hope to people who turn away from sin and seek His forgiveness. They will be blessed and will flourish by His grace. • Father, do not let the enticements and pressures of the world separate us from You and Your love for us in Jesus Christ. Amen.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 17:14 *Heal*. See note, 6:14.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 17:15–16 Jeremiah pleads for the Lord's understanding while his accusers brand him a false prophet.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 17:17 *refuge*. See "rock," p 843.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 17:18 *day of disaster*. When Babylon takes Jerusalem. *double destruction!* See notes, 16:18; Is 40:2.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 17:14–18 Jeremiah prays for vindication from God and for justice against his accusers. He bristles against the injustice of being punished for doing God's will. God's Word often creates opposition in this world, as it did for Jeremiah and even for Jesus (Jn 7:7). Yet God does not abandon His faithful servants, though sometimes they must suffer and even die for their faith. Even then, the Lord is our refuge and strength. • Do not let us become afraid or discouraged, Father, but fill us with courage from Your Holy Spirit. Amen.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 17:19 Jeremiah is to confront the people at the gates of Jerusalem, where they would enter and leave the city. *People's Gate*. Likely refers to an entrance to be used by all, whether prince or pauper, priest or layperson. Some commentators and translators have confused this gate with the Benjamin Gate (20:2; 37:13) because the Hbr spellings are similar.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 17:21 *burden*. Likely consisted of articles to be offered for sale by greedy merchants (cf 6:13; 22:17). *Sabbath day*. See pp 200–201.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 17:22 *keep the Sabbath*. The keeping of this commandment served as a touchstone of obedience (see note, Ex 20:8). Chem: "The general principle is: Do not perform works which hinder the ministry or stubbornly carry on needless labor. For if we are to support the practice of public worship, then we must give up those activities which hinder this worship" (*LTh* 2:389). *holy*. See p 7.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 17:23 *stiffened their neck*. See note, Ex 32:9.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 17:25 *sit on the throne of David*. Part of David's dynasty. See note, 2Sm 7:11.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 17:26 See color map 2. *offerings*. See pp 170–71. *frankincense*. See note, Lv 2:1.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 17:19–27 The Sabbath was a day of rest and worship under Mosaic Law (cf Ex 20:8–11; Dt 5:12–15). God set it aside as a blessing for His people. By continuing commerce on the Sabbath just as on any other day, God's people broke the covenant and turned their backs on Him. Rest and worship are essential for the spiritual health and welfare of God's people. The Gospel of Jesus Christ draws us together in public worship so that we might rejoice in our salvation and return to our callings with renewed confidence. • Our souls are restless, Lord, until they rest in You. Refresh us through Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 18:1–11 Jeremiah is sent to a potter to receive an object lesson in the principles of divine government, according to which God makes and keeps both His promises and threats.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 18:1 *word that came*. See note, 1:9.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 18:3 *working at his wheel*. Only biblical reference to a potter's wheel for molding clay.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 18:4–6 Chem: "God has us in His hand as a potter has a lump of clay. He works the clay so we might grow into a holy temple of God, Eph. 2:21. But we, while in the hands of God, who is fashioning us, destroy His work, Rom. 14:20; and God breaks in pieces that ruined vessel and throws it in with the rest of the unformed mass, Ps 2:9. But soon He turned and picked up that clay and 'made it into another vessel as seemed good to Him,' Jer. 18:4… . These words certainly should not be twisted to teach that God is the cause of sin" (*LTh* 1:199). Ger: "God is an utterly free agent; therefore we should not reduce His works to the calculations of our reason nor rashly demand of Him an account of His actions" (ThC E2 § 284).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 18:4 The potter did not immediately discard the clay when it turned into an unsatisfactory product. So also the Lord reserves for Himself the right to have mercy on His chosen nation, or any other nation marred by evil.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 18:7–9 *pluck up and break down … build and plant*. God uses words by which He called Jeremiah to be His ambassador. See note, 1:10.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 18:8 *relent*. See pp 1079–80.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 18:11 *Return*. See p 1080. *amend*. Lit, "make good."
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 18:12 The negative answer Jeremiah received to his solemn declaration from the Lord was evidence that the hearts of his hearers, hardened by stubbornness and self-will, were not malleable for reworking. Cf 7:24; 9:13–14; 11:8; 13:10; 16:12; 23:17.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 18:13 *virgin Israel*. See note, 14:17. *Israel*. See note, Gn 32:28.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 18:14–15 Contrasts the constancy of inanimate creation with the inconstancy of God's people, who turned away from their Creator to man-made idols.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 18:14 *Sirion?* Snow-capped Mount Hermon (see note, Dt 3:8). See also color map 2.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 18:17 *east wind*. Cf 4:11; see notes, Jb 1:19; 27:21. *show them My back*. See note, Is 45:15.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 18:18 Jeremiah's indictment only increased Israel's resistance to being reworked (v 4). The spiritual leaders rejected Jeremiah's claim that they were deceiving the people (cf 4:9–10; 8:8–12; 14:13–18). Hostility toward God's messenger grew from passive stubbornness (v 12) to plots designed to silence him forever. Rather than heed his words, they agreed to use them against him on trumped-up charges. Opponents of Jesus also sought "to trap Him in His talk" and accused Him of serious, punishable offenses (Mk 12:13; cf Lk 23:2).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 18:19–23 For protection against the wicked leaders and their plots against his life, Jeremiah turns to the Lord, who had promised to protect him and make him strong against his opponents.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 18:20 *pit*. Method of trapping animals, commonly mentioned in the Psalms. *stood before You*. Jeremiah interceded for his people until forbidden to do so (7:16; 11:14).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 18:21 The punishment God threatened to inflict (and later did) was no less gruesome. Cf 14:16. *their children*. Lit, "their sons." See note, 6:11.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 18:22 *snares*. See note, Ps 64:5.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 18:23 *Forgive not*. There comes a time when God no longer overlooks the sin of those who harden their hearts (cf Ps 95:8; 2Co 6:1–2; Heb 3:7–18). See notes, 7:16; 15:6.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 18** Committed to their idolatry and self-centered lifestyles, the Judeans refuse to respond to the Lord's gracious invitation to repent of their sin. Their rejection of God is plainly seen in their mistreatment of His prophet Jeremiah. Those who proclaim God's Word faithfully will likely face persecution. Yet believers stand in grace, confident of God's love. He makes us a new creation just as a potter reworks a lump of clay. • Anchor us in Christ crucified, O Lord, and keep us faithful to You. Shape our lives through Jesus, our Savior. Amen.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 19:1–13 Jeremiah acted out the threatened punishment of Judah in another dramatized parable. Jeremiah prefaced the symbolic action with a scathing denunciation of his people's heinous crimes.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 19:1 *elders*. See p 228.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 19:2 *Potsherd Gate*. Likely another name for the Dung Gate, which led to the city dump in the Hinnom Valley (see notes, 2:23; Jsh 18:16; Mk 9:43; cf Ne 2:13; 3:13–14).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 19:3 *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 19:4 *innocents*. Children who did not deserve to be executed.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 19:5 *high places*. See p 526. *Baal*. See note, Nu 25:3. *burn their sons*. See notes, 2:23; 2Ki 3:27.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 19:6 See note, Is 30:33.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 19:8 *hissed at*. See p 1276.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 19:10–11 The Egyptians would write curses on clay vessels and then smash them to symbolize the destruction of their enemy. At God's command, Jeremiah performs a similar symbolic act. See p 1220.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 19:13 *host of heaven*. See note, Dt 4:19.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 19:14–15 Jeremiah wanted this oracle of doom to reach the largest possible audience, so he prophesied in the temple court (see note, 7:2), where people gathered for services and festivals.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 19:15 *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291. *stiffened their neck*. See note, Ex 32:9.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 19** Jeremiah proclaims God's judgment against His people by breaking a piece of pottery near the valley where children had been sacrificed to pagan gods. As Jeremiah breaks the clay vessel, so God will break Jerusalem and reduce the population to destruction. As heinous as their sin is, God stands ready to forgive and save, if only they will repent and return to Him. • Father, turn us away from sin, and bring us back to You each day by Your grace in Jesus Christ. Amen.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 20** After being flogged, Jeremiah was locked in the stocks overnight in order that his captives might ridicule and discredit him. However, Jeremiah still announced the threat of the apostate nation's doom, even more emphatically and pointedly than before.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 20:1 *Pashhur*. Several priests and officials were so named (cf Ne 7:41; 10:3). The name also appears on letters (ostraca) found near the Jerusalem temple. *chief officer*. Not the high priest but an important administrator.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 20:2 *stocks*. Form of public punishment. *Benjamin Gate*. Apparently the name of two gates: one in the city wall, and the other in the temple precincts. Both faced north. Cf 38:7; see note, 17:19.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 20:3 *Terror On Every Side*. By a wordplay on Pashhur's name, the Lord made him the embodiment of the threat of doom. Cf Is 7:3; 8:3–4 for other names as messages.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 20:4 *king of Babylon*. Nebuchadnezzar. Cf 2Ki 24–25.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 20:6 *prophesied falsely*. Jeremiah did not hold out for personal revenge for his mistreatment by Pashhur. His tormentor was to be exiled and die in Babylon because he contradicted the word of God Jeremiah spoke. Cf 8:11; 14:13; 23:17 for the words of the false prophets.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 20:7 *deceived me*. Hbr verb means to persuade a person to take a certain course of action, usually to do wrong. Thus the same word may be used to describe a woman being persuaded to commit adultery or fornication (cf Ex 22:16) and a man alluring a woman to become his wife by speaking tenderly to her (Hos 2:14). Jeremiah is declaring that he did not become a prophet of his own will; he had to be prevailed upon to assume an obligation that brought him nothing but anguish and pain. Chem: "[Jeremiah] is speaking of his prophetic vocation which, since it brings with it much hatred, criticism and dangers, as is clear from the content of the chapter, the prophet is overcome by the weakness of his flesh, but he is not only overcome by these things, but in a certain sense he is even arguing with the Lord" (*LTh* 1:193). For the deception of false prophets, see note, 1Ki 22:20–22.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 20:9 *burning fire*. Though Jeremiah confesses his natural disinclination to be a prophet, he also bears witness to the mystery of divine inspiration. By the miraculous working of God, he became the instrument for the transmission of infallible truth. See note, 2Pt 1:21.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 20:10 Cf 11:19; 18:18.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 20:12 *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291. *tests the righteous*. See note, Gn 22:1. *Your vengeance*. See note, 11:18–23.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 20:13 Prayer not only quieted Jeremiah's fears but also gave him the boldness to "praise the Lord" (see p 843) as if He had already delivered him.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 20:14–18 The moment he took his eyes off the Lord and became introspective, Jeremiah slipped back into dark brooding over his fate. The sudden change of mood from praising God (v 13) to deep melancholy will not surprise anyone who has wrestled with God in the night watches of doubt; that person knows from experience it is possible to fall into self-pity and rebellious complaint at the very moment when faith seemed to have a strong grip on God's promises.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 20:14 *Cursed be the day*. Job spoke the same vehement denunciation of his existence (see note, Jb 3:3), and Elijah prayed to have death end his misery (1Ki 19:4). See "curse," p 6.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 20:16 *cities*. Sodom and Gomorrah.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 20:17 *He*. Refers to the Lord (v 16).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 20** Jeremiah complains bitterly about the opposition he has experienced in response to the dire warnings he preached to the people. His predictions of destruction stand unfulfilled, giving his enemies grounds to beat him, imprison him, and plot against his life. Jeremiah calls on the Lord for help and praises His name, but he cannot help expressing the anger and despair he genuinely feels. Like Jeremiah, we are often weak and fearful in times of crisis because we doubt the Lord and trust in ourselves. When we are weakest, God's strength shines through more clearly (cf 2Co 12:10). He is ever our refuge and strength, who hears our confession and forgives all our sins. • By Your Holy Spirit, Father, keep us strong in faith and grant us the courage to bear the name of Jesus in this evil world. Amen.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON **Chs 21–38** Collection of oracles arising out of the prophet's confrontation with Israel's unfaithful leaders. The Lord of the nations will so direct world history that out of chastened and restored Israel, a righteous Branch will spring up in the person of the messianic King, Prophet, and Priest. See notes, 23:5; Is 11:1. His rule, Word, and sacrifice will provide an escape for all people from the curse of sin. In almost all instances here, the reader is informed at what time or under what circumstances each "word of the Lord came to Jeremiah" (ch 33). Chs 1–20, however, supply little historical data. Nevertheless, events are not arranged exclusively according to their chronological sequence. See "Order and Chronology," p 1203.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 21:1 *King Zedekiah*. Cf 2Ki 24:18–25:7. *Pashhur*. Leader of a delegation. Not the same person mentioned in 20:1.

Zephaniah. May not be the same person referred to as "the second priest" in 52:24.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 21:2 *Inquire of the* LORD. See "call," p 842. *Nebuchadnezzar*. Cf 2Ki 24–25.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 21:4 *Chaldeans*. See note, Jb 1:17.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 21:8–10 The only alternative to facing death was to surrender to the enemy.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 21:8 *life … death*. This choice of crucial alternatives is represented as a dilemma.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 21:9 *surrenders*. Deserters kept their lives (38:2; 39:9; 52:15). *prize of war*. Prisoner/slave of the enemy.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 21:1–10 Through Jeremiah, God reveals His judgment on Jerusalem to the political and religious leaders of Judah: only those who surrender to the Chaldeans will live. God disciplines them for their lack of repentance and for ignoring His warnings. Even during this judgment, mercy and compassion shine through, providing a way of survival. No matter what you face today, call on the Lord with a repentant heart and humbly trust that He has an answer for you. Consider the life and sufferings of Jesus, who humbled Himself to redeem you for your salvation.
• Lord, lead us to heed Your warnings against sin and to live repentant lives according to Your holy will, reflecting Your holiness and loving compassion through Jesus. Amen.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 21:12–14 Even though Zedekiah was a descendant of the house of David, with whom God had made a solemn covenant (2Sm 7:1–17; see "covenant," p 6), he would have no successors. Kings of Israel were not to be arbitrary despots. If they ignored the demand to execute justice, they incurred God's unquenchable wrath. The royal city and palace will not offer protection, though situated on a rock towering over the surrounding plain.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 21:12 *justice in the morning*. Justice was urgent business to be transacted without delay (see p 842). *deliver*. See p 842.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 21:13 *inhabitant of the valley*. Jerusalem, rising out of the lower surrounding landscape, appeared to be an impregnable rock. *you who say*. Jerusalem's leaders.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 21:14 *fire in her forest*. Possibly a metaphor, though the hills of Judah may still have been forested at this time. See note, Jsh 17:15.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 22:1 *Go down*. From the temple area to the royal palace, situated on a lower level.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 22:3 *Do justice*. See note, 21:12. *justice … righteousness … deliver*. See pp 842–43. *innocent blood*. Even that of a prophet of the Lord (26:20–23).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 22:5 *I swear by Myself*. See note, Is 45:23; see also "oath," p 7.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 22:6–7 Even though the house of the king of Judah was as precious to God as the rich grazing territory of Gilead and the wooded heights of Lebanon were prized by the people, He would not hesitate to let it become a desolation. See color map 2.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 22:7 *choicest cedars*. As stately trees were felled on Mount Lebanon, so God would cut down the prominent men of state. See note, 1Ki 6:15–22.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 22:9 *covenant*. See p 127.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 21:11–22:10 God challenges His people in Jerusalem to keep His covenant by helping other people, protecting the weak and vulnerable, and keeping Him first in their worship and their lives. Keeping the Law means not only avoiding the wrong thing but also includes doing the right thing, such as having mercy (see SC, Fourth through Tenth Commandments, pp xxxv–xxxvi). Such compassion flows directly from a right relationship with God. Today, call on the Lord in repentance and prayer. Jesus redeemed you through His perfect life, death, and resurrection and has sworn to save you. • Father, lead us to treat other people as we want to be treated, loving them as You love us in Jesus Christ. Amen.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 22:11–30 Three kings who immediately preceded Zedekiah are dealt with in chronological order (609–597 BC), each one's fate demonstrating how the threat uttered against the whole dynasty would affect the lives of its individual members. Shallum and Jehoiakim were sons of Josiah, during whose 13th year Jeremiah was appointed a prophet (1:2); Coniah was a grandson of the same godly king.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 22:11 *went away*. Shallum, aka Jehoahaz, was to be lamented bitterly because he would never again see his native land after Pharaoh Neco deposed him and brought him to Egypt (cf 2Ki 23:31–33).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 22:13 *him*. Jehoiakim (cf v 18). Cf 2Ki 23:36–24:6. *upper rooms*. See note, 2Ki 4:10. *serve him for nothing*. See notes,

1Ki 5:13; Jer 34:8–9, 15.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 22:14 *great house*. Archaeologists at Ramat Rahel discovered such a home, with a large gateway, a lime-paved courtyard, fancy capitals, window balustrades, and ashlar masonry. *vermilion*. Orange-red, made from kermes insects or cinnabar.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 22:15 *compete in cedar?* Neco appointed Jehoiakim to rule in his brother Shallum's place. Jehoiakim would be punished for the violence he instigated in order to compete with Solomon's building program. As a result, circumstances at Jehoiakim's death were such that a decent burial was impossible (36:30; cf 2Ki 23:36–24:6). *justice and righteousness?* See p 843.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 22:20–23 Inhabitants of Jerusalem are dispersed. Misled by false leaders (shepherds), they will suffer the consequences of their evil.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 22:20 *lovers*. Denotes idols (3:1) and foreign allies (4:30; 30:14); here it parallels "shepherds" (v 22).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 22:22 *wind … shepherds*. Babylonians would blow away Judah's corrupt leaders. *lovers*. See note, v 20.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 22:23 *O inhabitant … among the cedars*. The king and his nobles felt themselves as secure as birds in their nest high in the cedars of Lebanon.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 22:24–30 Coniah (Jeconiah; aka Jehoiachin) ruled only three months before he and his mother were taken to Babylon (see notes, 2Ki 24:8–13).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 22:24 *signet ring*. See notes, 32:10; Gn 38:18.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 22:26 *mother*. See note, 13:18; cf 2Ki 24:8.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 22:30 *childless*. Presented as a curse. See "curse," p 6. No descendant would bear the royal title, though he was to have children (1Ch 3:17–18), and his grandson Zerubbabel was to play a prominent role after the Babylonian exile (Ezr 3; Hg 1:1; 2:2).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 22:11–30 Jeremiah condemns Israel's leaders for their obsession with wealth and power and, at the same time, neglect and abuse of the needy. God tells these powerful people that they will not enjoy their dishonest gains. People worship the same things today, sacrificing integrity and compassion for temporary riches. Jesus, having all things, avoids the deceit of wealth and power (Mt 4:8–10), remaining faithful to the plan of salvation by going to the cross to save us from our

sinful deceptions. • Lord, faithful Shepherd, lead us to treasure people more than things. Amen.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 23:1–2 Arraignment of the wicked shepherds extends into the opening verses of ch 23. God will punish them as they deserve for neglect of their duties. See note, Ezk 34:2.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 23:3–4 *remnant*. See p 1080. God will not let their wickedness frustrate His announced purpose to let Abraham's descendants be instrumental in blessing "all the families of the earth" (see note, Gn 12:3). To pursue His plan of salvation (Gn 17:19), He will first bring back a remnant from the Babylonian captivity.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 23:4 *shepherds*. Cf Ezk 34 for an expanded prophecy of the Good Shepherd; cf Jn 10:1–18 for its fulfillment. Cf Ps 80:1; 95:7.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 23:5 *days are coming*. The language and concepts of the prophecy range back and forth between preliminary and final fulfillment, between shadow and the substance of what is to come (Col 2:17). On prophetic perspective, see p 1258. *righteous Branch*. The Lord will shape history so that "the days are coming" when He will establish His messianic kingdom on earth. From the root of David's lineage, He will let spring forth a branch, or descendant. Unlike Israel's kings, He is righteous in His person (cf Zec 3:8; 6:12; Is 9:7; see note, Is 11:1). As indicated by His name, His subjects will also derive a unique benefit from His reign. For claiming His merits before the judgment seat of God, they, the unrighteous, will be declared righteous (Rm 3:21–26). *justice and righteousness*. See p 843.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 23:6 *saved*. See "salvation," p 843. Israel and Judah, reunited to become one nation, are a pledge of the spiritual unity of the messianic kingdom. Saved from extinction in Babylon, the people of Israel foreshadow the perfect bliss awaiting the new Israel, the Church. The rule of good shepherds reaches its fullness when Jesus Christ will effect justice and righteousness (v 5). *The Lord is our righteousness*. Through Him, we become righteous in God's sight. "Christ alone is our Righteousness, who is true God and man, because in Him the divine and human natures are personally united with each other" (FC Ep III 1).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 23:7–8 *As the Lord lives*. An oath formula. See "oath," p 7. *north country*. The direction of return from Babylon.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 23:1–8 God promises to give His people a new and righteous King who will save and protect them as long as He reigns over them. Jesus, the Good Shepherd, is this King, and He draws all believers together in one flock of faith, laying down His life for them and taking it up again (Jn 10). • Dear Jesus, keep us in Your flock, safe from all harm and danger. Amen.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 23:9 Introduces an undated oracle. *prophets*. God entrusted the spiritual welfare of His people to them. They desecrated their sacred office with false teaching and immoral living (2:8, 26; 5:31; 14:13–16; 27:9–10, 16–18; 32:31–32). *like a drunken man*. See note, Is 51:17.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 23:10 *adulterers*. Cf 3:8–9.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 23:11 *in My house*. Idols were placed even in the temple (2Ki 21:5).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 23:13 *prophets of Samaria*. See note, 1Ki 18:19. *Baal*. See note, Nu 25:3.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 23:15 *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291. *bitter food*. See note, Pr 5:4.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 23:16 *Do not listen*. Cf 5:13.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 23:17 *It shall be well*. Irresponsible coddling of evildoers. See note, 6:14; cf 14:13; Is 30:10.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 23:18 *in the council of the Lord*. They did not associate with the Lord like the prophets to whom He entrusted the task of "revealing His secret" (Am 3:7). See note, Jb 15:8.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 23:19 *the storm of the Lord!* Same threat is found in 30:23–24.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 23:20 *In the latter days*. See note, Is 2:2.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 23:21 *they ran*. As messengers. See pp 1081–83.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 23:22 *My council*. See note, v 18. *turned*. See p 1080.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 23:23–24 See notes, Ps 139:5, 7. *fill heaven and earth?* Luth: "Now, if someone has Him who fills all things, he has more than the whole world. He has the real Fountain, not merely a spoonful, which is what the world would be in comparison with this Fountain. Even if God gives much—a kingdom, Persia, the papacy, an empire—it is still only a small leftover, a bit of bread, a spoonful, a mouthful. It is not the real Fountain but only a piece that He gives everyone and tosses up for scrambles. But when a man has Him who has more than He can give away,

as the saying goes, then his heart knows that he has a gracious God and all things in Him. What could such a heart ever lack?" (AE 13:405–6).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 23:25 *I have dreamed*. See p 74.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 23:27 *forget My name*. Prophets who taught contrary to the doctrines revealed by God were to be branded impostors (see note, Dt 18:22). *Baal?* See note, Nu 25:3.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 23:28 *speak My word faithfully*. God works through His powerful Word. Corruption of His Word leads to confused teaching, hence the responsibility of godly teachers is great. See notes, Dt 18:18–20. *straw … wheat?* Contrast between the less useful straw and the precious, life-giving Word of God that nourishes faith. See note, Ps 1:4.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 23:29 "This is God's thunderbolt. By the Law He strikes down both obvious sinners and false saints. He declares no one to be in the right, but drives them all together to terror and despair. This is the hammer… . This is not active contrition or manufactured repentance. It is passive contrition, true sorrow of heart, suffering, and the sensation of death" (SA III III 2).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 23:33 *burden*. Hbr ordinarily denotes a weight or load carried by man or beast of burden (17:21; 2Ki 5:17). Also has the transferred meaning of message or utterance (see p 1079). Jer 23:33–40 plays on its double meaning. *cast you off*. Cf Dt 1:31.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 23:36 *the living God*. See note, Jsh 3:10. *LORD of hosts*. See p 1291.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 23:9–40 God condemns the spiritual leaders of Judah for misleading His people. They should have warned sinners of the impending judgment, but they did not, allowing the people to slide into idolatry and immorality. (Pray for pastors and other spiritual leaders, that they may fulfill their important callings.) The Law is to be preached to unrepentant sinners, no matter how painful it may be, so that people are not deceived. The Gospel is to be preached to spirits crushed by the Law, bringing light and life through faith in Jesus Christ, our Savior. • Lord, when we stray, may Your Law show us our sin. Always keep before us the Gospel, the wonderful cross of Christ crucified for sinners. Amen.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 24** Unlike false prophets (ch 22), Jeremiah stood in the council of the Lord (23:18); he was given a vision of the true course of events in Israel's future.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 24:1 *Nebuchadnezzar … Jeconiah*. See note, 22:24–30. *figs*. Other ordinary objects given parabolic meaning were an almond tree (1:11), a boiling pot (1:13), a potter's vessels (chs 18–19), and a yoke (27:2). See p 1220.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 24:2 *first-ripe figs*. Considered a delicacy (Hos 9:10). Perhaps offered as "firstfruits" (Ex 23:19; see p 6). If the bad figs were meant to serve the same purpose, they would have been a blatant expression of contempt for the Lord. Sacrificing blemished offerings was an abomination to Him (Mal 1:6–14). See note, Mk 11:13.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 24:5 The Lord will regard as good figs the exiles whom Nebuchadnezzar had brought to Babylon when he removed Coniah (Jeconiah; aka Jehoiachin) and the skilled craftsmen from Jerusalem (22:24–25; 2Ki 24:10–16). Chastised, humbled, repentant, these returning exiles will receive the new heart the Lord will give them.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 24:7 *a heart to know*. See notes, 31:33; Ezk 36:26.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 24:8 Bad figs are the people in Jerusalem who have escaped captivity. Because they remain self-righteous and impenitent, they shall be destroyed (cf Dt 28:37). *Zedekiah*. Cf 2Ki 24:18–25:7. *remnant*. God intended that some Judeans would remain in the land (Jer 44:7) to be joined by those who had been exiled. See p 1080. *in the land of Egypt*. Those who were taken there by Pharaoh Neco (see note, 22:10; cf 2Ki 23:31–34) or who fled there to escape the Babylonians.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 24:9 The suffering of the Judeans would become proverbial, like the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (23:14; 50:40). This idea becomes a theme in Jer, expressed in a litany of terms: byword, curse, desolation, execration, hissing, horror, oath, reproach, taunt, terror, and waste (44:8, 22). See "curse," p 6.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 24** The Lord tells Jeremiah that He will safeguard the Judean people sent into Babylonian exile in 587 BC, but that His wrath remains on those still in Jerusalem. The good—the faithful—will return. Today, the Lord calls us to repent of our sin and serve Him by faith. He graciously gives us His own heart and faithfulness in His Son born of David's line. • Father, keep us faithful by Your Holy Spirit, and direct our lives, redeemed by Your grace in Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 25:1 *word that came*. See p 1080. *fourth year of Jehoiakim*. C 605 BC.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 25:3 *twenty-three years*. God called Jeremiah to be a prophet in 628 BC.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 25:5 *Turn*. See p 1080.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 25:6 *work of your hands*. Idols (1:16; 10:3–5).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 25:8 *LORD of hosts*. See p 1291.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 25:9 *tribes of the north*. Allies of Babylon. *Nebuchadnezzar … My servant*. See note, Is 42:1. At that moment, he was marching southward from Carchemish on the Upper Euphrates, where he had defeated Pharaoh Neco in 605 BC (46:2; 2Ki 23:29). *devote … to destruction*. See p 6. *hissing*. See p 1276.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 25:10 *the millstones and … the lamp*. Dead stillness and unrelieved darkness will replace mirth and gladness.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 25:11 *seventy years*. See notes, 2Ch 36:21; Is 23:15; Dn 9:2.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 25:13 *in this book*. The king burned the record of all the words God spoke to Jeremiah until the fourth year of Jehoiakim, so Baruch had to prepare another scroll at Jeremiah's dictation (ch 36). The phrase "as at this day" (v 18) may have been incorporated in the later edition. On the LXX text, see note, v 17; see also "State of the LXX Text," p 1204.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 25:14 *them*. Babylonians.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 25:1–14 In a prophecy dating to 605 BC, God warns His people that He will soon destroy Jerusalem because of their idolatry and immorality. Ultimately, His judgment will fall on all nations, including Babylon. God, righteous and holy, must punish sin. Even if God's justice seems to delay, it always accomplishes its purpose. The Law must do its work, yet God also has His Gospel. Jesus Christ is working a better work, saving all who repent and believe in Him. • Lord, turn us from our sins, and keep us steadfast in Your grace through faith in Christ Jesus, our Lord. Amen.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 25:15 *this cup … of wrath*. See note, 13:13. The desolation awaiting them is described frequently this way, which Jeremiah, acting as divine cupbearer, will force them to drink. No nation, whether Egypt and Babylon or one of the lesser states, will be able to refuse to accept the cup.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 25:17 *all the nations*. In the following verses, they are listed according to their location in a line running from south (southeast and southwest) to north (northeast and northwest). For the oracles addressed to them all, cf chs 46–51. In the LXX, these oracles are found following the words "written in this book" (25:13). See "oracle," p 1079.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 25:18 See note, 24:9.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 25:19–25 See map, p 717.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 25:23 *cut … hair*. See note, 9:26.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 25:26 *Babylon*. Hbr *sheshach*, a cryptogram that uses a coded way of spelling known as Athbash. The last letter of the alphabet was substituted for the first, and the second last for the second, etc.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 25:28 *LORD of hosts*. See p 1291.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 25:30–31 Lest anyone think the fate of kingdoms and empires, mentioned by way of example, is merely an accident of history, Jeremiah is instructed to explain the causes of their downfall. Doom falls, not only on the people of his fold, but also on all the earth. The Lord insists on judgment with all according to unalterable laws of justice. No resistance is possible, for He issues thundering, resounding commands from on high. Cf Jl 2:11.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 25:30 *roar … shout*. Scornful of any attempted opposition, He has reason to shout. Cf Jl 2:11.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 25:32–33 Judgment will be so devastating that there will be no survivors to bury.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 25:34–38 So certain is the threatened destruction that the prophet can call on the shepherds or kings to wail as if they and their flock had already suffered. See note, 2:8.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 25:15–38 God warns all people that He will bring judgment to all the nations of the world. Implicit in the warning is a call to repentance and faith, the only way of salvation on the day of divine judgment. Like individual people, nations have gone their way without regard for God. Idolatry and immorality, including abuse and neglect of the poor, will be severely punished in the end. Ultimately, Jesus pays for the sins of all people and every nation by His death on the cross. Throughout these warnings to the nations, God's promise of a Savior continues to shine through. • Father, may Your Gospel go forth for all nations. Turn our own nation to righteousness, and grant us Your continued blessing. Amen.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 26:1–11 “The Levitical high priest was the chief priest by divine right [Leviticus 8], and yet godless high priests were not to be obeyed. As Jeremiah and other prophets dissented from the high priests [Jeremiah 26:1–11], so the apostles dissented from Caiaphas and did not have to obey him [Acts 4:19–20; 5:29]” (Tr 38).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 26:1 *Jehoiakim*. Cf 2Ki 23:36–24:6. *this word*. Historical context possibly related earlier. See note, 7:2.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 26:2 *court*. See p 842.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 26:3 *relent*. See pp 1079–80.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 26:4 *walk in My law*. See p 7.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 26:6 *Shiloh*. See note, 7:12. *a curse*. Jerusalem’s destruction will become proverbial. See note, 24:9. When uttering a curse, nations will say: “Let Jerusalem’s fate overtake you.” See p 6.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 26:7–9 A mob demanded that Jeremiah be executed for uttering blasphemy against God’s holy habitation (Dt 18:20).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 26:9 *house*. The temple.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 26:10 *the New Gate*. Known perhaps also as “the upper Benjamin Gate” (see note, 20:2).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 26:13 *relent*. See pp 1079–80.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 26:1–15 God sends Jeremiah to warn the people about the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple due to their sin. If they confess their sin, God will forgive them and spare them. For Jeremiah’s faithful proclamation, he is arrested and tried for treason (a capital crime). Hard hearts resist every overture of mercy from God and ignore all His warnings of impending judgment. God’s heart longs to forgive sinners, even though they resist His Word and murder His prophets. Today, know that the Lord has set His heart on you. Call on Him in repentance and faith, through Christ. • Father, open our ears to hear You clearly, and lead us every day in the way of faith and obedience, through Jesus Christ. Amen.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 26:16–19 The judges did not impose the death sentence, basing their verdict of not guilty on a precedent that occurred over a century earlier. At that time, King Hezekiah did not put the prophet Micah to death when he spoke similar threats against Zion and Jerusalem. Regarding Micah, see pp 1485–86.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 26:18 See note, Mi 3:12.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 26:19 *fear*. See p 1001. *favor*. See p 6. *relent*. See pp 1079–80.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 26:20–23 Jeremiah's life had indeed hung by a thread, as a recent incident showed. Another man, Uriah, was put to death because the king regarded the Lord's spokesman guilty of treason. Jehoiakim had Uriah executed like a common criminal. Uriah is unknown except for the reference here to his tragic death.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 26:20 *Kiriath-jearim*. Northwest of Jerusalem. See map, p 365. The ark of the covenant was lodged there during Samuel's time.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 26:21 *Jehoiakim*. Cf 2Ki 23:36–24:6.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 26:22 *Elnathan*. Member of the delegation sent to Egypt to bring Uriah back; he later gave good advice to the king.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 26:23 *took Uriah*. Because favorable diplomatic relations with Egypt existed at this time, the requested extradition was granted. *burial place*. The executed criminal was not accorded a resting place in a family sepulchre but was thrown into a common grave. *common people*. Lit, "sons of the people," which could refer to the landholders of the upper class. However, the common burial ground in the Kidron Valley seems the more likely place of Uriah's burial (cf 2Ki 23:6).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 26:24 *Ahikam*. His father, Shaphan, was a trusted official of King Josiah. His son Gedaliah, appointed governor by Nebuchadnezzar, respected Jeremiah (39:14; 2Ki 25:22).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 26:16–24 Jeremiah narrowly escapes the death penalty under wicked King Jehoiakim when a high court official, Ahikam, and others intercede for him. Faithful proclamation of God's Word often brings serious, even fatal, opposition by the worldly powers. Despite this, faithfully defend those wrongly accused, and pray for fellow Christians who face persecution. God often rescues His people from physical harm, but the greater blessing is that He rescues you from eternal condemnation through Jesus Christ. • Lord, by Your Spirit, make us faithful bearers of Your Word, no matter what troubles it causes. In Jesus' name. Amen.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON **Chs 27–28** 594 BC. Another confrontation between Jeremiah and the purveyors of false teachings (cf ch 26).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 27:1–11 *straps and yoke-bars*. Used to harness oxen to plow or wagon. At the Lord's command, Jeremiah used a visual aid to demonstrate the futility of joining other nations in resistance to Babylon.

This device of animal servitude was to symbolize the subjugation of all to the will of Nebuchadnezzar. All efforts to shake off this yoke would end in disaster, for the Babylonian king himself was God's servant (see note, 25:9). The Babylonian Empire would exist only until it had served His purpose. Then it, in turn, would become the slave of other nations.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 27:1 *Zedekiah*. The reading "Jehoiakim" (see ESV note) is likely a scribal error (cf vv 3, 12). On Zedekiah, cf 2Ki 24:18–25:7.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 27:2 See p 1220.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 27:3 *Moab … Tyre … Sidon*. See color map 2.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 27:4 *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 27:5 *arm*. See p 842; see also note, Is 5:25. *I give it to whomever*. See note, Ps 50:10.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 27:7 It was suicide to oppose the might of Nebuchadnezzar. The Babylonian Empire would dominate the ancient world for a period of three generations. Then a coalition of many nations under the leadership of the great kings of the Medes and the Persians was destined to make a slave of the lordly nation. See note, 50:9.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 27:8 *pestilence*. See note, Ps 91:3.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 27:9 See note, Dt 18:10–11.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 27:12–15 Lest the king of Judah follow the advice of false prophets who urged him and the people not to surrender to Babylon, Jeremiah warned Zedekiah of the catastrophe in store for any nation that does not obey.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 27:16–22 Jeremiah countered the delusion of the false prophets with the warning that rebellion against Nebuchadnezzar would make a desolation of Jerusalem.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 27:16 *vessels*. Cf 1Ki 7:15–39.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 27:19 See diagrams, pp 541, 672.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 27:20 *Jeconiah*. Or, Jehoiachin. *nobles*. See p 228.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 27:22 *carried to Babylon*. For the fulfillment, cf 2Ki 25:13–17. For the promised return, cf Ezr 1:2–7.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 27** Jeremiah predicts that God will let all who submit to the Babylonians live in their own land safely. To accomplish His purposes, the Lord uses people and nations and empires. The way of salvation is the way of humility and repentance: receiving God's Word by

faith and walking in His ways. Pray daily for faithful leaders. Thanks be to God that, despite evil worldly leaders, the Gospel prospers and bears fruit among us. • Bless us, heavenly Father, with humility and faith in You as nations and kingdoms rise and fall, knowing You are at work for the salvation of souls. Amen.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 28:1 *Hananiah*. Spokesman for the false prophets. Except for the part he played in this incident, nothing is known of him. *Gibeon*. C 6 mi NW of Jerusalem. *house of the* LORD. The temple.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 28:2–4 Before the same audience of priests and people (27:16), the impostor declared that the Lord already was ending the Babylonian servitude.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 28:6–9 Jeremiah's response was marked by restraint. Nothing would have pleased him more than to affirm the prediction of an immediate deliverance of the people he loved so dearly.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 28:9 The future would demonstrate which prophet the Lord had truly sent. See notes, Dt 18:9, 10–11; cf Dt 13:1–3.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 28:12 *Sometime after*. Jeremiah did not refute Hananiah on his own authority but waited for a divinely inspired rebuttal, as he did on a later occasion (42:7). *word of the* LORD *came*. See p 1080.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 28:14 LORD *of hosts*. See p 1291. *given … even the beasts*. Near Eastern artwork depicts elaborate royal hunts.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 28:15–17 Because Hananiah made people trust in a lie, he would not live the two years (v 3) within which his prediction was to have come true.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 28:16 Teaching false doctrine is not a trifling misdemeanor but a heinous crime because it misleads people to defy the will of God. Dire punishment awaits such perverters of the truth (29:21–22).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 28:17 *seventh month*. Tishri (Sept/Oct 594 BC).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 28** In 594 BC, Hananiah falsely predicts the return of the temple furnishings taken to Babylon in 597 BC and the Judean captives. Jeremiah warns the populace of Jerusalem that the worst is yet to come. God does not deal with sin merely with a "slap on the wrist" (as Hananiah thought). The wages of sin is death (Rm 6:23a). However, God does not delight in punishing sinners. He also sends true prophets and faithful ministers to turn people from death to life—God's gift to us in

Christ Jesus (Rm 6:23b). • Teach us, Lord, to avoid sin and wait upon Your Word, that we may have life in Jesus Christ. Amen.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 29:1 Jeremiah's prophecies of certain disaster met with opposition and ridicule, not only at home, but also in Babylon, where King Jehoiachin, influential people of Judah, and skilled craftsmen were exiled prisoners of Nebuchadnezzar. *letter*. Written after 597 BC. Jeremiah's letter would reach them by the same couriers who bore an official communication from King Zedekiah to Nebuchadnezzar (v 3). *surviving elders*. Lit, "the rest of the elders." Some would have succumbed to the rigors of the forced march from Jerusalem.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 29:2 *queen mother*. See note, 13:18. *eunuchs*. Translated "officers" in 39:3. Cf 41:16; see p 228.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 29:3 Perhaps Zedekiah was sending tribute to Babylon, or the delegation was to assure Nebuchadnezzar of his refusal to support the plot instigated by the neighboring states (27:1–7). The bearers of the letter seem to have sided with Jeremiah. *Elasah*. May have been a brother of Ahikam, who befriended the prophet (26:24). *Hilkiah*. Probably the high priest during the reign of Josiah (2Ki 22:4, 8).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 29:5–9 Instead of believing the false prophets whom God did not send, the exiles were to engage in activities that anticipated a prolonged sojourn on foreign soil, such as building houses, planting gardens, and founding families.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 29:7 *pray*. For Babylon.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 29:8 *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291. *prophets … diviners*. See note, Dt 18:10–11. *dreams*. See p 74.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 29:10 *seventy years*. See note, 25:11. *visit*. Cf 15:15.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 29:11 There was indeed a future and hope in God's plans for the exiled people. However, only after many years would the chastisement produce the desired change in their lives. When they would again turn to the Lord with all their heart, He would keep His promise to bring them back to their homeland. *welfare*. See "peace," p 7.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 29:14 *restore your fortunes*. See p 1080.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 29:15–23 From a brief assurance of eventual welfare (vv 10–14), Jeremiah abruptly reverts to a denunciation of the prophets who, at home and abroad, deny the necessity of repentance to avert God's judgment on an apostate nation. Cf ch 24.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 29:16 *the king*. Zedekiah. Jeremiah personally delivered the same threat to the king (27:12–15).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 29:17 *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291. *vile figs*. Cf ch 24.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 29:18 See note, 24:9.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 29:20 *you exiles*. Cf v 1.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 29:21–22 Nothing more is known of Ahab and Zedekiah except this prophecy of their execution by fire. Cf Dn 3:19–23.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 29:21 *Maaseiah*. Cf v 25; see note, 35:4.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 29:22 *curse*. See p 6.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 29:23 *an outrageous thing*. Denoting more than an indiscretion, this term describes wanton crimes. *I am witness*. The Lord testifies against them, approving their condemnation.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 29:1–23 The future of God's people lies with the exiles, taken from Jerusalem to Babylon in 587 BC. God's judgment must fall upon His rebellious people. Yet God's favor rests upon the exiles, and they are encouraged to settle down for a long stay, after which God will return them to Jerusalem. God will restore them to the Promised Land and ultimately bring from their descendants a Savior for all the people. He keeps His promises. • Fulfill Your plans for us, O Lord, and guide us to make plans that agree with Your will. Teach us to trust Your decisions for our lives; through Jesus Christ. Amen.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 29:24–28 In reply to Jeremiah's letter, another impostor named Shemaiah wrote from Babylon reproving priests in Jerusalem for not silencing the madman (Jeremiah), who prophesied that the exile will be long.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 29:24 *Shemaiah*. A false prophet.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 29:25 *letters*. See note, v 1. *Zephaniah*. See 21:1 and note. *Maaseiah*. See note, 35:4.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 29:26 *Jehoiada*. Cf 2Ki 11–12. *charge in the house of the Lord*. His work at the temple is not described. Cf 1Ch 9:23; 2Ch 23:18; 24:12. *madman*. Cf 1Sm 21:13–15. *stocks and neck irons*. See note, Jer 20:2.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 29:27 *Jeremiah of Anathoth*. See pp 1202–4.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 29:29 *Zephaniah*. See note, 21:1.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 29:30 *word of the Lord came*. See p 1080.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 29:24–32 An opposition figure in Babylon (Shemaiah) tries to make trouble for Jeremiah back in Jerusalem, responding to an earlier letter of Jeremiah to the Babylonian exiles. Leaders of God's people carry a tremendous responsibility to speak only God's Word and not their own doctrines. Pray that the Lord would guide your words and deeds as you care for those entrusted to your leadership in family, church, or society. Take heart, knowing that God's Word prevails, stronger than any opposing force, and it accomplishes its purpose: your salvation. • Keep us steadfast in Your Word of truth, O Lord. Amen.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON **Chs 30–33** Known as Jeremiah's "book of comfort," which beautifully proclaims the Gospel in contrast to the majority of the prophet's message. See pp 1202–6. On its date, cf 32:1.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 30** The vision of future blessings accorded Jeremiah ranges in scope and time from Israel's national restoration in the more immediate future to mankind's liberation from spiritual bondage in the messianic age. He need not fear that time will prove Jeremiah wrong. The Lord ordered him to record his prophecy, for it will stand the test of ages to come. The vantage point in time from which the vision proceeds is the exile. The dispersion of the "chosen" (see "choose," p 5) had not only occurred, as predicted, but was also about to end, as God said it would, after achieving its chastening purpose.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 30:2 *book*. Lit, "scroll." See notes, 25:13; 36:2.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 30:3 *days are coming*. They begin with the day of Babylon's overthrow and extend into "the latter days" of the messianic era (vv 8, 24; 23:7–8; 31:31). *restore the fortunes*. See p 1080.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 30:6 *woman in labor?* Common biblical metaphor of distress. See "woman in labor," p 1080.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 30:7 The Lord will shape events so that they shall be saved. He will use the events to initiate that day when He will raise up a Son of David whose universal kingdom will have no end. *That day*. See "day of the LORD," p 1079. *Jacob*. The promise of restoration is made not only to the 10 tribes of the Northern Kingdom, often called Jacob or Israel (see note, Gn 32:28), but to both Israel and Judah (v 3; see note, 3:7). *saved*. See "salvation," p 843.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 30:8 *his yoke*. Babylon would fall. See p 1220.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 30:9 *David*. The "righteous Branch" to arise from David's lineage here bears the name of His royal ancestor (Lk 1:32–

33). See notes, 2Sm 7:11–14.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 30:10–11 Jeremiah assures the captive Israelites of God's power and will that the descendants of Jacob will not vanish from history, as their oppressors will. Justly chastened but graciously returned, the survivors of the exile will again be accorded the status of God's servants and entrusted with the roles for which He chose them.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 30:10 *save*. See "salvation," p 843.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 30:11 *I am with you*. See "be with," p 5. *save*. See "salvation," p 843.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 30:12 Cf 6:7.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 30:14 *lovers*. Allies. See note, 22:20.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 30:17 See note, Dt 32:39.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 30:18–22 Jeremiah is granted a view of the results of God's intervention on behalf of His stricken people. Brought back to their homeland, they will rebuild the city of Jerusalem, raise songs of thanksgiving for their restored fortunes, and become an established "congregation." See "great congregation," p 842. However, their physical and national well-being is not to be an end in itself.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 30:18 *restore the fortunes*. See p 1080. *tents of Jacob*. Cf Is 54:2. *compassion*. See "mercy," pp 842–43. *mound*. Cities stood on hills known today as "tells."
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 30:21 *prince … ruler*. See p 228; see also note, Mi 5:4–5a. *approach Me*. The high priest of the old covenant dared not, on pain of death, draw near the holy God by virtue of his own authority and character. The Ruler and Prince to come, combining royal and priestly functions, will have access to the divine throne (Heb 7:26).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 30:22 *My people*. See note, Hos 2:23.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 30:23 *whirling tempest*. See note, Jb 38:1.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 30:24 *In the latter days*. See note, Is 2:2. The prophets commonly divide time into two periods: former and latter, or beginning and end (cf Dt 11:12). See p 1079.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 30** God tells Jeremiah to write down the prophecy of a future restoration. God will anoint a King to rule over His people, and the community will live in peace. God's greater purpose of salvation will be accomplished in spite of the people's sin. He will rescue His people and reign over them through David's descendant, the Messiah.

• Keep our hearts, O Lord, filled with the joy of our salvation and the confidence of Your love for us in Jesus Christ. Amen.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 31:1 *At that time*. See "on that day," p 1079. *clans*. See pp 54–55.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 31:3 *faithfulness*. See p 842. Hus: "The whole holy catholic church always has had and now has Christ as its head, from whom it cannot fall away, for she is the bride knit to him, her head, by a love that never ends… . Therefore, always, from the very beginning, the bridegroom has been present with the whole church by virtue of his divinity, who later was with the holy fathers by virtue of his humanity" (*The Church*, p 29).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 31:4 *build*. See note, 1:10. *virgin Israel!* See note, 14:17. *tambourines … dance*. See p 993.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 31:6 *watchmen*. See note, Is 21:6–12. *hill country of Ephraim*. See color map 2; see also "Ephraim," p 1080. *up to Zion*. See notes, Ps 120–34; Jer 31:12.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 31:7 *chief of the nations*. Israel owed its preeminence solely to its choice by the Lord to be His instrument in blessing all nations. This undeserved distinction accounts for similar titles of honor (cf vv 9, 20). *save*. See "salvation," p 843. *remnant*. See p 1080.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 31:8 *north country*. The direction traveled to Assyria and Babylon. See map, p 1396. *blind … lame … pregnant*. None are left behind.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 31:9 *mercy*. See pp 842–43. *My firstborn*. See p 6; see also note, Ex 4:22.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 31:11 *ransomed … redeemed*. See p 843.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 31:12 *Zion*. See p 844. The healing of the breach between the Northern Kingdom (Israel, Ephraim, Samaria) and the Southern Kingdom (Judah) was to reestablish joint worship on the height of Zion. The restored unity of faith also foreshadowed the common bonds of fellowship, by which God would link all believers with one another in a communion of saints, redeemed from the bondage of sin by His Son (Jn 10:16).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 31:13 *dance*. See p 993. *comfort*. See p 1079.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 31:14 *feast the soul*. From a restored prosperity, the people would be able to supply the sustenance of the priests as required by the Law (cf Lv 7:34). See pp 170–71.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 31:15–17 All this demands faith in God's promises. There was nothing on the contemporary scene even to suggest such a reversal of history. For if Rachel, ancestor of Benjamin and some northern tribes, were still alive, she would be heard weeping for those slain, dragged into captivity and gone for good. However, the Lord would also tell her to dry her tears, for her offspring would return.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 31:15 Anticipates the circumstances of Jesus' birth (Mt 2). *Ramah*. There are several Ramahs (Hbr "height"; general expression). Jeremiah refers to Ramah in Benjamin, a tribe born from Rachel, who was absorbed by Judah and passed with the Judeans into exile. This Ramah is c 10 mi N of Jerusalem and is on a road running from Bethlehem through Jerusalem up to Ramah. Rachel was buried along this road (Gn 35:19) after giving birth to Benjamin and naming him Ben-oni, "son of my troubles" (hence Jeremiah's reference to weeping). Rachel died while bearing a child at Ramah when she and her husband, Jacob, were on their way to Bethlehem (Gn 35:16; 1Sm 10:2). *Rachel is weeping*. Over the loss of her descendants to a ruthless conqueror (Babylon). She will shed bitter tears again when the mothers of Bethlehem lament the death of their infant sons killed by Herod (Mt 2:17–18). In sum, Rachel literally wept at Bethlehem over Benjamin (Gn 35), her daughters—Benjaminites—weep over the exile as they join the Judeans marching away (Jer 31), and the weeping is raised again from Bethlehem to Ramah as news spreads about the slaughter of the holy innocents (Mt 2).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 31:16 *your work*. Her labors in rearing sons will not be in vain, for a remnant will survive and come back to their own country.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 31:18–19 "Our election to eternal life is founded not on our godliness or virtue, but on Christ's merit alone and His Father's gracious will… . When His children depart from obedience and stumble, He has called them to repentance again through the Word, and the Holy Spirit wants by the Word to be effective in them for conversion. When they turn to Him [Jeremiah 31:18–19] again in true repentance by a right faith, He will always show His old paternal heart to all who tremble at His Word and from their heart turn again to Him" (FC SD XI 75).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 31:18 *like an untrained calf*. Resisting the discipline of bearing a yoke. *bring me back … restored*. Hbr verb is repeated, which frequently denotes a turning back to the Lord in repentance

(3:12, 14, 22). Now chastened and ashamed, they implore the Lord that they be restored to fellowship with Him. Restoration, whether physical or spiritual, is possible only if the Lord brings it about. See "restore the fortunes," p 1080.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 31:19 "The entire notion that a person is righteous is mere hypocrisy before God. We must acknowledge that our heart is, by nature, destitute of fear, love, and confidence in God" (Ap II 33).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 31:20 *dear son? … darling child?* The Lord hears their penitent pleas and holds introspection with Himself. His readiness to treat them again as a dear son and a darling child in spite of their insolent waywardness is a mystery of love that defies rational explanation. See note, Hos 11:1. *mercy*. See pp 842–43. Ambr: "Let us, then, submit ourselves to God, and not be subject to sin, and when we ponder the remembrance of our offences, let us blush as though at some disgrace, and not speak of them as a glory to us, as some boast of overcoming modesty, or putting down the feeling of justice. Let our conversion be such, that we who did not know God may now ourselves declare Him to others" (*NPNF* 2 10:350).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 31:21 He is about to summon the reclaimed "virgin Israel" to set out at once on the journey to her own cities. See note, Is 35:8.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 31:22 *faithless daughter?* Israel is unwilling to believe the Lord's promises. *a woman encircles a man*. Or, "a woman embraces a man." It certainly means the restoration of Israel will have unprecedented character. In order to overcome misgivings and unbelief, the Lord graciously lets Jeremiah repeat the promise of redemption in five more oracles (vv 23–40). See pp 1202–6.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 31:23 *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291. *restore their fortunes*. See p 1080. *bless … righteousness*. See pp 842–43. *holy hill!* Zion. See p 844.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 31:26 *I awoke*. The revelation accorded Jeremiah was like a pleasant dream. So Jacob "awoke from his sleep" in which he was granted a dream/vision (Gn 28:16). See p 74.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 31:27–30 In his second oracle, he says the land of Israel and Judah will be repopulated and made prosperous, each citizen recognizing his individual responsibility in the community.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 31:27 *seed of man and … of beast*. The human population and herds of animals will increase as if springing up from seed scattered over the land by the Lord.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 31:29 Proverbial saying. If people wanted to claim to be the victims of a miscarriage of justice, they quoted this proverb about children experiencing trouble for something their fathers had done. In the restoration to God's favor (32:38), the redeemed would no longer quote this saying (cf Dt 24:16; Ezk 18) or shrug off personal responsibility for their misdeeds. *set on edge*. Or, "become blunt," perhaps referring to the wincing or grimace of someone tasting something sour.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 31:30 *die for his own sin*. See note, Ex 20:5; cf Jer 32:18. Chem: "In Christ a person does not bear the iniquity of the father, because it has been taken away" (*LTh* 1:301).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 31:1–30 The Lord promises to restore His people to the Promised Land after the exile in Babylon. The exile is temporary, for God Himself will save the remnant and return them to their home. God could destroy them for their sin, but out of deep love and compassion He merely disciplines them with exile and even gives them the hope of return. Our Lord disciplines us for a time that we might walk by faith. In Christ, the discipline of God works for our benefit. • Dear Father, when our lives are dark with fear and uncertainty, keep the light of Your love for us in Jesus Christ before our eyes. Amen.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 31:31–34 In Jeremiah's third oracle, the Lord will create also the kind of spiritual reconstruction necessary for the exiles to be His people and He their God.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 31:31 *a new covenant*. See p 127. What God agreed to do to enable Israel and all sinners to become His people became a reality in that new covenant sealed with the blood of Jesus, the only mediator between God and man (cf 1Co 11:25). Iren: "One and the same householder produced both covenants, the Word of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, who spake with both Abraham and Moses, and who has restored us anew to liberty, and has multiplied that grace which is from Himself" (*ANF* 1:472). See pp xlv–xlvii.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 31:32 *husband*. See note, Hos 2:16.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 31:33 *the house of Israel*. Just: "The true spiritual Israel, and descendants of Judah, Jacob, Isaac, and Abraham … are we who have been led to God through this crucified Christ" (*ANF* 1:200). *My law*.

See p 971. *within them … on their hearts*. God's creative and transforming inscription of His will on the people was necessary because the root of their sin lay in their perverse and stubborn will to follow their own evil heart, as Jeremiah often pointed out (3:17; 4:4, 14; 5:23; 7:24). See note, Ezk 36:26. "Faith brings the Holy Spirit and produces a new life in hearts. It must also produce spiritual movements in hearts. The prophet Jeremiah shows what these movements are… . Therefore, when we have been justified by faith and regenerated, we begin to fear and love God, to pray to Him, to expect aid from Him, to give thanks and praise Him, and to obey Him in times of suffering. We also begin to love our neighbors, because our hearts have spiritual and holy movements… . We have said above that renewal and beginning to fulfill the Law must exist in us… . If anyone should cast away love, even though he has great faith, he does not keep his faith. For he does not keep the Holy Spirit" (Ap V 4, 98).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 31:34 *know Me*. Not merely an intellectual knowledge but an acknowledgment of a sacred relationship. The new covenant creates a conviction of fellowship with God that is self-authenticating and available for all.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 31:35–37 In the fourth oracle, Jeremiah assures the reader that the revival of the chosen people cannot fail to materialize; the same God who set the universe in motion and keeps it from falling into chaos promises to sustain it.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 31:35 *fixed order*. Lit, "statutes." See p 971. *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 31:38–40 In a closing vision, Jeremiah is made to see Jerusalem rebuilt tower by tower, gate by gate.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 31:38 *rebuilt*. Jeremiah sees the holy city rise out of its ruins.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 31:39 *Gareb … Goah*. Cannot be identified.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 31:40 *valley of the dead bodies*. The Hinnom Valley (see note, 2:23). *brook Kidron*. See color map 1. *the Horse Gate*. Cf Ne 3:28. *sacred to the Lord*. See "holy," p 7. The sacredness of the temple courts will expand to encompass the secular and profane regions of Jerusalem. Cf Ezk 43:12.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 31:31–40 God promises His people a new relationship, not based on the Law of Moses but on grace and faith. The promise finds fulfillment in Jesus and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in

the NT (cf Heb 8). Although the Law is good and holy, it condemns sinners for what we are and what we do. In Christ Jesus, God provides the sacrifice necessary to silence the accusations of the Law. By faith, Christians have a new and right relationship with God (cf Rm 3:21–26). • We thank You, Father, for the new covenant of forgiveness won by Jesus on the cross. Amen.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 32** The promise of redemption, proclaimed in chs 30–31, is highlighted by a visual demonstration of what it means to act on faith's conviction that nothing is too hard for the Lord (vv 17, 27).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 32:1 *word that came*. See p 1080. *tenth year*. 587 BC.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 32:2 *the court of the guard*. Part of the palace complex. How Jeremiah came to be shut up there is told in chs 37–38.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 32:5 *visit him*. Depending on circumstances, God's action described by this verb can be a promise of deliverance or a threat of punishment (cf 29:10; Is 29:6).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 32:7 *Buy my field*. Jeremiah's cousin urged him to buy a family plot of land in his hometown of Anathoth (see note, 1:1), already overrun by the enemy. *right of redemption*. See notes, Lv 25:25–34; Ru 4:5. Ludicrous as the transaction might appear, Jeremiah recognized in it God's call to illustrate, louder than his words, how certain it was that the land would again be occupied by the people seemingly doomed to extinction. See p 1220.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 32:8 *came to me*. The cousin got through enemy lines during a lull in the siege when Nebuchadnezzar had to fight off an Egyptian army (37:11–12).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 32:9 *I bought the field*. In the NT, the purchase of this field and the 30 shekels paid in wages to Zechariah (Zec 11:12–13) are cited as prophetic foreshadowing of the acquisition of the potter's field (Mt 27:9). *weighed out the money*. See note, Jsh 24:32. *shekels*. See p cx.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 32:10 *sealed*. Seals were lumps of clay stamped with a signet ring or cylinder that impressed the clay with a person's official insignia. They were placed over the strings that bound a folded document, which kept it closed. Nearly 400 clay seals (bullae) have been discovered in Israel, many from the "house of Bullae" in Jerusalem, which was likely burned when the Babylonians destroyed Jerusalem in 587 BC. The fire hardened and preserved these seals. Two seals have been discovered that

name Baruch the son of Neriah the scribe (v 12), which could have come from Jeremiah's secretary. See note, Gn 38:18.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 32:11 *sealed deed … open copy*. One copy was rolled and sealed to prevent opening. The other remained unsealed for ready reference.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 32:12 *Baruch the son of Neriah*. Jeremiah's personal scribe. See note, v 10. *Judeans*. Perhaps people visiting other prisoners. *court of the guard*. Normally legal transactions took place at the city gates (see p 792), prevented here by Jeremiah's arrest.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 32:14 *earthenware vessel*. Effective means of preserving documents. *last for a long time*. Until the return from Babylonian exile.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 32:1–15 God tells Jeremiah to buy a parcel of land near Anathoth as a visible promise that life would return to normal after the exile (which would last a long time). Surrounded by the enemy army, it may have seemed foolish to buy land for the future, but obeying God is always the right thing to do. When trouble surrounds you, cling to the Lord's commands and promises. In His mercy, God will save His people and bring them to safety, a promise ultimately fulfilled in Jesus Christ. • Lord, help us look past the present trouble to see with joy and confidence our eternal home in Jesus Christ. Amen.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 32:16–25 As under other trying circumstances, Jeremiah acted in obedience to the word of the Lord. Nevertheless, on this occasion he revealed how faith had to do battle with doubt even in a prophet's heart. He also showed how to win; he discussed his problem with the Lord, reciting an array of biblical truths to support the proposition that he should not question God's power, wisdom, justice, and goodness.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 32:17 *outstretched arm!* See "arm," p 842. *too hard for You*. God would begin His answer to the prayer by restating Jeremiah's words here in the form of a rhetorical question (v 27).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 32:18 *steadfast love*. See p 843. *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 32:19 *rewarding*. See note, 1Co 3:8.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 32:20 *made a name*. See "for Your name's sake," p 842.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 32:22 *flowing with milk and honey*. See p 6.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 32:23 *walk in Your law*. See p 7.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 32:24 *siege mounds*. See notes, 2Ki 18:14; Is 37:33.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 32:26 *word of the LORD came*. See p 1080.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 32:27 *God of all flesh*. Creator of all people. *too hard*. See note, v 17.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 32:28 *thus says the LORD*. See p 1080. Echoes the inspired words spoken by Jeremiah. Cf ch 7.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 32:29 *on whose roofs offerings*. See note, Jsh 2:6. *Baal*. See note, Nu 25:3. *drink offerings*. See note, Lv 23:37.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 32:33 *turned*. See "turn" and "backsliding," pp 1078–80. *taught them persistently*. Through priests and prophets. See note, Lv 10:11.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 32:34 *abominations*. See note, Pr 6:16. *house*. The temple.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 32:35 *high places*. See p 526. *Baal*. See note, Nu 25:3. *Valley of the Son of Hinnom*. See notes, Jsh 18:16; Mk 9:43; cf Jsh 15:8. *Molech*. Derisive name for Baal. See note, Lv 18:21. *this abomination*. Child sacrifice to the idols.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 32:16–35 God charges His people with idolatry, violating the First Commandment (cf Ex 20:4–6). Because they turned their back on God, He will turn them over to the Babylonians for the city's destruction and the people's exile. Fundamental to the relationship between God and His people is their exclusive loyalty and trust, much like a marriage. Because of His love, He will eventually recall His people from the land of exile and keep His promise to send a Savior for all humanity. • O Holy Spirit, keep us faithful to our Lord, who is ever loyal to us. In Jesus' name. Amen.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 32:37 *I will gather them*. See note, 23:3–4.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 32:39 *one heart and one way*. See note, 31:33. *fear*. See p 1001.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 32:40 *covenant*. See p 127. The same comprehensive term Jeremiah used to describe the relationship God will establish with His chastened people (see note, 31:31). It will be everlasting because He will never cease to supply the strength for a wholehearted commitment to His will.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 32:41 *plant*. See note, 1:10. *faithfulness*. See p 842. *all My heart … soul*. See note, Dt 6:5.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 32:42–44 Purchase of property in Anathoth was but a token of the restoration of all the land to its rightful owners.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 32:44 *places about Jerusalem*. To the north "in the land of Benjamin"; to the west in the Shephelah or coast plain; to the south in the Negeb. Cf Gn 12:9; 2Ch 28:18; see color map 2. *restore their fortunes*. See p 1080.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 32:36–44 The Lord promises to return His exiled people to their homeland. More than that, He will renew His covenant with them and change their hearts. Because of our fallen nature, we cannot trust God or obey Him by our own reason or strength. Only He can create and sustain saving faith and faithful living in His people. Repent of your sins. In the new covenant established by Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit creates faith within us and leads us every day as God's children. • O Holy Spirit, cleanse our hearts of sinful desires, and lead us to live for You. Amen.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 33:1 *word of the* LORD *came*. See p 1080. *court of the guard*. See note, 32:2.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 33:2 *His name*. See note, Ex 3:15.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 33:3 *great and hidden things*. Prophecies of judgment and restoration.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 33:4 *houses … torn down*. Another desperate maneuver in vain. Jerusalem's last days are sketched in terse language suggesting the frantic efforts to save the city. Houses were wrecked for material to replace gaps in the walls (Is 22:10). See note, Jsh 2:15. *siege mounds*. See notes, 2Ki 18:14; Is 37:33.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 33:5 Bodies, not reinforcements, would fill the buildings. *hidden My face*. See note, Is 45:15.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 33:6 *health and healing*. See note, 6:14.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 33:7 *restore the fortunes*. See p 1080.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 33:8 *cleanse … forgive*. See p 300.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 33:9 *name of joy*. No longer will the nations "be horrified … because of all its wounds" (18:16; 19:8). *glory*. See pp 6–7. *nations … shall fear*. Jerusalem would become a renewed power. See the relationship of Jerusalem to the nations in Is 2:2.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 33:11 *the voice of mirth*. Reversal of the chaos and grief threatened in 16:9; 25:10–11. *thank offerings*. See pp 170–71. *Give thanks … forever!* Cf Ps 136. *restore the fortunes*. See p 1080.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 33:13 See color map 2. *flocks … under the hands*. The method by which a shepherd would count the sheep in the morning and evening as they walked out of or into the sheepfold. Cf Jn 10:1–7.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 33:1–13 Eventually, the Lord will restore the fortunes of His people, and the empty streets will once again ring with joy and laughter. God's discipline must work itself out at this point before He will show mercy to His rebellious people. God plans a wonderful future for His people, ultimately fulfilled in Christ Jesus. • Strengthen us, O Lord, in trial and temptation. Keep our eyes on Christ and on our heavenly home. Amen.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 33:14–26 As in previous revelations of God's eternal plan for mankind, Jeremiah's vision of good things to come is not limited to the return of the chosen people from exile but penetrates to those days when the messianic Branch, sprung from David's lineage, will establish His universal kingdom of grace.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 33:15 *a righteous Branch*. See notes, 23:5–6. Jeremiah here elaborates more on the benefits to be derived from Christ's reign. *justice … righteousness*. See p 843. Ambr: "He who looks upon the Son sees, in portrait, the Father. Mark what manner of portrait is spoken of. It is Truth, Righteousness, the Power of God: not dumb, for it is the Word; not insensible, for it is Wisdom; not vain and foolish, for it is Power; not soulless, for it is the Life; not dead, for it is the Resurrection" (*NPNF* 2 10:208).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 33:16 *saved*. See "salvation," p 843. *The Lord is our righteousness*. By virtue of His righteousness imputed to the subjects of the King, they themselves will bear the holy name. They will have full access to the throne of God through His mediation, prefigured by the sacrifices offered by Israel's priests. These long-range promises will be fulfilled as certainly as God lets day and night follow each other.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 33:17 *never lack a man*. Zedekiah was the last of David's successors to rule in Jerusalem. The throne of the messianic King shall be established forever (see note, 2Sm 7:13). He will grant royal status to His subjects. They will reign with Him forever and ever (cf Mt 25:34; 2Tm 2:12; Rv 3:21; 22:5).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 33:18 *Levitical priests*. Priests from the tribe of Levi (see note, Dt 18:1). The promise of a perpetual priesthood (Nu 25:13) will become a reality, for the messianic Branch will be also able to save those who draw near to God through Him (Heb 7:21–28). The unnumbered host of those reconciled to God by His perfect sacrifice will constitute a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices to God (1Pt 2:5, 9; Rv 1:5–6; 5:9–10). *offerings … sacrifices*. See pp 170–71.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 33:20 *My covenant with the day … night*. See notes, Gn 1:14, 16; see also p 1291.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 33:21 See notes, vv 16–18.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 33:22 For similar prophetic comparisons, see note, Gn 15:5.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 33:24 *two clans*. Judah and Ephraim, which ruled the two kingdoms of Israel. Cf 1Ki 12:16–24; see pp 54–55.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 33:25 See note, 31:35–37.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 33:26 *restore their fortunes*. See p 1080. *mercy*. See pp 842–43.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 33:14–26 As certainly as day follows night, so will God keep His promise that a Davidic King will rule over His people and that a High Priest shall intercede for them. In Jesus, the Lord sent a faithful King to rule over all His people and a High Priest to intercede. Entrust your cares to Him through prayer. His all-availing sacrifice and His compassionate rule will bless and keep you. • Remind us, Father, that we always have someone who speaks on our behalf: Jesus Christ the Righteous. Amen.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 34:1–7 Zedekiah did not heed Jeremiah's advice to submit to the Babylonian invaders (chs 27–28). Jeremiah was sent again to warn the king that continued resistance could only end in the capture of the holy city and its destruction by fire.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 34:1 *Nebuchadnezzar*. Cf 2Ki 24–25.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 34:3–4 Zedekiah himself would be brought face to face with the Babylonian king for sentencing. Though allowed to die a natural death, the prisoner was not to escape severe punishment (52:9–11).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 34:5 *burn spices*. Customary at a king's funeral (see note, 2Ch 16:14).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 34:7 *Lachish and Azekah*. The two remaining fortified strongholds southwest of Jerusalem did not hold out much longer.

Notes on potsherds found in the ruins of Lachish tell the story of the hopeless struggle against the Babylonian war machine. See map, p 357.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 34:8–9 Free men would be more apt to help defend the city. No Hebrew man or woman, sold into slavery for debts, was to be deprived of freedom for more than six years (see note, Ex 21:2; cf Dt 15:1). See p 206.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 34:9 *Jew*. Judean. See note, Ezr 4:12.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 34:12 *word of the* LORD *came*. See p 1080.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 34:15 On biblical attitudes toward slavery and freedom, see pp 101, 206. *house … called by My name*. See note, 1Ki 8:18.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 34:16 When Nebuchadnezzar lifted the siege in order to meet the challenge of an Egyptian army, the slaveholders broke their solemn pledge and took back their slaves.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 34:17 *liberty to the sword*. Punishment for the crime, which profaned God's name though actually committed against fellowmen, is ironically called a liberation. Freedom from serving God is an independence that foregoes His protection.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 34:18 *the calf*. In making (lit, "cutting") a covenant, the contracting parties passed between two halves of a slain calf, thereby declaring that they deserved to be cut to pieces if they broke the contract. See note, Gn 15:9–10.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 34:19 See p 228.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 34:20 See note, 7:33.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 34:21 *king of Babylon … withdrawn*. See note, 37:1–10.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 34** When the Babylonians temporarily withdraw and it seems the danger is past, the rich once more enslave the servants they have freed. This reveals the unbelief and rebellion at the heart of God's people. Still, God does not reject them forever; He plans for their discipline and restoration. He is faithful to all His promises. To free us, He sent Christ, who is ever faithful. • Teach us, O Lord, to see others as You see them—through the eyes of Christ Jesus, our Savior. Stir our hearts to desire God-pleasing liberty for ourselves and for all people. Amen.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 35** The incident recorded here took place some 10 years earlier than the events described in ch 34. Though not in chronological sequence, it is documented here because, like ch 34, it

furnishes further evidence that God was fully justified in threatening to destroy His rebellious people.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 35:1 *days of Jehoiakim*. 609–598 BC.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 35:2 *house of the Rechabites*. For centuries, this Kenite clan had not deviated from the austere, seminomadic way of life prescribed by their ancestor Jonadab (see note, 2Ki 10:15; cf Jgs 1:16; Nu 10:29). At this time, they were forced by the Babylonian invasion to take refuge in Jerusalem (v 11). *offer them wine*. Before a large audience, gathered in front of a chamber in the temple court, they demonstrated their obedience to one of their ancestral rules of conduct—they refused to drink any wine (v 6).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 35:3 *the son of Jeremiah*. This otherwise unknown person bore the same name given to the prophet.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 35:4 *chamber*. Rooms or halls surrounded the temple courts. They were used for supplies, utensils, offices, and even dwellings. Cf 36:10, 12, 20; 1Ch 23:28; 28:12; 2Ch 31:11; see diagram, p 541. *Hanan the son of Igdaliah*. His chamber was near that of the princes and above that of the doorkeeper. *man of God*. Title typical of a prophet. See note, 1Sm 2:27. *Maaseiah*. A high-ranking official in the temple. *keeper of the threshold*. A priest with special duties at the boundary between the holy temple and the common streets of Jerusalem. He kept order and made sure only worthy persons entered the temple courts (Jer 52:24).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 35:6–10 "When the Rechabites are praised, it is necessary [to point out] that they have observed their custom, not because they believed (1) they merited forgiveness of sins by it or (2) that the work was itself a justifying service or (3) that it was a service by which they obtained eternal life instead of by God's mercy, for the sake of the promised Seed [Genesis 3:15; Galatians 3:16]. Their obedience is praised because they had their parents' command. One of God's commandments relates to this, 'Honor your father and your mother' [Exodus 20:12]" (Ap XXVII 61).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 35:12–19 Then Jeremiah turned to the men of Judah. What they had heard and seen was an object lesson of the enormity of their sin of disobedience. See p 1220. For (1) they broke the Law of God, who gave them the Promised Land, and not merely a rule of unproved merit issued by a fellowman; (2) they violated the divine demand not to "go after other gods"; (3) they did this not once but many times over; and (4) they could not claim ignorance of God's will, for He persistently sent them His

prophets to instruct them and call them to repentance. Such deliberate, obstinate wickedness would be punished, whereas the kind of unwavering fidelity displayed by the Rechabites will always be an example of acceptable service to God.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 35:15 *Turn*. See p 1080. *amend*. Lit, "make good." *serve*. Worship.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 35:18 *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 35:19 *stand before Me*. See p 1277. The bodily descendants of the Rechabites no longer constitute an identifiable group, yet their clan is spared from destruction. The loyalty they displayed lives on as the approved hallmark of countless numbers who dedicate themselves to serve the Lord.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 35** God uses the faithful Rechabite family to show His people what obedience looks like. People seem to be much more willing to follow the traditions of men and ignore the Law of God (cf Mt 15:1–6). (Consider, e.g., how holiday traditions spread easily though their spiritual meaning is often lost.) God patiently calls sinners to repentance, sending messengers and granting them ample time to turn back to Him in faith. • Father, make us ready servants, faithful to Your Word and will, through Jesus Christ. Amen.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 36** Third in a series of incidents documenting Israel's impenitence, which provokes the wrath of the Lord against them (v 7; cf chs 34–35).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 36:1 *fourth year of Jehoiakim*. 605 BC.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 36:2 *scroll*. Thin leather or papyrus that could be rolled up for storage. *days of Josiah*. Because Jeremiah could no longer appear in the precincts of the house of the Lord (v 5), God instructed him to write on a scroll all he had spoken for 23 years since the reign of Josiah.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 36:4 *Baruch*. See note, 32:12.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 36:5 *banned*. Jeremiah was not in prison at this time. It appears he was prevented by the temple authorities from appearing there after his clash with them (20:1–3; 26:1–11).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 36:6 *day of fasting*. Likely observed in view of the threat of Nebuchadnezzar's advance toward Jerusalem after he defeated the Egyptian army at Carchemish. See notes, 25:9, 34–38; cf 46:2. See also p 189. *Lord's house*. The temple.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 36:7 *mercy*. See pp 842–43. *turn*. See p 1080.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 36:8 Actual writing was done by his secretary, Baruch, at Jeremiah's dictation. After several months, when the manuscript was completed, Baruch was ordered to read the scroll to a large audience assembled in the temple to observe a fast day (vv 1–10).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 36:9 *fifth year … ninth month*. Nov/Dec 604 BC. *fast*. See note, v 6.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 36:10 *chamber*. See note, 35:4. *Gemariah the son of Shaphan*. Father of Micaiah (v 11). A seal bearing these names was found in Jerusalem. Gemariah was a supporter of Jeremiah. *secretary*. Hbr *sopher*, from the verb for counting or recounting (in speaking/writing). Also translated "scribe" (v 32; 8:8). Five such men are mentioned in Jer. They were officials who served at the palace, temple, and military posts. *upper court … New Gate*. See note, 26:10.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 36:11–19 A temple official named Micaiah reported what he heard there to the officials assembled for a cabinet meeting in the chamber of the secretary of state.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 36:12 *secretary*. See note, v 10. *Elnathan*. See note, 26:22. *Gemariah*. See note, v 10.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 36:14 *Jehudi*. Cf vv 21, 23.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 36:16 Anxious to hear the contents of the scroll, they had Baruch read the entire document to them. They were so perturbed by what they heard, they impounded the scroll in order to bring it to the attention of the king.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 36:17 The officials sought to discover who was responsible for the message.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 36:18 *with ink*. Omitted by LXX (see "State of the LXX Text," p 1204); perhaps regarded as unnecessary. Ink was made from plant galls and soot.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 36:20–26 At Jehoiakim's command, the scroll was taken into the court and read to him by Jehudi, one of his counselors. The king cut and burned the scroll until every hated word was destroyed. No doubt Jeremiah and Baruch would have shared the fate of Uriah (26:20–23), but the Lord hid them.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 36:22 *winter house*. A separate palace or special area within the palace that was easier to heat. *a fire*. Needed for warmth in the ninth month (Dec).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 36:24 *neither … was afraid*. They were concerned about the political significance of the document, but not its message from God. *tear their garments*. See p 1277.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 36:26 *Jerahmeel*. Son of King Jehoiakim. *the LORD hid them*. Normally such well-known citizens were easily found.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 36:27–32 The king's foolish attempt to silence the Word of God failed. At Jeremiah's dictation, Baruch rewrote the scroll, including also the prophecy of disaster pronounced for their iniquity on Jehoiakim, his servants, and Jerusalem.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 36:30 *none … on the throne*. See notes, 22:15, 24–30.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 36:32 *many similar words were added*. Completing the Book of Jeremiah that by divine providence lies before us.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 36** Jehoiakim of Judah destroys the written prophecies of Jeremiah, rejecting God's mercy and the chance to repent of his sins. In doing so, he seals his fate and the fate of the nation. Persistent unbelief rejects forgiveness and grace, guaranteeing eternal condemnation for sin. Even at this late stage in Judah's history, God wants to spare the people and forgive their sins—if only they would repent and turn back to Him. So also is God's desire for every person in every age, that they might turn and repent and believe in the Savior. • Father, keep me from stubbornly insisting on my way. Teach me to trust You and live as Your child through Jesus Christ. Amen.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON **Chs 37–38** Jeremiah is firm in proclaiming the inspired Word during the last two years before the fall of Jerusalem. In three private interviews with Zedekiah, he did not hesitate to announce the fearful fate awaiting the king, the city, and its inhabitants. Nor did scourging, jailing, and threat of death by the princes cower him into deviating from the truth.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 37:1–10 He was called to his first discussion with the king when Nebuchadnezzar lifted the siege of Jerusalem to engage an army under Pharaoh Hophra (44:30; cf 32:1–15). Asked to pray that the Babylonians be forced to stay away permanently, Jeremiah announced their inevitable return to burn the city with fire.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 37:1 *Zedekiah*. 597–587 BC. *Coniah*. See note, 22:24–30.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 37:2 *people of the land*. See p 228.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 37:3 *Zephaniah*. See note, 21:1. *Maaseiah*. See note, 35:4. *pray*. Jeremiah was forbidden to intercede for people intent on opposing God's will (cf 7:16; 11:14; 14:11; 15:1).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 37:4 *put in prison*. Cf v 15.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 37:7 See note, vv 1–10.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 37:1–10 Jeremiah assures King Zedekiah and the city residents that the withdrawal of the Babylonians is only temporary. The Babylonians would certainly return and destroy the city, as God had ordained because of people's sin. Sin brings terrible consequences. They are sometimes delayed, but they are inevitable. God never entirely abandons His people, but continues to call them to repentance with the promise of forgiveness and hope for the future. • Help us to understand sin and its fruit, Lord, that we may wisely follow Your way instead of the world's way. Amen.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 37:12 Taking advantage of a lull in fighting, the prophet of Anathoth traveled home in order to claim his share of some family property. *portion*. See p 7.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 37:13 *Benjamin Gate*. See note, 20:2. *sentry … Irijah*. A guard in Jerusalem. Jeremiah got as far as one of the city gates, where this sentry arrested him on charges of deserting to the enemy.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 37:15 *the secretary*. See note, 36:10. *made a prison*. Underground cell, located in the house of a certain Jonathan.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 37:16 *dungeon cells*. Apparently a further description of prison from v 15; may refer to a room below ground.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 37:17 *questioned him secretly*. During the siege, Zedekiah called for a secret consultation with Jeremiah at the palace.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 37:19 Predictions of popular prophets had proved false. Jeremiah spoke the true Word of God; therefore, he pleaded not to be sent back to the dungeon, where he would surely die. Afraid to expose him to possible harm by the princes, the king placed him into protective custody in the court of the guard and ordered provisions for him (vv 20–21).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 37:21 *court of the guard*. See note, 32:2. *bakers' street*. Each trade and craft usually occupied the same street.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 37:11–21 Jeremiah continues to suffer for doing God's will and speaking the truth. The world hates God and His Word and opposes those who proclaim its truth. However, God does not ignore the plight of His persecuted people, and He will not neglect you. Though

you enter the kingdom of heaven through tribulation, your future is assured through the Gospel of God's beloved Son. • Grant us strength, Lord, when we face trials and persecution. Keep us faithful to Jesus and focused on the prize of eternal life. Amen.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 38:1 *Gedaliah*. After the fall of the city, a man with the same name was made governor by Nebuchadnezzar (39:14; 40:5). *Jucal*. Aka Jehucal. *Pashhur*. Cf 21:1.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 38:2 *pestilence*. See note, Ps 91:3. *goes out to the Chaldeans*. The number of those who followed Jeremiah's advice apparently was large enough to make the king afraid of them. The king feared that if he, too, deserted to the enemy, Jeremiah's supporters would abuse him for having brought on the city's destruction (v 19; 39:9). *prize of war*. See note, 21:9.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 38:4 *weakening the hands*. Same type of accusation is found in a letter (ostracon) from Lachish, in which the writer complains about the words of the princes undermining morale. This letter was written just before the Babylonian siege (c 589 BC).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 38:6 *cistern*. See note, 2:13.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 38:1–6 Jeremiah's enemies secure permission from King Zedekiah to kill him for treason since he advised the city's soldiers to desert and predicted their defeat at the hand of the Chaldeans. Rather than risk outright murder, they confine Jeremiah to a dry cistern with the expectation that he will die of thirst or starvation. God's people often face death for their faithful proclamation of His Word. God rescues His people, even when they die, and gives them eternal life (cf Rm 8:31–39). • Lord Jesus, help us to love You more than earthly life so that we do not lose eternal life. Amen.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 38:7–10 When Ebed-melech appealed to Zedekiah's conscience not to let an innocent man suffer a lingering death, the weak but well-intentioned king not only agreed to the rescue operation but also ordered a contingent of men to carry out the project.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 38:7 *Ebed-melech*. Lit, "the king's servant." Significance of his nondescript name is not known. Cf 39:15–18. *Ethiopian*. From the region of Cush or Nubia, south of Egypt. See color map 3. *eunuch*. See p 228.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 38:10 *thirty men*. Large contingent may have been necessary to prevent interference with the mission.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 38:12–13 Suction and weight caused by deep mud made it impossible to escape.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 38:7–13 Ebed-melech, an official in King Zedekiah's administration, rescues Jeremiah with the king's permission. Like Jeremiah, God's people today should never give up hope but rather trust in the Lord, especially when things are at their worst. Also, God works through us to help one another in time of need, as Jesus helps us in our greatest need by rescuing us from sin and damnation. • When all seems lost, O Lord, lift up our heads. Keep our hearts faithful and our eyes on You. Amen.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 38:14–16 Third and final interview. Wracked by indecision, Zedekiah turns once more to Jeremiah, hoping to hear of a last-minute escape out of his dilemma.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 38:14 *third entrance*. Perhaps the king's private entrance to the temple, mentioned in 2Ki 16:18.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 38:16 *As the LORD lives*. Oath formula. See "oath," p 7.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 38:17 *God of hosts*. See p 1291.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 38:21 *the vision*. The Lord enabled His prophet to describe graphically what lay ahead as if he were a witness of the tragedy.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 38:22 He hears the women of the king's court taunting him with a ditty, mockingly lamenting the fact that his trusted friends had left him in the lurch.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 38:24–28 At the end of the meeting, Zedekiah gave further evidence of his craven fear of the princes. He pleaded with Jeremiah not to divulge everything they discussed but to mention only his

request not to be sent back to the underground cell. Jeremiah promised to do so and was permitted to remain in the court of the guard.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 38:28 *court of the guard*. See note, 32:2. *Jerusalem was taken*. Cf 39:1–10; 2Ki 25; Jer 52.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 38:14–28 King Zedekiah arranges a private meeting with Jeremiah and learns that he can avoid capture and save the city by surrendering to the Babylonian army, yet Zedekiah fears his own advisers more. God mercifully offers Zedekiah and his family their lives and will spare the city if only they will trust Him and leave matters in His hands. God's people have always faced the difficult choice of trusting God and doing things His way or following their own wisdom and the world's way. When faced with such dilemmas, pray that the Lord would grant you both wisdom and courage. Jesus, crucified and risen, is our wisdom (1Co 1:24). His courage in the face of death is the basis of our salvation. • Grant us wisdom and courage, Father, to do Your holy will. Amen.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 39:1–10 As foretold often and clearly in chs 1–38, Jerusalem was taken by the Babylonian army, Zedekiah the king was taken in fetters to Babylon, and the citizens of Jerusalem and Judah were carried into exile.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 39:1 589 BC.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 39:2 Tammuz 9 (July 29), 587 BC. Siege lasted c 1½ years. See notes, 2Ki 25:2, 4.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 39:3 *officials*. Nebuchadnezzar's commanders and officials listed here are not mentioned in 2Ki 25. Two of them apparently bore the name Nergal-sar-ezer. Rab-saris and Rab-mag are titles of offices in Nebuchadnezzar's administration. See note, 2Ki 18:17. *middle gate*. Likely the gate separating the new city and the old city.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 39:4 *gate between the two walls*. Cf Is 22:11. *Arabah*. See note, Jsh 3:16.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 39:5 *plains of Jericho*. See color map 1. *Riblah*. See map, p 609.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 39:8 *broke down the walls*. See note, Ne 2:13–15.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 39:9 *Nebuzaradan*. Nebuchadnezzar sent him to destroy Jerusalem by burning the city and breaking down its walls (cf 2Ki 25:8–9). He also oversaw the deportation of Judeans.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 39:10 *poor people*. Unskilled labor, of little use to the empire. *gave them vineyards and fields*. To appease them and

maintain the land's productivity for purposes of taxation.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 39:1–10 After a siege of one and a half years, Zedekiah and his people experience the consequences of their idolatry and unbelief. Yet, as promised, God rescues a remnant of the people and will later return them to Judah. God's Word of Law is kept, and His Word of Gospel is kept too. • Help us learn, O Lord, that You keep all Your Word, that we might keep the Word through faith in Jesus Christ. Amen.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 39:12 *look after him well*. Israelite deserters informed Nebuchadnezzar of Jeremiah's repeated advice not to resist the invaders. So Nebuchadnezzar considered the persecuted prophet an advocate of pro-Babylonian policy.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 39:13 See note, v 3.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 39:14 *lived among the people*. Jeremiah's favorable treatment by the Babylonians, not mentioned in the two other accounts, is recorded here and in the following chapters to provide the setting for his continued ministry among the people left in Israel by Nebuchadnezzar.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 39:16 The pledge of safety given Ebed-melech (cf 38:7–13) is inserted here to show that God did not fail to do for an Ethiopian what He did for His prophet. *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 39:17 *deliver*. See p 842.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 39:18 *a prize of war*. Preserved like Jeremiah, Ebed-melech shared in a prophet's reward (cf Mt 10:41). See note, 21:9.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 39:11–18 Nebuchadnezzar has Jeremiah released from custody and returned to his hometown. Before Jeremiah goes, he brings good news to Ebed-melech, who had rescued him from the dry cistern (38:7–13), that he will survive the fall of Jerusalem because he trusted in the Lord. You cannot avoid what you fear by disobeying God and trusting your own wisdom. Instead, trust that the Lord never forgets His people. Ultimately, He provides for you eternally through Jesus Christ. • Strengthen us, heavenly Father, when our way is difficult and danger seems so near. Show us our Savior, Jesus. Amen.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 40:1 *word that came … from the Lord*. See p 1080. *Nebuzaradan*. A Babylonian official. See note, 39:9. *Ramah*. See note, 31:15.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 40:2 *your God*. Cf 22:8–9; Ezr 1:2–4; 6:1–12 for similar words by a heathen acknowledging the power of Israel's God.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 40:4 *I release you*. Jeremiah's prophecies of Jerusalem's defeat were interpreted as loyalty to Babylon.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 40:5 *Gedaliah*. See note, 2Ki 25:22. *allowance … present*. The Babylonians wanted to develop cooperative relationships with the people they conquered (see note, 39:10). These grants made it possible for Jeremiah to stay and survive in the land. See notes, 39:12, 14.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 40:6 *lived with him*. Jeremiah stayed in Mizpah as a citizen of this new Babylonian province.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 40:7 *poorest*. See note, 39:10.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 40:8 *Ishmael*. See notes, v 14; 41:1–2. *Johanan*. A captain in the army of Judah. Cf 41:11–16. Johanan would later break a vow (43:2–6) and lose favor with the Lord and Jeremiah. See note, Lk 1:13.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 40:10 *cities that you have taken*. Since Jerusalem was razed, people had to move into smaller towns that were not destroyed.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 40:11 *Judeans … in other lands*. Refugees of the war. *remnant*. Cf v 7. Residents of Judah, not the prophesied remnant that would return. See p 1080.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 40:13 *Johanan*. See note, v 8. *forces in the open country*. Judean troops who had been ignored by the Babylonians.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 40:14 *Baalis*. King of Ammon, which lay east of the Jordan River, hoped to gain some advantage from the disorder following an overthrow of Judah. Archaeologists have discovered an Ammonite seal with the name Ba'alyasha, which may be the same ruler mentioned here. *Ishmael … to take your life?* Possibly a matter of envy. See note, 41:1–2.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 40** Gedaliah, appointed governor by the occupying Babylonians, naively ignores warnings of an assassination plot against him. Gedaliah trusts in his own wisdom and strength, setting the stage for his death and disastrous results for the survivors of Jerusalem. However, the Lord rescues Jeremiah and preserves a faithful remnant of the people in the land. Even in the worst of times, God is at work for the salvation of souls. • Father, always keep the cross of Christ before us, showing us the depth of Your love and reminding us of the cost of discipleship. Amen.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 41:1–2 *seventh month*. If this incident took place in the year of Jerusalem's fall (587 BC; cf 39:2), Gedaliah was governor in Mizpah for only three months. Perhaps the punitive measures Nebuchadnezzar took four years later (52:30) were in retaliation for

Gedaliah's murder. *Ishmael*. Likely jealous of Gedaliah, who was not a descendant of David. However, he may have acted out of hatred toward a Babylonian governor ruling over Israel or in support of Ammonite aggression.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 41:3 Potential witnesses and successors were likewise killed.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 41:5 *Shechem and Shiloh and Samaria*. Cities and regions formerly conquered (722 BC) and settled by the Assyrians. Cf 2Ki 17; see color map 1. *beards shaved … bodies gashed*. Mourning rites, by which the pilgrims expressed grief over the destruction of Jerusalem. God forbade such actions, so this behavior shows how the Israelites had adopted Canaanite practices. Cf 1Ki 18:28. *clothes torn*. See note, Jb 1:20. *grain offerings and incense*. See pp 170–71. *present at the temple*. The Babylonians had already destroyed the temple. These pilgrims would have made offerings at the site, a gesture of solidarity with the suffering Judeans.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 41:6 *weeping*. False sympathy, meant to deceive.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 41:7 *slaughtered them*. See note, v 3. *cistern*. See note, 2:13.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 41:8 *stores … hidden*. Caches of food were hidden from the invading Babylonians.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 41:10 *all the rest*. Though not mentioned specifically, Jeremiah evidently was among the people taken captive. *cross over to the Ammonites*. Sponsors of Ishmael's assassination. See note, 40:14.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 41:11 *Johanan*. See notes, 40:8; Lk 1:13.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 41:16 *eunuchs*. See p 228.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 41:17 *Geruth Chimham*. An inn, or khan, named after the son of David's friend Barzillai (see notes, 2Sm 19:31–39).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 41:18 *afraid*. See note, vv 1–2.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 41** Ishmael murders a number of pilgrims and Gedaliah, Babylon's appointed governor. Johanan, one of Gedaliah's soldiers, and his men overtake Ishmael. Johanan's faithfulness and mercy here contrast sharply with the treachery of Ishmael, who seeks advantage over others who are suffering. Like Johanan, have mercy on those who suffer and are confused by life's troubles. Repent of evil ambitions, and make service to the Lord and His people your highest goal. In mercy, the Lord made your salvation His highest priority, suffering death on the cross

to bring you new life. • Teach us to trust You, O Lord, and always follow Your ways, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 42:1–3 Reaching the vicinity of Bethlehem, Johanan and all the people prevail on Jeremiah to pray. After 10 days, the Word of the Lord came to Jeremiah (v 7). *mercy*. See pp 842–43. *remnant*. See note, 40:11.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 42:3 *Lord your God*. The commanders recognized Jeremiah's special relationship with the Lord.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 42:4 *Lord your God*. Jeremiah's reply emphasizes that the people, too, are to know the Lord and claim Him as their God.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 42:5 *faithful witness*. The commanders make a vow with covenant language. See "vow," p 7.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 42:7 *word of the Lord came*. See p 1080.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 42:10 *build … plant*. The epitome of the message Jeremiah was commissioned to proclaim (1:10; 18:7–9; 31:4, 28; 33:7). The answer he was authorized to give consisted of advice to "dwell in the land," where God would protect them from the Babylonians (vv 7–12), and a warning that certain death awaited them in Egypt (vv 13–17). *relent*. See pp 1079–80.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 42:11 *Do not fear*. The Judeans apparently feared that the Babylonians would punish all the people because of the assassination of their governor. *I am with you*. See "be with," p 5. *save … deliver*. See p 842.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 42:12 *mercy*. See pp 842–43.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 42:14 *sound of the trumpet*. Sounding an attack. See p 993.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 42:15 *remnant*. The term is applied to survivors in Judah as well as Judeans who were taken into exile. See p 1080; see also note, 40:11. *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 42:18 See note, 24:9.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 42:19 *Know for a certainty*. God's Word is faithful, not simply a rubber stamp for human aspirations.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 42** Jeremiah promises God's blessings to Johanan and his band of refugees if they will stay in Judah, but warns of certain death if they go to Egypt. God does not want His people to place their confidence in Pharaoh or his army. Today, when you face questions in life, seek the Lord's will through the wisdom of His Word and by

commending your life to Him through prayer. He will watch over you faithfully and be with you always. • Help us, heavenly Father, to trust in You above all earthly reason, might, and power, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 43** The exiled prophet foretold the punishment awaiting the rebellious fugitives: they would perish in the land. Nebuchadnezzar would act as God's servant in conquering and pillaging Egypt. In order to dramatize the certainty of this prophecy, Jeremiah was directed to lay large stones at the entrance to Pharaoh's palace, symbolizing the Babylonian king's throne and undisputed dominion in Egypt (vv 8–13).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 43:2 *Azariah … Johanan … insolent men*. They violated their vow. See notes, 40:8; 42:5.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 43:3 *Baruch*. See notes, 32:10, 12. It is not clear why the men believed Baruch would act as an agent of the Babylonians.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 43:5 *from all the nations*. Moab, Ammon, and Edom are some of the countries from which people returned during Gedaliah's governorship.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 43:6 *Nebuzaradan*. See note, 39:9. *Gedaliah*. See note, 2Ki 25:22. *Jeremiah … Baruch*. Because the commanders thought these men would betray them, they carried them off. Note that the commanders did not react by killing Jeremiah and Baruch, in contrast to the treacherous behavior of Ishmael (cf 40:14; 41:2).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 43:7 *Tahpanhes*. Border city and fort of Egypt manned by Greek mercenaries (see note, 2:16).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 43:9 *large stones and hide them*. Preparing an illustration. See p 1220.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 43:10 *My servant*. See note, 25:9. *set his throne*. Nebuchadnezzar would conquer Egypt. *royal canopy*. Set over the king's throne to make a comfortable meeting place.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 43:11 *strike the land*. A fragment from a Babylonian chronicle records Nebuchadnezzar's invasion of Egypt in 567 BC.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 43:12 *clean … of vermin*. Just as a shepherd would pick the lice out of his cloak, the Babylonians would pick through and pillage the cities of Egypt.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 43:13 *obelisks*. Lit, "pillars." *Heliopolis*. C 25 mi N of Memphis. See color map 3.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 43** Johanan and the last of the royal family break their vow (42:5–6) and move to Egypt against God's will, taking Jeremiah with them. Human reason often wins out over trust in God and obedience to Him. In grace, God preserves a faithful remnant of His people in Babylon. They will return to the Promised Land after many years, and from them the Lord will raise up a Savior, Christ the Lord. • Teach us to trust You, Lord, both in this life and for eternal salvation, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 44** In Egypt, Jeremiah delivers his last recorded oracle and probably suffers martyrdom because of it. The occasion is a great assembly of Judeans whose wives worship false gods (v 15).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 44:1 *Migdol*. On Egypt's northeastern border. *Tahpanhes … Memphis*. See note, 2:16. *Pathros*. Territory on the Upper Nile as far south as Aswan (see note, Is 11:11).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 44:2 *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 44:4 *persistently sent*. Jeremiah was not the first prophet to warn the people of the judgment to come (7:25; 25:4; 26:5). *My servants*. See pp 1077–83. *abomination*. See note, Pr 6:16.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 44:7 *no remnant?* See note, 24:8.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 44:8 *making offerings to other gods*. The nation of Egypt worshiped numerous gods and goddesses. Worship of these false gods and goddesses enticed Israel away from following the Lord God of Israel. *curse … taunt*. See note, 24:9.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 44:10 *feared*. See p 1001. *walked in My law*. See p 7. *statutes*. See p 971.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 44:11 *set My face*. See p 1277. *all Judah*. No one was to think that escape from God was possible, even though a few would survive and return to the land of Judah (v 28). See note, v 14.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 44:12 *set their faces*. See p 1277. *oath … taunt*. See note, 24:9.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 44:14 *some fugitives*. These few would likely return with the prophecies of Jeremiah and the history of their fulfillment.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 44:15 *great assembly*. Normally, a gathering of God's people at the temple or tabernacle. See "great congregation," p 842. However, the purpose of this assembly was to observe a pagan festival in honor of the queen of heaven, an astral deity and goddess of fertility (cf 7:18). *Pathros*. See note, v 1.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 44:17 *queen of heaven*. See note, 7:18. *had plenty*. Israel once "had plenty," and King Manasseh promoted "the despicable practices of the nations" (2Ki 21:1–9). After his grandson Josiah abolished idolatry (2Ki 23:4–20), everything went wrong, they claimed. This is an example of a worldview that does not reckon with the Lord of history.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 44:19 *husbands' approval*. The women, who apparently played a major role in honoring the mother-goddess, had their husbands' full support. See note, Nu 30:6–15.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 44:22 *abominations*. See note, Pr 6:16.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 44:23 *walk in His law*. See p 7. *statutes … testimonies*. See p 971.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 44:25 *confirm your vows*. Spoken ironically. See "vow," p 7.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 44:26 *sworn by My great name*. Cf 2Tm 2:13; see "for Your name's sake," p 842. *As the Lord GOD lives*. Oath formula. See "vow," p 7.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 44:28 *remnant of Judah*. See note, 24:8; see also p 1080.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 44:30 *Hophra*. Mentioned by name only here, this pharaoh tried to come to Jerusalem's aid during Nebuchadnezzar's siege of the city (37:5). As predicted by Jeremiah, Hophra's enemies killed him during the uprising. *Zedekiah … Nebuchadnezzar*. Cf 2Ki 24–25.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 44** The Judean refugees who fled to Egypt refuse to give up their idolatry. They are convinced that worshiping false gods brings them peace and prosperity. God cannot tolerate such rebellion. As we see illustrated here, God calls sinners to repent or face His judgment. Sadly, mankind often seeks religions that promise prosperity or personal gratification. These are nothing more than self-centered substitutes for faith. True faith comes only through the faithful proclamation of God's lasting treasure—eternal life through Jesus Christ. • Father, do not let the deceitful wealth of the world tempt us away from You and our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 45** Baruch's survival came at God's command. God promised to deliver him more than 15 years before Jerusalem's destruction. God promises to keep Baruch safe during a time of continued war (v 5). See notes, 32:10, 12.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 45:1 *fourth year of Jehoiakim*. 605 BC.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 45:3 *Woe is me!* The honest scribe admitted that he shared Jeremiah's anguish over a painful and futile task (8:18; 12:1; 15:15–21; 20:7–8). See "woe," p 1080.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 45:4 *built … planted*. See note, 1:10.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 45:5 *great things*. Whoever would be great in God's kingdom must surrender selfish ambitions (cf Mt 20:26–28). *prize of war*. See note, Jer 21:9.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 45** God reveals His heart in a message of encouragement to Baruch, Jeremiah's secretary. When God disciplines, even faithful servants like Baruch will feel the heat of His wrath. Yet God will protect Baruch throughout the turmoil ahead. Because God is wholly righteous, He must punish sin (Heb 12:6), although it causes Him great pain. God keeps His promises, even when His people break theirs, and He finally sends the Savior for all sinners. • Help us understand Your heart, O Lord, even when we do not understand Your plans for us. Keep our eyes on the cross of Christ Jesus. Amen.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON **Chs 46–51** Undated oracles. The Creator and Lord of the universe made known the course of history through Jeremiah, whom He called to be a prophet to the nations and to whom He gave authority over nations (1:5, 10). The oracle declaring what Jeremiah prophesied against all the nations in 25:13–38 is expanded in chs 46–51. Jeremiah's oracles are grouped in consecutive chapters, as in Is 13–33; Ezk 25–32; and Am 1:3–2:3. On the arrangement of these oracles in the LXX, see p 1204.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON **Chs 46–49** Proclaims Egypt's supremacy over lesser states (Philistines, Moabites, and Ammonites) stretching from the land of the Nile to the distant northeast and its defeat by the Babylonians.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 46** Egypt's fight with Babylon for world dominion occurred after the liquidation of the Assyrian Empire in 612 BC. Pharaoh Neco succeeded in reducing Judah to a vassal state for four years after killing King Josiah at Megiddo. However, Pharaoh Neco was no match for Nebuchadnezzar. Neco's crushing defeat in 605 BC, which was caused by the Lord (v 25), comes at Carchemish (vv 1–12). Nebuchadnezzar's invasion of the land of the pharaohs is the subject of a second scintillating poem (vv 14–24). A few lines in prose pick up the prophecy of this invasion (vv 25–26). God directs each nation's rise and fall

in order to establish His kingdom through a chastened, restored servant—Israel (vv 27–28).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 46:1 *word of the* LORD *that came*. See p 1080.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 46:2 *Pharaoh Neco … Carchemish*. See note, 2Ki 23:29. *Nebuchadnezzar*. Cf 2Ki 23–25. *fourth year of Jehoiakim*. 605 BC.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 46:3 *buckler*. See note, Ps 35:2.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 46:7 *Who is this*. Neco (v 2).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 46:9 *Cush … Put … Lud*. The Egyptians recruited hired soldiers (v 21) from these countries. Cush (Ethiopia) was situated on the Upper Nile south of Aswan. Put (variant spelling Pul) and Lud were African territories west of the Nile Delta (see notes, Is 66:19; Ezk 30:5; see also color map 3).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 46:10 *day of the Lord*. See p 1079. *a sacrifice*. See note, Is 34:6.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 46:11 *Gilead*. Famed for its balm (see note, 8:22).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 46:12 *stumbled*. Likely in chaotic retreat.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 46:14 *Migdol*. Likely served as an outpost on the border between Judah and Egypt. Sites excavated in the region included Greek and Egyptian pottery, leading the excavator to propose that the Judean kings had hired mercenaries to supplement their forces. *Memphis and Tahpanhes*. Cf 43:7; see note, 2:16.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 46:15 *mighty ones*. Cf Ps 103:20; Is 34:7 (“mighty bulls”); Ps 22:12 (“Many … strong bulls”). Apis is the name of the sacred bull worshiped in Egypt.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 46:17 *Noisy one*. Pharaoh Neco’s pompous declaration of military prowess turned out to be empty braggadocio (2Ki 18:21; Is 36:6).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 46:18 *As I live*. Oath formula. See “vow,” p 7. *King*. See pp 1565–66. *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291. *Tabor … Carmel*. As these mountains tower over Israel, so the Babylonian conqueror would be superior to all opposition.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 46:19 *Memphis*. See map, p color map 3.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 46:20 *beautiful heifer*. References Egypt’s gods. See note, v 15.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 46:21 *fattened calves*. See note, 1Sm 28:23–24.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 46:22 *sound like a serpent*. Rustling.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 46:23 *locusts*. See note, Jl 1:4.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 46:25 *Amon*. Chief among Egyptian gods.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 46:27 God's plan will preserve Israel against the upheavals of international politics. *save*. See "salvation," p 843. *Jacob shall return*. The remnant of Israel's descendants. See note, 24:8.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 46:28 *I am with you*. See "be with," p 5.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 46** God declares that He will use Egypt's defeat by Babylon as a pattern for further military losses. Egypt, however, will survive. Added to this prophecy of destruction is a note of comfort for the Judean exiles in Babylon: God will discipline, but not completely destroy, them. God created the world and rules it, administering His righteous justice according to His will. At all times, and through all things, God works for the salvation of His people. Even in the midst of His discipline, God preserves a faithful remnant, out of which came Jesus Christ—His long-promised Messiah. • Help us, O Lord, to keep faith when chaos and warfare erupt. Amen.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 47** The conquering forces "out of the north" (Babylon) would inundate the Philistines, leaving devastation in their wake.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 47:1 *struck down Gaza*. Before the Babylonians defeated the Philistines, the city-state of Gaza, one of the Philistines' southernmost strongholds, fell to the Egyptians. Pharaohs Psamtik I (664–610 BC) and Neco II (610–595 BC) were both active in Philistia. See color map 2.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 47:3 *look not back*. No hope of rescue.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 47:4 *Tyre and Sidon*. Phoenician allies of the Philistines. *Caphtor*. Likely the island of Crete, from which the Philistines may have migrated to Canaan. See map, p 1396.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 47:5 *Baldness*. Shaving the head was a sign of mourning. See note, Mi 1:16. *Ashkelon*. Another Philistine city-state located north of Gaza along the Great Sea. See color map 2. *gash*. See note, 41:5.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 47:6 *sword of the LORD!* Egypt, which punishes the Philistines. See note, v 1.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 47** Jeremiah proclaims an oracle against the Philistines. God will settle all accounts in the end, bringing perfect justice to the peoples of the world. God rescues faithful Judeans from many earthly enemies, but the greatest rescue He accomplished is saving people

from the Law's eternal condemnation. This He accomplished for us through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. • Lift our hearts, O Lord, when troubles come into our lives; keep our eyes on Christ Jesus, our Savior. Amen.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 48** The storm of God's judgment moves to the ancestral territory of the Moabites, along the eastern shore of the Salt Sea. They are descendants of Lot, Abraham's nephew (see note, Gn 19:37). In Jeremiah's time, Moab ravaged Judah after Nebuchadnezzar invaded Israel (2Ki 24:2). Later, emissaries of the king of Moab tried to involve Zedekiah in a plot against the Babylonians (27:1–6). The oracle concerning Moab is surpassed in length only by the threat against the Babylonians (chs 50–51).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 48:1 *Nebo … Kiriathaim*. A number of the cities are mentioned on the Moabite, or Mesha, Stone found over a century ago (see note, 2Ki 3:4). A few cities, such as Madmen (v 2), are not found anywhere else in Scripture and remain unidentified. For the region of Moab, see color map 2.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 48:2 *Heshbon*. See color map 1. *Madmen*. Hbr name, perhaps from Medeba, a Moabite town or region whose name may mean "water of quietness." A wordplay such as, "Silent one, you shall be silenced."

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 48:3 *Horonaim*. Location uncertain.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 48:4 *little ones*. Children suffered horribly in the ravages of war (cf 49:20; 50:45). See p 879.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 48:5 *Luhith*. Location uncertain.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 48:6 *like a juniper*. Isolated in a vast wilderness.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 48:7 *Chemosh*. The god of the Moabites (see notes, Nu 21:29; 1Ki 11:7; 2Ki 3:22).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 48:8 *destroyer*. Babylonians.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 48:10 Those refusing God's appointment as instruments of His wrath will also receive God's curse. See "curse," p 6.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 48:11 *at ease*. For a long time, Moab escaped the deportations inflicted on Israel and Judah. *settled on his dregs*. Like wine left undisturbed on its fermented sediment to improve its quality (see note, Is 25:6).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 48:12 The Babylonians will effect the change. They will destroy Moab as if tilting the wine jars, emptying them, and breaking the vessels.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 48:13 *Chemosh*. See note, Nu 21:29. *Bethel*. Where Israel worshiped idols such as Chemosh. On the city's role in Israel's apostasy, see notes, 1Ki 12:28–32.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 48:14 *mighty men*. See notes, Jsh 1:14; 2Sm 23:8.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 48:15 *destroyer*. Babylonians. *King*. See pp 1565–66 *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 48:17 *mighty scepter*. Moab's ruler.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 48:18 *Dibon!* See color map 1. *destroyer*. Babylonians.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 48:19 *Aroer!* See map, p 615.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 48:20 *Arnon*. River that bisected Moab and emptied into the Salt Sea. See color map 1.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 48:25 *horn … arm*. Symbols of power. See p 842.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 48:26 *Make him drunk*. See notes, 13:13; Is 51:17. Cf Jer 25:15.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 48:27 *wagged your head?* See p 1277.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 48:28 Like their ancestor Lot, they will be forced to take refuge in remote caves. Cf Gn 19:30–38.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 48:29–33 Jeremiah draws heavily on Isaiah's denunciation of Moab (cf Is 24:7–8).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 48:31 *wail for Moab*. Jeremiah expresses sympathy with the Moabites. *Kir-hareseth*. Likely Kerak, a major Moabite city.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 48:32 *Jazer … Sibmah!* Amorite and Moabite towns. *destroyer*. Babylonians.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 48:34 East and south of the Salt Sea.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 48:35 *high place*. See p 526.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 48:36 *moans … like a flute*. See "flute," p 993.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 48:37 *head is shaved … gashes*. See notes, 16:6; 41:5. *sackcloth*. See note, Jb 16:15.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 48:38 *housetops … lamentation*. The site of pagan sacrifice becomes the site of despondent mourning. Cf 19:13.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 48:40 *eagle*. See note, Mi 1:16.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 48:44 *year of their punishment*. See "day of the Lord," p 1079.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 48:45–46 See notes, Nu 21:27–29.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 48:45 *Heshbon*. See note, 49:3. *Sihon*. Amorite king of Moab.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 48:47 *restore the fortunes*. See p 1080. *in the latter days*. In the messianic age, Moab will be among the "many peoples" (Is 2:3) constituting the redeemed of the Lord (see note, Is 2:2).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 48** Moab was known for its vineyards and wine. Here, Jeremiah prophesies their destruction as a symbol of judgment on the Moabite people (fulfilled in 582 BC). Because of Moab's arrogance, its people will go into exile, as did the Judeans. In His mercy, God promised to preserve some of the population and Moab's identity as a people, at least for a time. Though Moab disappeared from history before the NT era, some of its descendants received the blessings of the new covenant (see notes, Ru 4:14–17). • Father, keep us humble. When others suffer, lead us to reach out to them in love. Teach us also to depend on You and not on ourselves. Amen.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 49:1 *Ammonites*. Descendants of Lot and therefore a people related to Israel (Gn 19:38; Dt 2:19). See note, 40:14. *no sons?* When the Assyrians carried the East-Jordan Israelites captive, the Ammonites moved in and occupied the territory allotted to the tribe of Gad, claiming that they, not Israel, were its heir (cf 2Ki 15:29). Cf Jgs 3:13; 1Sm 11:1; 2Ch 20:1 for earlier hostile acts against Israel. After the fall of Jerusalem, the king of Ammon plotted the death of Gedaliah (Jer 40:13–14). *Milcom*. See note, 1Ki 11:5.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 49:2 *Rabbah*. Ammonite capital. See color map 1.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 49:3 *Heshbon*. A city in Moab (48:34). Perhaps captured by the Ammonites, or there were two cities by this name. See color map 1. *Ai*. Unidentified site in Ammon, though a place by that name in Israel is well attested (Gn 12:8; Jsh 7–8). *sackcloth*. See note, Jb 16:15. *among the hedges!* Stone walls around fields, vineyards, and sheepfolds (Nu 32:16, 24, 36; Ps 89:40; Na 3:17; Zep 2:6), where fleeing people could hide. *Milcom*. See notes, 1Ki 11:5; Lv 18:21.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 49:5 *Lord* GOD *of hosts*. See p 1291.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 49:6 *restore the fortunes*. See p 1080.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 49:1–6 The Ammonites had opposed Israel and taken some of the territory God had given to the tribe of Gad. For Ammon's hostility toward God's people, Ammon will be destroyed (a

prophecy fulfilled in 582 BC). Opposition to the Lord and His people inevitably brings destruction and condemnation. God provides many opportunities for repentance, even for those nations that oppose His people or His will. Through these opportunities, we see God's marvelous grace. • Gracious God, grant us wisdom to humble ourselves before You, to repent, and then to trust Your judgments; in Jesus Christ. Amen.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 49:7 *Edom*. Descendants of Jacob's twin brother, Esau (Gn 36:1), the Edomites were enemies of Israel. Their ancestral home was south of the Salt Sea. Some of their chief centers of activity were Teman, Dedan, and Bozrah. See color map 2. *wisdom*. In the ancient world, the Edomites had a reputation of excelling in wisdom (Jb 2:11; 15:1–2, 18; Ob 8).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 49:11 *fatherless children … widows trust in Me*. See note, Ps 94:6.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 49:12 *did not deserve*. If less-guilty nations will be punished, then certainly Edom deserved to drink the cup of divine judgment. *the cup*. See note, Is 51:17. "Troubles are not always punishments for certain past deeds, but they are God's works, intended for our benefit, and that God's power might be made more apparent in our weakness" (Ap XIIB 63).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 49:13 *sworn by Myself*. Cf 2Tm 2:13; see "for Your name's sake," p 842. *Bozrah*. A chief city of Edom. *horror … curse*. See note, 24:9.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 49:14–16 Almost identical with Ob 1–4. Cf ch 48, where Jeremiah quoted from Is (see note, Jer 48:29).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 49:16 See notes, Ob 4; Mi 1:16.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 49:18 *Sodom and Gomorrah*. See note, 24:9.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 49:19 *jungle of the Jordan*. See note, Zec 11:3. *him*. Edom. *her*. Likely refers to the pasture. *appoint … whomever I choose*. The Lord would provide a new leader for His flock. *shepherd*. Leader. See note, 2:8.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 49:20 *Teman*. See note, Jb 2:11. *little ones*. See note, 48:4.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 49:21 *cry shall be heard at the Red Sea*. Their cry would be so loud people at a great distance would hear it.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 49:22 *eagle*. See note, Mi 1:16. *Bozrah*. See note, v 13.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 49:7–22 Famous for their wisdom, the Edomites have foolishly opposed God (like their ancestor Esau). They will be "stripped bare" by God's justice. Jeremiah uses a vineyard metaphor to state that none shall escape God's righteous judgment. Human pride inevitably leads to disaster, regardless of a person's wisdom or natural intellect. Wise or foolish by the world's standards, salvation belongs to everyone who trusts in Jesus Christ, for He alone is "the way, and the truth, and the life" (Jn 14:6). • Father, teach us true wisdom through faith and insight through Your Word. Amen.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 49:23 *Damascus*. Capital of Syria (Aram), c 60 mi NE of the Sea of Chinnereth. *Hamath*. C 100 mi N of Damascus. *Arpad*. C 100 mi N of Hamath. Cf 2Ki 10:32–33; 13:3, 7, 22 for earlier invasions of Israel by Syrian kings. See map, p 609.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 49:25 *city of My joy?* Damascus, one of the oldest continuously occupied cities in the world, is a lively center of trade at the juncture of three continents, a favored location.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 49:27 See note, Am 1:4.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 49:23–27 Damascus (capital of Aram) had long opposed God's people and often plotted against them. Damascus came under Babylonian domination shortly after Jerusalem fell to Nebuchadnezzar. No matter how strong or powerful God's enemies are, they all fall in the end. God's victory over opposing forces accomplishes two things: (1) it shows God's power over the gods of defeated nations, with the purpose of their salvation; (2) it means life and salvation for His people. • Lord, may we always see Your loving hand guiding all nations toward eternal salvation, regardless of how hopeless times may seem. Amen.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 49:28 *Kedar … Hazor*. Settlements and villages in the desert southeast of Syria (not the city of Hazor north of the Sea of Chinnereth; Jsh 11:1–2). These settlements were occupied by Bedouin descendants of Ishmael, Abraham's son by Hagar (Gn 25:12–13; see note, Jer 2:10). A Babylonian army invaded the area in 599 BC. *Nebuchadnezzar*. Cf 2Ki 24–25. *people of the east!* From the desert regions east of Israel, represented by Kedar and Hazor.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 49:31 *no gates or bars*. The people dwelt in tents, not walled cities.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 49:32 *cut … their hair*. See note, 9:26.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 49:33 See note, 24:9.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 49:28–33 The people of Kedar and Hazor lived in unwalled villages and presented no obstacle to the armies of Nebuchadnezzar that overran them at the beginning of the sixth century BC. Even those sinners who feel safe from God's judgment will feel the sting of God's wrath. The Lord does not delight in the death of sinners but wants all people to be saved through faith in the Messiah, Jesus (cf Ezk 18:23). • Help us, O Lord, to find our security only in Your love and grace through Jesus Christ. Send Your Holy Spirit to guard our souls unto eternity. Amen.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 49:34 *Elam*. C 200 mi E of Babylon. Its city of Susa was to become one of the capitals of the Medo-Persian Empire. Elam, which lies east of Babylon, allied with Babylon in her conquest of the Assyrians. See map, p 717. *Zedekiah*. Cf 2Ki 24:18–25:7.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 49:35 *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291. *break the bow*. Destroy their military power.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 49:36 *four winds*. See note, Ezk 5:10.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 49:39 *restore the fortunes*. See p 1080. Jews from Elam were a part of the multitude in Jerusalem on Pentecost (Ac 2:9).

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 49:34–39 Elam now stands before the Lord to receive His judgment. God finds Elam guilty of supporting Babylon in her war against the Judeans. He will scatter the Elamites throughout the world—their king and officials destroyed (v 38). In mercy, God does not completely destroy Elam. God judges all nations, yet He is Savior for all the earth and every people. • Enable us, heavenly Father, to reach out with the precious Gospel message to all nations, both near and far. Amen.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON **Chs 50–51** Oracles spoken against the Babylonian Empire (50:1). Jeremiah draws concentric circles around a central topic: the destruction of Babylon—the necessary preliminary to the restoration of exiled Israel. Jeremiah announced the grim fate of the Babylonians five years before they captured Jerusalem (cf 51:59). Jeremiah spoke in retrospect of the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple as an event that happened in the past and was foretold by him in advance. In prophetic vision, he also looked far beyond current events to the founding of the messianic reign centuries later.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 50:1 The Babylonian Empire was subject to God's eternal purpose. It emerged on the scene when He needed a "servant" (25:9; 27:6; 43:10) to punish His apostate people. It sank beneath the sands

of time because it sinned against the Lord (50:14), pursuing its own selfish interest and thus opposing the coming of the kingdom of God.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 50:2 Babylon's trust in false gods was in vain. *Bel*. See note, Is 46:1. *Merodach*. Hbr spelling of the Babylonian Marduk; appears in the names Merodach-baladan and Evil-merodach (2Ki 20:12; 25:27).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 50:3 *out of the north*. Babylon, the foe "from the north" (see note, 1:13–14), was to become the victim of invaders coming from the same direction, the Medes (51:11, 28). *desolation*. The city of Babylon, left intact by Cyrus the Mede at the time of its capture, was later reduced to desolation.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 50:4 *weeping*. See p 1277. *seek the* LORD. See p 843.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 50:5 *way to Zion*. See note, Is 2:2. *everlasting covenant*. See p 127.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 50:6 *shepherds*. Leaders. See note, 2:8. *turning them away*. The people wandered from safety, pushed by unfaithful leaders.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 50:7 *not guilty*. This claim of innocence is refuted in 2:3. *their habitation of righteousness*. Mount Zion, their sheepfold, from which they strayed.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 50:8 *as male goats before the flock*. Leaders of the flock.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 50:9 *nations, from the north country*. Medes and Persians dwelt in the mountains north and east of Babylon. See map, p 717.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 50:11 *you*. Babylon. *My heritage*. See p 7.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 50:12 *your mother*. City of Babylon.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 50:13 *hiss*. Jeremiah earlier used the same expression to describe Jerusalem's doom (25:9). See p 1276.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 50:15 *vengeance*. See note, Is 34:8.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 50:17 *hunted sheep*. Separated from the flock and therefore most vulnerable and subject to pursuit. *Nebuchadnezzar*. Cf 2Ki 24–25.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 50:19 *Carmel … Bashan*. Territories in Israel, famous for their fertility. *Ephraim … Gilead*. See color map 2.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 50:20 *In those days*. Time of the new covenant (cf 31:1, 31). *I will pardon*. See notes, Ps 103:11–12; Mi 7:19. *remnant*. See p 1080.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 50:21 *Merathaim … Pekod*. Puns on the names of localities in Babylonia. See ESV notes. *devote … to destruction*. See p 6.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 50:23 *hammer*. A favorite metaphor for Jeremiah (23:29; 51:20). Babylon serves as God's instrument of punishment.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 50:25 *Lord God of hosts*. See p 1291.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 50:26 *devote … to destruction*. See p 6.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 50:28 *Zion*. See p 844. *vengeance for His temple*. Babylon's guilt was the arrogant claim that the destruction of the Jerusalem temple proved Marduk's superiority over Israel's God.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 50:29 *Holy One of Israel*. See p 1227.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 50:30 *young men shall fall*. Jeremiah repeats words he spoke in announcing the doom of Damascus.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 50:34 *Redeemer*. See note, Jb 19:25. *plead their cause*. The Lord will be the advocate of His people, not the accuser. See p 792.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 50:35 *sword*. Medes and Persians (cf v 9).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 50:37 *become women!* Unskilled to fight; therefore, terrified.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 50:38 Babylon's idols are no match for almighty God.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 50:40 See note, 24:9. *neighboring cities*. Listed in Gn 14:2.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 50:41–43 Applies to the Babylonians the threat of doom previously addressed to Judah.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 50:44–46 Similar words are uttered against Edom. See notes, 49:19–21.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 50** God holds Babylon responsible for the destruction of Jerusalem and the captivity of its citizens. During the process of Babylon's destruction, the Israelites will come together to seek the Lord to make an everlasting covenant (vv 4–5). God's heart aches when the people He loves turn away from Him. Like the father of the prodigal (Lk 15:21–24), He yearns to forgive those who return to Him with repentant hearts. • Father, lead us by Your Holy Spirit to repentance, and forgive us through Your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 51:1 *Thus says the Lord*. See p 1080. The oracle against Babylon continues.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 51:2 *winnowers*. Figurative designation for destroyers. See notes, 4:12; 15:7.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 51:3 In the first two lines, the defenders are told that resistance is in vain, while in the next two lines, the attackers are called upon to prove it. *devote to destruction*. See p 6.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 51:5 *not been forsaken*. Cf Is 62:12. *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291. *Holy One of Israel*. See p 1227.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 51:6 Addressed to the exiled Israelites.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 51:7 *golden cup*. Divine judgment portrayed as a cup of wrath. See note, Is 51:17. Babylon, God's instrument of punishment on the nations, is called "golden" because of her imperial might and splendor.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 51:8 *Take balm*. Spoken ironically to Babylonian sympathizers and confederates who see her wound. See note, 8:22.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 51:10 Israel is reminded that her vindication comes by God's grace. *Zion*. See p 844.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 51:11 *kings of the Medes*. Leaders of various tribes, united in the attack on Babylon.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 51:12 *watchmen*. See note, Is 21:6–12.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 51:13 *many waters*. The Euphrates River was diverted into a network of irrigation canals as it flowed through Babylon. *thread of your life is cut*. Babylon's last thread has been stitched or woven in the tapestry of history. God is done with them.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 51:14 *sworn by Himself*. Cf 2Tm 2:13; see "for Your name's sake," p 842. *locusts*. See note, Jl 1:4.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 51:15–19 Describes the impotence of idols and warns against trusting "a work of delusion" (v 18) rather than the Creator God. This warning describes both Israel's folly and Babylon's folly for relying on their god Marduk to defend them against the "Lord of hosts" (v 19).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 51:15 *wisdom*. See pp 775–78.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 51:19 *portion*. See p 7.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 51:20 *My hammer*. As God once used the Assyrians as rods of His anger (Is 10:5–11), so the Babylonians were to "break nations in pieces" in their appointed rise to empire status. Babylon, however, committed its own sin, for which God judged them.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 51:24 *Zion*. See p 844.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 51:25 *mountain*. Babylon was located on a flat plain. Figuratively, it rose to towering eminence by its conquests.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 51:27 *Ararat, Minni, and Ashkenaz*. Districts in Median territory.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 51:28 *Medes*. See note, 50:9.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 51:31 *meet another*. Messengers of disaster will come and go in quick succession.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 51:33 *like a threshing floor*. Trodden and beaten. See p 422.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 51:34 *devoured*. Zion's delicacies and treasured possessions were removed from Israel and transported to Babylon. Thus, Nebuchadnezzar "devoured" her. Cf 2Ki 24–25. *monster*. See notes, Is 27:1; 51:9.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 51:36 *vengeance*. See note, Is 34:8. *her sea*. The Euphrates with its canals and reservoirs.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 51:38–40 The Babylonians acting like ravenous young lions inflamed with feverish craving for prey will be served food by the Lord, which will stupefy them into "a perpetual sleep" and change them from predatory beasts into domestic victims of "the slaughter."
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 51:39 *make them drunk*. See note, Is 51:17.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 51:41 *Babylon*. See note, 25:26; see also ESV note.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 51:42 *The sea*. Wave after wave of enemies will inundate Babylon.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 51:43 *son of man*. See p 1080.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 51:44 *Bel*. See note, Is 46:1.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 51:46 *heart faint*. The Israelites are not to worry, though rumors of political convulsions make them fearful that their lot in a foreign country could become even worse.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 51:48 *heavens… earth*. The whole universe was called upon to witness God's charges against His people, so it is summoned also to join in celebrating the defeat of His enemies (cf Dt 4:26; 30:19; Is 49:13). *destroyers … out of the north*. See note, 50:9.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 51:50 *You … go*. Having escaped from the sword, the exiles are to consider their liberation as God's calling to return to Jerusalem. *Remember the* LORD. See p 843.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 51:51 *holy places*. See diagram, p 541.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 51:53 *destroyers … from Me*. Cf v 48.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 51:55 *waves roar*. The attack by the enemy will be like the irresistible force of the sea and its deafening roar.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 51:56 *recompense*. See note, Is 34:8.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 51:57 *make drunk*. See note, Is 51:17. *King*. See pp 1565–66. *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 51:58 *weary themselves only for fire*. The siege will prevail against all preparations.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 51:59–64 A written copy of the words spoken concerning Babylon were to be taken to Babylon, tied to a stone, and cast into the Euphrates to symbolize that Babylon will sink, to rise no more. See p 1220.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 51:59 *Seraiah*. Baruch's brother. *quartermaster*. Lit, "the prince of rest." It refers to an administrative position, translated differently over the centuries.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 51:60 *a book*. A scroll. See notes, 36:8, 20–26.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 51** Jeremiah continues speaking God's oracle against Babylon, condemning her for the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple. The Lord called His people to come out of Babylon, lest they share the city's fate. Through Babylon's destruction, God teaches other nations of His dominion over them so they may come to faith. At the same time, He spares those He has called by His name. • Lord, lead us to live with compassion toward others, for You lovingly look upon the whole human race through the redeeming blood of Christ. Amen.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 52** The appendix verifies Jeremiah's claim that he spoke the Word of the Lord (cf 1:11). What he foretold became historical fact. Jeremiah's story began with the reign of Zedekiah, the last king of Judah (vv 1–3). Confirming his prophecies, this chapter describes the fall of Jerusalem and the vandalizing of the temple (vv 4–27), tabulates the deportations to Babylon (vv 28–30), and ends by relating how Jehoiachin (imprisoned by Nebuchadnezzar) was released from confinement and treated with dignity by Evil-merodach, a later Babylonian king (vv 31–34).
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 52:1–27 See notes, 2Ki 24:18–25:21.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 52:12 *tenth day*. Nebuchadnezzar's general, Nebuzaradan, arrived at Jerusalem three days before he ordered the temple pillaged and burned.

JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 52:1–23 See application note, 2Ki 25:1–21.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 52:24 *keepers of the threshold*. See note, 35:4.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 52:28 *seventh year*. The dating here, as well as in v 12, is based on one system of counting the regnant years of a king, whereas 2Ki 25:8 is based on another equally acceptable way of computing them. See "Chronology," p 527. *3,023 Judeans*. This number apparently refers only to the Judeans taken captive in the city of Jerusalem. The figure 10,000 in 2Ki 24:14 represents the total of all prisoners, counting also the 4,600 mentioned in Jer 52:30.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 52:30 This deportation is not mentioned in the parallel accounts.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 52:31–34 See notes, 2Ki 25:27–30.
JEREMIAH—NOTE ON 52:24–34 Jeremiah concludes on a hopeful note. Despite Judah's rebellion, God never forgot His promises. Years later, God sent Jesus Christ as the atoning sacrifice for the world's sin. All of God's promises find their Yes in Christ (2Co 1:20) • Lead us by Your Holy Spirit, heavenly Father, that we remain faithful to our eternal King, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Lamentations

Lamentations 1 | Lamentations 2 | Lamentations 3 | Lamentations 4 | Lamentations 5

- Introduction to Lamentations
  - Overview
  - Reading Lamentations
  - Luther on Lamentations
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

How Lonely Sits the City

1 [1]†How lonely sits the city
that was full of people!

How like a widow has she become,
she who was great among the nations!
She who was a princess among the provinces
has become a slave.
[2]† She weeps bitterly in the night,
with tears on her cheeks;
among all her lovers
she has none to comfort her;
all her friends have dealt treacherously with her;
they have become her enemies.
[3]† Judah has gone into exile because of affliction
and hard servitude;
she dwells now among the nations,
but finds no resting place;
her pursuers have all overtaken her
in the midst of her distress.[1]
[4]† The roads to Zion mourn,
for none come to the festival;
all her gates are desolate;
her priests groan;
her virgins have been afflicted,[2]
and she herself suffers bitterly.
[5]† Her foes have become the head;
her enemies prosper,
because the Lord has afflicted her
for the multitude of her transgressions;
her children have gone away,
captives before the foe.

6† From the daughter of Zion
all her majesty has departed.
Her princes have become like deer
that find no pasture;
they fled without strength
before the pursuer.
7† Jerusalem remembers
in the days of her affliction and wandering
all the precious things
that were hers from days of old.
When her people fell into the hand of the foe,
and there was none to help her,
her foes gloated over her;
they mocked at her downfall.
8† Jerusalem sinned grievously;
therefore she became filthy;
all who honored her despise her,
for they have seen her nakedness;
she herself groans
and turns her face away.
9† Her uncleanness was in her skirts;
she took no thought of her future;[3]
therefore her fall is terrible;
she has no comforter.
"O Lord, behold my affliction,
for the enemy has triumphed!"
10† The enemy has stretched out his hands
over all her precious things;
for she has seen the nations
enter her sanctuary,
those whom you forbade
to enter your congregation.
11† All her people groan
as they search for bread;
they trade their treasures for food
to revive their strength.

“Look, O Lord, and see,
for I am despised.”
12 “Is it nothing to you, all you who pass by?
Look and see
if there is any sorrow like my sorrow,
which was brought upon me,
which the Lord inflicted
on the day of his fierce anger.
13 “From on high he sent fire;
into my bones[1] he made it descend;
he spread a net for my feet;
he turned me back;
he has left me stunned,
faint all the day long.
14 “My transgressions were bound[2] into a yoke;
by his hand they were fastened together;
they were set upon my neck;
he caused my strength to fail;
the Lord gave me into the hands
of those whom I cannot withstand.
15 “The Lord rejected
all my mighty men in my midst;
he summoned an assembly against me
to crush my young men;
the Lord has trodden as in a winepress
the virgin daughter of Judah.
16 “For these things I weep;
my eyes flow with tears;
for a comforter is far from me,
one to revive my spirit;
my children are desolate,
for the enemy has prevailed.”
17 Zion stretches out her hands,
but there is none to comfort her;
the Lord has commanded against Jacob
that his neighbors should be his foes;

Jerusalem has become
a filthy thing among them.
18 “The Lord is in the right,
for I have rebelled against his word;
but hear, all you peoples,
and see my suffering;
my young women and my young men
have gone into captivity.
19† “I called to my lovers,
but they deceived me;
my priests and elders
perished in the city,
while they sought food
to revive their strength.
20 “Look, O Lord, for I am in distress;
my stomach churns;
my heart is wrung within me,
because I have been very rebellious.
In the street the sword bereaves;
in the house it is like death.
21† “They heard[3] my groaning,
yet there is no one to comfort me.
All my enemies have heard of my trouble;
they are glad that you have done it.
You have brought[4] the day you announced;
now let them be as I am.
22 “Let all their evildoing come before you,
and deal with them
as you have dealt with me
because of all my transgressions;
for my groans are many,
and my heart is faint.”

The Lord Has Destroyed Without Pity

2 [1]† How the Lord in his anger
has set the daughter of Zion under a cloud!

He has cast down from heaven to earth
the splendor of Israel;
he has not remembered his footstool
in the day of his anger.

[2]† The Lord has swallowed up without
mercy
all the habitations of Jacob;
in his wrath he has broken down
the strongholds of the daughter of Judah;
he has brought down to the ground in
dishonor
the kingdom and its rulers.

[3]† He has cut down in fierce anger
all the might of Israel;
he has withdrawn from them his right hand
in the face of the enemy;
he has burned like a flaming fire in Jacob,
consuming all around.

[4]† He has bent his bow like an enemy,
with his right hand set like a foe;
and he has killed all who were delightful in
our eyes
in the tent of the daughter of Zion;
he has poured out his fury like fire.

[5]† The Lord has become like an enemy;
he has swallowed up Israel;
he has swallowed up all its palaces;
he has laid in ruins its strongholds,
and he has multiplied in the daughter of

Judah
mourning and lamentation.
6† He has laid waste his booth like a garden,
laid in ruins his meeting place;
the LORD has made Zion forget
festival and Sabbath,
and in his fierce indignation has spurned king
and priest.
7† The Lord has scorned his altar,
disowned his sanctuary;
he has delivered into the hand of the enemy
the walls of her palaces;
they raised a clamor in the house of the
LORD
as on the day of festival.
8† The LORD determined to lay in ruins
the wall of the daughter of Zion;
he stretched out the measuring line;
he did not restrain his hand from
destroying;
he caused rampart and wall to lament;
they languished together.
9† Her gates have sunk into the ground;
he has ruined and broken her bars;
her king and princes are among the nations;
the law is no more,
and her prophets find
no vision from the LORD.
10† The elders of the daughter of Zion
sit on the ground in silence;
they have thrown dust on their heads
and put on sackcloth;
the young women of Jerusalem
have bowed their heads to the ground.
11† My eyes are spent with weeping;
my stomach churns;

my bile is poured out to the ground
because of the destruction of the daughter of
my people,
because infants and babies faint
in the streets of the city.
12 † They cry to their mothers,
"Where is bread and wine?"
as they faint like a wounded man
in the streets of the city,
as their life is poured out
on their mothers' bosom.
13 † What can I say for you, to what compare
you,
O daughter of Jerusalem?
What can I liken to you, that I may comfort you,
O virgin daughter of Zion?
For your ruin is vast as the sea;
who can heal you?
14 † Your prophets have seen for you
false and deceptive visions;
they have not exposed your iniquity
to restore your fortunes,
but have seen for you oracles
that are false and misleading.
15 † All who pass along the way
clap their hands at you;
they hiss and wag their heads
at the daughter of Jerusalem:
"Is this the city that was called
the perfection of beauty,
the joy of all the earth?"
16 All your enemies
rail against you;
they hiss, they gnash their teeth,
they cry: "We have swallowed her!

Ah, this is the day we longed for;
now we have it; we see it!”
17 † The Lord has done what he purposed;
he has carried out his word,
which he commanded long ago;
he has thrown down without pity;
he has made the enemy rejoice over you
and exalted the might of your foes.
18 Their heart cried to the Lord.
O wall of the daughter of Zion,
let tears stream down like a torrent
day and night!
Give yourself no rest,
your eyes no respite!
19 † “Arise, cry out in the night,
at the beginning of the night watches!
Pour out your heart like water
before the presence of the Lord!
Lift your hands to him
for the lives of your children,
who faint for hunger
at the head of every street.”
20 † Look, O Lord, and see!
With whom have you dealt thus?
Should women eat the fruit of their womb,
the children of their tender care?
Should priest and prophet be killed
in the sanctuary of the Lord?
21 In the dust of the streets
lie the young and the old;
my young women and my young men
have fallen by the sword;
you have killed them in the day of your
anger,
slaughtering without pity.

22 You summoned as if to a festival day
my terrors on every side,
and on the day of the anger of the LORD
no one escaped or survived;
those whom I held and raised
my enemy destroyed.

Great Is Your Faithfulness

3 [1]†I am the man who has seen affliction
under the rod of his wrath;

[2] he has driven and brought me
into darkness without any light;
[3] surely against me he turns his hand
again and again the whole day long.
[4] He has made my flesh and my skin waste away;
he has broken my bones;
[5] he has besieged and enveloped me
with bitterness and tribulation;
[6]† he has made me dwell in darkness
like the dead of long ago.
[7] He has walled me about so that I cannot
escape;
he has made my chains heavy;
[8]† though I call and cry for help,
he shuts out my prayer;
[9]† he has blocked my ways with blocks of
stones;
he has made my paths crooked.
[10] He is a bear lying in wait for me,
a lion in hiding;
[11] he turned aside my steps and tore me to
pieces;
he has made me desolate;
[12] he bent his bow and set me
as a target for his arrow.
[13] He drove into my kidneys
the arrows of his quiver;
[14] I have become the laughingstock of all
peoples,

the object of their taunts all day long.
15† He has filled me with bitterness;
he has sated me with wormwood.
16† He has made my teeth grind on gravel,
and made me cower in ashes;
17 my soul is bereft of peace;
I have forgotten what happiness[1] is;
18† so I say, "My endurance has perished;
so has my hope from the Lord."
19† Remember my affliction and my wanderings,
the wormwood and the gall!
20 My soul continually remembers it
and is bowed down within me.
21 But this I call to mind,
and therefore I have hope:
22†† The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases;[2]
his mercies never come to an end;
23† they are new every morning;
great is your faithfulness.
24† "The Lord is my portion," says my soul,
"therefore I will hope in him."
25 The Lord is good to those who wait for him,
to the soul who seeks him.
26† It is good that one should wait quietly
for the salvation of the Lord.
27† It is good for a man that he bear
the yoke in his youth.
28† Let him sit alone in silence
when it is laid on him;
29 let him put his mouth in the dust—
there may yet be hope;
30 let him give his cheek to the one who strikes,
and let him be filled with insults.
31 For the Lord will not
cast off forever,

32† but, though he cause grief, he will have
compassion
according to the abundance of his steadfast
love;
33† for he does not willingly afflict
or grieve the children of men.
34† To crush underfoot
all the prisoners of the earth,
35† to deny a man justice
in the presence of the Most High,
36 to subvert a man in his lawsuit,
the Lord does not approve.
37† Who has spoken and it came to pass,
unless the Lord has commanded it?
38 Is it not from the mouth of the Most High
that good and bad come?
39 Why should a living man complain,
a man, about the punishment of his sins?
40† Let us test and examine our ways,
and return to the Lord!
41† Let us lift up our hearts and hands
to God in heaven:
42† "We have transgressed and rebelled,
and you have not forgiven.
43 "You have wrapped yourself with anger and
pursued us,
killing without pity;
44 you have wrapped yourself with a cloud
so that no prayer can pass through.
45† You have made us scum and garbage
among the peoples.
46 "All our enemies
open their mouths against us;
47 panic and pitfall have come upon us,
devastation and destruction;

48 my eyes flow with rivers of tears
because of the destruction of the daughter of
my people.
49 “My eyes will flow without ceasing,
without respite,
50 until the Lord from heaven
looks down and sees;
51 my eyes cause me grief
at the fate of all the daughters of my city.
52 “I have been hunted like a bird
by those who were my enemies without
cause;
53 they flung me alive into the pit
and cast stones on me;
54 water closed over my head;
I said, ‘I am lost.’
55 “I called on your name, O Lord,
from the depths of the pit;
56 you heard my plea, ‘Do not close
your ear to my cry for help!’
57 You came near when I called on you;
you said, ‘Do not fear!’
58 “You have taken up my cause, O Lord;
you have redeemed my life.
59 You have seen the wrong done to me, O Lord;
judge my cause.
60 You have seen all their vengeance,
all their plots against me.
61 “You have heard their taunts, O Lord,
all their plots against me.
62 The lips and thoughts of my assailants
are against me all the day long.
63 Behold their sitting and their rising;
I am the object of their taunts.

64 “You will repay them,[1] O Lord,
according to the work of their hands.
65 You will give them[2] dullness of heart;
your curse will be[3] on them.
66 You will pursue them[1] in anger and destroy them
from under your heavens, O Lord.”[2]

The Holy Stones Lie Scattered

4 [1]†How the gold has grown dim,
how the pure gold is changed!
The holy stones lie scattered
at the head of every street.

[2]† The precious sons of Zion,
worth their weight in fine gold,
how they are regarded as earthen pots,
the work of a potter's hands!
[3]† Even jackals offer the breast;
they nurse their young,
but the daughter of my people has become
cruel,
like the ostriches in the wilderness.
[4]† The tongue of the nursing infant sticks
to the roof of its mouth for thirst;
the children beg for food,
but no one gives to them.
[5]† Those who once feasted on delicacies
perish in the streets;
those who were brought up in purple
embrace ash heaps.
[6]† For the chastisement[3] of the daughter of my
people has been greater
than the punishment[4] of Sodom,
which was overthrown in a moment,
and no hands were wrung for her.[5]
[7]† Her princes were purer than snow,
whiter than milk;
their bodies were more ruddy than coral,
the beauty of their form[6] was like
sapphire.[7]

8 Now their face is blacker than soot;
they are not recognized in the streets;
their skin has shriveled on their bones;
it has become as dry as wood.
9 Happier were the victims of the sword
than the victims of hunger,
who wasted away, pierced
by lack of the fruits of the field.
10† The hands of compassionate women
have boiled their own children;
they became their food
during the destruction of the daughter of my
people.
11† The Lord gave full vent to his wrath;
he poured out his hot anger,
and he kindled a fire in Zion
that consumed its foundations.
12† The kings of the earth did not believe,
nor any of the inhabitants of the world,
that foe or enemy could enter
the gates of Jerusalem.
13† This was for the sins of her prophets
and the iniquities of her priests,
who shed in the midst of her
the blood of the righteous.
14 They wandered, blind, through the streets;
they were so defiled with blood
that no one was able to touch
their garments.
15† "Away! Unclean!" people cried at them.
"Away! Away! Do not touch!"
So they became fugitives and wanderers;
people said among the nations,
"They shall stay with us no longer."
16† The Lord himself[1] has scattered them;
he will regard them no more;

no honor was shown to the priests,
no favor to the elders.
17† Our eyes failed, ever watching
vainly for help;
in our watching we watched
for a nation which could not save.
18 They dogged our steps
so that we could not walk in our streets;
our end drew near; our days were numbered,
for our end had come.
19† Our pursuers were swifter
than the eagles in the heavens;
they chased us on the mountains;
they lay in wait for us in the wilderness.
20† The breath of our nostrils, the LORD's
anointed,
was captured in their pits,
of whom we said, "Under his shadow
we shall live among the nations."
21† Rejoice and be glad, O daughter of Edom,
you who dwell in the land of Uz;
but to you also the cup shall pass;
you shall become drunk and strip yourself
bare.
22† The punishment of your iniquity, O daughter
of Zion, is accomplished;
he will keep you in exile no longer;[2]
but your iniquity, O daughter of Edom, he
will punish;
he will uncover your sins.

Restore Us to Yourself, O Lord

5 [1]Remember, O Lord, what has befallen us;
look, and see our disgrace!

[2]† Our inheritance has been turned over to
strangers,
our homes to foreigners.
[3]† We have become orphans, fatherless;
our mothers are like widows.
[4]† We must pay for the water we drink;
the wood we get must be bought.
[5] Our pursuers are at our necks;[3]
we are weary; we are given no rest.
[6]† We have given the hand to Egypt, and to
Assyria,
to get bread enough.
[7]† Our fathers sinned, and are no more;
and we bear their iniquities.
[8]† Slaves rule over us;
there is none to deliver us from their hand.
[9]† We get our bread at the peril of our lives,
because of the sword in the wilderness.
[10] Our skin is hot as an oven
with the burning heat of famine.
[11]† Women are raped in Zion,
young women in the towns of Judah.
[12]† Princes are hung up by their hands;
no respect is shown to the elders.
[13]† Young men are compelled to grind at the
mill,
and boys stagger under loads of wood.
[14]† The old men have left the city gate,
the young men their music.

15 The joy of our hearts has ceased;
our dancing has been turned to mourning.
16† The crown has fallen from our head;
woe to us, for we have sinned!
17 For this our heart has become sick,
for these things our eyes have grown dim,
18† for Mount Zion which lies desolate;
jackals prowl over it.
19† But you, O Lord, reign forever;
your throne endures to all generations.
20 Why do you forget us forever,
why do you forsake us for so many days?
21† Restore us to yourself, O Lord, that we may be
restored!
Renew our days as of old—
22† unless you have utterly rejected us,
and you remain exceedingly angry with us.

Lamentations

Overview

Author
Jeremiah the prophet

Date
c 587 BC

Places
Jerusalem; Judah; Israel; the temple of the Lord

People
The people of Jerusalem—king, princes, nobles, elders, priests, prophets, and common people; Jerusalem's enemies; passersby; Jeremiah

Law Themes
The Lord pours out His anger against the kingdom of Judah; Judah finds no comfort; she cries, mourns, weeps, and laments the siege and exile

Gospel Themes
The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; great is His faithfulness; wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord; He has redeemed you

Memory Verses
God's mercies never cease (3:21–24); compassion and steadfast love (3:31–33); examine your ways (3:40–42)

Introduction to Lamentations

Reading Lamentations

See pp 1202–5.

Luther on Lamentations

Sobs and complaints of this kind are usually uttered by those who struggle with unbelief and despair and cannot buoy up their heart or lay hold of any hope of salvation. (AE 8:72)

Oh, we handle these poor young people who are committed to us for training and instruction in the wrong way! We shall have to render a solemn account of our neglect to set the word of God before them. Their lot is as described by Jeremiah in Lamentations 2. [:11–12]…. We do not see this pitiful evil, how today the young people of Christendom languish and perish miserably in our midst for want of the gospel, in which we ought to be giving them constant instruction and training. (AE 44:206)

[God] stands hidden among the sufferings which would separate us from him like a wall, indeed, like a wall of a fortress. And yet he looks upon me and does not forsake me. He stands there and is ready to help in grace, and through the window of dim faith he permits himself to be seen. And Jeremiah says in Lamentations 3[:32–33], "He casts men aside, but that is not the intention of his heart." These people know nothing at all of this kind of a faith, and they give themselves over to thinking that God has forsaken them and is their enemy. They even lay the blame on other men or on the devil, and have simply no confidence at all in God. For this reason, too, their suffering is always an offense to them and harmful. And yet they go on doing their good works, as they think, quite unaware of their serious unbelief. But they who in such suffering trust God and hold on to a good, firm confidence in him, who believe that he is well-pleased with them, see in their sufferings and afflictions nothing but pure and precious merits, the costliest treasures which no man can assess. For faith and confidence make precious before God all that which others think most shameful. (AE 44:28)

Challenges for Readers

Hebrew Poetry. See pp 777–78.

Doom and Hope. As in Jeremiah's much longer Book, he sets his most hopeful passage (3:22–33) in the center of much longer passages of gloom. On this literary feature, see p 1204.

Blessings for Readers

Reading and studying lament poems may seem silly or even wrong in an era when popular preachers emphasize joy and prosperity, psychologists emphasize guilt-free living, and politicians spin out cheery sound bites. Yet this is precisely why Jeremiah's words have so much to offer: they honestly decry the crushing weight of human sin and guilt.

This Book shows us the consequence of ignoring the confession of our sins and daily repentance. Likewise, it firmly proclaims that the Lord's steadfast love never ceases, even amid the worst sufferings.

OUTLINE

Each chapter of Lamentations is a separate lament poem (cf 2Sm 1:19–27; 3:33–34; Ps 79; 83; 89:38–51). Chs 1–4 are written as acrostic poems, so that the first word of a poetic verse begins with a letter of the Hebrew alphabet (see pp 777–78). Because Hebrew has 22 letters, chs 1, 2, and 4 each have 22 verses. Ch 3 is different, devoting 3 verses for each Hebrew letter, yielding a total of 66 verses. Ch 5 has 22 verses, but does not strictly follow the alphabetic pattern.

I. The Desolation and Misery of Jerusalem (ch 1)
II. The Lord's Anger against the Daughter of Zion (ch 2)
III. The Lord Will Discipline and Have Mercy (ch 3)

IV. Zion’s Punishment Is Accomplished (ch 4)
V. Plea That the Lord Would Not Forget Zion (ch 5)

Footnotes

Footnotes for Lamentations, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:3 Or *in the narrow passes*
- [2] 1:4 Septuagint, Old Latin *dragged away*
- [3] 1:9 Or *end*
- [1] 1:13 Septuagint; Hebrew *bones and*
- [2] 1:14 The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain
- [3] 1:21 Septuagint, Syriac *Hear*
- [4] 1:21 Syriac *Bring*

Footnotes for Lamentations, Chapter 3

- [1] 3:17 Hebrew *good*
- [2] 3:22 Syriac, Targum; Hebrew *Because of the steadfast love of the* LORD*, we are not cut off*
- [1] 3:64 Or *Repay them*
- [2] 3:65 Or *Give them*
- [3] 3:65 Or *place your curse*
- [1] 3:66 Or *Pursue them*
- [2] 3:66 Syriac (compare Septuagint, Vulgate); Hebrew *the heavens of the* LORD

Footnotes for Lamentations, Chapter 4

- [3] 4:6 Or *iniquity*
- [4] 4:6 Or *sin*
- [5] 4:6 The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain
- [6] 4:7 The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain
- [7] 4:7 Hebrew *lapis lazuli*
- [1] 4:16 Hebrew *The face of the* LORD
- [2] 4:22 Or *he will not exile you again*

Footnotes for Lamentations, Chapter 5

- [3] 5:5 Symmachus *With a yoke on our necks*

Study Notes

LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON **Chs 1–4** Acrostic poetry. See pp 777–78.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON **Ch 1** In the first lament, Jerusalem is personified as a humiliated, deserted widow. Unsuppressed sobbing rends the air as the bliss of former days are contrasted with the present nightmare of shame and destitution. The stricken mourners repeatedly confess that the Lord was justified in letting the Babylonians destroy Zion, for she had "sinned grievously" and had become "filthy" (vv 8, 17). While the Israelites mourn their transgressions, they know that God hears their penitent cries for restoration. God will again use the chastised and forgiven Israel as an instrument of His gracious will.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 1:1 *widow*. A woman bereft of her husband faced great hardship in ancient Israel, in spite of explicit legislation for her protection (Ex 22:22; Dt 10:18). *slave*. See p 101.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 1:2 *lovers … friends*. The author describes Israel's reliance on foreign nations such as Egypt as harlotry (Jer 3:1; 4:30).
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 1:3 *exile*. See map, p 717. *pursuers*. Babylonians.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 1:4 *Zion*. See p 844. *the festival*. See note, Ex 23:14–17. *gates are desolate*. See p 792. *virgins … afflicted*. They normally rejoiced by singing and dancing at festivals. See "daughters of Zion," p 1079.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 1:5 *the head*. See "chief," p 228.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 1:6 *daughter of Zion*. See p 1079. *princes*. See p 228.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 1:7 Many points in Lm recount what the people of Jerusalem felt during or after the siege by the Babylonians (589–587 BC). Cf v 19; 2:11–12; 4:4–5.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 1:8 *filthy*. See "clean," p 6. *seen her nakedness*. See note, Lv 18:6.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 1:9 *uncleanness was in her skirts*. Cf Lv 15:25.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 1:10 *enter her sanctuary … congregation*. The temple.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 1:11 See note, v 7.

LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 1:12 *Is it nothing*. Though the Hbr presents difficulties, it is clear that passersby are hailed to look and see the greatness of Zion's sorrow. *fierce anger*. In the liturgy of Good Friday, Israel's grief is equated with the suffering of Jesus Christ when the Lord inflicted anger on Him (see *LSB Altar Book*, pp 518–21).
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 1:13 *fire; into my bones*. See note, Jer 8:18–22. *net for my feet*. Common theme in Ps to describe affliction. See note, Ps 25:15.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 1:14 *bound into a yoke*. Israel could not extricate herself from the consequences of her transgressions.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 1:15 *mighty men*. See notes, Jsh 1:14; 2Sm 23:8. *trodden … winepress*. See note, Is 63:2. *daughter of Judah*. See p 1079.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 1:17 *Zion*. See p 844. *neighbors*. See note, v 2. *filthy thing*. See "clean," p 6.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 1:19 *lovers*. See note, v 2. *priests and elders*. See p 228. *sought food*. See note, v 7.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 1:21 *They*. Enemies. *the day You announced*. The day of the Lord brought punishment for Israel's sins (Am 5:18–20; Jer 39:15–16). When it dawns again, Israel will be restored and her enemies destroyed (Jer 46:10; 47:4; 50:27). See "day of the LORD," p 1079. *let them be*. Israel's persecutors were also God's enemies by their "evildoing" (v 22) in opposing His kingdom; prayer for their defeat is justified.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON **Ch 1** Jeremiah describes the terrible conditions in Jerusalem after it fell to the Babylonians and its leading citizens were taken captive. Contrasted with the wealth and beauty of its former days, the ruins lie as a testimony to God's just response against persistent sin and rebellion. The foundation of sin and rebellion is unbelief, a refusal to trust God and follow Him. Even in the face of His people's faithlessness, God proves Himself faithful to His promise of a Savior by preserving a remnant that will return to Jerusalem. • Teach us to live wisely, O Lord, according to Your will and in the joy of our salvation in Jesus Christ. Amen.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON **Ch 2** In His righteous anger, God did not spare even His temple. The poet cannot exonerate Israel from guilt. Because it is the Lord who "has thrown down without pity," relief must come from

Him. Fervent, incessant prayer alone offers hope (vv 17–19). Responding to this exhortation, the daughter of Zion again appears on the stage to plead for the Lord's mercy.

LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 2:1 *set … under a cloud!* Rare expression, likely describing how the Lord's wrath has shrouded Jerusalem, hazy with the dust and smoke of destruction. *daughter of Zion*. See p 1079.

LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 2:2 The Lord fights against His own people. *daughter of Judah*. See p 1079.

LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 2:3 *right hand*. See p 843. *enemy*. Babylon.

LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 2:4 *the tent*. Israel personified once resided in Jerusalem (her tent). See note, Is 33:20.

LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 2:5 Cf v 2.

LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 2:6 *His booth*. In the storm of God's wrath, the massive structure of Israel's temple disintegrated as if it were a flimsy hut made of leaves and branches. *meeting place*. The temple. See note, Ex 27:21. *Zion*. See p 844. *festival and Sabbath*. See pp 200–201.

LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 2:7 *clamor … of festival*. The raucous cries of invaders replace the joyful shouts of worshipers.

LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 2:8 *stretched out the measuring line*. Demolition of the city walls was carried out with the same precision the builders used in erecting them (Is 34:11).

LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 2:9 *sunk*. Destroyed and covered with debris. *law is no more*. Proclamation of God's Word was ended. *no vision*. God ended prophetic visions. After Jeremiah was carried away into Egypt (Jer 43), no prophetic voice was heard in the region of Israel for decades. See pp 1077–83.

LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 2:10 *elders*. See p 228. *sit on the ground*. See p 1277. *dust on their heads*. See note, Jb 2:12. *sackcloth*. See note, Jb 16:15. *bowed*. See p 1276. Ambr: "Jeremiah knew that penitence was a great remedy, which he in his Lamentations took up for Jerusalem… . Here you recognize the intention of the soul, the faithfulness of the mind, the disposition of the body" (*NPNF* 2 10:351).

LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 2:11 *bile is poured out*. Vomiting that ends in dry heaves. See note, 1:7.

LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 2:12 *faint*. Cf 2Ki 25:3; Jer 52:6. *poured out on their mothers' bosom*. They hug and plead for food (perhaps breast

milk), but none is available.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 2:13 *daughter of Jerusalem … comfort*. See p 1079. *heal*. On God's work, see note, Dt 32:39.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 2:14 *Your prophets*. Cf Jer 14:13; 26:7; 27:10, 15; 37:18–19 for Jeremiah's tirades against false prophets. Those misled by religious charlatans share the guilt of their deceivers. Greg: "While fearing to reprove faults, they vainly flatter evil doers by promising security: neither do they at all discover the iniquity of sinners, since they refrain their voice from chiding. For the language of reproof is the key of discovery, because by chiding it discloses the fault of which even he who has committed it is often himself unaware" (*NPNF* 2 12:11b). *restore your fortunes*. See p 1080.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 2:15 *clap … hiss and wag*. See pp 1276–77. *perfection of beauty*. Jerusalem had the distinction of being the city of the great King (cf Ps 50:2).
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 2:17 *commanded long ago*. The Lord fulfilled the curses of Dt 27–28.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 2:19 *night watches!* Prayer continued into the night, which was divided into watches. See p 1567. *like water before … the Lord!* See note, Lv 23:37. *Lift your hands*. See p 1276.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 2:20 *eat the fruit of their womb*. Disobedience to God leads to horrific consequences (Lv 26:26; Dt 28:56). See note, 1:7. *priest and prophet be killed*. The chief priest Seraiah and other temple officials were slain at Riblah by the Babylonians (2Ki 25:18–21; Jer 52:24–27). It appears that others were killed on the spot at Jerusalem.

LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON **Ch 2** By the Lord's hand, Babylon has destroyed Jerusalem and razed its temple. The consequences of sin have left people slaughtered and the remaining citizens exiled to Babylon. God has turned His back on His people for turning their back on Him. Their worship of false gods violated the covenant dating back to the exodus from Egypt. Their sin has now born hideous fruit. Despite the apostasy of God's people, He still loves them and will bring them back from their captivity to rebuild Jerusalem and the temple. From these people, God shall raise up a Savior for all nations. • Lord, teach us to heed Your warnings and repent when we stray, that we might receive Your precious forgiveness. Amen.

LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON **Ch 3** In this lament, each Hbr letter appears in alphabetical order at the beginning of three verses as if to nail down each thought (see p 1296). Advice on how to bear chastisement reads like a page from Pr or Jb. A full confession of guilt and an unreserved plea for pardon are needed if there is to be an escape from the consequences of sinning against the Lord. Yet deliverance is as certain as if it had already come to pass. In order to awaken faith in God's promises, the poet lets an unnamed person testify how the Lord heard his cry "from the depths of the pit" (vv 52–57).

LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 3:1 *rod of His wrath*. Cf Jb 16:6–17; 19:8–22; Ps 38; 88; 109; 143 for similar outbursts of pain caused by the Lord.

LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 3:6 *in darkness*. Death terminates all physical sight. The prophet considers himself dead to God.

LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 3:8 *He shuts out my prayer*. See note, Jer 7:16.

LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 3:9 *made my paths crooked*. The prophet cannot see his way out of the dilemma. The rubble in the street becomes a metaphor for the spiritual trouble he experiences.

LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 3:15 *wormwood*. See note, Pr 5:4.

LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 3:16 *grind on gravel*. He had only stones and grit to chew rather than bread (cf Mt 7:9). *cower in ashes*. See note, Jb 2:8.

LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 3:18 *My endurance … my hope*. Other sufferers were tempted to give up hope.

LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 3:19 *wormwood … gall!* See notes, Pr 5:4; Jb 16:13.

LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 3:22–24 These verses stand at the center of the laments and offer the clearest expression of hope. On the similar literary strategy in Jer, see pp 1202–4.

LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 3:22 *steadfast love … mercies*. Plural to show how the Lord will multiply His blessings to the people. See p 843.

LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 3:23 *new every morning*. Cf Ps 5:3; 30:5. *faithfulness*. See p 842.

LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 3:24 *my portion*. He can claim God for himself as confidently as an heir asserts his right to his inheritance (cf Ps 119:57; 142:5). See p 7.

LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 3:26 *It is good*. Trials are sent by God for a wholesome purpose and should be borne with patient submission (Jb 5:17–18; Ps 37:7–8; Heb 12:6). *wait quietly*. Bern: "An unlearned person (as I truly confess myself to be) never acts more unlearnedly than when he presumes to teach what he knows not. Therefore, to teach is the business neither of the unlearned in his rashness, nor of the monk in his boldness, nor of the penitent in his distress… . I invite and entreat you … at least by the example of my silence, to learn from me to be silent, you who press me in your words to teach what I do not know" (*SLSB*, pp 113–14). *salvation*. See p 843.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 3:27 *bear the yoke*. Undergo training as a young ox would and so learn the Lord's discipline and ways.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 3:28 *sit alone in silence*. Reflection of repentance, without complaint about what God has sent or allowed. See note, Jer 18:4–6.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 3:32 *compassion … steadfast love*. See note, v 22; see also p 843.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 3:33 *not willingly*. God takes no sadistic delight in making His creatures miserable, but His compassion and steadfast love assure us that the pain does not last longer than necessary (Ps 103:9; Jer 3:12; 31:20; Hos 11:8–9).
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 3:34 Ambr: "The Lord humbles all the prisoners of the earth under His feet, in order that we may escape His judgment" (*NPNF* 2 10:333).
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 3:35 *justice … presence*. See pp 842–43.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 3:37–38 See note, Is 45:7.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 3:40 *test … examine*. Hbr verbs for searching. See note, 2Co 13:5. *return*. See p 1080.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 3:41 *lift up our hearts*. Description of expectant prayer. See "lift up hands," p 1276.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 3:42 *not forgiven*. Unless those who have transgressed and rebelled against the Lord seek His pardon, their sins remain unforgiven, creating a fatal separation between themselves and God (Is 59:2).
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 3:45 *scum and garbage*. They are cast out among the nations, which despise them.

LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 3:52–63 Jeremiah details the depths of the deadly disasters from which God delivered him.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 3:52 *like a bird*. See note, Ps 91:3.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 3:53 *into the pit*. Though Jeremiah plunged into a watery pit (cistern; cf v 54), he would have died of starvation rather than by drowning.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 3:55 *called on Your name*. See p 842.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 3:58 *redeemed*. See p 843.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 3:64–66 *repay them*. Jeremiah prays for vindication.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 3:65 *curse*. See p 6.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON **Ch 3** Jeremiah describes the great suffering of God's people at the hand of the invading Babylonians. He makes no excuse for their sin, but he encourages them (and us today) with God's great compassion and unfailing love. The people have been crushed but not utterly destroyed—their hope must be in the Lord and His great love for them. We are often our own worst enemies, responsible for our suffering through our own choices. No matter how bad things get, our hope is always in the Lord because He loves us in Jesus Christ and never abandons us. • Lord, do not treat us as our sins deserve, but forgive and restore us to Your unfailing love through Jesus Christ. Amen.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON **Ch 4** Another lament over the fall of Jerusalem. Sometimes, submission to God comes only after a prolonged battle against resentment and bitterness. The poet lets cries of anguish have free reign. The intensity of pain is to call to mind how grievously the nation sinned against God. A penitent realization of having offended a loving God is not in vain, for restoration to favor will follow when the punishment is accomplished (v 22).
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 4:1 *gold has grown dim*. Unlike other metals, gold does not tarnish. Yet Judah's "gold" has tarnished, revealing its true character. *holy stones*. The ashlar (dressed) stones that made up the temple and temple courts.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 4:2 *sons of Zion … as earthen pots*. Regarded as less valuable and therefore smashed.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 4:3 *ostriches*. Known for abandoning their young (cf Jb 39:13–16).
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 4:4 See note, 1:7.

LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 4:5 *purple*. See p 141.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 4:6 The punishment of Sodom was less severe because it did not suffer the horrors of a long siege and the cruelties perpetuated by human agents. God dealt harshly with Israel because of her apostasy. Cf Jer 23:14; Ezk 16:48–51.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 4:7 *Her*. Jerusalem.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 4:10 *boiled their own children*. Alluded to in 2:20.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 4:11 *kindled a fire in Zion*. Cf Jer 4:4; 5:14.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 4:12 Defended by the Lord, Jerusalem was impregnable against even such mighty conquerors as Sennacherib (Is 36–37). God's promise of divine protection gave rise to Israel's false sense of security (Jer 7; 26).
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 4:13 God holds false religious leaders accountable for the suffering their misleading words cause. These false leaders were also involved in murderous plots against the righteous (Jer 26:20–23).
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 4:15 *Away! Unclean!* The lying prophets who came among God's people were eventually shunned like lepers.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 4:16 *elders*. See p 228.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 4:17 The people confess that they ignored Jeremiah's warning against the folly of trying to ward off the threatened punishment by alliances with Egypt and other nations (Jer 2:18, 36–37).
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 4:19 *eagles*. See note, Mi 1:16.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 4:20 As long as a king, "the LORD's anointed" theocratic representative, occupied the throne in Jerusalem, the people felt that their existence among the nations was assured. But their trust in kings, considered essential, was shattered when King Zedekiah was trapped like an animal by the Babylonians (Jer 52:8–11). Jeremiah predicted that Zedekiah's irresponsible administration of his royal office would have tragic results (Jer 37:17). *Under his shadow*. Royal protection. See note, Ps 17:8–9. Aph: "They were sitting in the shadow of the king, while he was standing at their head. And when the crown of their head fell, they were without shade" (*NPNF* 2 13:355).
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 4:21 *Edom*. The foe of Israel is chosen. Edom exemplifies the fate awaiting all who attempt to thwart the coming of

God's kingdom. Cf Jer 49:7–13; Ezk 25:12–14; Ob 10–14; Mal 1:2–5. *cup … drunk*. See note, Is 51:17.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 4:22 *daughter of Zion*. See p 1079.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON **Ch 4** Jeremiah contrasts the wealth of Jerusalem's past with the poverty of its residents after the Babylonian conquest. The sins of the religious leaders come into focus as the cause for the destruction of the city. A note of hope appears at the end with a veiled reference to the eventual return of the exiles from Babylon (v 22). Spiritual leaders carry a great responsibility for the welfare of God's people (cf Jas 3:1). God sustained His people, and through their descendants raised up a Savior for all, Christ the Lord. • Father, send Your Spirit to strengthen Your shepherds, that they may teach Your Word in purity and truth. We pray through Jesus Christ. Amen.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON **Ch 5** God will accept a sincere confession of guilt and be moved to mercy. To that end, the people who remained in the land after Jerusalem's fall mourn to the Lord, for the temple lies desolate (v 18). The plea for the return of "days as of old" asserts the hope that God has not utterly rejected them (vv 21–22). Those who lament count on God to restore them to Himself so that His heavenly kingdom may manifest itself through them.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 5:2 *inheritance*. See "portion," p 7.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 5:3 *orphans … widows*. See note, Ps 94:6.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 5:4 *pay for the water… . wood*. A change in the social order is in view. See note, Jsh 9:21.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 5:6 *Egypt … Assyria*. Extending the hand of friendship and alliance to Egypt and Assyria dated back to the days of Israel's fathers. God's prophets repeatedly warned against rejecting God and seeking protection among men (Is 30:2–3; 31:1; Jer 2:18, 36; Ezk 16:28; 23:5, 12; Hos 5:13; 7:11).
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 5:7 *we bear their iniquities*. While the fathers did not live to see the prophets' threats of divine judgment come true, their generation was as guilty as the present generation.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 5:8 *Slaves*. Servants of the Babylonians who "lorded it over the people" (Ne 5:15). See p 101.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 5:9 *sword in the wilderness*. Bedouin raiders threatened Israel as she eked out an existence in the outer limits of the land.

LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 5:11 Crimes of all kinds flourished among the ruins of Jerusalem and other cities of Judah. See "Zion," p 844.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 5:12 *Princes … elders*. See p 228. *hung up by their hands*. Perhaps executed men were put on display as a warning to others.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 5:13 *grind at the mill*. See note, Jgs 16:21.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 5:14 *left the city gate*. See p 792. *young men their music*. A glimpse of former youthful activity in Jerusalem. Cf Mt 11:17; see p 993.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 5:16 *crown has fallen*. See note, 4:20. *we have sinned!* The suppliants did not accuse God of punishing them for sins they did not commit, as some of their contemporaries did by quoting a blasphemous proverb (see note, Jer 31:29).
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 5:18 *Zion*. See p 844.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 5:19 *O LORD, reign*. See pp 1565–66.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 5:21 *Restore us*. Sinners cannot be restored to a favorable relationship with God by their "own reason or strength" (SC, p xxxvii). Only the Spirit's enabling initiative and power can bring genuine renewal.
LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON 5:22 *unless You have utterly rejected us*. The impassioned pleading ends with uncertainty and doubt rather than in the exclamation point of firm trust and joyous anticipation. However, Israel boldly appeals to God to be true to Himself. If He is "merciful and gracious … abounding in steadfast love," as He has declared Himself to be (Ex 34:6), He cannot refuse to pardon His penitent children.

LAMENTATIONS—NOTE ON **Ch 5** Jeremiah points out that the sins of all the people lie at the very root of their current suffering (cf v 16). Because of their unfaithfulness, they struggle just to get enough to eat; they find themselves subjected to abuse and humiliation. Lamenting in anguish, God's people appeal to the Lord for forgiveness and restoration. In our own lives, we easily forget God and our calling as His people at times when it seems that everything is going our way. God stands ready to forgive penitent sinners by restoring His blessing to us through the blood of Jesus Christ. • Father, keep us faithful in good times and secure in our faith during bad times, for we are Yours at all times. Amen.

Ezekiel

Ezekiel 1 | Ezekiel 2 | Ezekiel 3 | Ezekiel 4 | Ezekiel 5 | Ezekiel 6 | Ezekiel 7 | Ezekiel 8 | Ezekiel 9 | Ezekiel 10 | Ezekiel 11 | Ezekiel 12 | Ezekiel 13 | Ezekiel 14 | Ezekiel 15 | Ezekiel 16 | Ezekiel 17 | Ezekiel 18 | Ezekiel 19 | Ezekiel 20 | Ezekiel 21 | Ezekiel 22 | Ezekiel 23 | Ezekiel 24 | Ezekiel 25 | Ezekiel 26 | Ezekiel 27 | Ezekiel 28 | Ezekiel 29 | Ezekiel 30 | Ezekiel 31 | Ezekiel 32 | Ezekiel 33 | Ezekiel 34 | Ezekiel 35 | Ezekiel 36 | Ezekiel 37 | Ezekiel 38 | Ezekiel 39 | Ezekiel 40 | Ezekiel 41 | Ezekiel 42 | Ezekiel 43 | Ezekiel 44 | Ezekiel 45 | Ezekiel 46 | Ezekiel 47 | Ezekiel 48

- Introduction to Ezekiel
  - Overview
  - Reading Ezekiel
  - Luther on Ezekiel
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

Ezekiel in Babylon

1 [1]†† In the thirtieth year, in the fourth month, on the fifth day of the
month, as I was among the exiles by the Chebar canal, the heavens were
opened, and I saw visions of God.[1] [2]† On the fifth day of the month (it was
the fifth year of the exile of King Jehoiachin), [3]† the word of the Lord came
to Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the
Chebar canal, and the hand of the Lord was upon him there.

The Glory of the Lord

4 ‡ † As I looked, behold, a stormy wind came out of the north, and a great
cloud, with brightness around it, and fire flashing forth continually, and in
the midst of the fire, as it were gleaming metal.[2] 5 † And from the midst of it
came the likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance:
they had a human likeness, 6 † but each had four faces, and each of them had
four wings. 7 † Their legs were straight, and the soles of their feet were like
the sole of a calf's foot. And they sparkled like burnished bronze. 8 † Under
their wings on their four sides they had human hands. And the four had their
faces and their wings thus: 9 † their wings touched one another. Each one of
them went straight forward, without turning as they went. 10 † As for the
likeness of their faces, each had a human face. The four had the face of a
lion on the right side, the four had the face of an ox on the left side, and the
four had the face of an eagle. 11 † Such were their faces. And their wings
were spread out above. Each creature had two wings, each of which
touched the wing of another, while two covered their bodies. 12 † And each
went straight forward. Wherever the spirit would go, they went, without
turning as they went. 13 † As for the likeness of the living creatures, their
appearance was like burning coals of fire, like the appearance of torches
moving to and fro among the living creatures. And the fire was bright, and
out of the fire went forth lightning. 14 † And the living creatures darted to and
fro, like the appearance of a flash of lightning.

15 † Now as I looked at the living creatures, I saw a wheel on the earth
beside the living creatures, one for each of the four of them.[1] 16 † As for the
appearance of the wheels and their construction: their appearance was like
the gleaming of beryl. And the four had the same likeness, their appearance
and construction being as it were a wheel within a wheel. 17 † When they
went, they went in any of their four directions[2] without turning as they
went. 18 ‡ † And their rims were tall and awesome, and the rims of all four
were full of eyes all around. 19 And when the living creatures went, the
wheels went beside them; and when the living creatures rose from the earth,
the wheels rose. 20 Wherever the spirit wanted to go, they went, and the
wheels rose along with them, for the spirit of the living creatures[3] was in

the wheels. [21]When those went, these went; and when those stood, these stood; and when those rose from the earth, the wheels rose along with them, for the spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels.

[22] † Over the heads of the living creatures there was the likeness of an expanse, shining like awe-inspiring crystal, spread out above their heads. [23] † And under the expanse their wings were stretched out straight, one toward another. And each creature had two wings covering its body. [24] † And when they went, I heard the sound of their wings like the sound of many waters, like the sound of the Almighty, a sound of tumult like the sound of an army. When they stood still, they let down their wings. [25] † And there came a voice from above the expanse over their heads. When they stood still, they let down their wings.

[26] † And above the expanse over their heads there was the likeness of a throne, in appearance like sapphire;[1] and seated above the likeness of a throne was a likeness with a human appearance. [27] † And upward from what had the appearance of his waist I saw as it were gleaming metal, like the appearance of fire enclosed all around. And downward from what had the appearance of his waist I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and there was brightness around him.[2] [28] † Like the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud on the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness all around.

Such was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. And when I saw it, I fell on my face, and I heard the voice of one speaking.

Ezekiel's Call

2 [1]‡†And he said to me, "Son of man,[3] stand on your feet, and I will
speak with you." [2]†And as he spoke to me, the Spirit entered into me and
set me on my feet, and I heard him speaking to me. [3]†And he said to me,
"Son of man, I send you to the people of Israel, to nations of rebels, who
have rebelled against me. They and their fathers have transgressed against
me to this very day. [4]†The descendants also are impudent and stubborn: I
send you to them, and you shall say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD.'
[5]†And whether they hear or refuse to hear (for they are a rebellious house)
they will know that a prophet has been among them. [6]†And you, son of
man, be not afraid of them, nor be afraid of their words, though briers and
thorns are with you and you sit on scorpions.[4] Be not afraid of their words,
nor be dismayed at their looks, for they are a rebellious house. [7]†And you
shall speak my words to them, whether they hear or refuse to hear, for they
are a rebellious house.

[8]†"But you, son of man, hear what I say to you. Be not rebellious like
that rebellious house; open your mouth and eat what I give you." [9]†And
when I looked, behold, a hand was stretched out to me, and behold, a scroll
of a book was in it. [10]†And he spread it before me. And it had writing on the
front and on the back, and there were written on it words of lamentation and
mourning and woe.

3 [1]†And he said to me, "Son of man, eat whatever you find here. Eat
this scroll, and go, speak to the house of Israel." [2]So I opened my mouth,
and he gave me this scroll to eat. [3]†And he said to me, "Son of man, feed
your belly with this scroll that I give you and fill your stomach with it."
Then I ate it, and it was in my mouth as sweet as honey.

[4]†And he said to me, "Son of man, go to the house of Israel and speak
with my words to them. [5]†For you are not sent to a people of foreign speech
and a hard language, but to the house of Israel— [6]†not to many peoples of
foreign speech and a hard language, whose words you cannot understand.
Surely, if I sent you to such, they would listen to you. [7]†But the house of
Israel will not be willing to listen to you, for they are not willing to listen to

me: because all the house of Israel have a hard forehead and a stubborn heart. 8 † Behold, I have made your face as hard as their faces, and your forehead as hard as their foreheads. 9 † Like emery harder than flint have I made your forehead. Fear them not, nor be dismayed at their looks, for they are a rebellious house." 10 † Moreover, he said to me, "Son of man, all my words that I shall speak to you receive in your heart, and hear with your ears. 11 † And go to the exiles, to your people, and speak to them and say to them, 'Thus says the Lord God,' whether they hear or refuse to hear."

12 † Then the Spirit[1] lifted me up, and I heard behind me the voice[2] of a great earthquake: "Blessed be the glory of the Lord from its place!" 13 † It was the sound of the wings of the living creatures as they touched one another, and the sound of the wheels beside them, and the sound of a great earthquake. 14 † The Spirit lifted me up and took me away, and I went in bitterness in the heat of my spirit, the hand of the Lord being strong upon me. 15 † And I came to the exiles at Tel-abib, who were dwelling by the Chebar canal, and I sat where they were dwelling.[1] And I sat there overwhelmed among them seven days.

A Watchman for Israel

16 ‡ † And at the end of seven days, the word of the Lord came to me:
17 † “Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel.
Whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning
from me. 18 ‡ † If I say to the wicked, ‘You shall surely die,’ and you give him
no warning, nor speak to warn the wicked from his wicked way, in order to
save his life, that wicked person shall die for[2] his iniquity, but his blood I
will require at your hand. 19 † But if you warn the wicked, and he does not
turn from his wickedness, or from his wicked way, he shall die for his
iniquity, but you will have delivered your soul. 20 † Again, if a righteous
person turns from his righteousness and commits injustice, and I lay a
stumbling block before him, he shall die. Because you have not warned
him, he shall die for his sin, and his righteous deeds that he has done shall
not be remembered, but his blood I will require at your hand. 21 † But if you
warn the righteous person not to sin, and he does not sin, he shall surely
live, because he took warning, and you will have delivered your soul.”
22 ‡ † And the hand of the Lord was upon me there. And he said to me,
“Arise, go out into the valley,[1] and there I will speak with you.” 23 † So I
arose and went out into the valley, and behold, the glory of the Lord stood
there, like the glory that I had seen by the Chebar canal, and I fell on my
face. 24 † But the Spirit entered into me and set me on my feet, and he spoke
with me and said to me, “Go, shut yourself within your house. 25 † And you,
O son of man, behold, cords will be placed upon you, and you shall be
bound with them, so that you cannot go out among the people. 26 † And I will
make your tongue cling to the roof of your mouth, so that you shall be mute
and unable to reprove them, for they are a rebellious house. 27 † But when I
speak with you, I will open your mouth, and you shall say to them, ‘Thus
says the Lord God.’ He who will hear, let him hear; and he who will refuse
to hear, let him refuse, for they are a rebellious house.

The Siege of Jerusalem Symbolized

4 [1]†“And you, son of man, take a brick and lay it before you, and engrave on it a city, even Jerusalem. [2]†And put siegeworks against it, and build a siege wall against it, and cast up a mound against it. Set camps also against it, and plant battering rams against it all around. [3]†And you, take an iron griddle, and place it as an iron wall between you and the city; and set your face toward it, and let it be in a state of siege, and press the siege against it. This is a sign for the house of Israel.

[4]††“Then lie on your left side, and place the punishment[2] of the house of Israel upon it. For the number of the days that you lie on it, you shall bear their punishment. [5]†For I assign to you a number of days, 390 days, equal to the number of the years of their punishment. So long shall you bear the punishment of the house of Israel. [6]†And when you have completed these, you shall lie down a second time, but on your right side, and bear the punishment of the house of Judah. Forty days I assign you, a day for each year. [7]†And you shall set your face toward the siege of Jerusalem, with your arm bared, and you shall prophesy against the city. [8]†And behold, I will place cords upon you, so that you cannot turn from one side to the other, till you have completed the days of your siege.

[9]††“And you, take wheat and barley, beans and lentils, millet and emmer, [1] and put them into a single vessel and make your bread from them. During the number of days that you lie on your side, 390 days, you shall eat it. [10]†And your food that you eat shall be by weight, twenty shekels[2] a day; from day to day[3] you shall eat it. [11]And water you shall drink by measure, the sixth part of a hin;[4] from day to day you shall drink. [12]††And you shall eat it as a barley cake, baking it in their sight on human dung.” [13]†And the Lord said, “Thus shall the people of Israel eat their bread unclean, among the nations where I will drive them.” [14]† Then I said, “Ah, Lord God! Behold, I have never defiled myself.[5] From my youth up till now I have never eaten what died of itself or was torn by beasts, nor has tainted meat come into my mouth.” [15]†Then he said to me, “See, I assign to you cow’s dung instead of human dung, on which you may prepare your bread.”

16 †Moreover, he said to me, “Son of man, behold, I will break the supply[6]
of bread in Jerusalem. They shall eat bread by weight and with anxiety, and
they shall drink water by measure and in dismay. 17 †I will do this that they
may lack bread and water, and look at one another in dismay, and rot away
because of their punishment.

Jerusalem Will Be Destroyed

5 [1]†† “And you, O son of man, take a sharp sword. Use it as a barber’s
razor and pass it over your head and your beard. Then take balances for
weighing and divide the hair. [2]† A third part you shall burn in the fire in the
midst of the city, when the days of the siege are completed. And a third part
you shall take and strike with the sword all around the city. And a third part
you shall scatter to the wind, and I will unsheathe the sword after them.
[3]† And you shall take from these a small number and bind them in the skirts
of your robe. [4]† And of these again you shall take some and cast them into
the midst of the fire and burn them in the fire. From there a fire will come
out into all the house of Israel.

[5]† “Thus says the Lord God: This is Jerusalem. I have set her in the center
of the nations, with countries all around her. [6]† And she has rebelled against
my rules by doing wickedness more than the nations, and against my
statutes more than the countries all around her; for they have rejected my
rules and have not walked in my statutes. [7]† Therefore thus says the Lord
God: Because you are more turbulent than the nations that are all around
you, and have not walked in my statutes or obeyed my rules, and have not[1]
even acted according to the rules of the nations that are all around you,
[8]† therefore thus says the Lord God: Behold, I, even I, am against you. And I
will execute judgments[2] in your midst in the sight of the nations. [9]† And
because of all your abominations I will do with you what I have never yet
done, and the like of which I will never do again. [10]† Therefore fathers shall
eat their sons in your midst, and sons shall eat their fathers. And I will
execute judgments on you, and any of you who survive I will scatter to all
the winds. [11]† Therefore, as I live, declares the Lord God, surely, because
you have defiled my sanctuary with all your detestable things and with all
your abominations, therefore I will withdraw.[3] My eye will not spare, and I
will have no pity. [12]† A third part of you shall die of pestilence and be
consumed with famine in your midst; a third part shall fall by the sword all
around you; and a third part I will scatter to all the winds and will unsheathe
the sword after them.

[13]†“Thus shall my anger spend itself, and I will vent my fury upon them
and satisfy myself. And they shall know that I am the Lord—that I have
spoken in my jealousy—when I spend my fury upon them. [14]†Moreover, I
will make you a desolation and an object of reproach among the nations all
around you and in the sight of all who pass by. [15]You shall be[1] a reproach
and a taunt, a warning and a horror, to the nations all around you, when I
execute judgments on you in anger and fury, and with furious rebukes—I
am the Lord; I have spoken— [16]† when I send against you[2] the deadly
arrows of famine, arrows for destruction, which I will send to destroy you,
and when I bring more and more famine upon you and break your supply[3]
of bread. [17]I will send famine and wild beasts against you, and they will rob
you of your children. Pestilence and blood shall pass through you, and I will
bring the sword upon you. I am the Lord; I have spoken.”

Judgment Against Idolatry

6 [1]†The word of the Lord came to me: [2]†“Son of man, set your face
toward the mountains of Israel, and prophesy against them, [3]†and say, You
mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord God! Thus says the Lord God
to the mountains and the hills, to the ravines and the valleys: Behold, I,
even I, will bring a sword upon you, and I will destroy your high places.
[4]†Your altars shall become desolate, and your incense altars shall be broken,
and I will cast down your slain before your idols. [5]†And I will lay the dead
bodies of the people of Israel before their idols, and I will scatter your
bones around your altars. [6]†Wherever you dwell, the cities shall be waste
and the high places ruined, so that your altars will be waste and ruined,[4]
your idols broken and destroyed, your incense altars cut down, and your
works wiped out. [7]†And the slain shall fall in your midst, and you shall
know that I am the Lord.

[8]†“Yet I will leave some of you alive. When you have among the nations
some who escape the sword, and when you are scattered through the
countries, [9]†then those of you who escape will remember me among the
nations where they are carried captive, how I have been broken over their
whoring heart that has departed from me and over their eyes that go
whoring after their idols. And they will be loathsome in their own sight for
the evils that they have committed, for all their abominations. [10]†And they
shall know that I am the Lord. I have not said in vain that I would do this
evil to them.”

[11]‡†Thus says the Lord God: “Clap your hands and stamp your foot and
say, Alas, because of all the evil abominations of the house of Israel, for
they shall fall by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence. [12]†He who is far
off shall die of pestilence, and he who is near shall fall by the sword, and he
who is left and is preserved shall die of famine. Thus I will spend my fury
upon them. [13]†And you shall know that I am the Lord, when their slain lie
among their idols around their altars, on every high hill, on all the
mountaintops, under every green tree, and under every leafy oak, wherever
they offered pleasing aroma to all their idols. [14]†And I will stretch out my
hand against them and make the land desolate and waste, in all their

dwelling places, from the wilderness to Riblah.[1] Then they will know that I am the LORD."

The Day of the Wrath of the Lord

7 [1] †The word of the Lord came to me: [2] †“And you, O son of man, thus says the Lord God to the land of Israel: An end! The end has come upon the four corners of the land.[2] [3] †Now the end is upon you, and I will send my anger upon you; I will judge you according to your ways, and I will punish you for all your abominations. [4] †And my eye will not spare you, nor will I have pity, but I will punish you for your ways, while your abominations are in your midst. Then you will know that I am the Lord.

[5] ‡†“Thus says the Lord God: Disaster after disaster![3] Behold, it comes. [6] †An end has come; the end has come; it has awakened against you. Behold, it comes. [7] †Your doom[4] has come to you, O inhabitant of the land. The time has come; the day is near, a day of tumult, and not of joyful shouting on the mountains. [8] †Now I will soon pour out my wrath upon you, and spend my anger against you, and judge you according to your ways, and I will punish you for all your abominations. [9] †And my eye will not spare, nor will I have pity. I will punish you according to your ways, while your abominations are in your midst. Then you will know that I am the Lord, who strikes.

[10] †“Behold, the day! Behold, it comes! Your doom has come; the rod has blossomed; pride has budded. [11] †Violence has grown up into a rod of wickedness. None of them shall remain, nor their abundance, nor their wealth; neither shall there be preeminence among them.[5] [12] †The time has come; the day has arrived. Let not the buyer rejoice, nor the seller mourn, for wrath is upon all their multitude.[1] [13] †For the seller shall not return to what he has sold, while they live. For the vision concerns all their multitude; it shall not turn back; and because of his iniquity, none can maintain his life.[2]

[14] †“They have blown the trumpet and made everything ready, but none goes to battle, for my wrath is upon all their multitude. [15] †The sword is without; pestilence and famine are within. He who is in the field dies by the sword, and him who is in the city famine and pestilence devour. [16] †And if any survivors escape, they will be on the mountains, like doves of the

valleys, all of them moaning, each one over his iniquity. 17 † All hands are
feeble, and all knees turn to water. 18 † They put on sackcloth, and horror
covers them. Shame is on all faces, and baldness on all their heads.
19 ‡ † They cast their silver into the streets, and their gold is like an unclean
thing. Their silver and gold are not able to deliver them in the day of the
wrath of the Lord. They cannot satisfy their hunger or fill their stomachs
with it. For it was the stumbling block of their iniquity. 20 † His beautiful
ornament they used for pride, and they made their abominable images and
their detestable things of it. Therefore I make it an unclean thing to them.
21 † And I will give it into the hands of foreigners for prey, and to the wicked
of the earth for spoil, and they shall profane it. 22 † I will turn my face from
them, and they shall profane my treasured[3] place. Robbers shall enter and
profane it.

23 ‡ † "Forge a chain![4] For the land is full of bloody crimes and the city is
full of violence. 24 † I will bring the worst of the nations to take possession of
their houses. I will put an end to the pride of the strong, and their holy
places[5] shall be profaned. 25 † When anguish comes, they will seek peace,
but there shall be none. 26 † Disaster comes upon disaster; rumor follows
rumor. They seek a vision from the prophet, while the law[6] perishes from
the priest and counsel from the elders. 27 † The king mourns, the prince is
wrapped in despair, and the hands of the people of the land are paralyzed by
terror. According to their way I will do to them, and according to their
judgments I will judge them, and they shall know that I am the Lord."

Abominations in the Temple

8 [1]†In the sixth year, in the sixth month, on the fifth day of the month,
as I sat in my house, with the elders of Judah sitting before me, the hand of
the Lord God fell upon me there. [2]†Then I looked, and behold, a form that
had the appearance of a man.[1] Below what appeared to be his waist was
fire, and above his waist was something like the appearance of brightness,
like gleaming metal.[2] [3]†He put out the form of a hand and took me by a
lock of my head, and the Spirit lifted me up between earth and heaven and
brought me in visions of God to Jerusalem, to the entrance of the gateway
of the inner court that faces north, where was the seat of the image of
jealousy, which provokes to jealousy. [4]†And behold, the glory of the God of
Israel was there, like the vision that I saw in the valley.

[5]†Then he said to me, "Son of man, lift up your eyes now toward the
north." So I lifted up my eyes toward the north, and behold, north of the
altar gate, in the entrance, was this image of jealousy. [6]†And he said to me,
"Son of man, do you see what they are doing, the great abominations that
the house of Israel are committing here, to drive me far from my sanctuary?
But you will see still greater abominations."

[7]†And he brought me to the entrance of the court, and when I looked,
behold, there was a hole in the wall. [8]†Then he said to me, "Son of man, dig
in the wall." So I dug in the wall, and behold, there was an entrance. [9]†And
he said to me, "Go in, and see the vile abominations that they are
committing here." [10]†So I went in and saw. And there, engraved on the wall
all around, was every form of creeping things and loathsome beasts, and all
the idols of the house of Israel. [11]†And before them stood seventy men of
the elders of the house of Israel, with Jaazaniah the son of Shaphan standing
among them. Each had his censer in his hand, and the smoke of the cloud of
incense went up. [12]†Then he said to me, "Son of man, have you seen what
the elders of the house of Israel are doing in the dark, each in his room of
pictures? For they say, 'The Lord does not see us, the Lord has forsaken the
land.'" [13]He said also to me, "You will see still greater abominations that
they commit."

14 †Then he brought me to the entrance of the north gate of the house of
the LORD, and behold, there sat women weeping for Tammuz. 15 †Then he
said to me, “Have you seen this, O son of man? You will see still greater
abominations than these.”
16 †And he brought me into the inner court of the house of the LORD. And
behold, at the entrance of the temple of the LORD, between the porch and the
altar, were about twenty-five men, with their backs to the temple of the
LORD, and their faces toward the east, worshiping the sun toward the east.
17 †Then he said to me, “Have you seen this, O son of man? Is it too light a
thing for the house of Judah to commit the abominations that they commit
here, that they should fill the land with violence and provoke me still
further to anger? Behold, they put the branch to their[1] nose. 18 †Therefore I
will act in wrath. My eye will not spare, nor will I have pity. And though
they cry in my ears with a loud voice, I will not hear them.”

Idolaters Killed

9 [1]†Then he cried in my ears with a loud voice, saying, “Bring near
the executioners of the city, each with his destroying weapon in his hand.”
[2]†And behold, six men came from the direction of the upper gate, which
faces north, each with his weapon for slaughter in his hand, and with them
was a man clothed in linen, with a writing case at his waist. And they went
in and stood beside the bronze altar.

[3]†Now the glory of the God of Israel had gone up from the cherub on
which it rested to the threshold of the house. And he called to the man
clothed in linen, who had the writing case at his waist. [4]†And the Lord said
to him, “Pass through the city, through Jerusalem, and put a mark on the
foreheads of the men who sigh and groan over all the abominations that are
committed in it.” [5]†And to the others he said in my hearing, “Pass through
the city after him, and strike. Your eye shall not spare, and you shall show
no pity. [6]†Kill old men outright, young men and maidens, little children and
women, but touch no one on whom is the mark. And begin at my
sanctuary.” So they began with the elders who were before the house.
[7]†Then he said to them, “Defile the house, and fill the courts with the slain.
Go out.” So they went out and struck in the city. [8]†And while they were
striking, and I was left alone, I fell upon my face, and cried, “Ah, Lord God!
Will you destroy all the remnant of Israel in the outpouring of your wrath
on Jerusalem?”

[9]†Then he said to me, “The guilt of the house of Israel and Judah is
exceedingly great. The land is full of blood, and the city full of injustice.
For they say, ‘The Lord has forsaken the land, and the Lord does not see.’
[10]†As for me, my eye will not spare, nor will I have pity; I will bring their
deeds upon their heads.”

[11]†And behold, the man clothed in linen, with the writing case at his
waist, brought back word, saying, “I have done as you commanded me.”

The Glory of the Lord Leaves the Temple

10 [1]†Then I looked, and behold, on the expanse that was over the heads of the cherubim there appeared above them something like a sapphire,[1] in appearance like a throne. [2]†And he said to the man clothed in linen, "Go in among the whirling wheels underneath the cherubim. Fill your hands with burning coals from between the cherubim, and scatter them over the city."

And he went in before my eyes. [3]†Now the cherubim were standing on the south side of the house, when the man went in, and a cloud filled the inner court. [4]†And the glory of the Lord went up from the cherub to the threshold of the house, and the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was filled with the brightness of the glory of the Lord. [5]†And the sound of the wings of the cherubim was heard as far as the outer court, like the voice of God Almighty when he speaks.

[6]‡†And when he commanded the man clothed in linen, "Take fire from between the whirling wheels, from between the cherubim," he went in and stood beside a wheel. [7]†And a cherub stretched out his hand from between the cherubim to the fire that was between the cherubim, and took some of it and put it into the hands of the man clothed in linen, who took it and went out. [8]†The cherubim appeared to have the form of a human hand under their wings.

[9]‡†And I looked, and behold, there were four wheels beside the cherubim, one beside each cherub, and the appearance of the wheels was like sparkling beryl. [10]†And as for their appearance, the four had the same likeness, as if a wheel were within a wheel. [11]†When they went, they went in any of their four directions[1] without turning as they went, but in whatever direction the front wheel[2] faced, the others followed without turning as they went. [12]†And their whole body, their rims, and their spokes, their wings,[3] and the wheels were full of eyes all around—the wheels that the four of them had. [13]†As for the wheels, they were called in my hearing "the whirling wheels." [14]†And every one had four faces: the first face was

the face of the cherub, and the second face was a human face, and the third the face of a lion, and the fourth the face of an eagle.

15 †And the cherubim mounted up. These were the living creatures that I
saw by the Chebar canal. 16And when the cherubim went, the wheels went
beside them. And when the cherubim lifted up their wings to mount up from
the earth, the wheels did not turn from beside them. 17 †When they stood
still, these stood still, and when they mounted up, these mounted up with
them, for the spirit of the living creatures[4] was in them.

18 †Then the glory of the Lord went out from the threshold of the house,
and stood over the cherubim. 19†And the cherubim lifted up their wings and
mounted up from the earth before my eyes as they went out, with the
wheels beside them. And they stood at the entrance of the east gate of the
house of the Lord, and the glory of the God of Israel was over them.

20 ‡ †These were the living creatures that I saw underneath the God of
Israel by the Chebar canal; and I knew that they were cherubim. 21Each had
four faces, and each four wings, and underneath their wings the likeness of
human hands. 22 †And as for the likeness of their faces, they were the same
faces whose appearance I had seen by the Chebar canal. Each one of them
went straight forward.

Judgment on Wicked Counselors

11 [1]†‡†The Spirit lifted me up and brought me to the east gate of the house of the Lord, which faces east. And behold, at the entrance of the gateway there were twenty-five men. And I saw among them Jaazaniah the son of Azzur, and Pelatiah the son of Benaiah, princes of the people. [2]‡And he said to me, “Son of man, these are the men who devise iniquity and who give wicked counsel in this city; [3]†who say, ‘The time is not near[5] to build houses. This city is the cauldron, and we are the meat.’ [4]† Therefore prophesy against them, prophesy, O son of man.”

[5]†And the Spirit of the Lord fell upon me, and he said to me, “Say, Thus says the Lord: So you think, O house of Israel. For I know the things that come into your mind. [6]†You have multiplied your slain in this city and have filled its streets with the slain. [7]†Therefore thus says the Lord God: Your slain whom you have laid in the midst of it, they are the meat, and this city is the cauldron, but you shall be brought out of the midst of it. [8]†You have feared the sword, and I will bring the sword upon you, declares the Lord God. [9]†And I will bring you out of the midst of it, and give you into the hands of foreigners, and execute judgments upon you. [10]†You shall fall by the sword. I will judge you at the border of Israel, and you shall know that I am the Lord. [11]†This city shall not be your cauldron, nor shall you be the meat in the midst of it. I will judge you at the border of Israel, [12]†and you shall know that I am the Lord. For you have not walked in my statutes, nor obeyed my rules, but have acted according to the rules of the nations that are around you.”

[13]†And it came to pass, while I was prophesying, that Pelatiah the son of Benaiah died. Then I fell down on my face and cried out with a loud voice and said, “Ah, Lord God! Will you make a full end of the remnant of Israel?”

Israel's New Heart and Spirit

14 ‡† And the word of the Lord came to me: 15 † "Son of man, your brothers,
even your brothers, your kinsmen,[1] the whole house of Israel, all of them,
are those of whom the inhabitants of Jerusalem have said, 'Go far from the
Lord; to us this land is given for a possession.' 16 † Therefore say, 'Thus says
the Lord God: Though I removed them far off among the nations, and
though I scattered them among the countries, yet I have been a sanctuary to
them for a while[2] in the countries where they have gone.' 17 † Therefore say,
'Thus says the Lord God: I will gather you from the peoples and assemble
you out of the countries where you have been scattered, and I will give you
the land of Israel.' 18 † And when they come there, they will remove from it
all its detestable things and all its abominations. 19 ‡† And I will give them
one heart, and a new spirit I will put within them. I will remove the heart of
stone from their flesh and give them a heart of flesh, 20 † that they may walk
in my statutes and keep my rules and obey them. And they shall be my
people, and I will be their God. 21 † But as for those whose heart goes after
their detestable things and their abominations, I will[1] bring their deeds
upon their own heads, declares the Lord God."

22 ‡ Then the cherubim lifted up their wings, with the wheels beside them,
and the glory of the God of Israel was over them. 23 † And the glory of the
Lord went up from the midst of the city and stood on the mountain that is on
the east side of the city. 24 † And the Spirit lifted me up and brought me in the
vision by the Spirit of God into Chaldea, to the exiles. Then the vision that I
had seen went up from me. 25 † And I told the exiles all the things that the
Lord had shown me.

Judah's Captivity Symbolized

12 [1]†The word of the Lord came to me: [2]†"Son of man, you dwell in
the midst of a rebellious house, who have eyes to see, but see not, who have
ears to hear, but hear not, for they are a rebellious house. [3]††As for you, son
of man, prepare for yourself an exile's baggage, and go into exile by day in
their sight. You shall go like an exile from your place to another place in
their sight. Perhaps they will understand, though[2] they are a rebellious
house. [4]†You shall bring out your baggage by day in their sight, as baggage
for exile, and you shall go out yourself at evening in their sight, as those do
who must go into exile. [5]†In their sight dig through the wall, and bring your
baggage out through it. [6]†In their sight you shall lift the baggage upon your
shoulder and carry it out at dusk. You shall cover your face that you may
not see the land, for I have made you a sign for the house of Israel."

[7]†And I did as I was commanded. I brought out my baggage by day, as
baggage for exile, and in the evening I dug through the wall with my own
hands. I brought out my baggage at dusk, carrying it on my shoulder in their
sight.

[8]In the morning the word of the Lord came to me: [9]†"Son of man, has not
the house of Israel, the rebellious house, said to you, 'What are you doing?'
[10]†Say to them, 'Thus says the Lord God: This oracle concerns[1] the prince
in Jerusalem and all the house of Israel who are in it.'[2] [11]†Say, 'I am a sign
for you: as I have done, so shall it be done to them. They shall go into exile,
into captivity.' [12]†And the prince who is among them shall lift his baggage
upon his shoulder at dusk, and shall go out. They shall dig through the wall
to bring him out through it. He shall cover his face, that he may not see the
land with his eyes. [13]†And I will spread my net over him, and he shall be
taken in my snare. And I will bring him to Babylon, the land of the
Chaldeans, yet he shall not see it, and he shall die there. [14]†And I will
scatter toward every wind all who are around him, his helpers and all his
troops, and I will unsheathe the sword after them. [15]†And they shall know
that I am the Lord, when I disperse them among the nations and scatter them
among the countries. [16]†But I will let a few of them escape from the sword,

from famine and pestilence, that they may declare all their abominations among the nations where they go, and may know that I am the Lord.”

17 ‡And the word of the Lord came to me: 18 †“Son of man, eat your bread with quaking, and drink water with trembling and with anxiety. 19 †And say to the people of the land, Thus says the Lord God concerning the inhabitants of Jerusalem in the land of Israel: They shall eat their bread with anxiety, and drink water in dismay. In this way her land will be stripped of all it contains, on account of the violence of all those who dwell in it. 20 †And the inhabited cities shall be laid waste, and the land shall become a desolation; and you shall know that I am the Lord.”

21 And the word of the Lord came to me: 22 ‡†“Son of man, what is this proverb that you[3] have about the land of Israel, saying, ‘The days grow long, and every vision comes to nothing’? 23 †Tell them therefore, ‘Thus says the Lord God: I will put an end to this proverb, and they shall no more use it as a proverb in Israel.’ But say to them, The days are near, and the fulfillment[4] of every vision. 24 †For there shall be no more any false vision or flattering divination within the house of Israel. 25 †For I am the Lord; I will speak the word that I will speak, and it will be performed. It will no longer be delayed, but in your days, O rebellious house, I will speak the word and perform it, declares the Lord God.”

26 And the word of the Lord came to me: 27 ‡“Son of man, behold, they of the house of Israel say, ‘The vision that he sees is for many days from now, and he prophesies of times far off.’ 28 Therefore say to them, Thus says the Lord God: None of my words will be delayed any longer, but the word that I speak will be performed, declares the Lord God.”

False Prophets Condemned

13 [1]The word of the Lord came to me: [2]†“Son of man, prophesy against the prophets of Israel, who are prophesying, and say to those who prophesy from their own hearts: ‘Hear the word of the Lord!’ [3]†Thus says the Lord God, Woe to the foolish prophets who follow their own spirit, and have seen nothing! [4]†Your prophets have been like jackals among ruins, O Israel. [5]†You have not gone up into the breaches, or built up a wall for the house of Israel, that it might stand in battle in the day of the Lord. [6]†They have seen false visions and lying divinations. They say, ‘Declares the Lord,’ when the Lord has not sent them, and yet they expect him to fulfill their word. [7]†Have you not seen a false vision and uttered a lying divination, whenever you have said, ‘Declares the Lord,’ although I have not spoken?”

[8]†Therefore thus says the Lord God: “Because you have uttered falsehood and seen lying visions, therefore behold, I am against you, declares the Lord God. [9]†My hand will be against the prophets who see false visions and who give lying divinations. They shall not be in the council of my people, nor be enrolled in the register of the house of Israel, nor shall they enter the land of Israel. And you shall know that I am the Lord God. [10]†Precisely because they have misled my people, saying, ‘Peace,’ when there is no peace, and because, when the people build a wall, these prophets smear it with whitewash,[1] [11]†say to those who smear it with whitewash that it shall fall! There will be a deluge of rain, and you, O great hailstones, will fall, and a stormy wind break out. [12]†And when the wall falls, will it not be said to you, ‘Where is the coating with which you smeared it?’ [13]†Therefore thus says the Lord God: I will make a stormy wind break out in my wrath, and there shall be a deluge of rain in my anger, and great hailstones in wrath to make a full end. [14]And I will break down the wall that you have smeared with whitewash, and bring it down to the ground, so that its foundation will be laid bare. When it falls, you shall perish in the midst of it, and you shall know that I am the Lord. [15]Thus will I spend my wrath upon the wall and upon those who have smeared it with whitewash, and I will say to you, The wall is no more, nor those who smeared it, [16]†the prophets of Israel who

prophesied concerning Jerusalem and saw visions of peace for her, when there was no peace, declares the Lord God.

17 † "And you, son of man, set your face against the daughters of your people, who prophesy out of their own minds. Prophesy against them 18 † and say, Thus says the Lord God: Woe to the women who sew magic bands upon all wrists, and make veils for the heads of persons of every stature, in the hunt for souls! Will you hunt down souls belonging to my people and keep your own souls alive? 19 † You have profaned me among my people for handfuls of barley and for pieces of bread, putting to death souls who should not die and keeping alive souls who should not live, by your lying to my people, who listen to lies.

20 † "Therefore thus says the Lord God: Behold, I am against your magic bands with which you hunt the souls like birds, and I will tear them from your arms, and I will let the souls whom you hunt go free, the souls like birds. 21 † Your veils also I will tear off and deliver my people out of your hand, and they shall be no more in your hand as prey, and you shall know that I am the Lord. 22 † Because you have disheartened the righteous falsely, although I have not grieved him, and you have encouraged the wicked, that he should not turn from his evil way to save his life, 23 † therefore you shall no more see false visions nor practice divination. I will deliver my people out of your hand. And you shall know that I am the Lord."

Idolatrous Elders Condemned

14 [1]†† Then certain of the elders of Israel came to me and sat before
me. [2]And the word of the Lord came to me: [3]† "Son of man, these men have
taken their idols into their hearts, and set the stumbling block of their
iniquity before their faces. Should I indeed let myself be consulted by
them? [4]† Therefore speak to them and say to them, Thus says the Lord God:
Any one of the house of Israel who takes his idols into his heart and sets the
stumbling block of his iniquity before his face, and yet comes to the
prophet, I the Lord will answer him as he comes with the multitude of his
idols, [5]that I may lay hold of the hearts of the house of Israel, who are all
estranged from me through their idols.

[6]† "Therefore say to the house of Israel, Thus says the Lord God: Repent
and turn away from your idols, and turn away your faces from all your
abominations. [7]† For any one of the house of Israel, or of the strangers who
sojourn in Israel, who separates himself from me, taking his idols into his
heart and putting the stumbling block of his iniquity before his face, and yet
comes to a prophet to consult me through him, I the Lord will answer him
myself. [8]† And I will set my face against that man; I will make him a sign
and a byword and cut him off from the midst of my people, and you shall
know that I am the Lord. [9]† And if the prophet is deceived and speaks a
word, I, the Lord, have deceived that prophet, and I will stretch out my hand
against him and will destroy him from the midst of my people Israel. [10]And
they shall bear their punishment[1]—the punishment of the prophet and the
punishment of the inquirer shall be alike— [11]† that the house of Israel may
no more go astray from me, nor defile themselves anymore with all their
transgressions, but that they may be my people and I may be their God,
declares the Lord God."

Jerusalem Will Not Be Spared

12 ‡ ‡ And the word of the Lord came to me: 13 “Son of man, when a land
sins against me by acting faithlessly, and I stretch out my hand against it
and break its supply[2] of bread and send famine upon it, and cut off from it
man and beast, 14 † even if these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it,
they would deliver but their own lives by their righteousness, declares the
Lord God.

15 ‡ “If I cause wild beasts to pass through the land, and they ravage it, and
it be made desolate, so that no one may pass through because of the beasts,
16 even if these three men were in it, as I live, declares the Lord God, they
would deliver neither sons nor daughters. They alone would be delivered,
but the land would be desolate.

17 † “Or if I bring a sword upon that land and say, Let a sword pass through
the land, and I cut off from it man and beast, 18 though these three men were
in it, as I live, declares the Lord God, they would deliver neither sons nor
daughters, but they alone would be delivered.

19 † “Or if I send a pestilence into that land and pour out my wrath upon it
with blood, to cut off from it man and beast, 20 even if Noah, Daniel, and Job
were in it, as I live, declares the Lord God, they would deliver neither son
nor daughter. They would deliver but their own lives by their righteousness.

21 † “For thus says the Lord God: How much more when I send upon
Jerusalem my four disastrous acts of judgment, sword, famine, wild beasts,
and pestilence, to cut off from it man and beast! 22 † But behold, some
survivors will be left in it, sons and daughters who will be brought out;
behold, when they come out to you, and you see their ways and their deeds,
you will be consoled for the disaster that I have brought upon Jerusalem, for
all that I have brought upon it. 23 † They will console you, when you see their
ways and their deeds, and you shall know that I have not done without
cause all that I have done in it, declares the Lord God.”

Jerusalem, a Useless Vine

15 [1]And the word of the Lord came to me: [2]“Son of man, how does
the wood of the vine surpass any wood, the vine branch that is among the
trees of the forest? [3]Is wood taken from it to make anything? Do people
take a peg from it to hang any vessel on it? [4]Behold, it is given to the fire
for fuel. When the fire has consumed both ends of it, and the middle of it is
charred, is it useful for anything? [5]Behold, when it was whole, it was used
for nothing. How much less, when the fire has consumed it and it is charred,
can it ever be used for anything! [6]Therefore thus says the Lord God: Like
the wood of the vine among the trees of the forest, which I have given to the
fire for fuel, so have I given up the inhabitants of Jerusalem. [7]And I will
set my face against them. Though they escape from the fire, the fire shall
yet consume them, and you will know that I am the Lord, when I set my
face against them. [8]And I will make the land desolate, because they have
acted faithlessly, declares the Lord God.”

The Lord's Faithless Bride

16 [1]Again the word of the Lord came to me: [2]"Son of man, make known to Jerusalem her abominations, [3]and say, Thus says the Lord God to Jerusalem: Your origin and your birth are of the land of the Canaanites; your father was an Amorite and your mother a Hittite. [4]And as for your birth, on the day you were born your cord was not cut, nor were you washed with water to cleanse you, nor rubbed with salt, nor wrapped in swaddling cloths. [5]No eye pitied you, to do any of these things to you out of compassion for you, but you were cast out on the open field, for you were abhorred, on the day that you were born.

[6]"And when I passed by you and saw you wallowing in your blood, I said to you in your blood, 'Live!' I said to you in your blood, 'Live!' [7]I made you flourish like a plant of the field. And you grew up and became tall and arrived at full adornment. Your breasts were formed, and your hair had grown; yet you were naked and bare.

[8]"When I passed by you again and saw you, behold, you were at the age for love, and I spread the corner of my garment over you and covered your nakedness; I made my vow to you and entered into a covenant with you, declares the Lord God, and you became mine. [9]Then I bathed you with water and washed off your blood from you and anointed you with oil. [10]I clothed you also with embroidered cloth and shod you with fine leather. I wrapped you in fine linen and covered you with silk.[1] [11]And I adorned you with ornaments and put bracelets on your wrists and a chain on your neck. [12]And I put a ring on your nose and earrings in your ears and a beautiful crown on your head. [13]Thus you were adorned with gold and silver, and your clothing was of fine linen and silk and embroidered cloth. You ate fine flour and honey and oil. You grew exceedingly beautiful and advanced to royalty. [14]And your renown went forth among the nations because of your beauty, for it was perfect through the splendor that I had bestowed on you, declares the Lord God.

[15]"But you trusted in your beauty and played the whore[2] because of your renown and lavished your whorings[3] on any passerby; your beauty[4]

became his. 16 † You took some of your garments and made for yourself
colorful shrines, and on them played the whore. The like has never been,
nor ever shall be.[5] 17 † You also took your beautiful jewels of my gold and of
my silver, which I had given you, and made for yourself images of men, and
with them played the whore. 18 † And you took your embroidered garments
to cover them, and set my oil and my incense before them. 19 Also my bread
that I gave you—I fed you with fine flour and oil and honey—you set
before them for a pleasing aroma; and so it was, declares the Lord God.
20 † And you took your sons and your daughters, whom you had borne to me,
and these you sacrificed to them to be devoured. Were your whorings so
small a matter 21 that you slaughtered my children and delivered them up as
an offering by fire to them? 22 And in all your abominations and your
whorings you did not remember the days of your youth, when you were
naked and bare, wallowing in your blood.

23 † "And after all your wickedness (woe, woe to you! declares the Lord
God), 24 † you built yourself a vaulted chamber and made yourself a lofty
place in every square. 25 † At the head of every street you built your lofty
place and made your beauty an abomination, offering yourself[6] to any
passerby and multiplying your whoring. 26 † † You also played the whore with
the Egyptians, your lustful neighbors, multiplying your whoring, to provoke
me to anger. 27 † Behold, therefore, I stretched out my hand against you and
diminished your allotted portion and delivered you to the greed of your
enemies, the daughters of the Philistines, who were ashamed of your lewd
behavior. 28 † You played the whore also with the Assyrians, because you
were not satisfied; yes, you played the whore with them, and still you were
not satisfied. 29 † You multiplied your whoring also with the trading land of
Chaldea, and even with this you were not satisfied.

30 † "How sick is your heart,[1] declares the Lord God, because you did all
these things, the deeds of a brazen prostitute, 31 † building your vaulted
chamber at the head of every street, and making your lofty place in every
square. Yet you were not like a prostitute, because you scorned payment.
32 † † Adulterous wife, who receives strangers instead of her husband! 33 Men
give gifts to all prostitutes, but you gave your gifts to all your lovers,
bribing them to come to you from every side with your whorings. 34 So you
were different from other women in your whorings. No one solicited you to

play the whore, and you gave payment, while no payment was given to you; therefore you were different.

35 “Therefore, O prostitute, hear the word of the Lord: 36 Thus says the Lord God, Because your lust was poured out and your nakedness uncovered in your whorings with your lovers, and with all your abominable idols, and because of the blood of your children that you gave to them, 37 therefore, behold, I will gather all your lovers with whom you took pleasure, all those you loved and all those you hated. I will gather them against you from every side and will uncover your nakedness to them, that they may see all your nakedness. 38 And I will judge you as women who commit adultery and shed blood are judged, and bring upon you the blood of wrath and jealousy. 39 And I will give you into their hands, and they shall throw down your vaulted chamber and break down your lofty places. They shall strip you of your clothes and take your beautiful jewels and leave you naked and bare. 40 They shall bring up a crowd against you, and they shall stone you and cut you to pieces with their swords. 41 And they shall burn your houses and execute judgments upon you in the sight of many women. I will make you stop playing the whore, and you shall also give payment no more. 42 So will I satisfy my wrath on you, and my jealousy shall depart from you. I will be calm and will no more be angry. 43 Because you have not remembered the days of your youth, but have enraged me with all these things, therefore, behold, I have returned your deeds upon your head, declares the Lord God. Have you not committed lewdness in addition to all your abominations?

44 “Behold, everyone who uses proverbs will use this proverb about you: ‘Like mother, like daughter.’ 45 You are the daughter of your mother, who loathed her husband and her children; and you are the sister of your sisters, who loathed their husbands and their children. Your mother was a Hittite and your father an Amorite. 46 And your elder sister is Samaria, who lived with her daughters to the north of you; and your younger sister, who lived to the south of you, is Sodom with her daughters. 47 Not only did you walk in their ways and do according to their abominations; within a very little time you were more corrupt than they in all your ways. 48 As I live, declares the Lord God, your sister Sodom and her daughters have not done as you and your daughters have done. 49 Behold, this was the guilt of your sister

Sodom: she and her daughters had pride, excess of food, and prosperous ease, but did not aid the poor and needy. 50They were haughty and did an abomination before me. So I removed them, when I saw it. 51†Samaria has not committed half your sins. You have committed more abominations than they, and have made your sisters appear righteous by all the abominations that you have committed. 52† Bear your disgrace, you also, for you have intervened on behalf of your sisters. Because of your sins in which you acted more abominably than they, they are more in the right than you. So be ashamed, you also, and bear your disgrace, for you have made your sisters appear righteous.

53† "I will restore their fortunes, both the fortunes of Sodom and her daughters, and the fortunes of Samaria and her daughters, and I will restore your own fortunes in their midst, 54†that you may bear your disgrace and be ashamed of all that you have done, becoming a consolation to them. 55As for your sisters, Sodom and her daughters shall return to their former state, and Samaria and her daughters shall return to their former state, and you and your daughters shall return to your former state. 56†Was not your sister Sodom a byword in your mouth in the day of your pride, 57†before your wickedness was uncovered? Now you have become an object of reproach for the daughters of Syria[1] and all those around her, and for the daughters of the Philistines, those all around who despise you. 58You bear the penalty of your lewdness and your abominations, declares the Lord.

The Lord's Everlasting Covenant

59 ‡ ‡ "For thus says the Lord God: I will deal with you as you have done,
you who have despised the oath in breaking the covenant, 60 † yet I will
remember my covenant with you in the days of your youth, and I will
establish for you an everlasting covenant. 61 † Then you will remember your
ways and be ashamed when you take your sisters, both your elder and your
younger, and I give them to you as daughters, but not on account of[1] the
covenant with you. 62 † I will establish my covenant with you, and you shall
know that I am the Lord, 63 † that you may remember and be confounded, and
never open your mouth again because of your shame, when I atone for you
for all that you have done, declares the Lord God."

Parable of Two Eagles and a Vine

17 [1]The word of the Lord came to me: [2]†“Son of man, propound a
riddle, and speak a parable to the house of Israel; [3]†say, Thus says the Lord
God: A great eagle with great wings and long pinions, rich in plumage of
many colors, came to Lebanon and took the top of the cedar. [4]†He broke off
the topmost of its young twigs and carried it to a land of trade and set it in a
city of merchants. [5]†Then he took of the seed of the land and planted it in
fertile soil.[2] He placed it beside abundant waters. He set it like a willow
twig, [6]†and it sprouted and became a low spreading vine, and its branches
turned toward him, and its roots remained where it stood. So it became a
vine and produced branches and put out boughs.

[7] †“And there was another great eagle with great wings and much
plumage, and behold, this vine bent its roots toward him and shot forth its
branches toward him from the bed where it was planted, that he might water
it. [8]†It had been planted on good soil by abundant waters, that it might
produce branches and bear fruit and become a noble vine.

[9]†“Say, Thus says the Lord God: Will it thrive? Will he not pull up its
roots and cut off its fruit, so that it withers, so that all its fresh sprouting
leaves wither? It will not take a strong arm or many people to pull it from
its roots. [10]†Behold, it is planted; will it thrive? Will it not utterly wither
when the east wind strikes it—wither away on the bed where it sprouted?”

[11]Then the word of the Lord came to me: [12]†“Say now to the rebellious
house, Do you not know what these things mean? Tell them, behold, the
king of Babylon came to Jerusalem, and took her king and her princes and
brought them to him to Babylon. [13]†And he took one of the royal offspring[3]
and made a covenant with him, putting him under oath (the chief men of the
land he had taken away), [14]†that the kingdom might be humble and not lift
itself up, and keep his covenant that it might stand. [15]†But he rebelled
against him by sending his ambassadors to Egypt, that they might give him
horses and a large army. Will he thrive? Can one escape who does such
things? Can he break the covenant and yet escape?

16 † “As I live, declares the Lord God, surely in the place where the king
dwells who made him king, whose oath he despised, and whose covenant
with him he broke, in Babylon he shall die. 17 † Pharaoh with his mighty
army and great company will not help him in war, when mounds are cast up
and siege walls built to cut off many lives. 18 He despised the oath in
breaking the covenant, and behold, he gave his hand and did all these
things; he shall not escape. 19 † Therefore thus says the Lord God: As I live,
surely it is my oath that he despised, and my covenant that he broke. I will
return it upon his head. 20 † I will spread my net over him, and he shall be
taken in my snare, and I will bring him to Babylon and enter into judgment
with him there for the treachery he has committed against me. 21 † And all
the pick[1] of his troops shall fall by the sword, and the survivors shall be
scattered to every wind, and you shall know that I am the Lord; I have
spoken.”

22 †† Thus says the Lord God: “I myself will take a sprig from the lofty top
of the cedar and will set it out. I will break off from the topmost of its
young twigs a tender one, and I myself will plant it on a high and lofty
mountain. 23 † On the mountain height of Israel will I plant it, that it may
bear branches and produce fruit and become a noble cedar. And under it
will dwell every kind of bird; in the shade of its branches birds of every sort
will nest. 24 † And all the trees of the field shall know that I am the Lord; I
bring low the high tree, and make high the low tree, dry up the green tree,
and make the dry tree flourish. I am the Lord; I have spoken, and I will do
it.”

The Soul Who Sins Shall Die

18 [1]The word of the Lord came to me: [2]†"What do you[2] mean by
repeating this proverb concerning the land of Israel, 'The fathers have eaten
sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge'? [3]As I live, declares
the Lord God, this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel. [4]†Behold,
all souls are mine; the soul of the father as well as the soul of the son is
mine: the soul who sins shall die.

[5]‡†"If a man is righteous and does what is just and right— [6]‡†if he does
not eat upon the mountains or lift up his eyes to the idols of the house of
Israel, does not defile his neighbor's wife or approach a woman in her time
of menstrual impurity, [7]†does not oppress anyone, but restores to the debtor
his pledge, commits no robbery, gives his bread to the hungry and covers
the naked with a garment, [8]†does not lend at interest or take any profit,[1]
withholds his hand from injustice, executes true justice between man and
man, [9]†walks in my statutes, and keeps my rules by acting faithfully—he is
righteous; he shall surely live, declares the Lord God.

[10]‡"If he fathers a son who is violent, a shedder of blood, who does any
of these things [11](though he himself did none of these things), who even eats
upon the mountains, defiles his neighbor's wife, [12]oppresses the poor and
needy, commits robbery, does not restore the pledge, lifts up his eyes to the
idols, commits abomination, [13]†lends at interest, and takes profit; shall he
then live? He shall not live. He has done all these abominations; he shall
surely die; his blood shall be upon himself.

[14]‡†"Now suppose this man fathers a son who sees all the sins that his
father has done; he sees, and does not do likewise: [15]he does not eat upon
the mountains or lift up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, does not
defile his neighbor's wife, [16]does not oppress anyone, exacts no pledge,
commits no robbery, but gives his bread to the hungry and covers the naked
with a garment, [17]†withholds his hand from iniquity,[2] takes no interest or
profit, obeys my rules, and walks in my statutes; he shall not die for his
father's iniquity; he shall surely live. [18]† As for his father, because he

practiced extortion, robbed his brother, and did what is not good among his people, behold, he shall die for his iniquity.

19 ‡ “Yet you say, ‘Why should not the son suffer for the iniquity of the father?’ When the son has done what is just and right, and has been careful to observe all my statutes, he shall surely live. 20 The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not suffer for the iniquity of the father, nor the father suffer for the iniquity of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself.

21 ‡ † “But if a wicked person turns away from all his sins that he has committed and keeps all my statutes and does what is just and right, he shall surely live; he shall not die. 22 † None of the transgressions that he has committed shall be remembered against him; for the righteousness that he has done he shall live. 23 † Have I any pleasure in the death of the wicked, declares the Lord God, and not rather that he should turn from his way and live? 24 † But when a righteous person turns away from his righteousness and does injustice and does the same abominations that the wicked person does, shall he live? None of the righteous deeds that he has done shall be remembered; for the treachery of which he is guilty and the sin he has committed, for them he shall die.

25 † “Yet you say, ‘The way of the Lord is not just.’ Hear now, O house of Israel: Is my way not just? Is it not your ways that are not just? 26 When a righteous person turns away from his righteousness and does injustice, he shall die for it; for the injustice that he has done he shall die. 27 † Again, when a wicked person turns away from the wickedness he has committed and does what is just and right, he shall save his life. 28 Because he considered and turned away from all the transgressions that he had committed, he shall surely live; he shall not die. 29 Yet the house of Israel says, ‘The way of the Lord is not just.’ O house of Israel, are my ways not just? Is it not your ways that are not just?

30 † “Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, declares the Lord God. Repent and turn from all your transgressions, lest iniquity be your ruin.[1] 31 † Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed, and make yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel? 32 † For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, declares the Lord God; so turn, and live.”

A Lament for the Princes of Israel

19 [1]†And you, take up a lamentation for the princes of Israel, [2]†and say:

What was your mother? A lioness!
Among lions she crouched;
in the midst of young lions
she reared her cubs.
[3]† And she brought up one of her cubs;
he became a young lion,
and he learned to catch prey;
he devoured men.
[4]† The nations heard about him;
he was caught in their pit,
and they brought him with hooks
to the land of Egypt.
[5]† When she saw that she waited in vain,
that her hope was lost,
she took another of her cubs
and made him a young lion.
[6]† He prowled among the lions;
he became a young lion,
and he learned to catch prey;
he devoured men,
[7]† and seized[1] their widows.
He laid waste their cities,
and the land was appalled and all who were
in it
at the sound of his roaring.
[8]†† Then the nations set against him
from provinces on every side;
they spread their net over him;
he was taken in their pit.

9 With hooks they put him in a cage[2]
and brought him to the king of Babylon;
they brought him into custody,
that his voice should no more be heard
on the mountains of Israel.

10 Your mother was like a vine in a
vineyard[3]
planted by the water,
fruitful and full of branches
by reason of abundant water.

11 Its strong stems became
rulers' scepters;
it towered aloft
among the thick boughs;[4]
it was seen in its height
with the mass of its branches.

12 But the vine was plucked up in fury,
cast down to the ground;
the east wind dried up its fruit;
they were stripped off and withered.
As for its strong stem,
fire consumed it.

13 Now it is planted in the wilderness,
in a dry and thirsty land.

14 And fire has gone out from the stem of its
shoots,
has consumed its fruit,
so that there remains in it no strong stem,
no scepter for ruling.

This is a lamentation and has become a lamentation.

Israel's Continuing Rebellion

20 [1]‡‡†In the seventh year, in the fifth month, on the tenth day of the month, certain of the elders of Israel came to inquire of the Lord, and sat before me. [2]And the word of the Lord came to me: [3]†"Son of man, speak to the elders of Israel, and say to them, Thus says the Lord God, Is it to inquire of me that you come? As I live, declares the Lord God, I will not be inquired of by you. [4]†Will you judge them, son of man, will you judge them? Let them know the abominations of their fathers, [5]‡†and say to them, Thus says the Lord God: On the day when I chose Israel, I swore[1] to the offspring of the house of Jacob, making myself known to them in the land of Egypt; I swore to them, saying, I am the Lord your God. [6]†On that day I swore to them that I would bring them out of the land of Egypt into a land that I had searched out for them, a land flowing with milk and honey, the most glorious of all lands. [7]†And I said to them, Cast away the detestable things your eyes feast on, every one of you, and do not defile yourselves with the idols of Egypt; I am the Lord your God. [8]†But they rebelled against me and were not willing to listen to me. None of them cast away the detestable things their eyes feasted on, nor did they forsake the idols of Egypt.

"Then I said I would pour out my wrath upon them and spend my anger against them in the midst of the land of Egypt. [9]†But I acted for the sake of my name, that it should not be profaned in the sight of the nations among whom they lived, in whose sight I made myself known to them in bringing them out of the land of Egypt. [10]So I led them out of the land of Egypt and brought them into the wilderness. [11]†I gave them my statutes and made known to them my rules, by which, if a person does them, he shall live. [12]†Moreover, I gave them my Sabbaths, as a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord who sanctifies them. [13]But the house of Israel rebelled against me in the wilderness. They did not walk in my statutes but rejected my rules, by which, if a person does them, he shall live; and my Sabbaths they greatly profaned.

"Then I said I would pour out my wrath upon them in the wilderness, to make a full end of them. [14]†But I acted for the sake of my name, that it should not be profaned in the sight of the nations, in whose sight I had

brought them out. 15 † Moreover, I swore to them in the wilderness that I
would not bring them into the land that I had given them, a land flowing
with milk and honey, the most glorious of all lands, 16 because they rejected
my rules and did not walk in my statutes, and profaned my Sabbaths; for
their heart went after their idols. 17 Nevertheless, my eye spared them, and I
did not destroy them or make a full end of them in the wilderness.

18 ‡ † "And I said to their children in the wilderness, Do not walk in the
statutes of your fathers, nor keep their rules, nor defile yourselves with their
idols. 19 I am the Lord your God; walk in my statutes, and be careful to obey
my rules, 20 and keep my Sabbaths holy that they may be a sign between me
and you, that you may know that I am the Lord your God. 21 † But the
children rebelled against me. They did not walk in my statutes and were not
careful to obey my rules, by which, if a person does them, he shall live;
they profaned my Sabbaths.

"Then I said I would pour out my wrath upon them and spend my anger
against them in the wilderness. 22 † But I withheld my hand and acted for the
sake of my name, that it should not be profaned in the sight of the nations,
in whose sight I had brought them out. 23 † Moreover, I swore to them in the
wilderness that I would scatter them among the nations and disperse them
through the countries, 24 because they had not obeyed my rules, but had
rejected my statutes and profaned my Sabbaths, and their eyes were set on
their fathers' idols. 25 † Moreover, I gave them statutes that were not good
and rules by which they could not have life, 26 and I defiled them through
their very gifts in their offering up all their firstborn, that I might devastate
them. I did it that they might know that I am the Lord.

27 † "Therefore, son of man, speak to the house of Israel and say to them,
Thus says the Lord God: In this also your fathers blasphemed me, by
dealing treacherously with me. 28 ‡ For when I had brought them into the
land that I swore to give them, then wherever they saw any high hill or any
leafy tree, there they offered their sacrifices and there they presented the
provocation of their offering; there they sent up their pleasing aromas, and
there they poured out their drink offerings. 29 (I said to them, What is the
high place to which you go? So its name is called Bamah[1] to this day.)

30 † "Therefore say to the house of Israel, Thus says the Lord God: Will
you defile yourselves after the manner of your fathers and go whoring after

their detestable things? 31 † When you present your gifts and offer up your children in fire,[2] you defile yourselves with all your idols to this day. And shall I be inquired of by you, O house of Israel? As I live, declares the Lord God, I will not be inquired of by you.

32 † "What is in your mind shall never happen—the thought, 'Let us be like the nations, like the tribes of the countries, and worship wood and stone.'

The Lord Will Restore Israel

33 ‡ ‡ ‡ “As I live, declares the Lord God, surely with a mighty hand and an
outstretched arm and with wrath poured out I will be king over you. 34 I will
bring you out from the peoples and gather you out of the countries where
you are scattered, with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, and with
wrath poured out. 35 And I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples,
and there I will enter into judgment with you face to face. 36 As I entered
into judgment with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so I
will enter into judgment with you, declares the Lord God. 37 † I will make
you pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant.
38 † I will purge out the rebels from among you, and those who transgress
against me. I will bring them out of the land where they sojourn, but they
shall not enter the land of Israel. Then you will know that I am the Lord.

39 † “As for you, O house of Israel, thus says the Lord God: Go serve every
one of you his idols, now and hereafter, if you will not listen to me; but my
holy name you shall no more profane with your gifts and your idols.

40 † “For on my holy mountain, the mountain height of Israel, declares the
Lord God, there all the house of Israel, all of them, shall serve me in the
land. There I will accept them, and there I will require your contributions
and the choicest of your gifts, with all your sacred offerings. 41 † As a
pleasing aroma I will accept you, when I bring you out from the peoples
and gather you out of the countries where you have been scattered. And I
will manifest my holiness among you in the sight of the nations. 42 And you
shall know that I am the Lord, when I bring you into the land of Israel, the
country that I swore to give to your fathers. 43 † And there you shall
remember your ways and all your deeds with which you have defiled
yourselves, and you shall loathe yourselves for all the evils that you have
committed. 44 And you shall know that I am the Lord, when I deal with you
for my name’s sake, not according to your evil ways, nor according to your
corrupt deeds, O house of Israel, declares the Lord God.”

45 † [1] And the word of the Lord came to me: 46 † “Son of man, set your face
toward the southland;[2] preach against the south, and prophesy against the
forest land in the Negeb. 47 † Say to the forest of the Negeb, Hear the word of

the LORD: Thus says the Lord GOD, Behold, I will kindle a fire in you, and it shall devour every green tree in you and every dry tree. The blazing flame shall not be quenched, and all faces from south to north shall be scorched by it. [48]All flesh shall see that I the LORD have kindled it; it shall not be quenched.” [49]†Then I said, “Ah, Lord GOD! They are saying of me, ‘Is he not a maker of parables?’”

The Lord Has Drawn His Sword

21 1 † [3] The word of the Lord came to me: 2 †“Son of man, set your
face toward Jerusalem and preach against the sanctuaries.[4] Prophesy
against the land of Israel 3 †and say to the land of Israel, Thus says the Lord:
Behold, I am against you and will draw my sword from its sheath and will
cut off from you both righteous and wicked. 4Because I will cut off from
you both righteous and wicked, therefore my sword shall be drawn from its
sheath against all flesh from south to north. 5And all flesh shall know that I
am the Lord. I have drawn my sword from its sheath; it shall not be
sheathed again.

6 †“As for you, son of man, groan; with breaking heart and bitter grief,
groan before their eyes. 7 †And when they say to you, ‘Why do you groan?’
you shall say, ‘Because of the news that it is coming. Every heart will melt,
and all hands will be feeble; every spirit will faint, and all knees will be
weak as water. Behold, it is coming, and it will be fulfilled,’” declares the
Lord God.

8And the word of the Lord came to me: 9 †“Son of man, prophesy and say,
Thus says the Lord, say:

“A sword, a sword is sharpened
and also polished,
10 † sharpened for slaughter,
polished to flash like lightning!

(Or shall we rejoice? You have despised the rod, my son, with everything of
wood.)[5] 11So the sword is given to be polished, that it may be grasped in
the hand. It is sharpened and polished to be given into the hand of the
slayer. 12 †Cry out and wail, son of man, for it is against my people. It is
against all the princes of Israel. They are delivered over to the sword with
my people. Strike therefore upon your thigh. 13 †For it will not be a testing—
what could it do if you despise the rod?”[6] declares the Lord God.

14 †“As for you, son of man, prophesy. Clap your hands and let the sword
come down twice, yes, three times,[7] the sword for those to be slain. It is the

sword for the great slaughter, which surrounds them, 15 † that their hearts
may melt, and many stumble.[8] At all their gates I have given the glittering
sword. Ah, it is made like lightning; it is taken up[9] for slaughter. 16 Cut
sharply to the right; set yourself to the left, wherever your face is directed.
17 † I also will clap my hands, and I will satisfy my fury; I the Lord have
spoken."

18 ‡ The word of the Lord came to me again: 19 ‡ † "As for you, son of man,
mark two ways for the sword of the king of Babylon to come. Both of them
shall come from the same land. And make a signpost; make it at the head of
the way to a city. 20 † Mark a way for the sword to come to Rabbah of the
Ammonites and to Judah, into Jerusalem the fortified. 21 † For the king of
Babylon stands at the parting of the way, at the head of the two ways, to use
divination. He shakes the arrows; he consults the teraphim;[1] he looks at the
liver. 22 † Into his right hand comes the divination for Jerusalem, to set
battering rams, to open the mouth with murder, to lift up the voice with
shouting, to set battering rams against the gates, to cast up mounds, to build
siege towers. 23 † But to them it will seem like a false divination. They have
sworn solemn oaths, but he brings their guilt to remembrance, that they may
be taken.

24 ‡ † "Therefore thus says the Lord God: Because you have made your guilt
to be remembered, in that your transgressions are uncovered, so that in all
your deeds your sins appear—because you have come to remembrance, you
shall be taken in hand. 25 † And you, O profane[2] wicked one, prince of
Israel, whose day has come, the time of your final punishment, 26 † thus says
the Lord God: Remove the turban and take off the crown. Things shall not
remain as they are. Exalt that which is low, and bring low that which is
exalted. 27 † A ruin, ruin, ruin I will make it. This also shall not be, until he
comes, the one to whom judgment belongs, and I will give it to him.

28 ‡ ‡ † "And you, son of man, prophesy, and say, Thus says the Lord God
concerning the Ammonites and concerning their reproach; say, A sword, a
sword is drawn for the slaughter. It is polished to consume and to flash like
lightning— 29 † while they see for you false visions, while they divine lies
for you—to place you on the necks of the profane wicked, whose day has
come, the time of their final punishment. 30 † Return it to its sheath. In the
place where you were created, in the land of your origin, I will judge you.

[31]†And I will pour out my indignation upon you; I will blow upon you with the fire of my wrath, and I will deliver you into the hands of brutish men, skillful to destroy. [32]You shall be fuel for the fire. Your blood shall be in the midst of the land. You shall be no more remembered, for I the Lord have spoken.”

Israel's Shedding of Blood

22 [1]And the word of the Lord came to me, saying, [2]"And you, son of man, will you judge, will you judge the bloody city? Then declare to her all her abominations. [3]You shall say, Thus says the Lord God: A city that sheds blood in her midst, so that her time may come, and that makes idols to defile herself! [4]You have become guilty by the blood that you have shed, and defiled by the idols that you have made, and you have brought your days near, the appointed time of[1] your years has come. Therefore I have made you a reproach to the nations, and a mockery to all the countries. [5]Those who are near and those who are far from you will mock you; your name is defiled; you are full of tumult.

[6]"Behold, the princes of Israel in you, every one according to his power, have been bent on shedding blood. [7]Father and mother are treated with contempt in you; the sojourner suffers extortion in your midst; the fatherless and the widow are wronged in you. [8]You have despised my holy things and profaned my Sabbaths. [9]There are men in you who slander to shed blood, and people in you who eat on the mountains; they commit lewdness in your midst. [10]In you men uncover their fathers' nakedness; in you they violate women who are unclean in their menstrual impurity. [11]One commits abomination with his neighbor's wife; another lewdly defiles his daughter-in-law; another in you violates his sister, his father's daughter. [12]In you they take bribes to shed blood; you take interest and profit[2] and make gain of your neighbors by extortion; but me you have forgotten, declares the Lord God.

[13]"Behold, I strike my hand at the dishonest gain that you have made, and at the blood that has been in your midst. [14]Can your courage endure, or can your hands be strong, in the days that I shall deal with you? I the Lord have spoken, and I will do it. [15]I will scatter you among the nations and disperse you through the countries, and I will consume your uncleanness out of you. [16]And you shall be profaned by your own doing in the sight of the nations, and you shall know that I am the Lord."

[17]And the word of the Lord came to me: [18]†“Son of man, the house of
Israel has become dross to me; all of them are bronze and tin and iron and
lead in the furnace; they are dross of silver. [19]Therefore thus says the Lord
God: Because you have all become dross, therefore, behold, I will gather
you into the midst of Jerusalem. [20]†As one gathers silver and bronze and
iron and lead and tin into a furnace, to blow the fire on it in order to melt it,
so I will gather you in my anger and in my wrath, and I will put you in and
melt you. [21]I will gather you and blow on you with the fire of my wrath, and
you shall be melted in the midst of it. [22]As silver is melted in a furnace, so
you shall be melted in the midst of it, and you shall know that I am the
Lord; I have poured out my wrath upon you.”

[23]And the word of the Lord came to me: [24]†“Son of man, say to her, You
are a land that is not cleansed or rained upon in the day of indignation.
[25]†The conspiracy of her prophets in her midst is like a roaring lion tearing
the prey; they have devoured human lives; they have taken treasure and
precious things; they have made many widows in her midst. [26]†Her priests
have done violence to my law and have profaned my holy things. They have
made no distinction between the holy and the common, neither have they
taught the difference between the unclean and the clean, and they have
disregarded my Sabbaths, so that I am profaned among them. [27]†Her princes
in her midst are like wolves tearing the prey, shedding blood, destroying
lives to get dishonest gain. [28]†And her prophets have smeared whitewash
for them, seeing false visions and divining lies for them, saying, ‘Thus says
the Lord God,’ when the Lord has not spoken. [29]The people of the land have
practiced extortion and committed robbery. They have oppressed the poor
and needy, and have extorted from the sojourner without justice. [30]†And I
sought for a man among them who should build up the wall and stand in the
breach before me for the land, that I should not destroy it, but I found none.
[31]†Therefore I have poured out my indignation upon them. I have consumed
them with the fire of my wrath. I have returned their way upon their heads,
declares the Lord God.”

Oholah and Oholibah

23 [1]The word of the Lord came to me: [2]†“Son of man, there were two
women, the daughters of one mother. [3]†They played the whore in Egypt;
they played the whore in their youth; there their breasts were pressed and
their virgin bosoms[1] handled. [4]†Oholah was the name of the elder and
Oholibah the name of her sister. They became mine, and they bore sons and
daughters. As for their names, Oholah is Samaria, and Oholibah is
Jerusalem.

[5]†“Oholah played the whore while she was mine, and she lusted after her
lovers the Assyrians, warriors [6]† clothed in purple, governors and
commanders, all of them desirable young men, horsemen riding on horses.
[7]She bestowed her whoring upon them, the choicest men of Assyria all of
them, and she defiled herself with all the idols of everyone after whom she
lusted. [8]She did not give up her whoring that she had begun in Egypt; for in
her youth men had lain with her and handled her virgin bosom and poured
out their whoring lust upon her. [9]Therefore I delivered her into the hands of
her lovers, into the hands of the Assyrians, after whom she lusted. [10]†These
uncovered her nakedness; they seized her sons and her daughters; and as for
her, they killed her with the sword; and she became a byword among
women, when judgment had been executed on her.

[11]†“Her sister Oholibah saw this, and she became more corrupt than her
sister[1] in her lust and in her whoring, which was worse than that of her
sister. [12]† She lusted after the Assyrians, governors and commanders,
warriors clothed in full armor, horsemen riding on horses, all of them
desirable young men. [13]And I saw that she was defiled; they both took the
same way. [14]†But she carried her whoring further. She saw men portrayed
on the wall, the images of the Chaldeans portrayed in vermilion, [15]wearing
belts on their waists, with flowing turbans on their heads, all of them having
the appearance of officers, a likeness of Babylonians whose native land was
Chaldea. [16]When she saw them, she lusted after them and sent messengers
to them in Chaldea. [17]†And the Babylonians came to her into the bed of
love, and they defiled her with their whoring lust. And after she was defiled

by them, she turned from them in disgust. [18]When she carried on her whoring so openly and flaunted her nakedness, I turned in disgust from her, as I had turned in disgust from her sister. [19]†Yet she increased her whoring, remembering the days of her youth, when she played the whore in the land of Egypt [20]†and lusted after her paramours there, whose members were like those of donkeys, and whose issue was like that of horses. [21]† Thus you longed for the lewdness of your youth, when the Egyptians handled your bosom and pressed[2] your young breasts."

[22]†† Therefore, O Oholibah, thus says the Lord God: "Behold, I will stir up against you your lovers from whom you turned in disgust, and I will bring them against you from every side: [23]† the Babylonians and all the Chaldeans, Pekod and Shoa and Koa, and all the Assyrians with them, desirable young men, governors and commanders all of them, officers and men of renown, all of them riding on horses. [24]†And they shall come against you from the north[3] with chariots and wagons and a host of peoples. They shall set themselves against you on every side with buckler, shield, and helmet; and I will commit the judgment to them, and they shall judge you according to their judgments. [25]†And I will direct my jealousy against you, that they may deal with you in fury. They shall cut off your nose and your ears, and your survivors shall fall by the sword. They shall seize your sons and your daughters, and your survivors shall be devoured by fire. [26]They shall also strip you of your clothes and take away your beautiful jewels. [27]Thus I will put an end to your lewdness and your whoring begun in the land of Egypt, so that you shall not lift up your eyes to them or remember Egypt anymore.

[28]"For thus says the Lord God: Behold, I will deliver you into the hands of those whom you hate, into the hands of those from whom you turned in disgust, [29]and they shall deal with you in hatred and take away all the fruit of your labor and leave you naked and bare, and the nakedness of your whoring shall be uncovered. Your lewdness and your whoring [30]have brought this upon you, because you played the whore with the nations and defiled yourself with their idols. [31]†You have gone the way of your sister; therefore I will give her cup into your hand. [32]Thus says the Lord God:

“You shall drink your sister’s cup
that is deep and large;
you shall be laughed at and held in derision,
for it contains much;
33 you will be filled with drunkenness and
sorrow.
A cup of horror and desolation,
the cup of your sister Samaria;
34† you shall drink it and drain it out,
and gnaw its shards,
and tear your breasts;

for I have spoken, declares the Lord God. 35Therefore thus says the Lord God: Because you have forgotten me and cast me behind your back, you yourself must bear the consequences of your lewdness and whoring.”

36 ‡ The Lord said to me: “Son of man, will you judge Oholah and Oholibah? Declare to them their abominations. 37†For they have committed adultery, and blood is on their hands. With their idols they have committed adultery, and they have even offered up[1] to them for food the children whom they had borne to me. 38‡Moreover, this they have done to me: they have defiled my sanctuary on the same day and profaned my Sabbaths. 39For when they had slaughtered their children in sacrifice to their idols, on the same day they came into my sanctuary to profane it. And behold, this is what they did in my house. 40†They even sent for men to come from afar, to whom a messenger was sent; and behold, they came. For them you bathed yourself, painted your eyes, and adorned yourself with ornaments. 41† You sat on a stately couch, with a table spread before it on which you had placed my incense and my oil. 42†The sound of a carefree multitude was with her; and with men of the common sort, drunkards[2] were brought from the wilderness; and they put bracelets on the hands of the women, and beautiful crowns on their heads.

43 † “Then I said of her who was worn out by adultery, Now they will continue to use her for a whore, even her![3] 44For they have gone in to her, as men go in to a prostitute. Thus they went in to Oholah and to Oholibah, lewd women! 45† But righteous men shall pass judgment on them with the

sentence of adulteresses, and with the sentence of women who shed blood, because they are adulteresses, and blood is on their hands.”

46For thus says the Lord God: “Bring up a vast host against them, and make them an object of terror and a plunder. 47† And the host shall stone them and cut them down with their swords. They shall kill their sons and their daughters, and burn up their houses. 48† Thus will I put an end to lewdness in the land, that all women may take warning and not commit lewdness as you have done. 49And they shall return your lewdness upon you, and you shall bear the penalty for your sinful idolatry, and you shall know that I am the Lord God.”

The Siege of Jerusalem

24 [1]†††In the ninth year, in the tenth month, on the tenth day of the month, the word of the Lord came to me: [2]"Son of man, write down the name of this day, this very day. The king of Babylon has laid siege to Jerusalem this very day. [3]††And utter a parable to the rebellious house and say to them, Thus says the Lord God:

"Set on the pot, set it on;
pour in water also;
[4] put in it the pieces of meat,
all the good pieces, the thigh and the shoulder;
fill it with choice bones.
[5] Take the choicest one of the flock;
pile the logs[1] under it;
boil it well;
seethe also its bones in it.

[6]†"Therefore thus says the Lord God: Woe to the bloody city, to the pot whose corrosion is in it, and whose corrosion has not gone out of it! Take out of it piece after piece, without making any choice.[2] [7]†For the blood she has shed is in her midst; she put it on the bare rock; she did not pour it out on the ground to cover it with dust. [8]To rouse my wrath, to take vengeance, I have set on the bare rock the blood she has shed, that it may not be covered. [9]†Therefore thus says the Lord God: Woe to the bloody city! I also will make the pile great. [10]†Heap on the logs, kindle the fire, boil the meat well, mix in the spices,[3] and let the bones be burned up. [11]†Then set it empty upon the coals, that it may become hot, and its copper may burn, that its uncleanness may be melted in it, its corrosion consumed. [12]†She has wearied herself with toil;[4] its abundant corrosion does not go out of it. Into the fire with its corrosion! [13]On account of your unclean lewdness, because I would have cleansed you and you were not cleansed from your uncleanness, you shall not be cleansed anymore till I have satisfied my fury

upon you. [14]†I am the Lord. I have spoken; it shall come to pass; I will do it. I will not go back; I will not spare; I will not relent; according to your ways and your deeds you will be judged, declares the Lord God."

Ezekiel's Wife Dies

15 ‡ ‡The word of the Lord came to me: 16 †"Son of man, behold, I am
about to take the delight of your eyes away from you at a stroke; yet you
shall not mourn or weep, nor shall your tears run down. 17 †Sigh, but not
aloud; make no mourning for the dead. Bind on your turban, and put your
shoes on your feet; do not cover your lips, nor eat the bread of men." 18So I
spoke to the people in the morning, and at evening my wife died. And on
the next morning I did as I was commanded.

19And the people said to me, "Will you not tell us what these things mean
for us, that you are acting thus?" 20Then I said to them, "The word of the
Lord came to me: 21 †'Say to the house of Israel, Thus says the Lord God:
Behold, I will profane my sanctuary, the pride of your power, the delight of
your eyes, and the yearning of your soul, and your sons and your daughters
whom you left behind shall fall by the sword. 22And you shall do as I have
done; you shall not cover your lips, nor eat the bread of men. 23Your turbans
shall be on your heads and your shoes on your feet; you shall not mourn or
weep, but you shall rot away in your iniquities and groan to one another.
24Thus shall Ezekiel be to you a sign; according to all that he has done you
shall do. When this comes, then you will know that I am the Lord God.'

25 †"As for you, son of man, surely on the day when I take from them
their stronghold, their joy and glory, the delight of their eyes and their soul's
desire, and also their sons and daughters, 26 †on that day a fugitive will come
to you to report to you the news. 27 †On that day your mouth will be opened
to the fugitive, and you shall speak and be no longer mute. So you will be a
sign to them, and they will know that I am the Lord."

Prophecy Against Ammon

25 [1]‡The word of the Lord came to me: [2]†"Son of man, set your face
toward the Ammonites and prophesy against them. [3]†Say to the Ammonites,
Hear the word of the Lord God: Thus says the Lord God, Because you said,
'Aha!' over my sanctuary when it was profaned, and over the land of Israel
when it was made desolate, and over the house of Judah when they went
into exile, [4]†therefore behold, I am handing you over to the people of the
East for a possession, and they shall set their encampments among you and
make their dwellings in your midst. They shall eat your fruit, and they shall
drink your milk. [5]†I will make Rabbah a pasture for camels and Ammon[1] a
fold for flocks. Then you will know that I am the Lord. [6]†For thus says the
Lord God: Because you have clapped your hands and stamped your feet and
rejoiced with all the malice within your soul against the land of Israel,
[7]†therefore, behold, I have stretched out my hand against you, and will hand
you over as plunder to the nations. And I will cut you off from the peoples
and will make you perish out of the countries; I will destroy you. Then you
will know that I am the Lord.

Prophecy Against Moab and Seir

8 ✝✝✝ “Thus says the Lord God: Because Moab and Seir[2] said, ‘Behold,
the house of Judah is like all the other nations,’ 9 therefore I will lay open the
flank of Moab from the cities, from its cities on its frontier, the glory of the
country, Beth-jeshimoth, Baal-meon, and Kiriathaim. 10 I will give it along
with the Ammonites to the people of the East as a possession, that the
Ammonites may be remembered no more among the nations, 11 ✝ and I will
execute judgments upon Moab. Then they will know that I am the Lord.

Prophecy Against Edom

12 ‡‡‡“Thus says the Lord God: Because Edom acted revengefully against
the house of Judah and has grievously offended in taking vengeance on
them, 13 †therefore thus says the Lord God, I will stretch out my hand against
Edom and cut off from it man and beast. And I will make it desolate; from
Teman even to Dedan they shall fall by the sword. 14 † And I will lay my
vengeance upon Edom by the hand of my people Israel, and they shall do in
Edom according to my anger and according to my wrath, and they shall
know my vengeance, declares the Lord God.

Prophecy Against Philistia

15 ✝✝✝“Thus says the Lord God: Because the Philistines acted revengefully
and took vengeance with malice of soul to destroy in never-ending enmity,
16 ✝therefore thus says the Lord God, Behold, I will stretch out my hand
against the Philistines, and I will cut off the Cherethites and destroy the rest
of the seacoast. 17 ✝I will execute great vengeance on them with wrathful
rebukes. Then they will know that I am the Lord, when I lay my vengeance
upon them.”

Prophecy Against Tyre

26 [1]In the eleventh year, on the first day of the month, the word of the Lord came to me: [2]"Son of man, because Tyre said concerning Jerusalem, 'Aha, the gate of the peoples is broken; it has swung open to me. I shall be replenished, now that she is laid waste,' [3]therefore thus says the Lord God: Behold, I am against you, O Tyre, and will bring up many nations against you, as the sea brings up its waves. [4]They shall destroy the walls of Tyre and break down her towers, and I will scrape her soil from her and make her a bare rock. [5]She shall be in the midst of the sea a place for the spreading of nets, for I have spoken, declares the Lord God. And she shall become plunder for the nations, [6]and her daughters on the mainland shall be killed by the sword. Then they will know that I am the Lord.

[7]"For thus says the Lord God: Behold, I will bring against Tyre from the north Nebuchadnezzar[1] king of Babylon, king of kings, with horses and chariots, and with horsemen and a host of many soldiers. [8]He will kill with the sword your daughters on the mainland. He will set up a siege wall against you and throw up a mound against you, and raise a roof of shields against you. [9]He will direct the shock of his battering rams against your walls, and with his axes he will break down your towers. [10]His horses will be so many that their dust will cover you. Your walls will shake at the noise of the horsemen and wagons and chariots, when he enters your gates as men enter a city that has been breached. [11]With the hoofs of his horses he will trample all your streets. He will kill your people with the sword, and your mighty pillars will fall to the ground. [12]They will plunder your riches and loot your merchandise. They will break down your walls and destroy your pleasant houses. Your stones and timber and soil they will cast into the midst of the waters. [13]And I will stop the music of your songs, and the sound of your lyres shall be heard no more. [14]I will make you a bare rock. You shall be a place for the spreading of nets. You shall never be rebuilt, for I am the Lord; I have spoken, declares the Lord God.

[15]"Thus says the Lord God to Tyre: Will not the coastlands shake at the sound of your fall, when the wounded groan, when slaughter is made in

your midst? [16]† Then all the princes of the sea will step down from their thrones and remove their robes and strip off their embroidered garments. They will clothe themselves with trembling; they will sit on the ground and tremble every moment and be appalled at you. [17]† And they will raise a lamentation over you and say to you,

"'How you have perished,
you who were inhabited from the seas,
O city renowned,
who was mighty on the sea;
she and her inhabitants imposed their terror
on all her inhabitants!
[18] Now the coastlands tremble
on the day of your fall,
and the coastlands that are on the sea
are dismayed at your passing.'

[19]† "For thus says the Lord GOD: When I make you a city laid waste, like the cities that are not inhabited, when I bring up the deep over you, and the great waters cover you, [20]† then I will make you go down with those who go down to the pit, to the people of old, and I will make you to dwell in the world below, among ruins from of old, with those who go down to the pit, so that you will not be inhabited; but I will set beauty in the land of the living. [21]I will bring you to a dreadful end, and you shall be no more. Though you be sought for, you will never be found again, declares the Lord GOD."

A Lament for Tyre

27 [1]The word of the LORD came to me: [2]"Now you, son of man, raise a lamentation over Tyre, [3]and say to Tyre, who dwells at the entrances to the sea, merchant of the peoples to many coastlands, thus says the Lord GOD:

"O Tyre, you have said,
'I am perfect in beauty.'
[4] Your borders are in the heart of the seas;
your builders made perfect your beauty.
[5] They made all your planks
of fir trees from Senir;
they took a cedar from Lebanon
to make a mast for you.
[6] Of oaks of Bashan
they made your oars;
they made your deck of pines
from the coasts of Cyprus,
inlaid with ivory.
[7] Of fine embroidered linen from Egypt
was your sail,
serving as your banner;
blue and purple from the coasts of
Elishah
was your awning.
[8] The inhabitants of Sidon and Arvad
were your rowers;
your skilled men, O Tyre, were in you;
they were your pilots.
[9] The elders of Gebal and her skilled men were
in you,
caulking your seams;
all the ships of the sea with their mariners

were in you
to barter for your wares.

10 ‡† “Persia and Lud and Put were in your army as your men of war. They
hung the shield and helmet in you; they gave you splendor. 11 † Men of Arvad
and Helech were on your walls all around, and men of Gamad were in your
towers. They hung their shields on your walls all around; they made perfect
your beauty.
12 ‡ † “Tarshish did business with you because of your great wealth of
every kind; silver, iron, tin, and lead they exchanged for your wares.
13 † Javan, Tubal, and Meshech traded with you; they exchanged human
beings and vessels of bronze for your merchandise. 14 From Beth-togarmah
they exchanged horses, war horses, and mules for your wares. 15 † The men
of Dedan[1] traded with you. Many coastlands were your own special
markets; they brought you in payment ivory tusks and ebony. 16 † Syria did
business with you because of your abundant goods; they exchanged for
your wares emeralds, purple, embroidered work, fine linen, coral, and ruby.
17 † Judah and the land of Israel traded with you; they exchanged for your
merchandise wheat of Minnith, meal,[2] honey, oil, and balm. 18 Damascus
did business with you for your abundant goods, because of your great
wealth of every kind; wine of Helbon and wool of Sahar 19 † and casks of
wine[3] from Uzal they exchanged for your wares; wrought iron, cassia, and
calamus were bartered for your merchandise. 20 Dedan traded with you in
saddlecloths for riding. 21 Arabia and all the princes of Kedar were your
favored dealers in lambs, rams, and goats; in these they did business with
you. 22 The traders of Sheba and Raamah traded with you; they exchanged
for your wares the best of all kinds of spices and all precious stones and
gold. 23 Haran, Canneh, Eden, traders of Sheba, Asshur, and Chilmad traded
with you. 24 † In your market these traded with you in choice garments, in
clothes of blue and embroidered work, and in carpets of colored material,
bound with cords and made secure. 25 † The ships of Tarshish traveled for
you with your merchandise. So you were filled and heavily laden in the
heart of the seas.

26 “Your rowers have brought you out
into the high seas.
The east wind has wrecked you
in the heart of the seas.
27 Your riches, your wares, your merchandise,
your mariners and your pilots,
your caulkers, your dealers in merchandise,
and all your men of war who are in you,
with all your crew
that is in your midst,
sink into the heart of the seas
on the day of your fall.
28 At the sound of the cry of your pilots
the countryside shakes,
29 and down from their ships
come all who handle the oar.
The mariners and all the pilots of the sea
stand on the land
30 and shout aloud over you
and cry out bitterly.
They cast dust on their heads
and wallow in ashes;
31 they make themselves bald for you
and put sackcloth on their waist,
and they weep over you in bitterness of soul,
with bitter mourning.
32 In their wailing they raise a lamentation for you
and lament over you:
‘Who is like Tyre,
like one destroyed in the midst of the sea?
33 When your wares came from the seas,
you satisfied many peoples;
with your abundant wealth and merchandise
you enriched the kings of the earth.
34 Now you are wrecked by the seas,
in the depths of the waters;

your merchandise and all your crew in your midst
have sunk with you.
35† All the inhabitants of the coastlands
are appalled at you,
and the hair of their kings bristles with horror;
their faces are convulsed.
36† The merchants among the peoples hiss at you;
you have come to a dreadful end
and shall be no more forever.’”

Prophecy Against the Prince of Tyre

28 [1] The word of the Lord came to me: [2] "Son of man, say to the
prince of Tyre, Thus says the Lord God:

"Because your heart is proud,
and you have said, 'I am a god,
I sit in the seat of the gods,
in the heart of the seas,'
yet you are but a man, and no god,
though you make your heart like the heart
of a god—
[3] you are indeed wiser than Daniel;
no secret is hidden from you;
[4] by your wisdom and your understanding
you have made wealth for yourself,
and have gathered gold and silver
into your treasuries;
[5] by your great wisdom in your trade
you have increased your wealth,
and your heart has become proud in your
wealth—
[6] therefore thus says the Lord God:
Because you make your heart
like the heart of a god,
[7] therefore, behold, I will bring foreigners
upon you,
the most ruthless of the nations;
and they shall draw their swords against the
beauty of your wisdom
and defile your splendor.
[8] They shall thrust you down into the pit,
and you shall die the death of the slain
in the heart of the seas.

9 Will you still say, ‘I am a god,’
in the presence of those who kill you,
though you are but a man, and no god,
in the hands of those who slay you?
10† You shall die the death of the uncircumcised
by the hand of foreigners;
for I have spoken, declares the Lord God.”

A Lament over the King of Tyre

11 Moreover, the word of the Lord came to me: 12 “Son of man, raise a
lamentation over the king of Tyre, and say to him, Thus says the Lord God:

“You were the signet of perfection,[1]
full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.
13 You were in Eden, the garden of God;
every precious stone was your covering,
sardius, topaz, and diamond,
beryl, onyx, and jasper,
sapphire,[2] emerald, and carbuncle;
and crafted in gold were your settings
and your engravings.[3]
On the day that you were created
they were prepared.
14 You were an anointed guardian cherub.
I placed you;[4] you were on the holy
mountain of God;
in the midst of the stones of fire you walked.
15 You were blameless in your ways
from the day you were created,
till unrighteousness was found in you.
16 In the abundance of your trade
you were filled with violence in your midst,
and you sinned;
so I cast you as a profane thing from the
mountain of God,
and I destroyed you,[5] O guardian cherub,
from the midst of the stones of fire.
17 Your heart was proud because of your
beauty;
you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of
your splendor.
I cast you to the ground;

I exposed you before kings,
to feast their eyes on you.
18 By the multitude of your iniquities,
in the unrighteousness of your trade
you profaned your sanctuaries;
so I brought fire out from your midst;
it consumed you,
and I turned you to ashes on the earth
in the sight of all who saw you.
19 All who know you among the peoples
are appalled at you;
you have come to a dreadful end
and shall be no more forever.”

Prophecy Against Sidon

20 The word of the Lord came to me: 21 “Son of man, set your face
toward Sidon, and prophesy against her 22 and say, Thus says the Lord God:

“Behold, I am against you, O Sidon,
and I will manifest my glory in your midst.
And they shall know that I am the Lord
when I execute judgments in her
and manifest my holiness in her;
23 for I will send pestilence into her,
and blood into her streets;
and the slain shall fall in her midst,
by the sword that is against her on every side.
Then they will know that I am the Lord.

24 “And for the house of Israel there shall be no more a brier to prick or
a thorn to hurt them among all their neighbors who have treated them with
contempt. Then they will know that I am the Lord God.

Israel Gathered in Security

25 ††“Thus says the Lord God: When I gather the house of Israel from the
peoples among whom they are scattered, and manifest my holiness in them
in the sight of the nations, then they shall dwell in their own land that I gave
to my servant Jacob. 26 †And they shall dwell securely in it, and they shall
build houses and plant vineyards. They shall dwell securely, when I execute
judgments upon all their neighbors who have treated them with contempt.
Then they will know that I am the Lord their God.”

Prophecy Against Egypt

29 [1]†In the tenth year, in the tenth month, on the twelfth day of the month, the word of the Lord came to me: [2]† "Son of man, set your face against Pharaoh king of Egypt, and prophesy against him and against all Egypt; [3]†speak, and say, Thus says the Lord God:

"Behold, I am against you,
Pharaoh king of Egypt,
the great dragon that lies
in the midst of his streams,
that says, 'My Nile is my own;
I made it for myself.'
[4]† I will put hooks in your jaws,
and make the fish of your streams stick to
your scales;
and I will draw you up out of the midst of
your streams,
with all the fish of your streams
that stick to your scales.
[5]† And I will cast you out into the
wilderness,
you and all the fish of your streams;
you shall fall on the open field,
and not be brought together or gathered.
To the beasts of the earth and to the birds of
the heavens
I give you as food.

[6]††Then all the inhabitants of Egypt shall know that I am the Lord.

"Because you[1] have been a staff of reed to the house of Israel, [7]when they grasped you with the hand, you broke and tore all their shoulders; and when they leaned on you, you broke and made all their loins to shake.[2] [8]Therefore thus says the Lord God: Behold, I will bring a sword upon you,

and will cut off from you man and beast, [9]†and the land of Egypt shall be a desolation and a waste. Then they will know that I am the Lord.

"Because you[3] said, 'The Nile is mine, and I made it,' [10]†therefore, behold, I am against you and against your streams, and I will make the land of Egypt an utter waste and desolation, from Migdol to Syene, as far as the border of Cush. [11]†No foot of man shall pass through it, and no foot of beast shall pass through it; it shall be uninhabited forty years. [12]†And I will make the land of Egypt a desolation in the midst of desolated countries, and her cities shall be a desolation forty years among cities that are laid waste. I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations, and disperse them through the countries.

[13]†"For thus says the Lord God: At the end of forty years I will gather the Egyptians from the peoples among whom they were scattered, [14]†and I will restore the fortunes of Egypt and bring them back to the land of Pathros, the land of their origin, and there they shall be a lowly kingdom. [15]†It shall be the most lowly of the kingdoms, and never again exalt itself above the nations. And I will make them so small that they will never again rule over the nations. [16]†And it shall never again be the reliance of the house of Israel, recalling their iniquity, when they turn to them for aid. Then they will know that I am the Lord God."

[17]†In the twenty-seventh year, in the first month, on the first day of the month, the word of the Lord came to me: [18]†"Son of man, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon made his army labor hard against Tyre. Every head was made bald, and every shoulder was rubbed bare, yet neither he nor his army got anything from Tyre to pay for the labor that he had performed against her. [19]†Therefore thus says the Lord God: Behold, I will give the land of Egypt to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; and he shall carry off its wealth[4] and despoil it and plunder it; and it shall be the wages for his army. [20]†I have given him the land of Egypt as his payment for which he labored, because they worked for me, declares the Lord God.

[21]†"On that day I will cause a horn to spring up for the house of Israel, and I will open your lips among them. Then they will know that I am the Lord."

A Lament for Egypt

30 1 The word of the Lord came to me: 2 “Son of man, prophesy,
and say, Thus says the Lord God:

“Wail, ‘Alas for the day!’
3 For the day is near,
the day of the Lord is near;
it will be a day of clouds,
a time of doom for[1] the nations.
4 A sword shall come upon Egypt,
and anguish shall be in Cush,
when the slain fall in Egypt,
and her wealth[2] is carried away,
and her foundations are torn down.

5 Cush, and Put, and Lud, and all Arabia, and Libya,[3] and the people of
the land that is in league,[4] shall fall with them by the sword.

6 “Thus says the Lord:
Those who support Egypt shall fall,
and her proud might shall come down;
from Migdol to Syene
they shall fall within her by the sword,
declares the Lord God.
7 And they shall be desolated in the midst of
desolated countries,
and their cities shall be in the midst of cities
that are laid waste.
8 Then they will know that I am the Lord,
when I have set fire to Egypt,
and all her helpers are broken.

9 † “On that day messengers shall go out from me in ships to terrify the
unsuspecting people of Cush, and anguish shall come upon them on the day
of Egypt’s doom;[5] for, behold, it comes!
10 †† “Thus says the Lord God:

“I will put an end to the wealth of Egypt,
by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of
Babylon.
11 He and his people with him, the most
ruthless of nations,
shall be brought in to destroy the land,
and they shall draw their swords against Egypt
and fill the land with the slain.
12 † And I will dry up the Nile
and will sell the land into the hand of
evildoers;
I will bring desolation upon the land and
everything in it,
by the hand of foreigners;
I am the Lord; I have spoken.
13 †† “Thus says the Lord God:
“I will destroy the idols
and put an end to the images in Memphis;
there shall no longer be a prince from the land
of Egypt;
so I will put fear in the land of Egypt.
14 I will make Pathros a desolation
and will set fire to Zoan
and will execute judgments on Thebes.
15 † And I will pour out my wrath on Pelusium,
the stronghold of Egypt,
and cut off the multitude[1] of Thebes.
16 And I will set fire to Egypt;
Pelusium shall be in great agony;
Thebes shall be breached,
and Memphis shall face enemies[2] by day.

17 The young men of On and of Pi-beseth shall
fall by the sword,
and the women[3] shall go into captivity.
18† At Tehaphnehes the day shall be dark,
when I break there the yoke bars of Egypt,
and her proud might shall come to an end
in her;
she shall be covered by a cloud,
and her daughters shall go into captivity.
19† Thus I will execute judgments on Egypt.
Then they will know that I am the Lord.”

Egypt Shall Fall to Babylon

[20] In the eleventh year, in the first month, on the seventh day of the month, the word of the Lord came to me: [21] "Son of man, I have broken the arm of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and behold, it has not been bound up, to heal it by binding it with a bandage, so that it may become strong to wield the sword. [22] Therefore thus says the Lord God: Behold, I am against Pharaoh king of Egypt and will break his arms, both the strong arm and the one that was broken, and I will make the sword fall from his hand. [23] I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations and disperse them through the countries. [24] And I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon and put my sword in his hand, but I will break the arms of Pharaoh, and he will groan before him like a man mortally wounded. [25] I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon, but the arms of Pharaoh shall fall. Then they shall know that I am the Lord, when I put my sword into the hand of the king of Babylon and he stretches it out against the land of Egypt. [26] And I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations and disperse them throughout the countries. Then they will know that I am the Lord."

Pharaoh to Be Slain

31 [1]In the eleventh year, in the third month, on the first day of the month, the word of the LORD came to me: [2]"Son of man, say to Pharaoh king of Egypt and to his multitude:

"Whom are you like in your greatness?
[3] Behold, Assyria was a cedar in Lebanon,
with beautiful branches and forest shade,
and of towering height,
its top among the clouds.[4]
[4] The waters nourished it;
the deep made it grow tall,
making its rivers flow
around the place of its planting,
sending forth its streams
to all the trees of the field.
[5] So it towered high
above all the trees of the field;
its boughs grew large
and its branches long
from abundant water in its shoots.
[6] All the birds of the heavens
made their nests in its boughs;
under its branches all the beasts of the field
gave birth to their young,
and under its shadow
lived all great nations.
[7] It was beautiful in its greatness,
in the length of its branches;
for its roots went down
to abundant waters.
[8] The cedars in the garden of God could not
rival it,

nor the fir trees equal its boughs;
neither were the plane trees
like its branches;
no tree in the garden of God
was its equal in beauty.
9 † I made it beautiful
in the mass of its branches,
and all the trees of Eden envied it,
that were in the garden of God.

10 ††“Therefore thus says the Lord God: Because it[1] towered high and set its top among the clouds, and its heart was proud of its height, 11 †I will give it into the hand of a mighty one of the nations. He shall surely deal with it as its wickedness deserves. I have cast it out. 12 † Foreigners, the most ruthless of nations, have cut it down and left it. On the mountains and in all the valleys its branches have fallen, and its boughs have been broken in all the ravines of the land, and all the peoples of the earth have gone away from its shadow and left it. 13 †On its fallen trunk dwell all the birds of the heavens, and on its branches are all the beasts of the field. 14 †All this is in order that no trees by the waters may grow to towering height or set their tops among the clouds, and that no trees that drink water may reach up to them in height. For they are all given over to death, to the world below, among the children of man,[2] with those who go down to the pit.

15 †“Thus says the Lord God: On the day the cedar[3] went down to Sheol I caused mourning; I closed the deep over it, and restrained its rivers, and many waters were stopped. I clothed Lebanon in gloom for it, and all the trees of the field fainted because of it. 16 †I made the nations quake at the sound of its fall, when I cast it down to Sheol with those who go down to the pit. And all the trees of Eden, the choice and best of Lebanon, all that drink water, were comforted in the world below. 17 They also went down to Sheol with it, to those who are slain by the sword; yes, those who were its arm, who lived under its shadow among the nations.

18 †“Whom are you thus like in glory and in greatness among the trees of Eden? You shall be brought down with the trees of Eden to the world below. You shall lie among the uncircumcised, with those who are slain by the sword.

“This is Pharaoh and all his multitude, declares the Lord God.”

A Lament over Pharaoh and Egypt

32 [1]†In the twelfth year, in the twelfth month, on the first day of the month, the word of the Lord came to me: [2]†"Son of man, raise a lamentation over Pharaoh king of Egypt and say to him:

"You consider yourself a lion of the nations,
but you are like a dragon in the seas;
you burst forth in your rivers,
trouble the waters with your feet,
and foul their rivers.
[3]† Thus says the Lord God:
I will throw my net over you
with a host of many peoples,
and they will haul you up in my dragnet.
[4]† And I will cast you on the ground;
on the open field I will fling you,
and will cause all the birds of the heavens to
settle on you,
and I will gorge the beasts of the whole
earth with you.
[5] I will strew your flesh upon the mountains
and fill the valleys with your carcass.[1]
[6] I will drench the land even to the mountains
with your flowing blood,
and the ravines will be full of you.
[7]† When I blot you out, I will cover the
heavens
and make their stars dark;
I will cover the sun with a cloud,
and the moon shall not give its light.
[8] All the bright lights of heaven
will I make dark over you,

and put darkness on your land,
declares the Lord God.

9"I will trouble the hearts of many peoples, when I bring your destruction among the nations, into the countries that you have not known. 10† I will make many peoples appalled at you, and the hair of their kings shall bristle with horror because of you, when I brandish my sword before them. They shall tremble every moment, every one for his own life, on the day of your downfall.

11"For thus says the Lord God: The sword of the king of Babylon shall come upon you. 12I will cause your multitude to fall by the swords of mighty ones, all of them most ruthless of nations.

"They shall bring to ruin the pride of Egypt,
and all its multitude[2] shall perish.
13† I will destroy all its beasts
from beside many waters;
and no foot of man shall trouble them anymore,
nor shall the hoofs of beasts trouble them.
14† Then I will make their waters clear,
and cause their rivers to run like oil,
declares the Lord God.
15† When I make the land of Egypt desolate,
and when the land is desolate of all that
fills it,
when I strike down all who dwell in it,
then they will know that I am the Lord.

16†This is a lamentation that shall be chanted; the daughters of the nations shall chant it; over Egypt, and over all her multitude, shall they chant it, declares the Lord God."

17††In the twelfth year, in the twelfth month,[3] on the fifteenth day of the month, the word of the Lord came to me: 18† "Son of man, wail over the multitude of Egypt, and send them down, her and the daughters of majestic nations, to the world below, to those who have gone down to the pit:

[19]† ‘Whom do you surpass in beauty?
Go down and be laid to rest with the
uncircumcised.’

[20]They shall fall amid those who are slain by the sword. Egypt[1] is delivered to the sword; drag her away, and all her multitudes. [21]†The mighty chiefs shall speak of them, with their helpers, out of the midst of Sheol: ‘They have come down, they lie still, the uncircumcised, slain by the sword.’

[22]†“Assyria is there, and all her company, its graves all around it, all of them slain, fallen by the sword, [23]†whose graves are set in the uttermost parts of the pit; and her company is all around her grave, all of them slain, fallen by the sword, who spread terror in the land of the living.

[24]†“Elam is there, and all her multitude around her grave; all of them slain, fallen by the sword, who went down uncircumcised into the world below, who spread their terror in the land of the living; and they bear their shame with those who go down to the pit. [25]They have made her a bed among the slain with all her multitude, her graves all around it, all of them uncircumcised, slain by the sword; for terror of them was spread in the land of the living, and they bear their shame with those who go down to the pit; they are placed among the slain.

[26]†“Meshech-Tubal is there, and all her multitude, her graves all around it, all of them uncircumcised, slain by the sword; for they spread their terror in the land of the living. [27]†And they do not lie with the mighty, the fallen from among the uncircumcised, who went down to Sheol with their weapons of war, whose swords were laid under their heads, and whose iniquities are upon their bones; for the terror of the mighty men was in the land of the living. [28]†But as for you, you shall be broken and lie among the uncircumcised, with those who are slain by the sword.

[29]†“Edom is there, her kings and all her princes, who for all their might are laid with those who are killed by the sword; they lie with the uncircumcised, with those who go down to the pit.

[30]†“The princes of the north are there, all of them, and all the Sidonians, who have gone down in shame with the slain, for all the terror that they caused by their might; they lie uncircumcised with those who are slain by the sword, and bear their shame with those who go down to the pit.

[31]†“When Pharaoh sees them, he will be comforted for all his multitude,
Pharaoh and all his army, slain by the sword, declares the Lord God. [32]†For I
spread terror in the land of the living; and he shall be laid to rest among the
uncircumcised, with those who are slain by the sword, Pharaoh and all his
multitude, declares the Lord God.”

Ezekiel Is Israel's Watchman

33 [1]‡‡The word of the Lord came to me: [2]†"Son of man, speak to your people and say to them, If I bring the sword upon a land, and the people of the land take a man from among them, and make him their watchman, [3]†and if he sees the sword coming upon the land and blows the trumpet and warns the people, [4]†then if anyone who hears the sound of the trumpet does not take warning, and the sword comes and takes him away, his blood shall be upon his own head. [5]†He heard the sound of the trumpet and did not take warning; his blood shall be upon himself. But if he had taken warning, he would have saved his life. [6]†But if the watchman sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet, so that the people are not warned, and the sword comes and takes any one of them, that person is taken away in his iniquity, but his blood I will require at the watchman's hand.

[7]†"So you, son of man, I have made a watchman for the house of Israel. Whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning from me. [8]If I say to the wicked, O wicked one, you shall surely die, and you do not speak to warn the wicked to turn from his way, that wicked person shall die in his iniquity, but his blood I will require at your hand. [9]†But if you warn the wicked to turn from his way, and he does not turn from his way, that person shall die in his iniquity, but you will have delivered your soul.

Why Will You Die, Israel?

10 ‡ ‡ “And you, son of man, say to the house of Israel, Thus have you said:
‘Surely our transgressions and our sins are upon us, and we rot away
because of them. How then can we live?’ 11 † Say to them, As I live, declares
the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the
wicked turn from his way and live; turn back, turn back from your evil
ways, for why will you die, O house of Israel?
12 † “And you, son of man, say to your people, The righteousness of the
righteous shall not deliver him when he transgresses, and as for the
wickedness of the wicked, he shall not fall by it when he turns from his
wickedness, and the righteous shall not be able to live by his
righteousness[1] when he sins. 13 † Though I say to the righteous that he shall
surely live, yet if he trusts in his righteousness and does injustice, none of
his righteous deeds shall be remembered, but in his injustice that he has
done he shall die. 14 Again, though I say to the wicked, ‘You shall surely
die,’ yet if he turns from his sin and does what is just and right, 15 † if the
wicked restores the pledge, gives back what he has taken by robbery, and
walks in the statutes of life, not doing injustice, he shall surely live; he shall
not die. 16 None of the sins that he has committed shall be remembered
against him. He has done what is just and right; he shall surely live.
17 † “Yet your people say, ‘The way of the Lord is not just,’ when it is their
own way that is not just. 18 When the righteous turns from his righteousness
and does injustice, he shall die for it. 19 And when the wicked turns from his
wickedness and does what is just and right, he shall live by this. 20 † Yet you
say, ‘The way of the Lord is not just.’ O house of Israel, I will judge each of
you according to his ways.”

Jerusalem Struck Down

21 In the twelfth year of our exile, in the tenth month, on the fifth day
of the month, a fugitive from Jerusalem came to me and said, “The city has
been struck down.” 22 Now the hand of the Lord had been upon me the
evening before the fugitive came; and he had opened my mouth by the time
the man came to me in the morning, so my mouth was opened, and I was no
longer mute.
23 The word of the Lord came to me: 24 “Son of man, the inhabitants of
these waste places in the land of Israel keep saying, ‘Abraham was only one
man, yet he got possession of the land; but we are many; the land is surely
given us to possess.’ 25 Therefore say to them, Thus says the Lord God: You
eat flesh with the blood and lift up your eyes to your idols and shed blood;
shall you then possess the land? 26 You rely on the sword, you commit
abominations, and each of you defiles his neighbor’s wife; shall you then
possess the land? 27 Say this to them, Thus says the Lord God: As I live,
surely those who are in the waste places shall fall by the sword, and
whoever is in the open field I will give to the beasts to be devoured, and
those who are in strongholds and in caves shall die by pestilence. 28 And I
will make the land a desolation and a waste, and her proud might shall
come to an end, and the mountains of Israel shall be so desolate that none
will pass through. 29 Then they will know that I am the Lord, when I have
made the land a desolation and a waste because of all their abominations
that they have committed.
30 “As for you, son of man, your people who talk together about you by
the walls and at the doors of the houses, say to one another, each to his
brother, ‘Come, and hear what the word is that comes from the Lord.’
31 And they come to you as people come, and they sit before you as my
people, and they hear what you say but they will not do it; for with lustful
talk in their mouths they act; their heart is set on their gain. 32 And behold,
you are to them like one who sings lustful songs with a beautiful voice and
plays[1] well on an instrument, for they hear what you say, but they will not
do it. 33 When this comes—and come it will!—then they will know that a
prophet has been among them.”

Prophecy Against the Shepherds of Israel

34 [1]‡‡The word of the Lord came to me: [2]†“Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel; prophesy, and say to them, even to the shepherds, Thus says the Lord God: Ah, shepherds of Israel who have been feeding yourselves! Should not shepherds feed the sheep? [3]You eat the fat, you clothe yourselves with the wool, you slaughter the fat ones, but you do not feed the sheep. [4]† The weak you have not strengthened, the sick you have not healed, the injured you have not bound up, the strayed you have not brought back, the lost you have not sought, and with force and harshness you have ruled them. [5]†So they were scattered, because there was no shepherd, and they became food for all the wild beasts. [6]†My sheep were scattered; they wandered over all the mountains and on every high hill. My sheep were scattered over all the face of the earth, with none to search or seek for them.

[7]“Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the Lord: [8]† As I live, declares the Lord God, surely because my sheep have become a prey, and my sheep have become food for all the wild beasts, since there was no shepherd, and because my shepherds have not searched for my sheep, but the shepherds have fed themselves, and have not fed my sheep, [9]therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the Lord: [10]† Thus says the Lord God, Behold, I am against the shepherds, and I will require my sheep at their hand and put a stop to their feeding the sheep. No longer shall the shepherds feed themselves. I will rescue my sheep from their mouths, that they may not be food for them.

The Lord God Will Seek Them Out

11 ‡ † “For thus says the Lord God: Behold, I, I myself will search for my
sheep and will seek them out. 12 As a shepherd seeks out his flock when he is
among his sheep that have been scattered, so will I seek out my sheep, and I
will rescue them from all places where they have been scattered on a day of
clouds and thick darkness. 13 † And I will bring them out from the peoples
and gather them from the countries, and will bring them into their own land.
And I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the ravines, and in all
the inhabited places of the country. 14 I will feed them with good pasture,
and on the mountain heights of Israel shall be their grazing land. There they
shall lie down in good grazing land, and on rich pasture they shall feed on
the mountains of Israel. 15 † I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I
myself will make them lie down, declares the Lord God. 16 I will seek the
lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I
will strengthen the weak, and the fat and the strong I will destroy.[1] I will
feed them in justice.

17 ‡ † “As for you, my flock, thus says the Lord God: Behold, I judge
between sheep and sheep, between rams and male goats. 18 ‡ Is it not enough
for you to feed on the good pasture, that you must tread down with your
feet the rest of your pasture; and to drink of clear water, that you must
muddy the rest of the water with your feet? 19 And must my sheep eat what
you have trodden with your feet, and drink what you have muddied with
your feet?

20 † “Therefore, thus says the Lord God to them: Behold, I, I myself will
judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep. 21 † Because you push with
side and shoulder, and thrust at all the weak with your horns, till you have
scattered them abroad, 22 I will rescue[1] my flock; they shall no longer be a
prey. And I will judge between sheep and sheep. 23 ‡ † And I will set up over
them one shepherd, my servant David, and he shall feed them: he shall feed
them and be their shepherd. 24 † And I, the Lord, will be their God, and my
servant David shall be prince among them. I am the Lord; I have spoken.

The Lord's Covenant of Peace

25 ‡ † "I will make with them a covenant of peace and banish wild beasts
from the land, so that they may dwell securely in the wilderness and sleep
in the woods. 26 † And I will make them and the places all around my hill a
blessing, and I will send down the showers in their season; they shall be
showers of blessing. 27 † And the trees of the field shall yield their fruit, and
the earth shall yield its increase, and they shall be secure in their land. And
they shall know that I am the Lord, when I break the bars of their yoke, and
deliver them from the hand of those who enslaved them. 28 They shall no
more be a prey to the nations, nor shall the beasts of the land devour them.
They shall dwell securely, and none shall make them afraid. 29 † And I will
provide for them renowned plantations so that they shall no more be
consumed with hunger in the land, and no longer suffer the reproach of the
nations. 30 † And they shall know that I am the Lord their God with them, and
that they, the house of Israel, are my people, declares the Lord God. 31 † And
you are my sheep, human sheep of my pasture, and I am your God, declares
the Lord God."

Prophecy Against Mount Seir

35 [1]The word of the Lord came to me: [2]†"Son of man, set your face
against Mount Seir, and prophesy against it, [3]and say to it, Thus says the
Lord God: Behold, I am against you, Mount Seir, and I will stretch out my
hand against you, and I will make you a desolation and a waste. [4]†I will lay
your cities waste, and you shall become a desolation, and you shall know
that I am the Lord. [5]†Because you cherished perpetual enmity and gave over
the people of Israel to the power of the sword at the time of their calamity,
at the time of their final punishment, [6]†therefore, as I live, declares the Lord
God, I will prepare you for blood, and blood shall pursue you; because you
did not hate bloodshed, therefore blood shall pursue you. [7]I will make
Mount Seir a waste and a desolation, and I will cut off from it all who come
and go. [8]And I will fill its mountains with the slain. On your hills and in
your valleys and in all your ravines those slain with the sword shall fall. [9]I
will make you a perpetual desolation, and your cities shall not be inhabited.
Then you will know that I am the Lord.

[10]†"Because you said, 'These two nations and these two countries shall
be mine, and we will take possession of them'—although the Lord was
there— [11]therefore, as I live, declares the Lord God, I will deal with you
according to the anger and envy that you showed because of your hatred
against them. And I will make myself known among them, when I judge
you. [12]†And you shall know that I am the Lord.

"I have heard all the revilings that you uttered against the mountains of
Israel, saying, 'They are laid desolate; they are given us to devour.' [13]And
you magnified yourselves against me with your mouth, and multiplied your
words against me; I heard it. [14]Thus says the Lord God: While the whole
earth rejoices, I will make you desolate. [15]† As you rejoiced over the
inheritance of the house of Israel, because it was desolate, so I will deal
with you; you shall be desolate, Mount Seir, and all Edom, all of it. Then
they will know that I am the Lord.

Prophecy to the Mountains of Israel

36 [1]‡‡“And you, son of man, prophesy to the mountains of Israel,
and say, O mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord. [2]‡†Thus says the
Lord God: Because the enemy said of you, ‘Aha!’ and, ‘The ancient heights
have become our possession,’ [3]†therefore prophesy, and say, Thus says the
Lord God: Precisely because they made you desolate and crushed you from
all sides, so that you became the possession of the rest of the nations, and
you became the talk and evil gossip of the people, [4]therefore, O mountains
of Israel, hear the word of the Lord God: Thus says the Lord God to the
mountains and the hills, the ravines and the valleys, the desolate wastes and
the deserted cities, which have become a prey and derision to the rest of the
nations all around, [5]†therefore thus says the Lord God: Surely I have spoken
in my hot jealousy against the rest of the nations and against all Edom, who
gave my land to themselves as a possession with wholehearted joy and utter
contempt, that they might make its pasturelands a prey. [6]† Therefore
prophesy concerning the land of Israel, and say to the mountains and hills,
to the ravines and valleys, Thus says the Lord God: Behold, I have spoken
in my jealous wrath, because you have suffered the reproach of the nations.
[7]Therefore thus says the Lord God: I swear that the nations that are all
around you shall themselves suffer reproach.

[8]†“But you, O mountains of Israel, shall shoot forth your branches and
yield your fruit to my people Israel, for they will soon come home. [9]†For
behold, I am for you, and I will turn to you, and you shall be tilled and
sown. [10]And I will multiply people on you, the whole house of Israel, all of
it. The cities shall be inhabited and the waste places rebuilt. [11]†And I will
multiply on you man and beast, and they shall multiply and be fruitful. And
I will cause you to be inhabited as in your former times, and will do more
good to you than ever before. Then you will know that I am the Lord. [12]†I
will let people walk on you, even my people Israel. And they shall possess
you, and you shall be their inheritance, and you shall no longer bereave
them of children. [13]Thus says the Lord God: Because they say to you, ‘You
devour people, and you bereave your nation of children,’ [14]therefore you
shall no longer devour people and no longer bereave your nation of

children, declares the Lord God. [15]And I will not let you hear anymore the reproach of the nations, and you shall no longer bear the disgrace of the peoples and no longer cause your nation to stumble, declares the Lord God."

The Lord's Concern for His Holy Name

16 The word of the Lord came to me: 17 "Son of man, when the house of
Israel lived in their own land, they defiled it by their ways and their deeds.
Their ways before me were like the uncleanness of a woman in her
menstrual impurity. 18 So I poured out my wrath upon them for the blood
that they had shed in the land, for the idols with which they had defiled it.
19 I scattered them among the nations, and they were dispersed through the
countries. In accordance with their ways and their deeds I judged them.
20 But when they came to the nations, wherever they came, they profaned
my holy name, in that people said of them, 'These are the people of the
Lord, and yet they had to go out of his land.' 21 But I had concern for my
holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations to
which they came.

I Will Put My Spirit Within You

22 ‡ ‡ ‡ “Therefore say to the house of Israel, Thus says the Lord God: It is
not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am about to act, but for the sake
of my holy name, which you have profaned among the nations to which you
came. 23 † And I will vindicate the holiness of my great name, which has
been profaned among the nations, and which you have profaned among
them. And the nations will know that I am the Lord, declares the Lord God,
when through you I vindicate my holiness before their eyes. 24 I will take
you from the nations and gather you from all the countries and bring you
into your own land. 25 † I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be
clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse
you. 26 † And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within
you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a
heart of flesh. 27 † And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk
in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.[1] 28 You shall dwell in the
land that I gave to your fathers, and you shall be my people, and I will be
your God. 29 † And I will deliver you from all your uncleannesses. And I will
summon the grain and make it abundant and lay no famine upon you. 30 I
will make the fruit of the tree and the increase of the field abundant, that
you may never again suffer the disgrace of famine among the nations.
31 † Then you will remember your evil ways, and your deeds that were not
good, and you will loathe yourselves for your iniquities and your
abominations. 32 It is not for your sake that I will act, declares the Lord God;
let that be known to you. Be ashamed and confounded for your ways, O
house of Israel.

33 † “Thus says the Lord God: On the day that I cleanse you from all your
iniquities, I will cause the cities to be inhabited, and the waste places shall
be rebuilt. 34 And the land that was desolate shall be tilled, instead of being
the desolation that it was in the sight of all who passed by. 35 † And they will
say, ‘This land that was desolate has become like the garden of Eden, and
the waste and desolate and ruined cities are now fortified and inhabited.’
36 † Then the nations that are left all around you shall know that I am the

LORD; I have rebuilt the ruined places and replanted that which was desolate. I am the LORD; I have spoken, and I will do it.

37 "Thus says the Lord GOD: This also I will let the house of Israel ask me to do for them: to increase their people like a flock. 38 † Like the flock for sacrifices,[2] like the flock at Jerusalem during her appointed feasts, so shall the waste cities be filled with flocks of people. Then they will know that I am the LORD."

The Valley of Dry Bones

37 [1]†‡†The hand of the Lord was upon me, and he brought me out in
the Spirit of the Lord and set me down in the middle of the valley;[1] it was
full of bones. [2]†And he led me around among them, and behold, there were
very many on the surface of the valley, and behold, they were very dry.
[3]†And he said to me, “Son of man, can these bones live?” And I answered,
“O Lord God, you know.” [4]‡ Then he said to me, “Prophesy over these
bones, and say to them, O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. [5]Thus says
the Lord God to these bones: Behold, I will cause breath[2] to enter you, and
you shall live. [6]And I will lay sinews upon you, and will cause flesh to
come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you
shall live, and you shall know that I am the Lord.”

[7]So I prophesied as I was commanded. And as I prophesied, there was a
sound, and behold, a rattling,[3] and the bones came together, bone to its
bone. [8]†And I looked, and behold, there were sinews on them, and flesh had
come upon them, and skin had covered them. But there was no breath in
them. [9]†Then he said to me, “Prophesy to the breath; prophesy, son of man,
and say to the breath, Thus says the Lord God: Come from the four winds,
O breath, and breathe on these slain, that they may live.” [10]†So I prophesied
as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived and
stood on their feet, an exceedingly great army.

[11]†Then he said to me, “Son of man, these bones are the whole house of
Israel. Behold, they say, ‘Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we
are indeed cut off.’ [12]†Therefore prophesy, and say to them, Thus says the
Lord God: Behold, I will open your graves and raise you from your graves,
O my people. And I will bring you into the land of Israel. [13]And you shall
know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves, and raise you from your
graves, O my people. [14]†And I will put my Spirit within you, and you shall
live, and I will place you in your own land. Then you shall know that I am
the Lord; I have spoken, and I will do it, declares the Lord.”

I Will Be Their God, They Shall Be My People

15 ‡ ‡ The word of the Lord came to me: 16 † “Son of man, take a stick[4] and
write on it, ‘For Judah, and the people of Israel associated with him’; then
take another stick and write on it, ‘For Joseph (the stick of Ephraim) and all
the house of Israel associated with him.’ 17 † And join them one to another
into one stick, that they may become one in your hand. 18 And when your
people say to you, ‘Will you not tell us what you mean by these?’ 19 say to
them, Thus says the Lord God: Behold, I am about to take the stick of
Joseph (that is in the hand of Ephraim) and the tribes of Israel associated
with him. And I will join with it the stick of Judah,[1] and make them one
stick, that they may be one in my hand. 20 When the sticks on which you
write are in your hand before their eyes, 21 then say to them, Thus says the
Lord God: Behold, I will take the people of Israel from the nations among
which they have gone, and will gather them from all around, and bring them
to their own land. 22 † And I will make them one nation in the land, on the
mountains of Israel. And one king shall be king over them all, and they
shall be no longer two nations, and no longer divided into two kingdoms.
23 † They shall not defile themselves anymore with their idols and their
detestable things, or with any of their transgressions. But I will save them
from all the backslidings[2] in which they have sinned, and will cleanse
them; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God.

24 † “My servant David shall be king over them, and they shall all have one
shepherd. They shall walk in my rules and be careful to obey my statutes.
25 They shall dwell in the land that I gave to my servant Jacob, where your
fathers lived. They and their children and their children’s children shall
dwell there forever, and David my servant shall be their prince forever. 26 † I
will make a covenant of peace with them. It shall be an everlasting
covenant with them. And I will set them in their land[3] and multiply them,
and will set my sanctuary in their midst forevermore. 27 † My dwelling place
shall be with them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.
28 † Then the nations will know that I am the Lord who sanctifies Israel, when
my sanctuary is in their midst forevermore.”

Prophecy Against Gog

38 [1]†The word of the Lord came to me: [2]†“Son of man, set your face
toward Gog, of the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech[4] and Tubal,
and prophesy against him [3]†and say, Thus says the Lord God: Behold, I am
against you, O Gog, chief prince of Meshech[5] and Tubal. [4]†And I will turn
you about and put hooks into your jaws, and I will bring you out, and all
your army, horses and horsemen, all of them clothed in full armor, a great
host, all of them with buckler and shield, wielding swords. [5]†Persia, Cush,
and Put are with them, all of them with shield and helmet; [6]Gomer and all
his hordes; Beth-togarmah from the uttermost parts of the north with all his
hordes—many peoples are with you.

[7]“Be ready and keep ready, you and all your hosts that are assembled
about you, and be a guard for them. [8]† After many days you will be
mustered. In the latter years you will go against the land that is restored
from war, the land whose people were gathered from many peoples upon
the mountains of Israel, which had been a continual waste. Its people were
brought out from the peoples and now dwell securely, all of them. [9]You will
advance, coming on like a storm. You will be like a cloud covering the land,
you and all your hordes, and many peoples with you.

[10]“‘Thus says the Lord God: On that day, thoughts will come into your
mind, and you will devise an evil scheme [11]†and say, ‘I will go up against
the land of unwalled villages. I will fall upon the quiet people who dwell
securely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having no bars or gates,’
[12]†to seize spoil and carry off plunder, to turn your hand against the waste
places that are now inhabited, and the people who were gathered from the
nations, who have acquired livestock and goods, who dwell at the center of
the earth. [13]† Sheba and Dedan and the merchants of Tarshish and all its
leaders[1] will say to you, ‘Have you come to seize spoil? Have you
assembled your hosts to carry off plunder, to carry away silver and gold, to
take away livestock and goods, to seize great spoil?’

[14]“‘Therefore, son of man, prophesy, and say to Gog, Thus says the Lord
God: On that day when my people Israel are dwelling securely, will you not

know it? 15 †You will come from your place out of the uttermost parts of the
north, you and many peoples with you, all of them riding on horses, a great
host, a mighty army. 16 †You will come up against my people Israel, like a
cloud covering the land. In the latter days I will bring you against my land,
that the nations may know me, when through you, O Gog, I vindicate my
holiness before their eyes.

17 ‡†"Thus says the Lord God: Are you he of whom I spoke in former days
by my servants the prophets of Israel, who in those days prophesied for
years that I would bring you against them? 18 †But on that day, the day that
Gog shall come against the land of Israel, declares the Lord God, my wrath
will be roused in my anger. 19 For in my jealousy and in my blazing wrath I
declare, On that day there shall be a great earthquake in the land of Israel.
20 The fish of the sea and the birds of the heavens and the beasts of the field
and all creeping things that creep on the ground, and all the people who are
on the face of the earth, shall quake at my presence. And the mountains
shall be thrown down, and the cliffs shall fall, and every wall shall tumble
to the ground. 21 † I will summon a sword against Gog[2] on all my
mountains, declares the Lord God. Every man's sword will be against his
brother. 22 †With pestilence and bloodshed I will enter into judgment with
him, and I will rain upon him and his hordes and the many peoples who are
with him torrential rains and hailstones, fire and sulfur. 23 †So I will show
my greatness and my holiness and make myself known in the eyes of many
nations. Then they will know that I am the Lord.

39 1 †"And you, son of man, prophesy against Gog and say, Thus says
the Lord God: Behold, I am against you, O Gog, chief prince of Meshech[1]
and Tubal. 2 And I will turn you about and drive you forward, and bring you
up from the uttermost parts of the north, and lead you against the mountains
of Israel. 3 †Then I will strike your bow from your left hand, and will make
your arrows drop out of your right hand. 4 †You shall fall on the mountains
of Israel, you and all your hordes and the peoples who are with you. I will
give you to birds of prey of every sort and to the beasts of the field to be
devoured. 5 You shall fall in the open field, for I have spoken, declares the
Lord God. 6 †I will send fire on Magog and on those who dwell securely in
the coastlands, and they shall know that I am the Lord.

7 † “And my holy name I will make known in the midst of my people
Israel, and I will not let my holy name be profaned anymore. And the
nations shall know that I am the Lord, the Holy One in Israel. 8 Behold, it is
coming and it will be brought about, declares the Lord God. That is the day
of which I have spoken.
9 † “Then those who dwell in the cities of Israel will go out and make fires
of the weapons and burn them, shields and bucklers, bow and arrows,
clubs[2] and spears; and they will make fires of them for seven years, 10 † so
that they will not need to take wood out of the field or cut down any out of
the forests, for they will make their fires of the weapons. They will seize the
spoil of those who despoiled them, and plunder those who plundered them,
declares the Lord God.
11 † “On that day I will give to Gog a place for burial in Israel, the Valley
of the Travelers, east of the sea. It will block the travelers, for there Gog
and all his multitude will be buried. It will be called the Valley of Hamon-
gog.[3] 12 † For seven months the house of Israel will be burying them, in
order to cleanse the land. 13 † All the people of the land will bury them, and it
will bring them renown on the day that I show my glory, declares the Lord
God. 14 † They will set apart men to travel through the land regularly and
bury those travelers remaining on the face of the land, so as to cleanse it.
At[4] the end of seven months they will make their search. 15 † And when
these travel through the land and anyone sees a human bone, then he shall
set up a sign by it, till the buriers have buried it in the Valley of Hamon-gog.
16 † (Hamonah[5] is also the name of the city.) Thus shall they cleanse the
land.
17 † “As for you, son of man, thus says the Lord God: Speak to the birds of
every sort and to all beasts of the field, ‘Assemble and come, gather from
all around to the sacrificial feast that I am preparing for you, a great
sacrificial feast on the mountains of Israel, and you shall eat flesh and drink
blood. 18 † You shall eat the flesh of the mighty, and drink the blood of the
princes of the earth—of rams, of lambs, and of he-goats, of bulls, all of
them fat beasts of Bashan. 19 And you shall eat fat till you are filled, and
drink blood till you are drunk, at the sacrificial feast that I am preparing for
you. 20 † And you shall be filled at my table with horses and charioteers, with
mighty men and all kinds of warriors,’ declares the Lord God.

[21] † “And I will set my glory among the nations, and all the nations shall
see my judgment that I have executed, and my hand that I have laid on
them. [22]The house of Israel shall know that I am the Lord their God, from
that day forward. [23] † And the nations shall know that the house of Israel
went into captivity for their iniquity, because they dealt so treacherously
with me that I hid my face from them and gave them into the hand of their
adversaries, and they all fell by the sword. [24]I dealt with them according to
their uncleanness and their transgressions, and hid my face from them.

The Lord Will Restore Israel

25 ††“Therefore thus says the Lord God: Now I will restore the fortunes of
Jacob and have mercy on the whole house of Israel, and I will be jealous for
my holy name. 26 †They shall forget their shame and all the treachery they
have practiced against me, when they dwell securely in their land with none
to make them afraid, 27 †when I have brought them back from the peoples
and gathered them from their enemies’ lands, and through them have
vindicated my holiness in the sight of many nations. 28 †Then they shall
know that I am the Lord their God, because I sent them into exile among the
nations and then assembled them into their own land. I will leave none of
them remaining among the nations anymore. 29 †And I will not hide my face
anymore from them, when I pour out my Spirit upon the house of Israel,
declares the Lord God.”

Vision of the New Temple

40 [1]†† In the twenty-fifth year of our exile, at the beginning of the year, on the tenth day of the month, in the fourteenth year after the city was struck down, on that very day, the hand of the Lord was upon me, and he brought me to the city.[1] [2]† In visions of God he brought me to the land of Israel, and set me down on a very high mountain, on which was a structure like a city to the south. [3]† When he brought me there, behold, there was a man whose appearance was like bronze, with a linen cord and a measuring reed in his hand. And he was standing in the gateway. [4]And the man said to me, “Son of man, look with your eyes, and hear with your ears, and set your heart upon all that I shall show you, for you were brought here in order that I might show it to you. Declare all that you see to the house of Israel.”

The East Gate to the Outer Court

5 ‡ ‡ † And behold, there was a wall all around the outside of the temple
area, and the length of the measuring reed in the man's hand was six long
cubits, each being a cubit and a handbreadth[1] in length. So he measured the
thickness of the wall, one reed; and the height, one reed. 6 † Then he went
into the gateway facing east, going up its steps, and measured the threshold
of the gate, one reed deep.[2] 7 † And the side rooms, one reed long and one
reed broad; and the space between the side rooms, five cubits; and the
threshold of the gate by the vestibule of the gate at the inner end, one reed.
8 † Then he measured the vestibule of the gateway, on the inside, one reed.
9 † Then he measured the vestibule of the gateway, eight cubits; and its
jambs, two cubits; and the vestibule of the gate was at the inner end. 10 † And
there were three side rooms on either side of the east gate. The three were of
the same size, and the jambs on either side were of the same size. 11 † Then
he measured the width of the opening of the gateway, ten cubits; and the
length of the gateway, thirteen cubits. 12 † There was a barrier before the side
rooms, one cubit on either side. And the side rooms were six cubits on
either side. 13 † Then he measured the gate from the ceiling of the one side
room to the ceiling of the other, a breadth of twenty-five cubits; the
openings faced each other. 14 † He measured also the vestibule, twenty cubits.
And around the vestibule of the gateway was the court.[3] 15 From the front of
the gate at the entrance to the front of the inner vestibule of the gate was
fifty cubits. 16 † And the gateway had windows all around, narrowing
inwards toward the side rooms and toward their jambs, and likewise the
vestibule had windows all around inside, and on the jambs were palm trees.

The Outer Court

17 ‡ † Then he brought me into the outer court. And behold, there were
chambers and a pavement, all around the court. Thirty chambers faced the
pavement. 18 † And the pavement ran along the side of the gates,
corresponding to the length of the gates. This was the lower pavement.
19 † Then he measured the distance from the inner front of the lower gate to
the outer front of the inner court,[1] a hundred cubits on the east side and on
the north side.[2]

The North Gate

[20] ‡ † As for the gate that faced toward the north, belonging to the outer
court, he measured its length and its breadth. [21] † Its side rooms, three on
either side, and its jambs and its vestibule were of the same size as those of
the first gate. Its length was fifty cubits, and its breadth twenty-five cubits.
[22] † And its windows, its vestibule, and its palm trees were of the same size
as those of the gate that faced toward the east. And by seven steps people
would go up to it, and find its vestibule before them. [23] † And opposite the
gate on the north, as on the east, was a gate to the inner court. And he
measured from gate to gate, a hundred cubits.

The South Gate

[24] † And he led me toward the south, and behold, there was a gate on the
south. And he measured its jambs and its vestibule; they had the same size
as the others. [25] Both it and its vestibule had windows all around, like the
windows of the others. Its length was fifty cubits, and its breadth twenty-
five cubits. [26] And there were seven steps leading up to it, and its vestibule
was before them, and it had palm trees on its jambs, one on either side.
[27] † And there was a gate on the south of the inner court. And he measured
from gate to gate toward the south, a hundred cubits.

The Inner Court

28 ‡† Then he brought me to the inner court through the south gate, and he
measured the south gate. It was of the same size as the others. 29 Its side
rooms, its jambs, and its vestibule were of the same size as the others, and
both it and its vestibule had windows all around. Its length was fifty cubits,
and its breadth twenty-five cubits. 30 † And there were vestibules all around,
twenty-five cubits long and five cubits broad. 31 † Its vestibule faced the
outer court, and palm trees were on its jambs, and its stairway had eight
steps.

32 † Then he brought me to the inner court on the east side, and he
measured the gate. It was of the same size as the others. 33 Its side rooms, its
jambs, and its vestibule were of the same size as the others, and both it and
its vestibule had windows all around. Its length was fifty cubits, and its
breadth twenty-five cubits. 34 Its vestibule faced the outer court, and it had
palm trees on its jambs, on either side, and its stairway had eight steps.

35 Then he brought me to the north gate, and he measured it. It had the
same size as the others. 36 Its side rooms, its jambs, and its vestibule were of
the same size as the others,[3] and it had windows all around. Its length was
fifty cubits, and its breadth twenty-five cubits. 37 Its vestibule[4] faced the
outer court, and it had palm trees on its jambs, on either side, and its
stairway had eight steps.

38 † There was a chamber with its door in the vestibule of the gate,[5] where
the burnt offering was to be washed. 39 † And in the vestibule of the gate
were two tables on either side, on which the burnt offering and the sin
offering and the guilt offering were to be slaughtered. 40 And off to the side,
on the outside as one goes up to the entrance of the north gate, were two
tables; and off to the other side of the vestibule of the gate were two tables.
41 † Four tables were on either side of the gate, eight tables, on which to
slaughter. 42 † And there were four tables of hewn stone for the burnt
offering, a cubit and a half long, and a cubit and a half broad, and one cubit
high, on which the instruments were to be laid with which the burnt
offerings and the sacrifices were slaughtered. 43 † And hooks,[1] a

handbreadth long, were fastened all around within. And on the tables the flesh of the offering was to be laid.

From *Ezekiel 21–48*, CC (St. Louis: Concordia, 2007), 1161. Adapted from C. F. Keil, *Biblischer Commentar über den Propheten Ezechiel*, 2nd edition (Leipzig: Dürffling und Franke, 1882).

Chambers for the Priests

44 ‡ † On the outside of the inner gateway there were two chambers[2] in the
inner court, one[3] at the side of the north gate facing south, the other at the
side of the south[4] gate facing north. 45 † And he said to me, This chamber
that faces south is for the priests who have charge of the temple, 46 † and the
chamber that faces north is for the priests who have charge of the altar.
These are the sons of Zadok, who alone[5] among the sons of Levi may
come near to the LORD to minister to him. 47 † And he measured the court, a
hundred cubits long and a hundred cubits broad, a square. And the altar was
in front of the temple.

The Vestibule of the Temple

48 † Then he brought me to the vestibule of the temple and measured the jambs of the vestibule, five cubits on either side. And the breadth of the gate was fourteen cubits, and the sidewalls of the gate[6] were three cubits on either side. 49 † The length of the vestibule was twenty cubits, and the breadth twelve[7] cubits, and people would go up to it by ten steps.[8] And there were pillars beside the jambs, one on either side.

The Inner Temple

41 [1]†Then he brought me to the nave and measured the jambs. On each side six cubits[9] was the breadth of the jambs.[10] [2]†And the breadth of the entrance was ten cubits, and the sidewalls of the entrance were five cubits on either side. And he measured the length of the nave,[11] forty cubits, and its breadth, twenty cubits. [3]†Then he went into the inner room and measured the jambs of the entrance, two cubits; and the entrance, six cubits; and the sidewalls on either side[12] of the entrance, seven cubits. [4]And he measured the length of the room, twenty cubits, and its breadth, twenty cubits, across the nave. And he said to me, “This is the Most Holy Place.”

[5]‡†Then he measured the wall of the temple, six cubits thick, and the breadth of the side chambers, four cubits, all around the temple. [6]†And the side chambers were in three stories, one over another, thirty in each story. There were offsets[1] all around the wall of the temple to serve as supports for the side chambers, so that they should not be supported by the wall of the temple. [7]†And it became broader as it wound upward to the side chambers, because the temple was enclosed upward all around the temple. Thus the temple had a broad area upward, and so one went up from the lowest story to the top story through the middle story. [8]†I saw also that the temple had a raised platform all around; the foundations of the side chambers measured a full reed of six long cubits. [9]†The thickness of the outer wall of the side chambers was five cubits. The free space between the side chambers of the temple and the [10]other chambers was a breadth of twenty cubits all around the temple on every side. [11]†And the doors of the side chambers opened on the free space, one door toward the north, and another door toward the south. And the breadth of the free space was five cubits all around.

[12]†The building that was facing the separate yard on the west side was seventy cubits broad, and the wall of the building was five cubits thick all around, and its length ninety cubits.

[13]‡Then he measured the temple, a hundred cubits long; and the yard and the building with its walls, a hundred cubits long; [14]also the breadth of the

east front of the temple and the yard, a hundred cubits.

15 Then he measured the length of the building facing the yard that was at
the back and its galleries[2] on either side, a hundred cubits.

The inside of the nave and the vestibules of the court, 16 † the thresholds
and the narrow windows and the galleries all around the three of them,
opposite the threshold, were paneled with wood all around, from the floor
up to the windows (now the windows were covered), 17 to the space above
the door, even to the inner room, and on the outside. And on all the walls all
around, inside and outside, was a measured pattern.[3] 18 † It was carved of
cherubim and palm trees, a palm tree between cherub and cherub. Every
cherub had two faces: 19 a human face toward the palm tree on the one side,
and the face of a young lion toward the palm tree on the other side. They
were carved on the whole temple all around. 20 From the floor to above the
door, cherubim and palm trees were carved; similarly the wall of the nave.

21 The doorposts of the nave were squared, and in front of the Holy Place
was something resembling 22 † an altar of wood, three cubits high, two cubits
long, and two cubits broad.[4] Its corners, its base,[5] and its walls were of
wood. He said to me, “This is the table that is before the Lord.” 23 The nave
and the Holy Place had each a double door. 24 The double doors had two
leaves apiece, two swinging leaves for each door. 25 † And on the doors of
the nave were carved cherubim and palm trees, such as were carved on the
walls. And there was a canopy[6] of wood in front of the vestibule outside.
26 † And there were narrow windows and palm trees on either side, on the
sidewalls of the vestibule, the side chambers of the temple, and the
canopies.

The Temple’s Chambers

42 [1]†Then he led me out into the outer court, toward the north, and he brought me to the chambers that were opposite the separate yard and opposite the building on the north. [2]The length of the building whose door faced north was a hundred cubits,[1] and the breadth fifty cubits. [3]†Facing the twenty cubits that belonged to the inner court, and facing the pavement that belonged to the outer court, was gallery[2] against gallery in three stories. [4]†And before the chambers was a passage inward, ten cubits wide and a hundred cubits long,[3] and their doors were on the north. [5]†Now the upper chambers were narrower, for the galleries took more away from them than from the lower and middle chambers of the building. [6]For they were in three stories, and they had no pillars like the pillars of the courts. Thus the upper chambers were set back from the ground more than the lower and the middle ones. [7]† And there was a wall outside parallel to the chambers, toward the outer court, opposite the chambers, fifty cubits long. [8]For the chambers on the outer court were fifty cubits long, while those opposite the nave[4] were a hundred cubits long. [9]Below these chambers was an entrance on the east side, as one enters them from the outer court.

[10]In the thickness of the wall of the court, on the south[5] also, opposite the yard and opposite the building, there were chambers [11]†with a passage in front of them. They were similar to the chambers on the north, of the same length and breadth, with the same exits[6] and arrangements and doors, [12]as were the entrances of the chambers on the south. There was an entrance at the beginning of the passage, the passage before the corresponding wall on the east as one enters them.[7]

[13]†Then he said to me, “The north chambers and the south chambers opposite the yard are the holy chambers, where the priests who approach the Lord shall eat the most holy offerings. There they shall put the most holy offerings—the grain offering, the sin offering, and the guilt offering—for the place is holy. [14]†When the priests enter the Holy Place, they shall not go out of it into the outer court without laying there the garments in which

they minister, for these are holy. They shall put on other garments before they go near to that which is for the people.”

15 †Now when he had finished measuring the interior of the temple area,
he led me out by the gate that faced east, and measured the temple area all
around. 16†He measured the east side with the measuring reed, 500 cubits by
the measuring reed all around. 17He measured the north side, 500 cubits by
the measuring reed all around. 18He measured the south side, 500 cubits by
the measuring reed. 19Then he turned to the west side and measured, 500
cubits by the measuring reed. 20†He measured it on the four sides. It had a
wall around it, 500 cubits long and 500 cubits broad, to make a separation
between the holy and the common.

The Glory of the Lord Fills the Temple

43 [1]‡‡Then he led me to the gate, the gate facing east. [2]†And behold, the glory of the God of Israel was coming from the east. And the sound of his coming was like the sound of many waters, and the earth shone with his glory. [3]†And the vision I saw was just like the vision that I had seen when he[8] came to destroy the city, and just like the vision that I had seen by the Chebar canal. And I fell on my face. [4]As the glory of the Lord entered the temple by the gate facing east, [5]†the Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court; and behold, the glory of the Lord filled the temple.

[6]†While the man was standing beside me, I heard one speaking to me out of the temple, [7]†and he said to me, "Son of man, this is the place of my throne and the place of the soles of my feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the people of Israel forever. And the house of Israel shall no more defile my holy name, neither they, nor their kings, by their whoring and by the dead bodies[1] of their kings at their high places,[2] [8]† by setting their threshold by my threshold and their doorposts beside my doorposts, with only a wall between me and them. They have defiled my holy name by their abominations that they have committed, so I have consumed them in my anger. [9]Now let them put away their whoring and the dead bodies of their kings far from me, and I will dwell in their midst forever.

[10]†"As for you, son of man, describe to the house of Israel the temple, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities; and they shall measure the plan. [11]†And if they are ashamed of all that they have done, make known to them the design of the temple, its arrangement, its exits and its entrances, that is, its whole design; and make known to them as well all its statutes and its whole design and all its laws, and write it down in their sight, so that they may observe all its laws and all its statutes and carry them out. [12]†This is the law of the temple: the whole territory on the top of the mountain all around shall be most holy. Behold, this is the law of the temple.

The Altar

13 ‡ ‡ ‡ “These are the measurements of the altar by cubits (the cubit being a
cubit and a handbreadth):[3] its base shall be one cubit high[4] and one cubit
broad, with a rim of one span[5] around its edge. And this shall be the height
of the altar: 14 from the base on the ground to the lower ledge, two cubits,
with a breadth of one cubit; and from the smaller ledge to the larger ledge,
four cubits, with a breadth of one cubit; 15 † and the altar hearth, four cubits;
and from the altar hearth projecting upward, four horns. 16 The altar hearth
shall be square, twelve cubits long by twelve broad. 17 † The ledge also shall
be square, fourteen cubits long by fourteen broad, with a rim around it half
a cubit broad, and its base one cubit all around. The steps of the altar shall
face east.”

18 ‡ ‡ And he said to me, “Son of man, thus says the Lord God: These are
the ordinances for the altar: On the day when it is erected for offering burnt
offerings upon it and for throwing blood against it, 19 † you shall give to the
Levitical priests of the family of Zadok, who draw near to me to minister to
me, declares the Lord God, a bull from the herd for a sin offering. 20 † And
you shall take some of its blood and put it on the four horns of the altar and
on the four corners of the ledge and upon the rim all around. Thus you shall
purify the altar and make atonement for it. 21 † You shall also take the bull of
the sin offering, and it shall be burned in the appointed place belonging to
the temple, outside the sacred area. 22 † And on the second day you shall
offer a male goat without blemish for a sin offering; and the altar shall be
purified, as it was purified with the bull. 23 When you have finished
purifying it, you shall offer a bull from the herd without blemish and a ram
from the flock without blemish. 24 † You shall present them before the Lord,
and the priests shall sprinkle salt on them and offer them up as a burnt
offering to the Lord. 25 For seven days you shall provide daily a male goat
for a sin offering; also, a bull from the herd and a ram from the flock,
without blemish, shall be provided. 26 † Seven days shall they make
atonement for the altar and cleanse it, and so consecrate it.[1] 27 † And when
they have completed these days, then from the eighth day onward the

priests shall offer on the altar your burnt offerings and your peace offerings, and I will accept you, declares the Lord GOD."

From *Ezekiel 21–48*, CC (St. Louis: Concordia, 2007), 1164. Adapted from C. F. Keil, *Biblischer Commentar über den Propheten Ezechiel*, 2nd edition (Leipzig: Dürffling und Franke, 1882).

The Gate for the Prince

44 [1]‡Then he brought me back to the outer gate of the sanctuary, which faces east. And it was shut. [2]†And the Lord said to me, “This gate shall remain shut; it shall not be opened, and no one shall enter by it, for the Lord, the God of Israel, has entered by it. Therefore it shall remain shut. [3]†Only the prince may sit in it to eat bread before the Lord. He shall enter by way of the vestibule of the gate, and shall go out by the same way.”

[4]‡† Then he brought me by way of the north gate to the front of the temple, and I looked, and behold, the glory of the Lord filled the temple of the Lord. And I fell on my face. [5]†And the Lord said to me, “Son of man, mark well, see with your eyes, and hear with your ears all that I shall tell you concerning all the statutes of the temple of the Lord and all its laws. And mark well the entrance to the temple and all the exits from the sanctuary. [6]‡And say to the rebellious house,[2] to the house of Israel, Thus says the Lord God: O house of Israel, enough of all your abominations, [7]in admitting foreigners, uncircumcised in heart and flesh, to be in my sanctuary, profaning my temple, when you offer to me my food, the fat and the blood. You[3] have broken my covenant, in addition to all your abominations. [8]And you have not kept charge of my holy things, but you have set others to keep my charge for you in my sanctuary.

[9]† “Thus says the Lord God: No foreigner, uncircumcised in heart and flesh, of all the foreigners who are among the people of Israel, shall enter my sanctuary. [10]†But the Levites who went far from me, going astray from me after their idols when Israel went astray, shall bear their punishment.[1] [11]‡They shall be ministers in my sanctuary, having oversight at the gates of the temple and ministering in the temple. They shall slaughter the burnt offering and the sacrifice for the people, and they shall stand before the people, to minister to them. [12]Because they ministered to them before their idols and became a stumbling block of iniquity to the house of Israel, therefore I have sworn concerning them, declares the Lord God, and they shall bear their punishment. [13]They shall not come near to me, to serve me as priest, nor come near any of my holy things and the things that are most

holy, but they shall bear their shame and the abominations that they have committed. [14]Yet I will appoint them to keep charge of the temple, to do all its service and all that is to be done in it.

Rules for Levitical Priests

15 ‡ ‡ “But the Levitical priests, the sons of Zadok, who kept the charge of
my sanctuary when the people of Israel went astray from me, shall come
near to me to minister to me. And they shall stand before me to offer me the
fat and the blood, declares the Lord God. 16 They shall enter my sanctuary,
and they shall approach my table, to minister to me, and they shall keep my
charge. 17 † When they enter the gates of the inner court, they shall wear
linen garments. They shall have nothing of wool on them, while they
minister at the gates of the inner court, and within. 18 † They shall have linen
turbans on their heads, and linen undergarments around their waists. They
shall not bind themselves with anything that causes sweat. 19 † And when
they go out into the outer court to the people, they shall put off the garments
in which they have been ministering and lay them in the holy chambers.
And they shall put on other garments, lest they transmit holiness to the
people with their garments. 20 † They shall not shave their heads or let their
locks grow long; they shall surely trim the hair of their heads. 21 † No priest
shall drink wine when he enters the inner court. 22 † They shall not marry a
widow or a divorced woman, but only virgins of the offspring of the house
of Israel, or a widow who is the widow of a priest. 23 † They shall teach my
people the difference between the holy and the common, and show them
how to distinguish between the unclean and the clean. 24 † In a dispute, they
shall act as judges, and they shall judge it according to my judgments. They
shall keep my laws and my statutes in all my appointed feasts, and they
shall keep my Sabbaths holy. 25 † They shall not defile themselves by going
near to a dead person. However, for father or mother, for son or daughter,
for brother or unmarried sister they may defile themselves. 26 After he has
become clean, they shall count seven days for him. 27 † And on the day that
he goes into the Holy Place, into the inner court, to minister in the Holy
Place, he shall offer his sin offering, declares the Lord God.

28 † “This shall be their inheritance: I am their inheritance: and you shall
give them no possession in Israel; I am their possession. 29 ‡ They shall eat
the grain offering, the sin offering, and the guilt offering, and every devoted
thing in Israel shall be theirs. 30 And the first of all the firstfruits of all kinds,

and every offering of all kinds from all your offerings, shall belong to the priests. You shall also give to the priests the first of your dough, that a blessing may rest on your house. [31]The priests shall not eat of anything, whether bird or beast, that has died of itself or is torn by wild animals.

The Holy District

45 [1]‡†“When you allot the land as an inheritance, you shall set apart
for the Lord a portion of the land as a holy district, 25,000 cubits[1] long and
20,000[2] cubits broad. It shall be holy throughout its whole extent. [2]†Of this
a square plot of 500 by 500 cubits shall be for the sanctuary, with fifty
cubits for an open space around it. [3]And from this measured district you
shall measure off a section 25,000 cubits long and 10,000 broad, in which
shall be the sanctuary, the Most Holy Place. [4]It shall be the holy portion of
the land. It shall be for the priests, who minister in the sanctuary and
approach the Lord to minister to him, and it shall be a place for their houses
and a holy place for the sanctuary. [5]† Another section, 25,000 cubits long
and 10,000 cubits broad, shall be for the Levites who minister at the temple,
as their possession for cities to live in.[3]

[6]†“Alongside the portion set apart as the holy district you shall assign for
the property of the city an area 5,000 cubits broad and 25,000 cubits long. It
shall belong to the whole house of Israel.

The Portion for the Prince

7 ‡ † “And to the prince shall belong the land on both sides of the holy
district and the property of the city, alongside the holy district and the
property of the city, on the west and on the east, corresponding in length to
one of the tribal portions, and extending from the western to the eastern
boundary 8 † of the land. It is to be his property in Israel. And my princes
shall no more oppress my people, but they shall let the house of Israel have
the land according to their tribes.

9 † “Thus says the Lord God: Enough, O princes of Israel! Put away
violence and oppression, and execute justice and righteousness. Cease your
evictions of my people, declares the Lord God.

10 † “You shall have just balances, a just ephah, and a just bath.[4] 11 The
ephah and the bath shall be of the same measure, the bath containing one
tenth of a homer,[5] and the ephah one tenth of a homer; the homer shall be
the standard measure. 12 † The shekel shall be twenty gerahs;[6] twenty
shekels plus twenty-five shekels plus fifteen shekels shall be your mina.[7]

13 † “This is the offering that you shall make: one sixth of an ephah from
each homer of wheat, and one sixth of an ephah from each homer of barley,
14 and as the fixed portion of oil, measured in baths, one tenth of a bath from
each cor[1] (the cor, like the homer, contains ten baths).[2] 15 † And one sheep
from every flock of two hundred, from the watering places of Israel for
grain offering, burnt offering, and peace offerings, to make atonement for
them, declares the Lord God. 16 † All the people of the land shall be obliged
to give this offering to the prince in Israel. 17 † It shall be the prince’s duty to
furnish the burnt offerings, grain offerings, and drink offerings, at the feasts,
the new moons, and the Sabbaths, all the appointed feasts of the house of
Israel: he shall provide the sin offerings, grain offerings, burnt offerings,
and peace offerings, to make atonement on behalf of the house of Israel.

18 ‡ “Thus says the Lord God: In the first month, on the first day of the
month, you shall take a bull from the herd without blemish, and purify the
sanctuary. 19 The priest shall take some of the blood of the sin offering and
put it on the doorposts of the temple, the four corners of the ledge of the
altar, and the posts of the gate of the inner court. 20 You shall do the same on

the seventh day of the month for anyone who has sinned through error or ignorance; so you shall make atonement for the temple.

21 ✝ “In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, you shall celebrate the Feast of the Passover, and for seven days unleavened bread shall be eaten. 22On that day the prince shall provide for himself and all the people of the land a young bull for a sin offering. 23And on the seven days of the festival he shall provide as a burnt offering to the Lord seven young bulls and seven rams without blemish, on each of the seven days; and a male goat daily for a sin offering. 24And he shall provide as a grain offering an ephah for each bull, an ephah for each ram, and a hin[3] of oil to each ephah. 25In the seventh month, on the fifteenth day of the month and for the seven days of the feast, he shall make the same provision for sin offerings, burnt offerings, and grain offerings, and for the oil.

The Prince and the Feasts

46 [1]‡‡“Thus says the Lord God: The gate of the inner court that faces
east shall be shut on the six working days, but on the Sabbath day it shall be
opened, and on the day of the new moon it shall be opened. [2]‡The prince
shall enter by the vestibule of the gate from outside, and shall take his stand
by the post of the gate. The priests shall offer his burnt offering and his
peace offerings, and he shall worship at the threshold of the gate. Then he
shall go out, but the gate shall not be shut until evening. [3]‡The people of the
land shall bow down at the entrance of that gate before the Lord on the
Sabbaths and on the new moons. [4]‡The burnt offering that the prince offers
to the Lord on the Sabbath day shall be six lambs without blemish and a ram
without blemish. [5]And the grain offering with the ram shall be an ephah,[4]
and the grain offering with the lambs shall be as much as he is able,
together with a hin[1] of oil to each ephah. [6]On the day of the new moon he
shall offer a bull from the herd without blemish, and six lambs and a ram,
which shall be without blemish. [7]As a grain offering he shall provide an
ephah with the bull and an ephah with the ram, and with the lambs as much
as he is able, together with a hin of oil to each ephah. [8]When the prince
enters, he shall enter by the vestibule of the gate, and he shall go out by the
same way.

[9]‡“When the people of the land come before the Lord at the appointed
feasts, he who enters by the north gate to worship shall go out by the south
gate, and he who enters by the south gate shall go out by the north gate: no
one shall return by way of the gate by which he entered, but each shall go
out straight ahead. [10]When they enter, the prince shall enter with them, and
when they go out, he shall go out.

[11]‡‡“At the feasts and the appointed festivals, the grain offering with a
young bull shall be an ephah, and with a ram an ephah, and with the lambs
as much as one is able to give, together with a hin of oil to an ephah.
[12]‡When the prince provides a freewill offering, either a burnt offering or
peace offerings as a freewill offering to the Lord, the gate facing east shall
be opened for him. And he shall offer his burnt offering or his peace

offerings as he does on the Sabbath day. Then he shall go out, and after he has gone out the gate shall be shut.

13 † "You shall provide a lamb a year old without blemish for a burnt offering to the LORD daily; morning by morning you shall provide it. 14 †And you shall provide a grain offering with it morning by morning, one sixth of an ephah, and one third of a hin of oil to moisten the flour, as a grain offering to the LORD. This is a perpetual statute. 15 Thus the lamb and the meal offering and the oil shall be provided, morning by morning, for a regular burnt offering.

16 † "Thus says the Lord GOD: If the prince makes a gift to any of his sons as his inheritance, it shall belong to his sons. It is their property by inheritance. 17 †But if he makes a gift out of his inheritance to one of his servants, it shall be his to the year of liberty. Then it shall revert to the prince; surely it is his inheritance—it shall belong to his sons. 18 The prince shall not take any of the inheritance of the people, thrusting them out of their property. He shall give his sons their inheritance out of his own property, so that none of my people shall be scattered from his property."

Boiling Places for Offerings

19 Then he brought me through the entrance, which was at the side of the
gate, to the north row of the holy chambers for the priests, and behold, a
place was there at the extreme western end of them. 20 And he said to me,
“This is the place where the priests shall boil the guilt offering and the sin
offering, and where they shall bake the grain offering, in order not to bring
them out into the outer court and so transmit holiness to the people.”

21 Then he brought me out to the outer court and led me around to the
four corners of the court. And behold, in each corner of the court there was
another court— 22 in the four corners of the court were small[2] courts, forty
cubits[3] long and thirty broad; the four were of the same size. 23 On the
inside, around each of the four courts was a row of masonry, with hearths
made at the bottom of the rows all around. 24 Then he said to me, “These are
the kitchens where those who minister at the temple shall boil the sacrifices
of the people.”

Water Flowing from the Temple

47 [1] ‡ † Then he brought me back to the door of the temple, and
behold, water was issuing from below the threshold of the temple toward
the east (for the temple faced east). The water was flowing down from
below the south end of the threshold of the temple, south of the altar.
[2] † Then he brought me out by way of the north gate and led me around on
the outside to the outer gate that faces toward the east; and behold, the
water was trickling out on the south side.

[3] ‡ Going on eastward with a measuring line in his hand, the man
measured a thousand cubits,[1] and then led me through the water, and it was
ankle-deep. [4] Again he measured a thousand, and led me through the water,
and it was knee-deep. Again he measured a thousand, and led me through
the water, and it was waist-deep. [5] Again he measured a thousand, and it was
a river that I could not pass through, for the water had risen. It was deep
enough to swim in, a river that could not be passed through. [6] And he said to
me, “Son of man, have you seen this?”

Then he led me back to the bank of the river. [7] As I went back, I saw on
the bank of the river very many trees on the one side and on the other.
[8] † And he said to me, “This water flows toward the eastern region and goes
down into the Arabah, and enters the sea;[2] when the water flows into the
sea, the water will become fresh.[3] [9] And wherever the river goes,[4] every
living creature that swarms will live, and there will be very many fish. For
this water goes there, that the waters of the sea[5] may become fresh; so
everything will live where the river goes. [10] † Fishermen will stand beside the
sea. From Engedi to Eneglaim it will be a place for the spreading of nets. Its
fish will be of very many kinds, like the fish of the Great Sea.[6] [11] † But its
swamps and marshes will not become fresh; they are to be left for salt.
[12] † And on the banks, on both sides of the river, there will grow all kinds of
trees for food. Their leaves will not wither, nor their fruit fail, but they will
bear fresh fruit every month, because the water for them flows from the
sanctuary. Their fruit will be for food, and their leaves for healing.”

Division of the Land

13 †††Thus says the Lord God: “This is the boundary[7] by which you shall
divide the land for inheritance among the twelve tribes of Israel. Joseph
shall have two portions. 14 And you shall divide equally what I swore to give
to your fathers. This land shall fall to you as your inheritance.
15 † “This shall be the boundary of the land: On the north side, from the
Great Sea by way of Hethlon to Lebo-hamath, and on to Zedad,[8]
16 Berothah, Sibraim (which lies on the border between Damascus and
Hamath), as far as Hazer-hatticon, which is on the border of Hauran. 17 So
the boundary shall run from the sea to Hazar-enan, which is on the northern
border of Damascus, with the border of Hamath to the north.[1] This shall be
the north side.[2]
18 † “On the east side, the boundary shall run between Hauran and
Damascus; along the Jordan between Gilead and the land of Israel; to the
eastern sea and as far as Tamar.[3] This shall be the east side.
19 † “On the south side, it shall run from Tamar as far as the waters of
Meribah-kadesh, from there along the Brook of Egypt[4] to the Great Sea.
This shall be the south side.
20 “On the west side, the Great Sea shall be the boundary to a point
opposite Lebo-hamath. This shall be the west side.
21 † “So you shall divide this land among you according to the tribes of
Israel. 22 † You shall allot it as an inheritance for yourselves and for the
sojourners who reside among you and have had children among you. They
shall be to you as native-born children of Israel. With you they shall be
allotted an inheritance among the tribes of Israel. 23 In whatever tribe the
sojourner resides, there you shall assign him his inheritance, declares the
Lord God.

48 1 “These are the names of the tribes: Beginning at the northern
extreme, beside the way of Hethlon to Lebo-hamath, as far as Hazar-enan
(which is on the northern border of Damascus over against Hamath), and[5]
extending from the east side to the west,[6] Dan, one portion. 2 Adjoining the
territory of Dan, from the east side to the west, Asher, one portion.

[3]Adjoining the territory of Asher, from the east side to the west, Naphtali,
one portion. [4]Adjoining the territory of Naphtali, from the east side to the
west, Manasseh, one portion. [5]Adjoining the territory of Manasseh, from the
east side to the west, Ephraim, one portion. [6]Adjoining the territory of
Ephraim, from the east side to the west, Reuben, one portion. [7]Adjoining
the territory of Reuben, from the east side to the west, Judah, one portion.

[8]† "Adjoining the territory of Judah, from the east side to the west, shall
be the portion which you shall set apart, 25,000 cubits[7] in breadth, and in
length equal to one of the tribal portions, from the east side to the west, with
the sanctuary in the midst of it. [9]The portion that you shall set apart for the
LORD shall be 25,000 cubits in length, and 20,000[8] in breadth. [10]† These
shall be the allotments of the holy portion: the priests shall have an
allotment measuring 25,000 cubits on the northern side, 10,000 cubits in
breadth on the western side, 10,000 in breadth on the eastern side, and
25,000 in length on the southern side, with the sanctuary of the LORD in the
midst of it. [11]† This shall be for the consecrated priests, the sons of Zadok,
who kept my charge, who did not go astray when the people of Israel went
astray, as the Levites did. [12]And it shall belong to them as a special portion
from the holy portion of the land, a most holy place, adjoining the territory
of the Levites. [13]And alongside the territory of the priests, the Levites shall
have an allotment 25,000 cubits in length and 10,000 in breadth. The whole
length shall be 25,000 cubits and the breadth 20,000.[9] [14]† They shall not sell
or exchange any of it. They shall not alienate this choice portion of the land,
for it is holy to the LORD.

[15]"The remainder, 5,000 cubits in breadth and 25,000 in length, shall be
for common use for the city, for dwellings and for open country. In the
midst of it shall be the city, [16]and these shall be its measurements: the north
side 4,500 cubits, the south side 4,500, the east side 4,500, and the west side
4,500. [17]And the city shall have open land: on the north 250 cubits, on the
south 250, on the east 250, and on the west 250. [18]† The remainder of the
length alongside the holy portion shall be 10,000 cubits to the east, and
10,000 to the west, and it shall be alongside the holy portion. Its produce
shall be food for the workers of the city. [19]And the workers of the city, from
all the tribes of Israel, shall till it. [20]The whole portion that you shall set

apart shall be 25,000 cubits square, that is, the holy portion together with the property of the city.

21 “What remains on both sides of the holy portion and of the property of the city shall belong to the prince. Extending from the 25,000 cubits of the holy portion to the east border, and westward from the 25,000 cubits to the west border, parallel to the tribal portions, it shall belong to the prince. The holy portion with the sanctuary of the temple shall be in its midst. 22 It shall be separate from the property of the Levites and the property of the city, which are in the midst of that which belongs to the prince. The portion of the prince shall lie between the territory of Judah and the territory of Benjamin.

23 † “As for the rest of the tribes: from the east side to the west, Benjamin, one portion. 24 Adjoining the territory of Benjamin, from the east side to the west, Simeon, one portion. 25 Adjoining the territory of Simeon, from the east side to the west, Issachar, one portion. 26 Adjoining the territory of Issachar, from the east side to the west, Zebulun, one portion. 27 Adjoining the territory of Zebulun, from the east side to the west, Gad, one portion. 28 And adjoining the territory of Gad to the south, the boundary shall run from Tamar to the waters of Meribah-kadesh, from there along the Brook of Egypt[1] to the Great Sea.[2] 29 This is the land that you shall allot as an inheritance among the tribes of Israel, and these are their portions, declares the Lord God.

The Gates of the City

30 ‡‡“These shall be the exits of the city: On the north side, which is to be
4,500 cubits by measure, 31three gates, the gate of Reuben, the gate of
Judah, and the gate of Levi, the gates of the city being named after the
tribes of Israel. 32On the east side, which is to be 4,500 cubits, three gates,
the gate of Joseph, the gate of Benjamin, and the gate of Dan. 33On the
south side, which is to be 4,500 cubits by measure, three gates, the gate of
Simeon, the gate of Issachar, and the gate of Zebulun. 34On the west side,
which is to be 4,500 cubits, three gates,[3] the gate of Gad, the gate of Asher,
and the gate of Naphtali. 35 †The circumference of the city shall be 18,000
cubits. And the name of the city from that time on shall be, The Lord Is
There.”

Ezekiel

Overview

Author
Ezekiel the prophet

Date
593–570 BC

Places
Babylon; Chebar Canal; Jerusalem; Israel; Judah; mountains of Israel; temple of Jerusalem; Ammon; Moab; Mount Seir; Edom; Philistia; Tyre; Sidon; Egypt

People
Ezekiel; exiles; cherubim and other angels; elders of Judah and Israel; Nebuchadnezzar; servant David; prince of Tyre; Pharaoh; Gog

Purpose
To explain why God's glory departed from Israel and how His glory would return

Law Themes
Death and God's wrath comes to Israel by the sword; Israel has not walked in God's statutes; in anger, God withdraws His glory and blessings; idolatry as spiritual adultery; defilement; exile; famine and pestilence

Gospel Themes
God keeps His covenant; new hearts; gift of the Spirit; the Good Shepherd; cleansing; restore the fortunes; God's glory returns; the new temple

Memory Verses
The watchman's calling (3:17–19); a new heart (11:19–20); the Lord desires to save us (18:21–23, 32); the Good Shepherd (34:20–24); a prophecy of

Baptism (36:25–27); the Lord’s glory returns (43:2–5)

Introduction to Ezekiel

Reading Ezekiel

The workman's trowel slathers mortar across the face of a mud brick. The trowel clinks and scrapes the excess from the brick's edges. Brick by brick, the workman slowly raises the walls of a new home. When he pauses for a drink, he stares westward, away from the village. Babylon's horizon appears as flat as a brick. He thinks of Judah's distant hills, the walls of stone his family raised there. Then he remembers how the walls toppled, the beams burned, and the people fled. He wonders if they will ever be restored.

From the plains of Babylon, the priest Ezekiel looked back upon the defeat of Judah and prophesied the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple. He explained to the exiled Judeans that God's glory had departed from them because they had abandoned Him. But the Lord also showed Ezekiel a new day when His glory would return and the kingdom would become an everlasting blessing to the nations.

Luther on Ezekiel

This vision in the first part of Ezekiel [1:4–28], however, is nothing else than a revelation of the kingdom of Christ in faith here upon earth, in all four corners of the whole world as said in Psalm 19[:4]: *In omnem terram*. This is how I understand it (let someone else improve on it). For no one can be a prophet, as St. Peter testifies, unless he have the Spirit of Christ [II Pet. 1:21]…. To put it briefly: this vision is the spiritual chariot of Christ in which he rides here in the world, meaning thereby his entire holy church….

This vision, moreover (as Ezekiel himself shows in chapters 8–9), signified the end … of the priesthood, the worship, and the church organization instituted and given them by Moses. For all of these were instituted only until Christ should come, as St. Paul says in Romans 8[:2–3] and II Corinthians 3[:6], as Christ himself says in Matthew 11[:13], and as the Epistle to the Hebrews says repeatedly….

For this prophecy contains two things. The first is that Israel and Judah shall return to their land after their captivity. This came to pass through King Cyrus and the Persians, before the birth of Christ, at the time when the Jews returned to their land and to Jerusalem from all countries. They also came to Jerusalem every year to the feasts, even from foreign countries where they maintained their residence, drawing many Gentiles with them and to them.

But the hope of the Jews that there shall yet be another physical return, when all of them together shall come back into the land and set up again the old Mosaic order of things, this is something they have dreamed up themselves. There is not a letter in the prophets or in Scripture which says or signifies anything of the kind. It is written, indeed, that they shall return out of all lands whither they have been driven; not all of them, however, but only some of them out of all lands….

The second thing, and the best thing in this prophecy … is that God promises to create something new in the land, to make a new covenant unlike the old covenant of Moses that they dream about. This is plain from Jeremiah 31[:31–32] and from many more passages. No longer are there to be two kingdoms but one kingdom, under their King David

who is to come; and his shall be an everlasting kingdom, even in that same physical land.

This, too, has been fulfilled. For when Christ came and found the people of both Israel and Judah gathered again out of all lands so that the country was full, he started something new: he established the promised new covenant. He did this not at a spiritual place, or at some other physical place, but exactly in that same physical land of Canaan, and at that same physical Jerusalem—as had been promised—to which they had been brought back out of all lands….

These two things Ezekiel teaches us when he comforts the people concerning the return from Babylon, but even more when he prophesies the new Israel and the kingdom of Christ. That is his vision of the chariot, and also really his temple, in the last part of his book [40:2–48:35]….

Ezekiel says neither that this city shall be called Jerusalem, nor that it shall stand at the place where Jerusalem was situated…. He says, "It shall be called *Dominus ibi*," "There God," or "God there," that is, "Where God himself is." The temple shall not be in the city…. There shall also be a great flow of water out of the temple into the Dead Sea [Ezek. 47:1–12] … but this in no way squares with the topography of Israel.

Besides the tribes and the land of Israel are very differently divided and arranged, so that the city and the temple shall not lie in the land of any tribe of Israel, though Jerusalem was previously located in the land of the tribe of Benjamin [Josh. 18:28]. All this and much more is plainly given in the text….

Therefore this building of Ezekiel is not to be understood to mean a physical building, but like the chariot at the beginning [1:4–28] so this building at the end [40–48] is nothing else than the kingdom of Christ, the holy church or Christendom here on earth until the last day. (AE 35:284–290)

Challenges for Readers

A Difficult Book. According to Jerome, the rabbis had decided that Jews should not read the first and final few chapters (40–48) of Ezekiel's prophecy until they were 30 years old. It appears they were concerned about misinterpretations of Ezekiel's visions, given the difficulty of interpreting and applying them. A further complication for readers is that the Hebrew text of Ezekiel is especially difficult. The ESV translators' notes supply numerous examples of the challenges. In some cases, the difficulties may be a result of the overwhelming experiences that accompanied Ezekiel's visions and the rapid way he recorded what he saw. One may generally agree that this prophecy is best approached by readers with a mature understanding of biblical teaching.

The Prophet Who Was a Priest. A common opinion among critical scholars of the nineteenth century was that prophets represented sincere, ethical religion and that priests represented dead legalism. The example of Ezekiel defies this caricature. He was a sincere priest and a prophet who cared deeply about the priestly code. See "The Prophets and Liberal Protestantism," p 1204; see also "Ritual and Devotion," p 5.

Repeated Expressions. Like the prophet Jeremiah, Ezekiel has favorite expressions that appear throughout his work: "know that I am the LORD," "son of man," "abomination," "declares the Lord GOD," and "the word of the LORD came to me." For more on these expressions, see pp 1079–80; see also note, Pr 6:16. Ezekiel's descriptive writing also naturally includes repeated attention to features of his visions, such as the wheels of God's throne (chs 1; 10) and the measurements of the new temple (chs 40–42).

Action Prophecies. Also like Jeremiah, Ezekiel tends to communicate God's Word through actions, which symbolize things to come. At times, these actions are difficult to understand. The notes help to unpack the setting and the symbolism. See note, chs 4–5; see also p 1220.

Bawdy Language. The satires in chs 16 and 23 contain shocking descriptions of lust, prostitution, and adulterous behaviors. Readers should surely understand that Ezekiel does not wish to stir up such desires in his readers but to illustrate the extreme unfaithfulness of Israel and Judah. Since God calls us to live a chaste and decent life, preachers and teachers of the Word should exercise care before using similar examples in their

messages. When teaching on these chapters, they should promote a mature and sober understanding of the prophet's message.

Oracles against the Nations. As with other OT prophets, a portion of Ezekiel is written against nations other than Israel and Judah (chs 25–32). Some interpreters have understood this as an example of Israelite nationalism or prejudice. However, a more careful consideration reveals how these passages emphasize God's rule and judgment over all creation as well as His desire to establish His reign for the salvation of the nations, not their destruction.

Kingdom of God. As Luther's preface explained, God gave Ezekiel visions that illustrated the character of His reign in time and eternity (chs 1; 40–48). He does not promise an earthly, political kingdom by which God's people may rule over others. For more on this issue, see pp 1375, 1565–66.

Blessings for Readers

Despite the challenges in understanding and applying the Book of Ezekiel, one may give thanks to God for this remarkable prophecy. Ezekiel provides important insights on the doctrine of repentance (chs 3; 18), the promise of salvation God revealed in the new covenant (chs 11; 33–37), a prophecy of Holy Baptism (36:25–27), and God's goal for a united and holy people among whom His glory would dwell (chs 40–48). Ezekiel beautifully describes the coming of God's Messiah, the Prince of David who will shepherd God's people (ch 34).

As you read Ezekiel's condemnations of Israel, Judah, and the nations, look also for these bright and glorious beams of hope that stream from God's heavenly throne and promise new life. The Lord—our shepherd and holy refuge—will grant you greater appreciation for His patience and a vision of heavenly bliss.

OUTLINE

The Book virtually divides itself into three major sections: (1) call and oracles of judgment on Israel (chs 1–24); (2) oracles of judgment on foreign nations, or Gentile oracles (chs 25–32); and (3) oracles and visions of restoration (chs 33–48). (Sometimes chs 40–48 are considered a separate, fourth section.)

I. Ezekiel's Call and Oracles of Judgment on Israel (chs 1–24)
   A. Ezekiel's Inaugural Vision and Commissioning (chs 1–3)
      1. Ezekiel's inaugural vision (ch 1)
      2. The prophetic commissioning of Ezekiel: part 1 (ch 2)
      3. The prophetic commissioning of Ezekiel: part 2 (ch 3)
   B. Prophecies of Judgment against Israel (chs 4–24)
      1. The first action prophecies of Jerusalem's siege and exile (ch 4)
      2. More action prophecies and the first judgment oracle (ch 5)
      3. Judgment for idolatry on the mountains (ch 6)
      4. "The end has come" (ch 7)
      5. The glory of God versus four abominations in the temple (ch 8)
      6. Those without the mark are slain (ch 9)
      7. The glory mounts the throne over the cherubim and wheels (ch 10)

8. After promising “one heart” and “a new spirit,” the glory departs the temple (ch 11)

9. An action prophecy of the prince’s exile and two false proverbs about true prophecy (ch 12)

10. False prophets and prophetesses (ch 13)

11. Cases of casuistry (ch 14)

12. Jerusalem is a useless vine (ch 15)

13. Jerusalem the whore (ch 16)

14. The allegory of the cedar sprig and the Messiah planted by Yahweh (ch 17)

15. The wicked will die, and the righteous will live (ch 18)

16. A lament for Israel’s princes (ch 19)

17. Review of the old covenant and promise of the new (20:1–44)

18. Yahweh’s punishing sword is drawn (20:45–21:32)

19. Judgment on the bloody city for her abominations (ch 22)

20. Two lewd sisters whore against Yahweh (ch 23)

21. The cooking pot; the death of Ezekiel’s wife (ch 24)

II. Oracles against Other Nations (chs 25–32)

A. Oracles against the Ammonites, Moab, Edom, and the Philistines (ch 25)

B. An Oracle against Tyre (ch 26)

C. A Lament over Tyre (ch 27)

D. Tyre’s King Is Expelled from Eden (ch 28)

E. Judgment for Egypt, Recompense for Babylon, and a Horn for Israel (ch 29)

F. Egypt Will Fall, and Pharaoh’s Arm Will Be Broken (ch 30)

G. Like Assyria the Cedar, Pharaoh Will Descend to Sheol (chs 31–32)

III. Oracles and Visions of Israel’s Restoration (chs 33–48)

A. Oracles of Israel’s Eschatological Restoration (ch 33–39)

1. The watchman; the fall of Jerusalem (ch 33)

2. Yahweh will save His sheep through His messianic Shepherd (ch 34)

3. An oracle against Mount Seir (ch 35)

4. Yahweh will sprinkle His people with clean water to give them a new heart and spirit (ch 36)

5. Resurrection of dry bones to become a people united under the new David (ch 37)

6. In the latter days, Gog will attack and be defeated by God (ch 38)

7. Yahweh will defeat Gog and pour out His Spirit on His people (ch 39)

B. Vision of the New Temple, the New Creation, and the New Israel (chs 40–48)

1. Vision of the new temple: part 1 (ch 40)
2. Vision of the new temple: part 2 (ch 41)
3. Vision of the new temple: part 3 (ch 42)
4. The return of Yahweh's glory; the altar (ch 43)
5. The prince; the glory; priests and Levites at the temple (ch 44)
6. Property for Yahweh, the priests, and the prince; the major festivals (ch 45)
7. The minor festivals and the prince; inheritance of the prince's property; the sacrificial kitchens (ch 46)
8. Life-giving water in the new creation to be apportioned to Israel (ch 47)
9. The new holy land, whose capital is named "The LORD [Yahweh] Is There" (ch 48)

Articles and Resources Related to Ezekiel

- God's Throne
- Humor and Comedy in the Bible
- New Life through Baptism
- The Final Battle and the Defeat of Gog

God's Throne

The most beautiful thing that has ever been found in Egypt" is how Howard Carter described the golden throne of King Tutankhamun (Thomas Hoving, *Tutankhamun: The Untold Story* [New York: Simon and Schuster, 1978], 95). Upon first seeing it, the archaeology team grew silent with awe. The chair back showed the young king and queen greeting each other gently. Below them—supporting the throne—stared two lions, symbols of royal power.

In the Bible, God's throne also shows both His gentleness and His power. God surrounds Himself with numerous heavenly beings and glorified saints. Unlike the lifeless carvings and gold decorations on the thrones of earthly rulers, the beings of God's throne actively worship Him and lead all creation in eternal praise (cf Dn 7; Rv 4:6).

The Creatures around God's Throne

We first read about the special creatures called cherubim in Gn 3:24. The Lord placed them at the entrance to Eden to prevent Adam and Eve from returning to the garden. We find them again in God's directions to Moses for the building of the ark of the covenant and the tabernacle curtain (Ex 25:18–22; 36:8; 37:7–9).

The cherubim held a special place in the tabernacle. They were among the only beings depicted in three-dimensional form, despite the rules against making any "carved image" (Ex 20:4; in fact, we should read the commandment as a prohibition against creating idols—objects of worship—rather than as a prohibition against creating three-dimensional artwork). Four cherubim stood in Solomon's temple (1Ki 8:6–7; two cherubim on the cover of the ark, two standing above the ark), comparable to Revelation's description of the four living creatures standing about God's throne in heaven (Rv 4:6b–8).

In the Old Testament, the ark of the covenant served as God's throne on earth. In fact, 1Sm 4:4 states that "the LORD of hosts … is enthroned on the cherubim" of the ark (cf 2Sm 6:2; Ps 80:1; 99:1). However, Solomon understood that this was only a model of God's heavenly temple. He asked, "Will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain You; how much less this house that I have built!" (1Ki 8:27). The Lord added through Isaiah, "Heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool" (Is 66:1). The ark surrounded by carved cherubim pointed to the heavenly throne room above (Heb 9:23–24).

The Appearance of the Creatures

The Jewish historian Flavius Josephus wrote that in his day no one really knew what the cherubim looked like (*Ant* 8:73). However, the priests would have seen the depictions of the cherubim when they served in the tabernacle and temple. God's own description or Moses' eyewitness testimony about these special angels would have guided their depiction. In fact, God inspired the craftsmen who created the images of the cherubim (Ex 31:1–7). Ezekiel also saw cherubim during his heavenly visions (Ezk 1; 10). He describes them with animal features and faces.

Some memories of the cherubim may also appear in the numerous statues of sphinxes and griffins in Egyptian and Near Eastern culture. Winged creatures with animal and human forms at least correspond to the descriptions of the cherubim that appeared in the Israelite temple. Images of such creatures have appeared on the thrones and other sacred furniture of ancient temples (cf 1Ki 10:18–20).

These Old Testament descriptions and ancient depictions may give us the best possible understanding of how the four living creatures appeared by God's throne and how they serve.

God’s Throne and You

If you trust in Christ Jesus for your salvation and have been baptized in His name, be assured that you will one day appear before God’s glorious throne as described in Scripture. You will take your place in that “great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands” (Rv 7:9). Do not wait until that day to join the heavenly shout, “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!” (Rv 7:10). Like the four living creatures, cast yourself down today and worship God Most High (Rv 7:11–12). Mingle your voice and praise with the voices and praises of heaven.

The cherubim and living creatures rightly take their place around God’s throne. Heaven is their natural environment, and their fearsome presence demonstrates God’s power. But through the blood of the Lamb, heaven belongs to you too. Your presence among God’s saints demonstrates not only God’s royal power but also His gentle mercy. Christ has prepared a place for you on His own throne (Rv 3:21) that you might dwell and reign with Him.

Humor and Comedy in the Bible

Numerous biblical passages take humorous turns—something serious students of the Bible may easily overlook. Mockery, ridicule, and taunts are common rhetorical devices in Scripture and may powerfully illustrate biblical truths.

When biblical writers point out the humor in a situation, it does not mean the situation is unreal or contrived. Comedy happens. A skillful writer will naturally play up the humorous aspects of a true story. Also, satires, parodies, proverbs, and parables are often epitomes of real events and experiences.

The following examples will help you recognize some of the ways humor appears in the Bible. (Many of the passages have humor that fits in more than one category; the list is far from exhaustive.) However, be forewarned—laughter is rarely carefree in the Bible (cf Gn 21:1–7; Jb 22:19; Ps 22:7; 37:12–13; 52:6; 59:8). Its humor is often bitter and unpleasant. Occasionally, it is bawdy. Before resorting to humor, students of Scripture should take to heart the lessons of Pr 12:18; 15:1; 25:11.

Euphemism: Describing something embarrassing or offensive with a more polite expression, which can have a humorous result.

Plowing with Samson's heifer (Jgs 14:18)

Foolishness: Embarrassing situations that reveal a person's lack of intelligence or character. This is perhaps the most common element of biblical humor and is used in contrast with biblical wisdom (comparable to modern situational comedy). See p 1016.

Joseph's brothers fear going to Joseph's house (Gn 43:18); Aaron's poor excuse (Ex 32:24); Balaam's argument with his donkey (Nu 22:22–35); Balak cannot get Balaam to curse Israel (Nu 23–24); Dagon bows before the ark of the covenant (1Sm 5:1–5); Achish regrets David's presence at his home (1Sm 21:10–15); Micaiah embarrasses Ahab (1Ki 22:5–23); Haman must lead Mordecai in procession of honor (Est 6); Jonah runs away from God (Jnh 1); James and John request glory (Mk 10:35–45); two disciples discuss Jesus' death and resurrection (Lk 24:13–35); Rhoda leaves Peter at the door (Ac 12:11–16)

Hyperbole: Rhetorical exaggeration, creating a fanciful situation or imagery.

Quail for a month (Nu 11:20); Moses' prayer about Korah's rebellion (Nu 16:15); Tobiah mocks the Judeans' efforts to build a wall (Ne 4:3); excesses of the wicked (Ps 73:4–12, esp vv 7, 9); gold ring in a pig's snout (Pr 11:22); she-bear robbed of her cubs (Pr 17:12); knife to the throat (Pr 23:1–2); quarrelsome wife (Pr 27:15–16); Nineveh's sorry defenses (Na 3:12–13); Jesus rebukes the Pharisees (Mt 23:1–36); Jesus teaches His disciples about faith (Lk 17:5–6); difficulty of saving the rich (Lk 18:24–25); Paul contrasts the apostles with the Corinthians (1Co 4:8–13)

Irony: Subtle, mocking comment that states something opposite to or surpassing its literal meaning; humor resulting from contrasts.

Goliath's taunts (1Sm 17:43–44); women of Israel celebrate Saul's victory (1Sm 18:6–9); Job loses honored status (Jb 29:24–30:1); God speaks to Ephraim's drunkards through the Assyrians (Is 28:11–13); Micaiah prophesies victory (1Ki 22:5–23, esp v 15)

Puns: Play on the sounds or meanings of words that results in irony or ridicule.

Birth of Isaac—"he laughs" (Gn 21:3); Nabal's humorous name (1Sm 25:3, 25); baby talk of Ephraim's drunkards (Is 28:1–13, esp vv 9–10, 13); beggar's answer (see note, Jn 9:9)

Riddles: Tricky or enigmatic sayings that play on words and associations. See "Enigmatic Sayings," p 1775; see also note, Pr 30.

Samson's riddle (Jgs 14:11–18); wounds caused by too much wine (Pr 23:29–30)

Sarcasm: Bitter mockery intended to humiliate; a more intense form of irony.

Achish mocks his servants (1Sm 21:10–15, esp v 15); Elijah's taunt (1Ki 18:27); wailing for fallen Babylon (Jer 51:6–10, esp v 8); Jesus mocks the hypocrites (Lk 6:41–42); beggar questions the Pharisees' interest in Jesus (Jn 9:24–34, esp v 27)

Satire: Oral or literary composition that ridicules someone's vices or foolishness.

Jotham's parable (Jgs 9:7–15); Micaiah explains how false prophets get their messages (1Ki 22:19–23); the young fool and the adulteress (Pr 7:6–23); loud Folly (Pr 9:13–18); the sluggard (Pr 19:24; 22:13; 26:13–16); woes of drunkards (Pr 23:29–35); Isaiah's song of the vineyard (Is 5:1–7);

drunkards of Ephraim (Is 28:1–13); making an idol (Is 44:9–20); Jerusalem as abandoned child, unfaithful bride (Ezk 16:1–58); Lusts of Oholah and Oholibah (Ezk 23); Jesus depicts errors of unreliable teachers (Lk 6:39–40); Jesus describes a persistent widow (Lk 18:1–8); Jesus contrasts a Pharisee and a tax collector (Lk 18:9–14)

Parody: Mimicking a person in order to ridicule him.

Isaiah goes naked for three years (Is 20); Baby talk of Ephraim's drunkards (Is 28:1–13, esp vv 9–10, 13); Preaching advice (Mi 2:6, 11)

The Gospel as Comedy

Some early Christian writers described Jesus' person and work in terms of a joke on death or the devil. Like a great fish, death or the devil gobbles up the man Jesus, not realizing that He is also true God. Christ's divinity, like a hook, catches the evil one and so allows Jesus to set free those who suffered death or the devil's oppression (e.g., Aug in *NPNF* 1 3:178; Gr Nys in *NPNF* 2 5:493–94; Jn D in *NPNF* 2 9:72).

Luther, too, loved the comic elements of Scripture and described God's work in our lives in terms of comedy:

For what could be said or thought that would be more wretched than those first fathers, Adam, Noah, and Abraham? Nevertheless, in the catastrophe of the comedy it appears that God has been playing with them in a most kindly manner and has not dealt otherwise with them than with dearly beloved sons. (AE 7:225)

Joseph plays this comedy in a very kindly manner and leads his brothers to despair, destruction, and hell; and when all is lost, the element of comedy appears and scatters all dangers…. When matters are in such a bad way and so desperate that no hope of deliverance is seen, we should know that it is the epitasis or the climax of the comedy and that the catastrophe is very near…. God is the Poet, and we are the verses or songs He writes. (AE 7:366)

Though disaster and death are truly serious matters, count on the Lord to overturn the tragedies of your life. From the catastrophe of His Son's death, He has brought forth for you new life, comfort, and joy.

New Life through Baptism

From Gn 3:15 onward, Scripture contains promises, prophecies, and types of Christ and His gracious work on our behalf (see p 1245). Because Holy Baptism plays such an important part in delivering Christ's work of redemption personally to us, the Bible foreshadows and prophesies the "washing of regeneration" (Ti 3:5) that God gives us through His Son.

Christian Baptism is more than a ceremony representing what God did for us in Christ, and being baptized is more than just obeying God's command with no personal benefit. Baptism is not an afterthought, as if God decided to add a subplot with no real significance or connection to the main story about Jesus. The Bible records that from the very beginning, God intended to join water to His Word to create new life.

Creating Life

Compare Gn 1 with Jn 1. Note that the first three words of both chapters are the same (“In the beginning”). Moses records that while the Holy Spirit hovered over the waters (Gn 1:2), God created our world and everything in it by speaking His Word (Gn 1:3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24, 26; cf Ps 33:6, 9; 148:5; Heb 11:3). John writes about God’s Word, the Son of God: “All things were made through Him, and without Him was not any thing made that was made” (Jn 1:3). By looking at Gn 1 and Jn 1 together, we see the Holy Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—bringing forth new life in connection with water.

Notice that God did not recite a fancy incantation or wave a magic wand. Instead, He spoke His Word, and the water and the air teemed with life. It is the same way with Baptism, which is not a magical ceremony. In Baptism, just as at creation, God speaks His Word and brings forth abundant life, received through saving faith. As the Spirit of God hovered over the waters at creation, so too the Spirit is present at our Baptism (cf Mt 3:16; Ac 2:38–39).

Other examples of this Old Testament foundation for Holy Baptism appear below.

All That We Need

From its opening chapters, the Bible points to the main plot in God's great salvation story: the coming of His one and only Son, Jesus Christ, to live, to die, and to rise again for us. But God's Word also foreshadows Baptism as an integral part of God's story to personally deliver *to us* what Christ has done *for us*.

With Christ, you have all that you need. Through His Word, His name—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—attached to the water of Baptism (Mt 28:19), God creates saving faith and brings forth new life. He separates you far from His wrath and punishment. He delivers you from attacks of the sinful nature that would drive you to the brink of destruction. And He graciously welcomes you into the promised land, allowing you to cross over from death into life. See p 1920.

When to Baptize

Does the Bible restrict Baptism on the basis of age, accountability, or mental ability? No. When Christ instituted Baptism, He did not apply such restrictions but simply instituted Baptism for "all nations" (Mt 28:19; on the nonbiblical "age of accountability," see note, Is 7:16). Such issues as age did not arise among the earliest Christians, who are known to have baptized whole households of people (see notes, Ac 16:15, 33).

In the third century AD, some people in North Africa proposed that, because the immature may fall into sin after Baptism, perhaps it should be withheld until a person is more mature (Ter, *ANF* 3:677–78). However, Christian leaders continued to practice Baptism as they had before—without restrictions on age. A report about a council of 66 bishops in North Africa illustrates this. The prevailing practice there was to baptize a child within two or three days of birth (*ANF* 5:353). These bishops even rejected the argument that Baptism should be withheld until a child was eight days old so its age could correspond to the age of Old Testament circumcision (Gn 17:12)! They pointed out that God, as Father, could be a father to anyone at any age. Cyp: "[God] shows Himself a Father to all with well-weighted equality for the attainment of heavenly grace…. No one ought to be hindered from baptism and from the grace of God, who is merciful and

kind and loving to all" (*ANF* 5:354). Baptism, like life, does not depend on the maturity of the one who receives it, but on the grace of the One who bestows it: the Father.

OT Example: The flood (Gn 6–9)
NT Affirmation: 1Pt 3:20–21
Meaning: The flood shows God washing away sinners who corrupted His creation. But Peter emphasizes the blessing of salvation God provides to Noah and his family because the water lifted them up. God gave them new life.

OT Example: Circumcision (Gn 17)
NT Affirmation: Col 2:11–12
Meaning: Paul compares OT circumcision with NT Baptism, by which God grants new life.

OT Example: The exodus (Ex 14)
NT Affirmation: 1Co 10:1–2; Col 2:12–15
Meaning: The Israelites faced death on every side. We are hopeless before the onslaught of the devil, the world, and our own sinful flesh. Like Israel, though, God gives us deliverance through water—the water of Baptism. Paul wrote that we are "buried" with Christ in Baptism (Col 2:12). In that burial, God joins our death to Christ's death. Our Baptism swallows up death, just as surely as the Red Sea swallowed up Pharaoh's army.

OT Example: Ritual cleansing (cf Ex 19:22; 24:7–8; Lv 11–15)
NT Affirmation: Mk 7:1–5; Heb 9:11–14, 19–22; 10:22
Meaning: Washing was central to consecration and purity in the OT covenant. Unclean people faced exclusion from the sanctuary and from the community. Defilement was even punished with death. Cleansing brought people back into the life and holiness of the community. The NT uses the Gk word *baptizo* to describe such washings. The Book of Hebrews mingles the blood of the covenant with references to Baptism.

OT Example: Entering the Promised Land (Jsh 3)
NT Affirmation: 1Pt 2:2–3, 9–12
Meaning: With great anticipation, the Israelites stood on the banks of the Jordan River, ready to enter the Promised Land. God told Joshua to lead the priests into the Jordan River with the ark of the Lord. They would open the way for the people. God called Canaan a "land flowing with milk and honey" (Ex 3:8). In contrast to the wilderness, it must have seemed like heaven. But before the Israelites could enter upon their new life, they would

need to pass through the water. Early Christians symbolized this new life by drinking from a cup of milk and honey after Baptism.
OT Example: New life and the Spirit (Ezk 36:25–27)
NT Affirmation: Jn 3:5; Ac 2:38–39
Meaning: Through Ezekiel, the Lord prophesied that He would give a new heart and His Holy Spirit to those sprinkled in Baptism.

The Final Battle and the Defeat of Gog

All commentators seem to agree that chapters 38 and 39 are really a unit and their division into two chapters is artificial…. But there is no agreement on how best to outline the chapters….

The oracle is undated and leaves no clues as to any historical occasion that might have elicited it. Closely related is the question of the positioning of the sermon at just this point in the book, especially because initially it appears to interrupt the sequence of chapters 33–37 and 40–48. Those earlier chapters promise the advent of the new David, Jesus Christ, and the regeneration of God's people (e.g., 34:23–25; 36:25–28; 37:22–28). The later chapters (40–48) give us an eschatological picture of a golden age of everlasting peace, security, and proper worship in the transformed promised land—the new heavens and new earth—parallel to the portrait of the eternal state in Revelation 21–22.

But here in Ezekiel 38–39 we have a description of a fearsome, climactic battle between the forces of evil and the people of God, who have already been redeemed and restored (e.g., "gathered" in 38:8; "peaceful … resettled … regathered" in 38:11–12). If we read Ezekiel 33–48 as presenting a chronological end-time sequence, this means that after the first advent of Jesus Christ (as prophesied in chapters 33–37), those who believe in him will be raised to new spiritual life already now. Thus the resurrection in Ezek 37:1–14 corresponds to dying and rising with Christ in Baptism (Rom 6:1–4) and to the "first resurrection" in Rev 20:5–6. Baptized believers in Christ have already undergone this spiritual "first resurrection," though we still await the bodily resurrection at the return of Christ.

Yet during this N[ew] T[estament] era, the powers of darkness are still present on earth and they continue to wage war against the church. Eventually they will mount a final attack against God's redeemed in Christ, but they will be overthrown (Ezekiel 38–39) before the dawning of the eternal state (Ezekiel 40–48)…. This chronological sequence fits the common biblical picture that persecution shall increase in intensity during the present church age and reach its peak before the parousia [coming, presence] of Christ. That biblical picture is presented by Christ himself in Matthew 24 and is the gist of the entire book of Revelation. Thus both

Ezekiel 38–39 and Rev 20:7–9, which alludes to these Ezekiel chapters by way of "Gog and Magog" (Rev 20:8), describe the warfare that Satan and his minions now wage against the church, with a final all-out battle coming before the end.

Therefore Ezekiel 33–48 supports the traditional understanding of biblical eschatology. In particular, chapters 38–39 offer no support for any of the complicated dispensational schemes involving a seven-year tribulation and a rapture of believers to be followed by an earthly reign of Christ on the present earth for a literal millennium.

Since Ezekiel 38–39 has some similarities with the Gentile oracles (chapters 25–32), some ask why they were not placed there. However, one will note that those oracles dealt with close and easily identifiable neighbors of Jerusalem, who were her enemies during the OT era. These chapters deal with enemies who are more distant, both geographically (see the commentary on 38:2–3) and temporally ("in the latter years/days," 38:8, 16)….

The first major biblical reuse [of chs 38–39] occurs in Revelation 19. Preparations are being made for the celebration of the marriage feast of the Lamb: at the return of Christ, all believers, who comprise his church and bride, will dine with him (Rev 19:7–9). The counterpart to that feast is the scene of the birds gathered for their great feast on the carnage of the enemies of God and his people in Rev 19:17–21, which is clearly a reworking of Ezek 39:17–20. Gog is never mentioned by name here, but plainly the "beast" ([Gk *therion*] Rev 19:19–20) represents him. Like Gog, he leads a worldwide coalition against God's church, accompanied by a false prophet and his various charms. At the conclusion of the last great battle, in which the beast and his coalition are defeated, the beast and the false prophet are cast alive into the lake of fire (Rev 19:20).

"Gog and Magog" figure explicitly in the account of the defeat of the beast in Rev 20:7–10. Yahweh putting hooks in Gog's jaws and summoning him from the far north to wage war on Israel (Ezek 38:4–23) is OT language for the same event now described as God releasing [Gk *ho satanas*], "Satan," the adversary, from his prison for a short time after the millennium (toward the close of the church age) so that he can assemble his army, consisting of "Gog and Magog." One should note that while Ezekiel describes God as orchestrating the whole scenario, Revelation gives prominence at this point to Satan. This is, of course, no ultimate

contradiction, and [commentator C. F.] Keil nicely compares this contrast to the famous one between 2 Sam 24:1 and 1 Chr 21:1 (on who prompts David to take a census). Again, the miraculous defeat of the army coincides with the return of Jesus Christ. Ultimately, the deceiver of the nations, now identified as [Gk *diabolos*], "the devil," is recaptured and thrown into the fiery lake to join the beast and his false prophet (Rev 20:10; cf. Rev 19:20).

What has happened is that Ezekiel's prophecy of a penultimate event in human history ("the latter years/days," 38:8, 16) has become a prophecy of the final, ultimate, universal victory by the Messiah over the cosmic forces of evil. In NT context, this means that the victory Jesus won on Calvary over our sin, death, and the devil is in principle complete ("it is finished," Jn 19:30), but still awaits its consummation at the end of human history. Every time we partake of the Eucharist, we proleptically join the celestial victors in "a foretaste of the feast to come."

Horace D. Hummel, *Ezekiel 21–48*, CC (St. Louis: Concordia, 2007), 1099–1103.

Footnotes

Footnotes for Ezekiel, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:1 Or *from God*
- [2] 1:4 Or *amber*; also verse 27
- [1] 1:15 Hebrew *of their faces*
- [2] 1:17 Hebrew *on their four sides*
- [3] 1:20 Or *the spirit of life*; also verse 21
- [1] 1:26 Or *lapis lazuli*
- [2] 1:27 Or *it*

Footnotes for Ezekiel, Chapter 2

- [3] 2:1 Or *Son of Adam*; so throughout Ezekiel
- [4] 2:6 Or *on scorpion plants*

Footnotes for Ezekiel, Chapter 3

- [1] 3:12 Or *the wind*; also verse 14
- [2] 3:12 Or *sound*
- [1] 3:15 Or *Chebar, and to where they dwelt*
- [2] 3:18 Or *in*; also verses 19, 20
- [1] 3:22 Or *plain*; also verse 23

Footnotes for Ezekiel, Chapter 4

- [2] 4:4 Or *iniquity*; also verses 5, 6, 17
- [1] 4:9 A type of wheat
- [2] 4:10 A *shekel* was about 2/5 ounce or 11 grams
- [3] 4:10 Or *at a set time daily*; also verse 11
- [4] 4:11 A *hin* was about 4 quarts or 3.5 liters
- [5] 4:14 Hebrew *my soul* (or *throat*) *has never been made unclean*
- [6] 4:16 Hebrew *staff*

Footnotes for Ezekiel, Chapter 5

- [1] 5:7 Some Hebrew manuscripts and Syriac lack *not*
- [2] 5:8 The same Hebrew expression can mean *obey rules*, or *execute judgments*, depending on the context
- [3] 5:11 Some Hebrew manuscripts *I will cut you down*
- [1] 5:15 Dead Sea Scroll, Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate, Targum; Masoretic Text *And it shall be*
- [2] 5:16 Hebrew *them*
- [3] 5:16 Hebrew *staff*

Footnotes for Ezekiel, Chapter 6

- [4] 6:6 Or *and punished*
- [1] 6:14 Some Hebrew manuscripts; most Hebrew manuscripts *Diblah*

Footnotes for Ezekiel, Chapter 7

- [2] 7:2 Or *earth*
- [3] 7:5 Some Hebrew manuscripts (compare Syriac, Targum); most Hebrew manuscripts *Disaster! A unique disaster!*
- [4] 7:7 The meaning of the Hebrew word is uncertain; also verse 10
- [5] 7:11 The meaning of this last Hebrew sentence is uncertain
- [1] 7:12 Or *abundance*; also verses 13, 14
- [2] 7:13 The meaning of this last Hebrew sentence is uncertain
- [3] 7:22 Or *secret*
- [4] 7:23 Probably refers to an instrument of captivity
- [5] 7:24 By revocalization (compare Septuagint); Hebrew *and those who sanctify them*
- [6] 7:26 Or *instruction*

Footnotes for Ezekiel, Chapter 8

- [1] 8:2 By revocalization (compare Septuagint); Hebrew *of fire*
- [2] 8:2 Or *amber*
- [1] 8:17 Or *my*

Footnotes for Ezekiel, Chapter 10

- [1] 10:1 Or *lapis lazuli*
- [1] 10:11 Hebrew *to their four sides*
- [2] 10:11 Hebrew *the head*
- [3] 10:12 Or *their whole body, their backs, their hands, and their wings*
- [4] 10:17 Or *spirit of life*

Footnotes for Ezekiel, Chapter 11

- [5] 11:3 Or *Is not the time near ... ?*
- [1] 11:15 Hebrew *the men of your redemption*
- [2] 11:16 Or *in small measure*
- [1] 11:21 Hebrew *To the heart of their detestable things and their abominations their heart goes; I will*

Footnotes for Ezekiel, Chapter 12

- [2] 12:3 Or *will see that*
- [1] 12:10 Or *This burden is*
- [2] 12:10 Hebrew *in the midst of them*
- [3] 12:22 The Hebrew for *you* is plural
- [4] 12:23 Hebrew *word*

Footnotes for Ezekiel, Chapter 13

- [1] 13:10 Or *plaster*; also verses 11, 14, 15

Footnotes for Ezekiel, Chapter 14

- [1] 14:10 Or *iniquity*; three times in this verse
- [2] 14:13 Hebrew *staff*

Footnotes for Ezekiel, Chapter 16

- [1] 16:10 Or *with rich fabric*
- [2] 16:15 Or *were unfaithful*; also verses 16, 17, 26, 28
- [3] 16:15 Or *unfaithfulness*; also verses 20, 22, 25, 26, 29, 33, 34, 36
- [4] 16:15 Hebrew *it*
- [5] 16:16 The meaning of this Hebrew sentence is uncertain
- [6] 16:25 Hebrew *spreading your legs*
- [1] 16:30 Revocalization yields *How I am filled with anger against you*
- [1] 16:57 Some manuscripts (compare Syriac) *of Edom*
- [1] 16:61 Or *not apart from*

Footnotes for Ezekiel, Chapter 17

- [2] 17:5 Hebrew *in a field of seed*
- [3] 17:13 Hebrew *seed*
- [1] 17:21 Some Hebrew manuscripts, Syriac, Targum; most Hebrew manuscripts *all the fugitives*

Footnotes for Ezekiel, Chapter 18

- [2] 18:2 The Hebrew for *you* is plural
- [1] 18:8 That is, profit that comes from charging interest to the poor; also verses 13, 17 (compare Leviticus 25:36)
- [2] 18:17 Septuagint; Hebrew *from the poor*
- [1] 18:30 Or *lest iniquity be your stumbling block*

Footnotes for Ezekiel, Chapter 19

- [1] 19:7 Hebrew *knew*
- [2] 19:9 Or *in a wooden collar*
- [3] 19:10 Some Hebrew manuscripts; most Hebrew manuscripts *in your blood*
- [4] 19:11 Or *the clouds*

Footnotes for Ezekiel, Chapter 20

- [1] 20:5 Hebrew *I lifted my hand*; twice in this verse; also verses 6, 15, 23, 28, 42
- [1] 20:29 *Bamah* means *high place*
- [2] 20:31 Hebrew *and make your children pass through the fire*
- [1] 20:45 Ch 21:1 in Hebrew
- [2] 20:46 Or *toward Teman*

Footnotes for Ezekiel, Chapter 21

- [3] 21:1 Ch 21:6 in Hebrew
- [4] 21:2 Some Hebrew manuscripts, compare Septuagint, Syriac *against their sanctuary*
- [5] 21:10 Probable reading; Hebrew *The rod of my son despises everything of wood*
- [6] 21:13 Or *For it is a testing; and what if even the rod despises? It shall not be!*
- [7] 21:14 Hebrew *its third*
- [8] 21:15 Hebrew *many stumbling blocks*
- [9] 21:15 The meaning of the Hebrew word rendered *taken up* is uncertain
- [1] 21:21 Or *household idols*

- [2] 21:25 Or *slain*; also verse 29

Footnotes for Ezekiel, Chapter 22

- [1] 22:4 Some Hebrew manuscripts, Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate, Targum; most Hebrew manuscripts *until*
- [2] 22:12 That is, profit that comes from charging interest to the poor (compare Leviticus 25:36)

Footnotes for Ezekiel, Chapter 23

- [1] 23:3 Hebrew *nipples*; also verses 8, 21
- [1] 23:11 Hebrew *than she*
- [2] 23:21 Vulgate, Syriac; Hebrew *bosom for the sake of*
- [3] 23:24 Septuagint; the meaning of the Hebrew word is unknown
- [1] 23:37 Or *have even made pass through the fire*
- [2] 23:42 Or *Sabeans*
- [3] 23:43 The meaning of the Hebrew verse is uncertain

Footnotes for Ezekiel, Chapter 24

- [1] 24:5 Compare verse 10; Hebrew *the bones*
- [2] 24:6 Hebrew *no lot has fallen upon it*
- [3] 24:10 Or *empty out the broth*
- [4] 24:12 The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain

Footnotes for Ezekiel, Chapter 25

- [1] 25:5 Hebrew *and the Ammonites*
- [2] 25:8 Septuagint lacks *and Seir*

Footnotes for Ezekiel, Chapter 26

- [1] 26:7 Hebrew *Nebuchadrezzar*; so throughout Ezekiel

Footnotes for Ezekiel, Chapter 27

- [1] 27:15 Hebrew; Septuagint *Rhodes*
- [2] 27:17 The meaning of the Hebrew word is unknown
- [3] 27:19 Probable reading; Hebrew *wool of Sahar, Vedan, and Javan*

Footnotes for Ezekiel, Chapter 28

- [1] 28:12 The meaning of the Hebrew phrase is uncertain
- [2] 28:13 Or *lapis lazuli*
- [3] 28:13 The meaning of the Hebrew phrase is uncertain
- [4] 28:14 The meaning of the Hebrew phrase is uncertain
- [5] 28:16 Or *banished you*

Footnotes for Ezekiel, Chapter 29

- [1] 29:6 Hebrew *they*

- [2] 29:7 Syriac (compare Psalm 69:23); Hebrew *to stand*
- [3] 29:9 Hebrew *he*
- [4] 29:19 Or *multitude*

Footnotes for Ezekiel, Chapter 30

- [1] 30:3 Hebrew lacks *doom for*
- [2] 30:4 Or *multitude*; also verse 10
- [3] 30:5 With Septuagint; Hebrew *Cub*
- [4] 30:5 Hebrew *and the sons of the land of the covenant*
- [5] 30:9 Hebrew *the day of Egypt*
- [1] 30:15 Or *wealth*
- [2] 30:16 Or *distress*
- [3] 30:17 Or *the cities*; Hebrew *they*

Footnotes for Ezekiel, Chapter 31

- [4] 31:3 Or *its top went through the thick boughs*; also verses 10, 14
- [1] 31:10 Syriac, Vulgate; Hebrew *you*
- [2] 31:14 Or *of Adam*
- [3] 31:15 Hebrew *it*

Footnotes for Ezekiel, Chapter 32

- [1] 32:5 Hebrew *your height*
- [2] 32:12 Or *wealth*
- [3] 32:17 Hebrew lacks *in the twelfth month*
- [1] 32:20 Hebrew *She*

Footnotes for Ezekiel, Chapter 33

- [1] 33:12 Hebrew *by it*
- [1] 33:32 Hebrew *like the singing of lustful songs with a beautiful voice and one who plays*

Footnotes for Ezekiel, Chapter 34

- [1] 34:16 Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate *I will watch over*
- [1] 34:22 Or *save*

Footnotes for Ezekiel, Chapter 36

- [1] 36:27 Or *my just decrees*
- [2] 36:38 Hebrew *flock of holy things*

Footnotes for Ezekiel, Chapter 37

- [1] 37:1 Or *plain*; also verse 2
- [2] 37:5 Or *spirit*; also verses 6, 9, 10
- [3] 37:7 Or *an earthquake* (compare 3:12, 13)
- [4] 37:16 Or *one piece of wood*; also verses 17, 19, 20
- [1] 37:19 Hebrew *And I will place them on it, the stick of Judah*
- [2] 37:23 Many Hebrew manuscripts; other Hebrew manuscripts *dwellings*
- [3] 37:26 Hebrew lacks *in their land*

Footnotes for Ezekiel, Chapter 38

- [4] 38:2 Or *Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech*
- [5] 38:3 Or *Gog, prince of Rosh, Meshech*
- [1] 38:13 Hebrew *young lions*
- [2] 38:21 Hebrew *against him*

Footnotes for Ezekiel, Chapter 39

- [1] 39:1 Or *Gog, prince of Rosh, Meshech*
- [2] 39:9 Or *javelins*
- [3] 39:11 *Hamon-gog* means *the multitude of Gog*
- [4] 39:14 Or *Until*
- [5] 39:16 *Hamonah* means *multitude*

Footnotes for Ezekiel, Chapter 40

- [1] 40:1 Hebrew *brought me there*
- [1] 40:5 A *cubit* was about 18 inches or 45 centimeters; a *handbreadth* was about 3 inches or 7.5 centimeters
- [2] 40:6 Hebrew *deep, and one threshold, one reed deep*
- [3] 40:14 Text uncertain; Hebrew *And he made the jambs sixty cubits, and to the jamb of the court was the gateway all around*
- [1] 40:19 Hebrew *distance from before the low gate before the inner court to the outside*
- [2] 40:19 Or *cubits. So far the eastern gate; now to the northern gate*.
- [3] 40:36 One manuscript (compare verses 29 and 33); most manuscripts lack *were of the same size as the others*
- [4] 40:37 Septuagint, Vulgate (compare verses 26, 31, 34); Hebrew *jambs*
- [5] 40:38 Hebrew *at the jambs, the gates*

- [1] 40:43 Or *shelves*
- [2] 40:44 Septuagint; Hebrew *were chambers for singers*
- [3] 40:44 Hebrew lacks *one*
- [4] 40:44 Septuagint; Hebrew *east*
- [5] 40:46 Hebrew lacks *alone*
- [6] 40:48 Septuagint; Hebrew lacks *was fourteen cubits, and the sidewalls of the gate*
- [7] 40:49 Septuagint; Hebrew *eleven*
- [8] 40:49 Septuagint; Hebrew *and by steps that would go up to it*

Footnotes for Ezekiel, Chapter 41

- [9] 41:1 A *cubit* was about 18 inches or 45 centimeters
- [10] 41: Compare Septuagint; Hebrew *tent*
- [11] 41:2 Hebrew *its length*
- [12] 41:3 Septuagint; Hebrew *and the breadth*
- [1] 41:6 Septuagint, compare 1 Kings 6:6; the meaning of the Hebrew word is uncertain
- [2] 41:15 The meaning of the Hebrew term is unknown; also verse 16
- [3] 41:17 Hebrew *were measurements*
- [4] 41:22 Septuagint; Hebrew lacks *two cubits broad*
- [5] 41:22 Septuagint; Hebrew *length*
- [6] 41:25 The meaning of the Hebrew word is unknown; also verse 26

Footnotes for Ezekiel, Chapter 42

- [1] 42:2 A *cubit* was about 18 inches or 45 centimeters
- [2] 42:3 The meaning of the Hebrew word is unknown; also verse 5
- [3] 42:4 Septuagint, Syriac; Hebrew *and a way of one cubit*
- [4] 42:8 Or *temple*
- [5] 42:10 Septuagint; Hebrew *east*

- [6] 42:11 Hebrew *and all their exits*
- [7] 42:12 The meaning of the Hebrew verse is uncertain

Footnotes for Ezekiel, Chapter 43

- [8] 43:3 Some Hebrew manuscripts and Vulgate; most Hebrew manuscripts *when I*
- [1] 43:7 Or *the monuments*; also verse 9
- [2] 43:7 Or *at their deaths*
- [3] 43:13 A *cubit* was about 18 inches or 45 centimeters; a *handbreadth* was about 3 inches or 7.5 centimeters
- [4] 43:13 Or *its gutter shall be one cubit deep*
- [5] 43:13 A *span* was about 9 inches or 22 centimeters
- [1] 43:26 Hebrew *fill its hand*

Footnotes for Ezekiel, Chapter 44

- [2] 44:6 Septuagint; Hebrew lacks *house*
- [3] 44:7 Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate; Hebrew *They*
- [1] 44:10 Or *iniquity*; also verse 12

Footnotes for Ezekiel, Chapter 45

- [1] 45:1 A *cubit* was about 18 inches or 45 centimeters
- [2] 45:1 Septuagint; Hebrew *ten*
- [3] 45:5 Septuagint; Hebrew *as their possession, twenty chambers*
- [4] 45:10 An *ephah* was about 3/5 of a bushel or 22 liters; a *bath* was about 6 gallons or 22 liters
- [5] 45:11 A *homer* was about 6 bushels or 220 liters

- [6] 45:12 A *shekel* was about 2/5 ounce or 11 grams; a *gerah* was about 1/50 ounce or 0.6 gram
- [7] 45:12 A *mina* was about 1 1/4 pounds or 0.6 kilogram
- [1] 45:14 A *cor* was about 6 bushels or 220 liters
- [2] 45:14 See Vulgate; Hebrew *(ten baths are a homer, for ten baths are a homer)*
- [3] 45:24 A *hin* was about 4 quarts or 3.5 liters

Footnotes for Ezekiel, Chapter 46

- [4] 46:5 An *ephah* was about 3/5 bushel or 22 liters
- [1] 46:5 A *hin* was about 4 quarts or 3.5 liters
- [2] 46:22 Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate; the meaning of the Hebrew word is uncertain
- [3] 46:22 A *cubit* was about 18 inches or 45 centimeters

Footnotes for Ezekiel, Chapter 47

- [1] 47:3 A *cubit* was about 18 inches or 45 centimeters
- [2] 47:8 That is, the Dead Sea
- [3] 47:8 Hebrew *will be healed*; also verses 9, 11
- [4] 47:9 Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate, Targum; Hebrew *the two rivers go*
- [5] 47:9 Hebrew lacks *the waters of the sea*
- [6] 47:10 That is, the Mediterranean Sea; also verses 15, 19, 20
- [7] 47:13 Probable reading; Hebrew *The valley of the boundary*
- [8] 47:15 Septuagint; Hebrew *the entrance of Zedad, Hamath*
- [1] 47:17 The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain
- [2] 47:17 Probable reading; Hebrew *and as for the north side*
- [3] 47:18 Compare Syriac; Hebrew *to the eastern sea you shall measure*

- [4] 47:19 Hebrew lacks *of Egypt*

Footnotes for Ezekiel, Chapter 48

- [5] 48:1 Probable reading; Hebrew *and they shall be his*
- [6] 48:1 Septuagint (compare verses 2–8); Hebrew *the east side the west*
- [7] 48:8 A *cubit* was about 18 inches or 45 centimeters
- [8] 48:9 Compare 45:1; Hebrew *ten*
- [9] 48:13 Septuagint; Hebrew *10,000*
- [1] 48:28 Hebrew lacks *of Egypt*
- [2] 48:28 That is, the Mediterranean Sea
- [3] 48:34 One Hebrew manuscript, Syriac (compare Septuagint); most Hebrew manuscripts *their gates three*

Study Notes

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 1:1 *In the thirtieth year*. Likely refers to the prophet's age. As a priest (v 3), this was the age when, if he were still in Jerusalem, he could assume full priestly duties in the temple. The date may be calculated as July 31, 593 BC. The true God is not confined to the temple, but comes to Ezekiel and calls him to a ministry of another sort. *Chebar*. Exact location unknown; likely in southwest Babylon (modern Iraq), near the ancient city of Nippur. Chebar is usually identified with the modern silted up river Shat-en-Nil, once fed by the Euphrates. *canal*. Hbr "river"; often specifically the Euphrates. Feeder canals often are as large as many rivers. *the heavens were opened*. The vision did not arise from within Ezekiel but from without. The almighty God came to him at a time and place of His choosing. *visions of God*. See ESV note. In the divine vision, Ezekiel saw God's glory but not God Himself (cf v 28). Iren: "The prophets saw the dispensations of God in part, but not actually God Himself… . When he set forth all the rest of the vision of the thrones, lest anyone might happen to think that in those [visions] he had actually seen God, he added: 'This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of God' " (*ANF* 1:490–91). *visions*. Probably not a typical plural, but intensive, a Hbr idiom for the greatness of the vision.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 1:2 *fifth year of the exile of King Jehoiachin*. Mid-593 BC, counting inclusively, as the OT usually does. Twelve other dates throughout Ezk follow the same pattern, the last in 40:1. All of these record times when Ezekiel received divine messages, except for 33:21, which reports the arrival of a messenger reporting the fall of Jerusalem. Even more noteworthy, all are in chronological order with the one exception of 29:17, which is dated 571 BC, the latest date in the Book. Ezekiel ministered some 22 years. See chronology, p ci. *Jehoiachin*. The rightful heir to the Davidic throne. Faithful Israelites centered their messianic hopes on him. (Cf 2Ki 24:8–17; 25:27–30; Jer 52.)

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 1:3 The rest of his Book is autobiographical. Ezekiel likely added this historical note for the benefit of later readers. This chronological reckoning will be used throughout Ezk. *the word of the* LORD *came*. The Bible often uses "word" and "vision" interchangeably. An actual vision comes in ch 1, but we hear no words until ch 2. Neither are artificial

or magical means used to induce inspiration, as was common in paganism. God cannot be manipulated; He comes in grace of His own free will. See p 1080. *Lord*. See p 1227. *Ezekiel … him*. The only place in the entire Book where Ezekiel does not use the first person ("I"). *the priest, the son of Buzi*. Implies that his father was also a priest. Priesthood was hereditary in the OT. See p 228. *Chaldeans*. Used almost interchangeably with "Babylonians" (e.g., 12:13; 23:15, 23). The city of Babylon was the capital, but had been invaded by the Chaldeans, an Aramaic-speaking people from the northwest (modern Syria). In alliance with the Medes, the Chaldeans defeated and replaced the original Babylonian people as the world power at about the time Ezekiel came of age. This explains why Aramaic appears in Dn and Ezr and also influences Ezekiel's language at points. See p 720. Since there had been a great Babylonian Empire a millennium earlier, historians call the empire of Ezekiel's era "neo-Babylonian." *the hand of the Lord*. First of seven appearances in Ezk. See p 842. Ezekiel esp associates this expression with his receipt of a vision.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 1:1–3 The presence of the exiles "in the land of the Chaldeans" far from home is a manifestation of God's judgment upon an unfaithful people. But a remnant has remained faithful, among them Ezekiel the priest, whom God chooses as His instrument to explain why that judgment had come. Ezekiel will call the exiles to repentance and describe God's mercy promised to them. • Lord, because of our sins, we are in "exile" from our true home. But we give You thanks daily that You send ministers to preach the Gospel of Christ's death and resurrection, to absolve us of our sins in His name, and thus lead us to our spiritual home, now and in eternity. Amen.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 1:4 *stormy wind came out of the north*. The head of the Persian Gulf is characterized by strong sand storms in the summer months. Ezekiel may be describing this natural phenomenon, which God transfigures for him (cf Ex 3, the burning bush). Neighboring pagans associated such storms with a storm-god. But here, the almighty Creator uses the storm to address the prophet in a land where He was not worshiped. *fire flashing*. Perhaps lightning. *as it were*. One of many expressions (including "like," "likeness," and "appearance") Ezekiel uses to show he describes the indescribable. *gleaming metal*. Something bright and reddish-yellow in color. Ancient translators often translated the Hbr word as

"electrum," a natural alloy of gold and silver. Another ancient parallel suggests "amber" (see ESV note).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 1:5 *likeness*. See note, v 4. *four*. Frequently used in Ezk, perhaps signifying completeness or totality. See p 217. *living creatures*. Later, Ezekiel will call these creatures "cherubim" (10:1); he may be reluctant to do so initially because their appearance was different from the cherubim above the ark of the covenant in both the tabernacle and the temple. See note, 10:1; see also p 1323.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 1:6 *four faces … four wings*. The creatures could see and move in all directions. A contrast may be intended with the hybrid creatures of Babylonian mythology, to which magical powers were ascribed. This vision stresses that all power and activity is under the control of the one omnipotent and omnipresent God.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 1:7 *Their legs were straight*. Could imply "unjointed" (i.e., having no knees) because the creatures did not walk, but flew. Alternatively, it may mean they were standing, not lying down with their legs folded beneath them. *sole of a calf's foot*. Probably a hoof. *they sparkled*. Likely the creatures as a whole, not merely their legs (cf v 4).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 1:8 Unlike birds, these hybrid creatures had human hands under their wings.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 1:9 *wings touched one another*. Cf 1Ki 6:27. Although there were four distinct creatures, they appeared to be a single creature (cf v 11). *touched*. Or, "joined," implying that each wing moved in perfect concert with the others. *straight forward*. In unison of purpose. Any direction was straight ahead for one of the creatures.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 1:10 They appear to be listed in the order in which they came into the prophet's field of vision. So, looking at the creatures head-on, the human face was the first discernible, then the lion on the right, the ox on the left, and finally an eagle at the rear. See note, v 6. At the head of all three is man, made in the image of God, but also to have dominion over the rest (see note, Gn 1:26). See note, Nu 2:2. Early in the history of the Christian Church, these four faces came to be identified with the four evangelists, who, in spite of their different accents, all proclaim the same Gospel. *likeness*. See note, v 4. *The four*. Described as a unit. *lion*. Representing strength, courage, and royalty ("the king of beasts"). *ox*. Common symbol of fertility and divinity in addition to its domestic utility. *eagle*. Renowned for its speed and stateliness.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 1:11 Partially repeats v 9. *two covered their bodies*. Apparently out of modesty, just as in Isaiah's inaugural vision.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 1:12 *Wherever the spirit would go, they went*. Neither wings nor legs play any role in the movement of the creatures. *spirit*. Hbr *ruach*. In v 4, it meant "wind." Here, it must mean "spirit," but whose? It could refer to the will of the creatures. But God's Spirit plays a prominent role elsewhere in Ezk, often lifting Ezekiel himself up and carrying him various places. The divine element cannot be eliminated here, much as the NT describes our human spirits as indwelt by the Holy Spirit. Christians will not hesitate to identify this divine Spirit with the Third Person of the Trinity. Bas: "Now of the rest of the Powers each is believed to be in a circumscribed place… . But the Spirit is believed to have been operating at the same time in Habakkuk and in Daniel at Babylon, and to have been at the prison with Jeremiah, and with Ezekiel at the Chebar. For the Spirit of the Lord fills the world" (*NPNF* 2 8:34–35).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 1:13 *like burning coals of fire … torches moving to and fro*. See note, v 4.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 1:14 *darted to and fro*. See note, v 12.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 1:15 *wheel on the earth*. Appears to anticipate the vehicle's landing in v 24b. Such a premature notice is an indication of Ezekiel's excitement. When the vision is repeated in ch 10, Ezekiel is calmer.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 1:16 *beryl*. Likely a bluish-green stone, one of the precious stones in the breastpiece of the high priest (Ex 28:30; 39:13). Cf 28:13. *wheel within a wheel*. Two wheels intersecting at right angles. Concentric rims is also possible, but less likely.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 1:17 The wheels can move freely in any direction (like a round caster on chair legs allowing the chair to roll in any direction without turning the direction the chair faces). See notes, 1Ki 1:46; 7:27.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 1:18–21 *full of eyes*. Stresses that the entire vehicle is alive. Even the wheels were under the guidance of the Spirit.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 1:18 *rims*. Outer surfaces of the wheels.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 1:22 *expanse*. Traditionally translated "firmament"; used in Gn 1:6–8 for the vault of heaven, which to the naked eye looks like an inverted bowl stretching to the horizon. God's throne stands in heaven above. God reigns over the entire universe, everything beneath the heavens. King Jehoiachin may have been dethroned (v 2), but God's universal rule

continues forever. See pp 1565–66, 1291. *crystal*. Usually means "ice," which looks very much like glass.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 1:23–24 Cf v 11. Their flight now ends and they relax.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 1:24 Three similes describe the sound the creatures make while active. *many waters*. Like the awesome roar of ocean breakers (cf Ps 93:4). Sometimes, esp in Ps, waters represent the forces of threatening evil, although sometimes God uses water for salvation (e.g., the exodus). *sound of the Almighty*. Or, "voice of the Almighty." *Almighty*. See p 1227. *tumult … sound of an army*. Preparing for battle will make quite a din.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 1:25 When the living creatures fall silent, Ezekiel is able to make out another sound—a voice coming from the expanse above. The words of the voice are not reported until ch 2.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 1:26 *likeness … appearance like*. Ezekiel attempts to describe the new scene surrounding God Himself. See note, v 4. *throne*. Meant to be occupied by the King of heaven. *sapphire*. Not the blue stone we know by that name, but rather lapis lazuli. *human*. Hbr *'adam*, "man."

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 1:27 *gleaming … fire … brightness*. Different words describe the same appearance. *gleaming metal*. See note, v 4. *fire enclosed all around*. Seems to imply that fire was enclosed in the metal-like upper torso.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 1:28 Climax and conclusion. *Such was the appearance*. See note, v 1. *glory of the* LORD. Hbr *kebod yahweh*. Esp important in Ezk. Sometimes "glory" simply implies "splendor, fame." But here it implies nothing less than God Himself in preincarnate revelation (cf Ex 33:18). The word refers not only to the divine figure on the throne but also to the apparatus underneath it. After the incarnation, the NT describes Christ as glorious (e.g., at the transfiguration [Mt 17:2; Mk 9:2–3; Lk 9:29–31]; at the throne scene [Rv 4]; in Isaiah's vision [Jn 12:41]; at the second coming, [Mt 19:28; 25:31]). See p 1227. *fell on my face*. Act of submission and worship. *the voice of one speaking*. God's message forms the contents of chs 2–3.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 1:4–28 Ezekiel describes the movement of the living creatures and the revelation of God's glory and voice. Today, God does not send us visions with new revelations, but works through the Word to convince us that we are "poor, miserable sinners." Yet God does not

show His glory in Christ to terrify us. Through repentance and absolution, He desires to raise us with Christ in newness of life (see SC, Baptism, pp xxxix–xl). • Lord, lead us to daily repentance and a life of thanksgiving for the revelation of Your glory in Your Son, who will through His Holy Spirit lead us into the blessings of eternal life. Amen.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON **Ch 2–3** Sometimes these chapters are artificially separated from ch 1, but they are a unit. See note, 1:3.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 2:1 *He*. God Himself, but under His revealed form as the "glory." See note, 1:28. *Son of man*. God never addresses Ezekiel by name, but by "son of man" 93 times throughout Ezk. The expression accents the prophet's weakness as a creature in contrast to the Creator's omnipotence displayed in the vision. See p 1080.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 2:2 The Spirit works through the Word, and so enters Ezekiel's spirit and raises him, as it were, from the dead. Cf Rm 8:11.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 2:3 *send you*. An official assignment. The word "apostle" is derived from the Gk equivalent. See p 1901. *the people of Israel*. Lit, "sons of Israel," emphasizing the theme of hereditary guilt (or original sin). The phrase is relatively rare in Ezk. *Israel*. Ambiguous in the OT. Originally it is the covenant name of God's chosen people (see note, Gn 32:28). The religious significance was preempted for political purposes when the 10 northern tribes broke away and used it as the name of their country (1Ki 12). Ezekiel uses "Israel" for (1) the conquered Northern Kingdom, (2) the exiles with him in Babylon, and (3) those still in the land of Israel. Ezekiel's audience here was those exiled with him, but it often sounds as though he is also writing to those still in Jerusalem. There was communication between the two communities, and their religious ideas were essentially the same. *nations of rebels*. Parallel to "people of Israel." In later Hbr, "nations" assumed the meaning of "Gentiles" (i.e., heathen unbelievers). The implication here seems to be that the rebellious Israelites were like another heathen nation before God.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 2:4 Ezekiel's primary mission was to his present generation. They were born rebels, but they could not evade personal responsibility by blaming their ancestors. *impudent*. Lit, "hard of face" (anticipating "face" in 3:8). *stubborn*. Lit, "strong, hard of heart." *Thus says the Lord* GOD. God sends Ezekiel to preach His Word, not Ezekiel's own judgments. This expression is used far more frequently in Ezk than in the

rest of the OT, so much so that it almost becomes Ezekiel's signature. See p 1080.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 2:5 *hear*. In the sense of "listen" or "obey." *rebellious house*. Instead of "house of Israel." *they will know that a prophet has been among them*. Variant of Ezekiel's recognition formula, "Then you will know that I am the LORD." They may have to learn the hard way, but learn they will! See "know that I am the LORD," p 1079. A prophet (or pastor) who preaches only what his audience wants to hear is rebellious and unfaithful. A prophet or pastor is not called to be successful by earthly standards, but to be faithful.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 2:6 The opposition is pictured as inflicting pain that will hurt but not prove fatal.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 2:7 *rebellious house*. Lit, "rebellion," as though this were their very essence.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 2:8 Transitional verse. *Be not rebellious*. Lit, "Be not rebellion." Underscores the intensity of the opposition that Ezekiel faces. *eat what I give you*. Unexpected command to the prophet; faithfulness to the Word does not include the option to pick and choose.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 2:9 *a hand was stretched out*. God's outstretched hand will appear again in 8:3; a cherub's hand appears in 10:7. Those instances speak of the hand as an instrument, not as an overpowering force (see p 842). *a scroll of a book*. Or, "a rolled-up scroll." Books as we know them (codices) did not appear until about the time of Christ, but scrolls were commonly used.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 2:10 *He spread it*. God unrolled the scroll. *writing on the front … back*. Common on scrolls. This detail also tells us the scroll was made of papyrus (only in NT times did they develop the technique of preparing skins so that they could be written on both sides). *lamentation and mourning and woe*. Hbr syntax indicates that this was a title written on the outside of the scrolls, essentially as is done with books today. It accurately summarizes the contents of the scroll, representing the bulk of the first part of Ezekiel's preaching (chs 4–24), until his constant prophecy of the fall of Jerusalem comes true.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 3:1 *house of Israel*. Phrase appears 78 times in Ezk but rarely in the rest of the OT. "House" would accent a family solidarity in the covenant. Although the Israelites are descendants, they have abandoned the heritage of the family of God.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 3:3 *fill your stomach*. The Word must permeate every fiber of Ezekiel's being so he will be prepared for the unpopular ministry ahead of him. *as sweet as honey*. Frequent simile in the Bible. Cf Ps 119:103; Rv 10:8–10, which appear to be only figures of speech. Here it seems Ezekiel actually did eat the papyrus scroll, which would not normally taste sweet.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 3:4 *speak with My words*. Implies a verbatim repetition of God's own words.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 3:5 Ezekiel is called to preach to his own people, who, of course, speak the same language. *foreign speech*. Hbr idiom. Lit, "deep of lips." *hard language*. Lit, "heavy of tongues." Is 28:11–12 vividly predicts how painfully difficult it will be for other exiles to learn a foreign language.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 3:6 *Surely … they would listen*. Hyperbole. Underscores the unexpectedness of Israel's obstinacy. Compare the Ninevites' reaction to Jonah's preaching (Jnh 3:5–9) with the Lord's denunciation of Capernaum and its neighbors (Mt 11:20–24). It is often harder to regain those who once belonged but have fallen away.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 3:7 *hard forehead and a stubborn heart*. See note, 2:4. Conversion is a matter of the will, which only God can move. Ezekiel should not take their rejection personally, because they are really rejecting the One who sent him (cf 1Sm 8:7; Lk 10:16).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 3:8 God promises to equip Ezekiel with the same unyielding determination as his foes show (cf Jer 1:18, Jeremiah's call). *hard*. From Hbr word for "strong," repeated three times in vv 8–9, and also found in Ezekiel's name, which means "God will strengthen." Deliberate wordplay. Ezekiel's "strong" name will characterize him.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 3:9 *emery harder than flint*. Restating v 8 in picture language. *emery*. Precise meaning of the Hbr is unknown. Used for sharpening hard objects. *flint*. Proverbial for its hardness. *Fear them not … rebellious house*. Nearly verbatim restatement of elements of 2:6–7.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 3:10 *Son of man*. Address signals a change of topic or a summary of a section. See note, 2:1. *all My words*. Placed first for emphasis. *receive in your heart, and hear with your ears*. Reinforcement of physical eating of the scroll (v 1).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 3:11 *the exiles*. Those exiled with him, not those left behind. *your people*. This phrase is used again in ch 33, with the same

"watchman" theme as follows in 3:17–21.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 3:12 *Spirit*. See note, 2:2. We shall meet the Spirit in a similar capacity five more times in Ezk. *a great earthquake*. Hbr word may refer to a roar or rumbling of any sort. *Blessed be the glory of the* LORD *from its place!* Could imply that the glory had stood still on the ground since 1:24 until now. More likely, this is a spontaneous salute to the departing glory, spoken by heavenly, angelic creatures. Cf 9:3; 10:4, 18–19; 11:22. *Blessed*. See p 842. *place!* Frequently means "holy place, sanctuary." Ordinarily, God's earthly place would be between the cherubim in the Jerusalem temple, but now He is specially present for the exiles a thousand miles away, as demonstrated by the voice/earthquake.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 3:13 See note, 1:24.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 3:14 *in bitterness in the heat of my spirit*. His psychological disposition. Such a notice is unexpected in a prophet who so rarely shares his emotions (in contrast to his contemporary, Jeremiah). Some other prophets were reluctant to answer God's call (cf Ex 4:1–17; Jnh 1:3; 4:1), but Ezekiel evidences no such mood. The words imply Ezekiel's identification with God's own emotions, a result of swallowing the scroll. *bitterness*. Hbr sounds similar to the frequent description of the exiles as a "rebellious" house. *heat of my spirit, the hand of the* LORD. Both God's Spirit and His hand influence Ezekiel here, and, as often, the two are not easy to distinguish. *heat*. Can be translated "fury," "rage"; frequently used in Ezk of God's wrath at His people's disobedience. *being strong upon me*. Apparently refers to the Lord compelling Ezekiel to do exactly as He commands. *strong*. May be another play on Ezekiel's name. See note, v 8.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 3:15 *I came to the exiles*. Ezekiel was somewhere outside the settlement itself at the time of the call and now returns to exercise his ministry. *Tel-abib*. The mound where Ezekiel and the other exiles settled. A "tell" is an artificial mound built up by layers of occupation (cf Jsh 11:13); modern villages are still often located on such mounds. *Chebar canal*. See note, 1:1. *overwhelmed … days*. Adjusting to the entirely different lifestyle or vocation that was now to begin. *seven*. Literal, and likely also symbolic use to indicate completion (e.g., Jb 2:13; Ezr 6:22). Seven is also prominent in the consecration of a priest (Ex 29:29–37; Lv 8:33–35). See p 217. Though Ezekiel will never exercise a normal priesthood in Jerusalem, God "ordained" him into a prophetic priesthood.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 2:1–3:15 God calls Ezekiel to witness to all sorts of conditions of men, even though prospects are bleak and the audience is hostile. As the Lord strengthened Ezekiel, He will also strengthen us to proclaim the Gospel. Our life may be one of lamentation, mourning, and woe, but that may be the only way to break through pride and lead us to see how hopeless our natural condition is. If, however, God's accusing message is ingested, His word of forgiveness in Christ's atonement will be "as sweet as honey." • Lord, drown our stubbornness daily in Baptism and raise us with Christ that we may gladly perform the service He gives us. Amen.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 3:16 *the word of the* LORD *came*. See note, 1:3.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 3:17 *watchman … warning*. Military metaphor; often applied to prophets (Is 21:6–12; Hos 9:8; Hab 2:1). In the NT, it is applied to all Christians, esp in final judgment contexts. The "warning" ultimately comes from the Lord, but the prophet is responsible for relaying it to those in danger. See note, Is 21:6–12.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON **3:17b–21** Nearly duplicated in 33:1–9, though the contexts are entirely different. Here the passage is a private message and digression for the prophet alone, concerned with the message of judgment to which the prophet has been called. In 33:1–9, after the fall of Jerusalem, the message is virtually a second commissioning to proclaim Gospel promises.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 3:18–21 Four examples are given in "if … then" form. Each case involves individual accountability before God, both for the speaker (the prophet) and the listener. Each example classifies the listener as either wicked or righteous. (The word "wicked" was used rarely in the ancient Near East outside of Israel.) Great care must be taken that the distinction between "righteous" and "wicked" is heard in full biblical context. Ethics will be involved, but that is secondary. The starting point is one's standing before the heavenly throne, whether one has been declared guilty or not guilty, depending on believing or rejecting the promise (the Gospel fulfilled in the Messiah as Savior). If, in the OT, the final judgment were based on works, not grace, the religion of the OT would have been diametrically opposed to the NT, and the OT would not belong in the Bible.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 3:18 In this first example, the prophet is derelict in his duty, and both he and the wicked will die. The prophet is accountable as an individual. Death here involves the fates of individuals in the coming sack of Jerusalem, but unless the thought really is fatalistic, death or life in

these contexts also involves ultimate destinies, i.e., eternal life or damnation. Bern: "Why do you [ministers] lay your heavy yoke upon those whose burden it is rather your duty to bear? Why does the young son who has been bitten by a serpent avoid displaying his wound to the priest, to whom he ought rather to resort as to the bosom of a mother? If you are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering yourself, lest you also be tempted (Gal. 6:1)" (*WDC*, p 154). Bern: "These and similar warnings, You, O Christ, did invisibly thunder to each, I appeal to their conscience as witness. You did knock at the doors of the mind of each with kindly terrors" (*SLSB*, p 185).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 3:19 In a second "if … then" example, the prophet is faithful, but the one warned refuses to "turn." The unrepentant person will die, but it is not the prophet's fault. *not turn*. Unrepentant. See "turn," p 1080. *delivered your soul*. Potentially misleading. Hbr has no word exactly corresponding to "soul." In the OT, people do not "have" souls; they "are" souls (cf Gn 2:7). In OT usage, "soul" is the life principle, i.e., what distinguishes a living person from a corpse; "soul" is synonymous with "life."

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 3:20 The third "if … then" example is more complex. In this case, a once-faithful person falls away and dies as a result. *righteous person*. See p 843. *lay a stumbling block*. A favorite expression of Ezekiel. It cannot be that God has caused the apostasy, but the "block" is something placed in a person's path that forces him to make a decision. What is in his heart must come to open expression. Cf Rm 9:32–33; Gal 5:11. The prophet's warning might have stopped the man's defection. *his righteous deeds … not be remembered*. The Bible frequently describes God in human terms as "remembering" or "forgetting" sins (cf Jer 31:34; Heb 8:12). The formerly righteous person has no merit to which he can appeal to balance the scales of justice on the Day of Judgment. Cf Ezk 18; Heb 9:27.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 3:21 The fourth example is the exact reverse of v 20. The prophet is faithful, the one tempted heeds the warning, and both live.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 3:22–27 Returns to the main matter: Ezekiel's call (v 25; see note, vv 17b–21). This is the most complex call narrative in all Scripture. There remains yet an additional instruction and also a directive such as no other prophet was required to observe. These verses may also be considered the beginning of the action prophecies (see note, chs 4–5). If the

commands given Ezekiel here are read in that light, we have powerful action prophecies of the siege and fall of Jerusalem. Its inhabitants will be banned, at least in the sense of inability to move about the whole land freely. When Jerusalem does fall, its people will be stunned into speechlessness—at the very time when Ezekiel's muteness will be lifted (33:22).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 3:22 *the valley*. Far enough removed from the Tel-abib settlement that God could instruct Ezekiel in privacy.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 3:23 *the glory of the LORD stood there*. See note, 1:28; cf 3:12; 8:4; 43:2. *I fell on my face*. Ezekiel's response is the same as when he first saw the glory (1:28). Too casual a familiarity with God, as our "spirituality" is prone to become, suggests that we are no longer worshiping the true God.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 3:24 *Spirit entered*. See note, 2:2. *shut yourself within your house*. As the following instructions will amplify, Ezekiel is to do nothing without God's explicit command, esp in public. All other passages that specify Ezekiel's preaching speak of his house; often the elders or people came to him there (8:1; 14:1; 20:1; 33:30–31).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 3:25 *cords … be bound*. The question here is whether the cords are literal or metaphorical. One could conceive of a mob being so incensed at the prophet that they would literally tie him up. But there is no evidence in Ezk to indicate hostility toward the prophet's person, as was true of other prophets (e.g., Jeremiah). He may speak symbolically of the people's apathy or contempt. In 4:8, in a different context, God will declare Himself to be the one who ultimately does the binding.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 3:26 *tongue cling … unable to reprove them*. Ezekiel's muteness is not an unalterable, permanent condition, but is lifted whenever God speaks to him. It is made plain in 24:27 and 33:22 that his ordinary speechlessness was permanently lifted when his basic prophecy came true, i.e., when Jerusalem fell.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 3:27 *He who will hear, let him hear*. Our Lord Jesus uses almost exactly the same formula (e.g., Lk 8:8; Rv 22:15–20). God calls all to repent and believe, but, unfortunately, not all will respond positively. We do not by nature have the freedom to come to faith, but we are "free" to spurn it.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 3:16–27 All Christians are called to watch not only themselves but also others who profess to believe. It is a matter of life

and death, and the one who fails to warn the backslider is just as culpable as the one who falls away. The true God is a God of justice (His justice as revealed on the cross) and He offers it to all. Disobedience or faithlessness will bring full judgment, perhaps in this life and certainly in eternity. But full forgiveness is available freely to all who heed the watchman's warning. • O Lord, through Your Holy Spirit, open our ears that we may heed the warnings of Scripture and open our mouths that with Ezekiel we may say to all, "Thus says the Lord GOD." Amen.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON **Chs 4–5** Contains three or four of Ezekiel's action prophecies (depending on how one classifies them). Their oddity has caused some to prefer reading other prophets who are easier to understand. The prophecies here concern the siege of Jerusalem and are undated. It is impossible to say whether the siege was already going on, but the context suggests that they are predictive prophecies, not contemporaneous. On action prophecies, see p 1220. By usual count, Ezekiel performed a total of 12 action prophecies, two more than his contemporary Jeremiah (cf Ac 21:10–11). Greg: "It is the duty of a ruler to show by the voice of preaching the glory of the supernal country, to disclose what great temptations of the old enemy are lurking in this life's journey, and to correct with great asperity [roughness] of zeal such evils among those who are under his sway as ought not to be gently borne with; lest, in being too little incensed against faults, of all faults he be himself held guilty" (*NPNF* 2 12:22b).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 4:1 *brick … engrave on it a city*. Ezekiel is to sketch a city on a common mud-brick, before it had dried and hardened in the sun. See note, Ex 5:7.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 4:2 Ancient bricks were often large enough that quite a bit could be sketched on them. But the vocabulary here leaves open the possibility that some of the details may have been represented by other objects placed near the brick. *siegeworks*. General term with components following. *siege wall*. Rampart erected by the enemy to stop passage of people or material in or out of the city. *camps*. The enemy placed garrisons all around the city for an overview and supervision of everything. *mound … plant battering rams*. See note, 2Ki 18:14.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 4:3 *iron griddle*. Unclear purpose; possibly it represented metal plates or shields often fastened to the wooden battering rams to keep them from being set afire. Less likely, it is a figurative interpretation, understanding it as a barrier between God and the doomed

city. *set your face toward it*. Ezekiel is to glare at the miniature city, as a sign of God's wrath. See p 1277. *a sign*. The entire action prophecy.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 4:4–8 The second and most difficult action prophecy. As though crushed by a heavy burden, Ezekiel is to lie on his two sides, to bear the people's punishments. (In the Agnus Dei, the original wording says "bear the iniquity of the world," not "take away.") Ezekiel was not operating as a sacrificial priest, but as a prophet—representing Israel's sin, which still required atonement.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 4:4 *lie on your left side*. Ezekiel was facing north (assuming his feet pointed eastward). The left side was also generally considered the less significant side (cf Gn 48:13–19; Ec 10:2). Looking northward would suggest the Northern Kingdom, Israel, which v 5 will confirm. He obviously did not spend the entire day (or even night) in a rigid posture. Evidently, he lay on one side and then another long enough for the people to see him lying there and infer the desired lesson. *it*. Ezekiel's left side.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 4:5 A day stands for a year, the total corresponding to 390 years of Israel's history. Ezekiel gives no clue about when the historic period begins or ends. The LXX has 150, which could approximate the period of years from Solomon's apostasy to the fall of Samaria (c 950–722 BC) or perhaps some other period. The span of 390 years fits fairly well with the time from the dedication of the temple (when the glory last moved [3:12]; see p 495) to the fall of Jerusalem. (Together, 390 and 40 [v 6] make 430, approximating the years Israel was in Egypt [Gn 15:13; Ex 12:40].) The lack of clarity and many proposed interpretations encourage a loose, symbolic interpretation; the figures prophesy God's judgment against His sinful people, yet He shall deliver them in the end.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 4:6 *right side … Forty days*. This number may stand for the long, wicked reign of Manasseh before his repentance (2Ch 33:12–13). Since 40 is a favorite figure of Ezekiel, it could represent a repetition of the 40 years in the wilderness (cf Ezk 29:11–13). Another ancient line of interpretation applies the numbers to the final judgment. The lack of clarity suggests that we not insist on precise application of the numbers. See p 217.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 4:7 *arm bared*. An indication of God's hostility. Similar phrases are used of God's saving activity, recalling the exodus, but Jer 21:5 depicts God warring against unfaithful Jerusalem. See p 842.

prophesy against the city. Might include the action prophecy itself, but usually implies speaking, most likely referring to prophecies that came later, beginning in ch 5.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 4:8 *cords*. See note, 3:25. God is in control of Ezekiel's action prophecies as much as his verbal ones.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 4:9–17 A third action prophecy begins—and probably a fourth as well, all about food. Two separate diets, or rations, are spoken of—a siege diet and an exile diet. The initial and concluding verses (9–11 and 16–17) speak of the siege diet of those left in Jerusalem, forming a framework for the whole section. Within that framework, vv 12–15 describe the mundane diet of Ezekiel and his fellow exiles in Babylon.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 4:9 There will not be enough of any one grain to make a loaf of flat bread (such as pita or variants, still common in the Near East). Vegetables (legumes, beans, and lentils) would not ordinarily be made into bread. Only 390 days of this diet are mentioned; the other 40 may be taken for granted. See p 236.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 4:10–11 During the siege, food and water will be scarce enough to be strictly rationed. *twenty shekels*. C 8 oz. *sixth part of a hin*. C 2/3 qt. These are near-starvation rations (cf Jer 37:21). *from day to day*. Suggests that Ezekiel ate and drank these rations while lying down, perhaps when the most people were likely to see it. Otherwise, he could perform his normal activities and eat at least the exilic diet.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 4:12–15 The exile diet.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 4:12 *barley cake*. Not dessert, but flat bread, as was the bread of the siege. On barley, see p 236. *on human dung*. The use of animal dung (which God will shortly allow as a substitute) was and is fairly common in areas where other fuels are scarce.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 4:13 *eat their bread unclean*. See "clean," p 6. When the people of Jerusalem are exiled, they will have no choice but to eat unclean food associated with pagan sacrifices. Cf 1Co 10:20–21. *where I will drive them*. Into exile.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 4:14 *defiled myself*. Ezekiel thinks he will make himself unclean if he eats bread baked on human dung. The Bible contains no prohibition of such activity, though there could have been an oral prohibition, at least among priests.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 4:15 God compassionately accedes to Ezekiel's sensitivities and allows him to use cow's dung, a practice that was common

and obviously not offensive to the prophet. See note, v 12. Even with God's concession, the point of the action prophecy would still stand—the shame of those in exile forced to eat unclean food among the Gentiles.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 4:16 *He said to me … Son of man*. Signals the shift of topic back to an interpretation of the action prophecy of vv 9–11 (the siege diet). *supply of bread*. Lit, "staff of bread." As a broken staff is useless, a broken supply signals starvation.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 4:17 *look at one another … rot away*. Vivid language for the horror of starvation, as people can see in others how they themselves look.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON **Ch 4** Ezekiel's action prophecies illustrate the dreadful judgment that God would visit upon the Israelites for their infidelity. God's ultimate purpose was to save as many as possible, who would repent before the judgment. God's wrath is a reality (see SC, Close of the Commandments, p xxxvi). Calvary's cross represents the maximum of God's wrath as well as the maximum of His love and great desire to deliver us. • Lord, lead us in true repentance and steadfastness of faith out of our Babylonian captivity, through Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. Amen.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 5:1–12 Hair is the subject of this final action prophecy because it burns easily and because it is light enough that wind easily blows it about.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 5:1 *sharp sword*. Or, "sharp blade," used as a razor because a sword will be used in the judgments on the people. It is surprising that Ezekiel does not object as he did earlier to preparing his food on human dung. Scripture clearly prohibits priests from shaving their heads or beards. Near Eastern culture generally considered it dishonorable for a man to appear beardless (cf 2Sm 10:4; 1Ch 19:4).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 5:2 *all around the city*. Jerusalem is the real object of the shaving. God is the real wielder of the sword. (God Himself speaks concerning the third portion of the hair.) Cf 4:1–3.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 5:3 *small number*. Representing a few survivors of the catastrophic fall of the city. *skirts of your robe*. Folds in the loose-fitting outer garment commonly worn at that time.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 5:4 *a fire will come out*. Even the small number who escape (v 3) will nevertheless suffer the fire of the city's destruction. That fire will affect even those in exile with Ezekiel.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 5:5 *Thus says the Lord God*. Topic transition. See p 1080. *This is Jerusalem*. Ezekiel is to point at the brick (4:1). *center of the nations*. In medieval times, the phrase was often misunderstood as a geographical statement, but it is a theological one. The election of Zion as the city of David was part of the pivotal messianic promise. The people were misinterpreting God's promise to Zion as a magical guarantee of Jerusalem's impregnability (cf Jer 7:4), and God must demolish that fantasy. The grace God showed to Jerusalem and His chosen people in the past was well known; now its neighbors will note the imminent judgment upon Jerusalem (and Israel) for its infidelity.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 5:6 *more*. Gentiles had only natural law written on their hearts, but Israel had God's special revelation, and so they were judged more guilty before God, even if externally they were no worse (cf Lk 12:48; Rm 2:12–14).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 5:7 Introduces the punishment after the previous indictment (vv 5–6). *turbulent*. Hbr unclear. Possibly "flagrant" or "brazen." *statutes … rules*. See p 971. *not even acted according to the rules of the nations*. Even pagan nations have rules and statutes as expression of the "natural law" in their hearts. Israel did not even meet the pagan standards.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 5:8 *I, even I, am against you*. Hostile orientation formula used 14 times by Ezekiel, more often than by any other prophet. *judgments*. See "rules," p 971.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 5:9 *abominations*. Ezekiel's all-purpose word for everything contrary to God's will and provoking His wrath. Ezekiel uses it 43 times, more than the rest of the prophets combined. See note, Pr 6:16.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 5:10 *fathers shall eat their sons*. Cannibalism, even of family members, will occur in Jerusalem's siege. *scatter*. When the city falls, God will scatter the few survivors. *to all the winds*. Possibly even a stronger expression than "to the four winds" used elsewhere (see "four," p 217).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 5:11 God summarizes the reasons for His judgment. *defiled My sanctuary*. Illustrated in ch 8. Since God's promise to David and Zion centered on His presence in the Most Holy Place of the temple, all of Israel's brazen misbehavior was a personal affront toward Him who is holiness. *abominations*. See note, v 9. *My eye will not spare*. God is not mocked (Gal 6:7). He sees all. Such harshness does not contradict God's

love and desire that all should be saved (cf ch 18), but He is also a God of justice.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 5:12 *A third*. Cf v 2. *pestilence*. Likely the bubonic plague, which would spread among the starving residents of a besieged city. See note, Ps 91:3.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 5:13 *My anger spend itself … satisfy Myself*. Virtually synonymous clauses piled up to emphasize that God's justice must be satisfied. *they shall know that I am the* LORD. See p 1079. *jealousy*. For a husband to share his bride with anyone else is contrary to the nature of things. See note, Ex 20:5.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 5:14–15 The focus shifts from God's anger to the emotional and psychological effects of the city's fall upon surrounding nations. Zion, the city set on a hill (Mt 5:14) as a light to the nations (Is 42:6; 49:6), will become a symbol of shame and contempt. Various pictures are used to drive the point home. *I am the* LORD*; I have spoken*. Unique to Ezk, appearing 10 times. God's Word will accomplish what it proclaims (Is 55:11).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 5:16–17 Ezekiel brings his first major judgment sermon to a conclusion, adding new word pictures to describe the judgment.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON **Ch 5** The Lord condemns Israel for its brazen, sometimes worse-than-heathen, misbehavior. Because God loves deeply, He responds vigorously to those who violate His covenant. The outpouring of His wrath on obstinate unbelievers reminds us that He operates by the same principle in salvation; His Son bore the wrath our sins deserved. His love is costly—a price we could never pay—complete holiness. • Lord, through Your Holy Spirit, instill in us true thankfulness and a holy life that honors Your gift of Your own Son, who paid the price through His blood. Amen.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON **Ch 6** Consists of two oracles (vv 2–10, 11–14), each of which subdivides into a main section (vv 2–7, 11–13a) followed by a sort of echo (vv 8–10, 13b–14). Both major sections close with variations of the recognition formula (see note, 2:5).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 6:1 *The word of the* LORD *came to me*. Formula emphasizing that what follows is not human thought but a product of divine revelation. See p 1080.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 6:2 *set your face toward*. See note, 4:3. The Lord commands an action prophecy. See note, chs 4–5. *the mountains of Israel*. Phrase Ezekiel uses 16 times; used by no other prophet. Several factors are

involved: (1) nostalgia for the hilly land of Israel is held in contrast to relatively flat terrain of lower Mesopotamia; (2) Ezekiel expands his scope from besieged Jerusalem (chs 3–5) to the whole land of Israel; and (3) the mountains were often centers of pagan worship (see p 526). A sequel comes in ch 36, describing Israel's return to the mountains of Israel in a faithful age.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 6:3 *high places*. Only Hezekiah and Josiah are credited with reforms thorough enough to abolish the high places. But their successors reversed their achievements, and in Ezekiel's day the high places were flourishing. See p 526.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 6:4 *altars*. Larger structures, primarily for animal sacrifices. *incense altars*. Smaller structures. Archaeologists find little four-horned limestone altars in abundance. *idols*. See p 1079.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 6:5 To remain unburied was a great shame. Cf Jer 7:33; 16:4. Instead of kneeling or prostrating themselves, as worshipers normally would, the dead Israelite bodies would lie motionless before their "dead" idols.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 6:6 *Wherever you dwell*. There judgment will happen. *high places*. See note, v 3. *works wiped out*. All efforts to please false gods will end in failure.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 6:7 *know that I am the* LORD. See p 1079.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 6:8 *I will leave some of you alive*. See "remnant," p 1080. The first time Ezekiel proclaims God's mercy. This theme surfaces again, each time in more detail, until after Jerusalem falls. In chs 34–48, God's mercy becomes the overriding theme.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 6:9 *remember*. The remnant will have true contrition. *broken*. Heartbroken. In the Bible, God is frequently described in human terms as grieving over the way His people have responded to His love with ingratitude (e.g., Ps 78:40; Mi 6:3–4). *whoring*. See note, Hos 4:13; cf Ezk 16; 23. *heart … eyes*. Should express faithfulness to God; instead, they wander. *loathsome … abominations*. They are poor, miserable sinners. Knowledge of the absolution God offers to the truly penitent is assumed in such a context. The alternative is despair. See note, 5:9.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 6:10 *evil*. Hbr word does not necessarily imply moral infractions as in v 9. When God is the subject, "calamity, disaster" might better reproduce the meaning. See note, Is 45:7.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 6:11–14 Second, shorter oracle commands Ezekiel to perform an action prophecy (cf v 2). The context first explains God's motives, and then specifies how God's wrath will manifest itself. This second oracle repeats the first (vv 2–10), except that here we only hear of God's certain judgment.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 6:11 *Clap … stamp*. Mocking actions. See p 1276. *evil abominations*. See note, 5:9. Expresses the depths of Israelite depravity.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 6:12 No one will escape from God's punishment. *pestilence … sword … famine*. Conventional summary of punishments (5:12, 17; 12:16; 14:21); most common in Jer. They come from the covenant curses of Lv 26:25–26. (Cf 1Ch 21:12.)
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 6:13 *on every high hill*. See note, v 3. *pleasing aroma*. Probably a reference to incense, or perhaps to sacrifices of any sort. See note, 16:18–19.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 6:14 *stretch out My hand*. See note, Is 5:25. *wilderness*. Probably the Negeb, the semi-arid southern part of the land, gradually merging into the great desert of Sinai. *Riblah*. Defines the nation's northern limit, situated in central Syria, north of Damascus, on the upper Orontes River. It is just a bit south of the city of Hamath, specified elsewhere as the northern limit of the land. Riblah had painful historical associations: Pharaoh Neco (2Ki 23:33) and Nebuchadnezzar (2Ki 25:4–7) used Riblah as their campaign headquarters. See map, p 609.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON **Ch 6** The Lord condemns the people, but, for the first time, salvation is clearly declared for the contrite remnant. Because God Himself was brokenhearted at their previous faithlessness, He will remember them now and so fulfill for them His promises, including the promise of the Savior. • O Lord, we are truly by nature sinful and unclean. Bless us with Your Word and Sacraments that we may remember and give genuine thanks for Your forgiveness through the sacrifice of Your Son. Amen.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON **Ch 7** Excited or agitated in tone, which probably represents Ezekiel's state of mind when he proclaimed the message. He may have intended to arouse the audience to the imminence of judgment. There are difficulties in translation, as the ESV footnotes attest. Ch 7 gives three announcements of Israel's end (vv 2–4; 5–9; 10–27).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 7:1 *word of the* LORD *came to me*. See p 1080.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 7:2 *son of man*. See note, 2:1. *An end!* Serves as a heading for the entire chapter. Lit, "End," since Hbr has no indefinite article. *four corners*. Probably implies something more universal than the earlier land of Israel (cf 7:23). See "four," p 217.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 7:3 *abominations*. See note, 5:9.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 7:4 *My eye will not spare you*. See note, 5:11.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 7:5–9 Six different Hbr words are used in this section to express the idea of disaster. *comes*. Emphasized by the fivefold repetition in this section.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 7:5 *Disaster after disaster!* A second announcement and stark title of doom opens again with a word without an article (see note, v 2).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 7:6 *awakened*. Synonym for "comes," chosen for literary reasons.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 7:7 *doom … the day is near*. See "day of the LORD," p 1079. *a day of tumult*. May recall earlier prophecies of Zep 1:14 and Is 22:5.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 7:8 *pour out*. First use of a common expression in Ezk. Perhaps derived from the practice of defenders on a city wall pouring hot liquid on attackers below.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 7:9 *I am the LORD, who strikes*. The recognition formula (see note, 2:5) is amplified with speaking of God as the striker (cf Is 9:13).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 7:10 This oracle opens by repeating v 7, but shifts to a botanical image. *blossomed … budded*. A plant is cut down when it is ripe or mature. So the final harvest is coming to nip the blossoms and buds of sin. Harvest imagery for the judgment is common in both testaments.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 7:11 After the harvest, nothing will be left standing.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 7:12 Commercial activity ends. Neither buyer nor seller will be able to react to the price paid in a transaction, because they will not be around.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 7:13 Refers to the Year of Jubilee, when all property was to revert to the original owner. See p 206. Loss of all property makes the law irrelevant. Cf Mt 24:17–18.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 7:14 When they sound the trumpet, calling people to battle, they will be so weak or petrified with fear that no one will respond. See "trumpet," p 993.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 7:15 See notes, 5:12; 6:12. *without … within*. The first threat will massacre those outside the city; the other threats will overtake those trapped inside.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 7:16 *doves of the valleys*. The few who might escape are compared to doves, who can do nothing but mournfully moan about their fate. *each one over his iniquity*. Implies they may bemoan their guilt, but not repent.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 7:17 Pictures either paralyzing fright or weakness of starvation. *turn to water*. Lit, "run with water," implying loss of bladder control.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 7:18 Four expressions of grief are mentioned—the first and last voluntary, the middle two involuntary. *sackcloth*. See note, Jb 16:15. *horror … Shame*. Figurative articles of clothing. *baldness*. Expression of mourning. See note, Lv 21:5.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 7:19–22 God judges the sin of materialism, no less a danger in antiquity than in modern times. Their silver and gold are now useless, so they discard it.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 7:19 *unclean thing*. Refers primarily to menstrual impurity, but can also refer to anything polluted and causing pollution (cf 36:17; see note, Is 64:6). *stumbling block of their iniquity*. A favorite phrase of Ezekiel (see note, Ezk 3:20). Their attachment to silver and gold is a manifestation of their iniquity.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 7:20 *His beautiful ornament*. Might refer to gold and silver jewelry, which they idolized, either figuratively or literally, as when they made the golden calf at Sinai (Ex 32). Or, "his" may refer to the temple (used as the national treasury; see notes, 1Ch 18:11; 26:20–28), which would highlight the magnitude of their greedy pride. See note, Is 3:18–23.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 7:21 *foreigners*. Babylonian besiegers. *wicked of the earth*. Perhaps generalizing to include any who oppose Jerusalem.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 7:22 *turn My face from them*. God will abandon them. See "lift up the face," p 1276. *treasured place*. The temple and Zion.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 7:23–27 God will also hold accountable the Israelites and their leaders, who corrupted the judicial system and legalized all sorts of criminal behavior.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 7:23 *Forge a chain!* To bind the captive Israelites together into a long train to be led into captivity.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 7:24 *worst*. Describes the Babylonians who, as the world power, most immediately threatened Jerusalem. *pride of the strong*. Probably refers to the Jerusalem temple. Cf 24:21; 33:28. Alongside of it were illegitimate, pagan "holy places" (including the high places).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 7:25 Jeremiah's refrain: the false prophets had been preaching "peace, peace" (Jer 6:14; 8:11). On "peace," see p 7.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 7:26 The people turn desperately, but in vain, to traditional spiritual and tribal leaders. *vision*. A prophecy, but true prophets in this context prophesy only judgment. *the law*. See p 971. *priest … elders*. Traditional repositories of wisdom, but they are no more faithful than other Israelites. See p 228. "The Church does not allow itself to change Christ's ordinances into unimportant matters" (Ap XXII 15).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 7:27 *king … prince … people*. A tripartite hierarchy of Israelite society. See p 228. *people of the land*. See p 228. *they shall know that I am the LORD*. Repetition of the recognition formula shows that they will learn the hard way that God is in control. See p 1079.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON **Ch 7** Ezekiel describes God's coming wrath. The Law is necessary to the message of salvation. A weak preaching of the Law inevitably sets one up for a deficient or weak understanding of the Gospel. All of us constantly stand at the edge of the void, with the devil, the world, and our flesh ever-active and formidable enemies before whom we can never hope to stand by our own resources. Thanks be to God there is a day of mercy, too, which Ezekiel will proclaim and we may celebrate with joy in Christ, our Savior. • Heavenly Father, when the end comes for us, safely usher us through the grave to rest with Christ, and finally, to resurrection and eternal life. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON **Chs 8–11** A single visionary experience, climaxing in God's (the "glory's") abandonment of Jerusalem and the temple.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 8:1 *sixth year … fifth day*. C Sept 18, 592 BC; 14 months after the inaugural vision (1:2). *elders*. Apparently leaders selected by the exilic community (cf 33:30–31). See p 228. *the hand of the Lord GOD*. God's overwhelming power first came upon Ezekiel at his inaugural vision. Since God cannot be described directly, He is identified with "the form of a hand" in v 3. See note, v 2. *fell upon me there*. Expresses a sudden manifestation.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 8:2 *a form … appearance*. Hesitant to describe the supernatural "man" who appears. See p 39. *fire … metal*. In reverse order from 1:27. See notes, 1:4, 27.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 8:3 *hand … Spirit*. Appear to be virtually interchangeable (see note, 3:14). *Spirit*. Obviously God, the Third Person of the Trinity. *Spirit lifted me … to Jerusalem*. The "form of a hand" now becomes active, and the Spirit transports the prophet to Jerusalem. *in visions of God*. See note, 1:1. *inner court*. Ezekiel is transported to the area of the temple that directly surrounded the great altar of burnt offering and the temple itself. *image of jealousy*. First of the four "abominations" he will witness on this trip. *provokes to jealousy*. Arouses God's wrath and brings His punishment. See note, Ex 20:5.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 8:4 *glory*. See note, 1:28. *vision … in the valley*. Identifies the figure here with the one Ezekiel first saw at his call (ch 1).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 8:5 Ezekiel is directed to look toward the north gate, where he again spies the "image of jealousy." *Son of man*. See note, 2:1.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 8:6 *great abominations*. See note, 5:9. *drive Me far from My sanctuary?* As the only true God, He cannot share His home with any other object of worship. See "holy," p 7.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 8:7 *hole in the wall*. Noted as Ezekiel proceeds through the gateway from its northern entrance.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 8:8 *entrance*. Ezekiel enlarges a hole and discovers it leads to some larger room.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 8:9 *vile abominations*. Superlative. All we know about these sights must be deduced from the following verses.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 8:10 *engraved … idols*. Apparently scratched or painted on the walls, representing the vast number of idolatrous cults flourishing in Jerusalem at the time. *creeping things and loathsome beasts*. Language suggests Egyptian influence, where many gods were depicted as animals, birds, snakes, etc., and where wall paintings and carvings are well known. The language also echoes the creation account, where God had made man to have dominion over such creatures (Gn 1:26). But these idolaters had turned the created order upside down!

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 8:11 *seventy men of the elders*. Perhaps the same elders mentioned in v 1, although "seventy" suggests a representative number for completeness. See p 217. *Jaazaniah*. May have been the leader.

His father, Shaphan, may be mentioned to distinguish him from another Jaazaniah, a son of Azzur (11:1). Ironically, Jaazaniah means "The Lord will hear." *Shaphan*. A man of this name, three of his sons, and a grandson play a prominent role as defenders and allies of Jeremiah (cf Jer 26:24; 29:3; 36; 39–40). If this is the same Shaphan, this Jaazaniah would be a notorious rebel of an otherwise godly family. *censer*. Container for incense, which played a prominent role in both pagan and Israelite worship. In paganism, it was thought to placate angry deities. In biblical worship, its rising smoke was associated with prayer (cf Ps 141:2; Lk 1:10). It continued to be used in Christian worship (cf Rv 5:8; 8:3–4), and Christ's atonement is often described in terms of its pleasant aroma (Eph 5:2; 2Co 2:14, 16). See note, Lv 10:1.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 8:12 *in the dark*. Perhaps they were trying to hide their activities from others, or this was intended as a substitute for the Most Holy Place with its "thick darkness" (1Ki 8:12). *room of pictures?* Summarizes v 10. *The* LORD *does not see us, the* LORD *has forsaken the land*. The many invasions they had suffered for over a century led them to a typical pagan thought: a god who could not protect them must have been defeated by other gods. So they invoke the other gods to meet their needs. Ironically, the Lord is about to forsake the land, not in impotence, but in judgment and in the hope that at least a remnant will repent.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 8:14 *north gate*. Inner entrance of gateway, in contrast to its outer entrance at v 3. Ezekiel's path is uncertain, but appears to move closer to the temple. *weeping for Tammuz*. This god is mentioned only here in the Bible, but is probably the same god known as Adonis in Greece and Rome (noted by Jerome and Cyril of Alexandria). In mythology, Adonis died every spring when the rainy season stopped. The weeping was intended magically to help make the rains resume the next fall. The women joined in the idolatry.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 8:15 Cf v 6.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 8:16 The worst of the abominations. *with their backs to the temple of the* LORD. Ignoring the true God Himself, whose "house" the temple was. This is overt paganism, where the sun-god was normally at the head of the pantheon, and temples were oriented toward the rising sun (whereas the ark of the covenant stood on the west end of the Israelite temple, see diagram, p 541.). Traditionally, Christian churches (and

graves) have been oriented toward the east because Christ, the sun of righteousness (Mal 4:2), rose at dawn in the east.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 8:17 God's rhetorical question implies that violence crowned all the abominations (cf Gn 6:11, 13). Abandonment of God's truth has led to loose ethical standards in many civilizations, including our own. Greg: "Now by Ezekiel are personified men in authority; by the wall is signified the hardness of their subordinates. And what is digging in a wall but opening the hardness of the heart by sharp inquisitions? … First a hole in the wall, and afterwards a door, is perceived, and that then at length the hidden abomination is made apparent; because, in fact, of every single sin signs are first seen outwardly, and afterwards a door is pointed out for opening the iniquity to view; and then at length every evil that lies hidden within is disclosed" (*NPNF* 2 12:21b). *branch to their nose*. See ESV note. Ezekiel is likely using a popular Israelite idiom for some supremely offensive gesture. The point of the expression is a maximal affront to God.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 8:18 *wrath*. With His love spurned, God's only alternative. See p 1904. *My eye will not spare*. Implies fulfillment of their apostasy. See note, 5:11. *cry in My ears*. See "call," p 842.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON **Ch 8** At the beginning of Ezekiel's visionary visit to Jerusalem, he is led to witness four "abominations" that entail rank syncretism or even outright rejection of the true faith. Only when people realize the ever-present and insidious depth of their bondage to sin will they feel any need for a Savior. Ch 9 will show that there were at least some faithful in Jerusalem. The Lord always preserves His remnant by grace. • O Lord, open our eyes to our own idolatries, that we may cling all the more closely to the forgiveness You offer us in Word and Sacrament. Amen.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON **Ch 9** Begins with nearly the same phrase that ends ch 8, but with radically different applications.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 9:1 *He*. God, in His earthly manifestation as the "glory." See note, 1:28. *executioners*. Unspecified attendants, probably angels, are sent by God to those who are going to punish the city. *destroying weapon*. Typically used for executions.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 9:2 At the command, a total of seven "men" (probably angels, cf Rv 8:2, 6) entered the city. Six are equipped to execute the judgment, while a seventh is prepared to write. On scribes, see notes, Jer 36:8, 10. *a writing case at his waist*. Often pictured in Egyptian paintings: a board with a slot for a pen and hollowed places for ink. *beside the bronze*

altar. Traditionally, in the center of the temple courtyard, although Ahaz had once shoved it into a corner and replaced it with a pagan altar (2Ki 16:14). It was the location of most sacrificial activity.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 9:3 *glory*. Interrupts the narrative flow. The glory can be identified with God, who will begin to abandon the temple (cf 11:23). *cherub*. See note, 10:1. *threshold*. Previously the glory had sat enthroned on the cherubim in the Most Holy Place, but now He has moved to the threshold of the temple structure, poised to move still further away.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 9:4 The scribe mentioned in v 2 receives different instructions from the Lord. *mark*. Lit, "make a *tau*," the last letter in the Hbr alphabet. Its shape in the ancient script was that of an Eng "X" or a cross. Cypr: "The sign pertains to the passion and blood of Christ, and that whoever is found in this sign is kept safe and unharmed… . When Egypt was smitten, the Jewish people could not escape except by the blood and the sign of the lamb; so also, when the world shall begin to be desolated and smitten, whoever is found in the blood and the sign of Christ alone shall escape" (*ANF* 5:464).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 9:5 The other six men are to slaughter pitilessly and spare no one (cf 9:10). God's desire is that all shall be saved (e.g., 18:32), but His justice requires that unrepentant sinners must die. A one-sided emphasis that "God is love" dare not eclipse the severity of His wrath. Christ's cross is the maximal expression of both.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 9:6 *old men … little children and women*. In the horror of war, innocent civilians commonly suffer as much as the combatants. See p 879. God is not indifferent, even if it seems so to the human eye (cf the Book of Job). In any case, God knows those who are His, as the rest of the verse indicates. The faithful have received the saving mark on their foreheads. See note, Rv 7:3. Christians still make the sign of the cross upon those being baptized and may cross themselves. See SC, Daily Prayers, pp xli–xlii. *begin at My sanctuary*. Cf Mal 3:1–4; Lk 12:48.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 9:7 *Defile … with the slain*. Idolatrous worship had already made the temple unclean, but the dead would defile the sanctuary (lit, "a holy place") even more.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 9:8 *remnant of Israel*. A remainder is faithful. Ezekiel does not challenge God's right to do as He pleases, but intercedes with God to remember His promises. In his excited frame of mind, Ezekiel

seems to have momentarily forgotten that a remnant had already been marked and thus saved (v 4).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 9:9 *full of blood … injustice*. People operated by a code of ethics at total variance with Yahweh's. *The LORD has forsaken … does not see*. God quotes their own words.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 9:10 *eye will not spare*. See note, 5:11. *bring their deeds upon their heads*. Pervasive evil requires pervasive punishment (cf v 5; Gal 6:7).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 9:11 Scribe's report will also remind Ezekiel that some were marked with the cross and had, indeed, been spared.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON **Ch 9** The vision vividly describes God's final judgment on His disobedient people. But a remnant, bearing a mark of salvation on their foreheads, will escape. The road to perdition is broad, but God does not fail to place His mark of salvation on all who repent, "who sigh and groan over all the abominations that are committed" in the holy city (v 4). • Lord, by Your grace, keep our eyes fixed on the cross of salvation and with Your Holy Spirit help us ward off the temptations to follow the heedless masses who ignore and reject Your Word. Amen.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON **Ch 10** The chapter divides into two parts, each introduced by "I looked, and behold." The first part describes the earthly judgment executed by the "man clothed in linen" (vv 2, 6–7). The second part describes the heavenly judgment as the glory abandons the temple (vv 4, 15, 18–19), expanding on the descriptions in ch 1.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 10:1 *cherubim*. The "living creatures" of 1:5, having animal and human features. These beings, mentioned over 90 times in the Bible, are most commonly associated with the presence of God (cf Ex 25:22). They guard the throne of God (Ps 80:1) and are probably the "living creatures" referred to as standing around the throne in Rv 4:6. "Cherubim" is probably best understood as a common noun referring to a variety of beings (described differently in the Bible) rather than as the name of a specific type of being. The term is also known from the ancient Near East, where it is sometimes used for the mythological beasts that stand guard over the gates of cities, an example of how the truth about God and His ways is often preserved in a distorted form in ancient mythology (e.g., the widespread accounts of the flood in various cultures). *sapphire … throne*. See note, 1:26.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 10:2 *man clothed in linen*. Appeared in 9:2; here he has an entirely different assignment. *whirling wheels*. Cf 10:9–13; see notes, 1:15, 16.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 10:3 *standing on the south side*. Possibly to distance themselves as far as possible from the "image of jealousy" at the north gate (8:5) or the gate from which the executioners entered (9:2). *cloud*. Signifies God's presence, as on the desert journeys (Ex 13:21) and at the consecration of the tabernacle (Ex 40:34–35) and the temple (1Ki 8:10–11). See p 39.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 10:4 God begins His abandonment of the temple (9:3) by moving from the cherubim in the Most Holy Place to the threshold of the temple. *glory of the LORD*. See p 1227. *cherub*. Singular here but probably collective. *brightness*. Cf 1:4, 13.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 10:5 *sound … heard as far as the outer court*. Since Ezekiel is in the inner court (8:3), the description illustrates how loud the wing beats were. *voice*. See note, 1:24. *God Almighty*. See p 1227.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 10:6–7 Essentially completes the account in this ch; resumed and concluded in vv 18–19.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 10:6 *fire*. Easily obtained from the burning coals (v 2).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 10:7 Clarifies v 2; the man obtained the coals through the agency of a cherub (cf Rv 8:5).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 10:8 *a human hand under their wings*. The mention of the hands (see note, 1:8) leads into a description of the cherubim in their entirety, concentrating esp on the wheels.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 10:9–13 Parallel to 1:18–21, but with some differences.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 10:9 *sparkling beryl*. See note, 1:16.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 10:10 *wheel … within a wheel*. See note, 1:16.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 10:11 *four directions*. See note, 1:17.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 10:12 *full of eyes*. See note, 1:18–21.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 10:13 *whirling wheels*. Cf v 2. Here, the motion is explicitly called to the prophet's attention.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 10:14 *four faces*. The subject shifts from the wheels to the cherubim as a whole. We were introduced to their four faces already in 1:6, 10 (see notes there). The face of an ox (1:10) is replaced with that of a cherub, the features of which may have resembled an ox.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 10:15 *mounted*. A brief note of the action, anticipating v 19. The identity of the living creatures of ch 1 with the cherubim here is made explicit. *Chebar canal*. See note, 1:1.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 10:17 See note, 1:18–21. This spirit or life force animated both the wheels and the cherubim.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 10:18 *glory of the Lord*. See note, 1:28. *went out from the threshold*. The Lord's abandonment of the temple takes place in stages. The first stage was reported in 9:3 and 10:4; the third and final stage will be reported at the end of ch 11. In this second phase, the glory resumes His place on the throne above the cherubim, though no longer in the Most Holy Place.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 10:19 The divine chariot now moves to the east gate of the temple compound, poised to leave the defiled area completely.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 10:20–22 Underscores what was already stated.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 10:20 *living creatures … they were cherubim*. Expands v 15b. *underneath the God of Israel*. The cherubim bore the platform on which God was enthroned (cf 1:26–28). *Chebar canal*. See note, 1:1; cf 10:15.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 10:22 *straight forward*. See notes, 1:9, 12.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON **Ch 10** The vision of the throne-chariot on which the glory sat, first described in ch 1, is here repeated and expanded. The glory takes another step away from the Most Holy Place; the Lord will totally abandon His temple. Yet, the glory of our incarnate Lord will not depart forever. He is gloriously enthroned through Baptism in those who have died with Him and risen again in holiness (cf Rm 6). • Lord, keep us from rejecting Your Word, of which the fate of Jerusalem warns. In the Savior's name we pray. Amen.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 11:1 *Spirit lifted me*. Mention of God's Spirit returns (cf 8:3). The Spirit transports the prophet to the east gate of the temple compound, where the cherubim and the glory had gone (cf 1:12–14). *Jaazaniah … Pelatiah*. Ezekiel is shown 25 men, the same number as in 8:16. But this is a different group. There is a Jaazaniah mentioned in 8:11, but he is obviously a different person with a different father. We know nothing further of Jaazaniah or Pelatiah except the latter's death in 11:13. *princes*. See p 228. New people had somehow assumed positions of influence in the vacuum created by the deportation from Jerusalem.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 11:2–12 A private communication from God to Ezekiel about the 25 men (vv 2–4) leads into a public sermon (vv 5–12).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 11:3 The leaders smugly say they need not build houses now, either because of the imminent Babylonian threat, or because there are plenty of abandoned houses. *cauldron*. Cooking pot. *we are the meat*. They regard themselves as safe within the city; they see no need for God. See note, v 7.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 11:4 *prophesy against them*. Preach in condemnation. The imperative is repeated for emphasis.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 11:5 *Spirit of the LORD*. The Spirit here inspires Ezekiel instead of transporting him, as in v 1. *fell upon me*. See note, 8:1. *mind*. Lit, "spirit," but obviously not God's Spirit. Their "spirituality" is their own invention, not the gift of revelation.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 11:6 This indictment implies a ruthless elimination of any opposition by those who considered themselves blessed. *slain*. Not limited to murder, but used metaphorically for injustice of various kinds. See SC, Fifth Commandment, p xxxv.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 11:7 The Lord turns the leaders' boasts in v 3 against them. They are not prime cuts protected by the cauldron, but butchers who have filled it with the meat of their victims (cf Mi 3:1–3).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 11:8 God will remove them from the safety of the pot and leave them defenseless against the sword.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 11:9 *foreigners*. Babylonians, who are threatening Jerusalem a second time. See chronology, pp ci–cii. *execute judgments*. Carry out a sentence (cf 5:6–10).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 11:10 *at the border*. Implies movement into exile away from the homeland. God implies here, and in the following verses, a double punishment—one at the fall of Jerusalem and a worse one in exile.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 11:11 See notes, vv 7–10.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 11:12 Repeats the recognition formula from the end of v 10 (see note, 2:5). They may not repent, but they will be forced, however unwillingly, to acknowledge God's rule. *not walked … nor obeyed*. The sermon ends with the charge made already in 5:6–7. Israel had become like the heathen nations: her walk, or way of life, was the same as theirs. See "walk," p 7. *rules of the nations*. In that culture war, paganism had won. (Consider how Eng "culture" includes Lat *cultus*, i.e., "worship"—of the Lord or of idols.)

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 11:13 *I fell down*. Because of the shock of Pelatiah's sudden death while Ezekiel was preaching. *remnant of Israel?* Ezekiel receives an extended promise of a restored and regenerate remnant in a new Israel. See p 1080.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 11:1–13 Using the metaphor of Jerusalem as a cooking pot with meat inside, God contradicts the inhabitants' arrogant self-assurance that the city walls will protect them. Ezekiel's outcry at Pelatiah's sudden death provides an occasion for the comforting Gospel sermon that follows. God certainly will not make a full end of the remnant of Israel, but will provide salvation. • Lord, through our Savior, who bore our offenses for us on the cross, strengthen us to resist temptation. Grant us refuge in You alone. Amen.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 11:14 A new oracle, a private communication to the prophet. It may answer Ezekiel's despairing outcry in v 13.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 11:15 *your brothers, your kinsmen*. Inhabitants of Jerusalem who had escaped the first deportation of the city in 597 BC. *Go far from the* LORD. Those not exiled urged the exiles to forget about ever returning to Jerusalem and worshiping the God they had once worshiped there. They argue that their survival in Jerusalem proves that they are the true heirs of the ancient promises. Like the 25 leaders (v 3), they interpret their physical presence in the Holy Land as a guarantee of security. This argument will reappear after the final destruction of the city in 587 BC (cf 33:24).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 11:16 God answers that the future lies with those who have "died" in exile, not with those who have escaped with their present lives. He had not abandoned the exiles. *them*. The exiles. *sanctuary to them for a while*. The temple sanctuary in Jerusalem was inaccessible and would soon be destroyed, but God was not imprisoned in that place where He caused His name to dwell for a time (cf ch 10). Wherever His name is invoked in true faith, even by only two or three present (Mt 18:20), there is a little church. One day we shall go to our promised land, the new Jerusalem (Rv 21:22).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 11:17 *gather … assemble*. Synonyms; the exiles' return to the land of Israel. The preliminary fulfillment of this promise came after Cyrus's 538 BC decree allowed some Israelites to return and rebuild the temple. But that was only a foretaste of the fulfillment. The promise given to God's people had further implications (cf Rv 7).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 11:18 *detestable things and all its abominations*. See note, 5:9.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 11:19–20 "The Holy Scriptures do not credit the human powers of the natural free will with conversion, faith in Christ, regeneration, renewal, and all that belongs to their effective beginning and end. They do not credit free will the whole way, half way, or in any way, even in the smallest or most trivial way. They credit conversion solely and completely to the Holy Spirit's divine work, as also the Apology teaches. Reason and free will are able to live an outwardly decent life to a certain extent. But only the Holy Spirit causes a person to be born anew [John 3:5] and to have inwardly another heart, mind, and natural desire. He opens the mind and heart to understand the Scriptures and to listen to the Word" (FC SD II 25–26).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 11:19 The heart of the Gospel message of Ezk, repeated almost verbatim in 36:26–27. Ezekiel is speaking of realities that transcend history and which only God can accomplish. St Paul's language in 2Co 3:3 appears to be derived from it. Also, Ezk 11:19–20 parallel Jeremiah's famous new covenant (or testament) prophecy (Jer 31:31–34), often quoted in the NT. What is needed is a supernatural gift, a "heart transplant" that only the Great Physician can accomplish. *one heart*. A single-mindedness, or unanimity, in faith. By nature, we pursue our own selfish interests (Is 53:6). *new spirit*. Often interchangeable with "heart"; a radically different human attitude, a gift of God's Holy Spirit. *remove the heart of stone*. Impenetrable, stubborn. God will replace it with faith created by the Holy Spirit's work through Word and Sacrament. *their flesh*. Their bodies. *heart of flesh*. Living. The OT does not use "flesh" in the negative sense that the NT does (e.g., "works of the flesh"; see "flesh," p 1902).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 11:20 External change in behavior will naturally accompany the radical internal change. The obedience will not only be to the letter of the law, but to its spirit. *statutes … rules*. See p 971. *I will be their God*. The Gospel message, the covenant formula, is repeated many times in both testaments, from Gn 17:7–8 to Rv 21:3.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 11:21 A reminder that they were not in paradise yet. They, like us, still daily sin much. *detestable things … abominations*. See note, 5:9. *upon their own heads*. If they (and we) did not repent, the punishment implicit in their sins would return.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 11:22–25 Climax of chs 9–11. The glory finally abandoned Jerusalem and the temple, which no longer had any special promise of divine protection. Jerusalem was as vulnerable as any other city. Cf 9:3.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 11:23 *mountain … on the east*. Across the Kidron Valley to the Mount of Olives. In 43:1–5, the glory returns by the east gate —to a new temple and a new Jerusalem in a new world.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 11:24 *Spirit lifted me*. See note, v 1. *into Chaldea, to the exiles*. Where Ezekiel had been bodily all along. *went up*. Out of his trancelike state and back to his natural senses.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 11:25 When the vision is over, Ezekiel tells the elders what he had seen and heard on his journey in the Spirit. Their response is not told.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 11:14–25 Ezekiel the prophet is assured that a remnant will be saved. The glory then leaves the city for the Mount of Olives to the east. This is the final judgment upon those who remain in Jerusalem below (cf Gal 4:26). Thanks be to God; He gives us His Word and Spirit, new hearts, and new lives in His promises of mercy. • Lord, through our Baptism, You have brought us out of the exile of our natural bondage to sin. Send Your Spirit upon us that we remain faithful until death and share in the return of the glory on the Last Day. Amen.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 12:1 This formula, emphasizing that what follows is God's Word, not man's, will be repeated several times in the chapter. See p 1080.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 12:2 *a rebellious house*. See note, 2:7; cf vv 3, 9, 25.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 12:3–20 Two major action prophecies appear in this chapter (vv 3–16 and 17–20), the first since ch 5. They appear to be directed more to those in Jerusalem than to Ezekiel's immediate audience, which has already been exiled. See p 1220.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 12:3 *exile's baggage*. Basic necessities that exiles could gather before the long trip ahead. Ancient reliefs often depict lines of captives with knapsacks slung over their shoulders. *your place to another place*. From Ezekiel's own dwelling to other places. *in their sight*. Ezekiel is to perform the action (emphasized seven times in vv 3–7).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 12:4 *at evening*. Avoiding the daytime heat.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 12:5 *dig through the wall*. Houses in that part of the world were (and often still are) made of mud brick. If this was to be done in the people's sight, Ezekiel must have dug from the outside in and then retrieved his baggage.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 12:6 *cover your face*. Implies losing sight of the homeland in exile. This need not mean blindfolding. *Israel*. Here, synonymous with Judah.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 12:7 Ezekiel rarely reports his obedience to God's commands (cf 24:18; 37:7), but here it needs to be emphasized. He had dug through the wall with his own hands, not the easiest of tasks.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 12:9 Ezekiel has gotten his audience's attention, which gives him an opportunity to explain the action prophecy they have just witnessed.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 12:10 *oracle*. See p 1079. *prince in Jerusalem*. Zedekiah, the puppet the Babylonians had placed over Jerusalem. Jehoiachin, the legitimate king, had been exiled together with Ezekiel. Cf 2Ki 24–25.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 12:11 The significance of Ezekiel's action (cf v 6) is now made clear. All of them will go into exile—precisely what they refuse to believe.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 12:12 *prince … shall lift his baggage*. The prince and the populace are treated virtually as a unit. The prince will be forced to carry his own baggage (v 3) as Ezekiel has done and to abandon his homeland. See p 228.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 12:13 *My net … My snare*. Metaphors to emphasize God's control over the capture of the prince, in spite of his attempts to escape. *Babylon, the land of the Chaldeans*. The first time Ezekiel uses the name Babylon. Years earlier, Babylon had been politically important under the Amorites, but by Ezekiel's time it was ruled by Aramaic-speaking Chaldeans (cf 1:3; 11:24). The details of the fulfillment of this prophecy are recorded in 2Ki 25:4–7; Jer 52:7–11.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 12:14 *toward every wind*. Beginning of Jewish Diaspora (Dispersion), a situation evidenced in St Paul's later missionary journeys. Cf Ac 13–20; see "Dispersion," p 1556. *helpers … troops*. King's supporters. Babylon deported the bulk of the survivors of the sack of Jerusalem; others were scattered. See note, Jer 52. *the sword*. Cf Ezk 5:2, 12.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 12:15 *they shall know that I am the* LORD. Does not necessarily imply repentance, but the admission, however grudging, that the Lord is in control. See p 1079. *when I disperse them*. Cf v 14.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 12:16 *declare all their abominations*. Gospel theme of a remnant escaping is hinted at here. The few who survive can testify to the Gentiles that their plight was not the result of God's weakness but of His just punishment for their many abominations.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 12:17–20 Brief but powerful second action prophecy.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 12:18 *quaking … trembling … anxiety*. Picture of uncontrollable fright in connection with the fall of Jerusalem.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 12:19 Apparently, the people remain so convinced that Jerusalem could never fall, that Ezekiel must explain his actions to them. *people of the land*. See p 228. *violence*. Summarizes the social aspects of their apostasy.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 12:20 Almost total depopulation of the land (not only Jerusalem) is described. The language harks back to the covenant

curses in Lv 26:14–26.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 12:22–28 God commands Ezekiel to refute complaints by which the people were discounting his prophecies. This indicates that Ezekiel was being heard, but not believed.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 12:22 *proverb*. Popular saying. *The days grow long*. Day after day goes by without anything significant happening. *every vision comes to nothing?* They complained that prophecies go unfulfilled.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 12:23 God's rejoinder to the popular "proverb" is a direct contradiction of it.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 12:24 *false*. Lit, "vain." Cf Ex 23:1; Ps 12:3; 24:4; 41:7; 144:8; Pr 30:8. *false vision or flattering divination*. What the audience wants to hear, inflating the high opinion they have of themselves. This implies the cessation of false prophecy, which was apparently encouraging the people's skepticism.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 12:25 *speak the word … and it will be performed*. Ezekiel's refutation is anchored in the certainty of the fulfillment of God's Word.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 12:27–28 A repetition of vv 22–25 in different words. The problem Ezekiel was confronting is a perennial one (cf 2Pt 3:3–13). Because Christ's second coming has been delayed for two thousand years, many weak believers scarcely give it a thought. The Bible closes with Christ's assurance, "Surely I am coming soon" (Rv 22:20), but God's time is not our time (2Pt 3:8).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON **Ch 12** Two action prophecies forecast the forthcoming deportation after Jerusalem's fall and its attendant horrors, followed by refutations of two complaints the people are using to discount God's warnings. Yet, God's overarching purpose in judgment is to bring forth repentance and create trust in His salvation, offered freely in Christ's death and resurrection. • Lord, keep us ever mindful of our sinfulness. United by Baptism with Christ's death and resurrection and through Word and Sacrament, keep us firm in the faith until the day of our Lord. Amen.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON **Ch 13** Denunciation of false prophets and prophetesses.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 13:2 *prophesy from their own hearts*. Of their own devising, bereft of divine revelation. They may have been charlatans or actually believed they were recipients of divine revelation. *Hear the word of the* LORD*!* Remedy to falsehood. The problem is the same today. There are

many claimants to God's truth. Our sure judge of what is true is the Scriptures. Obviously, not all Scripture had been written in Ezekiel's day, but they had "Moses and the Prophets" (Lk 16:29, 31).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 13:3 *Woe*. See p 1080. *foolish*. Often (esp in Proverbs) contrasted with wise, which in the Bible means confessing the true faith (cf Pr 1:7; 1Co 1–2). See p 1016. *follow their own spirit*. Synonymous with "hearts" in the previous verse. Their "spirituality" was not of the Holy Spirit. *seen nothing!* Corresponds to the frequent use of "vision" for prophecy; not necessarily implying use of the eyes.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 13:4 *jackals*. Commonly inhabited ruins and made a lot of noise without saying anything. They tend to act furtively at night, not in broad daylight.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 13:5 *breaches*. Place in the city walls that attackers had weakened or opened. If defenders did not assemble there, the enemy would soon come pouring in. They could repair the breach by patching it or building a new wall. *day of the LORD*. See p 1079.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 13:6 *false visions and lying divinations*. Parallel terms; "divinations" nearly always implies some pagan procedure that is supposed to reveal God's will. See note, 12:24. *Declares the LORD*. False prophets might use the same citation formula as the true prophets. God's Word is not validated by any subjective human "faith." Use of the externally correct words or rituals does not magically produce validation either.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 13:7 Rhetorical question implying a positive answer. Ezekiel accuses them of deception, however much they may have deluded themselves. *Declares the LORD*. See p 1079.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 13:8 *Therefore*. Signals the transition from indictment to verdict (cf vv 13, 20). If the Lord is against them, there is not the slightest chance that their "prophecies" will be fulfilled.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 13:9 *My hand*. Implies divine power deployed against false prophets. See note, 1:3. *not … nor … nor*. Three parallel negative results of God's hand against the false prophets are specified. *the council of My people*. The communion of the elect on earth, who are supposed to represent God's heavenly council of advisers. Cf Jer 23:18, 22. (The phrase "My people" will appear six more times in this chapter.) God has not abandoned His covenantal promises to His people, but they have spurned His gracious offer. *register*. Scripture sometimes speaks of a

heavenly list of the faithful, corresponding to an (inevitably imperfect) earthly list of the true Church (e.g., Rv 3:5; 13:8; 17:8; 20:12, 15; 21:27). *enter the land of Israel*. Applies immediately to a return to the homeland, but, ultimately, to the homeland above. *know that I am the Lord* GOD. By their very exclusion, they will have to admit that He is the Lord God. See p 1079.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 13:10 *'Peace,' when there is no peace*. False prophets further the people's vain hopes that Jerusalem would not fall and they could soon return home. Cf Jer 23:13–40. *peace*. See p 7. *when the people build a wall*. Metaphor referring to their expressions of false hope. *smear it with whitewash*. Annual maintenance for preserving a mud brick building. The false prophets cover over their fallacies with a thin veneer, which conceals the wall's fatal cracks.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 13:11 God will expose the weakness of that wall by a great storm. The hailstones are personified, and God is pictured as addressing them directly. God controls the elements.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 13:12 Rhetorical question implies the result of the storm described in vv 13–16.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 13:13–15 Description of the storm's utter destruction of the flimsy wall and those who had covered it superficially.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 13:16 The false prophets had said that the city was safe and the exile would be short. They were undoubtedly very popular, since this was what the people wanted to hear, but God's coming storm would demolish everything.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 13:17 *daughters … who prophesy*. False prophetesses who are denounced for giving their own opinions. Ezekiel's language here is virtually identical to that used of their male counterparts in vv 2–3. See p 389.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 13:18 *magic bands*. Might signify the supposed binding power of the spell or incantation. *veils*. Hbr unclear. Objects used as head coverings of some sort. *souls!* Or, "lives." *Will you … keep your own souls alive?* Rhetorical question implies a negative answer. When the judgment comes, their lives would not be spared any more than their victims had been.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 13:19 *profaned Me*. By their magic, the women had denied God's holiness and treated Him as some occult power they could manipulate. *barley … bread*. May have been part of the magical ritual.

More likely, the pittance of payment the women received. *putting to death … keeping alive*. Supposed effects of the spells. *souls who should not die*. Israelites whom the magicians had seduced into sin. *souls who should not live*. Magicians and their accomplices.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 13:20 *hunt the souls like birds*. Depicts the casual, almost sportlike, nature of the attempts to ensnare people with their bands.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 13:21 *veils*. See note, v 18. God will deliver His people from the spell of the false prophetesses, as He had from the bands.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 13:22 *disheartened the righteous falsely*. Result of their magic has been demoralization of the believers, who know that salvation comes only through the true God. *encouraged the wicked*. Magicians have emboldened the wicked in their apostasy. *not turn*. Lacking repentance, they forfeit their lives. See "turn," p 1080.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 13:23 When Jerusalem falls, the magicians will fall with it.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON **Ch 13** All religions do not lead to the same place. There is only one true Gospel of salvation by grace through faith in Christ; anyone who preaches or practices otherwise is condemned. By repeating phrases such as "My people," the Lord expresses His offer of salvation to all who believe. • "Lord, keep us steadfast in Your Word; Curb those who by deceit or sword Would wrest the kingdom from Your Son And bring to naught all He has done." Amen. (*LSB* 655:1)
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 14:1 *certain of the elders of Israel*. See note, 8:1. The phrase suggests a smaller number and men in some religious position. Vv 3–5 indicate that they had come with a question, which is not recorded. *sat before me*. Awaiting an answer.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 14:3 *idols into their hearts*. The elders' devotion to false gods is not superficial, but thoroughly internalized. *stumbling block*. See note, 3:20. *iniquity*. Idolatry is what had caused them to make the wrong decision and stumble. *before their faces*. Indicates that it was no occasional error, but a god or faith that they constantly pursued. *consulted*. Semi-technical term for a petition or request of God. The Lord is under no obligation to hear prayers of those who worship other gods.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 14:4–5 God will answer, but in the form of a lawsuit against the duplicity of those who are really expecting an answer from other gods. The Lord alone knows what is in human hearts; their insincerity is not hidden from Him.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 14:6 *Repent and turn*. Repetition (two forms of the same Hbr verb) and thus emphatic. See p 1080. The situation can change only if there is a change of heart. *abominations*. See note, 5:9.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 14:7 *strangers who sojourn*. Probably refers to proselytes who had attached themselves to Israel. See note, Nu 11:4. If these people joined the community in exile, they were probably no more sincere than most of the rest of the exiles.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 14:8 *set My face against*. See p 1277. *sign*. Visible warning or lesson. *byword*. Proverbial representative of all who would presume upon God's grace. *cut him off*. Implies a counterpart of churchly excommunication and perhaps other divine punishment, even death.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 14:9 Ezekiel here turns to a variant of the problem of two-faced seekers, a case where a false prophet answers them but tells them what they want to hear. More shocking is the Lord's statement that He has done the deceiving. The Lord Himself acts to ensure the hypocrites' well-deserved judgment. There are many parallels to this strange work (Is 28:21) of God (cf Ex 10:20, 27; 1Ki 22:20–22; Jer 20:7; Ezk 20:25–26). *stretch out My hand against him*. Not in salvation, as with the exodus, but to destroy him.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 14:11 *no more go astray … defile … transgressions*. When least expected, we have a beautiful note of God's mercy. The purpose of God's harsh judgment is to redeem the people from their errors. *be My people*. Bonded with the Lord and living as His people. For Christians, this relationship began at our Baptism, but will not be complete until the second coming, when the fullness of the new covenant will be written on our hearts (Jer 31:31–34).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 14:1–11 God does not answer the prayers of those who do not pray in His name, not even when false prophets claim to speak for Him. We are rejected because we first rejected Him, even if false preachers have seduced us. The last verse of this section is a beautiful statement of the purpose of the Law—to convict and convince us of our unfaithfulness and bring us to repentance so that we may enjoy His salvation. • O Lord, be our God, and make us truly Your people, through the merits of Jesus Christ, Your Son. Amen.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 14:12–23 The theme is no longer false prophecy (12:21–14:11) but the main theme of chs 1–24: the inevitability of God's judgment on Jerusalem. Four divine judgments (cf v 21) are discussed at

some length; the first, famine, is mentioned in v 13 as punishment upon a land that acts faithlessly.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 14:14 No one else's righteousness can be transferred to that land's account and save it. Each person must personally believe and answer to God. *Noah, Daniel, and Job*. Three paragons of righteousness. Noah lived in ancient times (during the flood). Job is not dated precisely in the Bible, but likely belongs to patriarchal times (see p 781). Daniel was Ezekiel's close contemporary (see p 1394). Jer 15:1–3 speaks similarly, using Moses and Samuel as examples. *their righteousness*. Would deliver only themselves. Transfer of merit is not possible. Cf 1Pt 3:19–20; 2Pt 2:5; see p 843. Cypr: "Who was more righteous than Noah, who, when the earth was filled with sins, was alone found righteous on the earth? Who more glorious than Daniel? Who more strong for suffering martyrdom in firmness of faith, more happy in God's condescension, who so many times, both when he was in conflict conquered, and, when he had conquered, lived on? Was any more ready in good works than Job, braver in temptations, more patient in sufferings, more submissive in his fear, more true in his faith?" (*ANF* 5:442).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 14:15–16 God would use judgment through an invasion by wild animals, depopulating the land.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 14:17 *sword*. Represents war.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 14:19 *pestilence*. See note, Ps 91:3.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 14:21 *How much more*. Righteousness will not transfer (v 14). This will certainly still apply when God sends His judgments upon Jerusalem.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 14:22 *survivors … when they come out to you*. Apparently captives who are marched into exile, where their parents are already. These random survivors have not been spared by anyone's righteousness. *consoled*. Applies to parents who had been worrying about their children who were left behind in the first exile.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 14:23 *They will console you*. Children will encourage their parents, as both groups will see that they had been guilty of the same depraved ways and deeds. God was just in destroying Jerusalem and leading a few into captivity. *not done without cause*. They will realize that the Lord had acted appropriately, not in some fit of temper.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 14:12–23 Using four vivid pictures, Ezekiel emphasizes that righteousness (faith and life) is not transferable from one

person to the next. We should not think that salvation can come from any other human source, but only from the righteousness won by Christ on the cross. The exiles' concession that God does not punish without cause is described in vv 22–23. The Law was beginning to work, opening the door for repentance and faith. • Teach us, Lord, how to regard the saints—not as sources of faith or merit for us, but as examples in fighting the good fight in Christ. Amen.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON **Ch 15** Ezekiel uses an extended metaphor, similar to a parable.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 15:2–5 Series of rhetorical questions.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 15:2 *the wood of the vine*. Grapevine. *surpass any wood*. Sarcastic. Of course, its wood is far inferior to wood from any other source.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 15:3 Two questions illustrate the vine's inferiority.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 15:4–5 If the vine was nearly useless to begin with, it will be totally useless after being reduced to ashes or a half-burned stick. Aph: "Its two branches are the two kingdoms, and its inward part which is laid waste is Jerusalem" (*NPNF* 2 13:360).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 15:6 As God has given the vine for burning, the inhabitants of Jerusalem face the same destiny. Both are givens, things that are a certain way and cannot be changed.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 15:7 *the fire shall yet consume them … I am the* LORD. Metaphor is abandoned now for straight pronouncement of judgment. Even if they have escaped the first deportation, they should not think that they will escape the major destruction coming shortly.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 15:8 Using some of the same vocabulary, this verse links ch 15 with the previous chapter (cf 14:13–16).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON **Ch 15** Jerusalem is a vine that is good for nothing but burning, a vivid illustration of the city's fall in 587 BC. By this catastrophe, the Lord prepares the way for restoration and salvation. In Christ, the true vine, we can bear much fruit (Jn 15:1–11). • Spare us, O Lord, as inhabitants of the new Jerusalem, from the defection and destruction of the old Jerusalem that in Christ we may finally enter the Jerusalem above. Amen.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON **Ch 16** A satire of Jerusalem's unfaithfulness. The comparison of idolatry with adultery is common in the Bible, and far older than Ezk. See note, Hos 1:2. Ch 16 (esp vv 43–58) has many affinities with

ch 23. It is the longest single oracle in the OT. The theme is Israel's gross unfaithfulness in contrast to God's constant love and fidelity.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 16:2 *abominations*. See note, 5:9.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 16:3 Ezekiel is not offering a biological genealogy here, but a record of how Israel mixed its religious beliefs with the beliefs of its neighbors. Canaanites were the original inhabitants of the Promised Land and are sometimes used interchangeably with Amorites. There were several major Amorite kingdoms along the Euphrates in the middle of the second millennium BC, and Hittites ruled in eastern Asia Minor a few centuries later. When the kingdoms collapsed, many tribes migrated to Canaan and elsewhere. "Canaanite" seems often to be an umbrella term for all the various groups. They were noted for their depravity, and the Israelites, failing to eliminate them, often adopted their religion and immorality. See p 345.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 16:4–5 Picture of infant exposure, common among ancient pagan cultures. See note, Ex 2:3. Rubbing with salt was probably thought to cleanse and toughen the skin, and oil was applied to soften it at the same time. Failure to cut the umbilical cord would soon bring death.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 16:6 God is pictured as a passerby. *wallowing in your blood*. Situation immediately after birth (placental fluids, etc.). *Live!* In the metaphor, physical life is implied, but the wider application is to spiritual life. In either case, life is a gift only God can dispense. See p 983.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 16:7 *arrived at full adornment*. Maturation into early adulthood. *naked and bare*. Before God, Israel was spiritually nothing until God gave her His covenant and promises. See notes, Dt 7:6–8.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 16:8 *age for love*. The woman's physical maturity indicates that she is marriageable. *corner of My garment*. OT idiom for marrying her. It may have been only a verbal part of the ceremony or an action in the ceremonies. See note, Ru 3:9. *covered your nakedness*. She must remain covered, i.e., unavailable to any man except her husband. See note, Lv 18:6. *vow … covenant*. Refers both to the repeated oaths to the patriarchs as well as at Mount Sinai. The words also apply to human marriages, as well as to God's promises to Israel. The Bible usually speaks of "making," "establishing," or "giving" His covenants—not "entering into"—thus emphasizing their unilateral nature, initiated by God out of grace. See pp 6–7. *became Mine*. Refers both to the chosenness of Israel and to the "one flesh" aspect of human marriage (cf Gn 2:24).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 16:9–13 In the allegory, the birth and wedding rituals seem to have merged. The jewelry is typically for the wedding ceremony (cf Is 3:18–21). Anointing with fragrant oil is mentioned several times as part of bridal preparations (cf Est 2:12).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 16:10 *fine leather*. Hide of sea mammals from the Red Sea. See p 141.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 16:13 *fine flour and honey and oil*. Highest quality food. *advanced to royalty*. Connects with the beautiful crown of v 12.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 16:14 *the splendor that I had bestowed on you*. Her beauty and other luxurious possessions were not a natural endowment or birthright, but gifts of pure grace.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 16:15 The queen descended into depravity. *trusted in*. She confused gift and Giver, virtually deifying her beauty. She dedicated her gifts not to the Giver but to herself (self-gratification). Greg: "The deluded mind admires itself for the great things that it has done. And, being exalted in its own sight through hidden tumour, it is deprived of the grace of Him Who bestowed the gift" (*NPNF* 2 13:36). *played the whore*. Summary of vv 16–58. Some form of the word "whore" occurs 21 times through v 41. Ezekiel depicts a deliberate affront and rejection of God. *your beauty became his*. Opposite of v 8.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 16:16 May reflect common practice of prostitutes in antiquity. *colorful shrines*. Often translated "high places." Associated with pagan rites, esp "sacred" prostitution. Israel's maximal ingratitude is described as without parallel in human history. See p 526.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 16:17 *My … My … I had given you*. Emphasizes the absolute reversal of God's intent with Israel's gifts. The verse seems to describe worship of male deities, esp Baal, the main male fertility god in Canaanite religion. See note, Nu 25:3.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 16:18–19 The subject is sacrificial offerings to idols. Some of them parallel the proper worship in the tabernacle/temple. But there are telling differences. Israel had no images to cover. Feeding and clothing idols played a prominent role in pagan rites. (Scripture mocks this practice; cf Ps 50:7–15.) The use of honey in sacrifice is explicitly forbidden (Lv 2:11). The description of sacrifice as a "pleasing aroma" is used of both proper and pagan worship, but the motivations are radically different.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 16:20–21 The most offensive pagan worship practice of all—the sacrifice of children. Child sacrifice to the god Molech is often referred to in the Bible and elsewhere in Ezk (20:25–26). The practice is attested archaeologically, esp in certain North African cemeteries used by Phoenician settlers.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 16:23 *woe, woe*. Indication of God's increasing exasperation. The necessity of judgment becomes more urgent. See p 1080.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 16:24 *vaulted chamber … lofty place in every square*. Probably structures readily recognizable as places of prostitution (cf Pr 7, 9).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 16:25 *offering yourself*. The translation is euphemistic here and at other points.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 16:26–29 Three neighbors are listed with whom Israel "played the whore." They appear in roughly the order in which Israel became acquainted with them. Political alliances inevitably involved recognition and veneration of the deities of the partner nations. As the smaller of the two allies, Israel was vulnerable to mixing its religion with idolatry.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 16:26 *to provoke Me*. The more Israel succumbed, the more she enraged God to anger.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 16:27 Historical reference is probably to events after the period of the judges. The period of Egypt's influence over Canaan was past, and only David would gradually succeed in eliminating the Philistine threat.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 16:28 By Ezekiel's time, the once-mighty Assyrian Empire had ceased to exist, but in much of the ninth to seventh centuries BC it had flourished. The Northern Kingdom was incorporated into the Assyrian Empire, and Judah was reduced to vassaldom. *not satisfied*. Returning to the theme of her insatiable lust, i.e., infidelity to the Lord.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 16:29 *trading land of Chaldea*. Babylon was Israel's current "lover." Because of its location and power, it naturally carried on trade.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 16:30 Describes a prostitute who seeks and seduces customers. Cf Pr 7.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 16:31 *you scorned payment*. Emphasizes the woman's almost pathological behavior. There may be a reference to trade

relations that impoverished Israel, but Ezekiel's interest is primarily in religion and morals.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 16:32–34 The accent here is not only whoredom, but the adultery of a philandering wife who even pays illegitimate lovers. The abandoned husband is the Lord. *bribing*. Describes the odd flow of money from prostitute to client; dramatizes exceptional lust.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 16:32 *Adulterous wife*. Addressed directly to Israel.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 16:35–37 God's judgment is described as a reversal of the whore's own actions. As she gathered lovers, God will gather them against her. As she had bared herself for her lovers, she will be stripped bare at her trial. There is copious evidence outside the Bible that this was a common punishment for unfaithfulness, leading to a divorce. Here it is a reversal of the Lord's spreading the edge of His robe over her (v 8).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 16:38 Her blood would be shed because of her adultery and her sacrifice of the children she had borne to the Lord (v 20). This comes full circle to the condition in which God first found her wallowing in her blood (v 6). *wrath and jealousy*. See notes, 3:14; Ex 20:5.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 16:39–41 *strip … take … leave … stone … cut … burn*. String of verbs relates the intense action of punishment for Jerusalem. The Lord will deputize her former paramours to carry out the actions.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 16:41 She will be publicly removed from the scene. *women*. Rivals in her profession (politically, allies in revolt against Babylon).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 16:42 *I satisfy My wrath … jealousy … I will be calm*. Language is that of God's satisfaction of the penalty for all her sin (the same language the Church uses to describe Christ's crucifixion in full satisfaction for mankind's sin, effecting God's calm).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 16:43 *returned your deeds upon your head*. The punishment has fit the crime. *lewdness in addition to all your abominations?* The punishment was almost inexpressibly severe, as her deviancy had almost been beyond words.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 16:44–45 *proverb*. Israel's wild behavior had been so flagrant that it could be summarized into a wise saying. *Like mother, like daughter*. As in v 3, the mother, called a Hittite, represents the pagan Canaanites, and her daughter is Jerusalem, or ultimately all Israel.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 16:46 *elder sister is Samaria … younger sister … Sodom*. A more literal translation would be "larger" and "smaller"

(geographically). The Northern Kingdom, with its 10 tribes, encompassed vastly more territory than Judah. While there are no explicit statements about Sodom's size, surrounded by desert, it was not very large.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 16:47 *more corrupt*. As God's covenanted people, Israel was held to a higher standard than her sisters. See note, Lk 10:11–12.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 16:49–50 Sodom's pride, gluttony, and neglect of the poor describes a decadent society in which gross immorality might easily thrive. *an abomination*. Probably refers to sodomy (Gn 19:1–22). At times, "abomination" is applied specifically to homosexual behavior (Lv 18:22; 20:13). See p 1911.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 16:51 *Samaria has not committed half your sins*. Typically, Ezekiel expresses himself in hyperbole. The corruption may be described as more intense because Judah has the center of holiness in its midst: the temple. Precisely because Jerusalem was the elect city, anyone aware of that fact would hold her to a higher standard.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 16:52 *Bear your disgrace*. Imperative in form, but when God is the speaker, it often has the force of a prediction. The reference may be to Jerusalem's imminent destruction. *intervened*. Jerusalem's greater judgment in the heavenly court had served as an argument in her sisters' defense.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 16:53 *restore their fortunes*. See p 1080. In the new creation, even sinners like Sodom can be redeemed. Here, Jerusalem's restoration is mentioned last, almost as an afterthought. As lesser offenders, it is only right that the sisters should be restored first. Israel is in special need of sheer grace because, as heir of the promise, she has transgressed more.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 16:54 *becoming a consolation*. Because God will forgive her flagrant behavior, Jerusalem will be an example of comfort to Samaria and Sodom. Unbelievers today also console themselves by the misdeeds of Christians and may use them as an excuse to reject the Gospel.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 16:56 *byword*. Jerusalem thought of herself highly and could look down on Sodom to excuse herself as not being so wicked.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 16:57 *object of reproach*. Because of her depravity and its punishment, others will use her name as she had once used "Sodom" (cf 5:14–15; Jer 23:14; 49:18; 50:40). See note, Jer 24:9. *Syria … Philistines*. Almost any of Israel's neighbors could have been mentioned to illustrate the point.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 16:1–58 In a long allegorical satire, Ezekiel equates idolatry with adultery. The underlying theme is one of base ingratitude. Forgetting God's unmerited grace, Jerusalem chases after the favors of idolatrous nations. God has no alternative but to punish her severely. If the Lord can restore someone who has fallen as far as Jerusalem, He can restore anyone. His grace is broad enough to cover even your greatest sin. • Lord, keep us ever mindful of all the undeserved mercies You have showered upon us from birth, especially the forgiveness of sin and eternal life, lest, like Jerusalem, we fall into great shame and vice. Amen.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 16:59 *I will deal with you as you have done*. Before repentance, the principle of reciprocity will apply: as Israel had "punished" the Lord, He will punish them. *the oath*. The covenant in which God has promised them so much (cf 44:7). See "vow," p 7.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 16:60 The great reversal from condemnation to mercy begins here. Abrupt transitions like this are found elsewhere in prophetic books. See p 320. *I will remember My covenant*. Remembering is not just a matter of the intellect, but it is also an action word. Israel may have forgotten completely, but God had not. See "remember," p 843. *I will establish for you an everlasting covenant*. Through Ezekiel, God reaffirms His promises. See p 127; see also notes, 2Sm 7:11–17; cf Jer 23; 31.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 16:61 *I give them to you as daughters*. Samaria and Sodom had originally been described as sisters of Israel (cf vv 48–49) but in the new creation they will be received as daughters. God's boundless grace is not limited to the chosen people but is extended to all.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 16:62 *you shall know that I am the* LORD. See p 1079.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 16:63 *confounded*. No words are adequate to express God's goodness. *when I atone for you*. See "atonement," p 5.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 16:59–63 The livid chapter on Israel's whoredom is followed by a beautiful affirmation of God's unwavering faithfulness to His everlasting covenant. The Gospel stands in stunning contrast to the Law's condemnation. With repentant joy, entrust your life and hope to the Lord. • Thanks be to You, O Lord, for choosing and saving even the chief of sinners, as all of us must account ourselves before You. Amen.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON **Ch 17** Builds on events of Ezekiel's time. In vv 1–10, the history is related allegorically; vv 11–24 interpret the allegory. The interpretation may be subdivided into three parts: (1) the historical meaning of the allegory (vv 11–18), (2) its theological meaning (vv 19–21), and (3) its messianic application (vv 22–24).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 17:2 *riddle … parable*. The two nouns are similar in meaning, but not entirely synonyms. A riddle implies any saying or story that requires interpretation. A parable implies a comparison of one thing with another. See notes, Jgs 9:8–15; 14:12; see also p 1609.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 17:3 *A great eagle*. Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon. Cf v 12. *Lebanon*. Greater Canaan, the northward, coastal extension of traditional Israelite territory. That name is chosen because of its prized species of cedar trees. *cedar*. Here, the tree must represent Jerusalem in southern Canaan.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 17:4 Reference to the deportation of Jehoiachin (with Ezekiel) to Babylon in 597 BC and the installation of Zedekiah in his stead. Babylon, with the surrounding area, was known as a major trade emporium (cf 16:29).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 17:5 *set it like a willow twig*. Willow grows rapidly along streams. The picture changes here: the eagle has become a gardener. It means Zedekiah is established in Jerusalem and could have thrived there.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 17:6 Another transformation. The vine is Zedekiah in Jerusalem. *low spreading vine*. Because of the intense summer heat, Near Eastern grapevines are often trained to hug the ground.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 17:7 *another great eagle*. Representing Egypt's Twenty-sixth Dynasty, probably under Pharaoh Hophra (cf Jer 44:30) or his predecessor, who encouraged Zedekiah to revolt and promised assistance. *that he might water it*. The vine (Zedekiah) responded favorably and sought water (support) from Egypt.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 17:8. Nebuchadnezzar had planted Jerusalem on good, well-watered soil so that, as a noble vine, it could bear fruit without turning to Egypt. As v 23 will indicate, it was God's will for that vine to thrive under the first eagle (Babylon), but the vine's defection forced God to respond in a different way.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 17:9 *Will it thrive?* Rhetorical question. Zedekiah and Jerusalem would certainly feel God's wrath for their unfaithfulness.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 17:10 The rhetorical question (v 9) is now restated in terms of surviving the hot, dry winds that blow from the eastern desert. See notes, Jb 1:19; 27:21.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 17:12 *what these things mean?* Here begins the prophet's own explanation. Until v 19, the explanation is historical; then he predicts the future. *king of Babylon came to Jerusalem*. The invasion of 597 BC.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 17:13 *royal offspring*. Jehoiachin's uncle Mattaniah, named Zedekiah by Nebuchadnezzar. *covenant … oath*. A treaty or pact was normally sealed by an oath, a promise of fealty by the vassal and of protection by the overlord. See pp 6–7. *chief men of the land*. Summarizes the scope of the 597 BC deportation.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 17:14 By taking captive Jerusalem's ruling classes, the city might not be tempted to rebel. See map, p 717.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 17:15 See note, 2Ki 24:20. *sending his ambassadors to Egypt*. Zedekiah did rebel in response to Egypt's promises. *horses and a large army*. Historical evidence indicates that when Nebuchadnezzar returned, Egypt's contribution was relatively small and ineffectual. See note, v 17.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 17:16 *in Babylon he shall die*. Fulfilled (cf Jer 52:11).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 17:17 Pharaoh Hophra's effort to help Zedekiah proved to be a failure. *mounds … siege walls*. Standard features of ancient sieges of cites. See note, 4:2.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 17:19–21 Ezekiel turns to a more theological explanation of the consequences of Zedekiah's actions. The Lord says that He will see to it that the punishment is carried out. On breach of covenant, cf 16:59; 44:7.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 17:20 *net … snare*. See note, Ps 91:3. These metaphors describe Zedekiah's capture. *treachery*. Commonly used of infidelity against God.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 17:21 *pick of his troops*. His mighty men. See note, Jsh 1:14. *survivors … scattered*. Implies an utter rout of the rebellion.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 17:22–24 A messianic prophecy spoken to a descendant of David, to whom the prophet Nathan promised an everlasting kingdom (2Sm 7).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 17:22 *sprig*. The kingdom of God, which came in a way beyond what OT believers would know; the NT describes the fulfillment, and the Church still awaits its final fruition. See p 1245. *cedar*. A return to the original imagery of the parable; see note, v 3. *the topmost of its young twigs*. As (in v 4) Nebuchadnezzar is figuratively described as breaking the top twigs (i.e., Jehoiachin, the legitimate king and of Davidic descent), so in the messianic era the Lord God will do something comparable (although on a vastly higher plane). *tender*. Unique expression but one probably ultimately derived from the common description of the Messiah as a branch or shoot (cf Is 11:1; Jer 23:5; Zec 3:8). One could think of Jesus' virginal birth as a tiny infant, though this may press the figure too far. *high and lofty mountain*. Cf v 24. Zion (Jerusalem) was situated on a small mountain, but this messianic abode far transcends earthly geography. Cf Ps 48:1–2; Is 11:9; 25:6–8. It can scarcely be accidental that high mountains figure so prominently in the NT (e.g., the scene of our Lord's temptations [Mt 4:1–11], the unnamed mount of transfiguration [Mt 17:1–13], and the new Jerusalem [Rv 21:2, 10]). Ezekiel will also describe the new temple of a restored Israel on "a very high mountain" (Ezk 40:2).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 17:23 *a noble cedar*. See note, v 3. *every kind of bird*. Symbolizing people of all nations. *shade … nest*. Symbols of shelter, which the Lord provides to those who take refuge in His chosen servant.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 17:24 *all the trees*. The nations will either bow in sincere faith or break in humiliation (cf Php 2:10–11). *bring low … make high*. Christ and the sinner changing places, as it were, so that none may boast but confess that it was all pure grace (cf Lk 1:46–55; 1Co 1–2).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON **Ch 17** An allegory describes Nebuchadnezzar's placement of Zedekiah over Jerusalem and the deportation of the rightful king, Jehoiachin. Ezekiel builds a glorious picture of God establishing His eternal kingdom in a descendant of David (and Jehoiachin): the Messiah. Ezekiel also describes how God makes a new creation for you, established through Christ's birth, life, death, and resurrection. • Lord, avert our eyes of faith from the kingdom of this world with its politics and power struggles. Show us the kingdom of heaven that You have already established. Sustain us on our journey to the high mountain above. Amen.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON **Ch 18** Theologically, this chapter ranks as one of the most important in the Book. Its overall theme is individual accountability before God. A person's ultimate judgment comes when he

must face the heavenly Judge at death. Ezekiel addresses the issue through three examples or case studies (vv 5–9; 10–13; 14–17). Ch 18 has affinities with chs 3; 33.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 18:2 Ezekiel is not asking for a direct answer, but challenging his audience to defend their shallow attempt to deny their guilt. *proverb*. See note, Jer 31:29; Jeremiah's refutation is oriented more to the future time of the new covenant.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 18:4 *souls*. Persons. See note, 3:19. *the soul who sins shall die*. Summarizes ch 18. Since all souls were created by God, He guides their destinies and judges them. Death is the punishment for unrepentant sinners. Throughout ch 18, life and death are used in their ultimate, beyond-this-world aspects. Gr Nys: "The death of the body consists in the extinction of the means of sensible perception, and in the dissolution of the body into its kindred elements: but 'the soul that sinneth,' he says, 'it shall die.' Now sin is nothing else than alienation from God, Who is the true and only life" (*NPNF* 2 5:126–27). Ambr: "[The soul] dies to the Lord, through the weakness not of nature but of guilt. But this death is not the discharge from this life, but a fall through error" (*NPNF* 2 10:179). Bern: "Who, then, is righteous, except he who returns to God, who loves him, His meed of love? … And he receives by one and the same Spirit both the reason for thinking that he is loved and the power of returning love, lest the love of God for us should be left without return" (*SLSB*, p 157).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 18:5–9 Ezekiel's first example.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 18:5 *righteous*. Follows from God's declaring a person righteous by grace through faith. See p 843. *does what is just and right*. Ezekiel stresses righteous acts in the prophecy.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 18:6–9 Major examples of what the Lord considered just and right.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 18:6 Idolatry, evidenced by participation in pagan sacrificial meals, is condemned first. *mountains*. Probably high places. See p 526. *lift up his eyes*. Trust in the false gods worshiped by apostate Israelites. See p 1276. *defile … approach a woman*. Sexual transgressions: adultery and relations during a woman's period (see note, Lv 15:19–24).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 18:7 *oppress*. Exploit. *pledge*. Collateral on a loan. *robbery*. Implying violence or force. In contrast, the righteous person provides food and clothing to the needy.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 18:8 *lend at interest or take any profit*. May refer to inordinate profit on the loan (Hbr term for "interest" is similar to word for "bite"). There are three similar passages in the Books of Moses (Ex 22:25; Lv 25:36–37; Dt 23:20). God's people should distinguish reasonable interest from usury. *justice*. See p 842.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 18:9 *by acting faithfully—he is righteous*. Righteousness is not merely adherence to some checklist, but a result of the right relation with God (see note, v 5). See pp 842–43.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 18:10–13 In Ezekiel's second case study, we meet a son who is a polar opposite of his father. The list of his wicked actions contrasts negatively to the father's righteous actions.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 18:13 *his blood shall be upon himself*. He has no one but himself to blame for his condemnation. The righteousness of the father cannot be inherited.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 18:14–17 The third case study involves a righteous grandson. An example of this sequence (righteous grandfather, unrighteous father, and righteous son/grandson) is seen in the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah of Judah (2Ki 15:32–17:5; 18:1–20:21).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 18:14 *this man*. Refers to the wicked father (vv 10–13).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 18:17 *he shall not die for his father's iniquity*. The father's wickedness is no more inheritable than the grandfather's righteousness had been. The grandson had been righteous himself and so shall live.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 18:18 Ezekiel glances back briefly at the unrighteous middle generation. Although each person is judged individually, the behavior of each member will affect the broader population.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 18:19–20 The people are not yet convinced and imply that God does not judge fairly. They prefer to blame God rather than themselves. God answers by simply repeating His principle of individual answerability.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 18:21–22 "Righteousness is faith in the heart. Furthermore, sins are redeemed by repentance. In other words, the obligation or guilt is removed because God forgives those who repent" (Ap V 142).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 18:21 *turns*. Repents. See p 1080. He returns to the true God whom he had abandoned. His new life is characterized by specific creeds and deeds, and his whole life has a different orientation.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 18:22 *None … shall be remembered*. See "remember," p 843. Chem: "Our righteousness consists in the fact that the Lord has not kept a record of our sins and does not impute them against us, as is explicitly stated in other passages of Scripture" (*LTh* 2:641). *for the righteousness that he has done he shall live*. His new relation with God leads to a change in behavior (cf v 9).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 18:23 It seems the people were not only accusing God of injustice but also of sadistic delight in punishing people. Just the opposite is true, as many scriptural passages affirm (cf Dt 30:15–20; 1Tm 2:4). Ter: "It was not merely that he might live the natural life that God had produced man, but that he should live virtuously, that is, in relation to God and to His law. Accordingly, God gave him *to live* when he was formed into a living soul; but He charged him *to live virtuously* when he was required to obey a law. So also God shows that man was not constituted for death, by now wishing that he should be restored to life, preferring the sinner's repentance to his death" (*ANF* 3:303).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 18:24 If someone who is righteous defects (and thus is no longer righteous), he will not live. His former righteous status is not remembered. God views things holistically. A person will be judged by his status before God at the moment of judgment. Cf Heb 9:27.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 18:25 The people still protest that the Lord's ways are not fair, but arbitrary or unpredictable. It is the other way around—God acts consistently according to His rules of justice, while people are fickle and reject God's revelation. Ath: "A servant would not dare to say, because I worked yesterday, I will not work today; and considering the past [I] will do no work in the future; … so let us daily abide firm in our discipline" (*NPNF* 2 4:201).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 18:27 *he shall save his life*. As throughout ch 18, the life Ezekiel refers to seems to be eternal life. Temporal life or death may or may not be included.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 18:30 *Repent and turn*. Two forms of the Hbr "turn," here repeated for emphasis. From the totality of Scripture, we know that this is possible only through the gracious gift of the Holy Spirit. See p 1080. *lest iniquity be your ruin*. As the ESV note indicates, "ruin" is a free

translation of "stumbling block," i.e., lest there be another relapse into apostasy. See note, 3:20.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 18:31 *Cast away … new spirit!* May be read as a condition: If you cast away … then you will get a new heart and spirit. (Cf 36:26.) Chem: "Just as there is an old and a new man, so the Law exercises control over the old man or his nature, coerces, crushes and mortifies it by outward discipline, punishments, and threats; but the consolation of the Gospel pertains to the new man and indeed produces the new man. For it is the ministration of renewal through which, when the man is outside he is brought low and when he is inside he is renewed from day to day" (*LTh* 2:664). *make yourselves a new heart and a new spirit!* Hbr idiom is involved, which may be translated "get/acquire for yourselves" (cf 28:4; Dt 8:17; 2Sm 15:1; 1Ki 1:5). Sinners do not have a free will or ability to make their hearts new (see note, Ex 35:29).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 18:32 Repeats v 23 as a conclusion and as an invitation to repent and live as God intended before the fall into sin. Through His Son, God has provided the means for such a change of heart. See notes, 11:19; 36:26. Cypr: "While God is provoked with frequent, yea, with continual offences, He softens His indignation, and in patience waits for the day of retribution, once for all determined; and although He has revenge in His power, He prefers to keep patience for a long while, bearing, that is to say, mercifully, and putting off, so that, if it might be possible, the long protracted mischief may at some time be changed, and man, involved in the contagion of errors and crimes, may even though late be converted to God" (*ANF* 5:485).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON **Ch 18** God gives a clear, almost dogmatic, statement of how His justice operates. Life or death depends upon whether or not one believes and, as a result, lives out that faith. God severely condemns natural man's tendency to justify himself on the basis of his own supposed righteousness, or to blame God (or someone else) for unfairness. Ezekiel also beautifully asserts God's desire for everyone to be saved ("live"). • Lord, keep us steadfast in Christ's righteousness, which has satisfied Your justice and has given us new lives. Amen.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON **Ch 19** Ezekiel issues a call to repentance in parabolic language, as in chs 15–18. Here, he composes a lament poem appropriate for a funeral (cf Lm). He mourns the last leaders of Judah, described as offspring of a lioness (vv 1–9) and as the strongest stem

growing on a vine (vv 10–14). Two of the kings who are mourned were sons of the same father; the third was a grandson. Though they are not expressly named, their identity emerges from allusions to circumstances in their lives.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 19:1 *lamentation*. See pp 839–46, 1295. *princes*. See p 228.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 19:2 *your mother?* Judah. *lioness!* Asian lion was an emblem of Judah. The first king was Josiah's son Jehoahaz (vv 2–4; cf 2Ki 23:31–33).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 19:3 *devoured men*. Said also of the next king (v 6). During the regime of both rulers, many people lost their lives.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 19:4 *he was caught … pit … hooks*. Together with vv 8–9, likely outlines ancient practices for capturing and controlling a lion. The animal was surrounded, driven by cries to a pit, netted, subdued with hooked poles, and bound.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 19:5 *waited in vain*. Hbr implies that the first lion disappointed the mother's expectations. *another of her cubs*. The second king was Jehoiachin, son of Jehoiakim and nephew of Jehoahaz (vv 5–9; cf 2Ki 24:8–15).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 19:6 *devoured men*. See note, v 3.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 19:7 *seized their widows*. Charges the ruler with killing men and taking their wives. Cf 2Sm 11.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 19:8–9 See note, v 4.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 19:8 *nations … every side*. Hbr can be translated: "Nations attacked him from provinces all around."

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 19:10–14 The third and last to hold a ruler's scepter in Judah was Zedekiah, another son of Josiah (cf Jer 52:1–11).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 19:10 *in a vineyard*. "In your blood," as the KJV translates (see ESV note), suggests the organic affinity of the stem (v 11) to the vine.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 19:11 Difficult Hbr. The text seems to move from describing the kings of David's line to the one king under whom Judah collapsed. *rulers' scepters*. Members of the royal family. See note, Gn 49:10. *it towered aloft*. Instead of hugging the ground as a fruitful vine. See note, Ezk 17:6.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 19:12 *plucked up*. By Babylon. *east wind*. See notes, Jb 1:19; 27:21.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 19:13 Deported to Babylon.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 19:14 The king's treachery brought on his and the monarchy's downfall (cf ch 15). *has gone out*. Ezekiel may have written the lamentation over Zedekiah after the fall of Jerusalem. However, a dirge may also be prophetic of a future calamity (cf Am 5). *become a lamentation*. Encloses or frames the passages (circling back to v 1). The wording also hints that Ezekiel wrote the lament for the fall of Jerusalem in 587 BC and so affirmed that his prophecy would come true.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON **Ch 19** Ezekiel laments the corrupt line of Judah. Instead of ruling through exemplary lives, the last three kings symbolize God's judgment. God withdrew His blessings from Judah, whose leaders rebelled against Him. However, God did not abandon His covenant promise to David (2Sm 7:16), fulfilling it in Jesus Christ, the descendant of David (Mt 1:6–16), the descendant of Abraham (Mt 1:2–5, 17). • Lord, we thank You for Your mercy. You remain faithful, fulfilling Your promise in Christ. Grant us true repentance and faithfulness. Amen.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 20:1–4 A third visit by the elders of Israel showed that they continued to ignore Ezekiel's unrelenting, impassioned preaching. The repetition in his preaching illustrates God's infinite patience. Ezekiel had to tell the inquiring elders that they still have not removed their idols from their hearts (cf vv 31–32). Instead of granting the kind of favorable answer they sought, Ezekiel is instructed to judge them, pronouncing them guilty of the same abominations as their fathers.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 20:1 *seventh year … tenth day of the month*. Aug 14, 591 BC, the seventh year of captivity. *elders of Israel*. See note, 8:1. *came to inquire*. See notes, 14:1, 3.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 20:3 *As I live*. Oath formula. See "vow," p 7.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 20:4 *abominations*. See note, 5:9.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 20:5–32 From Israel's beginning and throughout its history, God would have been justified if He had poured out His wrath on the people. They escaped destruction solely because God did not want His holy name to "be profaned in the sight of the nations" (vv 14, 22). See note, Ex 32:12.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 20:5 *I chose Israel, I swore*. See notes, Dt 7:6–8.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 20:6 *a land flowing with milk and honey*. See p 6.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 20:7 *detestable things … idols of Egypt*. Cf 5:11.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 20:8 *None*. Hyperbole, since Moses and Joshua remained steadfast even during the idolatry with the golden calf (Ex 32).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 20:9 *for the sake of My name*. Mentioned frequently as the reason for Israel's survival; the honor of God's name is cited also by Isaiah and Jeremiah as motivating Him to restrain His anger (cf Jer 14:7; Ex 32:11–12; Nu 14:15–16; Dt 9:27–28). See p 842.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 20:11 *statutes … rules*. See p 971. *shall live*. Cf Jsh 1:7–8; Lk 10:27–28.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 20:12 *Sabbaths*. A sign of covenant faithfulness. See note, Ex 20:8; cf Jer 17:21. *sanctifies them*. See "holy," p 7.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 20:14 See note, v 9.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 20:15 *a land flowing with milk and honey*. See p 6.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 20:18–19 "Doesn't God forbid people everywhere in the Prophets from setting up peculiar rites of worship without His commandment?" (Ap XV 14).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 20:18 *their children*. The generation born during the 40 years of wandering.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 20:21 *the children rebelled*. E.g., the murmurers and the sons of Korah (Nu 16).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 20:22 *withheld My hand*. Withheld full punishment.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 20:23 *scatter … disperse*. Cf Dt 4:27.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 20:25 *statutes … not good*. The laws God gave that man shall live (v 11) can also become "a fragrance from death to death" (2Co 2:14, 16). When executing judgment on willful, hardened sinners, He sends them a strong delusion (2Th 2:11) so that they fall into perverting wholesome ordinances and make them an excuse for committing the most detestable crimes. Cf Rm 7:7–8. "Not even to His Law has God assigned the honor that it should merit eternal life, as He clearly says" (Ap XXVII 30).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 20:27 *son of man*. See note, 2:1. *blasphemed Me*. With the actions described in vv 28–29.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 20:28–29 See p 526.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 20:30 *whoring*. Cf ch 16.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 20:31 *children in fire*. See notes, 16:20–21; 2Ki 16:3. *I will not be inquired of by you*. Cf Ezk 14:1; 20:1.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 20:32 *be like the nations*. Exiles of Ezekiel's day hoped for favorable treatment from the Babylonians if they adopted their

idols.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 20:1–32 The stench of Israel's sin is great. Verse by verse, God recounts how generations of Israelites compounded their sins. God desired to pour His wrath against them (vv 8, 13, 21) but, by His grace, stilled His own hand (vv 9, 14, 22). Today, make repentance a way of life. The heavenly Father will pardon your sins for the sake of Jesus, our Savior. He will raise His hand in blessing and incline His ear to hear your prayer. • Lord God, thankfully we do not receive what our sins deserve—eternal death. By Your grace, we receive eternal life. Amen.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 20:33–44 As in the past, God would not make a full end of the unfaithful people, because the honor of His name was still at stake (vv 39, 44). He would manifest His holiness in the sight of the nations by doing again what He did at the time of the exodus from Egypt.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 20:33 *a mighty hand and an outstretched arm*. See note, 4:7.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 20:37 As a shepherd wields his staff to judge which sheep belong in his flock, so the Lord will judge those who desire to acknowledge Him as their King (cf Jer 33:13).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 20:38 *rebels … shall not enter the land of Israel*. The rebellious generation after the exodus perished in the wilderness. The exile will provide a similar purging.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 20:39 *My holy name*. See "LORD," p 1227.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 20:40 *My holy mountain*. Zion. See p 844. *contributions … gifts … offerings*. Technical terms for the wave offerings, firstfruits, and other offerings described by Moses. See pp 170–71.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 20:41 Restored to their status as His covenant people, they will no longer be the object of ridicule.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 20:43 *loathe yourselves*. Ashamed of their misdeeds (cf 16:61; 36:31; Hos 5:15).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 20:45–49 In the Hbr Bible, vv 45–49 are the opening section of the next ch, in which Ezekiel continues his efforts to convince his calloused hearers of inevitable judgment to come.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 20:46 *forest land in the Negeb*. See note, Jsh 17:15.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 20:47 *kindle … devour*. Fire as divine wrath. Cf Is 10:17–18; Jer 44:6; Am 2:5.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 20:49 *a maker of parables?* Hbr *mashal* used here as a verb and a noun together, a pun expressing their disdain for Ezekiel's

repeated admonitions. See p 778.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 20:33–49 God continues His prophetic dialogue with Ezekiel. While the elders come seeking counsel, God speaks only to Ezekiel and reveals how the withdrawal of His blessings will ultimately lead to Israel's repentance. God will use the Babylonian captivity to bring Israel back into a covenant agreement with Himself (v 37). When difficulties or even disasters enter your life, let them remind you of the need for daily repentance and the refreshing blessings of the Gospel extended to you through Christ. • Merciful Father, forgive my sins and restore me to a right relationship through Your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 21:1–17 Though Ezekiel's hearers complained that he spoke in riddles, he continued to sound the alarm of God's judgment. He now describes a sword drawn for a great slaughter. The victims of the sword are identified at the very outset as Jerusalem and the land of Israel (v 2).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 21:2–3 *Israel*. See note, 2:3.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 21:3 *both righteous and wicked*. In catastrophes of nature and national disasters, there is no distinction in the outward fate that overtakes an entire community (see note, 18:24).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 21:6 *son of man*. See note, 2:1.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 21:7 *Every heart will melt*. See note, Jsh 2:9.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 21:9 *A sword*. The instrument of death is personified. Jeremiah also addressed a sword and invoked it to slaughter the Philistines and Babylonians (Jer 47:6–7; 50:35–38).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 21:10 *shall we rejoice?* Ezekiel's hearers still were tempted to think the sword was drawn to destroy their enemies. Ezekiel unmasked their hypocrisy with a terse statement of the facts.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 21:12 *princes of Israel*. See p 228. *Strike therefore upon your thigh*. Gesture to express anguish and despair. See "clap" and "smite," pp 1276–1277.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 21:13 *not be a testing*. God must use a sword to punish a nation that He chose to be His people, because chastisements with a rod did not bring them to their senses.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 21:14 *Clap your hands*. See note, 6:11. *twice, yes, three times*. The Lord urged Ezekiel to keep striking the people with his prophecies.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 21:15 *stumble*. See note, 3:20. *At all their gates*. Babylonians surrounded them for a siege.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 21:17 *clap My hands*. See note, 6:11.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 21:18–27 The sword of the Lord is more than a figure of speech. It had already been "given into the hand of the slayer" (v 11). Nebuchadnezzar, chosen to serve God as His executioner (see note, Is 42:1), is already marching. When he captures the people within Jerusalem, they will know that he is divinely commissioned to bring their guilt to remembrance, even though Nebuchadnezzar may act out of selfish motives. For breaking a sworn covenant, the prince of Israel will be disgraced and dethroned (cf Ezk 17:14–21). Nothing will remain of his kingdom but ruin (21:27).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 21:19 *make a signpost*. An advance unit marks the way for the main force to close in.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 21:20 *Rabbah*. See note, Jer 49:2. *Ammonites*. For the role they played in Israel's history and their ultimate fate, see note, Nu 21:24. Cf vv 28–32; see note, Jer 49:1.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 21:21 *divination*. Nebuchadnezzar did not reach a decision until he received favorable omens from three kinds of augury: (1) Arrows, marked to indicate divergent options, were shaken in a quiver. When the king drew out one of them with his right hand, the divination for Jerusalem (v 22) emerged. (2) Teraphim, carved or sculptured images in human form, were consulted (see note, Gn 31:19). How they were manipulated to foretell the future is not known. (3) Professional soothsayers were engaged to examine the liver of slain animals. They interpreted the coloring and the lines of the organ to indicate whether a contemplated action would succeed or not. Archaeologists have discovered clay diagrams of livers, which assisted with such interpretations. One was found at Megiddo in northern Israel.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 21:22 *open the mouth with murder*. Describes battle cries.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 21:23 *them*. The people of Jerusalem, who believed that Nebuchadnezzar's favorable omens would prove to be a false divination. *sworn solemn oaths*. Lit, "oaths of oaths are to them." They were so sure that Nebuchadnezzar was being deceived that they swore oath upon oath. See "vow," p 7. The Hbr noun for "oaths" may denote "weeks." If translated "weeks of weeks are to them," the meaning is that the people are saying, "It will not be for ages, if ever, that the divination will come true."

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 21:24 *made your guilt to be remembered*. The people flaunted their sins.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 21:25 *O profane wicked one, prince of Israel*. Zedekiah. Cf 2Ki 24:18–25:7.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 21:26 *Remove the turban … crown*. Resign. *Exalt … bring low*. The fall of Jerusalem and exile will overturn Judah's society.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 21:27 *the one to whom judgment belongs*. When Zedekiah dies in disgrace, the house of David will become defunct until the messianic King establishes His rule (see note, Gn 49:10; cf Is 9:6–7; Lk 1:32, 69).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 21:28–32 The sword of the Lord, deflected from the Ammonites for a time, will in due course be drawn for the slaughter.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 21:28 *son of man*. See note, 2:1. *Ammonites*. See note, v 20. *concerning their reproach*. When their day has come (v 29), the Ammonites will no longer rejoice over Jerusalem's ruin.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 21:29 An execution is described. However, the nouns and pronouns are unclear. Some wicked people are under threat, whether Ammonites or Judeans.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 21:30 *Return it*. If addressed to Ezekiel, God directs him to cease brandishing the sword that symbolized God's wrath. If addressed to Ammon, it is an ironic summons to give up the fight, because all resistance is in vain.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 21:31 *brutish men*. Cyrus would lead Medes and Persians against the Babylonians (the swords) and overthrow them in 539 BC. See notes, Is 45:1–3.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON **Ch 21** God's hand draws His sword of judgment: Nebuchadnezzar. The righteous and unrighteous will both perish as Babylon strikes Jerusalem. In a section of Scripture filled with foreboding, destruction, and doom, there seems scant room for God's peace, salvation, and forgiveness. Yet, as quickly as God drew His sword, He returns it to its scabbard. God claps His hands and His fury abates (v 17). Today, He is equally ready to put away His wrath and forgive your sins. • Father, daily we witness Your infinite mercy. Though our sins are numerous, Your Word and Sacraments call us to forgiveness in Jesus Christ. Amen.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 22:1–16 Nebuchadnezzar was about to besiege Jerusalem, which would result in a great slaughter of its citizens and reduce every structure to rubble (21:14, 27). God made it clear that He decreed the horrors of war and the defeat of Jerusalem. Acting as God's prosecuting attorney, Ezekiel hauled the inhabitants of Jerusalem into court, indicting them for committing abominable deeds.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 22:2 *son of man*. See note, 2:1. *bloody city?* Jerusalem is as infamous in God's sight as Nineveh, the notoriously wicked capital of Assyria, against which the prophet Nahum uttered the execration, "Woe to the bloody city" (Na 3:1). The crimes committed in Jerusalem are so heinous that the charge of shedding blood is repeated six times in the next 11 verses. *abominations*. See note, 5:9.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 22:4 *appointed time*. God planned Jerusalem's downfall. *reproach … mockery*. See note, Jer 24:9.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 22:6 *princes of Israel*. See p 228.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 22:7–12 *treated with contempt*. Legislation, well known to the accused, prohibited the wrongs enumerated here.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 22:7 *the sojourner … the fatherless and the widow*. Cf Dt 14:29; 16:11, 14; 24:19–22.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 22:8 *holy things*. Cf Lv 10:10; 11:47; 20:25. *Sabbaths*. Cf Ex 20:8–10; Is 56:2.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 22:9 *on the mountains*. See note, 18:6. *lewdness*. Cf Lv 18:8–20; 20:10–21.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 22:10 *their fathers' nakedness*. See note, Lv 18:6. *menstrual impurity*. See note, Lv 15:19–24.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 22:12 *bribes … extortion*. Cf Ex 23:8; Dt 16:19. *Me you have forgotten*. Abominations (v 2) that wrong fellow human beings are regarded as offenses against God Himself.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 22:13 *strike My hand*. To express aroused feelings of indignation. (See note, 6:11.)
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 22:14 *Can your courage endure*. Until now they had put on a bold, brazen front, confident that the Lord could not destroy the Holy City. (Cf Jer 7:4.)
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 22:15 *scatter*. Exile. *consume your uncleanness*. The walls of Jerusalem will not offer them security. For God will turn the city, filled with refugees, into a smelting furnace in which the fire of His wrath will melt them into a heap of slag.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 22:18 *dross … dross of silver*. See note, Jer 6:27–30. Israel is like ore that when melted down leaves no valuable residue of silver, but only worthless dross.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 22:20 *blow the fire*. Heat intensified by bellows.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 22:24 *not … rained upon*. If not blessed by rainfall, a land is a worthless desert, unable to sustain life (cf Jer 14:2–6).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 22:25 *conspiracy of her prophets*. False prophets would encourage members of the royal family to commit the crimes.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 22:26 *Her priests have done violence*. See note, 7:23–27. *the holy and the common*. See "holy," p 7. *the unclean and the clean*. See "clean," p 6.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 22:27 *princes … like wolves*. They are false shepherds (cf ch 34). *princes*. Hbr very likely refers to "high officials," as in 1Ki 4:2.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 22:28 *smeared whitewash*. To cover over the princes' evil deeds. See note, 13:10.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 22:30 *stand in the breach*. A few righteous individuals such as Noah, Daniel, and Job would no longer avert the doom of a nation in which all strata of the citizenry were addicted to a wanton life of crime (14:13–14). E.g., Jeremiah was sent to preach repentance but was rebuffed, ridiculed, and persecuted. "Such prayer, then, is to be our protection and defense now… . Let them all rage and attempt their utmost and deliberate and resolve how they may suppress and exterminate us, so that their will and counsel may prevail. Over and against this one or two Christians with this petition alone shall be our wall [Ezekiel 22:30], against which they shall run and dash themselves to pieces" (LC III 69).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 22:31 *I have returned their way upon their heads*. They will suffer the abuse they heaped on others.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON **Ch 22** Like a prosecuting attorney, Ezekiel presents God's charges against Judah. He outlines Judah's total disregard of God's Laws presented at Mount Sinai. Above all else, Judah has forgotten her Lord (v 12). Through the suffering of the exiles, the Lord would lead His people to repentance and ultimately forgiveness. He still works this way in our lives today, ever seeking our good and salvation. • Lord, our sins are above counting. Forgive us, we pray, through Christ. Amen.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON **Ch 23** Ezekiel tried to break through the hard resistance to his preaching of repentance by confronting the rebellious

house with an allegorical satire as shocking to their self-righteous sensibilities as the one recorded in ch 16.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 23:2 After Solomon's death, the kingdom was divided into two independent states. The capital of the seceding northern tribes came to be Samaria, while Jerusalem remained the seat of government in the south. The blood relationship of the two separate kingdoms is expressed in the satire by calling them daughters of one mother. See note, v 4.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 23:3 *played the whore*. Idolatry. See notes, 16:15; Jer 2:20; Hos 2:4.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 23:4 *Oholah … Oholibah*. Common element in the names is Hbr *'ohel*, "tent." Its figurative significance derives from its use to designate Israel's place of worship before the temple was built, called "the tent of meeting" (Ex 29:42; 33:7; Nu 11:24). *Oholah*. Lit, "her tent," because the northern tribes established sanctuaries of their own in opposition to the only legitimate worship center. *elder*. Samaria is called the elder of the sisters because it was destroyed more than 100 years before Ezekiel spoke this satire. *Oholibah*. Lit, "My tent is in her," because God's approved place of meeting with His people remained in Jerusalem. *became Mine*. Figurative way of saying that the covenant made by God with the entire nation was like the marriage vow of a bride and groom, which is to be kept inviolate.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 23:5 *her lovers the Assyrians*. The Northern Kingdom made overtures of alliance to the Assyrians. These diplomatic maneuvers deserve to be called harlotries. They violated the relationship of total trust and unreserved dependence that the people pledged to maintain exclusively with God. The felony was compounded by the fact that treaties with heathen nations required adopting the worship of their idols. (See note, 16:26–29; cf Hos 5:13; 7:11; 12:1.)
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 23:6 *clothed in purple*. Afforded by the wealthy. See p 141. *riding on horses*. See note, Ps 20:7.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 23:10 *uncovered her nakedness*. See note, Lv 18:6. *byword*. See note, Jer 24:9. *judgment*. Oholah came to a tragic end when the very lovers with whom she defiled herself turned against her and slew her.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 23:11–21 Instead of learning from the fate of her elder sister, Oholibah was even more corrupt.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 23:12 *the Assyrians*. Cf 2Ki 16:7–9.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 23:14 *men portrayed on the wall*. Engraved in low-relief carvings. See note, 8:10. *Chaldeans*. Ruling house of the Babylonians. See note, 2Ki 20:12. *vermilion*. See note, Jer 22:14.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 23:17 *the bed of love*. Euphemism for intercourse. *she turned from them in disgust*. Desire turned to revulsion. See note, 2Sm 13:15.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 23:19–21 Driven by vulgar, uninhibited lust, Oholibah increased her whoring with the Egyptians to exceed what she did in the days of her youth.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 23:20 *paramours*. Hbr term is likely borrowed from another language and is usually translated "concubines," but cannot refer to women here, as the rest of the verse makes clear. Some deviant Egyptian behavior is involved.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 23:21 *you*. Oholibah is directly addressed, as follows in vv 22–35.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 23:22–35 Fourfold legal sentencing introduced by "thus says the Lord GOD." (1) Her lovers will become her executioners (vv 22–27). (2) They will leave her denuded of resources, the fruit of her labor (vv 28–31). (3) The rapacious men will act at God's judgment (vv 32–34). (4) Convicted of lewdness and whoring, she will bear the consequences of her deeds (v 35).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 23:22 *I will stir up against you*. Introduces a great reversal of Oholibah's fortunes. As prostitutes commonly experience, she will become an object of abuse and violence rather than affection.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 23:23 *Pekod and Shoa and Koa*. Babylonian army will be composed in part of Aramean tribes located east of the Tigris River. Their names appear on Assyrian records.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 23:24 *from the north*. Hbr word occurring only here is so translated by the LXX. *buckler*. See note, Ps 35:2. *I will commit the judgment to them*. They act on God's behalf.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 23:25 *My jealousy*. See note, Ex 20:5. *cut off your nose and your ears*. Abuses the Assyrians used to humiliate some prisoners.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 23:31–34 See notes, Jer 13:13; Is 51:17.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 23:34 Act of insane delirium produced by the content of the cup.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 23:36–49 The abominable deeds and punishment of destroyed Samaria and the adultery and still-impending judgment of

Jerusalem merge into a single picture of guilt followed by punishment. In the perspective of God's unchanging justice, what will happen has already happened, and what has happened must happen again. The wages of sin never go unpaid.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 23:37 See note, 2Ki 16:3.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 23:38–39 *on the same day*. Adding insult to injury, the idolaters who sacrificed their children have the defiant effrontery to enter the temple on a Sabbath with the blood of the ghastly crime still on their hands. (See notes, Lv 18:21; 2Ki 23:10.)

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 23:40 *painted your eyes*. In order to enhance their beauty. (See notes, 2Ki 9:30; Jb 42:14.)

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 23:41 *couch*. Designed for reclining at meals. *My incense and My oil*. Cf Ex 25:6.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 23:42 Some features of the revelry and debauchery cannot be translated with certainty. The sisters embrace the dregs of society. *bracelets … beautiful crowns*. Cheap gifts to entice them.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 23:43 *adultery*. She was a woman of habitual, unrestrained lewdness. She did not yield to temptation in a weak moment, but permitted men to commit adultery with her as readily as a professional harlot plies her trade.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 23:45 *righteous men*. Though the Babylonians and Assyrians were no better than their victims, they executed righteous judgment because they carried out the sentence that God's Holy Law demands. See note, vv 22–35.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 23:47 *stone them and cut them down*. Cf Lv 20:10; Dt 21:21.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 23:48 *all women may take warning*. A warning to other nations.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON **Ch 23** Both the Northern and Southern Kingdoms of Israel prostituted themselves by worshiping foreign gods and forming alliances with foreign governments. God's use of sexually explicit language calls attention to His wrath against spiritual adultery. Modern lewdness in films, songs, and on the Internet similarly mislead people today by alienating them from God, who forbids such things. It also alienates people from their families, who cannot endure such unfaithfulness. Today, repent of lusts and from spiritual adulteries that mix true devotion with falsehood. No matter how deep the stain of your sins, trust that the Lord

Jesus can cleanse you with His precious blood and renew positive relationships with heaven and at home. • Father, forgive us for foolishly bowing to our own lusts and sinful imaginations. Renew us in the purity of Holy Baptism. Amen.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 24:1–14 For four years (cf 1:2; 24:1), God's appointed watchman over Israel sounded the alarm in vain (3:7). Informed by "the word of the LORD," he announces that, as he now speaks, the king of Babylon is no longer in far-off Riblah (see note, 21:18–27) but "has laid siege to Jerusalem this very day" (24:1–2).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 24:1 *ninth year … tenth month … tenth day*. Jan 15, 588 BC, the ninth year of the exile. Cf 1:1–2; 8:1; 2Ki 25:1; Jer 52:4. After the exile, the day was observed annually by fasting (Zec 8:19).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 24:3–5 The pieces of meat represent the people of Jerusalem (see note, 11:3). The upper stratum of the citizenry will share the same fate as the rank and file. In order to make sure that the bones too are thoroughly boiled, they are to be placed under the meat and the water is to be brought to a high boiling point (see ESV note).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 24:3 *parable*. See pp 775–78.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 24:6 *bloody city*. For its criminal record, see 22:1–12. *corrosion*. Copper pot has oxidized and was not cleaned, spoiling the food. *without making any choice*. Stabbing and removing meat at random—all get treated the same.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 24:7 *bare rock*. Blood was shed so brazenly and openly that no attempt was made to cover the crime or to bring the murderer to justice. Therefore the blood, like Abel's, cries to God for vengeance (cf Gn 4:10; Jb 16:18; Ps 32:1; Is 26:21; Rm 4:7).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 24:9 *bloody city!* Not because of her godly sacrifices at her temple, but because of her heinous sacrifice of firstborn children to foreign gods. See note, 16:20–21.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 24:10 Keep cooking as though nothing were wrong.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 24:11 *copper … corrosion*. See note, v 6.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 24:12 *wearied herself*. Also translated "she has wearied Me." The thought is that God's previous chastisements were wasted efforts because they failed to produce repentance and so cleanse the city of her filthy lewdness (v 13).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 24:14 *I will do it*. God will allow the Babylonians to complete the siege.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 24:1–14 By God's own hand, the Babylonians besiege Jerusalem (v 2). Judah's offenses against God earn her the hideous title of "the bloody city" (v 6). God sets afire Judah's uncleanness (v 11). This cleansing fire subsides when God has satisfied His fury (v 13). Thanks be to God; for our sakes, Jesus satisfied God's fury on the cross and atoned for all our uncleanness with His precious blood. • Father, only the precious blood of Jesus makes us holy. Purify us from all unrighteousness for His sake. Amen.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 24:15–27 Ezekiel was directed to perform another action prophecy (see note, chs 4–5). This is likely the most difficult assignment he received.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 24:16 *take the delight of your eyes*. Contrary to appearances, Ezekiel was not devoid of tender love, as this term of endearment for his wife shows. *you shall not mourn*. He was to give no outward expression of his grief and to refrain from observing the customary mourning rites. His highly unconventional behavior prompted the people to ask what these things meant.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 24:17 *Sigh*. According to prevailing funeral customs, the mourner was expected to (1) engage women to lament aloud (Mk 5:38); (2) take off the turban and go barefoot (2Sm 15:30; Is 20:2); (3) pull down a head-covering over his face to his lips (Mi 3:7); and (4) eat "the bread of men," prepared by relatives and friends (Jer 16:7; Hos 9:4).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 24:21 *I will profane My sanctuary*. Destruction of the temple by the Babylonians. *the pride of your power*. Cf Ps 27:4; 137:6; Lm 2:4.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 24:25 *son of man*. See note, 2:1. *their stronghold*. The temple.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 24:26 *on that day*. Hbr idiom also translated "when" or "then." See p 1079. Ezekiel is not saying that a fugitive leaving Jerusalem on the day of its capture (v 25) could arrive in Babylon within 24 hours. In prophetic perspective, the tragic event and the arrival of the report are telescoped into a single view. See p 1258. *a fugitive … to report*. Someone would escape the destruction to share the news.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 24:27 *no longer mute*. Cf 33:22. On the nature of the prophet's temporary muteness, see note, 3:26.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 24:15–27 Ezekiel must hold in his sorrow over the death of his wife as a sign to the exiles that they have no right to mourn

over the destruction of the temple and Jerusalem. False tears offend God. He calls for true sorrow and contrition as genuine results of repentance. Our sins profaned His most glorious temple—the body and life of His Son. Yet the Father quietly gave Him over to death so that we might have life. Thankfully, Jesus cleanses our pain-filled hearts and will wipe away all our tears. • O Jesus, when our sin profaned the temple of Your body, You prepared for us a place in Your eternal glory. Return and deliver us. Amen.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON **Chs 25–32** Oracles against seven nations surrounding Israel, which serve as an interlude, leave the reader in suspense about the future of Jerusalem (see note, 24:26). The doom pronounced on the foreign nations constitutes a prelude to the third and final section of Ezk. For similar collections of oracles against Israel's enemies, cf Is 13–23; Jer 46–51; Am 1:2–2:3. The nations are Ammon east of the Jordan, Moab east of the Salt Sea, Edom to the south, Philistia to the west (ch 25), and Tyre and Sidon to the northwest (chs 26–28). The seventh is Egypt, contender for the control of all Israel (chs 29–32). See color map 2. The indicted nations add up to a total of seven, and the seventh (Egypt) is condemned by seven words of the Lord that came to Ezekiel on seven occasions (29:1, 17; 30:1, 20; 31:1; 32:1, 17). See p 217. Every earthly power that seeks to hinder the coming of God's kingdom must go down in defeat. Note that Babylon is not included; in Ezekiel's day, the Babylonian king was not obstructing God's purposes. Though acting out of selfish motives, the Babylonian king was carrying out a divinely assigned task when he destroyed Jerusalem. Although Israel had dealings with other peoples, the seven nations indicted and condemned represent the totality of worldly powers answerable to God's direction (cf Dt 7:1). Ezekiel underscores the miracle of Israel's survival among hostile nations and empires by noting the exact date when he received seven of the oracles directed against them, thus accounting for half of the dated passages in the entire Book (26:1; 29:1, 17; 30:20; 31:1; 32:1, 17).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 25:2 *Son of man*. See note, 2:1. *set your face*. Cf 4:3; see p 1277. *the Ammonites*. Region of modern Jordan. See color map 2.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 25:3 *Aha!* Cry of vindictive joy. Cf Jb 39:25; Ps 35:21, 25; Is 44:16. *when it was profaned*. Fall of Jerusalem, 587 BC.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 25:4 *the people of the East*. Nomadic tribes of the desert to the east of Israel or more distant Babylon.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 25:5 *Rabbah … Ammon*. See note, 21:20.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 25:6 *clapped … stamped*. See note, 6:11.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 25:7 *know that I am the* LORD. See note, 2:5.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 25:1–7 Ezekiel pronounces the first of seven prophecies against nations surrounding Israel. God directs world events by faithfully protecting those whom He loves and punishing those who disobey Him. God continues to do the same today. He will not allow nations or individuals to mock Him. He will call straying people to repentance, that He might forgive them and restore blessings to them so that others may come to know the Lord (vv 5, 7). • Almighty God, grant that we never rejoice at the misfortune of others; we pray that all may come to know You by faith. Amen.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 25:8–11 Territory east of the Salt Sea and south of the Ammonites. See color map 2; see also notes, Is 15; Jer 48; cf Gn 19:37–38.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 25:8 *Judah is like all the other nations*. They certainly share the same sins but have greater responsibility because of their rebellion (cf 2:3–7).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 25:11 *know that I am the* LORD. See note, 2:5.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 25:8–11 Moab falls under the Lord's judgment. God accuses Moab of believing that Judah is like the other nations (v 8), when in truth they are called and blessed by God. Today, bear His name with repentant joy and sincere faith so that others may know the Lord. God expects His people to be different. Indeed, He makes a difference in the lives of those baptized in His name by forgiving their sins. • Merciful God, show us how to live in Your righteousness by Your Spirit's power, through Christ, our Lord. Amen.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 25:12–14 Living in the territory south of the Salt Sea, the Edomites refused to allow Israel to pass through their nation on their march to the Promised Land (Nu 20:18–21). See notes, Is 21:11; Jer 49:7, 12; Am 1:11; cf Ezk 35.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 25:12 *acted revengefully*. See note, Ob 14.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 25:13 *Teman*. In central Edom. See note, Jer 49:7.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 25:14 *vengeance … by the hand of My people Israel*. See note, Mal 1:3. The Edomites were later dominated by the Nabateans, Maccabees, and Romans until they disappeared from history. *they shall know My vengeance*. Cf v 7.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 25:12–14 In Ezekiel's day, the Edomites joined forces with the Babylonians besieging Jerusalem, and they participated in the slaughter of God's people (Ob 8–14). They did not simply ignore Judah's trouble, but actively exploited them. Today, when you see someone struggling, pray for him and actively seek his good. Leave vengeance to God and those whom God charges with matters of justice. Your hope and pride as God's child is not in your power over others but in the mercy He shed upon you by your Savior, Jesus. • Almighty God, we pray that You would forgive us, for at times we fail to help others in need. Lead us to strongly defend Your Holy Word. Amen.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 25:15–17 See notes, Jer 47.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 25:15 *never-ending enmity*. Books of Jgs and 1Sm–2Ch include God's many grievances against the Philistines. The trouble began in Jgs 3.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 25:16 *the Cherethites*. See note, 2Sm 15:18.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 25:17 *they will know*. Statement of God's ultimate purpose occurs frequently in sermons addressed to Israel (see note, 2:5). When it appears repeatedly also in these oracles, it holds out hope that people of heathen origin will also be led to knowledge of the saving truth, vouchsafed in God's everlasting covenant of grace (25:7, 11; 1Tm 2:4).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 25:15–17 Looking westward, God directs His fourth prophecy against the Philistines. Far from an act of revenge, God reaches out to the Philistines, that they may know He is God. To this day, God continues to reach out to people who do not know Him. He desires the salvation of all (1Tm 2:3–4), as He emphasized to Ezekiel (Ezk 18:23, 32). Pray for those who fight against God's people. The Lord can change their lives and grant them repentance, just as He has granted repentance and life to you in Christ Jesus. • Lord, You are merciful. By Your grace through Christ, deliver the nations from evil. Amen.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 26:1–14 C 35 mi NW of the Sea of Chinnereth lay the port city Tyre, "mighty on the sea" (v 17). Together with her sister city Sidon, c 25 mi up the Great Sea's coast, these Phoenician cities established a commercial empire unrivaled in their day. See color map 1. Their ships brought the merchandise of the nations into their storehouses and filled their coffers with treasures (cf Is 23). However, the amassed riches of the world did not put them beyond God's control. On five occasions, "the word of the LORD came" to Ezekiel to announce their doom (26:1; 27:1; 28:1, 11, 20).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 26:1 *the eleventh year*. 587 BC. Because Jerusalem was captured in the same year, the news of its fall must have quickly reached Tyre, where it was greeted with malicious glee.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 26:2 *Son of man*. See note, 2:1. *the gate of the peoples*. Situated astride the corridor between the Great Sea and the desert, Jerusalem was in a position to control the overland trade routes between the nations of antiquity and to levy taxes on wares in transit through its territory. See note, Jb 29:7.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 26:3 *as the sea brings up its waves*. Nations will rise against the city like a storm surge. Befitting her greater prominence at the time, Tyre bears the brunt of the denunciation. The Lord will make her a bare rock (vv 4, 14). One of the Lord's agents of destruction will be the king of Babylon.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 26:5 *a place for the spreading of nets*. Destroyed and sunk below water level so fishermen will fish over the ruins.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 26:6 *her daughters*. Phoenician towns of lesser prominence. *know that I am the* LORD. See note, 2:5.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 26:7 *thus says the Lord* GOD. Repeated three times to shatter Tyre's false sense of security (vv 7, 15, 19). See p 1080. *Nebuchadnezzar*. After the capture of Jerusalem, he besieged Tyre for 13 years. He destroyed the city on the mainland, but its island defenses, one-half mile offshore, held out. *king of kings*. Hbr superlative; i.e., the greatest of kings.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 26:8 *siege wall … mound*. See note, 4:2. *raise a roof of shields*. Or simply, "raise shields." The Greco-Roman *testudo* technique of joining shields to cover a group of men during an attack is not evident in Assyrian or Babylonian depictions of siege warfare.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 26:9 *battering rams*. See note, 4:3.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 26:14 *a place for the spreading of nets*. See note, v 5. *never be rebuilt*. Demolished in 332 BC by Alexander the Great. Before taking the fortified rock, he had to build a causeway into the sea and out to it. Alexander's conquest permanently altered the site, making the island of Tyre a peninsula.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 26:15–18 Tyre's satellites and maritime colonies will be appalled at the sudden fall of an apparently invincible power structure. Their spokesmen, called princes of the sea, will lament over the wreckage as if it were a corpse.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 26:16 *clothe themselves with trembling*. Picturesque description of mourning, as royalty shiver in sackcloth.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 26:17 *raise a lamentation*. See note, 2:10.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 26:19–21 The dirge over Tyre's demise is appropriate, because as the dead cannot return from the pit to the land of the living, so the city will never be found again.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 26:20 *the pit … the world below*. See p 792. *I will set beauty in the land of the living*. A word of hope for the repentant, which heightens the contrast for the unrepentant. Life and beauty will go on without them.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON **Ch 26** The Lord speaks against Phoenicia and its principal city, Tyre. Mocking the Lord brings His retribution. People who pride themselves on criticizing and persecuting God's people will suffer His wrath here or in the grave. Yet, there is hope and beauty for the repentant. Though Tyre would sink down, those who trust the Lord will rise up in blessing. • Lord, by Your hand all nations rise and fall. Protect us by Your Holy Spirit, through Christ. Amen.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 27:1–9 The Lord tells Ezekiel to raise a lamentation over Tyre as mourners would over someone brought down to the pit (26:20). The prophet opens with a eulogy customarily spoken over the deceased (cf 2Sm 1:17–27). Tyre is compared with a magnificent ship, "perfect in beauty," sturdily built, excellently equipped, lavishly arrayed, and manned by experienced mariners. On Great Sea trade, see p 1892. Cf Ac 27–28.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 27:2 *lamentation*. Cf 19:1–14; see p 1295.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 27:3 *merchant of the peoples*. People of many nations who frequented Tyre.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 27:4 *borders are in the heart of the seas*. Tyre's ships dominated the Great Sea and established its trade routes and colonies as far away as Spain. See note, vv 12–25a.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 27:5–6 *fir … cedar … oaks … pines*. Nearby Lebanon mountains were a rich source of shipbuilding timber.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 27:5 *Senir*. Lofty peak in the Anti-Lebanon Range better known as Mount Hermon (see note, Dt 3:8).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 27:7 *linen … sail, serving as your banner*. Emblem of Tyre emblazoned on the sail. *blue and purple*. See p 141. *Elishah*. Tentatively identified as a city on Cyprus.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 27:8 *Arvad*. Island c 100 mi N of Tyre. *rowers*. To get ships out of port and to guide them during contrary winds.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 27:9 *Gebal*. Or, Byblos. Seaport south of Arvad. *caulking*. Or, "repairing." *all … barter for your wares*. Bursting with trade.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 27:10–11 The Tyrian luxury liner could sail confidently to distant ports because its home base was protected by mercenaries assembled from far and wide.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 27:10 *Lud and Put*. Territories on the African coast, west of the delta. *your men of war*. Foreign mercenaries.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 27:11 *Helech*. Or, Cilicia. *Gamad*. Unidentified; possibly the Syrian town Kumidi.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 27:12–25a The Tyrian ship of state boasted of splendor and opulence because of lucrative trade in choice wares obtained from nations in all parts of the ancient world. The list of countries with which Tyre had profitable commercial relations constitutes a veritable map of antiquity. Javan (v 13) is Greece; Tubal and Meshech (v 13) are in Asia Minor; Beth-togarmah (v 14) is the territory later known as Armenia; Dedan (v 15) is possibly the island of Rhodes off the coast of Asia Minor; Syria (v 16) is north of Judah; Damascus (v 18) is the capital of Syria; Helbon (v 18) is north of Damascus; Uzal (v 19) is a trading center in southern Arabia; Dedan (v 20) is in central Arabia; Kedar (v 21) is in northern Arabia; Sheba and Raamah (v 22) with Canneh and Eden (v 23) are at the southern end of Arabia; Haran (v 23) is in Mesopotamia; Asshur (v 23) is in Assyria; Chilmad (v 23) remains unidentified. See color maps at the front of the Bible.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 27:12 *did business with you*. Great Sea shipping trade.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 27:13 *exchanged human beings*. Slave trade.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 27:15 *ivory tusks and ebony*. African luxuries.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 27:16 *Syria*. Lit, Aram.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 27:17 See "flowing with milk and honey," p 6.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 27:19 *cassia, and calamus*. See notes, Ps 45:8; Sg 4:14.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 27:24 *blue and embroidered work*. See p 141. *carpets*. Similar to modern Persian rugs.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 27:25 *ships of Tarshish*. Vessels capable of carrying heavy cargoes and going great distances (cf 1Ki 10:22).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 27:26 *rowers*. See note, v 8.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 27:27 *Your riches*. Tyre typifies godless self-sufficiency and self-determination. Every such anti-God power structure will share its fate. In Rv 18, John makes Babylon the symbol of opposition to God and describes its downfall in terms reminiscent of Tyre's shipwreck.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 27:28–31 Ships lost in v 27 evoke mourning by sailors and traders.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 27:34 *all your crew … sunk*. Cf v 27.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 27:35 *bristles with horror*. Cf Jer 2:12.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 27:36 *hiss at you*. See p 1276. *no more forever*. See note, 26:14.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON **Ch 27** God requests that nations sing a funeral lament over the destruction of Tyre. His arm is stretching out to oppose His enemies and to reach His people, to save them from themselves. Today, take His hand and ask Him to lead you on life's way. His arm of salvation, stretched out at Calvary, reaches across time to save you. • Father, the nations bow before You. Keep us steadfast in Your ways, for You alone provide eternal salvation. Through our service, further Your kingdom. Amen.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 28:2 *prince of Tyre*. Ithobaal II. See "prince," p 228. *I am a god*. Tyre's sin is epitomized in the pride of the chief of state, the prince. Ezekiel condemns the prince out of his own mouth, quoting him.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 28:3 *wiser than Daniel*. Nebuchadnezzar said to Daniel, "No mystery is too difficult for you" (Dn 4:9; cf Dn 1:20; see note, Ezk 14:14). Ambr: "[Daniel] was willing to endure danger for the law of God rather than to be turned from his purpose in order to gain the favor of men" (*NPNF* 2 10:52). The king of Tyre lacked the fear of the Lord, without which the most highly endowed intellect is prone to work havoc (cf Pr 3:7; 9:10; 26:12; Is 5:21; Jer 9:23–24).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 28:4 *wisdom and your understanding*. See pp 775–77.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 28:6 *like the heart of a god*. Describes his overconfidence and self-delusion.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 28:7 *most ruthless of the nations*. The Babylonians are given this distinction (cf 30:11; 32:12).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 28:8 *the pit*. See p 792.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 28:10 *the death of the uncircumcised*. Circumcision was the sign of the covenant with God (Gn 17:10–14). In contrast to his claim to royal honor, the king will die a shameful death like the uncircumcised Philistine slain by David and left unburied on the battlefield (1Sm 17:26, 36, 51).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 28:1–10 Tyre symbolizes God's concern to destroy sinful self-pride. Her ruins remain as Tyre's legacy of disgrace to surrounding nations. Unfortunately, like Tyre, we often deify ourselves. We pridefully boast in the works of our own hands instead of rejoicing in what God has worked through us. Paul states, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord" (1Co 1:31), who alone is the author of life and salvation. • Heavenly Father, raise up God-fearing leaders and prevent us from suffering Tyre's fate. Amen.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 28:11–19 Cf Is 14:12–21.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 28:12 *lamentation*. The defeat and death of the king are so certain to come to pass that Ezekiel is told to raise a lamentation over him in anticipation of his funeral. He will share the fate of all who rise against their Maker in rebellious pride, the primordial sin that destroyed God's perfect creation. *king of Tyre*. See note, v 2. *signet of perfection*. On stamping seals, see note, Jer 32:10. When properly handled, the seal makes an accurate copy of the pattern engraved on it. Tyre's king was a paragon of wisdom and beauty. He exhibited these traits as perfectly as if he were a living facsimile of them in their ideal form. Pride is not a slight misdemeanor but an anti-God orientation of life. It is insidious, for it beguiled God's creatures when they were perfect in beauty and blameless (cf Ezk 28:15).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 28:13 The proud monarch claimed to sit in the seat of the gods (v 2). In this Eden, he was covered with precious stones and walked amid the stones of fire (v 14). *Eden, the garden of God*. The elegy Ezekiel composed scintillates with figurative allusions to Adam's fall in Eden and to Satan's expulsion from heaven to the ground (v 17). As in vv 1–10, the poet borrowed descriptive details from the corrupted mythical accounts of primeval events with which the king of Tyre was acquainted (cf Gn 2). In the biblical account, the garden of God was an earthly paradise of luxurious trees (cf 31:16, 18; 36:35; Jl 2:3). *every precious stone*. The nine jewels listed were also set in three rows on the breastpiece of the high

priest, cf Ex 28:17–20. (The LXX adds three more, bringing the total to 12—the number prescribed for the priestly vestment.)

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 28:14–16 The king of Tyre is described as a cherub. Creatures similar to biblical cherubim appear in Phoenician art (see diagram, p 544). Elements of the passage are unclear.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 28:14 *an anointed guardian cherub*. This translation, based on the LXX, makes an angelic being the companion and protector of the prince on the holy mountain of God or the gods (as in pagan societies). However, after the king sinned, the same cherub drove him out from his celestial abode and God cast the sinner down to earth (vv 16–17; cf ch 10). The KJV interprets the text as saying that the prince is the cherub who is addressed as the guardian of the garden both here and in v 16. *you were on the holy mountain of God*. Perhaps equated with Eden. *stones of fire*. Perhaps the stars of ethereal heights (cf Is 14:12–13).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 28:15 *blameless*. See note, Jb 1:1. *unrighteousness was found in you*. See "righteousness," p 843.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 28:16 *your trade*. The figurative language momentarily gives way to a factual description of Tyre's source of wealth, the basis of its pride. *O guardian cherub … stones of fire*. See note, v 14.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 28:18 *your sanctuaries*. By the multitude of iniquities, he profaned the sacred precincts on the holy mountain (v 14). *fire out from your midst*. Cf Lv 10:2.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 28:19 *no more forever*. See note, 26:14.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 28:11–19 The funerary song continues. The rulers of Tyre once adorned themselves with precious stones like those that once adorned the high priest's vestment (v 13). Tyre's trade among nations brought wealth almost like that of the Garden of Eden (v 13). However, the sin of self-pride brought unrighteousness (v 15). Pride may replace wisdom in our lives as well. In response to our self-delusion, Jesus humbled Himself by taking up the cross to bear our sin and raise us up from the depths of corruption. • Father, nations like Tyre warn us against sinful pride. Send Your Spirit, that we may heed Your warning and trust in Your humble, righteous Son. Amen.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 28:21 *set your face toward Sidon*. See note, 4:3; see also p 1277. Situated c 25 mi N of Tyre, Sidon will share the fate of her sister city. See color map 1.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 28:22 *manifest My glory … holiness*. See "glory of the LORD" and "holy," pp 6–7. *know that I am the LORD*. See note, 2:5; see also p 1079.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 28:24–26 In marked contrast to Tyre and Sidon, the house of Israel has a glorious future. The chosen people will survive captivity, return from exile, and dwell securely in their own land. So God's plan of salvation, seemingly thwarted by the exile, will again get under way. Rescued from sin's bondage, a spiritual Israel will be gathered from all nations under the blissful rule of the Messiah, described in chs 33–48. (Cf Is 43:1–28; 52:1–15; 58–66; Jer 23:1–8; 33.) Iren: "The church is the seed of Abraham; and for this reason, that we may know that He who in the New Testament 'raises up from the stones children unto Abraham,' is He who will gather, according to the Old Testament, those that shall be saved from all the nations" (*ANF* 1:563–64).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 28:24 *a brier to prick or a thorn to hurt*. The Lord will provide an Edenlike peace for the remnant. Cf Gn 3:17–19; see note, Ezk 28:13. *know that I am the Lord GOD*. See p 1079.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 28:20–24 God speaks against Sidon. He desires to be exalted among all the nations (Ps 46:10). He will make His glory known in judgment (Ezk 28:22–23) but finally in mercy. Notice God's gracious promise of Israel's return from their Babylonian captivity (v 24). He promises to hallow and glorify His people through Christ Jesus (cf Rm 8:18; 1Co 1:30). • Lord, You graciously work for the salvation of many. May we learn to appreciate Your ways and partake of Your glorious goodness. Amen.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 28:25 Cf chs 40–48.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 28:26 *build houses and plant vineyards*. See note, Is 65:22. *know that I am the LORD their God*. See p 1079.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 28:25–26 God plans to lead Israel back into the land promised to their ancestors. In this instance, God directs Israel back to His covenant with their namesake Jacob—"Israel" (Gn 28:13–15; 32:28). God's mercy provides a recurring theme throughout the Bible. His promises point to the cross, where He willingly sacrificed His Son—the ultimate judgment against sin and the fullness of our redemption.• Lord, You are faithful; through Baptism, You have called us out of sin into eternal life. Strengthen us through Holy Communion and protect us with Your Spirit. Amen.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON **Chs 29–32** The seventh nation addressed is Egypt (see note, chs 25–32). Seven times, the word of the Lord came to Ezekiel to announce the coming downfall of the proud land of the pharaohs (29:1, 17; 30:1, 20; 31:1; 32:1, 17).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 29:1 The word of the Lord recorded in the opening verses of ch 29 came to Ezekiel after the siege of Jerusalem had begun (cf 24:1). No concentration of human might, whether specifically mentioned or not, is able to obstruct God's plan of salvation.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 29:2 *Son of man*. See note, 2:1. *Pharaoh*. An embodiment of the nation. See note, 17:7. Half of chs 25–32 is devoted to a sevenfold prophecy against Egypt. Unlike the six other nations, Egypt had achieved the status of a world empire and could be considered a formidable obstruction to God's government. As Ezekiel wrote his denunciations, Pharaoh was challenging Babylonian supremacy in the ancient world. The armies from the Nile would not be able to prevent Nebuchadnezzar from doing the task God assigned to him—the capture of Jerusalem and the chastening of the chosen people.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 29:3 *dragon*. Likely a crocodile. Because God created the great sea creatures (Gn 1:21), they cannot begin to dispute His control of them, for He can dispose of them as readily as He called them into being (Ps 74:13–14; 148:7). Opposition to God is at times represented by a dragon, identified as Rahab or Leviathan (see notes, Jb 9:13; 41:1; Is 30:7; 51:9).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 29:4 *hooks*. See notes, Jb 41:1; Am 4:2. *fish … stick to your scales*. Trapped along with the monster who rules them. *fish*. Satellite nations dependent on Egypt.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 29:5 Cf 39:17–20.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 29:6–12 Egypt's overthrow will be as complete as if its fertile land along the Nile had become a desolation and a waste.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 29:6 *know that I am the* LORD. See note, 2:5. *a staff of reed*. Zedekiah found out that to rely on Egypt for help was as foolish as leaning one's weight on one of the many stalks or reeds growing on the banks of the Nile (cf Jer 37:6–7; see note, Jer 44:30).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 29:9 *a desolation and a waste*. Wrecked as if by new plagues (cf Ex 7–11). *know that I am the* LORD. See note, 2:5.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 29:10 *from Migdol to Syene*. The entire north-to-south length of the land of Egypt, from the northernmost area in the delta to

the far south (modern Aswan).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 29:11 *forty years*. Symbolic number to indicate the full duration of the imposed punishment. See note, Nu 14:34–35; see also p 217.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 29:12 *scatter … disperse*. Egypt's surrender to foreign domination would be as complete as when Israel was dragged into exile.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 29:13–16 Egypt's revival described in terms of Israel's return after the exile from where they were scattered (28:25). However, God will make the Egyptians a minor power.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 29:14 *restore the fortunes*. See p 1080. *Pathros*. Situated in Upper (southern) Egypt, where the pharaohs once held sway from the ancient capital of Thebes. See map, p 33.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 29:15 *the most lowly of the kingdoms*. In his role as God's rod of punishment on Israel, the Babylonian king would bring divine judgment on the land of the pharaohs and humble it. Prostrate and decadent, it would not be able to interfere with Israel after the return from exile, when the descendants of Abraham would once again serve as the bearers of promises to all mankind.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 29:16 *know that I am the Lord* GOD. See note, 2:5. Expression implies promised mercy for Israel and Egypt. Cf Is 19:16–25.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 29:17 *twenty-seventh year*. 571 BC, c 15 years after the fall of Jerusalem.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 29:18 Egypt's humiliation would begin when Nebuchadnezzar would plunder it. According to a fragment of a Babylonian chronicle, he invaded Egypt in 567 BC (see note, Jer 43:11). When he did so, he worked for God, who did not want Egypt to interfere with Israel's restoration. *Son of man*. See note, 2:1. *made bald … rubbed bare*. Reference to mourning practices (see note, Dt 14:1) and the exertions of the besieging army, which wore itself out. *anything from Tyre*. No doubt the Tyrians removed their treasures to the offshore island, which Nebuchadnezzar could not conquer (see note, Ezk 26:7).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 29:19 *Egypt … shall be the wages for his army*. The Babylonians plunder Egypt to compensate for their fruitless efforts at Tyre.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 29:20 *they worked for Me*. See note, v 18.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 29:21 *a horn*. Frequent symbol of strength and kingship (cf Ps 89:17, 24; Jer 48:25; see p 842). When Christ was born, God "raised up a horn of salvation … in the house of His servant David" (Lk 1:69; cf Ps 132:17). *open your lips*. After the fall of Jerusalem, Ezekiel would renew his prophesying (see notes, Ezk 3:22–27). In chs 33–48, he received special eloquence to proclaim redemption through the coming deliverer. *know that I am the* LORD. See note, 2:5.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON **Ch 29** At God's command, Egypt never again rises to its former greatness, for it shall "never again be the reliance of the house of Israel" (v 16). The efforts of the world are finally brought to naught. The future belongs to the Lord, who promises Israel a deliverer who will bring salvation also to the nations. • Lord, we humbly thank You for protecting us and providing us with a Savior, Jesus Christ. Grant godly leaders among the nations and open our lips to proclaim Your salvation for all. Amen.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 30:1–19 Undated oracle.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 30:1–4 Egypt's inevitable and imminent doom is described as a catastrophe precipitated by "the day of the LORD," which will overtake not only Israel but also the nations. See notes, 7:7, 10; Is 2:12; see also p 1258.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 30:2 *Son of man*. See note, 2:1.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 30:3 *the day of the* LORD. See p 1079.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 30:5–9 The destruction of Egypt's power will have widespread and serious consequences. Those who support her will fall also.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 30:5 *Put, and Lud*. Frequently mentioned together, these names seem to refer to territories situated in Africa, west of the Delta (Jer 46:9). *Arabia*. Hbr noun is best vocalized to be read "the mingled people," meaning groups of mixed racial and social affinities that were associated with the Egyptian army or citizenry. *Libya*. Hbr *kub*, an unidentifiable place-name. Possibly a scribal misspelling for *lub*, Libya. *the people of the land that is in league*. Unclear. Possibly a treaty partner with Egypt. *league*. Hbr *berith*, "covenant," typically used with Israel/Judah. Judean mercenaries may be in view. All the allies are defeated with Egypt. See notes, 29:3–6.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 30:9 *messengers shall go out*. Angelic servants to administer God's judgment (cf ch 9). *from Me*. Lit, "from before Me," referring to God's court. See notes, 1Ki 22:19; Ps 103:19–22.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 30:10–12 Cf 29:17–21.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 30:10 *wealth*. Same Hbr word is translated "multitude" in 31:2.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 30:12 *I will dry up the Nile*. See note, Is 19:5–7.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 30:13–19 No area of Egypt will be spared. On city after city, in every part of the land, God will execute judgment. Located in the region of the Delta are Zoan, Pelusium, Pi-beseth, and Tehaphnehes; up the Nile lie Memphis and On (Heliopolis); and in southern Egypt is the area called Pathros, in which was the city of Thebes (Karnak). See map, p 33.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 30:13 *idols*. See p 1079. *Memphis*. An important religious and political center, often the home of the pharaohs.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 30:15 *the stronghold of Egypt*. Pelusium was a fort on Egypt's northeastern frontier, near Philistia.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 30:18 *covered by a cloud*. Cf v 3; Is 13:10.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 30:19 *know that I am the* LORD. See note, 2:5.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 30:1–19 Egypt's influence over the Mediterranean area comes to an end. God sends Babylon, the most ruthless of nations (v 11), as the executioner of His divine plan of justice. God's wrath will destroy the idols worshiped by Egypt (v 13; cf Jsh 24:14). Mercenary faith lusts after material possessions and lacks sincere devotion. Today, repent of self-interested religion and call upon the Lord with sincere devotion. He is no idol and gives you real faith through Christ. • Lord, in awe we watch You sweep away the plans of men to implement Your plan of salvation. Forgive us our sins. Amen.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 30:20 Apr 587 BC, before the fall of Jerusalem.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 30:21 *Son of man*. See note, 2:1. *Pharaoh*. Hophra, the reed on which Israel leaned in vain for support (Is 36:6; cf Jer 37:5–10; 2Ki 24:7; see note, 29:6).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 30:22 *break his arms*. His land would lie defenseless before the king of Babylon.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 30:24 *My sword*. God's judgment, like a weapon, decides the fate of nations.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 30:26 *scatter … disperse*. See note, 29:12. *know that I am the* LORD. See note, 2:5.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 30:20–26 God speaks a fourth prophecy of judgment against Egypt. Just as the strength or weakness of Pharaoh and Nebuchadnezzar were a matter for God's judgment, your life and future are

in God's hands. Pray that He would bless and guide the work of your hands today. Do not regret your weakness. Note that, through the trembling arms and nail-pierced hands of Jesus, the Lord accomplished His greatest work of salvation. • Heavenly Father, thank You for Your tender mercy. Uphold the hands of Your servant in the cause of righteousness. Amen.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 31:1 June 21, 587 BC.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 31:2 *Son of man*. See note, 2:1. *greatness?* Egypt's fall from imperial glory to disgrace and servitude would be like the sudden crashing to earth of a magnificent cedar. So Assyria (cf v 3), only three decades earlier, went down to oblivion from heights of world dominion. Egypt also has attained great height, dwarfing all rivals. The question is whether Assyria's fate will be a warning to Pharaoh that pride goes before destruction (Pr 16:18; cf Ezk 27).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 31:3 The Assyrian Empire towered high above the nations like a cedar in Lebanon. But when it stood at the pinnacle of glory, it suddenly disappeared from sight as if it were a tall tree felled in its prime. Egypt, like it in its greatness, will be like it also as it topples into irreversible ruin.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 31:5–6 Assyria had been a haven or ruler to many lesser nations and city-states.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 31:8 *in the garden of God*. Not even the trees of Eden were the cedar's equal in beauty and stature.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 31:9 *I made it beautiful*. Assyria's wonders were due to God's work. He had even granted Nineveh repentance and deliverance through Jonah's preaching.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 31:10–14 Because the cedar refused to acknowledge that God had made it beautiful (v 9), but it was proud of its height, He cut it down and left it to decay.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 31:10 *its heart was proud*. Personification of a nation as a tree at times gives way to a description of actual aspects of a human being. Thus the cedar is said to have a proud heart and to go down to the netherworld like all mortal men. Cf Ps 90:5–6; 103:14; Is 40:6.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 31:11 *a mighty one*. Nebuchadnezzar is called the king of "the most ruthless of nations" in 30:11.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 31:12 Allies and trade partners fled from troubled Assyria.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 31:13 Others exploit Assyria's downfall.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 31:14 See note, v 16.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 31:15 The cedar's fall from towering strength to helpless impotence is like a cosmic upheaval affecting the deep, its rivers and many waters, Lebanon, and all the trees of the field—the nations without exception. *Sheol*. See note, Dt 32:22; see also p 792. *closed*. Or, "covered," shrouded as a mourner.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 31:16 *Sheol … the pit*. The fate decreed on the proud tree is as irreversible as it is impossible for those who go down to the pit to return to their former scene of activity. Death cuts down all attainments, whether great or small. *comforted in the world below*. People who have not become cedars of success will be comforted to know that the most powerful people must end where the weakest do—in the grave. See p 792.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 31:18 *you*. The pharaoh, king of Egypt. *trees of Eden?* See notes, vv 3–9. *the uncircumcised*. See note, 28:10. *Pharaoh and all his multitude*. There will be no exception to this axiom of the Creator's decree.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON **Ch 31** Ezekiel speaks God's fifth prophecy against Egypt. God compares Egypt to Assyria, a nation that grew in power under God's guidance and whose capital once repented (cf Jnh 3). But proud Assyria turned away from God. All nations over time have collapsed under the weight of their own pride. Consider that God calls Christians to be in the world, yet not of the world (Jn 15:19). Though we honor God by serving our nation well, our ultimate reward is in His mercy and the homeland He has promised in Christ. • Lord God, even today Your Holy Word stands as testimony against prideful nations. May we honor and serve our nation by honoring and serving You. Amen.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 32:1 Mar 3, 585 BC. A year and a half after the fall of Jerusalem.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 32:2 *Son of man*. See note, 2:1. *lamentation*. The dirge Ezekiel was to compose was not to express pity or sadness over the king's impending end but to mock his pretensions to be "a lion of the nations," frightening them into submission by his roaring. He will not be safe, even in his homeland. *dragon*. See note, 29:3; cf 29:3–5; 32:2–6. This lament is a prophecy of destruction.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 32:3 *throw My net*. Forced submission to God's power is asserted by the same figure of speech in 12:13; 17:20. The

following description of the monster's disposal resembles the language of an ancient myth in which a god in the heathen pantheon establishes supremacy by slaying a rival dragon (cf Is 27:1; 51:9). Defeat of God's enemies is at times expressed by similar terms, though there is a vast difference in substance. The authority of the Lord of hosts is never in question. He has only to speak His omnipotent word to have men, angels, and devils do His will. The forces of nature are at His beck and call. See note, Mt 4:20.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 32:4–6 Cf 39:17–20.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 32:7–8 The judgment to be executed on Egypt was certain to materialize, for it would overtake the land with the force of the day of the Lord. God's commands are obeyed by the stars, the sun, the moon. Cf Is 2:12; Jl 2:10–11; Am 8:9.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 32:10 *hair … shall bristle with horror*. Other rulers would experience hair-raising fear when they saw how God condemned Egypt.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 32:13 With the inhabitants of Egypt eliminated, none will wade in the Nile anymore.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 32:14 *to run like oil*. The silt will settle out of the water, restoring a darker, oily appearance.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 32:15 *know that I am the* LORD. See note, 2:5.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 32:16 *the daughters of the nations shall chant*. They will play the part of professional mourning women and chant this doleful lament (vv 12–15). See note, Mt 9:23.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 32:17–31 In the seventh and last oracle against Egypt, Ezekiel brings to a climax his portrayal of the utter futility of all attempts to interfere with God's plans and decrees. He wails "over the multitude of Egypt" by conjuring up a scene from the netherworld, surpassing Milton's *Paradise Lost* for unearthly grandeur.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 32:17 *in the twelfth month*. Omitted in Hbr text and supplied from the LXX. C Mar 585 BC.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 32:18 *Son of man*. See note, 2:1. *the world below*. See p 792.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 32:19 *with the uncircumcised*. The Egyptians practiced circumcision. Being associated with uncircumcised people may have been just as repugnant to them as it was to faithful Israelites. See notes, 28:10; Ex 4:25.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 32:21 *mighty chiefs … with their helpers*. When Egypt is doomed to go the way of mortal flesh, the mighty chiefs who earlier have gone down to the pit are there to welcome the new arrival. *Sheol*. See p 792. *uncircumcised*. See note, 28:10.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 32:22 *Assyria*. The mighty empire disappeared from the face of the earth in 612 BC, less than 30 years before Ezekiel spoke this elegy (cf ch 31).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 32:23 *graves … in the uttermost parts of the pit*. Every corner was filled. *who spread terror*. Egypt shares the same fate with such stalwarts as Assyria (v 22), Edom (v 29), and the princes of the north (v 30). *land of the living*. Earth.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 32:24 *Elam*. Occupying territory east of Babylon, this nation was a formidable power in the ancient world until the Assyrians subjugated it. See map, p 609. *the world below*. See p 792. *bear their shame*. Humiliation in defeat.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 32:26–27 *Meshech-Tubal*. Peoples in Asia Minor, cf 38:2. See note, Gn 10:2. They do not lie with heroic warriors, who were granted a funeral with military honors.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 32:27 *swords … under their heads*. A burial practice.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 32:28 *you*. Pharaoh.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 32:29 *Edom*. See note, 25:12–14.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 32:30 *princes of the north are there*. Syrian states and Phoenician cities, such as Sidon, were north of Israel.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 32:31 As Pharaoh joins them, he can comfort himself only with the thought that others fare no better than he.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 32:32 *I spread terror in the land of the living*. The Lord bumps them from their pride of place and takes their tauntings as His spoil.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON **Ch 32** After the fall of Jerusalem, God commands Ezekiel to record laments for Pharaoh, his sixth and seventh prophecies against Egypt. God lists nations like Egypt who turned away and are no more (vv 22–30). In truth, the grave awaits us all. But the One who "spread terror in the land of the living" also holds the keys of death and hell (Rv 1:18). Our champion, the resurrected Lord, will deliver us. • Father, send Your Holy Spirit to dampen our pride; let us boast only in You and Your grace through Jesus Christ. Amen.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON **Chs 33–48** Third major division of Ezekiel's prophecies. Leaving the foreign, hostile nations buried and forgotten (chs 25–32), these final oracles proclaim that Israel, apparently also doomed to extinction, will figuratively rise from the grave of exile to serve God's plan of salvation. In carrying it forward, God will, as it were, begin where He left off. The chosen people will experience a new exodus, return to the Promised Land, and again enjoy the special care of the Lord. However, its restoration is not an end in itself. It serves at the same time as a blueprint of what God ultimately will do through the descendants of Abraham to bless all nations in a restored fellowship with Him.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 33:1–9 Before the news of Jerusalem's capture by Nebuchadnezzar arrives in the land of the Chaldeans, Ezekiel is prepared for his new assignment: to be the preacher of restoration. The instructions he receives are, in effect, a recommissioning to the prophetic office. Such a basic orientation was necessary. Because the message of redemption was radically different from the threat of God's wrath, delivered to the rebellious house in chs 1–24, Ezekiel might have concluded that the good news could be proclaimed on a different basis.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 33:2 *Son of man*. See note, 2:1. *your people*. Judeans exiled in Babylon. *watchman*. See note, 3:17. Ezekiel's work is still a matter of life and death. The task is still fraught with the greatest responsibilities for both the preacher and the hearers.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 33:3 See "trumpet," p 993.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 33:4 *his blood shall be upon his own head*. See note, 18:13.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 33:5 *he would have saved his life*. Ezekiel warns that unless each individual receives the proffered escape from impending death, that person will not save his life.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 33:6 *taken away in his iniquity*. Condemned and punished with exile. *his blood I will require at the watchman's hand*. See note, 3:18.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 33:7 *son of man*. See note, 2:1. *watchman for the house of Israel*. See note, 3:17. *a word from My mouth*. See note, 3:4.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 33:9 *delivered your soul*. See note, 3:19.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 33:1–9 God changes Ezekiel's focus. No longer does Ezekiel speak against the nations. Instead, God calls Ezekiel to serve once again as Israel's watchman "to warn the wicked to turn from his way"

(v 8). Today, God calls us not only to repent of our sins and receive the forgiveness He offers through Christ but also to warn others and to announce the Lord's forgiveness for all who repent. Thankfully, the Lord is watching over us and will sustain us in this vital service. • Lord, You continually provide leadership and guidance through servants of Your Word. Grant us swiftness to answer Your call of repentance and service. Amen.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 33:10 *son of man*. See note, 2:1. *our transgressions and our sins are upon us*. Cf ch 18 for the principle of individual responsibility. As preacher of restoration, Ezekiel has to cope with negative responses such as despair. When his fellow prisoners came face-to-face with the consequences of sin (as predicted by Ezekiel), they stoically resigned themselves to rot away.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 33:11 See note, 18:32. "God does not will sin and has no pleasure in sin … nor has He pleasure in [the sinner's] condemnation" (FC SD XI 81). Ter: "To all sins, then, committed whether by flesh or spirit, whether by deed or will, the same *God* who has destined penalty by means of judgment, has withal engaged to grant pardon by means of repentance" (*ANF* 3:659). Chem: "God clearly says in the case of the sins of the ungodly, which He foresees, that He neither wills, approves, aids, nor effects them, nor does He force their wills" (*LTh* 1:207).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 33:12 See note, 18:24.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 33:13 *trusts in his righteousness*. See "righteous," p 843; see also note, Is 64:6.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 33:15 *restores the pledge*. See note, 18:7. *statutes of life*. See p 971.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 33:17 *your people*. See note, v 2. *The way of the Lord is not just*. See note, 18:25.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 33:20 *I will judge … according to his ways*. Cf Mt 25:31–46.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 33:10–20 As a watchman for the Lord, Ezekiel carries God's Word to His people. God's Word remains effective: God's Law causes despair in sinful hearts, leading them to repent. Then, God's Word reaches out with the life-giving power of the Gospel to absolve the sinner and create a new life in Christ. His Word bears the same life-giving power that raised Jesus from the dead. • Lord, we thank You for Your mercy. Grant us sincere repentance and new life in Christ. Amen.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 33:21–22 News that the city has been struck down marked a new epoch in Ezekiel's ministry. Not only did he become the prophet of restoration, but in preaching redemption, he also was no longer to be restricted in communication as before (see notes, 3:22–27; 24:27).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 33:21 *the twelfth year*. It took the fugitive one and a half years to elude the Babylonian occupation forces and to make his way to the exiles. Some Hbr manuscripts and the ancient versions read "the eleventh year," thus reducing the interval to six months.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 33:22 *the hand of the* LORD *had been upon me*. See note, 1:3. *I was no longer mute*. As a sign for the people, Ezekiel had not spoken since his wife died.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 33:23 See p 1080.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 33:24 *inhabitants of these waste places in the land of Israel*. They escaped massacre and captivity when Jerusalem fell. *Abraham … one man*. Ezekiel had to confront two groups (vv 23, 30) with the demand that they change their attitude and conduct. The impenitent survivors of the fall of Jerusalem made the arrogant claim that they would have possession of the land simply because Abraham, who received it by promise, was only one individual whereas they are many. But they will find out that willful perpetrators of crime will not inherit the Kingdom. By their impenitence (vv 23–29; cf 18:6–13; 22:6–12), they excluded themselves from its blessings, even though Ezekiel, the prophet of restoration, offered these blessings to all people.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 33:25–26 Sins against the Law of Moses, which the arrogant survivors continued to violate.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 33:27 *waste places*. See note, v 24. *strongholds and in caves*. Natural places of refuge in the Shephelah or the Judean wilderness, such as the many caves near the Salt Sea. *pestilence*. See note, 5:12.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 33:29 *know that I am the* LORD. See note, 2:5.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 33:30 *your people*. The second group, Ezekiel's fellow prisoners, was to be told that God's Word of promise is not a cheap commodity. *Come, and hear*. They thought his preaching to be like the singing of love songs (v 32), to which they could listen for their amusement yet without committing themselves to do what his message required of them.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 33:31 *set on their gain*. They do not heed the Word, being preoccupied with material gain. How firmly this indicts complacent hearts today, who know the message of the Lord and His Church and can comment on whether or not a sermon or teaching is "good," but remain unmoved to believe the Word or fulfill it. In the end, they turn back to a discussion of their own prosperity and satisfaction.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 33:32 *lustful songs*. Cf chs 16; 23.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 33:21–33 A turning point has occurred in Ezekiel's ministry. When word of the destruction of Jerusalem reaches Ezekiel, he knows God has freed him from his previous assignment (24:27). Today, God continues to call individuals into His service, whether as full-time church workers or as volunteers. He likewise calls us to let go of earlier assignments and move into new areas of service. God knows our needs as His people, and He will provide for us and sustain us in fruitful service. • Gracious God, You provide pastors, teachers, and leaders to guide us in Your ways, calling them by grace. Give me a ready heart and steady hands. Amen.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 34:1–10 Having reviewed the principles governing the proclamation of restoration (ch 33), Ezekiel proceeds at once to speak promises of redemption into a situation marked by defeat and enshrouded in dark pessimism. Previously, a few rays of hope flashed through the lowering gloom of dire judgment (cf 11:16–20; 16:60; 20:40–44; 28:25–26; 29:21). These brief glimpses into a bright future gave Ezekiel and his hearers assurance that God's plan of salvation did not lie buried in the exile. Now, the sun of redemptive grace is allowed to break out from the clouds as God promises to care for the people in an even more direct and personal way.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 34:2 *Son of man*. See note, 2:1. *shepherds*. Political and religious leaders have exploited and fleeced the sheep (i.e., the people) instead of caring for them (cf 22:25–30; Jer 10:21; 23:1–4). *feeding yourselves!* Hoarding wealth. See notes, Mi 2:2; Zec 7:10.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 34:4 Ezekiel lists the common practices of a diligent shepherd, who would know his flock intimately. Cypr: "What else ought we to do, dearest brother, than to exhibit full diligence in gathering together and restoring the sheep of Christ, and to apply the medicine of paternal affection to cure the wounds of the lapsed?" (*ANF* 5:369).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 34:5 *no shepherd*. Jesus would also lament over the people of His day.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 34:6 As a result of the false shepherds' rapacious rule, the flock was exiled into foreign lands.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 34:8 *As I live*. An oath formula. See "vow," p 7. *My shepherds*. God had a right to expect them to rule as His representatives.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 34:10 *I will require My sheep at their hand*. Because God chose the offspring of Abraham to serve His plan of salvation, they are called "the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand" (Ps 95:7; cf 74:1; 79:13; 100:3). *rescue*. Sheep who hear the voice of the Good Shepherd and follow Him are safe, for no one is able to snatch them out of His hand (Jn 10:27–29).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 34:1–10 It would do little good for God to replace Israel's bad shepherds with other earthly rulers. Human society cannot lift itself out of the quicksand of pervasive corruption. God Himself must come to the rescue, which He has done in the person of His Son (Jn 10) and in the power of His Holy Spirit. Christian, serve with confidence, knowing that your Good Shepherd is ever vigilant to deliver you from evil. • Bind my wounds, Good Shepherd, and restore me to Your sheepfold, that I may be strengthened by Your caring hand. Amen.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 34:11 *search for My sheep*. In these verses, the tender, loving care for His miserable fallen creatures demonstrates that the God of the OT is not a wrathful ogre delighting in crushing helpless victims. He is the Father who sent His Son to seek and to save the lost.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 34:13 *their own land*. See "portion," p 7.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 34:15 *make them lie down*. A shepherd leads the flock to the best areas for grazing and rest.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 34:17–22 Not only did the shepherds abuse the flock, but members of the flock abused one another. There were stronger and fatter ones who oppressed and injured the weak and lean ones. God threatens to execute justice on those who prey on the weak.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 34:17 *I judge*. A regular duty of animal husbandry, which assures the flock's future and growth, is to compare and distinguish the animals to discern which will be retained in the flock.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 34:18–19 Certain animals dominate the pasture and the water hole, plying their advantage against the health of the whole flock. Greg: "The shepherds drink most pure water, when with a right

understanding they imbibe the streams of truth. But to foul the same water with their feet is to corrupt the studies of holy meditation by evil living. And verily the sheep drink the water fouled by their feet, when any of those subject to them follow not the words which they hear, but only imitate the bad examples which they see. Thirsting for the things said, but perverted by the works observed, they take in mud with their draughts, as from polluted fountains" (*NPNF* 2 12:2b).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 34:20 *I, I Myself will judge*. Cf Mt 25:31–46.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 34:21 *horns*. See p 842.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 34:23–24 If God is to break the power and reign of sin, He must send into this world His own vice-regent, His servant David. This future human-divine Shepherd and Prince will not destroy the sheep but feed them with bread from heaven (Jn 6:32–40). The brilliance of divine revelation shines into coming centuries. Ezekiel sees this transformation from doom to delight in the perspective of prophetic vision. Past, present, and future merge into a single dimension of timeless fact. See p 1258. The old covenant blends into the new covenant.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 34:23 *one shepherd*. The 12 tribes of Jacob were divided into two kingdoms after Solomon's death. Under great David's greater Son, there will be one flock, one shepherd.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 34:24 *prince*. No one will occupy the throne after Him, for He will be the Prince forever (37:25). Cf 2Sm 7:11–16; Is 9:5–6; 11:1–2; Jer 30:9. For Jesus' human ancestry from David's royal house, see p 1245. On the term "prince," see p 228.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 34:11–24 In place of unfaithful shepherds, God will provide one Shepherd, Jesus Christ ("My servant David"; v 24). Notice how Matthew captures King David's ancestry and how it culminates in Jesus Christ as Savior (Mt 1:6b–16). Jesus is the Good Shepherd who faithfully provides God's Word to all generations. He brings restoration to a world weary with sin. • Precious Savior, thank You for taking my sins on Yourself and restoring my relationship with the Father. Amen.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 34:25 *covenant of peace*. God pledges Himself to bring back the harmony and bliss He once provided in an unmarred paradise. His flock will know the peace that "surpasses all understanding" (Php 4:7). Israel's restoration is the rescue from estrangement from God. He will welcome the redeemed into the eternal Kingdom of His beloved Son, where there are pleasures forevermore (Col 1:13; Ps 16:11). He heals and makes whole again the brokenness of human existence. Man can be at peace with God and with himself. Because its provisions will never be abrogated, Ezekiel calls it an everlasting covenant (cf 16:60; Is 24:5; 55:3; 61:8; Jer 32:40). On "covenant," see p 127. *securely*. As Israel of old was safe under the mighty hand of the Creator of the universe, so the combined forces of the fiercest foes will not be allowed to harm God's people of the new covenant. The Kingdom of great David's greater Son will not be confined to the borders of the Holy Land, promised and given to the 12

tribes of Israel. His blessings will flow in ever-growing streams of living water to all parts of the sin-cursed world.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 34:26 *blessing*. Fruitful and nourishing for the flock. See "blessed," p 842. *showers in their season*. See calendar, p 262. *showers of blessing*. For the bliss of restored communion with God, see notes, Is 2:4; 11:6.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 34:27 *deliver*. See p 842.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 34:29 *renowned plantations*. God assures abundant harvests for them.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 34:30 *I am the LORD their God with them*. See "be with," p 5.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 34:31 *human sheep*. God's eternal plan of redemption will get under way again when He gathers the Israelites, scattered like lost sheep on the hills, and brings them back from exile to their homeland. From their midst will arise a Prince of the lineage of David (Lk 2:4). Not an earthly king of limited authority, He will found a spiritual kingdom. His subjects will represent broad racial and national affiliation. Even the poorest and the weakest will have all they need for time and eternity. The injustice and suffering of a sinful, heartless world will be left behind when the King says: "Come, you who are blessed by My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Mt 25:34). He is the Good Shepherd who lays down His life for the sheep (Jn 10:1–18; Heb 13:20–21; 1Pt 2:25; 5:4).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 34:25–31 God describes the tranquility of the new creation. A world like this once existed, a long time ago in the Garden of Eden. However, the bars of Adam and Eve's yoke (v 27) enslaved the Israelites, just as they enslaved you and me. Because of sin, we find ourselves bound to an endless cycle of hopelessness. Yet, God frees us from bondage through Jesus Christ, who breaks slavery's yoke and delivers us from the hand of Satan. • Heavenly Father, we are famished for righteousness. Shower Your blessings upon us, and direct us to the verdant pastures of Your Word. Amen.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON **Ch 35** God promised great things in ch 34. Now He declares that Edom (Mount Seir) will not be able to prevent the restoration of Israel. All attempts to seize the Promised Land would fail, even though Jerusalem lay in ruins and the whole country was open to invasion. Instead, Edom would be reduced to a waste and a desolation (vv 1–9). The wicked

design to devour what once was the two nations of Judah and Israel would end in dismal failure (vv 10–15). Edom, already denounced in 25:12–14, is not only the epitome of hostility to the ancient people of God but also typifies every evil counsel and will that God must hinder and break if His kingdom is to come (cf Ps 137:7; see notes, Jer 13:19; 49:7–22).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 35:2 *Son of man*. See note, 2:1. *Mount Seir*. Though mentioned by name only once in ch 35, Edom is immediately identified by the mountain range that traverses its territory south of the Salt Sea.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 35:4 *know that I am the* LORD. Repeated throughout ch 35 to emphasize God's action in judgment. See note, 2:5.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 35:5 *cherished perpetual enmity*. See note, Gn 27:39–40.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 35:6 *blood shall pursue you*. Ominous imagery, perhaps referring to the practices of blood vengeance in tribal society. Cf 1Ki 2:31.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 35:10 *These two nations*. Regions of Judah and Israel. *the* LORD *was there*. For a time, it seemed that God had abandoned the Holy Land when He let the Babylonians desecrate and denude it. Yet it was to remain the land of deliverance and hope. For in it, God would begin to fulfill the promises of mankind's freedom from spiritual tyranny. When the "inheritance of the house of Israel" (v 15) no longer would have geographic boundaries and Jerusalem would be the spiritual mother of the redeemed from all nations, it would be called "The LORD Is There" (48:35; cf Gal 4:26). See "be with," p 5.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 35:12 *know that I am the* LORD. See note, v 4. *revilings*. Or, "blasphemies."

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 35:15 *know that I am the* LORD. See note, v 4.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON **Ch 35** Although God has spoken against Edom (25:12–14), He does so again. Nothing can hinder God's plan of salvation. He will push out those who interfere, so all may know that He is God (vv 4, 9, 11–12, 15). Today, we often think about God's grace in terms of what God has provided. This is good. However, we should also consider what God has prevented. God has prevented many calamities from striking us as part of His work of salvation for our lives. • Father, we rejoice knowing that You are the God of promises kept and disasters prevented. When the troubles of life do not make sense to us, strengthen us in faith through Christ. Amen.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 36:1–15 In order to implement His plan of mankind's redemption, seemingly halted by the exile, God will reserve and preserve the Promised Land for Israel's return from captivity. He will repopulate it and shower blessings on it. He makes these promises dramatic by addressing them directly to the mountains of Israel. With a solemn oath (v 7), He assures the mountains that their fate will be different from that of Mount Seir (Edom), destined to become a perpetual desolation (35:9).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 36:2–7 *Because … therefore*. The unbreakable sequence of cause and effect in God's direction of history is spoken repeatedly.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 36:2 *Aha!* See note, 25:3.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 36:3 *the talk and evil gossip of the people*. Cf 33:30.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 36:5 *jealousy*. See note, Ex 20:5. *against all Edom*. In His jealous wrath, God will turn the tables on the greedy, malicious predator epitomized in Edom.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 36:6 *jealous wrath*. See note, Ex 20:5; see also p 1134.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 36:8 *soon*. In God's measure of time, the day is at hand, even though decades were to elapse before the exile was to end (cf Hab 2:3; Rm 13:12; 1Pt 4:7; Rv 1:3; 22:10). See p 1258.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 36:9 *tilled and sown*. The exile caused the fields to be fallow. See p 206.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 36:11 *multiply and be fruitful*. Cf Gn 1:22. *know that I am the LORD*. See note, 2:5.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 36:12 *inheritance*. See "portion," p 7. *bereave them*. The ravages of sword, famine, and pestilence, inflicted on Israel as punishment, devoured young and old (cf 6:11).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 36:1–15 Ezekiel prophesies the return of God's people to the land promised to their ancestor Abraham; imagine the elation for those dwelling in exile. God's grace fills this prophecy. Today, Christians may rejoice in God's gift through Christ. Sin places us in exile, just as sin exiled Israel. Yet, Christ has redeemed and forgiven us, setting us free once again to rejoice in His abundant blessings. He grants us the promised land of eternal life. • Lord, creation rejoices in Your wondrous act of redemption. To You be all honor and glory. Amen.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 36:17 *Son of man*. See note, 2:1. *defiled it*. The exile was no accident of history. God brought it about because the people had defiled the land with their ways and their deeds, for which He poured out His wrath on them. *uncleanness of a woman*. See note, 7:19.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 36:19 Cf 24:14.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 36:20 *they profaned My holy name*. The victors attributed Israel's disgrace to the Lord's inability to protect His people and to make them His instruments of worldwide blessings (vv 16–21; cf Nu 14:15–16). Such heathen blasphemy was to stop because it defeated the purpose for which God called Israel. By intervening in the course of history and bringing Israel back from extinction, God will vindicate the holiness of His name through them, so that the nations will know that He is the Lord (Ezk 36:22–24).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 36:16–21 The Lord characterizes Israel's sin by referring to the holiness code of Lv 11:1–15:33. God's name and reputation are precious to Him. How remarkable that He places His name on sinners like us (Nu 6:23–27), that all may know that we belong to Him. • O Lord, bless us and keep us, that we may call on Your name in every trouble and give You thanks and praise. Amen.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 36:22–38 This prophecy of cleansing is based on the imagery of ritual washings practiced under the old covenant (see "clean" and "holy," pp 6–7). However, the results of this washing (vv 25–27) are clearly connected with the new covenant fulfilled in Christ (cf Jer 31:31–34) and describe His work through Holy Baptism. See pp 1369, 1920; see also notes, Eph 5:26; Ti 3:5; Heb 10:22. In the Hbr of these verses, the Lord used the first person "I" a remarkable 34 times to affirm the certainty of His acts to His people (some examples of the grammar are obscured in the Eng). He emphasizes that His work is solely by grace. "If the 'new spirits' say, as they are accustomed, 'Still Baptism is itself a work, and you say works are of no use for salvation. What, then, becomes of faith?' Answer, 'Yes, our works, indeed, do nothing for salvation. Baptism, however, is not our work, but God's.' For, as was stated, you must completely distinguish Christ's Baptism from a bathkeeper's baptism. God's works are saving and necessary for salvation. They do not exclude, but demand, faith. For without faith they could not be grasped. By allowing the water to be poured upon you, you have not yet received Baptism in a way that benefits you at all. But it becomes beneficial to you if you have

yourself baptized with this thought: this is according to God's command and ordinance, and besides, it is done in God's name. In this way you may receive the promised salvation in the water. Now, your fist cannot do this, nor your body; but the heart must believe it" (LC IV 35–36).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 36:22 *holy name*. God's name is a capsule-word for everything He is and has revealed about Himself (see notes, Ex 6:3; Ps 8:1). Its essential characteristic is "holiness," i.e., transcendence above all limited human concepts, definitions, and comprehension. If His prime motive in rescuing Israel from exile is concern for His holy name, none of His fallen, rebellious creatures should presume to dictate to Him that His first consideration in saving them should be love and compassion (cf ch 20). It is not accidental that Jesus instructed His followers to let their first petition be "hallowed be Your name," followed by two requests to vindicate His name —by letting His kingdom come and by executing His will (Mt 6:9–10). Cf Ps 115:1; see "name," p 843.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 36:23 *vindicate the holiness*. The nations had indicted the Lord and blasphemed Him for disciplining His people (v 20). Now the Lord will set the matter straight.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 36:25 *sprinkle clean water on you*. Such consecration was used for the priests and Levites of the old covenant (cf Ex 29:4; Lv 16:4, 24; Nu 8:6–7; 19). If the exiles were to be worthy bearers of God's promises, He must not only give them back their homeland but also cleanse them. Yet this is no ordinary washing, as v 26 demonstrates. *sprinkle*. Term most often used with the blood of the atonement and covenant (Ex 24:8; Lv 1:5, 11; 3:2, 8, 13; cf Heb 12:24; 1Pt 1:1–2). Cypr: "The divine benefits can in no respect be mutilated and weakened [by the mode of sprinkling]… . For in the sacrament of salvation the contagion of sins is not in such wise washed away, as the filth of the skin" (*ANF* 5:400–401). *idols*. See p 1079.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 36:26 *a new heart, and a new spirit*. Equipped and empowered, they will respond to His goodness by walking in His statutes and observing His ordinances. Cf v 27; Jer 31:31–34. *heart of stone … heart of flesh*. See note, Ezk 11:19.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 36:27 *I will put My Spirit within you*. See pp 1850, 1920. *statutes … rules*. See p 971. Chem: "We must also teach how to begin this obedience, on what foundations to build it and where to seek it, that is, not from the natural effort of our free choice but from the Spirit of

renewal. In this way and in this order faith comes first, which accepts or receives the remission of sins and offers peace and joy of conscience. As a result of this, by the same faith we receive the promise of the Spirit who creates the new man unto good works and turns our hearts to obedience" (*LTh* 2:339).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 36:29 *deliver you from … uncleannesses*. See note, 7:19. *summon the grain*. God is providentially and intimately involved in His creation, even in things we regard as purely "natural" processes, such as the ripening of grain. Cf Ps 145:15.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 36:31 *remember*. See p 843. *loathe yourselves for your iniquities and your abominations*. Mark of repentance. See note, 5:9. The sincerity of their repentance and changed attitude will manifest itself (see note, 20:43).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 36:33 *On the day*. See p 1079.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 36:35 *the garden of Eden*. A return to the luxuriant fertility and undisturbed tranquility of paradise will become a reality in the spiritual bliss and peace of the promised kingdom of God (see notes, Is 2:2, 4; 35:1–10; 55:13).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 36:36 *nations that are left all around*. Restoration of the land from desolation to well-populated cities and the inner transformation of the chastened people will so impress the nations that they will acknowledge that it was the Lord who made it come to pass. *know that I am the* LORD. Likely intends that the nations will be brought to true faith. See notes, 2:5; Is 2:2. *I am the* LORD; *I have spoken, and I will do it*. See note, Ezk 36:22–38.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 36:38 Compares the crowd of animals that formerly stood near the temple with the crowded, renewed cities of the Promised Land.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 36:22–38 Ezekiel reveals the reason God will restore His blessings to Israel. Their return will "vindicate the holiness of [God's] great name" (v 23). God made a promise of a land inheritance to Abraham (Gn 12:2–3). Included in that promise were these words: "and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed" (Gn 12:3), a messianic promise God fulfills in Christ and through Holy Baptism in His name. • Lord God, turn our hearts away from self-glorification, and focus us on the blessed inheritance You bestowed in Holy Baptism. Amen.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 37:1–14 After Ezekiel deflated the pride and self-conceit of his hearers (ch 36), he had to overcome their reluctance to accept the Gospel of restoration. Because the heart of the exiles was "deceitful … and desperately sick" (Jer 17:9), they did not greet the glorious promise of redemption with jubilation but with the doleful lament of despair: "Our hope is lost; we are indeed cut off" (Ezk 37:11). However, the Good Shepherd does not hesitate to seek out also the sheep that have strayed into the desolate country of sullen doubt and bleak hopelessness. He granted Ezekiel a vision that was to convince his hearers that their despair grew out of their refusal to believe in a Creator who "calls into existence the things that do not exist" (Rm 4:17; cf Dt 32:39; Ps 33:9).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 37:1 *The hand of the* LORD. See note, 1:3. *the Spirit*. Hbr *ruach*, also denotes "breath" (vv 5, 6, 8, 9, 10) and "winds" (v 9). *the valley*. Apparently the same "plain" (see ESV note) where the Lord appeared to Ezekiel earlier in his ministry (3:22).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 37:2 *very dry*. Utterly dead. Cf v 11.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 37:3 *Son of man*. See note, 2:1. *O Lord* GOD, *You know*. Cf Jn 21:17; Rv 7:14.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 37:4–6 Through His Word, God promises miraculous change, despite the description in v 2. The bones, arranged according to their former function and position, are covered with sinews and flesh.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 37:8 *no breath*. Their form and appearance were restored but not yet life, which only God can give.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 37:9 *Prophesy to the breath*. See note, v 1. *four winds*. See note, 5:10; see also p 217.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 37:10 *breath came into them*. Humanly speaking, Israel's hopes for survival appeared dead and buried in the exile. Prospects of national revival were as unlikely as expecting a vast array of skeletons, dried and dismembered, to come to life again. Yet at God's command, spoken by His prophet, death must surrender its victims. *great army*. The expression can have military or nonmilitary senses. Ezekiel typically uses the military sense.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 37:11 *our hope is lost*. Ezekiel explains his symbolism from v 2.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 37:12 *I will open your graves and raise you*. Vision was to remind the exiles that He who promised to revive their dead nation

was the same God who "formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life" (Gn 2:7). Through His prophets, God demonstrated His power to force death to give up its victims (cf 1Ki 17:17–24; 2Ki 4:18–37).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 37:14 The revelation of God's power to raise the dead sends beams of light into the future beyond Israel's rescue from death in the Babylonian graveyard. A revived Israel is but the earthly clay that He will use to call into being a Spirit-filled people of all nations, once dead in trespasses but made alive in Christ Jesus (Rm 6:11; Eph 2:1). He who is "the resurrection and the life" will awaken those who sleep in the dust of the earth—"some to everlasting life, and some to … everlasting contempt" (Jn 11:25; Dn 12:2; cf Jb 19:25; Ps 49:19; 73:24; Is 26:19; Jn 5:25–29).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 37:1–14 In a dream, God carries Ezekiel to a valley filled with dry bones and calls him to prophesy over them. Through Ezekiel's word, the dead receive life. The people receive hope of restoration. God's Word is effective and still has power to give new life and hope. • Almighty God, You alone speak the words of eternal life. Save us, Lord, for we cannot save ourselves. Amen.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 37:15–28 God will restore the Kingdom through new hope and faith. According to ch 34, it will be unlike any earthly dominion in that there will not be a succession of rulers, but only one Shepherd or King—God's "servant David" (Jesus Christ). His unending rule will claim the allegiance of all nations the world over (see note, v 28). Jesus fulfilled this prophecy of His messianic reign when He spoke of "one flock, one shepherd" (Jn 10:16; cf Gal 3:26–29).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 37:16 *Son of man*. See note, 2:1. *stick*. As Ezekiel in his early ministry was directed to dramatize the judgment about to overtake Israel (chs 4–5), so he also used an action prophecy to portray the promises of the Gospel. *For Judah*. The southern part of Solomon's divided kingdom. *For Joseph*. The northern 10 tribes that seceded (1Ki 12) and were often called Ephraim, a leading tribe that descended from Joseph. See "Ephraim," p 1079.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 37:17 *join them*. Ezekiel enclosed the ends of the sticks in his fisted hand, giving them the appearance of having become a single rod.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 37:22 *one king*. The pantomimed healing of this ancient political rupture was to visualize the one nation and the one King

who will rule forever, in accord with an everlasting covenant of peace. See note, 44:3; cf Jer 33:14–26.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 37:23 *defile*. See note, 36:17. *save*. See "salvation," p 843. *backslidings*. See p 1078. *cleanse*. See note, 36:25; see also p 6.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 37:24 *My servant David*. The messianic King is so designated in 34:23.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 37:26 *covenant of peace*. See note, 34:25. *multiply*. Cf Gn 1:28. *set My sanctuary in their midst forevermore*. See note, Ezk 43:1–12.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 37:27 *My dwelling place*. God will be present wherever and whenever His people worship Him "in spirit and truth" (Jn 4:19–26).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 37:28 *I am the* LORD *who sanctifies Israel*. See "holy," p 7. *My sanctuary*. Before Ezekiel elaborates on the homage and service rendered by the new covenant people to their Redeemer and King (chs 40–48), he assures them in advance that no enemy will be able to silence their song of praise or prevent the extension of the Kingdom.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 37:15–28 Ezekiel prophesies that God will unite Israel again. No longer will two kingdoms exist, but one under "My servant David" (v 24). God fulfills this messianic prophecy for us in Jesus Christ at Calvary when the Church (God's new Israel) "was crucified with Him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing" (Rm 6:6). In Christ, God is our God and we are His people. • Almighty Father, through Christ, You hallowed us from all uncleanness. We rejoice in our salvation as Your pure gift. Amen.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON **Chs 38–39** Answers this question: Will God's "servant David," the one King of one nation, actually rule forever and put into effect an everlasting covenant (37:22–26), or will sinister forces combine to destroy His reign of peace? In order to allay fears for all time, God shows Ezekiel the very end of time. A literalistic interpretation of such prophecies, which identifies the foes with individual nations on the historical scene, is not only highly speculative but also does violence to biblical imagery. See p 307.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 38:2 *set your face*. See p 1277. *Gog … chief prince*. Ringleader of this confederacy of evil. His name occurs nowhere else as the head of a foreign state. His base of operations must be inferred from the location of his allies. Gog appears also in the NT (Rv 20) and is defeated.

This assurance of God's enduring kingdom of grace is being fulfilled in the preservation of the Holy Christian Church (Mt 16:18). *Meshech and Tubal*. See note, Ezk 32:26–27.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 38:3 *I am against you*. Cf Ps 2. Their doom is sealed by the sevenfold "thus says the Lord GOD" (Ezk 38:3, 10, 14, 17; 39:1, 17, 25). As the attack is to come in the remote future, so those who launch it are likewise described as hailing from the farthest borders of the world known to ancient Israel.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 38:4 *turn you about*. God will give free reign to the evil scheme (v 10) and base human motives, but will overrule them and make them serve His purposes. So He used the lust for power of the Assyrians (Is 10:5) and the Babylonians (Chaldeans; Hab 1:6). See note, 2Sm 24:1. *hooks into your jaws*. See note, Jb 41:1. *horses and horsemen*. Typically describes chariots. *buckler*. See note, Ps 35:2.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 38:5–6 *Gomer … Beth-togarmah*. Descendants of Japheth, they represent peoples living in the north (cf v 15). Allied with these attackers from the north are Persia in the east and Cush and Put (Egypt) in the south. On the political and military pressures faced by Israel, see map, p 1205.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 38:8 *mustered*. God lines them up for battle. *the latter years*. See note, Is 2:2. *all of them*. Ezekiel's immediate audience was the faithful exiles of Israel. The end-times fulfillment will apply to their spiritual descendants—the new Israel, the Church (cf Gal 6:16).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 38:11 *unwalled villages*. Gog expects little or no resistance in conquering and plundering cities. This feature of the prophecy looks beyond the physical defenses of restored Israel (e.g., soon after the return from Babylon, Nehemiah enclosed Jerusalem with a wall; Ne 1–7).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 38:12 *spoil … plunder*. Robbing God and His people.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 38:13 *Sheba*. Mentioned as trading with Tyre (27:22). See note, 1Ki 10:1. *Dedan*. Associated with Edom (Ezk 25:13). *Tarshish*. See note, 1Ki 10:22.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 38:15 *many peoples … a great host*. Just how vast their numbers were is evident from these facts: (1) after their defeat, their discarded weapons provided Israel with firewood for seven years; (2) their corpses filled a valley; (3) an organized effort over a period of seven

months was necessary to search out and bury all the enemy dead (39:9–16). *riding on horses*. Cavalry.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 38:16 *latter days*. The seven heathen nations denounced in chs 25–32 did not prevent the rehabilitation of the Babylonian exiles in the Promised Land. Proceeding from this point of fulfilled prophecy, Ezekiel envisions the era when Israel is no longer the name of a nation but the symbolic title of a spiritual fellowship open to all races and peoples. In these latter days of the messianic age, demonic attempts will indeed be made to destroy the Kingdom of the Prince of Peace, which is not of this world and therefore seems to be an easy prey for its enemies. *I will bring you against My land*. Israel, as a representation of God's spiritual kingdom. *nations may know Me*. See "know that I am the LORD," p 1079. *vindicate My holiness*. Cf 36:22.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 38:17–23 The assault on Israel is no sneak attack. God knew about it before it was even conceived. His prophets spoke about it in former days.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 38:17 *prophets … prophesied*. Though they did not mention Gog by name, they foretold the defeat of God's enemies who, like Gog, rise up against Him.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 38:18 *on that day*. See p 1079.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 38:21 *a sword*. The sword, together with pestilence and famine, is frequently mentioned as a divine implement of punishment (cf 5:1, 12, 17; 6:3; 11:8).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 38:22 Three pairs of plagues are in God's arsenal: (1) war, including disease that comes with war; (2) violent storms; and (3) the volcano-like destruction God used on Sodom and Gomorrah (Gn 19:24).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 38:23 *make Myself known*. See "know that I am the LORD," p 1079.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 39:1 *O Gog, chief prince*. See note, 38:2. In accord with a Hbr literary convention, the onslaught and defeat of Gog are repeated (vv 1–6) in a brief summary of ch 38 in order to dwell more at length on features previously mentioned more or less in passing.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 39:3 *strike your bow*. Cf Ps 46:8–11.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 39:4 See note, 1Ki 21:24.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 39:6 *those who dwell securely in the coastlands*. All people will be affected by the conflict and God's judgment. *know that I am the LORD*. See note, 2:5.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 39:7 *holy name*. Yahweh. See "for Your name's sake," p 842. *profaned*. See notes, Lv 20:3; Ex 20:7. *Holy One in Israel*. See p 1227.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 39:9 *fires … for seven years*. See note, 38:15.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 39:10 *seize the spoil*. Any losses the people experienced from Gog will be returned to them, as well as the goods of the attackers.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 39:11 *Valley of the Travelers*. On the route from east of the Salt Sea. Burial of Gog and his multitude was to be made beyond the borders of the Holy Land. *block the travelers*. Pile of corpses will be so great. *Hamon-gog*. See ESV note; cf v 15.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 39:12 *seven months*. Illustrates the enormous size of Gog's army. *cleanse the land*. Unburied corpses made the land ceremonially unclean (cf Nu 9:6; 19:11; 35:33–34).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 39:13 *I show My glory*. See note, 1:28.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 39:14 *set apart men … bury*. Unclean profession.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 39:15 *set up a sign*. Such a marker would warn people against defiling themselves by stumbling onto the remains (cf v 12) and would also guide the burial team's work.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 39:16 *Hamonah*. Both valley (v 11) and city derive from Hbr *hamon*, "multitude."
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 39:17 *sacrificial feast*. See note, Is 34:6. In judgment, God shows His greatness and holiness and so makes Himself known "in the eyes of many nations" (Ezk 38:23). By the horrible outcome of their sinister plan, Gog and every like-minded enemy of the Lord are to know how futile it is to try to destroy His kingdom. Instead of dethroning Him, they end up becoming a sacrificial feast, helplessly slaughtered like the animals offered on Israel's altars (39:17–21).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 39:18 *Bashan*. Transjordan grazing area, known for producing herds of strong, fat cattle. See note, Nu 21:33.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 39:20 *horses and charioteers*. Cf 38:15. The best-equipped and mightiest warriors will not escape becoming the prey of the birds and the beasts invited to the feast at the table set for them by the Lord.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 39:21 *set My glory among the nations*. See note, 1:28. *My hand that I have laid on them*. Judgment on the nations will contribute to His glory because they will understand the character of God's justice. See note, 36:20.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 39:23 *captivity for their iniquity*. See note, 36:23. *hid My face*. See note, Is 45:7.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 38:1–39:24 Gog represents the evil forces arrayed against Christ's Church. God's Word seals the doom of this unholy alliance. His powerful Word, through Ezekiel and through Christ, provides comfort to Christians today. "The gates of hell shall not prevail" (Mt 16:18). Judgment on His enemies is mercy for His people. God makes His holy name known to the nations and vindicates His holiness before their eyes (Ezk 38:16). • Lord, we take comfort in Your Word. Protect us and guard our faith through Your Holy Spirit. Amen.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 39:25 *restore the fortunes*. See p 1080. *Jacob*. See p 1079. *jealous for My holy name*. See note, Ex 20:5.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 39:26 *forget their shame*. Or, "bear their shame." Cf 6:9; 16:61; 20:43; 36:31.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 39:27 *through them have vindicated My holiness*. Though Ezekiel foretold things in ages to come, the vindication of God's holiness is not a utopian dream. It will begin in the near future—in the deliverance from the Babylonian captivity. Physical resettlement in their homeland will be followed by spiritual renewal (cf 36:22–32).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 39:28 *leave none*. Although some exiles did not want to return, God made it possible for all to do so.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 39:29 *I pour out My Spirit*. See notes, 36:27; 37:1.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 39:25–29 Israel will return to "dwell securely in their land with none to make them afraid" (v 26). Israel's return under the reign of Cyrus the Persian vindicates God's holiness and makes Him known to many nations. On Calvary's cross, God most fully revealed the character of His justice—He ransoms all by Christ's blood. No longer exiles, believers receive the blessings of His promises. • Father, we humbly thank You for our salvation, guaranteed by Christ's own blood. Guard us in our faith. Amen.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON **Chs 40–48** The Lord shows Ezekiel a vision of fulfillment regarding the things he had proclaimed in chs 33–39. The difficult Hbr text adds to the mysterious character of the prophecies. (The LXX translation is much easier to read, though it may draw the reader away from important insights in the Hbr.) The notes frequently refer to the temple diagram, p 1379. Because Ezekiel was to declare all he saw in the vision to his immediate audience, he describes the coming covenant of peace in

terms of the old covenant (its worship, its ordinances governing the religious and civic life, its locale in the Promised Land). But Ezekiel did not see a mirage without body or substance, or a literal blueprint for an end-times temple. We rejoice to be the benefactors of his fulfilled prophetic vision: restoration to communion with God through "the offering of the body of Jesus Christ" (Heb 10:10), "worship in spirit and truth" (Jn 4:24) as a living sacrifice, and fellowship in the Holy Christian Church, which will endure forever. When St John had a vision of what awaits us on Judgment Day, he, too, described its perfect bliss in the same figures of the old covenant we find in Ezk (Rv 21:9–22:5). See Luth, pp 1306–7.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 40:1 *twenty-fifth year*. Apr 28, 573 BC. God showed the vision to Ezekiel when the Jerusalem temple, destroyed for 14 years, seemed destined to remain a heap of ruins.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 40:2 *In visions of God*. See note, 1:1. *He brought me*. As in previous instances, the "hand of the LORD" made possible prophetic flight through time and space (see p 1258). *high mountain*. Mount Zion (see note, Is 2:2). *like a city*. The structure that appeared was of such size and complexity as to resemble not a single unit but a series of buildings that make up an entire city. Ezekiel's report would reverse what the exiles heard when, on a previous occasion, he told the exiles all that "the LORD had shown" him (Ezk 11:25)—the Lord's departure from Jerusalem and the burning of the city and the temple (chs 8–11).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 40:3 *a man*. An ethereal being, appearing in human form, was to be Ezekiel's companion on a tour of the site and its structures. The services of the angelic guide are mentioned seven times in ch 40, twice in ch 41, once in ch 43, twice in both chs 44 and 46, and four times in ch 47. The repeated references to the man connect the diverse elements of the vision. *appearance was like bronze*. See notes, 1:4, 7. *a linen cord and a measuring reed*. Cf v 5. Measurements and numerical descriptions dominate the vision. Some interpreters may be tempted to construct elaborate systems of number symbolism. Avoid such methods. First, as stated earlier, the Hbr is very difficult, and the manuscripts include variant readings, which would naturally undermine interpretations based on calculations. Second, the measurements often serve simply as practical descriptions of how the temple was laid out, a matter of special interest to a priest such as Ezekiel. Third, many figures relate to or stem from regulations in the Law of Moses (e.g., amounts for sacrifices) or from the

layouts of earlier temples (see diagrams, pp 541, 544). Such figures are not intended to introduce new symbolism. Given these cautions, three observations about the symbolism can be made. First, the design emphasizes equality, balance, and symmetry, illustrating the orderly and harmonious character of the new Israel God will establish (e.g., all the gates are exactly the same size). This would be esp comforting to a people who experienced the destruction of their homeland and were suffering in the chaos of exile in a foreign land. On God's order, see p 1291. Second, multiples of 10, a number associated with order and completeness, dominate the figures. See p 217. Third, at times the numbers illustrate distinctions in holiness, as can be seen in the seven steps for the outer gates, the eight steps for the priests at the inner gates, and the ten steps leading into the temple proper. See notes, 40:22, 31, 49.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 40:1–4 Symbolism forms the basis for the rest of Ezk. Already God has promised to deliver His people from captivity. He now describes an even greater deliverance through His promised Messiah. We also rejoice in God's deliverance! God makes us the beneficiaries of His abundant grace. Through Baptism, we belong to God's heavenly kingdom. By His precious Word and Sacraments, God holds us close to Him for all eternity. • Lord, at times we become disheartened. Grant us eyes of faith to see the blessings and the future You prepare for us in Christ. Amen.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 40:5–16 The man with a measuring reed began to provide specific dimensions of the various structural elements. The profusion of figures may discourage some readers, but the specifications remind us that our worship dare never be slovenly, disorderly, or haphazard. Detailed as the measurements are, they are not complete enough to serve as an architect's blueprint. (E.g., such details as the height of the structure and the material to be used are not given.) Instead, Ezekiel sees an existing, complete temple. There is symmetry throughout, symbolizing the perfection required of a holy habitation of the Lord.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 40:5 *a wall*. See point A, p 1379. The wall surrounding the temple was not designed to protect but to distinguish it from the profane world all around it. *temple area*. Outer court. See point D, p 1379. *long cubits*. Israelites had different cubit measurements. Ezekiel's guide uses a cubit equal to seven handbreadths, rather than the typical six, possibly because of the numerical symbolism for seven. See p 217.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 40:6 *its steps*. Another device to impress the worshiper that he is approaching the transcendent Lord are the series of steps leading to ever higher levels (cf vv 31, 49). There were also steps rising to the top of the altar (43:17). *threshold of the gate, one reed deep*. Going up the first of these stairways, Ezekiel was led through a huge gateway in the eastern wall. As he walked across the threshold, he saw rooms on either side of the massive entrance. In these rectangular niches, separated from the passageway by barriers (perhaps low walls), the temple guards stood watch. See p 792.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 40:7 *side rooms*. Guardrooms within the gates. See point B, p 1379. Before emerging into the outer court, he passed through a vestibule with jambs or decorative pillars.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 40:8 *vestibule of the gateway*. The main "room" that forms the gateway.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 40:9 Textual variants in the Hbr and early translations suggest some accidental duplication of phrases has taken place. *jambs*. Or, "gateposts." *inner end*. Standing within the city walls. See point B, p 1379.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 40:10 *three side rooms*. See note, v 7.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 40:11 *width … and the length of the gateway*. Exactly which proportions of the gateway are being measured is not clear.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 40:12 *barrier*. Or, "boundary." Perhaps a small wall.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 40:13 Inside the gateway, rooms stood on either side. See point B, p 1379.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 40:14 *vestibule, twenty cubits*. Cf vv 8–9. *court*. Outer court (see point D, p 1379). He is measuring beside the inner portion of the east gate.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 40:16 *windows all around, narrowing inwards*. A common design for military purposes, allowing the person inside maximum view of the outside with minimum exposure to those who might shoot at him. *on the jambs were palm trees*. A favored decorative element. See note, 1Ki 6:29; see also diagram, p 544.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 40:5–16 Ezekiel begins his temple tour and sees the exacting standards by which God measures man. Because God holds us to His standards, we find ourselves woefully inadequate. Yet, God graciously covers our inadequacies with Christ's blood and makes us

partakers of His holiness. • Lord, have mercy on us. We are sinful and unclean. Wash us in the blood of the Lamb; make us wholly Yours. Amen.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 40:17 *outer court*. See point D, p 1379. The temple rooms faced a pavement that, while higher than the ground outside the gate, was lower than the surface of the inner court (vv 18–19). *Thirty chambers faced the pavement*. Probably designed for Gentile worshipers. See point C, p 1379; see also point A, p 1838.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 40:18 *lower pavement*. See point E, p 1379.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 40:19 Approximately from point B to point F, p 1379.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 40:17–19 Ezekiel's tour guide meticulously measures the outer court of the new temple. Traditionally, Gentiles could pass no farther than the outer court, while Israelites could pass farther. By the blood of Jesus Christ, our great High Priest, all may enter God's presence (Heb 9:11–14). • Lord, fill us with the marvel, the wonder, and the joy of an eternity spent in Your presence. Amen.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 40:20 *the gate*. On the north and the south sides, access could be gained to the court through gateways similar to the east gate Ezekiel had entered.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 40:21 *same size as those of the first gate*. Cf vv 5–16.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 40:22 *seven steps*. Extending outside the gates, as seen at point B (p 1379).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 40:23 *from gate to gate, a hundred cubits*. See note, v 19.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 40:24 *same size*. Cf vv 5–16.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 40:27 See note, v 19.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 40:20–27 Ezekiel learns about two more gates. The measurements for them are exactly the same as for the east gate. People from every direction, tribe, and nation will flow into God's presence. Thank God that He did not leave us in our sin, but provided the means of our perfection through Jesus Christ. • Lord, You are perfect. We are sinners. Grant that we may dwell with You because You covered our sin with Christ's righteousness. Amen.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 40:28 *south gate*. See point F, left of center, p 1379. Continuing up a flight of steps and through another gateway in a wall, Ezekiel stepped into an inner court. This entrance, directly opposite the one

through the outer wall, was duplicated on the north and the south sides (vv 28–37). *same size*. Cf vv 5–16.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 40:30 Not in the LXX. A scribe may have duplicated it from another passage.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 40:31 *vestibule faced the outer court*. The inner gates stand within the larger court rather than within the walls to which they provide access. *its stairway had eight steps*. A new point of symbolism, eight representing a new beginning. See p 217; see also note, v 3.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 40:32 *same size*. Dimensions provided in vv 5–16.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 40:38 *chamber … where the burnt offering was to be washed*. See point G, p 1379.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 40:39 On these offerings, see pp 170–71.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 40:41 *eight tables, on which to slaughter*. For the inner court, 12 tables were needed for the preparation of the sacrifices (vv 38–43).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 40:42 *tables … instruments*. Needed for butchering.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 40:43 *hooks*. Meat hooks.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 40:28–43 In the inner courtyard, Ezekiel saw the 12 tables used for the preparation of the burnt offerings, sin offerings, and guilt offerings before the Lord (vv 38–43). These sacrifices proclaimed the atonement fulfilled when Jesus Christ "offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins" (Heb 10:12). • We praise You, Lord, that Your ancient sacrifices pointed to a great reversal—Christ's sinless life in exchange for our sinful lives. Amen.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 40:44 Along the north and the south walls, he observed rooms reserved for the officiating priests. See point I, p 1379. In the very center of this court stood an altar described in 43:13–17. See point J, p 1379.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 40:45 *priests who have charge of the temple*. Descendants of Aaron, but not of Zadok, this group of priests served as guardians and managers.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 40:46 *sons of Zadok*. The most holy group of Aaron's descendants. Cf 44:15–31. See p 1557.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 40:47 *hundred cubits*. Equal to the distance from an outer gate to an inner gate. See note, v 19.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 40:48 *vestibule of the temple*. Climbing 10 more steps and passing between two pillars, Ezekiel arrived at an enclosure that served like a narthex to the temple proper. See point K, p 1379.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 40:49 *ten steps*. The number of steps has increased compared to those for the gates. See note, v 3. *pillars*. See diagram, p 672.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 40:44–49 Ezekiel records the final figures that describe the chambers and the vestibule located in the inner court. He notes how holy the place is by mentioning that only the sons of Zadok could approach and minister there. How marvelous then is our salvation, which makes us a holy priesthood through Baptism and permits us to approach God's throne of grace! • Hallow all our service, dear Savior, that we may minister with joy in Your presence. Amen.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON **Ch 41** On the temple proper, see also the diagrams for the tabernacle on p 139 and for the various temples on pp 541, 730, and 1838.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 41:1 *the nave*. The Holy Place.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 41:2 *sidewalls*. Formed the space of the nave.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 41:3 *inner room*. The Most Holy Place. Only the heavenly guide went into the Most Holy Place. As in Solomon's temple, the Most Holy Place is likely a perfect cube.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 41:5–11 Description of the walls of the temple proper, including its side chambers. See the walls surrounding points L and M on the diagram (p 1379). The side chambers were probably used for storage of equipment and provisions.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 41:5 On the north and the south sides, and partly on the east side, the temple proper was surrounded by an outer paved platform and a double wall. *side chambers*. From a paved area, entrances on the north and south sides led to a space between the walls where Ezekiel found side chambers built above one another in three stories.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 41:6 *offsets*. Meaning uncertain.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 41:7 *broader as it wound upward*. Likely describes the need for the lower, foundational walls to be thicker. Second- and third-story walls could be thinner, so their rooms could have more interior space.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 41:8 *raised platform*. Terrace between the two walls. Its purpose is not indicated.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 41:9 *free space*. See point N, p 1379.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 41:11 *free space was five cubits*. Second measure of free space. See point O, p 1379.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 41:12 *building that was facing the separate yard*. To the west and abutting the outer wall of the temple complex. See point P, p 1379. Its function is never described.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 41:13–15a Summary of the temple measurements, all adding up to 100 cubits. They testify to its symmetrical perfection. See note, v 3.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 41:16 *paneled with wood*. See note, 1Ki 6:15–22. *covered*. Perhaps with lattice, common style in the ancient Near East.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 41:18 *cherubim and palm trees*. See notes, 1Ki 6:23, 29; see also diagram, p 544. *two faces*. The cherubim that Ezekiel saw bearing up the glory of the Lord had four faces (Ezk 1:10; 10:21). Perhaps only a human face and a young lion face came into Ezekiel's line of vision. Cherubim in the tabernacle and in Solomon's temple are not described as multifaced (Ex 25:18–22; 1Ki 6:23). See note, Ezk 10:1.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 41:22 *an altar of wood*. See note, Ex 27:1. *table that is before the* LORD. Likely to be set with the bread of the Presence (Ex 25:23, 30).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 41:25 *cherubim and palm trees*. See notes, 1Ki 6:23, 29. *canopy*. Hbr architectural term of uncertain meaning.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 41:26 *narrow windows*. See note, 40:16.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON **Ch 41** As Ezekiel tours the Holy Place of the temple, his guide continues to measure the building. On the walls of the Holy Place, Ezekiel sees carvings of cherubim that appear different from the cherubim he described at the beginning of his prophecy. How wonderful is God's creation. How much more amazing, when we shall see angels face-to-face surrounding God's throne! Yet even now the Lord regards us as His holy temple (1Co 6:19), His dwelling place prepared by the sacrifice of His beloved Son. • Lord, You are the author and perfecter of our faith. Build us up in unity for Jesus' sake. Amen.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 42:1 *chambers*. North and south of the inner court, and still within the area enclosed by the wall separating it from the outer court, were two series of chambers in addition to those mentioned in 41:6. The one row of rooms faced inward to the temple yard. Here the priests were to eat the most holy offerings and store them (v 13). See point Q, p 1379.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 42:3 *gallery*. Or, "balcony." The second row of chambers faced the outer court. In them, the priests were to leave the garments in which they minister and change garments before mingling with the people (v 14).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 42:4 *passage*. See point R, p 1379.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 42:5 Galleries were larger on the upper levels, making the rooms on those levels smaller.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 42:7 See point S, p 1379.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 42:11–12 *passage*. See point R, p 1379.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 42:13 *he said*. Cf 40:3, Ezekiel's guide. *eat the most holy offerings*. See pp 170–71.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 42:14 *laying there the garments*. Holy garments must stay in the holy area belonging to the priests. See notes, Lv 6:10–11; 16:23. *that which is for the people*. Courtyard.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 42:15 *all around*. Overall dimensions of the entire temple area are as symmetrical as those of the temple proper.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 42:16–20 The totals are 500 cubits, compared with 100 cubits for the interior structure (41:13). The four sides form a perfect square. If the holy God is to take up residence in this place, it must be devoid of anything uneven, incomplete, incongruous, or unharmonious. Cf Rv 21:15–16.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 42:20 *a separation between the holy and the common*. See "holy," p 7.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON **Ch 42** Having completed their tour of the temple complex, the man of bronze leads Ezekiel out the east entrance, heading back to the location where their tour had begun. Again, the man stops, this time to measure the entire temple complex. In the symbolism of this vision, we see a glimpse of the Lord's heavenly dwelling place, which He prepares for us in Christ. • Lord God and Savior, You rescued us through the waters of Baptism and nourish us with Your Supper. Teach us the way of holiness. Amen.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 43:1–12 Sanctuary described in chs 40–42 is deemed worthy of God's presence. Through the gate facing east, through which Ezekiel was guided into the temple complex (40:5–19), he now would see "the glory of the God of Israel" enter and fill the temple. See note, 1:28.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 43:2 *glory … coming from the east*. See note, 1:28. *sound of many waters*. See note, 1:24. *earth shone with His glory*. God's presence hallows the land again. See "glory of the LORD," pp 6–7.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 43:3 Cf chs 1–2. *I fell on my face*. See p 1276.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 43:5 *Spirit lifted me*. See note, 11:1.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 43:6 *the man*. See note, 40:3. *speaking to me out of the temple*. God had returned and would dwell in it forever (see note, 1:28). However, it must remain undefiled (vv 7–9; cf 1Ki 6:13; 8:10–13, 27; Ps 99:5; 132:7; Jer 3:17; 17:12).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 43:7 *place of My throne*. See p 495. *whoring … dead bodies*. Two ways are cited in which the temple, now lying in ruins, had forfeited God's presence and protection: (1) The people were guilty of idolatry, often described as marital unfaithfulness (Is 54:5–6; Jer 3:6; Hos 2:2; cf 2Ki 23:6–7). (2) Kings contaminated the temple when they were buried too near to the holy precincts and when they erected secular structures with only a wall separating the profane from the holy. Cf Lv 21:1; 22:4; Nu 5:2; 6:6; 9:10; 19:16 for ceremonial uncleanness resulting from contact with the dead. *high places*. See p 526.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 43:8 Ezekiel protests and warns against placing the palace, royal tombs, or unclean activities near the temple or even its outer wall. In the kingdom period, the palace and temple were quite close (cf 1Ki 6–7; 2Ki 11; 21:4–5). *abominations*. See note, 5:9.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 43:10 *be ashamed*. No desecration was to touch any part of the entire temple area on the top of the mountain, for the whole territory was to be as inviolate as the Most Holy Place. This was the law of the temple Ezekiel was to proclaim to the house of Israel (vv 11–12).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 43:11 *statutes … laws*. See p 971.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 43:12 Not a new covenant but a renewal of the covenant, which expands its holy boundaries and extends into the lives of the people (vv 10–11).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 43:1–12 Ezekiel watched the glory of the God of Israel (v 2) enter the restored temple from the east, whence it had departed (11:22–24). God will protect His holy name and the sanctity of His dwelling place among men. One of the names for Jesus is Immanuel, "God with us"; through His Word and precious Sacraments, He continually dwells with us. Through the cross, we hear God's words, "I will never leave you nor forsake you" (Heb 13:5), a promise sealed in Christ's blood. • Almighty

God, because of Christ's atoning sacrifice, we are Your dwelling place (2Co 6:16). Sanctify us, we pray. Amen.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 43:13–46:24 Ezekiel's temple had some features in common with Solomon's building, and the services to be rendered in it resembled the ritual prescribed in Mosaic legislation. Yet there were significant differences. These differences were not accidental, for they fit into an overall pattern Ezekiel saw like the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle. E.g., there is no mention of the ark of the covenant, which earlier played an indispensable part in Israel's worship. Furthermore, as will become evident, the function of a high priest, who alone was permitted to enter the Most Holy Place and to bring the mediating offering, will no longer be necessary. For the same reason, there will no longer be a need to observe the Day of Atonement, the annual high festival when this sacrificial act was performed. See note, 44:3.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 43:13–17 Under the old covenant, an altar was an absolute necessity. Mentioned in passing in 40:47, the altar is now described in characteristic detail. See point J, p 1379.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 43:15 *altar hearth*. Hbr word transliterated as "Ariel" in Is 29:1. *four horns*. See notes, Ex 21:14; 27:2; 29:12; 1Ki 1:50.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 43:17 The altar's overall structural features gave it the appearance of a symmetrical step-pyramid. The topmost level, where the sacrifice burned, rose above the base by means of squares or blocks of graduated size. The officiating priests needed steps to reach a height far enough removed from the profane earth below.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 43:18–27 If an altar built of earthly material by sinful hands was to serve its sacred purpose, the priest was to "purify … and make atonement for it" (v 20) by dedication rites similar to those carried out in former days (cf Lv 8; 1Ki 8:62–66). Only descendants of the high priest Zadok (v 19) were to minister at the altar. For the banishment from the high priestly office of Abiathar's family, see note, 1Ki 2:26.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 43:18 *burnt offerings*. See pp 170–71. *throwing blood*. See notes, Ex 24:6; Lv 1:5.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 43:19 *Levitical priests*. All priests were Levites, but as ch 44 makes clear, not all Levites were priests (see notes, Dt 18:1, 6–8). *a bull from the herd*. A young, domesticated bull.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 43:20 *purify … and make atonement*. See pp 5–7.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 43:21 *burned in the appointed place*. Cf Lv 4:12, 21.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 43:22 *without blemish*. See notes, Ex 29:1; Lv 1:3.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 43:24 *sprinkle salt*. See note, Lv 2:13.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 43:26 *atonement … cleanse … consecrate*. See pp 5–6.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 43:27 *burnt offerings … peace offerings*. They symbolize the worshipers' unreserved gifts of gratitude to God and sacramental communion with Him who restored them to His favor. See pp 170–71. *accept you*. Outward rituals, carefully and minutely prescribed for Israel's sanctuary, foreshadowed what even now constitutes service pleasing to God: a heart totally dedicated in holy obedience to Him who rescued the worshiper from death and restored him to fellowship with his Creator.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 43:13–27 God instructs Ezekiel on the rebuilding of the altar and the sacrifices necessary to sanctify it so that God can again dwell with His people. Today, Christ's cross is your altar by which the Lord has consecrated you as His child. • Lord, keep me mindful of the sacrifice of Your dear Son for my salvation. Amen.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 44:2 *remain shut*. Ordinance signified that only God Himself can open the way that leads to communion with Him. When rebellious sons and daughters of Adam arrogate to themselves the right to come into His presence, they insult and profane "the glory of the LORD" which "filled the temple" (v 4).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 44:3 *prince*. This individual had an unusual but significant relationship to the restored community. He did not, in the first place, exercise royal functions of a civic or political nature. His main responsibility lay rather in promoting worship. Though not granted priestly status and the authority to offer sacrifices, he nevertheless personified the privilege of a reconciled people to commune with God as well as the obligation to bring Him continual sacrifices in an orderly, sanctified way. In this person, unique among the functionaries of the old covenant, we see embodied everything the spiritual Israel of the new covenant may and should do to praise, extol, and glorify God for redemption from Satan's dominion and from the curse of sin. Just: "He is the chosen Priest and eternal King, the Christ, inasmuch as He is the Son of God" (*ANF* 1:258).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 44:4–8 The kind of worship acceptable to the reconciled Lord continues to be defined in the forms and regulations

prescribed in the old covenant.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 44:4 Cf 43:3–4.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 44:5 *statutes of the temple … laws*. Cf 43:12 and note.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 44:6–8 *foreigners, uncircumcised in heart and flesh*. To be excluded from the sanctuary in Jerusalem. In a similar way, only those who repent, believe, and amend their lives are members of the communion of saints; thus they may appear before God's throne. See notes, Ps 15; 24; Jer 4:4.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 44:9 The Lord underscores the holy awe by which reconciled sinners are to regard the privilege of worship. The priests who earlier ministered to idols were permitted only to engage in menial tasks (vv 9–14). They retained the title as priests but could not fulfill the duties as priests.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 44:10 *far from Me*. On idol worship in Israel's past, see the reforms that King Josiah carried out (2Ki 23:4). Those assuming leadership in such abominations "became a stumbling block" (v 12).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 44:11–14 The Lord reclassifies descendants of Aaron who are not descendants of Zadok. The non-Zadokites are given responsibilities like those of Levites, though they retain their title as priests. Cf vv 15–31; see note, 40:46.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 44:1–14 Detestable practices in the past drove God from His dwelling place, so God institutes regulations preventing those who are "uncircumcised in heart and flesh" from entering His sanctuary (v 9). Today, God's Holy Law guides your relationship with Him and with others. Unfortunately, you cannot keep His Law rightly. Yet, Christ kept them for you. He kept God's Laws perfectly in your stead and for your consecration. Through Christ, you are appointed to a holy priesthood (1Pt 2:5). • Father, I daily sin much and do not deserve Your mercy. Grant me daily repentance and renew me through Christ, my Lord. Amen.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 44:15 *kept the charge of My sanctuary*. The faithful sons of Zadok (see note, 43:18–27), who perform priestly functions, must observe strict ceremonial regulations, many of which are found in the Law of Moses. *offer Me the fat and the blood*. See note, Lv 1:8.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 44:17 *linen garments*. See notes, Ex 28:42; Lv 6:10–11.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 44:18 *sweat*. Priestly vestments were to be made of lightweight linen rather than of wool, which tends to make the wearer perspire. In the relatively dry, highland region of central Israel, sweat would normally evaporate quickly. Excessive sweat, like other bodily excretions, likely rendered the priests ceremonially unclean (cf Lv 15; Dt 23:12–14). Sweat may also be associated with the penalty of sin (cf Gn 3:19).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 44:19 *transmit holiness*. If the priests wore their sacred vestments among the people, it would obliterate "the difference between the holy and the common" (v 23), which they were to teach the people. People might be led to lose respect for the holy office of the priesthood. Cf Hg 2:12; see note, Lv 6:18.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 44:20 Judean men likely wore their hair trimmed short by a razor, though they were not to shave their heads bald, as Egyptians might.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 44:21 See note, Lv 10:9.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 44:22 *divorced*. See note, Dt 22:19.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 44:23 See note, v 19.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 44:24 *act as judges*. See note, Dt 17:8–13.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 44:25 *defile themselves by … a dead person*. See notes, 39:12, 15.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 44:27 *sin offering*. See pp 170–71.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 44:28 *I am their inheritance*. See "portion," p 7. Ezekiel envisions worshipers who have been restored to God's favor, reconciled by a great High Priest (Heb 9:12). The redeemed need not fear coming into God's presence, because He "counts no iniquity" to them but "counts righteousness" (Ps 32:2; Rm 4:6–8). *no possession*. See note, Dt 18:1; cf Ezk 48:8. See also "portion," p 7.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 44:29–31 The communion of saints still lives in a fallen world. Its members succumb to temptations and lapse into unholy thoughts, words, and deeds. Therefore, Ezekiel sees them bringing a sin offering and a guilt offering, confessing their wrongs to God and pleading for forgiveness (40:39; 42:13; 46:20). Yet, everything they think, say, and do becomes "a living sacrifice" (Rm 12:1).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 44:15–31 God reiterates Levitical standards for His priests with some new regulations. In the NT, the Father has made Jesus our High Priest. "He is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them"

(Heb 7:25). Christ has fulfilled the old order of sacrifice and permanently replaced it with a new order sealed in His blood. • Lord Jesus, Your victory at Calvary provides eternal salvation for me and all who trust in You. I give You all praise. Amen.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 45:1 *allot the land*. This reallotment did not take place after exile, but envisioned how holy relationships should work among God's people. *as a holy district*. C 6 or 7 mi, divided into three parallel strips. To ensure acceptable worship within the temple complex, the area immediately beyond and surrounding the outer walls must be orderly.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 45:2 *square plot*. In the center of the first zone stood the sanctuary, surrounded by the residences of the priests.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 45:5 The second zone of the square was reserved for the Levites.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 45:6 *Alongside the portion*. The lower and smaller zone was to be city land. *belong to the whole house of Israel*. Other Israelites could dwell in this area.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 45:1–6 God pronounces regulations designed to prevent future temple defilement. He zealously guards His house of worship but also allows means by which the people may approach Him and serve Him. Today, the Lord continues to consecrate a place for Himself—souls and bodies of believers, which He will raise to dwell in His eternal sanctuary of heaven. • Father, we ask that You guard and protect Your Church by the power of Your holy name. Amen.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 45:7 *prince*. See note, 44:3. *land on both sides*. On the sides of the sacred square were two rectangular territories that were assigned to the prince. One territory extended westward to the Great Sea, and the other extended eastward to the Jordan River.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 45:8 *no more oppress My people*. Cf 22:6. Luth: "The old, worldly, temporal government remains in all the world, and does not at all prevent the establishment upon earth of the new, spiritual, everlasting rule and kingdom of Christ under it and within it, a kingdom that has its own peculiar nature, as we clearly see. Especially is this the case where there are righteous kings and princes, who in their old government tolerate this new everlasting kingdom of Christ, or who themselves accept it, promote it, and desire as Christians to be in it" (AE 35:289).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 45:9 *execute justice*. Worship was to go on without hindrance and hardships. *Cease your evictions*. Cf Hos 5:10; see note, Dt

19:14.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 45:10 *You*. Plural, admonishing all the people.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 45:12 See note, Ex 30:13; see also p cx.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 45:13 *you*. Singular, yet contributions from all the people are envisioned (v 16).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 45:15 *make atonement for them*. Though reconciled to God and admitted into fellowship with Him, the redeemed community must plead guilty of committing sins and depend on God's mercy (cf Dt 21:8; Ps 51; Is 44:22; Ac 3:19). See "atonement," p 5.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 45:16 *offering to the prince*. After providing the temple with a peaceful setting, ordinances were issued to regulate the worship services within the holy precincts. The offerings found here do not appear in the Law of Moses. The Lord is commanding something new.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 45:17 *prince's duty to furnish … offerings*. The people were to give an offering for the prince, who in turn was to provide everything needed for the sacrifices. This is not mere taxation; the prince is acting as a mediator for the people. See note, 44:3.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 45:18–20 "The difference between the holy and the common" (44:23) was to be marked by dedicatory rites that would make atonement for the profane nature of a building and render it a sacred dwelling place (cf Lv 14:53).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 45:21–25 Three annual festivals were to be observed. The second of these is identified by name as "the Passover" (v 21). The other two are known in Mosaic legislation as New Year's Day (vv 18–20) and the Feast of Booths (v 25). See note, Ex 23:17; see also pp 200–201.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 45:7–25 God gives the Israelites a prince, not a king; the heavenly Father is Israel's King. The Israelites must present their offerings to the prince (vv 13–16). In the OT, God ordained days and times of worship with ceremonies pointing to the coming Messiah. As NT believers, we have more freedom by God's grace through Christ (Col 2:16–17). In fact, the Lord makes us a living temple (Eph 2:21). • Father, send Your Holy Spirit to work in us a faithful zeal for Your Holy Word and Sacraments. Amen.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 46:1 Presumably, the gate was to prevent unauthorized persons from entering the inner court when the prince was not standing guard in the gate. *six working days*. See notes, Ex 20:8, 11. *on the*

Sabbath day … the new moon. The prince was to provide various offerings also for these minor festivals (Ezk 45:17). On these occasions, he would pass through the gate leading into the inner court but was to stop at the threshold of the sanctuary, which only priests and Levites were allowed to enter.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 46:2 *worship at the threshold*. From this vantage point, he could observe the priests bringing the specified offerings.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 46:3 *bow down*. See p 1276. *at the entrance*. People were to remain in the outer court. In order to keep the assembly orderly, worshipers who entered by the north gate were to leave by the south gate and vice versa. On the six working days, when the prince did not represent the people, he was also to observe this ordinance.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 46:4–8 Describes the prince's offerings for the Sabbath and new-moon sacrifices. Compared with the regulations in Nu 28:29, the prince makes a greater offering. See note, Hos 2:11.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 46:9–10 People would move in and out of the court in a continuous line, providing better flow and crowd control.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 46:11–15 Specifies three things. The first is the size of the grain offering to supplement the animal sacrifices (v 11). Second, there is an exception to the rule laid down in v 1—the east gate is to be opened when the prince provides a freewill offering (i.e., a voluntary gift not required by law; v 12). Also described is the kind of daily offering to be brought "morning by morning" (vv 13–15).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 46:11 *as much as one is able to give*. Could mean the maximum one could offer or a voluntary amount.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 46:12 *freewill offering*. See note, Ex 35:29.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 46:13 *You*. Singular, possibly addressed to the prince or to Ezekiel.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 46:14 *perpetual statute*. A similar expression, "a statute forever," is common in the Books of Moses (Ex 12:14, 17; Lv 3:17; 10:9; 16:29, 31, 34).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 46:16 Only sons of the prince were to inherit gifts of real estate and hold them in perpetuity.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 46:17 As the inheritance of the prince was not to be diminished in size, so it was not to be increased by dispossessing the people and acquiring their property in any kind of transaction. For the abuse of

royal power by Ahab; cf 1Ki 21. *year of liberty*. When servants were to return such grants to the family estate (cf Jer 34:8–17). See p 206.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 46:1–18 God presents Ezekiel with additional ordinances for the prince and for worship. The prince embodied Israel's role in worship, enacting roles of both a priest and a king, as David and Solomon had. What Ezekiel describes anticipates the coming of the greatest Son of David, your Lord Jesus Christ, who hallows your worship and presents your prayers to the heavenly Father. • Lord Jesus, watch over my worship, I earnestly pray. Feed me and nourish me with Your Holy Word. Amen.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 46:20 *priests shall boil*. After Ezekiel learned about the kinds of sacrifices to be offered and the laws governing them, he finally was shown the kitchens (v 24) in which the priests and Levites cooked and baked the offerings. His angelic guide showed him the priests' chambers in the inner court (42:1–12), for the kitchens were located "at the extreme western end of them" (v 19). *transmit holiness*. See note, 44:19.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 46:21–24 Facilities to be manned by Levites for the purpose of preparing sacrifices were provided in the four corners of the outer wall.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 46:23–24 *hearths … kitchens*. See "Animal Sacrifice," p 164.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 46:19–24 Ezekiel's host escorts him to the far west end of the temple complex (v 19). Then the angel guides Ezekiel to the four corners of the outer court. God graciously provides regulations for the distinction between the sacred and the ordinary. Today, the Lord also distinguishes and hallows your life through Holy Baptism, Holy Communion, and the communion of saints. • Lord, make my life sacred in Your sight. Watch over me, I humbly pray, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 47:1 *water was issuing from below the threshold*. Water is the symbol of life-giving blessings flowing in the channels of divine grace (cf Ps 65:9; Is 33:20–21; 43:20; see p 1369). When, as here, it emanates from the temple where the reconciled God resides, it prefigures the restoration to life in the new covenant (cf Jn 4:14; 7:37–38; Eph 2:1–10; Col 2:13–15; Rv 22:1–2). The flow of this water never stops.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 47:2 See diagram, p 1379.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 47:3–6 In its course, it grew in depth and width. Yet it was not fed by tributaries.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 47:8 *Arabah*. Desert land including the area of the Salt Sea and extending southward from it (see note, 1Sm 23:24). *the sea*. The Salt Sea, rightly called because its salt kills vegetation and marine life. The sea could sustain life when the river flowed into it, overcoming its deadly properties. *the water will become fresh*. See note, v 1.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 47:10 *Engedi to Eneglaim*. Two springs. See note, 1Sm 23:29.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 47:11 *swamps and marshes*. Unchanged by the river. *will not become fresh*. Salt was necessary for the sacrifices of the temple (see note, Lv 2:13).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 47:12 Cf 36:33–38. *fresh fruit*. The miraculously increasing supply of water irrigated and fructified ever-widening banks, turning them into a paradise of trees bearing fruit every month. *leaves for healing*. In ancient Israel, various leaves and plants had medicinal uses. Here, God provides a most beneficial cure. Cf Rv 22:14, 19.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 47:1–12 Ezekiel's guide takes him to the inner court, where a stream of water begins flowing, transforming the Salt Sea (cf Rv 22:1–2). God's grace transforms what was dead to bring forth new life. How great is His power! How gentle His kindness toward you. • Precious Lord Jesus, transform me. I find myself dead in sin, but Your grace can make me alive again. Amen.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 47:13–23 God reestablishes the borders of the Promised Land, within which His people will dwell securely (38:11), unhampered in their desire to worship their Redeemer and uncontaminated by foreign influence. The northern limits extended from the Great Sea near Tyre to the vicinity of Damascus, once the capital of Syria. The Jordan and the Salt Sea formed the eastern border (cf Nu 34:3). The latter was also the point marking the southern extremity, which cut across westward to the Brook of Egypt, a stream emptying into the Great Sea, which was the western border. These borders differ somewhat from Israel's earlier borders. See note, Ezk 47:18; see also color maps at the front of the Bible.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 47:13 *Joseph*. Because Levi's inheritance is in the temple area (45:5), the number of the 12 tribes is maintained by allotting a portion to Ephraim and Manasseh, the sons of Joseph blessed by Jacob (Gn 48:20).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 47:15 *Hethlon*. This place, as well as others in this section, remains unidentified. For the entrance of Hamath, see note, 1Ki 8:65.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 47:18 *the land of Israel*. The land beyond the Jordan, where two and a half tribes had been located, was no longer to be a part of restored Israel. The place-names here may indicate Babylonian divisions.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 47:19 *Tamar*. Possibly the Edomite fortress (Mezad Hazeva) in the northern Arabah, near an important crossroad.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 47:21 *divide this land*. Cf ch 48.

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 47:22 *sojourners*. Peoples of heathen ancestry were to have an inheritance among the descendants of Abraham (Lv 19:33–34; Gal 3:7–9). *native-born children*. Naturally part of the holy nation. Luth: "According to the second part of the prophecy and the new covenant, the Jews are no longer Israel, for all things are to be new, and Israel too must become new. Those alone are the true Israel who have accepted the new covenant which was established and begun at Jerusalem. For according to the old covenant I am no Israelite, or Jew. But I claim now that I am the son of St. Paul, and an Israelite or Benjamite. For Paul is my father, not the old Paul but the new Paul. He is still the old Paul, but out of the old Paul there has arisen a new Paul in Christ; and he has begotten me in Christ by the gospel [I Cor. 4:15], so that I am in his likeness according to the new covenant. Thus all the Gentiles who are Christians are the true Israelites and new Jews, born of Christ, the noblest Jew. Everything, therefore, depends upon the new covenant, which the Messiah was to found, making all things new, as he has done" (AE 35:287–88).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON **Ch 48** Two aspects of restoration to God's favor are highlighted: (1) all the redeemed share alike in its privileges and obligations, and (2) the blessings bestowed are a permanent possession. The 12 tribes of Israel and the land they receive for an inheritance foreshadow what is in store for all among whom God is pleased to dwell. The land is divided into parallel strips of equal width and length, in contrast to the division of the land under Joshua, which was based on the sizes of the various tribes (Jsh 14–21). The equal divisions here emphasize that each tribe will have a place among God's people, despite their earlier disobedience and failures (cf Ac 20:32; Col 1:12–14).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 48:8–22 Before listing the inheritances in the south, the holy portion, the allotment for the city, and the property of the prince are described once more (cf 45:7–8).
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 48:10 Cf 45:1–6.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 48:11 See note, 44:11–14.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 48:14 Cf 45:1–6.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 48:18–19 *workers of the city*. The city is not exclusive to the Levites.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 48:23–29 The first territory below this well-defined area (vv 8–22) was assigned to Benjamin. The portions of Simeon, Issachar, Zebulun, and Gad followed in that order, from east to west. The focus in ch 48 is decidedly on Judah; cf 48:1–7. The glorious future has appeared in prophetic vision. The new covenant is described in terms of the old provisions. The immediate future and the more distant scenes of the messianic Kingdom merge in a single panoramic view of God's accomplished salvation to the ends of the earth.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 47:13–48:29 Just as the temple complex symbolized ideal worship and the river symbolized God's blessings flowing to His people, the land apportionment symbolizes God's abundant grace. Each tribe is welcomed back. In the new covenant, God has reconciled every person to Himself—including you. The blood that flowed from Christ's hands, feet, and riven side supply life to all who believe. • Father, I know that many still do not believe in Your Son. Use me to carry this message of salvation to all. Amen.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 48:30–35 As all the tribes receive a portion of land, so they all have access to the holy city—through four gates, each of which is assigned to three tribes. The city is not an earthly Jerusalem. Revered and worshiped in His sanctuary, God's presence will also hallow the labors and lives of all redeemed, reconciled sinners.
EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 48:35 *The Lord Is There*. Reconciled with God and declared a communion of saints, the former servants of sin bring to their Redeemer the sacrifices of praise and a sanctified life. They need not worry that the supply of royal gifts will give out, for they flow from the throne of grace in streams that grow in abundance. Nor will there ever be a moment when the gracious, protecting presence of the Shepherd/King in His flock will be in doubt, for it will always be true that "The Lord Is There" (cf 34:23–24; Rv 21:2, 4; see "be with," p 5). Luth: "This everlasting kingdom,

however, contains in addition such immeasurable, glorious blessings as forgiveness of sins, peace with God, security against everlasting death and all evil, communion with the Divine Majesty and with all angels and saints, joy and pleasure in the whole creation, even in a physical sense. For this same body, which is now the old body, shall also become new, together with the whole creation, as the soul has already begun to become new in faith" (AE 35:290).

EZEKIEL—NOTE ON 48:30–35 The idealized promised land is the prophetic symbol of a place in time in which the type of worship described previously will be possible. This is the era of the Holy Christian Church and of heaven; the place is the redeemed, restored community of saints, gathered from every nation and race on the earth. "The LORD Is There" (v 35) symbolizes what God has done for you through Jesus Christ. He has become your God. Through the forgiveness of sins, He dwells with you forever. God keeps His covenant! • Lord, You are faithful. Your mercy grants me eternal life through the blood of Christ Jesus, my Lord. Amen.

Articles and Resources

Ezekiel

- God’s Throne
- Humor and Comedy in the Bible
- New Life through Baptism
- The Final Battle and the Defeat of Gog

Daniel

Daniel 1 | Daniel 2 | Daniel 3 | Daniel 4 | Daniel 5 | Daniel 6 | Daniel 7 | Daniel 8 | Daniel 9 | Daniel 10 | Daniel 11 | Daniel 12

- Introduction to Daniel
  - Overview
  - Reading Daniel
  - Luther on Daniel
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

Daniel Taken to Babylon

1 [1] In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. [2] And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with some of the vessels of the house of God. And he brought them to the land of Shinar, to the house of his god, and placed the vessels in the treasury of his god. [3] Then the king commanded Ashpenaz, his chief eunuch, to bring some of the people of Israel, both of the royal family[1] and of the nobility, [4] youths without blemish, of good appearance and skillful in all wisdom, endowed with knowledge, understanding learning, and competent to stand in the king's palace, and to teach them the literature and language of the Chaldeans. [5] The king assigned them a daily portion of the food that the king ate, and of the wine that he drank. They were to be educated for three years, and at the end of that time they were to stand before the king. [6] Among these were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah of the tribe of Judah. [7] And the chief of the eunuchs gave them names: Daniel he called Belteshazzar, Hananiah he called Shadrach, Mishael he called Meshach, and Azariah he called Abednego.

Daniel’s Faithfulness

8 ‡ †But Daniel resolved that he would not defile himself with the king’s
food, or with the wine that he drank. Therefore he asked the chief of the
eunuchs to allow him not to defile himself. 9 †And God gave Daniel favor
and compassion in the sight of the chief of the eunuchs, 10 †and the chief of
the eunuchs said to Daniel, “I fear my lord the king, who assigned your
food and your drink; for why should he see that you were in worse
condition than the youths who are of your own age? So you would endanger
my head with the king.” 11 †Then Daniel said to the steward whom the chief
of the eunuchs had assigned over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah,
12 † “Test your servants for ten days; let us be given vegetables to eat and
water to drink. 13 Then let our appearance and the appearance of the youths
who eat the king’s food be observed by you, and deal with your servants
according to what you see.” 14 So he listened to them in this matter, and
tested them for ten days. 15 †At the end of ten days it was seen that they were
better in appearance and fatter in flesh than all the youths who ate the king’s
food. 16 So the steward took away their food and the wine they were to drink,
and gave them vegetables.

17 † As for these four youths, God gave them learning and skill in all
literature and wisdom, and Daniel had understanding in all visions and
dreams. 18 †At the end of the time, when the king had commanded that they
should be brought in, the chief of the eunuchs brought them in before
Nebuchadnezzar. 19 †And the king spoke with them, and among all of them
none was found like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. Therefore
they stood before the king. 20 † And in every matter of wisdom and
understanding about which the king inquired of them, he found them ten
times better than all the magicians and enchanters that were in all his
kingdom. 21 †And Daniel was there until the first year of King Cyrus.

Nebuchadnezzar’s Dream

2 [1] In the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar,
Nebuchadnezzar had dreams; his spirit was troubled, and his sleep left him.
[2] Then the king commanded that the magicians, the enchanters, the
sorcerers, and the Chaldeans be summoned to tell the king his dreams. So
they came in and stood before the king. [3]And the king said to them, “I had a
dream, and my spirit is troubled to know the dream.” [4]Then the Chaldeans
said to the king in Aramaic,[1] “O king, live forever! Tell your servants the
dream, and we will show the interpretation.” [5]The king answered and said
to the Chaldeans, “The word from me is firm: if you do not make known to
me the dream and its interpretation, you shall be torn limb from limb, and
your houses shall be laid in ruins. [6]But if you show the dream and its
interpretation, you shall receive from me gifts and rewards and great honor.
Therefore show me the dream and its interpretation.” [7]They answered a
second time and said, “Let the king tell his servants the dream, and we will
show its interpretation.” [8] The king answered and said, “I know with
certainty that you are trying to gain time, because you see that the word
from me is firm— [9]if you do not make the dream known to me, there is
but one sentence for you. You have agreed to speak lying and corrupt words
before me till the times change. Therefore tell me the dream, and I shall
know that you can show me its interpretation.” [10]The Chaldeans answered
the king and said, “There is not a man on earth who can meet the king’s
demand, for no great and powerful king has asked such a thing of any
magician or enchanter or Chaldean. [11] The thing that the king asks is
difficult, and no one can show it to the king except the gods, whose
dwelling is not with flesh.”

[12]Because of this the king was angry and very furious, and commanded
that all the wise men of Babylon be destroyed. [13]So the decree went out,
and the wise men were about to be killed; and they sought Daniel and his
companions, to kill them. [14] Then Daniel replied with prudence and
discretion to Arioch, the captain of the king’s guard, who had gone out to
kill the wise men of Babylon. [15]He declared[1] to Arioch, the king’s captain,

“Why is the decree of the king so urgent?” Then Arioch made the matter known to Daniel. [16]† And Daniel went in and requested the king to appoint him a time, that he might show the interpretation to the king.

God Reveals Nebuchadnezzar's Dream

17 † Then Daniel went to his house and made the matter known to
Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions, 18 †and told them to seek
mercy from the God of heaven concerning this mystery, so that Daniel and
his companions might not be destroyed with the rest of the wise men of
Babylon. 19 † Then the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a vision of the
night. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven. 20 †Daniel answered and said:

"Blessed be the name of God forever and
ever,
to whom belong wisdom and might.
21 † He changes times and seasons;
he removes kings and sets up kings;
he gives wisdom to the wise
and knowledge to those who have
understanding;
22 † he reveals deep and hidden things;
he knows what is in the darkness,
and the light dwells with him.
23 To you, O God of my fathers,
I give thanks and praise,
for you have given me wisdom and might,
and have now made known to me what we
asked of you,
for you have made known to us the king's
matter."

24 †Therefore Daniel went in to Arioch, whom the king had appointed to
destroy the wise men of Babylon. He went and said thus to him: "Do not
destroy the wise men of Babylon; bring me in before the king, and I will
show the king the interpretation."
25 †Then Arioch brought in Daniel before the king in haste and said thus
to him: "I have found among the exiles from Judah a man who will make
known to the king the interpretation." 26 The king declared to Daniel, whose

name was Belteshazzar, “Are you able to make known to me the dream that
I have seen and its interpretation?” [27]Daniel answered the king and said,
“No wise men, enchanters, magicians, or astrologers can show to the king
the mystery that the king has asked, [28]† but there is a God in heaven who
reveals mysteries, and he has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what
will be in the latter days. Your dream and the visions of your head as you
lay in bed are these: [29]To you, O king, as you lay in bed came thoughts of
what would be after this, and he who reveals mysteries made known to you
what is to be. [30]† But as for me, this mystery has been revealed to me, not
because of any wisdom that I have more than all the living, but in order that
the interpretation may be made known to the king, and that you may know
the thoughts of your mind.

Daniel Interprets the Dream

31 “You saw, O king, and behold, a great image. This image, mighty and
of exceeding brightness, stood before you, and its appearance was
frightening. 32 The head of this image was of fine gold, its chest and arms
of silver, its middle and thighs of bronze, 33 its legs of iron, its feet partly of
iron and partly of clay. 34 As you looked, a stone was cut out by no human
hand, and it struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in
pieces. 35 Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold, all
together were broken in pieces, and became like the chaff of the summer
threshing floors; and the wind carried them away, so that not a trace of them
could be found. But the stone that struck the image became a great
mountain and filled the whole earth.

36 “This was the dream. Now we will tell the king its interpretation.
37 You, O king, the king of kings, to whom the God of heaven has given the
kingdom, the power, and the might, and the glory, 38 and into whose hand
he has given, wherever they dwell, the children of man, the beasts of the
field, and the birds of the heavens, making you rule over them all—you are
the head of gold. 39 Another kingdom inferior to you shall arise after you,
and yet a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth. 40 And
there shall be a fourth kingdom, strong as iron, because iron breaks to
pieces and shatters all things. And like iron that crushes, it shall break and
crush all these. 41 And as you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter’s clay
and partly of iron, it shall be a divided kingdom, but some of the firmness
of iron shall be in it, just as you saw iron mixed with the soft clay. 42 And as
the toes of the feet were partly iron and partly clay, so the kingdom shall be
partly strong and partly brittle. 43 As you saw the iron mixed with soft clay,
so they will mix with one another in marriage,[1] but they will not hold
together, just as iron does not mix with clay. 44 And in the days of those
kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be
destroyed, nor shall the kingdom be left to another people. It shall break in
pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand
forever, 45 just as you saw that a stone was cut from a mountain by no
human hand, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the

silver, and the gold. A great God has made known to the king what shall be after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation sure."

Daniel Is Promoted

46 ‡ † Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face and paid homage to
Daniel, and commanded that an offering and incense be offered up to him.
47 † The king answered and said to Daniel, “Truly, your God is God of gods
and Lord of kings, and a revealer of mysteries, for you have been able to
reveal this mystery.” 48 † Then the king gave Daniel high honors and many
great gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon and
chief prefect over all the wise men of Babylon. 49 † Daniel made a request of
the king, and he appointed Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego over the
affairs of the province of Babylon. But Daniel remained at the king’s court.

Nebuchadnezzar’s Golden Image

3 [1]†King Nebuchadnezzar made an image of gold, whose height was sixty cubits[1] and its breadth six cubits. He set it up on the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon. [2]†Then King Nebuchadnezzar sent to gather the satraps, the prefects, and the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the justices, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces to come to the dedication of the image that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up. [3]Then the satraps, the prefects, and the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the justices, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces gathered for the dedication of the image that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up. And they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up. [4]†And the herald proclaimed aloud, “You are commanded, O peoples, nations, and languages, [5]†that when you hear the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, bagpipe, and every kind of music, you are to fall down and worship the golden image that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up. [6]†And whoever does not fall down and worship shall immediately be cast into a burning fiery furnace.” [7]Therefore, as soon as all the peoples heard the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, bagpipe, and every kind of music, all the peoples, nations, and languages fell down and worshiped the golden image that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

The Fiery Furnace

8 ‡ † Therefore at that time certain Chaldeans came forward and
maliciously accused the Jews. 9They declared[2] to King Nebuchadnezzar,
“O king, live forever! 10You, O king, have made a decree, that every man
who hears the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, bagpipe, and every
kind of music, shall fall down and worship the golden image. 11And
whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast into a burning fiery
furnace. 12 † There are certain Jews whom you have appointed over the
affairs of the province of Babylon: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.
These men, O king, pay no attention to you; they do not serve your gods or
worship the golden image that you have set up.”
13 † Then Nebuchadnezzar in furious rage commanded that Shadrach,
Meshach, and Abednego be brought. So they brought these men before the
king. 14Nebuchadnezzar answered and said to them, “Is it true, O Shadrach,
Meshach, and Abednego, that you do not serve my gods or worship the
golden image that I have set up? 15†Now if you are ready when you hear the
sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, bagpipe, and every kind of
music, to fall down and worship the image that I have made, well and good.
[1] But if you do not worship, you shall immediately be cast into a burning
fiery furnace. And who is the god who will deliver you out of my hands?”
16†Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered and said to the king, “O
Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. 17†If this be
so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery
furnace, and he will deliver us out of your hand, O king.[2] 18†But if not, be
it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the
golden image that you have set up.”
19†Then Nebuchadnezzar was filled with fury, and the expression of his
face was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. He ordered
the furnace heated seven times more than it was usually heated. 20†And he
ordered some of the mighty men of his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach,
and Abednego, and to cast them into the burning fiery furnace. 21 † Then
these men were bound in their cloaks, their tunics,[3] their hats, and their
other garments, and they were thrown into the burning fiery furnace.

[22] † Because the king's order was urgent and the furnace overheated, the flame of the fire killed those men who took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. [23] † And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell bound into the burning fiery furnace.

[24] † Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished and rose up in haste. He declared to his counselors, "Did we not cast three men bound into the fire?" They answered and said to the king, "True, O king." [25] † He answered and said, "But I see four men unbound, walking in the midst of the fire, and they are not hurt; and the appearance of the fourth is like a son of the gods."

[26] † Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the door of the burning fiery furnace; he declared, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out, and come here!" Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego came out from the fire. [27] † And the satraps, the prefects, the governors, and the king's counselors gathered together and saw that the fire had not had any power over the bodies of those men. The hair of their heads was not singed, their cloaks were not harmed, and no smell of fire had come upon them. [28] † Nebuchadnezzar answered and said, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who has sent his angel and delivered his servants, who trusted in him, and set aside[1] the king's command, and yielded up their bodies rather than serve and worship any god except their own God. [29] † Therefore I make a decree: Any people, nation, or language that speaks anything against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego shall be torn limb from limb, and their houses laid in ruins, for there is no other god who is able to rescue in this way." [30] † Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the province of Babylon.

Nebuchadnezzar Praises God

4 [1] ‡ † [2] King Nebuchadnezzar to all peoples, nations, and languages,
that dwell in all the earth: Peace be multiplied to you! [2] † It has seemed good
to me to show the signs and wonders that the Most High God has done for
me.

[3] † How great are his signs,
how mighty his wonders!
His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,
and his dominion endures from generation
to generation.

Nebuchadnezzar’s Second Dream

4 I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at ease in my house and prospering in my
palace. 5 I saw a dream that made me afraid. As I lay in bed the fancies and
the visions of my head alarmed me. 6 So I made a decree that all the wise
men of Babylon should be brought before me, that they might make known
to me the interpretation of the dream. 7 Then the magicians, the enchanters,
the Chaldeans, and the astrologers came in, and I told them the dream, but
they could not make known to me its interpretation. 8 At last Daniel came
in before me—he who was named Belteshazzar after the name of my god,
and in whom is the spirit of the holy gods[4]—and I told him the dream,
saying, 9 “O Belteshazzar, chief of the magicians, because I know that the
spirit of the holy gods is in you and that no mystery is too difficult for you,
tell me the visions of my dream that I saw and their interpretation. 10 The
visions of my head as I lay in bed were these: I saw, and behold, a tree in
the midst of the earth, and its height was great. 11 The tree grew and became
strong, and its top reached to heaven, and it was visible to the end of the
whole earth. 12 Its leaves were beautiful and its fruit abundant, and in it was
food for all. The beasts of the field found shade under it, and the birds of the
heavens lived in its branches, and all flesh was fed from it.

13 “I saw in the visions of my head as I lay in bed, and behold, a watcher,
a holy one, came down from heaven. 14 He proclaimed aloud and said thus:
‘Chop down the tree and lop off its branches, strip off its leaves and scatter
its fruit. Let the beasts flee from under it and the birds from its branches.
15 But leave the stump of its roots in the earth, bound with a band of iron
and bronze, amid the tender grass of the field. Let him be wet with the dew
of heaven. Let his portion be with the beasts in the grass of the earth. 16 Let
his mind be changed from a man’s, and let a beast’s mind be given to him;
and let seven periods of time pass over him. 17 The sentence is by the
decree of the watchers, the decision by the word of the holy ones, to the end
that the living may know that the Most High rules the kingdom of men and
gives it to whom he will and sets over it the lowliest of men.’ 18 This dream
I, King Nebuchadnezzar, saw. And you, O Belteshazzar, tell me the
interpretation, because all the wise men of my kingdom are not able to

make known to me the interpretation, but you are able, for the spirit of the holy gods is in you."

Daniel Interprets the Second Dream

19 ‡ † Then Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, was dismayed for a
while, and his thoughts alarmed him. The king answered and said,
“Belteshazzar, let not the dream or the interpretation alarm you.”
Belteshazzar answered and said, “My lord, may the dream be for those who
hate you and its interpretation for your enemies! 20 The tree you saw, which
grew and became strong, so that its top reached to heaven, and it was
visible to the end of the whole earth, 21 † whose leaves were beautiful and its
fruit abundant, and in which was food for all, under which beasts of the
field found shade, and in whose branches the birds of the heavens lived—
22 † it is you, O king, who have grown and become strong. Your greatness has
grown and reaches to heaven, and your dominion to the ends of the earth.
23 † And because the king saw a watcher, a holy one, coming down from
heaven and saying, ‘Chop down the tree and destroy it, but leave the stump
of its roots in the earth, bound with a band of iron and bronze, in the tender
grass of the field, and let him be wet with the dew of heaven, and let his
portion be with the beasts of the field, till seven periods of time pass over
him,’ 24 this is the interpretation, O king: It is a decree of the Most High,
which has come upon my lord the king, 25 † that you shall be driven from
among men, and your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field. You
shall be made to eat grass like an ox, and you shall be wet with the dew of
heaven, and seven periods of time shall pass over you, till you know that
the Most High rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom he will.
26 And as it was commanded to leave the stump of the roots of the tree, your
kingdom shall be confirmed for you from the time that you know that
Heaven rules. 27 † Therefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable to you:
break off your sins by practicing righteousness, and your iniquities by
showing mercy to the oppressed, that there may perhaps be a lengthening of
your prosperity.”

Nebuchadnezzar’s Humiliation

28 All this came upon King Nebuchadnezzar. 29 At the end of twelve
months he was walking on the roof of the royal palace of Babylon, 30 and
the king answered and said, “Is not this great Babylon, which I have built
by my mighty power as a royal residence and for the glory of my majesty?”
31 While the words were still in the king’s mouth, there fell a voice from
heaven, “O King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken: The kingdom has
departed from you, 32 and you shall be driven from among men, and your
dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field. And you shall be made to eat
grass like an ox, and seven periods of time shall pass over you, until you
know that the Most High rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom he
will.” 33 Immediately the word was fulfilled against Nebuchadnezzar. He
was driven from among men and ate grass like an ox, and his body was wet
with the dew of heaven till his hair grew as long as eagles’ feathers, and his
nails were like birds’ claws.

Nebuchadnezzar Restored

34 ‡† At the end of the days I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven,
and my reason returned to me, and I blessed the Most High, and praised and
honored him who lives forever,

for his dominion is an everlasting dominion,
and his kingdom endures from generation
to generation;
35 † all the inhabitants of the earth are accounted
as nothing,
and he does according to his will among the
host of heaven
and among the inhabitants of the earth;
and none can stay his hand
or say to him, “What have you done?”

36 † At the same time my reason returned to me, and for the glory of my
kingdom, my majesty and splendor returned to me. My counselors and my
lords sought me, and I was established in my kingdom, and still more
greatness was added to me. 37 †Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and
honor the King of heaven, for all his works are right and his ways are just;
and those who walk in pride he is able to humble.

The Handwriting on the Wall

5 [1] ‡ †King Belshazzar made a great feast for a thousand of his lords
and drank wine in front of the thousand.
[2] † Belshazzar, when he tasted the wine, commanded that the vessels of
gold and of silver that Nebuchadnezzar his father[1] had taken out of the
temple in Jerusalem be brought, that the king and his lords, his wives, and
his concubines might drink from them. [3]Then they brought in the golden
vessels that had been taken out of the temple, the house of God in
Jerusalem, and the king and his lords, his wives, and his concubines drank
from them. [4] † They drank wine and praised the gods of gold and silver,
bronze, iron, wood, and stone.
[5] † Immediately the fingers of a human hand appeared and wrote on the
plaster of the wall of the king's palace, opposite the lampstand. And the
king saw the hand as it wrote. [6] † Then the king's color changed, and his
thoughts alarmed him; his limbs gave way, and his knees knocked together.
[7] † The king called loudly to bring in the enchanters, the Chaldeans, and the
astrologers. The king declared[2] to the wise men of Babylon, "Whoever
reads this writing, and shows me its interpretation, shall be clothed with
purple and have a chain of gold around his neck and shall be the third ruler
in the kingdom." [8] † Then all the king's wise men came in, but they could not
read the writing or make known to the king the interpretation. [9] † Then King
Belshazzar was greatly alarmed, and his color changed, and his lords were
perplexed.
[10] † The queen,[3] because of the words of the king and his lords, came into
the banqueting hall, and the queen declared, "O king, live forever! Let not
your thoughts alarm you or your color change. [11] † There is a man in your
kingdom in whom is the spirit of the holy gods.[4] In the days of your father,
light and understanding and wisdom like the wisdom of the gods were
found in him, and King Nebuchadnezzar, your father—your father the king
—made him chief of the magicians, enchanters, Chaldeans, and astrologers,
[12] † because an excellent spirit, knowledge, and understanding to interpret
dreams, explain riddles, and solve problems were found in this Daniel,

whom the king named Belteshazzar. Now let Daniel be called, and he will show the interpretation."

Daniel Interprets the Handwriting

13 ‡† Then Daniel was brought in before the king. The king answered and
said to Daniel, “You are that Daniel, one of the exiles of Judah, whom the
king my father brought from Judah. 14 † I have heard of you that the spirit of
the gods[5] is in you, and that light and understanding and excellent wisdom
are found in you. 15 † Now the wise men, the enchanters, have been brought
in before me to read this writing and make known to me its interpretation,
but they could not show the interpretation of the matter. 16 But I have heard
that you can give interpretations and solve problems. Now if you can read
the writing and make known to me its interpretation, you shall be clothed
with purple and have a chain of gold around your neck and shall be the third
ruler in the kingdom.”

17 † Then Daniel answered and said before the king, “Let your gifts be for
yourself, and give your rewards to another. Nevertheless, I will read the
writing to the king and make known to him the interpretation. 18 † O king, the
Most High God gave Nebuchadnezzar your father kingship and greatness
and glory and majesty. 19 † And because of the greatness that he gave him, all
peoples, nations, and languages trembled and feared before him. Whom he
would, he killed, and whom he would, he kept alive; whom he would, he
raised up, and whom he would, he humbled. 20 † But when his heart was
lifted up and his spirit was hardened so that he dealt proudly, he was
brought down from his kingly throne, and his glory was taken from him.
21 † He was driven from among the children of mankind, and his mind was
made like that of a beast, and his dwelling was with the wild donkeys. He
was fed grass like an ox, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven,
until he knew that the Most High God rules the kingdom of mankind and
sets over it whom he will. 22 † And you his son,[1] Belshazzar, have not
humbled your heart, though you knew all this, 23 † but you have lifted up
yourself against the Lord of heaven. And the vessels of his house have been
brought in before you, and you and your lords, your wives, and your
concubines have drunk wine from them. And you have praised the gods of
silver and gold, of bronze, iron, wood, and stone, which do not see or hear

or know, but the God in whose hand is your breath, and whose are all your ways, you have not honored.

24“Then from his presence the hand was sent, and this writing was inscribed. 25‡And this is the writing that was inscribed: Mene, Mene, Tekel, and Parsin. 26This is the interpretation of the matter: Mene, God has numbered[2] the days of your kingdom and brought it to an end; 27Tekel, you have been weighed[3] in the balances and found wanting; 28Peres, your kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians.”[4]

29† Then Belshazzar gave the command, and Daniel was clothed with purple, a chain of gold was put around his neck, and a proclamation was made about him, that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom.

30† That very night Belshazzar the Chaldean king was killed. 31† [5] And Darius the Mede received the kingdom, being about sixty-two years old.

Daniel and the Lions' Den

6 [1] †It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom 120 satraps, to be throughout the whole kingdom; [2] †and over them three presidents, of whom Daniel was one, to whom these satraps should give account, so that the king might suffer no loss. [3] †Then this Daniel became distinguished above all the other presidents and satraps, because an excellent spirit was in him. And the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom. [4] †Then the presidents and the satraps sought to find a ground for complaint against Daniel with regard to the kingdom, but they could find no ground for complaint or any fault, because he was faithful, and no error or fault was found in him. [5] †Then these men said, "We shall not find any ground for complaint against this Daniel unless we find it in connection with the law of his God."

[6] †Then these presidents and satraps came by agreement[1] to the king and said to him, "O King Darius, live forever! [7] †All the presidents of the kingdom, the prefects and the satraps, the counselors and the governors are agreed that the king should establish an ordinance and enforce an injunction, that whoever makes petition to any god or man for thirty days, except to you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions. [8] †Now, O king, establish the injunction and sign the document, so that it cannot be changed, according to the law of the Medes and the Persians, which cannot be revoked." [9] Therefore King Darius signed the document and injunction.

[10] †When Daniel knew that the document had been signed, he went to his house where he had windows in his upper chamber open toward Jerusalem. He got down on his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as he had done previously. [11] †Then these men came by agreement and found Daniel making petition and plea before his God. [12] Then they came near and said before the king, concerning the injunction, "O king! Did you not sign an injunction, that anyone who makes petition to any god or man within thirty days except to you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions?" The king answered and said, "The thing stands fast, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be revoked." [13] Then they answered and said before the king, "Daniel, who is one of the

exiles from Judah, pays no attention to you, O king, or the injunction you have signed, but makes his petition three times a day."

14 †Then the king, when he heard these words, was much distressed and set his mind to deliver Daniel. And he labored till the sun went down to rescue him. 15Then these men came by agreement to the king and said to the king, "Know, O king, that it is a law of the Medes and Persians that no injunction or ordinance that the king establishes can be changed."

16 †Then the king commanded, and Daniel was brought and cast into the den of lions. The king declared[2] to Daniel, "May your God, whom you serve continually, deliver you!" 17 †And a stone was brought and laid on the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet and with the signet of his lords, that nothing might be changed concerning Daniel. 18 † Then the king went to his palace and spent the night fasting; no diversions were brought to him, and sleep fled from him.

19Then, at break of day, the king arose and went in haste to the den of lions. 20 †As he came near to the den where Daniel was, he cried out in a tone of anguish. The king declared to Daniel, "O Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to deliver you from the lions?" 21 †Then Daniel said to the king, "O king, live forever! 22 †My God sent his angel and shut the lions' mouths, and they have not harmed me, because I was found blameless before him; and also before you, O king, I have done no harm." 23 †Then the king was exceedingly glad, and commanded that Daniel be taken up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no kind of harm was found on him, because he had trusted in his God. 24 †And the king commanded, and those men who had maliciously accused Daniel were brought and cast into the den of lions —they, their children, and their wives. And before they reached the bottom of the den, the lions overpowered them and broke all their bones in pieces.

25Then King Darius wrote to all the peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth: "Peace be multiplied to you. 26 †I make a decree, that in all my royal dominion people are to tremble and fear before the God of Daniel,

for he is the living God,
enduring forever;
his kingdom shall never be destroyed,

and his dominion shall be to the end.
27† He delivers and rescues;
he works signs and wonders
in heaven and on earth,
he who has saved Daniel
from the power of the lions.”

28†So this Daniel prospered during the reign of Darius and the reign of Cyrus the Persian.

Daniel’s Vision of the Four Beasts

7 [1] ‡ † In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon, Daniel saw a
dream and visions of his head as he lay in his bed. Then he wrote down the
dream and told the sum of the matter. [2] † Daniel declared,[1] “I saw in my
vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the
great sea. [3] ‡ And four great beasts came up out of the sea, different from one
another. [4] The first was like a lion and had eagles’ wings. Then as I looked
its wings were plucked off, and it was lifted up from the ground and made
to stand on two feet like a man, and the mind of a man was given to it. [5] And
behold, another beast, a second one, like a bear. It was raised up on one
side. It had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth; and it was told, ‘Arise,
devour much flesh.’ [6] † After this I looked, and behold, another, like a
leopard, with four wings of a bird on its back. And the beast had four heads,
and dominion was given to it. [7] † After this I saw in the night visions, and
behold, a fourth beast, terrifying and dreadful and exceedingly strong. It
had great iron teeth; it devoured and broke in pieces and stamped what was
left with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that were before it, and
it had ten horns. [8] † I considered the horns, and behold, there came up among
them another horn, a little one, before which three of the first horns were
plucked up by the roots. And behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of
a man, and a mouth speaking great things.

The Ancient of Days Reigns

9 ‡‡‡“As I looked,

thrones were placed,
and the Ancient of Days took his seat;
his clothing was white as snow,
and the hair of his head like pure
wool;
his throne was fiery flames;
its wheels were burning fire.
10 ‡ A stream of fire issued
and came out from before him;
a thousand thousands served him,
and ten thousand times ten thousand stood
before him;
the court sat in judgment,
and the books were opened.

11 ‡“I looked then because of the sound of the great words that the horn was speaking. And as I looked, the beast was killed, and its body destroyed and given over to be burned with fire. 12 ‡As for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away, but their lives were prolonged for a season and a time.

The Son of Man Is Given Dominion

13 “I saw in the night visions,

and behold, with the clouds of heaven
there came one like a son of man,
and he came to the Ancient of Days
and was presented before him.
14 And to him was given dominion
and glory and a kingdom,
that all peoples, nations, and languages
should serve him;
his dominion is an everlasting
dominion,
which shall not pass away,
and his kingdom one
that shall not be destroyed.

Daniel's Vision Interpreted

15 ‡ ‡ "As for me, Daniel, my spirit within me[1] was anxious, and the
visions of my head alarmed me. 16 ‡ I approached one of those who stood
there and asked him the truth concerning all this. So he told me and made
known to me the interpretation of the things. 17 ‡ 'These four great beasts are
four kings who shall arise out of the earth. 18 ‡ But the saints of the Most
High shall receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever, forever
and ever.'

19 ‡ "Then I desired to know the truth about the fourth beast, which was
different from all the rest, exceedingly terrifying, with its teeth of iron and
claws of bronze, and which devoured and broke in pieces and stamped what
was left with its feet, 20 ‡ and about the ten horns that were on its head, and
the other horn that came up and before which three of them fell, the horn
that had eyes and a mouth that spoke great things, and that seemed greater
than its companions. 21 ‡ As I looked, this horn made war with the saints and
prevailed over them, 22 ‡ until the Ancient of Days came, and judgment was
given for the saints of the Most High, and the time came when the saints
possessed the kingdom.

23 ‡ "Thus he said: 'As for the fourth beast,

there shall be a fourth kingdom on earth,
which shall be different from all the
kingdoms,
and it shall devour the whole earth,
and trample it down, and break it to pieces.
24 ‡ As for the ten horns,
out of this kingdom ten kings shall arise,
and another shall arise after them;
he shall be different from the former ones,
and shall put down three kings.
25 ‡ He shall speak words against the Most High,
and shall wear out the saints of the Most
High,

and shall think to change the times and the
law;
and they shall be given into his hand
for a time, times, and half a time.
26 But the court shall sit in judgment,
and his dominion shall be taken away,
to be consumed and destroyed to the end.
27 And the kingdom and the dominion
and the greatness of the kingdoms under the
whole heaven
shall be given to the people of the saints of
the Most High;
their kingdom shall be an everlasting
kingdom,
and all dominions shall serve and obey
them.'[1]

28 "Here is the end of the matter. As for me, Daniel, my thoughts greatly alarmed me, and my color changed, but I kept the matter in my heart."

Daniel’s Vision of the Ram and the Goat

8 [1] In the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar a vision
appeared to me, Daniel, after that which appeared to me at the first. [2] And I
saw in the vision; and when I saw, I was in Susa the capital,[1] which is in
the province of Elam. And I saw in the vision, and I was at the Ulai canal.
[3] I raised my eyes and saw, and behold, a ram standing on the bank of the
canal. It had two horns, and both horns were high, but one was higher than
the other, and the higher one came up last. [4] I saw the ram charging
westward and northward and southward. No beast could stand before him,
and there was no one who could rescue from his power. He did as he
pleased and became great.

[5] As I was considering, behold, a male goat came from the west across
the face of the whole earth, without touching the ground. And the goat had a
conspicuous horn between his eyes. [6] He came to the ram with the two
horns, which I had seen standing on the bank of the canal, and he ran at him
in his powerful wrath. [7] I saw him come close to the ram, and he was
enraged against him and struck the ram and broke his two horns. And the
ram had no power to stand before him, but he cast him down to the ground
and trampled on him. And there was no one who could rescue the ram from
his power. [8] Then the goat became exceedingly great, but when he was
strong, the great horn was broken, and instead of it there came up four
conspicuous horns toward the four winds of heaven.

[9] Out of one of them came a little horn, which grew exceedingly great
toward the south, toward the east, and toward the glorious land. [10] It grew
great, even to the host of heaven. And some of the host and some[2] of the
stars it threw down to the ground and trampled on them. [11] It became great,
even as great as the Prince of the host. And the regular burnt offering was
taken away from him, and the place of his sanctuary was overthrown.
[12] And a host will be given over to it together with the regular burnt
offering because of transgression,[3] and it will throw truth to the ground,
and it will act and prosper. [13] Then I heard a holy one speaking, and another
holy one said to the one who spoke, “For how long is the vision concerning

the regular burnt offering, the transgression that makes desolate, and the giving over of the sanctuary and host to be trampled underfoot?” 14 † And he said to me,[4] “For 2,300 evenings and mornings. Then the sanctuary shall be restored to its rightful state.”

The Interpretation of the Vision

15 ‡ † When I, Daniel, had seen the vision, I sought to understand it. And
behold, there stood before me one having the appearance of a man. 16 † And I
heard a man's voice between the banks of the Ulai, and it called, "Gabriel,
make this man understand the vision." 17 † So he came near where I stood.
And when he came, I was frightened and fell on my face. But he said to me,
"Understand, O son of man, that the vision is for the time of the end."

18 † And when he had spoken to me, I fell into a deep sleep with my face
to the ground. But he touched me and made me stand up. 19 † He said,
"Behold, I will make known to you what shall be at the latter end of the
indignation, for it refers to the appointed time of the end. 20 ‡ As for the ram
that you saw with the two horns, these are the kings of Media and Persia.
21 † And the goat[1] is the king of Greece. And the great horn between his eyes
is the first king. 22 † As for the horn that was broken, in place of which four
others arose, four kingdoms shall arise from his[2] nation, but not with his
power. 23 † And at the latter end of their kingdom, when the transgressors
have reached their limit, a king of bold face, one who understands riddles,
shall arise. 24 † His power shall be great—but not by his own power; and he
shall cause fearful destruction and shall succeed in what he does, and
destroy mighty men and the people who are the saints. 25 † By his cunning he
shall make deceit prosper under his hand, and in his own mind he shall
become great. Without warning he shall destroy many. And he shall even
rise up against the Prince of princes, and he shall be broken—but by no
human hand. 26 † The vision of the evenings and the mornings that has been
told is true, but seal up the vision, for it refers to many days from now."

27 † And I, Daniel, was overcome and lay sick for some days. Then I rose
and went about the king's business, but I was appalled by the vision and did
not understand it.

Daniel’s Prayer for His People

9 [1] In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, by descent a Mede, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans— [2] in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, perceived in the books the number of years that, according to the word of the Lord to Jeremiah the prophet, must pass before the end of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years.

[3] Then I turned my face to the Lord God, seeking him by prayer and pleas for mercy with fasting and sackcloth and ashes. [4] I prayed to the Lord my God and made confession, saying, “O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, [5] we have sinned and done wrong and acted wickedly and rebelled, turning aside from your commandments and rules. [6] We have not listened to your servants the prophets, who spoke in your name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land. [7] To you, O Lord, belongs righteousness, but to us open shame, as at this day, to the men of Judah, to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to all Israel, those who are near and those who are far away, in all the lands to which you have driven them, because of the treachery that they have committed against you. [8] To us, O Lord, belongs open shame, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against you. [9] To the Lord our God belong mercy and forgiveness, for we have rebelled against him [10] and have not obeyed the voice of the Lord our God by walking in his laws, which he set before us by his servants the prophets. [11] All Israel has transgressed your law and turned aside, refusing to obey your voice. And the curse and oath that are written in the Law of Moses the servant of God have been poured out upon us, because we have sinned against him. [12] He has confirmed his words, which he spoke against us and against our rulers who ruled us,[1] by bringing upon us a great calamity. For under the whole heaven there has not been done anything like what has been done against Jerusalem. [13] As it is written in the Law of Moses, all this calamity has come upon us; yet we have not entreated the favor of the Lord our God, turning from our iniquities and gaining insight by your truth.

14 †Therefore the Lord has kept ready the calamity and has brought it upon
us, for the Lord our God is righteous in all the works that he has done, and
we have not obeyed his voice. 15 †And now, O Lord our God, who brought
your people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and have made a
name for yourself, as at this day, we have sinned, we have done wickedly.

16 ‡†“O Lord, according to all your righteous acts, let your anger and your
wrath turn away from your city Jerusalem, your holy hill, because for our
sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and your people have
become a byword among all who are around us. 17 †Now therefore, O our
God, listen to the prayer of your servant and to his pleas for mercy, and for
your own sake, O Lord,[2] make your face to shine upon your sanctuary,
which is desolate. 18 †O my God, incline your ear and hear. Open your eyes
and see our desolations, and the city that is called by your name. For we do
not present our pleas before you because of our righteousness, but because
of your great mercy. 19 †O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive. O Lord, pay attention
and act. Delay not, for your own sake, O my God, because your city and
your people are called by your name.”

Gabriel Brings an Answer

20 ‡ ‡ While I was speaking and praying, confessing my sin and the sin of
my people Israel, and presenting my plea before the Lord my God for the
holy hill of my God, 21 † while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel,
whom I had seen in the vision at the first, came to me in swift flight at the
time of the evening sacrifice. 22 He made me understand, speaking with me
and saying, “O Daniel, I have now come out to give you insight and
understanding. 23 † At the beginning of your pleas for mercy a word went
out, and I have come to tell it to you, for you are greatly loved. Therefore
consider the word and understand the vision.

The Seventy Weeks

24 ‡‡‡“Seventy weeks[1] are decreed about your people and your holy city,
to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin, and to atone for iniquity, to
bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal both vision and prophet, and to
anoint a most holy place.[2] 25 †Know therefore and understand that from the
going out of the word to restore and build Jerusalem to the coming of an
anointed one, a prince, there shall be seven weeks. Then for sixty-two
weeks it shall be built again with squares and moat, but in a troubled time.
26 †And after the sixty-two weeks, an anointed one shall be cut off and shall
have nothing. And the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the
city and the sanctuary. Its[1] end shall come with a flood, and to the end
there shall be war. Desolations are decreed. 27 †And he shall make a strong
covenant with many for one week,[2] and for half of the week he shall put an
end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall come
one who makes desolate, until the decreed end is poured out on the
desolator.”

Daniel's Terrifying Vision of a Man

10 [1]†In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a word was revealed to
Daniel, who was named Belteshazzar. And the word was true, and it was a
great conflict.[3] And he understood the word and had understanding of the
vision.

[2]†In those days I, Daniel, was mourning for three weeks. [3]†I ate no
delicacies, no meat or wine entered my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at
all, for the full three weeks. [4]†On the twenty-fourth day of the first month,
as I was standing on the bank of the great river (that is, the Tigris) [5]†I lifted
up my eyes and looked, and behold, a man clothed in linen, with a belt of
fine gold from Uphaz around his waist. [6]†His body was like beryl, his face
like the appearance of lightning, his eyes like flaming torches, his arms and
legs like the gleam of burnished bronze, and the sound of his words like the
sound of a multitude. [7]†And I, Daniel, alone saw the vision, for the men
who were with me did not see the vision, but a great trembling fell upon
them, and they fled to hide themselves. [8]†So I was left alone and saw this
great vision, and no strength was left in me. My radiant appearance was
fearfully changed,[4] and I retained no strength. [9]†Then I heard the sound of
his words, and as I heard the sound of his words, I fell on my face in deep
sleep with my face to the ground.

[10]†And behold, a hand touched me and set me trembling on my hands and
knees. [11]†And he said to me, "O Daniel, man greatly loved, understand the
words that I speak to you, and stand upright, for now I have been sent to
you." And when he had spoken this word to me, I stood up trembling.
[12]†Then he said to me, "Fear not, Daniel, for from the first day that you set
your heart to understand and humbled yourself before your God, your
words have been heard, and I have come because of your words. [13]†The
prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days, but
Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I was left there with
the kings of Persia, [14]†and came to make you understand what is to happen
to your people in the latter days. For the vision is for days yet to come."

15 †When he had spoken to me according to these words, I turned my face
toward the ground and was mute. 16 †And behold, one in the likeness of the
children of man touched my lips. Then I opened my mouth and spoke. I said
to him who stood before me, “O my lord, by reason of the vision pains have
come upon me, and I retain no strength. 17How can my lord’s servant talk
with my lord? For now no strength remains in me, and no breath is left in
me.”
18Again one having the appearance of a man touched me and
strengthened me. 19 †And he said, “O man greatly loved, fear not, peace be
with you; be strong and of good courage.” And as he spoke to me, I was
strengthened and said, “Let my lord speak, for you have strengthened me.”
20 †Then he said, “Do you know why I have come to you? But now I will
return to fight against the prince of Persia; and when I go out, behold, the
prince of Greece will come. 21 †But I will tell you what is inscribed in the
book of truth: there is none who contends by my side against these except
Michael, your prince.

The Kings of the South and the North

11 [1]†“And as for me, in the first year of Darius the Mede, I stood up
to confirm and strengthen him.

[2]†“And now I will show you the truth. Behold, three more kings shall arise in Persia, and a fourth shall be far richer than all of them. And when he has become strong through his riches, he shall stir up all against the kingdom of Greece. [3]†Then a mighty king shall arise, who shall rule with great dominion and do as he wills. [4]†And as soon as he has arisen, his kingdom shall be broken and divided toward the four winds of heaven, but not to his posterity, nor according to the authority with which he ruled, for his kingdom shall be plucked up and go to others besides these.

[5]†“Then the king of the south shall be strong, but one of his princes shall be stronger than he and shall rule, and his authority shall be a great authority. [6]†After some years they shall make an alliance, and the daughter of the king of the south shall come to the king of the north to make an agreement. But she shall not retain the strength of her arm, and he and his arm shall not endure, but she shall be given up, and her attendants, he who fathered her, and he who supported[1] her in those times.

[7]†“And from a branch from her roots one shall arise in his place. He shall come against the army and enter the fortress of the king of the north, and he shall deal with them and shall prevail. [8]†He shall also carry off to Egypt their gods with their metal images and their precious vessels of silver and gold, and for some years he shall refrain from attacking the king of the north. [9]Then the latter shall come into the realm of the king of the south but shall return to his own land.

[10]†“His sons shall wage war and assemble a multitude of great forces, which shall keep coming and overflow and pass through, and again shall carry the war as far as his fortress. [11]Then the king of the south, moved with rage, shall come out and fight against the king of the north. And he shall raise a great multitude, but it shall be given into his hand. [12]And when the multitude is taken away, his heart shall be exalted, and he shall cast down tens of thousands, but he shall not prevail. [13]For the king of the north shall

again raise a multitude, greater than the first. And after some years[1] he shall come on with a great army and abundant supplies.

14 †“In those times many shall rise against the king of the south, and the violent among your own people shall lift themselves up in order to fulfill the vision, but they shall fail. 15 †Then the king of the north shall come and throw up siegeworks and take a well-fortified city. And the forces of the south shall not stand, or even his best troops, for there shall be no strength to stand. 16 †But he who comes against him shall do as he wills, and none shall stand before him. And he shall stand in the glorious land, with destruction in his hand. 17 †He shall set his face to come with the strength of his whole kingdom, and he shall bring terms of an agreement and perform them. He shall give him the daughter of women to destroy the kingdom,[2] but it shall not stand or be to his advantage. 18 †Afterward he shall turn his face to the coastlands and shall capture many of them, but a commander shall put an end to his insolence. Indeed,[3] he shall turn his insolence back upon him. 19 †Then he shall turn his face back toward the fortresses of his own land, but he shall stumble and fall, and shall not be found.

20 †“Then shall arise in his place one who shall send an exactor of tribute for the glory of the kingdom. But within a few days he shall be broken, neither in anger nor in battle. 21 †In his place shall arise a contemptible person to whom royal majesty has not been given. He shall come in without warning and obtain the kingdom by flatteries. 22 †Armies shall be utterly swept away before him and broken, even the prince of the covenant. 23 †And from the time that an alliance is made with him he shall act deceitfully, and he shall become strong with a small people. 24 Without warning he shall come into the richest parts[4] of the province, and he shall do what neither his fathers nor his fathers’ fathers have done, scattering among them plunder, spoil, and goods. He shall devise plans against strongholds, but only for a time. 25 †And he shall stir up his power and his heart against the king of the south with a great army. And the king of the south shall wage war with an exceedingly great and mighty army, but he shall not stand, for plots shall be devised against him. 26 †Even those who eat his food shall break him. His army shall be swept away, and many shall fall down slain. 27 †And as for the two kings, their hearts shall be bent on doing evil. They shall speak lies at the same table, but to no avail, for the end is yet to be at

the time appointed. [28]†And he shall return to his land with great wealth, but his heart shall be set against the holy covenant. And he shall work his will and return to his own land.

[29]†"At the time appointed he shall return and come into the south, but it shall not be this time as it was before. [30]†For ships of Kittim shall come against him, and he shall be afraid and withdraw, and shall turn back and be enraged and take action against the holy covenant. He shall turn back and pay attention to those who forsake the holy covenant. [31]†Forces from him shall appear and profane the temple and fortress, and shall take away the regular burnt offering. And they shall set up the abomination that makes desolate. [32]†He shall seduce with flattery those who violate the covenant, but the people who know their God shall stand firm and take action. [33]†And the wise among the people shall make many understand, though for some days they shall stumble by sword and flame, by captivity and plunder. [34]When they stumble, they shall receive a little help. And many shall join themselves to them with flattery, [35]†and some of the wise shall stumble, so that they may be refined, purified, and made white, until the time of the end, for it still awaits the appointed time.

[36]†† "And the king shall do as he wills. He shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak astonishing things against the God of gods. He shall prosper till the indignation is accomplished; for what is decreed shall be done. [37]† He shall pay no attention to the gods of his fathers, or to the one beloved by women. He shall not pay attention to any other god, for he shall magnify himself above all. [38]†He shall honor the god of fortresses instead of these. A god whom his fathers did not know he shall honor with gold and silver, with precious stones and costly gifts. [39]† He shall deal with the strongest fortresses with the help of a foreign god. Those who acknowledge him he shall load with honor. He shall make them rulers over many and shall divide the land for a price.[1]

[40]†"At the time of the end, the king of the south shall attack[2] him, but the king of the north shall rush upon him like a whirlwind, with chariots and horsemen, and with many ships. And he shall come into countries and shall overflow and pass through. [41]†He shall come into the glorious land. And tens of thousands shall fall, but these shall be delivered out of his hand:

Edom and Moab and the main part of the Ammonites. [42]He shall stretch out his hand against the countries, and the land of Egypt shall not escape. [43]†He shall become ruler of the treasures of gold and of silver, and all the precious things of Egypt, and the Libyans and the Cushites shall follow in his train. [44]†But news from the east and the north shall alarm him, and he shall go out with great fury to destroy and devote many to destruction. [45]†And he shall pitch his palatial tents between the sea and the glorious holy mountain. Yet he shall come to his end, with none to help him.

The Time of the End

12 [1]†“At that time shall arise Michael, the great prince who has
charge of your people. And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never
has been since there was a nation till that time. But at that time your people
shall be delivered, everyone whose name shall be found written in the book.
[2]†And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to
everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. [3]†And those
who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky above;[1] and those
who turn many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever. [4]†But you,
Daniel, shut up the words and seal the book, until the time of the end. Many
shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase.”

[5]†Then I, Daniel, looked, and behold, two others stood, one on this bank
of the stream and one on that bank of the stream. [6]†And someone said to the
man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the stream,[2] “How long
shall it be till the end of these wonders?” [7]†And I heard the man clothed in
linen, who was above the waters of the stream; he raised his right hand and
his left hand toward heaven and swore by him who lives forever that it
would be for a time, times, and half a time, and that when the shattering of
the power of the holy people comes to an end all these things would be
finished. [8]‡I heard, but I did not understand. Then I said, “O my lord, what
shall be the outcome of these things?” [9]†He said, “Go your way, Daniel, for
the words are shut up and sealed until the time of the end. [10]†Many shall
purify themselves and make themselves white and be refined, but the
wicked shall act wickedly. And none of the wicked shall understand, but
those who are wise shall understand. [11]‡And from the time that the regular
burnt offering is taken away and the abomination that makes desolate is set
up, there shall be 1,290 days. [12]Blessed is he who waits and arrives at the
1,335 days. [13]†But go your way till the end. And you shall rest and shall
stand in your allotted place at the end of the days.”

Daniel

OVERVIEW

Author
Daniel

Date
c 605–536 BC

Places
Judah; Babylon; Shinar; Media; Persia; Susa in Elam; Greece; Tigris River; Egypt

People
Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah (the Judeans); Nebuchadnezzar; chief of the eunuchs; wise men and Chaldeans; Darius the Mede; Cyrus the Persian; Belshazzar; various rulers; Gabriel and Michael

Purpose
To comfort the people of God by demonstrating that the Most High God rules over the kingdom of men

Law Themes
Babylon holds Judah captive; Judah has failed to obey God's voice and has violated God's covenant; open shame; apocryphal events, including the profaning of the temple and the abomination that makes desolate; God's final judgment of mankind; everlasting contempt

Gospel Themes
The Most High God rules the kingdom of men; He keeps His covenant; mercy for the oppressed; His Anointed One will rule a kingdom that shall never be destroyed; an everlasting dominion; everlasting life

Memory Verses

The everlasting Kingdom (2:44–45); the King of heaven (4:37); the Son of Man receives dominion (7:13–14); the saints receive dominion (7:27); God's great mercy (9:18); the resurrection (12:2–3)

Introduction to Daniel

Reading Daniel

He sits up suddenly, drenched with sweat. His heart pounds as he tries to catch his breath. The events of his dream seemed so real and yet so very strange. Though moats, walls, and hundreds of guards surround his bedchamber, they cannot secure him from his dreams.

The prophet Daniel recounts dreams of kings and kingdoms. He shows how no ruler on earth is out of reach of the God of heaven. The hand of the Most High measures, weighs, and moves the hearts of men for the sake of His people. By grace He establishes an everlasting kingdom through His Anointed One, Jesus, the Christ (7:13–14; 9:24, 26).

Luther on Daniel

Daniel came to Babylon some years before the destruction of Jerusalem, during the reign of King Jehoiakim. King Nebuchadnezzar had had Jehoiakim captured and bound, and would have brought him to Babylon too, had he not changed his mind and let him remain. As it was, Nebuchadnezzar brought some of the best people back with him (including Daniel) as well as vessels from the temple in Jerusalem. We can read all about this in II Kings 24, and in II Chronicles 36….

From this book [of Daniel] we see what a splendid, great man Daniel was in the sight of both God and the world. First in the sight of God, he above all other prophets had this special prophecy to give. That is, he not only prophesies of Christ, like the others, but also reckons, determines, and fixes with certainty the times and years. Moreover he arranges the kingdoms with their doings so precisely and well, in the right succession down to the fixed time of Christ, that one cannot miss the coming of Christ unless one does it wilfully….

In the sight of the world, too, Daniel was a splendid and great man. For we see here that he rules the first two kingdoms as their chief prefect. It is as though God were to say, "I must provide leaders [*Leute*] for these kingdoms, even if I have to let my Jerusalem and my people be destroyed in order to do so." Though Daniel was never a king, and never had great wealth or honor out of it, nevertheless, he did possess and perform the functions, duties, and offices of a king. That is the way the world operates: those who work most about the place have the least, and those who do nothing get the most; in the words of the gospel saying, "One sows and another reaps" (John 4[:37]). Indeed, what is worse, he had to take hatred, envy, perils, and persecution as his reward for it all, for that is the reward with which the world is accustomed to repay all services and benefits.

However this does not hurt Daniel. He is the dearer to God because of it, and God rewards him all the more bountifully, looking upon Daniel as king in Babylon and Persia. For God reckons and judges according to the deed and fruit, not according to the person and name. Daniel is therefore, in deed the true king of Babylon and Persia, even though he lacks the royal person and name, and gets out of it no wealth but only unhappiness and all kinds of peril. Behold how God is able to console and to honor his captive Jews [Judeans], by taking the son of a townsman from destroyed Jerusalem and making him a twofold emperor, in Babylon and Persia. In short, among all the children of Abraham, none was so highly exalted in the world as Daniel. Joseph was indeed great in Egypt with King Pharaoh. David and Solomon were great in Israel. But they were all little kings and lords compared with the kings of Babylon and Persia; and it was among these that Daniel was the chief ruler. He miraculously converted them to God, and doubtless produced great fruit among the people in both empires; through him they came to a knowledge of God and were saved. This is well indicated by the documents and decrees of these emperors that the God of Daniel was to be honored in every land (Daniel 2 and 6).

This Daniel we commend to the reading of all good Christians, to whom he is comforting and useful in these wretched, last times. But to the wicked he is of no use, as he himself says at the end [12:10], “The wicked shall remain wicked and shall not understand.” For the

> prophecies of Daniel, and others like them, are not written simply that men may know history and the tribulations that are to come, and thus satisfy their curiosity, as with a news report, but in order that the righteous shall be encouraged and made joyful, and strengthened in faith and hope and patience. For here the righteous see and hear that their misery shall have an end, that they are to be freed from sins, death, the devil, and all evil—a freedom for which they yearn—and be brought into heaven, to Christ, into his blessed, everlasting kingdom. This is how Christ too, in Luke 21[:28], comforts his own by means of the terrible news, saying, "When you shall see these things, look up and raise your heads, because your redemption is near," etc. For this reason we see that here too Daniel always ends all his visions and dreams, however terrible, with joy, namely, with Christ's kingdom and advent. It is on account of this advent, the last and most important thing, that these visions and dreams were given, interpreted, and written.
>
> Whoever would read them with profit must not depend entirely on the histories or stick exclusively to history, but rather refresh and comfort his heart with the promised and certain advent of our Savior Jesus Christ, who is the blessed and joyful redemption from this vale of misery and wretchedness. To this may he help us, our dear Lord and Savior, to whom with the Father and the Holy Spirit be praise for ever and ever. Amen. (AE 35:294, 313–16)

For more of Luther's insights on this Book, see "Preface to the Prophet Daniel" (AE 35:294–316).

Challenges for Readers

Daniel and Dan'el. The Hebrew name Daniel is found outside the Book of Daniel. The earliest example of the Hebrew name refers to a son of David (1Ch 3:1). The name also appears in Ezr 8:2; Ne 10:6; Ezk 14:14, 20; 28:3. Based on Ezekiel's heroic characterization of Daniel, some critical scholars suggest the prophet Daniel is actually named after a Canaanite hero Dan'el, who is described in Ugaritic literature written c 1400 BC. It is interesting to note that Ezekiel listed Daniel with two non-Israelites (Noah and Job). Critical scholars use this association to suggest that the prophet Daniel is merely a legendary figure and not a real person. However, one should note that the biblical prophet served in non-Israelite administrations. Also, all the biblical passages referenced above were written during or near the time of the prophet Daniel's life, as Scripture describes it. Associating Daniel with Dan'el is unwarranted.

Different Texts of Daniel. The social and political upheaval of the Time between the Testaments (pp 1553–56) created confusion among Jews, who were switching from Hebrew and Aramaic as their primary languages to Greek. The Hebrew/Aramaic text of Daniel exhibits great unity (see chart, p 1395) and is much shorter than later Greek and Latin translations. The reliability of the Hebrew/Aramaic text was confirmed by the discovery of portions of all 12 chapters of Daniel at Qumran (fragments dating from the second century BC to mid-first century AD). However, early Christian scholar Jerome noted, "The Septuagint version of Daniel the prophet is not read by the Churches of our Lord and Savior. They use Theodotion's version…. This one thing I can affirm—that [the LXX] differs widely from the original [Hebrew], and is rightly rejected" (*NPNF*2 6:492). The LXX and editions influenced by it included small changes in their versions of Daniel and also three larger passages, which were originally independent compositions but which Greek scribes merged with Daniel: the Prayer of Azariah and the Song of the Three Holy Children (between Dn 3:23 and 3:24 in LXX and Vulg); Susanna (Dn 13 in LXX and Vulg); and Bel and the Dragon (Dn 14 in LXX and Vulg). Theodosius placed Susanna before the Book of Daniel, and Bel and the Dragon after the Book of Daniel. While working on the German Bible, Luther investigated these issues. He used the Hebrew/Aramaic text of Daniel and placed the three large additions to

Daniel in the Apocrypha. For Luther's comments on the additions, see pp 1562–64.

Apocalyptic. Daniel's style is often described as *apocalypsis* (Greek, "revelation"), a category of literature defined by modern scholars as writings that include dreams or visions, unusual symbolic imagery (e.g., the beasts in Dn 7:1–8), number symbolism, and interest in end-times events. Other proposed examples of this style in the Bible are Is 24–27; Ezk 38–39; Jl 2:28–3:21; Zec 9–14; and the Book of Revelation. Critical scholars often regard apocalyptic style as late in development and thus propose late dates for works that include this style (note the circular reasoning). However, one may readily compare the style of apocalyptic literature with the accounts of dreams and their interpretations in Gn 37; 40–41; Jgs 7. The interpretation of dreams has a long history in biblical and ancient Near Eastern literature (see p 74; see also note, Dn 2:2). So this feature of Daniel cannot be used to prove a late date for the Book.

Imperial Aramaic. As shown on the chart below, Daniel recorded many of his prophecies in Aramaic. See also p 720.

Judeans and Jews. The term "Judean" describes a member of the Israelite tribe of Judah. Descendants of the Judeans formed the religious ideals of latter Judaism. See note, Ezr 4:12; see also pp 1905–6. In Luther's German writings cited for Daniel, one finds *Jüden*, which usually refers to the people of ancient Judah and should not be confused with later practitioners of the Jewish religion.

Blessings for Readers

As you read Daniel, take to heart the example of this great leader of God's people who devoted himself to God's Word amid the disappointments and temptations of exile. Beware of overinterpreting the symbolism of Daniel's prophecies, a mistake that has led many people into error. Instead, cling to this general message: your God reigns, and He works to deliver you from evil, especially in the gift of His Son, Jesus, the Anointed One (9:24–26).

OUTLINE

Daniel is particularly easy to outline. Each chapter is a separate section. The only exception is the last section, which covers chs 10–12. In chs 1–6, Daniel describes what happens to him in the third person ("he"). In chs 7–12, Daniel describes what happens to him in the first person ("I").

I. Judeans Steadfast in Practicing Their Faith (ch 1)
II. Nebuchadnezzar's Dream: Four Kingdoms and the Establishment of the Kingdom of God (ch 2)
III. God's Faithful Servants Are Rescued from Death (ch 3)
IV. Nebuchadnezzar Judged for His Arrogance against God (ch 4)
V. Belshazzar Judged for His Arrogance against God (ch 5)
VI. God's Faithful Servant Is Rescued from Death (ch 6)
VII. Daniel's Vision: Four Kingdoms and the Establishment of the Kingdom of God (ch 7)
VIII. Daniel's Vision concerning the Post-Babylonian Kingdoms (ch 8)
IX. Daniel's Prayer and Vision concerning Jerusalem during the Post-Babylonian Kingdoms (ch 9)
X. Daniel's Vision concerning the Post-Babylonian Kingdoms (chs 10–12)

These sections are organized in two interlocking structures (chiasms); see pp 777–78. This thoughtful literary development attests to the Book's unity.

Articles and Resources Related to Daniel

- Simple Ways to Witness
- Maturing in Faith and Service
- The Ptolemies and the Seleucids
- The Seventy Weeks (Dn 9:24–27)
- The Messiah’s Enthronement

Simple Ways to Witness

A thorough course on evangelism is great for every Christian to take (see pp 1425–26). But to get started as a witness, all you need to know is the Apostles' Creed and a few things to say about matters of faith. The creed provides a simple outline.

I Believe in God the Father

Add to your conversations the following (or similar) simple statements:

"God has given us a beautiful day/night."

"I'll pray for you."

"God bless your day."

These are great ways to start, continue, or end a conversation. People do not take offense when you use such expressions. So share these thoughts with confidence. When you are comfortable doing so, follow up with a question:

"Can we talk about matters of faith?"

For most people, this is a nonthreatening question because it simply invites them to share their thoughts about God and faith. You are not requiring them to know a lot, so they will not feel quizzed. You are not promising to have all the answers, so you do not need to worry that you will say something wrong.

After you have asked this question, just listen. Be cordial and respectful, learning about what they believe and have experienced. Polite conversation allows that, if they share their thoughts about matters of faith and you have listened, you may share your thoughts about matters of faith with them. They will most likely listen. You can talk about your church, praying to God, or how much faith means to you. Most people are quite comfortable with such conversation.

I Believe in Jesus Christ

You have not really borne witness as a Christian until you have spoken with someone about the Lord Jesus Christ. Any religious person might talk about God or a religious upbringing. But Christians believe in and talk about Jesus Christ. Begin this important conversation with a simple question:

"What do you believe about Jesus Christ?"

As before, just listen to the answer. Try to understand where they are coming from and what they know about Jesus. If they seem uncomfortable, apologize for making them uncomfortable and suggest that perhaps you could talk another time. If they seem comfortable, wait for an opportunity to share what you know and believe about Jesus, such as "Jesus is my Savior." Or, "I pray to Jesus when I'm facing challenges in life." Let the conversation develop naturally from there. Once again, you do not have to have all the answers. Just share what you know, what you understand. If they ask questions you cannot answer, say, "I don't know about that. I'd like to talk with my pastor/Bible teacher about that. Okay?" Follow up later.

I Believe in the Holy Spirit and the Holy Christian Church

The Holy Spirit makes people Christians and brings them into the fellowship of the Church through Holy Baptism and God's Word. Many people today believe they can be Christians without the Church. But Jesus clearly taught that His followers would be part of the Church, and He taught His disciples how to care for one another in a community of faith.

Follow up your conversation by simply inviting them to church, Bible class, Vacation Bible School, or any event that brings them into contact with other Christians. Surprisingly, most people say that they would attend a church service if someone invited them. Pray that the Holy Spirit would strengthen you as a witness and pray for the persons to whom you witness. If they come to church with you, introduce them to others who may share their interests or experiences so that they can bear witness to them as well. It is really that simple.

To grow more confident and comfortable as a witness, read Milton I. Rudnick, *How to Share Christ Confidently* (St. Louis: Concordia, 2009).

Maturing in Faith and Service

As the Lord grants you faith and new life in Holy Baptism, He likewise moves you through the Gospel to desire growth in faith and in service. The apostle Paul explains, "It is God who works in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure" (Php 2:13). Also, "we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them" (Eph 2:10).

Because *The Lutheran Study Bible* will be an important tool for education in many Lutheran congregations, this article will provide you with some suggestions for courses of study. The suggestions are built on foundational passages of Christian education: (1) Moses' call to love the Lord (Dt 6:4–7), (2) the Mission Psalm (Ps 145:4–13), (3) Christ's call to confess the faith (Mt 10:32–33), (4) Christ's mandate to make disciples (Mt 28:19–20), and (5) Luther's Preface to the Small Catechism (see pp xxxiii–xxxv).

Basic Goals for Every Lutheran

For a thorough grounding in the Christian faith and for continuity with the expression of that faith in Lutheran congregations, every Lutheran should study the following topics:

Bible/Doctrine: Luther's Small Catechism as a Summary of the Bible
Christian Piety: Daily Prayer and Weekly Worship
Works of Love: How to Share the Faith with Family and Friends

For these purposes, *Luther's Small Catechism with Explanation*, *Lutheran Service Book*, and other devotional resources will be most helpful to you. As you grow in faith, you will naturally also grow in the desire to share Christ's peace and joy with others (2Th 1:3). You should receive intentional training in how to do so (e.g., friendship evangelism; see also "Simple Ways to Witness," p 1425).

Goals for Continued Growth

According to Luther's explanation of the Third Commandment, the Lord calls you to grow in love for God's Word and to gladly hear and learn it each week. The New Testament clearly expresses this truth by emphasizing that Christians *mature* in the faith (1Co 14:20; Eph 4:11–13; Php 3:12–16; Col 1:28; 4:12; Heb 6:1). They long to be like Christ, who declares them righteous by grace through faith (Php 3:8–11).

Below are study topics that will foster your growth in the Word, sincere piety, works of love, and appreciation of your heritage. This chart may serve as a guide for comprehensive parish education. Topics at the top of the list should be viewed as foundational for topics farther down the list. (E.g., Ezk, Dn, and Rv are more difficult to interpret and apply.) Congregational leaders should adapt the course offerings to the needs of their congregations.

Studies for continued growth should have greater depth. However, such studies should not be viewed as surpassing the basics, since a Christian never outgrows the catechism (LC Preface). Courses under the topic "Works of Love" should include activities. Congregations may wish to thank God publicly as their members reach goals and grow in faith and service.

Life Goals

Sound goals that Lutherans may hope to reach during their lifetime include the following:

Living and acting as faithful witnesses to the Gospel

Supporting the growth of their congregation

Reading through the entire Holy Bible and the Apocrypha

Reading through the entire Book of Concord

Rev. Dr. C. F. W. Walther noted that some Christians might say to themselves, "After [working] all day, I can't sit down and study in the evening. If I read my morning and evening devotions, that's enough." Certainly the challenges of daily life will collide with our growth and service as believers. Certainly our daily prayers have ongoing importance for us. But Walther also noted, "No, that is not enough! The Lord doesn't want us to remain children, who are blown to and fro by every wind of doctrine; instead of that, He wants us to grow in knowledge so that we can teach others" (cited in *Concordia*, pp xv–xvi).

As the Lord grants you strength and opportunity, pursue these good goals, not because you *must* attain them but because the Lord's mercy and love moves you to do so. He will help you set reasonable personal goals and grant His Spirit so that you may attain them. In all things, be assured of His surpassing love for you in Christ Jesus, who has taken away your sins and made you God's own child.

The Ptolemies and the Seleucids

Many names for the rulers listed here appear in the notes for Dn 11. This diagram will help you see the relationships between them.

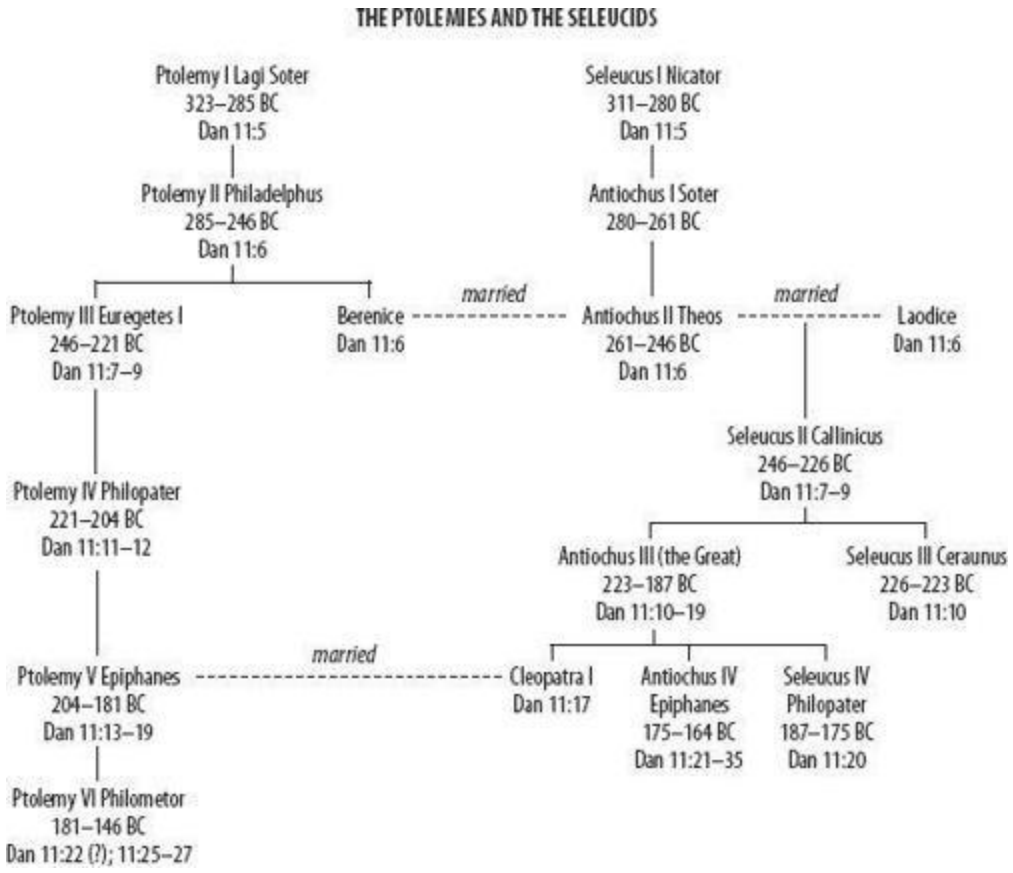


Diagram from Andrew E. Steinmann, *Daniel*, CC (St. Louis: Concordia, 2008), 521.

The Seventy Weeks (Dn 9:24–27)

The traditional Christian interpretation of 9:24–27 is that the Messiah in 9:25–26 is Jesus Christ and that the seventy weeks culminate in the first advent of Christ.

A typological messianic interpretation held by notable Lutherans of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Klieforth, Keil, Leupold) is that the vision covers the entire time between the time of Daniel and the second coming of Christ.

Charts from Andrew E. Steinmann, *Daniel*, CC (St. Louis: Concordia, 2008), 454.

The Messiah's Enthronement

Daniel's vision climaxes with the installation of the Son of Man as eternal king. The vision is essentially ended with 7:14. Therefore, at this point, it is appropriate to compare the enthronement of the Son of Man in Daniel 7 with other passages in the OT that speak of the enthronement of the Messiah.

Two psalms are particularly relevant, and they follow much the same pattern as Daniel's vision: Psalms 2 and 110. Both of these psalms speak of the decree of God concerning the Messiah's installation as king. While not every element in Daniel is present in these two psalms nor is every element in the psalms present in Daniel, these three passages present complementary pictures of the enthronement of the Messiah. Jesus explicitly connects Psalm 110 and Daniel 7 in Mt 26:64 and Mk 14:62. The heavenly vision of Christ shown to Stephen at his martyrdom (Acts 7:55–56) probably reflects a combination of Psalm 110 and Daniel 7.

THE MESSIAH'S ENTHRONEMENT IN DANIEL 7 AND PSALMS 2 AND 110

Daniel 7	*Psalm 2*	*Psalm 110*
A. Four beasts (nations) emerge from the sea to rule oppressively over God's people before the advent of the Messiah (7:1–8, 17, 19–21, 23–25).	A. Nations oppose God and his Messiah (2:1–3).	
B. The Ancient of Days convenes his heavenly court (7:8–10).		
C. Decree of the heavenly court: the Son of Man is installed as eternal king over all nations (7:13–14).	C. God's decree: God mocks the rebels and installs his Messiah as King to rule the nations (2:4–9).	C. God's decree: God installs David's Lord as King at his right hand to rule over his enemies (110:1–3). D. God's decree: the Messiah is Priest forever (110:4).
E. Decree of the heavenly court: the beasts are shorn of power and slain (7:11–12, 26).	E. Admonition to the nations: serve the Lord and kiss the Son or you will perish (2:10–12a).	E. The Lord and his Messiah crush kings and fill nations with corpses (110:5–6).
F. The Ancient of Days comes and decrees in favor of his saints; they receive the kingdom for eternity (7:18, 22, 27).	F. Those who take refuge in the Son are blessed (2:12b).	

Andrew E. Steinmann, *Daniel*, CC (St. Louis: Concordia, 2008), 359, 360.

Footnotes

Footnotes for Daniel, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:3 Hebrew *of the seed of the kingdom*

Footnotes for Daniel, Chapter 2

- [1] 2:4 The text from this point to the end of chapter 7 is in Aramaic
- [1] 2:15 Aramaic *answered and said*; also verse 26
- [1] 2:43 Aramaic *by the seed of men*

Footnotes for Daniel, Chapter 3

- [1] 3:1 A *cubit* was about 18 inches or 45 centimeters
- [2] 3:9 Aramaic *answered and said*; also verses 24, 26
- [1] 3:15 Aramaic lacks *well and good*
- [2] 3:17 Or *If our God whom we serve is able to deliver us, he will deliver us from the burning fiery furnace and out of your hand, O king.*
- [3] 3:21 The meaning of the Aramaic words rendered *cloaks* and *tunics* is uncertain; also verse 27
- [1] 3:28 Aramaic *and changed*

Footnotes for Daniel, Chapter 4

- [2] 4:1 Ch 3:31 in Aramaic
- [3] 4:4 Ch 4:1 in Aramaic
- [4] 4:8 Or *Spirit of the holy God*; also verses 9, 18

Footnotes for Daniel, Chapter 5

- [1] 5:2 Or *predecessor*; also verses 11, 13, 18
- [2] 5:7 Aramaic *answered and said*; also verse 10
- [3] 5:10 Or *queen mother*; twice in this verse
- [4] 5:11 Or *Spirit of the holy God*
- [5] 5:14 Or *Spirit of God*
- [1] 5:22 Or *successor*
- [2] 5:26 *Mene* sounds like the Aramaic for *numbered*
- [3] 5:27 *Tekel* sounds like the Aramaic for *weighed*
- [4] 5:28 *Peres* (the singular of *Parsin*) sounds like the Aramaic for *divided* and for *Persia*
- [5] 5:31 Ch 6:1 in Aramaic

Footnotes for Daniel, Chapter 6

- [1] 6:6 Or *came thronging*; also verses 11, 15
- [2] 6:16 Aramaic *answered and said*; also verse 20

Footnotes for Daniel, Chapter 7

- [1] 7:2 Aramaic *answered and said*
- [1] 7:15 Aramaic *within its sheath*
- [1] 7:27 Or *his kingdom shall be an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him*

Footnotes for Daniel, Chapter 8

- [1] 8:2 Or *the fortified city*
- [2] 8:10 Or *host, that is, some*
- [3] 8:12 Or *in an act of rebellion*
- [4] 8:14 Hebrew; Septuagint, Theodotion, Vulgate *to him*
- [1] 8:21 Or *the shaggy goat*
- [2] 8:22 Theodotion, Septuagint, Vulgate; Hebrew *the*

Footnotes for Daniel, Chapter 9

- [1] 9:12 Or *our judges who judged us*
- [2] 9:17 Hebrew *for the Lord's sake*

- [1] 9:24 Or *sevens*; also twice in verse 25 and once in verse 26
- [2] 9:24 Or *thing*, or *one*
- [1] 9:26 Or *His*
- [2] 9:27 Or *seven*; twice in this verse

Footnotes for Daniel, Chapter 10

- [3] 10:1 Or *and it was about a great conflict*
- [4] 10:8 Hebrew *My splendor was changed to ruin*

Footnotes for Daniel, Chapter 11

- [1] 11:6 Or *obtained*
- [1] 11:13 Hebrew *at the end of the times*
- [2] 11:17 Hebrew *her*, or *it*
- [3] 11:18 The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain
- [4] 11:24 Or *among the richest men*
- [1] 11:39 Or *land as payment*
- [2] 11:40 Hebrew *thrust at*

Footnotes for Daniel, Chapter 12

- [1] 12:3 Hebrew *the expanse*; compare Genesis 1:6-8
- [2] 12:6 Or *who was upstream*; also verse 7

Study Notes

DANIEL—NOTE ON **Ch 1** Luth: "The first chapter brings us a fine example from Daniel's life. We see how holy, how God-fearing, and how possessed he was of a great and noble faith in God; and all this in the very midst of the wild and pagan life and the abominable offenses which he had to listen to and look upon every day at Babylon. In spite of it all, he remained firm and steadfast, and conquered all these temptations in his heart. For this reason there follows almost immediately [the account of] how God showed him great mercy, first highly honoring him in things of the spirit by granting him wisdom and understanding beyond that of other men, and then by elevating him also in worldly affairs and doing nothing but great and mighty deeds and miracles through him. God did this to show us all how much he loves and cherishes those who fear and trust in him; with such an impressive example he prods us in a kindly way to faith and the fear of God" (AE 35:294–95).

DANIEL—NOTE ON 1:1 *third year ... of Jehoiakim.* Ruled 609–598 BC. In 605 BC, Nebuchadnezzar defeated Pharaoh Neco of Egypt at Carchemish (Jer 46:2) and took control of Judah. *Nebuchadnezzar*. Also spelled "Nebuchadrezzar" (see ESV note, Jer 21:2). *besieged*. Cf 2Ki 24. Jer 27–28 also provides some context for the Babylonian attacks.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 1:2 *Lord gave Jehoiakim … into his hand*. Jehoiakim was subjected to Nebuchadnezzar as punishment for his sins (2Ki 23:35–24:1). *vessels of the house of God*. Made by Solomon for temple worship (2Ch 4:19–22). See diagram, p 541. *Shinar*. Archaic name for land between the Euphrates and Tigris rivers. *his god*. Chief Babylonian god, named Marduk or Bel (cf Jer 50:2; see note, Is 46:1). *treasury*. Ancient temples often doubled as banks. See notes, 1Ch 18:11; 26:20–28.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 1:3 *Ashpenaz, his chief eunuch*. Important Babylonian officials were often eunuchs. See p 228. *royal family*. Jehoiakim's family. *nobility*. Judean government officials.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 1:4 *youths without blemish*. Nebuchadnezzar sought first-rate Israelites to educate for three years (v 5). *stand in the king's palace*. Once assimilated, well-trained servants could advise the king (vv 5, 19) regarding the governance of their home territory and their conquered countrymen. *Chaldeans*. Ancient name for Babylonians (Gn 11:28); their

language was Akkadian, written with cuneiform script. Intellectually elite culture in the Babylonian Empire. See note, Ezk 12:13.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 1:5 *food ... wine*. See note, v 8. *stand before the king*. See note, v 4.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 1:6 Names of these youths all end with "el" (Hbr *'elohim*, "God") or "iah" (Hbr *yahweh*, "LORD") and so proclaim the God of Israel. See p 1227. *tribe of Judah*. From which Jesus would come (Mt 1:2, 16).

DANIEL—NOTE ON 1:7 *chief of the eunuchs*. See p 228. *Belteshazzar.* Daniel's new name referred to the god Bel (akin to Hbr *ba'al*; probably here Babylonian Marduk). All the new names likely referred to Babylonian gods.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 1:1–7 God punishes unrepentant Jehoiakim and allows many Judeans to become exiles in Babylon. Yet Daniel and his friends will learn that the Lord is still in control, even though they are in the hand of Nebuchadnezzar (chs 2–6). God will protect the young men and use them to glorify His name. He likewise uses the testimony of Christians today to proclaim His saving name and work, even in the most challenging circumstances. • Jesus, may we never be ashamed of confessing You as our Lord and Savior. Amen.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 1:8 God's Law prohibited His OT people from eating certain foods (Lv 11; Dt 14:3–21). See p 236. In moderate amounts, wine is healthful and was not forbidden by OT Law (cf Ps 104:15). However, too much wine disrupts sleep and often causes headaches and lethargy (cf Pr 23:29–35).

DANIEL—NOTE ON 1:9 Daniel had an unseen, powerful protector. *favor*. See p 6. *compassion*. See "mercy," pp 842–43.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 1:10 The chief eunuch knew Nebuchadnezzar's capacity for violence. *endanger my head*. Should Daniel's physical appearance worsen, the king might punish his official with beheading.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 1:11 *steward*. Or, "superintendent." Guardian assistant to the chief eunuch.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 1:12 *Test ... for ten days*. Short period in which to observe change. Hipp: "They teach that it is not earthly meats that give to men their beauty and strength, but the grace of God bestowed by the Word" (*ANF* 5:186). *vegetables*. No vegetables were forbidden in OT food laws. On the Israelite diet, see p 236.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 1:15 Compared to the youths who ate the king's diet, the Judeans appeared healthier. A sound diet maintains the body's hydration and muscle tone. However, the noticeable difference between the Judeans and the other youths in such a short amount of time should be attributed to God's intervention.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 1:17 *God gave them learning and skill*. This blessing was in addition to their natural abilities (v 4). *wisdom*. See pp 775–77. *understanding in all visions and dreams*. Like Joseph in Egypt, Daniel would use this special gift (chs 2; 4; 5). See p 74.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 1:18 *end of the time*. Three years. *chief of the eunuchs*. See p 228.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 1:19 *stood before the king*. See note, v 4.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 1:20 *ten times better*. Their superior wisdom and understanding was the result of God's grace (v 17). *magicians and enchanters*. Consulted for advice and guidance. See note, Dt 18:10–11. God will show His superiority over these false prophets.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 1:21 C 66 years after his exile began (see note, v 1), Daniel survived the transition of the kingdom from the Babylonians to the Persians. Chs 1–5; 7–8 relate to the Babylonian period; chs 6; 9–12 relate to the Persian period. *Cyrus*. Persian king who conquered Babylon (539 BC) and allowed the Judean exiles to return home (cf Ezr 1:1–4).

DANIEL—NOTE ON 1:8–21 Daniel and his friends determine not to violate God's laws, even though they live in a heathen environment. God, the source of all wisdom, blesses and preserves them in faithfulness. When you are tempted by worldly pressures to sin against the Lord, call to mind the example of these God-fearing youths. Your Lord, the Savior, is with you even now, and He will not forsake you. • Heavenly King, strengthen my resolve to follow Your Word. Amen.

DANIEL—NOTE ON **Ch 2** Luth: "The honoring of Daniel begins; it is occasioned by the king's dream which Daniel, with the help of divine revelation, discerns and interprets. As a result Daniel becomes a ruler of the entire Babylonian realm and a bishop or chief prefect over all the priests and learned men. This takes place also for the comforting of the whole Jewish [Judean] community, that despite their wretched condition they should neither despair nor grow impatient, as if God had abandoned them or withdrawn his promise of Christ…. So wondrously does God lead his

faithful ones; he bestows upon them far more than anyone could wish" (AE 35:295).

DANIEL—NOTE ON 2:1 *second year*. Nebuchadnezzar's dream occurred during Daniel's three-year educational period (cf 1:5–6). Some time likely elapsed before the king consulted his dream experts (v 2). *dreams*. See p 74. *spirit was troubled*. Disturbed by the content of the dreams.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 2:2 *magicians … enchanters … sorcerers … Chaldeans*. See note, 1:20. Each group used slightly different occult methods to interpret dreams. Archaeologists have discovered Mesopotamian, Ugaritic, and Egyptian documents written esp for dream interpretation. *Chaldeans*. See note, 1:4.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 2:4 *Aramaic*. Common language in the Near East. Dn was written in both Hbr (1:1–2:4a; 8:1–12:13) and Aram (2:4b–7:28). See pp 720, 1394–95. *O king, live forever!* Common form of address. *show the interpretation*. Explain the dream's meaning.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 2:5 Nebuchadnezzar sought an explanation of what he had seen. Perhaps he also had some difficulty recalling the details of this disturbing experience (cf v 9). *word … is firm*. Nebuchadnezzar's mind was made up (v 8). *torn limb from limb … ruins*. The dream's importance to the king was reinforced by the severity of punishment.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 2:8 *trying to gain time*. Stalling, since the king's request placed them in a life-threatening position.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 2:9 Nebuchadnezzar did not fully trust his dream experts. His angry request implies that they had been unreliable. *till the times change*. Hoping the king would tell his dream.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 2:10 The dream experts assert that the king will find no help in understanding the dream because he refuses to work within the typical rules. *not a man on earth*. Anticipates God's intervention through Daniel.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 2:11 *gods*. Babylonian gods were remote and inaccessible. The wise men could only hope that they could learn divine mysteries through forms of magic, divination, and sorcery.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 2:13 *Daniel and his companions*. They "stood before the king" (1:19) and so were included among the wise men to be destroyed. However, as vv 15, 17 show, Daniel and his companions were not a part of the discussion recorded in vv 3–11.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 2:14 *captain of the king's guard*. Lit, "chief of the slaughterers."
DANIEL—NOTE ON 2:15 See note, v 13.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 2:16 *appoint him a time*. As the king's adviser, Daniel had access to Nebuchadnezzar and asked for an appointment to interpret the dream.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 2:1–16 The many Babylonian wise men are unable to recount or interpret Nebuchadnezzar's dream, and their gods are mute idols. But Daniel is confident that his God will help. Today, when life's mysteries or challenges threaten you, turn for guidance and comfort to the Lord and His Word. He knows all things and will hear your prayer. He knows what is best for you, and His Son, your Savior, intercedes for you. • Dear Jesus, may I never think of You as being distant or absent but always present for me in Your Word and Sacrament. Amen.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 2:18 Since Daniel had confidently promised Nebuchadnezzar an interpretation of his dream, he and his companions turned to God in prayer, seeking His help. *mercy*. See pp 842–43. *God of heaven*. See note, Ezr 1:2. *mystery*. Word borrowed from old Persian and always used in Dn for a revelatory dream; key word in ch 2 (vv 19, 27–30, 47; cf 4:9). Here it describes the dream and its meaning. *wise men*. Cf 1:20; 2:2.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 2:19 In contrast to pagan gods, the God of heaven reveals mysteries (cf v 47). This revelation is the critical turning point in the story. *vision of the night*. Dream. *blessed*. Daniel's confession of praise follows in vv 20–23. See p 842.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 2:20 *Blessed.* See p 842. *name of God.* See "LORD," p 1227. *to whom belong wisdom.* See note, Jb 28:23.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 2:21 *He changes times and seasons*. God is the master of human history. See pp 335–37. *kings*. Even one so powerful as Nebuchadnezzar was ruled by God's will. See note, Pr 21:1.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 2:22 *He reveals deep and hidden things.* Including esp the mystery of the Gospel (Eph 6:19; Col 4:3). *darkness … light*. All realms are ultimately under His control.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 2:24 *Do not destroy the wise men of Babylon.* Compassionately, God allowed Daniel to save the lives of these pagan Chaldeans.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 2:25 Arioch was no doubt surprised that this foreigner and young apprentice ventured to interpret Nebuchadnezzar's dream (see note, v 1).
DANIEL—NOTE ON 2:28 *reveals mysteries.* Cf v 19. *latter days*. End times.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 2:30 *not because of any wisdom that I have*. Daniel humbly attributed all his wisdom to God alone. See pp 775–77.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 2:17–30 Daniel would not have known Nebuchadnezzar's dream and its interpretation except for God's revelation. Neither are we able to know the mysteries of God, except what the Father has revealed to us in Christ (Rm 16:25–27). Like Daniel, we praise God for His mercy to us and His revelation in the Gospel. • Heavenly Father, thank You for making me wise unto salvation through faith in Christ. Amen.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 2:31 *great image*. Colossal statues and figures were common art in Babylon and Persia.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 2:32–33 Statue consisted of an odd mixture of four metals: gold, silver, bronze, and iron (mixed with clay).
DANIEL—NOTE ON 2:34 *stone.* Natural material; used as a hammer to break the statue's feet into pieces. *by no human hand*. Implying divine intervention. See note, v 45.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 2:35 *like the chaff*. See p 422. *not a trace of them could be found*. Setting up a contrast to what follows. *great mountain ... whole earth*. Symbolic of its dominance and importance. Aph: "He showed beforehand with regard to Christ that the whole earth shall be filled with Him. For lo! by the faith of Christ are all the ends of the earth filled" (*NPNF* 2 13:347).
DANIEL—NOTE ON 2:36 *we will tell.* Daniel alone had knowledge of the dream, but his companions may have worked with him to provide the interpretation. This would separate the Israelites from the other counselors.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 2:37 *king of kings*. Title; most appropriate for Christ (Rv 19:16). *God of heaven*. See note, Ezr 1:2.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 2:38 *head of gold*. Nebuchadnezzar had great power, might, and glory.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 2:39–41 Second, third, and fourth kingdoms are not named. Suggested identifications are Media, Persia, and Greece (cf 7:17; 8:20–21). The chief message is that whichever kingdoms are meant, all have disappeared. But the kingdom established by God will remain.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 2:43 *marriage*. Kings often sought to increase their power through marriage. See note, 1Ki 3:1–2.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 2:44 *days of those kings*. Refers ultimately to the time of the fourth beast (7:7–8, 19–27), which most likely represents the Roman Empire. *break … all these kingdoms*. Aph: "When King Messiah shall reign, then He will humble the fourth kingdom, and will break the whole image; for by the whole image the world is meant" (*NPNF* 2 13:357). *stand forever*. God's kingdom ends the other kingdoms and endures forever (Rv 11:15).

DANIEL—NOTE ON 2:45 *stone*. Christ, who will ultimately break into pieces all earthly kingdoms (Ps 118:22; Eph 1:20–22; 1Pt 2:6–8). *by no human hand*. Iren: "His coming into this world was not by the operation of human hands…. So, then, we understand that His advent in human nature was not by the will of a man, but by the will of God…. The great God showed future things by Daniel, and confirmed them by His Son; … Christ is the stone which is cut out without hands, who shall destroy temporal kingdoms, and introduce an eternal one, which is the resurrection of the just" (*ANF* 1:453, 555). Gr Nys: "Christ was born without a man. For as it is a new and marvelous thing that a stone should be cut out of the rock without a hewer or stone-cutting tools, so it is a thing beyond all wonder that an offspring should appear from an unwedded Virgin" (*NPNF* 2 5:521).

DANIEL—NOTE ON 2:31–45 God reveals through Nebuchadnezzar's dream the final dissolution of all earthly kingdoms. Only one Kingdom will endure forever, the one proclaimed by Jesus: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel" (Mk 1:15). That Kingdom awaits its full revelation at the end of history. We inherit His kingdom now in repentance and faith. • O King of kings, grant me hope and confidence in view of Your eternal rule. Amen.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 2:46 *paid homage … offering and incense*. Nebuchadnezzar honored Daniel as though he were a god (cf Ac 14:11–13).

DANIEL—NOTE ON 2:47 Though mistaking Daniel for a god, Nebuchadnezzar did catch Daniel's reference to "a great God" (v 45). He acknowledged that Israel's God was greater than all other gods—an important step away from idolatry, though he still had much to learn. Nebuchadnezzar now understood how Daniel could outrate his other wise men (cf 1:20).

DANIEL—NOTE ON 2:48 *made him ruler ... chief prefect.* Daniel was placed over Babylon and all its wise men.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 2:49 *Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego*. Daniel's companions are reintroduced because they will be subjected to a severe test in ch 3. *king's court*. Lit, "king's gate." See p 792.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 2:46–49 Nebuchadnezzar is obviously impressed with the wisdom Daniel received from the God of heaven. This gives Daniel an opportunity to reveal more about the true God and His promise of a Savior. Today, pray for opportunities to proclaim the Gospel to others. The true God of heaven blesses and watches over you and will keep you to the end. • I praise You, God of heaven, for every evidence of Your wisdom and power. Help me use such knowledge as I witness to Your love in Christ. Amen.
DANIEL—NOTE ON **Ch 3** Luth: "Daniel again records a great miracle of faith. There the three men are preserved in the fiery furnace, so that God is confessed and praised by the king [Nebuchadnezzar] throughout the entire realm, even in writing. This, too, happened for the consolation of the Jews [Judeans] who, along with their God, were despised nobodies at Babylon under the tyrants and false gods. But now their God is highly honored above all gods, in order that they may firmly believe that at the proper time he can and will indeed save them, and meanwhile hold fast to and console themselves with this honor he receives and this miracle he performs" (AE 35:297).
DANIEL—NOTE ON 3:1 *image.* Probably of the Babylonian god Bel. *sixty cubits … six cubits*. C 90 ft tall and 9 ft in diameter. *set ... up.* Repeated often in ch 3, as are other terms and phrases that suggest satire in the telling of the story. The false god could not make or present himself. *Dura*. Akkadian word meaning "fortress," a name given to many locations. Probably near the city of Babylon.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 3:2 Exact meaning of the seven named offices is uncertain; perhaps listed in order of descending importance. *satraps*. See note, Ezr 4:10. *dedication.* Significant public event.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 3:4 *peoples, nations, and languages*. Indicating the multiracial, multiethnic composition of the empire.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 3:5 Ensemble of three wind and three stringed instruments provided ceremonial music. See p 993. *fall down and worship*. Aram *sagad;* used of Nebuchadnezzar paying homage to Daniel and often

in Dn. Isaiah used the related Hbr term to describe idol worship (Is 44:15–19; 46:6).

DANIEL—NOTE ON 3:6 *fall down*. See p 1276. *burning fiery furnace*. Probably a smelting kiln with openings on the top and side. Burning was an ancient method of execution (cf Lv 20:14; 21:9).

DANIEL—NOTE ON 3:1–7 Nebuchadnezzar builds a golden statue and at its dedication commands all people to worship it. Such worship is forbidden in the First Commandment (Ex 20:3–6). Today, the gods we are tempted to worship may take subtler forms: material things, power, self. Only one "image" brings life and salvation—the incarnate Son of God (Col 1:15–20). • Triune God, may I never worship anyone or anything but You alone. Amen.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 3:8 *Chaldeans*. See note, 1:4. They no doubt felt professional jealousy against these Judeans who had positions of authority (v 12; 2:49). *Jews*. See "Judeans and Jews," p 1395.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 3:12 *Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.* Referred to only by their Babylonian names. Daniel was evidently not present for the ceremony. *pay no attention to you ... your gods*. Note the personal references. Their failure to worship the image was an affront to Nebuchadnezzar.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 3:13 *furious rage*. Nebuchadnezzar had forgotten his previous expressions of goodwill (2:46–49).

DANIEL—NOTE ON 3:15 *well and good.* Words added to the translation, which make clear Nebuchadnezzar's offer (see ESV note). *who is the god who will deliver you.* Nebuchadnezzar knew no god that could rescue these youths from the punishment he had decreed.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 3:16 *no need to answer you*. Their minds were made up.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 3:17 *If this be so.* If they must be cast into the fiery furnace. *our God … deliver us*. The youths confessed that the God of Israel was able to save them. See "deliver," p 842. Ter: "O martyrdom even without suffering perfect! Enough did they suffer! enough were they burned, whom on this account God shielded, that it might not seem that they had given a false representation of His power" (*ANF* 3:640–41). Ambr: "What good friends those Hebrew children were whom the flames of the fiery furnace did not separate from their love of each other!" (*NPNF* 2 10:88).

DANIEL—NOTE ON 3:18 *But if not.* There are times when it is not God's will to rescue believers from danger or death. Genuine faith trusts God whether or not He preserves believers when they face trials. E.g., consider how both the wicked and the righteous experienced suffering when God used Babylon to overthrow Judah. See pp 779–82. According to Church historians, all the apostles except John were put to death for their faith. Cypr: "Let us imitate the three children Ananias, Azarias, and Misael, who, neither frightened by their youthful age nor broken down by captivity, Judea being conquered and Jerusalem taken, overcame the king by the power of faith…. This is the strength of courage and of faith, to believe and to know that God can deliver from present death, and yet not to fear death nor give way, that faith may be the more mightily proved" (*ANF* 5:348).
DANIEL—NOTE ON 3:19 *expression … changed*. Because they defied Nebuchadnezzar's authority. *heated seven times more*. The king's unreasonable rage is matched by the excesses of the raging furnace. On the symbolic use of seven, see p 217.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 3:20 They were possibly cast into an opening on the top of the furnace. The front door (v 26) would be used for removing materials from the furnace.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 3:21 *bound in their ... garments.* These will testify to the miracle (v 27).
DANIEL—NOTE ON 3:22 *In their rush to please the enraged king,* the executioners failed to take proper precautions.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 3:23 Following this verse, the LXX included the Prayer of Azariah and the Song of the Three Holy Children. See pp 1394–95; see also *LSB* 931.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 3:24 After checking on the execution by having the front of the furnace opened, the king himself announced the amazing miracle to his counselors.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 3:25 *four men unbound, walking in the midst of the fire.* The three youths were not saved "from" the fire but "in" the fire. Like the burning bush (Ex 3:1–6), they were not consumed. *son of the gods*. See note, Jb 1:6. Cf Ps 34:7. Nebuchadnezzar clearly recognized (but did not describe) some feature that set this fourth person apart.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 3:26 *door*. Front opening (see note, v 20). *Most High*. Term non-Israelites used when referring to the true God (cf Nu 24:16; Is 14:14). See p 1227.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 3:27 Babylonian officials witnessed this miracle. *not singed ... no smell of fire*. As the Lord had promised: "When you walk through fire you shall not be burned" (Is 43:2).
DANIEL—NOTE ON 3:28 He who had blasphemed the true God by setting up a golden image now praised Him. The arrogant king was humbled. *Blessed*. See p 842. *angel*. See note, v 25. *yielded up their bodies*. Nebuchadnezzar esp marvels at their willingness to face martyrdom for their faith, a theme that begins with Israel's oppression in exile and appears throughout later Jewish and Christian literature. Israel as a nation suffered oppression from their enemies, but they increasingly suffered as individuals in hostile lands. Cf Heb 11.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 3:29 Nebuchadnezzar made the faith of Judah a legal religion with rights of toleration and respect. This was an important event since many Judeans would remain in Babylon after the end of the exile in 538 BC (e.g., the Judean community described in Est). *rescue*. See "redeem," p 843.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 3:30 *promoted*. Gave them additional responsibilities and privileges.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 3:8–30 The three youths who did not obey the idolatrous king's command were delivered because God's angel protected them. You have God's promise that "He will command His angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways" (Ps 91:11). You can be sure that His angels are watching over you at all times. • Heavenly Father, I entrust my life into Your loving hands, knowing that You care for me always. Amen.
DANIEL—NOTE ON **Ch 4** Luth: "A pointed example is directed against the bloodthirsty and the tyrants. For the great and mighty king [Nebuchadnezzar] is here robbed of his reason. He becomes so raving mad that he has to be treated like a mad dog, chained and put out in the field because people cannot stand his presence. Today, because we simply read this in a book, it may appear as a minor matter. If we had been present, however, and seen something like this, we would have been witnessing a terrifying and horrible judgment of God. Everyone would have been moved with compassion for all the overlords and evil tyrants, that they have to expect such gruesome judgment when they abuse their position as rulers. This too, however, happened for purposes of consolation—at that time the consolation of the wretched captive Jews [Judeans], today and evermore the

consolation of those who are plagued by tyrants or who suffer injustice—that men may see how God intends and is able to avenge us against our enemies even more fully than we dare to dream. As Psalm 58[:10] declares" (AE 35:297).

DANIEL—NOTE ON 4:1 Salutation of Nebuchadnezzar's open letter relating what had happened to him. *peoples, nations, and languages*. See note, 3:4.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 4:2 *signs and wonders.* What Nebuchadnezzar experienced was a miracle. See note, Ex 7:3. *Most High*. See note, 3:26. Occurs again in vv 17, 24, 25, 32, 34.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 4:3 Nebuchadnezzar began and ended with praise (vv 34–35). *kingdom*. Lit, "rule of a king." *dominion.* Lit, "rule of a lord" (Lat *dominus*). See pp 1565–66.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 4:1–3 Nebuchadnezzar wants others to know how the eternal King has changed his life. God likewise works in our lives to convict us of sin and assure us of His grace and forgiveness. • Holy Spirit, may I ever acknowledge Your work in me through Word and Sacrament. Amen.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 4:4 Things were going well for Nebuchadnezzar (cf v 27). Babylon was near the height of its power.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 4:5 *dream.* Cf 2:1. See p 74.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 4:7 See note, 2:2.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 4:8 *Belteshazzar ... my god*. See note, 1:7. *spirit of the holy gods*. See ESV note. Nebuchadnezzar recognized that Daniel was specially blessed by God (1:17), though his own knowledge of the true God remained quite limited.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 4:9 *chief of the magicians*. See note, 2:48. *mystery*. See note, 2:18.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 4:10–12 The gigantic tree in Nebuchadnezzar's dream was so great that it reached to heaven, provided sustenance for all creatures, and held everyone's attention.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 4:13 *watcher.* Angelic messenger. See note, v 17.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 4:14 *Chop ... lop ... strip ... scatter.* Shows that the Most High rules (v 17).

DANIEL—NOTE ON 4:15 *stump.* Suggests possible regrowth (cf Is 11:1). *band of iron and bronze*. To help preserve the stump. *him*. Masculine pronoun indicates that the tree represented the king (v 22). *wet with the dew*

of heaven. Having no shelter from moisture. Repeated in vv 25, 33. *portion*. See p 7.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 4:16 *beast's mind.* Mental illness called "lycanthropy." *seven periods of time*. Exact time needed to effect change. Typically regarded as seven years, though the equating of "periods of time" and "years" is not absolutely certain.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 4:17 *decree of the watchers … holy ones*. This sentence of the angelic council (see notes, 1Ki 22:19; Jb 1:6) was meant to convince "the living … that the Most High rules the kingdom of men." *Most High*. See note, 3:26.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 4:18 *spirit of the holy gods.* See note, v 8.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 4:4–18 In Nebuchadnezzar's dream, the great tree overshadowing the whole world represents a ruler who would be humbled. He has to learn that God rules all earthly kingdoms. We need constantly to be reminded that, although earthly kingdoms have great power and authority, the Most High rules. Thankfully, He rules mercifully (cf vv 34–37). • Thank You, heavenly Father, for exalting Jesus to Your right hand, where He rules for the benefit of His Church. Amen.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 4:19 *dismayed … alarmed*. Daniel realized the dream's meaning. *may the dream be ... for your enemies!* Pious wish intended to prepare Nebuchadnezzar for the worst.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 4:21 *leaves ... fruit.* Luth: "For the righteous lords and princes this is also a comforting and lovely image, that God the Lord depicts even this tyrannical king as a beautiful tree which nourishes all the beasts and lets them rest in its shade. Hereby God makes it clear that through civil authority [*Oberkeit*] he provides and maintains peace and tranquility, protection and defense, sustenance and possessions, and this entire temporal life, and that it is pleasing to him wherever a lord or prince practices his office conscientiously. For these are fine fruits, fine leaves, fine foliage, Daniel [4:21–22] says; that is, these are precious, noble, good works. Because it is so pleasing to God himself that he thus portrays, praises, and adorns it, a lord should indeed exercise his office with all eagerness and delight, even though it be full of toil and trouble. By the same token, we too ought not to pay attention to how evil the tyrants may be but to how precious and useful is the office which they have from God, instituted for our benefit and welfare" (AE 35:297–98).

DANIEL—NOTE ON 4:22 *it is you, O king*. Nebuchadnezzar's life parallels that of the tree. *ends of the earth*. Hyperbole, although the empire did reach from the Great Sea to the Persian Gulf. See map, p 717.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 4:23 *watcher, a holy one.* See note, v 17.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 4:25 *driven from among men.* Nebuchadnezzar was banished from society, just as Adam and Eve were cast out of Paradise. *till you know.* The king needed to learn that he ruled only by the will of the Most High.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 4:27 Call to repentance. "Daniel knew that the forgiveness of sins in Christ was promised not only to the Israelites, but also to all nations. Otherwise, he could not have promised to the king the forgiveness of sins. For without God's sure Word about His will, a person has no power to claim, especially when terrified by sin, that God ceases to be angry" (Ap V 141). Cyr Jer: "The LORD is loving unto man, and swift to pardon, but slow to punish. Let no man therefore despair of his own salvation" (*NPNF* 2 7:13). *prosperity.* Cf v 4.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 4:19–27 Daniel interprets the dream for the king and urges him to repent. Today, God does not normally use dreams to make clear His will that we repent, for He has given us the Scriptures, which are filled with such admonitions. To all who repent, God promises prosperity even greater than Nebuchadnezzar's: forgiveness of sins and eternal rest in heaven. • Holy God, I repent of my sins and plead for Your mercy. Grant me the rich blessing of Your Word of life. Amen.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 4:29 *twelve months*. Significant time elapsed with no change in Nebuchadnezzar's attitude.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 4:30 Nebuchadnezzar admired the many fine buildings for which he was famous, including one of the seven wonders of the ancient world, the Hanging Gardens. Under his reign, Babylon was 2 mi by 1.5 mi and completely enclosed by a high defensive wall with beautiful gates.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 4:31 Nebuchadnezzar had barely finished speaking when he heard God's voice of judgment.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 4:33 *eagles' feathers*. Could refer to vultures. Such birds of prey may have feathers more than a foot long. See note, Ob 4.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 4:28–33 Since Nebuchadnezzar goes on living as before, the decree of the Most High (v 24) comes to pass. For a period of

time, he lives like a beast. This is to be a learning experience for him. God may also allow trouble and illness in our lives to discipline us for our good (Heb 12:3–11). When this happens, we may trust His loving purpose and call on Him for strength and healing. • Loving Lord, when I experience trouble in my life, comfort me with the remembrance of what You suffered for my healing and salvation. Amen.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 4:34 *end of the days*. Seven periods of time completed (vv 16, 25). *lifted my eyes to heaven.* Nebuchadnezzar had learned his lesson. *I blessed the Most High*. His praise resumed (v 3) and was sincere. *dominion ... kingdom.* See note, v 3.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 4:35 *host of heaven*. Army of angels. See p 1291. *hand*. See p 842.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 4:36 *kingdom ... returned.* When Nebuchadnezzar's reason returned, he also resumed his kingly rule. *counselors ... sought me*. Government was back to normal.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 4:37 *all His works ... just*. This earthly king acknowledged that the King of heaven had treated him as he deserved. *He is able to humble*. Mary expressed the same thought in her Magnificat (Lk 1:52).

DANIEL—NOTE ON 4:34–37 After Nebuchadnezzar "lifted [his] eyes to heaven," his reason and the glory of his kingdom returned. He praised the King of heaven, who is able to humble those who walk in pride. As a disciple of Jesus, take to heart the words of Peter: "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time He may exalt you" (1Pt 5:6). • Jesus, You humbled Yourself for me. Give me the same mind, that all I say and do may glorify You. Amen.

DANIEL—NOTE ON **Ch 5** Luth: "Another example against the tyrants…. The hardened and unrepentant tyrant [Belshazzar] is punished mercilessly for his evil. At one blow he loses everything, land, people, and his own life. This is surely written to terrify all similar tyrants" (AE 35:298).

DANIEL—NOTE ON 5:1 *Belshazzar*. Ruled as Babylonian king while his father, Nabonidus, was elsewhere. *thousand of his lords*. Many nobles (and their wives) attended the great feast (v 3).

DANIEL—NOTE ON 5:2 *vessels … out of the temple in Jerusalem*. Nebuchadnezzar had brought these to Babylon (1:2). *father.* See ESV note. Nebuchadnezzar was a powerful king (vv 18–19) and regarded as father of the nation. *wives … concubines*. See pp 54–55.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 5:4 Using these sacred vessels for a toast to Babylonian idols at a boisterous drinking party was a sacrilegious act, mocking the Lord God (v 23). A letter (407 BC) from a Judean settlement in Elephantine, Egypt, complains of a similar abuse of sacred vessels taken from their temple.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 5:5 *fingers of a human hand*. The sudden appearance of this remarkable portent was not on the evening's program. *plaster*. Used to seal mud bricks; an excellent painting or writing surface. *opposite the lampstand*. The writing was well illuminated so all could read it.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 5:6 *color changed.* See note, 7:28.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 5:7 *enchanters … Chaldeans … astrologers*. See note, 2:2. *clothed with purple ... gold*. Symbols of royal honor. *third ruler*. High government office, likely third in rank after Belshazzar and his father Nabonidus, who was away at that time.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 5:8 Only the consonants were written, perhaps in an older script. See note, vv 25–28. The Babylonian wise men were unable to get the sense of the message.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 5:9 *color changed.* See note, 7:28.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 5:10 *queen.* See ESV note. May have been Nebuchadnezzar's widow.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 5:11 *spirit of the holy gods*. See note, 4:8. *wisdom*. Highly valued by Israelites and pagans. See pp 775–78. *father*. See note, v 2. *chief*. See note, 2:48.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 5:12 *riddles*. See note, Jgs 14:12. *this Daniel*. The person whom the queen described in such glowing terms was finally named. Daniel would have been an aged man by this time (see note, 1:21).
DANIEL—NOTE ON 5:1–12 Belshazzar hosts a great feast at which he and his guests drink toasts to their idols from the sacred vessels of the Jerusalem temple. God, whom Belshazzar mocks, suddenly shows His presence. This is a warning for us all. "Do not be deceived: God is not mocked" (Gal 6:7). God calls for repentance and faith. He likewise provides faithful interpreters of His Word to make His Law and promises known. • Holy God, may I ever respect Your almighty power and heed Your saving Word. Amen.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 5:13 *exiles of Judah.* See map, p 717.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 5:14 *I have heard*. Belshazzar had not met Daniel previously.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 5:15 *wise men, the enchanters*. See note, 1:20.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 5:17 *gifts ... rewards to another*. Daniel refused to allow any prospect of reward to influence his interpretation of the message.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 5:18 *Most High*. See note, 3:26. *gave Nebuchadnezzar … kingship*. Nebuchadnezzar learned that this was true (v 21).
DANIEL—NOTE ON 5:19 *he killed … he kept alive*. Had the power of life and death over those he ruled. God has similar yet far greater power. See note, Dt 32:39.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 5:20 *spirit was hardened*. Became proud of his achievements.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 5:21 *mind was made like that of a beast*. See note, 4:16. *wild donkeys*. See note, Jer 2:24. *Most High*. See note, 3:26.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 5:22 *not humbled ... knew all this*. Daniel condemned Belshazzar for the same sin of pride.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 5:23 *lifted up yourself*. Contrast Nebuchadnezzar, who finally lifted his eyes to heaven (4:34). Drinking from the sacred vessels and praising Babylonian gods was an affront to the Lord of heaven. *God in whose hand is your breath*. The true God, who had sent the writing hand (vv 5, 24), held in His hand the life of Belshazzar as surely as He holds the life of every person. Cf Ps 139.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 5:25–28 *Mene, Mene, Tekel, and Parsin*. Each Aram word had several meanings. As nouns, they could refer to three weights: "mina, shekel, and half (of a mina or shekel)." As verbs: "he counted (numbered), he weighed, he halved (divided)." *Peres*. Singular of *Parsin*; sounds like "Persia." Daniel interpreted these words to mean that God had judged Belshazzar, found him guilty, and would bring his kingdom to an end by giving it to the Medes and Persians. *Medes and Persians.* Peoples to the north and east of Babylon; often no distinction was made between the two groups. See map, p 717.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 5:29 Though Daniel's interpretation was not pleasing to the king, the king kept his promise.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 5:30 God was ultimately responsible for Belshazzar's death, as the vision of judgment showed.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 5:31 *Darius the Mede*. Not mentioned in any other ancient document. May be an alternate name for some other person who governed Babylon after its capture in 539 BC. A likely candidate is Cyrus,

whose mother was a Mede and did not give him the name Cyrus (Hdt 1:113–14). See note, 6:28. The prophets attributed the conquest of Babylon to the Medes (Is 13:17; Jer 51:11). There are further references to Darius the Mede in Dn 6; 9:1; 11:1. This person must be distinguished from the more famous Darius I, king of Persia (522–486 BC). *sixty-two*. Detail to distinguish the ruler from others of similar name.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 5:13–31 Daniel, after being introduced to Belshazzar, reminds him of how God has chastened Nebuchadnezzar for his pride. Belshazzar does not learn from this lesson, and so, as the writing reveals, he will be humbled and his kingdom given to another. The fall of Babylon made a deep impression on the biblical writers (Is 21:9; Rv 18:2) and came to symbolize the end of the world. All human history will end. Only the kingdom of God is forever, and He rules for the sake of our justification. • Lord Jesus, keep me watchful for Your coming and prepared for Your rule. Amen.

DANIEL—NOTE ON **Ch 6** Luth: "The fine and precious example of a good and righteous king [Darius] who loved Daniel…. Once again God proves himself righteous and comforting; for he so marvelously reverses the plot [so] that that which Daniel's enemies had prepared for him they had to swallow themselves. This is just as Psalm 7[:14, 16] declares…. Thus Daniel's life is nothing but a fine, clear mirror. In it we see the conflict and victory of faith, which, by the grace of God, triumphs over all men and devils; we see too the great fruit and use of faith, which it produces through patience and cross-bearing, before both God and the world" (AE 35:298–99).

DANIEL—NOTE ON 6:1 *Darius*. See note, 5:31. *satraps*. Persian term for provincial officials. See note, Ezr 4:10.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 6:2 *three presidents*. Oversaw the work of the satraps.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 6:3 *Daniel became distinguished.* Age and experience were highly regarded in the ancient world. *excellent spirit*. See note, 4:8.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 6:4 *sought to find a … complaint*. Prompted by political jealousy of this exiled Judean (v 13; cf 3:8). *faithful*. Daniel performed his official duties faultlessly.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 6:5 *law of his God*. Daniel's rivals were well aware of his religious practices.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 6:6 *came by agreement*. Hatched a plot to trap Daniel.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 6:7 *presidents ... governors*. The plotters claimed weighty support for their proposed law. *ordinance … injunction*. Law with enforcement procedures. *petition*. Prayer. *except to you, O king*. Elevated the king to divine status. *den*. Lit, "pit," closed by a stone (v 17). *lions*. Asiatic lions, smaller than African lions. Probably kept in captivity for royal hunting parties.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 6:8 *cannot be changed*. Making a mockery of his supposed divine authority.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 6:10 *toward Jerusalem*. See note, 1Ki 8:30. *on his knees three times a day*. Daniel did not protest the new law but witnessed to his faith by his actions. Judeans usually stood for public prayer and knelt in private. See "kneel," p 1276. Luther suggests that kneeling shows we are beggars before God. Ter: "We pray at least not less than thrice in the day, debtors as we are to Three—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit" (*ANF* 3:690).
DANIEL—NOTE ON 6:11 *by agreement*. Cf vv 6, 15. Every move was carefully plotted. *found Daniel*. He made no attempt to conceal the fact that he was violating the king's law.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 6:14–15 King Darius had come to depend on Daniel's expertise and wise counsel (v 3). But much to his distress, the law was unalterable.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 6:16 *May your God ... deliver you!* This heathen king expressed the hope that Daniel's God would save him. This may signal the king's doubts about the powers of his own gods.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 6:17 Daniel's fate was sealed; his death seemed inevitable.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 6:18 *spent the night fasting; no diversions*. Evidence of the king's distress (v 14). See p 189.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 6:20 *living God*. Cf Dt 5:26; see notes, Jsh 3:10; Mt 16:16. Only time a non-Israelite makes this confession. *able to deliver you*. Darius hoped that his wish was fulfilled (v 16). See "deliver," p 842.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 6:21 *O king, live forever!* See note, 2:4.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 6:22 *angel*. See note, Jb 1:6. *found blameless*. The expression can mean he was not guilty of "great transgression" (Ps 19:13). However, see note, Jb 1:1.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 6:23 *trusted*. Daniel demonstrated his faith when he continued to pray to the true God (v 10).
DANIEL—NOTE ON 6:24 *those men*. Plotters against Daniel (vv 5–6). *children ... wives*. Gk historian Herodotus reported that fear of conspiracy might cause a Persian ruler to kill the family of a criminal (Hdt 3:119). *before they reached the bottom*. Evidence of God's power in preserving Daniel's life.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 6:26 *tremble and fear*. Darius's decree went even further than Nebuchadnezzar's had (3:29) in commanding respect for the God of Israel. *kingdom … dominion*. See note, 4:3.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 6:27 *delivers and rescues … saved*. God protected Daniel as He had protected Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego (3:25–27). See "deliver," p 842. *signs and wonders*. Miracles.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 6:28 *and the reign of Cyrus the Persian.* Or, "that is, in the reign of Cyrus the Persian," which would make Darius the Mede and Cyrus the Persian the same person. See note, 5:31.
DANIEL—NOTE ON **Ch 6** Daniel is cast into the lions' den for continuing to pray to the true God. When Daniel is saved from death, Darius issues a new decree ordering all people in his kingdom to fear the God of Daniel. These events are a preview of God's ultimate triumph over all the forces of evil. Then every knee shall bow (Is 45:23; Php 2:10), and every nation will come and worship the Lord (Rv 15:4). The devil, that roaring lion (1Pt 5:8), means deadly woe, but we tremble not (*LSB* 656)! For Christ is our protector. • All praise to You, O Christ, for conquering Satan and rescuing me from his deadly threats. Amen.
DANIEL—NOTE ON **Ch 7** Hipp: "In distinguishing the kingdoms that are to rise after these things, he showed also the coming of Antichrist in the last times, and the consummation of the whole world…. Now if we set Daniel's own visions [ch 7] also side by side with this [ch 2], we shall have one exposition to give of the two together, and shall (be able to) show how concordant with each other they are, and how true" (*ANF* 5:208). Luth: "In the seventh chapter begin the visions and prophecies of the future kingdoms, especially of the kingdom of Christ, for whose sake all these visions came to pass. To begin with, the four kingdoms, which he pointed out above in chapter 2[:31–43] in the great image, he now sees again in another form, namely in the four beasts" (AE 35:299).

DANIEL—NOTE ON 7:1 *first year of Belshazzar*. 553 BC. See note, 5:1. *dream and visions*. Now Daniel receives revelations instead of interpreting them, in contrast to his previous experiences (chs 2; 4; 5). *he wrote.* Because he realized his dream was a revelation from God for His people.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 7:2 *four winds*. See note, Ezk 5:10. *great sea*. Often symbolic of chaos and evil (cf Is 27:1). Hipp: "By the great sea he means the whole world" (*ANF* 5:188).
DANIEL—NOTE ON 7:3–7 *four great beasts*. Daniel saw strange hybrid creatures whose appearances and actions had symbolic and prophetic meaning. See notes, vv 15–27.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 7:6 *dominion.* See note, 4:3.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 7:7 Whereas the appearances of the other beasts could be associated with various animals, the fourth beast had no natural counterpart. It is a living contrast to the created order. *iron teeth.* Hybrid of natural and man-made parts, with hideous results. *ten horns.* See note, v 24; see also "horn," p 842.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 7:8 *another horn, a little one.* It pushed up among the 10 horns of the fourth beast. *eyes … mouth*. Further hybrid features, with human characteristics.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 7:1–8 Daniel has a vision of four beasts coming out of the great sea. Though Daniel does not yet understand his vision, he knows that it is a revelation from God and so records it for us to read as well. We find much that is hard to understand in such visions. Thank God that He "has spoken to us by His Son" (Heb 1:2). In Christ, we have God's fullest and clearest revelation. • Heavenly Father, thank You for revealing all grace and truth in Your Son, Jesus. Deliver us from the beastly evils of this age. Amen.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 7:9–10 *thrones … court*. Daniel next saw a court scene with judgment thrones set up (cf Ps 122:5). See note, Ezk 1:26.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 7:9 *Ancient of Days.* God the Father. *white as snow … pure wool*. Symbolizes God's eternity and holiness (cf Is 1:18). *fiery flames*. Throne, wheels, and stream (v 10) were all fiery, as was God's appearance on Mount Sinai (Ex 19:16–18). On God's throne, see p 1323.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 7:10 *a thousand thousands*. 1 Clem: "Let us consider the whole multitude of His angels, how they stand ever ready to minister to His will…. Let us therefore, conscientiously gathering together in harmony, cry to Him earnestly, as with one mouth, that we may be made

partakers of His great and glorious promises" (*ANF* 1:14). Ter: "The Divine Monarchy also is administered by so many legions and hosts of angels; … it has not from this circumstance ceased to be the rule of one" (*ANF* 3:599). Cyr Jer: "Not that the multitude is only so great, but because the Prophet could not express more than these. So there will be present at the judgment in that day, God, the Father of all, Jesus Christ being seated with Him, and the Holy Ghost present with Them; and an angel's trumpet shall summon us all to bring our deeds with us" (*NPNF* 2 7:112). *served … stood*. God's throne was surrounded by myriads of angels. See "stand," p 1277. *books*. Records of human conduct.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 7:11 *great words*. Boasts "against the Most High" (v 25). *killed*. Body of the monster beast (vv 7–8) was destroyed and burned.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 7:12 First three beasts lost their power but continued to exist. *for a season and a time*. Lit, "until a season and a time," i.e., "for a period of time," which is not specified.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 7:9–12 The Ancient of Days presides over a court of judgment and condemns the fourth beast to be burned. This judgment scene, repeated in v 26, is a prelude to the final judgment, when all people will appear before the throne of God (Mt 25:32). For those who are in Christ Jesus, the verdict will be "not guilty" (Rm 8:1; 1Jn 2:1–2). • Praise to You, Lord Jesus, for serving as my advocate before God's throne. Amen.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 7:13 *with the clouds*. Different origin from the beasts, which came from the sea. See note, v 2. *like a son of man*. Daniel uses comparison as he did with the first three beasts earlier in the vision ("like," vv 4–6). There is something special about this figure, however. This vision describes the commissioning of the Christ as our Lord and Savior. See note, Ezk 2:1; see also p 1080. *presented*. Introduced at the court of the Ancient of Days (vv 9–10).

DANIEL—NOTE ON 7:14 In contrast to the beasts whose dominion was taken away (v 12), the Ancient of Days invested the "one like a son of man" with an everlasting reign. Just: "There would be two advents of His, —one in which He was pierced by you; a second, when you shall know Him whom you have pierced" (*ANF* 1:210). Cyr Jer: "We preach not one advent only of Christ, but a second also, far more glorious than the former. For the former gave a view of His patience; but the latter brings with it the crown of a divine kingdom. For all things, for the most part, are twofold in

our Lord Jesus Christ: a twofold generation; one, of God, before the ages; and one, of a Virgin, at the close of the ages: His descents twofold; one, the unobserved, *like rain on a fleece*; and a second His open coming, which is to be. In His former advent, He was wrapped in swaddling clothes in the manger; in His second, He *covers Himself with light as with a garment*" (*NPNF* 2 7:104). *dominion … kingdom*. See note, 4:3. *all peoples, nations, and languages*. His reign defies all boundaries. *everlasting*. Contrasts with the reigns of others, which are subject to God's limited plans for them.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 7:13–14 Daniel sees "one like a son of man," coming with the clouds of heaven, who is given eternal rule over the whole earth. We recognize that this King is Jesus, fully divine and fully human, Son of Mary and Son of the Most High, whose kingdom will never end (Lk 1:32–33). May we ever "live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him" (SC, p xxxvii). • Jesus, my King, rule me body and soul as You know best. Amen.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 7:15 Daniel had interpreted the dreams of others (1:17; 2:36; 4:19), but he was mystified and perplexed by his own dream (cf v 28).

DANIEL—NOTE ON 7:16 Daniel seeks the meaning of the vision even as it unfolds. *one … who stood there*. One serving the Ancient of Days (v 10); perhaps Gabriel (8:16).

DANIEL—NOTE ON 7:17 *four kings.* Note "kingdom" in v 23 (cf 2:39–41). Readers should be cautious about unequivocally linking representations in Daniel's visions with specific rulers; they might represent a succession of rulers for a particular kingdom. Because kings of Babylon (1:1), Media and Persia (5:31; 8:20; 10:1), and Greece (8:21) are mentioned in Dn, the first three beasts may be associated with these kingdoms.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 7:18 *saints*. Lit, "holy ones." See p 843. They will live forever in the kingdom ruled by "one like a son of man" (vv 13–14). *Most High*. See note, 3:26; see also p 1227.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 7:19 Daniel was less curious about the first three beasts than the terrible fourth beast, which may represent the Roman Empire.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 7:20 *other horn that came up*. Daniel was most interested in the little horn. Some interpreters regard it as a prophetic portrayal of Syrian king Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175–164 BC). The apocryphal books of 1 and 2Macc describe how this king savagely

persecuted the Jewish people. See pp 1562–64. However, the fourth kingdom more likely represents the Roman Empire and points forward to the reign of Antichrist. See "The Restrainer," p 2060. On prophetic perspective, see p 1258. Hipp: "Who, then, are meant by this but the Romans … ?" (*ANF* 5:178). Cyr Jer: "That this kingdom is that of the Romans, has been the tradition of the Church's interpreters" (*NPNF* 2 7:108).

DANIEL—NOTE ON 7:21 Daniel's vision was expanded, and he foresaw affliction for God's people.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 7:22 God the Father stepped in to save His people by destroying the beast with its many horns (cf vv 11, 26). *judgment was given*. Saints were vindicated and possessed the kingdom.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 7:23 *he said.* The interpreter (v 16) elaborated on his previous explanations.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 7:24 *ten horns … ten kings*. Rather than representing specific rulers, the number may be symbolic of the kingdom's greatness. See p 217. *another shall arise.* The little horn (vv 8, 20). *put down three kings*. The little horn will defeat three kings or kingdoms. See note, v 17.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 7:25 *speak words.* Cf vv 8, 11, 20; 11:36. This ruler's eloquence is emphasized. Cyr Jer: "A blasphemer the man is and lawless, not having received the kingdom from his fathers, but having usurped the power by means of sorcery…. And who is this, and from what sort of working? Interpret to us, O Paul. [2Th 2:9]" (*NPNF* 2 7:108). *Most High*. See note, 3:26. *wear out*. Harass and persecute. *change the times and the law*. Show antagonism to the Most High by changing the religious calendar and law. *given into his hand*. Cf v 21. *a time, times, and half a time*. Precise time when the suffering would end is not stated. Symbolically could mean that though the time of affliction for the saints seems like it will go on forever ("a time, times"), there will be a termination point ("half a time"). However, see note, 12:7.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 7:26–27 Cf v 22.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 7:27 *all dominions shall serve and obey them*. The saints will share in the rule of the "one like a son of man" (vv 13–14; 2Tm 2:12).

DANIEL—NOTE ON 7:28 *alarmed*. The vision's interpretation did not lessen Daniel's anxieties. *color changed*. Due to his alarm, he likely grew pale. See p 1276.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 7:15–28 Daniel's visions are interpreted to mean that the Ancient of Days will destroy all earthly kingdoms, including that of the little horn, and that the saints of the Most High will possess an everlasting kingdom. Yet Daniel is alarmed and perplexed over what he sees and hears; this may be comforting to us, since we do not fully comprehend God's ways and purposes either. Though we may understand the basics of what God is teaching us, still an element of mystery surrounds His promises and their future fulfillment. Powerful earthly kingdoms may sometimes persecute God's people, but we know that God has given us the Kingdom in His dear Son (Lk 12:32). • O Ancient of Days, give me the confidence that You rule all things for my good. Amen.
DANIEL—NOTE ON **Chs 8–12** Hbr language resumes for the remainder of the Book (see note, 2:4). See also p 1395.
DANIEL—NOTE ON **Ch 8** Luth: "Daniel experiences a special vision. Unlike the former, this one pertains not to the whole world but to his own people, the Jews [Judeans]; it shows how they were to fare prior to the Roman empire and before the coming of Christ, namely, under the third empire, that of Alexander the Great. Once again the purpose is to console the Jews, that they may not despair amid the wretchedness that is to engulf them, as if Christ would leave them again and not come" (AE 35:300).
DANIEL—NOTE ON 8:1 *third year*. C 551 BC (see note, 5:1). *vision.* Here Daniel was awake and not dreaming (cf 2:19).
DANIEL—NOTE ON 8:2 *Susa*. Future capital of the Persian Empire (Est 1:2); 200 mi E of Babylon. *Elam*. Between Babylon and Persia. *Ulai canal*. Waterway near Susa. See map, p 717.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 8:3–14 Notes for these verses focus on the imagery as Daniel experienced it. The vision is interpreted in vv 20–26.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 8:3 *ram*. Male sheep. *horns*. Typically represent kings or kingdoms in Daniel's visions (cf 7:24). *one was higher*. Represents greater strength.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 8:5 See note, v 21. *male goat*. Worthy rival. Cf Mt 25:32, where people are compared to sheep and goats. Goats tend to be more curious and courageous than sheep. *from the west*. Direction of Greece and Asia Minor. *without touching the ground*. Emphasizes his rapid progress. *horn between his eyes*. Most unusual position.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 8:8 *four conspicuous horns*. See note, v 22. *horns*. See note, v 3.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 8:9 *glorious land*. Israel, the Promised Land.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 8:10 Daniel envisioned the little horn trampling on the stars it had thrown down. *It grew great.* Cf 11:36. *host of heaven*. God's angelic army, which it defiled. See p 1291.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 8:11 *Prince of the host*. God. See note, Ezk 44:3; see also p 1291. *taken away*. Morning and evening sacrifices were stopped in the Jerusalem temple. See pp 170–71. *His sanctuary was overthrown*. See notes, vv 24, 25.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 8:12 Some Judeans joined in these transgressions of God's truth.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 8:13 *holy one ... another holy one said*. Daniel heard two angels talking. *how long.* First question of those who face suffering (cf Ps 74:10). *regular burnt offering*. See note, v 11. *transgression that makes desolate*. See note, v 25.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 8:14 *2,300 evenings and mornings*. Unclear whether number is literal or symbolic. If literal, the time period would be less than seven years, seven being a symbolic number (see p 217). In any case, the period of distress would end, and the sanctuary would be restored.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 8:1–14 In the vision of a ram and a male goat, God assures His people that His sanctuary will be restored. When trouble comes into our lives, no matter what its source, we may also ask, "How long?" Whether our time of suffering is long or short, we know that God hears our prayers and will help us according to His timetable. • Heavenly Father, comfort me with the assurance that Your love surrounds me every moment of my life. Amen.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 8:15 *appearance of a man*. Proved to be the angel Gabriel (v 16), whose name means "man of God."
DANIEL—NOTE ON 8:16 Unidentified human voice spoke from Ulai canal (see note, v 2).
DANIEL—NOTE ON 8:17 *fell on my face*. Result of being overcome by fear. See p 1276. *son of man*. Emphasizing Daniel's human weakness. See note, Ezk 2:1. *time of the end*. End of the distress caused by Antiochus IV (see notes, vv 23–25).
DANIEL—NOTE ON 8:18 *deep sleep*. He lost consciousness as a result of his visionary experience. *touched me*. To strengthen him (cf 1Ki 19:5, 7).
DANIEL—NOTE ON 8:19 Gabriel revealed to Daniel that the period of wrath experienced by God's people would indeed end. *appointed*. God had

determined the time.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 8:20–22 Cf vv 3–8. In the vision of ch 7, the kings/kingdoms were never named by the heavenly interpreter. Here Daniel receives more specific insight about his vision.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 8:21 Refers to Alexander the Great (356–323 BC), commander of the Gk army that conquered Persia.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 8:22 After Alexander's death, his empire split into four parts: Greece, Asia Minor, Syria, and Egypt. See map, p 1554.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 8:23 *transgressors have reached their limit*. Period of turmoil following Alexander's death when his generals vied for power. *bold face*. Refers to Antiochus IV, the little horn, who displayed insolence and defiance (vv 9–10). He titled himself Epiphanes, "god manifest." His rule points forward to the rule of Antichrist (see note, 7:20). *understands riddles*. Smart and clever. See note, Jgs 14:12.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 8:24 *great.* Cf vv 9, 11, 25. *destroy mighty men ... saints*. Antiochus IV destroyed his political enemies as well as some of God's holy people. He exalted himself, seeking to usurp God's place in the lives of His people.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 8:25 *he shall even rise up*. Antiochus IV committed blasphemous acts. As happened during the Babylonian conquest of Jerusalem, God's temple would again be defiled by pagans (1Macc 1:45–47, 59). Antiochus IV used the temple for worship of Zeus (Dn 11:31; 2Macc 6:2). See pp 1553–56. *Prince of princes*. God. See note, Ezk 44:3. *broken—but by no human hand.* Antiochus IV died in late 164 BC while campaigning in Persia; he reportedly lost his mind. So God ended his reign of terror (11:45).
DANIEL—NOTE ON 8:26 *vision of the evenings and the mornings*. There will be a period of time before the end comes. *seal up*. Daniel's vision was not for his own day but for the comfort of the saints at the time of Antiochus IV.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 8:27 *overcome … sick ... appalled*. Daniel grieved over what his people would have to suffer in future years.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 8:15–27 The angel Gabriel explains Daniel's vision. The wars between Persia and Greece will lead finally to the emergence of Antiochus IV, who will defy God and His people. But Daniel is assured that God has appointed this evil ruler's end. Today, we also face a wicked foe, Satan, who prowls around like a roaring lion seeking to devour

us (1Pt 5:8). Yet his end is also guaranteed because Christ died to "destroy the one who has the power of death" (Heb 2:14). Take comfort in Christ's victory. • Lord Jesus, thank You for defeating Satan and assuring us that we also will be conquerors through Christ. Amen.

DANIEL—NOTE ON **Ch 9** Luth: "The ninth chapter opens with a splendid prayer in which Daniel prays for his people who are held captive in Babylon, and for the city of Jerusalem and the temple. He prays that the Jews [Judeans] might return to Jerusalem and there resume their worship of God. The prayer is answered, and to Daniel is revealed the number of years until Christ should come and begin his eternal kingdom. Now this is a remarkable and great revelation of Christ which sets the time so surely and accurately" (AE 35:303).

DANIEL—NOTE ON 9:1 *first year*. 539 BC. *Darius ... a Mede*. See note, 5:31. Cf ch 6. *Ahasuerus.* Not the king mentioned in Ezr 4:6; Est 1:1. *Chaldeans*. Babylonians (see note, 1:4).

DANIEL—NOTE ON 9:2 *books.* Scrolls. Daniel searched the Scriptures after learning in his previous vision that the Jerusalem sanctuary would be restored after "2,300 evenings and mornings" (8:14; cf 8:26). Scribes were collecting the Books of the Prophets (the second portion of the Hbr Bible) and regarded them as divine and authoritative. See pp 1081–83. Daniel's prophecy would later also be collected for the third portion of the Hbr Bible, the Writings, which included the Books of Wisdom and most later historical books (Ru, Lam, Est, Ezr, Ne, 1Ch, 2Ch). *seventy years.* Jeremiah prophesied that 70 years must pass before the exiles would return to Jerusalem and the desolations of the city would end (Jer 29:10). This was a punishment for the Judeans and a period of rest for the land they had exploited. See note, 2Ch 36:21; see also p 206.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 9:3 Daniel prayed three times a day (6:10). What follows in vv 4–19 is an example of his pleas for mercy, addressed to the Lord shortly before Cyrus issued his decree in 538 BC allowing the Judean exiles to return home (Ezr 1:2–3). *mercy*. See pp 842–43. *fasting*. See p 189. *sackcloth and ashes*. See notes, Jb 2:8; 16:15.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 9:4 *confession*. Daniel was conscious of his own sins and those of Israel. Cf Ne 9. *keeps covenant and steadfast love*. In contrast to Israel's unfaithfulness, the Lord's love for His people did not waver. See notes, Ex 34:6–7; see also pp 127, 843.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 9:5 *sinned.* Hbr *chata',* "miss the mark." See p 959. Daniel repeatedly characterized Israel's rebellion and lawlessness with this word (vv 8, 11, 16, 20).
DANIEL—NOTE ON 9:6 On the prophets' ministry, see pp 1081–83.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 9:7–10 Daniel contrasted God's righteousness with Israel's glaring wickedness. Whereas Israel walked in sin, the Lord is distinguished by mercy and forgiveness. See notes, Ex 34:6–7.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 9:7 *righteousness*. See p 843.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 9:9 *mercy.* See pp 842–43.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 9:10 *His servants the prophets.* See pp 1081–83.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 9:11 *curse and oath*. Moses had warned the people of Israel that the Lord would pronounce curses on them for their sins. See pp 6–7.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 9:12 *confirmed His words*. Fulfilled the prophetic warnings spoken by Moses and other prophets. *done against Jerusalem*. City and temple had been destroyed by the Babylonians and still lay in ruins (v 17).
DANIEL—NOTE ON 9:13 *not ... turning from our iniquities*. Exiles were guilty of continuing in the sins of their ancestors. See notes, Ezk 20:1–4, 5–32.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 9:14 *kept ready the calamity*. Cf Jer 31:28; 44:27. *righteous*. See p 843.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 9:15 *brought Your people out of ... Egypt.* Daniel concluded his confession of sin by reminding the Lord of His great act of salvation on behalf of Israel. *mighty hand*. See "hand," p 842. *made a name for Yourself*. See "name" and "for Your name's sake," pp 843, 842.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 9:16–19 Repeated plea that the Lord would have mercy on Jerusalem.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 9:16 *holy hill*. Mount Zion, location of the temple in Jerusalem. See "Zion," p 844; see also map, p 493.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 9:17 *mercy*. See pp 842–43. *for Your own sake*. See "for Your name's sake," p 842. *make Your face to shine*. Sign of God's favor. See note, Nu 6:25; see also p 1276.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 9:18 *Open Your eyes*. Vivid way of appealing to God to take note of the desolations in Jerusalem (cf Ps 44:23). See note, Is 45:15. *called by Your name*. See p 842. *because of Your great mercy*. "Faith

saves because it takes hold of mercy, or the promise of grace, even though our works are unworthy" (Ap V 217).

DANIEL—NOTE ON 9:19 *hear ... forgive ... pay attention and act.* Daniel concluded his appeal for the Lord's mercy with a litany of petitions. "So Daniel teaches us in praying to seize mercy, that is, to trust in God's mercy and not to trust in our own merits before God" (Ap V 210). *called by Your name*. See p 842.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 9:1–19 Daniel fervently longs for the restoration of Jerusalem and the temple. His search of the Scriptures leads him to Jeremiah's prophecy that the captivity would end after 70 years. Daniel is aware that Israel's sins brought God's curse on them. His long prayer is a heartfelt confession of sins and an earnest plea for the Lord's mercy. The pattern of Daniel's prayer is one that we continue to follow in worship and private devotions. We are confident of being heard because Jesus is seated at the right hand of the Father. • O Christ, Lamb of God, have mercy on me, a sinner, and grant me peace. Amen.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 9:20 *holy hill.* See note, v 16.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 9:21 *man Gabriel*. Angel who had appeared to Daniel previously and interpreted his vision of the ram, goat, and little horn. *swift flight*. Gabriel came at once in answer to Daniel's prayer. Hipp: "You see how the prophet likens the speed of the angels to a winged bird, on account of the light and rapid motion with which these spirits fly so quickly in discharge of orders" (*ANF* 5:190). *evening sacrifice*. Daniel's evening prayer coincided with the time the evening sacrifice would normally have been offered in the temple (cf Ps 141:2). See p 1567.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 9:23 *word went out*. God commanded Gabriel to go to Daniel. *you are greatly loved*. Daniel needed this assurance after confessing his sins and deploring Jerusalem's desolations. *consider the word and understand the vision.* Gabriel links the word of Jeremiah (v 2) with the previous vision (ch 8). We are helped to understand Gabriel's answer in vv 24–27 (see notes) by recalling his interpretation of the previous vision (8:19–26) and what follows in ch 11.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 9:20–23 God demonstrates His love for Daniel by immediately responding to his prayer. Today, we have Jesus' assurance that He will hear and answer the prayers of His disciples (Jn 14:13–14; 15:16; 16:23–24). Therefore, we may pray with confidence and patience, knowing

that God will hear. • Lord, hear my prayer and answer me as You know best. Grant me great patience and faith in Your love. Amen.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 9:24–27 One of the more difficult and controverted texts of the OT. Of the many suggested interpretations, two are most noteworthy. They are presented together on p 1417. Notes on these verses follow the traditional messianic interpretation.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 9:24 *Seventy weeks*. Likely related to the "seventy years" of which Jeremiah spoke (v 2). Numbers like seven, seventy, and other multiples of seven are often symbolic (cf Mt 18:21–22). See p 217. The figure here is not a literal 70 weeks referring to the restoration of the temple, because the second temple was not completed until 516 BC (c 23 years after Daniel's vision). The Hbr word for "week" is literally "seven" (see ESV note). Seventy "sevens" is 490 units of time, which some regard as symbolic for c 490 years, from the end of the exile to the time of Christ. *holy city*. Jerusalem. *finish the transgression ... iniquity.* The people and city would continue to suffer for their sins, as God had threatened. *righteousness*. See p 843. *seal both vision and prophet*. See note, 8:26; cf 12:4. Wording indicates that the prophecy of 70 weeks has to do with the future, when it would be unsealed. (On the practical use of seals, see note, Jer 32:10.) The prophecy of Jeremiah was fulfilled literally during the 70 years of the exile. But here Gabriel uses the symbolic quality of the number to introduce another topic of prophecy. (On prophetic perspective, see p 1258.) The idea of 70 weeks may also connect with the OT theme of Sabbath rest for the land during the exile. See note, 2Ch 36:21; see also p 206. *to anoint a most holy place*. This translation implies rededication of the temple (cf Ezr 6:13–18; 1Macc 4:42–59). However, the Hbr literally says "to anoint a holy of holies" or "to anoint a most holy one" (see ESV note), which could refer to a person such as the Messiah (cf "anointed one," v 25). Hipp: "The Most Holy is none else but the Son of God alone" (*ANF* 5:181).

DANIEL—NOTE ON 9:25 *the word to restore*. Possibly refers to the decree of Cyrus in 538 BC (Ezr 1:2), which ended the exile. *anointed one, a prince*. May refer to either Zerubbabel or Joshua (see note, Zec 4:13–14). See also p 228. *anointed*. See note, 1Sm 10:1. *seven weeks*. Relatively short period of time, perhaps to the completion of the second temple. *sixty-two weeks*. Bulk of the time period, which may extend to the NT era. *built again with squares and moat*. Nehemiah would rebuild the walls and city of

Jerusalem. *moat*. Defensive trench, not necessarily filled with water. *troubled time*. Jerusalem was dominated by the Persians, Alexander the Great and his successors (cf 8:1–8; 11:2–4), the Maccabees, and finally the Romans. However, the city was continually inhabited amid all this trouble and became the capital of the region. Only during the reign of Antiochus IV were temple services disrupted.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 9:26 Luth: "Then after sixty-two weeks (he says) Christ shall be put to death. Here he shows what is to happen when these sixty-nine weeks are up, and Christ has begun [his ministry], namely, that Christ shall be crucified" (AE 35:305). Aph: "Daniel testifies that, when Christ comes and is slain, Jerusalem shall be destroyed, and shall continue in desolation until the accomplishment of the things which are determined, for ever" (*NPNF* 2 13:390). *people of the prince ... destroy*. Romans destroyed Jerusalem and the temple in AD 70. *Its end ... flood*. The end would come suddenly. Cf Mk 13:14–23 for Jesus' warnings.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 9:27 *strong covenant*. Luth: "The preaching of Christ spread mightily … proclaiming to the people the promised grace" (AE 35:305). *one week*. Short period of time. *half of the week*. About midway through the final period. *end to sacrifice and offering*. Luth: "Christ was put to death. And then the sacrifice ceased; that is, through Christ's death, which is the true sacrifice, the Jewish sacrifice and worship were abolished" (AE 35:305). *wing of abominations*. Luth: "The Romans under Emperor Caius Caligula placed an idol in the temple (as the angel says here [9:27]) as a sign that the temple and Judaism were to be at an end" (AE 35:305). *decreed end*. God is also speaking about the end of Rome.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 9:24–27 Gabriel directs Daniel to expand his vision of the future. Daniel was to think not of seventy years but of seventy times seven. The things of which Gabriel spoke remain somewhat mysterious. What we can learn from Gabriel's message is that God's vision of the future surpasses all our thinking and calculating. We walk by faith and not by sight (2Co 5:7), trusting that the One who kept His promise to send the Messiah, the Anointed One, will keep all His promises to us in His own time and way. • Take my hand and lead me, dear Lord, for then I know I am safe. Amen.

DANIEL—NOTE ON **Chs 10–12** Though quoting other speakers, Daniel is the narrator (except for 10:1, which characterizes the contents). He

describes an encounter with a heavenly messenger.
DANIEL—NOTE ON **Ch 10** Luth: "The tenth chapter is a prologue to the eleventh. Yet in it Daniel writes something special about the angels, the like of which we find nowhere else in the Scriptures, namely, that the good angels do battle with the evil angels in defense of men. Besides Daniel calls also the evil angels princes, as when he speaks of 'the prince of Greece' [10:20]. Hence we may understand why things are so wild and dissolute at the courts of kings and princes, and why they hinder the good and bring on war and unhappiness. For there are devils there, hounding and goading, or hindering to such an extent that nothing goes as it should" (AE 35:305–6).
DANIEL—NOTE ON 10:1 *third year*. 536 BC (after the capture of Babylon in 539 BC). *Cyrus king of Persia*. See notes, 1:21; 6:28. *Belteshazzar.* See note, 1:7. *great conflict*. Described in ch 11. *vision.* Daniel's previous vision (ch 8) disclosed information similar to that found in ch 11.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 10:2 Daniel continued to grieve for his people and Jerusalem (9:3, 16). Two years had passed since the Judeans were allowed to return to Jerusalem. Daniel was too old to return. Perhaps he heard of the hardships the returnees were facing.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 10:3 *anoint myself.* Use of oil was normal hygiene in a dry climate (cf Ec 9:8), but a mourner abstained from anointing (2Sm 14:2).
DANIEL—NOTE ON 10:4 *first month*. Nisan (Mar/Apr). *Tigris*. Large river east of Babylon. His previous vision was at the Ulai canal (8:2).
DANIEL—NOTE ON 10:5 *man clothed in linen.* Divine messenger; called a "man," as was Gabriel previously (8:15; 9:21). *Uphaz.* Location unknown.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 10:6 *beryl.* See note, Ezk 1:16.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 10:7 The vision was intended only for Daniel. *great trembling … fled*. They knew something unusual was taking place, perhaps from Daniel's reactions.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 10:8 *no strength.* Daniel repeatedly spoke of his weakness and need to be strengthened (cf vv 16–19). *my radiant appearance*. Reflecting the glory of the Lord.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 10:9 *fell on my face*. See note, 8:17. *deep sleep*. See note, 8:18.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 10:10 *hand touched me*. Daniel may have been met by a number of heavenly beings (cf vv 5, 10, 16, 18). This could have been either the hand of the messenger (v 5) or another divine being who had been sent (v 11).
DANIEL—NOTE ON 10:11 *man greatly loved*. Daniel was held in high esteem. See note, Ezk 14:14.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 10:12 Daniel's prayers were heard (v 2), but the answer was delayed.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 10:13 *prince of the kingdom of Persia*. Spiritual being, perhaps a fallen angel, who contended for Persia. *withstood me twenty-one days*. God's messenger was held up for three weeks (v 2) before coming to Daniel. *Michael*. Israel's prince/angel, whose name means "who is like God." Helped the messenger in his spiritual struggle against the prince of Persia.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 10:14 What the messenger had to say to Daniel concerned a time that lay in the future. See note, 8:26.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 10:15 *face toward the ground.* See "bow," p 1276.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 10:16 *one ... children of man*. See note, v 10. *touched my lips*. So Daniel could speak again (see note, v 8). *lord*. Hbr *'adonai*. Not the Lord God but an address showing respect.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 10:19 Daniel was strengthened (cf v 8) and thus made ready to hear what the messenger had to say. *peace be with you*. See p 7.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 10:20 *return to fight.* The messenger had to resume his struggle with the Persian prince. See note, v 13. *prince of Greece.* Another battle loomed.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 10:21 The messenger would first fulfill his assignment to tell Daniel what had been written about Israel's future (v 1; 11:2). This thought is continued in ch 11. *Michael.* See note, v 13.
DANIEL—NOTE ON **Ch 10** Daniel continues to grieve over the fate of his people and Jerusalem. Once again, the Lord sends a divine messenger to strengthen Daniel and prepare him spiritually for the word of truth he will hear. That Daniel is strengthened by an angel reminds us of Jesus' experience in Gethsemane (Lk 22:43) and His promise that angels watch over us (Mt 18:10). Our knowledge of how angels serve God's people is very limited. We know they guard our ways (Ps 91:11–12), which may also include strengthening us when we are weak. • Lord of heaven and earth,

send Your holy angels to care for me, that I may be strengthened to do Your will. Amen.

DANIEL—NOTE ON **Ch 11** Luth: "Daniel prophesies to his people, the Jews [Judeans]—almost exactly as he does in the eighth chapter—concerning Alexander the Great and the two kingdoms, Syria and Egypt, chiefly on account of Antiochus (called the Noble) who is to plague the Jews. But he describes Antiochus in such a way that his words ultimately tend under the figure of Antiochus to portray the very Antichrist. And so Daniel is actually referring here to these last times of ours just before the Last Day. For all teachers are unanimously agreed that these prophecies about Antiochus point to the Antichrist" (AE 35:306).

DANIEL—NOTE ON 11:1 *first year*. 539 BC. *Darius the Mede*. See note, 5:31. *confirm and strengthen*. The messenger had helped Michael during the reign of Darius.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 11:2 *three more kings … a fourth*. Persian kings Cambyses (528–523 BC); Bardiya, or Gaumata or Pseudo-Smerdis (522 BC); Darius I (522–486 BC); and Xerxes I (486–465 BC). *kingdom of Greece*. Xerxes invaded Greece and was defeated at Salamis (480 BC).

DANIEL—NOTE ON 11:3 *mighty king*. Alexander the Great invaded and conquered lands from modern Turkey to India and ruled the largest empire of the ancient world. See map, p 1554.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 11:4 *divided toward the four winds*. See note, 8:22.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 11:5 *king of the south*. Ptolemy I, ruler of Egypt (see p 1421). *one of his princes*. Seleucus I, who established his kingdom in Syria.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 11:6 *daughter*. Ptolemy II of Egypt gave his daughter Berenice in marriage to Antiochus II, ruler in Syria, who divorced his first wife, Laodice. *king of the north*. Antiochus II. *she shall not retain the strength of her arm*. Laodice regained power and killed Berenice. *he who supported her*. Antiochus II, who was also killed.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 11:7 *branch from her roots*. Ptolemy III, brother of Berenice, avenged his sister by executing Laodice.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 11:8 *carry off to Egypt.* Ptolemy III plundered Syria, a sign of his superior power.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 11:10–13 Seleucus II was succeeded by his sons, Seleucus III and Antiochus III. A large part of Israel was captured. In response, Ptolemy IV of Egypt went to war against Antiochus III. After

Antiochus lost c 7,000 men in a battle at Raphia in 217 BC, he raised an even larger army to invade the Ptolemaic Kingdom.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 11:14 Judean men would join the fight against Egypt.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 11:15 *siegeworks*. See note, 2Ki 18:14. *well-fortified city*. Sidon, belonging to Egypt.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 11:16 *glorious land*. Israel, the Promised Land.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 11:17 *terms of an agreement*. Antiochus III made peace with Egypt. *daughter of women to destroy the kingdom*. Antiochus III gave his daughter Cleopatra to Ptolemy V, hoping she would influence Egyptian policy in favor of Syria. But she was loyal to her husband and Egypt.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 11:18 *commander*. Roman general Scipio Africanus soundly defeated Antiochus III and took his son, later Antiochus IV, hostage.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 11:19 *not be found*. Antiochus III was assassinated in 187 BC while attempting to rob a temple to pay tribute to Rome.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 11:20 *exactor of tribute*. Seleucus IV succeeded his father and sent Heliodorus to seize the temple treasury in Jerusalem. Cf 2Macc 3:7–40. *neither in anger nor in battle*. In 175 BC, Seleucus was poisoned by Heliodorus.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 11:21 Antiochus IV, who may have been involved in the plot to murder his brother (v 20). See note, 8:23.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 11:22 *prince of the covenant*. Probably Onias III, the high priest at Jerusalem.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 11:23 *alliance*. Possibly with Ptolemy VI of Egypt. *small people*. Only a small number of people supported Antiochus IV at first.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 11:25 *king of the south ... shall not stand*. Ptolemy VI was taken prisoner when Antiochus IV occupied Egypt.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 11:26 *those who eat his food*. Ptolemy's advisers Eulaeus and Lenaeus foolishly counseled him to attack Antiochus.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 11:27 *two kings*. Antiochus IV and Ptolemy VI. *speak lies at the same table*. Both kings were committed to serving their own interests. *time appointed*. The Lord controls the time when evil will be defeated.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 11:28 *set against the holy covenant*. Antiochus would enact laws and take actions opposing God's holy will. See pp 1553–56. *covenant*. See p 127.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 11:29 Second campaign of Antiochus against Egypt.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 11:30 *Kittim*. Originally referred to the island of Cyprus but came to mean generally the coastlands of the Great Sea. A Roman fleet came to Egypt and ordered Antiochus not to attack. *action against the holy covenant*. See note, v 28.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 11:31 Antiochus made every effort to obliterate the religion of God's people and introduce pagan practices. See notes, 8:11, 25. *abomination that makes desolate*. A "desolating sacrilege" was erected in the temple on the altar of burnt offering, and pagan sacrifices were offered (1Macc 1:41–64).
DANIEL—NOTE ON 11:32 *people who know their God*. Opponents of Antiochus, led by the Maccabees (Hasmoneans), resisted his orders (167 BC). Hus: "Blessed be God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has hidden the way of truth from the wise and prudent and revealed it unto simple laymen and little priests who choose rather to obey God than men, who in acts generically good and acts neutral have the life of Christ before their eyes" (*The Church*, p 254).
DANIEL—NOTE ON 11:33 *wise.* Faithful religious teachers who would instruct the people.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 11:35 *refined, purified, and made white.* Figurative expressions indicating that the wise would be made clean by their sufferings (cf 12:10). *time of the end*. When the period of oppression seen in the vision would come to an end. Cf 12:4, 9.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 11:36–12:13 The description turns from Antiochus IV to the Antichrist; the reign of the former wicked ruler foreshadows that of the latter. Cf 2Th 2:3–4, 8–12. On prophetic perspective, see p 1258. Hipp: "The prophet set forth these things concerning the Antichrist, who shall be shameless, a war-maker, and despot…. Him the impious will worship as God, and will bend to him the knee, thinking him to be the Christ" (*ANF* 5:184).
DANIEL—NOTE ON 11:36 *magnify himself above every god*. Antiochus called himself "god manifest" (see note, 8:23). The Antichrist will make similar bold claims. *speak.* See note, 7:25. *God of gods*. The true God, above all other gods.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 11:37 *gods of his fathers.* Or, "God of his fathers." *one beloved by women.* Lit, "the desire of women." He will suppress natural affection that leads to marriage.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 11:38 *gold … costly gifts*. "The true adornment of the churches is godly, useful, and clear doctrine, the devout use of the Sacraments, fervent prayer, and the like. Candles, golden vessels, and similar adornments are fitting, but they are not the specifically unique adornment belonging to the Church. If the adversaries make these things the focus of worship, and not the preaching of the Gospel, in faith (and the struggles of faith) they are to be numbered among those whom Daniel describes as worshiping their god with gold and silver" (Ap XXIV 51).
DANIEL—NOTE ON 11:39 *foreign god.* Directing people away from the true God. *Those who acknowledge him.* He will honor his supporters, some of whom were Judeans. *divide the land for a price*. Reward for those who follow his false religion.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 11:40 *time of the end*. See note, v 35. *king of the south*. See notes, vv 5, 25.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 11:41 *glorious land*. Israel, the Promised Land. *Edom and Moab ... Ammonites*. Countries east and south of Israel. See color map 2. Emblematic of Israel's enduring enemies.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 11:43 *Libyans and the Cushites*. Countries west and south of Egypt. *follow in his train.* Submit to him.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 11:44 *devote many to destruction*. Planned further conquests. See p 6.
DANIEL—NOTE ON 11:45 *palatial tents*. Large tents were commonly used by royalty when they traveled. *sea*. Lit, "the waters," perhaps the Great Sea and Salt Sea. *holy mountain*. See note, 9:16. *he shall come to his end*. Cf 2Th 2:8.

DANIEL—NOTE ON **Ch 11** The Lord's messenger reveals to Daniel the coming conflicts between Persia and Greece, Egypt and Syria, culminating in the wicked reign of that "contemptible person," King Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175–164 BC). War and violence have never been absent from human history. At times, evil rulers have persecuted the people of God, bringing great affliction on them. But such suffering will be only for the time appointed by the Lord. Even in the midst of turmoil and tribulation, believers have the peace that the world cannot give, the peace that is in Jesus Christ, our deliverer (Jn 14:27; 2Th 3:16). • Gracious

heavenly Father, thank You for sending Jesus, the Prince of Peace. Grant me steadfast faith amid all troubles. Amen.

DANIEL—NOTE ON **Ch 12** Luth: "The twelfth chapter of Daniel … has to do wholly with the Antichrist and with these last times in which we are living. For this reason we do not have to consult the histories any longer at this point. Rather it is the clear gospel" (AE 35:313).

DANIEL—NOTE ON 12:1 *Michael*. Archangel. See note, 10:13. *your people*. Michael was charged to care for Israel but this reference may include "new Israel," the Church. *time of trouble.* God's people would suffer greatly because of the great conflict (9:25; 10:1; 11:5–45). *delivered*. See p 842. *written in the book*. God's Book of Life, listing those who remain faithful.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 12:2 *sleep ... awake.* The dead will be raised to live again. Ambr: "Well, then, did he speak of the rest of those that sleep, that one may understand that death lasts not for ever, which like sleep is undergone for a time, and is put off at its time" (*NPNF* 2 10:184). Jn D: "The words … clearly show that there will be a resurrection of bodies" (*NPNF* 2 9:100b). *everlasting life.* For those written in the book (v 1). *shame and everlasting contempt.* For those who cooperated with Antichrist.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 12:3 *shine*. Like stars. Their glory is a blessing of God's grace. Ambr: "The progress of that life which shall be after death is better than that which is passed in sorrow and pain before death" (*NPNF* 2 10:184). *turn many*. Ambr: "So the choirs of apostles, martyrs, and priests, shining like glorious stars, might give light throughout the world" (*NPNF* 2 10:226). *righteousness*. See p 843.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 12:4 *seal the book*. See notes, 8:26; 9:24. *run to and fro.* Seeking some word from God (Am 8:11–12). *knowledge shall increase*. Worldly learning, which is no help in knowing God's will. This concludes Daniel's report of what the messenger said to him (10:20–12:4).

DANIEL—NOTE ON 12:5 *two others.* As in his previous vision (8:13), Daniel heard two angels speaking.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 12:6 *man clothed in linen.* See note, 10:5. *How long.* Key question continued to be asked (see note, 8:13). *wonders?* Awesome events described in chs 11–12.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 12:7 *raised his right … left hand … and swore*. Raising both hands emphasized the solemnity of his oath. *a time, times, and half a time*. Yields three and a half "times," half of the symbolic number

seven. See p 217. So the reign of Antichrist stands in opposition to God's order and is chaotic and cut short. Commentators have also noted that Antiochus IV desecrated the temple for c three years. The messenger may use Antiochus's actions to symbolize the chaos and blasphemy of Antichrist's reign. See note, 7:25. *power of the holy people*. In the OT and the Time between the Testaments, believers often held civil as well as spiritual authority. Here, the messenger likely describes the influence of God's people upon larger society.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 12:8–13 Daniel is told to go on with his life, even if he does not understand what he has seen and heard. We, too, should take special note of this counsel: God does not want His people caught up in endless speculation about His timing (cf Ac 1:7). He calls us to serve Him and gives clear ways to do so. Focus here on the general point of the angel's message rather than the difficult symbolism describing matters that are sealed up until God fulfills them.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 12:9 *sealed*. See notes, 8:26; 9:24; Jer 32:10.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 12:10 *purify ... refined.* See note, 11:35. *wicked.* Those who side with Antichrist (v 2). *understand.* Though Daniel did not understand, wise people would understand when the events later took place. Despite the trials they would experience, the Lord would preserve them. The general message is that God's wisdom and kingdom will prevail.

DANIEL—NOTE ON 12:11–12 Matters described here could be any of three events, all of which were future to Daniel: (1) the desecration of the temple by Antiochus IV Epiphanes in 167 BC; (2) the destruction of the temple by the Romans in AD 70; or (3) an abomination to be committed by the Antichrist in the last days. See note, 11:31. Hipp: "Daniel has spoken, therefore, of two abominations; the one of destruction, and the other of desolation. What is that of destruction, but that which Antiochus established there at the time? And what is that of desolation, but that which shall be universal when Antichrist comes?" (*ANF* 5:184). *1,290 days ... 1,335 days*. Difference of 45 days. How these two figures relate to history or the future is not entirely clear. They likely apply to one of the events described above. Commentators offer numerous proposals. However, bear in mind the angel's advice to Daniel in v 9: focus on your calling, not speculation. A helpful observation is that God promises to bless those who endure hardship. This promise is made throughout Scripture and applies to

believers of all eras. *Blessed.* See p 842. *he who waits.* Person of faith who hopes in the Lord's deliverance (cf Ps 130:5–6).

DANIEL—NOTE ON 12:13 *go your way.* See note, vv 8–13. *your allotted place*. Daniel was assured that after death he would stand with the wise and receive his eternal reward.

DANIEL—NOTE ON **Ch 12** The long discourse of the man clothed in linen (chs 10–12) concludes with encouragement for Daniel. He is assured that Michael is in charge of Israel; the people will be delivered; and those whose names are written in God's book will rise to everlasting life in the end. Believers have always been curious about when the end of the world is coming. Some have tried to precisely determine that date based on the various numbers found in Dn and other biblical books. Jesus made clear that no one knows that day and hour (Mk 13:32; trying to guess the year has led to numerous false prophecies [see p 307]). The angel's advice to Daniel, to "go your way," is good for us all. Know that you are in God's hand, and take comfort that He has allotted a place in heaven for you. • Almighty Father, I wait for You to guide my life as I go on my way to my heavenly home. Amen.

Hosea

Hosea 1 | Hosea 2 | Hosea 3 | Hosea 4 | Hosea 5 | Hosea 6 | Hosea 7 | Hosea 8 | Hosea 9 | Hosea 10 | Hosea 11 | Hosea 12 | Hosea 13 | Hosea 14

- Introduction to Hosea
  - Overview
  - Reading Hosea
  - Luther on Hosea
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

1 [1]†The word of the LORD that came to Hosea, the son of Beeri, in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel.

Hosea’s Wife and Children

2 † † When the Lord first spoke through Hosea, the Lord said to Hosea,
“Go, take to yourself a wife of whoredom and have children of whoredom,
for the land commits great whoredom by forsaking the Lord.” 3 †So he went
and took Gomer, the daughter of Diblaim, and she conceived and bore him
a son.

4 †And the Lord said to him, “Call his name Jezreel, for in just a little
while I will punish the house of Jehu for the blood of Jezreel, and I will put
an end to the kingdom of the house of Israel. 5 †And on that day I will break
the bow of Israel in the Valley of Jezreel.”

6 †She conceived again and bore a daughter. And the Lord said to him,
“Call her name No Mercy,[1] for I will no more have mercy on the house of
Israel, to forgive them at all. 7 †But I will have mercy on the house of Judah,
and I will save them by the Lord their God. I will not save them by bow or
by sword or by war or by horses or by horsemen.”

8 †When she had weaned No Mercy, she conceived and bore a son. 9 †And
the Lord said, “Call his name Not My People,[2] for you are not my people,
and I am not your God.”[3]

10 † [4] Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be like the sand of the
sea, which cannot be measured or numbered. And in the place where it was
said to them, “You are not my people,” it shall be said to them, “Children[5]
of the living God.” 11 †And the children of Judah and the children of Israel
shall be gathered together, and they shall appoint for themselves one head.
And they shall go up from the land, for great shall be the day of Jezreel.

Israel's Unfaithfulness Punished

2 [1] ‡ † [1] Say to your brothers, "You are my people,"[2] and to your sisters, "You have received mercy."[3]

[2] † "Plead with your mother, plead—
for she is not my wife,
and I am not her husband—
that she put away her whoring from her face,
and her adultery from between her breasts;
[3] † lest I strip her naked
and make her as in the day she was born,
and make her like a wilderness,
and make her like a parched land,
and kill her with thirst.
[4] † Upon her children also I will have no mercy,
because they are children of whoredom.
[5] † For their mother has played the whore;
she who conceived them has acted shamefully.
For she said, 'I will go after my lovers,
who give me my bread and my water,
my wool and my flax, my oil and my drink.'
[6] † Therefore I will hedge up her[4] way with
thorns,
and I will build a wall against her,
so that she cannot find her paths.
[7] † She shall pursue her lovers
but not overtake them,
and she shall seek them
but shall not find them.
Then she shall say,
'I will go and return to my first husband,
for it was better for me then than now.'
[8] † And she did not know

that it was I who gave her
the grain, the wine, and the oil,
and who lavished on her silver and gold,
which they used for Baal.
9 Therefore I will take back
my grain in its time,
and my wine in its season,
and I will take away my wool and my flax,
which were to cover her nakedness.
10† Now I will uncover her lewdness
in the sight of her lovers,
and no one shall rescue her out of my hand.
11† And I will put an end to all her mirth,
her feasts, her new moons, her Sabbaths,
and all her appointed feasts.
12† And I will lay waste her vines and her fig
trees,
of which she said,
'These are my wages,
which my lovers have given me.'
I will make them a forest,
and the beasts of the field shall devour them.
13† And I will punish her for the feast days of the
Baals
when she burned offerings to them
and adorned herself with her ring and
jewelry,
and went after her lovers
and forgot me, declares the LORD.

The Lord's Mercy on Israel

14 "Therefore, behold, I will allure her,
and bring her into the wilderness,
and speak tenderly to her.
15 And there I will give her her vineyards
and make the Valley of Achor[1] a door of hope.
And there she shall answer as in the days of her youth,
as at the time when she came out of the land of Egypt.
16 "And in that day, declares the Lord, you will call me 'My Husband,'
and no longer will you call me 'My Baal.' 17 For I will remove the names of the Baals from her mouth, and they shall be remembered by name no more.
18 And I will make for them a covenant on that day with the beasts of the field, the birds of the heavens, and the creeping things of the ground. And I will abolish[2] the bow, the sword, and war from the land, and I will make you lie down in safety. 19 And I will betroth you to me forever. I will betroth you to me in righteousness and in justice, in steadfast love and in mercy. 20 I will betroth you to me in faithfulness. And you shall know the Lord.

21 "And in that day I will answer, declares the Lord,
I will answer the heavens,
and they shall answer the earth,
22 and the earth shall answer the grain, the wine, and the oil,
and they shall answer Jezreel,[1]
23 and I will sow her for myself in the land.
And I will have mercy on No Mercy,[2]
and I will say to Not My People,[3] 'You are

my people’;
and he shall say, ‘You are my God.’”

Hosea Redeems His Wife

3 [1]†And the Lord said to me, “Go again, love a woman who is loved
by another man and is an adulteress, even as the Lord loves the children of
Israel, though they turn to other gods and love cakes of raisins.” [2]†So I
bought her for fifteen shekels of silver and a homer and a lethech[4] of
barley. [3]†And I said to her, “You must dwell as mine for many days. You
shall not play the whore, or belong to another man; so
will I also be to you.” [4]†For the children of Israel shall dwell many days
without king or prince, without sacrifice or pillar, without ephod or
household gods. [5]†Afterward the children of Israel shall return and seek the
Lord their God, and David their king, and they shall come in fear to the
Lord and to his goodness in the latter days.

The Lord Accuses Israel

4 [1]†Hear the word of the Lord, O children of Israel,

for the Lord has a controversy with the
inhabitants of the land.
There is no faithfulness or steadfast love,
and no knowledge of God in the land;
[2]† there is swearing, lying, murder, stealing, and
committing adultery;
they break all bounds, and bloodshed
follows bloodshed.
[3]† Therefore the land mourns,
and all who dwell in it languish,
and also the beasts of the field
and the birds of the heavens,
and even the fish of the sea are taken away.

[4]† Yet let no one contend,
and let none accuse,
for with you is my contention, O priest.[1]

[5]† You shall stumble by day;
the prophet also shall stumble with you by
night;
and I will destroy your mother.
[6]† My people are destroyed for lack of
knowledge;
because you have rejected knowledge,
I reject you from being a priest to me.
And since you have forgotten the law of your
God,
I also will forget your children.

7† The more they increased,
the more they sinned against me;
I will change their glory into shame.
8† They feed on the sin[2] of my people;
they are greedy for their iniquity.
9† And it shall be like people, like priest;
I will punish them for their ways
and repay them for their deeds.
10† They shall eat, but not be satisfied;
they shall play the whore, but not multiply,
because they have forsaken the LORD
to cherish 11†whoredom, wine, and new
wine,
which take away the understanding.
12† My people inquire of a piece of wood,
and their walking staff gives them oracles.
For a spirit of whoredom has led them astray,
and they have left their God to play the
whore.
13† They sacrifice on the tops of the mountains
and burn offerings on the hills,
under oak, poplar, and terebinth,
because their shade is good.
Therefore your daughters play the whore,
and your brides commit adultery.
14† I will not punish your daughters when they
play the whore,
nor your brides when they commit adultery;
for the men themselves go aside with
prostitutes
and sacrifice with cult prostitutes,
and a people without understanding shall
come to ruin.

15 Though you play the whore, O Israel,
let not Judah become guilty.
Enter not into Gilgal,
nor go up to Beth-aven,
and swear not, “As the Lord lives.”
16 Like a stubborn heifer,
Israel is stubborn;
can the Lord now feed them
like a lamb in a broad pasture?

17 Ephraim is joined to idols;
leave him alone.
18 When their drink is gone, they give
themselves to whoring;
their rulers[1] dearly love shame.
19 A wind has wrapped them[2] in its wings,
and they shall be ashamed because of their
sacrifices.

Punishment Coming for Israel and Judah

5 [1]† Hear this, O priests!
Pay attention, O house of Israel!
Give ear, O house of the king!
For the judgment is for you;
for you have been a snare at Mizpah
and a net spread upon Tabor.

[2]† And the revolters have gone deep into
slaughter,
but I will discipline all of them.

[3]† I know Ephraim,
and Israel is not hidden from me;
for now, O Ephraim, you have played the
whore;
Israel is defiled.
[4]† Their deeds do not permit them
to return to their God.
For the spirit of whoredom is within them,
and they know not the Lord.

[5]† The pride of Israel testifies to his face;[3]
Israel and Ephraim shall stumble in his
guilt;
Judah also shall stumble with them.
[6]† With their flocks and herds they shall go
to seek the Lord,
but they will not find him;
he has withdrawn from them.
[7]† They have dealt faithlessly with the Lord;
for they have borne alien children.

Now the new moon shall devour them with
their fields.

8† Blow the horn in Gibeah,
the trumpet in Ramah.
Sound the alarm at Beth-aven;
we follow you,[1] O Benjamin!
9† Ephraim shall become a desolation
in the day of punishment;
among the tribes of Israel
I make known what is sure.
10† The princes of Judah have become
like those who move the landmark;
upon them I will pour out
my wrath like water.
11† Ephraim is oppressed, crushed in judgment,
because he was determined to go after
filth.[2]
12† But I am like a moth to Ephraim,
and like dry rot to the house of Judah.

13† When Ephraim saw his sickness,
and Judah his wound,
then Ephraim went to Assyria,
and sent to the great king.[3]
But he is not able to cure you
or heal your wound.
14† For I will be like a lion to Ephraim,
and like a young lion to the house of Judah.
I, even I, will tear and go away;
I will carry off, and no one shall rescue.

15† I will return again to my place,
until they acknowledge their guilt and seek

my face,
and in their distress earnestly seek me.

Israel and Judah Are Unrepentant

6 [1]† “Come, let us return to the Lord;
for he has torn us, that he may heal us;
he has struck us down, and he will bind us
up.

[2]† After two days he will revive us;
on the third day he will raise us up,
that we may live before him.
[3]† Let us know; let us press on to know the
Lord;
his going out is sure as the dawn;
he will come to us as the showers,
as the spring rains that water the earth.”

[4]†† What shall I do with you, O Ephraim?
What shall I do with you, O Judah?
Your love is like a morning cloud,
like the dew that goes early away.
[5]† Therefore I have hewn them by the
prophets;
I have slain them by the words of my
mouth,
and my judgment goes forth as the light.
[6]† For I desire steadfast love[1] and not sacrifice,
the knowledge of God rather than burnt
offerings.

[7]† But like Adam they transgressed the
covenant;
there they dealt faithlessly with me.
[8]† Gilead is a city of evildoers,

tracked with blood.
9† As robbers lie in wait for a man,
so the priests band together;
they murder on the way to Shechem;
they commit villainy.
10† In the house of Israel I have seen a horrible
thing;
Ephraim's whoredom is there; Israel is
defiled.

11† For you also, O Judah, a harvest is
appointed,
when I restore the fortunes of my people.

7 1† When I would heal Israel,
the iniquity of Ephraim is revealed,
and the evil deeds of Samaria;
for they deal falsely;
the thief breaks in,
and the bandits raid outside.

2† But they do not consider
that I remember all their evil.
Now their deeds surround them;
they are before my face.
3† By their evil they make the king glad,
and the princes by their treachery.
4† They are all adulterers;
they are like a heated oven
whose baker ceases to stir the fire,
from the kneading of the dough
until it is leavened.
5† On the day of our king, the princes
became sick with the heat of wine;
he stretched out his hand with mockers.

6 † For with hearts like an oven they approach
their intrigue;
all night their anger smolders;
in the morning it blazes like a flaming fire.
7 All of them are hot as an oven,
and they devour their rulers.
All their kings have fallen,
and none of them calls upon me.

8 † Ephraim mixes himself with the peoples;
Ephraim is a cake not turned.
9 † Strangers devour his strength,
and he knows it not;
gray hairs are sprinkled upon him,
and he knows it not.
10 † The pride of Israel testifies to his face;[1]
yet they do not return to the Lord their God,
nor seek him, for all this.

11 † Ephraim is like a dove,
silly and without sense,
calling to Egypt, going to Assyria.
12 † As they go, I will spread over them my net;
I will bring them down like birds of the
heavens;
I will discipline them according to the
report made to their congregation.
13 †† Woe to them, for they have strayed from me!
Destruction to them, for they have rebelled
against me!
I would redeem them,
but they speak lies against me.

14 † They do not cry to me from the heart,
but they wail upon their beds;
for grain and wine they gash themselves;
they rebel against me.
15 † Although I trained and strengthened their
arms,
yet they devise evil against me.
16 † They return, but not upward;[2]
they are like a treacherous bow;
their princes shall fall by the sword
because of the insolence of their tongue.
This shall be their derision in the land of
Egypt.

Israel Will Reap the Whirlwind

8 [1]† Set the trumpet to your lips!
One like a vulture is over the house of the
LORD,
because they have transgressed my
covenant
and rebelled against my law.

[2]† To me they cry,
"My God, we—Israel—know you."
[3]† Israel has spurned the good;
the enemy shall pursue him.

[4]† They made kings, but not through me.
They set up princes, but I knew it not.
With their silver and gold they made
idols
for their own destruction.
[5]† I have[1] spurned your calf, O Samaria.
My anger burns against them.
How long will they be incapable of innocence?
[6]† For it is from Israel;
a craftsman made it;
it is not God.
The calf of Samaria
shall be broken to pieces.[2]

[7]† For they sow the wind,
and they shall reap the whirlwind.
The standing grain has no heads;
it shall yield no flour;
if it were to yield,

strangers would devour it.
8 Israel is swallowed up;
already they are among the nations
as a useless vessel.
9 For they have gone up to Assyria,
a wild donkey wandering alone;
Ephraim has hired lovers.
10 Though they hire allies among the nations,
I will soon gather them up.
And the king and princes shall soon writhe
because of the tribute.

11 Because Ephraim has multiplied altars for
sinning,
they have become to him altars for
sinning.
12 Were I to write for him my laws by the ten
thousands,
they would be regarded as a strange
thing.
13 As for my sacrificial offerings,
they sacrifice meat and eat it,
but the LORD does not accept them.
Now he will remember their iniquity
and punish their sins;
they shall return to Egypt.
14 For Israel has forgotten his Maker
and built palaces,
and Judah has multiplied fortified cities;
so I will send a fire upon his cities,
and it shall devour her strongholds.

The Lord Will Punish Israel

9 [1] Rejoice not, O Israel!
Exult not like the peoples;
for you have played the whore, forsaking
your God.
You have loved a prostitute's wages
on all threshing floors.

[2] Threshing floor and wine vat shall not feed
them,
and the new wine shall fail them.
[3] They shall not remain in the land of the
Lord,
but Ephraim shall return to Egypt,
and they shall eat unclean food in Assyria.

[4] They shall not pour drink offerings of wine to
the Lord,
and their sacrifices shall not please him.
It shall be like mourners' bread to them;
all who eat of it shall be defiled;
for their bread shall be for their hunger only;
it shall not come to the house of the Lord.

[5] What will you do on the day of the appointed
festival,
and on the day of the feast of the Lord?
[6] For behold, they are going away from
destruction;
but Egypt shall gather them;
Memphis shall bury them.
Nettles shall possess their precious things of

silver;
thorns shall be in their tents.

7† The days of punishment have come;
the days of recompense have come;
Israel shall know it.
The prophet is a fool;
the man of the spirit is mad,
because of your great iniquity
and great hatred.
8† The prophet is the watchman of Ephraim
with my God;
yet a fowler's snare is on all his ways,
and hatred in the house of his God.
9† They have deeply corrupted themselves
as in the days of Gibeah:
he will remember their iniquity;
he will punish their sins.

10†† Like grapes in the wilderness,
I found Israel.
Like the first fruit on the fig tree
in its first season,
I saw your fathers.
But they came to Baal-peor
and consecrated themselves to the thing of
shame,
and became detestable like the thing they
loved.
11† Ephraim's glory shall fly away like a bird—
no birth, no pregnancy, no conception!
12† Even if they bring up children,
I will bereave them till none is left.
Woe to them
when I depart from them!

13† Ephraim, as I have seen, was like a young
palm[1] planted in a meadow;
but Ephraim must lead his children out to
slaughter.[2]
14† Give them, O LORD—
what will you give?
Give them a miscarrying womb
and dry breasts.

15† Every evil of theirs is in Gilgal;
there I began to hate them.
Because of the wickedness of their deeds
I will drive them out of my house.
I will love them no more;
all their princes are rebels.

16† Ephraim is stricken;
their root is dried up;
they shall bear no fruit.
Even though they give birth,
I will put their beloved children to death.
17† My God will reject them
because they have not listened to him;
they shall be wanderers among the nations.

10 1† Israel is a luxuriant vine
that yields its fruit.
The more his fruit increased,
the more altars he built;
as his country improved,
he improved his pillars.

2† Their heart is false;
now they must bear their guilt.

The Lord [3] will break down their altars
and destroy their pillars.

3† For now they will say:
"We have no king,
for we do not fear the Lord;
and a king—what could he do for us?"
4† They utter mere words;
with empty oaths they make covenants;
so judgment springs up like poisonous
weeds
in the furrows of the field.
5† The inhabitants of Samaria tremble
for the calf[4] of Beth-aven.
Its people mourn for it, and so do its
idolatrous priests—
those who rejoiced over it and over its
glory—
for it has departed[5] from them.
6† The thing itself shall be carried to Assyria
as tribute to the great king.[6]
Ephraim shall be put to shame,
and Israel shall be ashamed of his
idol.[7]

7† Samaria's king shall perish
like a twig on the face of the waters.
8† The high places of Aven, the sin of Israel,
shall be destroyed.
Thorn and thistle shall grow up
on their altars,
and they shall say to the mountains,
"Cover us,"
and to the hills, "Fall on us."

9† From the days of Gibeah, you have sinned,
O Israel;
there they have continued.
Shall not the war against the unjust[1]
overtake them in Gibeah?
10† When I please, I will discipline them,
and nations shall be gathered against them
when they are bound up for their double
iniquity.

11† Ephraim was a trained calf
that loved to thresh,
and I spared her fair neck;
but I will put Ephraim to the yoke;
Judah must plow;
Jacob must harrow for himself.
12† Sow for yourselves righteousness;
reap steadfast love;
break up your fallow ground,
for it is the time to seek the LORD,
that he may come and rain righteousness
upon you.

13† You have plowed iniquity;
you have reaped injustice;
you have eaten the fruit of lies.
Because you have trusted in your own way
and in the multitude of your warriors,
14† therefore the tumult of war shall arise among
your people,
and all your fortresses shall be destroyed,
as Shalman destroyed Beth-arbel on the day
of battle;

mothers were dashed in pieces with their
children.
15 † Thus it shall be done to you, O Bethel,
because of your great evil.
At dawn the king of Israel
shall be utterly cut off.

The Lord's Love for Israel

11 [1]†† When Israel was a child, I loved him,
and out of Egypt I called my son.

[2]† The more they were called,
the more they went away;
they kept sacrificing to the Baals
and burning offerings to idols.

[3]† Yet it was I who taught Ephraim to walk;
I took them up by their arms,
but they did not know that I healed them.
[4]† I led them with cords of kindness,[1]
with the bands of love,
and I became to them as one who eases the
yoke on their jaws,
and I bent down to them and fed them.

[5]† They shall not[2] return to the land of Egypt,
but Assyria shall be their king,
because they have refused to return to me.
[6]† The sword shall rage against their cities,
consume the bars of their gates,
and devour them because of their own
counsels.
[7]† My people are bent on turning away from me,
and though they call out to the Most High,
he shall not raise them up at all.

[8]† How can I give you up, O Ephraim?
How can I hand you over, O Israel?

How can I make you like Admah?
How can I treat you like Zeboiim?
My heart recoils within me;
my compassion grows warm and tender.
9 I will not execute my burning anger;
I will not again destroy Ephraim;
for I am God and not a man,
the Holy One in your midst,
and I will not come in wrath.[3]

10 They shall go after the Lord;
he will roar like a lion;
when he roars,
his children shall come trembling from the west;
11 they shall come trembling like birds from Egypt,
and like doves from the land of Assyria,
and I will return them to their homes,
declares the Lord.
12 [4] Ephraim has surrounded me with lies,
and the house of Israel with deceit,
but Judah still walks with God
and is faithful to the Holy One.

12 1 Ephraim feeds on the wind
and pursues the east wind all day long;
they multiply falsehood and violence;
they make a covenant with Assyria,
and oil is carried to Egypt.

The Lord's Indictment of Israel and Judah

2 The Lord has an indictment against Judah
and will punish Jacob according to his
ways;
he will repay him according to his deeds.
3 In the womb he took his brother by the
heel,
and in his manhood he strove with God.
4 He strove with the angel and prevailed;
he wept and sought his favor.
He met God[1] at Bethel,
and there God spoke with us—
5 the Lord, the God of hosts,
the Lord is his memorial name:
6 "So you, by the help of your God, return,
hold fast to love and justice,
and wait continually for your God."

7 A merchant, in whose hands are false
balances,
he loves to oppress.
8 Ephraim has said, "Ah, but I am rich;
I have found wealth for myself;
in all my labors they cannot find in me
iniquity or sin."
9 I am the Lord your God
from the land of Egypt;
I will again make you dwell in tents,
as in the days of the appointed feast.

10 I spoke to the prophets;
it was I who multiplied visions,

and through the prophets gave parables.
11† If there is iniquity in Gilead,
they shall surely come to nothing:
in Gilgal they sacrifice bulls;
their altars also are like stone heaps
on the furrows of the field.
12† Jacob fled to the land of Aram;
there Israel served for a wife,
and for a wife he guarded sheep.
13† By a prophet the LORD brought Israel up
from Egypt,
and by a prophet he was guarded.
14† Ephraim has given bitter provocation;
so his Lord will leave his bloodguilt on him
and will repay him for his disgraceful
deeds.

The Lord's Relentless Judgment on Israel

13 [1]† When Ephraim spoke, there was trembling;
he was exalted in Israel,
but he incurred guilt through Baal and died.

[2]† And now they sin more and more,
and make for themselves metal images,
idols skillfully made of their silver,
all of them the work of craftsmen.
It is said of them,
"Those who offer human sacrifice kiss
calves!"
[3]† Therefore they shall be like the morning mist
or like the dew that goes early away,
like the chaff that swirls from the threshing
floor
or like smoke from a window.

[4]† But I am the Lord your God
from the land of Egypt;
you know no God but me,
and besides me there is no savior.
[5]† It was I who knew you in the wilderness,
in the land of drought;
[6]† but when they had grazed,[1] they became full,
they were filled, and their heart was lifted up;
therefore they forgot me.
[7]† So I am to them like a lion;
like a leopard I will lurk beside the way.
[8]† I will fall upon them like a bear robbed of her
cubs;
I will tear open their breast,

and there I will devour them like a lion,
as a wild beast would rip them open.

9† He destroys[2] you, O Israel,
for you are against me, against your helper.
10 Where now is your king, to save you in all
your cities?
Where are all your rulers—
those of whom you said,
“ Give me a king and princes”?
11† I gave you a king in my anger,
and I took him away in my wrath.

12† The iniquity of Ephraim is bound up;
his sin is kept in store.
13† The pangs of childbirth come for him,
but he is an unwise son,
for at the right time he does not present
himself
at the opening of the womb.

14† Shall I ransom them from the power of Sheol?
Shall I redeem them from Death?
O Death, where are your plagues?
O Sheol, where is your sting?
Compassion is hidden from my eyes.

15† Though he may flourish among his brothers,
the east wind, the wind of the Lord, shall
come,
rising from the wilderness,
and his fountain shall dry up;
his spring shall be parched;

it shall strip his treasury
of every precious thing.
16† [1] Samaria shall bear her guilt,
because she has rebelled against her God;
they shall fall by the sword;
their little ones shall be dashed in pieces,
and their pregnant women ripped open.

A Plea to Return to the Lord

14 [1]† Return, O Israel, to the Lord your God,
for you have stumbled because of
your iniquity.

[2]† Take with you words
and return to the Lord;
say to him,
“ Take away all iniquity;
accept what is good,
and we will pay with bulls
the vows[2] of our lips.
[3]† Assyria shall not save us;
we will not ride on horses;
and we will say no more, ‘Our God,’
to the work of our hands.
In you the orphan finds mercy.”

[4]†† I will heal their apostasy;
I will love them freely,
for my anger has turned from them.
[5]† I will be like the dew to Israel;
he shall blossom like the lily;
he shall take root like the trees of Lebanon;
[6]† his shoots shall spread out;
his beauty shall be like the olive,
and his fragrance like Lebanon.
[7]† They shall return and dwell beneath my[3]
shadow;
they shall flourish like the grain;
they shall blossom like the vine;
their fame shall be like the wine of
Lebanon.

8† O Ephraim, what have I to do with idols?
It is I who answer and look after you.[1]
I am like an evergreen cypress;
from me comes your fruit.
9† Whoever is wise, let him understand these
things;
whoever is discerning, let him know them;
for the ways of the LORD are right,
and the upright walk in them,
but transgressors stumble in them.

Hosea

OVERVIEW

Author
Hosea the prophet

Date
c 740–715 BC

Places
Israel (Ephraim; capital, Samaria), including Jezreel Valley; Bethel (Beth-aven); Judah; nations of Assyria, Egypt, Lebanon

People
Hosea and Gomer; "No Mercy," "Not My People"; Kings Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, Jeroboam, Joash, Jehu

Purpose
Hosea reminds Israel of the Lord's loving faithfulness and calls them away from unfaithfulness to a new life

Law Themes
Israel's unfaithfulness; unfaithful priests and princes; adultery and drunkenness; unfruitfulness; idolatry; conquest of Samaria; stumbling

Gospel Themes
The Lord's faithfulness; children of God; redemption; healing in repentance; God's fatherly love; the Lord answers and looks after His people

Memory Verses
My husband (2:16–17); lack of knowledge (4:4–6); God will revive us (6:1–3); break the fallow ground (10:11–12); bands of love (11:1–4); dew to Israel (14:4–9)

Introduction to Hosea

Reading Hosea

Lamplight reached into the corners of the alley, revealing a woman's face beside a wretched pool. The watchman had seen her before. She used to pass through the streets at twilight, dressed in shimmering garments, strings of beads clinking about her neck as she hurried to reach a man who held out a ring and a cup of wine. Later, the watchman had seen her with bloodshot eyes receiving a stranger who offered her a mere loaf of bread and a wink. Now no one noticed her stumble and fall in the darkness except the watchman, who unpinned his wool cloak and covered her shame.

The prophet Hosea recorded how excess and idolatrous feasts caused the shameless leaders of Israel to stumble. Assyria would descend upon them in their stupor and rob them of all the goods and land the Lord had given them. Though the leaders knew of God's love and faithfulness, they failed to teach the people and so led them to destruction.

Luther on Hosea

Hosea lived and preached, as he himself indicates in the title [1:1], at the time of the second and last Jeroboam, king of Israel. This was the same time in which Isaiah and also Amos and Micah were living in Judah; but Hosea was the oldest of them.

Jeroboam too was a fine and prosperous king who did much for the kingdom of Israel, as II Kings 14[:23–27] testifies. Nevertheless he persisted in the old idolatry of his ancestors, the kings of Israel. Thus although there were truly many fine men in the nation at that time, they still could not make the people righteous. For the devil had to inflict this misery on the people, that they always killed the prophets and sacrificed their children to the idols, and so filled the land with bloodguiltiness, because of which he here in chapter 1[:5] threatens Jezreel.

It appears, however, as though this prophecy of Hosea was not fully and entirely written, but that pieces and sayings were taken out of his preaching and brought together into a book. Nevertheless we can trace and discover in it this much at least, that he performed the two offices fully and boldly. First he preached vigorously against the idolatry of his time and bravely rebuked the people, together with the king and his princes and priests. It was surely for this reason that he, like the others, tasted death. He had to die as a heretic against the priests and as a rebel against the king, for that is a prophetic and apostolic death, and in this way Christ himself had to die. Second he also prophesied powerfully and most comfortingly about Christ and his kingdom, as is shown particularly in chapters 2, 13, and 14.

But no one should think because he uses the words “harlot” and “harlotry” many times, and in chapter 1[:2–3] takes a “wife of harlotry,” that he was unchaste in words and deeds. For Hosea is speaking allegorically; this “wife of harlotry” is his lawfully wedded wife, and with her he begot legitimate children. The wife and children, however, had to bear those shameful names as a sign and rebuke to the idolatrous nation. For it was full of spiritual harlotry, that is, idolatry, as Hosea himself says in the text, “The land commits great harlotry by forsaking the Lord” [1:2]. In the same way Jeremiah wore the wooden yoke and carried the cup [Jer. 27:2; 25:17]. Indeed it was common for all the prophets to be doing some strange thing as a sign to the people. So here Hosea’s wife and children had to have names of harlotry as a sign against the whoring, idolatrous nation. For it is incredible that

> God should order a prophet to practice harlotry, as some interpret this passage in Hosea to mean. (AE 35:317–18)

For more of Luther's insights on this Book, see *Lectures on Hosea* (AE 18:1–76).

Challenges for Readers

Outline. Hosea is a collection of oracles without a clear, logical sequence. See outline notes at right.

Gomer. The Lord urged Hosea to marry a woman known for her unfaithfulness. She is described as a prostitute, whom Hosea would have to rescue from enslavement (ch 3). Since the Law condemned prostitutes to death by stoning, interpreters have struggled with how the Lord told Hosea to marry such a woman (see Luther's comments above). It appears that the Lord commanded exceptional action in this case in order to illustrate His exceptional love and mercy for Israel.

Violence against Samaria. At the end of Hosea, the Lord describes the merciless destruction of Israel's capital by the Assyrians (13:16), whom He had appointed to mete out judgment. Readers may wonder how the Lord could permit such violence against even women and children. See pp 320, 879.

Blessings for Readers

Hosea's message is not for the faint of heart. His descriptions of prostitution, war, substance abuse, and corruption easily match the worst police and news reports of our day. He reminds us that simple neglect of what is wholesome and blessed leads to wholehearted sin and self-destruction. Wealth and armies do not deliver a nation. Only the Lord can redeem and restore us. Hosea shows how the spiritual dry rot that caused Israel to collapse contrasts fully with the generous dew of God's life-giving mercy.

As you study Hosea, look heavenward and anticipate that the Lord will rain down righteousness for you. No matter what your past is, your forgiving Lord is present to apply His grace fully and restore you as a member of His people. Though you wince at the roar of His wrath (11:10), the Holy One will welcome you home as His child.

OUTLINE

The organization of Hosea presents complex problems. Commentators agree that the first three chapters revolve around Hosea's personal issues. Beyond ch 3, various oracles are added. The following outline provides an overview:

I. Superscription (1:1)
II. Hosea's Personal Issues as Prophecies (1:2–3:5)
  A. Names of Hosea and Gomer's Children Presage Israel's Judgment (1:2–9)
  B. Great Reversal of the Curse (1:10–2:1)
  C. Divorce Proceedings with New Betrothal and Marriage (2:2–15)
  D. Images of Great Reversal (2:16–23)
  E. A Second (?) Marriage to Gomer (ch 3)
III. Various Oracles (4:1–14:9)
  A. Yahweh's Lawsuit against Israel (ch 4)
  B. Court Called to Order (5:1–7)
  C. Warfare and False Repentance (5:8–6:6)
  D. Israel's Guilt Congenital, but Not Incurable (6:7–11)
  E. Israel Becomes like All Nations in Apostasy and Judgment (ch 7)

F. Sow the Wind, Reap the Whirlwind (ch 8)
G. Days of Festival and Punishment (ch 9)
H. Israel's Utter Destruction (ch 10)
I. Possibility of "Second Exodus" (11:1–11)
J. Israel as Deceiver (11:12–13:1)
K. Israel's Final Judgment (13:2–16)
L. Promise of Restoration (ch 14)

Three possible explanations for the arrangement are noted below.

Chronological divisions: Relatively peaceful and prosperous last years of Jeroboam II (chs 1–3); political and economic problems in the Northern Kingdom, as Assyrian pressure grows (chs 4–9); and Israel's last days before the fall of Samaria in 722 BC (chs 10–14).

Theological divisions: Accent Israel's guilt (chs 4–8); accent Israel's punishment (chs 9–11); and accent both, but end with promise or hope in ch 14 (chs 12–14).

Weal and woe themes: Hosea's first marriage is presented as a threat (1:2–9) and then as a promise (1:10–2:1); commentary with similar themes follows (2:2–23). Hosea's second marriage is presented as a threat (3:1–4), then as a promise (3:5); threat and promise commentary follows (4:1–5:15 and 6:1–3; 6:4–11:7 and 11:8–11; and 13:12–13, 16 and 14:1–9).

Footnotes

Footnotes for Hosea, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:6 Hebrew *Lo-ruhama*, which means *she has not received mercy*
- [2] 1:9 Hebrew *Lo-ammi*, which means *not my people*
- [3] 1:9 Hebrew *I am not yours*
- [4] 1:10 Ch 2:1 in Hebrew
- [5] 1:10 Or *Sons*

Footnotes for Hosea, Chapter 2

- [1] 2:1 Ch 2:3 in Hebrew
- [2] 2:1 Hebrew *ammi*, which means *my people*
- [3] 2:1 Hebrew *ruhama*, which means *she has received mercy*
- [4] 2:6 Hebrew *your*
- [1] 2:15 *Achor* means *trouble* ; compare Joshua 7:26
- [2] 2:18 Hebrew *break*
- [1] 2:22 *Jezreel* means *God will sow*
- [2] 2:23 Hebrew *Lo-ruhama*
- [3] 2:23 Hebrew *Lo-ammi*

Footnotes for Hosea, Chapter 3

- [4] 3:2 A *shekel* was about 2/5 ounce or 11 grams ; a *homer* was about 6 bushels or 220 liters ; a *lethech* was about 3 bushels or 110 liters

Footnotes for Hosea, Chapter 4

- [1] 4:4 Or *for your people are like those who contend with the priest*
- [2] 4:8 Or *sin offering*
- [1] 4:18 Hebrew *shields*
- [2] 4:19 Hebrew *her*

Footnotes for Hosea, Chapter 5

- [3] 5:5 Or *in his presence*
- [1] 5:8 Or *after you*
- [2] 5:11 Or *to follow human precepts*
- [3] 5:13 Or *to King Jareb*

Footnotes for Hosea, Chapter 6

- [1] 6:6 Septuagint *mercy*

Footnotes for Hosea, Chapter 7

- [1] 7:10 Or *in his presence*
- [2] 7:16 Or *to the Most High*

Footnotes for Hosea, Chapter 8

- [1] 8:5 Hebrew *He has*
- [2] 8:6 Or *shall go up in flames*

Footnotes for Hosea, Chapter 9

- [1] 9:13 Or *like Tyre*
- [2] 9:13 Hebrew *to him who slaughters*

Footnotes for Hosea, Chapter 10

- [3] 10:2 Hebrew *He*
- [4] 10:5 Or *calves*
- [5] 10:5 Or *has gone into exile*
- [6] 10:6 Or *to King Jareb*
- [7] 10:6 Or *counsel*
- [1] 10:9 Hebrew *the children of injustice*

Footnotes for Hosea, Chapter 11

- [1] 11:4 Or *humaneness* ; Hebrew *man*
- [2] 11:5 Or *surely*
- [3] 11:9 Or *into the city*
- [4] 11:12 Ch 12:1 in Hebrew

Footnotes for Hosea, Chapter 12

- [1] 12:4 Hebrew *him*

Footnotes for Hosea, Chapter 13

- [1] 13:6 Hebrew *according to their pasture*
- [2] 13:9 Or *I will destroy*
- [1] 13:16 Ch 14:1 in Hebrew

Footnotes for Hosea, Chapter 14

- [2] 14:2 Septuagint, Syriac *pay the fruit*
- [3] 14:7 Hebrew *his*
- [1] 14:8 Hebrew *him*

Study Notes

HOSEA—NOTE ON 1:1 *word of the* LORD *that came*. Refers to the total message of Hosea. See p 1080. *Hosea*. Means "salvation" or "he has helped/delivered." The names of Hosea's children also play an important role in his prophecy's rhetoric. See notes, vv 4, 6, 19. The manner of God's revelation to Hosea is not given in detail. He simply states that his prophecy came by God speaking (v 2). *son of Beeri*. A prophet typically introduces himself with the name of his father (Jl 1:1; Jnh 1:1; Zep 1:1; Hg 1:1; Zec 1:1). *Beeri*. Means "my wellspring" or "my well" and likely reflects the family's joy at the birth of a child. *the days of … kings of … Israel*. This mention of kings Uzziah (792–740 BC), Jotham (750–735 BC), Ahaz (735–715 BC), and Hezekiah (715–686 BC) makes plain that Hosea had a lengthy ministry and prophesied at the same time as Isaiah, Amos, and Micah. See pp 1077–83. *Jeroboam*. Only ruler of the northern tribes listed here (793–753 BC).

HOSEA—NOTE ON 1:2 *spoke through*. Hosea was the conduit of God's message, not its source. See note, v 1. Iren: "It was not by means of visions alone which were seen, and words which were proclaimed, but also in actual works, that He was beheld by the prophets, in order that through them He might prefigure and show forth future events beforehand" (*ANF* 1:492). *wife of whoredom*. Whether Hosea's wife was actually a prostitute/adulteress or whether this characterization is merely a figure of speech is a matter of debate. Luther favored a symbolic understanding (see pp 1427–28). Many modern commentators hold that Hosea's wife committed adultery; this is the simplest understanding of the text. Either way, the troubled marriage of Hosea and Gomer underscores the prophet's message of God's judgment against Israel for her unfaithfulness. On a related issue, the importance of women in Israelite society and in biblical literature is demonstrated by the way the Lord describes His relationship to Israel as being like the relationship between a husband and a wife. See note, Pr 31:10–31. *the land*. Though directed primarily at Israel (the Northern Kingdom), the judgment announced by Hosea extends to all those included in the covenant relationship with the Lord. *forsaking*. The people no longer followed after the Lord or walked in His ways. Instead, they abandoned Him and followed after pagan gods. Cf Dt 31:16; Hos 3:1; 9:1.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 1:3 *Gomer*. Unlike the names of his children, the name of Hosea's wife appears not to have symbolic meaning. *Diblaim*. Geographic reference unclear; perhaps an undiscovered village.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 1:4 *Jezreel*. "God sows"; has a double meaning. On the one hand, it recalls that God caused the people of Israel to multiply into the uncountable seed of Abraham (Gn 12:2; 15:5). It also brings to mind God's judgment against Ahab and the house of Jehu. *house of Jehu*. King Jeroboam II, king of the northern tribes at the time, sprang from Jehu's family tree. The end of this royal line is an important focus of Hosea's prophecy. *blood*. Much blood was shed in Jezreel, including that of Naboth and his sons (2Ki 9:26), King Ahab (1Ki 22:38), King Joram (2Ki 9:24), and Jezebel (2Ki 9:33). *an end to the kingdom*. Unfortunately, the royal house of Jehu turned out to be no better than its predecessors. This line ended when Zechariah was murdered (2Ki 15:10).
HOSEA—NOTE ON 1:5 *break the bow*. Figurative for the destruction of an opponent's military strength (e.g., 1Sm 2:4). Assyria destroyed Israel's military power and devastated its land in 723/2 BC (2Ki 17:5–6). *Valley of Jezreel*. Triangular valley southwest of the Sea of Chinnereth, with Mount Tabor at the northeast point. Owing to its adequate rainfall and rich soil, and its location on the main roads running east/west and north/south, it was an important part of Israel's territory. See color map 2.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 1:6 *No Mercy*. Symbolic name emphasizing that, due to Israel's persistent unfaithfulness, God will withdraw His compassion. Such threats of judgment are not Hosea's final word, however; 2:23 promises a future love for the people.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 1:7 *mercy on … Judah*. God's covenant with Abraham's descendants will continue through the remnant of Judah. Though the Babylonians did in fact take the Judeans into exile in 587 BC, the captives were allowed to return to Jerusalem 70 years later. *save them by the* LORD. God pledges to save Judah by His own hand rather than by their armaments. This reminds the northern tribes as well that their military strength, even if multiplied, is worthless (10:13). A fulfillment of God's promise to deliver Judah from the Assyrians miraculously is recounted in 2Ki 19:32–36.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 1:8 *weaned*. Occurred by age 2 or 3. Normally a time of celebration for the family and community (cf Gn 21:8; 1Sm 1:24). No Mercy's weaning coincides with the conception of Not My People and so

reinforces that the distance between God and His children is steadily increasing.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 1:9 *Not My People*. Breach between God and Israel continues to widen. It can still be restored, however, through the people's repentance and God's restorative action (2:1, 23).

HOSEA—NOTE ON 1:10 *like the sand*. Recalls the covenant God gave to Abraham, whereby his descendants are promised to become as numerous as the sand and the stars (cf Gn 32:12). *Children of the living God*. Even amid an announcement of judgment, God promises to spare many. Later, He extends His covenant promises to all peoples, so that "all Israel" might be saved in Christ (Rm 11:25–26; cf Eph 2:12–15, 19–20).

HOSEA—NOTE ON 1:11 *gathered together*. Anticipates a day when tribal divisions will end. *they shall go up from the land*. Depicts seeds growing up into an abundant harvest (cf v 10). *one head*. A single king over a united nation is predicted in 3:5. There, the head is foreseen as belonging to the house of David. This promise of a single head over a unified body is ultimately fulfilled by Jesus (Eph 1:22; 4:15–16; 5:23; Col 1:18).

HOSEA—NOTE ON 1:2–11 Hosea's tragic marriage and the suffering it inflicts on his children dramatically depict the wretched condition of God's people at that time. Sadly, the waywardness exhibited by God's people still happens today; unless the Spirit continues to grant us repentance and faith, we fall into the same kind of unfaithfulness and apostasy. Through Hosea's ministry, God shows mercy, pledging to gather, restore, and lead His people into a better future. • Heavenly Father, through Your beloved Son, You have forgiven all unfaithfulness and restored Your people to wholeness. May we be gathered under this Son, who gives us new birth and restores us as Your children. Amen.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 2:1 *your brothers … your sisters*. Hosea calls for his message to be heard by all Israel, recalling not only a common lineage through Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but esp God's constant blessing and favor. *You are My people … You have received mercy*. God's promise, even before Israel promises to change (cf Eph 2:13). Wordplay of the names of Hosea's children (Not My People and No Mercy). Hosea artfully emphasizes God's promise to show mercy and restore His people. Cf 1Pt 2:10.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 2:2 Metaphor of Hosea's marriage and family life is extended; Israel is identified as the Lord's unfaithful wife. *Plead*. Hbr *rib*,

"contend" or "strive," as in a legal setting. *she is not My wife*. Because Israel has been as guilty of adultery as Gomer, the nation has thus proven itself wholly unworthy of a committed husband. However, the Lord remains faithful (cf 2Tm 2:13).

HOSEA—NOTE ON 2:3 The Lord warns with increasing severity that shame, desertion, and death will come if Israel refuses to repent. The graphic imagery employed here recalls Israel's miserable status in Egypt and the desperate conditions she experienced during the wilderness wanderings of Exodus. Cf 11:1, where Hosea reminds the people that "out of Egypt" God called His beloved son, Israel.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 2:4 *her children*. Though earnestly invited to a restored relationship in v 1, God's children will yet be left without mercy if their rebellion continues. *children of whoredom*. Just as husbands typically feel little obligation for children conceived in adultery, so also the Lord warns the tainted children of Israel that He may desert them. Cf 5:7.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 2:5 Israel acts as though its food and clothing come from the surrounding pagan nations. The people completely ignore the Lord's generous provision. Consequently, Hosea warns that these sustaining gifts may be removed (vv 8–9). During the exodus, God miraculously provided His people manna and quail daily (Ex 16; Nu 11:1–15). The people ought to have remembered God's goodness and thankfully depended on Him.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 2:6 *hedge … a wall*. Before acting on His threat to kill Israel (v 3), the Lord acts to restrain her wickedness. By erecting a hedge, God means to block His people's pursuit of Baal. Cf Is 5:1–5 for similar imagery.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 2:7 *She shall … not find them*. Sadly, Israel will end up frustrated within the protective maze of the restraining wall, since she will persist in the pursuit of other gods. Cf 5:6 for a contrasting image. *first husband*. Just as Hosea took Gomer (1:3), so the Lord would take back Israel. This is remarkable since God's Word allowed for divorce in cases of adultery (Dt 24:1–4).

HOSEA—NOTE ON 2:8 *I who gave*. Despite Israel's preposterous claims that her food and clothes came from other nations and gods (v 5), the Lord here sets the record straight. He is the source of Israel's well-being. *used for Baal*. See note, Nu 25:3. Ironically, Israel was taking the gold and silver

God lavished on her and offering them to images of Baal. The people were even fashioning these precious metals into idols (8:4; cf 1Ki 12:28–30).
HOSEA—NOTE ON 2:10 *uncover her lewdness*. A return to the warning of v 3. Israel's nakedness contrasts starkly with her boast that she is well-supplied by the gods of other nations (v 5). When God removes the fruitfulness of the land, the fertility god Baal will be useless to cover Israel.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 2:11 The annual celebrations of Passover, Pentecost, and the Feast of Booths. The new-moon celebrations were monthly; the Sabbath, weekly. Such weekly, monthly, and annual celebrations will come to an abrupt halt when God allows a pagan invader, the Assyrians, to take Israel into exile. See pp 200–201.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 2:12 *my wages*. Israel foolishly considered the fertility of her land to be the result of her illicit relationship with Baal. Accordingly, God threatens to overthrow such folly by laying waste to Israel's vines and fig trees. Cf Lv 26:22; Dt 11:13–17 for similar warnings. *a forest*. A place of danger.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 2:13 *feast days of the Baals*. See note, Nu 25:3. Israel abandoned the Lord's festivals (v 11) and began offering sacrifices to Baal. The abundance of individual shrines to Baal likely explains the plural "Baals." *burned offerings*. Numerous places in the OT refer to Israel offering burnt sacrifices to Baal and Asherah (e.g., 4:13; 1Ki 11:7–8; 12:28–33; 16:32–33; 2Ki 17:7–13). *ring and jewelry*. Israel continues to act as a harlot, dressing in finery to attract attention, pursuing Baal instead of her faithful Lord. For an ironic contrast between God's steadfast knowledge and Israel's willful forgetfulness, cf 13:4–6.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 2:1–13 God warns Israel that He will punish her for the idolatrous insistence that Baal will provide for her needs. At the same time, the Lord more earnestly urges Israel to repent and avoid judgment. Today, God warns us similarly through the preaching of His Law. He also unfailingly adds the promises of His Gospel, wherein grace and every blessing are assured. • Lord, all goodness comes from You alone. We embrace the Gospel in faith, give You thanks for Your enduring gifts, and so enjoy the benefits of Your unfailing compassion. Amen.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 2:14 *allure*. Hbr *pathah*, "to persuade," "entice." God thus turns from threatening Israel to pursuing her winsomely. *wilderness*. Recalls the exodus and a time when Baal had not intruded into the

relationship of God and Israel (cf Jer 2:2). *tenderly*. God speaks with the kindness of a loving spouse.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 2:15 *Valley of Achor*. Southwest of Jericho. God judged Israel here during the entry into the Promised Land (Jsh 7). *door of hope*. Achor means "trouble"; God ironically reverses the name of the valley by calling it a door of hope. This rhetorical move follows the transformation of Hosea's children's names (1:6, 8; 2:1) and anticipates the reversal of the way Israel will address the Lord in v 16. *answer as in … her youth*. Recalls Israel's acts of faithfulness, as when she rejoiced to follow the Lord out of Egypt (Ex 15:1–21) and worshiped Him after entering Canaan (Jsh 4).

HOSEA—NOTE ON 2:16 *Baal*. Hbr *ba'al* means both "husband" and "lord." Here both senses nuance the meaning. See note, Nu 25:3.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 2:17 *Baals*. See notes, v 13; Nu 25:3.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 2:18 Acting as a third party, God establishes a covenant between Israel and the wild creatures. He demonstrates both His rule over the created order and His compassion for Israel. *on that day*. A key phrase appearing elsewhere (cf vv 16, 18, 21) that makes plain that the end of time is in view, when a new heaven and earth will be established. Cf Is 11:6–9; 25:6–9; 65:17–25. See p 1079. *abolish*. God will break the bow that endangers the animals and humankind, though for now it is still needed. See note, 1:5. *safety*. This promised peaceful coexistence between people and beasts is a complete reversal of the conditions described in v 12, where wild animals are a threat.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 2:19 *betroth*. Hbr *'aras*, not only the engagement proper, but also the compensation for the bride's family. Cf Dt 22:23–27. Betrothal usually lasted several months and was considered as binding as marriage, from which it was hardly distinguished. *righteousness … justice … steadfast love … mercy*. See pp 842–43; cf 1:6–7; 2:4, 23. These four qualities may profitably be understood as the price God pays for His Bride.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 2:21–22 *answer*. The Lord pledges to respond to His Bride, esp her words of desertion (v 5), her eventual promise to return (v 7), and her predicted calling on the Lord as her "Husband" (v 16). *they shall answer the earth*. God's response to a repentant Israel will be to renew and multiply Jezreel's agricultural capabilities. The fruit once withheld from that region (vv 8–9) will be restored, thus demonstrating the Lord's love for His people.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 2:22–23 *Jezreel … sow*. This wordplay emphasizes that Jezreel will someday no longer be the scene of bloodshed (1:4). Instead, God Himself will cultivate the land and so assure that His people will reap a bountiful harvest. Cf 14:4–7.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 2:23 *sow*. Hbr *zara'*. Related to the word Jezreel (v 22). *No Mercy … Not My People*. See notes, 1:6–9. The meanings of these names will also turn around, so that Israel will once again be accepted as the Lord's children and Bride. *he*. Singular. May refer to the last child, Not My People, who speaks for all.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 2:14–23 Despite Israel's complete disregard for the covenant, the Lord promises to renew His marriage with her. To this end, He will even marshal creation as His witness and servant. Though it pains us to admit it, our wealth often begins to lead us into the same failings as those of Israel in Hosea's day, putting our trust in things rather than in the Lord. Fortunately for us, however, the God of Israel never wavers in His commitments. God's Law continues to show us our sins and to make us want to be rid of them. Through Christ, all our waywardness and idolatry is forgiven, and a new and all-inclusive covenant has been enacted. • Though we are unworthy of Your love, O Lord, renew our relationship with You through the strength of Your faithfulness and commitment. May we always say, "You alone are our God." Amen.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 3:1 God directs Hosea to love Gomer despite her unfaithfulness. This act dramatically depicts God's faithfulness to an adulterous Israel. *turn to other gods and love cakes of raisins*. Devotion and offerings to Baal. This recalls Israel's boast that the fruit of the land comes through Baal (2:5).

HOSEA—NOTE ON 3:2 Beyond the emotional burden of his marriage to an adulteress, Hosea also had to pay a price for her: 15 shekels of silver and c 9 bushels of barley. This may be compared to the fine imposed for injuring a female slave (30 silver shekels; Ex 21:32) or the offering given by a woman fulfilling her vow (30 silver shekels; Lv 27:4).

HOSEA—NOTE ON 3:3 Though Israel will never cease to belong to the Lord, the fullness of their relationship will obviously not be enjoyed until after the return from the impending Assyrian exile. *many days*. Cf v 4. *belong … be to you*. Gomer is expected to be exclusively devoted to Hosea, just as he will be to her. This relationship symbolizes the one between the Lord and Israel.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 3:4 Such privations will remind the exiles of their broken relationship with God. *king*. Cf 1:4; 10:15; 13:10–11. *prince*. Cf 5:10; 7:3–5; 8:4. *sacrifice*. Cf 6:6; 8:13. *pillar*. Cf 10:1–2. *ephod*. A priestly mantle or cape, either costly and elaborate or relatively simple. Cf 1Sm 2:18; 23:6–11, where it is used when seeking a sign of the future. *household gods*. Hbr *teraphim*, small, human-shaped idols. Micah used some in conjunction with an ephod in order to ordain his son as priest (Jgs 17:5); they were also used to divine the future (Ezk 21:21).

HOSEA—NOTE ON 3:5 *return and seek the* LORD. See p 843. *David their king*. Though Israel had not been under David's line since Solomon's death, the promised messianic descendant of David (Jesus Christ) would someday become the King for all people. *fear*. Hbr *pachad*, "to dread or be in awe" (e.g., Ps 27:1; 119:161; Is 19:16–17). See p 1001. *latter days*. Conventional prophetic term for the messianic age, when both God's people and the Gentiles would be gathered to Him (cf Dt 4:30; Ezk 34:11–24).

HOSEA—NOTE ON **Ch 3** In obedience to the Lord's request, Hosea redeems Gomer and renews his commitment to her, despite her unfaithfulness. This prophesies God's desire to restore Israel as a pure people after the exile. We are sometimes challenged to swallow our pride and forgive others in similar difficult ways. At such times, we are strengthened by the knowledge that God gave His own Son to forgive and restore us. • We give thanks to You, O Lord, that Your patience toward us covers all our sins and restores us perfectly to the image of Your Son. Amen.

HOSEA—NOTE ON **Ch 4** God still addresses Israel as part of His children but does so here within the context of a legal suit He brings against them.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 4:1 *controversy*. Hbr *rib* (see note, 2:2). *faithfulness or steadfast love*. These often appear together in descriptions of God (e.g., Ex 34:6; Ps 40:10–11; 86:15; Is 16:5). See p 843. *knowledge*. Also translated "wisdom" or "discernment." Often refers to the revealed knowledge God imparts to His covenant people. See note, v 6.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 4:2 List of many of the sins forbidden by the Mosaic covenant (Ten Commandments). Adultery, a major theme in this Book, comes last for emphasis.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 4:3 Rather than finding natural and material abundance through her pursuit of Baal (2:5), Israel will find only hunger as the true Lord of creation removes His provision (2:9, 12). *the land mourns*.

All creation witnesses against Israel and sorrows over her condemnation. Cf Gn 3:17–18; Is 24:3–6; Rm 8:20–22.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 4:4 *no one contend … accuse*. God will not allow Israel's religious leaders, esp its priests, to challenge or otherwise address His court while He judges. Rather, they stand accused. *priest*. Unnamed; he represents the whole of Israel's religious establishment. Ironically, he fulfills his duty as priest, since he stands to represent the many. Unfortunately, he is found incompetent and is not allowed to intercede. He can only listen while God speaks His righteous condemnation. Cf Am 7:10–17.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 4:5 *stumble*. Action of one standing under God's judgment (cf 5:5). Significantly, this is the final verb of the entire Book (14:9). Nevertheless, those who stumble can still be restored (14:1–2). *I will destroy your mother*. See imagery of 2:2, 5. Faithless Israel is here portrayed as the mother of the representative accused priest.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 4:6 *destroyed for lack of knowledge*. Because the priests failed to instruct and correct the people, all will perish together (cf v 1; 6:5). Instead of hearing God's Word from the divinely appointed priesthood, the people seek knowledge from idols (v 12). *you*. The individual priest being addressed embodies the entire nation's rejection of God, who deposes him. Hus: "No one does more injury in the church than he who acts perversely and yet has the name and order of sanctity" (*The Church*, p 148). *law*. The Law is God's entire revelation and was to be taught day and night (Dt 6:1–9). See p 971.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 4:7 *they increased*. This numerical growth only resulted in greater iniquity. *glory into shame*. The idolatrous behaviors that were once the people's boast will soon become their condemnation. Cf Ps 106:20; Rm 1:21–23; Php 3:19.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 4:8 *They feed on the sin*. The priests both plant the seed of sin and feed on its harvest. Though Baal was thought to be the source of food (2:5), the people's idolatrous worship, led by the priests, yields only a harvest of increasing sin. Tragically, both priests and people are eager for this illicit fruit. This image ironically contrasts with Lv 6:26, where Israel's priests consume portions of the sacrifices offered to the Lord.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 4:9 *like people, like priest*. Rather than leading, the priests are following the people into idolatry and so will receive a similar

punishment. Cf 10:5. The kings and princes will not escape this judgment (13:9–11).

HOSEA—NOTE ON 4:10 *They shall eat … not multiply*. The Lord's judgment renders the people's gain unrewarding. Rather than growing, they shall waste away. Cf 8:7; Dt 28:1–63.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 4:11 *wine … new wine*. Hbr has two words for wine. "New wine," *tirosh*, appears also in 7:14; 9:2. Inflamed by wine and urged on by the priests, the people engage in illicit sexual relations that rob them of their understanding (lit, "heart") so that they lust after idols. Then, as now, substance abuse brings self-destructive sin. God's people must clearly see how excess leads to destruction (Eph 5:17–18).

HOSEA—NOTE ON 4:12 Having forsaken God and provoked His abandonment of them (v 6), the people seek spiritual knowledge through the created order rather than through the Creator. Cf Rm 1:25. *inquire of a piece of wood*. Divination likely involved the casting of rods on the ground and the interpretation of the resultant pattern. Note the contrast of possessive pronouns here. Though the Lord speaks of "My people," they are described as having left "their God" in favor of "their walking staff."

HOSEA—NOTE ON 4:13 *They sacrifice … shade is good*. High places were common sites for the worship of idols (cf Dt 12:2; 1Ki 14:23; Jer 2:20). See p 526. From tree wood they fashioned idols, and in the shade of the trees they found comfort. *whore … adultery*. The pagan sacrifices likely included ritual prostitution. This fact adds further nuance to Hosea's recurring imagery of Israel's unfaithfulness to her husband, the Lord.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 4:14 *not punish*. God shows a degree of forbearance toward the women involved, esp the daughters, because the husbands and fathers are considered most responsible for this sexual abomination. This follows the logic of the Lord's singling out the priests in vv 4–9, because they were also guilty of failure in leadership. *cult prostitutes*. Men had illicit sexual relations with women at the high places, believing Baal would then ensure the fertility of the land. Cf Gn 38:21–22. *a people … to ruin*. A proverb. Cf Pr 10:8, 10 for other uses of "ruin."

HOSEA—NOTE ON 4:15 *Gilgal … Beth-aven*. The main shrines in Israel, just west of Jericho and north of Jerusalem. See color map 1. *Beth-aven*. Means "house of wickedness." Ironic pun on the name Bethel, "house of God." *swear not, "As the* LORD *lives."* This oath had a proper use (e.g., Jgs

8:19; Ru 3:13; 1Sm 14:39), but not in unfaithful worship of idols. That would violate the Second Commandment. See note, Nu 30:2.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 4:16 *stubborn heifer*. Refusing to be led by its owner. Israel rebels against her Creator. Cf Am 4:1. *broad pasture*. Often signifies a place of security (e.g., Ps 18:19; 31:8). A lamb might be counted on to remain near her shepherd in an open space. Israel, however, cannot be trusted to stay with the Lord because of her past unfaithfulness.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 4:17 *Ephraim*. Strongest of the 10 northern tribes; stands as an embodiment of Israel. See p 1079.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 4:18 *When their drink is gone*. Even as Israel finishes one sin, another is quickly undertaken. Be it drunkenness or prostitution, the people's pursuit of wickedness is boundless. *rulers*. Hbr *magen*, lit, "shield," but often used for princes or kings (e.g., Ps 47:9; 89:18).
HOSEA—NOTE ON 4:19 *A wind*. Hbr *ruach*. Also means "spirit" (cf v 12, where "spirit" impels the people into whoredom). *wrapped them in its wings*. Just as wind drives the chaff into dispersion, so the coming exile will sweep away the people of Israel. Cf 8:7; 13:3, 15; Ps 1:4–5. *sacrifices*. Hbr usually translated "altar," but here refers to the sacrifices being made to Baal.

HOSEA—NOTE ON **Ch 4** God's judgment against Israel focuses on the priests and their failure of leadership, because they have permitted and even encouraged the people to engage in gross idolatry. Today we see similar failures in leadership, not only among the clergy and secular leaders, but also in parents. It is a great comfort, then, to know that the Church ultimately depends on Christ, the true Good Shepherd. The Resurrected One promises that He will never lose any of the sheep the Father has given Him but will keep them and raise them up on the Last Day. • Lord, preserve us from abuse and from abusing others. Direct us with Your wisdom, satisfy us with Your pasture, and lead us to worship You alone. Amen.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 5:1 Israel's religious and political leaders will be held particularly responsible. The sentences they ought to have meted out to the wayward ones committed to their care will then be laid on them. *Mizpah … Tabor*. Locations of pagan shrines. See color map 1; see also map, p 558.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 5:2 *revolters*. Hbr *setim*, difficult to translate. Means "mutineers" or "rebels," but may also refer to Shittim (near the mouth of the Jordan River), where Israel agreed to serve Baal of Peor (Nu 25:1–4; cf

Hos 9:10); Shittim would join Mizpah and Tabor (v 1) as the third site of Israelite apostasy.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 5:3 *Ephraim*. See note, 4:17.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 5:4 Though the Lord has already tried to rescue His people and stands ready to forgive (e.g., 2:14–23), Israel remains immersed in rebellion.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 5:5 *pride*. "Majesty" or "excellence," but also pride in the negative sense (e.g., Ps 59:12; Pr 8:13; Is 16:6). *his face*. Israel makes no attempt to hide its willful sin from God; we might call this sin "bald-faced." *his guilt*. Singular. Includes all the people of the wayward tribes.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 5:6 *seek the* LORD. See p 843. Israel might halfheartedly try to appease God, but He will not be deceived (cf 1Sm 15:10–23). *withdrawn*. Though God promises that He will eventually gather and restore His people (2:14–23; 11:8–9; 14:4–7), He will remain withdrawn from them so long as they remain rebellious. This recalls not only the names of Hosea's children (No Mercy and Not My People) but also other threats of withdrawal (e.g., Dt 31:16–18).
HOSEA—NOTE ON 5:7 *alien children*. Those who have abandoned the Lord and sacrificed to Baal have relinquished their birthright. This again recalls the symbolic name of Hosea's second son (Not My People). *new moon shall devour*. New-moon sacrifices are equated with impending judgment. See note, Is 1:13.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 5:8 *horn … trumpet … alarm*. See p 993. *Sound the alarm*. Hbr describes a trumpet blast that commenced hostilities and served as a call to arms (Jsh 6:4–5). At other times, it summoned the people to a celebration (Nu 10:7). *Gibeah … Ramah … Beth-aven*. Towns in southern Israel on the road from south to north. See note, 4:15; see also map, p 451.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 5:9 *Ephraim*. See note, 4:17. *day of punishment*. Likely refers to the Syro-Ephraimite war that pitted Israel against Judah, weakened the northern tribes, and led to defeat by the Assyrians in 722 BC. *punishment*. Hbr *yakach*; can mean "to decide," "to reprove," or "to reason" (cf Is 1:18).
HOSEA—NOTE ON 5:10 *princes*. Royal family and military leaders. See p 228. *move the landmark*. See note, Pr 22:28.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 5:11 *Ephraim*. See note, 4:17. *filth*. Uncleanness and consequent destruction. God will judge Israel esp for its drunkenness and sexual sins (cf 4:18).

HOSEA—NOTE ON 5:12 Dissolution caused by inner corruption. *moth*. Calling someone "moth-eaten" emphasized that person's fragility (Is 50:9; 51:8). *dry rot*. Caused by worms or fungi, applied to decay in the bones (Pr 12:4; Hab 3:16).

HOSEA—NOTE ON 5:13 *Ephraim*. See note, 4:17. *sickness … wound*. The Northern Kingdom would see the judgment that God brings on them. *went to Assyria*. To appease Assyria and protect their power for a brief time, the kings of Israel would pay tribute to Assyria (2Ki 17:3). *great king*. Specific reference unclear, though it almost certainly refers to one of the Assyrian rulers of the late eighth century BC, to whom Israel turned for help. The reference may be intentionally general in order to condemn the futility of turning to a pagan king.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 5:14 *like a lion*. Though Israel and Judah were right to dread Assyria's might, the Lord is the real power they should have feared. (Note the contrasts with God's likeness to the silent moth in v 12.) Ironically, 11:10 compares the Lord with a lion that leads, gathers, and defends Israel. *I, even I*. The impending destruction of Israel and Judah, though coming by the hands of other nations, will, in fact, be the result of the Lord's will.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 5:15 *to My place*. Pictures a lion retiring to its den after the hunt. Due to the people's ongoing apostasy, God's place is now far from Israel. *seek Me*. See p 843. When Israel repents, God will welcome her back. This good news prepares for 6:1–3, where Israel is encouraged to return to a gracious Lord (cf Lk 15:11–32).

HOSEA—NOTE ON **Ch 5** God warns Israel and Judah that putting their hope in foreign kings is useless. As long as they continue in idolatry, they may seek God, but they will not find Him; only in repentance can they be healed. We similarly try to play both sides of the fence, claiming to be children of God while living as friends of the world. It is a great comfort, therefore, to know that the Lord stands as near as the word of Absolution. • Lord Jesus, spare us from the judgment we deserve, for we admit that we, too, have turned to other gods. Accordingly, work in us true repentance, return us to You, and lead us to Your side by Your gracious Son. Amen.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 6:1 *Come, let us return to the* LORD. Hosea invites Ephraim and Judah to do right. See "turn," p 1080. *heal … bind*. See note, Dt 32:39.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 6:2 *two days ... third day.* A coming day of deliverance. We would say "in a few days." God acted in a special way on the third day on other occasions as well, most notably when He gave the Law at Sinai (Ex 19:16) and when Christ rose from the dead. On numerical sayings, see note, Pr 30.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 6:3 *press on to know the* LORD. Hosea urges the people to strive for knowledge that begins with "the fear of the LORD." See p 1001. Israel demonstrates a distinct lack of this knowledge by chasing after Baal. *dawn … showers … spring rains*. Guaranteed natural events. For sinners, the daily and seasonal rhythms of repentance and faith bring renewal. See p 320.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 6:4–8:14 The Lord speaks.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 6:4 When Ephraim and Judah join the prophet in confessing sincerely, the Lord will be very pleased. But this was not yet the case. The severity of God's anguish is evident in the two questions He poses. *Ephraim.* See note, 4:17. *morning cloud ... dew.* In contrast to the Lord's reliability (v 3), the love of God's people was transient, here today and passing away tomorrow.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 6:5 *hewn them.* "Struck or cut them down," as one would a tree. The Lord thus sent prophets to pierce the stubborn hearts of His people by the preaching of His Law. *by the words of My mouth.* The prophets were God's spokesmen. Their refrain was "Hear the word of the LORD" (4:1). *judgment goes forth as the light.* See note, v 3. Ter: "Justice is the very fulness of the Deity Himself, manifesting God as both a perfect father and a perfect master: a father in His mercy, a master in His discipline" (*ANF* 3:308).
HOSEA—NOTE ON 6:6 *steadfast love.* See p 843. The Catechism speaks of such love when it introduces the meaning of each commandment: "We should fear and love God so that …" (see p xxxv–xxxvi). *not sacrifice*. God had commanded sacrifices, yet they were pleasing to Him only if they came from the heart. Jesus quotes this passage in order to condemn the Pharisees' insincerity. *burnt offerings*. See pp 170–71. Iren: "It is evident that God did not seek sacrifices and holocausts from them, but faith, and obedience, and righteousness, because of their salvation" (*ANF* 1:484).
HOSEA—NOTE ON 6:7 *like Adam.* Possibly a city near the Jordan River (Jsh 3:16) rather than the first human being, as evidenced by the word "there" and by the fact that other cities are named in the next two verses.

That said, Scripture does not recount specifics about the people of that town breaking faith with God. *covenant*. See p 127.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 6:8 *Gilead.* Possibly refers to the 50 men that came from Gilead to help Pekah assassinate the Israelite king Pekahiah (cf 2Ki 15:25). See color map 2.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 6:9 *priests band together*. See notes, 4:4, 6, 9; 5:1. Hosea calls attention to a particularly heinous crime, i.e., when a gang of priests committed murder on the road to Shechem. *Shechem*. Major religious and political center, located near Mount Gerizim, just southeast of the capital city of Samaria. Joshua called the 12 tribes to a covenant renewal ceremony at Shechem just after they had occupied the Promised Land. See color map 1.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 6:10 *Ephraim's whoredom.* See notes, 4:10–16, 18, 19.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 6:11 *a harvest is appointed.* The judgment (e.g., Mt 13:30, 39). In contrast to the devastation in store for Israel, however, the Lord promises a good harvest for Judah. This will come after the Babylonian exile, when He will restore the fortunes of His remnant, including the sending of Jesus, the Messiah, a descendant of the tribe of Judah.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 7:1 *revealed.* Ironically, the more earnestly the Lord seeks to heal Israel, the more the iniquity of Ephraim becomes evident. *Samaria.* Capital of the Northern Kingdom of Israel, this city reeked of evil deeds. See color map 1. *the thief ... bandits raid outside.* Terror reigns in town and countryside, as thieves plunder houses and bandits rob travelers on the highways.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 7:2 Nothing is hidden from the Lord. He sees and remembers even secret misdeeds.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 7:3 The deplorable spiritual condition of the nation is revealed in the fact that the king and princes actually delight in the evil being done.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 7:4 Sinful Israel is compared to an oven stoked so hot that the baker no longer needs to stir the fire while kneading the dough and letting it rise.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 7:5 *the day of our king.* Likely the day on which an Israelite king ascended the throne. *princes became sick.* Self-indulgent princes downed so much wine that they became sick. *he*. Sadly, the king

himself joined with those whose drunken festivities effectively mocked the Lord.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 7:6–7 Like the fire in an oven that does not go out overnight, so the hearts of those planning intrigue continue to smolder as they sleep, only to blaze up again in the morning. Sinful desires flame up into sinful deeds. *devour their rulers.* During Hosea's ministry, four Israelite kings were overthrown within 12 years. *calls upon Me.* Neither king nor prince nor people called on the only One able to help in this time of upheaval. The Lord was utterly forgotten. See p 842.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 7:8 *mixes himself.* Refers to Israel's attempts to ally with foreign nations rather than the Lord. These alliances proved to be entangling snares rather than means of escape. *cake.* Griddle cake, probably sweetened with honey or a syrup made from grapes, dates, or figs. *not turned.* Burned on one side and raw on the other, i.e., defective and unusable.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 7:9 *Strangers.* Foreign nations (e.g., Assyria and Egypt) are strangers because they do not know the Lord. *he knows it not.* Sums up the feeble, blinded spiritual condition of Ephraim. *gray hairs.* Sign of aging and loss of vigor.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 7:10 *pride of Israel testifies to his face.* See note, 5:5. Israel's arrogant disdain for the Lord is clear and brings no positive effect. *return ... seek.* Hosea's emphasis. See p 843.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 7:11 *dove.* The people lack discernment. They desperately flutter in all directions, looking for help. Scripture does not always use symbols in the same sense. Contrast with Mt 3:16.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 7:12 *spread over them My net.* Like a fowler. See notes, 9:8; Ps 91:3. *report.* The discipline should come as no surprise, since the prophets often warned the assembled people of impending judgment.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 7:13–15 *against Me!* The Lord repeats this phrase to show how deeply grieved He is by His children's sin.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 7:13 *Woe.* Mournful cry heard at the death of a loved one. The Lord laments the destruction of His people. *redeem.* See p 843.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 7:14 *not ... from the heart.* Insincere. *wail.* Might refer to a ritual performed during Baal worship. *gash themselves.* On Mount Carmel, the prophets of Baal cut themselves as part of their idolatrous ritual (1Ki 18:28). The Israelites did the same here, hoping to ensure good crops.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 7:15 The Lord strengthened Israel militarily, yet Israel betrays its ally, the Lord.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 7:16 *not upward.* Israel turned to Baal and to other nations for help rather than to the Lord. *treacherous bow.* Such a weapon is incapable of shooting straight; its arrows do not hit the target. *princes.* High-ranking officials who, when captured by the enemy, were among the first to be executed. *derision in the land of Egypt.* When Israel's leaders fell, Egypt laughed in ridicule.
HOSEA—NOTE ON **Chs 6–7** Though Hosea earnestly encourages Ephraim and Judah to return to the Lord, his pleas continue to fall on deaf ears. Rather than trusting the Lord, Israel's leaders persist in seeking help from foreign nations such as Assyria and Egypt. Sadly, even committed Christians manifest the same kind of stubbornness and inability to overcome their weaknesses. And so it is that the Lord still deals with us today as He dealt with wayward Israel. He continues to call us to repentance so that we might return to Him, confess our sin, trust in His pardoning love, and again be reminded that Jesus, the Lamb of God, has forgiven us. • Come, then, let us return to the Lord. Let us press on to know Him and His steadfast love. May we humbly pray, "Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner, and grant me peace." Amen.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 8:1 *trumpet*. See note, 5:8. *One like a vulture*. Likely refers to Tiglath-pileser III, king of Assyria, who invaded Israel c 733–732 BC. *house of the* LORD. Probably the whole land of Israel, including the Jerusalem temple. *covenant ... law*. See p 971.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 8:2 *know You*. Presumptuous and self-deluded claim.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 8:3 *enemy*. See note, v 1.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 8:4–5 *made kings, but not through Me*. The northern tribes rejected the legitimate heirs to the throne of David and instead made Jeroboam their king. Thereafter, all of Israel's kings were illegitimate because they ruled outside the messianic line of Judah. *made idols ... calf.* Jeroboam, the first king of the northern tribes, made calves of gold and set them in the cultic shrines of Dan and Bethel. See note, 1Ki 12:28. The twin sins of establishing a kingly line in opposition to the messianic dynasty and worshiping idols ultimately led to Israel's destruction in 722 BC.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 8:5 *anger burns*. See note, Ex 32:10.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 8:6 *craftsman*. See notes, Is 44:12–17. *broken to pieces*. Underlines the fragility of this idol formed by human hands.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 8:7 *they sow the wind ... reap the whirlwind*. Proverb stresses the futility of turning away from God and trusting in idols. One sowing the wind can hardly expect any harvest but a whirlwind. *no heads ... no flour*. Wheat or oat stalks without heads of grain cannot feed the sower because they yield no flour. Investing in the nothingness of idolatry guarantees only bankruptcy. *strangers would devour*. Third depiction of the futility of idol worship through farming imagery.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 8:8 *swallowed up*. Like the crop devoured by strangers (v 7), so Israel is to be swallowed up by Assyrian invaders. *a useless vessel*. Under David and Solomon, Israel was a strong nation, possessing at least 2,000 chariots. But now the fractured nation is a mere shell of what it once was, an emptied vessel headed for the garbage heap.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 8:9 *a wild donkey*. Image of unbridled promiscuity. See note, Ezk 23:20.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 8:10 *hire allies*. Refers to alliances Ephraim made with nations such as Syria and Assyria. These were her illicit "lovers" (v 9), to whom she would vainly look for help. *writhe because of the tribute*. Israelite King Menahem paid Tiglath-pileser III of Assyria 1,000 talents (c 37 tons) of silver as tribute (2Ki 15:19–20), an attempt to stave off Israel's destruction. One can understand how kings and princes would have squirmed as they paid such a large sum of extortion money.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 8:11 Though the Lord had commanded Israel to offer different sacrifices (see pp 170–71), Ephraim's multiplication of altars resulted in an increase of sinning in the land because the people were using most of these altars for idol worship.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 8:12 *laws by the ten thousands*. Israel's disobedience was not simply the result of a lack of knowledge (cf 4:6) but a conscious disregard of God's will. Thousands of new laws would not have helped. *strange thing*. The people are so far from the Lord that His teachings now seem foreign to them.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 8:13 *they sacrifice meat and eat it*. In some of the sacrifices and offerings prescribed by Moses, the worshiper and priests were supposed to eat part of the meat. The rest was considered to be the Lord's portion and was burned (e.g., Lv 7:11–27; Dt 12:7; see pp 170–71). *return to Egypt*. For Israelites, the mention of Egypt called to mind captivity. When Hosea speaks of that nation here, therefore, the people

instantly understood his warning that a new captivity was coming, this time in Assyria.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 8:14 *built palaces ... fortified cities*. The rich and powerful built luxurious palaces. Therein, they sought comfort and security. Cf Am 6:4–7. *fire*. Palaces and cities of Israel were burned to the ground by the enemies whom the Lord sent.

HOSEA—NOTE ON **Ch 8** Topping the list of Israel's misdeeds is idolatry—their rejection of the Creator and their devotion to calves made of gold. Sadly, we, too, begin to fall into idolatry whenever we fear, love, and trust anything or any person more than the true God. Admitting that, we should also remember that the same God threatening to punish idolatry is also the One whose forgiving love and sustaining Spirit never fails. • Heavenly Father, may Your grace, which works powerfully in Word and Sacraments, strengthen our determination to have You first in our lives. May we ever think and pray, "Lord, keep me true to You in thought, word, and deed. Help me to fear, love, and trust in You above all things." Amen.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 9:1–9 Hosea speaks.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 9:1 *Rejoice not, O Israel!* Given the seriousness of the warnings, this was no time for making merry. *a prostitute's wages*. See note, Pr 6:26. *on all threshing floors*. The large, flat, open areas where grain was threshed (see note, Ru 3:2) were also used for religious ceremonies honoring Baal. Israel was expecting "wages" from Baal for its adulterous worship, i.e., its ritual prostitution.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 9:2 *new wine shall fail them*. Far from receiving bounty in return for its worship of pagan idols, Israel will find the vines so bare that the grapes produce hardly any wine. See note, 4:11.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 9:3 *the land of the* LORD. The same Lord who had given Israel the Promised Land was about to take back this blessing. *return to Egypt*. See note, 8:13. *eat unclean food in Assyria*. Ritually unclean, because the crops could not be grown in the Lord's land or be consecrated with the firstfruits offering (Dt 26:1–11).

HOSEA—NOTE ON 9:4–5 See pp 170–71. Living as captives in a foreign country would totally disrupt the worship rituals prescribed by the Lord. *mourners' bread*. Bread touched by a mourner who had been in contact with a dead body was unclean (Nu 19:11–22). *defiled*. Those who ate mourners' bread would themselves become unclean. *for their hunger only*. Defiled bread would still serve to relieve physical hunger. *the house of the* LORD.

Defiled bread could not be brought into the Lord's temple. *festival … feast*. See pp 200–201. Feast of Booths, an autumn harvest festival, was an esp joyful occasion.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 9:6 *Egypt.* Some in Israel fled from destruction by going to Egypt (cf Jer 44:1). However, they found no lasting refuge there. *Memphis*. Egyptian city famous for its pyramids and huge graveyard. Many expatriated Israelites were buried there. See color map 3. *Nettles*. Weeds with jagged leaves, covered with stinging hairs. See note, Jgs 9:8–15.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 9:7 *recompense*. The punishment on Israel is payback for rejecting the Lord and rebelling against His Law. *The prophet is a fool.* Reflects what many in Ephraim were saying about Hosea's prophetic warnings. *man of the spirit is mad*. Hosea responds to this charge of being a fool by asserting that he, a righteous man full of God's Spirit, is at wit's end because of the people's sin and hatred.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 9:8 *watchman*. See notes, Is 21:6–12; Ezk 3:17. *a fowler's snare*. A fowler is one who hunts birds by setting traps; see note, Ps 91:3. Hosea feels as though he is a hunted man in Ephraim. *hatred.* The prophet, who by rights should have been loved for proclaiming the Lord's Word, is hated. *house of his God*. See note, 8:1.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 9:9 *days of Gibeah*. Refers to the appalling sexual crime committed years earlier by some residents of Gibeah. These Benjaminites, thwarted in their attempt to rape a visiting Levite, abused the man's concubine all night until she fell dead. As a consequence, all Israel attacked the tribe of Benjamin, killing 25,000 men (Jgs 19:1–20:48).

HOSEA—NOTE ON 9:10–13 The Lord speaks.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 9:10 *Like grapes … your fathers*. The Lord likens Himself to a traveler in the wilderness who unexpectedly finds a vineyard. Such was His initial pleasure in the first Israelites. But that feeling changed as Israel became more and more apostate. *first fruit.* See note, Na 3:12. *Baal-peor*. Mountain in Moab, c 12 mi NE of the northern end of the Salt Sea. See Peor on map, p 250. *consecrated themselves to the thing of shame*. Refers to the episode in which Israel joined with the Moabites in worshiping Baal (Nu 25:1–3). This worship may have included child sacrifice (cf Ps 106:37–38). *thing they loved*. A baneful consequence of idolatry is that the worshiper begins to resemble his or her idol. Cf Ps 115:8.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 9:11 *glory shall fly away.* Israel enjoyed renown among the surrounding nations, but that glory was fleeting. *no birth, no*

pregnancy, no conception! One of the most devastating results of sin is its effect on children. The birthing process is traced backward to show how life will be turned upside down when war descends on Israel.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 9:12 *Woe*. See note, 7:13.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 9:13 Israel's glory days have been compared to a productive vine, a fruitful fig tree (v 10), and a thriving palm (v 13). In those days, God's faithful people did right and so produced much fruit, including children. But when the invading Assyrians strike, Ephraim's children will be mercilessly slaughtered.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 9:14 Hosea asks the Lord what He will give His people. He then prays that the Lord will grant His people a lesser evil than seeing their children slaughtered—no children at all.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 9:15 *Gilgal*. Across the Jordan River from Baal-peor; it was the site of Saul's inauguration as the first king. It long served as an illegitimate worship center, even after the temple was built in Jerusalem. Cf Am 4:4. *hate them*. Hbr verb involves rejection and distancing (cf v 17). *drive them out.* The Lord threatens to divorce Himself from Ephraim on account of the people's incessant wickedness. *My house*. The entire Promised Land. Cf 8:1. *their princes are rebels*. See notes, 5:1, 2.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 9:16 Cf Ex 34:7. The Lord permitted Assyria to conquer Israel, inevitably causing innocent children to be put to death for the sins of their parents.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 9:17 Summary. *wanderers*. God's people will be dispersed, first by the hands of the Assyrians and later the Babylonians. These exiles fulfilled the prophetic warning, spoken as early as Moses, that apostasy would cause the Lord to scatter His people.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 10:1 *more altars*. Again, Israel is compared to a luxuriant vine (cf 9:10). The more the people's fruit increased, however, the more altars they built to worship Baal. *pillars*. Stone pillars or columns marking places that Baal was worshiped. The Lord hated such pillars (Dt 16:22).
HOSEA—NOTE ON 10:2 *break down ... destroy*. Some years later, the Lord used King Josiah of Judah to destroy these altars and pillars (2Ki 23:14–15).
HOSEA—NOTE ON 10:3 *We have no king ... what could he do for us?* The people of Israel had no fewer than six kings within a period of c 20 years during the ministry of Hosea. This rapid succession no doubt prompts

their cynical question. The basic problem, however, is not their lack of a king. Rather, it is their failure to fear the One who truly is King, the Lord.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 10:4 *empty oaths*. Covenants, or contracts, between two parties were typically sealed with a binding oath (e.g., Eng: "so help me God"). In Hosea's day, such oaths had become hollow. See p 7. *poisonous weeds*. These contrast to the luxurious vines mentioned in v 1, which yielded delicious fruit. Poisonous weeds, on the other hand, diminished the harvest and caused illness and even death for those consuming them.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 10:5 *Samaria*. See note, 7:1. *calf of Beth-aven*. See note, 4:15. *idolatrous priests*. Foreign word for "priest," not Hbr, is used here to emphasize that these were rogue priests who served Baal. *rejoiced … departed.* Up to this point, the people rejoiced and gave glory to Baal while worshiping his image. Soon, however, mourning rather than rejoicing would be heard, since the calf would soon be removed.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 10:6 *carried to Assyria*. The calf would be carried off to Assyria with other Israelite treasures as tribute to the Assyrian monarch. *the great king*. King of Assyria, either Tiglath-pileser III (744–727 BC) or Shalmaneser V (726–722 BC).
HOSEA—NOTE ON 10:7 *Samaria's king*. The last king to rule in Samaria was Hoshea (732–722 BC). The Assyrians locked him up in prison for failing to pay tribute (2Ki 17:4). *like a twig on the face of the waters*. The king is swept away, powerless to resist.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 10:8 *high places.* The Canaanites usually chose high places, such as prominent hills, for the worship of their god Baal. Many in Israel did the same. See p 526. *Aven*. See note, 4:15. *Thorn and thistle*. Weeds would overgrow the altars on the high places once the Israelites were carried off into captivity. *Cover us … on us*. People facing divine judgment will actually ask to be buried by a mountain rather than face the full fury of God's wrath. Jesus quotes these words while speaking to the weeping women on the road to Calvary. This cry also accompanies the opening of the sixth seal and judgment that follows.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 10:9 *days of Gibeah*. See note, 9:9. *war against the unjust*. Shalmaneser V became king of Assyria in 726 BC and attacked Israel a few years later. He put King Hoshea into prison and captured the capital, Samaria, in 722 BC after a three-year siege (2Ki 17:3–6). People as far away as Gibeah felt the effects of this crushing blow.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 10:10 *double iniquity*. Israel's failure was complete. Cf v 15.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 10:11 *loved to thresh.* Threshing grain was easy work for an ox and opportunity for mouthfuls of fodder. *I spared her fair neck*. Refers to the Lord's long-suffering and patience with Israel. Thus far, He had not made the yoke of the covenant onerous ("a pain in the neck," we say). *yoke ... plow ... harrow*. The days of the Lord's forbearance are over. Henceforth, He will expect His people to shoulder the full weight of the covenant, even though they will chafe under its yoke, and toil so as to produce the fruit He desires.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 10:12 Bern: "This knowledge is taught, not by the reading of books, but by grace; not by the letter, but by the spirit; not by learning, but by the practice of the commandments of God…. You see that the light of knowledge cannot be duly attained, except the seed of righteousness [first] enter the soul, so that from it may grow the grain of life, and not the mere husk of vainglory" (*SLSB*, p 162). *righteousness.* See p 843. Not simply social justice but forgiveness and renewal.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 10:13 Root failure of Israel was a lack of trust in the Lord. This resulted in the false worship of Baal, general lawlessness, and a reliance on human resources for national security.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 10:14 *tumult of war.* Punishment for Israel's failure to keep the covenant. *Shalman*. No other mention of a person named Shalman in the Bible or in other historical records; it may be a shortened name for the Assyrian king Shalmaneser. *Beth-arbel.* Location unknown, though possibly in Gilead, east of the Jordan River. *dashed in pieces*. Imagery of the horrifying atrocities that accompany the tumult of war. Cf 13:16; see p 879.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 10:15 *O Bethel*. See note, 8:4–5. *great evil*. The worship of the golden calf (1Ki 12:27–29). Again and again, Israel broke the First Commandment, the root cause of all subsequent sins. *At dawn ... cut off.* People normally look forward to dawn with the hope of a new beginning. In this case, however, dawn marked the end: the king would be utterly cut off.
HOSEA—NOTE ON **Chs 9–10** Hosea alternately speaks about Israel's past and future. He reminds the people of how faithfully the Lord has treated His children. At the same time, however, Hosea warns Israel of impending judgment as a result of the nation's apostasy. We need to hear

similar prophetic exhortations today, not only to prevent us from slipping into thanklessness, but also to check our inclinations toward willful sins and outright rebellion. The prophetic word we need to hear most, however, is that in Christ God has rained down righteousness upon us, forgiving all sin, and thus we have the very hope of glory. • May all Your past faithfulness, O Lord, continually strengthen our conviction that on Judgment Day You will speak for us, not against us. Then we will eagerly long for the day when You will finally and completely free us from sin, death, and the devil. Amen.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 11:1 Hosea repeatedly reminds Israel of how graciously God has dealt with them in the past (cf 9:10a, 13a; 10:1a, 11a). *out of Egypt I called My son*. Recalls the time nearly seven centuries before Hosea's time when God elected Israel as His "firstborn son" (Ex 4:22–23) and rescued him from bondage in Egypt. This event anticipated the appearance of God's only-begotten Son and the Father's care during the Christ Child's return from Egypt, after He narrowly escaped Herod's attempt to destroy Him. See note, Mt 2:15.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 11:2 *called*. The Lord continuously raised up prophets to urge trust and obedience in the one true God. *Baals*. See note, Nu 25:3. Baal was the most alluring pagan deity for Israel and during the reign of Ahab was actually decreed the national idol (1Ki 16:29–34).

HOSEA—NOTE ON 11:3 *I who taught Ephraim to walk*. Continuing the parental imagery of v 1, God is pictured as a father tenderly holding his child by the arms as the little one learns to walk.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 11:4 *cords of kindness … bands of love*. Possibly imagery for a guide rope, halter, or lead rope. *the yoke on their jaws*. A yoke can impede an animal's ability to chew, esp as it leans forward to eat from a trough. *I bent down*. God compares Himself to a caring master who ensures that His animals' basic needs (and even comfort) are supplied.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 11:5 *Assyria shall be their king*. God forewarns Israel of impending judgment by means of the Assyrian invasion. *return*. See p 1080.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 11:6 *bars of their gates*. Crossbeams used to lock doors and gates. *their own counsels*. Plans and deeds made without dependence on the Lord and His Word.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 11:7 *bent on turning away*. To pursue wickedness. Constitutes original sin, which is the root of all unbelief and disobedience.

Luth: “Where, do you think, lies the reason why we cannot believe the Word of God although everything up to the article of the resurrection of the dead has happened as Scripture says? The reason is original sin” (*WLS* § 1442). *they call out*. Although they pray, they more steadfastly turn away from Him.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 11:8 *Admah … Zeboiim*. Two cities in the Valley of Siddim destroyed along with Sodom and Gomorrah. See map, p 33. *My heart*. Using anthropomorphic language to emphasize His fatherly love for Israel, God again underscores His abiding mercy and unending concern for His people.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 11:9 *burning anger*. See note, Jnh 3:9. *I am God and not a man*. Humans often permit emotions to control their actions and even pervert justice. Not so with God. While angered, He still deals with people in accord with a perfect balance of justice and mercy. *Holy One in your midst*. See p 1227. God is true to His promise to preserve His people. He is also personal, making Himself known in the midst of His people. He continues to do the same through the Church’s preaching of the Word and the administration of the Sacraments.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 11:10–11 God will gather His people from the nations. *roar like a lion*. Lions announce their arrival and mark their territory by roaring. This metaphorical roar not only declares to the world that God has returned for His people but also announces His rule and power. *trembling*. See p 1001. *from the west*. Lit, “from the waters,” the seas over which they dispersed. *Egypt … Assyria*. South and east of Israel, respectively. When He returns, all of His faithful people will be gathered from every corner of the world.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 11:12 *walks with God*. See p 7. *Holy One*. See p 1227.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 12:1 *feeds on the wind*. Israel’s spiritual eating and drinking is frivolous, empty, and undiscerning. See note, 8:7. *a covenant with Assyria*. Reflects Israel’s vain pursuits to establish alliances with heathen nations such as Assyria. See notes, 5:13; 7:11. *oil is carried to Egypt*. Olive trees did not grow in Egypt, so Israel exported olive oil to secure an ally against potential threats from Assyria in the east.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 11:1–12:1 Even as the Lord continues to speak of His unrequited love and longing for Israel, His firstborn, He anguishes over the people’s unceasing iniquity and willful disobedience. Unfortunately,

many today follow the lead of Hosea's generation, closing their ears to God's Law and imagining that judgment will never come upon them. Hear the Father's roar! Tremble and return by faith in Christ, who bore God's judgment for us and for our peace. • Heavenly Father, I believe. Help me in my weakness and unbelief, for the sake of Your only-begotten Son, my Savior. Amen.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 12:2 God's punishment for sin is equitable. *Jacob*. Synonymous with "Israel" (cf Gn 32:28), of which Judah is a tribe (cf 10:11).

HOSEA—NOTE ON 12:3–4 Various episodes of Jacob's life are recalled in order to encourage Israel to struggle with God in a good way, that they remain rightful heirs of the promise given to the patriarch.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 12:3 *In the womb*. Recalls Jacob's struggle with Esau before the twins were born and alludes to the historical fact that Israel is ever contending and striving—even with God—just as its forefather Jacob did.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 12:4 *strove with the angel*. Cf Gn 32:22–28. *he wept*. Jacob fervently asked for the angel's blessing. *He met God at Bethel*. Jacob received a dream from God at Bethel (a theophany; see p 39), after which he erected a sacred pillar or stone as a place of worship (Gn 28:18–22; see note, Jsh 24:26).

HOSEA—NOTE ON 12:5 In addition to revealing Himself gloriously as the "God of hosts" (see p 1291), the Lord also revealed Himself personally to the patriarchs, promising that through Jacob's descendants all the earth would be blessed (Gn 28:14). The faithful of Israel were continually to reinforce their community's faith in the promises given their forefathers, i.e., memorialize the Lord who had revealed Himself to them.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 12:6 *return*. See p 1080. *love*. Hbr *chesed*. See "steadfast love," p 843. *wait continually for your God*. An OT phrase meaning "patiently trust Him to act." See notes, Ps 25:3; Is 40:31.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 12:7 *false balances*. Or, dishonest scales. See note, Am 8:5.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 12:8 Ephraim was so steeped in sin that its people had convinced themselves that they had acquired their wealth justly. *they*. Likely other nations.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 12:9 By referring to the historical events of the exodus, God reminded Israel that He had elected them as His children,

caused them to become a great nation, and then freed them from their servitude. The Lord was prepared to make Israel again "dwell in tents," just as during the 40-year sojourn in the wilderness. *the appointed feast*. Feast of Booths, which commemorated Israel's nomadic journey through the wilderness. See pp 200–201.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 12:10 *visions … parables*. Not only had God provided ample warning through the sermons of the prophets, but He had also multiplied His disclosures to Israel in other forms of speech and literature. Iren: "God the Father is shown forth through all these [operations], the Spirit indeed working, and the Son ministering, while the Father was approving, and man's salvation being accomplished" (*ANF* 1:489). See notes, Ps 78:1–2; Mt 13:3.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 12:11 *Gilead*. Land east of the Jordan River; overrun by Assyria in 732 BC. *Gilgal … sacrifice bulls*. See note, 4:15. *stone heaps on the furrows*. When they plowed their fields, Israelite farmers gathered the stones that they uncovered and piled them in the depressions. God warns that He will reduce altars used for idolatrous worship to mere piles of stones, resembling such landfill.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 12:12 Jacob tended flocks for Rachel's father, Laban, in exchange for her hand in marriage. *Aram*. Located northeast of Canaan in contemporary Syria. See color map 2. *Israel*. Synonymous with "Jacob," who received his new name after he wrestled with God (Gn 32:28).

HOSEA—NOTE ON 12:13 *a prophet … brought Israel up from Egypt*. Israelites were led out of Egypt by God's greatest OT prophet, Moses. *guarded*. Jacob's tending of Laban's flocks (see note, v 12) is contrasted with God's shepherding of the Israelites through Moses' leadership.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 12:14 *bloodguilt*. See note, 1Ki 2:31; cf Lv 20:11–27.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 12:2–14 Rather than follow the example of their forefather Jacob, who in faith strove with God and so received a blessing, the Israelites of Hosea's day set themselves in a fight against the Lord and so inevitably fell under a crushing defeat. This leads us to ask, "Are our spiritual struggles borne of faith or of unbelief?" Sadly, there are times that our spirits knowingly fight against the Lord and His Word rather than battle against our true enemies: sin, death, the flesh, and the devil. In such times, the Gospel's promise calls to us: "If we are faithless, He remains faithful—for He cannot deny Himself" (2Tm 2:13). • Give me discernment, O Lord, so that when I lash out in anger and despair, I do not make You my enemy.

Because You lived, died, and rose again for me, teach me to know You as my ally. Amen.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 13:1 *trembling*. In Israel's glory days, when David and Solomon ruled over a united kingdom, the surrounding nations shuddered before their might. *guilt through Baal*. See note, Nu 25:3. After Israel became such a powerful nation, King Solomon allowed the spread of idolatrous practices. Under Jeroboam, his illegitimate successor in the north, worship began to be offered unabashedly to golden calves (1Ki 12:28). Later, during Ahab's reign, the king himself "served Baal and worshiped him," even setting up a temple for him (1Ki 16:31–32). Such departures marked the beginning of the end for Israel.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 13:2 King Jeroboam introduced worship of the twin golden calves c 200 years earlier. After that, the propagation of man-made idols accelerated. See note, 1Ki 12:28. *Those who offer human sacrifice kiss calves!* This ironic passage juxtaposes two aspects of Baal worship. Idolatrous practices could include human sacrifice. At the same time, this sentence underscores the frivolity of those worshiping Baal, since they showed greater respect for images of animals than for human life.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 13:3 *mist … dew*. Evaporates as soon as the sun rises. *chaff … smoke*. Blown away by even a puff of wind. A picture of how quickly and completely rebellious Israel will be destroyed. *window*. Buildings did not have chimneys; smoke exited through a window.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 13:4 *from the land of Egypt*. Israel is again reminded of their deliverance from Egypt. This redemptive intervention is repeatedly evoked amid Hosea's admonitions, reminding Israel that they should refuse to know any other God besides the One who rescued them from bondage. *know*. Hbr *yada'*, implies an evidential-experiential knowledge, i.e., a familiarity based on relationship. *besides Me there is no savior*. See "salvation," p 843. The exodus event is the greatest way that God revealed Himself as Savior in the OT. The greatest redemptive act in all of history, however, is the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, which results in the world's salvation from sin, death, and the devil. Christianity, unlike all other religions of the world, can point to factual events and historical persons as the basis for knowing God and, most important, knowing the certainty of salvation.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 13:5 *in the wilderness*. Israel's 40-year wandering.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 13:6 Haughty and deluded into believing they had no need of the Lord, they failed to appreciate all that the Lord had done for them. Moses warned them against this.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 13:7–8 *lion … leopard … bear*. Not commonly found in the Near East today. Asiatic lions and leopards, found only in India, are on the verge of extinction. Similarly, Asiatic black bears are found only in China. These animals conjure up the image of a voracious beast tearing a tame flock of sheep or goats to pieces, illustrating just how angry God was with Israel.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 13:8 *robbed of her cubs*. Mother bears are notoriously fierce as they protect their cubs. *tear open their breast*. Laying bare the heart.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 13:9 *He destroys*. "The beginning and cause of evil is not God's foreknowledge. (For God does not create and do evil, neither does He help or promote it.) The cause of this evil is the wicked, perverse will of the devil and of people" (FC SD XI 7). *helper*. Hbr *'ezer*, "ally." Not only did the Lord bring the Israelites out of Egypt, but He also continued to bless and sustain His chosen people. See note, Gn 2:18.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 13:11 *gave you a king in My anger*. See notes, 1Sm 8:7, 17. After King Solomon's death, the Lord's warnings about kings came to fruition. For more than two centuries, Israel languished under terrible leadership. *took him away*. When the Lord had endured enough of Israel's apostate kings, he allowed the Assyrians to destroy the Northern Kingdom and bring their royal line to an end.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 13:12 *bound up*. Their sin is preserved or collected so it can be taken into consideration when the time for punishment comes.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 13:13 *pangs of childbirth*. The judgment awaiting Israel would be, at least figuratively, as great as the trauma one experiences at birth. In Israel's case, however, this travail would last an abnormally long time. *unwise son*. God's "firstborn son" resists being born.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 13:14 *ransom*. See "redeem," p 843. *Sheol?* See p 792. *redeem*. See p 843. *O Death … your sting?* Obviously, only God can overcome the final and destructive power of death. He alone can loosen its hold on humankind. "Christ's death is a satisfaction not only for guilt, but also for eternal death" (Ap XIIB 43). *Compassion is hidden*. Although the Lord will indeed redeem His people and bring His great plan of salvation to fulfillment in His time, for the moment the theme of judgment and doom

predominate. Paul repeats these questions at the climax of his greatest chapter on the meaning of Christ's resurrection and then answers them: "But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1Co 15:57).

HOSEA—NOTE ON 13:15 *the east wind*. See note, Jb 1:19. An apt metaphor for God's destructive vengeance through the Assyrians, from the east. *strip his treasury*. When the Assyrians conquered the northern tribes, they plundered the Israelites' personal and national wealth.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 13:16 *Samaria*. See note, 7:1. *their little … ripped open*. See note, 10:14.

HOSEA—NOTE ON **Ch 13** Israel's never-ending idolatry and disobedience provoked this most violent description of judgment. The children offered to Baal would be ripped away. Today, offer yourself, your family, and your congregation to the Lord in repentant prayer. Acknowledge lack of control and beg God's forgiveness, restoration, and health. By grace, God's Holy Spirit will enable you to see things aright. He will ransom and redeem His people through His Son's compassionate love. • Thank You, Jesus, for opening my eyes to Your compassion. May I always trust in You when faced with sin, death, and the power of the devil. Amen.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 14:1 Israel's sin is here compared to a misstep, which leaves the possibility for regaining one's balance. The Lord continues to reach out in love and hope to a wayward people. *Return*. See p 1080.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 14:2 *Take with you words*. Approach the Lord with words of confession. *pay with bulls*. The prophet exhorts Israel to offer the sacrifices prescribed in the Books of Moses. At the same time, they must understand that such external signs of repentance are secondary to redirecting one's heart and mind to God. They do not contribute to the redemption or ransom, which comes from God's initiative. See notes, Ps 51:17, 19.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 14:3 *not ride on horses*. Warns Israel against relying on alliances with worldly powers (such as Assyria and Egypt). Only a return to God and trusting in Him can avert their doom. *the work of our hands*. Israel's idols are the creation of their imagination and the work of their hands. *In You the orphan finds mercy*. Not Baal, but the Lord is the hope of the orphan.

HOSEA—NOTE ON 14:4–7 The Lord's tone changes here. He begins to announce good news to Israel. Specifically, He promises to heal the people,

love them freely, and turn away His righteous anger. The imagery contrasts with the heat and dryness of the judgment in 13:15.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 14:4 *heal their apostasy*. Restore them from their rebellious ways.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 14:5 *like the dew to Israel*. Land of Israel is very hot, which makes the morning dew an important means of relief and refreshment. Although the Lord would scorch the land in judgment, He would also refresh and restore it afterward. *blossom like the lily*. White lilies of Palestine are still known for their fruitfulness and fragrance. The ancient botanist Pliny the Elder observed in the first century that they produced as many as 50 bulbs from a single root. *take root like the trees of Lebanon*. Lebanon was covered with oak, pine, and esp cedar trees. Ancient Phoenicians built ships from the wood of these forests. God promises not only to heal Israel but also to allow the nation to sink new roots into the land.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 14:6 *his shoots shall spread out*. God promises His people stability and security in the future. They will experience abundant growth, like the giant trees whose branches made up the vast canopy of Lebanon's forests. *fragrance like Lebanon*. Area is known for cedar trees and various spices.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 14:7 *return*. Implicitly the motive for Israel's return and future trust in the Lord is God's gracious outpouring of forgiveness, love, and blessings. *beneath My shadow*. In returning to God, Israel would find protection and solace. *their fame shall be like the wine of Lebanon*. Pliny the Elder notes the international repute of Lebanese wine in his *Naturalis Historia*.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 14:8 *Ephraim*. See note, 4:17. *answer*. The one, true, and only living God answered Israel's prayers. To this very day, He hears our cries of worship and devotion. *like an evergreen cypress*. Only time in the OT that God compares Himself symbolically to a tree. Fittingly, the Eastern Cypress tree was renowned for its graceful form and enormous size. As such, it provides an immense amount of shade and even protection from the elements. *from Me comes your fruit*. Israel's provision and blessings come from the Lord.
HOSEA—NOTE ON 14:9 *ways of the* LORD … *walk*. See p 844. *stumble*. See note, 4:5.

HOSEA—NOTE ON **Ch 14** The overwhelming evidence of Israel's apostasy showed that Hosea's indictment was true. In our own cases, the verdict is similarly clear. However, Jesus Christ has borne our sentence for us. The dew of His mercy and the shade of His cross heal our apostasy. He renders us innocent before God's holy tribunal. • We thank You, Lord Jesus, for all that You have done to make us holy and righteous. Enable us to walk in Your ways now and always. Amen.

Joel

Joel 1 | Joel 2 | Joel 3

- Introduction to Joel
  - Overview
  - Reading Joel
  - Luther on Joel
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

1 [1] † The word of the LORD that came to Joel, the son of Pethuel:

An Invasion of Locusts

2 Hear this, you elders;
give ear, all inhabitants of the land!
Has such a thing happened in your days,
or in the days of your fathers?
3 Tell your children of it,
and let your children tell their children,
and their children to another generation.

4 What the cutting locust left,
the swarming locust has eaten.
What the swarming locust left,
the hopping locust has eaten,
and what the hopping locust left,
the destroying locust has eaten.

5 Awake, you drunkards, and weep,
and wail, all you drinkers of wine,
because of the sweet wine,
for it is cut off from your mouth.
6 For a nation has come up against my land,
powerful and beyond number;
its teeth are lions' teeth,
and it has the fangs of a lioness.
7 It has laid waste my vine
and splintered my fig tree;
it has stripped off their bark and thrown it
down;
their branches are made white.

8 Lament like a virgin[1] wearing sackcloth
for the bridegroom of her youth.

9† The grain offering and the drink offering are
cut off
from the house of the Lord.
The priests mourn,
the ministers of the Lord.
10† The fields are destroyed,
the ground mourns,
because the grain is destroyed,
the wine dries up,
the oil languishes.

11† Be ashamed,[2] O tillers of the soil;
wail, O vinedressers,
for the wheat and the barley,
because the harvest of the field has perished.
12† The vine dries up;
the fig tree languishes.
Pomegranate, palm, and apple,
all the trees of the field are dried up,
and gladness dries up
from the children of man.

A Call to Repentance

13 Put on sackcloth and lament, O priests;
wail, O ministers of the altar.
Go in, pass the night in sackcloth,
O ministers of my God!
Because grain offering and drink offering
are withheld from the house of your
God.

14 Consecrate a fast;
call a solemn assembly.
Gather the elders
and all the inhabitants of the land
to the house of the Lord your God,
and cry out to the Lord.

15 Alas for the day!
For the day of the Lord is near,
and as destruction from the Almighty[1]
it comes.
16 Is not the food cut off
before our eyes,
joy and gladness
from the house of our God?

17 The seed shrivels under the clods;[2]
the storehouses are desolate;
the granaries are torn down
because the grain has dried up.
18 How the beasts groan!
The herds of cattle are perplexed

because there is no pasture for them;
even the flocks of sheep suffer.[3]

19 † To you, O Lord, I call.
For fire has devoured
the pastures of the wilderness,
and flame has burned
all the trees of the field.
20 † Even the beasts of the field pant for you
because the water brooks are dried up,
and fire has devoured
the pastures of the wilderness.

The Day of the Lord

2 [1]†††Blow a trumpet in Zion;
sound an alarm on my holy mountain!
Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble,
for the day of the Lord is coming; it is near,

[2]† a day of darkness and gloom,
a day of clouds and thick darkness!
Like blackness there is spread upon the mountains
a great and powerful people;
their like has never been before,
nor will be again after them
through the years of all generations.

[3]† Fire devours before them,
and behind them a flame burns.
The land is like the garden of Eden before them,
but behind them a desolate wilderness,
and nothing escapes them.

[4]† Their appearance is like the appearance of horses,
and like war horses they run.
[5]† As with the rumbling of chariots,
they leap on the tops of the mountains,
like the crackling of a flame of fire
devouring the stubble,
like a powerful army
drawn up for battle.

6† Before them peoples are in anguish;
all faces grow pale.
7† Like warriors they charge;
like soldiers they scale the wall.
They march each on his way;
they do not swerve from their paths.
8† They do not jostle one another;
each marches in his path;
they burst through the weapons
and are not halted.
9† They leap upon the city,
they run upon the walls,
they climb up into the houses,
they enter through the windows like a thief.

10† The earth quakes before them;
the heavens tremble.
The sun and the moon are darkened,
and the stars withdraw their shining.
11† The LORD utters his voice
before his army,
for his camp is exceedingly great;
he who executes his word is powerful.
For the day of the LORD is great and very
awesome;
who can endure it?

Return to the Lord

12 “Yet even now,” declares the Lord,
“return to me with all your heart,
with fasting, with weeping, and with
mourning;
13 and rend your hearts and not your
garments.”
Return to the Lord your God,
for he is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love;
and he relents over disaster.
14 Who knows whether he will not turn and
relent,
and leave a blessing behind him,
a grain offering and a drink offering
for the Lord your God?

15 Blow the trumpet in Zion;
consecrate a fast;
call a solemn assembly;
16 gather the people.
Consecrate the congregation;
assemble the elders;
gather the children,
even nursing infants.
Let the bridegroom leave his room,
and the bride her chamber.

17 Between the vestibule and the altar
let the priests, the ministers of the Lord,
weep
and say, “Spare your people, O Lord,
and make not your heritage a reproach,

a byword among the nations.[1]
Why should they say among the peoples,
‘Where is their God?’”

The Lord Had Pity

18 Then the Lord became jealous for his land
and had pity on his people.
19 The Lord answered and said to his people,
"Behold, I am sending to you
grain, wine, and oil,
and you will be satisfied;
and I will no more make you
a reproach among the nations.

20 "I will remove the northerner far from you,
and drive him into a parched and desolate
land,
his vanguard[2] into the eastern sea,
and his rear guard[3] into the western sea;
the stench and foul smell of him will rise,
for he has done great things.

21 "Fear not, O land;
be glad and rejoice,
for the Lord has done great things!
22 Fear not, you beasts of the field,
for the pastures of the wilderness are
green;
the tree bears its fruit;
the fig tree and vine give their full yield.

23 "Be glad, O children of Zion,
and rejoice in the Lord your God,
for he has given the early rain for your
vindication;
he has poured down for you abundant

rain,
the early and the latter rain, as before.

24† “The threshing floors shall be full of grain;
the vats shall overflow with wine and oil.
25† I will restore to you the years
that the swarming locust has eaten,
the hopper, the destroyer, and the cutter,
my great army, which I sent among you.

26† “You shall eat in plenty and be satisfied,
and praise the name of the Lord your God,
who has dealt wondrously with you.
And my people shall never again be put to
shame.

27† You shall know that I am in the midst of
Israel,
and that I am the Lord your God and there
is none else.
And my people shall never again be put to
shame.

The Lord Will Pour Out His Spirit

28 [1] “And it shall come to pass afterward,
that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh;
your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
your old men shall dream dreams,
and your young men shall see visions.
29 Even on the male and female servants
in those days I will pour out my Spirit.

30 “And I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and columns of smoke. 31 The sun shall be turned to darkness, and the moon to blood, before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes. 32 And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be those who escape, as the Lord has said, and among the survivors shall be those whom the Lord calls.

The Lord Judges the Nations

3 1 ‡ † [1] “For behold, in those days and at that time, when I restore the
fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem, 2 † I will gather all the nations and bring
them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat. And I will enter into judgment
with them there, on behalf of my people and my heritage Israel, because
they have scattered them among the nations and have divided up my land,
3 † and have cast lots for my people, and have traded a boy for a prostitute,
and have sold a girl for wine and have drunk it.

4 † “What are you to me, O Tyre and Sidon, and all the regions of
Philistia? Are you paying me back for something? If you are paying me
back, I will return your payment on your own head swiftly and speedily.
5 † For you have taken my silver and my gold, and have carried my rich
treasures into your temples.[2] 6 † You have sold the people of Judah and
Jerusalem to the Greeks in order to remove them far from their own border.
7 † Behold, I will stir them up from the place to which you have sold them,
and I will return your payment on your own head. 8 † I will sell your sons
and your daughters into the hand of the people of Judah, and they will sell
them to the Sabeans, to a nation far away, for the Lord has spoken.”

9 † Proclaim this among the nations:
Consecrate for war;[3]
stir up the mighty men.
Let all the men of war draw near;
let them come up.
10 † Beat your plowshares into swords,
and your pruning hooks into spears;
let the weak say, “I am a warrior.”

11 † Hasten and come,
all you surrounding nations,
and gather yourselves there.
Bring down your warriors, O Lord.

12† Let the nations stir themselves up
and come up to the Valley of Jehoshaphat;
for there I will sit to judge
all the surrounding nations.

13† Put in the sickle,
for the harvest is ripe.
Go in, tread,
for the winepress is full.
The vats overflow,
for their evil is great.

14† Multitudes, multitudes,
in the valley of decision!
For the day of the Lord is near
in the valley of decision.
15† The sun and the moon are darkened,
and the stars withdraw their shining.

16† The Lord roars from Zion,
and utters his voice from Jerusalem,
and the heavens and the earth quake.
But the Lord is a refuge to his people,
a stronghold to the people of Israel.

The Glorious Future of Judah

17 “So you shall know that I am the Lord your God,
who dwells in Zion, my holy mountain.
And Jerusalem shall be holy,
and strangers shall never again pass
through it.

18 “And in that day
the mountains shall drip sweet wine,
and the hills shall flow with milk,
and all the streambeds of Judah
shall flow with water;
and a fountain shall come forth from the
house of the Lord
and water the Valley of Shittim.

19 “Egypt shall become a desolation
and Edom a desolate wilderness,
for the violence done to the people of
Judah,
because they have shed innocent blood in
their land.
20 But Judah shall be inhabited forever,
and Jerusalem to all generations.
21 I will avenge their blood,
blood I have not avenged,[1]
for the Lord dwells in Zion.”

Joel

Overview

Author
Joel the prophet

Date
After the reign of Jehoshaphat (873–848 BC) or later

Places
Judah; Jerusalem; Valley of Jehoshaphat

People
Joel, son of Pethuel; elders; priests

Purpose
To call for fasting and repentance before the day of the Lord, depicted by a plague of locusts and a coming battle

Law Themes
Punishment brought by locusts; the day of darkness; fasting and mourning; judgment of the nations

Gospel Themes
Grace and mercy for the repentant; consecration; the gift of the Spirit; a harvest of blessings; refuge from enemies

Memory Verses
The day of the Lord (2:1–2); return to the Lord (2:12–13); the outpouring of the Spirit (2:28–29)

Introduction to Joel

Reading Joel

The bright green fields give way to mounting darkness. Black waves of locusts roll and swell across the fields. A farm family stares through tears as everything they have worked for slowly disappears. The father clutches a jar of wheat seed, which becomes more precious by the moment. He will have to hide the jar until planting season lest it be eaten or stolen. They will make do without bread until the following harvest.

Today, the hand-to-mouth existence of nations such as Judah may seem worlds apart. For them, a plague of locusts could mean the difference between life and death. Today, if a crop freezes in one part of the country, we can always receive our food from another part. The Judeans lived with a much clearer sense of their dependence on heaven. Yet they were still slow to repent, even in the face of disaster. As you read Joel, hear his alarm. Tighten your belt and take his call to repentance to heart.

Luther on Joel

Joel was a kindly and gentle man. He does not denounce and rebuke as do the other prophets, but pleads and laments; he tried with kind and friendly words to make the people righteous and to protect them from harm and misfortune. But it happened to him as to the other prophets: the people did not believe his words and held him to be a fool.

Nevertheless Joel is highly praised in the New Testament, for in Acts 2 St. Peter quotes him. Thus Joel had to provide the first sermon ever preached in the Christian Church, the one on Pentecost at Jerusalem when the Holy Spirit was given [Acts 2:1–16]. St. Paul too makes glorious use of the saying, "Everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved" [Rom. 10:13], which is also in Joel 2[:32].

In the first chapter he prophesies the punishment which is to come upon the people of Israel. They are to be destroyed and carried away by the Assyrians; and he calls the Assyrians cutting, swarming, hopping, and destroying locusts [1:4]. For the Assyrians devoured the kingdom of Israel bit by bit until they had completely destroyed it. In the end, however, King Sennacherib had to suffer defeat before Jerusalem; Joel touches on that in chapter 2[:20] when he says, "I will remove the northerner far from you."

In the second place, at the end of the second chapter and from that point on [2:28–3:21] he prophesies of the kingdom of Christ, and of the Holy Spirit, and speaks of the everlasting Jerusalem.

He speaks of the valley of Jehoshaphat [3:12] and says that the Lord will summon all the nations thither for judgment. The ancient fathers understand that to refer to the Last Judgment. I do not condemn this interpretation, but hold, nevertheless, that this is really Joel's meaning: even as he calls the Christian Church the everlasting Jerusalem, so he calls it also the valley of Jehoshaphat. He does so because through the word all the world is summoned to the Christian Church and is there judged, and by the preaching is reproved as being all together sinners in the sight of God, as Christ says, "The Spirit of truth will reprove the world of sin" [John 16:8]. For valley of Jehoshaphat means valley of judgment. Thus also does Hosea call the Christian Church the valley of Achor. (AE 35:318–19)

For more of Luther's insights on this Book, see *Lectures on Joel* (AE 18:77–123).

Challenges for Readers

Historical Context. Scholars are not sure when the prophet Joel wrote, providing dates ranging from the ninth century to the second century BC. Since the prophet likely mentioned King Jehoshaphat (see note, 3:2), the prophecy would date no earlier than the ninth century. He describes the temple services and addresses the priests as empathetic to his concerns, conditions that did not always exist for later prophets (e.g., the temple was not functioning from 587 to 516 BC). In view of these things, an earlier date is preferred.

Plague of Locusts. Interpreters have struggled with Joel's vision and description of invading locusts, wondering whether he meant a literal locust plague or was giving a figurative description of invading armies, such as the Assyrians or Babylonians (see Luther's comments above). Since the prophet nowhere clearly describes the Assyrians or Babylonians, the notes treat the prophecy as a warning about an actual locust plague, which the prophet used as a picture of Judgment Day.

Blessings for Readers

As you read Joel's prophecy, consider carefully his call to repentance. Consider your life, beliefs, and plans in view of God's Holy Word. Pray for the Lord's forgiveness, and ask for the blessing of His Holy Spirit (2:28–29), which He poured out in Holy Baptism. His Spirit will help you understand the Word and put it into practice.

When you read Joel's comments about the day of the Lord, consider them with all earnestness. Let them encourage you to share the good news of God's love and forgiveness with those who have not yet heard or believed in the Lord. Though He is coming to judge the world and to condemn the unrepentant, He is also coming to declare "not guilty" all who trust in His mercy through the Lord Jesus Christ (3:16).

OUTLINE

Superscription (1:1)
I. Catastrophes Current and Coming (1:2–2:17)
  A. The Current Catastrophe: The Locust Plague (1:2–20)
    1. Description of the locust plague (1:2–12)
    2. Call to fast at the temple (1:13–14)
    3. A lament and prayer (1:15–20)
  B. The Coming Catastrophe: The Day of the Lord (2:1–17)
    1. Blow a trumpet in Zion (2:1–2)
    2. The Lord's army as locusts (2:3–11)
    3. Call to return to the Lord (2:12–14)
    4. Call to fast and pray at the temple (2:15–17)
II. The Lord's Response (2:18–3:21)
  A. To the Locust Plague: Healing and Restoration (2:18–27)
  B. To the Coming Day of the Lord (2:28–3:21)
    1. Salvation for the survivors who escape (2:28–32)
      a. All will be prophets (2:28–29)
      b. Ones calling on the name of the Lord will be saved (2:30–32)
    2. Judgment of the Nations (ch 3)
      a. Summons and accusations (3:1–12)
      b. The nations are sentenced, while Judah is blessed (3:13–21)

Footnotes

Footnotes for Joel, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:8 Or *young woman*
- [2] 1:11 The Hebrew words for *dry up* and *be ashamed* in verses 10-12, 17 sound alike
- [1] 1:15 *Destruction* sounds like the Hebrew for *Almighty*
- [2] 1:17 The meaning of the Hebrew line is uncertain
- [3] 1:18 Or *are made desolate*

Footnotes for Joel, Chapter 2

- [1] 2:17 Or *reproach, that the nations should rule over them*
- [2] 2:20 Hebrew *face*
- [3] 2:20 Hebrew *his end*
- [1] 2:28 Ch 3:1 in Hebrew

Footnotes for Joel, Chapter 3

- [1] 3:1 Ch 4:1 in Hebrew
- [2] 3:5 Or *palaces*
- [3] 3:9 Or *Consecrate a war*
- [1] 3:21 Or *I will acquit their bloodguilt that I have not acquitted*

Study Notes

JOEL—NOTE ON 1:1 Throughout the ages, God has used various means to inspire His prophets to write (Heb 1:1). On some occasions, such divine inspiration came through dreams or visions (Dn 7:1–2; 8:1). At others, it came through an audible voice (Ezk 2:1–2; 3:1–3). Joel, however, does not specify how the Lord revealed His Word to him. At the same time, this verse unequivocally affirms that what follows is God's Word, not merely the prophet's impression or best approximation. God's wisdom and power are such that even though He uses imperfect men to reveal His will, each finished book of Scripture is a perfectly reliable revelation of the Lord's will. *Joel*. Lit, "Yahweh is God." *Pethuel*. Nothing more is known of him.
JOEL—NOTE ON 1:2 *elders*. Joel begins by directing a rhetorical question to the "old-timers," since they were best able to affirm the unprecedented nature of the agricultural disaster Joel predicted. See note, Ex 3:16. See p 228. *all inhabitants*. The entire nation of Judah. *such a thing*. Unprecedented invasion of locusts (v 4), followed by wildfires and drought (vv 19–20). No one familiar with Judah's past could recall a comparable disaster.
JOEL—NOTE ON 1:3 *Tell your children*. So that future generations learn from the impending disaster and avoid similar punishments.
JOEL—NOTE ON 1:4 *locust*. Not to be confused with grasshoppers or cicadas, locusts are terribly destructive insects 2–3 inches long. In the adult stage, they are capable of full flight. Joel predicts the invasion of four distinct kinds of locusts. *cutting locust*. From Hbr *gazaz,* "to cut off." *swarming locust*. Name resembles word for "multitude." *hopping locust*. Immature locusts. *destroying locust*. Notorious for obliterating crops (cf Dt 28:38). After these four successive invasions of locusts, no edible leaf, twig, or bark would remain in Judah.
JOEL—NOTE ON 1:5 *drunkards*. By destroying Judah's wine production, the invading locusts would force those addicted to drink to undergo the dreaded pains of withdrawal. *sweet wine*. New wine that has not yet gone into storage. Once the sweet wine was exhausted, there would be no more new stores of wine in Judah.
JOEL—NOTE ON 1:6 *nation*. Personification of locusts. Underscores the dreadful fact that, though they are small individually, huge swarms of these

insects are as devastating as an invading army. *its teeth*. Owing to their immense numbers, these locusts' teeth are far more destructive than the fangs of a lion.

JOEL—NOTE ON 1:7 Locust hordes will leave no vegetation. Trees will be stripped of their bark.

JOEL—NOTE ON 1:8 Judah's reaction to the upcoming devastation will be like that of a bride whose fiancé is killed just before the marriage ceremony.

JOEL—NOTE ON 1:9 *grain offering … drink offering*. Regularly used in thanksgiving for God's provision (Lv 2; 6:14–23), in the daily sacrifices (Ex 29:40–41), with the firstfruit offering (Lv 23:13), and with other sacrifices (Nu 15:5–7, 10). See pp 170–71; see also note, Lv 23:37. The famine produced by the locust invasion would threaten to put an end to these sacrifices and the blessings they provided. *ministers*. Priests serving in God's house would mourn the cessation of the grain and drink offerings because of the loss of their own sustenance and also because the people's fellowship with the Lord would be broken.

JOEL—NOTE ON 1:10 *the ground mourns*. As with Adam and Eve's sin (Gn 3:17), and again in the days of Noah (Gn 6:13), so also here the earth is depicted as suffering the consequences of human wickedness (cf Rm 8:20–23).

JOEL—NOTE ON 1:11 *Be ashamed, O tillers*. As those responsible for the agricultural production of the land, farmers will be esp grieved by the impending locust plague and resultant famine.

JOEL—NOTE ON 1:12 *apple*. Or, apricot, as some botanists maintain. *all the trees of the field*. Even larger, tougher plants, such as vines and trees, will not be spared. They, too, will be stripped bare by locusts, then consumed by fire (v 19).

JOEL—NOTE ON 1:2–12 Joel summons the people of Judah to assemble and hear the Lord's judgment for their sin: successive waves of locust swarms will come and devastate their land. When we replicate the failures of Joel's generation, God warns us to live in godly fear. In repentance, we are heartened by the promise that God's mercy is greater than any disaster. His grace, received through the Word and Sacraments, restores us and gives life. • Heavenly Father, even when every earthly blessing is cut off from us, there remains an eternal gift that atones for our unrighteousness—the spotless Lamb of God, Jesus Christ. For His sake, forgive and restore us to holiness. Amen.

JOEL—NOTE ON 1:13 *sackcloth*. Rough fabric, worn as sign of repentance. See note, Jb 16:15. *lament, O priests*. Impending crop failure threatened to end grain and drink sacrifices they offered, which was the basis of their livelihood. *Go in*. Priests are urged to enter the temple ("the house of your God"). *withheld*. See note, v 9.

JOEL—NOTE ON 1:14 *Consecrate a fast … assembly*. The priests are to assemble the people and lead them in making a public confession of sin. Fasting was part of penitential observance. See note, Lv 16:29. *elders*. Along with the priests, these men exercised a leadership role. See note, v 2. *all the inhabitants of the land*. All the people suspended their activities for the national observance. *cry out to the* LORD. Sincerely begging for forgiveness was the central part of such national days of repentance and prayer. See "call," p 842.

JOEL—NOTE ON 1:15 *the day of the* LORD. Here, the expression refers simply to the day when God will punish Judah by sending the locusts. However, see p 1079.

JOEL—NOTE ON 1:16 See notes, vv 9, 13.

JOEL—NOTE ON 1:17 *The seed shrivels under the clods*. With no moisture, planted seeds dry up instead of germinating. *storehouses … granaries*. Useless in a famine. Grain reserves for lean times and for planting will run out, guaranteeing long-term starvation.

JOEL—NOTE ON 1:18 *beasts groan!* Lowing and bleating for their owners to feed them. *even the flocks of sheep suffer*. Sheep feed closer to the ground and can scrounge grass too short to be grazed by cattle. Because the locusts will leave virtually no grass, however, sheep will suffer along with cattle.

JOEL—NOTE ON 1:19 *fire*. After the locusts ravage Judah's vegetation, wildfires will ignite and consume what is left in the fields, orchards, and woods.

JOEL—NOTE ON 1:20 *beasts of the field*. Depicts the depth of the coming misery. Even hardy, wild animals desperately search for any sign of water. *pant for you*. The animals' desperation mimics the prayers of the people.

JOEL—NOTE ON 1:13–20 Joel predicts that hordes of locusts will devour the vegetation, and then wildfires and drought will dispose of what remains. Desperation and starvation will result from the people's refusal to repent. In our own lives, unchecked sins bring about disastrous consequences. In such times of sorrow and despair, however, never forget

that God often uses bad things to bring us to repentance and to accomplish His good and gracious will. The ultimate example of this is Christ's mournful death, which atoned for the sin of the world. • Whenever our hearts are tempted to turn away from You, O Lord, bring us back. Turn us away from evil toward good, and restore us to the right relationship with You and with one another; for the sake of Your Son, Israel's Redeemer. Amen.

JOEL—NOTE ON 2:1–11 Continuation of the earlier vision, which foreshadows the character of the judgment at the end of time.

JOEL—NOTE ON 2:1 *trumpet … alarm*. Alert people to the coming disaster. See p 993. *Zion*. See p 844. *day of the* LORD. See note, 1:15.

JOEL—NOTE ON 2:2 *great and powerful people*. Another personification. Locusts are so numerous that they blacken the sky and bring as much devastation as an invading army. See note, 1:6.

JOEL—NOTE ON 2:3 *Fire*. Like the wildfires coming afterward (cf 1:19), locusts consume everything in their path. *like the garden of Eden … a desolate wilderness*. A vivid "before and after" picture. Compared to the desolation that Judah will become after the locusts and wildfires pass through, the land now seems lavishly abundant.

JOEL—NOTE ON 2:4 Compares the sound of the locusts to the din and destruction of charging chariots.

JOEL—NOTE ON 2:5 *chariots*. As war horses and chariots were often covered with armor, so the exoskeletons of the locusts give them the appearance of an armored force.

JOEL—NOTE ON 2:6 People are so struck with dread and despair that the blood leaves their faces and they look pallid.

JOEL—NOTE ON 2:7 Further examples of Joel personifying the locust swarms follow. Cf 1:6; 2:2. *like soldiers they scale the wall*. The city walls are no obstacle to them. In fact, they will overrun Judah more quickly than a human army.

JOEL—NOTE ON 2:8 *burst through the weapons*. Armies would clash as units in a great shoving match. The army that broke the others' wall of shields and spears would win.

JOEL—NOTE ON 2:9 *they climb up into the houses*. Nothing will keep them out, so their invasion will be total.

JOEL—NOTE ON 2:10 *The sun and the moon are darkened*. Signs in the heavens of the day of the Lord, as also predicted of the Last Day.

JOEL—NOTE ON 2:11 *His army*. Ironically, the locusts rather than the angelic hosts serve as God's army. See p 1291. *executes His word*. God sends these locusts in order to judge Judah's unfaithfulness. *the day of the* LORD. See note, 1:15. *who can endure it?* Question is also posed in Na 1:6 and Mal 3:2. Ultimately, only those who trust in the Lord's promised Messiah will be spared when God's judgment is revealed.

JOEL—NOTE ON 2:1–11 The locust hordes that God threatens to unleash on Judah will be as devastating as the invasion of a human army. The scorched earth Joel describes continues to have relevance today, with natural disasters and warfare looming ever larger. We do well to place our trust in the world's only hope, the Creator and Redeemer of all. Through His Son's death and resurrection, God promises to raise us from the dead and give us eternal life in a new heaven and new earth. • Heavenly Father, help us to see the Day of Judgment as the revelation of our final deliverance, and our last day here as the portal that leads to ineffable joy and splendor; through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

JOEL—NOTE ON 2:12 *return*. See p 1080. Just as God's people have turned away from the Lord in their hearts, so also they are to return to Him with sincerity and full conviction.

JOEL—NOTE ON 2:13 *rend your hearts and not your garments*. The Lord wants inner sincerity, not just outward show (Ps 51:17). See note, Jb 1:20. Chem: "What is the rationale for true conversion? He adds, 'Do not rend your garments,' as the hypocrites do, but 'rend your hearts,' that is, let your conversion be a genuine one and show this by the fruits worthy of repentance" (*LTh* 2:642). *He is gracious and merciful*. It is God's nature to forgive; thus, He forgives because of who He is, not in exchange for our repentance.

JOEL—NOTE ON 2:14 *Who knows*. Chem: "In the area of temporal punishments we must humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God and let God be free either to punish or withhold punishment, totally or in part" (*LTh* 2:642). *turn and relent*. See note, v 12. God's real purpose in sending this disaster is to work repentance in His people, so that they might receive forgiveness and avert disaster. *leave a blessing behind Him*. Along with the Lord's mercy comes every other blessing, among them sustenance and protection. See "bless," p 842. *a grain offering*. Offering such sacrifices to God would acknowledge Him as Creator and Provider of all good things. See pp 170–71.

JOEL—NOTE ON 2:15 *trumpet in Zion*. See note, 2:1. *consecrate a fast*. See note, 1:14. Ath: "When we fast, we should hallow the fast. For not all those who call upon God, hallow God, since there are some who defile Him; yet not Him—that is impossible—but their own mind concerning Him; for He is holy, and has pleasure in the saints" (*NPNF* 2 4:507).

JOEL—NOTE ON 2:16 *Consecrate*. Entailed having the people prepare themselves for worship by abstaining from work, food, and sexual relations (1:14; Ex 19:15). The people would also bathe and wash their clothes (Ex 19:14). *gather the children, even nursing infants*. This sacred purification included everyone, regardless of age or circumstances. See p 1369. *Let the bridegroom … bride*. Even newlyweds were to postpone their honeymoon in order to observe this sacred fast. *chamber*. The wedding canopy.

JOEL—NOTE ON 2:17 *Between the vestibule and the altar*. The raised area between the great altar standing in front of the temple and the entrance to the Holy Place. See diagram, p 541. Note the intercessory role the priests should play. *Your heritage*. A covenant name for God's people (Dt 4:20; Ex 34:9). This title was a special basis of confidence for Israel (Ps 94:14; 37:18; Mi 7:14, 18) and so was often invoked in prayer (Dt 9:26, 29; Ps 28:9; 33:12). See "portion," p 7. *reproach, a byword*. If the Lord does not spare His people, the surrounding nations will ridicule them, saying, "Where is their God?" Such taunts imply that Yahweh, the God of Israel, is not powerful.

JOEL—NOTE ON 2:12–17 In light of the impending locust plague, Joel urges the people to repent of their sin and return to the Lord, offering the hope that He might yet relent and hold off the disaster. When our own sins likewise kindle God's wrath and threaten to bring us under His judgment, consider the question posed by Joel: "Who can endure the awesome day of the Lord?" Thanks be to God, we have a Savior, our risen Lord Jesus Christ, who has already endured God's wrath and judgment for us. • "Jesus Christ, our blessed Savior, Turned away God's wrath forever; By His bitter grief and woe He saved us from the evil foe." Amen. (*LSB* 627:1)

JOEL—NOTE ON 2:18–19 *jealous for His land*. Joel's prophecy sounds markedly more hopeful. The Lord promises to show compassion for His people, even as they prepare to suffer the natural consequences of their sin (cf Ezk 36:1–15). Though they richly deserve the impending punishment, the Lord will not allow the pagan nations to mock His people and so denigrate the name of Yahweh, the one true God.

JOEL—NOTE ON 2:20 *northerner*. Most logically refers to the threatening locust swarms. In later centuries, enemy armies from Syria, Assyria, and Babylon would sweep down from the north. See pp 1447–48. *parched and desolate land*. The desert, where the locusts cannot harm Judah's people. *vanguard … eastern sea*. The foremost ranks of the locust swarm are driven into the Salt Sea. *rear guard … western sea*. Rearmost ranks of locusts are driven into the Great Sea. *stench and foul smell*. Smell of drowned locusts washed up on the shore. *he has done great things*. This characterization of the locusts is ironic, since their swarms can only do "great things" in the sense of massive destruction. God, on the other hand, can do "great things" to save and preserve life (v 21).

JOEL—NOTE ON 2:21 *the LORD has done great things!* God will foil the locust hordes by the breath of His mouth, carrying them away in a powerful wind (v 20). Then the people will exult in the Lord's great things, i.e., His mighty deliverance (cf Is 25:9).

JOEL—NOTE ON 2:22 Just as the land and its animals were subjected to this plague because of the people's sin (see note, 1:10), so also the plants and animals share in this deliverance.

JOEL—NOTE ON 2:23 *vindication*. By sending badly needed rainfall instead of a locust invasion, the Lord powerfully vindicates those who placed their faith in His goodness. *the early and the latter rain*. Refers to the seasonal pattern of precipitation, on which Judean agriculture was completely dependent. When the spring and fall rains came in sufficient amounts, the people received a powerful reminder of God's trustworthiness. See calendar, p 262.

JOEL—NOTE ON 2:24 *threshing floors*. See note, Ru 3:2. *vats*. Containers in which new wine and freshly pressed olive oil were stored. Their fullness would reflect God's overflowing grace.

JOEL—NOTE ON 2:25 *years … eaten*. Harvests lost to the locusts. *swarming … hopper … destroyer … cutter*. See note, 1:4.

JOEL—NOTE ON 2:26 *praise the name*. After the famine produced by the locust swarms, the future abundance of food would powerfully remind the people of God's grace. Cf Dt 8:1–10; see "name," p 843. *never again be put to shame*. This phrase, repeated in v 27 for emphasis, assured God's people that their enemies would never get the final word. Ultimately, this promise looks forward to the abundance of the consummation of the messianic age, when God will make permanent provision for both earthly and spiritual

needs. When Christ returns to usher in the fullness of the new heaven and earth, hunger and death will no longer exist. See note, Is 25:6–8.

JOEL—NOTE ON 2:27 *I am in the midst of Israel*. God's dwelling in the midst of His people is both the cause and a result of their salvation. *none else*. The Lord is the only God and Savior of Israel.

JOEL—NOTE ON 2:18–27 Along with dire predictions about a locust plague and famine, Joel assures the people that the Lord will not abandon them or allow them to be mocked by their pagan neighbors. To be sure, the Lord will not tolerate rebellion, and He fully expects us to sincerely repent of our sins. Nevertheless, when we return to the Lord, He is faithful and just and forgives us of all our unrighteousness. • O Lord of heaven and earth, turn us from ingratitude and sinful self-sufficiency. By Your Holy Spirit, move us to acknowledge You as the source of every good and perfect gift, especially the forgiveness of sins. Then we shall never be put to shame. Amen.

JOEL—NOTE ON 2:28 *afterward*. The earthly abundance the Lord promises His people will be accompanied by spiritual outpouring as well. *pour out My Spirit*. Fulfilled on Pentecost (Ac 2:1–33). Ambr: "Who, then, can dare to say that the substance of the Holy Spirit is created, at Whose shining in our hearts we behold the beauty of divine truth, and the distance between the creature and the Godhead, that the work may be distinguished from its Author? … [God] said not Spirit but 'of My Spirit' " (*NPNF* 2 10:105). Mel: "The fact that He uses the word 'My' shows that it was not some created movement which had been sent, but something of the essence of God. Further, it is necessary that He be a distinct person … and yet is not the Father" (Chem, *LTh* 1:130). *all flesh*. God's judgment affected the entire nation of Judah (v 16). His promised future blessings will extend to all nations. No one is excluded on the basis of age, gender, or any other factor. Cyr Jer: "Let neither the rich be puffed up, nor the poor dejected, but only let each prepare himself for reception of the Heavenly gift" (*NPNF* 2 7:129). *prophesy*. Knowing and communicating God's will. This ability is only given by God. See p 1493. *dreams … visions*. Revelatory dreams and prophetic visions show God's will. God fulfilled this promise in numerous unmistakable ways at the beginning of the age of the Church (e.g., Ac 7:55–56; 9:1–16; 10:1–33; 16:6–10; 18:9–10; 23:11).

JOEL—NOTE ON 2:29 *male and female servants*. Joel emphasizes that the spiritual gifts God pours out will extend to all people, both men and

women. Cf Ac 21:8–9. *in those days*. Ter: "It was characteristic of Him (only) to wait patiently for the fulness of time, to whom belonged the end of time no less than the beginning" (*ANF* 3:436). *pour out*. The Spirit is given by pouring, rather than specifying immersion. See note, Mt 28:19. *My Spirit*. Mel: "[The Father] rules you through the Holy Spirit and restores you to eternal life, as His divine promises guarantee" (Chem, *LTh* 1:51).

JOEL—NOTE ON 2:30–31 *wonders*. Refers to the signs that accompany the coming "day of the LORD." See note, 1:15. *darkness … blood … great and awesome day of the LORD*. Cosmic disturbances will serve as unmistakable signs on the Last Day, when Christ comes to judge the world. In anticipation of that final day, however, the Lord periodically sent similar signs while revealing judgment on His enemies and saving His own people, e.g., the heavenly disturbances and earthquake on Good Friday (Mt 27:45, 51–54). Similar phenomena also accompanied Jesus' earthly ministry (Mt 28:2; Jn 12:27–32). These powerfully foreshadowed the ultimate "great and awesome day of the LORD."

JOEL—NOTE ON 2:32 *calls on the name*. See p 842. *shall be saved*. See "salvation," p 843. *Mount Zion … Jerusalem*. See p 844. Though this promise was originally directed to the Judean people of Joel's generation, Jesus extended it to all, including Gentiles, through His apostles (Ac 2:38–39; 10:43). *escape*. Spared from condemnation on the Day of Judgment. *survivors*. The saved are those who have been called by God's grace and delivered by Him. *the LORD calls*. He chooses them by grace. The climactic promise of this wonderful section is that all those called by the Lord are given the gift of faith.

JOEL—NOTE ON 2:28–32 After the devastation wrought by the threatened locust plagues, the Lord promises to pour out His life-giving Spirit. His purpose in so doing is to deliver the gifts of salvation. Knowing that the Lord's judgment may come anytime, we should remain ever watchful and strive to be ready for that day. By His grace, the Lord enables us to do this very thing, as we call on Jesus' name and trust that He shall save us. • Heavenly Father, the day is quickly approaching when You shall judge all people. Because we cannot stand before You on the basis of our own strength or works, we pray that You would move us to trust in Your promised Redeemer, in whose name we will be saved. Amen.

JOEL—NOTE ON 3:1 *those days and at that time*. Envisions not only the restoration of Joel's generation after the locust plague but also the final

deliverance of God's people and the judgment of all nations on the Last Day (cf Mt 25:31–46). *fortunes*. Refers not only to the things of value taken from Israel (cf vv 3, 5–6), but indeed the eternal destiny of those who trust in God for their salvation.

JOEL—NOTE ON 3:2 *Valley of Jehoshaphat*. Wordplay. Jehoshaphat means "the judgment of Yahweh." Tradition has regarded this as the Kidron Valley. The site is best taken symbolically, signifying the place of the final judgment, since the Bible mentions this valley only here and in v 12. Some aspects of Joel's prophecy are similar to events of Jehoshaphat's reign, recorded in 2Ch 20, when the people of the Transjordan region rose up against this king of Judah. Jehoshaphat called for a national fast and assembled the people at the temple, including the children. The enemy, described as a great horde, is defeated in a valley. However, the Transjordan nations would be easterners, not northerners as Joel describes (2:20). The prophet may have borrowed his imagery from the events during Jehoshaphat's reign, reminding the people of the blessings that come from calling on the Lord. This could also commend a ninth-century date for the prophecy (see pp 1447–48). *enter into judgment*. The Lord's verdict will be on behalf of His people but against those persecuting the elect. *My heritage*. God's chosen people (Ex 34:9; Dt 4:20; cf Ac 15:16; Eph 1:3–4). The privilege afforded by the election of God's people was the basis for special petitions (Dt 9:26, 29; Ps 28:9) and confidence (Ps 94:14; Mi 7:14, 18; cf Ps 37:18). See p 7. *scattered*. God's people were taken captive and exiled at various points in their history and so ended up dispersed throughout the world. For them, this promise of returning to their land was obviously precious.

JOEL—NOTE ON 3:3 *cast lots*. See note, Jsh 14:2. *traded a boy for a prostitute*. God's people were sometimes sold as slaves and traded for goods or services, as if they were not human but merely chattel.

JOEL—NOTE ON 3:4 *Tyre and Sidon*. Twin cities of Phoenicia, known for their wealth and foreign trade. See color map 1. *Philistia?* Longtime enemy of Israel; it dealt in the slave trade. *paying Me back*. For some perceived injustice done to them by God's people.

JOEL—NOTE ON 3:5 Philistines bedeviled God's people over and over (Jgs 10:7; 13:1; 1Sm 31:1). Once, they managed to capture the ark of the covenant and set it in the temple of their god Dagon (1Sm 5:1–2).

JOEL—NOTE ON 3:6 *Greeks … remove them*. When sold into slavery by the Greeks, the people ended up very far from Judah. The exile described by Joel is fundamentally different from what occurred later under Assyria and Babylon.
JOEL—NOTE ON 3:7 No matter how far removed the exiled captives might be, the Lord promises to gather and return them to Israel.
JOEL—NOTE ON 3:8 *I will sell your sons and your daughters*. Some of God's people were taken captive by the Greeks (v 6); the Lord would bring the same hardships on the coastal people that they had brought on Judeans. *Sabeans*. Controlled the Arabian trade routes south of Judah. See note, Jb 1:15.
JOEL—NOTE ON 3:9 The Lord summons all the enemies of His people to prepare for battle. *Consecrate for war*. During the conquest, cities of the Canaanites were devoted (consecrated) to destruction. See p 6. *mighty men*. See note, Jsh 1:14.
JOEL—NOTE ON 3:10 God incites His people's enemies to rise and arm themselves with whatever is available. *the weak*. Even the feeblest among God's enemies are summoned to this battle.
JOEL—NOTE ON 3:11 *Your warriors*. Angelic hosts coming to fight for God's people. The Bible contains other passages depicting God's angels coming to render such aid (Dn 10:13, 20–21; 12:1; Rv 19:14).
JOEL—NOTE ON 3:12 *Valley of Jehoshaphat*. See note, v 2. *judge*. When He judges, the Lord will separate the whole world into two groups, His people and His enemies (Mt 25:31–46).
JOEL—NOTE ON 3:13 *sickle … winepress*. Just as the wheat falls before the sickle and the ripe grapes are mashed in a winepress, so God's enemies will be cut down and crushed on the Day of Judgment. Sickles could be finely crafted with bronze or crudely crafted with small, chisel-shaped pieces of flint stuck in pottery or the lower jawbone of an ox or donkey. *their evil is great*. God's enemies shall receive what their deeds have earned.
JOEL—NOTE ON 3:14 *valley of decision!* God renders His verdict on all peoples, pronouncing punishment for unbelievers and revealing the final deliverance of His people. *the day of the Lord is near*. See note, 1:15. On a personal level, the day of the Lord is always near, since we do not know when we will die and be judged according to what we believed and practiced during our earthly days.

JOEL—NOTE ON 3:15 See note, 2:30–31.
JOEL—NOTE ON 3:16 *roars from Zion*. God's pronouncements of judgment are repeatedly compared to the terrifying roar of a lion. *a refuge … stronghold*. The day of the Lord will not harm His people in any way. Sheltered in the Lord and safe in Him, they will, on this day, be brought into the fullness of God's glory. See note, Jgs 6:25–26.
JOEL—NOTE ON 3:1–16 Prophesying about Judgment Day, Joel announces that the Lord will punish His enemies, while vindicating and finally delivering His people. Though thoughts of judgment naturally produce dread in us, by faith we need not fear God's verdict. After all, the Lord is coming to usher us into heaven, not to punish us. • Judge of all the earth, grant us full confidence for Judgment Day, for we believe that there is no longer any condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. Come, Lord Jesus. Come quickly. Amen.
JOEL—NOTE ON 3:17 *Zion, My holy mountain*. Here, the temple mountain of Jerusalem represents both the people of God (the spiritual Israel) and the new heaven and earth (Rv 21:1–2). See p 844. *strangers shall never again pass through it*. There shall be no unbelievers in God's everlasting kingdom. There will be no enemies left to torment God's people in paradise (Rv 21:4, 8).
JOEL—NOTE ON 3:18 *mountains shall drip … hills shall flow*. Picture language describing the overflowing abundance and well-being enjoyed in God's presence. *a fountain … from the house of the* LORD. In the NT, Jesus is the source of such "living water" (Jn 4:14). *Valley of Shittim*. The overflow of life-giving water will be so great that even a desert area like this valley west of Jerusalem will abound.
JOEL—NOTE ON 3:19 *Egypt … Edom*. Traditional nemeses of Israel represent all those opposed to God and His people.
JOEL—NOTE ON 3:20 *inhabited forever*. The heavenly Jerusalem will be a place of undisturbed peace and eternal life for God's people.
JOEL—NOTE ON 3:21 *avenge*. The Lord will not allow any evil committed against His people to go unpunished. Thus Satan and his cohorts will be cast into the lake of fire (Rv 20:7–10). *the* LORD *dwells in Zion*. The ever-present Lord of Israel will accomplish all these glorious things. *Zion*. See p 844.
JOEL—NOTE ON 3:17–21 Joel promises a final vindication and everlasting abundance for God's people. Given the inevitability of

judgment, dreadful punishments await those who reject God and His purposes. Repent daily and strive continually to enter by the narrow gate. Receive limitless grace from the One who is the way, the truth, and the life. Through Him, you shall indeed come home to the Father. • Lord Jesus Christ, when You return, You will judge the world in righteousness. Therefore, keep us in the one true faith and be our refuge and stronghold against all who hate us on account of You and Your Word. Amen.

Amos

Amos 1 | Amos 2 | Amos 3 | Amos 4 | Amos 5 | Amos 6 | Amos 7 | Amos 8 | Amos 9

- Introduction to Amos
  - Overview
  - Reading Amos
  - Luther on Amos
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

1 [1] ✝✝The words of Amos, who was among the shepherds[1] of Tekoa,
which he saw concerning Israel in the days of Uzziah king of Judah and in
the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel, two years[2] before the
earthquake.

Judgment on Israel's Neighbors

2 † And he said:

"The Lord roars from Zion
and utters his voice from Jerusalem;
the pastures of the shepherds mourn,
and the top of Carmel withers."

3 † Thus says the Lord:

"For three transgressions of Damascus,
and for four, I will not revoke the
punishment,[3]
because they have threshed Gilead
with threshing sledges of iron.
4 † So I will send a fire upon the house of
Hazael,
and it shall devour the strongholds of
Ben-hadad.
5 † I will break the gate-bar of Damascus,
and cut off the inhabitants from the
Valley of Aven,[4]
and him who holds the scepter from
Beth-eden;
and the people of Syria shall go into exile
to Kir,"
says the Lord.

6 † Thus says the Lord:

"For three transgressions of Gaza,
and for four, I will not revoke the
punishment,
because they carried into exile a whole people
to deliver them up to Edom.

[7]† So I will send a fire upon the wall of Gaza,
and it shall devour her strongholds.
[8]† I will cut off the inhabitants from Ashdod,
and him who holds the scepter from
Ashkelon;
I will turn my hand against Ekron,
and the remnant of the Philistines shall perish,"
says the Lord God.

[9]†Thus says the Lord:

"For three transgressions of Tyre,
and for four, I will not revoke
the punishment,
because they delivered up a whole people to Edom,
and did not remember the covenant of brotherhood.
[10]† So I will send a fire upon the wall of Tyre,
and it shall devour her strongholds."

[11]†Thus says the Lord:

"For three transgressions of Edom,
and for four, I will not revoke the
punishment,
because he pursued his brother with the
sword
and cast off all pity,
and his anger tore perpetually,
and he kept his wrath forever.
[12]† So I will send a fire upon Teman,
and it shall devour the strongholds
of Bozrah."

[13]†Thus says the Lord:

"For three transgressions of the
Ammonites,

and for four, I will not revoke the punishment,
because they have ripped open pregnant women in Gilead,
that they might enlarge their border.
14† So I will kindle a fire in the wall of Rabbah,
and it shall devour her strongholds,
with shouting on the day of battle,
with a tempest in the day of the whirlwind;
15† and their king shall go into exile,
he and his princes[1] together,"
says the LORD.

2 1†Thus says the LORD:

"For three transgressions of Moab,
and for four, I will not revoke the punishment,[2]
because he burned to lime
the bones of the king of Edom.
2† So I will send a fire upon Moab,
and it shall devour the strongholds of Kerioth,
and Moab shall die amid uproar,
amid shouting and the sound of the trumpet;
3† I will cut off the ruler from its midst,
and will kill all its princes[1] with him,"
says the LORD.

Judgment on Judah

4 Thus says the Lord:

"For three transgressions of Judah,
and for four, I will not revoke the
punishment,
because they have rejected the law of the
Lord,
and have not kept his statutes,
but their lies have led them astray,
those after which their fathers walked.
5 So I will send a fire upon Judah,
and it shall devour the strongholds of
Jerusalem."

Judgment on Israel

6 Thus says the Lord:

"For three transgressions of Israel,
and for four, I will not revoke the
punishment,
because they sell the righteous for silver,
and the needy for a pair of sandals—
7 those who trample the head of the poor into the
dust of the earth
and turn aside the way of the afflicted;
a man and his father go in to the same girl,
so that my holy name is profaned;
8 they lay themselves down beside every
altar
on garments taken in pledge,
and in the house of their God they drink
the wine of those who have been fined.

9 "Yet it was I who destroyed the Amorite
before them,
whose height was like the height of the
cedars
and who was as strong as the oaks;
I destroyed his fruit above
and his roots beneath.
10 Also it was I who brought you up out of the
land of Egypt
and led you forty years in the wilderness,
to possess the land of the Amorite.
11 And I raised up some of your sons for prophets,
and some of your young men for Nazirites.
Is it not indeed so, O people of Israel?"
declares the Lord.

12 “But you made the Nazirites drink wine,
and commanded the prophets,
saying, ‘You shall not prophesy.’

13 “Behold, I will press you down in your place,
as a cart full of sheaves presses down.
14 Flight shall perish from the swift,
and the strong shall not retain his strength,
nor shall the mighty save his life;
15 he who handles the bow shall not stand,
and he who is swift of foot shall not save
himself,
nor shall he who rides the horse save his
life;
16 and he who is stout of heart among the
mighty
shall flee away naked in that day,”
declares the Lord.

Israel's Guilt and Punishment

3 [1]†† Hear this word that the Lord has spoken against you, O people of
Israel, against the whole family that I brought up out of the land of Egypt:

[2]† "You only have I known
of all the families of the earth;
therefore I will punish you
for all your iniquities.

[3]† "Do two walk together,
unless they have agreed to meet?
[4] Does a lion roar in the forest,
when he has no prey?
Does a young lion cry out from his den,
if he has taken nothing?
[5] Does a bird fall in a snare on the earth,
when there is no trap for it?
Does a snare spring up from the ground,
when it has taken nothing?
[6]† Is a trumpet blown in a city,
and the people are not afraid?
Does disaster come to a city,
unless the Lord has done it?

[7]† "For the Lord God does nothing
without revealing his secret
to his servants the prophets.
[8]† The lion has roared;
who will not fear?
The Lord God has spoken;
who can but prophesy?"

9 † Proclaim to the strongholds in Ashdod
and to the strongholds in the land of
Egypt,
and say, “Assemble yourselves on the
mountains of Samaria,
and see the great tumults within her,
and the oppressed in her midst.”
10 “They do not know how to do right,” declares
the Lord,
“those who store up violence and robbery in
their strongholds.”

11 †Therefore thus says the Lord God:

“An adversary shall surround the land
and bring down[1] your defenses from you,
and your strongholds shall be plundered.”

12 †Thus says the Lord: “As the shepherd rescues from the mouth of the lion two legs, or a piece of an ear, so shall the people of Israel who dwell in Samaria be rescued, with the corner of a couch and part[2] of a bed.

13 † “Hear, and testify against the house of Jacob,”
declares the Lord God, the God of hosts,
14 † “that on the day I punish Israel for his
transgressions,
I will punish the altars of Bethel,
and the horns of the altar shall be cut off
and fall to the ground.
15 † I will strike the winter house along with the
summer house,
and the houses of ivory shall perish,
and the great houses[3] shall come to an end,”
declares the Lord.

4 [1]† “Hear this word, you cows of Bashan,
who are on the mountain of Samaria,
who oppress the poor, who crush the needy,
who say to your husbands, ‘Bring, that we may drink!’

[2]† The Lord God has sworn by his holiness
that, behold, the days are coming upon you,
when they shall take you away with hooks,
even the last of you with fishhooks.
[3]† And you shall go out through the breaches,
each one straight ahead;
and you shall be cast out into Harmon,”
declares the Lord.

[4]†† “Come to Bethel, and transgress;
to Gilgal, and multiply transgression;
bring your sacrifices every morning,
your tithes every three days;
[5] offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving of that which
is leavened,
and proclaim freewill offerings, publish them;
for so you love to do, O people of Israel!”
declares the Lord God.

Israel Has Not Returned to the Lord

6 “I gave you cleanness of teeth in all your cities,
and lack of bread in all your places,
yet you did not return to me,”
declares the Lord.

7 “I also withheld the rain from you
when there were yet three months to the harvest;
I would send rain on one city,
and send no rain on another city;
one field would have rain,
and the field on which it did not rain would wither;
8 so two or three cities would wander to another city
to drink water, and would not be satisfied;
yet you did not return to me,”
declares the Lord.

9 “I struck you with blight and mildew;
your many gardens and your vineyards,
your fig trees and your olive trees the locust devoured;
yet you did not return to me,”
declares the Lord.

10 “I sent among you a pestilence after the manner of Egypt;
I killed your young men with the sword,
and carried away your horses,[1]
and I made the stench of your camp go up into your nostrils;

yet you did not return to me,”
declares the Lord.

11 † “I overthrew some of you,
as when God overthrew Sodom and
Gomorrah,
and you were as a brand[2] plucked out of
the burning;
yet you did not return to me,”
declares the Lord.

12 † “Therefore thus I will do to you, O Israel;
because I will do this to you,
prepare to meet your God, O Israel!”

13 † For behold, he who forms the mountains and
creates the wind,
and declares to man what is his thought,
who makes the morning darkness,
and treads on the heights of the earth—
the Lord, the God of hosts, is his name!

Seek the Lord and Live

5 [1]†† Hear this word that I take up over you in lamentation, O house of
Israel:

[2]† "Fallen, no more to rise,
is the virgin Israel;
forsaken on her land,
with none to raise her up."

[3]† For thus says the Lord God:

"The city that went out a thousand
shall have a hundred left,
and that which went out a hundred
shall have ten left
to the house of Israel."

[4]† For thus says the Lord to the house of Israel:

"Seek me and live;
[5]† but do not seek Bethel,
and do not enter into Gilgal
or cross over to Beersheba;
for Gilgal shall surely go into exile,
and Bethel shall come to nothing."

[6]† Seek the Lord and live,
lest he break out like fire in the house of
Joseph,
and it devour, with none to quench it
for Bethel,
[7]† O you who turn justice to wormwood[1]

and cast down righteousness to the
earth!

8 He who made the Pleiades and Orion,
and turns deep darkness into the morning
and darkens the day into night,
who calls for the waters of the sea
and pours them out on the surface of the
earth,
the LORD is his name;
9 who makes destruction flash forth against the
strong,
so that destruction comes upon the
fortress.

10 They hate him who reproves in the gate,
and they abhor him who speaks the truth.
11 Therefore because you trample on[2] the poor
and you exact taxes of grain from him,
you have built houses of hewn stone,
but you shall not dwell in them;
you have planted pleasant vineyards,
but you shall not drink their wine.
12 For I know how many are your transgressions
and how great are your sins—
you who afflict the righteous, who take a
bribe,
and turn aside the needy in the gate.
13 Therefore he who is prudent will keep silent
in such a time,
for it is an evil time.

14 Seek good, and not evil,
that you may live;

and so the Lord, the God of hosts, will be
with you,
as you have said.
15 † Hate evil, and love good,
and establish justice in the gate;
it may be that the Lord, the God of hosts,
will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph.

16 †Therefore thus says the Lord, the God of hosts, the Lord:

"In all the squares there shall be wailing,
and in all the streets they shall say, 'Alas!
Alas!'
They shall call the farmers to mourning
and to wailing those who are skilled in
lamentation,
17 † and in all vineyards there shall be wailing,
for I will pass through your midst,"
the Lord.

Let Justice Roll Down

18 Woe to you who desire the day of the Lord!
Why would you have the day of the Lord?
It is darkness, and not light,
19 as if a man fled from a lion,
and a bear met him,
or went into the house and leaned his hand
against the wall,
and a serpent bit him.
20 Is not the day of the Lord darkness, and not
light,
and gloom with no brightness in it?

21 "I hate, I despise your feasts,
and I take no delight in your solemn
assemblies.
22 Even though you offer me your
burnt offerings and grain offerings,
I will not accept them;
and the peace offerings of your fattened
animals,
I will not look upon them.
23 Take away from me the noise of your songs;
to the melody of your harps I will not listen.
24 But let justice roll down like waters,
and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

25 "Did you bring to me sacrifices and offerings during the forty years in the wilderness, O house of Israel? 26 You shall take up Sikkuth your king, and Kiyyun your star-god—your images that you made for yourselves, 27 and I will send you into exile beyond Damascus," says the Lord, whose name is the God of hosts.

Woe to Those at Ease in Zion

6 [1] “Woe to those who are at ease in Zion,
and to those who feel secure on the mountain of Samaria,
the notable men of the first of the nations,
to whom the house of Israel comes!

[2] Pass over to Calneh, and see,
and from there go to Hamath the great;
then go down to Gath of the Philistines.
Are you better than these kingdoms?
Or is their territory greater than your territory,
[3] O you who put far away the day of disaster
and bring near the seat of violence?

[4] “Woe to those who lie on beds of ivory
and stretch themselves out on their couches,
and eat lambs from the flock
and calves from the midst of the stall,
[5] who sing idle songs to the sound of the harp
and like David invent for themselves instruments of music,
[6] who drink wine in bowls
and anoint themselves with the finest oils,
but are not grieved over the ruin of Joseph!
[7] Therefore they shall now be the first of those who go into exile,
and the revelry of those who stretch themselves out shall pass away.”

[8] The Lord God has sworn by himself, declares the Lord, the God of hosts:

"I abhor the pride of Jacob
and hate his strongholds,
and I will deliver up the city and all that
is in it."

9 †And if ten men remain in one house, they shall die. 10 †And when one's relative, the one who anoints him for burial, shall take him up to bring the bones out of the house, and shall say to him who is in the innermost parts of the house, "Is there still anyone with you?" he shall say, "No"; and he shall say, "Silence! We must not mention the name of the Lord."

11 † For behold, the Lord commands,
and the great house shall be struck down
into fragments,
and the little house into bits.
12 † Do horses run on rocks?
Does one plow there[1] with oxen?
But you have turned justice into poison
and the fruit of righteousness into
wormwood[2]—
13 † you who rejoice in Lo-debar,[3]
who say, "Have we not by our own
strength
captured Karnaim[4] for ourselves?"
14 † "For behold, I will raise up against you a
nation,
O house of Israel," declares the Lord, the
God of hosts;
"and they shall oppress you from Lebo-hamath
to the Brook of the Arabah."

Warning Visions

7 [1]This is what the Lord God showed me: behold, he was forming
locusts when the latter growth was just beginning to sprout, and behold, it
was the latter growth after the king's mowings. [2]When they had finished
eating the grass of the land, I said,

"O Lord God, please forgive!
How can Jacob stand?
He is so small!"
[3] The Lord relented concerning this:
"It shall not be," said the Lord.

[4] This is what the Lord God showed me: behold, the Lord God was
calling for a judgment by fire, and it devoured the great deep and was eating
up the land. [5]Then I said,

"O Lord God, please cease!
How can Jacob stand?
He is so small!"
[6] The Lord relented concerning this:
"This also shall not be," said the
Lord God.

[7] This is what he showed me: behold, the Lord was standing beside a
wall built with a plumb line, with a plumb line in his hand. [8]And the Lord
said to me, "Amos, what do you see?" And I said, "A plumb line." Then the
Lord said,

"Behold, I am setting a plumb line
in the midst of my people Israel;
I will never again pass by them;
[9] the high places of Isaac shall be made
desolate,
and the sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid

waste,
and I will rise against the house of
Jeroboam with the sword.”

Amos Accused

10 ‡ † Then Amaziah the priest of Bethel sent to Jeroboam king of Israel,
saying, “Amos has conspired against you in the midst of the house of Israel.
The land is not able to bear all his words. 11 † For thus Amos has said,

> “‘Jeroboam shall die by the sword,
> and Israel must go into exile
> away from his land.’”

12 † And Amaziah said to Amos, “O seer, go, flee away to the land of Judah,
and eat bread there, and prophesy there, 13 † but never again prophesy at
Bethel, for it is the king’s sanctuary, and it is a temple of the kingdom.”
14 † Then Amos answered and said to Amaziah, “I was[1] no prophet, nor a
prophet’s son, but I was a herdsman and a dresser of sycamore figs. 15 † But
the Lord took me from following the flock, and the Lord said to me, ‘Go,
prophesy to my people Israel.’ 16 † Now therefore hear the word of the Lord.

> “You say, ‘Do not prophesy against Israel,
> and do not preach against the house
> of Isaac.’

17 † Therefore thus says the Lord:

> “‘Your wife shall be a prostitute in the city,
> and your sons and your daughters shall fall
> by the sword,
> and your land shall be divided up with a
> measuring line;
> you yourself shall die in an unclean land,
> and Israel shall surely go into exile away
> from its land.’”

The Coming Day of Bitter Mourning

8 [1] † This is what the Lord God showed me: behold, a basket of summer fruit.[2] † And he said, "Amos, what do you see?" And I said, "A basket of summer fruit." Then the Lord said to me,

"The end[1] has come upon my people Israel;
I will never again pass by them.
[3] † The songs of the temple[2] shall become
wailings[3] in that day,"
declares the Lord God.

So many dead bodies!"
"They are thrown everywhere!"
"Silence!"

[4] † † † Hear this, you who trample on the needy
and bring the poor of the land to an end,
[5] † saying, "When will the new moon be over,
that we may sell grain?
And the Sabbath,
that we may offer wheat for sale,
that we may make the ephah small and the
shekel[4] great
and deal deceitfully with false balances,
[6] † that we may buy the poor for silver
and the needy for a pair of sandals
and sell the chaff of the wheat?"

[7] † The Lord has sworn by the pride of Jacob:
"Surely I will never forget any of their
deeds.

8† Shall not the land tremble on this account,
and everyone mourn who dwells in it,
and all of it rise like the Nile,
and be tossed about and sink again, like the
Nile of Egypt?”

9† “And on that day,” declares the Lord God,
“I will make the sun go down at noon
and darken the earth in broad daylight.
10† I will turn your feasts into mourning
and all your songs into lamentation;
I will bring sackcloth on every waist
and baldness on every head;
I will make it like the mourning for an only
son
and the end of it like a bitter day.

11† “Behold, the days are coming,” declares the
Lord God,
“when I will send a famine on the land—
not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for
water,
but of hearing the words of the Lord.
12† They shall wander from sea to sea,
and from north to east;
they shall run to and fro, to seek the word of the
Lord,
but they shall not find it.

13† “In that day the lovely virgins and the young
men
shall faint for thirst.
14† Those who swear by the Guilt of Samaria,
and say, ‘As your god lives, O Dan,’

and, ‘As the Way of Beersheba lives,’
they shall fall, and never rise again.”

The Destruction of Israel

9 [1]†† I saw the Lord standing beside[1] the altar, and he said:

"Strike the capitals until the
thresholds shake,
and shatter them on the heads of all the
people;[2]
and those who are left of them I will kill with
the sword;
not one of them shall flee away;
not one of them shall escape.

[2]† "If they dig into Sheol,
from there shall my hand take them;
if they climb up to heaven,
from there I will bring them down.
[3]† If they hide themselves on the top of
Carmel,
from there I will search them out and take
them;
and if they hide from my sight at the bottom
of the sea,
there I will command the serpent, and it
shall bite them.
[4]† And if they go into captivity before their
enemies,
there I will command the sword, and it shall
kill them;
and I will fix my eyes upon them
for evil and not for good."

5 The Lord God of hosts,
he who touches the earth and it melts,
and all who dwell in it mourn,
and all of it rises like the Nile,
and sinks again, like the Nile of Egypt;
6 who builds his upper chambers in the heavens
and founds his vault upon the earth;
who calls for the waters of the sea
and pours them out upon the surface of the earth—
the Lord is his name.

7 "Are you not like the Cushites to me,
O people of Israel?" declares the Lord.
"Did I not bring up Israel from the land of Egypt,
and the Philistines from Caphtor and the Syrians from Kir?
8 Behold, the eyes of the Lord God are upon the sinful kingdom,
and I will destroy it from the surface of the ground,
except that I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob,"
declares the Lord.

9 "For behold, I will command,
and shake the house of Israel among all the nations
as one shakes with a sieve,
but no pebble shall fall to the earth.
10 All the sinners of my people shall die by the sword,
who say, 'Disaster shall not overtake or meet us.'

The Restoration of Israel

11 “In that day I will raise up
the booth of David that is fallen
and repair its breaches,
and raise up its ruins
and rebuild it as in the days of old,
12 that they may possess the remnant of Edom
and all the nations who are called by my
name,”[1]
declares the Lord who does this.

13 “Behold, the days are coming,” declares the Lord,
“when the plowman shall overtake the
reaper
and the treader of grapes him who sows the
seed;
the mountains shall drip sweet wine,
and all the hills shall flow with it.
14 I will restore the fortunes of my people Israel,
and they shall rebuild the ruined cities and
inhabit them;
they shall plant vineyards and drink their
wine,
and they shall make gardens and eat their
fruit.
15 I will plant them on their land,
and they shall never again be uprooted
out of the land that I have given them,”
says the Lord your God.

Amos

Overview

Author
Amos the prophet

Date
c 792–740 BC

Places
Judah; Jerusalem; Zion; Israel; Samaria; Bethel; Gilgal; Dan; Syria

People
Uzziah; Jeroboam; Joash; Ben-hadad; Amaziah

Purpose
To warn Israel and Judah that God would punish them for injustice and for idolatry, though a remnant would be saved

Law Themes
The nations condemned; the Lord as a lion; only a remnant; unfaithful worship; the day of the Lord

Gospel Themes
The remnant; seek the Lord and live; the booth of David; restoration of Israel; the Lord relents

Memory Verses
Let justice roll down (5:21–24); the fortunes of Israel restored (9:13–15)

Introduction to Amos

Reading Amos

From the high pastures he lifts his eyes to see across the Salt Sea and the Jordan, where the shadows stalk and devour Edom, Moab, and Ammon. Turning toward the sunset, he sees the distant peak of Mount Carmel, the coasts of Philistia, and the way to Egypt engulfed with reddish light. He calls together the sheep and leads them to safety before the day turns to darkness, when predators roam.

The Lord called the shepherd Amos to deliver a surprising and ominous message for Judah and Israel. In his prophecies, Amos pictured the Lord angry, crouching, and focused like a lion stalking the sinful, carefree nations. The kingdoms were prosperous when Amos preached, but his prophecies of destruction were rapidly fulfilled by the invading Assyrians, who besieged Samaria within a few decades.

Luther on Amos

Amos [1:1] does specify his time: he lived and preached in the days of Hosea and Isaiah. He attacks the same vices and idolatry, or false sanctity, as does Hosea, and he also forewarns of the Assyrian captivity.

He is violent too, and denounces the people of Israel throughout almost the entire book until the end of the last chapter, where he prophesies of Christ and his kingdom and closes his book with that. No prophet, I think, has so little in the way of promises and so much in the way of denunciations and threats. He can well be called Amos, that is, "a burden," one who is hard to get along with and irritating, particularly because he is a shepherd and not one of the order of prophets (as he himself says in chapter 7[:14]). Besides he comes out of the land of the tribe of Judah, from Tekoa, into the kingdom of Israel, and preaches there as a foreigner. It is for this reason that they say the priest Amaziah, whom he rebukes in chapter 7[:10–17], beat him to death with a club.

In the first chapter Amos is difficult and obscure, where he speaks of three and four sins. Many have knocked themselves out over it, struggling with it at great length. But the text, I believe, shows clearly that these three and four sins are but one sin. For he always names and cites only one sin. Against Damascus, for example, he names only the sin that "they have threshed Gilead with iron chariots," etc. [1:3].

But Amos calls this sin "three and four" because the people do not repent of the sin or acknowledge it; rather they boast of it and rely upon it as though it were a good deed, as false saints always do. For a sin cannot become more grave, great, or weighty than when it tries to be a holy and godly work, making the devil God and God the devil. So, too, three and four make seven, which is the completeness of numbers in the Scriptures, where one turns back and begins to count again, both the days and the weeks.

Amos is quoted twice in the New Testament. The first time is in Acts 7[:42–43], where Stephen cites Amos 5[:25–27] against the Jews and shows by it that the Jews have never kept God's law from the time they first came out of Egypt. The second time is in Acts 15[:16–17],

where St. James in the first council of the apostles quotes from the last chapter of Amos [9:11–12] as a proof of Christian liberty, that the Gentiles under the New Testament are not bound to keep the laws of Moses which the Jews themselves have never kept and could not keep, as St. Peter preaches in Acts 15[:10]. These are the two most important bits in Amos, and they are two very good bits. (AE 35:320–21)

For more of Luther's insights on this Book, see *Lectures on Amos* (AE 18:125–90).

Challenges for Readers

Outline. Amos's prophecies do not always stand together with clear, logical order, which can make his arguments difficult to follow.

Millennialism. Some interpreters take the promises about the land in ch 9 as a prophecy about a restoration of Israel, fulfilled in 1948 by the creation of modern Israel. However, the NT interprets such prophecies by applying them to the Church because Jesus did not come to set up an earthly kingdom (Jn 18:36) but a spiritual kingdom, the Church (cf Ac 15:15–18; Gal 3:29; 2Pt 3:13). See pp 1565–66, 1906.

Blessings for Readers

Amos demonstrates the character of God's justice, which punishes not only the nations for their sins but also His OT people, Israel and Judah. The Lord insists that people of all nations, classes, and incomes treat one another responsibly and mercifully in accordance with His Word. Though Amos focuses on the Law's condemnation and the imminent fall of Israel, he concludes with a prophecy of the coming Savior (9:11) and a note of enduring hope (9:13–15).

OUTLINE

Superscription (1:1–2)
I. Judgments against the Nations (1:3–2:16)
  A. Syria (1:3–5)
  B. Philistia (1:6–8)
  C. Tyre (1:9–10)
  D. Edom (1:11–12)
  E. Ammon (1:13–15)
  F. Moab (2:1–3)
  G. Judah (2:4–5)
  H. Israel (2:6–16)
II. Declarations concerning Israel (chs 3–6)
  A. Accusations Lodged against Israel (chs 3–4)
    1. Yahweh's exclusive relationship with Israel (3:1–2)
    2. Prophecy verified (3:3–8)
    3. Proclamation concerning Israel's guilt and punishment (3:9–15)
    4. Condemnation of the rich women of Israel (4:1–3)
    5. Indictment of sacrificial sins (4:4–5)
    6. Failure to respond to Yahweh's rebuke (4:6–13)
  B. Lamentation for Israel (5:1–3)
  C. Exhortation to Seek Yahweh (5:4–17)
  D. Judgment on the Day of Yahweh (5:18–6:14)
    1. The day of Yahweh (5:18–20)
    2. Detestable ritual practices (5:21–27)
    3. Warning to the secure and complacent (6:1–7)

4. Certain destruction for the prideful house of Israel (6:8–14)

III. Visions (chs 7–9)

A. Visions That Do Not Come to Pass (7:1–6)

1. Vision of the locusts (7:1–3)
2. Vision of the fire (7:4–6)

B. Visions That Do Come to Pass (7:7–9:10)

1. Vision of the plumb line (7:7–9)
2. Historical interlude (7:10–17)
3. Vision of the summer fruit (8:1–14)
4. Vision of the Lord beside the altar (9:1–10)

C. Restoration of David's Booth (9:11–15)

Footnotes

Footnotes for Amos, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:1 Or *sheep breeders*
- [2] 1:1 Or *during two years*
- [3] 1:3 Hebrew *I will not turn it back* ; also verses 6, 9, 11, 13
- [4] 1:5 Or *On*
- [1] 1:15 Or *officials*

Footnotes for Amos, Chapter 2

- [2] 2:1 Hebrew *I will not turn it back* ; also verses 4, 6
- [1] 2:3 Or *officials*

Footnotes for Amos, Chapter 3

- [1] 3:11 Hebrew *An adversary, one who surrounds the land—he shall bring down*
- [2] 3:12 The meaning of the Hebrew word is uncertain
- [3] 3:15 Or *and many houses*

Footnotes for Amos, Chapter 4

- [1] 4:10 Hebrew *along with the captivity of your horses*
- [2] 4:11 That is, a burning stick

Footnotes for Amos, Chapter 5

- [1] 5:7 Or *to bitter fruit*
- [2] 5:11 Or *you tax*

Footnotes for Amos, Chapter 6

- [1] 6:12 Or *the sea*
- [2] 6:12 Or *into bitter fruit*
- [3] 6:13 *Lo-debar* means *nothing*
- [4] 6:13 *Karnaim* means *horns* (a symbol of strength)

Footnotes for Amos, Chapter 7

- [1] 7:14 Or *am* ; twice in this verse

Footnotes for Amos, Chapter 8

- [1] 8:2 The Hebrew words for *end* and *summer fruit* sound alike
- [2] 8:3 Or *palace*
- [3] 8:3 Or *The singing women of the palace shall wail*
- [4] 8:5 An *ephah* was about 3/5 bushel or 22 liters ; a *shekel* was about 2/5 ounce or 11 grams

Footnotes for Amos, Chapter 9

- [1] 9:1 Or *on*
- [2] 9:1 Hebrew *all of them*
- [1] 9:12 Hebrew ; Septuagint (compare Acts 15:17) *that the remnant of mankind and all the nations who are called by my name may seek the Lord*

Study Notes

AMOS—NOTE ON **Chs 1–2** Text moves in a circle, pronouncing judgment on Israel's neighbors one by one (1:3–2:3) before finally taking aim at Judah (2:4–5) and then Israel (2:6–16). By structuring each oracle in chs 1–2 along similar lines, Amos not only builds dramatic tension but also emphasizes that God's people are acting no better than their pagan neighbors.

AMOS—NOTE ON 1:1 *The words … which he saw*. Amos received God's Word through visions. Joel and Zephaniah, e.g., simply report that "the word of the LORD" came to them (e.g., Jl 1:1; Zep 1:1). *shepherds of Tekoa*. Like David, another famous character from the same region, Amos worked as a shepherd before the Lord called him as a prophet. *Tekoa*. Village in Judah c 5 mi S of Bethlehem. See map, p 1205. *Uzziah … Jeroboam*. Mention of these two long-reigning monarchs provides evidence that Amos's ministry took place between c 792 and 740 BC. *two years before the earthquake*. If scholars are correct in dating this quake to c 760 BC, then we can specify the time of Amos's ministry more precisely. Given that his oracles warn that this earthquake is impending (8:8; 9:1, 5), we can reasonably assume that he gave these warnings in the years just prior to this upheaval. This seismic event was so unforgettable that the prophet Zechariah could refer to it several centuries later and count on people recognizing his mention of "the earthquake in the days of Uzziah" (14:5). Archaeologists have found evidence of the earthquake's destructive effects at Hazor.

AMOS—NOTE ON 1:2 *roars*. Amos compares his prophetic revelations to the terrifying roar of a lion. Such imagery commanded Israel's undivided attention and hints that this prophet's words focus on judgment. *Zion*. Synonymous with Jerusalem, the site of the Davidic throne and Solomon's temple. See p 844. *pastures … mourn*. God's judgment will produce a drought that devastates Judah's grazing lands. *Carmel*. Mountain in the Northern Kingdom; notorious site for Baal worship (cf 1Ki 18:20–29). See color map 2. Amos urges Israel to turn away from idols and return to the Lord, whose temple is in Jerusalem. *withers*. Verb and image it conveys effectively ridicule Baal, the Canaanite storm-god. Carmel, the peak

dedicated to this phony lord of rain and fertility, would soon be parched and bare.

AMOS—NOTE ON 1:3 *For three transgressions … for four*. This expression recurs throughout the oracles of the first two chapters (1:3–5, 6–8, 9–10, 11–12, 13–15; 2:1–3, 4–5, 6–16). It implies an ongoing escalation of wickedness during Amos's day. See note, chs 1–2; see also note, Pr 30. *Damascus*. Leading city-state of Aram (modern-day Syria; see color map 2) is the first kingdom to be denounced. Conquered by King David c 250 years earlier (2Sm 8:6), it soon recovered its strength and became a lasting nemesis of Israel (cf 1Ki 11:23–25; 2Ki 8:7–15). *I will not revoke*. Recurring phrase and constituent part of the oracles of Amos's opening chapters (1:6, 9, 11, 13; 2:1, 4, 6). This vow underlines that the Lord will not rescind the judgment being pronounced. *Gilead*. Northeast of Jerusalem; part of the Northern Kingdom. See color map 2. It sat in the territory separating Israel and Aram and so was among the first places attacked by Damascus. *threshing sledges of iron*. Attacks of Damascus on Israel are likened to metal-toothed devices used for ripping the wheat from the chaff on the threshing-room floor. See note, Ru 3:2.

AMOS—NOTE ON 1:4 *fire upon the house of Hazael*. Destruction by fire is another common thread in the oracles of judgment appearing in chs 1–2. In all but one of these oracles, the Lord threatens to punish by fire (1:7, 10, 12, 14; 2:2, 5). Given that Hazael became king of Syria after murdering Ben-hadad and usurping his throne (2Ki 8:7–15), the penalty here pronounced seems fitting. *strongholds of Ben-hadad*. Though made of stone, the fortresses at Damascus would be devoured by the fire of God's judgment.

AMOS—NOTE ON 1:5 *gate-bar*. Bar that secured the fortress gates of a city (cf 1Ki 4:13). Once a city's gate-bar broke, its overthrow was all but guaranteed. *Damascus*. See note, v 3. *Valley of Aven*. Location uncertain, but most likely "Valley of Lebanon" spoken of in Jsh 11:17. It extended along the northern border of Israel. *Aven*. Hbr "vanity," "idolatry"; wordplay (i.e., "valley of sin" or "valley of idolatry"). See note, Ec 1:2. *scepter*. Symbol of kingship, thus referring to the reigning power. *Beth-eden*. Aramean city-state north of Damascus, on the banks of the Euphrates. *Syria*. Also called Aram; empire north of Israel. Its leading city-state was Damascus. *go into exile*. To be forcibly removed from one's land and taken captive by a conqueror. Such forced relocations were common in ancient

conquests. *Kir*. Location uncertain; the place where the Syrians originated. The Syrians would lose their kingdom and be reduced to their place of origin.

AMOS—NOTE ON 1:6 *For three transgressions … for four*. See note, v 3. *Gaza*. Main city in Philistia, located southwest of Israel and Judah, along the coast of the Great Sea. See color map 1. *Edom*. Kingdom south of Judah. The Edomites descended from Esau and thus from Abraham, through Isaac (Gn 25:23–26; Dt 2:4).

AMOS—NOTE ON 1:7 *fire*. Amos threatens Gaza with the same fiery destruction as Damascus (v 4).

AMOS—NOTE ON 1:8 *Ashdod … Ashkelon … Ekron*. Along with Gaza (v 6), these are renowned strongholds of the Philistines. List conveys that all of Philistia will be punished. *scepter*. See note, v 5.

AMOS—NOTE ON 1:9 *For three transgressions … for four*. See note, v 3. *Tyre*. Port city northwest of Israel; important city-state in Phoenicia. See color map 1. *delivered up a whole people*. Tyre was known for engaging in the slave trade. In particular, Amos is rebuking Tyre for the role it would play in selling Israelite slaves when the northern tribes fell to Assyria in 722 BC. *Edom*. See note, v 6. *covenant of brotherhood*. Israel and Tyre made a covenant during the days of King Solomon (1Ki 5:1–12; cf 2Sm 5:11). Motivated by greed, the people of Tyre would soon violate that agreement.

AMOS—NOTE ON 1:10 *I will send a fire*. See notes, vv 4, 7.

AMOS—NOTE ON 1:11 *For three transgressions … for four*. See note, v 3. *Edom … pursued his brother*. See note, v 6. Sadly, biblical history is full of accounts about Edom making war against Israel (1Sm 14; 2Sm 8:12–14; 1Ki 11:14–22; 2Ki 8:20–22). *cast off all pity*. Wordplay. Lit, Edom "destroyed [Israel's] wombs" through brutal treatment and murder of Israelite women. *anger tore*. Presents an image of an animal tearing at its prey. The prophet thus characterizes Edom's attacks on Israel as unrelentingly vicious. *wrath forever*. Edom would never end its outpouring of rage against Israel.

AMOS—NOTE ON 1:12 *I will send a fire*. See notes, vv 4, 7. *Teman*. See note, Hab 3:3. *Bozrah*. Edom's northernmost city. Amos hints that Edom will suffer widespread, or even complete, destruction.

AMOS—NOTE ON 1:13 *For three transgressions … for four*. See note, v 3. *Ammonites*. People east of the Jordan. See color map 2. *ripped open pregnant women*. Ammon's enmity against Israel will express itself in

brutal attacks against women and children. Sadly, Israel suffered this fate more than once. *Gilead*. See note, v 3. *enlarge their border*. Ammon attempted to capture territory from the Israelites.

AMOS—NOTE ON 1:14 *I will kindle a fire*. See notes, vv 4, 7. *Rabbah*. Hbr "great"; Ammon's capital city (cf 1Ch 20:1). *tempest … whirlwind*. Ammon's judgment is coming in a terrible storm. Ammon will suffer a complete collapse in battle, and this defeat should be understood as divine punishment.

AMOS—NOTE ON 1:15 *their king shall go into exile*. Defeat of the Ammonites will be such that even their royalty will be captured and carried away.

AMOS—NOTE ON 2:1 *For three transgressions … for four*. See note, 1:3. *Moab*. Nation east of Israel, on the southern border of Ammon. See color map 2. *burned to lime*. Moabites stand accused of burning the bones of a fallen enemy to ash (or, "lime"). Such desecration was obviously an atrocity.

AMOS—NOTE ON 2:2 *I will send a fire*. See notes, 1:4, 7. *Kerioth*. Main city of Moab, near Aroer, and site of principal shrine for pagan god Chemosh (cf Jer 48:13, 24). See color map 2. *uproar*. Violence and tumult of battle.

AMOS—NOTE ON 2:3 *I will cut off the ruler … princes*. As in 1:15, this pictures a battle of annihilation. Even the king and princes will perish.

AMOS—NOTE ON 1:1–2:3 Amos denounces the nations surrounding Judah and Israel and threatens them with fiery judgment and political defeat. Seeing those around us similarly judged might tempt us to be smug, though it ought to show us that unless we repent and do what is right, the same fate can befall us. In order to learn to abhor all forms of sin and be empowered to walk in the Lord's ways, God has promised us His Spirit. As we hear God's Word and receive His Sacraments, His Spirit transforms us by helping us to grow into Christ's likeness. • "O Holy Spirit, enter in, And in our hearts Your work begin … That we may be Truly living, To You giving Prayer unceasing And in love be still increasing." Amen. (*LSB* 913:1)

AMOS—NOTE ON 2:4 *For three transgressions … for four*. See note, 1:3. *Judah*. Southern tribes of the divided kingdom. See note, chs 1–2; see also map, p 558; cf 1Ki 12; 2Ch 10–11. *rejected the law … statutes*. Judah is accused of breaking the Sinai covenant. See p 971. *lies have led them*

astray. Falsehood led to idolatry, improper worship, and ethical failures. *their fathers walked*. Covenant unfaithfulness had persisted for generations. Even from the time of the deliverance from Egypt, the Israelites had continually been tempted to follow other gods (cf Dt 4:3; 1Ki 18:18).

AMOS—NOTE ON 2:5 *fire upon Judah*. See notes, 1:4, 7.

AMOS—NOTE ON 2:4–5 Like its unbelieving neighbors, Judah is guilty of listening to false prophets and worshiping in ways unbecoming the one true God. Sadly, we, too, are tempted and led astray by false theologies. However, it is the Lord's Word of Gospel alone that washes away our sin and bestows life for the sake of our Savior, Jesus Christ. • "Lord, keep us steadfast in Your Word; Curb those who by deceit or sword Would wrest the kingdom from Your Son And bring to naught all He has done." Amen. (*LSB* 655:1)

AMOS—NOTE ON 2:6 *For three transgressions … for four*. See note, 1:3. *Israel*. See note, chs 1–2. *sell the righteous*. The Sinai covenant had in place many laws designed to protect the innocent (Ex 23:6–8; Dt 16:18–20). However, justice was being perverted in Amos's day. Judges were regularly taking bribes and depriving the innocent of their rights. See note, 1Sm 2:15–16. In rabbinic tradition, the "righteous one" was Joseph, sold by his brothers to buy sandals. *a pair of sandals*. Bogus judgments against the needy could be bought for a paltry price.

AMOS—NOTE ON 2:7 *trample the head of the poor*. Despite the covenant's mandates that the vulnerable of Israel be protected (Ex 22:21–27; Dt 24:12–17), the poor were being mistreated. *the same girl*. Incestuous behavior was forbidden explicitly (Lv 18:8; 20:11; Dt 22:30); it is an offense against nature. *My holy name is profaned*. The Lord's name is repeatedly associated with grace, mercy, and holiness (Ex 20:7; 34:6–7). The rampant corruption of Amos's day—Israel's perversion of justice, dishonoring of women, and idol worship—constituted an esp grievous affront to God's holiness.

AMOS—NOTE ON 2:8 *beside every altar*. Many pagan altars in Israel competed with the Lord's altar in the Jerusalem temple. Because of the popularity of these unauthorized shrines, Amos repeatedly accuses the people of syncretism and idolatry (3:14; 4:4; 7:9–10; 9:1). *pledge*. Garments were often given as collateral in ancient Israel in order to secure a loan or guarantee an unpaid debt. See note, Pr 20:16. However, out of care and regard for the poor, garments given in pledge were not to be kept

overnight (Dt 24:10–13). Amos's rebuke reveals that this command was being ignored. A seventh-century Hbr letter found at a military outpost along the Mediterranean held the complaint of a laborer that his garment was taken away unjustly. He was requesting its return. *house of their God*. Not the Jerusalem temple, but the pagan and syncretistic shrines erected in the northern territories by the kings of Israel in order to keep their citizens from traveling to the Lord's temple in Judah, at Jerusalem. Cf 1Ki 12:25–29. Though the priests officiating at such unauthorized altars did indeed invoke the Lord's name, they often did so while also praying to pagan gods. *wine of those who have been fined*. Not the wine offered in the Jerusalem temple (Ex 29:40–41), but wine taken as payment for fines by the priests of unauthorized sanctuaries. Such libations were in turn consumed within the precincts of these illicit sanctuaries. Significantly, drunkenness and debauchery is associated with the worship of false gods elsewhere in the Bible (cf Jgs 9:27).

AMOS—NOTE ON 2:9 *destroyed the Amorite*. Amos here calls to mind the mighty acts God worked on Israel's behalf while bringing them into the Promised Land. By helping them defeat this powerful and important Canaanite tribe, the Lord not only protected Israel from danger but, more important, allowed them to take possession of the land promised to Abraham and his descendants (Gn 15:12–16). *height of the cedars*. Symbolic phrase reminding the Israelites of the dread they once felt before the Amorites. In anticipation of the conquest, Moses sent spies into Amorite territories. They came back reporting that this was a giant people (Nu 13:25–33; Dt 1:27–28). *fruit above … roots beneath*. Couplet denoting total destruction (2Ki 19:30; Ezk 17:9; Hos 9:16). Today we say "from top to bottom."

AMOS—NOTE ON 2:10 *brought you up out of the land of Egypt*. Continues reminding Israel of God's faithfulness in bringing His people out of Egyptian bondage and into the Promised Land. The Lord's purpose in the exodus and in leading Israel "forty years in the wilderness" was that they would take possession of "the land of the Amorite" and then live under covenant grace. Israel's experience of the exodus and conquest defined its identity as God's chosen people. As such, the story of the exodus and conquest was to be recited faithfully among the Israelites throughout all generations (Lv 11:45; Dt 20:1; Jsh 24:16–18; Mi 6:4–5).

AMOS—NOTE ON 2:11 *prophets*. See note, 1Sm 9:9. *Nazirites*. Holy men who took oaths to neither cut their hair nor drink wine. See note, Nu 6:2.
AMOS—NOTE ON 2:12 *Nazirites drink wine*. Israelites had become so impious that even Nazirites were breaking their vows to God by taking alcohol. See note, Nu 6:3. *commanded the prophets*. Things had been turned upside down in Amos's day. Instead of listening to the prophetic Word and repenting, people tried to command the prophets, demanding changes in their behavior. On the priest Amaziah's attempt to silence Amos, cf 7:12.
AMOS—NOTE ON 2:13 *as a cart full of sheaves presses down*. Sheaves seem light, like a prophet's words. But the bottom sheaves are crushed and smothered by the total weight.
AMOS—NOTE ON 2:14–16 Climactic verses containing seven illustrations of what will befall Israel when the judgment comes. These metaphors vividly depict just how completely Israel will be crushed. The concluding image is telling indeed: even Israel's mightiest will flee naked from that terrible defeat.
AMOS—NOTE ON 2:6–16 Amos accuses Israel of breaking virtually every part of the covenant. The people worship other gods, withhold justice from the innocent, and shamefully exploit the poor and vulnerable. Such vices destroy our communities today, despite the great blessings we have enjoyed from God's hand. God calls His Church today to repentance precisely because He wishes to avert the shame and sorrow that will inevitably result when we take the way of selfishness and greed. He daily calls us to receive anew the forgiveness Christ won for us. • Gracious Lord, have mercy on Your people. Make our hearts swift to believe Your Word. Amen.
AMOS—NOTE ON 3:1 *whole family*. Though Amos has thus far drawn a distinction between the southern and northern tribes, addressing himself to Judah in 2:4–5 and then to Israel in 2:6–16, he here treats all of God's chosen people as one. He does so in order to remind the separated people of God about the intent of the covenant that they are supposed to follow in a right relationship with the Lord and in harmony with one another.
AMOS—NOTE ON 3:2 *You only have I known*. God's choice of Israel is a unique privilege. As such, breaking the covenant is a terrible offense, deserving the full penalty of God's judgment. *known*. Often connotes marital intimacy and unity. Cf Gn 4:1, 17.

AMOS—NOTE ON 3:3–6 Six rhetorical questions, each expecting a negative response, lead to a climactic seventh one (v 6b). This rhetorical device emphasizes that the disaster soon to come upon Israel is from the Lord's hand. The people should understand that they are receiving the just penalty for their sin.

AMOS—NOTE ON 3:6 *unless the LORD has done it?* Sin does not originate with the Holy One, who made all things good. Yet the prophet plainly speaks of a disaster (lit, "evil") coming from the Lord. The Almighty does indeed permit disasters as a natural consequence of sin. Jeremiah later characterized disaster coming upon the people as "the fruit" of their wicked devices and godless plans (Jer 6:19). Jn D: "Sometimes [evil] means what is evil by nature, and this is the opposite of virtue and the will of God: and sometimes it means … afflictions and calamities. Now these are seemingly evil because they are painful, but in reality are good. For to those who understand they become ambassadors of conversion and salvation. The Scripture says that of these God is the Author" (*NPNF* 2 9:93).

AMOS—NOTE ON 3:7 *without revealing His secret*. In His mercy, the Lord regularly reveals His judgments and intentions by the mouth of His prophets. This is why Amos was called to ministry: his job was to relay to the people what he received while seeing the Word of the Lord (1:1).

AMOS—NOTE ON 3:8 *who can but prophesy?* Hypothetical question used as a rhetorical device to state that this prophetic message to Israel is by the Lord's authority. As surely as a lion's roar (cf 1:2) will bring fear, so the Lord's speaking will bring the voice of the prophet.

AMOS—NOTE ON 3:9 *Ashdod*. See note, 1:8. *Egypt*. Perennially powerful nation from which the Lord delivered Israel during the exodus. *mountains of Samaria*. See color map 1. From these mountains, one can see the entire city. A measure of God's disgust with Samaria is that He threatened to assemble Ashdod and Egypt on the surrounding peaks to act as witnesses of the rampant injustice and oppression being perpetuated therein. *oppressed*. Innocent and the poor were regularly denied justice, as Amos emphasizes (2:6–7; 5:11–12; 8:4–6).

AMOS—NOTE ON 3:11 *surround the land*. Enemies lay siege. Israel's impending punishment is thus revealed as coming in the form of a military campaign. There will be a prolonged assault, followed by looting and plundering.

AMOS—NOTE ON 3:12 *As the shepherd rescues*. In reporting a sheep killed by wild beasts, a shepherd would often produce the victim's remains as proof of what happened (cf Gn 31:39). So also the remnant of Israel will similarly be a small and mangled portion of the whole after its enemies lay waste and carry away the people in exile. *corner of a couch and part of a bed*. The once mighty house of Israel is being reduced to a few scraps of furniture.
AMOS—NOTE ON 3:13 *God of hosts*. See p 1291. *hosts*. Describes not only the angelic armies but also the heavenly council. Just as the heavenly hosts hear the Lord's words being pronounced in heaven above, so also these same utterances are delivered on earth by God's servants, the prophets (cf Is 6:1–8; 1Ki 22:19–23).
AMOS—NOTE ON 3:14 *punish the altars*. Syncretistic shrines of Israel would be destroyed. See note, 2:8. *Bethel*. C 10 mi N of Jerusalem. See color map 1. One of the main sites of unauthorized worship in Israel. Such shrines were built and supported by the king of the breakaway northern tribes and, as such, were illegitimate. Abraham and Jacob had built altars and worshiped at Bethel much earlier (Gn 12:8; 28:18–22; 35:9–15). But by the time of Amos, the Jerusalem temple was the place that faithful Israelites were expected to worship. *horns*. Altars at Bethel resembled those of the tabernacle. See note, Ex 27:2. Cutting off the horns would render it useless for sacrifice and for protection (cf 1Ki 1:50; 2:28). See "horn," p 842.
AMOS—NOTE ON 3:15 *winter house … summer house*. This list of houses—one for every season, each in its own opulent style—emphasizes Israel's indulgent prosperity. However, many of these mansions were built upon the oppression of the innocent and the poor. Destruction of the altar at Bethel (v 14) would then engulf the homes of the wealthy. In that fashion, judgment would come upon temple as well as home, against Israel's religious and economic life. *houses of ivory*. Phoenician low-relief carved plaques were used to decorate furnishings and other features of a home. The Phoenician artistic style had great influence on Israelite architecture and design, as archaeology and Scripture testify. See note, 1Ki 10:18. See p 544.
AMOS—NOTE ON 4:1 *cows of Bashan*. Because their appetites are insatiable, prominent women of Samaria are likened to fat cows. Bashan was a fertile plain known for its rich pasture and large, healthy livestock (cf Dt 32:14). See color map 2. *say to your husbands*. Rich women goaded

their husbands to acquire more, even at the expense and suffering of the poor.

AMOS—NOTE ON 4:2 *sworn*. God has issued His verdict in the form of a legal oath, swearing by the highest referent possible, His own holiness (cf Heb 6:13). See note, Nu 30:2. *hooks … fishhooks*. Slaves and prisoners were hooked in order to control them.

AMOS—NOTE ON 4:3 *breaches*. Fortress walls will be breached, and lines of prisoners will march out. *Harmon*. Possibly Mount Hermon in Bashan. See color map 2.

AMOS—NOTE ON 4:4–5 Sarcasm; sacrifices rightfully belonged to the Lord at His altar in Jerusalem. Amos heightens this sarcasm by urging the people to sacrifice more frequently, "every morning" and "every three days."

AMOS—NOTE ON 4:4 *Bethel*. See note, 3:14. *Gilgal*. North of Jericho. One of the main sanctuaries for northern Israel; location of idolatry and syncretism. See color map 1.

AMOS—NOTE ON 3:1–4:5 Because Israel has completely abandoned the covenant—through worshiping idols, perpetrating injustice, and showing indifference to the poor—the Lord threatens to allow an invading enemy to wreak havoc on the land. Wealth, compromise of confession, and indifference to suffering tempt the "new Israel," the Church, still today. Recognizing such failures in ourselves should move us to repentance and increased gratitude for Christ, who was rich, yet became poor for our sakes, so that through His poverty we might become eternally rich (2Co 8:9). • Walk with us, O Lord. Abide with us, and restore us according to Your favor. Amen.

AMOS—NOTE ON 4:6 *cleanness of teeth*. Hunger and famine make an empty mouth. *return to Me*. In repentance. See p 1080. This phrase is repeated five times in vv 6–11. Afflictions sent by the Lord were intended to make Israel despair, so that out of their misery they would return to their covenant God, who abounds in compassion, forgiveness, and salvation (Ex 34:6–7).

AMOS—NOTE ON 4:7 *months to the harvest*. Withholding the latter rains (those coming in Mar/Apr) inevitably resulted in a massive crop failure by the harvest season (May). See calendar, p 262.

AMOS—NOTE ON 4:9 *blight and mildew*. These diseases destroyed both garden and vineyard. Crop devastations were evidence that Israel had

broken the covenant and forfeited the Lord's care and blessing. Cf Solomon's prayer, 1Ki 8:37–40. Since Israel has forsaken the Jerusalem temple, Solomon's petition had fallen on deaf ears.
AMOS—NOTE ON 4:10 *pestilence*. See notes, Dt 28:60–61; Ps 91:3. *horses*. Signs of military strength are removed. *stench of your camp*. Unbearable smell of unburied corpses.
AMOS—NOTE ON 4:11 *some of you*. Afflictions, plagues, warfare, and death described here are doled out selectively. Yet even those preserved from sickness and death will fail to recognize God's judgment in the afflictions and will not return to Him. *Sodom and Gomorrah*. Two cities near the Salt Sea, destroyed for their evil at the time of Abraham and Lot (Gn 19:23–28); prototypical examples of God's wrath and judgment. See map, p 33. *as a brand*. Snatched from total destruction. They should not feel vindicated but should seriously consider what consequences might follow if they continue despising the Lord.
AMOS—NOTE ON 4:12 *meet your God*. A day of judgment looms. God met with Israel at Sinai amid such terrifying sights and sounds that the people begged to be spared hearing the thunder of God's voice and beholding the brilliance of His nearby presence (Ex 20:18–21). And that was when God was giving the covenant, not calling people to account for breaking it!
AMOS—NOTE ON 4:13 Doxology of judgment. *morning darkness*. Deepest darkness is said to come just before dawn breaks. As Creator and Sustainer of all things, the Lord is responsible for both the brilliance of the noontime sun and for the deepest darkness of the night. Gr Naz: "The Word [of creation] was given once, but the Action is continuous even now" (*NPNF* 2 7:313). *God of hosts*. See p 1291.
AMOS—NOTE ON 4:6–13 Amos intersperses vivid descriptions of divine judgment with the divine lament "yet you did not return to Me." God's reasons for allowing calamities to enter our lives are ultimately good, but people nonetheless refuse to respond in humility and faith. True repentance is always His work, wrought through the Law. Forgiveness is His greatest work. Praise God that all sins, including our slowness to repent, are fully forgiven by Christ's sacrificial death. • Lord Jesus, we thank You for being our advocate with the Father. Because we are often intractably sinful, we are all the more grateful that You plead unceasingly for us in

heaven. Lead us to believe in and ever hold fast to the forgiveness You won for us. Amen.

AMOS—NOTE ON 5:1 *lamentation*. Hbr *qinah*, a rhythmic dirge (vv 1–3). Such songs of mourning were esp associated with death and were sometimes sung by professional mourners (v 16; Jer 9:17). Remarkably, Amos is mourning the death of his listeners themselves! By intoning this dirge in their hearing, the prophet effectively tells the people of the Northern Kingdom that their nation is doomed. *house of Israel*. Northern Kingdom.

AMOS—NOTE ON 5:2 *Fallen, no more to rise*. Assyrians will attack and finally conquer Israel in 722 BC. Once deported by the victors, the survivors of Israel will never return and thus become the famous 10 lost tribes of Israel. *virgin Israel*. Though the nation ought to be in the flower of its youth and vitality, it is destined to remain unfulfilled, separated from the bridegroom by tragedy.

AMOS—NOTE ON 5:3 *a thousand shall have a hundred left*. Israel will suffer overwhelming defeat and be left shattered. Here is the reason for the condition described in v 2. *house of Israel*. Phrase both begins and ends the dirge in vv 1–3, a device to round out the lament.

AMOS—NOTE ON 5:4 *Seek Me*. God's longing has been unfulfilled (4:6, 8, 10–11). See p 843. The Lord is long-suffering and compassionate (Ex 34:6; Ps 86:15). Whenever sin increases, His grace abounds all the more (Rm 5:20). Further tragedy can still be averted through repentance, which is why this refrain is repeated in vv 6, 14.

AMOS—NOTE ON 5:5 *Bethel … Gilgal … Beersheba*. Centers of blasphemous worship in Amos's day. See note, 3:14. Note also the literary arrangement: Bethel-Gilgal-Beersheba-Gilgal-Bethel. This chiasm emphasizes Bethel as a prime target of the Lord's wrath. See color map 1. *exile*. Israel would not go down to defeat while defending its borders. Rather, the people ended up fallen and forsaken on their own land (v 2), with the survivors shamefully deported to foreign lands.

AMOS—NOTE ON 5:6 *house of Joseph*. Northern Kingdom, Israel. See note, Zec 10:6. *devour*. Nothing will be able to extinguish the fiery judgment coming upon Israel, for it comes from the Lord Himself.

AMOS—NOTE ON 5:7 *wormwood*. Bitter plant with a repulsive taste. Accordingly, it represents sorrow (Pr 5:4; Lm 3:15). Once again, Amos rails

against the prevalent injustice of his day, esp the abuse of the poor (cf 2:7–8; 3:10; 4:1).
AMOS—NOTE ON 5:8–9 Doxology of judgment.
AMOS—NOTE ON 5:8 *made the Pleiades and Orion*. Pair of constellations. See note, Jb 38:31. *darkness … morning … calls for the waters*. The Lord governs light and darkness, creates the seas, and pours them out whenever He wishes. *the* LORD. See p 1227.
AMOS—NOTE ON 5:9 *flash forth*. As suddenly and powerfully as lightning bursts forth in the heavens, so also the Lord can send destruction against those who oppose Him and His will. Lightning was associated with God's holiness as revealed at Sinai (Ex 20:18)
AMOS—NOTE ON 5:10 *him who reproves in the gate*. See p 792. *abhor him who speaks the truth*. Dishonest oppressors naturally loathed those who dared contradict or expose them. Luth: "Wickedness cannot bear sound doctrine" (AE 18:161).
AMOS—NOTE ON 5:11 Note the change from the indefinite "They" in v 10 to the accusation "you" in vv 11–12—this becomes a pointed, personal rebuke. *taxes of grain*. Taxes were one way the poor were exploited rather than protected (cf Lv 25:35–37; Dt 23:19). *him*. The poor who actually worked the land. The unrighteous wealthy not only profited from their labor but also imposed unjust taxes on the poor. *houses of hewn stone*. Expensive homes, associated with royal households. However, Israel will not enjoy the fruit of these ill-gotten gains.
AMOS—NOTE ON 5:12 *needy in the gate*. The poor bring lawsuits in order to protect their rights and so secure justice. See p 792. Notice how vv 10–12 begin and end with references to legal proceedings at the city gate.
AMOS—NOTE ON 5:13 Unbridled wickedness forced the wise into resigned silence. Pressing for justice seemed futile and even dangerous.
AMOS—NOTE ON 5:14 *God of hosts*. See p 1291. This name becomes a refrain (vv 15–16), recurring twice more. *with you, as you have said*. During the days of the patriarchs, the Lord had made promises to be with people at both Beersheba (Gn 26:24; 46:1–4) and Bethel (Gn 28:15, 19). Incredibly, those showing utter contempt for the Lord and His covenant during Amos's time were still claiming this promise as their own.
AMOS—NOTE ON 5:15 *establish justice*. Stark contrast to what was happening in Israel. Notice the literary structure of vv 14–15: seek good, not evil/hate evil, love good. *remnant of Joseph*. These words look beyond

the impending destruction of the Northern Kingdom at the hands of the Assyrians and see that a faithful few will be preserved and restored, leaving a mere remnant. Cf Is 10:21–23. Amos's last oracle similarly speaks of God restoring the faithful remnant (9:11–15).

AMOS—NOTE ON 5:16 *God of hosts*. See note, v 14; see also p 1291. *squares*. City squares or plazas. Destruction and death will be felt throughout, even within the fortified cities. *farmers*. Rural areas will not be spared; the whole nation will be ruined. *lamentation*. Hbr *misped*, "beating the breast as a sign of grief, esp for the dead." Such outpouring will be heard everywhere and from everyone, from professional mourners to city dwellers to farmhands in the vineyards. Luth: "So great will the wretchedness be that there will be no one who is not sorry to be alive" (AE 18:163).

AMOS—NOTE ON 5:17 *pass through*. Echoes a portion of the Passover account, when the Lord "pass[ed] through the land of Egypt … strik[ing] all the firstborn" (Ex 12:12). Ironically, God was punishing Israel's enemy in Ex. God is now threatening to treat His own people as He once treated the Egyptians.

AMOS—NOTE ON 5:1–17 Amos sings a funeral dirge over impenitent Israel, for the Lord is soon to come in judgment against the nation for abandoning the covenant. The Lord's judgment still threatens all that would place anyone or anything above Him. At the same time, God remains merciful and long-suffering. He takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather wishes to see the wicked turn from his evil way and live (Ezk 33:11). • "Though great our sins, yet greater still Is God's abundant favor; His hand of mercy never will Abandon us, nor waver. Our shepherd good and true is He, Who will at last His Israel free From all their sin and sorrow." Amen. (*LSB* 607:5)

AMOS—NOTE ON 5:18 *the day of the* LORD*!* See p 1079. Likely refers to the day in which God will allow Israel's enemies to attack and destroy the northern tribes and then take them into exile. *darkness, and not light*. There will be disaster, not salvation, for Israel.

AMOS—NOTE ON 5:19 A pair of similes portrays things going from bad to worse, like "jumping out of the frying pan into the fire." Israel's condemnation is now inevitable.

AMOS—NOTE ON 5:20 *Is not …?* The expected affirmative answer to this rhetorical question reinforces the "woe" just pronounced in v 18. *darkness*

… *gloom*. See note, v 18. Repetition of "day of the LORD" and "darkness" leave no doubt about Israel's sad outcome.

AMOS—NOTE ON 5:21–23 Though Israel may continue to offer the worship described in these verses, it will do no good. Where simple justice and humility are lacking, even the most orthodox ritual and the finest of music is nothing more than a hypocritical sham. Luth: "The wicked do not please the Lord, regardless of how great and splendid their works may be" (AE 18:165).

AMOS—NOTE ON 5:21 *I hate, I despise*. Forceful denunciations of Israel's insincere worship. *feasts*. The three major festivals required by the Law were Passover, Pentecost, and Booths. See pp 200–201. *solemn assemblies*. Likely refers to the prayers and sacrifices offered on a daily and weekly basis.

AMOS—NOTE ON 5:22 The Lord rejects all sacrifices offered by those acting righteous but lacking a sincere faith. Cf Mi 6:6–8.

AMOS—NOTE ON 5:23 Israel's insincere religiosity and its consequent sham worship have become repugnant to God. The nation's supposedly sacred music is nothing more than noise to Him. Without a right relationship to the Lord, attempting to worship is futile.

AMOS—NOTE ON 5:24 *let justice roll down like waters*. God's people are to produce justice continually and swiftly, like the flow of a river. Just as plants and animals need a steady supply of water to survive, so also human communities can flourish only when justice and righteousness prevail. See "justice," p 842.

AMOS—NOTE ON 5:25 *sacrifices and offerings*. Sacrifice from Israel had never been the basis of its relationship to the Lord. From day one, God's chosen people enjoyed His gifts and protection as a free gift of His grace. See pp 170–71. *the forty years in the wilderness*. Only after Israel was delivered from Egypt and received the covenant did the people begin to offer God regular sacrifices. Amos insists repentance and a right relationship with God are the only basis for worship.

AMOS—NOTE ON 5:26 *Sikkuth … Kiyyun your star-god*. Deities of Mesopotamia. What folly to worship an imaginary star-god rather than the Creator of "the Pleiades and Orion" (v 8). Note further that Amos alludes to the practice of carrying these deities aloft while marching in religious procession. The punishment for such pagan practice will fit the crime, when Israel is forced to march "into exile beyond Damascus" (v 27).

AMOS—NOTE ON 5:27 *beyond Damascus*. God's long-suffering is coming to an end. He will send Israel into exile in a foreign land, never to return. This prediction was fulfilled by the Assyrians (2Ki 17:1–23) in 722 BC. *God of hosts*. See p 1291. Name appears repeatedly in this chapter (vv 14–16).

AMOS—NOTE ON 5:18–27 The people of Israel are living under the delusion that their prosperity is a sign of God's approval and that their perfunctory offering of sacrifices is keeping the Lord satisfied, even though they act unjustly and honor other gods. But God's first expectation has ever been and will always be "You shall have no other gods before Me" (Ex 20:3). Amos teaches us that grace and faith are the true basis for worship and a right relationship to the Lord. His invitation ever stands: "Come to Me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Mt 11:28).
• Lord God, roll down justice and mercy upon us through the righteous sacrifice offered by Your Son for our forgiveness. Amen.

AMOS—NOTE ON 6:1 *Zion*. Hill on which the Jerusalem temple stood. Here, it stands for the whole Southern Kingdom. See p 844. *Samaria*. Capital of Israel. Here, it stands for the whole Northern Kingdom. *notable men*. Those to whom the people came for advice, leadership, and an example to follow. It is doubtful that they were advising as they ought, i.e., the nation needed to heed Amos's warnings and repent.

AMOS—NOTE ON 6:2–3 *Calneh … Hamath … Gath*. If these three powerful city-states suffered military incursions and defeat, how can Israel expect to be spared the same fate, since by then they were hardly in a better position? See map, p 534. *Calneh*. Syrian city north of the bend in the Orontes River. *Hamath*. Important Syrian city north of Damascus. *Gath*. One of five royal cities of the Philistines on the coastal plain west of Judah.

AMOS—NOTE ON 6:3 *the seat of violence?* Amos repeats his charge about Israel's pervasive injustice and their oppression of the poor (e.g., 2:6–7; 5:11–12; 8:4–6). As a result of their callous and even brutal behavior, Israel's leaders will bear a special responsibility for precipitating the very disaster they claim will never occur.

AMOS—NOTE ON 6:4 *beds of ivory*. Symbols of luxury. Numerous pieces of furniture inlaid with ivory in the Phoenician style have been unearthed in Israel. See note, 3:15.*eat lambs … and calves*. Choicest meat, normally eaten only at feasts. See p 236. Extravagance points to misplaced priorities and hearts far more concerned with opulence than righteousness. Luth:

"The Lord is not condemning the possession of wealth but the misuse thereof" (AE 18:170).
AMOS—NOTE ON 6:5 *idle songs*. The idle rich frittered away their days singing and making merry. *like David invent*. An ironic comparison, since David was renowned for his contributions to sacred music, i.e., the compositions he dedicated to the Lord and the provisions he made for the temple worship (1Ch 23:5; 2Ch 29:25–26).
AMOS—NOTE ON 6:6 *wine in bowls*. Not just cups, but bowls of wine were consumed (see note, v 4). Bowls mentioned here were used in the temple for sprinkling sacrificial blood on the altar, which implies abuse by the priests or Levites. *anoint themselves*. Hbr *mashach*, associated with ritual anointing. Hedonistic excesses were ironically dressed up in religious garb. *ruin of Joseph!* Because of their misplaced priorities, the rich pamper and indulge themselves while ignoring the spiritual depravity and impending destruction of their nation. See note, 5:6.
AMOS—NOTE ON 6:7 *first … into exile*. Additional irony. The rich, whose attitude was famously "me first," will have the distinction of being punished first. They will be at the head of the column of deportees, leading the march into exile. *revelry*. Near Eastern version of a drinking party (compare to Gk *symposium*). Cf Jer 16:5, which describes a funeral. Such gatherings were associated with the cult of the dead in other cultures. *stretch themselves out*. This opulent class, though at ease and seemingly without a care in the world, will soon stop its partying.
AMOS—NOTE ON 6:8 *has sworn*. See note, 4:2. *God of hosts*. See p 1291. *abhor … hate*. Because Israel's "strongholds" have become a symbol of the people's prideful self-sufficiency, the Lord is revolted by them.
AMOS—NOTE ON 6:9 *they shall die*. Impending disaster will be unprecedented. No one will escape unscathed.
AMOS—NOTE ON 6:10 *relative … who anoints*. A family member comes to empty the house of its dead because none at the house are able or willing to perform the duties of burial. *innermost parts*. Back room of a pillared house, dark and good for hiding. *still anyone with you?* So many have died that the burying relative has lost track. *Silence!* Rather than invoking God's name in prayer (as we respond, "Oh, my God" when surprised), they are afraid to speak it, knowing God has brought the punishment. *the LORD*. See p 1227.

AMOS—NOTE ON 6:11 *great house … little house*. Neither rich nor poor will be spared. Significantly, Amos repeats why this all-encompassing tragedy came: fed up with Israel's apostasy, the Lord has commanded this destruction.
AMOS—NOTE ON 6:12 *Do horses … oxen?* Absurd rhetorical questions. Israel's injustice and unrighteousness are so extreme they go against nature. *justice into poison … righteousness into wormwood*. Israel's wickedness is so perverse that it unnaturally corrupts what is good. *wormwood*. See note, 5:7.
AMOS—NOTE ON 6:13 *Lo-debar*. Ammonite city in northern Gilead. See ESV note. Sarcastic wordplay; vanity of Israel is such that they rejoice at nothingness. *Karnaim*. Aramean city north and east of Lo-debar. Also wordplay; lit, "two horns"; symbolically represents military might. Amos criticizes Israel for placing its trust in human strength rather than in God.
AMOS—NOTE ON 6:14 *I will raise up*. For the third time, the Lord repeats that Israel's crushing defeat is in accord with His plan (vv 8, 11). *God of hosts*. See p 1291. *Lebo-hamath*. City in northern Lebanon, beyond Israel's northern border. *Brook of the Arabah*. Lower border of Northern Kingdom, not far from northern end of the Salt Sea. By means of these geographical references, Amos conveys yet another way that the impending devastation will be all-encompassing.

AMOS—NOTE ON **Ch 6** Many in Israel made pampering themselves a full-time occupation, smugly imagining that material wealth was clear-cut proof that they were right with God. People today make the same mistake, interpreting their material prosperity as a sign that they need not humble themselves and turn away from complacency. However, God desires to give Himself to us. This is why His Son became incarnate for us and for our salvation. • Keep us, dear heavenly Father, from greed and sinful presumption upon Your grace. Lead us to humbly repent of all our sins and to set our hearts on Your Son, Jesus, whose blood cleanses us of all sin and restores us to eternal fellowship with You. Amen.
AMOS—NOTE ON 7:1 *He was forming locusts*. Description of a vision, a direct revelation from the Lord. Amos was able to see exactly how the land would be judged. *latter growth*. Crops brought forth by late spring rains. Amos saw that an agricultural catastrophe was in the offing, since both the early grain crop (then maturing) and the second crop (just sprouting) would be destroyed by the locust swarm (see note, Jl 1:4). *king's mowings*. The

king had already exercised his royal prerogative of taking the first reaping. Consequently, nothing was left for the people but famine.
AMOS—NOTE ON 7:2 *He is so small!* Amos earnestly intercedes for Israel, pleading that the nation is too weak and poor to survive such a crop failure. This is ironic, since the prophet also criticized the people for their greed and materialism (e.g., 4:1; 6:4–7). The only hope that Amos's appeal might succeed is God's compassionate nature (Ex 34:6–7). Cf Gn 18:22–33.
AMOS—NOTE ON 7:3 *relented*. See note, Jnh 3:10. See p 1079. Remarkably, the Lord answers the prophet's intercessory prayer by agreeing to spare Israel. *It shall not be*. History shows that Israel's punishment was postponed rather than forever averted. Sadly, the people's obstinacy eventually did them in (2Ki 17:6–18).
AMOS—NOTE ON 7:4 *devoured the great deep*. The Lord's smoldering anger was ready to send an even more severe judgment, a fire so intense that it would scorch everything, even drying up the subterranean springs. Cf Dt 32:22; Am 1:4, 7, 10, 12, 14; 2:2, 5.
AMOS—NOTE ON 7:5 *please cease!* Intercession echoing that described in v 2. Previously, a reprieve was given (v 3). However, the people's sinfulness forced Amos to appeal to the Lord's mercy again, this time in order to stave off fiery judgment.
AMOS—NOTE ON 7:6 *relented*. See note, v 3; cf Jnh 3:9. See pp 1079–80.
AMOS—NOTE ON 7:7–8 *the Lord was standing*. The Lord revealed Himself to Amos in physical fashion during this series of visions. See p 39. *plumb line*. Builder's tool used to determine a straight, vertical line. In this comparison, the wall represents Israel. Though the Lord originally set up Israel to be right and true, the nation has become crooked and warped. Israel needs to be remeasured by the Lord's plumb line, since only then can things be set right. *pass by*. Though He has relented twice in the recent past (vv 3, 6), God's decree of punishment is now final. See note, 8:2.
AMOS—NOTE ON 7:9 *high places of Isaac*. Worship sites scattered around the Northern Kingdom. See p 526. *sanctuaries of Israel*. Likely references to Bethel and Dan. See notes, 3:14, 15; 4:4–5. Through Moses, the Lord had warned the people about the consequences of illicit worship (Lv 26:27–33). *the house of Jeroboam*. Prophecy reveals that the breakaway dynastic line of the Northern Kingdom would be ended by invading

enemies. Historically, this was fulfilled when Zechariah, son of Jeroboam II, was assassinated.

AMOS—NOTE ON 7:1–9 By means of symbolic visions involving locusts, fire, and a plumb line, the Lord warns His people that He will punish their apostasy. However, these visions, Amos's repeated intercessions on behalf of the people, and God's forbearance did not result in repentance. People today are just as slow to heed God's Word and are equally intractable in their bad behavior. We, too, would be irretrievably lost and eternally condemned were it not for Christ and His forgiveness. • "Grant us, O Father, that we may also be Your heavenly children. Teach us to think only of our souls and of our heavenly inheritance that our temporal fatherland and earthly lot may not deceive, hold, and hinder us or turn us altogether into children of this world, that we may say with a good and real reason, 'Our *heavenly* Father,' and may truly be Your heavenly children. Amen." (Luth, *TLWA*, p 294)

AMOS—NOTE ON 7:10 *Amaziah*. Priest of Jeroboam's sanctuary at Bethel. *priest of Bethel*. See notes, 3:14, 15; 4:4–5. This expression was found on a seal from a temple to Yahweh at Dor. *conspired*. Amaziah charges Amos with inciting insurrection and so overthrowing the dynasty ruling Israel. Apparently, Amos's message was getting through, for Amaziah protests that the land "is not able to bear all his words."

AMOS—NOTE ON 7:11 *Jeroboam shall die by the sword*. Amaziah probably refers to the oracle appearing in v 9. *exile*. Amos clearly threatened the nation with this punishment many times (4:2–3; 5:5, 26–27; 6:7; 9:4).

AMOS—NOTE ON 7:12 *seer*. Underlines the visionary nature of the oracles in vv 7–9. By calling Amos a "seer," Amaziah implicitly recognizes his prophetic gift. See note, 1Sm 9:9. *flee away to … Judah*. Amaziah indirectly threatens Amos by commanding him to go back to where he came from (cf 1:1).

AMOS—NOTE ON 7:13 *never again prophesy at Bethel*. Amaziah stops short of forbidding Amos from prophesying altogether. Instead, he forbids Amos from preaching in territories ruled by Jeroboam; he cannot deny that Amos is a true prophet (see note, v 12). *a temple of the kingdom*. Amaziah makes Bethel the "king's sanctuary" rather than the Lord's house.

AMOS—NOTE ON 7:14 *no prophet*. Amos became a prophet in the same way as so many others—apart from his own initiative or will. Many of

Israel's prophets resisted and tried to get out of their calls when the Lord unexpectedly came to them with a charge for mission (Ex 3:1–4:17; Is 6:1–7; Jer 1:4–10; Jnh 1:1–3). The OT contains no account about a true prophet taking the task upon himself. Gr Naz: "None can see or enter into the Kingdom, except he be born again of the Spirit, and be cleansed from the first birth … by which every one singly is created anew. This Spirit, for He is most wise and most loving, if He takes possession of a shepherd makes him a Psalmist … if he possess a goatherd[er] and scraper of sycamore fruit, He makes him a Prophet" (*NPNF* 2 7:384). *dresser of sycamore figs*. Amos readily admits he was not originally a prophet, nor did he come from a family or school of prophets (cf 1Sm 19:19–24; 2Ki 2:1–22). Rather, he engaged in an agricultural vocation, both as a herdsman and as one who scraped the fruit of fig trees in order to hasten their ripening (still practiced today).

AMOS—NOTE ON 7:15 *the* LORD *took me*. Cf 2Sm 7:8, David's call. *Go, prophesy*. Like David, Amos was commanded to leave one flock (his family's herd) and tend another (God's people, Israel).

AMOS—NOTE ON 7:16 *Do not prophesy … do not preach*. Notice the contrast in the twin commands spoken by Amaziah in v 12 and the Lord in vv 15–16. Amos wisely follows the divine imperative.

AMOS—NOTE ON 7:17 *wife … prostitute … daughters shall fall by the sword*. Amos responds to Amaziah's command that he stop prophesying by making some of his most horrifying predictions. Wives will be forced into prostitution, and Israel's children will be killed by merciless enemies. This prediction was fulfilled when the Assyrians invaded. *measuring line*. Assyrians would take possession of Israel's land and parcel it out as they saw fit. *unclean land*. Amaziah (and the people he represents) face a bleak future in exile. See p 300.

AMOS—NOTE ON 7:10–17 When Amaziah the priest rebukes Amos and orders him out of Israel, the prophet responds by uttering some of his most chilling words of judgment. Amos does so with good reason for, on top of all their other sins, the people of Israel have now dared to openly despise the prophetic word even as it is being spoken to them. This scenario reminds us just how dangerous it is to ignore God's Word and to defy those sent to call us to repentance. Though guilty ourselves of similar failings, we take comfort in Christ's loyalty and unbounded forgiveness. His death has paid the debt of our rebellion, and His resurrection assures us that even as

He lives, so also shall we. • Lord, we know that we should fear and love You so that we do not despise preaching and Your Word, but hold it sacred and gladly hear and learn it. For Jesus' sake, open our hearts and move our wills to do this, dear heavenly Father. Amen.

AMOS—NOTE ON 8:1 Amos continues to report his visions despite Amaziah's attempt to silence him. *summer fruit*. Likely figs, one of Israel's most important fruits, harvested in Aug/Sept. See note, v 2; see also calendar, p 262.

AMOS—NOTE ON 8:2 *The end*. Wordplay; Hbr for "figs" sounds like the word for "end." The harvest serves as a metaphor for death and/or judgment (cf Jl 3:12–13; Mt 13:30, 39; Rv 14:14–16). Simply put, Israel is threatened with being plucked, thrown into a basket, and devoured by Assyria. *pass by*. The curses threatened in the covenant for abandoning the Lord (Dt 28:15–18) will soon begin to materialize. See note, 7:7–8.

AMOS—NOTE ON 8:3 Songs of idolatrous worship will become wailing lamentation when the carnage begins. Corpses will be strewn everywhere. *Silence!* A typical reaction when God confronts people with their sinfulness. See note, 6:10; cf Ps 107:42; Rm 3:19.

AMOS—NOTE ON 8:4–6 Another list of specific ways that the people—esp the wealthy—pervert justice and oppress the poor. Amos levels similar charges in 2:6–7; 5:11–12.

AMOS—NOTE ON 8:4 *trample on the needy … the poor*. Cf 2:7. A refrain in Amos's prophecy. The covenant stipulated a very different treatment of the poor (Dt 15:7–11).

AMOS—NOTE ON 8:5 People obviously did not have their hearts in worship. *new moon*. First day of the lunar month was a regular festival. *Sabbath*. Cf Ex 20:11; see pp 200–201. *false balances*. To make matters worse, these people habitually defrauded unsuspecting customers with dishonest weights, measures, and scales (Lv 19:35–36; Dt 25:13–15).

AMOS—NOTE ON 8:6 *buy the poor … needy*. Some in Israel stooped to trafficking in slave trade. *sell the chaff of the wheat?* Some merchants were taking sweepings off the threshing floor and mixing them in with the grain in order to "bulk up" their bags of wheat. Beyond the dishonesty and price inflation involved, this was also an unhealthy practice.

AMOS—NOTE ON 8:7 *pride of Jacob*. Land of Israel. Amos elsewhere depicts the Lord swearing by His holiness (4:2) and Himself (6:8). Swearing by a corrupt and idolatrous land is highly ironic.

AMOS—NOTE ON 8:8 *rise like the Nile*. Famous for overflowing its banks in the spring and then steadily receding, the Nile is a simile for how the invading Assyrians would flood Israel and then eventually depart, leaving nothing but debris and stench in their wake.
AMOS—NOTE ON 8:9 *on that day*. The day of the Lord. See notes, 5:18, 20; see also p 1079. *the sun go down at noon*. Eclipses and darkness are often mentioned in connection with the Lord's judgment and the Last Day (Is 13:10; Jl 2:10; Zep 1:15; cf Lk 23:44–45), when the entire created order will manifest the Creator's outpoured wrath.
AMOS—NOTE ON 8:10 *feasts into mourning*. Singing and rejoicing of religious celebration would give way to outpourings of grief and sorrow. *sackcloth … baldness*. In ancient Israel, putting on sackcloth and shaving one's head showed that one was undergoing a period of mourning (see note, Jb 16:15; cf Is 15:2–3; 22:12; Jer 48:37). *an only son*. Children, esp males, not only embodied a family's aspirations but also helped provide for their parents in old age. Accordingly, the death of an only son constituted one of the greatest and most grievous of all misfortunes, truly "a bitter day."
AMOS—NOTE ON 8:11 *famine … of hearing the words*. Because the people have rejected and despised God's Word, and even forbidden His prophets from prophesying (2:12; 7:12–13), they will soon receive their just deserts—the Lord will no longer provide "the bread of life," His life-sustaining Gospel (cf Dt 8:3; Jn 4:10, 14; 6:35). Gr Naz: "[Basil] provided the nourishment of the Word … in rich abundance to the relief not of a famine of bread, nor of a thirst for water, but a longing for that Word which is really lifegiving and nourishing, and causes to grow to spiritual manhood him who is duly fed thereon" (*NPNF* 2 7:407–8). Luth: "For when the Word has been taken away, what else remains but the most terrible darkness of human reason which wants to be our mistress and which can teach nothing else than the doctrines of the demons? … There is no light except through faith in the Word" (AE 18:183). See pp 1081–83.
AMOS—NOTE ON 8:12 w*ander … run … seek*. Desperate but futile search for divine guidance. They will find no word of comfort or consolation.
AMOS—NOTE ON 8:13 *lovely virgins and the young men*. Coming judgment will be so severe that even those in the prime of life will perish. *faint for thirst*. Apparently recalls the drought threatened in 7:4.

AMOS—NOTE ON 8:14 *Guilt of Samaria*. Idolatrous worship of the golden calves at Bethel (see note, 3:14; cf Hos 8:5–6). See color map 1. *Dan*. Territory of Dan was also home to some of Israel's apostasy. Cf Jgs 18. *As the Way of Beersheba lives*. See note, 5:5. Oath for false gods and evil practices of Beersheba. A horned, cut-stone altar was discovered there at a "high place" or shrine. See note, Ex 27:2.

AMOS—NOTE ON **Ch 8** Amos's vision of the basket of summer fruit points to the Lord's judgment, which will soon cut down the people of Israel for their idolatrous worship, their greed, and their callous mistreatment of their brethren. If we persist in doing evil and despising God's graciousness, we will receive the same reward—punishment from God and eternal separation from His life-giving Word. Treasure the Word! Our God is gracious and continually stands ready to receive the repentant heart and lift it up with His Word of forgiveness and peace in Jesus. • Lord, Your Word assures me that You will not despise a broken and contrite heart (Ps 51:17). Therefore, graciously receive my confession, and cover me with the forgiveness of Him who died and rose again. Amen.

AMOS—NOTE ON 9:1 *the Lord standing beside the altar*. Not only evokes a portion of a previous oracle (in 7:7) but, more important, sets the stage for Amos's climactic fifth vision. *Strike the capitals … thresholds*. The Lord will shake Israel's illicit shrines to their very foundations. Their pillars would fall, and then the entire structures would collapse, killing the priests and worshipers. *capitals*. Knobs at the tops of pillars holding up the roof of the shrine. *thresholds*. Foundation stones beneath the pillars. *not one of them shall escape*. Those fleeing the temple's collapse will be killed with the sword.

AMOS—NOTE ON 9:2 *Sheol … heaven*. Neither the deepest depth (see p 792) nor the highest height will provide a place of refuge. When God pours out His wrath, there is no place to hide (cf 2:14–16; Dt 32:22).

AMOS—NOTE ON 9:3 *serpent*. Sea monster with a deadly bite stands ready to serve as God's servant of destruction (Ps 74:13–14; Is 27:1).

AMOS—NOTE ON 9:4 *if they go into captivity*. Even exile in a foreign land will not provide an escape, for the Lord is ruler over all. *fix My eyes upon them for evil*. Usually, God "fixes" His eyes on His people in order to show favor (Ps 33:18; Jer 24:6; cf Gn 44:21). Here, however, this expression serves to convey the certainty of Israel's punishment.

AMOS—NOTE ON 9:5–6 Last of Amos's three hymnic doxologies of judgment. It begins and ends with God's personal name, Yahweh. See p 1227; see also note, Ex 3:14.
AMOS—NOTE ON 9:5 *Lord God of hosts*. See note, 3:13; see also p 1291. As Creator and Ruler of all, the Lord has more than sufficient power to carry out His threats, for He controls nature and guides human events. Accordingly, the Assyrians will soon accomplish God's purpose, albeit unwittingly, when they come and destroy the northern tribes. *like the Nile*. See note, 8:8.
AMOS—NOTE ON 9:6 *upper chambers in the heavens … His vault upon the earth*. Cosmic imagery emphasizes that God is Creator and Sustainer of all things. As Lord of the universe, nothing can escape His judgment (vv 1–4). Ter: "Christ has prepared for us this ascension into heaven" (*ANF* 3:462). *pours them out*. May refer to the great flood (Gn 6:9–9:17). Just as there was no escaping God's judgment in Noah's day, so also it shall be when a flood of Assyrian soldiers overwhelms the land (see note, 8:8).
AMOS—NOTE ON 9:7 Rhetorical questions. The Lord denies that apostate Israel enjoys a position of privilege before Him. By abandoning the covenant, the people have become no better than the Cushites, i.e., descendants of wicked Ham and brothers of the accursed Canaanites (Gn 9:18–25; 10:6). Tragically, most from the northern tribes would lose their privileged covenantal status. *Caphtor*. Likely modern Crete. See map, p 1396.
AMOS—NOTE ON 9:8 *sinful kingdom … I will destroy*. All that the Lord now sees in Israel is a wicked nation; they will be punished. *I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob*. Yet there is still a word of hope. Since God is just, a faithful remnant will be spared. The messianic line will continue, and people will be saved through Christ. Cf Lv 26:44; Dt 4:31. On the remnant theme in the prophetic writings, cf Is 10:22; 11:1–2, 11; 37:30–32. See also p 1079.
AMOS—NOTE ON 9:9 *as one shakes with a sieve*. Continues remnant motif of v 8. God will separate the good from the bad. The evil will be punished with death, while the faithful remnant will be preserved for life. *sieve*. Constructed from a punctured copper bowl or from a screen made with plant fibers.
AMOS—NOTE ON 9:10 *sinners*. All those doing evil will perish. The final sentence of the vision states Israel's denial.

AMOS—NOTE ON 9:1–10 In his fifth and final vision report, Amos makes two main points: (1) Because Israel has abandoned the covenant, it has forfeited its claim to a privileged status before God. Thus the nation will be destroyed, leaving only a tiny remnant. If you insist on living life on your own terms, arrogantly spurning God's will for your life, you will face judgment. (2) Yet the Lord provides a means of escape: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1Jn 1:9). • "Have mercy on me, O God, according to Your steadfast love; according to Your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin!" (Ps 51:1–2). We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

AMOS—NOTE ON 9:11 *I will raise up … repair its breaches*. Amos characterizes the royal house of David as having fallen into a weak and decrepit state. Yet the Lord promises to restore its fortunes for the sake of the covenant made with David (2Sm 7:8–16). This restoration of David's line finds its fulfillment in the advent of Jesus, the Messiah and Son of David. Luth: "This is the kingdom of David, from which the Messiah was to rule. … It had fallen, it had been broken. But when Christ came, it was revived" (AE 18:189). *booth*. Hbr *sukkah*, a temporary dwelling, a lowly hut.

AMOS—NOTE ON 9:12 *remnant of Edom*. Edomites were some of Israel's most ancient and hated enemies (see notes, 1:6, 11). Nevertheless, the Lord promises that a remnant of Edom, along with peoples of all nations, will be made part of the restored Davidic kingdom. Then the greatest promise made to Abraham would be fulfilled: through his offspring (Jesus), "all the families of the earth shall be blessed" (Gn 12:3). *called by My name*. In Christ, believers from every nation are freely granted the honor of being called by the Lord's name. In this connection, note how James uses this passage to prove that all people shall be welcomed into the Church through Baptism and faith in Jesus, without any need for circumcision and the observance of similar rite (Ac 15:1–35, esp 16–17). See "name," p 843.

AMOS—NOTE ON 9:13 *overtake*. Promised restoration will be so abundant that there will be no breaks in the plowing-seeding-reaping work cycle. *drip sweet wine*. Hyperbole. The blessings of the messianic kingdom will be overflowing (cf Mi 4:4).

AMOS—NOTE ON 9:14 *I will restore the fortunes*. God will reverse to well-being all that was destroyed. Thus, people will rebuild and dwell (cf 3:15; 5:11; 6:11), plant and drink (cf 4:9; 5:11), cultivate and eat (4:9). After the Messiah's advent, nations wasting away in unbelief, superstition, and wickedness will be "rebuilt" by the preaching of good news (Is 55:1–5; Zec 9:9–10), thus fulfilling the restoration promised here (cf Dt 30:3–5).

AMOS—NOTE ON 9:15 *never again be uprooted*. God's restored people are given another promise—they will dwell securely. This pledge constitutes a reversal of the threats appearing in 5:2, 27; 7:17. Those called into relationship with the Messiah will be "the planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified" (Is 61:3). Cf Jn 10:27–30; Rm 8:31–39; Php 1:6.

AMOS—NOTE ON 9:11–15 Following many oracles and visions threatening judgment, Amos's prophecy unexpectedly ends with a word of hope. A day of rich blessing is coming, for the Lord will fulfill His covenant promises, bring about restoration, and establish the eternal kingdom of His Messiah. If it is perilous to despise God's threats of judgment and punishment, as did the people of Amos's day, it is even more foolhardy to refuse such gracious promises as Jn 3:16. • "Blessed Lord, You have caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning. Grant that we may so hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them that, by patience and comfort of Your holy Word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, our Lord." Amen. (*LSB*, p 308)

Obadiah

Obadiah 1

- Introduction to Obadiah
  - Overview
  - Reading Obadiah
  - Luther on Obadiah
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

1 [1] The vision of Obadiah.

Edom Will Be Humbled

Thus says the Lord God concerning Edom:
We have heard a report from the Lord,
and a messenger has been sent among the nations:
"Rise up! Let us rise against her for battle!"
2† Behold, I will make you small among the nations;
you shall be utterly despised.[1]
3† The pride of your heart has deceived you,
you who live in the clefts of the rock,[2]
in your lofty dwelling,
who say in your heart,
"Who will bring me down to the ground?"
4† Though you soar aloft like the eagle,
though your nest is set among the stars,
from there I will bring you down,
declares the Lord.

5† If thieves came to you,
if plunderers came by night—
how you have been destroyed!—
would they not steal only enough for themselves?

If grape gatherers came to you,
would they not leave gleanings?
6† How Esau has been pillaged,
his treasures sought out!
7† All your allies have driven you to your border;
those at peace with you have deceived you;
they have prevailed against you;

those who eat your bread[3] have set a trap
beneath you—
you have[4] no understanding.

8 † Will I not on that day, declares the Lord,
destroy the wise men out of Edom,
and understanding out of Mount Esau?
9 † And your mighty men shall be dismayed,
O Teman,
so that every man from Mount Esau will be
cut off by slaughter.

Edom's Violence Against Jacob

10 Because of the violence done to your brother
Jacob,
shame shall cover you,
and you shall be cut off forever.
11 On the day that you stood aloof,
on the day that strangers carried off his
wealth
and foreigners entered his gates
and cast lots for Jerusalem,
you were like one of them.
12 But do not gloat over the day of your
brother
in the day of his misfortune;
do not rejoice over the people of
Judah
in the day of their ruin;
do not boast[1]
in the day of distress.
13 Do not enter the gate of my
people
in the day of their calamity;
do not gloat over his disaster
in the day of his calamity;
do not loot his wealth
in the day of his calamity.
14 Do not stand at the crossroads
to cut off his fugitives;
do not hand over his survivors
in the day of distress.

The Day of the Lord Is Near

15† For the day of the Lord is near upon all the
nations.
As you have done, it shall be done to you;
your deeds shall return on your own
head.
16† For as you have drunk on my holy
mountain,
so all the nations shall drink continually;
they shall drink and swallow,
and shall be as though they had never
been.
17† But in Mount Zion there shall be those who
escape,
and it shall be holy,
and the house of Jacob shall possess their own
possessions.
18† The house of Jacob shall be a fire,
and the house of Joseph a flame,
and the house of Esau stubble;
they shall burn them and consume them,
and there shall be no survivor for the house
of Esau,
for the Lord has spoken.

The Kingdom of the Lord

19 † Those of the Negeb shall possess Mount
Esau,
and those of the Shephelah shall
possess the land of the Philistines;
they shall possess the land of Ephraim and the
land of Samaria,
and Benjamin shall possess Gilead.
20 † The exiles of this host of the people of Israel
shall possess the land of the Canaanites as
far as Zarephath,
and the exiles of Jerusalem who are in Sepharad
shall possess the cities of the Negeb.
21 † Saviors shall go up to Mount Zion
to rule Mount Esau,
and the kingdom shall be the Lord's.

Obadiah

Overview

Author
Obadiah the prophet

Date
c 587–553 BC

Places
Judah; Shephelah; Negeb; Samaria; Gilead; Zarephath; Edom; Philistia; Sepharad

People
Messenger; foreigners; fugitives/exiles; saviors

Purpose
To decry the abuses of Edom against fugitives from Judah and to announce the restoration of God's people

Law Themes
Pride in security; pillaging; the day of the Lord; fire; exile

Gospel Themes
The day of the Lord; escape; the Lord's kingdom

Memory Verses
Retribution (v 15); the Lord's kingdom (v 21)

Introduction to Obadiah

Reading Obadiah

From the safety of a ruddy bluff, he surveys the desert floor, awaiting opportunity. At a great distance, he sees a line of travelers marching southward, wilting in the brutal summer heat. They have descended from the siege in Jerusalem, where Babylonian towers lifted warriors to the tops of the walls. As the walls came down, refugees poured forth. Though these refugees lacked provisions, they fled in any direction a break in the line of soldiers allowed.

The soaring “eagles” of Edom—likely black, bearded, or griffon vultures—properly represented Edom’s soldiers for the prophet Obadiah. Like vultures, the Edomites preyed upon the desperate Judeans who fled from Jerusalem. And even though the Edomites dwelt securely in their rocky kingdom, carved into the cliffs of Mount Seir, the Lord’s judgment would reach them, and He would rule over them.

Luther on Obadiah

Obadiah does not specify the time when he lived. However his prophecy applies to the time of the Babylonian captivity, for he comforts the people of Judah that they shall return to Zion.

His prophecy is directed especially against Edom, or Esau, which bore a special and everlasting hatred against the people of Israel and Judah, as usually happens when friends turn against each other; especially when brothers fall into hatred and hostility against each other, such hostility knows no measure.

So here the Edomites hated the Jewish people beyond all measure, and had no greater joy
than to see the captivity of the Jews, boasting and mocking them in their misery and wretchedness. Almost all the prophets denounced the Edomites because of their hateful wickedness. Even Psalm 137[:7] complains of them and says, "Remember, O Lord, against the Edomites the day of Jerusalem, how they said, 'Rase it, rase it! Down to its foundations!' "

This hurts beyond measure when men mock and laugh at those who are wretched and troubled, defying them and boasting against them. It constitutes a great and strong assault [*Anfechtung*] upon their faith in God and a powerful incentive to despair and unbelief. Therefore God here appoints a special prophet against such vexatious mockers and tempters, and comforts those who are troubled, strengthening their faith with threats and denunciations against such hostile Edomites—those who mock the wretched—and with promises and assurances of future help and rescue. In such distress this is truly a needed comfort, and [the one who brings it] a veritable Obadiah.

At the end he prophesies of Christ's kingdom, that it shall not be at Jerusalem only, but everywhere. For he mixes all the nations together, Ephraim, Benjamin, Gilead, the Philistines, the Canaanites, Zarephath. This cannot be understood to refer to the temporal kingdom of Israel, for according to the law of Moses these tribes and people had to remain separate and distinct in the land. (AE 35:321–22)

For more of Luther's insights on this Book, see *Lectures on Obadiah* (AE 18:191–204).

Challenges for Readers

Date and Authorship. Obadiah is closely related to Jeremiah's oracle against Edom (cf Ob 1–6; Jer 49:9–10, 14–16; Ob 1 refers to "we" and "a messenger"). Obadiah may have modified Jeremiah's oracle for a specific use. This thematic and literary relationship helps us date Obadiah. The Book fits best in the first half of the exilic period, c 587–555 BC; the earliest date for its writing is the fall of Judah and Jerusalem to the Babylonians (587 BC), while the latest date must be before the campaign of Nabonidus against Edom (553 BC).

Blessings for Readers

Little Obadiah would be easy to overlook. However, carefully consider how this short prophecy is emblematic for all the OT Prophetic Books, emphasizing the Lord's reign on behalf of His people, which He would extend to other nations. This theme anticipated the coming of Jesus, whose merciful rule creates the Church, which now encircles the globe.

OUTLINE

Superscription (v 1a)
I. The First Proclamation against Edom: Humiliation (vv 1b–4)
II. The Second Proclamation against Edom: Displacement (vv 5–7)
III. The Third Proclamation against Edom (vv 8–18)
  A. Doom and Accusation (vv 8–15)
  B. Restoration for Jacob (Judah) and Destruction for Esau (Edom) (vv 16–18)
IV. Israel's Restoration and the Kingship of Yahweh (vv 19–21)

Footnotes

Footnotes for Obadiah, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:2 Or *Behold, I have made you small among the nations ; you are utterly despised*
- [2] 1:3 Or *Sela*
- [3] 1:7 Hebrew lacks *those who eat*
- [4] 1:7 Hebrew *he has*
- [1] 1:12 Hebrew *do not enlarge your mouth*

Study Notes

OBADIAH—NOTE ON 1 *vision*. From Hbr *chazah,* "to see." Occurs elsewhere in titles of prophetic writings as a technical term for divine revelation (Is 1:1; Na 1:1). *Obadiah.* "Servant (or worshiper) of the Lord." A dozen different men in the OT were so named. Oddly, there is no additional information about this particular prophet who delivered God's message in the years following the fall of Jerusalem (587 BC). *Thus says the Lord* GOD. This message against an enemy of Israel carried God's authority and was not a matter of Obadiah's wishful thinking. See p 1080. *Edom*. Located in and around the Seir mountain range south of the Salt Sea and east of the Great Rift Valley, it was 110 mi long, 30 mi wide, SE of Judah. See color map 2. The Edomites were descendants of Esau (v 6), Jacob's brother. God gave Jacob a new name, Israel, and his descendants became the nation of Israel. Edom had been hostile toward Israel for centuries. *We*. Obadiah and perhaps other prophets of the Lord and their audience. *messenger.* To achieve His purpose as ruler of history, God used an unidentified messenger to urge nations to attack Edom.

OBADIAH—NOTE ON 2 *make you small*. God is about to cut Edom down to size (cf Is 34:5–15; Jer 49:7–22 for a description of the severity of God's judgment against Edom).

OBADIAH—NOTE ON 3 *live in the clefts of the rock*. Hbr *sela'*, "rock," also the name of one of Edom's two principal cities. Edom was a rugged, mountainous territory that any invading army would find difficult to attack. This led to complacency and a false sense of security.

OBADIAH—NOTE ON 4 *soar aloft like the eagle*. Suggests Edom's pride at her apparent power and invincibility. *set among the stars*. Some of Edom's fortresses and military defenses were set in high, inaccessible places, yet still within God's reach. *I will bring you down*. Blunt statement answered Edom's rhetorical question in v 3. The Lord asked His own rhetorical questions in v 5.

OBADIAH—NOTE ON 5 In contrast to what thieves might take, Edom's destruction would be complete despite her supposed security in mountain strongholds (Jer 49:9–10). *steal only enough for themselves?* Plunderers by night would not take everything out of a house, but only what they wanted most. *leave gleanings?* Grape gatherers did not harvest the entire crop but

left some grapes behind for the poor to glean. However, nothing would be left behind after Edom's destruction.

OBADIAH—NOTE ON 6 *Esau.* Ancestral father of Edomites (v 1). By using Esau's name as a synonym for Edom, Obadiah recalled the history of strife and contention between Esau and Jacob (Gn 25:19–34; 27) and between the nations of Edom and Israel, which descended from them.

OBADIAH—NOTE ON 7 *allies*. Nearby nations, esp Babylon, with whom Edom collaborated in the attack on Jerusalem in 587 BC. These former friends will now turn against Edom. This prophecy was fulfilled when King Nabonidus of Babylon laid waste to Edom in 553/2 BC (cf Mal 1:4). *those who eat your bread*. Not true allies but mere "companions" (Lat *cum*, "with," and *panis*, "bread"). Eating together implied a covenant of friendship, making an attack by former allies even more stunning.

OBADIAH—NOTE ON 8 *wise men*. Military counselors. Rhetorical question indicates Edom would look in vain to her wise men for understanding. *Mount Esau?* Likely, the Seir Mountains of Edom. See color map 2.

OBADIAH—NOTE ON 9 Neither Edom's wise men nor her mighty men could save her from God's hand. *Teman*. Possibly a village in Edom, though the name might refer to Edom as a whole. See note, Jb 2:11.

OBADIAH—NOTE ON 1–9 Esau and his descendants have been arrogant and worldly since Esau sold his birthright to Jacob for a bowl of stew. The nation has a long record of hostility toward God's people Israel and, by extension, toward God. Obadiah announces God's judgment on Edom's behavior. Yet it is easy to forget that God, in His mercy, has given Edom a long time to repent and come to Him. The centuries that have passed demonstrate God's patience with Edom. God continues patiently to offer our world His grace and postpones judgment so that more people may repent (2Pt 3:9). "Now is the favorable time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2Co 6:2) • Lord, Your grace is a treasure. May I never test Your patience by unrepentance. Amen.

OBADIAH—NOTE ON 10 *your brother Jacob*. Edom had violated what should have been a brotherly relationship with (Israel) Jacob.

OBADIAH—NOTE ON 11 *On the day.* Probably refers to when the Babylonians captured Jerusalem in 587 BC. *his*. Jacob's (v 10). *foreigners entered ... one of them*. King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon besieged Jerusalem and finally broke through the gates, burned the temple, and tore

down the walls (2Ki 25:1–10). Ps 137:7 implicates Edom in this attack, making her as guilty as Babylon.

OBADIAH—NOTE ON 12–14 *do not*. Eight times Edom is warned not to gloat over or take advantage of Judah's downfall.

OBADIAH—NOTE ON 12 *over the day*. Edom had rejoiced over Judah's day of judgment without realizing that her day of reckoning was also coming, a day all nations will face. Cf Is 13–24. Ambr: "Grant that so often as the sin of any one who has fallen is made known to me I may suffer with him, and not chide him proudly, but mourn and weep" (*NPNF* 2 10:354).

OBADIAH—NOTE ON 13 Edom apparently followed the Babylonian army into Jerusalem to help loot the city.

OBADIAH—NOTE ON 14 *fugitives ... survivors*. After first standing by and gloating over Jerusalem's downfall and then plundering the city, Edom helped Babylon locate and capture the survivors who tried to escape.

OBADIAH—NOTE ON 10–14 After years of indifference punctuated by hostility, Edom faces a choice when God sends Babylon to punish Israel. Edom could show the compassion Jesus later described in Mt 25:34–40. Instead, Edom chooses destructive, self-serving action. The underlying spiritual hostility that led to such a choice seals Edom's fate. God gives us similar opportunities today (Eph 2:10) either to participate in His good work of compassion or turn our backs on those in need. He has already extended His compassion toward us in the sacrifice and blessing of Jesus. • Dear Jesus, use me as Your agent to help those who are hurting and have suffered misfortune. Relieve their distress, and give them hope. Amen.

OBADIAH—NOTE ON 15 *the day of the* LORD *is near*. Edom's brother Jacob had experienced the day of judgment (v 12). The Lord's great day of judgment would finally dawn for all nations (Zep 1:14–16). *your deeds shall return on your own head*. The hurt that Edom inflicted would now be inflicted on her, by the justice of "an eye for an eye" (Lv 24:20; Dt 19:21). This reversal theme runs through all of Ob (7, 15–21).

OBADIAH—NOTE ON 16 *drunk on My holy mountain*. Jerusalem invaders drank a cup of triumph as they gloated over their victory. God would soon serve them His cup of wrath. See note, Is 51:17. *as though they had never been*. God's wrath will destroy nations so that they will no longer exist. For a nation to lose its place in history is much worse than a military defeat.

OBADIAH—NOTE ON 17 *Mount Zion*. See p 844. In contrast to the devastation wreaked on Edom and the nations, God provides a place of refuge for His people. *escape*. Obadiah anticipated the faithful remnant God saved from destruction. See "remnant," p 1080. *holy*. God's judgment against Edom and other nations will cleanse the land, and His presence with His people will make it holy. In the largest sense, Obadiah looked forward to God purifying and restoring all things at the end of history. See p 7. These prophecies describe God's saving intentions rather than setting a timetable for events to happen. *their own possessions*. Israel will once again enjoy the covenantal blessings God had promised as the inheritance to Jacob. See "portion," p 7.

OBADIAH—NOTE ON 18 *house of Jacob ... house of Esau.* Language of reversal continues (see notes, vv 1, 4). God will use His faithful people, descended from Jacob, to consume the descendants of Esau. *for the* LORD *has spoken.* Although Obadiah's message must have seemed unlikely at the time, the closing statement puts God's stamp of certainty on it.

OBADIAH—NOTE ON 15–18 People are interested in spiritual things, but many remain confused about God's judgment and mercy. Obadiah cuts through the fog to paint a stark picture in these four verses. God will judge nations and individuals according to their deeds, and all will come up short (Rm 3:9–20). However, God in Christ provided the righteousness needed to stand in His holy presence. All who believe His saving promise will receive refuge and deliverance from sin, death, and the power of the devil. • Heavenly Father, my only refuge, strengthen my faith and lead me to show compassion, especially to those who need to hear the Gospel of forgiveness. Amen.

OBADIAH—NOTE ON 19–20 *shall possess*. This verb is repeated six times, emphasizing the reversal of fortunes for God's people, who will again possess territory they had lost. See note, v 17.

OBADIAH—NOTE ON 19 See color map 2. *Negeb.* Wilderness area south of Judah. *Mount Esau*. Mountainous area southeast of Salt Sea. *Shephelah*. Low foothill area between Judah and Philistia. *land of the Philistines.* Coastal plain along the Great Sea. *Ephraim.* Major territory of the former Northern Kingdom of Israel, later called Samaria. *Benjamin.* Tribe centered just north of Jerusalem. *Gilead.* Upland area east of Jordan River.

OBADIAH—NOTE ON 20 *exiles*. Faithful remnant of God's people who returned from the Babylonian captivity. See "remnant," p 1080. *Zarephath.*

City on the coast of the Great Sea, northwest of the Sea of Chinnereth. *Sepharad.* Possibly Sardis in Asia Minor or a site in Assyria.

OBADIAH—NOTE ON 21 *Saviors*. Hbr *moshi'im*. Cf Jgs 3:9. God will give His people security from their enemies by providing them with good rulers. Greater fulfillment is in the new covenant, when ministers of the Word give believers security against spiritual foes. Luth: "He calls leaders 'saviors,' as we find in the Book of Judges (Judg. 3:9), where He sent them many saviors, that is, leaders to lead them and take charge of them, to be in the lead if they ever had to fight with enemies. So here the apostles and other disciples are called 'saviors,' men who by preaching that joyful Gospel message have certainly freed them from all the assaults of Satan and from the gates of hell; men who have judged them in faith, who have ruled them with just judgment, and thus have prepared the eternal kingdom for the Lord" (AE 18:204). *the kingdom shall be the* LORD'S. In the end, God will rule all, and His people will serve and worship Him in perfect peace. See pp 1565–66.

OBADIAH—NOTE ON 19–21 Throughout history, God has used people such as Obadiah to speak His words, and He has used nations such as Edom and Israel as object lessons. Edom paid the price for spiritual arrogance and indifference; Israel was punished for unfaithfulness. However, God remained faithful to His people. He kept His promises and preserved a faithful remnant. There are times when we also are spiritually arrogant and deserve punishment. But God keeps calling us to repentance and to believe His promise of salvation. To all who listen to His Word, He has given the privilege of serving as witnesses to point others to His grace in the one Savior, Jesus Christ. • Lord of the Church, the kingdom, the power, and the glory are Yours. Move me to be Your witness and so direct others to Your kingdom. Amen.

Jonah

Jonah 1 | Jonah 2 | Jonah 3 | Jonah 4

- Introduction to Jonah
  - Overview
  - Reading Jonah
  - Luther on Jonah
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

Jonah Flees the Presence of the Lord

1 [1]‡‡†††Now the word of the Lord came to Jonah the son of Amittai,
saying, [2]†††“Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and call out against it, for
their evil[1] has come up before me.” [3]†††But Jonah rose to flee to Tarshish
from the presence of the Lord. He went down to Joppa and found a ship
going to Tarshish. So he paid the fare and went on board, to go with them to
Tarshish, away from the presence of the Lord.

[4]††† But the Lord hurled a great wind upon the sea, and there was a
mighty tempest on the sea, so that the ship threatened to break up. [5]†††Then
the mariners
were afraid, and each cried out to his god. And they hurled the cargo that
was in the ship into the sea to lighten it for them. But Jonah had gone down
into the inner part of the ship and had lain down and was fast asleep. [6]†††So
the captain came and said to him, “What do you mean, you sleeper? Arise,
call out to your god! Perhaps the god will give a thought to us, that we may
not perish.”

Jonah Is Thrown into the Sea

7 ‡†††† And they said to one another, “Come, let us cast lots, that we may
know on whose account this evil has come upon us.” So they cast lots, and
the lot fell on Jonah. 8 ††† Then they said to him, “Tell us on whose account
this evil has come upon us. What is your occupation? And where do you
come from? What is your country? And of what people are you?” 9 ††† And
he said to them, “I am a Hebrew, and I fear the Lord, the God of heaven,
who made the sea and the dry land.” 10 †† Then the men were exceedingly
afraid and said to him, “What is this that you have done!” For the men
knew that he was fleeing from the presence of the Lord, because he had told
them.

11 † Then they said to him, “What shall we do to you, that the sea may
quiet down for us?” For the sea grew more and more tempestuous. 12 † He
said to them, “Pick me up and hurl me into the sea; then the sea will quiet
down for you, for I know it is because of me that this great tempest has
come upon you.” 13 † Nevertheless, the men rowed hard[1] to get back to dry
land, but they could not, for the sea grew more and more tempestuous
against them. 14 †† Therefore they called out to the Lord, “O Lord, let us not
perish for this man’s life, and lay not on us innocent blood, for you, O Lord,
have done as it pleased you.” 15 † So they picked up Jonah and hurled him
into the sea, and the sea ceased from its raging. 16 † Then the men feared the
Lord exceedingly, and they offered a sacrifice to the Lord and made vows.

A Great Fish Swallows Jonah

17 †† [2] And the Lord appointed[3] a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And
Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

Jonah's Prayer

2 [1]Then Jonah prayed to the LORD his God from the belly of the fish,[2]saying,

"I called out to the LORD, out of my
distress,
and he answered me;
out of the belly of Sheol I cried,
and you heard my voice.
[3] For you cast me into the deep,
into the heart of the seas,
and the flood surrounded me;
all your waves and your billows
passed over me.
[4] Then I said, 'I am driven away
from your sight;
yet I shall again look
upon your holy temple.'
[5] The waters closed in over me to take my life;
the deep surrounded me;
weeds were wrapped about my head
[6] at the roots of the mountains.
I went down to the land
whose bars closed upon me forever;
yet you brought up my life from the pit,
O LORD my God.
[7] When my life was fainting away,
I remembered the LORD,
and my prayer came to you,
into your holy temple.
[8] Those who pay regard to vain idols
forsake their hope of steadfast love.
[9] But I with the voice of thanksgiving

will sacrifice to you;
what I have vowed I will pay.
Salvation belongs to the Lord!”

10 And the Lord spoke to the fish, and it vomited Jonah out upon the dry land.

Jonah Goes to Nineveh

3 [1]Then the word of the LORD came to Jonah the second time,
saying,[2]"Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and call out against it the
message that I tell you." [3]So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh, according to
the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly great city,[1] three
days' journey in breadth.[2] [4]Jonah began to go into the city, going a day's
journey. And he called out, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be
overthrown!" [5] And the people of Nineveh believed God. They called for a
fast and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them to the least of them.

The People of Nineveh Repent

6 †The word reached[1] the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne,
removed his robe, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. 7And he
issued a proclamation and published through Nineveh, “By the decree of
the king and his nobles: Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste
anything. Let them not feed or drink water, 8but let man and beast be
covered with sackcloth, and let them call out mightily to God. Let everyone
turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands. 9 Who
knows? God may turn and relent and turn from his fierce anger, so that we
may not perish.”

10 †When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil way,
God relented of the disaster that he had said he would do to them, and he
did not do it.

Jonah's Anger and the Lord's Compassion

4 [1]†But it displeased Jonah exceedingly,[2] and he was angry. [2]†And he prayed to the Lord and said, "O Lord, is not this what I said when I was yet in my country? That is why I made haste to flee to Tarshish; for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from disaster. [3]† Therefore now, O Lord, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live." [4]†And the Lord said, "Do you do well to be angry?"

[5]‡†Jonah went out of the city and sat to the east of the city and made a booth for himself there. He sat under it in the shade, till he should see what would become of the city. [6]†Now the Lord God appointed a plant[1] and made it come up over Jonah, that it might be a shade over his head, to save him from his discomfort.[2] So Jonah was exceedingly glad because of the plant.[7]†But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the plant, so that it withered. [8]†When the sun rose, God appointed a scorching east wind, and the sun beat down on the head of Jonah so that he was faint. And he asked that he might die and said, "It is better for me to die than to live." [9]†But God said to Jonah, "Do you do well to be angry for the plant?" And he said, "Yes, I do well to be angry, angry enough to die." [10]†And the Lord said, "You pity the plant, for which you did not labor, nor did you make it grow, which came into being in a night and perished in a night. [11]†And should not I pity Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than 120,000 persons who do not know their right hand from their left, and also much cattle?"

Jonah

Overview

Author
Jonah the prophet

Date
c 790 BC

Places
Israel; Nineveh (Assyria); Tarshish; Joppa

People
Jonah; Amittai; mariners; ship's captain; king of Nineveh

Purpose
To describe God's mercy toward the people of Nineveh and toward all who repent

Law Themes
Evil; flight from God; indifference; Sheol; fasting and sackcloth; God's appointed testing

Gospel Themes
God's appointed mercy; steadfast love; God turns/relents; pity

Memory Verses
God's powerful Word (3:6–10); God's character (4:2)

Introduction to Jonah

Reading Jonah

The ship's rounded prow, made from sturdy juniper, cuts the water's surface and skirts past a float of cedar logs from Lebanon. Through a porthole on the lower deck, a Phoenician sailor works his oar, digging into the harbor and pushing northward toward open sea. In racks beside the sailor stand tall amphora jars, filled with Israelite wine. The 12 tons of cargo hold the ship low in the water. As the ship passes the rocky outcrop, which defines Joppa's harbor, its main sail of goats' hair rises and pushes the ship to the west. Sparkling spray and dolphins leap before the prow, bringing the sailors joy and an omen of good travel.

The prophet Jonah lay in the belly of a ship he boarded at Joppa and was rocked to sleep. But his peace was false. His journey grew more and more arduous, for a westbound ship took him directly opposite from where he would end up: on the border of the Assyrian Kingdom. After landfall, he would still have
a 400-mile journey to reach the great city of Nineveh, the object of God's wrath and His mercy.

Luther on Jonah

As Jerome indicates, there are some who contend that this prophet was the son of the widow at Zarephath near Sidon, who fed Elijah in the famine, as described in I Kings 17[:8–24] and Luke 4[:26]. The reason they give is that Jonah [1:1] here calls himself a son of Amittai, that is, a son of the True One, because his mother said to Elijah when he had raised him from the dead, "Now I know that the word of your mouth is true" [I Kings 17:24].

Let anyone believe this who will; I do not believe it. Jonah's father's name was Amittai, in Latin *Verax*, in German *Wahrhaftig*; he was from Gath-hepher, a town in the land of the tribe of Zebulun, Joshua 19[:13]. For it is written in II Kings 14[:25], "King Jeroboam restored again the border of Israel from Hamath as far as the Sea of the Arabah, according to the word of the Lord, the God of Israel, which he spoke by his servant Jonah, the son of Amittai, the prophet of Gath-hepher." Moreover the widow at Zarephath was a Gentile, as Christ indicates in Luke 4[:25–26]. But Jonah here in chapter 1[:9] confesses that he is a Hebrew.

So we gather then that this Jonah lived at the time of King Jeroboam [II], the great grandson of King Jehu, at the time when King Uzziah reigned in Judah. This was also the time at which the prophets Hosea, Amos, and Joel were living in the same kingdom of Israel in other places and towns. From this we can readily gather what a splendid and valuable man this Jonah was in the kingdom of Israel. God did great things through him, for it was through his preaching that King Jeroboam was so successful and won back all that Hazael, king of Syria, had taken from the kingdom of Israel [II Kings 10:32–33; 13:3, 7; 14:25].

But greater than all he did in his own nation were his attacks upon the great and mighty kingdom of Assyria and his fruitful preaching among the Gentiles; among them he accomplished more than could have been accomplished among his own people with many sermons. It was as though God willed to demonstrate by him the word of Isaiah, "He who has not heard, shall hear it," as an illustration of the fact that they who have the word richly despise it thoroughly, and they who

cannot have it accept it gladly. Christ himself says, in Matthew 21[:43], “The kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to the nations producing the fruits of it.” (AE 35:323–24)

For more of Luther’s insights on this Book, see *Lectures on Jonah* (AE 19:1–104).

Challenges for Readers

History or Parable. Critical scholars regard the story of Jonah as a fictional lesson, chiefly because of the miraculous provision of the "fish," by which God rescued Jonah (see note, 1:17). However, every other aspect of the story conforms to the historical setting. When Jesus cited the story (Mt 12:39–42), He did not treat it as a parable but as history.

The Sign of Jonah. Mentioned three times in the Gospels (Mt 12:39; 16:4; Lk 11:29), the "sign" does not refer exclusively to Jonah's deliverance from the fish, which acts for Jonah's punishment and for his deliverance. When Jesus referred to "the sign of Jonah," He meant the paradox that He would soon be under both His Father's judgment and His Father's salvation. Based on Mt 12:40, the parallels are these: (1) Jonah's descent into Sheol and our Lord's experience of death, and (2) Jonah being "driven away" from Yahweh's presence (2:4) and Jesus' crying out on the cross when the Father abandoned Him (Mt 27:46). Jonah and Jesus had to go through judgment, condemnation, and death before they experienced new life.

Blessings for Readers

As you read Jonah, reflect on God's purposes for your life. Day by day we make decisions and plan our future, but the prophet Jonah describes just how far the Almighty will go to fulfill His plans for us and through us. Turn to Him in prayer, seeking His blessing. As you pray, remember that He is a "gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love" (4:2).

OUTLINE

Jonah, as good literature, presents the true story and events of the prophet's life as the scenes of a play, as shown by this outline.

Scene I Account of Jonah's Call and His Reaction (1:1–3)
Scene II Onboard Ship in the Midst of a Storm at Sea (1:4–17)
Scene III Inside the Great Fish (ch 2)
Scene IV Yahweh Gives Jonah His Assignment a Second Time (3:1–3)
Scene V Jonah Delivers the Message; Nineveh's Response (3:4–10)
Scene VI Jonah's Prayer in Nineveh (4:1–3)
Scene VII Jonah Sits Outside the City of Nineveh; Yahweh Teaches a Lesson on Mercy (4:4–11)

Footnotes

Footnotes for Jonah, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:2 The same Hebrew word can mean *evil* or *disaster*, depending on the context ; so throughout Jonah
- [1] 1:13 Hebrew *the men dug in* [their oars]
- [2] 1:17 Ch 2:1 in Hebrew
- [3] 1:17 Or *had appointed*

Footnotes for Jonah, Chapter 3

- [1] 3:3 Hebrew *a great city to God*
- [2] 3:3 Or *a visit was a three days' journey*
- [1] 3:6 Or *had reached*

Footnotes for Jonah, Chapter 4

- [2] 4:1 Hebrew *it was exceedingly evil to Jonah*
- [1] 4:6 Hebrew *qiqayon*, probably the castor oil plant ; also verses 7, 9, 10
- [2] 4:6 Or *his evil*

Study Notes

JONAH—NOTE ON 1:1 *word of the Lord came*. Typical introduction to OT prophecy. See p 1080. *Jonah the son of Amittai*. Jonah means "dove"; Amittai means "loyal" or "faithful." Jonah proclaimed the Lord's decision to allow Israel to expand its borders under King Jeroboam II (793–753 BC). Cf 2Ki 14:25.

JONAH—NOTE ON 1:2 *Nineveh*. Capital of Assyria, a powerful, ruthless nation more than 500 mi NE of Jonah's hometown in Israel. See map, p 1479. Assyria posed a threat to the entire region including Israel. *great city*. Nineveh's fortified wall was c 8 mi in circumference. *call out against it*. Proclaim God's impending judgment. *evil*. Hbr term used nine times in a variety of ways. *come up before Me*. Later, Nahum would charge Nineveh with plotting against the Lord, wanton cruelty, prostitution, materialism, and arrogance. See pp 1498–99.

JONAH—NOTE ON 1:3 *Jonah rose to flee.* Response was a jarring aberration for a servant of the Lord. Scripture nowhere reports that any other prophet disobeyed God's call. *Tarshish*. Possibly Tarsus in Asia Minor or Tartessus, a mining city in southwest Spain, both far removed from Nineveh. *the presence of the Lord*. Repeated twice in v 3 and again in v 10 to emphasize Jonah's misconception that somehow he could escape from the Lord by getting out of Israel. *Joppa*. Seaport on the Great Sea, the closest point of departure for Jonah. See map, p 1479. Joppa was later Peter's point of departure to bring the Gospel to the Gentiles (Ac 10:5). *paid the fare*. Ships routinely carried passengers as well as cargo.

JONAH—NOTE ON 1:4 God knew Jonah's heart and saw his disobedience. He sent a storm to intercept his getaway.

JONAH—NOTE ON 1:5 *each cried out to his god*. These experienced sailors realized they needed supernatural help to survive this unusual storm, showing more religious fervor than Jonah did. Luth: "Reason is unable to identify God properly; it cannot ascribe the Godhead to the One who is entitled to it exclusively. It knows that there is a God, but it does not know who or which is the true God. … Reason never finds the true God, but it finds the devil or its own concept of God, ruled by the devil. So there is a vast difference between knowing that there is a God and knowing who or what God is. Nature knows the former—it is inscribed in everybody's heart;

the latter is taught only by the Holy Spirit" (AE 19:54–55). *hurled the cargo*. Extreme step reflects the storm's severity and the crew's desperation. *inner part*. Probably a lower deck area set aside for crew or passengers. *fast asleep*. Jonah may have been rebelliously indifferent or perhaps depressed from the stress of running away from God.

JONAH—NOTE ON 1:6 *Arise.* Same word the Lord used to call Jonah (v 2; 3:2). *Perhaps the god will give a thought to us.* The captain's hope was similar to that expressed later by the king of Nineveh (3:9). The captain and crew worshiped many gods and would seek help from every available one.

JONAH—NOTE ON 1:1–6 Jonah turns his back on God, but God stops Jonah from his folly. God could punish Jonah or send someone else to Nineveh. However, God loves Jonah so much that He sends a storm to interrupt his flight and to eventually bring him back into a healthy relationship with his Savior. Our own disobedience merits punishment, but God in His love and mercy works to bring us to repentance and a restored relationship rather than closing the door on us. • Loving Father, hold me close and forgive my rebellion. If I try to slip away, please block my path. Rescue me from my folly, and restore to me the joy of salvation. Amen.

JONAH—NOTE ON 1:7 *cast lots*. See note, Jsh 14:2. The crew wanted to know whom to blame for such a tempestuous storm. *the lot fell on Jonah*. God, who controlled the storm, also controlled the outcome of casting lots. Jonah thought he could run away from the Lord's presence, but God demonstrated His reign over every detail of the situation.

JONAH—NOTE ON 1:8 Crew peppered Jonah with questions, probing him to understand why this evil had come on them.

JONAH—NOTE ON 1:9 *Hebrew*. See pp 1905–6. *fear the LORD*. See p 1001. Jonah's confession shows that he knew the true God but had disobeyed Him. Jonah described God as Creator and Lord, placing Him above the pagan gods that the sailors worshiped. Paul used a similar approach to introduce God to pagans in Athens (Ac 17:24).

JONAH—NOTE ON 1:10 Sailors were justly astounded at Jonah's audacity in trying to run from the God he had just described as Lord of the entire earth.

JONAH—NOTE ON 1:11 Jonah had so impressed the sailors with his confession and disclosures that they asked him how to calm the storm.

JONAH—NOTE ON 1:12 *hurl me into the sea*. In resignation, Jonah was ready to forfeit his life so the crew could be saved. This also shows Jonah's

personal distress (see note, 4:3).

JONAH—NOTE ON 1:13 *rowed hard*. Not wanting to sacrifice Jonah's life, the sailors made one last attempt to return to shore. It seems the ship was still close to shore when the storm struck.

JONAH—NOTE ON 1:14–16 Jonah's simple confession of faith (v 9) led these pagan sailors to realize that the Lord had sent the storm. They directed their prayers to the only One who could intervene and save them. Interpreters differ on whether the sailors were truly converted or simply added the Lord (Yahweh) to their list of deities, as clearly happened even in Israel (see notes, 1Ki 11:4, 5, 7).

JONAH—NOTE ON 1:14 *called*. See p 842. *innocent blood*. Ironically, Jonah did not care enough about the pagans in Nineveh to preach to them, but the pagan sailors cared enough about him that they did not want to be responsible for his
death.

JONAH—NOTE ON 1:15 Confirms God's control as well as Jonah's analysis of the situation (v 12).

JONAH—NOTE ON 1:16 *feared the* LORD. Just as later the people of Nineveh "believed God" (3:5), so these heathen sailors reverenced the Lord. See p 1001. *sacrifice*. Sign of thanks to the Lord offered after the crew got back to shore. *vows*. Religious commitment; cf Nu 30. Jonah concluded his prayer in the belly of the fish with a similar commitment (2:9). Luth: "What pure, God-fearing, and Christian consciences these people now have! The same people who prior to this did not hesitate to commit murder and who were entirely indifferent to obeying God now proceed to make sacrifices to God and to make vows. The various gods on whom they had called earlier are all forgotten. And this was all effected by Jonah and his dying. A servant of God must prove himself so useful that there is nothing about him that does not accrue to the benefit and the welfare of others. We stated earlier that the fear of God is just another term for the service of God; for true service of God is to fear and to honor God" (AE 19:69).

JONAH—NOTE ON 1:7–16 God uses Jonah's disobedience as a learning opportunity for him and for the ship's crew. Jonah has an opportunity to compare his indifference and hostility toward Nineveh with the sailors' concern for his life. And the sailors are able to learn of the true God through Jonah's confession of faith and God's control of the sea.

Amazingly, even when we break God's Law and receive punishment, He often turns the situation into a learning experience and an opportunity for us to confess and praise Him. "Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good, for His steadfast love endures forever" (Ps 136:1). • O Lord, You bring good out of evil circumstances. Lead me to confess Your name before others and testify to Your goodness. Amen.

JONAH—NOTE ON 1:17 *appointed.* Hbr *manah*, "to reckon," "number," or "ordain"; favorite term in Jonah. God not only designated this sea creature to rescue Jonah but also later appointed a plant, a worm, and a scorching east wind to further Jonah's schooling (4:6–8). Iren: "He patiently suffered Jonah to be swallowed by the whale, not that he should be swallowed up and perish altogether, but that, having been cast out again, he might be the more subject to God" (*ANF* 1:449). *great fish*. We are not told specifically what kind of sea creature God selected to rescue Jonah. Most often people think of a whale, because the animal would need to be very large. Israelites, like other ancient people, did not use the modern classifications for animals (e.g., distinguishing ocean mammals from fish). Their classifications tended to focus on an animal's habitat and locomotion (Gn 1:20–25; 9:2). Some interpreters saw in this beast an emblem of our eternal struggle. Iren: "From the beginning, did God permit man to be swallowed up by the great whale [Satan], who was the author of transgression" (*ANF* 1:449–50). *swallow up Jonah.* This miracle causes some interpreters to regard the Book of Jonah as a saga, fiction, or folklore. When Jesus referred to the "sign of Jonah," there is no indication that He considered this to be a parable, legend, allegory, or myth. Jesus spoke of the Book of Jonah as historical (as He likewise spoke of Solomon or of the queen of the South). *three days and three nights*. Jesus compared Jonah's three-day stay in the belly of the fish to His own stay in the heart of the earth prior to His resurrection.

JONAH—NOTE ON 1:17 Jonah thinks he will die by drowning in the sea, and that should be the outcome of his refusal to obey God. But God has other plans for Jonah. The great fish saves him from drowning and gives him pause to consider his situation and his role in carrying out God's will. Our life is like a tapestry woven by God. We are effective at making holes in that tapestry when we sin and follow our own will. God does not always protect us from ourselves so as to make the holes disappear, but He is skilled at reweaving the loose threads that we create and giving us a chance

to move on with Him and His purposes. • God of grace, thank You for saving me, Your undeserving child. Give me eyes of faith to trust Your guidance and direction in my life. Amen.

JONAH—NOTE ON 1:1 *Jonah prayed*. Psalm of thanksgiving recounting how the Lord heard his cry for help and rescued him from death.

JONAH—NOTE ON 1:2 *called*. See p 842. *answered me*. God saved Jonah from drowning, but Jonah had no way of knowing that he would escape the fish. It took faith to believe that God's salvation included restored life for him. *Sheol*. Place of the dead. Jonah's descent into the sea was like descending into Sheol, the grave. See p 792.

JONAH—NOTE ON 1:3 *You cast me into the deep.* Jonah recognized that his brush with death by drowning was God's doing.

JONAH—NOTE ON 1:4 *driven away from Your sight.* Jonah felt forsaken by God, just as Jesus felt separation from His Father while on the cross (Mt 27:46). *I shall again look upon Your holy temple*. Jonah was confident that he would live and have opportunity to worship at Zion once more.

JONAH—NOTE ON 1:5 *waters closed in over me.* Graphic description of drowning.

JONAH—NOTE ON 1:6 *roots of the mountains*. Jonah sunk deeply. *bars*. Gates were barred to lock them securely. Jonah felt the gates of death closing behind him. *the pit*. Expression for Sheol, the grave. See p 792.

JONAH—NOTE ON 1:7 *I remembered the* LORD. At the last moment, Jonah turned to the Lord, who alone could save him. *into Your holy temple*. Jonah had run from God, but now he longed for God to hear his prayer. See note, 1Ki 8:44; cf 1Ki 8:22–53. Luth: "First God grants grace and spirit to cheer the heart, He reminds it of God's mercy, dismissing thoughts touching on God's wrath, turning the heart from God the Judge to God the Father. But this does not lie in the power of man; for Jonah says here that his soul fainted within him and that faintheartedness was the strength and power of his soul. But the fact that he thinks about himself and begins to have faith is not the work of his soul. The Spirit, and no one else, can bring the Lord to mind. And when it comes to pass that the heart is reminded of the Lord, a new light flares up, life again raises its head, and the heart is emboldened to cry in supplication; and thus its petition also surely finds an ear" (AE 19:79).

JONAH—NOTE ON 1:8 *vain*. Lacking reality or value. See note, Ec 1:2. The prayers of Jonah's shipmates addressed to idols were worthless. "All

confidence is empty, except confidence in mercy. Mercy delivers us; our own merits, our own efforts, do not" (Ap V 209). *steadfast love*. Idol worshipers fail to experience God's loyal love, which Jonah had again tasted. See p 843.

JONAH—NOTE ON 1:9 *with the voice of thanksgiving will sacrifice*. Jonah's prayer is just such a sacrifice of thanksgiving to the Lord. Many psalms are offerings of thanksgiving (e.g., Ps 100; 136; 138). *vowed*. It is not unusual for a person in dire straits to make a pledge to serve the Lord in some special way. Perhaps Jonah's vow was to obey if God should again call him; cf Nu 30. *Salvation belongs to the LORD!* Statement sums up Book of Jonah. Salvation is God's possession, which He freely bestows. Jonah experienced that for himself and also saw how the Lord saved the sailors and would spare the people of Nineveh. See "salvation," p 843.

JONAH—NOTE ON 1:10 *the LORD spoke to the fish*. God rules over all creation, including animals and fish. His Word, as at creation (Gn 1:20–22), accomplishes His purposes. The Lord who teaches donkeys to speak (Nu 22:28) likewise teaches fish to listen. *vomited*. The fish could have become Jonah's tomb, but at God's command it instead provided transportation back to dry land. Though the event was likely terrifying for Jonah, his account has a humorous ring.

JONAH—NOTE ON **Ch 2** Jonah deserves death, not deliverance. Yet the Lord graciously rescues him by miraculous intervention. Jonah recognizes the greatness of the Lord's compassion and expresses his thanks in prayer. The apostle Paul, like Jonah, once felt that he had "received the sentence of death," but the God "who raises the dead" delivered him (2Co 1:8–10). All sinners deserve the sentence of everlasting death. But the God to whom salvation belongs has, in Christ, rescued us and given us new life.

• Gracious God and Father, thank You for redeeming me from sin, death, and the power of the devil. Move my tongue to glorify You in praise and witness. Amen.

JONAH—NOTE ON 1:1 *second time*. God made a new beginning with Jonah, giving him a second chance.

JONAH—NOTE ON 1:2 *Arise, go to Nineveh*. Repetition of 1:2. *the message that I tell you*. God would give Jonah the words to speak against Nineveh, reflecting God's will rather than Jonah's.

JONAH—NOTE ON 1:3 *went to Nineveh*. Jonah had learned his lesson and now followed God's directions. *exceedingly great city.* Indicates not

Nineveh's size, but God's concern for the city. *three days' journey in breadth*. See ESV note.

JONAH—NOTE ON 1:4 *a day's journey*. On the first day of Jonah's anticipated three-day visit, the people of Nineveh already responded to his message. *overthrown!* Or, "overturned." The message that God told Jonah to deliver may be understood in two ways: Jonah hoped that Nineveh would be overturned in destruction; instead, the city was overturned in repentance and faith. See "turn," p 1080. God then overturned His decision for judgment and granted them mercy (v 10). Nineveh changed and God changed His judgment, but Jonah did not. After Jonah delivered God's message, nothing more is heard of him in ch 3.

JONAH—NOTE ON 1:5 *believed God*. The Holy Spirit working through the Word convinced the people of Nineveh that God would indeed overthrow their city if they did not repent. This miracle of faith was even greater than Jonah's rescue by a great fish. 1 Clem: "Jonah proclaimed destruction to the Ninevites; but they, repenting of their sins … obtained salvation, although they were aliens [to the covenant] of God" (*ANF* 1:7). *fast … sackcloth*. Traditional signs of repentance and mourning. See note, Lv 16:29. *greatest … least*. Every level of Ninevite society responded to God's Word. Their quick response was in stark contrast to Israel's frequent hardness of heart (e.g., Nu 14:11; Dt 1:32; 2Ki 17:14). Luth: "Take note that the people of Nineveh do some things that God does not command them. Yet Jonah relates this. For instance, they fast and put on sackcloth. What does God care about fasting and sackcloth? He wants the heart; He wants to see a person's whole life transformed. Also, God did not demand these things from them through Jonah. All He asked was that they cease their villainy. … Jonah does not praise their fasting and their sackcloth later on, but he reports that 'they turned from their evil way' (v. 10)" (AE 19:86).

JONAH—NOTE ON 1:1–5 God is concerned for all people, even those we might write off. The people of Nineveh hardly seem like "good prospects." However, the message they hear is from God, and God makes sure that it bears the fruit of repentance. Do you assume some people are unable or unwilling to respond to the Gospel? Leave conversion in God's hands and faithfully fulfill your role as His witness. He has promised that His Word will bear fruit, and He is concerned that all people have the opportunity to be saved. Thank God, His Word bore the fruit of repentance

in Nineveh and also in your life. • Savior of the nations, keep me from doubting the effectiveness of Your Word. Amen.

JONAH—NOTE ON 1:6 *The word reached the king of Nineveh*. Messengers probably brought the king news of what the citizens of the city were doing. *sat in ashes*. Even the king vacated the honor of his throne and joined his people in expressions of repentance.

JONAH—NOTE ON 1:7 *issued a proclamation*. King and nobles wanted to ensure that everyone in Nineveh got the message and responded to his decree. *nor beast, herd nor flock*. Including animals underscores urgency of repentance. Greek historian Heroditus reported that in Persian times, animals were sometimes made part of the mourning process. Ter: "[They were] starving out even the cattle with which God was not angry" (*ANF* 4:106). *Let them not feed or drink water*. Applied to humans as well as animals, this enforced the completeness of the fast but also suggests it was of short duration.

JONAH—NOTE ON 1:8 *call out mightily to God*. In contrast to the sailors who "called out to the LORD" (1:14), the king used the general divine term "God" when ordering the people to pray. *evil way ... violence*. Acknowledgment of Nineveh's sin and truth of God's judgment (1:2; 3:2).

JONAH—NOTE ON 1:9 Assyrian king and citizens hoped God would change His mind, show mercy, and withhold judgment. Pagan sailors had also expressed this hope (1:6). See "turn," p 1080. *fierce anger*. Ninevites understood that they deserved God's punishment. Luth: "A truly contrite heart wrestles with fear and with doubt. … If there were no faith, it would never be able to stand its ground in this struggle and distress. Therefore these words are, rather, evidence of faith, but of a faith that trembles with fear and that still contends for mastery, but that all the while keeps God's grace before its eyes, saying: 'God may yet repent and turn from His fierce anger, etc.,' that is, grace still hovers in the background, and all is not wrath" (AE 19:88).

JONAH—NOTE ON 3:10 *God relented*. See note, 1Ch 21:15. See also pp 1079–80. God exercised His mercy. *disaster*. Lit, "evil." If the Ninevites had not repented, God would have destroyed them. "[The Ninevites] by their repentance (all of repentance) were reconciled to God and received the favor that their city was not destroyed" (Ap XIIB 69).

JONAH—NOTE ON 3:6–10 Jesus declared that "the men of Nineveh will rise up at the judgment … and condemn" His own generation of

hearers who failed to repent (Mt 12:41). God continues to call us to repentance for our sins of thought, word, and deed. The men of Nineveh furnish us with an example to follow. May they not condemn us on the Day of Judgment! May the Holy Spirit rather lead us daily to repent of our sins and trust Christ for pardon and peace. • Father in heaven, have mercy on me, a sinner. Grant me full confidence in the truth and power of Your Word, and give me peace. Amen.

JONAH—NOTE ON 4:1 *displeased Jonah exceedingly*. Lit, "it became evil to Jonah as a great evil." We are not told how Jonah came to realize that God was going to spare Nineveh from destruction. Perhaps 40 days had now elapsed since he had begun preaching that Nineveh would be overturned (3:4). *angry.* Jonah's anger is mentioned several times (vv 4, 9) and contrasts with God, who is "slow to anger" (v 2). Luth: "We must note first of all how wondrous God is in His saints, lest we be tempted to judge and condemn them thoughtlessly because of any of their actions. This work here may be evil—as indeed it is. But for all of that, I must not despise and reject the person. For if we regard Jonah in this act, we must agree that his actions are surely wrong; for God Himself punishes him. And yet he is God's dear child. He chats so uninhibitedly with God as though he were not in the least afraid of Him—as indeed he is not; he confides in Him as in a father" (AE 19:92).

JONAH—NOTE ON 4:2 *That is why.* Jonah and God converse with each other for the first time. Jonah revealed why he did not want to preach to Nineveh in the first place. Assyria was Israel's national enemy, so Jonah hoped they would perish. The central conflict was between God's mercy and Jonah's unwillingness to extend to Nineveh the grace of God that had already saved his own life. *I knew … relenting from disaster*. Cf Ex 34:6.

JONAH—NOTE ON 4:3 *take my life … better … to die.* Reflection of Jonah's selfish anger. He would rather die than endure the reality of God's pity for Nineveh. See note, 1:12.

JONAH—NOTE ON 4:4 With this rhetorical question, God gently endeavored to get Jonah to reconsider his attitude.

JONAH—NOTE ON 4:5–11 Some consider this section a flashback to the time right after Jonah had finished preaching in Nineveh (3:4). He planned to wait out the 40 days in hopes of seeing Nineveh's destruction.

JONAH—NOTE ON 4:5 *booth*. Temporary shelter made of branches to protect from the sun and wind.

JONAH—NOTE ON 4:6 *appointed a plant*. See note, 1:17. ESV note suggests the castor oil plant, which can quickly grow to a height of 15 ft. *discomfort*. Lit, "evil." Jonah's booth by itself was probably not very good protection from the sun. *exceedingly glad.* Lit, "rejoiced with a great joy." This is the one time we are told that Jonah was truly happy.

JONAH—NOTE ON 4:7 *God appointed a worm*. See note, 1:17. In 1:4, 17; 4:6–8, God used elements of His creation to try to change the hard heart of His stubborn prophet.

JONAH—NOTE ON 4:8 *God appointed a scorching east wind*. See note, 1:17. *sun beat down.* God made Jonah so miserable that, feeling faint, he wished to die. God was setting the stage to again challenge Jonah's attitude toward Nineveh. *It is better for me to die.* Repeat of Jonah's words in v 3, but here his wish to die is caused by physical wretchedness. See note, 1:12.

JONAH—NOTE ON 4:9 God's question is a repeat of the one in v 4, except for mention of the plant. *Yes, I do well to be angry*. Jonah's extreme anger was the result of an inconsequential event, the death of a plant for which he could take no credit and which had only temporary value (v 10). Jonah wanted things his way, even if it was not part of God's plan or if it interfered with God's grace.

JONAH—NOTE ON 4:10 Jonah's concern compared poorly with God's concern for Nineveh. Jonah was preoccupied with his own condition and the fate of a plant, while God was concerned with the condition and fate of human beings.

JONAH—NOTE ON 4:11 *should not I pity Nineveh*. Hbr is emphatic, yet God's final question is left unanswered. We do not know if Jonah's attitude toward Nineveh changed. This makes the story a challenge for us. It is a reminder that God has every right to show mercy to whom He wishes. We dare not demand that God should favor us and not others. *pity*. Commonly used negatively (e.g., in Dt, the Lord tells Israel repeatedly not to show pity on the Canaanites). *do not know … their left*. Expression for extreme degree of spiritual ignorance and vulnerability of Nineveh's population (cf Dt 5:32; 17:20; Jsh 1:7; 23:6; Pr 4:27). *much cattle?* God probably mentioned livestock to remind Jonah that sparing cattle was more valuable than sparing one little plant.

JONAH—NOTE ON **Ch 4** Jonah has a precious opportunity to preach God's Word to Nineveh, but his heart is not in it. He does not seem to understand the extent of God's concern for people who are enemies of

Israel, and he hopes that misfortune will come to them. We have the immense privilege of sharing God's Law and Gospel with the world around us. We have opportunities to be part of His plans. May we never be found guilty of neglecting our mission to make disciples of all nations. Praise God, He did not neglect us but appointed His only-begotten Son as our Savior. • O Lord, reveal to me every opportunity I have to share the good news of salvation with others, no matter who they are. Amen.

Micah

Micah 1 | Micah 2 | Micah 3 | Micah 4 | Micah 5 | Micah 6 | Micah 7

- Introduction to Micah
  - Overview
  - Reading Micah
  - Luther on Micah
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

1 [1]† The word of the LORD that came to Micah of Moresheth in the days
of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, which he saw concerning
Samaria and Jerusalem.

The Coming Destruction

2 † Hear, you peoples, all of you;[1]
pay attention, O earth, and all that is in it,
and let the Lord God be a witness against you,
the Lord from his holy temple.
3 † For behold, the Lord is coming out of his
place,
and will come down and tread upon the high
places of the earth.
4 And the mountains will melt under him,
and the valleys will split open,
like wax before the fire,
like waters poured down a steep place.
5 † All this is for the transgression of Jacob
and for the sins of the house of Israel.
What is the transgression of Jacob?
Is it not Samaria?
And what is the high place of Judah?
Is it not Jerusalem?
6 † Therefore I will make Samaria a heap in the
open country,
a place for planting vineyards,
and I will pour down her stones into the
valley
and uncover her foundations.
7 † All her carved images shall be beaten to
pieces,
all her wages shall be burned with fire,
and all her idols I will lay waste,
for from the fee of a prostitute she
gathered them,
and to the fee of a prostitute they shall
return.

[8]† For this I will lament and wail;
I will go stripped and naked;
I will make lamentation like the
jackals,
and mourning like the ostriches.
[9]† For her wound is incurable,
and it has come to Judah;
it has reached to the gate of my people,
to Jerusalem.

[10]†† Tell it not in Gath;
weep not at all;
in Beth-le-aphrah
roll yourselves in the dust.
[11]† Pass on your way,
inhabitants of Shaphir,
in nakedness and shame;
the inhabitants of Zaanan
do not come out;
the lamentation of Beth-ezel
shall take away from you its standing place.
[12]† For the inhabitants of Maroth
wait anxiously for good,
because disaster has come down from the
LORD
to the gate of Jerusalem.
[13]† Harness the steeds to the chariots,
inhabitants of Lachish;
it was the beginning of sin
to the daughter of Zion,
for in you were found
the transgressions of Israel.
[14]† Therefore you shall give parting gifts[1]
to Moresheth-gath;
the houses of Achzib shall be a deceitful thing
to the kings of Israel.

15 I will again bring a conqueror to you,
inhabitants of Mareshah;
the glory of Israel
shall come to Adullam.
16 Make yourselves bald and cut off your hair,
for the children of your delight;
make yourselves as bald as the eagle,
for they shall go from you into exile.

Woe to the Oppressors

2 [1]† Woe to those who devise wickedness
and work evil on their beds!
When the morning dawns, they perform it,
because it is in the power of their hand.

[2]† They covet fields and seize them,
and houses, and take them away;
they oppress a man and his house,
a man and his inheritance.
[3]† Therefore thus says the Lord:
behold, against this family I am devising
disaster,[2]
from which you cannot remove your necks,
and you shall not walk haughtily,
for it will be a time of disaster.
[4]† In that day they shall take up a taunt song
against you
and moan bitterly,
and say, “We are utterly ruined;
he changes the portion of my people;
how he removes it from me!
To an apostate he allots our fields.”
[5]† Therefore you will have none to cast the line
by lot
in the assembly of the Lord.

[6]† “Do not preach”—thus they preach—
“one should not preach of such
things;
disgrace will not overtake us.”
[7]† Should this be said, O house of Jacob?
Has the Lord grown impatient?[1]

Are these his deeds?
Do not my words do good
to him who walks uprightly?
8 But lately my people have risen up as an
enemy;
you strip the rich robe from those who pass
by trustingly
with no thought of war.[2]
9 The women of my people you drive out
from their delightful houses;
from their young children you take away
my splendor forever.
10 Arise and go,
for this is no place to rest,
because of uncleanness that destroys
with a grievous destruction.
11 If a man should go about and utter wind
and lies,
saying, “I will preach to you of wine and
strong drink,”
he would be the preacher for this people!
12 I will surely assemble all of you, O Jacob;
I will gather the remnant of Israel;
I will set them together
like sheep in a fold,
like a flock in its pasture,
a noisy multitude of men.
13 He who opens the breach goes up before them;
they break through and pass the gate,
going out by it.
Their king passes on before them,
the Lord at their head.

Rulers and Prophets Denounced

3 [1]† And I said:
Hear, you heads of Jacob
and rulers of the house of Israel!
Is it not for you to know justice?—

[2]†† you who hate the good and love the evil,
who tear the skin from off my people[3]
and their flesh from off their bones,
[3] who eat the flesh of my people,
and flay their skin from off them,
and break their bones in pieces
and chop them up like meat in a pot,
like flesh in a cauldron.

[4]† Then they will cry to the Lord,
but he will not answer them;
he will hide his face from them at that time,
because they have made their deeds evil.

[5]† Thus says the Lord concerning the prophets
who lead my people astray,
who cry “Peace”
when they have something to eat,
but declare war against him
who puts nothing into their mouths.
[6]† Therefore it shall be night to you, without
vision,
and darkness to you, without divination.
The sun shall go down on the prophets,
and the day shall be black over them;
[7]† the seers shall be disgraced,

and the diviners put to shame;
they shall all cover their lips,
for there is no answer from God.
8 † But as for me, I am filled with power,
with the Spirit of the Lord,
and with justice and might,
to declare to Jacob his transgression
and to Israel his sin.

9 † Hear this, you heads of the house of Jacob
and rulers of the house of Israel,
who detest justice
and make crooked all that is straight,
10 † who build Zion with blood
and Jerusalem with iniquity.
11 † Its heads give judgment for a bribe;
its priests teach for a price;
its prophets practice divination for money;
yet they lean on the Lord and say,
"Is not the Lord in the midst of us?
No disaster shall come upon us."
12 † Therefore because of you
Zion shall be plowed as a field;
Jerusalem shall become a heap of ruins,
and the mountain of the house a wooded
height.

The Mountain of the Lord

4 [1]†††† It shall come to pass in the latter days
that the mountain of the house of the Lord
shall be established as the highest of the
mountains,
and it shall be lifted up above the hills;
and peoples shall flow to it,

[2]† and many nations shall come, and say:
"Come, let us go up to the mountain of the
Lord,
to the house of the God of Jacob,
that he may teach us his ways
and that we may walk in his paths."
For out of Zion shall go forth the law,[1]
and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.
[3]† He shall judge between many peoples,
and shall decide for strong nations far away;
and they shall beat their swords into
plowshares,
and their spears into pruning hooks;
nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
neither shall they learn war anymore;
[4]† but they shall sit every man under his vine
and under his fig tree,
and no one shall make them afraid,
for the mouth of the Lord of hosts has
spoken.
[5]† For all the peoples walk
each in the name of its god,
but we will walk in the name of the Lord our God
forever and ever.

The Lord Shall Rescue Zion

6 In that day, declares the Lord,
I will assemble the lame
and gather those who have been driven away
and those whom I have afflicted;
7 and the lame I will make the remnant,
and those who were cast off, a strong
nation;
and the Lord will reign over them in
Mount Zion
from this time forth and forevermore.

8 And you, O tower of the flock,
hill of the daughter of Zion,
to you shall it come,
the former dominion shall come,
kingship for the daughter of Jerusalem.

9 Now why do you cry aloud?
Is there no king in you?
Has your counselor perished,
that pain seized you like a woman in labor?
10 Writhe and groan,[2] O daughter of Zion,
like a woman in labor,
for now you shall go out from the city
and dwell in the open country;
you shall go to Babylon.
There you shall be rescued;
there the Lord will redeem you
from the hand of your enemies.

11† Now many nations
are assembled against you,
saying, “Let her be defiled,
and let our eyes gaze upon Zion.”
12† But they do not know
the thoughts of the Lord;
they do not understand his plan,
that he has gathered them as sheaves to the
threshing floor.
13† Arise and thresh,
O daughter of Zion,
for I will make your horn iron,
and I will make your hoofs bronze;
you shall beat in pieces many peoples;
and shall devote[1] their gain to the Lord,
their wealth to the Lord of the whole earth.

The Ruler to Be Born in Bethlehem

5 1 Now muster your troops, O daughter[2] of troops;
siege is laid against us;
with a rod they strike the judge of Israel
on the cheek.

2 [3]But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah,
who are too little to be among the clans of Judah,
from you shall come forth for me
one who is to be ruler in Israel,
whose coming forth is from of old,
from ancient days.
3 Therefore he shall give them up until the time
when she who is in labor has given birth;
then the rest of his brothers shall return
to the people of Israel.
4 And he shall stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the Lord,
in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God.
And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great
to the ends of the earth.
5 And he shall be their peace.

When the Assyrian comes into our land
and treads in our palaces,
then we will raise against him seven shepherds
and eight princes of men;
6 they shall shepherd the land of Assyria with

the sword,
and the land of Nimrod at its entrances;
and he shall deliver us from the Assyrian
when he comes into our land
and treads within our border.

A Remnant Shall Be Delivered

7 Then the remnant of Jacob shall be
in the midst of many peoples
like dew from the Lord,
like showers on the grass,
which delay not for a man
nor wait for the children of man.
8 And the remnant of Jacob shall be among the
nations,
in the midst of many peoples,
like a lion among the beasts of the forest,
like a young lion among the flocks of sheep,
which, when it goes through, treads down
and tears in pieces, and there is none to
deliver.
9 Your hand shall be lifted up over your
adversaries,
and all your enemies shall be cut off.

10 And in that day, declares the Lord,
I will cut off your horses from among you
and will destroy your chariots;
11 and I will cut off the cities of your land
and throw down all your strongholds;
12 and I will cut off sorceries from your hand,
and you shall have no more tellers of
fortunes;
13 and I will cut off your carved images
and your pillars from among you,
and you shall bow down no more
to the work of your hands;
14 and I will root out your Asherah images from
among you

and destroy your cities.
15 And in anger and wrath I will execute
vengeance
on the nations that did not obey.

The Indictment of the Lord

6 [1]†† Hear what the Lord says:
Arise, plead your case before the
mountains,
and let the hills hear your voice.

[2]† Hear, you mountains, the indictment of the
Lord,
and you enduring foundations of the earth,
for the Lord has an indictment against his
people,
and he will contend with Israel.

[3]† "O my people, what have I done to you?
How have I wearied you? Answer me!
[4]†† For I brought you up from the land of Egypt
and redeemed you from the house of
slavery,
and I sent before you Moses,
Aaron, and Miriam.
[5]† O my people, remember what Balak king of
Moab devised,
and what Balaam the son of Beor answered
him,
and what happened from Shittim to Gilgal,
that you may know the saving acts of the
Lord."

What Does the Lord Require?

6 † † † “With what shall I come before the Lord,
and bow myself before God on high?
Shall I come before him with burnt
offerings,
with calves a year old?
7 † Will the Lord be pleased with[1] thousands of
rams,
with ten thousands of rivers of oil?
Shall I give my firstborn for my
transgression,
the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?”
8 † He has told you, O man, what is good;
and what does the Lord require of you
but to do justice, and to love kindness,[2]
and to walk humbly with your God?

Destruction of the Wicked

9 The voice of the Lord cries to the city—
and it is sound wisdom to fear your name:
"Hear of the rod and of him who
appointed it![3]
10 Can I forget any longer the treasures[4] of
wickedness in the house of the wicked,
and the scant measure that is accursed?
11 Shall I acquit the man with wicked scales
and with a bag of deceitful weights?
12 Your[5] rich men are full of violence;
your inhabitants speak lies,
and their tongue is deceitful in their
mouth.
13 Therefore I strike you with a grievous blow,
making you desolate because of your sins.
14 You shall eat, but not be satisfied,
and there shall be hunger within you;
you shall put away, but not preserve,
and what you preserve I will give to the sword.
15 You shall sow, but not reap;
you shall tread olives, but not anoint
yourselves with oil;
you shall tread grapes, but not drink wine.
16 For you have kept the statutes of Omri,[1]
and all the works of the house of Ahab;
and you have walked in their counsels,
that I may make you a desolation, and your[2]
inhabitants a hissing;
so you shall bear the scorn of my people."

Wait for the God of Salvation

7 [1] Woe is me! For I have become
as when the summer fruit has been gathered,
as when the grapes have been gleaned:
there is no cluster to eat,
no first-ripe fig that my soul desires.

[2] The godly has perished from the earth,
and there is no one upright among mankind;
they all lie in wait for blood,
and each hunts the other with a net.
[3] Their hands are on what is evil, to do it well;
the prince and the judge ask for a bribe,
and the great man utters the evil desire of his soul;
thus they weave it together.
[4] The best of them is like a brier,
the most upright of them a thorn hedge.
The day of your watchmen, of your punishment, has come;
now their confusion is at hand.
[5] Put no trust in a neighbor;
have no confidence in a friend;
guard the doors of your mouth
from her who lies in your arms;[3]
[6] for the son treats the father with contempt,
the daughter rises up against her mother,
the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law;
a man's enemies are the men of his own house.
[7] But as for me, I will look to the Lord;
I will wait for the God of my salvation;
my God will hear me.

8† Rejoice not over me, O my enemy;
when I fall, I shall rise;
when I sit in darkness,
the LORD will be a light to me.
9† I will bear the indignation of the LORD
because I have sinned against him,
until he pleads my cause
and executes judgment for me.
He will bring me out to the light;
I shall look upon his vindication.
10† Then my enemy will see,
and shame will cover her who said to me,
"Where is the LORD your God?"
My eyes will look upon her;
now she will be trampled down
like the mire of the streets.

11† A day for the building of your walls!
In that day the boundary shall be far extended.
12† In that day they[1] will come to you,
from Assyria and the cities of Egypt,
and from Egypt to the River,
from sea to sea and from mountain to
mountain.
13† But the earth will be desolate
because of its inhabitants,
for the fruit of their deeds.

14† Shepherd your people with your staff,
the flock of your inheritance,
who dwell alone in a forest
in the midst of a garden land;[2]
let them graze in Bashan and Gilead
as in the days of old.
15† As in the days when you came out of the land of

Egypt,
I will show them[3] marvelous things.
16† The nations shall see and be ashamed of all
their might;
they shall lay their hands on their mouths;
their ears shall be deaf;
17† they shall lick the dust like a serpent,
like the crawling things of the earth;
they shall come trembling out of their
strongholds;
they shall turn in dread to the Lord our God,
and they shall be in fear of you.

God’s Steadfast Love and Compassion

18 Who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity
and passing over transgression
for the remnant of his inheritance?
He does not retain his anger forever,
because he delights in steadfast love.
19 He will again have compassion on us;
he will tread our iniquities underfoot.
You will cast all our[4] sins
into the depths of the sea.
20 You will show faithfulness to Jacob
and steadfast love to Abraham,
as you have sworn to our fathers
from the days of old.

Micah

Overview

Author
Micah the prophet

Date
c 750–686 BC

Places
Judah; Jerusalem; Zion; Moresheth; Bethlehem; Lachish; Israel; Samaria; Gilgal; Bashan; Gilead; Gath; Assyria; Babylon; Egypt; Euphrates River

People
Kings Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah; remnant of Israel; leaders of Judah and Israel

Purposes
To indict the shepherds of Israel and Judah for exploiting and misleading the people and to prophesy the Lord's work as a shepherd for the remnant

Law Themes
Nakedness and shame; remnant; exile; false prophets

Gospel Themes
Remnant; Zion; shepherd; cut off; God's patience

Memory Verses
Remnant gathered (2:12–13); the Ruler from Bethlehem (5:2–5a); what is good (6:8); compassion again (7:18–20)

Introduction to Micah

Reading Micah

One reclines on the grass. The other stands on a rock. The first lazily eats mutton and drinks wine. The other turns and watches the tree line at the edge of the field. The first snores. The other sees the lion coming.

Micah called out against the leaders of Judah and Israel (1:2), who indulged themselves. They did not see the problems that threatened their subjects, including the threat of exile for the daughters of Zion (1:16; 4:10; 5:7). Yet Micah also prophesied the coming of a faithful Shepherd, who would stand guard over His people and spring to their defense with the strength of a young lion. This Ruler would come from a shepherd's town (Bethlehem), ascend to the "tower of the flock" (David's palace/throne), and renew the kingdom. Micah's Shepherd is Jesus (5:2, 4; Mt 2:6).

Luther on Micah

The prophet Micah lived at the time of Isaiah. Micah [4:1–3] even uses the words of Isaiah 2[:2–4], and thus one notes that these prophets who lived at the same time preached almost the very same word concerning Christ, as though they had consulted one another on the matter.

Micah is one of the fine prophets who rebukes the people severely for their idolatry and constantly refers to the coming Christ and to his kingdom. In one respect he is unique among the prophets, in that he points with certainty to Bethlehem, naming it as the town where Christ was to be born [5:2]. For this reason he was famous under the Old Covenant, as Matthew certainly shows in chapter 2[:3–6].

In short he denounces, he prophesies, he preaches, etc. Ultimately, however, his meaning is that even though Israel and Judah have to go to pieces, Christ will yet come and make all things good. So, too, we now have to rebuke, denounce, comfort, and preach, etc., and then say, "Even though all be lost, Christ will yet come at the Last Day and help us out of all misfortune."

In the first chapter Micah is difficult, a fact to which the original Hebrew contributes. He makes numerous plays on words, such as *Zaanan* for *shaanan*, and *Achzib* and *Mareshah*, etc., twisting the words to give them an ominous meaning. It is as if I were to say, "Rome, you shall become a *room* full of emptiness"; or, "Wittenberg, you shall become a *weiter Berg*," etc. The grammarians will surely notice this and also observe the pains we have taken. (AE 35:324–25)

For more of Luther's insights on this Book, see *Lectures on Micah* (AE 18:205–77).

Challenges for Readers

Author's Identity. Some 13 biblical figures are named Micah/Micaiah. The writer of this prophecy, a contemporary of Isaiah, came from the village of Moresheth in the Judean foothills southwest of Jerusalem. His name means "Who is like the Lord?" but one could also ask, "Who is Micah?" because we know little more about him.

Relationship to Isaiah. Micah, from the countryside, seems to stand in the shadow of Jerusalem's great prophet Isaiah. They have many points in common, both in wording and in themes (cf Mi 4:1–5; Is 2:2–5), but their relationship to each other is not clearly understood.

Reproaches. The Lord's indictment of Israel (6:1–4), traditionally used during the Easter Vigil, challenges God's people to see themselves in view of God's Law. Specifically, as it challenges and shames them for their faithless and thankless attitudes toward God who redeemed them from Egypt, it creates guilt and threatens punishment. The mention of God's redemption in proclaiming the Law seems strange, since we are usually proclaiming the Gospel when we mention God's redemption.

Blessings for Readers

Micah shows the important role that leaders play in families, congregations, and society in distributing God's blessings for us. As you study Micah, reflect on how your life and future depends on others and how God has placed people under your care or in your sphere of influence. See, ultimately, that all you have and all you are flows from His merciful goodness. Although we look to one another for help, there is no one like the Lord, who alone pardons iniquity and delights in steadfast love (7:18–20).

OUTLINE

The most natural outline is a tripartite one:

I. Prophecies of Doom against Various Cities (chs 1–3)
- A. Superscription (1:1)
- B. Invocation and Warning (1:2–4)
- C. Verdict against Samaria and Jerusalem (1:5–7)
- D. Lament (1:8–9)
- E. Assyrian Advance (1:10–16)
- F. Oracle of Woe (2:1–11)
- G. Interlude: Mercy for the Remnant (2:12–13)
- H. Conflict with False Prophets (ch 3)

II. Prophecies of Hope and Restoration (chs 4–5)
- A. Mount Zion (4:1–5)
- B. Kingdom Restored to Zion (4:6–13)
- C. Shepherd Prophecy (5:1–5a)
- D. Shepherds and the Remnant of Jacob (5:5b–15)

III. Renewed Prophecies of Doom, Ending with Restoration (chs 6–7)
- A. Reproaches against God's People (6:1–8)
- B. Guilty Verdict (6:9–16)
- C. Micah's Lament (7:1–6)
- D. Confidence in the Lord's Deliverance (7:7–17)
- E. Doxology of God's Mercy (7:18–20)

- Justice and Poverty

- Prophecy Foreshadows the Appearing of Christ
- The Bible, Reformation, and Mission

Justice and Poverty

The OT contains more legal and prophetic material about the poor and the powerless than any other societal problem. In both narrative and prophetic texts, a strong relationship exists between righteousness—the cornerstone of the Christian doctrine of justification—and justice. In Hebrew and Greek, *righteousness* and *justice* share root words. As justified believers—made right with God entirely through Jesus Christ—our attitude toward and treatment of the poor is a fundamental justice question. Questions of justice inevitably flow from the faith of the justified ones. God says to His people, "Therefore I command you, 'You shall open wide your hand to your brother, to the needy and to the poor, in your land' " (Dt 15:11). When the weak are oppressed and the needs of the poor come to God's attention, the psalmist writes that God "will now arise … I will place him in the safety for which he longs" (Ps 12:5).

More than half of Jesus' parables (17 of the 29 in the Synoptic Gospels) concern money. These parables lay out the perils of misplaced priorities; they are stories of the disordered, upside-down lives of people whose long-term "investments" expire prematurely. Jesus urges his disciples to invest in the Kingdom, in God's people, in those who are poor and needy in the eyes of the world. Followers of Jesus stock up on true righteousness and justice, rather than on riches that rust or fade away.

God's Word addresses situations that sound similar to our modern context (cf Dt 15:7; 24:14, 17). … In Ps 41:1, we hear a beatitude of brotherly love: "Blessed is the one who considers the poor!" In any society, there will be those who are too weak to "make it"—those who aren't strong or resilient enough, who aren't skilled or tough-willed, who lack the "right stuff" or the right connections. Such individuals often are marginalized. We see, all too clearly, where they stand. The question is Where do we stand? Do we stand with them? …

As God's redeemed people, we have the calling—and opportunity—to be openhanded and tenderhearted toward those in need, not hard-hearted and tightfisted.

Adapted from John Nunes, *Voices from the City* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1999), 34–36.

Prophecy Foreshadows the Appearing of Christ

Kinds of Prophesying: Direct Description of Events or Persons (Rectilinear)

Foretell (examples of OT prediction): Christ born at Bethlehem: Micah states that the new ruler of Israel would be born in Bethlehem (Mi 5:2). Matthew records that the Jewish scribes plainly understood this prophecy about the Messiah (Mt 2:4–6).

Forth-tell (examples of OT preaching): Angel of Yahweh: Jesus Himself preached to the people of the OT, appearing to them at times as the Angel of the Lord (e.g., Jgs 2:1–5). See p 1227.

Kinds of Prophesying: Symbolism for Events or Persons (Typology)

Foretell (examples of OT prediction): Passover Lamb: When God gave the Passover feast to Israel, He gave them something more than rules of sacrifice (Ex 12). He gave them a prophecy about Jesus. Jesus was arrested and tried on the same day the lambs were sacrificed (Jn 19:14). The death of the lambs to rescue the Israelites from punishment anticipated what God would do through the death of Christ, the Lamb of God (Jn 1:29).

Forth-tell (examples of OT preaching): Priesthood of Christ: In Ps 110, the heavenly Father proclaims the rule of an eternal priest and king. This psalm preaches Christ's work of salvation already in the OT.

The Bible, Reformation, and Mission

Luther lives and thinks with the Bible. Holy Scripture is a book that has transferred its message from the close quarters of the people of Israel into the wider ethnic world. It is a missionary book. [Cf Am 9:12; Jnh 1:16; 3:5, 10; 4:11; Mi 4:1–3; 5:4–5a; 7:11, 17; Zep 3:9; Zec 2:11; 3:10; 8:20; 9:7, 10; 14:16; Mal 1:11.] This could not but have an influence on Luther because of his intensive study of this Scripture. Consequently, Luther takes the missionary witness of every Christian so much for granted that he himself attests to it even where the text itself does not address it. Nearness to Scripture also means for Luther that the missionary expansion, which occurred in biblical times, is neither past nor complete. Instead, it is a living, contemporary, and personal reality of life. From the impact of the biblical message of Law and Gospel on his own person, Luther, who lived outside the biblical geography, professes unequivocally that if it is meant for him, then also all people without exception are in need of this preaching and should hear it. …

Missionary opportunities present themselves, therefore, even in the immediate vicinity. A Christian must at anytime be prepared to lead other people to Christ. Every Divine Service is endowed with a missionary dimension. The whole life of a Christian in the ordinary way he conducts himself possesses a testimonial character because there are always people around that have still not recognized Christ. …

Luther looks at mission as a fundamental life expression of the church, not as some sort of special undertaking that needs to be specially organized. The history of the Christian church, which has existed since the promise to Adam and Eve and which will exist and work until Judgment Day, is identical with the history of the transmissions of the message through missionary proclamation. When Christianity is seen as the original and most ancient religion, the other religions do not appear as neutral territory that has not been reached by the Christian message, but as paths that lead away or deviate from the true religion or that establish themselves in revolt against the Christian faith. …

[Luther] realized that the proclamation of the Gospel was unconditionally necessary for all people without exception. The simple chain of thought: “If

He is to be their God, then they must know Him and believe in Him; if they are to believe, then they must first hear His Word; then preachers must be sent who will proclaim God's Word to them" [AE 14:9] incites undeniably a mission activity. With the Reformation's doctrine of justification, the chruch is at the same time made aware of its missionary mandate. It is no coincidence that the Lutheran renewal in the [nineteenth] century called forth new missionary endeavors everywhere. …

Reformation and mission are not strangers to each other. They are conditioned upon each other, and in both cases it enters deeply into the same thing: The saving message of Christ is given to otherwise lost, sinful people. Just as reformation is always service to the whole church, so also mission is always service to all humanity. Luther desires to make this universal view clear. The Gospel does not belong in a corner, and Christ is Lord of everything.

The last verse of his chorale "Dear Christians, One and All Rejoice" brings this fusion of mission and reformation to expression with poetic precision, when it finally, with the view on the mission, says, "so that the kingdom of God is increased" and immediately appends the Reformation's warning, "But watch lest foes with base alloy, the heav'nly treasure should destroy."

Volker Stolle, *The Church Comes from All Nations*, trans. Klaus Detlev Schulz and Daniel Thies (St. Louis: Concordia, 2003), 13, 41, 75, 104, 106.

Footnotes

Footnotes for Micah, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:2 Hebrew *all of them*
- [1] 1:14 Or *give dowry*

Footnotes for Micah, Chapter 2

- [2] 2:3 The same Hebrew word can mean *evil* or *disaster*, depending on the context
- [1] 2:7 Hebrew *Has the spirit of the* LORD *grown short?*
- [2] 2:8 Or *returning from war*

Footnotes for Micah, Chapter 3

- [3] 3:2 Hebrew *from off them*

Footnotes for Micah, Chapter 4

- [1] 4:2 Or *teaching*
- [2] 4:10 Or *push*
- [1] 4:13 Hebrew *devote to destruction*

Footnotes for Micah, Chapter 5

- [2] 5:1 Ch 4:14 in Hebrew
- [3] 5:1 That is, city
- [4] 5:2 Ch 5:1 in Hebrew

Footnotes for Micah, Chapter 6

- [1] 6:7 Or *Will the* LORD *accept*
- [2] 6:8 Or *steadfast love*
- [3] 6:9 The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain
- [4] 6:10 Or *Are there still treasures*
- [5] 6:12 Hebrew *whose*
- [1] 6:16 Hebrew *For the statutes of Omri are kept*
- [2] 6:16 Hebrew *its*

Footnotes for Micah, Chapter 7

- [3] 7:5 Hebrew *bosom*
- [1] 7:12 Hebrew *he*
- [2] 7:14 Hebrew *of Carmel*
- [3] 7:15 Hebrew *him*
- [4] 7:19 Hebrew *their*

Study Notes

MICAH—NOTE ON 1:1 *word of the* LORD *that came*. God revealed His divine message to the prophet Micah. See p 1080. *Micah*. Common name; it means "Who is like the Lord?" See p 1486. Jeremiah refers to him as prophesying in the days of Hezekiah (Jer 26:18). *Moresheth.* Probably located near Gath (v 14), southwest of Jerusalem. See color map 1. *kings of Judah*. Jotham (750–735 BC), Ahaz (735–715 BC), and Hezekiah (715–686 BC). Micah was a contemporary of Isaiah and Hosea. *saw*. Suggests that the word came to Micah in the form of visions (Hab 1:1). *Samaria and Jerusalem.* Capitals of the Northern and Southern Kingdoms, Israel and Judah. The two cities are representative of the two nations (v 5). See color map 1.

MICAH—NOTE ON 1:2 *all of you*. The Lord addressed all nations. All people need to realize that God's testimony against Samaria and Jerusalem applied equally to them. *witness*. Courtroom imagery. The peoples stand accused, and God gives witness as their accuser. *His holy temple*. Probably refers to God's heavenly habitation rather than to the earthly temple (Ps 18:6).

MICAH—NOTE ON 1:3–4 Imagery of earthquake and storm (cf Ex 19:16–18; Ps 18:7–12) portrays the Lord's awesome arrival to judge the nations. All creation will tremble before Him. *high places.* Tops of the mountains.

MICAH—NOTE ON 1:5 God will appear in judgment to punish the house of Israel (Jacob), which was not exempt from His universal verdict: guilty (v 2). Capital cities were most responsible for these transgressions. *high place*. Hilltops or elevated platforms set aside for idolatrous worship (2Ch 28:25). Term is used here to condemn false worship in the Jerusalem temple. See p 526. Luth: "This expression 'high places' means altars. The sense, then, is this: 'I will uncover for you the sin of both Israel and Judah.' Israel sins in Samaria, Judah in Jerusalem. This is the source of every wickedness—namely, worship and sacrifices which God has not instituted and which the Word of God has not commanded. And here we see again—as we do in all Scripture—how it does not please God, and in fact, how He hates it, if we establish anything outside the Word of God, however good and holy it may appear" (AE 18:213).

MICAH—NOTE ON 1:6 *heap*. Ruin. Once-densely inhabited place would become open country, fit for planting vineyards. *uncover*. Destruction would be so complete that only city foundations remain. Term is associated with shame and exposing someone to nakedness (Lv 18:6–18; Ezk 23:10).
MICAH—NOTE ON 1:7 *wages ... fee*. God would destroy the wealth from fees paid for sacred prostitution at the temple of idols.
MICAH—NOTE ON 1:8 *lament and wail.* Prophet will weep over the sufferings of his people (Jer 9:1). *stripped and naked*. Public expression of profound grief and mourning. See note, Is 20:2. *jackals ... ostriches*. In the Bible, these two creatures, whose calls resemble the howls and groans of mourning, are often linked (Is 34:13; Jer 50:39).
MICAH—NOTE ON 1:9 *her wound is incurable*. Punishment would destroy even the temple city. *reached to the gate ... Jerusalem.* Fatal infection that began in Samaria spread unstoppably through the entire body of God's people.
MICAH—NOTE ON 1:10–16 Bible commentators describe the dirge here as difficult to interpret. Micah referred to many towns that are mentioned nowhere else in the OT and whose precise location is unknown. All of them are likely in the area where the prophet lived, southwest of Jerusalem. In the original Hbr, the names of the towns often suggested to Micah puns and plays on words. (See Luther's comments, p 1485.) One needs to imagine a conquering army marching from town to town spreading panic and consternation.
MICAH—NOTE ON 1:10 *Tell it not in Gath.* David said these very words as he grieved the deaths of Saul and Jonathan (2Sm 1:20). *Gath*. One of five chief cities of the Philistines and closest to the western border of Judah, not far from Micah's home (v 14). He does not want the Philistines to take pleasure in the suffering of God's people. *Beth-le-aphrah*. Lit, "house of dust." *roll yourselves in the dust.* Wordplay on town's name expresses mourning.
MICAH—NOTE ON 1:11 *Shaphir.* Means "beautiful." *nakedness and shame.* Suggests a beautiful woman, stripped and violated, being led away captive after military defeat. *Zaanan … do not come out.* Wordplay on town's name, which means "get out." *Beth-ezel.* Means "house at the side of." *standing place*. Location from which to resist attack.
MICAH—NOTE ON 1:12 *Maroth*. Play on Hbr words for "be bitter" and "be rebellious." *disaster ... to the gate of Jerusalem*. The Lord's judgment

from the heavenly temple (vv 2–3) ultimately reached the gate of the earthly temple (v 9).

MICAH—NOTE ON 1:13 *Lachish*. Fortress city 25 mi SW of Jerusalem, where horses and chariots were likely kept. *it*. Lachish was the starting point of Jerusalem's sin, perhaps referring to trust in armed force rather than in the Lord. See note, 2Ki 18:14. *daughter of Zion*. See note, Ps 9:14.

MICAH—NOTE ON 1:14 *parting gifts*. Probably the dowry (see ESV note), the parting gift a new bride takes with her to the house of her husband. *Moresheth-gath*. Micah's hometown (v 1). Sounds like Hbr word for "possession," or "dowry," suggesting that the residents of the city will be led into captivity. *Achzib*. Sounds like Hbr for "lie," or "falsehood"; hence condemning the town as a "deceitful thing." Probably located east of Moresheth.

MICAH—NOTE ON 1:15 *I will again bring a conqueror to you.* Possibly refers to Assyrian assault on Judah under King Sennacherib in 701 BC, when many towns were besieged and captured, though Jerusalem was spared (2Ki 18:13). *Mareshah*. Sounds like Hbr word for "possessor," "heir," or "conqueror." Located south of Moresheth (v 14). *glory of Israel shall come to Adullam*. When David was fleeing from King Saul, he hid in the cave of Adullam, located c 5 mi NE of Moresheth (1Sm 22:1). See map, p 534. Micah may be suggesting that Israel's royalty will be forced to escape to just such a hideout when the conqueror attacks Jerusalem.

MICAH—NOTE ON 1:16 *bald*. Drastic ritual expression of mourning (Is 15:2; Jer 47:5; Am 8:10). *bald as the eagle*. Likely describes a vulture, which has no feathers on its head or neck. *they*. The children. *exile*. Prophecy of the coming Babylonian exile after the fall of Jerusalem in 587 BC.

MICAH—NOTE ON **Ch 1** The Lord acts as the witness for the prosecution in the case against His sinful people represented by their capital cities, Samaria and Jerusalem. His coming is marked by dramatic signs in the creation, reminding us of what will happen on the Last Day. All the earth needs to take note of what happened to Israel and Judah. Our sinful actions are also witnessed by God and deserve wrathful punishment. God has shown the depth of His justice in Christ Jesus, who in love took on Himself God's just wrath so that we may stand holy and righteous before Him. • Lord Jesus, thank You for declaring me righteous and removing all fear of everlasting judgment against me. Amen.

MICAH—NOTE ON 2:1 Judgment on wealthy oppressors who spent the nighttime scheming how they could use their power to exploit their poor and weak neighbors. At daybreak, they began putting their ungodly plans into practice.
MICAH—NOTE ON 2:2 *covet.* Rich and powerful kindled God's wrath by breaking the Ninth Commandment (SC, p xxxvi). Their wickedness destroyed the social order in the land and took away the ability of families to provide for themselves. *inheritance*. See "portion," p 7.
MICAH—NOTE ON 2:3 *this family.* Oppressors. *devising disaster*. While the oppressors "devise wickedness" (v 1), the Lord planned to bring disaster on them. *cannot remove your necks*. Pictures people being led away, their necks collared under a yoke, bound for captivity after defeat (Jer 27:8; 28:14). *not walk haughtily*. Instead, they will be marched as slaves, legs shackled.
MICAH—NOTE ON 2:4 *In that day*. Day of God's judgment against those who have oppressed their fellow citizens. *taunt song*. Sung by enemies leading wealthy citizens into captivity, mocking their lament over lost possessions. *changes the portion*. Deprives the rich of their property. See p 7. *apostate*. Heathen outsiders such as the Assyrians, who took over the fields.
MICAH—NOTE ON 2:5 When exiles returned from captivity, their oppressors would not be among those who cast lots to divide the restored land.
MICAH—NOTE ON 2:6 Micah quotes the oppressors, who do not want to hear him preaching about sin, judgment, and future disgrace. See pp 1202–6.
MICAH—NOTE ON 2:7 *Should this be said*. First of four questions Micah addressed to his hearers, hoping to get them to examine their opposition to his preaching. *impatient?* Oppressors imagined that God's patience was infinite (Ex 34:6). *Do not my words … uprightly?* Those who follow God's will in their lives can expect to hear good words from Him.
MICAH—NOTE ON 2:8–9 Spirit of lawlessness had become prevalent among God's people, targeting peaceful travelers, women, and children. This directly violated God's commands (Ex 22:21–24).
MICAH—NOTE ON 2:10 *Arise and go.* Micah suggested that because of the evil in the land, it was best to leave. *uncleanness*. Land's holiness had been destroyed by sin. See p 300.

MICAH—NOTE ON 2:11 People who did not like Micah's preaching (v 6) would be happy with a "windy" preacher who told them lies and urged them to indulge in drinking. See notes, Pr 23:29–35.

MICAH—NOTE ON 2:12 *assemble ... remnant*. In contrast to conditions in Micah's day, the Lord speaks of a future time when He would gather the true Israel (Mt 10:6; Gal 6:16). See p 1080. *sheep ... pasture*. Remnant is likened to a flock of sheep, gathered in one place, with the Lord as their shepherd (Jer 23:3; Jn 10:1–16). Luth: "He now passes from the kingdom of Israel to the eternal, spiritual kingdom of Christ. You see, it was the custom of all the prophets—something we have seen earlier in those prophets whom we have interpreted—to prophesy first about the destruction of the people and about the external kingdom and then to pass over to the spiritual and eternal kingdom of Christ. This kingdom, they had prophesied, would come after the external kingdom was destroyed. It is very important to notice this in the prophets" (AE 18:227). See p 320.

MICAH—NOTE ON 2:13 *He who opens the breach*. Probably refers to how the Lord would free His people from captivity and lead them back to the Promised Land. *Their king*. Although the line of human kings ended when Jerusalem was captured by the Babylonians, the Lord will uphold His promise to David (2Sm 7:1–17). He Himself is the true King. See pp 1565–66.

MICAH—NOTE ON **Ch 2** Micah condemns the wickedness of the rich and powerful oppressors and proclaims the Lord's judgment against their covetous behavior. In mercy, God promises to gather a remnant out of Israel and shepherd them. Today, the Lord calls us to help our neighbors protect their house and possessions in fear and love. Jesus is our Good Shepherd, who gave His life to redeem us from sin and everlasting death. He has satisfied our most pressing needs and will free us from covetous desires. • Lord Jesus, my Good Shepherd, guide my feet in the way of Your Commandments. Amen.

MICAH—NOTE ON 3:1 *heads ... rulers*. Micah addressed the legal officials who acted as judges at the city gates (v 9; see p 792). *justice?* Impartial judgment. The very people who had the responsibility to understand and execute the law were abusing their authority by oppressing the powerless. See p 842.

MICAH—NOTE ON 3:2–3 *skin ... flesh ... bones*. Violent and gruesome imagery is a vivid metaphor for the way judges abused their authority. In

their greed, they were consuming their own people and destroying social harmony.

MICAH—NOTE ON 3:2 Cf Am 5:14–15 for proper behavior of judges.

MICAH—NOTE ON 3:4 *they*. Corrupt judges. *cry to the* LORD. Pray for help esp in time of trouble (Ps 50:15; 107:13). See "call," p 842. *hide His face*. God would not look with favor on their pleas for deliverance. *that time*. Time of God's judgment, when wicked leaders would experience God's wrath.

MICAH—NOTE ON 3:5 *prophets*. False prophets misled the people by telling lies. *who cry "Peace."* Jeremiah later voiced similar complaints about false prophets who promised peace (Jer 8:11). *something to eat*. False prophets' message was based on how well the people fed them (v 11).

MICAH—NOTE ON 3:6 Those who abused their prophetic office would totally lose their ability and privilege to speak the true Word of the Lord. They would experience a blackout of God's favor.

MICAH—NOTE ON 3:7 *seers ... diviners*. Those who claimed to be able to predict the future. See note, 1Sm 9:9. *cover their lips*. Gesture of uncleanness and mourning (Ezk 24:17, 22). *no answer*. Cf v 4.

MICAH—NOTE ON 3:8 *I am filled with power, with the Spirit of the* LORD. Micah, unlike the false prophets, was filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke a message that came from God. *transgression ... sin*. Micah's message offered no false security to Jacob (Israel) but proclaimed God's wrath and announced His justice. Luth: "He is boasting of his own power and boldness in the ministry of the Word which God has entrusted to him. It is as if he were saying: 'Although all the princes and priests resist me, yet I go on preaching because I must. I do not forsake the established office of teaching, no matter how much their frenzy rages against me. I pay no attention to any outward appearance on their part. I shall finish what I have started with God's help, even if I am going to be killed, because by the efficacy of the Spirit of the Lord I am filled with both power and a sense of justice. This "sense of justice" is that I am sure that I am teaching correct things. Therefore, even if the enemies of the Word of God threaten me with death, I pay no attention to it. The Spirit of the Lord is with me. He enlivens and comforts me.' Surely, to accuse so freely the princes and all those who are in positions of power and who rage against the truth is not characteristic of human boldness but of the boldness of the Spirit of the Lord" (AE 18:232).

MICAH—NOTE ON 3:9 *heads ... rulers*. Cf v 1.
MICAH—NOTE ON 3:10 *build*. According to archaeological evidence, much building was going on in Jerusalem during Micah's time. *blood … iniquity.* Parallel terms suggest oppressive practices such as forced labor and excessive taxes. See note, 1Ki 5:13.
MICAH—NOTE ON 3:11 *heads … money*. Judges, priests, and prophets abused their authority by giving false judgments, teachings, and oracles. They did this for personal gain, rather than carrying out their duties in the fear of the Lord and for the good of the people, esp for the protection of the needy in the land. *divination*. See note, Dt 18:10–11. *they lean on the* LORD. Despite their wickedness, the leaders acted as though they relied on the Lord, claiming that His presence in their midst guaranteed their security.
MICAH—NOTE ON 3:12 *Zion.* See p 844. *heap of ruins.* See note, 1:6. *wooded height.* Ground would go fallow after Babylonian forces conquered Judah and took its inhabitants into captivity. See note, Jgs 9:48. Micah's words were quoted about a century later by defenders of the prophet Jeremiah, who argued that he should not be killed for what he had spoken against the temple (Jer 26:16–19).
MICAH—NOTE ON **Ch 3** The very people charged by God to administer justice, to give sound teaching, and to preach His Word are abusing their authority for personal gain. Micah proclaims that God will refuse to hear their cry for deliverance when judgment comes. If we abuse our authority as parents, employers, pastors, or teachers, we kindle God's wrath and displeasure. When we serve our own interests at the expense of others, especially those who are powerless and needy, may we confess our sin and ask forgiveness. And as we have received God's mercy in Christ, may we show mercy by looking after the interests of others (Php 2:1–7). • Lord Jesus, save me from serving only my own needs. Give me freedom to look to the interests of the poor, the sick, and the powerless. Amen.
MICAH—NOTE ON 4:1–3 Nearly identical to Is 2:2–4. Micah envisions complete transformation of the conditions that existed in his day, described in chs 1–3. He pictures a time when all nations will cherish the Word of the Lord, a time of universal peace. This perfect future will be realized only in heaven.
MICAH—NOTE ON 4:1 *latter days*. Several of the prophets use expressions such as "at that time" (Zep 3:9) or "on that day" (Zec 13:1) when speaking of the future fulfillment of all God's promises. On that day,

the Lord will triumph over all His enemies. It will be a day of condemnation for unbelievers but one of salvation for God's people. *mountain of the house of the* LORD. In contrast with the description of the temple mount in 3:12, this mountain will become the very highest. *peoples shall flow to it*. See note, Is 2:2.

MICAH—NOTE ON 4:2 *come, and say.* Micah quotes the nations to show how eager they are to have the Lord teach them His ways. *walk in His paths.* God's teachings are put into practice (Ps 119:105). *law*. See p 971. Cypr: "The former law which was given by Moses was to cease. … A new law was to be given" (*ANF* 5:510).

MICAH—NOTE ON 4:3 *judge*. War will no longer be necessary to settle disputes and conflicts because the righteous Judge will preside over the nations. *beat their swords into plowshares*. The Lord will bring perfect peace. Iren: "The law of liberty … preached by the apostles … throughout all the earth, caused such a change in the state of things, that these [nations] did form the swords and war-lances into ploughshares, and changed them … for peaceful purposes" (*ANF* 1:512).

MICAH—NOTE ON 4:4 Agricultural imagery continues; people enjoy security and contentment, afraid of no one. What a contrast with present conditions in Micah's day.

MICAH—NOTE ON 4:5 *we will.* Words of an oath. See note, Nu 30:2. *walk in the name*. See p 7. Believers will respond to this glorious vision of heavenly bliss with their commitment of faithfulness to the Lord (Is 2:5). *forever and ever*. Common ending to prayers, as in the Lord's Prayer.

MICAH—NOTE ON 4:1–5 Micah prophesies of a time when the Lord will bring about His reign of peace and justice by bringing people from all nations to worship at His heavenly temple. In this world, there is much evidence of hostility, distrust, and conflict among various nations and cultures. Our Father provides the remedy for disunity by leading people to faith in Christ Jesus. As we are baptized into Christ, we are made into God's temple, and cultural and national hostilities are abolished (Gal 3:26–29). In heaven, we will experience this reality in its fullness. • Lord Jesus, thank You for teaching me Your way and for giving me brothers and sisters from every tribe, people, and language. Please bring all people into Your holy temple, so that they may receive Your justice, security, and peace. Amen.

MICAH—NOTE ON 4:6 *In that day*. See note, v 1. *assemble ... gather.* The Lord compares Himself to a shepherd gathering lost and hurting sheep

(2:12; Lk 15:4–5).

MICAH—NOTE ON 4:7 *remnant*. See p 1080. *the LORD will reign*. Prophecy is fulfilled in the just and merciful rule of Christ, who lives and reigns forever. See pp 1565–66. Luth: "Here is a clear and magnificent passage about the divinity of Christ. For this is the way David used to call Him who was going to sit upon his throne his Seed. Ps. 110. This passage Christ Himself quotes in the Gospel account (cf. Mark 12:36). So also here he calls Him Lord who is going to rule forever over His people on Mount Zion. It is necessary, then, that this be not a physical kingdom but a spiritual and eternal one" (AE 18:241).

MICAH—NOTE ON 4:8 *tower of the flock*. Jerusalem, a tower of security for the earthly flock of Israel before being destroyed, will give eternal security when it is made new (Rv 21:1–4). *daughter of Zion.* See note, Ps 9:14. *kingship*. Kingdom of David will be restored in the person of Christ, the Son of David (Mt 21:5, 9; Lk 1:32).

MICAH—NOTE ON 4:9 *Now.* Contrasts with "latter days" (v 1); also introduces v 11 and 5:1. *counselor*. Title for a king whose wisdom is borne out in policies that provide peace and security for the realm. *woman in labor?* Conveys present pain of the daughter of Zion (v 10).

MICAH—NOTE ON 4:10 *open country*. Dwelling in open country meant loss of security and companionship found in walled communities. *go to Babylon.* Prophecy fulfilled in 587 BC. *rescued … redeem*. The Lord would bring His people deliverance from captivity. Their earthly redemption prefigures the ultimate deliverance in Christ. See p 843.

MICAH—NOTE ON 4:11 *nations are assembled against you.* Military situation looked hopeless. *defiled*. Nations plot not only to defeat Jerusalem but also to desecrate the temple. See p 300.

MICAH—NOTE ON 4:12 *He has gathered them … to the threshing floor*. Day of Judgment is often compared to threshing grain, separating wheat from chaff (Is 41:15; Jer 51:33; Mt 13:30). Micah again uses an agricultural image.

MICAH—NOTE ON 4:13 *thresh*. Though the Lord Himself is the Judge of the nations (Rv 14:15–17), the people of Jerusalem are pictured as His agents. *make your horn iron*. Horn, symbol of strength, is made doubly strong to accomplish God's judgment. See "horn," p 842. *hoofs bronze*. In threshing, oxen trod down the grain with their hoofs, here made of metal.

See pp 422–23. *devote*. Wealth of the nations would be consecrated to the Lord in acknowledgment of His victory.

MICAH—NOTE ON 4:6–13 Micah proclaims the time when the Lord will gather His faithful people and reign over them as King. Though the nations assemble against Jerusalem, the Lord promises that in the end they will all be threshed out like grain. The forces of evil continue to rage against God's Church, but we have His assurance that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it (Mt 16:18; Rv 6:15–16). When we face difficult times, when the forces of the devil are lined up against us, we may be tempted to give up trusting that God is with us to guide and protect us. We can be certain of His gracious presence whenever we hear His Word and receive the body and blood of Christ. He will not leave us or forsake us. • Father, thank You for giving me Your Son, in whom I have life and security and peace. By the leading of Your Holy Spirit, I devote all that I have to Your service. Amen.

MICAH—NOTE ON 5:1 *O daughter of troops*. Pictures Jerusalem as a military base. *siege is laid.* Cf 4:11. *judge of Israel*. The king, not God's appointed judge. See note, Jgs 2:16. *strike ... on the cheek.* Insult emphasizing the king's helplessness (Ps 3:7; Lm 3:30).

MICAH—NOTE ON 5:2 *But you.* The Lord addressed this wonderful promise of a future ruler to a people and king whose situation seemed hopeless. *Bethlehem.* Birthplace of David and Jesus, 18 mi NE of Moresheth, Micah's hometown (1:1). See color map 1. When the Wise Men came to Jerusalem seeking the king of the Jews, they were directed to Bethlehem based on this passage. *Ephrathah*. City or region associated with Bethlehem. Jacob's wife Rachel was buried here (Gn 35:19). *clans*. See pp 54–55. Ephrathites were a small clan in the tribe of Judah (Ru 1:2). *for Me.* Promise of a Ruler accords with the Lord's own saving purpose. *coming forth ... ancient*. Origin of Israel's famous King David, born three centuries before Micah's day, was somewhat ancient. But the promised Ruler's origin was even more ancient, because He was begotten of the Father from eternity. See notes, Pr 8:22, 23. Luth: "He does not come forth first from Bethlehem after the Babylonian captivity but came forth a long time ago already. This is just the way John describes the divinity of Christ (John 1:1): 'In the beginning was the Word.' In his song, Ps. 90:2, Moses sings: 'From everlasting to everlasting Thou art God.' There Moses used the same expression that Micah uses here, that is: 'You did not begin with the world,

but, when the world began to be, You already were.' Christ also says about Himself: 'Before Abraham was, I am' (John 8:58)" (AE 18:248).

MICAH—NOTE ON 5:3 *give them up*. Before the promised Ruler would be born, God's people were left to suffer at the hands of their enemies. *she*. Refers to Mary. The One whom her labor brought forth healed the pain of the daughter of Zion (4:9–10). *return*. Spiritual return of all Israel, all believers (Rm 11:26). See p 1080.

MICAH—NOTE ON 5:4–5a *stand and shepherd*. Imagery of the king guiding and protecting his people was common (2:12; 4:6–8; Ezk 34:1–24). *strength ... majesty*. Qualities attributed to kings are here described as coming from the Lord. *to the ends of the earth*. All nations will ultimately recognize and acknowledge the authority of the Lord, and so there will be peace and security for the Lord's people (Php 2:10–11; Rv 11:15). *peace.* The Messiah is the Prince of Peace (Is 9:6; Lk 2:14).

MICAH—NOTE ON **5:5b** *Assyrian*. Micah's contemporaries responded to God's promise of a ruler by boasting of their ability to defeat this powerful nation located some 500 mi NE. In 701 BC, the Assyrian army under King Sennacherib invaded Judah and besieged Jerusalem (2Ki 18:13–17). *we will raise ... seven shepherds and eight princes*. Not meant as precise figures but to suggest a fairly large number of military leaders. See note, Pr 30.

MICAH—NOTE ON 5:6 *Nimrod*. Name of this "mighty man" (see note, Gn 10:8) was applied to Assyria. *entrances*. Troop movements at the borders would be blocked. *he shall deliver us.* Micah's hearers understood that the promised Ruler (v 2) would assure earthly victory. They failed to foresee that this Ruler was coming to deliver them from all spiritual enemies.

MICAH—NOTE ON 5:1–6 The Lord did not guarantee that the city of Jerusalem would escape capture, but He did promise a ruler from the house of David who would bring lasting peace and security. The Lord has not promised us victory over all our earthly enemies, but He has given us victory over sin, death, and the power of the devil through Jesus, the Son of David, born at Bethlehem in "the fullness of time" (Gal 4:4). He is our mighty fortress (*LSB* 656). • "Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1Co 15:57). Alleluia!

MICAH—NOTE ON 5:7 *remnant*. See p 1080. *like dew ... like showers*. Just as dew and showers are not dependent on human initiative, but are God's doing, so it is God's plan to disperse His people among the nations.

MICAH—NOTE ON 5:8 *like a lion*. Symbol of ferocious strength, esp of God's power over the nations (Is 31:4; Hos 11:10). See note, Am 1:2. God's people share in His power and are triumphant in the midst of their foes (Lk 10:19; 12:32).
MICAH—NOTE ON 5:10 *in that day*. See note, 4:1. *cut off*. The Lord will rid His people of all implements of war because they will not be needed when the Messiah reigns (v 5; Zec 9:10).
MICAH—NOTE ON 5:12 *sorceries … tellers of fortunes*. Attempts to manipulate divine power according to human will. See note, Dt 18:10–11.
MICAH—NOTE ON 5:13 *carved images*. Represented deities such as Baal, set up in shrines and high places, that even Israelites had worshiped. *pillars*. See note, Gn 28:18.
MICAH—NOTE ON 5:14 *Asherah*. Canaanite vegetation goddess and wife of Baal. Asherah images were usually wooden posts or trees that were seen as access points to the favorable presence of the goddess. See note, Ex 34:13.
MICAH—NOTE ON 5:7–15 The Lord is with His holy remnant (Is 4:3), even when we live in the midst of our enemies. We need not depend on human strength or seek help and direction from some other "divine" being. If we do, we are sure to falter and fail. When we take the Lord at His Word and depend on His might, we will be secure and at peace. God remains present with us even when we feel utterly abandoned to forces beyond our control, such as sickness and death. He uses such times to cleanse us from unbelief and lead us to a deeper trust in Christ Jesus. • Thank You, Father, for always being with me no matter where I find myself in life. Through Your Word and Sacrament, strengthen my faith in Jesus, and make me confident of Your help. Amen.
MICAH—NOTE ON 6:1 *Hear*. Micah turned his vision away from the future (chs 4–5) and directed the people to hear what God had to say to them (1:2; 6:2, 9). *plead your case before the mountains*. The Lord put Israel on trial and called on the mountains to be the jury. On court proceedings, see p 792.
MICAH—NOTE ON 6:2 *indictment*. The Lord, as plaintiff, charged Israel with failure to do what He required (v 8).
MICAH—NOTE ON 6:3 The Lord's questions ironically suggested that possibly He was at fault for Israel's failures.

MICAH—NOTE ON 6:4–5 The Lord reminded His people of four specific examples of His saving acts: He (1) redeemed them from Egypt; (2) provided excellent leaders; (3) guarded from harm; (4) led them into the Promised Land.
MICAH—NOTE ON 6:4 *redeemed*. See p 843.
MICAH—NOTE ON 6:5 *Balak king of Moab ... Balaam.* Balak hired Balaam to curse Israel, but the Lord forced him to bless Israel instead (Nu 22–24). *Shittim to Gilgal.* Locations on the eastern and western sides of the Jordan River, which Israel crossed to enter Canaan (Jsh 3:1; 4:19). See color map 1; see also p 250.
MICAH—NOTE ON 6:1–5 The Lord's indictment of Israel is based on the evidence of His saving acts. Yet by their sins, the people acted as though serving the Lord wearied them. When we think and speak as though God wants to rob us of joy in life, we treat God as our oppressor. We forget His saving acts on our behalf: creation, redemption, and sanctification. The Lord comes to us in His Word, calling us to repentance. The Holy Spirit moves us to confess our sins and trust Jesus for pardon and renewal. • Father, thank You for the love You have shown me in Your Son. By the leading of Your Holy Spirit, may I live each day recalling the great things You have done for me. Amen.
MICAH—NOTE ON 6:6–8 Character of the offerings goes from common to extraordinary to absurd. Some interpreters have argued from this passage that Israelite offerings originally included child sacrifice, commonly practiced by other nations. However, such an interpretation fails to appreciate the prophet's rhetoric.
MICAH—NOTE ON 6:6 *come before the* LORD. In response to the Lord's indictment, an individual asks what the Lord requires. The four questions, in ascending scale of value, refer to some ritual performance. *bow*. See p 1276. *calves a year old?* Burnt offering prescribed by God's law (Lv 9:3).
MICAH—NOTE ON 6:7 *thousands of rams.* When King Solomon dedicated the temple, countless animals were sacrificed (1Ki 8:5, 63). *rivers of oil?* Oil was poured on grain offerings (Lv 2:1). *my firstborn*. Israel was forbidden to sacrifice children (Dt 18:10), something their heathen neighbors did (2Ki 21:6). See pp 170–71.
MICAH—NOTE ON 6:8 *O man.* Micah directs each individual to the Word, where the Lord tells what He requires. *do justice.* To be fair and honest. See p 842. *love kindness.* Hbr *chesed,* emphasizes a love that is

loyal and steadfast. See "steadfast love," p 843. *walk humbly.* To be modest and reverential, always conscious of one's dependence on the Lord. See p 7. Luth: "God requires no good works from us for Himself; He wants everything to yield to the use and welfare of our neighbor. The glory of such works is enough for God. Faith is the beginning of justification, as all Scripture reveals. Being justified by faith, we neither can nor should offer anything to God other than the sacrifice of praise; that is, that we bear witness with our preaching of the grace we have received, that we magnify God, that we preach His glory, and do this preaching through the Gospel. These are the 'fruits of our lips,' Hos. 14:2. Then let us show mercy to our neighbor" (AE 18:261).

MICAH—NOTE ON 6:6–8 The Lord has clearly revealed in His Word what He requires of us. Our problem is not a failure to know but a failure to do. We "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Rm 3:23). God showed His steadfast love for us by the sacrifice of His Son on the cross. We are "justified by His grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Rm 3:24). The Holy Spirit leads redeemed sinners to walk in justice, kindness, and humility. • Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world. Grant us peace and love toward our neighbors. Amen.

MICAH—NOTE ON 6:9 *city*. Sins described in vv 10–12 were more common in the city. Perhaps Jerusalem is intended. *sound wisdom to fear Your name*. Micah interjected a word of advice to the people. See p 1001. *Hear.* Exhortation of vv 1–2 was repeated because the Lord will again be speaking. *rod*. Micah had reminded the people of what the Lord required (v 8). Now they will hear from the Lord how the rod of His punishment will fall on them because they failed to do good. See note, Pr 10:13.

MICAH—NOTE ON 6:10 *treasures of wickedness*. Money, land, and possessions gained by unjust business practices. *scant measure*. Deceptively lighter weights (v 11) were used by sellers to cheat buyers.

MICAH—NOTE ON 6:11 *bag of deceitful weights?* Merchants tied their own weights to their belts.

MICAH—NOTE ON 6:12 People grew rich by means of dishonesty, violence, and lies.

MICAH—NOTE ON 6:13 *grievous blow*. The rod of the Lord would strike those who sinfully oppressed the poor and weak. The image refers to drought or blight.

MICAH—NOTE ON 6:14–15 The Lord inflicted a "futility curse" on the people, which prevented them from ever being satisfied or enjoying the fruits of their labors (Hos 8:7; Am 5:11). Cf Dt 28.

MICAH—NOTE ON 6:16 *Omri ... Ahab*. Father and son, kings of Israel (885–853 BC) whose wickedness became proverbial (1Ki 16:25, 30). *walked in their counsels.* Rather than walking humbly with God (v 8), Micah's hearers followed the example of these wicked kings. *you.* The Lord probably has the city in mind (v 9). *hissing*. Inhabitants of the city would be objects of derisive hissing.

MICAH—NOTE ON 6:9–16 God would punish the wickedness of powerful city people. They would be cursed, not blessed, and be derided and condemned. Whoever breaks God's laws, especially by using positions of power to exploit the weak, will ultimately face God's judgment. Our sins may not match all that the Lord here condemns, but none of us is innocent in His sight. To walk humbly with our God means to repent daily of our sins and cling to His grace and mercy in Christ. • Lord Jesus, cleanse me from all evil, and give me strength to care for those who are weak and powerless in our world. Amen.

MICAH—NOTE ON 7:1 *Woe is me!* Micah lamented the sad spiritual decay of the house of Jacob (2:7–10). *no cluster to eat*. Just as one finds nothing to eat after the harvest is completed, so Micah searched in vain for any righteous person in the land.

MICAH—NOTE ON 7:2 *there is no one upright*. Micah's pessimistic assessment was shared by Paul (Rm 3:10–12, quoting Ps 14:3). See note, Jb 1:1. Ambr: "Let us, then, mourn for a time, that we may rejoice for eternity. Let us fear the Lord, let us anticipate Him with the confession of our sins, let us correct our backslidings and amend our faults" (*NPNF* 2 10:352). *lie in wait for blood*. People prey on one another, committing acts of violence for their own gain. *a net*. Hunting metaphor picturing how one person trapped another. See note, Ps 91:3.

MICAH—NOTE ON 7:3 *evil, to do it well.* People excelled in the art of doing evil. *great man*. The leader should be expected to set a good example. *utters the evil*. What formerly was unspoken is now discussed and planned openly. *weave it together*. Like spiders, the wicked weave webs to tangle the weak and unwitting.

MICAH—NOTE ON 7:4 Even the most upright of the leaders were like plants that not only fail to bear good fruit but also snare and entangle

anyone who comes close. *watchmen*. Prophets who warned of the coming day of the Lord (Jer 6:17; Hos 9:8). See notes, Is 21:6–12.
MICAH—NOTE ON 7:5–6 A time of universal suspicion when no one could be trusted. Jesus used similar words to describe a consequence of His ministry (Mt 10:35–36).
MICAH—NOTE ON 7:7 *I will look to the* LORD. As bad as the sinful conditions were in the land, Micah continued to trust in the Lord's salvation. *salvation*. See p 843.
MICAH—NOTE ON 7:8 *me*. Speaker is no longer Micah, but the repentant house of Jacob (4:2; 5:7–8). *enemy.* The devil and all the forces of evil. *fall … rise.* Israel certainly did fall, but a remnant would rise (Ezk 37:1–14).
MICAH—NOTE ON 7:9 *bear the indignation*. Sincere repentance expresses willingness to bear punishment for sins. The Judge determines what is best for the sinner. *I have sinned.* Confession is similar to those of King David and the prodigal son (Ps 51; Lk 15:21). *He pleads my cause*. God had challenged His people to plead their case (6:1). Now they look to Him to plead their cause. See note, Jb 13:8. *bring me out*. God will lead His people out of sin's captivity.
MICAH—NOTE ON 7:10 *Where is the* LORD *your God?* Shame will cover the faces of those who had mocked Israel's hope in the Lord (Ps 42:3). *mire*. Waste was commonly dumped in the streets, which were seen as public sewers (cf 1Sm 25:22, 34 KJV; 1Ki 14:10–11 KJV).
MICAH—NOTE ON 7:11 NT Israel—the Church—reaches to the end of the earth (Ac 1:6, 8; Gal 6:16).
MICAH—NOTE ON 7:12 *In that day.* Cf 2:4; 4:6; 5:10. *they*. Remnant of God's people, dispersed in many lands, will be gathered into one flock (2:12; Jn 10:16). *River*. The Euphrates.
MICAH—NOTE ON 7:13 In contrast to the gathering of God's people, the earth's wicked inhabitants will suffer punishment for their sins.
MICAH—NOTE ON 7:14 *Shepherd Your people with Your staff*. God's people called on Him to protect and guide them so that they might live in security, without fear of attack from their enemies (Ezk 34:11–16). *inheritance*. Common OT description of Israel to emphasize how special they were (Ps 79:1). See "portion," p 7. *dwell alone*. Such a lost person needs to be found by a good shepherd (Lk 15:1–7). *Bashan and Gilead.* Lands east of the Sea of Chinnereth and Jordan River, noted for fertile pastures. See color map 2.

MICAH—NOTE ON 7:15 *As in the days*. The Lord responded to His people's prayer by promising a new exodus, with deeds more wonderful than the first. *marvelous things*. Foreshadows the birth of God's Son, His resurrection from the dead, and the spread of the Gospel into all the world.

MICAH—NOTE ON 7:16 *ashamed*. Nations will stand dumbstruck before God's saving power. *hands on their mouths*. Sign of amazement. Luth: "So great will be the course of the Gospel and of this new kingdom, so broadly will it extend, that it will even reach the heathen, who will see the miracles of Christ and of the apostles. They will see so great a power of the Spirit in those miracles that they will become ashamed and quickly cease to trust further in the arm of the flesh. No longer will they glory in their own strength and in the righteousnesses of the flesh in which they used to trust. Rather, they will glory in this, 'that they have known Me,' Jeremiah 9:24" (AE 18:275).

MICAH—NOTE ON 7:17 *lick the dust*. Picture of humiliation and defeat. See note, Is 49:23. *turn in dread*. The once-haughty nations will fear divine judgment. See "turn," p 1080. *fear*. See p 1001. Cypr: "The foundation and strength of hope and faith is fear [of the Lord]" (*ANF* 5:539).

MICAH—NOTE ON 7:1–17 At the time of Micah's ministry, there was corruption and dissolution in the public and private spheres of life. Yet the prophet spoke of a coming time when God would gather His dispersed people and vindicate them before the nations. Through Word and Sacrament, God continues to gather people into His kingdom, people who confess their sins and look to Him for salvation. What a privilege to be part of God's inheritance and a witness to His saving power! • Come, Holy Spirit, and give me the joy of salvation. Make me an eager witness of the Gospel. Amen.

MICAH—NOTE ON 7:18 *Who is a God like You.* There is no God like the Lord, who reveals His glory in forgiving sins. The meaning of Micah's name, "Who is like the Lord?" is reflected in this question. *remnant of His inheritance?* Cf 4:7. See "portion," p 7; see also "remnant," p 1080. *steadfast love*. God's love differs from human love in that it never ceases (Rm 8:31–39). See p 843.

MICAH—NOTE ON 7:19 *tread our iniquities*. Military metaphor (cf v 10), picturing how totally God eliminates our enemy, sin. *You will cast all our sins*. Sincere confession of believers expressing their confidence that God

will remove their sins beyond retrieval, just as He removed the threat of Pharaoh's chariots.

MICAH—NOTE ON 7:20 Remnant of Israel was certain that God's faithfulness and steadfast love, sworn to their fathers, was effectual for them as well. Mary and Zechariah expressed this same faith in their songs (Lk 1:54–55; 72–73). *faithfulness … steadfast love*. See p 843. *from the days of old*. Because of what God has done in the past, believers are confident about the future (vv 14–15).

MICAH—NOTE ON 7:18–20 In this concluding hymn, the Lord's loving and forgiving nature is described, followed by a confident assertion of faith in Him. To know and trust such a God provokes in us a humble awe of our own unworthiness. With the tax collector in the temple, we are moved to pray, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner!" (Lk 18:13). • I hope in You, O Lord. Never leave me or forsake me. Amen.

Nahum

Nahum 1 | Nahum 2 | Nahum 3

- Introduction to Nahum
  - Overview
  - Reading Nahum
  - Luther on Nahum
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

1 [1] † An oracle concerning Nineveh. The book of the vision of Nahum of Elkosh.

God’s Wrath Against Nineveh

2 The Lord is a jealous and avenging God;
the Lord is avenging and wrathful;
the Lord takes vengeance on his adversaries
and keeps wrath for his enemies.
3 The Lord is slow to anger and great in power,
and the Lord will by no means clear the
guilty.
His way is in whirlwind and storm,
and the clouds are the dust of his feet.
4 He rebukes the sea and makes it dry;
he dries up all the rivers;
Bashan and Carmel wither;
the bloom of Lebanon withers.
5 The mountains quake before him;
the hills melt;
the earth heaves before him,
the world and all who dwell in it.

6 Who can stand before his indignation?
Who can endure the heat of his anger?
His wrath is poured out like fire,
and the rocks are broken into pieces by him.
7 The Lord is good,
a stronghold in the day of trouble;
he knows those who take refuge in him.
8 But with an overflowing flood
he will make a complete end of the adversaries,[1]
and will pursue his enemies into darkness.
9 What do you plot against the Lord?
He will make a complete end;
trouble will not rise up a second time.
10 For they are like entangled thorns,

like drunkards as they drink;
they are consumed like stubble fully dried.
11 From you came one
who plotted evil against the Lord,
a worthless counselor.

12 Thus says the Lord,
"Though they are at full strength and many,
they will be cut down and pass away.
Though I have afflicted you,
I will afflict you no more.
13 And now I will break his yoke from off you
and will burst your bonds apart."

14 The Lord has given commandment about you:
"No more shall your name be perpetuated;
from the house of your gods I will cut off
the carved image and the metal image.
I will make your grave, for you are vile."

15 [1] Behold, upon the mountains, the feet of
him
who brings good news,
who publishes peace!
Keep your feasts, O Judah;
fulfill your vows,
for never again shall the worthless pass
through you;
he is utterly cut off.

The Destruction of Nineveh

2 [1]† The scatterer has come up against you.
Man the ramparts;
watch the road;
dress for battle;[2]
collect all your strength.

[2]† For the LORD is restoring the majesty of Jacob
as the majesty of Israel,
for plunderers have plundered them
and ruined their branches.

[3]† The shield of his mighty men is red;
his soldiers are clothed in scarlet.
The chariots come with flashing metal
on the day he musters them;
the cypress spears are brandished.
[4] The chariots race madly through the streets;
they rush to and fro through the squares;
they gleam like torches;
they dart like lightning.
[5]† He remembers his officers;
they stumble as they go,
they hasten to the wall;
the siege tower[3] is set up.
[6]† The river gates are opened;
the palace melts away;
[7]† its mistress[4] is stripped;[5] she is carried off,
her slave girls lamenting,
moaning like doves
and beating their breasts.
[8]† Nineveh is like a pool

whose waters run away.[6]
"Halt! Halt!" they cry,
but none turns back.
9 Plunder the silver,
plunder the gold!
There is no end of the treasure
or of the wealth of all precious things.

10 Desolate! Desolation and ruin!
Hearts melt and knees tremble;
anguish is in all loins;
all faces grow pale!
11 Where is the lions' den,
the feeding place of the young lions,
where the lion and lioness went,
where his cubs were, with none to disturb?
12 The lion tore enough for his cubs
and strangled prey for his lionesses;
he filled his caves with prey
and his dens with torn flesh.

13 Behold, I am against you, declares the LORD of hosts, and I will burn your[1] chariots in smoke, and the sword shall devour your young lions. I will cut off your prey from the earth, and the voice of your messengers shall no longer be heard.

Woe to Nineveh

3 [1]† Woe to the bloody city,
all full of lies and plunder—
no end to the prey!

[2]† The crack of the whip, and rumble of the
wheel,
galloping horse and bounding chariot!
[3]† Horsemen charging,
flashing sword and glittering spear,
hosts of slain,
heaps of corpses,
dead bodies without end—
they stumble over the bodies!
[4]† And all for the countless whorings of
the prostitute,
graceful and of deadly charms,
who betrays nations with her whorings,
and peoples with her charms.

[5]† Behold, I am against you,
declares the Lord of hosts,
and will lift up your skirts over your face;
and I will make nations look at your
nakedness
and kingdoms at your shame.
[6]† I will throw filth at you
and treat you with contempt
and make you a spectacle.
[7]† And all who look at you will shrink from you
and say,
Wasted is Nineveh; who will grieve for her?
Where shall I seek comforters for you?

8† Are you better than Thebes[2]
that sat by the Nile,
with water around her,
her rampart a sea,
and water her wall?
9† Cush was her strength;
Egypt too, and that without limit;
Put and the Libyans were her[3] helpers.

10† Yet she became an exile;
she went into captivity;
her infants were dashed in pieces
at the head of every street;
for her honored men lots were cast,
and all her great men were bound in chains.
11† You also will be drunken;
you will go into hiding;
you will seek a refuge from the enemy.
12† All your fortresses are like fig trees
with first-ripe figs—
if shaken they fall
into the mouth of the eater.
13† Behold, your troops
are women in your midst.
The gates of your land
are wide open to your enemies;
fire has devoured your bars.

14† Draw water for the siege;
strengthen your forts;
go into the clay;
tread the mortar;
take hold of the brick mold!

15 There will the fire devour you;
the sword will cut you off.
It will devour you like the locust.
Multiply yourselves like the locust;
multiply like the grasshopper!
16 You increased your merchants
more than the stars of the heavens.
The locust spreads its wings and flies away.

17 Your princes are like grasshoppers,
your scribes[1] like clouds of locusts
settling on the fences
in a day of cold—
when the sun rises, they fly away;
no one knows where they are.

18 Your shepherds are asleep,
O king of Assyria;
your nobles slumber.
Your people are scattered on the mountains
with none to gather them.
19 There is no easing your hurt;
your wound is grievous.
All who hear the news about you
clap their hands over you.
For upon whom has not come
your unceasing evil?

Nahum

Overview

Author
Nahum the prophet

Date
c 663–612 BC

Places
Elkosh; Nineveh; Assyria; Judah; Israel; Thebes

People
Nahum; people of Judah; the king, nobles, and troops of Assyria

Purpose
The Lord fights for those who take refuge in Him

Law Themes
The Lord is jealous and avenging; Nineveh is destroyed

Gospel Themes
The Lord frees oppressed Judah; His Word and feasts are for His people

Memory Verses
The Lord's promise (1:7–8); good news for Judah (1:15); the Lord opposes Assyria (2:13)

Introduction to Nahum

Reading Nahum

Oxen lean into their yoke, slowly drawing a two-wheeled cart between the houses. The cart rattles under its burden as the crude wooden wheels roll over rocks and shards and soft patches in the street. Suddenly, hooves and eight-spoke wheels clatter behind the oxen. Chariots roll up the hill, as rein-lashing drivers and warriors shout for space on the streets. Their warhorses snort and toss their manes, closing rapidly on the oxen. The ox-driver goads his animals to move them aside and let the chariots race past so they can rush toward the battle lines.

The Lord promised Nahum that the yoke burdening Judah—the conquering Assyrian army—would soon be removed (1:13). Though the Assyrians had perfected the strategic use of their chariots, they would not overcome the Babylonians' attacks. The wood, leather, and wicker of the Assyrian chariots would race to their own destruction in the fires of war (2:3–4; 3:13). Nineveh, Assyria's proud capital, would fall as the Lord of hosts declared (3:1–7).

Luther on Nahum

The prophet Nahum prophesies about the destruction that the Assyrians were to inflict upon the people of Israel and Judah, as it was then actually accomplished by Shalmaneser and Sennacherib. This destruction took place because of the people's great sins. It was limited, however, in that the righteous remnant were to be preserved, as Hezekiah and those like him then experienced. Therefore it seems that Nahum came before Isaiah, or was at least his contemporary.

Next Nahum announces the destruction of the kingdom of Assyria, especially of Nineveh. While this city was very righteous in the time of Jonah, it afterward became full of wickedness again, and greatly afflicted the captives of Israel. Therefore even Tobit announces the final ruin of Nineveh's wickedness, and says, "Its iniquity will bring it to destruction." True to his name (for Nahum means *consolator*, or comforter,) he comforts God's people, telling them that their enemies, the Assyrians, shall in turn be destroyed.

At the end of chapter 1[:15], he talks like Isaiah 52[:7] of the good preachers who proclaim peace and salvation on the mountains, and bids Judah joyfully to celebrate. Though that can be understood to refer to the time of Hezekiah, after Sennacherib, when Judah was rescued and survived against King Sennacherib, nevertheless, this is a general prophecy referring also to Christ. It declares that the good news and the joyous worship of God, taught and confirmed by God's word, shall remain in Judah. Thus he is, and is properly called, a real *Nahum*. (AE 35:326)

For more of Luther's insights on this Book, see *Lectures on Nahum* (AE 18:279–315).

Challenges for Readers

Relevance. This prophecy against Assyria and Nineveh might easily be dismissed as irrelevant to people's lives today, as the events addressed here happened so long ago. However, Nahum dramatically illustrates how concerned the Lord is with human affairs, especially matters that affect the lives of His people, the Church.

The Angry Warrior. Nahum describes the Lord as a warrior (1:2–14), which may offend those who view God as only peace loving. Yet Nahum's description of the Lord agrees with other portions of Scripture (e.g., the exodus, the conquest).

Blessings for Readers

As you read this short prophecy, take note of how the Lord cares for His wayward people, calling them back to faithfulness and promising them aid. The Lord has good news for you too! Cling to the promises of His Word and His feasts (1:15), which pointed forward to the revelation of the Prince of Peace, Jesus.

OUTLINE

Title (1:1)
I. The Divine Warrior (1:2–15)
A. A Partial Acrostic Poem of the Lord's Wrath and Care (1:2–8)
B. Doom for Nineveh and Deliverance for Judah Are Announced (1:9–15)
II. The Future Destruction of Nineveh (chs 2–3)
A. Nineveh Besieged and Pillaged (2:1–10)
B. The Lion Taunt (2:11–13)
C. Woe to the City of Bloodshed (3:1–3)
D. The Sorceress-Prostitute Taunt (3:4–7)
E. The Comparison-with-Thebes Taunt (3:8–11)
F. Final Taunts (3:12–19)

Footnotes

Footnotes for Nahum, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:8 Hebrew *of her place*
- [1] 1:15 Ch 2:1 in Hebrew

Footnotes for Nahum, Chapter 2

- [2] 2:1 Hebrew *gird your loins*
- [3] 2:5 Or *the mantelet*
- [4] 2:7 The meaning of the Hebrew word rendered *its mistress* is uncertain
- [5] 2:7 Or *exiled*
- [6] 2:8 Compare Septuagint ; the meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain
- [1] 2:13 Hebrew *her*

Footnotes for Nahum, Chapter 3

- [2] 3:8 Hebrew *No-amon*
- [3] 3:9 Hebrew *your*
- [1] 3:17 Or *marshals*

Study Notes

NAHUM—NOTE ON 1:1 *oracle*. Hbr *massa'*, "burden." A divinely inspired message uttered by a prophet sent by God. God laid a heavy burden on Nahum's shoulders by calling him to speak a terrifying word of judgment against Nineveh. Oracles were most often spoken against a foreign power. *Nineveh*. Established by Sennacherib (704–681 BC) as the capital of the Assyrian Empire, it was located on the east bank of the Tigris River. See map, p 609. Excavation of its ruins near Mosul (in modern-day Iraq) revealed palaces with stone reliefs of the invasion and ruination of Judah in 701 BC. *book*. Lit, "scroll." Books of bound pages were not made until the first century. Nahum is committed to writing the entire message God revealed to him. No mention is made of the material on which Nahum is to write his Book, in contrast to Habakkuk, whom God commands to "write the vision" on tablets (Hab 2:2). *vision*. Hbr *chazon*. Occurs elsewhere in the titles of prophetic writings as a technical term for divine revelation (Is 1:1; Hab 1:1). *Nahum.* Little is known about the prophet. His name means "comforter." This suggests that his prophecy, a word of judgment against Nineveh, brought comfort to the people of Judah. *of Elkosh*. Location unknown, though most likely somewhere in Judah.

NAHUM—NOTE ON 1:2–3 Nahum unmistakably parallels the language of Ex 34:6–7 (cf Nu 14:18), where God reestablishes His covenant after He punishes Israel's idolatrous worship of the golden calf. But Nahum makes one significant change. In Ex 34:6, "slow to anger" is followed by "abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness." In Na 1:3, "slow to anger" is followed by "great in power." All that awaits wicked Nineveh is the raw power of God's judgment.

NAHUM—NOTE ON 1:2 *jealous and avenging*. God's jealousy means that He will tolerate no rivals; no one may steal His honor. He demands exclusive devotion (Ex 34:14; Dt 4:24). Because He is a jealous God, He aggressively executes vengeance against all wickedness and reveals His wrath and fury against His enemies. He is so possessive of His people that their enemies are His enemies.

NAHUM—NOTE ON 1:3 *slow to anger*. Hbr idiom (lit, "long of face") is aptly captured by the LXX translation, "long-suffering." It pictures divine restraint. *His way … whirlwind and storm, and the clouds.* Ominously

depicts God's vigorous movement, as He is preparing to take action in an outbreak of fury.

NAHUM—NOTE ON 1:4 *Bashan*. Transjordanian plateau, east of the Sea of Chinnereth. *Carmel.* Mountain jutting into the Great Sea south of Phoenicia. *Lebanon*. Mountainous range north of Phoenicia. These three locales in Israel's northern territory are known for their fruitfulness, with well-watered pastures and forested hills (cf Is 60:13; Jer 50:19). See color map 2.

NAHUM—NOTE ON 1:5 The violent convulsions and upheavals of nature picture how the physical world bows before God, who approaches in wrath and judgment against sin (Ps 29:3–9; Mi 1:4; Hab 3:6, 10).

NAHUM—NOTE ON 1:6 *the heat of His anger?* God consumes and utterly devastates those who rebel against Him, so hot is the fire of His wrath (Dt 32:22; Jer 7:20). Nahum uses four different Hbr words for "wrath" or "anger" in this verse. God's judgment is no mere slap on the wrist.

NAHUM—NOTE ON 1:7 *The Lord is good*. In striking contrast to the portrayal of God's anger is this assurance of His goodness to those who take refuge in Him. *stronghold*. Hbr *ma'oz*, place of safety or protection. It is used often to describe God's powerful and gracious protection of those who place their trust in Him (Ps 27:1; Jer 16:19; Jl 3:16).

NAHUM—NOTE ON 1:8 *darkness*. Used figuratively in the OT to characterize distress (Is 5:30), terror (Am 5:18, 20), mourning (Is 47:5), and perplexity (Jb 5:14). Nineveh will experience the terror of being pursued by God into the realm where the light of hope nowhere flickers.

NAHUM—NOTE ON 1:9 *trouble will not rise up a second time*. Assyrians are reminded of the finality of their destruction. No second destructive blow will be necessary.

NAHUM—NOTE ON 1:10 God's enemies, the Assyrians, are defenseless in their sinful preoccupations and drunken stupor. They will be burned out of existence (Is 5:24).

NAHUM—NOTE ON 1:11 *one who plotted evil*. Probably a reference to the Assyrian king Sennacherib, who had invaded Judah during Hezekiah's reign (Is 36:1). This "worthless counselor" plotted against the Lord, setting himself up for destruction.

NAHUM—NOTE ON 1:12 *they*. The Assyrians, whose military power was massive. *afflicted*. The Lord had allowed the Assyrian army to inflict

suffering on Judah, but now Nahum reveals that this oppression is over.
NAHUM—NOTE ON 1:13 *yoke*. Wooden crosspiece that fastened two animals together; figurative for oppression.
NAHUM—NOTE ON 1:14 *you*. Singular; the Assyrian king. *No more shall your name be perpetuated*. The Assyrian king Ashurbanipal (668–627 BC) expressly requested in his annals that his name be perpetuated through inscriptions. Such self-glorification will come to a shattering end. *carved image ... metal image*. Likely the images of deities such as Ishtar, the fertility goddess worshiped in Nineveh's temples. *vile*. Of little account (Hbr "you are trifling").

NAHUM—NOTE ON 1:15 The swift messenger who witnessed Nineveh's fall brings the good news that Judah's oppressor will no longer tyrannize or torment her. *peace!* In its fullest OT sense of well-being under God's blessing, which shall become a reality for God's people. With minor variations, Nahum's text reads like Is 52:7, which is later quoted by St Paul in Rm 10:15. Luth: "There is no other passage in this prophet which we can take as related to Christ except this one" (AE 18:295). *feasts*. Probably the three annual feasts of Passover, Weeks, and Booths (Dt 16:1–17; see pp 200–201). Ath: "With alacrity and zeal we should come to it, so that having begun joyfully here, we may also receive an earnest of that heavenly feast" (*NPNF* 2 4:519). *vows*. Pledges made by the people to the Lord (cf Lv 27; see p 7). *the worthless*. See note, v 11.

NAHUM—NOTE ON 1:2–15 Nahum foretells God's swift and final destruction of Nineveh and the Assyrian Empire. With mighty power, God executes His avenging wrath against His adversaries, who plot evil against Him and His people. As God mercifully delivered ancient Judah from Assyrian oppression, so He rescued us from sin, death, and the devil through the victory of our Lord Jesus Christ. • Gracious Lord, my stronghold in the day of trouble, fill me with confidence in Your power to save. Amen.
NAHUM—NOTE ON 2:1 *scatterer*. In light of v 13, the disperser of Nineveh's inhabitants is God Himself through the besieging army. *you*. Nineveh personified. *ramparts*. City fortifications. *dress for battle*. Proud and mighty Nineveh must prepare to receive some of her own medicine.
NAHUM—NOTE ON 2:2 *restoring the majesty*. The restoration of Israel's splendor finds its ultimate fulfillment in the NT Church (Ps 145:12; Eph

5:27). *branches*. God's people are a vineyard whose branches were stripped bare of fruit by ravagers.
NAHUM—NOTE ON 2:3 *red ... scarlet*. Colors may be taken literally or may refer to the blood of battle. *flashing metal*. Chariots, frightful instruments of warfare in Nahum's time, were covered with steel, which flashed in the sun. *cypress spears*. The wood of cypress trees was both strong and flexible, ideal for lances or spears.
NAHUM—NOTE ON 2:5 *remembers his officers*. Luther takes this to mean that the Assyrian king summons his officers to confront the enemy (AE 18:301). *siege tower*. Hbr term occurs only here in the OT and refers to a movable structure used for shielding those storming the city.
NAHUM—NOTE ON 2:6 *river gates*. Water gates holding back the river Khoser, which flowed through Nineveh. The invaders opened the gates, flooding the city and bringing down the palace.
NAHUM—NOTE ON 2:7 *mistress. S*ee ESV note. Perhaps a reference to the queen of Nineveh. *stripped*. Nineveh's inhabitants suffer public humiliation (cf Is 47:1–3, 5). *slave girls*. Maids serving their mistress. *beating their breasts*. Like someone beating a drum, these girls beat their chests as an expression of great mourning over the demise of their once-mighty city.
NAHUM—NOTE ON 2:8 *like a pool*. This once-flourishing city now has the look of a drained pond.
NAHUM—NOTE ON 2:9 Assyrian kings customarily inventoried booty taken from conquered cities. Nineveh had grown rich through the plunder of its foes, but now it is Nineveh's turn to be looted.
NAHUM—NOTE ON 2:10 Paralyzing fear overcomes the inhabitants of Nineveh. Nahum vividly describes the physiological effects of the reign of terror.
NAHUM—NOTE ON 2:11–12 *lions.* Assyrian kings in their annals and inscriptions often compared themselves to lions, ferocious in battle. The prophet uses this very imagery as a taunt and mocks Nineveh. The one-time predator has now become the prey. With this vivid comparison, Nahum intends to portray Nineveh's documented brutality as beastly.
NAHUM—NOTE ON 2:13 *you*. Nineveh. *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291. The Lord is described as the commander of armies to emphasize the truth that He alone is supreme in heaven and on earth. He acts in history to accomplish His sovereign purposes (Is 1:24). *young lions*. The Assyrian

king's subordinates, his officials and troops. *your messengers*. The Assyrian king Sennacherib sent his messenger to mock Jerusalem during the reign of Hezekiah (2Ki 18:17–37). Now Nineveh's pompous messengers are silenced for good.

NAHUM—NOTE ON **Ch 2** Nahum mockingly describes the sudden, devastating siege and capture of Nineveh, the city once known for its ruthlessness and cruelty. God will not leave unpunished those whose way of life is violence and force (cf Mt 26:52). God has revealed a different way, one of mercy and peace through His Son, the Prince of Peace. • Lord, guide our feet into the way of peace. Amen.

NAHUM—NOTE ON 3:1 *Woe*. Expression of warning (cf Hab 2:6, 9, 12); also used in lamentations. See p 1080. *bloody city*. Assyrian cuneiform tablets record such fiendish practices as the amputation of heads, hands, feet, ears, and noses, the gouging of eyes, and the flaying alive of conquered victims.

NAHUM—NOTE ON 3:2 Readers can imagine themselves in the midst of a battle, so vividly portrayed are the cracking of whips and the thunderous roar of chariots.

NAHUM—NOTE ON 3:3 Three different Hbr words are used to describe fallen corpses. These gruesome details dramatize the fierceness of God's wrath against the evil that filled Nineveh.

NAHUM—NOTE ON 3:4 *whorings ... charms*. Nineveh's victimization of other nations is compared to harlotry and sorcery (Ezk 16:15–22). Nahum may be alluding to the cult of Ishtar, the special goddess of Nineveh, whose rituals contained explicit references to sexual activity.

NAHUM—NOTE ON 3:5 *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291. *skirts over your face*. God will punish Nineveh by subjecting the city and its inhabitants to public disgrace, just as a prostitute's or unfaithful wife's nakedness is exposed to her shame.

NAHUM—NOTE ON 3:6 *throw filth*. Throwing detestable, unclean objects evidences God's total contempt for Nineveh. Such objects were readily found on foul city streets.

NAHUM—NOTE ON 3:7 Nineveh will experience the ultimate degradation: even her former lovers and friends will not stop to mourn her or comfort her.

NAHUM—NOTE ON 3:8 *Thebes*. Hbr *no' 'amon,* "the city of Amon," the Egyptian god. This magnificent capital city was located on the Nile River c

330 mi S of modern Cairo. See map, p 717. It fell to the Assyrians in c 663 BC, helping us date Nahum's prophecy. *water around her*. System of canals, lakes, and rivers surrounded the city and provided fortification against invaders.

NAHUM—NOTE ON 3:9 *Cush*. Nation located c 800 mi S of Egypt, ruled by the Twenty-fifth Dynasty of Nubia (716–663 BC). See color map 3. *Put ... Libyans*. Exact location of Put is uncertain, though possibly it is an alternate name for Libya, the region west of Egypt. *her helpers*. Combined power of Thebes's allies made the city seem invincible.

NAHUM—NOTE ON 3:10 *exile ... captivity*. Despite her seemingly impregnable position, Thebes was unable to withstand the bloody onslaught of the Assyrian army in 663 BC and was captured, her people deported. Nahum makes the point that if Thebes fell, so would Nineveh. *dashed in pieces*. Brutality against children, not uncommon in ancient conquests, was intended to terrorize the populace into submission and to ensure its complete destruction (cf Ps 137:9; Hos 13:16). *lots were cast*. Perhaps this selected which honored men should be executed and which were to be bound in chains.

NAHUM—NOTE ON 3:11 *drunken*. Nineveh is so helpless that she is compared to a drunken person who has lost his senses and is powerless to defend himself.

NAHUM—NOTE ON 3:12 *first-ripe figs*. Appearing in April, figs are a delicacy for those who have not had fresh fruit since the fall harvest. *if shaken they fall*. Nineveh's fortifications are "ripe for the taking" and will fall with relatively little effort.

NAHUM—NOTE ON 3:13 *troops are women*. Figuratively implying that the defenders lack strength, courage, and the will to resist.

NAHUM—NOTE ON 3:14 *Draw water*. Through the mouth of Nahum, the Lord mockingly commands Nineveh's defenders to store up water in preparation for the severe deprivation soon to follow. *go into the clay*. Strengthen the city fortifications by making sun-baked bricks. The circumference of Nineveh's city walls, built by Sennacherib, was c 7½ mi.

NAHUM—NOTE ON 3:15 *There*. Nineveh. *Multiply yourselves like the locust*. Taunting command suggesting that Nineveh increase its population like rapidly multiplying locusts. Of course, all these defensive efforts would be to no avail.

NAHUM—NOTE ON 3:16 *merchants*. Through its conquests and power, Assyria had become a center of commerce.
NAHUM—NOTE ON 3:17 *princes ... scribes*. Military and civic officials with leadership responsibilities in the city. *they fly away.* Nineveh's cowardly ruling class, like the merchants (v 16), take flight from the city in the heat of battle like a swarm of locusts that have been enlivened by the warm sun.
NAHUM—NOTE ON 3:18 *shepherds ... nobles*. Slovenly neglect of the rulers' assigned roles has caused their kingdom to collapse and the citizens to scatter.
NAHUM—NOTE ON 3:19 *your wound*. Addressed to the king of Assyria (*your* is masculine in Hbr), who suffered a fatal injury as the result of the destructive attack leveled against the city. In 612 BC, Nineveh fell to the combined armies of the Babylonians and the Medes. Her proud temples, palaces, and engineering wonders crumbled and were soon forgotten. *clap their hands*. Assyria's brutal tyranny over surrounding nations was widespread and well known. When news of the city's downfall is received, applause erupts everywhere as an expression of profound relief and joy. *For upon … evil?* Only two books in the Bible end with a question (Jnh and Na). Nahum's closing rhetorical question, soliciting the answer "none," forcefully vindicates God's righteous judgment against evil.

NAHUM—NOTE ON **Ch 3** For Nineveh, God's patience came to an end. The evil nation of Assyria that had tyrannized surrounding peoples, acquiring wealth and power at their expense, was overthrown, and it disappeared from the annals of history. God's wrath is revealed against all unrighteousness (Rm 1:18). Because of our sins, we also deserve His wrath and displeasure. Yet "God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1Th 5:9). God's wrath was poured out on Christ, and by faith in Him we have pardon and peace. • Lord, give us contrite hearts so that, trusting in Your mercy, we may know Your forgiving love. Amen.

Habakkuk

Habakkuk 1 | Habakkuk 2 | Habakkuk 3

- Introduction to Habakkuk
  - Overview
  - Reading Habakkuk
  - Luther on Habakkuk
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

1 [1] The oracle that Habakkuk the prophet saw.

Habakkuk's Complaint

2 O LORD, how long shall I cry for help,
and you will not hear?
Or cry to you "Violence!"
and you will not save?
3 Why do you make me see iniquity,
and why do you idly look at wrong?
Destruction and violence are before me;
strife and contention arise.
4 So the law is paralyzed,
and justice never goes forth.
For the wicked surround the righteous;
so justice goes forth perverted.

The Lord's Answer

5 "Look among the nations, and see;
wonder and be astounded.
For I am doing a work in your days
that you would not believe if told.
6 For behold, I am raising up the Chaldeans,
that bitter and hasty nation,
who march through the breadth of the earth,
to seize dwellings not their own.
7 They are dreaded and fearsome;
their justice and dignity go forth from
themselves.
8 Their horses are swifter than leopards,
more fierce than the evening wolves;
their horsemen press proudly on.
Their horsemen come from afar;
they fly like an eagle swift to devour.
9 They all come for violence,
all their faces forward.
They gather captives like sand.
10 At kings they scoff,
and at rulers they laugh.
They laugh at every fortress,
for they pile up earth and take it.
11 Then they sweep by like the wind and go on,
guilty men, whose own might is their god!"

Habakkuk's Second Complaint

12 Are you not from everlasting,
O LORD my God, my Holy One?
We shall not die.
O LORD, you have ordained them as a judgment,
and you, O Rock, have established them for
reproof.
13 You who are of purer eyes than to see evil
and cannot look at wrong,
why do you idly look at traitors
and remain silent when the wicked
swallows up
the man more righteous than he?
14 You make mankind like the fish of the sea,
like crawling things that have no ruler.
15 He brings all of them up with a hook;
he drags them out with his net;
he gathers them in his dragnet;
so he rejoices and is glad.
16 Therefore he sacrifices to his net
and makes offerings to his dragnet;
for by them he lives in luxury,[1]
and his food is rich.
17 Is he then to keep on emptying his net
and mercilessly killing nations forever?

2 1 I will take my stand at my watchpost
and station myself on the tower,
and look out to see what he will say to me,
and what I will answer concerning my
complaint.

The Righteous Shall Live by His Faith

2 ‡ ‡ And the Lord answered me:

“Write the vision;
make it plain on tablets,
so he may run who reads it.
3 ‡ For still the vision awaits its appointed time;
it hastens to the end—it will not lie.
If it seems slow, wait for it;
it will surely come; it will not delay.

4 ‡ “Behold, his soul is puffed up; it is not upright
within him,
but the righteous shall live by his faith.[2]
5 ‡ “Moreover, wine[3] is a traitor,
an arrogant man who is never at rest.[4]
His greed is as wide as Sheol;
like death he has never enough.
He gathers for himself all nations
and collects as his own all peoples.”

Woe to the Chaldeans

6 ‡ † Shall not all these take up their taunt against him, with scoffing and
riddles for him, and say,

"Woe to him who heaps up what is not his
own—
for how long?—
and loads himself with pledges!"
7 † Will not your debtors suddenly arise,
and those awake who will make you
tremble?
Then you will be spoil for them.
8 † Because you have plundered many nations,
all the remnant of the peoples shall plunder
you,
for the blood of man and violence to the
earth,
to cities and all who dwell in them.

9 † "Woe to him who gets evil gain for his house,
to set his nest on high,
to be safe from the reach of harm!
10 † You have devised shame for your house
by cutting off many peoples;
you have forfeited your life.
11 † For the stone will cry out from the wall,
and the beam from the woodwork respond.

12 † "Woe to him who builds a town with blood
and founds a city on iniquity!
13 † Behold, is it not from the Lord of hosts
that peoples labor merely for fire,
and nations weary themselves for nothing?

14 For the earth will be filled
with the knowledge of the glory of the
LORD
as the waters cover the sea.

15 "Woe to him who makes his neighbors drink—
you pour out your wrath and make them
drunk,
in order to gaze at their nakedness!
16 You will have your fill of shame instead of
glory.
Drink, yourself, and show your
uncircumcision!
The cup in the LORD's right hand
will come around to you,
and utter shame will come upon your
glory!
17 The violence done to Lebanon will
overwhelm you,
as will the destruction of the beasts that
terrified them,
for the blood of man and violence to the
earth,
to cities and all who dwell in them.

18 "What profit is an idol
when its maker has shaped it,
a metal image, a teacher of lies?
For its maker trusts in his own creation
when he makes speechless idols!
19 Woe to him who says to a wooden thing,
Awake;
to a silent stone, Arise!
Can this teach?
Behold, it is overlaid with gold and silver,

and there is no breath at all in it.
20† But the LORD is in his holy temple;
let all the earth keep silence before him.”

Habakkuk's Prayer

3 [1]†† A prayer of Habakkuk the prophet, according to Shigionoth.

[2]† O LORD, I have heard the report of you,
and your work, O LORD, do I fear.
In the midst of the years revive it;
in the midst of the years make it known;
in wrath remember mercy.
[3]† God came from Teman,
and the Holy One from Mount Paran.
His splendor covered the heavens,
and the earth was full of his praise. *Selah*
[4]† His brightness was like the light;
rays flashed from his hand;
and there he veiled his power.
[5]† Before him went pestilence,
and plague followed at his heels.[1]
[6]† He stood and measured the earth;
he looked and shook the nations;
then the eternal mountains were scattered;
the everlasting hills sank low.
His were the everlasting ways.
[7]† I saw the tents of Cushan in affliction;
the curtains of the land of Midian did tremble.
[8]† Was your wrath against the rivers, O LORD?
Was your anger against the rivers,
or your indignation against the sea,
when you rode on your horses,
on your chariot of salvation?
[9]† You stripped the sheath from your bow,
calling for many arrows.[2] *Selah*
You split the earth with rivers.
[10]† The mountains saw you and writhed;

the raging waters swept on;
the deep gave forth its voice;
it lifted its hands on high.
11 The sun and moon stood still in their place
at the light of your arrows as they sped,
at the flash of your glittering spear.
12 You marched through the earth in fury;
you threshed the nations in anger.
13 You went out for the salvation of your people,
for the salvation of your anointed.
You crushed the head of the house of the wicked,
laying him bare from thigh to neck.[1] *Selah*
14 You pierced with his own arrows the heads of his warriors,
who came like a whirlwind to scatter me,
rejoicing as if to devour the poor in secret.
15 You trampled the sea with your horses,
the surging of mighty waters.

16 I hear, and my body trembles;
my lips quiver at the sound;
rottenness enters into my bones;
my legs tremble beneath me.
Yet I will quietly wait for the day of trouble
to come upon people who invade us.

Habakkuk Rejoices in the Lord

17 Though the fig tree should not blossom,
nor fruit be on the vines,
the produce of the olive fail
and the fields yield no food,
the flock be cut off from the fold
and there be no herd in the stalls,
18 yet I will rejoice in the Lord;
I will take joy in the God of my salvation.
19 God, the Lord, is my strength;
he makes my feet like the deer's;
he makes me tread on my high places.

To the choirmaster: with stringed[2]
instruments.

Habakkuk

Overview

Author
Habakkuk the prophet

Date
c 605 BC

Places
The Lord's temple (Jerusalem); Chaldea; Lebanon; Teman

People
Habakkuk; the Chaldeans; all people

Purpose
The Lord shows that He works even through evil nations such as Babylon to accomplish His good purposes

Law Themes
Evil, which God permits to afflict His people; the need for patience; woes against drunkenness and idolatry; God's wrath

Gospel Themes
The Lord supplies patience; the righteous shall live by faith; God remembers mercy; faith and joy in the midst of trouble

Memory Verses
Habakkuk's complaint (1:2–4); a message for the arrogant and the righteous (2:2–4); a mercy prayer (3:2); rejoice always in the Lord (3:17–19)

Introduction to Habakkuk

Reading Habakkuk

A scribe's nimble hand carves a row of letters into a sheet of beeswax, which adheres to a pair of boards bound with leather strips. He pauses, awaiting his lord's next sentence—an order for the watchmen along Judah's western border. As the scribe waits, an evening breeze blows from the coast of the Great Sea and up the Judean hills to their high fortress, which guards against the Assyrians. At the doorway stands a messenger, ready to receive the tablets the moment they snap shut and to run the message to the next hilltop outpost.

The prophet Habakkuk
waited like a patient scribe
or messenger for a vision

the Lord promised him. As he waited, he needed the Lord's encouragement and patience (2:1–3). Habakkuk's style is unique among the prophets in that he never addresses God's people directly. Yet his message would apply very directly, then and now. His homeland—the kingdom of Judah—had suffered grave threats from the Assyrian Empire. When the Lord's message came to Habakkuk, it called the Judeans to sober humility and sincere faith (2:4–5). Though the Lord would destroy the Assyrians, He would raise up the Babylonians to chasten wayward Judah.

Luther on Habakkuk

This Habakkuk is a prophet of comfort, who is to strengthen and support the people, to prevent them from despairing of the coming of Christ, however strangely things may go. This is why he uses every device and stratagem that can serve to keep strong in their hearts the faith in the promised Christ. His message is as follows.

It is indeed true that because of the people's sins the lands shall have to be destroyed by the king of Babylon. But Christ and his kingdom shall not fail to come on that account. On the contrary, the destroyer, the king of Babylon, shall have little good out of his conquest, for he too shall perish. For it is God's nature and work to help when there is need and to come in the midst of the proper season. As Habakkuk's song says, "In wrath he remembers mercy" [3:2]; or as the proverb puts it, "When the rope holds tightest, it breaks."

In the same way we must support Christians with the word of God in anticipation of the Last Day, even though it appears that Christ is delaying long and will not come. For Christ himself says that he will come when men least expect it—when they are building and planting, buying and selling, eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage [Luke 17:27–28]—in order that at least some, though not all, can be preserved in faith. For in this matter preaching and believing are essential, as we see every day. …

Habakkuk certainly has a name appropriate to his office, for Habakkuk means an embracer, one who embraces another and takes him in his arms. This is what he does in his prophecy: he embraces his people and takes them in his arms. That is, he comforts them and supports them, as one embraces a weeping child or person to quiet and compose him with the assurance that things will go better, if God so will. (AE 35:327–28)

For more of Luther's insights on this Book, see *Lectures on Habakkuk* (AE 19:105–237).

Challenges for Readers

The Problem of Evil. Like the prophet Job, Habakkuk questioned why evil existed and why the Lord permitted evil to afflict His people (see pp 779–83). The Lord's answers may not completely satisfy our sense of fairness or goodness, since God's ways transcend ours.

Blessings for Readers

As you read Habakkuk, the Lord will call you to steadfast faith, even in the face of persistent evil. The Book describes how the Lord works through evil circumstances for our good, just as He worked through Jesus' suffering and death for our salvation. No matter what opposes you, take joy in the God of your salvation, who is your strength (3:18–19).

OUTLINE

Title (1:1)
I. The Debate between Habakkuk and God (1:2–2:5)
  A. The Argument about Divine Justice (1:2–11)
    1. Habakkuk's first complaint: lack of justice in Judah (1:2–4)
    2. The Lord's response: His plan for avenging evil (1:5–11)
      a. Preparations for retribution (1:5)
      b. Means identified as the Chaldeans (1:6)
      c. Chaldeans described (1:7–11)
  B. The Second Argument (1:12–2:5)
    1. Habakkuk's second complaint: how can God look on as "the wicked swallows up the man more righteous than he?" (1:12–2:1)
    2. The Lord's response: His rule is sure, and He will judge the wicked in His own time (2:2–5)
II. The Lord's Justice Is Certain: Woes to the Arrogant Oppressors (2:6–20)
  A. The Plunderer Plundered (2:6–8)
  B. The Fortified Dismantled (2:9–11)
  C. The Citizens Crushed (2:12–14)
  D. The Shameless Put to Shame (2:15–17)
  E. The Idolater Silenced (2:18–20)
III. Habakkuk's Psalm of Submission (ch 3)

Footnotes

Footnotes for Habakkuk, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:16 Hebrew *his portion is fat*

Footnotes for Habakkuk, Chapter 2

- [2] 2:4 Or *faithfulness*
- [3] 2:5 Masoretic Text ; Dead Sea Scroll *wealth*
- [4] 2:5 The meaning of the Hebrew of these two lines is uncertain

Footnotes for Habakkuk, Chapter 3

- [1] 3:5 Hebrew *feet*
- [2] 3:9 The meaning of the Hebrew line is uncertain
- [1] 3:13 The meaning of the Hebrew line is uncertain
- [2] 3:19 Hebrew *my stringed*

Study Notes

HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 1:1–4 Gr Naz: "[Habakkuk] utters more heated words, and is impatient with God Himself, and cries down, as it were our good Lord, because of the injustice of the judges" (*NPNF* 2 7:217).
HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 1:1 *oracle*. See note, Na 1:1. *saw*. God's revelation to Habakkuk evidently had some visual aspects.
HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 1:2 Addressing God directly, Habakkuk demands to know how long the Lord, who promises to hear the prayers of believers, will remain silent. Like Job (Jb 19:7), the prophet cries, "Violence!" (with regard to the injustice among His people), but his prayer for deliverance remains unanswered.
HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 1:3 *why do You idly look at wrong?* The prophet is deeply troubled because God seems to tolerate iniquity and wrong—things such as destruction, violence, strife, and contention—and does nothing about it. Sin and its results abound in the land. Habakkuk echoes the sentiments of many faithful people of God who wonder why God does not deal immediately and directly with the evil that surrounds them (cf Ps 73; Jer 12:1).
HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 1:4 *law is paralyzed*. From the prophet's perspective, the law has become ineffective because of the Lord's failure to act.

HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 1:2–4 Habakkuk experiences firsthand the oppressive policies of Jehoiakim, king of Judah (609–598 BC; 2Ki 23:36–37), and he feels surrounded by unchecked evil because of failure to enforce God's Law. Habakkuk grumbles against God. We need to remember that God hears our prayers and that, though we struggle when facing life's perplexing questions, nothing can separate us from His love (Rm 8:38–39).
• O Lord, teach me to be patient as You carry out Your will in my life in Your own good time. Amen.
HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 1:5 *I am doing a work.* The Lord's response to the prophet's complaint, addressed as well to the people of Judah, promises divine action.
HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 1:6 *I am raising up.* God is about to execute judgment against Judah through an enemy nation. *Chaldeans*. Aramaic group of tribes who appeared in lower Mesopotamia in the ninth century

BC and became one of the main elements in the neo-Babylonian kingdom founded by Nabopolassor (625–605 BC). Nabopolassor's son Nebuchadnezzar II (605–562 BC) rebuilt Babylon, solidified control over the Near East, and defeated Egypt at Carchemish all in the first year of his reign.

HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 1:7 *justice and dignity*. Sarcasm. The Chaldeans presumptuously and arrogantly demanded obedience and claimed superiority. God used this self-serving nation as the instrument of His judgment against Jerusalem, as incomprehensible as this may seem.

HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 1:8 *leopards … wolves … eagle*. The cunning, speed, and ferociousness of these ravenous creatures describes the lightning speed with which the Chaldean army pounced on Judah like a predator (Is 5:26–30).

HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 1:9 *faces forward*. Chaldean army is pictured as pressing forward for the kill. *like sand*. Innumerable.

HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 1:10 *pile up earth*. Earthen embankments were used as ramps to conquer walled cities. See note, 2Ki 18:14.

HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 1:11 *guilty men.* Again, incomprehensibly, a sinful nation that deified itself became the vehicle through which God acts within history to judge (cf v 7). *might is their god!* Luth: "Habakkuk separates Nebuchadnezzar's idol from the true God. … It is a false god whom we strive to please with our own efforts and works. However, the true God is the One who wants to help us" (AE 19:115).

HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 1:5–11 God's response to Habakkuk's complaint describes the powerful and arrogant nation that He will raise up to punish Judah for the sins in that nation's midst. Human beings dare never sit in judgment of God's ways, which are beyond human discernment (Rm 9:20; 11:33). We, however, can place our trust in Him, confident that in the end He will carry out His beneficial will in our lives. • Lord, at times Your plan and work are unclear to me. Help me to submit to You, O Lord, and trust in Your mercy. Amen.

HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 1:12 *Are You not.* The question expects a positive answer. The underlying question is how God could possibly cause a cruel nation to punish Judah and still be faithful to His covenant promises. *Holy One?* See p 1227. *We shall not die*. The prophet is troubled, but not without confidence and hope. *O Rock*. Habakkuk confesses God as the One

in whom His people can find security, protection, and stability. God is not only like a refuge; He is a refuge (Ps 18:1–3; 62:1–8). See "rock," p 843.
HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 1:13 Habakkuk is asking God an age-old question: Why do You permit evildoers to flourish, allowing them to oppress the righteous? *purer eyes*. Habakkuk had called the Lord "my Holy One" (v 12). He wonders how such a person is able to look at evil.
HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 1:14 People who have no strong ruler are like fish and crawling things: vulnerable to wicked oppressors.
HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 1:15 Like fishermen who make a big catch, so the Babylonians gloat that they have skillfully trapped and ensnared God's helpless people.
HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 1:16 *sacrifices to his net*. Babylonian king worships military prowess that made him successful and prosperous.
HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 1:17 *forever?* Habakkuk's cry to God is "Will this merciless killing never cease?"
HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 2:1 *take my stand*. In humility and patience, Habakkuk now quietly waits for God to answer the questions he has raised and cannot himself answer. *my complaint*. Habakkuk has questioned God's actions (and lack of action).
HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 1:12–2:1 Like others of great faith, Habakkuk argues and wrestles with God, waiting for answers to explain God's incomprehensible ways (cf Gn 18:23–32; Jer 20:7–18; 2Co 12:7–9). Yet Habakkuk does not lose patience but waits to hear what God will say. The Lord promises to answer those who call on Him, though in His own time and manner. God's Word is the light for our path (Ps 119:105). • When we are troubled and cry to You for wisdom and understanding, hear our prayer for the sake of Christ Jesus. Amen.
HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 2:2 *make it plain*. So the words might be easily read (cf Dt 27:8). *tablets*. Hbr *luach,* also used for the stone tablets of the Ten Commandments (Ex 24:12; Dt 9:9–11). Habakkuk's tablets may have been wooden, though words of the prophets were also written on stone tablets (Is 30:8), signifying their extreme importance.
HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 2:3 *appointed time*. The vision imparted to Habakkuk points forward to the completion, or fulfillment, of God's purpose at a time set by Him. *wait for it*. Waiting for the Lord is an act of faith and hope (Ps 33:20–22). This is an esp important exhortation for people in modern times, when the desire for immediate satisfaction breeds

impatience and irritability. 1 Clem: "Compare yourselves to … the vine. First of all, it sheds its leaves, then it buds, next it puts forth leaves, and then it flowers; after that comes the sour grape, and then follows the ripened fruit. You perceive how in a little time the fruit of a tree comes to maturity. Of a truth, soon and suddenly shall His will be accomplished" (*ANF* 1:11). Bas: "If in all this there is sorrow to be borne, I trust in the Lord that it will not be without its use to you. Therefore, the more have been your trials, look for a more perfect reward from your just Judge. Do not take your present trouble ill. Do not lose hope" (*NPNF* 2 8:280).

HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 2:4 *his soul*. Person who, in pride and stubbornness, refuses to believe God's prophetic word. *puffed up*. Hbr means "to swell" (as a tumor), a vivid picture of bloated pride. Luther described such a person as having "stuffed ears" for refusing to believe God's vision (AE 19:123). *the righteous shall live by his faith*. This passage summarizes Habakkuk's thought. In contrast to the arrogant person, the one who lives by faith is righteous, trusting in God's promises while waiting for the Lord to act. "People are just by faith. By faith they believe that God is favorable, and he [Habakkuk] adds that the same faith gives life because this faith produces peace and joy in the heart and eternal life" (Ap IV 100). Ter: "[One is] justified by the liberty of faith, not by servitude to the law. … The object, therefore, of the faith whereby the just man shall live, will be that same God to whom likewise belongs the law" (*ANF* 3:434). Leo: "A mighty bulwark is a sound faith, a true faith. … As righteousness is gained by faith, so too by a true faith is eternal life gained. … May He make you to advance and persevere to the end" (*NPNF* 2 12:136). Luth: "The godly people are waiting for the Lord; therefore they live, therefore they are saved, therefore they receive what has been promised. They receive it by faith, because they give glory to the God of truth" (AE 19:123). God's word to Habakkuk also formed the heart of the Gospel Paul proclaimed.

HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 2:5 *wine is a traitor*. See ESV note. Excessive love of wine (or wealth) beset the Chaldeans; this reckless bravado leads to their downfall. *His … he*. Babylonian Empire (cf 1:15–17). *wide as Sheol*. The insatiable appetite of Sheol was proverbial (Pr 30:16), gaping with an opened mouth to swallow its victims. See p 792.

HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 2:2–5 God responds to Habakkuk's complaint by urging patient trust, for in due time the instrument of Judah's chastisement (Chaldea) will itself suffer judgment for its cruel misdeeds.

Those intoxicated with pride most often deal treacherously with others and are themselves in danger of destruction (Pr 16:18). However, the Lord declares those righteous who wait for Him, humbly trusting His promises. • O Lord, cleanse my heart of sinful pride, and renew my trust in Your comforting promises. Amen.

HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 2:6 *all these*. The nations plundered by the Babylonians ("peoples" of v 5). *Woe.* See p 1080. The first of five taunts (cf vv 9, 12, 15, 19). The word is an attention-getter (like "Hey!" or "Ah!") and introduces an oracle of judgment. *loads himself with pledges!* Possessions amassed by the greedy Babylonians do not belong to them and are viewed as heavy debts that cannot be repaid. Greg: "To pile up earthly gains into a load of sin" (*NPNF* 2 12:46).

HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 2:7 *be spoil*. Chaldean wealth will become the spoils of war for the nations they formerly oppressed.

HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 2:8 *remnant of the peoples*. Survivors from the "many nations" plundered by the Chaldeans.

HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 2:9 *gets evil gain*. Babylon is condemned for greedily seizing the possessions of the conquered nations for its own benefit.

HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 2:10 The short-lived kingdom of Babylon will self-destruct, falling in disgrace and shame. Its rulers were eliminated, historical sources tell us, by assassination and murder.

HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 2:11 The very stones and wooden beams of Babylon's supposedly secure "house" will cry out in a litany of destruction. The house crashing down thus becomes a vivid picture of the crumbling of the king's dynasty.

HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 2:12 When the Lord looked at Babylon's thick walls and the grandeur of the city, He saw only bloodshed and wickedness.

HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 2:13 *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291. *labor merely for fire*. The sheer vanity of the Babylonians' laboring to build monuments to greatness will be exposed by the Lord's fiery destruction (Gn 19:24–28; Is 1:7).

HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 2:14 Luther sees a contrast between this verse and Is 11:9, which in similar words describes the knowledge of God's grace to be revealed through the Gospel. Habakkuk, however, refers to the knowledge of God's vengeance against the wicked, which will lead all nations to glorify Him (AE 19:129).

HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 2:15 *makes his neighbors drink*. An exploitive scheme, a metaphor for inflicting punishment on captives. Luth: "Habakkuk, therefore, is speaking about the excessive cruelty and tyrannical rule of the king" (AE 19:129; cf Is 51:17–22). *their nakedness!* The utter disgrace and shame suffered by conquered people at the hand of their oppressor (Is 47:2–3; Na 3:5).

HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 2:16 *show your uncircumcision!* Babylon, which had brought shame and disgrace on others, will now be put to shame by naked exposure. *cup*. See note, Is 51:17. *the LORD'S right hand*. See p 843.

HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 2:17 *violence done to Lebanon*. The prophet may be referring to Nebuchadnezzar's deforestation of Lebanon to carry out his military campaigns and building programs (e.g., his palace and the temple of Marduk, the state god of Babylon). See color map 2.

HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 2:19 In this final "woe," Habakkuk denounces the foolishness of worshiping or consulting idols. He ridicules them as the product of human imagination (Is 46:6–7; Hos 4:12). Silent and dead, these idols are able to teach no one.

HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 2:20 In sharp contrast to dead and dumb idols (cf v 19), the Lord is present in His temple and is prepared to act on behalf of His people. The appropriate response is reverent silence.

HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 2:6–20 In a series of five "woes," the prophet derisively pronounces God's judgment against the sins of Babylon: greed, pride, violence, shameful abuse of neighbors, and idolatry. Habakkuk's words remain a sober reminder of God's displeasure with human sin in all of its manifestations. We also need to hear God's "woe" and humbly repent of our sin. As the Lord was present in His holy temple, so He is present with us in His Holy Word and Sacraments to pardon and cleanse. • Lord, we bow before You in humble fear and adoration, crying out, "Have mercy on us." Amen.

HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 3:1 *prayer*. Hbr *tephillah*, occurs in heading of five psalms (17; 86; 90; 102; 142). An intercessory prayer in the form of a psalm. In view of the reference to the Lord's presence in His holy temple in the preceding verse (2:20), Habakkuk's prayer was likely used in temple worship. *Shigionoth*. The meaning of this musical term is uncertain (see note, Ps 7 intro). Some commentators suggest it refers to rapid changes of rhythm; others think it is a kind of lament.

HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 3:2 *report*. The accounts of God's saving actions in Israel's past history, esp the exodus. *In the midst of the years revive it*. In the present time, as the Lord chastises His people, Habakkuk prays that He will again bring to life His salvation and punish the oppressor (Ps 89:38–51). *in wrath remember mercy*. Prophet asks God to temper His fierce wrath with His abundant mercy. *wrath*. Hbr carries the nuance of "agitation" or "excitement."
HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 3:3 *came from Teman*. Edomite territory, the home of Esau, south of the Salt Sea (cf Gn 36:9–11; Am 1:12; Ob 9; see color map 2). *Holy One*. By this name, God reveals Himself and is present as the transcendent God,
who rules over all creation, separate from all that is sinful and impure. See p 1227. *Mount Paran*. Probably the mountainous region west and south of Edom, northeast of Mount Sinai. *Selah.* See p 993.
HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 3:4 *His brightness*. In a vision, the prophet experiences a theophany, a visible manifestation of God's glory and power. See p 39. The God who "dwells in unapproachable light" (1Tm 6:16), whom no one can look at and live (Ex 33:20), reveals His radiant presence in bright and flashing rays (Hbr "horns") of light coming from His hand. *veiled His power.* Cypr: "In the passion and the sign of the cross is all virtue and power" (*ANF* 5:524).
HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 3:5 *pestilence ... plague*. A reminder of the 10 plagues that revealed God's glory in death and destruction (cf Ex 7:14–12:30). Pestilence is associated with a burning fever. *plague*. Hbr word is also name of Canaanite god of disease and healing. Though Habakkuk personifies "plague," Yahweh is the only "Holy One" (v 3).
HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 3:6 See note, Na 1:5. *His were the everlasting ways*. In contrast to the mountains and the hills, which only appear to be eternal, the Lord's ways are truly everlasting. *ways*. See p 844.
HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 3:7 *Cushan.* Occurs only here in the Bible; meaning uncertain. Commentators suggest two possibilities: Ethiopia (usually called Cush; Zep 3:10) or a Midianite tribe of the Sinai peninsula. *Midian*. A seminomadic people whose central location was probably east of the Gulf of Aqaba in northwest Arabia. Moses lived in Midian for many years (Ex 2:15–22).
HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 3:8 Luther suggests that the questions could be answered either positively (thus a reference to God's wrath against His

enemies) or negatively (God's grace by which He saved His people). Luther preferred the negative answer, since the end of the verse points to God's salvation (AE 19:141). *You rode on Your horses, on Your chariot of salvation?* God is a mighty warrior who conquers the enemies of His people and brings them salvation. *salvation?* Hbr *yeshu'ah*, derived from the same root word as the name given to Jesus, the Savior (Mt 1:21). See p 843.
HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 3:9 *stripped the sheath*. The picture of the warrior taking his bow from its case on the chariot.
HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 3:10 The creation (personified) watches with fear and awe as God acts to punish and to save. See note, Na 1:5.
HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 3:11 *light of Your arrows*. Apparently lightning (Zec 9:14).
HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 3:12 *threshed*. Trod or trampled upon. See note, Ru 3:2.
HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 3:13 *Your people*. Ter: "Those who shall look up and lift their heads, being redeemed in the time of His kingdom" (*ANF* 3:416). *anointed*. Hbr *mashiach*, refers to the kings of Israel, esp to David (2Sm 22:51; Ps 84:9). The coming King, the Messiah, God's Son, is called "His anointed" in Ps 2:2. This King not only is saved, but is the Savior. *laying him bare*. Describes complete and shameful destruction (see note, Hab 2:15).
HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 3:14 *arrows*. God will destroy His enemies with their own weapons. *me*. The prophet, as the divine spokesman to the people, had to bear the brunt of the Lord's punishment inflicted by the Babylonian warriors.
HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 3:15 Reference to how the Lord delivered Israel at the Red Sea and destroyed His enemies (Ex 14–15).
HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 3:16 *rottenness*. Habakkuk's body trembles and his legs dissolve in decay as he feels helpless at the thought of the trouble to come. *quietly wait*. Though filled with anxiety, the prophet calmly submits to the inevitable with confidence in God's final victory over the attackers. *day of trouble*. The invading Babylonian conquerors would later suffer their own day of distress.
HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 3:1–16 As Habakkuk reflects on a terrifying manifestation of God's glory and power, he prays for mercy, quietly confident of God's ultimate deliverance even in the midst of great distress. Much in our lives brings anguish, fear, and even feelings of helplessness to

our hearts (Ps 25:16–18; Ac 14:22). God does humble us under His mighty hand, but He does so in order to exalt us (1Pt 5:6). • Lord Jesus Christ, let not the fear of trouble and death overwhelm me, for I trust continually in Your saving help. Amen.

HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 3:17–18 War strips the land of the means of sustenance. Deprived of the essentials of human survival, Judah's faith would be severely tested. The prophet's heartfelt conviction that "the righteous shall *live* by his faith" (2:4) enables him to rejoice in spite of the dire circumstances. He does so because he knows God is the salvation of His people (v 13). Cypr: "There flourishes with us the strength of hope and the firmness of faith. Among these very ruins of a decaying world our soul is lifted up, and our courage unshaken: our patience is never anything but joyous; and the mind is always secure of its God" (*ANF* 5:463).

HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 3:19 *strength.* Hbr *chayil,* has military connotations and in many passages means "army." Since all who trust in God know He is their strength, they are able to surmount life's difficulties and setbacks. *high places.* Believers need only to look to the nimble and sure-footed deer and the fortified high places for examples of the kind of security found in God (cf 2Sm 22:34; Ps 18:33). *choirmaster.* See Ps 46 intro. *instruments*. See p 993.

HABAKKUK—NOTE ON 3:17–19 The Book that begins with a complaint now ends with an expression of joyful confidence in the God of salvation. When we look to ourselves and our own strength, we have reason only to despair. But when we are cast down and experience inner turmoil, we say, "Yet I will rejoice in the LORD; I will take joy in the God of my salvation" (Hab 3:18). • I will praise You for Your salvation, O Lord, all the days of my life. Amen.

Zephaniah

Zephaniah 1 | Zephaniah 2 | Zephaniah 3

- Introduction to Zephaniah
  - Overview
  - Reading Zephaniah
  - Luther on Zephaniah
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

1 [1] † The word of the LORD that came to Zephaniah the son of Cushi,
son of Gedaliah, son of Amariah, son of Hezekiah, in the days of Josiah the
son of Amon, king of Judah.

The Coming Judgment on Judah

2 “I will utterly sweep away everything
from the face of the earth,” declares the
LORD.
3 “I will sweep away man and beast;
I will sweep away the birds of the
heavens
and the fish of the sea,
and the rubble[1] with the wicked.
I will cut off mankind
from the face of the earth,” declares the
LORD.
4 “I will stretch out my hand against Judah
and against all the inhabitants of Jerusalem;
and I will cut off from this place the remnant
of Baal
and the name of the idolatrous priests along
with the priests,
5 those who bow down on the roofs
to the host of the heavens,
those who bow down and swear to the LORD
and yet swear by Milcom,
6 those who have turned back from following
the LORD,
who do not seek the LORD or inquire of
him.”

The Day of the Lord Is Near

7 Be silent before the Lord God!
For the day of the Lord is near;
the Lord has prepared a sacrifice
and consecrated his guests.
8 And on the day of the Lord's
sacrifice—
"I will punish the officials and the king's
sons
and all who array themselves in foreign
attire.
9 On that day I will punish
everyone who leaps over the threshold,
and those who fill their master's[2] house
with violence and fraud.

10 "On that day," declares the Lord,
"a cry will be heard from the Fish
Gate,
a wail from the Second Quarter,
a loud crash from the hills.
11 Wail, O inhabitants of the Mortar!
For all the traders[1] are no more;
all who weigh out silver are cut off.
12 At that time I will search Jerusalem with lamps,
and I will punish the men
who are complacent,[2]
those who say in their hearts,
'The Lord will not do good,
nor will he do ill.'
13 Their goods shall be plundered,
and their houses laid waste.
Though they build houses,

they shall not inhabit them;
though they plant vineyards,
they shall not drink wine from them.”

14 † The great day of the Lord is near,
near and hastening fast;
the sound of the day of the Lord is bitter;
the mighty man cries aloud there.
15 † A day of wrath is that day,
a day of distress and anguish,
a day of ruin and devastation,
a day of darkness and gloom,
a day of clouds and thick darkness,
16 † a day of trumpet blast and battle cry
against the fortified cities
and against the lofty battlements.
17 † I will bring distress on mankind,
so that they shall walk like the blind,
because they have sinned against the Lord;
their blood shall be poured out like dust,
and their flesh like dung.
18 † Neither their silver nor their gold
shall be able to deliver them
on the day of the wrath of the Lord.
In the fire of his jealousy,
all the earth shall be consumed;
for a full and sudden end
he will make of all the inhabitants of the earth.

Judgment on Judah's Enemies

2 [1]† Gather together, yes, gather,
O shameless nation,

[2]† before the decree takes effect[3]
—before the day passes away like chaff—
before there comes upon you
the burning anger of the Lord,
before there comes upon you
the day of the anger of the Lord.
[3]† Seek the Lord, all you humble of the land,
who do his just commands;[4]
seek righteousness; seek humility;
perhaps you may be hidden
on the day of the anger of the Lord.
[4]† For Gaza shall be deserted,
and Ashkelon shall become a desolation;
Ashdod's people shall be driven out at noon,
and Ekron shall be uprooted.

[5]† Woe to you inhabitants of the seacoast,
you nation of the Cherethites!
The word of the Lord is against you,
O Canaan, land of the Philistines;
and I will destroy you until no inhabitant
is left.
[6]† And you, O seacoast, shall be pastures,
with meadows[1] for shepherds
and folds for flocks.
[7]† The seacoast shall become the possession
of the remnant of the house of Judah,
on which they shall graze,
and in the houses of Ashkelon

they shall lie down at evening.
For the Lord their God will be mindful of them
and restore their fortunes.

8† "I have heard the taunts of Moab
and the revilings of the Ammonites,
how they have taunted my people
and made boasts against their territory.
9† Therefore, as I live," declares the Lord of hosts,
the God of Israel,
"Moab shall become like Sodom,
and the Ammonites like Gomorrah,
a land possessed by nettles and salt pits,
and a waste forever.
The remnant of my people shall plunder them,
and the survivors of my nation shall possess them."
10† This shall be their lot in return for their pride,
because they taunted and boasted
against the people of the Lord of hosts.
11† The Lord will be awesome against them;
for he will famish all the gods of the earth,
and to him shall bow down,
each in its place,
all the lands of the nations.

12† You also, O Cushites,
shall be slain by my sword.

13† And he will stretch out his hand against the north

and destroy Assyria,
and he will make Nineveh a desolation,
a dry waste like the desert.
14 † Herds shall lie down in her midst,
all kinds of beasts;[2]
even the owl and the hedgehog[3]
shall lodge in her capitals;
a voice shall hoot in the window;
devastation will be on the threshold;
for her cedar work will be laid bare.
15 † This is the exultant city
that lived securely,
that said in her heart,
“I am, and there is no one else.”
What a desolation she has become,
a lair for wild beasts!
Everyone who passes by her
hisses and shakes his fist.

Judgment on Jerusalem and the Nations

3 [1]†† Woe to her who is rebellious and defiled,
the oppressing city!

[2]† She listens to no voice;
she accepts no correction.
She does not trust in the Lord;
she does not draw near to her God.

[3]† Her officials within her
are roaring lions;
her judges are evening wolves
that leave nothing till the morning.
[4]† Her prophets are fickle, treacherous men;
her priests profane what is holy;
they do violence to the law.
[5]† The Lord within her is righteous;
he does no injustice;
every morning he shows forth his justice;
each dawn he does not fail;
but the unjust knows no shame.

[6]† "I have cut off nations;
their battlements are in ruins;
I have laid waste their streets
so that no one walks in them;
their cities have been made desolate,
without a man, without an inhabitant.
[7]† I said, 'Surely you will fear me;
you will accept correction.
Then your[1] dwelling would not be cut off
according to all that I have appointed against

you.’[2]
But all the more they were eager
to make all their deeds corrupt.

8† “Therefore wait for me,” declares the Lord,
“for the day when I rise up to seize the prey.
For my decision is to gather nations,
to assemble kingdoms,
to pour out upon them my indignation,
all my burning anger;
for in the fire of my jealousy
all the earth shall be consumed.

The Conversion of the Nations

9 “For at that time I will change the speech of
the peoples
to a pure speech,
that all of them may call upon the name of
the Lord
and serve him with one accord.
10 From beyond the rivers of Cush
my worshipers, the daughter of my
dispersed ones,
shall bring my offering.
11 “On that day you shall not be put to shame
because of the deeds by which you have
rebelled against me;
for then I will remove from your midst
your proudly exultant ones,
and you shall no longer be haughty
in my holy mountain.
12 But I will leave in your midst
a people humble and lowly.
They shall seek refuge in the name of the
Lord,
13 those who are left in Israel;
they shall do no injustice
and speak no lies,
nor shall there be found in their mouth
a deceitful tongue.
For they shall graze and lie down,
and none shall make them afraid.”

Israel's Joy and Restoration

14 Sing aloud, O daughter of Zion;
shout, O Israel!
Rejoice and exult with all your heart,
O daughter of Jerusalem!
15 The Lord has taken away the judgments
against you;
he has cleared away your enemies.
The King of Israel, the Lord, is in your midst;
you shall never again fear evil.
16 On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem:
"Fear not, O Zion;
let not your hands grow weak.
17 The Lord your God is in your midst,
a mighty one who will save;
he will rejoice over you with gladness;
he will quiet you by his love;
he will exult over you with loud singing.
18 I will gather those of you who mourn for the
festival,
so that you will no longer suffer reproach.[1]
19 Behold, at that time I will deal
with all your oppressors.
And I will save the lame
and gather the outcast,
and I will change their shame into praise
and renown in all the earth.
20 At that time I will bring you in,
at the time when I gather you together;
for I will make you renowned and praised
among all the peoples of the earth,
when I restore your fortunes
before your eyes," says the Lord.

Zephaniah

OVERVIEW

Author
Zephaniah the prophet

Date
640–609 BC

Places
Judah; Jerusalem; Israel; Philistia; Moab; Ammon; Assyria

People
Zephaniah and his forebears; King Josiah, son of Amon; the Israelites; the Philistines; Moabites; Ammonites; Cushites; Assyrians

Purpose
Zephaniah announces God's wrath against the nations as a warning for Judah, whom he calls to repent

Law Themes
God's wrath against the nations, including His chosen people; the day of the Lord

Gospel Themes
The day of the Lord; the remnant preserved; the nations seek the Lord; the Lord is in our midst

Memory Verses
The Lord's awesomeness (2:11); the nations changed (3:9–13); quieting Zion (3:16–17)

Introduction to Zephaniah

Reading Zephaniah

The eerie evening light ebbs away beneath a mounting bank of clouds. As the sun blinks on the horizon, winds stir and rush through the shadows. Complacent townspeople now quicken their
steps toward home, but the moonless night slows them to a crawl. They feel their way with trips and stubs and jolts. A bolt stabs the earth, thunder trumpets, and light-blinded eyes search the thick darkness again.

Zephaniah prophesied the future storm of God's wrath as a day without light. Though the world has witnessed God's judgment on Judah and its enemies, Zephaniah's darkest prophecy remains unfulfilled, pointing still forward to earth's end: the great day of the Lord.

Luther on Zephaniah

Zephaniah lived in the time of the prophet Jeremiah, for as the title [1:1] shows, he prophesied under King Josiah, as did Jeremiah. For that reason he prophesies the very same things as Jeremiah, namely, that Jerusalem and Judah shall be destroyed and the people carried away because of their wicked life, devoid of repentance.

Unlike Jeremiah, however, he does not name the king of Babylon as the one who is to inflict this destruction and captivity. He says simply that God will bring misfortune and affliction upon the people so that they may be moved to repentance. For none of the prophets was ever able even once to persuade this people that God was angry with them. They relied continually on the claim that they were, and were called, God's people; and whoever preached that God was angry with them had to be a false prophet and had to die, for they would not believe that God would leave his people. It was then as it is today: all who teach that the church errs and sins, and that God will punish her, are denounced as heretics and killed.

Now Zephaniah prophesies this disaster not only for Judah, but also for all the surrounding and neighboring lands, such as the Philistines, Moab, the Ethiopians, and Assyria. The king of Babylon is to be God's rod upon all lands.

In the third chapter Zephaniah prophesies gloriously and clearly of the happy and blessed kingdom of Christ, which shall be spread abroad in all the world. Although he is a minor prophet, he speaks more about Christ than many other major prophets, almost more than Jeremiah even. He does so in order to give the people abundant comfort, so that they would not despair of God because of their disastrous captivity in Babylon, as if God had cast them off forever, but rather be sure that after this punishment they would receive grace again and get the promised Savior, Christ, with his glorious kingdom. (AE 35:328–29)

For more of Luther's insights on this Book, see *Lectures on Zephaniah* (AE 18:317–64).

Challenges for Readers

Day of the Lord. The theme of Judgment Day dominates Zephaniah's prophecy (1:2–3:8). Readers can easily feel overwhelmed by the descriptions of God's wrath. However, the prophecy ends with sweet emphasis on God's mercy (see p 320).

Rhetoric of Entrapment. At the close of ch 2 and beginning of ch 3, Zephaniah uses a special literary device that other prophets, and Jesus, used as well (cf 2Sm 12:1–13; Is 5:1–7; Am 1–2; Mt 21:33–45). He transitions from condemnation of Nineveh to condemnation of Jerusalem without clearly signaling that his subject has changed until 3:5. This entrapping technique puts evil Nineveh on the same footing as rebellious Jerusalem.

The Remnant. See p 1080.

Blessings for Readers

In just three chapters, Zephaniah describes the classic message of OT prophets, illustrating the destructive effects of sin upon all nations and describing the mercy God plans for them. As you read Zephaniah, seriously consider your own sin, and seek the Lord with a repentant heart. Zephaniah promises that the Lord will take away your fear and quiet you with His love.

OUTLINE

Title (1:1)
I. The Day of the Lord Is a Day of Wrath (1:2–3:8)
  A. The Lord's Just Wrath against Judah (1:2–2:3)
    1. The Lord's universal judgment (1:2–3)
    2. Condemnation of Judah (1:4–6)
    3. The day of the Lord is near (1:7–14)
    4. Description of the day of wrath (1:15–18)
    5. Judah's last chance to repent (2:1–3)
  B. The Lord's Just Wrath against the Nations Surrounding Judah (2:4–15)
    1. West—Philistia (2:4–7)
    2. East—Moab and Ammon (2:8–11)
    3. South—Cush (2:12)
    4. North—Assyria (2:13–15)
  C. The Lord's Just Wrath and Concern for Jerusalem (3:1–8)
    1. The evil of "the oppressing city" (3:1–5)
    2. The Lord's concern for Jerusalem (3:6–8)
II. The Day of the Lord Is a Day of Restoration (3:9–20)
  A. The Conversion of the Nations (3:9–10)
  B. The Remnant of Judah Is Saved and Purified (3:11–13)
  C. Judah Sings a Song of Victory because of Its Restoration (3:14–20)

Footnotes

Footnotes for Zephaniah, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:3 Or *stumbling blocks* (that is, idols)
- [2] 1:9 Or *their Lord's*
- [1] 1:11 Or *all the people of Canaan*
- [2] 1:12 Hebrew *are thickening on the dregs* [of their wine]

Footnotes for Zephaniah, Chapter 2

- [3] 2:2 Hebrew *gives birth*
- [4] 2:3 Or *who carry out his judgment*
- [1] 2:6 Or *caves*
- [2] 2:14 Hebrew *beasts of every nation*
- [3] 2:14 The identity of the animals rendered *owl* and *hedgehog* is uncertain

Footnotes for Zephaniah, Chapter 3

- [1] 3:7 Hebrew *her*
- [2] 3:7 Hebrew *her*
- [1] 3:18 The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain

Study Notes

ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 1:1 *The word of the LORD that came*. See p 1080. *Zephaniah … Hezekiah*. Zephaniah traces back his ancestry four generations to Hezekiah. If this is the good King Hezekiah who brought about religious reform in Judah, Zephaniah establishes himself as the connecting link who would help bring about a similar reform at the time of King Josiah. *the days of Josiah*. Josiah came to the throne of Judah in 640 BC following the religiously disastrous reigns of Manasseh and Amon. The Assyrian Empire was in decline, and Babylon was rising in importance.

ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 1:2 *sweep away everything*. God's final judgment will come upon the entire earth. All life will perish. God promised Noah that He would never again destroy the world by water (Gn 8:21–22; 9:15). The judgment on the Last Day will be by fire.

ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 1:3 *fish of the sea*. The final judgment will exceed even the flood by destroying life in the sea. *rubble.* Hbr *makshelah*, "stumbling block" or "idol," i.e., those things that cause people to turn away from the Lord. *wicked*. The morally corrupt. Human wickedness has polluted the entire creation and is the reason everything is under judgment (Rm 8:19–22).

ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 1:4 *stretch out My hand*. Also used for the judgment God brought on Egypt at the exodus (Ex 7:5). *against Judah.* After describing the final universal judgment, the Lord turns His attention to Judah. *remnant of Baal*. See note, Nu 25:3. Those people in the land who still worshiped Baal. See p 345. *the name of the idolatrous priests along with the priests*. The very memory of the priests of Baal and other false religions will be erased.

ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 1:5 God will bring judgment on those who worship the stars and also on those hypocrites who only pretend to worship the Lord. *Milcom*. Also known as Molech, the Ammonite idol to whom people sacrificed their children. See p 403. Solomon permitted the worship of Molech (1Ki 11:7), which continued until Josiah destroyed the high places dedicated to his worship.

ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 1:6 *turned back*. Judeans who had given up their faith in the Lord. *do not seek the LORD*. Those who no longer prayed to the Lord to seek His guidance and help. See "seek," p 843.

ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 1:2–6 The Lord declares that final judgment will come worldwide, then pronounces specific judgments against faithless Judah. We also deserve God's anger when we replace God and His Word with what we find exciting, entertaining, or perhaps financially beneficial. But God's Law shows us our sin and drives us to repentance. He forgives our sins because Christ, our Savior, suffered judgment in our place. • Lord, forgive me for not always giving You first place in my life. Move me daily to seek Your guidance and help. Amen.

ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 1:7 *Be silent*. God's presence demanded such behavior. See note, Ps 46:10. *Lord* GOD. Lit, "Lord Yahweh." The two Hbr words usually translated as *lord* are here used side by side: the first word is comparable to "master," and the second is God's proper name, "Yahweh" (usually written as LORD). See p 1227. *day of the* LORD. Refers to the time when the Lord will act, anticipating the wrath and salvation of Judgment Day. This phrase is used frequently in Jl and Zep. *sacrifice*. Nation of Judah. *His guests*. Foreign nation appointed by God to consume the sacrifice.

ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 1:8 *officials and the king's sons*. Leaders of Judah are singled out as objects of God's wrath. *array themselves in foreign attire*. Some Judeans chose to imitate the dress of the heathen nations around them.

ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 1:9 *leaps over the threshold*. Possibly refers to the superstitious practice of Philistine priests, who did not dare to step on the threshold of Dagon's temple. *violence*. Can refer to unjust gain. *fraud*. Dishonesty and trickery.

ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 1:10 *Fish Gate*. In Jerusalem's north wall. Discovery of fish bones has confirmed that a fish market was here, likely stocked with dried or salted fish, since the Jordan and Great Sea were too far away to provide fresh fish. *Second Quarter*. Likely the western hill of Jerusalem, an area with newer, wealthier homes. *a loud crash*. Judah's hills will be filled with the horrible sounds of havoc and destruction.

ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 1:11 *inhabitants of the Mortar!* Possibly a business area located in a shallow valley in Jerusalem. *traders*. See ESV note. Businesspeople are referred to as Canaanites, who spent their lives in pursuit of money. The Phoenicians dominated regional trade. *weigh out silver*. Not coins but pieces or "bits" of silver traded as currency. See notes,

Jsh 24:32; Ezr 2:69. *cut off*. The merchants and money-changers will be consumed and destroyed.

ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 1:12 *search Jerusalem with lamps*. As one uses a lamp at night to make a thorough search, so the Lord will search meticulously through Jerusalem. *The* LORD *… do ill*. Judeans had become like pagans who believed the Lord would neither help nor harm them.

ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 1:13 *goods ... houses ... vineyards*. Like practical atheists in any age, the people of Judah valued only wealth, real estate, and business. The Lord would destroy it all.

ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 1:14 *great day of the* LORD *is near*. Some things Zephaniah prophesied took place at the fall of Jerusalem in 587 BC. Other details would be fulfilled later. The ultimate fulfillment will be on Judgment Day. See p 1079. *sound … is bitter*. To hear and read about the Lord's judgment causes even the bravest soldier to cry out in despair.

ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 1:15 *day of wrath*. Reversal of the days of creation. Instead of light and life, there will be distress and darkness and death. God's anger at sin will be manifested. This phrase served as the title of a long thirteenth-century Latin hymn, "Dies Irae" (*TLH* 607), which became part of the Requiem Mass famously set to music by Mozart and Verdi. See also *LSB* 508. *distress*. Any kind of adversity, affliction, or trouble. *anguish*. Severe mental or physical suffering.

ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 1:16 *trumpet*. Hbr *shophar*, "ram's horn." Used to sound alarms and signal the last judgment (1Co 15:52; Rv 8:6). See p 993. *fortified cities*. Cities deemed inaccessible and unconquerable because of their strong construction. *lofty battlements*. High towers.

ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 1:17 *mankind*. Hbr *'adam*. What follows applies to all Adam's descendants. *walk like the blind*. Helpless, bewildered, and lost. *sinned against the* LORD. Sin is serious, not simply because it ruins a person's life or disrupts society, but because it offends the Lord. *their blood … like dung*. Humanity is totally sinful and deserves to be thrown out like things unclean and worthless.

ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 1:18 On Judgment Day, no one will be able to buy salvation. *fire of His jealousy*. The Lord is a jealous God (Ex 34:14), who demands the full devotion and worship of His people for Himself alone. See note, Ex 20:5.

ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 1:7–18 God's day of wrath would come swiftly on the people of Judah because of their materialism, worldliness,

and general disobedience. The final Day of Judgment will likewise come unexpectedly, as a thief in the night (1Th 5:2). We have all missed the mark of God's perfection and deserve only His punishment, now and eternally. However, God so loved the world that He sent His only Son to endure the punishment for our sins. All who believe in Jesus have no need to fear the Day of Judgment. • Lord, fill me with joyful anticipation for the day of Your return. Give me confidence that I shall stand before You cleansed and holy because of Jesus. Amen.

ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 2:1 *O shameless nation*. The Lord summons Judah to hear His call to repent.

ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 2:2 Synonyms for God's judgment. *burning anger*. Frightening picture of the fire (1:18) of God's wrath streaming forth from His flared nostrils (cf 2Sm 22:9).

ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 2:3 *Seek the LORD*. The way to escape the Lord's wrath is to turn to Him in humility. See "seek," p 843. *seek righteousness; seek humility*. The only righteousness that counts before God is the Lord's righteousness, His power to save (Php 3:9). All who humbly trust in Him will be spared on the Day of Judgment. See p 843.

ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 2:4 *Gaza … Ashkelon … Ashdod … Ekron*. Judah's enemies. See note, Zec 9:5–6. See color map 1. *at noon*. Ashdod will be destroyed in broad daylight. *uprooted*. Like a weed, Ekron will be pulled up by its roots and left to die.

ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 2:5 *Cherethites!* Related to Crete; Philistine origins are partially linked with this island. See note 2Sm 15:18. *Canaan*. Ancient name of the land along the eastern shore of the Great Sea, stretching from Sidon in the north to Gaza in the south, and reaching inland as far as the Jordan Valley. Philistines lived in the southwest part of Canaan. See map, p 60.

ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 2:6 *you, O seacoast, shall be pastures*. Following the destruction of Judah's enemies, a peaceful, pastoral scene emerges along the seacoast. *folds for flocks*. Stone-walled enclosures for sheep and goats.

ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 2:7 *possession of the remnant*. OT prophets often referred to the remnant of the house of Judah, which would again possess the land following the fall of Jerusalem and the Babylonian captivity (Is 37:31–32; see p 1080). *be mindful*. The Lord will remember

His people with a friendly intent. *restore their fortunes*. God's people will again enjoy good times. See p 1080.
ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 2:8 *taunts*. Insults and reproaches. *Moab*. East of the Salt Sea. See color map 2. *revilings*. Insults hurled at another person. *Ammonites*. Inhabitants of Ammon, a country north of Moab, east of the Jordan River.
ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 2:9 *as I live*. An oath as certain as the eternal existence of the Lord who swears it. *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291. *Moab shall become … a waste forever*. Moab and Ammon would be completely destroyed, as were Sodom and Gomorrah (Gn 19:23–25). *remnant … survivors*. See note, v 7. God foretells the time when His people would turn the tables on their enemies.
ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 2:10 *their pride*. The downfall of the Moabites and Ammonites.
ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 2:11 *famish all the gods*. The gods were thought to eat the sacrifices of their worshipers, so when their worshipers are swept away in judgment, the gods will starve. Wycl: "Who may see a greater abomination than to see the people to be led away from God, and they be taught to worship for God that thing that is not God nor Saviour of the world?" (*TT* 275). *bow down*. All people will fall down to worship the Lord (Php 2:10–11).
ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 2:12 *Cushites*. Cush was the ancient name of the territory south of Egypt, later referred to as Ethiopia. See note, Na 3:9; see also color map 3.
ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 2:13 *against the north*. Turning from Ethiopia in the south, the prophet now directs his attention to the north. *Assyria*. Located far to the north and east of Judah between the Upper Tigris and Euphrates rivers. *Nineveh*. Capital of the Assyrian Empire, on the Tigris River. See map, p 609. *desolation*. Hbr word implies that people will be astonished at the devastation. Over 150 years earlier, Nineveh's destruction had been averted (cf Jnh 3), but this time it would not be spared.
ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 2:14 *lie down in her midst*. Proud Nineveh will become a lair for wild animals. *owl … hedgehog*. Neither creature is normally a city dweller, which underscores that Nineveh will be abandoned to nature.
ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 2:15 *exultant*. Nineveh once rejoiced in its power and greatness. Now its beautiful architecture will be exposed to the

elements. *lived securely*. Nineveh's citizens believed their city was so secure it could never be conquered. *hisses*. People would show contempt for the site of Nineveh with shrill whistles as they passed by. The city that once prided itself on its own importance will become an object of scorn. See p 1276.

ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 2** Zephaniah urges the people of Judah to seek the Lord, then describes the devastation that will fall on neighboring nations because of their sins. We, too, are guilty of arrogance, pride, and boasting. The Lord calls us to humble repentance and, through trust in Jesus as our Savior, He promises to shield us from His anger. • Lord, may I never boast except in the cross of Jesus, my Savior. Amen.

ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 3:1 *defiled*. Morally polluted, unclean (Is 59:3). *oppressing city!* Zephaniah's hearers may have thought he was still speaking about Nineveh, but what follows reveals that he is speaking about their own city of Jerusalem, which has oppressed and mistreated people. See "Rhetoric of Entrapment," p 1512.

ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 3:2 *she does not draw near*. The people of Jerusalem refused to enter the Lord's presence in worship and prayer and would not place their confidence in Him.

ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 3:3 *officials … judges*. Civic leaders of Jerusalem are compared to hungry animals that devour everything they find. Officials and judges used power of their offices only for personal gain.

ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 3:4 *fickle*. Hbr word suggests that the prophets were as light as the froth on boiling water. They were unprincipled and imparted worthless teachings. *profane what is holy*. Priests desecrated God's holy temple and treated the sacred sacrifices disrespectfully. See notes, 1Sm 2:28–32.

ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 3:5 *Lord within her.* See "presence," p 843. *righteous*. Citizens of Jerusalem failed to recognize that because the Lord is righteous, He would take action against those who knew no shame. *no injustice*. He is sinless, without error.

ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 3:6 *I have cut off nations.* The Lord reminds Jerusalem of what He has done. *battlements*. Walled towers for defense. *streets … cities*. No community is secure when the Lord comes in judgment.

ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 3:7 *fear Me*. Not craven fear but godly reverence shown in obedience to the Lord's will. See p 1001. *appointed*

against you. If Judah would return to the Lord, He would not carry out His planned judgment. *make all their deeds corrupt*. Rather than repent and seek the Lord's will, they gave themselves completely over to sin.

ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 3:8 *wait for Me*. Most often, God encourages believers to wait for His salvation (Lm 3:26). But here the wait is for that day when the Lord will consume the earth (1:18). *the day*. The day of wrath (1:15), when God will assemble all people for judgment. *indignation*. Verb form can describe a camel growling or a person cursing. *fire of My jealousy*. See note, 1:18.

ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 3:1–8 The city of Jerusalem, including its leaders, refuses to return to the Lord. Such impenitence brings upon them God's day of wrath. These things are meant as a warning for us (1Co 10:6), as Jesus preached, "Repent and believe in the gospel" (Mk 1:15). All who believe in Jesus will escape everlasting punishment. • Lord Jesus, be merciful to me, a sinner, and spare me on the Day of Judgment. Amen.

ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 3:9 *at that time*. NT era. Chem: "He brings in a reference to Christ by repeating preceding prophets" (*LTh* 2:459). *a pure speech*. Mouths of former idolaters will resound with praises to the Lord. *call upon the name of the* LORD. See p 842.

ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 3:10 *Cush*. See note, 2:12. *My worshipers*. Cush is an example of a foreign nation whose people will worship the Lord. Cf Is 19:21. *My offering*. They shall offer their bodies as living sacrifices (Rm 12:1).

ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 3:11 *no longer be haughty*. Pride has no place in the hearts of those whose rebellion has been forgiven. *in My holy mountain*. Zion. See p 844.

ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 3:12 *refuge in the name of the* LORD. The humble trust solely in the Lord for salvation.

ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 3:13 Believers will have pure speech (v 9); like a flock of sheep, they will enjoy provision and security.

ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 3:9–13 Along with the remnant in Israel, nations from around the world will call on the name of the Lord and serve Him. Once proud and haughty, these people will now praise God because Jesus has paid the price for their rebellious deeds. You and I are part of this great communion of saints. • Lord, help me always praise Your name and find refuge in Your protection. Amen.

ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 3:14 *O daughter of Zion*. Citizens of God's Holy City, the heavenly Jerusalem, the Church (Heb 12:22).
ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 3:15 *judgments against you*. The Lord has removed every legal accusation against His people (Rm 8:33). *King of Israel, the* LORD. See p 1227. *in your midst*. See "presence," p 843.
ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 3:16 *On that day*. Cf v 9. *Zion*. See p 844.
ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 3:17 *quiet you by His love.* The Lord lives among His people and guarantees their salvation. Luth: "It happens for the righteous that [the Lord] allows them to be attacked, to be molested in various ways, and to be troubled by many evils, so that they be conformed to their King. Yet He adds that feeling of joy, that security of heart, so that all things may become sweeter, so that nothing can separate them from the love of God, Rom 8:39" (AE 18:361).
ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 3:18 *the festival*. The fall of Jerusalem disrupted the celebration of annual festivals such as the Passover.
ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 3:19 *your oppressors*. Nations that afflict God's people. *I will change their shame into praise*. God will cause the lame and outcast believers to express praise rather than to wallow in shame.
ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 3:20 *restore your fortunes*. See note, 2:7.
ZEPHANIAH—NOTE ON 3:14–20 Zephaniah urges God's people to fear no evil but instead to rejoice over their coming salvation. Fear may hinder us from witnessing of God's love and mercy; how wrong and foolish that would be! God has redeemed us in Christ. He will always be with us, and someday He will take us to the heavenly Jerusalem. • Lord God, make me a bold witness of Your saving power. Amen.

Haggai

Haggai 1 | Haggai 2

- Introduction to Haggai
  - Overview
  - Reading Haggai
  - Luther on Haggai
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

The Command to Rebuild the Temple

1 [1]‡†In the second year of Darius the king, in the sixth month, on the
first day of the month, the word of the Lord came by the hand of Haggai the
prophet to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to
Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest: [2]†“Thus says the Lord of hosts:
These people say the time has not yet come to rebuild the house of the
Lord.” [3]† Then the word of the Lord came by the hand of Haggai the
prophet, [4]† “Is it a time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses,
while this house lies in ruins? [5]†Now, therefore, thus says the Lord of hosts:
Consider your ways. [6]† You have sown much, and harvested little. You eat,
but you never have enough; you drink, but you never have your fill. You
clothe yourselves, but no one is warm. And he who earns wages does so to
put them into a bag with holes.

[7]†“Thus says the Lord of hosts: Consider your ways. [8]†Go up to the hills
and bring wood and build the house, that I may take pleasure in it and that I
may be glorified, says the Lord. [9]† You looked for much, and behold, it
came to little. And when you brought it home, I blew it away. Why?
declares the Lord of hosts. Because of my house that lies in ruins, while
each of you busies himself with his own house. [10]†Therefore the heavens
above you have withheld the dew, and the earth has withheld its produce.
[11]†And I have called for a drought on the land and the hills, on the grain, the
new wine, the oil, on what the ground brings forth, on man and beast, and
on all their labors.”

The People Obey the Lord

12 ‡ † Then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Joshua the son of
Jehozadak, the high priest, with all the remnant of the people, obeyed the
voice of the Lord their God, and the words of Haggai the prophet, as the
Lord their God had sent him. And the people feared the Lord. 13 † Then
Haggai, the messenger of the Lord, spoke to the people with the Lord's
message, "I am with you, declares the Lord." 14 † And the Lord stirred up the
spirit of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of
Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the spirit of all the
remnant of the people. And they came and worked on the house of the Lord
of hosts, their God, 15 † on the twenty-fourth day of the month, in the sixth
month, in the second year of Darius the king.

The Coming Glory of the Temple

2 [1]‡†In the seventh month, on the twenty-first day of the month, the word of the Lord came by the hand of Haggai the prophet, [2]†“Speak now to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and to all the remnant of the people, and say, [3]† ‘Who is left among you who saw this house in its former glory? How do you see it now? Is it not as nothing in your eyes? [4]†Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, declares the Lord. Be strong, O Joshua, son of Jehozadak, the high priest. Be strong, all you people of the land, declares the Lord. Work, for I am with you, declares the Lord of hosts, [5]† according to the covenant that I made with you when you came out of Egypt. My Spirit remains in your midst. Fear not. [6]†For thus says the Lord of hosts: Yet once more, in a little while, I will shake the heavens and the earth and the sea and the dry land. [7]†And I will shake all nations, so that the treasures of all nations shall come in, and I will fill this house with glory, says the Lord of hosts. [8]† The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, declares the Lord of hosts. [9]† The latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former, says the Lord of hosts. And in this place I will give peace, declares the Lord of hosts.’”

Blessings for a Defiled People

10 On the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, in the second year of
Darius, the word of the Lord came by Haggai the prophet, 11 "Thus says the
Lord of hosts: Ask the priests about the law: 12 'If someone carries holy
meat in the fold of his garment and touches with his fold bread or stew or
wine or oil or any kind of food, does it become holy?'" The priests
answered and said, "No." 13 Then Haggai said, "If someone who is unclean
by contact with a dead body touches any of these, does it become unclean?"
The priests answered and said, "It does become unclean." 14 Then Haggai
answered and said, "So is it with this people, and with this nation before
me, declares the Lord, and so with every work of their hands. And what they
offer there is unclean. 15 Now then, consider from this day onward.[1]
Before stone was placed upon stone in the temple of the Lord, 16 how did
you fare? When[2] one came to a heap of twenty measures, there were but
ten. When one came to the wine vat to draw fifty measures, there were but
twenty. 17 I struck you and all the products of your toil with blight and with
mildew and with hail, yet you did not turn to me, declares the Lord. 18
Consider from this day onward, from the twenty-fourth day of the ninth
month. Since the day that the foundation of the Lord's temple was laid,
consider: 19 Is the seed yet in the barn? Indeed, the vine, the fig tree, the
pomegranate, and the olive tree have yielded nothing. But from this day on
I will bless you."

Zerubbabel Chosen as a Signet

20 ‡ † The word of the Lord came a second time to Haggai on the twenty-
fourth day of the month, 21 † “Speak to Zerubbabel, governor of Judah,
saying, I am about to shake the heavens and the earth, 22 † and to overthrow
the throne of kingdoms. I am about to destroy the strength of the kingdoms
of the nations, and overthrow the chariots and their riders. And the horses
and their riders shall go down, every one by the sword of his brother. 23 † On
that day, declares the Lord of hosts, I will take you, O Zerubbabel my
servant, the son of Shealtiel, declares the Lord, and make you like a[3] signet
ring, for I have chosen you, declares the Lord of hosts.”

Haggai

OVERVIEW

Author
Haggai the prophet

Date
520 BC

Place
Judah

People
Haggai; King Darius; Zerubbabel, governor of Judah; Joshua the high priest

Purpose
The exiles must rebuild the Jerusalem temple rather than focus on their own prosperity

Law Themes
Condemnation of self-serving interests; living with the results of sinful behavior; shaking the nations

Gospel Themes
The Lord blesses the people's focus on receiving the Word; the promise of the Spirit; chosen by the Lord

Memory Verse
Shaking the nations (2:7–9)

Introduction to Haggai

Reading Haggai

A ruler lays his headdress and outer garments in his servant's hands and lifts a gold necklace over his head. He kicks his sandals off his feet and steps to the edge of the basin to wash in the water the servant will pour. On his right hand remains a broad ring with his name, title, and the symbol of his family—a lion—etched in its oval face. The gold and garments he can lay aside, but the ring can never leave him, for by it he dispatches orders and exercises his authority.

When the prophet Haggai began to prophesy, the Judean exiles needed a man of authority. They needed a governor and high priest to rally them away from self-interest and to unite them for rebuilding the ruined walls of the temple. Over the course of three months in 520 BC, the Lord opened the mouth of Haggai 27 times to rebuke and encourage the leaders and the people of Judah, His chosen ones.

Luther on Haggai

Haggai is the first prophet given to the people after the Babylonian captivity, and by his prophecy the temple and the worship of God were set up again. In addition Zechariah was later given to him as a companion for a period of two months, so that by the mouth of two witnesses the word of God might the more surely be believed. For the people had fallen into great doubt whether the temple would ever be rebuilt.

It is our opinion that Daniel is speaking of this prophet, where he says in chapter 9, "From the going forth of the commandment to restore and rebuild Jerusalem to the coming of Christ, the prince, there shall be seven weeks, and three score and two weeks," etc. For although a decree had gone out earlier from King Cyrus that the temple should be rebuilt at Jerusalem at his (the king's) expense, yet it was hindered until the time of Haggai and Zechariah. When God's commandment went out through their prophesying, then the work went ahead [Ezra 1:1–4; 4:4–6:15].

Haggai denounces the people, however, because they had given no thought to setting up the temple and the worship of God, but had feverishly grubbed and scraped only for their own property and houses. For this reason they were afflicted with famine and with loss of produce, wine, grain, and all sorts of crops. This was an example to all the godless, who pay no heed to God's word and worship and are always filling their own bags. It is to them alone that this text applies, when he says, "Their bag shall be full of holes" [1:6].

So we find in all the histories that when men will not support God's servants or help to maintain his word, he just lets them go and grub for themselves, and scrape incessantly. However in the end he punctures the bag full of holes; he blows into it so that it disintegrates and vanishes, and no one knows what has become of it. God intends to share their food or they'll not have any.

He prophesies also of Christ in chapter 2[:6–7], that he shall soon come as a "comfort of all nations," by which he indicates in a mystery that the kingdom and the laws of the Jews shall have an end, and the kingdoms of all the world shall be destroyed and become subject to Christ. This has already taken place, and continues to take place until the Last Day when it will all be fulfilled. (AE 35:329–30)

For more of Luther's insights on this Book, see *Lectures on Haggai* (AE 18:365–87).

Challenges for Readers

A Specific Mission. Unlike most books of the Bible, Haggai has an especially narrow focus. His prophecies specifically call the Judeans in 520 BC to complete work on the temple, and they finished that work just a few years later. As a consequence, readers today may wonder what this prophecy means for them or even why such a specific matter was included in Holy Scripture.

Blessings for Readers

Haggai illustrates for us the problem of focusing on self-serving priorities to the neglect of God's priorities. It also shows how God rallied this community of faith to accomplish an important work, which united them in hearing God's Word. (The prophet states 27 times that the Word of the Lord came to him.) These are blessings that God's people certainly need today as they consider how to prioritize their life and work together. Also, do not miss how the word to Zerubbabel anticipates the coming of Christ's kingdom (2:20–23).

OUTLINE

I. The Command to Rebuild the Temple (1:1–11)
II. The People Obey (1:12–15)
III. The Glory of This Temple Will Surpass Solomon's (2:1–9)
IV. The People's Faithful Response to the Lord Will Remove Their Defilement (2:10–19)
V. Zerubbabel Is the Lord's Chosen Leader (2:20–23)

Footnotes

Footnotes for Haggai, Chapter 2

- [1] 2:15 Or *backward* ; also verse 18
- [2] 2:16 Probable reading (compare Septuagint) ; Hebrew *LORD, since they were. When*
- [3] 2:23 Hebrew *the*

Study Notes

HAGGAI—NOTE ON 1:1 *second year…sixth month.* Aug/Sept 520 BC. See pp 1518–19. *Darius.* Persian king (522–486 BC; see note, Zec 1:1). *the word of the* LORD *came*. See p 1080. Haggai recorded God's words. *Haggai*. Along with Zechariah, this prophet promoted the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem. Haggai may have returned from exile in Babylon with the remnant under Zerubbabel. *prophet*. See note, 1Sm 9:9. *Zerubbabel … Joshua*. Haggai's first message is directed to these two leaders of the people. *Zerubbabel*. Led some of the Judeans back from the Babylonian captivity and was appointed governor of Judah by the Persians (2:21). *Shealtiel*. Also an ancestor of Jesus (Mt 1:12; Lk 3:27). *Joshua*. Not the son of Nun (Jsh 1:1). As high priest, this Joshua assisted Zerubbabel in rebuilding the temple (Zec 3).

HAGGAI—NOTE ON 1:2 *LORD of hosts*. See p 1291. *rebuild the house of the* LORD. The Judeans who returned to Jerusalem in 538 BC built an altar to offer sacrifices to the Lord and laid the foundations for the temple (Ezr 3). But work stopped when they ran into opposition (Ezr 4:4–5).

HAGGAI—NOTE ON 1:3 *the word of the* LORD *came*. See p 1080. Repetition of these words (v 1) strengthens Haggai's assertion that the Lord spoke through him. *prophet*. See note, 1Sm 9:9.

HAGGAI—NOTE ON 1:4 *paneled houses … this house lies in ruins?* Private dwellings were nicely finished with wood, such as cedar on the walls (Jer 22:14), but God's house was a desolate waste.

HAGGAI—NOTE ON 1:5 *Consider your ways*. Call to repentance. People were to examine their hearts, looking closely at what they had done since returning from Babylon. See "ways," p 844.

HAGGAI—NOTE ON 1:6 *a bag with holes*. Hbr refers to a package that had been carefully wrapped but whose contents fell out because it was punctured. Such is the life of people who fail to put the Lord first.

HAGGAI—NOTE ON 1:7 *Consider your ways.* Repeated (v 5) for emphasis.

HAGGAI—NOTE ON 1:8 *bring wood*. Though Solomon's temple had been built using cedar from Lebanon (1Ki 5:6), now the Lord orders that wood from nearby hills be used. *glorified*. Because the place would be

ready to welcome worshipers. Even a "second class" worship setting could bring God glory.

HAGGAI—NOTE ON 1:9 *it came to little*. Their lives lacked fulfillment because the temple lay in ruins. *busies himself with his own house*. Rather than concern for God's house, the people's number one priority was themselves.

HAGGAI—NOTE ON 1:10 *withheld the dew*. In dry Israel, dew was an important source of moisture for healthy crops. See calendar, p 262.

HAGGAI—NOTE ON 1:11 *drought*. Hbr play on words: the Lord punished the people with drought (Hbr *choreb*) because they had let God's house lie in ruins (Hbr *chareb*). *grain, the new wine, the oil*. In the ancient biblical world, these were the basic foods. See p 236.

HAGGAI—NOTE ON 1:1–11 The Lord chastises His people for being concerned about their own houses while His sacred house lies in ruins. The Lord's work suffers today when we take care of our own material wants and needs but fail to support the work of proclaiming the Gospel. Jesus had a different priority. He came to serve, giving His life as a ransom for us. Though He was rich, for our sakes He became poor so that we might become rich (2Co 8:9). The riches we have received in Him move us to become rich in our love for Him and others. • Dear Jesus, fire me with zeal to have You first in my life. Unite me in service with others. Amen.

HAGGAI—NOTE ON 1:12 *Zerubbabel … Joshua*. See note, v 1. *all the remnant*. Judeans, some of whom had returned from Babylon. One estimate puts this number at fewer than 4,000 people. See p 1080. *obeyed*. Responded positively to the Word of the Lord spoken by Haggai. *the people feared the* LORD. This fear is a profound and worshipful respect that results in obedience. See p 1001.

HAGGAI—NOTE ON 1:13 *messenger*. Hbr *mal'ak,* often translated "angel" but could describe preachers. *I am with you*. The Lord, by assuring His people of His living presence among them, means to give them the needed confidence to carry out the building project.

HAGGAI—NOTE ON 1:14 *stirred up the spirit*. Emphasizes how completely the people and their leaders have the Lord's support.

HAGGAI—NOTE ON 1:15 *twenty-fourth day.* Three and a half weeks after the Word of the Lord had come to Haggai (v 1), the people began the work of restoring what had lain in ruins for nearly 70 years.

HAGGAI—NOTE ON 1:12–15 The people of Judah obey the Word of the Lord and begin the task of rebuilding the temple. They demonstrate repentance for their previous selfishness. The Lord in turn promises to be with them, and He stirs up the spirit of the people and their leaders to work hard. Through Word and Sacrament, God is present with us today. His Spirit stirs us to repentance and gives us a burning desire to serve Him. • Lord God, bless my hearing and my doing of Your holy will. Amen.

HAGGAI—NOTE ON 2:1 *seventh month*. Hbr *Tishri* (our Sept/Oct; see calendar, p 262), three and a half weeks after the work on the house of the Lord had begun.

HAGGAI—NOTE ON 2:2 *Speak now*. Directed to the governor, the high priest, and the remnant of the people, some of whom would have had childhood memories of what the temple had looked like before it was destroyed by the Babylonians in 587 BC.

HAGGAI—NOTE ON 2:3 *this house in its former glory?* Solomon's temple was exceedingly glorious. *as nothing*. Replacement temple must have seemed inferior to those who remembered the glory of Solomon's temple. Luth: "Many little children had been carried away into captivity, like Daniel, who lived almost until the return from the captivity. Here, too, this text indicates that there were still some survivors who had seen God's earlier house which had been so magnificently and beautifully constructed. So it did seem impossible to them that the temple could be restored. We have had the same experience. In the beginning, the preaching of the Gospel seemed foolish to us, but this is the way God declares His power. You see, at the time when we expect nothing less, when we think that everything is going to pieces, that's when the Lord is near" (AE 18:380).

HAGGAI—NOTE ON 2:4 *be strong*. Three repetitions of this verb heighten God's call for courage and fortitude. *Work, for I am with you.* In the strength of the Lord, nothing is impossible for His people. *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291.

HAGGAI—NOTE ON 2:5 *the covenant*. At Mount Sinai, God had declared that Israel would be His own possession from among all peoples (Ex 19:5–6), and He had given them the assurance that He would dwell among them and be their God (Ex 25:8). See p 127. *My Spirit remains in your midst*. In the past, God had given His Holy Spirit to Moses, to Joshua, and to David. This same Spirit would now be among these people to comfort and strengthen them. See p 1815.

HAGGAI—NOTE ON 2:6 *shake*. First of three occurrences of this word, which refers to events associated with God's effect on human history (vv 7, 21). When God acts, as on the Last Day, all the forces of nature will experience upheaval along with the nations of the world (Mt 24:29).
HAGGAI—NOTE ON 2:7 *shake*. See note, v 6. *glory*. The Lord promises that His glory will fill this rebuilt temple as it filled Solomon's temple (1Ki 8:11).
HAGGAI—NOTE ON 2:8 *The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine.* Whatever was needed to build the temple, the Lord provided. He will also provide whatever spiritual riches are needed for His more glorious house, the Church.
HAGGAI—NOTE ON 2:9 *glory*. Luth: "This splendor could not lie in gold or silver or other precious objects, since that first temple had been built much more richly and splendidly. Rather, this is a spiritual splendor, which comes through the preaching of the Gospel. All these things have been fulfilled in Christ" (AE 18:383). *greater than the former*. What would make the second temple even more glorious than the first was the presence of God's Son in it (Lk 2:27, 46). *peace*. Hbr *shalom,* a multipurpose word that can mean "health," "prosperity," or "peace," and may serve as a greeting. God's greatest gift of peace is in the sending of the Messiah (Lk 2:14, 29).
HAGGAI—NOTE ON 2:1–9 The Lord encourages His people to continue their work of rebuilding the temple with the assurance that He will be with them and that in the future, the glory of this house will be greater than the first temple. Do we at times become discouraged thinking that God's Church and the preaching of His Word count for nothing in this world? The Lord assures us that it is here we find our greatest treasure: forgiveness of sins and peace in Christ our Savior. • Praise to You, O Lord, for establishing Your glorious Church and for the peace that she proclaims. Amen.
HAGGAI—NOTE ON 2:10 *ninth month.* Hbr *Chislev*, our Nov/Dec. See calendar, p 262. Haggai received his third message exactly three months after work on the Lord's house had begun.
HAGGAI—NOTE ON 2:11 *Ask the priests.* Priests had the responsibility of distinguishing between what was clean and what was unclean. They were also responsible for interpreting and applying the Law (Dt 17:8–13). *law*. Hbr *torah,* "instruction in God's will"; may refer to a ruling or decision

based on the Ten Commandments and other laws in the Five Books of Moses. See p 971.

HAGGAI—NOTE ON 2:12 Garments were made holy by contact with holy meat (Lv 6:27) but could not communicate holiness to other items. See pp 170–71. *holy meat*. Flesh of animals sacrificed to the Lord.

HAGGAI—NOTE ON 2:13 *contact with a dead body*. Anyone who touched a dead body was unclean (Nu 19:11–13), and everything touched by the unclean person also became unclean.

HAGGAI—NOTE ON 2:14 People were unclean or defiled because the temple had not yet been completed, despite good beginnings. Their previous failure to act according to God's will in one area of life contaminated all other activities in which they engaged, such as trying to raise crops.

HAGGAI—NOTE ON 2:15 *consider ... onward*. Haggai invites the people to look forward to what is coming in contrast to what had been happening. Repeated in v 18.

HAGGAI—NOTE ON 2:16 *how did you fare?* People are asked to think about conditions before the temple rebuilding began. Then, they lacked wheat and wine. *a heap*. Sheaf of grain. *wine vat*. Where grapes were crushed and juice was drained.

HAGGAI—NOTE ON 2:17 *I struck you*. The Lord permitted disease, mold, and hail to ruin their crops so that they would turn their hearts to Him in repentance (1:10–11). See note, Dt 32:39.

HAGGAI—NOTE ON 2:18 Repeated from v 15. From the time that the foundation of the temple had been laid until the present day, the people had continued to suffer want.

HAGGAI—NOTE ON 2:19 *from this day on I will bless you*. Despite all their hard efforts, the people had not enjoyed good harvests. But now, because of their determination to rebuild the temple, they can look forward with hope. The Lord will mark this day as the beginning of showers of blessings on them. *bless*. See p 842.

HAGGAI—NOTE ON 2:10–19 The people have not received the blessings they expected from the Lord. And the offerings they bring to the Lord are unclean (v 14) because of their earlier failure to rebuild the temple. But now the Lord promises to bless them. The people of Judah need to realize that without this blessing, both the temple building project and their crops will suffer. We also need the Lord to bless us, for without Him, we can do nothing. By His bodily presence in Christ, He has demonstrated His

gracious kindness to us. We can depend on Him to provide for all our needs, both spiritual and physical. • Father, forgive me for the times I have lived my life without considering You. Help me depend on You to bless all that I undertake as Your child. Amen.

HAGGAI—NOTE ON 2:20 *on the twenty-fourth day of the month*. The Lord spoke through Haggai a second time on the same day (v 10).

HAGGAI—NOTE ON 2:21 *Zerubbabel*. See note, 1:1. Haggai's first message on the 24th day of the month was directed to the people (v 10). Now he addresses Zerubbabel, the one through whom spiritual blessings will be realized in the future. *shake*. See note, v 6.

HAGGAI—NOTE ON 2:22 *throne of kingdoms*. Earthly rulers and their dynasties. *destroy the strength ... overthrow.* There will be a complete overthrow of the kingdoms of this world, together with their charioteers, their cavalry, and all their weapons of war (Ps 46:9–10). *by the sword of his brother*. The Lord will use one nation to destroy another.

HAGGAI—NOTE ON 2:23 *On that day*. OT prophets often used this expression when referring to the NT era (Zep 3:9, 11, 16; Zec 13:1). See p 1079. *signet ring*. Ring engraved with a person's name or symbol and used to make an impression on a clay seal or wax tablet as a way of sealing a decree. To have a signet ring was a mark of authority. See note, Jer 32:10. *chosen*. The promise made to David (2Sm 7:11–16; Ps 78:70) is repeated to Zerubbabel, a descendant of David, through whom the promised Savior would come (Mt 1:12, 16). Zerubbabel never became a king over Judah, as perhaps some Judeans hoped would happen. Luth: "This applies not so much to the person of the king as it does to the person of Christ, who was born out of his loins, because 'salvation is from the Jews,' as John writes (John 4:22). Therefore, Christ, who came from the Jews, changed everything with His coming, namely, through the preaching of the Gospel. You see, as long as Zerubbabel lived that change did not occur. It came after his death when the new King, Christ, was born. To Him be praise and glory. Amen" (AE 18:386–87). See pp 1565–66.

HAGGAI—NOTE ON 2:20–23 Haggai concludes by looking to the future. The time was coming when the Lord would overthrow the kingdoms of the world and make His chosen servant Zerubbabel the one through whom the promise of the Savior would be realized. When we see the world in turmoil, with wars and rumors of wars across the globe and evil increasing all around, how often do we find ourselves foolishly wondering

whether the Lord is in control? We need to remember that just as He did in the past, so today the Lord continues to govern all things in the interest of His kingdom. Through Jesus, the promised descendant of David and Zerubbabel, we receive forgiveness for our sins of doubt and worry. • Heavenly Father, I praise You for sending Jesus to be my Savior from sin, my comfort in affliction, and my reason for living. Amen.

Zechariah

Zechariah 1 | Zechariah 2 | Zechariah 3 | Zechariah 4 | Zechariah 5 | Zechariah 6 | Zechariah 7 | Zechariah 8 | Zechariah 9 | Zechariah 10 | Zechariah 11 | Zechariah 12 | Zechariah 13 | Zechariah 14

- Introduction to Zechariah
  - Overview
  - Reading Zechariah
  - Luther on Zechariah
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

A Call to Return to the Lord

1 [1]In the eighth month, in the second year of Darius, the word of
the Lord came to the prophet Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, son of Iddo,
saying, [2] “The Lord was very angry with your fathers.[3]Therefore say to
them, Thus declares the Lord of hosts: Return to me, says the Lord of hosts,
and I will return to you, says the Lord of hosts. [4] Do not be like your
fathers, to whom the former prophets cried out, ‘Thus says the Lord of
hosts, Return from your evil ways and from your evil deeds.’ But they did
not hear or pay attention to me, declares the Lord. [5]Your fathers, where are
they? And the prophets, do they live forever? [6] But my words and my
statutes, which I commanded my servants the prophets, did they not
overtake your fathers? So they repented and said, As the Lord of hosts
purposed to deal with us for our ways and deeds, so has he dealt with us.”

A Vision of a Horseman

7 †† On the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month, which is the month
of Shebat, in the second year of Darius, the word of the Lord came to the
prophet Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, son of Iddo, saying, 8 † "I saw in
the night, and behold, a man riding on a red horse! He was standing among
the myrtle trees in the glen, and behind him were red, sorrel, and white
horses. 9 † Then I said, 'What are these, my lord?' The angel who talked with
me said to me, 'I will show you what they are.' 10 † So the man who was
standing among the myrtle trees answered, 'These are they whom the Lord
has sent to patrol the earth.' 11 † And they answered the angel of the Lord
who was standing among the myrtle trees, and said, 'We have patrolled the
earth, and behold, all the earth remains at rest.' 12 † Then the angel of the
Lord said, 'O Lord of hosts, how long will you have no mercy on Jerusalem
and the cities of Judah, against which you have been angry these seventy
years?' 13 † And the Lord answered gracious and comforting words to the
angel who talked with me. 14 † So the angel who talked with me said to me,
'Cry out, Thus says the Lord of hosts: I am exceedingly jealous for
Jerusalem and for Zion. 15 † And I am exceedingly angry with the nations
that are at ease; for while I was angry but a little, they furthered the disaster.
16 † Therefore, thus says the Lord, I have returned to Jerusalem with mercy;
my house shall be built in it, declares the Lord of hosts, and the measuring
line shall be stretched out over Jerusalem. 17 † Cry out again, Thus says the
Lord of hosts: My cities shall again overflow with prosperity, and the Lord
will again comfort Zion and again choose Jerusalem.'"

A Vision of Horns and Craftsmen

18 ‡ † [1] And I lifted my eyes and saw, and behold, four horns! 19 † And I
said to the angel who talked with me, “What are these?” And he said to me,
“These are the horns that have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem.”
20 † Then the Lord showed me four craftsmen. 21 † And I said, “What are these
coming to do?” He said, “These are the horns that scattered Judah, so that
no one raised his head. And these have come to terrify them, to cast down
the horns of the nations who lifted up their horns against the land of Judah
to scatter it.”

A Vision of a Man with a Measuring Line

2 [1] And I lifted my eyes and saw, and behold, a man with a measuring line in his hand! [2] Then I said, “Where are you going?” And he said to me, “To measure Jerusalem, to see what is its width and what is its length.” [3] And behold, the angel who talked with me came forward, and another angel came forward to meet him [4] and said to him, “Run, say to that young man, ‘Jerusalem shall be inhabited as villages without walls, because of the multitude of people and livestock in it. [5] And I will be to her a wall of fire all around, declares the Lord, and I will be the glory in her midst.’”

[6] Up! Up! Flee from the land of the north, declares the Lord. For I have spread you abroad as the four winds of the heavens, declares the Lord. [7] Up! Escape to Zion, you who dwell with the daughter of Babylon. [8] For thus said the Lord of hosts, after his glory sent me[1] to the nations who plundered you, for he who touches you touches the apple of his eye: [9] “Behold, I will shake my hand over them, and they shall become plunder for those who served them. Then you will know that the Lord of hosts has sent me. [10] Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion, for behold, I come and I will dwell in your midst, declares the Lord. [11] And many nations shall join themselves to the Lord in that day, and shall be my people. And I will dwell in your midst, and you shall know that the Lord of hosts has sent me to you. [12] And the Lord will inherit Judah as his portion in the holy land, and will again choose Jerusalem.”

[13] Be silent, all flesh, before the Lord, for he has roused himself from his holy dwelling.

A Vision of Joshua the High Priest

3 [1]†† Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the
angel of the Lord, and Satan[2] standing at his right hand to accuse him.
[2]† And the Lord said to Satan, "The Lord rebuke you, O Satan! The Lord
who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is not this a brand[3] plucked from
the fire?" [3]† Now Joshua was standing before the angel, clothed with filthy
garments. [4]† And the angel said to those who were standing before him,
"Remove the filthy garments from him." And to him he said, "Behold, I
have taken your iniquity away from you, and I will clothe you with pure
vestments." [5]† And I said, "Let them put a clean turban on his head." So
they put a clean turban on his head and clothed him with garments. And the
angel of the Lord was standing by.

[6]† And the angel of the Lord solemnly assured Joshua, [7]† "Thus says the
Lord of hosts: If you will walk in my ways and keep my charge, then you
shall rule my house and have charge of my courts, and I will give you the
right of access among those who are standing here. [8]† Hear now, O Joshua
the high priest, you and your friends who sit before you, for they are men
who are a sign: behold, I will bring my servant the Branch. [9]† For behold, on
the stone that I have set before Joshua, on a single stone with seven eyes,[1] I
will engrave its inscription, declares the Lord of hosts, and I will remove the
iniquity of this land in a single day. [10]† In that day, declares the Lord of
hosts, every one of you will invite his neighbor to come under his vine and
under his fig tree."

A Vision of a Golden Lampstand

4 [1]And the angel who talked with me came again and woke me, like
a man who is awakened out of his sleep. [2]And he said to me, “What do
you see?” I said, “I see, and behold, a lampstand all of gold, with a bowl on
the top of it, and seven lamps on it, with seven lips on each of the lamps
that are on the top of it. [3]And there are two olive trees by it, one on the
right of the bowl and the other on its left.” [4]And I said to the angel who
talked with me, “What are these, my lord?” [5]Then the angel who talked with
me answered and said to me, “Do you not know what these are?” I said,
“No, my lord.” [6]Then he said to me, “This is the word of the Lord to
Zerubbabel: Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord of
hosts. [7]Who are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall
become a plain. And he shall bring forward the top stone amid shouts of
Grace, grace to it!’”

[8]Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying, [9] “The hands of
Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also
complete it. Then you will know that the Lord of hosts has sent me to you.
[10] For whoever has despised the day of small things shall rejoice, and shall
see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel.

“These seven are the eyes of the Lord, which range through the whole
earth.” [11]Then I said to him, “What are these two olive trees on the right and
the left of the lampstand?” [12]And a second time I answered and said to
him, “What are these two branches of the olive trees, which are beside the
two golden pipes from which the golden oil[1] is poured out?” [13]He said to
me, “Do you not know what these are?” I said, “No, my lord.” [14]Then he
said, “These are the two anointed ones[2] who stand by the Lord of the
whole earth.”

A Vision of a Flying Scroll

5 [1] ‡† Again I lifted my eyes and saw, and behold, a flying scroll!
[2] † And he said to me, “What do you see?” I answered, “I see a flying scroll.
Its length is twenty cubits, and its width ten cubits.”[3] [3] † Then he said to me,
“This is the curse that goes out over the face of the whole land. For
everyone who steals shall be cleaned out according to what is on one side,
and everyone who swears falsely[4] shall be cleaned out according to what is
on the other side. [4] † I will send it out, declares the Lord of hosts, and it shall
enter the house of the thief, and the house of him who swears falsely by my
name. And it shall remain in his house and consume it, both timber and
stones.”

A Vision of a Woman in a Basket

5 ‡ † Then the angel who talked with me came forward and said to me,
“Lift your eyes and see what this is that is going out.” 6 †And I said, “What
is it?” He said, “This is the basket[5] that is going out.” And he said, “This is
their iniquity[6] in all the land.” 7 †And behold, the leaden cover was lifted,
and there was a woman sitting in the basket! 8 † And he said, “This is
Wickedness.” And he thrust her back into the basket, and thrust down the
leaden weight on its opening.

9 † Then I lifted my eyes and saw, and behold, two women coming
forward! The wind was in their wings. They had wings like the wings of a
stork, and they lifted up the basket between earth and heaven. 10Then I said
to the angel who talked with me, “Where are they taking the basket?” 11 †He
said to me, “To the land of Shinar, to build a house for it. And when this is
prepared, they will set the basket down there on its base.”

A Vision of Four Chariots

6 [1] ‡ ‡Again I lifted my eyes and saw, and behold, four chariots came
out from between two mountains. And the mountains were mountains of
bronze. [2] † The first chariot had red horses, the second black horses, [3] † the
third white horses, and the fourth chariot dappled horses—all of them
strong.[1] [4] † Then I answered and said to the angel who talked with me,
"What are these, my lord?" [5] † And the angel answered and said to me,
"These are going out to the four winds of heaven, after presenting
themselves before the Lord of all the earth. [6] † The chariot with the black
horses goes toward the north country, the white ones go after them, and the
dappled ones go toward the south country." [7] † When the strong horses came
out, they were impatient to go and patrol the earth. And he said, "Go, patrol
the earth." So they patrolled the earth. [8] † Then he cried to me, "Behold,
those who go toward the north country have set my Spirit at rest in the north
country."

The Crown and the Temple

9 ‡ † And the word of the Lord came to me: 10 † “Take from the exiles
Heldai, Tobijah, and Jedaiah, who have arrived from Babylon, and go the
same day to the house of Josiah, the son of Zephaniah. 11 † Take from them
silver and gold, and make a crown, and set it on the head of Joshua, the son
of Jehozadak, the high priest. 12 † And say to him, ‘Thus says the Lord of
hosts, “Behold, the man whose name is the Branch: for he shall branch out
from his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord. 13 † It is he who
shall build the temple of the Lord and shall bear royal honor, and shall sit
and rule on his throne. And there shall be a priest on his throne, and the
counsel of peace shall be between them both.”’ 14 † And the crown shall be in
the temple of the Lord as a reminder to Helem,[1] Tobijah, Jedaiah, and Hen
the son of Zephaniah.

15 † “And those who are far off shall come and help to build the temple of
the Lord. And you shall know that the Lord of hosts has sent me to you. And
this shall come to pass, if you will diligently obey the voice of the Lord
your God.”

A Call for Justice and Mercy

7 [1]In the fourth year of King Darius, the word of the Lord came to
Zechariah on the fourth day of the ninth month, which is Chislev. [2]Now
the people of Bethel had sent Sharezer and Regem-melech and their men to
entreat the favor of the Lord, [3] saying to the priests of the house of the Lord
of hosts and the prophets, "Should I weep and abstain in the fifth month, as
I have done for so many years?"

[4]Then the word of the Lord of hosts came to me: [5]"Say to all the people
of the land and the priests, When you fasted and mourned in the fifth month
and in the seventh, for these seventy years, was it for me that you fasted? [6]
And when you eat and when you drink, do you not eat for yourselves and
drink for yourselves? [7] Were not these the words that the Lord proclaimed
by the former prophets, when Jerusalem was inhabited and prosperous, with
her cities around her, and the South and the lowland were inhabited?"

[8]And the word of the Lord came to Zechariah, saying, [9]"Thus says the
Lord of hosts, Render true judgments, show kindness and mercy to one
another, [10] do not oppress the widow, the fatherless, the sojourner, or the
poor, and let none of you devise evil against another in your heart." [11]But
they refused to pay attention and turned a stubborn shoulder and stopped
their ears that they might not hear.[1] [12] They made their hearts diamond-
hard lest they should hear the law and the words that the Lord of hosts had
sent by his Spirit through the former prophets. Therefore great anger came
from the Lord of hosts. [13] "As I[2] called, and they would not hear, so they
called, and I would not hear," says the Lord of hosts, [14] "and I scattered
them with a whirlwind among all the nations that they had not known. Thus
the land they left was desolate, so that no one went to and fro, and the
pleasant land was made desolate."

The Coming Peace and Prosperity of Zion

8 [1]‡†And the word of the Lord of hosts came, saying, [2]†“Thus says the Lord of hosts: I am jealous for Zion with great jealousy, and I am jealous for her with great wrath. [3]†Thus says the Lord: I have returned to Zion and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem, and Jerusalem shall be called the faithful city, and the mountain of the Lord of hosts, the holy mountain. [4]‡†Thus says the Lord of hosts: Old men and old women shall again sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each with staff in hand because of great age. [5]†And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in its streets. [6]†Thus says the Lord of hosts: If it is marvelous in the sight of the remnant of this people in those days, should it also be marvelous in my sight, declares the Lord of hosts? [7]†Thus says the Lord of hosts: behold, I will save my people from the east country and from the west country, [8]†and I will bring them to dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. And they shall be my people, and I will be their God, in faithfulness and in righteousness.”

[9]†Thus says the Lord of hosts: “Let your hands be strong, you who in these days have been hearing these words from the mouth of the prophets who were present on the day that the foundation of the house of the Lord of hosts was laid, that the temple might be built. [10]†For before those days there was no wage for man or any wage for beast, neither was there any safety from the foe for him who went out or came in, for I set every man against his neighbor. [11]†But now I will not deal with the remnant of this people as in the former days, declares the Lord of hosts. [12]† For there shall be a sowing of peace. The vine shall give its fruit, and the ground shall give its produce, and the heavens shall give their dew. And I will cause the remnant of this people to possess all these things. [13]†And as you have been a byword of cursing among the nations, O house of Judah and house of Israel, so will I save you, and you shall be a blessing. Fear not, but let your hands be strong.”

[14]‡†For thus says the Lord of hosts: “As I purposed to bring disaster to you when your fathers provoked me to wrath, and I did not relent, says the Lord of hosts, [15]†so again have I purposed in these days to bring good to

Jerusalem and to the house of Judah; fear not. [16]†These are the things that you shall do: Speak the truth to one another; render in your gates judgments that are true and make for peace; [17]† do not devise evil in your hearts against one another, and love no false oath, for all these things I hate, declares the Lord."

[18]‡†And the word of the Lord of hosts came to me, saying, [19]†"Thus says the Lord of hosts: The fast of the fourth month and the fast of the fifth and the fast of the seventh and the fast of the tenth shall be to the house of Judah seasons of joy and gladness and cheerful feasts. Therefore love truth and peace.

[20]† "Thus says the Lord of hosts: Peoples shall yet come, even the inhabitants of many cities. [21]†The inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, 'Let us go at once to entreat the favor of the Lord and to seek the Lord of hosts; I myself am going.' [22]† Many peoples and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem and to entreat the favor of the Lord. [23]†Thus says the Lord of hosts: In those days ten men from the nations of every tongue shall take hold of the robe of a Jew, saying, 'Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.'"

Judgment on Israel's Enemies

9 [1]† The burden of the word of the Lord is against
the land of Hadrach
and Damascus is its resting place.
For the Lord has an eye on mankind
and on all the tribes of Israel,[1]

[2]† and on Hamath also, which borders on it,
Tyre and Sidon, though they are very
wise.
[3]† Tyre has built herself a rampart
and heaped up silver like dust,
and fine gold like the mud of the
streets.
[4]† But behold, the Lord will strip her of her
possessions
and strike down her power on the sea,
and she shall be devoured by fire.

[5]† Ashkelon shall see it, and be afraid;
Gaza too, and shall writhe in anguish;
Ekron also, because its hopes are
confounded.
The king shall perish from Gaza;
Ashkelon shall be uninhabited;
[6]† a mixed people[1] shall dwell in Ashdod,
and I will cut off the pride of Philistia.
[7]† I will take away its blood from its mouth,
and its abominations from between its
teeth;
it too shall be a remnant for our God;
it shall be like a clan in Judah,
and Ekron shall be like the Jebusites.

[8] † Then I will encamp at my house as a guard,
so that none shall march to and fro;
no oppressor shall again march over them,
for now I see with my own eyes.

The Coming King of Zion

9† Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion!
Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem!
Behold, your king is coming to you;
righteous and having salvation is he,
humble and mounted on a donkey,
on a colt, the foal of a donkey.
10† I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim
and the war horse from Jerusalem;
and the battle bow shall be cut off,
and he shall speak peace to the nations;
his rule shall be from sea to sea,
and from the River to the ends of the
earth.
11† As for you also, because of the blood of my
covenant with you,
I will set your prisoners free from the
waterless pit.
12† Return to your stronghold, O prisoners of
hope;
today I declare that I will restore to you
double.
13† For I have bent Judah as my bow;
I have made Ephraim its arrow.
I will stir up your sons, O Zion,
against your sons, O Greece,
and wield you like a warrior's sword.

The Lord Will Save His People

14† Then the Lord will appear over them,
and his arrow will go forth like lightning;
the Lord God will sound the trumpet
and will march forth in the whirlwinds of the south.
15† The Lord of hosts will protect them,
and they shall devour, and tread down the sling stones,
and they shall drink and roar as if drunk with wine,
and be full like a bowl,
drenched like the corners of the altar.

16† On that day the Lord their God will save them,
as the flock of his people;
for like the jewels of a crown
they shall shine on his land.
17† For how great is his goodness, and how great his beauty!
Grain shall make the young men flourish,
and new wine the young women.

The Restoration for Judah and Israel

10 [1]† Ask rain from the Lord
in the season of the spring rain,
from the Lord who makes the storm clouds,
and he will give them showers of rain,
to everyone the vegetation in the field.

[2]† For the household gods utter nonsense,
and the diviners see lies;
they tell false dreams
and give empty consolation.
Therefore the people wander like sheep;
they are afflicted for lack of a shepherd.

[3]† "My anger is hot against the shepherds,
and I will punish the leaders;[1]
for the Lord of hosts cares for his flock, the house of Judah,
and will make them like his majestic steed in battle.
[4]† From him shall come the cornerstone,
from him the tent peg,
from him the battle bow,
from him every ruler—all of them together.
[5]† They shall be like mighty men in battle,
trampling the foe in the mud of the streets;
they shall fight because the Lord is with them,
and they shall put to shame the riders on horses.

6 “I will strengthen the house of Judah,
and I will save the house of Joseph.
I will bring them back because I have
compassion on them,
and they shall be as though I had not
rejected them,
for I am the Lord their God and I will
answer them.
7 Then Ephraim shall become like a mighty
warrior,
and their hearts shall be glad as with wine.
Their children shall see it and be glad;
their hearts shall rejoice in the Lord.

8 “I will whistle for them and gather them in,
for I have redeemed them,
and they shall be as many as they were before.
9 Though I scattered them among the nations,
yet in far countries they shall remember me,
and with their children they shall live and
return.
10 I will bring them home from the land of Egypt,
and gather them from Assyria,
and I will bring them to the land of Gilead
and to Lebanon,
till there is no room for them.
11 He shall pass through the sea of troubles
and strike down the waves of the sea,
and all the depths of the Nile shall be
dried up.
The pride of Assyria shall be laid low,
and the scepter of Egypt shall depart.
12 I will make them strong in the Lord,
and they shall walk in his name,”
declares the Lord.

The Flock Doomed to Slaughter

11 [1]†Open your doors, O Lebanon,
that the fire may devour your cedars!

[2]† Wail, O cypress, for the cedar has fallen,
for the glorious trees are ruined!
Wail, oaks of Bashan,
for the thick forest has been felled!
[3]† The sound of the wail of the shepherds,
for their glory is ruined!
The sound of the roar of the lions,
for the thicket of the Jordan is ruined!

[4]†Thus said the Lord my God: "Become shepherd of the flock doomed to slaughter. [5]† Those who buy them slaughter them and go unpunished, and those who sell them say, 'Blessed be the Lord, I have become rich,' and their own shepherds have no pity on them. [6]†For I will no longer have pity on the inhabitants of this land, declares the Lord. Behold, I will cause each of them to fall into the hand of his neighbor, and each into the hand of his king, and they shall crush the land, and I will deliver none from their hand."

[7]† So I became the shepherd of the flock doomed to be slaughtered by the sheep traders. And I took two staffs, one I named Favor, the other I named Union. And I tended the sheep. [8]† In one month I destroyed the three shepherds. But I became impatient with them, and they also detested me. [9]†So I said, "I will not be your shepherd. What is to die, let it die. What is to be destroyed, let it be destroyed. And let those who are left devour the flesh of one another." [10]†And I took my staff Favor, and I broke it, annulling the covenant that I had made with all the peoples. [11]†So it was annulled on that day, and the sheep traders, who were watching me, knew that it was the word of the Lord. [12]†Then I said to them, "If it seems good to you, give me my wages; but if not, keep them." And they weighed out as my wages thirty pieces of silver. [13]†Then the Lord said to me, "Throw it to the potter"—the lordly price at which I was priced by them. So I took the thirty pieces of

silver and threw them into the house of the Lord, to the potter. [14] †Then I broke my second staff Union, annulling the brotherhood between Judah and Israel.

[15] †Then the Lord said to me, “Take once more the equipment of a foolish shepherd. [16] †For behold, I am raising up in the land a shepherd who does not care for those being destroyed, or seek the young or heal the maimed or nourish the healthy, but devours the flesh of the fat ones, tearing off even their hoofs.

[17] † “Woe to my worthless shepherd,
who deserts the flock!
May the sword strike his arm
and his right eye!
Let his arm be wholly withered,
his right eye utterly blinded!”

The Lord Will Give Salvation

12 [1] The burden of the word of the Lord concerning Israel: Thus
declares the Lord, who stretched out the heavens and founded the earth and
formed the spirit of man within him: [2] "Behold, I am about to make
Jerusalem a cup of staggering to all the surrounding peoples. The siege of
Jerusalem will also be against Judah. [3] On that day I will make Jerusalem a
heavy stone for all the peoples. All who lift it will surely hurt themselves.
And all the nations of the earth will gather against it. [4] On that day, declares
the Lord, I will strike every horse with panic, and its rider with madness.
But for the sake of the house of Judah I will keep my eyes open, when I
strike every horse of the peoples with blindness. [5] Then the clans of Judah
shall say to themselves, 'The inhabitants of Jerusalem have strength through
the Lord of hosts, their God.'

[6] "On that day I will make the clans of Judah like a blazing pot in the
midst of wood, like a flaming torch among sheaves. And they shall devour
to the right and to the left all the surrounding peoples, while Jerusalem shall
again be inhabited in its place, in Jerusalem.

[7] "And the Lord will give salvation to the tents of Judah first, that the
glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem
may not surpass that of Judah. [8] On that day the Lord will protect the
inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the feeblest among them on that day shall
be like David, and the house of David shall be like God, like the angel of
the Lord, going before them. [9] And on that day I will seek to destroy all the
nations that come against Jerusalem.

Him Whom They Have Pierced

10 ‡ † “And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of
Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that, when they look on
me, on him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one
mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a
firstborn. 11 † On that day the mourning in Jerusalem will be as great as the
mourning for Hadad-rimmon in the plain of Megiddo. 12 † The land shall
mourn, each family[1] by itself: the family of the house of David by itself,
and their wives by themselves; the family of the house of Nathan by itself,
and their wives by themselves; 13 † the family of the house of Levi by itself,
and their wives by themselves; the family of the Shimeites by itself, and
their wives by themselves; 14 † and all the families that are left, each by itself,
and their wives by themselves.

13 1 † “On that day there shall be a fountain opened for the house of
David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to cleanse them from sin and
uncleanness.

Idolatry Cut Off

2 ‡ † “And on that day, declares the Lord of hosts, I will cut off the names
of the idols from the land, so that they shall be remembered no more. And
also I will remove from the land the prophets and the spirit of uncleanness.
3 † And if anyone again prophesies, his father and mother who bore him will
say to him, ‘You shall not live, for you speak lies in the name of the Lord.’
And his father and mother who bore him shall pierce him through when he
prophesies.
4 ‡ † “On that day every prophet will be ashamed of his vision when he
prophesies. He will not put on a hairy cloak in order to deceive, 5 † but he
will say, ‘I am no prophet, I am a worker of the soil, for a man sold me in
my youth.’[1] 6 † And if one asks him, ‘What are these wounds on your
back?’[2] he will say, ‘The wounds I received in the house of my friends.’

The Shepherd Struck

7 ✝✝ “Awake, O sword, against my shepherd,
against the man who stands next to me,”
declares the Lord of hosts.

“Strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be
scattered;
I will turn my hand against the little ones.
8 ✝ In the whole land, declares the Lord,
two thirds shall be cut off and perish,
and one third shall be left alive.
9 ✝ And I will put this third into the fire,
and refine them as one refines silver,
and test them as gold is tested.
They will call upon my name,
and I will answer them.
I will say, ‘They are my people’;
and they will say, ‘The Lord is my God.’”

The Coming Day of the Lord

14 [1]†Behold, a day is coming for the Lord, when the spoil taken from
you will be divided in your midst. [2]†For I will gather all the nations against
Jerusalem to battle, and the city shall be taken and the houses plundered and
the women raped. Half of the city shall go out into exile, but the rest of the
people shall not be cut off from the city. [3]† Then the Lord will go out and
fight against those nations as when he fights on a day of battle. [4]† On that
day his feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives that lies before Jerusalem on
the east, and the Mount of Olives shall be split in two from east to west by a
very wide valley, so that one half of the Mount shall move northward, and
the other half southward. [5]† And you shall flee to the valley of my
mountains, for the valley of the mountains shall reach to Azal. And you
shall flee as you fled from the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of
Judah. Then the Lord my God will come, and all the holy ones with him.

[6]† On that day there shall be no light, cold, or frost.[1] [7]† And there shall
be a unique[2] day, which is known to the Lord, neither day nor night, but at
evening time there shall be light.

[8]† On that day living waters shall flow out from Jerusalem, half of them
to the eastern sea[3] and half of them to the western sea.[4] It shall continue in
summer as in winter.

[9]†And the Lord will be king over all the earth. On that day the Lord will
be one and his name one.

[10]† The whole land shall be turned into a plain from Geba to Rimmon
south of Jerusalem. But Jerusalem shall remain aloft on its site from the
Gate of Benjamin to the place of the former gate, to the Corner Gate, and
from the Tower of Hananel to the king's winepresses. [11]†And it shall be
inhabited, for there shall never again be a decree of utter destruction.[5]
Jerusalem shall dwell in security.

[12]†And this shall be the plague with which the Lord will strike all the
peoples that wage war against Jerusalem: their flesh will rot while they are
still standing on their feet, their eyes will rot in their sockets, and their
tongues will rot in their mouths.

13 †And on that day a great panic from the Lord shall fall on them, so that
each will seize the hand of another, and the hand of the one will be raised
against the hand of the other. 14 †Even Judah will fight at Jerusalem. And the
wealth of all the surrounding nations shall be collected, gold, silver, and
garments in great abundance. 15 †And a plague like this plague shall fall on
the horses, the mules, the camels, the donkeys, and whatever beasts may be
in those camps.

16 †Then everyone who survives of all the nations that have come against
Jerusalem shall go up year after year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts,
and to keep the Feast of Booths. 17 †And if any of the families of the earth
do not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, there will
be no rain on them. 18 †And if the family of Egypt does not go up and
present themselves, then on them there shall be no rain;[1] there shall be the
plague with which the Lord afflicts the nations that do not go up to keep the
Feast of Booths. 19 This shall be the punishment to Egypt and the
punishment to all the nations that do not go up to keep the Feast of Booths.

20 †And on that day there shall be inscribed on the bells of the horses,
“Holy to the Lord.” And the pots in the house of the Lord shall be as the
bowls before the altar. 21 †And every pot in Jerusalem and Judah shall be
holy to the Lord of hosts, so that all who sacrifice may come and take of
them and boil the meat of the sacrifice in them. And there shall no longer be
a trader[2] in the house of the Lord of hosts on that day.

Zechariah

OVERVIEW

Author
Zechariah the prophet

Date
520–518 BC

Places
Jerusalem and Zion; Judah; Bethel; Israel; Bashan; Megiddo; Babylon; Shinar; Damascus; Tyre, Sidon, and Lebanon; Philistia; Greece

People
Zechariah; Joshua the high priest; Zerubbabel, governor of Judah; the Israelites; Heldai, Tobijah, Jedaiah, and Hen; Sharezer and Regem-melech; King Darius

Purpose
Zechariah supports the rebuilding of the Jerusalem temple and prophesies about the fulfillment, in Christ, of the old covenant

Law Themes
A call to return to the Lord in repentance; dishonesty condemned; the whirlwind among the nations; the doomed flock

Gospel Themes
The Lord chooses His people; the Branch prophecy of forgiveness; the temple restored; nations seek the Lord; the coming King; the day of the Lord

Memory Verses
The vision of Joshua (ch 3); by the Lord's Spirit (4:6); the humble King (9:9); the doomed flock (11:4–6); they are My people (13:7–9)

Introduction to Zechariah

Reading Zechariah

A measuring line and filthy garments made pure, a golden lampstand and a flying scroll, a gilded crown and a promise from God—vision by vision, the Lord raised up the second temple to welcome the exiles home and to hold the promise of His presence.

The visions that the Lord gave to Zechariah overtook the wandering Judeans and settled their hearts in Zion. This humble beginning would hail the coming of a lowly King, who would fulfill the old covenant and establish an unbounded kingdom wholly consecrated to the Lord.

Luther on Zechariah

This prophet lived after the Babylonian captivity. With his colleague, Haggai, he helped to rebuild Jerusalem and the temple and to bring the scattered people together again, so that government and order might be set up in the land again. He is truly one of the most comforting of the prophets. He presents many lovely and reassuring visions, and gives many sweet and kindly words, in order to encourage and strengthen the troubled and scattered people to proceed with the building and the government despite the great and varied resistance which they had till then encountered. He does this down to the fifth chapter.

In the fifth chapter, under the vision of the scroll and the bushel, he prophesies of the false teachers who are later to come among the Jewish people, and who will deny Christ; and this still applies to the Jews at the present day.

In the sixth chapter he prophesies of the gospel of Christ and the spiritual temple to be built in all the world, because the Jews denied him and would not have him.

In the seventh and eighth chapters a question arises which the prophet answers, encouraging and exhorting them once more to build the temple and organize the government. And with this he concludes the prophecy about the rebuilding in his time.

In the ninth chapter he proceeds to the coming times, and prophesies first in chapter ten [9:1–6] of how Alexander the Great shall conquer Tyre, Sidon, and the Philistines, so that the whole world shall be opened to the coming gospel of Christ; and Zechariah [9:9] has the King Christ coming into Jerusalem on an ass.

In the eleventh chapter, however, he prophesies that Christ shall be sold by the Jews for thirty pieces of silver [11:12–13], for which cause Christ will leave them, so that Jerusalem will be destroyed and the Jews will be hardened in their error and dispersed. Thus the gospel and the kingdom of Christ will come to the Gentiles, after the sufferings of Christ, in which he, as the Shepherd, shall first be beaten, and the apostles, as the sheep, be scattered. For Christ had to suffer first and thus enter into his glory [Luke 24:26].

In the last chapter [14], when he has destroyed Jerusalem, he abolishes also the Levitical priesthood along with its organization and utensils and festivals, saying that all spiritual offices shall be held in common, for the worship and service of God, and shall not belong to the tribe of Levi only. That is, there shall be other priests, other festivals, other sacrifices, other worship, which other tribes could observe, indeed, even the Egyptians and all the Gentiles. Surely that is the outright abolition and removal of the Old Covenant. (AE 35:330–31)

For more of Luther's insights on this Book, see *Lectures on Zechariah* (AE 20).

Challenges for Readers

Unity. Chs 1–8 are clearly dated. Chs 9–12 have no dates and also differ in style. As a result, critics have concluded that Zechariah likely wrote the first chapters, but a later prophet wrote the last ones. Though this could have happened, long-standing tradition has testified to the unity of the Book. Defenders of this tradition point out that the first chapters focus on the specific problems of the temple and priesthood, while the later chapters prophesy about the future. The later chapters could have been written years later by Zechariah.

Apocalyptic Style. Chs 1–8 of Zechariah's prophecies are written in a special visionary style that appears in some biblical books of this era (Ezk, Dn), some nonbiblical books (see pp 1562–64), and the Book of Revelation (see p 2193). The Greek term *apocalypsis*, "revelation," is used to describe visions presented with the help of an angelic messenger. Such visions are highly symbolic and require interpretation. Zechariah usually includes explanations for his visions, but not all apocalyptic literature does this.

Son of Iddo. Some questions about Zechariah's genealogy are raised by Ezk 5:1 and Ne 12:16. Zechariah introduces himself as "the son of Berechiah, son of Iddo" (Zec 1:1, 7), but Berechiah is not mentioned in Ne 12:16, where the prophet is presented simply as the descendant "of Iddo." Biblical writers commonly compressed genealogies, highlighting certain names and omitting others (see p 9). Iddo may be Zechariah's grandfather and a more prominent forebear than his literal father. See note, 1:1

Blessings for Readers

As you study Zechariah, read his visions carefully; interpret them in view of the angels' remarks and their context in history rather than looking for fulfillment in modern events, such as those occurring in the Middle East. Take special note of the comfort and hope Zechariah proclaims as he looks forward to the appearing of the promised Savior.

OUTLINE

I. Introductory Oracle (1:1–6)
II. Eight "Night Visions" (1:7–6:8)
  A. A Horseman (1:7–17)
  B. Four Horns (1:18–21)
  C. A Man with a Measuring Line (ch 2)
  D. Joshua the High Priest (ch 3)
  E. A Golden Lampstand (ch 4)
  F. A Flying Scroll (5:1–4)
  G. A Woman in a Basket (5:5–11)
  H. Four Chariots (6:1–8)
III. Crowning of Joshua (6:9–15)
IV. Fasting Sermons (chs 7–8)
V. Victory of Messianic King over Rivals (ch 9)
VI. Denunciation of False Shepherds (10:1–5)
VII. The Return of Israel (10:6–12)
VIII. Allegory of the Good Shepherd (ch 11)
IX. Final Eschatological Battle of the Nations against Jerusalem (12:1–9)
X. Israel Laments Its Rejection of the Good Shepherd (12:10–14)
XI. Repudiation of False Prophecy (13:1–6)
XII. The Salvation of God's People (13:7–9)
XIII. Varied Pictures of the Last Day (ch 14)
  A. Mount of Olives Split in Half to Protect the Righteous (14:1–5)
  B. Unique Day (14:6–7)
  C. Living Waters (14:8)
  D. The Lord is One (14:9)
  E. New Jerusalem (14:10–15)

F. The Feast of Booths (14:16–19)
G. The Restoration of All Creation to Its Original Holiness (14:20–21)

Footnotes

Footnotes for Zechariah, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:18 Ch 2:1 in Hebrew

Footnotes for Zechariah, Chapter 2

- [2] 2:1 Ch 2:5 in Hebrew
- [1] 2:8 Or *he sent me after glory*

Footnotes for Zechariah, Chapter 3

- [2] 3:1 *Satan* means *the accuser*
- [3] 3:2 That is, a burning stick
- [1] 3:9 Or *facets*

Footnotes for Zechariah, Chapter 4

- [1] 4:12 Hebrew lacks *oil*
- [2] 4:14 Hebrew *two sons of new oil*

Footnotes for Zechariah, Chapter 5

- [3] 5:2 A *cubit* was about 18 inches or 45 centimeters
- [4] 5:3 Hebrew lacks *falsely* (supplied from verse 4)
- [5] 5:6 Hebrew *ephah* ; also verses 7-11. An *ephah* was about 3/5 bushel or 22 liters
- [6] 5:6 One Hebrew manuscript, Septuagint, Syriac ; most Hebrew manuscripts *eye*

Footnotes for Zechariah, Chapter 6

- [1] 6:3 Or *and the fourth chariot strong dappled horses*
- [1] 6:14 An alternate spelling of *Heldai* (verse 10)

Footnotes for Zechariah, Chapter 7

- [1] 7:11 Hebrew *and made their ears too heavy to hear*
- [2] 7:13 Hebrew *he*

Footnotes for Zechariah, Chapter 9

- [1] 9:1 A slight emendation yields *For to the LORD belongs the capital of Syria and all the tribes of Israel*
- [1] 9:6 Or *a foreign people* ; Hebrew *a bastard*

Footnotes for Zechariah, Chapter 10

- [1] 10:3 Hebrew *the male goats*

Footnotes for Zechariah, Chapter 12

- [1] 12:12 Or *clan* ; also verses 13, 14

Footnotes for Zechariah, Chapter 13

- [1] 13:5 Or *for the land has been my possession since my youth*
- [2] 13:6 Or *on your chest* ; Hebrew *wounds between your hands*

Footnotes for Zechariah, Chapter 14

- [1] 14:6 Compare Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate, Targum ; the meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain
- [2] 14:7 Hebrew *one*
- [3] 14:8 That is, the Dead Sea
- [4] 14:8 That is, the Mediterranean Sea
- [5] 14:11 The Hebrew term rendered *decree of utter destruction* refers to things devoted (or set apart) to the Lord (or by the Lord) for destruction
- [1] 14:18 Hebrew lacks *rain*
- [2] 14:21 Or *Canaanite*

Study Notes

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 1:1 *eighth month … second year.* Oct/Nov 520 BC, two months after Haggai began to prophesy. *Darius*. King of Persia (522–486 BC), Darius I Hystaspes (known as "the Great"); consolidated control of the country after two years of civil war following a rebellion against the previous king, Cambyses. *the word of the* LORD *came*. See p 1080. *Zechariah … Berechiah … Iddo*. Zechariah means "Yahweh has remembered." His grandfather Iddo, head of a prominent priestly family, was among the first Judeans to return from exile in Babylon. The description of Zechariah elsewhere as "son of Iddo" (Ezr 5:1; Ne 12:16) suggests his father (Berechiah) died young, and Zechariah succeeded his grandfather as head of the family. Zechariah, born a priest to intercede for God's people, was called to be His spokesman to them.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 1:2 Hard hearts, deaf ears, and evil deeds of generations of Israelites had brought about God's "alien work" of anger toward them. This culminated in the destruction of Jerusalem and exile to Babylon. People could realize the depth of His anger by glancing around at the war damage still evident almost 20 years after the exiles' return.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 1:3 *LORD of hosts*. See p 1291. Term occurs three times in this verse and often in Zec. *return*. See p 1080. Personal return to the Lord is the precondition for properly receiving not only Zechariah's message, but every Word of God. This appeal must do its work in your heart and life before God will perform His "proper work" of returning in forgiving love. Chem: "Just as the turning away of God's face demonstrates a hatred toward actions opposing Him, so His turning toward a person testifies to His benevolence in the way things are going" (*LTh* 1:259).

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 1:4 *former prophets*. Preexilic prophets like Isaiah and Jeremiah who had appealed, mainly in vain, for the repentance of the people of Israel.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 1:5–6 Two ironic questions remind the hearers that though people pass away, God's inspired Word remains in force to bear fruit (1Pt 1:25).

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 1:6 *words … statutes … commanded*. God's will, as revealed in the Law and the Prophets, has enduring authority and

power. The moral relativism of our times makes our society similar to that of Israel and Judah, who paid such a high price for tuning out the prophets. *overtake your fathers?* God was personally present in His Word, which chased, apprehended, and punished Judah's ancestors, who had despised it. *they repented*. See note, v 3. After experiencing the destruction of Jerusalem and captivity in Babylon, the faithful remnant acknowledged their evil ways and deeds.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 1:1–6 When God's Word produces changes of heart and life, it bears beautiful fruit. The people of Judah have to learn that lesson from their tragic past lest their return from exile end in sorrow. When God's Word meets resistance and rejection, then there will be a repeat of the same shuddering outcome seen in war-damaged Jerusalem. The good news is that God keeps returning with open arms, beckoning us to repent. He pities the guilty with a Father's heart. • Lord, rescue our hearts and minds from the prison of our wrong desires and actions. Connect us to the reality of Your grace that we may return to Your sweet embrace and remain in it forever. Amen.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 1:7 *twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month*. Feb 15, 519 BC.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 1:8 *in the night*. First of a series of eight interconnected visions that Zechariah received at night. He learned of God's gracious purposes for His people, which were already taking effect at that time but would be fully realized in Christ and His kingdom. *a man … red horse!* Angelic figure on horseback with other angels on horseback behind him. Horses symbolize strength and motion. Rv 6:1–8 suggests that the different colors of the horses allude to the various tasks assigned to their riders. *myrtle trees*. Evergreens, usually c 8 ft tall, symbolizing the holy people. *in the glen*. Likely alludes to Judah's depressed fortunes at this time, much like a valley.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 1:9 *angel who talked with me*. This interpreting angel remains with the prophet to explain new features of the revelation given to him. Angels play a prominent role in Zec.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 1:10 *man*. On the red horse (v 8). *sent to patrol*. These angels are not simply collectors of information but are instrumental in God's government of the world.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 1:11 *angel of the* LORD. Central figure of this living tableau, distinct from both the rider on the red horse and the

interpreting angel. See p 1227. His dramatic appearance here indicates that God is once again accomplishing mighty saving works for His people. *at rest*. Order had been restored in the Persian Empire by Darius (v 1).

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 1:12 *how long*. Angel of the Lord intercedes for His OT people, even as Jesus did in the Upper Room (Jn 17) and as He continues to do at the Father's right hand (Rm 8:34; Heb 7:25). *seventy years?* Jeremiah's prophecy of 70 years of desolation, beginning with the destruction of the first temple in 587 BC, was now drawing to a close. See notes, 2Ch 36:21; Is 23:15.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 1:13 *gracious and comforting words*. In contrast to the dire threats that had resulted in the devastation of Jerusalem (Zep 3:1–5).

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 1:14 *jealous*. God is fiercely protective of His people. See note, Ex 20:5. His message, communicated through the interpreting angel to Zechariah, is a wholehearted commitment to rebuild Jerusalem. *Zion*. Mount Zion was the site of Solomon's temple. See p 844.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 1:15 *furthered the disaster*. Though they were God's agents in punishing His people, Israel's enemies relished their task too much, exercising an excess of cruelty.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 1:16 *I have returned*. God's renewed favor to His people has already begun and will flower in the rebuilding of the temple. *measuring line*. String that builders use to mark where walls of a house or the walls of a city should go. But see note, 2:1.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 1:17 *comfort Zion … choose Jerusalem*. God will again make Jerusalem the city of His earthly abode. This declaration brought comfort to the people who felt rejected by the Lord during the exile.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 1:7–17 At a moment when God seems remote and uncaring, Zechariah sees that He is guiding events for good. The Angel of the Lord was among His people, interceding for them and preparing for the rebuilding of the temple and city. If you experience dismal moments, do not succumb to the despairing thought that God has forsaken His people in general or you in particular. God's angels watch over His own, and Christ effectually intercedes for you before His Father's throne. • Open my eyes, Lord, to the care of Your servants. Give me courage and endurance to trust that if Christ is for me, the hosts of hell cannot prevail against me. Amen.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 1:18 *four horns!* Fearsome weapons (see p 842). Here they signify massive strength and great pride. Four is a number of completeness (four winds, four corners of the earth), suggesting all the military might of the world. We are reminded of Daniel's vision of four beasts (Dn 7:1–8), but it is not possible to identify the world powers pictured in Zechariah's vision.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 1:19 *scattered … Jerusalem*. People of the Northern Kingdom of Israel were scattered by the Assyrians (2Ki 17:6), and those in Judah and Jerusalem by the Babylonians (2Ki 25:11). Cf v 21.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 1:20 *craftsmen*. Hbr word refers specifically to blacksmiths or metalworkers, men who bend iron to their will by sheer force. They are divine agents, "brutish men, skillful to destroy" (Ezk 21:31), appointed to cast down the four horns.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 1:21 *to terrify them, to cast down the horns of the nations*. Just as craftsmen wield power over horns, so God causes kingdoms like Assyria and Babylon to fall before powers like Persia and Rome.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 1:18–21 Zechariah's heart sinks and his soul wilts before the forces arrayed against the holy people from his own day to the end of time. But almighty God stiffens the prophet's backbone and restores his courage by the sight of even mightier powers fighting on the side of God's people. Do not despair over the strength of evil. Instead, lift your eyes to Christ, who sends His mighty warriors to defend Zion so that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it (Mt 16:18). • O Jesus, King of angels, make me ever mindful of Your protecting care. Equip me to resist the hosts of hell, trusting in Your sure deliverance. Amen.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 2:1 *lifted my eyes and saw.* Zechariah's third vision. *measuring line*. To measure distances (e.g., tape measure); different from the line in 1:16.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 2:2 *measure Jerusalem*. That one should measure the width and length of a city is not unusual. Ezekiel had a similar vision (Ezk 40:3), as did John (Rv 21:15–17).

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 2:3 *the angel who talked with me*. Interpreting angel (1:9). *another angel*. Likely one of higher rank who would convey supernatural information.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 2:4 *young man*. The man with a measuring line (v 1). *as villages without walls*. Lit, "as open country." The prophet was

granted a vision that rises above his own time and place. He beheld the universal Church, a city without walls, with inhabitants "from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages" (Rv 7:9).

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 2:5 *wall of fire*. God's personal presence will afford much better protection than any city wall or humanly contrived security system. *glory in her midst*. New Jerusalem has no need of sun or moon, "for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb" (Rv 21:23).

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 2:6–13 Not part of the third vision, but an expansion on some of the themes found in the first three visions.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 2:6 *Up! Up!* There is urgency in the Lord's admonition. *Flee from the land of the north*. Judeans living in Babylon are encouraged to come to Jerusalem. *I have spread you abroad as the four winds*. The second vision pictured how the four horns scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem (1:19).

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 2:7 *Escape to Zion*. The thought of v 6 is repeated for emphasis. *daughter of Babylon*. For the daughter of Zion (v 10) to remain in this heathen city was to risk spiritual death.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 2:8 *His glory*. Visible manifestation from which God spoke to Zechariah (cf Ex 40:34; see p 39). *sent me.* See notes, v 11; 4:9. *apple of His eye*. See note, Pr 7:2. God's people are compared to the pupil of the eye. Just as a person is protective of this sensitive part of the body, so God hurts when His people hurt.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 2:9 *shake My hand*. With a wave of the hand, the Lord dismisses those who threaten His people. *plunder … them*. God will cause servants to overthrow their masters and seize their goods. *sent me*. See notes, v 11; 4:9.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 2:10 *Sing … daughter of Zion*. As the opposite of the "daughter of Babylon" (v 7), those who belong to the city of God are encouraged to break into song. Mary is an example of one who did, singing her Magnificat (Lk 1:46–55). *dwell in your midst*. Not only did God come to the restored temple, but He also came in the fullness of time (Gal 4:4). Jesus is rightly called Immanuel, for He is "God with us" (Is 7:14; Mt 1:23) and remains with us through Word and Sacrament.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 2:11 *join themselves to the* LORD. Nations' alienation from the God of Israel will become a thing of the past as many of them are added to His people. *in that day*. Prophets often use this

expression when referring to the NT era (cf Zep 3:11, 16; Zec 13:1). *sent me*. Third occurrence of these words (vv 8–9) suggests that not everyone was ready to accept Zechariah as a prophet sent by the Lord (see note, 4:9). Moses had the same concern (Ex 3:13–15).

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 2:12 *inherit Judah as His portion*. Faithful remnant needed assurance that God continued to regard them as His special possession (Dt 7:6). See "portion," p 7. *holy land*. One of two biblical occurrences (cf Ps 78:54) of this term, which has become common today. However, every corner of the earth where the Lord comes and dwells with His faithful people is "holy land." *choose Jerusalem*. See note, 1:17.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 2:13 *Be silent.* Appropriate response before the Lord is reverent silence (Hab 2:20). *roused Himself.* In contrast to dead idols, God is alive. *holy dwelling.* God's heavenly habitation (Dt 26:15).

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 2:1–13 A measuring line will not do when seeking to determine the extent of God's kingdom. His promise to dwell in Jerusalem's earthly temple pales in splendor to what is to come. Zechariah saw a glorious future for the people of Judah, but he did not understand how great would be the fulfillment of God's promises in Jesus Christ and the heavenly Jerusalem. Likewise, the eyes of our faith see only dimly the glory that will be revealed to us. • Praise to You, O Jesus, for coming to dwell among us with Your grace and truth. Keep our eyes ever focused on the heavenly Jerusalem. Amen.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 3:1 *He showed me*. The Lord granted His prophet this vision (cf Am 7:1). *Joshua the high priest*. See note, Hg 1:1. Along with the governor Zerubbabel, he was a leader in the temple rebuilding project (Ezr 5:2; Hg 1:1). "Joshua" is a form of the name "Jesus." *angel of the* LORD. See p 1227. *Satan.* Hbr name meaning "obstruct," "oppose." (Cf Jb 1–2; 1Ch 21:1.) *at his right hand to accuse*. As in Rv 12:10, Satan plays the role of "accuser of our brothers." Here he is about to accuse Joshua.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 3:2 *The* LORD *rebuke you, O Satan!* Sharp rebuke showed that the Lord was aware of the charges Satan planned to make. *brand plucked from the fire?* As one might pull a charred piece of burning wood from a fire, so Joshua was rescued from the fire of Babylonian exile.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 3:3 *filthy garments*. Joshua was a descendant of sinful and impure people and had been living in Babylon, an unclean land.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 3:4 *the angel*. The Angel of the Lord, who speaks with full divine authority. See p 1227. *those … standing*. Other angels. *Behold … you*. Removal of the filthy garments symbolized the divine absolution Joshua received. God washes away our sin by the Word and water of Baptism (Ac 22:16). *clothe you with pure vestments*. Holy garments worn by the high priest, designed by the Lord Himself (Ex 28). So is the robe of righteousness worn by believers and the white robes of those in heaven (Rv 7:9).

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 3:5 *And I said*. A bold intervention by the prophet, who begged that the high priest be completely equipped for effective ministry. *turban*. Official headdress of the high priest (Ex 28:36–38), on top of which was set a "holy crown" (Ex 29:6).

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 3:6 *angel of the* LORD. See p 1227.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 3:7 *walk in My ways*. Joshua could only carry out his office of governing God's people if he diligently followed the Lord's will. See p 844. *right of access*. An assurance that the petitions Joshua offered on earth would be heard in God's presence.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 3:8 *your friends*. Joshua's associates in the priesthood. *men who are a sign*. Priests of Aaron's line point to the coming High Priest descended from David (Heb 8:1–2). *My servant the Branch*. Two strands of messianic prophecy are beautifully tied together: the Branch will be a king of David's line (Is 4:2; Jer 33:15) and the Servant of the Lord (Is 42:1; 53:11), who by making atonement for sin will undo the damage done by Adam (Is 53:2–12). Christ is the content of Scripture. Chem: "Zechariah is referring to the passages of earlier prophets, where the Messiah is called an offshoot" (*LTh* 1:106).

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 3:9 *a single stone with seven eyes*. May symbolize the restored temple and its seven eyes, God's perfect watchful care (Zec 9:8; 12:4). It is also a sign of that living stone, our Lord Jesus Christ (1Pt 2:4). *inscription*. Though the wording of the inscription is not stated, the engraving on the plate fastened to the high priest's turban would be most appropriate: "Holy to the LORD" (Ex 28:36). *single day*. Messianic prophecy foretelling the work of the Branch on Good Friday, when the perfect Priest Himself secured eternal redemption (Heb 9:11–12).

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 3:10 *vine … fig tree*. Figures of speech capturing the peace and safety of prosperity, but esp of the messianic

kingdom (Mi 4:4). Here God's peace, the fruit of the atonement, is presented as something to be actively shared through evangelism.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 3:1–10 The Joshua of Zechariah's day would have sunk under Satan's accusations if a greater Joshua (Jesus) had not stepped forward to reverse a grim situation. The first Joshua was no private person but represented his whole people in the filth of their sin. But the promised Branch was on the way, who on Good Friday removed the iniquity of Joshua and his people. We are all like brands plucked from the fire of sin; we all wear filthy garments. But because of the greater Joshua, we have been robed in righteousness. We enjoy the peace and safety of His kingdom. • Holy God, give me eyes to see and confess my filthiness and a heart to believe Your perfect cleansing, through Jesus Christ, my Lord. Amen.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 4:1 *woke me*. The angel roused the prophet, who then compared his visionary experience to being suddenly awakened from sleep.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 4:2 *lampstand*. Hbr *menorah*. Its seven branches would have at once reminded Zechariah of an important furnishing kept in the Holy Place of the original tabernacle (Ex 25:31–40) and later in the temple. The lampstand in Zechariah's vision has several unique features that reveal details about the temple rebuilding project. *bowl on the top*. Just how this bowl was positioned on the lampstand is not altogether clear, though its function is. Priests had to fill the temple lampstand with oil each day, but this bowl contained an ever-flowing supply from the two olive trees (v 3). *seven lamps … seven lips on each*. Each of the seven lamps had seven lips into which wicks were placed. Each wick produced a flame, fed by the oil, creating a lampstand of 49 lights in all. Archaeologists have found such seven-lipped lamps. See p 217.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 4:3 *two olive trees*. Live olive trees supplied the oil needed for lamplight. In v 14 we learn that these olive trees represent the two men holding offices through which God works for His people.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 4:4–5 *these*. Though Zechariah was familiar with the lampstand as such, he failed to understand the meaning of the special features. The angel's question shows how vital it is for Zechariah (and us) to grasp the meaning of these unique features: the anointed men will continuously serve the people.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 4:6 *the word of the* LORD *to Zerubbabel.* See p 1080. Before the interpreting angel explained the meaning of the vision to Zechariah in vv 10b–14, he spoke to Zerubbabel, the civil governor of Judah under the Persian king (Ezr 2:2; Hg 1:1). *by My Spirit*. Zerubbabel, burdened with the heavy duty of superintending the rebuilding of the temple, needed a divine reminder to depend on God's Spirit rather than human power and might to get the job done. See p 1227. *Lord of hosts*. See p 1291.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 4:7 *mountain?* Symbol of all the difficulties encountered during the temple rebuilding project. *become a plain.* The Lord of hosts promises to smooth the way. *top stone*. Final stone in the structure, a figure of speech indicating that Zerubbabel would bring to completion the building project that he is overseeing. *Grace, grace to it!* People would call on the Lord to bless the new temple as if to say, "May it enjoy Your favor and never again be destroyed!"

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 4:9 *hands of Zerubbabel.* Used figuratively. Zerubbabel was in charge of the rebuilding but did not necessarily do the actual work. *sent me to you*. Fourth time this statement is made (2:8, 9, 11). Completing the temple would be a sign to the people that the Lord of hosts had sent Zechariah.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 4:10 *day of small things*. Humanly speaking, Judah's status as a subjected nation and the inferiority of the second temple to the first are well described as "small things." But God was at work preparing the way for great events that would cause people to rejoice. Christ's coming in the flesh is one such great event. *plumb line*. Weighted string used to determine if the walls were being built straight up and down. *seven are the eyes of the* LORD. Interpreting angel resumes his explanation (v 5) of what Zechariah's vision means. Seven lamps, each with seven lips (see note, v 2), symbolize the Lord's seven eyes, keeping watch over all the earth (3:9; 9:1). See p 217.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 4:12 Branches and pipes from the olive trees on either side of the lampstand (v 3) furnish a continuing supply of fresh oil for the burning lamps.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 4:13–14 *two anointed ones*. See ESV note. Israelite high priests (Ex 40:13) and kings (2Sm 2:4) were anointed with oil. Zechariah heard from the angel that the high priest Joshua and the governor Zerubbabel had been chosen as leaders to "stand by the Lord of the whole

earth." As leaders, they were to supply the oil to complete the temple rebuilding project. Jesus Christ is the ultimate Anointed One (Messiah), who as Prophet, Priest, and King supplies the oil of joy to all believers (Is 61:3).

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 4:1–14 God used earthly leaders like Joshua and Zerubbabel to accomplish His work in this world. Rebuilding the temple was a most important project for the Jerusalem community of believers, many of whom had returned from exile in Babylon. God continues to use earthly leaders to build His kingdom of believers, the communion of saints. Yet no pastor, teacher, or layperson can keep the lamp of faith and holy living alight by his or her own efforts. The Holy Spirit gives life and strength to believers through Word and Sacrament to build God's holy temple of living stones (1Pt 2:5). • Holy Spirit, open my eyes to see how You are at work in our world. Make me strong in faith so that I may better serve as one of Your instruments. Amen.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 5:1 *flying scroll!* It comes from heaven and contains God's message. Jeremiah was told to write on a scroll all the words the Lord had spoken, and Ezekiel was supposed to eat a scroll filled with lamentations (Ezk 3:1).

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 5:2 *length ... width*. Massively oversized, 30 by 15 ft, the scroll had the same dimensions as the Holy Place in the original tabernacle and in Solomon's temple (1Ki 6:3). This links the heavenly scroll and its message to the earthly sanctuary being restored.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 5:3 *curse*. Interpreting angel revealed to Zechariah that the scroll contained a curse, just as the Lord's covenant with Israel included a series of curses for those who failed to obey His commandments (Dt 27:15–26; 28:15–68). *steals*. An esp prevalent sin in economically depressed Judah. *cleaned out*. Hbr *naqah*, the expression means "purge out" or "empty" from the holy people. *one side … the other side*. Like the original tablets of the Law (Ex 32:15) and the scroll that Ezekiel ate (Ezk 2:10), this scroll had writing on both sides. *swears falsely*. Swearing an oath of innocence was one feature of the Israelite system of justice (Ex 22:11; Nu 5:19–21). To swear falsely was likely a common abuse of this legal procedure. See note, Nu 30:2.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 5:4 *it.* The curse. *enter ... remain ... consume*. People who steal or swear falsely might escape human punishment but not

the Lord's. His curse will enter a house and remain there until the house is consumed. His covenant, including its curses, was still in effect.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 5:1–4 God's curse rests on all who fail to keep His Law perfectly (Gal 3:10), but in Christ, that curse is removed. For "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us" (Gal 3:13). How blessed we are that our debt was canceled by having it nailed to the cross (Col 2:14)! • Lord Jesus Christ, thank You for removing God's curse, which rested on me because of my sin. Assist me as I share this Good News with others. Amen.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 5:5 *Lift your eyes and see.* Begins the seventh of Zechariah's eight visions. *going out*. The angel called attention to the fact that the object in the vision was moving away.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 5:6 *basket*. Lit, an "ephah," a container roughly the size of a bushel. See p cx. This basket must have been oversized, since a woman was inside and a lid on top (v 7). *iniquity in all the land*. When the contents of the basket were revealed to Zechariah, he understood better why it was labeled "iniquity" (see notes, vv 7, 8).

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 5:7 *leaden cover*. Lead is a heavy metal, which unlike gold, silver, bronze, and iron, was considered quite useless in biblical times. A lead cover is most appropriate when confining iniquity. *a woman*. Some women and female figures posed threats to the worship of the true God in several ways. The foreign wives of Solomon "turned away his heart after other gods" (1Ki 11:4). Marriage to foreign wives was a problem among exiles who returned to Jerusalem from Babylon (Ezr 9:2; 10:18). In Rv, Babylon is called the "mother of prostitutes" (Rv 17:5).

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 5:8 *Wickedness.* Ultimate wickedness is idolatry, worshiping other gods and goddesses (SC, First Commandment, p xxxv). Judeans taken captive to Babylon would have become familiar with worship of the fertility goddess Ishtar. Queen Athaliah of Judah, who promoted idolatry even within the temple, is called "that wicked woman" (2Ch 24:7). The woman in the basket is the personification of idolatry.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 5:9 *two women.* Likely angels, though the setting is in a vision, which may not depict heavenly reality; this is the only place in Scripture where female figures have an angelic role. It is fitting that these two carry away the wicked woman. *wings.* Humanlike angels are not depicted with wings elsewhere in Scripture, though they are described as flying (Rv 14:6). Cherubim and seraphim are winged. See note, Ezk 10:1.

stork. Large white and black bird with powerful wings. The Judeans would think of storks as birds on the move since they were migratory and hatched their eggs elsewhere.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 5:11 *land of Shinar*. Babylon, the land from which the exiles had come, a land where many Judeans were still living (2:6–7). See map, p 717. *house*. Temple (Hg 1:9). In Jerusalem, the temple was being restored for the worship of the true God; in Babylon, the people were building a house for an idol. *base*. The pedestal on which the woman's image was placed.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 5:5–11 The ever-present temptation to idolatry came to the people of Jerusalem who had worked so hard at rebuilding the temple. God made it clear that idolatry had no place among them; that wicked woman had to be carted off to Babylon. Idolatry has no place among us either. "You shall have no other gods" (Ex 20:3). We were baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The triune God has given us life and salvation. Worship and serve Him alone! • Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and shall be forever. Amen.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 6:1 *Again … saw*. This eighth and final vision has similarities with the first vision (1:7–17). *four chariots*. Unlike the first vision, where the horses were at rest, these horses pull chariots, symbolizing military power. There are four in number, corresponding to the four points of the compass, to cover the entire earth. *came out from between two mountains … of bronze*. Possibly representing the two tall bronze pillars standing on either side of the temple entrance (1Ki 7:15; Jer 52:17). Chariots coming out of the rebuilt temple would obviously belong to the Lord. Luther interpreted the two bronze mountains spiritually as the Law and the Prophets: "They are fixed and constant. For rust does not devour bronze, as it devours iron. Thus the Law and the Prophets are great, strong, constant witnesses of the Gospel" (AE 20:248).

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 6:2 *red*. Sometimes represents carnage and warfare. *black*. Usually associated with death and doom.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 6:3 *white*. Typically represents holiness, purity, and victory; may also represent paleness or fear. *dappled*. Interpretations vary; may represent famine or catastrophe. *all of them strong*. Suggests divine power that is about to become active.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 6:4 As in earlier visions, Zechariah asks the interpreting angel the meaning of the vision.
ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 6:5 *out to the four winds*. The chariots went out in four directions: north, east, south, and west. The Hbr word *ruchoth*, "wind," anticipates the similar word *ruach*, "spirit" (v 8). Luth: "No rider is seen here on the horses nor a man in the chariots. For Christ sits and rides on these horses and chariots alone" (AE 20:249).
ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 6:6 *The chariot … after them*. Two chariots went northward toward Babylon and Persia to show God's rule over these countries. *toward the south country*. Egypt was south of Israel and also a world power. The destination of the red chariot is not told.
ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 6:7 *strong horses*. Zechariah's attention is caught by the power and vigor of the horses. *patrol*. The Lord released His agents to proceed with their mission of patrolling the earth.
ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 6:8 *He cried to me*. The Ruler of heaven and earth has a special message for the prophet. *set My Spirit at rest in the north country*. God's Spirit is at rest even in the warlike countries of Persia and Babylon. The Lord wanted His people to know that because He is in charge of world events, He can establish rest in "all the earth" (1:11). Luth: "[Zechariah] comforts and encourages his people, who have been terrified and dejected because of their fear of the nations of the north" (AE 20:63).
ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 6:1–8 In this vision, the Lord reveals to the people of Jerusalem, who have suffered devastation, that He is indeed powerful and active. His authority is likened to strong horses pulling four chariots, patrolling the earth in all directions. This is also our God, powerful and active in controlling the events of this world for the sake of His people and for the sake of the Gospel. God's word to us is that He is our refuge and strength (cf Ps 46:1). • Almighty Father, Creator and Ruler of all that exists, silence our doubts and fears by Your comforting Word. Amen.
ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 6:9 What follows is not a vision but a symbolic act that will incorporate a messianic message.
ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 6:10 *Heldai, Tobijah, and Jedaiah*. Three men who had recently arrived in Jerusalem from Babylon and who had brought silver and gold, no doubt wishing to support the temple rebuilding effort. *Babylon*. Ancient capital city of the Babylonian Empire on the Euphrates River, southwest of modern Baghdad. See map, p 717. Many of the Judean exiles continued to live in Babylon (2:7). *Josiah, the son of Zephaniah*.

Possible descendant of the Zephaniah named as the second priest at the time of the fall of Jerusalem.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 6:11 *a crown*. Hbr is plural but here translated in the singular. Some commentators suggest that the crown here, set on the head of Joshua the high priest, should be distinguished from the one in v 14. Usually we think of kings being crowned, but here the high priest received this honor. The headgear prescribed for the high priest did include a "holy crown" (Ex 29:6; Lv 8:9), though that Hbr word differs from the one used here.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 6:12 *Branch*. Hbr *tsemach*, a term designating the future Messiah. See note, 3:8. The coming Branch will be more than just a king; He will also be a high priest (Heb 9:11). Joshua was a type of the Coming One, who would be a vigorous and fruit-bearing plant. *build the temple of the* LORD. Not the wood and stone temple currently being constructed under the supervision of Zerubbabel. This Branch will build a spiritual temple, the Church (Eph 2:21; 1Pt 2:5). Luth: "[*Tsemach*] means a plant or a twig which grows to be a large tree. For Christ at first was a small shrub, or plant, in the Jewish land, but then He grew until He has become a tree which fills all the world with its branches, its top reaching to heaven and its roots reaching to the abyss of hell" (AE 20:255).

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 6:13 *royal honor*. The Branch will have the majesty and splendor of a king. *rule on His throne*. Christ's rule as King and Priest will extend over everything and will have no end (Lk 1:32–33; Eph 1:21–22). *a priest on His throne*. A new concept. In the past, priests and kings did not mix, and rivalries often existed between Israel's civil and religious leadership. *the counsel of peace*. The union of Priest and King in one person, the Branch, will not only guarantee perfect harmony but will also bring lasting peace.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 6:14 *the crown shall be in the temple*. Joshua's crown or a second crown (see note, v 11). *as a reminder*. Both a reminder that God will carry out His purposes through the Branch, and a cherished memorial for those who brought gifts from Babylon. *Helem … and Hen the son of Zephaniah*. Variations of the names in v 10. Josiah seems also to have had the name Hen.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 6:15 *those who are far off*. Not a reference to those who might help in the building of Jerusalem's earthly temple, but rather to all those, including Gentiles, who would be active in building

God's spiritual temple. *you shall know*. Many people in Zechariah's day doubted these promises, but we have seen their fulfillment and know that the Lord of hosts did indeed send this prophet (2:9; 4:9). *if you will diligently obey*. What is called for is "the obedience of faith" (Rm 1:5). Anna modeled this obedience (Lk 2:38).

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 6:9–15 A crown made from gifts of gold and silver becomes an object lesson to teach about the coming Branch, who will fill the offices of King and Priest. Not everyone in Zechariah's day wholeheartedly believes God's promises that accompany this lesson. But this does not prevent their fulfillment in the person and work of Jesus Christ. Likewise, the obedience of faith is lacking in many today, sometimes even in our own hearts. Jesus' trust-building message keeps coming to us: "Repent and believe in the gospel" (Mk 1:15). • Lord, Your voice calls me to grow in faith and life. Grant me the obedience of faith. Amen.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 7:1 *fourth year of King Darius*. 518 BC. Two years had elapsed since the beginning of Zechariah's ministry and his series of visions (cf 1:1, 7). By this time, the Israelite presence in Jerusalem had been strengthened, the temple was within two years of completion (Ezr 6:15), and the people were settling into a life of some ease and routine (Hg 1:4). *word of the* LORD. See p 1080. *Chislev*. Ninth month, corresponding to our Nov/Dec. See calendar, p 262. This heading marks the beginning of the Book's third section (chs 7–8 are one unit).

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 7:2 *Bethel*. Important town in Israel's history, located 12 mi N of Jerusalem. See color map 1. Years earlier, King Jeroboam I had set up a golden calf here for citizens of the Northern Kingdom to worship, hoping to keep them from going to Jerusalem (1Ki 12:26–33). Bethel evidently was occupied during the Babylonian exile, and now its people sent delegates to Jerusalem to inquire whether they should continue to observe special days of fasting, something they had done for nearly 70 years. *Sharezer and Regem-melech*. Delegates from Bethel. *entreat the favor of the* LORD. Lit, "to soothe the face," an idiom for appeasing someone's anger. Indicates they were hoping for a positive answer to their question, thinking that because of the return of many Judeans and the rebuilding of the temple, the fasts could be discontinued.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 7:3 *priests … prophets*. Priests were ordinarily the interpreters of the Law (Dt 17:9), but this question was also addressed

to the prophets, including Zechariah. *Lord of hosts*. Name is used 24 times in chs 7–8. See p 1291. *weep and abstain*. Rituals of humiliation and repentance (cf Jl 1:13–14), involving shedding of tears and fasting, recalled the horrible events of the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in 587 BC. *in the fifth month*. See note, 8:19.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 7:4–7 The Lord first asks His own questions before providing an answer to Bethel's question (8:19).

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 7:5 Zechariah is directed to speak the Lord's words not only to the Bethel delegation but also to a much wider audience. What they heard was more than just an answer to the original question. *was it for Me that you fasted?* The first of three rhetorical questions implying that their fasting was motivated by selfish interests rather than a desire to honor God. *seventy years*. In 518 BC, the 70-year period that began with the fall of Jerusalem was nearly over (Jer 25:11).

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 7:6 God questions whether the people's daily activities and joyful celebrations were not also motivated solely by the natural desire to satisfy themselves, with no thought given to Him, the Giver of all good things.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 7:7 *words … by the former prophets*. The final rhetorical question calls to mind what earlier prophets such as Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Micah had spoken. Examples of their admonitions are found in vv 9–10. *South*. The Negeb, along the southern boundary of Judah. *lowland*. The low country southwest of Jerusalem, between the seacoast and the central plateau. See color map 2.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 7:8 The Lord inspired Zechariah to restate words spoken by the former prophets. Four commands follow, two positive and two negative.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 7:9 *Render true judgments*. God's concern for truth and impartiality should also characterize the attitude of His people (cf Jer 22:3; Ezk 18:8). *show kindness and mercy*. Believers should practice kindness to others that reflects God's faithfulness and demonstrates heartfelt pity and compassion (cf Hos 2:19–20; 6:6). Luth: "Now He, in turn, answers that this is true fasting: when we forgive our enemies, when we remit that with which we have burdened them in an unchristian way, and when in addition we do good to them and help them. Whoever does this, fasts well, though he continue to eat and drink" (AE 20:263).

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 7:10 *do not oppress*. God's concern for the helpless was emphasized by the former prophets (Is 1:17; Jer 7:6; Ezk 22:7). The weak have a special place in God's heart and should have a similar place in His people's hearts. *devise evil*. Sin runs deeper than outward actions. It must be stopped at its source, the heart.
ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 7:11 *they refused to pay attention*. Zechariah reminded his audience of their ancestors' refusal to obey and the consequences of their sin. *stubborn shoulder*. Pictures someone intending to place a yoke on the neck of an ox, only to have the animal whirl aside. *stopped their ears*. Lit, "made their ears heavy"; i.e., plugged their ears out of distaste for God's Word.
ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 7:12 *diamond-hard*. Rare Hbr word suggesting just how obstinately the Israelites resisted God's Word before the exile. Elsewhere, the Lord described Judah's sins as written "with a point of diamond" (Jer 17:1). *by His Spirit through the former prophets*. The prophets were human agents, and God's Spirit was the divine agent. Zechariah understood that he was inspired by the Holy Spirit (cf 2Pt 1:19–21). *great anger*. God's patience finally was exhausted. The threatened judgment came upon Israel with devastating force.
ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 7:13 *I called … they called*. Cf 1:3. Because God's people refused to hear Him speaking, He closed His ears to their prayers as well.
ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 7:14 *scattered them*. See note, 1:19. *whirlwind*. Scattering effect of a whirlwind describes the tragic consequences of Israel's past disobedience. *they had not known*. The destruction of Jerusalem and the temple was bad enough; being scattered among the nations was equally hard to endure. No longer were they a people set apart but strangers without status in a foreign land (cf Dt 28:36; Jer 16:13). *no one went to and fro*. The land once so prosperous and richly populated (v 7), once "flowing with milk and honey" (Ex 3:8), was left silent and abandoned. *pleasant land was made desolate*. Judah's disobedience had turned the pleasant land into a wasteland (cf Ps 106:24; Jer 3:19–20).
ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 7:1–14 Bethel's delegation received a far different answer than they anticipated. In Zechariah's day, priest and people alike needed to learn the lessons from Judah's history lest the errors that caused such distress be repeated. God also wants us to examine our actions and ask whether the things we do glorify Him. With David, we must

confess, “I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me” (Ps 51:3). In Christ alone is complete cleansing from all iniquity. In union with Him, we become fruit-bearing branches (Jn 15:5). • Lord of hosts, may Your Word ever be “a lamp to my feet and a light to my path” (Ps 119:105). Amen.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 8:1 The Lord now speaks words of promise to encourage His people.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 8:2 *Thus says the* LORD. This phrase, introducing oracles of the Lord, is repeated 10 times in ch 8. See p 1080. *jealous for Zion with great jealousy*. See note, 1:14. This is not like human jealousy, which is a negative emotion and a destructive force, but rather an intense and absolute commitment. *great wrath*. Directed at the enemies of His people (1:15), whereas for a time He had been angry with His own people (7:12).

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 8:3 *returned to Zion*. See note, 1:3. *dwell*. Hbr *shakan*, the root for the word “tabernacle.” God had dwelt with His people in the tabernacle and temple. With the rebuilding of the temple, His presence was again assured. *faithful city*. A name Jerusalem had lost (Is 1:21) would now be restored. God’s faithfulness would be reflected in the transformation of His people.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 8:4–5 *streets*. Word occurs three times in vv 4–5. Hbr refers to “open places,” such as a city park rather than a modern street.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 8:4 *Old men and old women*. Tranquil scene of elderly people sitting in city plazas, where soldiers would camp in times of war, recalls the promise of the Fourth Commandment (Ex 20:12). Sociologists estimate that men typically lived less than 40 years, and women even fewer due to the dangers of childbearing. Studies of the king’s chronologies suggest a typical life expectancy of c 46 years for rulers.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 8:5 Imagery of children, who with the elderly (v 4) are among the most vulnerable people in society, happily playing. These words were particularly encouraging to the exiles who had returned, because the city was still sparsely populated (cf 7:7).

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 8:6 Rhetorical question. What might seem humanly impossible was not difficult for the Lord of hosts to accomplish. *remnant*. Small band of survivors who had returned to Jerusalem from Babylon. See p 1080.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 8:7 *I will save My people*. This clear statement of the Gospel, repeated in v 13, is key to understanding all of Scripture. God is the one who saves His people (Ex 14:30; Ps 106:8, 10; Acts 16:31). The very name Jesus means "the Lord saves" (cf Mt 1:21). *from the east country … west country*. People will come from all quarters of the earth to share in the blessings of salvation (Is 2:2–3; Mal 1:11). God will gather His people no matter how far and wide they may be scattered.
ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 8:8 *dwell in the midst of Jerusalem*. Just as God had a dwelling place among His people (v 3), so they will dwell in Jerusalem, an image of the true Church of God throughout the world (Gal 4:26; Heb 12:22–23). *they shall be … I will be*. What the Lord had promised in Dt 30:1–6 finds its fulfillment here. He once again affirms the close bond that exists between Him and His people (Jer 30:22; Ezk 36:28; Hos 2:23). *faithfulness … righteousness*. Two familiar words describing the relationship between covenant partners. See pp 842, 843.
ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 8:9 *Let your hands be strong*. In this sixth oracle (see note, v 2), the Lord repeats words of encouragement originally addressed to Zerubbabel and Joshua and found again in v 13. *mouth of the prophets*. Prophets like Haggai and Zechariah had been speaking such words of encouragement since the foundation for the restored temple had been laid.
ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 8:10 *no wage*. Conditions had improved compared to the early days of the exiles' return. Those were days of scarcity for people and animals (cf Hg 1:10–11). *safety from the foe*. The returning Judeans experienced intense opposition from their Gentile neighbors. *man against his neighbor*. Even among the exiles there was disunity and strife, resulting in evil and discouragement.
ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 8:11 *not deal … as in the former days*. God promised a new day for those exiles who had returned. *remnant*. See p 1080.
ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 8:12 *sowing of peace*. The glorious future is described in agricultural terms. God's new day will produce a fruitful harvest of peace (vv 16, 19; Lk 2:14).
ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 8:13 *byword of cursing*. God's people had been an object of scorn in the eyes of heathen nations (Jer 24:9; 25:18). See note, Gn 12:3. *house of Judah and house of Israel*. The promised reunion of the previously separated Southern and Northern Kingdoms (Ezk 37:15–22) is

an image of the Church's unity (Gal 6:16; Eph 4:4–6). *I save you*. See note, v 7. *blessing*. No longer will God's people be a "byword of cursing," but He will bless them and make them a blessing to the world (Gal 3:14). See p 842. *be strong*. Cf v 9.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 8:14–15 *purposed*. Hbr term is usually used in a negative manner. However, as God determined to bring disaster on Israel, so now God will supplant disaster with blessing and bring good to Jerusalem and the house of Judah.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 8:14 *purposed to bring disaster*. In the seventh oracle, God announces a reversal of His previous actions (7:14). The Babylonian exile was God's purposeful punishment for a long history of disobedience. *wrath*. See note, 7:12. *not relent*. Because Judah required severe discipline, God stayed the course.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 8:15 *fear not*. Cf v 13. The promise will not fail.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 8:16 *things that you shall do*. The Lord had promised good to His people and now tells them what they should do. Two positive obligations are followed by two negatives, similar to those in 7:9–10. These virtues are basic for a well-functioning society. *Speak the truth*. God puts a high priority on this obligation, one that believers are to love (v 19; Pr 12:22; Eph 4:15). The new Jerusalem is called "the faithful city" (v 3), which might be translated "the city of truth." *render in your gates judgments that are true*. Civil courts convened at the gate of the city. See p 792. Truthfulness in judicial proceedings was another of God's particular concerns (cf Mi 6:8). *make for peace*. Fair decisions resulted in peaceful living (v 12).

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 8:17 *do not devise evil in your hearts*. See note, 7:10. *love no false oath*. Bearing false witness against a neighbor seems to have been a serious problem and was specifically forbidden in the Eighth Commandment (Dt 5:20; 19:16–19). *all these things I hate*. The sins mentioned all make the list of the seven "abominations" in Pr 6:16–19. See note, Ps 5:5.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 8:1–17 In a series of seven oracles, the Lord of hosts contrasts His future blessings with the judgment His people had suffered in former days. God was good to Israel, and He has been good to us. We do not deserve His goodness, for there is no merit or worthiness in us. Yet His grace has allowed us to see in Christ the spiritual fulfillment of

many of His ancient promises. As people who trust in His mercy, we look forward to a glorious future and seek to serve Him in all we say and do. • Lord, how very good You have been to Your people and to me. Give me a thankful heart, and move me to glorify You in word and deed. Amen.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 8:18 *the word of the LORD of hosts*. Signals the last of the five sections of chs 7–8, all with similar introductions (7:1, 4, 8; 8:1, 18). Finally the answer is given to the question asked by the delegates from Bethel regarding fasting observances (7:3). Vv 19–23 record the final 3 of the 10 oracles spoken by the Lord of hosts (see note, v 2).

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 8:19 *fast of the fourth month*. The Judeans evidently observed four fasts connected with the fall of Jerusalem. The fourth-month fast commemorated the breaching of Jerusalem's walls (2Ki 25:3–4). *fifth*. Lamented the burning of the temple and other important buildings (2Ki 25:8–10). *seventh*. Marked the anniversary of the assassination of Gedaliah, provisional governor of the occupied territory (2Ki 25:22–25). *tenth*. Mourned the beginning of the siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar (2Ki 25:1). See calendar, p 262. *seasons of joy and gladness and cheerful feasts*. The deep sorrow associated with memories of the great calamities surrounding Jerusalem's fall will be supplanted by joyful celebrations. The Hbr words call to mind the joy of a wedding celebration (Jer 33:11), the gladness of social festivities (Est 9:17–18; Is 65:18–19), and cheerful feasts. The ultimate fulfillment of this promise will be the heavenly banquet of salvation (Is 25:6–9; Rv 19:6–10). *love truth and peace*. Proclamation that the fasts will change to feasts ends with the encouragement to love what the Lord loves: truth and peace.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 8:20 Not just an individual here and there, but large groups of peoples, cities, and nations will come (Is 2:1–4). This points to the NT era, when God brings Jews and Gentiles from all nations together into one Body, His Church (Eph 2:11–13; Rv 7:9).

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 8:21 *inhabitants of one city*. Converts from one city will go to neighboring cities and invite others to join them as they seek God (cf Jn 1:38–51). *entreat the favor of the Lord*. See note, 7:2; see also "seek," p 843. Note repetition in v 22 in reverse order. *I myself am going*. Converts will encourage one another by their own examples, a most effective form of evangelism.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 8:22 *Many peoples and strong nations*. That great multitudes and even powerful nations should seek the Lord is truly

amazing (cf Mt 8:11; Rv 11:15). The struggling group of returning exiles who had not yet completely restored the temple would become a great movement with the new Jerusalem as its focal point (Rv 21:2).

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 8:23 *Thus says the* LORD *of hosts*. Last of the 10 oracles in this chapter (see note, v 2). *In those days*. The prophets often use this expression when referring to the NT era (cf Zep 3:9, 16; Hg 2:23; Zec 13:1). *ten*. Symbolic number to emphasize completeness, a large number of Gentiles. *nations of every tongue*. A variety of languages were spoken on Pentecost (Ac 2:1–13). *take hold of the robe*. Gentile nations will come to the Light (Lk 2:32), to Jesus, born in Judah (Mt 2:1–11). *Jew.* Hbr *yehudi*, "person of Judah." The tribe of Judah and all Israel had a favored status in the history of salvation (Rm 9:4–5). It is from their history that salvation has come to all people through the preaching of the Gospel. Modern Judaism began to emerge during the time between the OT and the NT, becoming firmly established after the Roman destruction of Herod's temple (AD 70). See pp 1553–56. Luth: "It is as if He were saying: 'The Gospel will be preached throughout the earth. It will bear such great fruit that one apostle … will with his preaching convert many thousands of people to righteousness. They will follow spontaneously, not because the Law compels them but because the Holy Spirit leads them' " (AE 20:87–88). *God*. Not God's personal name (Hbr *yahweh*, "LORD," which occurs c 125 times in Zec); Gentile converts use the general Hbr term *'elohim* ("God") by itself only here and in 9:7. (Zec sometimes puts the two terms together; e.g., 6:15.) The Gentiles are convinced that the true God is the One worshiped by the Judeans.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 8:18–23 God tells the people of Bethel that their fasts will become joyful worship. He promises a great movement of people from the Gentile world who will seek the Lord and entreat His favor. People of all nations will become one in the Holy Christian Church. Their worship will not be empty ritual but a feast of joy and gladness, remembering God's gracious activity throughout human history. God continues to come to us in Word and Sacrament with His message of repentance and forgiveness, a message for us to proclaim to all nations (Lk 24:47). • Lord of the Church, give me joy in worship and the desire to invite others to come with me. Amen.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 9:1 Some interpreters question whether a different author wrote chs 9–14 because of dissimilarities in vocabulary and

style. See “Unity,” p 1524. *burden*. Hbr *massa’*, may be translated “oracle.” See p 1079. *Hadrach*. Not mentioned elsewhere in the Bible, but Assyrian military records identify Hadrach as a country near Damascus. *Damascus*. Capital of Syria, c 60 mi NE of the Sea of Chinnereth. See color map 2. *its resting place*. The “burden of the word” rested on Damascus. *an eye on mankind*. The Lord’s vision was international, seeing all nations of the world.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 9:2 *Hamath*. City on the Orontes River, c 150 mi N of Damascus. *Tyre*. Important Phoenician city; port on the Great Sea, c 35 mi NW of the Sea of Chinnereth. Tyre was a trade center for goods from Persia, Greece, Egypt, and other countries. Resting partly on an island, Tyre built strong walls and was able to hold out against many enemy attacks. *Sidon*. Phoenician city on the Great Sea, c 20 mi N of Tyre. See color map 1. *very wise*. Despite the earthly wisdom of these two prominent cities, the Lord’s “burden” fell on them.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 9:3 *rampart*. Defensive fortification of strong, thick walls.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 9:4 *strip … strike … be devoured*. Commerce had made Tyre a rich city (v 3), but such treasures could not spare it from God’s judgment. In 332 BC, Alexander the Great conquered and sacked the city after a seven-month siege.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 9:5–6 *Ashkelon … Gaza … Ekron … Ashdod*. Four of the five major Philistine cities (Gath is not mentioned), all located near the coast of the Great Sea, between 20 and 40 mi W of Jerusalem. See color map 1. Hearing of the destruction of Tyre and Sidon, these cities would writhe in fear, knowing that the Lord’s “burden” was coming on them.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 9:6 *mixed people*. See ESV note. Suggests an unstable, perhaps incestuous population; not upstanding citizens. *pride of Philistia*. The Lord begins a personal address. The people of Philistia, as well as the other places named, were proud of their power and wealth, which they attributed to their false gods. But the Lord had His eye on them, and His burden fell on them. Babylon conquered Ashdod and other cities in the seventh and sixth centuries BC.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 9:7 *blood from its mouth … abominations*. The Lord had commanded Israel to “eat neither fat nor blood” (Lv 3:17). Heathen nations like Philistia observed no such restriction in their worship

of idols. The Lord promised to take away false worship. *remnant*. See p 1080. *like a clan in Judah*. Judah was made up of many clans, or extended families. The day was coming when people of many different nationalities would become members of God's great clan, the Church. *like the Jebusites*. The original inhabitants of what became the city of Jerusalem were absorbed into the population (Jsh 15:63), just as foreigners are absorbed into God's kingdom.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 9:8 *encamp at My house as a guard*. The Lord pictures Himself camping at the temple to keep watch over His people. See notes, Is 21:6–12. *I see with My own eyes*. See note, v 1. The Lord's protective oversight comforted those He had called "the apple of His eye" (2:8).

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 9:9 *daughter of Zion!* God's people are called to welcome their coming King with joyful shouts (cf 2:10). This is a preview to the depiction of the new Jerusalem as the Bride of Christ (Rv 21:2). *your king is coming … humble*. This King is unique, one of a kind, the Messiah. Wycl: "Christ mounted these animals to condemn the riding of pope and cardinals, and of the inferior bishops too, who are wont to ride in superfluous pomp on war-horses decked out with gold and silk" (TT, 190). Luth: "Here there is no violence, no armor, no power, no anger, no wrath…. Here there are only kindness, justice, salvation, mercy, and every good thing" (AE 20:94). In His triumphal entry into Jerusalem, Jesus gave public proof that He is this promised King (Mt 21:1–11). *donkey*. Israelites typically rode donkeys. Horses were reserved for military use. See notes, Jsh 11:4, 6.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 9:10 *cut off*. War tools have no place in the Messiah's kingdom (cf Ps 46:9). *speak peace to the nations*. God's Word is the "weapon" by which He brings peace. *His rule … ends of the earth*. Christ's rule is universal, not limited to geographical boundaries such as earthly kingdoms. We are to be His witnesses "to the end of the earth" (Ac 1:8). See pp 1565–66.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 9:11 *blood of My covenant*. The Lord will set Zion's prisoners free because of His covenant with them, sealed with blood. We have eternal redemption by Christ's blood (Heb 9:12). *waterless pit*. Symbolizes the hopeless condition of one under the curse of the Law. See note, Jer 2:13.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 9:12 *prisoners of hope*. By grace, the Lord invites sinners to return to their stronghold, the Lord Himself. *restore to you double*. In place of despair, the Lord promises a double blessing: a secure stronghold and victory over all enemies.
ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 9:13 *bow … arrow … sword*. The Lord wields His people as spiritual weapons against the devil and his angels, here represented by the sons of Greece. The sword of God's Word is effective in waging spiritual warfare (Eph 6:17; Heb 4:12).
ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 9:14 *the LORD will appear over them*. Just as the Lord hovered over His people in the wilderness (Ex 13:21), so He appears over them as a divine warrior to protect and save them. *trumpet … whirlwinds*. The Lord's actions are described using the imagery of a thunderstorm.
ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 9:15 *LORD of hosts*. See p 1291. *them*. The people of God; Zion. *they shall drink*. Figurative; they will drink the blood of the enemy (cf Ezk 39:17–20).
ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 9:16 *On that day*. See p 1079. *flock*. All believers. *jewels of a crown*. Each believer brings God honor.
ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 9:17 *how great … His beauty!* Praise for the Lord's salvation. *young men … young women*. Luth: "The people of the Gospel will be robust, energetic, and cheerful, both in spirit and in faith. After all, in Christ there is no old age but an everlasting bloom of youth" (AE 20:104).
ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 9** The Lord's saving work on behalf of His people is foretold using illustrations based on OT history. God's enemies suffer defeat for breaking His Holy Law. They will learn that "the wages of sin is death" (Rm 6:23). But those who repent and cling in faith to the Messiah will be covered with His righteousness and enjoy His rule of peace. • King Jesus, accept my joyful shouts of praise for Your saving work. Rule in my life, now and always. Amen.
ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 10:1 *season of the spring rain*. In Israel, rain falls mainly in the winter months. Early rain marked the beginning of the season; spring rain (also called latter rain) came at the end of the season and was essential for crop development (cf Jl 2:23). See calendar, p 262.
ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 10:2 *household gods*. See "idols," p 1079. Prayers addressed to such objects were useless. *diviners*. People who claimed to be able to tell the future by communicating with some

supernatural power. *lack of a shepherd*. The people failed to turn to the Lord in prayer because they lacked leaders to give them spiritual direction. They were "like sheep without a shepherd" (Mt 9:36).
ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 10:3 *shepherds*. Both kings and other spiritual and political leaders were described as shepherds in the Bible. *like His majestic steed*. See note, 1:8. The Lord Himself took over leadership of His flock and shaped them figuratively into His majestic horse, with which He fought spiritual battles (cf 6:1–8).
ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 10:4 Christ is from the house of Judah and the cornerstone on whom the Church is built (Eph 2:20; 1Pt 2:5–8). Other terms used here also refer to Him.
ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 10:5 *like mighty men in battle*. Words of a familiar hymn, "Onward, Christian soldiers, Marching as to war" (LSB 662:1), compare the Church to an army fighting battles with the Lord's help.
ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 10:6 *bring them back*. The Lord promised to bring back Judah and Joseph (Ephraim), who had been carried off into captivity as a punishment for sin. Luth: "This passage is to be understood about a spiritual conversion" (AE 20:111). *I will answer them*. The Lord will hear and respond to the prayers of His people.
ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 10:7 *their hearts shall be glad … rejoice*. Zion was encouraged to "rejoice greatly" because of the coming King (9:9). Ephraim, the Northern Kingdom, will join the celebration. *Ephraim*. See p 1079.
ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 10:8 *whistle for them*. God's whistle was His Word summoning Ephraim to come back to Him. *redeemed*. See p 843.
ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 10:9 In judgment, the Lord scattered His people among the nations. But He says "they shall remember Me" and return. Many did at Pentecost (Ac 2:5–11).
ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 10:10 *Egypt … Assyria*. Significant numbers of Israelites had been captives in these countries, which are examples of places from which the redeemed will come. *Gilead … Lebanon*. Small territories east and north, respectively, of the Sea of Chinnereth. See color map 2. Even if this area was joined to Israel, there would not be room for all those who will eventually live in God's kingdom.
ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 10:11 The Lord will lead His people through the sea of troubles, strike down the waves, and dry up the depths of rivers

such as the Nile in Egypt.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 10:12 The Lord identifies Himself as the source of strength, life, and guidance for His people.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 10** There is a vast difference between the OT kingdom of Israel and the kingdom restored by the Messiah. Luther described the former as weak because it was based on Israel's obedience. Of the latter he said: "This kingdom is founded on God's mercy without our own goodness or merit, and therefore it will stand fast to all eternity" (AE 20:304). Like Israel, we all fall short of God's glory. Because of His compassion, He called Israel back to Him and likewise keeps calling us. • Holy Spirit, move me to exclaim with gratitude and awe in my heart, "The LORD … is good, for His steadfast love endures forever" (Ps 136:1). Amen.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 11:1 *Open your doors, O Lebanon*. Like a general at the enemies' gates, the Lord commanded Lebanon (see note, 10:10) to open its doors to devastation. Judgment was inevitable and could not be stopped. *fire*. Lebanon was famous for its majestic cedar trees, symbols of strength. But they could not withstand the Lord's fiery destruction (cf Ezk 31:1–17).

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 11:2 *Wail, O cypress … Wail, oaks of Bashan*. Cypress is a tall evergreen. Bashan, a region east of the Jordan, was famous for its oaks. See color map 2. These trees are called on to lament the ruin of the glorious cedars of Lebanon. All nature is stunned by God's judgment.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 11:3 *wail of the shepherds*. Shepherds live close to nature. Seeing the ruin of something so stately as the cedars of Lebanon leads them to lament. Note the reference in 10:3 to shepherds who will also be the subject of God's judgment. *the thicket of the Jordan*. The tropical jungle on both banks of the lower Jordan River, a habitat for lions, was also ruined when God's judgment struck.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 11:4–14 Parable describes how the Lord abandoned His people, the flock doomed to slaughter. These actions were not necessarily in chronological order and likely referred to events that occurred previously in Israel's history. As with Jesus' parables, it is the overall point that is important. Symbolically (not literally), the prophet is commanded to shepherd the flock. He describes their suffering at the hands of external and internal enemies. Finally, the Lord and His prophet, whom the flock came to detest, no longer have pity on them (vv 6, 9).

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 11:5 *Those*. Sheep traders (v 7); probably referring to wicked rulers (cf Ezk 34:1–10). *Blessed be the* LORD. Wicked rulers mask their fleecing of the sheep with pious words.
ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 11:6 Neighbor and king violently overwhelmed the inhabitants of the land, the flock was doomed to slaughter, and the Lord did nothing to intervene.
ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 11:7 The prophet/shepherd gave names to his two staffs that describe the Lord's historic relationship with Israel: His favor and the union they enjoyed with Him and one another. Both staffs will be broken (vv 10, 14). *Favor.* Hbr *no'am*, "delightfulness," "pleasantness."
ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 11:8 *three shepherds*. Commentators have offered more than 40 different suggestions as to their exact identity. They probably represent leaders of Israel. *detested me.* Describes the deterioration of the relationship between shepherd and flock.
ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 11:9 *I will not be your shepherd*. The prophet gave up caring about the people, just as the Lord had done, and turned them over to their enemies.
ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 11:10 *annulling the covenant*. The prophet had taken on the responsibility of tending the flock, but now this covenant was annulled. He broke the staff called Favor to symbolize this termination. See note, v 7.
ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 11:11 Wicked rulers (see note, v 5) recognized that the prophet's actions were a revelation of the will of the Lord, who no longer had pity on His people (v 6).
ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 11:12 *as my wages thirty pieces of silver*. Shepherds expected wages for their work. The prophet's request of the sheep traders is a bit ironic: will you pay me for turning over the flock to destruction? That the wicked rulers were willing to give him 30 pieces of silver, the price of a slave, showed how calloused their hearts were. This is the same amount Judas received for betraying Jesus.
ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 11:13 *Throw it to the potter*. Possibly a proverbial saying expressing disdain or disgust at the action of the sheep traders. *into the house of the* LORD, *to the potter*. The prophet performed this act publicly, throwing down the silver coins in the temple just as Judas would later do (Mt 27:5).
ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 11:14 *annulling the brotherhood*. The prophet broke the second staff, Union, and so annulled the brotherhood between

Judah and Israel. This happened historically when the northern tribes rebelled against Judah after Solomon's death (1Ki 12:16–20).

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 11:15–16 This short proverb makes the same point as the previous section. The Lord commanded the prophet to act out the role of a foolish shepherd who has no fear of the Lord (Pr 1:7). Such a ruler was equipped with all the devices of evil.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 11:16 *shepherd*. A foolish leader. *tearing off even their hoofs*. Likely a proverbial saying meaning that the flesh of the fat ones will be totally consumed.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 11:17 Curse on the "worthless shepherd" (cf v 16). *arm … right eye!* Representing the shepherd's physical and mental abilities. Removing them made him unable to function.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 11** The chapter begins with a lament over the Lord's coming judgment, followed by a description of how He abandoned His flock and no longer had pity on them. This chastisement is God's "strange" work. His "proper" work is to comfort. "[Isaiah] calls it the 'strange' work of the Lord when He terrifies, because to make alive and comfort is God's own proper work. But He terrifies … for this reason—that there may be a place for comfort and making alive" (Ap XIIA 51). We are accused by God's Law and threatened with punishment for our sins. God intends this to lead us to repentance so that, trusting in Christ's merits, we might enjoy eternal comfort and peace. • Lord, be my Good Shepherd and show me Your favor. Amen.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 12:1 *burden*. Cf 9:1. Here the burden of God's Word is "concerning Israel," promising salvation to His people. *who stretched … within him*. The One who makes these promises is no earthly ruler but the Creator of heaven and earth, who gives life to humans. What He did in the beginning shows what He can do at the end. He has global power.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 12:2 *a cup of staggering*. Cup's contents often symbolize God's wrath, here causing people to stagger (cf Jer 25:15–31). Enemies attacking Jerusalem imagine an easy victory. Luther pictured the Lord saying, "Very well, come on, try your tricks, go on and drink. I will present you with a drink that will serve you well: you will stumble so that you will reel along very violently" (AE 20:324). See note, Is 51:17.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 12:3 *On that day*. This expression occurs seven times in ch 12 and 17 times in chs 12–14. God is speaking of the end times,

when He will destroy all enemies. See p 1079. On that day, the "holy city, new Jerusalem," will come down from heaven (Rv 21:2). Jerusalem and Judah represent the Church. *heavy stone*. The Lord laid a stone in Zion (Is 28:16) that proves to be a "stone of stumbling" for those who disobey the Word (1Pt 2:8). *all the nations … will gather against it*. The worldwide gathering of enemies against Jerusalem points to the spiritual nature of what is being described here.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 12:5 *strength through the* LORD *of hosts*. The source of strength and victory for Judah and the Church is the Lord of hosts (9:15). Of Him we sing, "A mighty fortress is our God" (*LSB* 656:1).

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 12:6 *I will make*. Also vv 2–3. All that happens is God's doing. *blazing pot … flaming torch … shall devour*. Further images of how the Lord will consume His enemies.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 12:7 *salvation to the tents of Judah first*. People who lived in Judah outside the capital city of Jerusalem, where the temple was located, may have considered themselves second-class citizens. But the Lord puts them first in line for salvation. *glory*. See pp 6–7. Jesus was not born in Jerusalem but in the small Judean town of Bethlehem. Here the "glory of the Lord shone" (Lk 2:9).

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 12:8 *like David … like God, like the angel of the* LORD. Bold comparisons assure believers of the eternal protection the Lord provides, even for the weak. When Christ appears, God's children "shall be like Him" (1Jn 3:2).

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 12:9 *I will seek to destroy*. The Creator's ultimate purpose "on that day" is to destroy all enemies of His Church (Rv 21:8).

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 12:1–9 The day is coming, declares the Lord, when the enemies of His people, represented here by Jerusalem and Judah, will be destroyed. When confronted by spiritual foes who cause us to feel weak and helpless, we must keep telling ourselves that our strength is in the One "who stretched out the heavens and founded the earth" (v 1). He will protect and save us. • Almighty Father, my refuge and strength, remove all fear from my heart, and make me confident of Your ultimate victory. Amen.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 12:10 *pour out … a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy*. The Lord will pour out on His people spiritual gifts that will cause them to mourn and plead for mercy when they look on "Him

whom they have pierced." *pierced*. The object of this piercing is God Himself, a prophecy of what happened to Jesus on the cross (Jn 19:34). *mourn*. This grief is extremely intense, such as for an only child, a firstborn, or a fallen king. Luth: "To mourn for Christ's sake is to imitate the crucifixion, death, and burial of Christ so that we mortify our flesh … [and] say with the apostle Paul: 'Those who belong to Christ have crucified the flesh with its … lusts' " (AE 20:140).

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 12:11 *Hadad-rimmon*. Only occurrence of this name in the Bible; may refer to a small village located c 60 mi NW of Jerusalem, a place of great mourning. Though "Hadad" and "Rimmon" (2Ki 5:18) are names of a pagan god, the reference here is likely to mourning for the Judean king Josiah, who was killed on the Plain of Megiddo. See color map 2.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 12:12 *family by itself … wives by themselves*. Translates a Hbr word that means "alone, separate, apart" and indicates the individual nature of this mourning. No one can mourn in place of another. Special mention is made of wives to emphasize that in Israelite society it was the traditional role of women to mourn (cf Jer 9:17; Lk 23:27–29). *house of Nathan*. Son of David, named in the genealogy of Jesus.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 12:13 *house of Levi*. Israelite priests were from the tribe of Levi, and Levites served in the temple. *Shimeites*. Shimei was the son of Gershon, son of Levi (Ex 6:16–17). The four families of David, Nathan, Levi, and Shimei represent the kingdom of holy priests (1Pt 2:5; Rv 1:6) who lament their sin, which caused Jesus to be pierced.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 12:14 *all the families*. Universal mourning (cf Rv 1:7).

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 13:1 *On that day*. That day of fulfillment when all things will come to pass according to God's plan of salvation. See p 1079. See also note, Hg 2:23. *fountain opened … to cleanse*. No amount of mourning can cleanse a person from sin. A fountain is needed that will provide total purification from uncleanness. That fountain is the blood of Jesus, which "cleanses us from all sin" (1Jn 1:7). Though sin afflicts us, Baptism is "the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit" (Ti 3:5) that effects our sanctification.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 12:10–13:1 Zechariah prophesies intense mourning for all people. Can there be any sorrow greater than that of beholding the Son of God, His body pierced and bleeding, hanging on the

cross? Such a sight produces contrition in the hearts of believers. The Lutheran Confessions define contrition as "the true terror of conscience, which feels that God is angry with sin and grieves that it has sinned" (Ap XIIA 29). For the contrite sinner, the good news is that the death of Christ opened a fountain that cleanses us from sin and uncleanness. We have good reason to sing, "Glory be to Jesus, Who in bitter pains Poured for me the lifeblood From His sacred veins!" (LSB 433:1). • Lord Jesus Christ, grant that I may always know the grace and life eternal found in Your precious blood. Amen.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 13:2 *cut off the names of the idols*. Idol worship was a continuing temptation for God's OT people. The Lord promises that He will eliminate idols "on that day" (see note, Hg 2:23) so that their names will no longer be invoked in worship. *the prophets and the spirit of uncleanness*. Baal's prophets, filled with the spirit of uncleanness, were vanquished by the Lord at Mount Carmel (1Ki 18:20–40). False prophets will be totally absent in the new Jerusalem.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 13:3 *You shall not live, for you speak lies*. According to God's Law, children who struck or cursed a parent were to be killed (Ex 21:15, 17). To speak lies in the Lord's name deserved the same penalty. *pierce*. Usually those guilty of a capital crime were stoned, but Jer 26:23 tells of a prophet pierced by a sword.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 13:4–6 On the day that is coming, no person will even desire to pose as a prophet. In the centuries after the return from exile, various sources record that there were no prophets in Israel (1Macc 4:46; 9:27; 14:41). See pp 1077–83.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 13:4 *hairy cloak*. The prophet Elijah wore a cloak (1Ki 19:13, 19; 2Ki 2:8, 13–14). No one will try to make people think he is a prophet by following Elijah's example.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 13:5 *I am no prophet … in my youth*. One who was a worker of the soil, in the manner of Amos, will reject the title of prophet.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 13:6 False prophets sometimes cut themselves, hoping their god would be moved to respond (1Ki 18:28). Someone with such wounds would provide an alternate explanation to allay the suspicion that he might be a prophet.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 13:2–6 Zechariah warns about false worship and false prophets. Throughout history, false religion has been a serious

problem. People today may not call on Baal or Rimmon for help, but idols and false prophets are still in evidence. Luth: "Many a person thinks that he has God and everything in abundance when he has money and possessions" (LC I 5). Idols may be gone from our eyes but not from our hearts. Only when Christ comes again in glory will there be an end to all false religion. • Lord, keep me steadfast in Your Word, safe from all who would deceive me. Amen.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 13:7 *My shepherd*. In contrast to the worthless shepherd (11:17), this is the Lord's own shepherd, the Good Shepherd (Jn 10:14), whom the sword would strike. *man who stands next to Me*. Unique Hbr phrase meaning "a man, my associate/neighbor" and describing the intimate relationship of Father and Son. *Strike the shepherd … little ones*. Jesus cited these words when He foretold His disciples' defection after His arrest (Mk 14:27).

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 13:8 *one third shall be left*. In describing what to expect in the future, Zechariah drew on past experiences. The one third was likely a symbolic fraction representing those living in Judah after the Babylonian exile.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 13:9 *fire*. Used to purify and test precious metals, which are soft enough to work when cold. God leads His people through the fires of affliction to purify them and to test the genuineness of their faith. *call upon My name*. In worship and prayer. *My people*. The Lord said to Israel in Egypt, "I will take you to be My people" (Ex 6:7). In the new covenant, this bond is restored: "they shall be my people" (Jer 31:33).

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 13:7–9 That the Lord of hosts should rouse the sword against His very own Shepherd defies rational explanation. Only in the light of divine revelation can one comprehend the truth that Christ's death on the cross was the supreme act of God's love for us sinners. Luth: "To believe in life in the midst of death, to believe in glory in the midst of sin, to believe in the peace and favor of God in the midst of persecution—this is something beyond every capability of reason. It is truly a miracle in our eyes" (AE 20:151). • Dearest Lord, the fires of life test my will to be Your witness. May Your name seal me against sin and show that I belong to You. Strengthen me to bear the cross and follow You. "Take my life and let it be Consecrated, Lord, to Thee." Amen. (LSB 783:1)

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 14:1 *day is coming for the* LORD. This is a day for the Lord to act, to reveal His power. *divided in your midst*. The division

of spoil gained by the enemies who attack Jerusalem is described prior to the battle itself. The headline comes before the event.
ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 14:2 Not an actual historical attack on Jerusalem, but rather a vivid reminder that the Lord permits His people to experience afflictions.
ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 14:3 *go out and fight*. The Lord brings the nations to Jerusalem for the battle, and then He fights against them. The Lord continues to wage just war against all enemies of His people.
ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 14:4 *On that day*. Refers not to vv 1–3 but rather to what follows. See note, 12:3. *stand on the Mount of Olives*. A bold example of God described in human form (anthropomorphism) as a giant. *split in two*. God has power to cause cosmic upheaval (cf Mi 1:4).
ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 14:5 *flee to the valley*. The Lord provides a wide valley as a way of escape for His people trapped in Jerusalem. *Azal*. From the tribe of Benjamin (cf Azel, 1Ch 8:37). This reference is likely to where his family lived, east of Jerusalem. *earthquake*. At Hazor, archaeologists have found many collapsed buildings, the result of such an earthquake. *my God will come, and all the holy ones*. God's coming with His holy angels (cf Mt 25:31) will initiate the changes described in the following verses.
ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 14:6 *no light, cold, or frost*. With God's coming (v 5), atmospheric conditions change radically.
ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 14:7 *unique day … light*. The created light of our present world (Gn 1:3) will be replaced by a light totally different from anything known to humans. Darkness will be eliminated (Is 60:19).
ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 14:8 *living waters*. Flowing, not stagnant. This water guarantees life. *eastern sea … western sea*. See ESV notes. The prophet uses the geography of Judah to picture God's new creation. See color map 1. *summer as in winter*. These waters are not a wadi or gully that dries up in summer.
ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 14:9 *king over all the earth*. All earthly government will cease, and the Lord will reign as King. *the LORD will be one and His name one*. Israel's confession, "The LORD our God, the LORD is one" (Dt 6:4), will be on every tongue (Php 2:11) so that "God may be all in all" (1Co 15:28).
ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 14:10 *plain*. The prophet envisions further geographical changes as he seeks to picture God's new earth. The

mountains of Judah become a plain. *Geba*. C 6 mi NE of Jerusalem. *Rimmon*. Exact location unknown; somewhere on the southern border of Judah. *Jerusalem shall remain aloft*. Jerusalem, with its walls and gates, will remain the high point above the surrounding plain (cf Mi 4:1–2). See map, p 971.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 14:11 *never again be a decree of utter destruction*. The Lord had threatened and even ordered utter destruction on His own people due to their sins (Is 43:28; Mal 4:6), but the new Jerusalem will be safe from such a decree.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 14:12 *plague*. A strike against all who wage war against Jerusalem (14:2). Cf Ex 7–12. The horrible plague described here pictures God's terrible judgment on all who oppose Him (cf Rv 20:7–10; 21:8).

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 14:13 *panic*. Plague will create holy terror. *seize the hand … one will be raised against the hand of the other*. Confusion will reign, causing enemy soldiers to grab hold of each other and fight among themselves.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 14:14 *wealth … collected*. Reverse of v 1, where the enemy divided the spoil of Jerusalem.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 14:15 Plague of v 12 will fall not only on enemy soldiers but on animals used for war. Enemies of God's kingdom will be utterly destroyed.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 14:16 *go up year after year to worship the King*. The prophet saw a time in the future when nations who had initially attacked Jerusalem (v 2) would go there to worship the Lord (Zec 8:22). This prophecy is fulfilled in NT times when people of all nations come into God's kingdom. *Feast of Booths*. This most prominent OT festival in postexilic times would naturally come to mind as an example of worship (Ne 8:13–18; Jn 7:2–10).

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 14:17 *no rain*. Since rain is such a great blessing for an agricultural society (Jl 2:23), it becomes a symbol of God's favor. The Lord withholds blessing from those who fail to worship Him.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 14:18 *Egypt*. Specially mentioned because of the oppression Israel experienced there (Ex 1:13–14). *plague*. Not the same plague described in v 12, which struck those waging war against Jerusalem. Here the plague is "no rain."

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 14:20 *on that day*. This phrase brackets vv 20–21, which describe the radical changes in the new Jerusalem (see note, 12:3). *bells of the horses*. Horses, used almost exclusively for war, seem totally out of place in God's kingdom of peace. Yet the bells that adorn them are inscribed with the same words as the gold plate on the turban of the high priest: "Holy to the LORD" (Ex 28:36). *pots … bowls before the altar*. Bowls (basins) outranked pots in temple ritual, but "on that day" they will be equal.

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON 14:21 *every pot … holy*. Even the lowly cooking pot used for daily food preparation will be holy to the Lord and may be used in preparing a sacrifice. In heaven, there will be complete holiness. *trader*. The temple will no longer be a place for economic transactions (Mt 21:12; Jn 2:14–17).

ZECHARIAH—NOTE ON **Ch 14** Zechariah's description of Jerusalem's future anticipates John's vision: "I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband" (Rv 21:2). Both foresee a day when the Lord will use His mighty power to crush all His enemies and make all things new and holy. Those wearing white robes, whose sins have been washed away in the blood of the Lamb, will reside in that Holy City (Rv 7:13–14). They will "serve Him day and night in His temple" (Rv 7:15). • "Now come, Thou Blessed One, Lord Jesus, God's own Son, Hail! Hosanna! We enter all The wedding hall To eat the Supper at Thy call." Amen. (*LSB* 516:2)

Malachi

Malachi 1 | Malachi 2 | Malachi 3 | Malachi 4

- Introduction to Malachi
  - Overview
  - Reading Malachi
  - Luther on Malachi
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

1 [1] The oracle of the word of the LORD to Israel by Malachi.[1]

The Lord's Love for Israel

2 † "I have loved you," says the Lord. But you say, "How have you loved
us?" "Is not Esau Jacob's brother?" declares the Lord. "Yet I have loved
Jacob 3 †but Esau I have hated. I have laid waste his hill country and left his
heritage to jackals of the desert." 4 †If Edom says, "We are shattered but we
will rebuild the ruins," the Lord of hosts says, "They may build, but I will
tear down, and they will be called 'the wicked country,' and 'the people
with whom the Lord is angry forever.'" 5 † Your own eyes shall see this, and
you shall say, "Great is the Lord beyond the border of Israel!"

The Priests' Polluted Offerings

6 † † "A son honors his father, and a servant his master. If then I am a
father, where is my honor? And if I am a master, where is my fear? says the
Lord of hosts to you, O priests, who despise my name. But you say, 'How
have we despised your name?' 7 † By offering polluted food upon my altar.
But you say, 'How have we polluted you?' By saying that the Lord's table
may be despised. 8 † When you offer blind animals in sacrifice, is that not
evil? And when you offer those that are lame or sick, is that not evil?
Present that to your governor; will he accept you or show you favor? says
the Lord of hosts. 9 † And now entreat the favor of God, that he may be
gracious to us. With such a gift from your hand, will he show favor to any
of you? says the Lord of hosts. 10 † Oh that there were one among you who
would shut the doors, that you might not kindle fire on my altar in vain! I
have no pleasure in you, says the Lord of hosts, and I will not accept an
offering from your hand. 11 † For from the rising of the sun to its setting my
name will be[1] great among the nations, and in every place incense will be
offered to my name, and a pure offering. For my name will be great among
the nations, says the Lord of hosts. 12 † But you profane it when you say that
the Lord's table is polluted, and its fruit, that is, its food may be despised.
13 † But you say, 'What a weariness this is,' and you snort at it, says the Lord
of hosts. You bring what has been taken by violence or is lame or sick, and
this you bring as your offering! Shall I accept that from your hand? says the
Lord. 14 † Cursed be the cheat who has a male in his flock, and vows it, and
yet sacrifices to the Lord what is blemished. For I am a great King, says the
Lord of hosts, and my name will be feared among the nations.

The Lord Rebukes the Priests

2 [1]“And now, O priests, this command is for you. [2] If you will not
listen, if you will not take it to heart to give honor to my name, says the
Lord of hosts, then I will send the curse upon you and I will curse your
blessings. Indeed, I have already cursed them, because you do not lay it to
heart. [3] Behold, I will rebuke your offspring,[2] and spread dung on your
faces, the dung of your offerings, and you shall be taken away with it.[3]
[4] So shall you know that I have sent this command to you, that my
covenant with Levi may stand, says the Lord of hosts. [5] My covenant with
him was one of life and peace, and I gave them to him. It was a covenant of
fear, and he feared me. He stood in awe of my name. [6] True instruction[4]
was in his mouth, and no wrong was found on his lips. He walked with me
in peace and uprightness, and he turned many from iniquity. [7] For the lips
of a priest should guard knowledge, and people[5] should seek instruction
from his mouth, for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts. [8] But you
have turned aside from the way. You have caused many to stumble by your
instruction. You have corrupted the covenant of Levi, says the Lord of hosts,
[9] and so I make you despised and abased before all the people, inasmuch as
you do not keep my ways but show partiality in your instruction.”

Judah Profaned the Covenant

10 ‡† Have we not all one Father? Has not one God created us? Why then
are we faithless to one another, profaning the covenant of our fathers?
11 † Judah has been faithless, and abomination has been committed in Israel
and in Jerusalem. For Judah has profaned the sanctuary of the Lord, which
he loves, and has married the daughter of a foreign god. 12 † May the Lord cut
off from the tents of Jacob any descendant[1] of the man who does this, who
brings an offering to the Lord of hosts!

13 † And this second thing you do. You cover the Lord's altar with tears,
with weeping and groaning because he no longer regards the offering or
accepts it with favor from your hand. 14 † But you say, "Why does he not?"
Because the Lord was witness between you and the wife of your youth, to
whom you have been faithless, though she is your companion and your wife
by covenant. 15 † Did he not make them one, with a portion of the Spirit in
their union?[2] And what was the one God[3] seeking?[4] Godly offspring. So
guard yourselves[5] in your spirit, and let none of you be faithless to the wife
of your youth. 16 †"For the man who does not love his wife but divorces her,
[6] says the Lord, the God of Israel, covers[7] his garment with violence, says
the Lord of hosts. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and do not be
faithless."

The Messenger of the Lord

17 ‡ † You have wearied the Lord with your words. But you say, “How
have we wearied him?” By saying, “Everyone who does evil is good in the
sight of the Lord, and he delights in them.” Or by asking, “Where is the God
of justice?”

3 1 †“Behold, I send my messenger, and he will prepare the way before
me. And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; and the
messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says
the Lord of hosts. 2 †But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can
stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner’s fire and like fullers’ soap.
3 †He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the sons of
Levi and refine them like gold and silver, and they will bring offerings in
righteousness to the Lord.[1] 4 † Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem
will be pleasing to the Lord as in the days of old and as in former years.

5 †“Then I will draw near to you for judgment. I will be a swift witness
against the sorcerers, against the adulterers, against those who swear falsely,
against those who oppress the hired worker in his wages, the widow and the
fatherless, against those who thrust aside the sojourner, and do not fear me,
says the Lord of hosts.

Robbing God

6 ‡ † “For I the Lord do not change; therefore you, O children of Jacob, are
not consumed. 7 † From the days of your fathers you have turned aside from
my statutes and have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you,
says the Lord of hosts. But you say, ‘How shall we return?’ 8 † Will man rob
God? Yet you are robbing me. But you say, ‘How have we robbed you?’ In
your tithes and contributions. 9 † You are cursed with a curse, for you are
robbing me, the whole nation of you. 10 † Bring the full tithe into the
storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the
test, says the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you
and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need. 11 I will rebuke
the devourer[1] for you, so that it will not destroy the fruits of your soil, and
your vine in the field shall not fail to bear, says the Lord of hosts. 12 † Then
all nations will call you blessed, for you will be a land of delight, says the
Lord of hosts.

13 † “Your words have been hard against me, says the Lord. But you say,
‘How have we spoken against you?’ 14 † You have said, ‘It is vain to serve
God. What is the profit of our keeping his charge or of walking as in
mourning before the Lord of hosts? 15 † And now we call the arrogant
blessed. Evildoers not only prosper but they put God to the test and they
escape.’”

The Book of Remembrance

16 ‡ † Then those who feared the Lord spoke with one another. The Lord
paid attention and heard them, and a book of remembrance was written
before him of those who feared the Lord and esteemed his name. 17 † "They
shall be mine, says the Lord of hosts, in the day when I make up my
treasured possession, and I will spare them as a man spares his son who
serves him. 18 † Then once more you shall see the distinction between the
righteous and the wicked, between one who serves God and one who does
not serve him.

The Great Day of the Lord

4 [1]†† [2] “For behold, the day is coming, burning like an oven, when all
the arrogant and all evildoers will be stubble. The day that is coming shall
set them ablaze, says the Lord of hosts, so that it will leave them neither
root nor branch. [2]†But for you who fear my name, the sun of righteousness
shall rise with healing in its wings. You shall go out leaping like calves
from the stall. [3]† And you shall tread down the wicked, for they will be
ashes under the soles of your feet, on the day when I act, says the Lord of
hosts.

[4]† “Remember the law of my servant Moses, the statutes and rules[1] that I
commanded him at Horeb for all Israel.

[5]† “Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and
awesome day of the Lord comes. [6]†And he will turn the hearts of fathers to
their children and the hearts of children to their fathers, lest I come and
strike the land with a decree of utter destruction.”[2]

Malachi

OVERVIEW

Author
Malachi the prophet

Date
c 430 BC

Places
Israel; Judah; Jerusalem; Edom; Horeb

People
Israelites; priests; husbands and wives; sons of Levi; the Lord's messenger; Moses; Elijah the prophet

Purpose
Malachi expresses to the Judeans the love of God, on account of which He calls for their repentance

Law Themes
Rejection of Edom; condemnation of unfaithful priests; divorce; unfaithfulness in offerings; the day of the Lord

Gospel Themes
Love for Israel; the Lord's faithfulness; the messenger of the covenant; deliverance from evil

Memory Verses
God, our Father (1:6–7); a priest's chief duty (2:4–7); the messenger of the covenant (3:1–3); the day of the Lord (4:1–6)

Introduction to Malachi

Reading Malachi

Heat and flame from glowing charcoal caress the bottom of a pot full of powdery ore. Slowly the ore begins to weep drops of lead mixed with silver, which flow to the bottom of the pot, lifting the dirt and debris that resist the heat. When the contents are poured out and cooled, the dirt breaks away, leaving a purer alloy that is ready to be heated and refined yet again.

In the heat of suffering and persecution, Malachi saw the Lord at work to refine and purify the Levites, who were the spiritual leaders of Judah. Their unfaithfulness and impurity had the Lord's attention. Because He loved them, He could not leave them as they were.

Luther on Malachi

The Hebrews believe that this Malachi was Ezra. We let that pass, because we can know nothing certain about him except that, so far as we can gather from his prophecy, he lived not long before Christ's birth and was certainly the last prophet. For he says in chapter 2[3:1] that Christ the Lord shall come soon.

He is a fine prophet, and his book contains beautiful sayings about Christ and the gospel. He calls it "a pure offering in all the world," for by the gospel the grace of God is praised, and that is the true pure thank-offering. Again he prophesies of the coming of John the Baptist, as Christ himself in Matthew 11[:10, 14] interprets that of which Malachi [3:1; 4:5] writes, calling John his messenger and Elijah.

Beyond that he also denounces his people severely because they do not give the priests their tithes and other services [3:8–10]. Even when

they gave them, they did it faithlessly; sick and blemished sheep, for example, whatever they did not want themselves, had to be good enough for the poor priests and preachers [1:8–14]. This is the way it usually goes. Those who are true preachers of the word of God must suffer hunger and privation, while false teachers must always have their fill. To be sure, the priests too are denounced along with the offerings, because they accepted those offerings and sacrificed them. Such was the work of dear Sir Avarice.

But God here declares that he is greatly displeased with this. He calls such faithlessness and wickedness an offense against himself. On account of it God threatens to leave them and to take the Gentiles as his people.

Afterward he denounces the priests particularly because they falsified the word of God and taught it faithlessly and thereby deceived many [2:6–10] and because they abused their priestly office by not rebuking those who offered blemished things or were otherwise unrighteous, and by praising them instead and calling them righteous, just to gain contributions and profit from them. In this way avarice and concern for the belly have always injured the word and worship of God; they always turn preachers into hypocrites.

He denounces them also because they grieved [*betrübten*] their wives and despised them, and thereby defiled their own sacrifices and worship [2:13–16]. For the law of Moses forbade the offering of impure [*betrübte*] sacrifices to God; and those who were impure dared not sacrifice or eat of the sacrifice. This is what they brought about who grieved their wives and made them weep, and tried to justify their actions by the example of Abraham, who had to cast out and grieve his Hagar [Gen. 21:9–14]. However Abraham had not done this because of ill will, just as he had not taken Hagar to wife because of a whim [Gen. 16:1–4]. (AE 35:332–33)

For more of Luther's insights on this Book, see *Lectures on Minor Prophets I* (AE 18:389–419).

Challenges for Readers

Identity of the Author. Malachi literally means “my messenger,” and the prophet’s identity is never revealed. He was likely a member of the Levitical priesthood who witnessed the corruption and indifference he rebukes throughout the Book.

Rhetorical Questions. The prophet asks 22 rhetorical questions in just 55 verses. He uses these questions to argue against the Judeans and to accuse them as people who certainly know better than to pursue the sins that were distracting them from true worship.

Blessings for Readers

As you read Malachi, consider and answer his questions honestly in view of the Lord's commands and promises and in view of your life. The fire of His teaching will sear the dross of your indifference and bring forth tears of sincere repentance. Treasure most of all His precious Word about the appearance of Jesus, our Savior (3:1–4), the messenger of a better covenant.

OUTLINE

Title (1:1)
I. God's Love (1:2–5)
   A. The Lord Reminds Israel of His Love (1:2)
   B. The Lord Defeats Judah's Enemies (1:3–5)
II. Condemnation of the Priests (1:6–2:9)
   A. The Lord Is Father and Master of All (1:6)
   B. How the Priests Have Despised the Lord's Name (1:7–2:9)
      1. Offering polluted sacrifices (1:7–14)
      2. Failing to teach rightly (2:1–9)
III. The People Must Be Faithful through Proper Marriage Practice (2:10–16)
   A. The Lord Is Father and Creator of All (2:10)
   B. The People Are Faithless to Their Spouses and God's Laws (2:11–16)
IV. The Lord Will Establish Justice through His Messenger (2:17–3:5)
   A. The Lord Accuses the People (2:17–18)
   B. God Will Send His Messenger to Establish Justice (3:1–5)
V. A Call to Return to the Lord in Repentance (3:6–15)
   A. The People Accused of Robbing God (3:6–9)
   B. The Lord Offers Blessings in Return for Full Tithes (3:10–12)
   C. The People Accused of Harsh Words against God (3:13–15)
VI. The Ones Who Fear the Lord Are Remembered by Him (3:16–4:3)
VII. Final Words (4:4–6)
   A. A Call to Observe the Law of Moses (4:4)
   B. The Promise of a Greater Prophet (4:5–6)

Footnotes

Footnotes for Malachi, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:1 *Malachi* means *my messenger*
- [1] 1:11 Or *is* (three times in verse 11 ; also verse 14)

Footnotes for Malachi, Chapter 2

- [2] 2:3 Hebrew *seed*
- [3] 2:3 Or *to it*
- [4] 2:6 Or *law* ; also verses 7, 8, 9
- [5] 2:7 Hebrew *they*
- [1] 2:12 Hebrew *any who wakes and answers*
- [2] 2:15 Hebrew *in it*
- [3] 2:15 Hebrew *the one*
- [4] 2:15 Or *And not one has done this who has a portion of the Spirit. And what was that one seeking?*
- [5] 2:15 Or *So take care* ; also verse 16
- [6] 2:16 Hebrew *who hates and divorces*
- [7] 2:16 Probable meaning (compare Septuagint and Deuteronomy 24:1–4); or *"The LORD, the God of Israel, says that he hates divorce, and him who covers*

Footnotes for Malachi, Chapter 3

- [1] 3:3 Or *and they will belong to the LORD, bringers of an offering in righteousness*
- [1] 3:11 Probably a name for some crop-destroying pest or pests

Footnotes for Malachi, Chapter 4

- [2] 4:1 Ch 4:1-6 is ch 3:19-24 in the Hebrew
- [1] 4:4 Or *and just decrees*
- [2] 4:6 The Hebrew term rendered *decree of utter destruction* refers to things devoted (or set apart) to the Lord (or by the Lord) for destruction

Study Notes

MALACHI—NOTE ON 1:1 *oracle*. See p 1079. *Malachi.* See ESV note; see also "angel," p 5. May refer to an actual person named Malachi or to an anonymous prophet whom God called "My messenger." He prophesied after the rebuilding of the temple. Luth: "Almost all the words which are here spoken in the name of the Lord echo a sort of disgust. The Lord has had enough and is, as it were, nauseated by their ceremonies…. But they themselves preserved them for their own gain and profit, not with a sincere heart but with a greedy one, giving no glory to God…. The stomach is the greatest idol in every religion. Unbelief is the cause for greed" (AE 18:391).
MALACHI—NOTE ON 1:2 *I have loved you*. God wanted Israel to believe this basic truth (Hos 11:1). *How have You loved us?* Israel challenged God's claim with a confrontational question. *Is not Esau Jacob's brother?* Rhetorical question referring to a well-known fact. God introduced the names of Esau (Edom) and Jacob (Israel), twin sons of Isaac and Rebekah. Since they were twins, one might suppose equal treatment. *I have loved Jacob.* Again the Lord affirmed His love for Jacob (Israel), just as Rebekah loved her son Jacob, but Isaac loved Esau (Gn 25:28).
MALACHI—NOTE ON 1:3 *Esau I have hated*. A surprisingly strange statement. God's love and care for all people and all creation is affirmed throughout Scripture (see note, v 11; cf Ps 104; Jn 3:16; 1Jn 4:16). God's "hatred" of Esau must be understood in light of what Jesus said about hating one's "own father and mother and wife and children" (Lk 14:26). Such hatred refers to the choices a person must make between Jesus and loved ones. So God showed hatred for Esau when He chose the older, Esau, to serve the younger, Jacob (Gn 25:23; Rm 9:12–13). Prophecies around the time of the Judean exile (beginning in 587 BC) are esp condemning of the Edomites. See pp 1473–74. *laid waste his hill country ... heritage to jackals*. God had given Edom its own territory and commanded Israel to respect this heritage (Dt 2:4–5). But in 553/2 BC, the Babylonian king Nabonidus destroyed Edom, likely the event to which the Lord refers. God's hatred for Esau was shown by permitting this judgment to happen.
MALACHI—NOTE ON 1:4 *rebuild the ruins.* Just as Israel rebuilt Jerusalem, so Edom vowed to do the same. *Lord of hosts*. Name for God used more than 20 times in Mal. See note, Zec 7:3. See p 1291. *I will tear*

down. In contrast to blessing the rebuilding of Israel's temple, the Lord declared that the Edomites' building projects would be futile (cf Jer 49:7–22). *the wicked country.* God's judgment against Edom resulted in a new name that expressed His hatred.

MALACHI—NOTE ON 1:5 *Your own eyes shall see*. God demonstrated His power and majesty before Israel's very eyes as proof of His love. *Great is the Lord.* Common refrain in Psalms (35:27; 40:16; 96:4). *beyond the border of Israel!* The Lord is not an idol, the invention of a particular nation, but the international God, the one and only true God over all creation (Is 46:9).

MALACHI—NOTE ON 1:1–5 God impresses the truth of His love for Israel (Jacob) by contrasting what happened to them with what happened to Edom (Esau). To justify rebellion against God, human beings sometimes question God's love. Despite all rebellion, God maintains His steadfast love for sinners. He demonstrated this love conclusively when Christ died for all on the cross (2Co 5:15). Believers know for certain that nothing can separate us from His love (Rm 8:38–39). • Dear God of love, forgive my doubts and graciously move me to trust You completely. Amen.

MALACHI—NOTE ON 1:6 *A son honors ... master*. The Lord begins the second part of Malachi, addressed to the priests, by alluding to the Fourth Commandment. *where is My honor? ... fear?* The honor and reverence due to God was lacking in the priestly worship. See p 1001. *despise.* Hbr *bazah,* "to show contempt." Used repeatedly with related terms (vv 7, 12; 2:9). *My name*. The priests are charged with breaking the Second Commandment. *How have we despised Your name?* The priests asked for proof just as the people did in v 2.

MALACHI—NOTE ON 1:7 *polluted food*. See note, v 8. *the Lord's table may be despised*. By word and deed, the priests made plain to the people that they were despising God's Law and sacrifices.

MALACHI—NOTE ON 1:8 *blind ... lame or sick.* In Lv 22:20–22 and Dt 15:21, the Lord forbade the sacrifice of animals that were blemished. *Present that to your governor*. God asks sarcastically if the Persian governor would look favorably on such gifts.

MALACHI—NOTE ON 1:9 *entreat ... gracious to us*. The Lord expressed what the priests were really saying by their worship practices. If the governor will not show favor because of such gifts, can the priests expect the Lord to do so? *favor of God.* Lit, "face of God" (cf Nu 6:25–26).

MALACHI—NOTE ON 1:10 *shut the doors*. An appeal to end this mockery of true worship and sacrifice. Luth: "It would be preferable to abstain from prayer than to pray in an evil manner" (AE 18:396). *kindle fire on My altar in vain!* The polluted sacrifices being offered by the priests could never gain the Lord's favor. *no pleasure in you*. As God had "no regard" for Cain and his sacrifice (Gn 4:5), so He was displeased with the priests.

MALACHI—NOTE ON 1:11 *from the rising ... setting*. All over the world (cf Ps 113:3). *My name will be great among the nations*. The priests despised the Lord's name (v 6), but the time will come when "at the name of Jesus every knee … in heaven and on earth" will bow (Php 2:10). Not only will Israel cry out, "Great is the LORD!" (v 5), but all nations will do likewise. This reverses the Lord's hatred of Esau described in v 2. *incense will be offered*. Incense was commonly offered in worship and represented the prayers of God's people (Ps 141:2; Lk 1:9–10; Rv 5:8). "First, his words say this: the name of the Lord will be great. This is accomplished by the preaching of the Gospel. Through this preaching, Christ's name is made known and the Father's mercy, promised in Christ, is recognized. The preaching of the Gospel produces faith in those who receive the Gospel [Romans 10:17]. They call upon God, give thanks to God, bear troubles for their confession, and produce good works for Christ's glory. So the name of the Lord becomes great among the Gentiles [Malachi 1:11]. Therefore, *incense* and a *pure offering* means not a ceremony by the outward act, but all those sacrifices through which the name of the Lord becomes great: faith, invocation, the preaching of the Gospel, confession, and so on…. We include the preaching of the Word among the sacrifices of praise…. Malachi speaks about all the services of the New Testament…. He requires services of the heart, through which the name of the Lord becomes truly great" (Ap XXIV 32–33).

MALACHI—NOTE ON 1:12 The priests' words showed that they thought sacrifices commanded by the Lord were nothing special and so could be despised (v 7).

MALACHI—NOTE ON 1:13 *weariness*. God had commanded morning and evening sacrifices. See pp 170–71. In time, the priests became weary of carrying out their duties. *snort*. To show contempt. *taken by violence*. In addition to the blemished animals in v 8, there are stolen animals, a violation of the Seventh Commandment.

MALACHI—NOTE ON 1:14 *Cursed be the cheat*. A divine curse concludes this series of questions addressed to the priests (vv 6–13). It was their responsibility to make sure that the animals people brought to fulfill a vow had no blemish (Lv 27:9–12). This curse fell on the priests as well as the cheaters. See note, Gn 12:3. *I am a great King.* More than just a father and master (v 6), the Lord demands the honor due the greatest King of all. See pp 1565–66. *feared among the nations.* The nations will do what Israel failed to do (cf v 11).

MALACHI—NOTE ON 1:6–14 The Lord calls to account His OT priests for the way they despised Him, as evidenced by their worship practices. Our fallen human nature also makes us quick to serve our own interests by giving leftovers rather than firstfruits. In contrast, God gave us the very best, His One and only Son. People of all nations worship Him because of His love and compassion, His grace and mercy. May we join in the praise of Him who is the great King! • Dear Father in heaven, open my heart to appreciate the abundance of Your grace so that I may serve You with the first and best of all You have given me. Amen.

MALACHI—NOTE ON 2:1 *O priests.* The Lord continues His condemnation of Jerusalem's worship leaders. *command.* Used again in v 4; refers to what the priests should be doing.

MALACHI—NOTE ON 2:2 *not ... give honor to My name.* The nations would honor the Lord's name (1:11), but the priests despised it (1:6). *send the curse.* The judgment for sin is curses (Dt 28:15). *curse*. Repeated three times, continuing the thought of 1:14. *your blessings*. The priests' duty was to bless the people (Nu 6:23–27). The Lord cursed even this blessing. Hus: "The priest who binds and looses others ought himself to be prudent and just, for otherwise he will put to death souls who do not die and revive souls which do not live, and in this way he turns his power of pronouncing judgment into an instrument of cursing" (*The Church*, p 104). *not lay it to heart*. The priests did not take the Lord's commands seriously.

MALACHI—NOTE ON 2:3 *rebuke your offspring.* The priests' children suffered for the sins of their fathers (cf 1Sm 2:27–36). *dung*. Hbr *peresh,* the intestinal contents from an animal slaughtered for sacrifice. Spreading dung on their faces is God's way of expressing disdain for these priests. *taken away*. In Ex 29:14, the Lord ordered that this dung be burned outside the camp.

MALACHI—NOTE ON 2:4 *My covenant with Levi*. The Lord set apart the descendants of Levi, Jacob's son, to "minister to Him and to bless in His name" (Dt 10:8; cf Nu 3:5–10). In vv 4–7, the Lord describes the service of the ideal Levitical priest. Luth: "The covenant made with the whole tribe of Levi, the command handed down through Moses [was] that they teach rightly and deceive no man" (AE 18:400). See note, v 6.
MALACHI—NOTE ON 2:5 *life and peace*. OT priests were to bring spiritual life and peace to God's people (Nu 25:12; Dt 30:19–20). *covenant of fear*. Proper worship and veneration of the Lord. See p 1001. *He stood in awe of My name*. The ideal Levite, one like Moses, gave honor to the Lord's name.
MALACHI—NOTE ON 2:6 *instruction*. See note, Pr 1:8; see also pp 775–78. *walked with Me.* The ideal priest not only talked the talk but walked the walk. See p 7.
MALACHI—NOTE ON 2:7 *guard knowledge*. To hold it carefully, to protect it from error, to preserve it among the people. Cf Hos 4:6. *messenger*. Priests and prophets (e.g., Malachi; see note, 1:1) were spokesmen for the Lord of hosts. See pp 1077–83.
MALACHI—NOTE ON 2:8 *But you have turned aside.* God's condemnation of the current priesthood resumes. They were not measuring up to what an ideal priest should be. *stumble.* Contrast to "walk" in v 6. See note, Ps 86:11.
MALACHI—NOTE ON 2:9 *ways.* See p 844. *show partiality*. Another of the priests' sins was showing favor in their teaching to one group of people, perhaps to the rich.
MALACHI—NOTE ON 2:1–9 The Lord condemns the priests in Malachi's day for failing to live up to the expectations He presented in His Word. God has similar requirements for His pastors and teachers today (cf Ti 1:9). How blessed are those who have such servants of the Lord! And how important it is for us to pray that they remain faithful in their calling. For we all need what a devoted Christian leader proclaims: repentance and the forgiveness of sins in Christ, our Lord. • Thank You, Jesus, for servants who preach and teach Your Holy Word in truth and purity. Amen.
MALACHI—NOTE ON 2:10 *one Father ... one God created*. Malachi begins the third part of his prophecy with two rhetorical questions about marriage to foreign wives. God is the Father who created humans (Dt 32:6). In marriage, He unites husband and wife as one (v 15; Gn 2:24). Luth:

"These are also two outstanding statements for correcting the cruelty of husbands, namely, if they look at their wives as God's creation and as women who have a God in common with them" (AE 18:403). *faithless*. Refers to the lack of commitment and fidelity in marriage (used also in vv 11, 14, 16). See "faithfulness," p 842. *profaning the covenant.* Treating God's covenant Law with disrespect.

MALACHI—NOTE ON 2:11 *abomination*. See note, Pr 6:16. The prophet charged the people with doing something horrible, completely opposite of what was good. *profaned the sanctuary*. By continuing to worship the Lord while living in sin, they showed disrespect for the temple. *married the daughter of a foreign god*. God's Law prohibited marriage to unbelievers (Dt 7:3). This law was being violated after the return from exile (Ezr 9:12). The NT provides similar warnings. See note, 2Co 6:14. Cf 1Co 7:12–16 for those already married.

MALACHI—NOTE ON 2:12 Malachi expressed the wish that the Lord would exclude from the community of Judah those who continued to bring offerings and yet were married to idolaters.

MALACHI—NOTE ON 2:13 *second thing.* Evidently some were guilty of divorcing their Israelite spouses to marry foreigners. *tears*. The people wept when they brought their sacrifices to the Lord's altar because He had no regard for their offering (cf Gn 4:5).

MALACHI—NOTE ON 2:14 *witness*. Marriage was a legal covenant that required witnesses. The Lord clearly sees when husband and wife are united in marriage. *wife of your youth ... by covenant*. This first marriage was to an Israelite woman, a wife in accordance with God's covenant. *faithless.* The husband divorced his first wife and married a foreigner. See note, Ezr 10:3.

MALACHI—NOTE ON 2:15 *one*. See note, v 10. *portion of the Spirit in their union?* Indicates how important marriage is in God's eyes. See note, Sg 8:6. He wants to inspire love for spouse and for children. *Godly offspring*. God has in mind not just the conception of human beings, but children who will be raised in the discipline and instruction of the Lord (Eph 6:4). *So guard yourselves.* This admonition, repeated in v 16, was meant for those who had Israelite spouses.

MALACHI—NOTE ON 2:16 *the man who ... divorces*. Some translations of these words differ (see ESV note). See note, 1:3. *covers his garment with violence*. Spattered with blood. A grim description of how a husband's hatred for his wife might play itself out.

MALACHI—NOTE ON 2:10–16 The people of Israel were guilty of breaking one of the covenant laws by marrying foreign, idolatrous wives. The Creator's first command to Adam and Eve was to "be fruitful and multiply" (Gn 1:28). After creating Eve, the Lord brought her to Adam and instituted marriage. He spoke the Sixth Commandment to guard this union (Ex 20:14). Yet throughout history, humans have violated God's rules for marriage. Christians today violate God's will concerning the marriage relationship in various ways. We need His admonition and His forgiveness. With the command and blessing of marriage, the Lord provides a rich portion of His Spirit, who is faithful and keeps us in good faith. • Heavenly Father, forgive my unfaithful desires and tainted love. Direct me by Your Spirit to think and do what is right in Your sight. Amen.

MALACHI—NOTE ON 2:17 *wearied the* LORD. This accusation introduces the fourth section of the Book. *Everyone who does evil ... delights in them.* The Lord was charged by some with actually favoring people who did evil, contradicting His statement in Dt 25:16. Similar complaints are expressed in 3:14–15. *Where is the God of justice?* Not a new question (cf Jb 21:7–16; Hab 1:2–4, 13).

MALACHI—NOTE ON 3:1 *My messenger*. Not Malachi (see note, 1:1), but a promise that the Lord would send an extraordinary messenger; this was fulfilled in John the Baptist. Luth: "[The Lord] says, 'I will send you the genuine Malachi, that is, a messenger, who is John the Baptist' " (AE 18:408). *prepare the way*. John prepared the way for Christ by "proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins" (Mk 1:4). *Lord ... messenger of the covenant*. This is an even more distinguished Messenger, our Lord Jesus Christ, who brought the new covenant in His blood. *in whom you delight.* Jesus is the God of justice whom the people desired (2:17). *coming*. John and Jesus were born approximately 400 years after the time of Malachi. See timeline, p 1543.

MALACHI—NOTE ON 3:2 *who can endure ... appears?* When the God of justice appears, all will be found guilty (Rm 3:23). *refiner's fire.* Fire was used to remove impurities from metals. Everlasting punishment is compared to a lake of fire (Rv 20:14). *fullers' soap*. A fuller used strong soap made of lye to clean wool and make it white. Luth: "Christ is not merely the Purifier but also the purifying Agent. He is not only the Blacksmith but also the Fire; not only the Cleaner but also the Soap" (AE 18:410).

MALACHI—NOTE ON 3:3 *purifier of silver*. One who puts silver through fire until all the impurities are burned away. *sons of Levi*. A prophecy referring to Christians, the "royal priesthood" (1Pt 2:9) who will replace the Levitical priesthood. *offerings in righteousness*. In contrast to the disgraceful sacrifices of the priests in Malachi's day, God will create a people who are genuinely righteous in faith and who offer Him spiritual sacrifices (Rm 12:1; 1Pt 2:5). "This passage clearly requires the sacrifices of the righteous, and so does not favor the opinion about the outward act (*opus operatum*). But the sacrifices of the sons of Levi, that is, of those teaching in the New Testament, are the preaching of the Gospel and the good fruit of preaching" (Ap XXIV 34).

MALACHI—NOTE ON 3:4 *offering ... will be pleasing.* The offerings of God's NT priests will fulfill His purpose in instituting the OT sacrifices (cf Ps 51:17).

MALACHI—NOTE ON 3:5 *Then I will draw near to you for judgment.* Final judgment, when God will gather all nations before His glorious throne (Mt 25:32; Rm 14:10). *witness against ... do not fear Me*. One of several biblical catalogs of sins to which the Lord of hosts will testify on the Day of Judgment (Mk 7:21–22; 1Co 6:9–10; Rv 21:8). *sojourner.* A guest or stranger.

MALACHI—NOTE ON 2:17–3:5 The people in Malachi's day ask, "Where is the God of justice?" (cf 2Pt 3:4). The Lord makes it very clear that the Day of Judgment is coming. He wants all people to be prepared for that day. That's why He sent the Messenger of the new covenant, Jesus Christ, to suffer and die for the sins of the world. Christ will come again, "not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for Him" (Heb 9:28). • Blessed Lord and Savior, help me to wait and pray for Your reappearing with confidence and hope. Amen.

MALACHI—NOTE ON 3:6 *I the* LORD *do not change*. This fifth part of Malachi begins with the Lord's assertion that He will never change. He continues to condemn sin, but His mercy also endures forever. *O children of Jacob.* In 1:2, the Lord assured Jacob's offspring of His love, which remains constant. *are not consumed.* The Lord refrained from doing what He had every right to do.

MALACHI—NOTE ON 3:7 *turned aside*. Hbr *shub*, "to turn off a path, to the right or left." God's people walked in directions contrary to His intended course. *Return to Me, and I will return to you*. A play on the Hbr

term *shub,* "to turn, turn around, return"; often translated "repent" (see note, Zec 1:3). See p 1080.
MALACHI—NOTE ON 3:8 *Will man rob God?* Rhetorical question from God, which should be answered no. The question acts as an accusation. *tithes and contributions*. The Lord had commanded His people to give a tenth of their income for the support of the Levites "as a contribution to the LORD" (Nu 18:24). Ne 13:10 records that this was not being done. The people were stealing from God by failing to support the ministry of the Levites. Luth: "Certainly God does not say this as if He really cared about tithes, etc. Rather He says it to preserve the ministry of the Word" (AE 18:414). The Lord demanded support for the Levitical priesthood even though the priests were derelict in their duties (1:6–2:9).
MALACHI—NOTE ON 3:9 *cursed with a curse*. God intensified His condemnation by combining a verb and noun form of the same root word. Previously He had cursed the priests. Dt 28:15–68 gives examples of how terrible it is to be cursed by God. See note, Gn 12:3.
MALACHI—NOTE ON 3:10 *full tithe*. Entire 10 percent. *storehouse*. Levites maintained places to store the offerings the people brought (Ne 12:44). *food in My house*. Priests lived off the tithes of food that were brought as they served in the Lord's house. *put Me to the test*. God's challenge to the people is unusual—in fact, it is the only example in Scripture of God giving humans permission to test Him. He forbids such testing in Dt 6:16 and Mt 4:7, and He condemns those who do test Him (Ps 95:8–11); He does invite a request for a sign in Is 7:11. *open the windows of heaven*. May refer literally to rain (Gn 7:11), but more likely it indicates the abundance of blessings God promised to Jacob's children.
MALACHI—NOTE ON 3:12 *blessed … land of delight*. Dt 28:1–14 details the blessings that the people of God could expect.
MALACHI—NOTE ON 3:13 *hard*. Harsh, critical. Examples of their hard words are found in 1:2; 2:17; and 3:14–15. On the whole, the children of Jacob continued to resist the Lord's Word.
MALACHI—NOTE ON 3:14 *vain to serve God*. The people said that serving God did no good and offered no benefits. *What is the profit of our keeping His charge*? Rhetorical question implying that there was no gain for them in following the requirements of God's Law. Cf Ps 73:1–12. *walking as in mourning*. Participating in rituals of repentance.

MALACHI—NOTE ON 3:15 *we call the arrogant blessed.* Those who do evil and despise the Lord seem to have His blessing (2:17). See note, Ps 73:4–12. *put God to the test and they escape*. Some notorious evildoers took up God's challenge by putting Him to the test (see note, v 10), and they prospered. Though sinful, they escaped punishment. This dilemma is addressed in the next section.

MALACHI—NOTE ON 3:6–15 Jeremiah's complaint, "Why does the way of the wicked prosper?" (Jer 12:1), resounds in Malachi's day. Many of Jacob's children think nothing of robbing God by withholding their full tithes because it seems to them that evildoers prosper. It is true that the wicked often prosper in this life. Though God does promise that His people may enjoy worldly blessings, He also warns that they can expect suffering too. Because of Christ's death and resurrection, we can be certain of His eternal blessings (Eph 1:3, 11–14). "The wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rm 6:23). • Lord of heaven and earth, move my heart to honor You with my earthly offerings while keeping my eyes firmly fixed on Your eternal blessings. Amen.

MALACHI—NOTE ON 3:16 The sixth part of the Book begins. *those who feared the* LORD. See p 1001. *paid attention and heard.* The Lord was not pleased with many of the hard words spoken against Him (3:13), but He responded positively to the words of these believers. *book of remembrance*. This is comparable to the Book of Life (Rv 21:27). God will remember and deliver those who fear Him. See "remember," p 843. *esteemed His name.* In contrast to the priests, who despised God's name (1:6).

MALACHI—NOTE ON 3:17 *in the day.* The Day of Judgment (cf 4:1, 3, 5). *My treasured possession*. Those whom God will protect and preserve eternally. *as a man spares his son who serves him*. The Lord rebuked those scoffers who claimed that "it is vain to serve God" (3:14).

MALACHI—NOTE ON 3:18 These distinctions had been denied by some in the community (2:17; 3:14–15). God makes His justice clear. *righteous*. See p 843.

MALACHI—NOTE ON 3:16–18 The Lord assures those who fear Him that their service has not been in vain and that they will be spared on the Day of Judgment. God-fearing people know they are guilty according to God's Law, but they also know God's forgiveness leads them to love and trust Him all the more (Ps 130:4). • My soul magnifies You, O Lord, for showing mercy to those who fear You. Amen.

MALACHI—NOTE ON 4:1 *the day is coming*. The day of the Lord (3:17; 4:3, 5), when He will come to judge the living and the dead. *burning like an oven.* The Lord uses images of heat, fire, and burning to portray the Day of Judgment (cf Mt 25:41; 2Pt 3:10). *stubble*. Evildoers who seem to prosper in this life will end up like a plant's stalk after harvest. See note, Ps 1:4. *neither root nor branch*. The fire will be so intense that nothing of the plant will remain.

MALACHI—NOTE ON 4:2 *fear My name.* See p 1001. The Lord addresses believers directly (3:16). *sun of righteousness*. In contrast to the burning fire of judgment, the heat of the sun warms believers with the healing message of God's righteousness in Christ (cf Is 58:8). Bern: "Those whom He called, them also He justified. Over them a Sun arises, though not that sun which may daily be seen arising over good and bad alike, but He of whom the Prophet speaks when addressing himself to those alone who have been called to the counsel" (*SLSB*, p 151). *healing in its wings*. Wings are often a symbol of security and shelter (Ps 63:7; 91:4; Lk 13:34). The handles of royal Judean storage jars were impressed with a winged sun disk. Some archaeologists believe this represents Yahweh, the Lord, or His chariot-throne (see note, Ezk 10:1). The sun disk has its origin in Egypt; Israelite artists commonly borrowed Egyptian and Phoenician designs. *leaping like calves*. Those who experience salvation will be full of joy and excitement, with the same kind of energy as calves at play.

MALACHI—NOTE ON 4:3 *ashes under the soles of your feet*. Only the ashes of the wicked remain.

MALACHI—NOTE ON 4:4 *Remember.* See p 843. *law.* See p 971. *My servant Moses.* The priests were not faithful servants because they did not teach the Law as Moses had (2:8). *statutes and rules that I commanded*. God commanded Moses to teach all Israel His statutes and rules (Dt 6:1). These remained valid in Malachi's day. See p 971.

MALACHI—NOTE ON 4:5 *I will send you Elijah the prophet*. See note, 3:1. "My messenger" (1:1) is identified here as someone like the great prophet Elijah, who had called Israel to repentance and was taken alive to heaven (2Ki 2:1–12). John the Baptist came in the power and spirit of Elijah. Moses and Elijah appeared to Jesus at His transfiguration (Mt 17:3).

MALACHI—NOTE ON 4:6 *turn.* See p 1080. *the hearts … to their fathers.* The angel Gabriel used these words to describe John's mission. When fathers and children have a good relationship, the way is prepared for the

coming of Christ into their hearts. *lest I come ... utter destruction.* Though God threatened utter destruction, His ultimate hope is that people will respond in repentance and faith to the message of prophets such as Malachi and John (Lk 3:3–14).

MALACHI—NOTE ON 4:1–6 The last OT Book concludes with the Lord's announcement that Judgment Day is coming. For those who refuse to repent and believe the Gospel, it means utter destruction. But for those who fear His name, this will be a day of rejoicing. John the Baptist called the people of his day to repentance and faith in the coming Savior. How great a message for us to hear! • Dear Lord Jesus, Son of Righteousness, let the light of Your healing grace shine on me, that I may fear, love, and trust in You always. Amen.

THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS AND THE APOCRYPHA

There was great distress in Israel, such as had not been since the time that prophets ceased to appear among them…. And the Jews and their priests decided that Simon should be their leader and high priest for ever, until a trustworthy prophet should arise.

—1Macc 9:27; 14:41

When I went East and came to the place where these things were preached and done, I learned accurately the books of the Old Testament, and send them to you as written below. [He excludes the Apocrypha.]

—Melito, *Letter to Onesimus*

For greater exactness I add this also, writing of necessity; that there are other books [the Apocrypha] besides these not indeed included in the Canon, but appointed by the Fathers to be read by those who newly join us, and who wish for instruction in the word of godliness.

—Athanasius, *Festal Easter Letter* (AD 367)

As, then the Church reads Judith, Tobit, and the books of Maccabees, but does not admit them among the canonical Scriptures, so let it read these two volumes [Wisdom of Solomon and Ecclesiasticus] for the edification of the people, [but] not to give authority to doctrines of the Church.

—Jerome, *Prefaces*

Books [of the Apocrypha are] not held equal to the Scriptures but are useful and good to read.

—Martin Luther, *Prefaces to the Apocrypha*

When the Prophets Ceased to Speak

The Time between the Testaments (c 430–2 BC)

Who are the Pharisees, and where did they come from? How did the Romans end up in Judea? Who wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls? The Old Testament books do not answer these questions or the many others that naturally come up when you read the New Testament.

This is because there is a gap or "silent period" from the last writing prophet, Malachi (c 430 BC), until the New Testament era. These four centuries abounded with historic, religious, and social developments—the most important being that the prophets ceased to speak (1Macc 4:46; 9:27; 14:41). By learning about this Intertestamental Era, you will gain a much better understanding of the New Testament world and the culture in which Jesus conducted His earthly ministry. (A helpful overview is provided by Raymond F. Surburg, *Introduction to the Intertestamental Period* [St Louis: Concordia, 1975].)

Historical Events

The setting for the Time between the Testaments was created by the Persian emperor Cyrus the Great (d c 530 BC), who conquered Babylon and allowed the Judeans to return to Jerusalem. Cyrus and other Persian rulers demonstrated a tolerant attitude toward the Judeans and other religious and ethnic groups (see notes, Ezr 1:1–2). Cyrus supported the rebuilding of Jerusalem and its temple, which took several decades. The last Old Testament prophets (Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi) supported this work. The Judeans made a new commitment to God's Word (see p 751), and life for them was fairly peaceful.

About a century later (332 BC), the Macedonian general Alexander the Great took Judea away from the Persians. Alexander planned to unite his new empire by spreading the Greek language and Greek culture (a policy called "Hellenization," meaning "from the Greek"). But Alexander did not forcefully oppose the Judeans or their religious practices. After Alexander died in 323 BC, his vast empire was divided between four of his generals (see note, Dn 8:22).

Ptolemy, one of Alexander's generals, ruled Israel and Egypt. Ptolemy's descendants allowed the Judeans to practice their religion and culture, while they also continued the policy of Hellenization. In 198 BC, the descendants of Seleucus, another of Alexander's generals, conquered the region of Judea. (See p 1421.) The Seleucid rulers forcefully opposed the religion of the Judeans and outlawed its practice. For example, they made it illegal to possess a copy of the Hebrew Scriptures (1Macc 1:56–57). To circumcise someone was punishable by death (1Macc 1:60–61).

The worst Seleucid ruler, Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175–164 BC), caused a Judean revolt because he erected a statue of Zeus in the Jerusalem temple court, sacrificed a pig on its altar, and insisted that the Lord's priests participate in pagan sacrifices (1Macc 1:44–50; 2:15–18; 2Macc 6:1–2). A Judean named Mattathias rebelled against representatives of the Seleucid Empire (1Macc 2); faithful Judeans supported this rebellion (167 BC). Led by Mattathias's sons, the Judeans won independence. They regained Jerusalem and purified the temple (commemorated by the Jewish festival of Hanukkah).

Mattathias's descendants, the Hasmoneans, ruled the land until the Roman military helped settle a civil war between two Hasmonean brothers, each of whom claimed Israel's throne. The Roman Empire established control of the region in 63 BC. Rome and its Byzantine successors ruled Judea until AD 637. For more on religious and social developments, see pp 1556–58.

Literature

Perhaps the most important work produced during this "silent period" was the Septuagint (LXX). Jewish scholars translated the Hebrew Scriptures into Koine, or "common," Greek, the language used in the Mediterranean world. As a result of Alexander's conquests and the process of Hellenization, this simplified Greek served as the business language for dozens of different people groups.

The LXX receives its name from the tradition that 72 Jewish scholars were responsible for the translation (attested by *The Letter of Aristeas*). New Testament writers frequently used the LXX when citing Scripture, and even Jesus may have used it (cf Gn 2:24; Mt 19:5).

The Dead Sea Scrolls were also produced during the Time between the Testaments. These were discovered in 1947 near Qumran, near the northwest shore of the Dead Sea, and have added greatly to our knowledge of the time. About one-third of the scrolls are copies of books from the Hebrew Scriptures and generally demonstrate the preciseness with which the Scriptures were passed down. Other scrolls include commentaries on books of Hebrew Scriptures and sectarian documents about the beliefs of the Qumran community.

A wide variety of other works were produced during the centuries leading up to Christ's birth. Most prominent are the Apocrypha, the books of which appear in the LXX. The Apocrypha helps readers understand the world in which the New Testament was born. For a thorough overview of the Apocrypha, see "Luther's Prefaces to the Apocrypha," pp 1562–64. For more on other ancient literature that was not included in the Bible, read "The Holy Scriptures and Other Ancient Writings" (pp 1559–61).

Persons and Groups of Early Judaism and Christianity

The list below will help you identify people groups of the Time between the Testaments and the New Testament so that you may appreciate the variety of religious and political ideas people held.

chief priests. The high priest and other temple officials. Sadducees seem to have dominated these positions during NT times. See *Zadokites* and *Sadducees*. See also p 228.

Christians. See note, Ac 11:26.

Council, The. Also known as the Sanhedrin, seventy lay elders, the presiding chief priest, and the scribes who functioned as legal experts in Judaism. They oversaw religious and some civil matters in Judea. See *elders*.

Dispersion. Gk *diaspora*, the scattering or "dispersion" of Jews throughout the Near East and Mediterranean regions (i.e., outside the region of Israel) after Jerusalem's fall in the sixth century BC.

Ebionites. Hbr for "poor ones," a sect of Jewish Christians that flourished east of the Jordan River. They did not regard Jesus as the Son of God and of Mary but as a man God anointed as the Messiah (i.e., they denied the virgin birth; *NPNF* 2 1:158–60). They rejected the Epistles of Paul and had their own version of a gospel (*ANF* 1:439–40).

elders. In Israel and Judaism, community or national leaders. See p 228. In Christianity, congregational leaders. See note, 1Tm 5:17.

Essenes. Jewish ascetic group known from the time of the Hasmoneans (c 150 BC). They had settlements in Jerusalem, Judea, and around the Dead Sea. They sent gifts to the temple but did not attend its services. They may have been influenced by Gk philosophy. Some scholars believe the Qumran community was an Essene settlement. See *Qumran community*.

God-fearers. Gentiles who believed that the God of Israel was the true God, but who had not received circumcision. See *Proselytes*.

Hasideans. Or, Chasidim. Hbr "pious ones," mentioned in 1Macc 2:42 as a broad group of Jews who supported Judas Maccabeus in revolt against

Antiochus IV Epiphanes. However, once the Hasideans gained their religious rights, they lost interest in advancing the Hasmonean dynasty.

Hasmoneans. From Gk *Hasmonaios*, which likely refers to a place-name associated with the priest Mattathias, who led his family in revolt (AD 167) against Antiochus IV Epiphanes. Mattathias's son, Judas Maccabeus ("the hammer") became the leader of the movement and established the Hasmonean dynasty (167 BC–AD 63) over Judea. See map, p 1555. Hasmonean rulers also served as high priests. See *Zadokites*.

Hellenists. Jews who accepted the Gk language and culture following the rule of Alexander the Great (356–323 BC). When the Ptolemies ruled Judea (323–198 BC), they encouraged Gk ways but did not force their religion on the people. After the Seleucids took over Judea (198 BC), they forced Gk ways on the people under threat of torture and death. This sharply divided the Jewish community. Acts reports that Hellenists readily converted to Christianity (Ac 6:1; 9:29), though the cultural conflict that divided Judaism likewise affected the Early Church. The Hellenist Christians actively spread the Gospel to Gentiles (cf Ac 11:19–20).

Herodians. The dynasty of Herod the Great and its political supporters. Descendants of Herod ruled the region of Israel on behalf of the Romans (63 BC–AD 100).

Hillel, House of. Disciples of Rabbi Hillel the Elder (active c 30 BC–c AD 10). More tolerant toward Gentiles than the House of Shammai. Rabbi Gamaliel, with whom the apostle Paul studied (Ac 5:34; 22:3), may have been Hillel's grandson.

Jews/Judeans. See note, Ezr 4:12. For the use of "Jews" in the NT, see pp 1775, 1905–6.

Maccabees. See Hasmoneans.

Pharisees. Preeminent Jewish sect, representing the Jewish authorities and strict observers and teachers of the Torah. The Pharisees did not control the government or the temple, but they were a large group and popular with the common people, so they were powerful. The Pharisees believed that in order to live under God's favor, as Israel had in the days of Moses and David, the Jews needed to separate themselves from the Gentiles and their ways and return to strict observance of Mosaic Law.

(See Jos, *Ant*, 13:172, 288–98, 372–76; 18:12–15.) Rabbinic Judaism most likely stems from the Pharisees.

proselytes. Gentile converts to Judaism who were circumcised and likely also received a baptism for cleansing. See p 1369; see also *God-fearers*.

Ptolemies. See pp 1553–58.

Qumran community. Jewish sect responsible for copying the Dead Sea Scrolls, led by "the Teacher of Righteousness." Flourished near the Dead Sea from the second century BC to c AD 70. The scrolls describe a people alienated from those who ran the Jerusalem temple (see *Zadokites*). They lived by a different calendar (see p 1567) and by different laws. They awaited a Messiah. Some scholars believe they were Essenes, but others believe they were a distinct group.

rabbi. Hbr *rab*, "great one"; means "my great one" and thus "my master/teacher." The expression developed into a title describing teachers of the Law of Moses, Jewish traditions, and religious practices (see pp 719–20). Regarding an example of such teaching, see Luther's "Preface to the Book of Jesus Sirach" (p 1563). See also *Hillel* and *Shammai*. People addressed Jesus as "rabbi" (e.g., Mt 26:25, 49; Mk 9:5; 11:21; 14:45), but He warned His disciples about accepting such a title (Mt 23:8).

Sadducees. Name thought to derive from Hbr "righteous" or from the Zadokite family. These Jews held to the Law of Moses and the Oral Law but did not accept the traditions of the scribes and Pharisees. They did not believe in the resurrection (Lk 20:27–40; Ac 23:8), in angels, or in spirits. They also did not long for a Messiah the way other Jewish groups did. They were the second largest religious group in Judea.

Samaritans. A people whose Jewish heritage had been adulterated through intermarriage and whose observance of Judaism was regarded as corrupted. Samaritans descended from Israelites left behind after Samaria's destruction (722 BC) and included foreigners imported by Assyrian kings (2Ki 17:24–28, 33–34). They inhabited the area between Judea and Galilee. See color map 4. They accepted only the Five Books of Moses as authoritative, worshiped on Mount Gerizim, and rejected Jerusalem as the proper place of worship. Most Jews regarded Samaritans as outside the bounds of the covenant people and avoided them (Lk 9:52–53). Long-standing and deep-seated hostility existed between Jews and Samaritans.

Sanhedrin. See *Council, The*.

scribes. See pp 719–20.

Seleucids. See pp 1553–58.

Shammai, House of. Disciples of Rabbi Shammai (c 50 BC–AD 30), founder of a school of Jewish thought. Strongly nationalistic and opposed to Gentile rule.

Sicarii. Jewish revolutionaries who expected a messianic king and supported their leader, Menahem, during the revolt against the Romans in AD 66. See *Zealots*.

synagogue. Community building where Jews gathered to read the Scriptures, study, and pray. Such gathering places were found throughout the Mediterranean world, since they were typically established wherever 10 Jewish heads of household were present. The NT is one of the most important early witnesses to synagogue activity. The earliest Christian congregations were synagogues of Jews who believed Jesus was the promised Messiah. See "church," pp 1901–2. See also note, Ac 6:9.

Therapeutae. Jewish sect in Egypt known for its interest in healing. Praised by Philo of Alexandria in *On the Contemplative Life*.

Zadokites. Descendants of the high priest Zadok. In King David's time, there was more than one high priest (see p 228). Zadok supported Solomon's succession as king and was made sole high priest (1Ki 1; 2:35). All high priests were Zadokites from c 970 BC until between 152 and 140 BC, when the Hasmoneans expelled the Zadokites from the temple and made themselves priests. The priests described in the Dead Sea Scrolls are called "sons of Zadok," since some Zadokites apparently retreated to Qumran after they were expelled.

Zealots. Jewish revolutionaries who followed Judas the Galilean in resistance against Herodian rule in AD 6 and revolted against the Romans in AD 66. The Zealots opposed paying taxes to Rome. Jesus' disciple Simon the Zealot (Lk 6:15; Ac 1:13) may have been a part of such a group before following Jesus. See *Sicarii*.

The Holy Scripture and Other Ancient Writings

Curiosity about books that were not included in the Holy Bible has greatly increased in recent times. The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls (Jewish, first and second centuries BC), the Nag Hammadi Codices (Gnostic, AD second and third centuries), and other documents (see below) has also increased media attention on this issue. Just as some scholars and religious groups today question the authority or genuineness of some biblical books, ancient critics and later scholars of Renaissance humanism raised similar questions about books of Scripture.

The Lutheran reformers and theologians were fully familiar with such questions and the methods that the critics used. Although archaeologists have discovered new documents in recent decades, the methods for evaluating the historical and spiritual worth of such documents have changed little since the Renaissance and the Reformation. Like the early Christians and like Luther during the Reformation, we face questions about distinguishing which writings are (1) Sacred Scripture; (2) useful writings, though not the same as Sacred Scripture; or (3) false and spiritually harmful writings.

The following essay summarizes how Lutherans have reflected on these issues. It is followed by Luther's prefaces to the Apocrypha, which illustrate these reflections in use (see pp 1562–64).

What Is Holy Scripture?

> We believe, teach, and confess that the only rule and norm according to which all teachings, together with 'all' teachers, should be evaluated and judged [2 Timothy 3:15–17] are the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures of the Old and New Testament alone. For it is written in Psalm 119:105, "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." St. Paul has written, "even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed" (Galatians 1:8). However, other writings by ancient or modern teachers—no matter whose name they bear—must not be regarded as equal to the Holy Scriptures. All of them are subject to the Scriptures. (FC Ep Sum 1–2)

The importance of the Holy Scripture for Christian faith and life leads us to consider how it became "holy." What is it about Scripture that makes it sacred? Historically, Lutherans have recognized the following characteristics of the books of Sacred Scripture, summarized by Robert Preus:

> (a) the depth of the mysteries revealed in Scripture, (b) the majesty of God speaking to us in Scripture, (c) the truthfulness of Scripture, (d) the sufficiency of the teachings and precepts of Scripture, (e) the profound and yet simple manner in which Scripture speaks to us, (f) the power of Scripture to bend the hearts of sinful men and give them hope, (g) the fact that Scripture has maintained its authority in the face of time and opposition, (h) the remarkable harmony between the Old and the New Testament. (Preus l:301)

Along with these features of the Scripture, we should note that the Scripture was written by prophets, evangelists, and apostles whom God chose and inspired to lead His people. The congregations of the Old and New Testaments recognized this inspiration and authority so that the books of Scripture continued in use throughout Christian churches from the beginning.[1]

Luther, with his characteristic flair, draws all such thoughts together in his preface to the Old Testament and notes:

> Dismiss your own opinions and feelings, and think of the Scriptures as the loftiest and noblest of holy things, as the richest of mines which can never be sufficiently explored, in order that you may find that divine wisdom which God here lays before you in such simple guise as to quench all pride. Here you will find the swaddling cloths and the manger in which Christ lies, and to which the angel points the shepherds [Luke 2:12]. Simple and lowly are these swaddling cloths [of the Scriptures], but dear is the treasure, Christ, who lies in them. (AE 35:236)

Inspiration

> All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness. (2Tm 3:16)

The biblical teaching about inspiration of Scripture deserves special attention. When Paul wrote to Timothy about the inspiration of Scripture, he had in mind particularly the Hebrew Scripture, what we today call the Old Testament.[2] "Inspired" is simply a shorter way of saying "breathed out by God" and indicates the source of Sacred Scripture—God Himself.

God breathed His Spirit into His prophets (OT) and apostles (NT), so that the words they wrote down would be God's words. Inspiration means that, not just the thought or general idea came from God, but also the wording, the sentence structure, and the literary composition flowed from God as well as from the authors onto the written page. God worked with the personalities, skills, and abilities of these writers. As a result, the Scripture reflects the writers' diversity of styles and perception. We get to know the authors as well as the message when we read God's Holy Word. Yet the Holy Scripture also displays a remarkable unity because God inspired it. (See pp xxvi–xxx.)

Authority

Because the words of Holy Scripture come from God, they carry divine authority. The Law and Gospel of Scripture teach us about salvation and life. God's Word always accomplishes His purposes—it is reliable (Is 55:10–11; see p 1646). In the original languages of Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek, as well as in accurate translations—whether the Word is written, spoken, or signed—the Scripture effectively works faith and salvation in people.

God's Word presents itself with clarity and simplicity (Rm 10:9–11). Ironically, a person can spend a lifetime studying the Scripture and never master it, yet a child can read or hear it and come to faith in Jesus right away (cf Mt 11:25–26). See pp xxvi–xxx.

The early Christians used the term *canon* (Gk *kanon*, "measuring rod" or "rule") to describe the collection of Holy Scripture that the Church uses for public reading, for teaching, and for judging doctrine and practice.

The Canon of the Hebrew Scripture

For many years, a list of the books that were considered Holy Scripture was not necessary. God had directed Moses to put a copy of the Ten Commandments into the ark of the covenant (Ex 25:16, 21). He had also told Moses to record the Law and told the priests to teach the Law (Ex 17:14; 34:27; Lv 10:11). The Old Testament often refers to these texts but also mentions some books that were eventually lost (see pp 3–5). Over time, the writings of the prophets and also the Psalms were reserved for use by God's people. Scrolls were likely kept in the temple archives (cf 2Ki 22:8; 1Macc 14:49; 2Macc 2:13; see note, 1Ch 26:20–28).

By the first century BC, the books of Holy Scripture were well established as the books we have in our Old Testament. According to Jewish tradition, in c AD 100 (after the destruction of the Jerusalem temple), Jewish religious leaders in Jamnia composed an authoritative list of the Old Testament books. (See rabbinic opinions in Mishnah Yadayim 3:2–5; Baba Bathra 14b; Shabbath 14a, 30b.)

Old Testament Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha

During the Time between the Testaments, a variety of books related to themes and figures in the Hebrew Scripture were produced. Some of these documents claimed to be written by people in the Bible from long ago (*pseudepigrapha*, credited to people such as Enoch, Adam and Eve, and Moses). Other books contained history (1 and 2 Maccabees), supplements to recognized biblical books (Baruch, additions to Daniel and Esther), or contemporary religious thought (wisdom books). A number of the books were translated for the LXX.

Jerome included some of these books in his Latin translation of the Bible (Vulgate) in the fourth century AD. Roman Catholics, Eastern Orthodox, and some Protestants regard these books as a "second canon" (*deuterocanonical* books) or supplemental list to the Old Testament. Luther thought these books were good to read but did not regard them as Holy Scripture. (See "Luther's Prefaces to the Apocrypha," pp 1562–64.)

Lutherans have labeled these books as *Apocrypha* (Gk, "hidden away") and separated them from books universally recognized as Holy Scripture. Apocryphal books are not typically read in worship services, nor do they typically serve as sermon texts.

New Testament Pseudepigrapha

Just as many nonbiblical books appeared during the Time between the Testaments, so there were a variety of works that non-Christian sects produced during the Early Church period. Many of these books (e.g., the Nag Hammadi library) came from Gnostic groups that rejected all or part of biblical teaching.

Gnostics varied widely in their teachings and beliefs, but most emphasized the importance of a secret "knowledge" passed on to followers by a founding religious figure. Some Gnostic groups had little or nothing to do with Christianity (e.g., Sethian Gnostics were more Jewish in character), but many borrowed heavily from the New Testament and Christian traditions.

"Christian" Gnostics and other false teachers invented a "Jesus" who is very different from the real Jesus Christ. They preached a "gospel" that eliminated the cross as the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the world. They also produced numerous documents to support their philosophy. But the Gnostics eventually died out and were almost entirely forgotten. Because some of their literature was discovered in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, people have shown a renewed interest in these odd religious sects. If you hear news reports about a recent or newly discovered "gospel," it is likely one of these Gnostic texts.

In the second century, the heretic Marcion of Sinope rejected the entire Old Testament Scripture and taught that the God who created the physical world was a lower-level spiritual being whose creation ineptly caused the creation of evil. Marcion taught that people should worship the supreme, loving God instead. Marcion created his own version of the Gospel according to Luke and rejected all the New Testament books except for some of Paul's Letters. Marcion denied the Christ of Scripture and taught that Jesus was a middle-level spirit being who came to teach His disciples a body of secret knowledge. Marcion's teachings caused the Church to define and defend the books of the Bible. (See pp 2099–2101.)

Conclusion

The books of the Bible have authenticated themselves over many centuries. People have recognized the divine nature of Holy Scripture and spent time and money to make copies of God's Word, even when this was tedious and expensive. Recognizing Scripture's authority, churches and synagogues have read it in public worship services, preached its message, and taught its contents for generations. People have willingly died rather than surrender these books of Scripture to those who would destroy them.

The Christian Church does not stand over the Scripture and decide what is or is not God's Word. The Christian Church merely recognizes the voice of its Good Shepherd in the biblical books and follows Him through His teaching (cf Jn 10:27–28; 14:23–24).

[1] Though the Church recognized the Scripture as God's Word, it did not "create" the Scripture as God's Word on human authority. The Scripture is self-authenticating. For example, if a child sees an apple and declares, "There's an apple," no one would suggest that the child's declaration created the apple. He simply sees it for what it is.

[2] Paul also considered NT Scripture inspired, as he sets Dt 25:4 and Lk 10:7 on equal footing in 1Tm 5:18.

Luther's Prefaces to the Apocrypha

Books Not Held Equal to the Scriptures but Useful and Good to Read

The German Luther Bible included virtually all the Old Testament apocryphal books but placed them in a separate section, between the Old and New Testaments. This was an important change from the Greek Septuagint and the Latin Vulgate (the Bibles used during the ancient and medieval periods). Luther wrote prefaces for the Apocrypha for different editions of the Bible from 1529 to 1534, when the first complete "Luther Bible" translation was published. In these prefaces, Luther summarized what each apocryphal book was about, its value, and the reasons he saw for distinguishing it from the Old Testament.

Helpful portions of Luther's prefaces for the Apocrypha are included below. The texts are drawn from AE 35:337–54. These prefaces were edited during Luther's lifetime up to 1545, when Luther reviewed the last edition of his German Bible. (See AE 35 for specific dates and textual notes.)

Preface to the Book of Judith

If one could prove from established and reliable histories that the events in Judith really happened, it would be a noble and fine book, and should properly be in the Bible. Yet it hardly squares with the historical accounts of the Holy Scriptures, especially Jeremiah and Ezra…. Thus as to both time and name, error and doubt are still present, so that I cannot reconcile [the accounts] at all.

Some people think this is not an account of historical events [*Geschichte*] but rather a beautiful religious fiction [*Gedicht*] by a holy and ingenious man who wanted to sketch and depict therein the fortunes of the whole Jewish people and the victory God always miraculously granted them over all their enemies…. Such an interpretation strikes my fancy, and I think that the poet deliberately and painstakingly inserted the errors of time and name in order to remind the reader that the book should be taken and understood as that kind of a sacred, religious, composition.

Now the names fit into this sort of an interpretation extraordinarily well. [E.g.,] Judith means Judea, (that is) the Jewish people…. It may even be that in those days they dramatized literature like this, just as among us the Passion and other sacred stories are performed…. Therefore this is a fine, good, holy, useful book, well worth reading by us Christians. For the words spoken by the persons in it should be understood as though they were uttered in the Holy Spirit by a spiritual, holy poet or prophet who, in presenting such persons in his play, preaches to us through them.

Preface to the Wisdom of Solomon

For a long time this book has stood in the cross fire of controversy as to whether or not it should be included among the sacred Scriptures of the Old Testament, especially in view of the fact that the author suggests in chapter 9[:7] that throughout the book it is King Solomon speaking—he whose wisdom is also extolled in the Book of Kings [I Kings 4, 10].

The ancient church fathers, however, excluded it outright from the sacred Scriptures…. They contend, however, that Philo is the author of this book. Undoubtedly he was one of the most learned and wisest men the Jewish people have had since the prophets, as he demonstrated in other books and deeds of his…. When the emperor was so embittered against the Jews that he turned them away and would not even hear them, then Philo—a man of courage and confidence—spoke up and said to his fellow Jews, "Well, then, dear brethren, do not be afraid but take heart; just because human help fails us, God's help will surely be with us!"

In my estimation, this book must have come out of such a situation or cause…. It came to be regarded by many as a genuine book of sacred Scripture…. There are many good things in this book, and it is well worth reading…. This book is timely for our day, because tyrants are now cocksurely abusing their authority against him from whom they have it…. It pleases me beyond measure that the author here [6:22] extols the Word of God so highly, and ascribes to the Word all the wonders God has performed, both on enemies and in his saints….

Finally, this book is a proper exposition and illustration of the first commandment. For here you see that the author throughout is teaching you to fear and trust God; he terrifies with examples of divine wrath those who are not afraid and who despise God, and he comforts with examples of divine grace those who believe and trust him.

Preface to the Book of Tobit

What was said about the book of Judith may also be said about this book of Tobit. If the events really happened, then it is a fine and holy history. But if they are all made up, then it is indeed a very beautiful, wholesome, and useful fiction or drama by a gifted poet…. For Judith presents a good, serious, heroic tragedy, and Tobit presents a fine, delightful, devout comedy…. Tobit shows how things may go badly with a pious peasant or townsman, and there may be much suffering in married life, yet God always graciously helps and finally crowns the outcome with joy, in order that married folk should learn to have patience and, in a genuine fear of God and firm faith, put up gladly with all sorts of hardships because they have hope…. Therefore this book is useful and good for us Christians to read.

Preface to the Book of Jesus Sirach

This book has heretofore carried the Latin title, *Ecclesiasticus*, which has been understood in German to mean "spiritual discipline." … Its real name is otherwise Jesus Sirach, after its author as its own prologue and the Greek [50:27] indicate. This is how the books of Moses, Joshua, Isaiah, and all the prophets are named, after their authors. Yet the ancient fathers did not include this one among the books of sacred Scripture, but simply regarded it as the fine work of a wise man. And we shall let it go at that….

That the book must be a compilation is suggested also by the fact that in it one part is not fitted neatly to the next, as in the work of a single author. Instead it draws on many books and authors and mixes them together, much as a bee sucks juices out of all sorts of flowers and mixes them…. This is a useful book for the ordinary man. The author concentrates all his effort on helping a citizen or housefather to be Godfearing, devout, and wise; and on showing what the relationship of such a man should be to God, the Word of God, priests, parents, wife, children, his own body, his servants, possessions, neighbors, friends, enemies, government, and anyone else. So one might well call this a book on home discipline or on the virtues of a pious householder. This indeed is the proper "spiritual discipline," and should be recognized as such.

Preface to the Book of Baruch

Whoever the good Baruch may be, this book is very skimpy. It is hardly credible that the servant of St. Jeremiah, whose name is also Baruch (and to whom this letter is attributed), should not be richer and loftier in spirit than this Baruch. Furthermore, the book's chronology does not agree with the [accepted] histories. Thus I very nearly let it go with the third and fourth books of Esdras…. Baruch, however, we shall let run with the pack because he writes so vigorously against idolatry and sets forth the law of Moses.

Preface to the First Book of Maccabees

This is another book not to be found in the Hebrew Bible. Yet its words and speech adhere to the same style as the other books of sacred Scripture. This book would not have been unworthy of a place among them, because it is very necessary and helpful for an understanding of chapter 11 of the prophet Daniel. For the fulfilment of Daniel's prophecy in that chapter, about the abomination and misfortune which was going to befall the people of Israel, is here described—namely, Antiochus Epiphanes—and in much the same way that Daniel [11:29–35] speaks of it: a little help and great persecution by the Gentiles and by false Jews, which is what took place at the time of the Maccabees. This is why the book is good for us Christians to read and to know….

We should take heart that God helped those people not only against Antiochus and the Gentiles but also against the traitorous and disloyal Jews who had gone over to the Gentiles and were helping to persecute, kill, and torment their own people and brethren…. However those same enemies and traitors are amply punished by God at the end; their tyranny and treachery does not go undetected.

Preface to the Second Book of Maccabees

This book is called, and is supposed to be, the second book of Maccabees, as the title indicates. Yet this cannot be true, because it reports several incidents that happened before those reported in the first book, and it does not proceed any further than Judas Maccabaeus, that is, chapter 7 of the first book…. But we include it anyway, for the sake of the good story of the seven Maccabean martyrs and their mother, and other things as well.

It appears, however, that the book has no single author, but was pieced together out of many books. It also presents a knotty problem in chapter 14[:41–46] where Razis commits suicide, something which also troubles St. Augustine and the ancient fathers. Such an example is good for nothing and should not be praised, even though it may be tolerated and perhaps explained. So also in chapter 1 this book describes the death of Antiochus quite differently than does First Maccabees [6:1–16]…. However the whole thing is left and referred to the pious reader to judge and to decide.

Preface to Parts of Esther and Daniel

Here follow several pieces which we did not wish to translate [and include] in the prophet Daniel and in the book of Esther. We have uprooted such cornflowers (because they do not appear in the Hebrew versions of Daniel and Esther). And yet, to keep them from perishing, we have put them here in a kind of special little spice garden or flower bed since much that is good, especially the hymn of praise, *Benedicite*, is to be found in them.

But the texts of Susanna, and of Bel, Habakkuk, and the Dragon, seem like beautiful religious fictions, such as Judith and Tobit…. Be the story as it may, it can all be easily interpreted in terms of the state, the home, or the devout company of the faithful.

Longing for a Kingdom

The dynasty of the House of David lasted 412 years (1009–597 BC). After the Babylonians conquered Jerusalem in 587 BC, the Judeans were ruled by the Persians, Alexander the Great, the Ptolemies, the Seleucids, and later the Romans. The heroic actions of Mattathias and his family gave the Judeans hope for a new dynasty. But the Hasmonean leaders (167–63 BC) became corrupt and ineffective. These experiences left the remnant of Israel and Judah longing for a powerful, victorious king or messiah ("anointed one").

The New Testament opens with John the Baptist proclaiming the "kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Mt 3:2). This article will explore what Scripture says about "the kingdom of God/heaven" and ways God's kingdom has been misunderstood.

What Is the Kingdom of God?

Christians may speak about the kingdom of God in a variety of ways. First, God rules the universe and everything in it, including the affairs of humanity (Ps 66:7; Dn 5:21). Second, we also use the phrase "kingdom of God" to refer to the time after the resurrection of the dead when God rules without opposition ("kingdom come," as some say; Rv 12:10).

We give thanks to God for His powerful rule over all the world, and we pray for the advent of His glorious victory on the Last Day. But when the Bible refers to the "kingdom of God," it usually has a different definition in mind. As Jeffrey Gibbs explains for the Gospel according to Matthew, the kingdom of God is God's righteous reign.

> To speak of a "reign" … is to imply that a king is present to act as such, "to reign." … If "the reign of heaven/God" stands near, then the God of heaven has come down to reign, to perform his kingly deeds. Thus, the reign of God is not primarily a place. Rather, it is a *divine action* that occurs where Jesus is, through his words and deeds. Nor is the reign of heaven a group of people. Rather, because the God of heaven has begun to manifest his kingly deeds, a group of people are constituted as those who believe in God's reign in Jesus. (CC Mt, 48–49)

Kingdom of God in the Old Testament

Although the phrase "kingdom of God" does not appear in the Old Testament, the Lord is called a king and a ruler (e.g., Ps 47:2; 95:3; Mal 1:14). When God called Abraham, He promised to bless him and to bless all the peoples of earth through him (Gn 12:1–3). Abraham believed Him, and God credited it to him as righteousness (Gn 15:6), granting Abraham a "right status" with God through faith alone (a point Paul makes in Rm 4). Through faith, Abraham and his family entered the "kingdom of God," even though they had no land or earthly kingdom (cf Wisd of Sol 10:5, 9–10). Geography does not define the kingdom/reign of God in either testament.

This Kingdom/reign does take shape in the real world because it exists in the hearts and minds of believers, who inhabit earthly countries and kingdoms. Wherever Abraham traveled, there was the kingdom of God. His faith held on to the promise of a Savior, a "Seed," or Offspring, through whom all the world would be blessed (cf Gal 3:19). The kingdom of God in the Old Testament is received by people who believe this promise, just as in the New Testament. In the Old Testament, God gathered His people together in the land of Israel. Nevertheless, the focus is always on God's work to create a "kingdom of priests" and a nation "holy" to the Lord (Ex 19:6)—not on the land.

One geographical place does play a special role in the Old Testament reign of God—Mount Zion. "Zion" refers to the hill between the Tyropean and Kidron valleys in Jerusalem (see map, p 493; see also p 844). It does not physically dominate the area, but it plays an important role in the history of God and His people because this is where Solomon built the temple. The temple at Zion represents God's gracious presence and the forgiveness of sins made possible by sacrifice and faith (Is 59:19–20; cf Rv 14:1).

God reveals a new dimension when He promises David that one of his descendants will reign forever. David had wanted to build God a "house" (temple), but God refused. Instead, God promised to build David a "house" (a dynasty or kingdom) that would last forever, ruled by a descendant much greater than David himself (2Sm 7:13; see David's response in Ps 110). God's reign becomes focused on this coming King, the Anointed One (Messiah, Christ).

Daniel sees this promised King in a vision several centuries later. The Spirit reveals to Daniel critical information about the kingdom of God and its ruler, a human being ("one like a son of man") who judges with divine authority (Dn 7:13–14). This King will rule over a Kingdom comprised of Gentiles as well as Israelites, individuals from all over the world brought together in faith. (Jesus draws His favorite self-designation, "Son of Man," from this passage, quoting it on trial before Caiaphas in Mk 14:62.)

Kingdom of God in the New Testament

The phrase "kingdom of God" (or "kingdom of heaven") appears nearly one hundred times in the New Testament. All but a few of the occurrences are in Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Between the time of Adam's fall (Gn 3:1–6) and the end of the world, Satan dominates the world. All people are born into Satan's kingdom and are by nature enemies of God and opposed to His kingdom (Eph 2:1–3). When God extends His kingdom, conflict and opposition ensue (cf Mt 11:12). The results are often dramatic, involving powerful displays of God's saving power (sometimes called "signs" because they point to Jesus as the promised Messiah). When God's reign overpowers Satan's, sick people are cured, handicapped people are made whole, demon-possessed individuals are freed, and even the dead are raised. These external signs point to the greater gift of God as He extends His rule —eternal salvation through saving faith in Jesus Christ.

God opens His kingdom to all people, not just a few. Jew and Gentile, wealthy and poor, men and women are all welcomed into God's grace (Gal 3:26–28). Not all people enter the kingdom of God, however. Human pride and a self-righteous attitude block the work of the Spirit. Only after the Law has stripped away all pretense of personal merit can a sinner come to know the grace of God in Christ Jesus (the "poor in spirit" of the first beatitude, Mt 5:3). We enter the Kingdom as helpless children (Mk 10:13–16), born anew by water and the Spirit (Jn 3:1–6).

On the one hand, the kingdom of God is invisible. Saving faith in Jesus Christ cannot be seen by the natural eye, nor can any human being look into the heart of another. Observers may be able to predict a change of weather by watching for certain signs, but the dynamic rule of God by grace through faith takes place within a person (cf Lk 17:20–21). On the other hand, believers live in the world and occupy space and time just like unbelievers. In this sense, God's kingdom is plainly visible because its citizens live in the world as living signposts, pointing to Christ Jesus by what they say and do.

Luke closely connects the Kingdom with the name of Jesus and His work (Ac 8:12; 28:31). The Old Testament prophecies of a messianic King find fulfillment in Jesus, the eternal King promised to David (2Sm 7:13–14; see p 1245). The pious longing of faithful Jews during the Time between the

Testaments likewise looked forward to the coming of Jesus. During His ministry, Jesus confronts the rule of Satan and overcomes it, binding Satan and ransacking his "house" (Mt 12:29), drawing people to faith in Himself.

Only Jesus, crucified for the sins of the world and raised again for the justification of sinners, can create the Kingdom that leads to eternal life. Anchored in the cross of Christ (a past event) and actualized in the present through the proclamation of God's Word and the administration of His Sacraments, the kingdom of God also awaits its fulfillment in the visible return of Jesus Christ in glory.

As the messianic King, vested with complete divine authority, Christ Jesus commissions His followers to make disciples by baptizing and by teaching (Mt 28:18–20). He promises to be with His people always, even to the end of the present age, to accomplish this purpose.

Zion served in the Old Testament as a concrete picture for the reign of God; the Church stands in the New Testament as the people through whom outreach and activity take place. Jesus gives the Keys of the Kingdom (the power of forgiveness through the proclamation and application of the Gospel) to His Church (Mt 16:19; 18:18–20), empowering them for the assigned task of making disciples.

The reign of God continues to advance in the world through the work of the local congregation and the witness of every Christian. Wherever the Gospel is preached and the story of Jesus shared, the Holy Spirit works to expand the rule of grace through faith in God's Son.

- The Lutheran Study Bible

Time Reckoning in the Bible

For the Israelites, reckoning time was more than a matter of business or convenience. Because a calendar would guide the celebration of religious festivals, reckoning time was a matter of devotion, which became hotly disputed during the Intertestamental Era (see “Qumran community,” p 1557). Below are different calendar systems that affected life for the people of Judea during the Intertestamental and New Testament eras.

Annual Reckoning

Natural Basis
TEMPLE JUDAISM CALENDAR: Lunar
MACEDONIAN CALENDAR: Lunar
QUMRAN JUDAISM CALENDAR: Solar
ROMAN (JULIAN) CALENDAR: Solar
Form
TEMPLE JUDAISM CALENDAR: 12 months of 29/30 days each, totaling 354 days
MACEDONIAN CALENDAR: 12 months totaling c 354 days
QUMRAN JUDAISM CALENDAR: 12 months of 30 days, adjusted to make 52 weeks (364 days)
ROMAN (JULIAN) CALENDAR: 12 months totaling 52 weeks (365 days)
Adjustments (due to different annual cycles of the sun and moon)
TEMPLE JUDAISM CALENDAR: Extra month (Second Adar) added every 36 months
MACEDONIAN CALENDAR: Extra month added every other year
QUMRAN JUDAISM CALENDAR: A "remembrance day" added once per quarter
ROMAN (JULIAN) CALENDAR: One day added to Feb every fourth year
Notes
TEMPLE JUDAISM CALENDAR: The calendar found in the OT; see p 262
MACEDONIAN CALENDAR: Spread by Alexander the Great; adapted by Seleucid and Ptolemaic rulers of Syria and Egypt (including Judea)
QUMRAN JUDAISM CALENDAR: Known from the Dead Sea Scrolls; a similar calendar appears in Jubilees and 1 Enoch
ROMAN (JULIAN) CALENDAR: The basis of the modern Western calendar

Day Reckoning

In general, time reckoning was not so exact as in our modern era. Services for the morning and evening sacrifices were offered at the temple after dawn and before sunset. (On hours of prayer, cf Ps 55:17; 119:164; Ac 3:1; 10:9; 16:25.) The Sabbath began at sunset on Friday and continued 24 hrs until sunset on Saturday (see p 1764). Jews often regarded part of a day as if it were a full day (e.g., the "three days" Jesus was in the tomb, from Friday evening to Sunday morning). The nights were divided into watches, when guards patrolled city streets. Hours could be discerned from one another using water clocks and sundials (see note, Is 38:8). Roman-civil reckoning began from midnight.

OT RECKONING: Dawn, c 6 a.m.
ROMAN-CIVIL RECKONING: 6 a.m.
COMMON RECKONING OF NT ERA: 1st hour (c 6 a.m.–c 7 a.m.)
OT RECKONING
ROMAN-CIVIL RECKONING: 7
ROMAN-CIVIL RECKONING: 2nd hour (c 7 a.m.–c 8 a.m.)
OT RECKONING
ROMAN-CIVIL RECKONING: 8
COMMON RECKONING OF NT ERA: 3rd hour (c 8 a.m.–c 9 a.m.)
OT RECKONING: Morning
ROMAN-CIVIL RECKONING: 9
COMMON RECKONING OF NT ERA: 4th hour (c 9 a.m.–c 10 a.m.)
OT RECKONING
ROMAN-CIVIL RECKONING: 10
COMMON RECKONING OF NT ERA: 5th hour (c 10 a.m.–c 11 a.m.)
OT RECKONING
ROMAN-CIVIL RECKONING: 11
COMMON RECKONING OF NT ERA: 6th hour (c 11 a.m.–c 12 p.m.)
OT RECKONING: Midday
ROMAN-CIVIL RECKONING: 12 p.m./Noon
COMMON RECKONING OF NT ERA: 7th hour (c 12 p.m.–c 1 p.m.)
OT RECKONING
ROMAN-CIVIL RECKONING: 1
COMMON RECKONING OF NT ERA: 8th hour (c 1 p.m.–c 2 p.m.)

OT RECKONING
ROMAN-CIVIL RECKONING: 2
COMMON RECKONING OF NT ERA: 9th hour (c 2 p.m.–c 3 p.m.)
OT RECKONING
ROMAN-CIVIL RECKONING: 3
COMMON RECKONING OF NT ERA: 10th hour (c 3 p.m.–c 4 p.m.)
OT RECKONING
ROMAN-CIVIL RECKONING: 4
COMMON RECKONING OF NT ERA: 11th hour (c 4 p.m.–c 5 p.m.)
OT RECKONING: Evening/Sunset, c 6 p.m.
ROMAN-CIVIL RECKONING: 5
COMMON RECKONING OF NT ERA: 12th hour (c 5 p.m.–c 6 p.m.)
OT RECKONING: 1st watch of the night c 6 p.m.–c 10 p.m.
ROMAN-CIVIL RECKONING: 6
COMMON RECKONING OF NT ERA: 1st watch of the night c 6 p.m.–c 9 p.m.
OT RECKONING
ROMAN-CIVIL RECKONING: 7
COMMON RECKONING OF NT ERA
ROMAN-CIVIL RECKONING: 8
COMMON RECKONING OF NT ERA
OT RECKONING
ROMAN-CIVIL RECKONING: 9
COMMON RECKONING OF NT ERA: 2nd watch c 9 p.m.–c Midnight
OT RECKONING: 2nd watch c 10 p.m.–c 2 a.m.
ROMAN-CIVIL RECKONING: 10
COMMON RECKONING OF NT ERA
OT RECKONING
ROMAN-CIVIL RECKONING: 11
COMMON RECKONING OF NT ERA
OT RECKONING
ROMAN-CIVIL RECKONING: 12 a.m./Midnight
COMMON RECKONING OF NT ERA: 3rd watch c Midnight–c 3 a.m.
OT RECKONING
ROMAN-CIVIL RECKONING: 1
COMMON RECKONING OF NT ERA
OT RECKONING: 3rd watch c 2 a.m.–c 6 a.m.

ROMAN-CIVIL RECKONING: 2
COMMON RECKONING OF NT ERA
OT RECKONING
ROMAN-CIVIL RECKONING: 3
COMMON RECKONING OF NT ERA: 4th watch c 3 a.m.–c 6 a.m.
OT RECKONING
ROMAN-CIVIL RECKONING: 4
COMMON RECKONING OF NT ERA
OT RECKONING
ROMAN-CIVIL RECKONING: 5
COMMON RECKONING OF NT ERA
OT RECKONING
ROMAN-CIVIL RECKONING: 6
COMMON RECKONING OF NT ERA

THE NEW TESTAMENT

Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, … For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

—The Prophet Jeremiah (cf Mt 26:26–28)

Many have undertaken to compile a narrative of the things that have been accomplished among us, just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word have delivered them to us.

—St Luke

Count the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you … in all his letters … which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures.

—St Peter

To me Jesus Christ is in the place of all that is ancient: His cross, and death, and resurrection, and the faith which is by Him, are undefiled monuments of antiquity; by which I desire, through your prayers, to be justified.

—Ignatius of Antioch, *Epistle to the Philadelphians*

[Jesus] called His disciples "scribes" [Mt 13:52] and "teachers of the kingdom of heaven"; … He means by those things … new and old, the two covenants; the old, that giving of the law which took place formerly; and He points out as the new, that manner of life required by the Gospel, of which David says, "Sing unto the LORD a new song."

—Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*

I shall adopt … the pattern of Luke the Evangelist … ; it seemed good to me also, having been urged thereto by true brethren, and having learned from the beginning, to set before you the books included in the Canon, and handed down, and accredited as Divine…. Thus far constitutes the Old Testament. Again it is not tedious to speak of the [books] of the New Testament…. These are fountains of salvation.

—Athanasius, *Festal Easter Letter* (AD 367)

MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE, AND JOHN

The Holy Gospel

In his prefaces to the new testament (1522, 1546, etc.), Luther wrote that there is only one Gospel, which is proclaimed throughout the Scriptures. He introduced the four Gospels as follows:

> The notion must be given up that there are four gospels and only four evangelists…. "Gospel" [*Euangelium*] is a Greek word and means in Greek a good message, good tidings, good news, a good report, which one sings and tells with gladness. For example, when David overcame the great Goliath, there came among the Jewish people the good report and encouraging news that their terrible enemy had been struck down and that they had been rescued and given joy and peace; and they sang and danced and were glad for it [1 Sam. 18:6].
>
> Thus this gospel of God or New Testament is a good story and report, sounded forth into all the world by the apostles, telling of a true David who strove with sin, death, and the devil, and overcame them, and thereby rescued all those who were captive in sin, afflicted with death, and overpowered by the devil. Without any merit of their own he made them righteous, gave them life, and saved them, so that they were given peace and brought back to God. For this they sing, and thank and praise God, and are glad forever, if only they believe firmly and remain steadfast in faith.
>
> This report and encouraging tidings, or evangelical and divine news, is also called a New Testament. For it is a testament when a dying man bequeaths his property, after his death, to his legally defined heirs. And Christ, before his death, commanded and ordained that his gospel be preached after his death in all the world [Luke 24:44–47]. Thereby he gave to all who believe, as their possession, everything that he had. This included: his life, in which he swallowed up death; his righteousness, by which he blotted out sin; and his salvation, with which he overcame everlasting damnation. A poor man, dead in sin and consigned to hell, can hear nothing more comforting than this precious and tender message about Christ; from the bottom of his heart he must laugh and be glad over it, if he believes it true.

Now to strengthen this faith, God has promised this gospel and testament in many ways, by the prophets in the Old Testament, as St. Paul says in Romans 1[:1], "I am set apart to preach the gospel of God which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, concerning his Son, who was descended from David," etc…. [Editor's note: Luther cites Gn 3:15; 22:18; Gal 3:8, 16; Jn 11:26; 2Sm 7:12–14; Mi 5:2; and Hos 13:14 to make this point.]

The gospel, then, is nothing but the preaching about Christ, Son of God and of David, true God and man, who by his death and resurrection has overcome for us the sin, death, and hell of all men who believe in him. Thus the gospel can be either a brief or a lengthy message; one person can write of it briefly, another at length. He writes of it at length, who writes about many words and works of Christ, as do the four evangelists. He writes of it briefly, however, who does not tell of Christ's works, but indicates briefly how by his death and resurrection he has overcome sin, death, and hell for those who believe in him, as do St. Peter and St. Paul.

See to it, therefore, that you do not make a Moses out of Christ, or a book of laws and doctrines out of the gospel, as has been done heretofore and as certain prefaces put it, even those of St. Jerome. For the gospel does not expressly demand works of our own by which we become righteous and are saved; indeed it condemns such works.

Rather the gospel demands faith in Christ: that he has overcome for us sin, death, and hell, and thus gives us righteousness, life, and salvation not through our works, but through his own works, death, and suffering, in order that we may avail ourselves of his death and victory as though we had done it ourselves.

To be sure, Christ in the gospel, and St. Peter and St. Paul besides, do give many commandments and doctrines, and expound the law. But these are to be counted like all Christ's other works and good deeds. To know his works and the things that happened to him is not yet to know the true gospel, for you do not yet thereby know that he has overcome sin, death, and the devil. So, too, it is not yet knowledge of the gospel when you know these doctrines and commandments, but only when the voice comes that says, "Christ is your own, with his life, teaching, works, death, resurrection, and all that he is, has, does, and can do."

Thus we see also that he does not compel us but invites us kindly and says, "Blessed are the poor," etc. [Matt. 5:3]. And the apostles use the words, "I exhort," "I entreat," "I beg," so that one sees on every hand that the gospel is not a book of law, but really a preaching of the benefits of Christ, shown to us and given to us for our own possession, if we believe. But Moses, in his books, drives, compels, threatens, strikes, and rebukes terribly, for he is a lawgiver and driver.

Hence it comes that to a believer no law is given by which he becomes righteous before God, as St. Paul says in I Timothy 1[:9], because he is alive and righteous and saved by faith, and he needs nothing further except to prove his faith by works. Truly, if faith is there, he cannot hold back; he proves himself, breaks out into good works, confesses and teaches this gospel before the people, and stakes his life on it. Everything that he lives and does is directed to his neighbor's profit, in order to help him—not only to the attainment of this grace, but also in body, property, and honor. Seeing that Christ has done this for him, he thus follows Christ's example.

That is what Christ meant when at the last he gave no other commandment than love, by which men were to know who were his disciples [John 13:34–35] and true believers. For where works and love do not break forth, there faith is not right, the gospel does not yet take hold, and Christ is not rightly known. See, then, that you so

> approach the books of the New Testament as to learn to read them in this way. (AE 35:357–61)

For more of Luther's insights on the Gospels, see *A Brief Instruction on What to Look For and Expect in the Gospels* (AE 35:113–24), *A Meditation on Christ's Passion* (AE 42:3–14), and *Sermon at Coburg on Cross and Suffering* (AE 51:197–208).

In describing the four Gospels, Luther emphasized the unity of all Scripture and the most basic distinction in its teaching: the Law and the Gospel. Although the Old Testment speaks more about God's Law and the New Testament speaks more about the Gospel, the testaments are united because they proclaim the two ways God works in people's lives according to their needs. (See note, Ex 34:6–7.)

What Is a Gospel?

For readers today, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John may seem much like biographies. But take note that a Gospel is more than an account of a person's life and achievements. With the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the evangelists wrote the Gospels to persuade their readers that Jesus is the Christ, God's Son, who came to save sinners (Mt 16:13–16; Mk 10:45; Lk 1:1–4; 24:45–49; Jn 20:30–31). They prepared their accounts with this goal in mind. Although they focused on what happened, they wanted to illustrate *why* Jesus was born, lived, died, and rose again, even while they told the story. The evangelists commonly cited passages from the Old Testament to demonstrate how Jesus fulfilled the prophecies about the coming Messiah (see pp 1245, 1646).

Differences in the order and style of the Gospels arose because the evangelists were writing to persuade different audiences (see below). For this reason, each Gospel has a different plot and climax that should be respected for its literary genius and treasured for its faith-filled testimony.

The Synoptic Problem

However, since the earliest days of the Church, students of Holy Scripture have also noted the similarity between the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. They are often called the *Synoptic* Gospels because they provide a "common view" of Jesus' life and teaching. In some places, the wording is so similar it appears that the writers borrowed from one another, such as the story of Jesus' Passion.

Early critics saw the relationship between the Gospels as a weakness in the Holy Scripture and asserted that the Gospels did not agree with, and even contradicted, one another. As a result, some early Christians sought to unify the Gospels by blending them into one story (e.g., Tatian's *Diatessaron*, of which only fragments survive). Others rejected three of the Gospels and used only one (e.g., the heretical teacher Marcion used only Luke). Early Christian teachers rejected these approaches and instead emphasized that the entire Gospel has a fourfold character that must be preserved and respected throughout the four books.

> It is not possible that the Gospels can be either more or fewer in number than they are. For, since there are four zones of the world in which we live, and four principal winds, while the Church is scattered throughout all the world, and the "pillar and ground" of the Church is the Gospel and the spirit of life; it is fitting that she should have four pillars, breathing out immortality on every side, and vivifying men afresh. From which fact, it is evident that the Word, the Artificer of all, He that sits upon the cherubim, and contains all things, He who was manifested to men, has given us the Gospel under four aspects, but bound together by one Spirit. (Iren, *ANF* 1:428)

Early Christian scribes copied and distributed the Gospels together as one volume, and later interpreters developed systems for comparing the Gospels (e.g., Ammonius and Eusebius). In c AD 400, Augustine wrote *The Harmony of the Gospels* in an effort to answer questions about their unity. He sorted out many of the issues but, of course, not to the satisfaction of all readers. Various Gospel harmonies continued to be in use throughout the Middle Ages.

The relationship between the Gospels became an issue briefly during the Reformation, when Andreas Osiander introduced some unhelpful claims about how the Gospels were written, assuming they could be fully harmonized. Martin Chemnitz corrected these misunderstandings in his *Harmony of the Four Evangelists* (further developed by Polycarp Leyser and Johann Gerhard). Chemnitz pointed out that in purpose and in the chief points of history (e.g., Jesus' birth, John the Baptist's ministry, Jesus' Baptism, His ministry in Galilee, the feeding of the five thousand, and the events of the Passion and resurrection), the Gospels agree with one another. However, because the evangelists wished to emphasize different points for different audiences, they narrated the details of Jesus' ministry differently, arranging the material according to their purposes and not always with meticulous attention to chronology (e.g., an evangelist may write, "On the next day," which could mean something very general, such as "later"). The reader should piously consider and respect the work of each evangelist rather than try to merge the accounts. (See Martin Chemnitz, *Die Harmonie derer heiligen vier Evangelisten* [Magdeburg and Leipzig: Seidel und Scheidhauerschen Buchhandlung, 1794], 1:3.)

The Quest for the Historical Jesus

Critics continued to raise the issue of unity among the Gospels. In 1837, D. F. Strauss published *The Life of Jesus*, which has inspired nearly endless debate and speculation among liberal scholars about who Jesus really is and whether He can be known and understood through the Gospels.

Many nineteenth-century scholars believed they could search the Gospels to find a common source for them (called "Q" from the German word *Quellen*, "source"). They believed they could discover the real historical Jesus through these methods. However, these attempts have failed miserably. The more critics speculated about who Jesus was, the more they tended to describe Him as a figure of their own beliefs (e.g., philosophers saw Jesus as a philosopher, socialist revolutionaries saw Jesus as a revolutionary, etc.).

Ultimately, one must return to where the early Christians began: reading the Gospels as faithful and independent accounts of the life and teachings of Jesus. Though many differences between the Gospels can be explained—as Augustine and Chemnitz demonstrated—the relationship between them remains a mystery, which readers should approach as a matter of faith.

Early Christian Testimony Endures

The earliest description of who wrote the Gospels and how they were written was provided by the following Church Fathers: first-century figures Aristion and John the Presbyter; Clement of Rome (flourished c AD 96); and Papias (c AD 60–130), bishop of Hierapolis in Asia Minor. Despite all the efforts of modern critical approaches, the earliest testimonies of the Fathers remain the best means for understanding the history and writing of the Gospels. Eusebius recorded their testimony in his *Church History* :

> So greatly did the splendor of piety illumine the minds of Peter's hearers that they were not satisfied with hearing once only, and were not content with the unwritten teaching of the divine Gospel, but with all sorts of entreaties they besought Mark, a follower of Peter, and the one whose Gospel is extant, that he would leave them a written monument of the doctrine which had been orally communicated to them. Nor did they cease until they had prevailed with the man, and had thus become the occasion of the written Gospel which bears the name of Mark.
>
> And they say that Peter when he had learned, through a revelation of the Spirit, of that which had been done, was pleased with the zeal of the men, and that the work obtained the sanction of his authority for the purpose of being used in the churches. Clement in the eighth book of his Hypotyposes gives this account, and with him agrees the bishop of Hierapolis named Papias. And Peter makes mention of Mark in his first epistle which they say that he wrote in Rome itself, as is indicated by him, when he calls the city, by a figure, Babylon, as he does in the following words: "The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you, salutes you; and so does Marcus my son." (*NPNF* 2 1:116)
>
> Of all the disciples of the Lord, only Matthew and John have left us written memorials, and they, tradition says, were led to write only under the pressure of necessity. For Matthew, who had at first preached to the Hebrews, when he was about to go to other peoples, committed his Gospel to writing in his native tongue, and thus compensated those whom he was obliged to leave for the loss of his presence. And when Mark and Luke had already published their Gospels, they say that

John, who had employed all his time in proclaiming the Gospel orally, finally proceeded to write for the following reason. The three Gospels already mentioned having come into the hands of all and into his own too, they say that he accepted them and bore witness to their truthfulness; but that there was lacking in them an account of the deeds done by Christ at the beginning of his ministry. (*NPNF* 2 1:152–53)

As for Luke, in the beginning of his Gospel, he states himself the reasons which led him to write it. He states that since many others had more rashly undertaken to compose a narrative of the events of which he had acquired perfect knowledge, he himself, feeling the necessity of freeing us from their uncertain opinions, delivered in his own Gospel an accurate account of those events in regard to which he had learned the full truth, being aided by his intimacy and his stay with Paul and by his acquaintance with the rest of the apostles. (*NPNF* 2 1:153–54)

"This also the presbyter said: Mark, having become the interpreter of Peter, wrote down accurately, though not in order, whatsoever he remembered of the things said or done by Christ. For he neither heard the Lord nor followed him, but afterward, as I said, he followed Peter, who adapted his teaching to the needs of his hearers, but with no intention of giving a connected account of the Lord's discourses, so that Mark committed no error while he thus wrote some things as he remembered them. For he was careful of one thing, not to omit any of the things which he had heard, and not to state any of them falsely." These things are related by Papias concerning Mark. But concerning Matthew he writes as follows: "So then Matthew wrote the oracles in the Hebrew language, and every one interpreted them as he was able." (*NPNF* 2 1:172–73)

Cross-References in *TLSB*

The study notes in *TLSB* do not attempt to harmonize the Gospels but treat each one as a separate and valid account that presents the truthful testimony of an evangelist. However, to save space, some references in the study notes lead the reader to notes in another Gospel for common explanations of historical context, culture, and terms.

To discover parallel historical accounts in Jesus' life and teachings, take note of the center-column references. For example, at Mt 3:13, one finds in the center column, "For vv 13–17, see Mk 1:9–11; Lk 3:21–22; [Jn 1:32–34]," which give the parallel accounts of Jesus' Baptism. For each new section heading in the ESV text, you may wish to check for a parallel reference in the center column.

Matthew

Matthew 1 | Matthew 2 | Matthew 3 | Matthew 4 | Matthew 5 | Matthew 6 | Matthew 7 | Matthew 8 | Matthew 9 | Matthew 10 | Matthew 11 | Matthew 12 | Matthew 13 | Matthew 14 | Matthew 15 | Matthew 16 | Matthew 17 | Matthew 18 | Matthew 19 | Matthew 20 | Matthew 21 | Matthew 22 | Matthew 23 | Matthew 24 | Matthew 25 | Matthew 26 | Matthew 27 | Matthew 28

- Introduction to Matthew
  - Overview
  - Reading Matthew
  - Luther on Matthew
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

The Genealogy of Jesus Christ

1 [1] †††The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David,
the son of Abraham.

[2]Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and
Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, [3]†and Judah the father of Perez
and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father
of Ram,[1] [4]and Ram the father of Amminadab, and Amminadab the father of
Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon, [5]†and Salmon the father of
Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father
of Jesse, [6]†and Jesse the father of David the king.

And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah, [7]and
Solomon the father of Rehoboam, and Rehoboam the father of Abijah, and
Abijah the father of Asaph,[2] [8]and Asaph the father of Jehoshaphat, and
Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziah, [9]and
Uzziah the father of Jotham, and Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the
father of Hezekiah, [10]and Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, and Manasseh
the father of Amos,[3] and Amos the father of Josiah, [11]†and Josiah the father
of Jechoniah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon.

[12]And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of
Shealtiel,[4] and Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel, [13]and Zerubbabel the
father of Abiud, and Abiud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of
Azor, [14]and Azor the father of Zadok, and Zadok the father of Achim, and
Achim the father of Eliud, [15]and Eliud the father of Eleazar, and Eleazar the
father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob, [16]†and Jacob the father
of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called
Christ.

[17] † So all the generations from Abraham to David were fourteen
generations, and from David to the deportation to Babylon fourteen
generations, and from the deportation to Babylon to the Christ fourteen
generations.

The Birth of Jesus Christ

18 ‡ † Now the birth of Jesus Christ[5] took place in this way. When his
mother Mary had been betrothed[6] to Joseph, before they came together she
was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. 19 † And her husband
Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to
divorce her quietly. 20 † But as he considered these things, behold, an angel
of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do
not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is
from the Holy Spirit. 21 † She will bear a son, and you shall call his name
Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” 22 † All this took place to
fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:

> 23 † “Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
> and they shall call his name Immanuel”

(which means, God with us). 24 † When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as
the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, 25 † but knew her
not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.

The Visit of the Wise Men

2 [1]†† Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of
Herod the king, behold, wise men[1] from the east came to Jerusalem,
[2]† saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his
star when it rose[2] and have come to worship him." [3]† When Herod the king
heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; [4]† and assembling
all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the
Christ was to be born. [5]† They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is
written by the prophet:

[6]† "'And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of
Judah;
for from you shall come a ruler
who will shepherd my people Israel.'"

[7]† Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from
them what time the star had appeared. [8]† And he sent them to Bethlehem,
saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found
him, bring me word, that I too may come and worship him." [9]† After
listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they
had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place
where the child was. [10]† When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly
with great joy. [11]† And going into the house they saw the child with Mary his
mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their
treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. [12]† And
being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own
country by another way.

The Flight to Egypt

13 ††Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared
to Joseph in a dream and said, “Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee
to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for
the child, to destroy him.” 14 †And he rose and took the child and his mother
by night and departed to Egypt 15 † and remained there until the death of
Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, “Out of
Egypt I called my son.”

Herod Kills the Children

16 Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men,
became furious, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem
and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the
time that he had ascertained from the wise men. 17 Then was fulfilled what
was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah:

18 "A voice was heard in Ramah,
weeping and loud lamentation,
Rachel weeping for her children;
she refused to be comforted, because they
are no more."

The Return to Nazareth

19 † But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a
dream to Joseph in Egypt, 20 † saying, “Rise, take the child and his mother
and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child’s life are dead.”
21 And he rose and took the child and his mother and went to the land of
Israel. 22 † But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea in
place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a
dream he withdrew to the district of Galilee. 23 † And he went and lived in a
city called Nazareth, that what was spoken by the prophets might be
fulfilled: “He shall be called a Nazarene.”

John the Baptist Prepares the Way

3 [1]‡†In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness
of Judea, [2]†"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." [3]†For this is he
who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah when he said,

> "The voice of one crying in the wilderness:
> 'Prepare[1] the way of the Lord;
> make his paths straight.'"

[4]†Now John wore a garment of camel's hair and a leather belt around his
waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. [5]†Then Jerusalem and all
Judea and all the region about the Jordan were going out to him, [6]†and they
were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

[7]†But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his
baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee
from the wrath to come? [8]†Bear fruit in keeping with repentance. [9]†And do
not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father,' for I tell
you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham.
[10]†Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that
does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

[11]†"I baptize you with water for repentance, but he who is coming after
me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will
baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. [12]†His winnowing fork is in his
hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and gather his wheat into the
barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

The Baptism of Jesus

13 ‡ † Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized
by him. 14 † John would have prevented him, saying, “I need to be baptized
by you, and do you come to me?” 15 † But Jesus answered him, “Let it be so
now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.” Then he
consented. 16 ‡ † And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from
the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him,[1] and he saw the
Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; 17 † and
behold, a voice from heaven said, “This is my beloved Son,[2] with whom I
am well pleased.”

The Temptation of Jesus

4 [1]†† Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. [2]† And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. [3]† And the tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." [4]† But he answered, "It is written,

> "'Man shall not live by bread alone,
> but by every word that comes from the
> mouth of God.'"

[5]† Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple [6]† and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written,

> "'He will command his angels concerning you,'

and

> "'On their hands they will bear you up,
> lest you strike your foot against a stone.'"

[7]† Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.'" [8]† Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. [9]† And he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me." [10]† Then Jesus said to him, "Be gone, Satan! For it is written,

> "'You shall worship the Lord your God
> and him only shall you serve.'"

[11]† Then the devil left him, and behold, angels came and were ministering to him.

Jesus Begins His Ministry

12 ‡ † Now when he heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew into
Galilee. 13 † And leaving Nazareth he went and lived in Capernaum by the
sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, 14 so that what was spoken by
the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled:

15 ‡ † “The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali,
the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan,
Galilee of the Gentiles—
16 the people dwelling in darkness
have seen a great light,
and for those dwelling in the region and
shadow of death,
on them a light has dawned.”

17 † From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, “Repent, for the kingdom
of heaven is at hand.”

Jesus Calls the First Disciples

18 † While walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon
(who is called Peter) and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea, for
they were fishermen. 19 † And he said to them, “Follow me, and I will make
you fishers of men.” 20 † Immediately they left their nets and followed him.
21 † And going on from there he saw two other brothers, James the son of
Zebedee and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father,
mending their nets, and he called them. 22 Immediately they left the boat and
their father and followed him.

Jesus Ministers to Great Crowds

[23] ‡† And he went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and
proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every
affliction among the people. [24] † So his fame spread throughout all Syria, and
they brought him all the sick, those afflicted with various diseases and
pains, those oppressed by demons, epileptics, and paralytics, and he healed
them. [25] † And great crowds followed him from Galilee and the Decapolis,
and from Jerusalem and Judea, and from beyond the Jordan.

The Sermon on the Mount

5 [1]†Seeing the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him.

The Beatitudes

[2]And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying:

[3]†† "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

[4]† "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

[5]† "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

[6]† "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

[7]† "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.

[8]† "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

[9]† "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons[1] of God.

[10]† "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

[11]† "Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. [12]†Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Salt and Light

13 “You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall
its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be
thrown out and trampled under people’s feet.
14 “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden.
15 Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and
it gives light to all in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine
before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your
Father who is in heaven.

Christ Came to Fulfill the Law

17 ‡† “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I
have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. 18 † For truly, I say to you,
until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the
Law until all is accomplished. 19 † Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least
of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called
least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them
will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. 20 † For I tell you, unless your
righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter
the kingdom of heaven.

Anger

21 ✝✝ “You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not
murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.’ 22 ✝But I say to
you that everyone who is angry with his brother[1] will be liable to
judgment; whoever insults[2] his brother will be liable to the council; and
whoever says, ‘You fool!’ will be liable to the hell[3] of fire. 23 ✝So if you are
offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has
something against you, 24 ✝leave your gift there before the altar and go. First
be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. 25 ✝Come to
terms quickly with your accuser while you are going with him to court, lest
your accuser hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and
you be put in prison. 26 ✝Truly, I say to you, you will never get out until you
have paid the last penny.[4]

Lust

27 † “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’
28 †But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent
has already committed adultery with her in his heart. 29 †If your right eye
causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose
one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell. 30 And
if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is
better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into
hell.

Divorce

31 ‡ † “It was also said, ‘Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a
certificate of divorce.’ 32 † But I say to you that everyone who divorces his
wife, except on the ground of sexual immorality, makes her commit
adultery, and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

Oaths

33 ††“Again you have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not
swear falsely, but shall perform to the Lord what you have sworn.’ 34 ††But I
say to you, Do not take an oath at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of
God, 35 or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the
city of the great King. 36 †And do not take an oath by your head, for you
cannot make one hair white or black. 37 †Let what you say be simply ‘Yes’
or ‘No’; anything more than this comes from evil.[1]

Retaliation

38 ‡‡“You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a
tooth.’ 39 †But I say to you, Do not resist the one who is evil. But if anyone
slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. 40 †And if anyone
would sue you and take your tunic,[2] let him have your cloak as well.
41 †And if anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles. 42 †Give
to the one who begs from you, and do not refuse the one who would borrow
from you.

Love Your Enemies

43 ‡ ‡ “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and
hate your enemy.’ 44 † But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those
who persecute you, 45 † so that you may be sons of your Father who is in
heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends
rain on the just and on the unjust. 46 † For if you love those who love you,
what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?
47 † And if you greet only your brothers,[1] what more are you doing than
others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? 48 † You therefore must be
perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Giving to the Needy

6 [1]†† “Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in
order to be seen by them, for then you will have no reward from your
Father who is in heaven.
[2]† “Thus, when you give to the needy, sound no trumpet before you, as
the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be
praised by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. [3]†But
when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right
hand is doing, [4]†so that your giving may be in secret. And your Father who
sees in secret will reward you.

The Lord's Prayer

5 ‡ † "And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they
love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they
may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward.
6 † But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your
Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.
7 † "And when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do,
for they think that they will be heard for their many words. 8 † Do not be like
them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. 9 ‡ † Pray
then like this:

"Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name.[1]
10 † Your kingdom come,
your will be done,[2]
on earth as it is in heaven.
11 ‡ † Give us this day our daily bread,[3]
12 † and forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.
13 † And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.[4]

14 ‡ For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also
forgive you, 15 † but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will
your Father forgive your trespasses.

Fasting

16 “And when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they
disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others. Truly, I say to
you, they have received their reward. 17 But when you fast, anoint your
head and wash your face, 18 that your fasting may not be seen by others but
by your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will
reward you.

Lay Up Treasures in Heaven

19 ‡ ‡ “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and
rust[1] destroy and where thieves break in and steal, 20 † but lay up for
yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and
where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 †For where your treasure is, there
your heart will be also.

22 † “The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is healthy, your
whole body will be full of light, 23 †but if your eye is bad, your whole body
will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the
darkness!

24 † “No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love
the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot
serve God and money.[2]

Do Not Be Anxious

25 ‡ † “Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you
will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on.
Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? 26 † Look at the
birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet
your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?
27 † And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of
life?[3] 28 And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the
field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, 29 † yet I tell you, even
Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. 30 † But if God so
clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown
into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?
31 † Therefore do not be anxious, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall
we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ 32 † For the Gentiles seek after all these
things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. 33 † But seek
first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be
added to you.

34 † “Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be
anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

Judging Others

7 [1]†† “Judge not, that you be not judged. [2]† For with the judgment you
pronounce you will be judged, and with the measure you use it will be
measured to you. [3]† Why do you see the speck that is in your brother’s eye,
but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? [4]† Or how can you say to
your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when there is the log
in your own eye? [5]† You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye,
and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother’s eye.
[6]† “Do not give dogs what is holy, and do not throw your pearls before
pigs, lest they trample them underfoot and turn to attack you.

Ask, and It Will Be Given

7 ‡‡“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and
it will be opened to you. 8For everyone who asks receives, and the one who
seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. 9‡Or which one of
you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? 10Or if he asks for
a fish, will give him a serpent? 11‡If you then, who are evil, know how to
give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in
heaven give good things to those who ask him!

The Golden Rule

12 “So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them,
for this is the Law and the Prophets.
13 “Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy[1]
that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. 14 For the gate
is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are
few.

A Tree and Its Fruit

15 ‡ ‡ “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing but
inwardly are ravenous wolves. 16 † You will recognize them by their fruits.
Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? 17 † So, every
healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. 18 A
healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit.
19 † Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the
fire. 20 † Thus you will recognize them by their fruits.

I Never Knew You

21 ††“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom
of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.
22 †On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in
your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works
in your name?’ 23 †And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you;
depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’

Build Your House on the Rock

24 “Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will
be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. 25 And the rain fell, and
the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not
fall, because it had been founded on the rock. 26 And everyone who hears
these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who
built his house on the sand. 27 And the rain fell, and the floods came, and
the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall
of it.”

The Authority of Jesus

28 And when Jesus finished these sayings, the crowds were astonished
at his teaching, 29 for he was teaching them as one who had authority, and
not as their scribes.

Jesus Cleanses a Leper

8 [1] ✝When he came down from the mountain, great crowds followed
him. [2] ✝And behold, a leper[1] came to him and knelt before him, saying,
“Lord, if you will, you can make me clean.” [3] ✝And Jesus[2] stretched out his
hand and touched him, saying, “I will; be clean.” And immediately his
leprosy was cleansed. [4] ✝And Jesus said to him, “See that you say nothing to
anyone, but go, show yourself to the priest and offer the gift that Moses
commanded, for a proof to them.”

The Faith of a Centurion

5 ‡ † When he entered Capernaum, a centurion came forward to him,
appealing to him, 6“Lord, my servant is lying paralyzed at home, suffering
terribly.” 7 † And he said to him, “I will come and heal him.” 8 † But the
centurion replied, “Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof,
but only say the word, and my servant will be healed. 9 † For I too am a man
under authority, with soldiers under me. And I say to one, ‘Go,’ and he
goes, and to another, ‘Come,’ and he comes, and to my servant,[3] ‘Do this,’
and he does it.” 10 † When Jesus heard this, he marveled and said to those
who followed him, “Truly, I tell you, with no one in Israel[4] have I found
such faith. 11 † I tell you, many will come from east and west and recline at
table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, 12 † while
the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness. In that place
there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” 13 † And to the centurion Jesus
said, “Go; let it be done for you as you have believed.” And the servant was
healed at that very moment.

Jesus Heals Many

14 And when Jesus entered Peter's house, he saw his mother-in-law
lying sick with a fever. 15 He touched her hand, and the fever left her, and
she rose and began to serve him. 16 That evening they brought to him many
who were oppressed by demons, and he cast out the spirits with a word and
healed all who were sick. 17 This was to fulfill what was spoken by the
prophet Isaiah: "He took our illnesses and bore our diseases."

The Cost of Following Jesus

18 ‡† Now when Jesus saw a crowd around him, he gave orders to go over
to the other side. 19 † And a scribe came up and said to him, “Teacher, I will
follow you wherever you go.” 20 † And Jesus said to him, “Foxes have holes,
and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his
head.” 21 † Another of the disciples said to him, “Lord, let me first go and
bury my father.” 22 † And Jesus said to him, “Follow me, and leave the dead
to bury their own dead.”

Jesus Calms a Storm

[23] And when he got into the boat, his disciples followed him. [24] And behold, there arose a great storm on the sea, so that the boat was being swamped by the waves; but he was asleep. [25] And they went and woke him, saying, “Save us, Lord; we are perishing.” [26] And he said to them, “Why are you afraid, O you of little faith?” Then he rose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. [27] And the men marveled, saying, “What sort of man is this, that even winds and sea obey him?”

Jesus Heals Two Men with Demons

28 ‡ † And when he came to the other side, to the country of the Gadarenes, [1] two demon-possessed[2] men met him, coming out of the tombs, so fierce
that no one could pass that way. 29 † And behold, they cried out, “What have
you to do with us, O Son of God? Have you come here to torment us before
the time?” 30 † Now a herd of many pigs was feeding at some distance from
them. 31 † And the demons begged him, saying, “If you cast us out, send us
away into the herd of pigs.” 32 † And he said to them, “Go.” So they came out
and went into the pigs, and behold, the whole herd rushed down the steep
bank into the sea and drowned in the waters. 33 † The herdsmen fled, and
going into the city they told everything, especially what had happened to
the demon-possessed men. 34 † And behold, all the city came out to meet
Jesus, and when they saw him, they begged him to leave their region.

Jesus Heals a Paralytic

9 [1]And getting into a boat he crossed over and came to his own city.
[2]And behold, some people brought to him a paralytic, lying on a bed. And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Take heart, my son; your sins are forgiven." [3]And behold, some of the scribes said to themselves, "This man is blaspheming." [4]But Jesus, knowing[1] their thoughts, said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts? [5]For which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise and walk'? [6]But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"—he then said to the paralytic—"Rise, pick up your bed and go home." [7]And he rose and went home. [8]When the crowds saw it, they were afraid, and they glorified God, who had given such authority to men.

Jesus Calls Matthew

9 ††As Jesus passed on from there, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at
the tax booth, and he said to him, “Follow me.” And he rose and followed
him.

10 † And as Jesus[2] reclined at table in the house, behold, many tax
collectors and sinners came and were reclining with Jesus and his disciples.
11 †And when the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, “Why does
your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?” 12 †But when he heard it,
he said, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who
are sick. 13 † Go and learn what this means, ‘I desire mercy, and not
sacrifice.’ For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.”

A Question About Fasting

14 Then the disciples of John came to him, saying, “Why do we and the
Pharisees fast,[3] but your disciples do not fast?” 15 And Jesus said to them,
“Can the wedding guests mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them?
The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and
then they will fast. 16 No one puts a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old
garment, for the patch tears away from the garment, and a worse tear is
made. 17 Neither is new wine put into old wineskins. If it is, the skins burst
and the wine is spilled and the skins are destroyed. But new wine is put into
fresh wineskins, and so both are preserved.”

A Girl Restored to Life and a Woman Healed

18 ‡ † While he was saying these things to them, behold, a ruler came in
and knelt before him, saying, “My daughter has just died, but come and lay
your hand on her, and she will live.” 19 And Jesus rose and followed him,
with his disciples. 20 † And behold, a woman who had suffered from a
discharge of blood for twelve years came up behind him and touched the
fringe of his garment, 21 † for she said to herself, “If I only touch his garment,
I will be made well.” 22 † Jesus turned, and seeing her he said, “Take heart,
daughter; your faith has made you well.” And instantly[1] the woman was
made well. 23 † And when Jesus came to the ruler’s house and saw the flute
players and the crowd making a commotion, 24 † he said, “Go away, for the
girl is not dead but sleeping.” And they laughed at him. 25 † But when the
crowd had been put outside, he went in and took her by the hand, and the
girl arose. 26 † And the report of this went through all that district.

Jesus Heals Two Blind Men

[27] ‡ † And as Jesus passed on from there, two blind men followed him,
crying aloud, “Have mercy on us, Son of David.” [28] † When he entered the
house, the blind men came to him, and Jesus said to them, “Do you believe
that I am able to do this?” They said to him, “Yes, Lord.” [29] † Then he
touched their eyes, saying, “According to your faith be it done to you.”
[30] † And their eyes were opened. And Jesus sternly warned them, “See that
no one knows about it.” [31] † But they went away and spread his fame through
all that district.

Jesus Heals a Man Unable to Speak

32 ‡‡‡As they were going away, behold, a demon-oppressed man who was
mute was brought to him. 33 ‡And when the demon had been cast out, the
mute man spoke. And the crowds marveled, saying, “Never was anything
like this seen in Israel.” 34 ‡But the Pharisees said, “He casts out demons by
the prince of demons.”

The Harvest Is Plentiful, the Laborers Few

[35] ‡ † And Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in
their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing
every disease and every affliction. [36] † When he saw the crowds, he had
compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep
without a shepherd. [37] ‡ Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is
plentiful, but the laborers are few; [38]therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of
the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.”

The Twelve Apostles

10 [1] ‡ † And he called to him his twelve disciples and gave them
authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease
and every affliction. [2] ‡ † The names of the twelve apostles are these: first,
Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of
Zebedee, and John his brother; [3] † Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and
Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus;[1]
[4] † Simon the Cananaean, and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

Jesus Sends Out the Twelve Apostles

5 ‡ † These twelve Jesus sent out, instructing them, “Go nowhere among
the Gentiles and enter no town of the Samaritans, 6 † but go rather to the lost
sheep of the house of Israel. 7 † And proclaim as you go, saying, ‘The
kingdom of heaven is at hand.’ 8 † Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse
lepers,[2] cast out demons. You received without paying; give without pay.
9 ‡ Acquire no gold nor silver nor copper for your belts, 10 no bag for your
journey, nor two tunics[1] nor sandals nor a staff, for the laborer deserves his
food. 11 † And whatever town or village you enter, find out who is worthy in
it and stay there until you depart. 12 † As you enter the house, greet it. 13 † And
if the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it, but if it is not worthy,
let your peace return to you. 14 † And if anyone will not receive you or listen
to your words, shake off the dust from your feet when you leave that house
or town. 15 † Truly, I say to you, it will be more bearable on the day of
judgment for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah than for that town.

Persecution Will Come

16 ✝✝“Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be
wise as serpents and innocent as doves. 17 ✝Beware of men, for they will
deliver you over to courts and flog you in their synagogues, 18 ✝and you will
be dragged before governors and kings for my sake, to bear witness before
them and the Gentiles. 19 ✝When they deliver you over, do not be anxious
how you are to speak or what you are to say, for what you are to say will be
given to you in that hour. 20 ✝For it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of
your Father speaking through you. 21 ✝Brother will deliver brother over to
death, and the father his child, and children will rise against parents and
have them put to death, 22 and you will be hated by all for my name’s sake.
But the one who endures to the end will be saved. 23 ✝When they persecute
you in one town, flee to the next, for truly, I say to you, you will not have
gone through all the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes.

24 ✝“A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant[2] above his master.
25 ✝It is enough for the disciple to be like his teacher, and the servant like his
master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much
more will they malign[3] those of his household.

Have No Fear

26 ‡ † “So have no fear of them, for nothing is covered that will not be
revealed, or hidden that will not be known. 27 † What I tell you in the dark,
say in the light, and what you hear whispered, proclaim on the housetops.
28 † And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather
fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell.[1] 29 † Are not two
sparrows sold for a penny?[2] And not one of them will fall to the ground
apart from your Father. 30 † But even the hairs of your head are all numbered.
31 † Fear not, therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows. 32 † So
everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge
before my Father who is in heaven, 33 † but whoever denies me before men, I
also will deny before my Father who is in heaven.

Not Peace, but a Sword

34 ††“Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I have not
come to bring peace, but a sword. 35 For I have come to set a man against his
father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her
mother-in-law. 36 † And a person’s enemies will be those of his own
household. 37 †Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy
of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of
me. 38 †And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of
me. 39 †Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my
sake will find it.

Rewards

40 “Whoever receives you receives me, and whoever receives me
receives him who sent me. 41 The one who receives a prophet because he is
a prophet will receive a prophet’s reward, and the one who receives a
righteous person because he is a righteous person will receive a righteous
person’s reward. 42 And whoever gives one of these little ones even a cup
of cold water because he is a disciple, truly, I say to you, he will by no
means lose his reward.”

Messengers from John the Baptist

11 [1]When Jesus had finished instructing his twelve disciples, he
went on from there to teach and preach in their cities.
[2]Now when John heard in prison about the deeds of the Christ, he sent
word by his disciples [3]and said to him, “Are you the one who is to come,
or shall we look for another?” [4]And Jesus answered them, “Go and tell John
what you hear and see: [5]the blind receive their sight and the lame walk,
lepers[1] are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the
poor have good news preached to them. [6]And blessed is the one who is not
offended by me.”
[7]As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning
John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the
wind? [8]What then did you go out to see? A man[2] dressed in soft clothing?
Behold, those who wear soft clothing are in kings’ houses. [9]What then did
you go out to see? A prophet?[3] Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet.
[10]This is he of whom it is written,

> “‘Behold, I send my messenger before your
> face,
> who will prepare your way before you.’

[11]Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has arisen no one
greater than John the Baptist. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of
heaven is greater than he. [12]From the days of John the Baptist until now
the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence,[4] and the violent take it by
force. [13]For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John, [14]and if
you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who is to come. [15]He who has ears
to hear,[5] let him hear.
[16]“But to what shall I compare this generation? It is like children sitting
in the marketplaces and calling to their playmates,

17 † “‘We played the flute for you, and you did not
dance;
we sang a dirge, and you did not mourn.’

18 † For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, ‘He has a demon.’ 19 † The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, ‘Look at him! A glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’ Yet wisdom is justified by her deeds.”[6]

Woe to Unrepentant Cities

[20] Then he began to denounce the cities where most of his mighty works had been done, because they did not repent. [21] “Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. [22] But I tell you, it will be more bearable on the day of judgment for Tyre and Sidon than for you. [23] And you, Capernaum, will you be exalted to heaven? You will be brought down to Hades. For if the mighty works done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. [24] But I tell you that it will be more tolerable on the day of judgment for the land of Sodom than for you.”

Come to Me, and I Will Give You Rest

25 ††At that time Jesus declared, “I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and
earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding
and revealed them to little children; 26 † yes, Father, for such was your
gracious will.[1] 27 †All things have been handed over to me by my Father,
and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father
except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.
28 †Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.
29 †Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in
heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 †For my yoke is easy, and my
burden is light.”

Jesus Is Lord of the Sabbath

12 [1]At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath. His disciples were hungry, and they began to pluck heads of grain and to eat. [2]But when the Pharisees saw it, they said to him, “Look, your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath.” [3]He said to them, “Have you not read what David did when he was hungry, and those who were with him: [4]how he entered the house of God and ate the bread of the Presence, which it was not lawful for him to eat nor for those who were with him, but only for the priests? [5]Or have you not read in the Law how on the Sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath and are guiltless? [6]I tell you, something greater than the temple is here. [7]And if you had known what this means, ‘I desire mercy, and not sacrifice,’ you would not have condemned the guiltless. [8]For the Son of Man is lord of the Sabbath.”

A Man with a Withered Hand

9 ‡ † He went on from there and entered their synagogue. 10 † And a man
was there with a withered hand. And they asked him, “Is it lawful to heal on
the Sabbath?”—so that they might accuse him. 11 † He said to them, “Which
one of you who has a sheep, if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will not take
hold of it and lift it out? 12 † Of how much more value is a man than a sheep!
So it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath.” 13 Then he said to the man,
“Stretch out your hand.” And the man stretched it out, and it was restored,
healthy like the other. 14 † But the Pharisees went out and conspired against
him, how to destroy him.

God’s Chosen Servant

15 ✝✝Jesus, aware of this, withdrew from there. And many followed him,
and he healed them all 16 ✝and ordered them not to make him known. 17 ✝This
was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah:

18 ✝✝ “Behold, my servant whom I have chosen,
my beloved with whom my soul is well
pleased.
I will put my Spirit upon him,
and he will proclaim justice to the Gentiles.
19 ✝ He will not quarrel or cry aloud,
nor will anyone hear his voice in the streets;
20 a bruised reed he will not break,
and a smoldering wick he will not quench,
until he brings justice to victory;
21 and in his name the Gentiles will hope.”

Blasphemy Against the Holy Spirit

22 ‡† Then a demon-oppressed man who was blind and mute was brought
to him, and he healed him, so that the man spoke and saw. 23 † And all the
people were amazed, and said, “Can this be the Son of David?” 24 † But
when the Pharisees heard it, they said, “It is only by Beelzebul, the prince
of demons, that this man casts out demons.” 25 ‡† Knowing their thoughts, he
said to them, “Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and no
city or house divided against itself will stand. 26 And if Satan casts out Satan,
he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand? 27 † And if I
cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons cast them out?
Therefore they will be your judges. 28 † But if it is by the Spirit of God that I
cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. 29 † Or how
can someone enter a strong man’s house and plunder his goods, unless he
first binds the strong man? Then indeed he may plunder his house.
30 † Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with
me scatters. 31 † Therefore I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be
forgiven people, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven.
32 † And whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but
whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this
age or in the age to come.

A Tree Is Known by Its Fruit

33 ‡ ‡ “Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or make the tree bad
and its fruit bad, for the tree is known by its fruit. 34 ‡ You brood of vipers!
How can you speak good, when you are evil? For out of the abundance of
the heart the mouth speaks. 35 ‡ The good person out of his good treasure
brings forth good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure brings forth
evil. 36 ‡ I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every
careless word they speak, 37 ‡ for by your words you will be justified, and by
your words you will be condemned.”

The Sign of Jonah

38 ‡ † Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered him, saying,
“Teacher, we wish to see a sign from you.” 39 †But he answered them, “An
evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given to
it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. 40 †For just as Jonah was three days
and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be
three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. 41 †The men of Nineveh
will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they
repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold, something greater than
Jonah is here. 42 †The queen of the South will rise up at the judgment with
this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to
hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, something greater than Solomon
is here.

Return of an Unclean Spirit

43 “When the unclean spirit has gone out of a person, it passes through
waterless places seeking rest, but finds none. 44 Then it says, ‘I will return
to my house from which I came.’ And when it comes, it finds the house
empty, swept, and put in order. 45 Then it goes and brings with it seven
other spirits more evil than itself, and they enter and dwell there, and the
last state of that person is worse than the first. So also will it be with this
evil generation.”

Jesus’ Mother and Brothers

46 ✝✝While he was still speaking to the people, behold, his mother and his
brothers stood outside, asking to speak to him.[1] 48 But he replied to the man
who told him, “Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?” 49 ✝And
stretching out his hand toward his disciples, he said, “Here are my mother
and my brothers! 50 ✝For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is
my brother and sister and mother.”

The Parable of the Sower

13 [1]That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. [2]And great crowds gathered about him, so that he got into a boat and sat down. And the whole crowd stood on the beach. [3]And he told them many things in parables, saying: “A sower went out to sow. [4]And as he sowed, some seeds fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured them. [5]Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and immediately they sprang up, since they had no depth of soil, [6]but when the sun rose they were scorched. And since they had no root, they withered away. [7]Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. [8]Other seeds fell on good soil and produced grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. [9]He who has ears,[1] let him hear.”

The Purpose of the Parables

10 Then the disciples came and said to him, “Why do you speak to them
in parables?” 11 And he answered them, “To you it has been given to know
the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given.
12 For to the one who has, more will be given, and he will have an
abundance, but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken
away. 13 This is why I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not
see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. 14 Indeed, in their
case the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled that says:

> “‘You will indeed hear but never understand,
> and you will indeed see but never perceive.
> 15 For this people’s heart has grown dull,
> and with their ears they can barely hear,
> and their eyes they have closed,
> lest they should see with their eyes
> and hear with their ears
> and understand with their heart
> and turn, and I would heal them.’

16 But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear.
17 For truly, I say to you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see
what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear
it.

The Parable of the Sower Explained

18 ‡ ‡ “Hear then the parable of the sower: 19 † When anyone hears the word
of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches
away what has been sown in his heart. This is what was sown along the
path. 20 As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the
word and immediately receives it with joy, 21 † yet he has no root in himself,
but endures for a while, and when tribulation or persecution arises on
account of the word, immediately he falls away.[1] 22 † As for what was sown
among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world
and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful.
23 † As for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word
and understands it. He indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a
hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.”

The Parable of the Weeds

24 ††He put another parable before them, saying, “The kingdom of heaven
may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field, 25 †but while
his men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds[2] among the
wheat and went away. 26So when the plants came up and bore grain, then
the weeds appeared also. 27And the servants[3] of the master of the house
came and said to him, ‘Master, did you not sow good seed in your field?
How then does it have weeds?’ 28 †He said to them, ‘An enemy has done
this.’ So the servants said to him, ‘Then do you want us to go and gather
them?’ 29But he said, ‘No, lest in gathering the weeds you root up the wheat
along with them. 30 †Let both grow together until the harvest, and at harvest
time I will tell the reapers, Gather the weeds first and bind them in bundles
to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.’”

The Mustard Seed and the Leaven

31 He put another parable before them, saying, “The kingdom of heaven
is like a grain of mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his field. 32 It
is the smallest of all seeds, but when it has grown it is larger than all the
garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make
nests in its branches.”
33 He told them another parable. “The kingdom of heaven is like leaven
that a woman took and hid in three measures of flour, till it was all
leavened.”

Prophecy and Parables

34 All these things Jesus said to the crowds in parables; indeed, he said
nothing to them without a parable. 35 This was to fulfill what was spoken
by the prophet:[1]

> “I will open my mouth in parables;
> I will utter what has been hidden since the
> foundation of the world.”

The Parable of the Weeds Explained

36 ‡ † Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples
came to him, saying, “Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field.”
37 He answered, “The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. 38 †The
field is the world, and the good seed is the sons of the kingdom. The weeds
are the sons of the evil one, 39 and the enemy who sowed them is the devil.
The harvest is the close of the age, and the reapers are angels. 40 †Just as the
weeds are gathered and burned with fire, so will it be at the close of the age.
41 †The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will gather out of his
kingdom all causes of sin and all law-breakers, 42 †and throw them into the
fiery furnace. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.
43 †Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father.
He who has ears, let him hear.

The Parable of the Hidden Treasure

44 “The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

The Parable of the Pearl of Great Value

45 “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine
pearls, 46 who, on finding one pearl of great value, went and sold all that he
had and bought it.

The Parable of the Net

47 “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the
sea and gathered fish of every kind. 48 When it was full, men drew it ashore
and sat down and sorted the good into containers but threw away the bad.
49 So it will be at the close of the age. The angels will come out and
separate the evil from the righteous 50 and throw them into the fiery furnace.
In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

New and Old Treasures

51 ‡† “Have you understood all these things?” They said to him, “Yes.”
52 † And he said to them, “Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like a master of a house, who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.”

Jesus Rejected at Nazareth

53 ‡ † And when Jesus had finished these parables, he went away from
there, 54 † and coming to his hometown he taught them in their synagogue, so
that they were astonished, and said, “Where did this man get this wisdom
and these mighty works? 55 † Is not this the carpenter’s son? Is not his mother
called Mary? And are not his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and
Judas? 56 † And are not all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all
these things?” 57 † And they took offense at him. But Jesus said to them, “A
prophet is not without honor except in his hometown and in his own
household.” 58 † And he did not do many mighty works there, because of
their unbelief.

The Death of John the Baptist

14 [1]‡‡‡At that time Herod the tetrarch heard about the fame of Jesus,
[2]†and he said to his servants, “This is John the Baptist. He has been raised
from the dead; that is why these miraculous powers are at work in him.”
[3]†For Herod had seized John and bound him and put him in prison for the
sake of Herodias, his brother Philip’s wife,[1] [4]† because John had been
saying to him, “It is not lawful for you to have her.” [5]And though he wanted
to put him to death, he feared the people, because they held him to be a
prophet. [6]† But when Herod’s birthday came, the daughter of Herodias
danced before the company and pleased Herod, [7]†so that he promised with
an oath to give her whatever she might ask. [8]†Prompted by her mother, she
said, “Give me the head of John the Baptist here on a platter.” [9]And the king
was sorry, but because of his oaths and his guests he commanded it to be
given. [10]He sent and had John beheaded in the prison, [11]and his head was
brought on a platter and given to the girl, and she brought it to her mother.
[12]†And his disciples came and took the body and buried it, and they went
and told Jesus.

Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand

13 ‡ ‡ ‡ Now when Jesus heard this, he withdrew from there in a boat to a
desolate place by himself. But when the crowds heard it, they followed him
on foot from the towns. 14 † When he went ashore he saw a great crowd, and
he had compassion on them and healed their sick. 15 † Now when it was
evening, the disciples came to him and said, “This is a desolate place, and
the day is now over; send the crowds away to go into the villages and buy
food for themselves.” 16 † But Jesus said, “They need not go away; you give
them something to eat.” 17 † They said to him, “We have only five loaves
here and two fish.” 18 And he said, “Bring them here to me.” 19 † Then he
ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass, and taking the five loaves and
the two fish, he looked up to heaven and said a blessing. Then he broke the
loaves and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the
crowds. 20 † And they all ate and were satisfied. And they took up twelve
baskets full of the broken pieces left over. 21 † And those who ate were about
five thousand men, besides women and children.

Jesus Walks on the Water

22 ‡ † Immediately he made the disciples get into the boat and go before
him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. 23 † And after he had
dismissed the crowds, he went up on the mountain by himself to pray.
When evening came, he was there alone, 24 † but the boat by this time was a
long way[1] from the land,[2] beaten by the waves, for the wind was against
them. 25 † And in the fourth watch of the night he came to them, walking on
the sea. 26 † But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were
terrified, and said, "It is a ghost!" and they cried out in fear. 27 † But
immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Take heart; it is I. Do not be
afraid."

28 † And Peter answered him, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to
you on the water." 29 He said, "Come." So Peter got out of the boat and
walked on the water and came to Jesus. 30 † But when he saw the wind,[3] he
was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried out, "Lord, save me." 31 † Jesus
immediately reached out his hand and took hold of him, saying to him, "O
you of little faith, why did you doubt?" 32 † And when they got into the boat,
the wind ceased. 33 † And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly
you are the Son of God."

Jesus Heals the Sick in Gennesaret

[34] ‡ † And when they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret.
[35] † And when the men of that place recognized him, they sent around to all
that region and brought to him all who were sick [36] † and implored him that
they might only touch the fringe of his garment. And as many as touched it
were made well.

Traditions and Commandments

15 [1]†† Then Pharisees and scribes came to Jesus from Jerusalem and
said, [2]† "Why do your disciples break the tradition of the elders? For they do
not wash their hands when they eat." [3]† He answered them, "And why do
you break the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition? [4]† For
God commanded, 'Honor your father and your mother,' and, 'Whoever
reviles father or mother must surely die.' [5]† But you say, 'If anyone tells his
father or his mother, "What you would have gained from me is given to
God,"[1] [6]† he need not honor his father.' So for the sake of your tradition
you have made void the word[2] of God. [7]† You hypocrites! Well did Isaiah
prophesy of you, when he said:

[8]† "'This people honors me with their lips,
but their heart is far from me;
[9] in vain do they worship me,
teaching as doctrines the commandments of
men.'"

What Defiles a Person

10 And he called the people to him and said to them, “Hear and
understand: 11 it is not what goes into the mouth that defiles a person, but
what comes out of the mouth; this defiles a person.” 12 Then the disciples
came and said to him, “Do you know that the Pharisees were offended when
they heard this saying?” 13 He answered, “Every plant that my heavenly
Father has not planted will be rooted up. 14 Let them alone; they are blind
guides.[1] And if the blind lead the blind, both will fall into a pit.” 15 But
Peter said to him, “Explain the parable to us.” 16 And he said, “Are you also
still without understanding? 17 Do you not see that whatever goes into the
mouth passes into the stomach and is expelled?[2] 18 But what comes out of
the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a person. 19 For out of
the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft,
false witness, slander. 20 These are what defile a person. But to eat with
unwashed hands does not defile anyone.”

The Faith of a Canaanite Woman

21 ‡†And Jesus went away from there and withdrew to the district of Tyre
and Sidon. 22 †And behold, a Canaanite woman from that region came out
and was crying, “Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David; my daughter is
severely oppressed by a demon.” 23 †But he did not answer her a word. And
his disciples came and begged him, saying, “Send her away, for she is
crying out after us.” 24 †He answered, “I was sent only to the lost sheep of
the house of Israel.” 25 †But she came and knelt before him, saying, “Lord,
help me.” 26 †And he answered, “It is not right to take the children’s bread
and throw it to the dogs.” 27 †She said, “Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the
crumbs that fall from their masters’ table.” 28 †Then Jesus answered her, “O
woman, great is your faith! Be it done for you as you desire.” And her
daughter was healed instantly.[3]

Jesus Heals Many

[29] †† Jesus went on from there and walked beside the Sea of Galilee. And
he went up on the mountain and sat down there. [30] † And great crowds came
to him, bringing with them the lame, the blind, the crippled, the mute, and
many others, and they put them at his feet, and he healed them, [31] † so that
the crowd wondered, when they saw the mute speaking, the crippled
healthy, the lame walking, and the blind seeing. And they glorified the God
of Israel.

Jesus Feeds the Four Thousand

[32]†† Then Jesus called his disciples to him and said, “I have compassion
on the crowd because they have been with me now three days and have
nothing to eat. And I am unwilling to send them away hungry, lest they faint
on the way.” [33]† And the disciples said to him, “Where are we to get enough
bread in such a desolate place to feed so great a crowd?” [34]† And Jesus said
to them, “How many loaves do you have?” They said, “Seven, and a few
small fish.” [35]And directing the crowd to sit down on the ground, [36]† he took
the seven loaves and the fish, and having given thanks he broke them and
gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds.
[37]† And they all ate and were satisfied. And they took up seven baskets full
of the broken pieces left over. [38]† Those who ate were four thousand men,
besides women and children. [39]† And after sending away the crowds, he got
into the boat and went to the region of Magadan.

The Pharisees and Sadducees Demand Signs

16 [1]And the Pharisees and Sadducees came, and to test him they asked him to show them a sign from heaven. [2]He answered them,[1] "When it is evening, you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red.' [3]And in the morning, 'It will be stormy today, for the sky is red and threatening.' You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times. [4]An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah." So he left them and departed.

The Leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees

5 When the disciples reached the other side, they had forgotten to bring
any bread. 6 Jesus said to them, “Watch and beware of the leaven of the
Pharisees and Sadducees.” 7 And they began discussing it among
themselves, saying, “We brought no bread.” 8 But Jesus, aware of this, said,
“O you of little faith, why are you discussing among yourselves the fact that
you have no bread? 9 Do you not yet perceive? Do you not remember the
five loaves for the five thousand, and how many baskets you gathered? 10 Or
the seven loaves for the four thousand, and how many baskets you
gathered? 11 How is it that you fail to understand that I did not speak about
bread? Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees.” 12 Then they
understood that he did not tell them to beware of the leaven of bread, but of
the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

Peter Confesses Jesus as the Christ

13 ‡†Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked
his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” 14 †And they
said, “Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or
one of the prophets.” 15 †He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?”
16 †Simon Peter replied, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”
17 †And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh
and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven.
18 †And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock[1] I will build my church,
and the gates of hell[2] shall not prevail against it. 19 †I will give you the keys
of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in
heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed[3] in heaven.”
20 †Then he strictly charged the disciples to tell no one that he was the
Christ.

Jesus Foretells His Death and Resurrection

21 ‡ † From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to
Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and
scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. 22 † And Peter took him
aside and began to rebuke him, saying, “Far be it from you, Lord![1] This
shall never happen to you.” 23 † But he turned and said to Peter, “Get behind
me, Satan! You are a hindrance[2] to me. For you are not setting your mind
on the things of God, but on the things of man.”

Take Up Your Cross and Follow Jesus

[24] Then Jesus told his disciples, “If anyone would come after me, let
him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. [25] For whoever
would save his life[3] will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will
find it. [26] For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and
forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul? [27] For the
Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and
then he will repay each person according to what he has done. [28] Truly, I
say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they
see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.”

The Transfiguration

17 [1]‡†And after six days Jesus took with him Peter and James, and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. [2]†And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became white as light. [3]†And behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him. [4]†And Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good that we are here. If you wish, I will make three tents here, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah.” [5]†He was still speaking when, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, “This is my beloved Son,[1] with whom I am well pleased; listen to him.” [6]†When the disciples heard this, they fell on their faces and were terrified. [7]†But Jesus came and touched them, saying, “Rise, and have no fear.” [8]† And when they lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only.

[9]†And as they were coming down the mountain, Jesus commanded them, “Tell no one the vision, until the Son of Man is raised from the dead.” [10]† And the disciples asked him, “Then why do the scribes say that first Elijah must come?” [11]†He answered, “Elijah does come, and he will restore all things. [12]†But I tell you that Elijah has already come, and they did not recognize him, but did to him whatever they pleased. So also the Son of Man will certainly suffer at their hands.” [13]†Then the disciples understood that he was speaking to them of John the Baptist.

Jesus Heals a Boy with a Demon

14 ‡ † And when they came to the crowd, a man came up to him and,
kneeling before him, 15 † said, “Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is an
epileptic and he suffers terribly. For often he falls into the fire, and often
into the water. 16 † And I brought him to your disciples, and they could not
heal him.” 17 † And Jesus answered, “O faithless and twisted generation, how
long am I to be with you? How long am I to bear with you? Bring him here
to me.” 18 † And Jesus rebuked the demon,[2] and it[3] came out of him, and
the boy was healed instantly.[4] 19 † Then the disciples came to Jesus privately
and said, “Why could we not cast it out?” 20 † He said to them, “Because of
your little faith. For truly, I say to you, if you have faith like a grain of
mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and
it will move, and nothing will be impossible for you.”[1]

Jesus Again Foretells Death, Resurrection

22 ‡‡As they were gathering[2] in Galilee, Jesus said to them, “The Son of
Man is about to be delivered into the hands of men, 23 ‡and they will kill
him, and he will be raised on the third day.” And they were greatly
distressed.

The Temple Tax

[24] ‡ † When they came to Capernaum, the collectors of the two-drachma
tax went up to Peter and said, “Does your teacher not pay the tax?” [25] † He
said, “Yes.” And when he came into the house, Jesus spoke to him first,
saying, “What do you think, Simon? From whom do kings of the earth take
toll or tax? From their sons or from others?” [26] † And when he said, “From
others,” Jesus said to him, “Then the sons are free. [27] † However, not to give
offense to them, go to the sea and cast a hook and take the first fish that
comes up, and when you open its mouth you will find a shekel.[3] Take that
and give it to them for me and for yourself.”

Who Is the Greatest?

18 [1]‡†At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” [2]And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them [3]†and said, “Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. [4]†Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

[5]† “Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, [6]† but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin,[4] it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened around his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea.

Temptations to Sin

7 ‡ † “Woe to the world for temptations to sin![1] For it is necessary that
temptations come, but woe to the one by whom the temptation comes!
8 ‡ And if your hand or your foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it
away. It is better for you to enter life crippled or lame than with two hands
or two feet to be thrown into the eternal fire. 9 And if your eye causes you to
sin, tear it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one
eye than with two eyes to be thrown into the hell[2] of fire.

The Parable of the Lost Sheep

10 ‡ ‡ “See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I tell you
that in heaven their angels always see the face of my Father who is in
heaven.[3] 12 ‡ What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of
them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains
and go in search of the one that went astray? 13 And if he finds it, truly, I say
to you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine that never went
astray. 14 † So it is not the will of my[4] Father who is in heaven that one of
these little ones should perish.

If Your Brother Sins Against You

15 ‡‡“If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between
you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother.
16 †But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that
every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses.
17 †If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to
listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.
18 †Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven,
and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed[5] in heaven. 19 †Again I say
to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done
for them by my Father in heaven. 20 †For where two or three are gathered in
my name, there am I among them.”

The Parable of the Unforgiving Servant

21 ‡ † Then Peter came up and said to him, “Lord, how often will my
brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?”
22 † Jesus said to him, “I do not say to you seven times, but seventy times
seven.[1]
23 ‡ “Therefore the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who
wished to settle accounts with his servants.[2] 24 † When he began to settle,
one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents.[3] 25 † And since
he could not pay, his master ordered him to be sold, with his wife and
children and all that he had, and payment to be made. 26 † So the servant[4]
fell on his knees, imploring him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay
you everything.’ 27 † And out of pity for him, the master of that servant
released him and forgave him the debt. 28 † But when that same servant went
out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii,[5]
and seizing him, he began to choke him, saying, ‘Pay what you owe.’ 29 † So
his fellow servant fell down and pleaded with him, ‘Have patience with me,
and I will pay you.’ 30 † He refused and went and put him in prison until he
should pay the debt. 31 When his fellow servants saw what had taken place,
they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their master all
that had taken place. 32 † Then his master summoned him and said to him,
‘You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with
me. 33 And should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had
mercy on you?’ 34 † And in anger his master delivered him to the jailers,[6]
until he should pay all his debt. 35 † So also my heavenly Father will do to
every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart.”

Teaching About Divorce

19 [1] Now when Jesus had finished these sayings, he went away
from Galilee and entered the region of Judea beyond the Jordan. [2] And
large crowds followed him, and he healed them there.

[3] And Pharisees came up to him and tested him by asking, "Is it lawful to
divorce one's wife for any cause?" [4] He answered, "Have you not read that
he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, [5] and
said, 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to
his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? [6] So they are no longer two
but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man
separate." [7] They said to him, "Why then did Moses command one to give
a certificate of divorce and to send her away?" [8] He said to them, "Because
of your hardness of heart Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but
from the beginning it was not so. [9] And I say to you: whoever divorces his
wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits
adultery."[1]

[10] The disciples said to him, "If such is the case of a man with his wife, it
is better not to marry." [11] But he said to them, "Not everyone can receive
this saying, but only those to whom it is given. [12] For there are eunuchs
who have been so from birth, and there are eunuchs who have been made
eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs
for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. Let the one who is able to receive
this receive it."

Let the Children Come to Me

13 ‡ † Then children were brought to him that he might lay his hands on
them and pray. The disciples rebuked the people, 14 † but Jesus said, “Let the
little children come to me and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the
kingdom of heaven.” 15 † And he laid his hands on them and went away.

The Rich Young Man

16 ‡ † And behold, a man came up to him, saying, “Teacher, what good
deed must I do to have eternal life?” 17 † And he said to him, “Why do you
ask me about what is good? There is only one who is good. If you would
enter life, keep the commandments.” 18 ‡ He said to him, “Which ones?” And
Jesus said, “You shall not murder, You shall not commit adultery, You shall
not steal, You shall not bear false witness, 19 † Honor your father and mother,
and, You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” 20 † The young man said to
him, “All these I have kept. What do I still lack?” 21 † Jesus said to him, “If
you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess and give to the poor, and
you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.” 22 † When the
young man heard this he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.
23 ‡ And Jesus said to his disciples, “Truly, I say to you, only with
difficulty will a rich person enter the kingdom of heaven. 24 Again I tell you,
it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich
person to enter the kingdom of God.” 25 † When the disciples heard this, they
were greatly astonished, saying, “Who then can be saved?” 26 † But Jesus
looked at them and said, “With man this is impossible, but with God all
things are possible.” 27 † Then Peter said in reply, “See, we have left
everything and followed you. What then will we have?” 28 † Jesus said to
them, “Truly, I say to you, in the new world,[1] when the Son of Man will sit
on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve
thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. 29 † And everyone who has left
houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands, for my
name’s sake, will receive a hundredfold[2] and will inherit eternal life. 30 † But
many who are first will be last, and the last first.

Laborers in the Vineyard

20 [1]†††“For the kingdom of heaven is like a master of a house who
went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. [2]After
agreeing with the laborers for a denarius[3] a day, he sent them into his
vineyard. [3]†And going out about the third hour he saw others standing idle
in the marketplace, [4]†and to them he said, ‘You go into the vineyard too,
and whatever is right I will give you.’ [5]†So they went. Going out again
about the sixth hour and the ninth hour, he did the same. [6]†And about the
eleventh hour he went out and found others standing. And he said to them,
‘Why do you stand here idle all day?’ [7]†They said to him, ‘Because no one
has hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You go into the vineyard too.’ [8]†And when
evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, ‘Call the
laborers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last, up to the first.’
[9]† And when those hired about the eleventh hour came, each of them
received a denarius. [10]‡Now when those hired first came, they thought they
would receive more, but each of them also received a denarius. [11]And on
receiving it they grumbled at the master of the house, [12]saying, ‘These last
worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne
the burden of the day and the scorching heat.’ [13]†But he replied to one of
them, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a
denarius? [14]†Take what belongs to you and go. I choose to give to this last
worker as I give to you. [15]†Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what
belongs to me? Or do you begrudge my generosity?’[1] [16]†So the last will be
first, and the first last.”

Jesus Foretells His Death a Third Time

17 ✝✝And as Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he took the twelve disciples
aside, and on the way he said to them, 18 ✝ “See, we are going up to
Jerusalem. And the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests
and scribes, and they will condemn him to death 19 ✝and deliver him over to
the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified, and he will be raised
on the third day.”

A Mother's Request

20 ‡ † Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee came up to him with her
sons, and kneeling before him she asked him for something. 21 † And he said
to her, "What do you want?" She said to him, "Say that these two sons of
mine are to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your
kingdom." 22 † Jesus answered, "You do not know what you are asking. Are
you able to drink the cup that I am to drink?" They said to him, "We are
able." 23 † He said to them, "You will drink my cup, but to sit at my right
hand and at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has
been prepared by my Father." 24 † And when the ten heard it, they were
indignant at the two brothers. 25 † But Jesus called them to him and said,
"You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great
ones exercise authority over them. 26 † It shall not be so among you. But
whoever would be great among you must be your servant,[2] 27 † and whoever
would be first among you must be your slave,[1] 28 † even as the Son of Man
came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for
many."

Jesus Heals Two Blind Men

[29]†† And as they went out of Jericho, a great crowd followed him. [30]† And behold, there were two blind men sitting by the roadside, and when they heard that Jesus was passing by, they cried out, “Lord,[2] have mercy on us, Son of David!” [31]† The crowd rebuked them, telling them to be silent, but they cried out all the more, “Lord, have mercy on us, Son of David!” [32]† And stopping, Jesus called them and said, “What do you want me to do for you?” [33]They said to him, “Lord, let our eyes be opened.” [34]† And Jesus in pity touched their eyes, and immediately they recovered their sight and followed him.

The Triumphal Entry

21 [1] † † Now when they drew near to Jerusalem and came to
Bethphage, to the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, [2] †saying
to them, "Go into the village in front of you, and immediately you will find
a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them to me. [3] †If
anyone says anything to you, you shall say, 'The Lord needs them,' and he
will send them at once." [4] †This took place to fulfill what was spoken by the
prophet, saying,

> [5] "Say to the daughter of Zion,
> 'Behold, your king is coming to you,
> humble, and mounted on a donkey,
> and[3] on a colt, the foal of a beast of
> burden.'"

[6]The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them. [7] †They brought the
donkey and the colt and put on them their cloaks, and he sat on them.
[8] † Most of the crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut
branches from the trees and spread them on the road. [9] †And the crowds that
went before him and that followed him were shouting, "Hosanna to the Son
of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the
highest!" [10]And when he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred up,
saying, "Who is this?" [11] †And the crowds said, "This is the prophet Jesus,
from Nazareth of Galilee."

Jesus Cleanses the Temple

12 ✝ ✝ And Jesus entered the temple[1] and drove out all who sold and
bought in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money-changers
and the seats of those who sold pigeons. 13 ✝ He said to them, “It is written,
‘My house shall be called a house of prayer,’ but you make it a den of
robbers.”
14 ✝ And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple, and he healed
them. 15 ✝ But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the wonderful
things that he did, and the children crying out in the temple, “Hosanna to
the Son of David!” they were indignant, 16 ✝ and they said to him, “Do you
hear what these are saying?” And Jesus said to them, “Yes; have you never
read,

> “‘Out of the mouth of infants and nursing babies
> you have prepared praise’?”

17 ✝ And leaving them, he went out of the city to Bethany and lodged there.

Jesus Curses the Fig Tree

18 ‡ †In the morning, as he was returning to the city, he became hungry.
19 ‡And seeing a fig tree by the wayside, he went to it and found nothing on
it but only leaves. And he said to it, “May no fruit ever come from you
again!” And the fig tree withered at once.
20 When the disciples saw it, they marveled, saying, “How did the fig tree
wither at once?” 21 ‡And Jesus answered them, “Truly, I say to you, if you
have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what has been done to the
fig tree, but even if you say to this mountain, ‘Be taken up and thrown into
the sea,’ it will happen. 22 And whatever you ask in prayer, you will receive,
if you have faith.”

The Authority of Jesus Challenged

23 ✝✝And when he entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of
the people came up to him as he was teaching, and said, “By what authority
are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?” 24 ✝Jesus
answered them, “I also will ask you one question, and if you tell me the
answer, then I also will tell you by what authority I do these things. 25The
baptism of John, from where did it come? From heaven or from man?” And
they discussed it among themselves, saying, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he
will say to us, ‘Why then did you not believe him?’ 26✝But if we say, ‘From
man,’ we are afraid of the crowd, for they all hold that John was a prophet.”
27 ✝So they answered Jesus, “We do not know.” And he said to them,
“Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things.

The Parable of the Two Sons

[28] “What do you think? A man had two sons. And he went to the first
and said, ‘Son, go and work in the vineyard today.’ [29] And he answered, ‘I
will not,’ but afterward he changed his mind and went. [30] And he went to
the other son and said the same. And he answered, ‘I go, sir,’ but did not go.
[31] Which of the two did the will of his father?” They said, “The first.” Jesus
said to them, “Truly, I say to you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes go
into the kingdom of God before you. [32] For John came to you in the way of
righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the
prostitutes believed him. And even when you saw it, you did not afterward
change your minds and believe him.

The Parable of the Tenants

33 ‡‡‡“Hear another parable. There was a master of a house who planted a
vineyard and put a fence around it and dug a winepress in it and built a
tower and leased it to tenants, and went into another country. 34 ‡When the
season for fruit drew near, he sent his servants[1] to the tenants to get his
fruit. 35 ‡And the tenants took his servants and beat one, killed another, and
stoned another. 36 ‡Again he sent other servants, more than the first. And
they did the same to them. 37 ‡Finally he sent his son to them, saying, ‘They
will respect my son.’ 38 ‡But when the tenants saw the son, they said to
themselves, ‘This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and have his
inheritance.’ 39 ‡And they took him and threw him out of the vineyard and
killed him. 40 ‡When therefore the owner of the vineyard comes, what will
he do to those tenants?” 41 They said to him, “He will put those wretches to a
miserable death and let out the vineyard to other tenants who will give him
the fruits in their seasons.”

42 ‡Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the Scriptures:

> “‘The stone that the builders rejected
> has become the cornerstone;[2]
> this was the Lord’s doing,
> and it is marvelous in our eyes’?

43 ‡Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you
and given to a people producing its fruits. 44 ‡And the one who falls on this
stone will be broken to pieces; and when it falls on anyone, it will crush
him.”[1]

45 ‡When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they
perceived that he was speaking about them. 46 ‡And although they were
seeking to arrest him, they feared the crowds, because they held him to be a
prophet.

The Parable of the Wedding Feast

22 [1]‡‡And again Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying, [2]†“The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son, [3]†and sent his servants[2] to call those who were invited to the wedding feast, but they would not come. [4]†Again he sent other servants, saying, ‘Tell those who are invited, See, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding feast.’ [5]‡But they paid no attention and went off, one to his farm, another to his business, [6]while the rest seized his servants, treated them shamefully, and killed them. [7]†The king was angry, and he sent his troops and destroyed those murderers and burned their city. [8]†Then he said to his servants, ‘The wedding feast is ready, but those invited were not worthy. [9]†Go therefore to the main roads and invite to the wedding feast as many as you find.’ [10]†And those servants went out into the roads and gathered all whom they found, both bad and good. So the wedding hall was filled with guests.

[11]‡“But when the king came in to look at the guests, he saw there a man who had no wedding garment. [12]And he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding garment?’ And he was speechless. [13]†Then the king said to the attendants, ‘Bind him hand and foot and cast him into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ [14]†For many are called, but few are chosen.”

Paying Taxes to Caesar

15 ‡ † Then the Pharisees went and plotted how to entangle him in his
words. 16 † And they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians,
saying, “Teacher, we know that you are true and teach the way of God
truthfully, and you do not care about anyone’s opinion, for you are not
swayed by appearances.[1] 17 † Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to
pay taxes to Caesar, or not?” 18 † But Jesus, aware of their malice, said,
“Why put me to the test, you hypocrites? 19 ‡ Show me the coin for the tax.”
And they brought him a denarius.[2] 20 And Jesus said to them, “Whose
likeness and inscription is this?” 21 † They said, “Caesar’s.” Then he said to
them, “Therefore render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God
the things that are God’s.” 22 When they heard it, they marveled. And they
left him and went away.

Sadducees Ask About the Resurrection

[23] The same day Sadducees came to him, who say that there is no resurrection, and they asked him a question, [24] saying, “Teacher, Moses said, ‘If a man dies having no children, his brother must marry the widow and raise up children for his brother.’ [25] Now there were seven brothers among us. The first married and died, and having no children left his wife to his brother. [26]So too the second and third, down to the seventh. [27]After them all, the woman died. [28] In the resurrection, therefore, of the seven, whose wife will she be? For they all had her.”

[29] But Jesus answered them, “You are wrong, because you know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God. [30] For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven. [31] And as for the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was said to you by God: [32]‘I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’? He is not God of the dead, but of the living.” [33] And when the crowd heard it, they were astonished at his teaching.

The Great Commandment

[34] ‡ † But when the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees,
they gathered together. [35] † And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question
to test him. [36] † “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?”
[37] ‡ ‡ And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your
heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. [38] This is the great and
first commandment. [39] † And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor
as yourself. [40] † On these two commandments depend all the Law and the
Prophets.”

Whose Son Is the Christ?

41 †Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them a
question, 42 †saying, “What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is
he?” They said to him, “The son of David.” 43 †He said to them, “How is it
then that David, in the Spirit, calls him Lord, saying,

> 44 “‘The Lord said to my Lord,
> Sit at my right hand,
> until I put your enemies under your feet’?

45 †If then David calls him Lord, how is he his son?” 46 †And no one was able
to answer him a word, nor from that day did anyone dare to ask him any
more questions.

Seven Woes to the Scribes and Pharisees

23 [1] Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples, [2] "The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat, [3] so practice and observe whatever they tell you—but not what they do. For they preach, but do not practice. [4] They tie up heavy burdens, hard to bear,[1] and lay them on people's shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to move them with their finger. [5] They do all their deeds to be seen by others. For they make their phylacteries broad and their fringes long, [6] and they love the place of honor at feasts and the best seats in the synagogues [7] and greetings in the marketplaces and being called rabbi[2] by others. [8] But you are not to be called rabbi, for you have one teacher, and you are all brothers.[3] [9] And call no man your father on earth, for you have one Father, who is in heaven. [10] Neither be called instructors, for you have one instructor, the Christ. [11] The greatest among you shall be your servant. [12] Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.

[13] "But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut the kingdom of heaven in people's faces. For you neither enter yourselves nor allow those who would enter to go in.[1] [15] Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel across sea and land to make a single proselyte, and when he becomes a proselyte, you make him twice as much a child of hell[2] as yourselves.

[16] "Woe to you, blind guides, who say, 'If anyone swears by the temple, it is nothing, but if anyone swears by the gold of the temple, he is bound by his oath.' [17] You blind fools! For which is greater, the gold or the temple that has made the gold sacred? [18] And you say, 'If anyone swears by the altar, it is nothing, but if anyone swears by the gift that is on the altar, he is bound by his oath.' [19] You blind men! For which is greater, the gift or the altar that makes the gift sacred? [20] So whoever swears by the altar swears by it and by everything on it. [21] And whoever swears by the temple swears by it and by him who dwells in it. [22] And whoever swears by heaven swears by the throne of God and by him who sits upon it.

23 † “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and
dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice
and mercy and faithfulness. These you ought to have done, without
neglecting the others. 24 † You blind guides, straining out a gnat and
swallowing a camel!
25 ‡ “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the
outside of the cup and the plate, but inside they are full of greed and self-
indulgence. 26 You blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and the
plate, that the outside also may be clean.
27 ‡ † “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like
whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within are full
of dead people’s bones and all uncleanness. 28 † So you also outwardly
appear righteous to others, but within you are full of hypocrisy and
lawlessness.
29 ‡ † “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you build the
tombs of the prophets and decorate the monuments of the righteous,
30 ‡ saying, ‘If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have
taken part with them in shedding the blood of the prophets.’ 31 † Thus you
witness against yourselves that you are sons of those who murdered the
prophets. 32 † Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers. 33 † You serpents, you
brood of vipers, how are you to escape being sentenced to hell?
34 † Therefore I send you prophets and wise men and scribes, some of whom
you will kill and crucify, and some you will flog in your synagogues and
persecute from town to town, 35 † so that on you may come all the righteous
blood shed on earth, from the blood of innocent Abel to the blood of
Zechariah the son of Barachiah,[1] whom you murdered between the
sanctuary and the altar. 36 † Truly, I say to you, all these things will come
upon this generation.

Lament over Jerusalem

37 ‡ ‡ “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones
those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children
together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not!
38 ‡ See, your house is left to you desolate. 39 ‡ For I tell you, you will not see
me again, until you say, ‘Blessed is he who comes in the name of the
Lord.’”

Jesus Foretells Destruction of the Temple

24 [1]†††Jesus left the temple and was going away, when his disciples
came to point out to him the buildings of the temple. [2]† But he answered
them, “You see all these, do you not? Truly, I say to you, there will not be
left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down.”

Signs of the Close of the Age

3 †As he sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately,
saying, “Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of
your coming and of the close of the age?” 4 †And Jesus answered them, “See
that no one leads you astray. 5 †For many will come in my name, saying, ‘I
am the Christ,’ and they will lead many astray. 6 †And you will hear of wars
and rumors of wars. See that you are not alarmed, for this must take place,
but the end is not yet. 7 For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom
against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various
places. 8 †All these are but the beginning of the birth pains.

9 †“Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and put you to death, and
you will be hated by all nations for my name’s sake. 10 †And then many will
fall away[1] and betray one another and hate one another. 11 †And many false
prophets will arise and lead many astray. 12 †And because lawlessness will
be increased, the love of many will grow cold. 13 †But the one who endures
to the end will be saved. 14 † And this gospel of the kingdom will be
proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and
then the end will come.

The Abomination of Desolation

15 ‡ † “So when you see the abomination of desolation spoken of by the
prophet Daniel, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand),
16 † then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. 17 ‡ Let the one who
is on the housetop not go down to take what is in his house, 18 and let the one
who is in the field not turn back to take his cloak. 19 And alas for women
who are pregnant and for those who are nursing infants in those days!
20 † Pray that your flight may not be in winter or on a Sabbath. 21 † For then
there will be great tribulation, such as has not been from the beginning of
the world until now, no, and never will be. 22 † And if those days had not
been cut short, no human being would be saved. But for the sake of the
elect those days will be cut short. 23 ‡ Then if anyone says to you, ‘Look,
here is the Christ!’ or ‘There he is!’ do not believe it. 24 For false christs and
false prophets will arise and perform great signs and wonders, so as to lead
astray, if possible, even the elect. 25 † See, I have told you beforehand. 26 † So,
if they say to you, ‘Look, he is in the wilderness,’ do not go out. If they say,
‘Look, he is in the inner rooms,’ do not believe it. 27 † For as the lightning
comes from the east and shines as far as the west, so will be the coming of
the Son of Man. 28 † Wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will gather.

The Coming of the Son of Man

29 ✝ ✝ “Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be
darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from
heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. 30 ✝ Then will appear
in heaven the sign of the Son of Man, and then all the tribes of the earth will
mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven
with power and great glory. 31 ✝ And he will send out his angels with a loud
trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one
end of heaven to the other.

The Lesson of the Fig Tree

32 ††“From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes
tender and puts out its leaves, you know that summer is near. 33 †So also,
when you see all these things, you know that he is near, at the very gates.
34 †Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these
things take place. 35 †Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will
not pass away.

No One Knows That Day and Hour

36 “But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels
of heaven, nor the Son,[1] but the Father only. 37 For as were the days of
Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. 38 For as in those days
before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in
marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, 39 and they were unaware
until the flood came and swept them all away, so will be the coming of the
Son of Man. 40 Then two men will be in the field; one will be taken and one
left. 41 Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken and one
left. 42 Therefore, stay awake, for you do not know on what day your Lord
is coming. 43 But know this, that if the master of the house had known in
what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake
and would not have let his house be broken into. 44 Therefore you also must
be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

45 “Who then is the faithful and wise servant,[1] whom his master has set
over his household, to give them their food at the proper time? 46 Blessed is
that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes. 47 Truly, I
say to you, he will set him over all his possessions. 48 But if that wicked
servant says to himself, ‘My master is delayed,’ 49 and begins to beat his
fellow servants[2] and eats and drinks with drunkards, 50 the master of that
servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he
does not know 51 and will cut him in pieces and put him with the
hypocrites. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

The Parable of the Ten Virgins

25 [1]‡‡“Then the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took
their lamps[3] and went to meet the bridegroom.[4] [2]† Five of them were
foolish, and five were wise. [3]†For when the foolish took their lamps, they
took no oil with them, [4]but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. [5]†As
the bridegroom was delayed, they all became drowsy and slept. [6]† But at
midnight there was a cry, ‘Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.’
[7]†Then all those virgins rose and trimmed their lamps. [8]‡And the foolish
said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’
[9]But the wise answered, saying, ‘Since there will not be enough for us and
for you, go rather to the dealers and buy for yourselves.’ [10]†And while they
were going to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in
with him to the marriage feast, and the door was shut. [11]‡Afterward the
other virgins came also, saying, ‘Lord, lord, open to us.’ [12]But he answered,
‘Truly, I say to you, I do not know you.’ [13]†Watch therefore, for you know
neither the day nor the hour.

The Parable of the Talents

14 ‡ ‡ “For it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his
servants[1] and entrusted to them his property. 15†To one he gave five talents,
[2] to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he
went away. 16‡He who had received the five talents went at once and traded
with them, and he made five talents more. 17So also he who had the two
talents made two talents more. 18† But he who had received the one talent
went and dug in the ground and hid his master’s money. 19†Now after a long
time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them.
20† And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five
talents more, saying, ‘Master, you delivered to me five talents; here I have
made five talents more.’ 21† His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and
faithful servant.[3] You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over
much. Enter into the joy of your master.’ 22‡And he also who had the two
talents came forward, saying, ‘Master, you delivered to me two talents; here
I have made two talents more.’ 23His master said to him, ‘Well done, good
and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over
much. Enter into the joy of your master.’ 24† He also who had received the
one talent came forward, saying, ‘Master, I knew you to be a hard man,
reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you scattered no seed,
25so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you
have what is yours.’ 26‡ But his master answered him, ‘You wicked and
slothful servant! You knew that I reap where I have not sown and gather
where I scattered no seed? 27Then you ought to have invested my money
with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my
own with interest. 28‡So take the talent from him and give it to him who has
the ten talents. 29For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will
have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be
taken away. 30† And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. In
that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

The Final Judgment

31 ‡ † “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with
him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. 32 † Before him will be gathered
all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd
separates the sheep from the goats. 33 † And he will place the sheep on his
right, but the goats on the left. 34 † Then the King will say to those on his
right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom
prepared for you from the foundation of the world. 35 ‡ For I was hungry and
you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger
and you welcomed me, 36 I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and
you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.’ 37 † Then the righteous
will answer him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you,
or thirsty and give you drink? 38 † And when did we see you a stranger and
welcome you, or naked and clothe you? 39 † And when did we see you sick
or in prison and visit you?’ 40 † And the King will answer them, ‘Truly, I say
to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers,[1] you did it to
me.’

41 † “Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you cursed,
into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. 42 ‡ For I was
hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink,
43 I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not
clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.’ 44 † Then they also
will answer, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a
stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?’ 45 † Then
he will answer them, saying, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one
of the least of these, you did not do it to me.’ 46 † And these will go away into
eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

The Plot to Kill Jesus

26 [1] When Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said to his disciples, [2] "You know that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Man will be delivered up to be crucified."

[3] Then the chief priests and the elders of the people gathered in the palace of the high priest, whose name was Caiaphas, [4] and plotted together in order to arrest Jesus by stealth and kill him. [5] But they said, "Not during the feast, lest there be an uproar among the people."

Jesus Anointed at Bethany

6 Now when Jesus was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper,[2] 7 a
woman came up to him with an alabaster flask of very expensive ointment,
and she poured it on his head as he reclined at table. 8 And when the
disciples saw it, they were indignant, saying, “Why this waste? 9 For this
could have been sold for a large sum and given to the poor.” 10 But Jesus,
aware of this, said to them, “Why do you trouble the woman? For she has
done a beautiful thing to me. 11 For you always have the poor with you, but
you will not always have me. 12 In pouring this ointment on my body, she
has done it to prepare me for burial. 13 Truly, I say to you, wherever this
gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will also be told
in memory of her.”

Judas to Betray Jesus

14 ‡ ‡ Then one of the twelve, whose name was Judas Iscariot, went to the
chief priests 15 † and said, “What will you give me if I deliver him over to
you?” And they paid him thirty pieces of silver. 16 † And from that moment
he sought an opportunity to betray him.

The Passover with the Disciples

17 ✝ ✝ Now on the first day of Unleavened Bread the disciples came to
Jesus, saying, “Where will you have us prepare for you to eat the
Passover?” 18 ✝ He said, “Go into the city to a certain man and say to him,
‘The Teacher says, My time is at hand. I will keep the Passover at your
house with my disciples.’” 19 And the disciples did as Jesus had directed
them, and they prepared the Passover.

20 ✝ When it was evening, he reclined at table with the twelve.[1] 21 ✝ And as
they were eating, he said, “Truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me.”
22 ✝ And they were very sorrowful and began to say to him one after another,
“Is it I, Lord?” 23 ✝ He answered, “He who has dipped his hand in the dish
with me will betray me. 24 ✝ The Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but
woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been
better for that man if he had not been born.” 25 ✝ Judas, who would betray
him, answered, “Is it I, Rabbi?” He said to him, “You have said so.”

Institution of the Lord's Supper

[26]†† Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke
it and gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." [27]† And
he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying,
"Drink of it, all of you, [28]† for this is my blood of the[1] covenant, which is
poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. [29]† I tell you I will not drink
again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in
my Father's kingdom."

Jesus Foretells Peter's Denial

[30] ‡ † And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of
Olives. [31] † Then Jesus said to them, "You will all fall away because of me
this night. For it is written, 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the
flock will be scattered.' [32] But after I am raised up, I will go before you to
Galilee." [33] † Peter answered him, "Though they all fall away because of you,
I will never fall away." [34] † Jesus said to him, "Truly, I tell you, this very
night, before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times." [35] † Peter said
to him, "Even if I must die with you, I will not deny you!" And all the
disciples said the same.

Jesus Prays in Gethsemane

[36]†† Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane, and he said
to his disciples, “Sit here, while I go over there and pray.” [37]† And taking
with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, he began to be sorrowful and
troubled. [38]† Then he said to them, “My soul is very sorrowful, even to
death; remain here, and watch[2] with me.” [39]† And going a little farther he
fell on his face and prayed, saying, “My Father, if it be possible, let this cup
pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will.” [40]† And he came
to the disciples and found them sleeping. And he said to Peter, “So, could
you not watch with me one hour? [41]† Watch and pray that you may not enter
into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.” [42]Again,
for the second time, he went away and prayed, “My Father, if this cannot
pass unless I drink it, your will be done.” [43]And again he came and found
them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. [44]† So, leaving them again, he went
away and prayed for the third time, saying the same words again. [45]† Then
he came to the disciples and said to them, “Sleep and take your rest later on.
[1] See, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of
sinners. [46]Rise, let us be going; see, my betrayer is at hand.”

Betrayal and Arrest of Jesus

47 ‡ † While he was still speaking, Judas came, one of the twelve, and with
him a great crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the
elders of the people. 48 † Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying,
"The one I will kiss is the man; seize him." 49 † And he came up to Jesus at
once and said, "Greetings, Rabbi!" And he kissed him. 50 † Jesus said to him,
"Friend, do what you came to do."[2] Then they came up and laid hands on
Jesus and seized him. 51 † And behold, one of those who were with Jesus
stretched out his hand and drew his sword and struck the servant[3] of the
high priest and cut off his ear. 52 † Then Jesus said to him, "Put your sword
back into its place. For all who take the sword will perish by the sword.
53 † Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send
me more than twelve legions of angels? 54 † But how then should the
Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must be so?" 55 † At that hour Jesus said to the
crowds, "Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs to
capture me? Day after day I sat in the temple teaching, and you did not
seize me. 56 † But all this has taken place that the Scriptures of the prophets
might be fulfilled." Then all the disciples left him and fled.

Jesus Before Caiaphas and the Council

57 ‡† Then those who had seized Jesus led him to Caiaphas the high priest,
where the scribes and the elders had gathered. 58 † And Peter was following
him at a distance, as far as the courtyard of the high priest, and going inside
he sat with the guards to see the end. 59 † Now the chief priests and the whole
Council[4] were seeking false testimony against Jesus that they might put
him to death, 60 † but they found none, though many false witnesses came
forward. At last two came forward 61 † and said, “This man said, ‘I am able
to destroy the temple of God, and to rebuild it in three days.’” 62 And the
high priest stood up and said, “Have you no answer to make? What is it that
these men testify against you?”[5] 63 † But Jesus remained silent. And the high
priest said to him, “I adjure you by the living God, tell us if you are the
Christ, the Son of God.” 64 † Jesus said to him, “You have said so. But I tell
you, from now on you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of
Power and coming on the clouds of heaven.” 65 † Then the high priest tore his
robes and said, “He has uttered blasphemy. What further witnesses do we
need? You have now heard his blasphemy. 66 † What is your judgment?”
They answered, “He deserves death.” 67 † Then they spit in his face and
struck him. And some slapped him, 68 † saying, “Prophesy to us, you Christ!
Who is it that struck you?”

Peter Denies Jesus

69 ‡ † Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. And a servant girl
came up to him and said, “You also were with Jesus the Galilean.” 70 But he
denied it before them all, saying, “I do not know what you mean.” 71 And
when he went out to the entrance, another servant girl saw him, and she said
to the bystanders, “This man was with Jesus of Nazareth.” 72 † And again he
denied it with an oath: “I do not know the man.” 73 † After a little while the
bystanders came up and said to Peter, “Certainly you too are one of them,
for your accent betrays you.” 74 † Then he began to invoke a curse on himself
and to swear, “I do not know the man.” And immediately the rooster
crowed. 75 † And Peter remembered the saying of Jesus, “Before the rooster
crows, you will deny me three times.” And he went out and wept bitterly.

Jesus Delivered to Pilate

27 [1] ‡† When morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death. [2] † And they bound him and led him away and delivered him over to Pilate the governor.

Judas Hangs Himself

3 ‡ † Then when Judas, his betrayer, saw that Jesus[1] was condemned, he
changed his mind and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief
priests and the elders, 4 † saying, “I have sinned by betraying innocent
blood.” They said, “What is that to us? See to it yourself.” 5 † And throwing
down the pieces of silver into the temple, he departed, and he went and
hanged himself. 6 † But the chief priests, taking the pieces of silver, said, “It
is not lawful to put them into the treasury, since it is blood money.” 7 † So
they took counsel and bought with them the potter’s field as a burial place
for strangers. 8 † Therefore that field has been called the Field of Blood to
this day. 9 ‡ Then was fulfilled what had been spoken by the prophet
Jeremiah, saying, “And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him
on whom a price had been set by some of the sons of Israel, 10 and they gave
them for the potter’s field, as the Lord directed me.”

Jesus Before Pilate

11 ✝✝Now Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor asked him,
“Are you the King of the Jews?” Jesus said, “You have said so.” 12 ✝But
when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he gave no answer.
13Then Pilate said to him, “Do you not hear how many things they testify
against you?” 14But he gave him no answer, not even to a single charge, so
that the governor was greatly amazed.

The Crowd Chooses Barabbas

15 ‡ † Now at the feast the governor was accustomed to release for the
crowd any one prisoner whom they wanted. 16 † And they had then a
notorious prisoner called Barabbas. 17 † So when they had gathered, Pilate
said to them, “Whom do you want me to release for you: Barabbas, or Jesus
who is called Christ?” 18 † For he knew that it was out of envy that they had
delivered him up. 19 † Besides, while he was sitting on the judgment seat, his
wife sent word to him, “Have nothing to do with that righteous man, for I
have suffered much because of him today in a dream.” 20 † Now the chief
priests and the elders persuaded the crowd to ask for Barabbas and destroy
Jesus. 21 The governor again said to them, “Which of the two do you want
me to release for you?” And they said, “Barabbas.” 22 † Pilate said to them,
“Then what shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?” They all said, “Let
him be crucified!” 23 And he said, “Why, what evil has he done?” But they
shouted all the more, “Let him be crucified!”

Pilate Delivers Jesus to Be Crucified

24 ††So when Pilate saw that he was gaining nothing, but rather that a riot
was beginning, he took water and washed his hands before the crowd,
saying, “I am innocent of this man’s blood;[1] see to it yourselves.” 25 †And
all the people answered, “His blood be on us and on our children!” 26 †Then
he released for them Barabbas, and having scourged[1] Jesus, delivered him
to be crucified.

Jesus Is Mocked

27 ✝ ✝ Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's
headquarters,[2] and they gathered the whole battalion[3] before him. 28 ✝ And
they stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, 29 ✝ and twisting together a
crown of thorns, they put it on his head and put a reed in his right hand. And
kneeling before him, they mocked him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!"
30 ✝ And they spit on him and took the reed and struck him on the head.
31 And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the robe and put his
own clothes on him and led him away to crucify him.

The Crucifixion

32 ✝✝As they went out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name. They
compelled this man to carry his cross. 33 ✝And when they came to a place
called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull), 34 ✝they offered him wine to
drink, mixed with gall, but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. 35 ✝And
when they had crucified him, they divided his garments among them by
casting lots. 36 ✝Then they sat down and kept watch over him there. 37 ✝And
over his head they put the charge against him, which read, “This is Jesus,
the King of the Jews.” 38 ✝Then two robbers were crucified with him, one on
the right and one on the left. 39 ✝And those who passed by derided him,
wagging their heads 40 ✝and saying, “You who would destroy the temple and
rebuild it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come
down from the cross.” 41 ✝So also the chief priests, with the scribes and
elders, mocked him, saying, 42 ✝“He saved others; he cannot save himself.
He is the King of Israel; let him come down now from the cross, and we
will believe in him. 43 ✝He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he
desires him. For he said, ‘I am the Son of God.’” 44 ✝And the robbers who
were crucified with him also reviled him in the same way.

The Death of Jesus

45 ‡ † Now from the sixth hour[4] there was darkness over all the land[5] until
the ninth hour.[6] 46 † And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud
voice, saying, “Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?” that is, “My God, my God, why
have you forsaken me?” 47 † And some of the bystanders, hearing it, said,
“This man is calling Elijah.” 48 † And one of them at once ran and took a
sponge, filled it with sour wine, and put it on a reed and gave it to him to
drink. 49 † But the others said, “Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to
save him.” 50 † And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice and yielded up
his spirit.

51 ‡ † And behold, the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to
bottom. And the earth shook, and the rocks were split. 52 ‡ The tombs also
were opened. And many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were
raised, 53 † and coming out of the tombs after his resurrection they went into
the holy city and appeared to many. 54 † When the centurion and those who
were with him, keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what
took place, they were filled with awe and said, “Truly this was the Son[1] of
God!”

55 † There were also many women there, looking on from a distance, who
had followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to him, 56 † among whom were
Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Joseph and the mother
of the sons of Zebedee.

Jesus Is Buried

57 ‡† When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named
Joseph, who also was a disciple of Jesus. 58 † He went to Pilate and asked for
the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. 59 † And Joseph
took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen shroud 60 † and laid it in his
own new tomb, which he had cut in the rock. And he rolled a great stone to
the entrance of the tomb and went away. 61 † Mary Magdalene and the other
Mary were there, sitting opposite the tomb.

The Guard at the Tomb

62 ‡ † The next day, that is, after the day of Preparation, the chief priests
and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate 63 † and said, “Sir, we remember
how that impostor said, while he was still alive, ‘After three days I will
rise.’ 64 ‡ Therefore order the tomb to be made secure until the third day, lest
his disciples go and steal him away and tell the people, ‘He has risen from
the dead,’ and the last fraud will be worse than the first.” 65 Pilate said to
them, “You have a guard[2] of soldiers. Go, make it as secure as you can.”
66 So they went and made the tomb secure by sealing the stone and setting a
guard.

The Resurrection

28 [1]‡†Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. [2]† And behold, there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. [3]† His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. [4]† And for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men. [5]But the angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. [6]† He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he[1] lay. [7]† Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead, and behold, he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him. See, I have told you.” [8]† So they departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. [9]† And behold, Jesus met them and said, “Greetings!” And they came up and took hold of his feet and worshiped him. [10]† Then Jesus said to them, “Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me.”

The Report of the Guard

11 ‡† While they were going, behold, some of the guard went into the city
and told the chief priests all that had taken place. 12 † And when they had
assembled with the elders and taken counsel, they gave a sufficient sum of
money to the soldiers 13 ‡ and said, “Tell people, ‘His disciples came by night
and stole him away while we were asleep.’ 14 And if this comes to the
governor’s ears, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble.” 15 So they
took the money and did as they were directed. And this story has been
spread among the Jews to this day.

The Great Commission

16 ‡ † Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which
Jesus had directed them. 17 † And when they saw him they worshiped him,
but some doubted. 18 ‡ † And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in
heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 † Go therefore and make
disciples of all nations, baptizing them in[1] the name of the Father and of
the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 † teaching them to observe all that I have
commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Matthew

OVERVIEW

Author
Matthew Levi the apostle

Date
Written c AD 50

Places
Galilee; Judea; Nazareth; Capernaum; Tyre and Sidon; Jerusalem; Jericho; Bethany; Jordan River; Mount of Olives; Gethsemane; see map, p 1584

People
Jesus; John the Baptist; the 12 apostles; Jesus' family; scribes; Pharisees; Sadducees; Herod the Great; Herod Antipas; Mary Magdalene; Mary the mother of James and Joseph; the mother of James and John

Purpose
To proclaim that God's end-times rule has come in the person and ministry of Jesus Christ

Law Themes
God's rule in judgment; repentance; political and religious opposition; authoritative teaching; confronting a brother who sins

Gospel Themes
God's rule in mercy; Gospel; Baptism; compassion; authoritative teaching; ransom; Lord's Supper; forgiving a brother who sins

Memory Verses
Jesus' birth (1:18–25); the Beatitudes (5:1–12); prayer and the Golden Rule (7:7–14); rest from Jesus (11:28–30); parable of the net interpreted (13:47–50); forgiveness and the Church (18:15–20); make disciples (28:18–20)

Introduction to Matthew

Reading Matthew

A brilliant halo of white light envelops the walls of Herod's temple. The white limestone blocks gleam at the edges as the light slips around them. Travelers camping on the Mount of Olives wonder at the temple's beauty. As the sun descends, the color of the heavens paints the temple yellow, then red, then purple, until finally heaven and earth meld in darkness. The great, glorious building that seemed so permanent has disappeared.

When Jesus taught in Galilee, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand" (4:17), and at the temple, "There will not be left here one stone upon another" (24:2), it must have seemed like a dream to His disciples. The ways of the world and their glory must have seemed permanent. And yet, as Jesus preached, the sun was setting on the old ways because God had promised He would come to reign. In the Gospel according to Matthew, Jesus reveals the glorious appearing of the kingdom of heaven.

Jeffrey Gibbs characterizes Matthew's account as follows:

> Addressing a broad Christian audience of Jewish and Gentile worshiping communities in Syria and Palestine during the middle of the first century AD, Matthew the apostle extended the Scriptures of Israel by authoritatively narrating how the end-time reign of God had

broken into the world through the historical deeds and the words of Jesus of Nazareth, God's Son and God's Christ. The former tax gatherer's narrative reflected the common apostolic proclamation about Jesus' ministry, culminating in His vicarious death and resurrection. At the same time, Matthew of Capernaum independently portrayed with special emphasis that (1) Jesus, Son of David and true King of Israel, fulfilled God's dealings with His people in the OT, and that (2) this Jesus is the mighty Judge whose return on the Last Day will usher in both final salvation for all God's people and final judgment for all God's enemies, and that (3) until the age's consummation, the disciples of the Son of God are to occupy themselves with extending Jesus' own mission to save both Jew and Gentile. This mission takes place by telling the Good News of Jesus' reign-of-God ministry among human beings (Mt 26:13), by baptizing in the triune name of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (28:19), and by instructing Jesus' disciples in the whole revelation of God, especially that revealed in Jesus' own teaching (28:20).

Adapted from Jeffrey A. Gibbs, *Matthew* 1:1–11:1, CC (St. Louis: Concordia, 2006), 1.

Luther on Matthew

See pp 1571–72.

For more of Luther's insights on Mt 5–7, see *The Sermon on the Mount* (AE 21:1–294) and *The Magnificat* (AE 21:295–358).

Challenges for Readers

Relationship to Other Gospels. See pp 1571–74.

Jesus and the Community of Faith. Since the Gospel according to Matthew is the only Gospel to directly mention congregations (16:18; 18:17), some interpreters have emphasized the role of the early Christian churches in writing this Gospel. A typical critical argument is that Matthew strongly reflects the needs, interests, and interpretations of early congregations and that members of these congregations made up the stories and teachings about Jesus' life to address issues of their time and place. Although Matthew does focus more on the community of faith than do the other Gospels, that does not mean his Gospel is about early churches rather than the actual events and teachings of Jesus. Matthew answers questions about congregational life while faithfully describing Jesus' ministry, which founded the community of faith.

Order and Meaning in the Story. In the Gospels, the teachings and events of Jesus' life are not simply gathered together randomly but are presented (narrated) for the instruction of the reader. Matthew's account illustrates this clearly by the five sermons, or discourses, that organize Jesus' teaching into blocks (chs 5–7; 10; 13; 18; 24–25). The passages before and after each saying or event often help the reader interpret their meaning and role in the larger story. The study of these relationships (narrative criticism) is important for interpreting and applying the Gospel message. In other words, it is important to study the story as Matthew presents it before comparing his account with other Gospels. See pp 1571–74.

The Sermon on the Mount. A long-standing debate questions whether the Sermon on the Mount (chs 5–7) presents Law or Gospel. Jesus did not present this sermon specifically to convict people of their sins (though that may certainly happen as people read the sermon). In its context in Matthew, the sermon describes the way people who have received the reign of God now live.

Interpreting and Applying Parables. See note, 13:3.

Eschatology. Matthew emphasizes that the life and teachings of Jesus fulfill God's plan to reign over His people from heaven. In Jesus, the end-times reign of God has come. In Matthew, Jesus mentions the "kingdom of

God" or the "kingdom of heaven" 48 times. This is the single most important theme of the Gospel.

Blessings for Readers

As you read the Gospel according to Matthew, rejoice especially in the very full accounting he gives of Jesus' teachings. His five discourses record more of Jesus' parables and sayings than are recorded by Mark and Luke. Also take special note of the promise that Christ is coming again to reign eternally. As you face struggles, dwell on this sure and certain hope in your Savior.

OUTLINE

Matthew divides at 4:17 and again at 16:21 with these words: "From that time Jesus began to …" Another important dividing phrase appears at the end of each discourse: "And when Jesus had finished …" (7:28; 11:1; 13:53; 19:1; 26:1). The outline below reflects these natural divisions within the text.

I. The Person of Jesus Christ (1:1–4:16)
   A. The Genealogy, Birth, and Childhood of Jesus Christ (chs 1–2)
   B. The Ministry of John the Baptist and of Jesus (3:1–4:16)
II. The Proclamation and Ministry of Jesus Christ to Israel (4:17–16:20)
   A. Jesus Begins Ministry to Israel (4:17–25)
   B. First Discourse: The Sermon on the Mount (chs 5–7)
   C. The Deeds of Jesus Christ (chs 8–9)
   D. Second Discourse: The Missionary Discourse (10:1–11:1)
   E. Jesus' Ministry Meets with Opposition and Prompts Division (11:2–12:50)
   F. Third Discourse: The Parable Discourse (13:1–52)
   G. Continuing Opposition and Jesus' Identity (13:53–16:20)
III. The Suffering, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ for Israel and All People (16:21–28:20)
   A. Jesus Approaches Jerusalem, Where He Will Suffer, Die, and Be Raised (16:21–17:27)
   B. The Fourth Discourse: The Church Is Founded on the Forgiveness of Sins (ch 18)
   C. Jesus Continues toward Jerusalem in the Face of Opposition (chs 19–20)

D. Jesus' Ministry in Jerusalem, Where He Meets Confrontation and Rejection (chs 21–23)
E. Fifth Discourse: The Eschatological Discourse (chs 24–25)
F. Jesus' Passion (chs 26–27)
1. The plot against Jesus (26:1–16)
2. Passover becomes the Lord's Supper (26:17–29)
3. Jesus foretells Peter's denial (26:30–35)
4. Jesus' arrest and trial (26:36–27:26)
5. Jesus is mocked, crucified, and buried (27:27–66)
G. Jesus Rises from the Dead and Sends the Eleven (ch 28)

Articles and Resources Related to Matthew

- The Miracles of Jesus
- The Parables of Our Lord
- The Keys of the Kingdom
- Faithful to Christ—and to Caesar
- God's Reliable Word
- Which Tomb?

The Miracles of Jesus

Besides this list, Jesus performed numerous miracles that the evangelists mention but do not describe (e.g., Mt 4:23; 9:35; 11:21; Mk 6:56; Lk 4:40; 5:15; 6:17–18; 7:21; 10:13; Jn 2:23; 3:2; 4:45; 20:30; 21:25).

1. **Water made into wine (Cana)**
   John 2:1–11
2. **Healing of an official's son (Cana)**
   John 4:46–54
3. **Healing of a man at the Pool of Bethesda (Jerusalem)**
   John 5:2–13
4. **Miraculous catch of fish (Lake of Gennesaret)**
   Luke 5:1–11
5. **Healing of a man with an unclean spirit (Capernaum)**
   Mark 1:21–28; Luke 4:31–37
6. **Healing of Peter's mother-in-law (Capernaum)**
   Matthew 8:14–15; Mark 1:29–31; Luke 4:38–39
7. **Healing of a leper (Galilee)**
   Matthew 8:2–4; Mark 1:40–45; Luke 5:12–15
8. **Healing of a paralytic (Capernaum)**
   Matthew 9:2–8; Mark 2:1–12; Luke 5:17–26
9. **Healing of a man with a withered hand (Galilee)**
   Matthew 12:9–14; Mark 3:1–6; Luke 6:6–11
10. **Healing of a centurion's servant (Capernaum)**
    Matthew 8:5–13; Luke 7:1–10
11. **Raising of a widow's son (Nain)**
    Luke 7:11–17
12. **Healing of a blind and mute demon-oppressed man (Galilee)**
    Matthew 12:22–28
13. **Calming of a storm (Sea of Galilee)**
    Matthew 8:23–27; Mark 4:35–41; Luke 8:22–25
14. **Healing of two men with demons (Gadarenes)**
    Matthew 8:28–34; Mark 5:1–20; Luke 8:26–39

15. **Raising of Jairus's daughter (Capernaum)**
Matthew 9:18–26; Mark 5:22–43; Luke 8:41–56
16. **Healing of a woman with a discharge of blood (Capernaum)**
Matthew 9:20–22; Mark 5:24–34; Luke 8:43–48
17. **Healing of two blind men (at or near Capernaum)**
Matthew 9:27–31
18. **Healing of a mute, demon-oppressed man (at or near Capernaum)**
Matthew 9:32–34;
19. **Feeding of the 5,000 (Bethsaida)**
Matthew 14:15–21; Mark 6:35–44; Luke 9:12–17; John 6:5–13
20. **Walking on water (Sea of Galilee)**
Matthew 14:24–34; Mark 6:47–53; John 6:16–21
21. **Healing of the daughter of a Canaanite woman (district of Tyre)**
Matthew 15:21–28; Mark 7:24–30
22. **Healing of a deaf man with a speech impediment (Decapolis)**
Mark 7:32–37
23. **Feeding of the 4,000 (Decapolis)**
Matthew 15:32–38; Mark 8:1–9
24. **Healing of a blind man (near Bethsaida)**
Mark 8:22–26
25. **Healing of a boy with an unclean spirit (near Mount of Transfiguration)**
Matthew 17:14–18; Mark 9:14–27; Luke 9:37–43
26. **Provision of a shekel (Capernaum)**
Matthew 17:24–27
27. **Healing of a blind man (Jerusalem)**
John 9:1–41
28. **Healing of a mute man with a demon (Perea)**
Luke 11:14–20
29. **Healing of a woman with a disabling spirit (Perea or Judea)**
Luke 13:10–17
30. **Healing of a man with dropsy (Perea)**
Luke 14:1–6
31. **Raising of Lazarus (Bethany)**
John 11:1–46

32. **Cleansing of ten lepers (border of Samaria and Galilee)**
Luke 17:12–19
33. **Healing of blind Bartimaeus and companion (Jericho)**
Matthew 20:29–34; Mark 10:46–52; Luke 18:35–43
34. **Cursing of fig tree (near Jerusalem)**
Matthew 21:18–20; Mark 11:12–14, 20–25
35. **Healing of Malchus's ear (Gethsemane)**
Luke 22:49–51; John 18:10–11
36. **Second catch of fish (Sea of Tiberias)**
John 21:1–14

"Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book" (Jn 20:30).

The Parables of Our Lord

The differences between parables, allegories, similes, and metaphors are not easily defined. Often there is scarcely any difference. In a technical sense, the word *parable* (Gk *parabole*) ordinarily means "a complete, imaginary story that illustrates some spiritual truth." But the word originally signified the placing of two or more objects together for the sake of comparison. In the Gospels, parables are typically (1) allegorical stories that reveal how God is inaugurating His heavenly reign on earth through Jesus, or (2) such a story teaching disciples how they should live in view of God's reign.

The public preaching of our Lord assumed the general characteristic of speaking in parables. For example, "All these things Jesus said to the crowds in parables; indeed, He said nothing to them without a parable" (Mt 13:34). This is clearly seen in the Synoptic Gospels. However, only one parabolic saying appears in the Gospel of John: the Good Shepherd (10:1–21). The chart at right lists Jesus' parabolic sayings in the Synoptics, though it does not necessarily list all His parabolic sayings. For more on parables and their interpretation, see note, Mt 13:3. See also "Enigmatic Sayings," p 1775.

[*] Jesus used parables to warn about God's final judgment (punishment and bliss). But accounts of God's judgment are never portrayed as mere stories or illustrations. Interpreters must distinguish between the parables and the very real judgment they teach. For example, the parable of the weeds (Mt 13:24–30) and the parable of the net (Mt 13:47–48) clearly stand in a list of parabolic stories. But when Jesus *interprets* these parables, He explains God's real, coming judgment (Mt 13:37–43, 49–50). Likewise, the stories of the lost sheep and the lost coin (Lk 15:3–10) are clearly labeled as parables (Lk 15:3). But the rejoicing of the angels describes a heavenly reality (15:7, 10). Interpreters often label the story of the rich man and Lazarus (Lk 16:19–31) and the dividing of the sheep and goats (Mt 25:31–46) as parables because they fit with Jesus' style of storytelling.

But the Gospels do not call them parables, as though they were simply illustrations with no basis in reality (see note, Lk 16:19–31). Like the passages above, they warn about God's very real and coming judgment and His promise of eternal life for the righteous.

The Keys of the Kingdom

The Ministry of the Keys and Confession

> **I** will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. (Mt 16:19)

Almost everyone uses some kind of key every day. We have car keys and house keys. Children have keys to their lockers at school and keys to secure their bikes. We may not think much about our keys—until we lose them or lock them inside the trunk.

In Mt 16:19, our Lord Jesus talks about the most important Keys of all. He calls them the "keys of the kingdom of heaven." Elsewhere, Christ said to all His disciples, "If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld" (Jn 20:23). And in Mt 18:18, Christ speaks to Christian congregations in every place and every time when He says, "Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Amazing as it may seem, Jesus has entrusted the Keys of the kingdom of heaven to His Church. We have received the authority of our Lord Himself to distribute the gift of divine pardon to all penitent sinners.

The Key That Locks Up Heaven

Jesus speaks of two Keys. The first is used for "binding," or locking, the gates of heaven. Scripture itself gives us a striking example of this use of this Key. A member of the congregation in Corinth began living in incest with his father's wife—probably his stepmother. Apparently, this fellow would have been content to continue living in this sin. By his impenitent lifestyle, he trampled Christ's blood underfoot. He spat upon the cross, figuratively speaking. St Paul warned the congregation, "Purge the evil person from among you" (1Co 5:13). The wake-up call worked. It shook up the entire body of believers in Corinth and brought the sinner to his knees in grief and fear (2Co 2:5–11).

Jesus makes it clear that we have enough "logs" in our own eyes and need not go snooping around to discover "specks" in the eyes of fellow believers (Mt 7:4). Nevertheless, some sins compel us to confront the sinner. Just as compassion compels a doctor to care for an injured person who has fallen unconscious, so believers must deal in compassion with those in their fellowship who live in sin, seemingly oblivious to its consequences.

First of all, we pray for those who show no concern for their own souls. We visit with them about the danger, following the directions Jesus gives in Mt 18. We work patiently to win them back. Sometimes, erring brothers or sisters are brought back to Christ in repentance and faith. This brings us joy, even as it evokes a celebration in heaven! (Lk 15:7).

At other times, heaven weeps over sinners who refuse to acknowledge their sin and who continue to reject God's Word. Such people may even come right out and say, "I do not believe anymore." In cases like this, we must tell the truth. Since they reject Christ and the salvation He has won for them, the gate of heaven is locked to them. If they die in their unbelief, they will be lost forever. Nevertheless, if such individuals repent and return, Christ's heart is open to them—as are the hearts of everyone in His family.

Someone may object, saying that only God can look into someone's heart to judge whether penitent faith lies within. That is clearly true. But Jesus has directed us—commanded us—to deal with the facts as we know them. We have no choice but to obey Him. This use of this Key serves as the

strongest possible warning that no sinner dare take sin lightly or treat it flippantly.

The Key That Opens Heaven

Happily, Christ speaks of another Key: "Whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Mt 16:19). The second Key "looses," or opens, the gate to heaven. We use this Key whenever we tell someone, "Your sins are forgiven." Christ authorizes every Christian to share this Good News of the Gospel. Whenever a troubled sinner shares his burden with us, we can remind him of Christ's death and what it accomplished for him.

Congregations call pastors to use this Key in public on their behalf. The pastor uses it in almost every worship service. The congregation prays a prayer of general confession of sins, and the pastor pronounces Absolution. That Absolution, spoken in Christ's name and at His command, opens for us the gates of heaven.

All believers struggle with their own pet sins. We may fall into sins of gossip, hatred, jealousy, lust, laziness, greed, or pride. Satan continually accuses our conscience of these sins. We may find our hearts flooded with shame over hurt that we have caused or harm that we have brought into someone else's life. At times like these, private confession can restore our peace and deepen our faith in our Savior's love for us.

When we confess our sins privately to our pastor, we need not mention every single sin. For one thing, that would be impossible. We commit sins of which we are not even aware. In Ps 19, David prayed, "Who can discern his errors? Declare me innocent from hidden faults" (v 12).

Scripture promises that we can trust the Absolution spoken in the stead and by the command of Christ by our pastor as confidently as if we heard our Lord Jesus Himself speaking from heaven: "I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." What relief that Absolution gives! What power it conveys as we combat Satan's temptations to unbelief and despair!

How thankfully we should use the Keys Christ has given us as we extend His pardon to others and also receive that pardon for ourselves!

> What do you believe according to these words [John 20:22–23]?
>
> I believe that when the called ministers of Christ deal with us by His divine command, in particular when they exclude openly unrepentant

sinners from the Christian congregation and absolve those who repent of their sins and want to do better, this is just as valid and certain, even in heaven, as if Christ our dear Lord dealt with us Himself. (SC, Confession, p xl)

Faithful to Christ—and to Caesar

> Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's. (Mt 22:21)

In the days of Jesus' earthly ministry, the land of Israel lay under the control of the powerful Roman Empire, whose ruler held the title "Caesar." Most Jews hated the Roman occupation. We can understand this hatred when we stop to think about what it might be like to have troops from a foreign nation keeping order on the corners of the streets in our town or city.

Our Lord's enemies used the hatred of the Jews in an attempt to trap Jesus. They asked Him, "Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?" (Mt 22:17). If Jesus said yes, He would seem to be taking sides with the Roman occupation, a stance bound to deflate His popularity with the people. On the other hand, if Jesus said no, His enemies could charge Him with sedition and inciting rebellion. Rome would take that kind of charge seriously indeed. But Jesus knew His enemies' motives. He would not allow hypocrites like these to trap Him.

Pointing to a coin with Caesar's image and name on it, Jesus replied, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's." In other words, pay your taxes; you owe it to Caesar. Scripture teaches that every government is established by God. Ultimately, this is why citizens owe government their obedience and allegiance (Jn 19:11; Rm 13:1–7). Democracies; kingdoms; dictatorships. Some governments rule with an iron fist; others, with an open hand. Regardless of their approach, God holds the nations and their rulers in His hands (cf Is 40:15–24).

The Kingdom of the Left Hand

Our Lord raises up earthly governments to prevent anarchy and injustice. Martin Luther and other reformers called these earthly governments "the kingdom of the left hand." As bad as conditions in society can get, they would be much worse if no one made laws and enforced them. Still, because all human beings, including human rulers, are sinners, no earthly government will enact and enforce perfect laws. If we live in a country in which government officials at least attempt to act in justice, we have plenty for which to thank God.

Even so, whether we believe our government acts justly or not, Jesus makes our obligations to it clear. "Rendering to Caesar" involves much more than simply paying taxes. It includes obeying the laws enacted by the government and serving in the military if called to such duty. If we live under some form of democracy, it means taking seriously our responsibility to vote. It involves praying for our nation, that God will give us wise and good rulers and that He will bless our land with peace and prosperity. In addition, Christians are to speak out against injustice when we see it. This, too, is a duty of Christians—a duty perhaps we have often neglected.

The Kingdom of the Right Hand

Our Lord did not stop at saying, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's." He concluded with these words: "Render … to God the things that are God's" (Mt 22:21). Here, Jesus expands our citizenship beyond the earthly country in which we live. Although we live in an earthly state, we also live under another flag. This Kingdom is far superior to any earthly nation.

Jesus taught His disciples many things about this Kingdom. Matthew's Gospel records many of these teachings. Jesus began His ministry with this message: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Mt 4:17). Toward the end of His ministry, just before He instituted the Lord's Supper, our Savior talked about the culmination of His kingdom in heaven. He promised, "I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom" (Mt 26:29).

Unlike the governments of the earth, God's kingdom has different purposes and different means to carry out its ends. This "kingdom of the right hand," the kingdom of God, is a kingdom of love, founded by the One who on the cross poured out His blood as a sacrifice for all human sin. This mighty Kingdom is ruled by the King of kings and Lord of lords, who holds the whole world and the entire universe in His hand. It is an everlasting Kingdom, established by the One who on Easter Sunday broke the iron grip of death and opened the gates of paradise to all believers. People from every nation under the sun belong to this Kingdom, for the King has commanded us, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations" (Mt 28:19).

God's kingdom does not spread by force of arms or physical threats. Rather, it uses spiritual means to accomplish its ends. Through the means of grace (Word and Sacraments), our mighty King delivers people from the devil's clutches, brings them to Himself, and keeps them loyal to Him in faith.

In faith and love for the Savior, Christians want to serve God and their neighbors faithfully. When we worship, when we give money to help the poor, when we rake a shut-in's lawn or prepare a meal for a grieving family, we exercise our citizenship in Christ's kingdom. We do not do these things to avoid paying a fine. We do not serve because we fear imprisonment.

Rather, we live our lives to please our heavenly King. Our loyalty to Christ's kingdom always comes first. We must disobey any earthly government that demands we compromise our Christian discipleship.

Just how do believers "render to God the things that are God's"? Everything we have—our life, our possessions, our families, our children, our health, our wealth—belongs to Him already. How can we ever repay the Savior whose blood has washed away our sins? We thank and praise, serve and obey our gracious God by showing love to all those whom God puts in our life to respect, care for, and live with.

See also note, Mt 28:18.

God's Reliable Word

The problem posed by Mt 27:9–10 has interested critics and defenders of the Holy Scriptures for at least 1,700 years (see Eusebius, *The Proof of the Gospel* 10:4). Critics have attacked the Bible's reliability by pointing to what seems like an obvious mistake in its text. Matthew writes, "Then was fulfilled what had been spoken by the prophet Jeremiah" but follows immediately with words from Zec 11:13.

Augustine was among the earliest to provide an explanation (*NPNF* 1 6:191–93). Medieval interpreters and also Luther followed his opinion, even saying that the Holy Spirit allowed the evangelist to make a "slight error" (Latin *levis error*; see AE 20:321). Modern critics have loved to point out this passage and the Church Fathers' description of it as proof positive that the Holy Scriptures are unreliable and filled with errors.

Chains of Biblical Quotations

The critics overlook a number of points on this issue. First, at a time when manuscripts were very rare and expensive, readers resorted to a variety of ways for studying and remembering key passages. Scribes often prepared collections of texts on a topic as a means for exploring and learning the teachings of Scripture. In *The Harmony of All Sacred Scripture*, Michael Walther provided numerous examples of this practice and the writers' habit of merging quotations (*Harmonia Totius S. Scripturae* [Strasbourg: Eberhard Zetzner, 1626], 416). Below is Walther's list with some additions:

> Mt 21:5 contains Is 62:11; Zec 9:9
> Mt 21:13 contains Is 56:7; Jer 7:11
> Mk 1:2–3 contains Mal 3:1; Is 40:3
> Ac 1:20 contains Ps 69:25; 109:8
> Rm 3:10–18 contains Ps 14:1–3; 53:1–3; 5:9; 140:3; Pr 1:16; Is 59:7–8; Ps 36:1
> 1Pt 2:7 contains Ps 118:22; Is 8:14

The example from Mk 1:2–3 is especially helpful for understanding Mt 27:9–10. Mark ascribes his quote to Isaiah, but the full quote is actually a mixture of Malachi and Isaiah—and Malachi gets quoted first. When we carefully consider Mt 27:9–10, we see that the first words of the text come from Zec 11:13. But there is also wording from Jer 32:6–9. It appears that both Matthew and Mark named their lists by the larger prophetic books cited in the lists. (Zechariah and Malachi were perhaps less likely to suggest themselves for the titling, since they stood in the scroll of the minor prophets.)

God's Word Cannot Err

A second matter the critics overlook is that, even after the Fathers described Mt 27 as containing a "slight error," they still confessed that God's Word does not err, which will be explained below. Here are some quotes of the Fathers from the first century through the Reformation:

> 1 Clem: "Look carefully into the Scriptures, which are the true utterances of the Holy Spirit. Observe that nothing of an unjust or counterfeit character is written in them." (*ANF* 1:17)
>
> Aug: "If we are perplexed by an apparent contradiction in Scripture, it is not allowable to say, The author of this book is mistaken; but either the manuscript is faulty, or the translation is wrong, or you have not understood…. For the utterances of Scripture, harmonious as if from the mouth of one man, commend themselves to the belief of the most accurate and clear-sighted piety, and demand for their discovery and confirmation the calmest intelligence and the most ingenious research…. So that, if any one is perplexed by the apparent contradiction, the only conclusion is that he does not understand." (*NPNF* 1 4:180)
>
> Gratian: "In the canonical Scriptures falsehood is not admitted." (*Decreta* Dist IX)
>
> Thomas Aquinas: "Our faith rests upon the revelation made to the apostles and prophets who wrote the canonical books, and not on the revelations (if any such things there are) made to other doctors. Hence Augustine says (Epis. ad Hieron. xix, 1): 'Only those books of Scripture which are called canonical have I learned to hold in such honor as to believe their authors have not erred in any way in writing them.' " (*Summa Theologica* I, Q1, art 8)
>
> Luth: "The saints could err in their writings and sin in their lives, but the Scriptures cannot err." (AE 36:137)

> Luth: “God does not lie [Titus 1:2]. I and my neighbor and, in short, all people, may err and deceive. But God’s Word cannot err.” (LC IV 57)

This last quote from Luther connects us to some of his favorite passages as a writer. He often refers to Nu 23:19 or Ti 1:2 to emphasize how reliable God’s Word is. As the Lord Himself confesses, “My word … shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it” (Is 55:11), including our edification and salvation.

The Two Natures of Holy Scripture

As you study the Scripture, bear in mind its two natures: human and divine. At times, the human nature of Scripture shows through in loose quotations (Mt 27:9–10), round figures (1Ki 7:23), and examples of human weakness (1Co 1:16). People speak and write in these ways daily without anyone accusing them of error. For example, would you attack someone for saying, "The sun will *rise* in the morning" when everyone knows the earth actually revolves around the sun? Of course not! This "slight error" is just a customary expression for our perspective from earth. The examples given here are perfectly natural ways to communicate, which everyone understands.

Even Jesus—God in the flesh—displayed typical human characteristics (e.g., Mt 24:36; Mk 4:38; Jn 19:28). Yet He did not err or sin by them (Heb 4:15; 1Pt 2:22; 1Jn 3:5). Instead, He lived as one of us and bore our sins (2Co 5:21).

As you recognize and identify with the human nature of Scripture, rejoice also in its divine nature! Across the centuries, Holy Scripture has prophesied God's plan and purpose in our salvation; we see those promises fulfilled. We hear the testimony of a great host of witnesses across the ages who have been blessed, encouraged, enlightened, and strengthened by reading or hearing God's miraculous and life-giving Word. Take in hand these sacred texts with confidence and read them in faith. Although Scripture was written by men and has a human nature, we may rightly call it divine—God's inerrant Word.

Which Tomb?

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John all tell us that Jesus was crucified at "the Place of a Skull." We also know the place as Calvary or Golgotha; both words mean "skull," in Latin and Aramaic respectively. Matthew tells us that Joseph of Arimathea "took the [Lord's] body … and laid it in his own new tomb" (Mt 27:59–60). John adds the detail that our Savior's tomb was nearby Calvary, "in the place where He was crucified" (Jn 19:41).

So where was the place called Calvary? Where was Christ's tomb? Strange as it may sound, we do not know for sure. First-century Christians, of course, were in no position to erect historic markers. As a persecuted minority, many of them eventually fled from Jerusalem. Furthermore, in AD 70, Roman legions, commanded by General Titus, destroyed the city. Given all this, as well as the 2,000-year gap that separates us from our Lord's death and resurrection, it is not surprising that no one today can claim to know for certain the exact locations of our Savior's death and burial. However, two sites vie for the honor.

The Garden Tomb

A place called "the Garden Tomb" is situated about 200 yards north of the old walled city of Jerusalem. (See diagram, p 1627.) Many cars, taxis, and donkeys travel past this site on their way to and from the city's busiest entrance, the Damascus Gate. Children skip by. Friends stop and greet each other, "*Salaam alaikum*. Peace be with you!" As Jesus hung dying, much traffic passed by the Place of the Skull also. But those greetings had no friendly tone. Scripture tells us, "Those who passed by derided Him" (Mt 27:39).

Once a visitor stands inside the garden, the hustle and bustle of the city seem a thousand miles away. The wall around the garden creates a world of peace and tranquillity within. In this restful setting, the visitor can sit on wooden benches in the shade. From this vantage point, one can see a tomb in the side of a hill, just as Matthew describes it, "cut in the rock" (27:60). To one side lies a piece of the large round stone that may once have blocked the entrance.

Seen from the inside, this tomb was clearly meant to serve as a site for family burials. Shelflike burial places cut in the rock line three walls. (See diagram, p 1823.) In fact, the entire tomb is bare rock. A rocky hill rises behind this tomb. Caves in the hillside look like the eye sockets of a human skull. Some think this hill was Golgotha. Because the British General Charles Gordon investigated the site of the so-called Garden Tomb in 1883, the hill located behind it is often called "Gordon's Calvary."

The Holy Sepulchre

While the Garden Tomb brings forth thoughts of "Joseph's lovely garden," the Church of the Holy Sepulchre disappoints many visitors. The Garden Tomb is fresh and restful. The Holy Sepulchre is dismal and musty. Its ancient stones have suffered so much destruction and rebuilding that one observer has described the building as "one of the most complicated architectural, stylistic, and chronological jumbles on the face of the earth."

Immediately inside the church's entrance lies a long reddish slab of stone. This is the Stone of Unction where, according to tradition, Jesus' body was anointed for burial. To the right of this stone, steps ascend the traditional site of Calvary, now crowned with two chapels. The first chapel is Roman Catholic and is said to mark the place where soldiers nailed Jesus to the cross. The other chapel is Greek Orthodox, with portions of it belonging to the Armenian, Coptic, Ethiopian, and Syrian branches of Christendom. It is replete with gold and silver-encased icons and hundreds of candles. A silver disk beneath the altar marks the spot where the Lord's cross supposedly stood. See "Traditional Crucifixion Site," p 1627.

Down the steps and beneath the chapel's rotunda stands a large alabaster structure known as the "edicule." Inside is a room big enough for only three or four people. This room houses the tomb, with a marble slab marking the place where Jesus is said to have lain. Instead of bare rock, this tomb is a conglomeration of candlesticks, silver pictures, and marble. Amid all the ornamentation hangs a white cloth with a cross and the words "Christ is risen" (Greek *Christos aneste*).

Which Is the Real Site?

The Garden Tomb appeals to the senses and satisfies the imagination. But tradition favors the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Although it now lies within Jerusalem's walls, in Christ's day the site was outside them. Thus both tombs fit the words of Heb 13:12: "So Jesus also suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through His own blood."

But does it really matter which is the real tomb? In one sense, no. What matters is that Christ shed His blood and died for us. He Himself has borne the world's sins and removed them from the people. No matter where we live, our sins are now "outside the gate." As a result, Jesus Christ Himself, not any particular plot of earth, deserves our veneration.

Yet the tombs do serve a purpose. They remind us that the crucifixion and death of our Savior were not myths that took place in some never-never land. As we confess in the Apostles' Creed, Jesus Christ, our Lord, "was crucified, died and was buried"—in fulfillment of God's prophetic Word—on a real cross, in a real tomb, in the city of Jerusalem.

There remains, of course, the possibility that neither of these two sites is authentic. Still, both tombs have much to back their claims. And, yes, there is one more piece of evidence that could fit either tomb. Both of them are empty!

Footnotes

Footnotes for Matthew, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:3 Greek *Aram*; also verse 4
- [2] 1:7 *Asaph* is probably an alternate spelling for *Asa*; some manuscripts read *Asa*; also verse 8
- [3] 1:10 *Amos* is probably an alternate spelling for *Amon*; some manuscripts read *Amon*; twice in this verse
- [4] 1:12 Greek *Salathiel*; twice in this verse
- [5] 1:18 Some manuscripts *of the Christ*
- [6] 1:18 That is, legally pledged to be married

Footnotes for Matthew, Chapter 2

- [1] 2:1 Greek *magi*; also verses 7, 16
- [2] 2:2 Or *in the east*; also verse 9

Footnotes for Matthew, Chapter 3

- [1] 3:3 Or *crying: Prepare in the wilderness*
- [1] 3:16 Some manuscripts omit *to him*
- [2] 3:17 Or *my Son, my* (or *the*) *Beloved*

Footnotes for Matthew, Chapter 5

- [1] 5:9 Greek *huioi*; see preface
- [1] 5:22 Some manuscripts insert *without cause*
- [2] 5:22 Greek *says Raca to* (a term of abuse)
- [3] 5:22 Greek *Gehenna*; also verses 29, 30
- [4] 5:26 Greek *kodrantes*, Roman copper coin (Latin *quadrans*) worth about 1/64 of a *denarius* (which was a day's wage for a laborer)
- [1] 5:37 Or *the evil one*
- [2] 5:40 Greek *chiton*, a long garment worn under the cloak next to the skin
- [1] 5:47 Or *brothers and sisters*. The plural Greek word *adelphoi* (translated "brothers") refers to siblings in a family. In New Testament usage, depending on the context, *adelphoi* may refer either to *brothers* or to *brothers and sisters*

Footnotes for Matthew, Chapter 6

- [1] 6:9 Or *Let your name be kept holy*, or *Let your name be treated with reverence*
- [2] 6:10 Or *Let your kingdom come, let your will be done*
- [3] 6:11 Or *our bread for tomorrow*
- [4] 6:13 Or *the evil one*; some manuscripts add *For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen*
- [1] 6:19 Or *worm*; also verse 20
- [2] 6:24 Greek *mammon*, a Semitic word for money or possessions
- [3] 6:27 Or *a single cubit to his stature*; a *cubit* was about 18 inches or 45 centimeters

Footnotes for Matthew, Chapter 7

- [1] 7:13 Some manuscripts *For the way is wide and easy*

Footnotes for Matthew, Chapter 8

- [1] 8:2 *Leprosy* was a term for several skin diseases; see Leviticus 13
- [2] 8:3 Greek *he*
- [3] 8:9 Greek *bondservant*
- [4] 8:10 Some manuscripts *not even in Israel*
- [1] 8:28 Some manuscripts *Gergesenes*; some *Gerasenes*
- [2] 8:28 Greek *daimonizomai*; also verse 33; elsewhere rendered *oppressed by demons*

Footnotes for Matthew, Chapter 9

- [1] 9:4 Some manuscripts *perceiving*
- [2] 9:10 Greek *he*
- [3] 9:14 Some manuscripts add *much*, or *often*
- [1] 9:22 Greek *from that hour*

Footnotes for Matthew, Chapter 10

- [1] 10:3 Some manuscripts *Lebbaeus*, or *Lebbaeus called Thaddaeus*
- [2] 10:8 *Leprosy* was a term for several skin diseases; see Leviticus 13
- [1] 10:10 Greek *chiton*, a long garment worn under the cloak next to the skin
- [2] 10:24 Greek *bondservant*; also verse 25
- [3] 10:25 Greek lacks *will they malign*
- [1] 10:28 Greek *Gehenna*
- [2] 10:29 Greek *assarion*, Roman copper coin (Latin *quadrans*) worth about 1/16 of a *denarius* (which was a day's wage for a laborer)

Footnotes for Matthew, Chapter 11

- [1] 11:5 *Leprosy* was a term for several skin diseases; see Leviticus 13
- [2] 11:8 Or *Why then did you go out? To see a man ...*
- [3] 11:9 Some manuscripts *Why then did you go out? To see a prophet?*
- [4] 11:12 Or *has been coming violently*
- [5] 11:15 Some manuscripts omit *to hear*
- [6] 11:19 Some manuscripts *children* (compare Luke 7:35)
- [1] 11:26 Or *for so it pleased you well*

Footnotes for Matthew, Chapter 12

- [1] 12:46 Some manuscripts insert verse 47: *Someone told him, "Your mother and your brothers are standing outside, asking to speak to you"*

Footnotes for Matthew, Chapter 13

- [1] 13:9 Some manuscripts add here and in verse 43 *to hear*
- [1] 13:21 Or *stumbles*
- [2] 13:25 Probably *darnel*, a wheat-like weed
- [3] 13:27 Greek *bondservants*; also verse 28
- [1] 13:35 Some manuscripts *Isaiah the prophet*

Footnotes for Matthew, Chapter 14

- [1] 14:3 Some manuscripts *his brother's wife*
- [1] 14:24 Greek *many stadia*, a *stadion* was about 607 feet or 185 meters
- [2] 14:24 Some manuscripts *was out on the sea*
- [3] 14:30 Some manuscripts *strong wind*

Footnotes for Matthew, Chapter 15

- [1] 15:5 Or *is an offering*
- [2] 15:6 Some manuscripts *law*
- [1] 15:14 Some manuscripts add *of the blind*
- [2] 15:17 Greek *is expelled into the latrine*
- [3] 15:28 Greek *from that hour*

Footnotes for Matthew, Chapter 16

- [1] 16:2 Some manuscripts omit the following words to the end of verse 3
- [1] 16:18 The Greek words for *Peter* and *rock* sound similar
- [2] 16:18 Greek *the gates of Hades*
- [3] 16:19 Or *shall have been bound ... shall have been loosed*
- [1] 16:22 Or "[May God be] *merciful to you, Lord!"*
- [2] 16:22 Greek *stumbling block*
- [3] 16:22 The same Greek word can mean either *soul* or *life*, depending on the context; twice in this verse and twice in verse 26

Footnotes for Matthew, Chapter 17

- [1] 17:5 Or *my Son, my* (or *the*) *Beloved*

- [2] 17:18 Greek *it*
- [3] 17:18 Greek *the demon*
- [4] 17:18 Greek *from that hour*
- [1] 17:20 Some manuscripts insert verse 21: *But this kind never comes out except by prayer and fasting*
- [2] 17:22 Some manuscripts *remained*
- [3] 17:27 Greek *stater*, a silver coin worth four drachmas or approximately one shekel

Footnotes for Matthew, Chapter 18

- [4] 18:6 Greek *causes ... to stumble*; also verses 8, 9
- [1] 18:7 Greek *stumbling blocks*
- [2] 18:9 Greek *Gehenna*
- [3] 18:10 Some manuscripts add verse 11: *For the Son of Man came to save the lost*
- [4] 18:14 Some manuscripts *your*
- [5] 18:18 Or *shall have been bound ... shall have been loosed*
- [1] 18:22 Or *seventy-seven times*
- [2] 18:23 Greek *bondservants*; also verses 28, 31
- [3] 18:24 A *talent* was a monetary unit worth about twenty years' wages for a laborer
- [4] 18:26 Greek *bondservant*; also verses 27, 28, 29, 32, 33
- [5] 18:28 A *denarius* was a day's wage for a laborer
- [6] 18:34 Greek *torturers*

Footnotes for Matthew, Chapter 19

- [1] 19:9 Some manuscripts add *and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery*; other manuscripts *except for sexual*

immorality, makes her commit adultery, and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery

- [1] 19:28 Greek *in the regeneration*
- [2] 19:29 Some manuscripts *manifold*

Footnotes for Matthew, Chapter 20

- [3] 20:2 A *denarius* was a day's wage for a laborer
- [1] 20:15 Or *is your eye bad because I am good?*
- [2] 20:26 Greek *diakonos*
- [1] 20:27 Greek *bondservant* (*doulos*)
- [2] 20:30 Some manuscripts omit *Lord*

Footnotes for Matthew, Chapter 21

- [3] 21:5 Or *even*
- [1] 21:12 Some manuscripts add *of God*
- [1] 21:34 Greek *bondservants*; also verses 35, 36
- [2] 21:42 Greek *the head of the corner*
- [1] 21:44 Some manuscripts omit verse 44

Footnotes for Matthew, Chapter 22

- [2] 22:3 Greek *bondservants*; also verses 4, 6, 8, 10
- [1] 22:16 Greek *for you do not look at people's faces*
- [2] 22:19 A *denarius* was a day's wage for a laborer

Footnotes for Matthew, Chapter 23

- [1] 23:4 Some manuscripts omit *hard to bear*
- [2] 23:7 *Rabbi* means *my teacher*, or *my master*; also verse 8
- [3] 23:8 Or *brothers and sisters*
- [1] 23:13 Some manuscripts add here (or after verse 12) verse 14: *Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you devour widows' houses and for a pretense you make long prayers; therefore you will receive the greater condemnation*
- [2] 23:15 Greek *Gehenna*; also verse 33
- [1] 23:35 Some manuscripts omit *the son of Barachiah*

Footnotes for Matthew, Chapter 24

- [1] 24:10 Or *stumble*
- [1] 24:36 Some manuscripts omit *nor the Son*
- [1] 24:45 Greek *bondservant*; also verses 46, 48, 50
- [2] 24:49 Greek *bondservants*

Footnotes for Matthew, Chapter 25

- [3] 25:1 Or *torches*
- [4] 25:1 Some manuscripts add *and the bride*
- [1] 25:14 Greek *bondservants*; also verse 19
- [2] 25:15 A *talent* was a monetary unit worth about twenty years' wages for a laborer
- [3] 25:21 Greek *bondservant*; also verses 23, 26, 30
- [1] 25:40 Or *brothers and sisters*

Footnotes for Matthew, Chapter 26

- [2] 26:6 *Leprosy* was a term for several skin diseases; see Leviticus 13
- [1] 26:20 Some manuscripts add *disciples*
- [1] 26:28 Some manuscripts insert *new*
- [2] 26:38 Or *keep awake*; also verses 40, 41
- [1] 26:45 Or *Are you still sleeping and taking your rest?*
- [2] 26:50 Or *Friend, why are you here?*
- [3] 26:51 Greek *bondservant*
- [4] 26:59 Greek *Sanhedrin*
- [5] 26:62 Or *Have you no answer to what these men testify against you?*

Footnotes for Matthew, Chapter 27

- [1] 27:3 Greek *he*
- [1] 27:24 Some manuscripts *this righteous blood*, or *this righteous man's blood*
- [1] 27:26 A Roman judicial penalty, consisting of a severe beating with a multi-lashed whip containing imbedded pieces of bone and metal
- [2] 27:27 Greek *the praetorium*
- [3] 27:27 Greek *cohort*; a tenth of a Roman legion, usually about 600 men
- [4] 27:45 That is, noon
- [5] 27:45 Or *earth*
- [6] 27:45 That is, 3 P.M.
- [1] 27:54 Or *a son*
- [2] 27:65 Or *Take a guard*

Footnotes for Matthew, Chapter 28

- [1] 28:6 Some manuscripts *the Lord*
- [1] 28:19 Or *into*

Study Notes

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 1:1–17 See note, Lk 3:23–38.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 1:1 *book*. A written document, often rolled up as a scroll (cf Lk 4:20). The book as we know it today (bound pages; Lat *codex*) was an emerging technology at this time. *Jesus*. Personal name meaning "the Lord is salvation" (see note, v 21). *Christ*. See p 2098. *son of David*. Jesus was a descendant of King David, from whose family the Messiah was to come. See note, Ru 4:17; see also p 2098. *Abraham*. Father of the Israelites, through whom all nations were to be blessed. This blessing is realized in Jesus. See note, Gn 12:2.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 1:3 *Tamar*. Daughter-in-law of Judah; possibly a Gentile. Cf Gn 38. Tamar is one of four mothers mentioned in the genealogy of Jesus, none of whom were typical Judean women—a sign of God's grace to all people.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 1:5 *Rahab*. This Gentile prostitute aided the Israelites who spied on Canaan before the conquest (Jsh 2:1–21). After Jericho was destroyed, Rahab and her family lived with the Israelites, and she became an ancestor of the Messiah.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 1:6 *David the king*. See note, v 1. *wife of Uriah*. Bathsheba, with whom David committed adultery.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 1:11 *deportation*. Babylon captured and destroyed Jerusalem in 587 BC and deported many Judeans into exile. This humbling experience was one of the most significant events in Israelite history. See "captivity," p 1079; see also map, p 717.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 1:16 *husband of Mary*. Joseph was not the biological father of Jesus but the stepfather. See note, v 20. *Christ*. Cf v 1; see p 2098. This genealogy demonstrated that Jesus had the proper ancestors to be the Christ, though His claim was denounced as blasphemy by the Jewish high priest (26:63–65). Wycl: "He was without beginning, and without ending, and in his manhood begotten and not made" (*TT*, p 279).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 1:17 *fourteen*. Matthew did not list every generation in this family tree but rather created a three-part structure that communicates a sense of completeness and fulfillment. See "Genealogies

and Ages," p 9. The birth of the promised Messiah marked the end of the OT.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 1:1–17 In the genealogy of Jesus Christ, Matthew makes no effort to hide sinners and scandals. Instead, he highlights them. Jesus' ancestors include prostitutes, adulterers, violent men, and other sinners of all descriptions. Though this might surprise us, the truth is that there were no people other than sinners to make up His genealogy. Jesus' ancestors needed a Savior just as much as we do. If God, in His grace, can use such flawed and sinful people, how much more can He bless and use sinners who witness the Messiah's sinless sacrifice and believe in Him today! • Lord Jesus Christ, thank You for including me, a sinner, among those whom You came to save. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 1:18 *betrothed*. According to Jewish custom, betrothal was a legally binding relationship, the first stage of marriage. See pp 54–55. *before they came together*. Though betrothed, Joseph and Mary did not live together or have sexual relations. *from the Holy Spirit*. Mary became pregnant by a divine miracle, not through human means. See note, Lk 1:35.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 1:19 *just man*. Joseph, who wrongly assumed that Mary had been unfaithful to him, wished to live according to God's Law. See "righteous," p 843. *divorce her quietly*. The Law called for a betrothed woman to be stoned if she was guilty of adultery (Dt 22:23–24). See application note, Dt 24:1–4. Joseph felt compassion for Mary and planned to dissolve their marriage contract as quietly as possible.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 1:20 *angel of the Lord*. The Lord's messenger revealed to Joseph the divine origin of Mary's pregnancy. The angel is mentioned again in 2:13, 19. See p 1227. *dream*. A common means of revelation in the OT (see p 74), esp in the story of the patriarch Joseph (Gn 37–50). *son of David*. As Jesus' legal father, Joseph brought Him into the royal line of David. See note, v 16. *from the Holy Spirit*. See note, v 18.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 1:21 *save His people*. The personal name of the Messiah indicated what He would do (see note, v 1). See p 1904. Chrys: "[Matthew] darkly signified the Gentiles too. For 'His people' are not the Jews only, but also all that draw nigh and receive the knowledge that is from Him" (*NPNF* 1 10:26).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 1:22 *fulfill … prophet*. First of 10 times where Matthew introduces an OT passage with these words. See pp 1245, xlv–

xlvii.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 1:23 *virgin ... Immanuel.* Isaiah's Immanuel prophecy was originally addressed to the unbelieving King Ahaz of Judah, but its fulfillment came only with Mary's virginal conception and Jesus' birth. See notes, Is 7:14, 16. *God with us*. Cypr: "Christ is God" (*ANF* 5:517). The name Immanuel revealed that the human child born in Bethlehem was none other than the "Mighty God" (Is 9:6). Ter: "He who was going to consecrate a new order of birth, must Himself be born after a novel fashion…. This is the new nativity; a man is born in God. And in this man God was born" (*ANF* 3:536).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 1:24 *took his wife*. In contrast to King Ahaz, who doubted Isaiah's prophecy (see notes, Is 7:11–13), Joseph showed that he believed the word of the Lord.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 1:25 *knew her not*. Hbr expression. They did not have sexual intercourse. See note, Gn 19:5.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 1:18–25 Joseph serves as a model for believers. Before he knew the reason for Mary's pregnancy, he wanted to treat her justly but mercifully. However, when God's angel reveals the unique miracle of a virginal conception, Joseph believes, and he fulfills his responsibilities by marrying his betrothed and raising Jesus. Some people today struggle to believe the virgin birth, but it takes no more faith for us to believe than it did for Joseph. In fact, we have the evidence of Joseph's testimony to help us. He saw and believed that God can do what He promises. Likewise, the Holy Spirit works faith in our hearts to believe that God can do anything good and that Jesus is truly both God and man. • O Holy Spirit, strengthen my faith, and fill me with joy as I reflect on the miracle of Christ's birth. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 2:1 *Bethlehem of Judea*. C 5 mi S of Jerusalem. See map, p 1584. Town where David was born and anointed king (1Sm 16:1–13). *Herod the king*. Named king of Judea by the Roman Senate in 40 BC. Called "the Great" to distinguish him from his sons. He was a ruthless ruler whose paranoia caused him to kill family members and close associates. He likely died c 1 BC (the year of Jesus' birth was calculated erroneously by later historians). *behold.* This word, repeated in v 9, alerts the reader to something startling. *wise men.* See ESV note. Gk term loosely referred to a wide variety of people interested in dreams, astrology, and magic. On the timing of their arrival, see note, v 16. *from the east*. These

Gentiles probably came from Persia, Babylon, or Arabia. Their kind of wisdom was not always God-pleasing. See note, Dt 18:10–11.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 2:2 *king of the Jews?* It is surprising that these Gentile Magi would be looking for a Jewish king. Jesus comes for all nations. *His star.* The Magi may have seen a natural astronomical phenomenon, but more likely the appearance of the star was a miraculous event (cf v 9). They may have linked the star with a Jewish king through acquaintance with OT prophecy. See note, Nu 24:17. *when it rose*. See ESV note. Gk term for "east" and "rising" is the same. *worship*. Though the Gk word may also describe the reverence one would show a king, it commonly describes divine worship in the NT.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 2:3 *all Jerusalem with him*. Herod feared that his rule might be challenged. The people dreaded Herod's rage (see note, v 1) and his cruel reaction to this report (v 16). As an Idumean (Edomite), Herod continued the relationship of rivalry with God's chosen people (see note, Gn 27:39–40).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 2:4 *chief priests*. Current and former high priests. *scribes*. Students of God's Word who interpreted and taught the Scriptures. See pp 719–20. *where the Christ was to be born.* Herod's question indicated his awareness of OT promises of a Messiah.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 2:5 *prophet*. Micah. See note, Mi 5:2.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 2:6 *you, O Bethlehem ... a ruler.* Micah spoke this prophecy more than 700 years earlier, at a time when Assyria threatened Judah. The birth of Christ fulfilled the promise of a ruler from Bethlehem. *who will shepherd My people Israel.* Wording based on the Lord's commissioning of David as king of Israel. See note, 2Sm 5:2.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 2:7 Herod calculated that the child was born when the Magi first observed the star.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 2:8 Herod sought to deceive the Magi, hoping they would report back to him what they found, that he might finalize his plan to kill the infant king.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 2:9 The star the Magi had seen in their homeland now guided them from Jerusalem to the very house where Joseph, Mary, and Jesus were living (v 11). God was obviously leading these Gentiles in their quest for the King of the Jews.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 2:10 *rejoiced exceedingly with great joy*. Matthew piles one expression of joy on another to emphasize the Magi's

feelings.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 2:11 Unclear whether the Magi worshiped Jesus as true God or revered Him only as an earthly king. "Worship" implies they realized that Jesus was more than just a human king. See note, v 2. The Magi's gifts to Jesus were expensive but not uncommon presents for a king. *frankincense*. See note, Lv 2:1. *myrrh*. See note, Sg 3:6.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 2:12 *warned in a dream*. To allow time for the Holy Family to escape to Egypt, God kept Herod in the dark about where Jesus was. See p 74.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 2:1–12 God uses a star, Scripture, and a dream to guide the Magi on their way to and from Bethlehem. They are the first of many Gentiles to worship Jesus. Today, through His Word, the Father guides people of all nations to Christ. Jesus is the "star" the Father provided for us so that we can see our Savior. The Holy Spirit works faith in our hearts through the Gospel, and like the Magi, we joyfully offer our gifts of thanksgiving to Jesus. • "Holy Spirit, light divine, Shine upon this heart of mine; … Let me see my Savior's face, Let me all His beauties trace; Show those glorious truths to me Which are only known to Thee." Amen. (*LSB* 496:1–2)
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 2:13 *flee to Egypt*. C 175 mi SW of Jerusalem, outside Herod's jurisdiction. Joseph was told to stay in Egypt till he received further instructions.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 2:14 *by night*. Joseph obeyed the angel's command that very night.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 2:15 *death of Herod*. See note, v 1. *prophet*. Hosea. *Out of Egypt I called My son*. In Hos 11:1, the Lord referred to Israel as "My son," whom He called out of Egypt at the time of the exodus. Jesus is here named as God's one and only Son, who was the representative and substitute for all Israel. God would also call this Son out of Egypt to redeem His sinful people.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 2:13–15 After God's warning, Joseph immediately flees with his family in the middle of the night. This is an example of how God protects His people. When threatening challenges surround us, we trust that God is in control and that He will protect us. Most of all, we know that He has already protected us from our greatest enemies: sin, death, and the devil. • Heavenly Father, keep me from ever doubting Your protecting care. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 2:16 *saw that he had been tricked*. Herod waited in vain for the Magi to return and report where the new king was living. *all the male children ... two years old or under*. The figure probably reflects how long it had been since the Magi first saw the star. Since Herod did not know which young boy might be his potential rival, he ordered a mass killing of all male children up to two years old in Bethlehem and the surrounding region. These young boys, traditionally called "The Holy Innocents," are regarded as the first martyrs in the NT.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 2:18 *A voice was heard in Ramah ... they are no more.* Rachel, the beloved wife of Jacob, died in childbirth and was buried in Ramah, just north of Jerusalem (Gn 35:16–20). Years later, Jeremiah pictured Rachel weeping for the Israelites who were exiled to Babylon. These OT stories of suffering anticipated the suffering caused by Herod. The sound of weeping was heard again when Herod slaughtered the infant boys of Bethlehem. See note, Jer 31:15.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 2:16–18 The young boys of Bethlehem die, but Jesus escapes. He escapes death at the hands of Herod, that later He might die on the cross for all sinners, even ones so cruel as Herod or so young as two-year-olds. Jesus sacrificed His innocent life to redeem all people from sin, death, and the power of the devil. Trusting in Jesus, we have perfect innocence before our Father in heaven. • We praise You, Jesus, for willingly giving up Your life at the proper time for our salvation. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 2:20–21 *land of Israel*. This expression, used nowhere else in the NT, suggests that Jesus' return from Egypt was like ancient Israel's leaving Egyptian slavery to dwell in the Promised Land.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 2:22 *Archelaus*. After Herod's death, this son was made ruler of Judea, Samaria, and Idumea. A brutal tyrant, he was deposed and exiled in AD 6. *warned*. Joseph had evidently planned to go back to Bethlehem in Judea, but God directed him elsewhere. *district of Galilee*. Territory north of Judea and Samaria. The temple authorities in Jerusalem tended to look down on people living in Galilee because they came into contact with many more Gentiles.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 2:23 *Nazareth*. Former home of Joseph and Mary. Small, insignificant town not mentioned in the OT. Hardly the place from which to expect the Messiah. See notes, Jn 1:46; 7:52. *prophets*. Does not refer to one prophet but to OT prophets in general. *called a Nazarene*. Because Nazareth was a despised place, someone coming from there would

also be despised. Matthew's comment reflects the surprising character of the outcome of these prophecies. That many would despise the Messiah is reflected in various OT prophecies (cf Ps 22:6–8, 13; Is 53:2–3, 8).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 2:19–23 God's revelation leads Joseph to take Mary as his wife. He later flees to Egypt and finally settles permanently in Nazareth with God's guidance. These events may have seemed confusing to Joseph, but God had a plan. All of the Lord's leading was to fulfill OT prophecies. We do not always know where God is leading us, but we can be sure that He will be with us and that His plans are for our good. • Loving Father, help me to pray with Jesus, "Your will be done," and follow where You lead. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 3:1 *John the Baptist*. Son of Zechariah, an elderly priest, and his wife, Elizabeth, Mary's relative (cf Lk 1:36; 57–66). *Baptist*. See note, Lk 7:20. *preaching*. God called John to prepare the way for Jesus (v 3). *wilderness*. See note, Mk 1:4.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 3:2 *Repent*. This exhortation, which John addressed to all Israel, called for a radical transformation of the entire person, a fundamental turnabout. To repent meant to be converted from unbelief to faith. See p 1080. "With one bolt of lightning, he hurls together both 'those selling and those buying works'. He says: 'Repent!' [Matthew 3:2]. Now one group imagines, 'Why, we have repented!' The other says, 'We need no repentance' " (SA III III 30–31). *kingdom of heaven*. This expression, used 32 times in Mt, means the same as "kingdom of God." "Kingdom" might better be translated "reign" because it refers not to a geographical location but to God's act of ruling. See pp 1565–66. *at hand*. God's rule was near in Christ.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 3:3 *The voice.* The prophet Isaiah so described the Lord's forerunner, John. *paths straight*. Repentance is compared to building a straight road.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 3:4 See note, Mk 1:6.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 3:5 *going out to him.* John's preaching caused enormous excitement.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 3:6 *baptized.* The goal of John's Baptism at the Jordan River was to produce repentance (see note, Mk 1:4). *confessing their sins*. Those who were baptized and confessed their sins could be certain of the forgiveness of sins (cf Mk 1:4; Lk 3:3). Chrys: "When the sacrifice was not yet offered … how was remission to take place? … Had

they not condemned themselves, they could not have sought after His grace; and not seeking, they could not have obtained remission. Thus that baptism led the way for this; wherefore also he said, that 'they should believe on Him which should come after him' " (*NPNF* 1 10:62–63).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 3:7 *Pharisees*. See note, Mk 2:18. *Sadducees*. See p 1557. *brood of vipers! ... wrath to come?* See note, Lk 3:7.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 3:8 The Pharisees and Sadducees wanted John to baptize them without having repented and confessed their sins. Their works should give evidence of sincere repentance (cf Lk 3:10–14). "Confession, too, cannot be false, uncertain, or fragmentary. A person who confesses that everything in him is nothing but sin includes all sins, excludes none, forgets none. Neither can the satisfaction be uncertain, because it is not our uncertain, sinful work. Rather, it is the suffering and blood of the innocent Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" (SA III III 37–38).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 3:9 *Abraham as our father*. Spiritual confidence based on biological descent from Abraham was no substitute for repentance. *stones ... children*. See note, Lk 3:8.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 3:10 See note, Lk 3:9.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 3:11 *with water for repentance*. See note, v 2. *sandals I am not worthy*. See note, Mk 1:7. *baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire*. Jesus will baptize with the Holy Spirit those who repent, but the unrepentant will experience the fire of eternal punishment. Jesus baptized His disciples with the Holy Spirit at Pentecost (Ac 2:33) and continues to pour out the Spirit on believers through Word and Sacrament. See p 1815.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 3:12 *winnowing fork … threshing floor*. John compared the final judgment to threshing. See pp 422–23. *wheat into the barn*. Just as the harvester saved the wheat, God will save His people. *barn*. Pit or silo for storing grain. *chaff He will burn*. Likely refers to cleanup at the end of threshing season. Chaff had no value and so was burned. This is the eternal fate of those who refuse to repent. *unquenchable fire*. God's judgment (cf Is 30:27; Mal 3:2).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 3:1–12 John was a preacher of repentance, as was Martin Luther, who often emphasized that we believers must not only sincerely confess our sins but also be certain of forgiveness. Thank God for such preachers. • Almighty God, be merciful to me, a sinner. Burn my chaff, but quench my sinful passions in the daily washing of Holy Baptism. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 3:13 Jesus traveled at least 15 mi, perhaps much farther, to receive John's Baptism. The two were cousins (Lk 1:36–45) and likely knew each other.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 3:14 *would have prevented*. John refused to baptize the Pharisees and Sadducees because they failed to repent (v 8). Because Jesus was without sin, John also wanted to refuse Baptism to this One who was mightier than he (cf v 11). *I need to be baptized*. In Jesus' presence, John felt unclean (cf Is 6:1–5). He recognized that Jesus could do for him what no one else could.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 3:15 *Jesus answered.* First recorded words of Jesus in Mt. *now*. In the present context of Jesus' mission to save sinners (1:21). *fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness*. Jesus submitted to John's Baptism, the same that sinners were undergoing, in order to affirm His identity with sinners and to provide them with perfect righteousness (2Co 5:21). Hipp: "I am the Fulfiller of the law; I seek to leave nothing wanting to its whole fulfillment…. Baptize Me, John, in order that no one may despise baptism" (*ANF* 5:236). Jesus' Baptism marked the beginning of His public ministry and anticipated His death on the cross (cf Mk 10:38; Rm 6:3). The fact that all four Gospels report the Baptism of Jesus points to its importance. Luther captured the primary meaning for His Baptism: "[Christ] accepted it from John for the reason that he was entering into our stead, indeed, our person, that is, becoming a sinner for us, taking upon himself the sins which he had not committed, and wiping them out and drowning them in his holy baptism" (AE 51:315).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 3:16–17 What happened after the Baptism of Jesus was startling and completely unexpected. The entire Trinity was revealed when the Father's voice declared Jesus to be His beloved Son and the Spirit descended on Him. Mel: "In the New Testament the three persons are most clearly revealed in the baptism of Christ, where the Father says, 'This is My beloved Son,' and the Son is seen standing publicly in the river, and the Holy Spirit sits in visible form upon the Son" (Chem, *LTh* 1:51).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 3:16 *up from the water*. See note, Mk 1:10. *behold.* Cf v 17; see note, 2:1. *opened to Him, and He saw*. Matthew emphasizes that the Spirit's descent was for Jesus' benefit. *Spirit*. See note, Mk 1:10; cf Jn 14:26.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 3:17 *voice*. The Father's voice, so often heard in the OT, was heard anew. *My beloved Son*. The Father's declaration is for all

to hear, including us today. Even John was not fully aware of Jesus' divine origin till now (Jn 1:31–34). *well pleased*. As the Father's beloved Son, Jesus fulfilled all righteousness (v 15), something that Israel, God's OT son, failed to do.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 3:13–17 Because Jesus is our substitute, we need not fear God's wrath and punishment for our sins. We are washed clean by the blood of the Lamb (Rv 7:14), who prepared the waters of Baptism for us. • Lord Jesus, You stood next to sinners in the waters of the Jordan. Stand with me now, and wash away my sins. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 4:1 *Then ... led up by the Spirit*. The Holy Spirit, whom Jesus received at His Baptism (3:16), at once led Him to be tested. *wilderness*. In Judea. See map, p 1584. A place associated with demons (cf 12:43). God also led Israel into the wilderness to wander 40 years (Dt 8:2). *to be tempted*. These temptations were not willed by the devil but by God, whose eternal plan called for the Savior to be tempted and to triumph. Jesus met the test as Israel had not (Ex 15:25; 20:20). As true man, Jesus experienced genuine temptation. As true God, He could overcome temptation. *devil*. Means "slanderer." Also called the tempter (v 3) and Satan (v 10), which means "adversary."

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 4:2 *hungry*. Israel had also experienced great hunger in the wilderness (Ex 16:3; 24:18). The devil's first temptation attacked a basic need.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 4:3 See note, Lk 4:3. *If You are the Son of God*. The devil attempted to get Jesus to prove what the Father had just declared (3:17) and so satisfy His hunger. *loaves of bread*. Jesus was tempted to provide bread miraculously for His own needs, just as God had miraculously provided manna for Israel.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 4:4 *It is written*. Repeated by Jesus in vv 7, 10. Here, Jesus quoted Moses' explanation to Israel of why God had let them hunger in the wilderness. Life does not depend on food alone but on the Word of God. Jesus did not exhibit His own glory by performing a miracle but displayed trust in the Word of His Father.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 4:5 *took Him*. The devil only seemed to be in charge. Ultimately, it was the Spirit who continued to lead Jesus (v 1). *holy city*. Jerusalem. *pinnacle of the temple*. See note, Lk 4:9.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 4:6 *Son of God*. See note, v 3. *throw Yourself down*. Such a rash action would likely result in death or severe injury. *it is*

written. The devil sought to overthrow Jesus' previous use of Scripture by quoting a psalm in which God promises to command His angels to protect those who trust in Him (though significantly Satan omitted the phrase "in all your ways").

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 4:7 Jesus met this temptation by quoting Moses' warning to Israel against testing God as they had done at Massah (cf Ex 17:2–7). Jesus would have been guilty of the same sin had He felt it necessary to prove God's power by jumping from the temple pinnacle in an attempt to gain personal glory and fame.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 4:8 *very high mountain*. In this climactic temptation, the devil was permitted to create for Jesus a spiritual vision of "all the kingdoms of the world and their glory." An earthly mountain from which one could see all this does not exist. The nearest high point likely would have been Hebron in Judea. See color map 4.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 4:9 Though Satan has some dominion in this world (Col 1:13; 1Jn 5:19), here he offered things that were not his to give. Satan demanded that the Son of God worship him rather than do His Father's will.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 4:10 *Be gone, Satan!* Jesus had heard enough from Satan and ordered him to leave. This demonstrates the true extent of Jesus' authority as manifested later (cf 7:29). *it is written.* Jesus' third quotation of Scripture was from a passage where, with similar words, Moses admonished Israel to fear and serve the Lord rather than idols when they entered the Promised Land. If Jesus had worshiped the devil and rejected the way of the cross, He might well have gained earthly glory for Himself.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 4:11 *the devil left Him*. Satan was forced to depart. The Son of God had vanquished the old evil foe. Cf Jas 4:7. *angels came and were ministering*. Jesus had refused to relieve His hunger with a miracle (v 4). Now, miraculously, the angels served Him, probably also with food (cf 1Ki 19:6–7).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 4:1–11 The devil tempts Jesus to seek His own glory. Jesus refuses this path to walk the way of the cross. In love, He "did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but made Himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross" (Php 2:6–8). He did

all this for the sake of Israel, who had failed God's test. He did all this for our sake, because we, too, have failed God's test. Jesus is our substitute who defeated Satan for us, setting us free from sin, death, and the devil's power. • Mighty Hero, though devils fill the world, we do not fear because You have won the victory. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 4:12 *arrested*. Herod Antipas, son of Herod the Great and ruler of Galilee, imprisoned John for condemning his adulterous relationship with his brother's wife (cf 14:1–12). *withdrew*. Gk word can mean simply "departed" (2:12), with no idea of escape. As John's public ministry ended, Jesus' began.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 4:13 *Capernaum*. Modern Tel Hum. Fishing village and important garrison on the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee. See map, p 1584. Home of Peter (8:14) and also the town where Matthew collected taxes (9:9). Capernaum served as Jesus' base of operations. *Zebulun and Naphtali*. Two of Israel's 12 tribes originally occupied this territory west of the Sea of Galilee. See map, p 365.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 4:15–16 *The land of Zebulun ... light has dawned.* The prophet Isaiah foretold that this land, through which the conquering Assyrian army had marched, would later see a "great light." Jesus, the light of the world (Jn 8:12), dispelled the darkness in which these people had walked. Hipp: "The two peoples [were] being brought together into one fold and under the hand of one chief Shepherd, the good (Shepherd) by nature, that is, Christ" (*ANF* 5:165).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 4:15 *Galilee of the Gentiles.* See note, 2:22. Galilee had a significant Gentile population. Here in despised Galilee, light dawned.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 4:17 *began to preach*. Marks a major transition in Mt, announcing the beginning of Jesus' public ministry. *Repent ... is at hand*. Cf 3:2, where John spoke identical words. The Church proclaims this same message today. See p 1080.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 4:18 *Sea of Galilee.* Freshwater fishing lake, c 13 mi by 8 mi, 682 ft below sea level. See map, p 1584. *Simon (who is called Peter) and Andrew*. Brothers originally from Bethsaida. See map, p 1584. *Peter*. Name given him by Jesus. See ESV note, 16:18. *net*. See notes, 13:47–48; Mk 1:16.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 4:19 See note, Mk 1:17.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 4:20 *Immediately*. These brothers responded at once to the overwhelming authority of Jesus' call. Their priorities would never again be the same.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 4:21–22 *James ... John ... followed Him.* See note, Mk 1:19.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 4:23–24 *healing every disease … affliction*. Mt and Lk emphasize that early in His ministry, Jesus healed everyone who came to Him (8:16; 9:35; 12:15; Lk 4:40; 6:19). (Mk writes "many" in 3:10.) Thus the Gospels set out the general character of Jesus' ministry in Galilee. They later note exceptions to those general trends: growing skepticism (Mt 12:22–32; Lk 11:14–23) and few miracles in Nazareth (Mt 13:54; Mk 6:5). Healings are emphasized less and less as Jesus journeys toward the cross. The miracles adorned Jesus' ministry to demonstrate that He is God's servant (Jn 3:2; Ac 2:22). They are not a witness that God will work wonders for all people, everywhere, at all times, as St Paul learned in 2Co 12:7–10.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 4:23 First general summary of Jesus' ministry in Galilee. *teaching*. Important Gk term in Mt, used 14 times. See p 1904; cf Dt 6:7; Pr 1:8. *synagogues*. Places for reading and studying Scripture, perhaps in private homes. See p 1557. *proclaiming*. Also translated "preaching." *gospel of the kingdom*. Jesus announced the nearness of the reign of God (v 17; 3:2). See pp 1902, 1565–66. *healing*. The various diseases and afflictions cataloged in v 24 are evidence of how sin has spoiled God's creation. Jesus' healing miracles showed the nearness of God's reign and gave a foretaste of our final deliverance from disease and death. Cf Rv 22:2.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 4:24 *Syria*. Refers loosely to the region north of Galilee, where both Jews and Gentiles lived. *all the sick*. Jesus gained instant fame from His healing powers. Five categories of illness are mentioned, and Jesus had power over all of them.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 4:25 *great crowds*. An emphasis in Mt; "crowd" occurs 50 times. *followed*. The crowds physically followed Jesus, but not necessarily as disciples (cf v 19). *Decapolis*. Refers to 10 cities east of the Jordan with large Gentile populations. *beyond the Jordan*. The east bank, to which reference is made in Isaiah's prophecy (v 15). See color map 4.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 4:12–25 Isaiah described the sinful state of this world: people walking in darkness and the shadow of death, unable to

find their way and lacking the ability to help themselves. Into this black hole comes Jesus, the light of the world. His great light shines first in Galilee, where He calls disciples, teaches, preaches, and heals. His great light continues to shine in our darkness. The good news of God's reign continues to be sounded in Word and Sacrament. To sinful, hurting people, Jesus gives life, hope, and deliverance. • May Your light shine in us as we share Your Gospel with the world, O Christ, our light. Shine on us and through us. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON **Chs 5–7** See pp 1575–77.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:1 *Seeing the crowds.* Jesus separated Himself from the "great crowds" (4:25), though some did hear His teaching (7:28). *mountain*. Location unknown. Mountains were common sites for significant events (cf 17:1). Jesus' teaching in chs 5–7 has long been known as the Sermon on the Mount. It is the first of five major sermons, or discourses, in Mt (cf ch 10; 13:1–52; ch 18; chs 24–25). Aug: "The sermon before us is perfect in all the precepts by which the Christian life is moulded" (*NPNF* 1 6:3). *sat down*. Rabbis typically sat to teach. *disciples*. Gk *mathetes*; "learner," "apprentice." Common in Gospels and Ac, but never used in Epistles. Often means the 12 called "apostles" (10:1–2), but can also mean a larger group of adherents. The feminine form appears once (see note, Ac 9:36). Here, the term includes the four fishermen (cf 4:18–22) plus others from the crowds who responded to Jesus' call to repent.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:3–11 *Blessed*. Jesus began His sermon by nine times declaring His disciples blessed because of what God had in store for them. Jesus was not making ethical demands of His followers but was describing blessings they would fully enjoy in the new heaven and new earth (Rv 21:1). The beatitudes are a common literary form found throughout Scripture (e.g., Ps 1:1; Lk 11:28; Rv 19:9). See p 842.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:3 *poor in spirit*. The spiritually poor who acknowledge their moral bankruptcy. Cf Lk 4:18. *theirs is the kingdom of heaven*. A possession that disciples enjoy even now by faith. This blessing is repeated in v 10. Aug: "The one reward, which is the kingdom of heaven, is variously named [in the Beatitudes]" (*NPNF* 1 6:7). See pp 1565–66.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:4 *mourn.* Over sin; similar to the spiritually poor (see note, v 3). *comforted*. The comfort the Messiah brings will be fully realized in heaven.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:5 *meek*. Lowly, humble. *inherit the earth*. See "portion," p 7. We will inherit the new heavens and new earth after our bodies are resurrected on the Last Day.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:6 *hunger and thirst for righteousness*. Fervent desire for God's righteousness, or salvation (Is 51:5–8; cf 3:15). On "righteousness," see p 1904. *satisfied*. Luth: "We have the clear assurance that God does not cast aside sinners, that is, those who recognize their sin and desire to come to their senses, who thirst for righteousness (Matt. 5:6)" (AE 2:41).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:7 *merciful ... receive mercy*. A disciple who truly appreciates God's blessings will be a merciful person and will receive mercy (cf 18:33). See p 1903.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:8 *pure in heart*. Those who do not worship false gods. Aug: "A pure heart … is a single heart: and just as this light cannot be seen, except with pure eyes; so neither is God seen, unless that is pure by which He can be seen" (*NPNF* 1 6:5). *see God*. The worshiper in Ps 24 who sought the face of God experienced the coming of the King of glory (vv 7–10). Such disciples look forward to seeing God. See note, Jn 1:18.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:9 *peacemakers.* Jesus would send out His disciples to bring peace to those who were worthy (10:13). *called sons of God*. The Son of God is named the Prince of Peace (Is 9:6). Those who trust in Him are blessed by being God's sons and daughters (Gal 3:26–28).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:10 *persecuted for righteousness' sake*. Jesus later warned the disciples He sent out as peacemakers (v 9) that persecution would also be their lot (10:16–22). Aug: "Where there is no sound faith, there can be no righteousness, for the just [righteous] man lives by faith" (*NPNF* 1 6:7). *theirs ... heaven.* See note, v 3.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:11 *Blessed are you.* Jesus spoke the first eight beatitudes using the third person ("they"). In this final beatitude, He addressed His disciples directly using the second person ("you") for emphasis. He continued using "you" until 7:13. *on My account*. For being Christ's disciple. "Troubles are not always punishments for certain past deeds, but they are God's works, intended for our benefit, and that God's power might be made more apparent in our weakness" (Ap XIIB 63).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:12 *Rejoice and be glad.* The source of joy for a disciple who suffers persecution is the promise of heaven. *reward*. Though Jesus used this term when referring to heavenly blessings, He taught that

the reward would be based on God's goodness, not the amount of work done (cf 20:1–15). Any reward our heavenly Father gives is an expression of His grace. "We confess that eternal life is a reward; it is something due because of the promise, not because of our merits" (Ap V 242). Hus: "When [a disciple] has patiently continued to endure[,] it helps to purify him as tools [purify] iron, and fire gold, and it helps to increase his reward of beatitude" (*The Church*, p 270). See notes, 1Co 3:8, 14. *prophets*. OT prophets were persecuted (cf 2Ch 24:21; Jer 20:2).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:1–12 Jesus introduces His Sermon on the Mount with nine beatitudes that detail the future blessedness of His disciples. These promised blessings are God's gracious gifts to those who repent of their sins and trust Christ for righteousness. Only after Jesus has assured His disciples of God's goodness to them does He call on them, in the rest of His sermon, to be good and do good. When we recognize our own spiritual poverty, when the Lord leads us to hunger and thirst for God's righteousness, when He makes us pure in heart so that we seek to worship only the true God, then we are blessed, now and forever. • Gracious Savior, keep my eyes ever focused on You and Your blessings, which are mine by grace alone. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:13–16 Jesus commands His disciples to be salt and light. In the rest of the sermon, He will spell out specific ways in which they fulfill this calling.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:13 *You.* See note, v 11. *salt of the earth*. By their way of life, Jesus' disciples are to be as useful as salt is. See note, Lv 2:13. *lost its taste*. Becoming useless. *saltiness be restored?* Lit, "How shall it [humankind] be salted?" Humanity will not benefit if salt—or disciples—become useless. One might as well throw it out to be trampled underfoot.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:14 *light of the world*. Light is a universal symbol for what is beneficial to people. Jesus, the light of the world, called on His followers to fulfill that function for the world. Aug: "By the world must be understood not the heavens and the earth, but the men who are in the world or love the world" (*NPNF* 1 6:9). *hidden*. Just as there is no hiding the light of a city on a hill, the light of a true disciple cannot be hidden.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:15 *on a stand*. The light of a lamp is meant to illuminate a dark house.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:16 *they may see your good works*. Jesus urged His disciples to do good works for the people of this world to see. Luth: "What [Jesus] calls 'good works' here is the exercise, expression, and confession of the teaching about Christ and faith…. Shining is the real job of believing or teaching, by which we also help others to believe" (AE 21:65; see FC Ep IV 18). *glory to your Father*. Good works are meant to lead others to glorify our heavenly Father, not to bring praise to the one who does them. Leading people to worship the true God is the whole purpose of doing good deeds.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:13–16 Words without deeds are like salt that has become useless or like a light put under a basket. The words we speak in praise of our heavenly Father need the support of our deeds. Jesus wants us to witness by both words and deeds, even as God bears witness that He is our Father when He calls us His children. • Lord Jesus, help me to be good salt and a shining light wherever I am. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:17 *Law or the Prophets.* All OT Scriptures. *fulfill them*. Jesus fulfilled all that was written of Him in the Law and the Prophets. See "Eschatology," p 1577. Likewise, He kept the commands of the Law perfectly (cf Heb 4:15).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:18 *truly.* Gk *amen*; used 31 times by Jesus in Mt. See p 1901. *pass away*. At the last judgment. *iota … dot*. Refers to the smallest Hbr letter (*yod*) and even smaller markings in the sacred text. *accomplished.* The Messiah's work, esp His death and resurrection.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:19 *relaxes*. By teaching that the commandments were no longer applicable in their fullness. This was the error of the scribes and Pharisees (vv 21–48). *least in the kingdom of heaven*. Such a false teacher will not be excluded from God's kingdom but will have a lesser status, something we will understand only in heaven. See note, 1Co 3:8.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:20 *righteousness exceeds.* See p 1904. True righteousness is the result of a right relationship with Jesus. Good works are a fruit of faith in Him (Eph 2:8–10), something that most scribes and Pharisees did not possess. *scribes*. See note, 2:4. *Pharisees*. See note, Mk 2:18.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:17–20 The scribes and Pharisees read and study the Law and the Prophets. They accept the fact that "Scripture cannot

be broken" (Jn 10:35), but they do not believe that Jesus is the fulfillment of the Scriptures (cf Jn 5:39). They seek to achieve righteousness by keeping the Law, for which they have a high regard. But Jesus goes on to point out just how defective their righteousness really is (vv 21–48). "Christ takes the Law into His hands and explains it spiritually" (FC SD V 10). When judged by the true intent of God's Law, our righteousness is likewise defective. Only in Christ do we have true righteousness. • Jesus, when I read and study the Scriptures, help me to see my sin and to see You, my Savior. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:21 *You have heard.* What the disciples heard from Jewish religious teachers such as the scribes and Pharisees. *liable to judgment*. From a human court.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:22 *But I say to you.* Jesus stated His own teaching with the voice of authority (cf vv 28, 32, 34, 39, 44; 7:29). "Christ takes the Law into His hands and explains it spiritually" (FC SD V 10). *brother*. A fellow believer. See p 1901. *liable to judgment.* God's judgment. *council*. Religious court. *You fool!* Another term expressing anger and abuse. *hell of fire*. Lit, rubbish pit near Jerusalem, where fire always smoldered. See ESV note. Symbolic of eternal punishment. See p 792. "He says that we must not kill, neither with hand, heart, mouth, signs, gestures, help, nor counsel" (LC I 182).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:23 *gift at the altar*. An offering to be sacrificed on the temple altar. Aug: "We may interpret the altar spiritually, as being faith itself in the inner temple of God, whose emblem is the visible altar. For whatever offering we present to God, whether prophecy, or teaching, or prayer, or a psalm, or a hymn, and whatever other such like spiritual gift occurs to the mind, it cannot be acceptable to God, unless it be sustained by sincerity of faith" (*NPNF* 1 6:12–13). *something against you*. A fellow believer has a grievance against the worshiper.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:24 The first priority for a worshiper is to seek reconciliation with an offended believer.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:25 *Come to terms quickly with your accuser.* Jesus urged immediate action in resolving disputes. On legal proceedings, see p 792.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:26 *paid the last penny.* See ESV note. The end for someone who is angry with a fellow believer (v 22) and does not seek reconciliation (vv 24–25) is imprisonment. See note, 18:34.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:21–26 Jesus teaches that not only murder but also anger makes one liable to the hell of fire. He urges His disciples to energetically seek reconciliation with fellow believers who might be vexed with them. This stern preaching of the Law causes us to take stock of our own behavior and to confess that we often, through sinful anger, fall. Our only hope for salvation is to trust the reconciliation that Christ accomplished by His sacrificial death (cf 2Co 5:19). Having been reconciled to God, we may be reconciled with one another. • Mighty Judge, cover my outbursts of sinful anger with the embrace of Your reconciling peace. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:28 *lustful intent*. Burning sexual desire (1Co 7:9). *already committed adultery ... in his heart*. Sin is not merely outward action. Jesus identified the sinful heart as the source of all evil (15:19). See notes, Gn 6:5; Ex 20:17. Aug: "There are three things which go to complete sin: the suggestion of, the taking pleasure in, and the consenting to" (*NPNF* 1 6:15). Cf Gn 3:6; 1Jn 2:16.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:29–30 Hyperbole, though such a punishment was known (Jos, *Life*, 169). Jesus used strong and exaggerated language to emphasize the seriousness of sexual sins. Such sins (and other abuses) wreak havoc with personal relationships. If an eye or hand leads one to commit sin, it would be better to get rid of these body parts than go into hell (cf 18:8–9). *hell.* See note, v 22.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:27–30 The question asked in Pr 6:27 depicts the dangers that arise from lustful intentions: "Can a man carry fire next to his chest and his clothes not be burned?" Christ wants us to exhibit sexual purity in our inner thoughts as well as our outward deeds. When we are guilty of sexual sins, Christ calls us to repentance and faith, to look to His cross for pardon and cleansing. • "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me" (Ps 51:10). Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:31 The essential wording of a divorce certificate was "Lo, you are free to marry any man." Cf 19:3–9, where the Pharisees question Jesus about divorce.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:32 *sexual immorality*. Gk word refers to adultery—sexual intercourse between a married man or woman and someone other than a spouse. Cf Lv 18 regarding other sexual sins. *makes her commit adultery*. See note, Dt 24:4. Because marriage was often arranged for economic purposes, frequent divorces forced women into

adulterous remarriages. *whoever marries ... commits adultery*. A man who married a divorced woman was guilty of adultery. However, Scripture acknowledges that in some cases a believer may not be at fault in a divorce (see note, 1Co 7:15). In such circumstances, forbidding the believer to remarry could double his sorrow. "Unjust is the tradition forbidding an innocent person to marry after divorce" (Tr 78).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:31–32 Jesus condemns the easy divorce practices of His day that resulted in adulterous relationships. He teaches that the sacred union of marriage is lifelong. Jesus' authoritative teaching concerning divorce has often been violated, as have His teachings about other sins (cf vv 21–42). As God's children, we all need Jesus' teaching and encouragement to let our lights shine as we faithfully fulfill our marriage vows and honor the vows of others. The child of God who is guilty of a sinful divorce has the assurance that Jesus bore this sin also. • Lord Jesus, take away our sin. Be the cord that binds together Christian wives and husbands. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:33 *not swear falsely*. Just as OT Law permitted divorce, so also the swearing of oaths was allowed. Jesus condemned swearing falsely and breaking an oath. See "vow," p 7.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:34–35 *heaven … earth … Jerusalem.* When taking an oath, many Jews refrained from using God's name but substituted some other significant term. Jesus pointed out that these other terms were closely related to God (e.g., His "*throne,*" "*footstool,*" "*city* "). Some people believed that swearing by an object other than God lessened their responsibility for keeping the oath or vow (cf 23:16–22).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:34 *Do not take an oath at all*. Jesus instructed His disciples to refrain from taking any foolish oaths (see p 7). "We are not to swear in support of evil, that is, to support falsehood, or to swear when there is no need or use. But we should swear for the support of good and the advantage of our neighbor" (LC I 66).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:36 *your head*. Another example of substituting a lesser object for God. But even the hairs on one's head are under God's governance.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:37 The truthfulness of a believer's yes or no cannot be enhanced by swearing an oath, as Peter found out (26:72–74). *evil.* See ESV note.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:33–37 Jesus tells His disciples not to take an oath at all, expressing a general rule of conduct for them. The bottom line for Jesus is truthfulness. When believers lie or exaggerate commitment, they are not letting their light shine. This rule applies especially when believers converse with fellow Christians. However, there may be times when Christians will be asked to take an oath in their earthly affairs or contacts with governing authorities. Out of loving consideration for this request, Christians may comply. Thanks be to God that He vowed to save us (cf Ti 1:2) and fulfilled that vow by His Son's life, death, and resurrection for our salvation. • Lord Jesus, help me speak the truth in all my conversations and testimony. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:38 *eye for an eye*. Law of equal retaliation (Lat *lex talionis*) is based in Scripture and is an attitude deeply rooted in the human heart.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:39 *Do not resist*. Jesus prescribed a totally different attitude for His disciples, one He practiced. He illustrated this nonresistance with four examples. He is not teaching pacifism or that governing authorities cannot exert force (see note, Lk 3:14) but is describing the response of someone facing persecution. *slaps ... turn.* More of an insult than an attempt to do physical harm (cf 26:67–68).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:40 *sue you.* Take you to court. See p 792. *tunic*. See ESV note. *cloak*. Outer garment, which was more essential. See note, Ex 22:26.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:41 Roman military forced some civilians to carry baggage. Jesus told His disciples to go the extra mile in serving these foreign soldiers.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:42 Jesus' final example of not resisting evil requires reckless generosity. His words are meant to instill a deeper insight into how He intends His disciples to act. Jesus wants us to be willing to make sacrifices, to think twice before we refuse a request for help. Ter: "Who fears not to lose, finds it not irksome to give" (*ANF* 3:712). Luth: "Christ is not telling me to give what I have to any scoundrel that comes along and to deprive my family of it or others who may need it and whom I am obliged to help" (AE 21:117). Cf Mk 7:9–13.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:38–42 Jesus instructs His disciples not to resist evil people, a teaching that has provoked much debate over the centuries. As with some other statements Jesus made in this portion of the

Sermon on the Mount, there is a degree of exaggeration in what He says. We need to grasp His essential point. Jesus provokes self-examination in every Christian's heart: have I always been generous in sharing with the needy, whether they are good or evil? Jesus was totally generous in giving His life for us. In Him, we receive forgiveness and renewal. • Show me Your face, dear Jesus, in the hurting eyes of the needy, that I may help them as You helped me. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:43 *love your neighbor.* Cf Lv 19:18, where the "neighbor" was a fellow Israelite, which prompted a lawyer to ask Jesus, "Who is my neighbor?" (Lk 10:29). *hate your enemy.* Those who wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls commanded hatred for the outsider (see 1QS 1.4). See pp 1553–58.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:44 *Love your enemies.* Jesus was commanding not so much an emotion as loving actions. *pray ... persecute*. Christ on the cross and the martyr Stephen did this. Hus: "When he himself was stripped, beaten and blasphemed by the soldiers, scribes, Pharisees, officers, and priests, not even then did he pronounce any malediction, but he prayed, saying: 'Father forgive them' " (*The Church*, p 285).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:45 *be sons of your Father*. Sons of God will be like their Father, whose nature it is to love the world (Jn 3:16; cf 1Jn 4:16). Jesus died for God's enemies (Rm 5:10). To love one's enemies is to share in God's peacemaking (v 9). *sun ... rain*. Examples from nature demonstrate that God has mercy on all. *just.* See p 842.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:46 *reward do you have?* Rhetorical question; the answer is none. *tax collectors*. Romans (and local rulers such as Herod Antipas) awarded the right to collect taxes to the highest bidder, allowing local tax gatherers to levy a surcharge on the taxes they collected. Tax collectors typically abused the practice and were generally considered dishonest, traitorous, and "sinners." Yet, even they returned love for love.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:47 *brothers*. See ESV note; see also p 1901. *what more are you doing.* Jesus asked this series of questions to show the difference between common human behavior and His teachings. Luth: "Do you see now how pious you are if you are friendly and kind only to your friends? You are just about as pious as the thieves and the scoundrels, as the whores and the criminals, or as the devil himself" (AE 21:127).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:48 *You.* See note, v 11. *perfect, as your heavenly Father*. Jesus, who previously cited the Father's example (v 45),

concluded His teaching on love of enemies by commanding His disciples to imitate the Father's perfection (cf Eph 5:1–2).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 5:43–48 When we contemplate the six authoritative teachings of Jesus in vv 21–48, we must agree with Luther's verdict: "At this point you will discover how hard it is to do the good works God commands…. You will find out that you will be occupied with the practice of this work for the rest of your life" (AE 44:109). Some people, when confronted with the strict demands of the Law, will whittle off a point here, another there. They suggest that we do the best we can, and God will be satisfied. But God demands perfection, which sinners cannot achieve (cf Rm 7:21–25; 1Tm 1:15). Our perfection is in Christ alone. As God's redeemed people, Jesus declares that we are salt of the earth and light of the world. • Heavenly Father, though I often fall short of Your perfection, forgive my sins for Jesus' sake, and strengthen me for greater service. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 6:1 *righteousness*. See p 1904. Three important acts of Jewish piety were giving to the needy, praying, and fasting. Jesus warned His disciples not to do these righteous acts with the wrong intentions. *seen*. Jesus did not want the good works of His disciples to bring them personal glory but to glorify the Father (5:16). *no reward*. See note, 5:12.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 6:2 *needy*. The poor were cared for mainly through private almsgiving (cf Dt 15:11). *sound no trumpet*. No other record for this practice when giving alms. Jesus may have spoken figuratively: "Don't blow your own horn." *hypocrites*. People who outwardly appeared to be righteous but were not (cf 7:5; 22:18; 23:13). See note, Lk 6:42. *reward.* Public acclaim.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 6:3 *left hand ... right hand.* To scarcely remember the acts of mercy done.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 6:4 *secret*. Not known to humans. See note, v 6. *Father ... will reward you*. Cf vv 1, 6, 18; see note, 5:12.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 6:1–4 Jesus calls us to hide our good works when we are tempted to show them. Our works must glorify the Father. The only blessing that counts is the one received from His generous hand. His grace perfects even the least of our good works. • Loving Father, may my giving to the needy always bring You glory. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 6:5 *stand and pray*. Jesus was not criticizing this posture for prayer but the ostentatious motive behind it. See p 1277.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 6:6 *secret ... secret.* With this wordplay, Jesus made the point that God, who is invisible, sees and hears us even when what we do is invisible to other people.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 6:7 *empty phrases.* Meaningless babble. Prayer at this time might have included incantations. See note, Ac 19:18. Jesus does not condemn repeating prayers. See note, 26:44. *Gentiles*. Idolaters whose gods were alleged to thrive on incantation and repetition. Aug: "Gentiles … make it their endeavour to exercise the tongue rather than to cleanse the heart" (*NPNF* 1 6:37).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 6:8 *your Father knows*. Economy of expression in prayer is acceptable to our Father because He knows all our needs. See note, Is 65:24. Prayer is based on trust, not on magic or manipulation. Make your request, and trust that He will act. Yet, our Lord also taught us to pray persistently from our hearts.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 6:9–13 See SC, pp xxxvii–xxxix.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 6:9 *Pray then like this.* Jesus gave His disciples a model or general pattern for prayer, one that has become a fixed part of Christian worship. The version in Lk is slightly different. *Our Father.* Disciples pray as a community to their true Father. See p 2098. *hallowed be Your name*. See ESV note. God's name and Word are not now kept holy on earth. We pray for the day when this will come to pass (cf Php 2:9–11).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 6:10 *Your kingdom come*. See note, 3:2. God's reign is near in Christ for all who believe His Holy Word. We pray for His final victory. See pp 1565–66. Aug: "The kingdom of God, though it never departs from the earth, is yet absent to those who are ignorant of it" (*NPNF* 1 6:40). *Your will be done.* Already now our Father breaks and hinders Satan's evil will. When Christ comes again, all enemies will be defeated (cf 1Co 15:26; Heb 2:14–15). *on earth as it is in heaven.* Applies equally to the three initial petitions. We on earth pray that God would act on behalf of His name, His kingdom, and His will. These three petitions will be perfectly fulfilled only on the Last Day.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 6:11–13 In the second set of petitions, we ask God to do what is important for us today.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 6:11 *this day our daily bread*. We ask our Father to supply our daily needs. Preparing bread was a daily task. See note, Dt

24:6.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 6:12 *debts*. Sin is a moral debt owed to God. If He would not forgive us, we would have to pay "the last penny" (5:26). See p 959. *have forgiven our debtors.* Our power to forgive comes from having been forgiven. One who refuses to forgive turns away from God's forgiveness (vv 14–15; cf 18:23–35).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 6:13 *lead us ... deliver us*. Separate petitions, but joined in one sentence. We realize that God could allow the devil to tempt us, as Jesus was led into temptation by the Spirit (4:1). But we pray that our Father would guard and keep us from the evil one (see ESV note). Ter: "[Jesus], when tempted by the devil, demonstrated who it is that presides over and is the originator of temptation" (*ANF* 3:684). A doxology for the Lord's Prayer may have been added as early as the first century in the *Didache* ; in Gk Bible manuscripts, as early as the fifth century (see ESV note). These words were likely a liturgical response when the prayer was used in worship.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 6:14–15 *if you forgive ... not forgive*. Jesus added these words to reinforce the Fifth Petition, which is key to the prayer (v 12) and to discipleship. He emphasizes the importance of mutual forgiveness in the community of believers. He does not mean that forgiveness is somehow earned. On forgiveness, see Jesus' extensive teaching in ch 18.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 6:15 *trespasses*. Word for sin meaning to step over the line. See p 959.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 6:5–15 After Jesus warns His disciples not to pray in an ostentatious or merely repetitious manner, He provides them with a prayer of which Luther wrote, "There is no nobler prayer to be found upon earth" (LC III 23). Luther also called the Lord's Prayer "the greatest martyr" because "everybody tortures and abuses it; few take comfort and joy in its proper use" (AE 43:200). We may at times utter the Lord's Prayer thoughtlessly. Yet, our Father is fully attentive at all times to our needs and desires. This is our comfort and our joy. • Father, thank You for listening when I come to You in prayer. Amen.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 6:16 *fast*. Common practice in first-century Judaism (cf 9:14; Lk 18:12). It was done for various reasons: as a spiritual discipline, an aid to prayer, or a form of self-punishment for sin. Sometimes it was evidence of disdain for the body. The wording here implies that Jesus assumed His disciples would fast. See note, Mk 2:18. See also p 189.

gloomy … disfigure. Hypocrites disfigure their faces because they want others to notice them. See note, v 2.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 6:17 Usual hygienic steps that help create a normal appearance.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 6:18 *in secret … Father … will reward you*. See notes, vv 4, 6; 5:12.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 6:16–18 Fasting is only one of many practices that are susceptible to religious hypocrisy. Jesus does not command His disciples to discontinue acts of piety such as fasting, but to make sure that they are done to God's glory (cf 1Co 10:31). Jesus practiced what He preached by giving generously, praying, and fasting for our salvation. • Holy Father, to You belongs all glory, praise, and honor, now and forever. May my deeds reflect Your mercy and Your glory. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 6:19–24 Jesus urged a right attitude toward possessions by presenting contrasting pictures of treasures, eyes, and masters.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 6:20 *treasures in heaven*. Eternal rewards are free and cannot be taken away. See note, 5:12.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 6:21 *heart.* The center of one's personality, including the mind, emotions, and will. The heart will dwell on whatever a person treasures most. See notes, Gn 6:5; Ps 103:1–2.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 6:22 *eye is the lamp*. In Jesus' day, people believed that light shone out from the body through the eye. See note, Jb 17:7. *healthy.* Refers to spiritual health producing a "bountiful eye" (Pr 22:9). *full of light*. Such an eye means the whole person is healthy and generous. Hus: "[His work] is pure from the standpoint of a holy purpose" (*The Church*, p 224).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 6:23 *bad.* A morally bad eye is stingy (cf Pr 23:6; see ESV note). *light in you is darkness*. Such a person may see physically but is in total spiritual darkness.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 6:24 *two masters*. Jesus portrayed both God and money as slave owners. Obviously a slave has only one master. See p 101. *money*. See ESV note; see also note, Jsh 24:32.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 6:19–24 Humans everywhere, whether rich or poor, are prone to collecting earthly treasures. Yet, only heavenly treasures are eternal. As children of light, God calls us to be generous with our possessions and to serve God as our master rather than live as slaves to

possessions. For our sake, Christ became the servant of all—to save all—by bearing all of our sins and granting us rich, surpassing, eternal forgiveness. • Heavenly Father, lead me to "seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God" (Col 3:1). Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 6:25 *Therefore.* Conclusion to be drawn from vv 19–24. *anxious*. Worry, dread, and fear. *Is not ... clothing?* The first of five rhetorical questions that compare or contrast greater and lesser things. This was a typical teaching method of the rabbis.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 6:26 *birds ... feeds them*. Luth: "He is making the birds our schoolmasters and teachers. It is a great and abiding disgrace to us that in the Gospel a helpless sparrow should become a theologian and a preacher" (AE 21:197). *more value*. This second question compares the lesser to the greater.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 6:27 *span.* Gk word means "cubit"; see ESV note. Suggests adding a short extension to your life.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 6:29 *Solomon*. Israelite king known for his splendor. See pp 1048–49.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 6:30 *God so clothes*. See note, Lk 12:28. *grass ... oven*. Grass was used for fuel. *little faith?* See note, Lk 12:28. Those who worry about food, drink, and clothing (as well as other things) show little faith in the heavenly Father's providential care. Jesus also refers to great faith (cf 15:28). Paul describes faith organically, as "growing" (see note, 2Th 1:3).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 6:31 *Therefore.* Jesus concluded His argument by repeating elements of v 25.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 6:32 *Gentiles seek*. They did not believe in a generous, loving Creator. See note, v 7. *your heavenly Father knows.* See note, v 8.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 6:33 *seek first the kingdom*. Desire above all to live under the rule of the one true God (cf 3:2; 4:17). See pp 1565–66. *righteousness*. God's righteousness, or His salvation (cf 5:6). See p 1904. *all … added to you*. Jesus again compared the greater to the lesser blessing (cf Rm 8:32).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 6:34 Jesus concluded this portion of His teaching with a commonsense proverb. We would say, "Take one day at a time."

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 6:25–34 If Jesus' words are taken literally, it seems as if He encourages irresponsibility and laziness. And is it true that

all birds are adequately fed and all flowers are beautiful? As with Jesus' parables, we need to look for His central teaching here: seek God's salvation, and then entrust your daily life to His loving care. We do this by faithfully making use of the Word and Sacraments, through which the Spirit leads us to repent of our sins and to trust Jesus for forgiveness. Convinced of our salvation, we commit our daily lives into the caring hands of our heavenly Father. • Good Shepherd, because You laid down Your life for me, grant that I may trust You to provide my daily needs. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 7:1 *Judge not*. Jesus is not referring to a decision rendered by a human judge, nor does He mean that Christians should never confront others with God's Law. He refers to the condemnation of a fellow believer by one who has not first practiced proper self-examination (cf Rm 2:1; 14:10). According to Augustine, when we do not know the intentions behind a person's actions, "We are to put the better construction on them" (*NPNF* 1 6:54). *be not judged.* By God.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 7:2 *judgment ... measure*. Probably a proverbial saying about fairness, similar to the Golden Rule (v 12).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 7:3 Jesus used a grotesque exaggeration to illustrate how absurd it was for His disciples to pick out the sins of others when they have not repented of their own. The Lord calls us to daily repentance (see note, 6:12).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 7:4 *brother.* See p 1901.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 7:5 *hypocrite*. Usually describes unbelievers (see note, 6:2); applied here to a sinning disciple. *then you will see clearly*. Jesus did not rule out speaking to fellow believers about their sins (cf 18:15; Gal 6:1), but it should be done only after proper self-examination and repentance. See note, v 1.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 7:6 Jesus may be quoting a proverbial saying, which He applies to His previous teaching. He compares His disciples to "what is holy" and to "pearls." He warns that hypocritical condemnation of fellow believers (vv 1–5) is tantamount to throwing these precious persons out of the fellowship to the dogs and pigs. *trample … attack*. Disciples thrown out of the fellowship would obviously suffer spiritual harm, and the congregation would be attacked for its hypocrisy.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 7:1–6 One of the most difficult tasks for a Christian is to speak to a fellow believer about some personal fault (cf 18:15). This is especially difficult within a family or a congregation. Jesus

sets forth a basic rule that needs to be observed: first, practice self-examination. If you do not realize your own sins and faults, you cannot offer admonition to a fellow Christian. One who assumes the task of taking the speck out of his brother's eye must do so with sincere love, deep humility, and the prayer "Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors" (6:12). • Lord Jesus, help me see the log in my own eye before I seek to take the speck from another's eye. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 7:7–8 *Ask … seek … knock.* The disciples have heard from Jesus that He expects them to be lights of the world (5:14) and to show compassion, humility, purity, and love. For aid in doing such good things, He exhorted them to pray fervently for the Father's blessing. *receives … finds … be opened.* Stunning unconditional assurances that the Father will hear and answer the prayers of His children; therefore, we can pray boldly. Like a Father, He will answer according to His good purposes.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 7:9–10 See note, Lk 11:11–13.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 7:11 *evil*. Jesus took for granted the sinfulness of all human beings. See note, 15:19. *how much more.* Again, Jesus compares the lesser truth to the greater (see note, 6:26). *good things*. These good things include the Holy Spirit (Lk 11:13), daily necessities (Mt 6:33), and finally heaven itself (Heb 10:1). Luth: "[Christ] also wants to indicate that because of all the temptations and hindrances we face, nothing is more necessary in Christendom than continual and unceasing prayer that God would give His grace and His Spirit" (AE 21:228–29).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 7:7–11 Jesus emphasizes the blessings and importance of prayer. Most important is our heavenly Father's eagerness to give His children "good things." Because we are evil, we do not always recognize that God answers every prayer for our good (Rm 8:28). Jesus guarantees that we receive God's mercy and blessings (2Co 1:20). • Father in heaven, You give only good things to me. Increase my trust and confidence in Your goodness. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 7:12 Summary of 5:17–7:11; often called the Golden Rule. Luth: "He concludes the teaching He has been giving in these three chapters, and wraps it all up in a little package where it can all be found" (AE 21:235). *Law and the Prophets*. See note, 5:17. Jesus' teachings demonstrated that He had not come to abolish the OT but to fulfill it. See pp 1575–77.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 7:13–14 Jesus contrasted the two gates and ways that lay before His disciples (cf Dt 30:19; Ps 1). See pp 775–78; see also "way," p 844.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 7:13 *Enter*. Cf 5:20.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 7:14 *hard*. Gk is related to the word for "tribulation" (cf Ac 14:22). Persecution and ill-treatment awaited Jesus and His disciples.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 7:12–14 Jesus' teachings in the Sermon on the Mount show us our sins and describe the path on which we, as repentant children of God, seek to walk. Luth: "The true disciples remain on the hard path or enter through the narrow gate (Matt. 7:14), namely, the Word of God, saying: 'I am helpless. May God help me. It all rests in His hands. He promised and said: "Just cling to the Word, and I will uphold you. When you find yourself in any extremity or distress, you will learn to continue in God's Word. This will liberate you and make you a true disciple" ' " (AE 23:401). • Dear Jesus, walk with me on the narrow way that leads to life, lest I stumble or stray. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 7:15 *false prophets*. Such prophets seek to lead astray those on the narrow way (cf 24:4–11, 24). See note, Dt 18:22. See p 307. *sheep's clothing ... ravenous wolves*. Outwardly, these prophets seem to be followers of Jesus, but their goal is to devour the sheep. Hus: "Consider the two sect[ion]s of the clergy, namely, the clergy of Christ and the clergy of antichrist.... [Laymen] may sit in judgment on the works of their superiors" (*The Church*, pp 159, 225).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 7:16 *fruits*. Used seven times in vv 16–20. Does not refer to good deeds but to what the prophet says—his preaching and teaching (cf 2Pt 2:1). *grapes gathered.* Rhetorical question. On judging a prophet, see note, Dt 18:22.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 7:17 *diseased tree bears bad fruit.* False prophets and their teachings.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 7:19 *thrown into the fire*. Hell fire. See note, 5:22.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 7:20 *recognize ... fruits*. See note, v 16.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 7:15–20 Just as there are two ways, the good and the bad, so there are two kinds of prophets. One can identify false prophets by what they teach, especially by what they teach about the person and mission of Jesus. Luth: "You must hold on to the chief part, the

summary, of Christian teaching and accept nothing else: That God has sent and given Christ, His Son, and that only through Him does He forgive us all our sins, justify and save us" (AE 21:254). • Preserve me, O Lord, from all false prophets who would take away my trust for salvation in You alone. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 7:21 *says … will enter*. Saying the right words does not guarantee entrance into heaven. *does the will of My Father*. Cf Jn 6:40.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 7:22 *On that day*. Judgment Day. *say to Me.* Jesus will be the judge (25:31–32; see SC, Second Article, p xxxvii). *prophesy … cast out demons … mighty works in Your name?* They trust in their works. With its threefold repetition, the question asked by the false prophets indicates their expectation to enter heaven because of their use of the Lord's name in what they did.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 7:23 *I never knew you.* They never had a faith relationship with God. The Lord spoke similar words to the foolish virgins (25:12). *lawlessness*. The ultimate lawlessness is the failure to believe in the One whom the Father sent (cf Jn 3:18).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 7:21–23 Jesus describes the fate of the false prophets as it will be revealed on Judgment Day. Christ will condemn those who call attention to their own works and expect God to receive them into heaven on that basis. On the other hand, those who are saved will be surprised to hear Jesus call attention to their good works (cf 25:37–39). God regards those works as good that give evidence of saving faith in Jesus, our Lord. • "Lord, … when I appear before Your throne, Your righteousness shall be my crown." Amen. (*LSB* 438:4)

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 7:24–27 Jesus ends His sermon with a parable about two builders who illustrate two kinds of hearers. The wise man hears Jesus' words and does them. The foolish man hears Jesus' words and does something else. Aug: "If Christ is the rock, … that man builds in Christ who does what he hears from Him" (*NPNF* 1 6:63). See note, Lk 6:47–49.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 7:24 *wise man*. See p 775–78.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 7:27 *it fell*. Describes the foolish man's life on Judgment Day (cf v 19).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 7:24–27 Jesus begins this sermon by declaring that God blesses the poor in spirit, the mourning, the meek, and those who are hungry for God's saving righteousness (5:3–12). These are the ones who

receive Jesus and His teaching with understanding (cf 13:23). Saving faith in Jesus is living and active, eager to do what He says. "Good works certainly and without doubt follow true faith" (FC Ep IV 6). Jesus concludes His sermon by picturing the secure future guaranteed to the wise disciple who hears His words and does them. • Jesus, my Teacher and Master, bless my hearing and doing of Your Word. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 7:28 *finished.* Each of Jesus' five long discourses in Mt ends with similar words (11:1; 13:53; 19:1; 26:1). The crowds were astonished by the unparalleled authority with which Jesus taught (v 29).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 7:29 *authority*. Evidence of Jesus' authority is seen throughout Mt (e.g., 9:6; 21:23; 28:18). *scribes*. See note, 2:4. When the scribes taught, they quoted other authorities. See pp 719–20.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 7:28–29 Jesus was not merely a wise teacher, but He speaks with the voice of God. Our Lord and Savior addresses us in the Sermon on the Mount. He declares us blessed and calls us to be lights of the world because we are enlightened by His Word. • Blessed Lord, grant that I may hear, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest Your Holy Word. Amen. (Adapted from *LSB*, p 308)

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 8:2 *behold.* See note, 2:1. *leper.* See ESV note. People believed God was punishing those afflicted by such diseases (cf Nu 12:10). Lepers were ritually unclean and excluded from the community. *You can make me clean.* This leper believed because of the healing authority Jesus had shown (4:23–24). Lepers who were healed could be pronounced clean and were allowed to reenter society.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 8:3 *touched him*. See note, Lk 5:13.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 8:4 See "Secrecy," p 1653.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 8:1–4 Cleansing the leper is the first of 10 miracles that Jesus performs in chs 8–9. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus had demonstrated His teaching authority (7:29). Jesus uses that same divine authority in working miracles. His miracles are signs that anticipate the day when every disease and even death itself will be no more (Rv 21:4). Then, as forgiven sinners, we will rejoice with all those who have been cleansed. • Precious Savior, heal me. Fill me with anticipation for that day when You will heal every illness. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 8:5 *Capernaum.* See note, 4:13. *centurion*. Commander of 80–100 soldiers in the service of Herod Antipas (see note,

4:12). This Gentile centurion, like the leper (vv 2–4), was an outsider in Jewish society.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 8:7 Some translate Jesus' words as a question: "Shall I come and heal him?" Jews did not usually enter the home of a Gentile (cf Ac 10:28).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 8:8 See note, Lk 7:6. *only say the word*. The centurion was confident that Jesus could heal from a distance by His word.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 8:9 *under authority*. The centurion was part of a chain of command. He needed only to speak a word, and the soldiers under him would obey. He believed Jesus had even greater authority, even over creation.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 8:10 Nowhere among the Jews had Jesus found a faith superior to that of the centurion (cf 15:28). See notes, 6:30; Lk 7:9.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 8:11 Jesus had in mind the messianic banquet of salvation in heaven (cf 22:2; Is 25:6–8; Rv 19:9). *many ... from east and west*. Gentiles from all over the world. *recline*. It was customary to eat while lying on one's left side, esp in formal settings (cf Jn 13:23).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 8:12 *sons of the kingdom*. Those descendants of Israel who supposed that their earthly heritage guaranteed them a place at the banquet (v 11). *outer darkness*. Hell. *gnashing*. Grinding one's teeth because of the spiritual and emotional pain and anger accompanying this torturous ordeal (cf 13:42). See p 1276.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 8:13 *believed ... healed*. Jesus healed the servant just as the centurion believed He could.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 8:5–13 Jesus' words possess power and authority. The centurion believes this, and his faith is not in vain. Jesus' words still possess power and authority. Water, joined to the Word of Jesus in Holy Baptism, washes away sin. Bread and wine, joined to the Word of Jesus in Holy Communion, is His body and blood for the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation. What marvels God can do! We sinners rejoice at these miracles of grace. • Lord Jesus, grant me full confidence in the power of Your Word. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 8:14 *Peter's house*. Archaeologists discovered an ancient building in Capernaum (v 5) that may have been Peter's house. It later became a church. *mother-in-law*. Peter was married (cf 1Co 9:5). *fever*. See note, Lk 4:38.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 8:15 *she rose ... serve him*. See note, Mk 1:31.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 8:16 *evening*. See note, Lk 4:40. *oppressed by demons*. Lit, "demonized." Demon possession was common during the earthly ministry of Jesus. *with a word ... healed all.* The powerful healing word of Jesus is again emphasized (cf v 8). See note, 4:23–24. Luth: "All the wretchedness and misery rampant in the world is the work of the devil, who delights in bringing ruin and death on man; for it was he who plunged all human nature into sin and death" (AE 24:73–74). See note, Gn 3:15.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 8:17 Matthew's translation of Is 53:4 brings out the truth that the saving work of Jesus, the Suffering Servant, includes final victory over all illness and disease. Cf Is 35:5–7; 53:5.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 8:14–17 Take heart! Jesus came "to destroy the works of the devil" (1Jn 3:8): sin, disease, and death. • Divine Healer, keep hope alive in my heart, that no sickness can separate me from Your love. Amen.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 8:18 *other side*. Jesus went from Capernaum to the east side of the Sea of Galilee. See map, p 1584.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 8:19 *scribe*. See note, 2:4. *Teacher.* Gk *didaskalos* corresponds to Hbr*rabbi.* Strangers and critics (e.g., scribes) used this term when addressing Jesus to show they did not regard Him as an authority (cf 12:38). Jesus' disciples seldom used this term (cf vv 2, 6).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 8:20 *Son of Man.* See p 2098. *nowhere to lay His head*. Wycl: "In his humanity, [Jesus] had not any such place; in a worldly sense, in his own proper right of possession" (*TT*, p 167). Jesus and His disciples were constantly on the move. Potential volunteers needed to count the cost of discipleship.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 8:21 *bury my father*. A request to honor a parent, a duty Jesus encouraged on another occasion (15:4–6).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 8:22 Jesus' harsh-sounding answer to this would-be disciple should not be understood as a general rule, since honoring one's parents was required by the Commandments (Ex 20:12). This particular man needed to hear that following Jesus should take precedence over everything else in his life (cf 10:35–39; 19:21; cf 1Ki 19:19–21).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 8:18–22 Neither one of these would-be disciples of Jesus has counted the cost. One is too quick in promising to follow, while the other is too slow to follow. We are not told if either one followed Jesus. The examples invite us to ask, What kind of disciple am I?

When we evaluate our lives as Jesus' disciples, we must confess that we often fail in our words and actions. Though we fall short, our Savior did not. He went all the way to the cross for us and grants us sincere repentance, faith, and life. • Lord Jesus, make me a better disciple and a more faithful witness. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 8:24 *storm*. Gk *seismos*, which may also mean "earthquake." This violent squall contrasts with the "great calm" that followed (v 26). See note, Mk 4:37. *sea*. See note, Mt 4:18. *asleep*. Jesus was unaffected by the storm and its danger.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 8:26 *little faith?* Jesus did not chide His disciples for disturbing Him but for disturbing themselves with their fears (cf 14:31; 16:8). See note, 6:30. *rebuked*. See note, Mk 4:39.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 8:27 The disciples' question speaks also to you as a reader, inviting you to consider and confess what you have learned of Jesus.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 8:23–27 Jesus shows His divine authority by doing what only God can do (cf Ps 65:7; 89:9). The great calm that the disciples experienced was a foretaste of the truly blessed conditions that all believers will enjoy in the new creation. By nature, we have no right to live in that world. We are citizens of God's kingdom only because of what Jesus has done for us. • Dear Jesus, when danger threatens and my heart trembles, remind me of Your presence and Your power. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 8:28 *country of the Gadarenes*. Gadara was southeast of the Sea of Galilee in Gentile territory. See map, p 1584; see also note, Mk 5:1. *demon-possessed.* See note, v 16. Two violent men confronted Jesus and blocked His way. *tombs*. Caves. Even Gentiles would be repelled by people living among the remains of the dead. See notes, Gn 23:19; 1Ki 2:10.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 8:29 *behold.* Repeated in vv 32, 34. See note, 2:1. *Son of God?* See note, Mk 1:24. The demons knew the answer to the question that the disciples had asked about Jesus' identity (v 27). See p 2098. *the time?* Final judgment. Jesus does not answer their questions.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 8:30 See note, Lk 8:32–33.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 8:31 Unclean spirits sought refuge in unclean animals.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 8:32 *Go.* With a single word, Jesus cast out the demons. This contrasts with the complicated formulas employed by human

exorcists (cf 12:22–28). *drowned in the waters*. Unclean spirits sought refuge in waterless places (cf 12:43). These demons were plunged into a watery tomb.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 8:33 See note, Lk 8:34. *city*. Possibly Gadara (see note, v 28).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 8:34 *begged.* The demons had done the same thing (v 31). *leave their region*. The presence of so powerful an exorcist frightened these superstitious Gentiles. They did not thank or praise Him for mercifully healing two demon-possessed men.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 8:28–34 Demons are especially active in opposing Jesus' ministry. But they cannot stymie God's Son, who repeatedly shows His authority over them. We cannot reject the possibility that demon possession causes some afflictions today. However, baptized children of God do not need to fear demonic possession. For our Lord Jesus Christ has redeemed us "from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil" (SC, Second Article, p xxxvii). Baptism into Christ ensures that His victory is our victory. • Thank You, Lord Jesus, for manifesting Your power over all demonic forces. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 9:1 *own city*. Capernaum. See note, 4:13.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 9:2 *bed*. Stretcherlike mat. *saw their faith*. Both the paralytic and the people who brought him to Jesus showed their faith. *Take heart, My son*. Affectionate encouragement. *your sins are forgiven*. That the Lord God forgives sins is taught throughout the OT (e.g., Ex 34:6–7). See p 1902. Jesus speaks directly and immediately with God's authority. Chrys: "He discloses also another sign, and that no small one, of His own Godhead, and of His equality in honor with the Father" (*NPNF* 1 10:196).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 9:3 *scribes*. See note, 2:4. *blaspheming*. To demean or malign God in some way. Here, the accusation is that Jesus claimed divine authority, since forgiveness must come from God. This was the beginning of long-standing conflict between followers of Jesus and heirs of the Pharisees in rabbinic Judaism. Rabbinic writers would describe Jesus as a sinful magician who would not listen to wisdom and sought to destroy the Law of Moses. A similar scandal may occur when pastors forgive sins by Jesus' authority. E.g., when a pastor states, "As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins" (*LSB*, p 151). See note, Jn 20:23.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 9:4 *knowing*. Many Gk manuscripts have the same word as in v 2: "saw." Just as Jesus saw the faith of the paralytic, He saw the thoughts of the scribes. *think evil.* Jesus' question brought out the growing malice of the scribes against His gracious ministry.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 9:5 *which is easier.* Obviously, it was easier to declare someone forgiven than to tell a paralytic to rise and walk.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 9:6 *Son of Man.* See p 2098. *authority ... to forgive sins*. Jesus proved His authority to forgive sins on earth by commanding the paralytic to get up and go home. This was another example of the power of His words (cf 8:8, 16, 27, 32).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 9:8 *afraid*. Sinful mortals react with fear when confronted with evidence of God at work (cf 28:8; Lk 1:30; 2:9–10). See p 1001. *glorified God*. In contrast to the Gadarenes (8:34), these people responded to Jesus' authority by giving God the glory.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 9:1–8 The paralytic who is brought to Jesus no doubt hopes for physical healing. He receives an even greater blessing: absolution. The word "absolve" comes from Lat *ab* ("from") and *solvere* ("loose") and refers to the sacred act of loosening a person from sin, to free one from guilt. When we confess our sins, whether publicly or privately, and hear God's word of forgiveness spoken to us, then, like the paralytic, we are absolved. Luther called absolution "a great and precious and magnificently splendid treasure" and urged believers "to accept it with all praise and thanksgiving to God" (BEC 22). • Jesus, precious Savior, cheer me with Your Word that I am washed clean from all my sins. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 9:9 *Matthew*. Also called Levi. One of the 12 apostles. *tax booth*. Possibly on the border between the territories of Philip and Herod Antipas, where commercial tolls were levied. Matthew's administrative occupation likely helped prepare him for writing his Gospel. *followed Him*. In contrast to those who only volunteered to follow Jesus (8:19–22), Matthew responded immediately to Jesus' call (cf 4:18–22).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 9:10 *reclined at table*. See note, 8:11. *the house*. Matthew's (cf Lk 5:29). *tax collectors*. See note, 5:46. *sinners*. Disreputable people. See p 959.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 9:11 *Pharisees*. See note, Mk 2:18. The intent behind their question was to find fault with Jesus, something they did increasingly (cf v 34; 12:2). *eat*. See note, Mk 2:16.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 9:12 *physician*. Jesus is the sinners' "doctor." See note, Dt 32:39.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 9:13 Jesus told the Pharisees, who were proud of their knowledge of Scripture, to go back to school. They failed to see that mercy was the point of God's work. *mercy, and not sacrifice*. Hosea condemned Israel for supposing that God desired obedience to ritual laws (sacrifice) more than the practice of mercy. The Pharisees were equally guilty of this sin. See note, 1Sm 15:22–23. *righteous, but sinners*. Those proud of their own righteousness will not respond positively when Jesus calls sinners. See p 843.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 9:9–13 That Jesus ate with tax collectors and sinners may not shock Bible readers today. We think of Him as the friend of sinners. But it was shocking to many first-century Jews that Jesus would practice table fellowship with such people (cf 11:19). Jesus is unlike any other Jewish rabbi. This festive banquet is His opportunity to call to faith people who are conscious of their unrighteousness. Jesus sits with them, not because they are worthy, but because He is merciful. He wants sinners included in His kingdom. • Dear Jesus, thank You for inviting me, a sinner, to Your marriage supper. Amen.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 9:14 See note, Mk 2:18. *disciples of John*. John was in prison (4:12) but still had disciples. *fast*. Matthew's banquet may have prompted this question (v 10).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 9:15 See note, Mk 2:19–20.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 9:16–17 Jesus illustrated the significance of His presence with two short parables, both of which communicated that someone new is here. Jesus compared His ministry to unshrunk (new) cloth and new wine. His Gospel message tore away and burst the old traditions and practices about fasting and table fellowship. See p 1671. *wineskins*. Goatskin bags that, when new, could withstand the pressure of fermenting wine.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 9:14–17 John the Baptist compared Jesus to a bridegroom (Jn 3:29). Jesus does the same here and in His parable of the 10 virgins (25:1–13). Marriage imagery also figures prominently in Rv (e.g., 19:9; 21:9). The Bride of Christ is the Church—all those who by repentance and faith are united with the Bridegroom. The Church sings with anticipation: "The Bridegroom comes, awake! Your lamps with gladness take! Alleluia! With bridal care Yourselves prepare To meet the Bridegroom, who is near" (*LSB* 516:1). • Come, heavenly Bridegroom, and make all things new. Amen.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 9:18 *ruler*. See note, Lk 8:41. *lay Your hand on her*. See note, Mk 5:23.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 9:20 *discharge of blood*. See note, Mk 5:25. *touched the fringe*. See note, Mt 14:36.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 9:21 Due to her gender and affliction, the woman was probably ashamed to speak to Jesus directly, but inwardly she expressed great faith in His healing power.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 9:22 *Take heart, daughter*. Affectionate encouragement. *your faith has made you well*. A repeated emphasis (8:2, 10; 9:2, 29). Only the disciples showed "little faith" (8:26). See note, 6:30.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 9:23 Even poor families hired two flute players and a wailing woman to express grief when a loved one died. See p 993.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 9:24 *sleeping*. See note, Mk 5:39. *laughed*. The crowd, including the professional mourners, ridiculed Jesus.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 9:25 The healing touch of Jesus (8:3, 15; 9:21, 29) had power to raise the dead.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 9:26 *district*. Area around the Sea of Galilee. See map, p 1584.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 9:18–26 These miracles benefit a woman and a girl. Generally, girls were not as highly prized by families. Among pagans, infant daughters were more likely than their brothers to be abandoned after birth. But Jesus does not see women and girls this way. See note, Lk 8:2–3. In His sight, all alike have sinned, and all alike are justified by His grace (Rm 3:23–24). • Jesus, Savior of all, cheer me by touching my heart with Your saving power. Amen.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 9:27 *two blind men.* They followed Jesus after He left the ruler's house (v 23). *Have mercy*. Common prayer for help based on Ps 51:1. See pp 842–43. *Son of David*. See note, 1:1. Well-known title for the promised Messiah. See p 2098.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 9:28 *house*. Possibly where Jesus lived (cf 4:13). *came to Him.* They followed Jesus into the house. *Do you believe*. Jesus' question brings out the importance of faith (see note, v 22).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 9:29 *According to your faith*. Jesus spoke similar words to the centurion (8:13) and the Canaanite woman (15:28).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 9:30 *no one knows*. Jesus did not want too much publicity, because many Jews misunderstood His messianic mission (cf 16:20). See "Secrecy," p 1653.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 9:31 *spread His fame*. With their sight restored, these men disregarded the Lord's warning. *district*. See note, v 26.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 9:27–31 Jesus answers the blind men's cry for mercy by restoring their sight. He urges the Pharisees to acquire the same virtue (9:13; 12:7). In the OT, God describes Himself as "merciful and gracious" (Ex 34:6), and His Son demonstrates this same divine attribute. We are truly blessed to receive God's mercy (5:7). • Heavenly Father, may

we who have received mercy also show mercy. Forgive me for the many times I have failed to show mercy to others. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 9:32–34 Miracle reported with great brevity, rushing to explain the conflict described in v 34.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 9:32 *demon-oppressed.* See note, 8:16; cf 8:28. *mute*. Unable to speak.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 9:33 The crowds responded positively to what Jesus had done.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 9:34 *Pharisees.* Cf 3:7; see note, v 11. They responded negatively as their opposition to Jesus increased (cf 12:2, 14, 24). *prince of demons*. Beelzebul (see note, 10:25).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 9:32–34 When the mute man speaks, the crowds recognize that Jesus is someone special. But the Pharisees have a negative explanation for His power over demons. Today, people are still divided in their reactions to Jesus. Yet, the Gospel speaks clearly that He is the Christ (16:16), the Savior. • Holy Spirit, strengthen my faith in Jesus as my Savior and Lord. Loose my tongue, that I may bear witness to His mercy. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 9:35 This second summary leads into the calling of the 12 apostles (10:1–4) and the missionary discourse (10:5–42). *healing every disease … affliction*. See note, 4:23–24.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 9:36 *compassion*. Lit, "moved with pity"; based on a term referring to the belly, regarded as the seat of the emotions. *harassed and helpless*, *like sheep without a shepherd*. The people had spiritual leaders like the Pharisees, who charged Jesus with being a pawn of Satan (v 34).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 9:37–38 *disciples.* Not just the Twelve (10:1), but a larger group. *harvest.* Various harvests would occur throughout the year. See calendar, p 262. Jesus used this agricultural metaphor to picture the many people who needed to hear the Gospel. *pray earnestly … send out laborers.* The plentiful harvest continues to require our prayers for workers today. It also calls us to bear witness ourselves.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 9:35–38 As Jesus travels around Galilee, the need for partners to preach the Gospel becomes more and more obvious. He urges His disciples to pray for laborers, and He sends out 12 of them as His personal ambassadors (ch 10). Jesus' desire to save Jewish people and to

"make disciples of all nations" (28:19) has not changed. All Christians are called to be witnesses of the surpassing compassion Jesus shows them by the forgiveness, life, and salvation He offers. • Good Shepherd, make me faithful, and bless my every effort to enlarge Your flock. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 10:1 *twelve disciples*. See notes, 5:1; Lk 22:30; see also p 217. Jesus granted His disciples the kind of power that He had abundantly demonstrated (7:29; 9:6, 8; Mk 1:21–28). The spiritual authority Jesus grants them anticipates their role and calling as leaders in the Early Church. See notes, Jn 20:22, 23; Ac 1:25; 6:3; 15:2.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 10:2–4 Apostles are listed in pairs; Jesus sent them out "two by two" (Mk 6:7).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 10:2 *apostles.* See p 1901. Only time Mt uses this term. *Simon … Andrew.* Former fishermen and brothers. Most prominent among the Twelve. *Peter*. See note, Mk 3:16. *Andrew.* Not mentioned again in Mt. *James … John.* Also former fishermen. Peter, James, and John formed Jesus' inner circle (17:1; 26:37).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 10:3 *Philip*. Greek-speaking disciple from Bethsaida (Jn 1:43–44; 12:20–21) who found Nathanael (Jn 1:45). *Bartholomew*. Perhaps Nathanael (Jn 1:45–51). *Thomas*. Prominent in Jn (Jn 11:16; 14:5; 20:26–29). *Matthew*. Former tax collector. *James the son of Alphaeus*. Referred to as "James the younger" (Mk 15:40) to distinguish him from John's brother. *Thaddaeus*. Probably the person Luke called "Judas, son of James" (Lk 6:16; Ac 1:13).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 10:4 *Simon the Cananaean.* Aram *qane'an,* "zealous one"; name given to Jewish nationalist groups opposed to Roman rule (see "Zealots," p 1558). *Judas Iscariot.* See note, Lk 22:3.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 10:1–4 Jesus selects representatives to extend His gracious kingdom. They are named individually and given divine authority, demonstrating Jesus' personal care for each disciple. The compassionate authority of forgiveness is given to each of Christ's followers. We are sent with the message of God's love to a world of sinners. Through the waters of Baptism, God called us by name and made us His dear children. • Thank You, Jesus, for making me one of Your followers. Help me to carry out Your mission as Your representative. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 10:5 *sent out, instructing.* Jesus' second discourse (vv 5–42) concerns the upcoming mission of His disciples. This training would prepare them to serve the Church in the future. *Go nowhere*

among the Gentiles. The disciples were to concentrate their immediate efforts on Jewish people living in Galilee. Only later would Jesus give them the command to go to all nations (v 18; 28:19). *Samaritans*. See p 1557.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 10:6 *lost*. Jesus had observed the spiritual misery of the house of Israel during His own tour through Galilee. He recognized how necessary it was for laborers to proclaim "the gospel of the kingdom" (9:35–38). *sheep*. Jesus would train the apostles as shepherds, from which the office/title of "pastor" would come (cf Jn 21:15–16; Eph 4:11; 1Pt 2:25; 5:1).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 10:7 The disciples' message would be identical to that of Jesus and John the Baptist (Mk 1:14–15).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 10:8 *Heal the sick ... cast out demons.* Cf v 1. Jesus lists four ways the disciples are to use their authority. These miracles were signs of the nearness of God's kingdom. *cleanse.* See "Clean and Unclean," p 1653. *received … give without pay.* The healing power was not for personal financial gain.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 10:9–10 The disciples were to travel light, carrying no excess baggage or provisions. *laborer deserves his food*. Jesus approved the commonsense rule that those who benefit from the labors of another are obliged to provide something in return.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 10:11 *stay there.* See note, Lk 9:4. *worthy*. A person receptive to the Gospel and willing to provide food. Luke terms this person a "son of peace" (Lk 10:6). See note, v 13.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 10:12 *greet*. Luke provides the wording of such a greeting: "Peace be to this house!" (Lk 10:5).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 10:13 *your peace*. The peace the disciples gave was the peace found in Christ. See p 7. *not worthy ... return*. The disciples were unable to know for certain which persons were worthy. If they had extended the peace of Christ to an unworthy person, the blessing would be ineffective. Later in this sermon, Jesus described people who are "not worthy of Me" (vv 37–38). He also spoke of guests invited to a banquet as being not worthy (22:8).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 10:14 *shake off the dust*. See note, Lk 9:5.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 10:15 *day of judgment.* Catastrophic judgment meted out on Sodom and Gomorrah (Gn 19:24) was nothing compared to the eternal end-times punishment for those who refuse Christ's Gospel. See "day of the LORD," p 1079.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 10:5–15 Jesus sends out 12 apostles and warns them that not everyone will receive them hospitably or listen to their message. We who witness to Christ have the same experience. The Gospel is foolishness to many, "but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, [it is] Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God" (1Co 1:24). • Lord Jesus, strengthen my determination to serve as Your ambassador of peace, even when I encounter opposition. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 10:16 *wolves*. Jesus sent His disciples into a dangerous environment. *wise as serpents*. Shrewd when facing danger. *innocent as doves*. Without guile.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 10:17 *Beware of men*. The disciples would face hostile people and betrayers. *flog you in their synagogues*. Whipping was a Jewish form of punishment, one that Paul experienced five times (2Co 11:24).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 10:18 The training would prepare the apostles for the future mission to all the world. See note, v 5.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 10:19 The disciples would not be left speechless. No preplanned defense was necessary because divine assistance would be provided.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 10:20 *Spirit of your Father speaking through you*. God's Son speaks of a time after Pentecost, when His disciples will be filled with the Holy Spirit, who will testify through them (cf Ac 1:8; 2:32).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 10:21–22 Jesus knew that His disciples might be tempted to give up their mission and their faith when even family members turned against them because of their loyalty to Him (see note, Mk 13:12). Jesus encouraged the disciples to stand firm, always keeping in mind the highest goal, salvation.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 10:23 If persecution became too severe in one town, Jesus told His disciples to move to the next one. At times, Jesus Himself withdrew to escape danger (4:12). *Son of Man comes*. Likely refers to Jesus' coming in judgment on Jerusalem, which was captured and destroyed by the Romans in AD 70 (24:2).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 10:24 Teachers and disciples, servants and masters suffer the same.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 10:25 *Beelzebul*. See note, 2Ki 1:2. Jesus, the true Master of God's house, was labeled demonic. Jesus' disciples will be equally maligned.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 10:16–25 Jesus warns His disciples to expect persecution as they carry out their mission of being His witnesses. This opposition to the Gospel is evidence of sin's grip on the human heart. When we experience abuse because of our loyalty to Jesus, we have His assurance that the Holy Spirit will help us to speak the right words. He will use our Gospel testimony to soften the hard hearts of unbelievers. • Holy Spirit, help me to stand firm to the end and faithfully witness to Christ in word and deed. Amen.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 10:26 *no fear*. Since it was Jesus who sent His disciples into the world, they could depend on His protection. *revealed … known*. As the disciples carry out their mission, they need to be convinced that ultimately the truth of the Gospel will emerge.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 10:27 Jesus often told His disciples to keep quiet about who He was (12:16; 16:20; 17:9). See "Secrecy," p 1653. However, the time was coming when He wanted them to proclaim the Gospel openly and boldly. *housetops*. See note, Jsh 2:6.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 10:28 *fear*. See p 1001. *those*. Earthly persecutors. *Him*. God. What mortals can do to a believer is nothing compared to what God can do. He alone is capable of punishing a person, body and soul, in hell. Not fear of humans but fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (Pr 9:10).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 10:29 *sparrows sold for a penny?* The very poor purchased sparrows for food, paying c 1/16 of a day's wage. This illustrates how little meat was eaten by the common people. See p 236. *apart from your Father*. No sparrow, seemingly so worthless, will fall from its nest or experience harm in flight without God's knowledge and will. "He foresees and foreknows everything that is or will be" (FC SD XI 4).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 10:30 What no person would want to do, our Father has done: counted each hair on our heads. He knows us down to the minutest detail.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 10:31 *Fear not.* For the third time, Jesus tells His disciples not to be afraid (vv 26, 28). *more value*. The disciples had vastly greater value than a small bird. They had nothing to fear, because God blesses and rules over all creation.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 10:32 Jesus promised His disciples that if they fearlessly confessed Him on earth, He would stand up for them before His

heavenly Father at the last judgment and accept them into eternal life. See *LSB*, p 272.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 10:33 Those who, from fear or doubt, deny Jesus will be denied by Jesus on Judgment Day. To deny Jesus is to reject the One who brings us to the Father (Jn 14:6; Eph 2:18).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 10:26–33 Enemies of the Gospel can persecute believers only within limits set by our heavenly Father. Because He is in charge of our lives, we need not be afraid of those who oppose us because we confess Christ. At the last judgment, our Lord will recognize faithful service and acknowledge us as His followers. We are confident of His love not because of what we have done but because He died and rose to redeem us from sin, death, and the power of the devil. • Heavenly Father, through Word and Sacrament, assure me of Your loving care and drive fear from my heart. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 10:34 *not … peace, but a sword*. Likely surprised the disciples, because earlier Jesus had told them to "let your peace come" on the houses they entered (v 13). Jesus wanted them to realize that His coming was like a sword that split families in two: some were for Him, some were against Him. See note, Ac 14:22. This same division will be evident in the last judgment.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 10:36 *person's enemies … own household.* Cf v 21. Jesus distanced Himself from His own family, some of whom did not believe in Him (12:46–50; Mk 3:21; Jn 7:5).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 10:37 *loves … more than Me*. More important than loving parents and other family members is loyalty to Christ. *not worthy of Me*. Cf vv 11, 13. To value family more than Jesus means that one is not fit to be a disciple. Bern: "Although it is impious to despise a mother, yet to despise her for Christ's sake is most pious" (*SLSB*, p 212).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 10:38 *take his cross and follow*. The cross represented death; it was common for Romans to crucify criminals. Jesus expected His followers to be willing to die, if necessary, rather than to give up their commitment to Him.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 10:39 Contrasts earthly and eternal life. Clinging to earthly life forfeits eternal life, but losing one's life for Christ's sake gains real life.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 10:34–39 The radical nature of following Jesus may result in conflict and divisions within families. Jesus wants His

disciples to strive for eternal life, even if this means sacrificing earthly benefits. In all honesty, we must confess that we often fail to put Jesus first in our lives, that we do not take up His cross and follow Him. What we fail to do, Jesus did for us. He took up His cross and paid the penalty for the sins of the world. In Him, we have peace. • Thank You, Jesus, for bearing my cross on Calvary and making me Your highest priority. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 10:40 The disciples were authorized messengers of Jesus. To receive them was the same as receiving Christ and the Father who sent Him (cf v 14).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 10:41 Not only the apostles but also others served as Gospel witnesses. *receives a prophet ... righteous person*. See p 1904. *reward.* See note, 5:12.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 10:42 *little ones*. Jesus was likely gesturing to young children, but may have been referring also to those who believe in Jesus with a simple, childlike faith (cf 18:1–14). *cup of cold water ... reward.* Someone who performs even a small act of love will be rewarded.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 10:40–42 Jesus says much about the difficulties that the disciples will encounter as they carry out their mission. But He concludes His sermon by promising a reward to those who support the Gospel message and fellow disciples. Yet no reward can match the blessings of grace given to those who repent of their sins and believe in Jesus as their Savior (Eph 2:8–10). He gives peace with God, patience in time of tribulation, confidence to pray, and finally eternal life. • Loving Savior, I deserve no reward for my words and actions. Yet You promise rich blessings to those who receive the Gospel. Thank You. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 11:1 After Jesus finished giving mission instructions to His disciples (ch 10), He resumed His travels in the cities and villages of Galilee (9:35).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 11:2 *John heard in prison*. John the Baptist had been imprisoned by King Herod Antipas about a year earlier. *he sent word*. John wanted to verify the reports he had heard about Jesus.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 11:3 John the Baptist had used images of judgment to describe the ministry of the One who was coming (3:10–12). Jesus seemed not to be living up to John's expectations of the Coming One, a title for the Messiah.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 11:5 Jesus pointed to His mighty works of healing (chs 8–9) and His proclamation of the Good News to the poor as the

fulfillment of Isaiah's messianic prophecies (cf Is 26:19; 29:18; 35:5–6; 42:18; 61:1–2). These words and deeds verified that He was the promised Christ.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 11:6 *blessed*. Jesus' beatitude (cf 5:3–12) promised spiritual tranquility to John and anyone else who was not repelled by Him. *not offended by Me*. Bern: "The Lord intimated that He was about to die, and by such a death as might be to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness" (*SLSB*, p 174).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 11:7–9 *What did you go out ... to see?* Jesus had established who He was. He now asks the same rhetorical question three times to explain John's mission. Each moves closer to the purpose described in Mal 3:1 (cf Mt 11:10).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 11:7 *shaken*. See note, Lk 7:24.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 11:8 *soft clothing?* John's ascetic garb of camel's hair and leather belt were hardly the silk and satin garments of noble courtiers (3:4). See note, Mk 1:6. *kings' houses*. See note, Lk 7:25.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 11:9 John surpassed all other prophets because he was God's chosen messenger, specifically identified as such in the OT, to prepare the way for the Messiah (v 10). He played a unique role in God's plan of salvation.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 11:10 *My messenger.* See note, Lk 7:27.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 11:11 See note, Lk 7:28.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 11:12 *kingdom of heaven has suffered violence.* John experienced violence; Jesus and His disciples expected violent opposition as they carried out their mission (ch 10). *violent take it by force.* See note, Lk 16:16.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 11:13 OT era, with its writings that foretold the coming of both John and Jesus, had come to an end.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 11:14 Malachi had predicted that a prophet like Elijah would come "before the great and awesome day of the LORD" (Mal 4:5). John the Baptist was that prophet.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 11:15 Outwardly hearing what Jesus said about Himself and John was not sufficient. Real hearing called for faith, something that Jesus' contemporaries lacked (vv 16–24).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 11:16 Jesus was often critical of the people of His day (12:38, 41–42, 45; 16:4; 17:17). Like children who did not want to

play either happy or sad games, people were dissatisfied with both John and Jesus.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 11:17 His own people would not listen. Cf Lk 11:32; see note, Lk 7:32.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 11:18 See note, Lk 7:33.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 11:19 *glutton ... drunkard ... friend of ... sinners!* See note, Lk 7:34. *wisdom is justified by her deeds.* What a person does demonstrates wisdom. Because of what Jesus did (v 2), one was justified in believing that He was the Messiah. See pp 775–78.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 11:1–19 People commonly experience disappointment because of false or unfulfilled expectations. We hope God will act in a certain way, but He does not. We then wonder why. To guard against false expectations, focus on Jesus and on what He has said and done. He is the fulfillment of all our hopes. "All the promises of God find their Yes in Him" (2Co 1:20). • Lord Jesus, when I struggle with doubts and unfulfilled hopes, remind me of Your words and works that assure me of Your saving love. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 11:20 *denounce the cities.* Both John and Jesus exhorted their hearers to repent (3:2; 4:17). Jesus expressed indignation against the cities; though crowds flocked to hear Him, they remained unmoved by His proclamation. These cities refused to respond positively to Jesus' messianic presence and message.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 11:21–22 See note, Lk 10:13–14.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 11:23 *Capernaum.* See note, 4:13. *exalted … brought down*. Capernaum's inhabitants may have felt a sense of pride because Jesus had adopted it as His hometown. But their failure to heed His message would plunge them into the depths of Hades, a term that here designates hell. *Sodom.* One of the cities destroyed by sulfur and fire (Gn 19:24); proverbial for wickedness. See map, p 33.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 11:24 *more tolerable.* See note, Lk 10:11–12.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 11:20–24 Jesus is deeply grieved that some who have had the greatest opportunity to hear the Gospel stubbornly refuse to repent and believe. His warning to the Galilean cities is one for us to take to heart as well. Many of us have been blessed to drink often of the water of life. We must respond eagerly and sincerely. Day by day, Jesus patiently invites us to repent of our sins and hear His word of forgiveness. • Turn my

heart daily, O Holy Spirit, to confess my sins and receive the full and free forgiveness earned by Jesus. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 11:25 Jesus thanked His Father for revealing the truth of the Gospel to little children rather than having the knowledge of salvation depend on human wisdom. Jesus referred to His followers as the "little ones" (10:42) and pointed to a child as the greatest in the kingdom of heaven (18:1–4). Those considered wise by earthly standards regard the word of the cross as folly (cf Is 29:14). Bern: "Those who are led by this Spirit, they are sons, and cannot be kept from their Father's council" (*SLSB*, p 150).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 11:26 *gracious will*. God gives grace to the humble but opposes the proud (Jas 4:6). Cf Lk 1:52.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 11:27 See note, Lk 10:22. "The majesty of the divine nature is communicated to the human nature" (CT I).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 11:28 *rest*. The peace of God, which surpasses all understanding and guards our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus (Php 4:7). "Here there are two parts. The 'labor' and the burden signify the contrition, anxiety, and terrors of sin and death. To 'come to' Christ is to believe that sins are forgiven for Christ's sake. When we believe, our hearts are brought to life by the Holy Spirit through Christ's Word. Here, therefore, are these two chief parts: contrition and faith" (Ap XIIA 44–45).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 11:29 *yoke*. Wooden crosspiece fastened over the necks of two animals. Jewish rabbis spoke of the "yoke of the Law" as glorious obedience to God, which freed one from obligations to the world and gave rest. (Cf Ecclus 24:23; 51:26.) Jesus described this yoke as heavy (Mt 23:4) and offered His alternative, to be yoked with Him to the Gospel. One yoked to Jesus will find rest. See note, 12:7. Luth: "The yoke that Christ lays upon us is sweet, and His burden is light (Matt. 11:30). When sin has been forgiven and the conscience has been liberated from the burden and the sting of sin, then a Christian can bear everything easily. Because everything within is sweet and pleasant, he willingly does and suffers everything" (AE 26:133).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 11:30 Jesus has carried all our sins and sorrows to the cross. His presence and forgiveness lightens every load. Bern: "Testimonies of the Truth console me, which wonderfully raise up those whom they make humble, instruct while they humiliate. Thus this same Hand that casts me down raises me up again and makes me sing with joy….

This marvel the word of God, living and efficacious, produces" (*SLSB*, p 62).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 11:25–30 The thing hidden from the wise and understanding is God's gracious plan of salvation, the message that both Jesus and John the Baptist proclaimed. Jesus' contemporaries by and large rejected Him, preferring to live under the heavy yoke of the Law as the way to salvation. Jesus invites us to receive the yoke of the Gospel, which guarantees true rest. • Dearest Jesus, I praise You that when I am yoked to You, no burden is too heavy. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 12:2 The Pharisees resumed their faultfinding (9:11, 34). The Law of Moses forbade all forms of work on the Sabbath (Ex 31:13–15), including the harvesting of grain (Ex 34:21; Dt 5:14), which the Pharisees accused the disciples of doing.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 12:3–4 *what David did*. Jesus cited a biblical example familiar to the Pharisees in order to claim authority as great as Israel's greatest king. (See note, Lk 1:32–33.) David demanded five loaves of bread from the priest at the tabernacle in Nob, a village just east of Jerusalem. *bread of the Presence ... only for the priests?* Twelve sacred loaves were placed before the Lord every Sabbath as a thank offering and were to be eaten only by the priests. However, only this "holy bread" was available for David and his men, and so they ate it. Jesus, the Son of David, likewise allowed that it was more important on this occasion for His followers to eat than to rest on the Sabbath.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 12:5 To fulfill their religious duties of offering sacrifices, priests were required to work on the Sabbath. Their worship responsibilities took priority over the Sabbath.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 12:6 Jesus was greater even than the temple and its worship. His comparisons in vv 3–5 made the case.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 12:7 *mercy, and not sacrifice*. People in Hosea's day put a greater priority on offering sacrifices than on steadfast love of the heart. The Pharisees prioritized the details of the Sabbath law over mercy. *guiltless*. This principle of mercy over sacrifice and the authority of Jesus shielded His disciples from guilt.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 12:8 The Father had handed all things over to Jesus (11:27), the Son of Man. His lordship extended also over the Sabbath Day law. See notes, Mk 2:28; Lk 6:5. *Son of Man*. See p 2098.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 12:1–8 God's purpose in giving the Sabbath law was to provide physical rest for His people. But those in Jesus' day who tried to follow all the Sabbath regulations imposed by the Pharisees found that the law had become a heavy burden, a yoke on their necks. We keep the Sabbath Day holy when "we do not despise preaching and His Word, but hold it sacred and gladly hear and learn it" (SC, p xxxv). Jesus offers true rest, the yoke of the Gospel (11:29–30). • Loving Savior, keep me from quibbling about trivial things and from neglecting Your Word. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 12:9 *entered their synagogue*. Possibly at Capernaum or another Galilean town (cf 11:21, 23).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 12:10 *withered hand*. Lit, "dry." Paralyzed, shrunken, and atrophied because of disease or accident. *they*. Pharisees (vv 1–8). *accuse Him*. See note, Mk 3:2.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 12:11 Jesus assumed that His hypothetical question about lifting a sheep out of a pit on the Sabbath would have a positive answer. The Pharisees would certainly rescue their sheep.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 12:12 Humans have greater value than animals. Jesus declared that doing good on the Sabbath took priority over a too-strict application of the Law. Jewish religious law did permit medical treatment when life was in danger.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 12:14 Jesus' messianic claims drove the Pharisees to plot Jesus' death. See notes, v 8; Mk 3:6.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 12:9–14 The Pharisees' eagerness to find fault with Jesus is a common sin. Jesus warns His disciples about seeing the speck in another's eye while overlooking the log in one's own eye (7:3–5). That Jesus was the victim of false accusations is another example of how He took on Himself the sins of the world. Though we have many faults, for which we deserve condemnation, He has washed them all away by His innocent suffering and death. • Dearest Jesus, forgive me for the times I unlovingly find fault with others. Move me to do good as You have done good for me. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 12:15 As Jesus had done after John's arrest, He withdrew from a confrontation with the Pharisees. His hour had not yet come (Jn 13:1). *healed them all*. Gentiles may have been among the many who followed Jesus (cf Mk 3:8). Jesus demonstrated His compassion by turning away none who needed healing. See note, Mt 4:23–24.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 12:16 As on previous occasions (e.g., 9:30), Jesus downplayed His ministry of physical healing so that His disciples would better understand that He came, above all, to bring spiritual healing. See "Secrecy," p 1653.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 12:17 *fulfill.* Mt often refers to OT Scriptures fulfilled in Christ's coming (e.g., 2:14, 17, 23). See p 1245.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 12:18–21 Quotation based on Is 42:1–4, though not word for word.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 12:18 *servant.* Gk *pais*; may also be translated "son." Jesus was revealed as the Servant/Son of the Father at His Baptism, and the Spirit descended on Him (3:13–17). *justice.* God's righteousness to condemn and forgive is revealed in His Law and Gospel. See "righteousness," p 1904. *Gentiles.* Though Jesus had forbidden His disciples to go to the Gentiles (10:5), proclamation to all nations was very much a part of God's plan (28:19). The quotation concludes with a second mention of the Gentiles (v 21).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 12:19–20 Jesus described Himself as "gentle and lowly in heart" (11:29).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 12:15–21 Jesus, the Servant of the Lord, proclaimed justice to all nations, a justice that rightfully condemns sinners. Yet Jesus fulfilled the demands of that justice by His perfect life and innocent death on the cross. We, Christ's present-day ambassadors, do well to follow His example as we proclaim His message. We will not save anyone by being argumentative and quarrelsome. The Gospel of Christ alone is the power of God for salvation (Rm 1:16). • Grant me patience, Lord, not to quarrel or cry aloud as I share the Gospel with others. Amen.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 12:22 *demon-oppressed … blind and mute.* See note, 8:16. Another example of how Jesus "healed them all" (v 15).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 12:23 *Son of David?* See p 2098.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 12:24 The Pharisees rejected the people's conclusion and asserted that Jesus' power to heal had a different source. *Beelzebul.* See note, 2Ki 1:2.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 12:25–26 First of four arguments Jesus raised against the Pharisees' charge. He suggested that their accusation was absurd and self-destructive. Satan would not undercut his own princely dominion.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 12:25 *Knowing their thoughts.* See note, Lk 11:17.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 12:27 *by whom ... cast them out?* Attempted expulsion of evil spirits, or demons, is called exorcism and was practiced in the biblical world (Ac 19:11–20) and also today. Jesus' question and second argument suggested that sons or students of the Pharisees claimed this power. *they will be your judges*. See note, Lk 11:19.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 12:28 Jesus' third argument was the bold assertion that He cast out demons by the power of the Holy Spirit. This proved that God's kingdom was at hand (4:17; 10:7), present in His very person among the unbelieving Pharisees.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 12:29 Jesus' fourth argument is a brief parable. Jesus pointed out that Satan was very strong and must first be bound before anyone could plunder his house. Only One stronger than Satan can plunder Satan's household and rescue those held captive by his demonic hosts. Cf Col 1:13–14.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 12:30 *not with Me is against Me*. Although directed specifically against the Pharisees, this general principle stands for all time. There is no middle ground when it comes to being either for or against Jesus (Rv 3:15–16). Hus: "Men may easily recognize the wicked by their outward works which are contrary to Christ; but the good cannot be so known because hypocrisy may lurk in them" (*The Church*, p 160).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 12:31 *Therefore I tell you.* What Jesus said to the Pharisees was a solemn warning to beware of blaspheming the Holy Spirit. *blasphemy.* Extreme slander or curse of the deity. OT law pronounced death (no forgiveness) on anyone who blasphemed God (Lv 24:16). This was the charge against Jesus that led to His crucifixion (Mt 26:65–66). *against the Spirit will not be forgiven.* Jesus declared that those who slandered Him as a human being could be forgiven, but those who called His miracles "the devil's work" were blaspheming the Holy Spirit and could not be forgiven. The Holy Spirit is true God. See note, Mk 3:29–30. No one who worries about having committed this unforgivable sin is guilty of it.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 12:32 *speaks against.* Synonym for blasphemy. *either in this age ... to come.* Forceful way of saying "never."

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 12:22–32 The Pharisees claim that Beelzebul, the prince of demons, has enabled Jesus to overpower demons. This leads Jesus to declare: "Whoever is not with Me is against Me" (v 30). One cannot be neutral in spiritual matters. To be indifferent or apathetic about

Jesus is to be on the side of those who refuse to confess that He is the Messiah. He alone saves the world from sin, death, and the power of the devil. • Lord Jesus Christ, continue to send Your Holy Spirit through Word and Sacrament to strengthen my faith in You as my only Savior. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 12:33 *tree is known by its fruit.* Words one speaks (cf v 32) are fruit that determine whether one is good or bad.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 12:34 *brood of vipers!* Pharisees. *out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks*. "The First Commandment has instructed the heart and taught the faith. This commandment now leads us forward and directs the mouth and tongue to God. For the first things that spring from the heart and show themselves are words" (LC I 50).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 12:35 *good treasure … evil treasure*. Speech reveals character: good from good; bad from bad. See note, v 33.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 12:36 *careless word*. Gk adjective means "lazy, idle (KJV), insignificant." Jesus possibly had in mind the Pharisees' remark that He cast out demons by Beelzebul (v 24). He warned that they would be held accountable for this word on the Day of Judgment.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 12:37 *you will be justified*. Jesus spoke these final words not just to the Pharisees but to all hearers (and readers). Each individual is accountable for the words that flow from one's heart. They prove a person either righteous or guilty. However, cf Rom 10:10.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 12:33–37 Jesus reminds us that words are important. Good words come from good hearts, and evil words come from evil hearts. What do our words tell others about our hearts? James said quite a bit about controlling our tongues (Jas 3:1–12). Such control begins with a repentant heart. Only faith in Jesus, the Word of God, produces good hearts, from which flow words of praise and confession. • Guard my mouth, O Lord, from speaking words that would detract others from Your truth. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 12:38 *scribes … Pharisees*. See p 1557. *Teacher*. See note, 8:19. *sign*. The Jewish legal scholars asked for some compelling miracle to verify Jesus' messianic claims. The healing of the demon-oppressed man was not sufficient for them (v 22).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 12:39 *adulterous generation.* Jesus described His contemporaries with a term often used by OT prophets (Jer 3:8; 13:27; Ezk 16:15). *seeks for a sign*. To seek a sign from Jesus after all He had already done revealed the spiritual impurity and wickedness of these religious

leaders. Like Satan, they wanted Jesus to certify that He was the Son of God (4:3, 6). This certification would come in the sign of Jonah (v 40).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 12:40 *Son of Man*. See p 2098. Jesus cites what happened to Jonah as a preview of His own death, burial, and resurrection. Jonah was the only OT prophet to whom Jesus directly compared Himself. *three days and three nights*. Ancient way of referring to any parts of three calendar days. See p 1567.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 12:41 *men of Nineveh ... condemn.* These Gentiles repented because of Jonah's preaching; on Judgment Day, they will condemn unbelievers for rejecting Jesus. *something greater*. Jesus was a greater prophet than Jonah (cf 10:1; 12:6).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 12:42 *queen of the South*. The queen of Sheba, a Gentile, traveled great distances to hear Solomon's wisdom (1Ki 10:1–10). What she sought, a great king and sage, was surpassed by Jesus, the messianic King who will sit at the Father's right hand (Col 3:1; Heb 12:2). She also will condemn the contemporaries of Jesus at the final judgment. See note, Lk 11:31.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 12:38–42 The people of Nineveh heard Jonah, and the queen of Sheba saw Solomon. But greater than either that prophet or that king is our Lord Jesus Christ. We are privileged to hear and receive Him in His Word. Sometimes, like the unbelieving leaders, we seek signs of God's goodness in success, wealth, and health. One sign is sufficient for faith, the sign of Jonah. In this sign we find peace, joy, and hope. • O Jesus, my Prophet, Priest, and King, accept the praise I bring because You revealed to me the sign of salvation. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 12:43–45 With this parable, Jesus returned to the subject of demonic possession (vv 22, 27). See "Clean and Unclean," p 1653.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 12:43 *passes through waterless places*. People in Jesus' day believed that evil spirits inhabited desert places (cf 4:1). If they found no resting place there, they would seek out some human habitation.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 12:44 *house*. Person who formerly had the demon. *empty.* When a state of neutrality exists, when a person is neither for or against Christ (v 30), the demon regains possession. Emptiness invites occupation. *swept, and put in order*. See note, Lk 11:25.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 12:45 Jesus applied the parable to His contemporaries who refused to acknowledge Him as God's chosen Servant

(v 18). They were missing an opportunity to amend their sinful lives and would end up being condemned at the final judgment (vv 41–42). *last state*. See note, Lk 11:26.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 12:43–45 Jesus describes how a person delivered from a demon becomes worse when there is failure to fill the emptiness with goodness. We can also relapse into old and habitual sins when we fail to nourish our spiritual lives through Word and Sacrament. Only the Holy Spirit can replace the evil spirits that are constantly "seeking someone to devour" (1Pt 5:8). With words from Luther's baptismal service, we cry out: "Depart thou unclean spirit and make room for the Holy Spirit" (AE 53:107). • Come, Holy Spirit, and make my heart Your dwelling place. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 12:46 *brothers*. See note, Mk 6:3.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 12:49 The spiritual family of believers took priority for Jesus over His earthly family.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 12:50 To do the Father's will includes believing (Jn 6:29). By doing what pleases the Father, we identify ourselves as members of the family of Jesus (7:20–21).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 12:46–50 Jesus' family comes to speak with Him, but He gently rebuffs them in order to make the point that all Christians are His sisters, brothers, and mother. None of us deserves to be included in this sacred relationship. But our Savior's arms, once extended on the cross, now embrace us with His forgiving love and empowering grace. • My Brother, Jesus, assure me of Your presence, and guide me as I seek to do my Father's will. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:1 *same day*. Jesus' third major discourse followed immediately after He experienced rejection from "this evil generation" (12:45). See "Order and Meaning in the Story," p 1577. *house*. The owner is not named but may have been Peter (v 36; 8:14). *sea*. Galilee.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:2 *into a boat*. See note, Mk 3:9. *sat down*. In biblical times, teachers taught while sitting (5:1; 24:3). *crowd stood*. Those assembled onshore.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:3 *parables*. Matthew's first use of this term, which refers to short stories or wise sayings in a variety of literary forms, including proverbs, maxims, allegories, fables, comparisons, and riddles (cf Ps 78:2; Ezk 17:2). See note, Jgs 9:8–15. All of Jesus' parables here focus on the working of God's kingdom (cf 6:9). Four parables in this chapter

were spoken to the crowd (vv 3–9; 24–35) and four to the disciples (vv 36–52). *sower*. Farmer planting seeds. See note, Mk 4:14. *sow*. See note, Mk 4:3. Jesus interpreted this parable of the sower in vv 18–23. Some modern interpreters have argued that parables are best interpreted by reducing them to a single point or truth. However, the way Jesus interpreted and applied some of His own parables (e.g., vv 36–43, 49–50) should guide how we interpret and apply them today.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:4 *path*. Packed-down soil.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:5–6 See note, Mk 4:5–6.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:7 See note, Mk 4:7.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:8 *produced*. See note, Mk 4:8.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:9 Cf 11:15. Jesus meant this agricultural example to have a deeper spiritual meaning, which His hearers needed to carefully consider. See note, Mk 4:9.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:1–9 Jesus earlier told His disciples: "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few" (9:37). This parable gives encouragement that when a laborer faithfully sows the seed, a plentiful harvest may follow, even if some seed goes to waste. We are tempted to give up a task when we experience little success. That is also true of our efforts to share the Gospel. Let us not grow weary in doing good, knowing that at the right time we will reap, because God provides the harvest (Gal 6:9). • Give me patience, dear Lord, when the tasks of life seem hard and unending. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:10 *came*. Later, Jesus taught His disciples privately in the house (see note, Mk 4:10). Likely vv 10–23 were included in this instruction. *them*. Crowd of people (v 2).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:11 *given to know the secrets*. The disciples were the "little children" to whom the Father revealed the secrets of the kingdom of heaven (11:27). See note, Mk 4:11.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:12 Jesus quoted a proverbial saying that contrasts those people who have with those who have not. The disciples had been given the secrets of the kingdom (v 11) and would learn more. Those who opposed Jesus would lose even what knowledge they had.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:13 *why I speak to them in parables.* Parables both reveal and conceal. For the unbeliever, parables were a form of God's judgment, because they refused to listen to the clear Gospel message (v 34).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:14–15 Jesus quoted Is 6:9–10 to show that He was fulfilling Scripture when He spoke in parables. The Lord commissioned Isaiah to preach to Israel, knowing that the people would not understand what they heard or saw. Jesus taught the unbelieving crowds in parables because they continued to reject Him.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:16 *blessed*. See p 842.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:17 *longed to see*. Past generations looked forward in faith to the fulfillment of God's messianic promises. *did not see it … did not hear it*. These OT prophets and righteous people died before Christ came.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:10–17 Jesus pronounces His disciples blessed because they have seen and heard and believed. Christians today are also blessed, for the Holy Spirit has given us eyes that see and ears that hear. We dare never take our spiritual blessings for granted, for then we put ourselves in danger of losing them. Let us daily praise God for His goodness. In the Holy Scriptures we have everything we need for salvation and life together. There we learn of Jesus and His completed work of salvation for us sinners. • I stand in awe of Your goodness to me, dear Savior, and ask You to keep me faithful to the end. Amen.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:18 Jesus will interpret vv 3–8 for His disciples.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:19 *word.* Note the sixfold repetition in vv 19–23. See note, Mk 4:14. *of the kingdom*. Gospel message that Christ is the messianic King who rules (4:17; 9:35). God's rule springs from His Word. See pp 1565–66. *not understand*. Jesus uses the examples of three different soil conditions to explain why hearers failed to understand the Word, something Isaiah also experienced (vv 14–15). *evil one*. Satan. *sown in his heart*. The Word is heard but quickly rejected. See note, Mk 4:15. "Those fussy spirits are to be rebuked who, after they have heard a sermon or two, find hearing more sermons to be tedious and dull. They think that they know all that well enough and need no more instruction" (LC I 99).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:21 *no root in himself*. The Word is heard but does not produce a vigorous root because the soil lacks depth. *tribulation or persecution*. See note, Mk 4:16–17.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:22 See note, Mk 4:18–19.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:23 *understands*. Understanding the Word is the Father's gift to His children (v 11; 11:25). *bears fruit and yields*. The

seed of the Word of God is good and will produce abundant fruit.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:18–23 Jesus explains the parable of the sower for His disciples. He wants them to understand that as they go out and preach the Gospel, not all the seed they sow will produce fruit. But what keeps a farmer sowing and a disciple proclaiming is Jesus' promise that some seed will produce a wonderful harvest. The lesson for us is obvious: the blessings of God's kingdom come through the seed of God's Word. • O divine Sower, keep me from becoming discouraged as I entrust my life to Your Word and seek to share Your message of salvation with others. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:24 *them.* The crowd (vv 2, 34). *kingdom of heaven.* Remaining parables in this chapter make comparisons to aspects of God's kingly rule (cf v 11; 3:2; 4:17). See pp 1565–66. *compared to a man*. Another parable about a sower, but one with a different problem. Jesus will interpret this parable in vv 37–43.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:25 *weeds*. Likely bearded darnel, which is botanically close to wheat and difficult to distinguish from it when the plants are young.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:28–29 The master's servants inquired whether they should collect the weeds prior to the harvest. But pulling darnel weeds, with their strong and deep roots, would uproot the emerging wheat plants.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:30 *burned*. To prevent the weeds from spreading seed and causing future damage, they were burned after being separated from the wheat. On harvesting, see pp 422–23. *barn*. Wheat was stored for future use.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:24–30 The master does not seem overly upset by what his enemy has done and shows great patience in delaying until the harvest the separation of weeds from wheat. He warns his servants not to judge prematurely by assuming they can distinguish between these plants. A mark of God's rule is His patience (2Pt 3:8–15). For us sinners, this is a great comfort and also an encouragement for us to endure evil patiently (2Tm 2:24). • O God, help me to accept the fact that in this world good and evil will grow side by side. Lead me also to count on Your wise timing and judgment. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:31–32 Jesus compared kingdom growth to how a very small seed becomes a tree. *mustard seed.* See note, Mk 4:31.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:32 *smallest.* See note, Mk 4:31. *larger ... branches.* See note, Mk 4:32.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:33 *leaven*. Yeast or a bit of leavened dough causes dough to rise. Leaven often symbolized evil (1Co 5:7), but here Jesus pictured it as a transforming agent that works quietly and almost unnoticed. *hid*. Hidden in the dough as God's kingdom is hidden in the world. *three measures*. Probably c 84 cups, as much as a woman could work at one time.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:31–33 These two parables contrast the small beginnings of the kingdom of heaven with its exceptional, though hidden, growth. God is active in small things, even though His presence may not be evident. Jesus' ministry had humble beginnings, but its expansion has been miraculous. God uses even our small efforts to accomplish His purposes. • Lord Jesus, use my feeble testimony to further the growth of Your great kingdom. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:35 *fulfill ... prophet.* Cf Ps 78, which relates the history of Israel. The story of Israel needed interpretation to be properly understood. The truths that Jesus told also needed explanation (11:25).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:34–35 Historians point out that simply knowing the facts about an event is not enough. One must interpret the facts correctly for proper understanding. This is true with Jesus and the events of His life. We need the revelation that the Holy Spirit has provided in the Word of God to understand Jesus and put our faith in Him. • Lord, draw near to me in Your Word, and open my heart to hear. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:36 *house*. See note, v 1. *Explain*. In contrast to those who rejected Jesus, the disciples persisted in seeking understanding. Jesus explained vv 24–30, interpreting seven key elements: sower, field, seed, weeds, enemy, harvest, and reapers (vv 37–39). "You must always have God's Word in your heart, upon your lips, and in your ears. But where the heart is idle and the Word does not make a sound, the devil breaks in and has done the damage before we are aware" (LC I 100).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:38 *field*. Represents the world, where "the sons of the evil one" continue to live. See Ap VII and VIII 17–19.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:40 Parable illustrated the final judgment.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:41 *gather ... all law-breakers*. Hus: "They gather up from the kingdom of holy church all that offend, that is, those

who commit iniquity, namely, the sin of final impenitence" (*The Church*, p 41).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:42 *fiery furnace*. Image of punishment in hell (cf 3:12; 18:8–9). *gnashing*. See note, 8:12.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:43 *shine like the sun*. The righteous will reflect light similar to Jesus at His transfiguration (17:2; 1Co 15:39–49). *their Father*. Jesus referred to the righteous in the third person to indicate a future event.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:36–43 At the close of this present age, the Son of Man will send His angels to gather all people. The law-breakers will suffer eternal punishment, and the righteous will enjoy the Father's heavenly glory. Since all people are law-breakers, all deserve to be cast into the fiery furnace. Only those who have faith in Christ will escape this fate. They are declared righteous (Rm 3:21–26). "He who has ears, let him hear" (v 43). • Bless me, Jesus, with a believing heart, that I may remain a child of Your kingdom. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:44–52 Jesus told these last four parables, found only in Mt, to His disciples.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:44 Different interpretations of this short parable exist. One may naturally see the man as any man and the treasure as the kingdom that he discovers. However, a more Christological interpretation describes the field as the world, the treasure as you (the hearer), and the man as Christ, who gives up the glory of heaven to win you.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:45–46 *one pearl of great value*. In contrast to the previous parable, this merchant was busily seeking to discover fine pearls. When he found one perfect in size, shape, and color, he sold all he had and bought it.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:44–46 In the parables of both the hidden treasure and the precious pearl, Jesus reinforces this basic truth: earthly possessions cannot compare with the immense value and cost of God's kingdom. We must not press the details of these parables to say that one can buy entrance into God's kingdom by sacrificing all possessions. We inherit the kingdom by grace through faith in Christ, who purchased and redeemed us with His precious blood. • Heavenly Father, grant me Your kingdom and Your righteousness. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:47–48 *net*. A dragnet was drawn through the water between two boats and onto the shore. *fish of every kind ... good ... bad.* When the net was full, edible and inedible fish were sorted from one another.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:49–50 Jesus interpreted this parable in a way similar to the parable of the weeds (cf vv 37–43). However, the weeds were allowed to grow over a period of time, whereas there was no delay in the sorting of the fish. Both parables teach clearly that God's rule includes a final judgment at the close of this age.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:47–50 Jesus' parable illustrates what will happen at the close of the age. Believers need not worry about that day, for God is gracious to us through His Son, our Savior, in whom we are chosen (Eph 1:4). • Let not my heart be troubled, dear Lord, by thoughts of the final judgment. I know that You have prepared a place for me in heaven. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:51 The disciples had earlier asked Jesus to explain the parable of the weeds (v 36). Now Jesus asked them whether they understood, something that was vital for a disciple (vv 13–15, 19, 23). *Yes*. The disciples would later show that their confident answer was overstated (15:16).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:52 *scribe*. See pp 719–20. *trained.* Lit, "has become a disciple." Jesus trained disciples so that they could make disciples of others (28:19–20). *master*. Owner of the house. *treasure.* Storeroom. *what is new and what is old*. Fresh food items and aged ones, such as cheese and wine.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:51–52 With this parable, Jesus encourages His disciples to imitate the master of a house who brings out food for his family and guests. Jesus had trained His disciples to be teachers for the kingdom of heaven. In their teaching, they were to bring out both old and new. Without giving up the OT, they were to add the NT. The OT needed to be understood on the basis of the new revelation that they had received from the Father (11:25). Christian pastors, teachers, and students of God's Word continue to follow this practice today. All the Holy Scriptures teach Law and Gospel and "are able to make [us] wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus" (2Tm 3:15). • Lord, keep me steadfast in Your Word, and lead me out of death to life. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:53 *there*. House probably in Capernaum, where Jesus had been teaching His disciples (v 36).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:54 *hometown*. Nazareth. *taught.* Jesus did what His disciples would be doing in the future (v 52). *wisdom and these mighty works?* Townspeople questioned the source of authority and power for Jesus' teachings and miracles.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:55 See note, Mk 6:3. *brothers*. Four brothers are named who earlier had come asking to speak to Jesus. See "Authorship and Context," p 2132.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:56 *sisters*. See note, Mk 6:3. *all these things?* See note, v 54.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:57 *offense*. Gk *skandalizo*, "stumble or trip over something or someone" (Eng "scandalize"; 16:23; 1Pt 2:8). Jesus' neighbors were skeptical because of their prior acquaintance with Him and His family. *prophet is not without honor… own household*. Proverb similar to "familiarity breeds contempt." Jesus was saying that a prophet is more honored away from home than by His native town and family. Jesus' family had made a similar mistake (Mk 3:21).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:58 *did not do many mighty works*. See note, Mk 6:5. *unbelief.* Jesus refrained from doing many miracles because the people of Nazareth showed the lack of understanding that Jesus would increasingly face (cf v 13).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 13:53–58 Just as the people of Nazareth took offense at Jesus and refused to believe in Him, so today many are skeptical of His claims. They may agree that Jesus was a good religious teacher whose example we should follow. But they refuse to believe that He is "true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary." If we hear and understand, it is not by our own reason or strength but because the Holy Spirit has created faith in our hearts by the Gospel. Only the Spirit, working through the Word, can change an unbeliever's heart. • Spirit of God, thank You for calling me by the Gospel and enlightening my heart. Amen.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 14:1–12 Herod had arrested John the Baptist (4:12) and kept him in prison (11:2), probably at the palace-fortress of Machaerus. This report of John's beheading is a flashback to what Herod had ordered earlier.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 14:1 *Herod*. Called Antipas, son of Herod the Great (2:1) by his Samaritan wife, Malthace. Ruled region of Galilee and Perea (4 BC–AD 39). *tetrarch.* Roman title for a ruler of secondary rank, though sometimes called "king" (Mk 6:14).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 14:2 *raised from the dead.* Herod's fear may have grown out of his own guilty conscience.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 14:3 *Herodias*. See note, Mk 6:17.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 14:4 John condemned Herod's adultery with Herodias, the wife of Herod's half brother Philip, as contrary to divine Law.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 14:6 *Herod's birthday*. Public celebration with invited guests. *daughter of Herodias*. Josephus identifies her as teenage Salome. *danced*. Perhaps seductively. This would reflect the Greco-Roman cultural influence in Herod's court.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 14:7 Herod was reckless and foolish to swear that he would do whatever this girl desired. He also sinned in fulfilling an evil oath. See "oath," p 7.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 14:8 Image of John's head on a serving dish is gruesome. Herod went through with this macabre act to satisfy the hatred of Herodias for John, who had dared to criticize her immorality.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 14:12 The gory death of John anticipated Jesus' impending crucifixion (16:21; 17:12–13).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 14:1–12 Throughout history, wicked earthly rulers have attacked Christ and His kingdom (cf 2:16–18). But their rage is in vain (Ps 2:1–2). Believers might at times be concerned about the outcome of this warfare between God and Satan, but have no fear. Christ has won the victory (1Co 15:57). • Lord Jesus, when I fear the might of those who oppose Your kingdom, comfort me with the knowledge that You live and rule eternally. Amen.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 14:13–21 Significant event recorded in all four Gospels.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 14:13 *when Jesus heard this*. Matthew notes Jesus' personal response to the news of John's execution. *withdrew*. See note, 12:15. *desolate place*. Jesus and His disciples (Mk 6:32) crossed the Sea of Galilee to an isolated place on the northeast shore near Bethsaida (Lk 9:10).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 14:14 *compassion*. See note, Lk 7:13; cf Mt 15:32.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 14:15 *desolate place*. See note, v 13. *send the crowds away*. The disciples' suggestion makes sense from a human point of view.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 14:16 Unexpectedly and forcefully, Jesus challenged the disciples to provide food for this vast crowd. He planned to teach them an important lesson.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 14:17 *five loaves here and two fish*. Staple foods in Galilee, esp for the poor, but barely enough to feed the 12 disciples and Jesus. See p 236.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 14:19 *looked up ... a blessing*. Jesus probably spoke a traditional Jewish blessing such as "Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe! You bring forth bread from the earth." At the Last Supper, Jesus likewise spoke a blessing before giving the bread. See "bless," p 842.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 14:20 *satisfied*. All of the people had enough to eat, and none went hungry. *twelve baskets*. That Jesus had provided an abundance of food was impressed on the disciples, whose baskets were full of leftovers. (See the heavenly banquet described in 8:11; Is 25:6–9.) See also p 217.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 14:21 *five thousand men*. See note, Lk 9:14.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 14:13–21 This miracle is obviously important because all four evangelists have recorded it. The account here makes no mention of the crowd's reaction. They seem not to realize that a miracle has taken place. But the disciples know. Each has a basketful of leftovers to testify to what Jesus has done. They will also be privileged to feed the nations spiritually with the bread of life, a resource that will satisfy and never be exhausted. Whenever you have doubts about God's power to supply your needs, whether physical or spiritual, recall this miracle. Jesus is able to provide. • Heavenly Father, thank You for abundantly answering my prayer: "Give us this day our daily bread." Amen.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 14:22 *Immediately*. Cf vv 27, 31. Emphasizes key events in Mt: Baptism of Jesus (3:16), call of the first disciples (4:20, 22), Palm Sunday (21:2), some healings (8:3; 20:34). *made the disciples*. See note, Mk 6:45. *other side*. To the northwest shore of the sea, the Plain of Gennesaret (v 34). See map, p 1584.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 14:23 *mountain*. Or, hill, of which there are several in the area. *by Himself to pray.* See note, Mk 1:35. Matthew's report

that Jesus prayed by Himself suggests that an important moment in His ministry was about to take place. Lk often notes that Jesus prayed at significant times in His life (see note, Lk 6:12).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 14:24 *long way*. Jn 6:19 reports that they had rowed c 3–4 mi.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 14:25 *fourth watch*. Early morning; 3 to 6 a.m. Romans divided nighttime into four segments of three hours each. See p 1567. *walking on the sea*. Jesus revealed His divine nature when He made His presence known to His disciples in this way.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 14:26 *ghost!* See note, Mk 6:49–50. *fear*. Exhausted, wet, and windblown, these experienced fishermen saw something that terrified them. When God reveals Himself, mortals tremble (Ex 3:6; 20:18; Is 6:5).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 14:27 *Take heart.* Jesus spoke a word of encouragement and self-revelation. *it is I*. Gk *ego eimi*. God made Himself known to Moses using similar words: "I AM WHO I AM" (Ex 3:14). See pp 1784–85. *Do not be afraid*. See note, Mk 6:49–50.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 14:28 First of three scenes where Peter's role is prominent (16:13–23; 17:24–27). Peter's request exhibits his impetuous yet genuine faith. *if it is You*. Or, "since it is You," an expression of Peter's faith.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 14:30 Peter's fear resulted from his failure to concentrate on the object of faith: Jesus. *Lord, save me*. Peter's shout for help repeated the disciples' prayer during an earlier storm.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 14:31 Jesus rebuked Peter for his lack of faith (cf 8:26). Peter still had much to learn, as will become evident. See note, 2Th 1:3.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 14:32 *wind ceased*. Abrupt evidence of a divinely wrought miracle.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 14:33 *worshiped*. Lit, "bow low," "fall at another's feet." See p 1276. The disciples' expression of reverence for Jesus right there in the boat is striking. In their worship, they joined the Magi who had honored the child Jesus (2:2, 8, 11). The women (28:9) and the 11 disciples (28:17) would also worship the risen Savior. *Son of God*. When Jesus had previously calmed a storm, the disciples wondered what sort of man He was (8:27). Now they confidently confess that He is the Son of God (cf 3:17; 4:3, 6; 8:29). See p 2098.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 14:22–33 When Jesus reveals His divine presence to His disciples by walking on the sea, they can only conclude: "Truly You are the Son of God." As long as Peter keeps his eyes on Jesus, he also is able to walk on the water. Like Peter, we often look away from the object of our faith and focus on our problems and doubts. Although we know the Son of God is with us and provides for all our needs, we still worry and fear. Jesus states, "Take heart; it is I. Do not be afraid." His powerful arm reaches out to steady us and guide us into His safe harbor. • Divine Savior, when the storms of life threaten to shipwreck my faith, assure me of Your loving presence and protecting care. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 14:34 *Gennesaret*. Populated plain south of Capernaum along the Sea of Galilee, 3 mi long and 1 mi wide, known for its fertility. See map, p 1584.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 14:35 Jesus did not seek to escape the crowds of needy and hurting people who flocked to Him. Cf vv 13–14.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 14:36 *touch.* Jesus often touched those with maladies to effect healing (8:3, 15; 9:29; 20:34). On this occasion, the sick were made well after begging to touch His garment (cf 9:20–22). See note, Mk 5:23. *fringe*. May refer to the tassel that Israelite men were to wear on the four corners of their outer garment (Nu 15:38–39; Dt 22:12).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 14:34–36 Surprisingly, Jesus heals many who only touch the tassel of His garment. What about today? Does not God permit both believer and unbeliever to be healed through medications that are derived from His creation? (Cf 5:45.) What happens on the Plain of Gennesaret demonstrates Christ's exceeding goodness to all. Yet because we know Jesus and trust Him as our Savior and Lord, we thank and praise Him for the multitude of undeserved favors that we daily receive. • "Oh give thanks to the LORD, for He is good; for His steadfast love endures forever!" (Ps 118:1). Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 15:1 *Pharisees and scribes.* See p 1557. *from Jerusalem*. Though Pharisees and scribes are mentioned together in 5:20 and 12:38, this sounds like an official inquiry from temple headquarters.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 15:2 *tradition of the elders?* Rules of conduct derived from an interpretation of OT Law. The Pharisees considered this tradition as having nearly equal authority to Scripture. In Jesus' time, these traditions were being passed down orally. However, they were later written down in the Mishnah, where an entire chapter deals with hand washing. *wash their hands*. Cf Ex 30:17–21; Lv 22:4–7 for laws intended for priests.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 15:3 Jesus questioned how His critics dared subordinate God's moral commandment to humanly instituted rules.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 15:4 Jesus quoted the Fourth Commandment given at Mount Sinai and another law that mandated death for reviling a parent (Lv 20:9). On the basis of OT laws, Jesus taught that grown children had an obligation to provide for their aging parents.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 15:5–6 Jesus faulted the Pharisees and scribes for teaching that one could avoid financial support of parents by vowing this money to God as a gift. Such a vow might not be fulfilled until much later (if at all), allowing continued use of the money.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 15:6 *void the word of God*. Jesus accused His opponents of setting aside God's revealed will for the sake of their human traditions. Hus: "They … sit ill … who teach good things and do them not. Worst are those who neither teach nor do. Worst are those who prevent the teaching of good things. And still worst of all are they who live ill, forbid the teaching of good things and teach their own things" (*The Church*, p 201).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 15:7 *hypocrites!* Though Jesus harshly criticized hypocrites in the Sermon on the Mount (6:2, 5, 16; 7:5), this is the first time in Mt that He applied this term to the Pharisees and scribes. Their hypocrisy included self-deception, assuming that they were serving God by their conduct and rules when in fact they were not. See note, Lk 6:42.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 15:8–9 LXX translation of Is 29:13. People in Isaiah's day imagined that they were worshiping God, even though they were, in fact, teaching human commandments. The Pharisees and scribes made the same mistake. See p 1557. "We unanimously believe, teach, and confess that some ceremonies or Church practices are neither commanded nor forbidden in God's Word, but have been introduced only for the sake of

fitting and good order. Such rites are not in and of themselves divine worship. They are not even a part of it" (FC Ep X 3).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 15:1–9 Jesus is dealing with questions of Law when He criticizes placing man-made traditions above God's Commandments. God's Law and Gospel dare never be subordinated to human teachings and rules. Jesus came to fulfill every aspect of the Law, that He might be our perfect Savior. • Lord Jesus Christ, keep me faithful to Your Word, which is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path (Ps 119:105). Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 15:10 Jesus wanted all people, not just His opponents, to hear and understand what He said about defilement.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 15:11 See note, Mk 7:20. "Neither sin nor righteousness should be placed in meat, drink, clothing, and like things. Christ wished the use of such things to be left free" (Ap XXVIII 7).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 15:12 *offended.* See note, 13:57.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 15:13 The Father planted Israel (Is 5:1–7). But Jesus implied that because He had not planted the Pharisees, they would be uprooted.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 15:14 The Pharisees considered themselves spiritual guides for the common Jew. But since the guides were themselves blind to Jesus' teachings, both they and their followers were doomed. Hus: "A subject, in obeying his prelate [leader] in that which is evil, is not excused from sin … they both fall into the pit of error" (*The Church*, p 224).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 15:15 Peter referred to Jesus' statement in v 11, which is a kind of riddle. *parable*. See note, 13:3.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 15:16 Jesus was concerned that even His disciples did not understand the argument He was making (v 10; 13:51).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 15:17–18 Jesus elaborated His statement in v 11, adding this important point: "What comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart."

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 15:19–20 See note, Mk 7:21–22.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 15:19 *heart.* Spiritual inner being of a person (6:21). The mouth speaks what is in the heart (12:34). The heart is the moving force that leads a person to commit the other sins that Jesus mentioned. "Original sin is born in us because of the sinful seed and is a

source of all other actual sins, such as wicked thoughts, words, and works" (FC Ep I 21).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 15:20 Sins of the heart are what defile a person, not eating with ritually unclean hands (vv 2–3).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 15:10–20 People are unholy because of sin, not from some external defilement. Sin originates in the heart. Jesus mentioned a few of these sins, and one could easily add many more. At our birth, we were already sinful. But through Holy Baptism and the Word, the Spirit has renewed our hearts and washed away all our sins (Ti 3:4–7). Although our hearts will never be completely free from sinful desire in this life, God's Spirit continues to lead us on the path of holiness. • Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 15:21 *withdrew.* See note, 12:15. One of the few times that Jesus ventured beyond the borders of Galilee. *Tyre and Sidon*. See note, Lk 10:13–14; see also color map 4.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 15:22 *Canaanite*. Descendant of the OT race that Israel was ordered to exterminate because of their idol worship (Dt 20:17). *Have mercy*. Typical cry for help in a desperate situation (17:15; 20:30). *Son of David*. See p 2098. This Gentile woman addressed Jesus in the same way as did two Jewish blind men (9:27). In contrast to the Pharisees who were spiritually blind, she was not (v 14). *oppressed by a demon*. Cf 4:24; 12:22. The daughter's ailment is not further specified.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 15:23 When Jesus remained silent, making no response to the woman's cry for mercy, the disciples begged Him to help her and so get rid of her.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 15:24 Jesus reminded His disciples that His mission was limited to the people of Israel (see notes, 10:5–6).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 15:25 *knelt.* Same Gk word translated "worship" in 14:33. *Lord, help me.* This woman would simply not be turned away.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 15:26 Jesus answered the mother with a pithy statement expressing a general truth or rule of conduct. Because of the proverbial nature of His statement, He may not be calling her a dog. See note, Mk 7:27.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 15:27 This astute woman matched Jesus' maxim with one of her own: Pets get the scraps that fall from the table.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 15:28 *O woman, great is your faith!* Second time Jesus commended the faith of a Gentile (cf 8:10). In contrast, Jesus

repeatedly chided His disciples for their lack of faith (8:26; 14:31; 17:20).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 15:21–28 This persistent Canaanite woman gains Jesus' praise for believing that He will help her sick daughter. In time of need, we often either fail to pray with such determination or only ask hesitantly. Instead, we ought to "pray without ceasing" (1Th 5:17). Jesus hears all prayers offered in His name, and He will answer in His own time and way as is best for us. Therefore, we can pray with confidence. • Lord, sometimes I have not because I ask not. Move me to pray with confidence. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 15:29 *mountain*. Jesus taught on the mountain (5:1), prayed on the mountain (14:23), and here healed on an unnamed mountain in the Decapolis (Mk 7:31). Since many Gentiles lived in this area, some may have been among the great crowds.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 15:30 Jesus fulfilled Isaiah's prophecy of what to expect in the days of the Messiah (Is 35:5–6). Summarizes the events of Mt 4:23–25; 8:16–17; 9:35–36; 14:13–14, 34–36. The number of miracles drops off after 16:21.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 15:31 *wondered … glorified the God of Israel*. This expression of praise is another hint that Gentiles were among those healed.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 15:29–31 Jesus shows that He is the promised Messiah by the healings He performs. Far too often we take our physical health for granted and fail to glorify God when we recover from illness or injury. Jesus brings eternal salvation, but He also helps and heals us when we are physically afflicted. • O Great Physician of body and soul, accept my humble thanks and praise for all the blessings I receive from Your bountiful hand. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 15:32 *compassion*. See note, Lk 7:13. *three days … lest they faint*. Unlike the situation in 14:15, here it is Jesus who speaks to His disciples about the people's need for food.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 15:33 *desolate place*. Region of the Decapolis (v 29), southeast of the Sea of Galilee; a high plateau with few towns. See color map 4.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 15:34 *Seven.* See note, Mk 8:5–6.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 15:36 *given thanks*. Gk verb *eucharisteo* (Eng "eucharist"), also used to describe what Jesus did before giving the cup at the Last Supper. See note, Mk 6:41.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 15:37 *satisfied*. Jesus never skimped in supplying people's needs but gave in abundance. *baskets*. Gk word differs from the one used in 14:20, where the disciples gathered the leftovers in the kind of baskets Jews commonly used to carry kosher food. Jesus also makes this distinction in 16:9–10.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 15:38 *four thousand.* Though Mt nowhere states that those fed on this mountain included many Gentiles, there are hints in the text that this was the case. Cf vv 33, 37.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 15:39 *Magadan*. Location unknown; probably on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 15:32–39 The two great feeding miracles of Jesus remind us of how God miraculously fed His people Israel with manna and quail in the wilderness (Ex 16; Nu 11). God works through His creation to provide our daily bread. We dare not take this blessing for granted. Luther urges us in his explanation of the Fourth Petition "to receive our daily bread with thanksgiving" (SC, p xxxviii), for our Lord constantly cares for us. • Thank You, heavenly Father, for daily food and drink. Lead me to share my abundance with those in need. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 16:1 *Pharisees and Sadducees*. See p 1557. *test*. Jesus' opponents, like Satan (4:1, 7), tempted Him to prove His identity by doing something miraculous. *sign from heaven*. See note, 12:38.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 16:2–3 *sky is red*. Common and helpful way to anticipate fair weather or a storm. *interpret the signs of the times*. Jesus' opponents were blind to the spiritual signs of the times: the advent of the Messiah and the nearness of God's kingdom.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 16:4 *no sign*. See note, Mk 8:12. *sign of Jonah*. See note, 12:40. *left them and departed.* Because Jesus was again confronted by His enemies on His return to Jewish territory, He crossed the sea by boat (Mk 8:13) on His way to the district of Caesarea Philippi (v 13). See color map 4.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 16:1–4 Jesus points the Jews of His day to the sign of Jonah, His death and resurrection. St Paul wrote that the "Jews demand signs … but we preach Christ crucified" (1Co 1:22–23). When plagued by doubts or fears, look to this sign of assurance. The sign of Jesus' cross and resurrection sustains us in our faith and is the sign to which we must point in our witness (Ac 2:23, 31–32). • Ascended Lord, when I falter, comfort me in faith with the sign of Jonah. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 16:5 *other side*. Northern shore of the Sea of Galilee near Bethsaida (Mk 8:22). *bread.* The disciples' thoughts were focused on their failure to bring bread.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 16:6 *leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees*. Jesus' thoughts were focused on how the Jewish religious leaders continued to reject Him (vv 1–4). *leaven.* See note, 13:33.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 16:8–10 *little faith*. Jesus did not reproach His disciples for forgetting bread, but for forgetting His miracles. Jesus urged them to remember how twice He had fed thousands with a few loaves of bread.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 16:11 *Beware of the leaven.* See note, 13:33.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 16:12 The disciples finally understood what Jesus meant by leaven. Jesus warned against skeptics like the Pharisees and Sadducees, who seek signs but "cannot interpret the signs of the times" (v 3).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 16:5–12 The disciples worried about their failure to bring bread rather than guarding against the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees, which should have been their primary concern. Too often, like the disciples, earthly needs and worries distract us. Jesus makes it clear that one thing is necessary: a focus on His teaching (Lk 10:38–42). When we abide in the Word of Jesus, we will know the truth (Jn 8:31–32). • Lord Jesus, help me to hear Your Word and gladly keep it. Amen.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 16:13 *Caesarea Philippi*. New city built by Philip, son of Herod the Great. See note, Mk 8:27; see also color map 4. *Son of Man*. See p 2098.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 16:14 People in Jesus' day expected the reappearance of some notable prophet, but opinions differed as to who this would be (Dt 18:15; Mal 3:1; 4:5–6).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 16:15 See note, Mk 8:29. *you*. Plural. "Peter is the representative of the entire assembly of apostles, as appears from the text itself. Christ does not ask Peter alone" (Tr 23).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 16:16 *Christ.* Mt clearly identifies Jesus as the promised Messiah (1:1, 16, 18). John the Baptist questioned whether Jesus was the Christ (11:2–3). Now Peter, as representative of the Twelve, boldly confessed that Jesus was the Messiah, the Christ. See p 2098. Hus: "Faith, which properly is the foundation of the church, excelled in Peter"

(*The Church*, p 84). *Son of the living God*. After Jesus came walking on the sea to His disciples, they confessed that He was the Son of God. *living*. Emphasizes that God is the source of life, as later evidenced in Christ's resurrection. Bede: "He calls Him the 'living' God by way of distinction from the false gods which heathendom in its various delusions made to itself to worship, either of dead men, or—greater folly still—of insensate matter" (*VB*, p 151). This passage is the climax of chs 4–16.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 16:17 *Blessed*. See p 842. *Simon Bar-Jonah!* Peter's Aram birth name, "Simon, son of Jonah." *flesh and blood has not revealed … Father*. Peter's confession did not result from his request for a sign (v 1) or his own superior understanding. He was one of the "little children" to whom the Father had revealed this truth. Hil: "The Father revealed to Peter that he should say, 'You are the Son of the living God' [Matthew 16:17]. Therefore, the building of the Church is upon this rock of confession. This faith is the foundation of the Church" (Tr 29).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 16:18 *Peter.* See note, Mk 3:16. *on this rock.* Peter's rocklike confession of faith was the solid foundation on which Christ would build His Church (7:24–27; Eph 2:19–22). "Certainly the Church has not been built upon the authority of a man. Rather, it has been built upon the ministry of the confession Peter made, in which he proclaims that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God" (Tr 25). Hus: "Christ is therefore the foundation by whom primarily and in whom primarily the holy catholic church is founded, and faith is the foundation with which it is founded—that faith which works through love" (*The Church*, p 73). *I will build My church*. The Church is the assembly, or gathering, of all believers. Christ is the builder of the Church, and each individual member is a living stone (1Pt 2:5). This passage and 18:17 are the only times "church" is used in the Gospels. See pp 1901–2. *gates of hell*. Figure of speech, meaning what causes a person to enter hell (Ps 9:13; 107:18). Bede: "The gates of Hell are wicked doctrines, which seduce men and bring them to Hell" (*VB*, p 154). Death will not overcome the Church because it rests on the living Son of God (1Tm 3:15). "God's eternal election does not just foresee and foreknow the salvation of the elect. From God's gracious will and pleasure in Christ Jesus, election is a cause that gains, works, helps, and promotes our salvation and what belongs to it. Our salvation is so founded on it that 'the gates of hell shall not prevail against it' (Matthew 16:18)" (FC SD XI 8).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 16:19 *keys of the kingdom*. Keys are used to lock and unlock doors. See notes, Sg 5:4; Is 22:22. The door of heaven is opened through the forgiveness of sins. See p 1617. *bind … loose*. To forgive or to refuse to forgive sins. "Our people are taught that they should highly prize the Absolution as being God's voice and pronounced by God's command" (AC XXV 3). "The Keys are an office and power given by Christ to the Church for binding and loosing sin" (SA III VII 1). "These words show that the Keys are given to all the apostles alike and that all the apostles are sent forth alike" (Tr 23). Bede: "Without the slightest doubt it is given to the other Apostles also. Christ Himself bears witness to this, for after the triumph of His Passion and Resurrection He appeared to them, and breathing on them said 'Receive the Holy Ghost [Jn 20:22]' " (*VB*, p 156). See note, 18:20; cf 23:13.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 16:20 *tell no one*. Because so many people thought that the Messiah would be a political leader to free them from Roman domination, Jesus likely wanted His disciples to refrain from proclaiming Him as the Christ until after His death and resurrection (Lk 24:46–48). See "Secrecy," p 1653.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 16:13–20 Peter's confession of Jesus as the Messiah and Son of God was a key event in Jesus' ministry. To confess Jesus as Savior and Lord is also essential in every believer's life. Some Christians will remember the very moment this first happened. Other Christians, baptized in infancy, have made this confession again and again in worship and daily life. Like Peter, none of us can by our own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit has called us by the Gospel (SC, p xxxvii). As royal priests of God, we "proclaim the excellencies of Him who called [us] out of darkness into His marvelous light" (1Pt 2:9). • Grant us grace, heavenly Father, to confess Jesus and so remain on the unshakable rock of our salvation. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 16:21 *From that time.* Jesus now set His eyes on Jerusalem, where He must suffer, die, and on the third day be raised in order to fulfill His Father's will (first Passion prediction recorded in Mt).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 16:22 *rebuke*. Peter's harsh rebuke resulted from his failure to envision a Christ who must suffer and die. Such a Messiah was not part of Jewish thinking at that time. See pp 1565–66.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 16:23 *Peter … Satan!* Jesus addressed Peter as Satan's spokesman because his counsel would keep Jesus from fulfilling

God's purposes. *hindrance*. Gk *skandalon.* See note, 13:57. Peter, whose name means rock (v 18), had become Peter the stumbling block. *things of God … things of man*. Peter's thoughts were governed by human values rather than divine values. He did not yet understand the theology of the cross. See p 837.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 16:21–23 Peter genuinely thinks he is helping Jesus when he tries to talk Him out of suffering and death. At times, we also fail to understand God's ways, thinking we know better. Jesus knows that He has to take up the cross for our salvation. Peter will learn that truth later, a truth that continues to give us comfort and peace. • Lord, thank You for being willing to suffer and die that I might be forgiven. Lead me to speak Your Word aright. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 16:24 *come after Me*. To follow. *deny himself*. To affirm that the self has no claim or value worth comparing with Christ (Php 3:8–9). *take up his cross and follow Me*. See note, 10:38. Jesus led and taught by example. When Jesus called disciples, His usual invitation was "Follow Me" (4:19; 9:9). "Without faith, human nature cannot, in any way, do the works of the First or Second Commandment [1 Corinthians 2:14]. Without faith, human nature does not call upon God, nor expect anything from Him, nor bear the cross" (AC XX 36–37).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 16:25 *save his life … loses his life.* See note, 10:39.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 16:26 The answer to these rhetorical questions is "nothing." In both questions, Jesus referred to eternal life.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 16:27 *Son of Man*. See p 2098. *come with His angels*. When Jesus returns to judge the living and the dead, His angels will accompany Him (13:40, 49; 25:31). *glory of His Father*. Jesus' heavenly glory and divine nature will be clearly evident at the final judgment. *repay*. Those who lose their life for Jesus' sake will receive public vindication on the Last Day (25:31–46).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 16:28 *coming in His kingdom.* This coming is not the same as the coming in glory to which Jesus referred in v 27. Jesus assured His little band of followers that some of them would see His kingdom come in His resurrection, Pentecost, and the growth of the Church (cf Col 1:6). The disciples were not to expect the end of the world until "this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world" (24:14). See pp 1565–66.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 16:24–28 Talk of suffering and death, taking up one's cross, and losing one's life sounds strange and foreboding to Jesus' disciples. It does to us too. Yet the end is not the cross; the end is life in God's kingdom. To live in His kingdom must be our ultimate purpose. Many of the first disciples saw the glorious unveiling of that Kingdom when Christ rose from the dead. Peter saw the fulfillment of the promise on Pentecost. We continue to behold the spread of the message of Christ's cross into all the world. • Blessed Savior, give me the will and strength to take up the cross and follow You to life eternal. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 17:1 *after six days*. Indication that Peter's confession of faith and the transfiguration are closely connected. *Peter and James, and John*. Three of the first disciples called (4:18–22). Jesus selected them several times to be with Him at key moments (26:37; Mk 5:37). *high mountain*. Possibly Mount Tabor or Hermon. See color map 4. Mountains were common sites for significant events: temptation (Mt 4:8), sermon (5:1), prayer (14:23), feeding of 4,000 (15:29); God revealed Himself to both Moses and Elijah on Mount Sinai (Horeb; Ex 19:3; 1Ki 19:8).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 17:2 *transfigured*. Gk *metamorphoo¯*, "to change into a wholly different form or appearance" (Eng "metamorphosis"). Christ's human appearance became dazzlingly bright as He displayed His divine glory.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 17:3 *Moses and Elijah*. The great lawgiver and the outstanding prophet were representative of the OT Scriptures, the Law and the Prophets (5:17; 11:13). See application note, Dt 34.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 17:4 Peter's proposal gives Jesus the same honor shown for Moses and Elijah, thus implying that Jesus was equal with them.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 17:5 *bright cloud*. God also revealed His presence on Mount Sinai with a cloud (Ex 19:9). *This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased*. The Father answers the question Jesus had asked His disciples in 16:15. What Peter, James, and John had not heard at the Baptism of Jesus (3:17), they hear now. *listen*. Moses had foretold that God would raise up a prophet to whom the people should listen (Dt 18:15). Jesus was that prophet. He alone knows the Father, who has handed over all things to His Son (11:27). "All who want to be saved ought to listen to this preaching. For the preaching and hearing of God's Word are the Holy Spirit's instruments. By, with, and through these instruments the Spirit

desires to work effectively, to convert people to God, and to work in them both to will and to do" (FC SD II 52).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 17:6 *fell on their faces*. The disciples were overcome with awe at what they saw and heard. See p 1276.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 17:7 *touched*. Jesus moved the disciples out of their dazed state by this human gesture.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 17:8 Moses and Elijah had vanished; Jesus had resumed His normal appearance.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 17:9 What the three disciples had seen was obviously out of the ordinary. Until Jesus rose from the dead, the general public and the other disciples could not properly understand it. See "Secrecy," p 1653. *Son of Man.* See p 2098.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 17:10 *Elijah must come?* The scribes taught, on the basis of OT prophecy (Mal 4:5–6), that before the Messiah came, Elijah would reappear. If Jesus was the Messiah, the disciples wondered whether Elijah's appearance in this vision fulfilled the prophecy.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 17:11 Jesus agreed with the scribes' interpretation.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 17:12 *Elijah has already come.* John the Baptist did the work of the new Elijah. Unfortunately, John's ministry ended abruptly (14:10). *suffer at their hands.* Jesus knew He would suffer the same fate as John. See note, 4:12; cf 11:12.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 17:13 The disciples now grasped what Jesus had taught earlier about John (11:14).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 17:1–13 The transfiguration of Jesus confirms for the disciples that He truly is the Messiah, the Son of the living God, as Peter confessed (16:16). The transfiguration is a foretaste of coming glory: Christ's resurrection and His earthly appearances afterward, His ascension, and finally heaven. Comfort one another with these words. Though we are still troubled by the cares and ills of earthly life, every believer shares in the vision of what is to come (1Jn 3:2). • "'Tis good, Lord, to be here! Yet we may not remain; But since Thou bidst us leave the mount, Come with us to the plain." Amen. (*LSB* 414:5)
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 17:14 *when they came*. The next morning. See note, Lk 9:37.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 17:15 *have mercy*. This father's desperate plea echoed the cry of the Canaanite woman (15:22). See pp 842–43. *epileptic*.

See note, Mk 9:18.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 17:16 Perhaps took place when Jesus was on the mountain (v 1). Their failure to heal the boy while Jesus was transfigured would emphasize the contrast between heavenly glory and the grip the devil still has on earthly affairs.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 17:17 *faithless and twisted generation*. Jesus lumped His disciples with all those whom He had previously denounced with similar words (12:39, 45; 16:4). *how long*. He would not be with them much longer. The disciples' lack of faith prompted Jesus to ask these rhetorical questions, which expressed His disappointment.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 17:18 The disciples cast out demons (cf 6:13), but they could not overcome this one (cf v 19). Jesus, who had just heard the voice of His Father, readily conquered this mute demon. "[The devil] often breaks men's necks or drives them to insanity, drowns some, and moves many to commit suicide and to many other terrible disasters [e.g., Mark 9:17–22]. So there is nothing for us to do upon earth but to pray against this archenemy without stopping. For unless God preserved us, we would not be safe from this enemy even for an hour" (LC III 115–16).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 17:19 They had previously been successful in casting out demons (10:8).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 17:20 *little faith*. Jesus had several times admonished His disciples for their weak faith (8:26; 14:31; 16:8). See notes, 6:30; 2Th 1:3. He had given them authority to cast out demons (10:8), but their doubts prevented them from healing this boy. *mustard seed*. See note, Mk 4:31. Jesus used figurative language to teach that faith as tiny as a mustard seed could do great things, such as moving a huge mountain. *nothing will be impossible for you*. Jesus made this promise to His disciples in the context of their mission as His representatives (10:1–8; Php 4:13).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON **17:21** Included as footnote 1 above. *prayer*. Cf Mk 9:29.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 17:14–20 Jesus heals a demon-possessed boy whom His disciples have been unable to help. Their faltering faith has let down a seriously afflicted person. Sometimes our weak faith may do the same. When we express our own doubts and fears, family members and friends may be led to question God's promises. Yet the strength of our faith does not flow from us but is the work of the Holy Spirit through Word and Sacrament. Our prayer must ever be: "Lord, increase our faith." • Lord

Jesus, give me great faith, that I may receive the fullness of the gifts You promise. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 17:22 *gathering.* Apparently Jesus and His disciples separated for a time prior to their journey to Jerusalem for Passover (19:1). *Son of Man*. See p 2098. *delivered.* Gk *paradidomi*. Lit, "handed over." Term used throughout Jesus' Passion (cf LXX Is 53:6, 12). Jesus foretold His death and resurrection for a second time (cf 16:21).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 17:23 *greatly distressed.* Peter had rebuked Jesus when He first spoke of His death (16:22). Now the disciples felt helpless in grief and sorrow with no comprehension of the resurrection. Cf Jn 11:16.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 17:22–23 Jesus has to tell His disciples repeatedly that He is going to suffer, die, and rise. Love prompts our Lord to repeat those things the disciples need to hear. Christians hear these same events proclaimed again and again. We annually observe the Lenten season and relive Christ's suffering and death. Each year, we celebrate His glorious resurrection. We never grow weary of hearing this story of God's love and our salvation. • Dear Jesus, lead me to ponder and love those truths that declare my salvation. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 17:24 *Capernaum*. See note, 4:13. *two-drachma tax*. Every adult Jewish male paid this annual tax (about two days' wages) to support the Jerusalem temple.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 17:25 Jesus referred to the practice of earthly kings, who did not collect taxes from their own sons.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 17:26 *sons are free*. Just as the sons of earthly kings were not obligated to pay taxes, so Jesus, as the Son of the heavenly King, was free from the temple tax.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 17:27 *not to give offense.* See note, 13:57. Jesus did not want to give others a reason to fault Him for refusing to pay the temple tax. *hook*. Cf Jb 41:1; Ezk 29:4; Am 4:2. *find a shekel.* The way in which Jesus provided for payment of the tax showed how much greater than the temple He was (12:6).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 17:24–27 Jesus submits to paying the temple tax so as not to cause offense. He who calmed the stormy sea and fed the multitudes with scant provisions humbled Himself to the requirements of the Law. Likewise, He humbled Himself to death on the cross (Php 2:6–8) to pay the penalty for our sins of pride and tax evasion and all the rest. His

righteousness sets us free. • Lord Jesus Christ, keep me humble in my words and actions, ever walking in Your ways. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON **Ch 18** Extensive teaching on sin, forgiveness, and the community of faith.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 18:1 The disciples seem to have had a recurring dispute about who was the greatest (20:21; Lk 22:24). Jesus used their question as the occasion for His fourth major discourse, in which He taught how Christians should act toward one another.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 18:3 *turn*. See p 1080. To change one's thinking as to what makes for greatness in God's kingdom. *become like children*. The child served Jesus as an object lesson in humility.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 18:4 A child's humility is evident esp in dependence on and trust in a superior. Greatness in the kingdom is characterized by humble trust in the Lord. "Just as a child neither takes nor seeks sovereignty for himself, so this shows that there is not to be sovereignty among ministers" (Tr 8).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 18:5 *one such child.* One who humbly trusts in the Lord (v 4). Jesus identified Himself with such children (11:25; 25:40, 45).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 18:6 *causes ... to sin*. Prompting a fellow believer to sin through tempting words or bad examples. *who believe*. Faith and the kingdom of God are not limited by age or mental abilities. They are gracious gifts of God. See notes, 19:14; Lk 18:16. *better*. Better to die by drowning than to suffer eternal punishment (cf v 9) for causing a little one to sin. *millstone.* Cf Dt 24:6; see notes, Jgs 9:53; Jb 41:24.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 18:1–6 Jesus demonstrates that humility is the hallmark of greatness in the Kingdom of heaven. Humility means confessing our inability to do anything at all to become worthy before God and earn salvation. Humility depends entirely on God's mercy for forgiveness. It looks to Jesus Christ as the Savior who became one with sinners to redeem them. • Daily teach me, dear Jesus, to turn and become like a child. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 18:7 *temptations to sin!* Gk word is also translated "take offense" (11:6; 15:12; 17:27) and "cause to sin" (vv 6, 8–9). See note, 13:57. The world sets up numerous stumbling blocks over which people trip and fall into sin. *necessary*. Because sin has corrupted

this world, temptations will persist until Judgment Day (1Jn 2:16). Jesus pronounced doom on anyone who causes another person to sin.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 18:8–9 Cf 5:29–30, where Jesus spoke similar words to warn against sexual sins. He used such strong and hyperbolic language to emphasize the seriousness of sin.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 18:7–9 One need look no further than these words of Jesus to see how much the holy God hates sin. Here, the Law strikes us with all its fury. Who of us can say that our hand or foot or eye has not caused us to sin? We all deserve to be thrown into the hell of fire. Thank God that Jesus' hands and feet were pierced for our iniquities and that His eyes beheld our sin in order to turn the Father's face from it. By His wounds and precious death, we enter life. • Holy Father, I confess my sins of thought and word and deed. Forgive me for Jesus' sake. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 18:10 *despise*. E.g., cause a fellow believer to sin (v 6). *their angels*. Believers can be certain that angels keep watch over them (Ps 91:10–11). This text is the basis for the depictions of "guardian angels" common in art. *see the face*. Angels have direct access to our Father in heaven, who cares greatly for each of His little ones.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 18:12–13 God, like the good shepherd, will search for a single lost sheep and rejoice when it is found.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 18:14 The heavenly Father wants all to be saved (cf 1Tm 2:4).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 18:10–14 Jesus compares the Father's love for His little ones to that of a shepherd who left his 99 sheep to search for the one who went astray. Do we show similar concern when fellow Christians stray from faith in Christ? May we never despise one of the little ones for whom Christ died. God did everything He could to seek and to save the lost. He spared not His only Son but gave Him up for us all. • Give me a heart, O Father, that cares about each of Your little ones. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 18:15–17 *If your brother sins against you.* Context is important here. After Jesus had stressed the seriousness of sin (vv 8–9), He warned against despising a little one (v 10), told the parable about seeking the lost sheep (vv 12–13), and stated that His Father did not want a single little one to perish (v 14). The entire process that Jesus here describes must be carried out in humility (v 4) with the goal of gaining your

brother. See LC I 276–78. Hus: "Teach, counsel, punish, console, remit, bear, pray" (*The Church*, p 92).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 18:16 *take one or two others.* To serve as witnesses that the accusation of sin was well-founded. See notes, Dt 17:6; 19:15.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 18:17 *tell it to the church.* If a brother refused to listen and repent, the Church was informed of his sin. The entire believing community had the opportunity to regain him. On "church," see note, 16:18. *Gentile and a tax collector.* After all efforts had failed to convince the sinner to repent, he was to be regarded as outside the Christian fellowship. This did not preclude future efforts to regain him. See LC I 279–83. Hus: "A notorious sinner after the third warning or public citation, when he refuses to be corrected, ought on account of his criminal offence to be kept from [communion]" (*The Church*, p 271).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 18:18 *bind … loose*. See notes, 16:19; Jn 20:23. The action that the Church took regarding the sinning brother was valid in heaven. "He means sin being forgiven, eternal death taken away, and eternal life bestowed. 'Whatever you bind' does not speak of requiring punishments, but of retaining the sins of those who are not converted" (Ap XIIB 41).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 18:19 *two*. See note, v 16. *anything*. Gk *pragma*, "an issue," as in a common legal case (Eng "pragmatic"). Likely refers to church matters such as dealing with a sinning brother. *they ask, it will be done.* The heavenly Father will ratify the Church's actions done in Christ's name (v 20).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 18:20 Jewish Mishnah states that God's glory is present when two or three men consider the Torah together (Avot 3:2). Here, the actions of believers are valid in heaven because of Jesus' presence among them. Cf 6:10. "God is superabundantly generous in His grace: First, through the spoken Word…. Also through the mutual conversation and consolation of brethren" (SA III IV). "The Keys have been given to the Church, and not merely to certain persons" (Tr 68).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 18:15–20 Jesus commands the Church to do all it can to regain an unrepentant sinner. To humbly and lovingly speak to such a brother or sister is to follow the example of the shepherd who searched for one lost sheep. Christ has promised to stand behind the actions of the Church in either forgiving or refusing to forgive sins. We need

personally to cherish His gifts and to present His Law and Gospel to anyone caught in the grip of sin. Through the precious gift of forgiveness, the door of heaven is opened to each repentant sinner. • Loving Lord, help me to act as my brother's keeper, even as You care for me and keep me by grace. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 18:21 Peter's question was a follow-up to the instructions Jesus had given on how to treat a sinning brother (vv 15–20). *seven times?* Peter probably regarded his suggestion as quite lenient since some rabbis taught that one needed to forgive the same sin only three times.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 18:22 *seventy times seven*. Jesus meant that forgiveness has no limits.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 18:23–35 Jesus also told this parable to make His point that forgiveness has no limits for those who repent.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 18:24 *ten thousand talents*. ESV note indicates that the debt of one servant was fantastically high, more than what one individual could ever hope to repay.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 18:25 *sold*. The king ordered a most degrading and protracted punishment for this debtor and his family—slavery. See p 101.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 18:26 This servant could never repay his debt, though he promised to do so.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 18:27 Out of pity, the king forgave the gigantic debt. So our heavenly Father has forgiven the enormous debt of our sin.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 18:28 *hundred denarii*. See ESV note. This debt is thousands of times less than what the king had forgiven the first servant.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 18:29 Second debtor made almost the same appeal as had the forgiven servant (v 26).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 18:30 Forgiven servant showed no pity to his fellow servant. *until he should pay the debt.* See note, v 25.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 18:32 *wicked servant!* Not for running up an enormous debt but for refusing to forgive his fellow servant.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 18:34 *jailers.* Jailers often tortured inmates. The servant who refused to forgive was doomed. This condemnation represents eternal punishment.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 18:35 Jesus summed up His teaching about how Christians should act toward one another (see note, v 1) by repeating that our heavenly Father expects those whom He has forgiven to forgive others

(6:15). The blessing of forgiveness is the defining gift of the Church. No other institution can offer this heavenly blessing.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 18:21–35 Jesus teaches that God has forgiven us far more than we will ever be called on to forgive. Our willingness to forgive a brother or sister is grounded in God's abundant mercy toward us (see note, Lk 23:34). To forgive is to exercise our childlike faith (v 3). Pray for such simplicity of heart; trust likewise in the simple, enduring love of your gracious heavenly Father, who daily forgives all your debts. • Jesus, Your forgiveness for my sin has no limits. Move me likewise to forgive those who sin against me. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 19:1 *Judea beyond the Jordan*. On the east side of the Jordan River, also known as Perea. See color map 4.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 19:2 Reinforces the picture of Jesus performing countless healings during His earthly ministry. Cf Mk 1.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 19:3 *tested*. As on numerous other occasions, Jesus' opponents try to lure Him into self-incrimination (see note, 16:1; cf 22:18, 35). *divorce*. Then, as now, divorce presented special challenges for God's people. *any cause?* Some rabbis argued that men were completely free to divorce their wives.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 19:4–5 Rather than immediately answering His opponents' question, Jesus first underlines God's intent for marriage. Quoting Gn 1:27; 2:24, Jesus emphasizes God's will that married couples share a lifelong, monogamous union, and that gender is an essential feature of God's created order. See notes, Gn 1:27; 2:24.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 19:6 *God has joined*. Marriage is a divine institution, not merely a cultural institution that can be changed at will. On the issue of same-sex relationships, see p 1911. *let not man separate*. God desires that married couples remain together until parted by death.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 19:7 Divorce was common. See Jos, *Life*, 414–28. *certificate of divorce*. Written statement given by a husband to a wife as evidence of a legal divorce. Cf Dt 24:1.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 19:8 Because of the perennial problem of failed marriages, the Law given to Moses made provision for divorce. Even so, Jesus shows divorce was never a part of God's intention, but a concession made because of "hardness of heart." This also illustrates why the civil laws of the OT could not remain in force forever—they were designed to meet the needs of Israel. See note, Gal 3:22–23.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 19:9 *except for sexual immorality*. Jesus does not teach that divorce is required if husband or wife has sexual contact with another outside of marriage. In some cases, through repentance and forgiveness, couples are able to overcome such immorality. This exception clause simply allows for the possibility. *commits adultery*. Divorce and remarriage for reasons other than sexual immorality result in a union that is inherently adulterous. Jesus permits remarriage only if one is widowed or the victim of a spouse's sexual immorality. See notes, 1Co 7:10–13, 15.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 19:10 *better not to marry*. Jesus' disciples blurt this out because they are shocked by His strictness.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 19:11–12 Jesus changes the subject a bit, speaking about those who opt to remain unmarried for positive reasons. *to whom it is given*. Clear that some receive a special gift so that they can happily and chastely choose to remain unmarried. See note, Rm 12:3.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 19:12 *eunuchs … from birth*. For a variety of physical and psychological reasons, some seem destined from birth to lead a single life. On eunuchs, see note, 2Ki 9:32. *made eunuchs*. Others undergo life experiences or losses that lead them to see singleness as the better option for them. *made themselves eunuchs*. Some do not marry for the sake of the Kingdom. Paul may have been such a person (cf 1Co 7). A single lifestyle allowed him to devote all his time and effort to his missionary calling. *receive this*. According to God's created order (vv 4–5), the Church cannot forbid a person to marry, not even a church worker. Staying unmarried will only be a blessing if God has prepared that person to wholeheartedly embrace the single life. "The law of nature in human beings cannot be removed by vows or enactments" (Ap XXVII 51).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 19:1–12 Few problems afflict the Church and society more than those of marital infidelity and divorce. Sin has deeply affected our human relationships to the point that its effects seem normal, but they are not. When questioned about marriage and divorce, Jesus emphasizes that a lifelong, monogamous union is God's intent for a man and a woman. He instituted marriage to be a gift and a blessing. He also affirms the value of a single lifestyle. With His forgiveness, grace, and guidance, our relationships can be a blessing. • Be with all Christian families, Lord, granting them strength, mutual affection, and the grace to raise their children in faith. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 19:13 *lay His hands on them and pray*. OT associates the imposition of hands most often with sacrificial (Lv 1:4) and consecratory rites (Dt 34:9). However, examples in Gn 27:23; 48:14–18 show that blessings and inheritance were bestowed on family members in this way. *rebuked*. Ironically, in 18:5, Jesus had told the disciples to receive children, the weak, and the humble in His name.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 19:14 *to such belongs the kingdom*. Cf 18:1–5; only those exhibiting childlike humility and dependence on God can enjoy the benefits of His kingdom. See "portion," p 7. *belongs*. See note, Lk 18:16.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 19:15 *laid His hands on them*. Jesus often touched those whom He was healing (8:3, 15; 9:29; 20:34); here He imparts another kind of blessing.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 19:13–15 Jesus welcomes children and makes it clear that they, too, have a place in the Kingdom. For a variety of reasons —some unavoidable and others the result of selfishness—many children today are not nurtured as they ought to be. Because of His special love for children, Jesus not only allows children into His kingdom, but He also gives them pride of place! • Give us childlike simplicity, O Lord, so that we not only love little ones as ourselves but also please You through our humility. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 19:16 *Teacher*. See note, 8:19. *what good deed*. Like many in Jesus' day, this young man assumed that eternal life is earned by fulfilling God's Law. Elsewhere, Scripture explains that this idea is wrong (Gal 3:1–14).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 19:17 *one who is good*. Jesus' response echoes Israel's creed: "Hear, O Israel: the LORD our God, the LORD is one" (Dt 6:4). By answering in this way, Jesus shifts the focus away from human works and toward God, the source of grace. *If you would … commandments*. Jesus next challenges the young man with God's Law. Fulfilling God's commands earns eternal life only when perfect obedience is rendered. After the fall of Adam and Eve, of course, such perfection is impossible. "Without Christ the commandments are not kept and cannot please" (Ap V 149).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 19:18–19 Jesus summarizes the Second Table of the Law (Commandments 4–10). Though Jesus fulfilled on our behalf the ceremonial aspects of the Mosaic Law (circumcision, clean/unclean, Sabbath observance, and the like), He strictly upheld the enduring validity

of the Law's moral code, which has to do with our treatment of fellow human beings. That emphasis fits perfectly with the demand Jesus will lay upon this young man in v 21.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 19:19 See notes, 5:43–48.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 19:20 The young man's answer demonstrates hypocrisy, naivete, or both. *What do I still lack?* A telling question, for it shows that he is aware of his imperfections.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 19:21 *perfect*. See p 1903. Perfection involves not only avoiding sins but also actively fulfilling acts of sacrificial love. *sell*. Jesus addresses the man's greatest weakness. Though he claimed to keep all the Commandments, he failed to keep the first one because he loved his wealth more than he loved God. See note, Ex 20:5. *give to the poor*. Jesus proclaims a harsh Law. Though this expectation is tailored to this young man, Jesus does expect charity from all disciples. *treasure in heaven*. Faithful generosity here on earth will result in the Lord rewarding us in heaven (cf 25:31–46; see note, 1Co 3:8), but it does not cause us to be in heaven. That is the gift of Christ's grace alone. Neither are these rewards the best motive for serving others; that is a response of a grateful faith. *follow Me*. How Jesus invited people into discipleship (4:19–22; 9:9; 16:24).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 19:22 Jesus' proclamation of the Law overwhelms the young man, yet he is not prepared to repent.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 19:23–24 Jesus does not state that rich people cannot be saved. *camel … needle*. Hyperbolic imagery to impress upon His hearers just how serious an impediment riches can be. Significantly, the NT depicts numerous wealthy people becoming disciples and using their money and influence in a God-pleasing way (e.g., Joseph of Arimathea, 27:57–61; Zacchaeus, Lk 19:1–10; Lydia, Ac 16:13–15). See note, Mk 10:25.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 19:25 The disciples were amazed by the rigor of Jesus' demand. Their reaction implies that they were having doubts about their own salvation.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 19:26 Stark contrast between human weakness and divine power. Salvation is only possible through God's power and grace.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 19:27 Though based on a misunderstanding, Peter's anguished cry is nonetheless poignant, for he had left everything to follow Jesus. Owing to the heartfelt nature of Peter's exclamation, Jesus

responds not with a rebuke but with a wonderful promise and reassurance (vv 28–30).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 19:28 *new world*. How things will be after His second coming, when all will be perfectly restored. Cf Rv 21:1–22:5. *Son of Man … glorious throne*. Based on the vision recorded in Dn 7, where Jesus' glorious final enthronement is prophesied. *twelve thrones*. In heaven, they will join Him in ruling the restored people of God. A similar promise is made to all believers (2Tm 2:12; Rv 22:5).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 19:29 See note, Mk 10:29. *left*. "Christ does not mean that leaving parents, wife, and siblings is a work that must be done because it merits the forgiveness of sins and eternal life…. When Christ speaks about leaving wife and children, it becomes clear that He does not approve this kind of leaving. We know that God's commandment forbids leaving wife and children. God's command to leave is different, that is, when power or tyranny pushes us either to leave or to deny the Gospel" (Ap XXVII 40–41). *for My name's sake*. Jesus will reward every matter suffered on account of faith and love for Him (cf 25:34–40). See p 842. *hundredfold*. Reward for following Jesus far outweighs any sacrifice that it requires. *inherit eternal life*. Jesus' description of the way eternal life is gained contrasts with that of the young man (v 16). See "portion," p 7.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 19:30 Within this context, this means that many poor and humble will be exalted in the age to come, while many of this world's rich and powerful will be brought low.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 19:16–30 We cannot earn eternal life through our good works; we can only receive it by God's grace. But Jesus still rewards our sacrifices and service for Him. Trying to earn eternal life is a losing proposition. The perfection this requires is impossible for us sinners. Through faith in Christ, God freely gives us the gift of eternal life. And if that were not enough, He rewards the sacrifices made for His kingdom a hundredfold! • By Your grace, Father, You have adopted us and made us heirs of eternal life. Move us to respond to such kindness by willingly sacrificing for You. Amen.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 20:1–16 Wording of 19:30 and 20:16 surround this parable. This bracketing structure (an *inclusio*) suggests that God's mysterious way of reversing things is the parable's point.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 20:1 *master of a house*. Owner and manager of the household. *hire laborers*. Day laborers would be delighted for any work,

because they had no other steady income.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 20:3 *third hour*. C 9 a.m. See p 1567. *idle*. They desperately need work. *marketplace*. See note, Jb 29:7.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 20:4 Household master sets no specific wage for this and the subsequent groups hired. He merely promises to pay fairly.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 20:5 *sixth hour … ninth hour*. Noon to 3 p.m. See p 1567.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 20:6 *eleventh hour*. An hour before quitting time.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 20:7 Hiring these men to work only an hour was an act of charity, ensuring they would eat that day.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 20:8 *foreman*. Supervisor who oversaw the laborers.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 20:9 Supervisor paid each worker the same, regardless of the number of hours worked.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 20:10–12 The expectation that those hired first would receive more seems reasonable. Recall, however, that they agreed to their denarius wage beforehand.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 20:13 *Friend*. Implies association, not necessarily personal affection. See note, 26:50.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 20:14 *I choose*. Or, "I will." Emphasizes that the master's decision regarding the pay of those hired later lies completely within his discretion.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 20:15 Master's decision to be generous with those hired last does not mean he has shortchanged those hired first. On the contrary, those hired first receive the wage mutually agreed upon. Being part of God's kingdom is not based on earning or deserving anything, but rather on grace (cf 19:16–30).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 20:16 See note, vv 1–16.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 20:1–16 Serving the Lord's kingdom is a privilege and labor of love, not something undertaken to gain a reward. When we begin to think that God's kingdom needs or depends on us, we get it completely backward. We need and depend on it! Through forgiveness and the renewing work of God's Spirit, we can indeed be used by God for vital service in His kingdom. • Keep me ever mindful, Lord, that it is only by grace that I have been included in Your kingdom and am privileged to serve in it. Amen.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 20:17 *going up*. See color map 4.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 20:18 *Son of Man*. See p 2098. *delivered*. Betrayed; see note, 17:22. *chief priests and scribes*. In the end, the religious establishment will push hardest for Jesus to be crucified (27:1). See p 1556, 719–20.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 20:19 *Gentiles*. Pontius Pilate, the highest Roman authority in Jerusalem, would write Jesus' death sentence.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 20:17–19 For a third and final time, Jesus predicts His Passion. Ironically, Jesus' three predictions match the number of Peter's denials. The depth of humanity's sin is such that only the death of God's Son can atone for it. No one took Jesus' life from Him, as His Passion predictions make clear. Rather, He willingly laid down His life in order to save us. • "Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast Save in the death of Christ, my God…. Love so amazing, so divine, Demands my soul, my life, my all!" Amen. (*LSB* 426:2, 4)

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 20:20 *sons of Zebedee*. Cf 4:21–22. *kneeling*. Posture seems ironic, for the request being made has little to do with humility. See p 1276.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 20:21 *right hand … left*. Positions of highest authority. *in Your kingdom*. Refers to the time when Jesus will exercise the fullness of His messianic authority. Jesus had already promised that all 12 apostles would share in this rule (19:28).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 20:22 *drink the cup*. See note, Mk 10:38; cf Jer 25:15–29.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 20:23 *not Mine to grant*. Jesus once again defers to His Father's authority.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 20:24 They, too, hoped to sit in the seats of the highest honor.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 20:25 *lord it over them*. Abuse their power by exploiting those less powerful.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 20:26 *great … servant*. Greatness in God's kingdom is characterized by willingness to serve others rather than insistence on being served.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 20:27 *slave*. See p 1904.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 20:28 *Son of Man*. See p 2098. *to serve*. Jesus' service is complete. He gave His very life for the salvation of the world. *ransom*. See "redeem," p 843; see also p 1178. *for many*. Hbr idiom meaning "all."

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 20:20–28 Jesus continues to convince His disciples that in His kingdom, humility and service, not acclaim and power, are most highly valued. Just as it was among the Twelve, so also today the lust for power and control over others continues to be a problem in the Christian community. Though many things make Jesus great—among them His role in creating and preserving all things—it is His sacrificial death that is most wonderful for us. • We thank You, Lord Jesus, for though You were unspeakably rich, You willingly became poor, that by Your great poverty we might become rich. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 20:29 *Jericho*. C 15 mi from Jesus' destination, Jerusalem. See color map 4.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 20:30 *Lord, have mercy*. Echoing others in great need (15:22; 17:15), these blind men do not waste words. See note, Lk 17:13. *Son of David!* See p 2098.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 20:31 *rebuked*. See note, Lk 18:39.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 20:32 Jesus' question emphasizes His willingness to serve them.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 20:34 *pity*. See note, Lk 7:13. *touched their eyes*. Cf 8:3, 15; 9:29; 19:15; see notes, Mk 3:10; 7:33. His touch would have been esp important to the blind men. *followed*. See note, Mk 8:34.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 20:29–34 Though the nearness of the crowd and His own impending death weigh heavily on Him, Jesus is not too preoccupied to help two men in desperate need. Like the people in Jericho who tried to silence the two blind men, we also may tend to treat persons in need as nuisances. Yet Jesus painstakingly extended His ministry to all in need, showing care and concern for them. We, too, have received His grace. • "Amazing grace—how sweet the sound—That saved a wretch like me! I once was lost but now am found, Was blind but now I see!" Amen. (*LSB* 744:1)

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 21:1 *Bethphage*. See note, Lk 19:29; see also map, p 1584. *two disciples*. Not identified. Jesus frequently sent paired workers for a task (Mk 6:7; Lk 10:1).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 21:2–3 Jesus needed only a single mount. He commanded that the donkey and her colt be brought to Him in order to fulfill the prophecy recorded in Zec 9:9 (cf vv 4–5). See notes, Mk 11:2; Lk 19:30.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 21:3 Jesus could have entered Jerusalem under His own power. However, He rode the donkey to fulfill prophecy and reenact the kind of royal inaugurations described in 1Ki 1:32–40.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 21:4–5 Jesus entered Jerusalem as the promised Messiah. Zec had much to say about the advent of the messianic age (cf Mt 26:31). See notes, Zec 9:9; Jn 12:16.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 21:7–8 Outer garments on the animals were used as saddles. Shortly thereafter, the crowds laid their cloaks on the road where Jesus passed, much as the crowds had done at Jehu's inauguration (2Ki 9:12–13).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 21:8 Branches, particularly palms, were used to adorn processions, esp religious ones. Descriptions of this custom are found in 1Macc 13:51; 2Macc 10:6–7.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 21:9 *Hosanna*. See note, Jn 12:13. *Blessed*. See p 842. *comes in the name of the Lord!* Jesus is openly acclaimed as the promised Messiah, with a divinely appointed destiny to fulfill. See "name," p 843.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 21:11 *the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth*. Title recalls the Galilean phase of Jesus' ministry, when He was just becoming famous for His teaching and healing (13:57; 14:5; 16:14). By this time, however, the crowds unabashedly acclaim Him as Messiah.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 21:1–11 Palm Sunday is a high point, as a crowd at the Jewish capital openly acclaims Jesus as Messiah. It is also a turning point, however, since it galvanizes His opponents. Like the crowds in Jerusalem, we are prone to fickleness—today all for the Lord, tomorrow turning from Him. Though we often prove faithless, Jesus remains constant. His love and forgiveness never falter. • " 'Hosanna in the highest!' That ancient song we sing; For Christ is our Redeemer, The Lord of heav'n our King." Amen. (*LSB* 443:3)
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 21:12 *entered the temple*. Here, at the sacrificial center of Judaism, Jesus will complete His earthly ministry. *sold and bought*. In the court of the Gentiles (see diagram, p 1627), merchants sold animals to the pilgrims coming to offer sacrifice, as it was impractical for travelers to transport animals. *money-changers*. See note, Jn 2:14.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 21:13 Cf Is 56:7, originally meant to assure Gentiles that they, too, could offer sacrifices to the Lord. This was part of the reason for the court of the Gentiles (see diagram, p 1627). By

converting some of the temple precincts into a trading post, however, the religious leaders were thwarting God's design. *house of prayer*. On temple services, see note, Ac 3:1.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 21:14 In contrast to the religious leaders, who were failing in their sacred duties by allowing the temple to be so misused, Jesus used the temple exactly as the Messiah ought: for healing.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 21:15 *chief priests … scribes*. See pp 1556–57. *indignant*. Children grasp what is occurring as the blind receive sight. Yet the supposed experts refuse to see.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 21:16 Jesus underlines the irony of children grasping the situation while their leaders fail. He also highlights another fulfillment of prophecy. See note, Ps 8:2.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 21:17 *Bethany*. C 2 mi E of the temple. Because Mary, Martha, and Lazarus lived there, it is possible that Jesus lodged with them. See color map 4.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 21:12–17 Immediately after being acclaimed Messiah, Jesus further provokes the Jewish leaders by driving merchants and money-changers out of the temple. Sometimes financial concerns eclipse the Church's real priority: faithfully teaching the Word and administering the Sacraments. Jesus responds to our misuse of holy things not by yanking them away from us but rather by correcting us and calling us to receive them worthily, unto faith and salvation. • "Almighty, ever-living God, grant that … all my worship may be acceptable unto Thee; through Jesus Christ, my Lord." Amen. (*TLH*, p 4)

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 21:18 After spending the night in Bethany, Jesus returned to the temple. He would spend the next several days there teaching the people and debating with religious authorities.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 21:19–20 See note, Mk 11:13.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 21:21–22 Jesus' cursing of the fig tree is an "enacted prophecy" that foreshadows the judgment God will visit on the unbelievers of Jerusalem. Jer 8:13 and Mi 7:1 compare faithless Israel to a barren fig tree (cf Hos 9:10). Just as Jesus punished this fig tree, so also unbelieving Jerusalem and its temple would be destroyed in AD 70. But even as Jesus acts in judgment against fruitlessness, He also promises great reward for faithfulness. Faith moves mountains and knows that its prayers are heard and answered by God.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 21:18–22 By cursing a fruitless fig tree, Jesus reveals symbolically God's judgment against the faithless and fruitless portion of His covenant people. Though we are saved by faith alone, producing fruit for God and His kingdom is not optional. Though faithlessness rightly deserves God's wrath, God Himself works faithfulness in us and grants a rich reward of blessings. • Lord Jesus, You are the true vine. Apart from You, we can do nothing. Keep us united to You, that we produce abundant fruit to Your glory. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 21:23 *chief priests … elders*. See p 1556. Leaders continue to watch Jesus closely, hoping to find grounds to accuse Him. Within a few days, they will have succeeded in their plan to do away with Him. *authority*. Chief concern of Jerusalem leaders.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 21:24–25 *baptism of John*. John the Baptist came, announcing the advent of the Kingdom and calling for repentance. *From heaven or from man?* Jesus asks the same question concerning John that His accusers have just posed about Him: what was the source of His authority? *not believe him?* They admit to rejecting the divine origin of John's message. In this rejection, they proved more hard-hearted than the common people.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 21:26 *prophet*. See note, 11:9.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 21:27 Answer given by Jesus' opponents is insincere and cowardly. Even worse is the fact that they deny the authority of God's Messiah.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 21:23–27 When His opponents challenge the source of His authority, Jesus exhibits a wisdom that powerfully attests to His status as one sent by God. Like Jesus' opponents, we sometimes challenge the Lord's authority and attempt to stand in judgment of Him. But God rightly judges us, not vice versa. Jesus willingly submitted to the authority of those who falsely accused Him and unjustly condemned Him to death. By His death, He won our salvation. • Give us grace always to submit to Your authority, O Lord, for it comes from heaven and so can lead us there, where we will reign with You forever. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 21:28–32 Parable contrasts the more pious reaction of tax collectors and prostitutes to John's preaching with the hard-heartedness of His adversaries (vv 23–27).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 21:29 *changed his mind*. Gk term also expresses regret or remorse. The son changes his behavior and does his father's will.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 21:30 Though he appeared to be the good son, the second one was the more disobedient.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 21:31 *will of his father?* The father represents God. Jesus implicitly asks who within Israel has better discerned and fulfilled God's will. *tax collectors … prostitutes*. Notorious sinners. See note, 5:46. *go … before you*. By presenting such vile characters as more pious than His opponents, Jesus puts the opponents in the worst possible light.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 21:32 *the way of righteousness*. According to John the Baptist, this involved preparing to receive the coming Messiah, turning from sin, and producing the fruit of repentance (3:1–12). See p 843. *believed him*. Many people embraced John's message, including some notorious sinners. Jesus' opponents, however, persist in their rejection of John and the One whose way he prepared.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 21:28–32 Jesus graphically depicts the obstinance of His opponents and the depth of their sin in rejecting Him. There are times that our stubborn refusals to change our behavior are just as obstinate. In God's kingdom, no repentant sinner is ever turned away. Repentant tax collectors and prostitutes were welcomed; so are we! • "Chief of sinners though I be, Jesus shed His blood for me, Died that I might live on high, Lives that I might never die. As the branch is to the vine, I am His, and He is mine." Amen. (*LSB* 611:1)
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 21:33–41 Parable in vv 28–32 was quite critical of Jesus' accusers. He continues with a parable that is even more devastating, borrowing imagery the prophets repeatedly used to depict Israel's relationship to God (e.g., Is 5:1–5). See note, Lk 20:9–15.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 21:33 *master*. Landowner who leases out his land; symbolizes God. *vineyard*. See notes, Is 5:2–5. *tenants*. Sharecroppers who represent the unbelieving religious leaders opposing Jesus.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 21:34 *season for fruit*. See calendar, p 262. *his fruit*. Previously specified portion of the harvest for payment.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 21:35 *stoned*. The servant killed by stoning represents the OT prophets. Stoning was the punishment for a variety of religious infractions in ancient Israel, including defiling holy space (Ex 19:13), idolatry (Lv 20:2), practicing satanic arts (Lv 20:27), and blasphemy (Lv 24:14–16, 23). This underlines that the rebellious tenants and their master held different religious beliefs and practices.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 21:36 God sent many prophets to wayward Israel. Many of them were rejected, and many were treated violently. See pp 1081–83.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 21:37 *respect my son*. As emissary par excellence. As God's own Son, Jesus deserves the highest respect.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 21:38 *have his inheritance*. See note, Mk 12:7.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 21:39 Jesus was similarly put to death outside the wall of Jerusalem, as was the first Christian martyr, Stephen (Ac 7:54–60).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 21:40–41 Jesus' rhetorical question about the fate of the wicked tenants forces His opponents to pronounce their own sentence. *put those wretches to a miserable death*. The harsh punishment perfectly fits such a wicked crime. Even at that, forgiveness is repeatedly offered to those who condemned Jesus (Ac 3:17–26; 5:29–32).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 21:42 Second time the messianic Ps 118 is quoted in this section of Mt (cf 21:9). *stone … cornerstone*. See note, Lk 20:17.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 21:43 *taken away … given to a people*. Jewish rejection will hasten the Gentiles' inclusion in the Kingdom. They are the new people who will produce fruit. *producing its fruits*. Remaining in Jesus and obeying His commands (Jn 15:1–9).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 21:44 Jesus warns that anyone rejecting Him will face being broken and crushed by the weight of that most grievous sin.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 21:45 *chief priests … Pharisees*. See pp 1556–57. *speaking about them*. Jesus' hearers understood perfectly well how and where they were represented in this parable.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 21:46 Jesus was indeed a prophet, but also much more. Thus this parable (vv 33–46), as well as the following one (22:1–14), identifies Him as God's Son.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 21:33–46 Jesus warns His opponents that rejecting Him will ultimately lead to their exclusion from the Kingdom. Judgment is based on one's reaction to Jesus. Those rejecting Him are excluded from God's kingdom and are consigned to the only other option: an eternity apart from God in hell. In His great wisdom and mercy, God used the murder of His Son to work salvation, and He used the rejection of Israel's leaders to hasten the extension of the Kingdom to Gentiles. • Heavenly Father, keep us united by faith to Christ, our source of life, lest we ever turn away, reject Him, and so lose our hope of salvation. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 22:1–11 Parable repeats three important themes from the previous one (21:33–46), specifically Jesus' divine Sonship, Israel's persistent rejection of its prophets, and the inclusion of Gentiles in God's kingdom.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 22:2 *wedding feast*. Is 25:6–9 compares the messianic age to a great feast hosted by God. That imagery, along with Jesus' self-identification as the Bridegroom in Mt 9:15, makes it plain that in the parable the father represents God and Jesus is the Bridegroom.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 22:3 Those invited represent the people of Israel. Inexplicably, they refuse to come to the banquet prepared for them.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 22:4 *my oxen and my fat calves*. Compare the sumptuous fare laid out at this feast with the fare prophesied in Is 25.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 22:5–6 Some of those invited to the feast ignore the second invitation. Others greet these messengers with violence. Such refusals represent Israel's reaction toward the prophets sent to them. "The cause for this contempt for the Word is not God's foreknowledge, but the perverse human will. The human will rejects or perverts the means and instrument of the Holy Spirit, which God offers it through the call. It resists the Holy Spirit, who wants to be effective, and who works through the Word" (FC SD XI 41).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 22:7 Anticipates the Roman destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 during the first Jewish revolt.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 22:8 *not worthy*. Their steadfast refusal to accept the invitation disqualified them.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 22:9 *as many as you find*. This invitation represents the inclusion of the Gentiles in God's kingdom.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 22:10 *bad and good*. Parables in Mt repeatedly depict the Kingdom as including "bad people" or hypocrites (cf 13:24–30, 36–43, 47–50). In the end, however, there is always a separation of the true and false believers. *wedding hall*. Representation of the earthly Church.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 22:11–12 *wedding garment*. Israelites expected invited guests to wear festive wedding garments, which the host could provide. Thus, this fellow's failure to dress in appropriate clothing, which was freely given to him, offends the host. This garment signifies the righteousness of God, which covers our sin (cf Is 61:10; Gal 3:27).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 22:13 *outer darkness*. Jesus is not talking about an earthly party but about salvation. The exclusion and punishment is a

description of hell. *gnashing*. See note, 8:12.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 22:14 Many of those called into God's kingdom miss out because they refuse to respond to the invitation properly—in faith. "This does not mean that God is unwilling to save everybody. But the reason some are not saved is as follows: They do not listen to God's Word at all" (FC Ep XI 12).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 22:1–14 Though God earnestly invites all to His Son's feast, some refuse to accept His invitation and so fail to enjoy its richness. Coming from a long line of believers does not guarantee anyone a place in God's kingdom. Ingratitude and presumption ever threaten to lead us away. Though we in no way deserve mercy, the Gospel earnestly invites us to come and join the Lord in His eternal heavenly banquet. • Heavenly Father, thank You for preparing a table before us in the presence of our enemies and graciously calling us to dwell in Your house forever. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 22:15 Once again, Jesus' adversaries set a trap for Him, by means of a trick question.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 22:16 *their disciples*. Just as Jesus had disciples, so also did other famous religious figures, such as John the Baptist (9:14; 11:2) and, in this case, the Pharisees. *Herodians*. See p 1557. *way of God*. See p 844. *not swayed by appearances*. Excessive and insincere flattery that frames this question is intended to disarm Jesus and set Him up for a fall.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 22:17 See note, Lk 20:22.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 22:18 *hypocrites?* See note, Lk 6:42.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 22:19–20 Coin minted by Rome for paying this tax bore the image of Tiberius Caesar and identified him as "son of the divine Augustus." Ironically, the question was put to Jesus, the true Son of God. The fact that they possessed this coin tacitly acknowledged Caesar's rule.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 22:21 Jesus here distinguishes the two realms—the civil and the heavenly—under which all believers live. Though our first allegiance is always to God (Ac 5:29), we are also bound to obey the legitimate civil authorities God has established (Rm 13:1–7). Luth: "It is the duty and obligation of those who participate in this earthly regime to administer law and punishment, to maintain the distinctions that exist among ranks and persons, to manage and distribute property…. But the Gospel does not trouble itself with these matters. It teaches about the right relation of the heart to God" (AE 21:108).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 22:15–22 Jesus' followers owe loyalty and obedience not only to Him, but also to the human rulers that God Himself has established. Though Christians may be tempted to avoid taxes and shirk civic responsibilities, they must "render to Caesar." Civil authority and good governmental leaders are beneficial means whereby God blesses us. • "Thou who art ever nigh, Guarding with watchful eye, To Thee aloud we cry: God save the State!" Amen. (*LSB* 965:2)
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 22:23 *Sadducees*. See p 1557.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 22:24 *Moses said*. Sadducees held only the five Books of Moses to be authoritative. Accordingly, they choose a Mosaic passage (Dt 25:5–6) as the basis for a hypothetical question.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 22:25–28 Sadducees' drawn-out question is absurd. Who can imagine a woman being widowed by seven men, much less seven brothers?
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 22:28 By asking such a far-fetched question, the Sadducees mock belief in the resurrection.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 22:29 Jesus immediately exposes their hypocrisy. They ask such a thing because they fail to believe in God's power to raise the dead.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 22:30 Jesus' point is that earthly marriages are no longer binding once one partner dies. Cf Rm 7:1–3. *like angels*. Comparison. Believers do not become angels after death.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 22:31–32 See note, Lk 20:37–38.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 22:33 The crowd's astonished reaction emphasizes the brilliance of Jesus' scriptural interpretation.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 22:23–33 Jesus vindicates Israel's resurrection hope by masterfully interpreting the Scriptures given them through Moses. Dismissing the bodily resurrection denies the Lord, who promises to raise us from the dead. The God who promised to bring life and immortality to light has fulfilled this promise by raising His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. • "He lives and grants me daily breath; He lives, and I shall conquer death; He lives my mansion to prepare; He lives to bring me safely there." Amen. (*LSB* 461:7)
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 22:34 After Jesus trumped the Sadducees and their trick question (vv 23–33), the Pharisees gathered together (lit, "synagogued") to have another go at Jesus.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 22:35 *lawyer*. Expert in religious laws of the Jews; in modern terms, a biblical scholar.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 22:36 *great commandment*. God had given the Israelites a great variety of laws, including moral, ceremonial, and civil. Jesus' interrogator asks which of these was the most important.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 22:37–39 Significantly, Jesus' answer is thoroughly traditional. Luth: "But you may say: Oh, it is utterly impossible for a person to keep these two commandments. Yes, it is impossible for you to keep or perform them. You cannot do it; God must do it in you, for him it is possible" (AE 51:104).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 22:37–38 First recorded in Dt 6:5, where it follows the great *Shema* of Israel: "Hear, O Israel: the LORD our God, the LORD is one" (Dt 6:4).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 22:39 Found in Lv 19:18, amid that book's "holiness code."
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 22:40 Along with a majority of rabbis of His day, Jesus sees these twin commandments at the heart of the OT revelation. In contrast to the Jewish ceremonial laws, which Christ fulfilled and suspended, these moral commandments remain binding.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 22:34–40 Jesus avoids another trap set by His opponents, correctly identifying love for God and for neighbor as the two main concerns of the divine Commandments. Among our many sins, none is more grievous than our failure to love God above all else. Thankfully, God does not respond to our selfishness by reciprocating. Instead, He gives us the greatest gift: His only-begotten Son. • "Living God, Your almighty power is made known chiefly in showing mercy and pity. Grant us the fullness of Your grace to lay hold of Your promises and live forever in Your presence; through Jesus Christ." Amen. (*LSB Altar Book*, p 835)
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 22:42 *son of David*. See note, Mk 12:35.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 22:43–44 *in the Spirit*. Jesus simply shows that the Holy Spirit inspired David's words (cf 1Pt 1:10–12; 2Tm 3:16) and the heavenly Father applied them to Him. See note, Ps 110:1.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 22:45 See note, Mk 12:37.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 22:46 *that day*. After Monday of Holy Week, Jesus' opponents no longer challenged Him publicly. Reduced to silence, they continued plotting against Him in secret.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 22:41–46 Jesus' authoritative interpretation of the OT proves that the Messiah is not merely human but also divine. While some people accept His humanity, only those who acknowledge Him as Savior and God have the certain hope of salvation. Jesus Christ, God's eternal Son, descended from heaven, assumed our flesh, suffered, died, and rose again, that we might share in His glory. • "Beautiful Savior, Lord of the nations, Son of God and Son of Man! Glory and honor, Praise, adoration Now and forevermore be Thine!" Amen. (*LSB* 537:4)

MATTHEW—NOTE ON **Ch 23** Exasperated at the Pharisees' obstinacy, Jesus makes His last word about them a sustained and scathing condemnation.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 23:2 *sit on Moses' seat*. Jesus does not deny that the scribes and Pharisees are Moses' successors and teach with his authority. Granting that, Jesus lambastes them for their miserable stewardship of the sacred duties entrusted to them. See note, Lv 10:11. "The Sacraments and Word are effective because of Christ's institution and command, even if they are administered by evil men" (AC VIII 2).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 23:3 This command must be understood in light of Jesus' disagreement with, and corrections of, pharisaical teachings elsewhere (e.g., 12:1–8; 15:1–20). Jesus stresses that, insofar as the Pharisees rightly interpret and uphold God's Word, their teaching should be affirmed and followed. At the same time, Jesus warns against their hypocrisy.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 23:4 Because the Pharisees often went beyond God's commands when they interpreted the Law, Jesus described them as "laying heavy burdens" on the people. See notes, 11:28–30.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 23:5 *phylacteries*. Small leather boxes containing Scripture verses. They were tied around one's forehead or arms (see note, Dt 6:8). *fringes*. Tassels containing blue strands that Jews attached to the corners of their garments to remind them of the Commandments (cf Nu 15:38–40).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 23:6–8 *best seats … greetings … being called rabbi by others*. Pharisees flaunted the privileges their teaching office afforded them, misusing them to exploit others. *one teacher … brothers*. Jesus, of course, is the one authoritative teacher among Christians. Under His headship, all Christians, esp leaders, exhibit fraternal love and respect for others.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 23:9–10 *call no man your father*. Not speaking of biological relations. In ancient Judaism, "father" referred to esteemed teachers and the revered dead. Cf 2Ki 2:12; see p 555.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 23:10 *instructors*. Gk *kathegetes*, "one who leads the way." See notes, 8:19; Mk 9:5. Instruction might take place in a group at a school (as today) or through tutoring and mentoring. See notes, Pr 1:2, 8; see also application note, Pr 4. Because Jesus is God's Son, He is the

Scripture's ultimate interpreter and revealer of divine things. Only He teaches with full authority.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 23:11–12 Jesus previously defined greatness in terms of humble service. Here He adds a promise: God will exalt those who humbly serve for His sake. In contrast, the proud will be abased.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 23:13–36 First of seven "woes." Such woes also appear in the OT prophets (e.g., Am 5:18; Is 5:8–30; Mi 2) and function as a negative counterpart of the Beatitudes (or blessings) Jesus promises throughout Mt (most notably in 5:1–12). The first six woes are presented in pairs of themes (vv 13–15 [proselyte], 16–24 [matters of Law], 25–28 [cleansing]).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 23:13 *woe*. See note, Mk 13:17. *shut the kingdom of heaven*. By demanding a righteousness based on human achievement and by insisting on an obedience to human rather than divine commands. See note, 16:19.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 23:15 *travel … to make a single proselyte*. Emboldened by the reign of the Maccabees, first-century Judaism was mission-minded, though not as zealous in proselytizing as Christianity. See note, Mk 1:4; see also p 1557. *child of hell*. The Pharisees' zeal for making converts was laudable, but the content of their preaching was deficient.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 23:16–22 Jesus refers to His adversaries' practice of swearing by sacred things (e.g., the temple, its gold, the altar) rather than by God's name, so as to avoid breaking the Second Commandment. Jesus dismisses such hypocrisy. See "vow," p 7.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 23:16 *blind guides*. Ironic, in view of their responsibility to lead Israel (v 2). They could not even recognize the Messiah.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 23:17 God's presence (1Ki 8:27–30) made the temple holy, not its furnishings. *sacred?* See "holy," p 7.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 23:18–20 The temple's altar is similarly greater than the gifts placed on it, for it is the source of an offering's holiness. It is the height of presumption to imagine that an offering placed on the altar gives value to God's temple.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 23:21–22 All such vows ultimately invoke God's name and are to be used cautiously. See "vow," p 7. Jesus warns His followers against making frivolous vows in 5:33–37.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 23:23 *tithe … cumin*. Some Pharisees were so scrupulous about tithing that they even gave 10 percent of their garden herbs. See note, Sg 4:13–15. *justice … mercy … faithfulness*. See pp 842–43. Compared to the Pharisees' failure to keep the weightier portions of the moral law—the commands to act justly and mercifully toward others—their painstaking tithing of garden produce is absurd. *without neglecting*. Jesus does not condemn their scrupulousness in tithing but rather their failure to act with love and compassion. In other words, the Law of God applies and is good. But God's people live by the full teaching of God's Word—both Law and Gospel.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 23:24 While obsessing over trivial things, they ignore truly weighty matters (cf 15:1–10).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 23:25–26 The Pharisees are more concerned with outward religious observances than with the heart and its unending battle with sin. See notes, Mk 7:3–4, 19–22.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 23:27–28 Affirms the point made in vv 25–26. A piety that is merely external is like a beautiful tomb. It may look good from the outside, but it is dead within.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 23:27 *whitewashed tombs*. Clean, whitewashed limestone facades. See diagram, p 1823. *uncleanness*. Jewish purity system held that contact with human remains rendered one ceremonially unclean (Nu 19:11). See note, Mk 7:3–4.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 23:28 Jesus has repeatedly charged His opponents with hypocrisy. This charge of lawlessness is even more serious.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 23:29–33 As Jesus pronounces this seventh and climactic woe, He completes His denunciation. The charge shifts from hypocrisy and defective observance to rejection of the prophets and violence against them.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 23:29 *build … decorate*. Building and adorning the tombs of great people can be a positive thing if it reinforces the good values embodied by those resting within. The Pharisees were not following the prophets' teachings, even as they claimed to honor them.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 23:30–31 Jesus accuses His opponents of being the spiritual heirs of those who rejected and killed the prophets, as His opponents' words and actions reveal.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 23:31 The people of Israel had a long history of rejecting and oppressing God's messengers.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 23:32 Sarcasm. Jesus mockingly commands His opponents to do exactly what they ought not to do. This is a tragic recognition that some of Jesus' adversaries are beyond correction.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 23:33 Repetition highlights the hard-heartedness of those denounced. Only repentance and faith can save such people from eternal condemnation. Cf Jn 3:7.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 23:34 *send*. Remarkably, God's gracious revelation was sent first to those who rejected and crucified Jesus (cf Ac 1:1–8:3). *prophets … scribes*. Jesus includes Himself in this company, along with the apostles He sent (10:5–15). *flog*. Peter, John, and Paul were flogged by Jewish religious leaders, as were other Christian preachers (Ac 5:40; 2Co 11:23–25).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 23:35 *righteous blood*. Many prophets were innocently killed. *blood of innocent Abel … Barachiah*. I.e., all the prophets, from first to last. *between the sanctuary … altar*. Cf 2Ch 24:20–22 for the story of this murder in the temple.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 23:36 *upon this generation*. In AD 70, the Romans leveled Jerusalem and its magnificent temple. This destruction partially fulfilled Jesus' woes.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 23:1–36 Jesus criticizes the Pharisees' hypocrisy and obstinacy. Of all the charges that will be laid against God's people on Judgment Day, none is more damning than the accusation that they despised God's Word. Even Jesus' most acrimonious denunciations are motivated by His sincere desire that people turn from sin and death and receive the gift of eternal life. • Lord Jesus, thank You for loving us enough to warn us when we stray from Your Word. Keep us steadfast in Your truth. Amen.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 23:37 *Jerusalem, Jerusalem*. Jesus begins to direct His words to the entire city. For His double address, see note, Lk 10:41. *How often*. Indicates that Jesus often visited Jerusalem. Cf Ex 23:17. *as a hen gathers her brood*. See note, Lk 13:34. *you would not!* "The human will rejects or perverts the means and instrument of the Holy Spirit, which God offers it through the call" (FC SD XI 41).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 23:38 Another reference to the destruction of the temple in AD 70.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 23:39 Different use of the psalm sung earlier (21:1–9). Those who rejected and killed Jesus did not see Him after the

resurrection. They will, however, see Him when He returns in glory (Php 2:10–11).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 23:37–39 Just days before His sacrificial death for all people, Jesus laments the fact that so many of His people reject Him and the gift of eternal life. In the end, those who reject Jesus and refuse His offer of eternal life will be judged. Even when hated and rejected by many, Jesus never stopped loving and sincerely reaching out to them. He does the same with us. • Fill us with Your unbounded love, O Lord, that we never cease to love and long for the salvation of all, even for those who revile You and hate us as Your disciples. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON **Chs 24–25** Jesus' fifth and final discourse. See "Order and Meaning in the Story," p 1577.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 24:1 See note, Mk 13:1.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 24:2 Given the scale and splendor of the Jerusalem temple, Jesus' prediction is all the more astounding. Yet it unfailingly came to pass, under the Roman general Titus, c 40 years later.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 24:1–2 In response to His disciples' admiring comments about the temple, Jesus predicts its destruction. The things of this world do not endure. All earthly splendor will be forgotten on the Last Day. Understanding the provisional nature of material things leads us to place our highest hopes in the Lord and what He has in store for us in the new heavens and new earth. • You alone are our life and hope, O Lord. Help us to set our hearts and affections on You, for in the end everything else will give way. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 24:3 *Mount of Olives*. Just east of the temple, on the opposite bank of the Kidron Valley. See map, p 1584. *privately*. Jesus taught publicly on many occasions (e.g., 5:1–7:29; 13:1–52). At other times, He revealed things only to His disciples. *when*. First of the two questions concerns the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple; vv 15–22 hold Jesus' answer. *what*. Second question involves the end times. Jesus describes the end of the age in vv 4–14 and speaks of His second coming in vv 21–31.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 24:4 Significantly, the first statement about the end times is a warning against deception. See p 307. Cf v 36, where Jesus teaches that no one can know or calculate when the Last Day will come.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 24:5 *I am the Christ*. History has seen many examples of messianic pretenders. Cf Ac 5:35–40.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 24:6–7 Because geopolitical conflicts and natural disasters are common, they cannot be used to determine the date of the end of the world. The frequency of such signs reminds us that we always need to be prepared for Jesus' return.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 24:8 Birth pains typically become more frequent and intense as the time of delivery approaches. So also it will be in the end times. The severity and frequency of cataclysmic events will increase.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 24:9 *they*. Jesus does not identify those who will persecute His followers. In every generation, of course, there are some who oppose Jesus' cause and so seek to harm His Church. *all nations*. All peoples. Accordingly, one should not interpret this oracle in exclusively political terms.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 24:10 *fall away*. See note, 1Tm 4:1; see also pp 2059–60.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 24:11 *false prophets*. Just as an abundance of messianic pretenders have appeared over the centuries, so also many false prophets and subverters of sound doctrine will appear. See note, v 4.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 24:12 Doctrinal corruption always produces a deterioration of morality and ethics.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 24:13 Amid His dire predictions about things continually worsening, Jesus offers a word of encouragement: those remaining faithful will be saved. "This does not mean that faith lays hold of righteousness and salvation only in the beginning and then resigns its office to works as though they had to sustain faith, the righteousness received, and salvation. It means that the promise, not only of receiving, but also of retaining righteousness and salvation, is firm and sure to us. St. Paul (Romans 5:2) ascribes to faith not only the entrance to grace, but says that we stand in grace and boast of the future glory. In other words, he credits the beginning, middle, and end *to faith alone*" (FC SD IV 34).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 24:14 The world will have the chance to hear the Gospel before Jesus returns in glory. This is not only a testimony to God's all-encompassing grace but also to Jesus' universal lordship and role as judge. On the spread of mission work, see maps, pp 2239–41.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 24:1–14 Jesus prophesies about things leading up to the end of the world. Today, stories of military conflicts, political intrigues, and natural disasters continue to fill the news. All this should remind us of the nearness of the end of this age. In that we may rejoice!

Though the world is indeed increasingly evil and hostile to God, Christians are ever nearer the great day of Christ's return. • Keep us faithful in a world spinning out of control, Lord Jesus, that in the end, we may receive the salvation You are even now preparing for us. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 24:15 See note, Mk 13:14. *let the reader understand*. Matthew provides an editorial comment to underline the significance of the temple's destruction.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 24:16 Many Christian residents of Judea fled on the eve of the revolt that brought Jerusalem's destruction in AD 70. See note, Lk 21:21.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 24:17–19 Jesus warns that the inhabitants of Judea will be extremely rushed when they are forced to flee the attacking Roman legions (this began in AD 67). There will not even be time for gathering a few prized possessions or grabbing a coat. See notes, Mk 13:15–17.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 24:20 *Sabbath*. Violating the day of rest by fleeing on it would be permissible (see note, Mk 3:4).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 24:21 *great tribulation*. The days leading up to Jerusalem's destruction would be unprecedented in the intensity of suffering and would require extraordinary means of survival.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 24:22 *had not been cut short*. Jesus characterizes the days leading up to the destruction of Jerusalem as horrible and long. *the sake of the elect*. God's special love and concern for His people moves Him to lessen the severity of what befalls the land in AD 66–70. He graciously rescues His people in the midst of suffering. Cf Gn 18:22–33.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 24:23–24 *false christs and false prophets*. When things turn desperate, people instinctively recognize the need for a spiritual answer. Under such wretched conditions, it is no wonder that false teachers would attract so many followers. *even the elect*. God's people, however, will not fall for charlatans. The power of God's Spirit helps believers in Jesus to remain true.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 24:25 The fact that Jesus is able to predict things even before they happen helps demonstrate the truth of His Word.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 24:26 Yet another warning against false christs. Jesus will return from heaven on the clouds of the sky, according to Ac 1:11. Any other claims should be rejected.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 24:27 When the sun breaks the horizon, its light comes so fast it seems instantaneous. When Christ returns in glory, He will suddenly appear in the heavens (cf v 30; 26:64).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 24:28 False teachers will swoop down on the confused and suffering people just as vultures unfailingly spot carrion and gather around it.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 24:15–28 While prophesying concerning Jerusalem's destruction, Jesus again warns His disciples against being deceived by false messiahs. During crises, people instinctively seek spiritual aid. In such times, God's people are tempted to join those fleeing to charlatans and the false hopes they offer. Christ's return in glory will be unmistakable. In an instant, He will raise the dead, transform believers into His likeness, and so effect our final deliverance. • You have revealed to us the manner of Your return, O Lord. Therefore, keep us watchful for You so we do not follow those who seek to deceive us. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 24:29 *tribulation*. Used broadly for the troubles described in vv 5–28, some of which were fulfilled in AD 70; others will be fulfilled just before Christ returns. The character of the prophecy warns us against trying to calculate the exact time of Jesus' return. *darkened*. See note, Mk 13:24.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 24:30 *sign of the Son of Man*. Cf Dn 7:1–14, where the final enthronement of Christ is depicted as occurring before all people. See p 2098. *mourn*. Those who opposed the Messiah will mourn their actions, esp those who pierced Him (Rv 1:7).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 24:31 *His angels*. Mt frequently portrays angels as assisting the Lord on Judgment Day (e.g., 13:39–41, 49; 16:27; 25:31). *gather His elect*. Christians are drawn together to separate them from unbelievers. See note, 25:32. *four winds*. The directions of the compass, the "ends of the earth." Jesus will send His angels to gather all believers, regardless of where they are.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 24:29–31 Jesus describes the manner (though not the exact time) of His second coming. He will come in glory on the clouds of heaven as your Savior. Rejoice! For all Christians will unfailingly be gathered to reunite with their fellow believers and enter the Lord's presence. • "O Jesus Christ, do not delay, But hasten our salvation; … Come, mighty judge, and set us free From death and ev'ry evil." Amen. (*LSB* 508:7)

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 24:32 See note, Mk 13:28.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 24:33 *all these things*. Jesus refers not only to His prediction about Jerusalem's destruction (vv 15–22) but also to the other signs that will accompany the end of the world and His return. *He … at the very gates*. Jesus is the one standing at the gate, ready to appear suddenly in glory.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 24:34 *this generation*. Repeatedly rebuked by Jesus for rejecting Him and the prophets, demanding signs, and otherwise failing to recognize the coming of the messianic kingdom (11:16; 12:41–42; 23:36; cf 16:4; 17:17). Accordingly, this passage is best taken as a prediction that there will always be a "generation" that rejects the Gospel, demands signs, and dismisses the inevitability of judgment.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 24:35 Though the delay of Christ's second coming might lead some to conclude that He will not appear, His promised return will indeed come to pass. Then, everything else will fail. In contrast, Jesus' Word will stand forever vindicated (cf 2Pt 3:3–14).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 24:32–35 Jesus again reminds us that there will be constant and unmistakable signs that the end is near. For those who reject Jesus and the Gospel, the reminder that He is standing at the gate is a threat of judgment and condemnation. However, believers in Christ may be encouraged when reminded that Jesus is near, for they know that this means their salvation is drawing near. • "O Thou Long-expected, weary Waits my anxious soul for Thee…. O my Savior, O my Savior, When wilt Thou return to me?" Amen. (*TLH* 606:2)
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 24:36 Important interpretive key for everything Jesus says about the end times: no one can decipher the day (or even the year) of His return in glory. Flee from those who claim they can. *nor the Son.* "'Christ according to His human nature' … knows some things and is ignorant of others" (FC SD VIII 74).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 24:37–39 Noah's preaching and building of the ark were clear warnings that God was preparing to judge wickedness by sending a flood. Still, people were unprepared when the flood came. So it will also be at the end of time.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 24:38 Eating, drinking, and marrying are not inherently evil. The people in Noah's generation were not condemned for doing these things, but rather for their cavalier disregard of God and His prophets.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 24:40–41 Emphasizes the suddenness and finality of the separation that will occur on the Last Day. See note, Lk 17:34–35.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 24:42 The sudden nature of Christ's return requires that His people remain ever vigilant.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 24:43–44 *master of the house*. Though Jesus is plainly the master of the house in the parable that follows (vv 45–51), here that character represents those called to watch for His second coming. *thief*. Just as a thief comes when least expected, so also Jesus' appearing will catch people sleeping.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 24:44 See note, Lk 12:40.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 24:45–51 In this parable, the master represents Jesus; the servant in charge of feeding the others stands for Christian leaders; and the other slaves are the rest of the Christians.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 24:46–47 Before any word of judgment is heard in this parable, blessing is promised to those servants found faithfully at work for their master.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 24:47 *over all his possessions*. Those found faithful to Jesus are promised that in heaven they will share with Him in ruling over all things (cf 2Tm 2:12; Rv 22:5).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 24:48–49 The wicked servant's monstrous behavior flows from his sense that his master is not returning. This implies that Christians may slip into bad behavior in part because they begin to doubt or underestimate the importance of Jesus' second coming.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 24:49 *fellow servants*. Following the logic of this parable, the evil servant not only associates with outside drunkards but also injures fellow brothers and sisters within the Christian community.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 24:51 *cut him in pieces*. Jolting conclusion serves as a sobering reminder to all Christians that Jesus will not only call His disciples to account for their behavior but also severely punish their unfaithfulness. *hypocrites*. Those who are finally excluded from the community. See note, Lk 6:42. *weeping and gnashing of teeth*. Describes hell as a place of torment and eternal regret (13:42, 50; 22:13; 25:30). See note, 8:12.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 24:36–51 The suddenness of Christ's second coming, along with His promise that faithfulness will be richly rewarded, moves us to watch eagerly for Jesus. Sadly, many Christians today seem to have lost their expectation of Christ's imminent return. Countless sins and

vices follow. Christians who are found faithful when called home will be unbelievably privileged: they will share in Christ's everlasting reign! • Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly. Come, save us from this dying world, and lead us into Your everlasting kingdom, where we shall reign with You. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 25:1 Scripture repeatedly compares the relationship between Christ and the Church to that of husband and wife (most famously in Eph 5:22–33). This parable uses similar though distinct imagery. Jesus is the Bridegroom; the virgins represent members of the Church on earth. For more on Jewish wedding customs, see pp 54–55.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 25:2 *foolish … wise*. Cf 7:26; see pp 775–78.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 25:3 Streets of even large cities had no public lighting. The foolish virgins do not consider the possibility that the bridegroom might be delayed, and so they bring no extra oil for their lamps. The oil represents a faith continually sustained by the means of grace, thus able to endure until Christ's return.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 25:5 *delayed*. Many early Christians expected Jesus' return in their generation (cf 1Th 4:13–18). This parable implies that Jesus might not come as quickly as some expected, while encouraging the Church not to lose hope.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 25:6 The bridegroom suddenly appears at midnight, when many eyes are heavy.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 25:7 *trimmed*. Adjusted the wicks to make them burn brightly.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 25:8–9 By the time the bridegroom arrives, it is too late to prepare. Hil: "In other words, no one can be aided by the works and merits of another, because it is necessary for every one to buy oil for his own lamp" (Ap XXI 30).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 25:10 *marriage feast*. The future glory of heaven is repeatedly compared to the joy and intimacy of a wedding feast (cf 22:1–14; Is 25:6–9). *shut*. Once this door was shut, there was no possibility of entry into the feast.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 25:11–12 *Lord, lord … I do not know you*. Words echoing 7:21–23, where Jesus warns His audience that He will recognize and admit into the kingdom of heaven only those who do the will of His Father.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 25:13 *day nor the hour*. See note, 24:36.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 25:1–13 Jesus warns that many invited to share in the eternal joy of His kingdom will miss out by failing to have a living faith at the end. Though some will be condemned for heinous crimes and gross sins, many more will fail to enter heaven because they neglected their faith. Even so, no matter how depleted our faith is, Jesus' grace can fill us to overflowing with a single word. • Keep us ever filled to overflowing, O Lord, that we continually abound in faith, hope, and love for You. Amen.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 25:14–15 The master represents Jesus, the servants stand for believers, and the talents symbolize the various gifts God places into their stewardship. *it will be like*. Another parable about the end times. *entrusted to them his property*. Masters frequently put trusted servants in charge of their estate (cf Gn 24:2).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 25:15 *talents*. Gk monetary unit. See p cx. A silver talent was worth c 7,300 denarii (a denarius equals one day's wage), and a gold talent could be 30 times more valuable. Sizable amounts of money are in play here.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 25:16–17 *traded*. Though the nature of their business is not specified, both men earned 100 percent profit.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 25:18 *hid his master's money*. Third servant tries to keep from losing his master's money rather than putting it to productive use. Later, he will pay for this lack of effort.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 25:19 *settled accounts*. The master wanted a report of how each servant had administered the funds left in his charge.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 25:20 First servant does not try to take any cut for himself, but turns over everything to his master. Cf Lk 17:7–10. "He will also strengthen, increase, and support to the end the good work that He has begun in them [Philippians 1:6], if they cling to God's Word, pray diligently, abide in God's goodness, and faithfully use the gifts they received" (FC SD XI 21).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 25:21 *set you over much*. The faithfulness and productivity of this servant is rewarded with an even larger sum to administer. *Enter into the joy*. The greater reward for this servant is being called into the presence of his lord. This passage symbolizes the Christian's entry into eternal life.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 25:22–23 Second servant produces the same margin of profit and therefore receives the same commendation and

rewards. He differs from the first servant only in that he began with fewer talents.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 25:24 Third servant characterizes his master as "hard" to blame his own failure on his master. The description has a variety of unflattering connotations: cruel, demanding, strong, or violent.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 25:26–27 The master responds with righteous indignation rather than sympathy. Even granting that the master was "hard," would that not make it even more urgent for this servant to produce some growth with the talent entrusted to him?

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 25:28–29 Most productive servant ends up entrusted with even more of his master's property, while the unproductive one loses his stewardship altogether.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 25:30 See note, 24:51.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 25:14–30 Our relationship to God and the world is one of stewardship. We are to use everything entrusted to us in such a way that it benefits God's kingdom. Though modern people often have far more material and technological means than any previous generation, they often use these tools selfishly. An unfailing promise attaches to faithful stewardship: if we use the things entrusted to us for God and His purposes, we will be blessed here and in heaven. • "Give me a faithful heart, Likeness to Thee, That each departing day Henceforth may see Some work of love begun, Some deed of kindness done, Some wand'rer sought and won, Something for Thee." Amen. (*TLH* 403:3)

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 25:31 *Son of Man*. See p 2098. *glory*. See p 6–7. *glorious throne*. Cf Dn 7:13–14, where the Son of Man is presented as holy but never actually sits on heaven's throne. Here, the Son of Man sits in glory as God.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 25:32 Sheep and goats are not described as being judged on this day, but rather separated. Accordingly, this parable is not primarily about judgment but about the revelation and public vindication of true believers.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 25:33 In the ancient world, the right hand was regularly associated with privilege or honor. See p 843.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 25:34 *King*. Fitting title, given the coronation theme in Dn 7. *prepared for you*. Bern: "Your present justification is the revelation of the Divine counsel, and a preparation for future glory…. Let

none, therefore, doubt that he is loved who already loves. The love of God freely follows our love which it preceded" (*SLSB*, p 155).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 25:35–36 This story does not teach that people are justified before God on the basis of works. The sheep receive their blessing and inheritance from the Father before a single word about their good works is spoken. (See "portion," p 7.) Scripture teaches that people do good works in God's sight only after they have come to faith and been justified by Christ. Good works are the result of salvation, not its cause. See Ap V 250–51.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 25:37 *righteous*. See p 847. Interestingly, those called righteous are surprised at what is being said about them. Far from being boastful about the good deeds worked in them by God's Spirit, they are completely ignorant of them.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 25:38 *welcome*. This word is particularly connected to the early Christian practice of providing hospitality for traveling missionaries. Examples of hospitality are found in Ac 16:14–15; 17:5–9; 18:7–8; 21:8. See note, Gn 18:4.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 25:39 *in prison and visit*. Held special significance for the first Christians, because many of them, particularly their leaders, were arrested for the faith (e.g., Ac 5:18; 12:3–4; 16:23).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 25:40 Important theme in Mt is that Jesus is Immanuel, "God with us" (1:23; 18:20; 28:20). This verse stresses that Jesus is with the Christian community in such a way that we serve Him when we serve others.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 25:41 *cursed*. See p 6. *eternal fire … angels*. Hell was not prepared for human beings. Those who reject the Lord will go there because the wicked cannot stay with the righteous. Cf Rv 20:10.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 25:42–43 The undone works are only a symptom of the real problem: lack of faith. If they had called on the Lord in faith, He would have forgiven them, prepared them, and completed good works in them. See LC I 191–92.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 25:44 *minister to You?* Offer service, particularly in physical needs. Cf Heb 11:6.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 25:45 Apart from faith in Christ and His forgiveness, all of our sins and shortcomings remain offenses against God, for which He shall hold us fully accountable.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 25:46 The difference between those who are in Christ and those who stand outside of His forgiveness cannot be stated more clearly. The difference is as great as heaven and hell. See AC XVII.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 25:31–46 On the Last Day, Jesus will separate true believers from hypocrites and those who reject Him. The faithful will be vindicated and welcomed into heaven, while unbelievers will be condemned. Having received forgiveness through faith in Christ, God's flock eagerly await the day on which they shall be publicly vindicated and receive eternal life. • Grant us a faith that perseveres until the end, O Lord. Move us by Your Spirit, that our good works continually glorify You and benefit our neighbors. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:2 *after two days … coming*. Since the Passover began Thursday night (Maundy Thursday), this would have been spoken on Tuesday. *Son of Man*. See p 2098.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:3 *chief priests*. Caiaphas, the current high priest, as well as his father-in-law and former high priest, Annas. See notes, Lk 3:1–2; Jn 11:49. *elders*. See p 228. *palace of the high priest*. Earlier, Jesus' opponents had been primarily the Pharisees (12:14; 22:15); now the high priest and his associates oppose Him too.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:5 As Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem demonstrated (21:8–11), He had quite a following. His opponents did not wish to provoke the anger of these crowds.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:1–5 Both Jesus and His enemies long for His impending death. They plot to kill Him, but He longs to offer up His life for them and for the whole world. Pray for those who oppose the Gospel. Despite such opposition, the Lord is at work for the good of His people. • How great is Your love, O Jesus! Grant me courage in the face of all trouble. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:6 *Bethany*. On the Mount of Olives, 2 mi E of Jerusalem. See color map 4. *Simon the leper*. See note, Mk 14:3.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:7 *alabaster*. Semiprecious stone often cut into beautiful containers to hold perfumes. *ointment*. Sweet-smelling oil used for anointing, much as perfumes and colognes are used today. *on His head*. People were usually anointed on their heads; Jn 12:3; Lk 7:38 mention that Jesus was anointed on His feet too. *reclined*. See note, 8:11.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:8–9 Jesus had taught concern for the poor (e.g., 11:5; 19:21), which now led the disciples to oppose such extravagant

expense.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:10 *beautiful thing*. Lit, "a good work." Her service rendered to Jesus was out of faith.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:11 As Dt 15:11 teaches, every age will have its poor; Jesus, however, would not always be present visibly with His disciples. Jesus does not set aside the command to be generous to the poor, but rather honors a woman who has honored Him.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:12 *prepare Me for burial*. Dead were commonly anointed with spices (cf Lk 23:56). This woman has anointed Jesus before His death rather than after.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:13 *this gospel*. Not just Mt, but the Christian message proclaimed by the apostles. See pp 1571–74. *in memory of her*. See note, Mk 14:9.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:6–13 A woman anoints Jesus, which greatly offends His disciples. They take offense where no offense should be taken. Jesus, however, commends the woman, because her action points to His death for the world, which in turn points to His love for you. • Strengthen our faith, dear God, to focus on Christ's death and resurrection for us and not on distractions. Amen.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:14 *Judas Iscariot*. See notes, Lk 6:16; 22:3; cf Jn 12:4–6.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:15 Fulfills the prophecy of Zec 11:12 and alludes to Ex 21:32, where the value of a dead slave is affixed at 30 pieces of silver.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:16 *opportunity*. Judas had to find a time when Jesus would be isolated from the crowds and defenseless.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:14–16 Judas agrees to betray Jesus for 30 pieces of silver. How often we, too, have betrayed Christ and sent Him to the cross for a lot less than 30 pieces of silver. Christ, however, still loves us. He died for Judas's sin and for ours. Repent of all insincerity, doubt, and fear to bear witness. The Lord is ever ready to hear your prayer and forgive your sin. So great is His mercy! • Hear my cry, O Lord, and answer when I call. Grant me a sincere faith. Amen.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:17 *first day of Unleavened Bread*. Technically speaking, the Feast of Unleavened Bread did not begin until the day after the Passover (cf Lv 23:5–6). However, leaven had to be removed before the

Passover (cf Ex 12:18). This is probably the reason for the term here. *eat the Passover?* See pp 200–201.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:18 *Teacher*. See note, 8:19. *My time is at hand*. Jesus' death was impending.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:20 *evening*. Like the Sabbath, the Passover celebration began at sundown. *reclined*. See note, 8:11. *the twelve*. The only participants at the meal.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:21 *betray Me*. See note, Lk 22:21.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:22 *Is it I, Lord?* Lit, "It isn't I, Lord?"
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:23 Banqueters often dipped their bread into a common dish of sauce. See note, Lk 22:8.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:24 *woe*. Judas's betrayal brings a horrible judgment upon him (cf 18:7–9; 23:13–26). *better … not been born*. It would have been better if Judas had never existed rather than betray Jesus, commit suicide, die without faith, and experience eternal damnation.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:25 *Rabbi?* See notes, 8:19; Mk 9:5. Judas is the only disciple to address Jesus with this term in Mt; see also his salutation in v 49. *You have said so*. Jesus indirectly says yes (cf v 64).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:17–25 Jesus celebrates the Passover with His disciples, even as He warns Judas against betraying Him. In the same way, God warns us daily not to yield to sin and thus betray Him. He also invites us to partake of fellowship with Him, as Christ did with His disciples at the Passover, freely offering His forgiveness. • Lord Jesus, forgive my betrayal, and strengthen me to follow You. Amen.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:26 *blessing*. See p 842. *broke it*. To distribute. *this is My body*. With the bread, Christ gives His very body for the disciples to eat.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:27 *cup*. Wine for the Passover meal. *given thanks*. See note, Mk 14:23. *all of you*. "The laity are given both kinds in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper because this practice has the Lord's command" (AC XXII 1).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:28 *this is My blood of the covenant*. With the wine, Christ gives His blood. It is the blood of a new covenant; as the first covenant was established by blood, so Christ's blood establishes the new covenant (Ex 12:7–13; 24:5–8). *poured out*. The blood that communicants receive is the same blood Christ shed for us on the cross. Cf Is 53:12. "We see how He has completely poured forth Himself [Matthew 26:28] and

withheld nothing from us" (LC II 26). *many*. Hbr expression for "all people." *for the forgiveness of sins*. Christ's death absolved the world of its sin; the Sacrament applies that forgiveness to individual communicants. Cf 1:23; Jer 31:34. "It is just like when I go to the Sacrament trusting not in my faith, but in Christ's Word. Whether I am strong or weak, I commit that to God. But I know this, that He asks me to go, to eat and to drink, and so on, and He gives me His body and blood [Matthew 26:26–28]. That will not deceive me or prove false to me" (LC IV 56). Bern: "Where there is reconciliation there is remission of sins. And what is that but justification? Whether, therefore, we call it reconciliation, or remission of sins or justification, or, again, redemption, or liberation from the chains of the devil, by whom we were taken captive at his will, at all events by the death of the Only Begotten, we obtain that we have been justified freely by His blood" (*SLSB*, pp 287–88). See p 2230.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:29 *fruit of the vine*. Hbr idiom for "wine." Christ would not drink wine again until His saving work was finished. See note, 8:11; see also "vow," p 7.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:26–29 Christ institutes His Supper. He continues to offer His body and His blood for us Christians to eat and to drink for the forgiveness of sins whenever we come to His Table. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for His righteousness! • "Lord, may Thy body and Thy blood Be for my soul the highest good!" Amen. (*LSB* 618)

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:30 *sung a hymn*. Possibly Ps 113–18, commonly sung at the end of the Passover meal. See note, Ps 113–18. *Mount of Olives*. Just east of Jerusalem, across the Kidron Valley in the direction of Gethsemane. See map, p 1584.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:31 All the disciples will abandon Jesus, the shepherd. The sheep (in this case, the disciples) flee when the shepherd is killed.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:33 Peter was overconfident.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:34 *rooster crows*. Before first light. *three times*. Peter would not only deny Jesus once before first light, but three times—something Peter thought impossible.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:35 As in 16:16, Peter said what the rest of the disciples were also thinking.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:30–35 The disciples, especially Peter, do not perceive the danger. They think they are strong enough to face anything

without denying Christ. How often we foolishly copy Peter and substitute recklessness for humble faith. Fortunately, Jesus knows our weaknesses and is ready to restore us, even as He restored Peter. • Grant us grace to trust Your strength, O Lord, and not our own. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:36 *Gethsemane*. Walled garden where olives were pressed for oil. On the lower western reaches of the Mount of Olives, across the Kidron Valley to the east of Jerusalem. Jesus and His disciples frequently met here (cf Jn 18:2). See Mount of Olives on diagram, pp 1690–91.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:37 On several occasions, Jesus took this inner circle of disciples with Him (cf Mk 5:37). *sons of Zebedee*. See note, Mk 1:19.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:38 *sorrowful, even to death*. Fully human, Jesus experienced the horror and difficulty of death; unlike all others, He had done nothing to deserve this death.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:39 *little farther*. C 30 yd. See note, Lk 22:41. *fell on His face*. Common posture of overwhelmed worshipers. See p 1276. *this cup*. See note, Is 51:17. *pass from Me*. See note, Mk 14:35. *not as I will, but as You will*. Christ's will is to conform to the Father's will, even if it means pain for Himself.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:40 Peter, the boldest in saying that he would never fall away, shows that he is not strong enough to pray with Jesus for even one hour.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:41 *not enter into temptation*. Requested in the Lord's Prayer (6:13). *spirit … weak*. Our new spiritual nature may be strong, but it is burdened by the flesh, our old sinful self (Rm 8:1–14). Luth: "O Father, we are faint and ill, and the trials in the flesh and in the world are severe and manifold. O dear Father, hold us and do not let us fall into temptation and sin again, but give us grace to remain steadfast and fight valiantly to the end. Without your grace and your help, we are not able to do anything" (AE 42:80).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:44 *third time … same words*. Cf v 39. Jesus illustrates that repetition in prayer is not wrong, so long as one's heart is sincere in the asking. See note, 6:9.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:45 *take your rest later on*. Since Jesus' betrayal is impending, there is little time for sleep now. *betrayed … sinners*.

Jesus is handed over to sinful men (Judas and company) to suffer what sinners deserved. See p 959.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:36–46 Jesus prays three times in Gethsemane, while His disciples give themselves over to sleep rather than to prayer. How often we get ourselves into trouble because we do not bother to pray! Pour out your heart to the Lord in sincere prayer again and again. Christ's prayer and obedience to the Father open the portals of heaven to your prayers. • Let us hasten to bring our petitions before God's throne of grace! Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:47 *great crowd*. Most likely drawn from the temple guards (cf Jn 18:3). *chief priests … elders*. See p 1556.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:48 *a sign … kiss*. See note, Mk 14:44.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:49 *Rabbi!* See notes, 8:19; Mk 9:5.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:50 *Friend*. Ironic. Can mean "comrade." Jesus knew the reason for Judas's presence: to betray Him. See note, 20:13. *they*. The crowd (v 47).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:51 *one … with Jesus*. One of His disciples; Jn 18:10 says it was Peter. *sword and struck*. Peter had forgotten the blessings of persecution (5:10–12). *servant of the high priest*. Malchus (Jn 18:10).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:52 Violence brings down violence on those who practice it.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:53 Jesus had already declined to call on the angels' help (4:6–7). He will not call on them now to prevent His death. *twelve legions*. C 72,000 soldiers; here it means countless angels.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:54 *Scriptures be fulfilled*. Christ's death was God's will, as foretold in the OT. See p 1245.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:55 *crowds*. Cf v 47.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:56 *Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled*. See p 1245. *all the disciples left Him and fled*. All but Peter and John fled into hiding until the resurrection (cf Jn 18:15), and these two would soon join the rest (Jn 20:19).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:47–56 Judas betrays Jesus, but Jesus refuses to allow His disciples to use violence to defend Him. Evil permeates the scene: there is treachery, cowardice, and false bravado. But the sinless Son of God stands in the midst of these evils and allows these things to take place so He can redeem us. • Dear Savior, thank You for redeeming me, a sinner. Grant me wisdom and courage in the hour of temptation. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:57 *Caiaphas*. See note, v 3. *scribes … elders*. See pp 1556–57.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:58 Peter wanted to see what would happen to Jesus, but from a distance. Though he had fled in confusion, he continued to show greater bravery than most of the disciples. *courtyard of the high priest*. Placed Peter close enough to overhear the results of the trial without endangering his life by being inside. See note, Jn 18:15. *see the end*. What would happen to Jesus.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:59 *Council*. See p 1556. *seeking false testimony*. Judas's cooperation had put the Council ahead of schedule (cf v 5); they had not quite prepared their case. See note, v 60. *put Him to death*. Though there were many irregularities about the trial, the Council still wanted to preserve an appearance of justice, esp in putting such a popular man to death.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:60 *found none*. Testimony of at least two witnesses had to agree (Dt 17:6). Because the testimonies were false, they were inconsistent.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:61 *destroy the temple*. Such a statement would arouse the fear of the priests; not only was the temple God's house, it was also their source of income. See Jesus' words and actions in 21:12–13, 18–19; 22:7; 23:37–38; 24:3–35.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:63 *Jesus remained silent*. He did not defend Himself because He did not want to derail His conviction. *adjure*. Put under oath. *living God*. See note, 16:16. *Christ, the Son of God*. The Messiah foretold by the OT. Though Caiaphas may not have understood the full divinity of the Messiah, he at least must have believed in the unique honor of the Messiah. See p 2098.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:64 *Son of Man*. See p 2098. *right hand of Power*. See note, Lk 22:69. *coming on the clouds*. See note, Dn 7:13.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:65 *tore his robes*. Sign of distress and grief in reaction to distressing news. See note, Jb 1:20. *blasphemy*. The high priest thought Jesus was a mere mortal claiming divinity.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:66 Blasphemy bore the death penalty in Jewish law.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:67 *spit*. Insulting gesture. *some slapped Him*. Probably some of the guards, not members of the Council.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:68 *Prophesy*. As Messiah, Jesus was expected to be able to identify His tormentors without seeing them. See note, Mk 14:65.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:57–68 Jesus stands trial before the Council. Christ notes that He will come again to judge them and all who have sinned. He makes this confession so He can go to the cross and die for all who have perverted justice. Today, deal fairly with others, and pray for your persecutors. The death of Jesus atones for your sins and avails for them too. • Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world, have mercy on us. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:69 *servant girl*. See note, Lk 22:56. *the Galilean*. Person from Galilee in northern Israel.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:72 *with an oath*. See note, v 74; see also "vow," p 7.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:73 *your accent betrays you*. Peter spoke like a Galilean and thus could not have been ignorant of who Jesus was.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:74 *curse … swear*. Jesus had warned against taking casual oaths (5:33–37). Peter, like Herod (14:7–9), succumbed to this form of blasphemy.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:75 Rooster crowed near first light, fulfilling Christ's prophecy (v 34). *wept bitterly*. Indicating true sorrow for his sin.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 26:69–75 Peter denies Jesus three times. His failure teaches us that mere bravado cannot keep us from sinning. But Jesus will restore Peter, even as He forgives us when we fall into sin. • Thank You, Lord, for Your constant forgiveness. Keep our hearts even when we fail to mind our tongues. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:1 *morning*. Early Friday morning. *chief priests … elders*. See p 1556. *took counsel*. Jewish law demanded that the trial take place in the daytime; this would fulfill that legal requirement.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:2 Pilate was the Roman governor (prefect) of the province of Judea. Only he had the legal authority to put people to death (cf Jn 18:31).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:1–2 Christ is handed over to Pilate. When others betray you or falsely speak evil against you, take counsel with Jesus. He knows your sorrows and has borne your sins. He will sustain you in the

hour of trial. • Lord Jesus Christ, let us die to sin and live to You. Lift up our hearts. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:3 *saw that Jesus was condemned*. Pilate had not yet condemned Jesus, but Judas saw what they intended to do to Him. *changed his mind*. Not repented (sorrow and faith), but had deep regret.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:4 *I have sinned*. Judas took a bribe to shed innocent blood and thereby fell under a curse (Dt 27:25). *What is that to us?* Judas seeks absolution from these corrupt priests, but they refuse to give it to him. Despite their sacred calling, they hate Jesus more than they love to minister to sinners. *See to it yourself*. They leave Judas to deal with his own sin rather than directing him to God's grace.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:5 *into the temple*. Judas hurls the blood money into the sanctuary itself. *hanged himself*. Judas executes himself for murder (cf Lv 24:21). As he felt cursed by the Law (Dt 27:25), so he died an accursed death (Dt 21:23). "This faith shows the distinction between the contrition of Judas and Peter, of Saul and David. The contrition of Judas or Saul [Matthew 27:3–5; 1 Samuel 31:4–6] is useless because faith is not added. Faith grasps the forgiveness of sins, given as a gift for Christ's sake. So the contrition of David or Peter [2 Samuel 12:13; Matthew 26:75] helps because faith, which takes hold of the forgiveness of sins granted for Christ's sake, is added to it" (Ap XIIA 36). "Whenever the Law alone exercises its office, without the Gospel being added, there is nothing but death and hell, and one must despair, as Saul and Judas did" (SA III III 7).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:6 *not lawful*. Ill-gotten gains could not be brought into the temple (Dt 23:18). By this statement, the priests tacitly acknowledge that they have unjustly prosecuted Jesus. *treasury*. For the upkeep of the temple and its activities. Cf 1Ch 26:20–32. *blood money*. Money used for a violent sin.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:7 *potter's field*. Good clay for pottery in this area; the En-rogel Spring south of Jerusalem in the Kidron Valley is nearby. See diagram, p 1690. *burial place*. Cemeteries were unclean because corpses were unclean by OT Law (cf Nu 19:11, 14). Tainted money could be used to buy such land, esp since it was intended for Gentile burials.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:8 *Field of Blood*. So called because of the origin of the money used to buy it.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:9–10 Quotes Zec 11:12–13, but adds phrases from Jer 19:11 (a potter's field is used for burial) and an allusion to Jer

32:6–11 (Jeremiah's purchase of land). For more on this style of quotation, see p 1646.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:3–10 Peter's denial is followed closely by Judas's suicide. The two commit similar sins in betraying Christ, but things turn out differently for each. Both are sorry for their misdeeds—perhaps Judas is even sorrier in that he tries to undo the damage. But Judas ends his life in despair, while Peter ultimately trusts in Christ, who alone can save us from guilt and despair. • Oh, let us ever flee to You, Christ, when overwhelmed by our sin! Let us not despair but know the depth of Your mercy. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:11 *governor*. Pontius Pilate (v 2). *King of the Jews?* The Council translated their accusation against Jesus into political terms Pilate could understand. *You have said so*. See note, Mk 15:2.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:12 *no answer*. Jesus did not defend Himself, because He was willing to be crucified.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:11–14 Jesus silently listens to His accusers. His silence leads to His condemnation, but also to our forgiveness. When foes accuse you, curb your tongue. Loose your tongue in prayer to the One who takes away your sin. • Thank You, dearest Jesus, for Your silence before Your accusers and Your sacrifice for us. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:15 *feast*. Passover. *accustomed to release*. As a favor to those Pilate governed, he usually released one prisoner every year.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:16 *Barabbas*. See note, Lk 23:19.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:17 *Jesus who is called Christ?* See note, Php 2:11.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:18 Pilate hoped the crowd's decency would lead them to ask for a man they did not like (Jesus) instead of one who had committed serious crimes (Barabbas).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:19 *judgment seat*. Bench, often outdoors, where the presiding judge sat. Cf Ac 18:12. People could gather around the judge (Jos, *War* 2:175). See note, Ac 25:6. *his wife … dream*. Pilate's wife, like the Wise Men and Joseph (2:12–13), was warned in a dream. This Gentile woman sees what the chief priests and the crowd could not see. See p 74.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:20 *chief priests … elders*. See p 1556. *crowd*. Probably a mob formed by people employed in the temple and under the

chief priests' sway. They are to be distinguished from the majority of people in Jerusalem, who may have been more sympathetic to Jesus; see notes, 26:5; Lk 23:27. *destroy*. Kill Him and obliterate His movement.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:22 *Let Him be crucified!* See note, Mk 15:13.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:15–23 The crowd chooses to release Barabbas instead of Jesus. They prefer the sinful ways of Barabbas and seek to crucify their true Lord. Just as the Lord's ways disturbed and threatened the people of Jerusalem, His ways disrupt our self-security. The silent Lamb of God would lead us away from the ways of the world to walk in His ways. He was condemned to death, that we might go freely into His kingdom. • Thank You, Lord, that You did not choose freedom for Yourself but life for me. Amen.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:24 *riot*. Pilate gave the crowd what they wanted rather than risk their displeasure. *washed his hands*. Symbol of innocence used by both Jews and Gentiles. *innocent*. Pilate recognized that he was putting an innocent man to death and did not want to be held guilty for this miscarriage of justice. *see to it yourselves*. Pilate will crucify Jesus, but he puts the blame on the mob.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:25 If Pilate hesitates to accept responsibility for his role in Christ's death, the mob does not. However, this is a mob of temple partisans, not a representative sample of the Jewish people; the temple crowd bears the responsibility, not all Jews. Rather than simply blaming the Jews, the apostles proclaimed the Gospel to them, and even to those who had called for Jesus' death (cf Ac 3:17).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:26 *scourged … crucified*. See p 1178.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:24–26 Pilate condemns Jesus to death while he seeks to absolve himself of responsibility for it. No matter how a sinner tries to evade responsibility for sin, he cannot wash himself of it. Thanks be to God that Christ took responsibility for the sins of the whole world and let Himself be crucified for our sakes. • I am guilty, Lord; grant me Your forgiveness and a new heart. Amen.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:27 *soldiers of the governor*. Pilate's Roman soldiers now take over; the temple guard had previously arrested Jesus (Jn 18:3). *governor's headquarters*. The crowd had previously stood outside of the building (cf Jn 18:28).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:28 *stripped*. Clothing that had been put on Jesus after His scourging was removed. *scarlet robe*. Most likely a soldier's

cape; this color was also used by royalty. Cf Mk 15:17; Jn 19:2; dye baths can yield different hues from the same dye materials, depending on their strength, quality, mordant, and the receptivity of the fabrics being treated. The different terms for hues are likely a reflection of this trade issue. See p 141.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:29 *crown of thorns*. See note, Mk 15:17. *reed in His right hand*. Mock scepter, symbol of royal power. *mocked*. They honored Christ as King, but only in sport.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:30 *spit*. Cf 26:67–68; Is 50:6.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:27–31 Jesus is mocked as a false king by the Roman soldiers. They despise His weakness, but it is the way that He would win His kingdom—He will redeem the world and win His subjects on the cross. How different are the Lord's ways by which He rescues us! • Hail, O true King of the Jews and of all the world. I confess You as my King. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:32 *Cyrene*. City in Libya on the northeast coast of Africa. *Simon*. Common Jewish name. *carry His cross*. After His scourging, Jesus was unable to carry the heavy crossbeam, so the Romans pressed Simon into carrying it.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:33 *Place of a Skull*. Aram; so called because people were crucified there or because of the shape of the rock.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:34 *gall*. Bitter substance made from plants; perhaps a narcotic or even poisonous, here mixed with wine. *He would not drink it*. Christ would not lessen the pain until all was finished (cf Jn 19:28).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:35 *crucified Him*. Nailed Him to the cross. *casting lots*. They gambled as a way to divide His clothes. See note, Jsh 14:2.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:36 *kept watch*. Implies that they knew Jesus was no ordinary prisoner facing execution. They still feared the crowds who had followed Him.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:37 *charge*. Placard explaining the reason for His execution.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:38 *robbers were crucified*. See note, Mk 15:27.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:39 *derided Him, wagging their heads*. Gesture of scorn. The whole Passion evokes Ps 22.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:40 *save Yourself!* Christ's mockers assume that one with divine powers would use it to save Himself. *If You are the Son of God*. See note, Lk 4:3.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:41 *chief priests … scribes … elders*. See pp 1556–57.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:42 *King of Israel*. Jews used this title for the Messiah rather than "King of the Jews." *we will believe in Him*. A mocking claim. Most likely, they would still have refused to trust in Him.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:43 *He said, "I am the Son of God."* Cf 26:63–64.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:44 Mt emphasizes that even those executed used their last breaths to mock Jesus. Lk 23:39–41 clarifies that one robber repented of his sin.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:32–44 Jesus is crucified and reviled on every hand. Here we see the full depth of our sin: the pain of the cross and the reviling of the whole world is what we deserve. But we also see the full depth of God's mercy in that He willingly submitted Himself to this torture for our sakes. • Grant, O God, that I boast in nothing but in the cross of Your Son. Amen.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:45 See p 1567. *darkness*. Sign of sorrow and judgment (Jl 2:2; Am 8:9).
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:46 Poignantly portrays the separation of Christ from His Father. However, see also "Jesus' Human Nature," p 2237. *loud voice*. Cry of pain and loneliness. *Eli, Eli*. Hbr. *lema sabachthani?* Aram.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:47 *calling Elijah*. "Eli" sounds similar to "Elijah."
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:48 *sour wine*. Cheap beverage that quenched thirst quickly.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:49 *others*. Probably Jews passing by. Crucifixions typically took place along a roadway to inspire fear in would-be criminals.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:50 *loud voice*. See note, v 46. *yielded up His spirit*. He died.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:51–53 Earthquakes were often associated with manifestations of God. Moreover, they were considered a sign of the end

and the final judgment. The destruction of the temple's veil and the resurrection of the dead also point forward to the end.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:51 *curtain of the temple*. See notes, Ex 30:6; Mk 15:38; Lk 23:45.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:52–53 *bodies of the saints … coming out*. Their resurrection demonstrated the purpose of Christ's death: to bring eternal life to those doomed to die.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:53 *holy city*. Jerusalem.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:54 *centurion*. See note, 8:5. *Truly this was the Son of God!* Gentile centurion sensed what the unbelieving leaders of Israel did not.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:55 *women*. See note, Lk 8:2–3.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:56 *Mary Magdalene*. She had followed Christ ever since He expelled seven demons from her (Lk 8:2). *Mary … Joseph*. Possibly Mary the wife of Clopas (Mk 15:40; Jn 19:25), a sister to Mary the mother of Jesus. *mother … Zebedee*. Mother of James and John. See note, Mk 1:19.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:45–56 After Jesus cries in agony at His abandonment, He dies. His death is followed by supernatural signs. His cry shows the abandonment that we should have experienced. But by His death, He destroyed the power of death and removed the barrier that separated us from God. • We praise You, O Christ, and we bless You. By Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world. Amen.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:57 *Arimathea*. City in Judah; exact location unknown. *disciple of Jesus*. See note, Jn 19:38.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:58 *asked for the body*. See note, Mk 15:43.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:59 Burial customs included anointing the corpse with spices and wrapping it in a shroud.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:60 *tomb … cut in the rock*. Graves were often hollowed-out clefts in a rock. See p 1651. *great stone*. Disk-shaped and several feet in diameter, it was thick enough to keep out animals. It was rolled in a hewn channel to seal off the tomb's entrance and would require several men to move it.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:61 See note, Mk 15:47.
MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:57–61 Jesus is buried. By sharing our human grave, He sanctifies our tombs and makes them places where our bodies can rest, confident in the resurrection. Honor the faithfully departed

by remembering their graves and by praying for their families. As Christ burst from His tomb, so shall He raise all the dead on the Last Day. • Thank You, Lord, for the life and sacrifice of others and for the certain hope of the resurrection. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:62 *after the day of Preparation*. The Sabbath. *chief priests … Pharisees*. See pp 1556–57.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:63 *that impostor*. Jesus' enemies did not understand who He was. *After three days I will rise*. Jesus had foretold His resurrection to the Pharisees (12:40), who ironically paid more attention to His words than did the disciples.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:64–66 Chief priests request a guard from Pilate, but he tells them to use their temple guards to make the tomb as secure as possible. Ironically, these guards are among the first human witnesses of the resurrection. See note, Lk 24:9; see also diagram, p 1823.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 27:62–66 The chief priests and their allies secure Jesus' tomb to prevent a faked resurrection. Their act, done out of unbelief, will ironically give them compelling evidence for the resurrection. Christ permits this to happen so His disciples could be confident that His resurrection was no hoax, but fact. • Living Lord, You triumphed over all Your enemies. Be with us always and deliver us. Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 28:1 *after the Sabbath … first day*. Early Sunday morning. *Mary Magdalene*. See note, Lk 8:2–3. *other Mary*. Presumably "Mary the mother of James and Joseph" (27:56).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 28:2 The angel opens the tomb, but Christ has already risen. *sat on it*. Resting; symbolizing Christ's victory over death.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 28:3 His face was bright, causing his garments also to be brilliant.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 28:4 *became like dead men*. Fainted or collapsed.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 28:6 *He has risen, as He said*. Cf 16:21; 17:23; 20:19. *see the place*. This proves the angel's testimony.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 28:7 *tell His disciples*. The 11 remaining disciples. *See, I have told you*. The angel emphasizes his trustworthiness.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 28:8 They were still frightened, but glad at the news. See note, Mk 16:8.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 28:9 *Jesus met them*. The women saw more than the empty tomb that morning; they saw the risen Christ Himself. *took hold*

of His feet. Sign of homage. *worshiped*. They bowed before their Lord. Cf 2:2; see p 1276.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 28:10 *afraid*. As earlier (cf vv 5, 8), the women are awed by the events. *brothers*. Jesus still refers to His disciples as family (12:48–50; 25:40). See p 1901.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 28:1–10 The women see the empty tomb and the angel, who proclaims that Christ has risen. Though Christ's resurrection terrifies His enemies, such as the guards at the tomb, it brings great joy to His followers. Rejoice today in His resurrection and pray for His reappearing. • Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia! Amen.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 28:11 *city*. Jerusalem.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 28:12 *assembled*. As in 26:3–4, it may not have been a full meeting of the Council. *a sufficient sum*. Amount unclear.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 28:13–15 Story concocted by the chief priests does not work. How would the soldiers know that the disciples came if they had been sleeping? How could they not have heard the door of the tomb being opened? But the story was enough to convince those who wanted to reject Jesus. See note, 27:64–66.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 28:11–15 The guards report Christ's resurrection to the authorities, but the authorities prefer to create and spread a lie. Though many have been deceived over the centuries, the Good News of Christ's resurrection has triumphed over the skepticism of Christianity's critics. • "Jesus lives! The vict'ry's won! Death no longer can appall me; Jesus lives! Death's reign is done! From the grave will Christ recall me. Brighter scenes will then commence; This shall be my confidence." Amen. (*LSB* 490:1)

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 28:16 *eleven disciples*. The Twelve minus Judas. *mountain*. Location unknown. Traditionally thought to be the Mount of Transfiguration.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 28:17 *worshiped*. Cf 2:2; 28:9. *some doubted*. Though not in rank unbelief, they had a hard time absorbing the events that had transpired. Cf Lk 24:38.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 28:18–20 Though all God's people are to bear witness to the Lord (cf Ps 145; Is 43:10), the focus here is on the apostles and their calling as leading witnesses and representatives of Jesus. (Compare to the authorization in Mt 10:1–7.)

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 28:18 *All authority*. Christ's human nature, which had refrained from exercising the divine authority belonging to the person of Christ, now is fully exalted and given free use of divine authority (cf v 19). "He can also powerfully effect and do everything that He says and promises" (FC SD VII 43). "The Church's authority and the State's authority must not be confused. The Church's authority has its own commission to teach the Gospel and to administer the Sacraments [Matthew 28:19–20]. Let it not break into the office of another. Let it not transfer the kingdoms of this world to itself. Let it not abolish the laws of civil rulers. Let it not abolish lawful obedience" (AC XXVIII 12–13).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 28:19 *make disciples*. See note, 5:1. Jesus gives us the tools to make disciples: Baptism and His teaching. *all nations*. Not just the Jews, but Gentiles too (cf 10:5–6). *baptizing them in the name*. "Name" is singular, followed by the threefold naming of the divine persons. This illustrates the doctrine of the Holy Trinity. See p 1815. Those baptized in the name of the Father have God as their Father; baptized in the name of the Son, they receive all the benefits of the Son's redeeming act; baptized in the name of the Spirit, they receive the life-giving, life-sustaining power and presence of the Spirit. Christian Baptism is founded on this institution. See note, Nu 6:22–27. *baptizing*. Washing with the water of new birth. "Baptism is no human plaything, but it is instituted by God Himself" (LC IV 6). "It is necessary to baptize little children, that the promise of salvation may be applied to them, according to Christ's command to baptize all nations (Matthew 28:19). Just as in this passage salvation is offered to all, so Baptism is offered to all, to men, women, children, infants. It clearly follows, therefore, that infants are to be baptized, because salvation is offered with Baptism" (Ap IX 52).

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 28:20 *teaching*. Disciples are made not only through Baptism, but through the ongoing catechetical work of the Church. *observe all*. Christians are called to do more than "obey"; they are called to treasure God's Word in their hearts. *commanded*. Not only Christ's moral injunctions (the Law) but also His invitation to trust in Him (the Gospel). *I am with you always*. Not only in Spirit but also according to His human nature. See "be with," p 5. "He is present especially in His Church and congregation on earth as Mediator, Head, King, and High Priest. This presence is not a part, or only one half of Him. Christ's entire person is

present, to which both natures belong, the divine and the human—not only according to His divinity, but also according to, and with, His received human nature" (FC SD VIII 78). *end of the age*. When He returns visibly.

MATTHEW—NOTE ON 28:16–20 Christ commissions His disciples to go and make disciples of all nations through Baptism and teaching. Christ promises to be with us, and He is the one who makes disciples through our baptizing and teaching. Today, remember your Baptism and confirmation in the faith, which are precious blessings for the Lord's disciples. His love and care are new for you every morning. • Send us, Lord, to make disciples in Your name in accordance with our callings in life. Amen.

Mark

Mark 1 | Mark 2 | Mark 3 | Mark 4 | Mark 5 | Mark 6 | Mark 7 | Mark 8 | Mark 9 | Mark 10 | Mark 11 | Mark 12 | Mark 13 | Mark 14 | Mark 15 | Mark 16

- Introduction to Mark
  - Overview
  - Reading Mark
  - Luther on Mark
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

John the Baptist Prepares the Way

1 [1]†† The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.[1]
[2]†† As it is written in Isaiah the prophet,[2]

"Behold, I send my messenger before your
face,
who will prepare your way,
[3]† the voice of one crying in the wilderness:
'Prepare[3] the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight,'"

[4]† John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. [5]† And all the country of Judea and all Jerusalem were going out to him and were being baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. [6]† Now John was clothed with camel's hair and wore a leather belt around his waist and ate locusts and wild honey. [7]† And he preached, saying, "After me comes he who is mightier than I, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. [8]† I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

The Baptism of Jesus

9 ††In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized
by John in the Jordan. 10 † And when he came up out of the water,
immediately he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending
on him like a dove. 11 †And a voice came from heaven, “You are my beloved
Son;[4] with you I am well pleased.”

The Temptation of Jesus

12 The Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. 13 And he
was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan. And he was with
the wild animals, and the angels were ministering to him.

Jesus Begins His Ministry

14 ‡ † Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming
the gospel of God, 15 † and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of
God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.”

Jesus Calls the First Disciples

16 ‡† Passing alongside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew the
brother of Simon casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. 17 † And
Jesus said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you become fishers of
men.” 18 † And immediately they left their nets and followed him. 19 † And
going on a little farther, he saw James the son of Zebedee and John his
brother, who were in their boat mending the nets. 20 † And immediately he
called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired
servants and followed him.

Jesus Heals a Man with an Unclean Spirit

[21] And they went into Capernaum, and immediately on the Sabbath he
entered the synagogue and was teaching. [22] And they were astonished at his
teaching, for he taught them as one who had authority, and not as the
scribes. [23] And immediately there was in their synagogue a man with an
unclean spirit. And he cried out, [24] "What have you to do with us, Jesus of
Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy
One of God." [25] But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent, and come out of
him!" [26] And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying out with a loud
voice, came out of him. [27] And they were all amazed, so that they
questioned among themselves, saying, "What is this? A new teaching with
authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him."
[28] And at once his fame spread everywhere throughout all the surrounding
region of Galilee.

Jesus Heals Many

29 ‡ † And immediately he[1] left the synagogue and entered the house of
Simon and Andrew, with James and John. 30 † Now Simon's mother-in-law
lay ill with a fever, and immediately they told him about her. 31 † And he
came and took her by the hand and lifted her up, and the fever left her, and
she began to serve them.

32 † That evening at sundown they brought to him all who were sick or
oppressed by demons. 33 † And the whole city was gathered together at the
door. 34 † And he healed many who were sick with various diseases, and cast
out many demons. And he would not permit the demons to speak, because
they knew him.

Jesus Preaches in Galilee

35 ✝ ✝ And rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark, he
departed and went out to a desolate place, and there he prayed. 36 And Simon
and those who were with him searched for him, 37 and they found him and
said to him, “Everyone is looking for you.” 38 ✝ And he said to them, “Let us
go on to the next towns, that I may preach there also, for that is why I came
out.” 39 And he went throughout all Galilee, preaching in their synagogues
and casting out demons.

Jesus Cleanses a Leper

40 And a leper[2] came to him, imploring him, and kneeling said to him,
“If you will, you can make me clean.” 41 Moved with pity, he stretched out
his hand and touched him and said to him, “I will; be clean.” 42 And
immediately the leprosy left him, and he was made clean. 43 And Jesus[1]
sternly charged him and sent him away at once, 44 and said to him, “See that
you say nothing to anyone, but go, show yourself to the priest and offer for
your cleansing what Moses commanded, for a proof to them.” 45 But he
went out and began to talk freely about it, and to spread the news, so that
Jesus could no longer openly enter a town, but was out in desolate places,
and people were coming to him from every quarter.

Jesus Heals a Paralytic

2 [1]†‡†And when he returned to Capernaum after some days, it was reported that he was at home. [2]And many were gathered together, so that there was no more room, not even at the door. And he was preaching the word to them. [3]†And they came, bringing to him a paralytic carried by four men. [4]†And when they could not get near him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him, and when they had made an opening, they let down the bed on which the paralytic lay. [5]†And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven." [6]†Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, [7]†"Why does this man speak like that? He is blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" [8]†And immediately Jesus, perceiving in his spirit that they thus questioned within themselves, said to them, "Why do you question these things in your hearts? [9]†Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise, take up your bed and walk'? [10]But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"—he said to the paralytic — [11]‡"I say to you, rise, pick up your bed, and go home." [12]†And he rose and immediately picked up his bed and went out before them all, so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything like this!"

Jesus Calls Levi

13 ‡ † He went out again beside the sea, and all the crowd was coming to
him, and he was teaching them. 14 † And as he passed by, he saw Levi the son
of Alphaeus sitting at the tax booth, and he said to him, “Follow me.” And
he rose and followed him.

15 † And as he reclined at table in his house, many tax collectors and
sinners were reclining with Jesus and his disciples, for there were many
who followed him. 16 † And the scribes of[1] the Pharisees, when they saw
that he was eating with sinners and tax collectors, said to his disciples,
“Why does he eat[2] with tax collectors and sinners?” 17 † And when Jesus
heard it, he said to them, “Those who are well have no need of a physician,
but those who are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.”

A Question About Fasting

18 ✝ ✝Now John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting. And people
came and said to him, "Why do John's disciples and the disciples of the
Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?" 19✝And Jesus said to them,
"Can the wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them? As long
as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. 20The days will
come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast
in that day. 21✝No one sews a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old garment. If
he does, the patch tears away from it, the new from the old, and a worse tear
is made. 22And no one puts new wine into old wineskins. If he does, the
wine will burst the skins—and the wine is destroyed, and so are the skins.
But new wine is for fresh wineskins."[3]

Jesus Is Lord of the Sabbath

23 ‡† One Sabbath he was going through the grainfields, and as they made
their way, his disciples began to pluck heads of grain. 24 † And the Pharisees
were saying to him, “Look, why are they doing what is not lawful on the
Sabbath?” 25 ‡ And he said to them, “Have you never read what David did,
when he was in need and was hungry, he and those who were with him:
26 how he entered the house of God, in the time of Abiathar the high priest,
and ate the bread of the Presence, which it is not lawful for any but the
priests to eat, and also gave it to those who were with him?” 27 † And he said
to them, “The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. 28 † So
the Son of Man is lord even of the Sabbath.”

A Man with a Withered Hand

3 [1] ‡† Again he entered the synagogue, and a man was there with a
withered hand. [2] † And they watched Jesus,[1] to see whether he would heal
him on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse him. [3] And he said to the man
with the withered hand, "Come here." [4] † And he said to them, "Is it lawful
on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or to kill?" But they
were silent. [5] † And he looked around at them with anger, grieved at their
hardness of heart, and said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He
stretched it out, and his hand was restored. [6] † The Pharisees went out and
immediately held counsel with the Herodians against him, how to destroy
him.

A Great Crowd Follows Jesus

7 ‡ ‡ Jesus withdrew with his disciples to the sea, and a great crowd
followed, from Galilee and Judea 8 and Jerusalem and Idumea and from
beyond the Jordan and from around Tyre and Sidon. When the great crowd
heard all that he was doing, they came to him. 9 † And he told his disciples to
have a boat ready for him because of the crowd, lest they crush him, 10 † for
he had healed many, so that all who had diseases pressed around him to
touch him. 11 ‡ And whenever the unclean spirits saw him, they fell down
before him and cried out, “You are the Son of God.” 12 And he strictly
ordered them not to make him known.

The Twelve Apostles

13 ‡ † And he went up on the mountain and called to him those whom he
desired, and they came to him. 14 ‡ And he appointed twelve (whom he also
named apostles) so that they might be with him and he might send them out
to preach 15 and have authority to cast out demons. 16 † He appointed the
twelve: Simon (to whom he gave the name Peter); 17 † James the son of
Zebedee and John the brother of James (to whom he gave the name
Boanerges, that is, Sons of Thunder); 18 † Andrew, and Philip, and
Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus,
and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Cananaean, 19 † and Judas Iscariot, who
betrayed him.

20 † Then he went home, and the crowd gathered again, so that they could
not even eat. 21 † And when his family heard it, they went out to seize him,
for they were saying, “He is out of his mind.”

Blasphemy Against the Holy Spirit

22 ‡ † And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem were saying, “He is
possessed by Beelzebul,” and “by the prince of demons he casts out the
demons.” 23 † And he called them to him and said to them in parables, “How
can Satan cast out Satan? 24 If a kingdom is divided against itself, that
kingdom cannot stand. 25 † And if a house is divided against itself, that house
will not be able to stand. 26 And if Satan has risen up against himself and is
divided, he cannot stand, but is coming to an end. 27 † But no one can enter a
strong man’s house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong
man. Then indeed he may plunder his house.
28 † “Truly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the children of man, and
whatever blasphemies they utter, 29 ‡ but whoever blasphemes against the
Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin”— 30 for
they were saying, “He has an unclean spirit.”

Jesus’ Mother and Brothers

31 And his mother and his brothers came, and standing outside they sent
to him and called him. 32 And a crowd was sitting around him, and they
said to him, “Your mother and your brothers[1] are outside, seeking you.”
33 And he answered them, “Who are my mother and my brothers?” 34 And
looking about at those who sat around him, he said, “Here are my mother
and my brothers! 35 For whoever does the will of God, he is my brother and
sister and mother.”

The Parable of the Sower

4 [1]‡‡‡†Again he began to teach beside the sea. And a very large
crowd gathered about him, so that he got into a boat and sat in it on the sea,
and the whole crowd was beside the sea on the land. [2]And he was teaching
them many things in parables, and in his teaching he said to them:
[3]†"Listen! A sower went out to sow. [4]†And as he sowed, some seed fell
along the path, and the birds came and devoured it. [5]‡Other seed fell on
rocky ground, where it did not have much soil, and immediately it sprang
up, since it had no depth of soil. [6]And when the sun rose, it was scorched,
and since it had no root, it withered away. [7]†Other seed fell among thorns,
and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no grain. [8]†And other
seeds fell into good soil and produced grain, growing up and increasing and
yielding thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold." [9]†And he said, "He
who has ears to hear, let him hear."

The Purpose of the Parables

10 And when he was alone, those around him with the twelve asked him
about the parables. 11 And he said to them, "To you has been given the
secret of the kingdom of God, but for those outside everything is in
parables, 12 so that

> "they may indeed see but not perceive,
> and may indeed hear but not understand,
> lest they should turn and be forgiven."

13 And he said to them, "Do you not understand this parable? How then will
you understand all the parables? 14 The sower sows the word. 15 And these
are the ones along the path, where the word is sown: when they hear, Satan
immediately comes and takes away the word that is sown in them. 16 And
these are the ones sown on rocky ground: the ones who, when they hear the
word, immediately receive it with joy. 17 And they have no root in
themselves, but endure for a while; then, when tribulation or persecution
arises on account of the word, immediately they fall away.[1] 18 And others
are the ones sown among thorns. They are those who hear the word, 19 but
the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches and the desires for
other things enter in and choke the word, and it proves unfruitful. 20 But
those that were sown on the good soil are the ones who hear the word and
accept it and bear fruit, thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold."

A Lamp Under a Basket

[21] And he said to them, “Is a lamp brought in to be put under a basket,
or under a bed, and not on a stand? [22] For nothing is hidden except to be
made manifest; nor is anything secret except to come to light. [23] If anyone
has ears to hear, let him hear.” [24] And he said to them, “Pay attention to
what you hear: with the measure you use, it will be measured to you, and
still more will be added to you. [25] For to the one who has, more will be
given, and from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away.”

The Parable of the Seed Growing

[26] ‡ ‡ ‡ And he said, “The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter
seed on the ground. [27] † He sleeps and rises night and day, and the seed
sprouts and grows; he knows not how. [28] † The earth produces by itself, first
the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. [29] † But when the grain is
ripe, at once he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come.”

The Parable of the Mustard Seed

30 ‡ † And he said, “With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or
what parable shall we use for it? 31 † It is like a grain of mustard seed, which,
when sown on the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth, 32 † yet
when it is sown it grows up and becomes larger than all the garden plants
and puts out large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its
shade.”

33 † With many such parables he spoke the word to them, as they were able
to hear it. 34 † He did not speak to them without a parable, but privately to his
own disciples he explained everything.

Jesus Calms a Storm

35 ‡ † On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, “Let us go
across to the other side.” 36 † And leaving the crowd, they took him with
them in the boat, just as he was. And other boats were with him. 37 † And a
great windstorm arose, and the waves were breaking into the boat, so that
the boat was already filling. 38 † But he was in the stern, asleep on the
cushion. And they woke him and said to him, “Teacher, do you not care that
we are perishing?” 39 † And he awoke and rebuked the wind and said to the
sea, “Peace! Be still!” And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.
40 † He said to them, “Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?”
41 † And they were filled with great fear and said to one another, “Who then
is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?”

Jesus Heals a Man with a Demon

5 [1]†‡†They came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gerasenes.[1] [2]†And when Jesus[2] had stepped out of the boat, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit. [3]He lived among the tombs. And no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain, [4]† for he had often been bound with shackles and chains, but he wrenched the chains apart, and he broke the shackles in pieces. No one had the strength to subdue him. [5]†Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains he was always crying out and cutting himself with stones. [6]And when he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and fell down before him. [7]† And crying out with a loud voice, he said, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I adjure you by God, do not torment me." [8]For he was saying to him, "Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!" [9]†And Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" He replied, "My name is Legion, for we are many." [10]†And he begged him earnestly not to send them out of the country. [11]‡Now a great herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside, [12]† and they begged him, saying, "Send us to the pigs; let us enter them." [13]† So he gave them permission. And the unclean spirits came out, and entered the pigs, and the herd, numbering about two thousand, rushed down the steep bank into the sea and were drowned in the sea.

[14]† The herdsmen fled and told it in the city and in the country. And people came to see what it was that had happened. [15]†And they came to Jesus and saw the demon-possessed[1] man, the one who had had the legion, sitting there, clothed and in his right mind, and they were afraid. [16]And those who had seen it described to them what had happened to the demon-possessed man and to the pigs. [17]†And they began to beg Jesus[2] to depart from their region. [18]As he was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed with demons begged him that he might be with him. [19]‡And he did not permit him but said to him, "Go home to your friends and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you." [20]And he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him, and everyone marveled.

Jesus Heals a Woman and Jairus's Daughter

21 ‡ ‡And when Jesus had crossed again in the boat to the other side, a
great crowd gathered about him, and he was beside the sea. 22 †Then came
one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name, and seeing him, he fell
at his feet 23 †and implored him earnestly, saying, "My little daughter is at
the point of death. Come and lay your hands on her, so that she may be
made well and live." 24 ‡And he went with him.

And a great crowd followed him and thronged about him. 25 †And there
was a woman who had had a discharge of blood for twelve years, 26 †and
who had suffered much under many physicians, and had spent all that she
had, and was no better but rather grew worse. 27 †She had heard the reports
about Jesus and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his garment.
28 For she said, "If I touch even his garments, I will be made well." 29 †And
immediately the flow of blood dried up, and she felt in her body that she
was healed of her disease. 30 ‡And Jesus, perceiving in himself that power
had gone out from him, immediately turned about in the crowd and said,
"Who touched my garments?" 31 And his disciples said to him, "You see the
crowd pressing around you, and yet you say, 'Who touched me?'" 32 And he
looked around to see who had done it. 33 †But the woman, knowing what
had happened to her, came in fear and trembling and fell down before him
and told him the whole truth. 34 †And he said to her, "Daughter, your faith
has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease."

35 †While he was still speaking, there came from the ruler's house some
who said, "Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the Teacher any further?"
36 But overhearing[3] what they said, Jesus said to the ruler of the synagogue,
"Do not fear, only believe." 37 ‡And he allowed no one to follow him except
Peter and James and John the brother of James. 38 They came to the house of
the ruler of the synagogue, and Jesus[1] saw a commotion, people weeping
and wailing loudly. 39 †And when he had entered, he said to them, "Why are
you making a commotion and weeping? The child is not dead but sleeping."
40 †And they laughed at him. But he put them all outside and took the child's
father and mother and those who were with him and went in where the child

was. [41]†Taking her by the hand he said to her, “Talitha cumi,” which means, “Little girl, I say to you, arise.” [42]And immediately the girl got up and began walking (for she was twelve years of age), and they were immediately overcome with amazement. [43]† And he strictly charged them that no one should know this, and told them to give her something to eat.

Jesus Rejected at Nazareth

6 [1] ‡ † He went away from there and came to his hometown, and his
disciples followed him. [2] † And on the Sabbath he began to teach in the
synagogue, and many who heard him were astonished, saying, “Where did
this man get these things? What is the wisdom given to him? How are such
mighty works done by his hands? [3] † Is not this the carpenter, the son of
Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? And are not his
sisters here with us?” And they took offense at him. [4] † And Jesus said to
them, “A prophet is not without honor, except in his hometown and among
his relatives and in his own household.” [5] † And he could do no mighty work
there, except that he laid his hands on a few sick people and healed them.
[6] † And he marveled because of their unbelief.

And he went about among the villages teaching.

Jesus Sends Out the Twelve Apostles

7 ‡† And he called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and
gave them authority over the unclean spirits. 8 ‡ He charged them to take
nothing for their journey except a staff—no bread, no bag, no money in
their belts— 9 but to wear sandals and not put on two tunics.[1] 10 † And he
said to them, “Whenever you enter a house, stay there until you depart from
there. 11 † And if any place will not receive you and they will not listen to
you, when you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony
against them.” 12 † So they went out and proclaimed that people should
repent. 13 † And they cast out many demons and anointed with oil many who
were sick and healed them.

The Death of John the Baptist

14 King Herod heard of it, for Jesus'[2] name had become known.
Some[3] said, "John the Baptist[4] has been raised from the dead. That is why
these miraculous powers are at work in him." 15 But others said, "He is
Elijah." And others said, "He is a prophet, like one of the prophets of old."
16 But when Herod heard of it, he said, "John, whom I beheaded, has been
raised." 17 For it was Herod who had sent and seized John and bound him
in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, because he had
married her. 18 For John had been saying to Herod, "It is not lawful for you
to have your brother's wife." 19 And Herodias had a grudge against him and
wanted to put him to death. But she could not, 20 for Herod feared John,
knowing that he was a righteous and holy man, and he kept him safe. When
he heard him, he was greatly perplexed, and yet he heard him gladly.

21 But an opportunity came when Herod on his birthday gave a banquet
for his nobles and military commanders and the leading men of Galilee.
22 For when Herodias's daughter came in and danced, she pleased Herod
and his guests. And the king said to the girl, "Ask me for whatever you
wish, and I will give it to you." 23 And he vowed to her, "Whatever you ask
me, I will give you, up to half of my kingdom." 24 And she went out and
said to her mother, "For what should I ask?" And she said, "The head of
John the Baptist." 25 And she came in immediately with haste to the king and
asked, saying, "I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist
on a platter." 26 And the king was exceedingly sorry, but because of his
oaths and his guests he did not want to break his word to her. 27 And
immediately the king sent an executioner with orders to bring John's[5] head.
He went and beheaded him in the prison 28 and brought his head on a
platter and gave it to the girl, and the girl gave it to her mother. 29 When his
disciples heard of it, they came and took his body and laid it in a tomb.

Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand

30 ‡† The apostles returned to Jesus and told him all that they had done and
taught. 31 ‡ And he said to them, “Come away by yourselves to a desolate
place and rest a while.” For many were coming and going, and they had no
leisure even to eat. 32 † And they went away in the boat to a desolate place by
themselves. 33 Now many saw them going and recognized them, and they
ran there on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them. 34 † When
he went ashore he saw a great crowd, and he had compassion on them,
because they were like sheep without a shepherd. And he began to teach
them many things. 35 ‡ And when it grew late, his disciples came to him and
said, “This is a desolate place, and the hour is now late. 36 Send them away
to go into the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves
something to eat.” 37 † But he answered them, “You give them something to
eat.” And they said to him, “Shall we go and buy two hundred denarii[1]
worth of bread and give it to them to eat?” 38 † And he said to them, “How
many loaves do you have? Go and see.” And when they had found out, they
said, “Five, and two fish.” 39 † Then he commanded them all to sit down in
groups on the green grass. 40 So they sat down in groups, by hundreds and by
fifties. 41 † And taking the five loaves and the two fish he looked up to
heaven and said a blessing and broke the loaves and gave them to the
disciples to set before the people. And he divided the two fish among them
all. 42 ‡ And they all ate and were satisfied. 43 And they took up twelve
baskets full of broken pieces and of the fish. 44 And those who ate the loaves
were five thousand men.

Jesus Walks on the Water

45 ‡ † Immediately he made his disciples get into the boat and go before
him to the other side, to Bethsaida, while he dismissed the crowd. 46 † And
after he had taken leave of them, he went up on the mountain to pray.
47 † And when evening came, the boat was out on the sea, and he was alone
on the land. 48 † And he saw that they were making headway painfully, for
the wind was against them. And about the fourth watch of the night[2] he
came to them, walking on the sea. He meant to pass by them, 49 ‡ but when
they saw him walking on the sea they thought it was a ghost, and cried out,
50 for they all saw him and were terrified. But immediately he spoke to them
and said, “Take heart; it is I. Do not be afraid.” 51 ‡ And he got into the boat
with them, and the wind ceased. And they were utterly astounded, 52 † for
they did not understand about the loaves, but their hearts were hardened.

Jesus Heals the Sick in Gennesaret

53 ‡ † When they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret and
moored to the shore. 54 † And when they got out of the boat, the people
immediately recognized him 55 ‡ and ran about the whole region and began
to bring the sick people on their beds to wherever they heard he was. 56 And
wherever he came, in villages, cities, or countryside, they laid the sick in
the marketplaces and implored him that they might touch even the fringe of
his garment. And as many as touched it were made well.

Traditions and Commandments

7 [1] ‡ † Now when the Pharisees gathered to him, with some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem, [2] † they saw that some of his disciples ate with hands that were defiled, that is, unwashed. [3] ‡ (For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they wash[1] their hands, holding to the tradition of the elders, [4] and when they come from the marketplace, they do not eat unless they wash.[2] And there are many other traditions that they observe, such as the washing of cups and pots and copper vessels and dining couches.[3]) [5] † And the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, "Why do your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?" [6] ‡ And he said to them, "Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written,

> "'This people honors me with their lips,
> but their heart is far from me;
> [7] in vain do they worship me,
> teaching as doctrines the commandments of
> men.'

[8] † You leave the commandment of God and hold to the tradition of men."

[9] ‡ And he said to them, "You have a fine way of rejecting the commandment of God in order to establish your tradition! [10] For Moses said, 'Honor your father and your mother'; and, 'Whoever reviles father or mother must surely die.' [11] But you say, 'If a man tells his father or his mother, "Whatever you would have gained from me is Corban"' (that is, given to God)[1]— [12] then you no longer permit him to do anything for his father or mother, [13] † thus making void the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down. And many such things you do."

What Defiles a Person

14 And he called the people to him again and said to them, “Hear me, all
of you, and understand: 15 There is nothing outside a person that by going
into him can defile him, but the things that come out of a person are what
defile him.”[2] 17 And when he had entered the house and left the people, his
disciples asked him about the parable. 18 And he said to them, “Then are
you also without understanding? Do you not see that whatever goes into a
person from outside cannot defile him, 19 since it enters not his heart but his
stomach, and is expelled?”[3] (Thus he declared all foods clean.) 20 And he
said, “What comes out of a person is what defiles him. 21 For from within,
out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft,
murder, adultery, 22 coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander,
pride, foolishness. 23 All these evil things come from within, and they defile
a person.”

The Syrophoenician Woman's Faith

24 ‡ † And from there he arose and went away to the region of Tyre and
Sidon.[4] And he entered a house and did not want anyone to know, yet he
could not be hidden. 25 But immediately a woman whose little daughter had
an unclean spirit heard of him and came and fell down at his feet. 26 † Now
the woman was a Gentile, a Syrophoenician by birth. And she begged him
to cast the demon out of her daughter. 27 † And he said to her, "Let the
children be fed first, for it is not right to take the children's bread and throw
it to the dogs." 28 † But she answered him, "Yes, Lord; yet even the dogs
under the table eat the children's crumbs." 29 ‡ And he said to her, "For this
statement you may go your way; the demon has left your daughter." 30 And
she went home and found the child lying in bed and the demon gone.

Jesus Heals a Deaf Man

31 ‡† Then he returned from the region of Tyre and went through Sidon to
the Sea of Galilee, in the region of the Decapolis. 32 † And they brought to
him a man who was deaf and had a speech impediment, and they begged
him to lay his hand on him. 33 † And taking him aside from the crowd
privately, he put his fingers into his ears, and after spitting touched his
tongue. 34 ‡ And looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to him,
"Ephphatha," that is, "Be opened." 35 And his ears were opened, his tongue
was released, and he spoke plainly. 36 † And Jesus[1] charged them to tell no
one. But the more he charged them, the more zealously they proclaimed it.
37 † And they were astonished beyond measure, saying, "He has done all
things well. He even makes the deaf hear and the mute speak."

Jesus Feeds the Four Thousand

8 [1]‡†In those days, when again a great crowd had gathered, and they had nothing to eat, he called his disciples to him and said to them, [2]†“I have compassion on the crowd, because they have been with me now three days and have nothing to eat. [3]†And if I send them away hungry to their homes, they will faint on the way. And some of them have come from far away.” [4]† And his disciples answered him, “How can one feed these people with bread here in this desolate place?” [5]‡ And he asked them, “How many loaves do you have?” They said, “Seven.” [6]† And he directed the crowd to sit down on the ground. And he took the seven loaves, and having given thanks, he broke them and gave them to his disciples to set before the people; and they set them before the crowd. [7]† And they had a few small fish. And having blessed them, he said that these also should be set before them. [8]† And they ate and were satisfied. And they took up the broken pieces left over, seven baskets full. [9]And there were about four thousand people. And he sent them away. [10]† And immediately he got into the boat with his disciples and went to the district of Dalmanutha.[2]

The Pharisees Demand a Sign

11 The Pharisees came and began to argue with him, seeking from him a
sign from heaven to test him. 12 And he sighed deeply in his spirit and said,
"Why does this generation seek a sign? Truly, I say to you, no sign will be
given to this generation." 13 And he left them, got into the boat again, and
went to the other side.

The Leaven of the Pharisees and Herod

14 ‡‡Now they had forgotten to bring bread, and they had only one loaf
with them in the boat. 15 †And he cautioned them, saying, “Watch out;
beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod.”[1] 16 †And
they began discussing with one another the fact that they had no bread.
17 ‡†And Jesus, aware of this, said to them, “Why are you discussing the fact
that you have no bread? Do you not yet perceive or understand? Are your
hearts hardened? 18 Having eyes do you not see, and having ears do you not
hear? And do you not remember? 19 When I broke the five loaves for the five
thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you take up?” They
said to him, “Twelve.” 20 “And the seven for the four thousand, how many
baskets full of broken pieces did you take up?” And they said to him,
“Seven.” 21 †And he said to them, “Do you not yet understand?”

Jesus Heals a Blind Man at Bethsaida

22 ††And they came to Bethsaida. And some people brought to him a blind
man and begged him to touch him. 23 †And he took the blind man by the
hand and led him out of the village, and when he had spit on his eyes and
laid his hands on him, he asked him, “Do you see anything?” 24 †And he
looked up and said, “I see men, but they look like trees, walking.” 25 †Then
Jesus[2] laid his hands on his eyes again; and he opened his eyes, his sight
was restored, and he saw everything clearly. 26 †And he sent him to his
home, saying, “Do not even enter the village.”

Peter Confesses Jesus as the Christ

27 ✝ ✝ And Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea
Philippi. And on the way he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that I
am?” 28 ✝ And they told him, “John the Baptist; and others say, Elijah; and
others, one of the prophets.” 29 ✝ And he asked them, “But who do you say
that I am?” Peter answered him, “You are the Christ.” 30 ✝ And he strictly
charged them to tell no one about him.

Jesus Foretells His Death and Resurrection

31 ‡ † And he began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many
things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and
be killed, and after three days rise again. 32 † And he said this plainly. And
Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. 33 † But turning and seeing his
disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are
not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man."
34 ‡ † And calling the crowd to him with his disciples, he said to them, "If
anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross
and follow me. 35 † For whoever would save his life[1] will lose it, but
whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it. 36 ‡ For what
does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? 37 For what
can a man give in return for his soul? 38 † For whoever is ashamed of me and
of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of
Man also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the
holy angels."

9 1 † And he said to them, "Truly, I say to you, there are some standing
here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God after it has
come with power."

The Transfiguration

2 ††And after six days Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and
led them up a high mountain by themselves. And he was transfigured before
them, 3 †and his clothes became radiant, intensely white, as no one[2] on
earth could bleach them. 4 †And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses,
and they were talking with Jesus. 5 †And Peter said to Jesus, "Rabbi,[3] it is
good that we are here. Let us make three tents, one for you and one for
Moses and one for Elijah." 6 †For he did not know what to say, for they were
terrified. 7 †And a cloud overshadowed them, and a voice came out of the
cloud, "This is my beloved Son;[1] listen to him." 8 And suddenly, looking
around, they no longer saw anyone with them but Jesus only.

9 †And as they were coming down the mountain, he charged them to tell
no one what they had seen, until the Son of Man had risen from the dead.
10 †So they kept the matter to themselves, questioning what this rising from
the dead might mean. 11 †And they asked him, "Why do the scribes say that
first Elijah must come?" 12 †And he said to them, "Elijah does come first to
restore all things. And how is it written of the Son of Man that he should
suffer many things and be treated with contempt? 13 †But I tell you that
Elijah has come, and they did to him whatever they pleased, as it is written
of him."

Jesus Heals a Boy with an Unclean Spirit

14 ‡ † And when they came to the disciples, they saw a great crowd around
them, and scribes arguing with them. 15 And immediately all the crowd,
when they saw him, were greatly amazed and ran up to him and greeted
him. 16 And he asked them, “What are you arguing about with them?”
17 † And someone from the crowd answered him, “Teacher, I brought my son
to you, for he has a spirit that makes him mute. 18 † And whenever it seizes
him, it throws him down, and he foams and grinds his teeth and becomes
rigid. So I asked your disciples to cast it out, and they were not able.”
19 † And he answered them, “O faithless generation, how long am I to be
with you? How long am I to bear with you? Bring him to me.” 20 And they
brought the boy to him. And when the spirit saw him, immediately it
convulsed the boy, and he fell on the ground and rolled about, foaming at
the mouth. 21 † And Jesus asked his father, “How long has this been
happening to him?” And he said, “From childhood. 22 † And it has often cast
him into fire and into water, to destroy him. But if you can do anything,
have compassion on us and help us.” 23 † And Jesus said to him, “‘If you
can’! All things are possible for one who believes.” 24 † Immediately the
father of the child cried out[2] and said, “I believe; help my unbelief!”
25 ‡ † And when Jesus saw that a crowd came running together, he rebuked
the unclean spirit, saying to it, “You mute and deaf spirit, I command you,
come out of him and never enter him again.” 26 And after crying out and
convulsing him terribly, it came out, and the boy was like a corpse, so that
most of them said, “He is dead.” 27 But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted
him up, and he arose. 28 † And when he had entered the house, his disciples
asked him privately, “Why could we not cast it out?” 29 † And he said to
them, “This kind cannot be driven out by anything but prayer.”[1]

Jesus Again Foretells Death, Resurrection

[30] They went on from there and passed through Galilee. And he did not
want anyone to know, [31] for he was teaching his disciples, saying to them,
"The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men, and they
will kill him. And when he is killed, after three days he will rise." [32] But they
did not understand the saying, and were afraid to ask him.

Who Is the Greatest?

[33] ‡ † And they came to Capernaum. And when he was in the house he asked them, “What were you discussing on the way?” [34] † But they kept silent, for on the way they had argued with one another about who was the greatest. [35] † And he sat down and called the twelve. And he said to them, “If anyone would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all.” [36] And he took a child and put him in the midst of them, and taking him in his arms, he said to them, [37] † “Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, and whoever receives me, receives not me but him who sent me.”

Anyone Not Against Us Is for Us

38 ‡ ‡John said to him, “Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in
your name,[2] and we tried to stop him, because he was not following us.”
39 ‡But Jesus said, “Do not stop him, for no one who does a mighty work in
my name will be able soon afterward to speak evil of me. 40For the one who
is not against us is for us. 41 ‡For truly, I say to you, whoever gives you a
cup of water to drink because you belong to Christ will by no means lose
his reward.

Temptations to Sin

42 ‡‡“Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin,[3] it
would be better for him if a great millstone were hung around his neck and
he were thrown into the sea. 43 †And if your hand causes you to sin, cut it
off. It is better for you to enter life crippled than with two hands to go to
hell,[4] to the unquenchable fire.[5] 45 And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it
off. It is better for you to enter life lame than with two feet to be thrown into
hell. 47 †And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out. It is better for you to
enter the kingdom of God with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown
into hell, 48 †‘where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched.’
49 †For everyone will be salted with fire.[1] 50 †Salt is good, but if the salt has
lost its saltiness, how will you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves,
and be at peace with one another.”

Teaching About Divorce

10 [1]And he left there and went to the region of Judea and beyond
the Jordan, and crowds gathered to him again. And again, as was his
custom, he taught them.
[2]And Pharisees came up and in order to test him asked, “Is it lawful for
a man to divorce his wife?” [3]He answered them, “What did Moses
command you?” [4]They said, “Moses allowed a man to write a certificate of
divorce and to send her away.” [5]And Jesus said to them, “Because of your
hardness of heart he wrote you this commandment. [6] But from the
beginning of creation, ‘God made them male and female.’ [7]‘Therefore a
man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife,[2] [8]and the
two shall become one flesh.’ So they are no longer two but one flesh. [9]What
therefore God has joined together, let not man separate.”
[10]And in the house the disciples asked him again about this matter.
[11]And he said to them, “Whoever divorces his wife and marries another
commits adultery against her, [12]and if she divorces her husband and marries
another, she commits adultery.”

Let the Children Come to Me

[13] ‡ † And they were bringing children to him that he might touch them,
and the disciples rebuked them. [14] † But when Jesus saw it, he was indignant
and said to them, “Let the children come to me; do not hinder them, for to
such belongs the kingdom of God. [15] † Truly, I say to you, whoever does not
receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it.” [16] † And he took
them in his arms and blessed them, laying his hands on them.

The Rich Young Man

17 ‡ † And as he was setting out on his journey, a man ran up and knelt
before him and asked him, “Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal
life?” 18 † And Jesus said to him, “Why do you call me good? No one is good
except God alone. 19 † You know the commandments: ‘Do not murder, Do
not commit adultery, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Do not
defraud, Honor your father and mother.’” 20 And he said to him, “Teacher, all
these I have kept from my youth.” 21 † And Jesus, looking at him, loved him,
and said to him, “You lack one thing: go, sell all that you have and give to
the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.”
22 Disheartened by the saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great
possessions.

23 And Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, “How difficult it will
be for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!” 24 ‡ † And the
disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said to them again,
“Children, how difficult it is[1] to enter the kingdom of God! 25 † It is easier
for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter
the kingdom of God.” 26 † And they were exceedingly astonished, and said to
him,[2] “Then who can be saved?” 27 † Jesus looked at them and said, “With
man it is impossible, but not with God. For all things are possible with
God.” 28 † Peter began to say to him, “See, we have left everything and
followed you.” 29 † Jesus said, “Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has
left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands, for
my sake and for the gospel, 30 † who will not receive a hundredfold now in
this time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and
lands, with persecutions, and in the age to come eternal life. 31 † But many
who are first will be last, and the last first.”

Jesus Foretells His Death a Third Time

32 ✝✝And they were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was
walking ahead of them. And they were amazed, and those who followed
were afraid. And taking the twelve again, he began to tell them what was to
happen to him, 33✝saying, “See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son
of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and the scribes, and they
will condemn him to death and deliver him over to the Gentiles. 34✝And
they will mock him and spit on him, and flog him and kill him. And after
three days he will rise.”

The Request of James and John

35 ‡† And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came up to him and said
to him, “Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you.” 36 And
he said to them, “What do you want me to do for you?” 37 † And they said to
him, “Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your
glory.” 38 † Jesus said to them, “You do not know what you are asking. Are
you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism
with which I am baptized?” 39 † And they said to him, “We are able.” And
Jesus said to them, “The cup that I drink you will drink, and with the
baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized, 40 † but to sit at my
right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it
has been prepared.” 41 † And when the ten heard it, they began to be
indignant at James and John. 42 ‡ And Jesus called them to him and said to
them, “You know that those who are considered rulers of the Gentiles lord it
over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. 43 But it shall
not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your
servant,[1] 44 and whoever would be first among you must be slave[2] of all.
45 † For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give
his life as a ransom for many.”

Jesus Heals Blind Bartimaeus

46 ‡ † And they came to Jericho. And as he was leaving Jericho with his
disciples and a great crowd, Bartimaeus, a blind beggar, the son of Timaeus,
was sitting by the roadside. 47 † And when he heard that it was Jesus of
Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on
me!” 48 † And many rebuked him, telling him to be silent. But he cried out all
the more, “Son of David, have mercy on me!” 49 And Jesus stopped and said,
“Call him.” And they called the blind man, saying to him, “Take heart. Get
up; he is calling you.” 50 † And throwing off his cloak, he sprang up and
came to Jesus. 51 † And Jesus said to him, “What do you want me to do for
you?” And the blind man said to him, “Rabbi, let me recover my sight.”
52 † And Jesus said to him, “Go your way; your faith has made you well.”
And immediately he recovered his sight and followed him on the way.

The Triumphal Entry

11 [1]‡†Now when they drew near to Jerusalem, to Bethphage and Bethany, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus[3] sent two of his disciples [2]†and said to them, "Go into the village in front of you, and immediately as you enter it you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever sat. Untie it and bring it. [3]†If anyone says to you, 'Why are you doing this?' say, 'The Lord has need of it and will send it back here immediately.'" [4]And they went away and found a colt tied at a door outside in the street, and they untied it. [5]And some of those standing there said to them, "What are you doing, untying the colt?" [6]And they told them what Jesus had said, and they let them go. [7]‡And they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it, and he sat on it. [8]† And many spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut from the fields. [9]‡And those who went before and those who followed were shouting, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! [10]Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David! Hosanna in the highest!"

[11]†And he entered Jerusalem and went into the temple. And when he had looked around at everything, as it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve.

Jesus Curses the Fig Tree

12 ‡‡On the following day, when they came from Bethany, he was hungry.
13 ‡And seeing in the distance a fig tree in leaf, he went to see if he could
find anything on it. When he came to it, he found nothing but leaves, for it
was not the season for figs. 14 ‡And he said to it, “May no one ever eat fruit
from you again.” And his disciples heard it.

Jesus Cleanses the Temple

15 ‡ ‡ ‡ And they came to Jerusalem. And he entered the temple and began
to drive out those who sold and those who bought in the temple, and he
overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold
pigeons. 16 † And he would not allow anyone to carry anything through the
temple. 17 † And he was teaching them and saying to them, “Is it not written,
‘My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations’? But you
have made it a den of robbers.” 18 † And the chief priests and the scribes
heard it and were seeking a way to destroy him, for they feared him,
because all the crowd was astonished at his teaching. 19 And when evening
came they[1] went out of the city.

The Lesson from the Withered Fig Tree

20 ‡ † As they passed by in the morning, they saw the fig tree withered
away to its roots. 21 † And Peter remembered and said to him, “Rabbi, look!
The fig tree that you cursed has withered.” 22 ‡ And Jesus answered them,
“Have faith in God. 23 Truly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain,
‘Be taken up and thrown into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but
believes that what he says will come to pass, it will be done for him.
24 Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have
received[2] it, and it will be yours. 25 † And whenever you stand praying,
forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father also who
is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.”[1]

The Authority of Jesus Challenged

[27] ‡ † And they came again to Jerusalem. And as he was walking in the temple, the chief priests and the scribes and the elders came to him, [28] † and they said to him, “By what authority are you doing these things, or who gave you this authority to do them?” [29] ‡ Jesus said to them, “I will ask you one question; answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things. [30] † Was the baptism of John from heaven or from man? Answer me.” [31] And they discussed it with one another, saying, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will say, ‘Why then did you not believe him?’ [32] † But shall we say, ‘From man’?”—they were afraid of the people, for they all held that John really was a prophet. [33] † So they answered Jesus, “We do not know.” And Jesus said to them, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things.”

The Parable of the Tenants

12 [1]‡‡†And he began to speak to them in parables. “A man planted a
vineyard and put a fence around it and dug a pit for the winepress and built
a tower, and leased it to tenants and went into another country. [2]†When the
season came, he sent a servant[2] to the tenants to get from them some of the
fruit of the vineyard. [3]†And they took him and beat him and sent him away
empty-handed. [4]Again he sent to them another servant, and they struck him
on the head and treated him shamefully. [5]† And he sent another, and him
they killed. And so with many others: some they beat, and some they killed.
[6]†He had still one other, a beloved son. Finally he sent him to them, saying,
‘They will respect my son.’ [7]†But those tenants said to one another, ‘This is
the heir. Come, let us kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.’ [8]†And they
took him and killed him and threw him out of the vineyard. [9]What will the
owner of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the tenants and give
the vineyard to others. [10]‡†Have you not read this Scripture:

> “‘The stone that the builders rejected
> has become the cornerstone;[3]
> [11] this was the Lord’s doing,
> and it is marvelous in our eyes’?”

[12]† And they were seeking to arrest him but feared the people, for they
perceived that he had told the parable against them. So they left him and
went away.

Paying Taxes to Caesar

13 ‡ † And they sent to him some of the Pharisees and some of the
Herodians, to trap him in his talk. 14 † And they came and said to him,
“Teacher, we know that you are true and do not care about anyone’s
opinion. For you are not swayed by appearances,[1] but truly teach the way
of God. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not? Should we pay them, or
should we not?” 15 ‡ † But, knowing their hypocrisy, he said to them, “Why
put me to the test? Bring me a denarius[2] and let me look at it.” 16 And they
brought one. And he said to them, “Whose likeness and inscription is this?”
They said to him, “Caesar’s.” 17 † Jesus said to them, “Render to Caesar the
things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.” And they
marveled at him.

The Sadducees Ask About the Resurrection

18 ✝✝And Sadducees came to him, who say that there is no resurrection.
And they asked him a question, saying, 19 ✝"Teacher, Moses wrote for us
that if a man's brother dies and leaves a wife, but leaves no child, the man[3]
must take the widow and raise up offspring for his brother. 20There were
seven brothers; the first took a wife, and when he died left no offspring.
21And the second took her, and died, leaving no offspring. And the third
likewise. 22And the seven left no offspring. Last of all the woman also died.
23✝In the resurrection, when they rise again, whose wife will she be? For the
seven had her as wife."

24✝Jesus said to them, "Is this not the reason you are wrong, because you
know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God? 25✝For when they rise
from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like
angels in heaven. 26✝And as for the dead being raised, have you not read in
the book of Moses, in the passage about the bush, how God spoke to him,
saying, 'I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of
Jacob'? 27✝He is not God of the dead, but of the living. You are quite
wrong."

The Great Commandment

28 ✝ ✝ And one of the scribes came up and heard them disputing with one
another, and seeing that he answered them well, asked him, “Which
commandment is the most important of all?” 29 ✝ Jesus answered, “The most
important is, ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. 30 And you
shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and
with all your mind and with all your strength.’ 31 The second is this: ‘You
shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment
greater than these.” 32 And the scribe said to him, “You are right, Teacher.
You have truly said that he is one, and there is no other besides him. 33 ✝ And
to love him with all the heart and with all the understanding and with all the
strength, and to love one’s neighbor as oneself, is much more than all whole
burnt offerings and sacrifices.” 34 ✝ And when Jesus saw that he answered
wisely, he said to him, “You are not far from the kingdom of God.” And
after that no one dared to ask him any more questions.

Whose Son Is the Christ?

35 ✝✝ And as Jesus taught in the temple, he said, “How can the scribes say
that the Christ is the son of David? 36 ✝ David himself, in the Holy Spirit,
declared,

> “‘The Lord said to my Lord,
> Sit at my right hand,
> until I put your enemies under your feet.’

37 ✝ David himself calls him Lord. So how is he his son?” And the great
throng heard him gladly.

Beware of the Scribes

38 And in his teaching he said, “Beware of the scribes, who like to walk
around in long robes and like greetings in the marketplaces 39 and have the
best seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at feasts, 40 who
devour widows’ houses and for a pretense make long prayers. They will
receive the greater condemnation.”

The Widow’s Offering

41 And he sat down opposite the treasury and watched the people
putting money into the offering box. Many rich people put in large sums.
42 And a poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which make
a penny.[1] 43 And he called his disciples to him and said to them, “Truly, I
say to you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are
contributing to the offering box. 44 For they all contributed out of their
abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she
had to live on.”

Jesus Foretells Destruction of the Temple

13 [1] ‡† And as he came out of the temple, one of his disciples said to him, “Look, Teacher, what wonderful stones and what wonderful buildings!” [2] † And Jesus said to him, “Do you see these great buildings? There will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down.”

Signs of the Close of the Age

3 And as he sat on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter and
James and John and Andrew asked him privately, 4 "Tell us, when will
these things be, and what will be the sign when all these things are about to
be accomplished?" 5 And Jesus began to say to them, "See that no one
leads you astray. 6 Many will come in my name, saying, 'I am he!' and they
will lead many astray. 7 And when you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do
not be alarmed. This must take place, but the end is not yet. 8 For nation
will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be
earthquakes in various places; there will be famines. These are but the
beginning of the birth pains.

9 "But be on your guard. For they will deliver you over to councils, and
you will be beaten in synagogues, and you will stand before governors and
kings for my sake, to bear witness before them. 10 And the gospel must first
be proclaimed to all nations. 11 And when they bring you to trial and deliver
you over, do not be anxious beforehand what you are to say, but say
whatever is given you in that hour, for it is not you who speak, but the Holy
Spirit. 12 And brother will deliver brother over to death, and the father his
child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death.
13 And you will be hated by all for my name's sake. But the one who
endures to the end will be saved.

The Abomination of Desolation

14 “But when you see the abomination of desolation standing where he
ought not to be (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea
flee to the mountains. 15 Let the one who is on the housetop not go down,
nor enter his house, to take anything out, 16 and let the one who is in the
field not turn back to take his cloak. 17 And alas for women who are
pregnant and for those who are nursing infants in those days! 18 Pray that it
may not happen in winter. 19 For in those days there will be such tribulation
as has not been from the beginning of the creation that God created until
now, and never will be. 20 And if the Lord had not cut short the days, no
human being would be saved. But for the sake of the elect, whom he chose,
he shortened the days. 21 And then if anyone says to you, ‘Look, here is the
Christ!’ or ‘Look, there he is!’ do not believe it. 22 For false christs and false
prophets will arise and perform signs and wonders, to lead astray, if
possible, the elect. 23 But be on guard; I have told you all things
beforehand.

The Coming of the Son of Man

24 ‡ ‡ “But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened,
and the moon will not give its light, 25 † and the stars will be falling from
heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. 26 † And then they will
see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. 27 † And
then he will send out the angels and gather his elect from the four winds,
from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

The Lesson of the Fig Tree

28 ‡ † “From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes
tender and puts out its leaves, you know that summer is near. 29 † So also,
when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very
gates. 30 † Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all
these things take place. 31 † Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words
will not pass away.

No One Knows That Day or Hour

32 “But concerning that day or that hour, no one knows, not even the
angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. 33 Be on guard, keep
awake.[1] For you do not know when the time will come. 34 It is like a man
going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his servants[2] in charge,
each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to stay awake.
35 Therefore stay awake—for you do not know when the master of the house
will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows,[3] or in
the morning— 36 lest he come suddenly and find you asleep. 37 And what I
say to you I say to all: Stay awake.”

The Plot to Kill Jesus

14 [1] It was now two days before the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. And the chief priests and the scribes were seeking how to arrest him by stealth and kill him, [2] for they said, “Not during the feast, lest there be an uproar from the people.”

Jesus Anointed at Bethany

3 ‡ † And while he was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper,[1] as he
was reclining at table, a woman came with an alabaster flask of ointment of
pure nard, very costly, and she broke the flask and poured it over his head.
4 There were some who said to themselves indignantly, “Why was the
ointment wasted like that? 5 † For this ointment could have been sold for
more than three hundred denarii[2] and given to the poor.” And they scolded
her. 6 † But Jesus said, “Leave her alone. Why do you trouble her? She has
done a beautiful thing to me. 7 † For you always have the poor with you, and
whenever you want, you can do good for them. But you will not always
have me. 8 † She has done what she could; she has anointed my body
beforehand for burial. 9 † And truly, I say to you, wherever the gospel is
proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory
of her.”

Judas to Betray Jesus

10 ‡ † Then Judas Iscariot, who was one of the twelve, went to the chief
priests in order to betray him to them. 11 † And when they heard it, they were
glad and promised to give him money. And he sought an opportunity to
betray him.

The Passover with the Disciples

12 ‡ † And on the first day of Unleavened Bread, when they sacrificed the
Passover lamb, his disciples said to him, “Where will you have us go and
prepare for you to eat the Passover?” 13 † And he sent two of his disciples
and said to them, “Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will
meet you. Follow him, 14 † and wherever he enters, say to the master of the
house, ‘The Teacher says, Where is my guest room, where I may eat the
Passover with my disciples?’ 15 † And he will show you a large upper room
furnished and ready; there prepare for us.” 16 And the disciples set out and
went to the city and found it just as he had told them, and they prepared the
Passover.

17 † And when it was evening, he came with the twelve. 18 † And as they
were reclining at table and eating, Jesus said, “Truly, I say to you, one of
you will betray me, one who is eating with me.” 19 † They began to be
sorrowful and to say to him one after another, “Is it I?” 20 † He said to them,
“It is one of the twelve, one who is dipping bread into the dish with me.
21 † For the Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that man by
whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that man if
he had not been born.”

Institution of the Lord’s Supper

22 ✝✝And as they were eating, he took bread, and after blessing it broke it
and gave it to them, and said, “Take; this is my body.” 23 ✝And he took a
cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, and they all drank of
it. 24 ✝And he said to them, “This is my blood of the[1] covenant, which is
poured out for many. 25 ✝Truly, I say to you, I will not drink again of the fruit
of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.”

Jesus Foretells Peter's Denial

[26] ‡ † And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of
Olives. [27] † And Jesus said to them, "You will all fall away, for it is written,
'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.' [28] But after I am
raised up, I will go before you to Galilee." [29] † Peter said to him, "Even
though they all fall away, I will not." [30] † And Jesus said to him, "Truly, I tell
you, this very night, before the rooster crows twice, you will deny me three
times." [31] But he said emphatically, "If I must die with you, I will not deny
you." And they all said the same.

Jesus Prays in Gethsemane

32 ‡ † And they went to a place called Gethsemane. And he said to his
disciples, “Sit here while I pray.” 33 † And he took with him Peter and James
and John, and began to be greatly distressed and troubled. 34 † And he said to
them, “My soul is very sorrowful, even to death. Remain here and watch.”[1]
35 † And going a little farther, he fell on the ground and prayed that, if it were
possible, the hour might pass from him. 36 † And he said, “Abba, Father, all
things are possible for you. Remove this cup from me. Yet not what I will,
but what you will.” 37 † And he came and found them sleeping, and he said to
Peter, “Simon, are you asleep? Could you not watch one hour? 38 † Watch
and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is
willing, but the flesh is weak.” 39 And again he went away and prayed,
saying the same words. 40 † And again he came and found them sleeping, for
their eyes were very heavy, and they did not know what to answer him.
41 † And he came the third time and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and
taking your rest? It is enough; the hour has come. The Son of Man is
betrayed into the hands of sinners. 42 Rise, let us be going; see, my betrayer
is at hand.”

Betrayal and Arrest of Jesus

43 ††And immediately, while he was still speaking, Judas came, one of the
twelve, and with him a crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests
and the scribes and the elders. 44 †Now the betrayer had given them a sign,
saying, “The one I will kiss is the man. Seize him and lead him away under
guard.” 45 †And when he came, he went up to him at once and said, “Rabbi!”
And he kissed him. 46 †And they laid hands on him and seized him. 47 †But
one of those who stood by drew his sword and struck the servant[2] of the
high priest and cut off his ear. 48 And Jesus said to them, “Have you come
out as against a robber, with swords and clubs to capture me? 49 †Day after
day I was with you in the temple teaching, and you did not seize me. But let
the Scriptures be fulfilled.” 50 †And they all left him and fled.

A Young Man Flees

51 ††And a young man followed him, with nothing but a linen cloth about
his body. And they seized him, 52 †but he left the linen cloth and ran away
naked.

Jesus Before the Council

53 ✝✝And they led Jesus to the high priest. And all the chief priests and the
elders and the scribes came together. 54 ✝And Peter had followed him at a
distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest. And he was sitting with
the guards and warming himself at the fire. 55 ✝Now the chief priests and the
whole Council[1] were seeking testimony against Jesus to put him to death,
but they found none. 56 ✝For many bore false witness against him, but their
testimony did not agree. 57 And some stood up and bore false witness against
him, saying, 58 ✝"We heard him say, 'I will destroy this temple that is made
with hands, and in three days I will build another, not made with hands.'"
59 Yet even about this their testimony did not agree. 60 And the high priest
stood up in the midst and asked Jesus, "Have you no answer to make? What
is it that these men testify against you?"[2] 61 ✝But he remained silent and
made no answer. Again the high priest asked him, "Are you the Christ, the
Son of the Blessed?" 62 ✝And Jesus said, "I am, and you will see the Son of
Man seated at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of
heaven." 63 ✝And the high priest tore his garments and said, "What further
witnesses do we need? 64 ✝You have heard his blasphemy. What is your
decision?" And they all condemned him as deserving death. 65 ✝And some
began to spit on him and to cover his face and to strike him, saying to him,
"Prophesy!" And the guards received him with blows.

Peter Denies Jesus

66 ‡ † And as Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant girls of
the high priest came, 67 † and seeing Peter warming himself, she looked at
him and said, “You also were with the Nazarene, Jesus.” 68 But he denied it,
saying, “I neither know nor understand what you mean.” And he went out
into the gateway[3] and the rooster crowed.[4] 69 And the servant girl saw him
and began again to say to the bystanders, “This man is one of them.” 70 † But
again he denied it. And after a little while the bystanders again said to Peter,
“Certainly you are one of them, for you are a Galilean.” 71 † But he began to
invoke a curse on himself and to swear, “I do not know this man of whom
you speak.” 72 † And immediately the rooster crowed a second time. And
Peter remembered how Jesus had said to him, “Before the rooster crows
twice, you will deny me three times.” And he broke down and wept.[5]

Jesus Delivered to Pilate

15 [1] ✝ ✝ And as soon as it was morning, the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole Council. And they bound Jesus and led him away and delivered him over to Pilate. [2] ✝ And Pilate asked him, “Are you the King of the Jews?” And he answered him, “You have said so.” [3] And the chief priests accused him of many things. [4] And Pilate again asked him, “Have you no answer to make? See how many charges they bring against you.” [5] ✝ But Jesus made no further answer, so that Pilate was amazed.

Pilate Delivers Jesus to Be Crucified

6 ‡ † Now at the feast he used to release for them one prisoner for whom
they asked. 7 † And among the rebels in prison, who had committed murder
in the insurrection, there was a man called Barabbas. 8 † And the crowd came
up and began to ask Pilate to do as he usually did for them. 9 † And he
answered them, saying, “Do you want me to release for you the King of the
Jews?” 10 † For he perceived that it was out of envy that the chief priests had
delivered him up. 11 † But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him
release for them Barabbas instead. 12 And Pilate again said to them, “Then
what shall I do with the man you call the King of the Jews?” 13 † And they
cried out again, “Crucify him.” 14 And Pilate said to them, “Why, what evil
has he done?” But they shouted all the more, “Crucify him.” 15 † So Pilate,
wishing to satisfy the crowd, released for them Barabbas, and having
scourged[1] Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.

Jesus Is Mocked

16 ‡ † And the soldiers led him away inside the palace (that is, the governor's headquarters),[2] and they called together the whole battalion.[3]
17 †And they clothed him in a purple cloak, and twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on him. 18 And they began to salute him, "Hail, King of the Jews!" 19 And they were striking his head with a reed and spitting on him and kneeling down in homage to him. 20 And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him. And they led him out to crucify him.

The Crucifixion

21 ‡ † And they compelled a passerby, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming
in from the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to carry his cross.
22 † And they brought him to the place called Golgotha (which means Place
of a Skull). 23 † And they offered him wine mixed with myrrh, but he did not
take it. 24 † And they crucified him and divided his garments among them,
casting lots for them, to decide what each should take. 25 And it was the third
hour[1] when they crucified him. 26 † And the inscription of the charge against
him read, “The King of the Jews.” 27 † And with him they crucified two
robbers, one on his right and one on his left.[2] 29 † And those who passed by
derided him, wagging their heads and saying, “Aha! You who would
destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, 30 save yourself, and come
down from the cross!” 31 † So also the chief priests with the scribes mocked
him to one another, saying, “He saved others; he cannot save himself. 32 † Let
the Christ, the King of Israel, come down now from the cross that we may
see and believe.” Those who were crucified with him also reviled him.

The Death of Jesus

33 ‡ † And when the sixth hour[3] had come, there was darkness over the
whole land until the ninth hour.[4] 34 † And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a
loud voice, “Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?” which means, “My God, my
God, why have you forsaken me?” 35 And some of the bystanders hearing it
said, “Behold, he is calling Elijah.” 36 † And someone ran and filled a sponge
with sour wine, put it on a reed and gave it to him to drink, saying, “Wait,
let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down.” 37 † And Jesus uttered
a loud cry and breathed his last. 38 † And the curtain of the temple was torn in
two, from top to bottom. 39 † And when the centurion, who stood facing him,
saw that in this way he[5] breathed his last, he said, “Truly this man was the
Son[6] of God!”

40 There were also women looking on from a distance, among whom were
Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joses,
and Salome. 41 † When he was in Galilee, they followed him and ministered
to him, and there were also many other women who came up with him to
Jerusalem.

Jesus Is Buried

42 ✝✝And when evening had come, since it was the day of Preparation, that
is, the day before the Sabbath, 43 ✝Joseph of Arimathea, a respected member
of the Council, who was also himself looking for the kingdom of God, took
courage and went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. 44 ✝Pilate was
surprised to hear that he should have already died.[1] And summoning the
centurion, he asked him whether he was already dead. 45 And when he
learned from the centurion that he was dead, he granted the corpse to
Joseph. 46 ✝And Joseph[2] bought a linen shroud, and taking him down,
wrapped him in the linen shroud and laid him in a tomb that had been cut
out of the rock. And he rolled a stone against the entrance of the tomb.
47 ✝Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses saw where he was laid.

The Resurrection

16 [1]‡†When the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene and Mary the
mother of James and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and
anoint him. [2]†And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had
risen, they went to the tomb. [3]And they were saying to one another, “Who
will roll away the stone for us from the entrance of the tomb?” [4]† And
looking up, they saw that the stone had been rolled back—it was very large.
[5]†And entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side,
dressed in a white robe, and they were alarmed. [6]†And he said to them, “Do
not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has
risen; he is not here. See the place where they laid him. [7]†But go, tell his
disciples and Peter that he is going before you to Galilee. There you will see
him, just as he told you.” [8]†And they went out and fled from the tomb, for
trembling and astonishment had seized them, and they said nothing to
anyone, for they were afraid.

[SOME OF THE EARLIEST MANUSCRIPTS
DO NOT INCLUDE 16:9-20.][3]

Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene

9 ‡‡‡[[Now when he rose early on the first day of the week, he appeared
first to Mary Magdalene, from whom he had cast out seven demons. 10 She
went and told those who had been with him, as they mourned and wept.
11 †But when they heard that he was alive and had been seen by her, they
would not believe it.

Jesus Appears to Two Disciples

[12] ‡ † After these things he appeared in another form to two of them, as they were walking into the country. [13] † And they went back and told the rest, but they did not believe them.

The Great Commission

14 ‡ † Afterward he appeared to the eleven themselves as they were
reclining at table, and he rebuked them for their unbelief and hardness of
heart, because they had not believed those who saw him after he had risen.
15 † And he said to them, “Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to
the whole creation. 16 † Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but
whoever does not believe will be condemned. 17 † And these signs will
accompany those who believe: in my name they will cast out demons; they
will speak in new tongues; 18 † they will pick up serpents with their hands;
and if they drink any deadly poison, it will not hurt them; they will lay their
hands on the sick, and they will recover.”
19 † So then the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them, was taken up into
heaven and sat down at the right hand of God. 20 † And they went out and
preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the
message by accompanying signs.]]

Mark

OVERVIEW

Author
John Mark

Date
Written c AD 50–60

Places
Galilee; Judea; Nazareth; Capernaum; Tyre; Sidon; Jerusalem; Jericho; Bethany; Jordan River; Mount of Olives; Gethsemane; see map, p 1584

People
Jesus; John the Baptist; the 12 apostles; Jesus' family; scribes; Pharisees; Herodians; Herod Antipas; Mary the mother of Joses; Mary Magdalene; Mary the mother of James; Salome

Purpose
To proclaim Jesus the Son of God, who calls disciples to repent, to believe the Gospel, and to bear the cross

Law Themes
Repentance; political and religious opposition; uncleanness; authoritative teaching; hard-heartedness

Gospel Themes
Gospel; Baptism; compassion; mercy; cleansing; authoritative teaching; ransom; Lord's Supper

Memory Verses
Jesus' message (1:14–15); prayer for faith (9:23–24); Jesus' mission (10:42–45); a centurion's confession (15:39)

Introduction to Mark

Reading Mark

The old farmer knew this corner of the field well. His plow had turned up rocks here for years. He and his brothers picked up the rocks and worked them into a retaining wall not far away. He could see there a row of sick and lame people sitting on the stones, waiting for their turn to see the Teacher. Families with small children also sat nearby, awaiting their turn. The farmer sat and scratched the soil. It felt warm and loose to the touch. Then he struck a rock. "Another rock," he said. "Still too stony—unfit for seed."

Mark describes how the disciples and the crowds immediately responded to the authority of Jesus' teaching. They flocked to receive His healing touch and blessings for their children. But beneath the surface of this excitement, their hearts remained hardened and crippled by unbelief. As you read Mark's account of Jesus' ministry and Passion, consider Jesus' patience. He plows and replows matters of repentance, faith, and the promises of God, picking out hard hearts and calling people to believe and to bear fruit.

Martin Franzmann characterizes Mark's account as follows:

> The Gospel According to Mark is a Gospel of action. As compared with Matthew, Mark emphasizes the deeds of Jesus. The deeds of Jesus

are by no means isolated from His words; the word is Jesus' instrument in His deeds too; He speaks, and it is done. And Mark, besides giving two longer discourses of Jesus (4:1–34; 13:1–37), repeatedly emphasizes the centrality of the word in the ministry of Jesus and the effect of its authority on men, 1:14, 22, 38–39f; 2:2, 13; 4:1; 6:1–7; 9:7; 10:1; 11:18; cf also 8:38. But it is chiefly by His works that Jesus is marked as the Proclaimer and the Bringer of the almighty grace of the kingdom of God, as the anointed King in whom man can trust, the Son of God in whom man can believe.

Adapted from Martin H. Franzmann, *CSSC*, p 44.

Luther on Mark

See pp 1571–72.

Challenges for Readers

Relationship to Other Gospels. See pp 1571–74. Some critics have regarded Mark's Gospel as crudely written in comparison to the other canonical Gospels. This criticism fails to appreciate Mark's thoughtful literary construction as described below.

Jesus as the Son of God. Mark describes God's unique relationship with Jesus, who represents the heavenly Father to the world and bears His authority. This theme shows up repeatedly as Jesus is titled "the Son of God" (1:1, 11; 3:11; 5:7; 9:7; 14:61) and climaxes with the centurion's confession at the cross (15:39), which highlights the central importance of Jesus' sacrificial suffering and death (10:45). The disciples respond to Jesus' authority, the demons fear it, and all creation obeys Him. Also, Jesus foresees His crucifixion and resurrection and guides these events.

Jesus as Man. Though Mark describes Jesus' great authority, he also emphasizes Jesus' need for quiet prayer (1:35); His feelings of compassion, anger, and frustration (1:41; 3:5; 10:14, 21; 14:33); and even His need for sleep (4:38). Jesus at times seems weak or ineffectual (cf 6:1–6; 8:22–26). However, Mark uses these times to illustrate important truths about faith.

Hard-heartedness. Of the Gospels, Mk provides the most negative description of Jesus' disciples. In 6:45–52 and 8:14–21, they fail to understand who Jesus is and what He is teaching (cf 4:13, 35–41; 7:14–19; 8:1–10; 9:14–19, 33–37; 10:13–16, 35–45; 14:3–21, 26–31; 16:14). He repeatedly refers to hardness of heart (3:5; 6:52; 8:17; 10:5), which is how the Lord described Pharaoh in the exodus. Even the women, who faithfully mourn at Jesus' crucifixion and visit His tomb, flee in fear at the announcement of the resurrection (16:8). This emphasis prompts readers to consider the condition of their own hearts and faith.

Clean and Unclean. Mark explains and emphasizes cleanliness, an important aspect of OT Law (cf Gn 7:2–3; 9:3–4; Lv 11–15) and rabbinic tradition (7:1–8). Jesus "made clean" a leper (1:40–44). A demon is an "unclean spirit" (e.g., 1:23). A herd of swine—unclean animals—are wiped out (5:13). These examples likely helped Mark's Gentile readers better understand the Jewish members of their early Christian congregations. But Mark also emphasized Jesus' teaching about the ultimate source of uncleanness: the sinful human heart (7:20–23). See p 6.

Secrecy. Throughout the Gospel of Mark, Jesus discourages people and unclean spirits from speaking about Him and His kingdom (e.g., 1:23–25; 1:44; 3:11–12; 7:36–37; 8:26, 30; 9:9–10). Critical scholars read this feature as a device early Christians added to the story of Jesus' life. They argue that Jesus never really called Himself the Son of God or Christ but that these beliefs about Him were added later to let people in on the secret. Such an interpretation conflicts with Mark's overall goal and account (see "Jesus as the Son of God," above). It is more likely that Jesus exercises His authority to guide the spread of His popularity, which had brought Him into conflict with political and religious authorities. E.g., outside the jurisdiction of Jesus' main opponents, He actually encourages a man to proclaim His miracles (5:19–20).

Mark's Abrupt Ending. As the ESV text note for 16:9–20 shows, these verses do not appear in a number of early Greek manuscripts. This likely means they were not part of Mark's original composition, which may have used a "suspended" ending that left readers wanting to learn more about Jesus and His disciples. The longer ending was perhaps added later to satisfy people's interests.

Blessings for Readers

As you read Mark's account of Jesus' ministry and Passion, take special note of the emphasis on discipleship and faith. Jesus tells His followers that He will suffer and will ransom them (8:31–33; 9:30–31; 10:32–34, 45). They, too, will face suffering on account of Him and the Gospel (8:34–9:1; 10:29–30). Yet, through repentance and faith, they will inherit eternal life (cf 10:17, 27).

When you face difficulty, cry out, "I believe; help my unbelief!" (9:24). The Son of God, who ransomed you from the bondage of sin and death (10:45; 15:22–25), will hear you in compassion and have mercy (9:22; 10:47–49).

OUTLINE

The simplest outline of Mark has two parts: Jesus' public ministry and Jesus' Passion. The outline below provides greater detail.

I. Prologue: "The Beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God" (1:1–13)
   A. The Ministry of John the Baptist (1:1–8)
   B. The Baptism and Temptation of Jesus (1:9–13)
II. Jesus' Public Ministry of Preaching and Miracle Working (1:14–8:30)
   A. Jesus Begins His Ministry in Galilee with Authority, but Meets Opposition (1:14–3:12)
      1. Jesus proclaims the rule of God and calls disciples (1:14–20)
      2. Jesus begins His ministry on a Sabbath Day in Capernaum (1:21–39)
      3. Jesus continues His ministry amid growing opposition (1:40–3:6)
      4. Large crowds follow Jesus (3:7–12)
   B. Jesus Is Received with Both Unbelief and Faith (3:13–6:6)
      1. Jesus appoints the 12 apostles (3:13–19)
      2. Jesus confronts the unbelief facing His ministry (3:20–4:34)
         a. Jesus confronts unbelief both from the scribes and His family (3:20–35)
         b. Jesus teaches the crowds and His disciples in light of the unbelief of the religious authorities ("The Parabolic Discourse"; 4:1–34)

3. Jesus performs miracles on and around the Sea of Galilee (4:35–5:43)

a. Jesus calms a storm (4:35–41)

b. Jesus heals a Gerasene demoniac (5:1–20)

c. Jesus heals a sick woman and raises a dead girl (5:21–43)

4. Jesus is rejected at Nazareth (6:1–6)

C. Jesus Withdraws from His Public Ministry in Galilee (6:7–8:30)

1. Jesus sends the 12 apostles; John the Baptist dies (6:7–30)

2. A first cycle of parallel events (6:31–7:37)

a. Jesus feeds 5,000 in the wilderness and walks on water (6:31–56)

b. Jesus confronts the Pharisees and scribes and teaches on the distinction between clean and unclean, but His disciples misunderstand (7:1–23)

c. Jesus heals a Syrophoenician woman's daughter near Tyre (7:24–30)

d. Jesus heals a deaf man in the region of the Decapolis (7:31–37)

3. A second cycle of parallel events (8:1–26)

a. Jesus feeds 4,000 in the wilderness (8:1–10)

b. Jesus confronts the Pharisees and warns against the yeast of the Pharisees and Herod, but His disciples misunderstand (8:11–21)

c. Jesus heals a blind man in Bethsaida (8:22–26)

4. Peter confesses that Jesus is the Christ in Caesarea Philippi (8:27–30)

III. Jesus Prepares His Disciples for His Passion, Death, and Resurrection (8:31–16:8)

A. Jesus Reveals His Passion, Death, and Resurrection and Teaches on Discipleship (8:31–10:52)

1. The first Passion prediction and subsequent teaching and events (8:31–9:29)

a. Jesus predicts His suffering, death, and resurrection, and rebukes Peter (8:31–33)

b. Jesus teaches His disciples and the crowd on discipleship (8:34–9:1)

c. Jesus is transfigured before three of His disciples (9:2–13)

d. Jesus casts out an unclean spirit from a boy after His disciples' failure (9:14–29)

2. The second Passion prediction and subsequent teaching (9:30–10:31)

a. Jesus predicts His suffering, death, and resurrection (9:30–32)

b. Jesus teaches His disciples on greatness in the kingdom of God (9:33–50)

c. Jesus teaches in the region of Judea and across the Jordan (10:1–31)

3. The third Passion prediction and subsequent teaching and events (10:32–52)

a. Jesus predicts His suffering, death, and resurrection (10:32–34)

b. Jesus responds to the request of James and John and teaches on greatness in the kingdom of God (10:35–45)

c. Jesus heals blind Bartimaeus (10:46–52)

B. Jesus Enters Jerusalem and Confronts the Religious Authorities (chs 11–13)

1. Jesus enters Jerusalem to the praise of the crowds (11:1–11)

2. Jesus curses the fig tree, cleanses the temple, and teaches the disciples on faith (11:12–26)

3. Jesus confronts the religious authorities (11:27–12:40)

a. Jesus responds to the question of His authority (11:27–33)

b. Jesus teaches the parable of the tenants (12:1–12)

c. Jesus responds to the question about paying taxes to Caesar (12:13–17)

d. Jesus responds to the Sadducees on the resurrection (12:18–27)

e. Jesus responds to the question on the greatest commandment (12:28–34)

f. Jesus questions them about the relationship of David and the Christ (12:35–37)

g. Jesus warns against the scribes (12:38–40)

4. Jesus teaches His disciples through the widow's offering (12:41–44)

5. Jesus teaches His disciples in light of His rejection by the religious authorities ("The Eschatological Discourse"; ch 13)

a. Jesus predicts the temple's destruction (13:1–2)

b. The signs and warnings (13:3–37)

C. Jesus' Passion, Death, and Resurrection (14:1–16:8)

1. Jesus is anointed at Bethany amid a plot to have Him arrested and killed (14:1–11)

2. Jesus celebrates the Passover with His disciples, predicts His betrayal, and institutes the Lord's Supper (14:12–25)
3. Jesus predicts Peter's denial (14:26–31)
4. Jesus prays in Gethsemane and is arrested (14:32–52)
5. Jesus is tried before the high priest and is denied by Peter (14:53–72)
6. Jesus is tried before Pilate (15:1–15)
7. Jesus is mocked by the soldiers, crucified, and dies (15:16–41)
8. Jesus is buried (15:42–47)
9. The women find the empty tomb and hear that Jesus is risen (16:1–8)

IV. The Long Ending (16:9–20)

Articles and Resources Related to Mark

- Including the Gentiles
- God's Care and Miracles
- Biblical Miracles at Work Today
- The Heavenly Banquet
- The Preaching and Teaching of Christ

Including the Gentiles

Redefining Laws and Customs

Jesus often clashed with the Pharisees while teaching His disciples that God wanted to include the Gentiles in His kingdom. The following chart provides examples from the Gospels where Jesus interpreted and applied Old Testament laws and Jewish traditions. It will help you understand how Jesus fulfilled the Law of God, yet overturned man-made ideas of holiness and righteousness. He did this to prepare the way for people of all nations to enter God's kingdom.

Throughout Jesus' teaching on feasts, He emphasizes two key points: God's Word—correctly applied—must have precedence over traditions, and mercy is the essence of devotion. These key points still apply to us today.

Israelites and Gentiles Together

The greatest cultural challenge facing the first Christians after Jesus ascended into heaven was welcoming the Gentiles into the Church. Many New Testament books and early Christian writings illustrate this struggle (e.g., Ac 10–11; 15; Rm 9–11; 14–15; Gal). This challenge lasted into the second century, when the Jewish Bar Kokhba revolt (AD 132–35) clearly divided Judaism and Christianity.

The Gospels show Jesus preparing His disciples for this great cultural conflict and the conflict God's people still experience today when people from different cultures gather to hear God's Word.

One in Christ

As Jesus taught His disciples at the Last Supper, He knew the conflicts over culture they would soon face. He knew how hard it would be for these sincere Jewish believers to welcome the Gentiles. To hold the Church together, Jesus prayed for the unity of His disciples. He also left them the one loaf and one cup of the Lord's Supper to unite them.

The Lord's Supper unites God's people of every culture because it unites them with Christ. When fellow believers eat the body of Christ and drink His blood, their Lord draws them closer to one another. He makes them one. In this holy feast, Jesus offers the chief blessing of God, the forgiveness of sin, which tears down barriers between sinners.

The next time the chalice of the Lord's Supper opens the door of your lips (cf Ps 51:15; 141:3), open also your heart to the people of God around you. Work to settle differences among yourselves on the basis of God's Word. When disputes cause you pain, pray Ps 116 and find in Christ your healing.

God's Care and Miracles

A miracle is when God directly intervenes in nature in such a way that the natural order of things is overruled. Something happens that goes beyond nature. For example, Jesus restored sight to a blind man (Mk 8:22–26); Elijah brought a young boy back to life (1Ki 17:17–24). These were genuine miracles.

Yet sometimes we see unusual and wonderful things happen within the natural realm. For example, a horrendous automobile accident may demolish a car, yet the driver walks away with barely a scratch. A tornado turns and misses a building full of people. A plane's landing gear will not operate properly, yet the pilot lands the aircraft safely. A vicious cancer is treated with radiation and chemotherapy and goes into remission. We should be cautious about calling such events miracles in the biblical sense. Even though they are amazing, they are probably different from miracles in that they do not supersede the natural order.

Theologian Norman Geisler gives an example. During the landing of the Allied troops at Normandy, France, in World War II, fog rolled in and gave cover for the soldiers. Many lives were saved through this protecting fog. We are thankful to God for providing this unexpected and wonderful gift of protection, but God did this special act of *providential* care through nature. In other words, Jesus walking on water would be a miracle, but soldiers walking through fog that appeared at just the right time is not a miracle (Norman Geisler, *Miracles and the Modern Mind* [Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1992], 124–25).

An example from the Book of Exodus may provide further help. In 10:2, the Lord promises to work signs before the people. What follows are various plagues and the crossing of the Red Sea. To prevent the Egyptians from killing the Israelites on the beaches of the Red Sea, the angel of God moves a cloud between the two groups (14:19–20). To this point, the story about the cloud sounds similar to Geisler's story about the fog at Normandy. However, the next verse tells us that the cloud brought darkness to the Egyptians but light to the Israelites. This is not natural cloud behavior!

If the fog at Normandy had brought darkness to the Nazis but lit up the beaches for the Allies, we would certainly point to the event as a miracle. However, as Geisler describes the Normandy event, it seems like an example of God's providence.

Providence is "that activity of God whereby He uninterruptedly upholds (preserves), governs, and directs" all of life (*Lutheran Cyclopedia*, ed. Erwin Lueker [St Louis: Concordia, 1954, 1975], 644). Providence is God working through the laws of nature on our behalf. Sometimes, He directs the forces of nature so that something unusual and wonderful happens. But a miracle is still something different. In a miracle, God reaches into human life in such a way that natural law is set aside for that moment to accomplish some special and unique purpose.

Praise Your Miraculous Lord

Know for certain that the Lord, your Provider, works on your behalf. He watches over you and your family now and each day. Psalm 104 beautifully describes His constant providential care for all creation. He is no cold, distant God. He blesses you even now through His creation with His loving, providential care. Pray for miracles, but also trust His providential care.

Whenever something marvelous happens—whether miraculous or a special case of God's providential care—give thanks and praise to Him. He urges us to cast our anxieties on Him and entrust each heartbeat, thought, and breath to His care (1Pt 5:7). As you pray this day, know that Jesus, your Savior, hears you. He will answer your prayers. If He was willing to suffer the bitterness of the cross to address your greatest need—the forgiveness of sins—will He not also care for your other needs of body and soul? As the apostle Paul explained to the Philippians, "And my God will supply every need of yours according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus" (Php 4:19).

Miracles in the Old Testament

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Gn 1:1). The very first words of the Bible record the miracle that started everything. With a powerful word, God went to work. Below are just a few of the more famous miracles in the Old Testament.

Sadly, the beauty of creation is soon marred by sin in the Garden of Eden. Pain, disease, hate, murder, punishment, and death invade the universe under the guise of Satan's temptation to be like God. Yet God does not abandon His world. Instead, He goes to work bringing salvation through a nation called Israel.

The flood with Noah and the ark (Gn 7:6–12, 17–24)
Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gn 19:15–29)
Lot's wife turned into a pillar of salt (Gn 19:24–26)
Moses' staff turns into a snake (Ex 4:1–5)
Plagues that lead to the Israelites' freedom from slavery (Ex 7–12)
The parting of the Red Sea (Ex 14:21–29)
Balaam's donkey speaks (Nu 22:21–35)
The sun stands still over Gibeon (Jsh 10:12–14)
Elijah raises the widow's son (1Ki 17:17–24)
Fire consumes Elijah's sacrifice on Mount Carmel (1Ki 18:16–38)
Elisha's bones bring a man back to life (2Ki 13:20–21)
Three Hebrew youths delivered from a fiery furnace (Dn 3:13–30)
Daniel saved from lions (Dn 6:16–23)
Jonah swallowed by a great fish (Jnh 1)

These are only a small sample of the Old Testament miracles. Norman Geisler lists nearly 110 miraculous events from Genesis to Jonah (pp 145–49).

The miracles in the Old Testament come when God's people are most in need, when the promise of a Savior is most threatened, when hope seems lost. But God is faithful. He saves His Old Testament chosen people, and miracles are part of those wonderful moments of deliverance. He does all this so that His salvation might reach you through His Son, Jesus.

Biblical Miracles at Work Today

A college junior, majoring in biology, sits in a campus Bible study. This evening, the students are reading about how Jesus gave sight to a man born blind. But the student is having a hard time seeing how this has anything to do with his life as a student preparing for medical school.

A family returns to church the week after a tornado has destroyed a relative's house in a nearby state. The appointed reading is about Jesus calming a violent storm after the disciples had to wake Him up with these words, "Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?" (Mk 4:38). The family wonders if Jesus does care when natural disasters do so much damage to people's lives.

God Acts

Notice how the miracle accounts are told. A major conflict is usually in progress. We actually hear very little about how the miracle is done—maybe a sentence or two. But we hear much about who is in trouble, what has caused the dilemma, and how God acts to change the situation. What we find out about our Lord in these events has great value for our faith today.

In an article about miracle stories in the Gospels, Eugene L. Lowry categorizes miracles into six different types ("Miracle Stories: The Supernatural Identity of Jesus," *The Sermon as Symphony*, ed. Mike Graves [Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1997], 104–11). Lowry explains that each type of miracle shows us a different aspect of Jesus' ever-present help in our times of need. The following chart lists six settings of miracles and shows what they teach us about Jesus.

The Lord's Care

What value do the biblical miracles have for us today? They give our faith realistic optimism. We have a Savior who not only cares for our souls with forgiveness but also cares for us completely. Our gracious Lord is concerned for our health, physical needs, emotions, safety, and understanding as well. Of course, we will still get sick, struggle with demonic enemies, be threatened by violent storms, and die someday. We are realistic, for we still live in this sinful world.

Yet we are optimistic. Jesus rose from the dead. One day all our enemies will go down in complete defeat. We will rise victorious from the dead and join in the never-ending celebration around the heavenly banquet table with Jesus (Rv 19:6–9). The ultimate miracle is that day when there will be no more tears, pain, hunger, thirst, danger, sin, or death. All conflict will cease, and we will live forever protected by Jesus!

The Heavenly Banquet

Somehow, someone started the notion that in heaven God's people will sit around on overstuffed clouds and play gilded harps. In contrast, Scripture describes a very earthly picture of everlasting life. For example, the prophet Isaiah describes an elaborate feast of the best food and wine served atop a great mountain. The Lord Himself joins in the celebration. He swallows up death forever and wipes away His people's tears (Is 25:6–8). Jesus mentions this same banquet while teaching about God's kingdom but provides different details.

Teaching: **Gentiles Eating with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob**
(Mt 8:10–12; Lk 13:23–30)

Context: After hearing a confession of faith from a Roman centurion, Jesus tells His disciples to anticipate what the kingdom of heaven will be like. The patriarchs would recline at tables with Gentiles from all over the world.

Application: God's kingdom is not restricted to the people of Israel. The Lord desires to gather people from all nations for the joy and comfort of heaven.

Teaching: **Parable of the Banquet**
(Mt 22:1–14; Lk 14:15–24)

Context: Luke tells us that Jesus was eating at the home of a Pharisee where other Pharisees and teachers of the law had gathered. The parable comes after Jesus teaches the guests about mercy and humility in the context of feasts. Jesus responds to a man's statement about feasting in God's kingdom. His story describes guests who refuse to attend the feast and unworthy guests who are welcomed to the feast.

Application: The people who refuse to come to the banquet are the Pharisees and teachers of the law. God would gather a new following. This following would ultimately include the Gentiles.

Teaching: **Parable of the 10 Virgins**
(Mt 25:1–13)

Context: This parable is part of a long address Jesus gives about His return and the end of the age. He emphasizes that the disciples will not know for certain when He will return.

Application: Jesus compares people in this life to a group waiting for the start of a wedding celebration. The faithful will enter the banquet; the unfaithful will be turned away.

Teaching: **The Last Supper; Passover**
(Mt 26:26–29; Mk 14:17–25; Lk 22:14–30)

Context: Jesus announces that He is beginning a fast. He will not eat this feast again with His disciples until they sit down together in the heavenly Father's kingdom.

Application: The disciples may have taken Jesus' announcement to mean that they must now help Him drive the Romans out of Israel and that this must be accomplished before the next Passover (cf Lk 22:36–38, 47–50). However, Jesus was talking about His Last Supper and the banquet of heaven.

Christ Prepares the Banquet

For your spiritual benefit, take note of what Jesus teaches about the heavenly banquet: (1) those who take God's grace for granted will miss out; (2) the Lord will gather all kinds of people, not just people who appear ready; (3) you cannot attend this banquet unless He invites you (only the faithful will attend); (4) you cannot be sure when the celebration will start, so stay prepared.

Through the forgiveness Christ offers through His body and blood in His Holy Supper, He prepares your place at the heavenly feast. The bread and wine you taste now give you a foretaste of heaven itself. Do not let the Lord's Supper be just one more thing you do at church. Linger at the Lord's Table. Meditate on its blessings and comfort through faithful hymns. "Hasten as a bride to meet Him, And with loving rev'rence greet Him" (*LSB* 636:2). He stands knocking this day at the door of your church. With repentant joy, open and eat with Him at His feast (Rv 3:19–20).

A Heavenly Setting

In Rv 19:1–9, the apostle John draws together the wonder of and anticipation for the heavenly banquet described throughout Scripture. God sits at the head of the table. The banquet hall rings with shouts of "Hallelujah!" as human and angelic voices unite. The saints take their places in gleaming robes.

After you read this passage, read Rv 21–22, which gives further details about the heavenly setting for this holy feast. Hear the voice of the Spirit and the Church calling for you to attend (Rv 22:17). Hunger for this heavenly food; thirst for this heavenly drink. And prepare to rejoice with those who have gone before you: Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as well as your family, friends, and neighbors who have entered God's rest. Heaven is His feast prepared for you.

The Preaching and Teaching of Christ

How successful was our Lord and the apostles in bringing people to the saving faith with their preaching, which was accompanied by miraculous acts? What is clear is that, according to human standards, Jesus was not successful! But he did not tailor his message to the point that it would compromise its essence, its medium, or its purposes. Let's consider the following examples from Jesus' and Paul's ministry.

The gist of the teaching and preaching of Christ was the "kingdom of God" or the "kingdom of heaven." Yet his disciples, those about whom he said, "Blessed are you for your eyes see, and your ears hear (Mt 13:16), did not understand this central concept of Christ's message before his resurrection and Pentecost (see Acts 1:6). The general populace on many occasions failed to see Christ for what he was. He fed them with physical bread, in order that he might lead them to *real* food and drink, but they did not understand this (Jn 6:6–65). Sadly, thousands left and only a few remained, because his teaching was unintelligible to them. Jesus tried through parables, personal interaction, and miracles to open the eyes, ears, and hearts of his hearers, but not many grasped the gospel.

Does the fact that Jesus did not align his teaching and message with his hearers indicate that he was not pastoral, creative, or innovative? No! The fact that he went into the house of Zaccheus, that he ate with sinners and the unwanted, that he spoke to the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well, and that he showed concern to the rich young man, are all indicative of his care and love for his hearers. The fact that he did not change the substance of his message did not make him unloving, arrogant, rigid, negative, insensitive, and so forth. In the case of the Samaritan woman, he was even explicit that all Samaritans needed to change their religion (Jn 4:22).

The experience of Paul and Barnabas with both the Jewish and Gentile hearers is indicative that the pluralist approach to theology is not philosophically or biblically sound. In Acts 13:16–41, they tried in many ways to show the Jews that Jesus was indeed the Old Testament Messiah. The Christian "gospel," as they defined and proclaimed it, was that the Messiah promises were fulfilled (Acts 13:32–33). When this gospel of promise-fulfillment was rejected, Paul and Barnabas pronounced the

judgment found in Acts 13:46. When the Lystran people mistook them for the incarnation of their own deities, they were distressed and tore their clothes, and did not want the people to believe a lie (Acts 14:14–18).

When Paul met Peter in Antioch after the Jerusalem synod, the plight of the Gentiles was at stake. Even here there was absolutely no compromising or shuffling or juggling the doctrine of justifying faith in Christ.

David Tswaedi, "Pluralist Theology and Africa Today," *Logia* 17, no. 1 (Epiphany 2008): 10–11.

Footnotes

Footnotes for Mark, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:1 Some manuscripts omit *the Son of God*
- [2] 1:2 Some manuscripts *in the prophets*
- [3] 1:3 Or *crying: Prepare in the wilderness*
- [4] 1:11 Or *my Son, my* (or *the*) *Beloved*
- [1] 1:29 Some manuscripts *they*
- [2] 1:40 *Leprosy* was a term for several skin diseases; see Leviticus 13
- [1] 1:43 Greek *he*; also verse 45

Footnotes for Mark, Chapter 2

- [1] 2:16 Some manuscripts *and*
- [2] 2:16 Some manuscripts add *and drink*
- [3] 2:22 Some manuscripts omit *But new wine is for fresh wineskins*

Footnotes for Mark, Chapter 3

- [1] 3:2 Greek *him*
- [1] 3:32 Other early manuscripts add *and your sisters*

Footnotes for Mark, Chapter 4

- [1] 4:17 Or *stumble*

Footnotes for Mark, Chapter 5

- [1] 5:1 Some manuscripts *Gergesenes*; some *Gadarenes*
- [2] 5:2 Greek *he*; also verse 9
- [1] 5:15 Greek *daimonizomai*; also verses 16, 18; elsewhere rendered *oppressed by demons*
- [2] 5:17 Greek *him*
- [3] 5:36 Or *ignoring*; some manuscripts *hearing*
- [1] 5:38 Greek *he*

Footnotes for Mark, Chapter 6

- [1] 6:9 Greek *chiton*, a long garment worn under the cloak next to the skin
- [2] 6:14 Greek *his*
- [3] 6:14 Some manuscripts *He*
- [4] 6:14 Greek *baptizer*; also verse 24
- [5] 6:27 Greek *his*
- [1] 6:37 A *denarius* was a day's wage for a laborer
- [2] 6:48 That is, between 3 **A**.**M**. and 6 **A**.**M**.

Footnotes for Mark, Chapter 7

- [1] 7:3 Greek *unless they wash with a fist*, probably indicating a kind of ceremonial washing

- [2] 7:4 Greek *unless they baptize*; some manuscripts *unless they purify themselves*
- [3] 7:4 Some manuscripts omit *and dining couches*
- [1] 7:11 Or *an offering*
- [2] 7:15 Some manuscripts add verse 16: *If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear*
- [3] 7:19 Greek *goes out into the latrine*
- [4] 7:24 Some manuscripts omit *and Sidon*
- [1] 7:36 Greek *he*

Footnotes for Mark, Chapter 8

- [2] 8:10 Some manuscripts *Magadan*, or *Magdala*
- [1] 8:15 Some manuscripts *the Herodians*
- [2] 8:25 Greek *he*
- [1] 8:35 The same Greek word can mean either *soul* or *life*, depending on the context; twice in this verse and once in verse 36 and once in verse 37

Footnotes for Mark, Chapter 9

- [2] 9:3 Greek *no cloth refiner*
- [3] 9:5 *Rabbi* means *my teacher*, or *my master*
- [1] 9:7 Or *my Son, my* (or *the*) *Beloved*
- [2] 9:24 Some manuscripts add *with tears*
- [1] 9:29 Some manuscripts add *and fasting*
- [2] 9:38 Some manuscripts add *who does not follow us*
- [3] 9:42 Greek *to stumble*; also verses 43, 45, 47
- [4] 9:43 Greek *Gehenna*; also verse 47
- [5] 9:43 Some manuscripts add verses 44 and 46 (which are identical with verse 48)

- [1] 9:49 Some manuscripts add *and every sacrifice will be salted with salt*

Footnotes for Mark, Chapter 10

- [2] 10:7 Some manuscripts omit *and hold fast to his wife*
- [1] 10:24 Some manuscripts add *for those who trust in riches*
- [2] 10:26 Some manuscripts *to one another*
- [1] 10:43 Greek *diakonos*
- [2] 10:44 Greek *bondservant* (*doulos*)

Footnotes for Mark, Chapter 11

- [3] 11:1 Greek *he*
- [1] 11:19 Some manuscripts *he*
- [2] 11:24 Some manuscripts *are receiving*
- [1] 11:25 Some manuscripts add verse 26: *But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father who is in heaven forgive your trespasses*

Footnotes for Mark, Chapter 12

- [2] 12:2 Greek *bondservant*; also verse 4
- [3] 12:10 Greek *the head of the corner*
- [1] 12:14 Greek *you do not look at people's faces*
- [2] 12:15 A *denarius* was a day's wage for a laborer
- [3] 12:19 Greek *his brother*
- [1] 12:42 Greek *two lepta*, which make a *kodrantes*; a *kodrantes* (Latin *quadrans*) was a Roman copper coin worth about 1/64 of a *denarius* (which was a day's wage for a laborer)

Footnotes for Mark, Chapter 13

- [1] 13:33 Some manuscripts add *and pray*
- [2] 13:34 Greek *bondservants*
- [3] 13:35 That is, the third watch of the night, between midnight and 3 **A**.**M**.

Footnotes for Mark, Chapter 14

- [1] 14:3 *Leprosy* was a term for several skin diseases; see Leviticus 13
- [2] 14:5 A *denarius* was a day's wage for a laborer
- [1] 14:24 Some manuscripts insert *new*
- [1] 14:34 Or *keep awake*; also verses 37, 38
- [2] 14:47 Greek *bondservant*
- [1] 14:55 Greek *Sanhedrin*
- [2] 14:60 Or *Have you no answer to what these men testify against you?*
- [3] 14:68 Or *forecourt*
- [4] 14:68 Some manuscripts omit *and the rooster crowed*
- [5] 14:72 Or *And when he had thought about it, he wept*

Footnotes for Mark, Chapter 15

- [1] 15:15 A Roman judicial penalty, consisting of a severe beating with a multi-lashed whip containing imbedded pieces of bone and metal
- [2] 15:16 Greek *the praetorium*
- [3] 15:16 Greek *cohort*; a tenth of a Roman legion, usually about 600 men
- [1] 15:25 That is, 9 a.m.
- [2] 15:27 Some manuscripts insert verse 28: *And the Scripture was fulfilled that says, "He was numbered with the transgressors"*
- [3] 15:33 That is, noon
- [4] 15:33 That is, 3 **P**.**M**.
- [5] 15:39 Some manuscripts insert *cried out and*
- [6] 15:39 Or *a son*
- [1] 15:44 Or *Pilate wondered whether he had already died*
- [2] 15:46 Greek *he*

Footnotes for Mark, Chapter 16

- [3] 16:8 Some manuscripts end the book with 16:8; others include verses 9-20 immediately after verse 8. A few manuscripts insert additional material after verse 14; one Latin manuscript adds after verse 8 the following: *But they reported briefly to Peter and those with him all that they had been told. And after this, Jesus himself sent out by means of them, from east to west, the sacred and imperishable proclamation of eternal salvation*. Other manuscripts include this same wording after verse 8, then continue with verses 9-20

Study Notes

MARK—NOTE ON 1:1 *gospel*. Gk *euangelion*. Here used as (1) fulfillment of God's promises to Israel about forgiveness and new life through the Messiah and (2) an extended account of Jesus' teaching and healing ministry, His crucifixion, and resurrection from the dead. "Sometimes [gospel] is used to mean the entire doctrine of Christ, our Lord … this includes the explanation of the Law and the proclamation of the favor and grace of God His heavenly Father" (FC SD V 4). See pp 1571–74. *Jesus Christ, the Son of God*. A major theme of Mk (see "Jesus as the Son of God," pp 1652–53; cf 1:11; 8:29; 15:39).

MARK—NOTE ON 1:2–3 OT passages now fulfilled. "John the Baptist (preceding Christ) is called a preacher of repentance, but this is for the forgiveness of sins. That is, John was to accuse all and convict them of being sinners. This is so they can know what they are before God and acknowledge that they are lost. So they can be prepared for the Lord [Mark 1:3] to receive grace and to expect and accept from Him the forgiveness of sins" (SA III III 5). *Isaiah*. Because he was Israel's preeminent prophet, only his name need be mentioned here. See p 1646. He is the only prophet quoted in Mk (cf 7:6–7).

MARK—NOTE ON 1:2 Cf Ex 23:20.

MARK—NOTE ON 1:3 See note, Mt 3:3.

MARK—NOTE ON 1:4 *John*. See note, Mt 3:1. *wilderness*. Prophets and their activity are frequently set in the wilderness (e.g., Elijah; 1Ki 19:4–8). Here, it probably refers to where the Jordan River empties into the Dead Sea. See color map 4. *baptism*. Even before John the Baptist appeared, different groups within Judaism likely practiced baptism. Rabbinic literature notably mentions that Gentiles converting to Judaism were expected to undergo circumcision and a proselyte baptism, and to make an offering. These rites marked full acceptance into the community of God's chosen people. But John insisted that Jews needed to repent and be baptized, implying that they were no better than Gentiles. *repentance*. See note, Mt 3:2. *forgiveness*. John's Baptism removed the guilt of sin. Christian Baptism, which Jesus instituted after the resurrection (Mt 28:19–20), delivers this same blessing (Ac 2:38–39; 1Pt 3:21). See p 1369; see also *Ant* 18:117.

MARK—NOTE ON 1:5 *all*. Hyperbole. John attracted large numbers. For this reason, Herod began to worry about his influence (6:17–20). *confessing*. Gk *exomologeo*, a public acknowledgment of the need for forgiveness and a belief that God provided it through this washing.
MARK—NOTE ON 1:6 *camel's hair … leather belt*. Worn by Elijah and other prophets. Jews of Jesus' day expected Elijah to return just before the Messiah would come. Jesus later equated John's ministry with this expected return of Elijah (9:11–13; cf 6:15). *ate locusts and wild honey*. John's diet was just as unusual as his attire. These foods functioned as "enacted prophecies" against the prevailing worldliness and excessive concern for creature comfort. Locusts are mentioned as food in the Cairo Damascus Document 12:14. They were cleansed by water or fire before eaten. See p 236.
MARK—NOTE ON 1:7 *He who is mightier*. The coming Messiah. Jesus later characterizes Himself as the One stronger than Satan (3:23–27). *strap … untie*. Tying and untying the master's shoes were among the lowliest tasks performed by slaves. Thus, John casts himself as a humble servant of the coming Messiah.
MARK—NOTE ON 1:8 *baptize you with the Holy Spirit*. See note, Mt 3:11.
MARK—NOTE ON 1:1–8 Mark begins by telling of (1) John's call to repentance, (2) Baptism, and (3) eager expectation of the Messiah's coming. John warns us not to adopt worldly values and expectations. Happily, all of us who are baptized have received the promised Holy Spirit, who continually forgives us, restores us, and focuses us on the splendor of Jesus' second coming. • Lord, remind us of the washing we received in Baptism, for through it Your Holy Spirit was poured into our hearts. Keep us steadfast in the hope of Your glory. Amen.
MARK—NOTE ON 1:9 *those days*. It is unclear how long John preached before Jesus came to him to be baptized, but it was long enough to have gathered some disciples (cf Jn 1:35). The focus now shifts from John's ministry to that of Jesus. *Jesus came … baptized by John*. See note, Mt 3:13.
MARK—NOTE ON 1:10 *He … Him*. Jesus. *came up out of the water*. Suggests that Jesus was either immersed or sprinkled while standing in the river. See note, 7:3–4. See p 1369. *immediately*. Gk *euthus* occurs 41 times in Mk but only 10 additional times in the rest of the NT. It underlines both

the urgency of Jesus' ministry and His march toward the cross. *heavens being torn open*. See note, Mk 15:38. *Spirit*. The Messiah would possess the Spirit of the Lord (Is 11:2; 42:1; 61:1). The prophecies are fulfilled. *on Him*. Lit, "into Him."

MARK—NOTE ON 1:11 See notes, 1:1; Mt 3:16–17; Lk 3:22.

MARK—NOTE ON 1:9–11 The Father declares Jesus is His Son as the Spirit descends on Jesus. Jesus' status as God's Son makes Him a target of Satan's assaults (1:12–13). This same dynamic continues in the lives of God's children today, as Satan does all that he can to tempt the baptized. Yet, our own Baptism joins us to Christ and clothes us with His righteousness. • Lord, You humbly stood in our stead when baptized by John and thereby gave us a share in Your life, death, and resurrection. Let us therefore celebrate our place in God's family, obeying the Father, dwelling richly in the Spirit, and ever following You. Amen.

MARK—NOTE ON 1:12–13 Immediately after being revealed as God's Son, Jesus' archenemy, Satan, begins to assault Him. Jesus emerges from His time of testing perfectly, without succumbing to temptation in any way. He thus achieves something greater than all those tempted before Him and foreshadows the climax of the Gospel. There, He will undergo greater temptations but will rise victorious over the grave.

MARK—NOTE ON 1:12 *wilderness*. See notes, v 4; Mt 4:1.

MARK—NOTE ON 1:13 *forty days*. See p 217. *with the wild animals*. Likely meant to evoke prophetic depictions of the messianic age (cf Is 11:6–8; 65:25). *angels*. Ministering angels contrast sharply with Satan, the fallen angel who brings temptation rather than help.

MARK—NOTE ON 1:12–13 Jesus' successful struggle against temptation in the wilderness prefigures His final victory at the cross over our ancient foe. From the days of Adam and Eve, we have continuously fallen into Satan's traps. Jesus, after uniting Himself with fallen humans through Baptism, won a preliminary victory over the evil foe's temptations. At the cross, Jesus gained an even more wonderful victory for us. His resurrection proves that Satan cannot prevail. • Lord, when we are tempted, remind us of Your own struggles and trials. You have broken Satan's power once and for all. Amen.

MARK—NOTE ON 1:14 *arrested*. Mentioned in passing; 6:14–29 gives the full account of the prophet's imprisonment and execution. Mk focuses

on Jesus and the ministry He is beginning. *gospel*. See note, v 1.

MARK—NOTE ON 1:15 The Kingdom has come in the advent of Jesus (the verb "is" emphasizes completed action), for He came to fulfill all of God's promises about the salvation of the world. Throughout His ministry, Jesus invites people to enjoy God's kind rule by living under His grace and righteousness. Luth: "Once we have His Word, true doctrine, and true worship, we also pray that His kingdom may be in us and remain in us; that is, that He may govern us in this doctrine and life, that He may protect and preserve us against all the power of the devil and his kingdom, and that He may shatter all the kingdoms that rage against His kingdom, so that it alone may remain" (AE 21:146). *kingdom of God*. Not a confined geographical territory, but wherever and whenever people are ruled by God through their faith in His Son. See pp 1565–66. *at hand*. Or, "here." *repent and believe in the gospel*. Echoes John's call for a public show of contrition and an adoption of a new way of life (cf vv 2–4). See p 320. "In its proper sense, *Gospel* does not mean the preaching of repentance, but only the preaching of God's grace. This follows directly after the preaching of repentance" (FC SD V 6). See note, 1:1.

MARK—NOTE ON 1:14–15 On the one hand, Jesus' message sounds much like the message of John and the prophets. On the other hand, the arrival of the Messiah fulfills prophecy and ushers in a new era. The Church's message today has the same combination of new and old. True, it focuses on the age-old problem of sin and human failure. However, the Gospel delivers the forgiveness of sins and with it the hope of an eternal future with God. • Lord, help us to see You clearly and so believe that Your kingdom is still among us. Move us to a steadfast hope for the future and to daily repentance and new life. Amen.

MARK—NOTE ON 1:16 *Sea of Galilee*. See note, Mt 4:18. *Simon and Andrew*. Jesus' first disciples (cf Jn 1:35–42). *Simon*. Jesus later named him Peter (3:16). *net*. Circular and c 10–15 ft in diameter, it could be thrown either from the shore or from a boat.

MARK—NOTE ON 1:17 Jesus' practice contrasts sharply with that of other rabbis, who were chosen by those who wanted to follow their teaching. Jesus, however, chose those whom He wished to follow Him. Like fishermen, then, Jesus' disciples were likewise expected to draw others into the Kingdom.

MARK—NOTE ON 1:18 *immediately*. See note, v 10. Emphasizes the disciples' unquestioning response to Jesus' call. Given that the promises of God's kingdom were being fulfilled (v 15), one might expect all people to respond to Jesus' invitation as did Peter and Andrew.
MARK—NOTE ON 1:19 *James … John*. Brothers later dubbed "Sons of Thunder" by Jesus (3:17). Along with Peter, they formed something of an inner circle among the 12 apostles (cf 5:37; 9:2; 14:33). See p 1780. *mending the nets*. A regular task for fishermen.
MARK—NOTE ON 1:20 James and John's fishing business was large enough that it supported laborers from outside the family. Walking away from this business, therefore, meant leaving a successful trade and a relatively secure future.
MARK—NOTE ON 1:16–20 The first thing Jesus does in His public ministry is to call two pairs of brothers. They respond by dropping everything, following Him, and becoming "fishers of men." The same invitation to discipleship confronts people today: either drop everything and, in faith, follow Jesus and make sacrifices, or run the risk of missing out on the Kingdom. Thankfully, we are not left to our own devices in this regard. God's Holy Spirit, working through the Word and Sacraments, moves us to faithful discipleship and so also to eternal life. • Lord, thank You for calling us into Your kingdom, for which You declare us fit by Your grace. Keep us faithful in our calling, for Jesus' sake. Amen.
MARK—NOTE ON 1:21 *Sabbath*. See note, Ex 16:23. *entered the synagogue*. Like other pious Jews, Jesus joined the community in corporate worship on the Sabbath. *synagogue*. See p 1557. *teaching*. Mk tells us more of what Jesus did than what he taught. However, the reaction of Jesus' opponents to His teaching plays a large role in Mk. In fact, Jesus' controversial teachings—most of which were accompanied by equally provocative actions—produce such outrage in His opponents (cf 2:5–12, 16–17, 18–19, 23–28; 3:1–5) that they are already planning on killing Him by 3:6.
MARK—NOTE ON 1:22 Jesus never used the prophetic formula "thus says the LORD." In contrast to the scribes, whose authority derived from the teachings they received from their forefathers, Jesus spoke as one uniquely authorized by His Father in heaven. *scribes*. See pp 719–20.
MARK—NOTE ON 1:23–26 Just as Jesus faced Satan immediately after His Baptism, so also here He is met by a demon-possessed man at the

beginning of His teaching ministry. Exorcisms, common in Mk (3:11; 5:13; 9:25), reveal Jesus' identity and power.
MARK—NOTE ON 1:24 *us … us?* Either more than one demon possessed this man (as in 5:9) or Jesus' attack on one demon was a declaration of war on them all. *destroy*. After the outcome of the temptation (vv 12–13; cf Mt 4:10–11), the demons expect only punishment from Jesus. *Holy One of God*. Title similar to "Son of God." See p 1227. In the ancient world, people believed that knowing the real name of a divine being gave one control over that deity. This demon knew Jesus' true identity and yet could not overcome Him. Though the demons often use messianic titles for Jesus, the disciples fail to do so until much later (8:29). Their slowness to recognize Jesus' messianic status is a major theme of Mk.
MARK—NOTE ON 1:25 *Be silent*. See "Secrecy," p 1653.
MARK—NOTE ON 1:27 *A new teaching with authority!* Jesus' teaching is supported by miraculous signs. Because of His deeds, Jesus needed no one to support the truth of His words. His actions spoke clearly for themselves.
MARK—NOTE ON 1:28 *fame*. Jesus' incredible popularity characterized the early days of His ministry (e.g., v 45; 2:2; 3:8, 20; 4:1).
MARK—NOTE ON 1:21–28 Jesus' authoritative teaching and power over the unclean spirits create an immediate stir among those beholding Him in the early days of His ministry in Galilee. Today, we often see the same thing. People continue to be interested in and even amazed by Jesus' teaching, and yet many fail to depend on Him for life and salvation. By the power of His authoritative Word and Spirit, however, others are indeed brought into saving faith and life. • Lord Jesus, move us to an unquestioning trust and mature faith in You. By the power of Your Word and Spirit, make us steadfast in the hope of glory. Amen.
MARK—NOTE ON 1:29 *house of Simon*. See note, Mt 8:14. *Simon and Andrew*. See note, v 16.
MARK—NOTE ON 1:30 *Simon's mother-in-law*. Simon Peter was married. *fever*. Often a symptom of a serious illness. *they*. The disciples.
MARK—NOTE ON 1:31 *lifted her up*. Touched her. This is similar to how He revived Jairus's daughter (5:41–42). See notes, 7:33; Lk 5:13. *she began to serve*. Indicates the completeness and instantaneousness of her recovery.
MARK—NOTE ON 1:32 *sundown*. See note, Lk 4:40. *oppressed by demons*. See note, Mt 8:16.
MARK—NOTE ON 1:33 *whole city*. See note, v 5.

MARK—NOTE ON 1:34 *not permit … to speak*. See "Secrecy," p 1653; see also note, Lk 4:41.

MARK—NOTE ON 1:29–34 Jesus' first day of public ministry—the Sabbath—is a busy one. Given the endless series of things to which Jesus attends, we sometimes imagine that He is too busy for us and our problems. But Jesus knows and cares for each of us individually. He actually commands us to lay all our needs before Him and stands ever willing and able to help us. • Lord, teach us to turn to You in every need. Then give us grateful hearts so that, after receiving Your kindness and healing, we thank and serve You. Amen.

MARK—NOTE ON 1:35 *desolate place … prayed*. Though Jesus had plenty to do in Capernaum (vv 29–34), He nonetheless retreated into the wilderness in order to pray. The Gospels repeatedly depict Jesus spending time alone in prayer (cf 6:46; Lk 5:16; 6:12).

MARK—NOTE ON 1:38 Jesus refused to stay within the friendly confines of Capernaum (see note, Mt 4:13). He was committed to preaching, exorcising demons, and healing throughout Israel.

MARK—NOTE ON 1:35–39 Though Jesus has much more to do among the people of Capernaum, He makes time for private devotion and then insists on moving on to visit other towns and villages. His unswerving adherence to the right priorities stands in sharp contrast with our own tendency to lose focus, allow others to set our agenda, and put lesser things above what is most important. Given our weaknesses, it is reassuring that Jesus keeps things straight. His highest goal was, and is, to fulfill the Father's command that He save the lost. • Lord, preserve us from misplaced priorities. Keep us focused on Your Gospel, that we may know and do what is pleasing in Your sight. Amen.

MARK—NOTE ON 1:40 See note, Mt 8:2.

MARK—NOTE ON 1:41 *pity*. See note, Lk 7:13. *touched him*. See note, Lk 5:13.

MARK—NOTE ON 1:43–44 Jesus sent this man to the priest so that he might be officially pronounced clean. Jesus' touch thus resulted in two restorations: first, the man was restored to physical wholeness; second, he was able to resume his rightful place in society. *say nothing*. See "Secrecy," p 1653. *offer … for a proof*. Refers to the offerings and rites by which a leper was pronounced clean and allowed to return to society. *proof to them*.

Jesus wanted the priests to know He had power to heal and was abiding by OT Law.

MARK—NOTE ON 1:45 *spread the news*. Despite Jesus' warning (v 44), the man spoke of Him everywhere. *Could no longer openly enter*. See note, v 28. *every quarter*. Jesus' incredible popularity would soon cause conflict with even the scribes and Pharisees (2:1–3:6).

MARK—NOTE ON 1:40–45 When a leper seeks Jesus' help, the Lord not only heals him but also makes sure that the man is restored to his rightful place in society. Though we may no longer ostracize people for contracting leprosy, there are a host of ways that people experience alienation from family, church, and the larger community. But Jesus' healing will remedy such alienation. His grace makes peace with God, restores our broken relationships, and thus puts us right with one another. • Lord, thank You for Your healing power. Hear our cries for help, heal us according to Your wisdom, and then move us to tell others what You have done. Amen.

MARK—NOTE ON 2:1–2 *at home … preaching the word*. Jesus' practice of preaching within a domestic setting, as described here, set a precedent for His followers. For the next 300 years, Christian worship services usually took place in house churches. See note, 1Co 14:23.

MARK—NOTE ON 2:1 *Capernaum*. See note, Mt 4:13.

MARK—NOTE ON 2:3 *paralytic*. Cause of this man's paralysis is not stated. Plainly, he was unable to move without the help of his friends.

MARK—NOTE ON 2:4 *removed the roof*. This would have resulted in debris and dust flying everywhere. Between the press of the crowd and the damage being done to the roof, the scene takes on elements of chaos and even danger. *bed*. Stretcherlike mat.

MARK—NOTE ON 2:5 *saw their faith*. Though Christian teaching often emphasizes—and rightly so—that people need to have personal faith, this story illustrates how one person acting in faith can benefit another. Thus, the four friends seek blessings for the paralytic because they believed Jesus could heal him. *Son*. Implies affection and familial concern. *your sins are forgiven*. See note, Mt 9:2. Given the widespread belief in Jesus' day that people became ill as the result of some personal sin, this word of grace is noteworthy. Cf Jn 9:1–5.

MARK—NOTE ON 2:6 *scribes*. See pp 719–20.

MARK—NOTE ON 2:7 *blaspheming!* See note, Mt 9:3. *Who can forgive sins but God*. See note, Mt 9:2.
MARK—NOTE ON 2:8 Jesus' knowledge of his opponents' inner thoughts reveals His supernatural perception and shows His divinity. Ironically, that is the very thing being called into question (v 7).
MARK—NOTE ON 2:9 *Which is easier*. See note, Mt 9:5. Ambr: "With His blood, then, as man, the Lord redeemed us, Who also, as God, has forgiven sins" (*NPNF* 2 10:247).
MARK—NOTE ON 2:11–12 Ambr: "He charged the man to perform an action of which health was the necessary condition, even while the patient was yet praying a remedy for his disease" (*NPNF* 2 10:269). This man would have had to pass through many people in this crowded house. His action provided incontrovertible confirmation that Jesus fully healed him. Jesus' miracles were live illustrations that He was the Messiah.
MARK—NOTE ON 2:12 *glorified God*. See note, Mt 9:8.
MARK—NOTE ON 2:1–12 In the presence of many who doubt Jesus' ability, He forgives and heals a paralyzed man simply by speaking the word. Today, there are still some who doubt the power of Jesus' Word—there will always be such naysayers. But, as Peter reminds us, though our flesh will perish, the Word of the Lord stands forever (1Pt 1:24–25). Through faith in the Gospel, we receive the promise of life everlasting. • Lord, You can do all things. Give us such a bold confidence in You that even those around us, many of whom are paralyzed by sin and doubt, may be blessed through our steadfastness. Amen.
MARK—NOTE ON 2:13 *teaching*. See note, 1:21.
MARK—NOTE ON 2:14 *Levi*. Also named Matthew. *tax booth*. Levi had long collected taxes in Capernaum. Such collaboration with the occupying Romans was considered traitorous by most Jews. See note, Mt 5:46.
MARK—NOTE ON 2:15 *reclined at table*. See note, Mt 8:11. *his house*. Levi's (Lk 5:29). *tax collectors*. See note, Mt 5:46. *sinners*. See p 959.
MARK—NOTE ON 2:16 *scribes of the Pharisees*. See ESV note; see also pp 719–20. Jesus' opponents become more numerous. In v 6, only the scribes opposed Him. *eating*. Pious Jews, esp Pharisees, would not associate with Gentiles, tax collectors, or openly wicked Jews, let alone eat with them. Sharing a table with sinners was regarded as a defiling act (Lk 15:1–2; Ac 11:3). See p 1671.

MARK—NOTE ON 2:17 Christ came to heal sinners (cf vv 1–12). See note, Dt 32:39. Just as physicians must have contact with the diseased, so also Jesus' ministry obliged Him to associate with sinners and social outcasts. See note, Mt 9:13.

MARK—NOTE ON 2:13–17 Jesus outrages His critics by calling Levi the tax collector to follow Him, then eats with a houseful of equally "defiled" people. This story invites the modern hearer to reflect: am I more like the manifest sinners of this story or like those who criticize Jesus' openness to be with the unworthy? Either way, you stand in need of forgiveness. Thankfully, Jesus brings healing and forgiveness to all, even manifest sinners and smug hypocrites. • Lord, preserve us from both our crass and hidden sins. Grant us a rich measure of Your grace, that others may see Your mercy and be drawn to the healing and fellowship that only You can provide. Amen.

MARK—NOTE ON 2:18 *Pharisees*. Originally, the name of this party meant "the separate ones." What separated the Pharisees from other Jews was their rigorous interpretations and strict observance of the Jewish Law. See p 1557. *fasting*. Pharisees fasted twice weekly (on the second and fifth days of the week, according to the *Didache*; *ANF* 1:174). This went far beyond the required annual fast (affliction) on the Day of Atonement (Lv 23:26–32; Ac 27:9) and the few mentioned in Zec 8:19. Fasting, therefore, was an important aspect of the Pharisees' ritual observance. See p 189.

MARK—NOTE ON 2:19–20 Fasting is a time for sorrow or penitence, whereas feasting is associated with joy. Jesus emphasizes that feasting is proper because the Messiah (the Bridegroom) is now present among God's people. Jesus hastens to add that He will someday be taken away from them (after His death, resurrection, and ascension), and then God's people will have occasions to fast. See note, Mt 6:16.

MARK—NOTE ON 2:21–22 See note, Mt 9:16–17.

MARK—NOTE ON 2:18–22 Jesus stresses that the time of fulfillment has arrived, and thus totally new ways of thinking and acting are in order. In our own lives, the same dynamic is at work. It will not do simply to patch some little bit of the Gospel onto our existing lifestyle and expect it all to hold together. Thankfully, the Lord offers such surpassingly great promises that the old is made obsolete. That is what Paul meant when he said, "If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation" (2Co 5:17). • Lord, so fill us with

the surpassingly great promises of Your Gospel that we count all else as loss for the greater hope of attaining eternity with You. Amen.
MARK—NOTE ON 2:23 See note, Dt 23:24–25.
MARK—NOTE ON 2:24 *not lawful*. See note, Mt 12:2.
MARK—NOTE ON 2:25–26 See note, Mt 12:3–4.
MARK—NOTE ON 2:27 *Sabbath was made for man*. Jesus clarifies God's purpose in establishing the Sabbath: this day of rest was primarily intended to restore people, not make them slaves of arbitrary rules and regulations. Luth: "Man was especially created for the knowledge and worship of God; for the Sabbath was not ordained for sheep and cows but for men, that in them the knowledge of God might be developed and might increase" (AE 1:80).
MARK—NOTE ON 2:28 Jesus' reason for referring to the story of David eating the holy bread (vv 25–26) comes clear: the Lord of the Sabbath—Jesus—is greater than King David. This bold claim to divinity is not lost on Jesus' critics, as 3:2, 6 show. See note, Lk 6:5. *Son of Man*. See p 2098.
MARK—NOTE ON 2:23–28 When the Pharisees accuse Jesus' disciples of violating the Sabbath, Jesus uses the opportunity to claim divine authority and assert His messianic status. Sadly, there are people today who still level criticisms like the Pharisees of old, criticizing Jesus' followers because they really wish to criticize the authority and status of the Lord. But neither Jesus nor His Church can be dismissed. Through these same disciples, Jesus would spread the good news of peace, rest, and comfort. • Lord, defend Your people from those who hate You and would therefore do harm to Your Church. Help the Church to see that the battle is Yours and that You can do all things. Amen.
MARK—NOTE ON 3:1 *entered the synagogue*. See note, Mt 12:9. *withered*. See note, Mt 12:10.
MARK—NOTE ON 3:2 *they*. Presumably, the Pharisees from vv 23–28, who accused Jesus' disciples of breaking the Sabbath. *accuse Him*. The Pharisees hoped to catch Jesus performing a healing and then accuse Him of breaking the Sabbath. In so doing, they would ironically prove the very point they were trying to deny, that Jesus was divine.
MARK—NOTE ON 3:4 *Is it lawful*. Rhetorical, since everyone knew that Jewish tradition allowed for the Sabbath to be broken if life was threatened. *they were silent*. Shows the weakness of the argument by Jesus' opponents.

MARK—NOTE ON 3:5 *anger, grieved*. Unlike Mt and Lk, Mk tends to emphasize Jesus' emotions (cf 7:34; 8:12; 10:21). *hardness of heart*. See "Hard-heartedness," p 1653. Jesus' adversaries did not care for the disabled man. They were so intent on being right that they were dreadfully wrong. They would not see that Jesus had come to have mercy on all people, including them. See note, Ex 4:21. *restored*. Began to function normally.

MARK—NOTE ON 3:6 *Pharisees … held counsel with the Herodians*. Pharisees would not normally ally themselves with Herodians, since they considered Herod's family to be an illegitimate dynasty. However, a shared hatred for Jesus drove these two parties together. See p 1557. *counsel*. Gk *symboulion*, appears in Mk only here and in 15:1, when the Jews take counsel against Jesus on Good Friday. Note how quickly Jesus' enemies oppose Him in Mk! *destroy*. Kill.

MARK—NOTE ON 3:1–6 Again, Jesus demonstrates His authority over the Sabbath, this time by restoring a man's hand. He knows all our burdens and desires to grant us rest. Call on Him in earnest prayer. When the Lord is for us, none can oppose us! • Lord, lead us to take Your Word to heart. By Your Holy Spirit, work in us a faith that knows You as the way, the truth, and the life. Amen.

MARK—NOTE ON 3:7–8 After the conflicts described in 2:1–3:6, Jesus withdrew to a remote area along the sea. Nevertheless, people from all over flocked to Him. Jesus' popularity among the common people thus contrasts sharply with His unpopularity with His opponents (cf v 6).

MARK—NOTE ON 3:9 The crowds, for all their affection, were about to trample Jesus. For His own safety, as well as for the welfare of those around Him, Jesus sought refuge in a boat. Cf Lk 5:3.

MARK—NOTE ON 3:10 *touch Him*. See note, Lk 5:13; cf Mk 5:28–29; 7:33; 8:23. Jesus' touch showed His compassion and willingness to cross boundaries for the good of others.

MARK—NOTE ON 3:11–12 *You are the Son of God*. See note, 1:24. *not to make Him known*. See "Secrecy," p 1653.

MARK—NOTE ON 3:7–12 In contrast to the Pharisees' and Herodians' hostility, the crowds enthusiastically press around Jesus to listen and be healed. The mixed reaction to Jesus has not changed over the years. Many still reject Him, while others desperately seek His help. He nonetheless attends to people's physical and spiritual needs. He continues to bless those who seek Him today. • Lord, draw us to You, that we might learn from You

and be healed by You. Count us among the eager crowds who leave everything else to be near You. Amen.
MARK—NOTE ON 3:13 *He went up on the mountain*. See note, 1:35.
MARK—NOTE ON 3:14–15 *twelve*. See note, Lk 22:30; see also p 217. *apostles*. See notes, Mt 5:1; Lk 6:13. *send them out … cast out demons*. Because the disciples were given to share in Jesus' ministry and its authority, they were even able to cast out demons.
MARK—NOTE ON 3:16 *Peter*. Transliteration of Gk adjective *petros*, which is related to the word for "rock." However, Peter was not always the stable fellow his nickname implied. He sometimes acts rashly (e.g., 14:29, 66–72). After the resurrection, however, Peter became much more of a bulwark.
MARK—NOTE ON 3:17 *James … John*. See note, 1:19.
MARK—NOTE ON 3:18 See note, Mt 10:3.
MARK—NOTE ON 3:19 *Judas Iscariot*. See note, Lk 22:3. *who betrayed Him*. This important detail reinforces that Jesus is a marked man, destined to suffer from wicked intrigues (cf v 6).
MARK—NOTE ON 3:20 *home*. See note, 2:1–2. Not clear whether Jesus was in His own house or perhaps that of Simon Peter. *not even eat*. Again, Mk emphasizes Jesus' popularity with the masses. The demands of the crowd hardly allowed Jesus and the apostles time for a meal.
MARK—NOTE ON 3:21 Jesus' immediate family thought He was delusional. The cause of this concern is not clear. However, as firstborn son, He would have important family duties that may have fallen to His siblings. This would cause tension (cf vv 31–35). *His family*. See note, Lk 8:19.
MARK—NOTE ON 3:13–21 Even as Jesus seeks to expand His ministry by appointing and sending 12 apostles, His family comes and tries to make Him stop what He is doing. How ironic that those who think they know Jesus best are trying to stop Him from fulfilling His mission! Unfortunately, similar examples are still seen, as when lifelong Christians undermine sound mission strategies. But the Lord and His mission are not overcome by even this opposition. Jesus willingly faced death and conquered it for us. In Him is our hope of eternal life. • Lord, overcome our fear when we do not understand Your plans. Focus us instead on Your call to follow and Your gracious promise to lead. Amen.
MARK—NOTE ON 3:22 Because Jesus' opponents could not deny His many miracles, they tried to impugn their divine origin, claiming that He

performed exorcisms by the power of Satan. *Beelzebul*. See note, 2Ki 1:2. *prince of demons*. Satan, not Beelzebul, was the leader of the demonic host. But Jesus' adversaries were more interested in heaping scorn than in being precise.

MARK—NOTE ON 3:23 *parables*. Here means something like "metaphor" or "illustration." See notes, Jgs 9:8–15; Mt 13:3. *How can Satan cast out Satan?* Rhetorical. Jesus shows the folly of claiming that He defeated the demons by Satan's power. Since the fall, Satan may properly be understood as "the ruler of this world" (Jn 12:31). At the same time, his authority is only what God allows (cf Jb 1:12; Jn 16:11; 1Pt 3:18–19).

MARK—NOTE ON 3:25 *house is divided*. Repeats the point made in v 24 ("a kingdom divided"), but is even more pointed within this context of the division within Jesus' own family (v 21).

MARK—NOTE ON 3:27 See note, Mt 12:29.

MARK—NOTE ON 3:28 *children of man*. Semitic way of referring to human beings (e.g., Ps 11:4; 12:1, 8; 14:2; 31:19). This phrase is also used frequently in the LXX. In the NT, it is used only here and in Eph 3:5. See "Son of Man," p 2098. *blasphemies*. See notes, Mt 9:3; 12:31.

MARK—NOTE ON 3:29–30 Famously difficult passage; it equates blasphemy of the Holy Spirit with the unpardonable sin—unyielding refusal to believe the Gospel and a rejection of the Holy Spirit's work to create faith in Jesus. *eternal sin*. Guilt of this sin brings one into the everlasting condemnation and punishment established for Satan and his evil angels (cf Mt 25:41). See note, 1Jn 5:16. Luth: "He calls the sin against the Holy Spirit a mortal sin. All of this is tantamount to saying: 'Whoever despairs in his sin or relies on good works sins against the Holy Spirit and against grace.' Of course, I should intercede for such people and pray that they may be freed from that sin and be converted; but it is impossible that God be gracious to them so long as they are given to that sin, it is impossible that God's grace be of greater effect in their hearts than that sin, as is true of other sins…. No, I must pray against that sin, as Moses did in Num. 16:15, against Korah, saying: 'Do not respect their offering.' For Korah, too, aspired to esteem before God by reason of his works, and so he sinned against grace. That is an intolerable sin. All other sins which let grace triumph and reign are forgivable" (AE 19:48–49).

MARK—NOTE ON 3:22–30 Those who refuse to recognize Jesus as God's Son and acknowledge His works as manifestations of the Holy Spirit

remain under the dominion of Satan. But Jesus has overcome Satan. Those baptized into Christ have received not only Him but also His promised Holy Spirit. • Lord, preserve us from the power of Satan. Remove any lingering doubts we might harbor, that we might be confident in the fact that You have bound him and rescued us from his dominion. Amen.

MARK—NOTE ON 3:31–35 Having answered the charges of His enemies, Jesus now directs attention to His family and their fears that He has lost His mind. *brothers*. See note, Lk 8:19.

MARK—NOTE ON 3:32 Note the irony. People who barely know Jesus are seated next to Him, eagerly listening, while His family is outside, trying to get close enough to make Him stop.

MARK—NOTE ON 3:33–35 *Who are My mother and My brothers?* To be clear, Jesus is not despising family ties and their importance (see note, Lk 2:51).Though earthly relations are crucial, one's relationship to God and His family of faith are even more important, since they form an eternal communion. See note, Mt 10:37.

MARK—NOTE ON 3:31–35 Loyalty to God takes precedence over loyalty to blood relations. This is still hard to hear today, as the temptation to put relationships with family and friends above God can be overwhelming. But the Lord wants us to have both relationships, and have them as healthy as they can be. He stands first in our lives because He placed Himself last, to humbly bear our sins and make us children of God. • Lord, thank You for the privilege of being included in Your eternal family. Keep us in this faith and life forever. Amen.

MARK—NOTE ON 4:1–34 First of two extended sections of teaching in Mk (cf 13:3–37). Parables here repeatedly draw comparisons with things from everyday life in order to clarify how God plants and grows His kingdom. Jesus reveals both grace and judgment in these parables. See note, Lk 5:36.

MARK—NOTE ON 4:1–9 Though typically called "the parable of the sower," this story's main point has more to do with the four kinds of soil than with the one sowing seed. Cf vv 14–20 for the parable's interpretation.

MARK—NOTE ON 4:1 *teach*. See note, 1:21. *sea*. Sea of Galilee. *into a boat*. See note, 3:9. *sat*. See note, Mt 13:2.

MARK—NOTE ON 4:3 *sower*. A farmer planting seed. See note, v 14. *sow*. After seed was sown, an oxen-drawn harrow (or even a flock of sheep or goats) was driven through the field to turn the soil over the seed.

MARK—NOTE ON 4:4 *the path*. Packed-down soil.
MARK—NOTE ON 4:5–6 Shallow soil over large stones warms up quickly after the winter cold, and so helps the seeds germinate and sprout quickly. Because such soil has no depth, however, the seedlings cannot sink healthy roots.
MARK—NOTE ON 4:7 A variety of thorny weeds grow in Israel, some as tall as 6 ft. Like all weeds, these deplete the soil of nutrients, leaving little for the plants being cultivated.
MARK—NOTE ON 4:8 This plant produces grain abundantly in comparison to the single grain sown. Even a hundredfold increase is attested! Cf Mt 19:29.
MARK—NOTE ON 4:9 Jesus challenges the hearer to consider carefully what has just been said and apply it to his or her life. This saying appears frequently in the NT (e.g., v 23; Mt 13:43; Lk 14:35; Rv 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22).
MARK—NOTE ON 4:1–9 The parable of the sower helps explain why not everyone who hears the Gospel believes it and bears the fruit of faith. Such failures are seemingly more common today than ever, even among traditionally Christian peoples. At the same time, the Word of the Lord accomplishes His good purpose. It works miracles in lives where the Spirit has His way. • Lord, continue to plant Your Word richly in us. Remove the stones and weeds that impede Your Word, and thereby bring forth a harvest of mature fruit in all who believe. Amen.
MARK—NOTE ON 4:10 The disciples still did not have "ears to hear" (v 9), and so had to ask Jesus for an explanation about the parable of the sower. Perhaps because they were too embarrassed to reveal their lack of understanding in public, they asked Jesus for an explanation in private.
MARK—NOTE ON 4:11 *To you has been given*. Before interpreting the parable of the sower for His disciples, Jesus first made clear that human beings cannot understand divine revelation unless given insight by God Himself. *secret of the kingdom*. This mystery has everything to do with a proper understanding of Jesus and His mission. Unfortunately, the disciples have still not understood Jesus' divinity and the nature of His mission. Particularly troublesome for them will be the idea that their Messiah has to suffer in order to complete His mission (cf 8:31–33; 9:30–32; 10:35–45). See "Secrecy," p 1653.

MARK—NOTE ON 4:12 *see but not perceive … hear but not understand*. See note, Mt 13:14–15.

MARK—NOTE ON 4:13 *How then will you understand*. Until the disciples believe that Jesus is the Messiah and interpret His teachings in light of His sacrificial suffering and death, they will never comprehend anything about Him. In fact, much of the unfolding plot in Mk involves the struggle of the disciples to accept that the Messiah will be rejected and crucified.

MARK—NOTE ON 4:14 Those sowing God's Word include Jesus Himself, the first disciples, and all subsequent teachers and preachers of the Gospel. The administration of Baptism and the Lord's Supper are included in this sowing activity.

MARK—NOTE ON 4:15 Just as Jesus can and will be rejected, so also His Word can suffer opposition. The human ego is not the only obstacle to the Word's reception. Satan and his evil hosts also work vigorously against the Word.

MARK—NOTE ON 4:16–17 Many converts joyfully begin a walk in the faith but then turn away when difficulties come. *tribulation or persecution*. Difficulties and troubles will come to all believers, even as they once came to Christ. That is why Jesus repeatedly warns people of the perils of following Him (8:34–35; Mt 10:22) and why His apostles repeatedly urge believers to persevere, despite trials (Gal 6:9; 2Tm 2:1–7; Heb 12:3–11; Jas 1:12; 1Pt 1:13–16; Rv 2:10; 3:11). See note, Heb 6:6.

MARK—NOTE ON 4:18–19 Like thorns that choke a growing plant, so the worries and pleasures of the world eradicate the feeble understanding of the Gospel.

MARK—NOTE ON 4:19 *unfruitful*. Here, as in other places, Jesus makes clear that the barometer of one's faith is not what one says, but rather what one does. In other words, the fruits of faith (good works) are the most accurate indicators of the sincerity of belief. Cf Mt 7:15–20; 12:33; Mk 12:1–9.

MARK—NOTE ON 4:20 *accept it and bear fruit*. Elsewhere, Scripture teaches that believers must be given grace in order to accept the Word and bear the fruit of faith (cf 1Co 12:3). That reality serves as a corrective to any thought that the productive soil is inherently better than the other, unproductive soils. "The Word is so effective that whenever it is seriously contemplated, heard, and used, it is bound never to be without fruit" (LC I 101).

MARK—NOTE ON 4:10–20 Jesus interprets the parable of the sower for His disciples. The failures of the various soils to produce for the Lord are still common: people even now refuse to hear, fall away when hardship comes, and allow worldly concerns to overwhelm their faith. Yet, by God's grace, many receive the Word in good faith and produce richly. Not even the gates of hell can prevail against His Church. • Lord, help us to see and perceive, to hear and understand. Remove every impediment to our faith. Let Your Word bring forth lasting fruit in our lives. Amen.
MARK—NOTE ON 4:21–22 *Is a lamp … put under*. Rhetorical; it is obviously self-defeating to light a lamp and then hide it. Jesus' followers are supposed to bring the light of the Gospel to the darkness surrounding them.
MARK—NOTE ON 4:22 *nothing is hidden*. See note, Lk 8:17.
MARK—NOTE ON 4:23 See note, v 9.
MARK—NOTE ON 4:24 Jesus assures His followers that, when they act graciously and righteously toward others, an even greater measure of goodness will come back to them. Cf Gal 6:9.
MARK—NOTE ON 4:25 *more will be given … taken away*. See note, Lk 8:18.
MARK—NOTE ON 4:21–25 Jesus continues the theme of producing for the Kingdom by comparing His people to lamps set on a stand and by promising that faithfulness will be rewarded. It is a great pity, therefore, that so many Christians thwart God's desire to bless faithfulness by failing to put their faith into practice wholeheartedly. The Lord forgives those who repent, and He calls us to focus on His mission. Though we are generous, He is more generous still and blesses more and more. • Lord, thank You for graciously rewarding our small kindnesses with outpourings of even more precious blessings. Amen.
MARK—NOTE ON 4:26–29 Although this parable and the one in vv 1–20 both involve the sowing of seed and its growth, this one makes a different point.
MARK—NOTE ON 4:26 *kingdom of God*. See note, 1:15.
MARK—NOTE ON 4:27 *sleeps and rises*. Although the farmer plays an important role in the cultivation of his field—after all, he sows the seed—its growth occurs apart from his efforts, even as he sleeps. *sprouts and grows; he knows not how*. Even today, many aspects of horticulture remain a

mystery. The more one studies nature, the more one marvels at its intricacy, as well as the wisdom and power of its Lord.

MARK—NOTE ON 4:28 The earth does not actually produce growth "by itself" (Gk *automate*). The plant owes its growth to the power of God, who both creates and sustains the natural order (cf v 26). Growth in the Kingdom is similarly the result of God's Word and Spirit, not the speaker or hearer (Rm 10:17).

MARK—NOTE ON 4:29 Image frequently used to describe judgment at the end of time (cf Is 17:5; Rv 14:14–19). By concluding this parable with a reference to the final judgment, Jesus underscores the idea that the Kingdom is moving toward a goal.

MARK—NOTE ON 4:26–29 God's kingdom grows mysteriously of itself, at its own pace, and through the power of the Word. This reality often causes frustration among those who eagerly long for a rapid expansion of the Kingdom, and all the more as we only have a short-term view of things. But God's kingdom grows according to His plan and timetable. And it is a great blessing that things ultimately depend on Him and not us, for only He is able to bring home a great harvest for life eternal. • Lord, as You have begun a good work by planting Your kingdom in our world, bring it to a full harvest in Your own good time. Amen.

MARK—NOTE ON 4:30 *compare the kingdom*. Only record of this phrase in Mk (cf Mt 13:24; 18:23; 22:2; 25:1).

MARK—NOTE ON 4:31 *mustard seed*. Proverbial in rabbinical teaching for its smallness (cf Mt 17:20). Technically a hyperbole, since the mustard seed is not actually the smallest seed known.

MARK—NOTE ON 4:32 *larger than all the garden plants*. One variety of mustard (*sinapis nigra*) can reach a mature height of 10 ft, making it the largest plant in an herb garden. *birds*. In contrast to v 15, here the birds represent people of every nation. Alludes to a prophecy comparing the Messiah's rule to a great tree in whose shadow "birds of every sort will nest" (Ezk 17:23).

MARK—NOTE ON 4:33 *able to hear it*. See notes, vv 9, 11.

MARK—NOTE ON 4:34 *privately*. See note, v 10. Jesus did not purposely make His teaching confusing. Rather, it was the people's preconceptions that made His teachings seem hard.

MARK—NOTE ON 4:30–34 Jesus' parables reassure believers that over time the kingdom of God will grow incredibly large, far beyond its unassuming beginnings. Precisely because the Kingdom grows so slowly and its Lord is so patient, believers tend to become discouraged and its enemies are emboldened. But in the end, the Kingdom alone will stand, and everything else will be overthrown. Thank God, He shelters His people of every nation in its eternal shade. • Lord, let us see both in fact and by faith that Your kingdom will someday be all in all. Keep us ever sheltered safely within its branches. Amen.

MARK—NOTE ON 4:35 *other side*. From the western side of the Sea of Galilee to the eastern shore, leaving the predominantly Jewish region of Galilee for the more Gentile region of the Gerasenes (See note, 5:1).

MARK—NOTE ON 4:36 *just as He was*. Jesus had entered the boat to teach (v 1). *other boats*. Only Mk notes the presence of other boats, though Jesus and the Twelve were evidently all in a single boat.

MARK—NOTE ON 4:37 *windstorm*. Sea of Galilee is c 700 ft below sea level. Mount Hermon, a 9,200-ft-high peak, sits only 30 mi NE. When the westerly winds coming off this mountain collide with the warm air over the lake, sudden and violent storms are sometimes produced.

MARK—NOTE ON 4:38 *asleep*. Jesus felt comfortable enough traveling by boat to nap on the way. *Teacher*. See note, Mt 8:19.

MARK—NOTE ON 4:39 *rebuked … Peace! Be still!* Jesus addresses creation by speaking to the storm as if it were a person. (See note, Dt 30:19.) By His authoritative word, He masters the wind and waves just as easily as illnesses and demons. *calm*. Remarkable because it was instantaneous and complete.

MARK—NOTE ON 4:40 *still no faith?* Jesus had assured the Twelve not much earlier that "the secret of the kingdom" had been given to them (v 11). However, they had yet to internalize His teaching and self-revelation. Their lack of understanding is a theme for almost all of Mk.

MARK—NOTE ON 4:41 *Who then is this*. They may have been wondering if Jesus was a miracle worker, such as Honi the Circle-Drawer and Hanina ben Dosa. They still did not understand that Jesus is more than a miracle worker; He is the Messiah and Son of God. None of them will acclaim Jesus as Messiah until 8:29.

MARK—NOTE ON 4:35–41 When Jesus rebukes the wind and waves, the lifeless storm shows a greater recognition of His divine power than the

disciples. Similar examples still abound, as the brute forces of nature invariably obey the Lord's commands better than people, including God's own children, obey them. But the Lord nonetheless continues to love and care for us, despite our dullness and doubts. He not only calms all of the storms in our lives but actually does so in ways that mature our faith and lead us to trust Him more deeply. • Lord, forgive our doubts, for we sometimes take Your silence as nothing more than sleepy indifference. Remind us that You never sleep nor slumber, but always keep us under Your watchful eye. Amen.

MARK—NOTE ON 5:1–20 These events do not take place within the city proper but in the outlying regions near the seashore. Mk records three episodes in which Jesus casts out unclean or demonic spirits (1:21–28; 5:1–20; 9:14–29). Each account exhibits a similar structure: opening conflict; exorcism; and finally, dismay and praise.

MARK—NOTE ON 5:1 *Gerasenes*. Gerasa was a city c 35 mi SE of the Sea of Galilee. See map, p 1576.

MARK—NOTE ON 5:2 *tombs*. In this region, archaeologists have unearthed "cavern tombs" (man-made caves carved out of rocky outcroppings). They are large enough to provide living space. *unclean spirit*. Contact with tombs was likely regarded as ritually defiling (cf Lv 21:1; see note, Lk 11:44). In folk piety, graveyards were believed to be the haunts of ghosts and disembodied spirits.

MARK—NOTE ON 5:4 Apparently, the townspeople feared the man's violent strength and had tried to bind him.

MARK—NOTE ON 5:5 *always crying out and cutting himself*. Demons drove this man to inflict wounds on himself (cf 9:18, 20, 22).

MARK—NOTE ON 5:7 *Jesus, Son of the Most High God?* See note, 1:24.

MARK—NOTE ON 5:9 Jesus forces these demons to reveal their name! *Legion*. Roman military units containing 4,000–6,000 soldiers. Roman legions were legendary for their ferocity and ability to impose their will upon others. A whole host of demons possessed this man.

MARK—NOTE ON 5:10 In one moment, the demons tried to gain control over Jesus by invoking His name (v 7); in the next, they begged Jesus not to expel them too far away.

MARK—NOTE ON 5:11–12 *pigs*. See note, Lk 8:32–33.

MARK—NOTE ON 5:12 See note, Mt 8:31.

MARK—NOTE ON 5:13 *drowned*. The death of the pigs powerfully attests that the demons' hold over this poor man was finally loosed.
MARK—NOTE ON 5:14 *herdsmen … told*. See note, Lk 8:34.
MARK—NOTE ON 5:15 *sitting there … in his right mind*. The sudden change in the man recalls the instant calm that Jesus brought to the storm in 4:39. *afraid*. The typical reaction to a stunning show of divine power. See note, Lk 5:8.
MARK—NOTE ON 5:17 See note, Lk 8:37.
MARK—NOTE ON 5:19–20 *tell them*. Though Jesus has commanded silence after healing others (e.g., 1:44; 5:43; 7:36; 8:26), He encourages this man to share the good news of his deliverance (see "Secrecy," p 1653). The man does so enthusiastically, spreading the word in numerous communities (Decapolis means "10 cities").
MARK—NOTE ON 5:1–20 Despite Jesus' magnificent work of deliverance, the reaction to Him is mixed. The man eagerly wishes to follow Jesus and then enthusiastically furthers His cause, while the townspeople ask Jesus to go away. The Lord still receives the same kind of mixed reaction today, even among those who follow Him, especially when doing so requires a change from established ways. But what remarkable kindness Jesus shows! He rescues people from the devil's power and even the grave itself, and then allows them to be witnesses to the wonders of His grace. • Lord, rescue us from the power of Satan, and draw us from the grave through Your resurrection. May we learn joyfully to tell our neighbors what good things the Lord has done. Amen.
MARK—NOTE ON 5:21–43 Both stories here center on females, and both mention a span of 12 years: the girl was 12 years old, and the woman had suffered from a hemorrhage for 12 years.
MARK—NOTE ON 5:22 *rulers of the synagogue*. See note, Lk 8:41.
MARK—NOTE ON 5:23 *lay Your hands on her*. Jesus had healed with a touch before (1:31, 41) and would several additional times. See notes, Mt 14:36; Lk 5:13. That said, Jesus was perfectly capable of effecting cures simply by saying the word (7:29; Mt 8:13).
MARK—NOTE ON 5:24–34 Account of Jairus and his daughter is interrupted by a story about the healing of the woman with a discharge of blood (cf 3:21–35; 6:7–30; 11:12–25; 14:1–12).
MARK—NOTE ON 5:25 *discharge of blood*. Likely a uterine hemorrhage. See note, Lv 15:25–30.

MARK—NOTE ON 5:26 The woman had tried all kinds of remedies. The Talmud listed 11 cures for such ailments, all of which we would consider superstitious; she likely tried such remedies.
MARK—NOTE ON 5:27 *touched His garment*. See note, Mt 14:36.
MARK—NOTE ON 5:29 *immediately*. In contrast to Jairus's anxious waiting (vv 22–24, 35), healing came instantaneously to this woman, who had waited so many years.
MARK—NOTE ON 5:30–31 *power … from Him*. Does not mean Jesus performed this miracle unawares or involuntarily. *Who touched My garments?* Not an accusatory question but an invitation for the woman to confess her faith.
MARK—NOTE ON 5:33 *fear and trembling*. The woman's illness involved impurity and thus left her open to the charge that she had defiled Jesus by touching Him.
MARK—NOTE ON 5:34 *faith has made you well*. To be clear, this woman's faith was not the main cause of her healing. Rather, her faith was the means whereby healing was received from the outpouring of Jesus' power and grace. See note, Lk 7:50.
MARK—NOTE ON 5:35 *Teacher*. See note, Mt 8:19. Jesus spent many hours teaching. He was far more than an instructor, however, as His miracles forcefully underscored.
MARK—NOTE ON 5:37 *Peter and James and John*. See note, 1:19.
MARK—NOTE ON 5:39 *not dead but sleeping*. The girl had, in fact, died, but Jesus was about to awaken her as easily as from a natural sleep. Because of the Lord's mastery over death and the resurrection promise, the NT repeatedly speaks of death in terms of "sleeping" (Mt 27:52; Jn 11:11, 13; Ac 7:60; 13:36; 1Co 11:30; 15:6, 18, 20, 51; 1Th 4:13–15). See p 1750.
MARK—NOTE ON 5:40 *laughed*. Ridiculed. See p 1335.
MARK—NOTE ON 5:41 *Talitha cumi*. Aram, "young one" (feminine), "arise." The power of these simple words from Jesus' lips was such that those witnessing their effect never forgot them. See "Imperial Aramaic," p 720. Ambr: "How quickly at the word of the Lord does the spirit return, the reviving body rise up, and food is taken, that the evidence of life may be believed!" (*NPNF* 2 10:187).
MARK—NOTE ON 5:43 *no one should know*. See "Secrecy," p 1653. *give her something to eat*. See note, Lk 8:55.

MARK—NOTE ON 5:21–43 Jesus heals Jairus's daughter and a woman with a chronic ailment. Like Jairus, we often worry that the Lord's delay in answering our prayers may end up in catastrophe. But the Eternal One, who overcame death by rising from the dead, never runs out of time. In fact, His gracious promise is that we shall share eternal life with Him. • Lord, grant us to believe without doubting that You can heal every illness. Give us patience, as well, that we might be unmoved while waiting for You to act in Your own good time and in accord with Your gracious will. Amen.
MARK—NOTE ON 6:1 *hometown*. Nazareth, the town where Jesus was raised (Mt 2:19–23), not Capernaum, from which He conducted His ministry (see note, Mt 4:13).
MARK—NOTE ON 6:2 *teach in the synagogue*. It appears that Jesus had not yet preached in the Nazareth synagogue, as He had in Capernaum. *teach*. See note, 1:21. *What is the wisdom*. See note, Mt 13:54.
MARK—NOTE ON 6:3 *carpenter*. Gk *tekton* applied not only to carpenters and woodworkers but also to those who fashioned goods from a combination of wood and stone (e.g., homes, which Jesus often mentions in His teaching). See p 2134. The context suggests that Jesus' old neighbors mentioned His days as a tradesman in order to draw an unflattering contrast with His new role as teacher. *brother*. See note, Lk 8:19. Though none of these four brothers of Jesus believed in Him as Savior during His earthly ministry (Jn 7:5), James and Jude did so after His resurrection. *James*. He saw the resurrected Jesus (1Co 15:7) and became a leader in the Jerusalem Church (cf Ac 12:17; 15:13; 21:18; Gal 1:19; 2:9, 12; Jas 1:1). He wrote the short Epistle that bears his name. See pp 2130–33. *Judas*. Wrote the short Epistle called Jude. *sisters*. Unfortunately, Jesus' sisters go unnamed and unnumbered. Consequently, nothing else is known of them. *took offense*. Jesus did not give offense; rather, the people took offense at His words and actions. *offense*. See note, Mt 13:57.
MARK—NOTE ON 6:4 See note, Mt 13:57.
MARK—NOTE ON 6:5 Jesus was fully capable of performing miracles in Nazareth, had He wanted to. Yet, He chose not to give any signs of His divinity to those who scoffingly dismissed Him. Jesus' miracles were gifts He freely gave, not proofs demanded of Him (cf 8:11–12).
MARK—NOTE ON 6:6 *unbelief*. The callous unbelief of Jesus' hometown contrasts starkly with the humble but dogged examples of faith in 2:2–5 and 5:34. *teaching*. See note, 1:21.

MARK—NOTE ON 6:1–6 Two very different astonishments stand side by side: Jesus' teachings amaze His hometown neighbors; yet their close-minded hard-heartedness leaves Jesus amazed. We see similar contrasts today as people experience so much goodness from God and yet remain unthankful and unbelieving. But Jesus did not retaliate or write people off, even when they scornfully dismissed Him. He took the world's rejection and, through His sacrificial death, reconciled all people to God. • Lord, give us eyes to recognize You, ears to receive Your Word, and hearts to believe its promises. By Your grace, bring us to the fullness of Your glory in heaven. Amen.

MARK—NOTE ON 6:7 *authority over the unclean spirits*. Jesus had appointed the Twelve (3:13–19); then they were with Him for some time, learning from His teaching and observing how He exercised authority. Now, He gives them a more active role in His ministry. Chief among the powers He gives them is the authority to cast out demons. See note, 3:14–15.

MARK—NOTE ON 6:8–9 The apostles were to depend wholly upon the kindness of others and the provisions of God. Given the shabby treatment Jesus just received in Nazareth (vv 1–5), this command must have sounded quite perilous.

MARK—NOTE ON 6:10 See note, Lk 9:4.

MARK—NOTE ON 6:11 *shake off the dust*. See note, Lk 9:5.

MARK—NOTE ON 6:12 *proclaimed … repent*. Repentance lay at the heart of both John's and Jesus' proclamations of the Kingdom (1:4, 14–15). The Twelve, therefore, continued and extended the ministries of John and Jesus. See "repent," p 1080.

MARK—NOTE ON 6:13 *anointed with oil*. See note, Ps 23:5. Christian fellowships today still practice anointing rituals for healing (Lk 10:34). See notes, 1Sm 10:1; Jas 5:14. See also *LSB Pastoral Care Companion*, p 34.

MARK—NOTE ON 6:7–13 The disciples multiply Jesus' healing and revealing ministry, building on the foundation laid by John the Baptist and anticipating their own ministries, which will bear full fruit after Jesus' ascension. Even as Jesus sends the Twelve, He anticipates that not everyone will welcome the Gospel, as is still true today. Nevertheless, God unfailingly opens hearts and doors to their ministry, and He promises to do the same until the end of time. • Lord, give us courage to share Your Word

to a dying world in these uncertain times. Open hearts to repentance and faith in the Gospel. Amen.

MARK—NOTE ON 6:14 *King*. Mt and Lk use the more specific term "tetrarch" (Mt 14:1; Lk 9:7) because the Roman emperor did not recognize Herod Antipas's claim to royalty. *raised from the dead*. Herod's fear and guilt over John's death likely caused his suspicion that the Baptizer had returned from the dead. Others also suspected that Jesus might be John raised from the dead (8:28).

MARK—NOTE ON 6:15 See note, 1:6.

MARK—NOTE ON 6:17 *Herodias, his brother Philip's wife*. Granddaughter of Herod the Great. Her present husband, Herod Antipas, was a son of Herod the Great. She had been previously married to Philip, another son of Herod the Great (Philip was also the half brother of Herod Antipas). In other words, both of Herodias's husbands were also her uncles.

MARK—NOTE ON 6:18 *not lawful*. Herod divorced his first wife, the daughter of a Nabataean king, in order to marry Herodias. (Nabataea was the region east of the Dead Sea.) However, it was not lawful for him to marry his brother's wife (cf Lv 18:16; 20:21). Furthermore, Herodias had divorced her husband, also forbidden by Jewish law.

MARK—NOTE ON 6:19 *Herodias had a grudge*. Given her shameful behavior (see notes, vv 17, 18), Herodias was understandably sensitive and therefore irked that John called attention to her divorce and remarriage.

MARK—NOTE ON 6:20 *Herod feared John*. See note, v 14. *righteous and holy man*. John was a prophet who sought neither riches nor political power. Prophets often rebuked kings for their sins (e.g., 2Sm 12:1–14). See p 843. *kept him safe*. Jewish historian Josephus wrote that Herod imprisoned John at Machaerus, a fortress overlooking the Dead Sea. There, the prophet was relatively safe from the hatred of Herodias. *heard*. John preached the Law but also that the Gospel of the kingdom of God was at hand.

MARK—NOTE ON 6:21 *nobles*. Part of the wealthy class, whose support Herod needed. *military commanders*. Along with the nobles, these people formed the backbone of Herod's support. *leading men*. Likely second-level rank of officials and civilian leaders.

MARK—NOTE ON 6:22 *danced*. Likely suggestively, in a manner calculated to gain favor. Planned by her mother, Herodias (vv 24–26).

MARK—NOTE ON 6:23 *up to half of my kingdom*. Herod did not have authority to dispense with half of his kingdom, but used the phrase as an

extravagant expression.
MARK—NOTE ON 6:24–28 Herod ironically attempts to save his honor by taking John's life.
MARK—NOTE ON 6:26 *exceedingly sorry*. Ambr: "[This] is not repentance on the part of the king, but a confession of guilt" (*NPNF* 2 10:385).
MARK—NOTE ON 6:28 *head on a platter*. Grisly display of John's severed head—at a meal, no less—illustrates the extreme corruption of Herod and his high society friends.
MARK—NOTE ON 6:29 Herod tries to salvage his reputation by allowing John's disciples to bury John's body. John's burial prefigures the interment of Jesus (15:42–47).
MARK—NOTE ON 6:14–29 Coming just after the story about Jesus' rejection in Nazareth, the tragic story of John gives an unmistakable foreshadowing of what awaits Jesus: rejection and even violent hostility. But rejection and violence cannot overcome the risen Lord. His victory over death and the grave shows how wonderfully He can turn such antagonism into life and salvation. • Lord, give us a faith like John's, especially his integrity and trust. Help us to believe unquestioningly that faithfulness unto death will receive the crown of eternal life. Amen.
MARK—NOTE ON 6:30 *The apostles returned*. Story begun in vv 7–13 resumes. Intervening account of John's death (vv 14–29) is a somber reminder that Jesus and His disciples will face the wrath of rulers like Herod.
MARK—NOTE ON 6:31–32 Despite an unending list of ministry tasks to get done, Jesus made time for Himself and His disciples to rest and recover. Presumably, this time of rest included instruction and prayer (cf 1:35; 7:17).
MARK—NOTE ON 6:32 *desolate place*. Not a desert, since there was green grass (v 39). See note, Lk 9:10.
MARK—NOTE ON 6:34 *compassion*. See note, Lk 7:13. *shepherd … teach*. Jesus, the Good Shepherd, fulfills the needs of His flock. Here, He provides instruction as well as an unforgettable meal (vv 37–44). Christian worship services today typically have Jesus' teaching and a miraculous meal as their most important elements. See note, 1:21.
MARK—NOTE ON 6:35–36 Because it was likely late afternoon, the people would have time to buy food at the market.

MARK—NOTE ON 6:37 *You give them something to eat*. See note, Lk 9:13. *two hundred denarii*. Over half a year's salary, a substantial amount.
MARK—NOTE ON 6:38 *Five, and two fish*. Obviously, this amount of food was insufficient for Jesus and the Twelve, let alone the multitude.
MARK—NOTE ON 6:39 *green grass*. Only Mk records this detail, possibly a vivid recollection from the disciple's memory.
MARK—NOTE ON 6:41 This sequence—taking the bread, speaking a blessing, breaking, and then giving—also occurs in the institution of the Lord's Supper (14:22), which may be foreshadowed here. See notes, Lk 24:30; Jn 6:51–58.
MARK—NOTE ON 6:42–44 *all ate … satisfied*. The Lord's superabundant provision was such that, despite the overwhelming number of people, no one went away hungry. *five thousand men*. Women and children were fed but not included in the number.
MARK—NOTE ON 6:30–44 When a multitude of Jesus' followers have far too little food for all to eat, Jesus multiplies five loaves and two fishes so that all are satisfied. When problems threaten us and needs overwhelm our resources, what is our reaction? Do we turn first to the Lord? We should, as His Word makes clear, for He still treats His flock with compassion and more than provides for every need of body and soul. • Lord, thank You for providing so abundantly and for graciously sustaining our bodies and souls. Teach us to turn to You first in every want and need. Amen.
MARK—NOTE ON 6:45 Jesus obliged the disciples to embark for the other shore. This shows that Jesus was responsible for the disciples' all-night struggle against the wind. Note further that this was the second time in a day that Jesus commanded the disciples to do something difficult or even impossible (cf v 37).
MARK—NOTE ON 6:46 *on the mountain to pray*. See note, 1:35.
MARK—NOTE ON 6:47 *out on the sea*. C 3–4 mi (cf Jn 6:19).
MARK—NOTE ON 6:48 *fourth watch*. From 3 to 6 a.m. See p 1567. The disciples had been in the boat for a long time, fighting with the wind for almost the whole night. *walking on the sea*. Jesus comes to reveal Himself as the Lord of all creation. *pass by them*. In the OT, God passed by Moses (Ex 33:22; 34:6) and Elijah (1Ki 19:11–13).
MARK—NOTE ON 6:49–50 *ghost*. Gk *phantasma*. Appears only here and in Mt 14:26. See note, Mk 5:2. The disciples are not far from the truth as

they assume that the one walking on the water is more than a mere mortal, for Jesus' divinity is clearly visible. *Do not be afraid*. This command will be echoed at another important moment of revelation—at the empty tomb (16:6).

MARK—NOTE ON 6:51 *wind ceased*. See note, 4:39.

MARK—NOTE ON 6:52 *did not understand about the loaves*. Despite the unmistakable ways Jesus had just displayed His divine nature and power, the disciples somehow remain in the dark. *hearts were hardened*. See "Hard-heartedness," p 1653. It is somewhat surprising that Jesus describes the disciples and His opponents in the same way (cf 10:5; 16:14). The disciples' lack of comprehension will only worsen in the coming chapters (e.g. 9:32; 10:32). Jesus' predictions of His death will prove most difficult for them to grasp.

MARK—NOTE ON 6:45–52 Demonstrating mastery over the winds and waves for a second time, Jesus calms another storm. Even more amazing, however, is the fact that Jesus' disciples still do not recognize His divine nature. Too often, our eyes are also blind and our hearts are just as hard. It is a good thing, therefore, that He who walked on the water that night also died in Calvary's darkness to save us from our hard-heartedness. • Lord, save us when we are overcome by life's storms and our hearts are darkened by unbelief. Calm the tempest, open our eyes, and create within us the faith to recognize You. Amen.

MARK—NOTE ON 6:53 *Gennesaret*. Town on the northwestern shore of the Sea of Galilee, between Capernaum and Tiberius. See map, p 1584.

MARK—NOTE ON 6:54 *recognized Him*. Note how starkly this picture contrasts with the depiction of the disciples in vv 50–51. The Twelve's hardened hearts had just failed to see Jesus' divine nature, even after He had multiplied the loaves and walked on the water.

MARK—NOTE ON 6:55–56 *laid the sick in the marketplaces*. Instead of the usual goods on the market, Jesus found a multitude of desperately ill people, all asking for His touch and healing. The numerous healings here in Gennesaret contrast with the few that were healed in Nazareth (6:5–6). *touch even the fringe*. This confidence echoes that of the woman who touched Jesus' garment and was healed (5:28–29). *fringe*. See note, Mt 14:36.

MARK—NOTE ON 6:53–56 Not long after Jesus' disciples failed to recognize an unmistakable display of His divinity, the people of Gennesaret

show great faith by receiving Jesus and clamoring for His healing power. Even today, those new to the faith often exhibit more conviction than those who have known Jesus for a long time. It is good news, then, that Jesus remains devoted to us even when our commitment wavers or fails. His resolve to suffer and die for all is ample proof of that. • Lord, give us the zeal of the Gennesaret believers. May we ever press toward You, resolute in our conviction that You can heal and restore us. Amen.

MARK—NOTE ON 7:1 *Pharisees … scribes*. In contrast to the sincerity of the throngs in Gennesaret, Jesus' adversaries renew hostilities. They were sticklers for the observance of detailed interpretations of the law. See notes, 2:18; Mt 2:4. *from Jerusalem*. See note, Mt 15:1.

MARK—NOTE ON 7:2 *hands … unwashed*. Not so much an issue of hygiene, but of ritual observance.

MARK—NOTE ON 7:3–4 Cf Ex 30:17–21; Lv 22:4–7 for laws intended for priests. This lengthy aside explains that the Pharisees required ritual washings, not only of those returning from the market, but also of different cooking utensils and even furniture. *wash*. Gk *baptizo*; same term used when referring to Christian Baptism. Though this verb may denote immersion, it also describes washings by pouring or sprinkling. See p 1369. *Did*: "Baptize into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, in living water. But if you have not living water, baptize into other water; and if you cannot in cold, in warm. But if you have not either, pour out water thrice upon the head into the name of Father and Son and Holy Spirit" (*ANF* 7:379). This shows the flexibility of earliest Christian practice as it adapted from the customs of Judaism. Archaeologists have discovered ritual washing pools or tanks (Hbr *miqwaoth*) that held c 60 gallons of water, which would have been running or "living" (cf Jn 4:10–11; 7:37–38) according to rabbinic custom. However, see notes, Ezk 36:25; Heb 10:22. See also Mishnah Teharot. *dining couches*. Cushions.

MARK—NOTE ON 7:5 The Pharisees and scribes expected the disciples and Jesus to follow their ritual practices, esp those involving washings.

MARK—NOTE ON 7:6–7 Jesus quotes Is to rebuke the hypocrisy of His pharisaical accusers. This passage contrasts insincere lip service with heartfelt obedience. *Isaiah*. See note, 1:2–3.

MARK—NOTE ON 7:8 Jesus' rebuke is aimed particularly at the Pharisees' elevation of human tradition above divine commandment.

MARK—NOTE ON 7:9–13 Jesus gives a concrete example of the Pharisees' hypocritical piety: He describes them as failing to obey the Fourth Commandment ("Honor your father and your mother") because they consider it more important to give special offerings than to support elderly parents. Such piety is ultimately self-serving and a sham. *Corban*. An offering above and beyond the tithes required by Mosaic Law.
MARK—NOTE ON 7:13 *making void the word of God*. A mere appearance of piety does not please God. He prefers that people simply obey His Commandments.
MARK—NOTE ON 7:1–13 Jesus criticizes the Pharisees for being overly concerned with man-made observances while failing to fulfill God's Commandments. Such hypocrisy still abounds, as most people worry more about human opinions than what God thinks. Given our own failures in this regard, it is a good thing that the Lord not only commands in His Word, but also graciously forgives and promises goodness. • Lord, cleanse us each day from our sins. We thank You that Jesus was made a fragrant, sacrificial offering for us. Amen.
MARK—NOTE ON 7:14–23 Jesus does not simply refute and criticize the Pharisees. He also teaches the people the correct understanding of God's will and human nature.
MARK—NOTE ON 7:15 Jesus turns the pharisaical conception of impurity upside down (see note, v 20).
MARK—NOTE ON 7:17 *left the people*. Jesus provided additional, private teaching for the disciples, away from the crowds (cf 4:10, 34).
MARK—NOTE ON 7:18 *without understanding?* See note, 6:52.
MARK—NOTE ON 7:19 *enters not his heart*. Cf v 15. Ritually impure food does not touch the heart and so cannot contaminate it. *all foods clean*. Jesus' teaching will affect the future Christian mission. Simply put, Gentiles will not need to observe Jewish dietary laws. The question of food laws caused much controversy in the first-century Church. Cf Ac 15:1–35; Rm 14:1–3; 1Co 8:7–13; see p 300.
MARK—NOTE ON 7:20 Jesus clarifies that what does indeed defile is not what enters from the outside, but rather what lurks in the hearts of fallen people.
MARK—NOTE ON 7:21–22 Beginning with sexual immorality, 12 kinds of evil thoughts and actions are combined in a dreadful list of vices. The first six are in the plural form and describe behaviors; the last six are in the

singular and have more to do with attitudes. These 12 vices leave no doubt as to the wretched impurity of the human spirit. See note, Ps 51:5. *heart*. See note, Mt 15:19.

MARK—NOTE ON 7:14–23 Jesus teaches that people are not defiled by food or other things entering the body from the outside, but rather by their own evil inclinations and sinful behaviors. This teaching exposes the uselessness of our own excuse-making and dismisses our claims that other people and things are to blame for our shortcomings and failures. However, Jesus does not merely condemn; He also sets free. Through His promises we are liberated from sin and reconciled to God. • Lord, renew us each day with clean hearts. By Your Spirit, give us joyous words, generous spirits, and behaviors that reflect Your glory. Amen.

MARK—NOTE ON 7:24 *Tyre and Sidon*. See note, Lk 10:13–14. *did not want anyone to know*. See "Secrecy," p 1653.

MARK—NOTE ON 7:26 *Gentile*. Mk stresses this woman's Gentile background, probably because of Jesus' previous debate with the Pharisees over what is defiling (vv 1–23). *she begged … her daughter*. Another case of one person's faithful intercession benefiting another (cf 2:3–5; 5:22–24; 6:56).

MARK—NOTE ON 7:27 Jesus' response to this woman is surprising on at least two counts. First, He implies she is a dog, which was a great insult (see notes, 2Sm 3:8; Php 3:2). Second, He suggests that He would serve Jewish people first (the children at the table). *dogs*. Gk *kunarion,* a diminutive form referring to family pets, not wild or street dogs.

MARK—NOTE ON 7:28 The woman seizes upon her characterization as a family pet and expresses her willingness to assume even a most modest place within the household.

MARK—NOTE ON 7:29–30 This outsider's great faith contrasts sharply with that of the Pharisees and even the disciples, who fail to understand much of what Jesus is teaching. Such unswerving faith results in the daughter's full recovery.

MARK—NOTE ON 7:24–30 In the regions of Tyre and Sidon, Jesus reveals that He has come to save the Gentiles along with the Jews. Unfortunately, the all-encompassing nature of His Gospel is viewed today as a threat by many Christian communities; outreach to other cultures might be ignored. But Jesus calls us to repent of such notions, and He reaches out to all people. No one lies beyond the scope of His love and grace. • Lord,

help us to share the Gospel with all people, especially those who are different from us, that all may be edified in the faith. Amen.
MARK—NOTE ON 7:31 *Decapolis*. Lit, "10 cities"; this region lay southeast of the Sea of Galilee. See color map 4.
MARK—NOTE ON 7:32 *deaf and had a speech impediment*. Because those unable to hear have difficulty learning to speak correctly, it is probable that this man had been handicapped from birth.
MARK—NOTE ON 7:33 *privately*. As will become clearer in v 36, this is another example of Jesus commanding silence in order to avoid misunderstanding about His identity (see "Secrecy," p 1653). *touched*. Here, touch made communication easier. Jesus tended to use touch in His healings (cf 1:31, 41; 5:28–29, 41; 6:56; 8:25). See note, Lk 5:13.
MARK—NOTE ON 7:34–35 *sighed*. Physical sign of emotion. See note, 3:5. *Ephphatha*. Aram word was later used in the Church's baptismal liturgies in order to emphasize the Spirit's power to open ears to the Gospel. *spoke plainly*. Once the man's ears were healed, he was also able to speak clearly. He immediately put this gift to work in praise.
MARK—NOTE ON 7:36 *tell no one*. See "Secrecy," p 1653.
MARK—NOTE ON 7:37 *done all things well*. Summarizes all of Jesus' works. The Pharisees will demand more signs (8:11–12). The crowds were awed and remained positive toward Jesus but, like the disciples, did not truly understand who Jesus is.
MARK—NOTE ON 7:31–37 Jesus heals another person in a Gentile region, further emphasizing His love for every race and kind of people. This serves as yet one more example of why we need to avoid the temptation to narrow the scope of the mission and to ignore opportunities to reach out to those who are different than ourselves. Jesus' healing of this man, immediately after He restored the daughter of the Syrophoenician woman, underscores that He desires to love, cleanse, and heal all people. • Lord, You have done everything well. Help us also to see the depths of Your mercy and grace, that we understand them as gifts meant for all. Amen.
MARK—NOTE ON 8:1 *In those days*. Maintains the tension described in the confrontations and miracles of ch 7.
MARK—NOTE ON 8:2 *compassion*. See note, Lk 7:13. *with Me … nothing to eat*. Crowds were wildly enthusiastic for Jesus (cf 1:37, 45; 3:9; 6:33, 54–55). They were so eager to stay with Him that they lost track of time and began to ignore basic necessities such as food.

MARK—NOTE ON 8:3 Jesus already had in mind to feed the hungry multitude; nonetheless, He invited the disciples to reflect on the problem (cf 6:37). Jesus tested them to see whether they would have faith.
MARK—NOTE ON 8:4 Once again, the disciples failed to recognize Jesus' true identity and lacked faith in His power. *desolate place?* See note, Mt 15:33.
MARK—NOTE ON 8:5–6 *Seven*. May represent the number of Gentile nations surrounding Israel (see p 345). There were 12 baskets of leftovers collected in 6:43, a number representing Israel. See p 217.
MARK—NOTE ON 8:6 *took … given thanks … broke … gave*. See note, 6:41.
MARK—NOTE ON 8:7 In contrast with 6:41, Jesus blessed the fish separately, after the bread had been distributed, thus making a second course that highlighted the bounty of the meal. *small fish*. Probably roasted until crisp. *blessed*. See p 842.
MARK—NOTE ON 8:8 *satisfied*. See notes, 6:42–44; Mt 15:37.
MARK—NOTE ON 8:10 *district of Dalmanutha*. Only NT mention. It was most likely on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee.
MARK—NOTE ON 8:1–10 Jesus' compassion moves Him to feed another hungry crowd by means of a second miraculous multiplication of bread. When Jesus confronts the disciples with feeding the crowds for a second time, they again fail to see that His power provides the way forward. How slowly we sometimes respond in faith! Yet how graciously Jesus continues to provide, both with His Word of forgiveness and with daily bread. He fully satisfies our bodies and souls. • Lord, deepen our hunger for Your Word, and so teach us to turn first to You in every need. Then feed us with Your multiple gifts. Amen.
MARK—NOTE ON 8:11 The Pharisees had already decided that Jesus must die (3:6). Thus, their behavior here is pure hypocrisy. *sign from heaven*. See note, Mt 12:38.
MARK—NOTE ON 8:12 *sighed deeply*. Display of emotion. See note, 3:5. *no sign*. Jesus refused to provide a gratuitous show of power. The only sign given to such unbelief will be Jesus' death and resurrection. See note, Mt 12:39.
MARK—NOTE ON 8:11–13 Even though the Pharisees have already rejected Jesus, they still try to demand that He prove His identity. Scoffers continue to do as much today, denying God but at the same time hurling

demands for proof toward Him. Believers, however, know that God is real, and they see the depth of His love in Christ's suffering and the glory of His promises in the resurrection. • Lord, when we hunger for a sign of Your presence and power, focus our eyes on Your empty tomb. Make this the lasting, satisfying sign that opens our eyes to You. Amen.

MARK—NOTE ON 8:14–21 By now, the disciples should have gotten the idea that a shortage of food was no problem for Jesus. However, they remain as blind to Jesus' true identity as ever.

MARK—NOTE ON 8:15 *leaven*. See notes, Mt 13:33; 1Co 5:6, 7; Gal 5:9. *Pharisees*. See note, Mk 2:18. *Herod*. See "Herodians," p 1557.

MARK—NOTE ON 8:16 *no bread*. Problem is not a shortage of food, but a lack of faith in the One who can provide for this and every need.

MARK—NOTE ON 8:17–21 Jesus warns against a failure to see His true identity and a lack of faith in Him as Lord. Significantly, His adversaries already know but reject His claims to be the Messiah. His disciples, on the other hand, are depicted as merely oblivious to His true identity.

MARK—NOTE ON 8:17 *Do you not yet perceive*. The Twelve had seen the clear testimony of Jesus' miraculous feedings—to say nothing of His many other miracles—yet did not grasp that Jesus is the Messiah. *hearts hardened?* See notes, Ex 4:21; 9:12.

MARK—NOTE ON 8:21 Repetition of this question (v 17) anticipates the great moment when the disciples recognize Jesus (v 29).

MARK—NOTE ON 8:14–21 The disciples remember their lack of bread but forget about the One who is with them, the very Lord and Creator of all. At times, we are similarly hard-hearted and shortsighted, focusing so much on our need for daily bread that we forget to call upon Jesus, the very bread of life. Nevertheless, Jesus patiently teaches His disciples, showing over and over that He alone can satisfy our deepest needs. • Lord, open the eyes of our hearts, so that we see You as the very bread from heaven, the answer to all our wants and needs. Amen.

MARK—NOTE ON 8:22 *Bethsaida*. Village on the northeast shore of the Sea of Galilee. See color map 4.

MARK—NOTE ON 8:23 *out of the village*. Jesus heals the man away from the crowds. Cf 5:40; 7:33; see "Secrecy," p 1653. *spit on his eyes*. Jesus used His saliva as a means of healing on other occasions. See note, Jn 9:6. *laid His hands on him*. See note, 7:33.

MARK—NOTE ON 8:24 *like trees, walking*. The man sees unclearly at first. It may indicate that the man was not born blind but lost his sight. (He knows something is still wrong in what he now sees.)
MARK—NOTE ON 8:25 *again*. Only two-step miracle recorded in the Gospels. The blind man receives his sight slowly. In the same way, the disciples do not understand what they are seeing; Jesus must teach them who He is again and again (v 31; 9:31; 10:32–33).
MARK—NOTE ON 8:26 See "Secrecy," p 1653.
MARK—NOTE ON 8:22–26 Jesus heals a blind man as His disciples continue to struggle with the issue of who Jesus is and what He has come to do. Sin blinds all of us. Yet, Jesus' gracious touch opens our eyes so that, despite our weaknesses, we recognize Him as the Christ and believe in Him unto life everlasting. • Lord, open our eyes to see You and Your ways. Help us to recognize and confess You clearly as our great physician. Amen.
MARK—NOTE ON 8:27 *Caesarea Philippi*. Northernmost Galilean city Jesus visited, 25 mi N of Bethsaida, in the largely Gentile region north of the Sea of Galilee. See color map 4.
MARK—NOTE ON 8:28 See note, Mt 16:14. *John the Baptist*. See note, 6:14. *Elijah*. See note, 1:6. *prophets*. Jesus, though indeed a prophet, was much more.
MARK—NOTE ON 8:29 Jesus' point in pressing this question of His identity is to get the disciples to recognize and acclaim Him as the Messiah. *You are the Christ*. Although Mk begins by identifying Jesus as the Christ (1:1, 11), this is the first time the disciples correctly identify Jesus as the Messiah. In Mk, however, Peter does not confess at this time that Jesus is the Son of God. See note, 15:39. *Christ*. See "Jesus as the Son of God," pp 1652–53; see also p 2098.
MARK—NOTE ON 8:30 *tell no one*. See "Secrecy," p 1653.
MARK—NOTE ON 8:27–30 For the first time in Mk, one of the Twelve recognizes Jesus as the Christ, God's Anointed One. How slow we are and how dull is our understanding of Jesus' divinity! We see and yet do not see. And so it is that Jesus graciously continues revealing Himself to us through Word and Sacrament. His Spirit works in us the faith that claims, "Jesus is the Christ." • Lord Jesus, help us to see You as the true Son of the Father, the Christ anointed as our prophet, priest, and king. Rule us graciously for all eternity. Amen.

MARK—NOTE ON 8:31 *Son of Man*. See p 2098. *suffer … rejected*. Though Is 52:13–53:12 predicted that God's Servant would suffer and die for the benefit of His people, the disciples would prove unable to accept such suffering. Jesus repeats this prediction twice in Mk (9:31; 10:33–34), so that there end up being three Passion predictions, one for each of Peter's denials in 14:66–72. After each Passion prediction, Jesus continues by teaching about discipleship. *elders … chief priests … scribes*. See pp 1556–57.

MARK—NOTE ON 8:32 *Peter … began to rebuke Him*. Peter will not accept a suffering Christ until after the resurrection. Like most Jews of his day, Peter expects a powerful warrior and conquering Messiah. Ironically, Jesus has been the one to silence others (cf 1:25–26). Now, however, Peter tries to silence Jesus.

MARK—NOTE ON 8:33 *He rebuked Peter*. Jesus is, in fact, correcting all of the Twelve, since none can accept the necessity of His sacrificial death. *Satan!* The refusal to accept God's plan of having Jesus die for all is devilish, for it threatens to undo the divine plan of salvation. *setting your mind on the things of God*. To accept Jesus' suffering and believe in the resurrection is a divine gift. Cf Php 2:5–11.

MARK—NOTE ON 8:34–38 Jesus now applies the implications of His own Messiahship to the lives of His followers. Just as He willingly submits to God's will, even when that is painful, so they must also submit. Aug: "The first destruction of man, was the love of himself…. Prefer to this God's will; learn to love yourself by not loving yourself" (*NPNF* 1 6:408).

MARK—NOTE ON 8:34 *take up his cross*. Accept the burdens of being an imitator of Christ. Aug: "Let him bear whatever trouble he has; so let him follow Me. For when he shall begin to follow Me in conformity to My life and precepts, he will have many to contradict him … and that from among those who are even as it were Christ's companions" (*NPNF* 1 6:409). *follow Me*. Christians follow Jesus through suffering and death and into resurrection.

MARK—NOTE ON 8:35 The mystery of Jesus' suffering for the life of the world turns upside down everything the disciples know and imagine. In order to save their lives, they must be willing to give them up. *gospel's*. See note, v 38.

MARK—NOTE ON 8:36–37 Jesus underlines the foolishness of chasing after a fading world while being robbed of eternal life. No wealth but

Christ's blood can be exchanged for one's soul (1Pt 1:18–19). Aug: "Great is the world; but greater is He by whom the world was made. Fair is the world; but fairer is He by whom the world was made. Sweet is the world; but sweeter is He by whom the world was made. Evil is the world; and good is He by whom the world was made" (*NPNF* 1 6:410).

MARK—NOTE ON 8:38 *ashamed*. The disciples as yet refuse to accept Jesus as the suffering Messiah or to confess Him truly. Jesus graciously promises a reward for those who accept the necessity of His death and confess Him as Savior before the world (Mt 10:32). *My words*. Jesus emphasizes His Word ("gospel's," v 35) as the basis of faith, life, and salvation. This continues the emphasis on preaching begun in 1:14–15. *He comes … with the holy angels*. Ambr: "The angels come in obedience, He comes in glory: they are His retainers, He sits upon His throne: they stand, He is seated—to borrow terms of the daily dealings of human life, He is the Judge: they are the officers of the court" (*NPNF* 2 10:257).

MARK—NOTE ON 9:1 Only Judas failed to witness the resurrection. *see the kingdom of God after it has come with power*. Though Jesus could mean the transfiguration as a fulfillment of this promise (vv 2–13), this ultimately points to His death and resurrection as the beginning of the Kingdom in power.

MARK—NOTE ON 8:31–9:1 Jesus warns that He has come to suffer, die, and rise and that everyone who follows Him must carry the cross. Temptation to avoid the anguish of the cross is great. A safe life tempts us to deny Christ and His cross. Yet, Jesus suffered for our salvation and promised to overcome Satan and all our foes. Jesus is the only one sufficient to exchange His life for ours. • Lord, thank You for accepting the disgrace and pain of the cross. Strengthen us to follow You from Your cross to Your glory. Amen.

MARK—NOTE ON 9:2 See note, Mt 17:1. *transfigured*. Jesus shone with the glory of His divine nature, which otherwise had been veiled (cf Php 2:7–8). See note, Mt 17:2.

MARK—NOTE ON 9:3 Jesus' divinity shone with brilliance (cf Ex 34:29; Rv 1:16). *bleach*. Paste made from clean clay (fuller's earth) in which white cloth was soaked and then stretched out to dry in the sun. Once dry, the clay paste was washed away.

MARK—NOTE ON 9:4 *Elijah with Moses*. See note, Mt 17:3.

MARK—NOTE ON 9:5 *Rabbi*. From Hbr *rabban*, "chief" or "great one." See p 228. *three tents*. Peter hoped to prolong their stay by providing shelter or places of worship.
MARK—NOTE ON 9:6 *he did not know what to say*. Peter did not rightly understand what he was witnessing. Moses and Elijah were preparing Jesus for going to His death (Lk 9:30–31).
MARK—NOTE ON 9:7 *cloud*. The presence of divine glory was associated with clouds in the wilderness, overshadowing mountains, the tabernacle, and the temple (cf Ex 13:21; 19:9; 33:9; 40:34–38; 1Ki 8:10–11). *This is My beloved Son*. The Father repeated the announcement from Jesus' Baptism for the disciples. A centurion would affirm this truth at Jesus' crucifixion (see note, 15:39). *listen to Him*. See note, Mt 17:5.
MARK—NOTE ON 9:9 *tell no one*. Jesus continued the caution of silence (see "Secrecy," p 1653). *Son of Man had risen*. The heart of Jesus' prophecy was His death and resurrection. His glory did not dismiss the cross.
MARK—NOTE ON 9:10 The disciples struggled over the necessity of Jesus' suffering.
MARK—NOTE ON 9:11 *scribes*. See note, Mt 2:4. *Elijah must come?* See note, Mt 17:10.
MARK—NOTE ON 9:12 *Elijah … restore all*. John the Baptist prepared for Jesus' arrival (cf 1:2–8). *Son of Man … suffer … contempt?* Referred to Jesus' betrayal, trial, beatings, and crucifixion.
MARK—NOTE ON 9:13 *Elijah has come*. See note, Mt 17:12. *as it is written of him*. Like Elijah, who suffered the wickedness of King Ahab and Queen Jezebel, John had to suffer under Herod and Herodias (cf 1Ki 17–21).
MARK—NOTE ON 9:2–13 Jesus is transfigured to display His divine glory and to prepare His disciples for His death and resurrection. We cannot imagine the glory of God, especially in Christ, who is fully human. Jesus loses none of His divine majesty in the incarnation, but His glory shines through His human nature. His glory reminds us that He freely chose death and resurrection for our sakes. • Lord, bring us to that mountain where we can see Your glory shine. Let us follow You to the glory of Your cross to celebrate Your power and to marvel at Your life given for us. Amen.
MARK—NOTE ON 9:14 *scribes arguing*. See note, 1:22.
MARK—NOTE ON 9:17 *Teacher*. See note, Mt 8:19. *a spirit that makes him mute*. Other spirits had been vocal (cf 1:24; 5:7).

MARK—NOTE ON 9:18 His condition resembled an epileptic seizure, causing recurring convulsions and loss of consciousness, but was caused by demon possession. Cf Mt 17:15. *Your disciples*. See note, Mt 17:16.
MARK—NOTE ON 9:19 *them*. The father, disciples, and the gathering crowd. *faithless generation*. The father and crowd had likely despaired while Jesus was absent on the mount. Note the amazement in v 15 (cf 6:6; Lk 24:32, 41). *how long … How long*. See note, Mt 17:17.
MARK—NOTE ON 9:21 Jesus showed interest in the boy, who was more to Jesus than a subject for a demonstration of His power.
MARK—NOTE ON 9:22 *compassion*. See note, Lk 7:13.
MARK—NOTE ON 9:23 The power and love of God are constant (Ps 62:11–12). Faith receives the gifts God had prepared (cf 11:22–24; Jas 1:5–8).
MARK—NOTE ON 9:24 The father cried out with faith but struggled with his son's burden and the failure of the disciples (cf Rm 7). "Worthiness does not depend on the greatness or smallness, the weakness or strength of faith. Instead, it depends on Christ's merit, which the distressed father of little faith [Mark 9:24] enjoyed as well as Abraham, Paul, and others who have a joyful and strong faith" (FC SD VII 71).
MARK—NOTE ON 9:25–26 The mute spirit cried out and left the healed boy, who appeared to be dead.
MARK—NOTE ON 9:25 See note, Mt 17:18.
MARK—NOTE ON 9:28 *the house*. Jesus often gathered the disciples by themselves after a significant event (1:29; 4:10; 4:34; 9:33). *Why could we not*. See note, Mt 17:19.
MARK—NOTE ON 9:29 There are different types of demons with different powers. The disciples' earlier success in exorcism (6:13) had either not prepared them for this case or made them overconfident in their own work.
MARK—NOTE ON 9:14–29 Jesus descends from the transfiguration and meets a defiant demon, an anxious father, an astonished crowd, and despairing disciples. Despair threatens to overwhelm our faith too by pointing out how we fail to change or improve, suggesting that God neither cares for us nor has power to help. However, Jesus does not linger in the glory of the transfiguration, but graciously descends to a world of despair and doubt so that He might deliver us. • Lord, thank You for Your compassion, which brings You to our world of pain and dismay. Give us

faith to overcome our doubts, and help us believe that all things are possible with You. Amen.

MARK—NOTE ON 9:30–32 Second of Jesus' three predictions of His death and resurrection. The disciples' confusion continued, even though Jesus taught them repeatedly. See note, 8:31. Luth: "[The Law] attacks Him and kills Him. By this deed the whole world is purged and expiated from all sins, and thus it is set free from death and from every evil. But when sin and death have been abolished by this one man, God does not want to see anything else in the whole world, especially if it were to believe, except sheer cleansing and righteousness. And if any remnants of sin were to remain, still for the sake of Christ, the shining Sun, God would not notice them" (AE 26:280).

MARK—NOTE ON 9:30–32 Jesus repeats the prophecy of His Passion and resurrection while the disciples listen in frightened silence. Death is frightening and confusing when we cannot see the promised resurrection. Yet, Jesus bears our fears as well as our sins on the cross in order to deliver us. • Lord, break our fear of death by reminding us that You have died, never to die again. Today, open our frightened hearts with the resurrection's promise; one day, open our closed eyes with the resurrection's power. Amen.

MARK—NOTE ON 9:33 *in the house*. See note, v 28.

MARK—NOTE ON 9:34 Ironically, after the transfiguration and Jesus' Passion prediction, the disciples debated which of them was greatest. See note, Lk 9:46.

MARK—NOTE ON 9:35 *first … last … servant of all*. Jesus described His own life.

MARK—NOTE ON 9:37 Jesus emphasizes service and humility. Though the child appeared insignificant, he was treasured by and connected to the Lord, who focused on serving others. In the kingdom of God, every disciple represents the Lord. *Him who sent Me*. The Father.

MARK—NOTE ON 9:33–37 Confused by Jesus' prediction of His death, the disciples return to a subject they know well, their own greatness. Jesus shows them that true status is found in serving those whom God values. When we are tempted to debate who is the greatest, we should instead look to where the Master hangs on the cross. He represents us before the Father in order to redeem us, and He leads us by the cross into a

new life. • Lord, forgive us for our battles over greatness. Remind us that You alone are great, for You have served the least among us. Amen.
MARK—NOTE ON 9:38 *Teacher*. See note, Mt 8:19. *we tried to stop him*. The disciples were protecting their exclusive status with Jesus.
MARK—NOTE ON 9:39 *a mighty work in My name*. Exorcism, a divine work that should not be stopped. *speak evil of Me*. One who worked good in God's name would not curse His name.
MARK—NOTE ON 9:41 Smallest kindness of God could be as simple as giving a cup of water. *you belong to Christ*. Even a small, generous act gives glory to Christ (v 37). *reward*. See note, Mt 5:12.
MARK—NOTE ON 9:38–41 Jesus opens the disciples' eyes to see those who do God's work in dramatic or simple ways. The work of God goes far beyond us. He shows His power and kindness through great life-changing miracles and simple cups of water. • Lord, thank You for Your work through the lives of others. Lead me to welcome those miracles and mercies that You show through every one of Your people. Amen.
MARK—NOTE ON 9:42 *little ones*. Gk *micros*, "smallest child" (cf vv 36–37; 10:13–16). *to sin*. Results in the loss of faith. *great millstone*. See note, Jb 41:24.
MARK—NOTE ON 9:43 Nothing is more important than faith unto eternal life. *hell*. Gk *geenna* ; from Hbr name for the Hinnom Valley southwest of Jerusalem, where humans were sacrificed (2Ch 28:3; 33:6) and garbage was dumped (2Ki 23:10). Fire was constantly present in the Hinnom Valley due to sacrifices and burning trash; this became a figure for the everlasting fire of hell, as the ESV translation suggests. Used only in Mk (vv 43, 45, 47).
MARK—NOTE ON 9:47 *kingdom of God … hell*. Heaven and eternal life in contrast to eternal death.
MARK—NOTE ON 9:48 The torments of hell.
MARK—NOTE ON 9:49 *salted with fire*. Fire purified and salt preserved. Christians may be kept in the true faith through the trials they endure.
MARK—NOTE ON 9:50 See note, Mt 5:13. *peace*. Faith brought peace, which was esp needed among contentious disciples.
MARK—NOTE ON 9:42–50 Nothing is more important than retaining the faith unto eternal life. Let nothing come between you and the Savior. Though He tests us with fire, He does not consume His own people. Rejoice, for God graciously gives us the faith in which He preserves us to eternity. • Lord, give us the lasting faith that can persevere through every

trial. Empty our hands of anything that competes with You, and let us hold firmly to You eternally. Amen.
MARK—NOTE ON **Ch 10** The key to this chapter is that God accepts us by grace through faith in Jesus, not through obedience or status, just as children receive love they do not earn.
MARK—NOTE ON 10:1 *region of Judea and beyond the Jordan*. East of the Jordan River toward the Dead Sea. *as was His custom*. Jesus conducted a preaching ministry, interrupting it occasionally to focus on His disciples (cf 9:30).
MARK—NOTE ON 10:2 The Pharisees sought either to justify themselves or to trap Jesus.
MARK—NOTE ON 10:4 *certificate of divorce*. See note, Dt 24:1.
MARK—NOTE ON 10:5 *hardness of heart*. See note, Mt 19:8; see also "Hard-heartedness," p 1653.
MARK—NOTE ON 10:6–8 God intended marriage to be lifelong. See notes, Mt 19:4–5, 6.
MARK—NOTE ON 10:11–12 Jesus likely shocked His disciples (cf Mt 19:10), since other teachers were more permissive and even the law seemed to grant this as a right. See note, Mt 19:9.
MARK—NOTE ON 10:1–12 Jesus teaches that God wants a man and a woman in marriage to be exclusively committed to each other for life. Attempts to alter or get around God's good intentions bring condemnation, not greater liberty. Thoughtfully and prayerfully embrace God's ways. What He establishes is for our good and stems from His love and grace. • "O Spirit of the Father, Breathe on them from above, So searching in Your pureness, So tender in Your love That, guarded by Your presence And kept from strife and sin, Their hearts may heed Your guidance And know You dwell within." Amen. (*LSB* 858:3)
MARK—NOTE ON 10:13 *touch*. To bless them. See note, Mt 19:13. *disciples rebuked them*. They thought children were not important and thus limited their access to Jesus. Cf 9:36–37.
MARK—NOTE ON 10:14 See note, Lk 18:16. *indignant*. Righteous anger.
MARK—NOTE ON 10:15 *the kingdom*. The kingdom of God's grace, equivalent to salvation. *like a child*. In simple trust. See note, Mt 18:5. "I act as a child who is being taught the catechism…. But I must remain a child and pupil of the catechism, and am glad to remain so" (LC, Longer Preface 7–8).

MARK—NOTE ON 10:16 *blessed*. See note, Mt 19:13; see also p 842. *laying His hands on them*. See note, Mt 19:15.

MARK—NOTE ON 10:13–16 This story is the key to the chapter, showing us that salvation is a gift of grace through faith in Jesus Christ. We trust the Lord as a child trusts a parent. We do not earn God's love and favor by keeping the Law, especially when we look for loopholes to excuse our sinful behavior (cf 10:1–12). All people, like helpless children, receive Jesus' blessing and enter the Kingdom through faith in Him. • "You have promised to receive us, Poor and sinful though we be; You have mercy to relieve us, Grace to cleanse, and pow'r to free. Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, Early let us turn to You. Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, Early let us turn to You." Amen. (*LSB* 711:3)

MARK—NOTE ON 10:17 *Teacher*. See note, Mt 8:19. *inherit*. Inheritance is not given based on merit. See "heir," p 1902.

MARK—NOTE ON 10:18 *God alone*. Jesus changes the focus from the man's works to who God is.

MARK—NOTE ON 10:19 See note, Mt 19:18–19. *defraud*. Refers to coveting (Ex 20:17).

MARK—NOTE ON 10:21 See note, Mt 19:21. *loved him*. Jesus did not speak harshly or out of anger, but compassionately. He sought to strip away the man's self-deception about having kept the Law.

MARK—NOTE ON 10:24–25 See note, Mt 19:23–24.

MARK—NOTE ON 10:24 *amazed*. The Jews regarded wealth as a mark of God's favor. The disciples thought rich people had the best chance to enter the kingdom of God because of all the good things they could afford to do. *Children*. Term of affection. *how difficult it is to enter*. Understatement. No people will ever enter the Kingdom based on their own reason or strength.

MARK—NOTE ON 10:25 Even the rich fail to enter the kingdom of God by their own efforts. A camel, proverbially the largest animal, had a better chance of slipping through the eye of a needle, proverbially the smallest opening, than the most favored human being had of entering the kingdom of God through works.

MARK—NOTE ON 10:26 The disciples thought that Jesus had just told them that no human could enter the kingdom of God.

MARK—NOTE ON 10:27 People cannot enter the kingdom of God on their own merit. Yet, God calls and gathers people into His kingdom by grace (cf Rm 3:21–26).

MARK—NOTE ON 10:28 See note, Mt 19:27.
MARK—NOTE ON 10:29 Following Jesus entailed the loss of possessions, even life itself. "He is speaking not of those who injure wife and children, but who bear injury because of the confession of the Gospel. For the Gospel's sake we should even leave our body" (Ap XXVII 41–42).
MARK—NOTE ON 10:30 *hundredfold*. More than replacing what we lost to follow Him. *persecutions*. Satan will always stir up opposition against God's people. *age to come*. After the resurrection of the dead (cf Mt 19:28).
MARK—NOTE ON 10:31 The poor, sinners, and Gentiles whose confidence was in God alone would enter the Kingdom ahead of those whose spiritual confidence was in their worldly power and wealth.
MARK—NOTE ON 10:17–31 Jesus teaches His disciples that not even people with the greatest worldly means (e.g., a rich man) can enter the kingdom of God on their own merit. We cannot justify ourselves; we receive salvation ("inherit eternal life") solely by grace through faith in Jesus, just like a little child (10:13–16). • "My heart's delight, My crown most bright, O Christ, my joy forever. Not wealth nor pride Nor fortune's tide Our bonds of love shall sever." Amen. (*LSB* 557:4)
MARK—NOTE ON 10:32 *amazed … afraid*. The disciples were surprised that Jesus would walk openly into the stronghold of His enemies (cf Jn 7:1–5); they expected a deadly confrontation (cf Jn 11:16).
MARK—NOTE ON 10:33 *Son of Man*. See p 2098. *chief priests … scribes*. See pp 1556–57. *Gentiles*. The Romans.
MARK—NOTE ON 10:34 Jesus prophesied details of His Passion (cf 15:1–16:8). See note, 8:31.
MARK—NOTE ON 10:32–34 Jesus predicts His trial, execution, and resurrection for the third time in Mk (cf 8:31–32; 9:30–32) while walking boldly to His death. Jesus goes to die the sinner's death, accepting the Law's penalty in our place. Faith looks to Christ crucified and risen and says "for me." Luth: "Who is this 'me'? It is I, an accursed and damned sinner, who was so beloved by the Son of God that He gave Himself for me" (AE 26:176). • "Your grace alone, dear Lord, I plead, Your death is now my life indeed, For You have paid my ransom." Amen. (*LSB* 555:6)
MARK—NOTE ON 10:35 James and John asked for a decision before they made known the nature of the request.
MARK—NOTE ON 10:37 *right hand … left, in Your glory*. First and second positions of power. James and John are referring to an earthly

kingdom.
MARK—NOTE ON 10:38 *the cup … baptism*. Figures of speech for intense experiences associated with suffering and death. See note, Is 51:17. Early Christians referred to martyrdom as baptism with blood.
MARK—NOTE ON 10:39 *you will drink … be baptized*. Jesus predicted a life of suffering for the sake of the Gospel.
MARK—NOTE ON 10:40 *not Mine to grant*. The heavenly Father makes the decision.
MARK—NOTE ON 10:41 The other disciples also hoped to sit in the seats of highest honor.
MARK—NOTE ON 10:42–44 In Christ's kingdom, positions of authority carried a servant's job description, as He demonstrated with His own life. *lord it over them … authority*. Dominate, tyrannize.
MARK—NOTE ON 10:45 *Son of Man*. See p 2098. *to serve*. Jesus set aside His own welfare for the sake of sinners. *give His life as a ransom for many*. See "ransom," p 1904. This expression explains Jesus' mission and describes the purpose of the cross that He would soon bear.
MARK—NOTE ON 10:35–45 Jesus puts our welfare and needs ahead of His own as He conducts His ministry, showing us what real leadership is. Jesus shows that those who lead in the kingdom of God serve others in humility. He leads by laying down His life as the sacrifice for our sins and calls us to similar sacrifice. • Dear Father, You have sent Christ to serve us, although He had the right to demand our service. Forgive us, Father. Lead us to give ourselves for the sake of others, that we, being last, might truly be first with Jesus in His kingdom. Amen.
MARK—NOTE ON 10:46 *Jericho*. This ancient city's center had moved to various locations, causing writers to describe it more like a region (cf Lk 18:35; see note, Jsh 4:12–13). *Bartimaeus … son of Timaeus*. Aram *bar* means "son of." The translation was included to benefit Gentile readers. *blind beggar*. See note, Lk 18:35.
MARK—NOTE ON 10:47 *Son of David*. See note, Mt 1:1. *have mercy*. Cry for help from God in Ps. See note, Lk 17:13.
MARK—NOTE ON 10:48 *rebuked*. See note, Lk 18:39.
MARK—NOTE ON 10:50 *cloak*. Folded on the lap to receive alms. He tossed away the cloak in order to get up, not knowing if later he would be able to find the alms and his source of warmth. *sprang*. Shows urgent excitement.

MARK—NOTE ON 10:51 *What do you want Me to do for you?* See note, Mt 20:32. *Rabbi*. See note, 9:5.
MARK—NOTE ON 10:52 *your faith has made you well*. See note, Lk 7:50. Physical healing is only part of Christ's work. Jesus rescued Bartimaeus from sinfulness as well as its collateral damage: blindness (cf 2:1–12). See note, Jn 9:2. *followed Him*. See note, Mk 8:34.
MARK—NOTE ON 10:46–52 Though Jesus is intent on going to the cross, He pauses to have mercy on Bartimaeus, who can do nothing to solve his problem except cry out to the Lord, "Have mercy!" Like Bartimaeus, learn to call on the Lord and trust in His power to deliver you. Jesus will hear and respond compassionately. • "Lord, Your mercy will not leave me; Ever will Your truth abide. Then in You I will confide." Amen. (*LSB* 559:4)
MARK—NOTE ON 11:1 *Bethphage and Bethany*. See note, Lk 19:29. *two of His disciples*. Not identified.
MARK—NOTE ON 11:2 *village*. Probably Bethphage. *no one … sat*. Unbroken colt, which was normally difficult to ride. See note, Lk 19:30.
MARK—NOTE ON 11:3 The owner may have known Jesus from previous trips to Jerusalem. See note, Mt 21:3.
MARK—NOTE ON 11:7–8 See note, Mt 21:7–8.
MARK—NOTE ON 11:8 *branches*. See note, Mt 21:8.
MARK—NOTE ON 11:9–10 The people welcomed Jesus with praise drawn from Ps 113–18. See note, Ps 113–18. *Hosanna!* See note, Ps 118:25.
MARK—NOTE ON 11:11 *into the temple*. Outer court (see diagram, p 1838). *looked around … late*. Jesus inspected the temple (cf Mal 3:1). He would return to teach the next day.
MARK—NOTE ON 11:1–11 Jesus enters Jerusalem triumphantly as King, openly accepting messianic titles and fulfilling several OT prophecies. The disciples and the crowds expect Jesus to establish an earthly kingdom. They celebrate His arrival at Jerusalem without a clear view of His express purpose: to die for the sins of the world. Jesus enters Jerusalem in humility to fulfill the plan of salvation by laying down His life for sinners. • "All glory, laud, and honor To You, Redeemer, King, To whom the lips of children Made sweet hosannas ring. The multitude of pilgrims With palms before You went; Our praise and prayer and anthems Before You we present." Amen. (*LSB* 442:3)
MARK—NOTE ON 11:12 *following day*. Monday.

MARK—NOTE ON 11:13 *not the season for figs*. Early unripe figs should have been present (c Mar/Apr), even though the main harvest season had not yet arrived (Aug/Sep). The leaves should have served as a reliable indicator for these early figs. If the early figs do not appear, neither will the later ones.

MARK—NOTE ON 11:14 A curse. See p 6.

MARK—NOTE ON 11:12–14 The curse and destruction of the fig tree warns Jesus' disciples of impending judgment against the temple and the unfruitful people. Works without faith are truly fruitless. True faith, and the life that flows from it, cannot be separated. They are the good and gracious gifts of our heavenly Father. • "In your hearts enthrone Him; There let Him subdue All that is not holy, All that is not true: Crown Him as your captain In temptation's hour; Let His will enfold you In its light and pow'r." Amen. (*LSB* 512:5)

MARK—NOTE ON 11:15–19 Mk places the cleansing of the temple in the midst of the story of the unproductive fig tree to connect them. Like a fig tree with leaves, the temple compound was full of activity. Fruit should have been present, but both tree and temple were barren.

MARK—NOTE ON 11:15 See note, Jn 2:14. *pigeons*. Cf Lv 15:14, 29.

MARK—NOTE ON 11:16 Temple precinct was used as a shortcut between the Mount of Olives and Jerusalem. Jerusalem was more or less a center of religious tourism.

MARK—NOTE ON 11:17 See note, Mt 21:13.

MARK—NOTE ON 11:18 *chief priests … scribes*. See pp 1556–57. *destroy*. Murder. *feared*. They considered Jesus dangerous because the Romans would not tolerate a popular rebellion (cf Jn 11:45–50).

MARK—NOTE ON 11:15–19 As prophesied in Mal 3:1–5, Jesus purifies the temple of those who use religion to line their pockets. He does so in the temple court, where genuine worship has been disrupted. Today, Jesus challenges us to eliminate all such barriers to God's Word in our lives and in our congregations. He is the proper focus of our prayers, the reason for our service; He hallows us as the temple of His Holy Spirit. • "Your name be hallowed. Help us, Lord, In purity to keep Your Word, That to the glory of Your name We walk before You free from blame. Let no false teaching us pervert; All poor deluded souls convert." Amen. (*LSB* 766:2)

MARK—NOTE ON 11:20 *fig tree*. See note, v 13.

MARK—NOTE ON 11:21 *Rabbi*. See note, 9:5. *cursed*. Doomed to destruction. See p 6.
MARK—NOTE ON 11:22–24 Jesus explains that the source of His authority is God, who gives faith and honors prayers spoken in faith. See notes, Jas 5:15–18.
MARK—NOTE ON 11:25 *stand praying*. Jewish posture for prayer. See p 1277. *forgive*. Jesus transitions to mention the greatest petition for one praying: the forgiveness of sins. Refusing to forgive forfeits forgiveness by destroying the relationship between God and the believer. "If you forgive, you have this comfort and assurance, that you are forgiven in heaven. This is not because of your forgiving. For God forgives freely and without condition, out of pure grace, because He has so promised" (LC III 95–96). *may forgive*. As forgiven sinners, we are delighted to forgive those who sin against us. See p 1902.
MARK—NOTE ON 11:20–26 Jesus teaches that saving faith rescues us from God's judgment and that, through faith, we have the power to do the work God gives us. Without faith in Jesus, it is impossible to please God or pray to Him. We know God hears our prayers even if we do not receive an answer immediately. Confident prayer, based on faith in Christ crucified and risen, trusts God to answer in His own time and way (cf Rm 8:32). • "Forgive our sins, Lord, we implore, That they may trouble us no more; We, too, will gladly those forgive Who hurt us by the way they live. Help us in our community To serve each other willingly." Amen. (*LSB* 766:6)
MARK—NOTE ON 11:27 *chief priests … scribes … elders*. See pp 1556–57.
MARK—NOTE ON 11:28 Jesus' actions in vv 15–16 overturned decisions the temple leaders had made. Their practices were not explicitly forbidden by God's Law, so they believed they had acted appropriately.
MARK—NOTE ON 11:29–30 Jesus replied to their question with a question, a common debate strategy.
MARK—NOTE ON 11:30 *baptism of John*. Cf 1:4–8.
MARK—NOTE ON 11:32 *people … all held*. The people believed that God sent John.
MARK—NOTE ON 11:33 *We do not know*. Fear of the people kept them from giving their opinion. *Neither will I tell you*. Jesus discredited them by refusing to answer.

MARK—NOTE ON 11:27–33 Opponents of Jesus confront Him and question His authority. Jesus refuses to engage them since He confidently knows the true character of His authority (Mt 28:18). The anger of these leaders brings Jesus ever nearer to the cross, where He acts in weakness to overthrow the authority of the evil one for the sake of our salvation. • Lord God, heavenly Father, You sent Your Son to cleanse the temple of Jerusalem, so now cleanse the hearts of Your people, that they may be temples for Your Holy Spirit. Amen.
MARK—NOTE ON 12:1–8 See note, Lk 20:9–15.
MARK—NOTE ON 12:1 *parables*. See note, Mt 13:3. *tenants*. Farm renters who paid the lease with either cash or a share of the crop.
MARK—NOTE ON 12:2 *season*. Harvesttime, when the rent was due. The time of the year varied by crop. See calendar, p 262. *some of the fruit*. Agreed-upon portion of the harvest for payment.
MARK—NOTE ON 12:3 Their actions toward the servant demonstrated disrespect for the owner.
MARK—NOTE ON 12:5 See note, Mt 21:36.
MARK—NOTE ON 12:6 The patient owner endured rebellious behavior in the hope the tenants would come to their senses. *respect my son*. See note, Mt 21:37.
MARK—NOTE ON 12:7 According to Jewish law, the tenants stood a good chance of inheriting the land when the owner died, if there was no heir.
MARK—NOTE ON 12:8 See note, Mt 21:39.
MARK—NOTE ON 12:10–11 See notes, Ps 118:22, 23. God chose the Messiah to rule His people.
MARK—NOTE ON 12:10 *stone … cornerstone*. See note, Lk 20:17.
MARK—NOTE ON 12:12 Jesus was taking direct aim at the leaders, who feared He had come to entice the people away (cf Jn 11:47–50). By seeking to kill Him, they would not inherit the kingdom they were trying to take from God.
MARK—NOTE ON 12:1–12 Jesus tells how God deals patiently with people. But eventually, God's patience runs out, and every person must face judgment. God planned the death of His Son for the sins of all people. Unlike the story here, His beloved Son rose from the dead on the third day, taking up again the life He had laid down for us, to give us the Kingdom as a gift. • "I trust in Him with all my heart; Now all my sorrow ceases. His

words abiding peace impart; His blood from guilt releases." Amen. (*LSB* 568:3)
MARK—NOTE ON 12:13 *Pharisees*. See note, 2:18. *Herodians*. See p 1557.
MARK—NOTE ON 12:14 *Teacher*. Formal but insincere address. See note, Mt 8:19. *not swayed by appearances*. He judges truly, based on God's Law. *taxes to Caesar*. See note, Lk 20:22.
MARK—NOTE ON 12:15–16 See note, Mt 22:19–20.
MARK—NOTE ON 12:15 *hypocrisy*. See note, Lk 6:42.
MARK—NOTE ON 12:17 See note, Mt 22:21.
MARK—NOTE ON 12:13–17 Jesus challenges the hypocrites to examine their own hearts and repent. Human hearts naturally belong to their Maker, who stamped His image on them at creation (Gn 1:28). Though sin shattered that image in us, the Lord still wants us for His very own people and sent Jesus to make that possible (Rm 8:29; Eph 4:24; Col 3:10). • "We give Thee but Thine own, Whate'er the gift may be; All that we have is Thine alone, A trust, O Lord, from Thee." Amen. (*LSB* 781:1)
MARK—NOTE ON 12:18 *Sadducees*. See p 1557.
MARK—NOTE ON 12:19 See note, Mt 22:24.
MARK—NOTE ON 12:23 The Sadducees wrongly imagined that marriage would continue after death if there was a resurrection.
MARK—NOTE ON 12:24 *you know neither the Scriptures*. The bond of marriage ends when a man dies, allowing his wife to remarry (cf the commands of Dt 25:5–10 with the prohibition of Lv 18:16; cf also Rm 7:1–3; 1Co 7:39). *nor the power of God?* They denied the resurrection.
MARK—NOTE ON 12:25 *are given*. A man married; a woman was given in marriage by her father. See pp 54–55. *like angels in heaven*. Angels and resurrected believers would not marry. Procreation was designed for earthly existence.
MARK—NOTE ON 12:26–27 See note, Lk 20:37–38.
MARK—NOTE ON 12:27 *God of*. This phraseology appears in passages about salvation or protection (cf Ex 3:15–16; 4:5). "God of the dead" would be a contradiction. God did not set time limits on His saving relationship with His people. The patriarchs, though dead physically, would dwell with Him (cf Mt 8:11). Luth: "When I behold a corpse carried out and buried, it is hard to go my way and believe and think that we will some day rise together. How so, or by what power? Not by myself or by virtue of any

merit on earth, but by this one Christ. And that is indeed certain, far more certain than the fact that I will be buried and see someone else buried, which I know with certainty and behold with my eyes" (AE 28:117).

MARK—NOTE ON 12:18–27 The Sadducees try to trap Jesus with a hypothetical question. Jesus turns their question upside down and shows them that they deny God's power and reject His Word. Like the Sadducees, people today want to limit God to doing what makes sense to them, as if human limitations or reason could bind Him! Despite these things, God keeps His promises to us. He rescues His people even from death and raises all believers in Christ to eternal life. • "There shall we see in glory Our dear Redeemer's face; The long-awaited story Of heav'nly joy takes place: The patriarchs shall meet us, The prophets' holy band; Apostles, martyrs greet us In that celestial land." Amen. (*LSB* 514:2)

MARK—NOTE ON 12:28 *scribes*. See note, Mt 2:4. *seeing that He answered them well*. Unlike the other questioners (vv 13–27), this man asks sincerely, desiring Jesus' interpretation.

MARK—NOTE ON 12:29–31 A summary of the two tables of the Law. See notes, Ex 20:12–17; Mt 22:37–39.

MARK—NOTE ON 12:33 *more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices*. Expressions of love for and faith in the one true God. Faith in God was far more important than external worship.

MARK—NOTE ON 12:34 *not far*. The scribe understood God's OT revelation, though he did not yet confess Jesus as the Messiah. *no one dared to ask*. Jesus had made the questioners look foolish.

MARK—NOTE ON 12:28–34 Jesus challenges an expert in the Scriptures to consider the entire Law and to turn to the Lord in faith. Only Jesus has kept the entire Law perfectly. He did this for our salvation, due to His surpassing love for us. • "Thy love to me, O God, Not mine, O Lord, to Thee, Can rid me of this dark unrest And set my spirit free." Amen. (*LSB* 567:4)

MARK—NOTE ON 12:35 *scribes*. See note, Mt 2:4. *Christ is the son of David?* The Messiah was to be a descendant of King David (cf 2Sm 7:13–14; Rm 1:3). See p 2098.

MARK—NOTE ON 12:36 See note, Mt 22:43–44.

MARK—NOTE ON 12:37 A highly respected ancestor would never have called a descendant "my lord." When David called his descendant "lord," he showed that the Messiah is more than merely human. The failure of the

scribes to realize this showed how much of the Scriptures remained hidden to them.

MARK—NOTE ON 12:35–37 Jesus challenges His audience to think about the Messiah and realize that He is more than a man. He is God as well. Unbelief blinds people so they do not see Christ in the OT (cf 2Co 3:12–18). God became man, born of Mary, born under the Law, to redeem sinners such as we (cf Gal 4:4–5). • "O come, Thou Key of David, come, And open wide our heav'nly home; Make safe the way that leads on high, And close the path to misery." Amen. (*LSB* 357:5)

MARK—NOTE ON 12:38 *scribes*. See note, Mt 2:4. *long robes*. Mark of distinction, perhaps associated with holiness. *greetings*. Titles of honor and respect (e.g., "Rabbi," "Teacher").

MARK—NOTE ON 12:39 *best seats … places of honor*. The place at the front of the synagogue or nearest the host at a banquet.

MARK—NOTE ON 12:40 *devour widows' houses*. With no other source of income, scribes often lived off the generosity of benefactors. Abuses followed. *long prayers*. Prayers offered to impress listeners, long in duration and short on faith. *greater condemnation*. With greater knowledge comes greater responsibility and accountability (cf Lk 12:47–48; Jas 3:1). Luth: "In spiritual gifts we far surpass others; but because we acknowledge these as gifts of God, not our own, granted to us for building up the body of Christ (Eph. 4:12), we do not become proud on their account. For we know that more is required of him to whom much is given than of him to whom little is given (Luke 12:48). In addition, we know that 'God shows no partiality' (Rom. 2:11). Therefore a faithful sexton is no less pleasing to God with his gift than is a preacher of the Word, for he serves God in the same faith and spirit. And so we should not honor the lowest Christians any less than they honor us. In this way we remain free of the poison of vainglory and walk by the Spirit" (AE 27:103).

MARK—NOTE ON 12:38–40 Jesus warns against using self-serving religion to elevate ourselves above others. Clergy especially need to listen to Jesus at this point. Jesus shows all religious leaders and scholars the model for their leadership: humility, service, and sacrifice, for His sacrifice has atoned for us all. • Lord, grant us humble hearts and willing spirits to fulfill our callings faithfully. Amen.

MARK—NOTE ON 12:41 *treasury*. Cf 1Ch 26:20–32. *offering box*. See note, Lk 21:1.

MARK—NOTE ON 12:42 *copper coins*. Smallest coins in use.
MARK—NOTE ON 12:43 *more*. Proportionately more than all the others.
MARK—NOTE ON 12:44 *put in everything she had*. The widow kept nothing for herself (cf 10:21; Rm 12:1–2).

MARK—NOTE ON 12:41–44 Jesus uses the sacrifice of a widow to illustrate for His disciples the character of absolute dependence on God. Wealth and possession can pose a spiritual threat—wealth has a way of owning its possessor. Jesus' love and sacrifice motivate us to offer our whole lives to Him as our daily offering of gratitude. He gave up everything, including His life, on the cross for us. • "Take my life and let it be Consecrated, Lord, to Thee; Take my moments and my days, Let them flow in ceaseless praise." Amen. (*LSB* 783:1)

MARK—NOTE ON **Ch 13** Jesus answers His disciples' question (v 4) about the destruction of the temple, including descriptions of what the end of the world will be like. The upcoming events of AD 70, when the Romans would destroy Jerusalem (vv 1–23, 28–31), foreshadowed the events at the end of the world (vv 24–27). The close comparison of these events has confused some interpreters, esp those intent on figuring out when Christ would return. As you study ch 13, bear in mind Jesus' most important point: judgment comes unexpectedly; therefore, remain faithful.

MARK—NOTE ON 13:1 *wonderful stones … buildings!* Huge stone blocks, some measuring 37 ft long, 18 ft wide, and 12 ft high, and decorated with gold, were used to build Herod's temple, one of the most impressive man-made structures of the ancient world. See diagram, p 1710.

MARK—NOTE ON 13:2 See note, Mt 24:2.

MARK—NOTE ON 13:1–2 Jesus begins to talk about the fall of Jerusalem and the end of the world with a prediction of the temple's destruction. What makes a house of worship worthy is not its outward appearance but the Word of God in it. The temple in Jerusalem had been the "embassy" of heaven on earth. With the birth of Jesus, this temple would no longer serve that purpose. Now, in Jesus Christ, the fullness of the Godhead dwells bodily among us (cf Col 2:9). • "To this temple, where we call You, Come, O Lord of hosts, and stay; Come with all Your loving-kindness, Hear Your people as they pray." Amen. (*LSB* 909:2)

MARK—NOTE ON 13:3–37 Second of two extended sections of teaching (cf 4:1–32).

MARK—NOTE ON 13:4 *these things*. Events mentioned in v 2. *sign*. Event that indicated destruction was imminent.

MARK—NOTE ON 13:5 See note, Mt 24:4.

MARK—NOTE ON 13:6 *I am He!* A claim to be the Messiah.

MARK—NOTE ON 13:7–8 See note, Mt 24:6–7.

MARK—NOTE ON 13:8 *birth pains*. See note, Mt 24:8.

MARK—NOTE ON 13:9 Persecution of Christians was common in the first century and is still common today in parts of the world. *they*. See note, Mt 24:9.

MARK—NOTE ON 13:10 *first*. Before the end of the world and Judgment Day. *to all nations*. Jesus announces God's plan to include the Gentiles.

MARK—NOTE ON 13:11 The Holy Spirit would help them bear witness to the Gospel.
MARK—NOTE ON 13:12 Anti-Christian sentiment would divide families, even to the point of close relatives handing over loved ones for execution.
MARK—NOTE ON 13:13 *hated by all*. Because God's Law offends and because Jesus claimed to be the only way to salvation (Jn 14:6). *will be saved*. By God's grace through faith in Christ alone.
MARK—NOTE ON 13:3–13 Jesus warns His disciples about the coming troubles they will face as they bring the Gospel into the world. He encourages them to trust God and rely on the Holy Spirit, especially when they face opposition and persecution. Nobody likes to be shown his or her sin. As Christians proclaim Law and Gospel, they need to be ready to endure the loss of everything, including their lives. Because God wants all people to hear the Gospel, He prolongs the NT age so that the Church may witness to all the earth. To Him alone we owe the survival of our personal faith as well. • "Lord of harvest, great and kind, Rouse to action heart and mind; Let the gath'ring nations all See Your light and heed Your call." Amen. (*LSB* 830:6)
MARK—NOTE ON 13:14 *abomination of desolation*. Repeats a prophecy recorded in Dn 9:27 about the desecration of the temple under the Seleucids (1Macc 1:54–59). Jesus announces a new desolation and destruction of the Jerusalem temple, which will be carried out by the Romans in AD 70. This event will end all temple worship and sacrifice. But these desolations are but a taste of what lies in the future (cf 2Th 2:3–4). *let the reader understand*. Reader is challenged to think about these things, esp in light of Dn 9:27. Cf Rv 13:18. *flee to the mountains*. See note, Mt 24:16.
MARK—NOTE ON 13:15–16 Jesus warned His followers to flee quickly when they see these events unfold.
MARK—NOTE ON 13:15 *housetop*. See note, Jsh 2:6. *not go down*. Houses were often adjoined or close to one another, so one could run from roof to roof. Stairs were often outside the house. Eus: "The people of the church in Jerusalem had been commanded by a revelation, vouchsafed to approved men there before the war, to leave the city and to dwell in a certain town of Perea called Pella" (*NPNF* 2 1:138).
MARK—NOTE ON 13:16 *cloak*. Outer garment workers left at home or laid on the ground when working. See note, Ex 22:26.

MARK—NOTE ON 13:17 It is more difficult for pregnant women and new mothers to flee. *alas*. Gk *ouai*, an interjection expressing horror. Also translated as "woe" (14:21). See p 1080.
MARK—NOTE ON 13:18 *Pray*. For God's mercy. *winter*. Cool, wet, sometimes with snow. Food would be scarce too. See calendar, p 262.
MARK—NOTE ON 13:19 This suffering, highlighted by the Roman destruction of the temple in AD 70, will eclipse any previous suffering the Israelites experienced. *tribulation*. Persecution, disaster. See note, 4:16–17.
MARK—NOTE ON 13:20 See note, Mt 24:22.
MARK—NOTE ON 13:21–22 Counterfeit miracles could mislead people and draw them away from Jesus, the only Savior. Those who believe owe their faith, perseverance, and salvation to the triune God alone.
MARK—NOTE ON 13:23 Luth: "For this much is sure: So long as a Christian preacher holds on and sticks to his business, despising the world's abuse and persecution, the ministry will abide and the Gospel cannot fail; for some will always stand firm and abide, as indeed there must always be some that abide, until Judgment Day" (AE 21:64–65).
MARK—NOTE ON 13:14–23 Jesus warns His followers of the imminent destruction of Jerusalem, which was fulfilled during the Jewish revolt against the Romans (AD 66–70). These events foreshadowed the end of the world. Jesus tells us these things so that we may be prepared to resist evil and proclaim the Gospel more fervently while we have time to do so. When Jesus returns on the Last Day, He will judge all people. Prior to that glorious and victorious day, evil will erupt and bring destruction. Yet, God holds on to His people throughout these events, anchoring believers in Jesus Christ by His Holy Spirit. • "Jerusalem the golden, With milk and honey blest—The promise of salvation, The place of peace and rest—We know not, oh, we know not What joys await us there: The radiancy of glory, The bliss beyond compare!" Amen. (*LSB* 672:1)
MARK—NOTE ON 13:24 *tribulation*. See note, Mt 24:29. *darkened*. Undoing the fourth day of creation (Gn 1:14) on the Last Day.
MARK—NOTE ON 13:25 Cosmic signs of the end (cf Jl 2:10; 3:15).
MARK—NOTE ON 13:26 Jesus returns with the Father's authority to judge the world. See note, Dn 7:13. *Son of Man*. See p 2098.
MARK—NOTE ON 13:27 See note, Mt 24:31.
MARK—NOTE ON 13:24–27 Jesus will return on the Last Day to judge all humanity, fulfilling OT prophecy and His own predictions. No one will

enter the kingdom of God by works, nor will any mere religion save anyone. Because Jesus died and rose for us and because the Holy Spirit created and sustained saving faith in His people, we can be sure of our salvation no matter how fearsome the Last Day may be. • Set my heart, O Savior, on the life and hope above, so that shadows of this world may not darken my sight. Amen.

MARK—NOTE ON 13:28 Perhaps Jesus stood near a fig tree. Because these trees produce two crops each year, they became proverbial for the passing of the seasons. See calendar, p 262. Unlike many trees in Israel, the fig sheds its leaves each fall. New leaves appear relatively late in spring and indicate that warm weather is about to arrive. See note, 11:13.

MARK—NOTE ON 13:29 *these things*. The fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the temple. Cf vv 14–23. *He is near*. Or, "It is near," meaning the fulfillment of the prophecy of v 2.

MARK—NOTE ON 13:30 *generation will not pass*. Within one generation —c 40 years—the temple would lie in ruins.

MARK—NOTE ON 13:31 The Word of God, which spoke creation into being, will last longer than creation. It is eternal.

MARK—NOTE ON 13:28–31 Jesus answers the original question of "when?" about the destruction of the temple (v 4). The events of vv 14–23 would take place within a generation. The fall of Jerusalem foreshadows the end of the world, which will come later (vv 24–27). Today, we need to focus on the calling we have as Christ's Church: Gospel proclamation and outreach (cf Mt 28:18–20). God has created this time before the second appearing of Jesus so that we may come to faith and call others to faith and salvation. • "My Savior paid the debt I owe And for my sin was smitten; Within the Book of Life I know My name has now been written. I will not doubt, for I am free, And Satan cannot threaten me; There is no condemnation!" Amen. (*LSB* 508:5)

MARK—NOTE ON 13:32 *no one knows*. Jesus speaks here as a man. In His state of humility, Jesus did not always speak from His divine power of foreknowledge. See note, Mt 24:36. *only the Father*. God knows His plans and reveals what He chooses to whom He chooses.

MARK—NOTE ON 13:33 No one knows when the events Jesus prophesied will take place; therefore, Christians are to focus on the work He has given them (Mt 9:38). Aug: "Let no one then search out for the last Day,

when it is to be; but let us watch all by our good lives, lest the last day of any one of us find us unprepared" (*NPNF* 1 6:411).

MARK—NOTE ON 13:34–37 Rather than wasting time and energy trying to determine the exact year or day of Jesus' return, which God has not revealed, we should focus on bringing the Gospel to people who do not yet know Christ as Savior and Lord.

MARK—NOTE ON 13:37 *Stay awake*. Remain alert to proclaim the Gospel and practice the faith. Aug: "When it tells us to watch for the last day, every one should think of [this] as concerning his own last day; lest haply when you judge or think the last day of the world to be far distant, you slumber with respect to your own last day" (*NPNF* 1 6:411).

MARK—NOTE ON 13:32–37 In contrast to the fall of Jerusalem (vv 5–23), which will happen within a generation, no one knows the day when Jesus will return to judge the world (vv 24–27). Jesus exhorts us to vigilance and encourages us to use the available time wisely, proclaiming the Gospel for the salvation of others. Jesus promises to be with us always and has poured out on us His Holy Spirit for the work of evangelizing the nations. • "The world is very evil, The times are waxing late; Be sober and keep vigil, The Judge is at the gate; The Judge that comes in mercy, The Judge that comes with might, To terminate the evil, To diadem the right." Amen. (*TLH* 605:1)

MARK—NOTE ON 14:1 *two days before*. Wednesday of Holy Week. *Passover*. A feast commemorating God's deliverance of His people from Egypt (cf Ex 12:1–14). *Feast of Unleavened Bread*. The seven days that followed Passover (cf Ex 12:15–20). The whole festival could be called by either name. See pp 200–201. *chief priests … scribes*. See pp 1556–57. *kill Him*. Not a simple assassination but a plan to entrap Him legally.

MARK—NOTE ON 14:2 They likely feared that Jesus would publicly declare Himself the Messiah in the temple during Passover and start a revolt against the Romans.

MARK—NOTE ON 14:1–2 The Jewish leaders desperately try to find a way to execute Jesus quickly and quietly before He gains full support for His mission. Yet, God is at work in this, using even the opposition of His enemies for His gracious purposes. The Lord is likewise at work in the events of our lives today, bringing about good even amid suffering. Pray for His aid and comfort while trusting He has a plan for you. How joyful to know His plan of salvation in Jesus, who has taken away all our sins. •

Sustain us, dearest Jesus, for You are the bread of life we celebrate, our life and hope to come. Amen.

MARK—NOTE ON 14:3 *Simon the leper*. A man who had been afflicted with a skin disease but was cured, possibly by Jesus. *reclining*. See note, Mt 8:11. *alabaster*. See note, Mt 26:7. *pure nard*. See note, Jn 12:3. *broke*. Long neck of the flask was broken to dispense the contents.

MARK—NOTE ON 14:5 *given to the poor*. Jesus' ministry likely included charity for the poor.

MARK—NOTE ON 14:6 *beautiful thing*. See note, Mt 26:10.

MARK—NOTE ON 14:7 See note, Mt 26:11.

MARK—NOTE ON 14:8 *anointed … for burial*. Rather than embalming, Israelites used ointments and spices to prepare a body for burial.

MARK—NOTE ON 14:9 A prophecy fulfilled even now as Christians read of this woman's deep love for Jesus. Luth: "To love Christ, to confess Christ, and to take pleasure in Him—this does not happen without the Holy Spirit. To confess the faith, to bear the hatred of the world, to undergo exile and death—all this is proof of the Spirit" (AE 30:298).

MARK—NOTE ON 14:3–9 A woman anoints Jesus for His burial, sacrificing expensive ointment out of love for Him. The woman's clear focus on Jesus testifies to her devotion toward Him. Her sacrifice reveals her deep love for Him and sets a wonderful example for later Christians. Today, devote yourself to Jesus by prayer and service. He now stands at the Father's throne, praying for you, serving as your Savior. • "I'll think upon Thy mercy without ceasing, That earth's vain joys to me no more be pleasing; To do Thy will shall be my sole endeavor Henceforth forever." Amen. (*LSB* 439:12)

MARK—NOTE ON 14:10 *Judas Iscariot*. See note, Lk 22:3. *chief priests*. See p 1556. *in order to betray*. To lead the authorities to Jesus at a time and in a place where they could arrest Him quietly.

MARK—NOTE ON 14:11 *money*. Greed no doubt played a part (cf Jn 12:6).

MARK—NOTE ON 14:10–11 Judas, one of the Twelve whom Jesus appointed, decides to betray Him to the authorities. Even Judas's betrayal of Jesus plays an important role in the plan of salvation, culminating in the cross and empty tomb. Simple association with Christians or a knowledge of Christ cannot save. Only faith in Jesus as Savior rescues from sin and

death. • My sinful heart would betray You, dear Lord, and arrest my faith. Deliver me from evil by Your grace. Amen.
MARK—NOTE ON 14:12 *first day of Unleavened Bread*. See note, Mt 26:17; see also pp 200–201. *sacrificed the Passover lamb*. The Passover festival required the slaughter of a one-year-old male lamb or goat in the temple forecourt in the afternoon. It was eaten as the main course of the evening meal (cf Dt 16:1–8). *eat the Passover?* See pp 200–201.
MARK—NOTE ON 14:13 *two*. Peter and John (Lk 22:8). *man carrying … water*. Normally a woman's job.
MARK—NOTE ON 14:14 *master*. Owner. *Teacher*. See note, Mt 8:19.
MARK—NOTE ON 14:15 *upper room furnished and ready*. A meal for 13 people would require a large room, a table, and dining couches, all set up before dinner could begin. Jesus may have been familiar with this room from previous trips to Jerusalem.
MARK—NOTE ON 14:17 *evening*. The Passover celebration began at sundown. *twelve*. Only the Twelve are mentioned as traveling and partaking of the Lord's Supper with Jesus.
MARK—NOTE ON 14:18 *reclining*. See note, Mt 8:11. *betray Me*. See note, Lk 22:21.
MARK—NOTE ON 14:19 Each apostle's conscience troubled him.
MARK—NOTE ON 14:20 *dipping bread*. Commonly, pieces of bread would be torn off the loaf, dipped into a bowl of fruit sauce or stew, and then eaten.
MARK—NOTE ON 14:21 *Son of Man*. See p 2098. *woe*. See p 1080. *better … not been born*. Jesus foresaw the sad end for the betrayer. See note, Jn 6:70.
MARK—NOTE ON 14:12–21 Jesus arranged for the Passover to be eaten at a secret location in Jerusalem. Opposition to the Gospel comes from Satan, the world, and even from within the ranks of Jesus' followers. God uses these enemies to accomplish His plan of salvation at the cross. The sacrifice of the Passover lamb would foreshadow the sacrifice of our beloved Redeemer for us. • "A Lamb goes uncomplaining forth, The guilt of sinners bearing And, laden with the sins of earth, None else the burden sharing; Goes patient on, grows weak and faint, To slaughter led without complaint, That spotless life to offer." Amen. (*LSB* 438:1)
MARK—NOTE ON 14:22 *bread*. Unleavened. See pp 200–201, 236. *blessing*. Jesus followed a traditional Jewish pattern but used these elements

in a new way. See p 842. *this is My body*. By His word, Christ effects a communion between the bread and His body for all who eat of it. See note, 1Co 10:16. Luth: "For as soon as Christ says: 'This is my body,' his body is present through the Word and the power of the Holy Spirit. If the Word is not there, it is mere bread; but as soon as the words are added they bring with them that of which they speak" (AE 36:341). See p 2230.

MARK—NOTE ON 14:23 *a cup*. Wine for the Passover meal. *given thanks*. Jesus consecrated the wine before it was distributed. "Christ's body and blood are received with the bread and wine, not only spiritually through faith, but also orally. Yet not in a 'Capernaitic' way, but in a supernatural, heavenly way, because of the sacramental union" (FC Ep VII 15).

MARK—NOTE ON 14:24 *This is My blood*. See note, 1Co 10:16. *covenant*. Gk *diatheke*, "testament." Jesus sealed His last will and testament with His own precious blood to establish the Lord's Supper (1Co 11:23–26). He was the sacrificial Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world (cf Jn 1:29). See p 127. *many*. Hbr expression for "all people."

MARK—NOTE ON 14:25 Christ will not observe the Passover again with His disciples. However, He refers here to the heavenly banquet (Mt 8:11). *fruit of the vine*. Wine.

MARK—NOTE ON 14:22–25 Jesus establishes the Lord's Supper, giving communicants His true body and blood for the forgiveness of sins under the bread and wine. Because of our sin, we could not have fellowship with God. However, Jesus creates a new relationship between God and sinners through His suffering and death on the cross. By His blood, He seals His testament of peace and forgiveness, which we receive in this Sacrament. • "O Lord, we praise Thee, bless Thee, and adore Thee, In thanksgiving bow before Thee. Thou with Thy body and Thy blood didst nourish Our weak souls that they may flourish: O Lord, have mercy! May Thy body, Lord, born of Mary, That our sins and sorrows did carry, And Thy blood for us plead In all trial, fear, and need: O Lord, have mercy!" Amen. (*LSB* 617:1)

MARK—NOTE ON 14:26 See note, Mt 26:30.

MARK—NOTE ON 14:27 God accomplished forgiveness of sins when the Good Shepherd was struck for the sheep. Luth: "[Christ] Himself also submitted to smitings without any guilt of His own, and He did this also so that men might not regard the kingdom of Christ as something worldly. For

to the world it is to be a very offensive kingdom, as St. Paul says, 1 Cor. 1:23" (AE 20:335).
MARK—NOTE ON 14:29 *I will not*. A boast that was eventually fulfilled by his martyrdom (see note, Jn 21:18–19).
MARK—NOTE ON 14:30 See note, Mt 26:34.
MARK—NOTE ON 14:26–31 Jesus fulfills the Scripture that promises the forgiveness of sins through the sacrifice of the Shepherd, even though all His sheep desert Him. Good intentions do not substitute for faith. Only through God's strength can any Christian face trial. Even though Jesus' sheep will run away, He will lay down His life for them. • Faithful Shepherd, keep me close this day and always. Amen.
MARK—NOTE ON 14:32 *Gethsemane*. See note, Mt 26:36.
MARK—NOTE ON 14:33 *Peter and James and John*. See note, 1:19. *distressed and troubled*. Jesus anticipated the great suffering that would soon come.
MARK—NOTE ON 14:34 *My soul*. Hbr expression. See note, Ps 103:1–2. *even to death*. Supreme sorrow. *watch*. Gk *gregoreo*, "be alert." Lat translation gives us Eng "vigil." Stay awake and pray against the temptations of Satan.
MARK—NOTE ON 14:35 *a little farther*. C 30 yd, private but near His disciples (cf Lk 22:41). *fell on the ground*. His posture reflected deep grief. See p 1276. *hour*. Not simply 60 minutes, but the whole ordeal He must face at that time. See note, Jn 2:4. *pass from Him*. Jesus fully experienced the agony of soul caused by the burden of sin He was about to bear even unto death. Ambr: "He has taken upon Him the substance of man, and therewith its affections…. Not as God, then, but as man, speaks He, for could God be ignorant of the possibility or impossibility of aught?" (*NPNF* 2 10:228).
MARK—NOTE ON 14:36 *Abba*. See p 2098. *cup*. See note, Is 51:17. *Yet not what I will, but what You will*. Jesus always submitted to His Father's will.
MARK—NOTE ON 14:37 *Peter … hour?* See note, Mt 26:40.
MARK—NOTE ON 14:38 *Watch and pray*. See note, v 34. *not enter into temptation*. Similar to the sixth petition of the Lord's Prayer (Lk 11:4). *the flesh is weak*. Refers to the complete depravity of the whole person. See p 1902. Luth: "When our hearts are troubled with sorrow, then truly God

Himself sorrows, who died that we might be justified, holy, and full of joy" (AE 13:138).
MARK—NOTE ON 14:40 *what to answer*. The disciples had no excuse for their failure to watch and pray.
MARK—NOTE ON 14:41 *hour*. See note, v 35. *Son of Man*. See p 2098. *betrayed*. He, who is God of God, is about to place Himself in the hands of sinners so that He might save all sinners. *sinners*. See p 959.
MARK—NOTE ON 14:32–42 On the eve of His Passion, Jesus prays in agony, yet He concludes by praying that the Father's will be done. The disciples fall asleep while praying, faithless in the critical hour. Spiritual sleepiness steals over us too when we need to watch and pray. But our Savior is ever vigilant and interceding on our behalf, that the Lord might answer our prayers in mercy. • Faithful High Priest, intercede for us at Your Father's throne, that He may pardon and bless us for Your sake. Amen.
MARK—NOTE ON 14:43 *chief priests … scribes … elders*. See pp 1556–57.
MARK—NOTE ON 14:44 *sign*. Necessary in the dark. *kiss*. See note, Rm 16:16; cf 1Pt 5:14.
MARK—NOTE ON 14:45 *Rabbi!* Ironic use of a title of respect. See note, 9:5.
MARK—NOTE ON 14:46 *laid hands on Him*. Arrested Him.
MARK—NOTE ON 14:47 See note, Jn 18:10.
MARK—NOTE ON 14:49 *teaching*. See note, 1:21. *let the Scriptures be fulfilled*. OT promised salvation through the death of the Messiah (cf Lk 24:25, 44–47). See p 1245. Luth: "Such courage must be the work of none other than the Holy Spirit…. The world is not able to have or give this courage; for it places its reliance only in the things it sees, in goods, reputation, and high honor. When what it boasts of comes to an end—as it all must come to an end—its courage also vanishes, and sheer despair remains" (AE 24:118–19).
MARK—NOTE ON 14:50 See note, Mt 26:56.
MARK—NOTE ON 14:43–50 Representatives of the Jewish ruling Council arrest Jesus, apprehending Him at night outside the city to avoid causing a riot among His supporters. God's plan of salvation moves forward, using the "success" of these enemies to move closer to the cross for the sake of our salvation. • "O wondrous Love, what have You done! The Father offers up His Son, Desiring our salvation. O Love, how strong

You are to save! You lay the One into the grave Who built the earth's foundation." Amen. (*LSB* 438:3)

MARK—NOTE ON 14:51 *young man*. Detail unique to Mk; it is thought to be Mark himself. *linen cloth*. A linen robe worn under a woolen outer garment.

MARK—NOTE ON 14:52 *ran away naked*. He was in such a desperate hurry that he left behind the garment (cf v 51).

MARK—NOTE ON 14:51–52 Jesus is abandoned by His disciples, including a young man (possibly Mark) who has witnessed the arrest. We cannot count on our own courage or strength in the face of Satan and his forces. Jesus accomplishes the plan of salvation without aid from any human ally. • Stand with me, Jesus, and grant me courage to withstand all temptations by which I might depart from Your good way. Amen.

MARK—NOTE ON 14:53 *chief priests … elders … scribes*. See pp 1556–57.

MARK—NOTE ON 14:54 *courtyard of the high priest*. In his residence on the south side of Jerusalem. This group may have met here for privacy. *high priest*. Caiaphas. See notes Lk 3:1–2; Jn 11:49.

MARK—NOTE ON 14:55 To gain a death sentence, the accusers needed proof that Jesus threatened Roman rule. Although there was no evidence that Jesus was an insurrectionist, they would charge Him as such (15:3).

MARK—NOTE ON 14:56 OT Law required testimony to be established by two or three witnesses.

MARK—NOTE ON 14:58 Jesus had used such words to predict His death and resurrection and was not speaking about Herod's temple.

MARK—NOTE ON 14:61 *Christ, the Son of the Blessed?* See p 2098. *the Blessed?* The priest avoided using the name of God as a custom of respect for the divine name.

MARK—NOTE ON 14:62 Cf Dn 7:13–14. *I am*. Jesus decisively identified Himself as the Son of God. See pp 1784–85. *right hand of Power*. See p 843.

MARK—NOTE ON 14:63 *tore his garments*. See note, Jb 1:20. He believed that Jesus committed blasphemy by claiming to be God.

MARK—NOTE ON 14:64 *blasphemy*. Capital crime in Judaism. *all condemned Him*. All present passed unanimous judgment. They reasoned God would not actually let His "Chosen One" suffer such humiliation and defeat.

MARK—NOTE ON 14:65 Blindfolding and striking reflected a misunderstanding of Is 11:2–4.

MARK—NOTE ON 14:53–65 The Jewish ruling Council convicts Jesus of blasphemy for claiming to be the messianic King. Even though all of Jesus' supporters have abandoned Him, He stands ready to bear the sins of the world. God uses the plans and plots of His enemies to accomplish our salvation. • "Jesus, I will ponder now On Your holy passion; With Your Spirit me endow For such meditation. Grant that I in love and faith May the image cherish Of Your suff'ring, pain, and death That I may not perish." Amen. (*LSB* 440:1)

MARK—NOTE ON 14:66 *below*. The trial of Jesus took place on an upper floor of the residence.

MARK—NOTE ON 14:67 *Nazarene*. Jesus was raised in Nazareth (see note, Mt 2:23).

MARK—NOTE ON 14:70 *you are a Galilean*. This may have been obvious from Peter's accent (cf Mt 26:73).

MARK—NOTE ON 14:71 *invoke a curse*. A desperate means to make the people around him believe his lie. See note, Mt 26:74; see also p 6.

MARK—NOTE ON 14:72 *he broke down and wept*. Peter was deeply sorry for his denial. Luth: "The church of God has great need of these examples. For what would become of us? What hope would be left for us if Peter had not denied Christ and all the apostles had not taken offense at Him, and if Moses, Aaron, and David had not fallen? Therefore God wanted to console sinners with these examples and to say: 'If you have fallen, return; for the door of mercy is open to you. You, who are conscious of no sin, do not be presumptuous; but both of you should trust in My grace and mercy' " (AE 7:11).

MARK—NOTE ON 14:66–72 While Jesus stands firm before Caiaphas, on trial for His life, Peter three times denies knowing Jesus. Fear leads us to do things we later regret. Only God can give us the courage to face difficult situations, especially persecution. Not only did Jesus later forgive Peter, but He also even reinstated this apostle to his office (cf Jn 21:15–19). Therefore, be comforted because your Lord will likewise be merciful toward you. • "What punishment so strange is suffered yonder! The Shepherd dies for sheep that loved to wander; The Master pays the debt His servants owe Him, Who would not know Him." Amen. (*LSB* 439:4)

MARK—NOTE ON 15:1 Luth: "The Jews and Pilate, however, were our God's chisels, picks, and stone mallets, which He used to polish this Stone [Jesus] so that He might lay the foundation of His new temple" (AE 20:219). *chief priests … elders and scribes … whole Council*. All the members summoned. See pp 1556–57. *consultation*. See note, 3:6. *Pilate*. Roman governor, AD 26–36.
MARK—NOTE ON 15:2 *King of the Jews?* I.e., a political rival to Rome. See pp 1553–58. *You have said so*. Enigmatic answer. Jesus at times misdirects His opponents during arguments. Jesus is not the kind of king Pilate would understand. See p 1775. Luth: "Not one of the saints thinks or says that he is righteous but rather always prays and waits to be justified, and for this reason he is regarded by God as righteous, because He has regard for the humble. Thus Christ is King of the Jews, that is, of those who confess that they are always sinners and yet seek to be justified and hate their sins" (AE 25:246).
MARK—NOTE ON 15:5 *no further answer*. Silence presumed guilt under Roman law.
MARK—NOTE ON 15:1–5 The Jewish leaders bring Jesus to Pilate, hoping to get a death penalty conviction from him. The world does not understand the kingdom of God, where God rules by grace through faith in Jesus Christ, nor does the world understand its King. Jesus endures His trial silently, without making a legal defense. He willingly goes to the cross for us. • "O mighty King, no time can dim Thy glory! How shall I spread abroad Thy wondrous story? How shall I find some worthy gifts to proffer? What dare I offer?" Amen. (*LSB* 439:8)
MARK—NOTE ON 15:6 *the feast*. Passover. *release … one prisoner*. Local custom designed to reduce tensions among crowds at the feast and thus to keep a lid on anti-Roman sentiment.
MARK—NOTE ON 15:7 *the insurrection*. Recent uprising against the ruling authorities. Only Mk records this event. *Barabbas*. Aram "son of the father." See note, Lk 23:19.
MARK—NOTE ON 15:8 *crowd*. See note, Mt 27:20.
MARK—NOTE ON 15:9 Pilate offers a sarcastic reply.
MARK—NOTE ON 15:10 The priests were jealous of Jesus' popularity.
MARK—NOTE ON 15:11 Jesus' enemies called for the release of Barabbas, and the crowd fell in line with them.

MARK—NOTE ON 15:13 *Crucify*. Punishment so horrific that it was illegal to inflict it on Roman citizens. See note, Ac 16:37.
MARK—NOTE ON 15:15 *scourged*. Common prelude to crucifixion, adding to its physical agony.
MARK—NOTE ON 15:6–15 Despite knowing that Jesus is innocent, Pilate condemns Him to death by crucifixion under pressure from the Jewish leadership and the crowds. Even though Pilate wants to release Jesus, he sentences Him to death to keep himself out of trouble. Often, Christians face similar temptations to act contrary to God's Word and will for their own safety. We can pray that the Lord would grant us courage to trust His will and share His will. He has promised to give us His Holy Spirit to strengthen us for every challenge. • "I'll think upon Thy mercy without ceasing, That earth's vain joys to me no more be pleasing; To do Thy will shall be my sole endeavor Henceforth forever." Amen. (*LSB* 439:12)
MARK—NOTE ON 15:16 See note, Mt 27:27.
MARK—NOTE ON 15:17 Luth: "Now sin, as we well know, is removed by nothing but the suffering of Christ. For that is the power and the fruit of His suffering, the forgiveness of sins, as Is. 53 and Peter and Paul teach in many places" (AE 20:219). *purple cloak*. Used in mockery of a royal robe. See notes, Mt 27:28; Jn 19:2. *crown of thorns*. A sadistic imitation of a crown.
MARK—NOTE ON 15:16–20 Roman soldiers mock Jesus as the King of the Jews, inflicting terrible physical and emotional pain. Paying for the sin of the world was costly. Jesus' tremendous love for us kept Him on course to the cross. • "Whence come these sorrows, whence this mortal anguish? It is my sins for which Thou, Lord, must languish; Yea, all the wrath, the woe, Thou dost inherit, This I do merit." Amen. (*LSB* 439:3)
MARK—NOTE ON 15:21 *Simon of Cyrene*. A man from the northeast coast of Africa who had come to Jerusalem for the festival. As an eyewitness to these events, he could share his experience with the Gospel writers. See note, Lk 1:2. *Alexander and Rufus*. Known to the original readers (cf Rm 16:13). *carry His cross*. Just the crossbeam, which could weigh as much as 100 lb.
MARK—NOTE ON 15:22 *Place of a Skull*. See note, Mt 27:33.
MARK—NOTE ON 15:23 *myrrh*. Narcotic offered to make the condemned prisoner easier to control. See notes, Pr 7:17; Sg 3:6; Jn 19:39. *He did not*

take it. Jesus was nailed to the cross without any drugs, fully experiencing the Law's punishment for the sins of the world.
MARK—NOTE ON 15:24 *lots*. Dice made from bone.
MARK—NOTE ON 15:26 The criminal charge against the condemned (cf Jn 19:19–22) was written on a board hung around his neck; then it was placed on the cross at the execution site.
MARK—NOTE ON 15:27 Luth: "And all the prophets saw this, that Christ was to become the greatest thief, murderer, adulterer, robber, desecrator, blasphemer, etc., there has ever been anywhere in the world…. In short, He has and bears all the sins of all men in His body—not in the sense that He has committed them but in the sense that He took these sins, committed by us, upon His own body, in order to make satisfaction for them with His own blood" (AE 26:277). *robbers*. Likely, rebels who sought the violent overthrow of the Romans in Judea.
MARK—NOTE ON 15:29 *derided*. Lit, "blasphemed," insulted and mocked.
MARK—NOTE ON 15:31 *chief priests … scribes*. See pp 1556–57.
MARK—NOTE ON 15:32 *Christ, the King of Israel*. See note, Mt 27:42. *reviled*. Cf vv 29–30.
MARK—NOTE ON 15:21–32 Jesus is crucified, bearing the punishment for the sins of the world. This is what it costs to atone for sins. At any time, Jesus can halt the proceedings, save Himself, and condemn His enemies. His love for us and His obedience to the Father lead Him to make this sacrifice instead. • "The sinless Son of God must die in sadness; The sinful child of man may live in gladness; Man forfeited his life and is acquitted; God is committed." Amen. (*LSB* 439:5)
MARK—NOTE ON 15:33 *sixth hour … ninth hour*. From noon to 3 p.m. See p 1567. *darkness*. Cf Ex 10:21–22.
MARK—NOTE ON 15:34 *loud voice*. A crucified man died of asphyxiation and was quiet at the end; therefore, Jesus' cry required superhuman effort. *Eloi*. Aram. Sounded identical to "Elijah." Ambr: "Christ, in naming God as His God, does so as man…. He suffers as a man" and "as man, therefore, He is distressed, as man He weeps, as man He is crucified" (*NPNF* 2 10:216, 230). See p 2237.
MARK—NOTE ON 15:36 *sour wine*. Cheap drink used by Roman troops.
MARK—NOTE ON 15:37 *loud cry*. Crucifixion made this extremely difficult. See note, v 34. *breathed His last*. Christ gave up His life of His

own accord.
MARK—NOTE ON 15:38 Tearing of the curtain, which separated the Most Holy Place of the temple from the Holy Place, symbolized the opened fellowship between God and people through Christ (cf Heb 10:19–22). See diagram, p 1710.
MARK—NOTE ON 15:39 Climax of Mk. Luth: "For we are sinners and thieves, and therefore we are worthy of death and eternal damnation. But Christ took all our sins upon Himself, and for them He died on the cross" (AE 26:277). *centurion*. See note, Mt 8:5; see also "Jesus as the Son of God," pp 1652–53. *Truly this man was the Son of God!* Major theme of Mk (cf 1:1; 8:29). The centurion may not have understood his confession, but Mk's readers recognized that Jesus is true God and true man.
MARK—NOTE ON 15:41 See note, Lk 8:2–3.
MARK—NOTE ON 15:33–41 Jesus pays for the sins of the world on the cross, opening the way to God through faith in Him. As God and man in one person, He dies under the curse of the Law (Gal 3:13–14). The penalty for sin is death (cf Rm 6:23a). Jesus pays that penalty for us all (cf Rm 6:23b). • "What language shall I borrow To thank Thee, dearest Friend, For this Thy dying sorrow, Thy pity without end? O make me Thine forever! And should I fainting be, Lord, let me never, never, Outlive my love for Thee." Amen. (*LSB* 450:5)
MARK—NOTE ON 15:42 *evening*. Between 4 and 5 p.m. *day of Preparation*. Friday. *Sabbath*. Saturday. See pp 200–201.
MARK—NOTE ON 15:43 *Council*. See p 1556. *himself looking for the kingdom of God*. Joseph had found hope in the Messiah. *asked for the body*. He requested permission to bury the body of Jesus. This was risky because Jesus had been executed for treason. That Pilate released the body (v 45) reflects his belief that Jesus was innocent.
MARK—NOTE ON 15:44 *already died*. A man ordinarily lasted at least 24 hours on the cross. To hasten death and remove the bodies before the Sabbath, legs of the criminals were broken (cf Jn 19:31; see also Jos, *Life*, 420–21).
MARK—NOTE ON 15:46 *a linen shroud*. Used to wrap the body for burial. *laid Him in a tomb*. Luth: "Christ tells us how He destroys death and how I am rescued from death. He will be death's venom. Death and Law, to be sure, will condemn Him. Therefore He will have to die and be buried. But He will rise again from the dead. And where I shall be then, the devil

will have to retreat. But how do I approach this Savior and Redeemer? By means of … rules? No! Just cling to the Son in faith" (AE 22:355–56). *tomb … cut out of the rock*. See note, 5:2. See also p 1651.

MARK—NOTE ON 15:47 The women watched and so knew the location of the tomb (cf 16:1).

MARK—NOTE ON 15:42–47 Friends bury the body of Jesus quickly. The approaching Sabbath Day was holy to the Lord, and no work could be done (Ex 20:8–11). Even in the tomb, death does not conquer Jesus—His body does not decay (cf Ac 2:31). Jesus completes His mission with this last step in His state of humiliation. He has fully paid for the sins of the entire world! • Grant me patience, dearest Jesus, to bear the reproaches of those who do not know and confess the blessings of Your death and resurrection. Give me boldness to confess You before the world. Amen.

MARK—NOTE ON 16:1 *Sabbath was past*. After sundown on Saturday. *Mary Magdalene*. See note, Lk 8:2–3. *spices … anoint*. Sweet-smelling ointments were usually wrapped around corpses in strips of cloth before entombment.

MARK—NOTE ON 16:2 *first day*. Sunday.

MARK—NOTE ON 16:4 *stone*. See note, Mt 27:60.

MARK—NOTE ON 16:5 *young man*. An angel. Angels typically appear in the form of young, adult males. *white robe*. See note, Mt 28:3.

MARK—NOTE ON 16:6 *alarmed*. People were often filled with awe and fear in the presence of angels. *He has risen; He is not here*. Jesus had taken up His life just as He had laid it down on Good Friday (cf Jn 10:17–18). See note, Rm 4:24. Luth: "The blessed resurrection … is pure joy, because we hear that our greatest Treasure, over which we rejoice, is already in heaven above, and that only the most insignificant part remains behind; and that He will awaken this, too, and draw it after Him as easily as a person awakens from sleep. There will no longer be any grief or suffering, and neither world nor devil will plague and sadden us anymore" (AE 28:115).

MARK—NOTE ON 16:7 *Galilee*. Original home of Jesus and His disciples. This fulfills Jesus' promise in 14:28. *you will see Him*. "Examples of mercy help … such as when we see Peter forgiven his denial" (Ap XXI 36).

MARK—NOTE ON 16:8 *they said nothing*. The women were temporarily overcome by fear and could not speak (as were Peter, James, and John on the Mount of Transfiguration, 9:6). Luth: "A Christian must accustom

himself to think about Christ's victory—the victory in which everything has already been accomplished and in which we have everything we should have. Henceforth we live only to spread among other people the news of what Christ has achieved" (AE 24:421).

MARK—NOTE ON 16:1–8 Three women undertake the job of properly preparing Jesus' body for burial, which the press of time prevented earlier. When they arrive at the tomb, they find it empty and hear the wonderful (and temporarily paralyzing) message that Jesus has risen from the dead and the tomb is empty. In spite of Jesus' clear predictions on at least three occasions (8:31–32; 9:31; 10:33–34), His disciples do not believe. Jesus rises from the dead, proclaiming His victory to all creation and providing for all believers a resurrection to eternal life on the Last Day. • "Christ Jesus lay in death's strong bands For our offenses given; But now at God's right hand He stands And brings us life from heaven. Therefore let us joyful be And sing to God right thankfully Loud songs of alleluia! Alleluia!" Amen. (*LSB* 458:1)

MARK—NOTE ON 16:9–20 See "Mark's Abrupt Ending," p 1653.

MARK—NOTE ON 16:9 *Mary Magdalene*. A disciple of Jesus; see note, Lk 8:2–3. *seven demons*. Cf 5:9; Lk 8:30.

MARK—NOTE ON 16:11 Luth: "Faith is a divine work which God demands of us; but at the same time He Himself must implant it in us, for we cannot believe by ourselves" (AE 23:23).

MARK—NOTE ON 16:9–11 Mary Magdalene sees the resurrected Jesus and tells the disciples about Him, but they do not believe it. Sinful human nature cannot believe. Doubt assails our hearts at every opportunity. Yet faith, like life, comes as a pure gift from God. He keeps us in the true faith unto life everlasting. • "Lord, by the stripes which wounded Thee, From death's dread sting Thy servants free That we may live and sing to Thee. Alleluia!" Amen. (*LSB* 464:5)

MARK—NOTE ON 16:12 *another form*. The unnamed disciples were kept from recognizing Jesus. *walking into the country*. On the road to Emmaus. Cf Lk 24:13–34.

MARK—NOTE ON 16:13 *they did not believe them*. Even after a second eyewitness report, the disciples did not believe that Jesus was risen from the dead (cf Jn 20:24–25). Ter: "It was well, however, that the unbelief of the disciples was so persistent, in order that to the last we might consistently

maintain that Jesus revealed Himself to the disciples as none other than the Christ of the prophets" (*ANF* 3:422).

MARK—NOTE ON 16:12–13 The pattern of unbelief continues in spite of additional eyewitness accounts. Like us, the disciples are slow of heart and deaf to the good news of their reconciliation with God through Christ's resurrection. Yet, He still rose for them and commissioned them to proclaim the Gospel everywhere. That is still the gracious commission to the Church from Christ. • "Christ is arisen From the grave's dark prison. So let our joy rise full and free; Christ our comfort true will be. Alleluia!" Amen. (*LSB* 459:1)

MARK—NOTE ON 16:14 *the eleven*. The Twelve, minus Judas Iscariot (cf 3:13–19). *reclining at table*. See note, Mt 8:11. *unbelief and hardness of heart*. See "Hard-heartedness," p 1653.

MARK—NOTE ON 16:15 Hus: "Christ preached to the people on the sea, in the desert, in the fields and houses, in synagogues, in villages and on the streets, and taught his disciples…. And these, going forth, preached everywhere, that is, in every place where the people were willing to listen, God working with them" (*The Church*, pp 205–6).

MARK—NOTE ON 16:16 Faith is a gift from God, which He bestows through the Word and through Holy Baptism. "Concerning Baptism, our churches teach that Baptism is necessary for salvation [Mark 16:16] and that God's grace is offered through Baptism" (AC IX 1). "Baptism is not a work that we offer to God. It is a work in which God baptizes us. In other words, a minister baptizes us on God's behalf" (Ap XXIV 18).

MARK—NOTE ON 16:17 *signs*. Miracles pointing to Christ. *in My name*. By Jesus' authority and in accordance with His will.

MARK—NOTE ON 16:18 *pick up serpents … drink any deadly poison*. God promises to protect us, but we should not tempt or test Him. Cf Ac 28:3. *lay their hands on the sick*. A way of communicating blessing and the Holy Spirit (cf Ac 19:6). Ambr: "There is no power of man exercised in these things, in which the grace of the divine gift operates" (*NPNF* 2 10:335).

MARK—NOTE ON 16:19 *taken up into heaven*. Cf Ac 1:6–11. *sat down at the right hand of God*. An expression stating that Christ rules the universe as Lord and God in the same way that a ruling son has a throne beside his father.

MARK—NOTE ON 16:20 *preached everywhere*. Beginning with Jerusalem and then extending throughout the Roman province of Judea-Samaria and finally Rome itself. *worked with them*. Jesus does not leave us alone but is always with us in this outreach (cf Mt 28:20). *confirmed the message*. Miracles revealed the saving power of the Gospel. See note, Ac 2:22.

MARK—NOTE ON 16:14–20 Jesus commissions His followers to proclaim the message of salvation throughout the world. Only through faith in Jesus Christ can anyone be saved. The Gospel invitation is open to all. God wants all people to be saved through Jesus (1Tm 2:3–4). • "Now let the heav'ns be joyful, Let earth its song begin, Let all the world keep triumph And all that is therein. Let all things, seen and unseen, Their notes of gladness blend; For Christ the Lord has risen, Our joy that has no end!" Amen. (*LSB* 478:3)

Luke

Luke 1 | Luke 2 | Luke 3 | Luke 4 | Luke 5 | Luke 6 | Luke 7 | Luke 8 | Luke 9 | Luke 10 | Luke 11 | Luke 12 | Luke 13 | Luke 14 | Luke 15 | Luke 16 | Luke 17 | Luke 18 | Luke 19 | Luke 20 | Luke 21 | Luke 22 | Luke 23 | Luke 24

- Introduction to Luke
  - Overview
  - Reading Luke
  - Luther on Luke
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

Dedication to Theophilus

1 [1]†‡‡‡Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile a narrative of
the things that have been accomplished among us, [2]†just as those who from
the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word have delivered
them to us, [3]†it seemed good to me also, having followed all things closely
for some time past, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent
Theophilus, [4]†that you may have certainty concerning the things you have
been taught.

Birth of John the Baptist Foretold

5 ‡ † In the days of Herod, king of Judea, there was a priest named
Zechariah,[1] of the division of Abijah. And he had a wife from the daughters
of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. 6And they were both righteous
before God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and statutes of
the Lord. 7But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and both
were advanced in years.

8Now while he was serving as priest before God when his division was
on duty, 9†according to the custom of the priesthood, he was chosen by lot
to enter the temple of the Lord and burn incense. 10And the whole multitude
of the people were praying outside at the hour of incense. 11 † And there
appeared to him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar
of incense. 12And Zechariah was troubled when he saw him, and fear fell
upon him. 13 † But the angel said to him, “Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for
your prayer has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son,
and you shall call his name John. 14 † And you will have joy and gladness,
and many will rejoice at his birth, 15 † for he will be great before the Lord.
And he must not drink wine or strong drink, and he will be filled with the
Holy Spirit, even from his mother’s womb. 16And he will turn many of the
children of Israel to the Lord their God, 17 † and he will go before him in the
spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,
and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready for the Lord a
people prepared.”

18 † And Zechariah said to the angel, “How shall I know this? For I am an
old man, and my wife is advanced in years.” 19 † And the angel answered
him, “I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I was sent to speak
to you and to bring you this good news. 20And behold, you will be silent and
unable to speak until the day that these things take place, because you did
not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time.” 21 † And the
people were waiting for Zechariah, and they were wondering at his delay in
the temple. 22And when he came out, he was unable to speak to them, and
they realized that he had seen a vision in the temple. And he kept making

signs to them and remained mute. [23] † And when his time of service was ended, he went to his home.

[24] After these days his wife Elizabeth conceived, and for five months she kept herself hidden, saying, [25] “Thus the Lord has done for me in the days when he looked on me, to take away my reproach among people.”

Birth of Jesus Foretold

26 In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of
Galilee named Nazareth, 27 to a virgin betrothed[1] to a man whose name
was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. 28 And
he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!"[2]
29 But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort
of greeting this might be. 30 And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid,
Mary, for you have found favor with God. 31 And behold, you will conceive
in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. 32 He will
be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will
give to him the throne of his father David, 33 and he will reign over the house
of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

34 And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?"[3]

35 And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you,
and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to
be born[4] will be called holy—the Son of God. 36 And behold, your relative
Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth
month with her who was called barren. 37 For nothing will be impossible
with God." 38 And Mary said, "Behold, I am the servant[5] of the Lord; let it
be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

Mary Visits Elizabeth

39 ††In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to
a town in Judah, 40 and she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted
Elizabeth. 41 † And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby
leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, 42 and
she exclaimed with a loud cry, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed
is the fruit of your womb! 43 And why is this granted to me that the mother
of my Lord should come to me? 44 For behold, when the sound of your
greeting came to my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. 45 And
blessed is she who believed that there would be[1] a fulfillment of what was
spoken to her from the Lord.”

Mary's Song of Praise: The Magnificat

46 ✝✝✝And Mary said,

"My soul magnifies the Lord,
47 ✝ and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
48 ✝ for he has looked on the humble estate of his
servant.
For behold, from now on all generations
will call me blessed;
49 for he who is mighty has done great things
for me,
and holy is his name.
50 ✝ And his mercy is for those who fear him
from generation to generation.
51 He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts
of their hearts;
52 he has brought down the mighty from their
thrones
and exalted those of humble estate;
53 he has filled the hungry with good things,
and the rich he has sent away empty.
54 He has helped his servant Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,
55 as he spoke to our fathers,
to Abraham and to his offspring forever."

56 And Mary remained with her about three months and returned to her home.

The Birth of John the Baptist

57 † Now the time came for Elizabeth to give birth, and she bore a son.
58 † And her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown great
mercy to her, and they rejoiced with her. 59 † And on the eighth day they
came to circumcise the child. And they would have called him Zechariah
after his father, 60 † but his mother answered, “No; he shall be called John.”
61 And they said to her, “None of your relatives is called by this name.”
62 And they made signs to his father, inquiring what he wanted him to be
called. 63 † And he asked for a writing tablet and wrote, “His name is John.”
And they all wondered. 64 And immediately his mouth was opened and his
tongue loosed, and he spoke, blessing God. 65 And fear came on all their
neighbors. And all these things were talked about through all the hill
country of Judea, 66 † and all who heard them laid them up in their hearts,
saying, “What then will this child be?” For the hand of the Lord was with
him.

Zechariah's Prophecy

67 ‡ And his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and
prophesied, saying,

68 ‡† "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,
for he has visited and redeemed his people
69 † and has raised up a horn of salvation for us
in the house of his servant David,
70 as he spoke by the mouth of his holy
prophets from of old,
71 that we should be saved from our enemies
and from the hand of all who hate us;
72 to show the mercy promised to our fathers
and to remember his holy covenant,
73 the oath that he swore to our father Abraham,
to grant us
74 † that we, being delivered from the hand of
our enemies,
might serve him without fear,
75 in holiness and righteousness before him all
our days.
76 † And you, child, will be called the prophet of
the Most High;
for you will go before the Lord to prepare
his ways,
77 † to give knowledge of salvation to his people
in the forgiveness of their sins,
78 † because of the tender mercy of our God,
whereby the sunrise shall visit us[1] from on
high
79 to give light to those who sit in darkness and
in the shadow of death,
to guide our feet into the way of peace."

80 † And the child grew and became strong in spirit, and he was in the wilderness until the day of his public appearance to Israel.

The Birth of Jesus Christ

2 [1]In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the
world should be registered. [2] This was the first registration when[2]
Quirinius was governor of Syria. [3]And all went to be registered, each to his
own town. [4] And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of
Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because
he was of the house and lineage of David, [5]to be registered with Mary, his
betrothed,[1] who was with child. [6]And while they were there, the time came
for her to give birth. [7]And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped
him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no
place for them in the inn.

The Shepherds and the Angels

8 ‡ † And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping
watch over their flock by night. 9 † And an angel of the Lord appeared to
them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled
with fear. 10 † And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you
good news of great joy that will be for all the people. 11 † For unto you is
born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. 12 † And
this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths
and lying in a manger.” 13 † And suddenly there was with the angel a
multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

14 † “Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace among those with
whom he is pleased!”[2]

15 When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said
to one another, “Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has
happened, which the Lord has made known to us.” 16 And they went with
haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. 17 † And
when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them
concerning this child. 18 And all who heard it wondered at what the
shepherds told them. 19 † But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering
them in her heart. 20 And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising
God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

21 † And at the end of eight days, when he was circumcised, he was called
Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

Jesus Presented at the Temple

22 ‡‡And when the time came for their purification according to the Law
of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord 23(as
it is written in the Law of the Lord, “Every male who first opens the womb
shall be called holy to the Lord”) 24and to offer a sacrifice according to what
is said in the Law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves, or two young
pigeons.” 25‡‡Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon,
and this man was righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of
Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. 26And it had been revealed to him
by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s
Christ. 27‡And he came in the Spirit into the temple, and when the parents
brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the
Law, 28he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said,

29‡ “Lord, now you are letting your servant[1] depart
in peace,
according to your word;
30‡ for my eyes have seen your salvation
31‡ that you have prepared in the presence of all
peoples,
32‡ a light for revelation to the Gentiles,
and for glory to your people Israel.”

33And his father and his mother marveled at what was said about him.
34‡And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, “Behold, this
child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign
that is opposed 35‡(and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), so
that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed.”

36‡And there was a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the
tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years, having lived with her husband
seven years from when she was a virgin, 37‡and then as a widow until she
was eighty-four.[2] She did not depart from the temple, worshiping with
fasting and prayer night and day. 38‡And coming up at that very hour she

began to give thanks to God and to speak of him to all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem.

The Return to Nazareth

39 And when they had performed everything according to the Law of the
Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. 40 And the
child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor of God
was upon him.

The Boy Jesus in the Temple

41 ‡ † Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the
Passover. 42 † And when he was twelve years old, they went up according to
custom. 43 And when the feast was ended, as they were returning, the boy
Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents did not know it, 44 but
supposing him to be in the group they went a day's journey, but then they
began to search for him among their relatives and acquaintances, 45 and
when they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem, searching for him.
46 ‡ After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the
teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. 47 And all who heard
him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. 48 And when his
parents[1] saw him, they were astonished. And his mother said to him, "Son,
why have you treated us so? Behold, your father and I have been searching
for you in great distress." 49 And he said to them, "Why were you looking
for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?"[2] 50 And
they did not understand the saying that he spoke to them. 51 † And he went
down with them and came to Nazareth and was submissive to them. And his
mother treasured up all these things in her heart.

52 † And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature[3] and in favor with God
and man.

John the Baptist Prepares the Way

3 [1]†In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, [2]during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John the son of Zechariah in the wilderness. [3]†And he went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. [4]††As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet,

> "The voice of one crying in the wilderness:
> 'Prepare the way of the Lord,[4]
> make his paths straight.
> [5] Every valley shall be filled,
> and every mountain and hill shall be made
> low,
> and the crooked shall become straight,
> and the rough places shall become level
> ways,
> [6] and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.'"

[7]†He said therefore to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? [8]† Bear fruits in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham. [9]†Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."

[10]† And the crowds asked him, "What then shall we do?" [11]† And he answered them, "Whoever has two tunics[5] is to share with him who has none, and whoever has food is to do likewise." [12]†Tax collectors also came to be baptized and said to him, "Teacher, what shall we do?" [13]And he said to them, "Collect no more than you are authorized to do." [14]†Soldiers also

asked him, “And we, what shall we do?” And he said to them, “Do not extort money from anyone by threats or by false accusation, and be content with your wages.”

15 †As the people were in expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Christ, 16 †John answered them all, saying, “I baptize you with water, but he who is mightier than I is coming, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. 17 †His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

18 So with many other exhortations he preached good news to the people. 19 †But Herod the tetrarch, who had been reproved by him for Herodias, his brother’s wife, and for all the evil things that Herod had done, 20 added this to them all, that he locked up John in prison.

21 †Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heavens were opened, 22 †and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form, like a dove; and a voice came from heaven, “You are my beloved Son;[1] with you I am well pleased.”[2]

The Genealogy of Jesus Christ

23 ‡ † Jesus, when he began his ministry, was about thirty years of age,
being the son (as was supposed) of Joseph, the son of Heli, 24 the son of
Matthat, the son of Levi, the son of Melchi, the son of Jannai, the son of
Joseph, 25 the son of Mattathias, the son of Amos, the son of Nahum, the son
of Esli, the son of Naggai, 26 the son of Maath, the son of Mattathias, the son
of Semein, the son of Josech, the son of Joda, 27 the son of Joanan, the son of
Rhesa, the son of Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel,[3] the son of Neri, 28 the
son of Melchi, the son of Addi, the son of Cosam, the son of Elmadam, the
son of Er, 29 the son of Joshua, the son of Eliezer, the son of Jorim, the son of
Matthat, the son of Levi, 30 the son of Simeon, the son of Judah, the son of
Joseph, the son of Jonam, the son of Eliakim, 31 the son of Melea, the son of
Menna, the son of Mattatha, the son of Nathan, the son of David, 32 the son
of Jesse, the son of Obed, the son of Boaz, the son of Sala, the son of
Nahshon, 33 the son of Amminadab, the son of Admin, the son of Arni, the
son of Hezron, the son of Perez, the son of Judah, 34 the son of Jacob, the son
of Isaac, the son of Abraham, the son of Terah, the son of Nahor, 35 the son
of Serug, the son of Reu, the son of Peleg, the son of Eber, the son of
Shelah, 36 the son of Cainan, the son of Arphaxad, the son of Shem, the son
of Noah, the son of Lamech, 37 the son of Methuselah, the son of Enoch, the
son of Jared, the son of Mahalaleel, the son of Cainan, 38 the son of Enos, the
son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.

The Temptation of Jesus

4 [1]†† And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and
was led by the Spirit in the wilderness [2]† for forty days, being tempted by
the devil. And he ate nothing during those days. And when they were ended,
he was hungry. [3]† The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God,
command this stone to become bread." [4]And Jesus answered him, "It is
written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone.'" [5]† And the devil took him up
and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, [6]and
said to him, "To you I will give all this authority and their glory, for it has
been delivered to me, and I give it to whom I will. [7]If you, then, will
worship me, it will all be yours." [8]And Jesus answered him, "It is written,

> "'You shall worship the Lord your God,
> and him only shall you serve.'"

[9]† And he took him to Jerusalem and set him on the pinnacle of the temple
and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from
here, [10]† for it is written,

> "' He will command his angels concerning you,
> to guard you,'

[11]and

> "'On their hands they will bear you up,
> lest you strike your foot against a stone.'"

[12]† And Jesus answered him, "It is said, 'You shall not put the Lord your
God to the test.'" [13]† And when the devil had ended every temptation, he
departed from him until an opportune time.

Jesus Begins His Ministry

14 ✝✝And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and a report
about him went out through all the surrounding country. 15 ✝And he taught in
their synagogues, being glorified by all.

Jesus Rejected at Nazareth

16 ‡† And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. And as was
his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up
to read. 17 † And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He
unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written,

18 "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the
captives
and recovering of sight to the blind,
to set at liberty those who are oppressed,
19 to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

20 † And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat
down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. 21 † And he
began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your
hearing." 22 And all spoke well of him and marveled at the gracious words
that were coming from his mouth. And they said, "Is not this Joseph's son?"
23 And he said to them, "Doubtless you will quote to me this proverb,
'Physician, heal yourself.' What we have heard you did at Capernaum, do
here in your hometown as well." 24 ‡ And he said, "Truly, I say to you, no
prophet is acceptable in his hometown. 25 But in truth, I tell you, there were
many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heavens were shut up
three years and six months, and a great famine came over all the land, 26 and
Elijah was sent to none of them but only to Zarephath, in the land of Sidon,
to a woman who was a widow. 27 And there were many lepers[1] in Israel in
the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them was cleansed, but only
Naaman the Syrian." 28 When they heard these things, all in the synagogue
were filled with wrath. 29 † And they rose up and drove him out of the town
and brought him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so

that they could throw him down the cliff. [30] † But passing through their midst, he went away.

Jesus Heals a Man with an Unclean Demon

31 ‡ † And he went down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee. And he was
teaching them on the Sabbath, 32 † and they were astonished at his teaching,
for his word possessed authority. 33 † And in the synagogue there was a man
who had the spirit of an unclean demon, and he cried out with a loud voice,
34 † "Ha![2] What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come
to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God." 35 But Jesus
rebuked him, saying, "Be silent and come out of him!" And when the
demon had thrown him down in their midst, he came out of him, having
done him no harm. 36 And they were all amazed and said to one another,
"What is this word? For with authority and power he commands the
unclean spirits, and they come out!" 37 And reports about him went out into
every place in the surrounding region.

Jesus Heals Many

38 ‡ † And he arose and left the synagogue and entered Simon's house.
Now Simon's mother-in-law was ill with a high fever, and they appealed to
him on her behalf. 39 † And he stood over her and rebuked the fever, and it
left her, and immediately she rose and began to serve them.

40 † Now when the sun was setting, all those who had any who were sick
with various diseases brought them to him, and he laid his hands on every
one of them and healed them. 41 † And demons also came out of many,
crying, "You are the Son of God!" But he rebuked them and would not
allow them to speak, because they knew that he was the Christ.

Jesus Preaches in Synagogues

42 † And when it was day, he departed and went into a desolate place. And
the people sought him and came to him, and would have kept him from
leaving them, 43 † but he said to them, “I must preach the good news of the
kingdom of God to the other towns as well; for I was sent for this purpose.”
44 † And he was preaching in the synagogues of Judea.[1]

Jesus Calls the First Disciples

5 [1]†† On one occasion, while the crowd was pressing in on him to hear
the word of God, he was standing by the lake of Gennesaret, [2]† and he saw
two boats by the lake, but the fishermen had gone out of them and were
washing their nets. [3]† Getting into one of the boats, which was Simon's, he
asked him to put out a little from the land. And he sat down and taught the
people from the boat. [4]And when he had finished speaking, he said to
Simon, "Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch." [5]† And
Simon answered, "Master, we toiled all night and took nothing! But at your
word I will let down the nets." [6]† And when they had done this, they
enclosed a large number of fish, and their nets were breaking. [7]† They
signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they
came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. [8]† But when
Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me,
for I am a sinful man, O Lord." [9]For he and all who were with him were
astonished at the catch of fish that they had taken, [10]† and so also were
James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And
Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching
men." [11]† And when they had brought their boats to land, they left
everything and followed him.

Jesus Cleanses a Leper

12 ‡ † While he was in one of the cities, there came a man full of leprosy.[2]
And when he saw Jesus, he fell on his face and begged him, “Lord, if you
will, you can make me clean.” 13 † And Jesus[3] stretched out his hand and
touched him, saying, “I will; be clean.” And immediately the leprosy left
him. 14 † And he charged him to tell no one, but “go and show yourself to the
priest, and make an offering for your cleansing, as Moses commanded, for a
proof to them.” 15 But now even more the report about him went abroad, and
great crowds gathered to hear him and to be healed of their infirmities. 16 But
he would withdraw to desolate places and pray.

Jesus Heals a Paralytic

17 ‡ † On one of those days, as he was teaching, Pharisees and teachers of
the law were sitting there, who had come from every village of Galilee and
Judea and from Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was with him to heal.
[1] 18 And behold, some men were bringing on a bed a man who was
paralyzed, and they were seeking to bring him in and lay him before Jesus,
19 † but finding no way to bring him in, because of the crowd, they went up
on the roof and let him down with his bed through the tiles into the midst
before Jesus. 20 † And when he saw their faith, he said, "Man, your sins are
forgiven you." 21 † And the scribes and the Pharisees began to question,
saying, "Who is this who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but
God alone?" 22 † When Jesus perceived their thoughts, he answered them,
"Why do you question in your hearts? 23 † Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins
are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Rise and walk'? 24 † But that you may know that
the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"—he said to the man
who was paralyzed—"I say to you, rise, pick up your bed and go home."
25 And immediately he rose up before them and picked up what he had been
lying on and went home, glorifying God. 26 † And amazement seized them
all, and they glorified God and were filled with awe, saying, "We have seen
extraordinary things today."

Jesus Calls Levi

27 ‡† After this he went out and saw a tax collector named Levi, sitting at
the tax booth. And he said to him, “Follow me.” 28 † And leaving everything,
he rose and followed him.

29 ‡† And Levi made him a great feast in his house, and there was a large
company of tax collectors and others reclining at table with them. 30 † And
the Pharisees and their scribes grumbled at his disciples, saying, “Why do
you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?” 31 † And Jesus answered
them, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are
sick. 32 † I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.”

A Question About Fasting

33 ‡ ‡ And they said to him, “The disciples of John fast often and offer
prayers, and so do the disciples of the Pharisees, but yours eat and drink.”
34 ‡ And Jesus said to them, “Can you make wedding guests fast while the
bridegroom is with them? 35 The days will come when the bridegroom is
taken away from them, and then they will fast in those days.” 36 ‡ ‡ He also
told them a parable: “No one tears a piece from a new garment and puts it
on an old garment. If he does, he will tear the new, and the piece from the
new will not match the old. 37 And no one puts new wine into old wineskins.
If he does, the new wine will burst the skins and it will be spilled, and the
skins will be destroyed. 38 But new wine must be put into fresh wineskins.
39 ‡ And no one after drinking old wine desires new, for he says, ‘The old is
good.’”[1]

Jesus Is Lord of the Sabbath

6 [1]‡†On a Sabbath,[2] while he was going through the grainfields, his
disciples plucked and ate some heads of grain, rubbing them in their hands.
[2]†But some of the Pharisees said, “Why are you doing what is not lawful to
do on the Sabbath?” [3]‡And Jesus answered them, “Have you not read what
David did when he was hungry, he and those who were with him: [4]how he
entered the house of God and took and ate the bread of the Presence, which
is not lawful for any but the priests to eat, and also gave it to those with
him?” [5]†And he said to them, “The Son of Man is lord of the Sabbath.”

A Man with a Withered Hand

6 ‡ † On another Sabbath, he entered the synagogue and was teaching, and
a man was there whose right hand was withered. 7 † And the scribes and the
Pharisees watched him, to see whether he would heal on the Sabbath, so
that they might find a reason to accuse him. 8 But he knew their thoughts,
and he said to the man with the withered hand, “Come and stand here.” And
he rose and stood there. 9 † And Jesus said to them, “I ask you, is it lawful on
the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or to destroy it?” 10 And
after looking around at them all he said to him, “Stretch out your hand.”
And he did so, and his hand was restored. 11 † But they were filled with fury
and discussed with one another what they might do to Jesus.

The Twelve Apostles

12 ‡ † In these days he went out to the mountain to pray, and all night he
continued in prayer to God. 13 † And when day came, he called his disciples
and chose from them twelve, whom he named apostles: 14 ‡ Simon, whom he
named Peter, and Andrew his brother, and James and John, and Philip, and
Bartholomew, 15 † and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of
Alphaeus, and Simon who was called the Zealot, 16 † and Judas the son of
James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor.

Jesus Ministers to a Great Multitude

17 ††And he came down with them and stood on a level place, with a great
crowd of his disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea and
Jerusalem and the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon, 18 who came to hear him and
to be healed of their diseases. And those who were troubled with unclean
spirits were cured. 19 †And all the crowd sought to touch him, for power
came out from him and healed them all.

The Beatitudes

[20]†††And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said:
“Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.
[21]†“Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you shall be satisfied.
“Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh.
[22]†“Blessed are you when people hate you and when they exclude you and revile you and spurn your name as evil, on account of the Son of Man!
[23]†Rejoice in that day, and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven; for so their fathers did to the prophets.

Jesus Pronounces Woes

24 ‡ ‡ “But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your
consolation.
25 “Woe to you who are full now, for you shall be hungry.
“Woe to you who laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep.
26 “Woe to you, when all people speak well of you, for so their fathers did
to the false prophets.

Love Your Enemies

27 ‡ † “But I say to you who hear, Love your enemies, do good to those
who hate you, 28 † bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you.
29 † To one who strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also, and from one
who takes away your cloak do not withhold your tunic[1] either. 30 Give to
everyone who begs from you, and from one who takes away your goods do
not demand them back. 31 † And as you wish that others would do to you, do
so to them.

32 ‡ “If you love those who love you, what benefit is that to you? For even
sinners love those who love them. 33 And if you do good to those who do
good to you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners do the same.
34 And if you lend to those from whom you expect to receive, what credit is
that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to get back the same amount.
35 † But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in
return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most
High, for he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil. 36 Be merciful, even as
your Father is merciful.

Judging Others

37 ‡ ‡ “Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will
not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven; 38 ‡ give, and it will be
given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over,
will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured
back to you.”

39 He also told them a parable: “Can a blind man lead a blind man? Will
they not both fall into a pit? 40 ‡ A disciple is not above his teacher, but
everyone when he is fully trained will be like his teacher. 41 ‡ Why do you
see the speck that is in your brother’s eye, but do not notice the log that is in
your own eye? 42 ‡ How can you say to your brother, ‘Brother, let me take
out the speck that is in your eye,’ when you yourself do not see the log that
is in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye,
and then you will see clearly to take out the speck that is in your brother’s
eye.

A Tree and Its Fruit

43 “For no good tree bears bad fruit, nor again does a bad tree bear good
fruit, 44 for each tree is known by its own fruit. For figs are not gathered
from thornbushes, nor are grapes picked from a bramble bush. 45 The good
person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil
person out of his evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the
heart his mouth speaks.

Build Your House on the Rock

46 ✝ ✝ “Why do you call me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do what I tell you?
47 ✝ Everyone who comes to me and hears my words and does them, I will
show you what he is like: 48 he is like a man building a house, who dug deep
and laid the foundation on the rock. And when a flood arose, the stream
broke against that house and could not shake it, because it had been well
built.[1] 49 But the one who hears and does not do them is like a man who
built a house on the ground without a foundation. When the stream broke
against it, immediately it fell, and the ruin of that house was great.”

Jesus Heals a Centurion's Servant

7 [1]†† After he had finished all his sayings in the hearing of the people,
he entered Capernaum. [2]† Now a centurion had a servant[1] who was sick and
at the point of death, who was highly valued by him. [3] † When the
centurion[2] heard about Jesus, he sent to him elders of the Jews, asking him
to come and heal his servant. [4]And when they came to Jesus, they pleaded
with him earnestly, saying, "He is worthy to have you do this for him, [5]† for
he loves our nation, and he is the one who built us our synagogue." [6]† And
Jesus went with them. When he was not far from the house, the centurion
sent friends, saying to him, "Lord, do not trouble yourself, for I am not
worthy to have you come under my roof. [7]† Therefore I did not presume to
come to you. But say the word, and let my servant be healed. [8]For I too am
a man set under authority, with soldiers under me: and I say to one, 'Go,'
and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do
this,' and he does it." [9]† When Jesus heard these things, he marveled at him,
and turning to the crowd that followed him, said, "I tell you, not even in
Israel have I found such faith." [10]And when those who had been sent
returned to the house, they found the servant well.

Jesus Raises a Widow’s Son

11 †† Soon afterward[3] he went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and
a great crowd went with him. 12 † As he drew near to the gate of the town,
behold, a man who had died was being carried out, the only son of his
mother, and she was a widow, and a considerable crowd from the town was
with her. 13 † And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her and said
to her, “Do not weep.” 14 † Then he came up and touched the bier, and the
bearers stood still. And he said, “Young man, I say to you, arise.” 15 † And
the dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus[4] gave him to his mother.
16 † Fear seized them all, and they glorified God, saying, “A great prophet
has arisen among us!” and “God has visited his people!” 17 † And this report
about him spread through the whole of Judea and all the surrounding
country.

Messengers from John the Baptist

18 ‡ † The disciples of John reported all these things to him. And John,
19 † calling two of his disciples to him, sent them to the Lord, saying, “Are
you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?” 20 † And when the
men had come to him, they said, “John the Baptist has sent us to you,
saying, ‘Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?’”
21 In that hour he healed many people of diseases and plagues and evil
spirits, and on many who were blind he bestowed sight. 22 † And he answered
them, “Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive
their sight, the lame walk, lepers[1] are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead
are raised up, the poor have good news preached to them. 23 † And blessed is
the one who is not offended by me.”

24 ‡ † When John’s messengers had gone, Jesus[2] began to speak to the
crowds concerning John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to see?
A reed shaken by the wind? 25 † What then did you go out to see? A man
dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who are dressed in splendid clothing
and live in luxury are in kings’ courts. 26 † What then did you go out to see?
A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. 27 ‡ This is he of whom it
is written,

> “‘Behold, I send my messenger before your
> face,
> who will prepare your way before you.’

28 † I tell you, among those born of women none is greater than John. Yet the
one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.” 29 ‡ (When all the
people heard this, and the tax collectors too, they declared God just,[3]
having been baptized with the baptism of John, 30 but the Pharisees and the
lawyers rejected the purpose of God for themselves, not having been
baptized by him.)

31 † “To what then shall I compare the people of this generation, and what
are they like? 32 † They are like children sitting in the marketplace and
calling to one another,

“‘We played the flute for you, and you did not
dance;
we sang a dirge, and you did not weep.’

33 †For John the Baptist has come eating no bread and drinking no wine, and
you say, ‘He has a demon.’ 34 † The Son of Man has come eating and
drinking, and you say, ‘Look at him! A glutton and a drunkard, a friend of
tax collectors and sinners!’ 35 †Yet wisdom is justified by all her children.”

A Sinful Woman Forgiven

36 ‡† One of the Pharisees asked him to eat with him, and he went into the
Pharisee's house and took his place at the table. 37 † And behold, a woman of
the city, who was a sinner, when she learned that he was reclining at table in
the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of ointment, 38 † and standing
behind him at his feet, weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears and
wiped them with the hair of her head and kissed his feet and anointed them
with the ointment. 39 † Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw this,
he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would have known who
and what sort of woman this is who is touching him, for she is a sinner."
40 † And Jesus answering said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to
you." And he answered, "Say it, Teacher."

41 † "A certain moneylender had two debtors. One owed five hundred
denarii, and the other fifty. 42 † When they could not pay, he cancelled the
debt of both. Now which of them will love him more?" 43 † Simon answered,
"The one, I suppose, for whom he cancelled the larger debt." And he said to
him, "You have judged rightly." 44 † Then turning toward the woman he said
to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave me no
water for my feet, but she has wet my feet with her tears and wiped them
with her hair. 45 † You gave me no kiss, but from the time I came in she has
not ceased to kiss my feet. 46 † You did not anoint my head with oil, but she
has anointed my feet with ointment. 47 † Therefore I tell you, her sins, which
are many, are forgiven—for she loved much. But he who is forgiven little,
loves little." 48 † And he said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." 49 † Then those
who were at table with him began to say among[1] themselves, "Who is this,
who even forgives sins?" 50 † And he said to the woman, "Your faith has
saved you; go in peace."

Women Accompanying Jesus

8 [1] ‡ † Soon afterward he went on through cities and villages,
proclaiming and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God. And the
twelve were with him, [2]‡and also some women who had been healed of evil
spirits and infirmities: Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons
had gone out, [3]and Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's household manager,
and Susanna, and many others, who provided for them[1] out of their means.

The Parable of the Sower

4 ‡ † And when a great crowd was gathering and people from town after
town came to him, he said in a parable: 5 † "A sower went out to sow his
seed. And as he sowed, some fell along the path and was trampled
underfoot, and the birds of the air devoured it. 6 † And some fell on the rock,
and as it grew up, it withered away, because it had no moisture. 7 † And some
fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up with it and choked it. 8 † And
some fell into good soil and grew and yielded a hundredfold." As he said
these things, he called out, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

The Purpose of the Parables

9 ‡ ‡ And when his disciples asked him what this parable meant, 10 ‡ he said,
“To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of God, but
for others they are in parables, so that ‘seeing they may not see, and hearing
they may not understand.’ 11 ‡ Now the parable is this: The seed is the word
of God. 12 ‡ The ones along the path are those who have heard; then the devil
comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not
believe and be saved. 13 ‡ And the ones on the rock are those who, when they
hear the word, receive it with joy. But these have no root; they believe for a
while, and in time of testing fall away. 14 ‡ And as for what fell among the
thorns, they are those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked
by the cares and riches and pleasures of life, and their fruit does not mature.
15 ‡ As for that in the good soil, they are those who, hearing the word, hold it
fast in an honest and good heart, and bear fruit with patience.

A Lamp Under a Jar

16 “No one after lighting a lamp covers it with a jar or puts it under a
bed, but puts it on a stand, so that those who enter may see the light. 17 For
nothing is hidden that will not be made manifest, nor is anything secret that
will not be known and come to light. 18 Take care then how you hear, for to
the one who has, more will be given, and from the one who has not, even
what he thinks that he has will be taken away.”

Jesus' Mother and Brothers

19 ‡ † Then his mother and his brothers came to him, but they could not
reach him because of the crowd. 20 ‡ And he was told, "Your mother and
your brothers are standing outside, desiring to see you." 21 But he answered
them, "My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and
do it."

Jesus Calms a Storm

22 One day he got into a boat with his disciples, and he said to them,
"Let us go across to the other side of the lake." So they set out, 23 and as
they sailed he fell asleep. And a windstorm came down on the lake, and
they were filling with water and were in danger. 24 And they went and woke
him, saying, "Master, Master, we are perishing!" And he awoke and
rebuked the wind and the raging waves, and they ceased, and there was a
calm. 25 He said to them, "Where is your faith?" And they were afraid, and
they marveled, saying to one another, "Who then is this, that he commands
even winds and water, and they obey him?"

Jesus Heals a Man with a Demon

26 Then they sailed to the country of the Gerasenes,[1] which is opposite
Galilee. 27 When Jesus[2] had stepped out on land, there met him a man
from the city who had demons. For a long time he had worn no clothes, and
he had not lived in a house but among the tombs. 28 When he saw Jesus, he
cried out and fell down before him and said with a loud voice, "What have
you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, do not
torment me." 29 For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of
the man. (For many a time it had seized him. He was kept under guard and
bound with chains and shackles, but he would break the bonds and be
driven by the demon into the desert.) 30 Jesus then asked him, "What is
your name?" And he said, "Legion," for many demons had entered him.
31 And they begged him not to command them to depart into the abyss.
32 Now a large herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside, and they
begged him to let them enter these. So he gave them permission. 33 Then the
demons came out of the man and entered the pigs, and the herd rushed
down the steep bank into the lake and were drowned.

34 When the herdsmen saw what had happened, they fled and told it in
the city and in the country. 35 Then people went out to see what had
happened, and they came to Jesus and found the man from whom the
demons had gone, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind,
and they were afraid. 36 And those who had seen it told them how the
demon-possessed[1] man had been healed. 37 Then all the people of the
surrounding country of the Gerasenes asked him to depart from them, for
they were seized with great fear. So he got into the boat and returned.
38 The man from whom the demons had gone begged that he might be with
him, but Jesus sent him away, saying, 39 "Return to your home, and declare
how much God has done for you." And he went away, proclaiming
throughout the whole city how much Jesus had done for him.

Jesus Heals a Woman and Jairus's Daughter

40 ‡ † Now when Jesus returned, the crowd welcomed him, for they were
all waiting for him. 41 † And there came a man named Jairus, who was a ruler
of the synagogue. And falling at Jesus' feet, he implored him to come to his
house, 42 † for he had an only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she
was dying.

As Jesus went, the people pressed around him. 43 † And there was a
woman who had had a discharge of blood for twelve years, and though she
had spent all her living on physicians,[2] she could not be healed by anyone.
44 † She came up behind him and touched the fringe of his garment, and
immediately her discharge of blood ceased. 45 † And Jesus said, "Who was it
that touched me?" When all denied it, Peter[3] said, "Master, the crowds
surround you and are pressing in on you!" 46 But Jesus said, "Someone
touched me, for I perceive that power has gone out from me." 47 † And when
the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling, and falling
down before him declared in the presence of all the people why she had
touched him, and how she had been immediately healed. 48 † And he said to
her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace."

49 † While he was still speaking, someone from the ruler's house came and
said, "Your daughter is dead; do not trouble the Teacher any more." 50 † But
Jesus on hearing this answered him, "Do not fear; only believe, and she will
be well." 51 † And when he came to the house, he allowed no one to enter
with him, except Peter and John and James, and the father and mother of
the child. 52 † And all were weeping and mourning for her, but he said, "Do
not weep, for she is not dead but sleeping." 53 † And they laughed at him,
knowing that she was dead. 54 † But taking her by the hand he called, saying,
"Child, arise." 55 † And her spirit returned, and she got up at once. And he
directed that something should be given her to eat. 56 † And her parents were
amazed, but he charged them to tell no one what had happened.

Jesus Sends Out the Twelve Apostles

9 [1] ‡ † And he called the twelve together and gave them power and
authority over all demons and to cure diseases, [2] † and he sent them out to
proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal. [3] † And he said to them, “Take
nothing for your journey, no staff, nor bag, nor bread, nor money; and do
not have two tunics.[1] [4] † And whatever house you enter, stay there, and from
there depart. [5] † And wherever they do not receive you, when you leave that
town shake off the dust from your feet as a testimony against them.” [6] † And
they departed and went through the villages, preaching the gospel and
healing everywhere.

Herod Is Perplexed by Jesus

7 ‡‡‡Now Herod the tetrarch heard about all that was happening, and he
was perplexed, because it was said by some that John had been raised from
the dead, 8 by some that Elijah had appeared, and by others that one of the
prophets of old had risen. 9 Herod said, “John I beheaded, but who is this
about whom I hear such things?” And he sought to see him.

Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand

10 ‡ † On their return the apostles told him all that they had done. And he
took them and withdrew apart to a town called Bethsaida. 11 † When the
crowds learned it, they followed him, and he welcomed them and spoke to
them of the kingdom of God and cured those who had need of healing.
12 † Now the day began to wear away, and the twelve came and said to him,
"Send the crowd away to go into the surrounding villages and countryside
to find lodging and get provisions, for we are here in a desolate place."
13 † But he said to them, "You give them something to eat." They said, "We
have no more than five loaves and two fish—unless we are to go and buy
food for all these people." 14 † For there were about five thousand men. And
he said to his disciples, "Have them sit down in groups of about fifty each."
15 And they did so, and had them all sit down. 16 † And taking the five loaves
and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and said a blessing over them.
Then he broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples to set before the
crowd. 17 † And they all ate and were satisfied. And what was left over was
picked up, twelve baskets of broken pieces.

Peter Confesses Jesus as the Christ

18 ‡ † Now it happened that as he was praying alone, the disciples were
with him. And he asked them, “Who do the crowds say that I am?” 19 † And
they answered, “John the Baptist. But others say, Elijah, and others, that one
of the prophets of old has risen.” 20 † Then he said to them, “But who do you
say that I am?” And Peter answered, “The Christ of God.”

Jesus Foretells His Death

[21] ‡ ‡ And he strictly charged and commanded them to tell this to no one, [22] ‡ saying, “The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised.”

Take Up Your Cross and Follow Jesus

[23] ‡‡‡And he said to all, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny
himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. [24]For whoever would
save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it.
[25] †For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or
forfeits himself? [26]†For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words, of him
will the Son of Man be ashamed when he comes in his glory and the glory
of the Father and of the holy angels. [27]†But I tell you truly, there are some
standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God.”

The Transfiguration

28 ‡ † Now about eight days after these sayings he took with him Peter and
John and James and went up on the mountain to pray. 29 † And as he was
praying, the appearance of his face was altered, and his clothing became
dazzling white. 30 † And behold, two men were talking with him, Moses and
Elijah, 31 † who appeared in glory and spoke of his departure,[1] which he was
about to accomplish at Jerusalem. 32 † Now Peter and those who were with
him were heavy with sleep, but when they became fully awake they saw his
glory and the two men who stood with him. 33 † And as the men were parting
from him, Peter said to Jesus, “Master, it is good that we are here. Let us
make three tents, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah”—not
knowing what he said. 34 † As he was saying these things, a cloud came and
overshadowed them, and they were afraid as they entered the cloud. 35 † And
a voice came out of the cloud, saying, “This is my Son, my Chosen One;[2]
listen to him!” 36 † And when the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone.
And they kept silent and told no one in those days anything of what they
had seen.

Jesus Heals a Boy with an Unclean Spirit

37 ‡ † On the next day, when they had come down from the mountain, a
great crowd met him. 38 † And behold, a man from the crowd cried out,
“Teacher, I beg you to look at my son, for he is my only child. 39 † And
behold, a spirit seizes him, and he suddenly cries out. It convulses him so
that he foams at the mouth, and shatters him, and will hardly leave him.
40 † And I begged your disciples to cast it out, but they could not.” 41 † Jesus
answered, “O faithless and twisted generation, how long am I to be with
you and bear with you? Bring your son here.” 42 † While he was coming, the
demon threw him to the ground and convulsed him. But Jesus rebuked the
unclean spirit and healed the boy, and gave him back to his father. 43 ‡ † And
all were astonished at the majesty of God.

Jesus Again Foretells His Death

But while they were all marveling at everything he was doing, Jesus[1] said to his disciples, 44 †“Let these words sink into your ears: The Son of Man is about to be delivered into the hands of men.” 45 †But they did not understand this saying, and it was concealed from them, so that they might not perceive it. And they were afraid to ask him about this saying.

Who Is the Greatest?

46 An argument arose among them as to which of them was the greatest.
47 But Jesus, knowing the reasoning of their hearts, took a child and put
him by his side 48 and said to them, “Whoever receives this child in my
name receives me, and whoever receives me receives him who sent me. For
he who is least among you all is the one who is great.”

Anyone Not Against Us Is For Us

49 †† John answered, “Master, we saw someone casting out demons in
your name, and we tried to stop him, because he does not follow with us.”
50 † But Jesus said to him, “Do not stop him, for the one who is not against
you is for you.”

A Samaritan Village Rejects Jesus

51 ‡† When the days drew near for him to be taken up, he set his face to go
to Jerusalem. 52 ‡ And he sent messengers ahead of him, who went and
entered a village of the Samaritans, to make preparations for him. 53 But the
people did not receive him, because his face was set toward Jerusalem.
54 † And when his disciples James and John saw it, they said, “Lord, do you
want us to tell fire to come down from heaven and consume them?”[1]
55 † But he turned and rebuked them.[2] 56 And they went on to another village.

The Cost of Following Jesus

57 ‡ † As they were going along the road, someone said to him, “I will
follow you wherever you go.” 58 † And Jesus said to him, “Foxes have holes,
and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his
head.” 59 ‡ To another he said, “Follow me.” But he said, “Lord, let me first
go and bury my father.” 60 And Jesus[3] said to him, “Leave the dead to bury
their own dead. But as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God.”
61 † Yet another said, “I will follow you, Lord, but let me first say farewell to
those at my home.” 62 † Jesus said to him, “No one who puts his hand to the
plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God.”

Jesus Sends Out the Seventy-Two

10 [1]†‡After this the Lord appointed seventy-two[4] others and sent
them on ahead of him, two by two, into every town and place where he
himself was about to go. [2]†And he said to them, "The harvest is plentiful,
but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest
to send out laborers into his harvest. [3]†Go your way; behold, I am sending
you out as lambs in the midst of wolves. [4]† Carry no moneybag, no
knapsack, no sandals, and greet no one on the road. [5]‡Whatever house you
enter, first say, 'Peace be to this house!' [6]And if a son of peace is there, your
peace will rest upon him. But if not, it will return to you. [7]†And remain in
the same house, eating and drinking what they provide, for the laborer
deserves his wages. Do not go from house to house. [8]†Whenever you enter
a town and they receive you, eat what is set before you. [9]†Heal the sick in it
and say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.' [10]But
whenever you enter a town and they do not receive you, go into its streets
and say, [11]‡'Even the dust of your town that clings to our feet we wipe off
against you. Nevertheless know this, that the kingdom of God has come
near.' [12]I tell you, it will be more bearable on that day for Sodom than for
that town.

Woe to Unrepentant Cities

13 ‡ ‡ “Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty
works done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have
repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. 14 But it will be more
bearable in the judgment for Tyre and Sidon than for you. 15 † And you,
Capernaum, will you be exalted to heaven? You shall be brought down to
Hades.

16 † “The one who hears you hears me, and the one who rejects you rejects
me, and the one who rejects me rejects him who sent me.”

The Return of the Seventy-Two

17 The seventy-two returned with joy, saying, “Lord, even the demons
are subject to us in your name!” 18 And he said to them, “I saw Satan fall
like lightning from heaven. 19 Behold, I have given you authority to tread
on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing
shall hurt you. 20 Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are
subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.”

Jesus Rejoices in the Father's Will

21 ‡ † In that same hour he rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said, "I thank
you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things
from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children; yes,
Father, for such was your gracious will.[1] 22 † All things have been handed
over to me by my Father, and no one knows who the Son is except the
Father, or who the Father is except the Son and anyone to whom the Son
chooses to reveal him."

23 † Then turning to the disciples he said privately, "Blessed are the eyes
that see what you see! 24 For I tell you that many prophets and kings desired
to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did
not hear it."

The Parable of the Good Samaritan

25 ‡ † And behold, a lawyer stood up to put him to the test, saying,
“Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” 26 †He said to him, “What is
written in the Law? How do you read it?” 27 †And he answered, “You shall
love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with
all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself.”
28 †And he said to him, “You have answered correctly; do this, and you will
live.”

29 †But he, desiring to justify himself, said to Jesus, “And who is my
neighbor?” 30 †Jesus replied, “A man was going down from Jerusalem to
Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who stripped him and beat him and
departed, leaving him half dead. 31 †Now by chance a priest was going down
that road, and when he saw him he passed by on the other side. 32 †So
likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the
other side. 33 †But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was, and
when he saw him, he had compassion. 34 †He went to him and bound up his
wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he set him on his own animal and
brought him to an inn and took care of him. 35 †And the next day he took out
two denarii[1] and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, ‘Take care of him, and
whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back.’ 36 †Which of
these three, do you think, proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell
among the robbers?” 37 †He said, “The one who showed him mercy.” And
Jesus said to him, “You go, and do likewise.”

Martha and Mary

38 ✝ ✝ Now as they went on their way, Jesus[2] entered a village. And a
woman named Martha welcomed him into her house. 39 ✝ And she had a
sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to his teaching.
40 ✝ But Martha was distracted with much serving. And she went up to him
and said, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone?
Tell her then to help me." 41 ✝ But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha,
you are anxious and troubled about many things, 42 ✝ but one thing is
necessary.[1] Mary has chosen the good portion, which will not be taken
away from her."

The Lord's Prayer

11 [1] Now Jesus[2] was praying in a certain place, and when he
finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John
taught his disciples." [2] And he said to them, "When you pray, say:

"Father, hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come.
[3] Give us each day our daily bread,[3]
[4] and forgive us our sins,
for we ourselves forgive everyone who is
indebted to us.
And lead us not into temptation."

[5] And he said to them, "Which of you who has a friend will go to him at
midnight and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves, [6] for a friend of
mine has arrived on a journey, and I have nothing to set before him'; [7] and
he will answer from within, 'Do not bother me; the door is now shut, and
my children are with me in bed. I cannot get up and give you anything'? [8] I
tell you, though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his
friend, yet because of his impudence[4] he will rise and give him whatever he
needs. [9] And I tell you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will
find; knock, and it will be opened to you. [10] For everyone who asks
receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be
opened. [11] What father among you, if his son asks for[5] a fish, will instead
of a fish give him a serpent; [12] or if he asks for an egg, will give him a
scorpion? [13] If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your
children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to
those who ask him!"

Jesus and Beelzebul

14 Now he was casting out a demon that was mute. When the demon
had gone out, the mute man spoke, and the people marveled. 15 But some of
them said, “He casts out demons by Beelzebul, the prince of demons,”
16 while others, to test him, kept seeking from him a sign from heaven.
17 But he, knowing their thoughts, said to them, “Every kingdom divided
against itself is laid waste, and a divided household falls. 18 And if Satan
also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? For you say
that I cast out demons by Beelzebul. 19 And if I cast out demons by
Beelzebul, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they will be
your judges. 20 But if it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons, then
the kingdom of God has come upon you. 21 When a strong man, fully
armed, guards his own palace, his goods are safe; 22 but when one stronger
than he attacks him and overcomes him, he takes away his armor in which
he trusted and divides his spoil. 23 Whoever is not with me is against me,
and whoever does not gather with me scatters.

Return of an Unclean Spirit

24 “When the unclean spirit has gone out of a person, it passes through
waterless places seeking rest, and finding none it says, ‘I will return to my
house from which I came.’ 25 And when it comes, it finds the house swept
and put in order. 26 Then it goes and brings seven other spirits more evil
than itself, and they enter and dwell there. And the last state of that person
is worse than the first.”

True Blessedness

27 As he said these things, a woman in the crowd raised her voice and
said to him, “Blessed is the womb that bore you, and the breasts at which
you nursed!” 28 But he said, “Blessed rather are those who hear the word of
God and keep it!”

The Sign of Jonah

[29] ‡ ‡ When the crowds were increasing, he began to say, “This generation
is an evil generation. It seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it
except the sign of Jonah. [30] ‡ For as Jonah became a sign to the people of
Nineveh, so will the Son of Man be to this generation. [31] ‡ The queen of the
South will rise up at the judgment with the men of this generation and
condemn them, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom
of Solomon, and behold, something greater than Solomon is here. [32] ‡ The
men of Nineveh will rise up at the judgment with this generation and
condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold,
something greater than Jonah is here.

The Light in You

33 “No one after lighting a lamp puts it in a cellar or under a basket, but
on a stand, so that those who enter may see the light. 34 Your eye is the
lamp of your body. When your eye is healthy, your whole body is full of
light, but when it is bad, your body is full of darkness. 35 Therefore be
careful lest the light in you be darkness. 36 If then your whole body is full
of light, having no part dark, it will be wholly bright, as when a lamp with
its rays gives you light.”

Woes to the Pharisees and Lawyers

37 While Jesus[1] was speaking, a Pharisee asked him to dine with him,
so he went in and reclined at table. 38 The Pharisee was astonished to see
that he did not first wash before dinner. 39 And the Lord said to him, "Now
you Pharisees cleanse the outside of the cup and of the dish, but inside you
are full of greed and wickedness. 40 You fools! Did not he who made the
outside make the inside also? 41 But give as alms those things that are
within, and behold, everything is clean for you.

42 "But woe to you Pharisees! For you tithe mint and rue and every herb,
and neglect justice and the love of God. These you ought to have done,
without neglecting the others. 43 Woe to you Pharisees! For you love the
best seat in the synagogues and greetings in the marketplaces. 44 Woe to
you! For you are like unmarked graves, and people walk over them without
knowing it."

45 One of the lawyers answered him, "Teacher, in saying these things you
insult us also." 46 And he said, Woe to you lawyers also! For you load
people with burdens hard to bear, and you yourselves do not touch the
burdens with one of your fingers. 47 Woe to you! For you build the tombs of
the prophets whom your fathers killed. 48 So you are witnesses and you
consent to the deeds of your fathers, for they killed them, and you build
their tombs. 49 Therefore also the Wisdom of God said, 'I will send them
prophets and apostles, some of whom they will kill and persecute,' 50 so
that the blood of all the prophets, shed from the foundation of the world,
may be charged against this generation, 51 from the blood of Abel to the
blood of Zechariah, who perished between the altar and the sanctuary. Yes, I
tell you, it will be required of this generation. 52 Woe to you lawyers! For
you have taken away the key of knowledge. You did not enter yourselves,
and you hindered those who were entering."

53 As he went away from there, the scribes and the Pharisees began to
press him hard and to provoke him to speak about many things, 54 lying in
wait for him, to catch him in something he might say.

Beware of the Leaven of the Pharisees

12 [1]In the meantime, when so many thousands of the people had gathered together that they were trampling one another, he began to say to his disciples first, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. [2]Nothing is covered up that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known. [3]Therefore whatever you have said in the dark shall be heard in the light, and what you have whispered in private rooms shall be proclaimed on the housetops.

Have No Fear

4 ‡ ‡ “I tell you, my friends, do not fear those who kill the body, and after
that have nothing more that they can do. 5 ‡ But I will warn you whom to
fear: fear him who, after he has killed, has authority to cast into hell.[1] Yes, I
tell you, fear him! 6 ‡ Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies?[2] And not
one of them is forgotten before God. 7 ‡ Why, even the hairs of your head are
all numbered. Fear not; you are of more value than many sparrows.

Acknowledge Christ Before Men

[8]†† “And I tell you, everyone who acknowledges me before men, the Son of Man also will acknowledge before the angels of God, [9]† but the one who denies me before men will be denied before the angels of God. [10]† And everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but the one who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven. [11]† And when they bring you before the synagogues and the rulers and the authorities, do not be anxious about how you should defend yourself or what you should say, [12]† for the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say.”

The Parable of the Rich Fool

13 Someone in the crowd said to him, “Teacher, tell my brother to divide
the inheritance with me.” 14 But he said to him, “Man, who made me a
judge or arbitrator over you?” 15 And he said to them, “Take care, and be on
your guard against all covetousness, for one’s life does not consist in the
abundance of his possessions.” 16 And he told them a parable, saying, “The
land of a rich man produced plentifully, 17 and he thought to himself, ‘What
shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?’ 18 And he said, ‘I will do
this: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store
all my grain and my goods. 19 And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have
ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.’ 20 But God
said to him, ‘Fool! This night your soul is required of you, and the things
you have prepared, whose will they be?’ 21 So is the one who lays up
treasure for himself and is not rich toward God.”

Do Not Be Anxious

22 ‡† And he said to his disciples, “Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious
about your life, what you will eat, nor about your body, what you will put
on. 23 † For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing.
24 † Consider the ravens: they neither sow nor reap, they have neither
storehouse nor barn, and yet God feeds them. Of how much more value are
you than the birds! 25 †And which of you by being anxious can add a single
hour to his span of life?[1] 26 †If then you are not able to do as small a thing
as that, why are you anxious about the rest? 27 †Consider the lilies, how they
grow: they neither toil nor spin,[2] yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his
glory was not arrayed like one of these. 28 †But if God so clothes the grass,
which is alive in the field today, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how
much more will he clothe you, O you of little faith! 29 † And do not seek
what you are to eat and what you are to drink, nor be worried. 30 †For all the
nations of the world seek after these things, and your Father knows that you
need them. 31 †Instead, seek his[3] kingdom, and these things will be added to
you.

32 †“Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you
the kingdom. 33 † Sell your possessions, and give to the needy. Provide
yourselves with moneybags that do not grow old, with a treasure in the
heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches and no moth destroys.
34 †For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

You Must Be Ready

35 ‡ ‡ “Stay dressed for action[4] and keep your lamps burning, 36 ‡ and be like
men who are waiting for their master to come home from the wedding feast,
so that they may open the door to him at once when he comes and knocks.
37 ‡ Blessed are those servants[5] whom the master finds awake when he
comes. Truly, I say to you, he will dress himself for service and have them
recline at table, and he will come and serve them. 38 ‡ If he comes in the
second watch, or in the third, and finds them awake, blessed are those
servants! 39 ‡ But know this, that if the master of the house had known at
what hour the thief was coming, he[6] would not have left his house to be
broken into. 40 ‡ You also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an
hour you do not expect.”

41 ‡ Peter said, “Lord, are you telling this parable for us or for all?” 42 And
the Lord said, “Who then is the faithful and wise manager, whom his master
will set over his household, to give them their portion of food at the proper
time? 43 ‡ Blessed is that servant[1] whom his master will find so doing when
he comes. 44 ‡ Truly, I say to you, he will set him over all his possessions.
45 ‡ But if that servant says to himself, ‘My master is delayed in coming,’ and
begins to beat the male and female servants, and to eat and drink and get
drunk, 46 ‡ the master of that servant will come on a day when he does not
expect him and at an hour he does not know, and will cut him in pieces and
put him with the unfaithful. 47 And that servant who knew his master’s will
but did not get ready or act according to his will, will receive a severe
beating. 48 But the one who did not know, and did what deserved a beating,
will receive a light beating. Everyone to whom much was given, of him
much will be required, and from him to whom they entrusted much, they
will demand the more.

Not Peace, but Division

49 ✝✝“I came to cast fire on the earth, and would that it were already
kindled! 50 ✝I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how great is my
distress until it is accomplished! 51 ✝Do you think that I have come to give
peace on earth? No, I tell you, but rather division. 52 ✝For from now on in
one house there will be five divided, three against two and two against
three. 53They will be divided, father against son and son against father,
mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against
her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law.”

Interpreting the Time

54 He also said to the crowds, “When you see a cloud rising in the west,
you say at once, ‘A shower is coming.’ And so it happens. 55 And when you
see the south wind blowing, you say, ‘There will be scorching heat,’ and it
happens. 56 You hypocrites! You know how to interpret the appearance of
earth and sky, but why do you not know how to interpret the present time?

Settle with Your Accuser

57 “And why do you not judge for yourselves what is right? 58 As you go
with your accuser before the magistrate, make an effort to settle with him
on the way, lest he drag you to the judge, and the judge hand you over to the
officer, and the officer put you in prison. 59 I tell you, you will never get out
until you have paid the very last penny.”[1]

Repent or Perish

13 [1]‡‡There were some present at that very time who told him about
the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. [2]† And
he answered them, “Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners
than all the other Galileans, because they suffered in this way? [3]†No, I tell
you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. [4]†Or those eighteen
on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them: do you think that they
were worse offenders than all the others who lived in Jerusalem? [5]†No, I
tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.”

The Parable of the Barren Fig Tree

6 ‡ † And he told this parable: “A man had a fig tree planted in his
vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none. 7 †And he said to
the vinedresser, ‘Look, for three years now I have come seeking fruit on this
fig tree, and I find none. Cut it down. Why should it use up the ground?’
8 †And he answered him, ‘Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it
and put on manure. 9 †Then if it should bear fruit next year, well and good;
but if not, you can cut it down.’”

A Woman with a Disabling Spirit

10 ‡ † Now he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath.
11 † And there was a woman who had had a disabling spirit for eighteen
years. She was bent over and could not fully straighten herself. 12 When
Jesus saw her, he called her over and said to her, “Woman, you are freed
from your disability.” 13 And he laid his hands on her, and immediately she
was made straight, and she glorified God. 14 † But the ruler of the synagogue,
indignant because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, said to the people,
“There are six days in which work ought to be done. Come on those days
and be healed, and not on the Sabbath day.” 15 † Then the Lord answered
him, “You hypocrites! Does not each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or
his donkey from the manger and lead it away to water it? 16 † And ought not
this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen years,
be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day?” 17 † As he said these things,
all his adversaries were put to shame, and all the people rejoiced at all the
glorious things that were done by him.

The Mustard Seed and the Leaven

18 ‡ ‡He said therefore, “What is the kingdom of God like? And to what
shall I compare it? 19 †It is like a grain of mustard seed that a man took and
sowed in his garden, and it grew and became a tree, and the birds of the air
made nests in its branches.”
20 And again he said, “To what shall I compare the kingdom of God? 21 †It
is like leaven that a woman took and hid in three measures of flour, until it
was all leavened.”

The Narrow Door

22 ‡ † He went on his way through towns and villages, teaching and
journeying toward Jerusalem. 23 † And someone said to him, “Lord, will
those who are saved be few?” And he said to them, 24 † “Strive to enter
through the narrow door. For many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not
be able. 25 † When once the master of the house has risen and shut the door,
and you begin to stand outside and to knock at the door, saying, ‘Lord, open
to us,’ then he will answer you, ‘I do not know where you come from.’
26 † Then you will begin to say, ‘We ate and drank in your presence, and you
taught in our streets.’ 27 † But he will say, ‘I tell you, I do not know where
you come from. Depart from me, all you workers of evil!’ 28 † In that place
there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and
Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God but you
yourselves cast out. 29 † And people will come from east and west, and from
north and south, and recline at table in the kingdom of God. 30 † And behold,
some are last who will be first, and some are first who will be last.”

Lament over Jerusalem

31 At that very hour some Pharisees came and said to him, “Get away
from here, for Herod wants to kill you.” 32 And he said to them, “Go and
tell that fox, ‘Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today and
tomorrow, and the third day I finish my course. 33 Nevertheless, I must go
on my way today and tomorrow and the day following, for it cannot be that
a prophet should perish away from Jerusalem.’ 34 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem,
the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How
often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her
brood under her wings, and you would not! 35 Behold, your house is
forsaken. And I tell you, you will not see me until you say, ‘Blessed is he
who comes in the name of the Lord!’”

Healing of a Man on the Sabbath

14 [1]‡†One Sabbath, when he went to dine at the house of a ruler of the Pharisees, they were watching him carefully. [2]†And behold, there was a man before him who had dropsy. [3]†And Jesus responded to the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, “Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath, or not?” [4]†But they remained silent. Then he took him and healed him and sent him away. [5]† And he said to them, “Which of you, having a son[1]or an ox that has fallen into a well on a Sabbath day, will not immediately pull him out?” [6]†And they could not reply to these things.

The Parable of the Wedding Feast

[7] ‡ ‡ ‡ Now he told a parable to those who were invited, when he noticed
how they chose the places of honor, saying to them, [8] † “When you are
invited by someone to a wedding feast, do not sit down in a place of honor,
lest someone more distinguished than you be invited by him, [9] † and he who
invited you both will come and say to you, ‘Give your place to this person,’
and then you will begin with shame to take the lowest place. [10] † But when
you are invited, go and sit in the lowest place, so that when your host comes
he may say to you, ‘Friend, move up higher.’ Then you will be honored in
the presence of all who sit at table with you. [11] † For everyone who exalts
himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

The Parable of the Great Banquet

12 He said also to the man who had invited him, “When you give a
dinner or a banquet, do not invite your friends or your brothers[1] or your
relatives or rich neighbors, lest they also invite you in return and you be
repaid. 13 But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame,
the blind, 14 and you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you. For
you will be repaid at the resurrection of the just.”

15 When one of those who reclined at table with him heard these things,
he said to him, “Blessed is everyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of
God!” 16 But he said to him, “A man once gave a great banquet and invited
many. 17 And at the time for the banquet he sent his servant[2] to say to those
who had been invited, ‘Come, for everything is now ready.’ 18 But they all
alike began to make excuses. The first said to him, ‘I have bought a field,
and I must go out and see it. Please have me excused.’ 19 And another said,
‘I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to examine them. Please have me
excused.’ 20 And another said, ‘I have married a wife, and therefore I
cannot come.’ 21 So the servant came and reported these things to his
master. Then the master of the house became angry and said to his servant,
‘Go out quickly to the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in the poor and
crippled and blind and lame.’ 22 And the servant said, ‘Sir, what you
commanded has been done, and still there is room.’ 23 And the master said
to the servant, ‘Go out to the highways and hedges and compel people to
come in, that my house may be filled. 24 For I tell you,[3] none of those men
who were invited shall taste my banquet.’”

The Cost of Discipleship

25 ‡† Now great crowds accompanied him, and he turned and said to them,
26 † "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and
wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he
cannot be my disciple. 27 † Whoever does not bear his own cross and come
after me cannot be my disciple. 28 † For which of you, desiring to build a
tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to
complete it? 29 † Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to
finish, all who see it begin to mock him, 30 † saying, 'This man began to
build and was not able to finish.' 31 ‡† Or what king, going out to encounter
another king in war, will not sit down first and deliberate whether he is able
with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty
thousand? 32 † And if not, while the other is yet a great way off, he sends a
delegation and asks for terms of peace. 33 † So therefore, any one of you who
does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple.

Salt Without Taste Is Worthless

34 “Salt is good, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be
restored? 35 It is of no use either for the soil or for the manure pile. It is
thrown away. He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”

The Parable of the Lost Sheep

15 [1]Now the tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to
hear him. [2]And the Pharisees and the scribes grumbled, saying, “This man
receives sinners and eats with them.”

[3]So he told them this parable: [4]“What man of you, having a hundred
sheep, if he has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open
country, and go after the one that is lost, until he finds it? [5]And when he
has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. [6]And when he comes
home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them,
‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.’ [7]Just so, I tell
you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over
ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

The Parable of the Lost Coin

8 ‡ ‡ ‡ “Or what woman, having ten silver coins,[1] if she loses one coin,
does not light a lamp and sweep the house and seek diligently until she
finds it? 9 † And when she has found it, she calls together her friends and
neighbors, saying, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had
lost.’ 10 † Just so, I tell you, there is joy before the angels of God over one
sinner who repents.”

The Parable of the Prodigal Son

11 ‡ ‡ And he said, “There was a man who had two sons. 12 † And the
younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of property
that is coming to me.’ And he divided his property between them. 13 † Not
many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took a journey into
a far country, and there he squandered his property in reckless living.
14 † And when he had spent everything, a severe famine arose in that country,
and he began to be in need. 15 † So he went and hired himself out to[1] one of
the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed pigs. 16 † And
he was longing to be fed with the pods that the pigs ate, and no one gave
him anything.

17 † “But when he came to himself, he said, ‘How many of my father’s
hired servants have more than enough bread, but I perish here with hunger!
18 ‡ I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, “Father, I have
sinned against heaven and before you. 19 I am no longer worthy to be called
your son. Treat me as one of your hired servants.”’ 20 † And he arose and
came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him
and felt compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. 21 † And the
son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am
no longer worthy to be called your son.’[2] 22 † But the father said to his
servants,[3] ‘Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on
his hand, and shoes on his feet. 23 † And bring the fattened calf and kill it,
and let us eat and celebrate. 24 † For this my son was dead, and is alive again;
he was lost, and is found.’ And they began to celebrate.

25 † “Now his older son was in the field, and as he came and drew near to
the house, he heard music and dancing. 26 And he called one of the servants
and asked what these things meant. 27 And he said to him, ‘Your brother has
come, and your father has killed the fattened calf, because he has received
him back safe and sound.’ 28 † But he was angry and refused to go in. His
father came out and entreated him, 29 † but he answered his father, ‘Look,
these many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your command,
yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might celebrate with my friends.
30 † But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your property with

prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him!' [31] † And he said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. [32] † It was fitting to celebrate and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found.'"

The Parable of the Dishonest Manager

16 [1]He also said to the disciples, “There was a rich man who had
a manager, and charges were brought to him that this man was wasting his
possessions. [2]And he called him and said to him, ‘What is this that I hear
about you? Turn in the account of your management, for you can no longer
be manager.’ [3]And the manager said to himself, ‘What shall I do, since my
master is taking the management away from me? I am not strong enough to
dig, and I am ashamed to beg. [4]I have decided what to do, so that when I
am removed from management, people may receive me into their houses.’
[5]So, summoning his master’s debtors one by one, he said to the first, ‘How
much do you owe my master?’ [6]He said, ‘A hundred measures[1] of oil.’ He
said to him, ‘Take your bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty.’ [7]Then he
said to another, ‘And how much do you owe?’ He said, ‘A hundred
measures[2] of wheat.’ He said to him, ‘Take your bill, and write eighty.’
[8]The master commended the dishonest manager for his shrewdness. For
the sons of this world[3] are more shrewd in dealing with their own
generation than the sons of light. [9]And I tell you, make friends for
yourselves by means of unrighteous wealth,[4] so that when it fails they may
receive you into the eternal dwellings.

[10]“One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and one
who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much. [11]If then you
have not been faithful in the unrighteous wealth, who will entrust to you the
true riches? [12]And if you have not been faithful in that which is another’s,
who will give you that which is your own? [13]No servant can serve two
masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be
devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and
money.”

The Law and the Kingdom of God

14 ††The Pharisees, who were lovers of money, heard all these things, and
they ridiculed him. 15 †And he said to them, “You are those who justify
yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is exalted
among men is an abomination in the sight of God.
16 †“The Law and the Prophets were until John; since then the good news
of the kingdom of God is preached, and everyone forces his way into it.[5]
17 †But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one dot of the
Law to become void.

Divorce and Remarriage

18 ✝ ✝ ✝ “Everyone who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery, and he who marries a woman divorced from her husband commits adultery.

The Rich Man and Lazarus

19 “There was a rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and
who feasted sumptuously every day. 20 And at his gate was laid a poor man
named Lazarus, covered with sores, 21 who desired to be fed with what fell
from the rich man’s table. Moreover, even the dogs came and licked his
sores. 22 The poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham’s
side.[1] The rich man also died and was buried, 23 and in Hades, being in
torment, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his
side. 24 And he called out, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send
Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in
anguish in this flame.’ 25 But Abraham said, ‘Child, remember that you in
your lifetime received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner bad
things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in anguish. 26 And
besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, in order
that those who would pass from here to you may not be able, and none may
cross from there to us.’ 27 And he said, ‘Then I beg you, father, to send him
to my father’s house— 28 for I have five brothers[2]—so that he may warn
them, lest they also come into this place of torment.’ 29 But Abraham said,
‘They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.’ 30 And he said,
‘No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will
repent.’ 31 He said to him, ‘If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets,
neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead.’”

Temptations to Sin

17 [1]‡†And he said to his disciples, “Temptations to sin[3]are sure to
come, but woe to the one through whom they come! [2]†It would be better for
him if a millstone were hung around his neck and he were cast into the sea
than that he should cause one of these little ones to sin.[4] [3]†Pay attention to
yourselves! If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him,
[4]†and if he sins against you seven times in the day, and turns to you seven
times, saying, ‘I repent,’ you must forgive him.”

Increase Our Faith

5 ✝✝The apostles said to the Lord, “Increase our faith!” 6 ✝And the Lord said, “If you had faith like a grain of mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, ‘Be uprooted and planted in the sea,’ and it would obey you.

Unworthy Servants

7 ††“Will any one of you who has a servant[1] plowing or keeping sheep
say to him when he has come in from the field, ‘Come at once and recline at
table’? 8 †Will he not rather say to him, ‘Prepare supper for me, and dress
properly,[2] and serve me while I eat and drink, and afterward you will eat
and drink’? 9 † Does he thank the servant because he did what was
commanded? 10 † So you also, when you have done all that you were
commanded, say, ‘We are unworthy servants;[3] we have only done what was
our duty.’”

Jesus Cleanses Ten Lepers

11 ‡ † On the way to Jerusalem he was passing along between Samaria and
Galilee. 12 † And as he entered a village, he was met by ten lepers,[4] who
stood at a distance 13 † and lifted up their voices, saying, “Jesus, Master, have
mercy on us.” 14 † When he saw them he said to them, “Go and show
yourselves to the priests.” And as they went they were cleansed. 15 † Then
one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God
with a loud voice; 16 † and he fell on his face at Jesus’ feet, giving him
thanks. Now he was a Samaritan. 17 † Then Jesus answered, “Were not ten
cleansed? Where are the nine? 18 † Was no one found to return and give
praise to God except this foreigner?” 19 † And he said to him, “Rise and go
your way; your faith has made you well.”[5]

The Coming of the Kingdom

20 †† Being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come,
he answered them, The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be
observed, 21 † nor will they say, ‘Look, here it is!’ or ‘There!’ for behold, the
kingdom of God is in the midst of you.”[6]
22 † And he said to the disciples, “The days are coming when you will
desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see it.
23 † And they will say to you, ‘Look, there!’ or ‘Look, here!’ Do not go out or
follow them. 24 † For as the lightning flashes and lights up the sky from one
side to the other, so will the Son of Man be in his day.[1] 25 † But first he must
suffer many things and be rejected by this generation. 26 † Just as it was in the
days of Noah, so will it be in the days of the Son of Man. 27 †† They were
eating and drinking and marrying and being given in marriage, until the day
when Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all.
28 † Likewise, just as it was in the days of Lot—they were eating and
drinking, buying and selling, planting and building, 29 † but on the day when
Lot went out from Sodom, fire and sulfur rained from heaven and destroyed
them all— 30 † so will it be on the day when the Son of Man is revealed.
31 † On that day, let the one who is on the housetop, with his goods in the
house, not come down to take them away, and likewise let the one who is in
the field not turn back. 32 † Remember Lot’s wife. 33 † Whoever seeks to
preserve his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life will keep it. 34 †† I tell
you, in that night there will be two in one bed. One will be taken and the
other left. 35 There will be two women grinding together. One will be taken
and the other left.”[2] 37 † And they said to him, “Where, Lord?” He said to
them, “Where the corpse[3] is, there the vultures[4] will gather.”

The Parable of the Persistent Widow

18 [1]‡‡And he told them a parable to the effect that they ought always
to pray and not lose heart. [2]†He said, “In a certain city there was a judge
who neither feared God nor respected man. [3]†And there was a widow in
that city who kept coming to him and saying, ‘Give me justice against my
adversary.’ [4]†For a while he refused, but afterward he said to himself,
‘Though I neither fear God nor respect man, [5]†yet because this widow
keeps bothering me, I will give her justice, so that she will not beat me
down by her continual coming.’” [6]†And the Lord said, “Hear what the
unrighteous judge says. [7]†And will not God give justice to his elect, who
cry to him day and night? Will he delay long over them? [8]†I tell you, he will
give justice to them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes,
will he find faith on earth?”

The Pharisee and the Tax Collector

9 ††He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they
were righteous, and treated others with contempt: 10 †“Two men went up
into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. 11 †The
Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed[1] thus: ‘God, I thank you that I am
not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax
collector. 12 †I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get.’ 13 †But the tax
collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but
beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, a sinner!’ 14 †I tell you, this
man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone
who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will
be exalted.”

Let the Children Come to Me

15 ✝✝Now they were bringing even infants to him that he might touch
them. And when the disciples saw it, they rebuked them. 16✝But Jesus called
them to him, saying, “Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them,
for to such belongs the kingdom of God. 17✝Truly, I say to you, whoever
does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it.”

The Rich Ruler

18 ‡ ‡ † And a ruler asked him, “Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit
eternal life?” 19 † And Jesus said to him, “Why do you call me good? No one
is good except God alone. 20 † You know the commandments: ‘Do not
commit adultery, Do not murder, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness,
Honor your father and mother.’” 21 † And he said, “All these I have kept from
my youth.” 22 † When Jesus heard this, he said to him, “One thing you still
lack. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have
treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.” 23 † But when he heard these
things, he became very sad, for he was extremely rich. 24 ‡ Jesus, seeing that
he had become sad, said, “How difficult it is for those who have wealth to
enter the kingdom of God! 25 For it is easier for a camel to go through the
eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God.”
26 † Those who heard it said, “Then who can be saved?” 27 † But he said,
“What is impossible with men is possible with God.” 28 † And Peter said,
“See, we have left our homes and followed you.” 29 ‡ And he said to them,
“Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or wife or
brothers[2] or parents or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God, 30 † who
will not receive many times more in this time, and in the age to come
eternal life.”

Jesus Foretells His Death a Third Time

31 ‡ † And taking the twelve, he said to them, “See, we are going up to
Jerusalem, and everything that is written about the Son of Man by the
prophets will be accomplished. 32 † For he will be delivered over to the
Gentiles and will be mocked and shamefully treated and spit upon. 33 † And
after flogging him, they will kill him, and on the third day he will rise.”
34 † But they understood none of these things. This saying was hidden from
them, and they did not grasp what was said.

Jesus Heals a Blind Beggar

35 ‡ ‡ ‡ As he drew near to Jericho, a blind man was sitting by the roadside
begging. 36 † And hearing a crowd going by, he inquired what this meant.
37 † They told him, “Jesus of Nazareth is passing by.” 38 † And he cried out,
“Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!” 39 † And those who were in front
rebuked him, telling him to be silent. But he cried out all the more, “Son of
David, have mercy on me!” 40 And Jesus stopped and commanded him to be
brought to him. And when he came near, he asked him, 41 † “What do you
want me to do for you?” He said, “Lord, let me recover my sight.” 42 † And
Jesus said to him, “Recover your sight; your faith has made you well.”
43 † And immediately he recovered his sight and followed him, glorifying
God. And all the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God.

Jesus and Zacchaeus

19 [1]‡‡He entered Jericho and was passing through. [2]†And there was a man named Zacchaeus. He was a chief tax collector and was rich. [3]†And he was seeking to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was small of stature. [4]†So he ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him, for he was about to pass that way. [5]†And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today." [6]†So he hurried and came down and received him joyfully. [7]†And when they saw it, they all grumbled, "He has gone in to be the guest of a man who is a sinner." [8]†And Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor. And if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold." [9]† And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham. [10]†For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."

The Parable of the Ten Minas

11 ‡ ‡ ‡ As they heard these things, he proceeded to tell a parable, because
he was near to Jerusalem, and because they supposed that the kingdom of
God was to appear immediately. 12 † He said therefore, “A nobleman went
into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and then return.
13 † Calling ten of his servants,[1] he gave them ten minas,[2] and said to them,
‘Engage in business until I come.’ 14 † But his citizens hated him and sent a
delegation after him, saying, ‘We do not want this man to reign over us.’
15 † When he returned, having received the kingdom, he ordered these
servants to whom he had given the money to be called to him, that he might
know what they had gained by doing business. 16 † The first came before
him, saying, ‘Lord, your mina has made ten minas more.’ 17 † And he said to
him, ‘Well done, good servant![3] Because you have been faithful in a very
little, you shall have authority over ten cities.’ 18 † And the second came,
saying, ‘Lord, your mina has made five minas.’ 19 † And he said to him, ‘And
you are to be over five cities.’ 20 † Then another came, saying, ‘Lord, here is
your mina, which I kept laid away in a handkerchief; 21 † for I was afraid of
you, because you are a severe man. You take what you did not deposit, and
reap what you did not sow.’ 22 † He said to him, ‘I will condemn you with
your own words, you wicked servant! You knew that I was a severe man,
taking what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow? 23 † Why then
did you not put my money in the bank, and at my coming I might have
collected it with interest?’ 24 † And he said to those who stood by, ‘Take the
mina from him, and give it to the one who has the ten minas.’ 25 And they
said to him, ‘Lord, he has ten minas!’ 26 † ‘I tell you that to everyone who
has, more will be given, but from the one who has not, even what he has
will be taken away. 27 † But as for these enemies of mine, who did not want
me to reign over them, bring them here and slaughter them before me.’”

The Triumphal Entry

28 ‡ † And when he had said these things, he went on ahead, going up to
Jerusalem. 29 † When he drew near to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount
that is called Olivet, he sent two of the disciples, 30 † saying, “Go into the
village in front of you, where on entering you will find a colt tied, on which
no one has ever yet sat. Untie it and bring it here. 31 † If anyone asks you,
‘Why are you untying it?’ you shall say this: ‘The Lord has need of it.’”
32 So those who were sent went away and found it just as he had told them.
33 ‡ And as they were untying the colt, its owners said to them, “Why are you
untying the colt?” 34 And they said, “The Lord has need of it.” 35 ‡ And they
brought it to Jesus, and throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on
it. 36 And as he rode along, they spread their cloaks on the road. 37 † As he
was drawing near—already on the way down the Mount of Olives—the
whole multitude of his disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud
voice for all the mighty works that they had seen, 38 † saying, “Blessed is the
King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the
highest!” 39 † And some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, “Teacher,
rebuke your disciples.” 40 † He answered, “I tell you, if these were silent, the
very stones would cry out.”

Jesus Weeps over Jerusalem

41 ††And when he drew near and saw the city, he wept over it, 42 †saying,
“Would that you, even you, had known on this day the things that make for
peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. 43 †For the days will come
upon you, when your enemies will set up a barricade around you and
surround you and hem you in on every side 44 †and tear you down to the
ground, you and your children within you. And they will not leave one
stone upon another in you, because you did not know the time of your
visitation.”

Jesus Cleanses the Temple

45 ‡ † And he entered the temple and began to drive out those who sold,
46 † saying to them, “It is written, ‘My house shall be a house of prayer,’ but
you have made it a den of robbers.”
47 † And he was teaching daily in the temple. The chief priests and the
scribes and the principal men of the people were seeking to destroy him,
48 † but they did not find anything they could do, for all the people were
hanging on his words.

The Authority of Jesus Challenged

20 [1]†† One day, as Jesus[1] was teaching the people in the temple and
preaching the gospel, the chief priests and the scribes with the elders came
up [2]† and said to him, “Tell us by what authority you do these things, or who
it is that gave you this authority.” [3]† He answered them, “I also will ask you
a question. Now tell me, [4]† was the baptism of John from heaven or from
man?” [5]† And they discussed it with one another, saying, “If we say, ‘From
heaven,’ he will say, ‘Why did you not believe him?’ [6]† But if we say, ‘From
man,’ all the people will stone us to death, for they are convinced that John
was a prophet.” [7]† So they answered that they did not know where it came
from. [8]† And Jesus said to them, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I
do these things.”

The Parable of the Wicked Tenants

9 ‡ ‡ And he began to tell the people this parable: “A man planted a
vineyard and let it out to tenants and went into another country for a long
while. 10 † When the time came, he sent a servant[2] to the tenants, so that they
would give him some of the fruit of the vineyard. But the tenants beat him
and sent him away empty-handed. 11 † And he sent another servant. But they
also beat and treated him shamefully, and sent him away empty-handed.
12 † And he sent yet a third. This one also they wounded and cast out. 13 † Then
the owner of the vineyard said, ‘What shall I do? I will send my beloved
son; perhaps they will respect him.’ 14 † But when the tenants saw him, they
said to themselves, ‘This is the heir. Let us kill him, so that the inheritance
may be ours.’ 15 † And they threw him out of the vineyard and killed him.
What then will the owner of the vineyard do to them? 16 † He will come and
destroy those tenants and give the vineyard to others.” When they heard
this, they said, “Surely not!” 17 † But he looked directly at them and said,
“What then is this that is written:

> “‘The stone that the builders rejected
> has become the cornerstone’?[3]

18 † Everyone who falls on that stone will be broken to pieces, and when it
falls on anyone, it will crush him.”

Paying Taxes to Caesar

19 ‡ † The scribes and the chief priests sought to lay hands on him at that
very hour, for they perceived that he had told this parable against them, but
they feared the people. 20 † So they watched him and sent spies, who
pretended to be sincere, that they might catch him in something he said, so
as to deliver him up to the authority and jurisdiction of the governor. 21 † So
they asked him, “Teacher, we know that you speak and teach rightly, and
show no partiality,[1] but truly teach the way of God. 22 † Is it lawful for us to
give tribute to Caesar, or not?” 23 But he perceived their craftiness, and said
to them, 24 † “Show me a denarius.[2] Whose likeness and inscription does it
have?” They said, “Caesar’s.” 25 † He said to them, “Then render to Caesar
the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.” 26 † And
they were not able in the presence of the people to catch him in what he
said, but marveling at his answer they became silent.

Sadducees Ask About the Resurrection

27 ‡ † There came to him some Sadducees, those who deny that there is a
resurrection, 28 † and they asked him a question, saying, “Teacher, Moses
wrote for us that if a man’s brother dies, having a wife but no children, the
man[3] must take the widow and raise up offspring for his brother. 29 ‡ Now
there were seven brothers. The first took a wife, and died without children.
30 And the second 31 and the third took her, and likewise all seven left no
children and died. 32 Afterward the woman also died. 33 † In the resurrection,
therefore, whose wife will the woman be? For the seven had her as wife.”

34 † And Jesus said to them, “The sons of this age marry and are given in
marriage, 35 † but those who are considered worthy to attain to that age and to
the resurrection from the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage,
36 † for they cannot die anymore, because they are equal to angels and are
sons of God, being sons[4] of the resurrection. 37 ‡ But that the dead are raised,
even Moses showed, in the passage about the bush, where he calls the Lord
the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. 38 Now he
is not God of the dead, but of the living, for all live to him.” 39 † Then some
of the scribes answered, “Teacher, you have spoken well.” 40 † For they no
longer dared to ask him any question.

Whose Son Is the Christ?

41 ††But he said to them, “How can they say that the Christ is David’s
son? 42††For David himself says in the Book of Psalms,

“‘The Lord said to my Lord,
Sit at my right hand,
43 until I make your enemies your footstool.’

44†David thus calls him Lord, so how is he his son?”

Beware of the Scribes

45 And in the hearing of all the people he said to his disciples, 46 Beware
of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes, and love greetings in
the marketplaces and the best seats in the synagogues and the places of
honor at feasts, 47 who devour widows' houses and for a pretense make
long prayers. They will receive the greater condemnation."

The Widow’s Offering

21 [1]Jesus[1] looked up and saw the rich putting their gifts into the offering box, [2]and he saw a poor widow put in two small copper coins.[2] [3]And he said, “Truly, I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all of them. [4]For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on.”

Jesus Foretells Destruction of the Temple

5 ‡ ‡ ‡ And while some were speaking of the temple, how it was adorned
with noble stones and offerings, he said, 6 † "As for these things that you see,
the days will come when there will not be left here one stone upon another
that will not be thrown down." 7 † And they asked him, "Teacher, when will
these things be, and what will be the sign when these things are about to
take place?" 8 † And he said, "See that you are not led astray. For many will
come in my name, saying, 'I am he!' and, 'The time is at hand!' Do not go
after them. 9 † And when you hear of wars and tumults, do not be terrified,
for these things must first take place, but the end will not be at once."

Jesus Foretells Wars and Persecution

10 Then he said to them, “Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom
against kingdom. 11 There will be great earthquakes, and in various places
famines and pestilences. And there will be terrors and great signs from
heaven. 12 But before all this they will lay their hands on you and persecute
you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons, and you will be
brought before kings and governors for my name’s sake. 13 This will be
your opportunity to bear witness. 14 Settle it therefore in your minds not to
meditate beforehand how to answer, 15 for I will give you a mouth and
wisdom, which none of your adversaries will be able to withstand or
contradict. 16 You will be delivered up even by parents and brothers[1] and
relatives and friends, and some of you they will put to death. 17 You will be
hated by all for my name’s sake. 18 But not a hair of your head will perish.
19 By your endurance you will gain your lives.

Jesus Foretells Destruction of Jerusalem

20 “But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that
its desolation has come near. 21 Then let those who are in Judea flee to the
mountains, and let those who are inside the city depart, and let not those
who are out in the country enter it, 22 for these are days of vengeance, to
fulfill all that is written. 23 Alas for women who are pregnant and for those
who are nursing infants in those days! For there will be great distress upon
the earth and wrath against this people. 24 They will fall by the edge of the
sword and be led captive among all nations, and Jerusalem will be trampled
underfoot by the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

The Coming of the Son of Man

25 ††“And there will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and on the earth
distress of nations in perplexity because of the roaring of the sea and the
waves, 26 †people fainting with fear and with foreboding of what is coming
on the world. For the powers of the heavens will be shaken. 27 †And then
they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.
28 †Now when these things begin to take place, straighten up and raise your
heads, because your redemption is drawing near.”

The Lesson of the Fig Tree

[29] And he told them a parable: “Look at the fig tree, and all the trees.
[30] As soon as they come out in leaf, you see for yourselves and know that the
summer is already near. [31] So also, when you see these things taking place,
you know that the kingdom of God is near. [32] Truly, I say to you, this
generation will not pass away until all has taken place. [33] Heaven and earth
will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

Watch Yourselves

34 “But watch yourselves lest your hearts be weighed down with
dissipation and drunkenness and cares of this life, and that day come upon
you suddenly like a trap. 35For it will come upon all who dwell on the face
of the whole earth. 36But stay awake at all times, praying that you may
have strength to escape all these things that are going to take place, and to
stand before the Son of Man.”
37And every day he was teaching in the temple, but at night he went out
and lodged on the mount called Olivet. 38And early in the morning all the
people came to him in the temple to hear him.

The Plot to Kill Jesus

22 [1]‡‡Now the Feast of Unleavened Bread drew near, which is called
the Passover. [2]† And the chief priests and the scribes were seeking how to
put him to death, for they feared the people.

Judas to Betray Jesus

3 ‡ † Then Satan entered into Judas called Iscariot, who was of the number
of the twelve. 4 † He went away and conferred with the chief priests and
officers how he might betray him to them. 5 † And they were glad, and
agreed to give him money. 6 † So he consented and sought an opportunity to
betray him to them in the absence of a crowd.

The Passover with the Disciples

7 ‡† Then came the day of Unleavened Bread, on which the Passover lamb
had to be sacrificed. 8 † So Jesus[1] sent Peter and John, saying, “Go and
prepare the Passover for us, that we may eat it.” 9 They said to him, “Where
will you have us prepare it?” 10 † He said to them, “Behold, when you have
entered the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him
into the house that he enters 11 † and tell the master of the house, ‘The
Teacher says to you, Where is the guest room, where I may eat the Passover
with my disciples?’ 12 † And he will show you a large upper room furnished;
prepare it there.” 13 † And they went and found it just as he had told them,
and they prepared the Passover.

Institution of the Lord’s Supper

14 ✝✝And when the hour came, he reclined at table, and the apostles with
him. 15 ✝And he said to them, “I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover
with you before I suffer. 16 ✝For I tell you I will not eat it[2] until it is fulfilled
in the kingdom of God.” 17 ✝And he took a cup, and when he had given
thanks he said, “Take this, and divide it among yourselves. 18 ✝For I tell you
that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom
of God comes.” 19 ✝And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he
broke it and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body, which is given for
you. Do this in remembrance of me.” 20 ✝And likewise the cup after they had
eaten, saying, “This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in
my blood.[3] 21 ✝But behold, the hand of him who betrays me is with me on
the table. 22 ✝For the Son of Man goes as it has been determined, but woe to
that man by whom he is betrayed!” 23 ✝And they began to question one
another, which of them it could be who was going to do this.

Who Is the Greatest?

24 ‡ † A dispute also arose among them, as to which of them was to be
regarded as the greatest. 25 † And he said to them, “The kings of the Gentiles
exercise lordship over them, and those in authority over them are called
benefactors. 26 † But not so with you. Rather, let the greatest among you
become as the youngest, and the leader as one who serves. 27 † For who is the
greater, one who reclines at table or one who serves? Is it not the one who
reclines at table? But I am among you as the one who serves.
28 † “You are those who have stayed with me in my trials, 29 † and I assign
to you, as my Father assigned to me, a kingdom, 30 † that you may eat and
drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones judging the twelve
tribes of Israel.

Jesus Foretells Peter’s Denial

31 “Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you,[1] that he might
sift you like wheat, 32 but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail.
And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.” 33 Peter[2] said
to him, “Lord, I am ready to go with you both to prison and to death.”
34 Jesus[3] said, “I tell you, Peter, the rooster will not crow this day, until
you deny three times that you know me.”

Scripture Must Be Fulfilled in Jesus

35 ‡ † And he said to them, “When I sent you out with no moneybag or
knapsack or sandals, did you lack anything?” They said, “Nothing.” 36 † He
said to them, “But now let the one who has a moneybag take it, and
likewise a knapsack. And let the one who has no sword sell his cloak and
buy one. 37 † For I tell you that this Scripture must be fulfilled in me: ‘And he
was numbered with the transgressors.’ For what is written about me has its
fulfillment.” 38 † And they said, “Look, Lord, here are two swords.” And he
said to them, “It is enough.”

Jesus Prays on the Mount of Olives

39 ✝ ✝ And he came out and went, as was his custom, to the Mount of
Olives, and the disciples followed him. 40 ✝ And when he came to the place,
he said to them, “Pray that you may not enter into temptation.” 41 ✝ And he
withdrew from them about a stone’s throw, and knelt down and prayed,
42 ✝ saying, “Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me.
Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done.” 43 ✝ And there appeared to
him an angel from heaven, strengthening him. 44 ✝ And being in an agony he
prayed more earnestly; and his sweat became like great drops of blood
falling down to the ground.[1] 45 ✝ And when he rose from prayer, he came to
the disciples and found them sleeping for sorrow, 46 ✝ and he said to them,
“Why are you sleeping? Rise and pray that you may not enter into
temptation.”

Betrayal and Arrest of Jesus

47 ‡ † While he was still speaking, there came a crowd, and the man called
Judas, one of the twelve, was leading them. He drew near to Jesus to kiss
him, 48 † but Jesus said to him, “Judas, would you betray the Son of Man
with a kiss?” 49 † And when those who were around him saw what would
follow, they said, “Lord, shall we strike with the sword?” 50 † And one of
them struck the servant[2] of the high priest and cut off his right ear. 51 † But
Jesus said, “No more of this!” And he touched his ear and healed him.
52 † Then Jesus said to the chief priests and officers of the temple and elders,
who had come out against him, “Have you come out as against a robber,
with swords and clubs? 53 † When I was with you day after day in the temple,
you did not lay hands on me. But this is your hour, and the power of
darkness.”

Peter Denies Jesus

54 ‡ † Then they seized him and led him away, bringing him into the high
priest's house, and Peter was following at a distance. 55 † And when they had
kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat
down among them. 56 † Then a servant girl, seeing him as he sat in the light
and looking closely at him, said, "This man also was with him." 57 † But he
denied it, saying, "Woman, I do not know him." 58 † And a little later
someone else saw him and said, "You also are one of them." But Peter said,
"Man, I am not." 59 † And after an interval of about an hour still another
insisted, saying, "Certainly this man also was with him, for he too is a
Galilean." 60 † But Peter said, "Man, I do not know what you are talking
about." And immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed.
61 † And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the
saying of the Lord, how he had said to him, "Before the rooster crows
today, you will deny me three times." 62 † And he went out and wept bitterly.

Jesus Is Mocked

63 ✝✝Now the men who were holding Jesus in custody were mocking him
as they beat him. 64 ✝ They also blindfolded him and kept asking him,
“Prophesy! Who is it that struck you?” 65 ✝And they said many other things
against him, blaspheming him.

Jesus Before the Council

66 ‡ † When day came, the assembly of the elders of the people gathered
together, both chief priests and scribes. And they led him away to their
council, and they said, 67 † "If you are the Christ, tell us." But he said to
them, "If I tell you, you will not believe, 68 † and if I ask you, you will not
answer. 69 † But from now on the Son of Man shall be seated at the right hand
of the power of God." 70 † So they all said, "Are you the Son of God, then?"
And he said to them, "You say that I am." 71 † Then they said, "What further
testimony do we need? We have heard it ourselves from his own lips."

Jesus Before Pilate

23 [1] ‡ † Then the whole company of them arose and brought him
before Pilate. [2] † And they began to accuse him, saying, “We found this man
misleading our nation and forbidding us to give tribute to Caesar, and
saying that he himself is Christ, a king.” [3] † And Pilate asked him, “Are you
the King of the Jews?” And he answered him, “You have said so.” [4] † Then
Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowds, “I find no guilt in this man.”
[5] † But they were urgent, saying, “He stirs up the people, teaching throughout
all Judea, from Galilee even to this place.”

Jesus Before Herod

6 ‡ ‡When Pilate heard this, he asked whether the man was a Galilean.
7 †And when he learned that he belonged to Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him
over to Herod, who was himself in Jerusalem at that time. 8 †When Herod
saw Jesus, he was very glad, for he had long desired to see him, because he
had heard about him, and he was hoping to see some sign done by him.
9 †So he questioned him at some length, but he made no answer. 10 †The
chief priests and the scribes stood by, vehemently accusing him. 11 †And
Herod with his soldiers treated him with contempt and mocked him. Then,
arraying him in splendid clothing, he sent him back to Pilate. 12 †And Herod
and Pilate became friends with each other that very day, for before this they
had been at enmity with each other.

13 †Pilate then called together the chief priests and the rulers and the
people, 14 †and said to them, "You brought me this man as one who was
misleading the people. And after examining him before you, behold, I did
not find this man guilty of any of your charges against him. 15 †Neither did
Herod, for he sent him back to us. Look, nothing deserving death has been
done by him. 16 †I will therefore punish and release him."[1]

Pilate Delivers Jesus to Be Crucified

18 ‡ † But they all cried out together, “Away with this man, and release to
us Barabbas”— 19 † a man who had been thrown into prison for an
insurrection started in the city and for murder. 20 Pilate addressed them once
more, desiring to release Jesus, 21 † but they kept shouting, “Crucify, crucify
him!” 22 † A third time he said to them, “Why, what evil has he done? I have
found in him no guilt deserving death. I will therefore punish and release
him.” 23 † But they were urgent, demanding with loud cries that he should be
crucified. And their voices prevailed. 24 † So Pilate decided that their demand
should be granted. 25 † He released the man who had been thrown into prison
for insurrection and murder, for whom they asked, but he delivered Jesus
over to their will.

The Crucifixion

26 ‡ † And as they led him away, they seized one Simon of Cyrene, who
was coming in from the country, and laid on him the cross, to carry it
behind Jesus. 27 † And there followed him a great multitude of the people and
of women who were mourning and lamenting for him. 28 † But turning to
them Jesus said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for
yourselves and for your children. 29 † For behold, the days are coming when
they will say, 'Blessed are the barren and the wombs that never bore and the
breasts that never nursed!' 30 † Then they will begin to say to the mountains,
'Fall on us,' and to the hills, 'Cover us.' 31 † For if they do these things when
the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?"

32 † Two others, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with
him. 33 † And when they came to the place that is called The Skull, there they
crucified him, and the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. 34 † And
Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."[1] And
they cast lots to divide his garments. 35 † And the people stood by, watching,
but the rulers scoffed at him, saying, "He saved others; let him save himself,
if he is the Christ of God, his Chosen One!" 36 † The soldiers also mocked
him, coming up and offering him sour wine 37 ‡ and saying, "If you are the
King of the Jews, save yourself!" 38 † There was also an inscription over him,
[2] "This is the King of the Jews."

39 † One of the criminals who were hanged railed at him,[3] saying, "Are
you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!" 40 † But the other rebuked him,
saying, "Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of
condemnation? 41 † And we indeed justly, for we are receiving the due
reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong." 42 † And he said,
"Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." 43 † And he said
to him, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise."

The Death of Jesus

44 ‡ † It was now about the sixth hour,[4] and there was darkness over the
whole land until the ninth hour,[5] 45 † while the sun's light failed. And the
curtain of the temple was torn in two. 46 † Then Jesus, calling out with a loud
voice, said, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!" And having said
this he breathed his last. 47 † Now when the centurion saw what had taken
place, he praised God, saying, "Certainly this man was innocent!" 48 † And
all the crowds that had assembled for this spectacle, when they saw what
had taken place, returned home beating their breasts. 49 † And all his
acquaintances and the women who had followed him from Galilee stood at
a distance watching these things.

Jesus Is Buried

50 ‡ † Now there was a man named Joseph, from the Jewish town of
Arimathea. He was a member of the council, a good and righteous man,
51 † who had not consented to their decision and action; and he was looking
for the kingdom of God. 52 † This man went to Pilate and asked for the body
of Jesus. 53 † Then he took it down and wrapped it in a linen shroud and laid
him in a tomb cut in stone, where no one had ever yet been laid. 54 † It was
the day of Preparation, and the Sabbath was beginning.[1] 55 † The women
who had come with him from Galilee followed and saw the tomb and how
his body was laid. 56 † Then they returned and prepared spices and ointments.

On the Sabbath they rested according to the commandment.

The Resurrection

24 [1]‡†But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they went to
the tomb, taking the spices they had prepared. [2]†And they found the stone
rolled away from the tomb, [3]†but when they went in they did not find the
body of the Lord Jesus. [4]†While they were perplexed about this, behold,
two men stood by them in dazzling apparel. [5]†And as they were frightened
and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, “Why do you
seek the living among the dead? [6]†He is not here, but has risen. Remember
how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, [7]†that the Son of Man must
be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified and on the third
day rise.” [8]†And they remembered his words, [9]†and returning from the
tomb they told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest. [10]†Now it
was Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary the mother of James and the
other women with them who told these things to the apostles, [11]†but these
words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them. [12]†But
Peter rose and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen
cloths by themselves; and he went home marveling at what had happened.

On the Road to Emmaus

13 That very day two of them were going to a village named Emmaus,
about seven miles[1] from Jerusalem, 14 and they were talking with each
other about all these things that had happened. 15 While they were talking
and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them.
16 But their eyes were kept from recognizing him. 17 And he said to them,
"What is this conversation that you are holding with each other as you
walk?" And they stood still, looking sad. 18 Then one of them, named
Cleopas, answered him, "Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does
not know the things that have happened there in these days?" 19 And he
said to them, "What things?" And they said to him, "Concerning Jesus of
Nazareth, a man who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God
and all the people, 20 and how our chief priests and rulers delivered him up
to be condemned to death, and crucified him. 21 But we had hoped that he
was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third
day since these things happened. 22 Moreover, some women of our
company amazed us. They were at the tomb early in the morning, 23 and
when they did not find his body, they came back saying that they had even
seen a vision of angels, who said that he was alive. 24 Some of those who
were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but
him they did not see." 25 And he said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of
heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! 26 Was it not necessary
that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?" 27 And
beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the
Scriptures the things concerning himself.

28 So they drew near to the village to which they were going. He acted as
if he were going farther, 29 but they urged him strongly, saying, "Stay with
us, for it is toward evening and the day is now far spent." So he went in to
stay with them. 30 When he was at table with them, he took the bread and
blessed and broke it and gave it to them. 31 And their eyes were opened,
and they recognized him. And he vanished from their sight. 32 They said to
each other, "Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the
road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?" 33 And they rose that same

hour and returned to Jerusalem. And they found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together, [34] † saying, “The Lord has risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!” [35] † Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he was known to them in the breaking of the bread.

Jesus Appears to His Disciples

36 ‡ † As they were talking about these things, Jesus himself stood among
them, and said to them, “Peace to you!” 37 † But they were startled and
frightened and thought they saw a spirit. 38 † And he said to them, Why are
you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? 39 † See my hands and
my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me, and see. For a spirit does not have
flesh and bones as you see that I have.” 40 † And when he had said this, he
showed them his hands and his feet. 41 † And while they still disbelieved for
joy and were marveling, he said to them, “Have you anything here to eat?”
42 ‡ They gave him a piece of broiled fish,[1] 43 and he took it and ate before
them.

44 † Then he said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I
was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses
and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.” 45 † Then he opened their
minds to understand the Scriptures, 46 † and said to them, “Thus it is written,
that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, 47 † and
that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to
all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. 48 † You are witnesses of these things.
49 † And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay
in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.”

The Ascension

50 ‡ ‡ Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and lifting up his hands he
blessed them. 51 † While he blessed them, he parted from them and was
carried up into heaven. 52 † And they worshiped him and returned to
Jerusalem with great joy, 53 † and were continually in the temple blessing
God.

Luke

OVERVIEW

Author
Luke

Date
Written c AD 55–60

Places
Galilee; Judea; Samaria; Nazareth; Capernaum; Bethlehem; Jerusalem; Jericho; Bethany; Emmaus; Jordan River; Mount of Olives; see map, p 1584

People
Jesus; the 12 apostles; Joseph; Mary; Zechariah; Elizabeth; John the Baptist; Simeon; Anna; Mary Magdalene; Zacchaeus; Herod the Great; Herod Antipas; Pilate

Purpose
To affirm Theophilus in the Gospel of Jesus, which he learned through catechesis

Law Themes
The lost; the mighty brought low; destruction of the temple; repentance; call to pray

Gospel Themes
The found; the humble exalted; God's presence at the temple; work of the Spirit; promises fulfilled; fellowship meals; call of the Gentiles

Memory Verses
The annunciation (1:30–33); the Magnificat (1:46–55); the Gloria in Excelsis (2:10–14); the Nunc Dimittis (2:29–32); parable of the lost sheep

(15:1–7); Jesus fulfills the Scriptures (24:44–49)

Introduction to Luke

Reading Luke

During the 23-mile journey up to Jerusalem, a rise of more than 3,300 feet, the people fall silent. After leaving Jericho, the melodies of joyful ascent toward Zion give way to the somber percussion of sandals on stones. Dry throats pant as weary feet plod and ache. Yet, when they reach the crest of the Mount of Olives, joy springs anew. They shout "Hosanna!" as the temple mount comes into view across the Kidron Valley.

Luke presents the story of Jesus' life as a journey. The story begins at the Jerusalem temple (1:8), climaxes with Jesus teaching at the temple some 30 years later (19:45–21:38), and ends at the temple (24:53) after Jesus is crucified, buried, resurrected, and ascended outside the city.

Arthur Just characterizes Luke's account as follows:

> Luke's Gospel is a book of the church, written for the church, to be used by the church in its proclamation of the Gospel to the unbaptized and the baptized. The community that receives Luke's Gospel is a catechetical and eucharistic body that already in the first century had a method for making Christians. That method originated in Christ's own ministry, then was continued by the Jewish followers of the Christ.

Thus, the context in which Scripture is received is liturgical, that is, a church that worships Christ, who is present in the reading and preaching of the Word and the receiving of the Sacraments…. Luke's Gospel was written with a specific context in mind. The evangelist was recording the ministry of Jesus (A.D. 30) for a community (A.D. 55–60) that worshiped in a particular way and in a particular space…. Luke's writings provide most of the NT information about house churches. Jesus sets the precedent for a mission to houses when he sends the Twelve (9:1–6) and the seventy(-two) (10:1–24) into various houses. Jesus institutes what would become a natural pattern for early mission activity.

Arthur A. Just, *Luke 1:1–9:50*, CC (St. Louis, Concordia, 1996), 5, 7, 16.

Luther on Luke

See pp 1571–72.

For Luther's insights on Lk 1, see *The Magnificat* (AE 21:295−358); on Lk 6, see *The Sermon on the Mount* (AE 21:1−294).

Challenges for Readers

Relationship to Other Gospels. See pp 1571–74.

Before the Lord. See note, 1:15.

Jesus' Journey. The Lord's journey—which returns again and again to the temple—begins in heaven, comes to earth, and returns to heaven. The Church's creeds summarize this journey as Jesus' work of salvation. See p 1975.

Two Audiences. Luke writes his account with two different audiences in mind. The first audience includes the apostles, disciples, crowds, and opponents of Jesus who actually hear and see Jesus at work in the events Luke records. This first audience never fully understands what Jesus is doing and teaching (e.g., Peter in ch 9). Everyone is a potential catechumen, but many will reject Jesus. The second audience is the group of disciples or catechumens who later receive and hear Luke's Gospel. This group knows how the story will end in the cross and resurrection. While hearing the Gospel read, they learn more about Jesus by participating in the Word and Sacrament ministry of the Church. Luke presents Jesus' life to both of these audiences.

Table Fellowship. See p 1764.

Now and Not Yet. Luke shows us that in Jesus, God's salvation has come *now*. It is here *today*. God's people, and indeed all creation, enjoy the blessings of redemption. The joy of being with God eternally is already here for us in the Word and Sacrament ministry of the Church (called "inaugurated eschatology"). *Yet*, we still await Jesus' final reappearing when He will come again to judge the living and the dead and complete the work of His kingdom.

From Luke to Acts. Luke begins by explaining that his Gospel account is intended for teaching the faith to catechumens (1:4). Likewise, Acts begins with a similar emphasis on making disciples through the Gospel, teaching, Baptism, and the Lord's Supper. In Ac 1–12, the Church grows rapidly as Jews receive Jesus as the promised Messiah (Ac 2:41; 4:4). The reports of growth slow down as the Church reaches out to the Gentiles (Ac 13–28), who need more training because they are not so familiar with the Scriptures. Luke's Gospel fills the needs of this group. Throughout Luke and Acts, meals are important points for teaching the faith.

Blessings for Readers

As you read Luke's carefully researched account of Jesus' life, consider yourself on a journey with Luke to learn more about Jesus of Nazareth, whose body, crucified for the forgiveness of our sins, becomes the temple of the living God (22:19).

OUTLINE

Luke's Gospel can be divided into a prologue and seven sections:
I. Prologue (1:1–4)
II. Infancy of John and Jesus (1:5–2:52)
III. Preparation for the Public Ministry of Jesus (3:1–4:13)
IV. Ministry of Jesus in Galilee (4:14–9:50)
V. Journey to Jerusalem (9:51–19:27)
VI. Ministry of Jesus in Jerusalem (19:28–21:38)
VII. Passion of Jesus (22:1–23:56a)
VIII. Resurrection of Jesus (23:56b–24:53)

The following is a more detailed outline:
I. Prologue (1:1–4)
II. Infancy of John and Jesus (1:5–2:52)
   A. Announcement of John's Birth (1:5–25)
   B. Announcement of Jesus' Birth (1:26–38)
   C. Visitation (1:39–45)
   D. Magnificat (1:46–56)
   E. Birth and Circumcision of John (1:57–66)
   F. Benedictus (1:67–80)
   G. Birth of Jesus (2:1–21)
   H. Infant Lord Comes to His Temple (2:22–40)
   I. Young Jesus Returns to His Temple (2:41–52)
III. Preparation for the Public Ministry of Jesus (3:1–4:13)
   A. Ministry of John the Baptist (3:1–20)
   B. Baptism of Jesus (3:21–22)
   C. Genealogy of Jesus (3:23–38)
   D. Temptation of Jesus in the Wilderness (4:1–13)

IV. Ministry of Jesus in Galilee (4:14–9:50)
A. Jesus the Cornerstone (4:14–44)
B. Peter as First among the Twelve; Matthew (Levi) as First among the Gospel Writers (5:1–6:11)
C. Apostolic Foundation and Ways of Life and Death (6:12–49)
D. Jesus Heals and Teaches at Table (ch 7)
E. Parable of the Sower and Mysteries of the Kingdom (ch 8)
F. Climax of Jesus' Galilean Ministry (9:1–50)
V. Journey to Jerusalem (9:51–19:27)
A. Part 1 (9:51–13:21)
1. Turning point of Jesus' ministry (9:51)
2. Rejection in Samaria and the sending of the Seventy-two (9:52–10:24)
3. Jesus' teachings about mercy, worship, and prayer; Pharisaic opposition (10:25–11:54)
4. Discourse on persecution, possessions, and hypocrisy (12:1–13:21)
B. Part 2 (13:22–17:10)
1. Teachings about the end times (13:22–14:24)
2. Teachings in parables (14:25–17:10)
C. Part 3 (17:11–19:27)
1. Teaching from the final travel notice to the final Passion prediction (17:11–18:34)
2. Teachings near Jericho and Jesus' approach to Jerusalem (18:35–19:27)
VI. Ministry of Jesus in Jerusalem (19:28–21:38)
A. Triumphant Entrance into Jerusalem (19:28–48)
B. Conflict with Religious Establishment in the Temple (20:1–21:4)
C. Signs and Warnings about the End Times (21:5–38)
VII. Passion of Jesus (22:1–23:56a)
A. Last Supper (22:1–38)
B. Temptation and Testing of Disciples (22:39–62)
C. Trials of Jesus (22:63–23:25)
D. Final Hours (23:26–56a)
VIII. Resurrection of Jesus (23:56b–24:53)
A. Sabbath Rest in the Tomb and Sunday Announcement to the Women (23:56b–24:12)
B. Emmaus Journey and Recognition of Jesus (24:13–35)

C. Risen Lord Eats with and Teaches His Disciples; Ascends (24:36–53)

Articles and Resources Related to Luke

- Luke’s Unique Contribution
- Life, Lyrics, and the Lord’s First Steps
- The Temple in Luke
- Be Our Guest
- Women Disciples
- What Happens When We Die?
- The New Sabbath

Luke's Unique Contribution

Luke records many passages that are similar to passages in Matthew and Mark. However, Luke also records unique sayings and events from Jesus' life. This chart will help you investigate Luke's unique contribution.

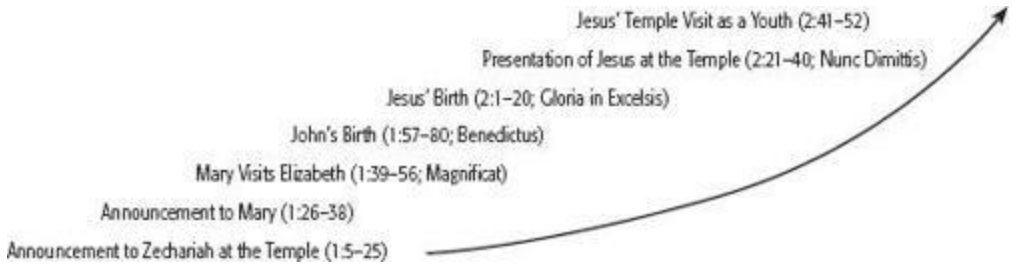
Luke's introduction shows that the original audience for his Gospel had already received teaching about Christ from within the Church by her ministers and writings. Luke was writing to the Church for the benefit of those already in the Church. Arthur Just writes in his commentary on Luke:

> The gospel was used in catechesis, which we may define broadly as the instruction of those who have come to faith and who look forward to Baptism or who have been baptized already. Catechesis is centered in Jesus Christ of Nazareth, who was promised in the OT and became incarnate to accomplish the Father's plan of salvation….
>
> Luke's gospel is a book of the church, written for the church, to be used by the church in its proclamation of the Gospel to the unbaptized and the baptized. (CC Lk1, p 5)

Life, Lyrics, and the Lord's First Steps

God's presence permeates the birth events of John the Baptist and Jesus (Lk 1:5–2:52). Just as God dwelt in the temple and offered mercy through the sacrifices in the Old Testament, so He now dwells as a child in the womb of Mary. This wondrous birth gives both angels and humans a reason to sing. It gives Luke a reason to record the Gospel, and it gives the Church a reason to live, hope, and repeat the songs again and again.

The structure of the infancy narratives has been called "step-parallelism," which can be understood in the following way. First, the birth of John the Baptist is foretold; then the narrative moves to the announcement of Jesus' birth. John is born and presented in the temple, and then Jesus is born and presented. Each step of Luke's literary structure serves a function similar to John the Baptist's function as a prophet—to prepare the way for Christ.



The Temple in Luke

Luke's Gospel begins and ends with events at the Jerusalem temple.

Conclusion

God's mighty deed promised to Abraham and his descendants is fulfilled in the coming of Jesus Christ, salvation in visible form. Jesus' work of reversing the worldly order begins at His birth and culminates with His death on the cross. By His incarnation and death, Jesus puts fallen creation back into the realm of the magnificent. His life is God's great reversal. In God's grace and mercy, He came to reverse the low estate of His servants, namely the poor, the sick, the captive, the hungry, and the sinful. He came to send away the rich and proud with empty hands. How He does this in His ministry and continues that work in the Church is detailed in the rest of Luke and in Luke's second writing, the Acts of the Apostles.

Be Our Guest

Meals offer one of the greatest examples of diversity among human beings. Each culture has its own food and customs for eating that food. When people with different customs gather around the table, there is often confusion and misunderstanding. The Gospels provide important examples of this culture clash, which affects our life and faith.

Jesus began to redefine holiness and the boundaries of Israel during His ministry by challenging conventional ideas about meals and holiness. The following chart lists meals Jesus attended. Many of these meals show how Jesus pointed out misunderstandings of God's covenant and the purpose of the Law.

Throughout the Gospels, Jesus used the occasion of feasts and friendship meals (Hbr *chaburah*) to teach God's Word. This began with His own parents and the Passover feast in Jerusalem. It ended with Him preparing breakfast for His disciples on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. After that meal, Jesus taught Peter and the other disciples about their mission. He described their responsibility with the words "Feed My lambs" (Jn 21:15–17).

Christians today need to rediscover the teaching opportunities the Lord provides through their meals. Follow the example of Jesus, and make mealtime more than an opportunity to nourish your body. Rededicate yourselves; pray with one another; discuss God's Word together. See the warmth and sharing of mealtime as an opportunity to grow closer to Christ and to one another. Also welcome people who are not Christians at meals in your homes and at restaurants. Share with them the words of Jesus, the bread of life, as you share with them your daily bread. Through the Word and faith, the Holy Spirit will prepare them to receive the meal, the feast of Christ's body and blood for the forgiveness of all their sins.

Women Disciples

Women held a special place in the heart of Jesus. Women were often His most beloved disciples (though the term "disciple" is not clearly applied to a woman until Ac 9:36). While He chose only men for the apostolic ministry, women were often the focus of His ministry. Luke explains that women also loved Jesus and provided for His followers from their means. Women helped pay for the ministry. To learn more about this specific theme in Luke's Gospel, study the chart below.

Luke also mentions some women whom Jesus used as examples in His teaching (the widow of Zarephath, 4:24–26; the parable of the leaven, 13:20–21; the parable of the coins, 15:8–10; the women grinding grain, 17:35; and a woman with seven husbands, 20:27–38). Luke records more interaction between Jesus and women than do the other Gospel writers.

What Happens When We Die?

A human is made up of body and soul (Mt 10:28; cf 2Pt 1:13–15). When a human dies, his soul is separated from his body. His body decays, but his soul—and thus he himself, his *ego*, or personality—lives on. If a person trusts in Jesus for salvation, his soul will live in joy with God, awaiting the resurrection, the last judgment, and eternal life. If a person is wicked and unbelieving, his soul will live in torment, awaiting the resurrection, the last judgment, and eternal condemnation.

In 2Co 5:4–8, St Paul describes the body as a "tent" in which he—that is, his mind, personality, soul, spirit, or however one might describe the center of one's person—dwells. He says that when he and believing Christians die, they will be "away from the body" (literally, "out of the house of the body") and yet still "at home with [present with] the Lord." These passages show clearly that the center of one's personhood, which other passages call "the soul," can exist separately from the body, and that at death the soul is separated from the body. Cf Lk 8:55; 23:46; 1Pt 3:18–19; Php 1:23–24; Rv 6:9.

What about “Soul Sleep”?

In Jn 11:11–14, our Lord Jesus describes the death of His friend Lazarus as “sleep.” But note: the wicked who die have “no rest” (Is 57:20–21; Rv 14:11). Death is a “rest” or “sleep” for the godly (Rv 14:13, drawing from Ps 95). Thus, the Church calls the places where the godly are buried “cemeteries,” that is, “dormitories” or places of sleep, and the Church believes that the godly do indeed “rest in peace.”

But while the body sleeps, the soul is awake. For example, in Lk 16:19–31, the soul of the rich man in Hades prays (to no avail) that the beggar Lazarus would relieve his suffering or return to earth to warn his family. The soul of Lazarus, on the other hand, is “comforted” (v 25). Both the rich man and faithful Abraham are awake, conscious, and speaking. Scripture sometimes indicates that the departed souls are unaware of what takes place on earth (e.g., 2Ki 22:20; Jb 14:21; Is 57:1–2; 63:16). Yet it should not be concluded from this that they are unconscious. The soul of the rich man was not unconscious, nor was the soul of Abraham (Mt 22:32).

In considering “soul sleep,” however, we must distinguish between those people who affirm that the souls of the righteous are comforted and experience God’s presence and those who think that the souls of the righteous experience nothing, or worse, are obliterated. As long as the comfort of the righteous souls is affirmed, expressions about the dead being asleep are not dangerous. But the view that the souls of the righteous experience nothing, or that they are dissipated or annihilated, however, are false, unscriptural views.

Glory and Condemnation on Judgment Day

What is the last judgment all about? Scripture teaches that in heaven there are varying degrees of glory and in hell there are varying degrees of condemnation, or judgment (Mt 10:15; 20:23; Lk 14; Jn 19:11; 1Co 15:40–42). We should not think about Judgment Day as though it is the first time that the godly will be distinguished from the wicked (2Pt 2:3–4, 9; Jude 6), or as though it is the first time that the godly will experience the blessed presence of God. But it will be the first time the godly fully experience God's presence in their glorified bodies (Lk 16:19–31; Jn 5:24).

Instead of thinking about Judgment Day as the first time a distinction is made between the righteous and the wicked, we should see it as the *final and full* awarding of rewards and penalties (2Co 5:10). Judgment Day is about the fact that we, in our bodies, will receive the things done in the body. Those who have done evil in the body will receive condemnation. Those who, in the body, have believed in Christ, have been forgiven of their sins, and have new life by God's Spirit, will receive rewards. Judgment Day is the full and final awarding of rewards and penalties, not the beginning of that awarding.

Everlasting Life with Christ

As we have begun to live with Christ here on earth in the Church through His Word and Sacraments, so we will continue to live with Him after we die. Death is not an interruption of this fellowship with our Lord. Our life with Christ continues, even after death, even before the resurrection. Our departed friends and family members who lived with Christ here below by faith in His cross for their forgiveness even now live with Him and are comforted. Because our life with Christ is not interrupted by death, death for the Christian may be sweet and joyful, even in the midst of tears.

The New Sabbath

We mark the transition from one day to the next by watching the clock to observe the stroke of midnight. However, when a rabbi in Jesus' day needed to mark the transition from ordinary time to the holy time of the Sabbath, he would hold aloft two strings: one light and one dark. When sunlight grew too dim to distinguish which string was light and which was dark, then the Sabbath had begun. (The Old Testament Sabbath began at sundown on Friday night.) The rabbi would repeat the same process to distinguish when the Sabbath ended. He marked the passing of each day and the start of the holy day by the transition from light to darkness.

In contrast, New Testament writers describe a different transition. They describe the transition from the shadowy time of the Old Testament to the brilliance of the New Testament with the dawn of Easter morning. You can see evidence of this transition in the end of Luke's Gospel.

In Light of the Resurrection

Luke pays careful attention to time in ch 22 of his Gospel. First, he records the approach of the Passover (22:1). Next, Luke notes the arrival of the day when the Passover lambs were sacrificed (22:7). Then in v 14, "the hour" has come, the starting point of Jesus' Passion: His arrest, trial, suffering, crucifixion, death, and burial. Each time reference in Lk 22 funnels toward the key moment of history when God would change time. Through the death and resurrection of Jesus, time changed from the hour of "the power of darkness" (22:53) to the dawn of Easter morning, "the first day of the week" (24:1).

The earliest Christians did not immediately switch to worshiping on the first day of the week (Sunday). As devout Jews, they continued to gather at the temple at the regular times of prayer (Lk 24:53; Ac 3:1; 5:12). However, as the early Christians began to understand the meaning of Jesus' resurrection and as they experienced conflict with their fellow Jews, they began gathering on Sunday morning for worship instead of on Saturday when Jewish people observed the Sabbath.

Luke, who was probably a Gentile, notes this change of worship practice in Ac 20:7 when he writes, "On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread." This was during Paul's third missionary journey (c AD 52–55). The apostle Paul likewise mentions gathering on Sundays, telling the Corinthians to set aside a sum of money for the poor "on the first day of every week" (1Co 16:2, written AD 55). Within a generation of Jesus' death and resurrection, Christians began gathering on Sundays. By the end of the first century, Christians titled Sunday "the Lord's Day" (Rv 1:10; the title may come from Ps 118:22–24, a prophecy of Jesus' resurrection).

New Life

Although Christians continued to regard the Old Testament teachings about the Sabbath and the feasts as God's Word, they applied them differently in view of the death and resurrection of Jesus. In ch 24, Luke records how Jesus taught His disciples to apply all of the Old Testament to Himself. He fulfilled its prophecies and kept all its laws so that He might become the Savior of all nations (24:25–27, 44–47).

In Colossians, the apostle Paul explains this change of application. He writes, "Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath. These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ" (2:16–17). Paul notes that the Old Testament laws about feasts and Sabbaths were given in anticipation of the coming of Christ. Through Christ, you are free in matters of diet and worship.

When you gather with God's people on Sunday for worship, remember why you gather. You gather to celebrate the day of Christ's resurrection and the transformation of the old covenant in view of His life. You gather to receive His forgiveness and partake of His Holy Feast, the Lord's Supper. Recognize that gathering for worship is more than a law or a custom you should keep. In the worship service, the Lord gives you His blessings. Sunday morning is a banquet prepared to sustain you unto life everlasting.

The Passover Seder

Jesus and the disciples likely observed the Passover meal in the following way. They reclined around a low table (Jn 13:22–25; see note, Mt 8:11). The meal began with the blessing of the feast day and the drinking of the first cup of wine, which was passed around the table. Green and bitter herbs and a fruit puree sauce were then served (cf Mt 26:23; Jn 13:26).

The Passover liturgy followed, as the youngest son asked questions about the meaning of the meal. The head of the household responded by interpreting the meal's elements and retelling the exodus story (Ex 12:26–27; note that Jesus reinterprets the meal in view of His death and second coming in Mt 26:26–29; Mk 14:22–25; Lk 22:18–20). The first part of the

Hallel (Ps 113–14) was sung, and a second cup of wine was shared (cf Lk 22:17).

A prayer of benediction was spoken over the unleavened bread (Mt 26:26), which was distributed and eaten (cf Lk 22:19). Then the Passover lamb was eaten. (The Gospels do not mention eating the lamb; Jesus makes Himself the Passover Lamb [cf Jn 1:29].) A third cup was blessed, shared, and the eating ended (cf Lk 22:20). The second part of the Hallel (Ps 115–18) was sung (cf Mt 26:30; Mk 14:26). Some scholars question whether a fourth cup of wine was part of the service at Jesus' time.

Footnotes

Footnotes for Luke, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:5 Greek *Zacharias*
- [1] 1:27 That is, legally pledged to be married
- [2] 1:28 Some manuscripts add *Blessed are you among women!*
- [3] 1:34 Greek *since I do not know a man*
- [4] 1:35 Some manuscripts add *of you*
- [5] 1:38 Greek *bondservant*; also verse 48
- [1] 1:45 Or *believed, for there will be*
- [1] 1:78 Or *when the sunrise shall dawn upon us*; some manuscripts *since the sunrise has visited us*

Footnotes for Luke, Chapter 2

- [2] 2:2 Or *This was the registration before*
- [1] 2:5 That is, one legally pledged to be married
- [2] 2:14 Some manuscripts *peace, good will among men*
- [1] 2:29 Greek *bondservant*
- [2] 2:37 Or *as a widow for eighty-four years*
- [1] 2:48 Greek *they*
- [2] 2:49 Or *about my Father's business*
- [3] 2:52 Or *years*

Footnotes for Luke, Chapter 3

- [4] 3:4 Or *crying, Prepare in the wilderness the way of the Lord*
- [5] 3:11 Greek *chiton*, a long garment worn under the cloak next to the skin
- [1] 3:22 Or *my Son, my* (or *the*) *Beloved*
- [2] 3:22 Some manuscripts *beloved Son; today I have begotten you*
- [3] 3:27 Greek *Salathiel*

Footnotes for Luke, Chapter 4

- [1] 4:27 *Leprosy* was a term for several skin diseases; see Leviticus 13
- [2] 4:34 Or *Leave us alone*
- [1] 4:44 Some manuscripts *Galilee*

Footnotes for Luke, Chapter 5

- [2] 5:12 *Leprosy* was a term for several skin diseases; see Leviticus 13
- [3] 5:13 Greek *he*
- [1] 5:17 Some manuscripts *was present to heal them*
- [1] 5:39 Some manuscripts *better*

Footnotes for Luke, Chapter 6

- [2] 6:1 Some manuscripts *On the second first Sabbath* (that is, on the second Sabbath after the first)
- [1] 6:29 Greek *chiton*, a long garment worn under the cloak next to the skin
- [1] 6:48 Some manuscripts *founded upon the rock*

Footnotes for Luke, Chapter 7

- [1] 7:2 Greek *bondservant*; also verses 3, 8, 10
- [2] 7:3 Greek *he*
- [3] 7:11 Some manuscripts *The next day*
- [4] 7:15 Greek *he*
- [1] 7:22 *Leprosy* was a term for several skin diseases; see Leviticus 13
- [2] 7:24 Greek *he*
- [3] 7:29 Greek *they justified God*
- [1] 7:49 Or *to*

Footnotes for Luke, Chapter 8

- [1] 8:3 Some manuscripts *him*
- [1] 8:26 Some manuscripts *Gadarenes*; others *Gergesenes*; also verse 37
- [2] 8:27 Greek *he*; also verses 38, 42
- [1] 8:36 Greek *daimonizomai*; elsewhere rendered *oppressed by demons*
- [2] 8:43 Some manuscripts omit *and though she had spent all her living on physicians,*
- [3] 8:45 Some manuscripts add *and those who were with him*

Footnotes for Luke, Chapter 9

- [1] 9:3 Greek *chiton*, a long garment worn under the cloak next to the skin
- [1] 9:31 Greek *exodus*
- [2] 9:35 Some manuscripts *my Beloved*
- [1] 9:43 Greek *he*
- [1] 9:54 Some manuscripts add *as Elijah did*
- [2] 9:55 Some manuscripts add *and he said, "You do not know what manner of spirit you are of; for the Son of Man came not to destroy people's lives but to save them"*
- [3] 9:60 Greek *he*

Footnotes for Luke, Chapter 10

- [4] 10:1 Some manuscripts *seventy*; also verse 17
- [1] 10:21 Or *for so it pleased you well*
- [1] 10:35 A *denarius* was a day's wage for a laborer
- [2] 10:38 Greek *he*
- [1] 10:42 Some manuscripts *few things are necessary, or only one*

Footnotes for Luke, Chapter 11

- [2] 11:1 Greek *he*
- [3] 11:3 Or *our bread for tomorrow*
- [4] 11:8 Or *persistence*
- [5] 11:11 Some manuscripts insert *bread, will give him a stone; or if he asks for*
- [1] 11:37 Greek *he*

Footnotes for Luke, Chapter 12

- [1] 12:5 Greek *Gehenna*
- [2] 12:6 Greek *two assaria*; an *assarion* was a Roman copper coin worth about 1/16 of a *denarius* (which was a day's wage for a laborer)
- [1] 12:25 Or *a single cubit to his stature*; a *cubit* was about 18 inches or 45 centimeters
- [2] 12:27 Some manuscripts *Consider the lilies; they neither spin nor weave*
- [3] 12:31 Some manuscripts *God's*
- [4] 12:35 Greek *Let your loins stay girded*; compare Exodus 12:11
- [5] 12:37 Greek *bondservants*
- [6] 12:39 Some manuscripts add *would have stayed awake and*
- [1] 12:43 Greek *bondservant*; also verses 45, 46, 47
- [1] 12:59 Greek *lepton*, a Jewish bronze or copper coin worth about 1/128 of a *denarius* (which was a day's wage for a laborer)

Footnotes for Luke, Chapter 14

- [1] 14:5 Some manuscripts *a donkey*

- [1] 14:12 Or *your brothers and sisters*. The plural Greek word *adelphoi* (translated "brothers") refers to siblings in a family. In New Testament usage, depending on the context, *adelphoi* may refer either to *brothers* or to *brothers and sisters*
- [2] 14:17 Greek *bondservant*; also verses 21, 22, 23
- [3] 14:24 The Greek word for *you* here is plural

Footnotes for Luke, Chapter 15

- [1] 15:8 Greek *ten drachmas*; a *drachma* was a Greek coin approximately equal in value to a Roman *denarius*, worth about a day's wage for a laborer
- [1] 15:15 Greek *joined himself to*
- [2] 15:21 Some manuscripts add *treat me as one of your hired servants*
- [3] 15:22 Greek *bondservants*

Footnotes for Luke, Chapter 16

- [1] 16:6 About 875 gallons
- [2] 16:7 Between 1,000 and 1,200 bushels
- [3] 16:8 Greek *age*
- [4] 16:9 Greek *mammon*, a Semitic word for money or possessions; also verse 11; rendered *money* in verse 13
- [5] 16:16 Or *everyone is forcefully urged into it*
- [1] 16:22 Greek *bosom*; also verse 23
- [2] 16:28 Or *brothers and sisters*

Footnotes for Luke, Chapter 17

- [3] 17:1 Greek *Stumbling blocks*
- [4] 17:2 Greek *stumble*
- [1] 17:7 Greek *bondservant*; also verse 9
- [2] 17:8 Greek *gird yourself*
- [3] 17:10 Greek *bondservants*
- [4] 17:12 *Leprosy* was a term for several skin diseases; see Leviticus 13
- [5] 17:19 Or *has saved you*
- [6] 17:21 Or *within you*, or *within your grasp*
- [1] 17:24 Some manuscripts omit *in his day*
- [2] 17:35 Some manuscripts add verse 36: *Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left*
- [3] 17:37 Greek *body*
- [4] 17:37 Or *eagles*

Footnotes for Luke, Chapter 18

- [1] 18:11 Or *standing, prayed to himself*
- [2] 18:29 Or *wife or brothers and sisters*

Footnotes for Luke, Chapter 19

- [1] 19:13 Greek *bondservants*; also verse 15
- [2] 19:13 A *mina* was about three months' wages for a laborer
- [3] 19:17 Greek *bondservant*; also verse 22

Footnotes for Luke, Chapter 20

- [1] 20:1 Greek *he*

- [2] 20:10 Greek *bondservant*; also verse 11
- [3] 20:17 Greek *the head of the corner*
- [1] 20:21 Greek *and do not receive a face*
- [2] 20:24 A *denarius* was a day's wage for a laborer
- [3] 20:28 Greek *his brother*
- [4] 20:36 Greek *huioi*; see preface

Footnotes for Luke, Chapter 21

- [1] 21:1 Greek *He*
- [2] 21:2 Greek *two lepta*; a *lepton* was a Jewish bronze or copper coin worth about 1/128 of a *denarius* (which was a day's wage for a laborer)
- [1] 21:16 Or *parents and brothers and sisters*

Footnotes for Luke, Chapter 22

- [1] 22:8 Greek *he*
- [2] 22:16 Some manuscripts *never eat it again*
- [3] 22:20 Some manuscripts omit, in whole or in part, verses 19b-20 (*which is given . . . in my blood*)
- [1] 22:31 The Greek word for *you* (twice in this verse) is plural; in verse 32, all four instances are singular
- [2] 22:33 Greek *He*
- [3] 22:34 Greek *He*
- [1] 22:44 Some manuscripts omit verses 43 and 44
- [2] 22:50 Greek *bondservant*

Footnotes for Luke, Chapter 23

- [1] 23:16 Here, or after verse 19, some manuscripts add verse 17: *Now he was obliged to release one man to them at the festival*
- [1] 23:34 Some manuscripts omit the sentence *And Jesus . . . what they do*
- [2] 23:38 Some manuscripts add *in letters of Greek and Latin and Hebrew*
- [3] 23:39 Or *blasphemed him*
- [4] 23:44 That is, noon
- [5] 23:44 That is, 3 **P**.**M**.
- [1] 23:54 Greek *was dawning*

Footnotes for Luke, Chapter 24

- [1] 24:13 Greek *sixty stadia*; a *stadion* was about 607 feet or 185 meters
- [1] 24:42 Some manuscripts add *and some honeycomb*

Study Notes

LUKE—NOTE ON 1:1–4 Written in excellent Gk style, the prologue not only displays Luke's literary prowess, but also more important, identifies his purpose, his method, and who received his Gospel.

LUKE—NOTE ON 1:1 *accomplished*. Jesus' life, death, and resurrection fulfill all that the OT foretold concerning the Messiah (cf 24:25–27, 44–47).

LUKE—NOTE ON 1:2 *eyewitnesses*. Luke's account is based on firsthand testimony. He would have gathered information from some of the apostles, original disciples, and perhaps even members of Jesus' family (cf chs 1–2). *delivered*. Technical term describing the transmission of oral tradition (cf 1Co 15:3). See p 1902.

LUKE—NOTE ON 1:3 *account*. Technical term for an orderly description of events. *most excellent*. Elsewhere directed at weighty Roman officials. *Theophilus*. Recipient of Luke's account. Possibly a patron who helped Luke produce and publish his Gospel. Because "Theophilus" means "friend of God," some interpreters take this name as a symbolic reference to anyone who reads the Gospel in faith.

LUKE—NOTE ON 1:4 *you have been taught*. Theophilus had a basic knowledge of the Christian faith. Luke's purpose in writing was to deepen his familiarity with Jesus' life and teachings.

LUKE—NOTE ON 1:1–4 Luke introduces the Gospel as a well-written, researched, and historical record of Jesus' life and teachings. God's people need clear, accurate teaching in order to grow in faith and in service. As you study Luke's account, pray that the Lord would make you a faithful "friend of God" through Jesus, who has accomplished your salvation by His birth, life, death, and resurrection. • "Jesus, priceless treasure, Fount of purest pleasure, Truest friend to me, Ah, how long in anguish Shall my spirit languish, Yearning, Lord, for Thee? Thou art mine, O Lamb divine! I will suffer naught to hide Thee; Naught I ask beside Thee." Amen. (*LSB* 743:1)

LUKE—NOTE ON 1:5 *Herod*. Called "the Great"; ruled from 37 to 1 BC. Descendants ruled regions of Israel in successive generations (see note, 3:1–2). *Zechariah … Elizabeth*. John the Baptist's parents were from the priestly line of Aaron. *Abijah*. Head of a priestly family (Ne 12:4, 7).

LUKE—NOTE ON 1:9 *chosen by lot*. Rare privilege, a high point of Zechariah's life. Most of the time, priests lived rather ordinary lives in their

hometowns. Scholars have calculated that only 56 priests officiated at the temple each day, and 28 more were needed on the Sabbath. Josephus tells us that Israel had c 20,000 priests and Levites (*Ag Ap* 2:108). *temple of the Lord*. Holy Place within the larger temple compound (see diagram, p 1710), where incense was offered during the morning and evening sacrifices.

LUKE—NOTE ON 1:11 *angel of the Lord*. OT contains examples of the Lord or His angels appearing in the temple (1Sm 3; Zec 3). Note that angels play a prominent role in Lk, repeatedly making important announcements (1:11–20, 26–38; 2:8–14; 24:4–7, 23). See p 1227.

LUKE—NOTE ON 1:13 *John*. Hbr *yochanan*, "the Lord has shown favor" (cf Jer 40:8); emphasizes God's grace in giving Zechariah and Elizabeth a child in their advanced age. The name was popular among the Maccabees. See pp 1553–58. "No prophet, neither Elijah nor Elisha, received the Spirit without the Ten Commandments 'or the spoken Word'. John the Baptist was not conceived without the word of Gabriel coming first, nor did he leap in his mother's womb without Mary's voice" (SA III VIII 11–12).

LUKE—NOTE ON 1:14 *joy*. Recurring theme in Lk (cf 1:44, 47; 2:10; 8:13; 10:17; 15:7, 10; 24:41, 52).

LUKE—NOTE ON 1:15 *before the Lord*. Lk often uses this OT expression and similar expressions to describe God's presence and one's standing before God's judgment (whether one is righteous or unrighteous, cf v 6). *must not drink wine or strong drink*. Like Samson (Jgs 13:4–7) and Samuel (1Sm 1:11) before him, John lived as a Nazirite. Cf Nu 6:1–21. *filled with the Holy Spirit*. See note, vv 41−44. The Spirit plays a much more prominent role in Lk than in any other Gospel.

LUKE—NOTE ON 1:17 *spirit and power of Elijah*. John's ministry paralleled Elijah's prophetic career in key ways. Cf Mt 3:4. John fulfilled the prophecy that Elijah would reappear before the Messiah (see notes, Mal 4:5–6).

LUKE—NOTE ON 1:18 *How shall I know this?* Zechariah demands proof and earns God's punishment (v 20).

LUKE—NOTE ON 1:19 *Gabriel*. One of two angels named in the Bible (Dn 8:16–26; 9:20–27). The other is Michael (Dn 10:13, 21; 12:1; Jude 9; Rv 12:7). Gabriel later visits Mary (vv 26–38).

LUKE—NOTE ON 1:21 *wondering at his delay*. Zechariah's advanced age likely contributed to the people's concern. The sanctity of the Holy Place,

however, would have discouraged another priest from going to check on him.

LUKE—NOTE ON 1:23 Zechariah finished his priestly service (an additional week or two) without speaking and then returned home.

LUKE—NOTE ON 1:5–25 Zechariah receives word that the Lord will bless him and Elizabeth with a son who has a special calling. Children are a blessing from God to be treasured and raised according to His good purposes. Pray for the children in your family, and support their nurture in the faith. Give thanks to God the Father, who nurtures us in His Holy Child, Jesus, our deliverer from sin, evil, and doubt. • "Hark! A thrilling voice is sounding! 'Christ is near,' we hear it say. 'Cast away the works of darkness, All you children of the day!' " Amen. (*LSB* 345:1)

LUKE—NOTE ON 1:26 *sixth month*. Refers to Elizabeth's pregnancy. *Nazareth*. Never mentioned in the OT. Jesus' hometown is obscure and insignificant. See note, Mt 2:23; cf Jn 1:46.

LUKE—NOTE ON 1:27 *a virgin betrothed to a man*. Jewish betrothal was binding in ways that modern engagements are not (see note, Mt 1:19). Betrothal usually preceded marriage by at least nine months to assure that the bride was not pregnant. The young man would give the bride's family a gift (see note, Gn 34:12). The fathers of the families would sign a marriage document (Hbr *kethubah*).

LUKE—NOTE ON 1:30 *favor*. See p 6.

LUKE—NOTE ON 1:31 *Jesus*. See note, Mt 1:21; see also p 2098.

LUKE—NOTE ON 1:32–33 *Most High … Lord God*. See p 1227. *the throne of His father David … He will reign … forever*. Refers to Davidic covenant, wherein God promised the Messiah would descend from David and rule eternally (2Sm 7:16; Ps 2:6–7). Cf Lk 1:27; 2:4.

LUKE—NOTE ON 1:34 In contrast to Zechariah's skeptical question (v 18), Mary wonders in faith. Zechariah walked away unable to speak, but Mary burst forth into holy song (vv 46–55) after Gabriel's departure.

LUKE—NOTE ON 1:35 *The Holy Spirit will come upon you*. Cf Is 32:15 describing the Spirit bringing fertility and life to the land. *overshadow*. Used in LXX Ex 40:35 to describe God's presence in the tabernacle. Cf Gn 1:2. Accordingly, Gabriel's announcement implies that through Mary's pregnancy, God will be present among His people in a more wonderful way (cf Jn 1:14). *Son of God*. Title forcefully underscores Jesus' divine nature (see p 2098; see also SC, Second Article, p xxxvii). "The divine and human

natures in Christ are personally united. So there are not two Christs, one the Son of God and the other the Son of Man. But one and the same person is the Son of God and Son of Man" (FC Ep VIII 5).

LUKE—NOTE ON 1:37 Echoes the question God asked Abraham while announcing that Sarah would bear Isaac in her old age.

LUKE—NOTE ON 1:38 *servant of the Lord*. Demonstrating great humility and purpose, Mary identifies herself as a household slave. See p 101.

LUKE—NOTE ON 1:26–38 The angel Gabriel announces Jesus' birth to Mary, who responds in faith. By announcing the Gospel, the Lord likewise calls us to faith and to bear Christ—not as our child—but as the Holy One of God, our Savior. • "O holy Child of Bethlehem, Descend to us, we pray; Cast out our sin, and enter in, Be born in us today. We hear the Christmas angels The great glad tidings tell; O come to us, abide with us, Our Lord Immanuel!" Amen. (*LSB* 361:4)

LUKE—NOTE ON 1:39 *town in Judah*. Zechariah and Elizabeth lived somewhere near Jerusalem, where Zechariah had recently served in the temple (vv 5–20).

LUKE—NOTE ON 1:41–44 *filled with the Holy Spirit*. Elizabeth recognized that Mary was carrying a child who was the "Lord," knowledge that only the Holy Spirit could reveal. Even more remarkably, John reacted from within her womb as well! Cf 2:25–38.

LUKE—NOTE ON 1:39–45 As Mary greets Elizabeth, baby John leaps for joy in Elizabeth's womb. The work of God's Spirit is not limited by age, gender, or socio-economic status. He is poured out for all people according to the good and gracious will of God, who blesses motherhood and children and, through them, all humanity, even as He promised Eve (Gn 3:15). Like baby John, leap for joy that salvation comes from the Lord in humble and unexpected ways as the Good News of Jesus is shared. • "Thou Christian heart, Whoe'er thou art, Be of good cheer and let no sorrow move thee! For God's own Child, In mercy mild, Joins thee to Him; how greatly God must love thee!" Amen. (*LSB* 372:4)

LUKE—NOTE ON 1:46–55 One of four canticles in chs 1–2 (see note, v 46). Zechariah similarly bursts into song at John's birth (1:68–79), the angels intone their announcement of Jesus' birth (2:14), and Simeon sings a blessing (2:29–32). Mary's canticle (called the Magnificat from the first word in the Latin translation) is the most prominent of these four songs of praise, still sung in the Church's liturgy (*LSB*, pp 248–49). They introduce

an important Lukan theme: God delights in exalting the poor and humble, while bringing down the rich and proud (vv 48, 51–53; cf 14:11; 18:11). See Hannah's song (1Sm 2:1–10).

LUKE—NOTE ON 1:46 *Mary said*. Biblical Gk commonly uses verbs of speaking when presenting chanting/singing (cf Rv 5:9). In antiquity, poetic compositions were typically chanted or sung.

LUKE—NOTE ON 1:47 *God my Savior*. Title often used for God, esp in Ps. Underscores not only His rescue from physical calamity but also His saving power in spiritual matters (Ps 18:46; 24:5; 25:5; 27:9).

LUKE—NOTE ON 1:48 *humble estate*. Mary humbly acknowledges herself as God's servant (v 38) and thanks Him for exalting her through the conception of Jesus in her womb. This parallels Israel's status as an exalted servant in v 54.

LUKE—NOTE ON 1:50 *fear*. See p 1001. *generation to generation*. Recalls covenants given to Abraham (Gn 12:1–3) and David (see note, vv 32–33). Thus, the climax of Mary's song emphasizes fulfillment (cf vv 54–55).

LUKE—NOTE ON 1:46–56 The Lord delivers His people amid suffering and disappointment. Today, no matter what troubles assail you, trust in the Lord as your deliverer, and commend all cares to Him in prayer. Rejoice in His surpassing mercy through the Holy Child, who delivers the generations from sin and sorrow. • Pray or sing the Magnificat (vv 46–55; *LSB*, pp 248–49).

LUKE—NOTE ON 1:58 In the case of John, a miracle baby given to aged parents, such a celebration would be all the more joyous.

LUKE—NOTE ON 1:59 *circumcise*. Cf Gn 17:9–14. This sign marked John as heir to the covenant described in Gn 12:1–3. *would have called him Zechariah*. Common to name a male child after his grandfather or father.

LUKE—NOTE ON 1:60 See note, v 13.

LUKE—NOTE ON 1:63 *writing tablet*. Board covered with wax that could receive letters made with a stylus. See note, Is 30:8. Zechariah would likely have used this tool during the nine months he was unable to speak (v 20).

LUKE—NOTE ON 1:66 *the hand of the Lord was with him*. God was active in John's life, to guide, protect, and lead him into the way of godliness. See "be with," p 5.

LUKE—NOTE ON 1:57–66 Elizabeth gives birth to John; Zechariah confirms his son's name. John is truly the Lord's gift to you as well because

he prepared the way for your Savior, Jesus. Do not doubt, but dare to proclaim what the Lord has promised and accomplished for your salvation. His blessings never cease to amaze! • "When all the world was cursed By Moses' condemnation, Saint John the Baptist came With words of consolation. With true forerunner's zeal The greater One he named, And Him, as yet unknown, As Savior he proclaimed." Amen. (*LSB* 346:1)

LUKE—NOTE ON 1:68–79 The Benedictus (from the Latin translation of the first word, "Blessed"). Sung as part of the Church's liturgy (*LSB*, pp 238–40).

LUKE—NOTE ON 1:68 *visited and redeemed His people*. Pair of verbs recall some of God's mightiest acts of salvation. *visited*. Gk *episkeptomai*, "look after, appear in order to help" (LXX: Gn 50:24–25; Ru 1:6; 1Sm 2:21; Ps 8:4; Ezk 34:11). *redeemed*. Gk *poiein lutrosin*, "redeem or ransom from slavery" (LXX: Ex 6:6; Dt 7:8; Ne 1:10; Ps 49:8). See p 843.

LUKE—NOTE ON 1:69 *horn of salvation*. See pp 842–43.

LUKE—NOTE ON 1:74 *serve Him without fear*. All of God's covenant and victories on Israel's behalf had one purpose—to redeem His people and enable them to serve Him freely. Such service was characterized by holy and righteous living.

LUKE—NOTE ON 1:76 *prepare His ways*. See notes, v 17; Mt 3:3.

LUKE—NOTE ON 1:77 *knowledge of salvation … forgiveness of their sins*. Central to the Gospel message, these themes echo the promise of a new covenant (Jer 31:33–34).

LUKE—NOTE ON 1:78 *sunrise*. The dawning of a new era (cf Is 9:2; 60:1).

LUKE—NOTE ON 1:80 *grew and became strong in spirit*. Echoes descriptions of Samuel's development (1Sm 2:26; 3:19), as well as Jesus' (Lk 2:52). *he was in the wilderness*. Throughout Israel's history, the wilderness serves as a place of spiritual formation and testing in God's presence. Cf Nu 14:33; 1Ki 19:4–18. As such, this was an appropriate place for young John to live.

LUKE—NOTE ON 1:67–80 The theme of ch 1 is fulfillment. God faithfully keeps His promises by sending one like Elijah to prepare His people, and then by announcing the advent of the Son of God and Savior of all humankind. Nothing is impossible with God! Through Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, we are bold to hope for an even more wonderful fulfillment of divine promises, including our glorification. • Blessed are

You, O Lord, the God of Israel, for You have visited and redeemed Your people and raised up a horn of salvation for us. You have assured us that our final day of salvation will someday be completed, when Christ returns. Therefore, come, Lord Jesus. Come quickly! Amen.

LUKE—NOTE ON 2:1 *Caesar Augustus*. In 27 BC, the Roman Senate conferred on Octavian, the reigning Caesar, the title "Augustus" ("the exalted one"). For all his glory, however, Caesar Augustus remained God's instrument. His call for a worldwide census unwittingly set into motion the events of Jesus' birth, thereby bringing to fulfillment the prophecy regarding his place of birth (Mi 5:2). *all the world*. Gk *oikoumene*, "the inhabited world," here meaning the Roman Empire. Luke will use such terms later to emphasize the all-inclusive nature of the Gospel. *registered*. Necessary for taxation.

LUKE—NOTE ON 2:2 *Quirinius … governor of Syria*. May have held this office twice and conducted a census in each term. First, when Jesus was born, and then in AD 6–9 (Ac 5:37).

LUKE—NOTE ON 2:4 *Bethlehem*. Hometown of Joseph's and Mary's ancestor King David. See notes, v 1; 1:32–33.

LUKE—NOTE ON 2:5 Mary was also subject to Roman taxes and required to participate in the census. *his betrothed*. See note, 1:27.

LUKE—NOTE ON 2:7 *swaddling cloths*. A sign of tender care. Babies were washed, rubbed with salt (and possibly olive oil), and then wrapped (cf Ezk 16:4). Strips of cloth were wrapped tightly around infants to warm and secure them. *manger*. Animals' feed trough. *no place for them in the inn*. Mary and Joseph were forced to bed down in a nearby cave or stable, where animals were housed. The travel caused by the census likely overwhelmed normal arrangements for hospitality. See note, Gn 18:4.

LUKE—NOTE ON 2:1–7 Joseph and Mary travel from Nazareth to Bethlehem, where Jesus is born in humble circumstances. The birth of a child always comes with great hardship (Gn 3:16). The birth of this Child comes with great blessings for sinners. As you reflect on the wonder of Jesus' birth, pray also for a humble and pure heart. The mighty Lord will have mercy on you and exalt you by grace alone (Lk 1:49–52). • O Holy Child, grant me sincere humility, even as You exalt me by calling me God's child. Amen.

LUKE—NOTE ON 2:8 The Judean countryside has long been used for grazing sheep. David himself had been a shepherd in these fields (1Sm

16:11).
LUKE—NOTE ON 2:9 *glory of the Lord*. Cf Ex 24:16–17; see pp 6–7. Suggests that Jesus' birth brings the Lord's presence near to humankind. *glory*. See p 1902.
LUKE—NOTE ON 2:10 *good news*. Gk *euangelizomai*, "I evangelize," a favorite expression in Lk (cf 1:19; 2:10; 3:18; 4:18, 43; 7:22; 8:1; 9:6; 16:16; 20:1). Calls to mind many prophetic promises of salvation (e.g., Is 52:7; 61:1). *all the people*. Universal theme in Lk (see note, v 1). However, because Lk repeatedly follows the OT practice of calling Israel "the people," Israel is likely meant.
LUKE—NOTE ON 2:11 *city of David*. Bethlehem. *Savior*. The title, as well as the related terms "save" and "salvation," form another important Lukan theme (1:47, 69, 71, 77; 7:50; 19:9–10). See note, Mt 1:21. *Christ the Lord*. See p 2098.
LUKE—NOTE ON 2:12 *sign*. The baby serves as a sign for the shepherds that the Good News is true. More important, the prophetic sign of a son born to a virgin was fulfilled (see note, Is 7:14).
LUKE—NOTE ON 2:13 *heavenly host*. See p 1291.
LUKE—NOTE ON 2:14 *in the highest*. Refers to praise in the heavenly realms, where God and the angels live. *on earth peace*. Emphasizes not human goodwill but God's grace and the peace it brings us.
LUKE—NOTE ON 2:17 The Good News about Jesus is contagious. The shepherds immediately broadcast what they had seen and heard.
LUKE—NOTE ON 2:19 *pondering*. Detail points to Mary as one of Luke's sources for the Gospel (see note, 1:2).
LUKE—NOTE ON 2:21 *circumcised*. See notes, 1:59; Gn 17:10. *Jesus*. See note, Mt 1:21.
LUKE—NOTE ON 2:8–21 Angels reveal to shepherds the Good News of the Savior's birth. The shepherds in turn announce the Good News to others. As you celebrate the glory of Christmas, be sure to announce Jesus' saving work to others also. The Savior is your peace and joy this day and always! • O Holy Child, I treasure the Good News of Your birth for my salvation. Call others to faith through me. Amen.
LUKE—NOTE ON 2:22–24 *purification*. Done 40 days after giving birth (Lv 12). *pair of turtledoves*. Most modest of the different sacrifices that could be offered; suggests that Jesus' parents were poor (Lv 12:8).

LUKE—NOTE ON 2:25 *the consolation of Israel*. Recalls the comfort Isaiah foretold. Synonymous with the Lord's salvation and forgiveness.
LUKE—NOTE ON 2:25–27 Simeon's watchfulness, discernment of the Messiah's presence, and consequent prophetic utterance were all the result of the Spirit's action. *not see death*. The Spirit had revealed to Simeon that he would not die until he beheld the fulfillment of God's promise to send the Messiah.
LUKE—NOTE ON 2:27 *temple*. Specific setting is likely the temple's Court of Women, because both Mary and Anna (vv 36–38) were present. See diagram, p 1838.
LUKE—NOTE ON 2:29 *Lord … servant*. Like Mary (1:48), Simeon identifies himself as God's servant while bursting forth in praise—a thematic link between the two songs. Simeon's song also continues to be sung as part of the Church's liturgy (*LSB*, pp 238–40).
LUKE—NOTE ON 2:30 *salvation*. Realized in the baby Jesus. On this Lukan theme, see note, v 11; cf Ac 4:12; see also p 843.
LUKE—NOTE ON 2:31 *all peoples*. Refers to all nations, not just to Israel. See notes, vv 1, 10.
LUKE—NOTE ON 2:32 *light for … the Gentiles … glory to … Israel*. The glory of Israel is her salvation. Because this salvation is for all people, it will come to shine upon every nation through the preaching of the Gospel.
LUKE—NOTE ON 2:34 *for the fall and rising of many*. Based on their reaction to Jesus, people will either stand or fall (cf 1Pt 2:6, 8). *opposed*. Jesus' rejection is foretold early in Lk. Before the infancy narrative ends, the cross begins to loom.
LUKE—NOTE ON 2:35 *a sword will pierce through your own soul*. Mary will someday experience sorrow because of her Son's suffering and death (cf Jn 19:25–27).
LUKE—NOTE ON 2:36 *a prophetess*. See p 389.
LUKE—NOTE ON 2:37 *a widow*. A variety of widows exhibited exemplary devotion (1Ki 17:8–24; Lk 21:1–4; cf 1Tm 5:3–10). Anna was an outstanding example of such a pious widow.
LUKE—NOTE ON 2:38 *redemption of Jerusalem*. See Simeon's waiting for the consolation of Israel (v 25); see also p 843. Consolation and redemption summarize beautifully the benefits of the Messiah.

LUKE—NOTE ON 2:22–38 As confirmed by prophecy, Jesus is appointed as the Savior. Today, pray that the Lord would grant you the enduring faith of Simeon and Anna, to see the Lord's salvation and give Him thanks face-to-face in eternity. • Pray the Nunc Dimittis (vv 29–32; *LSB*, p 165).

LUKE—NOTE ON 2:40 *filled with wisdom*. Likely alludes to Is 11:2, where the Messiah is characterized as one endowed by the Spirit with wisdom. See pp 775–78. *favor*. See p 6.

LUKE—NOTE ON 2:39–40 Jesus matures as a normal child and also has the blessings of God's wisdom and favor. Today, pray for the children in your family or neighborhood, that they would grow in the knowledge of their Savior and receive His favor. He who has blessed and kept you in faith will likewise hear and bless them too. • I thank You, Holy Child, that You fulfilled the Law for me. Fill me with the wisdom only You can give. Amen.

LUKE—NOTE ON 2:41 An annual pilgrimage to the Passover was required of all Israelites (Dt 16:6). Extended families and neighbors often traveled together, singing and picnicking along the way. See note, Ps 120–34.

LUKE—NOTE ON 2:42 Twelve years have passed since the previous episode. Remarkably, vv 41–52 is the only NT account of Jesus' later childhood.

LUKE—NOTE ON 2:46–47 *listening to them and asking them questions*. In order to stimulate more profound thinking, the rabbis often responded to people's questions by posing their own questions. Already as a child, Jesus was able to engage the best religious minds in this way. *amazed at His understanding and His answers*. Jesus is depicted as Rabbi par excellence, even from His youth. See note, v 40.

LUKE—NOTE ON 2:51 *submissive*. Jesus responded as an obedient child to His mother's scolding (v 48). He obeyed the divine Law and submitted to His earthly parents. *treasured up*. See note, v 19.

LUKE—NOTE ON 2:52 *increased*. Chem: "This advance pertained to the one [human] nature [of Christ]" (*LTh* 1:105). *favor*. See p 6.

LUKE—NOTE ON 2:41–52 Luke's account of Jesus' birth and childhood repeatedly sets the ordinary beside the miraculous (e.g., a youth from the hinterland stuns the Jerusalem rabbis with His wisdom). Given the mysterious and often apparently ordinary ways God chooses to reveal

Himself and His salvation—in the flesh of His Son, in words, in water, in bread and wine—we easily underestimate their power. Thankfully, the very common aspects of God's gifts mean that they are never far from us. • Lord Jesus, open my eyes to Your life-giving presence. Through Your Word, Sacraments, and Spirit, bless my life, so that things that seem mundane become a foretaste of blessedness in Your eternal presence. Amen.

LUKE—NOTE ON 3:1–2 Luke continually relates his account of Jesus' life to known historical facts, inviting readers to see the life of Jesus in historical context. Careful comparisons with contemporary sources demonstrate Luke's accuracy. *fifteenth year … Tiberius Caesar*. Roman sources tell us that Tiberius became co-regent with Augustus in AD 11/12, then sole emperor in AD 14. That time frame suggests that John's ministry began somewhere between AD 26 and 29. See chronology, p cvii. *Pontius Pilate*. Prefect or procurator over Judea and Samaria, AD 26−36. *Herod*. Herod Antipas, who ruled Galilee and Perea after the death of his father. See note, 9:7–9. *Philip*. Another son of Herod the Great. Philip ruled areas north and west of Galilee from 4 BC to AD 34. *Lysanias*. Little is clear about this character. Josephus mentions more than one Lysanias. Multiple inscriptions bearing this name have been unearthed. *Annas and Caiaphas*. Family dominated the Jewish high priesthood for most of Jesus' lifetime and beyond. Remains of Caiaphas's house and his ossuary (bone coffin) have been unearthed. *the word of God came*. See notes, Jl 1:1; Mi 1:1. *John*. See note, Mt 3:1.

LUKE—NOTE ON 3:3 *region around the Jordan*. Likely the Judean desert just north of the Dead Sea. *baptism of repentance*. John called for a change of heart and a commitment to holy living. This repentance was sealed with a baptism. See p 1901. *for the forgiveness of sins*. See note, Mk 1:4.

LUKE—NOTE ON 3:4–6 Like the other evangelists (Mt 3:3; Mk 1:2–3), Luke quotes Is 40:3–4 to emphasize that John's work fulfills prophecy by preparing the people for the Messiah's arrival. *all flesh*. In contrast to Mt and Mk, Lk includes the promise of Is 40:5. He underlines a major theme, that Jesus came for both Jews and Gentiles.

LUKE—NOTE ON 3:4 See note, Mt 3:3.

LUKE—NOTE ON 3:7 *brood of vipers!* Offspring of poisonous snakes, which often function as symbols of deception and malice (cf Is 59:4–5). *wrath to come?* Destruction of Jerusalem (AD 70) and the final judgment on the Last Day. See notes, 21:6–9; see also p 1904.

LUKE—NOTE ON 3:8 *repentance*. See note, Mt 3:8. Gk *metanoia*, "a change of mind." *Abraham as our father*. See note, Mt 3:9. *stones … children*. Wordplay in Aram; these two words have a similar sound. John derisively dismissed spiritual blessing based on race.
LUKE—NOTE ON 3:9 *axe is laid to the root of the trees*. Stresses the urgency of John's call to repentance and the reality of God's judgment. Cf Is 10:33–34; Jer 46:22–23. God described Israel as an unproductive vine coming under His judgment in Is 5:1–7.
LUKE—NOTE ON 3:10 More than simply feeling sorrow and remorse, the truly penitent seek a godly alternative to sinful living.
LUKE—NOTE ON 3:11 *tunics*. Worn under the cloak. In counseling his hearers to share, John anticipates Jesus' command (12:32–34) and the practice of the Early Church (Ac 2:44–45; 4:34–37).
LUKE—NOTE ON 3:12 *Tax collectors*. See note, Mt 5:46.
LUKE—NOTE ON 3:14 *Soldiers*. Jewish temple guards or even Romans. Detail anticipates Ac, when numerous soldiers convert to Christianity (Ac 10; 16:25–34). Luth: "He did not condemn their office or advise them to stop doing their work…. He praised the military profession, but at the same time he forbade its abuse…. Therefore even under the New Testament the sword is established by God's word and commandment, and those who use it properly and fight obediently serve God and are obedient to his word" (AE 46:97−98).
LUKE—NOTE ON 3:15 John's resemblance to Elijah (cf 1:17) suggested to some that he might be the Messiah.
LUKE—NOTE ON 3:16 *strap … untie*. See note, Mk 1:7. *baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire*. See note, Mt 3:11.
LUKE—NOTE ON 3:17 See note, Mt 3:12.
LUKE—NOTE ON 3:19 After Herod Antipas divorced his wife and took Herodias (his niece and former wife of his brother Philip), John denounced him. This led to John's imprisonment and eventual execution (cf Mk 6:14–29).
LUKE—NOTE ON 3:21 *when Jesus also had been baptized*. Though Jesus did not need to receive Baptism in order to be forgiven, he nonetheless submitted to it (see notes, Mt 3:13–15). *praying*. Detail mentioned only by Luke, who emphasized prayer in Jesus' ministry (5:16; 6:12; 9:18, 28–29; 11:1; 22:32, 41; 23:34, 46).

LUKE—NOTE ON 3:22 The Father's affirmation echoes two messianic prophecies (Ps 2:7; Is 42:1), reinforcing that Jesus is indeed the Son of God. "You must honor Baptism and consider it glorious because of the Word. For God Himself has honored it both by words and deeds. Furthermore, He confirmed it with miracles from heaven. Do you think it was a joke that, when Christ was baptized, the heavens were opened and the Holy Spirit descended visibly, and everything was divine glory and majesty?" (LC IV 21). See note, Mt 3:17.

LUKE—NOTE ON 3:23–38 Twin genealogies of Jesus appear in the NT, here and in Mt 1:1–17. They differ greatly. First, Luke's genealogy is given at the beginning of Jesus' ministry, while Matthew's appears at the beginning of the Gospel. Second, Luke's genealogy works backward from Joseph, while Matthew's works forward from Abraham. Third, Luke goes all the way back to Adam and God (v 38), while Matthew traces only back to Abraham. Most scholars believe that these respective arrangements are the result of, and consistent with, each evangelist's special interests. On this understanding, Luke emphasizes that the Messiah descends from Adam and so is related to all nations, while Matthew focused on Jesus' Judean roots, which accords with his desire to present Jesus as the fulfillment of God's promises to Abraham. Luke names the actual ancestors of Joseph's branch of the family. Matthew likely gives a stylized legal line of descent from King David. See note, Mt 1:16.

LUKE—NOTE ON 3:23 *about thirty years of age*. A fitting age. Priests began their work at age 30 (Nu 4:3), Ezekiel began his prophetic calling at age 30 (Ezk 1:1), and King David assumed the throne at this age (2Sm 5:4). *supposed*. Subtly reaffirms the virgin birth.

LUKE—NOTE ON **Ch 3** Luke's account of John's ministry and Jesus' ancestry hint at the universal nature of the Messiah's kingdom. How sad, then, that churches too often show little concern for those outside the immediate boundaries of their fellowship. The Gospel is for everyone! Jesus' death and resurrection bring life and salvation to all who repent and call on His name. • Lord, open my eyes to the nature of Your kingdom, and so move me to live a life worthy of Your Gospel by reaching out with the Good News that leads to everlasting life. Amen.

LUKE—NOTE ON 4:1 *full of the Holy Spirit*. Links this episode to Jesus' Baptism (3:21–22) and reinforces the prominent role Luke's Gospel gives to the Spirit. *wilderness*. See note, Mt 4:1.

LUKE—NOTE ON 4:2 *forty days*. See p 217. *tempted by the devil*. Though the First Adam ("son of God" in 3:38) failed when the devil tempted him (Gn 3:6), this greater Son of God is obedient when tempted (cf Rm 5:12–21). *He was hungry*. See note, Mt 4:2.

LUKE—NOTE ON 4:3 The devil and his minions knew full well that Jesus was the Son of God (cf 3:21–22; 4:41). Jesus was led by the Holy Spirit (v 1). This question, however, functions as a challenge of the fact and tempts Jesus to depart from God's ways (cf Mk 8:27–33). It likewise challenges the reader to consider who Jesus is.

LUKE—NOTE ON 4:5–6 *took Him*. See note, Mt 4:5. *up*. See note, Mt 4:8. *the world … You I will give*. An offer to make Jesus a political ruler. Again, the devil attacks Jesus' pride and destiny as messianic King. *for it has been delivered to me*. Cf Jn 12:31; 1Jn 5:19; see note, Mt 4:9.

LUKE—NOTE ON 4:9 *took Him*. See note, Mt 4:5. *pinnacle of the temple*. Probably refers to the corner of the temple colonnade overlooking the Kidron Valley. If so, there was a drop of 100 ft.

LUKE—NOTE ON 4:10–11 The devil was adept at distorting Scripture and using it for his own purposes. This serves as a warning against those who skillfully misinterpret the Bible.

LUKE—NOTE ON 4:12 See note, Mt 4:7.

LUKE—NOTE ON 4:13 *until an opportune time*. The devil would continue to work against Jesus from time to time during His ministry (e.g., Mk 8:33), but esp in Gethsemane on the night of His arrest (Lk 22:39–46).

LUKE—NOTE ON 4:1–13 The Holy Spirit leads Jesus and abides with Him through His temptation, affirming that Jesus truly is the Son of God. The blessed Trinity likewise abides with us, that we may withstand Satan's temptation of our flesh, our pride, and our will. Through Holy Baptism in God's name, we are truly His beloved children. • "Almighty God, unto You all hearts are open, all desires are known, and from You no secrets are hid. Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of Your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love You, and worthily magnify Your holy Name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen." (Gregorian Sacramentary, *TLWA*, p 261)

LUKE—NOTE ON 4:14 *in the power of the Spirit*. See notes, 3:22; 4:1. *to Galilee*. Jesus returns north to His home territory. There, the first major phase of His ministry unfolds.

LUKE—NOTE ON 4:15 Continues the theme of Jesus' extraordinary wisdom (cf 2:41–52). The beginning of Jesus' public ministry was a time of popularity, running all the way through 9:50.

LUKE—NOTE ON 4:14–15 Jesus begins to teach publicly for the first time since He was a child (2:41–52). Reflect on Jesus' teaching, which relies on the work of the Holy Spirit and cannot be judged by popularity alone. Pray that the Holy Spirit would bless your speech and lead others to the Lord through you. What blessings He bestows through the Gospel! • "May we in faith its message learn Nor thanklessly its blessings spurn; May we in faith its truth confess And praise the Lord, our righteousness." Amen. (*LSB* 580:6)

LUKE—NOTE ON 4:16 *as was His custom*. Jesus worshiped regularly and so fulfilled the commandments in this regard (cf 2:22, 41). s*tood up to read*. Any qualified male could read from the Hebrew Scriptures in a synagogue. See note, Ne 8:8.

LUKE—NOTE ON 4:17 *scroll*. Typical manuscript format of the time, which would be displaced by the "codex" (book) beginning in the first century. *prophet Isaiah*. Probably a selection from a prescribed lectionary. The reading appointed for this day, from Is 61:1–2, has an unmistakably messianic character.

LUKE—NOTE ON 4:20 *sat down*. Typical posture of a teacher.

LUKE—NOTE ON 4:21 Rabbis commonly taught on the Scripture passages just read from the lectionary, like sermons today. See note, Ne 8:8.

LUKE—NOTE ON 4:24–27 Jesus' words outraged his audience because they subtly made a case for including Gentiles in the Messiah's salvation. Elijah and Elisha are examples of prophets who previously extended God's grace to Gentiles.

LUKE—NOTE ON 4:29 *throw Him down the cliff*. In addition to the violence of the fall, the people might have also planned to stone Jesus.

LUKE—NOTE ON 4:30 *passing through their midst*. Attests to both Jesus' power and God's timing. The hour of His death had not yet come.

LUKE—NOTE ON 4:16–30 Jesus' ministry begins with victories over Satan and his minions, but also with an episode in Nazareth that foreshadows His rejection at the hands of His own people. Our lives typically include a similar mixture of successes and rejections. That is why we do well to focus more on the end of the Gospel story, for there we see

resurrection, God's greatest victory over sin and the devil, and the revelation of His grace and mercy for us. • Eternal God, give me grace when I face temptations from the devil and assaults from the unbelieving world. Remind me that You have already overcome these things for me and even now are preparing a place for me in Your eternal presence. Amen.

LUKE—NOTE ON 4:31 *Capernaum*. See note, Mt 4:13. *teaching them on the Sabbath*. This synagogue may have been on the site of a fourth-century synagogue discovered at Capernaum.

LUKE—NOTE ON 4:32 *His word possessed authority*. Different from the rest of the rabbis, and all the more because it could effect miraculous signs (cf v 36).

LUKE—NOTE ON 4:33 *the spirit of an unclean demon*. It caused the people it possessed to be unclean or wicked. *loud voice*. The demon itself cried out before Jesus' superior power.

LUKE—NOTE ON 4:34 *Holy One of God*. Demons know Jesus' divine identity. Here, the demon calls Him by name in an attempt to exercise control over Him. See p 1227.

LUKE—NOTE ON 4:31–37 With authoritative words, Jesus silences and sends away unclean spirits. God's Word bears authority for your sake, too, pointing out your uncleanness due to sin, yet also promising deliverance from sin and from attacks of the evil one. Revel in Jesus' teaching and its great blessings for you. • "Thy strong Word bespeaks us righteous; Bright with Thine own holiness, Glorious now, we press toward glory, And our lives our hopes confess." Amen. (*LSB* 578:3)

LUKE—NOTE ON 4:38 *Simon's house*. See note, Mt 8:14. *high fever*. Often the harbinger of something worse.

LUKE—NOTE ON 4:39 *rose and began to serve*. See note, Mk 1:31. Provides a picture of discipleship.

LUKE—NOTE ON 4:40 *when the sun was setting*. Because it was the Sabbath (v 31), the crowds waited until the end of the Sabbath (sundown) to transport the sick. Carrying them earlier would have violated the holy day. Now, needy people began streaming to Jesus. *healed*. See notes, Mt 4:23–24.

LUKE—NOTE ON 4:41 *demons*. See note, Mt 8:16. *would not allow them to speak*. Jesus likely silenced the demons because He knew that they would misrepresent Him and distort the nature of His mission (cf vv 1–11). See "Secrecy," p 1653.

LUKE—NOTE ON 4:38–41 Jesus heals many people by a word and a touch. His works reveal the bond between sin and sickness, which corrupts the world and touches our lives. Pray that Jesus would deliver you from evil and protect you from the effects of sin. Christ can forgive and restore you by His grace. • Restore me, precious Savior, that I may serve You faithfully. Amen.

LUKE—NOTE ON 4:43 *kingdom of God*. Major theme in Lk; this is merely the first of over 30 occurrences of this phrase, which describes the coming of the Messiah and the exercise of God's reign through Him. See pp 1565–66.

LUKE—NOTE ON 4:44 *Judea*. Refers broadly to all of ancient Israel's territory, since the account continues with Jesus' ministry in Galilee. See color map 4.

LUKE—NOTE ON 4:42–44 People chase after Jesus as though they could possess Him and keep Him for themselves. Do we blame them? They had never before witnessed God's blessings so greatly. Yet, with His blessings, Jesus would also teach us His generous ways, that He belongs not only to us but to all. His kingdom knows no human boundaries. • "Son of God, eternal Savior, Source of life and truth and grace, Word made flesh, whose birth among us Hallows all our human race, You our Head, who, throned in glory, For Your own will ever plead: Fill us with Your love and pity, Heal our wrongs, and help our need." Amen. (*LSB* 842:1)

LUKE—NOTE ON 5:1 *lake of Gennesaret*. Usually called the Sea of Galilee; also called the Sea of Tiberias. See note, Mt 4:18.

LUKE—NOTE ON 5:2 *washing their nets*. Regular task for fishermen such as Peter, Andrew, James, and John. See notes, Mt 13:47–48; Mk 1:16.

LUKE—NOTE ON 5:3 *put out a little from the land*. Allowed Jesus some freedom from the press of the crowd, which made Him easier to see and to hear. *sat down and taught*. See note, 4:20.

LUKE—NOTE ON 5:5 *Master*. Title unique to Lk. Means "chief," "commander." An address of respect. Later, Peter will acclaim Jesus with more exalted titles, such as "Lord" (v 8) and "the Christ of God" (9:20). *we toiled all night*. Night fishing often yields good results. On this night, however, they had no success.

LUKE—NOTE ON 5:6 Likely the comb, or musht, fish, the only large fish in Galilee that moves in shoals. Some 30 varieties of fish now live in the lake.

LUKE—NOTE ON 5:7 *partners*. Four of Jesus' most important apostles were two pairs of brothers: Simon Peter and Andrew; and James and John (sons of Zebedee). They may have run a sizable fishing business (on John's access to Jerusalem leaders, see note, Jn 18:15). See p 236.
LUKE—NOTE ON 5:8 *Depart from me*. Peter shrinks back in holy fear. God's purity and power highlights Peter's weakness and sin. See note, Is 6:5.
LUKE—NOTE ON 5:10 *catching men*. Lit, "become a fisher of men." Peter would henceforth gather mortal men into everlasting life rather than hunt and kill fish.
LUKE—NOTE ON 5:11 *left everything*. Fishing often brought an above-average income, so these disciples left behind considerable assets.
LUKE—NOTE ON 5:1–11 A miraculous catch of fish shows the disciples that Jesus is more than a great teacher—God is working mightily through Him. Like the disciples, the mundane struggle for daily bread, and the sin and doubt it fosters, may make you feel distant from God. But He is ever near and also ever prepared to forgive your sins. • Stay with me, Lord, for I am a sinful person. Grant me repentance and a new life in service to You. Amen.
LUKE—NOTE ON 5:12 *full of leprosy*. As most diseases, leprosy affected people both physically and spiritually (cf Lv 13:1–8). *if You will*. This man does not doubt Jesus' ability to heal. Rather, he expresses his sense of unworthiness.
LUKE—NOTE ON 5:13 *Jesus … touched him*. Noteworthy detail, because Jewish purity laws held that this contact would defile Jesus. Remarkably, the exchange runs in the other direction. Jesus does not become defiled, but the unclean man is made whole and pure. Cf Lv 5:3; 13.
LUKE—NOTE ON 5:14 *He charged him to tell no one*. See "Secrecy," p 1653. Jesus sought to avoid misunderstandings about His identity and mission. The time for His exaltation had not yet come. Cf 9:7–9. *show yourself to the priest*. See note, Mk 1:43–44.
LUKE—NOTE ON 5:12–16 Jesus cleanses a leper by touching him and sends him to fulfill the Law of Moses. He still touches lives today and has mercy according to His good and gracious will. Bring your requests to Jesus, and trust in His good purposes for you. Even now, your Savior is interceding for you in heaven. • Cleanse me, dearest Jesus, and make Your

will known in my life, that I may fulfill Your Word and fill the world with the report of Your goodness. Amen.

LUKE—NOTE ON 5:17 *Pharisees and teachers of the law*. Members of this party (and their expert interpreters of the Law) appear for the first time in Lk. See note, Mk 2:18. *the power of the Lord was with Him to heal*. Not temporary or momentary power but intrinsic to Jesus' person. However, see note, Mt 13:58.

LUKE—NOTE ON 5:19 *bed*. Stretcherlike mat on which the paralytic was carried. *tiles*. Israelite homes typically had branches and mud laid across roof beams. The word denotes a more sophisticated roof tile, typical of Roman construction.

LUKE—NOTE ON 5:20 *saw their faith*. See note, Mk 2:5. *your sins are forgiven*. See note, Mt 9:2.

LUKE—NOTE ON 5:21 *scribes and the Pharisees*. See p 1557. *blasphemies?* See note, Mt 9:3. *Who can forgive sins but God*. See note, Mt 9:2.

LUKE—NOTE ON 5:22 See note, Mk 2:8.

LUKE—NOTE ON 5:23 *Which is easier*. See note, Mt 9:5.

LUKE—NOTE ON 5:24 *that you may know*. Jesus' healing of this man's paralysis reveals not only His power over the physical but also His authority in the spiritual realm. Without this physical healing, Jesus' claim to forgive would be less persuasive. *Son of Man*. Used for the first time in Lk. See p 2098.

LUKE—NOTE ON 5:26 See notes, Mt 9:8.

LUKE—NOTE ON 5:17–26 Jesus asserts His authority to forgive sins by healing a paralyzed man. Though Jesus could easily say, "Your sins are forgiven you," the price of that forgiveness cost Him His life. He bore the cross and your sins willingly, and He will also bear with you in all infirmities. • Grant me firm faith, O Lord, that I may walk in Your ways. Amen.

LUKE—NOTE ON 5:27 *tax collector*. See note, Mt 5:46. *Levi*. Matthew (Mt 9:9).

LUKE—NOTE ON 5:28 *leaving everything*. Again emphasizes that Jesus' disciples left everything to follow Him. Because Levi walked away from a lucrative customs contract, his response to Jesus was esp costly (cf 19:1–10).

LUKE—NOTE ON 5:29–31 Levi's banquet gives Jesus an opportunity to show His solidarity with sinners and emphasize that His mission was to call sinners to repentance (cf 19:10). This willingness to have fellowship with those considered sinners had a cost, however (cf 15:1–2). See p 1764.
LUKE—NOTE ON 5:29 *reclining at table*. See note, Mt 8:11.
LUKE—NOTE ON 5:30 *Pharisees … scribes*. See p 1557. *eat*. See note, Mk 2:16.
LUKE—NOTE ON 5:31 *physician*. Christ came to heal sinners. See note, Dt 32:39.
LUKE—NOTE ON 5:32 See note, Mk 2:17. *repentance*. See note, Mt 3:2.
LUKE—NOTE ON 5:27–32 Jesus teaches the people that He came to save sinners by leading them to repentance. No matter what your past, whether you are a notorious sinner or smugly self-righteous, Jesus calls you to a life of daily repentance. As the great physician, He can forgive all manner of sins. • Jesus, I would follow You. Lead me by repentance and faith to leave behind my old life. Amen.
LUKE—NOTE ON 5:33 *disciples of John*. See note, Mt 9:14. *fast often and offer prayers*. Fasting was typically accompanied by prayer. See notes, Ne 1:4; Est 4:3. The Pharisees, who observed that Jesus and His disciples often went to festive occasions, but rarely (if ever) fasted, were taken aback. Hus: "Apart from the bridegroom's will you cannot lawfully make his sons to fast" (*The Church*, p 235).
LUKE—NOTE ON 5:34–35 See note, Mk 2:19–20.
LUKE—NOTE ON 5:36–38 Jesus' twin pictures of a clothing patch and a wineskin emphasized the superiority of the new over the old, fulfillment over promise. Attempts at merging the Pharisees' traditional laws with Jesus' good news of the Kingdom would inevitably result in destruction. The new Kingdom was to be embraced wholly.
LUKE—NOTE ON 5:36 *parable*. A teaching tool with deep roots in OT. See note, Jgs 9:8−15. Parables typically use a metaphorical story, suggestive imagery, and/or memorable turns of phrase to clarify a spiritual truth. Many parables illumine the nature of the Kingdom. See p 1609.
LUKE—NOTE ON 5:39 *The old is good*. The Pharisees stubbornly loved their old traditions and could not savor the Gospel.
LUKE—NOTE ON 5:33–39 Jesus fulfills God's promise to make all things new: He makes fishermen and a tax collector into disciples, He makes a leper and a paralytic whole, and He forgives sins. Unfortunately,

some resist such changes, not only in Jesus' day but also in our lives. That is why He calls us to embrace the Gospel wholly. Jesus' astounding promise is this: whatever we leave behind for the sake of the kingdom of God will be replaced with much more in this age and with eternal life in the age to come (18:30). • Lord Jesus, give me grace to follow wherever You lead. By Your Spirit, strengthen me to live as Your disciple, reaching out to others in need of Your life-changing love and forgiveness. Amen.

LUKE—NOTE ON 6:1 See note, Dt 23:24–25. *rubbing*. To separate the kernel from the chaff.

LUKE—NOTE ON 6:2 *not lawful*. See note, Mt 12:2.

LUKE—NOTE ON 6:3–4 See note, Mt 12:3–4.

LUKE—NOTE ON 6:5 *Son of Man*. See p 2098. *lord of the Sabbath*. Jesus claims a divine right here, namely, the right to reapply a commandment for His disciples' benefit. This makes even more explicit the messianic claim. See notes, Mt 12:8; Mk 2:28.

LUKE—NOTE ON 6:1–5 Jesus reapplies the Third Commandment to reveal the blessings of the Sabbath. When we consider laws and their application, God would have us see not simply how laws restrict but also who and what they protect. All God's Word is written for our benefit, that we may enjoy the inherited blessings of His mercy. • " 'You shall observe the worship day That peace may fill your home, and pray, And put aside the work you do, So that God may work in you.' Have mercy, Lord!" Amen. (*LSB* 581:4)

LUKE—NOTE ON 6:6 *another Sabbath … synagogue*. See note, Mt 12:9. *withered*. See note, Mt 12:10.

LUKE—NOTE ON 6:7 Second time the Pharisees and legal scribes charge Jesus with breaking the Sabbath (cf vv 1–5). They are eager to find fault with Him.

LUKE—NOTE ON 6:9 *is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good*. Question exposes the superficiality of Jesus' critics, who apparently put a ritual observance (resting from work on the Sabbath) above a moral obligation (to heal and save life).

LUKE—NOTE ON 6:11 The Pharisees began to plot against Jesus. See note, Mk 3:6.

LUKE—NOTE ON 6:6–11 Jesus, despite facing severe criticism, has mercy on the man with a withered hand. As God grants you opportunity to show mercy, act with care and confidence. Goodness and life are God's

great blessings for you and for all in Jesus. • "As You, Lord, have lived for others, So may we for others live. Freely have Your gifts been granted; Freely may Your servants give." Amen. (*LSB* 842:2)

LUKE—NOTE ON 6:12 *He went out to the mountain to pray*. Recurrence of the prayer motif (see note, 3:21). Presumably, Jesus prayed over His upcoming appointment of the apostles.

LUKE—NOTE ON 6:13 *twelve*. See note, Mt 10:1. *apostles*. Gk *apostolos*, "person sent with a commission." Later, Jesus authorized these 12 to preach, heal, and cast out demons (9:1–6; cf 10:1–16). See p 1901.

LUKE—NOTE ON 6:14–16 See notes, Mt 10:2–4. Several apostles were called by more than one name (e.g., Cephas is also known as Simon and Peter). This fact best explains differences found in the names listed here, in Mt 10:1–4, and in Mk 3:16–19.

LUKE—NOTE ON 6:15 *Simon … the Zealot*. See note, Mt 10:4.

LUKE—NOTE ON 6:16 *Judas the son of James*. Family relationship reference used here distinguishes this Judas from Judas Iscariot and from the writer of Jude. Apparently, this James was also known as Thaddaeus. *Iscariot*. See note, 22:3.

LUKE—NOTE ON 6:12–16 Jesus chooses 12 men as His apostles, an office specifically appointed by Jesus for the early years of the Church. Today, Jesus continues to call people for various roles of service in the Church, depending on God's order, our gifts, and the Church's needs. There are no self-appointed offices in God's Church. He calls people and extends His care by His gracious and good will. • "Make them apostles, heralds of Your cross; Forth let them go to tell the world of grace. Inspired by You, may they count all but loss And stand at last with joy before Your face." Amen. (*LSB* 682:5)

LUKE—NOTE ON 6:17 *stood on a level place*. The teaching that follows is sometimes called the Sermon on the Plain. Not surprisingly, much of the material recorded here also appears in the Sermon on the Mount (Mt 5–7). Jesus repeated His teachings at various times and locations, as speakers commonly do.

LUKE—NOTE ON 6:19 *power came out from Him*. See note, 5:17. *healed*. See notes, Mt 4:23–24.

LUKE—NOTE ON 6:17–19 Jesus preaches and ministers to the crowds. Jesus continues to touch our lives today through the ongoing ministry of His life-giving Word. • "Lord, Your words are waters living When my

thirsting spirit pleads. Lord, Your words are bread life-giving; On Your words my spirit feeds. Lord, Your words will be my light Through death's cold and dreary night; Yes, they are my sword prevailing And my cup of joy unfailing!" Amen. (*LSB* 589:3)

LUKE—NOTE ON 6:20–23 *Blessed*. As in the Sermon on the Mount, the first words Jesus speaks are blessings (cf Mt 5:1−12). See p 842.

LUKE—NOTE ON 6:20 *poor*. An emphasis in Lk. Because Jesus blesses the "poor in spirit" in Mt 5:3, the poverty spoken of here may include spiritual humility.

LUKE—NOTE ON 6:21 *hungry*. Like poverty (see note, v 20), this hunger may have a spiritual aspect. See note, Mt 5:6.

LUKE—NOTE ON 6:22 *on account of*. See note, Mt 5:11. *Son of Man*. See p 2098.

LUKE—NOTE ON 6:23 *reward*. See note, Mt 5:12.

LUKE—NOTE ON 6:20–23 Jesus blesses the crowds and describes their estates in this life and the life to come. Even amid sorrows, God's blessings prevail. • Set my heart, dear Savior, on Your blessings and promises, that I remain steadfast in all circumstances. Amen.

LUKE—NOTE ON 6:24–26 The four woes are exact opposites of the four blessings just uttered (vv 20–23). Particularly noteworthy is the contrast between the persecution awaiting Jesus' followers (v 22) and the popularity of those who please men (v 26).

LUKE—NOTE ON 6:24–26 Jesus condemns those who live for today, neglecting the ways of God and the care of His people. When pride and self-interest allure you, turn to the Lord in repentance. Daily He provides for all your needs and forgives you by grace. • Hear my daily confession of sins, O Savior, and set my heart on things above. Amen.

LUKE—NOTE ON 6:27 *Love your enemies*. Jesus takes love, the heart of His teaching, to an unexpectedly deeper level by commanding that His disciples love their enemies.

LUKE—NOTE ON 6:28 *bless … pray*. Jesus clarifies how love for an enemy expresses itself concretely—in blessing and interceding for them. Later in Luke's accounts, Jesus and Stephen fulfill this command in remarkable and similar ways (Lk 23:34; Ac 7:60).

LUKE—NOTE ON 6:29 *cloak … tunic*. Give the inner garment also to one demanding the outer one. Note how this command goes beyond the one spoken by John the Baptist (3:11).

LUKE—NOTE ON 6:31 *as you wish that others*. The Golden Rule. Jesus sets down a variation of "love your neighbor as yourself" (Lv 19:18).
LUKE—NOTE ON 6:32–34 People typically do favors in order to gain favors. The Roman saying "I give so that you give" (*do ut des*) perfectly encapsulates the spirit of this ethic. Jesus, however, expects more of His followers. He commands them to reflect God's love by giving without expecting any payback.
LUKE—NOTE ON 6:35 Lk repeatedly emphasizes the undeserved and unconditional nature of God's mercy. Cf 7:36–50; 15:11–32; 18:9–14.
LUKE—NOTE ON 6:27–36 Jesus overthrows the common ethics of human culture to emphasize the Father's ways of love and mercy. God calls you to have self-sacrificing love. Pray for wisdom and patience with yourself as you put God's ways into practice. The Father of all mercy will hear your plea. He is ever ready to forgive and strengthen you. • Lord, lead me to love the ungrateful and the evil, even as You have loved and cared for me. Amen.
LUKE—NOTE ON 6:37 *Judge not, and you will not be judged*. Because one's behavior toward others often ends up being paid back in kind—indeed, sometimes even to a greater degree—Jesus continues urging His disciples to be long-suffering. In particular, He prohibits condemning others and instead commends forgiveness. *you will be forgiven*. "If you forgive, you have this comfort and assurance, that you are forgiven in heaven. This is not because of your forgiving. For God forgives freely and without condition, out of pure grace, because He has so promised, as the Gospel teaches. But God says this in order that He may establish forgiveness as our confirmation and assurance, as a sign alongside of the promise" (LC III 95–96).
LUKE—NOTE ON 6:38 *pressed … shaken … running over*. Market practices for packing grain to guarantee a good deal. *put into your lap*. A generous portion of grain could be poured into the fold of one's cloak over the belt. Cf Ru 3:15.
LUKE—NOTE ON 6:40 Refers to apprentice training.
LUKE—NOTE ON 6:41 Hyperbole was a form of humor in Jesus' day. No doubt people smiled knowingly as they pictured people with huge beams in their eyes, obsessing over a speck of sawdust in the eye of another. See note, Mt 7:3. See p 1335.

LUKE—NOTE ON 6:42 *hypocrite*. Gk word referred originally to an actor wearing a mask. It was then applied to those pretending to be who they were not. *then you will see clearly*. See note, Mt 7:5.

LUKE—NOTE ON 6:37–42 Jesus teaches the disciples to judge mercifully and lead faithfully. We can never outgrow our good teacher, who by grace judged and declared us not guilty while we were yet dead in our sins. His grace in our lives—measured, pressed, and shaken—always runs over. • Grant me a forgiving heart, merciful Judge, even as You have forgiven me. Amen.

LUKE—NOTE ON 6:43–45 An example from nature underscores how and why hypocrisy is invariably exposed. Ultimately, bad trees yield bad fruit, while good trees produce useful fruit.

LUKE—NOTE ON 6:45 *heart*. Over time, what lies hidden within the heart becomes visible in our words, actions, and reactions.

LUKE—NOTE ON 6:43–45 A person's words and deeds—not appearances—are the true marks of one's character. In repentance and through the Gospel, the Lord grants you a pure heart, set free from sin by God's grace. • Create in me a clean heart, O God, that I might bear the fruit of faith. Amen.

LUKE—NOTE ON 6:46 The disparity between verbal commitment and faithful practice always plagues people (cf Ezk 33:30–33).

LUKE—NOTE ON 6:47–49 This parable demonstrates the futility of merely paying lip service to God's Word. In the end, the house of the foolish builder cannot withstand life's storms. In contrast, life's torments are often defining moments for those who faithfully follow Christ, for they reveal the unshakable strength of a faith rightly placed in Him. Hus: "Christ grounds and builds his church on himself, the Rock, when he so influences her that she hears and does his words, for then the gates of hell do not prevail against her" (*The Church*, p 73). See note, Mt 7:24–27.

LUKE—NOTE ON 6:46–49 Jesus authoritatively teaches about the ethic of God's kingdom. Unfortunately, His teachings are so radically demanding and countercultural that even the most dedicated believers fail to live up to them. It is good news indeed, then, that Jesus does not merely command long-suffering, forgiveness, and love of enemies. He Himself puts them into practice, lovingly bearing with us and forgiving us! • Lord Jesus, lead me to

know the blessings of a life that reflects Your divine qualities of compassion, forbearance, and forgiveness. Amen.

LUKE—NOTE ON 7:1 *Capernaum*. See note, Mt 4:13.

LUKE—NOTE ON 7:2 *centurion*. See note, Mt 8:5. *servant … was highly valued*. The centurion was concerned for the servant as a person rather than as property.

LUKE—NOTE ON 7:3–5 As one familiar with Jewish faith and practice, this official concluded that a pious Jew like Jesus would feel discomfort or even offense at being approached by a Gentile like himself. Instead, he asked some of his influential Jewish friends to intercede.

LUKE—NOTE ON 7:5 The centurion had shown great commitment to the Jewish faith by paying for the construction of the local house of worship. He stopped short of becoming a full convert to Judaism, which would have created obstacles to his service in the Roman army.

LUKE—NOTE ON 7:6 *Lord*. The centurion recognizes Jesus' authority, even over life-threatening illness. *not worthy*. The centurion shows awareness that he stands outside of God's covenant people and is considered a "Gentile sinner" by most Jews. Chrys: "Though having such great faith, he still accounted himself to be unworthy. Christ however, signifying that he was worthy to have Him enter into his house, did much greater things, marvelling at him, and proclaiming him, and giving more than he had asked. For he came indeed seeking for his servant health of body, but went away, having received a kingdom" (*NPNF* 1 10:180).

LUKE—NOTE ON 7:7–8 *say the word*. Reveals the centurion's respect for Jesus' divine power and purity. Had Jesus entered the centurion's Gentile house, most fellow Jews would have been aghast, taking this involvement as defiling (cf Ac 10:28; 11:3). *under authority*. See note, Mt 8:9.

LUKE—NOTE ON 7:9 *marveled*. Verb used of Jesus only at this event (concerning remarkable faith) and in Mk 6:6 (in reaction to His hometown's lack of faith). *not even in Israel*. Sounds anew the theme of salvation for the nations. See note, 2:1. *faith*. The key to God's kingdom is faith (trust) in Jesus Christ.

LUKE—NOTE ON 7:1–10 Jesus reveals His authority over every threatening foe, even death, by healing a centurion's servant. How often we try everything else before turning to the Lord when we find ourselves in similar desperate straits! Through regular worship, devotional time, and the

reception of the Sacrament, God's Spirit brings us into a deeper and livelier trust in Jesus. • "May Thy rich grace impart Strength to my fainting heart; My zeal inspire! As Thou hast died for me, Oh, may my love to Thee Pure, warm, and changeless be, A living fire!" Amen. (*LSB* 702:2)

LUKE—NOTE ON 7:11 *Nain*. Small village c 20 mi SW of Capernaum. See color map 4.

LUKE—NOTE ON 7:12 The woman's situation was particularly desperate. Her husband had already died, and now her only son as well. Her future was uncertain. Cf 1Tm 5.

LUKE—NOTE ON 7:13 *compassion*. Gk *splagchnizomai*. Lit, "his gut moved." Jesus experienced the same gut reaction as we sometimes do in sad situations.

LUKE—NOTE ON 7:14 *touched the bier*. Provocative because it would render Jesus ceremonially unclean. See note, Nu 5:2−4. *arise*. Jesus is indeed the resurrection and the life (Jn 11:25).

LUKE—NOTE ON 7:15 *began to speak*. Irrefutable proof that he was alive. *gave him to his mother*. Cf 1Ki 17:17–24, where Elijah restores the life of a widow's son. Jesus is the long-expected prophet greater than Elijah. Cf 9:28–35.

LUKE—NOTE ON 7:16 *Fear*. Understandably terrified and awestruck at first. *glorified*. Offered praise and worship. *prophet*. Because the coming Messiah was sometimes referred to as "the (coming) Prophet," the crowd's reaction to Jesus is stronger than may first appear. Cf Dt 18:15–20; Lk 9:7–9, 24:19; Jn 1:21; 7:40; esp Ac 3:22–23; 7:37. *visited*. See note, 1:68.

LUKE—NOTE ON 7:17 Such news naturally spread rapidly by word of mouth.

LUKE—NOTE ON 7:11–17 Out of compassion for a widow who lost her only son, Jesus raises the young man back to life. Tragedy knows no bounds, striking people of every nation, age, and station in life. Thank God for His great compassion, that Jesus is the Savior for all people. The Gospel shows He has conquered every foe for us, even death and the grave. • "For us He rose from death again; For us He went on high to reign; For us He sent His Spirit here To guide, to strengthen, and to cheer." Amen. (*LSB* 544:6)

LUKE—NOTE ON 7:18 *disciples of John*. Followers of John the Baptist. Cf Ac 19:1–7 regarding the persistence of John's appeal, even after his death.

LUKE—NOTE ON 7:19 *the one*. See note, Mt 11:3.
LUKE—NOTE ON 7:20 *Baptist*. Because his ministry included the administration of a religious washing (Baptism), John became known as the "Baptizer" or "Baptist." Cf 3:1–22.
LUKE—NOTE ON 7:22 See note, Mt 11:5.
LUKE—NOTE ON 7:23 *blessed*. See p 842. *offended*. Lit, "scandalized," refers to rejecting Jesus as Messiah and Son of God.
LUKE—NOTE ON 7:24–26 *What did you go out … to see?* See note, Mt 11:7–9.
LUKE—NOTE ON 7:24 *reed shaken*. A "yes man," one who changes position with every shift in public opinion, unlike John, who was stable and strong.
LUKE—NOTE ON 7:25 *soft clothing … splendid clothing*. See note, Mt 11:8. *kings' courts*. John's impact owed nothing to position or associations. Rather, his message drew people out to the wilderness.
LUKE—NOTE ON 7:26 *more than a prophet*. See note, Mt 11:9.
LUKE—NOTE ON 7:27 *My messenger … prepare Your way*. Jesus quotes Mal 3:1 to define John's role as herald announcing the advent of the Messiah and getting the people ready to receive Him. See note, 1:17.
LUKE—NOTE ON 7:28 *born of women*. Reference to John's humanity, though this might also be taken as a subtle contrast with Jesus, who was not merely born of a woman, but of a virgin. *none is greater*. John was the last prophet under the old covenant. His surpassing greatness was his close connection to Jesus. He announced Christ's advent, baptized Him, and then preceded Him in a martyr's death. So closely related were John and Jesus, in fact, that Herod got the two confused (9:7–9). *least in the kingdom of God is greater*. Some, including Luther, understand Jesus as referring to Himself as "greater." However, because the Spirit dwells in the heart of every Christian, making present the risen Jesus and imparting His resurrected life, even the Church's rank-and-file believers enjoy privileges that exceed any bestowed under the old covenant.
LUKE—NOTE ON 7:29–30 Likely comments on the dynamics of the crowd's reactions. *declared God just*. People were affirmed in their belief that God was behind John's message of judgment, repentance, and Baptism. *baptism of John*. See note, 3:3. *rejected the purpose of God*. Some who heard John still rejected salvation by refusing to acknowledge their sin and undergo Baptism. See note, Mt 3:6.

LUKE—NOTE ON 7:31 *this generation*. Those rejecting John the Baptist and opposing Jesus.
LUKE—NOTE ON 7:32 *like children sitting in the marketplace*. Dismissively compares the criticism of Jesus' opponents with the childish chatter heard on the street corner. *We played … weep*. Proverbial saying directed at those who criticized both John for being too stern and Jesus for being too easygoing. They rejected both the Law's condemnation of their sin and the Gospel's mercy.
LUKE—NOTE ON 7:33 *eating no bread and drinking no wine*. As Gabriel prophesied in 1:15, John led an ascetic lifestyle. Not surprisingly, then, Lk also connects him with the practice of frequent fasting (5:33). *has a demon*. Those who rejected John's message actually attributed his unusual lifestyle and fiery preaching to the influence of an evil spirit.
LUKE—NOTE ON 7:34 *glutton and a drunkard*. In contrast to John's asceticism, Jesus regularly ate with all kinds of people. Though the accusers' characterizations of Jesus were lies, they reflected an important truth: much of Jesus' outreach and teaching ministry took place over shared meals (5:33–39; 7:36–50; 10:38–42; 11:37–54; 14:1–24; 15; 22:7–38; 24:28–31, 41–49). See p 1764. *tax collectors and sinners!* See note, Mk 2:16.
LUKE—NOTE ON 7:35 *wisdom is justified by all her children*. See note, Mt 11:19.
LUKE—NOTE ON 7:18–35 In response to doubt and criticism, Jesus affirms that He is indeed the Messiah announced by John and that John, who heralded His advent, is Israel's greatest prophet. Yet, many will accept neither John's thunderous warnings nor Jesus' proclamation of the Good News of the kingdom. Such skepticism continues today. Thank God, conversion is God's work through His Word. God's Spirit continues to enlighten, sanctify, and keep us in the true faith. • "Holy Spirit, light divine, Shine upon this heart of mine; Chase the shades of night away, Turn the darkness into day." Amen. (*LSB* 496:1)
LUKE—NOTE ON 7:36 Given the opposition Jesus suffered from many Pharisees, it is notable that this one invited Jesus into his house. *His place*. Perhaps the seat of honor, closest to the host.
LUKE—NOTE ON 7:37 *a woman … a sinner*. Likely a prostitute or adulteress. *reclining at table*. See note, Mt 8:11. *alabaster*. See note, Mt 26:7.

LUKE—NOTE ON 7:38 Scandalous behavior. In later Judaism, a married woman who let her hair down in public could be divorced. Nevertheless, Jesus interprets this woman's behavior as reverent and appropriate. Aug: "She who had walked long in evil, sought now the steps of Uprightness. First she shed tears, the heart's blood; and washed the Lord's Feet with the duty of confession. She wiped them with her hair, she kissed, she anointed them: she spake by her silence; she uttered not a word, but she manifested her devotion" (*NPNF* 1 6:416).
LUKE—NOTE ON 7:39 If a ceremonially impure person such as this woman touched an observant Jew, the latter would be rendered unclean and would be unable to enter the temple area, celebrate festivals, or offer sacrifice. See notes, v 14; 5:13.
LUKE—NOTE ON 7:40 *answering*. Jesus responds to Simon's dismay and concerns, even before Simon voices them. *Teacher*. See note, Mt 8:19. Though still respectful in his address of Jesus, Simon seems skeptical.
LUKE—NOTE ON 7:41 *moneylender*. More like a loan shark than a banker. *five hundred denarii … the other fifty*. An ordinary worker earned about one denarius per day; these sums were substantial.
LUKE—NOTE ON 7:42 Amazingly, the debt was forgiven. Obviously, it was an unusual event, which makes a powerful point in Jesus' story. *love him more?* The greater the gift, the greater the gratitude.
LUKE—NOTE ON 7:43 Even though Simon answered with some reservation ("I suppose"), he came to the only logical conclusion.
LUKE—NOTE ON 7:44 Ordinary hospitality included the opportunity for a visitor to wash. Sandals and dusty roads made for dirty feet. See note, Gn 18:4.
LUKE—NOTE ON 7:45 In the ancient East, the kiss of greeting is equivalent to a handshake. In fact, this is still common today in parts of the Near East and Europe. See note, Rm 16:16.
LUKE—NOTE ON 7:46 Offering olive oil for personal grooming was a special courtesy, reserved for important guests. See note, Ps 23:5.
LUKE—NOTE ON 7:47 This woman's love did not earn her forgiveness. Rather, it flowed from being shown mercy, as Jesus' story suggested. Aug: "This was spoke on account of that Pharisee who thought that he had either no sins, or but few" (*NPNF* 1 6:417).
LUKE—NOTE ON 7:48 *Your sins are forgiven*. Lit, "Your sins stand forgiven." Gk perfect tense implies a previous pardon that continues to

remain in effect. “In repentance these two things ought always to exist, namely, contrition and faith…. By these tears the contrition is recognized. Afterward, she hears the Absolution” (Ap XIIA 57).

LUKE—NOTE ON 7:49 Because only God can forgive sins, the guests were shocked that Jesus claimed such authority. Cf 5:17–26.

LUKE—NOTE ON 7:50 *Your faith has saved you*. Or, “Your faith has made you well.” Forgiveness imparts deliverance from sin and death. “Christ did not mean that the woman had merited forgiveness of sins by that work of love. That is why He adds, ‘Your faith has saved you.’ But faith is that which freely obtains God’s mercy because of God’s Word” (Ap V 31–32). *go in peace*. Peace naturally flows from the reception of God’s forgiveness and acceptance (cf Rm 5:1).

LUKE—NOTE ON 7:36–50 Jesus teaches that even notorious sinners can be forgiven and restored; indeed, they sometimes become all the more devoted to God for having received greater deliverance. His teaching challenges us to consider: Do we act like the begrudging Pharisee or the grateful penitent? Do we trust that God can truly change people’s lives? By God’s Spirit, we grow daily in our appreciation of the fact that “where sin increased, grace abounded all the more” (Rm 5:20). • “Chief of sinners though I be, Jesus shed His blood for me, Died that I might live on high, Lives that I might never die. As the branch is to the vine, I am His, and He is mine.” Amen. (*LSB* 611:1)

LUKE—NOTE ON 8:1 Jesus’ Galilean ministry was ever on the move. *good news of the kingdom of God*. See pp 1565–66.

LUKE—NOTE ON 8:2–3 *also some women*. Women followed Jesus, supporting the ministry of Jesus and the apostles. This is striking, because females did not normally follow Jewish rabbis. *Magdalene*. From the village of Magdala. Mary was present at the crucifixion, witnessed Jesus’ burial, and helped anoint His body (24:1). *Joanna*. Accompanied Mary to anoint Jesus’ body. As wife to the household manager of Herod Antipas, she would have belonged to a higher social class. *Susanna*. Scripture says nothing more about her. *provided for them*. Female disciples make important contributions to Jesus’ ministry and God’s unfolding plan of salvation for all people. See p 1726.

LUKE—NOTE ON 8:1–3 Jesus breaks with rabbinic tradition and allows women to become disciples. The Church likewise calls all its members to various forms of service. The Lord has appropriate forms of

service for every member of His Kingdom, regardless of gender, ethnicity, or social standing. He serves one and all by taking away their sins and giving them His Holy Spirit. • Give Your Church wisdom, O Lord, that she may be a faithful steward of all people baptized in Your name. Give me zeal for my own vocation and service, as well as the grace to encourage others. Amen.

LUKE—NOTE ON 8:4 See note, 5:36.

LUKE—NOTE ON 8:5 *sower*. A farmer planting seed. See note, Mk 4:14. *sow*. See note, Mt 13:3. *path*. Packed-down soil. Farmers cast seed in all directions while walking along the paths through their fields.

LUKE—NOTE ON 8:6 See note, Mk 4:5–6.

LUKE—NOTE ON 8:7 See note, Mk 4:7.
LUKE—NOTE ON 8:8 *yielded*. See note, Mk 4:8. *He who has ears to hear, let him hear*. See note, Mk 4:9.
LUKE—NOTE ON 8:4–8 Jesus warns that not everyone hearing God's Word will have an enduring faith. Tragically, some hear the life-giving Gospel of Jesus but fail to produce the fruit of a Christian life, eventually dying in unbelief. Genuine faith, however, so transforms our lives that we joyfully serve the Lord in this world and enjoy eternal life. • "On what has now been sown Thy blessing, Lord, bestow; The pow'r is Thine alone To make it sprout and grow. Do Thou in grace the harvest raise, And Thou alone shalt have the praise!" Amen. (*LSB* 921:1)
LUKE—NOTE ON 8:9 See note, Mk 4:10.
LUKE—NOTE ON 8:10 *given to know the secrets*. Jesus clarifies His parables with the disciples, though not always with the crowds, which contain some insincere and hostile individuals. See note, Mk 4:11. *seeing they may not see*. Spoken to Isaiah as he accepted his call to prophetic office. The quote stresses that the prophetic proclamation of God's Word is always met with rejection by some. Bern: "For His friends how different! … The Lord knows who are His. Here is His great secret and the counsel which He has made known unto men…. Who, except he be called, may approach God's counsel? Those whom He called, them also He justified" (*SLSB*, p 151).
LUKE—NOTE ON 8:11 *seed is the word of God*. Jesus equates the dynamic seed with the Gospel and its sowing with the proclamation of the kingdom of God.
LUKE—NOTE ON 8:12 Where hearts are as impenetrable as a hard-packed footpath, the Gospel message does not enter. See note, Ex 4:21.
LUKE—NOTE ON 8:13 See notes, Mk 4:16–17.
LUKE—NOTE ON 8:14 *choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life*. See note, Mk 4:18–19.
LUKE—NOTE ON 8:15 *honest and good heart*. A humble faith dwelling in a repentant heart is able, by God's grace, both to endure persecution and to avoid the trap of self-absorption. *fruit*. Deeds of faith. *with patience*. Given the incredibly high ethical standard Jesus set for His followers (e.g., 6:27–42), patience, determination, and divine grace are required.

LUKE—NOTE ON 8:9–15 Jesus uses an agricultural metaphor to explain how the Gospel ministry works and why it is sometimes thwarted. As our own experience bears out, the sinful nature, the world, and the devil all resist the Holy Spirit, who calls people to faith and would lead them into committed discipleship. By God's grace, however, our faith not only withstands trial and temptation but even grows stronger. The Christian's faithful endurance is a testimony to Christ's constant love. • "To Thee our wants are known, From Thee are all our pow'rs; Accept what is Thine own And pardon what is ours. Our praises, Lord, and prayers receive, And to Thy Word a blessing give." Amen. (*LSB* 921:2)

LUKE—NOTE ON 8:16–18 Stresses the practical implications and public nature of faith in Jesus. Whoever becomes Jesus' disciple will be scrutinized. The presence (or lack) of Christian fruit is plain for all to see.

LUKE—NOTE ON 8:17 *nothing is hidden*. Ultimately, everything about a person—esp his or her attitude toward Jesus—will be made public on Judgment Day.

LUKE—NOTE ON 8:18 *how you hear*. See note, Mk 4:9. *more will be given … taken away*. Not saying that the rich get richer. Rather, in the economy of God's kingdom, those who faithfully put into practice the teachings of Jesus will be given more faith. Conversely, those who do not receive His Gospel will see spiritual life and blessings slip away.

LUKE—NOTE ON 8:16–18 Jesus calls His followers to be just as transparent in their attitudes and irreproachable in their behavior as He is. However, we often fare poorly under such a glaring light, where our failures seem magnified. Nevertheless, when we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1Jn 1:9). • Draw us ever to Your light, O Lord. Although it makes clear our unworthiness to stand in Your presence, it also removes our darkness and, by Your forgiving grace, restores us to the glory for which You created us. Amen.

LUKE—NOTE ON 8:19 See note, Mk 3:32. *his brothers*. Probably refers to the natural children of Joseph and Mary, i.e., Jesus' younger half brothers. However, there is a later tradition that Joseph was widowed before marrying the Virgin Mary. If that is so, these siblings could be Jesus' older stepbrothers, born to Joseph by his first wife. See note, Mk 6:3.

LUKE—NOTE ON 8:20–21 Families of flesh and blood last only for a lifetime, but the family of God endures forever and calls people to commit

to the eternal Word.

LUKE—NOTE ON 8:19–21 By faith, we inherit the kingdom of God. Yet, fewer and fewer people break away from earthly cares and make time for the Church and the eternal fellowship God bestows through it. Those attending the Lord's Table, however, enjoy an eternal family fellowship and a foretaste of the feast that goes on forever in God's presence. • Lord, show us the need for both our earthly and Church families. By Your Spirit, increase our commitment to both our temporal and eternal relations; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

LUKE—NOTE ON 8:22 *lake*. See note, 5:1.

LUKE—NOTE ON 8:23 *windstorm*. See note, Mk 4:37.

LUKE—NOTE ON 8:24 *Master*. See note, 5:5. *rebuked*. Means "reprove, censure, or punish." Jesus speaks to the natural forces as if to a person (see note, Mk 4:39). Jesus previously rebuked evil spirits during exorcisms (4:35, 41) and a fever while healing (4:39).

LUKE—NOTE ON 8:25 *Where is your faith?* Given all the miracles the disciples have witnessed, Jesus expects a greater degree of trust. *Who then is this*. This question encapsulates the point of the story, which revolves around Jesus' identity. Left unanswered, this question effectively challenges Luke's audience to respond.

LUKE—NOTE ON 8:22–25 After calming a storm, Jesus challenges His disciples to consider the answer to their question, "Who then is this?" Though any Christian can answer this question correctly while sitting in an armchair, it is a different matter altogether when facing trouble. Yet, when we are similarly overwhelmed, the risen Christ comes to our aid. • "Yea, though I walk in death's dark vale, Yet will I fear no ill; For Thou art with me, and Thy rod And staff me comfort still." Amen. (*LSB* 710:3)

LUKE—NOTE ON 8:26 *Gerasenes*. See note, Mk 5:1−20.

LUKE—NOTE ON 8:27 Social isolation and an attraction to burial sites were symptoms of this man's demon possession. *tombs*. See notes, Mt 8:28; Mk 5:2.

LUKE—NOTE ON 8:28 *Son of the Most High God?* Demons often recognized Jesus' divinity before humans did. Fully aware of Jesus' authority, the demons pleaded for mercy. See note, Mk 1:24.

LUKE—NOTE ON 8:29 Besides social isolation and a preoccupation with graveyards, superhuman strength was another characteristic of demoniacs.

LUKE—NOTE ON 8:30 *Legion*. See note, Mk 5:9. *him*. The demon-possessed man.
LUKE—NOTE ON 8:31 *depart into the abyss*. Cast into hell. As numerous and powerful as these demons were, they knew Jesus had dominion over them and so again begged not to be cast into hell.
LUKE—NOTE ON 8:32–33 The presence of these ceremonially unclean animals makes it likely that this was Gentile territory. Cf Dt 14:8; see note, Mt 8:31. *enter these … were drowned*. From a Jewish perspective, this was a fitting end for both the unclean spirits and the defiling animals.
LUKE—NOTE ON 8:34 These men were not merely reporting the loss of the pigs to their owners, but also recounting an amazing show of divine power.
LUKE—NOTE ON 8:35 *sitting at the feet of Jesus*. Now free of his possession, the man sits in the posture of a disciple. Clothed, rational, and enjoying the company of other people, this fellow has been fully restored. *afraid*. See note, Mk 5:15.
LUKE—NOTE ON 8:37 The reaction of the townspeople is understandable on two counts. First, they had just heard about the destruction of an entire herd of pigs, which represented a huge economic loss. Second, Jesus' show of divine power frightened them.
LUKE—NOTE ON 8:38–39 *sent him away … Return*. Apparently, Jesus wanted him to witness to his hometown. There, his testimony would be most persuasive among those who knew him.
LUKE—NOTE ON 8:39 *God has done … Jesus had done*. Luke subtly equates Jesus' miracle with something God has done. Cf 17:15–16, where the healed leper praises God by worshiping at Jesus' feet.
LUKE—NOTE ON 8:26–39 Luke's lengthiest report of an exorcism is also his most dramatic: in the Gerasene region, Jesus frees a deranged and menacing demoniac. The magnitude of this man's suffering leads some—especially the pious—to dread evil spirits and wonder what prevents any of us from being the object of their attacks. Though we do well to take note that demons exist, we may also trust in Jesus, whose resurrection has disarmed the forces of sin, death, and even Satan. • "The pow'rs of death have done their worst, But Christ their legions hath dispersed. Let shouts of holy joy outburst. Alleluia!" Amen. (*LSB* 464:2)
LUKE—NOTE ON 8:40 *returned*. To Capernaum, Jesus' headquarters for His Galilean ministry. See note, Mt 4:13.

LUKE—NOTE ON 8:41 *a ruler of the synagogue*. The layman responsible for the local house of worship. *falling at Jesus' feet*. An act of humility and respect, this posture also reflected his desperation. See p 1276.
LUKE—NOTE ON 8:42 The girl was almost of marriageable age. As such, the promise of family and children lay just ahead of her.
LUKE—NOTE ON 8:43 *discharge of blood*. See note, Mk 5:25. *twelve years*. Plainly, this was a chronic problem. Note that "twelve years" (v 42) intertwines the accounts of the healing of Jairus's daughter and the woman.
LUKE—NOTE ON 8:44 *touched the fringe*. See note, Mt 14:36.
LUKE—NOTE ON 8:45 *Who was it that touched Me?* Jesus felt the woman's need for healing. His question singles out the woman from the crowd, so that He can praise her amazing faith. *Master*. See note, 5:5. *crowds surround You*. Humorous confusion from the apostles because dozens of people would have touched Jesus as He made His way. See p 1335. The Gospels repeatedly depict Jesus as besieged by those seeking help (e.g., Mk 3:9−10; Lk 5:18−19; 6:17−18).
LUKE—NOTE ON 8:47 Though the woman had tried to escape notice, she was now the focus of attention, both of the crowd and of Jesus.
LUKE—NOTE ON 8:48 *Daughter*. By virtue of her faith, this woman was part of God's family; Jesus addresses her in familial terms. *your faith has made you well*. See note, 7:50.
LUKE—NOTE ON 8:49 *Teacher*. Title of honor shows respect, even where full-blown faith may be lacking (cf 7:40).
LUKE—NOTE ON 8:50 *only believe*. A call to trust God, even in the face of insurmountable problems. The same Jesus who can calm storms, exorcise hosts of demons, and heal the incurable can also help this dead girl.
LUKE—NOTE ON 8:51 *Peter and John and James*. See note, Mk 1:19.
LUKE—NOTE ON 8:52 *she is not dead but sleeping*. See note, Mk 5:39.
LUKE—NOTE ON 8:53 *laughed*. See note, Mt 9:24.
LUKE—NOTE ON 8:54 *taking her by the hand*. See note, 5:13. *Child*. Gk *pais,* a term often noting affection.
LUKE—NOTE ON 8:55 *her spirit returned*. Flesh and spirit—separated by death—were now reunited in life. *to eat*. Jesus shows concern for this girl's recovery of strength, but also commands an act that proves she is bodily alive (cf 24:41–43).
LUKE—NOTE ON 8:56 Jesus wanted to continue preaching from town to town until it was time to give His life as a ransom on the cross. If people

came only for His miracles, they would miss out on what mattered most.

LUKE—NOTE ON 8:40–56 After displaying His mastery over nature and demons, Jesus shows His authority over incurable illness and even death. Just as the disciples despaired in the face of danger (v 25), we also sometimes despair as catastrophe looms. But Jesus can deal with any problem. His sacrificial death and victorious resurrection prove that He can overcome even the gravest threat. • "O Lord God, the just Judge, strong and patient, You know the frailty and wickedness of men. Be my strength, and all my trust, for my own conscience does not suffice for me. Although I know nothing by myself, yet I cannot hereby justify myself; for without Your mercy, in Your sight shall no man living be justified. Amen." (Thom K, *TLWA*, p 231)

LUKE—NOTE ON 9:1 Jesus empowers His apostles to perform the same wonders as He has done. The Twelve performed similar miracles after the resurrection (cf Ac 2:43; 3:6; 5:12–16; 9:32–42).

LUKE—NOTE ON 9:2 Jesus' own ministry was one of healing and revealing. Note that healings revealed the hidden power of the Gospel with irrefutable evidence.

LUKE—NOTE ON 9:3 These instructions required the apostles to trust God. Their daily needs were to be met by those that received their ministry and provided hospitality (food and lodging).

LUKE—NOTE ON 9:4 Prohibits the Twelve from constantly moving about so as to secure better accommodations. The goodwill of those who received the Gospel and extended hospitality to Christ's ambassadors was more important than the apostles' comfort.

LUKE—NOTE ON 9:5 *shake off the dust*. Ritual act symbolizing God's judgment against those who reject the Gospel, as if to indicate that the Twelve should not even associate with these unbelievers' dust. Jesus commands the Seventy-two to do the same when He sends them out (10:10–11), and Paul also does this during his mission journeys (Ac 13:51; 18:6).

LUKE—NOTE ON 9:6 *preaching the gospel*. Lit, "evangelizing." This proclamation naturally included both Law (threats of judgment on sin and unbelief) and Gospel (promises of blessing and eternal life to those who believe).

LUKE—NOTE ON 9:1–6 Jesus sends out the 12 apostles to preach the Gospel, heal diseases, and cast out evil spirits. When modern-day Christians

hear of such wondrous power and consider how few miracles they have experienced, they easily begin to feel inadequate for the service to which God calls them. However, we possess the same hope and eternal life through Christ crucified. We know that wherever that Gospel is delivered and received, the greatest healing follows. • "May God bestow on us His grace, With blessings rich provide us; And may the brightness of His face To life eternal guide us, That we His saving health may know, His gracious will and pleasure, And also to the nations show Christ's riches without measure And unto God convert them." Amen. (*LSB* 823:1)

LUKE—NOTE ON 9:7–9 Herod is reintroduced (cf 3:1); he tells that he put John the Baptist to death. This passage also raises the question of Jesus' identity—a major theme in the discourse of this chapter (vv 18–22)—as well as sets the stage for Herod's interview of Jesus on Good Friday, just before His death (23:8−9).

LUKE—NOTE ON 9:7 *Herod the tetrarch*. See note, Mt 14:1.

LUKE—NOTE ON 9:7–9 After the Twelve are sent out to preach and heal, there is such an outburst of prophetic activity that even Herod takes notice. Unfortunately, many people today have the same kind of puzzled but faithless reaction when the Gospel reaches their ears. By God's Spirit and grace, our hearing of the Gospel will bear different fruit, that is, faithful commitment and the eager expectation of Jesus' life-giving blessings. • Lord, open my heart to the blessings of Your Gospel. Grant me Your Spirit, that I never fail to appreciate the privilege of knowing You rightly and of being Your child and heir. Amen.

LUKE—NOTE ON 9:10 Jesus brings the Twelve to an isolated place, away from the crowds. He probably did this in order to provide a time of rest for the apostles and debrief them after their just-completed mission (cf 10:17–24). *Bethsaida*. On the northeast shore of the Sea of Galilee. See color map 4.

LUKE—NOTE ON 9:11 *spoke to them … healing*. Jesus' ministry was one of revealing and healing, teaching about the Kingdom and relieving human suffering.

LUKE—NOTE ON 9:12 *find lodging and get provisions*. People had gone to great lengths to see Jesus. *desolate place*. See note, v 10.

LUKE—NOTE ON 9:13 *You give them something to eat*. Jesus unexpectedly challenges the apostles. Where earlier, they had to depend on

the hospitality of others for food, now, ironically, Jesus asks them to provide for those hearing the Gospel.

LUKE—NOTE ON 9:14 *five thousand men*. As in OT reports about the exodus (Ex 12:37), women and children are not included in the number. *groups of about fifty each*. Echoes OT descriptions about Israel's flight from Egypt (Ex 18:21). The upcoming feeding miracle thus invites comparison with miracles God worked through Moses during the desert wanderings (cf Jn 6:22–59).

LUKE—NOTE ON 9:16 *said a blessing*. Such prayer invites comparison to other passages, e.g., the Last Supper (22:17–20) and the event in Emmaus (24:30).

LUKE—NOTE ON 9:17 *they all ate*. Everyone left this meal full. This was not always the case, for malnutrition was common in Jesus' day. *twelve*. This number evokes the exodus account (see note, v 14) by calling to mind the 12 tribes of Israel (Ex 24:4; Nu 1:44; Dt 1:23).

LUKE—NOTE ON 9:10–17 In a miracle reminiscent of the manna in the wilderness, Jesus feeds the multitude that have come out to the wilderness to hear Him. Like the confused apostles, we often face life's challenges armed only with our sin-starved wisdom and resources. Yet, Jesus stands ready to help. Just as He miraculously fed the 5,000, He is willing also and able to provide for us in time of need. • Lord, teach me to turn to You in every time of need, for I can do all things through You, as You strengthen me. Amen.

LUKE—NOTE ON 9:18 *praying alone*. See notes, 3:21; Mk 1:35. *Who do the crowds say that I am?* This identity question was highlighted in the episode involving Herod (vv 7–9).

LUKE—NOTE ON 9:19 The apostles' answers are reasonable. After all, John was the greatest prophet ever (see note, 7:28), and Elijah was expected to reappear at the dawn of the messianic age (see notes, 1:17; 3:15; 4:24–27; 7:15).

LUKE—NOTE ON 9:20 *But who do you say that I am?* Jesus puts His disciples on the spot. This induces Peter to make the first full-fledged confession of Jesus as Messiah. *The Christ of God*. See p 2098. Peter's unequivocal identification of Jesus' messianic status is a monumental event in the Gospel. Henceforth, Jesus begins to speak openly about His death (v 22).

LUKE—NOTE ON 9:18–20 For the first time in the Gospel, Peter makes a clear confession of Jesus as the Messiah. All of our words and actions should similarly confess the One who is the only life and hope of the world, though we often fail in this regard. When we fail—indeed even when we deny our Lord—Jesus treats us just as He did Peter. He faithfully calls us to repent, and He forgives our weaknesses. • Lord Jesus, grant us grace to believe Your promise that if we confess You before men, You will confess us before the Father in heaven. Amen.
LUKE—NOTE ON 9:21 Many Jews expected the Messiah to be a military conqueror like David, one who would forcibly expel the occupying Romans (see p 1553–58). This helps explain why Jesus often commanded silence about His messianic identity. He did not want mistaken understandings about His person and work to take root.
LUKE—NOTE ON 9:22 First of Jesus' repeated predictions about His arrest, trial and conviction, crucifixion, and resurrection (cf 9:44; 13:31–33; 18:31−33). *Son of Man*. See p 2098.
LUKE—NOTE ON 9:21–22 Now identified as the Christ, Jesus challenges His disciples' understanding of that role by revealing His impending suffering and death. It is painful to admit that we need a Messiah who would suffer and die for us—to make up for our failures and rebellions. Thankfully, Jesus was willing to be born under the Law, to fulfill all righteousness, and then pay the full price of our redemption on Calvary's cross. • "Come to Calv'ry's holy mountain, Sinners, ruined by the fall; Here a pure and healing fountain Flows for you, for me, for all, In a full, perpetual tide, Opened when our Savior died." Amen. (*LSB* 435:1)
LUKE—NOTE ON 9:23–24 Having revealed that His ministry will include rejection and death on a cross, Jesus explains that His disciples must be prepared to experience the same things. Though the cost of discipleship can be steep, wonderful promises also apply. Those who surrender their lives (lose their lives) to Jesus and His Gospel unfailingly receive salvation and eternity with God (save their lives).
LUKE—NOTE ON 9:23 See note, Mk 8:34.
LUKE—NOTE ON 9:25 See note, Mk 8:36–37. *forfeits himself*. A way of describing eternal condemnation and separation from God.
LUKE—NOTE ON 9:26 *whoever is ashamed of Me*. Refers to those who hesitate to confess Jesus openly and live faithfully as His disciples. Though we may not suffer much persecution today, those to whom Jesus first spoke

did suffer and even paid the ultimate price for publicly witnessing to their faith in the Gospel (21:12–17; Ac 5:40–42; 7:54–60; 12:1–5). *glory*. Christ's visible, public return on the Last Day. See p 1902.

LUKE—NOTE ON 9:27 *taste death*. Refers to physical death. *see the kingdom of God*. Best taken as referring to the disciples' beholding of the resurrected Jesus, His ascension, receiving the outpoured Spirit on Pentecost, and so forth. Such signs were unmistakable proof that the messianic age had begun. See pp 1565–66.

LUKE—NOTE ON 9:23–27 Because Jesus is the only way to eternal life, following Him demands that we reorder our priorities, putting Him in first place and setting aside whatever does not accord with His way. This proves impossible for us but not for our Lord, who embraces and bears our crosses and shame that He might present us righteous before His dear Father. • " 'Take up your cross,' the Savior said, 'If you would My disciple be; Forsake the past, and come this day, And humbly follow after Me.' " Amen. (*LW* 382:1)

LUKE—NOTE ON 9:28 *Peter and John and James*. Among the first appointed as apostles (6:14), they were present also when Jairus's daughter was raised (see note, Mk 1:19). They were recognized as leaders among the Twelve. *the mountain*. Possibly Mount Tabor or Mount Hermon.

LUKE—NOTE ON 9:29 *His face was altered*. Jesus' appearance was transformed; a divine brilliance radiated from Him.

LUKE—NOTE ON 9:30 *Moses*. The premier OT prophet who served as a model for the coming Messiah (see notes, Dt 18:15–18). See application note, Dt 34. *Elijah*. Similarly connected to the advent of God's Chosen One (see note, Mal 4:5).

LUKE—NOTE ON 9:31 *glory*. Moses and Elijah enjoy close fellowship with God in heaven and so reflect that divine brilliance. See pp 6–7. *departure*. Lit, "exodus." Because Jesus was soon to offer His life as a sacrifice for the sins of the world (vv 21–22), thereby freeing His people from slavery to sin and leading them to the promised land of eternal life, this comparison to the OT exodus from Egypt is fitting.

LUKE—NOTE ON 9:32 *heavy with sleep*. Apparently, Jesus prayed for a long time. *His glory*. Because they were sleeping when Jesus' appearance was transfigured, the disciples saw His radiance and brilliant white clothing only after awakening.

LUKE—NOTE ON 9:33 *Master*. See note, 5:5. *three tents*. Temporary shelters. Peter wanted to prolong the mountaintop experience. *not knowing*. Peter did not understand the situation or the reason for the appearance of Moses and Elijah.
LUKE—NOTE ON 9:34 *a cloud came*. Often a visible sign of God's presence (cf Ex 13:21–22; 40:34; Ac 1:9).
LUKE—NOTE ON 9:35 *voice*. See note, 3:22. *My Chosen One*. The Father affirms that Jesus is His Son, appointed before the creation of the world to bear the world's sins on the cross. *listen to Him!* Echoes Dt 18:19 and confirms that Jesus is the long-expected prophet like Moses. See notes, v 30; Lk 7:16.
LUKE—NOTE ON 9:36 *kept silent*. Jesus was not the military conqueror that the people expected. Therefore, revealing the transfiguration at this time could only lead to misunderstanding. Only in the light of Easter and Pentecost did the meaning of this mountaintop experience come clear (cf 2Pt 1:16–21).
LUKE—NOTE ON 9:28–36 Through the transfiguration, Jesus allows His disciples to catch a glimpse of the glory that will again be His after His resurrection. Like Peter, we, too, like to prolong "mountaintop experiences," leaving the toil and trouble of the world behind. However, Jesus has not called us out of the world, but rather to overcome it. Accordingly, He lifts us up and strengthens us when we are challenged, reminding us that He has already overcome the world for us. • " 'Tis good, Lord, to be here! Yet we may not remain; But since Thou bidst us leave the mount, Come with us to the plain." Amen. (*LSB* 414:5)
LUKE—NOTE ON 9:37 Transfiguration likely occurred late at night (accounting for the sleepiness of the disciples). After daybreak, they descended.
LUKE—NOTE ON 9:38 *Teacher*. See note, Mt 8:19.
LUKE—NOTE ON 9:39 Though the symptoms described here seem to match epilepsy, Luke clearly attributes this boy's suffering to a demon. Both may have afflicted him.
LUKE—NOTE ON 9:40 *Your disciples … could not*. See note, Mt 17:16.
LUKE—NOTE ON 9:41 *faithless and twisted generation*. Jesus repeatedly rebuked people's lack of faith with such terms (7:31; 11:29–32; cf Ac 2:40) because they failed to fully recognize Jesus' identity. *how long*. See note, Mt 17:17.

LUKE—NOTE ON 9:42 Jesus relieved the boy of all his suffering, both physical and mental.
LUKE—NOTE ON 9:43 *the majesty of God*. Mighty acts of God are visible in the healing works of Jesus.
LUKE—NOTE ON 9:37–42 On the way down from the transfiguration, Jesus rescues a demon-possessed boy. Like the disciples who appear in this episode, we, too, exhibit weakness of faith. Thankfully, Jesus does not simply rebuke such failures and then fall silent. Rather, He responds in compassion and forgiveness as well, and so rescues us from unbelief and the menacing power of Satan. • Lord Jesus, keep me strong in faith, that neither fear of death nor the threats of the adversary divert my eyes from You and the glories of Your Gospel promises. Amen.
LUKE—NOTE ON 9:44 *Son of Man*. See p 2098. *delivered*. Or, "handed over," "betrayed." Refers to His arrest, trial, and execution.
LUKE—NOTE ON 9:45 *concealed from them*. Only after the resurrection would God's plan of salvation become clear to the disciples (cf 24:44–47). *afraid*. Reason unclear. Plainly, it was not a pleasant topic.
LUKE—NOTE ON 9:43–45 Jesus once more predicts His suffering and death, and once more the disciples fail to understand Him. Blinded by our own misplaced priorities, we may likewise fail to discern God's ways and plans for our lives. But Jesus remains with us every step of the way. With Him as our guide, we cannot be lost. • "Jesus, lead Thou on Till our rest is won. Heav'nly leader, still direct us, Still support, console, protect us, Till we safely stand In our fatherland." Amen. (*LSB* 718:5)
LUKE—NOTE ON 9:46 *them*. The disciples, particularly the apostles. *greatest*. The disciples were expecting an earthly kingdom (see note, v 21), in which they might occupy positions of power and prestige. They began to argue about leadership positions.
LUKE—NOTE ON 9:47 Jesus knew the apostles' argument, even without hearing every word, and understood the thinking behind it.
LUKE—NOTE ON 9:48 *receives this child*. Children are of relatively little importance from a functional point of view; they do not know much and cannot do much. *in My name*. On account of Jesus and in conformity with His teaching. When Christians love and value a person because Jesus loves and values that person, they are fulfilling what Jesus commands here. *Him who sent Me*. The Father. *least … great*. God's value system differs from those of the world. The believer who serves and helps others is greater in

God's eyes than the influential person who seems so important in the world's eyes.

LUKE—NOTE ON 9:46–48 Jesus corrects a misunderstanding about the nature of His kingdom, clarifying that true greatness comes from faith and service. We are just as mistaken when we think, as the disciples did, that our value comes from social position or material abundance. Instead, the grace manifested in Jesus' sacrificial death establishes our value. By the power of God's Spirit, our humble service produces things great in His eyes. • O Lord, grant me humility, that, being strengthened by Your Word and following the example of Your service to others, I might please You in all that I do and say. Amen.

LUKE—NOTE ON 9:49 *Master*. See note, 5:5. *casting out demons*. Using the powerful name of Jesus, an unidentified person was exorcising demons from people. *tried to stop him*. The disciples were protecting their exclusive status with Jesus.

LUKE—NOTE ON 9:50 *the one who is not against you is for you*. Jesus rebukes the disciples again for squabbling over leadership in the Church, to the neglect of serving people. Order and organization are important, yet we must not lose sight of why they exist—to dispense God's mercy. Cf Nu 11:24–30.

LUKE—NOTE ON 9:49–50 Jesus admonishes His disciples for poor attitudes about ministry. Like the apostles, we may keep certain privileges and opportunities for ourselves. That impulse, however, runs contrary to God's mercy, which He would share with all people, not just those in our preferred circle. Thankfully, Jesus left the comfort of heaven to stand with us, bear our burdens, and deliver us from evil. • Lord, preserve us from that selfish impulse that would inhibit Your mercy and the proclamation of Your name. Help us to see that You desire the salvation of all people, that we acknowledge and put to appropriate use the gifts of others. Amen.

LUKE—NOTE ON 9:51 *taken up*. Refers to Jesus' death, resurrection, and esp ascension into heaven (24:50–51; Ac 1:2, 9–11). *set His face*. In firm resolve. Evokes numerous passages from Ezk (6:2; 13:17; 21:2) and so reinforces Luke's characterization of Jesus as God's ultimate prophet. *go to Jerusalem*. Place of Jesus' death and resurrection, which fulfill God's plan of salvation.

LUKE—NOTE ON 9:52–53 *messengers*. Likely sent to proclaim the kingdom and call for repentance. On that understanding, these envoys

anticipate the upcoming appointment and sending of the Seventy-two (10:1–16). *Samaritans*. See p 1557. *did not receive Him*. Unfortunately, those sent by Jesus to the Samaritans had no success.

LUKE—NOTE ON 9:54 The disciples expected that harsh judgment would come down on the Samaritans. Their request was perhaps inspired from the ministry of the prophet Elijah (2Ki 1:9–12) and also by centuries-old antagonism between Jews and Samaritans.

LUKE—NOTE ON 9:55 *rebuked them*. Third time Jesus reproved the attitudes of His apostles (cf vv 46–50). The disciples still had much to learn about the Christlike attitudes necessary for ministry.

LUKE—NOTE ON 9:51–56 When Jesus' overture to the Samaritans is rejected, His apostles imagine that harsh retribution is in order. Such thinking is typical, unfortunately, as age-old conflicts die hard. We may easily resort to similar bad judgment. Yet, Jesus makes peace, not only with God but also between people. In Christ, all who repent are fully reconciled to the Father. • Lord, remove all sinful division and enmity from Your Church, that we love just as You have loved us. Amen.

LUKE—NOTE ON 9:57 *I will follow You*. Elsewhere, Jesus always initiated the call to discipleship. Remarkably, the Gospels never tell us about anyone offering to follow Jesus and then successfully becoming a disciple. In each case, Jesus seems to challenge the self-confidence.

LUKE—NOTE ON 9:58 During Jesus' ministry, He had no home of His own. He depended on hospitality, just as the apostles did when He sent them out (see note, v 3). *Son of Man*. See p 2098.

LUKE—NOTE ON 9:59–60 See notes, Mt 8:21, 22. *proclaim the kingdom of God*. The kingdom is so important that its proclamation pushes even venerated duties and traditions into the background. See pp 1565–66.

LUKE—NOTE ON 9:61 *say farewell*. A third candidate for discipleship is shocked by Jesus' demands. Clearly, following Jesus means a radical reordering of values and priorities.

LUKE—NOTE ON 9:62 It took one's full attention to hold and press down on a plow with one hand as it cut through the earth. The plowman's other hand held a goad for the animal pulling the plow.

LUKE—NOTE ON 9:57–62 In three brief exchanges with would-be disciples, Jesus shows that the cost of discipleship is high. Obviously, were it up to us to achieve our place in the kingdom of God, we would never make it. Thankfully, then, Jesus invites us and by grace makes it possible

for us to become members of His eternal communion. • "O Lord, rescue us from the captivity of the sins which have oppressed us, so that we may attain the dwellings of the heavenly Jerusalem; through Jesus Christ. Amen." (Sarum Breviary, *TLWA*, p 228)

LUKE—NOTE ON 10:1 *appointed*. Selected or chosen, just as Jesus had previously done when he appointed the Twelve (6:12–16) and then sent them out (9:1–6). *seventy-two*. May subtly symbolize the number of Gentile nations around Israel. On that understanding, Jesus broadens the scope of the outreach here, building on what He had just done in reaching out to Samaritans (9:52).

LUKE—NOTE ON 10:2 *harvest … laborers*. The Church continues praying that the Lord will raise up new generations of workers to harvest souls unto eternal life.

LUKE—NOTE ON 10:3 *as lambs in the midst of wolves*. Warns that Christian witness will often be met with opposition and even persecution (cf 21:12–19).

LUKE—NOTE ON 10:4 *Carry no moneybag*. See notes, 9:3, 4. *greet no one*. Polite greetings could be time-consuming, involving long discussions of one's family.

LUKE—NOTE ON 10:5–6 Greetings delivered from the Lord are not mere formalities, but actually impart a blessing. *son of peace*. One who receives God's messengers worthily. Cf v 16. *it will return to you*. Only those who receive a blessing in good faith will actually benefit from it.

LUKE—NOTE ON 10:7 *remain in the same house*. See note, 9:4. *laborer deserves his wages*. See note, Mt 10:9–10.

LUKE—NOTE ON 10:8 *eat what is set before you*. Expands on v 7. More important, the missionaries are to share table with people considered ceremonially unclean and consume what may not be ceremonially clean. See p 1764.

LUKE—NOTE ON 10:9 *Heal the sick*. See notes, 9:2, 11. *kingdom … near*. See note, 17:21.

LUKE—NOTE ON 10:11–12 *dust of your town … wipe off*. See note, 9:5. *more bearable on that day*. Those receiving such unmistakable signs of the Kingdom's presence will bear a greater responsibility for rejecting it. See note, Mt 10:15. *Sodom*. Ancient city near the Dead Sea that was destroyed by God for its extreme sinfulness (Gn 19:1–29).

LUKE—NOTE ON 10:1–12 Having previously sent out the Twelve (9:1–6), Jesus expands the breadth of His Gospel outreach by sending out 72 more workers. Then and now, many people who hear of Jesus' kingdom end up rejecting it. Much as we hate to admit it, we, too, have responded indifferently and, at times, have rejected God's will for our lives. How heartening to know that Jesus continues to reach out with compassion through the Gospel ministry He has established. • Lord, even as You have called me to faith and hope in the Gospel, keep me steadfast in the same. Amen.

LUKE—NOTE ON 10:13–14 *Woe to you*. See notes, Hos 7:13; Na 3:1; Mk 13:17. Exclamatory warning. *Chorazin! … Bethsaida!* Towns near the Sea of Galilee. Residents there were aware of the teaching and miracles Jesus performed in that region. *Tyre and Sidon*. Pagan cities farther north, along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea. See color map 4. *would have repented*. Jesus repeatedly contrasted more receptive pagans with children of Abraham who were less open-minded (cf 7:9; 13:28–30). *sackcloth and ashes*. Symbolic of repentance. See note, Jb 16:15. *more bearable*. See note, vv 11−12.

LUKE—NOTE ON 10:15 See note, Mt 11:23.

LUKE—NOTE ON 10:16 Rejecting God's representatives is equivalent to rejecting Him. "They [Church authorities] have been given the ministry of the Word and Sacraments. They have no other authority according to the Gospel than the authority to forgive sins, to judge doctrine, to reject doctrines contrary to the Gospel, and to exclude from the communion of the Church wicked people, whose wickedness is known. They cannot exclude people with human force, but simply by the Word" (AC XXVIII 21). "Ministers act in Christ's place and do not represent their own persons…. Ungodly teachers are to be deserted because they no longer act in Christ's place, but are antichrists" (Ap VII/VIII 47–48). Apostolic authority guided the work of the Early Church (cf Ac 6:2−3; 15:6, 22).

LUKE—NOTE ON 10:13–16 As Jesus sends out the Seventy-two, He warns that whoever rejects Him will be in danger of eternal condemnation. Such warnings continue in force today and apply especially to those who have heard the Gospel frequently. However, the fact that our familiarity with God sometimes breeds contempt does not mean that He acts likewise. He is faithful and just and forgives all who repent. • Give me a grateful heart, O Lord, ever ready to serve You and Your people. Amen.

LUKE—NOTE ON 10:17 *in Your name!* As was previously evidenced, the authority of Jesus' name was such that it could even cast out demons (9:49). After Jesus' resurrection, God enabled the apostles to work wonders through the almighty power of Jesus' name (Ac 3:6; 4:30).

LUKE—NOTE ON 10:18 *I saw Satan fall*. Vividly portrays the effect that the proclamation of the kingdom had on Satan and his minions: their grip on humanity was loosened. Cf Lk 11:14–22; 13:10–17; Rv 12:1–12.

LUKE—NOTE ON 10:19–20 *given you authority*. Cf 10:8–10. *nothing shall hurt you*. Jesus promises His people protection from evil while they are engaged in spiritual warfare. Luth: " 'The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear him.' … This is one of the special and most memorable consolations in the psalms and should be applied to our advantage" (AE 6:94). Such pledges of divine protection, however, are tempered by Jesus' prediction that His witnesses will encounter hostile rejection (12:11) and even suffer persecution (21:12). *do not rejoice in this … but rejoice*. Rather than focus primarily on the lesser (albeit impressive) gifts of divine protection and power over the demons, Jesus directs the Seventy-two to make the greater gift of eternal salvation their first and final hope.

LUKE—NOTE ON 10:17–20 Empowered by Jesus, the Seventy-two advance into Satan's territory as people believe the Gospel. Until Christ's return, we, too, remain in this war zone, where Satan does everything he can to destroy us and halt the Gospel's advance. In Christ, however, we are protected. In Him, we cannot lose, even though put to death, for in the end Christ grants us eternal life. • "Lord, be our light when worldly darkness veils us; Lord, be our shield when earthly armor fails us; And in the day when hell itself assails us, Grant us Your peace, Lord." Amen. (*LSB* 659:3)

LUKE—NOTE ON 10:21 Inspired by the Spirit, Jesus expresses joy at the life-giving insight just gained by the disciples. Saving faith, a gift from the Father, is created by the Spirit, not the result of human effort or intellect.

LUKE—NOTE ON 10:22 *All things*. Jesus claims to have received from the Father an absolute authority over all creation. No higher Christological claim appears anywhere in Lk and Ac. *no one knows*. Human beings can know Jesus as the Son of God only by the gift of faith, which God alone can give (cf Mt 16:16–17). *the Son chooses to reveal Him*. Likewise, no one can know the Father apart from the revelation of the one true God given through

the incarnation of His Son, Jesus (cf Jn 1:1, 14, 18). There is a perfect relationship of trust and understanding between Jesus and His Father.
LUKE—NOTE ON 10:23 *privately*. See note, 8:10. *Blessed*. God's people in the OT could only look expectantly toward the fulfillment of God's promises—the coming of the Messiah and the kingdom of God. Jesus' disciples, however, are privileged to see it dawn in Jesus' life-imparting ministry. See p 842.
LUKE—NOTE ON 10:21–24 While rejoicing that His disciples have received the gift of life-saving faith, Jesus stresses that He is the chief content and unique mediator of the Gospel revelation. Oh, that we would have the grace to rejoice with Him and to appreciate fully the great privilege that is ours in the Gospel! • "In Thee is gladness Amid all sadness, Jesus, sunshine of my heart. By Thee are given The gifts of heaven, Thou the true Redeemer art." Amen. (*LSB* 818:1)
LUKE—NOTE ON 10:25 *lawyer*. On scholars of the Law, see p 719. *inherit*. Emphasizes the gracious nature of salvation. See p 7.
LUKE—NOTE ON 10:26 *Law?* Moses' writings, the first five books of the Bible. See p 971. *How do you read it?* Jesus asks the lawyer for his own interpretation of God's Word as a starting point for what follows.
LUKE—NOTE ON 10:27 The lawyer's response stresses complete devotion to God and loving behavior toward one's neighbor.
LUKE—NOTE ON 10:28 *do this, and you will live*. Jesus affirms that if a person perfectly fulfills the Law of God, that individual will receive eternal life on Judgment Day. However, this is impossible for sinners.
LUKE—NOTE ON 10:29 *justify himself*. The lawyer seems to realize the impossibility of fulfilling the commandments just cited. Thus he seeks to limit God's uncompromising demands. *neighbor?* Gk root means "nearby, close." Therefore, it means "whoever happens to be nearby or close at hand," not just people who have homes nearby.
LUKE—NOTE ON 10:30 *down from Jerusalem to Jericho*. See color map 4. *robbers*. Ordinary highway bandits, though the word sometimes means "insurrectionists, guerrillas."
LUKE—NOTE ON 10:31 *priest*. A fellow Jew, who served God in the temple. Cf Lv 8. *passed by*. The priest walked by on the other side of the road in order to avoid the injured man and any obligation to him.
LUKE—NOTE ON 10:32 *Levite*. A temple worker. Cf Nu 1:47–54.

LUKE—NOTE ON 10:33 *Samaritan*. See p 1557. *had compassion*. See note, 7:13.
LUKE—NOTE ON 10:34 *oil and wine*. Treatments comparable to today's antibacterial first-aid creams.
LUKE—NOTE ON 10:35 *two denarii*. Two days' wages; no small sum. *innkeeper*. Though this person's job was to provide lodging and perhaps a meal, the Samaritan pressed him into nursing duties.
LUKE—NOTE ON 10:36 *proved to be a neighbor*. Fulfilled the law of loving "your neighbor as yourself" (v 27).
LUKE—NOTE ON 10:37 The Samaritan risked his own neck to help a Jew, and then spent a sizable amount of money to provide for his ongoing recovery. He invested much in order to rescue a traditional enemy. See note, Mi 6:8. God requires us to act in love toward all people, even our enemies and esp those in need. Luth: "Our neighbor is any human being, especially one who needs our help, as Christ interprets it in Luke 10:30–37. Even one who has done me some sort of injury or harm … does not stop being my neighbor" (AE 27:58). The Samaritan in the parable likely represents Christ, who had recently sought to work with the Samaritans (9:51–56).
LUKE—NOTE ON 10:25–37 Jesus tells the famous parable of the Good Samaritan to clarify that He expects His followers to do good to all people. However, His concluding exhortation, "Go, and do likewise," reminds us just how far we are from the loving, self-sacrificing behaviors the Lord expects. So it was that Jesus became the Good Samaritan for us. He laid down His life, befriended us while we were yet His enemies. He promises us full restoration and life everlasting. • Lord, make me more like You, that I grow in faith and love for my neighbor. May people see You in my actions as I reach out to them with Your love. Amen.
LUKE—NOTE ON 10:38 *they*. The makeup of the group accompanying Jesus is unspecified, though it certainly included the Twelve. *welcomed Him into her house*. Martha received Jesus as a guest and showed hospitality. See notes, 9:4, 58; Gn 18:4.
LUKE—NOTE ON 10:39 *sat at the Lord's feet*. Normal position for students learning from a rabbi. See note, 8:2–3. Aug: "She sat at the feet of our Head. The more lowly she sat, the more amply did she receive. For the water flows together to the low hollows of the valley, runs down from the risings of the hill" (*NPNF* 1 6:430). Aug: "The one was arranging many

things, the other had her eyes upon the One. Both occupations were good" (*NPNF* 1 6:427).

LUKE—NOTE ON 10:40 *much serving*. Martha was likely cooking for dozens of people. *do You not care*. Note her implied rebuke and criticism of Jesus. She expected Him to be sensitive to the workload that His arrival created. *Tell her*. In Martha's eyes, Mary should be helping. This, of course, is a reasonable expectation.

LUKE—NOTE ON 10:41 *Martha, Martha*. Jesus' double address implies tender affection, pity (cf 13:34; 22:31; 2Sm 18:33).

LUKE—NOTE ON 10:42 *one thing is necessary*. As necessary as hospitality was—esp during Jesus' visit—the only thing that remained truly indispensable was the Word of God. Aug: "One is preferred to many. For one does not come from many, but many from one. The things which were made, are many, he who made them is One…. She chose that which shall abide for ever" (*NPNF* 1 6:429–30). *good portion*. A clever turn of phrase, since it implicitly compares hearing the Word to eating a meal. See "portion," p 7. *not be taken away*. Food comes and goes, and eventually everyone becomes hungry again. The Word of God, however, abides forever. It alone can truly satisfy. Aug: "In these two women the two lives are figured, the life present, and the life to come, the life of labour, and the life of quiet, the life of sorrow, and the life of blessedness, the life temporal, and the life eternal" (*NPNF* 1 6:430).

LUKE—NOTE ON 10:38–42 In contrast with Jesus' demand for great works in the previous parable (vv 25–37), the story of Mary and Martha shows the importance of faith and rest in Jesus and His Word. Today, we are often so distracted that we neglect what matters most: God's Word and Sacraments. What we can never earn for ourselves, no matter how much we scramble, God freely provides through faith in Jesus Christ. • O Savior, bear my anxieties and remove my distractions, that I may receive Your good portion for me. Amen.

LUKE—NOTE ON 11:1 *certain place … one of His disciples*. Neither time, place, nor questioner are identified. *teach us to pray*. Fixed forms of prayer were common in first-century Judaism. The people of the Dead Sea Scrolls, the followers of John the Baptist, and other groups used set prayers.

LUKE—NOTE ON 11:2–4 This version of the Lord's Prayer is substantially shorter than the one found in Mt. Jesus likely taught this prayer differently in a variety of settings. See note, Mt 6:9.

LUKE—NOTE ON 11:4 *sins*. Mt 6:12 has "debts," which has the same sense. *indebted*. Just as our sins indebt us to God, so other people's trespasses cause them to "owe" us.
LUKE—NOTE ON 11:5 *friend*. Context suggests that this fellow is more than an acquaintance. *midnight*. At this hour, it would be impossible to go out and buy food. *lend me three loaves*. In a society where many baked goods were homemade, this was a significant request.
LUKE—NOTE ON 11:6 *friend*. Someone close enough to expect hospitality from the one requesting the bread.
LUKE—NOTE ON 11:7 *with me*. In small dwellings, entire families often slept near one another on the floor. Rising and granting this favor would likely awaken the whole household.
LUKE—NOTE ON 11:8 *impudence*. Gk *anaideia*, lit, "shamelessness" or "above reproach." Rather than acting shamefully by failing to help his persistent friend, the man in the house will actually give more than his friend has asked.
LUKE—NOTE ON 11:9–10 Aug: "Let then the slothfulness of men be put to shame; He is more willing to give, than we to receive; He is more willing to show mercy, than we to be delivered from misery" (*NPNF* 1 6:431).
LUKE—NOTE ON 11:10 *everyone*. Believers.
LUKE—NOTE ON 11:11–13 By using rhetorical questions to characterize the kindness of human fathers, Jesus heightens the contrast between the earthly parents and God the Father, whose goodness is infinite. Note how this passage reinforces the point of the parable in vv 5–8. *give the Holy Spirit*. The best gift of all. "The Holy Spirit dwells in the elect, who have become believers, as in His temple" (FC SD XI 73). *ask Him!* Jesus concludes this teaching by urging us to ask for that which God wants to give. See note, Jas 4:3.
LUKE—NOTE ON 11:13 See note, Mt 7:11.
LUKE—NOTE ON 11:1–13 Jesus teaches that Christian prayers are unfailingly heard because God has promised to hear us, and He always keeps His promises. Were prayer to depend on us, we could never be sure of God's response, because sin corrupts completely. We can depend on God to keep His promise to hear us and answer us because He never breaks His word. Prayer is a blessed opportunity granted by the Gospel. • "What a friend we have in Jesus, All our sins and griefs to bear! What a privilege to carry Ev'rything to God in prayer! Oh, what peace we often forfeit; Oh,

what needless pain we bear—All because we do not carry Ev'rything to God in prayer!" Amen. (*LSB* 770:1)

LUKE—NOTE ON 11:14 *demon that was mute*. Not every case of demon possession had the same symptoms. In this case, the demon caused the man to be mute.

LUKE—NOTE ON 11:15 Note that a similar accusation was laid against John the Baptist (7:33). *Beelzebul*. See note, 2Ki 1:2.

LUKE—NOTE ON 11:16 *test*. Though Luke does not give particulars, people were demanding that Jesus prove His credentials. *sign*. A miracle authenticating that Jesus came from God, not Satan.

LUKE—NOTE ON 11:17 *knowing their thoughts*. Jesus knew His adversaries' criticisms, and so He addresses them straightaway. *Every kingdom … falls*. Apparently, a proverbial saying.

LUKE—NOTE ON 11:18 *if Satan also is divided*. Satan, who holds great sway over fallen humans, is depicted as "ruler of this world" (Jn 12:31; cf Col 1:13).

LUKE—NOTE ON 11:19 *by whom … cast them out?* See note, Mt 12:27. *they will be your judges*. By blaspheming Jesus, His adversaries called all who exorcise demons into question. For such false teaching, Jesus' opponents will be judged on the Last Day.

LUKE—NOTE ON 11:20 *kingdom of God has come upon you*. Jesus advances the kingdom of God by defeating the occupying forces of Satan and his minions. See note, Col 1:13.

LUKE—NOTE ON 11:21–22 See note, Mt 12:29.

LUKE—NOTE ON 11:21 *strong man*. Satan. *palace*. Satan's stronghold is the human heart, where he exerts great influence.

LUKE—NOTE ON 11:22 *armor*. Metaphor for Satan's great power.

LUKE—NOTE ON 11:23 Neutrality is not an option. One is either with Jesus and against Satan, or with Satan and against Jesus. *gather*. Harvest. Cf 10:2.

LUKE—NOTE ON 11:14–23 Jesus responds to accusations that He performs exorcisms by Satan's power. He points out just how self-defeating that would be. Sadly, however, people continue to misunderstand Jesus. They place themselves in an equally self-defeating position when they listen to and follow Satan. What good news, then, to hear that Jesus has overcome the devil and opened God's kingdom to all who hear His Word

and follow Him. • Lord, Your Son has overcome even sin, death, and the devil for us. Lead us to abide in Him steadfastly until the end. Amen.
LUKE—NOTE ON 11:24 *passes through waterless places*. See note, Mt 12:43. *seeking rest*. An image emphasizing the desperation demons feel as they search for another person to possess. *house*. The person who formerly had the demon.
LUKE—NOTE ON 11:25 *swept and put in order*. Evil spirits brought chaos and destruction when they possessed a person. Once liberated of that possession, however, the person behaved normally (cf 8:35).
LUKE—NOTE ON 11:26 *seven … enter and dwell*. More than one demon can possess a single person (see note, Mk 5:9). *last state*. After the second possession. "He also will punish those who willfully turn away from the holy commandment and again entangle themselves in the world's filth (2 Peter 2:20–21), decorate their hearts for Satan (Luke 11:24–26), and despise God's Spirit (Hebrews 10:29)" (FC SD XI 83).
LUKE—NOTE ON 11:24–26 A person healed of demon possession could fall into such trouble again. Thus, it is a grave mistake to imagine that we can receive the Gospel, come to Jesus, and yet continue in destructive ways and return to our sins. Thankfully, God promises to fill those who repent with His own Spirit and bless us through His Word and Sacraments, that we may be whole. • "Come, Holy Ghost, Creator blest, And make our hearts Your place of rest; Come with Your grace and heav'nly aid, And fill the hearts which You have made." Amen. (*LSB* 499:1)
LUKE—NOTE ON 11:27 It is noteworthy that a woman speaks this blessing, because women did not ordinarily begin a conversation with a man they did not know.
LUKE—NOTE ON 11:28 Jesus does not reject this woman's praise of His mother but rather directs attention to the blessedness of receiving the life-giving Gospel, in accord with His Father's mission.
LUKE—NOTE ON 11:27–28 Jesus teaches that hearing His Word and faithfully putting it into practice heaps praise on Him. He continually extends His Word and unfailingly delivers the blessings it promises. • Lord, help me not only to hear Your Word but also to keep it in a pure heart and thereby produce a fruitful life of service. Amen.
LUKE—NOTE ON 11:29 Many people flocked to Jesus simply because of the miracles He was performing. *evil generation … seeks for a sign*. Jesus

criticized the people because they refused to recognize His messianic status and dignity. *sign of Jonah*. The resurrection; just as Jonah was in the belly of the fish for three days and emerged alive, so also Jesus would lie in the belly of the earth for three days and then rise again.

LUKE—NOTE ON 11:30 *a sign to the people of Nineveh*. Jonah warned the Ninevites about God's judgment, and God brought them to repentance. Like Jonah, Jesus warned of judgment and called for repentance.

LUKE—NOTE ON 11:31 See note, Mt 12:42. *rise up … condemn*. The queen of Sheba showed greater respect for Solomon—an earthly king—than many in Jesus' generation showed for the Son of God. Thus, her example puts the behavior of Jesus' adversaries to shame, and she was a Gentile! *ends of the earth*. Far away. Sheba was likely located in southwestern Arabia. See note, 1Ki 10:1. *something greater than Solomon is here*. Both Solomon and Jesus were sons of David and famously wise. Jesus, however, exceeds Solomon, for He is the Messiah and Savior of the world.

LUKE—NOTE ON 11:32 *repented*. Another example of Gentiles showing greater righteousness and devotion than God's covenant people (see note, 7:9). *something greater than Jonah is here*. Jesus speaks of Himself. Both His person and the work of His kingdom far surpassed the person and work of Jonah.

LUKE—NOTE ON 11:29–32 Jesus contrasts the stubborn unbelief of His own people with Gentiles who believed God's Word and turned to Him in repentance. Such unfavorable comparisons remind us that, though we enjoy the privilege of being called God's people today, we can certainly lose our salvation by turning away from the Lord. Happily, the One who called us is faithful. He will lead us to repentance and see us through to life eternal. • "O blessed Jesus, by Your own blood You have purchased for Yourself a church here upon earth. Make me truly sensible of the honor You have done me, in making me a member of Your church, and admitting me by my Baptism into the participation of all those blessings You have bestowed upon it. Amen." (Ger, *TLWA*, p 275)

LUKE—NOTE ON 11:33 Lamps were set in high places, where they would shed the most light.

LUKE—NOTE ON 11:34 See note, Mt 6:22.

LUKE—NOTE ON 11:35 *the light in you be darkness*. "Light" is identified with faith; "darkness," with unbelief. See note, Jb 17:7.

LUKE—NOTE ON 11:36 Through Jesus, God sanctifies every aspect of His people's lives.

LUKE—NOTE ON 11:33–36 Jesus equates the Gospel with light and faith with a healthy eye. Some people remain in darkness because they reject the Gospel and will not allow the message of salvation to penetrate and dispel the darkness of their souls. The Lord moves us to appreciate that it is God Himself, through His Spirit, who illumines souls and preserves faith in hearts. • "Lord, who once came to bring, On Your redeeming wing, Healing and sight, Health to the sick in mind, Sight to the inly blind: Oh, now to humankind Let there be light!" Amen. (*LSB Accompaniment for the Hymns* 979:2)

LUKE—NOTE ON 11:37 *Pharisee*. See note, Mk 2:18. *reclined at table*. See note, Mt 8:11.

LUKE—NOTE ON 11:38 *wash before dinner*. Jesus did not fulfill the ritual hand washing expected by his host. Though Mosaic Law did not require laypeople to perform such ritual washings before meals, the tradition of the Pharisees did. Accordingly, this is yet another instance of a Pharisee finding fault with Jesus' observance of ritual (cf 5:30, 33; 6:7–11; 15:1–2). See note, Mk 7:3–4.

LUKE—NOTE ON 11:39 Jesus launched into a sustained criticism of the Pharisees' misplaced priorities, spiritual superficiality, and legalism, charging them with hypocrisy for being more concerned with outward appearances than inward truth.

LUKE—NOTE ON 11:40 *fools!* Biblical wisdom is centered on a right knowledge of God (see pp 775–78). Jesus thus accused the Pharisees of misunderstanding God. *He*. God, the Maker of all.

LUKE—NOTE ON 11:41 Giving from the heart, esp to those in desperate need, is a much more authentic expression of piety and godliness (cf Jas 1:27). "He requires not only alms, but also the righteousness of faith" (Ap V 34).

LUKE—NOTE ON 11:42 *woe*. Cf Is 10:1; Mt 11:21. *tithe mint and rue*. See note, Nu 18:21. The Pharisees were so scrupulous in this regard that they even tithed on their garden spices (rue is an aromatic evergreen). *neglect justice and the love of God*. See note, Mi 6:8. *without neglecting the others*. Jesus does not condemn the Pharisees' tithing piety but rather their failure to make mercy and justice the first priority.

LUKE—NOTE ON 11:43 *best seat*. Seats of honor reserved for leaders. *greetings*. Titles of respect and honor, used to address experts in Scripture (e.g., "rabbi").
LUKE—NOTE ON 11:44 *unmarked graves*. The Jews carefully marked their graves lest anyone accidentally touch them. Such contact resulted in ritual impurity and disqualified one from temple attendance. Cf Nu 19:16. By calling them "unmarked graves," Jesus effectively characterizes the Pharisees as defiling and dead.
LUKE—NOTE ON 11:45 *lawyers*. See pp 719–720. *insult*. Apparently, some non-Pharisees in the audience understood Jesus' remarks as applying to them and took offense.
LUKE—NOTE ON 11:46 *burdens*. Refers to the fact that many expert interpreters added to the demands spelled out in Mosaic Law. *touch*. Having increased what was expected of others, the religious leaders addressed here would not "lift a finger" in order to help the people keep their additional requirements.
LUKE—NOTE ON 11:47 Jesus accuses the lawyers and Pharisees of possessing the same spirit as those in previous generations who rejected God's Word and killed the prophets.
LUKE—NOTE ON 11:48 Jesus attributes His adversaries' interest in the prophets' tombs to their complicity in the wrongful deaths of the prophets.
LUKE—NOTE ON 11:49 See note, Mt 23:34.
LUKE—NOTE ON 11:50 *shed from the foundation*. From the time sin and death entered the world. *charged against this generation*. The current audience has much greater guilt because they reject and kill God's ultimate envoy, the incarnate Son of God.
LUKE—NOTE ON 11:51 *Abel*. The first man murdered, his righteous witness places him among the "prophets." *Zechariah*. His murder is recorded in 2Ch 24:20–22. *required*. Idiom for bringing charges against someone.
LUKE—NOTE ON 11:52 *taken away the key of knowledge*. Ironically, these supposed experts and leaders were obstructing the way to God's grace and salvation by their false teaching. The Gospel of the Holy Scripture, the key to knowing God, is a means of grace (cf Mt 16:19). *enter*. Enter into salvation. *hindered*. By replacing the divine revelation with man-made teachings. See note, 16:31.

LUKE—NOTE ON 11:53–54 They began showering Him with questions, hoping He would express Himself poorly and give them a basis for charges against Him.

LUKE—NOTE ON 11:37–54 Jesus' harshest criticisms are directed at those religious leaders and experts in Scripture who place their traditions above God's Word and refuse God's call to repentance. Measure all traditions against God's Word, especially the standards of mercy Jesus emphasized. Give thanks to God for faithful traditions that agree with His Gospel, which alone grants us salvation in Christ. • "Not what I feel or do Can give me peace with God; Not all my prayers and sighs and tears Can bear my awful load. Thy work alone, O Christ, Can ease this weight of sin; Thy blood alone, O Lamb of God, Can give me peace within." Amen. (*LSB* 567:2–3)

LUKE—NOTE ON 12:1 *meantime*. In connection with the events of vv 37–54. *first*. Having sternly admonished the Pharisees, Jesus now turns to warn His own disciples. *leaven of the Pharisees … hypocrisy*. The Pharisees' main failure was a hypocrisy born of legalism. See note, Mk 2:18.

LUKE—NOTE ON 12:2–3 God knows everything and is not fooled by piety that is focused on externals. Jesus warns His disciples not to act one way in public and another way in private. In the end, such duplicity is exposed.

LUKE—NOTE ON 12:1–3 Jesus warns His disciples about the pitfalls of religious hypocrisy. Though justified by faith, Christians still have a sinful nature and so struggle daily with the challenge of living the faith sincerely. Because we are frequently tempted to hypocrisy and sometimes fail in the struggle, it is comforting to hear that God knows us as we truly are, yet remains committed to our repentance and our salvation. • Lord, You know me better than I know myself. Though aware of my many failures, You still love me and continue to forgive me. Receive my heartfelt thanks. Amen.

LUKE—NOTE ON 12:4 *My friends*. The disciples. *those who kill the body*. Human beings can destroy the body but not the soul.

LUKE—NOTE ON 12:5 See note, Mt 10:28.

LUKE—NOTE ON 12:6 See note, Mt 10:29.

LUKE—NOTE ON 12:7 *hairs … are all numbered*. See note, Mt 10:30. God knows us down to the minutest detail. *more value*. Vivid way of

expressing God's boundless love and the incredible value His love bestows on those He redeems.

LUKE—NOTE ON 12:4–7 Jesus identifies fear as the root cause of hypocrisy. He assures us that His Father's children have nothing to fear from others. Today, if we are honest about the things that trouble us most, we will have to admit that fear and worry are near the top of the list. This leads us to see all the more clearly the benefit of the Gospel, which assures us of God's victory over everyone and everything threatening us. • "O little flock, fear not the foe Who madly seeks your overthrow; Dread not his rage and pow'r. And though your courage sometimes faints, His seeming triumph o'er God's saints Lasts but a little hour." Amen. (*LSB* 666:1)

LUKE—NOTE ON 12:8 See note, Mt 10:32.

LUKE—NOTE ON 12:9 See note, Mt 10:33.

LUKE—NOTE ON 12:10 Christians who fail to confess Jesus when facing persecution (e.g., Peter) and even avowed enemies of the Gospel (e.g., Paul before his conversion) can be forgiven. But whoever continually resists the Spirit and rejects the Gospel goes to eternal damnation. See note, Mk 3:29–30.

LUKE—NOTE ON 12:11 *bring you before*. Facing charges and possible punishment from hostile religious leaders. Not only Jesus (23:6–21) but also Stephen and Paul underwent this ordeal (Ac 6:8–7:60; 22:30–23:11).

LUKE—NOTE ON 12:12 *the Holy Spirit will teach you*. Does not promise some special revelation. Rather, the Spirit will bestow courage and clarity of expression to Jesus' witnesses as they face persecution.

LUKE—NOTE ON 12:8–12 Jesus teaches about the blessedness of confessing Him and the great dangers in denying Him and resisting His grace. In a culture increasingly hostile to traditional Christian belief, such warnings are timely, as the temptation to compromise our confession becomes more intense every day. Thank God for His Holy Spirit, who strives all the more for us and for the integrity of our faith. • Lord Jesus, give us a rich measure of Your Holy Spirit, that we boldly confess Your name before an increasingly faithless and hostile world. Turn the hearts of our enemies, that they receive Your salvation. Amen.

LUKE—NOTE ON 12:13 *divide the inheritance*. He asks Jesus to mediate a family dispute. People often brought such problems to respected rabbis.

LUKE—NOTE ON 12:14 Seems ironic, because elsewhere Jesus is called the "one mediator between God and men" (1Tm 2:5) and pictured as the

Judge (Mt 25:31–46). Yet vv 15–21 make Jesus' judgment plain. Aug: "He asked for half an inheritance on earth; the Lord offered him a whole inheritance in heaven. The Lord gave more than asked for" (*NPNF* 1 6:437).

LUKE—NOTE ON 12:15 *covetousness*. Though greed may long lie hidden in one's heart, it eventually manifests itself in a variety of destructive behaviors.

LUKE—NOTE ON 12:16 *told them a parable*. Jesus' story about coveting responds to the man who asked for help in dividing the inheritance (v 13).

LUKE—NOTE ON 12:19 *say to my soul*. Reveals this man's heart. Use of "soul" is ironic, for in v 20 the Lord requires judgment of this man's soul. *relax, eat, drink, be merry*. Not sinful acts in themselves, but here they represent misplaced priorities and values.

LUKE—NOTE ON 12:20 *Fool!* See p 1016. By depending on riches rather than God, this man does the opposite of what wisdom requires. Aug: "O, my Brethren, with how many fools does He speak here, when the Gospel is read! When it is read, are not they who hear and do not, fools?" (*NPNF* 1 6:438). *required of you*. God subpoenas him for judgment. *whose will they be?* Irony. While working so hard, this man thought only of himself. After his death, however, someone else will enjoy the fruit of all his work.

LUKE—NOTE ON 12:21 *not rich toward God*. Obsession with money can crowd God's ways out of our hearts. That is why Jesus warns so sternly against covetousness (v 15). "This is the most common idol on earth. He who has money and possessions feels secure [Luke 12:16–21] and is joyful and undismayed as though he were sitting in the midst of Paradise. On the other hand, he who has no money doubts and is despondent, as though he knew of no God" (LC I 7–8). Aug: "What is more perverse than a man who wishes to have 'much goods,' and does not wish to be good himself?" (*NPNF* 1 6:438).

LUKE—NOTE ON 12:13–21 Jesus underlines the great danger of being rich in earthly things but poor toward God. In a consumer culture, the dangers of covetousness are often downplayed; in fact, some even try to make greed a virtue. In love for us, however, Jesus warns us against the self-destructive nature of covetousness and gives us new hearts, which He, the very source of life and goodness, fills with joyful satisfaction through the Gospel. • Heavenly Father, keep my eyes from becoming envious and my heart from self-destructive greed. Move me to find satisfaction in Your

promises and to trust that You will more than provide for me and my loved ones. Amen.
LUKE—NOTE ON 12:22 Though God provides for all, even unbelievers (Mt 5:45), Jesus esp urges His followers to trust Him for life's necessities. *anxious*. Worry, dread, and fear.
LUKE—NOTE ON 12:23 Physical needs are an important part of life, but they should not dominate a Christian's thinking.
LUKE—NOTE ON 12:24 *God feeds them*. See SC, Fourth Petition, p xxxviii.
LUKE—NOTE ON 12:25 Undue worry subtracts from life. *span*. See note, Mt 6:27.
LUKE—NOTE ON 12:26 *the rest?* Other things over which we have no control.
LUKE—NOTE ON 12:27 *spin*. Turn fiber into thread or yarn. *Solomon in all his glory*. Cf 1Ki 10:14–25. Solomon's splendor could not compare to the beauty of a simple flower.
LUKE—NOTE ON 12:28 *God so clothes*. An argument from the lesser to the greater. If God adorns common plants with such beauty, how much more will He lavish good things on the crown of His creation? *thrown into the oven*. Burned as fuel for heating and cooking. *little faith!* This criticism typically comes after people underestimate God or His Son. See note, Mt 6:30.
LUKE—NOTE ON 12:29 *do not seek*. Do not make this your priority. *be worried*. To the extent that worry manifests a lack of trust in God, it is a serious failing.
LUKE—NOTE ON 12:30 *Father knows*. God, who created us, understands our needs better than we ourselves do. See notes, Ps 139:1; Mt 6:8.
LUKE—NOTE ON 12:31 God's kingdom exists wherever He rules hearts and minds. We "seek" it by having Him and His ways hold sway in our lives. See pp 1565–66. *added*. Provided in abundance.
LUKE—NOTE ON 12:32 *little flock*. Affectionate term indicating ownership and tender care. *good pleasure*. Synonymous with "resolve, determination, choice." *give you the kingdom*. We are included in that realm ruled by God's grace. This comes through faith in Jesus and results in abundant life both here and in heaven. See pp 1565–66.
LUKE—NOTE ON 12:33 *Sell your possessions, and give to the needy*. A radical call to use our goods not only for ourselves but also to help other

people. *moneybags … treasure*. The best treasure comes from living as God directs. His ways involve generously helping others.

LUKE—NOTE ON 12:34 If one wants to see what is most important to another (where the heart is), it is most telling to look at where that person spends most of his money (where the treasure is).

LUKE—NOTE ON 12:22–34 Jesus encourages His disciples to trust in God, their heavenly Father, since He will provide for all their needs. We need to take this exhortation to heart, because our fallen nature makes it difficult to look past ourselves and depend on another. But God's faithfulness far exceeds our needs. He provides as He sees fit, giving us an abundance that we may share with others. • "Grant us hearts, dear Lord, to give You Gladly, freely of Your own. With the sunshine of Your goodness Melt our thankless hearts of stone Till our cold and selfish natures, Warmed by You, at length believe That more happy and more blessed 'Tis to give than to receive." Amen. (*LSB* 851:2)

LUKE—NOTE ON 12:35 *dressed for action*. Stand ready to fulfill the Master's command. The long robes worn in Jesus' day had to be gathered up and tied before a person could move quickly. See note, Ex 12:11.

LUKE—NOTE ON 12:36 *waiting for their master*. Discipleship is depicted as servanthood. *wedding feast*. Because wedding celebrations lasted for days, the servants could not know precisely when their master would return. Cf Sg 3:6–7.

LUKE—NOTE ON 12:37 *Blessed*. Objects of the master's favor and approval. See p 842. *dress himself for service*. See note, v 35. *recline at table*. See note, Mt 8:11. *serve them*. Note the role reversal—the master now serves the servants!

LUKE—NOTE ON 12:38 In the Jewish reckoning, the first watch of the night was 6 to 10 p.m.; the second, 10 p.m. to 2 a.m.; and the third, 2 to 6 a.m. See p 1567.

LUKE—NOTE ON 12:39 *thief*. Ominous image of a burglar breaking and entering contrasts with the blessings of the master serving his faithful servants (v 37).

LUKE—NOTE ON 12:40 *ready … Son of Man is coming*. Faithfulness is defined as doing the work Jesus has given us while eagerly awaiting His return. *an hour you do not expect*. No human being knows or can calculate the time of Jesus' return (cf Mk 13:32). Beware of any teacher who claims such knowledge. Aug: "Our Lord Jesus Christ both came to men, and went

away from men, and is to come to men. And yet He was here when He came, nor did He depart when He went away, and He is to come to them to whom He said, 'Lo, I am with you, even unto the end of the world' " (*NPNF* 1 6:440).

LUKE—NOTE ON 12:41–43 Jesus narrows the focus here and spells out the special responsibilities borne by Christian leaders. *manager*. Or, "steward"; the slave left in charge of a household's administration. See p 101. *their portion of food*. Not only food, but all the staff needs. Thus, a faithful steward not only takes good care of his master's balance sheet, but also his human resources.

LUKE—NOTE ON 12:43 *Blessed*. See note, v 37; see also p 842.

LUKE—NOTE ON 12:44 *set him over all*. Faithful service in God's kingdom is rewarded (cf 19:11–27). See note, 1Co 3:8.

LUKE—NOTE ON 12:45 The delayed return leads the manager to abuse his trust, thinking he can get away with it.

LUKE—NOTE ON 12:46–48 See note, Mt 10:15. *cut him in pieces*. Fearsome; implies eternal condemnation. *with the unfaithful*. With those who reject God and act wickedly. *severe beating … light beating*. Abuse of fellow servants is punished with death; willful disobedience is penalized by a severe beating; involuntary dereliction of duty merits a light beating. *much will be required*. The privilege of leading makes leaders answerable to God for their greater responsibilities (cf Jas 3:1).

LUKE—NOTE ON 12:35–48 Jesus urges those in positions of leadership to faithfully discharge their duties. Following worldly examples, Christian leaders sometimes see their positions more in terms of privilege than responsibility. Jesus' example of self-sacrifice, however, underscores the shallowness of such attitudes. We are moved to emulate His way of humble service because He was willing to endure all things for us, that we might share in His privileges. • "Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast Save in the death of Christ, my God; All the vain things that charm me most, I sacrifice them to His blood." Amen. (*LSB* 425:2)

LUKE—NOTE ON 12:49 *cast fire*. Proclamation of the judgment (cf 3:9; 9:5; 10:13–15). *would that it were already kindled!* Jesus longs to reveal the Kingdom, not only through judgment, but also and esp through the revelation of His grace and the deliverance it brings about.

LUKE—NOTE ON 12:50 *baptism*. Figurative way of referring to the cross. *how great is My distress*. Verb implies being torn between two emotions.

On the one hand, Jesus cannot but dread His impending death on the cross. On the other, there is glory for Him and all humankind beyond the grave, thus His eager expectation.

LUKE—NOTE ON 12:51 *Do you think*. Although the disciples probably expected opposition—even violent opposition—they anticipated a military victory and subsequent political peace during the Messiah's reign. Jesus would indeed bring about a kingdom of peace, but not the earthly kind His followers envisioned. *division*. There is no middle ground with respect to Jesus and His rule. A person stands either with Him or against Him.

LUKE—NOTE ON 12:52–53 *three against two*. Families would be deeply divided over what to make of Jesus.

LUKE—NOTE ON 12:49–53 Jesus expresses a deep desire to fulfill God's plan of salvation once for all, even though it means going to the cross. The depth of His commitment naturally forces His followers to decide what is most important for them, as well. As you wrestle with so great a challenge, take comfort in the One who calls you. He is faithful. • Lord Jesus, when earthly relations cause me to make You and Your kingdom anything less than my first priority, strengthen me and lead me back into the way of life everlasting. Amen.

LUKE—NOTE ON 12:54 *a cloud rising in the west*. Rain-bearing clouds blow in from the Mediterranean Sea to the west. *A shower is coming*. Given the semiarid conditions of Israel, this would be a welcome event.

LUKE—NOTE ON 12:55 *south wind*. From the Negeb Desert to the south came dry, scorching winds.

LUKE—NOTE ON 12:56 *hypocrites!* Another rebuke of the failure to discern the significance of Jesus' words and deeds. *interpret the present time?* Jesus' ministry ushered in the messianic age. That was obvious to anyone with eyes to see it (cf 5:22–26; 7:11–23). Nevertheless, some stubbornly refused to recognize Jesus.

LUKE—NOTE ON 12:54–56 Jesus condemns the unbelief of those beholding His miraculous signs who yet reject the obvious implications. Satan blinds the hearts of unbelievers even to this day. Only by God's grace can we see clearly, as the Spirit opens our eyes through faith in Jesus Christ. • "Amazing grace—how sweet the sound—That saved a wretch like me! I once was lost but now am found, Was blind but now I see!" Amen. (*LSB* 744:1)

LUKE—NOTE ON 12:57–58 *judge for yourselves*. Jesus uses an earthly example to illustrate the need for repentance now—before the final judgment. *magistrate*. Lit, "ruler"; term could apply to many different kinds of civil authorities. *settle*. Come to agreement on the amount of debt owed and square it away. *judge*. Refers specifically to those who adjudicate cases in courts of law. *officer*. Here, a constable or bailiff in charge of a debtors' prison.

LUKE—NOTE ON 12:59 Warns of hell. Debtors' prisons occasioned much suffering. Family and friends were expected to come up with the money needed to free the debtor, who was frequently tortured in order to motivate payment. See note, Mt 18:34. We only escape hell through Jesus' blood and merit.

LUKE—NOTE ON 12:57–59 Jesus encourages His followers to repent and make peace quickly, lest a budding conflict escalate and spin out of control. His disciples are called not only to sacrifice possessions and relationships that hinder their way in the kingdom but also to avoid entangling disputes. Though hard feelings are often hard to let go, Jesus promises mercy and blessings for those who repent and receive His peace. • Lord, free me from any lingering resentment, ill will, or hatred toward another. Teach me to owe no one anything save the debt to love as You have loved us. Amen.

LUKE—NOTE ON 13:1 Neither the NT nor extrabiblical records shed light on this tragic event, which must have recently occurred.
LUKE—NOTE ON 13:2 Many thought that tragedies happened to people as divine punishments for specific sins. See p 837.
LUKE—NOTE ON 13:3 *repent … likewise perish*. Jesus uses this tragedy to spur His audience into self-examination and an honest assessment of their walk with God. If they do so, they will see that they might experience the same kind of misfortune. "The term *repentance* is not used in the Holy Scriptures in one and the same sense. In some passages of Holy Scripture it is used and taken to mean a person's entire conversion" (FC SD V 7).
LUKE—NOTE ON 13:4 *tower in Siloam fell*. Another incident for which we have no other historical record.
LUKE—NOTE ON 13:5 See note, v 3.
LUKE—NOTE ON 13:1–5 Jesus points out tragedies as occasions for self-examination and reflection on our sinful frailty. Contrary to popular thought, tragedy does not always strike people because they somehow deserve it. Rather, in His wisdom God allows and uses even tragic events to warn of judgment, that He might bring us to repentance and eternal life through faith in Jesus. • Lord, increase my faith in what You have given me to know. Grant me humility before those mysteries that surpass my understanding. Amen.
LUKE—NOTE ON 13:6 *fig tree … seeking fruit*. This unproductive tree symbolizes Jews who were not producing the fruit of faith. *fig tree*. See note, Am 7:14. *vineyard*. Symbol of Israel, God's chosen people (cf Is 5:1–7; Mt 21:33–46).
LUKE—NOTE ON 13:7 The owner symbolizes God; the vinedresser represents a religious leader. *three years*. Very patient, giving his plant every opportunity to produce fruit.
LUKE—NOTE ON 13:8 Aug: "The gardener who intercedes, is every saint who within the Church prays for those who are without the Church" (*NPNF* 1 6:444). *dig around it and put on manure*. The best way to fertilize the tree, that it might bear fruit. Aug: "The basket of dung understand in its good effects. It is filthy, but it produces fruit. The gardener's filth is the sinner's sorrows. They who repent, repent in filthy robes; if, that is, they understand aright, and repent in truth" (*NPNF* 1 6:444).
LUKE—NOTE ON 13:9 The people hearing Jesus may still have time to repent and trust in Him. If they do not, they will face God's wrath and

eternal destruction.

LUKE—NOTE ON 13:6–9 Jesus warns that His audience needs to begin producing works consistent with the Gospel. Today, many fail to live their lives according to God's will. The One who commands us to such works also bestows His Spirit. He enables us to repent and to produce the fruit that flow from His salvation. • Lord, show me the shortness of my time and the nearness of eternity, so I do not fail to redeem the time. Amen.

LUKE—NOTE ON 13:10 Jesus customarily taught in synagogues on the Jewish day of worship (4:16). He also performed numerous healings on the Sabbath, which provoked His critics' wrath (6:6–11).

LUKE—NOTE ON 13:11 The evil spirit possessing this woman caused her a physical ailment. *bent over*. Lit, "bent double"; a crippling affliction.

LUKE—NOTE ON **13:12–13** Jesus released her from her physical symptoms by eliminating the cause of the problem: the unclean spirit.

LUKE—NOTE ON 13:14 *ruler of the synagogue*. See note, 8:41. *said to the people*. Jesus' critics vie for the hearts of the people to keep them from following Jesus, whom they considered a false prophet and Law-breaker. *There are six days … Sabbath day*. See note, 6:9.

LUKE—NOTE ON 13:15 *hypocrites!* See note, 6:42. Jesus' opponents are so intent on putting Him in a bad light that they adopt an obviously wrong position.

LUKE—NOTE ON 13:16 *daughter of Abraham*. An affirmation of her faith, which would remove a stigma caused by her infirmity (cf Jn 9:3). *Satan bound*. See note, v 11.

LUKE—NOTE ON 13:17 *adversaries*. Pharisees, Sadducees, and Herodians opposed Jesus. See p 1557.

LUKE—NOTE ON 13:10–17 Though Jesus' critics saw His miracle as a clear violation of the Sabbath, Jesus' work, in fact, fulfilled the Sabbath Day's purpose: to provide blessing for God's people. He still calls us to keep the Sabbath by gladly receiving God's Word, which delivers to us the blessings of Jesus' victory over sin and death. How great a privilege to enter His presence in worship. • "Open now thy gates of beauty; Zion, let me enter there, Where my soul in joyful duty Waits for Him who answers prayer. Oh, how blessed is this place, Filled with solace, light, and grace!" Amen. (*LSB* 901:1)

LUKE—NOTE ON 13:18 *kingdom of God*. See pp 1565–66. Jesus teaches that it is sown in seeming powerlessness and grows only gradually, over an

extended period of time.
LUKE—NOTE ON 13:19 *mustard seed*. See note, Mk 4:31. *tree*. See note, Mk 4:32.
LUKE—NOTE ON 13:21 *leaven*. Yeast or a bit of leavened dough retained from previous baking. Parable repeats the point of vv 18–19. Given enough time, even the tiniest pinch of leaven permeates an entire batch of dough. See note, Mt 13:33.
LUKE—NOTE ON 13:18–21 Though the kingdom of God has humble beginnings, it grows to embrace all creation. Like Jesus' first hearers, we, too, tend to wish for a more powerful kingdom and more rapid growth. But this kingdom is God's, not ours. He extends His realm in His way with His timing. • Lord, give us wholeheartedly to the task of extending Your reign, even though we may never see the growth that we would like. Keep us focused instead on the final consummation. Amen.
LUKE—NOTE ON 13:22 *toward Jerusalem*. See note, 9:51.
LUKE—NOTE ON 13:23 Jesus directs His followers' attention away from the plight of others and toward an honest self-appraisal and spiritual housecleaning (cf vv 1–5).
LUKE—NOTE ON 13:24 *narrow door*. Jesus Christ is the only way to salvation (Jn 14:6). All other hopes are misplaced.
LUKE—NOTE ON 13:25 *shut the door*. The time to repent and receive the Lord is fleeting. See note, 3:9. Accordingly, people need to make entry into God's kingdom their first priority, before the door to life suddenly slams shut. *I do not know where you come from*. See note, Mt 10:33.
LUKE—NOTE ON 13:26 *You taught in our streets*. Mere acquaintance with Jesus and His teachings will not avail on Judgment Day; a wholehearted trust is needed. Luth: "For even though you know that He is God's Son, that He died and rose again, and that He sits at the right hand of the Father, you have not yet learned to know Christ aright … [until you also] believe that He did all this for your sake, in order to help you" (AE 30:30).
LUKE—NOTE ON 13:27 *workers of evil!* Lit, "workers of injustice." Without faith in Jesus Christ, it is impossible to produce works that please God (Heb 11:6).
LUKE—NOTE ON 13:28 *place … gnashing of teeth*. Refers to the torment of eternal separation from God and His goodness—hell. *in the kingdom of*

God. Restored creation, after the new heaven and new earth are revealed and people behold God face-to-face (Rv 21:1–5).

LUKE—NOTE ON 13:29 *people*. Those redeemed by Christ through faith. *recline at table*. See note, Mt 8:11. The joy of eternal life is repeatedly compared to that of a great feast (e.g., Is 25:6–9).

LUKE—NOTE ON 13:30 *last … first*. Outsiders and people from the dregs of society (tax collectors, sinners, and Gentiles) will be saved, while supposed insiders and important people (religious and civil leaders) will lose out. The determining factor is faith in Jesus, not wealth or social status.

LUKE—NOTE ON 13:22–30 People can enter God's kingdom only through Jesus Christ. Moreover, the time for every human being—and indeed the world—is quickly slipping away, and soon the door will slam shut. Accordingly, the Lord beseeches one and all to come into the great wedding banquet of His Son, without cost and without delay. • "Today Your gate is open, And all who enter in Shall find a Father's welcome And pardon for their sin. The past shall be forgotten, A present joy be giv'n, A future grace be promised, A glorious crown in heav'n." Amen. (*LSB* 915:2)

LUKE—NOTE ON 13:31 The Pharisees' motive for warning Jesus is not clear. If sincere, they wished to move Him from their territory. On Herod Antipas, cf 3:19–20; 9:7–9.

LUKE—NOTE ON 13:32 *fox*. Ironically, this clever tyrant would serve God's plan of salvation. Cf 23:11. *third day I finish My course*. See note, 9:22.

LUKE—NOTE ON 13:33 Irony. Jerusalem was the Judean capital and the site of the temple. Yet, the people had a history of killing God's prophets there (cf Ac 7:51–53, 58).

LUKE—NOTE ON 13:34 *Jerusalem, Jerusalem*. See note, 10:41. *gathered*. Often used to describe God's gracious return of His people after the exile (e.g., Jer 32:37). *as a hen gathers her brood*. When a hen senses danger, she draws her chicks together and protects them with her outstretched wings. Cf Ps 36:7 for another image of God offering refuge under His wings. *you would not!* Like wayward chicks, the people stubbornly resist God's will for their lives.

LUKE—NOTE ON 13:35 *your house is forsaken*. The people's obstinacy sealed a disastrous fate for Jerusalem. The Romans utterly destroyed it in AD 70, after a Jewish revolt. *see Me*. Jesus would not visit the city again until He triumphantly entered it on Palm Sunday (cf 19:28–44).

LUKE—NOTE ON 13:31–35 Jesus repeats His determination to press toward Jerusalem and God's will for Him there. Unfortunately, the impenitence mentioned in this passage continues today, keeping people out of God's kingdom. That makes the imagery of this episode all the more poignant, for the Lord still reaches out to His wayward children, earnestly seeking to gather them under His protective wing. • "Delay not, delay not! Why longer abuse The love and compassion of Jesus, your God? A fountain is opened; how can you refuse To wash and be cleansed in His pardoning blood?" Amen. (*LW* 349:5)

LUKE—NOTE ON 14:1 *Sabbath*. See note, Gn 2:3. Jewish traditions specified numerous categories of work to avoid on the Sabbath, making the Sabbath a detailed and onerous observance. *ruler of the Pharisees*. A leading rabbi among them, renowned for meticulous devotion to the Law. *watching*. The Pharisees' growing conflict with Jesus (ch 13) made them hope that He would break their Sabbath rules as in 6:7.

LUKE—NOTE ON 14:2 *dropsy*. Swelling caused by water pockets collecting in body tissue. Some believed the cause was immorality.

LUKE—NOTE ON 14:3 *lawyers*. On scholars of the Law, see p 719.

LUKE—NOTE ON 14:4 *sent him away*. Dismissal with blessing (e.g., 7:50; 8:48).

LUKE—NOTE ON 14:5 Some rabbinic traditions allowed only the person to be rescued; others allowed the animal also to be rescued.

LUKE—NOTE ON 14:6 *they could not reply*. Their hypocrisy became obvious.

LUKE—NOTE ON 14:1–6 Jesus exposes His enemies' inconsistencies and cruelty. Today, we are also tempted to build our religion on human tradition (rather than on God's Word) and then to condemn others on the basis of our traditions. Jesus holds the well-being of God's children above all. Still, He reaches out to us in mercy, despite the indifference or rejection of others. • Jesus, look upon us in our need, heal us, and dismiss us with Your blessing. Amen.

LUKE—NOTE ON 14:7–11 The parable offers advice about manners in social situations and also applies to our pride before God.

LUKE—NOTE ON 14:7 Guests were expected to give priority to those of higher rank, who would take the most prestigious places near the head of the group.

LUKE—NOTE ON 14:8 At such a feast, there is great significance in the position of the guests. The marriage banquet is also a frequent image in Scripture for the kingdom of God.
LUKE—NOTE ON 14:9 *shame*. Publicly acknowledging that one has exalted oneself.
LUKE—NOTE ON 14:10 *honored*. Being promoted to a more dignified position.
LUKE—NOTE ON 14:11 The person who boasts before God will be humbled in His judgment, while the one who humbly confesses sin may trust in Christ for forgiveness and so be raised up at the Last Day. Cf 1:51–52. Hus: "[The apostles], like Christ, began to do good by excelling in good works and not by receiving kisses, given as unto God. For they despised mundane honors" (*The Church*, p 145).
LUKE—NOTE ON 14:7–11 Jesus illustrates how pride leads to humiliation. Let others praise you or promote you rather than praise and promote yourself. No matter what others say or do, your greatest promotion is when the heavenly Father calls you His beloved child, through Christ. • Grant me a humble and steadfast heart, O Lord, to see myself as You see me. Amen.
LUKE—NOTE ON 14:12 *repaid*. Emphasis should be on generosity. Jesus is neither criticizing His host nor forbidding people to host their family and friends.
LUKE—NOTE ON 14:13 Lists people likely reduced to begging for food.
LUKE—NOTE ON 14:14 *blessed*. See p 842. *because they cannot repay you*. Unlike the circumstances in v 12, God will repay the giver. Cf Ac 20:35. *resurrection of the just*. Those justified by God's grace, who through faith rise to eternal life. See "justify," p 1903. The repayment already promised for Christ's sake outweighs anything we could hope to receive in this life.
LUKE—NOTE ON 14:15 *reclined at table*. See note, Mt 8:11. *Blessed*. See p 842. *kingdom of God!* See pp 1565–66. The Jews anticipated that the Messiah's new age would begin with a banquet, as after a military conquest.
LUKE—NOTE ON 14:16–24 Though the parable is similar to Mt 22:1–14, this is not necessarily the same event in Jesus' life.
LUKE—NOTE ON 14:17 Usually an invitation was issued, and then a summons was sent when the feast was prepared. It would be insulting to accept the invitation but miss the banquet.

LUKE—NOTE ON 14:18–20 Two of the excuses match legitimate OT reasons to refrain from military service (Dt 20:6–7).
LUKE—NOTE ON 14:18 *see it*. Either it was bought unseen or the guest needed to complete the sale.
LUKE—NOTE ON 14:19 *five yoke*. Ten oxen, implying considerable wealth; an ordinary farm required only one pair. *examine*. The sale was contracted but required closer examination.
LUKE—NOTE ON 14:20 Demonstrates a wrong priority in this case: the good preferred above the best. Cf v 26.
LUKE—NOTE ON 14:21 *streets and lanes*. Often narrow, like alleys, and winding. *poor*. See note, v 13. Only those who are beggars before God accept the invitation of His grace. Luther's last written words, found in his pocket, were "We are beggars" (AE 54:476).
LUKE—NOTE ON 14:22 The servant's comment follows the completion of the instruction.
LUKE—NOTE ON 14:23 The summons outside the city suggests God is reaching to the Gentiles. *house may be filled*. God's grace will fulfill His plan to seek and to save the lost.
LUKE—NOTE ON 14:24 *none of those men*. Cf vv 18–20.
LUKE—NOTE ON 14:12–24 God's invitations overcome people's rejections. Too often God's gifts are more important to us than He, the giver, is. But God is persistent. He reaches out again and again wherever His servants carry the Good News, so that all may receive His gracious invitation. • O Lord, by grace move us to treasure most the invitation to fill Your house and love those despised by the world. Amen.
LUKE—NOTE ON 14:25 The crowds stuck close to Jesus everywhere He traveled.
LUKE—NOTE ON 14:26 *hate*. Hbr idiom. To love one thing and to hate another gives preference to the former. Cf Gn 29:30−31. God does not expect us to be cruel to the family He has given, but rather to love Him first. *cannot be My disciple*. False priorities crippled such a person's discipleship.
LUKE—NOTE ON 14:27 *bear his own cross*. Refers to Christ's own death and His disciples' willingness to follow in His sacrifice.
LUKE—NOTE ON 14:28 *tower*. Substantial building, such as a fortress. See note, Jgs 9:46.

LUKE—NOTE ON 14:29 *mock*. As the unfinished builder may be ridiculed, so those who falter in their discipleship dishonor themselves and the Gospel.
LUKE—NOTE ON 14:30 *finish*. Complete the course and keep the faith (2Tm 4:7)
LUKE—NOTE ON 14:31–32 Same point is reinforced with a second comparison.
LUKE—NOTE ON 14:31 *with ten thousand … with twenty thousand?* Often, Christians feel outnumbered by the forces of the world.
LUKE—NOTE ON 14:32 Jesus advises not mere compromise, but a sober look at reality and evaluation of the cost.
LUKE—NOTE ON 14:33 Being a disciple entails the readiness to give up anything if duty to God calls for it.
LUKE—NOTE ON 14:25–33 Jesus illustrates the unconditional nature of discipleship. Consider well the radical demands of following Jesus, and be ready to meet them. Yet, count also the demands our salvation placed on the Son of God, who gave up all things for us. He is your tower and refuge of strength. • "Take myself, and I will be Ever, only, all for Thee." Amen. (*LSB* 783:6)
LUKE—NOTE ON 14:34 Ancient salt was made of several chemicals dried from seawater. Sodium chloride, true salt, could leach out, leaving other worthless minerals. So the Christian whose faith has eroded is no longer a Christian. See note, Mt 5:13.
LUKE—NOTE ON 14:35 The partly desalinated compound could still harm the soil; therefore, it must be "thrown away," like a worthless servant into the outer darkness (Mt 25:30).
LUKE—NOTE ON 14:34–35 Christ's people are "the salt of the earth" (Mt 5:13), purifying and seasoning it, because Christ is within them. He makes us Christians through God's Word. • Spare us, O Christ, from a weak and insipid faith, that the world may taste and see that You are good. Amen.
LUKE—NOTE ON **Ch 15** Three parables about finding what was lost illustrate human weakness and the strength of God's care.
LUKE—NOTE ON 15:1 *tax collectors*. See note, Mt 5:46.
LUKE—NOTE ON 15:2 *receives sinners*. See notes, 7:34, 37; see also p 1764.
LUKE—NOTE ON 15:3–7 The lost sheep represents the sinner, while God, esp the Son, is the shepherd (cf Ps 23; Is 40:11). The found sheep is every

Christian, rescued and delivered by God. The neighbors are the saints and angels who rejoice together.

LUKE—NOTE ON 15:4 *open country*. Their normal pasture. The emphasis is not on neglecting the flock, but on seeking the lost. (A shepherd typically watched 30−40 sheep, so Jesus' account likely implies the presence of one or two helpers.)

LUKE—NOTE ON 15:5 The lost sheep is carried home in safety with triumph and celebration. Shepherds often brought the flock home to the village at the end of the day, though not always (cf 2:8).

LUKE—NOTE ON 15:6 *Rejoice with me*. Climax of the story (cf Rv 19:7).

LUKE—NOTE ON 15:7 The rejoicing in heaven is over those whom the shepherd has found. *need no repentance*. The self-righteous imagine that they need no repentance. Before we are found by the Gospel, the Law must show we are hopelessly lost.

LUKE—NOTE ON 15:1–7 In the first of three similar parables, Jesus uses the devotion of a shepherd to illustrate God's willingness to find the wayward sinner. God does not abandon us to our foolishness but seeks us out, calling us to repentance and to faith in the Gospel. • Bring us home, dear Lord, and let there be joy in heaven. Grant us daily repentance. Amen.

LUKE—NOTE ON 15:8–10 In the second parable, the repentant sinner is like a coin. Unlike the wandering sheep, the coin is inanimate, emphasizing its complete helplessness. The neighbors represent the angels, who are invited to share the joy of God, for He has found something precious.

LUKE—NOTE ON 15:8 *silver coins*. Perhaps a collection of coins or bits of silver, worn as a headdress, brought into the marriage as the woman's dowry and meant to sustain the family in times of want. The value of such a coin, a day's wages, was once equivalent to the price of a sheep. *light a lamp*. A typical house was dark even in daytime, having few or no windows. Christ, the light of the world, seeks out the lost.

LUKE—NOTE ON 15:9 *Rejoice with me*. See note, v 6.

LUKE—NOTE ON 15:10 *joy before the angels of God*. The celebration of those closest to God over the lost sinner brought to repentance.

LUKE—NOTE ON 15:8–10 The unrepentant sinner is like a coin lost in the darkness. Once lost, we have no more ability to find the Lord than the coin has to find its owner. Yet, the good news of Christ gives "light to those

who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death" (1:79). • Thank You, merciful Lord, for seeking us when we had no power to seek You. Amen.
LUKE—NOTE ON 15:11–32 The father represents God, the prodigal represents a sinner, and the older brother represents those who consider themselves to be "righteous persons who need no repentance" (v 7).
LUKE—NOTE ON 15:12 *give me the share of property*. The law allowed this to happen before the father's death. See "portion," p 7. *divided*. The younger son could expect one-third of the estate. See note, Gn 25:31.
LUKE—NOTE ON 15:13 *far country*. Away from the constraints of home. *reckless living*. The idea combines carelessness with moral laxity (cf v 30).
LUKE—NOTE ON 15:14 The life of a penniless foreigner was esp difficult when there was little food around.
LUKE—NOTE ON 15:15 *hired himself out*. He took employment, like his father's hired servants. *feed pigs*. His employer was likely a Gentile; feeding the unclean beasts was the son's lowest step.
LUKE—NOTE ON 15:16 Carob pods were regarded as animal fodder and were eaten only by the desperately poor. *no one gave him anything*. He likely had friends when he had money, but none when poor.
LUKE—NOTE ON 15:17 *came to himself*. Expression may imply repentance. However, see note, vv 18–19. *hired servants*. Not slaves; hired by the day or retained as workers.
LUKE—NOTE ON 15:18–19 The son realizes his wickedness and his plight but would still bargain for his father's help, an illustration of the depth of human depravity.
LUKE—NOTE ON 15:20 *compassion*. See note, 7:13. In the NT, this word is largely used only of God, of Jesus, and in parables of characters representing God. E.g., it describes the Good Samaritan, which likely represents Jesus (see note, 10:37). The word, therefore, represents gracious love beyond the human norm, understanding and reaching into the life of another. *ran and embraced him and kissed him*. Shows acceptance of the wayward son before any question is asked. Remarkably, the father ran to his son, which was below the dignity of the older man.
LUKE—NOTE ON 15:21 The son begins his speech but is cut off before he can offer his bargain (v 19).
LUKE—NOTE ON 15:22 *servants*. Different word from that in v 17. See p 1904. *best robe*. Festive and showing favor. Cf Gn 37:3–4. *ring*. Symbol of

status and authority. See note, Gn 41:42. *shoes*. Dressed from head to toe as a son.
LUKE—NOTE ON 15:23 *fattened calf*. Cf Gn 18:7. *celebrate*. Or, "make merry."
LUKE—NOTE ON 15:24 *was dead, and is alive again*. From the father's perspective, his son's plight was worse than imagined.
LUKE—NOTE ON 15:25 His work likely kept the older son from the feast. *music and dancing*. Unmistakable sounds of celebration.
LUKE—NOTE ON 15:28 *angry*. Cf v 29. *entreated*. Again, the father disregards the dignity of his position and condescends to encourage a son.
LUKE—NOTE ON 15:29 *never disobeyed*. Hyperbole. Yet, this son behaved as he thought his younger brother should have behaved—as a servant. *young goat*. Minimal basis for a feast.
LUKE—NOTE ON 15:30 *devoured*. Wasted; the son lost a third of the family fortune.
LUKE—NOTE ON 15:31 *you are always with me*. The older son did not realize that being with his father was its own reward. *all that is mine is yours*. Not only a future benefit of the remaining inheritance, but also a present reality. The riches of the father were already the son's to enjoy.
LUKE—NOTE ON 15:32 The father does not need to justify himself, but he wishes his son would see the joy in recovering his brother. *dead*. Lost to the family.
LUKE—NOTE ON 15:11–32 God found us when we were far from Him. We are in no position to begrudge His grace similarly given to others, no matter how unworthy they appear to us. How meagerly we celebrate Baptism and public declarations of faith! God calls us to a joyful celebration, not only of our own salvation, but also for the salvation of our brothers and sisters. • Father, as You welcome me, grant me joy in welcoming others. Amen.
LUKE—NOTE ON 16:1–9 Interpreters differ over this difficult parable, unlike the clearer symbolism of parables in ch 15. It seems impossible that the rich man can be commended for integrity while at the same time the manager is praised for self-interest. Instead of viewing elements of this parable symbolically, it is best to stress Jesus' main point in v 9.
LUKE—NOTE ON 16:1 *manager*. The owner's agent, entrusted with executive authority and independent in his stewardship.

LUKE—NOTE ON 16:2 *account*. Required either because the manager's employment is discontinued or for audit to see if the charges are true.
LUKE—NOTE ON 16:3 Weakness and shame narrow his choices.
LUKE—NOTE ON 16:4 *receive me into their houses*. Either for employment or as a guest.
LUKE—NOTE ON 16:5 *debtors*. Tenants or traders with unpaid accounts.
LUKE—NOTE ON 16:6–7 The debtors are likely sharecroppers. The generous reduction of the bills clearly favor the debtors, perhaps by removing interest on loans or property agreements.
LUKE—NOTE ON 16:8 *commended*. Praise for shrewdness but not necessarily approval. *sons of this world*. People immersed in the ways of the world. *sons of light*. Believers.
LUKE—NOTE ON 16:9 *unrighteous wealth*. Although the wealth belongs in a fallen world, the disciple's stewardship can follow higher principles. Aug: "Some, by a bad understanding of this, plunder the goods of others, and bestow some of that upon the poor…. I would not that you should so understand it. Give alms of your righteous labors: give out of that which you possess rightfully" (*NPNF* 1 6:450). *eternal dwellings*. The steward wants only hospitality now, but Jesus points to eternal welcome.
LUKE—NOTE ON 16:10–13 This teaching is related to the theme of vv 1–9 but has moved to a new emphasis.
LUKE—NOTE ON 16:10 *faithful*. Dependable. See p 842.
LUKE—NOTE ON 16:11 *unrighteous wealth*. See note, v 9. *true riches?* The Gospel's lasting and substantial value surpasses any earthly thing (cf Php 3:8).
LUKE—NOTE ON 16:12 We are stewards only of that which God loans to us.
LUKE—NOTE ON 16:13 *two masters*. A household servant can give undivided loyalty to one master only. *devoted*. Lit, "hold on to." *You cannot serve God and money*. For the servant of God, money may in turn be a servant of godly purposes, but money cannot become a master without threatening loyalty to God.
LUKE—NOTE ON 16:1–13 Guard against becoming enslaved to the pursuit of wealth. Instead, use money for godly and eternal purposes. God offers us lasting treasure in Christ, and so a true perspective on money and goods. • Deliver us, Father, from the love of money, but increase our love for You and for one another. Amen.

LUKE—NOTE ON 16:14 *ridiculed*. They tried to deflect Jesus' criticism by sneering at Him and pointing out what they regarded as His faults.
LUKE—NOTE ON 16:15 *justify yourselves*. Establish their righteousness among themselves. *exalted … abomination*. His ways are not our ways (Is 55:8–9), and so people value the very things that God despises.
LUKE—NOTE ON 16:16 *Law and the Prophets*. The whole OT. *John*. Cf ch 3. *good news of the kingdom of God*. See note, 4:43. *forces his way into it*. Jesus seems to complain about the violent reaction people have to God's Word. The Pharisees abuse the proclamation of the Gospel (v 14), just as they abused the Law and the Prophets. They even rejected John, who prepared the way for God's rule in Christ.
LUKE—NOTE ON 16:17 Despite great opposition, God's Word will not fail. Jesus has come to fulfill "the Law or the Prophets" that others have abused (Mt 5:17).
LUKE—NOTE ON 16:14–17 It is tempting to lay aside the inconvenient portions of God's Law. Yet, every Word of God is precious and for our edification. Praise God, we do not need to justify ourselves. The good news of His kingdom releases us from sin and gives new life. • Lord, teach us to treasure the Law and the Gospel as Your good gifts, fulfilled for us in Christ Jesus. Amen.
LUKE—NOTE ON 16:18–17:10 This section points to the power of the Word and the blessings of faithful service. The particular topics likely flowed from Jesus' conflict with the Pharisees (16:14).
LUKE—NOTE ON 16:18 God intends marriage to be a permanent union (Mt 19:3–9) between one man and one woman (Gn 2:18–25).
LUKE—NOTE ON 16:18 Marital fidelity is to be preserved, for marriage is the blessing of a lifelong partnership. Pray for your spouse in the love of the heavenly Bridegroom, Jesus. His faithfulness avails for our forgiveness and salvation. • Sanctify our marriages, O blessed Savior. Amen.
LUKE—NOTE ON 16:19–31 Though some interpreters have regarded this story of Lazarus as a parable (perhaps because of dislike for v 23), the fact that Jesus used a personal name for a main character indicates a realistic situation.
LUKE—NOTE ON 16:19 *clothed in purple and fine linen*. A rich, royal woolen cloak worn over a delicate undergarment.

LUKE—NOTE ON 16:20 The feasting of the rich man and his friends made the gate a promising site for a beggar. *Lazarus*. Means "one whom God helps."
LUKE—NOTE ON 16:21 He is helpless to keep the dogs from his undressed wounds.
LUKE—NOTE ON 16:22 *carried by the angels*. Instantly, divine help appears where human aid had been lacking. *Abraham's side*. Lit, "Abraham's bosom." Perhaps the place of honor at the heavenly banquet (cf Mt 8:11; Jn 21:20).
LUKE—NOTE ON 16:23 *Hades, being in torment*. The rich man has completed his life and is tormented for his heartlessness. Though the story provides a glimpse of the afterlife, other passages of Scripture are needed to gain a clear and comprehensive teaching of that doctrine. See p 1609. *saw Abraham far off*. The man is isolated from God and His servants.
LUKE—NOTE ON 16:24 *send Lazarus*. Formerly neglected, he is now seen as a potential minister in need. *cool my tongue*. The thought of such minimal relief moves him to beg, so great is the torment. *flame*. As in Ps 106:18, flame burns up the wicked. Aug: "Proud in the world, in hell a beggar! For that poor man did attain to his crumbs; but the other attained not to the drop of water" (*NPNF* 1 6:426).
LUKE—NOTE ON 16:25 *Child*. Father Abraham does not disown him as his descendant. *comforted … anguish*. Contrasts between this life and eternal life, and how we perceive them, are the essence of the account.
LUKE—NOTE ON 16:26 *chasm … none may cross*. Nothing can bridge the gap after death (cf Heb 9:27).
LUKE—NOTE ON 16:27 *send him*. Again, the rich man needs the humble beggar from his gate.
LUKE—NOTE ON 16:28 *warn them*. Their repentance would be to merely try to avoid the brother's fate.
LUKE—NOTE ON 16:29 *They have Moses and the Prophets*. Repentance has already been demanded by the living God, a far higher authority than the brother who has died.
LUKE—NOTE ON 16:30 The rich man is hopeful but misjudges the stubbornness of human nature. Cf Dt 18:11; 1Sm 28:7.
LUKE—NOTE ON 16:31 Another Lazarus (Jn 11) did return from the dead. But not all witnesses were moved (Jn 11:45–53). Repentance and faith are wrought through the Word of God, not dramatic experiences. "The

reason some are not saved is as follows: They do not listen to God's Word at all, but willfully despise it, plug their ears, and harden their hearts. In this way they block the ordinary way [Luke 16:29–31] for the Holy Spirit so He cannot perform His work in them. Or, when they have heard God's Word, they make light of it again and ignore it. But their wickedness is responsible for this 'that they perish', not God or His election" (FC Ep XI 12).

LUKE—NOTE ON 16:19–31 Jesus challenges the belief that earthly blessings are a sign of God's eternal favor. He teaches us to heed the Word of God now while faithful mercy can be shown, for this is God's good and gracious will. • Lord, teach me to read and trust in Your gift of Moses, the Prophets, and all faithful witnesses to the Gospel. May my tongue speak now of Your grace for all who have ears to hear. Amen.

LUKE—NOTE ON 17:1 *woe*. See p 1080; see also note, Is 10:1.

LUKE—NOTE ON 17:2 *millstone*. See note, Jgs 9:53. *cause one of these little ones to sin*. Leading esp a young or immature believer to fall away from Christ. Even infants can believe or trust (cf 18:15), as shown by the way they long to be held by parents rather than by strangers. See note, 18:15.

LUKE—NOTE ON 17:3 *yourselves!* Each one bears responsibility for guiding the brother away from sin and for being ready to forgive. *rebuke*. Drawing attention to the sin is a loving warning. "Necessity requires one to speak of the evil, to prefer charges, to investigate, and to testify…. Governments, father and mother, brothers and sisters, and other good friends are under obligation to one another to rebuke evil wherever it is needful and profitable" (LC I 274–75). *if he repents, forgive him*. As God does the same.

LUKE—NOTE ON 17:4 *seven times*. Keep forgiving, as God likewise forgives you. Aug: "What then is 'seven times'? Always, as often as he shall sin and repent" (*NPNF* 1 6:452).

LUKE—NOTE ON 17:1–4 Disciples need to guard the faith of others with forgiveness and a helping hand. Exercise special care for the young and the young in faith. How ready God is to forgive, as He demonstrates in the love of Christ. • Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. Amen.

LUKE—NOTE ON 17:5 *apostles*. Note that v 1 has "disciples." At times, the terms are used interchangeably in Lk. See p 1901. *Increase our faith!* The disciples see they are unable to live up to the teaching of Jesus. The

Lord shows that faith is a quality more than a measured quantity. See "faith," p 1902.

LUKE—NOTE ON 17:6 *mustard seed*. See note, Mk 4:31. *mulberry tree*. A deep-rooted tree. *planted in the sea*. Faith is capable of otherwise impossible things. *it would obey you*. The unclean spirits (Mk 1:27) and the winds and water (Lk 8:25) were seen to obey Jesus, so faith connects the Christian to the power of God.

LUKE—NOTE ON 17:5–6 The tiniest faith accomplishes remarkable things. Like the apostles, we may feel a weakness in our faith. Today, pray for the Lord's strength. His gift of faith is anything but weak, and He will grant you strength to accomplish the impossible. • I believe; help my unbelief, O Lord. Increase my faith in You. Amen.

LUKE—NOTE ON 17:7 *servant*. Perhaps the household's only slave tending to outside and inside duties. *recline at table?* See note, Mt 8:11.

LUKE—NOTE ON 17:8 *dress properly*. Clothes worn for farm labor are replaced by those fit for waiting at table.

LUKE—NOTE ON 17:9 *Does he thank the servant*. Obviously not; a rhetorical question.

LUKE—NOTE ON 17:10 *We are unworthy servants*. Perfect service is a reasonable return to our Master, who deals mercifully with us and calls us to deal mercifully with others (vv 3–4). "These words clearly declare that God saves by mercy and because of His promise, not that it is due because of the value of our works" (Ap V 213).

LUKE—NOTE ON 17:7–10 We owe God our full service and truly can do Him no favors. God does not owe us thanks for our obedience. In Christ, He does not forever punish us for our disobedience but forgives us graciously. When He returns, we will eat and drink in His kingdom as He has served us. • Grant me a willing heart and able hands, O Lord, to render thanks to You and care to my neighbors. Amen.

LUKE—NOTE ON 17:11 Location not specified. See color map 4.

LUKE—NOTE ON 17:12 The law required the separation of lepers from the community (cf Lv 13).

LUKE—NOTE ON 17:13 *Master*. See note, 5:5. *have mercy*. Adopted in the Church's liturgy as a cry for salvation. See pp 842–43.

LUKE—NOTE ON 17:14 *show yourselves to the priests*. To verify the healing (Lv 14). *cleansed*. Lepers were regarded as "unclean" due to association with the death of the affected body parts.

LUKE—NOTE ON 17:15 *with a loud voice*. Began his praise from a distance.
LUKE—NOTE ON 17:16 *fell on his face*. See p 1276. Note that he praises God at Jesus' feet (see note, 8:39). *Samaritan*. The Jews despised the Samaritans because of historic betrayals and heretical beliefs. See p 1557.
LUKE—NOTE ON 17:17 Ingratitude is the response of the majority.
LUKE—NOTE ON 17:18 *foreigner?* United in their affliction, the Samaritan and Jewish lepers tolerated one another. Now the one least expected to associate with Jesus, a Jew, returns thanks.
LUKE—NOTE ON 17:19 *your faith has made you well*. See note, 7:50.
LUKE—NOTE ON 17:11–19 Jesus commends the faith of a Samaritan leper who alone gives thanks for his healing. Daily God's mercy extends to the unworthy—including you. Give praise to Him, who bore no grudge toward you but came to save you. • Thanks be to You, O God, as we go our way, made whole by Jesus. Amen.
LUKE—NOTE ON 17:20 *kingdom of God*. See pp 1565–66. *not coming with signs to be observed*. They searched in vain for the wrong kingdom (11:29).
LUKE—NOTE ON 17:21 *in the midst of you*. Christ, the King, was in their midst. Aug: "Let every one then wisely receive the admonitions of the Master, that he may not lose the season of the mercy of the Savior, which is now being dealt out, as long as the human race is spared. For to this end is man spared, that he may be converted, and that he may not [exist] to be condemned. God only knows when the end of the world shall come: nevertheless now is the time of faith" (*NPNF* 1 6:442).
LUKE—NOTE ON 17:22 *days are coming*. The days between the first and second comings of Jesus, when the Church waits longingly for His return.
LUKE—NOTE ON 17:23 Some still look for visible signs. See note, 11:29.
LUKE—NOTE ON 17:24 The Son of Man's return will be as evident as lightning that fills the sky.
LUKE—NOTE ON 17:25 As glorious as the Lord's return will be, deep will also be His humiliation and suffering, which must take place to atone for the sins of the world.
LUKE—NOTE ON 17:26 *days of Noah*. See note, Mt 24:37–39.
LUKE—NOTE ON 17:27–28 *marrying and being given in marriage*. Going about their lives, thinking "all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation" (2Pt 3:4).

LUKE—NOTE ON 17:28 Judgment of Sodom came while people were absorbed in their business.
LUKE—NOTE ON 17:29 *fire and sulfur rained*. Sudden and inescapable destruction.
LUKE—NOTE ON 17:30 *Son of Man*. See p 2098. *revealed*. On the Last Day, at His return.
LUKE—NOTE ON 17:31 The usefulness of goods will have passed.
LUKE—NOTE ON 17:32 *Lot's wife*. Example of destructive regret over leaving one's former life.
LUKE—NOTE ON 17:33 Some will cherish the present and miss life everlasting.
LUKE—NOTE ON 17:34–35 *One will be taken*. Only some will be taken to God in eternity. Cf Mt 25:31–46. The modern rapture doctrine is based on a misunderstanding of this passage and others. See note, 1Th 4:17.
LUKE—NOTE ON 17:37 *Where, Lord?* The Pharisees had asked "when" (v 20). The disciples want a location for the Kingdom, which shows they have not understood. See pp 1565–66. *corpse … vultures*. Snappy, ominous answer. The vultures' interest points unmistakably to the corpse, and similarly there will be no doubt about the second coming (cf v 24).
LUKE—NOTE ON 17:20–37 The kingdom of God will come unexpectedly, but surely, to all. Live in daily repentance rather than put off repentance or take confidence that you can discern the day of Christ's return. Take comfort that we can trust in the Son of Man, who suffered and was rejected for us, so that His Father would not reject us. • Come, Lord Jesus. Take Your people home. Amen.
LUKE—NOTE ON 18:1 *not lose heart*. They would soon be discouraged by their weaknesses and the death of Jesus, who urges them to prayer. Aug: "Faith pours out prayer, and the pouring out of prayer obtains the strengthening of faith…. So far temptation advances as faith gives way: and so far temptation gives way, as faith advances" (*NPNF* 1 6:454).
LUKE—NOTE ON 18:2 *neither feared God nor respected man*. Isolated in arrogance, the judge fears neither those above nor below him.
LUKE—NOTE ON 18:3 She was vulnerable because she had no companion to advocate for her (Ac 6:1; Jas 1:27). *Give me justice*. Her plea could include reparation for her as well as punishment of the wrongdoer.
LUKE—NOTE ON 18:4 Like the rich fool in ch 12, the judge does not share his thoughts with others.

LUKE—NOTE ON 18:5 Her persistence is the key feature of this parable.
LUKE—NOTE ON 18:6 The unrighteous judge himself gives the parable's application.
LUKE—NOTE ON 18:7 God is not an unrighteous judge. But if even an unrighteous man will give justice to the persistent, how much more will our righteous God do so? *elect*. See note, Rm 8:29; see also "chosen," p 1901.
LUKE—NOTE ON 18:8 *speedily*. The most decisive act of God in vindicating His elect, namely, Jesus' death and resurrection, was near. *Son of Man*. See p 2098. *will He find faith on earth?* Rhetorical question, urging faithfulness, which is the key ingredient in the prayers of the saints.
LUKE—NOTE ON 18:1–8 If even an unworthy judge responds to persistence, God certainly hears His people's faithful prayers. Pray without ceasing (1Th 5:17). God will answer speedily as He has promised in Christ. • Lord, grant me enduring faith and persistence in the face of every trouble. Amen.
LUKE—NOTE ON 18:9 *trusted in themselves*. Believing their lives were acceptable to God. On true righteousness, see p 1904.
LUKE—NOTE ON 18:10 *into the temple to pray*. For public prayers. See note, 24:53. *Pharisee*. See note, Mk 2:18. *tax collector*. See note, Mt 5:46.
LUKE—NOTE ON 18:11 Satirical. See p 1335. *not like other men*. Arrogant pride. Aug: "He had no mind to pray to God, but to laud himself" (*NPNF* 1 6:455). *like this tax collector*. Expresses disdain. The tax collector is placed in the same category as the other sinners in the verse because of his hated occupation. "He who prays for grace in this way does not rely upon God's mercy and treats Christ with disrespect" (Ap V 211).
LUKE—NOTE ON 18:12 *fast twice a week*. Not demanded by the OT. *tithes*. See note, 11:42.
LUKE—NOTE ON 18:13 Knowing his inadequacy before God, he seeks a God who saves rather than condemns.
LUKE—NOTE ON 18:14 *justified*. To be declared righteous and therefore acceptable to God. See p 1903. *who humbles himself … exalted*. Only the humble would pray for and receive God's forgiveness (Pr 15:33; 16:18).
LUKE—NOTE ON 18:9–14 The Pharisee excludes himself from God's gift of righteousness, while the penitent tax collector embraces it. Today, beware of the complacency of measuring your goodness against others. Measure yourself against God's standards—then repent. God is ready to

justify the worst of sinners by His generous grace in Christ. • God, be merciful to me, a sinner. Amen.

LUKE—NOTE ON 18:15 *infants*. Very youngest children, unable to make independent decisions. However, see note, 17:2. *touch*. For blessing. See notes, Gn 48:14; Ex 30:29; Mt 14:36; Mk 5:23. "We bring the child in the conviction and hope that it believes, and we pray that God may grant it faith [Luke 17:2; Ephesians 2:8]. But we do not baptize it for that reason, but solely because of God's command. Why? Because we know that God does not lie [Titus 1:2]. I and my neighbor and, in short, all people, may err and deceive. But God's Word cannot err" (LC IV 57). *rebuked*. Likely, they regarded babies as unworthy of the Lord's attention.

LUKE—NOTE ON 18:16 *to such belongs the kingdom*. The kingdom of God comes to all who humbly trust the Lord, no matter what their age or status (1Co 1:27–29). *belongs*. Just as an infant may inherit the parents' blessings and property, so any person may receive the inheritance of God's kingdom—salvation. Grace, faith, and everlasting life are gifts of God. See note, Eph 2:8–9.

LUKE—NOTE ON 18:17 Children have to trust and receive the care of others, and only in the same way does the kingdom of God come to us.

LUKE—NOTE ON 18:15–17 Jesus includes children in His kingdom and teaches that we must be like them to enter the kingdom. No one has a greater claim to the kingdom than a newly baptized infant, whom Jesus welcomes with loving arms—that is grace. • Give us grace to receive Your kingdom, O Lord, as babies welcome and trust their parents' loving arms. Amen.

LUKE—NOTE ON 18:18–30 The rich ruler, a powerful and capable man, stands in contrast to the helpless infants of vv 15–17.

LUKE—NOTE ON 18:18 *ruler*. Perhaps a leader in the synagogue. See note, 8:41. *Teacher*. See note, Mt 8:19. *inherit eternal life?* Eternal life is a gracious gift inherited, not earned. See note, v 16.

LUKE—NOTE ON 18:19 *No one is good except God alone*. Jesus points to a perfect goodness—His own—which the ruler does not yet understand.

LUKE—NOTE ON 18:20 The Commandments give more guidance and demand more perfection than the man realizes. See note, Mt 19:18–19.

LUKE—NOTE ON 18:21 *All these I have kept*. According to his standard.

LUKE—NOTE ON 18:22 See note, Mt 19:21.

LUKE—NOTE ON 18:23 *became very sad*. Because he was unwilling to accept Jesus' great challenge.
LUKE—NOTE ON 18:24–25 The teaching about the camel sounds like exaggeration, but it is literally true that no one can overcome the obstacles to entering the kingdom of God. The comparison has a humorous quality. See p 1335.
LUKE—NOTE ON 18:26 *who can be saved?* Because wealth and status were seen as signs of God's favor, the disciples wondered what hope there was for the poor.
LUKE—NOTE ON 18:27 See note, Mt 19:26.
LUKE—NOTE ON 18:28 Peter is anxious to know that their sacrifice has been adequate.
LUKE—NOTE ON 18:29–30 Degree of their sacrifice, though great by our standards, does not compare to the greatness of heavenly blessings.
LUKE—NOTE ON 18:30 *receive many times more*. Cf 1Co 3:14. Believers opened their homes and hearts to one another as members of the family of faith.
LUKE—NOTE ON 18:18–30 Wealth, works, and personal sacrifice cannot save. However, any sacrifice made for God's kingdom is amply compensated in this life and in the life to come. Heaven is our inheritance by our loving Father's grace alone. Yet, in generosity, He will also reward us as we care for one another here. • The blessings You give, generous Father, are impossibly out of our reach. Lift us up by the grace of Your Son, our Savior, that we may receive all You have prepared for us. Amen.
LUKE—NOTE ON 18:31 *Son of Man*. See p 2098. *accomplished*. Lit, "ended." The prophecies were not completed until their fulfillment in Christ.
LUKE—NOTE ON 18:32 *delivered over*. Not only by Judas and the high priest, but also by the plan of God (22:22).
LUKE—NOTE ON 18:33 *he will rise*. When Jesus predicts His sufferings, He also affirms the resurrection. This was not understood (v 34) until after the event (24:6–11).
LUKE—NOTE ON 18:34 *hidden*. Had they been alert to messianic prophecies (e.g., Is 53; Ps 22), the course of Jesus' mission might have seemed obvious. In the next event, vv 35–43, they still did not grasp the nature of God's kingdom

LUKE—NOTE ON 18:31–34 As in ch 9, Jesus explains the culmination of His ministry in suffering, death, and resurrection. Today, do not settle for a glorious vision of Jesus that does not include the cross. God has fulfilled His glorious promises of prophecy in His Son. Jesus retains His scars (24:40) as pledges of His love for you. • Let not sin shield our eyes, O Father, from the truth of Jesus, who bore the cross to be our Savior. Amen.
LUKE—NOTE ON 18:35–43 Last miracle before Jesus enters Jerusalem. Significantly, it is an account that is colored with expressions about the Messiah. As in 18:1–8, persistence in prayer is answered.
LUKE—NOTE ON 18:35 Blindness at that time precluded regular work, so he depended on others' generosity.
LUKE—NOTE ON 18:36 From the noise, he knows there is a crowd, but not why.
LUKE—NOTE ON 18:37 Jesus is described by His hometown, which cannot explain who He truly is.
LUKE—NOTE ON 18:38 *Son of David*. See note, Mt 1:1. *mercy on me!* See note, Lk 17:13.
LUKE—NOTE ON 18:39 *rebuked*. As with the children in v 15, the blind man was considered unworthy of Christ's attention. People likely viewed his condition as evidence of sin (cf Jn 9:2).
LUKE—NOTE ON 18:41 *What do you want Me to do for you?* See note, Mt 20:32. *Lord*. Ambiguous title; it could mean no more than "Sir," but it is also used in the LXX to translate God's name. The wording provokes the reader to consider who Jesus is.
LUKE—NOTE ON 18:42 See note, 7:50.
LUKE—NOTE ON 18:43 *followed*. Characteristic verb of discipleship.
LUKE—NOTE ON 18:35–43 A blind beggar overcomes the crowd and cries for sight. Today, persist in prayer and in faith. Jesus, great David's greater Son, brings health and salvation to all who believe. • Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me! Let me see You clearly and confess You truly. Amen.
LUKE—NOTE ON 19:1–2 *entered Jericho*. Having restored the blind beggar's sight, Jesus now rescues Zacchaeus, who is lost in his wealth. Cf 18:22.
LUKE—NOTE ON 19:2 *chief tax collector*. Zacchaeus was supervisor over Jericho, a principal location for collecting customs on goods passing east

and west. See note, Mt 5:46. *rich*. He used his position for his own benefit. Cf v 8.
LUKE—NOTE ON 19:3 *seeking*. He was curious, having heard about Jesus. Though Zacchaeus was looking, it is Jesus who found him.
LUKE—NOTE ON 19:4 *sycamore tree*. See note, Am 7:14.
LUKE—NOTE ON 19:5 *I must stay at your house*. "Must" implies God required this. Jesus has found the seeker and extends mercy to the despised tax collector by asking to stay with him.
LUKE—NOTE ON 19:6 *received Him joyfully*. The coming of Jesus was a sign of fellowship and forgiveness. See p 1718.
LUKE—NOTE ON 19:7 *they all grumbled*. Others likely hoped to have the great Teacher as their guest. Some thought that for Jesus to eat with such a man as Zacchaeus was to become a partner with him in his sins. See note, Mk 2:16.
LUKE—NOTE ON 19:8 *half of my goods I give to the poor*. His words and actions show true repentance. Cf 3:10–14. *defrauded … fourfold*. Past extortion is not in doubt.
LUKE—NOTE ON 19:9 *salvation has come*. See p 843. The coming of Jesus means the lost Zacchaeus has been sought and now found. *son of Abraham*. A descendant of Abraham and now a "true" son through faith in Jesus. See note, Rm 4:16.
LUKE—NOTE ON 19:10 The whole reason God's Son became incarnate and was on His way to Jerusalem.
LUKE—NOTE ON 19:1–10 Jesus saves Zacchaeus by visiting him with mercy. Followers of Jesus dare never begrudge the mercy others have received. The Gospel can save one sinner who repents just as well as another. The saving love of Jesus seeks and reaches out to all people. • Lord, in Your name, we welcome all who repent and share in the forgiveness we have received. Grant us willing hearts to share the Gospel freely. Amen.
LUKE—NOTE ON 19:11–27 Parable recalls when Archelaus, the son of Herod the Great, went to Rome to be confirmed by Caesar as king. (Archelaus ruled 4 BC–AD 6.) A delegation of Jews also went to Rome to protest the appointment. Caesar still appointed Archelaus as king, but he gave him a smaller kingdom. In the parable, Jesus teaches that by His death, resurrection, and ascension, He will gain His kingship. Though the world will protest His reign, Jesus' disciples are to use the gifts entrusted to them

faithfully. At Jesus' return, He will punish those who have opposed His gracious rule.

LUKE—NOTE ON 19:11 *these things*. Words spoken in Zacchaeus's house, to which He now adds the parable about kingship. *near to Jerusalem*. Jericho was c 15 mi NE of Jerusalem. See color map 4. *the kingdom of God was to appear immediately*. The hearers expected that God's kingdom would come instantly in glory as Jesus took Jerusalem away from the Romans. See note, 9:21.

LUKE—NOTE ON 19:12 *nobleman*. Lit, "well-born." Certainly applies to Jesus: descended from David and the Son of God, conceived by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary.

LUKE—NOTE ON 19:13 *ten minas*. See ESV note. *Engage in business*. The servants are being tested to prepare them for greater responsibilities when the nobleman returns.

LUKE—NOTE ON 19:14 *hated*. The same hostility of those who rejected Jesus, placing Him on the cross. *delegation*. See note, vv 11–27.

LUKE—NOTE ON 19:15 *received the kingdom*. Rejection by his enemies did not prevent the nobleman from receiving the kingship. *that he might know*. He inquires as to their faithful use of his gifts.

LUKE—NOTE ON 19:16 *your mina has made*. What Jesus gives, rather than the servant's skill, produces the increase. Luth: "[Jesus] wants nothing to be offered but the gift which was received; nothing is to be taught except the word of God; nothing is to be done except what God works in us…. We are stewards not of our own riches, but of the manifold grace of God" (AE 44:379).

LUKE—NOTE ON 19:17 He proved himself faithful in the king's service, so the reward is great service, proportional to his success.

LUKE—NOTE ON 19:18 Though there are differences in what the servants accomplish, what the king requires is faithfulness.

LUKE—NOTE ON 19:19 See note, v 17.

LUKE—NOTE ON 19:20 Three servants who are rewarded may represent the responses of all 10 (v 13). *laid away in a handkerchief*. Luth: "Whoever teaches the Word of God correctly … does not lay the Word down in his napkin, as a lazy slave does…. He keeps it in use" (AE 28:321).

LUKE—NOTE ON 19:21 *severe*. Strict, exacting. The charge, however, was wrong, because the king was generous to the other servants (vv 17, 19).

LUKE—NOTE ON 19:22 *with your own words*. Luth: "By excusing himself he accuses himself" (AE 1:274).
LUKE—NOTE ON 19:23 *bank*. Tables of money changers. This procedure would have taken little effort, had little risk, and would have given a decent return.
LUKE—NOTE ON 19:24 *those who stood by*. Represents the attendants of the heavenly King, namely, the angels.
LUKE—NOTE ON 19:26 *I tell you*. A principle to answer v 25. Be faithful with whatever amount is given or face the loss of all, even the little, you have.
LUKE—NOTE ON 19:27 *these enemies of mine*. Ignoring the third servant, Jesus speaks of those who continued to reject Him and oppose the preaching of His Word. *slaughter them before me*. The final judgment that ends all rebellion against the king.
LUKE—NOTE ON 19:11–27 Our returning King will abolish all opposition to His kingdom and will honor those who faithfully served Him. Never take God's Word for granted, hoarding the gifts you have received. Christ calls you to share His Word faithfully, and He is ever generous and merciful toward you. His gifts work effectively in your life, and, through you, in the lives of others. • Grant, O generous Lord, that we may always remain faithful in our stewardship of Your gifts. Amen.
LUKE—NOTE ON 19:28 Jesus travels as a king going to His coronation (cf v 11). *He went on ahead*. Perhaps drawing away from the crowds who attended Him at Jericho. The road to Jerusalem is very steep. See color map 4.
LUKE—NOTE ON 19:29 *Bethphage*. Village on the Mount of Olives c 1 mi from the Jerusalem temple. *Bethany*. Village on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives, c 2 mi from Jerusalem. See color map 4.
LUKE—NOTE ON 19:30 Jesus intentionally sought to fulfill Zec 9:9. *you will find*. Jesus may have made prearrangements, or, more likely, used His divine knowledge to give direction. *no one has ever yet sat*. Animals that had not been used were esp appropriate for holy purposes (cf Nu 19:2; 1Sm 6:7). See note, Mk 11:2.
LUKE—NOTE ON 19:31 *The Lord*. The owners either knew Jesus or knew of Him.
LUKE—NOTE ON 19:33–34 Just as Jesus had spoken, so it happened.

LUKE—NOTE ON 19:35–36 See notes, Mt 21:7–8. Jesus enters royally, but not as a military hero (see note, 1Ki 1:33).
LUKE—NOTE ON 19:37 *Mount of Olives*. The mount named in the prophecy of the Lord's coming (Zec 14:4). *began to rejoice*. The praise increases at the crest of the mount as Jerusalem comes into view. See diagram, pp 1690–91. *mighty works*. Esp the healing of the blind man (18:35–43) and the raising of Lazarus (Jn 11).
LUKE—NOTE ON 19:38 Many from Jerusalem, hearing of His approach, met Jesus. They sang the words used to greet pilgrims entering Jerusalem. Yet, they welcomed Jesus as the messianic King. *Peace in heaven*. God is reconciled to us in Christ (Rm 5:1).
LUKE—NOTE ON 19:39 *Teacher*. In Lk, Jesus' opponents often used this title for Him (7:40; 20:21, 28, 39). See note, Mt 8:19.
LUKE—NOTE ON 19:40 The rhetorical reply challenged the Pharisees' silence. Even nature yearns for the coming salvation of the world (Rm 8:19–22).
LUKE—NOTE ON 19:28–40 Jesus fulfills OT prophecy and is acclaimed the messianic King. Take joy in the reign of your Savior, who answers prayers with wonder and grants abiding peace. • "O Lord, how shall I meet You, How welcome You aright? Your people long to greet You, My hope, my heart's delight!" Amen. (*LSB* 334:1)
LUKE—NOTE ON 19:41 Jesus weeps only here and when Lazarus died. Opposite the rejoicing crowd, Jesus wept for the city because He saw its coming destruction. See note, v 43.
LUKE—NOTE ON 19:42 *Would that*. Depicts strong emotion. Jesus knew how short-lived the celebration will be. He would be dead before the end of the week. *things that make for peace!* Events related to God's gracious visitation in His Son.
LUKE—NOTE ON 19:43 *the days will come*. Jerusalem would be utterly destroyed by Rome (AD 70).
LUKE—NOTE ON 19:44 *you did not know the time of your visitation*. They ignored or misunderstood God's gracious visit in His Son.
LUKE—NOTE ON 19:41–44 Jesus weeps over Jerusalem's present blindness and future fate. His heart still breaks for those who have not yet received His Word. Pray for your family, friends, and neighbors, that they would receive Jesus, who came in compassion to seek and save the lost. • "Ride on, ride on in majesty! In lowly pomp ride on to die. Bow Thy meek

head to mortal pain, Then take, O God, Thy pow'r and reign." Amen. (*LSB* 441:5)

LUKE—NOTE ON 19:45 Jesus came to the temple "like a refiner's fire" (Mal 3:2). *those who sold*. See note, Mt 21:12.

LUKE—NOTE ON 19:46 The pilgrims were being cheated; the exchange rates were tantamount to robbery. Cf Mt 21:12–13.

LUKE—NOTE ON 19:47 The temple, prominent in chs 1–2, is the scene of Jesus' final messages (19:47–21:38). *chief priests*. The high priest, ex high priests, and other temple officers, mostly Sadducees. *scribes*. See note, Mt 2:4. *principal men*. Laymen, heads of some of the ancient families. These three groups formed the supreme Jewish Council (also called the Sanhedrin). See p 1556.

LUKE—NOTE ON 19:48 *people were hanging on His words*. Proof of the gripping power of Jesus' teaching and the anticipation that something great was happening (see note, v 11).

LUKE—NOTE ON 19:45–48 Jesus goes directly to the temple to cleanse it for proper services: the hearing of God's Word. Today, beware of worldly distractions from the Lord's Word. Hang on to it, for Jesus cleanses our hearts by faith in His Holy Word. • Cleanse us, O Savior, from everything that would separate us from Your Holy Word and Your gracious reign. Amen.

LUKE—NOTE ON 20:1 Jesus, having cleansed the temple court (see diagram, p 1690), now teaches in it, identifying Himself with it and His Father. *preaching the gospel*. The truths of the kingdom of God (cf 4:18, 43; 7:22; 8:1; 9:6; 16:16). *chief priests … scribes … elders*. See note, 19:47.

LUKE—NOTE ON 20:2 The priests and Levites had divine appointment (Lv 8; Nu 1:47–54). Likewise, the Pharisees legitimately taught the people (Mt 23:2). Elders had always counseled God's people (see note, Ex 3:16). These leaders raise a natural and proper question, but in circumstances that point to their failure to exercise their authority rightly by holding to God's Word.

LUKE—NOTE ON 20:3 To answer a question with a question was a typical rabbinic rhetorical practice.

LUKE—NOTE ON 20:4 *baptism of John*. The authority of John and Jesus belong together from their births. See note, 3:3. *from heaven or from man?* See note, Mt 21:24–25.

LUKE—NOTE ON 20:5 To admit that John was a true prophet would condemn themselves because they had rejected God's spokesman.

LUKE—NOTE ON 20:6 *stone us*. Punishment for blasphemy. *John was a prophet*. In contrast to these leaders, John proved faithful and true, including his prophecy about Jesus (3:16).

LUKE—NOTE ON 20:7 They pleaded ignorance, even though it was their duty to give instruction on such basic issues. In a debate, this pushed the question back toward the one who raised it.

LUKE—NOTE ON 20:8 *Neither will I tell you*. Jesus sharply ended the debate because they forfeited any right to have their original question answered.

LUKE—NOTE ON 20:1–8 Jesus would not allow detractors to take away His right to teach in the temple. His teaching still commands authority

and priority today over all other teaching. Subject all things to His reign and the wisdom of His Word. Pray for bold faith that rightly honors Christ and His prophets. He claims you as His holy temple, that He may rule your heart in forgiveness, peace, and love. • " 'Hosanna in the highest!' That ancient song we sing; For Christ is our Redeemer, The Lord of heav'n our King. Oh, may we ever praise Him With heart and life and voice And in His blissful presence Eternally rejoice!" Amen. (*LSB* 443:3)

LUKE—NOTE ON 20:9–15 The owner is God, the vineyard is Israel, the tenants are the religious leaders, the servants are the prophets, and the beloved son is Jesus. The parable's background fits absentee landlord arrangements of the first century. The point is not the vineyard's productivity but the caretaker's actions.

LUKE—NOTE ON 20:10 *time came*. To collect the rent at harvest. *beat him*. Symbolizes Israel's rejection of the prophets.

LUKE—NOTE ON 20:11 *he sent another*. Note God's patience. See note, Mt 21:36. *treated him shamefully*. They added insult to the violence.

LUKE—NOTE ON 20:12 Crescendo of abuse.

LUKE—NOTE ON 20:13 *beloved son*. Jesus (cf 3:22; 9:35), God's last and most gracious attempt to win over His people. *respect him*. See note, Mt 21:37.

LUKE—NOTE ON 20:14 *the inheritance may be ours*. Because the son/heir would be dead. They failed to reckon with any subsequent action by the owner.

LUKE—NOTE ON 20:15 *out of the vineyard*. Jesus' crucifixion outside Jerusalem. *What then*. Jesus shatters the assumption of the owner's permanent absence.

LUKE—NOTE ON 20:16 *to others*. Not the old religious establishment (cf Ac 13:46–47). *Surely not!* Expression used frequently by Paul, but only here in the Gospels. See note, Rm 3:4.

LUKE—NOTE ON 20:17 Jesus cites Ps 118:22 in speaking of the Messiah's rejection, but He also points to the resurrection. The events of the next few days will answer His question. *stone … cornerstone?* Jesus, rejected by official Israel, is exalted by God, who builds His Church on Jesus as the "Church's one foundation" (*LSB* 644:1).

LUKE—NOTE ON 20:18 Jesus uses OT imagery to speak of the inevitable judgment. The image of the stone is twofold: one may stumble over it or be crushed by it. All who reject Christ will feel its sharpness and pain.

LUKE—NOTE ON 20:9–18 By parable and psalm, Jesus warns against rejecting the Messiah. God's mission in Christ will succeed; we reject it at our great peril. Despite all opposition, God will build His Church on the crucified and resurrected Jesus. • O God, grant that we may always build our heavenly hope on the one sure cornerstone You have provided, our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.
LUKE—NOTE ON 20:19 *scribes … chief priests*. Some of the same opponents as in 19:47. See pp 1556–57. *lay hands on Him*. They cannot because, again, the people support Jesus (cf 18:43; 20:6).
LUKE—NOTE ON 20:20 *authority and jurisdiction of the governor*. Unable to overcome Jesus by themselves, they turn to the Romans' power.
LUKE—NOTE ON 20:21 *Teacher*. In Lk, only strangers and critics use this title for Jesus (vv 28, 39). See note, Mt 8:19. *rightly … no partiality … way of God*. They flatter Jesus to entrap Him in a bold statement.
LUKE—NOTE ON 20:22 *lawful*. Jewish religious law. *tribute to Caesar*. A Roman-imposed poll tax, detested by the Jews, because it marked them as subjects of Rome. If Jesus says yes, He could lose the support of the people; if He says no, His opponents would have a charge to take before Pilate.
LUKE—NOTE ON 20:24 See note, Mt 22:19–20.
LUKE—NOTE ON 20:25 One's loyalty to God can exist with loyalty to earthly authority, but the state's claims can never usurp God's claims. See note, Mt 22:21.
LUKE—NOTE ON 20:26 Even his opponents admit His victory as they retreat in silence.
LUKE—NOTE ON 20:19–26 Jesus outwits His opponents and teaches the proper relationship between earthly authority and God. Not even the legitimate claims of government usurp our loyalty to God. Jesus' perfect allegiance to His Father brought the state's condemnation, that He might forgive our divided allegiance. • Lord, grant that we may serve You faithfully as citizens in this world. Amen.
LUKE—NOTE ON 20:27 *Sadducees*. In Lk, mentioned only here. *deny that there is a resurrection*. See p 1557.
LUKE—NOTE ON 20:28 See note, Mt 22:24. *Teacher*. See note, v 21.
LUKE—NOTE ON 20:29–33 Extreme example to attempt to make the resurrection look ridiculous.
LUKE—NOTE ON 20:33 *whose wife*. None of the brothers in the example had begotten an heir or had an enduring marriage with her.

LUKE—NOTE ON 20:34 *sons of this age*. People living in the present world.
LUKE—NOTE ON 20:35 *considered worthy*. Through repentance and faith, they have entered God's kingdom. *neither marry nor are given in marriage*. The question is irrelevant; in heaven, people neither marry nor remarry, die nor give birth.
LUKE—NOTE ON 20:36 *equal to angels*. Possessing an endless heavenly glory. *sons of God … sons of the resurrection*. The sad brothers and the widow, who had no heir, inherit God's kingdom and the joyous benefits of the resurrection.
LUKE—NOTE ON 20:37–38 The Sadducees had referred to Moses; Jesus does the same as He points to Ex 3:6, 15 to affirm the resurrection. God had said, "I am the God of …" Though at Moses' time the patriarchs were long dead, God identifies Himself as being their God. Only living people can have a God; therefore, if He is their God, they are alive, their souls are with Him, and their bodies will be raised.
LUKE—NOTE ON 20:39 *scribes*. See note, Mt 2:4.
LUKE—NOTE ON 20:40 *no longer*. This ended their questions, but now Jesus would examine them.
LUKE—NOTE ON 20:27–40 Jesus demonstrates that the Lord is the God of the living. The patriarchs, though dead from an earthly perspective, are still alive with God. Our human reason dare not come between us and God's sure promises. Jesus' certain resurrection shows that He is our living God and hope of life. • I praise You, Lord of life, for the resurrection promised in Your Word. Grant me faithfulness unto the Last Day. Amen.
LUKE—NOTE ON 20:41 Jesus takes the initiative and questions the scribes, who believed the Messiah was only David's earthly son. *Christ is David's son?* See note, Mk 12:35.
LUKE—NOTE ON 20:42–43 In the psalm, David sees his "Lord" invited by God, "the Lord," to exercise all divine majesty and power. See note, Ps 110:1. Luth: "Here, as nowhere else in the Old Testament Scriptures, we find a clear and powerful description of His person—who he is, namely, both David's promised Son according to the flesh and God's eternal Son" (AE 13:228).
LUKE—NOTE ON 20:42 *right hand*. Place of honor and authority. See p 843.

LUKE—NOTE ON 20:44 By the incarnation, David's descendant possesses greater authority than David. The eternal Son of God became David's Son when He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary.

LUKE—NOTE ON 20:41–44 Only the incarnation can answer Jesus' question. He is both man, David's son, and God, David's Lord. Reason dare not reduce the truths of Scripture. David's son has become our Lord through His death and resurrection, and the Father has exalted Jesus to His right hand. • "Hail him, ye heirs of David's line, Whom David Lord did call, The God incarnate, man divine, And crown Him Lord of all." Amen. (*LSB* 549:4)

LUKE—NOTE ON 20:46 *Beware of the scribes*. Generally, as allies of the Pharisees, they opposed Jesus. See note, Mt 2:4. *long robes*. Ornate garments worn by dignitaries on special occasions. *marketplaces*. Where people are seen and greeted. *best seats*. Benches in the synagogue before the platform. *places of honor*. Next to the host. See note, v 42.

LUKE—NOTE ON 20:47 *devour widows' houses*. Scribes were often appointed as widows' advisors or agents, mishandling the property to their advantage. *long prayers*. To appear more pious and impressive. See note, Mt 6:7.

LUKE—NOTE ON 20:45–47 Jesus warns His disciples not to be impressed by the scribes' display. Do not practice the faith simply to impress others. In contrast, for your salvation, Jesus "made Himself nothing, taking the form of a servant…. He humbled Himself" (Php 2:7–8). • Lord, grant me the humility and mind of Christ. Amen.

LUKE—NOTE ON 21:1 Jesus sat teaching in an outer court of the temple, where He could see the rich making their contributions. *offering box*. One of the 13 trumpet-shaped collection boxes in the court of the women that received offerings for the temple worship.

LUKE—NOTE ON 21:2 *poor widow*. Alone, she was virtually penniless. *copper coins*. Smallest coins in use.

LUKE—NOTE ON 21:3–4 *you*. The disciples with Jesus. *more*. In God's eyes, who notes her sacrifice. *all … all … all*. Note the emphasis. God deals in wholes, not fractions.

LUKE—NOTE ON 21:1–4 Jesus highlights the widow in order to teach what God values. Our giving reflects our priorities. "For you know the

grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that you by His poverty might become rich" (2Co 8:9). • Lord, open our hearts by Your generous goodness. Amen.

LUKE—NOTE ON 21:5–36 Jesus concludes by prophesying the destruction of the temple and the city and the end of the world. Although separate in time, Jerusalem's destruction foreshadows the final judgment. See p 1258; see also note, Mk 13.

LUKE—NOTE ON 21:5 Herod the Great renovated the temple. The third-century Roman historian Tacitus described it as "immensely opulent." *adorned with noble stones and offerings*. Some marble columns were higher than 40 ft. Ornaments included tapestries, golden and bronze doors, and golden grape clusters.

LUKE—NOTE ON 21:6 *the days will come*. Destruction by the Romans in AD 70. *thrown down*. Devastation would be complete; no part of the temple remains today, only a retaining wall of the outer court (the West Wall).

LUKE—NOTE ON 21:7 *Teacher*. See note, Mt 8:19. *sign*. Portend or miracle.

LUKE—NOTE ON 21:8 *not led astray*. Many false prophets were coming; discernment would be needed. *My name*. Claiming to be Christ's representatives or Christ Himself. *I am He!* "I am the Messiah whose return was promised!"

LUKE—NOTE ON 21:9 *these things*. Events of vv 6–8. *the end will not be at once*. The destruction of Jerusalem would foreshadow the distant end of the world.

LUKE—NOTE ON 21:5–9 Jesus prepares His disciples for the temple's destruction and the final judgment. Do not be so impressed with the world's splendor that you lose sight of the eternal. Jesus, our true temple, was laid low in the grave but rose again so we can live fearlessly. • Lord, keep our hearts fixed on You, that as we pass through things temporal, we do not lose what is eternal. Amen.

LUKE—NOTE ON 21:10 These signs lead up to the destruction of the temple (AD 70); similar signs will occur before the end of the world (v 25).

LUKE—NOTE ON 21:11 Jesus speaks of natural disasters and physical disturbances. The historian Josephus reported such events before the destruction of the temple.

LUKE—NOTE ON 21:12 Before Jerusalem's fall, the disciples will have to endure various persecutions because they are Christians (1Pt 4:12).

LUKE—NOTE ON 21:13 Persecution provides an opportunity to proclaim Jesus publicly (Ac 4:1–12; 5:17–32; 26).
LUKE—NOTE ON 21:14–15 Jesus reassures the disciples that God will protect and provide for them in tribulation. Through the Holy Spirit, He will provide irrefutable words and thoughts. Hus: "He it is who feeds his sheep by his word and example and by the food of His body…. He is the bishop holding supreme guardianship over his flock, because he sleeps not nor is he, that watches over Israel, weary" (*The Church*, p 120).
LUKE—NOTE ON 21:16 *delivered up*. People will hand them over just as Jesus was handed over by Judas.
LUKE—NOTE ON 21:17 *by all*. Hyperbole, an exaggeration for the sake of emphasis (Ac 2:47; 3:9), but strongly emphasizing that Jesus' followers will experience persecution.
LUKE—NOTE ON 21:18 Proverbial statement of God's protection.
LUKE—NOTE ON 21:19 *endurance*. Luth: "You are children of the kingdom, your sins are forgiven, the devil has been overcome and laid low under your feet, sin and death will do you no harm; but you are blameless. Therefore bear the hostile curses with equanimity" (AE 5:146.)
LUKE—NOTE ON 21:10–19 The disciples will endure various persecutions along with Jerusalem's fall. Today, when put to the test, we cannot rely on our own strength. Jesus promises guidance in the persecutions His disciples face. He is our strength in the midst of all trials. • Lord, give us Your wisdom to bear witness in every persecution. Amen.
LUKE—NOTE ON 21:20–24 Jerusalem's destruction is a preview of the world's end.
LUKE—NOTE ON 21:20 Rome's encirclement meant Jerusalem's end was near. The city was leveled in AD 70, with much of its population killed.
LUKE—NOTE ON 21:21 Three warnings: *flee to the mountains*. Where there was a better chance of survival. *depart*. The Church historian Eusebius reported that Christians in Jerusalem found refuge at Pella, a small town near the Sea of Galilee. See map, p 1576. *not … enter*. Those outside Jerusalem should not seek protection in the doomed city.
LUKE—NOTE ON 21:22 *days of vengeance*. God's judgment for failure to receive His Messiah (13:35; 19:43–44). *fulfill all that is written*. Prophets had issued many warnings over the centuries (Jer 6:8; Mi 3:12; Zec 14:1).
LUKE—NOTE ON 21:23 *Alas for women*. Parents will face additional tragedy. *this people*. Israel, but ultimately all people (v 35).

LUKE—NOTE ON 21:24 *fall by the … sword and be led captive*. First-century historian Flavius Josephus states that more than a million died and 97,000 were carried away captive. *times of the Gentiles are fulfilled*. Period of Gentile domination of Jerusalem. Still today, large portions of the city are inhabited by people of non-Jewish descent.

LUKE—NOTE ON 21:20–24 Jesus foretells Jerusalem's destruction, pointing ahead to the judgment of all the world. God's impending judgment cannot be ignored. However, we can face the judgment unafraid, because Jesus has already borne God's vengeance for our sakes and takes away the cause of judgment: our sins. • Lord, keep us ever watchful and repentant until Your return. Amen.

LUKE—NOTE ON 21:25 Jesus focuses more directly on the events relating to the end of the world. *signs*. Cosmic events (eclipses, comets) and earthly events (storms, tidal waves) prepare for the ultimate catastrophe; creation itself is torn apart. *nations in perplexity*. Worldwide confusion at these events.

LUKE—NOTE ON 21:26 Reaction moves from confusion to fear. *powers of the heavens*. The heavenly bodies.

LUKE—NOTE ON 21:27 *Son of Man coming*. The visible return of the crucified and glorified Christ. See p 2098. *cloud*. Indicates the glory associated with God (Ex 40:34; Ac 1:9).

LUKE—NOTE ON 21:28 *raise your heads*. Confident expectation of a blessed event. *redemption*. Deliverance from all forces of sin and evil. See p 843.

LUKE—NOTE ON 21:25–28 Jesus points to signs preceding His return. Today, fear and uncertainty should lead us to focus on His redemption. Pray earnestly for that day. Jesus' return brings us full deliverance from all evil of this world. • Lord, keep us always expectant as we anticipate Your return. Amen.

LUKE—NOTE ON 21:29–30 *fig tree*. See note, Mk 13:28.

LUKE—NOTE ON 21:29 *and all the trees*. Anywhere there are trees, people will understand.

LUKE—NOTE ON 21:31 *these things*. Associated with Christ's return (cf vv 25–26). *know that the kingdom of God is near*. Esp when Christ returns in glory.

LUKE—NOTE ON 21:32 *this generation*. Those who receive the signs of vv 25–26. Used nine times in Lk, always of an unbelieving portion of

humanity.
LUKE—NOTE ON 21:33 All material things will perish. But the Word of Jesus, who created all things, is everlasting. “He is not a mere man or angel, neither is He just true, wise, and mighty, but He is the eternal Truth and Wisdom itself and Almighty God. He knows very well what and how He is to speak. He can also powerfully effect and do everything that He says and promises” (FC SD VII 43).
LUKE—NOTE ON 21:29–33 Jesus points to the sure coming of God’s kingdom through the budding of a fig tree, and He promises that His teachings will abide forever. Do not ignore the sure signs and words of His coming. More firm than this creation is His promise of return and new creation for you. • Lord, give us eyes to see the signs of Your coming kingdom and hearts to trust Your abiding Word. Amen.
LUKE—NOTE ON 21:34 Jesus warns His followers about being dulled by worldly concerns. *dissipation*. Used only here in the NT; lit, a “drinking bout,” but generally the distractions of daily life (8:14; 12:22). “A true and not a false putting to death [mortification] happens through the cross and troubles, by which God exercises us…. There is also a necessary, voluntary exercise…. These exercises are to be accepted not because they are services that justify, but because they are assumed to control the flesh, should overindulgence overpower us, and make us secure and unconcerned. This results in people indulging and obeying the tendencies of the flesh” (Ap XV 45–47). *that day*. When Christ returns. *like a trap*. The unexpectedness of that day will catch the unprepared.
LUKE—NOTE ON 21:35 *all who dwell*. No one escapes the final judgment.
LUKE—NOTE ON 21:36 *stay awake … praying*. One remains prepared and watchful by persevering in prayer. *stand before the Son of Man*. Lit, “to be made to stand,” i.e., by grace. Believers will stand unharmed in Christ’s judgment, greeting it with heads held high (v 28).
LUKE—NOTE ON 21:37 *lodged on the mount called Olivet*. Passover pilgrims would often sleep outside the city.
LUKE—NOTE ON 21:38 As at the beginning of Jesus’ temple teaching (19:47–48), the common people surrounded Him in the temple.
LUKE—NOTE ON 21:34–38 Jesus warns His disciples to be ready for His return. Our focus on daily affairs can shorten our prayers and lower our eyes so that His return might surprise us. But Jesus’ final word in the temple

is good news to those who remain alert: His return will bring redemption and new freedom. • Hear our prayers, O Lord, and give us grace always to anticipate Your glorious return. Amen.

LUKE—NOTE ON 22:1 *Feast of Unleavened Bread … called the Passover*. Two festivals commemorating God's deliverance (cf Ex 12:1–20; Lv 23:4–6; Nu 28:16–17). The two festivals were frequently regarded as one and the names used interchangeably (Lk 22:7; Ac 12:3–4). See pp 200–201.

LUKE—NOTE ON 22:2 *chief priests*. Priestly aristocracy representing the Sadducees on the Jewish high Council. *scribes*. Teachers of the Law connected to the Pharisees (19:47–48; 20:19). See note, Mt 2:4. *how*. Jesus' death had been decided. How to kill Him without a riot was the only question.

LUKE—NOTE ON 22:1–2 The Jewish leaders seek Jesus' death. Those who conspire against God's plans ultimately fail, as Pharaoh learned at the first Passover. In Jesus' life, God uses the hostility of His enemies to fulfill the sacrifice of the true Passover lamb, who wrought our salvation. • Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world, have mercy on us. Amen.

LUKE—NOTE ON 22:3 *Satan entered into Judas*. Judas is responsible for his actions, but Satan is a motivator. *Iscariot*. Two apostles were named Judas (6:16). The betrayer is identified by "Iscariot," or "man from Kerioth-hezron," his hometown, making him the only apostle from Judea. The others came from Galilee.

LUKE—NOTE ON 22:4 *chief priests*. Those priests who held leading positions in the temple hierarchy. See p 1556. *officers*. Of the temple guard.

LUKE—NOTE ON 22:5 *glad*. They now knew how (v 2) to put Jesus to death. *money*. Judas acts from greed (Mt 26:14–16; Jn 12:6).

LUKE—NOTE ON 22:6 *in the absence of a crowd*. Judas looks for his chance to deliver Jesus when He is alone. Both Jesus' birth and betrayal come in lonely places.

LUKE—NOTE ON 22:3–6 Prompted by Satan, Judas negotiates the price for Jesus. The Lord would not have us compromise His purposes for earthly gain. When sin assails you, call on Jesus, who redeemed us, not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood. • Lord, make us loyal to You above all. Amen.

LUKE—NOTE ON 22:7 *the day of Unleavened Bread*. See note, v 1. *Passover lamb*. See note, Mk 14:12.

LUKE—NOTE ON 22:8 Jesus takes the initiative. The location will not be known to others, including Judas. *prepare the Passover*. Besides the lamb, the other parts of the meal, including the unleavened bread, bitter herbs with a fruit puree sauce, and wine, had to be obtained. See p 1764.
LUKE—NOTE ON 22:10 *a man carrying a jar of water*. Women usually carried water. The man would be noticeable.
LUKE—NOTE ON 22:11 The disciples are told exactly what to say. *master*. Owner. *Teacher*. An address in Lk usually used by strangers in speaking to Jesus (see note, Mt 8:19); perhaps the host was not a believer. *guest room*. Residents regularly welcomed Passover pilgrims.
LUKE—NOTE ON 22:12 *a large upper room*. Likely built on the flat roof of the first story, reached by outside steps. See note, 2Ki 4:10. *furnished*. Supplied with rugs and couches for reclining around a low table.
LUKE—NOTE ON 22:13 *the Passover*. A crucial meal. Referred to often in vv 1–13.
LUKE—NOTE ON 22:7–13 Jesus directs His disciples in preparing the Passover meal. God foresees our needs and plans for our lives. He invites us to follow as He leads. He always arranges for our eternal welfare. • Praise to You, O Lord. You do all things well for us and our salvation! Grant us sincere hearts and willing feet. Amen.
LUKE—NOTE ON 22:14 Refers to the hour to celebrate the Passover (sundown), but also the time when Jesus' mission moves toward completion. *reclined at table*. See note, Mt 8:11.
LUKE—NOTE ON 22:15 *I have earnestly desired*. As He finishes His work, He will leave them with a new meal, the Lord's Supper.
LUKE—NOTE ON 22:16 *not eat it*. His death will keep Him from eating the Passover with them again; He does, however, eat with His disciples after His resurrection (24:41–43; Ac 10:41). *until it is fulfilled*. The Passover is fulfilled in Jesus' death, which ushers in God's kingdom; celebration of the Lord's Supper points to the marriage feast of the Lamb in the kingdom of glory (Rv 19:6–9).
LUKE—NOTE ON 22:17 *cup*. Either the first, or probably the second, cup of the Passover (Seder) meal, which ended the teaching aspect of the meal. See p 1764.
LUKE—NOTE ON 22:18 *not drink*. See note, v 16. *fruit of the vine*. The Passover liturgy (Seder) addresses God as "Creator of the fruit of the vine."

LUKE—NOTE ON 22:19 *took bread*. Taking, blessing, breaking, and distributing the bread was the duty of the host and began the eating of the Passover meal proper. *This is My body*. Jesus, departing from the regular ritual, identifies this broken bread with His body given on the cross as a vicarious sacrifice. *remembrance*. Focus is on Jesus and His sacrificial death. The Lord's Supper reminds one of Jesus' death and bestows the benefits of His death. "To remember Christ is to remember His benefits. It means to realize that they are truly offered to us. It is not enough only to remember history" (AC XXIV 31–32). See p 2230.

LUKE—NOTE ON 22:20 Luke describes only the parts of the meal that are new and which the Church is to continue to observe. *the cup after they had eaten*. Third cup of the meal. *for you*. In place of you. Therefore, the Lord's Supper "is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ under the bread and wine, instituted by Christ Himself for us Christians to eat and to drink" (SC, p xli). *new covenant in My blood*. A binding relationship of grace based on Christ's shed blood. Jesus clearly identifies the wine as His blood.

LUKE—NOTE ON 22:21 Sharing in food, ministry, prayers, and confession of faith with someone you intend to betray is the worst sort of hypocrisy (cf Ps 41; Ob 7). In Lk, Judas was present with Jesus at the meal. Luth: "Now the partakers of this broken bread are not only the worthy, but also Judas and the unworthy" (AE 37:354).

LUKE—NOTE ON 22:22 *Son of Man*. See p 2098. *determined, but woe*. Within the Father's plan of salvation, Judas remained responsible for his act. God did not force Judas to sin.

LUKE—NOTE ON 22:23 *they*. The apostles.

LUKE—NOTE ON 22:14–23 During Passover, Jesus institutes the Sacrament of His body and blood, by which He brings forgiveness to His people. To neglect the Lord's Supper is to ignore the forgiveness Christ earned for us. "My body, which is given for you" and "this cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood"—these words say it all! • "In this memorial of Thy death, O Lord, Thou dost Thy body and Thy blood afford: Oh, may our souls forever feed on Thee, And Thou, O Christ, forever precious be." Amen. (*LSB* 640:2)

LUKE—NOTE ON 22:24 *dispute also arose*. The question of the betrayer contrasts with the argument about who is the "greatest." Ironic, in view of Jesus' offering of His body and blood.

LUKE—NOTE ON 22:25 Jesus defines greatness through leadership and service. *exercise lordship*. Leaders in this world are served, giving orders for others to fulfill. *benefactors*. Honorary title combining respect and authority, given to princes and other leaders.
LUKE—NOTE ON 22:26 Jesus contrasts greatness in the world (being served) and in the Church (serving). *youngest*. The one with the least claim over others (9:46–48). "Christ rebukes this error of the apostles and teaches that there shall not be lordship or superiority among them. Instead, the apostles would be sent forth as equals to the common ministry of the Gospel" (Tr 8).
LUKE—NOTE ON 22:27 *reclines*. Appropriate for honored guests. See note, Mt 8:11. *But I*. Jesus emphasizes His own example.
LUKE—NOTE ON 22:28 *in My trials*. The disciples were loyal despite rejection and opposition.
LUKE—NOTE ON 22:29 Jesus promised the apostles they would share the glory given by the Father.
LUKE—NOTE ON 22:30 *My table*. At the kingdom's banquet, the apostles sit at privileged places with the King of heaven. *thrones*. Jesus notes the honors given to the loyal apostles, who will become leaders in the Church (Ac 6; 15). The 12 apostles correspond to the 12 tribes of Israel.
LUKE—NOTE ON 22:24–30 Jesus points His arguing apostles to true greatness in serving others, promising they will share His honor. Today, we often expect recognition for our service to the Church and feel slighted when ignored. Yet, we have the Lord's promise that He always sees and will reward our service. Our greatest treasure remains how He serves us, forgiving our sins by grace. • Thank You, Lord, for all You have done for me. May I show my gratitude in service to You and to Your people. Amen.
LUKE—NOTE ON 22:31 *Simon, Simon*. Peter's Semitic name, before he was designated "Peter" (see note, 6:14–16); soon Peter will falter. The repetition of the name expresses pity (13:34; 2Sm 19:4; see note, 10:41). *Satan demanded*. As with Job, the Lord gave His permission. *you*. Gk plural. Lit, "all of you." All the disciples will be tested. *sift you like wheat*. To separate the grain from the chaff, a time of testing. See pp 422–23.
LUKE—NOTE ON 22:32 *you … your*. Singular, referring to Peter. Jesus intercedes for him, and His prayer is stronger than Satan. Peter will stumble, but not lose his faith entirely. *turned again*. Repentance will show

Peter's renewed faith. *strengthen your brothers*. He will become the rock once again, fortifying his fellow disciples. See note, Jn 21:15.

LUKE—NOTE ON 22:33 Peter's impulsive reply matches his confident nature. *to prison and to death*. Peter was unaware how these words would later prove true (Ac 12:1–5; Jn 21:18–19).

LUKE—NOTE ON 22:34 Rooster's crow points to the coming dawn. Before morning, Peter will deny even knowing Jesus.

LUKE—NOTE ON 22:31–34 Jesus warns a self-confident Peter that he will deny his Lord, but also assures him of His intercession. "Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall" (1Co 10:12). Jesus, who interceded for Peter, is even now at the right hand of God interceding for us (Rm 8:34; Heb 7:25). • Lord Jesus, pray for me, that my faith in You remains steadfast to the end. Amen.

LUKE—NOTE ON 22:35 Jesus contrasts the earlier mission of the Twelve (9:1–6) and of the Seventy-two (10:1–20) with their new situation. The hospitality received then would not necessarily await them in the future.

LUKE—NOTE ON 22:36 *But now*. Emphatic signal of their new situation after the resurrection. *sword … buy one*. To give up a necessary garment for a sword indicates hostility and persecution are at hand (Ac 8:1–3; 9:1–2; 12:1–5). Jesus likely speaks figuratively, as shown by His brusque reply in v 38.

LUKE—NOTE ON 22:37 *this Scripture*. See note, Is 53:12. Jesus will die a shameful death between two criminals.

LUKE—NOTE ON 22:38 *two swords*. Travelers commonly carried swords, or large knives (see note, v 36; cf vv 50–51; 6:27–29). *It is enough*. Jesus ends the discussion and dismisses them.

LUKE—NOTE ON 22:35–38 Jesus warns His disciples about the hostile times they will face, similar to His own rejection. No disciple, including us, will avoid some of the hostility that Jesus faced. "Yet He bore the sin of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors" (Is 53:12). • When we experience hostility, Lord, keep us focused on what You have borne for us. Amen.

LUKE—NOTE ON 22:39 The emphasis in Lk deals with the disciples as a whole (does not single out Peter, James, and John), and the focus is on Jesus' agony. *custom*. Jesus had recently been staying overnight there (cf 21:37); therefore, Judas knew where to find Him.

LUKE—NOTE ON 22:40 *the place*. Gethsemane. See note, Mt 26:36. *Pray*. Jesus frames the event with this admonition, repeated in v 46. *temptation*. A trial of faith, a real danger as Satan wants to sift them like wheat (v 31). "God tempts no one," but all disciples are to pray "that God would guard and keep" them (SC, Sixth Petition, p xxxviii–xxxix).
LUKE—NOTE ON 22:41 *a stone's throw*. C 30 yd, distant enough for privacy, yet near His companions. *knelt down*. Showing His emotional intensity. Usually, Jews stood when praying. See p 1276.
LUKE—NOTE ON 22:42 *remove this cup from Me*. See notes, Ps 75:8; Is 51:17. For Jesus, the cup is the suffering He must bear, full of God's wrath on all people's sin. In His true humanity, He experienced dread at the thought of His impending suffering. *not My will, but Yours*. Jesus would gladly be spared, should it be the Father's will. Yet, He accepted God's will unconditionally.
LUKE—NOTE ON 22:43 An angel came to strengthen Him, that He might complete His mission in accord with His Father's will (cf Dn 10:18–19; Mk 1:13).
LUKE—NOTE ON 22:44 *agony*. Intense struggle or anxiety, the only occurrence of this word in the NT. *like great drops of blood*. The inner agony finds physical expression. The phrase may compare the drops of sweat with globules of blood. However, severe stress may cause the blood vessels of the skin to break, mixing the blood with sweat (hematidrosis).
LUKE—NOTE ON 22:45 The impending tragedy brought the disciples to emotional exhaustion.
LUKE—NOTE ON 22:46 Jesus again admonishes His disciples to pray, now that He is strengthened and prepared to do His Father's will.
LUKE—NOTE ON 22:39–46 While the disciples sleep, Jesus, in prayerful agony, shrinks from His coming ordeal and yet submits to His Father's will. Without focus on Jesus and His agony in the garden, we easily succumb to temptation. Yet, He comes to us, again and again, to strengthen us against temptation. • "Go to dark Gethsemane, All who feel the tempter's pow'r; Your Redeemer's conflict see, Watch with Him one bitter hour; Turn not from His griefs away; Learn from Jesus Christ to pray." Amen. (*LSB* 436:1)
LUKE—NOTE ON 22:47 *While he was still speaking*. Ties in closely with the preceding. *leading*. Judas knew exactly where to go. *kiss*. Frequently used in greeting, particularly from disciple to teacher. See note, Rm 16:16.

LUKE—NOTE ON 22:48 *Son of Man*. See p 2098. *kiss*. An expression of affection used to betray—the ultimate hypocrisy! See notes, vv 21, 47.
LUKE—NOTE ON 22:49 *strike with the sword?* Likely asked by one who carried a sword (cf v 38). They were falling into the temptation of avoiding the Father's will.
LUKE—NOTE ON 22:50 *one of them struck*. Without waiting for an answer. *servant of the high priest*. A trusted member of the high priest's household. See note, Jn 18:10.
LUKE—NOTE ON 22:51 *No more*. Jesus forbade further resistance. *healed him*. Jesus manifested His compassion and power even here.
LUKE—NOTE ON 22:52 *chief priests … officers … elders*. See p 1556. Some Roman soldiers were also present (Jn 18:3).
LUKE—NOTE ON 22:53 *your hour, and the power of darkness*. Satan's hour, when his power is evident. This darkness would be broken with the resurrection.

LUKE—NOTE ON 22:47–53 Judas betrays Jesus with a kiss, and Jesus, in mercy, heals the servant's severed ear. The conflict between Jesus and the forces of darkness escalates. This darkness still would surround us. Yet, God used the night of betrayal to overcome the darkness and usher in His everlasting light. • May Your light, O Christ, disperse the night of Satan, that we remain faithful to You. Amen.
LUKE—NOTE ON 22:54 *high priest's house*. A large residence where the Jewish Council interrogated Jesus during the night. *Peter was following*. As with his distance from Jesus in Gethsemane, Peter remained close enough to observe, yet distant enough to be safe.
LUKE—NOTE ON 22:55 *they*. Some servants gathered to learn of the interrogation.
LUKE—NOTE ON 22:56 *servant girl*. She kept watch at the gate to the courtyard (cf Jn 18:16–17) and was certain that Peter had been with Jesus.
LUKE—NOTE ON 22:57 *I do not know Him*. Peter panics and refuses to acknowledge Jesus, thus fulfilling Jesus' prophecy (v 34).
LUKE—NOTE ON 22:58 Peter says, in essence, I don't know Him, and you don't know me.
LUKE—NOTE ON 22:59 A third person insists, probably tipped off by Peter's distinctive Galilean accent (Mt 26:73).
LUKE—NOTE ON 22:60 See note, Mt 26:75.

LUKE—NOTE ON 22:61 *Lord … looked at Peter*. Jesus was near, perhaps being led from the high priest to some place of detention.
LUKE—NOTE ON 22:62 Jesus had prayed about this moment (v 32). Peter's tears of contrition signal his spiritual recovery.
LUKE—NOTE ON 22:54–62 During Jesus' interrogation, Peter denies Jesus three times. But Jesus' word and look bring Peter to tears and to repentance. Self-preservation is never justification for denying our Lord and His tie with us. Jesus ever looks at us in love to call us to repentance, forgiving our sins. • Lord, look on me this hour with Your forgiving love. Amen.
LUKE—NOTE ON 22:63 Ongoing abuse, administered by the temple officers and high council's servants. This, along with the behavior of Herod and his soldiers (23:11) and of the soldiers at the cross (23:36), fulfills Jesus' prophecy of His Passion (18:32–33).
LUKE—NOTE ON 22:64 *Prophesy!* Jesus had been often recognized as a prophet (7:16; 9:8, 19; 13:33; 24:19).
LUKE—NOTE ON 22:65 *blaspheming*. Can imply insulting speech of one person to another, but usually, as here, indicates ridicule of God.
LUKE—NOTE ON 22:63–65 Jesus is mocked as a prophet by those holding Him. Previously accused of blasphemy, Jesus, the Son of God, is now blasphemed. Today, we mock Jesus whenever we withhold the honor that is rightfully His as God's Son. Yet, "when He was reviled, He did not revile in return," that He might bear "our sins in His body on the tree" (1Pt 2:23–24). • Grant us, dear Savior, true confession of our sins and of faith, that we may always honor You as our Messiah and the Son of God. Amen.
LUKE—NOTE ON 22:66 *When day came*. A night trial of Jesus was held at the high priest's house (Mt 26:57; Mk 14:53; Jn 18:12–13). However, a night trial's verdict was invalid. *assembly of the elders*. Jewish ruling Council (Sanhedrin) with control over internal Jewish matters. See p 1556. *their council*. An early morning meeting to validate the decision of the previous night.
LUKE—NOTE ON 22:67 Had Jesus claimed to be the Christ, as they understood it, they would have had a charge to take to Pilate. In Lk, Jesus does not directly refer to Himself as "the Christ" until after His resurrection (24:26). See p 2098. *you will not believe*. They did not want an answer on His terms, but would interpret it to their own ends.

LUKE—NOTE ON 22:68 They refuse a serious discussion of Jesus as Messiah; their minds are made up. He did ask them once (20:41), but to no avail.
LUKE—NOTE ON 22:69 *Son of Man*. To avoid any political misunderstanding, instead of "Christ," Jesus uses "Son of Man," the term He usually uses of Himself (see p 2098). *right hand of the power of God*. Jesus points to His heavenly enthronement: His resurrection and ascension (Eph 1:20–21; Heb 1:3). See "right hand," p 843.
LUKE—NOTE ON 22:70 *Son of God*. To claim He was Messiah was bad enough, but to claim divinity was blasphemy. See p 2098. Yet, this was the undeniable truth (1:32–35; 3:22; 9:35; Mt 14:33). *You say that I am*. Your words, but they are true. "I AM" can be a divine title (Ex 3:13–14; Jn 6:35). See pp 1784–85.
LUKE—NOTE ON 22:71 They understood Jesus to accept the title "Son of God." Next, they must seek His death through Pilate.
LUKE—NOTE ON 22:66–71 Jesus, before the Council, points to His exaltation. He acknowledges that He is the Son of God and is condemned. We can never force Jesus into our definitions of Messiah. It is for us to receive Him for who He is, as described in Scripture. Jesus, condemned for us, is the promised Messiah and Son of God, who now is seated in glory at God's right hand. • Jesus, You are the Christ, Son of God in glory. Grant that this confession may always be ours. Amen.
LUKE—NOTE ON 23:1 *whole company*. The whole body of the Jewish Council (22:66). *Pilate*. Chief Roman administrator, who alone could authorize capital punishment; he governed Judea AD 26–36 (cf 3:1). Pilate was ordinarily in Caesarea but came to Jerusalem to oversee the Passover festival with its crowds of pilgrims.
LUKE—NOTE ON 23:2 The Jewish Council condemned Jesus for blasphemy (22:70–71), but Pilate heard political charges: *misleading our nation*. Inciting unrest against Rome. *forbidding … tribute*. Violating the tax code (clearly a lie; cf v 22). *saying … Christ, a king*. Pilate could not ignore treason, i.e., a claim to be king.
LUKE—NOTE ON 23:3 *King of the Jews?* Pilate focuses on the political claim of kingship. *You have said so*. Affirmation, but not a simple yes.
LUKE—NOTE ON 23:4 *chief priests*. Spokesmen for the Council. See p 1556. *crowds*. First time involved. Townspeople were awakened at about 6

a.m., when Roman officials began work. *no guilt*. Pilate sees Jesus' innocence.
LUKE—NOTE ON 23:5 *urgent*. When Pilate refused the verdict, they brought sharper accusations. *stirs up … teaching*. They claim His teachings incite against Rome. *from Galilee*. Galilee was not under Pilate's jurisdiction, but the charge shows Jesus' teaching caused a wide-scale problem.
LUKE—NOTE ON 23:1–5 The Jewish leaders bring Jesus before Pilate, seeking a death penalty. In weakness, we, too, may wrongly accuse the Lord of fighting against us, making problems for us, or not listening to us. Jesus bore every false accusation so that He might be our Savior. • Preserve us, Lord, from falsehood, that our life and witness to You remain true. Amen.
LUKE—NOTE ON 23:6–7 Jesus' appearance before Herod occurs only in Lk. *Galilean*. Jesus was raised in Galilee (2:39; 4:16).
LUKE—NOTE ON 23:7 *Herod's jurisdiction*. Herod Antipas, son of Herod the Great, ruled Galilee, part of his father's kingdom, under the Romans as tetrarch 4 BC–AD 39. Pilate hoped to transfer responsibility for Jesus to Herod. *in Jerusalem*. Like Pilate, Herod was in Jerusalem because Galilean pilgrims regularly went there for Passover (cf 13:1).
LUKE—NOTE ON 23:8 Herod had heard stories of Jesus (9:9) and hoped to see a miracle.
LUKE—NOTE ON 23:9 *no answer*. Cf Is 53:7.
LUKE—NOTE ON 23:10 *chief priests … scribes*. Members of the Jewish Council. See pp 1556–57. At least some went along to argue.
LUKE—NOTE ON 23:11 *soldiers*. Or, guards who had come with him to Jerusalem. *splendid clothing*. Mockery of Jesus' alleged kingship.
LUKE—NOTE ON 23:12 *friends*. Their former hostility may have come as a result of the incident mentioned in 13:1. They agreed on Jesus' innocence. Note the irony: Herod Antipas and Pilate, former enemies, are reconciled because of Jesus.
LUKE—NOTE ON 23:13 *rulers*. Cf v 10. *people*. Earlier, the term describes those favorable to Jesus (19:48; 21:38). Likely not the same group who hailed Him as Messiah.
LUKE—NOTE ON 23:14 Pilate declares Jesus innocent a second time.
LUKE—NOTE ON 23:15 Herod would have understood the religious charges better, but he also found Jesus innocent.

LUKE—NOTE ON 23:16 *punish*. Either whipping or scourging, which usually preceded crucifixion. The punishment conflicts with Jesus' innocence.

LUKE—NOTE ON 23:6–16 Pilate and Herod declare Jesus innocent but do not believe in Him. For us and for our lives, Jesus makes great claims. He would be our Savior and King. We thank God that others have brought Jesus into our lives and that, through His Spirit, He enables us to cling to Him always. • Lord, by Your grace and power, be the center of my life. Amen.

LUKE—NOTE ON 23:18 *Away with*. Call for execution. *release to us Barabbas*. Luke assumes his readers were aware of the practice of releasing a guilty prisoner at a festival. *Barabbas*. Aram, "son of the father." Note the irony: Jesus was truly the Father's Son (2:49; 10:21–22; 11:2; 22:29, 42).

LUKE—NOTE ON 23:19 *insurrection*. Barabbas was the sort of revolutionary leader that the Jewish leaders claimed Jesus was.

LUKE—NOTE ON 23:21 See note, Mk 15:13.

LUKE—NOTE ON 23:22 For the third time, Pilate declares Jesus innocent. *punish*. See note, v 16.

LUKE—NOTE ON 23:23 *voices prevailed*. The crowd's shrill anger influenced Pilate more than Jesus' quiet innocence.

LUKE—NOTE ON 23:24 Pilate simply follows the crowd's demands, never declaring Jesus guilty.

LUKE—NOTE ON 23:25 *released … delivered Jesus over to their will*. The guilty person is free; the innocent is condemned. Pilate put his own career first, and so the Church, in the Apostles' Creed, continues to confess, "Crucified under Pontius Pilate." *delivered … over*. Same Gk word used for Judas' betrayal of Jesus (22:4).

LUKE—NOTE ON 23:18–25 Pilate, frightened of the crowd and blind to Jesus' identity, releases Barabbas and hands Jesus over to be crucified. Innocent Jesus is sentenced to die in place of us, who are genuinely guilty. His precious life atones for all our sins. • "They rise and needs will have My dear Lord made away; A murderer they save, The Prince of Life they slay. Yet cheerful He To suff'ring goes That He His foes From thence might free." Amen. (*LSB* 430:5)

LUKE—NOTE ON 23:26 *they*. Soldiers in charge of the crucifixion. *Cyrene*. Modern Libya had a large Jewish population in Jesus' day. Simon likely came to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover. *in from the country*.

Perhaps camping outside the city as did Jesus and His disciples (21:37). *laid on him the cross*. The crossbeam; the upright beam typically stood at the place of execution. Because of Jesus' weakening condition, Simon was drafted for this task.

LUKE—NOTE ON 23:27 *great multitude*. Crowds following from sympathy and curiosity. *women*. Pious women customarily lamented one condemned to die.

LUKE—NOTE ON 23:28 Weeping marked both Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem (19:41) and His exit. *weep for yourselves*. Jesus acknowledges their sympathy but expresses pity for Jerusalem's residents. *yourselves … children*. Women and children are more vulnerable than men in times of distress. Cf Lm 2:11–12.

LUKE—NOTE ON 23:29 *the days are coming*. Destruction of Jerusalem (19:41–44; 21:5–24). *Blessed are the barren*. Ordinarily, childlessness was a shame in Israel (Gn 30:23; Lk 1:24–25), but is preferred to the coming suffering.

LUKE—NOTE ON 23:30 *Fall on us*. An appeal to be killed quickly.

LUKE—NOTE ON 23:31 If the Romans do this to one they pronounce innocent, what will they do to a rebellious city? Or perhaps, if God has not spared His innocent Son, how much worse will it be when the Romans inflict His judgment on the city?

LUKE—NOTE ON 23:32 *Two others … criminals*. Reflects the prophecy (Is 53:12) and Jesus' own prediction (22:37).

LUKE—NOTE ON 23:33 *The Skull*. See note, Mt 27:33.

LUKE—NOTE ON 23:34 Jesus prayed for all those blind to their actions (Ac 13:27; 1Co 2:8). Jesus' prayer reflects His teaching (Lk 11:4) and is repeated by Stephen (Ac 7:60). Hus: "When he himself was stripped, beaten and blasphemed by the soldiers, scribes, Pharisees, officers, and priests, not even then did he pronounce any malediction, but he prayed" (*The Church*, p 285). *cast lots*. Executioners received a victim's clothing. Casting lots involves chance, yet God foresaw the outcome (see notes, Ps 22:18; Jn 19:23, 24).

LUKE—NOTE ON 23:35 *rulers*. Members of the Jewish High Council. See "Council, The" p 1556. *scoffed*. The first mocking. *saved others*. They admit He saved and raised others, but reason that if He will not rescue Himself, He is clearly not the Messiah. *Christ of God, His Chosen One*. See notes, 4:3; 9:35.

LUKE—NOTE ON 23:36 *soldiers*. First explicit mention of the Roman soldiers in Lk. *sour wine*. Cheap wine drunk by soldiers. This offer was mockery and a joke.
LUKE—NOTE ON 23:37–38 The taunt refers to the title above the cross and presumes that kings save themselves, not their people.
LUKE—NOTE ON 23:38 *inscription*. The victim's crime was usually posted, but Pilate stated Jesus' title as a fact to mock the Jews.
LUKE—NOTE ON 23:39 *railed at Him*. The third taunt.
LUKE—NOTE ON 23:40 *fear God*. Have the proper attitude toward God (1:50; 12:4–5; 18:4). See p 1001. *same sentence*. Facing death, this is the time to seek mercy.
LUKE—NOTE ON 23:41 The criminal also bears witness to Jesus' innocence, recognizing His majesty and grace.
LUKE—NOTE ON 23:42 *remember me*. An appeal to act on his behalf (1:54, 72; see p 843). *when You come into Your kingdom*. Statement of true faith. He alone sees Jesus' messianic kingship, which welcomes sinners.
LUKE—NOTE ON 23:43 *today you will be with Me in Paradise*. Recalls Eden's garden and God's presence with Adam and Eve. Christ restores to their descendants what they had lost, and more. Whereas the criminal had spoken an indefinite "when," Jesus responds with a definite "today." Bern: "If God justifies, who is he that condemns? … He was content to pass by the cross as by a short bridge from the religion of death unto the land of the living, and from this foul mire into the paradise of joy" (*SLSB*, p 29). *Paradise*. See note, 2Co 12:3.
LUKE—NOTE ON 23:26–43 Jesus was crucified that we may be spared the coming judgment, hear His word of absolution, and enter into paradise with Him. He not only saved others, but is also the messianic King who saves us. We all justly deserve God's judgment because of our sinful deeds. Yet, because Jesus sacrificed Himself for us all, we have His word of absolution and the promise of being with Him in paradise. • Grant, dear Jesus, that we may see the day when we will be with You in paradise. Amen.
LUKE—NOTE ON 23:44 *sixth hour … ninth hour*. From noon to 3 p.m. See p 1567. *darkness*. Shows the significance of Jesus' death: judgment is present and Satan's attack comes to its conclusion (22:53).
LUKE—NOTE ON 23:45 *sun's light failed*. Not an eclipse. The Passover occurs during a full moon, which prevents an eclipse. What blocked the

sun, whether a dust-laden wind, a dark cloud, or something else, is less important than God's timing and the event's significance. *curtain of the temple was torn in two*. The curtain of the Most Holy Place, where the high priest entered annually on the Day of Atonement to sprinkle the blood of the sacrifice. The old system of sacrifice, priesthood, and temple worship ended; Jesus' sacrifice opened the way for every repentant sinner to enter into God's presence (Heb 9:11–12; 10:20). See diagram, p 1710.

LUKE—NOTE ON 23:46 *loud voice*. Jesus did not die of exhaustion, but remained in control to the end. *Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit*. Jesus, completing His mission, entrusted Himself to His Father by quoting Ps 31:5.

LUKE—NOTE ON 23:47 *centurion*. See note, Mt 8:5. *what had taken place*. Jesus forgave His enemies (v 34), promised paradise to the repentant criminal (v 43), prayed to His Father, and gave up His life (v 46). *praised God*. In view of events, the Roman officer summed up Jesus' life as righteous and His divine claims as true.

LUKE—NOTE ON 23:48 *spectacle*. Used only here in the NT, suggesting entertainment of the crowd. *beating their breasts*. A sign of remorse and sorrow; after Jesus died, they ceased to be spectators and became penitents.

LUKE—NOTE ON 23:49 *His acquaintances*. Friends, relatives, and disciples watching from a distance. *women*. See note, 8:2–3. These women are crucial in the following accounts (23:55–56; 24:1–12).

LUKE—NOTE ON 23:44–49 In the darkness, when the temple curtain is torn, Jesus commits His spirit into His Father's hands. The centurion praises God, the crowds become remorseful, and Jesus' followers observe from a distance. Jesus dies bearing the darkness of God's judgment on the world's sins. Out of the darkness of judgment, Jesus ushers in the bright day of grace. • Grant, Lord, that on the Last Day, I, too, may entrust my spirit into the hands of the Father. Amen.

LUKE—NOTE ON 23:50 *Joseph … of Arimathea*. Unknown, except for this event. Arimathea was either his birthplace or a former residence. Location of his tomb indicates he had moved to Jerusalem (Mt 27:60). *council*. See p 1556. *righteous man*. Like Zechariah and Elizabeth (1:5–6) and Simeon (2:25), Joseph was a member of God's faithful people and a secret disciple of Jesus (Jn 19:38).

LUKE—NOTE ON 23:51 *had not consented*. Joseph may not have been notified, or he may have cast a dissenting vote at the Council's hasty trial of

Jesus (22:66–71). *looking for the kingdom of God*. A pious Israelite with messianic expectations, similar to many at Jesus' birth (1:5–6; 2:25, 36–38). See pp 1565–66.

LUKE—NOTE ON 23:52 *asked for the body*. To keep Jesus' body from a criminal's common grave. Joseph's important position gave easier access to Pilate.

LUKE—NOTE ON 23:53 Anointing the dead involved wrapping them in a spiced linen cloth. *tomb cut in stone*. Rock-hewn tombs were common in Jerusalem. See diagram, p 1823. *no one had ever yet been laid*. An unused tomb was fitting for the King of the Jews in the same way the never-ridden colt of Palm Sunday (19:30) had been. Joseph's action fulfills the law of Dt 21:22–23.

LUKE—NOTE ON 23:54 *day of Preparation*. Friday, when preparations were made for the next day's Sabbath. *Sabbath was beginning*. Late afternoon, with the sun setting.

LUKE—NOTE ON 23:55 *how His body was laid*. The women prepare for a proper burial after the Sabbath. Jesus' burial ends that climactic day that began with the Last Supper after sundown Thursday and ended at sundown Friday.

LUKE—NOTE ON 23:56 *spices and ointments*. Used in preparing Jesus' body for His permanent burial. *rested*. The Sabbath rest anticipated the rest that will come through Jesus' resurrection. Cf Heb 4:9.

LUKE—NOTE ON 23:50–56 Joseph of Arimathea secures the body of Jesus and places it in a newly hewn tomb. Women make preparations for a final burial after the Sabbath. Our sin has led to this, the death and burial of God's only Son. The work of redeeming the world is done. • "What Thou, my Lord, hast suffered Was all for sinners' gain; Mine, mine was the transgression, But Thine the deadly pain. Lo, here I fall, my Savior! 'Tis I deserve Thy place; Look on me with Thy favor, And grant to me Thy grace." Amen. (*LSB* 450:3)

LUKE—NOTE ON 24:1 *first day*. Sunday is the day God said, "Let there be light" (Gn 1:3, 5). *spices*. Used for the final burial rites (23:55–56).

LUKE—NOTE ON 24:2 *stone*. See note, Mt 27:60.

LUKE—NOTE ON 24:3 *went in*. Boldly seeking their Lord.

LUKE—NOTE ON 24:4 *two men*. Identified as angels (v 23). As angels announced Jesus' birth (2:8–14), they also announce His resurrection.

dazzling apparel. Similar term is used for Jesus' clothing at His transfiguration (9:29), reflecting God's splendor.
LUKE—NOTE ON 24:5 *frightened and bowed*. Reverential awe in recognition of the angels. *Why … dead?* Tombs are for the dead. They are led to remember His promised resurrection (v 7).
LUKE—NOTE ON 24:6 *has risen*. See note, Mk 16:6. *Remember how He told you*. These women from Galilee (23:55) may have also heard what Jesus taught the disciples.
LUKE—NOTE ON 24:7 Jesus' prior teaching, briefly summarized, but hard to accept and remember (9:44; 18:31–33). *must be*. A divine plan foretold by Scripture and by Jesus (1Co 15:3–4).
LUKE—NOTE ON 24:8 The first moment of comprehension.
LUKE—NOTE ON 24:9 *the eleven*. Judas's replacement was not yet chosen (24:33; Ac 1:26). *all the rest*. Includes the two disciples returning to Emmaus (Lk 24:13, 22–24) and the larger group of Jesus' followers, possibly some of the 120 of Ac 1:15. Some modern interpreters emphasize that since God chose to have women first bear witness to the resurrection, this means God specially ordained them for service in the Church. This argument fails on two counts: the angels were actually the first to bear witness to the resurrection (v 5), and God has always called all of His people to bear witness to His mighty acts (cf Ps 145), even children (Ps 8:2). The "go-and-tell" passages in the Gospels are not about ordaining or commissioning people to offices in the Church, but about people acting as couriers or witnesses (e.g., Mt 11:4; 18:15; Mk 5:19; Lk 7:22; 13:32).
LUKE—NOTE ON 24:10 *Mary Magdalene and Joanna*. See note, 8:2–3. *Mary the mother of James*. Likely referred to in Mk 15:40. James's identity is uncertain, but he may be "the son of Alphaeus," one of the Twelve (Lk 6:15). *the other women*. Those from Galilee who witnessed Jesus' death and burial (23:49, 55).
LUKE—NOTE ON 24:11 *idle tale*. Nonsense; hopeful but impossible. This continues the theme in Lk of the disciples' slowness to believe and understand (cf v 25).
LUKE—NOTE ON 24:12 *But Peter*. True to his impetuous nature, Peter dashed off to the tomb. *linen cloths*. Burial shroud of 23:53. Jesus' body is absent, but no theft has occurred.
LUKE—NOTE ON 24:1–12 The women find the stone has been rolled away from the tomb. They find not the body of Jesus but two angels who

say that Jesus is alive. Do we ever fail to believe the things Jesus has told us because they are impossibly good? "He is not here, but has risen" means that someday the graves of all His followers will be opened, and they, too, will rise to live with Him. Take comfort and joy! • In keeping with Your Word, fill our hearts, dear Lord Jesus, with the knowledge and comfort of Your empty tomb. Amen.
LUKE—NOTE ON 24:13–35 Unique to Lk. The passage contains much irony and even humor.
LUKE—NOTE ON 24:13 They were possibly returning home after Passover.
LUKE—NOTE ON 24:14 *all these things*. Cf vv 19–24.
LUKE—NOTE ON 24:16 *kept from recognizing*. Without recognizing Jesus, the disciples focused on His teaching and were prepared for the upcoming recognition (v 31).
LUKE—NOTE ON 24:17 *stood still*. Jesus' question astounds them.
LUKE—NOTE ON 24:18 *Cleopas*. Mentioned only here as a disciple. Early Church tradition suggests that Cleopas (Gk) is the Clopas (Hbr) referred to in Jn 19:25, the brother of Joseph and thus the uncle of Jesus and that the unnamed second disciple was his son Simeon, the later head of the Jerusalem Church. However, his exact identity remains unknown. *the only visitor*. Even a visitor should have known. The irony was that Jesus' "visit" on earth was indeed drawing to a close.
LUKE—NOTE ON 24:19 *prophet*. Jesus' teaching and mighty deeds (4:32, 36; 6:19; 7:16) showed Him to be a prophet, as predicted in Dt 18:15.
LUKE—NOTE ON 24:20 *chief priests and rulers*. Despite Pilate's role, the nation's religious leaders rejected Jesus (22:66; 23:10, 13) and bear responsibility.
LUKE—NOTE ON 24:21 *redeem Israel*. The Messiah was thought of as the deliverer of Israel from Rome. They did not yet understand that the cross was the means of redemption.
LUKE—NOTE ON 24:22–23 Summary of vv 1–12. *our company*. Cf v 9.
LUKE—NOTE ON 24:23 *seen a vision of angels*. In a vision, God gives sight that is usually hidden. (E.g., Zechariah in a vision sees an angel in the temple, 1:22).
LUKE—NOTE ON 24:24 *Some of those … with us*. Implying that after Peter's visit (v 12), others went to the tomb, but no apostle is yet reported to have seen Jesus.

LUKE—NOTE ON 24:25 *foolish ones, and slow of heart*. Without understanding, they could not believe. See p 1335. *believe all*. They believed that a Messiah would usher in God's rule, but not that He would suffer, die, and rise again.
LUKE—NOTE ON 24:26 *Was it not necessary*. They should have known this essential part of God's divine plan. *His glory?* The resurrection is the gateway to the climactic glory of His ascension and exaltation to God's right hand.
LUKE—NOTE ON 24:27 *He interpreted to them*. Aug: "All that there is of those former Scriptures tells of Christ; but only if it finds ears. He also 'opened their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures.' Whence we also must pray for this, that He would open our understanding" (*NPNF* 1 7:469).
LUKE—NOTE ON 24:28–29 Jesus' action evokes their hospitality. See note, Gn 18:4.
LUKE—NOTE ON 24:30 *He took the bread*. Jesus, though guest, becomes host. To take, bless, break, and distribute bread ordinarily began a meal. This was not necessarily the Lord's Supper, though the words and actions are reminiscent of the Supper, and by them Jesus is recognized for the first time as the crucified and risen Messiah. "Although we do not object if some interpret these passages as referring to the Sacrament, it does not make sense that only one part of the Sacrament was given" (Ap XXII 7).
LUKE—NOTE ON 24:31 *eyes were opened*. God opened them; the reverse of v 16. *vanished*. When they realize Jesus is alive, His visible presence is unnecessary.
LUKE—NOTE ON 24:32 *burn*. Filled with wonder and holy joy. *opened*. Jesus explained the true meaning of Scripture (v 27). Such insight comes only from God. Cf 1Co 2:6–16.
LUKE—NOTE ON 24:33 *those … gathered*. Same group to which the women reported the empty tomb (v 9).
LUKE—NOTE ON 24:34 *appeared to Simon!* The decisive evidence of the resurrection. This appearance is not recounted in the other Gospels; however, St Paul specifically refers to it: "He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve" (1Co 15:4).
LUKE—NOTE ON 24:35 *Then they told*. Seeing Jesus confirms Peter's experience.

LUKE—NOTE ON 24:13–35 Jesus joins two disciples discussing what happened in Jerusalem. He interprets His death and resurrection through the OT before revealing Himself in the breaking of the bread. “Slow of heart to believe” describes us when we doubt or do not accept all that the Scriptures teach about Jesus. God, who has given us the Scriptures to make us “wise for salvation” (2Tm 3:15), opens our eyes to believe Jesus. • “Lord Jesus Christ, with us abide, For round us falls the eventide. O let Your Word, that saving light, Shine forth undimmed into the night.” Amen. (*LSB* 585:1)
LUKE—NOTE ON 24:36 *stood among them*. Jesus appears as suddenly as He had disappeared (v 31). *Peace to you!* Traditional Israelite greeting. See note, 10:5–6. Jesus gives what the Word says, perfect harmony between God and humankind.
LUKE—NOTE ON 24:37 His sudden appearance caused fear.
LUKE—NOTE ON 24:38 *doubts*. Uncertain if He was a ghost or a real person.
LUKE—NOTE ON 24:39 Jesus answers their doubts to confirm His resurrection. *My hands and My feet*. Carrying the visible nail marks, they demonstrate the victory of life over death. *I Myself*. The very same Jesus they had always known. *Touch Me*. Confirming the reality of the resurrection.
LUKE—NOTE ON 24:40 *He showed them*. Aug: “He arose, with His wounds healed, His scars kept. For this He judged expedient for His disciples, that His scars should be kept, whereby the wounds of their hearts might be healed. What wounds? The wounds of unbelief. For He appeared to their eyes, exhibiting real flesh” (*NPNF* 1 6:456). False teachers deny the resurrection of the body.
LUKE—NOTE ON 24:41 *disbelieved for joy*. The truth seemed too good to be true. *anything here to eat?* Jesus offers the final evidence.
LUKE—NOTE ON 24:42–43 The Lord’s Supper announced His death. This simple meal announced His resurrection.
LUKE—NOTE ON 24:44 *I spoke to you*. His earlier teachings (9:22, 44; 17:25; 18:31–33; 22:37). *everything written about Me*. The OT is Christ-centered from beginning to end. See note, Jn 5:39; see also p 1245. *Law of Moses … Psalms*. The entire OT.
LUKE—NOTE ON 24:45 God opens hearts and minds through His Word and faith. Jesus does for the many what He had done for the Emmaus disciples (v 27). Just: “I purpose to quote to you Scriptures, not that I am

anxious to make merely an artful display of words … but God's grace alone has been granted to me to the understanding of His Scriptures" (*ANF* 1:225).

LUKE—NOTE ON 24:46 Luth: "All Scripture and the Word of God point to the suffering of Christ, as He Himself declares in the last chapter of Luke (24:46–47) that Scripture contains nothing else than the promised grace and forgiveness of sin through the suffering of Christ, that whoever believes in Him, and none other, shall be saved" (AE 14:168).

LUKE—NOTE ON 24:47 *repentance and forgiveness*. Besides the Passion (v 26), Jesus adds the proclamation of repentance and forgiveness. The mission begun by John the Baptist (3:3) continued in Ac. "God is superabundantly generous in His grace: First, through the spoken Word, by which the forgiveness of sins is preached in the whole world [Luke 24:45–47]. This is the particular office of the Gospel" (SA III IV). "*To repent* means nothing other than to truly acknowledge sins, to be heartily sorry for them, and to stop doing them. This knowledge comes from the Law. It is not enough for saving conversion to God if faith in Christ is not added. The comforting preaching of the Holy Gospel offers His merits to all penitent sinners who are terrified by the preaching of the Law. The Gospel proclaims the forgiveness of sins, not to coarse and self-secure hearts, but to the bruised or penitent (Luke 4:18). The preaching of the Gospel must be added so that the repentance may lead to salvation and not to the Law's contrition or terrors (2 Corinthians 7:10)" (FC SD V 8–9). *beginning from Jerusalem*. The narrative has moved toward Jerusalem. The mission narratives in Ac moved out from it (Ac 1:8).

LUKE—NOTE ON 24:48 *witnesses*. Those who have experienced the ministry of Jesus, His Passion, and His resurrection.

LUKE—NOTE ON 24:49 *promise*. The sending of the Holy Spirit (Ac 1:4–5; 2:17), who equips people for Jesus' mission. *clothed with power*. The Holy Spirit's power makes their witness effective. Luth: "It's as if he would say, 'I'll place armor on you that will withstand every shot' " (AE 54:149).

LUKE—NOTE ON 24:36–49 Jesus dispels all doubt when He offers absolute proof of His resurrection. Again, He points to Himself as Scripture's center, but now includes the mission to all nations through the Holy Spirit's power. There is the danger that we keep to ourselves when Jesus is equipping us to go out—we accept the fact that He is risen but deny

the mission on which He sends us. The resurrected Christ truly equips us for our witness to Him with the Holy Spirit, whom He provides. • Come, Holy Spirit, as promised by Jesus. Enable us to bear witness to our crucified and risen Savior. Amen.

LUKE—NOTE ON 24:50–53 No longer on "that very day" (v 13), during which all of the preceding took place. Luke concludes his Gospel with the ascension, recounted in greater detail in Ac 1, where he indicates that it took place 40 days after the resurrection (Ac 1:3). Luke focuses the events as a fitting conclusion to Jesus' life begun in ch 1. *Bethany*. On the Mount of Olives (Lk 19:29). Cf Ac 1:12. *blessed*. Jesus bestows the grace that distinguishes them for service. See p 842. Sav: "What will you do, O child of man? Leave this world, enter the service of Christ. He is waiting for you, and will reward your service, for He is a bountiful rewarder. Let every one then hasten to serve Him. But because each one is bound to care for the salvation of his brother, and to lead him to Christ, therefore the Lord gives you the gift of love, by which you should warn your brother, your neighbor, your friend, your wife, every one, and with all your strength and zeal should lead them to Christ" (*WGS*, p 97).

LUKE—NOTE ON 24:51 *carried up*. The end of Jesus' visible presence with His disciples (however, cf Ac 7:55; 9:3–5; 23:11). Carried up by God, He entered into glory (Lk 24:26), seated at His Father's right hand (22:69).

LUKE—NOTE ON 24:52 *worshiped Him*. The disciples now worship Jesus, acknowledging His divinity (cf 4:8).

LUKE—NOTE ON 24:53 Lk concludes where it began, in the temple (1:8–9). The early Christians continued worshiping there, but after Pentecost, they began to spread to the ends of the earth (Ac 1:8). *blessing God*. See p 842.

LUKE—NOTE ON 24:50–53 Jesus leads His disciples to Bethany, where He blesses them and is taken up into heaven. They worship Him and return to Jerusalem where they regularly worship God in the temple. We might take for granted all that Jesus has done, neglecting to worship and thank Him for our blessings. We are led to repentance and renewed faith each day, and Jesus continues to bless us with salvation and puts joy into our lives as we serve Him. • "Almighty God, our Father, Your blessed Son called Luke the physician to be an evangelist and physician of the soul. Grant that the healing medicine of the Gospel and the Sacraments may put to flight the diseases of our souls that with willing hearts we may ever love

and serve You; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord." Amen. (*LSB Altar Book*, p 980)

John

John 1 | John 2 | John 3 | John 4 | John 5 | John 6 | John 7 | John 8 | John 9 | John 10 | John 11 | John 12 | John 13 | John 14 | John 15 | John 16 | John 17 | John 18 | John 19 | John 20 | John 21

- Introduction to John
  - Overview
  - Reading John
  - Luther on John
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

The Word Became Flesh

1 [1]In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and
the Word was God. [2]He was in the beginning with God. [3]All things were
made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.
[4]In him was life,[1] and the life was the light of men. [5]The light shines in
the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

[6]There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. [7]He came as
a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through
him. [8]He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.

[9]The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.
[10]He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world
did not know him. [11]He came to his own,[2] and his own people[3] did not
receive him. [12]But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name,
he gave the right to become children of God, [13]who were born, not of
blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

[14]And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his
glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.
[15](John bore witness about him, and cried out, “This was he of whom I
said, ‘He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before
me.’”) [16]And from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.
[17]For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through
Jesus Christ. [18]No one has ever seen God; the only God,[1] who is at the
Father’s side,[2] he has made him known.

The Testimony of John the Baptist

19 ‡ † And this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and
Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?” 20 † He confessed, and
did not deny, but confessed, “I am not the Christ.” 21 † And they asked him,
“What then? Are you Elijah?” He said, “I am not.” “Are you the Prophet?”
And he answered, “No.” 22 So they said to him, “Who are you? We need to
give an answer to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?”
23 † He said, “I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, ‘Make
straight[3] the way of the Lord,’ as the prophet Isaiah said.”

24 † (Now they had been sent from the Pharisees.) 25 † They asked him,
“Then why are you baptizing, if you are neither the Christ, nor Elijah, nor
the Prophet?” 26 † John answered them, “I baptize with water, but among you
stands one you do not know, 27 † even he who comes after me, the strap of
whose sandal I am not worthy to untie.” 28 † These things took place in
Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

Behold, the Lamb of God

[29]‡† The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! [30]This is he of whom I said, ‘After me comes a man who ranks before me, because he was before me.’ [31]† I myself did not know him, but for this purpose I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel.” [32]†And John bore witness: “I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. [33]†I myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’ [34]†And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God.”

Jesus Calls the First Disciples

35 ‡ † The next day again John was standing with two of his disciples,
36 † and he looked at Jesus as he walked by and said, “Behold, the Lamb of
God!” 37 The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus.
38 † Jesus turned and saw them following and said to them, “What are you
seeking?” And they said to him, “Rabbi” (which means Teacher), “where
are you staying?” 39 † He said to them, “Come and you will see.” So they
came and saw where he was staying, and they stayed with him that day, for
it was about the tenth hour.[1] 40 † One of the two who heard John speak and
followed Jesus[2] was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. 41 † He first found his
own brother Simon and said to him, “We have found the Messiah” (which
means Christ). 42 † He brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said,
“So you are Simon the son of John? You shall be called Cephas” (which
means Peter[3]).

Jesus Calls Philip and Nathanael

43 †The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said
to him, “Follow me.” 44 †Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of
Andrew and Peter. 45 †Philip found Nathanael and said to him, “We have
found him of whom Moses in the Law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of
Nazareth, the son of Joseph.” 46 †Nathanael said to him, “Can anything good
come out of Nazareth?” Philip said to him, “Come and see.” 47 †Jesus saw
Nathanael coming toward him and said of him, “Behold, an Israelite indeed,
in whom there is no deceit!” 48 †Nathanael said to him, “How do you know
me?” Jesus answered him, “Before Philip called you, when you were under
the fig tree, I saw you.” 49 †Nathanael answered him, “Rabbi, you are the
Son of God! You are the King of Israel!” 50 †Jesus answered him, “Because I
said to you, ‘I saw you under the fig tree,’ do you believe? You will see
greater things than these.” 51 †And he said to him, “Truly, truly, I say to you,
[4]you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and
descending on the Son of Man.”

The Wedding at Cana

2 [1]†† On the third day there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee, and the
mother of Jesus was there. [2]† Jesus also was invited to the wedding with his
disciples. [3]† When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to him, “They
have no wine.” [4]† And Jesus said to her, “Woman, what does this have to do
with me? My hour has not yet come.” [5]† His mother said to the servants,
“Do whatever he tells you.”

[6]† Now there were six stone water jars there for the Jewish rites of
purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons.[1] [7]† Jesus said to the
servants, “Fill the jars with water.” And they filled them up to the brim.
[8]† And he said to them, “Now draw some out and take it to the master of the
feast.” So they took it. [9]† When the master of the feast tasted the water now
become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants
who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the
bridegroom [10]† and said to him, “Everyone serves the good wine first, and
when people have drunk freely, then the poor wine. But you have kept the
good wine until now.” [11]† This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in
Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him.

[12]† After this he went down to Capernaum, with his mother and his
brothers[2] and his disciples, and they stayed there for a few days.

Jesus Cleanses the Temple

13 ‡ † The Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to
Jerusalem. 14 †In the temple he found those who were selling oxen and sheep
and pigeons, and the money-changers sitting there. 15 †And making a whip
of cords, he drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and oxen. And
he poured out the coins of the money-changers and overturned their tables.
16 And he told those who sold the pigeons, “Take these things away; do not
make my Father’s house a house of trade.” 17 †His disciples remembered
that it was written, “Zeal for your house will consume me.”

18 †So the Jews said to him, “What sign do you show us for doing these
things?” 19 †Jesus answered them, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I
will raise it up.” 20 †The Jews then said, “It has taken forty-six years to build
this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?” 21 †But he was speaking
about the temple of his body. 22 †When therefore he was raised from the
dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the
Scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

Jesus Knows What Is in Man

23 Now when he was in Jerusalem at the Passover Feast, many believed
in his name when they saw the signs that he was doing. 24 But Jesus on his
part did not entrust himself to them, because he knew all people 25 and
needed no one to bear witness about man, for he himself knew what was in
man.

You Must Be Born Again

3 [1]‡†Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler
of the Jews. [2]†This man came to Jesus[1] by night and said to him, “Rabbi,
we know that you are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these
signs that you do unless God is with him.” [3]†Jesus answered him, “Truly,
truly, I say to you, unless one is born again [2]he cannot see the kingdom of
God.” [4]Nicodemus said to him, “How can a man be born when he is old?
Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?” [5]†Jesus
answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the
Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. [6]†That which is born of the
flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. [3][7]†Do not marvel
that I said to you, ‘You [4]must be born again.’ [8]†The wind [5]blows where it
wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from
or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.”

[9]Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?” [10]†Jesus answered
him, “Are you the teacher of Israel and yet you do not understand these
things? [11]†Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know, and bear
witness to what we have seen, but you[1] do not receive our testimony. [12]†If I
have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if
I tell you heavenly things? [13]†No one has ascended into heaven except he
who descended from heaven, the Son of Man.[2][14]†And as Moses lifted up
the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, [15]that
whoever believes in him may have eternal life.[3]

For God So Loved the World

16 ‡ † “For God so loved the world,[4] that he gave his only Son, that
whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. 17 For God
did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that
the world might be saved through him. 18 † Whoever believes in him is not
condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because
he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. 19 † And this is the
judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness
rather than the light because their works were evil. 20 † For everyone who
does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his
works should be exposed. 21 † But whoever does what is true comes to the
light, so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in
God.”

John the Baptist Exalts Christ

22 ‡ † After this Jesus and his disciples went into the Judean countryside,
and he remained there with them and was baptizing. 23 † John also was
baptizing at Aenon near Salim, because water was plentiful there, and
people were coming and being baptized 24 †(for John had not yet been put in
prison).

25 † Now a discussion arose between some of John's disciples and a Jew
over purification. 26 † And they came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, he
who was with you across the Jordan, to whom you bore witness—look, he
is baptizing, and all are going to him." 27 † John answered, "A person cannot
receive even one thing unless it is given him from heaven. 28 You yourselves
bear me witness, that I said, 'I am not the Christ, but I have been sent before
him.' 29 † The one who has the bride is the bridegroom. The friend of the
bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly at the bridegroom's
voice. Therefore this joy of mine is now complete. 30 † He must increase, but
I must decrease."[1]

31 ‡ † He who comes from above is above all. He who is of the earth
belongs to the earth and speaks in an earthly way. He who comes from
heaven is above all. 32 † He bears witness to what he has seen and heard, yet
no one receives his testimony. 33 † Whoever receives his testimony sets his
seal to this, that God is true. 34 † For he whom God has sent utters the words
of God, for he gives the Spirit without measure. 35 † The Father loves the Son
and has given all things into his hand. 36 † Whoever believes in the Son has
eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath
of God remains on him.

Jesus and the Woman of Samaria

4 [1]‡†Now when Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus
was making and baptizing more disciples than John [2](although Jesus
himself did not baptize, but only his disciples), [3]†he left Judea and departed
again for Galilee. [4]†And he had to pass through Samaria. [5]†So he came to a
town of Samaria called Sychar, near the field that Jacob had given to his son
Joseph. [6]† Jacob's well was there; so Jesus, wearied as he was from his
journey, was sitting beside the well. It was about the sixth hour.[2]

[7]‡A woman from Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give
me a drink." [8](For his disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.)
[9]The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a
drink from me, a woman of Samaria?" (For Jews have no dealings with
Samaritans.) [10]†Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who
it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and
he would have given you living water." [11]† The woman said to him, "Sir,
you have nothing to draw water with, and the well is deep. Where do you
get that living water? [12]†Are you greater than our father Jacob? He gave us
the well and drank from it himself, as did his sons and his livestock."
[13]Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again,
[14]†but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty
again.[1] The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water
welling up to eternal life." [15]The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this
water, so that I will not be thirsty or have to come here to draw water."

[16]† Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here." [17]‡The
woman answered him, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You are
right in saying, 'I have no husband'; [18]for you have had five husbands, and
the one you now have is not your husband. What you have said is true."
[19]† The woman said to him, "Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet. [20]†Our
fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you say that in Jerusalem is the
place where people ought to worship." [21]† Jesus said to her, "Woman,
believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in
Jerusalem will you worship the Father. [22]† You worship what you do not

know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. [23]†But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. [24]†God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth." [25]†The woman said to him, "I know that Messiah is coming (he who is called Christ). When he comes, he will tell us all things." [26]†Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am he."

[27]†Just then his disciples came back. They marveled that he was talking with a woman, but no one said, "What do you seek?" or, "Why are you talking with her?" [28]†So the woman left her water jar and went away into town and said to the people, [29]"Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?" [30]They went out of the town and were coming to him.

[31]‡Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, saying, "Rabbi, eat." [32]But he said to them, "I have food to eat that you do not know about." [33]So the disciples said to one another, "Has anyone brought him something to eat?" [34]†Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work. [35]†Do you not say, 'There are yet four months, then comes the harvest'? Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see that the fields are white for harvest. [36]† Already the one who reaps is receiving wages and gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. [37]For here the saying holds true, 'One sows and another reaps.' [38]†I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor."

[39]Many Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me all that I ever did." [40]† So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them, and he stayed there two days. [41]†And many more believed because of his word. [42]†They said to the woman, "It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Savior of the world."

[43]After the two days he departed for Galilee. [44]†(For Jesus himself had testified that a prophet has no honor in his own hometown.) [45]†So when he came to Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him, having seen all that he had done in Jerusalem at the feast. For they too had gone to the feast.

Jesus Heals an Official's Son

46 So he came again to Cana in Galilee, where he had made the water
wine. And at Capernaum there was an official whose son was ill. 47 When
this man heard that Jesus had come from Judea to Galilee, he went to him
and asked him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of
death. 48 So Jesus said to him, "Unless you see signs and wonders you will
not believe." 49 The official said to him, "Sir, come down before my child
dies." 50 Jesus said to him, "Go; your son will live." The man believed the
word that Jesus spoke to him and went on his way. 51 As he was going
down, his servants[1] met him and told him that his son was recovering.
52 So he asked them the hour when he began to get better, and they said to
him, "Yesterday at the seventh hour[2] the fever left him." 53 The father
knew that was the hour when Jesus had said to him, "Your son will live."
And he himself believed, and all his household. 54 This was now the second
sign that Jesus did when he had come from Judea to Galilee.

The Healing at the Pool on the Sabbath

5 [1]†† After this there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

[2]† Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, in Aramaic[3] called Bethesda,[4] which has five roofed colonnades. [3]† In these lay a multitude of invalids—blind, lame, and paralyzed.[5] [5]One man was there who had been an invalid for thirty-eight years. [6]†When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had already been there a long time, he said to him, "Do you want to be healed?" [7]†The sick man answered him, "Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up, and while I am going another steps down before me." [8]†Jesus said to him, "Get up, take up your bed, and walk." [9]And at once the man was healed, and he took up his bed and walked.

Now that day was the Sabbath. [10]†So the Jews said to the man who had been healed, "It is the Sabbath, and it is not lawful for you to take up your bed." [11]But he answered them, "The man who healed me, that man said to me, 'Take up your bed, and walk.'" [12]They asked him, "Who is the man who said to you, 'Take up your bed and walk'?" [13]Now the man who had been healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had withdrawn, as there was a crowd in the place. [14]†Afterward Jesus found him in the temple and said to him, "See, you are well! Sin no more, that nothing worse may happen to you." [15]The man went away and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had healed him. [16]†And this was why the Jews were persecuting Jesus, because he was doing these things on the Sabbath. [17]†But Jesus answered them, "My Father is working until now, and I am working."

Jesus Is Equal with God

18 ††This was why the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him, because
not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own
Father, making himself equal with God.

The Authority of the Son

19 ‡ † So Jesus said to them, Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do
nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing. For
whatever the Father[1] does, that the Son does likewise. 20 † For the Father
loves the Son and shows him all that he himself is doing. And greater works
than these will he show him, so that you may marvel. 21 † For as the Father
raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom he
will. 22 The Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son,
23 that all may honor the Son, just as they honor the Father. Whoever does
not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him. 24 † Truly, truly, I
say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has
eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to
life.

25 † "Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming, and is now here, when
the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live.
26 † For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to
have life in himself. 27 † And he has given him authority to execute
judgment, because he is the Son of Man. 28 † Do not marvel at this, for an
hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice 29 † and
come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those
who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment.

Witnesses to Jesus

30 “I can do nothing on my own. As I hear, I judge, and my judgment is
just, because I seek not my own will but the will of him who sent me. 31 If I
alone bear witness about myself, my testimony is not deemed true. 32 There
is another who bears witness about me, and I know that the testimony that
he bears about me is true. 33 You sent to John, and he has borne witness to
the truth. 34 Not that the testimony that I receive is from man, but I say these
things so that you may be saved. 35 He was a burning and shining lamp, and
you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light. 36 But the testimony that
I have is greater than that of John. For the works that the Father has given
me to accomplish, the very works that I am doing, bear witness about me
that the Father has sent me. 37 And the Father who sent me has himself
borne witness about me. His voice you have never heard, his form you have
never seen, 38 and you do not have his word abiding in you, for you do not
believe the one whom he has sent. 39 You search the Scriptures because you
think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness
about me, 40 yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life. 41 I do not
receive glory from people. 42 But I know that you do not have the love of
God within you. 43 I have come in my Father’s name, and you do not receive
me. If another comes in his own name, you will receive him. 44 How can
you believe, when you receive glory from one another and do not seek the
glory that comes from the only God? 45 Do not think that I will accuse you
to the Father. There is one who accuses you: Moses, on whom you have set
your hope. 46 For if you believed Moses, you would believe me; for he
wrote of me. 47 But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe
my words?”

Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand

6 [1]After this Jesus went away to the other side of the Sea of Galilee,
which is the Sea of Tiberias. [2]And a large crowd was following him,
because they saw the signs that he was doing on the sick. [3]Jesus went up
on the mountain, and there he sat down with his disciples. [4]Now the
Passover, the feast of the Jews, was at hand. [5]Lifting up his eyes, then, and
seeing that a large crowd was coming toward him, Jesus said to Philip,
"Where are we to buy bread, so that these people may eat?" [6]He said this
to test him, for he himself knew what he would do. [7]Philip answered him,
"Two hundred denarii[1] would not buy enough bread for each of them to get
a little." [8]One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to him,
[9]"There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are
they for so many?" [10]Jesus said, "Have the people sit down." Now there
was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, about five thousand in
number. [11]Jesus then took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he
distributed them to those who were seated. So also the fish, as much as they
wanted. [12]And when they had eaten their fill, he told his disciples, "Gather
up the leftover fragments, that nothing may be lost." [13]So they gathered
them up and filled twelve baskets with fragments from the five barley
loaves left by those who had eaten. [14]When the people saw the sign that he
had done, they said, "This is indeed the Prophet who is to come into the
world!"

[15]Perceiving then that they were about to come and take him by force to
make him king, Jesus withdrew again to the mountain by himself.

Jesus Walks on Water

16 ‡† When evening came, his disciples went down to the sea, 17 † got into a
boat, and started across the sea to Capernaum. It was now dark, and Jesus
had not yet come to them. 18 The sea became rough because a strong wind
was blowing. 19 † When they had rowed about three or four miles,[2] they saw
Jesus walking on the sea and coming near the boat, and they were
frightened. 20 † But he said to them, “It is I; do not be afraid.” 21 † Then they
were glad to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat was at the
land to which they were going.

I Am the Bread of Life

22 ‡ † On the next day the crowd that remained on the other side of the sea
saw that there had been only one boat there, and that Jesus had not entered
the boat with his disciples, but that his disciples had gone away alone.
23 † Other boats from Tiberias came near the place where they had eaten the
bread after the Lord had given thanks. 24 † So when the crowd saw that Jesus
was not there, nor his disciples, they themselves got into the boats and went
to Capernaum, seeking Jesus.
25 When they found him on the other side of the sea, they said to him,
"Rabbi, when did you come here?" 26 † Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I
say to you, you are seeking me, not because you saw signs, but because you
ate your fill of the loaves. 27 † Do not labor for the food that perishes, but for
the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you.
For on him God the Father has set his seal." 28 Then they said to him, "What
must we do, to be doing the works of God?" 29 † Jesus answered them, "This
is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent." 30 So they
said to him, "Then what sign do you do, that we may see and believe you?
What work do you perform? 31 † Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness;
as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'" 32 † Jesus then said
to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave you the
bread from heaven, but my Father gives you the true bread from heaven.
33 For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to
the world." 34 They said to him, "Sir, give us this bread always."
35 † Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall
not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst. 36 But I said to
you that you have seen me and yet do not believe. 37 † All that the Father
gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out.
38 For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of
him who sent me. 39 † And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should
lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day.
40 † For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and
believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last
day."

41 ‡ † So the Jews grumbled about him, because he said, “I am the bread
that came down from heaven.” 42 They said, “Is not this Jesus, the son of
Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does he now say, ‘I have
come down from heaven’?” 43 Jesus answered them, “Do not grumble
among yourselves. 44 † No one can come to me unless the Father who sent
me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day. 45 † It is written in the
Prophets, ‘And they will all be taught by God.’ Everyone who has heard
and learned from the Father comes to me— 46 † not that anyone has seen the
Father except he who is from God; he has seen the Father. 47 † Truly, truly, I
say to you, whoever believes has eternal life. 48 † I am the bread of life.
49 Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. 50 This is the
bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die.
51 ‡ † I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of
this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of
the world is my flesh.”

52 † The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, “How can this man
give us his flesh to eat?” 53 † So Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you,
unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no
life in you. 54 † Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal
life, and I will raise him up on the last day. 55 † For my flesh is true food, and
my blood is true drink. 56 † Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood
abides in me, and I in him. 57 † As the living Father sent me, and I live
because of the Father, so whoever feeds on me, he also will live because of
me. 58 This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like the bread[1] the
fathers ate and died. Whoever feeds on this bread will live forever.”
59 † Jesus[2] said these things in the synagogue, as he taught at Capernaum.

The Words of Eternal Life

60 ‡ † When many of his disciples heard it, they said, “This is a hard
saying; who can listen to it?” 61 But Jesus, knowing in himself that his
disciples were grumbling about this, said to them, “Do you take offense at
this? 62 †Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he
was before? 63 †It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. The
words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. 64 †But there are some of
you who do not believe.” (For Jesus knew from the beginning who those
were who did not believe, and who it was who would betray him.) 65 †And
he said, “This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is
granted him by the Father.”

66 After this many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with
him. 67 So Jesus said to the Twelve, “Do you want to go away as well?”
68 †Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the
words of eternal life, 69 †and we have believed, and have come to know, that
you are the Holy One of God.” 70 †Jesus answered them, “Did I not choose
you, the Twelve? And yet one of you is a devil.” 71 He spoke of Judas the
son of Simon Iscariot, for he, one of the Twelve, was going to betray him.

Jesus at the Feast of Booths

7 [1]‡†After this Jesus went about in Galilee. He would not go about in
Judea, because the Jews[3] were seeking to kill him. [2]†Now the Jews' Feast
of Booths was at hand. [3]†So his brothers[4] said to him, "Leave here and go
to Judea, that your disciples also may see the works you are doing. [4]†For no
one works in secret if he seeks to be known openly. If you do these things,
show yourself to the world." [5]†For not even his brothers believed in him.
[6]†Jesus said to them, "My time has not yet come, but your time is always
here. [7]The world cannot hate you, but it hates me because I testify about it
that its works are evil. [8]†You go up to the feast. I am not[1] going up to this
feast, for my time has not yet fully come." [9]After saying this, he remained
in Galilee.

[10]†But after his brothers had gone up to the feast, then he also went up,
not publicly but in private. [11]The Jews were looking for him at the feast, and
saying, "Where is he?" [12]And there was much muttering about him among
the people. While some said, "He is a good man," others said, "No, he is
leading the people astray." [13]†Yet for fear of the Jews no one spoke openly
of him.

[14]†About the middle of the feast Jesus went up into the temple and began
teaching. [15]†The Jews therefore marveled, saying, "How is it that this man
has learning,[2] when he has never studied?" [16]So Jesus answered them, "My
teaching is not mine, but his who sent me. [17]†If anyone's will is to do
God's[3] will, he will know whether the teaching is from God or whether I
am speaking on my own authority. [18]The one who speaks on his own
authority seeks his own glory; but the one who seeks the glory of him who
sent him is true, and in him there is no falsehood. [19]†Has not Moses given
you the law? Yet none of you keeps the law. Why do you seek to kill me?"
[20]†The crowd answered, "You have a demon! Who is seeking to kill you?"
[21]Jesus answered them, "I did one work, and you all marvel at it. [22]†Moses
gave you circumcision (not that it is from Moses, but from the fathers), and
you circumcise a man on the Sabbath. [23]If on the Sabbath a man receives
circumcision, so that the law of Moses may not be broken, are you angry

with me because on the Sabbath I made a man's whole body well? [24] †Do not judge by appearances, but judge with right judgment."

Can This Be the Christ?

25 ‡ ‡Some of the people of Jerusalem therefore said, “Is not this the man
whom they seek to kill? 26 And here he is, speaking openly, and they say
nothing to him! Can it be that the authorities really know that this is the
Christ? 27 ‡But we know where this man comes from, and when the Christ
appears, no one will know where he comes from.” 28 So Jesus proclaimed, as
he taught in the temple, “You know me, and you know where I come from?
But I have not come of my own accord. He who sent me is true, and him
you do not know. 29 I know him, for I come from him, and he sent me.”
30 ‡So they were seeking to arrest him, but no one laid a hand on him,
because his hour had not yet come. 31 ‡Yet many of the people believed in
him. They said, “When the Christ appears, will he do more signs than this
man has done?”

Officers Sent to Arrest Jesus

32 ††The Pharisees heard the crowd muttering these things about him, and
the chief priests and Pharisees sent officers to arrest him. 33 Jesus then said,
"I will be with you a little longer, and then I am going to him who sent me.
34 †You will seek me and you will not find me. Where I am you cannot
come." 35 †The Jews said to one another, "Where does this man intend to go
that we will not find him? Does he intend to go to the Dispersion among the
Greeks and teach the Greeks? 36 What does he mean by saying, 'You will
seek me and you will not find me,' and, 'Where I am you cannot come'?"

Rivers of Living Water

37 ‡ ‡On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried
out, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. 38 †Whoever believes
in me, as[1] the Scripture has said, ‘Out of his heart will flow rivers of living
water.’” 39 †Now this he said about the Spirit, whom those who believed in
him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus
was not yet glorified.

Division Among the People

40 †† When they heard these words, some of the people said, “This really is
the Prophet.” 41 Others said, “This is the Christ.” But some said, “Is the
Christ to come from Galilee? 42 † Has not the Scripture said that the Christ
comes from the offspring of David, and comes from Bethlehem, the village
where David was?” 43 So there was a division among the people over him.
44 † Some of them wanted to arrest him, but no one laid hands on him.

45 The officers then came to the chief priests and Pharisees, who said to
them, “Why did you not bring him?” 46 † The officers answered, “No one
ever spoke like this man!” 47 The Pharisees answered them, “Have you also
been deceived? 48 † Have any of the authorities or the Pharisees believed in
him? 49 † But this crowd that does not know the law is accursed.”
50 † Nicodemus, who had gone to him before, and who was one of them, said
to them, 51 † “Does our law judge a man without first giving him a hearing
and learning what he does?” 52 † They replied, “Are you from Galilee too?
Search and see that no prophet arises from Galilee.”

[The earliest manuscripts
do not include 7:53–8:11.][1]

The Woman Caught in Adultery

8 [53][[They went each to his own house, [1]†but Jesus went to the Mount
of Olives. [2]† Early in the morning he came again to the temple. All the
people came to him, and he sat down and taught them. [3]†The scribes and
the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery, and
placing her in the midst [4]they said to him, “Teacher, this woman has been
caught in the act of adultery. [5]†Now in the Law Moses commanded us to
stone such women. So what do you say?” [6]†This they said to test him, that
they might have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and
wrote with his finger on the ground. [7]†And as they continued to ask him, he
stood up and said to them, “Let him who is without sin among you be the
first to throw a stone at her.” [8]And once more he bent down and wrote on
the ground. [9] † But when they heard it, they went away one by one,
beginning with the older ones, and Jesus was left alone with the woman
standing before him. [10]Jesus stood up and said to her, “Woman, where are
they? Has no one condemned you?” [11]†She said, “No one, Lord.” And Jesus
said, “Neither do I condemn you; go, and from now on sin no more.”]]

I Am the Light of the World

12 Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, “I am the light of the world.
Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of
life.” 13 So the Pharisees said to him, “You are bearing witness about
yourself; your testimony is not true.” 14 Jesus answered, Even if I do bear
witness about myself, my testimony is true, for I know where I came from
and where I am going, but you do not know where I come from or where I
am going. 15 You judge according to the flesh; I judge no one. 16 Yet even if
I do judge, my judgment is true, for it is not I alone who judge, but I and the
Father[2] who sent me. 17 In your Law it is written that the testimony of two
people is true. 18 I am the one who bears witness about myself, and the
Father who sent me bears witness about me.” 19 They said to him therefore,
“Where is your Father?” Jesus answered, “You know neither me nor my
Father. If you knew me, you would know my Father also.” 20 These words
he spoke in the treasury, as he taught in the temple; but no one arrested him,
because his hour had not yet come.

21 So he said to them again, “I am going away, and you will seek me, and
you will die in your sin. Where I am going, you cannot come.” 22 So the
Jews said, “Will he kill himself, since he says, ‘Where I am going, you
cannot come’?” 23 He said to them, “You are from below; I am from above.
You are of this world; I am not of this world. 24 I told you that you would
die in your sins, for unless you believe that I am he you will die in your
sins.” 25 So they said to him, “Who are you?” Jesus said to them, “Just what
I have been telling you from the beginning. 26 I have much to say about you
and much to judge, but he who sent me is true, and I declare to the world
what I have heard from him.” 27 They did not understand that he had been
speaking to them about the Father. 28 So Jesus said to them, “When you
have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he, and that I
do nothing on my own authority, but speak just as the Father taught me.
29 And he who sent me is with me. He has not left me alone, for I always do
the things that are pleasing to him.” 30 As he was saying these things, many
believed in him.

The Truth Will Set You Free

31 ‡ ‡ So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, “If you abide in
my word, you are truly my disciples, 32 † and you will know the truth, and
the truth will set you free.” 33 † They answered him, “We are offspring of
Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say,
‘You will become free’?”

34 † Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who
commits sin is a slave[1] to sin. 35 ‡ The slave does not remain in the house
forever; the son remains forever. 36 † So if the Son sets you free, you will be
free indeed. 37 † I know that you are offspring of Abraham; yet you seek to
kill me because my word finds no place in you. 38 I speak of what I have
seen with my Father, and you do what you have heard from your father.”

You Are of Your Father the Devil

[39]†† They answered him, “Abraham is our father.” Jesus said to them, “If
you were Abraham’s children, you would be doing the works Abraham did,
[40]† but now you seek to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I
heard from God. This is not what Abraham did. [41]† You are doing the works
your father did.” They said to him, “We were not born of sexual immorality.
We have one Father—even God.” [42]Jesus said to them, “If God were your
Father, you would love me, for I came from God and I am here. I came not
of my own accord, but he sent me. [43]† Why do you not understand what I
say? It is because you cannot bear to hear my word. [44]† You are of your
father the devil, and your will is to do your father’s desires. He was a
murderer from the beginning, and has nothing to do with the truth, because
there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character,
for he is a liar and the father of lies. [45]But because I tell the truth, you do not
believe me. [46]† Which one of you convicts me of sin? If I tell the truth, why
do you not believe me? [47]† Whoever is of God hears the words of God. The
reason why you do not hear them is that you are not of God.”

Before Abraham Was, I Am

48 ‡ † The Jews answered him, “Are we not right in saying that you are a
Samaritan and have a demon?” 49 Jesus answered, “I do not have a demon,
but I honor my Father, and you dishonor me. 50 † Yet I do not seek my own
glory; there is One who seeks it, and he is the judge. 51 † Truly, truly, I say to
you, if anyone keeps my word, he will never see death.” 52 † The Jews said to
him, “Now we know that you have a demon! Abraham died, as did the
prophets, yet you say, ‘If anyone keeps my word, he will never taste death.’
53 Are you greater than our father Abraham, who died? And the prophets
died! Who do you make yourself out to be?” 54 Jesus answered, “If I glorify
myself, my glory is nothing. It is my Father who glorifies me, of whom you
say, ‘He is our God.’ [1] 55 But you have not known him. I know him. If I were
to say that I do not know him, I would be a liar like you, but I do know him
and I keep his word. 56 † Your father Abraham rejoiced that he would see my
day. He saw it and was glad.” 57 † So the Jews said to him, “You are not yet
fifty years old, and have you seen Abraham?” [2] 58 † Jesus said to them,
“Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am.” 59 † So they picked up
stones to throw at him, but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple.

Jesus Heals a Man Born Blind

9 [1]†As he passed by, he saw a man blind from birth. [2]†And his disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” [3]†Jesus answered, “It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him. [4]†We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. [5]†As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” [6]†Having said these things, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva. Then he anointed the man’s eyes with the mud [7]†and said to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which means Sent). So he went and washed and came back seeing.

[8]†The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar were saying, “Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?” [9]†Some said, “It is he.” Others said, “No, but he is like him.” He kept saying, “I am the man.” [10]So they said to him, “Then how were your eyes opened?” [11]He answered, “The man called Jesus made mud and anointed my eyes and said to me, ‘Go to Siloam and wash.’ So I went and washed and received my sight.” [12]They said to him, “Where is he?” He said, “I do not know.”

[13]†They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. [14]Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. [15]So the Pharisees again asked him how he had received his sight. And he said to them, “He put mud on my eyes, and I washed, and I see.” [16]†Some of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath.” But others said, “How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?” And there was a division among them. [17]†So they said again to the blind man, “What do you say about him, since he has opened your eyes?” He said, “He is a prophet.”

[18]The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight, until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight [19]and asked them, “Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?” [20]†His parents answered, “We know that this is our son and that he was born blind. [21]†But how he now sees we do not know, nor do

we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself." [22]†(His parents said these things because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone should confess Jesus[1] to be Christ, he was to be put out of the synagogue.) [23]Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."

[24]†So for the second time they called the man who had been blind and said to him, "Give glory to God. We know that this man is a sinner." [25]He answered, "Whether he is a sinner I do not know. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see." [26]They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" [27]† He answered them, "I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?" [28]And they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. [29]†We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from." [30]The man answered, "Why, this is an amazing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. [31]†We know that God does not listen to sinners, but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does his will, God listens to him. [32]†Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a man born blind. [33]If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." [34]† They answered him, "You were born in utter sin, and would you teach us?" And they cast him out.

[35]†Jesus heard that they had cast him out, and having found him he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?"[1][36]He answered, "And who is he, sir, that I may believe in him?" [37]Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and it is he who is speaking to you." [38]† He said, "Lord, I believe," and he worshiped him. [39]†Jesus said, "For judgment I came into this world, that those who do not see may see, and those who see may become blind." [40]Some of the Pharisees near him heard these things, and said to him, "Are we also blind?" [41]†Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would have no guilt;[2] but now that you say, 'We see,' your guilt remains.

I Am the Good Shepherd

10 [1]“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold
by the door but climbs in by another way, that man is a thief and a robber.
[2]But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. [3]To him the
gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by
name and leads them out. [4]When he has brought out all his own, he goes
before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. [5]A stranger
they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the
voice of strangers.” [6]This figure of speech Jesus used with them, but they
did not understand what he was saying to them.

[7]So Jesus again said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of
the sheep. [8]All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep
did not listen to them. [9]I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be
saved and will go in and out and find pasture. [10]The thief comes only to
steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it
abundantly. [11]I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his
life for the sheep. [12]He who is a hired hand and not a shepherd, who does
not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees, and
the wolf snatches them and scatters them. [13]He flees because he is a hired
hand and cares nothing for the sheep. [14]I am the good shepherd. I know my
own and my own know me, [15]just as the Father knows me and I know the
Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. [16]And I have other sheep that
are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice.
So there will be one flock, one shepherd. [17]For this reason the Father loves
me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. [18]No one takes
it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it
down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received
from my Father.”

[19]There was again a division among the Jews because of these words.
[20]Many of them said, “He has a demon, and is insane; why listen to him?”
[21]Others said, “These are not the words of one who is oppressed by a
demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?”

I and the Father Are One

22 ‡ † At that time the Feast of Dedication took place at Jerusalem. It was
winter, 23 † and Jesus was walking in the temple, in the colonnade of
Solomon. 24 † So the Jews gathered around him and said to him, “How long
will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly.” 25 † Jesus
answered them, “I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in
my Father’s name bear witness about me, 26 but you do not believe because
you are not part of my flock. 27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them,
and they follow me. 28 † I give them eternal life, and they will never perish,
and no one will snatch them out of my hand. 29 My Father, who has given
them to me,[1] is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the
Father’s hand. 30 † I and the Father are one.”

31 The Jews picked up stones again to stone him. 32 † Jesus answered them,
“I have shown you many good works from the Father; for which of them
are you going to stone me?” 33 † The Jews answered him, “It is not for a good
work that we are going to stone you but for blasphemy, because you, being
a man, make yourself God.” 34 † Jesus answered them, “Is it not written in
your Law, ‘I said, you are gods’? 35 ‡ † If he called them gods to whom the
word of God came—and Scripture cannot be broken— 36 do you say of him
whom the Father consecrated and sent into the world, ‘You are
blaspheming,’ because I said, ‘I am the Son of God’? 37 If I am not doing the
works of my Father, then do not believe me; 38 † but if I do them, even
though you do not believe me, believe the works, that you may know and
understand that the Father is in me and I am in the Father.” 39 Again they
sought to arrest him, but he escaped from their hands.

40 † He went away again across the Jordan to the place where John had
been baptizing at first, and there he remained. 41 † And many came to him.
And they said, “John did no sign, but everything that John said about this
man was true.” 42 And many believed in him there.

The Death of Lazarus

11 [1]Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of
Mary and her sister Martha. [2]It was Mary who anointed the Lord with
ointment and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was ill.
[3]So the sisters sent to him, saying, “Lord, he whom you love is ill.” [4]But
when Jesus heard it he said, “This illness does not lead to death. It is for the
glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it.”

[5]Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. [6]So, when he
heard that Lazarus[1] was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where
he was. [7]Then after this he said to the disciples, “Let us go to Judea again.”
[8]The disciples said to him, “Rabbi, the Jews were just now seeking to
stone you, and are you going there again?” [9]Jesus answered, “Are there not
twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble,
because he sees the light of this world. [10]But if anyone walks in the night,
he stumbles, because the light is not in him.” [11]After saying these things,
he said to them, “Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I go to awaken
him.” [12]The disciples said to him, “Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will
recover.” [13]Now Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that he
meant taking rest in sleep. [14]Then Jesus told them plainly, “Lazarus has
died, [15]and for your sake I am glad that I was not there, so that you may
believe. But let us go to him.” [16]So Thomas, called the Twin,[2] said to his
fellow disciples, “Let us also go, that we may die with him.”

I Am the Resurrection and the Life

17 ‡†Now when Jesus came, he found that Lazarus had already been in the
tomb four days. 18 Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles[3] off, 19 †and
many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them
concerning their brother. 20 So when Martha heard that Jesus was coming,
she went and met him, but Mary remained seated in the house. 21 Martha
said to Jesus, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.
22 †But even now I know that whatever you ask from God, God will give
you.” 23 Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.” 24 †Martha said to
him, “I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.”
25 †Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life.[4] Whoever believes
in me, though he die, yet shall he live, 26 †and everyone who lives and
believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?” 27 She said to him,
“Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming
into the world.”

Jesus Weeps

28 ‡ † When she had said this, she went and called her sister Mary, saying
in private, “The Teacher is here and is calling for you.” 29 † And when she
heard it, she rose quickly and went to him. 30 † Now Jesus had not yet come
into the village, but was still in the place where Martha had met him.
31 When the Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary
rise quickly and go out, they followed her, supposing that she was going to
the tomb to weep there. 32 † Now when Mary came to where Jesus was and
saw him, she fell at his feet, saying to him, “Lord, if you had been here, my
brother would not have died.” 33 † When Jesus saw her weeping, and the
Jews who had come with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in his
spirit and greatly troubled. 34 And he said, “Where have you laid him?” They
said to him, “Lord, come and see.” 35 † Jesus wept. 36 So the Jews said, “See
how he loved him!” 37 But some of them said, “Could not he who opened the
eyes of the blind man also have kept this man from dying?”

Jesus Raises Lazarus

38 ‡ † Then Jesus, deeply moved again, came to the tomb. It was a cave,
and a stone lay against it. 39 † Jesus said, “Take away the stone.” Martha, the
sister of the dead man, said to him, “Lord, by this time there will be an
odor, for he has been dead four days.” 40 † Jesus said to her, “Did I not tell
you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?” 41 † So they took
away the stone. And Jesus lifted up his eyes and said, “Father, I thank you
that you have heard me. 42 † I knew that you always hear me, but I said this
on account of the people standing around, that they may believe that you
sent me.” 43 When he had said these things, he cried out with a loud voice,
“Lazarus, come out.” 44 † The man who had died came out, his hands and
feet bound with linen strips, and his face wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to
them, “Unbind him, and let him go.”

The Plot to Kill Jesus

45 † Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen
what he did, believed in him, 46 but some of them went to the Pharisees and
told them what Jesus had done. 47 † So the chief priests and the Pharisees
gathered the Council and said, “What are we to do? For this man performs
many signs. 48 † If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him,
and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation.”
49 † But one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them,
“You know nothing at all. 50 Nor do you understand that it is better for you
that one man should die for the people, not that the whole nation should
perish.” 51 † He did not say this of his own accord, but being high priest that
year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation, 52 † and not for the
nation only, but also to gather into one the children of God who are
scattered abroad. 53 So from that day on they made plans to put him to death.

54 † Jesus therefore no longer walked openly among the Jews, but went
from there to the region near the wilderness, to a town called Ephraim, and
there he stayed with the disciples.

55 † Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and many went up from
the country to Jerusalem before the Passover to purify themselves. 56 They
were looking for[1] Jesus and saying to one another as they stood in the
temple, “What do you think? That he will not come to the feast at all?”
57 Now the chief priests and the Pharisees had given orders that if anyone
knew where he was, he should let them know, so that they might arrest him.

Mary Anoints Jesus at Bethany

12 [1]†‡Six days before the Passover, Jesus therefore came to Bethany,
where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. [2]†So they gave a
dinner for him there. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those reclining
with him at table. [3]†Mary therefore took a pound[2] of expensive ointment
made from pure nard, and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped his feet with
her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. [4]† But
Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (he who was about to betray him), said,
[5]†"Why was this ointment not sold for three hundred denarii[3] and given to
the poor?" [6]†He said this, not because he cared about the poor, but because
he was a thief, and having charge of the moneybag he used to help himself
to what was put into it. [7]†Jesus said, "Leave her alone, so that she may keep
it[4] for the day of my burial. [8]†For the poor you always have with you, but
you do not always have me."

The Plot to Kill Lazarus

9 ‡† When the large crowd of the Jews learned that Jesus[5] was there, they
came, not only on account of him but also to see Lazarus, whom he had
raised from the dead. 10 So the chief priests made plans to put Lazarus to
death as well, 11 † because on account of him many of the Jews were going
away and believing in Jesus.

The Triumphal Entry

12 The next day the large crowd that had come to the feast heard that
Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. 13 So they took branches of palm trees and
went out to meet him, crying out, “Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in
the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!” 14 And Jesus found a young
donkey and sat on it, just as it is written,

> 15 “Fear not, daughter of Zion;
> behold, your king is coming,
> sitting on a donkey’s colt!”

16 His disciples did not understand these things at first, but when Jesus was
glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written about
him and had been done to him. 17 The crowd that had been with him when
he called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead continued
to bear witness. 18 The reason why the crowd went to meet him was that they
heard he had done this sign. 19 So the Pharisees said to one another, “You
see that you are gaining nothing. Look, the world has gone after him.”

Some Greeks Seek Jesus

[20] Now among those who went up to worship at the feast were some
Greeks. [21] So these came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and
asked him, “Sir, we wish to see Jesus.” [22] Philip went and told Andrew;
Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. [23] And Jesus answered them, “The
hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. [24] Truly, truly, I say to
you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone;
but if it dies, it bears much fruit. [25] Whoever loves his life loses it, and
whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. [26] If anyone
serves me, he must follow me; and where I am, there will my servant be
also. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him.

The Son of Man Must Be Lifted Up

27 ‡ † “Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? ‘Father, save me
from this hour’? But for this purpose I have come to this hour. 28 † Father,
glorify your name.” Then a voice came from heaven: “I have glorified it,
and I will glorify it again.” 29 † The crowd that stood there and heard it said
that it had thundered. Others said, “An angel has spoken to him.” 30 Jesus
answered, “This voice has come for your sake, not mine. 31 † Now is the
judgment of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out. 32 † And
I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.” 33 He
said this to show by what kind of death he was going to die. 34 † So the
crowd answered him, “We have heard from the Law that the Christ remains
forever. How can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is
this Son of Man?” 35 † So Jesus said to them, “The light is among you for a
little while longer. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake
you. The one who walks in the darkness does not know where he is going.
36 While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons
of light.”

The Unbelief of the People

When Jesus had said these things, he departed and hid himself from
them. [37]†Though he had done so many signs before them, they still did not
believe in him, [38]†so that the word spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be
fulfilled:

> "Lord, who has believed what he heard from us,
> and to whom has the arm of the Lord been
> revealed?"

[39]†Therefore they could not believe. For again Isaiah said,

> [40]† "He has blinded their eyes
> and hardened their heart,
> lest they see with their eyes,
> and understand with their heart, and turn,
> and I would heal them."

[41]†Isaiah said these things because he saw his glory and spoke of him.
[42]†Nevertheless, many even of the authorities believed in him, but for fear
of the Pharisees they did not confess it, so that they would not be put out of
the synagogue; [43]for they loved the glory that comes from man more than
the glory that comes from God.

Jesus Came to Save the World

44 And Jesus cried out and said, “Whoever believes in me, believes not in
me but in him who sent me. 45 And whoever sees me sees him who sent me.
46 I have come into the world as light, so that whoever believes in me may
not remain in darkness. 47 If anyone hears my words and does not keep
them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save
the world. 48 The one who rejects me and does not receive my words has a
judge; the word that I have spoken will judge him on the last day. 49 For I
have not spoken on my own authority, but the Father who sent me has
himself given me a commandment—what to say and what to speak. 50 And
I know that his commandment is eternal life. What I say, therefore, I say as
the Father has told me.”

Jesus Washes the Disciples' Feet

13 [1]‡†Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that
his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his
own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. [2]†During supper,
when the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's
son, to betray him, [3]†Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things
into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going back to God,
[4]†rose from supper. He laid aside his outer garments, and taking a towel,
tied it around his waist. [5]†Then he poured water into a basin and began to
wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped
around him. [6]He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, do you wash
my feet?" [7]†Jesus answered him, "What I am doing you do not understand
now, but afterward you will understand." [8]†Peter said to him, "You shall
never wash my feet." Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have
no share with me." [9]†Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but
also my hands and my head!" [10]†Jesus said to him, "The one who has
bathed does not need to wash, except for his feet,[1] but is completely clean.
And you[2] are clean, but not every one of you." [11]For he knew who was to
betray him; that was why he said, "Not all of you are clean."

[12]†When he had washed their feet and put on his outer garments and
resumed his place, he said to them, "Do you understand what I have done to
you? [13]†You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. [14]‡If I
then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash
one another's feet. [15]For I have given you an example, that you also should
do just as I have done to you. [16]†Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant[3] is not
greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent
him. [17]†If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them. [18]†I am
not speaking of all of you; I know whom I have chosen. But the Scripture
will be fulfilled,[1]'He who ate my bread has lifted his heel against me.' [19]†I
am telling you this now, before it takes place, that when it does take place
you may believe that I am he. [20]†Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever receives

the one I send receives me, and whoever receives me receives the one who sent me.”

One of You Will Betray Me

21 ‡ † After saying these things, Jesus was troubled in his spirit, and
testified, “Truly, truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me.” 22 The
disciples looked at one another, uncertain of whom he spoke. 23 † One of his
disciples, whom Jesus loved, was reclining at table close to Jesus,[2] 24 so
Simon Peter motioned to him to ask Jesus[3] of whom he was speaking. 25 So
that disciple, leaning back against Jesus, said to him, “Lord, who is it?”
26 † Jesus answered, “It is he to whom I will give this morsel of bread when I
have dipped it.” So when he had dipped the morsel, he gave it to Judas, the
son of Simon Iscariot. 27 † Then after he had taken the morsel, Satan entered
into him. Jesus said to him, “What you are going to do, do quickly.” 28 † Now
no one at the table knew why he said this to him. 29 † Some thought that,
because Judas had the moneybag, Jesus was telling him, “Buy what we
need for the feast,” or that he should give something to the poor. 30 † So, after
receiving the morsel of bread, he immediately went out. And it was night.

A New Commandment

31 ††When he had gone out, Jesus said, “Now is the Son of Man glorified,
and God is glorified in him. 32If God is glorified in him, God will also
glorify him in himself, and glorify him at once. 33†Little children, yet a little
while I am with you. You will seek me, and just as I said to the Jews, so
now I also say to you, ‘Where I am going you cannot come.’ 34 †A new
commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved
you, you also are to love one another. 35†By this all people will know that
you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

Jesus Foretells Peter's Denial

36 ‡ † Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, where are you going?" Jesus
answered him, "Where I am going you cannot follow me now, but you will
follow afterward." 37 † Peter said to him, "Lord, why can I not follow you
now? I will lay down my life for you." 38 † Jesus answered, "Will you lay
down your life for me? Truly, truly, I say to you, the rooster will not crow
till you have denied me three times.

I Am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life

14 1 ✝✝“Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God;[1] believe also
in me. 2 ✝In my Father’s house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I
have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?[2][3] ✝And if I go and
prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that
where I am you may be also. 4 And you know the way to where I am
going.”[3][5] ✝Thomas said to him, “Lord, we do not know where you are
going. How can we know the way?” 6 ✝Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and
the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. 7 ✝If
you had known me, you would have known my Father also.[4] From now on
you do know him and have seen him.”

8 ✝Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.”
9 ✝Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and you still do not
know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you
say, ‘Show us the Father’? 10 ✝Do you not believe that I am in the Father and
the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own
authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works. 11 ✝Believe me
that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of
the works themselves.

12 ✝“Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the
works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going
to the Father. 13 Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father
may be glorified in the Son. 14 ✝If you ask me[5] anything in my name, I will
do it.

Jesus Promises the Holy Spirit

15 ‡ ‡ “If you love me, you will keep my commandments. 16 † And I will ask
the Father, and he will give you another Helper,[6] to be with you forever,
17 † even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it
neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and
will be in you.
18 † “I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. 19 † Yet a little
while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I
live, you also will live. 20 † In that day you will know that I am in my Father,
and you in me, and I in you. 21 † Whoever has my commandments and keeps
them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my
Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.” 22 † Judas (not
Iscariot) said to him, “Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us,
and not to the world?” 23 ‡ † Jesus answered him, “If anyone loves me, he
will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him
and make our home with him. 24 Whoever does not love me does not keep
my words. And the word that you hear is not mine but the Father’s who sent
me.
25 “These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. 26 † But the
Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will
teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to
you. 27 † Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world
gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be
afraid. 28 † You heard me say to you, ‘I am going away, and I will come to
you.’ If you loved me, you would have rejoiced, because I am going to the
Father, for the Father is greater than I. 29 And now I have told you before it
takes place, so that when it does take place you may believe. 30 † I will no
longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming. He has no
claim on me, 31 but I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world
may know that I love the Father. Rise, let us go from here.

I Am the True Vine

15 [1]†† “I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. [2]† Every
branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that
does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. [3]Already you are clean
because of the word that I have spoken to you. [4]† Abide in me, and I in you.
As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither
can you, unless you abide in me. [5]† I am the vine; you are the branches.
Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart
from me you can do nothing. [6]† If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown
away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into
the fire, and burned. [7]† If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask
whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. [8]† By this my Father is
glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. [9]As the
Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. [10]† If you keep
my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my
Father’s commandments and abide in his love. [11]† These things I have
spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.

[12]† “This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved
you. [13]† Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for
his friends. [14]† You are my friends if you do what I command you. [15]† No
longer do I call you servants,[1] for the servant[2] does not know what his
master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from
my Father I have made known to you. [16]† You did not choose me, but I
chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your
fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may
give it to you. [17]† These things I command you, so that you will love one
another.

The Hatred of the World

18 ‡ † “If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated
you. 19 † If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but
because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore
the world hates you. 20 † Remember the word that I said to you: ‘A servant is
not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted me, they will also persecute
you. If they kept my word, they will also keep yours. 21 But all these things
they will do to you on account of my name, because they do not know him
who sent me. 22 † If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have
been guilty of sin,[3] but now they have no excuse for their sin. 23 † Whoever
hates me hates my Father also. 24 † If I had not done among them the works
that no one else did, they would not be guilty of sin, but now they have seen
and hated both me and my Father. 25 † But the word that is written in their
Law must be fulfilled: ‘They hated me without a cause.’

26 † “But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the
Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear
witness about me. 27 † And you also will bear witness, because you have
been with me from the beginning.

16 1 † “I have said all these things to you to keep you from falling
away. 2 † They will put you out of the synagogues. Indeed, the hour is
coming when whoever kills you will think he is offering service to God.
3 And they will do these things because they have not known the Father, nor
me. 4 † But I have said these things to you, that when their hour comes you
may remember that I told them to you.

The Work of the Holy Spirit

"I did not say these things to you from the beginning, because I was with
you. [5]†But now I am going to him who sent me, and none of you asks me,
'Where are you going?' [6]But because I have said these things to you, sorrow
has filled your heart. [7]† Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your
advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come
to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. [8]†And when he comes, he will
convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment:
[9]† † concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; [10]† concerning
righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer;
[11]†concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.

[12]†"I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.
[13]†When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he
will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak,
and he will declare to you the things that are to come. [14]†He will glorify me,
for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. [15]All that the Father has
is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

Your Sorrow Will Turn into Joy

16 ‡ † “A little while, and you will see me no longer; and again a little
while, and you will see me.” 17 So some of his disciples said to one another,
“What is this that he says to us, ‘A little while, and you will not see me, and
again a little while, and you will see me’; and, ‘because I am going to the
Father’?” 18 So they were saying, “What does he mean by ‘a little while’?
We do not know what he is talking about.” 19 † Jesus knew that they wanted
to ask him, so he said to them, “Is this what you are asking yourselves, what
I meant by saying, ‘A little while and you will not see me, and again a little
while and you will see me’? 20 † Truly, truly, I say to you, you will weep and
lament, but the world will rejoice. You will be sorrowful, but your sorrow
will turn into joy. 21 † When a woman is giving birth, she has sorrow because
her hour has come, but when she has delivered the baby, she no longer
remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the
world. 22 † So also you have sorrow now, but I will see you again, and your
hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you. 23 † In that day
you will ask nothing of me. Truly, truly, I say to you, whatever you ask of
the Father in my name, he will give it to you. 24 † Until now you have asked
nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.

I Have Overcome the World

25 ‡ † “I have said these things to you in figures of speech. The hour is
coming when I will no longer speak to you in figures of speech but will tell
you plainly about the Father. 26 In that day you will ask in my name, and I do
not say to you that I will ask the Father on your behalf; 27 for the Father
himself loves you, because you have loved me and have believed that I
came from God.[1] 28 I came from the Father and have come into the world,
and now I am leaving the world and going to the Father.”

29 † His disciples said, “Ah, now you are speaking plainly and not using
figurative speech! 30 † Now we know that you know all things and do not
need anyone to question you; this is why we believe that you came from
God.” 31 † Jesus answered them, “Do you now believe? 32 † Behold, the hour
is coming, indeed it has come, when you will be scattered, each to his own
home, and will leave me alone. Yet I am not alone, for the Father is with
me. 33 † I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In
the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the
world.”

The High Priestly Prayer

17 [1]†When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, “Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, [2]†since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. [3]†And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. [4]I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do. [5]†And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.

[6]†“I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world. Yours they were, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. [7]†Now they know that everything that you have given me is from you. [8]For I have given them the words that you gave me, and they have received them and have come to know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. [9]†I am praying for them. I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours. [10]†All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them. [11]†And I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one. [12]†While I was with them, I kept them in your name, which you have given me. I have guarded them, and not one of them has been lost except the son of destruction, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. [13]But now I am coming to you, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves. [14]†I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. [15]†I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one.[1][16]They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. [17]†Sanctify them[2] in the truth; your word is truth. [18]†As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. [19]†And for their sake I consecrate myself,[3] that they also may be sanctified[4] in truth.

[20]†“I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me
through their word, [21]†that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in
me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe
that you have sent me. [22]†The glory that you have given me I have given to
them, that they may be one even as we are one, [23]†I in them and you in me,
that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you
sent me and loved them even as you loved me. [24]†Father, I desire that they
also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my
glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation
of the world. [25]O righteous Father, even though the world does not know
you, I know you, and these know that you have sent me. [26]†I made known
to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with
which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.”

Betrayal and Arrest of Jesus

18 [1] When Jesus had spoken these words, he went out with his
disciples across the Kidron Valley, where there was a garden, which he and
his disciples entered. [2] Now Judas, who betrayed him, also knew the place,
for Jesus often met there with his disciples. [3] So Judas, having procured a
band of soldiers and some officers from the chief priests and the Pharisees,
went there with lanterns and torches and weapons. [4] Then Jesus, knowing
all that would happen to him, came forward and said to them, "Whom do
you seek?" [5] They answered him, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus said to them,
"I am he."[1] Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them. [6] When
Jesus[2] said to them, "I am he," they drew back and fell to the ground. [7] So
he asked them again, "Whom do you seek?" And they said, "Jesus of
Nazareth." [8] Jesus answered, "I told you that I am he. So, if you seek me, let
these men go." [9] This was to fulfill the word that he had spoken: "Of those
whom you gave me I have lost not one." [10] Then Simon Peter, having a
sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant[3] and cut off his right ear.
(The servant's name was Malchus.) [11] So Jesus said to Peter, "Put your
sword into its sheath; shall I not drink the cup that the Father has given
me?"

Jesus Faces Annas and Caiaphas

12 So the band of soldiers and their captain and the officers of the Jews
arrested Jesus and bound him. 13 First they led him to Annas, for he was the
father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was high priest that year. 14 It was Caiaphas
who had advised the Jews that it would be expedient that one man should
die for the people.

Peter Denies Jesus

15 ✝✝Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple. Since that
disciple was known to the high priest, he entered with Jesus into the court
of the high priest, 16but Peter stood outside at the door. So the other disciple,
who was known to the high priest, went out and spoke to the servant girl
who kept watch at the door, and brought Peter in. 17✝The servant girl at the
door said to Peter, “You also are not one of this man’s disciples, are you?”
He said, “I am not.” 18✝Now the servants[4] and officers had made a charcoal
fire, because it was cold, and they were standing and warming themselves.
Peter also was with them, standing and warming himself.

The High Priest Questions Jesus

19 The high priest then questioned Jesus about his disciples and his
teaching. 20 Jesus answered him, “I have spoken openly to the world. I have
always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all Jews come
together. I have said nothing in secret. 21 Why do you ask me? Ask those
who have heard me what I said to them; they know what I said.” 22 When
he had said these things, one of the officers standing by struck Jesus with
his hand, saying, “Is that how you answer the high priest?” 23 Jesus
answered him, “If what I said is wrong, bear witness about the wrong; but if
what I said is right, why do you strike me?” 24 Annas then sent him bound
to Caiaphas the high priest.

Peter Denies Jesus Again

25 ✝✝Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. So they said to
him, “You also are not one of his disciples, are you?” He denied it and said,
“I am not.” 26 ✝One of the servants of the high priest, a relative of the man
whose ear Peter had cut off, asked, “Did I not see you in the garden with
him?” 27 ✝Peter again denied it, and at once a rooster crowed.

Jesus Before Pilate

28 ‡ † Then they led Jesus from the house of Caiaphas to the governor's
headquarters.[1] It was early morning. They themselves did not enter the
governor's headquarters, so that they would not be defiled, but could eat the
Passover. 29 † So Pilate went outside to them and said, "What accusation do
you bring against this man?" 30 † They answered him, "If this man were not
doing evil, we would not have delivered him over to you." 31 ‡ † Pilate said to
them, "Take him yourselves and judge him by your own law." The Jews
said to him, "It is not lawful for us to put anyone to death." 32 † This was to
fulfill the word that Jesus had spoken to show by what kind of death he was
going to die.

My Kingdom Is Not of This World

33 ††So Pilate entered his headquarters again and called Jesus and said to
him, “Are you the King of the Jews?” 34 Jesus answered, “Do you say this of
your own accord, or did others say it to you about me?” 35 †Pilate answered,
“Am I a Jew? Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered you over
to me. What have you done?” 36 †Jesus answered, “My kingdom is not of
this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been
fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is
not from the world.” 37 †Then Pilate said to him, “So you are a king?” Jesus
answered, “You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for
this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth.
Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice.” 38 †Pilate said to him,
“What is truth?”

After he had said this, he went back outside to the Jews and told them, “I
find no guilt in him. 39 †But you have a custom that I should release one man
for you at the Passover. So do you want me to release to you the King of the
Jews?” 40 † They cried out again, “Not this man, but Barabbas!” Now
Barabbas was a robber.[1]

Jesus Delivered to Be Crucified

19 [1] ‡ † Then Pilate took Jesus and flogged him. [2] † And the soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head and arrayed him in a purple robe. [3] † They came up to him, saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!” and struck him with their hands. [4] Pilate went out again and said to them, “See, I am bringing him out to you that you may know that I find no guilt in him.” [5] † So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, “Behold the man!” [6] † When the chief priests and the officers saw him, they cried out, “Crucify him, crucify him!” Pilate said to them, “Take him yourselves and crucify him, for I find no guilt in him.” [7] † The Jews answered him, “We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die because he has made himself the Son of God.” [8] † When Pilate heard this statement, he was even more afraid. [9] † He entered his headquarters again and said to Jesus, “Where are you from?” But Jesus gave him no answer. [10] † So Pilate said to him, “You will not speak to me? Do you not know that I have authority to release you and authority to crucify you?” [11] † Jesus answered him, “You would have no authority over me at all unless it had been given you from above. Therefore he who delivered me over to you has the greater sin.”

[12] † From then on Pilate sought to release him, but the Jews cried out, “If you release this man, you are not Caesar’s friend. Everyone who makes himself a king opposes Caesar.” [13] † So when Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called The Stone Pavement, and in Aramaic[1] Gabbatha. [14] † Now it was the day of Preparation of the Passover. It was about the sixth hour.[2] He said to the Jews, “Behold your King!” [15] † They cried out, “Away with him, away with him, crucify him!” Pilate said to them, “Shall I crucify your King?” The chief priests answered, “We have no king but Caesar.” [16] † So he delivered him over to them to be crucified.

The Crucifixion

So they took Jesus, [17] ✝ and he went out, bearing his own cross, to the
place called The Place of a Skull, which in Aramaic is called Golgotha.
[18] There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, and
Jesus between them. [19] ✝ Pilate also wrote an inscription and put it on the
cross. It read, “Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.” [20] ✝ Many of the
Jews read this inscription, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near
the city, and it was written in Aramaic, in Latin, and in Greek. [21] ✝ So the
chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, “Do not write, ‘The King of the
Jews,’ but rather, ‘This man said, I am King of the Jews.’” [22] ✝ Pilate
answered, “What I have written I have written.”

[23] ✝ ✝ When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his garments and
divided them into four parts, one part for each soldier; also his tunic.[3] But
the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom, [24] ✝ so they
said to one another, “Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see whose it
shall be.” This was to fulfill the Scripture which says,

> “They divided my garments among them,
> and for my clothing they cast lots.”

So the soldiers did these things, [25] ✝ but standing by the cross of Jesus
were his mother and his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary
Magdalene. [26] ✝ ✝ When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved
standing nearby, he said to his mother, “Woman, behold, your son!” [27] ✝ Then
he said to the disciple, “Behold, your mother!” And from that hour the
disciple took her to his own home.

The Death of Jesus

[28] ‡ † After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill
the Scripture), “I thirst.” [29] † A jar full of sour wine stood there, so they put a
sponge full of the sour wine on a hyssop branch and held it to his mouth.
[30] † When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, “It is finished,” and he
bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

Jesus’ Side Is Pierced

31 ‡† Since it was the day of Preparation, and so that the bodies would not
remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the
Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken and that they might be
taken away. 32 So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first, and of the
other who had been crucified with him. 33 But when they came to Jesus and
saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. 34 † But one of the
soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and
water. 35 † He who saw it has borne witness—his testimony is true, and he
knows that he is telling the truth—that you also may believe. 36 † For these
things took place that the Scripture might be fulfilled: “Not one of his bones
will be broken.” 37 † And again another Scripture says, “They will look on
him whom they have pierced.”

Jesus Is Buried

38 ‡† After these things Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus,
but secretly for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the
body of Jesus, and Pilate gave him permission. So he came and took away
his body. 39 † Nicodemus also, who earlier had come to Jesus[1] by night,
came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds[2] in
weight. 40 † So they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen cloths with
the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews. 41 † Now in the place where he
was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no
one had yet been laid. 42 † So because of the Jewish day of Preparation, since
the tomb was close at hand, they laid Jesus there.

The Resurrection

20 [1]†‡Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. [2]†So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, “They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.” [3]So Peter went out with the other disciple, and they were going toward the tomb. [4]†Both of them were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. [5]†And stooping to look in, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he did not go in. [6]Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen cloths lying there, [7]†and the face cloth, which had been on Jesus’[3] head, not lying with the linen cloths but folded up in a place by itself. [8]† Then the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; [9]†for as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that he must rise from the dead. [10]†Then the disciples went back to their homes.

Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene

11 † But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb, and as she wept she
stooped to look into the tomb. 12 †And she saw two angels in white, sitting
where the body of Jesus had lain, one at the head and one at the feet. 13They
said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping?” She said to them, “They have
taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.”
14 †Having said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing, but she did
not know that it was Jesus. 15 †Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you
weeping? Whom are you seeking?” Supposing him to be the gardener, she
said to him, “Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid
him, and I will take him away.” 16 †Jesus said to her, “Mary.” She turned and
said to him in Aramaic,[1] “Rabboni!” (which means Teacher). 17 †Jesus said
to her, “Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go
to my brothers and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your
Father, to my God and your God.’” 18Mary Magdalene went and announced
to the disciples, I have seen the Lord”—and that he had said these things to
her.

Jesus Appears to the Disciples

19 ‡† On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being
locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood
among them and said to them, “Peace be with you.” 20 † When he had said
this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad
when they saw the Lord. 21 † Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you.
As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.” 22 † And when he had
said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit.
23 † If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold
forgiveness from any, it is withheld.”

Jesus and Thomas

24 ‡ † Now Thomas, one of the Twelve, called the Twin,[2] was not with
them when Jesus came. 25 † So the other disciples told him, “We have seen
the Lord.” But he said to them, “Unless I see in his hands the mark of the
nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into
his side, I will never believe.”
26 † Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with
them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them
and said, “Peace be with you.” 27 † Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger
here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do
not disbelieve, but believe.” 28 † Thomas answered him, “My Lord and my
God!” 29 † Jesus said to him, “Have you believed because you have seen me?
Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”

The Purpose of This Book

30 ✝ ✝ Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples,
which are not written in this book; 31 ✝ but these are written so that you may
believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you
may have life in his name.

Jesus Appears to Seven Disciples

21 [1]After this Jesus revealed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias, and he revealed himself in this way. [2]Simon Peter, Thomas (called the Twin), Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples were together. [3]Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We will go with you." They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.

[4]Just as day was breaking, Jesus stood on the shore; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. [5]Jesus said to them, "Children, do you have any fish?" They answered him, "No." [6]He said to them, "Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some." So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in, because of the quantity of fish. [7]That disciple whom Jesus loved therefore said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment, for he was stripped for work, and threw himself into the sea. [8]The other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, but about a hundred yards[1] off.

[9]When they got out on land, they saw a charcoal fire in place, with fish laid out on it, and bread. [10]Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish that you have just caught." [11]So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, 153 of them. And although there were so many, the net was not torn. [12]Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast." Now none of the disciples dared ask him, "Who are you?" They knew it was the Lord. [13]Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and so with the fish. [14]This was now the third time that Jesus was revealed to the disciples after he was raised from the dead.

Jesus and Peter

15 When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon,
son of John, do you love me more than these?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord;
you know that I love you.” He said to him, “Feed my lambs.” 16 He said to
him a second time, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?” He said to him,
“Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” He said to him, “Tend my sheep.”
17 He said to him the third time, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?”
Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, “Do you love me?”
and he said to him, “Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.”
Jesus said to him, “Feed my sheep. 18 Truly, truly, I say to you, when you
were young, you used to dress yourself and walk wherever you wanted, but
when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will dress
you and carry you where you do not want to go.” 19 (This he said to show by
what kind of death he was to glorify God.) And after saying this he said to
him, “Follow me.”

Jesus and the Beloved Apostle

20 †Peter turned and saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them,
the one who had been reclining at table close to him and had said, “Lord,
who is it that is going to betray you?” 21 †When Peter saw him, he said to
Jesus, “Lord, what about this man?” 22 †Jesus said to him, “If it is my will
that he remain until I come, what is that to you? You follow me!” 23 †So the
saying spread abroad among the brothers[1] that this disciple was not to die;
yet Jesus did not say to him that he was not to die, but, “If it is my will that
he remain until I come, what is that to you?”

24 †This is the disciple who is bearing witness about these things, and who
has written these things, and we know that his testimony is true.

25 †Now there are also many other things that Jesus did. Were every one of
them to be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the
books that would be written.

John

Overview

Author
John the apostle

Date
Written c AD 90

Places
Bethsaida; Nazareth; Cana; Capernaum; Aenon near Salim; Galilee; Samaria; Tiberias; Mount of Olives; Jerusalem; Bethany; see map, p 1584

People
Jesus and His family; the Twelve (especially "the disciple whom Jesus loved," Andrew, Simon Peter, Philip, Nathanael, Thomas the Twin, Judas Iscariot); Caiaphas, Annas, and chief priests; "the Jews"; Nicodemus; Samaritan woman; blind man; Lazarus, Mary, and Martha; Pilate

Purpose
To lead people to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God

Law Themes
Darkness; slavery to sin; condemnation; demand for signs; death; fleshly desire; unbelief; Judas's example; spiritual blindness; unclean; command to love; the world's hatred

Gospel Themes
Light; grace; truth; Baptism; Lamb of God; born of the Spirit; life; resurrection; Jesus' flesh and blood; the Shepherd's care; clean; forgiveness; God's love; sanctification

Memory Verses

Jesus, the Word (1:1–5); born of God (1:12–14); water and the Spirit (3:5–8); God so loved the world (3:16–17); Jesus' flesh and blood (6:53–58); Peter's confession (6:67–69); Father and Son are one (10:27–30); resurrection and life (11:25–26); the way to the Father (14:1–6); gift of the Spirit (20:22–23)

Introduction to John

Reading John

"What did he mean?" the rabbi questioned. "We sent you to evaluate his teachings and to learn whether he follows the traditions. Will his views lead to an uproar, or can this fellow be contained?"

"This one is different," his colleague replied. "Everyone flocks to him. His teaching is striking, but he leaves you with many questions. We will hear him again if he comes to the feast."

The religious leaders in Judea had questioned the ministry of John the Baptist and worried about his influence (1:19–28). But after they heard Jesus' teaching, they knew they were in for trouble (4:1–3; 5:18). Jesus taught with great boldness and challenged people's assumptions in simple language. Yet, many of Jesus' sayings invite the deepest reflection because they expound the eternal mysteries of the faith. The apostle John focused especially on collecting those remarkable sayings of Jesus.

Luther on John

From the very beginning the evangelist teaches and documents most convincingly the sublime article of our holy Christian faith according to which we believe and confess the one true, almighty, and eternal God. But he states expressly that three distinct Persons dwell in that same single divine essence, namely, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. The Father begets the Son from eternity, the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son, etc. Therefore there are three distinct Persons, equal in glory and majesty; yet there is only one divine essence…. The first man to attack the doctrine of the divinity of Christ was the heretic Cerinthus, a contemporary of the apostles. He presumed to fathom and comprehend this article with his reason. Therefore he declared that the Word was not God. And in order to support this view he cited the verse from Deuteronomy (6:4): "The Lord our God is one God"; and also (Deut. 5:7): "You shall have no other gods before Me." With this sham he worked great harm. He gained a powerful following. Many Jews attached themselves to him, even some of those who had believed in Christ. It must be viewed as a manifestation of divine grace that Cerinthus assailed this article during the lifetime of the apostles; for this is what prompted John, the foremost of the apostles still living at the time, to write his Gospel. In it he proves this article conclusively: that Christ, our Lord and Savior, is true, natural, and eternal God with the Father and the Holy Spirit. John had a very good reason for basing his proof on Moses, since it was he of whom Cerinthus and his followers had boasted. Wresting Moses from their hands, mouth, and heart, John now quotes Moses in an attack against their blasphemous heresies and refutes them completely. This was a veritable masterstroke. (AE 22:5, 7)

Therefore the evangelist John is a master above all the other evangelists, for he treats of this doctrine of Christ's divinity and His humanity persistently and diligently. He joins these two natures together. When Christ becomes man, He speaks to us, performs miracles, and dies according to His humanity. And then His divinity is also established with plain words. (AE 23:77)

For more of Luther's insights on this Book, see *Sermons on the Gospel of St. John* (AE 22–24).

Challenges for Readers

Relationship to Other Gospels. See pp 1571–74.

Authorship. Early Christian testimony affirms that the apostle John wrote the Fourth Gospel (see pp 1571–74). Yet the Gospel itself never states this directly. Instead, the author describes himself as "the disciple whom Jesus loved" (21:7, 20; cf 13:23; 19:26; 20:2) and seems to mention other witnesses to the events of the Gospel ("we" in 1:14; 21:24). Critics have used these facts to suggest a number of other potential authors, but none of the suggestions are compelling. The references to the beloved disciple fit well with what we know of John in the other Gospels: that he was a member of Jesus' inner circle and a close comrade of Simon Peter in Acts (cf Jn 13:23–25; 21:20–23; Ac 3:1–4; 8:14; the other member of that inner circle—John's brother James—was martyred early on; Ac 12:2). The reference to other witnesses ("we") also shows up repeatedly in the Letters of John (e.g., 1Jn 1). Therefore, early Christian testimony appears sound and consistent in affirming John as the writer.

Opposition from the Jews. John frequently uses the Gk term *Ioudaioi* (usually translated "Jews" but also translated "Judeans") to describe people who oppose Jesus, beginning in 1:19 (leaders from Jerusalem). Some interpreters have accused John of anti-Semitism because he used this expression in connection with Jewish-Christian hostility. Jesus and John were, of course, ethnically Jewish. Readers should note that John does record positive examples of Jews who believed in Jesus (11:45), even from among the Jewish leadership (19:38–39). Also note that John tends to use many ethnic or regional designations, including Greeks, Romans, Galileans, Samaritans, and Judeans (the latter three are derived from names of Roman tetrarchies). The Synoptic Gospels instead often use the general term "crowds" to describe people who come to hear Jesus. Instead of reading all of John's references to "Jews" as religious or as evidence of Jewish-Christian hostility, one may see John distinguishing the responses of the Judeans from the Samaritans, Galileans, and Greeks who more readily received Jesus (4:39–40, 45; 12:20–21), as noted already by Chrysostom: "Behold, both Samaritans and Galileans believe, to the shame of the Jews, and Samaritans are found better than Galileans, for the first received Him

through the words of the woman, the second when they had seen the miracles which He did" (*NPNF* 1 14:123).

Enigmatic Sayings. Whereas Matthew and Luke tend to record Jesus' parables, John records many difficult sayings of Jesus that appear throughout the Gospel and unify its composition (e.g., 2:4, 19; 3:3, 8; 4:10, 32; 5:17; 6:35, 51, 53, 70; 7:6, 34, 37–38; 8:21, 58; 9:39; 13:33; 14:4; 15:17; 18:36–37; 21:18, 22). John often notes the trouble the disciples and the crowds have deciphering Jesus' intent by recording their questions. In some cases the disciples only understood Jesus' words much later (cf 2:22; 21:19). Jesus refers to His sayings as "figures of speech" (Gk *paroimia*, 16:25), an expression that commonly describes proverbs. But Jesus' sayings are more than traditional proverbs. They are often prophetic or have the character of riddles, demanding deep reflection. Jesus' many "I am" statements should be included among these enigmatic sayings. See pp 1784–85.

Jesus' Signs. John records that Jesus performed many "signs" (Gk *semeia*). These are not just miracles but are acts demonstrating that Jesus is the Messiah. Source critics have proposed that the first half of John's Gospel (chs 2–12) actually comes from a lost document called the "Book of Signs." They note that these chapters list a series of signs and that this series does not continue throughout the Book. However, readers should discern the important transition in chs 12–13, in which John tells how the signs did not convince the crowds (12:37–43), so Jesus withdrew to teach His disciples privately and to prepare them for His death and resurrection—His greatest sign (see especially 20:30, "many *other* signs," making the resurrection a sign; cf Mt 12:38–41). Viewed in this light, John presents a unified composition rather than a later edition of an earlier work.

John's Calendar. John appears to mark time differently from the other evangelists. He may use Roman-civil reckoning for describing hours of the day. See p 1567.

Gnosticism. See notes, 1:4, 5.

Blessings for Readers

John's Gospel focuses beautifully on both the promise of everlasting life and the bodily resurrection of those who trust in Jesus. As you study the words of Jesus as recorded by John, take comfort in His many great and precious promises to you. His words are spirit, and they are life! Just as the disciples reflected for years on Jesus' simple yet profound words (2:22; 21:19), commit His words to heart, consider them with hope, and grow by them. Even now, Jesus—the Word made flesh—is working for your blessing (5:17) and preparing an eternal home for you (14:1–3).

OUTLINE

I. John's Prologue: The Word Became Flesh (1:1–18)
II. Jesus' Ministry (1:19–10:42)
  A. John the Baptist and the First Disciples (1:19–51)
    1. The testimony of John the Baptist (1:19–34)
    2. Jesus calls the first disciples (1:35–51)
  B. Early Ministry (chs 2–4)
    1. The wedding at Cana (2:1–12)
    2. Jesus cleanses the temple (2:13–25)
    3. Jesus teaches Nicodemus (3:1–21)
    4. John the Baptist exalts Christ (3:22–36)
    5. Jesus teaches a Samaritan woman and a Galilean official (ch 4)
  C. Rising Opposition to Jesus' Ministry (chs 5–10)
    1. The healing at the pool on the Sabbath (ch 5)
    2. Jesus feeds and teaches the 5,000 (ch 6)
    3. Jesus at the Feast of Booths (7:1–52)
    4. The woman caught in adultery (7:53–8:11)
    5. Jesus testifies about the Father before the Pharisees (8:12–59)
    6. Jesus heals a man born blind (ch 9)
    7. Jesus is the Good Shepherd (10:1–21)
    8. Jesus and the Father are one (10:22–42)
III. A Death and Resurrection; Persistent Unbelief (chs 11–12)
  A. Raising Lazarus (ch 11)
  B. The Triumphal Entry and People's Doubts (ch 12)

1. Mary anoints Jesus for His death (12:1–11)
2. Jesus' public teaching before the Passover (12:12–50)

IV. Passover and Holy Week (chs 13–19)
A. Jesus Bids His Disciples Farewell (chs 13–16)
1. Jesus washes the disciples' feet (13:1–20)
2. Jesus predicts Judas's betrayal (13:21–30)
3. Jesus gives a new commandment (13:31–35)
4. Jesus foretells Peter's denial (13:36–38)
5. Jesus is the way and the truth and the life (14:1–14)
6. Jesus promises the Holy Spirit (14:15–31)
7. Jesus is the true vine, hated by the world (15:1–16:4a)
8. The work of the Holy Spirit (16:4b–15)
9. Sorrow will turn into joy, and Jesus has overcome the world (16:16–33)

B. Jesus' Prayer for the Disciples (ch 17)
C. Jesus' Trial and Passion (chs 18–19)
1. Betrayal and arrest of Jesus (18:1–11)
2. Jesus faces Annas, Caiaphas, and Pilate (18:12–40)
3. The crucifixion (19:1–27)
4. The death and burial of Jesus (19:28–42)

V. Jesus' Resurrection (ch 20)
VI. Epilogue (ch 21)

Articles and Resources Related to John

- A Simple Fisherman
- Jesus' Words "Amen, Amen"
- The Witness of "I Am"
- God's Work in Healing and Suffering
- Love: Inclusive or Exclusive?
- Love for the Vineyard
- The Spirit in John's Gospel
- God Is Three-in-One

A Simple Fisherman

In the winter of 1986, Moshe and Yuval Lofan trudged through the mud on the west shore of the Sea of Galilee. For years, human feet had not touched the ground on which they walked, but an extended drought had lowered the water level and exposed the sea bottom. As they plodded, suddenly they noticed something jutting out of the sea floor. Pawing through the mud, they realized they had discovered an ancient fisherman's boat. Soon, archaeologists began an excavation. They concluded that the boat dated to the days of Jesus and the apostle John.

Although the Bible does not tell us specifically about John's youth, archaeology and history give us hints about what his life must have been like. This article explores the facts of John's family and friendship with Jesus. It will help you appreciate God's call in the life of this simple fisherman.

A Fisherman's Life

Growing up on the shores of the Sea of Galilee, John would have known well both the sea and his father's fishing trade. Zebedee, John's father, most likely worked out of Capernaum or Bethsaida, on Galilee's north shore. Zebedee's family prospered in the fishing trade and was able to afford servant labor (Mk 1:20). John would have worked alongside his father and his servants in every aspect of his father's business. For example, Matthew describes how John and his brother James helped Zebedee prepare the nets by washing, mending, and hanging them out to dry at the end of the day (Mt 4:21).

Details about John's mother show the devoted upbringing of the children. She followed Jesus and ministered to Him when He taught in Galilee (she may be Salome; cf Mt 27:56; Mk 15:40–41). She saw Jesus die on the cross and brought spices to His tomb on Easter Sunday morning. (Based on Jn 19:25, some think she was the sister of Mary the mother of Jesus.) She was probably a protective and forceful personality in John's life. She asked Jesus to enthrone James and John alongside Him in His kingdom (Mt 20:20–24; Mk 10:35–41)! Not surprisingly, John never mentions this incident or the ill feelings it created among the disciples.

The Gospels hint that John's family prospered in their fishing business. For example, John was known by the high priest and gained access to his household during Jesus' trial (Jn 18:15; note that Peter, another fisherman, did not have easy access). Also, from the cross Jesus entrusted Mary to John's care. The closeness and wealth of the family probably made John the best choice to assume Jesus' family responsibility for His mother. (According to church historian Eusebius, John took care of Mary for 15 years.)

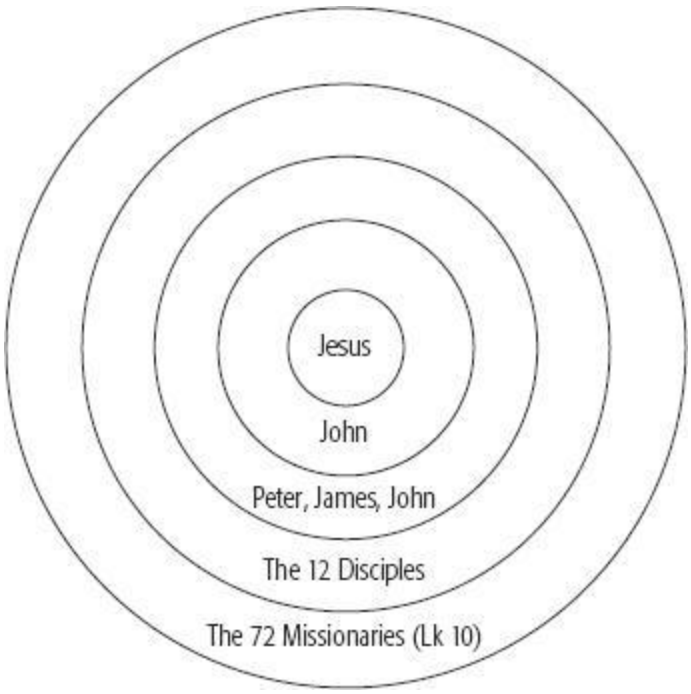
Close to Christ

When you search the Gospels for more details about John's life, you will notice that he has a special relationship with Jesus. At crucial moments in His ministry, Jesus invites John to accompany Him (transfiguration: Mt 17:1; Mk 9:2; Lk 9:28; raising of Jairus's daughter: Mk 5:37; Lk 8:51; prayers at Gethsemane: Mt 26:37; Mk 14:33).

At the Last Supper, John sits closest to Jesus, reclining on the floor next to a short table according to Near Eastern custom (Jn 13:23). When Peter, another disciple close to Jesus, needs information, he tries to work through John to get to Jesus (vv 24–25). In this same passage, as throughout his Gospel, John describes himself as "the disciple whom Jesus loved" (21:7, 20). John appears to have been the only disciple to overcome his fear of arrest and stand by Jesus at the crucifixion (19:25–27). On Easter Sunday, John is the first of the disciples to reach the empty tomb and ponder its message (20:1–9). He clearly demonstrates a special closeness to the Lord.

Lean on the Lord

As you read John's testimony about Jesus, pray that you, too, might grow closer to your Savior. Though a thousand other duties and relationships may cry out to you, remember that this one relationship—to Christ—has the highest priority. Like the beloved disciple, lean on the Lord and bring your requests to Him. He will hear your pleas and answer you with loving-kindness. Though a thousand other duties and relationships may cry out to Him, He will always have time for you.



Jesus' Words "Amen, Amen"

Amen comes from the Hebrew word for faith or faithfulness. When used as a verb, this word meant "to establish, support, or make certain."

Amen is one of those unique Hebrew words that has followed the Gospel into every language in which it has been preached. Most people are familiar with *amen* as a conclusion for prayers. When used in this way, *amen* means "may it be so" or "may this prayer be fulfilled." In John's Gospel, *amen* takes on a different sense. When doubled up at the beginning of a Scripture passage, *amen* means "truly," "verily," or "surely."

John is the only Gospel writer to feature this double amen. He records numerous examples of Christ saying, "Amen, amen," as He is about to present a new thought. In the ESV, the double amen translates as "Truly, truly," which ties beautifully to John's words that Christ is full of grace and truth (1:14) and Christ's own words, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life" (14:6). To learn more about Jesus' double amen, study the following chart.

In each case, the "Amen, amen" statements confront those who do not understand Jesus or who doubt His message. Jesus uses this phrase again and again, almost like one uses an oath today, affirming His testimony.

As you read Jesus' words recorded by the apostle John, recognize that Christ knows your need. His teaching brims with blessings for your life. Receive His Word in faith, affirming each promise with "Amen, amen! Yes, yes, it shall be so!"

The Witness of "I AM"

Throughout the Old Testament, the most frequent name for God is "Yahweh," used over 5,000 times. This Hebrew name for God comes from God Himself, as Moses records. When Moses asked God by what name He desired to be called, God replied, " I AM WHO I AM" (Ex 3:14). When Moses began preaching to the Israelites, he explained to them, " 'He Is' sent me." Or, literally in Hebrew, "Yahweh sent me."

The Gospel of St John builds on this Old Testament event and this personal name for God in order to explain who Jesus is. The Jewish people of Jesus' day knew Moses' story about "I AM" and Moses' preaching in the name of "He Is." This name for God was so sacred that they would never utter it. In view of this background, imagine the outrage of the Pharisees when Jesus described Himself by repeatedly using the phrase "I am." Based on the Greek original, here are the places in John where Christ refers to Himself as "I am": 4:26; 6:20, 35, 41, 48, 51; 8:12, 24, 28, 58; 9:9; 10:7, 9, 11, 14; 11:25; 13:19; 14:6; 15:1, 5; 18:5–6, 8.

The following examples will explain Jesus' statements and help you better understand who Jesus is.

I Am the Bread of Life

John records various times when Christ described Himself as “I am” followed with a statement about bread. Christ refers to Himself as “the bread of life” (6:35, 48). He is “the bread that came down from heaven” (6:41) and “the living bread” (6:51). The Jews were stunned. “How can this man give us His flesh to eat?” Their grumbling leads Christ to add that He is “the bread that came down from heaven” (6:4).

In speaking these words, Christ drew a parallel between His life and the manna God provided during the exodus. Christ taught the Pharisees: “In the desert, God provided manna. This manna kept your ancestors alive; however, because of original sin, they eventually died. Like the manna God provided, I came from heaven, but I give eternal life” (6:32–33, paraphrase; cf vv 48–51; Ps 78:23–33).

According to John, Christ’s teaching on the bread of life was a pivotal point in His ministry. Because of Christ’s words about eating and drinking His flesh and blood, many disciples “no longer walked with Him” (Jn 6:66). They found His teachings too difficult. Yes, just as food is necessary for earthly life, Christ is necessary for life eternal.

I Am the Light of the World

At the beginning of the Gospel, John called Christ "the light of men" (1:4). In 8:12, we learn where John first heard the term *light* used in reference to Christ. The term came from Christ Himself as He addressed the Pharisees in the temple court near the place where offerings were put (8:13, 20). Historically, the Pharisees were aware of the messianic prophecies about light found in passages such as Is 42:6 and Dn 2:22. Therefore, speaking in terms the Jews would understand, Christ witnessed that He fulfilled these prophecies. However, Christ does not stop there. He followed His words "I am the light" by quickly adding "of the world" (Jn 8:12). By adding this phrase, Christ testified that He is the fulfillment of God's plan for Jews and Gentiles alike (Is 49:6).

The second mention of Jesus as the "light of the world" occurs in Jn 9:5. This teaching prepares people for the healing of a blind man. Again, it is addressed to the Pharisees. Soon after calling Himself "the light of the world," Christ offered proof of His power over blindness, fulfilling Is 29:18; 35:5. Christ, the light of the world, brought light into the blind man's darkness.

Some scholars suggest that the blind man symbolized the Gentile nations, which received the light after the Jews rejected it. However, if symbolism is involved, it is most likely that the blind man symbolized all sinners, who languish in darkness until the light (Christ) shines in their lives. The brilliance of His glory will open your eyes!

I Am the Door

In ancient times, sheep were kept in walled enclosures with only one entrance. Jesus calls Himself the door (Jn 10:7, 9), for only through Him will true shepherds (pastors and other faithful witnesses) enter to guide the lost sheep. Christ addresses this teaching to the Pharisees. He accuses them of providing false witness. Christ provides the test for who is a true and faithful shepherd. True shepherds do not proclaim themselves, but the Lord. Christ alone provides our security.

I Am the Good Shepherd

The Pharisees knew the Old Testament passages in which humanity was called God's "sheep" and God their "shepherd" (Ps 23:1). Therefore, in His first "I am the good shepherd" pronouncement, Christ tells the Pharisees that, unlike a hired hand who watches the sheep and runs at the slightest hint of danger, a good shepherd protects His sheep, even to the point of death (10:11).

In His second "I am the good shepherd" pronouncement, Christ spoke pointedly. He would die for His sheep; that includes you and me. John mentions that Christ spoke of "sheep that are not of this fold" (10:16). Those of Christ's fold are the Jews, while those not of this fold are the Gentiles. Christ aimed His words at the traditional Jewish notion that salvation was for Jews alone. Christ also takes aim at our self-righteousness. His words teach each generation of believers to follow the Good Shepherd instead of contenting themselves with the idea that they walk with the right sheep.

I Am the Resurrection and the Life

Jesus' last "I am" statement closes out the first part of the Gospel, which describes His travels and ministry. Lazarus, a friend of Jesus, is gravely ill. Mary and Martha, Lazarus's two sisters, send word to Jesus. Yet, He purposely stays away from Lazarus for two days, during which time Lazarus dies. Jesus tells His disciples that Lazarus has fallen asleep and that He is going to awaken him (11:11).

As we look at Christ's words today, it seems obvious that He is speaking about raising Lazarus from the dead. However, the disciples do not understand Christ's words as "Lazarus is dead," but only as "Lazarus is sleeping" (Jn 11:12–13). At this point, according to John, Christ tells His disciples specifically that Lazarus is not asleep, but dead. Jesus arrives at the home of Mary and Martha after Lazarus has been dead four days, his body in decay (11:39).

Perhaps you are wondering why John is so precise about recording how long Lazarus was in the tomb and that his corpse was in decay. Medical techniques were not as sophisticated then as they are today, and it was possible for someone to have a seizure, be pronounced dead, be laid in a tomb, and then recover. John wants his readers to know Lazarus was indeed dead and decaying.

As is the custom today, friends and relatives were coming to Mary and Martha's home to offer their condolences. In ancient times, the mourning period would last an additional three days. As Jesus approaches, Martha goes to meet Him. She confesses her belief in Christ's God-given power. She knew Christ could heal the sick. However, she has no idea Christ could raise the dead. Then Christ utters the key words of our text: "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in Me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in Me shall never die" (11:25–26). What a wonderful testimony Christ offers Martha, as if to say, "The Father and I are one. Death has no power over the believer. Martha, live by the Holy Spirit, that you may know that I bring eternal life. Physical death no longer holds Lazarus captive. I have broken death's hold." Does Martha believe Christ's words? He asks. Her confession gushes forth, "Yes, Lord; I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world" (11:27).

Conclusion

Christ intended that His “I am” statements would lead others to faith. His prayer offered just before He raised Lazarus demonstrates this: “I said this on account of the people standing around, that they may believe that You [God] sent Me” (11:42).

For Jewish readers, John’s Gospel emphasizes that Jesus is Yahweh, come down among men. For other readers, John emphasizes that the one true God created and sustains the physical universe. For you and all generations, John affirms that there is no other Savior. Jesus is our bread, light, door, shepherd, and life.

God's Work in Healing and Suffering

I met Lydia in college through a mutual friend. She was a good student, a talented musician with a great sense of humor, and she was very easy to talk to. For all of these reasons, Lydia had a bright future. Yet one thing seemed to dominate Lydia's life. She wanted to see.

As I recall, Lydia was born blind. For years, she sought healing for her blindness. She prayed that God would heal her. She visited the healing services of various churches and famous faith healers. But she always came away disappointed. Often she was told that God would heal her if she just had enough faith. She longed to have the faith the healers commanded. Outwardly, she remained confident that God would heal her. Inwardly, she wondered why God had not healed her.

Lydia's story raises many questions about miracles and the pursuit of miracles. Clearly, the Bible teaches that God heals people either through providential care or through a miracle. However, this article will also show from Scripture that God often calls His people to endure suffering and loss in order "that the works of God might be displayed" (9:3).

Suffering and Healing

Jesus healed many people during His ministry in Galilee. He did not do miracles for every person He met. Scripture tells us, “He did not do many mighty works there [in Nazareth], because of their unbelief” (Mt 13:58). When some people demanded miraculous signs, Jesus rebuked them (Mt 12:39; 16:4; Jn 6:26). He did not perform miracles on demand.

The apostle Paul testifies that Jesus specifically told him He would not be healed of his “thorn” in the flesh (2Co 12:7–10). Paul explains that the Lord let him suffer in order that Paul might remain humble. Several Old Testament examples show that God has even caused illness among His people. He caused Moses to have a leprous hand to demonstrate His miraculous power to Pharaoh (Ex 4:6–7). In Nu 12, God caused Miriam to have leprosy because she spoke against her brother Moses. In Nu 21:4–9, the Lord sent poisonous serpents among His people to punish them. He healed many, but many also died. And who could overlook the example of Job? He, too, suffered great loss in his family, health, and fortune. In this case, the Lord allowed Satan to test Job’s faith through suffering and ill health (Jb 1:6–2:10).

In view of these examples, it is too simple to say that God wants His people to enjoy perfect health. We should not expect miracles on our terms. All these things are subject to God’s greater purposes. He allows suffering and brings healing where and when He wills.

The Man Born Blind

No story shows God's use of suffering and miracles more clearly than the story in Jn 9 of the man born blind. When the disciples saw the blind man, they asked, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" (v 2). Jesus' answer gives us a peek behind the scenes, a look at God's purpose in Jesus' miracles. "It was not that this man sinned, or his parents," said Jesus, "but that the works of God might be displayed in him" (v 3). With these words, Jesus frees us from the notion that all physical conditions, sicknesses, or sufferings come as punishment from God. He introduces us to the great truth that God works His will and good purpose through our suffering and loss.

Take some time to read the rest of this story in Jn 9 to see how it all works out. Notice that Jesus does give sight to the man, but that is not the end of the man's suffering. The Pharisees interrogate him. They throw him out of the synagogue. But in the midst of this new suffering, he testifies that God is at work through His Son, Jesus (vv 32–33). The man comes to know Jesus as the Messiah and the Savior (vv 35–38). The story shows how God works through suffering and miracles for this greater purpose—that the works of God might be displayed (v 3).

The Work of God

When faith healers told Lydia that she did not have enough faith, they did not point Lydia to "the works of God," but to her own works. They failed to encourage her to trust her Maker and His greater purpose above all earthly blessings. To be frank, they sinned against her, treating her like an unbeliever rather than as a dear child of the heavenly Father. They failed to see that God works through physical conditions, loss, and suffering as well as through miracles. They directed her away from the point of Jesus' own suffering and miraculous resurrection: her salvation from sin, death, and the power of the devil.

Do not be blinded by popular notions about miracles or suffering. Trust your Lord. Look for His blessings in the midst of all circumstances, and seek opportunities to glorify "the works of God" through Jesus, your Savior. Know that God works in your life right now whether you see 20/20 or are totally blind. Certainly pray for miracles. But also praise the Lord for working through more than miracles, for working through suffering, pain, loss, and even death.

On the cross, Jesus suffered in complete weakness to remove your spiritual blindness. At your Baptism, He washed your spiritual eyes and cleansed your soul. Through His suffering, He grants healing and all the blessings of heaven. Though now you may live in weakness, as did Job and the apostle Paul, the power of almighty God rests upon you and works through you. His "grace is sufficient for you" (2Co 12:9). God saves you and sustains you through Jesus Christ.

Love: Inclusive or Exclusive?

When John introduces the events of Maundy Thursday evening, he tells us that Jesus loved "His own who were in the world" (13:1). John clearly sees two groups of people in the world: those who belong to Jesus and the rest of humanity. The same distinction appears throughout the record of Jesus' comments and prayer that evening. For example, in 15:19, Jesus remarks that the world (unbelieving humanity) hates His disciples, just as it hates Him. He states that the world would love them as its own if they had their origin and values from the world. In the High Priestly Prayer (ch 17), Jesus identifies His followers as those whom the Father has given to Him "out of the world" (17:6).

Does this mean that God loved only those who believed in Jesus and hated the rest of humanity? By no means! Even though in John's Gospel "the world" and "the ruler of this world" designate God's human and demonic enemies (cf 12:31; 14:17, 30; 15:18–19), God loved the world so much that He willingly paid the cost of salvation and gave His only-begotten Son (3:16). Jesus did not come primarily to judge the world but to save it (12:47; cf 3:17). For this reason, Jesus established His Church, that the Gospel might go into all parts of the world for the purpose of salvation (17:21).

Exclusively through Christ

To the ancient peoples, the gods acted much like modern organized crime. You did your religious duty to keep them off your back and out of your lives (like a protection racket) or to entice them to do you a favor. Judaism's message to the world that there is one and only one God (Dt 6:4) ran counter to religious thought across the world. Christianity struggled alongside Judaism because it proclaimed a similar message: the God who reveals Himself in the Holy Scriptures is the only real God in all the world.

But Christianity went further. This one God has provided one and only one way of salvation throughout the ages. Only by trusting in the living God can any human being receive salvation (a point Paul makes forcefully in Rm 3:27–31). Not all religions lead to the true God. In fact, Jesus makes the claim that He and only He can lead us to God. "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me" (Jn 14:6).

Church teachers sometimes call this the "scandal of particularity." In the original language of the New Testament, the word *scandal* refers to the trigger of a fatal trap. *Particularity* means "uniqueness," a claim to being the only thing of its kind in the world. Christians went out into the world with the scandalous message that Jesus saves people from their sins. They did not preach that Jesus was a way of salvation or that He was one option among many. Only Jesus, true God and true man, could lead people to the love of God the Father. Outside of faith in Jesus, no one would have God's love, grace, and forgiveness.

Apart from a personal faith in Jesus, no one in all the world throughout all history could be saved. This created a stumbling block for early Christians, because it meant they could not worship the gods of their neighbors. They could not worship Caesar and therefore were labeled atheists by their pagan neighbors. Even some of their Jewish brothers and sisters persecuted and killed them, thinking God wanted them to eradicate Christians.

Inclusive in Christ

What does this mean for ordinary Christians? It means that we have the most important mission on earth. We share the Good News of Jesus Christ with the world. We have the only cure for the eternal illness that infects every human being on the face of our planet. Only through faith in Jesus Christ can any human being in any place on earth receive God's love, forgiveness of sins, and eternal life. We have the Great Commission to teach all nations, a matter of eternal life and death.

As you gather with fellow believers, rejoice that God has made you a partaker of His blessings in Christ. You are one of His own, just as surely as Jesus' handpicked apostles. God makes you His own through His only-begotten Son.

Love for the Vineyard

God took Israel out of Egypt and planted them in Canaan, as one plants a vine (Ps 80:8–11). He had used good stock, so that He would harvest fruit of exceptional quality. Yet Israel had turned into a wild vine, producing no usable fruit at all (Jer 2:21). As a result, God uprooted His vineyard in the sixth century BC, as He threatened in Ezk 15. (Cf Ezk 19:10–14 for a picture of God's vineyard in the desert of exile.)

Of all the Old Testament prophets, Isaiah develops the image of vine and vineyard with the most detail. In Is 5:1–7, he describes God's gracious election of Israel and the care He lavished on her in Canaan. God spared no expense in establishing His beloved vineyard in the choicest land. Yet when He looked for its fruit, He found none. As a result, God promised to dismantle the protective walls and tower, dry up the vineyard, and destroy its vines.

The True Vine

Contrast the harsh Law of Ezekiel and Isaiah with the comforting Gospel of Jesus in Jn 15:1–8. Jesus picks up this vineyard metaphor, used so often in the Old Testament, to comfort His troubled disciples on the evening before He ascended the cross. Like the prophets, Jesus pictures God as the owner and caretaker of the vineyard. Like the Old Testament authors, Jesus talks about good fruit from His choice vines. What is different? Jesus Himself!

Living branches live because they remain in Christ. Because they remain in Him by faith, grafted into the true Vine, they produce the fruit that God has always looked for from His people. God "cleans away" the dead branches and "cleans up" the living ones (reflecting a wordplay in the original Greek). Believers (living branches) are "clean" because of the Word that Jesus has spoken to them. Those who continue with genuine faith in Jesus bear much good fruit, all to the glory of God the Father.

Grafted into the Vine

So what is this fruit we are to bear? Isaiah offers us a hint. In Is 5:7, he says that God looked for justice and righteousness but found only violence and oppression. Paul also provides a helping hand with our question. In Gal 5:22–23, he describes the fruit of the Spirit as "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control." We see that "good fruit" involves our attitudes and our treatment of those around us. "Love your neighbor as yourself" (Lv 19:18).

God has grafted us into the true Vine, Jesus, at our Baptism. Watered by His Word, nurtured by His body and blood, and filled with His Spirit, we live for Him rather than for ourselves. He has shown us what love looks like by His sacrifice on the cross. That same self-giving love becomes the motivation for how we treat others in our lives—family, friends, strangers, and enemies. We depend exclusively on Jesus Christ and Him crucified for our salvation. In Him we bear much fruit.

The Spirit in John's Gospel

John frequently describes the work of the Holy Spirit in his Gospel. Study the following chart to receive a clearer understanding of the Holy Spirit's work in the lives of the apostles and in your life.

Four passages in John's Gospel describe the work of the Holy Spirit in an even more intimate way than does the Old Testament: 1:33; 7:39; 14:17; 20:22. Whereas the Old Testament repeatedly spoke of the Holy Spirit coming upon someone, Jesus speaks of the Holy Spirit dwelling in a believer. The Spirit dwells in believers through their Baptism into Christ (cf Ezk 36:25–27 for a prophecy of this), through the Lord's Supper, and in the revelation of God's love and salvation in Jesus Christ. In this way, John's Gospel emphasizes the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit, supporting and comforting believers with Christ's gift of peace.

God Is Three-in-One

God Is One

When Moses asks God for His name, God replies, "I AM WHO I AM…. Say this to the people of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you' " (Ex 3:14). He is the only true God. All other gods are imaginary, idols that mislead people from the true God. God is truth; idols are lies. God calls people to faith, while idols confirm lost souls in their estrangement from the Creator. God challenges people to live holy lives. In contrast, idols give permission for sinners to sin with abandon. Even though the world thinks that many gods and many lords exist (as Paul notes in 1Co 8:5), only one God truly lives (as Paul goes on to confirm in v 6).

In His High Priestly Prayer (Jn 17), Jesus confesses the fundamental truth that only one God exists (v 3). He describes eternal life as knowing the only true God and the One He has sent, Jesus Christ. He also talks about God as His Father and speaks about the Holy Spirit as someone distinct from the Father and the Son.

God in Three Persons

Jesus often speaks of God as Father. (John records uses of "Father" some 60 times in chs 12–21.) He mentions God the Holy Spirit five times in this section. In prayer, Jesus also calls Himself the Son of God (17:1). Both the evangelist (20:31) and Jesus' enemies (19:7) recognize the fact that Jesus claims a unique Sonship with the Father. His relationship with the Father is so close that He is able to say, "I and the Father are one" (10:30).

In 3:16–18, Jesus identifies Himself as the "only begotten" Son (the translation "only Son" somewhat misses the point). The Father "begets" the Son and always has. Yet the Son is truly God (1:1). John even calls Him the "only begotten God" (1:18, author's translation). The Spirit, on the other hand, proceeds from the Father (15:26) and the Son (Rm 8:9–11; Ac 16:7; Php 1:19; 1Pt 1:11).

In this way, God reveals Himself as one God. The Son of God is begotten of the Father from eternity. No matter how far back we look, the Son lives with the Father. Likewise, the Spirit proceeds eternally from the Father and the Son. The Spirit carries out the will of the Father by leading people to the Son (16:13).

Triune Savior

God's ways are higher than our ways. Though He reveals Himself to us in the Scriptures, we cannot fully grasp who He is. But a mathematic illustration may help us begin to understand.

1 + 1 + 1 cannot equal 1. However, 1 × 1 × 1 does equal 1!

Just as multiplication is a higher form of math than addition, so God's ways are higher than ours. Our heavenly Father does not ask us to understand His triune nature. He asks us to trust in Him and leave the details to Him.

As you ponder the mystery of who God is, also turn your attention to what God does. God has not revealed His triune nature in order to confuse you. He desires to show you the many aspects of His love and work of salvation.

Footnotes

Footnotes for John, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:4 Or *was not any thing made. That which has been made was life in him*
- [2] 1:11 Greek *to his own things*; that is, to his own domain, or to his own people
- [3] 1:11 *People* is implied in Greek
- [1] 1:18 Or *the only One, who is God*; some manuscripts *the only Son*
- [2] 1:18 Greek *in the bosom of the Father*
- [3] 1:23 Or *crying out, 'In the wilderness make straight*
- [1] 1:39 That is, about 4 P.M.
- [2] 1:40 Greek *him*
- [3] 1:42 *Cephas* and *Peter* are from the word for *rock* in Aramaic and Greek, respectively
- [4] 1:51 The Greek for *you* is plural; twice in this verse

Footnotes for John, Chapter 2

- [1] 2:6 Greek *two or three measures* (*metrētas*); a *metrētēs* was about 10 gallons or 35 liters
- [2] 2:12 Or *brothers and sisters*. The plural Greek word *adelphoi* (translated "brothers") refers to siblings in a family. In New Testament usage, depending on the context, *adelphoi* may refer either to *brothers* or to *brothers and sisters*

Footnotes for John, Chapter 3

- [1] 3:2 Greek *him*
- [2] 3:3 Or *from above*; the Greek is purposely ambiguous and can mean both *again* and *from above*; also verse 7
- [3] 3:6 The same Greek word means both *wind* and *spirit*
- [4] 3:7 The Greek for *you* is plural here
- [5] 3:8 The same Greek word means both *wind* and *spirit*
- [1] 3:11 The Greek for *you* is plural here; also four times in verse 12
- [2] 3:13 Some manuscripts add *who is in heaven*
- [3] 3:15 Some interpreters hold that the quotation ends at verse 15
- [4] 3:16 Or *For this is how God loved the world*
- [1] 3:30 Some interpreters hold that the quotation continues through verse 36

Footnotes for John, Chapter 4

- [2] 4:6 That is, about noon
- [1] 4:14 Greek *forever*
- [1] 4:51 Greek *bondservants*
- [2] 4:52 That is, at 1 P.M.

Footnotes for John, Chapter 5

- [3] 5:2 Or *Hebrew*
- [4] 5:2 Some manuscripts *Bethsaida*
- [5] 5:3 Some manuscripts insert, wholly or in part, *waiting for the moving of the water; 4for an angel of the Lord went down at certain seasons into the pool, and stirred the water: whoever stepped in first after the stirring of the water was healed of whatever disease he had*
- [1] 5:19 Greek *he*

Footnotes for John, Chapter 6

- [1] 6:7 A *denarius* was a day's wage for a laborer
- [2] 6:19 Greek *twenty-five or thirty stadia*; a *stadion* was about 607 feet or 185 meters
- [1] 6:58 Greek lacks *the bread*
- [2] 6:59 Greek *He*

Footnotes for John, Chapter 7

- [3] 7:1 Or *Judeans*
- [4] 7:3 Or *brothers and sisters*; also verses 5, 10
- [1] 7:8 Some manuscripts add *yet*
- [2] 7:15 Or *this man knows his letters*
- [3] 7:17 Greek *his*
- [1] 7:38 Or *let him come to me, and let him who believes in me drink. As*
- [1] 7:52 Some manuscripts do not include 7:53–8:11; others add the passage here or after 7:36 or after 21:25 or after Luke 21:38, with variations in the text

Footnotes for John, Chapter 8

- [2] 8:16 Some manuscripts *he*
- [1] 8:34 Greek *bondservant*; also verse 35
- [1] 8:54 Some manuscripts *your God*
- [2] 8:57 Some manuscripts *has Abraham seen you?*

Footnotes for John, Chapter 9

- [1] 9:22 Greek *him*
- [1] 9:35 Some manuscripts *the Son of God*
- [2] 9:41 Greek *you would not have sin*

Footnotes for John, Chapter 10

- [1] 10:29 Some manuscripts *What my Father has given to me*

Footnotes for John, Chapter 11

- [1] 11:6 Greek *he*; also verse 17
- [2] 11:16 Greek *Didymus*
- [3] 11:18 Greek *fifteen stadia*; a *stadion* was about 607 feet or 185 meters
- [4] 11:25 Some manuscripts omit *and the life*
- [1] 11:56 Greek *were seeking for*

Footnotes for John, Chapter 12

- [2] 12:3 Greek *litra*; a *litra* (or Roman pound) was equal to about 11 1/2 ounces or 327 grams
- [3] 12:5 A *denarius* was a day's wage for a laborer
- [4] 12:7 Or *Leave her alone; she intended to keep it*
- [5] 12:9 Greek *he*

Footnotes for John, Chapter 13

- [1] 13:10 Some manuscripts omit *except for his feet*
- [2] 13:10 The Greek words for *you* in this verse are plural
- [3] 13:16 Greek *bondservant*
- [1] 13:18 Greek *But in order that the Scripture may be fulfilled*
- [2] 13:23 Greek *in the bosom of Jesus*
- [3] 13:24 Greek lacks *Jesus*

Footnotes for John, Chapter 14

- [1] 14:1 Or *You believe in God*
- [2] 14:2 Or *In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you*
- [3] 14:4 Some manuscripts *Where I am going you know, and the way you know*
- [4] 14:7 Or *If you know me, you will know my Father also*, or *If you have known me, you will know my Father also*
- [5] 14:14 Some manuscripts omit *me*
- [6] 14:16 Or *Advocate*, or *Counselor*; also 14:26; 15:26; 16:7

Footnotes for John, Chapter 15

- [1] 15:15 Greek *bondservants*
- [2] 15:15 Greek *bondservant*; also verse 20
- [3] 15:22 Greek *they would not have sin*; also verse 24

Footnotes for John, Chapter 16

- [1] 16:27 Some manuscripts *from the Father*

Footnotes for John, Chapter 17

- [1] 17:15 Or *from evil*
- [2] 17:17 Greek *Set them apart* (for holy service to God)

- [3] 17:19 Or *I sanctify myself*; or *I set myself apart* (for holy service to God)
- [4] 17:19 Greek *may be set apart* (for holy service to God)

Footnotes for John, Chapter 18

- [1] 18:5 Greek *I am*; also verses 6, 8
- [2] 18:6 Greek *he*
- [3] 18:10 Greek *bondservant*; twice in this verse
- [4] 18:18 Greek *bondservants*; also verse 26
- [1] 18:28 Greek *the praetorium*
- [1] 18:40 Or *an insurrectionist*

Footnotes for John, Chapter 19

- [1] 19:13 Or *Hebrew*; also verses 17, 20
- [2] 19:14 That is, about noon
- [3] 19:23 Greek *chiton*, a long garment worn under the cloak next to the skin
- [1] 19:39 Greek *him*
- [2] 19:39 Greek *one hundred litras*; a *litra* (or Roman pound) was equal to about 11 1/2 ounces or 327 grams

Footnotes for John, Chapter 20

- [3] 20:7 Greek *his*
- [1] 20:16 Or *Hebrew*
- [2] 20:24 Greek *Didymus*

Footnotes for John, Chapter 21

- [1] 21:8 Greek *two hundred cubits*; a *cubit* was about 18 inches or 45 centimeters
- [1] 21:23 Or *brothers and sisters*

Study Notes

JOHN—NOTE ON 1:1 *beginning*. Before creation. *Word*. Gk *logos* ; cf Eng "logic" and "-ology," referring to reason, meaning, and study. Describes not only divine self-expression, but the pre-existent Christ, as the following shows. See p 1012. *Word was God*. Fully God, but distinguished from the Father. Chrys: "The Father was never without the Word, but He was always God with God, yet Each in His proper Person" (*NPNF* 1 14:17). Aug: "We are speaking of God; what marvel if you do not comprehend? For if you comprehend, He is not God…. To reach to God in any measure by the mind, is a great blessedness; but to comprehend Him, is altogether impossible" (*NPNF* 1 6:459).

JOHN—NOTE ON 1:3 *All things*. Gk *panta* ; emphasizes Jesus' priority and supremacy over creation. *through*. Indicates that Jesus is the Father's agent in creation.

JOHN—NOTE ON 1:4 *life was the light of men*. OT clearly taught that God gave life to people through His Word. Wisdom and the Law (Torah) are light (Ps 119:105, 130; Pr 6:23; see pp 775–78). Now the incarnate Word—the light of the world—has come to give life eternal. Contrasts between light and darkness are common in the Jewish Dead Sea Scrolls (first century BC) and should not be attributed to ancient Gnosticism, as some interpreters have wrongly concluded.

JOHN—NOTE ON 1:5 *darkness*. The world estranged from God, spiritually ignorant and blind. "The Scriptures flatly call natural man in spiritual and divine things *darkness*…. (that is, in the dark, blind world, which does not know or regard God)" (FC SD II 10). Aug: "As in the case of a blind man placed in the sun, the sun is present to him, but he is absent from the sun" (*NPNF* 1 7:13).

JOHN—NOTE ON 1:6 *sent*. Gk *apostello*, "to send." See "apostle," p 1901. *from God*. Luth: "He did not come on his own, unauthorized…. He was to rap at the doors, arouse the Jews, and testify of the Lord" (AE 22:43). *John*. Son of the priest Zechariah and his wife, Elizabeth (Lk 1:5–25, 57–80). Name means "the Lord has been gracious." He bore witness to the truth, as Jn 5:33 indicates.

JOHN—NOTE ON 1:7–8 *Him*. Not John, but Jesus Christ. Through the Light, and only through Him, do we come to saving faith.

JOHN—NOTE ON 1:9 *enlightens everyone*. Not that everyone is saved (universalism), but Christ made satisfaction for everyone (universal justification; see p 1906). Salvation requires the gift of faith that holds to Christ. Although He came for everyone, not everyone trusts in Him.
JOHN—NOTE ON 1:10 *in the world*. Christ, as God, is present everywhere. *world did not know Him*. The created order (esp sinful human beings) in rebellion against its Creator.
JOHN—NOTE ON 1:11 *His own*. Lit, "His own things," or property. Here, the Lord's chosen people of the OT, His household. See "portion," p 7.
JOHN—NOTE ON 1:12 *receive Him*. Synonymous with believing. *right*. Gk *exousia*, "freedom," "authority." Christ authorizes us to become God's children by grace through faith in Him.
JOHN—NOTE ON 1:13 Luth: "These words are the evangelist's confutation, as it were, to all those who lay claim to anything within themselves of which they may boast. However good or rich it may be, or however much of it there may be, it contributes nothing toward becoming a child of God" (AE 22:90). *of God*. The work, the new birth, is from God. Luth: "[Jesus] alone imparts this birth, granting believers in Him the privilege, the right, and the power to become God's children" (AE 22:101). See note, 3:5.
JOHN—NOTE ON 1:14 *Word became flesh*. God's Word was embodied. Jn elsewhere refers to Jesus' humanity (4:6; 11:35; 19:28). "The Word, that is, the Son of God [John 1:14], assumed the human nature in the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary. So there are two natures—the divine and the human—inseparably joined in one person. There is one Christ, true God and true man" (AC III 1–2). "The divine essence is not changed into the human nature. But the two natures, unchanged, are personally united" (FC SD VII 36). *dwelt among us … glory*. In the OT, God revealed His glory in the tabernacle. When Christ took on flesh, He dwelt, or "tabernacled," among His people (see "glory of the LORD," pp 6–7; see also p 495). God's glory was manifest in Christ throughout His entire ministry, but esp in His submission to the cross (see notes, Php 2:7, 8). Chrys: "We admire Him not only on account of the miracles, but also by reason of the sufferings; as that He was nailed upon the Cross" (*NPNF* 1 14:42). *full of grace and truth*. Cf Ex 34:6. In Christ, the Lord is faithful to His promise to be gracious. See "grace," p 1902.

JOHN—NOTE ON 1:15 Luth: "Christ the Lord existed before His incarnation and, therefore, prior to [John] … with respect to [Christ's] divinity" (AE 22:129).
JOHN—NOTE ON 1:16 *grace upon grace*. Luth: "Christ … is an interminable well, the chief source of all grace, truth, righteousness, wisdom, and life, without limit, measure, or end" (AE 22:134). See p 1902.
JOHN—NOTE ON 1:17 A contrast of intensity rather than quality. God gave the Law (Torah) through Moses in preparation for the full revelation of His grace and truth (i.e., Christ). The instruction of the Law prepares the way for the Gospel. See p xxxi–xxxii.
JOHN—NOTE ON 1:18 *No one has ever seen God*. Chrys: "[The prophets saw] instances of (His) condescension, not the vision of the Essence itself unveiled" (*NPNF* 1 14:51). See p 39. *only*. Gk *monogenes*, "only-begotten"; expresses Christ's divinity and origin from the Father, and thus His complete uniqueness from all other beings. *at the Father's side … made Him known*. Whoever saw Christ, therefore, saw the Father (cf 14:9), in whom Christ was always abiding.
JOHN—NOTE ON 1:1–18 By taking on human flesh, God the Son comes into the world He created. He graciously brings deliverance from spiritual darkness and authorizes believers to become God's children. Those who do not receive Christ by faith remain in darkness. Christ, the true light, has overcome the darkness, and He promises His forgiving grace to you and all people. • O Word made flesh, be present with me this day, and fill me with Your limitless grace. Amen.
JOHN—NOTE ON 1:19 *Jews*. See "Opposition from the Jews," p 1775. *priests and Levites*. See p 228. Probably members of the Council (the Sanhedrin; see p 1556). They would have understood issues surrounding ritual purification (i.e., baptism) raised by John's ministry. See note, Mk 7:3–4.
JOHN—NOTE ON 1:20 *Christ*. See p 2098.
JOHN—NOTE ON 1:21 *Are you Elijah?* Elijah, who had never died (2Ki 2:11), was expected to come again (Mal 4:5) as the forerunner of the Messiah. The prophecy concerning Elijah was fulfilled in John the Baptist (Mt 17:12; Mk 9:13), though John was not Elijah returned from heaven. *the Prophet?* See note, Jn 6:14.
JOHN—NOTE ON 1:23 *one crying out in the wilderness*. John announces a new exodus. God will soon deliver His people from sin's captivity

through His Son. *Make straight the way*. Through John's preaching of repentance and Baptism, God prepared people spiritually. See pp 1565–66.
JOHN—NOTE ON 1:24 *Pharisees*. See p 1557.
JOHN—NOTE ON 1:25 *why are you baptizing*. See note, Mt 3:6; see also p 1369.
JOHN—NOTE ON 1:26 *baptize with water*. John's Baptism was preparatory in nature. See note, v 23.
JOHN—NOTE ON 1:27 *not worthy to untie*. Compared to the Son of God, John was unworthy of even a slave's task.
JOHN—NOTE ON 1:28 Not the Bethany near Jerusalem, but the town east of the Jordan River, closer to Galilee and north of Jericho. See map, p 1584.
JOHN—NOTE ON 1:19–28 John testifies to Jewish leaders asking, "Who are you?" that he is not the Christ but was sent to prepare the way for Him. As a faithful servant, John sets an example of humility and reverence for us. Ironically, the One whose sandal John was unworthy to untie became the Suffering Servant, who bore all our sins. • O Christ, prepare a royal highway in my heart, that I may receive You in steadfast humility and joy. Amen.
JOHN—NOTE ON 1:29 *next day*. Day following events/day of vv 19–28. In 1:19–2:1, John may not be using precise reckoning of time but may be creating a comparison with the six-day week of creation. He began his account with creation themes from Genesis, including reference to "light" (which forms days; vv 1–4) and water (an important element of creation; vv 26–34). Vv 19–51 suggest a passage of four days (day 1, vv 19–28; day 2, vv 29–34; day 3, vv 35–42; day 4, vv 43–51). At 2:1, John begins to count again, starting on day 4. So, "on the third day" (2:1) would make a total of six days—a week that ends with yet another Genesis theme: the blessing of marriage (cf Gn 1:28; 2:18–25). On expressions for time and reckoning, see p 1567. John ends his account with another six-day period: Holy Week (12:1). *Lamb of God*. A fulfillment of OT prophecy. Cf Ex 12. *takes away*. Gk *airo*, "bearing off," "getting rid of," or "carrying away." John the Baptist alluded to the scapegoat carrying the people's sins away (Lv 16:21–22). Luth: "[The Son of God] says to me: 'You are no longer a sinner, but I am. I am your substitute…. All your sins are to rest on Me and not on you' " (AE 22:167). *sin of the world!* Sin of every person in the entire world throughout human history. See note, 2Co 5:21.

JOHN—NOTE ON 1:31 *did not know Him*. John knew Jesus (they were cousins; cf Lk 1:36), but until Jesus was baptized, John did not know that He was the Messiah (cf v 33). *revealed to Israel*. As the forerunner of Christ, John's mission was to make Jesus manifest as Messiah to His own nation.

JOHN—NOTE ON 1:32 *saw the Spirit*. John saw the Spirit remain on Christ (v 33), thus anointing Him as the Messiah. See notes, Mk 1:10; Lk 3:22. *dove*. Cf Gn 8:8–12. An animal associated with the services of the temple. Cf Lv 1:14; Lk 2:24; see p 1815.

JOHN—NOTE ON 1:33 *said to me*. John the Baptist, like the OT prophets, received direct revelation from God. *baptizes with the Holy Spirit*. The One upon whom the Spirit came at His Baptism now gives the Spirit through Holy Baptism (Ti 3:5). Luth: "Thus our Baptism in Christ, in which He gives us remission of sin, baptizing us with the Holy Spirit and with forgiveness, remains and continues to be effective" (AE 22:179). See note, Mk 1:10.

JOHN—NOTE ON 1:34 *Son of God*. Title bears witness to God the Father's words from heaven (Mt 3:17; Mk 1:11; Lk 3:22) declaring Christ's unique relationship to His Father (cf Ps 2). Jesus is "very God of very God, begotten, not made" (Nicene Creed). See note, Jn 1:18.

JOHN—NOTE ON 1:29–34 John the Baptist testifies that Jesus is the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world—the very Son of God, on whom the Holy Spirit rested at His Baptism. Today, the Lord gives His Spirit in Holy Baptism. To regard Christian Baptism as a symbolic act is to despise a precious treasure. In Baptism, Jesus Christ has taken away our sin, and the Spirit daily assures us of His merciful goodness toward us. • O Lamb of God, send Your Spirit with Your gracious pardon, and silence my accusing conscience. Amen.

JOHN—NOTE ON 1:35 *his disciples*. One was Andrew (v 40); the other may have been John, the author.

JOHN—NOTE ON 1:36 *Lamb of God!* Cf v 29.

JOHN—NOTE ON 1:38 *Rabbi*. See note, Mk 9:5. *where are You staying?* Not an unreasonable question; they want to find out where to receive this new rabbi's teaching. *staying?* Lit, "abiding." See note, Jn 6:56.

JOHN—NOTE ON 1:39 *tenth hour*. 10 a.m. according to Roman time, which John seems to use. He reckons time differently from the other Gospels. See "John's Calendar," p 1775.

JOHN—NOTE ON 1:40 *Andrew, Simon Peter's brother*. Assumes readers' knowledge of previous Gospels or Christian teaching as Peter is not previously introduced in Jn. Andrew came to Christ first and led his well-known brother to the Lord.
JOHN—NOTE ON 1:41 *Messiah*. See "Anointed," p 1227.
JOHN—NOTE ON 1:42 *John?* Peter's father, Jonah of Bethsaida (cf Mt 16:17). *Cephas*. See notes, Mt 4:18; 1Co 1:12.
JOHN—NOTE ON 1:43 *Galilee*. See color map 4. *Philip*. Like Andrew and Peter, he had a Gk name. *Follow Me*. Christ's powerful call makes Philip His follower and an apostle. See notes, Mt 4:20; Mk 1:17.
JOHN—NOTE ON 1:44 *Bethsaida*. See color map 4.
JOHN—NOTE ON 1:45 *Nathanael*. Probably Bartholomew, paired with Philip in the other Gospels (Mt 10:3; Mk 3:18; Lk 6:14; cf Ac 1:13). *prophets*. The Law of the prophet Moses and the other Prophets (cf Lk 24:44); another way of referring to the OT. *Nazareth*. Jesus' hometown (Mt 4:13; Mk 1:9; Lk 1:26; 2:4, 51; 4:16–44). See color map 4. *Joseph*. Legal, earthly father of Jesus; of Davidic descent (Mt 1:6, 16; Lk 3:31).
JOHN—NOTE ON 1:46 *anything good come out of Nazareth?* See note, Mt 2:23. Chrys: "His mode of living was ordinary, and His garments not better than those of the many. For He was not girt with a leathern girdle, nor was His raiment of hair, nor did He eat honey and locusts. But He fared like all others, and was present at the feasts of wicked men and publicans, that He might draw them to Him" (*NPNF* 1 14:55). Luth: "Christ chooses as His apostles the poorest and lowliest He can find" (AE 22:192). Yet see also p 1780. *Come and see*. Invitation to discard preconceived notions and to believe in the fulfillment of the OT.
JOHN—NOTE ON 1:47 First demonstration of Jesus' divine knowledge, giving credence to Philip's words (vv 45–46) and verifying the OT's teaching that true Israelites will come to Christ. *no deceit!* Nathanael will speak the truth about Jesus (v 49).
JOHN—NOTE ON 1:48 *I saw you*. Evidence that Christ is all-knowing, a running theme in Jn.
JOHN—NOTE ON 1:49 *You are the Son of God! … King of Israel!* See note, v 34. The Messiah has a special relationship not only to God but also to God's holy nation. The Son of God is Israel's royal Messiah. See pp 1565–66.
JOHN—NOTE ON 1:50 *greater things*. See note, v 51.

JOHN—NOTE ON 1:51 *Truly*. From Hbr *'aman* ; verb meaning "to confirm" (source of Eng "Amen"). Stresses importance of something said. In the Gospels, it is used only by Jesus; in John's Gospel, it is usually doubled. See p 1784. *you will see heaven opened*. Heaven opened in Jacob's dream at Bethel and also at Jesus' Baptism. God has revealed and continues to reveal the way to Himself through Jesus, the Word made flesh (1:14; 14:6). *Son of Man*. See p 2098.

JOHN—NOTE ON 1:35–51 When Jesus calls the first disciples, He reveals Himself to be the Messiah—the Son of God and Son of Man—the way to heaven. Today, people may still question Jesus' invitation to follow Him. Yet, Jesus overcomes unbelief through the Gospel testimony and graciously opens the way to heaven through His Word. • Son of God, give me the strength I need to follow You daily and to testify that You are the only Savior. Amen.

JOHN—NOTE ON 2:1 *third day*. See note, 1:29. *wedding*. According to Jewish custom, the wedding feast typically lasted seven days. Many guests would remain the whole week, abstaining from work and sharing the new family's joy. The intertestamental document Tobit describes a Jewish wedding contract and extended feast (chs 7–8). *Cana*. C 9 mi N of Nazareth, on the north side of the Beit Netofa Valley, on a main route. See color map 4. *mother of Jesus was there*. Mary may have been related to the host family, or simply a close friend.

JOHN—NOTE ON 2:2 *with His disciples*. Known and thus invited by the host family or welcomed with their Teacher.

JOHN—NOTE ON 2:3 *wine*. Symbol in the OT of physical and spiritual joy (Gn 27:28; Ec 9:7), future hope (Is 25:6; Jl 2:19; Zec 10:6–7), and abundance (Jl 2:24; 3:18; Am 9:13). Running out of wine or having wine of poor quality at a wedding was a social blunder.

JOHN—NOTE ON 2:4 *Woman*. A common and respectful greeting, though somewhat unusual for one's mother. Jesus may be speaking to her as a disciple. *to do with Me?* Or, "to do with Me and you?" *My hour*. Allusion to the hour of Jesus' death, when God will "lift up," or glorify, His Son (3:14; 8:28; 12:32).

JOHN—NOTE ON 2:5 Mary is a model of faith. Cf Lk 1:38.

JOHN—NOTE ON 2:6 *stone water jars*. In rabbinic thought, stone did not attract impurity, so the jars could be properly cleansed and reused. Archaeologists identify Jewish communities of the NT era by the presence

of such stone jars and cups. *Jewish rites of purification*. Custom of washing utensils and esp hands before eating (see note, Mk 7:3–4). The transformation of the water in such vessels shows Jesus' power to purify and to provide.

JOHN—NOTE ON 2:7 Table wine was typically prepared by mixing water with thick, syrupy wine. Jesus made the servants witnesses of the miracle because they saw that only water was used.

JOHN—NOTE ON 2:8 *draw*. The jars were not used for pouring but as reservoirs (cf 4:7, 15). *master of the feast*. Chief steward in charge of the physical needs of the wedding guests.

JOHN—NOTE ON 2:9 *now become wine*. Jesus' first recorded miracle (v 11). *bridegroom*. The servants, who had the lowest status, witnessed the miracle. Now the groom, who had the greatest status, was about to receive the wine.

JOHN—NOTE ON 2:10 *good wine*. The feast's master recognized the wine's high quality, giving witness to the miracle's greatness.

JOHN—NOTE ON 2:11 *first*. Lit, "beginning." *signs*. Gk *semeia*, meaning more than miracles; used 17 times in Jn. Signs reveal God's mind and work (cf 10:38). See "Jesus' Signs," p 1775. *glory*. See note, 1:14; see also p 1902. *believed in Him*. The disciples' faith in Jesus as the Messiah was strengthened through the miracle. Cf 4:46–54.

JOHN—NOTE ON 2:12 *down to Capernaum*. Cana, in the hill country, was at an elevation higher than Capernaum. See note, Mt 4:13; see also color map 4. *His mother and His brothers and His disciples*. The immediate family of Mary and Jesus (see note, Jn 7:3; cf Mk 6:3) were also guests at the wedding. The disciples were like extended family (cf Jn 20:17).

JOHN—NOTE ON 2:1–12 Jesus, through whom all things were made (1:3), performs His first miracle ("sign") at a wedding at Cana in Galilee, manifesting His glory by turning water into wine. Today, take your concerns to Jesus in prayer. By His life, and at the hour of His death, Christ revealed His great mercy toward us, assuring us that no need escapes His care. • O Lord Jesus, give me confidence as I seek You in my hour of need. Amen.

JOHN—NOTE ON 2:13 *Passover*. See pp 200–201. The first Passover in Jesus' ministry likely took place in AD 30; first of three in Jn (6:4; 11:55; cf 12:1; 13:1; 18:28, 39; 19:14). *up*. Jerusalem, the capital, was at a higher elevation. See color map 4.

JOHN—NOTE ON 2:14 *selling oxen and sheep and pigeons*. For the sacrifices prescribed by the Levitical code, performed during Passover. See pp 170–71. In the outer court of the Gentiles, merchants sold animals to the travelers because it was impractical for travelers to transport animals. Luther dubbed this "crass commercialism" (AE 22:220). *money-changers*. Travelers had to have their money exchanged into the local currency for the temple tax, which required Jewish coins (shekels) without human images. The on-site bankers charged an exorbitant exchange fee.
JOHN—NOTE ON 2:15 *whip of cords*. Made of ropes used for animals in the temple. Symbol of Jesus' moral authority. *drove them*. Lit, "cast out, expel" (Gk *ekballo*). *poured out the coins … overturned their tables*. Christ revealed holy wrath, not a violent spirit.
JOHN—NOTE ON 2:17 Luth: "Zeal is an angry love or a jealous love…. His anger does not arise from hatred; it springs from … love toward God" (AE 22:233–34). Christ's zeal revealed His relationship with God and the people of His house, Israel. See note, Ex 20:5.
JOHN—NOTE ON 2:18 *Jews*. See "Opposition from the Jews," p 1775. *sign … for doing these things?* Visible proof or evidence to back up Jesus' authority. Cf Mt 21:23.
JOHN—NOTE ON 2:19 Christ speaks prophetically of His impending death and resurrection.
JOHN—NOTE ON 2:20 The Jews did not understand that Christ was referring to His physical body (see note, v 21), not to the Jerusalem temple that Herod had begun to build in
c 20–19 BC (completed in AD 64, just before it was destroyed in AD 70).
JOHN—NOTE ON 2:21 *temple of His body*. Christ's human body, where God dwelt and was made manifest (see note, 1:14), was given as the ultimate sacrifice for the sins of the world.
JOHN—NOTE ON 2:22 John gives away the conclusion of the Gospel, implying that the readers already know the full story.
JOHN—NOTE ON 2:13–22 With holy zeal, Jesus cleanses the temple, which has been turned into a marketplace, and He predicts His resurrection to those questioning His authority. When we disrespect God's Word and sacred things, He calls us to repentance. Christ's suffering, death, and resurrection reveal God's heart, which is zealous for those He loves. • O risen Lord, give me a heart that fervently clings to You and Your Word. Amen.

JOHN—NOTE ON 2:23 *believed in His name*. Shallow and fickle faith based on the spectacular miracles and bold actions they saw. *signs*. See note, v 11.

JOHN—NOTE ON 2:24–25 *He knew all people … knew what was in man*. Christ put no confidence in these people because their faith was not genuinely directed toward Him as the Messiah. As the omniscient Son of God, Jesus knew the spiritual state of those coming to Him, that is, whether their faith was genuine.

JOHN—NOTE ON 2:23–25 In Jerusalem, many come to believe in Jesus, but theirs is a superficial faith based mainly on the miracles they see. The all-knowing Christ calls us to abandon all outward pretense, to repent truly, and to trust Him fully. The Lord Jesus offers Himself in mercy and forgiveness to those who trust in Him. • O all-knowing Savior, forgive my secret sins and cover them with Your boundless love. Amen.

JOHN—NOTE ON 3:1 *Pharisees*. See p 1557. Their general view was that prophets were rare or had vanished. See pp 1553–58. *Nicodemus, a ruler*. Member of the Council (the Sanhedrin; see p 1556) who later spoke on Jesus' behalf and participated in providing Jesus an honorable burial.

JOHN—NOTE ON 3:2 *by night*. So that his colleagues would not know. John's presentation of this encounter may symbolize those in the world who come out of evil darkness to Jesus, the light of the world (cf 3:19–21). *no one can do these signs*. Cf 2:23. For Nicodemus, these signs were legitimate indications of God's presence.

JOHN—NOTE ON 3:3 *born*. Metaphor of salvation, favored by John. *again*. Gk *anothen*, "from above." Nicodemus either misunderstood Jesus' words, assuming human birth and effort, or began to play a word game by taking Jesus as literally as possible. But Jesus meant a spiritual rebirth that only God can effect from above. *kingdom of God*. In Jn, expression used only here and in v 5. Refers to the reign of God that came in the person of Jesus, on whom John focuses throughout. See pp 1565–66.

JOHN—NOTE ON 3:5 *born of water and the Spirit*. Elaboration on v 3. The preposition "of" (Gk *ek*) governs both nouns. "Water" and "Spirit" therefore belong together and point to Christian Baptism. Aug: "We are born spiritually then, and in spirit we are born by the word and sacrament" (*NPNF* 1 7:82). "In the first place, we take up Baptism, by which we are first received into the Christian Church" (LC IV 2). "Reason and free will are able to live an outwardly decent life to a certain extent. But only the

Holy Spirit causes a person to be born anew [John 3:5] and to have inwardly another heart, mind, and natural desire" (FC SD II 26). See p 1369.

JOHN—NOTE ON 3:6 *flesh is flesh*. Human nature as it derives from natural, physical birth (cf 1:13). See p 1902. *Spirit is spirit*. Spiritual life comes only by the Holy Spirit.

JOHN—NOTE ON 3:7 *born again*. See note, v 3.

JOHN—NOTE ON 3:8 *wind*. No human being can understand, govern, or control the wind's movement. Jesus urged Nicodemus to discard his narrowly naturalistic view of human beings, as well as any presumption that they produce new birth. The new birth is an act of God (cf 1:13).

JOHN—NOTE ON 3:10 Nicodemus professed to know—surprisingly—what he did not grasp. *the teacher of Israel*. Definite article "the" suggests that Nicodemus was a recognized teacher among his contemporaries.

JOHN—NOTE ON 3:11 *we*. Christ speaks for the OT prophets (He is "the Prophet"; cf 4:19; 6:14; 7:40; 9:17) and the new Christian community, the Church. Nicodemus and the entire community he represented were blind to this testimony.

JOHN—NOTE ON 3:12 Nicodemus struggled to understand the need for spiritual birth on earth. How then would he ever understand the heavenly nature and powers behind such a spiritual birth produced by the Holy Spirit? Jesus' sayings were often enigmatic to His hearers. See "Enigmatic Sayings," p 1775.

JOHN—NOTE ON 3:13 *Son of Man*. See p 2098. Luth: "[Jesus] calls Himself the Son of Man who has His existence both on earth and in heaven [simultaneously]" (AE 22:321).

JOHN—NOTE ON 3:14 *lifted up*. See note, Nu 21:9.

JOHN—NOTE ON 3:1–15 Nicodemus, though "the teacher of Israel," shows that he cannot comprehend the Spirit's miraculous work of new birth through Baptism. Human reason, darkened by sin, cannot accept that God can grant spiritual rebirth through ordinary water used with His Word. But such a great promise has come from none other than the Son of Man, lifted up on the cross for our salvation! • O Holy Spirit, I praise You that You have given me new birth to a living hope through Christ's resurrection. Amen.

JOHN—NOTE ON 3:16 *loved*. Gk *agapao*, used repeatedly in Jn; God's sacrificial and faithful love for the entire world alienated from God, that is,

all humankind. *the world*. See note, 1:10. *gave*. God not only sent His Son but also offered Him to the world. He became our atoning sacrifice. *His only Son*. See note, 1:18. *believes*. "Whoever believes in [the Son of God, be it with a strong or with a weak faith,] may have eternal life. [John 3:15] Worthiness does not depend on the greatness or smallness, the weakness or strength of faith. Instead, it depends on Christ's merit" (FC SD VII 70–71). Luth: "Look at the words, I beseech you, to determine how and of whom He is speaking…. No one is here excluded. God's Son was given for *all*. *All* should believe, and *all* who do believe should not perish, etc. Take hold of your own nose, I beseech you, to determine whether you are not a human being (that is, part of the world) and, like any other man, [you] belong to the number of those comprised in the word 'all' " (*WLS* § 1859). *perish*. Eternal separation from God. Cf Is 66:24; Mk 9:48. "Out of His immense goodness and mercy, God provides for the public preaching of His divine eternal Law and His wonderful plan for our redemption, that of the holy, only saving Gospel of His eternal Son, our only Savior and Redeemer, Jesus Christ" (FC SD II 50).

JOHN—NOTE ON 3:18 *condemned*. Under God's judgment. Luth: "All men are already condemned and imprisoned to be damned eternally, but the Son of God was given to us to redeem us from that judgment" (AE 22:380). *already*. The final judgment has moved into the present with the coming of His kingdom (cf Mt 3:10).

JOHN—NOTE ON 3:19 *judgment*. Gk *krisis*; brings to mind the judicial process, including the adverse verdict brought on by rejecting the Son of God. See p 1903. *the light*. See note, 1:4.

JOHN—NOTE ON 3:20 *wicked*. Gk *phaulos*, "base." *hates the light … be exposed*. Those with low moral standards hate disclosure of their foul deeds, just as marauders of the night flee the light of day.

JOHN—NOTE ON 3:21 *does what is true*. Aug: "He that does truth accuses his evil works in himself, spares not himself, forgives not himself, that God may forgive him: for that which he desires God to forgive, he himself acknowledges, and he comes to the light; to which he is thankful for showing him what he should hate in himself" (*NPNF* 1 7:86). *carried out in God*. God is at work in those who have responded to the Gospel (cf Php 2:13; 1Th 2:13).

JOHN—NOTE ON 3:16–21 God gives His only Son as a sacrificial gift to deliver the world from condemnation and to give eternal life to those

who believe in Him. When we continue in an immoral lifestyle, we naturally resist divine disclosure of our sin and thus our need for a Savior. Do not flee the light, but repent. God has revealed His strong love in His Son, Jesus Christ, to forgive your sins and give you life. • O heavenly Father, grant that my life may be a vivid testimony to Your sacrificial and faithful love in Christ. Amen.

JOHN—NOTE ON 3:22 *Judean countryside*. Jesus left Jerusalem and headed north. *baptizing*. Jesus' disciples performed Baptisms and thus were instruments through whom He made disciples.

JOHN—NOTE ON 3:23 *Aenon near Salim*. West of the Jordan c 5 mi S of Scythopolis. *water was plentiful there*. "Aenon" probably derives from Hbr '*ayin*, "a spring." This suggests Aenon had the water necessary for John the Baptist's ministry.

JOHN—NOTE ON 3:24 Shows that, for a while, John's ministry and Jesus' ministry occurred at the same time.

JOHN—NOTE ON 3:25 Precise point of this dispute is not mentioned, but perhaps it centered on where true cleansing from sin was to be found among the various baptisms. See note, Mk 7:3–4.

JOHN—NOTE ON 3:26 *they*. John's disciples (v 25). *Rabbi … all are going to Him*. Their comment was prompted by envy because of Jesus' growing influence.

JOHN—NOTE ON 3:27 John's ministry as the Messiah's forerunner depended completely on God's grace, ruling out all boasting and judgments of comparative worth.

JOHN—NOTE ON 3:29 A wedding metaphor emphasizes the difference between the Bridegroom and His attendant friend ("best man"). The Bride, the Church, belongs to Jesus, not John (cf 2Co 11:2; Eph 5:25–33).

JOHN—NOTE ON 3:30 John's preparatory ministry, of divine necessity, had to decrease once Christ appeared. How great was John's humility!

JOHN—NOTE ON 3:31–36 Likely commentary from the evangelist rather than reflection from John the Baptist.

JOHN—NOTE ON 3:31 *above all*. Christ is absolutely preeminent and superior over all prophets because He came from heaven, not earth (cf 1:51). *belongs to the earth*. John the Baptist was of human origin, like the rest of humankind.

JOHN—NOTE ON 3:32 *what He has seen and heard*. Builds on v 31. As true God, Jesus alone bore witness to knowledge from heaven.

JOHN—NOTE ON 3:33 Whoever has faith in Christ "seals," or certifies, that God is truthful. See note, Jer 32:10. *God is true*. See note, Ti 1:2.

JOHN—NOTE ON 3:34 *gives the Spirit without measure*. The Father gave the Holy Spirit to the Son without measure. This distinguished Jesus from all other recipients of the Spirit, including Israel's judges, kings, and prophets (cf Jgs 6:34; 1Sm 16:13; Mi 3:8). See p 1815.

JOHN—NOTE ON 3:35 *given all things*. "To make alive, to have all judgment and all power in heaven and on earth, to have all things in His hands, to have all things subject beneath His feet, to cleanse from sin, and so on, are not created gifts. These are divine, infinite properties. Yet, according to the declaration of Scripture, these have been given and communicated to the man Christ" (FC SD VIII 55).

JOHN—NOTE ON 3:36 *obey the Son*. Cf v 18. To believe in the Son (cf Rm 1:5). *wrath of God*. God will judge and condemn those who refuse to believe in Christ (Rm 1:18; 2:5; Mt 3:7).

JOHN—NOTE ON 3:22–36 John the Baptist steps aside when Christ comes because Jesus is the Son of God from heaven and possesses the Holy Spirit without measure. God reveals His wrath against those who do not believe in His Son and deprives them of everlasting life. But He gives everlasting life to all who trust in Jesus. • Lord Jesus, give to me a full measure of Your Spirit, that I may always remain faithful to You and bear witness to You. Amen.

JOHN—NOTE ON 4:1 The Pharisees were interested in the shifting religious influence, anticipating that this would affect them too.

JOHN—NOTE ON 4:3 Jesus may have been avoiding premature conflict with the Pharisees, but He was also being led by the Father's direction.

JOHN—NOTE ON 4:4 Jesus took the most direct path between Judea and Galilee. But God's will and plan also required this route for the sake of those in Samaria. See color map 4; see also "Samaritans," p 1557.

JOHN—NOTE ON 4:5 *Sychar*. Probably the modern city of Askar, just east of Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal, c 1 mi NE of Jacob's well. See color map 4.

JOHN—NOTE ON 4:6 *Jacob's well*. Intercepts an underground stream. *wearied*. Reveals Jesus' true humanity. *sixth hour*. Depending on John's reckoning of time, the hour may be noon or 6 a.m. See p 1567.

JOHN—NOTE ON 4:7–9 *Give Me a drink*. More than a simple request to satisfy thirst. By requesting water from her, Jesus ignored traditional

hostility between Jews and Samaritans as well as denigrating attitudes toward women. See note, Lk 8:2–3; see also "Samaritans," p 1557.
JOHN—NOTE ON 4:10 *gift*. Gk *dorea*, occurs only here in the Gospels; stresses God's bounty. See p 1902. *living water*. Hbr expression for flowing water. See note, Zec 14:8. Cf Jn 7:38–39, where the expression refers to the gift of the Holy Spirit, who creates new life (3:5; 6:63). *Did* : "Baptize into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, in living water" (*ANF* 7:379).
JOHN—NOTE ON 4:11 *deep*. According to archaeology, it was the deepest well in Israel at that time.
JOHN—NOTE ON 4:12 Though surprised, the woman was confident that Jesus could not be greater than the patriarch.
JOHN—NOTE ON 4:14 *never be thirsty again*. In contrast to the temporary satisfaction ordinary water brings. *water welling up to eternal life*. Metaphor of a bubbling spring pictures the life of the Holy Spirit within believers, which will come to full realization in eternity.
JOHN—NOTE ON 4:16 Jesus was leading the woman to an understanding of her sin and guilt.
JOHN—NOTE ON 4:17–18 The Lord revealed His divine omniscience, as in the case of Nathanael (1:48–49).
JOHN—NOTE ON 4:19 With the recognition that Jesus must be a prophet (cf 7:39), the woman took a step closer to identifying Him as Messiah.
JOHN—NOTE ON 4:20 *this mountain*. Nearby Mount Gerizim, where, according to Josephus, the Samaritans built a temple in the fourth century BC. See "Samaritans," p 1557. Remains on Gerizim include ruins of a large building (66 ft by 66 ft) and courtyard.
JOHN—NOTE ON 4:21 *Woman*. See note, 2:4.
JOHN—NOTE ON 4:22 *salvation.* Gk has a definite article, "the salvation," a subtle reference to the salvation Jesus alone brings. *from the Jews*. The Messiah Himself had to be from the tribe of Judah, according to the OT Scriptures.
JOHN—NOTE ON 4:23 *coming … now here*. The hour was simultaneously coming and present, since Christ was in the midst of accomplishing everything the Father had sent Him to do. Cf Lk 4:18–19. *spirit and truth*. Because God is spirit, proper worship is not a matter of geographical location. True worship receives its genuine character from the Holy Spirit's

activity. *Father is seeking*. God actively seeks people out to save them (cf Lk 19:10; 1Tm 2:4).

JOHN—NOTE ON 4:24 *God is spirit*. That God's essential nature is spiritual, not material, reinforces the teaching that people should worship "with the inclinations of the heart and by faith" (Ap XXIV 27). Aug: "Both the Father is a spirit and the Son is a spirit, and the Father is holy and the Son is holy….

[The Holy Spirit] is referred both to the Father and to the Son, because the Holy Spirit is the Spirit both of the Father and of the Son" (*NPNF* 1 3:93).

JOHN—NOTE ON 4:25 *Messiah … Christ*. Samaritans believed a prophet like Moses would restore an era of divine favor. *tell us all things*. Perhaps reflects Samaritan views of the Messiah as teacher. Similar expectations appear in the Dead Sea Scrolls.

JOHN—NOTE ON 4:26 *I … am He*. Christ acknowledged that He was the Messiah, also using the enigmatic words "I am" (Gk *ego eimi*). See pp 1784–85.

JOHN—NOTE ON 4:27 Jewish custom did not allow a rabbi to speak to a woman in public. The disciples were shocked but held their tongues. See note, Lk 8:2–3.

JOHN—NOTE ON 4:28 *left her water jar*. In her excitement, the woman forgot her purpose in coming to the well. *town*. Likely Sychar. See note, v 5.

JOHN—NOTE ON 4:31–32 *urging Him … Rabbi, eat*. The disciples had left their Master tired and hungry when they went to buy food (v 8). Jesus turned the disciples' exhortation into an occasion for teaching.

JOHN—NOTE ON 4:34 *My*. Emphatic in Gk. In contrast to the disciples' crassly physical misunderstanding (cf 2:20; 3:4; 4:15), Jesus gave "food" a higher spiritual meaning: His completion of the Father's mission to save the world (3:16). The OT idea of "portion" (see p 7) may figure into Jesus' riddle, bridging the ideas of food, work, and standing in the family.

JOHN—NOTE ON 4:35 *There are yet four months*. Probably a proverbial saying, used to contrast the period of waiting before harvest with the urgent necessity of realigning priorities for spiritual harvest. *harvest?* On wheat and barley harvests, see calendar, p 262. *white*. Bleached and dried by the sun.

JOHN—NOTE ON 4:36 *fruit for eternal life*. New believers being gathered into the kingdom of God. *sower and reaper may rejoice together*.

Emphasizes the urgency of the missionary task. While the sower goes out to sow, the harvest is already coming in. Sowing no longer entails waiting.
JOHN—NOTE ON 4:38 *Others*. Perhaps the prophets before Jesus, such as John the Baptist, or maybe even Jesus Himself. *entered into their labor*. See note, Lk 10:2.
JOHN—NOTE ON 4:40 Jesus had already put aside the division between Jews and Samaritans by speaking to the woman. Now the Samaritans asked Him to stay, something He did not experience in Jerusalem.
JOHN—NOTE ON 4:41 Cf Rm 10:17.
JOHN—NOTE ON 4:42 *Savior of the world*. Expression used only here and 1Jn 4:14, but Christ's objective—deliverance of the whole world—pervades NT teaching (e.g., Jn 3:16; 2Co 5:19).
JOHN—NOTE ON 4:44 Cf 1:11; why Jesus left Judea for Galilee. Both the Samaritans (vv 4–42) and Galileans (vv 43–54) received Him, while His own people in Judea did not. See note, Mt 13:57.
JOHN—NOTE ON 4:45 *all that He had done*. Miracles Jesus performed while at Passover. The Galileans welcomed this great worker of miracles.
JOHN—NOTE ON 4:1–45 Jesus graciously reaches out to a Samaritan woman, leads her to recognize Him as the Messiah, and through her brings other Samaritans to receive His life-giving blessings. Christians sometimes allow social and cultural barriers to hinder their witness to Christ and His love for all people. Just as Christ forgave the woman her past and present sins, He now freely offers His forgiving love to us and calls us to spread this Good News. • O Lord, let me experience the joy of freely sharing Your Word with others, whoever they may be. Amen.
JOHN—NOTE ON 4:46 Mention of Cana and Jesus' miracle there suggests He was going to build on His past work. *official*. Gk *basilikos*, probably one of Herod Antipas's court officials. Or, possibly a relative of the royal (Herodian) family. See p 1557.
JOHN—NOTE ON 4:48 *you*. Plural. Jesus was addressing all the Galileans. He did not want anyone to come to Him merely because of miracles He performed.
JOHN—NOTE ON 4:50 *believed the word*. The official came to faith (v 53) without needing a visible sign. He simply believed what Jesus said.
JOHN—NOTE ON 4:51 *servants*. See p 1904.
JOHN—NOTE ON 4:52 *seventh hour*. See p 1567.

JOHN—NOTE ON 4:53 *believed*. Genuine faith in Jesus as the Messiah and Savior of the world. See note, v 50.
JOHN—NOTE ON 4:54 Second sign in Galilee recorded by John (cf 2:11); Jesus acted for a specific purpose (20:30–31).
JOHN—NOTE ON 4:46–54 The official, whose dying son Jesus heals in Galilee, comes to a genuine faith in Him before the sign, the wonder, is done. Unlike this official, many today will not believe God's Word unless they are first shown demonstrative proofs. Despite such unbelief, the Lord Jesus hastens to call all people to faith; He would forgive them and bear their burdens and needs. • Lord Jesus, give me and my entire family unquestioning faith in Your promises. Amen.
JOHN—NOTE ON 5:1 *feast*. Some manuscripts have "the feast." Possibly the Feast of Booths, commemorating Israel's 40-year wandering, or the Feast of the New Year. See pp 200–201.
JOHN—NOTE ON 5:2 *Sheep Gate*. Small opening within the north wall of the temple, where the sheep were washed in the pool before entering the sanctuary. *Aramaic*. See "Imperial Aramaic," p 720. *Bethesda*. "House of grace" or "house of mercy," signaling the miracle that Jesus was about to perform. *colonnades*. Four sets of columns enclosed two separate pools, and a fifth set stood between the pools. These five sets of columns were capped to form porches for the people who gathered by the pools.
JOHN—NOTE ON 5:3 The disabled gathered here because of the popular Gk cultic belief that the pool had healing powers, with angels present at the water's first stirring.
JOHN—NOTE ON 5:6 *Do you want to be healed?* Question designed to attract the man's attention.
JOHN—NOTE ON 5:7 The man was still focused on the pool, hoping Jesus might help him reach it in time.
JOHN—NOTE ON 5:8 *bed*. Mat or pad that could be rolled up and carried.
JOHN—NOTE ON 5:10 *Sabbath … take up your bed*. Jewish leaders interpreted the man carrying his mat as a violation of the Sabbath law against carrying burdens from one domain to another. Cf Ex 31:12–17. Necessary works, however, were not forbidden. See note, Mt 9:13.
JOHN—NOTE ON 5:14 *nothing worse*. Warning against persisting in unbelief, lest consequences worse than a physical handicap follow.
JOHN—NOTE ON 5:16 *persecuting Jesus*. Some Jews were now continually hostile toward Him and constantly considered how they might

get rid of Him. See "Opposition from the Jews," p 1775.
JOHN—NOTE ON 5:17 *working until now*. God does not stop sustaining His creation on Sabbaths; the Son was simply working as the Father does.
JOHN—NOTE ON 5:1–17 After Jesus heals an invalid, Jewish leaders accuse Him of breaking Sabbath law and begin to persecute Him. Legalistic rigidity can also keep us from showing mercy to those in need. The Lord calls us to repentance, sincere faith, and compassionate service. Jesus cares deeply for us, helping us in our physical and spiritual needs. • O Lover of my soul, help me to extend Your mercy to others. Amen.
JOHN—NOTE ON 5:18 *kill Him*. The Jews plotted to kill Jesus, not only for violation of Sabbath law, but also for blasphemy. *His own Father*. Calling God "Father" was rare in Jewish literature but did occur in the OT (cf Ps 89:26; Jer 3:4). *making Himself equal with God*. The Jews realized Jesus was claiming divine status and headship over all things. They regarded such a claim as usurping God's authority. Ironically, Jesus stood before them in obedience to His Father and in humble service to the world, esp to the Jews. They did not understand Christ's humble service or His exalted status.
JOHN—NOTE ON 5:18 The Jews plot to kill Jesus for what they understand to be a blasphemous claim: equality with God. Failure to acknowledge Christ's deity despite Scripture's clear testimony places one in opposition to the Lord. Jesus is indeed God and has given us the right to become God's children (1:12); nothing will ever take us from His hand (10:28). • O God, forgive me when I have questioned Your authority, and lead me always boldly to confess Your holy name. Amen.
JOHN—NOTE ON 5:19 Jesus' Sonship is enacted in obedience. *them*. Jews in Jerusalem (vv 1, 16–17).
JOHN—NOTE ON 5:20 *greater works*. Raising the spiritually dead, judging human beings, and raising the physically dead (vv 21–29).
JOHN—NOTE ON 5:21 *raises*. Restores to life the spiritually dead (vv 21–25).
JOHN—NOTE ON 5:24 *passed from death to life*. Scripture teaches two "resurrections" (see note, Rv 20:6). Aug: "Hence a resurrection does take place now, and men pass from a death to a life; from the death of infidelity to the life of faith; from the death of falsehood to the life of truth; from the death of iniquity to the life of righteousness…. The Lord Jesus, then, was

willing to make known to us *a* resurrection of the dead before *the* resurrection of the dead" (*NPNF* 1 7:125).
JOHN—NOTE ON 5:25 *now here*. Eternal life begins when a person comes to saving faith in Christ. *dead will hear*. Hearing with faith brings spiritual life (Gal 3:2, 5).
JOHN—NOTE ON 5:26 As true God, Jesus is the giver of life through creation and redemption (1:3–4; 14:6).
JOHN—NOTE ON 5:27 *Son of Man*. See p 2098.
JOHN—NOTE ON 5:28 *all who are in the tombs*. Describes the resurrection of the body.
JOHN—NOTE ON 5:29 *done good … done evil*. "All passages about works can be judged according to this rule. When eternal life is granted to works, it is granted to those who have been justified. Only justified people, who are led by the Spirit of Christ, can do good works. Without faith and Christ as Mediator, good works do not please, according to Hebrews 11:6: 'Without faith it is impossible to please [God]' " (Ap V 251–52). See notes, Mt 25:35–37.
JOHN—NOTE ON 5:19–29 Equal to the Father in deity and honor, God's Son makes people spiritually alive through His Word and raises believers from the grave at the hour of His coming to judge. Those who refuse to believe in God's Son will come under judgment, and their evil deeds will become known. Christ has the authority to give you life now and on the day of your resurrection to everlasting life. • O Son of God, with joy I praise You, that by Your grace I have passed from death to life. Amen.
JOHN—NOTE ON 5:30 *nothing on My own*. Christ did not act independently but was in perfect communion with His Father. *seek not My own will*. Because Jesus did as He saw (vv 19–20) and judged as He heard, He was consulting and following the Father's will at every moment. See note, 10:18.
JOHN—NOTE ON 5:31 *not deemed true*. OT required more than one witness (Dt 19:15).
JOHN—NOTE ON 5:32 *another*. Jesus cites John the Baptist (v 33), but He will rest on the witness of the Father Himself (v 37).
JOHN—NOTE ON 5:36 *testimony*. Jesus has a legal witness even greater than John: the Father. *works … bear witness about Me*. All Jesus' works, including His miracles, attest to His identity, that people may know Him, trust in Him, and thereby be saved.

JOHN—NOTE ON 5:37 *Himself borne witness*. Through prophecies and the signs of Jesus' ministry.
JOHN—NOTE ON 5:38 *abiding in you*. The Word abides in the heart of a person united to Christ by faith.
JOHN—NOTE ON 5:39 *Scriptures*. The OT. *eternal life*. The Scriptures give eternal life only by and through Christ, not through the mere act of studying them. *they that bear witness about Me*. The entire scriptural testimony centers on Jesus (cf Rm 15:4; 16:25–27; see p xxvi–xxx).
JOHN—NOTE ON 5:44 *glory from one another*. They sought their own honor through one another's praise.
JOHN—NOTE ON 5:45 The Jews desired to follow the Law of Moses, which actually accused them and revealed their sins (Dt 31:19, 21, 26; cf Rm 3:19).
JOHN—NOTE ON 5:46 Chrys: "If they believed Moses they ought to have done homage to One of whom Moses prophesied" (*NPNF* 1 14:149).
JOHN—NOTE ON 5:47 Because the Jews did not believe that Moses pointed to Christ, they did not believe Christ's explanation of Moses (cf 2Co 3:15–16).
JOHN—NOTE ON 5:30–47 The Father gives binding witness to His Son's true identity, which is revealed in the works He performs and in the Scriptures that everywhere speak of Him. Those who fail to see Christ in the pages of the Bible, including the OT, are blind to its central purpose. Through Scripture's testimony of Christ, God reveals His great love toward all people. • O heavenly Father, I praise You for the testimony You have given me of Your Son, my Savior, through Your life-giving Word. Amen.
JOHN—NOTE ON 6:1 *went away … other side*. Area around Bethsaida on the northeast shore of the Sea of Galilee. See color map 4. Jesus' journey accomplished two things: it brought the disciples to a quiet place for rest and teaching (Mk 6:31); and it provided a setting in the wilderness (Mt 14:13) for the sign John records. The crowds would have no place to go for food, and the disciples would have to turn to Jesus in an impossible situation (v 5). Jesus also was moving away from Jerusalem, the stronghold of those who wanted to kill Him (5:18; 7:1). *Tiberias*. See note, v 23.
JOHN—NOTE ON 6:2 *signs*. See note, 2:11.
JOHN—NOTE ON 6:3 *mountain*. Exact location not given. *sat down*. See note, Mt 5:1.
JOHN—NOTE ON 6:4 *Passover*. See note, 2:13.

JOHN—NOTE ON 6:5 *Philip*. See note, 1:43.
JOHN—NOTE ON 6:6 *test*. Jesus wanted to strengthen their faith in Him as they faced an impossible situation. See note, Gn 22:1.
JOHN—NOTE ON 6:7 *Two hundred denarii*. Over half a year's salary, a substantial amount.
JOHN—NOTE ON 6:9 *boy*. Gk *paidarion*, "child"; common in LXX but used only here in NT. *barley loaves*. See p 236.
JOHN—NOTE ON 6:10 *much grass*. Providing comfortable seating. *men*. Cf Mt 14:21.
JOHN—NOTE ON 6:11 *given thanks*. The head of a Jewish household customarily pronounced a blessing at meals.
JOHN—NOTE ON 6:14 *sign*. As God had miraculously provided manna in the wilderness after the exodus, so Jesus miraculously provided food for these people. This sign also proved Jesus was the Christ. *the Prophet*. Many apparently thought Jesus was the new Moses (Dt 18:15–18).
JOHN—NOTE ON 6:15 *make Him king*. People wanted to make Jesus a king on their terms (political, earthly) rather than accept Him as the King He was and is (heavenly, eternal). Satan offered the same temptation (Mt 4:8–9). The disciples likewise held this view of Jesus (Mt 16:21–23). See pp 1565–66. *by Himself*. See note, Mk 1:35.
JOHN—NOTE ON 6:1–15 Jesus' feeding of 5,000, the next sign recorded in Jn, reveals Jesus as the Christ, the Son of the living God (20:30–31). Like those who had "eaten their fill," we also are tempted to seek the Lord only for the earthly things He can give us. Fortunately for us, Jesus reigns as our heavenly King, who calls us to repentance, fills us with needed spiritual blessings, and gives us everlasting life. • O Christ, satisfy not only my temporal needs but also my deepest spiritual needs. Amen.
JOHN—NOTE ON 6:16 *evening*. Darkness approaches. See note, 1:5.
JOHN—NOTE ON 6:17 *got into a boat*. According to Mk, Jesus sent the disciples ahead so He could dismiss the crowd and have some private time for prayer (Mk 6:45–46). Small wooden boats were used by fishermen and by travelers. See p 1780. *Capernaum*. See note, Mt 4:13; see also color map 4. *not yet come to them*. Anticipates events about to take place and emphasizes Jesus' absence.
JOHN—NOTE ON 6:19 *three or four miles*. At its widest point, Galilee is c 8 mi across. *frightened*. In the darkness, the disciples initially thought the

figure walking on the wind-tossed sea was a phantom (Mk 6:48–49). See note, Mt 14:26.
JOHN—NOTE ON 6:20 *It is I*. Lit, "I am." See pp 1784–85; see also note, 4:26. *do not be afraid*. See note, Mk 6:49–50.
JOHN—NOTE ON 6:21 *immediately … at the land*. Wind immediately ceased (Mk 6:51), and they reached the near shore.
JOHN—NOTE ON 6:16–21 By walking on the storm-tossed sea, Jesus shows His disciples that He is the eternal King, ruler of all creation. Today, when life's problems overwhelm us, fear may cause us to lose faith in God's protection and care. But Jesus is true God and true man in one person; Jesus has saved us from sin and evil, assuring us of His divine protection in every situation. • Lighten our darkness, O Lord, and protect us against the dangers of the night. Amen.
JOHN—NOTE ON 6:22 Assessing the situation, the crowd could not figure out how Jesus could have crossed the sea.
JOHN—NOTE ON 6:23 *Tiberias*. Large Gk city on the Sea of Galilee, mentioned only in Jn (6:1; 21:1). Herod Antipas built it in AD 16–22 and named it in honor of the reigning Roman emperor. See map, p 1584.
JOHN—NOTE ON 6:24 *Capernaum*. See note, Mt 4:13; see also color map 4.
JOHN—NOTE ON 6:26 Faith in Jesus was the purpose of all the signs (20:30–31). At the miraculous feeding, the crowds saw only the gift, not the Giver.
JOHN—NOTE ON 6:27 *labor*. See note, v 29. *food*. Jesus posed an absolute contrast between physical and spiritual "food" without denying the importance of the physical. *set His seal*. See note, Jer 32:10.
JOHN—NOTE ON 6:29 *work of God, that you believe*. The crowd asked about righteous "works" (v 28), but Jesus singled out one necessary work: faith in Him, which is God's gift. See p 2016.
JOHN—NOTE ON 6:31 The crowd quoted the OT to support their demand that Jesus perform a miracle like Moses had done, which they assumed was greater than Jesus' signs.
JOHN—NOTE ON 6:32 Jesus corrected the crowd on two points: manna came from God, not Moses (Ex 16:4, 15); and Moses' bread was not the "true bread from heaven." Only the Father gives that bread.
JOHN—NOTE ON 6:35 *I am*. Jesus clearly identified Himself as the source of real life, which lasts forever. See pp 1784–85.

JOHN—NOTE ON 6:37 *All*. Those who believe. *Father gives … will come to Me*. No one has the willpower to choose to believe in Jesus or come to God. Faith comes to the believer as a gift from God, just as physical life comes as a gift. See note, v 44.
JOHN—NOTE ON 6:39 *lose nothing*. Salvation of the believer is secure in Christ, who lets none of His own slip through His fingers (cf 1Pt 1:3–5).
JOHN—NOTE ON 6:40 *looks*. Seeing Jesus with eyes of faith. "The chief worship of the Gospel is to desire to receive the forgiveness of sins, grace, and righteousness" (Ap V 189). *raise him up on the last day*. Cf 5:28–29.
JOHN—NOTE ON 6:41–42 Jesus' opponents thought they knew His background and parentage (cf Mt 13:53–58). Thus, any implication that He was more than of human origin was grounds for complaint on their part.
JOHN—NOTE ON 6:41 *grumbled*. Lit, "were grumbling." An allusion to the Israelites' grumbling in the wilderness (cf Ex 15:24).
JOHN—NOTE ON 6:44 *come to Me*. See note, v 37. *draws*. God alone has the power to make the spiritually dead alive (cf 5:25–26). "To 'have' God, you can easily see, is not to take hold of Him with our hands or to put Him in a bag 'like money' or to lock Him in a chest 'like silver vessels'. Instead, to 'have' Him means that the heart takes hold of Him and clings to Him. To cling to Him with the heart is nothing else than to trust in Him entirely. For this reason God wishes to turn us away from everything else that exists outside of Him and to draw us to Himself" (LC I 13–15).
JOHN—NOTE ON 6:45 *Prophets*. One of the major divisions of the Hbr Scriptures (cf Lk 24:27; Ac 26:22). *all be taught by God*. From a section in Is, where the prophet foretells Zion's future glory when the Messiah will rule His people.
JOHN—NOTE ON 6:46 Only through Jesus can human beings know the Father (cf 14:6–9).
JOHN—NOTE ON 6:47 See note, 3:16.
JOHN—NOTE ON 6:48 *bread of life*. See note, v 51.
JOHN—NOTE ON 6:51–58 Not an obvious reference to the Lord's Supper: the words of institution are not recorded, no wine is present, Jesus speaks of "flesh" and not "body," and the crowd is generally hostile and unbelieving. However, Jn records many veiled references to Jesus' future service, such as His work on the cross (1:50; 2:4, 19–22; 4:32; 6:62; 12:32). Whereas the other Gospel writers collected Jesus' parables, John collected

Jesus' enigmatic, or riddlelike, sayings. See "Enigmatic Sayings," p 1775. His wording anticipates the blessings of the Sacrament.

JOHN—NOTE ON 6:51 *living bread*. Life-giving bread; synonymous with "bread of life." Cf 1:4; 5:26. *My flesh*. See note, 1:14. The incarnate Word offered Himself as a sacrifice for the sins of the world (1:29). "The Sacrament was instituted to comfort terrified minds. This happens when they believe that Christ's flesh is given as food for the life of the world" (Ap XXII 10).

JOHN—NOTE ON 6:52 *disputed*. Heated argument erupted over Jesus' language in v 51, which the audience found offensive.

JOHN—NOTE ON 6:53 Graphic description of faith, the topic under discussion (v 47).

JOHN—NOTE ON 6:54 "There is a twofold eating of Christ's flesh. One is spiritual, which Christ describes especially in John 6:54. This 'eating' happens in no other way than with the Spirit and faith, in preaching and meditation on the Gospel, as well as in the Lord's Supper" (FC SD VII 61).

JOHN—NOTE ON 6:55 Only through faith in Christ crucified do people have what they really need for eternal life, a life with God that earthly food and drink cannot provide. "His flesh is a truly life-giving food and His blood a truly life-giving drink" (FC SD VIII 76).

JOHN—NOTE ON 6:56 *abides*. Major theme in Jn, defining the relationship not only of persons in the Trinity (1:32–33; 14:10; 15:10), but also between believers and Christ (5:38; 8:31; 15:7, 9–10). Bern: "I wish to follow with all my strength the lowly Jesus; I wish Him, who loved me and gave Himself for me, to embrace me with the arms of His love, which suffered in my stead; but I must also feed on the Paschal Lamb, for unless I eat His Flesh and drink His Blood I have no life in me. It is one thing to follow Jesus, another to hold Him, another to feed on Him. To follow Him is a life-giving purpose; to hold and embrace Him a solemn joy; to feed on Him a blissful life" (*SLSB*, pp 292–93).

JOHN—NOTE ON 6:57 *I live because of the Father*. The Son, begotten of the Father from eternity (see Nicene Creed), is one with the Father (10:30).

JOHN—NOTE ON 6:59 *synagogue*. See p 1557. *Capernaum*. See note, Mt 4:13; see color map 4.

JOHN—NOTE ON 6:22–59 Unlike the perishable manna God gave to Israel through Moses, Jesus comes down from heaven as the true bread to

give life to all who believe in Him. Contrary to popular notions, no one "chooses" to believe in Christ; the initiative belongs entirely to God through His Word (v 44; cf 14:6). Those united by faith to Christ will be raised up on the Last Day to enjoy eternal communion with the Father. • O God, draw me ever closer to You through Your Word and Sacraments. Amen.

JOHN—NOTE ON 6:60 *disciples*. Wider group of followers than the Twelve. *hard saying*. See "Enigmatic Sayings," p 1775.

JOHN—NOTE ON 6:62 *ascending to where He was before?* Jesus' cross, resurrection, and ascension seen together (cf 3:13–15).

JOHN—NOTE ON 6:63 *Spirit*. Just as fleshly bodies need spirit to have life, believers need the Holy Spirit to make them alive. The Spirit is given through Jesus' words. *the flesh is no help at all*. Note that Jesus does not say "My flesh," as in vv 51, 54–56. Jesus contrasted the sinful nature ("flesh") with the spiritual nature to show that eternal life comes only from the Holy Spirit. The sinful flesh, which lusts for bread rather than the things of God (v 26), cannot help in spiritual matters. *words … are spirit and life*. The Holy Spirit, proceeding eternally from the Father and the Son (see notes, 14:26; 15:26), uses the Word of God to create faith and life in hearers. See note, Rm 10:17.

JOHN—NOTE ON 6:64 *those*. Lit, "some who." *betray Him*. Even from the time Judas joined the disciples, Jesus knew Judas would betray Him. This does not mean Judas was predestined for damnation.

JOHN—NOTE ON 6:65 *come to Me*. Expression used for faith five times in ch 6 (vv 35, 37, 44, 45, 65). Cf Eph 2:8–9.

JOHN—NOTE ON 6:68 *words of eternal life*. Cf v 63.

JOHN—NOTE ON 6:69 *Holy One*. Further description of Jesus' identity as Messiah (cf Ac 3:14; 4:27, 30; 1Jn 2:20). See p 1227. Title used once by demons (Lk 4:34).

JOHN—NOTE ON 6:70 *a devil*. Judas, inspired by Satan, would betray Jesus.

JOHN—NOTE ON 6:60–71 Faced with Jesus' true identity and the necessity of faith in Him, many stop following, and even one of the Twelve aligns himself with Satan against Jesus. Nevertheless, Jesus' words bring life; they are the means the Father uses to draw people to Himself. • O Lord, let me always say as Peter did, "You have the words of eternal life." Amen.

JOHN—NOTE ON 7:1 *Jews were seeking to kill Him*. Jesus and His teaching posed a serious threat to religious parties such as the Herodians and Pharisees (see p 1557), who shared a common goal—killing Jesus (cf Mk 3:6).
JOHN—NOTE ON 7:2 *Feast of Booths*. See pp 200–201.
JOHN—NOTE ON 7:3 *brothers*. See note, 2:12. Though initially unbelievers (v 5), at least some of Jesus' brothers came to faith after His resurrection (e.g., James; 1Co 15:7). *Leave*. Jesus' unbelieving brothers did not understand His divine mission and mocked Him.
JOHN—NOTE ON 7:4 *works in secret*. Working in remote Galilee, Jesus' brothers suggest, was the same as working "in secret." Someone who wanted to be a public figure would need to go to Jerusalem, the center of Jewish religious life.
JOHN—NOTE ON 7:5 See note, v 3.
JOHN—NOTE ON 7:6 *My time*. The hour of Jesus' glorification on the cross (cf 12:23–27). *your time*. They could safely go to the feast; indeed, the Law required it (Ex 23:17).
JOHN—NOTE ON 7:8 *I am not going*. Jesus does not intend to go to the feast with His brothers as just another worshiper. When He goes, He will go on His own terms (cf v 10) and for reasons very different from His brothers and the others in Jerusalem. He missed at least the first half of the feast (v 14) and may not have attended any of the festivities even after He arrived.
JOHN—NOTE ON 7:10 *in private*. See note, v 8.
JOHN—NOTE ON 7:13 *for fear of the Jews*. Pressure—even threat of excommunication—was exerted against anyone who would speak out in favor of Jesus (cf 9:13–34).
JOHN—NOTE ON 7:14 *into the temple*. Jesus, like other rabbis, often taught in the temple compound (cf 10:23; Ac 5:12). See temple courts on diagram, p 1838.
JOHN—NOTE ON 7:15 *never studied?* Jesus never studied under a recognized rabbi (nor did His disciples). He did not have the ancient equivalent of a diploma or degree.
JOHN—NOTE ON 7:17 *he will know*. By faith alone, a person will recognize the divine origin of Jesus' teaching. Unlike the rabbis who quoted previous rabbis, Jesus' teaching came directly from the Father.
JOHN—NOTE ON 7:19 The Jews had knowledge of God's Law but did not keep it, as shown by their desire to kill Jesus.

JOHN—NOTE ON 7:20 *You have a demon!* Some may not have known about the plots against Jesus. Others knew but did not want their evil plans exposed, so they denied the truth.
JOHN—NOTE ON 7:22 *circumcision*. See note, Gn 17:10. *from the fathers*. Circumcision for Israelites began with Abraham, c 500 years before Moses.
JOHN—NOTE ON 7:24 *judge by appearances*. Application of the Law must not be done superficially, but in the context of God's grace and mercy (cf Mt 12:1–8).
JOHN—NOTE ON 7:1–24 Despite growing opposition from Jewish leaders and unbelief within His own family, Jesus enters Jerusalem during the Feast of Booths as the time of His death draws near. People today still fail to see that Jesus is not just another lawgiver but a merciful Savior. He was "despised and rejected" (Is 53:3) that He might bear our sins on the cross. • O Lord, confirm the faith of all who experience persecution because of Your name. Grant us boldness to proclaim You. Amen.
JOHN—NOTE ON 7:25 *people of Jerusalem*. Distinct from the Judean leadership ("the Jews") and the multitudes there for the feast ("the crowd").
JOHN—NOTE ON 7:27 Although Mi 5:2 prophesied Christ's birth at Bethlehem, some thought the Messiah would arrive supernaturally. Because they thought Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee, He could not be the Christ in either case.
JOHN—NOTE ON 7:30 *So … seeking to arrest Him*. Because of what He had just said (vv 28–29), they regarded Him as blaspheming (cf 5:18). *His hour had not yet come*. God's timetable, not theirs, prevailed (cf 12:23–27).
JOHN—NOTE ON 7:31 See application note, 4:46–54; see also "Jesus' Signs," p 1775.
JOHN—NOTE ON 7:25–31 Because Jesus does not fit their preconceived notions of the Messiah's identity, residents of Jerusalem reject Him and join in the effort to kill Him for blasphemy. That Jesus is true God and true man still remains a stumbling block for those who judge Him by earthly standards. Yet, for our sake, Jesus was always conscious of the Father's will and never allowed human opinions to sidetrack Him from His saving purpose. • Beloved Lord, preserve my faith when enemies seek to undermine the Christian faith. Amen.
JOHN—NOTE ON 7:32 *chief priests*. Temple officials, including the chief priest. See p 1556. *officers*. Temple police force, perhaps similar to court

bailiffs.
JOHN—NOTE ON 7:34 *Where I am you cannot come*. When Jesus departed through death to His Father (cf 6:62; 13:1), He would be inaccessible, removed from His enemies' grasp.
JOHN—NOTE ON 7:35 *Dispersion*. See p 1556. *Greeks*. Gentiles.
JOHN—NOTE ON 7:32–36 Jesus teaches that when He dies, He will return to His Father and become inaccessible to His enemies. Yet, He remains gracious toward all. The "window of opportunity" for the Gospel will soon close, both for the individual and for the world. But God now graciously extends the time for the Gospel's proclamation that many others may hear and be saved (2Pt 3:9). • Make me alert, O God, to seize every opportunity to share Jesus' saving love. Amen.
JOHN—NOTE ON 7:37 *last day of the feast*. Either the seventh-day or eighth-day closing festival. *great day*. Day on which the celebration came to a climax.
JOHN—NOTE ON 7:38 *as the Scripture has said*. No specific text is cited; cf 4:14; Is 58:11.
JOHN—NOTE ON 7:39 *were to receive … Spirit had not been given*. Full outpouring of the Holy Spirit would not take place until Pentecost, after Jesus finished His work and returned to the Father (cf 16:5–11). See p 1815. *glorified*. Hour of the crucifixion (cf 12:23–27).
JOHN—NOTE ON 7:37–39 On the final day of the Feast of Booths, Jesus promises that believers will receive the Holy Spirit (at Pentecost) after His death. "Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to Him" (Rm 8:9). But Christ's death and resurrection proclaimed in the Gospel brings life to all who thirst for Him and His blessings. • O Holy Spirit, bring refreshing showers of blessing each day of my life. Amen.
JOHN—NOTE ON 7:40 *the Prophet*. See note, 6:14.
JOHN—NOTE ON 7:42 Passages attesting to the Messiah's lineage (e.g., 2Sm 7:13–14) and origin would have been widely circulated. Messianic fervor, though involving conflicting views, ran high before Christ's appearing. See pp 1565–66.
JOHN—NOTE ON 7:44 *Some*. Those who had firmly made up their minds (cf 7:1, 13, 32, 45). *no one laid hands on Him*. Unless He permitted it (cf 8:59; 10:39).

JOHN—NOTE ON 7:46 Even the officers sent to arrest Jesus—though unbelievers—were impressed with what He said and how He said it.
JOHN—NOTE ON 7:48 The leaders exaggerated. Several prominent Jewish people believed in Jesus, including Nicodemus, a Pharisee and Council member (3:2, 10; 7:50; 19:38–39).
JOHN—NOTE ON 7:49 *accursed*. Pharisees regarded the common people as ignorant of the Law and esp the oral tradition associated with it. See "curse," p 6.
JOHN—NOTE ON 7:50 *Nicodemus*. See notes, v 48; 3:1.
JOHN—NOTE ON 7:51 *hearing*. Whether a formal hearing or an informal dialogue, firsthand information was required to judge a person in Jewish legal tradition.
JOHN—NOTE ON 7:52 *no prophet arises from Galilee*. Their anger and unbelief blinded them and led them to forget that Jonah, a Hbr prophet, came from Galilee, not far from Nazareth. God can raise up a prophet wherever and whenever He pleases.
JOHN—NOTE ON 7:40–52 Jewish leaders and the populace hold sharply different opinions regarding Jesus. Today, people continue to misjudge the Lord on the basis of their own feelings and perceptions. Truly, "no one ever spoke like this man" Jesus; His teaching exceeded all human expectations, imparting grace to those who heard. His words came directly from our heavenly Father. • Lead me, Lord Jesus, to hear the full message of Your Word. Amen.
JOHN—NOTE ON **7:53–8:11** Not clear that John wrote this passage, as the ESV note shows. Even if he did not, it may preserve a genuine event in Jesus' ministry.
JOHN—NOTE ON **7:53** *each to his own house*. Jesus' enemies were still not sufficiently organized to stop His work, so they disbanded.
JOHN—NOTE ON 8:1 *Mount of Olives*. East of the temple across the Kidron Valley. See map, p 1584.
JOHN—NOTE ON 8:2 *sat down and taught them*. Cf Lk 5:3. See notes, Mt 5:1; 13:2.
JOHN—NOTE ON 8:3 *scribes*. See pp 719–20. *caught in adultery*. A married woman caught in the act of sexual intercourse with a man who was not her husband. The man should also have been brought for judgment (Lv 20:10; Dt 22:22). *midst*. They made her stand in front of Jesus and the crowd, an unnecessary act of humiliation. They had set a trap for this

woman (v 5) and sought to discredit Jesus by forcing this situation upon Him.

JOHN—NOTE ON 8:5 *stone*. Preferred method was to push the convicted person off a height of at least 6 ft and then drop or throw stones on the victim until she died. *such women*. Both the adulterous woman and her lover were to be stoned (see note, v 3), but they singled her out, likely letting the man escape.

JOHN—NOTE ON 8:6 *test Him*. Scribes and Pharisees sought to catch Jesus in something that could be used to condemn Him, either in the popular mind, in court, or in both. *Jesus bent down and wrote*. Not absolutely clear what Jesus wrote. Sometimes judges wrote down their sentence before pronouncing it—in which case Jesus wrote what He spoke in v 7.

JOHN—NOTE ON 8:7 Jesus pricks the consciences of the woman's accusers, who likely entrapped her in order to entrap Jesus. See note, v 3.

JOHN—NOTE ON 8:9 *beginning with the older ones*. Elders would have had a greater share of responsibility and provided leadership for the rest.

JOHN—NOTE ON 8:11 Jesus pronounced no specific word of forgiveness (cf Lk 7:48–50). The woman, though possibly entrapped, was nevertheless guilty. He called her to repent and to change her sinful life.

JOHN—NOTE ON **7:53–8:11** The scribes and Pharisees fail to trap Jesus by requesting a hasty judgment against a woman caught in the act of adultery. Jesus reveals the hypocrisy of His detractors and calls them to self-examination, even as He calls the sinful woman to consider her error. The Lord's greatest desire is to deliver us from sin through repentance and faith, rather than condemn us for our sins. Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, even the worst of us, by His sacrifice on the cross. • O Lord, be merciful to me, a poor sinful being. Amen.

JOHN—NOTE ON 8:12 *I am*. See note, 4:26; see also pp 1784–85. *light of the world*. A messianic claim. *darkness*. See note, 1:5.

JOHN—NOTE ON 8:13 Pharisees argued that Jesus' self-testimony was invalid on Jewish legal grounds. See note, vv 17–18.

JOHN—NOTE ON 8:14 Jesus' witness about Himself is true because of His identity (origin) and mission (destination). His adversaries are in no position to judge His witness because they know neither His nature nor His credentials.

JOHN—NOTE ON 8:15–16 *according to the flesh*. By human standards. *I judge no one*. Jesus did not come to judge the world but to save it (3:17). Yet, if He does judge, His judgment is just and true.
JOHN—NOTE ON 8:17–18 Jesus' testimony was valid even according to the Law on which the Pharisees took their stand (cf Dt 19:15); the Father is the great second witness.
JOHN—NOTE ON 8:19 *Where is Your Father?* They ask Jesus to produce His witness.
JOHN—NOTE ON 8:20 *treasury*. Near the 13 collection boxes for donations to the poor, located in the court of women (cf Mk 12:41–42).
JOHN—NOTE ON 8:21 *sin*. Singular here (cf v 24), meaning unbelief or rejection of Jesus leading to eternal condemnation (3:18; 9:41; 16:9). *Where I am going*. See note, 6:62.
JOHN—NOTE ON 8:23 Jesus sharply contrasts the realm of God and the realm of fallen humanity corrupted by sin.
JOHN—NOTE ON 8:24 *believe that I am He*. Lit, "believe that I AM." See note, 4:26.
JOHN—NOTE ON 8:26 *much to judge*. See note, vv 15–16.
JOHN—NOTE ON 8:27 These leaders lacked spiritual discernment.
JOHN—NOTE ON 8:28 *lifted up*. See note, Nu 21:9. Term used four times in Jn to indicate Christ's exaltation on the cross and His heavenly exaltation.
JOHN—NOTE ON 8:29 *with Me*. Not only did the Father send the Son (vv 16, 18, 26), but He also accompanied and supported the Son in His work.
JOHN—NOTE ON 8:30 *many believed in Him*. The Word convinced many, though the faith of some may have been weak and transitory. See note, v 31.
JOHN—NOTE ON 8:12–30 Jesus claims to be the light of the world, through whom people may have life, which prompts the Pharisees to question His authority. Unless individuals believe in Jesus Christ, who was sent by God the Father, they will die in their sins. Jesus' cross reveals that He is truly the Messiah, the Son of Man sent to deliver us from spiritual darkness. • Heavenly Father, You have made me a new person through Baptism. Now make me Your light in the world. Amen.
JOHN—NOTE ON 8:31 *abide in My word*. Speaking to those whose belief in Him was superficial, Jesus explained that discipleship meant accepting all of His teaching and remaining faithful to it. See note, 6:56.

JOHN—NOTE ON 8:32 *truth will set you free*. Cf 14:6. Only in Jesus and His teaching will anyone be free from sin, death, and Satan's rule, and thus free to serve God with a pure heart. In contrast, Judaism taught that study of God's Law made a person free.
JOHN—NOTE ON 8:33 *never been enslaved*. Though presently subject to Rome and the Herodians, these proud leaders asserted their independence by appealing to the heritage of Abraham, a free man.
JOHN—NOTE ON 8:34 *slave to sin*. Since the fall, all people are sinners and enslaved to sin, bound to self-centeredness, doomed to death, and blind to their slavery.
JOHN—NOTE ON 8:35–36 A slave can never be sure of present or future status. Only the Son, Jesus Christ, can bring genuine freedom and make us children of God through faith.
JOHN—NOTE ON 8:36 "As Christ says, [baptized people] have been made free again [John 8:36]. Therefore, they are able not only to hear the Word, but also to agree with it and accept it, although in great weakness" (FC SD II 67).
JOHN—NOTE ON 8:37 *you seek to kill Me*. Cf 7:19, 25.
JOHN—NOTE ON 8:31–38 Jews with a weak faith in Jesus balk when He says that true freedom comes through Him and His teaching. Humans are self-centered from birth and in bondage to sin, unable to please God (Rm 8:8). Through Jesus' sacrificial death and resurrection, He provides liberation from sin, death, and the devil to all who believe and are baptized into His name. • Grant that I may remain faithful to Your Word until my last hour, O Lord. Amen.
JOHN—NOTE ON 8:39 *doing the works Abraham did*. Abraham trusted God, and God counted his faith as righteousness (Gn 15:6). When Abraham's descendants opposed Jesus, they demonstrated thorough unbelief.
JOHN—NOTE ON 8:40 *I heard from God*. See note, 3:32.
JOHN—NOTE ON 8:41 *not born of sexual immorality*. Possibly a sarcastic slur meant to anger Jesus by implying He was a bastard child. *one Father—even God*. Earlier they had rebuked Jesus for making this claim (cf 5:18).
JOHN—NOTE ON 8:43 They could not comprehend Jesus' teaching because they lacked spiritual discernment. See note, 1Co 2:14.
JOHN—NOTE ON 8:44 *your father the devil*. Their physical ancestor may have been Abraham (v 39), but they can trace their spiritual ancestry to the

devil. *murderer from the beginning*. The tempter's lie brought death into the world (Gn 3). *father of lies*. Satan used half-truths and outright lies to deceive Adam and Eve. See notes, Gn 3:1, 4. "Although God creates and preserves nature, the cause of sin is located in the will of the wicked, that is, the devil and ungodly people. Without God's help, this will turns itself away from God" (AC XIX 1).

JOHN—NOTE ON 8:46 The burden of proof lay on Jesus' opponents.

JOHN—NOTE ON 8:47 Jesus reaffirmed what He said in v 45 and summarized the basic problem: they are not "of God." See note, 1:13.

JOHN—NOTE ON 8:39–47 Jesus traces the people's refusal to believe in Him and His Word to their spiritual "father," the devil himself. Beware—even today satanic deception lies behind opposition to Jesus and His teaching. Yet, God's love revealed in the Gospel explains why His children by faith love their Savior and His Word. • "O LORD, I love the habitation of Your house and the place where Your glory dwells" (Ps 26:8). Amen.

JOHN—NOTE ON 8:48 *Samaritan*. See p 1557. *have a demon?* Countercharge that Jesus, not they, operated under demonic influence. Cf Mt 12:24.

JOHN—NOTE ON 8:50 *One … He is the judge*. God the Father. By attacking Jesus, they were attacking God and bringing eternal condemnation upon themselves.

JOHN—NOTE ON 8:51 *Truly, truly*. See note, 1:51. *see death*. Experience everlasting death.

JOHN—NOTE ON 8:52 *keeps My word*. Not only intellectual acceptance of Jesus' teaching but also faith in and obedience to it (cf v 55; Mt 28:20). *taste death*. Reference to physical death here, in contrast to spiritual death in v 51.

JOHN—NOTE ON 8:56 *Your father Abraham*. Physically they descended from Abraham. See note, v 44. *He saw it and was glad*. By faith, Abraham saw God's plan of salvation fulfilled (Heb 11:8–10). Bern: "So are we to think of all the saints of that time, that they were born just as ourselves under the power of darkness, because of original sin, but rescued before they died, and that by nothing else but the blood of Christ" (*SLSB*, p 285). See note, Gal 3:8.

JOHN—NOTE ON 8:57 *fifty years old*. Perhaps a reference to the priests' ineligibility for service when they passed age 50 (Nu 4:3); or just a round

number indicating that Jesus, in His 30s (Lk 3:23), was not even close to Abraham's era. In any case, Jesus' claim sounded preposterous to them.
JOHN—NOTE ON 8:58 *I am*. See pp 1784–85. Declaration of Jesus' eternal preexistence (1:1; cf Is 41:4).
JOHN—NOTE ON 8:59 *picked up stones to throw at Him*. Presumably on the grounds that Jesus was guilty of blasphemy (Lv 24:16). *hid Himself*. Or, "was hidden," that is, by divine concealment.
JOHN—NOTE ON 8:48–59 The confrontation between Jesus and the Pharisees reaches a climax when the Pharisees attempt to stone Him for claiming to be the preexistent Son of God. The Bible's witness that Jesus is true God and the only way to heaven receives intense and sometimes virulent opposition today. Pray for those confused or offended by the truth about Jesus, for "God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Rm 5:8). • O God, grant true repentance to those whose hearts are turned against You. Amen.
JOHN—NOTE ON 9:1 *passed by*. Specific location not given. Since it was on the Sabbath (v 14), it was likely the temple area.
JOHN—NOTE ON 9:2 *who sinned*. Many people believed that suffering resulted from a specific sin. The man's blindness would therefore be punishment for a particular sin of his parents or some sin he committed in the womb. See note, Jb 5:16.
JOHN—NOTE ON 9:3 *the works of God might be displayed*. Not merely restoration of physical sight (v 7), but deliverance from spiritual darkness (v 38).
JOHN—NOTE ON 9:4 *night*. Elsewhere in Jn carries overtones of spiritual darkness (3:2; 11:10; 13:30). See note, 1:5.
JOHN—NOTE ON 9:5 *I am the light of the world*. See notes, 1:4; 8:12; see also pp 1784–85.
JOHN—NOTE ON 9:6 *spat on the ground and made mud*. Jesus violated the rabbinic rules concerning the Sabbath. The rabbis listed kneading dough among 39 forms of work forbidden on the Sabbath, a law thought also to cover the mixing of earth and saliva. *anointed*. In ancient times, saliva was thought to have curative powers (e.g., how animals clean themselves).
JOHN—NOTE ON 9:7 *Siloam*. Part of the system that brought water from Gihon Spring in the Kidron Valley to an upper and lower pool in Jerusalem. The Siloam pool was surrounded by a courtyard and was likely larger than it is today. *which means Sent*. Reminds the reader that Jesus is sent by the

Father and the blind man was sent by Jesus—wordplay that brings the story together around the theme of sending.
JOHN—NOTE ON 9:8 *beggar*. Many blind men could do little else in the ancient world than ask for charity alongside the roadways. (However, consider the cultural contributions of Homer and Didymus.)
JOHN—NOTE ON 9:9 *kept saying*. Allusion to the Gospel's repeated use of the words "I am." Jn playfully draws attention to this emphasis. *I am the man*. Lit, "I am." See pp 1784–85.
JOHN—NOTE ON 9:13 The preceding events were so extraordinary that religious authorities had to be consulted for their opinion.
JOHN—NOTE ON 9:16 Two schools of thought divided the Pharisees. Some questioned Jesus' authority by focusing on His alleged violation of Sabbath law. Others argued that only one sent from God could perform such a miracle (cf Ac 5:38–39).
JOHN—NOTE ON 9:17 *He is a prophet*. Or, "the prophet." The blind man's faith and confession will reveal a deeper understanding of Jesus (v 33). At this point, he can at least state the obvious: Jesus is at minimum a prophet, a man sent from God with extraordinary powers.
JOHN—NOTE ON 9:20–21 The parents' restrained response reflected their fear of the Jewish authorities (v 22).
JOHN—NOTE ON 9:21 The parents deftly avoided the dispute, while witnessing to the miracle. *he is of age*. Age of legal maturity was 13 years and 1 day.
JOHN—NOTE ON 9:22 *confess Jesus*. See note, Php 2:11. *put out of the synagogue*. Gk *aposynagogus*, expulsion from fellowship with the synagogue; a type of excommunication, though its precise form is uncertain. See "Opposition from the Jews," p 1775.
JOHN—NOTE ON 9:24 *Give glory to God*. In God's name, swear to tell the whole truth. *this man is a sinner*. Transgressor of the Law; violation of Sabbath law was a very serious matter (cf Nu 15:32–36).
JOHN—NOTE ON 9:27 *want to become His disciples?* Biting sarcasm, indicating the man's courage and character.
JOHN—NOTE ON 9:29 Questions the legitimacy of Jesus' right to speak in God's name.
JOHN—NOTE ON 9:31 *does not listen to sinners*. Only half true; all are sinners, but God does listen to those sinners who are His children by faith, as a loving father listens to his beloved children.

JOHN—NOTE ON 9:32 A miracle of this kind was unprecedented, further proof to him that Jesus was not breaking the Law.
JOHN—NOTE ON 9:34 *born in utter sin*. See note, v 2. *cast him out*. See note, v 22.
JOHN—NOTE ON 9:35 *Son of Man?* See p 2098.
JOHN—NOTE ON 9:38 *worshiped Him*. The man's faith grew from acknowledging Jesus as a prophet (v 17) to confessing Him as being "from God" (v 33) to honoring Him as Lord. This does not mean the man realized Jesus was God. See note, Mt 2:11. (Consider the faith of the disciples, which was genuine though they lacked full understanding of who Jesus was; cf Mt 8:23–27.)
JOHN—NOTE ON 9:39 Jesus did not come to condemn the world but to save it (3:16–17). His coming is a judgment, however, because those who reject Him bring everlasting condemnation upon themselves.
JOHN—NOTE ON 9:41 The spiritually blind refuse to acknowledge their need for the Savior in spite of what God's Word says about the human condition. Paradoxically, only when we realize we are blind (condemned by the Law as sinners) can we see.
JOHN—NOTE ON **Ch 9** Jesus gives physical and spiritual sight—faith—to a man born blind, though the Pharisees accuse Jesus of violating the Sabbath and remain spiritually blind. We are all born spiritually blind, unable to see our sin and unwilling to do things God's way. But through Baptism and the Word, God has delivered us from the domain of darkness through His beloved Son and has enlightened our hearts to know and follow Him. • I praise You, O God, that though I once was blind, now I see! Lead me as I guide others to the truth of the Gospel. Amen.
JOHN—NOTE ON 10:1 *you*. Pharisees (9:40) and others who were attending Jesus' teaching. *sheepfold*. Walled enclosure for keeping sheep safe at night. See note, Nu 32:16.
JOHN—NOTE ON 10:3–4 *gatekeeper*. Watchman who guarded the entrance to the sheep pen. *sheep hear his voice … leads them out*. Sheep would usually recognize the voice of their shepherd and respond to his call. Shepherds in the Near East typically lead their flocks rather than drive them from behind; they draw the sheep by their word. *all his own*. As sheep follow their shepherd, so those drawn to Jesus by the Father follow Him (cf 6:44).

JOHN—NOTE ON 10:6 *figure of speech*. Gk *paroimia*, "veiled saying" (in NT only here and 16:25, 29; 2Pt 2:22). A concrete image used to convey a spiritual truth. As with parables, the meaning is not always obvious to outsiders (cf Mt 13:13–16). See "Enigmatic Sayings," p 1775.
JOHN—NOTE ON 10:7 *I am the door*. Compared Himself to the gate that controlled access to the safety of the sheep pen. He alone provides access to eternal life. See pp 1784–85.
JOHN—NOTE ON 10:8 *All who came before Me*. Religious leaders of Jesus' day, much like leadership in the past, cared far more for their own profit and welfare than for God's sheep (cf Ezk 34).
JOHN—NOTE ON 10:10 *may have life … abundantly*. Everlasting life through faith in Jesus Christ (cf 20:31), not through material goods or worldly success.
JOHN—NOTE ON 10:11 *I am*. See pp 1784–85. *good shepherd*. Luth: "In this single little word 'shepherd' there are gathered together in one almost all the good and comforting things that we praise in God" (AE 12:152). *lays down His life for the sheep*. Jesus did not risk His life for the sheep merely to set a noble example; He gave His life as an atoning sacrifice for them. See note, 1:29.
JOHN—NOTE ON 10:12 *hired hand*. Includes Israel's leaders who were motivated more by self-interest than care for the sheep.
JOHN—NOTE ON 10:14–15 The close relationship of the Good Shepherd and His sheep finds a direct comparison with the intimate relationship between God the Father and God the Son.
JOHN—NOTE ON 10:16 *other sheep*. Gentiles, people not descended from Abraham and not part of Israel, who would be integrated into the one flock. Cf Rm 11:17–18. Hus: "Other sheep he had by virtue of predestination, which are not of this fold and of his church according to present righteousness, which sheep of his grace he brought to life" (*The Church*, p 25).
JOHN—NOTE ON 10:18 Jesus went to the cross voluntarily. His obedience to the Father and His love for the sheep moved Him to lay down His life.
JOHN—NOTE ON 10:20 Cf 8:48, 52.
JOHN—NOTE ON 10:21 *Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?* Cf 9:16.
JOHN—NOTE ON 10:1–21 Jesus calls Himself the Good Shepherd to describe His intimate relationship with His followers and the love that

moved Him to lay down His life for them. Sheep who ignore the Good Shepherd's voice (His Word) have only themselves to blame and will fall prey to Satan. Unlike human love motivated by self-interest, Christ's love for His own moved Him to voluntarily endure even death on a cross for our sake (Php 2:8). • My dear Shepherd, watch over me that I may never stray from You. Amen.

JOHN—NOTE ON 10:22 *Feast of Dedication*. Also called Feast of Lights or Hanukkah. Celebrated the rededication of the temple in 164 BC, following its desecration by the Seleucid ruler Antiochus IV Epiphanes. The festival was joyous and included recitation of Ps 30. See pp 1553–58. *winter*. December.

JOHN—NOTE ON 10:23 *colonnade of Solomon*. Sheltered area on the east side of the temple, with a roof supported by columns that provided some protection from the weather. Popular place for rabbis and their disciples to gather. See diagram, p 1838.

JOHN—NOTE ON 10:24 *Jews*. See "Opposition from the Jews," p 1775.

JOHN—NOTE ON 10:25 *I told you*. Not an explicit statement, but His deeds (the signs) and His teaching spoke a clear and unequivocal yes.

JOHN—NOTE ON 10:28 Hus: "Because Christ and his Father are one with the Holy Spirit—who is Christ's gift, by whom the church is knit together with him—therefore, no one is able to pluck his sheep out of his hand" (*The Church*, p 34). "Predestination, or God's eternal election, covers only the godly, beloved children of God. It is a cause of their salvation, which He also provides. He plans what belongs to it as well. Our salvation is founded so firmly on it that the gates of hell cannot overcome it" (FC Ep XI 5). "God's eternal election does not just foresee and foreknow the salvation of the elect. From God's gracious will and pleasure in Christ Jesus, election is a cause that gains, works, helps, and promotes our salvation and what belongs to it" (FC SD XI 8).

JOHN—NOTE ON 10:30 *are*. Plural verb, which presupposes the distinction of persons in the Trinity. *one*. Not merely one in will and work, but one in being or essence (v 38). The Pharisees immediately recognized the nature of Jesus' claim—He declared Himself equal with God (v 33).

JOHN—NOTE ON 10:32 *good works*. Miracles (cf 9:3).

JOHN—NOTE ON 10:33 *blasphemy*. Speech that denigrates or defames, in this case, God's holy name. *make Yourself God*. See note, 5:18. The Jews discerned that Jesus implied personal greatness, but they did not consider

His claim true. The history of the Feast of Dedication, which celebrated deliverance and cleansing from idolatrous paganism, would make those attending esp sensitive to matters of who God is. See note, v 22.

JOHN—NOTE ON 10:34 *gods?* See note, Ps 82:1; perhaps refers to judges in Israel.

JOHN—NOTE ON 10:35–36 If the psalmist can use the word "gods" to describe Israel's leaders, surely it would be appropriate for Jesus to claim to be the Son of God.

JOHN—NOTE ON 10:35 *Scripture cannot be broken*. Scripture's authority cannot be questioned (cf 2Tm 3:16).

JOHN—NOTE ON 10:38 *understand*. By faith, not reason. *Father is in Me and I am in the Father*. Further explains v 30.

JOHN—NOTE ON 10:40 See note, 1:28.

JOHN—NOTE ON 10:41 *no sign*. John the Baptist did no miracles, in contrast to Jesus, who did many (cf 20:30–31). See p 1596.

JOHN—NOTE ON 10:22–42 In the colonnade of Solomon during the Jewish Feast of Dedication, Jesus declares His oneness with the Father, which the unbelieving crowd understands to be blasphemous and worthy of death. To reject Jesus is to reject God and abandon the hope of everlasting life. Believers can rest secure that they belong to Jesus Christ and will never perish; all of Jesus' works affirm this truth. • O Lord, "into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things." Amen. (SC, Morning and Evening Prayers, pp xli–xlii)

JOHN—NOTE ON **Ch 11** Commentators have noted the detailed, eyewitness character of the events in this chapter.
JOHN—NOTE ON 11:1 *Lazarus*. Brother of Martha and Mary; friend of Jesus. Name means "God has helped." He appears only in Jn 11–12. *Bethany*. Small village c 2 mi E of Jerusalem (v 18; see color map 4).
JOHN—NOTE ON 11:2 Cf 12:1–11.
JOHN—NOTE ON 11:3 *he whom You love*. Equivalent to "close friend."
JOHN—NOTE ON 11:4 *not lead to death*. Lazarus will not stay dead, proving Jesus' claim (cf v 25). *It is for the glory … glorified through it*. Lazarus's illness provided an occasion for the Father to reveal His Son's glory, that all should honor the Son as they honor the Father (5:23). See "glory," p 1902.
JOHN—NOTE ON 11:5–6 Jesus' delay was not due to a lack of love for His friends; quite the opposite. Obedient to His Father's will, Jesus helped this dear family at the hour the Father appointed for the manifestation of His power and grace. Cf 9:2.
JOHN—NOTE ON 11:8 *just now*. As recently as the Feast of Dedication (10:31, 39). Events of ch 11 would have transpired shortly afterward.
JOHN—NOTE ON 11:9–10 Jesus spoke figuratively of daylight and darkness to teach that as long as He, the light of the world, is among His disciples (both then and now), they are safe.
JOHN—NOTE ON 11:11 *fallen asleep*. No mere euphemism; at the hand of Jesus, death is no more serious than sleep (cf Mk 5:39; 1Co 15:55). This expression is commonly used of death in the NT (e.g., 1Co 15:6, 20; 1Th 4:13). See p 1750.
JOHN—NOTE ON 11:15 *for your sake I am glad*. By raising Lazarus, Jesus will demonstrate the truth that He is the resurrection and the life. The faith of His disciples will grow, and for this reason He rejoices.
JOHN—NOTE ON 11:16 *Thomas, called the Twin*. One of the Twelve. *we may die with Him*. Courageous devotion, or perhaps sarcasm. Thomas understands the mounting danger for those close to Jesus.
JOHN—NOTE ON 11:1–16 Jesus, the Son of God, will raise Lazarus from the dead so that He might be glorified. Death overwhelms us all. Even Christians have difficulty at times accepting God's promise to strengthen faith through adversity. At the hand of Christ, suffering serves God's gracious purpose; even death loses its sting (1Co 15:55–57). • O Lord,

strengthen me for the days ahead, that I may bear witness to Your glory. Amen.

JOHN—NOTE ON 11:17 *four days*. Perhaps significant because of the rabbinic belief that the soul hovers over the body for three days and then departs when decomposition sets in. John's point is that only a genuine miracle could account for the raising of Lazarus.

JOHN—NOTE ON 11:19 *many of the Jews*. Possibly Lazarus and his sisters were of high social standing, thus drawing the attention of many neighbors.

JOHN—NOTE ON 11:22 A statement of trust and hope that anticipates Lazarus's resurrection to eternal life. Martha did not have the resurrection of Lazarus in mind (cf v 39) but affirmed the general truth that God gives Jesus whatever He asks.

JOHN—NOTE ON 11:24 *resurrection*. Taught by the Pharisees and others but denied by the Sadducees (cf Mt 22:23–33). See p 1557.

JOHN—NOTE ON 11:25 *I am the resurrection and the life*. See pp 1784–85. Everlasting life can be found in no one else but Jesus. *though he die*. Even those who die physically in faith will rise again to everlasting life. Physical death is no obstacle to the resurrection. Cf 1Co 15. Luth: "The cemetery or burial ground does not indicate a heap of the dead, but a field full of kernels, known as God's kernels, which will verdantly blossom forth again and grow more beautifully than can be imagined" (AE 28:178).

JOHN—NOTE ON 11:26 *never*. The Gk grammar denies even the possibility of something happening.

JOHN—NOTE ON 11:17–27 Jesus assures Martha that all who believe in Him, though they die physically, will live forever. Death is the consequence of sin (Gn 2:17; Rm 5:12; 6:23) and eventually takes everyone. No human being can overcome it. Comfort one another in the hope that even in the face of death, believers in Jesus Christ possess the sure promise of their own resurrection to everlasting life. • In the hour of our death, comfort us, O Lord, with the bright hope of life forever with You. Amen.

JOHN—NOTE ON 11:28 *in private*. Mary had likely wanted to be alone, away from the gathered crowd of mourners.

JOHN—NOTE ON 11:29 *rose quickly*. She longed for Jesus' help or consolation.

JOHN—NOTE ON 11:30 Jesus would also speak with Mary somewhere on the road to the village. John provides memorable details and the sequence of events, without naming the place.
JOHN—NOTE ON 11:32 *fell at His feet*. Poignant demonstration of reverence and faith (similar to her posture in Lk 10:39). See p 1276.
JOHN—NOTE ON 11:33 *deeply moved*. Gk word may connote anger, revealing Jesus' irritation, not only that death had taken His friend, but also that the mourners wept as those without hope (cf 1Th 4:13). *in His spirit*. He did not voice a rebuke or complaint.
JOHN—NOTE ON 11:35 *wept*. Gk *dakryo*, "shed tears"; not loud lamentation (Gk *klaio*). He wept for Mary, her family, and her friends. Jesus' heart goes out to those who mourn (cf Mt 5:4; Rm 12:15).
JOHN—NOTE ON 11:28–37 When Jesus comes to Mary and Martha's house and sees great mourning, He is moved to tears over the situation and because of love for His friends. For all people, death and the grave bring loss and the pain of separation. But for Christians, death is only a temporary interruption of the fellowship they share with others in Christ Jesus, who will raise believers up on the Last Day to everlasting life. • O living Savior, when my loved ones die, turn my sorrow into joy as I look forward to our reunion in heaven. Amen.
JOHN—NOTE ON 11:38 *deeply moved again*. See notes, vv 33, 35. *cave*. Burial chamber sealed by a stone. See diagram, p 1823.
JOHN—NOTE ON 11:39 *by this time … four days*. The thought of raising a person after four days, when decay had set in, seemed impossible, even to Martha, who confessed that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. See note, v 17.
JOHN—NOTE ON 11:40 *Did I not tell you*. Cf vv 25–26, now summarized.
JOHN—NOTE ON 11:41 *lifted up His eyes*. Posture of prayer (cf Mk 6:41; Lk 18:13; Ac 7:55). See p 1276.
JOHN—NOTE ON 11:42 Jesus prayed publicly so the crowd would know and believe that He was dependent on and obedient to His Father, who had sent Him.
JOHN—NOTE ON 11:44 *bound*. Burial customs included wrapping a corpse with strips of cloth, effectively binding it. *them*. People standing near Lazarus. *Unbind him*. Reflects Jesus' sensitivity to personal needs (cf Mk 5:43).

JOHN—NOTE ON 11:38–44 By raising Lazarus, Jesus reveals God's glory and that He is truly the resurrection and the life. Apart from faith in Christ, the fear of death brings hopelessness and despair. Believers, however, can eagerly look forward to the day when Jesus will call them from their graves to live with Him forever (cf 5:28–29). • O God of life, when death takes one I love, may the promise of our resurrection turn my sorrow into joy. Amen.

JOHN—NOTE ON 11:47 *chief priests … Pharisees … Council*. See pp 1556–57.

JOHN—NOTE ON 11:48 Romans reacted harshly against rebellions, riots, and disorder in general. Jewish leaders feared that if Jesus stirred up the mob, the Romans would destroy the temple ("our place") and the Jewish nation.

JOHN—NOTE ON 11:49 *Caiaphas … high priest*. Served from AD 18–36. High priests were ordinarily chosen for life, but that was often not the case under Roman rule. See "chief priests," p 1556.

JOHN—NOTE ON 11:51 *being high priest that year he prophesied*. Caiaphas is compelled by God to utter more than he intends or knows. Like Balaam of old, he must speak what God puts in his mouth (Nu 23:12). Despite abuses of the priestly office, the Lord abided with the ministry He established (see note, Mt 23:2).

JOHN—NOTE ON 11:52 *children of God*. All believers in Jesus Christ, born anew by the Holy Spirit through water and the Word (cf 1:12–13; 3:1–6). Bern: "We see flourish again under our eyes the wood whereon the Lord of Glory hung, who died not for His own nation only…. He, yes, He Himself draws you, who loves you as His own flesh, as the most precious fruit of His cross, as the most worthy recompense of the blood He shed" (*SLSB*, p 165).

JOHN—NOTE ON 11:54 *no longer walked openly*. Due to growing opposition, Jesus avoided public contact. *Ephraim*. Northwest of Jericho.

JOHN—NOTE ON 11:55 *Passover*. See note, 2:13. *purify themselves*. A person had to be ceremonially clean to participate in the Passover. Purification rites took place one week before the Passover. Nothing unclean could come into the Lord's presence (cf Lv 7:21; Nu 9:6). See pp 200–201; see also note, Mk 7:3–4.

JOHN—NOTE ON 11:45–57 After Jesus raises Lazarus, Jewish leaders become hardened in their opposition to Him and plot to kill Him before the Passover. Unbelief hardens the heart, making a person callous to God's acts of grace, mercy, and compassion. By daily repentance and prayer, dedicate yourself to fulfilling your calling faithfully. Rejoice that nothing stopped Jesus from graciously giving His life for all people at God's appointed time and gathering His children to Himself. • Heavenly Father, draw me ever closer to You through Jesus Christ, my Lord. Amen.
JOHN—NOTE ON 12:1 *Six days*. Saturday before Holy Week. *Jesus … came*. John reminds the reader to view Jesus' trip to Bethany in light of the immediately preceding events. *Bethany*. See color map 4.
JOHN—NOTE ON 12:2 *gave a dinner*. Probably a Sabbath dinner, held either in midafternoon or after sunset. *reclining*. See note, Mt 8:11; see also p 1764.
JOHN—NOTE ON 12:3 *expensive ointment made from pure nard*. Aromatic oil made from the crushed rhizomes of the spikenard plant, native to northern India; used as an herbal medicine. Called "pure" presumably because of its exceptional quality. *anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped His feet with her hair*. This was highly unusual. Mary's actions (anointing feet, not head; wiping off oil with hair) signified her humble devotion to her Savior. Cf 13:3–5. *hair*. Women typically had long hair and wore it braided or pinned up.
JOHN—NOTE ON 12:4 *Judas Iscariot*. Cf 6:71.
JOHN—NOTE ON 12:5 *three hundred denarii*. Nearly the yearly wages of a common laborer. *given to the poor?* Jesus had commended almsgiving in the Sermon on the Mount (Mt 6:2–4), and the disciples assumed Jesus would give money to the needy at the Passover Feast.
JOHN—NOTE ON 12:6 *charge of the moneybag*. Judas carried or kept the moneybag or purse (a treasurer of sorts). Funds were used not only to take care of the expenses of the disciples but also to help those in need (13:29).
JOHN—NOTE ON 12:7 Obviously, it was too late for the oil to be kept in the bottle and then sold to replenish the moneybag. Jesus here speaks in abbreviated form, saying that Mary was right to keep the oil for such an occasion. *burial*. See note, Mt 26:12.
JOHN—NOTE ON 12:8 See note, Mt 26:11.
JOHN—NOTE ON 12:1–8 In humble devotion, yet with extravagant expense, Mary anoints Jesus, while Judas the betrayer and thief covers his

greed with seemingly pious intentions. Sinners may appear to have pure motives, but inwardly they have greedy hearts. Through repentance and the blessings of the Word, God grants us pure hearts. No monetary value can be placed on our "redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses" (Eph 1:7). • O Lord, may we follow Mary's example by lavishing love on Him who died for us! Amen.

JOHN—NOTE ON 12:9 *large crowd of the Jews*. Not all Jews were hostile to Jesus. No doubt some were pilgrims who had come to the Passover Feast. *there*. Bethany (v 1).

JOHN—NOTE ON 12:11 *going away*. Many left the chief priests and other Jewish leaders to follow Jesus.

JOHN—NOTE ON 12:9–11 Jesus' popularity grows as crowds hear about the raising of Lazarus, but the chief priests plot against Jesus and Lazarus. Those who hate Christ also hate His friends. But Jesus deserves praise (Php 2:10), for He came to bring life to all, and He will mercifully watch over us. • Dear Lord, change the hearts of all who hate You so that they may trust in Your mercy. Amen.

JOHN—NOTE ON 12:12 *next day*. Sunday of Christ's Passion. *large crowd*. See note, v 9.

JOHN—NOTE ON 12:13 *branches*. See note, Mt 21:8. *palm trees*. Palm trees grew plentifully near Jerusalem and had become a Jewish national symbol, appearing on Judean coins. *Hosanna!* Lit, "help" or "save, I pray." Plea for divine help or deliverance found frequently in Ps 113–18 (the Hallel), psalms for morning prayer. It became a general acclamation. See note, Ps 118:25.

JOHN—NOTE ON 12:15 *daughter of Zion*. See p 1079. *donkey's colt!* Israelite kings rode beasts of burden (1Ki 1:38), but by Roman times, the usual royal mount was a horse. Signified that Christ came in humility and peace.

JOHN—NOTE ON 12:16 *glorified*. After Christ was crucified and raised from the dead, the disciples were able to understand how He had fulfilled prophecies. *written about Him*. Christ's actions fulfilled what the prophets said. See notes, Zec 9:9; Lk 24:44.

JOHN—NOTE ON 12:17 *continued to bear witness*. The crowd could not stop talking about the great miracle that had taken place.

JOHN—NOTE ON 12:19 *you are gaining nothing*. Another way of saying, "It's useless." Reveals the Pharisees' exasperation at Jesus' growing

popularity. See note, 4:1.

JOHN—NOTE ON 12:12–19 Riding on a donkey, Jesus enters Jerusalem on the Sunday of Passion Week. Leaders of the Jewish nation reacted as we often do when we are no longer in control: frustrated and fearful. But Christ comes in a humble and gentle manner, eager to listen to our prayers for salvation. • Hosanna! Please save us, O blessed Lord. Amen.

JOHN—NOTE ON 12:20 *Greeks*. Probably Gk-speaking Gentiles from a place like the Decapolis. See color map 4.

JOHN—NOTE ON 12:21 *came to Philip*. Perhaps because Philip had a Gk name and came from an area near the Decapolis. *Bethsaida*. See color map 4.

JOHN—NOTE ON 12:22 For some reason, Philip hesitated to speak immediately with Jesus. Here Andrew showed the same missionary zeal he had shown earlier (1:41).

JOHN—NOTE ON 12:23 *answered them*. Apparently Philip and Andrew rather than the Greeks. We are never told whether these Greeks met with Jesus, who is now fully focused on His challenges in Jerusalem. *hour has come … to be glorified*. See notes, 2:4; 7:30.

JOHN—NOTE ON 12:24 Emphasizes the necessity of Jesus' death as the way to glorification and the blessing of many disciples. According to the time reckoning in Jn, Jesus rose from the dead on the 16th of Nisan, the day barley firstfruits were offered at the temple.

JOHN—NOTE ON 12:25 *loses it*. Jesus applied the image in v 24 to the life of His followers (cf Mk 8:34). Idolatrous love of self brings a person under God's judgment. *hates his life*. Semitic idiom indicating preference; the opposite of sinful self-adulation. See note, Rm 9:13.

JOHN—NOTE ON 12:26 Just as Christ was ready to face death, so must His disciples be, no matter who they are or where they come from.

JOHN—NOTE ON 12:20–26 When some Greeks want to see Jesus, He uses the occasion to proclaim His death and the fruit it will bear. Too often we are tempted to think that we are really "living" when we are indulging in life's sinful pleasures. Christ promises everlasting life to all who deny themselves and trust in Him. He shows us the meaning of abundant life. • O God, as Your baptized child, let me consider myself "dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus" (Rm 6:11). Amen.

JOHN—NOTE ON 12:27 *soul troubled*. Christ knew that the moment of His death was at hand. *this purpose*. Suffering and death as the path to

glorification. See note, 13:21.
JOHN—NOTE ON 12:28 *I have glorified it … glorify it again*. The Father had already glorified Christ through His incarnation and earthly ministry (esp miracles and signs); now He was about to glorify Him again through His death and resurrection.
JOHN—NOTE ON 12:29 *thundered*. God's voice was audible to all, but not everyone identified it or understood it (cf Ex 19:16, 19).
JOHN—NOTE ON 12:31 *Now is the judgment*. Jesus Himself will be judged a criminal shortly, but here He speaks of the condemnation of Satan and the work of the Holy Spirit (cf 16:8–10). *ruler of this world be cast out*. Christ's death on the cross may have appeared to be Satan's triumph, but in fact it spelled his overthrow. See note, Gn 3:15.
JOHN—NOTE ON 12:32 *And I*. Jesus emphasizes what He will experience and do. See note, v 34. *lifted up*. See note, 8:28. *all people*. Not that everyone in the world would enter heaven, but Christ would make atonement for everyone's sins and draw people out of every nation to form His Church. See note, 1:9.
JOHN—NOTE ON 12:34 *heard from the Law*. Scriptural texts prophesying the Messiah's eternal kingdom (e.g., 2Sm 7:13; Ps 89:35–37; Dn 7:13–14). *lifted up?* Crowd evidently understood this as a reference to Jesus' execution. *Who is this Son of Man?* People seemed confused about the title's meaning, despite Jesus' emphasis on Himself in v 32. The question implied, however, that at least some considered it a reference to the Messiah. See p 2098.
JOHN—NOTE ON 12:35 *Walk*. See p 1904. *lest darkness overtake you*. Believing in Jesus is a matter of utmost urgency. See note, 1:5.
JOHN—NOTE ON **12:36a** *sons of light*. People whose life is characterized by the light (cf Eph 5:8; 1Th 5:5).
JOHN—NOTE ON 12:27–36a Christ faces the moment of His glory, confirmed by His Father's voice from heaven: the hour when He would be lifted up on the cross so that He could draw all people to Himself. Now is the day of salvation (2Co 6:2); people ignore it at their great peril. Thanks be to God, Christ remains committed to His mission to save the world in spite of its unbelief. • Father, glorify Your Son and draw us to Him today. Amen.
JOHN—NOTE ON **12:36b** *departed*. From Jerusalem or perhaps from the crowd.

JOHN—NOTE ON 12:37 *they*. The crowd (v 34).
JOHN—NOTE ON 12:38 As Isaiah foretold, the people believed neither the message nor Jesus' signs (cf 14:10–11).
JOHN—NOTE ON 12:39–40 As in the days of Isaiah, God's judgment locked people in their unbelief. They would not believe, so they are condemned to become those who could not believe. See note, Ex 9:12.
JOHN—NOTE ON 12:40 *He*. Or, "it," referring to what was heard.
JOHN—NOTE ON 12:41 *he saw*. Either directly in a vision or through the prophetic words God gave him. *His glory*. Isaiah either saw the preincarnate Christ or discerned what the Christ would do as the Suffering Servant. See p 1178.
JOHN—NOTE ON 12:42 *authorities believed*. E.g., Nicodemus (3:1–21) and Joseph of Arimathea (19:38). *for fear of the Pharisees*. Pharisees controlled Jewish synagogues. Few dared to oppose them, for fear of being ostracized. See note, 9:22; see also p 1557.
JOHN—NOTE ON **12:36b–43** Some Jews reject Jesus and, under God's judgment, are hardened in unbelief; others believe in Him but refuse to confess Him openly for fear of being removed from the synagogue community. The desire to be accepted by others can stand in the way of a Christian's bold confession of Christ today. Yet, take heart. God has revealed His saving presence (His glory) in the person of His Son, that we may glorify Him before all people. • Lord, may I "tell of [Your] salvation from day to day" (Ps 96:2). Amen.
JOHN—NOTE ON 12:46 *as light*. See note, 8:12.
JOHN—NOTE ON 12:47 Christ came to save the world by making atonement for sin. Even on the Last Day, first and foremost He will be our Savior.
JOHN—NOTE ON 12:48 *the word … will judge*. Christ offered life to His hearers, but their rejection of His message would condemn them. They had a chance to embrace life, but they freely chose death instead.
JOHN—NOTE ON 12:49 Throughout His ministry, Christ simply did and spoke what His Father told Him to do and speak.
JOHN—NOTE ON 12:50 *His commandment*. See note, v 49. *eternal life*. The message entrusted to Jesus by His Father has one goal: to bring eternal life to all who believe it.
JOHN—NOTE ON 12:44–50 As Jesus concludes His public ministry, He reminds His hearers that He has come to save the world. Rejection of

Christ and His Word brings judgment. Believers, however, do not see in Jesus an angry judge but a loving Savior who has our salvation ever on His heart. • Gracious Savior, remove from my heart all unbelief and doubt. Amen.

JOHN—NOTE ON **Chs 13–17** The setting for these chapters is the Upper Room, where Jesus celebrated the Passover with His disciples.

JOHN—NOTE ON **Ch 13** An important transition in Jn, introducing the section covering the events of Holy Week (chs 13–19).

JOHN—NOTE ON 13:1 *before*. Not on the day before the Passover but on the evening of the Passover (Nisan 13), before the Passover meal had been eaten. See calendar, p 262. *He loved them to the end*. May mean either "to the end of His life" or "utterly."

JOHN—NOTE ON 13:2 The plot against Jesus did not originate in flesh and blood but was of the devil's prompting.

JOHN—NOTE ON 13:3 Christ did not face death as a powerless victim but as the almighty Son of God.

JOHN—NOTE ON 13:4 *rose from supper*. Christ interrupted His dinner to serve the disciples. *outer garments*. Slaves and workers did not wear outer garments, esp while working.

JOHN—NOTE ON 13:5 Even if a guest had bathed just before attending a banquet, his feet would be dirty from dusty roads. The lowest of the slaves —in Jewish households, a Gentile slave—was made to do the menial work of bathing guests' feet. Disciples might do many chores for their rabbi, but foot washing was not one of them.

JOHN—NOTE ON 13:7 *afterward*. After Christ's crucifixion and resurrection.

JOHN—NOTE ON 13:8 Peter objected because he thought Christ's behavior was too demeaning. *share with Me*. Share in Jesus' inheritance, i.e., be eternally blessed. See "portion," p 7.

JOHN—NOTE ON 13:9 Peter went to the opposite extreme from v 8: if foot washing is good, further washing must be better. Peter lists the parts of the body commonly washed or "bathed" when a thorough bath was not possible (v 10). See note, Mk 7:3–4.

JOHN—NOTE ON 13:10 *bathed*. See notes, vv 5, 9; Mk 7:3–4. *except for his feet*. The disciples had already received forgiveness of sins—spiritual cleansing—from Jesus. But just as a traveler might regularly need a foot washing, so Christians must lead a life of daily repentance (contrition and

faith). *not every one of you*. Because Judas did not believe, he had rejected the forgiveness God offered and thus remained unclean.
JOHN—NOTE ON 13:12 Christ did more than give an example of humility; He also demonstrated the self-sacrifice and love that He would show the next day on the cross.
JOHN—NOTE ON 13:13 *Teacher and Lord*. Common titles for rabbis in ancient times. *Teacher*. Aram *rabbi*, "my chief," or "great one" (Hbr *rabban*). *Lord*. Aram *mari*, "my lord." See "Lord," p 2098.
JOHN—NOTE ON 13:14–15 Jesus did not institute a new sacrament of foot washing, but rather established a pattern of humility for Christians to follow. See note, v 12.
JOHN—NOTE ON 13:16 If foot washing was not too lowly a task for Christ, then His disciples could not turn away from doing such humble acts. *messenger*. Lit, "apostle," but not in its churchly sense. An apostle was essentially a messenger sent by his lord, with full authority to act in his lord's name. See p 1901.
JOHN—NOTE ON 13:17 *blessed*. Gk *makarios*, occurring only twice in Jn (cf 20:29). Not merely happy but truly receiving God's gracious favor. See p 842.
JOHN—NOTE ON 13:18 Christ knew Judas's character when He chose him. *He who ate My bread*. Sharing a meal was a sign of close friendship. To betray such friendship was esp heinous. *lifted his heel*. Act of malice or betrayal, e.g., striking a person when he is down.
JOHN—NOTE ON 13:19 *believe that I am He*. Jesus foretold His betrayal, which confirmed His divine insight (see note, 1:48). Jesus remained fully in control, not a passive victim of fate. Cf 8:28; see pp 1784–85.
JOHN—NOTE ON 13:20 Christ would send the apostles. How they would be treated would indicate how people viewed Christ.
JOHN—NOTE ON 13:1–20 Jesus washes His disciples' feet, thereby showing His willingness to serve them. Often we think that greatness means having others serve us. But Christ shows His true greatness and His love toward us in that He came to wash away our sins, even though it cost Him His life. • Lord Jesus Christ, receive our thanks for Your love, and help us to love one another as deeply as You have loved us. Amen.
JOHN—NOTE ON 13:21 *troubled in His spirit*. Christ knew full well that the cross, though ultimately bringing glory, would be painful. Cf Lk 22:42–44. *betray Me*. See note, Lk 22:21.

JOHN—NOTE ON 13:23 *whom Jesus loved*. According to tradition, John, the author of the Gospel. Not a boast that the Lord favored him, but a recognition that the Lord chose to love even him. *close to Jesus*. Lit, "in the bosom of Jesus." John would have been reclining next to Jesus, with his back toward Him, thus making it convenient for him to lean back and talk to Him (v 25). See note, Mt 8:11.
JOHN—NOTE ON 13:26 *I will give this morsel*. Usually a sign of honor and care.
JOHN—NOTE ON 13:27 *Satan entered*. Satan possessed Judas. See note, Lk 22:3. *What you are going to do, do quickly*. Jesus permitted Judas's betrayal because it fit with God's plan of redemption.
JOHN—NOTE ON 13:28 *no one … knew*. Given the earlier discussion (vv 21–26), John should have known, but he and the other disciples could not imagine that any of them would betray Jesus.
JOHN—NOTE ON 13:29 *feast*. Most likely Feast of Unleavened Bread, which began the next day. Although a few merchants might be selling at that hour, it would be impossible to buy anything on Friday or Saturday because of Sabbath regulations. *give something to the poor*. Almsgiving, a common practice during Passover.
JOHN—NOTE ON 13:30 *night*. Not only indicating the Passover Feast had begun but also symbolizing the spiritual darkness descending on Judas (see note, v 27). See note, 1:5.
JOHN—NOTE ON 13:21–30 Jesus predicts that one of His disciples will betray Him. He gives Judas a morsel of food, a gesture of friendship, but Judas leaves to carry out his plot. This event warns us not to repay the kindness of God with evil and unfaithfulness. When you see how you have betrayed Christ with your behavior, repent; remember that He died for you and will forgive you. • Gracious Savior, forgive my own sins of betrayal, and grant me a new heart. Amen.
JOHN—NOTE ON 13:31 *glorified*. Jesus saw His death as the moment of His glory. See note, 2:4.
JOHN—NOTE ON 13:33 *Little children*. Term of endearment. Evokes the image of a father addressing his children at a Passover meal. See note, Ex 13:8. *Where I am going you cannot come*. The disciples could not follow Christ to the cross, where He would make atonement for sin.
JOHN—NOTE ON 13:34 *new commandment*. God had previously commanded His people to love others, even at some cost (e.g., Mt 5:38–46),

but Jesus' sacrificial love sets a far higher standard than anything before.
JOHN—NOTE ON 13:35 Genuine faith in Christ shows itself in brotherly love.
JOHN—NOTE ON 13:31–35 The disciples cannot follow Christ to the cross, but He asks them to imitate His love for them as they love one another. Christians bring dishonor to Christ and His love when they deal with one another in a loveless manner. Christ redeemed us through His self-sacrificial love that we may in turn imitate His love (Eph 5:1–2). • May Your love, O Lord, guide my every action. Amen.
JOHN—NOTE ON 13:36 *you will follow afterward*. Peter would die later.
JOHN—NOTE ON 13:37 Peter's overconfidence and self-assertive pride prevented him from seeing that Christ must die for him, not he for Christ.
JOHN—NOTE ON 13:38 See note, 18:27.
JOHN—NOTE ON 13:36–38 Peter thinks he is ready to follow Jesus, but Jesus says Peter will only deny Him. Peter's boldness was not due to faith but to egotistical bravado. In the end, Peter did offer his life for Christ, but only because Christ first offered His life for Peter—and for us too. • Dear God, help me to see that Your power is made perfect in my weakness. Amen.
JOHN—NOTE ON 14:1 Jesus clearly equates Himself with God. See notes, 1:18; 10:30.
JOHN—NOTE ON 14:2 *many rooms*. Lit, "dwelling places." Imagery depicts not temporary housing, such as a hotel room, but permanent residence with the Father in heaven. *I go to prepare a place for you?* Christ prepares a new "promised land" for the Church, the new Israel.
JOHN—NOTE ON 14:3 *come again*. After the resurrection.
JOHN—NOTE ON 14:5 *we do not know where You are going*. Thomas remained perplexed about the significance of Jesus' departure. Jesus' teaching would not become clear until after the resurrection (cf 2:22; 20:19–29).
JOHN—NOTE ON 14:6 *the way*. Christ is not merely a way, but rather the only way to God. See p 844. Hus: "Let the humble pilgrim look at Christ…. Behold he who wants to go, has the way, for Christ is the way, and whither he wants to go, for Christ is the truth, and where he wants to abide, for Christ is the life" (*The Church*, p 90).

JOHN—NOTE ON 14:7 *know Him and have seen Him*. Christ is so fully divine that to have seen and known Him is to have seen and known the Father (see note, 1:18).
JOHN—NOTE ON 14:8 *show us the Father*. Philip apparently wanted a more physical experience of God's presence (a "theophany," e.g., Ex 33:17–23; see p 39).
JOHN—NOTE ON 14:9 *seen the Father*. See note, 1:18.
JOHN—NOTE ON 14:10 *dwells in Me does His works*. Another expression of the complete unity of Father and Son (see note, 10:30).
JOHN—NOTE ON 14:11 *works*. See note, 5:36.
JOHN—NOTE ON 14:12 *greater works*. Cf 5:20. They are greater not because they are more miraculous but because many miracles will take place after Christ has completed His work of redemption and gone to the Father. Cf Ac 5:12–16.
JOHN—NOTE ON 14:14 *in My name, I will do it*. Not simply a formula appended to a prayer, but prayer in keeping with Jesus' revealed will and teaching. Cf Jas 4:3.
JOHN—NOTE ON 14:1–14 Through His death and resurrection, Christ went to prepare a place for us in heaven, where we will dwell with God forever. The true God cannot be known apart from Jesus Christ. Because of Christ's work, we can know the Father and enter His eternal presence. • O risen Lord, with great anticipation I long for my home in heaven. Come, Lord Jesus! Amen.
JOHN—NOTE ON 14:15 *If you love Me*. See "love," p 1903. *My commandments*. Christ's Word, including not merely ethical mandates but all His teaching (cf vv 21, 23–24).
JOHN—NOTE ON 14:16 *Helper*. Gk *parakletos*, "comforter" or someone who appears on another's behalf ("advocate").
JOHN—NOTE ON 14:17 *Spirit of truth*. The Holy Spirit imparts the truth found in God and His Son, who speaks truthful words.
JOHN—NOTE ON 14:18 *orphans*. See note, 13:33. *come to you*. After His resurrection they would see Him again.
JOHN—NOTE ON 14:19 *Because I live, you also will live*. Christ's resurrection is the basis for the new life that Christians begin to experience now and will receive fully on the Last Day. Cf 5:24; 11:25–26.
JOHN—NOTE ON 14:20 *In that day*. Hbr expression meaning "then." *you in Me, and I in you*. Christ dwells in His people so that they have intimate

communion with Him and His Father.
JOHN—NOTE ON 14:21 God loves and reveals Himself to those who love and believe Christ—a love shown by obedience to the Word. Bern: "Make yourself known then and seen beforehand, lest you be unknown for glory and known only for punishment. If Christ recognizes you in the [present] strife, He will recognize you in heaven" (*SLSB*, p 191).
JOHN—NOTE ON 14:22 *Judas*. Probably Judas the son of James. *manifest*. Perhaps Judas expected that Jesus, as Messiah, would reveal Himself to an audience wider than His disciples after His resurrection. Cf 1Co 15:3–8.
JOHN—NOTE ON 14:23–24 Jesus answers Judas by distinguishing believers from the world, which would not receive His preaching. Judas has in mind a political goal; Jesus has in mind a heavenly goal. See note, 18:36.
JOHN—NOTE ON 14:23 *My word*. His teaching. *We … Our*. The Trinity. *make Our home with him*. Cf 1Co 3:16–17; Eph 2:22.
JOHN—NOTE ON 14:26 *send in My name*. The Father will act at Jesus' initiative and request (cf v 16). See note, 15:26. Aug: "The Lord … shows the Spirit to be both of the Father and of the Son…. The Father is the beginning (*principium*) of the whole divinity" (*NPNF* 1 3:85). *teach you all things … I have said to you*. Promise that the Holy Spirit will help the disciples to discern more fully the words they could not understand before Christ's death. Cf 21:19; see "Enigmatic Sayings," p 1775.
JOHN—NOTE ON 14:27 *Peace*. Reconciliation with God, secured through Christ's death and resurrection; not external peace, politically and militarily maintained. See p 7.
JOHN—NOTE ON 14:28 *rejoiced*. Jesus lifts the vision of the sad and fearful disciples. His return to the Father ought to bring them joy, once they see its full meaning. *Father is greater than I*. Not with respect to His being or essence, for Jesus is equal to God, as Jn often testifies (1:1, 18; 5:16–18; 10:30; 20:28). Jesus here speaks about His human nature, His humiliation as the Word made flesh, and His obedient suffering and death. Cf Php 2:5–8. Hus: "He obeyed God, his Father, in all things, as being on the side of his humanity less than the Father" (*The Church*, p 186).
JOHN—NOTE ON 14:30 *ruler of this world*. See note, 12:31. *no claim*. Against Christ, Satan is powerless.

JOHN—NOTE ON 14:15–31 Christ promises that He and His Father will come to dwell in those who hear and believe His Word, and that He will send to them the Holy Spirit as the Helper. Those who neglect Christ's Word isolate themselves from God. Jesus Christ reveals God's grace in His Word, dispelling our fear and unbelief. • O Holy Spirit, draw me ever closer to my Savior, and focus me on His Word. Amen.

JOHN—NOTE ON 15:1 *true vine*. As opposed to unbelieving Israel, the false vine (cf Is 5:1–7; Ezk 19:10–14).

JOHN—NOTE ON 15:2–3 *fruit*. Not just holy deeds, but love and witness leading to new disciples. *prunes*. Lit, "cleanses" (cf v 3). Although Christians have already been cleansed by God's forgiveness, they are daily in need of repentance and spiritual growth. *clean because of the word*. The means through which the cleansing takes place, since the Word's content is Christ.

JOHN—NOTE ON 15:4 *Abide*. See note, 6:56.

JOHN—NOTE ON 15:5 *apart from Me you can do nothing*. "We cannot keep the Law without Christ's aid…. So, before we keep the Law, our hearts must be born again through faith" (Ap V 194). "Without faith, human nature does not call upon God, nor expect anything from Him, nor bear the cross [Matthew 16:24]. Instead, human nature seeks and trusts in human help. So when there is no faith and trust in God, all kinds of lusts and human intentions rule in the heart [Genesis 6:5]" (AC XX 37–38).

JOHN—NOTE ON 15:6 *fire*. Symbol of judgment and destruction (cf Ezk 15:1–8; Mt 3:10).

JOHN—NOTE ON 15:7 *it will be done.* See note, 14:14.

JOHN—NOTE ON 15:8 As Christ glorified the Father through His obedience, believers glorify God through their lives—and show that they are real disciples, attached to the vine.

JOHN—NOTE ON 15:10 *Father's commandments*. Jesus' obedience to His Father, a central theme of Jn. Cf 8:29.

JOHN—NOTE ON 15:11 *My joy … your joy*. Not the ephemeral happiness that worldly pleasures bring, but the deep and abiding joy of being loved by God through Jesus Christ. See p 1903.

JOHN—NOTE ON 15:12 *love … as I have loved you*. See note, 13:34.

JOHN—NOTE ON 15:13 *lay down his life*. Highest expression of love. *for his friends*. Gk *hyper*, "on behalf of"; giving one's life as a sacrifice for a friend. See note, 1:29.

JOHN—NOTE ON 15:14 We do not become Christ's friends through our obedience, but we obey Him because we cherish our relationship with Him.
JOHN—NOTE ON 15:15 *servants*. See p 1904. *all that I have heard from My Father*. See note, 5:30.
JOHN—NOTE ON 15:16 *I chose you and appointed you*. God called them as believers; they depended on divine initiative, not human choice. Cf v 19; see note, 1:13. *bear fruit*. See note, vv 2–3.
JOHN—NOTE ON 15:17 Jesus focuses on love and self-sacrifice as the basis for this relationship among His disciples.
JOHN—NOTE ON 15:1–17 Christ is the true vine, and His disciples are the branches, vitally connected to Him and spontaneously bearing fruit under His purifying care. Christians must love one another as friends, not regard one another as enemies. By grace, God has dwelt among us in His Son (1:14) and has joined us together in a fellowship of self-giving love. • Hear the prayers of Your faithful people, who desire to do Your will, dear Lord. Amen.
JOHN—NOTE ON 15:18 *world*. See note, 1:10.
JOHN—NOTE ON 15:19 *not of the world … out of the world*. Christians are born into fallen humanity ("the world") and thus are chosen out of it; but as Christ's followers, they are no longer governed by it and hence are not of it. See "church," pp 1901–2.
JOHN—NOTE ON 15:20 Jesus reapplies the words of 13:16 to the coming persecution. *servant*. See p 1904. *persecute*. More than antagonism; persecution leading to death.
JOHN—NOTE ON 15:22 *not have been guilty*. Of course, the world stood guilty of sin before Christ's coming. But His message, which aroused fierce opposition, exposed the world's rebellion against God.
JOHN—NOTE ON 15:23 You cannot truly love God if you reject Christ.
JOHN—NOTE ON 15:24 *works*. Jesus' words and deeds, including His miracles. *not be guilty*. See note, v 22.
JOHN—NOTE ON 15:25 *their Law*. OT Scripture. *They hated Me without a cause*. Most likely from Ps 69:4, a messianic psalm quoted often in the NT.
JOHN—NOTE ON 15:26 *I will send … proceeds from the Father*. This verse refers primarily to the Son's sending of the Holy Spirit. That He is the Spirit of the Son (Rm 8:9; Gal 4:6; 1Pt 1:11) indicates that the Holy Spirit proceeds not only from the Father but also from the Son. Western

Christians, therefore, rightly understand this passage to imply a double procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son. Nicene Creed: "who proceeds from the Father and the Son." Aug: "The Spirit came forth, not as born, but as given; and so He is not called a son, because He was neither born, as the Only-begotten [the Son], nor made, … as we are" (*NPNF* 1 3:94).

JOHN—NOTE ON 15:27 *beginning*. Beginning of Jesus' ministry.

JOHN—NOTE ON 16:1 *falling away*. From saving faith; apostasy.

JOHN—NOTE ON 16:2 *They*. Those who belong to the world (15:21–25), specifically the unbelieving Jewish leadership who persecuted Christ. *out of the synagogues*. See note, 9:22. *offering service to God*. Same as Paul's attitude prior to conversion (Gal 1:13–14).

JOHN—NOTE ON 16:4 *their hour*. Those who opposed Christ and His followers would have a time to freely persecute God's people. Cf Ac 7–8. Jesus did not explicitly state when this would take place.

JOHN—NOTE ON 15:18–16:4a Christ predicts that His disciples will face hostility from the unbelieving world. Those who think it is easy to be a Christian fail to understand the real consequences of following Jesus Christ. In the face of persecution and the world's hatred, Christ promises to strengthen and keep us from falling away • O Lord, let me not be discouraged when I am personally abused because of my faith. Amen.

JOHN—NOTE ON 16:5 *Where are You going?* Thomas had asked such a question earlier (14:5). More recently, the disciples had been too preoccupied with their own loss to ask more perceptive questions about His impending departure.

JOHN—NOTE ON 16:7 *to your advantage*. Advantageous because Jesus would send the Spirit to His disciples once His work had been accomplished. *the Helper will not come to you*. The Holy Spirit could not begin His work of applying Christ's redemption until Christ Himself had finished it. See p 1815.

JOHN—NOTE ON 16:8 *convict*. Not merely in a legal sense, but will expose to shame before all, with the hope of bringing the world to its senses and to repentance. This is the Spirit's work through the Law. "Christ's Spirit must not only comfort, but also through the office of the Law 'convict the world concerning sin' [John 16:8]" (FC SD V 11).

JOHN—NOTE ON 16:9–11 The world must know that it is not righteous but trapped in the worst of sins: unbelief (v 9; cf 12:34–50). Further, the

world must know that Christ alone is righteous (v 10) and everything the world worships is doomed (v 11). The Holy Spirit convicts people of these truths so that they will no longer be part of the world but become Christ's disciples.

JOHN—NOTE ON 16:9 In the final analysis, sin is unbelief and the refusal to trust in God.

JOHN—NOTE ON 16:10 Though the world considered itself righteous, Christ's glorification proved that He alone was righteous, much to the world's shame.

JOHN—NOTE ON 16:11 The world is further convicted of sin because it follows one who has been condemned. *ruler*. Satan. *judged*. Found guilty and condemned. See note, 12:31.

JOHN—NOTE ON 16:12 Jesus resumed teaching after the resurrection (chs 20–21).

JOHN—NOTE ON 16:13 *guide*. Gk *hodegeo*, from *hodos* ("way," "journey"); to lead, as a travel guide. *things that are to come*. Not a promise of new revelations, but rather that the disciples would understand how Christ's death and resurrection applied to the Church after Pentecost. The Spirit will lead believers into a clearer understanding of God's truth as they make their way into the future.

JOHN—NOTE ON 16:14 *take what is Mine*. Jesus had received His revelation from the Father, which would now be imparted and explained by the Holy Spirit.

JOHN—NOTE ON **16:4b–15** Christ comforts the disciples by promising to send them the Helper (the Holy Spirit), who will guide them into a deeper understanding of Christ's Word. Mistakenly, we sometimes think that Jesus' physical absence places us at a disadvantage. In fact, Jesus is present with us through the witness of the Spirit, who works among us through God's Word and Sacraments. • O Holy Spirit, through the Word, guide us into all truth. Amen.

JOHN—NOTE ON 16:16 Christ describes His burial and resurrection.

JOHN—NOTE ON 16:19 Jesus commonly used rhetorical questions as a teaching method.

JOHN—NOTE ON 16:20 *sorrow will turn into joy*. Cf 20:20.

JOHN—NOTE ON 16:21 Cf Is 21:3; 26:18–19, where the prophet illustrates Israel's suffering before deliverance with the image of childbirth.

JOHN—NOTE ON 16:22 *no one will take your joy*. Christ's resurrection brings lasting joy, not just joy for a moment (cf 1Pt 1:3–9).
JOHN—NOTE ON 16:23 *ask nothing of Me*. After Christ's resurrection and ascension, the disciples will pray directly to their heavenly Father.
JOHN—NOTE ON 16:24 *Until now you have asked nothing in My name*. The disciples had asked questions and favors of Jesus but had not prayed to the Father in Jesus' name.

JOHN—NOTE ON 16:16–24 Christ promises to return after His resurrection and turn the disciples' sorrow into joy. Human sorrow can become an expression of self-pity, hindering genuine prayer for God's help and deliverance. Yet, God knows how to turn our sorrow into joy, and He promises to hear our prayers for Jesus' sake. • Hear us, O heavenly Father, and give us joy in Jesus' name! Amen.
JOHN—NOTE ON 16:25 *figures of speech*. See note, 10:6. *hour*. See note, 2:4.
JOHN—NOTE ON 16:29 The disciples thought that they understood, but their understanding remained inadequate.
JOHN—NOTE ON 16:30 *You came from God*. Although their faith was still deficient, the disciples believed that Jesus' knowledge proved His divine origin.
JOHN—NOTE ON 16:31 See note, v 19.
JOHN—NOTE ON 16:32 *each to his own home*. The disciples would temporarily abandon Jesus in the crisis to come. *with Me*. Although the Father would forsake Christ on the cross (cf Mt 27:46) as Christ became sin for us (2Co 5:21), the Father remained faithful to His Son and His mission in a way that the disciples did not (cf Ac 2:24; 10:40).
JOHN—NOTE ON 16:33 *tribulation*. Persecution and other troubles Christians face. *I have overcome the world*. See note, v 11.

JOHN—NOTE ON 16:25–33 The disciples confidently claim they understand Jesus' parting words, but Jesus utters the sober prediction that they will soon abandon Him. Those boasting about spiritual maturity stand in danger of succumbing to human pride and unbelief. When we face temptation and trouble in this world, we can take heart that Christ has overcome the world for our sake. • O Christ, in crisis situations, give me the peace only You can give. Amen.
JOHN—NOTE ON 17:1 *lifted up His eyes*. See note, 11:41. *glorify*. The glorification would take place on the cross (see note, 12:28).

JOHN—NOTE ON 17:2 *authority over all flesh*. Christ rules over all people. *all whom You have given*. Believers in Christ do not come to Him by their own power; God brings them to Him. See note, 6:44.
JOHN—NOTE ON 17:3 Jesus summarizes two key points: (1) to know God is eternal life; and (2) knowledge of the true God cannot be separated from Christ, who is the only access to such knowledge (cf 14:6–7). *know You*. Bern: "Knowledge then is the fruit of faith, perfect charity of hope… . Understanding and love, that is, the knowledge of and delight in the truth, are, perhaps, as it were, the two arms of the soul, with which it embraces and comprehends with all saints the length and breadth, the height and depth, that is the eternity, the love, the goodness, and the wisdom of God" (*SLSB*, p 37). *only true God*. False teachers have abused this passage, using it to question whether Jesus was true God. Ath: "Now had [Jesus] been a creature, He would not have added this, and ranked Himself with His Creator (for what fellowship is there between the True and the not true?); but as it is, by adding Himself to the Father, He has shown that He is of the Father's nature; and He has given us to know that of the True Father He is True Offspring. And John too, as he had learned, so he teaches this, writing in his Epistle, 'And we are in the True, even in His Son Jesus Christ; This is the True God and eternal life' " (*NPNF* 2 4:398). Hil: "If … the Father is the only true God, Christ is not outside the only true God, since the Father, Who is the only true God, glorifies in Himself Christ [cf 13:32; 14:10; 17:5]" (*NPNF* 2 9:169).
JOHN—NOTE ON 17:5 *glorify Me in Your own presence*. See note, 1:14. *before the world existed*. Preincarnate glory with the Father. Christ is eternal and thus existed before the world was made.
JOHN—NOTE ON 17:6 *people*. Cf 6:37, 44–45; 15:16, 27.
JOHN—NOTE ON 17:7 *everything*. Includes Jesus' coming, His entire ministry, His Word and works, His disciples—in short, all that He is, has received, and has done to reveal His Father's love for the world.
JOHN—NOTE ON 17:9 *I am not praying for the world*. Jesus did not pray for the world in its opposition to God, though He loves the world (3:16) and prayed it would be saved through the Word that His witnesses share (vv 20–23).
JOHN—NOTE ON 17:10 *glorified in them*. Through their fruitful discipleship (cf 15:8).

JOHN—NOTE ON 17:11 *keep them in Your name*. Faithful to Jesus' revelation of the Father. *be one*. Spiritual unity of the Church. *even as*. Gk *kathos*, also translated "just as" in v 21. A comparison. Whereas the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are one in being (Dt 6:4), Christians enjoy only a similar unity, as the Gk shows. Ancient and modern false teachers have badly muddled Jesus' words by overlooking this and arguing that the Father and Son have a unity only of will and works, not of being. Beware such false doctrine!

JOHN—NOTE ON 17:12 *son of destruction*. Judas. See notes, 6:70; 13:27. *Scripture might be fulfilled*. God remained in control. God brings about good from evil despite people's bad intentions. See p 837.

JOHN—NOTE ON 17:14 *world has hated … not of the world*. Cf 15:18–19.

JOHN—NOTE ON 17:15 God calls Christians to be witnesses to the world (15:27), which they cannot be if they are no longer in the world. *evil one*. Satan. Cf 1Jn 2:13–14; 3:12.

JOHN—NOTE ON 17:17 *Sanctify*. God sets His people apart from the world by means of His Word. See p 1904.

JOHN—NOTE ON 17:18 *I have sent them*. Anticipates the sending in 20:21 (cf 13:20; 15:26–27).

JOHN—NOTE ON 17:19 *consecrate*. Gk *hagiazo*, same word translated "sanctify" in v 17. See "holy," p 1902. Jesus set Himself apart to do the saving work for which the Father sent Him.

JOHN—NOTE ON 17:20 *those who will believe in Me through their word*. All subsequent generations of believers.

JOHN—NOTE ON 17:21 *be one*. See note, v 11. *the world may believe that You have sent Me*. Unity and love give powerful witness to the world.

JOHN—NOTE ON 17:22 *glory*. See note, 1:14. Christ's glory was seen chiefly on the cross. *given to them*. Jesus' disciples were commissioned to bear witness to His glory as the Savior of the world.

JOHN—NOTE ON 17:23 *become perfectly one*. Attain perfect unity. See note, v 11.

JOHN—NOTE ON 17:24 See note, 14:2.

JOHN—NOTE ON 17:26 *will continue to make it known*. After His death and resurrection, through the Holy Spirit and the testimony of His disciples (cf 15:26–27).

JOHN—NOTE ON **Ch 17** Knowing that He is going to the cross, Jesus prays for His disciples and asks that they be united by faith in Him. Whenever Christians ignore God's Word, they foster divisions within the Church and diminish their witness. But God's Word is the truth that will unite His Church, glorify Him, and enable His people to fulfill their calling in a troubled world. • Heavenly Father, reveal in my life the love that You have shown me in Your Son. Amen.

JOHN—NOTE ON 18:1 *Kidron*. Name means "murky" or "turgid." The brook is a wadi or watercourse, dry except in the rainy season; it adjoins Jerusalem on the east and empties into the Dead Sea. The valley is mentioned only here and in 2Ch 30:14. See diagram, pp 1690–91. *garden*. Though unnamed here, Gethsemane (see note, Mt 26:36). Perhaps John does not name it because the place was unfamiliar to his readers.

JOHN—NOTE ON 18:2 *Judas … knew*. Jesus was not trying to keep His movements secret, thus He returned to a place He frequented. *often met there*. Only Jn supplies this detail. Jesus and His disciples may have camped in this place for the Passover festival and at other times when they visited Jerusalem. Aug: "There, accordingly, the wolf, clad in a sheep's skin, and tolerated among the sheep by the profound counsel of the Father of the family, learned where he might opportunely scatter the slender flock, and lay his coveted snares for the Shepherd" (*NPNF* 1 7:416).

JOHN—NOTE ON 18:3 *band*. Cohort of Roman soldiers, or a 10th of a legion. Not likely a whole cohort (normally 500–600, though numbers varied), though concern that rioting among the Galileans at the feast would be sparked by the arrest of Jesus might have motivated the authorities to send a large detachment. *officers*. See note, 7:32. Reinforcement of these police by Roman soldiers was necessary because the temple police failed to arrest Jesus previously and because of the concern about resistance from the Galileans (cf 7:44–46). *lanterns and torches*. Perhaps thought necessary to prevent Jesus from hiding in the garden, despite a full moon that night (Passover was calculated by the phases of the moon). *weapons*. Ironically used to arrest the One who came to bring peace (14:27; 16:33; 20:19). Aug: "God lay hid in that human flesh; and eternal day was so obscured in those human limbs, that with lanterns and torches He was sought for to be slain by the darkness" (*NPNF* 1 7:417).

JOHN—NOTE ON 18:4 *came forward*. More evidence that Jesus willingly submitted to His Father's will (10:18).

JOHN—NOTE ON 18:5 *I am He*. Note the threefold repetition of the "I am" in vv 5, 6, 8. An expression of self-identification; see note, 4:26. See also pp 1784–85. *Judas*. Mentioned often in Jn (eight times), usually with specific reference to his betrayal. This is the last reference in Jn.
JOHN—NOTE ON 18:6 *they drew back and fell to the ground*. The Son of God confronted the power of darkness that came out against Him and caused its agents to recoil before His divine presence (cf 12:31; 14:30). Cf 2Ki 1 for the humbling of Ahaziah's troops.
JOHN—NOTE ON 18:10 *sword*. Relatively short sword (like a dagger) that could be concealed under a cloak. Some Jewish sources indicate that it was illegal to carry such a weapon during Passover. The servant perhaps sought to avoid Peter's wild blow, but when he flinched, his ear was severed. *Malchus*. Similar to Hbr "king"; mentioned by name only in Jn. Perhaps a Syrian or Nabataean servant attached to the high priest's household.
JOHN—NOTE ON 18:11 *drink the cup*. Cup of wrath and suffering, which God—not His enemies—had prepared for Him (cf Ps 75:8; Is 51:17; Jer 25:15; Ezk 23:31–34; Hab 2:16). See note, Is 51:17.

JOHN—NOTE ON 18:1–11 Jesus takes charge and powerfully confronts those who come to arrest Him in the garden, even while He voluntarily accepts the suffering that lies before Him. Jesus suffered and died not as a martyr for a noble cause but as the Savior whose sacrifice atoned for our sin. • I give You thanks, O Redeemer, that I am counted among Your own. Amen.
JOHN—NOTE ON 18:12 *bound Him*. Standard procedure for Roman soldiers, who took no chances lest an escape lead to serious trouble.
JOHN—NOTE ON 18:13 *Annas*. High priest AD 6–15, when he was deposed by the Roman governor. At this time, Annas was not in office but continued to bear the honorary title. His five sons and his son-in-law Caiaphas succeeded
him.

JOHN—NOTE ON 18:12–14 Jewish officials arrest Jesus with the assistance of Roman soldiers and lead Him to the high priest Annas for questioning. The arrest of God's Son reveals the depths to which sinful humans will go to remove Him from their lives. God used those who led Jesus to His cross as His instruments to accomplish our salvation. • O Lord Jesus, I praise You that You died not only for my sins, but for the sins of all

people.
Amen.
JOHN—NOTE ON 18:15 *another disciple*. Probably John, the disciple "whom Jesus loved" (13:23). *known to the high priest*. For reasons unspecified, John had access to the high priest's house and was familiar with some servants there. See note, v 10; cf v 16. *court*. Atrium or open area, probably in the Hasmonean Palace, which stood opposite the west wall of the temple, across the Tyropoeon Valley. Annas and his son-in-law Caiaphas would have occupied separate apartments surrounding the court mentioned here.
JOHN—NOTE ON 18:17 *are you?* Gk form of question expected a negative answer, indicating some doubt on her part. *I am not*. Peter took the way out that her question provided.
JOHN—NOTE ON 18:18 *officers*. Cf v 3. *cold*. Night temperatures in Jerusalem (elevation 2,400 ft) could be cold in the spring, but only occasionally reaching freezing.
JOHN—NOTE ON 18:15–18 Despite Peter's "brave" promise to lay down his life for Jesus (13:37), Peter denies that he is Jesus' disciple because of his concern for self-protection. Tragically, our mouths with which we confess Jesus as Savior can also quickly deny Him. Our loving Lord did not begrudge His atoning sacrifice even to those who had denied and abandoned Him. The living Word saves us. • "What wondrous love is this That caused the Lord of bliss To bear the dreadful curse for my soul!" Amen. (*LSB* 543:1)
JOHN—NOTE ON 18:19 *high priest*. Annas.
JOHN—NOTE ON 18:20 *nothing in secret*. Jesus' private and public teachings were perfectly consistent. He hid nothing from the authorities.
JOHN—NOTE ON 18:21 *those who have heard Me*. Jesus called the bluff of the high priest by demanding to hear the evidence against Him from the lips of witnesses.
JOHN—NOTE ON 18:22 *struck*. An illegal act during proper court proceedings.
JOHN—NOTE ON 18:23 *bear witness*. Furnish proof. Jesus asserted that the proceedings showed disrespect for proper authority and for real evidence. To insult proper authority is to insult God (Ex 22:28). Ironically, the officer's mistreatment of Jesus was blasphemous toward God.

JOHN—NOTE ON 18:24 *sent Him bound to Caiaphas*. Now the trial would start in earnest. Jesus had demanded to hear the evidence against Him, and Caiaphas would attempt to oblige.

JOHN—NOTE ON 18:19–24 After Jesus' arrest, Annas conducts the preliminary interrogation of Jesus. As in the case of Jesus' accusers, sinful human beings are prone to dealing unfairly with others. Jesus calls us to honest dealings. He became the innocent victim of oppression and judgment in order that He would endure the just punishment of our sin (Is 53:7–9) and become our Savior. • O Lamb of God, who went to the cross with no complaint, remind me always of Your unfailing mercy. Amen.

JOHN—NOTE ON 18:25 See note, v 17.

JOHN—NOTE ON 18:26 *Did I not*. Gk form of this third question expected a positive answer (cf vv 17, 25). Now Peter faced a real crisis. A relative of Malchus, who certainly remembered Peter, uncovered his identity.

JOHN—NOTE ON 18:27 *rooster crowed*. Jesus' words were fulfilled. Jn does not mention Peter's flight and sorrowful tears (Mt 26:75; Mk 14:72; Lk 22:62). Chickens are never mentioned in the OT but were apparently common in NT times. See p 236.

JOHN—NOTE ON 18:25–27 In sharp contrast to Jesus' forthright self-disclosure ("I am," vv 5, 8), Peter denies Jesus a third time ("I am not"), leaving Jesus alone on the way to suffering and death. Jesus warned that whoever denies Him before others, He will deny before His Father in heaven (Mt 10:33). But Christ's love is greater than our sin, and with His forgiveness He will restore a broken heart. • Lord Jesus, be patient with me and forgive me, that I might live by Your promise. Amen.

JOHN—NOTE ON 18:28 *governor's headquarters*. Praetorium. Governor's official residence, likely the Herodian Palace on the western wall of the city of Jerusalem, or possibly the fortress Antonia, northwest of the temple area. *early morning*. Likely during the fourth watch, 3 to 6 a.m. See p 1567. *not be defiled*. Jews did not want to become ceremonially unclean by entering the home of Pilate, a Gentile. Yet, they wanted Pilate to condemn an innocent man. Such care for the Law contrasted unfavorably with the glaring illegalities of Jesus' trial. *eat the Passover*. This ambiguous reference to the Passover has raised issues of whether the other Gospels agree with Jn about the timing of events. The other Gospels clearly have Jesus and the Twelve eating Passover on Thursday night (see note, Lk

23:55; see also diagram, p 1690). If the reference to Passover here means the Passover meal proper (Ex 12), Jesus and the Twelve would have eaten the Passover a day earlier than the priests. The ambiguity is caused by three factors: (1) "Passover" here may refer to Passover proper (Nisan 13) or to the broader Passover and Unleavened Bread Festival (Nisan 14 to 21); (2) "day of Preparation" (Jn 19:14, 31, 42) may refer to preparation of Passover proper or to the Friday preparation for the Sabbath during the broader festival; and (3) different groups of Jews observed different calendars at this time, so Jesus may have kept a different feast day from that kept at the temple by the priests. See p 1567.

JOHN—NOTE ON 18:29 *Pilate*. Pontius Pilate, governor of Judea (AD 26–36) appointed by Emperor Tiberius on the recommendation of Sejanus, commander of the Roman Praetorian guard. Pilate's political situation was greatly complicated after AD 31, when Tiberius executed Sejanus for insurrection. An inscription mentioning Pilate's service was found at the Roman theater in Caesarea Maritima, where Pilate had his home. See color map 4.

JOHN—NOTE ON 18:30 Jesus' accusers implicitly admitted the weakness of their case by not providing a specific charge against Him.

JOHN—NOTE ON 18:31–33, 37–38 These verses appear on the back and front of an ancient Egyptian papyrus page out of a book (P^{52} of the J. Rylands Library, Manchester, England). The page is dated c AD 125. Apparently, within 30–40 years of when John likely wrote his Gospel at Ephesus, a copy of his work made it to Egypt. See pp 1571–74.

JOHN—NOTE ON 18:31 Pilate gruffly suggests that the Council deal with Jesus itself. He already hints that he knows Jesus is being mistreated. The Romans gave local governments freedom to rule their own people by local law, but capital cases were to be judged by the Roman authorities alone. See "Council, The," p 1556.

JOHN—NOTE ON 18:32 *kind of death*. The Romans executed noncitizens by crucifixion (cf 3:14), in contrast to stoning under Jewish law (e.g., Ac 7:57–58).

JOHN—NOTE ON 18:28–32 To avoid religious contamination, the Jewish leaders refuse to enter Pilate's residence, but they unjustly seek to use Pilate's authority to put Jesus to death. Even religious people are capable of manipulating others to advance personal agendas. Remarkably, Jesus' death at the hands of unjust accusers became the very means through

which our gracious God took away the guilt of sin. • "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me" (Ps 51:10). Amen.

JOHN—NOTE ON 18:33 Pilate's question revealed that he was aware of the Jewish leaders' real complaint—Jesus' messianic claims. Politically speaking, Pilate saw no threat posed to Rome by the pitiable, but not criminal, man before him.

JOHN—NOTE ON 18:35 Pilate displays irritation for being drawn into what he perceived as a Jewish squabble motivated by jealousy of Jesus' public ministry.

JOHN—NOTE ON 18:36 *My kingdom is not of this world*. Jesus was rejecting any worldly political aspirations or rebellious intent. Although a King, His kingdom did not threaten the external rule of the Roman Empire (cf Lk 20:25). See pp 1565–66. *My servants would have been fighting*. If Jesus had been establishing a political kingdom, He would have encouraged His disciples to fight to establish it (cf vv 10–11). "Legitimate public ordinances are good creations of God and divine ordinances, which a Christian can safely use. This entire topic about the distinction between the spiritual kingdom of Christ and a political kingdom has been explained in the literature of our writers…. Christ's kingdom allows us outwardly to use legitimate political ordinances of every nation in which we live, just as it allows us to use medicine or the art of building, or food, drink, and air. Neither does the Gospel offer new laws about the public state, but commands that we obey present laws, whether they have been framed by heathens or by others. It commands that in this obedience we should exercise love" (Ap XVI 53–55).

JOHN—NOTE ON 18:37 *Everyone … of the truth listens*. Challenge to Pilate to assess the truth of the claim that Jesus presented. The person of Jesus and His revelation of divine truth are inseparable (14:6).

JOHN—NOTE ON 18:38 *What is truth?* Cynical, dismissive response intended to end the discussion.

JOHN—NOTE ON 18:39 *custom*. Only the Gospels record this custom, which seems to be a local arrangement. *King of the Jews?* Title mocking the absurdity of accusations against Jesus.

JOHN—NOTE ON 18:40 *robber*. Cf Mk 15:7.

JOHN—NOTE ON 18:33–40 Pilate tries to dismiss the case before him by accommodating a Jewish custom calling for the release of a prisoner at Passover—in this instance, an insurrectionist called Barabbas. The story of

Jesus' Passion is filled with people refusing to accept responsibility for their own sins, a failure that afflicts us all. But God willed that the guilt of sin be laid on His innocent Son so we might receive God's forgiveness. • Teach me to confess my faults, O Lord. Rule my heart with Your most gracious favor. Amen.

JOHN—NOTE ON 19:1 *flogged Him*. This beating was severe; emphasizes Pilate's intent to appease the Jews and thus release Jesus.

JOHN—NOTE ON 19:2 *crown of thorns*. Mockery. Thorns, if from the date palm, could have been as much as 12 in long. *purple robe*. A cloak made of relatively expensive purple cloth, worn by the Roman military and signifying royalty or governmental authority (see note, Ac 16:14).

JOHN—NOTE ON 19:3 *Hail*. Cruel game of mockery played by the soldiers. *struck*. Slapped in the face with an open hand (cf 18:22).

JOHN—NOTE ON 19:5 *Behold the man!* Mockery emphasizing Christ's weakness and vulnerability; meaning something like "poor fellow." Ironically, this was indeed the man who is King of kings and Lord of lords.

JOHN—NOTE ON 19:6 *chief priests and the officers*. See "Council, The," p 1556.

JOHN—NOTE ON 19:7 *according to that law*. The real issue now came out—blasphemy, which from Pilate's point of view was no crime.

JOHN—NOTE ON 19:8 *more afraid*. Perhaps caused by Pilate's difficult political situation or by a superstitious reaction to the news that Jesus claimed divine status.

JOHN—NOTE ON 19:9 *Where are You from?* A question far more profound than Pilate realized. He was likely weighing the political implications of crucifying Jesus or trying to satisfy superstitious curiosity. *no answer*. Jesus did not bother to explain. Pilate could not comprehend what was happening anyway. Cf Is 53:7.

JOHN—NOTE ON 19:10 Pilate had ultimate legal authority over capital cases in Judea.

JOHN—NOTE ON 19:11 *given you from above*. Cf Rm 13:1–4. Luth: "With these words He Himself confirms this power. Yet He submits to it because this was pleasing to His Father" (AE 30:78). *he who delivered Me*. Caiaphas. *the greater sin*. Caiaphas was responsible for handing over a man he knew to be innocent. In human affairs, that is the greater crime. Luth: "Pilate and the Jews had the sword and rule in the land. And yet they could not do anything until God had decreed it, as Christ also declared before

Pilate: 'You would have no power over Me' (Jn 19:11). Thus He herewith gives to the sword leave and power over Christ and also offers us the comfort that no harm can come to us except insofar as He allows and permits it" (AE 20:335).

JOHN—NOTE ON 19:12 *Caesar's friend*. Title of honor given to the emperor's closest and most faithful supporters. The title could be revoked, but only with the most frightful political and personal ramifications. Given Pilate's difficult political situation (see note, 18:29), the Jews' threat was a serious one. *makes himself a king*. Jewish leaders sought to buttress the case that Jesus, by making Himself a king, was guilty of insurrection against the emperor (cf v 3).

JOHN—NOTE ON 19:13 *judgment seat*. See note, Mt 27:19. *Stone Pavement*. Probably in the courtyard of the Herodian Palace (see note, Jn 18:28). *Aramaic Gabbatha*. Exceptional detail to describe the place for Jewish and Gentile readers.

JOHN—NOTE ON 19:14 *day of Preparation*. Friday, the day of preparing for the Sabbath or the Friday coinciding with the Passover. See note, 18:28. *sixth hour*. See p 1567.

JOHN—NOTE ON 19:15 *no king but Caesar*. Hypocritical claim that denied the kingship of God and the Messiah.

JOHN—NOTE ON 19:16 *them*. Roman crucifixion detachment that was ordered to put Jesus to death, to the satisfaction of the Jewish leaders. At this point, a second and more severe beating might have been administered to Jesus (cf Mt 27:27–31) as part of the torture leading to crucifixion.

JOHN—NOTE ON 19:1–16a Pilate succumbs to political pressure exerted by Jewish leaders and delivers Jesus over to death by crucifixion. All human beings, by virtue of their participation in Adam's sin (Rm 5:12), bear responsibility for Christ's death. Yet, take comfort in this truth: "He was wounded for our transgressions; He was crushed for our iniquities; … with His stripes we are healed" (Is 53:5). • "O sacred Head, now wounded, … I joy to call Thee mine." Amen. (*LSB* 449:1)

JOHN—NOTE ON 19:17 *bearing His own cross*. Jesus would have carried the horizontal crossbeam (*patibulum*) to the place of execution. The vertical beam was likely already erected at the site. *The Place of a Skull … Golgotha*. Aram "skull" (Lat *calvaria*). Perhaps a hill that had a skull-like appearance. Chrys: "Some say that Adam died there, and there lies; and that Jesus in this place where death had reigned, there also set up the trophy. For

He went forth bearing the Cross as a trophy over the tyranny of death: and as conquerors do, so He bore upon His shoulders the symbol of victory" (*NPNF* 1 14:317).

JOHN—NOTE ON 19:19 *inscription*. Stated reason for crucifixion, intended to deter other would-be criminals. *King of the Jews*. Taunt and expression of revenge aimed at Jewish leaders. Ironically, Pilate's mockery served as a statement of fact (cf v 3).

JOHN—NOTE ON 19:20 *written in Aramaic, in Latin, and in Greek*. Aram, local language; Lat, official language; Gk, common language of business in the Roman Empire. Thus, everyone would know the crime of the crucified one.

JOHN—NOTE ON 19:21 *This man said*. Suggests that Jesus "claimed" to be a king. But He was indeed the Messiah, the true King of Israel.

JOHN—NOTE ON 19:22 Pilate was in no mood to be conciliatory.

JOHN—NOTE ON 19:23–25 Both Jews and Gentiles attended Jesus' crucifixion.

JOHN—NOTE ON 19:23 *divided them into four parts*. Likely divided into belt, head covering, sandals, and outer garment. See note, Lk 23:34. *one part for each*. Suggests the execution squad consisted of four soldiers. *seamless*. It could not be divided.

JOHN—NOTE ON 19:24 Even the details of the crucifixion occurred according to God's plan foretold in Scripture. *cast lots*. Use of dice (made of bone) to determine which member of the execution detail would take the tunic.

JOHN—NOTE ON 19:25 *His mother*. Jn never mentions Mary by name (cf 2:1, 3). *His mother's sister*. Probably Salome. See p 1780. *Clopas*. See note, Lk 24:18. On women as disciples, see note, Lk 8:2–3.

JOHN—NOTE ON 19:26–27 *behold, your son! … Behold, your mother!* Deeply concerned for His mother's welfare, Jesus entrusted Mary to a disciple's care. Note: Jesus' brothers, who did not yet believe (7:5), were noticeably absent. Jesus reorders the household.

JOHN—NOTE ON 19:26 *disciple whom He loved*. See note, 13:23.

JOHN—NOTE ON 19:27 *his own home*. Lit, "into his own [things]."

JOHN—NOTE ON **19:16b–27** As He is crucified on the Place of a Skull near Jerusalem, Jesus entrusts His mother to John's care. Though this is a special example of Jesus' love, God calls all believers together in an everlasting bond of mutual responsibility and love—including care for

parents. Like Mary and John, we also become members of Jesus' family by faith. From the cross, Jesus reigned with love for the world; now He reigns in the hearts of those who love Him. • Dear Lord, let Your cross bring comfort and peace to me and my family. Amen.

JOHN—NOTE ON 19:28 Beyond the physical thirst caused by dehydration, Jesus sought to fulfill His Father's plan foretold in Scripture. *fulfill the Scripture*. Ps 69 also cited at 2:17; 15:25.

JOHN—NOTE ON 19:29 *sour wine*. Cheap beverage used by the Roman legionnaires. *hyssop branch*. Common bushy plant, used to sprinkle blood at the Passover (Ex 12:22). Here its stalk was used to lift a small sponge soaked with the sour wine.

JOHN—NOTE ON 19:30 *It is finished*. Literary and theological climax of Jn. Jesus' work of atonement was finished, or accomplished. *gave up His spirit*. Lit, "gave up the spirit." No one could take His life from Him (10:18). To the end, Jesus was in control and was decisively giving Himself up for us sinners. "Although the work is done and the forgiveness of sins is secured by the cross [John 19:30], it cannot come to us in any other way than through the Word. How would we know about it otherwise, that such a thing was accomplished or was to be given to us, unless it were presented by preaching or the oral Word?" (LC V 31).

JOHN—NOTE ON 19:28–30 Jesus the Christ dies, finishing the work of salvation that His Father sent Him to accomplish. Death is not merely a natural process but is God's just punishment for sin (Rm 6:23). However, Jesus died not because He sinned but because He came to bear sin's punishment for us. • Jesus, priceless treasure and trusted friend, thank You for bearing my cross and preparing for me a new home. Amen.

JOHN—NOTE ON 19:31 *day of Preparation*. See note, v 14. *Sabbath was a high day*. Sabbath connected with the Passover Feast, thus called "great." *broken*. Breaking the shinbones would hasten death, since the victim could no longer hold himself up to avoid fatigue and eventual asphyxiation.

JOHN—NOTE ON 19:34 *spear*. Lance (*pilum*); part of a Roman soldier's weaponry. *blood and water*. The spear pierced the pleural cavity near the heart and opened a stream of blood mingled with water. This detail establishes that Jesus' death was real. Some Church Fathers saw symbolism here pointing to the Sacraments. Aug: "From [Jesus' side] have flowed forth the sacraments of the Church, without which there is no entrance to the life which is the true life" (*NPNF* 1 7:434).

JOHN—NOTE ON 19:35 *He*. John the evangelist. *his testimony is true … telling the truth*. Because he was an eyewitness of the crucifixion. *you also may believe*. First direct address to the hearers of the Gospel, intended to bring them to faith.
JOHN—NOTE ON 19:36 Likely an allusion to the Passover. The Passover victim's bones were not to be broken. Christ Himself thus became the Passover Lamb.
JOHN—NOTE ON 19:37 The One lifted up and pierced was now looked upon for salvation (3:14; Nu 21:8–9; Is 53:5).
JOHN—NOTE ON 19:31–37 John invites us to look on Jesus, the crucified "Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" (1:29). Enemies of the cross interpret Jesus' death as disgrace, not glory. Yet, hidden beneath the outward "mask" of Jesus' suffering and death, there stands the work of our redemption, foretold in the OT. • Through the witness of Your blessed apostles, Lord Jesus, draw many to Your saving grace. Amen.
JOHN—NOTE ON 19:38 *Joseph*. Wealthy member of the Council. *Arimathea*. Possibly Ramah. See note, 1Sm 1:1. *secretly*. Joseph honored Jesus in death, though he was afraid to confess Him in life (cf 12:42–43). Since Joseph was not overtly tied to Jesus' circle, he had access to Jesus' body, which Pilate would not likely have released to a known disciple.
JOHN—NOTE ON 19:39 *Nicodemus*. See notes, 3:1–2. *myrrh and aloes*. Myrrh, a fragrant resin turned into a powder by crushing, was added to the aloes, a powder of crushed sandalwood. *seventy-five pounds*. Large amount, but not uncommon for royal burials. Spices were used not to embalm but to mask the smell of decay—though unnecessary in this case because of God's intervention (cf Ps 16:10; Ac 2:31).
JOHN—NOTE ON 19:40 *bound it in linen cloths*. See note, 11:44. *spices*. Placed in the linen wrapping. See note, v 39.
JOHN—NOTE ON 19:41 *garden*. Orchard or cultivated area. *new tomb*. No doubt a sign of special honor, which may also signal a new beginning. See note, Lk 23:53.
JOHN—NOTE ON 19:42 A speedy burial was necessary since the Sabbath began at sundown. *day of Preparation*. See note, v 14. *close at hand*. Tomb was located outside the walls of the city in AD 33 (cf Heb 13:12). See p 1651.

JOHN—NOTE ON 19:38–42 Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, secretly Jesus' disciples for fear of the Jews, honor Jesus by attending to His burial. That the Son of God should become a corpse and be entombed appears offensive and even scandalous to human reason. But Jesus' burial proclaims the depth of Christ's utter humiliation for the sake of our salvation. • Dear Lord, You became one with us in death that we may look to You for life. Amen.

JOHN—NOTE ON 20:1 *first day*. Sunday. *Mary Magdalene*. See note, Lk 8:2–3. Perhaps Mary had become separated from the other women. *early*. Various factors may have motivated early departure for the tomb: a determination to act decisively; the desire to work on Jesus' body as soon as possible, in the morning hours while it was still cool; and the desire to leave the city before the Passover crowds began bustling about. *stone*. See note, Mt 27:60.

JOHN—NOTE ON 20:2 *ran*. Sign of distress. *Simon Peter*. First mention of Peter since the denial (18:27). *one whom Jesus loved*. See note, 13:23.

JOHN—NOTE ON 20:4 *outran*. Explanation not given, though some have surmised that John was younger (he lived until the end of the first century).

JOHN—NOTE ON 20:5 *stooping*. Gk *parakypto*, bending for the sake of looking, with focus on satisfying one's curiosity. *linen cloths*. See note, 11:44.

JOHN—NOTE ON 20:7 *face cloth*. Probably would be wrapped under the chin and over the top of the head to keep the corpse's mouth from opening. *folded up*. Detail indicating that the body had not been stolen. Grave robbers would not unwrap the body, leaving behind the valuable linen and spices, nor would they neatly fold these items before leaving the tomb.

JOHN—NOTE ON 20:8 *saw and believed*. Though John did not see the resurrected Jesus, he believed after seeing the signs of His resurrection in the empty tomb. (Contrast with Thomas's doubt [v 25].) However, John did not yet understand (v 9).

JOHN—NOTE ON 20:9 Though Jesus had promised His own death and resurrection and supported these promises from Scripture, the disciples had not understood the true meaning of the promises (e.g., Is 53:10–12; Hos 6:2).

JOHN—NOTE ON 20:10 *their homes*. Where they were staying in Jerusalem.

JOHN—NOTE ON 20:1–10 The first witnesses of Jesus' resurrection see an empty tomb bearing all the signs of the fulfillment of the OT promises and Jesus' own declaration that He "must rise from the dead" (v 9). The disciples were slow to believe, just as we, too, can be of little faith. Yet, rejoice! For our sakes, Christ grants us His Spirit to work faith in us. Christ robbed the grave of death, confirming His own words, "I am the resurrection and the life" (11:25). • Christ is risen. He is risen indeed. Alleluia!

JOHN—NOTE ON 20:12 *two angels in white*. Visitors from heaven sometimes appeared in shining white garments (cf Lk 9:29–31; Ac 1:10).

JOHN—NOTE ON 20:14 Even those who knew Jesus best did not recognize Him until His Word made Him known.

JOHN—NOTE ON 20:15 Jesus repeated the question asked by the angels (v 13). Then His second question began to lead Mary out of her distress, to consider why Jesus was not in the tomb.

JOHN—NOTE ON 20:16 *Mary*. The Good Shepherd called His sheep by name, and she recognized His voice (cf 10:3–4). *Rabboni!* Aram "my lord, my master." See note, Mk 9:5.

JOHN—NOTE ON 20:17 *Do not cling*. Lit, "do not keep clinging." Mary was holding on to Jesus, but He asked her to let go of Him. *not yet ascended*. Jesus would still be visibly present for a time. Thus, Mary must go and tell the disciples of His appearing. *My Father and your Father, to My God and your God*. Luth: "Christ's Father and our Father are one and the same…. Therefore God is our Father and our God, but through Christ" (AE 26:43).

JOHN—NOTE ON 20:11–18 After His resurrection, Jesus first appears to Mary Magdalene, who is led to recognize Him and goes to tell the disciples she has seen the Lord. When death confronts us, sorrow and a sense of loss may overcome us. But because Christ is risen, Christians can confidently assure one another that God will wipe away our tears (Rv 21:4). • O risen Christ, end our nights of sorrow and restore to us the joy of our salvation. Amen.

JOHN—NOTE ON 20:19 *that day*. Sunday evening. *doors being locked*. Barred. *disciples*. The Twelve (v 24) minus Judas and Thomas. *fear of the Jews*. The disciples were afraid that they would be arrested for supporting Jesus' alleged conspiracy against the authority of imperial Rome. *Jesus came and stood among them*. After His resurrection, Jesus more fully

manifested His divine attributes. Thus, though still completely human, He did not allow physical barriers to keep Him from revealing Himself to His disciples. Luth: "The evangelist says not that they saw him enter, but, 'He appeared or stood in their midst' [Luke 24:36], which sounds as if he had been there already, hidden, and now revealed himself, as he also did to Mary Magdalene at the grave [John 20:14], and with all to whom he appeared" (AE 37:66). *Peace*. See note, 14:27.

JOHN—NOTE ON 20:20 *showed them His hands and His side*. Proved beyond doubt that the risen Lord, though appearing with a glorified body, was the same person as the crucified Christ. Luth: "So the very same Christ who was born of Mary and who was nailed to the cross truly rose again. It was He and no other, as He showed His disciples the scars in His hands and His side" (AE 28:150). *Then … glad*. Jesus' appearance caused a sudden outburst of joy.

JOHN—NOTE ON 20:21 "Christ sends forth His disciples in equality, without any distinction…. He says, 'As the Father has sent Me, even so I am sending you.' He says that He sends them individually in the same way He Himself was sent [John 12:44–50]. Therefore, He grants no one a privilege or lordship above the rest" (Tr 9). Hus: "[Jesus sends them] to bear testimony to the truth, to preach the word of salvation, and, by life and teaching, to show the way of blessedness to the people" (*The Church*, p 195).

JOHN—NOTE ON 20:22 *breathed on*. Gk term used only here in NT. Jesus' words, formed by breaths of air, delivered the Spirit to the disciples (Gk *pneuma* translates as "spirit" or "wind" [breath]). Aug: "That bodily breathing, proceeding from the body with the feeling of bodily touching, was not the substance of the Holy Spirit, but a declaration by a fitting sign, that the Holy Spirit proceeds not only from the Father, but also from the Son" (*NPNF* 1 3:84). *Receive the Holy Spirit*. By giving the Holy Spirit, Jesus was equipping the disciples for the ongoing work assigned to them, including esp the exercise of the Office of the Keys (see note, v 23).

JOHN—NOTE ON 20:23 "These words show that the Keys are given to all the apostles alike and that all the apostles are sent forth alike. In addition, it must be recognized that the Keys belong not to the person of one particular man, but to the Church. Many most clear and firm arguments show this. For Christ, speaking about the Keys, adds, for example, 'If two

of you agree on earth' (Matthew 18:19). Therefore, He grants the Keys first and directly to the Church. This is why it is first the Church that has the right of calling" (Tr 23–24).

JOHN—NOTE ON 20:19–23 The once-crucified Jesus appears to His disciples, commissioning them for their work and equipping them with the Holy Spirit. Christians have received the most precious treasure on earth—the Gospel of forgiveness—but often keep it hidden from others. Pray that the Lord would grant you boldness. God raised Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, and will equip us with every good thing to do His will (Heb 13:20–21).

• O God, give us Your eternal peace and also boldness through the Holy Spirit. Amen.

JOHN—NOTE ON 20:24 *Twin*. See note, 11:16. *them*. The Twelve.

JOHN—NOTE ON 20:25 *I will never believe*. Instead of accepting the testimony of fellow disciples (cf v 8), Thomas remained deeply skeptical and demanded tactile proof of Jesus' physical resurrection.

JOHN—NOTE ON 20:26 *Eight days later*. The following Sunday (calculated by using Jewish inclusive reckoning; see p 1567). *inside again*. Perhaps same location as in v 19. *locked*. See note, v 19. *Peace be with you*. See note, 14:27.

JOHN—NOTE ON 20:27 Jesus graciously accommodated Thomas's request, to his astonishment and perhaps even his shame. *believe*. Lit, "become believing."

JOHN—NOTE ON 20:28 *My Lord and my God!* Restatement of 1:1, a central Christological affirmation in Jn.

JOHN—NOTE ON 20:29 *Blessed*. See note, 13:17. *have not seen and yet have believed*. After Jesus' ascension, people would come to faith without seeing Jesus, on the sole basis of the apostles' witness (cf 17:18, 20; Rm 10:17).

JOHN—NOTE ON 20:24–29 Jesus appears before a skeptical Thomas, who upon seeing Jesus is moved to confess Him as Lord and God. Today, we live in a skeptical age that operates by the saying "I'll believe it when I see it." However, in the Word and the Sacraments, we see and we do receive the benefits of Jesus' death and resurrection. Those who believe receive God's divine favor, for whoever believes has everlasting life (3:36).

• Even though I do not now see You, Lord, I believe and rejoice with inexpressible joy. Amen.
JOHN—NOTE ON 20:30 *other signs*. See note, 2:11. *this book*. John's Gospel.
JOHN—NOTE ON 20:31 John not only states the purpose of his Book, but summarizes succinctly its content. See note, 5:39.
JOHN—NOTE ON 20:30–31 John, the author of this Gospel, clearly states its purpose and summarizes its central message. People commonly and mistakenly think that biblical books were written mainly to provide rules for godly living. Speaking through John, God announces the Good News that Jesus is His Son and that by faith in His name, we have life and salvation—the core message of the entire Scripture. • Let me gladly share this Good News, O God, that others may believe and live. Amen.
JOHN—NOTE ON 21:1 *revealed*. See note, v 14. The disciples returned to Galilee after the appearance of Jesus to Thomas (Mt 28:7). Jesus unveiled His glory and His triumph over death. Jn again uses the verb that described Jesus' self-revelation at the wedding of Cana (Jn 2:11). *Sea of Tiberias*. See note, 6:23; see also map, p 1584.
JOHN—NOTE ON 21:2 *Cana*. See note, 2:1; see also color map 4. *sons of Zebedee*. James and John. *two others*. Never identified.
JOHN—NOTE ON 21:3–4 Once more, this time in Galilee amid the everyday occupations of a fisherman, the disciples behold Jesus in the glory of His gracious lordship.
JOHN—NOTE ON 21:4 *did not know*. The fishermen did not recognize that the person on the shore was Jesus. The boat was 100 yd from shore (v 8), and the light of day was still dim.
JOHN—NOTE ON 21:5 *Children*. Not a common form of address, but perhaps equivalent to present-day "boys" or "guys."
JOHN—NOTE ON 21:6 *Cast the net*. See note, Mt 13:47–48. Jesus acts as a "spotter" from the shore, a strategy for identifying the movement of a shoal of fish.
JOHN—NOTE ON 21:7 *It is the Lord!* Reaction prompted when Jesus' Word produced the miraculous catch of fish. *outer garment*. Used as a coat to ward off the morning chill. See note, 13:4.
JOHN—NOTE ON 21:9 *charcoal fire*. Small, hot fire kindled expressly to make breakfast. Jesus was serving them again by providing fish and bread (cf 6:11; 13:4–5).

JOHN—NOTE ON 21:11 An astonishing catch—so impressive that the disciples actually counted them. Additional details enhance the extraordinary nature of the catch. Cf Lk 5:1–11.
JOHN—NOTE ON 21:12 *have breakfast*. Gk word used elsewhere for a main meal (Lk 11:37). *knew it was the Lord*. Like the other post-resurrection appearances, this one awed the disciples.
JOHN—NOTE ON 21:13 Jesus hosted the meal. See p 1764. The focus is on the resurrected Lord's serving His disciples. Cf ch 13.
JOHN—NOTE ON 21:14 *third time*. Cf 20:19–23; 26–29. *revealed*. Repetition of this verb marks vv 1–14 as a discrete section.
JOHN—NOTE ON 21:1–14 During Jesus' third appearance after the resurrection, He performs another miracle and serves as host at a meal for the disciples. Jesus shows once again His servant heart, teaching us to follow in His way. We bless and serve one another because our gracious Savior continues to bless and serve us, especially in His Holy Supper. • As I come regularly to Your Holy Supper, dear Lord, prepare me to receive You and Your gifts worthily. Amen.
JOHN—NOTE ON 21:15 *love Me more than these?* Peter tended to boast of his commitment before the other disciples (e.g., 13:37). Hus: "As for the third virtue, love, it is plain that Peter had this in certain respects above the others, as appears from the fervor of his acts which fittingly proceed from greater love" (*The Church*, p 86). *Yes*. Emphatic. *Feed My lambs*. The Lord was calling Peter away from his former profession to be a shepherd of His flock, a comparison for what would become the "pastoral" ministry.
JOHN—NOTE ON 21:16 *Tend My sheep*. Luth: "God could rule the church through the Holy Spirit without the ministry, but He does not want to do this directly. Therefore He says to Peter: 'Feed My sheep (John 21:16). Go, preach, baptize, absolve.' … Therefore Paul calls the apostles 'fellow workmen with God' (1 Cor. 3:9). To be sure He alone works. But He does so through us" (AE 8:94–95).
JOHN—NOTE ON 21:17 *third time*. Peter denied the Lord three times, and now the Lord invited him to declare his love for Him three times. *everything*. Peter cannot tell Jesus anything that He does not already know. See note, 1:48. *Feed My sheep*. The Lord's threefold calling restored Peter for future service to Him and to His Church.
JOHN—NOTE ON 21:18–19 According to tradition, Peter was crucified in Rome under Nero in AD 68. Jesus, in an enigmatic way, was referring to

Peter's martyrdom. See "Enigmatic Sayings," p 1775. Peter would follow Jesus in suffering and death, glorifying the Father (cf 12:23–28).

JOHN—NOTE ON 21:15–19 In His threefold exchange with Peter—who in pride and weakness failed His Lord—Jesus restores this disciple for service to Him and His flock. Our own past sins and failures make us feel unworthy to serve God. But Jesus continues to comfort shepherds and the souls they serve with the forgiveness of sins and with compassion. • Great Shepherd of the sheep, bless all pastors who bring Your consolation and peace to Your people. Amen.

JOHN—NOTE ON 21:21 *what about this man?* Peter was concerned about John's welfare and future.

JOHN—NOTE ON 21:22 *If it is My will that he remain*. I.e., what would it matter if he were not to die. *what is that to you?* Peter did not need to know certain things. See "Enigmatic Sayings," p 1775.

JOHN—NOTE ON 21:23 *brothers*. Late-first-century Church.

JOHN—NOTE ON 21:24 Identifies the beloved disciple, John, as witness and author of this Gospel. *we know*. More than one witness or contributor may have been involved in the production of the Gospel account and the support of its distribution (see note, 18:31–33, 37–38).

JOHN—NOTE ON 21:25 The Gospel is not a complete biography in the modern sense, but rather a theological treatment of Jesus' life and teachings.

JOHN—NOTE ON 21:20–25 In the closing exchange between Jesus and Peter, Jesus kindly reminds this beloved apostle that God is in control of matters related to his future. All Christians must humbly recognize that God has not chosen to reveal certain things to us. But the Scriptures do reveal what is necessary for us to know: Jesus and the salvation He brings. • Blessed Lord, by patience and comfort of Your Holy Word, may we embrace and ever hold fast the glorious hope of everlasting life. Amen.

Acts

Acts 1 | Acts 2 | Acts 3 | Acts 4 | Acts 5 | Acts 6 | Acts 7 | Acts 8 | Acts 9 | Acts 10 | Acts 11 | Acts 12 | Acts 13 | Acts 14 | Acts 15 | Acts 16 | Acts 17 | Acts 18 | Acts 19 | Acts 20 | Acts 21 | Acts 22 | Acts 23 | Acts 24 | Acts 25 | Acts 26 | Acts 27 | Acts 28

- Introduction to Acts
  - Overview
  - Reading Acts
  - Luther on Acts
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

The Promise of the Holy Spirit

1 [1] ‡ † In the first book, O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus
began to do and teach, [2] † until the day when he was taken up, after he had
given commands through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had
chosen. [3] † He presented himself alive to them after his suffering by many
proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the
kingdom of God.

[4] † And while staying[1] with them he ordered them not to depart from
Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, "you
heard from me; [5] † for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized
with[2] the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

The Ascension

6 †So when they had come together, they asked him, “Lord, will you at
this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” 7 †He said to them, “It is not for
you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority.
8 † But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and
you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to
the end of the earth.” 9 †And when he had said these things, as they were
looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. 10 †And
while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by
them in white robes, 11 † and said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand
looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven,
will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.”

Matthias Chosen to Replace Judas

12 ‡† Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which
is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away. 13 † And when they had
entered, they went up to the upper room, where they were staying, Peter and
John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and
Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot and Judas the
son of James. 14 † All these with one accord were devoting themselves to
prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his
brothers.[1]

15 † In those days Peter stood up among the brothers (the company of
persons was in all about 120) and said, 16 †"Brothers, the Scripture had to be
fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke beforehand by the mouth of David
concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus. 17 †For
he was numbered among us and was allotted his share in this ministry."
18 ‡† (Now this man acquired a field with the reward of his wickedness, and
falling headlong[2] he burst open in the middle and all his bowels gushed
out. 19 † And it became known to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the
field was called in their own language Akeldama, that is, Field of Blood.)
20 †"For it is written in the Book of Psalms,

> "'May his camp become desolate,
> and let there be no one to dwell in it';

and

> "'Let another take his office.'

21 † So one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time that the
Lord Jesus went in and out among us, 22 † beginning from the baptism of
John until the day when he was taken up from us—one of these men must
become with us a witness to his resurrection." 23 †And they put forward two,
Joseph called Barsabbas, who was also called Justus, and Matthias. 24 ‡† And
they prayed and said, "You, Lord, who know the hearts of all, show which
one of these two you have chosen 25 † to take the place in this ministry and

apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place.” [26]† And they cast lots for them, and the lot fell on Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

The Coming of the Holy Spirit

2 [1]‡†When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one
place. [2]‡† And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty
rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. [3]†And
divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested[1] on each one of
them. [4]†And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in
other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

[5]†Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every
nation under heaven. [6]†And at this sound the multitude came together, and
they were bewildered, because each one was hearing them speak in his own
language. [7]‡And they were amazed and astonished, saying, “Are not all
these who are speaking Galileans? [8]And how is it that we hear, each of us in
his own native language? [9]‡Parthians and Medes and Elamites and residents
of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, [10]Phrygia and
Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors
from Rome, [11]†both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians—we hear
them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God.” [12]†And all were
amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, “What does this mean?”
[13]†But others mocking said, “They are filled with new wine.”

Peter’s Sermon at Pentecost

14 But Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice and addressed
them: “Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to
you, and give ear to my words. 15 For these people are not drunk, as you
suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day.[2] 16 But this is what was
uttered through the prophet Joel:

17 “‘And in the last days it shall be, God
declares,
that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh,
and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
and your young men shall see visions,
and your old men shall dream dreams;
18 even on my male servants[1] and female
servants
in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and
they shall prophesy.
19 And I will show wonders in the heavens
above
and signs on the earth below,
blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke;
20 the sun shall be turned to darkness
and the moon to blood,
before the day of the Lord comes, the great
and magnificent day.
21 And it shall come to pass that everyone who
calls upon the name of the Lord shall be
saved.’

22 “Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to
you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through
him in your midst, as you yourselves know— 23 this Jesus, delivered up
according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and
killed by the hands of lawless men. 24 God raised him up, loosing the pangs

of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it. [25]For David says concerning him,

> “‘I saw the Lord always before me,
> for he is at my right hand that I may not be
> shaken;
> [26] therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue
> rejoiced;
> my flesh also will dwell in hope.
> [27] For you will not abandon my soul to Hades,
> or let your Holy One see corruption.
> [28] You have made known to me the paths of life;
> you will make me full of gladness with your
> presence.’

[29] “Brothers, I may say to you with confidence about the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. [30]Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would set one of his descendants on his throne, [31]he foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption. [32]This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses. [33]Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing. [34]For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he himself says,

> “‘The Lord said to my Lord,
> Sit at my right hand,
> [35] until I make your enemies your footstool.’

[36]Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.”

[37]Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?” [38]And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the

Holy Spirit. [39]†For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.” [40]†And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, “Save yourselves from this crooked generation.” [41]†So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.

The Fellowship of the Believers

42 ‡ † And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the
fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. 43 † And awe[1] came
upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the
apostles. 44 ‡ And all who believed were together and had all things in
common. 45 And they were selling their possessions and belongings and
distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. 46 † And day by day,
attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they
received their food with glad and generous hearts, 47 † praising God and
having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day
by day those who were being saved.

The Lame Beggar Healed

3 [1]‡†Now Peter and John were going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour.[1] [2]†And a man lame from birth was being carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple that is called the Beautiful Gate to ask alms of those entering the temple. [3]‡Seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, he asked to receive alms. [4]And Peter directed his gaze at him, as did John, and said, “Look at us.” [5]And he fixed his attention on them, expecting to receive something from them. [6]†But Peter said, “I have no silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk!” [7]And he took him by the right hand and raised him up, and immediately his feet and ankles were made strong. [8]‡And leaping up he stood and began to walk, and entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God. [9]And all the people saw him walking and praising God, [10]and recognized him as the one who sat at the Beautiful Gate of the temple, asking for alms. And they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.

Peter Speaks in Solomon's Portico

11 ‡ † While he clung to Peter and John, all the people, utterly astounded,
ran together to them in the portico called Solomon's. 12 And when Peter saw
it he addressed the people: "Men of Israel, why do you wonder at this, or
why do you stare at us, as though by our own power or piety we have made
him walk? 13 † The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob,
the God of our fathers, glorified his servant[2] Jesus, whom you delivered
over and denied in the presence of Pilate, when he had decided to release
him. 14 † But you denied the Holy and Righteous One, and asked for a
murderer to be granted to you, 15 † and you killed the Author of life, whom
God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses. 16 † And his name—by
faith in his name—has made this man strong whom you see and know, and
the faith that is through Jesus[3] has given the man this perfect health in the
presence of you all.

17 † "And now, brothers, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also
your rulers. 18 † But what God foretold by the mouth of all the prophets, that
his Christ would suffer, he thus fulfilled. 19 † Repent therefore, and turn
again, that your sins may be blotted out, 20 † that times of refreshing may
come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send the Christ
appointed for you, Jesus, 21 † whom heaven must receive until the time for
restoring all the things about which God spoke by the mouth of his holy
prophets long ago. 22 † Moses said, 'The Lord God will raise up for you a
prophet like me from your brothers. You shall listen to him in whatever he
tells you. 23 † And it shall be that every soul who does not listen to that
prophet shall be destroyed from the people.' 24 † And all the prophets who
have spoken, from Samuel and those who came after him, also proclaimed
these days. 25 † You are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant that God
made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, 'And in your offspring shall all
the families of the earth be blessed.' 26 † God, having raised up his servant,
sent him to you first, to bless you by turning every one of you from your
wickedness."

Peter and John Before the Council

4 [1] ‡ † And as they were speaking to the people, the priests and the captain of the temple and the Sadducees came upon them, [2] † greatly annoyed because they were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead. [3] † And they arrested them and put them in custody until the next day, for it was already evening. [4] † But many of those who had heard the word believed, and the number of the men came to about five thousand.

[5] † On the next day their rulers and elders and scribes gathered together in Jerusalem, [6] † with Annas the high priest and Caiaphas and John and Alexander, and all who were of the high-priestly family. [7] † And when they had set them in the midst, they inquired, "By what power or by what name did you do this?" [8] † Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders, [9] † if we are being examined today concerning a good deed done to a crippled man, by what means this man has been healed, [10] † let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead—by him this man is standing before you well. [11] † This Jesus[1] is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone.[2] [12] † And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

[13] † Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. And they recognized that they had been with Jesus. [14] But seeing the man who was healed standing beside them, they had nothing to say in opposition. [15] † But when they had commanded them to leave the council, they conferred with one another, [16] † saying, "What shall we do with these men? For that a notable sign has been performed through them is evident to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it. [17] ‡ But in order that it may spread no further among the people, let us warn them to speak no more to anyone in this name." [18] So they called them and charged them not to speak

or teach at all in the name of Jesus. [19]†But Peter and John answered them,
“Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God,
you must judge, [20]for we cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard.”
[21]†And when they had further threatened them, they let them go, finding no
way to punish them, because of the people, for all were praising God for
what had happened. [22]†For the man on whom this sign of healing was
performed was more than forty years old.

The Believers Pray for Boldness

23 ‡ † When they were released, they went to their friends and reported
what the chief priests and the elders had said to them. 24 † And when they
heard it, they lifted their voices together to God and said, “Sovereign Lord,
who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and everything in them,
25 ‡ † who through the mouth of our father David, your servant,[1] said by the
Holy Spirit,

“‘Why did the Gentiles rage,
and the peoples plot in vain?
26 The kings of the earth set themselves,
and the rulers were gathered together,
against the Lord and against his Anointed’[2]—

27 † for truly in this city there were gathered together against your holy
servant Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along
with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, 28 † to do whatever your hand and
your plan had predestined to take place. 29 † And now, Lord, look upon their
threats and grant to your servants[3] to continue to speak your word with all
boldness, 30 † while you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders
are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus.” 31 † And when
they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was
shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak
the word of God with boldness.

They Had Everything in Common

32 ‡ † Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and
soul, and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his
own, but they had everything in common. 33 † And with great power the
apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus,
and great grace was upon them all. 34 There was not a needy person among
them, for as many as were owners of lands or houses sold them and brought
the proceeds of what was sold 35 † and laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was
distributed to each as any had need. 36 † Thus Joseph, who was also called by
the apostles Barnabas (which means son of encouragement), a Levite, a
native of Cyprus, 37 sold a field that belonged to him and brought the money
and laid it at the apostles' feet.

Ananias and Sapphira

5 [1]†† But a man named Ananias, with his wife Sapphira, sold a piece
of property, [2]† and with his wife's knowledge he kept back for himself some
of the proceeds and brought only a part of it and laid it at the apostles' feet.
[3]† But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the
Holy Spirit and to keep back for yourself part of the proceeds of the land?
[4]While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was
sold, was it not at your disposal? Why is it that you have contrived this deed
in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God." [5]† When Ananias heard
these words, he fell down and breathed his last. And great fear came upon
all who heard of it. [6]† The young men rose and wrapped him up and carried
him out and buried him.

[7]After an interval of about three hours his wife came in, not knowing
what had happened. [8]And Peter said to her, "Tell me whether you[1] sold the
land for so much." And she said, "Yes, for so much." [9]† But Peter said to
her, "How is it that you have agreed together to test the Spirit of the Lord?
Behold, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and
they will carry you out." [10]† Immediately she fell down at his feet and
breathed her last. When the young men came in they found her dead, and
they carried her out and buried her beside her husband. [11]† And great fear
came upon the whole church and upon all who heard of these things.

Many Signs and Wonders Done

12 ‡ ‡Now many signs and wonders were regularly done among the people
by the hands of the apostles. And they were all together in Solomon's
Portico. 13 ‡None of the rest dared join them, but the people held them in
high esteem. 14And more than ever believers were added to the Lord,
multitudes of both men and women, 15 ‡so that they even carried out the sick
into the streets and laid them on cots and mats, that as Peter came by at least
his shadow might fall on some of them. 16 ‡The people also gathered from
the towns around Jerusalem, bringing the sick and those afflicted with
unclean spirits, and they were all healed.

The Apostles Arrested and Freed

17 ‡ † But the high priest rose up, and all who were with him (that is, the
party of the Sadducees), and filled with jealousy 18 † they arrested the
apostles and put them in the public prison. 19 † But during the night an angel
of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought them out, and said, 20 † "Go
and stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this Life."
21 † And when they heard this, they entered the temple at daybreak and began
to teach.

Now when the high priest came, and those who were with him, they
called together the council and all the senate of the people of Israel and sent
to the prison to have them brought. 22 But when the officers came, they did
not find them in the prison, so they returned and reported, 23 † "We found the
prison securely locked and the guards standing at the doors, but when we
opened them we found no one inside." 24 † Now when the captain of the
temple and the chief priests heard these words, they were greatly perplexed
about them, wondering what this would come to. 25 And someone came and
told them, "Look! The men whom you put in prison are standing in the
temple and teaching the people." 26 † Then the captain with the officers went
and brought them, but not by force, for they were afraid of being stoned by
the people.

27 † And when they had brought them, they set them before the council.
And the high priest questioned them, 28 † saying, "We strictly charged you
not to teach in this name, yet here you have filled Jerusalem with your
teaching, and you intend to bring this man's blood upon us." 29 † But Peter
and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than men. 30 † The
God of our fathers raised Jesus, whom you killed by hanging him on a tree.
31 † God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give
repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. 32 † And we are witnesses to
these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who
obey him."

33 When they heard this, they were enraged and wanted to kill them.
34 † But a Pharisee in the council named Gamaliel, a teacher of the law held
in honor by all the people, stood up and gave orders to put the men outside

for a little while. [35]And he said to them, “Men of Israel, take care what you
are about to do with these men. [36]†For before these days Theudas rose up,
claiming to be somebody, and a number of men, about four hundred, joined
him. He was killed, and all who followed him were dispersed and came to
nothing. [37]†After him Judas the Galilean rose up in the days of the census
and drew away some of the people after him. He too perished, and all who
followed him were scattered. [38]†So in the present case I tell you, keep away
from these men and let them alone, for if this plan or this undertaking is of
man, it will fail; [39]but if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them.
You might even be found opposing God!” So they took his advice, [40]†and
when they had called in the apostles, they beat them and charged them not
to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. [41]Then they left the presence
of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor
for the name. [42]†And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they
did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.

Seven Chosen to Serve

6 [1] ‡‡Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number,
a complaint by the Hellenists[1] arose against the Hebrews because their
widows were being neglected in the daily distribution. [2] ‡And the twelve
summoned the full number of the disciples and said, “It is not right that we
should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. [3] ‡Therefore,
brothers,[2] pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the
Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty. [4] ‡But we will
devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.” [5] ‡And what
they said pleased the whole gathering, and they chose Stephen, a man full
of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and
Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. [6] ‡These they
set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands on them.

[7] ‡And the word of God continued to increase, and the number of the
disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests
became obedient to the faith.

Stephen Is Seized

8 ‡ † And Stephen, full of grace and power, was doing great wonders and
signs among the people. 9 † Then some of those who belonged to the
synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called), and of the Cyrenians, and of
the Alexandrians, and of those from Cilicia and Asia, rose up and disputed
with Stephen. 10 † But they could not withstand the wisdom and the Spirit
with which he was speaking. 11 † Then they secretly instigated men who said,
“We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and God.”
12 † And they stirred up the people and the elders and the scribes, and they
came upon him and seized him and brought him before the council, 13 † and
they set up false witnesses who said, “This man never ceases to speak
words against this holy place and the law, 14 † for we have heard him say that
this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and will change the customs
that Moses delivered to us.” 15 † And gazing at him, all who sat in the council
saw that his face was like the face of an angel.

Stephen's Speech

7 [1]‡†And the high priest said, "Are these things so?" [2]†And Stephen said:

"Brothers and fathers, hear me. The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran, [3]and said to him, 'Go out from your land and from your kindred and go into the land that I will show you.' [4]†Then he went out from the land of the Chaldeans and lived in Haran. And after his father died, God removed him from there into this land in which you are now living. [5]†Yet he gave him no inheritance in it, not even a foot's length, but promised to give it to him as a possession and to his offspring after him, though he had no child. [6]†And God spoke to this effect—that his offspring would be sojourners in a land belonging to others, who would enslave them and afflict them four hundred years. [7]†'But I will judge the nation that they serve,' said God, 'and after that they shall come out and worship me in this place.' [8]†And he gave him the covenant of circumcision. And so Abraham became the father of Isaac, and circumcised him on the eighth day, and Isaac became the father of Jacob, and Jacob of the twelve patriarchs.

[9]†"And the patriarchs, jealous of Joseph, sold him into Egypt; but God was with him [10]†and rescued him out of all his afflictions and gave him favor and wisdom before Pharaoh, king of Egypt, who made him ruler over Egypt and over all his household. [11]‡Now there came a famine throughout all Egypt and Canaan, and great affliction, and our fathers could find no food. [12]But when Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt, he sent out our fathers on their first visit. [13]And on the second visit Joseph made himself known to his brothers, and Joseph's family became known to Pharaoh. [14]†And Joseph sent and summoned Jacob his father and all his kindred, seventy-five persons in all. [15]‡And Jacob went down into Egypt, and he died, he and our fathers, [16]and they were carried back to Shechem and laid in the tomb that Abraham had bought for a sum of silver from the sons of Hamor in Shechem.

17 “But as the time of the promise drew near, which God had granted to
Abraham, the people increased and multiplied in Egypt 18 until there arose
over Egypt another king who did not know Joseph. 19 He dealt shrewdly
with our race and forced our fathers to expose their infants, so that they
would not be kept alive. 20 At this time Moses was born; and he was
beautiful in God’s sight. And he was brought up for three months in his
father’s house, 21 and when he was exposed, Pharaoh’s daughter adopted him
and brought him up as her own son. 22 And Moses was instructed in all the
wisdom of the Egyptians, and he was mighty in his words and deeds.

23 “When he was forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his
brothers, the children of Israel. 24 And seeing one of them being wronged,
he defended the oppressed man and avenged him by striking down the
Egyptian. 25 He supposed that his brothers would understand that God was
giving them salvation by his hand, but they did not understand. 26 And on the
following day he appeared to them as they were quarreling and tried to
reconcile them, saying, ‘Men, you are brothers. Why do you wrong each
other?’ 27 But the man who was wronging his neighbor thrust him aside,
saying, ‘Who made you a ruler and a judge over us? 28 Do you want to kill
me as you killed the Egyptian yesterday?’ 29 At this retort Moses fled and
became an exile in the land of Midian, where he became the father of two
sons.

30 “Now when forty years had passed, an angel appeared to him in the
wilderness of Mount Sinai, in a flame of fire in a bush. 31 When Moses saw
it, he was amazed at the sight, and as he drew near to look, there came the
voice of the Lord: 32 ‘I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham and
of Isaac and of Jacob.’ And Moses trembled and did not dare to look.
33 Then the Lord said to him, ‘Take off the sandals from your feet, for the
place where you are standing is holy ground. 34 I have surely seen the
affliction of my people who are in Egypt, and have heard their groaning,
and I have come down to deliver them. And now come, I will send you to
Egypt.’

35 “This Moses, whom they rejected, saying, ‘Who made you a ruler and
a judge?’—this man God sent as both ruler and redeemer by the hand of the
angel who appeared to him in the bush. 36 This man led them out,
performing wonders and signs in Egypt and at the Red Sea and in the

wilderness for forty years. [37] †This is the Moses who said to the Israelites,
‘God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brothers.’ [38] †This is
the one who was in the congregation in the wilderness with the angel who
spoke to him at Mount Sinai, and with our fathers. He received living
oracles to give to us. [39] ‡Our fathers refused to obey him, but thrust him
aside, and in their hearts they turned to Egypt, [40] saying to Aaron, ‘Make for
us gods who will go before us. As for this Moses who led us out from the
land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.’ [41] And they made a
calf in those days, and offered a sacrifice to the idol and were rejoicing in
the works of their hands. [42] ‡But God turned away and gave them over to
worship the host of heaven, as it is written in the book of the prophets:

“‘Did you bring to me slain beasts and
sacrifices,
during the forty years in the wilderness,
O house of Israel?
[43] You took up the tent of Moloch
and the star of your god Rephan,
the images that you made to worship;
and I will send you into exile beyond Babylon.’

[44] †“Our fathers had the tent of witness in the wilderness, just as he who
spoke to Moses directed him to make it, according to the pattern that he had
seen. [45] ‡Our fathers in turn brought it in with Joshua when they
dispossessed the nations that God drove out before our fathers. So it was
until the days of David, [46] who found favor in the sight of God and asked to
find a dwelling place for the God of Jacob.[1] [47] But it was Solomon who
built a house for him. [48] Yet the Most High does not dwell in houses made by
hands, as the prophet says,

[49] ‡ “‘Heaven is my throne,
and the earth is my footstool.
What kind of house will you build for me,
says the Lord,
or what is the place of my rest?
[50] Did not my hand make all these things?’

51 † “You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always
resist the Holy Spirit. As your fathers did, so do you. 52 † Which of the
prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who
announced beforehand the coming of the Righteous One, whom you have
now betrayed and murdered, 53 † you who received the law as delivered by
angels and did not keep it.”

The Stoning of Stephen

54 ‡ † Now when they heard these things they were enraged, and they
ground their teeth at him. 55 ‡ But he, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into
heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of
God. 56 And he said, “Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man
standing at the right hand of God.” 57 † But they cried out with a loud voice
and stopped their ears and rushed together[2] at him. 58 † Then they cast him
out of the city and stoned him. And the witnesses laid down their garments
at the feet of a young man named Saul. 59 ‡ And as they were stoning
Stephen, he called out, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” 60 And falling to his
knees he cried out with a loud voice, “Lord, do not hold this sin against
them.” And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

Saul Ravages the Church

8 [1]‡†And Saul approved of his execution. And there arose on that day a great persecution against the church in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. [2]†Devout men buried Stephen and made great lamentation over him. [3]†But Saul was ravaging the church, and entering house after house, he dragged off men and women and committed them to prison.

Philip Proclaims Christ in Samaria

4 ‡‡Now those who were scattered went about preaching the word. 5 Philip
went down to the city[1] of Samaria and proclaimed to them the Christ.
6 ‡And the crowds with one accord paid attention to what was being said by
Philip when they heard him and saw the signs that he did. 7 For unclean
spirits, crying out with a loud voice, came out of many who had them, and
many who were paralyzed or lame were healed. 8 So there was much joy in
that city.

Simon the Magician Believes

9 ‡ † But there was a man named Simon, who had previously practiced
magic in the city and amazed the people of Samaria, saying that he himself
was somebody great. 10 † They all paid attention to him, from the least to the
greatest, saying, “This man is the power of God that is called Great.” 11 And
they paid attention to him because for a long time he had amazed them with
his magic. 12 † But when they believed Philip as he preached good news
about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were
baptized, both men and women. 13 † Even Simon himself believed, and after
being baptized he continued with Philip. And seeing signs and great
miracles[1] performed, he was amazed.

14 ‡ Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received
the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John, 15 ‡ who came down and
prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit, 16 for he had not yet
fallen on any of them, but they had only been baptized in the name of the
Lord Jesus. 17 † Then they laid their hands on them and they received the
Holy Spirit. 18 ‡ Now when Simon saw that the Spirit was given through the
laying on of the apostles’ hands, he offered them money, 19 saying, “Give me
this power also, so that anyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the
Holy Spirit.” 20 † But Peter said to him, “May your silver perish with you,
because you thought you could obtain the gift of God with money! 21 † You
have neither part nor lot in this matter, for your heart is not right before
God. 22 † Repent, therefore, of this wickedness of yours, and pray to the Lord
that, if possible, the intent of your heart may be forgiven you. 23 † For I see
that you are in the gall[2] of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity.” 24 † And
Simon answered, “Pray for me to the Lord, that nothing of what you have
said may come upon me.”

25 † Now when they had testified and spoken the word of the Lord, they
returned to Jerusalem, preaching the gospel to many villages of the
Samaritans.

Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch

26 ‡ † Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, “Rise and go toward the
south[3] to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.” This is a desert
place. 27 ‡ And he rose and went. And there was an Ethiopian, a eunuch, a
court official of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who was in charge of all
her treasure. He had come to Jerusalem to worship 28 and was returning,
seated in his chariot, and he was reading the prophet Isaiah. 29 † And the
Spirit said to Philip, “Go over and join this chariot.” 30 ‡ So Philip ran to him
and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet and asked, “Do you understand
what you are reading?” 31 And he said, “How can I, unless someone guides
me?” And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him. 32 ‡ Now the
passage of the Scripture that he was reading was this:

> “Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter
> and like a lamb before its shearer is silent,
> so he opens not his mouth.
> 33 In his humiliation justice was denied him.
> Who can describe his generation?
> For his life is taken away from the earth.”

34 † And the eunuch said to Philip, “About whom, I ask you, does the prophet
say this, about himself or about someone else?” 35 † Then Philip opened his
mouth, and beginning with this Scripture he told him the good news about
Jesus. 36 † And as they were going along the road they came to some water,
and the eunuch said, “See, here is water! What prevents me from being
baptized?”[1] 38 † And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went
down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him. 39 † And
when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord carried Philip
away, and the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing.
40 † But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he passed through he
preached the gospel to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

The Conversion of Saul

9 [1]But Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest [2]and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. [3]Now as he went on his way, he approached Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. [4]And falling to the ground he heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?" [5]And he said, "Who are you, Lord?" And he said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. [6]But rise and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do." [7]The men who were traveling with him stood speechless, hearing the voice but seeing no one. [8]Saul rose from the ground, and although his eyes were opened, he saw nothing. So they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. [9]And for three days he was without sight, and neither ate nor drank.

[10]Now there was a disciple at Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision, "Ananias." And he said, "Here I am, Lord." [11]And the Lord said to him, "Rise and go to the street called Straight, and at the house of Judas look for a man of Tarsus named Saul, for behold, he is praying, [12]and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him so that he might regain his sight." [13]But Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he has done to your saints at Jerusalem. [14]And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on your name." [15]But the Lord said to him, Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel. [16]For I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name." [17]So Ananias departed and entered the house. And laying his hands on him he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus who appeared to you on the road by which you came has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit." [18]And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and he regained his sight. Then he rose and was baptized; [19]and taking food, he was strengthened.

Saul Proclaims Jesus in Synagogues

For some days he was with the disciples at Damascus. [20] † And immediately he proclaimed Jesus in the synagogues, saying, “He is the Son of God.” [21] † And all who heard him were amazed and said, “Is not this the man who made havoc in Jerusalem of those who called upon this name? And has he not come here for this purpose, to bring them bound before the chief priests?” [22] † But Saul increased all the more in strength, and confounded the Jews who lived in Damascus by proving that Jesus was the Christ.

Saul Escapes from Damascus

23 ‡‡When many days had passed, the Jews plotted to kill him, 24 but their
plot became known to Saul. They were watching the gates day and night in
order to kill him, 25 ‡but his disciples took him by night and let him down
through an opening in the wall,[1] lowering him in a basket.

Saul in Jerusalem

26 ‡ † And when he had come to Jerusalem, he attempted to join the
disciples. And they were all afraid of him, for they did not believe that he
was a disciple. 27 † But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles
and declared to them how on the road he had seen the Lord, who spoke to
him, and how at Damascus he had preached boldly in the name of Jesus.
28 † So he went in and out among them at Jerusalem, preaching boldly in the
name of the Lord. 29 † And he spoke and disputed against the Hellenists.[2]
But they were seeking to kill him. 30 † And when the brothers learned this,
they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him off to Tarsus.

31 † So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace
and was being built up. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the
comfort of the Holy Spirit, it multiplied.

The Healing of Aeneas

32 ‡ † Now as Peter went here and there among them all, he came down
also to the saints who lived at Lydda. 33 † There he found a man named
Aeneas, bedridden for eight years, who was paralyzed. 34 † And Peter said to
him, “Aeneas, Jesus Christ heals you; rise and make your bed.” And
immediately he rose. 35 † And all the residents of Lydda and Sharon saw him,
and they turned to the Lord.

Dorcas Restored to Life

36 ‡ † Now there was in Joppa a disciple named Tabitha, which, translated,
means Dorcas.[3] She was full of good works and acts of charity. 37 † In those
days she became ill and died, and when they had washed her, they laid her
in an upper room. 38 † Since Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples, hearing that
Peter was there, sent two men to him, urging him, “Please come to us
without delay.” 39 † So Peter rose and went with them. And when he arrived,
they took him to the upper room. All the widows stood beside him weeping
and showing tunics[4] and other garments that Dorcas made while she was
with them. 40 † But Peter put them all outside, and knelt down and prayed;
and turning to the body he said, “Tabitha, arise.” And she opened her eyes,
and when she saw Peter she sat up. 41 † And he gave her his hand and raised
her up. Then calling the saints and widows, he presented her alive. 42 † And it
became known throughout all Joppa, and many believed in the Lord.
43 † And he stayed in Joppa for many days with one Simon, a tanner.

Peter and Cornelius

10 [1]At Caesarea there was a man named Cornelius, a centurion of what was known as the Italian Cohort, [2]a devout man who feared God with all his household, gave alms generously to the people, and prayed continually to God. [3]About the ninth hour of the day[1] he saw clearly in a vision an angel of God come in and say to him, "Cornelius." [4]And he stared at him in terror and said, "What is it, Lord?" And he said to him, "Your prayers and your alms have ascended as a memorial before God. [5]And now send men to Joppa and bring one Simon who is called Peter. [6]He is lodging with one Simon, a tanner, whose house is by the sea." [7]When the angel who spoke to him had departed, he called two of his servants and a devout soldier from among those who attended him, [8]and having related everything to them, he sent them to Joppa.

Peter’s Vision

9 ‡ † The next day, as they were on their journey and approaching the city,
Peter went up on the housetop about the sixth hour[2] to pray. 10 † And he
became hungry and wanted something to eat, but while they were preparing
it, he fell into a trance 11 † and saw the heavens opened and something like a
great sheet descending, being let down by its four corners upon the earth.
12 In it were all kinds of animals and reptiles and birds of the air. 13 ‡ And
there came a voice to him: “Rise, Peter; kill and eat.” 14 But Peter said, “By
no means, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or
unclean.” 15 ‡ And the voice came to him again a second time, “What God
has made clean, do not call common.” 16 This happened three times, and the
thing was taken up at once to heaven.

17 ‡ Now while Peter was inwardly perplexed as to what the vision that he
had seen might mean, behold, the men who were sent by Cornelius, having
made inquiry for Simon’s house, stood at the gate 18 and called out to ask
whether Simon who was called Peter was lodging there. 19 And while Peter
was pondering the vision, the Spirit said to him, “Behold, three men are
looking for you. 20 Rise and go down and accompany them without
hesitation, for I have sent them.” 21 And Peter went down to the men and
said, “I am the one you are looking for. What is the reason for your
coming?” 22 † And they said, “Cornelius, a centurion, an upright and God-
fearing man, who is well spoken of by the whole Jewish nation, was
directed by a holy angel to send for you to come to his house and to hear
what you have to say.” 23 ‡ So he invited them in to be his guests.

The next day he rose and went away with them, and some of the brothers
from Joppa accompanied him. 24 † And on the following day they entered
Caesarea. Cornelius was expecting them and had called together his
relatives and close friends. 25 ‡ When Peter entered, Cornelius met him and
fell down at his feet and worshiped him. 26 But Peter lifted him up, saying,
“Stand up; I too am a man.” 27 † And as he talked with him, he went in and
found many persons gathered. 28 † And he said to them, “You yourselves
know how unlawful it is for a Jew to associate with or to visit anyone of
another nation, but God has shown me that I should not call any person

common or unclean. [29]†So when I was sent for, I came without objection. I ask then why you sent for me."

[30]†And Cornelius said, "Four days ago, about this hour, I was praying in my house at the ninth hour,[1] and behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing [31]†and said, 'Cornelius, your prayer has been heard and your alms have been remembered before God. [32]Send therefore to Joppa and ask for Simon who is called Peter. He is lodging in the house of Simon, a tanner, by the sea.' [33]†So I sent for you at once, and you have been kind enough to come. Now therefore we are all here in the presence of God to hear all that you have been commanded by the Lord."

Gentiles Hear the Good News

34 ‡ ‡So Peter opened his mouth and said: “Truly I understand that God
shows no partiality, 35but in every nation anyone who fears him and does
what is right is acceptable to him. 36†As for the word that he sent to Israel,
preaching good news of peace through Jesus Christ (he is Lord of all),
37 † you yourselves know what happened throughout all Judea, beginning
from Galilee after the baptism that John proclaimed: 38†how God anointed
Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about
doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was
with him. 39†And we are witnesses of all that he did both in the country of
the Jews and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree,
40‡but God raised him on the third day and made him to appear, 41not to all
the people but to us who had been chosen by God as witnesses, who ate and
drank with him after he rose from the dead. 42†And he commanded us to
preach to the people and to testify that he is the one appointed by God to be
judge of the living and the dead. 43†To him all the prophets bear witness that
everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his
name.”

The Holy Spirit Falls on the Gentiles

44 While Peter was still saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell on all
who heard the word. 45 And the believers from among the circumcised who
had come with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit was
poured out even on the Gentiles. 46 For they were hearing them speaking in
tongues and extolling God. Then Peter declared, 47 "Can anyone withhold
water for baptizing these people, who have received the Holy Spirit just as
we have?" 48 And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus
Christ. Then they asked him to remain for some days.

Peter Reports to the Church

11 [1]‡† Now the apostles and the brothers[1] who were throughout
Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God. [2]† So when
Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcision party criticized him, saying,
[3]† "You went to uncircumcised men and ate with them." [4]‡ But Peter began
and explained it to them in order: [5]"I was in the city of Joppa praying, and
in a trance I saw a vision, something like a great sheet descending, being let
down from heaven by its four corners, and it came down to me. [6]Looking at
it closely, I observed animals and beasts of prey and reptiles and birds of the
air. [7]And I heard a voice saying to me, 'Rise, Peter; kill and eat.' [8]But I said,
'By no means, Lord; for nothing common or unclean has ever entered my
mouth.' [9]But the voice answered a second time from heaven, 'What God
has made clean, do not call common.' [10]This happened three times, and all
was drawn up again into heaven. [11]And behold, at that very moment three
men arrived at the house in which we were, sent to me from Caesarea.
[12]† And the Spirit told me to go with them, making no distinction. These six
brothers also accompanied me, and we entered the man's house. [13]And he
told us how he had seen the angel stand in his house and say, 'Send to Joppa
and bring Simon who is called Peter; [14]† he will declare to you a message by
which you will be saved, you and all your household.' [15]As I began to
speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them just as on us at the beginning. [16]† And I
remembered the word of the Lord, how he said, 'John baptized with water,
but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' [17]† If then God gave the same
gift to them as he gave to us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ,
who was I that I could stand in God's way?" [18]† When they heard these
things they fell silent. And they glorified God, saying, "Then to the Gentiles
also God has granted repentance that leads to life."

The Church in Antioch

19 ‡ † Now those who were scattered because of the persecution that arose
over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, speaking
the word to no one except Jews. 20 † But there were some of them, men of
Cyprus and Cyrene, who on coming to Antioch spoke to the Hellenists[1]
also, preaching the Lord Jesus. 21 † And the hand of the Lord was with them,
and a great number who believed turned to the Lord. 22 ‡ The report of this
came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to
Antioch. 23 When he came and saw the grace of God, he was glad, and he
exhorted them all to remain faithful to the Lord with steadfast purpose, 24 for
he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a great many
people were added to the Lord. 25 ‡ So Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for
Saul, 26 † and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. For a
whole year they met with the church and taught a great many people. And
in Antioch the disciples were first called Christians.

27 † Now in these days prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch.
28 † And one of them named Agabus stood up and foretold by the Spirit that
there would be a great famine over all the world (this took place in the days
of Claudius). 29 † So the disciples determined, everyone according to his
ability, to send relief to the brothers[2] living in Judea. 30 † And they did so,
sending it to the elders by the hand of Barnabas and Saul.

James Killed and Peter Imprisoned

12 [1]†† About that time Herod the king laid violent hands on some
who belonged to the church. [2]† He killed James the brother of John with the
sword, [3]† and when he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded to arrest
Peter also. This was during the days of Unleavened Bread. [4]† And when he
had seized him, he put him in prison, delivering him over to four squads of
soldiers to guard him, intending after the Passover to bring him out to the
people. [5]† So Peter was kept in prison, but earnest prayer for him was made
to God by the church.

Peter Is Rescued

6 ‡ † Now when Herod was about to bring him out, on that very night,
Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, and
sentries before the door were guarding the prison. 7 † And behold, an angel
of the Lord stood next to him, and a light shone in the cell. He struck Peter
on the side and woke him, saying, “Get up quickly.” And the chains fell off
his hands. 8 † And the angel said to him, “Dress yourself and put on your
sandals.” And he did so. And he said to him, “Wrap your cloak around you
and follow me.” 9 And he went out and followed him. He did not know that
what was being done by the angel was real, but thought he was seeing a
vision. 10 † When they had passed the first and the second guard, they came
to the iron gate leading into the city. It opened for them of its own accord,
and they went out and went along one street, and immediately the angel left
him. 11 † When Peter came to himself, he said, “Now I am sure that the Lord
has sent his angel and rescued me from the hand of Herod and from all that
the Jewish people were expecting.”

12 † When he realized this, he went to the house of Mary, the mother of
John whose other name was Mark, where many were gathered together and
were praying. 13 † And when he knocked at the door of the gateway, a servant
girl named Rhoda came to answer. 14 Recognizing Peter’s voice, in her joy
she did not open the gate but ran in and reported that Peter was standing at
the gate. 15 † They said to her, “You are out of your mind.” But she kept
insisting that it was so, and they kept saying, “It is his angel!” 16 But Peter
continued knocking, and when they opened, they saw him and were
amazed. 17 † But motioning to them with his hand to be silent, he described
to them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, “Tell
these things to James and to the brothers.”[1] Then he departed and went to
another place.

18 Now when day came, there was no little disturbance among the soldiers
over what had become of Peter. 19 † And after Herod searched for him and
did not find him, he examined the sentries and ordered that they should be
put to death. Then he went down from Judea to Caesarea and spent time
there.

The Death of Herod

20 ‡ † Now Herod was angry with the people of Tyre and Sidon, and they
came to him with one accord, and having persuaded Blastus, the king's
chamberlain, they asked for peace, because their country depended on the
king's country for food. 21 ‡ On an appointed day Herod put on his royal
robes, took his seat upon the throne, and delivered an oration to them. 22 And
the people were shouting, "The voice of a god, and not of a man!"
23 Immediately an angel of the Lord struck him down, because he did not
give God the glory, and he was eaten by worms and breathed his last.

24 † But the word of God increased and multiplied.

25 † And Barnabas and Saul returned from[1] Jerusalem when they had
completed their service, bringing with them John, whose other name was
Mark.

Barnabas and Saul Sent Off

13 [1] † † Now there were in the church at Antioch prophets and
teachers, Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger,[2] Lucius of Cyrene,
Manaen a member of the court of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. [2] † While
they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart
for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.”
[3] † Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent
them off.

Barnabas and Saul on Cyprus

4 ‡ † So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia, and
from there they sailed to Cyprus. 5 † When they arrived at Salamis, they
proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. And they had
John to assist them. 6 † When they had gone through the whole island as far
as Paphos, they came upon a certain magician, a Jewish false prophet
named Bar-Jesus. 7 † He was with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, a man of
intelligence, who summoned Barnabas and Saul and sought to hear the
word of God. 8 † But Elymas the magician (for that is the meaning of his
name) opposed them, seeking to turn the proconsul away from the faith.
9 † But Saul, who was also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked
intently at him 10 ‡ † and said, “You son of the devil, you enemy of all
righteousness, full of all deceit and villainy, will you not stop making
crooked the straight paths of the Lord? 11 And now, behold, the hand of the
Lord is upon you, and you will be blind and unable to see the sun for a
time.” Immediately mist and darkness fell upon him, and he went about
seeking people to lead him by the hand. 12 † Then the proconsul believed,
when he saw what had occurred, for he was astonished at the teaching of
the Lord.

Paul and Barnabas at Antioch in Pisidia

13 ‡ † Now Paul and his companions set sail from Paphos and came to
Perga in Pamphylia. And John left them and returned to Jerusalem, 14 † but
they went on from Perga and came to Antioch in Pisidia. And on the
Sabbath day they went into the synagogue and sat down. 15 † After the
reading from the Law and the Prophets, the rulers of the synagogue sent a
message to them, saying, “Brothers, if you have any word of
encouragement for the people, say it.” 16 † So Paul stood up, and motioning
with his hand said:

“Men of Israel and you who fear God, listen. 17 † The God of this people
Israel chose our fathers and made the people great during their stay in the
land of Egypt, and with uplifted arm he led them out of it. 18 † And for about
forty years he put up with[1] them in the wilderness. 19 † And after destroying
seven nations in the land of Canaan, he gave them their land as an
inheritance. 20 † All this took about 450 years. And after that he gave them
judges until Samuel the prophet. 21 † Then they asked for a king, and God
gave them Saul the son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, for forty
years. 22 † And when he had removed him, he raised up David to be their
king, of whom he testified and said, ‘I have found in David the son of Jesse
a man after my heart, who will do all my will.’ 23 † Of this man’s offspring
God has brought to Israel a Savior, Jesus, as he promised. 24 † Before his
coming, John had proclaimed a baptism of repentance to all the people of
Israel. 25 And as John was finishing his course, he said, ‘What do you
suppose that I am? I am not he. No, but behold, after me one is coming, the
sandals of whose feet I am not worthy to untie.’

26 † “Brothers, sons of the family of Abraham, and those among you who
fear God, to us has been sent the message of this salvation. 27 † For those
who live in Jerusalem and their rulers, because they did not recognize him
nor understand the utterances of the prophets, which are read every
Sabbath, fulfilled them by condemning him. 28 † And though they found in
him no guilt worthy of death, they asked Pilate to have him executed.
29 † And when they had carried out all that was written of him, they took him
down from the tree and laid him in a tomb. 30 † But God raised him from the

dead, [31]†and for many days he appeared to those who had come up with him
from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are now his witnesses to the people. [32]†And
we bring you the good news that what God promised to the fathers, [33]†this
he has fulfilled to us their children by raising Jesus, as also it is written in
the second Psalm,

> “‘You are my Son,
> today I have begotten you.’

[34]†And as for the fact that he raised him from the dead, no more to return to
corruption, he has spoken in this way,

> “‘I will give you the holy and sure blessings of
> David.’

[35]†Therefore he says also in another psalm,

> “‘You will not let your Holy One see corruption.’

[36]†For David, after he had served the purpose of God in his own generation,
fell asleep and was laid with his fathers and saw corruption, [37]†but he whom
God raised up did not see corruption. [38]†Let it be known to you therefore,
brothers, that through this man forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you,
[39]†and by him everyone who believes is freed[1] from everything from which
you could not be freed by the law of Moses. [40]Beware, therefore, lest what
is said in the Prophets should come about:

> [41]† “‘Look, you scoffers,
> be astounded and perish;
> for I am doing a work in your days,
> a work that you will not believe, even if one
> tells it to you.’”

[42]†As they went out, the people begged that these things might be told
them the next Sabbath. [43]†And after the meeting of the synagogue broke up,
many Jews and devout converts to Judaism followed Paul and Barnabas,
who, as they spoke with them, urged them to continue in the grace of God.

[44] †The next Sabbath almost the whole city gathered to hear the word of
the Lord. [45] †But when the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with
jealousy and began to contradict what was spoken by Paul, reviling him.
[46] †And Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly, saying, “It was necessary that
the word of God be spoken first to you. Since you thrust it aside and judge
yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles.
[47] †For so the Lord has commanded us, saying,

> “‘I have made you a light for the Gentiles,
> that you may bring salvation to the ends of
> the earth.’”

[48] †And when the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying
the word of the Lord, and as many as were appointed to eternal life
believed. [49] †And the word of the Lord was spreading throughout the whole
region. [50] †But the Jews incited the devout women of high standing and the
leading men of the city, stirred up persecution against Paul and Barnabas,
and drove them out of their district. [51] †But they shook off the dust from
their feet against them and went to Iconium. [52] †And the disciples were filled
with joy and with the Holy Spirit.

Paul and Barnabas at Iconium

14 [1] Now at Iconium they entered together into the Jewish
synagogue and spoke in such a way that a great number of both Jews and
Greeks believed. [2] But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles and
poisoned their minds against the brothers.[1] [3] So they remained for a long
time, speaking boldly for the Lord, who bore witness to the word of his
grace, granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands. [4] But the
people of the city were divided; some sided with the Jews and some with
the apostles. [5] When an attempt was made by both Gentiles and Jews, with
their rulers, to mistreat them and to stone them, [6] they learned of it and fled
to Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and to the surrounding country, [7] and
there they continued to preach the gospel.

Paul and Barnabas at Lystra

8 Now at Lystra there was a man sitting who could not use his feet. He
was crippled from birth and had never walked. 9 He listened to Paul
speaking. And Paul, looking intently at him and seeing that he had faith to
be made well,[2] 10 said in a loud voice, “Stand upright on your feet.” And he
sprang up and began walking. 11 And when the crowds saw what Paul had
done, they lifted up their voices, saying in Lycaonian, “The gods have come
down to us in the likeness of men!” 12 Barnabas they called Zeus, and Paul,
Hermes, because he was the chief speaker. 13 And the priest of Zeus, whose
temple was at the entrance to the city, brought oxen and garlands to the
gates and wanted to offer sacrifice with the crowds. 14 But when the
apostles Barnabas and Paul heard of it, they tore their garments and rushed
out into the crowd, crying out, 15 “Men, why are you doing these things?
We also are men, of like nature with you, and we bring you good news, that
you should turn from these vain things to a living God, who made the
heaven and the earth and the sea and all that is in them. 16 In past
generations he allowed all the nations to walk in their own ways. 17 Yet he
did not leave himself without witness, for he did good by giving you rains
from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and
gladness.” 18 Even with these words they scarcely restrained the people
from offering sacrifice to them.

Paul Stoned at Lystra

19 ‡† But Jews came from Antioch and Iconium, and having persuaded the
crowds, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing that he
was dead. 20 † But when the disciples gathered about him, he rose up and
entered the city, and on the next day he went on with Barnabas to Derbe.
21 When they had preached the gospel to that city and had made many
disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch,
22 † strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in
the faith, and saying that through many tribulations we must enter the
kingdom of God. 23 † And when they had appointed elders for them in every
church, with prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in whom
they had believed.

Paul and Barnabas Return to Antioch in Syria

[24] ‡ ‡ Then they passed through Pisidia and came to Pamphylia. [25] And when they had spoken the word in Perga, they went down to Attalia, [26] † and from there they sailed to Antioch, where they had been commended to the grace of God for the work that they had fulfilled. [27] † And when they arrived and gathered the church together, they declared all that God had done with them, and how he had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles. [28] † And they remained no little time with the disciples.

The Jerusalem Council

15 [1]†‡†But some men came down from Judea and were teaching the
brothers, “Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses,
you cannot be saved.” [2]† And after Paul and Barnabas had no small
dissension and debate with them, Paul and Barnabas and some of the others
were appointed to go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and the elders about
this question. [3]†So, being sent on their way by the church, they passed
through both Phoenicia and Samaria, describing in detail the conversion of
the Gentiles, and brought great joy to all the brothers.[1] [4]†When they came
to Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and the
elders, and they declared all that God had done with them. [5]†But some
believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees rose up and said, “It is
necessary to circumcise them and to order them to keep the law of Moses.”

[6]†The apostles and the elders were gathered together to consider this
matter. [7]†And after there had been much debate, Peter stood up and said to
them, “Brothers, you know that in the early days God made a choice among
you, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and
believe. [8]†And God, who knows the heart, bore witness to them, by giving
them the Holy Spirit just as he did to us, [9]†and he made no distinction
between us and them, having cleansed their hearts by faith. [10]† Now,
therefore, why are you putting God to the test by placing a yoke on the neck
of the disciples that neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear?
[11]†But we believe that we will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus,
just as they will.”

[12]†And all the assembly fell silent, and they listened to Barnabas and Paul
as they related what signs and wonders God had done through them among
the Gentiles. [13]† After they finished speaking, James replied, “Brothers,
listen to me. [14]†Simeon has related how God first visited the Gentiles, to
take from them a people for his name. [15]And with this the words of the
prophets agree, just as it is written,

[16]‡ “‘After this I will return,
and I will rebuild the tent of David that has

fallen;
I will rebuild its ruins,
and I will restore it,
17 that the remnant[1] of mankind may seek the
Lord,
and all the Gentiles who are called by my
name,
says the Lord, who makes these things
18 known from of old.’

19 ‡ † Therefore my judgment is that we should not trouble those of the Gentiles who turn to God, 20 † but should write to them to abstain from the things polluted by idols, and from sexual immorality, and from what has been strangled, and from blood. 21 † For from ancient generations Moses has had in every city those who proclaim him, for he is read every Sabbath in the synagogues.”

The Council’s Letter to Gentile Believers

22 ‡ † Then it seemed good to the apostles and the elders, with the whole
church, to choose men from among them and send them to Antioch with
Paul and Barnabas. They sent Judas called Barsabbas, and Silas, leading
men among the brothers, 23 † with the following letter: “The brothers, both
the apostles and the elders, to the brothers[2] who are of the Gentiles in
Antioch and Syria and Cilicia, greetings. 24 † Since we have heard that some
persons have gone out from us and troubled you[3] with words, unsettling
your minds, although we gave them no instructions, 25 † it has seemed good
to us, having come to one accord, to choose men and send them to you with
our beloved Barnabas and Paul, 26 † men who have risked their lives for the
sake of our Lord Jesus Christ. 27 † We have therefore sent Judas and Silas,
who themselves will tell you the same things by word of mouth. 28 † For it
has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay on you no greater
burden than these requirements: 29 † that you abstain from what has been
sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from what has been strangled, and
from sexual immorality. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do
well. Farewell.”

30 † So when they were sent off, they went down to Antioch, and having
gathered the congregation together, they delivered the letter. 31 † And when
they had read it, they rejoiced because of its encouragement. 32 † And Judas
and Silas, who were themselves prophets, encouraged and strengthened the
brothers with many words. 33 † And after they had spent some time, they
were sent off in peace by the brothers to those who had sent them.[1] 35 † But
Paul and Barnabas remained in Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of
the Lord, with many others also.

Paul and Barnabas Separate

[36] ‡ † And after some days Paul said to Barnabas, “Let us return and visit
the brothers in every city where we proclaimed the word of the Lord, and
see how they are.” [37] † Now Barnabas wanted to take with them John called
Mark. [38] But Paul thought best not to take with them one who had withdrawn
from them in Pamphylia and had not gone with them to the work. [39] † And
there arose a sharp disagreement, so that they separated from each other.
Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus, [40] † but Paul chose
Silas and departed, having been commended by the brothers to the grace of
the Lord. [41] † And he went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the
churches.

Timothy Joins Paul and Silas

16 [1]‡†Paul[2] came also to Derbe and to Lystra. A disciple was there,
named Timothy, the son of a Jewish woman who was a believer, but his
father was a Greek. [2]He was well spoken of by the brothers[3] at Lystra and
Iconium. [3]†Paul wanted Timothy to accompany him, and he took him and
circumcised him because of the Jews who were in those places, for they all
knew that his father was a Greek. [4]†As they went on their way through the
cities, they delivered to them for observance the decisions that had been
reached by the apostles and elders who were in Jerusalem. [5]† So the
churches were strengthened in the faith, and they increased in numbers
daily.

The Macedonian Call

6 ‡ ‡ † And they went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having
been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia. 7 † And when
they had come up to Mysia, they attempted to go into Bithynia, but the
Spirit of Jesus did not allow them. 8 † So, passing by Mysia, they went down
to Troas. 9 † And a vision appeared to Paul in the night: a man of Macedonia
was standing there, urging him and saying, “Come over to Macedonia and
help us.” 10 † And when Paul[1] had seen the vision, immediately we sought to
go on into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the
gospel to them.

The Conversion of Lydia

11 †So, setting sail from Troas, we made a direct voyage to Samothrace,
and the following day to Neapolis, 12 †and from there to Philippi, which is a
leading city of the[2] district of Macedonia and a Roman colony. We
remained in this city some days. 13 † And on the Sabbath day we went
outside the gate to the riverside, where we supposed there was a place of
prayer, and we sat down and spoke to the women who had come together.
14 †One who heard us was a woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira,
a seller of purple goods, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her
heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul. 15 † And after she was
baptized, and her household as well, she urged us, saying, “If you have
judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay.” And she
prevailed upon us.

Paul and Silas in Prison

16 ‡†As we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl
who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners much gain by
fortune-telling. 17 ‡She followed Paul and us, crying out, “These men are
servants[3] of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of
salvation.” 18 And this she kept doing for many days. Paul, having become
greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, “I command you in the name
of Jesus Christ to come out of her.” And it came out that very hour.

19 †But when her owners saw that their hope of gain was gone, they seized
Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace before the rulers.
20 †And when they had brought them to the magistrates, they said, “These
men are Jews, and they are disturbing our city. 21 †They advocate customs
that are not lawful for us as Romans to accept or practice.” 22 †The crowd
joined in attacking them, and the magistrates tore the garments off them and
gave orders to beat them with rods. 23 And when they had inflicted many
blows upon them, they threw them into prison, ordering the jailer to keep
them safely. 24 †Having received this order, he put them into the inner prison
and fastened their feet in the stocks.

The Philippian Jailer Converted

25 ‡ † About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to
God, and the prisoners were listening to them, 26 and suddenly there was a
great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken. And
immediately all the doors were opened, and everyone's bonds were
unfastened. 27 † When the jailer woke and saw that the prison doors were
open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the
prisoners had escaped. 28 † But Paul cried with a loud voice, "Do not harm
yourself, for we are all here." 29 And the jailer[1] called for lights and rushed
in, and trembling with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas. 30 ‡ † Then he
brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" 31 † And they
said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your
household." 32 † And they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who
were in his house. 33 † And he took them the same hour of the night and
washed their wounds; and he was baptized at once, he and all his family.
34 † Then he brought them up into his house and set food before them. And
he rejoiced along with his entire household that he had believed in God.

35 † But when it was day, the magistrates sent the police, saying, "Let those
men go." 36 And the jailer reported these words to Paul, saying, "The
magistrates have sent to let you go. Therefore come out now and go in
peace." 37 † But Paul said to them, "They have beaten us publicly,
uncondemned, men who are Roman citizens, and have thrown us into
prison; and do they now throw us out secretly? No! Let them come
themselves and take us out." 38 The police reported these words to the
magistrates, and they were afraid when they heard that they were Roman
citizens. 39 † So they came and apologized to them. And they took them out
and asked them to leave the city. 40 † So they went out of the prison and
visited Lydia. And when they had seen the brothers, they encouraged them
and departed.

Paul and Silas in Thessalonica

17 [1] Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and
Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the
Jews. [2] And Paul went in, as was his custom, and on three Sabbath days he
reasoned with them from the Scriptures, [3] explaining and proving that it
was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead, and saying,
"This Jesus, whom I proclaim to you, is the Christ." [4] And some of them
were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, as did a great many of the devout
Greeks and not a few of the leading women. [5] But the Jews were jealous,
and taking some wicked men of the rabble, they formed a mob, set the city
in an uproar, and attacked the house of Jason, seeking to bring them out to
the crowd. [6] And when they could not find them, they dragged Jason and
some of the brothers before the city authorities, shouting, "These men who
have turned the world upside down have come here also, [7] and Jason has
received them, and they are all acting against the decrees of Caesar, saying
that there is another king, Jesus." [8] And the people and the city authorities
were disturbed when they heard these things. [9] And when they had taken
money as security from Jason and the rest, they let them go.

Paul and Silas in Berea

10 ‡ ‡ The brothers[1] immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to
Berea, and when they arrived they went into the Jewish synagogue. 11 ‡ Now
these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the
word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these
things were so. 12 ‡ Many of them therefore believed, with not a few Greek
women of high standing as well as men. 13 But when the Jews from
Thessalonica learned that the word of God was proclaimed by Paul at Berea
also, they came there too, agitating and stirring up the crowds. 14 ‡ Then the
brothers immediately sent Paul off on his way to the sea, but Silas and
Timothy remained there. 15 ‡ Those who conducted Paul brought him as far
as Athens, and after receiving a command for Silas and Timothy to come to
him as soon as possible, they departed.

Paul in Athens

16 ‡ † Now while Paul was waiting for them at Athens, his spirit was
provoked within him as he saw that the city was full of idols. 17 † So he
reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the devout persons, and in the
marketplace every day with those who happened to be there. 18 † Some of the
Epicurean and Stoic philosophers also conversed with him. And some said,
“What does this babbler wish to say?” Others said, “He seems to be a
preacher of foreign divinities”—because he was preaching Jesus and the
resurrection. 19 † And they took him and brought him to the Areopagus,
saying, “May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting?
20 † For you bring some strange things to our ears. We wish to know therefore
what these things mean.” 21 † Now all the Athenians and the foreigners who
lived there would spend their time in nothing except telling or hearing
something new.

Paul Addresses the Areopagus

22 So Paul, standing in the midst of the Areopagus, said: “Men of
Athens, I perceive that in every way you are very religious. 23 For as I
passed along and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar
with this inscription, ‘To the unknown god.’ What therefore you worship as
unknown, this I proclaim to you. 24 The God who made the world and
everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples
made by man,[1] 25 nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed
anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and
everything. 26 And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live
on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the
boundaries of their dwelling place, 27 that they should seek God, in the
hope that they might feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is
actually not far from each one of us, 28 for

> “‘In him we live and move and have our
> being’;[1]

as even some of your own poets have said,

> “‘For we are indeed his offspring.’[2]

29 Being then God’s offspring, we ought not to think that the divine being is
like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of
man. 30 The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all
people everywhere to repent, 31 because he has fixed a day on which he will
judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of
this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.”

32 Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked.
But others said, “We will hear you again about this.” 33 So Paul went out
from their midst. 34 But some men joined him and believed, among whom
also were Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris and
others with them.

Paul in Corinth

18 [1]†‡After this Paul[3] left Athens and went to Corinth. [2]†And he found a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to leave Rome. And he went to see them, [3]†and because he was of the same trade he stayed with them and worked, for they were tentmakers by trade. [4]†And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and tried to persuade Jews and Greeks.

[5]†When Silas and Timothy arrived from Macedonia, Paul was occupied with the word, testifying to the Jews that the Christ was Jesus. [6]†And when they opposed and reviled him, he shook out his garments and said to them, "Your blood be on your own heads! I am innocent. From now on I will go to the Gentiles." [7]†And he left there and went to the house of a man named Titius Justus, a worshiper of God. His house was next door to the synagogue. [8]†Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord, together with his entire household. And many of the Corinthians hearing Paul believed and were baptized. [9]†And the Lord said to Paul one night in a vision, "Do not be afraid, but go on speaking and do not be silent, [10]†for I am with you, and no one will attack you to harm you, for I have many in this city who are my people." [11]†And he stayed a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

[12]†But when Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews made a united attack on Paul and brought him before the tribunal, [13]†saying, "This man is persuading people to worship God contrary to the law." [14]But when Paul was about to open his mouth, Gallio said to the Jews, "If it were a matter of wrongdoing or vicious crime, O Jews, I would have reason to accept your complaint. [15]†But since it is a matter of questions about words and names and your own law, see to it yourselves. I refuse to be a judge of these things." [16]And he drove them from the tribunal. [17]†And they all seized Sosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue, and beat him in front of the tribunal. But Gallio paid no attention to any of this.

Paul Returns to Antioch

18 ‡ † After this, Paul stayed many days longer and then took leave of the
brothers[1] and set sail for Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila. At
Cenchreae he had cut his hair, for he was under a vow. 19 † And they came to
Ephesus, and he left them there, but he himself went into the synagogue and
reasoned with the Jews. 20 ‡ When they asked him to stay for a longer period,
he declined. 21 But on taking leave of them he said, “I will return to you if
God wills,” and he set sail from Ephesus.

22 † When he had landed at Caesarea, he went up and greeted the church,
and then went down to Antioch. 23 † After spending some time there, he
departed and went from one place to the next through the region of Galatia
and Phrygia, strengthening all the disciples.

Apollos Speaks Boldly in Ephesus

24 ‡† Now a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus.
He was an eloquent man, competent in the Scriptures. 25 † He had been
instructed in the way of the Lord. And being fervent in spirit,[1] he spoke
and taught accurately the things concerning Jesus, though he knew only the
baptism of John. 26 † He began to speak boldly in the synagogue, but when
Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him and explained to him the way
of God more accurately. 27 † And when he wished to cross to Achaia, the
brothers encouraged him and wrote to the disciples to welcome him. When
he arrived, he greatly helped those who through grace had believed, 28 † for
he powerfully refuted the Jews in public, showing by the Scriptures that the
Christ was Jesus.

Paul in Ephesus

19 [1] † † And it happened that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul passed through the inland[2] country and came to Ephesus. There he found some disciples. [2] † And he said to them, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?” And they said, “No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.” [3] † And he said, “Into what then were you baptized?” They said, “Into John’s baptism.” [4] † And Paul said, “John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, Jesus.” [5] † On hearing this, they were baptized in[3] the name of the Lord Jesus. [6] † And when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking in tongues and prophesying. [7] There were about twelve men in all.

[8] † And he entered the synagogue and for three months spoke boldly, reasoning and persuading them about the kingdom of God. [9] † But when some became stubborn and continued in unbelief, speaking evil of the Way before the congregation, he withdrew from them and took the disciples with him, reasoning daily in the hall of Tyrannus.[1] [10] † This continued for two years, so that all the residents of Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks.

The Sons of Sceva

11 ‡‡And God was doing extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul, 12 so
that even handkerchiefs or aprons that had touched his skin were carried
away to the sick, and their diseases left them and the evil spirits came out of
them. 13 †Then some of the itinerant Jewish exorcists undertook to invoke
the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying, “I adjure
you by the Jesus whom Paul proclaims.” 14 †Seven sons of a Jewish high
priest named Sceva were doing this. 15 ‡But the evil spirit answered them,
“Jesus I know, and Paul I recognize, but who are you?” 16 And the man in
whom was the evil spirit leaped on them, mastered all[2] of them and
overpowered them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.
17 †And this became known to all the residents of Ephesus, both Jews and
Greeks. And fear fell upon them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was
extolled. 18 †Also many of those who were now believers came, confessing
and divulging their practices. 19 †And a number of those who had practiced
magic arts brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all.
And they counted the value of them and found it came to fifty thousand
pieces of silver. 20 †So the word of the Lord continued to increase and
prevail mightily.

A Riot at Ephesus

21 ‡ † Now after these events Paul resolved in the Spirit to pass through
Macedonia and Achaia and go to Jerusalem, saying, “After I have been
there, I must also see Rome.” 22 † And having sent into Macedonia two of his
helpers, Timothy and Erastus, he himself stayed in Asia for a while.

23 † About that time there arose no little disturbance concerning the Way.
24 † For a man named Demetrius, a silversmith, who made silver shrines of
Artemis, brought no little business to the craftsmen. 25 † These he gathered
together, with the workmen in similar trades, and said, “Men, you know that
from this business we have our wealth. 26 ‡ And you see and hear that not
only in Ephesus but in almost all of Asia this Paul has persuaded and turned
away a great many people, saying that gods made with hands are not gods.
27 And there is danger not only that this trade of ours may come into
disrepute but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis may be
counted as nothing, and that she may even be deposed from her
magnificence, she whom all Asia and the world worship.”

28 † When they heard this they were enraged and were crying out, “Great is
Artemis of the Ephesians!” 29 † So the city was filled with the confusion, and
they rushed together into the theater, dragging with them Gaius and
Aristarchus, Macedonians who were Paul’s companions in travel. 30 But
when Paul wished to go in among the crowd, the disciples would not let
him. 31 † And even some of the Asiarchs,[1] who were friends of his, sent to
him and were urging him not to venture into the theater. 32 † Now some cried
out one thing, some another, for the assembly was in confusion, and most of
them did not know why they had come together. 33 † Some of the crowd
prompted Alexander, whom the Jews had put forward. And Alexander,
motioning with his hand, wanted to make a defense to the crowd. 34 But
when they recognized that he was a Jew, for about two hours they all cried
out with one voice, “Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!”

35 † And when the town clerk had quieted the crowd, he said, “Men of
Ephesus, who is there who does not know that the city of the Ephesians is
temple keeper of the great Artemis, and of the sacred stone that fell from the
sky?[2] 36 Seeing then that these things cannot be denied, you ought to be

quiet and do nothing rash. 37 †For you have brought these men here who are
neither sacrilegious nor blasphemers of our goddess. 38 † If therefore
Demetrius and the craftsmen with him have a complaint against anyone, the
courts are open, and there are proconsuls. Let them bring charges against
one another. 39But if you seek anything further,[3] it shall be settled in the
regular assembly. 40 † For we really are in danger of being charged with
rioting today, since there is no cause that we can give to justify this
commotion." 41And when he had said these things, he dismissed the
assembly.

Paul in Macedonia and Greece

20 [1]‡†After the uproar ceased, Paul sent for the disciples, and after encouraging them, he said farewell and departed for Macedonia. [2]†When he had gone through those regions and had given them much encouragement, he came to Greece. [3]†There he spent three months, and when a plot was made against him by the Jews as he was about to set sail for Syria, he decided to return through Macedonia. [4]†Sopater the Berean, son of Pyrrhus, accompanied him; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timothy; and the Asians, Tychicus and Trophimus. [5]†These went on ahead and were waiting for us at Troas, [6]†but we sailed away from Philippi after the days of Unleavened Bread, and in five days we came to them at Troas, where we stayed for seven days.

Eutychus Raised from the Dead

7 ‡†On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break
bread, Paul talked with them, intending to depart on the next day, and he
prolonged his speech until midnight. 8 There were many lamps in the upper
room where we were gathered. 9 †And a young man named Eutychus, sitting
at the window, sank into a deep sleep as Paul talked still longer. And being
overcome by sleep, he fell down from the third story and was taken up
dead. 10 †But Paul went down and bent over him, and taking him in his arms,
said, “Do not be alarmed, for his life is in him.” 11 †And when Paul had gone
up and had broken bread and eaten, he conversed with them a long while,
until daybreak, and so departed. 12 And they took the youth away alive, and
were not a little comforted.

13 †But going ahead to the ship, we set sail for Assos, intending to take
Paul aboard there, for so he had arranged, intending himself to go by land.
14 And when he met us at Assos, we took him on board and went to
Mitylene. 15 And sailing from there we came the following day opposite
Chios; the next day we touched at Samos; and[1] the day after that we went
to Miletus. 16 †For Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus, so that he might
not have to spend time in Asia, for he was hastening to be at Jerusalem, if
possible, on the day of Pentecost.

Paul Speaks to the Ephesian Elders

17 ‡ † Now from Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called the elders of the
church to come to him. 18 ‡ And when they came to him, he said to them:

"You yourselves know how I lived among you the whole time from the
first day that I set foot in Asia, 19 † serving the Lord with all humility and
with tears and with trials that happened to me through the plots of the Jews;
20 † how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable,
and teaching you in public and from house to house, 21 † testifying both to
Jews and to Greeks of repentance toward God and of faith in our Lord Jesus
Christ. 22 † And now, behold, I am going to Jerusalem, constrained by[1] the
Spirit, not knowing what will happen to me there, 23 except that the Holy
Spirit testifies to me in every city that imprisonment and afflictions await
me. 24 † But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself,
if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the
Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God. 25 † And now, behold,
I know that none of you among whom I have gone about proclaiming the
kingdom will see my face again. 26 † Therefore I testify to you this day that I
am innocent of the blood of all of you, 27 † for I did not shrink from declaring
to you the whole counsel of God. 28 † Pay careful attention to yourselves and
to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for
the church of God,[2] which he obtained with his own blood.[3] 29 † I know that
after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the
flock; 30 † and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted
things, to draw away the disciples after them. 31 † Therefore be alert,
remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to admonish
everyone with tears. 32 † And now I commend you to God and to the word of
his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance
among all those who are sanctified. 33 I coveted no one's silver or gold or
apparel. 34 † You yourselves know that these hands ministered to my
necessities and to those who were with me. 35 † In all things I have shown
you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember
the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give
than to receive.'"

[36] † And when he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all. [37] † And there was much weeping on the part of all; they embraced Paul and kissed him, [38] being sorrowful most of all because of the word he had spoken, that they would not see his face again. And they accompanied him to the ship.

Paul Goes to Jerusalem

21 [1]‡‡‡And when we had parted from them and set sail, we came by
a straight course to Cos, and the next day to Rhodes, and from there to
Patara.[1] [2]And having found a ship crossing to Phoenicia, we went aboard
and set sail. [3]When we had come in sight of Cyprus, leaving it on the left
we sailed to Syria and landed at Tyre, for there the ship was to unload its
cargo. [4]† And having sought out the disciples, we stayed there for seven
days. And through the Spirit they were telling Paul not to go on to
Jerusalem. [5]†When our days there were ended, we departed and went on our
journey, and they all, with wives and children, accompanied us until we
were outside the city. And kneeling down on the beach, we prayed [6]and said
farewell to one another. Then we went on board the ship, and they returned
home.

[7]†When we had finished the voyage from Tyre, we arrived at Ptolemais,
and we greeted the brothers[2] and stayed with them for one day. [8]†On the
next day we departed and came to Caesarea, and we entered the house of
Philip the evangelist, who was one of the seven, and stayed with him. [9]†He
had four unmarried daughters, who prophesied. [10]†While we were staying
for many days, a prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. [11]† And
coming to us, he took Paul's belt and bound his own feet and hands and
said, "Thus says the Holy Spirit, 'This is how the Jews at Jerusalem will
bind the man who owns this belt and deliver him into the hands of the
Gentiles.'" [12]When we heard this, we and the people there urged him not to
go up to Jerusalem. [13]†Then Paul answered, "What are you doing, weeping
and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be imprisoned but even
to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." [14]†And since he would
not be persuaded, we ceased and said, "Let the will of the Lord be done."

[15]†After these days we got ready and went up to Jerusalem. [16]†And some
of the disciples from Caesarea went with us, bringing us to the house of
Mnason of Cyprus, an early disciple, with whom we should lodge.

Paul Visits James

17 ‡ † When we had come to Jerusalem, the brothers received us gladly.
18 † On the following day Paul went in with us to James, and all the elders
were present. 19 † After greeting them, he related one by one the things that
God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry. 20 † And when they
heard it, they glorified God. And they said to him, “You see, brother, how
many thousands there are among the Jews of those who have believed.
They are all zealous for the law, 21 † and they have been told about you that
you teach all the Jews who are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, telling
them not to circumcise their children or walk according to our customs.
22 What then is to be done? They will certainly hear that you have come.
23 † Do therefore what we tell you. We have four men who are under a vow;
24 † take these men and purify yourself along with them and pay their
expenses, so that they may shave their heads. Thus all will know that there
is nothing in what they have been told about you, but that you yourself also
live in observance of the law. 25 † But as for the Gentiles who have believed,
we have sent a letter with our judgment that they should abstain from what
has been sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from what has been
strangled,[1] and from sexual immorality.” 26 † Then Paul took the men, and
the next day he purified himself along with them and went into the temple,
giving notice when the days of purification would be fulfilled and the
offering presented for each one of them.

Paul Arrested in the Temple

27 When the seven days were almost completed, the Jews from Asia,
seeing him in the temple, stirred up the whole crowd and laid hands on him,
28 crying out, “Men of Israel, help! This is the man who is teaching
everyone everywhere against the people and the law and this place.
Moreover, he even brought Greeks into the temple and has defiled this holy
place.” 29For they had previously seen Trophimus the Ephesian with him in
the city, and they supposed that Paul had brought him into the temple.
30Then all the city was stirred up, and the people ran together. They seized
Paul and dragged him out of the temple, and at once the gates were shut.
31 And as they were seeking to kill him, word came to the tribune of the
cohort that all Jerusalem was in confusion. 32He at once took soldiers and
centurions and ran down to them. And when they saw the tribune and the
soldiers, they stopped beating Paul. 33 Then the tribune came up and
arrested him and ordered him to be bound with two chains. He inquired
who he was and what he had done. 34Some in the crowd were shouting one
thing, some another. And as he could not learn the facts because of the
uproar, he ordered him to be brought into the barracks. 35 And when he
came to the steps, he was actually carried by the soldiers because of the
violence of the crowd, 36for the mob of the people followed, crying out,
“Away with him!”

Paul Speaks to the People

37 ‡ † As Paul was about to be brought into the barracks, he said to the
tribune, “May I say something to you?” And he said, “Do you know Greek?
38 † Are you not the Egyptian, then, who recently stirred up a revolt and led
the four thousand men of the Assassins out into the wilderness?” 39 † Paul
replied, “I am a Jew, from Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of no obscure city. I
beg you, permit me to speak to the people.” 40 † And when he had given him
permission, Paul, standing on the steps, motioned with his hand to the
people. And when there was a great hush, he addressed them in the Hebrew
language,[1] saying:

22 1 † “Brothers and fathers, hear the defense that I now make before
you.”

2 † And when they heard that he was addressing them in the Hebrew
language, they became even more quiet. And he said:

3 † “I am a Jew, born in Tarsus in Cilicia, but brought up in this city,
educated at the feet of Gamaliel[2] according to the strict manner of the law
of our fathers, being zealous for God as all of you are this day. 4 † I
persecuted this Way to the death, binding and delivering to prison both men
and women, 5 † as the high priest and the whole council of elders can bear
me witness. From them I received letters to the brothers, and I journeyed
toward Damascus to take those also who were there and bring them in
bonds to Jerusalem to be punished.

6 † “As I was on my way and drew near to Damascus, about noon a great
light from heaven suddenly shone around me. 7 And I fell to the ground and
heard a voice saying to me, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?’
8 † And I answered, ‘Who are you, Lord?’ And he said to me, ‘I am Jesus of
Nazareth, whom you are persecuting.’ 9 † Now those who were with me saw
the light but did not understand[3] the voice of the one who was speaking to
me. 10 And I said, ‘What shall I do, Lord?’ And the Lord said to me, ‘Rise,
and go into Damascus, and there you will be told all that is appointed for
you to do.’ 11 And since I could not see because of the brightness of that

light, I was led by the hand by those who were with me, and came into Damascus.

12 † “And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, well spoken of by all the Jews who lived there, 13 came to me, and standing by me said to me, ‘Brother Saul, receive your sight.’ And at that very hour I received my sight and saw him. 14 ‡† And he said, ‘The God of our fathers appointed you to know his will, to see the Righteous One and to hear a voice from his mouth; 15 † for you will be a witness for him to everyone of what you have seen and heard. 16 † And now why do you wait? Rise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on his name.’

17 ‡† “When I had returned to Jerusalem and was praying in the temple, I fell into a trance 18 † and saw him saying to me, ‘Make haste and get out of Jerusalem quickly, because they will not accept your testimony about me.’ 19 † And I said, ‘Lord, they themselves know that in one synagogue after another I imprisoned and beat those who believed in you. 20 † And when the blood of Stephen your witness was being shed, I myself was standing by and approving and watching over the garments of those who killed him.’ 21 † And he said to me, ‘Go, for I will send you far away to the Gentiles.’”

Paul and the Roman Tribune

22 ‡ † Up to this word they listened to him. Then they raised their voices
and said, “Away with such a fellow from the earth! For he should not be
allowed to live.” 23 † And as they were shouting and throwing off their cloaks
and flinging dust into the air, 24 † the tribune ordered him to be brought into
the barracks, saying that he should be examined by flogging, to find out
why they were shouting against him like this. 25 † But when they had
stretched him out for the whips,[1] Paul said to the centurion who was
standing by, “Is it lawful for you to flog a man who is a Roman citizen and
uncondemned?” 26 When the centurion heard this, he went to the tribune and
said to him, “What are you about to do? For this man is a Roman citizen.”
27 So the tribune came and said to him, “Tell me, are you a Roman citizen?”
And he said, “Yes.” 28 † The tribune answered, “I bought this citizenship for
a large sum.” Paul said, “But I am a citizen by birth.” 29 † So those who were
about to examine him withdrew from him immediately, and the tribune also
was afraid, for he realized that Paul was a Roman citizen and that he had
bound him.

Paul Before the Council

30 ‡ † But on the next day, desiring to know the real reason why he was
being accused by the Jews, he unbound him and commanded the chief
priests and all the council to meet, and he brought Paul down and set him
before them.

23 1 † And looking intently at the council, Paul said, “Brothers, I have
lived my life before God in all good conscience up to this day.” 2 † And the
high priest Ananias commanded those who stood by him to strike him on
the mouth. 3 † Then Paul said to him, “God is going to strike you, you
whitewashed wall! Are you sitting to judge me according to the law, and yet
contrary to the law you order me to be struck?” 4 † Those who stood by said,
“Would you revile God’s high priest?” 5 † And Paul said, “I did not know,
brothers, that he was the high priest, for it is written, ‘You shall not speak
evil of a ruler of your people.’”

6 † Now when Paul perceived that one part were Sadducees and the other
Pharisees, he cried out in the council, “Brothers, I am a Pharisee, a son of
Pharisees. It is with respect to the hope and the resurrection of the dead that
I am on trial.” 7 † And when he had said this, a dissension arose between the
Pharisees and the Sadducees, and the assembly was divided. 8 † For the
Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, nor angel, nor spirit, but the
Pharisees acknowledge them all. 9 † Then a great clamor arose, and some of
the scribes of the Pharisees’ party stood up and contended sharply, “We find
nothing wrong in this man. What if a spirit or an angel spoke to him?”
10 † And when the dissension became violent, the tribune, afraid that Paul
would be torn to pieces by them, commanded the soldiers to go down and
take him away from among them by force and bring him into the barracks.

11 † The following night the Lord stood by him and said, “Take courage,
for as you have testified to the facts about me in Jerusalem, so you must
testify also in Rome.”

A Plot to Kill Paul

12 ‡† When it was day, the Jews made a plot and bound themselves by an
oath neither to eat nor drink till they had killed Paul. 13 There were more
than forty who made this conspiracy. 14 † They went to the chief priests and
elders and said, “We have strictly bound ourselves by an oath to taste no
food till we have killed Paul. 15 † Now therefore you, along with the council,
give notice to the tribune to bring him down to you, as though you were
going to determine his case more exactly. And we are ready to kill him
before he comes near.”

16 † Now the son of Paul’s sister heard of their ambush, so he went and
entered the barracks and told Paul. 17 † Paul called one of the centurions and
said, “Take this young man to the tribune, for he has something to tell him.”
18 So he took him and brought him to the tribune and said, “Paul the prisoner
called me and asked me to bring this young man to you, as he has
something to say to you.” 19 † The tribune took him by the hand, and going
aside asked him privately, “What is it that you have to tell me?” 20 ‡ And he
said, “The Jews have agreed to ask you to bring Paul down to the council
tomorrow, as though they were going to inquire somewhat more closely
about him. 21 But do not be persuaded by them, for more than forty of their
men are lying in ambush for him, who have bound themselves by an oath
neither to eat nor drink till they have killed him. And now they are ready,
waiting for your consent.” 22 So the tribune dismissed the young man,
charging him, “Tell no one that you have informed me of these things.”

Paul Sent to Felix the Governor

23 ‡ ‡ Then he called two of the centurions and said, “Get ready two
hundred soldiers, with seventy horsemen and two hundred spearmen to go
as far as Caesarea at the third hour of the night.[1] 24 Also provide mounts for
Paul to ride and bring him safely to Felix the governor.” 25 † And he wrote a
letter to this effect:

26 † “Claudius Lysias, to his Excellency the governor Felix, greetings.
27 † This man was seized by the Jews and was about to be killed by them
when I came upon them with the soldiers and rescued him, having learned
that he was a Roman citizen. 28 And desiring to know the charge for which
they were accusing him, I brought him down to their council. 29 † I found that
he was being accused about questions of their law, but charged with nothing
deserving death or imprisonment. 30 † And when it was disclosed to me that
there would be a plot against the man, I sent him to you at once, ordering
his accusers also to state before you what they have against him.”

31 † So the soldiers, according to their instructions, took Paul and brought
him by night to Antipatris. 32 † And on the next day they returned to the
barracks, letting the horsemen go on with him. 33 When they had come to
Caesarea and delivered the letter to the governor, they presented Paul also
before him. 34 † On reading the letter, he asked what province he was from.
And when he learned that he was from Cilicia, 35 † he said, “I will give you a
hearing when your accusers arrive.” And he commanded him to be guarded
in Herod’s praetorium.

Paul Before Felix at Caesarea

24 [1]‡†And after five days the high priest Ananias came down with some elders and a spokesman, one Tertullus. They laid before the governor their case against Paul. [2]‡And when he had been summoned, Tertullus began to accuse him, saying:

"Since through you we enjoy much peace, and since by your foresight, most excellent Felix, reforms are being made for this nation, [3]†in every way and everywhere we accept this with all gratitude. [4]But, to detain[1] you no further, I beg you in your kindness to hear us briefly. [5]†For we have found this man a plague, one who stirs up riots among all the Jews throughout the world and is a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes. [6]†He even tried to profane the temple, but we seized him.[2] [8]By examining him yourself you will be able to find out from him about everything of which we accuse him."

[9]†The Jews also joined in the charge, affirming that all these things were so.

[10]†And when the governor had nodded to him to speak, Paul replied:

"Knowing that for many years you have been a judge over this nation, I cheerfully make my defense. [11]† You can verify that it is not more than twelve days since I went up to worship in Jerusalem, [12]†and they did not find me disputing with anyone or stirring up a crowd, either in the temple or in the synagogues or in the city. [13]†Neither can they prove to you what they now bring up against me. [14]†But this I confess to you, that according to the Way, which they call a sect, I worship the God of our fathers, believing everything laid down by the Law and written in the Prophets, [15]†having a hope in God, which these men themselves accept, that there will be a resurrection of both the just and the unjust. [16]†So I always take pains to have a clear conscience toward both God and man. [17]†Now after several years I came to bring alms to my nation and to present offerings. [18]While I was doing this, they found me purified in the temple, without any crowd or tumult. But some Jews from Asia— [19]†they ought to be here before you and to make an accusation, should they have anything against me. [20]†Or else let

these men themselves say what wrongdoing they found when I stood before the council, [21]other than this one thing that I cried out while standing among them: ‘It is with respect to the resurrection of the dead that I am on trial before you this day.’”

Paul Kept in Custody

22 ‡ † But Felix, having a rather accurate knowledge of the Way, put them
off, saying, “When Lysias the tribune comes down, I will decide your case.”
23 † Then he gave orders to the centurion that he should be kept in custody
but have some liberty, and that none of his friends should be prevented from
attending to his needs.
24 † After some days Felix came with his wife Drusilla, who was Jewish,
and he sent for Paul and heard him speak about faith in Christ Jesus. 25 † And
as he reasoned about righteousness and self-control and the coming
judgment, Felix was alarmed and said, “Go away for the present. When I
get an opportunity I will summon you.” 26 † At the same time he hoped that
money would be given him by Paul. So he sent for him often and conversed
with him. 27 † When two years had elapsed, Felix was succeeded by Porcius
Festus. And desiring to do the Jews a favor, Felix left Paul in prison.

Paul Appeals to Caesar

25 [1]†Now three days after Festus had arrived in the province, he went
up to Jerusalem from Caesarea. [2]† And the chief priests and the principal
men of the Jews laid out their case against Paul, and they urged him,
[3]asking as a favor against Paul[1] that he summon him to Jerusalem—
because they were planning an ambush to kill him on the way. [4]Festus
replied that Paul was being kept at Caesarea and that he himself intended to
go there shortly. [5]"So," said he, "let the men of authority among you go
down with me, and if there is anything wrong about the man, let them bring
charges against him."

[6]† After he stayed among them not more than eight or ten days, he went
down to Caesarea. And the next day he took his seat on the tribunal and
ordered Paul to be brought. [7]†When he had arrived, the Jews who had come
down from Jerusalem stood around him, bringing many and serious charges
against him that they could not prove. [8]Paul argued in his defense, "Neither
against the law of the Jews, nor against the temple, nor against Caesar have
I committed any offense." [9]But Festus, wishing to do the Jews a favor, said
to Paul, "Do you wish to go up to Jerusalem and there be tried on these
charges before me?" [10] † But Paul said, "I am standing before Caesar's
tribunal, where I ought to be tried. To the Jews I have done no wrong, as
you yourself know very well. [11] † If then I am a wrongdoer and have
committed anything for which I deserve to die, I do not seek to escape
death. But if there is nothing to their charges against me, no one can give
me up to them. I appeal to Caesar." [12]†Then Festus, when he had conferred
with his council, answered, "To Caesar you have appealed; to Caesar you
shall go."

Paul Before Agrippa and Bernice

13 ‡ † Now when some days had passed, Agrippa the king and Bernice
arrived at Caesarea and greeted Festus. 14 And as they stayed there many
days, Festus laid Paul's case before the king, saying, "There is a man left
prisoner by Felix, 15 † and when I was at Jerusalem, the chief priests and the
elders of the Jews laid out their case against him, asking for a sentence of
condemnation against him. 16 † I answered them that it was not the custom of
the Romans to give up anyone before the accused met the accusers face to
face and had opportunity to make his defense concerning the charge laid
against him. 17 † So when they came together here, I made no delay, but on
the next day took my seat on the tribunal and ordered the man to be
brought. 18 When the accusers stood up, they brought no charge in his case
of such evils as I supposed. 19 † Rather they had certain points of dispute with
him about their own religion and about a certain Jesus, who was dead, but
whom Paul asserted to be alive. 20 Being at a loss how to investigate these
questions, I asked whether he wanted to go to Jerusalem and be tried there
regarding them. 21 But when Paul had appealed to be kept in custody for the
decision of the emperor, I ordered him to be held until I could send him to
Caesar." 22 Then Agrippa said to Festus, "I would like to hear the man
myself." "Tomorrow," said he, "you will hear him."

23 † So on the next day Agrippa and Bernice came with great pomp, and
they entered the audience hall with the military tribunes and the prominent
men of the city. Then, at the command of Festus, Paul was brought in.
24 And Festus said, "King Agrippa and all who are present with us, you see
this man about whom the whole Jewish people petitioned me, both in
Jerusalem and here, shouting that he ought not to live any longer. 25 But I
found that he had done nothing deserving death. And as he himself appealed
to the emperor, I decided to go ahead and send him. 26 † But I have nothing
definite to write to my lord about him. Therefore I have brought him before
you all, and especially before you, King Agrippa, so that, after we have
examined him, I may have something to write. 27 † For it seems to me
unreasonable, in sending a prisoner, not to indicate the charges against
him."

Paul’s Defense Before Agrippa

26 [1] †So Agrippa said to Paul, “You have permission to speak for
yourself.” Then Paul stretched out his hand and made his defense:

[2] †“I consider myself fortunate that it is before you, King Agrippa, I am
going to make my defense today against all the accusations of the Jews,
[3] †especially because you are familiar with all the customs and controversies
of the Jews. Therefore I beg you to listen to me patiently.

[4] “My manner of life from my youth, spent from the beginning among my
own nation and in Jerusalem, is known by all the Jews. [5] †They have known
for a long time, if they are willing to testify, that according to the strictest
party of our religion I have lived as a Pharisee. [6] †And now I stand here on
trial because of my hope in the promise made by God to our fathers, [7] to
which our twelve tribes hope to attain, as they earnestly worship night and
day. And for this hope I am accused by Jews, O king! [8] †Why is it thought
incredible by any of you that God raises the dead?

[9] “I myself was convinced that I ought to do many things in opposing the
name of Jesus of Nazareth. [10] †And I did so in Jerusalem. I not only locked
up many of the saints in prison after receiving authority from the chief
priests, but when they were put to death I cast my vote against them. [11] †And
I punished them often in all the synagogues and tried to make them
blaspheme, and in raging fury against them I persecuted them even to
foreign cities.

Paul Tells of His Conversion

12 ‡‡‡“In this connection I journeyed to Damascus with the authority and
commission of the chief priests. 13At midday, O king, I saw on the way a
light from heaven, brighter than the sun, that shone around me and those
who journeyed with me. 14 †And when we had all fallen to the ground, I
heard a voice saying to me in the Hebrew language,[1] ‘Saul, Saul, why are
you persecuting me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.’ 15And I
said, ‘Who are you, Lord?’ And the Lord said, ‘I am Jesus whom you are
persecuting. 16†But rise and stand upon your feet, for I have appeared to you
for this purpose, to appoint you as a servant and witness to the things in
which you have seen me and to those in which I will appear to you,
17delivering you from your people and from the Gentiles—to whom I am
sending you 18†to open their eyes, so that they may turn from darkness to
light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness
of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.’

19“‘Therefore, O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly
vision, 20†but declared first to those in Damascus, then in Jerusalem and
throughout all the region of Judea, and also to the Gentiles, that they should
repent and turn to God, performing deeds in keeping with their repentance.
21For this reason the Jews seized me in the temple and tried to kill me. 22To
this day I have had the help that comes from God, and so I stand here
testifying both to small and great, saying nothing but what the prophets and
Moses said would come to pass: 23†that the Christ must suffer and that, by
being the first to rise from the dead, he would proclaim light both to our
people and to the Gentiles.”

24 †And as he was saying these things in his defense, Festus said with a
loud voice, “Paul, you are out of your mind; your great learning is driving
you out of your mind.” 25But Paul said, “I am not out of my mind, most
excellent Festus, but I am speaking true and rational words. 26†For the king
knows about these things, and to him I speak boldly. For I am persuaded
that none of these things has escaped his notice, for this has not been done
in a corner. 27King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you
believe.” 28†And Agrippa said to Paul, “In a short time would you persuade

me to be a Christian?”[1] 29 †And Paul said, “Whether short or long, I would
to God that not only you but also all who hear me this day might become
such as I am—except for these chains.”

30 Then the king rose, and the governor and Bernice and those who were
sitting with them. 31 † And when they had withdrawn, they said to one
another, “This man is doing nothing to deserve death or imprisonment.”
32 †And Agrippa said to Festus, “This man could have been set free if he had
not appealed to Caesar.”

Paul Sails for Rome

27 [1] ††And when it was decided that we should sail for Italy, they
delivered Paul and some other prisoners to a centurion of the Augustan
Cohort named Julius. [2] †And embarking in a ship of Adramyttium, which
was about to sail to the ports along the coast of Asia, we put to sea,
accompanied by Aristarchus, a Macedonian from Thessalonica. [3] †The next
day we put in at Sidon. And Julius treated Paul kindly and gave him leave
to go to his friends and be cared for. [4] †And putting out to sea from there we
sailed under the lee of Cyprus, because the winds were against us. [5] And
when we had sailed across the open sea along the coast of Cilicia and
Pamphylia, we came to Myra in Lycia. [6] †There the centurion found a ship
of Alexandria sailing for Italy and put us on board. [7] †We sailed slowly for a
number of days and arrived with difficulty off Cnidus, and as the wind did
not allow us to go farther, we sailed under the lee of Crete off Salmone.
[8] Coasting along it with difficulty, we came to a place called Fair Havens,
near which was the city of Lasea.

[9] †Since much time had passed, and the voyage was now dangerous
because even the Fast[2] was already over, Paul advised them, [10] †saying,
"Sirs, I perceive that the voyage will be with injury and much loss, not only
of the cargo and the ship, but also of our lives." [11] †But the centurion paid
more attention to the pilot and to the owner of the ship than to what Paul
said. [12] †And because the harbor was not suitable to spend the winter in, the
majority decided to put out to sea from there, on the chance that somehow
they could reach Phoenix, a harbor of Crete, facing both southwest and
northwest, and spend the winter there.

The Storm at Sea

13 Now when the south wind blew gently, supposing that they had
obtained their purpose, they weighed anchor and sailed along Crete, close to
the shore. 14 † But soon a tempestuous wind, called the northeaster, struck
down from the land. 15 † And when the ship was caught and could not face
the wind, we gave way to it and were driven along. 16 † Running under the
lee of a small island called Cauda,[1] we managed with difficulty to secure
the ship's boat. 17 † After hoisting it up, they used supports to undergird the
ship. Then, fearing that they would run aground on the Syrtis, they lowered
the gear,[2] and thus they were driven along. 18 Since we were violently
storm-tossed, they began the next day to jettison the cargo. 19 And on the
third day they threw the ship's tackle overboard with their own hands.
20 † When neither sun nor stars appeared for many days, and no small
tempest lay on us, all hope of our being saved was at last abandoned.

21 Since they had been without food for a long time, Paul stood up among
them and said, "Men, you should have listened to me and not have set sail
from Crete and incurred this injury and loss. 22 † Yet now I urge you to take
heart, for there will be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship.
23 † For this very night there stood before me an angel of the God to whom I
belong and whom I worship, 24 † and he said, 'Do not be afraid, Paul; you
must stand before Caesar. And behold, God has granted you all those who
sail with you.' 25 † So take heart, men, for I have faith in God that it will be
exactly as I have been told. 26 But we must run aground on some island."

27 † When the fourteenth night had come, as we were being driven across
the Adriatic Sea, about midnight the sailors suspected that they were
nearing land. 28 So they took a sounding and found twenty fathoms.[3] A little
farther on they took a sounding again and found fifteen fathoms.[4] 29 And
fearing that we might run on the rocks, they let down four anchors from the
stern and prayed for day to come. 30 † And as the sailors were seeking to
escape from the ship, and had lowered the ship's boat into the sea under
pretense of laying out anchors from the bow, 31 † Paul said to the centurion

and the soldiers, “Unless these men stay in the ship, you cannot be saved.”
32 Then the soldiers cut away the ropes of the ship’s boat and let it go.

33 † As day was about to dawn, Paul urged them all to take some food,
saying, “Today is the fourteenth day that you have continued in suspense
and without food, having taken nothing. 34 Therefore I urge you to take some
food. For it will give you strength, for not a hair is to perish from the head
of any of you.” 35 And when he had said these things, he took bread, and
giving thanks to God in the presence of all he broke it and began to eat.
36 Then they all were encouraged and ate some food themselves. 37 † (We
were in all 276[5] persons in the ship.) 38 † And when they had eaten enough,
they lightened the ship, throwing out the wheat into the sea.

The Shipwreck

39 †Now when it was day, they did not recognize the land, but they noticed
a bay with a beach, on which they planned if possible to run the ship ashore.
40 †So they cast off the anchors and left them in the sea, at the same time
loosening the ropes that tied the rudders. Then hoisting the foresail to the
wind they made for the beach. 41 But striking a reef,[1] they ran the vessel
aground. The bow stuck and remained immovable, and the stern was being
broken up by the surf. 42 †The soldiers' plan was to kill the prisoners, lest
any should swim away and escape. 43 But the centurion, wishing to save
Paul, kept them from carrying out their plan. He ordered those who could
swim to jump overboard first and make for the land, 44 †and the rest on
planks or on pieces of the ship. And so it was that all were brought safely to
land.

Paul on Malta

28 [1]†After we were brought safely through, we then learned that the island was called Malta. [2]†The native people[2] showed us unusual kindness, for they kindled a fire and welcomed us all, because it had begun to rain and was cold. [3]†When Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks and put them on the fire, a viper came out because of the heat and fastened on his hand. [4]†When the native people saw the creature hanging from his hand, they said to one another, “No doubt this man is a murderer. Though he has escaped from the sea, Justice[3] has not allowed him to live.” [5]He, however, shook off the creature into the fire and suffered no harm. [6]†They were waiting for him to swell up or suddenly fall down dead. But when they had waited a long time and saw no misfortune come to him, they changed their minds and said that he was a god.

[7]†Now in the neighborhood of that place were lands belonging to the chief man of the island, named Publius, who received us and entertained us hospitably for three days. [8]†It happened that the father of Publius lay sick with fever and dysentery. And Paul visited him and prayed, and putting his hands on him healed him. [9]And when this had taken place, the rest of the people on the island who had diseases also came and were cured. [10]They also honored us greatly,[4] and when we were about to sail, they put on board whatever we needed.

Paul Arrives at Rome

11 ‡ † After three months we set sail in a ship that had wintered in the
island, a ship of Alexandria, with the twin gods[5] as a figurehead. 12 Putting
in at Syracuse, we stayed there for three days. 13 † And from there we made a
circuit and arrived at Rhegium. And after one day a south wind sprang up,
and on the second day we came to Puteoli. 14 † There we found brothers[6]
and were invited to stay with them for seven days. And so we came to
Rome. 15 † And the brothers there, when they heard about us, came as far as
the Forum of Appius and Three Taverns to meet us. On seeing them, Paul
thanked God and took courage. 16 † And when we came into Rome, Paul was
allowed to stay by himself, with the soldier that guarded him.

Paul in Rome

17 †After three days he called together the local leaders of the Jews, and
when they had gathered, he said to them, “Brothers, though I had done
nothing against our people or the customs of our fathers, yet I was delivered
as a prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans. 18 †When they
had examined me, they wished to set me at liberty, because there was no
reason for the death penalty in my case. 19 But because the Jews objected, I
was compelled to appeal to Caesar—though I had no charge to bring against
my nation. 20 †For this reason, therefore, I have asked to see you and speak
with you, since it is because of the hope of Israel that I am wearing this
chain.” 21 †And they said to him, “We have received no letters from Judea
about you, and none of the brothers coming here has reported or spoken any
evil about you. 22 †But we desire to hear from you what your views are, for
with regard to this sect we know that everywhere it is spoken against.”

23 †When they had appointed a day for him, they came to him at his
lodging in greater numbers. From morning till evening he expounded to
them, testifying to the kingdom of God and trying to convince them about
Jesus both from the Law of Moses and from the Prophets. 24 †And some
were convinced by what he said, but others disbelieved. 25 †And disagreeing
among themselves, they departed after Paul had made one statement: “The
Holy Spirit was right in saying to your fathers through Isaiah the prophet:

26 †“‘Go to this people, and say,
You will indeed hear but never understand,
and you will indeed see but never perceive.
27 For this people’s heart has grown dull,
and with their ears they can barely hear,
and their eyes they have closed;
lest they should see with their eyes
and hear with their ears
and understand with their heart
and turn, and I would heal them.’

28 ††Therefore let it be known to you that this salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles; they will listen.”[1]

30 †He lived there two whole years at his own expense,[2] and welcomed all who came to him, 31 †proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness and without hindrance.

Acts

Overview

Author
Luke

Date
Written c AD 60–62

Places
Jerusalem; Samaria; Syrian Antioch; cities in Asia Minor and Greece; Rome; see map, p 1886

People
Jesus; Peter, John, and the other apostles; James the brother of Jesus; Saul/Paul; Barnabas

Purpose
To link the Gospel of Jesus and the service of the 12 apostles with the missionary work of the apostle Paul

Law Themes
Kingdom of God; way of God; call to bear witness; repentance; devotion to the Law; turn to God; call to preach; condemnation of lying, magic, simony, and superstition; resisting the Spirit; persecution; generosity urged

Gospel Themes
Kingdom of God; way of God; God's promises fulfilled; resurrection; filled with the Spirit; salvation; Jesus' name; forgiveness; fear of God; grace; Gospel proclamation

Memory Verses
The mission (1:7–9); the name of Jesus (4:11–12); Stephen's prayer (7:59–60); saved by grace (15:10–11); counsel for church elders (20:28–32);

Paul’s mission (26:15–18)

Introduction to Acts

Reading Acts

Every scroll collected by the synagogue is laid out and rolled open. Readers flock around them like grazing sheep around patches of grass, devouring the lines of text and chewing on the young rabbi's suggestion that the Messiah has come, has suffered death, and has risen again. "Would the Messiah save the Gentiles too?" someone wonders aloud. "Without circumcision, without the customs of the Law? How can these things be?"

The preaching of salvation through Jesus, confirmed by the gift of the Holy Spirit, "turned the world upside down" (17:6). In Acts, Luke continues the story of Jesus' work in and through the apostles and other disciples. Acts records the progress of God's mission to reach the ends of the earth with the promise of forgiveness and everlasting life in Christ—a mission that continues today as the Lord works through His Church.

Luther on Acts

Contrary to what has sometimes been the practice, this book should not be read or regarded as though St. Luke had written about the personal work or history of the apostles simply as an example of good works or good life. Even St. Augustine and many others have looked upon the fact that the apostles had all things in common with Christians [Acts 2:44–45; 4:32–37] as the best example which the book contains. Yet this practice did not last long and in time had to stop. Rather it should be noted that by this book St. Luke teaches the whole of Christendom, even to the end of the world, that the true and chief article of Christian doctrine is this: We must all be justified alone by faith in Jesus Christ, without any contribution from the law or help from our works.

This doctrine is the chief intention of the book and the author's principal reason for writing it. Therefore he emphasizes so powerfully not only the preaching of the apostles about faith in Christ, how both Gentiles and Jews must thereby be justified without any merits or works, but also the examples and the instances of this teaching, how the Gentiles as well as Jews were justified through the gospel alone, without the law.

As St. Peter testifies in chapters 10[:34–47] and 15[:7–11], in this matter God made no distinction between Jews and Gentiles; just as he gave the Holy Spirit through the gospel to the Gentiles who were living without the law, so he gave him to the Jews through the gospel, and not through the law or because of their own works and merits. Thus in this book St. Luke puts side by side both the doctrine about faith and the examples of faith.

Therefore this book might well be called a commentary on the epistles of St. Paul. For what Paul teaches and insists upon with words and passages of Scripture, St. Luke here points out and proves with examples and instances to show that it has happened and must happen in the way St. Paul teaches, namely, that no law, no work justifies men, but only faith in Christ. Here, then, in this book you find a beautiful mirror in which you can see that this is true: *Sola fides justificat*, "faith alone justifies." For all the examples and incidents contained in this

book are sure and comforting testimonies to this doctrine; they neither deceive nor lie to you.

For consider how St. Paul himself was converted [Acts 9:1–19], and how the Gentile, Cornelius, was converted through St. Peter's word—the angel telling him beforehand that Peter would preach to him and that thereby he would be saved [Acts 10:1–8, 30–33]. Look at the proconsul Sergius [Acts 13:7] and at all the cities where Paul and Barnabas preached. Look at the first council of the apostles at Jerusalem, in chapter 15; look at all the preaching of SS. Peter, Paul, Stephen, and Philip. You will find that it all adds up to one thing: we must come into grace and be justified only through faith in Christ, without law and works.

By means of this book, used in this way, we can silence in a masterly and effective way the loquacity of opponents who [keep on] pointing us to the law and to our own works, and reveal their foolish unwisdom before all the world. Therefore St. Luke says too that these illustrations of faith amazed the pious Jews who had become believers, and that the unbelieving Jews became maddened and foolish over it. And this was no surprise, for they had been raised in the law and had been accustomed to it ever since Abraham. So it was bound to vex them that the Gentiles, who were without law and God, should be equal to themselves in God's grace. (AE 35:363–64)

Challenges for Readers

Relationship to the Gospel according to Luke. As the opening words show (Ac 1:1–3), Acts cannot be considered separate from Luke. See pp 1700–1701. Acts differs from Luke in that Luke was himself an eyewitness to the events he records in Acts (cf Lk 1:1–4). For example, scholars have noted several "we" passages (Ac 16:10–17; 20:5–15; 21:1–18; 27:1–28:16) where Luke writes as a companion of Paul, beginning with Paul's second missionary journey (c AD 49–51).

Speeches in Acts. Critics have noted the unity of style present in the various speeches Luke recorded in Acts. They point to this unity as proof that Luke made up the speeches and that they do not reflect real or faithful history. Certainly Luke was not an eyewitness to every speech, and it is also natural that his style as a narrator would come through, especially since some speeches were originally delivered in Hebrew and Aramaic (e.g., 22:2). But Luke never claims to record speeches word for word. He presents summaries of speeches, and he even lets the reader know when he is not quoting a source (see note, 23:25). Paraphrases and summaries were perfectly acceptable ways of presenting historical events both in the first century and today. We cannot condemn Luke's approach as unhistorical based on modern standards of documentary history.

Work of the Holy Spirit. Some interpreters treat Acts like mere history. However, the Book of Acts may rightly be called "The Acts of Jesus and the Holy Spirit." See pp 1841, 1876.

Christianity and Empire. Luke seems very concerned to demonstrate that Christianity is no threat to the Roman Empire and that Christians are loyal citizens. He is not shy in recording the fact that the Gospel brought controversy, whether among Jews in Jerusalem or Gentiles in Ephesus. Yet Luke wants the reader to understand that, when carefully examined by Roman officials, Christians are innocent of any charges of rebellion. Christians spread their doctrine throughout the known world and even to the capital without resorting to violence, even though they were often persecuted. See p 1892.

Peter, Paul, and Church Unity. Perhaps the most important feature of Luke's account is that he demonstrates the unity of apostolic mission and ministry through two important leaders of the Early Church: Peter and Paul.

Although James the brother of Jesus features importantly as leader of the Church at Jerusalem (ch 15), Luke focuses on the two apostles responsible for the spread of the Gospel to the Gentiles and the fact that this was the express will of Jesus (1:8; 9:15), the heavenly Father (2:38–39; 15:16–17), and the Holy Spirit (8:14–17; 10:44–48). See note, 16:6–10. The Jerusalem Council (ch 15) demonstrates the consensus of all.

The Resurrection. Luke places special emphasis on reporting the miracle of the resurrection both as a demonstration of Jesus' calling and divinity (2:22–33) and that God's work in the world has changed following the resurrection (cf 17:29–31). By raising Christ to life again, God shows that He gives life in Christ to those who believe (2:28; 3:15; 11:18).

Paul's Visits to Jerusalem. A challenge arises for readers comparing Acts with Paul's Letters. In his Letters, Paul mentions three visits to Jerusalem (Gal 1:18; 2:1; Rm 15:25–26). Acts describes five visits (9:26; 11:27–30; ch 15; 18:22; 21:17). The first and last visits recorded in Acts correspond to the first and last visits mentioned in Paul's Letters. However, scholars debate when the Gal 2:1 visit occurred and how it fits with the examples from Acts. For more on this, see chronology, p cviii.

Blessings for Readers

By writing his Gospel and Acts, Luke wrote about 25 percent of the NT, more text than any other NT writer. In these two books, Luke provides an account of God's work from the announcement of Jesus' birth to the announcement in Rome of salvation in Jesus (AD 58). Luke shows that, through poor and helpless people on the margin of society, God spread His Word.

As you study the Book of Acts, consider how the Lord calls every believer—including you—to bear witness to Jesus' death and resurrection and to the salvation in His name. Acts records how God works through His Word, whether spoken or written, to bring people to faith in Christ. Through the Gospel, the Lord is turning the world upside down and advancing His kingdom from person to person and from nation to nation.

OUTLINE

The Book of Acts may be divided most easily between the work of Peter (chs 1–12) and the work of Paul (chs 13–28). Also, 1:8 provides a helpful outline for the progress of the 25 years of history presented in Acts (c AD 33–58):

From Jerusalem (1:1–6:7)
To Judea and Samaria (6:8–9:31)
To the ends of the earth (9:32–28:31)

The following detailed outline takes into account the main characters as well as the progress from Jerusalem out to the broader Roman Empire and its capital.

I. Prologue (1:1–2) (Links Acts to Luke and Shows that Christ's Work Continues as the Spirit Works in and through the Church)
II. Peter and the Church's Foundation: The Gospel Spreads from Judea to Galilee and Samaria (1:3–14:28)
A. The Church Is Born (1:3–2:47)
1. Jesus teaches about the kingdom of God, promises the Holy Spirit, and ascends into heaven (1:3–11)
2. Matthias chosen to replace Judas: the foundation of the 12 apostles is restored (1:12–26)

3. Pentecost: the descending Spirit gives birth to the Church (ch 2)

B. Peter and John Carry On the Work of Christ in Jerusalem (chs 3–5)

1. Peter and John's first trial and its effects (3:1–5:11)

2. Peter and John's second trial and its effects (5:12–42)

C. The Martyrdom of Stephen and Initial Spread of the Gospel (chs 6–8)

1. Stephen and his martyrdom (6:1–8:1a)

2. The persecution of the Church leads to the Gospel's spread (8:1b–40)

D. The Conversion of Paul and the Vision of Peter Pave the Way for Outreach to the Gentiles (chs 9–14)

1. Saul's conversion on the road to Damascus (9:1–31)

2. Peter's vision and the extension of the Gospel (9:32–11:18)

3. The Church in Antioch (11:19–30)

4. Peter's escape; Herod's death (ch 12)

5. Paul's first missionary journey (chs 13–14)

III. The Jerusalem Council: Paul's Work Endorsed by Peter and James (15:1–35)

A. Paul's Missionary Work Sparks Controversy (15:1–5)

B. Paul's Missionary Work Evaluated (15:6–21)

C. The Council Sends a Letter to the Churches (15:22–35)

IV. Paul Carries the Gospel to the Ends of the Earth (15:36–28:31)

A. Paul's Second Missionary Journey (15:36–18:22)

B. Paul's Third Missionary Journey (18:23–21:16)

C. Paul Goes to Rome (21:17–28:31)

1. Paul's imprisonment in Jerusalem (21:17–23:35)

a. Paul's arrest (21:17–22:29)

b. Trial before the Council (22:30–23:11)

c. Transfer to Caesarea (23:12–35)

2. Paul's imprisonment in Caesarea (chs 24–26)

a. Trial before Felix (ch 24)

b. Trial before Festus (25:1–12)

c. Hearing before Festus and Agrippa (25:13–26:32)

3. Voyage to Rome (27:1–28:15)

4. House arrest in Rome: the Gospel is preached (28:16–31)

- A Blessed Life
- Pentecost
- The Acts of Whom?
- Grace, Power, and Martyrdom
- Conflict among Christians
- The Work of the Spirit
- The Empire in Acts
- Sea Travel in Paul’s Day
- Beyond the Temple
- The Office of the Public Ministry

A Blessed Life

The God revealed through the Bible is the God whose gifts to sinners often go beyond human expectations. The lame man at the Jerusalem temple did not seem to have so high expectations as to be healed (Acts 3:1–10), nor did the paralyzed man in Capernaum expect to be treated in both body and soul (Mark 2:1–12). Simon the magician was so amazed at the power of the Spirit working through the disciples that he attempted to purchase some of it (Acts 8). True power to conquer all that would hinder human entrance into a blessed life eternal resides in Jesus' hands and is given to those who follow Him.

Even if the Christian knows someone would try to cast a spell on him, he lives in perfect peace in Christ who bore sin's worst spell upon a Jerusalem cross in the sinner's place. The Christian has full protection and victory over the enemy through the Triune God who created him, redeemed him, and sanctified him. When the Christian stops breathing in his mortal body, he knows that he is taken to the presence of His Lord, as it was in the case of Stephen (Acts 7:54–60). …

The Christian concept of Baptism is that in that action, God the Holy Spirit is at work to connect the baptized to the Triune God and the life that knows no end (Titus 3:5). Through Christian Baptism, one becomes the temple of the Holy Spirit, empowered and protected by the Triune God to live in joy and holiness. (Rom. 6:4–6; 1 Peter 3:21–22).

Paul Touloute, "A Glimpse into Vodou" (Pro Bono Ecclesiae paper, Concordia Theological Seminary, n.d.), 6–7.

Pentecost

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the Pentecostal movement raised a question for biblical interpreters. Pentecostals studied the events of the Day of Pentecost and concluded that every Christian's life should imitate the experience of the early Christians on that day. Most pointedly, they concluded that all Christians should speak in tongues or prophesy as described in Ac 2. In contrast, other interpreters view these events as unique and miraculous—not something Christians must imitate.

Based on ancient Jewish sources, this article will explore the setting for the miraculous events of Pentecost. It will help you gain a deeper understanding of God's true purpose behind this remarkable event: the inclusion of every tongue, tribe, and nation in God's kingdom.

The Gathering

According to Josephus (*War* 6:299), on Pentecost eve, the priests began to gather at the inner court of the temple. Jewish people from around the ancient Near East would already have filled the city, because they could not travel far on the previous day, the Sabbath (*Ant* 13:251–52).

On Pentecost morning, farmers from around Jerusalem gathered baskets with several types of food (see Mishnah Bikkurim 1:3, 10; see also pp 200–201). A flute player led the farmers up Mount Zion as they sang the Songs of Ascents (Ps 120–36). This liturgy of procession and psalms was known as the Great Hallel (Hbr *Hallel Hagadol*). Psalm 136 served as a climax of praise to God, "who alone does great wonders" (v 4; Hbr *Naphla'oth gedoloth*): creating the earth, delivering the people out of Egypt, and conquering the Promised Land from which the farmers gathered their offerings.

As the procession neared the city, officials went out to join the procession up to the Temple Mount. The king placed a basket of food on his shoulder and led the people into the temple courts as the Levites sang Ps 30, written for the temple dedication (see note, Ps 30).

The Offering

In the temple courts, the farmers would present their baskets before the priests. Each farmer would step forward and say the liturgy of recitation (Dt 26:3). He would remove the basket from his shoulder and tip it toward the priest. The priest took hold of the basket, and the two of them swayed it back and forth as a "wave" offering. Then the farmer would recite in Hebrew, "A wandering Aramean was my father …" (Dt 26:5–10a). He would leave the basket, bow before the Lord, and make way for the next farmer.

But a controversy arose about the recitation. The priest would have to lead the people who could not speak Hebrew. He would say a part in Hebrew, and the person making the offering would repeat it. This apparently embarrassed people. They stopped bringing their offerings. As a result, the priests decided that they would lead all the people in the recitation, whether or not they knew Hebrew. In this way, they continued to receive everyone's offering but also retained Hebrew as the language of temple services.

Rejoice, Remember, and Follow

According to Dt 26:11 and 16:11–12, "rejoicing" and "remembering" followed the offering. The rabbis tell us that the priests led the people in prayer according to the daily prayer customs. This likely included recitation of the 18 Benedictions and the Shema (Dt 6:4–9). They also sang the festival psalms known as the Egyptian Hallel (Ps 113–18). They shouted Ps 118:15–17, 22–23 (cf Mt 21:1–11).

A service of covenant renewal called by King Asa during the third month of the year is described in 2Ch 15:10–15. It is likely that this renewal was during the Festival of Pentecost. Later Jewish tradition made an oath to the covenant part of the Pentecost celebration (see the pseudepigraphal book Jubilees, especially chs 6 and 22). The people promised to follow the teachings of the covenant each year on Pentecost.

The Miracle of Pentecost

The Festival of Pentecost gives us a better understanding of the events described in Ac 2. For example, Jewish people who spoke a variety of languages would have gathered at the temple courts to make their offering and repeat the recitation in Hebrew. They would sing psalms extolling the wonders of God and participate in a ceremony of renewal.

The miraculous gift of tongues ("languages," see p 1969) demonstrated to everyone who heard them that God desired all people to have His Word, not just the Hebrew speakers. This use of foreign language was a sign to the Jewish people, who had failed to heed the prophets and call the nations to repentance (Is 28:11–12; 1Co 14:21; see p 751). They heard the first Christians praising God for His great deeds, such as those recorded in the Great Hallel. Finally, Peter's sermon culminates in a service of renewal: Baptism in the name of the Savior Jesus!

Genuine Renewal

On Pentecost, the Lord called His people to abandon the language barrier they had set up. The miraculous events of Ac 2:1–4 do not describe everyday Christian life but God's special lesson for the first Jewish Christians: God poured out His Spirit because He wanted to include all nations and tongues in the new covenant. God replays this lesson throughout Acts as new people join the Church (the Samaritans and Ethiopians, Ac 8; the Gentiles, Ac 10; and the disciples of John the Baptist, Ac 19:1–7).

Ac 2:42 describes how the early Christians enjoyed the very things that shape and guide everyday Christian life today. Rather than emphasizing that all believers must imitate the experience of Ac 2:1–4, the Book of Acts emphasizes God's mission of carrying the Gospel to all people (e.g., 1:8, 21–22; 3:24–26; 4:12, 31; 6:1; 7:51–53) and joining them in the Body of Christ through Baptism (e.g., 2:37–39, 41; 8:12–13, 36–38; 10:47–48; 16:15, 33; 18:8).

Today, the renewal the Church needs is the same renewal God gave the first Christians: Baptism. In Baptism, God pours out His Holy Spirit. He forgives sins and includes people in the apostolic fellowship. Rather than trying to imitate the events of Pentecost, turn to God's promise of renewal in Baptism through daily repentance. Then, filled with peace through Christ, turn with joy to the people around you—no matter who they are or where they come from—and bear witness to them of the renewal you have received in Christ.

The Acts of Whom?

Before His ascension, Jesus gave His disciples a promise: "I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Mt 28:20). Did they consider this statement nothing more than typical parting words, the same sort we might utter when telling friends we are "with them" in thought even though separated from them? Whatever the disciples may first have thought about Jesus' words, it soon became clear that He was with them in far more than a symbolic sense.

Luke opens his history (Acts) with a significant clue as to what is going on—and who is leading. "In the first book," he notes, "I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach" (Ac 1:1). The Gospel story (Luke) is not simply an account of what Jesus did; it is the story of what He *began to do*. And its sequel (Acts) records what Jesus *continued to do*. The risen Christ continues His ministry of salvation and restoration through the acts and works of His apostles. And the apostles, for their part, provide a stunning display of the truth behind Paul's statement: "It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me" (Gal 2:20). The One who said, "This is My body; this is My blood" when He instituted that Holy Meal, by which He comes among us and into us, continues to abide with us.

The Acts of the Spirit

Jesus, however, is not the only one living and acting in the lives of the apostles. He not only told them He would be with them, but He also promised that His Spirit would likewise be with them (Jn 16:7). His presence is seen everywhere in Acts (mentioned 57 times). Make no mistake—the apostles serve as the Lord's instruments, but the Lord Himself is the one acting through them. As Luke outlines the growth of the Church, he insists on one fundamental point. This numerical growth is attributable to no human endeavors; rather, "the Lord added to their number" (Ac 2:47).

Ironically, a rather unlikely individual also seconds this most important point. When Gamaliel, a Pharisee, stood before the Sanhedrin (the Jewish Council), he advised them: "Let [these men] alone, for if this plan or this undertaking is of man, it will fail; but if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them" (Ac 5:38–39). The irony increases as we read his words two thousand years later. The activity of the disciples—or rather, of God Himself—has not failed! It continues even today as Christ's Gospel is proclaimed and His Sacraments administered and as the Church continues to grow.

Lights! Camera! Action!

What Luke, the apostles, and even Gamaliel make so plain is, strangely enough, something we often tend to forget. The Church grows where and when God Himself is at work. We are incredibly privileged; we, like the apostles, have been chosen to serve as His instruments. But we should never dare to think our acts alone are effective or sufficient in matters of salvation.

No matter how clever our programs or how eloquent our speech, if they do not bear witness to the salvation won by Christ we should not think the Spirit is using them to build up the kingdom of God. (Many have been deceived by this notion. Various cults and false religions have grown at alarmingly rapid rates. Is this evidence of the work of Christ and His Spirit? Not at all!) Jesus endowed His people with His Spirit that they might testify to Him, to His death and resurrection, and to the forgiveness of sins that He alone provides. Any preaching that does not do so can claim to flow neither from Christ or His Spirit.

The sure promise given to the apostles is our promise yet today. Where Christ and His cross are preached, there Christ Himself is active. There His Spirit is present, calling, enlightening, and sanctifying His people. Each of us has been given a walk-on role in the divine drama of salvation, but the Lord Himself remains the actor with top billing. He acts in us, through us, and for us, even to the end of the age.

Grace, Power, and Martyrdom

A pirouetting ballerina is graceful; a charging bull is powerful. We do not often think of the terms "grace" and "power" together. To refer to a martyr as "full of grace and power," as Stephen is described in Ac 6:8, may seem strange. A martyr is powerless, a victim of those who hold the power of life and death. Also, martyrdom is far from a graceful affair. Bones are crushed under a hail of stones, limbs are severed between the teeth of Colosseum lions, flesh melts in the heat of a blazing fire. It is far more gruesome than graceful.

In the Book of Acts, there is more to martyrdom than may at first be apparent. The Greek word *martyr* means, literally, "witness." That is precisely what Stephen was, even before his death. In fact, it was his testimony to God's grace that precipitated his death. And when he preached *grace*, he did so with *power*. Luke describes him as "a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit" (Ac 6:5). And Jesus had promised His followers, "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you" (Ac 1:8). They bear witness to God's grace and bear witness by God's power. In the person of Stephen—and in all witnesses and martyrs of the Church—we see this central theme of Acts.

Witnesses True and False

As the events of Stephen's death make clear, all witnesses are not equal. When Stephen gave testimony of Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit, the human wisdom of his opponents could not refute him. So, Luke tells us, "they set up false witnesses" (Ac 6:13). They falsely charged that Stephen had blasphemed against God and His prophets and rejected the divine Law of Israel. But as Stephen narrated to them the history of Israel, it quickly became evident that his accusers were the ones guilty of rejecting God's Law and prophets. Stephen's testimony exposed them, so they killed him.

The sham trial of Stephen bears remarkable similarity to that of his Lord. As Christ stood before Caiaphas, "the chief priests and the whole Council were seeking false testimony against Jesus that they might put Him to death, but they found none, though many false witnesses came forward" (Mt 26:59–60). When Jesus finally opened His mouth to confess truthfully that He was the Son of God, He was promptly charged with blasphemy and sentenced to death.

Just as false witnesses are found throughout Scripture, so false martyrs abound even today. Suicide bombers in the Middle East, imprisoned terrorists starving on hunger strikes—we are often led to believe that all who commit suicide in the name of a cause, even when wrong or misguided, deserve a certain amount of respect for the strength of their convictions. Many would argue that they at least deserve a headline. They are, we are told, martyrs. However, we do well to recall the sentiment of the early Christians. Death does not make a martyr, they would agree, but the content of one's testimony while still alive does.

The Seed of the Church

The early Christian writer Tertullian (c 160–c 225) asserted, "The blood of Christians is seed" (*ANF* 3:55). Through the spectacle of martyrdom, he meant, the Church gained victory over those who would destroy it. The patient suffering of Christians inspired more people to follow Christ. Basil the Great, another ancient Church teacher, wrote: "The blood of the martyrs, watering the Churches, nourished many more champions of true religion, each generation [preparing] for the struggle with the zeal of those that had gone before" (*NPNF* 2 8:216).

However, other Christian writers recorded stories of zealous but confused believers who went to great lengths to seek out martyrdom. For example, the mother of a young man named Origen was forced to hide his clothing in order to prevent him from leaving the house in search of a martyr's death.

But Scripture is clear. The death of sinners—even the death of those who are also saints—is not the foundation on which the Church is built. The Church is built on one foundation: Jesus Christ. Only the proclamation of His death and its saving benefits is responsible for the Church's growth on earth. And only those who by the Spirit's power proclaim God's grace in Christ are truly His witnesses, or martyrs. This is so even if they do not meet death for their faithful testimony.

Seeing Heaven Open

Though you may not experience the dramatic death associated with martyrdom, you certainly cannot expect to escape death itself. Death entered our world on account of sin. St Paul reminds us, “Death spread to all men because all sinned” (Rm 5:12). The fact of your mortality is a constant reminder that you are a sinful being living in a sinful world. Nothing within your power can change that.

But you, like the witnesses and martyrs of the earliest Church, have not been left to your own power. In the waters of Baptism, God bestowed on you His own grace and power. Like Stephen, even you are “full of grace and power.” By His grace, you are saved. And by His power, you can now testify to the salvation He has provided for all. This, in fact, is precisely what you have been called to do. This is what the Holy Spirit has empowered you to do. You are to be a witness. You are to be, in the original meaning of the term, a martyr.

You may not, as Stephen did, see heaven open as you fall under a hail of stones. That is probably good news. But what is certainly good news is that you will indeed see heaven open when you depart this earthly life. And there you will see the Savior in all His power and glory, graciously welcoming you home.

Conflict among Christians

The story of the Apostolic Council in Ac 15 actually begins in Ac 11. Some men from Cyprus and Cyrene traveled to Antioch of Phoenicia. Antioch at this time may have been packed with over a quarter million people—a large number being Jews. These men "spoke to the Hellenists [Greeks] also, preaching the Lord Jesus" (11:20). Barnabas from Jerusalem went to serve them, fetching Saul (Paul) from Tarsus to help teach the rapidly growing numbers of new Christians (11:25–26).

Later, these leaders began their first mission journey from this great city of the Roman Empire. When Paul and Barnabas returned to the Church at Antioch from their first journey, they reported how God "had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles" (14:27). But when word of these Gentile conversions drifted back to Jerusalem, some there became deeply concerned.

Dealing with Conflict

Some Jewish believers wanted to slam the door of the Church in the face of Gentile believers. The Church's leaders gathered for the first Church assembly. The gathering had an issue before it, followed a definite strategy, carried on responsible deliberation, and experienced a happy outcome.

The Issue. Some men, "zealous for the law" (21:20), came down from Judea to Antioch. They were teaching the believers, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved" (15:1). At the Jerusalem Council, some believing Pharisees insisted, "It is necessary to circumcise them and to order them to keep the law of Moses" (15:5). They insisted that Gentiles follow the Law, or they could not be saved.

The Strategy. Following intense preliminary discussion, the Church at Antioch chose responsible leaders, including Paul and Barnabas. These leaders went to meet with the apostles and elders in Jerusalem about the question at issue. All these Church leaders gathered for extended debate, public testimony, and reasoned discussion based on experience and scriptural arguments. A formal resolution of the issue was reached and communicated responsibly to the Church at Antioch.

Responsible Deliberation. Peter testified from personal experience at the house of Cornelius (ch 10) that God through him had arranged for the Gentiles to hear and believe the Gospel. They, too, received the Holy Spirit. God saved the Jews by the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as He saved the Gentiles! Therefore, Peter concluded, they should not burden them with the yoke of the Law. Barnabas and Paul buttressed Peter's arguments with personal testimony. They "related what signs and wonders God had done through them among the Gentiles" (15:12).

The Outcome. Finally, James delivered incisive scriptural arguments to prove the correctness of Peter's witness. He showed that the Gentile mission was God's work, prophesied and fulfilled. The Scriptures proved that "God first visited the Gentiles [hear 'uncircumcised'], to take from them a people for His name" (15:14). God's promise through Amos to "rebuild the tent of David that has fallen" (15:16) was fulfilled in His gracious claiming of the Gentiles as His very own people. God was acting

to rebuild a human temple as His own dwelling place by His Spirit (cf Eph 2:22). Thus, the Gentiles did not need circumcision to be saved.

The Council accepted a proposal put forth by James: for the sake of Christ's mission, Jewish Christians would not require Gentile Christians to be circumcised. For the sake of Christ's mission, Gentile Christians would respect the sensitivities of Jewish Christians. They would agree to abstain from practices offensive to Jews (Lv 17–18). They would avoid food polluted by idols (sold in marketplaces), sexual immorality (perhaps illegal marriage described in Mosaic Law), meat from strangled animals, and meat not properly drained of its blood. In summary, the Church in love reached agreement through concessions in matters of Christian liberty.

The Church at Antioch received with joy and great relief the decision delivered by letter through responsible leaders. "When they had read it, they rejoiced because of its encouragement" (Ac 15:31). The Apostolic Council yielded the happy outcome of harmony in the Church and the advancement of the Lord's saving mission.

Paul and Barnabas Divided

Disagreements often arise between Christians. Sometimes these disputes revolve around matters of mere strategy. At other times they are over questions of clear scriptural teaching and practice. “A sharp disagreement,” for example, erupted between none other than Paul and Barnabas (Ac 15:39). Barnabas wanted to take his cousin John Mark along on the second mission journey. Paul thought this was inadvisable. So strong was their disagreement that they had to part ways for a time. The matter evidently was resolved later, for Paul mentions his partnership with Barnabas in 1Co 9:6.

On another occasion (Gal 2:11–14), however, the disagreement centered on “the truth of the gospel.” Paul publicly rebuked Peter when Peter’s actions implied that circumcision was necessary for Gentiles (otherwise, they could not have table fellowship with Jewish Christians). This dispute was also resolved later.

Blessings of Resolution

Deadly to Christian unity are two opposing errors. We may quickly and wrongly elevate mission strategy questions to the level of doctrine. Or, we may carelessly and wrongly dismiss questions of doctrine as mere strategy. Both errors may fuel a party spirit, a work of the flesh as described in Gal 5:19–21, which undermines trust and unity among Christians. Resolution of conflict in the Church requires careful discernment, responsible discussion, patience, and devotion to fellow members of Christ's Body.

To a divided congregation, Paul wrote, "God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord" (1Co 1:9). Because of the forgiving grace of our Lord Jesus bestowed on each Christian in Baptism, Christians are one with Him and with one another in His Body. Therefore, God desires that they seek to be one in their external relationship to one another. In the very next verse, Paul says exactly this: "I appeal to you, brothers, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree, and that there be no divisions among you" (1:10).

The Work of the Spirit

In the Book of Acts and in his Gospel, Luke often describes the work of the Holy Spirit. The following charts provide an overview of the Spirit's work so that you may discern His blessings for God's people in the past and also today.

Throughout his writings, Luke emphasizes the work of the Holy Spirit. In particular, he emphasizes that God gives His Spirit through Holy Baptism (Ac 2:38) or in close association with Baptism. (Note Paul's emphasis in Eph 4:5. Beware of groups who insist on a second "baptism" in the Spirit!) The Spirit "fills" God's people so that they may boldly proclaim God's Word. Take note also of the role of the apostles or specially called disciples in giving the Spirit (Ac 2:38; 8:18–20; 9:17; 10:45; 19:6). The Spirit worked with and through these ministers, confirming their authority and the unity of the Church under their leadership. How easily the Church might have splintered into Jewish, Samaritan, or Gentile groups if everyone claimed this calling (cf Ac 8:17).

The Work of the Spirit Today

As you reflect on the claims of groups that emphasize speaking in tongues or ecstatic experiences, remember that tongues are mentioned only three times in Luke's writings. He places far greater emphasis on bearing witness to Christ and serving others. Each example of tongues in Acts also served as a special sign when a new group of believers was welcomed into the Church: the Diaspora Jews, the uncircumcised Gentiles, and the disciples of John the Baptist. Luke never suggests that speaking in tongues should be a regular part of Christian life or worship but associates tongues with the giving of the Spirit through the special ministry of the apostles. These events served God's purpose in spreading the Gospel during apostolic times (2Co 12:12).

Rather than blindly seeking after ecstatic experiences, put your focus where the Spirit puts His focus in the Book of Acts: the ministry of God's Word and service to one another. Through the Word, the Spirit will edify and build up the Church. Through the Word, He will bring others to the saving knowledge of Christ. Through the Word, He will bless and comfort you as you live by the Gospel, full of God's Holy Spirit.

The Empire in Acts

This article will help you understand the terminology for governmental offices, officeholders, and other aspects of Roman rule. It will greatly enhance your reading of Ac 13–28. (Historians agree that terms can have various usages and meanings, depending on location in the empire.)

Governmental Offices

Caesar (17:7; 25:8, 10, 11, 12, 21; 26:32; 27:24; 28:19)
Proper name that came to mean "emperor."
Proconsul (13:7–9, 12; 18:12; 19:38)
Head of government in a Roman senatorial province; a former member of the Roman Senate acting "for the consul" (in behalf of the Senate); governor.
Governor (23:24, 26, 33; 24:1, 10; 26:30)
Term used for Roman legates, procurators, and proconsuls. The governor kept the peace of his province, commanded troops in its borders, applied law, and collected taxes.
Magistrates (16:19–20, 22, 35, 36, 38)
Properly called *duoviri* ("two men"; i.e., two men who were in charge of a Roman colony). They were sometimes called "praetors." They presided in the courts, supervised the public treasury, and administered the law accumulated by Roman legislation and decree.
Police (16:38)
Official attendants (*lictors*) of the chief magistrates in Rome and Roman cities. In official processions, they carried symbolic bundles of rods, sometimes with an ax inserted. They served to inflict both corporal and capital punishment.
City Authorities (17:6, 8)
A magistrate (*politarch*) who formed a part of a town or city council; thus, a "city official." A term for chief magistrates (5 or 6) who ruled in Macedonian cities. These officials were non-Roman; present at Thessalonica, for instance.
Town Clerk (19:35)
Chief executive officer of a governmental entity. The clerk executed decrees of popular assemblies in cities, drafted decrees, and had them engraved when passed. A kind of liaison officer between civic government and Roman provincial administration.
Citizen (21:39; see also "Roman[s]" in 16:21, 37–38; 22:25–29; 23:27; 25:16; 28:17)
Possessed the following rights: (1) vote in popular assemblies, (2) exemption from payment of certain taxes, (3) trial by local or Roman

courts, (4) appeal of capital offenses, and (5) protection from scourging, whipping, torture, or injury.

Military Offices and Terminology

Jailer (16:23, 27, 29, 36)
Called *desmophylax*; keeper of a prison.
Tribune (21:31–33, 37; 22:24, 26–30; 23:10, 15, 17–19, 22; 24:8, 22; 25:23)
Called a *chiliarch*; commander or military tribune. Lit, “a leader of 1,000”; he commanded a cohort (c 600).
Centurion (21:32; 22:25–26; 23:17–18, 23; 24:23; 27:1, 6, 11, 31, 43 [cf 10:1, 22])
Roman officer commanding c 100 soldiers.
Soldier (21:32, 35, 37; 23:23, 31; 27:31–32, 42; 28:16 [cf 10:7; 12:4, 6, 18])
Called *stratiotes*; served in groups of 100 (century), 200 (maniple), 600 (cohort), and (6,000) legion. In Judea, soldiers served as auxiliary troops with a potential strength of 760 foot soldiers and 240 cavalry (23:23, 32). Soldiers also served as spearmen (23:23).

Locations and Gatherings

District (16:12)
Term used for one of four parts into which Macedonia was divided by the imperial government.
Colony (16:12)
Region created by the emperor in provinces (about 20 in number) for retired government officials and veterans of legions; included Pisidian Antioch, Lystra, Troas, and Syracuse. A colony possessed autonomous government and was sometimes immune from taxes.
Tribunal (18:12, 16–17; 25:6, 10, 17)
A judicial platform or dais *(bema)* to which an official ascended to hold court; a term used for the court itself.
Courts (19:38)
Court days or sessions; a meeting of the citizens with a proconsul presiding.
Assembly (19:39, 41)
A regularly summoned legislative body (*ekklesia*).
Praetorium (23:35)
Official headquarters and residence of the Roman governor of an imperial province.

Sea Travel in Paul's Day

Ancient sources indicate that travel on the Mediterranean Sea was governed by the seasons. March 10–May 27 was risky; May 28–September 14 was considered safe; September 15–November 11 was risky; and November 12–March 9 was dangerous, with disasters common.

Paul mentions "the Fast" in Ac 27:9, which refers to Yom Kippur, or the Day of Atonement. Since this Jewish feast day occurred in September or October, we can assume that the journey to Rome took place during a "risky" season.

For most of his seafaring journey from Caesarea to Rome, St Paul traveled on two Alexandrian grain ships (Ac 27:6; 28:11). Here is what we know about such ships from Luke's account and from other ancient sources.

Cargo

Corn, wheat, and barley grown in Egypt were loaded on the ship in bulk (not in sacks or bins). Shifting weight, therefore, could cause ballast problems, and wet grain could swell in the hull, requiring adjusted ballast or undergirding of the ship (Ac 27:17–18).

Route

The route traveled from Egypt to Rome took an average of 10–20 days with favorable winds. Ships had to sail 1,000 nautical miles to make this trip.

Size

Some grain ships could be as large as 180 ft long, 45 ft wide, and 40 ft deep. They could carry as much as 150,000 tons per year. Josephus claimed to have traveled on a ship like this loaded with 600 passengers. "This was the largest mercantile fleet known to Europe before the 1700s," notes one scholar (Craig Keener, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament* [Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993], 401, 403).

Beyond the Temple

Luke begins [Acts] with Jesus giving the promise of the Holy Spirit and the prediction that the disciples will be his "witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:4 and 7–8). … Luke is very careful in following the geographical movement of the gospel: from Jerusalem (Acts 1, and Temple in Luke 1 and 2) to Rome (Acts 28). …

Up to [Acts] Chapter 6, the preaching activities of the apostles have been exclusively in Jerusalem around the temple. But, Jesus' command to stay in Jerusalem (1:4) took on a new direction after they had received the Holy Spirit. Once they had received the promised gift, they were free to leave, so that they could fulfill what the giving of the power through the Spirit (1:8) intended, that is, to be in mission to the ends of the earth. Stepping beyond Jerusalem took place in a strange way. It was through the persecuted Christians, excluding the apostles. The immediate flame of such a "great persecution" (8:1) was ignited by Stephen's speech. The implied message of the speech is that the Temple is no longer the focal place for true worship, nor are the Jews the true worshipers. Stephen arrived at this conclusion from lessons of the past.

Thus, Stephen's speech provides the Christians, who were persecuted and scattered, the lost paradigm of true mission. The speech attempts to restore and rediscover true worship and God's transcendent nature beyond Jerusalem. God's presence is not confined to Jerusalem or the Temple. God can be worshiped outside Jerusalem. With this assurance and promise, the "new Israelites" were forced to scatter as Jesus predicted. Their scattering beyond Jerusalem resulted in bringing the Gospel to Samaria, and this marked the actual parting between Christianity and Judaism.

Hyo-Jong Kim, "Stephen's Speech" (STM thesis, Concordia Seminary, 1999), 129, 131–33.

The Office of the Public Ministry

The office of the public ministry is not merely a divine suggestion but a divine mandate. God has declared that the church should carry out its functions not only in private, individual actions and speaking, but also corporately by selecting men who meet God's criteria and whom He then places into office of the public ministry.

The office and its functions are not called "public" because the functions are always discharged in public, but because they are performed on behalf of the church. The acts of one who is called to fill the office of the public ministry are "public" even when they are performed privately with one individual. Moreover, the word "public" connotes accountability to those who have placed them into "public" office. … As a father manages his household, so the bishop stands at the head of his congregation as one who is charged with the duty of caring for the church of God [1Tm 3:1; other passages on the office include 1Tm 5:17; Heb 13:7; Eph 4:11–12]. …

Of great significance for the nature of New Testament ministry are the expressions: the "ministry of the Word" (Acts 6:4); the "ministry of a new covenant" (2 Cor 3:6); the "ministry of the Spirit" (2 Cor 3:8); the "ministry of reconciliation" (2 Cor 5:18); and Paul's reference to himself as a "minister of the Gospel" (Col 1:23).

Paul writes in Titus 1:5, "This is why I left you in Crete that you might amend what was defective (what is absent, lacking, missing) and appoint elders in every town as I directed you." In Acts 14:23, the examples of the apostles are recorded. They appointed ordained elders for them in every church. In Acts 20:17 and Acts 20:28, the terms elder and bishop are used interchangeably, as in Titus 1:5 and 7. In Acts 20:28, Paul admonishes the elders: "Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God which He obtained with the blood of his own Son."

A picture emerges from these references of an office that was instituted by God, in and with the apostolate, for which very specific qualifications are listed. The essence of this is properly defined in the Augsburg Confession as "teaching the Gospel and administering the Sacraments" (AC V) on behalf of and with the accountability to the church (AC XIV).

The supervision of the shepherd-elder-bishop is a supervision of the teaching of the Word and administration of the Sacraments. In this way they are leaders to be obeyed in their speaking of the Word of God. They are supervisors of spiritual life, faith, and Christian service of the Church and its members. This is a heavy responsibility that no man can take upon himself; rather to which he must be legitimately called by the church (cf. Acts 1:23–26, 13:2–3, 14:23, 2 Cor 8:19, AC XIV).

V. Indrenath Stanley, "Transition from a Missionary to a Post-Missionary Era in the Ambur District of the India Evangelical Lutheran Church" (doctoral dissertation, Concordia Theological Seminary, 2003), 99–103.

Footnotes

Footnotes for Acts, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:4 Or *eating*
- [2] 1:5 Or *in*
- [1] 1:14 Or *brothers and sisters*. The plural Greek word *adelphoi* (translated "brothers") refers to siblings in a family. In New Testament usage, depending on the context, *adelphoi* may refer either to men or to both men and women who are siblings (brothers and sisters) in God's family, the church; also verse 15
- [2] 1:18 Or *swelling up*

Footnotes for Acts, Chapter 2

- [1] 2:3 Or *And tongues as of fire appeared to them, distributed among them, and rested*
- [2] 2:15 That is, 9 A.M.
- [1] 2:18 Greek *bondservants*; twice in this verse
- [1] 2:43 Or *fear*

Footnotes for Acts, Chapter 3

- [1] 3:1 That is, 3 P.M.
- [2] 3:13 Or *child*; also verse 26
- [3] 3:16 Greek *him*

Footnotes for Acts, Chapter 4

- [1] 4:11 Greek *This one*
- [2] 4:11 Greek *the head of the corner*
- [1] 4:25 Or *child*; also verses 27, 30
- [2] 4:26 Or *Christ*
- [3] 4:29 Greek *bondservants*

Footnotes for Acts, Chapter 5

- [1] 5:8 The Greek for *you* is plural here

Footnotes for Acts, Chapter 6

- [1] 6:1 That is, Greek-speaking Jews
- [2] 6:3 Or *brothers and sisters*

Footnotes for Acts, Chapter 7

- [1] 7:46 Some manuscripts *for the house of Jacob*
- [2] 7:57 Or *rushed with one mind*

Footnotes for Acts, Chapter 8

- [1] 8:5 Some manuscripts *a city*
- [1] 8:5 Greek *works of power*
- [2] 8:23 That is, a bitter fluid secreted by the liver; bile
- [3] 8:26 Or *go at about noon*
- [1] 8:36 Some manuscripts add all or most of verse 37: *And Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." And he replied, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."*

Footnotes for Acts, Chapter 9

- [1] 9:25 Greek *through the wall*
- [2] 9:29 That is, Greek-speaking Jews
- [3] 9:36 The Aramaic name *Tabitha* and the Greek name *Dorcas* both mean *gazelle*
- [4] 9:39 Greek *chiton*, a long garment worn under the cloak next to the skin

Footnotes for Acts, Chapter 10

- [1] 10:3 That is, 3 P.M.
- [2] 10:9 That is, noon
- [1] 10:30 That is, 3 P.M.

Footnotes for Acts, Chapter 11

- [1] 11:1 Or *brothers and sisters*
- [1] 11:20 Or *Greeks* (that is, Greek-speaking non-Jews)
- [2] 11:29 Or *brothers and sisters*

Footnotes for Acts, Chapter 12

- [1] 12:17 Or *brothers and sisters*
- [1] 12:25 Some manuscripts *to*

Footnotes for Acts, Chapter 13

- [2] 13:1 *Niger* is a Latin word meaning *black*, or *dark*
- [1] 13:18 Some manuscripts *he carried* (compare Deuteronomy 1:31)
- [1] 13:39 Greek *justified*; twice in this verse

Footnotes for Acts, Chapter 14

- [1] 14:2 Or *brothers and sisters*
- [2] 14:9 Or *be saved*

Footnotes for Acts, Chapter 15

- [1] 15:3 Or *brothers and sisters*; also verse 22
- [1] 15:17 Or *rest*
- [2] 15:23 Or *brothers and sisters*; also verses 32, 33, 36
- [3] 15:24 Some manuscripts *some persons from us have troubled you*
- [1] 15:33 Some manuscripts insert verse 34: *But it seemed good to Silas to remain there*

Footnotes for Acts, Chapter 16

- [2] 16:1 Greek *He*
- [3] 16:2 Or *brothers and sisters*; also verse 40
- [1] 16:10 Greek *he*
- [2] 16:12 Or *that*
- [3] 16:17 Greek *bondservants*
- [1] 16:29 Greek *he*

Footnotes for Acts, Chapter 17

- [1] 17:10 Or *brothers and sisters*; also verse 14
- [1] 17:24 Greek *made by hands*
- [1] 17:28 Probably from Epimenides of Crete
- [2] 17:28 From Aratus's poem "Phainomena"

Footnotes for Acts, Chapter 18

- [3] 18:1 Greek *he*
- [1] 18:18 Or *brothers and sisters*; also verse 27
- [1] 18:25 Or *in the Spirit*

Footnotes for Acts, Chapter 19

- [2] 19:1 Greek *upper* (that is, highland)
- [3] 19:5 Or *into*
- [1] 19:9 Some manuscripts add *from the fifth hour to the tenth* (that is, from 11 A.M. to 4 P.M.)
- [2] 19:16 Or *both*
- [1] 19:31 That is, high-ranking officers of the province of Asia
- [2] 19:35 The meaning of the Greek is uncertain
- [3] 19:39 Some manuscripts *seek about other matters*

Footnotes for Acts, Chapter 20

- [1] 20:15 Some manuscripts add *after remaining at Trogyllium*
- [1] 20:22 Or *bound in*
- [2] 20:28 Some manuscripts *of the Lord*
- [3] 20:28 Or *with the blood of his Own*

Footnotes for Acts, Chapter 21

- [1] 21:1 Some manuscripts add *and Myra*
- [2] 21:7 Or *brothers and sisters*; also verse 17
- [1] 21:25 Some manuscripts omit *and from what has been strangled*

- [1] 21:40 Or *the Hebrew dialect* (that is, Aramaic); also 22:2

Footnotes for Acts, Chapter 22

- [2] 22:3 Or *city at the feet of Gamaliel, educated*
- [3] 22:9 Or *hear with understanding*
- [1] 22:25 Or *when they had tied him up with leather strips*

Footnotes for Acts, Chapter 23

- [1] 23:23 That is, 9 P.M.

Footnotes for Acts, Chapter 24

- [1] 24:4 Or *weary*
- [2] 24:6 Some manuscripts add *and we would have judged him according to our law. [7]But the chief captain Lysias came and with great violence took him out of our hands, [8]commanding his accusers to come before you*.

Footnotes for Acts, Chapter 25

- [1] 25:3 Greek *him*

Footnotes for Acts, Chapter 26

- [1] 26:14 Or *the Hebrew dialect* (that is, Aramaic)
- [1] 26:28 Or *In a short time you would persuade me to act like a Christian!*

Footnotes for Acts, Chapter 27

- [2] 27:9 That is, the Day of Atonement
- [1] 27:16 Some manuscripts *Clauda*
- [2] 27:17 That is, the sea-anchor (or possibly the mainsail)
- [3] 27:28 About 120 feet; a fathom (Greek *orguia*) was about 6 feet or 2 meters
- [4] 27:28 About 90 feet (see previous note)
- [5] 27:37 Some manuscripts *seventy-six*, or *about seventy-six*
- [1] 27:41 Or *sandbank*, or *crosscurrent*; Greek *place between two seas*

Footnotes for Acts, Chapter 28

- [2] 28:2 Greek *barbaroi* (that is, non–Greek speakers); also verse 4
- [3] 28:4 Or *justice*

- [4] 28:10 Greek *honored us with many honors*
- [5] 28:11 That is, the Greek gods Castor and Pollux
- [6] 28:14 Or *brothers and sisters*; also verses 15, 21
- [1] 28:28 Some manuscripts add verse 29: *And when he had said these words, the Jews departed, having much dispute among themselves*
- [2] 28:30 Or *in his own hired dwelling*

Study Notes

ACTS—NOTE ON 1:1 *first book*. Lk and Ac form a two-part account, with Ac depicting the growth of the apostolic Church as a consequence of Christ's life, death, and resurrection. *Theophilus*. See note, Lk 1:3. *all … teach*. Despite Jesus' ascension, He constantly exercises active lordship over the Church as He works and speaks through His apostles.

ACTS—NOTE ON 1:2 *taken up*. The Father exalted, crowned, and enthroned the Son, giving Him as man a full share in His own divine glory. See notes, Php 2:9, 11. *commands through the Holy Spirit*. The Holy Spirit conceived Jesus' human nature in Mary's womb, descended on Jesus at His Baptism, and worked with Jesus in His ministry. Mentioned 57 times in Ac, the Holy Spirit, with the exalted Christ, exercises ongoing lordship over the Church. See pp 1815, 1920. *apostles*. The Twelve minus Judas. See p 1901.

ACTS—NOTE ON 1:3 *many proofs*. The resurrection's compelling evidence moved the apostles to believe this startling truth; Christianity rests on a bedrock of hard fact. *kingdom of God*. See pp 1565–66.

ACTS—NOTE ON 1:4 *wait for*. The proper attitude of the faithful in both testaments; cf Ps 27:14. *promise of the Father*. Cf Jn 16:7. Cyr Jer: "After His resurrection He breathed on them. [Jn 20:22] But though He bestowed His grace then, He was to lavish it yet more bountifully. … *Receive* it in part now; then, you shall wear it in its fulness. For he who receives, often possesses the gift but in part; but he who is clothed, is completely enfolded by his robe" (*NPNF* 2 7:127).

ACTS—NOTE ON 1:5 Just as John poured water onto people's bodies, the Holy Spirit would be poured out lavishly on the apostles and all Christians. See notes, 2:17; Mt 3:11.

ACTS—NOTE ON 1:6 *come together*. On the Mount of Olives (cf 1:12). *restore the kingdom to Israel?* The apostles have experienced God's mighty works, and they expect Him to sweep away instantly the old order of things. They may also be clinging to a political idea of Jesus' Messiahship. See pp 1565–66.

ACTS—NOTE ON 1:7 Only the Father knows when His Son will return in glory. Speculation is out of place; confident hope is in.

ACTS—NOTE ON 1:8 *power*. The Holy Spirit provides the superhuman strength that enables the Church to fulfill God's commands.

See p 1903. *My witnesses*. The Lord charges these and all His people to bear brave (and often costly) witness to what they have seen, heard, and touched (1Jn 1:1–3; Ps 145:4–13). Luth: " 'Bearing witness' is nothing but God's Word spoken by angels or men, and it calls for faith" (AE 20:213). *end of the earth*. The account of the Church's mission is headed for Rome (chs 27–28) and beyond. Luth: "This promise is to be found in all the prophets, namely that through the Seed of the woman the blessing will come upon all nations; … the Holy Spirit is given through Christ to all who hear the Word of Christ and believe in Him." (AE 8:254). "Without any doubt God also knows and has determined for everyone the time and hour of his call and conversion. But this time has not been revealed to us. Therefore, we have the command always to keep proclaiming the Word, entrusting the time and hour 'of conversion' to God (Acts 1:7)" (FC SD XI 56).

ACTS—NOTE ON 1:9 *lifted up*. See notes, 1:2; Lk 24:51. *cloud*. OT symbol of God's immediate, majestic presence (e.g., Ex 16:10). Jesus takes His throne at the Father's right hand. See "right hand," p 843.

ACTS—NOTE ON 1:10 *two men … white robes*. Angels appear here at the ascension as they had at the annunciation (Lk 1:26–27), Jesus' birth (Lk 2:8–14), ministry (Mk 1:13; Lk 22:43), and resurrection (Mt 28:2–7). As God's messengers, they explain the significance of these events.

ACTS—NOTE ON 1:11 *Jesus … will come in the same way*. In the supernatural, divine way marked by the image of the cloud (cf v 9). See note, 2Th 1:10; see also "Son of Man," p 2098. Jn D: "The Lord shall come out of heaven, just as the holy apostles beheld Him going into heaven, perfect God and perfect man, with glory and power, and will destroy the man of lawlessness, the son of destruction, with the breath of His mouth" (*NPNF* 2 9:99).

ACTS—NOTE ON 1:1–11 Jesus, truly risen in His body from the dead, reigns as unseen King over the here and now. He will return in full sight of all in the Father's good time. Therefore, do not let the evil one lock Jesus in the past or reduce His ministry to you now. Boldly pray to Jesus, and acknowledge Him as your Lord. Your good standing today and your eternal tomorrow flow from Jesus' victory over the grave and His enthronement at the Father's right hand. • Lord, increase our faith in Jesus' past, present, and future triumph, and make us bold witnesses to Him in every facet of our lives. Amen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 1:12 *Olivet*. See note, v 6. *a Sabbath day's journey*. Pious Jews were expected to stay within the permitted distance of 2,000 cubits (just over ½ mi) from home on the holy day (Ex 16:29; Nu 35:5; Jsh 3:4).
ACTS—NOTE ON 1:13 *upper room*. Possibly the site of the Last Supper, though Luke uses a different word here than in his Gospel. See note, 12:12.
ACTS—NOTE ON 1:14 *one accord*. Because the early Christians were close to Christ, the earliest Church had a natural unity that has since been tragically fractured. *devoting themselves to prayer*. With undivided attention, their hearts and minds were open to receive the promised Spirit. *the women*. See note, Lk 8:2–3; cf 23:55; 24:1–10. *brothers*. Listed in Mk 6:3; James and Jude were the most notable in the Early Church. See p 2134.
ACTS—NOTE ON 1:15 *In those days*. During the 50 days between Easter and Pentecost (see note, 2:1). *brothers*. Used differently than in v 14. See p 1901. *about 120*. In a suddenly widening circle of disciples, Peter strengthened his brothers (Lk 22:32) as Jesus had predicted (Jn 21:15–17). The location in vv 15–26 may no longer be the upper room of v 13, due to the number of people. A courtyard would better accommodate such a large group.
ACTS—NOTE ON 1:16 *Scripture … the Holy Spirit spoke*. All Scripture is God-breathed, with the Holy Spirit as its primary author. See pp xxvi–xxx, 1245. *David*. Co-author with the Holy Spirit of the psalms quoted in v 20. As a prophet, David glimpsed the future fulfillment of his own calling in the life of Christ. *Judas*. Our Lord regarded Judas's betrayal as the fulfillment of prophecy (see note, Jn 17:12). See also note, Ps 41:9.
ACTS—NOTE ON 1:17 *share*. Usually rendered as "lot" and has two senses in the Bible: a plot of land, one's goodly heritage in the Promised Land; and a means of determining God's will, carried out prayerfully and solemnly. See note, Jsh 14:2; see also "portion," p 7. *ministry*. See note, v 25; see also "service," p 1904.
ACTS—NOTE ON 1:18–19 Luke digresses from Peter's speech to give an account of Judas's fate.
ACTS—NOTE ON 1:18 *reward*. Payment Judas received from the Council for betraying Christ. He bought the field indirectly, because the Council did this with the money Judas returned (see notes, Mt 27:3–8). *falling headlong*. The rope Judas hanged himself with (Mt 27:5) likely broke, causing his already decaying corpse (see ESV note) to fall and rupture.

ACTS—NOTE ON 1:19 *Akeldama*. Aram name. *Field of Blood*. See note, Mt 27:8.
ACTS—NOTE ON 1:20 Vicious attacks on King David were ultimately directed at God and gave a preview of the trouble in store for Christ, the greater David.
ACTS—NOTE ON 1:21 *men*. Gk *aner*, "male," "husband." Christ chose only men for the apostolic ministry (Lk 6:13–16). He also treasured the service of women (see notes, Lk 8:2–3; 24:9; Ac 9:36). The early Christians maintained a clear division in the callings of men and women. See p 1972. *accompanied*. Witness to the whole public activity of Christ, up to the resurrection. *in and out*. Hbr idiom encompassing everything Jesus did (cf Dt 28:6).
ACTS—NOTE ON 1:22 *baptism of John*. See note, Mt 3:6.
ACTS—NOTE ON 1:23 *Joseph … Barsabbas … Justus*. Hbr, Aram, and Lat names. Considerable detail concerning someone not chosen or mentioned again. He was likely well known in the Early Church. *Matthias*. Short form of Mattathias, a name famous as a result of the war to liberate Israel from the tyranny of Antiochus IV Epiphanes (cf 1Macc 2:1).
ACTS—NOTE ON 1:24–25 The apostles hold together despite Judas's defection; they remain intact even after the martyrdom of James the Great (cf 12:2).
ACTS—NOTE ON 1:24 *You have chosen*. Apostles are chosen directly by Christ Himself. He appoints overseers and elders indirectly through the mutual consent of clergy and people (cf 20:17, 28).
ACTS—NOTE ON 1:25 *this ministry*. In the NT, almost always specific, a concrete form of service laid on a particular person. See "service," p 1904. *apostleship*. Gk *apostole*; the ambassadorial office Jesus instituted in Lk 6:13. See p 1901.
ACTS—NOTE ON 1:26 *cast lots*. See notes, Jsh 14:2; Pr 18:18. *eleven apostles*. Twelve apostles were needed to confront the 12 tribes of Israel on the day of Pentecost.
ACTS—NOTE ON 1:12–26 The disciples and others seek the Lord's will concerning the candidate of His choice to replace Judas as a leader of the Church, the new Israel. Today, entrust your future to the Lord in prayer. He will prepare your way before you. Since our Lord is present with us till the end of the age, He will knit together in love His faithful people with Himself and with one another. • Jesus, our King, may we never tire of

watching in prayer before Your throne, and may Your will be our delight. Amen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 2:1 *day of Pentecost*. Fifty days after the Passover Sabbath (Lv 23:15–21). See pp 200–201. Pentecost likely also commemorated the giving of the Law on Sinai, as later rabbis attest. On this new day in Ac, God's people are publicly formed through the bestowal of the Holy Spirit. They acquire the names "Church" and "Christians" in the NT but also stand in faith with believers of the OT, who trusted in the coming Savior. Cf Mt 8:11. *arrived*. Gk has sense of "fill up, complete" (cf Lk 9:51; Gal 4:4). *they*. Possibly just the 12 apostles (cf 1:26; 2:14), though the fulfillment described in vv 17–18 hints that the 120 are meant. (Reference to the 120 is much more remote; 1:15.) Chrys: "Was it upon the twelve that [the Holy Spirit] came? Not so; but upon the hundred and twenty. For Peter would not have quoted to no purpose the testimony of the prophet" (*NPNF* 1 11:25). *all together*. Continuing their practice of fellowship and worship. *in one place*. Setting unclear. Possibly the building containing the Upper Room (1:13), though how the apostles' message could reach the crowd (vv 5–11) is unclear and never explained. This has led some interpreters to suggest the temple courts as a likely location.

ACTS—NOTE ON 2:2–3 *like … wind … as of fire*. The manifestations were indescribable because they revealed God's miraculous activity.

ACTS—NOTE ON 2:2 *house*. Gk *oikos*. Luke usually uses this term to denote a private dwelling (or for the family as a "household") but also uses it for the temple (Lk 6:4; 19:46; Ac 7:47, 49; cf Lk 24:53; Ac 2:46). The setting for Peter's sermon (vv 14–41) had to accommodate thousands of people. According to later Christian tradition, the house with the Upper Room was located on Mount Zion (southwest hill of Jerusalem) and would have been outside the city wall.

ACTS—NOTE ON 2:3 *tongues as of fire*. Luke describes the scene with a comparison. The emphasis in the wording is on the mouth ("tongue," "speak," "utterance"), which may indicate where the "fire" appeared (see Moses' appearance in Ex 34:29). The fire appropriately appears as tongues of flame, since the Holy Spirit works through the apostles' speech. In the OT, angelic spirits were described as fire (see note, Ps 104:3–4). Fire also represented the presence of God's Spirit (Ex 3:2–4).

ACTS—NOTE ON 2:4 *filled with the Holy Spirit*. Anointing with the Holy Spirit brings a startling transformation. The Spirit never becomes a personal

possession but remains a heavenly gift, received by the repentant through faith. See p 1876. *speak in other tongues*. Miraculous ability to communicate in foreign languages the speakers had never learned (vv 7–11). See p 1969. Cyr Jer: "The Holy Spirit taught them many languages at once, languages which in all their lives they never knew" (*NPNF* 2 7:128).

ACTS—NOTE ON 2:5 *Jews, devout men from every nation*. Jews dispersed throughout the world who piously observed the Law, now in Jerusalem to observe the required feasts. See note, Ex 34:23; see also "Dispersion," p 1556.

ACTS—NOTE ON 2:6 God brings the people together to hear His Word. These miraculous events are God's extended appeal for Israel to receive Jesus as their Messiah and to become part of the new Israel, the Church. *speak in his own language*. The hearers understood the proclamation neither in Aram nor in common Gk but in their local languages.

ACTS—NOTE ON 2:7–8 An obvious miracle. Working men from Galilee would hardly be accomplished linguists.

ACTS—NOTE ON 2:9–11 These groups, coming from all corners of the earth, point forward to the universal character of the Church. Twelve diverse regions signify all people. The Jewish Dispersion had spread to all these places (see p 1556). The mention of the capital city of Rome represents the empire, which encompassed the known world (see note, 1:8). *Jews and proselytes*. Represents all worshipers of the God of Israel, whether ethnic Jews or Gentile converts. *Cretans and Arabians*. Has the sense of all from west and east, from island and mainland.

ACTS—NOTE ON 2:11 *proselytes*. See p 1557. *mighty works of God*. Cf Dt 11:2; Ps 71:19; 105. Luth: "When God wanted to spread the gospel throughout the world by means of the apostles he gave the tongues for that purpose [Acts 2:1–11]. Even before that, by means of the Roman Empire he had spread the Latin and Greek languages widely in every land in order that his gospel might the more speedily bear fruit far and wide" (AE 45:359).

ACTS—NOTE ON 2:12 This extraordinary work of God needed explanation.

ACTS—NOTE ON 2:13 Just as some rejected the earthly Jesus, so mockers and skeptics have always dismissed the Church's message (cf Mt 10:22; Jn 15:18–20). Cyr Jer: "In truth the wine was new, even the grace of the New Testament; but this new wine was from a spiritual Vine, which had

oftentimes [before] this borne fruit in Prophets, and had budded in the New Testament" (*NPNF* 2 7:128).

ACTS—NOTE ON 2:1–13 The Holy Spirit descends as a gift, sounding forth one message in many tongues, showing that Israel will soon burst its ethnic bounds. Cynics of all eras belittle God's mighty deeds and explain them away. However, humility before the Holy Spirit is in order, along with sheer wonder that God gives Himself to people of all nations. • "Come, holy Fire, comfort true, Grant us the will Your work to do And in Your service to abide; Let trials turn us not aside." Amen. (*LSB* 497:3)

ACTS—NOTE ON 2:14 *Peter*. Spokesman for the Twelve; always named first in lists of the apostles. His work is the focus of chs 1–12.

ACTS—NOTE ON 2:15 *third hour of the day*. Hour of prayer and sacrifice at the temple. See p 1567.

ACTS—NOTE ON 2:17–21 See notes, Jl 2:28–32.

ACTS—NOTE ON 2:17 *last days*. Peter quotes Joel's prophecy to state that the decisive stage and climax of history has arrived with Christ and the Church (cf 1Co 10:11; Heb 1:2; 1Pt 1:20). See p 1245. *pour out My Spirit*. God gives His people not just things, but Himself in the Third Person of the Godhead. The promised Baptism with the Spirit was "poured," showing that the term "baptism" was not regarded strictly as immersion (cf v 33). See notes, Ezk 36:25; Mk 7:3–4. *all flesh*. God's salvation is universal in scope; He pours out the Spirit on all kinds of people. *prophesy … visions … dreams*. See pp 1077–83.

ACTS—NOTE ON 2:18 *servants*. Like Mary (Lk 1:38) and Paul (Rm 1:1), all Christians are bond servants of the Lord. He gives them His Spirit, yet they belong to Him. See p 1904.

ACTS—NOTE ON 2:19 *wonders … signs*. Works that demonstrate the arrival of the last days, begun in the earthly life of Christ (see "Jesus' Signs," p 1775) and continued here in Ac (cf v 43; 4:16, 22, 30; 5:12; 6:8; 8:6, 13; 14:3; 15:12). *above … below*. Emphasizes the dramatic top-to-bottom change in creation that God enacts.

ACTS—NOTE ON 2:20 *the day of the Lord*. When Christ returns in glory. See p 1079.

ACTS—NOTE ON 2:21 *calls upon*. A cry from the heart, lamenting sin and imploring mercy. *name of the Lord*. See "Lord," p 2098; see also "name," p 843.

ACTS—NOTE ON 2:22 *Men of Israel*. Not ethnic or geographical (v 14) but a strictly religious form of address. *Nazareth*. See note, Mt 2:23. *attested to you by God*. God richly supplied Jesus' credentials in His works. See "Jesus' Signs," p 1775.
ACTS—NOTE ON 2:23 *delivered up*. Betrayed. *foreknowledge of God*. Paradoxically, God uses man's free work for His purposes (see note, Jn 2:24–25). *you crucified and killed*. Distinction between mere death and accursed crucifixion. *lawless men*. Jesus was handed over to the Romans, who were not under the yoke of Moses' Law.
ACTS—NOTE ON 2:24 *loosing the pangs of death*. LXX translation of Hbr "cords of Sheol" (cf 2Sm 22:6), which applies to death an image usually associated with giving birth. Because death's pangs are terminal, not temporary, only God can overcome them. Luth: "[Christ] came back to life, and this became an opportunity for life, which before had been an opportunity for death. In this way death has become the door to life for us; disgrace has become the elevation to glory; condemnation and hell, the door to salvation. And this has happened through Christ, who was sinless, etc." (AE 19:31).
ACTS—NOTE ON 2:25–28 David ("I") speaks in two dimensions. First, the king rejoices that God will not allow death to cut off David's or God's covenant people. Second, through David, Christ speaks prophetically of His own soul's deliverance and His body's escape from corruption.
ACTS—NOTE ON 2:25 *David says*. See note, 1:16. *I … me*. David speaks for Jesus, his descendant. *saw the Lord*. Christ has always beheld God, His heavenly Father. *at my right hand*. Helper from all distress. See "right hand," p 843.
ACTS—NOTE ON 2:27–28 Though David himself hopes for bodily resurrection, v 27 is about Christ.
ACTS—NOTE ON 2:29 *patriarch David*. Head of his dynasty, which lasted in Judah for 422 years. Ranked with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.
ACTS—NOTE ON 2:30 *prophet*. See pp 1077–83. *God had sworn*. Cf 2Sm 7:12–16; Ps 132:11.
ACTS—NOTE ON 2:31 *the Christ*. First use of the term in Ac. See p 2098.
ACTS—NOTE ON 2:32 *witnesses*. Cf 1:8.
ACTS—NOTE ON 2:33 *exalted at the right hand of God*. Jesus has equality with God the Father. See "right hand," p 843. *poured out*. See note, v 17.

ACTS—NOTE ON 2:34–35 David reverses conventional speech by addressing one of his descendants as his superior. Christ, David's son, is David's Lord. See note, Ps 110:1.

ACTS—NOTE ON 2:36 *made*. Appointed to office. Through the resurrection, God clearly reveals Jesus' status as Son, Lord, and Messiah. *Lord and Christ*. The Church has always confessed that Jesus is God. See p 2098. *you crucified*. Though only some people were directly responsible for Jesus' trial and murder, His death was required to remove the guilt of all people's sin.

ACTS—NOTE ON 2:37 *cut to the heart*. Deepest emotional wound. *apostles*. See p 1901. *Brothers*. Fellow Jews. Shows how Peter and the Spirit won the empathy of his hearers.

ACTS—NOTE ON 2:38 *Repent and be baptized*. Recognize your desperate state, confess your sins, and be washed by God. See note, Mt 3:6; see also p 1369. *in the name of Jesus Christ*. Distinguishes the Baptism mandated by Christ from that of John the Baptist and other Jewish groups. See p 1369. This does not rule out use of the full trinitarian wording in Baptism (Mt 28:19). *for the forgiveness of your sins*. Chief blessing of Baptism, esp helpful emphasis in view of v 37. *receive the gift of the Holy Spirit*. The Holy Spirit is received through Baptism. See note, Jn 3:5.

ACTS—NOTE ON 2:39 *the promise*. The gift of the Spirit. See note, 1:8. *for you … for all*. God is gracious to all people regardless of age or race. See note, Mt 19:14. "Children are to be baptized. … Being offered to God through Baptism, they are received into God's grace" (AC IX 2). "God's approval of the Baptism of little children is shown by this: He gives the Holy Spirit to those baptized. … For if this Baptism would be empty, the Holy Spirit would be given to no one. No one would be saved. And finally, there would be no Church" (Ap IX 53).

ACTS—NOTE ON 2:40 *Save yourselves*. Or, "be saved."

ACTS—NOTE ON 2:41 *those who received his word were baptized*. Not all believed. *three thousand souls*. Describes the stunning growth of the Church. Cf 1:15. Luke places special emphasis on the growth and spread of the Church (2:47; 4:4; 5:14, 16; 6:7).

ACTS—NOTE ON 2:14–41 Peter shows from the Scriptures that Jesus is Israel's Lord as well as Savior of the nations. Rejoice that God pours out His Spirit in Baptism and multiplies His blessings to us in daily repentance and forgiveness. He makes a new Israel, a new house of David—the

Church! • Lord, grant that I may confess and proclaim You with confidence, as Peter did. Amen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 2:42 *devoted*. With rapt attention. *apostles' teaching*. Summary of the apostles' faith and proclamation. *fellowship*. See p 1902. *breaking of bread*. See note, Lk 24:30. Could include the Holy Supper. "Although we do not object if some interpret these passages as referring to the Sacrament, it does not make sense that only one part of the Sacrament was given. According to the ordinary usage of language, naming one part also means the other" (Ap XXII 7). *the prayers*. See p 1567. The Jews had liturgical-style prayers they memorized and recited, a practice continued in the Christian Church, as the use of the Lord's Prayer shows. See p 959.

ACTS—NOTE ON 2:43 *awe*. Lit, "fear." See p 1001. *wonders and signs*. See note, v 19. At this time, more miracles are happening through the apostles than Luke has space to record (cf Jn 21:25).

ACTS—NOTE ON 2:44–45 *all things in common.* See note, 4:32.

ACTS—NOTE ON 2:46 *day by day, attending the temple*. The apostles (even as late as 21:26) exercise the maximum possible participation at the Jerusalem temple, which Jesus called His Father's house (Lk 2:49; Jn 2:16). *breaking bread in their homes*. Covers both the agape meal (cf Jude 12) and the Lord's Supper.

ACTS—NOTE ON 2:47 *favor with all the people*. The respect they received from the ordinary folk contrasts with the spitefulness of the rulers (ch 4). *the Lord added to their number*. God alone, through grace, builds His Church. See note, v 41.

ACTS—NOTE ON 2:42–47 The early Christians lived only for their Lord and for the other members of His Body, the Church. How cheap in comparison is our indifference to the Church; how sad are our compromises with the world. Yet the Holy Spirit still dwells and works among us; we still have the apostles' teaching embodied in the NT Scriptures. How blessed are we in such heavenly fellowship! • Lord, open our eyes to Your reality, order our priorities, and let Your light transfigure these latter days. Amen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 3:1 *the hour of prayer*. Devout Jews had developed patterns of prayer at specific times. See p 1567. Features of early Christian prayers recorded in *The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles* (aka the *Didache*, c first century; cf 2:42) resemble features of Jewish prayers associated with the temple services (cf Ex 29:38–42).

ACTS—NOTE ON 3:2 *laid daily at the gate*. Destitute, but the beneficiary of community care. *Beautiful Gate*. Location unknown; traditionally identified with the Shushan Gate, and by some moderns with the Nicanor Gate. *to ask alms*. A positive aspect of Judaism was its emphasis on doing good to a neighbor in need (affirmed by our Lord, Mt 6:1–4).
ACTS—NOTE ON 3:3–5 The beggar receives personal attention from the apostles but not the gift he expects. See note, v 6.
ACTS—NOTE ON 3:6 *In the name of Jesus Christ*. The name of Jesus is exalted, supremely holy, and worthy of praise (cf 5:40–41). It is the deposit of salvation, which it powerfully enacts (2:38). See "name," p 843; see also note, Jn 16:23. Ambr: "He gave not money, but he gave health. How much better it is to have health without money, than money without health!" (*NPNF* 2 10:63).
ACTS—NOTE ON 3:8–10 Praising God, the cured man sets the best example for all who receive the healing gifts of Word and Sacrament.
ACTS—NOTE ON 3:1–10 In this highest form of almsgiving, Peter and John dispense God's own gift: mercy. Present through the Spirit in His holy name, the exalted Jesus makes the crippled man stand, that he may leap for joy. Shudder when you hear people use Jesus' holy name as a curse rather than as a cure. Call on Him in all your needs, and use His name reverently and gladly to bestow the Father's gifts on others. • Fill us, Holy Spirit, that our hearts and lips may honor Jesus' holy name. Amen.
ACTS—NOTE ON 3:11 *portico called Solomon's*. On east side of the court of Gentiles. See diagram, p 1838; see also note, Jn 10:23.
ACTS—NOTE ON 3:13 *servant*. Gk *paidion*, "child." Not "slave" (cf 2:18) or "minister," as is used sometimes of apostles. Derived from LXX version of Is 52:13, where it expresses both submission to the Lord and intimacy with Him. *you delivered over and denied*. Strong emphasis on their complicity in Jesus' death. Perhaps some faces were familiar from Pilate's courtyard and from Calvary.
ACTS—NOTE ON 3:14 *the Holy and Righteous One … a murderer*. Pointed contrast between Jesus' innocence and the guilt of the criminal Barabbas. Yet Jesus placed Himself under the curse of all sin. See "righteous," p 843.
ACTS—NOTE ON 3:15 *the Author of life*. As "founder" (Heb 2:10; 12:2), Jesus serves as "the firstborn among many brothers" (Rm 8:29). See notes, Col 1:15, 18; Jn 1:12–13. Luth: "[The OT saints] believed that He would

come in the future; but we believe that He has appeared, and that He has gone away to the Father to prepare dwelling places for us (John 14:2), and that He is sitting at the right hand of the Father and is interceding for us" (AE 1:348).

ACTS—NOTE ON 3:16 *by faith in His name*. Jesus' holy name works not by magic but through trust, or faith. *faith … through Jesus*. Faith in Jesus completes the people's existing faith in the God of Israel and His promised Messiah.

ACTS—NOTE ON 3:17 *ignorance*. Because Christ rarely showed His divine majesty on earth, the people did not fully understand who He was.

ACTS—NOTE ON 3:18 *Christ would suffer*. Cf v 13; Is 52:13; see p 1178.

ACTS—NOTE ON 3:19 *Repent … turn again*. See "turn," p 1080. *blotted out*. See notes, Ex 32:32; Ps 103:11–12.

ACTS—NOTE ON 3:20 *times of refreshing*. Like "breathing space," times free from end-times distress. *Christ appointed*. See note, 2:36.

ACTS—NOTE ON 3:21 *heaven must receive*. Christ ascended to the Father, yet His present reign still links Him with His Church. See note, Mt 28:20. *restoring all the things*. He will undo all the damage done to humankind in the fall. Cf Is 65:17–25. *God spoke by*. See note, Dt 18:18.

ACTS—NOTE ON 3:22 *a prophet like me*. Moses and Jesus are both prophets and deliverers.

ACTS—NOTE ON 3:23 A sobering threat (cf Rv 2:9). Cf Dt 18:19.

ACTS—NOTE ON 3:24 *all the prophets … proclaimed these days*. They announced God's coming reign, which arrived in Jesus. See p 1245.

ACTS—NOTE ON 3:25 *sons of the prophets and of the covenant*. These hearers should welcome Jesus as a fulfillment of God's promise. *in your offspring … be blessed*. See note, Gal 3:8.

ACTS—NOTE ON 3:26 *His servant*. See note, v 13. *bless*. See p 842.

ACTS—NOTE ON 3:11–26 Peter shows the crowd at the temple that all the prophets have pointed to Jesus as the Christ. The risen Lord brings to light our hidden guilt and lifts the burden that crushes every sinner. Though His Word points out your shame, His grace will wipe away your sin. • Lord Jesus, come boldly to both Jew and Gentile, to accuse and to forgive, to wound and to heal. Amen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 4:1 *captain of the temple*. Chief of temple police, a Levite second only to the high priest in the temple hierarchy. *Sadducees*. See p 1557.

ACTS—NOTE ON 4:2 *proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection*. Many Jews (esp the Pharisees; see p 1557) had expected the resurrection of all the dead at the end of time. Jesus' resurrection proved that the end had already appeared in one man. See note, Jb 19:26.
ACTS—NOTE ON 4:3 *evening*. Started at 3 p.m. See p 1567.
ACTS—NOTE ON 4:4 *many … believed*. The temple authorities could not destroy the Spirit's work. *five thousand*. Significant growth since Pentecost. See note, 2:41.
ACTS—NOTE ON 4:5 *rulers … elders … scribes*. See p 1556–57.
ACTS—NOTE ON 4:6 *Annas the high priest and Caiaphas*. See note, Jn 11:49. *John*. Likely son of Annas, Caiaphas's successor. *Alexander*. Unknown from other sources. *high-priestly family*. Hasmoneans. See pp 1556, 278.
ACTS—NOTE ON 4:7 *power … name*. Perhaps echoing the accusation that Jesus performed miracles by sorcery (cf Mt 12:24).
ACTS—NOTE ON 4:8 *filled with the Holy Spirit*. The authorities' force is powerless against Peter's prophetic inspiration, a fulfillment of Lk 12:11–12; 21:14–15. See note, 2:4.
ACTS—NOTE ON 4:9 *healed*. See note, Lk 7:50; see also "save," p 1904.
ACTS—NOTE ON 4:10 See note, 3:6; cf Php 2:10–11.
ACTS—NOTE ON 4:11 *stone that was rejected*. The Holy One was treated as accursed (Gal 3:13), as sin itself (2Co 5:21). *cornerstone*. Jesus burst forth from the tomb as the Second Adam, able to support the whole spiritual temple, the Church. See note, Ps 118:22.
ACTS—NOTE ON 4:12 Christianity is the one true faith because Jesus, the only source of salvation, rescues us from the evil one. He delivers all people from a verdict of damnation and heals ills of body and soul. "Christ's name is received only by faith. Therefore, we are saved by confidence in Christ's name, and not by confidence in our works. For 'the name' here means the cause that is mentioned, because of which salvation is gained. To call upon Christ's name is to trust in His name as the cause, or price, because of which we are saved" (Ap IV 98). Luth: "We should learn to magnify and extol our blessings, which are incomparably greater and more illustrious than the blessings of the fathers. We have the Keys, the Gospel, the sacraments, and the forgiveness of sins and life richly offered to us in many ways" (AE 8:312–13).

ACTS—NOTE ON 4:13 *uneducated, common men*. Unschooled fishermen; it was unthinkable that these apostles should speak with such force and passion. See note, Pr 1:8. *they had been with Jesus*. Their accents betrayed their Galilean origin; their faces were likely recognized by some.
ACTS—NOTE ON 4:15 *council*. See p 1556.
ACTS—NOTE ON 4:16 Like Pilate (Jn 18:38), the authorities disregard truth.
ACTS—NOTE ON 4:17–18 The vested interests of the ruling class triumph over obvious truth. The Judean leadership refuses God's gracious appeal, with dire consequences in time (Jerusalem destroyed in AD 70) and eternity (Jn 3:18; 2Jn 9).
ACTS—NOTE ON 4:19–20 Allegiance to God alone is the antidote to all totalitarianism. See note, 5:29.
ACTS—NOTE ON 4:21 *no way to punish them*. Simple force would rebound against the Council, so they must tread softly—for now. Cf 7:54–8:3; on the Council, see p 1556.
ACTS—NOTE ON 4:22 This single act of healing pointed to a greater cure available to all through Christ the healer. Because of his age, this man's crippled condition would have been widely known.
ACTS—NOTE ON 4:1–22 Locking their hearts, the religious authorities also close their eyes and cover their ears to silence the Word. But the crippled man still stands, the name of Jesus displays its power, and salvation resides in Him alone. Today, the Lord wants you to stand along with His bold apostles. He pledges His life and blessing to you in the midst of all difficulties. • Christ, our Savior, give us courage to stand firm. Amen.
ACTS—NOTE ON 4:23 *friends*. Lit, "their own [people]." The Church is more close-knit than any family. *chief priests … elders*. See p 1556.
ACTS—NOTE ON 4:24 *Sovereign Lord*. Or, "Master." God rules in fatherly love as an absolute, powerful ruler. See note, Na 2:13.
ACTS—NOTE ON 4:25–26 Used in the coronation liturgy of Davidic kings, Ps 2 describes Satan's ongoing war against God and against Jesus as the Christ. See notes, v 27; Ps 2:4.
ACTS—NOTE ON 4:25 *father David*. David's intimate relationship with God prefigures Jesus' unique relationship with Him. *Your servant*. See note, 3:13. *said by the Holy Spirit*. See note, 2Pt 1:21.
ACTS—NOTE ON 4:27 *holy servant Jesus, whom You anointed*. Identifies Jesus with the figure of Ps 2:2. Hatred of Christianity is ultimately loathing

of Christ Himself. See "Christ," p 2098.
ACTS—NOTE ON 4:28 *predestined*. God directs events while allowing human choices, all to achieve His saving plan. See note, Rm 8:30.
ACTS—NOTE ON 4:29 The Holy Spirit fills believers with boldness in the face of intimidation.
ACTS—NOTE ON 4:30 *signs and wonders*. See note, 2:19. *Your holy servant Jesus*. See note, 3:13.
ACTS—NOTE ON 4:31 *the place … was shaken*. The Holy Spirit shows His presence by a sign similar to, but distinct from, what occurred at 2:2 (cf Ex 19:18). *filled with the Holy Spirit*. See note, 2:4. *speak the word of God with boldness*. Cf v 29. Their prayer was answered.
ACTS—NOTE ON 4:23–31 Mounting pressure drives the apostles to prayer. They recite God's sure Word and ask Him for boldness and a demonstration of His presence. Remember to pray for boldness when faced with persecution. Rejoice that the Lord refashions you in His image by His Word and Spirit. • Lord, grant Your Church throughout the world such a prayer for boldness, said with one heart and one Spirit. Amen.
ACTS—NOTE ON 4:32 *one heart and soul*. Church unity in every respect. Cf 2:42–47. *everything in common*. Preview and foretaste of the restoration of Paradise-like conditions in heaven. God gives us property and resources for our neighbor's benefit. The early Christians fully shared with one another, but not in the same way as the failed communist experiments of the twentieth century. Here there is no compulsion or involvement of the State —only believers are affected, and only goods are shared, not their production.
ACTS—NOTE ON 4:33 *with great power the apostles*. Such preaching was the opposite of dull, distant reading from a manuscript. *great grace*. Likely high esteem from the average person in Jerusalem. Cf Mk 7:37.
ACTS—NOTE ON 4:35 *distributed … as any had need*. Voluntary, commendable. See note, v 32.
ACTS—NOTE ON 4:36 *Joseph … Barnabas*. The nickname would distinguish Joseph from his many Jewish namesakes. *encouragement*. A role he would fulfill later in the mission to the Gentiles. *Levite*. See p 228. Barnabas stands in contrast to Ananias and Sapphira (ch 5). He will play a major role, beginning in ch 13, when he becomes Paul's co-worker.

ACTS—NOTE ON 4:32–37 As the early Christians loved their Lord, they loved His Bride, the Church, giving of themselves freely. As you gather goods that perish, consider that "it is more blessed to give than to receive" (20:35). Lavish love on your brothers and sisters in Christ, just as Jesus lavished His love on us all and gave Himself unto death for the worst of sinners. • Grant us, Lord, to live each hour in the knowledge that "love never ends" (1Co 13:8). Amen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 5:1 *Ananias*. Hbr *Hananiah*, "The LORD is gracious." *Sapphira*. Aram for "beautiful." Likely not Jews of the Dispersion, but natives of Judea.

ACTS—NOTE ON 5:2 Hypocrisy. This wealthy couple had the right to retain their property, but they sinned grievously by pretending to offer it all. (See the hypocrisy of the Pharisees in Mt 23, of Achan in Jsh 7.) Their pious playacting and deceit disrupted the marvelous unity of the Church (4:32). This is the first deliberate sin recorded in the Church's history. Their actions contrast with Barnabas's openhanded generosity (4:36–37).

ACTS—NOTE ON 5:3–4 *lie to the Holy Spirit … lied … to God*. The Holy Spirit, source of this power, is Himself fully God, equal to the Father and the Son. Ambr: "Peter teaches that the same is the Holy Spirit Who is the Spirit of the Lord" (*NPNF* 2 10:101). Ambr: "The Spirit of the Lord is the very Spirit of God" (*NPNF* 2 10:142). The power (1:8) manifested in the apostolic ministry of the Church, if abused, brings serious consequences. Ananias's love of riches set him on Judas's accursed path (cf Jn 13:2).

ACTS—NOTE ON 5:5 *breathed his last*. Grievous sin threatens to extinguish spiritual life. Here it brings about bodily death also. Ananias's death is a divine chastisement understood in light of the biblical witness to God's holiness (cf Ex 19:12; Lv 10; 1Sm 6:6; Heb 12:29). *great fear*. "Servile fear"; terror of God's judgment. Contrast with "fear of the LORD." See p 1001.

ACTS—NOTE ON 5:6 The speed of burial underlines Ananias's terrifying brush with God's holiness.

ACTS—NOTE ON 5:9 *to test the Spirit of the Lord?* Cf Ex 17:2; Nu 20:13, 24. To trifle with the Holy Spirit is to trifle with God (see note, vv 3–4).

ACTS—NOTE ON 5:10 *breathed her last*. See note, v 5.

ACTS—NOTE ON 5:11 *church*. First mention in Luke's writings, but the reality has been present since 1:12–15. See p 1901–2.

ACTS—NOTE ON 5:1–11 Ananias and Sapphira pay a high price for their hypocrisy, taking grace for granted and forgetting that "we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ" (2Co 5:10). Woe to those who disturb and deceive the Lord's Church! Yet, "the fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom" (Pr 9:10). "If anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father" (1Jn 2:1). • Lord, let a goodly measure of "fear and trembling" (Php 2:12) inform our trust in You. Amen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 5:12 *signs … regularly done*. See note, 2:19. This season of unstoppable miracles would not always be the case. Cf 8:1; 14:22; see note, 2Co 12:12. *by the hands of the apostles*. An answer to prayer (4:29–30) as God continued to use the apostles for His work. *together in Solomon's Portico*. Seemingly the apostles' favorite retreat. See note, 3:11.

ACTS—NOTE ON 5:13–14 *the rest*. Many Christians kept their distance from the apostles on account of the fate of Ananias and Sapphira, but conversions continued at a brisk rate.

ACTS—NOTE ON 5:15 Cf Lk 4:40; 6:18–19. *shadow*. God's work through Peter is amazing. See note, 19:11–12.

ACTS—NOTE ON 5:16 *all healed*. Cf Jn 14:12.

ACTS—NOTE ON 5:12–16 God heals many people through the apostles. This massive outpouring of God's love and power comes with His serious appeals for repentance. God's power to change lives is still at work today. His greatest work always remains the forgiveness of sins. • Lord, fill us with all due reverence for You and Your mysteries. Stretch forth Your hand to heal the sicknesses of our bodies and souls. Amen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 5:17 *high priest … Sadducees*. See p 1557. *filled with jealousy*. Envy, unchecked, leads to murder (e.g., 7:58; 12:2).

ACTS—NOTE ON 5:18 *arrested the apostles*. Apparently all 12 (cf v 29). *public prison*. City jail.

ACTS—NOTE ON 5:19 *an angel of the Lord*. Cf Lk 22:43. *opened the prison doors*. Not with the guards' keys, but miraculously. Cf 12:7–10.

ACTS—NOTE ON 5:20 *all the words of this Life*. The message focused on the life of the risen Christ. Cf 1Jn 1:2; see pp 1784–85.

ACTS—NOTE ON 5:21 *entered the temple at daybreak*. C 6 a.m. They probably went directly to the temple courts. (Josephus states that the temple gates were opened at midnight. They were likely closed after the evening sacrifice.)

ACTS—NOTE ON 5:23 The angel and the departing apostles had not attracted the guards' attention. Perhaps the Lord caused their sleep, a violation of a guard's service.
ACTS—NOTE ON 5:24 *captain of the temple*. See note, 4:1. *chief priests*. See p 1556.
ACTS—NOTE ON 5:26 *not by force*. Temple guards wisely avoided a riot. "Superiors should therefore be honored by us with whatever respect we can, but in such a way that we do not reject or deny the Word of Christ and the promise of grace on their account and lose the spiritual blessing. For all respect, honor, and services of every kind are to be paid to magistrates with a good conscience and joyful heart if they remain within the prescribed limits, that is, provided that obedience to God and confession of the Word remain intact" (AE 6:168). *stoned*. Penalty for blasphemy. The people acknowledged divine power at work through the apostles.
ACTS—NOTE ON 5:27 *council*. See p 1556.
ACTS—NOTE ON 5:28 *bring this man's blood upon us*. Indicates the high priest's guilty conscience.
ACTS—NOTE ON 5:29 *obey God rather than men*. "It is necessary for Christians to be obedient to their rulers and laws. The only exception is when they are commanded to sin" (AC XVI 6–7). Hus: "As we are commanded to obey our superiors in things lawful and honorable, with the circumstances taken into consideration, so we are commanded to resist them to the face when they walk contrary to the divine counsels or commandments" (*The Church*, p 222). Luth: "One of these two things has to happen: either the Word of God will abide and conquer them; or at least they will be unable to suppress it, even if they refuse to accept all its grace and goodness and salvation" (AE 21:121).
ACTS—NOTE ON 5:30 *hanging Him on a tree*. Judean expression for crucifixion. Cf Dt 21:22–23; see note, Gal 3:13.
ACTS—NOTE ON 5:31 *exalted … at His right hand*. Jesus' ascension. See notes, Eph 1:20; Rm 8:34; see also "right hand," p 843. *Leader*. See note, 3:15.
ACTS—NOTE ON 5:32 *so is the Holy Spirit*. Cf 1:8; see note, Jn 15:26. *given to those who obey*. See note, Rm 1:5.
ACTS—NOTE ON 5:34 *Pharisee*. See p 1557. *Gamaliel, a teacher of the law*. See "Hillel, House of," p 1557.

ACTS—NOTE ON 5:36 *Theudas*. Josephus mentions such a rebel active in AD 45–46 (*Ant* 20:97–98). Luke likely refers to an earlier incident (see also *Ant* 17:271–72).
ACTS—NOTE ON 5:37 *Judas the Galilean*. Active during a troubled time in Judea. *days of the census*. Josephus dates this census to c AD 6, when Quirinius became imperial legate of Syria. Papyrus census forms show that such censuses were taken every 14 years.
ACTS—NOTE ON 5:38–39 Gamaliel's proposal, fulfilled by the growth and endurance of Christianity, shows the power of God that protects Christian faith. A mixture of shrewd pragmatism and pious caution, it poses a thoughtful suggestion to present-day Judaism.
ACTS—NOTE ON 5:40 *they beat them*. Likely "forty lashes less one," inflicted five times on Paul (2Co 11:24). *not to speak in the name of Jesus*. See note, 19:13.
ACTS—NOTE ON 5:42 *teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ*. See note, Php 2:11.
ACTS—NOTE ON 5:17–42 God's patience (Rm 2:4) is running out. Those at the head of Israel are dangerously close to judgment. Under fire, the Church holds firm, confesses the truth, and accepts the suffering that follows. Today, pray for bold witness and the blessing of peaceful service. When trouble threatens, have confidence that the crucified and risen Savior will keep us steadfast in His grace. • Lord, protect and deliver Your holy people who are still persecuted countless times each day. Amen.
ACTS—NOTE ON 6:1 *disciples*. First of 25 occurrences of this term in Ac; emphasizes personal adherence to Christ (though cf 9:25). See note, Mt 5:1. *Hellenists*. See pp 1556–57. *Hebrews*. Jews resident in Jerusalem, speaking Aram as their primary (and perhaps only) language; generally resistant to Hellenistic culture. See p 751. *distribution*. Gk *diakonia*, "service," "ministry." The social service described in 4:34–35 remained a striking feature of the Jerusalem Church and was attractive to outsiders. It benefited esp widows, who were often subject to dire hardship. See notes, 1Tm 5:3–16. Cultural factionalism had broken out, threatening the Church's unity described in the two previous summaries (2:42–47; 4:32–35).
ACTS—NOTE ON 6:2–6 Example of a local church council; this burning issue affected only the local church of Jerusalem. See p 1867. Luth: "The diaconate is the ministry, not of reading the Gospel or the Epistle, as is the

present [medieval] practice, but of distributing the church's aid to the poor" (AE 36:116).

ACTS—NOTE ON 6:3 *good repute*. See the qualifications for deacons in 1Tm 3:1–13. *full of the Spirit and of wisdom*. Both spiritual and practical aptitudes. See note, 2:4. *we will appoint*. The people chose the deacons; the apostles instituted their office.

ACTS—NOTE ON 6:4 Christ mandated to the apostles the ministry of prayer and the Word. Later, this apostolic ministry is passed on to the elders and overseers (14:23; 20:28). By instituting the separate office of deacon, the ministry of directing the practical affairs of the Church (esp relief of the poor) is entrusted to a different set of office bearers. Though Christ alone had authority to establish the apostolic ministry (see note, Mt 10:1), the apostles could establish other offices according to the Church's needs (see list in Eph 4:11).

ACTS—NOTE ON 6:5 *full of faith and of the Holy Spirit*. Stephen's spiritual gifts anticipate his confrontation with the authorities at Jerusalem (ch 7). See note, 2:4. *proselyte of Antioch*. Originally a Gentile. See p 1557. The deacons' Gk names suggest that they were likely Hellenists, though some Judeans also had Gk names.

ACTS—NOTE ON 6:6 *they prayed and laid their hands on them*. Consecration was a means of solemnly assigning offices (e.g., Nu 8:10; 27:18–23). Luth: "We are all equally priests, that is to say, we have the same power in respect to the Word and the sacraments. However, no one may make use of this power except by the consent of the community or by the call of a superior. (For what is the common property of all, no individual may arrogate to himself, unless he is called.) And therefore this 'sacrament' of ordination, if it is anything at all, is nothing else than a certain rite whereby one is called to the ministry of the church" (AE 36:116).

ACTS—NOTE ON 6:7 *word … continued to increase*. More people received the apostolic message. See note, 2:41. *priests*. Given the priests' vested interest in the continuance of their careers at the temple, they may have been the most difficult to change. But God's Word can bring faith to any heart. See p 228; see also "Zadokites," pp 1557–58. *obedient to the faith*. See note, Rm 1:5.

ACTS—NOTE ON 6:1–7 The apostles deal with complaints about the relief of the Church's poor, instituting the office of deacon. Church conflict can often be resolved for the benefit of the ministries, preaching, teaching,

and physical care of God's people. If your congregation is experiencing conflict, take counsel and comfort from this passage. Also, rest your heart and confidence in the Lord, who sends His Spirit and heals His Church. • Lord, let love rule our life, and supply us with pastors and deacons for Your glory and for the good of Your flock. Amen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 6:8 *full of grace and power*. Cf 2:4. *wonders and signs*. See note, 2:19.

ACTS—NOTE ON 6:9 *synagogue*. The NT provides some of the earliest references to synagogues. Later, the Jerusalem Talmud numbered 480 synagogues in Jerusalem; the Babylonian Talmud numbered 394. The early Christians may have been regarded as their own synagogue. See note, Jn 9:22. *Freedmen*. Gk transliteration of Lat, likely indicating Jews from Italy who had been freed from slavery.

ACTS—NOTE ON 6:10 *wisdom and the Spirit*. Cf v 3. Stephen received the gifts promised by his Lord (cf Lk 12:12). See note, 2:4.

ACTS—NOTE ON 6:11 *blasphemous words against Moses and God*. Stephen may have declared how Christ fulfilled the Law, altering the people's relationship to the Law of Moses and the temple services (insights later associated esp with Paul). People feared that the Christians would despise worship at the temple.

ACTS—NOTE ON 6:12 *elders … scribes … council*. See pp 1556–57.

ACTS—NOTE ON 6:13 *false witnesses*. Same strategy that led to Jesus' arrest and condemnation. Cf Mk 14:56–59. *this holy place*. The temple (cf 7:44–50). *the law*. See p 971.

ACTS—NOTE ON 6:14 *destroy this place*. See notes, vv 11, 13. *customs that Moses delivered to us*. Oral law taught by the rabbis. See "Sadducees," p 1557.

ACTS—NOTE ON 6:15 Stephen's face likely shone with heavenly light, a sign of Christ's indwelling and the nearness of God's presence. See note, Lk 24:4.

ACTS—NOTE ON 6:8–15 Stephen is the new target of persecution. Synagogue leaders twist his words, accusing him of treason against Judaism. When persecution confronts you, be faithful to Jesus, whatever the consequences may be. Remember that He is always faithful to you and can deliver you. • Lord, may we, like Stephen, never falter when under attack for You. Amen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 7:1 *high priest*. Perhaps Annas. Cf 4:6; Mt 26:57–68; Mk 14:53–65; Lk 22:66–71; Jn 18:12–14.
ACTS—NOTE ON 7:2 *God of glory*. Stephen asserted that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is both the subject and source of his message. See "glory of the LORD," pp 6–7.
ACTS—NOTE ON 7:4 *this land*. An essential element of the old covenant was the Promised Land (cf Gn 12:1–9; 15:18–21; 17:1–14).
ACTS—NOTE ON 7:5 *no inheritance*. See "portion," p 7. Abraham held title to the Promised Land only by faith. After God called him, he became a sojourner. His nomadic existence in obedience to the Lord is further emphasized by the need to purchase Sarah's burial site (Gn 23). He lived in tents, despite God's promise that the land would be his and belong to his descendants. He built altars as part of the covenant's purpose for the land. God intended His chosen people to occupy the Promised Land as a "kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Ex 19:6). The inheritance of land was inseparable from God's covenant of grace. *foot's length*. Measurement; also, ownership was demonstrated by stepping onto one's property.
ACTS—NOTE ON 7:6 *four hundred years*. See note, Gn 15:13–14. In God's covenant with Abraham, He foresaw the 400 years of slavery in Egypt, a land they would fill and build but not possess. Their hopes were to be in His Promised Land.
ACTS—NOTE ON 7:7 *worship Me in this place*. See notes, vv 4–5. The purpose of the land was not merely possession, but worship and service to the Lord (cf Dt 4:1–8).
ACTS—NOTE ON 7:8 *covenant of circumcision*. Cf Gn 17:1–14.
ACTS—NOTE ON 7:9 *jealous*. The 12 sons of Jacob came from four different wives. Jacob's favoring of Rachel and their son Joseph fostered conflict (Gn 37:3–4). See p 54–55.
ACTS—NOTE ON 7:10 Despite slavery, false accusations, and prison, Joseph was in God's care. Eventually, Pharaoh released Joseph from prison and elevated him to second in command over Egypt.
ACTS—NOTE ON 7:11–13 Joseph saw the power of God, which both harnessed and overcame his brothers' evil plans. Working through famine, the Lord preserved Jacob's family and kept His covenant with Abraham.
ACTS—NOTE ON 7:14 *seventy-five*. Stephen may have arrived at this total by adding the five sons of Manasseh and Ephraim mentioned in Nu 26:28–37.

ACTS—NOTE ON 7:15–16 Cf Gn 50:6 and Pharaoh's invitation for Joseph to bury his father.
ACTS—NOTE ON 7:17–18 *time of the promise*. Within the Lord's framework of eternity, He made certain that events and situations served His plan of deliverance. Although the new pharaoh did not recognize Joseph or his contribution, this actually signaled a crucial step in the Lord's plan of deliverance.
ACTS—NOTE ON 7:20 *beautiful*. See note, Ex 2:2.
ACTS—NOTE ON 7:22 Moses had the educational benefits of a royal upbringing.
ACTS—NOTE ON 7:23 *came into his heart*. Suggests that Moses, though he enjoyed the advantages of living among the Egyptian royalty, was aware of his identity as an Israelite and the plight of his fellow Israelites. Cf Heb 11:24–25.
ACTS—NOTE ON 7:24–26 Cf Ex 3:11–14.
ACTS—NOTE ON 7:27 *thrust him aside*. Undergirds the theme for Stephen's speech. Moses, thrust aside by the very person whom he saved, would be rejected (v 39) by the people God called him to deliver. Likewise, Christ, the Anointed One, would be denied by the people He came to save. On the cross, Christ was not only rejected by those who mocked Him (Mt 27:39–44) but also forsaken by the Father (Mt 27:46), that He might complete His mission as the sacrifice for our sins.
ACTS—NOTE ON 7:28–29 Cf Ex 2:14–22; see note, Ex 2:22.
ACTS—NOTE ON 7:30–32 *an angel appeared to him*. See note, Ex 3:2. *did not dare to look*. Ex 3:6 recounts how Moses hid his face out of fear of God. Later, Moses spoke face-to-face with God (Ex 33:11), but he was not allowed to see God's unveiled glory. Cf Ex 34:29.
ACTS—NOTE ON 7:33–35 God selected whom man rejected.
ACTS—NOTE ON 7:35–36 *ruler and redeemer*. The Lord called Moses to be His instrument of Israel's deliverance, a redeemer, and to be His mouthpiece to Israel (Ex 3:18). Dt 34:10–12 testifies to Moses' service. *by the hand of the angel*. God called Moses and designated an angel to support him in the work of deliverance. Cf Ps 91:11.
ACTS—NOTE ON 7:37 *a prophet like me*. Pointing to Christ (see note, v 27). Christ is the stone the builders rejected (Lk 20:17), the one "of whom Moses in the Law and also the prophets wrote" (Jn 1:45).

ACTS—NOTE ON 7:38 *living oracles*. The living God (Rv 7:2) is the author of the living words from which believers receive strength and refreshment.
ACTS—NOTE ON 7:39–41 See note, v 27. In thrusting Moses aside, they also rejected God and committed idolatry. Israel's pattern of apostasy, begun under the leadership of Moses (Nu 11), continued under the leadership of Joshua (Jsh 7), the judges (Jgs 2), and the kings (1Ki 11).
ACTS—NOTE ON 7:42–43 *host of heaven*. Cf Dt 17:3. *tent of Moloch … Rephan*. See notes, Am 5:25–27.
ACTS—NOTE ON 7:44 On Mount Sinai, the Lord gave Moses the pattern for the tabernacle (Ex 26), which the builders followed (Ex 36:1; 40). See diagram, p 139.
ACTS—NOTE ON 7:45–48 The tabernacle represented the wanderings in the wilderness, where the Israelites camped by tribe in relationship to the tabernacle (Nu 2). Although David wanted to build a permanent house of worship, the Lord planned for Solomon to build the temple (2Sm 7).
ACTS—NOTE ON 7:49–50 God intended His people to worship Him in spirit and in truth, without focus on their rituals or places of worship apart from Him. Cf Am 5:21–25; Mi 6:6–8; Jn 4:23.
ACTS—NOTE ON 7:51 *stiff-necked*. See note, Ex 32:9; cf Ne 9:16, 26. *uncircumcised in heart and ears*. See note, Lv 26:41. *resist the Holy Spirit*. See notes, Is 63:10; Eph 4:30. Cf Mt 23:37; Lk 13:34 for the rejection of Jesus by Jerusalem. The Holy Spirit works through the Word to turn a heart of stone into one of faith (Ezk 36:26–27). "God does not force a person to become godly. (Those who always resist the Holy Spirit and persistently oppose the known truth are not converted)" (FC SD II 60).
ACTS—NOTE ON 7:52 *the Righteous One*. See note, Jer 23:5.
ACTS—NOTE ON 7:53 *delivered by angels*. The Lord assigned an angel to guard the children of Israel on the way out of Egypt (Ex 23:20). The commander of the Lord's army appeared to Joshua. See note, Jsh 5:14; cf Jsh 24:8.
ACTS—NOTE ON 7:1–53 Stephen's message recounts how God's chosen people, by rejecting Moses, rejected God. Israel's refusal to follow God ended in their dismissal of God's Son. However, Jesus took upon Himself the sins of the world, that we would be reconciled to God the Father. In Holy Baptism, He gives us new hearts and pours out His Spirit

for us. • Father, for Jesus' sake, forgive my sins. Circumcise my heart, that I trust in You above all things. Amen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 7:54 *ground their teeth*. See p 1276.

ACTS—NOTE ON 7:55–56 *full of the Holy Spirit*. See note, 2:4. *glory*. See p 1902. *Jesus standing at the right hand of God*. Stephen's vision confirmed Christ's prophecy that He would be seen at the right hand of God (Mt 26:64; Lk 22:69). Christ promised He would send the Holy Spirit, who would teach His disciples what to say when persecuted (Lk 12:11–12; Jn 14:15–26). Luth: "When you are baptized, partake of Holy Communion, receive the absolution, or listen to a sermon, heaven is open, and we hear the voice of the Heavenly Father; … Heaven is open, as St. Stephen saw it open (Acts 7:55); and we hear God when He addresses us in Baptism, in Holy Communion, in confession, and in His Word as it proceeds from the mouth of the men who proclaim His message to the people" (AE 22:202).

ACTS—NOTE ON 7:57 Cf Jn 8:44. Those of the devil refuse to hear the truth but rather attack it.

ACTS—NOTE ON 7:58 Stephen's vision and witness guaranteed his condemnation. His witnesses immediately judged him guilty, stoning him outside the city. They did not fear reprisal from the crowds, as they had in their opposition to Jesus. Cf Mt 21:46; Mk 11:18; Lk 20:19; 22:2. *a young man named Saul*. Though young, Saul was old enough to bear public authority (8:3; 9:1–2). Cf Nu 1:3; 4:3. *Saul*. Saul's name reminds one of the OT king Saul, who also came from the tribe of Benjamin and strayed from God's way. Cf 1Sm 15.

ACTS—NOTE ON 7:59–60 *receive my spirit … do not hold this sin against them*. Cf Lk 23:34, 46, Christ's crucifixion. *he fell asleep*. Because Christ conquered sin, death, and the power of the devil, when believers die, their death leads to everlasting life. Cf Rv 14:13; see p 1750.

ACTS—NOTE ON 7:54–60 Stephen displays the heart of one touched and changed by Jesus' love. Normally we do not forgive people until they ask for forgiveness. Here we see a second type of forgiveness, spoken and requested from God before a person asks for it (v 60). When betrayal, persecution, or abuse breaks your heart, recall Stephen's words. Pray that the Lord would lead you to this type of forgiveness. Know that the Lord, who forgave the soldiers who crucified Him, can forgive all your sins. He can likewise heal your wounds of body and soul. So great is His mercy. • "Jesus, in Your dying woes, Even while Your lifeblood flows, Craving

pardon for Your foes: Hear us, holy Jesus. … Oh, may we, who mercy need, Be like You in heart and deed, When with wrong our spirits bleed: Hear us, holy Jesus." Amen. (*LSB* 447:1, 3)

ACTS—NOTE ON 8:1 *Saul approved*. Saul's eagerness to support Stephen's death anticipates his future persecution of Christians. *great persecution*. Through Stephen, the line of division between Christianity and Judaism was sharply drawn for the first time. Persecution came not only on the apostles but on the whole Church. *scattered … except the apostles*. The apostles' responsibilities to the Church required them to stay in Jerusalem under threat of arrest and death. They had faced arrest before (5:18).

ACTS—NOTE ON 8:2 Cf Jn 19:38.

ACTS—NOTE ON 8:3 *Saul was ravaging the church*. See note, Php 3:6. With hindsight, Luke shows that Christ's command to proclaim the Gospel in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the end of the earth (1:8) was partially fulfilled because of this persecution and the scattering of the Church.

ACTS—NOTE ON 8:1–3 Stephen's death and Saul's persecution of Christ's followers illustrate the fulfillment of the prophecy that the world would hate the Gospel and kill those who believed it (Mt 24:9–10). The omnipotent God made the world's fanatical hatred serve His purpose in proclaiming the Gospel throughout the entire world. When you are persecuted for the sake of the Gospel, trust that your Lord is at work in the midst of such circumstances. As the cross shows, He can work blessings for you and for others, despite all curses and condemnations. • "Praise for the first of martyrs Who saw You ready stand To help in time of torment, To plead at God's right hand. Like You, our suff'ring Savior, His enemies he blessed, With 'Lord, receive my spirit,' His faith, by death, confessed." Amen. (*LSB* 517:7)

ACTS—NOTE ON 8:4–5 Philip proclaimed the Gospel in Samaria in fulfillment of Jesus' prophecy (1:8). *city of Samaria*. Never named. Sebaste, Sychar, and Shechem are likely candidates. See map, p 1584. Jesus had preached in the area (Jn 4) and was known to some of the Samaritan people (Jn 4:39–42). See "Samaritans," p 1557.

ACTS—NOTE ON 8:6–8 Philip preached, taught, healed, and cast out demons. Christ had given the disciples authority to heal the sick and cast out demons (Mt 10:8).

ACTS—NOTE ON 8:4–8 The ancient hatred between Jews and Samaritans underscores the corrosion of sin in the world. Christ, however,

through His death and resurrection, makes all people one in Him (Eph 2:11–22). View people of every race and kind as precious to Jesus. His blood washes away all sin, and His Spirit makes us one. • Father, beat down Satan under our feet, and give us faithful laborers for Your harvest field. Through Your Word of salvation, give to all nations peace and harmony. Amen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 8:9 *Simon … practiced magic*. Such practices were common in the ancient world (cf 19:19). Archaeologists often find ritual incantations that invoke spiritual powers, curse people, or cast spells (Hbr term for "magician" means an engraver or writer). See note, Dt 18:9. Simon may have been a religious priest or shaman of superstitious practices rather than a priest of the Samaritan religion and temple at Mount Gerizim.

ACTS—NOTE ON 8:10 Simon cleverly deceived many into believing he had divinely imparted powers.

ACTS—NOTE ON 8:12 *they believed … good news*. The power of the Gospel overcame the empty show of Simon's magic. See note, Rm 1:16. *kingdom of God*. See pp 1565–66. *baptized, both men and women*. Under the old covenant, only males were circumcised (Gn 17:10). But in the new covenant, Baptism consecrates both men and women in the one faith (Gal 3:28; Eph 4:5; Col 2:11–14). See p 1369.

ACTS—NOTE ON 8:13 The Lord's miracles and the convincing power of the Gospel converted even Simon, who then accompanied Philip by heeding his teaching or supporting his work.

ACTS—NOTE ON 8:14–17 The outward gift of the Spirit through the apostles' prayers and laying on of hands served to unify the Church, binding together Jews and Samaritans who practiced different yet related religions. The two elements of Baptism are water and the Word (Eph 5:26; cf Mt 28:19; Jn 3:5; Ac 2:38). Notice that Peter and John did not rebaptize those who had been baptized. The one Baptism conveyed the gifts of faith in Christ and eternal salvation, which are worked by the Spirit through water and the Word.

ACTS—NOTE ON 8:15–16 *Spirit … had not yet fallen*. On Pentecost, a public demonstration of the Spirit's approval was given. Luke records that this public demonstration appears as new groups were received into the one Church through the ministry of the apostles: Samaritans (ch 8), Gentiles (ch 10), and the disciples of John the Baptist (ch 19). Note that in each case, these groups knew God's Word and the promise of the Messiah from the OT. The preaching and gift of the Spirit confirm to them that Jesus is indeed the Messiah. See p 1835.

ACTS—NOTE ON 8:17 Cyr Jer: "Peter and John came down, and with prayer, and the laying on of hands, imparted the fellowship of the Holy Ghost" (*NPNF* 2 7:130).

ACTS—NOTE ON 8:18–19 *he offered them money*. Simon assumed that his money and former persuasive ability would bring him new powers. *power*. Gk *exousia*, "authority." He sought to purchase apostolic authority and continue his influence among the Samaritans.

ACTS—NOTE ON 8:20 Peter pronounces a curse on Simon to emphasize rejection of Simon's offer. See "curse," p 6. *the gift of God*. God commanded His people to provide for servants of the Word (Nu 18:24; Ac 28:10; 1Tm 5:17). However, the Gospel, and the blessings thereof, cannot be bought or sold. God's blessings and authority are gifts of God (Eph 2:8–

10; 4:7–14). The Early Church Fathers attribute the beginning of heresies to Simon, though this is likely a simplification of the history. Iren: "This man, then, was glorified by many as if he were a god; and he taught that it was himself who appeared among the Jews as the Son, but descended in Samaria as the Father while he came to other nations in the character of the Holy Spirit" (*ANF* 1:348). Simon became known as the "arch-heretic," and the attempt to buy authority in the Church was named "simony."

ACTS—NOTE ON 8:21 Without hesitation, Peter condemned this lust for power and warned Simon that he had sinned.

ACTS—NOTE ON 8:22 *Repent … and pray*. Peter's warning to Simon is similar to John the Baptist's warning to the Pharisees and Sadducees (Mt 3:2) and Jesus' warning to the Pharisees (Mt 12:25). *if possible*. The matter is so serious Peter anticipates swift judgment (cf 5:1–5; Nu 12).

ACTS—NOTE ON 8:23 *gall of bitterness … bond of iniquity*. Simon is enslaved to sin. Cf Rm 6:17.

ACTS—NOTE ON 8:24 Unlike Ananias and Sapphira (5:1–5), Simon immediately asked Peter to intercede on his behalf and to remove the curse. Cf 1Jn 1:8–10.

ACTS—NOTE ON 8:25 The apostles expanded Philip's work of preaching and teaching. See note, Jn 4:44.

ACTS—NOTE ON 8:9–25 The power of the Gospel, which reaches even the most unlikely people, is illustrated in the lives of the Samaritans. God and His grace cannot be bought. A person's life is transformed only by the power of the Holy Spirit working through the Word. Today, ask the Lord to bless your study of His Word. He will transform you and bless your service according to His gifts and good pleasure. • Father, all too often I have treated Your grace as something I could purchase or earn. Forgive me, for Jesus' sake, and let Your Holy Spirit work mightily in my life, that I might imitate Philip and proclaim Your Word of life. Amen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 8:26 *an angel of the Lord*. See p 1227. *road … to Gaza*. See map, p 1857. *desert*. Or, "uninhabited." The Lord moves Philip from the exciting, expanding work in Samaria to a place with no people.

ACTS—NOTE ON 8:27–28 *Ethiopian*. OT "Cushite," known to Israelites through contacts with Egypt and Sheba. Judeans fled into Egypt during the Babylonian exile (see map, p 717) and settled on the island of Elephantine in Upper Egypt (near modern Aswan). They likely spread the faith southward into Nubia (Sudan) and Ethiopia. The Falasha religion of

Ethiopia likely had ancient Jewish roots. *eunuch*. See note, 2Ki 9:32. *Candace*. Likely Amantitere (c AD 25–41; called Kandake in inscriptions), who ruled at Meroë and is mentioned by Roman authors. *come to Jerusalem to worship*. A convert to Judaism likely returning from an annual festival. Cf Ex 34:23. *reading … Isaiah*. A man of considerable means (affording a large scroll) and education.

ACTS—NOTE ON 8:29 *join this chariot*. The Spirit may have given Philip the swiftness to catch the chariot (cf 1Ki 18:46), or the Ethiopian travelers may have been resting.

ACTS—NOTE ON 8:30–31 *heard him reading*. In ancient times, people typically read aloud. Luth: "It pleased God not to give the Spirit without the Word. … He could, of course, do this apart from the Word; but He does not want to do it that way" (*WLS* § 2050). *unless someone guides*. The Ethiopian eagerly acknowledged that he did not understand the prophet. Luth: "We should hear God's Word with fear and study in it with humility; we should not pounce upon it with our own notions of what is right" (*WLS* § 4758). Contrast the Ethiopian's eager listening with the arrogance of the synagogue of the Freedmen (6:9–14).

ACTS—NOTE ON 8:32–33 Prophecy regarding Jesus' suffering and death for the sins of the world.

ACTS—NOTE ON 8:34 Classic questions for interpreters of Is 53. See p 1178.

ACTS—NOTE ON 8:35 Philip demonstrated that Jesus fulfilled Isaiah's prophecy. Cf Mt 3:15.

ACTS—NOTE ON 8:36 Philip's testimony about Christ likely included accounts of Baptism. Luth: "Whoever is baptized in Christ is baptized through His suffering and blood, or, to state it more clearly, through Baptism he is bathed in the blood of Christ and is cleansed from sins" (*WLS* § 127). Cf Is 56:3–4.

ACTS—NOTE ON 8:38 As a convert to Judaism, the Ethiopian was already well-instructed in biblical teaching. Therefore, Philip did not hesitate to baptize him. See note, Mt 28:19; see also p 1369.

ACTS—NOTE ON 8:39 *the Spirit of the Lord carried Philip away*. See note, v 29. The Lord provided both the resources and means to carry out the mission. See notes, Ezk 3:12, 14; cf 2Co 12:2. *eunuch … rejoicing*. The message of salvation through Christ goes out to all people, bringing forgiveness and blessing (Rm 1:5, 16). Ethiopian Christians trace their

beginning to this man, though Ethiopian kings did not officially adopt Christianity until c AD 350.

ACTS—NOTE ON 8:40 *Azotus*. Identified with Ashdod. One of five chief cities of Philistia, between Gaza and Joppa, where Jews and Gentiles likely dwelt side by side.

ACTS—NOTE ON 8:26–40 God leads Philip to bear witness to and baptize an important official from Ethiopia, ensuring that Jews in Africa and also Ethiopians would likewise receive the Gospel. The Holy Spirit brings the eunuch to faith through the Word and Baptism. Today, rejoice in the Word and Baptism you have received, through which the Holy Spirit continues to work in your life. • Father, through Your Holy Spirit, rekindle my desire to read and hear Your Word, acknowledge Your gifts in Baptism, and respond with joy and care for others. Amen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 9:1 *murder*. Saul was intoxicated with hatred. We do not have a specific report that he actually killed Christians, though those he imprisoned were executed (22:4). *high priest*. See note, 7:1.

ACTS—NOTE ON 9:2 *synagogues at Damascus*. Saul was intent on halting the spread of the Gospel. We are not told which disciple spread the message to Damascus, a Syrian city on a plateau (2,300 ft above sea level). It was watered by the rivers Abana and Pharpar (2Ki 5:12). See map, p 1857. *the Way*. Name for Christianity; only in Ac. The origin of the term remains obscure. See "way," p 844.

ACTS—NOTE ON 9:3–9 Some interpreters treat Saul's experience as a model for Christian conversion, as though every person has to experience a crisis in order to become a Christian. This is misleading. Though God can and does work in people's lives through crises, conversion is always the work of the Holy Spirit through the means of grace. Saul's conversion actually takes place in vv 17–18 as he receives God's Word and Sacrament. Let no one question your salvation because you came to faith quietly, without some dramatic experience. What matters is trust in Jesus as the Savior, which is truly what made Saul a Christian.

ACTS—NOTE ON 9:3 *light from heaven flashed*. The Lord often used elements of nature to serve His purpose. See note, Ex 19:18.

ACTS—NOTE ON 9:4 *persecuting Me?* Cf 26:14. Saul's persecution of Jesus' disciples was persecution of the Son of God. Believers are the "Body of Christ." See p 1965. Luth: "When [the Word of God] strikes the heart, it is like a thunderbolt which overthrows even the most strongly fortified

places by its force. … Paul hated the Gospel with such an obstinate heart that he was like an immovable rock. Yet he is shattered by the hammer of the Word. For 'God kills and brings to life; He brings down to Sheol and raises up' (1 Sam. 2:6)" (AE 3:348).

ACTS—NOTE ON 9:5–6 *Lord?* Not an expression of faith but of respect. Up to this moment, Saul was convinced that his mission pleased God. *I am Jesus*. See pp 1784–85. The Lord answers Saul's question concerning His identity by speaking and acting as God, directing Saul on where to go and saying no more.

ACTS—NOTE ON 9:8–9 *he saw nothing*. Physical afflictions can turn an individual toward repentance and contrition (e.g., Zechariah's muteness, Lk 1:20; Miriam's leprosy, Nu 12:10). Saul's murderous energy (v 1) contrasts with his meek dependence here. *neither ate nor drank*. The heavenly vision (26:19) may have driven Saul to fast as part of his repentance and contrition. Cf Ezr 9:5; Ne 1:4; Dn 9:3; see p 189.

ACTS—NOTE ON 9:10 *disciple at Damascus*. One of the people Saul would have brought "bound to Jerusalem" (v 2). *Ananias*. Common name. Cf 5:1. *vision*. Prophesied in 2:17 (cf 10:9–16; 11:5).

ACTS—NOTE ON 9:11–12 *street called Straight*. Major street in the city. Ananias's help for Saul illustrates how the Lord brings otherwise disparate people into fellowship through the Gospel. *he is praying*. Expression of his repentance. *seen in a vision*. See note, v 10.

ACTS—NOTE ON 9:13 Saul's reputation and his authorization to hunt down believers had reached Damascus, c 135 mi from Jerusalem. *saints*. See p 1904.

ACTS—NOTE ON 9:14 See note, v 2. *call on Your name*. See p 1901.

ACTS—NOTE ON 9:15–16 *chosen instrument*. The Lord often calls those considered least likely to serve His plan of salvation. Recall how the Lord directed Samuel in anointing David as Saul's successor (1Sm 16). *suffer for the sake of My name*. God's name is inseparable from His covenant of grace with humankind. (Cf Ac 4:12; Ezk 36:22; Rv 21:6.) Christ instructed His disciples regarding the cost of discipleship. The disciple is not above the teacher (Mt 10:24), and His disciples would be condemned by religious and civil authorities for His sake (Mt 10:17). See "for Your name's sake," p 842.

ACTS—NOTE ON 9:16 Luth: "All Christendom is a small group that must submit to, suffer, and bear more than all other people whatever grief the devil and the world can inflict on it. Now who, in view of what they appear

to be and are subjected to, will recognize and learn that they are genuine Christians? Reason will surely not show this. The Holy Spirit must do so. He is called 'the Spirit of truth' because in spite of what they appear to be and are subjected to … He strengthens and preserves hearts in the faith" (AE 24:358).

ACTS—NOTE ON 9:17 *laying his hands on him*. See note, 1Tm 4:14. *Brother*. See p 1901. *filled with the Holy Spirit*. See note, 2:4.

ACTS—NOTE ON 9:18 *scales*. Similar description appears in Tobit 3:17. There is also a spiritual healing, allowing true insight of God in Christ. *baptized*. Baptism clothes the believer with Christ, removes former barriers, and bestows the Spirit. Cf 2:38–39; Mt 28:19–20; Jn 3:5–6; Rm 6:1–4; 1Co 6:11; Gal 3:27–28; Eph 4:1.

ACTS—NOTE ON 9:1–19a Jesus confronts Saul and converts him through the Gospel and Baptism. Though Saul was convinced of his righteous mission of persecution, he learned that true righteousness comes only through Christ. All we are and all we do depends on His blessing and calling. • "Praise for the light from heaven And for the voice of awe; Praise for the glorious vision The persecutor saw. O Lord, for Paul's conversion, We bless Your name today; Come shine within our darkness, And guide us on our way." Amen. (*LSB* 517:12)

ACTS—NOTE ON **9:19b** Cf vv 20–22. Christ's disciples received Saul into fellowship due to sincere faith.

ACTS—NOTE ON 9:20 The Holy Spirit breathed new life into him who formerly breathed threats and murders.

ACTS—NOTE ON 9:21 *called upon this name?* To call on the Lord is to believe in Him and to pray. Cf 2:21; Rm 10:9, 14; 2Tm 2:22; 1Pt 1:17; see p 842.

ACTS—NOTE ON 9:22 *confounded the Jews*. Marking Saul's separation from his former beliefs and from that community. See "Opposition from the Jews," p 1775. *proving that Jesus was the Christ*. OT prophecies were fulfilled in Christ. See p 1245.

ACTS—NOTE ON **9:19b–22** The Holy Spirit opened Saul's eyes and heart to forgiveness through Christ so he boldly confessed His name to his fellow Jews. Today, trust that the Lord is able to change people's lives—even people you regard as utterly lost and despicable. How great is our Lord and His grace! • Father, as Your Holy Spirit opened Saul's heart to the

Gospel, open my heart, that I might believe and make a fearless testimony of Christ. Amen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 9:23–24 Saul, who formerly hunted Christ's disciples, would himself be hunted. Cf Mt 24:9.

ACTS—NOTE ON 9:25 *his disciples*. Term used for those who followed a prophet. See note, Is 8:16. *opening in the wall*. First of several recorded accounts of Saul being delivered from death. Christians should not seek out martyrdom, but seek to honor and proclaim the Gospel, whether by life or death. Bern: "Paul blushed not to be let down in a basket over a wall … and so to escape the hands of those who were seeking his life. He escaped not to spare his life, but to give place to wrath; not to avoid death, but to attain life" (*SLSB*, p 136).

ACTS—NOTE ON 9:23–25 The Christians show sincere faith by welcoming Saul, supporting his teaching of salvation through Christ. For the sake of the Gospel today, support and defend the witness of your brothers and sisters in Christ. The Lord your Savior is your defender. • Father, through Your Word, strengthen my faith in Christ. Make me, like those who assisted Saul, faithful in serving the proclamation of the Gospel. Amen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 9:26 Cf vv 1–2, 13. Underscores the savagery with which Saul executed his campaign of persecution against Christ's disciples.

ACTS—NOTE ON 9:27 Barnabas validated Saul's conversion, emphasizing that Saul had seen and heard the Lord. Cf vv 3–19; 1Jn 1:1–4.

ACTS—NOTE ON 9:28 *in and out among them*. See note, 1:21. The disciples in Jerusalem received Saul into fellowship (cf 1Jn 1:6–7).

ACTS—NOTE ON 9:29 *Hellenists*. See pp 1556–57. *seeking to kill him*. See note, v 16; cf Jn 11:53.

ACTS—NOTE ON 9:30 *brothers*. See p 1901. Again, Christ's disciples ensured Saul would escape. *Caesarea*. C 23 mi S of Mount Carmel; built (25–13 BC) by Herod the Great; Roman capital of that region (cf 18:22; 21:8, 16; 23:23, 33; 25). *Tarsus*. Chief city of Cilicia on Cydnus River; home of Paul (cf 9:11; 21:39; 22:3). See map, p 1857.

ACTS—NOTE ON 9:31 When Saul, former persecutor of Christians, was converted, peace returned to the Church. The Lord ended the first serious persecution. *walking*. See p 1904. *fear of the Lord*. See p 1001. *comfort of the Holy Spirit*. See note, Jn 14:16. *multiplied*. See p 1850.

ACTS—NOTE ON 9:26–31 Due to Saul's past, Christians are suspicious of him. Due to his new faith, enemies of the Christian faith plot to kill him. Nevertheless, the Holy Spirit brings Saul to other believers who help him escape. Through the power of the Gospel, the Church continues to grow. The Lord will likewise watch over the future of your congregation. Proclaim Christ! The Savior will bless and keep you. • Father, thank You for allowing me to hear the lifesaving news of the Gospel and to share in the fellowship of believers. Amen.
ACTS—NOTE ON 9:32 *saints*. See p 1904. *Lydda*. Town in plain of Sharon, 11 mi SE of Joppa. See map, p 1857.
ACTS—NOTE ON 9:33 *paralyzed*. Cf Mt 9:2; Mk 2:3; Lk 5:18.
ACTS—NOTE ON 9:34 *Jesus Christ heals you*. See notes, 3:6; 8:6–8; cf Mt 4:23; 9:35.
ACTS—NOTE ON 9:35 *they turned to the Lord*. See "turn," p 1080.
ACTS—NOTE ON 9:32–35 Aeneas, paralyzed for eight years, is healed through the power of the Gospel. Seeing this miracle, the residents of Lydda and Sharon repent and believe in the Lord. As God grants you opportunity, share the love of Jesus by caring for the sick. His abiding care will sustain you in every need. • Father, thank You for healing me from the paralysis and death of sin and giving me the hope of eternal life. Amen.
ACTS—NOTE ON 9:36 *Joppa*. See map, p 1857. *disciple*. Gk *mathetria*, female disciple. See note, Mt 5:1. Only time used in Scripture. However, see note, Lk 8:2–3. *Tabitha … full of good works and acts of charity*. Tabitha's example shows that as believers grow in faith in Christ, they bear the fruit of faith, imitating Christ. Cf Mt 25:31–40; Ac 2:44–45; 1Tm 5:3–16. See note, 2Th 1:3.
ACTS—NOTE ON 9:37 Typical preparation for burial of a person of ordinary means (cf Mt 27:59; Jn 11:44). The wealthy anointed their dead with spices and perfumes (cf Jn 12:7; 19:39).
ACTS—NOTE ON 9:38 *Peter … Please come to us*. An invitation to attend the funeral. Burial had to take place soon. Yet, Christ gave His disciples authority to raise the dead (Mt 10:8).
ACTS—NOTE ON 9:39 *tunics and other garments*. Testimony to Tabitha's works of charity.
ACTS—NOTE ON 9:40 *knelt down and prayed*. See p 1276. *Tabitha, arise*. Cf Lk 7:22; 1Ki 17:19; 2Ki 4:32–34.

ACTS—NOTE ON 9:41 *saints and widows*. Distinction may suggest that some widows were not yet believers. However, see note, 1Tm 5:3.
ACTS—NOTE ON 9:42 *many believed in the Lord*. Cf Mt 4:24; Mk 1:28; Lk 4:14 on how Christ's fame spread.
ACTS—NOTE ON 9:43 *Simon, a tanner*. Ceremonially unclean due to contact with dead animals. That Peter chose to stay with a tanner showed how his views of cleanliness were changing. God will take Peter a step further by Peter's visit to Cornelius's home (10:24–43).
ACTS—NOTE ON 9:36–43 An untimely death comes to Tabitha, a beloved servant. However, those who mourn Tabitha's death witness the power of Christ through her restoration to life. How great is the Lord's kindness! • Father, when my last hour comes, take me to be with You in heaven, through Jesus Christ, my Lord. Amen.
ACTS—NOTE ON 10:1 *centurion*. Roman officer in command of 100 soldiers (cf Mt 8:5; Mk 15:39; Lk 7:1–10). *Italian Cohort*. The Roman legion, nominally 6,000 men, was divided into 10 cohorts, or regiments, each of approximately 600 soldiers.
ACTS—NOTE ON 10:2 *devout*. Although he was pious and generous, he did not yet know Jesus as his Savior from sin. He would have known there was a coming Messiah. See note, v 37. Ancient inscriptions have shown that Gentile patrons gave gifts to synagogues. "Cornelius, living among the Jews, had heard long before about the coming Messiah, through whom he was righteous before God (Acts 10:1–2). In such faith, his prayers and alms were acceptable to God (since Luke calls him devout and Godfearing)" (SA III VIII 8).
ACTS—NOTE ON 10:3 *ninth hour*. C 3 p.m., a traditional time of prayer. *vision*. See note, 9:10; cf Jl 2:28. In ch 9, the Lord gave both Ananias and Saul visions, which confirmed His will.
ACTS—NOTE ON 10:4 *terror*. In the presence of the holy God, one stands in terror because of one's sins.
ACTS—NOTE ON 10:5 *Joppa*. See map, p 1857. *Simon … Peter*. His Hbr name required explanation. See note, Mt 16:17.
ACTS—NOTE ON 10:6 *Simon, a tanner*. See note, 9:43.
ACTS—NOTE ON 10:7 *a devout soldier*. Note emphasis (cf v 2). See note, Lk 3:14. By contrast, observe how easily the chief priests and elders bribed the soldiers after Christ's resurrection (Mt 28:11).

ACTS—NOTE ON 10:8 Cornelius would have related the vision only to those whom he trusted.

ACTS—NOTE ON 10:1–8 The Lord prepares Cornelius to learn more about Jesus. Likewise, He prepares and guides our lives in accordance with His good purposes. Therefore, commend your life and ways to your Lord, who at all times has you on His heart. • Father, Your Law reminds me daily that as good as I think I am, I can never be good enough to inherit eternal salvation. Thank You for sending Jesus to fulfill all righteousness for me. In Jesus' name. Amen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 10:9 *housetop*. Some homes had a flat roof reached by an external stairway. Cf Lk 5:19. Peter likely went up to the housetop for solitude to pray (cf Mt 14:23; Jn 6:15). See note, Jsh 2:6.

ACTS—NOTE ON 10:10 *a trance*. An inspired dream. (Cf 26:13; Ezk 1:1; Dn 7:1; 2Co 12:1.)

ACTS—NOTE ON 10:11 *heavens opened*. Cf Lk 3:21.

ACTS—NOTE ON 10:13–14 Peter, in accordance with ceremonial law, would have avoided eating unclean animals. See notes, Lv 11:3–23; see also p 300.

ACTS—NOTE ON 10:15–16 *second time … three times*. Threefold repetition would have removed all doubt that this vision came from the Lord. (Three times Jesus had asked Peter, "Do you love Me?"; Jn 21:15–17.)

ACTS—NOTE ON 10:17–21 Peter, thoroughly perplexed, could not interpret the vision on his own. The Holy Spirit interpreted the vision and, as often seen in Ac, sent him on a journey.

ACTS—NOTE ON 10:22 See notes, vv 1, 2.

ACTS—NOTE ON 10:23 *brothers*. Six fellow Christians accompanied Peter and would become eyewitnesses to God's work (cf Dt 17:6; Mt 18:19–20).

ACTS—NOTE ON 10:24 Cornelius's gathering of relatives and close friends underscores their confidence in him and his eagerness to hear Peter's message.

ACTS—NOTE ON 10:25–26 The man of God clearly shows that wisdom and counsel, forgiveness and salvation come from the one true God. Cf Gn 41:16; Dn 2:27–28.

ACTS—NOTE ON 10:27 See note, v 24.

ACTS—NOTE ON 10:28 *unlawful … to associate*. Due to issues of ritual purity. See p 1907; see also note, Jn 18:28. *common*. Impure or unholy. Cf Mk 7:1–23; Rm 14:13–14.
ACTS—NOTE ON 10:29 Cf vv 20–24.
ACTS—NOTE ON 10:30 *a man … in bright clothing*. Cf Mt 28:2–3; Mk 16:5; Lk 24:2–4; Jn 20:12.
ACTS—NOTE ON 10:31 *remembered before God*. Cf Dn 9:20–21, where the angel Gabriel appeared to Daniel while he was still praying.
ACTS—NOTE ON 10:33 *here in the presence of God*. Cornelius recognized that not only had a holy man arrived but that God also drew near through the words Peter was about to speak. See p 843.
ACTS—NOTE ON 10:9–33 Through a vision, the Lord teaches Peter that holiness is not determined by people, but by what God Himself has ordained as holy and clean. We are powerless to hallow anything. Pray that God's gifts and blessings may be hallowed among us. Through the Gospel, the Lord cleanses and hallows us. • Father, thank You for making me righteous and acceptable through Your Word. Let Your Holy Spirit move me to confess Christ, that others might be made acceptable in Your sight. Amen.
ACTS—NOTE ON 10:34–35 God's message of salvation goes out to all people because all the earth is His. God will write His Word on the hearts of all who believe (Jer 31:33). Cf Rm 14:11; Rv 14:6. *fears*. See p 1001.
ACTS—NOTE ON 10:36 *preaching good news of peace*. The hallmark of the kingdom of God is the announcement of peace, healing, and forgiveness. *He is Lord of all*. A brief confession or creed, appropriate among Gentiles who had worshiped idols and who perhaps wondered whether the true God would be their God. See note, 1Co 12:3.
ACTS—NOTE ON 10:37 *you yourselves know*. Though they had heard about Jesus' ministry, Peter gave them an eyewitness account of Jesus' ministry, death, and resurrection. Cf 1Jn 1:1–4.
ACTS—NOTE ON 10:38 *anointed … with the Holy Spirit and with power*. Christ, the Anointed One, fulfilled the prophecies regarding the Messiah (Gn 3:15; 49:10; Is 7:14; Mi 5:2; Mt 1:20; Jn 1:1). *with Him*. See "be with," p 5.
ACTS—NOTE ON 10:39 Jesus' condemnation on the cross came despite God's anointing, the power of the Holy Spirit, and His gracious healing of

many. *tree*. Adam and Eve's willful reach for Eden's tree was cured by Christ's willing grasp of the cross. Cf Dt 21:23; Gal 3:13; 1Pt 2:24.

ACTS—NOTE ON 10:40–41 God demonstrated Jesus to be His Son esp through the resurrection, as believers realize (Rm 1:4). See "The Resurrection," p 1829.

ACTS—NOTE ON 10:42 Luth: "Who will harm the man when the great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, to whom the Day of Judgment belongs, is on his side and stands before him with all His glory, greatness, majesty, and might?" (*WLS* § 2178).

ACTS—NOTE ON 10:43 *all the prophets bear witness*. See note, Lk 24:44. *forgiveness of sins through His name*. "Peter says we receive forgiveness of sins through Christ's name, that is, for His sake. It is not for the sake of our merits, not for the sake of our contrition, attrition, love, worship, or works. He adds: *When we believe in Him*. Peter requires faith. For we cannot receive Christ's name except by faith" (Ap IV 83). Luth: "Cornelius (Acts 10:43) had to be brought to the new faith that Christ had already come" (*WLS* § 2125).

ACTS—NOTE ON 10:34–43 Peter affirms for devout Cornelius that Jesus is truly the Christ; the Spirit affirms for Peter that the Gospel applies to all people without partiality. The Holy Spirit unites one and all in the Body of Christ. • Father, thank You for the gift of salvation through Your Son, Jesus Christ. Make me a faithful witness of Your love. Amen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 10:44 The Holy Spirit comes through the Word to everyone who hears and believes. Cf Rm 10:17; 15:13; 1Co 2:10–14; 6:11; 1Pt 2:9. Luth: "[Faith is] a living spiritual flame, by which hearts are set afire, born anew and converted through the Holy Spirit, so that they desire, will, do, and are exactly what the law of Moses expressly commands and requires [Jer 31:33; 2Co 3:3; Rm 3:27; 8:2; 2Co 4:13]. … For the living Word of Christ, when preached, imparts the Spirit, who writes the law of God in our hearts with living fire, as happened to Cornelius in Acts 10 [:44], and again Gal. 4 [3:2]: 'Did you receive the Spirit by works or by the preaching of faith?' Hence the gospel is called a word of life in John 6[:68]" (AE 36:200–201).

ACTS—NOTE ON 10:45 See notes, 2:38, 39; cf Gal 5:6.

ACTS—NOTE ON 10:46 *speaking in tongues and extolling God*. See pp 1835, 1969.

ACTS—NOTE ON 10:47 See note, 8:14–17.

ACTS—NOTE ON 10:48 *baptized in the name of Jesus*. See note, 2:38.

ACTS—NOTE ON 10:44–48 The Holy Spirit demonstrates to the Jewish believers that God indeed desires to pour out His Spirit on "all flesh" (2:17), even Gentiles. The water, the Word, and the Holy Spirit go together. So Peter urges that the Gentiles be baptized right away, without concern for circumcision or ritual purity according to the old covenant. These blessings of Word and Sacrament abide with us today. • Lord, give us Your Word, that our thankfulness points many to Your grace. Amen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 11:1 *apostles*. See p 1901. *brothers*. Jewish converts to Christianity. See p 1901. *received the word of God*. Specifically, the affirmation of Christ as the Messiah and Savior.

ACTS—NOTE ON 11:2 *circumcision party*. Those who insisted on circumcision along with saving faith. Cf Gal 3. Since the uncircumcised Gentiles were only beginning to be received into the Church, this title may be retrospective—we see the party forming from this incident. Cf Ac 15.

ACTS—NOTE ON 11:3 *ate with them*. The Pharisees had criticized Jesus for eating with sinners and tax collectors (Mk 2:15–16).

ACTS—NOTE ON 11:4–18 See notes, 10:9–48.

ACTS—NOTE ON 11:12 Six brothers represent twice the number of witnesses needed to establish testimony (Mt 18:19–20).

ACTS—NOTE ON 11:14 *saved*. See p 1904.

ACTS—NOTE ON 11:16 Peter comments on what went through his mind during the events of 10:44–48. Pentecost was the fulfillment of this prophecy about Baptism and the Spirit (ch 2).

ACTS—NOTE ON 11:17 *God gave the same gift*. God withheld neither the gift of grace nor the Holy Spirit from the Gentiles. Peter, having seen Christ's ministry, death, and resurrection, was also an eyewitness of the Gentiles' receiving of the Holy Spirit through the proclamation of the Gospel.

ACTS—NOTE ON 11:18 *repentance that leads to life*. See "repent," p 1080.

ACTS—NOTE ON 11:1–18 Through the Law, God condemns all sinners and drives them to repentance; through the Gospel, He grants life everlasting. Live a life of daily repentance, and glorify God for His lavish blessings and gifts to you and all people. • Lord, let our likeness to some not be a barrier to others. Draw everyone to You, O Holy Spirit, even the unlikely. Amen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 11:19 See note, 8:1. According to tradition, Luke was a Gentile from Antioch.
ACTS—NOTE ON 11:20 *Hellenists*. See p 1556–57.
ACTS—NOTE ON 11:21 *the hand of the Lord*. See p 842. *was with them*. See "be with," p 5. *turned to the Lord*. See p 1080. Luth: "Faith is an unceasing and constant looking … which turns the eyes upon nothing but Christ, the Victor over sin and death and the Giver of righteousness, salvation, and life eternal" (*WLS* § 1374).
ACTS—NOTE ON 11:22–24 *they sent Barnabas*. See note, 9:27; cf 1Co 9:6; Gal 2:1, 9, 13; Col 4:10.
ACTS—NOTE ON 11:25–26 See note, 9:15–16.
ACTS—NOTE ON 11:26 *Christians*. Gk *christianos*; from a Lat noun that indicates allegiance to Christ. A title used by outsiders, reflecting their attitude. Hus: "The faithful were first called disciples and brethren, and later Christians" (*The Church*, p 63). Luth: " 'On this rock, that is, on me, Christ, I will build all of my Christendom, just as you and the other disciples are built on it through my Father in heaven, who revealed it to you.'… Thus Luke in Acts 11 [:26] says that the disciples in Antioch were first called Christians, which is why names have survived such as, 'Christians, Christendom, Christian faith,' etc. … Whoever believes in Christ is built on this rock and will attain salvation, even against all the gates of hell; whoever does not believe in Christ is not built on this rock and must be damned, with all the gates of hell" (AE 41:314–15).
ACTS—NOTE ON 11:27 *prophets*. See pp 1077–83. *came down*. From the heights of Jerusalem. See map, p 971.
ACTS—NOTE ON 11:28 *Agabus … foretold by the Spirit*. The Spirit demonstrated power through foretelling of the future. See p 1876. *great famine … in the days of Claudius*. Claudius ruled as Roman emperor AD 41–54. Josephus mentions these economic troubles (*Ant* 20:51).
ACTS—NOTE ON 11:29 *send relief*. Cf 2Co 9:1–5. *brothers*. See p 1901.
ACTS—NOTE ON 11:30 *elders*. See note, 20:17; see also p 1556.
ACTS—NOTE ON 11:19–30 Though persecution scatters the believers, the Lord uses the persecution to proclaim the Gospel even more broadly. As believers grow in faith, they commit themselves to acts of service. Men of God, such as Barnabas, not only confirm the work of the Holy Spirit among believers but also ensure that new believers are nurtured in the faith through instruction (Mt 28:19–20). • "Awake, Thou Spirit, who didst fire The

watchmen of the Church's youth, Who faced the Foe's envenomed ire, Who witnessed day and night Thy truth, Whose voices loud are ringing still And bringing hosts to know Thy will." Amen. (*TLH* 494:1)

ACTS—NOTE ON 12:1 *Herod the king*. Probably Herod Agrippa I (AD 37–44), tetrarch of Galilee, Judea, and Samaria. See "Herodians," p 1557.

ACTS—NOTE ON 12:2 *James … John*. Sons of Zebedee and Salome; present with Peter at the transfiguration and in Gethsemane. See p 1780.

ACTS—NOTE ON 12:3 *pleased the Jews*. See note, 9:1; cf Mt 26:3–4; Mk 14:1; Lk 22:1–2. *days of Unleavened Bread*. See pp 200–201.

ACTS—NOTE ON 12:4 *four squads*. Extra security. A heavily armed force was sent to apprehend Jesus (Mt 26:47; Lk 22:47; Jn 18:3). *after the Passover*. Notice the emphasis that timing played in both this account and the account of Christ's crucifixion. The leaders showed fearful respect for the crowds and their festivals.

ACTS—NOTE ON 12:5 Praying with faith in Christ brings wondrous results (Jas 5:16). How much more so when believers gather with one accord, letting their requests be made known to God with thanksgiving for His gifts (Ac 1:14; Php 4:6).

ACTS—NOTE ON 12:1–5 As Christ had prophesied, His disciples share in His suffering, being arrested, beaten, and even killed. By His crucifixion and resurrection, Christ has passed through death and draws us safely through to life. He alone holds the keys of death and will leave none of His own behind. • Father, in the righteousness of faith in Christ, hear my prayer for believers who face persecution for Your name's sake. Keep them faithful unto death, that they may receive the crown of life. Amen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 12:6 The prison enacted maximum security procedures.

ACTS—NOTE ON 12:7 God continues to work through the means of both angels and apostles. Angels serve primarily as messengers of salvation and freedom from persecution throughout Ac (e.g., 5:19; 10:3; 12:23, 27:23), often emphasizing that they are real rather than a mere vision (e.g., 12:9, 11; 23:8). See "angel of the LORD," p 1227.

ACTS—NOTE ON 12:8 *Dress yourself*. As a means of punishment, the guards had likely deprived him of warm clothing.

ACTS—NOTE ON 12:10 *iron gate … opened*. The reality of the angelic escort was seen in the iron gate's opening. The number of guards and the iron gate suggests a maximum security prison. *went along one street*. An odd detail; the angel abides with dazed Peter.

ACTS—NOTE ON 12:11 *all that the Jewish people were expecting*. Given the death of James (v 2), many would expect Peter to be killed at this time. Two of Jesus' closest followers would be eliminated. Cf Jn 21:18–19; 2Pt 1:14 regarding Peter's coming death.
ACTS—NOTE ON 12:12 *house*. Later tradition suggested this was the site of the Upper Room, where Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper. A church was built on the traditional site. See note, 1:13. *Mary*. Probably the sister of Barnabas and the hostess of one of the house churches in Jerusalem. See note, 1Co 14:23. *John … Mark*. See notes, Mk 14:51–52. The Lat name "Markus" may indicate his involvement with Roman culture or administration.
ACTS—NOTE ON 12:13 *door of the gateway*. Indicates an outer courtyard. *servant … Rhoda*. Suggests that Mary was relatively wealthy.
ACTS—NOTE ON 12:15 Their doubt about Rhoda's discovery recalls Peter's unwillingness to accept the testimony of Mary Magdalene and others after Christ's resurrection (Lk 24:10–12). *his angel!* See note, Mt 18:10.
ACTS—NOTE ON 12:17 *James*. Brother of Jesus, who served as the acknowledged leader of the Jerusalem Church (see pp 2130–33). *brothers*. See p 1901. *another place*. Recall how the disciples assisted Paul in escaping (9:25, 30).
ACTS—NOTE ON 12:19 The disappearance of Peter fulfills the warning of Gamaliel that the authorities will find themselves struggling against God (5:39). *put to death*. For delinquent duty.
ACTS—NOTE ON 12:6–19 The death of James at the hand of Herod and the imprisonment of Peter demonstrate the world's hatred of the Gospel. Yet, nothing can separate believers from the love of Christ. He fulfills His purpose for us in life and in death; therefore, we have joy. • Father, may Rhoda's joy at seeing Peter overflow in my life as I have fellowship with other believers. Amen.
ACTS—NOTE ON 12:20 Events of AD 44. *Herod was angry*. Never explained. Herod followed the Herodian pattern of intrigue and violence (Mt 2:1–18; 14:3; Mk 6:17; Lk 3:19–20; 13:32). See note, v 1. *Blastus, the king's chamberlain*. Position of influence in Herod's court. *depended … for food*. See note, 11:28. Positioned on the Phoenician coast, Tyre and Sidon gained their wealth through shipping but remained vulnerable to food shortages.

ACTS—NOTE ON 12:21–23 See also the pride of Nebuchadnezzar (Dn 4:28–33) and Belshazzar (Dn 5). *an angel of the Lord*. See p 1227. *he did not give God the glory*. Falling into pride and idolatry. *eaten by worms*. Likely a disorder of the digestive tract. Josephus mentions his stomach trouble (*Ant* 19:346, 350).

ACTS—NOTE ON 12:24 *word of God increased and multiplied*. Despite internal tensions and outside persecution. "[Rulers] should work toward the preservation and growth of divine things, that is, the Gospel of Christ on the earth. … As God's representatives, they should defend the life and safety of the innocent" (Ap XXI 44).

ACTS—NOTE ON 12:25 *completed their service*. Probably refers to the relief effort entrusted to Barnabas and Saul. *John … Mark*. See note, v 12.

ACTS—NOTE ON 12:20–25 Herod's violence and intrigue illustrate how evil breeds evil. Yet God can decisively topple evil. In mercy to us, He sent His Son to the cross to condemn evil and rescue us. Living in forgiveness, we eagerly await the day when our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ takes us to live with Him forever in heaven. • "By all Your saints in warfare, For all Your saints at rest, Your holy name, O Jesus, Forevermore be blest! For You have won the battle That they might wear the crown; And now they shine in glory Reflected from Your throne." Amen. (*LSB* 517:1)

ACTS—NOTE ON 13:1 *Antioch*. Political, military, and commercial center for Roman Syria and the Persian frontier; one of the most important cities of the empire. See map, p 1857. *prophets and teachers*. Prominent roles in the Early Church (cf 1Co 14:3–4, 29–32; Eph 4:11). *Simeon*. Hbr; he was probably Jewish with a dark complexion. *Niger*. See ESV note. *Cyrene*. In North Africa. *Manaen*. Hbr name Menachem. *member of the court*. Lit, "nourished together" or brought up with Herod. *Herod the tetrarch*. Herod Antipas ruled Galilee from 4 BC to AD 39, during the time of Jesus' ministry (cf Lk 23:6–12).

ACTS—NOTE ON 13:2 *worshiping the Lord*. The Early Church gathered for worship often, even daily, and generally in homes (cf 2:46). *fasting*. Discipline of depriving oneself of food in order to focus on God and spiritual matters (cf Mt 6:16–18). See p 189. *Spirit said*. Perhaps audibly and directly, but more likely through one of the prophets. *Set apart*. For a special purpose. Note that Barnabas is mentioned first. *called*. Gk tense emphasizes the ongoing effects of God's call. See pp 1901, 1899–1901. Luth: "Why does he call himself only the apostle to the Gentiles, but Peter

and the others the apostles to the circumcised? … The other apostles had remained in Judea and Jerusalem until God called them elsewhere. … But as Acts 13:2 writes, Paul was set aside by a special call as the apostle to the Gentiles and was sent out from Judea to journey through the Gentile lands. And although he also went into Jewish synagogs, he preached elsewhere to the Gentiles—in the public forum, in private homes, on the riverbank" (AE 26:101).

ACTS—NOTE ON 13:3 *fasting and praying*. The Spirit of God acted first (v 2); the Church responded with further fasting and praying. *laid their hands … sent*. Placed the blessings and Spirit of God on them (cf 2Tm 1:6). See note, Mk 5:23. Chem: "A call ought to have the public witness of the church. … Thus Paul, although called immediately, still is sent to Ananias, who was to lay hands on [him], that it might be evident to the church concerning [his] call; … when he was to be sent among the gentiles, he was made a regular teacher of the gentiles, again by the laying on of hands" (*LTh* 2:704).

ACTS—NOTE ON 13:1–3 The momentous missionary journeys of Saul (later Paul) begin with the calling and equipping by the Spirit. The Holy Spirit calls us by the Gospel and enlightens us with His gifts, especially those of teaching and spreading God's Word, which we use in God's service and to the benefit of others (cf 1Co 12). • Thank You, God, for those whom Your Spirit has gifted to share Your Word in my life. Enable me to use my gifts to serve others in Jesus' name. Amen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 13:4 *sent out by the Holy Spirit*. The Spirit directed the work of Barnabas and Saul. Cf 16:6–10; 21:10–11; 27:21–26. See p 1876.

ACTS—NOTE ON 13:5 *proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues*. It was Saul's pattern to begin his mission work in a city's synagogue, preaching the Gospel first to the Jews and then to the Gentiles (cf Rm 1:16; 11:13). See "synagogue," p 1557; see also "Dispersion," p 1556. *John*. John Mark, author of the second Gospel. See pp 1652–54. He will return home midway through the journey (v 13).

ACTS—NOTE ON 13:6 *magician*. Used demonic spells and incantations prohibited by the OT (cf Ex 22:18; Lv 19:26; 20:27; Dt 18:9–14). See notes, Ac 19:13, 18, 19; Dt 18:9, 10–11. *Bar-Jesus*. Aram, "son of Jesus." "Jesus" was a common name, equivalent to "Joshua." In contrast to the true prophets (v 1), this false prophet, also known as Elymas (v 8), misused and misapplied God's Word.

ACTS—NOTE ON 13:7 *proconsul, Sergius Paulus*. Chief official on Cyprus; his name has been found on an inscription in Rome. In Luke's books, Roman officials are generally portrayed positively and as testifying to the integrity of Christianity. See note, 19:38; see also p 1892.
ACTS—NOTE ON 13:8 *the faith*. God's Word or teaching, which brings a person to faith.
ACTS—NOTE ON 13:9 *Saul … Paul*. Saul, his Jewish name, is still used, though it is more than a decade after his conversion (see chronology, pp cvii–cix). "Paul" is used in Gk contexts and regularly through the rest of Ac. *filled with the Holy Spirit*. Note the prominence of the Spirit's work (cf vv 2, 4). See p 1876.
ACTS—NOTE ON 13:10–11 Elymas temporarily experienced physical blindness to make him see the spiritual blindness that possessed him.
ACTS—NOTE ON 13:10 Contrast God's work to straighten our crooked ways (Lk 3:5).
ACTS—NOTE ON 13:12 *proconsul believed*. The Gospel imparts faith (Rm 10:17) but may be accompanied by signs and wonders as well (cf Ac 14:3; 2Co 12:12). *astonished at the teaching*. The Word of God they taught was living and active (Heb 4:12). See note, Lk 4:32.
ACTS—NOTE ON 13:4–12 At the first mission stop, there is both opposition to and belief in the Gospel. Jesus says, "Whoever is not with Me is against Me" (Lk 11:23). God's powerful Word will create and strengthen faith in us and in those who hear His Word from us (Rm 10:17). • Dear God, I confess that in my sinful nature I am opposed to Your will and Your ways. Thank You for Your powerful Word, which has brought me to faith in Jesus. May I use it to battle the evil within me and around me. Amen.
ACTS—NOTE ON 13:13 John Mark returns to Jerusalem; later this event becomes a point of contention between Paul and Barnabas (15:37–40).
ACTS—NOTE ON 13:14 *synagogue*. See note, v 5.
ACTS—NOTE ON 13:15 *reading from the Law and the Prophets*. See notes, Lk 4:16–17. *rulers of the synagogue*. See note, Lk 8:41. *Brothers*. Fellow Jews who also looked for the promised Messiah (cf vv 43–45; Rm 11:17–24). See p 1901. *word of encouragement*. Qualified visitors to the synagogue were normally invited to give the message, like guest preachers.
ACTS—NOTE ON 13:16 *Men of Israel*. Paul addresses the Jews of the Dispersion as a united people. He appeals to their heritage, reaching back to

the unity of the tribes under David and Solomon. See "Dispersion," p 1556. *you who fear God*. See "God-fearers," p 1556.
ACTS—NOTE ON 13:17 *chose*. See notes, Dt 7:6–8; see also "chosen," p 1901. *uplifted arm*. Way of describing God reaching out to save, as in the exodus. See "arm," p 842.
ACTS—NOTE ON 13:18 For 40 years, Israel tested God's patience. See p 212–14.
ACTS—NOTE ON 13:19 *inheritance*. The land was a gift to Israel from God, who had promised it to the patriarchs. See "portion," p 7.
ACTS—NOTE ON 13:20 *450 years*. Ex 12:40 says Israel was in Egypt for 430 years; Paul's approximate number ("about") may include the years in the wilderness and perhaps the time during which Joshua conquered the Promised Land. See chronology, pp xcv–xcvi. *judges until Samuel the prophet*. After Joshua, various judges ruled until the last judge, Samuel, anointed kings. See pp 431–34.
ACTS—NOTE ON 13:21 Cf 1Sm 8–9.
ACTS—NOTE ON 13:22 *removed him*. King Saul rejected the Lord's Word (see note, 1Sm 15:26) and engaged in acts of disobedience. As a result, the Lord rejected Saul. *man after My heart, who will do all My will*. David was not perfect, but he set his heart on doing God's will, and he repented when he failed (cf 1Sm 16:7; 2Sm 12:13).
ACTS—NOTE ON 13:23 *Savior, Jesus*. Cf 5:31; Lk 1:47; see p 2098.
ACTS—NOTE ON 13:24 *baptism of repentance*. See notes, Mt 3:6; Lk 3:3.
ACTS—NOTE ON 13:26 See notes, vv 15–16.
ACTS—NOTE ON 13:27 *those who live in Jerusalem and their rulers*. The crowds who insisted on Jesus' crucifixion were residents of the city, stirred up and controlled by local religious leaders, including Caiaphas, the high priest. Cf Lk 23:21–23. *read every Sabbath*. God's people have gathered together around His Word for centuries; one purpose of the Sabbath was to remember God's saving acts as written in Scripture (Dt 5:15). See "synagogue," p 1557.
ACTS—NOTE ON 13:28 Pilate declared Jesus innocent three times (Lk 23:4, 14, 22).
ACTS—NOTE ON 13:29 *tree*. Wooden cross. Cf Dt 21:23; see note, Gal 3:13.
ACTS—NOTE ON 13:30 Key verification of the Christian faith (cf 1Co 15:3–20); the NT confesses both that Jesus rose from the dead and that the

Father raised Him. See note, Rm 8:11.
ACTS—NOTE ON 13:31 *His witnesses*. Jesus commissioned this role, and it is key throughout Ac, particularly to attest to the resurrection (1:22; 2:32). *people*. The Jews.
ACTS—NOTE ON 13:32 Paul has rehearsed the basic Gospel, or "good news," which is firmly rooted in the OT promises. See "Gospel," p 1902.
ACTS—NOTE ON 13:33 Ps 2:7 speaks of Israel's king at his coronation. Jesus fulfills the words in a literal and far greater sense (cf Heb 1:5). See note, Ps 2:7. Chem: "In the resurrection there was manifested and set forth that which previously lay hidden under weakness (namely that this person of the Son was begotten of the Father from eternity)" (*LTh* 1:104).
ACTS—NOTE ON 13:34 *you*. Plural in Gk. Is 55:3 addresses Israel; here it applies initially to Christ, who then extends the blessings promised to David for the sake of all believers in Israel. See notes, 2Sm 7:11–13.
ACTS—NOTE ON 13:35 In Ps 16:10, David is not speaking of himself but instead is prophesying of Jesus' resurrection, as Peter made clear on Pentecost (Ac 2:29–31).
ACTS—NOTE ON 13:36 *served the purpose of God*. As king, David received God's promise and shepherded God's people in a generally faithful manner. God calls each believer to serve Him and His people—to live lives of faith and purpose. *laid with his fathers and saw corruption*. Since David died, he could not have been speaking about himself in Ps 16:10. See note, 1Ki 2:10.
ACTS—NOTE ON 13:37 Culmination of Paul's message: miraculous resurrection. See note, 1:3.
ACTS—NOTE ON 13:38 *brothers*. See note, v 15. *through this man forgiveness of sins*. Fulfillment of Lk 24:47. The objective message of salvation is the proclamation of forgiveness in Jesus.
ACTS—NOTE ON 13:39 A concise summary of Paul's message about the Law that is expanded in Rm and Gal, where he also uses legal "justification" terminology to describe salvation. *freed*. See ESV note; see also "justify," p 1903. The Gospel is personally applied to people who receive God's general declaration of justification by faith (cf Rm 1:16–17). *from everything*. Chem: "[The Gk refers] to the troubles from which we are delivered" (*LTh* 2:717).
ACTS—NOTE ON 13:41 Hab 1:5 was initially spoken to rebellious Judah c 600 BC, just prior to the invasion of the Babylonians. See notes, Hab 1:5–

6.
ACTS—NOTE ON 13:42 *begged*. How eagerly the Gospel was sought!
ACTS—NOTE ON 13:43 *converts*. See "proselytes," p 1557. *continue in the grace of God*. Lit, "abide" or "remain" in the grace of God that had come to them (cf Jn 15:4–6). See note, Jn 6:56.
ACTS—NOTE ON 13:44 *whole city*. Hyperbole stressing the great turnout of people, both Jews and Gentiles.
ACTS—NOTE ON 13:45 Many first-century Jews, when confronted with Jesus as the promised Messiah, responded with violent opposition. Jesus experienced the same hostility, also at times out of envy (Mt 27:18). See "Opposition from the Jews," p 1775.
ACTS—NOTE ON 13:46 The Gospel is brought first to the lost sheep of Israel, the Jews (Mt 15:24; Rm 1:16). No one is worthy of eternal life, but in Christ God declares us to be so. To reject this Gospel is to condemn oneself (Jn 3:18). Luth: "Where the Law is not truly preached, unrecognized sins cannot be reproved. … If one preaches man's own merits, when will he preach repentance and grace? What is not evil does not need the Gospel and therefore neither the revealing of sin nor the revealing of the cure. … Thereafter they will be deprived not only of prophets and priests of their own nation but also of apostles and their successors" (AE 16:60).
ACTS—NOTE ON 13:47 Outreach to Gentiles is not unique to the NT. Is 49:6 and many other OT passages envisioned it (cf Rm 15:9–12). Cf Ac 15.
ACTS—NOTE ON 13:48 *appointed to eternal life believed*. God "enrolls" or "sets in order" that both Jews and Gentiles receive eternal life through believing in Christ. See "chosen," p 1901.
ACTS—NOTE ON 13:49 A recurring theme in Ac. See note, 2:41.
ACTS—NOTE ON 13:50 Jewish opponents were able to convince religious and influential citizens to oppose Paul. *district*. Area not under the authority of the city's leaders.
ACTS—NOTE ON 13:51 *shook off the dust*. See note, Lk 9:5.
ACTS—NOTE ON 13:52 *joy*. Prominent theme in Lk and Ac. *Holy Spirit*. The work of the Spirit nicely frames the chapter (cf v 2). See p 1876.
ACTS—NOTE ON 13:13–52 Paul's visit to Pisidian Antioch is typical of his missionary technique and preaching. Today, the unbelieving world often responds in opposition to the message of salvation. Yet, the Gospel of

Christ's death and resurrection, which fulfilled the OT promises of salvation, "is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes" (Rm 1:16). • Thank You, heavenly Father, for Your Scriptures. Help me to read them as Paul did, to see Your gracious activity there, and to realize that all of Your promises and actions are fulfilled in Jesus Christ to give me eternal life. Amen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 14:1 *Jewish synagogue*. See note, 13:5. Usually "synagogue" would not require the modifier "Jewish." Perhaps whole synagogues were converting to Christianity, making this distinction necessary. *spoke in such a way*. Preaching God's Word, though it involves persuasion and clarity, is finally the work of the Holy Spirit, who produced a believing response by Jews and Gentiles. Cf 1Co 1:18–31; 2:14–16. *Greeks*. Proselytes. See p 1557.

ACTS—NOTE ON 14:2 *poisoned*. Lit, "made them evil" in opposition. *brothers*. The believers at the synagogue. See p 1901.

ACTS—NOTE ON 14:3 Other events testified to the authenticity and power of the Word. *signs and wonders*. As in Jesus' ministry, miraculous events accompanied the spoken Word. See note, 13:12.

ACTS—NOTE ON 14:4 *apostles*. At times, the term is used in a broad sense (1Th 2:6 refers to Paul and probably his colleagues), but usually it refers to the office of apostle (Ac 1:21–26; 1Co 9:1; Gal 1:19); see p 1901. Here and in v 14, Barnabas seems to be numbered among this select group.

ACTS—NOTE ON 14:5 *stone them*. The prescribed penalty among Jews for blasphemy (Lv 24:16).

ACTS—NOTE ON 14:6–7 Rather than simply running away to save their own lives, Paul and Barnabas were also running toward new mission opportunities after planting a Christian community in Iconium. See note, 9:25.

ACTS—NOTE ON 14:1–7 Paul's visit to Iconium follows the pattern set in Pisidian Antioch. The message of grace again encounters violent opposition. The word of grace from God is sufficient for us (2Co 12:9), but the Lord may accompany His message with miraculous signs that testify to its power. • Heavenly Father, thank You for Your powerful Word. May it bear abundant fruit as You have promised, even in the midst of opposition. Amen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 14:8–10 The healing of this man "crippled from birth" parallels a miracle of Jesus (Lk 5:17–26) and a miracle of Peter and John

(Ac 3:1–10).
ACTS—NOTE ON 14:9 *seeing that he had faith*. Either the man's intense listening to the message was a sign, or the Spirit gave Paul insight into his heart. *made well*. Lit, "be saved"; able to walk. See "save," p 1904.
ACTS—NOTE ON 14:11 *Lycaonian*. Language spoken in the district of Lycaonia, east of Pisidia. The population may have originally emigrated from Crete. *gods*. According to their logic, the healing showed Paul and Barnabas to be divine beings.
ACTS—NOTE ON 14:12 *Zeus*. Chief god in the Gk pantheon; patron of Lystra. A temple nearby was dedicated to him. *Hermes*. A god who served as spokesman for the other gods. The more important god (Zeus) was thought to work through a spokesman (Hermes).
ACTS—NOTE ON 14:13 *priest of Zeus*. Served at the temple of Zeus, just outside the city. *oxen and garlands*. Typical offerings to these Gk gods.
ACTS—NOTE ON 14:14 *tore their garments*. A sign of revulsion and horror (cf Mt 26:65). See p 1277.
ACTS—NOTE ON 14:15 *men, of like nature*. Merely fellow human beings, not gods. *good news*. Paul wants to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus but does not get that far. *turn*. See p 1080. *vain things*. Pagan rites. *living God*. The true God is not a statue or sculpture made by humans; instead, He is the Maker of heaven and earth. See note, Lk 20:37–38; see also p 1227.
ACTS—NOTE ON 14:16–17 The blessings of creation (providence) provide a powerful witness to a Creator God who graciously gives good things (cf Ps 19:1–6; 145:15–16; Mt 5:45; Rm 1:19–20). See notes, 17:25–26.
ACTS—NOTE ON 14:18 The words of Paul and Barnabas barely kept the crowds from sacrificing to them as gods, and they were unable to proceed to speak of Jesus.
ACTS—NOTE ON 14:8–18 Lystra has no synagogue, so when God miraculously heals someone, Paul testifies to the people that God graciously blesses all creation. People by nature tend to worship gods of their own making and in their own ways (Rm 1:22–25). Yet, God's bounty in creation, and especially His Word, come to turn us away from idolatry and toward Him. • Praise to You, O Lord, the King of creation. "The eyes of all look to You, and You give them their food in due season. You open Your hand; You satisfy the desire of every living thing" (Ps 145:15–16). Amen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 14:19 *Jews … stoned Paul*. Cf v 5; see note, 2Co 11:25.
ACTS—NOTE ON 14:20 *disciples*. See note, Mt 5:1. *he rose up*. Paul was certainly severely wounded, apparently to the point of death (v 19). Yet, miraculously, he gets up and walks back into the city where he had just been stoned.
ACTS—NOTE ON 14:22 *strengthening the souls*. Encouragement affects their whole being. *through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God*. Evident here from Paul's suffering (cf 2Co 11:23–29). Pressure, hardship, and opposition are to be expected by God's people on their earthly journey toward their full experience of His heavenly kingdom. See note, Rm 2:9. Bern: "None the less ought we to sympathize with our friends whom we see placed in care and grief" (*SLSB*, p 47). "They will bring every possible misfortune and grief upon us. For where God's Word is preached, accepted, or believed and produces fruit, there the holy cross cannot be missing" (LC III 65). Luth: "Curses will not be lacking. But go forth to face them more boldly, be strong, and cling steadfastly to the blessing, no matter how much everything seems to be full of a curse. For this is what we should conclude: It is sure that I have been baptized. I have heard the Word from the mouth of the minister. I have made use of the Sacrament of the Altar. This is the divine and unchangeable truth. Even though I am weak, it is sure and unalterable. … You are children of the kingdom, your sins are forgiven, the devil has been overcome and laid low under your feet, sin and death will do you no harm; but you are blameless. Therefore bear the hostile curses with equanimity" (AE 5:145–46).
ACTS—NOTE ON 14:23 *appointed*. Formed from Gk for "hand," indicating either the stretching out or laying on of hands, or perhaps election by a show of hands. See notes, Ex 29:9, 10. "Formerly, the people elected pastors and bishops [Acts 14:23]. Then came a bishop, either of that church or a neighboring one, who confirmed the one elected by the laying on of hands [1 Timothy 4:14]. Ordination was nothing else than such a ratification" (Tr 70). *elders*. Pastors. Cf 20:17, 28; Ti 1:5–9; see p 1556. *prayer and fasting*. Lit, "praying with fasting," as practiced in Antioch (see notes, Ac 13:2, 3). See also note, Est 4:3. *committed them to the Lord*. Placed them before God in prayer and entrusted the new believers to His care.

ACTS—NOTE ON 14:19–23 The conclusion of Paul's work in Lystra illustrates both suffering for the Gospel and the power of the Gospel. God's people should expect opposition from a sinful world. Yet, the Gospel is crowned with success! It grants us entrance into God's kingdom, while strengthening and encouraging us along the way. • Lord, strengthen my soul so that in faith I may say, "Why should cross and trial grieve me? Christ is near With His cheer; Never will He leave me." Amen. (*LSB* 756:1)

ACTS—NOTE ON 14:24–26 Paul and Barnabas journey south to the coast and take a ship back to Syria. See map, p 1886.

ACTS—NOTE ON 14:26 Paul and Barnabas return to the congregation that had sent them out to face many trials, but had also given them over to God's grace, which enabled them to fulfill such great work. *commended*. The congregation literally "handed them over" to God. *grace*. See p 1902.

ACTS—NOTE ON 14:27 *declared all*. They announced what God accomplished through them. *opened a door of faith*. People can only believe when God opens the door of faith to them; Paul's first journey showed God was opening this door to Gentiles as well as Jews. See notes, Jn 6:37; Eph 2:8–9.

ACTS—NOTE ON 14:28 *disciples*. See note, Mt 5:1.

ACTS—NOTE ON 14:24–28 Paul and Barnabas end their journey by reporting to those who sent them everything God has done. Neither our faith nor our missionary achievements are ultimately our doing. It is God who opens the door of faith—for us and for those to whom we witness. • Heavenly Father, may Your Spirit move Your Church to spread Your Word. Bring many more people into Your kingdom, and strengthen all believers to endure the trials they face on their way to heaven. In Jesus' name. Amen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 15:1 A critical debate arises between Jewish Christians from Judea and the Jewish and Gentile believers in Antioch. See p 1867. *circumcised according to the custom of Moses*. As recorded in the Books of Moses. Cf Gn 17; Ex 12:43–48. Those from Judea insist that uncircumcised Gentile believers must be circumcised. Suppression of circumcision was a major cause of the Maccabean revolt (167 BC; cf 1Macc 1:11–15, 60–64). *you cannot be saved*. Paul's Letter to the Galatians addresses this same issue prior to the decision reached in Jerusalem. See "save," p 1904; see also pp 2000–2001. "The false apostles pushed circumcision (Acts 15:1) in order to establish their false doctrine that the works of the Law were necessary for righteousness and salvation [2 Corinthians 11:13]. They misused circumcision to confirm their error in people's minds" (FC SD X 12).

ACTS—NOTE ON 15:2 *appointed*. The Church in Antioch "sets it in order" for an official delegation to travel to Jerusalem to resolve this dispute (see note, v 1). *go up*. Jerusalem is c ½ mi above sea level, a higher elevation than Antioch. See map, p 971. *the apostles and the elders*. Here, the 12 apostles and other church leaders. See pp 1901, 1556.

ACTS—NOTE ON 15:3 *Phoenicia and Samaria*. Stops for encouragement were made on the way south. See map, p 1857. *conversion of the Gentiles*. Through the mission work of Paul and Barnabas (chs 13–14). *joy to all the brothers*. Believers in these non-Jewish places approved of the results.

ACTS—NOTE ON 15:4 The delegation is positively received by the believers in Jerusalem.

ACTS—NOTE ON 15:5 *party of the Pharisees*. Christian Pharisees, something still possible at this point. See p 1557. *circumcise … keep the law of Moses*. The necessity of circumcision for salvation is restated (cf v 1); it is significant that the Pharisees added the requirement to obey all the Law, as Paul describes in Gal 5:3. See note, Gal 3:10; see also "Law," p 971.

ACTS—NOTE ON 15:6 The Church leaders in Jerusalem gather to resolve the issues raised in vv 1, 5. This meeting is called the Jerusalem (or Apostolic) Council and is regarded as the first ecumenical council of the Church. See note, 6:2–6.

ACTS—NOTE ON 15:7 *early days*. Peter describes events that occurred about a decade earlier. *by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the*

word. God sent Peter to the house of Cornelius (ch 10). *believe*. See note, Rm 10:17.

ACTS—NOTE ON 15:8 *knows the heart*. God sees one's true inner being (1Sm 16:7; cf Lk 5:22). See note, Jn 2:24–25. *bore witness … by giving them the Holy Spirit*. As on Pentecost (Ac 2:1–4), visible and audible signs of the Spirit's presence were given to Cornelius and his family—in that instance prior to Baptism (10:44–48). See p 1876.

ACTS—NOTE ON 15:9 *no distinction*. The particular distinction to be overcome in this context is between Jew and Gentile; God receives all people through repentance and faith (10:34–35). *cleansed their hearts by faith*. Faith receives the purifying work of Christ for us. "Through faith, as St. Peter says, we have a new and clean heart [Acts 15:9–11], and God will and does account us entirely righteous and holy for the sake of Christ, our Mediator [1 Timothy 2:5]" (SA III XIV 1). Mel: "If faith only refers to knowledge, such as even the devils have, this statement would be utterly inane. But it is evident in this very passage that that argument pertains to justification, and it is established beyond debate that hearts are not purified by the righteousness of the Law" (Chem, *LTh* 2:487).

ACTS—NOTE ON 15:10 *putting God to the test*. God had made His acceptance of Gentiles evident; laying additional requirements on them for full acceptance into the fellowship of believers would be an affront to Him. Cf Dt 6:16. *yoke*. The obligation of circumcision and obedience to the Law, which even Jews were unable to keep (v 5; cf 13:39). See note, Mt 11:29. "If the Gospel says that Moses' ceremonies—which were divinely instituted—do not justify, how much less do human traditions justify! Neither do the bishops have the power to institute services, as though they justified, or were necessary for justification. … Peter declares this effort to burden the Church a great sin" (Ap XV 30–31). *disciples*. Gentile believers; see note, Mt 5:1.

ACTS—NOTE ON 15:11 The heart of biblical faith. Salvation for both Jew and Gentile is a free gift of grace in Christ. *saved*. See p 1904. *grace*. See p 1902. Luth: "It is necessary beyond measure to know this doctrine about faith in the Christ to be revealed [the expected Messiah] and in the Christ already revealed. … For now that Christ has been revealed, we cannot be saved by faith in the coming Christ; but we are obliged to believe that He has already come, has fulfilled everything, and has abrogated the Law" (AE 26:210).

ACTS—NOTE ON 15:12 *signs and wonders*. See note, 14:3.
ACTS—NOTE ON 15:13 *James*. Half brother of Jesus; cf Mk 6:3. See pp 2130–33. James the brother of John had already been killed by Herod Agrippa I (12:2).
ACTS—NOTE ON 15:14 *Simeon*. Alternate (Semitic) spelling of Simon, i.e., Peter. *a people for His name*. The name of God (Yahweh) and of Jesus convey His presence and blessing (e.g., Nu 6:22–27; Mt 28:19); here it is extended to Gentiles (cf 2:21; 4:12). See "for Your name's sake," p 842.
ACTS—NOTE ON 15:16–18 See notes, Am 9:11, 14. After punishment and exile, God would restore David's royal house (cf Lk 1:32–33). The citation from Am also declared that Gentiles would be called by the Lord's name along with the faithful remnant of Israel.
ACTS—NOTE ON 15:19–21 Based on the testimony of Peter (vv 7–11) and the Scriptures (vv 16–18), James draws the matter to its conclusion. The place of Gentiles in the fellowship of believers should not depend on circumcision and obedience to the Law. Indeed, Christ fulfilled the commands of the OT (Mt 5:17; Rm 10:4); e.g., He declared all foods clean (Mk 7:19).
ACTS—NOTE ON 15:19 *turn to God*. God's word of grace calls and empowers people to turn to Him, as it had through the sending of Paul and Barnabas. See p 1080.
ACTS—NOTE ON 15:20 The considered request of the apostles and elders. *polluted by idols*. Sacrificed to them (cf 1Co 8–10). *sexual immorality*. Conduct commonly practiced by Gentiles, but clearly sinful and particularly offensive to Jews. See note, 1Co 6:13; see also p 1911. *strangled*. So the blood remained with the meat. *blood*. Eating it violated Jewish custom (Gn 9:4; Lv 17:10–12). See p 1907. "Not even the apostles themselves wanted to burden consciences with bondage to traditions. They forbid the eating of the blood for a time to avoid giving offense. For in this decree we must always keep in mind what the aim of the Gospel is" (AC XXVIII 65–66).
ACTS—NOTE ON 15:21 Obedience to the ceremonial law was never intended to be a requirement for salvation; neither is it a prerequisite for acceptance in the Church. James acknowledges that Jewish Christians are free to continue these ancient practices but asks Gentile believers to abide by a few rules so as not to hinder the faith of Jewish believers. This would also enhance outreach to the synagogues. See note, Mk 7:3–4.

ACTS—NOTE ON 15:1–21 The Jerusalem Council resolved the critical issue of who God's chosen people are and affirmed that Jews and Gentiles are saved by grace alone (v 11). Obedience to the Law is a burden or yoke no one can bear, neither Jew nor Gentile (v 10; cf 13:39). However, our salvation through faith alone also empowers us to live with care and respect for others. • Heavenly Father, I praise You for saving us through the grace of our Lord Jesus. Empower and guide Your people to live in that grace, and to live out that grace, for the sake of others within and outside of the Church. Amen.
ACTS—NOTE ON 15:22 *Judas called Barsabbas, and Silas*. Delegates from Jerusalem will solidify and clarify the written decision; Silas accompanied Paul on his second and third missionary journeys. See map, p 1886. *leading men among the brothers*. Well respected by the Jerusalem believers. See "brothers," p 1901.
ACTS—NOTE ON 15:23 *letter*. The decision is also delivered in writing (v 20); this letter, or "epistle," follows the standard first-century format and resembles a Jewish festal letter. See pp 1899–1901. *The brothers, both the apostles and the elders*. "Brothers" here simply means fellow believers, among whom are apostles and elders. See pp 1901, 1556. *brothers who are of the Gentiles*. The matter specifically concerns the inclusion of Gentiles in the Church, in response to vv 1, 5.
ACTS—NOTE ON 15:24 *some persons*. Jewish Christians (v 1), particularly those who still held to Pharisaic teachings (v 5). *we gave them no instructions*. Neither the teachers nor the teaching had the approval of the Church leaders in Jerusalem.
ACTS—NOTE ON 15:25 *having come to one accord*. The matter has been resolved as a whole. See p 1867. *beloved Barnabas and Paul*. They have had the approval of the Jerusalem leadership for some time (cf 4:36–37; 9:27–29; 11:22–26; Gal 2:7–9).
ACTS—NOTE ON 15:26 As on the first missionary journey.
ACTS—NOTE ON 15:27 *word of mouth*. Official witnesses. See note, v 22.
ACTS—NOTE ON 15:28 *good to the Holy Spirit and to us*. It is not clear how the Spirit made His intention known (cf 13:2). However, God works through the appointed leaders of His Church, esp through the Word, which the leaders consulted (vv 16–17). *requirements*. Lit, "necessary things," not for salvation (vv 10–11) but as accommodations to enable fellowship

among Jewish and Gentile believers. Chem: "[God] does not lay upon religious people the ceremonial or civil laws, but only the Decalog. … We do not condemn godly and useful ordinances if they work to edify the church. But we must beware that they do not become snares for consciences or hinder our Christian liberty" (*LTh* 2:343, 580).

ACTS—NOTE ON 15:29 See notes, vv 20–21.

ACTS—NOTE ON 15:30 *congregation*. Lit, "multitude"; probably believers from various house churches throughout Antioch. See note, 1Co 14:23.

ACTS—NOTE ON 15:31 *encouragement*. The letter and delegation affirmed the place of Gentile believers among God's people.

ACTS—NOTE ON 15:32 *prophets, encouraged and strengthened*. NT prophets took God's Word and will (i.e., the decision of the Jerusalem Council) and applied it to people in their situation. See notes, v 31; 13:1; see also pp 1077–83.

ACTS—NOTE ON 15:33 Since the matter had arisen in Antioch (v 1), the letter and delegation responded specifically to that setting. But Paul and others also shared these affirmations with Gentiles elsewhere (cf 16:4).

ACTS—NOTE ON 15:35 As they had done earlier (11:25–26), Paul, Barnabas, and many others continued in Antioch for a time, teaching and evangelizing with the Word of the Lord.

ACTS—NOTE ON 15:22–35 The decision reached in Jerusalem is delivered by delegation and by letter to the believers in Syrian Antioch, affirming the teaching of the council. Today, seek peace based on God's Word and mutual care of fellow believers. The Lord, who cares deeply for you, will bless and provide for you in Christ, our peace. • Heavenly Father, may Your Spirit work through the Scriptures and human messengers to affirm the good news of our salvation and to teach us Your will. Help all of Your people to listen and to respond in faith and love. Amen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 15:36 They wish to return to the cities of their first journey (chs 13–14).

ACTS—NOTE ON 15:37 *John called Mark*. See note, 13:5.

ACTS—NOTE ON 15:39 A "sharp disagreement" works out for good: two missionary teams are now active, dividing up the task of revisiting the believers in Cyprus and Galatia (16:1).

ACTS—NOTE ON 15:40 Though Silas had returned to Jerusalem (v 33), after a while (cf v 36) he returned to Antioch and joined Paul. *commended*.

As before, they are sent out on their second journey by the Christians in Antioch. See notes, 13:3; 14:26. *grace*. See p 1902.

ACTS—NOTE ON 15:41 *Syria and Cilicia*. Paul traveled north and then west to the land of his birth. See map, p 1886.

ACTS—NOTE ON 15:36–41 After disagreement over John Mark, two missionary teams are sent out from Antioch. Believers are also sinners (even Paul and Barnabas) and will at times have sharp disagreements. Yet, God promises to work all things for good, even our faults and failings (cf Rm 8:28; Gn 50:20), as He forgives our sins in Christ. • Heavenly Father, when dissension arises among Your people, forgive our sins and continue to work among us, even through our conflicts. In Jesus' name. Amen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 16:1 *disciple*. See note, Mt 5:1. *Timothy*. See pp 2066–67. *father was a Greek*. In the Dispersion, such marriages were common; language implies his Gk father was not a Christian.

ACTS—NOTE ON 16:3 Paul's first journey began with three people (13:5); the second journey also begins with a team of three. *circumcised him*. When circumcision was alleged to be a requirement for salvation, Paul refused to circumcise Titus (Gal 2:1–5). With the issue resolved in Ac 15, Paul treats circumcision as an acceptable practice to enable better outreach among Jews. If circumcision is a legalistic requirement, it must be resisted. But as a matter of Christian freedom (*adiaphora*), it may be practiced in ways beneficial to the faith (cf Gal 5:6; 6:15). See notes, 1Co 9:19, 20. Luth: "When [Paul] encountered the stubborn Jews who insisted upon circumcision and the law, he took delight in teaching and doing the very opposite; he would not be coerced [Gal. 2:3–5]. But when he came to the weak and simple people he even practiced circumcision [Acts 16:3] and let the law stand, until such time as he might strengthen them and deliver them from the law" (AE 36:253).

ACTS—NOTE ON 16:4 *delivered … the decisions*. Cf ch 15; see notes, 15:10–11, 19–21.

ACTS—NOTE ON 16:5 *strengthened*. The apostles reassured the Gentile believers in the cities of Paul's first journey. This verse concludes the section on the uniting of Jew and Gentile (13:1–16:5); see pp 1828–30. *increased*. See note, 2:41.

ACTS—NOTE ON 16:1–5 Paul begins his second journey with Silas and Timothy. Through them, God continues to reach out with His message, using people as His messengers. Encouragement is still a great blessing to

our faith. Share your hope and joy! Jesus is our strength amid all troubles and challenges. • Lord Jesus, may wisdom and love characterize all that we do. Amen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 16:6–10 *Holy Spirit … Spirit of Jesus … God*. Note the unity of mission expressed by the persons of the Holy Trinity.

ACTS—NOTE ON 16:6 Whether by direct revelation or by circumstances (e.g., hostility, illness), Paul was prohibited from traveling west toward Ephesus at this time, as well as north (v 7). Many times Paul's own travel plans did not go as he intended (cf chs 21–23; Rm 1:13; 15:22–32).

ACTS—NOTE ON 16:7 *Spirit of Jesus*. The Holy Spirit is sent by Jesus (2:33; Jn 14:26; 15:26; 16:14); the Spirit "proceeds from the Father and the Son" (Nicene Creed). See p 1815.

ACTS—NOTE ON 16:8 *Troas*. On the coast of the Aegean Sea. See map, p 1886.

ACTS—NOTE ON 16:9 *vision*. Perhaps in a dream during the night. See pp 1077–83. *Macedonia*. West across the Aegean Sea; modern northern Greece. This may be the first time the Gospel moves from Asia onto the continent of Europe. See map, p 1886.

ACTS—NOTE ON 16:10 *we*. First of the so-called "we" sections of Ac (see "Relationship to the Gospel according to Luke," p 1829).

ACTS—NOTE ON 16:6–10 God guided Paul and his companions in unexpected directions. Our plans in general, and in particular our plans for the spread of the Gospel, do not always proceed as we hope. Yet, God directs us as His messengers to the people and places He would have us go. His grace is not bounded by our weakness but serves His good purposes in Christ. • Heavenly Father, continue to send workers into Your harvest field. Enable missionaries, evangelists, and pastors to always see their ministry as a calling from You. Amen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 16:12 *Roman colony*. See pp 2029–30.

ACTS—NOTE ON 16:13 *Sabbath*. Regular day of worship for those who followed the God of Israel. See pp 200–201. *riverside … a place of prayer*. Apparently there were few Jews, particularly Jewish men, and therefore no synagogue in Philippi. See "synagogue," p 1557. *women*. Lk and Ac highlight the role of women, the only worshipers of God present on this occasion. See note, Lk 8:2–3; see also p 1726.

ACTS—NOTE ON 16:14 *Thyatira*. City in Asia Minor; a center for the manufacture of purple dye. *seller of purple goods*. The expensive dye made a profitable trade. See p 141. *worshiper of God*. Cf 13:16; see "God-fearers," p 1556. *The Lord opened her heart*. Paul spoke the message, and the Lord worked through it to create a faithful response. See note, 14:27. "With this Word the Holy Spirit is present and opens hearts, so that people (like Lydia in Acts 16:14) pay attention to it and are converted only through the Holy Spirit's grace and power, who alone does the work of converting a person" (FC Ep II 5).

ACTS—NOTE ON 16:15 *she was baptized, and her household*. As is common in Ac, Baptism is granted immediately and is bestowed on the entire household along with its head (cf 10:44–48). *household*. Term includes children and servants. See p 1369. *faithful to the Lord*. See "faith," p 1902. *stay*. Lydia offered the hospitality of her home, which likely became a gathering place for the Philippian believers. See notes, Gn 18:4; 1Co 14:23.

ACTS—NOTE ON 16:11–15 Paul begins his work in Philippi through Lydia. At times, Christians may feel isolated from worship and fellowship. Yet, God opens the hearts of people to believe, provides others who are faithful to the Lord, and binds them together in homes and families. • Heavenly Father, we thank You for opening the door of faith to many faithful women throughout the ages—Sarah, Deborah, Ruth, Esther, Elizabeth, Mary, and Lydia. Guide and bless women today to be equally receptive to Your Word. In the name of our Lord Jesus, the Son of Mary. Amen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 16:16 *spirit of divination … fortune-telling*. Demonic powers are able to predict the future, so it is no certain sign that God is at work in a person (cf Dt 13:1–5). Here the girl is being used to generate profit. See note, 8:9.

ACTS—NOTE ON 16:17–18 As in Jesus' ministry, the demons recognize God's presence at work and are driven to respond (cf Lk 4:34, 41).

ACTS—NOTE ON 16:19 *marketplace before the rulers*. The rulers were apparently overseeing the buying and selling that took place at the city's main place of commerce (Gk *agora*). See pp 1944–46.

ACTS—NOTE ON 16:20 *magistrates*. Unusual term of respect, probably because of Philippi's status as a Roman colony (v 12). See p 1892. *Jews*.

The antagonism between Jews and Gentiles went both ways; here the contrast is with the Romans.

ACTS—NOTE ON 16:21 *customs that are not lawful*. Slanderous statement, since the OT religion was officially sanctioned and legally practiced (*religio licita*) in the empire. Christianity was not yet distinguished from Judaism (cf 18:12–15; see note, 18:15).

ACTS—NOTE ON 16:22 City officials order Paul and Silas to be stripped of their clothes and severely beaten, an illegal punishment (v 37).

ACTS—NOTE ON 16:24 *inner prison*. Place of added security, and perhaps additional torture as well; archaeologists have located this city jail in Philippi's ruins. *s tocks*. Secure and painful.

ACTS—NOTE ON 16:16–24 Paul heals a demon-possessed girl, and as a result, he and Silas are beaten and jailed. Believers who do God's will, even when striving to help others, can expect mistreatment and abuse from the people and institutions of this world. However, the same name and power that freed this slave girl from demonic captivity deliver us from suffering to eternal life. • Heavenly Father, the powers of evil still try to torment us. As we strive to do Your will, deliver us from evil, and assure us that through Christ's death and resurrection, the victory over evil is already won. Amen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 16:25 *praying and singing*. Inspiring response to harsh mistreatment. *prisoners were listening*. Their worship was a powerful witness to others in the jail.

ACTS—NOTE ON 16:27 If a Roman guard lost his prisoner, the penalty was death; the jailer is about to carry out what he assumes is inevitable.

ACTS—NOTE ON 16:28 *all here*. Despite the open doors, no prisoner had left! The jailer did not need to fear punishment.

ACTS—NOTE ON 16:30–33 Walth: "The Gospel does not require anything good that man must furnish: not a good heart, not a good disposition, no improvement of his condition, no godliness, no love either of God or men. It issues no orders, but it changes man. It plants love into his heart and makes him capable of all good works. It demands nothing, but it gives all. Should not this fact make us leap for joy? … Observe that the Gospel bestows the faith which it demands" (*L & G*, p 16).

ACTS—NOTE ON 16:30 *Sirs, what must I do to be saved?* The ultimate question. Those who ask it often place the emphasis on what they must do

(e.g., Lk 10:25; 18:18); here the jailer stresses his need for rescue and salvation. *saved?* See p 1904.

ACTS—NOTE ON 16:31 *Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved*. A concise summary of the Christian faith (see note, v 14; cf 15:11; Rm 10:9). *your household*. The message would permeate his household. Others are saved not by the jailer's faith but by their own hearing and believing (v 32).

ACTS—NOTE ON 16:32 *word of the Lord*. Whether using OT texts or words of the Lord Jesus (or both), Paul and Silas speak the message of salvation to the entire household. Salvation came to them through the Word and the Sacrament of Baptism (v 33).

ACTS—NOTE ON 16:33 *washed their wounds*. From the earlier beating (v 22). *baptized at once, he and all his family*. Reminiscent of Peter's visit to Cornelius's household (10:34–48). Baptism is immediate and for the entire family (see note, v 15; cf 8:36–38).

ACTS—NOTE ON 16:34 *house*. Before, described members of the jailer's household (v 32); now Paul and Silas enter the actual home. *rejoiced*. The jailer's faith in the Lord Jesus had turned his suicidal fear into joy! See "joy," p 1903.

ACTS—NOTE ON 16:35 *police*. Officers sent by the city's leaders (cf v 20). After the previous day's punishment, Paul and Silas are going to be released.

ACTS—NOTE ON 16:37 *Roman citizens*. Magistrates could punish noncitizens without proper legal proceedings, but Paul and Silas were Roman citizens; hence the dismay of the city officials (vv 38–39).

ACTS—NOTE ON 16:39 The city officials could now be in trouble. They politely ask Paul and Silas to leave.

ACTS—NOTE ON 16:40 *they went out of the prison*. Either Paul and Silas had returned to the prison earlier in the morning, or they were at the jailer's home nearby. *encouraged*. Before leaving, they visited Lydia and the other believers, who were certainly uplifted by these events. See note, v 15.

ACTS—NOTE ON 16:25–40 Paul and Silas are freed from prison. The Lord brings a Philippian jailer and his family to faith. Like Paul and Silas, God's people today can respond to mistreatment with a powerful testimony of prayer and praise to God. Like the despairing jailer (v 27), all people are sinners who face death (Rm 3:9; 6:23). But all are saved by trusting in the Lord Jesus. • Father, assure me of the simplicity of this good news:

"Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved" (v 31). Then move me to respond with a life of worship and praise to You, whatever my earthly situation may be. Amen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 17:1 *synagogue*. Unlike Philippi, Thessalonica had a Jewish community and synagogue. See p 1557.

ACTS—NOTE ON 17:2 *as was his custom*. See note, 13:5. *reasoned … from the Scriptures*. Paul began where people were. If they had the OT Scriptures and accepted them, Paul utilized them; contrast his approach in vv 22–31.

ACTS—NOTE ON 17:3 Following a pattern set by Jesus, Paul uses the OT to demonstrate God's work of salvation, which depends on Jesus as the promised Messiah (Lk 24:26–27, 44–45; cf Is 52:13–53:12). See p 1245.

ACTS—NOTE ON 17:4 Paul regularly has some success at the synagogues among Jews and God-fearing Gentiles there (see note, 13:5; cf 14:1). *leading women*. Culturally, women more easily converted from one religion to another, as commonly happened through marriage. Inheritance and other issues placed more restrictions on men; e.g., circumcision hindered male converts to Judaism. See "God-fearers," p 1556. Regarding Luke's focus on women, see p 1726.

ACTS—NOTE ON 17:5 *Jason*. Perhaps hosted Paul and Silas in his home during their time in Thessalonica, as Lydia had in Philippi (16:15).

ACTS—NOTE ON 17:6 *turned the world upside down*. Lit, "shaking or stirring up the inhabited (i.e., Roman) world" in a negative, seditious manner. In a more profound sense, Christianity does invert the ways of this world (e.g., Lk 1:51–53; 6:20–26; 9:46–48; 18:14).

ACTS—NOTE ON 17:7–8 *another king, Jesus*. An issue in Jesus' trial (Lk 23:2–3; Jn 18:37; cf Lk 1:32–33); the lordship of Christ may have been part of Paul's message. Asserting a rival king to Caesar was a serious charge and greatly disturbed the city. See pp 1565–66.

ACTS—NOTE ON 17:9 *money as security*. Jason (see note, v 5) was required to place his money and property on the line to guarantee that there would be no further disruptive events.

ACTS—NOTE ON 17:1–9 At Thessalonica, Paul and Silas continue the pattern of preaching at the synagogue, gaining converts, and experiencing harsh opposition. The offense and foolishness of the cross (1Co 1:23) may well provoke a harsh response from the world. Yet Jesus, the Messiah, suffered, died, and rose, and "turned the world upside down." Sinners are

forgiven, the humble and poor are raised up, and the proud and rich are brought low. The first will be last, and the last, first. • Heavenly Father, may the Good News of Jesus Christ, the King of kings, continue to turn this world upside down. Amen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 17:10 *brothers*. Christians in Thessalonica. See p 1901. *Jewish synagogue*. See notes, 13:5; 14:1.

ACTS—NOTE ON 17:11 In contrast to the Thessalonian Jews, the dominant group in the Berean synagogue is open to listening to Paul's message. They use the OT Scriptures to discern its validity. Luth: "We must go back to the Old Testament and learn to prove the New Testament from the Old. There we shall see the promise concerning Christ, as Christ Himself declares in John 5:39: 'You search the Scriptures … and it is they that bear witness to Me.' Likewise (v. 46): 'If you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote of Me' " (AE 30:18–19).

ACTS—NOTE ON 17:12 *Greek women of high standing*. Socially prominent women seem to have been commonly present in Jewish synagogues and among those who accepted Christianity (cf vv 4, 34; 16:14). See note, v 4.

ACTS—NOTE ON 17:14 Hostility of Thessalonian Jews must have been directed most vehemently against Paul, who is sent off, while Silas and Timothy continue the work in Berea.

ACTS—NOTE ON 17:15 *conducted Paul*. Others go along with Paul to ensure his safety. *command*. Paul instructs his escort to tell Silas and Timothy to join him soon (cf 1Th 2:17–3:6).

ACTS—NOTE ON 17:10–15 Persecution follows the Gospel, even when the Bereans eagerly receive it. God's people should follow the noble example of the Bereans, who studied the Scriptures daily in order to receive further truths and to examine what they were being taught. Because the OT Scriptures also testify to Jesus Christ (Jn 5:39), searching them brings God's blessings of salvation (Is 55:10–11). • Heavenly Father, thank You for the truth of Your Word. May it be "a lamp to my feet and a light to my path" (Ps 119:105). Amen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 17:16 Athens had many idol statues and temples. The most prominent was Athena, patron goddess of the city, whose temple was the Parthenon. This wanton idolatry irritated and angered Paul.

ACTS—NOTE ON 17:17 *synagogue*. See note, 13:5. *devout persons*. See "God-fearers," p 1556. *marketplace*. Paul also reasoned and debated with

those in the commercial hub of the city (Gk *agora*), which archaeologists have excavated.

ACTS—NOTE ON 17:18 *Epicurean and Stoic*. The philosophical fame of Athens is evident. Epicureanism emphasized seeking a pleasurable life, though not merely in a sensual way. Stoicism stressed the rational order of nature and urged people to accept their fate within it. These two Gk philosophies were the most popular of the day. *foreign divinities*. At least some may have thought Paul was preaching a divine Jesus and a goddess, Anastasia (Gk for "resurrection"). *preaching Jesus and the resurrection*. This was the heart of Paul's message, emphasized in Ac (cf 1Co 15:3–4). See p 1829.

ACTS—NOTE ON 17:19 *Areopagus*. Lit, "hill of Ares." Ares was a Gk god of war linked with Mars by the Romans; therefore, the location is also called Mars Hill. Early in the history of Athens, citizens met here to govern the city, so "Areopagus" also came to describe the city council. Paul seems to be in the place called the Areopagus, near the Acropolis, rather than at a formal meeting of citizens. He would be in view of the massive Parthenon, dedicated to Athena. *new teaching*. Since there was at least one synagogue in Athens (v 17), the Athenians likely knew of the OT. But the good news of Jesus' death and resurrection was new to them.

ACTS—NOTE ON 17:20 Their openness is reminiscent of the Bereans (vv 11–12), as well as those at Pisidian Antioch (13:42).

ACTS—NOTE ON 17:21 This parenthetical comment heightens the philosophical reputation and character of the city of Athens, from the time of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle on.

ACTS—NOTE ON 17:16–21 At Athens, Paul engages the dominant religious and philosophical teachings of the day. The Gospel message is foolishness to people of this world. Yet, God desires to engage all people with His Word and, by the Spirit's power, to open their hearts and minds to the good news of Jesus and His resurrection. • Father, the Gospel of Jesus is the power by which we are saved (1Co 1:18–25). Guide Your people to engage the world with this message. Amen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 17:22 *Areopagus*. See note, v 19. *religious*. Gk term could have a positive ("religious") or negative ("superstitious") meaning. Here Paul most likely speaks positively in order to get a fair hearing.

ACTS—NOTE ON 17:23 *To the unknown god*. The Greeks had many gods; this altar was built to ensure no significant deity was missed. Its existence is

confirmed by other sources.
ACTS—NOTE ON 17:24 *does not live in temples*. Pagans generally built temples for their gods to "live" in, as evidenced by the statues contained therein. The God of creation transcends earth and any structure on it.
ACTS—NOTE ON 17:25 God is not dependent upon His creation or anything human beings do. Instead, God is the giver of life to all, as well as the giver of all that we have.
ACTS—NOTE ON 17:26 *one man every nation*. All people are descended from Adam. *determined allotted periods and the boundaries*. God is involved in the lives of all peoples and nations on earth, even setting in order the times and places of their existence. Cf Gn 10–11; see note, Jb 38:4.
ACTS—NOTE ON 17:27 *seek God*. The goodness and power of God revealed in creation should lead people to seek Him (cf Rm 1:19–21). *feel their way*. Apart from God's direct revelation, it is like groping for God in the darkness. See notes, Rm 1:20–23. *not far.* Chem: "Paul says that God can almost be contacted through these evidences. … Nine proofs are listed [by Melanchthon]: (1) the very order of nature itself, (2) the nature of the human mind, (3) the difference between the honorable and the shameful, (4) the truthfulness of natural knowledge, (5) the terrors of conscience, (6) the structure of human society, (7) the orderly process of cause and effect, (8) the signs of future events, (9) the ultimate purpose of things. … These proofs of the natural knowledge of God can be quite favorably compared with the arguments of Paul by which in his preaching to the gentiles he marshals his argument concerning the natural knowledge of God" (*LTh* 1:52). Cf Ac 14:15.
ACTS—NOTE ON 17:28 *In Him we live*. Paul here refers to pagan poets who, through their natural knowledge of God (Rm 1:20–21), correctly assessed and asserted this truth about the Creator God. C 600 BC, Epimenides concluded that one god is the creator and sustainer of all life. "In order that God's creation and work in mankind may be distinguished from the devil's work, we say that it is God's creation that a person has body and soul. Also, it is God's work that a person can think, speak, do, and work anything" (FC SD I 42). Chem: "[God] watches over and sustains the order which He has established in nature" (*LTh* 1:167). See p 1291. *For we are indeed His offspring*. Both Aratus and Cleanthus made this statement c 300 BC. It agrees with Paul's assertion in v 26 (cf Ps 8; Jn 10:34–35).

offspring. Gk *genos*, similar in meaning to Eng "generation." Luth: "Natural life is a part of eternal life and its beginning, but it ends through death because it does not acknowledge nor honor him from whom it comes. Sin cuts it off, so that it must die eternally. On the other hand, those who believe in him, and acknowledge him from whom they have their being never die. Their natural life will be stretched out into life eternal, so that they never taste death" (AE 52:55).

ACTS—NOTE ON 17:29 *God's offspring*. God created Adam; as Adam's offspring, we are similarly God's creation and offspring; see note, v 26. Note that elsewhere Paul and other apostles distinguish the children of God (believers) from the world (unbelievers). See notes, Jn 1:12; Rm 8:17. *art and imagination of man*. We cannot make God in our image or find Him in the gods of other religions. See p 141. Original sin drives all people to idolatry.

ACTS—NOTE ON 17:30 *times of ignorance God overlooked*. Cf Rm 2:12–16. With the coming of Christ, God's revealed Word is sent out into the world. Now it has come to Athens through Paul. Chem: "God by His determination has decided how long He wills to wait for repentance and where He is going to crush wickedness" (*LTh* 1:211). Cf Rm 2:4; 9:22; 1Pt 3:20. *all people*. "No one is an exception who is a human being. This repentance teaches us to discern sin: We are completely lost; there is nothing good in us from head to foot; and we must become absolutely new and different people" (SA III III 34–35). *repent*. The proper response to God's message is repentance (Lk 3:3; 10:13; 13:3, 5), but it must be His gift and work through His Word (cf Ac 2:38; 5:31; 10:44). See note, Mt 3:2.

ACTS—NOTE ON 17:31 *judge the world in righteousness by a man*. Jesus will come again in glory to judge; He will do so in accordance with the righteousness required by God and freely granted through faith. See p 1903. *appointed*. See note, 2:36. *raising Him from the dead*. Paul identifies the resurrection as the event that publicly declared Jesus to be God's Son (cf Rm 1:4) and, therefore, the one entrusted to judge (cf Jn 5:22; Mt 28:18). See "The Resurrection," p 1829.

ACTS—NOTE ON 17:32 *mocked*. Derisive reaction to the bodily resurrection, an unthinkable event for Platonic philosophers, who emphasized the spirit and ideas over the body and physical reality (cf 1Co 15:12, 35).

ACTS—NOTE ON 17:34 *Dionysius the Areopagite*. First named convert in Athens; tradition says he became a church leader there. *woman named Damaris*. Another leading female convert (cf 16:14; 18:2).

ACTS—NOTE ON 17:22–34 Paul reaches out to Athenians who do not know the Scriptures. He uses teachings from their philosophy and literature to point them to the God of creation, who sent His Son, Jesus. All people need to repent before Christ comes again to judge the living and the dead. The Creator desires that all people seek after Him. In love, He has come to us with the message of Jesus Christ, who has saved us by His resurrection. • Heavenly Father, move all people to seek You through repentance and to come to the true knowledge that You have already reached out to them in Christ. Amen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 18:1 Paul journeyed west to the strategic, sea-trading city of Corinth, set on a narrow isthmus. This is the setting of his two Letters to Thessalonica. See pp 2050–51, 2059–60.

ACTS—NOTE ON 18:2 *Aquila … Priscilla*. This couple become prominent co-workers with Paul. They were from northern Asia Minor, but came to Corinth from Rome. See "Cultural Diversity in Roman Corinth," p 1945. *Jews to leave Rome*. The Roman historian Suetonius relates how the emperor Claudius expelled Jews from the city in AD 49 because of their squabbling over a "Chrestus," probably a reference to Christ.

ACTS—NOTE ON 18:3 *tentmakers*. Gk *skenopoios*, "tent making" or "leather making." This could refer to material for tents or canvas for sails. Paul probably learned his trade as a youth; Pharisees regularly had an occupation, and Paul often worked to provide for himself.

ACTS—NOTE ON 18:4 *reasoned in the synagogue*. See note, 13:5; cf 17:1–2. Evidence of a synagogue in Corinth has been found, including the doorpost, an inscription, and other artifacts.

ACTS—NOTE ON 18:5 *occupied with the word … the Christ was Jesus*. Using OT Scriptures, as was Paul's custom at the synagogue (cf 13:16–41; 17:2–3), to demonstrate Jesus was the promised Messiah. See p 2098.

ACTS—NOTE ON 18:6 Some Jews, though not all (vv 7–8), become hostile. *shook out his garments*. Sign of rejection (cf Lk 9:5; 10:11). *Your blood be on your own heads!* They are responsible for the judgment they will face before God's throne. See note, Ezk 3:18. *go to the Gentiles*. See note, Ac 13:5.

ACTS—NOTE ON 18:7 *Titius Justus, a worshiper of God*. A Gentile who had been at the synagogue. See "God-fearers," p 1556.
ACTS—NOTE ON 18:8 *Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue*. An important Jewish convert who then brought his household to the faith. See note, Lk 8:41. *believed and were baptized*. The witness of Crispus was understandably quite effective in Corinth. See note, 16:15.
ACTS—NOTE ON 18:9 *vision*. Either a physical appearance or a dream in the night. Note Paul's continuing personal contact with Jesus (cf 9:4–6). See pp 1077–83.
ACTS—NOTE ON 18:10 *I am with you*. Jesus is with us always (Mt 28:20); here He is present esp to bless Paul's work in Corinth. See "be with," p 5. *I have many in this city*. The fields are ripe for harvest in Corinth (cf Lk 10:2).
ACTS—NOTE ON 18:11 *a year and six months*. Opposition usually drove Paul from a city within a short time. His lengthy stay in Corinth reflects the promise in v 10.
ACTS—NOTE ON 18:12 *proconsul*. Roman governor of the province; see note, 19:38. An inscription found at Delphi, Greece, places Gallio in this position from AD 51 to 52. See p 1892. *tribunal*. See notes, 25:6; Mt 27:19.
ACTS—NOTE ON 18:13 *contrary to the law*. See note, 16:21. The charge of the Jews was that Paul's teachings did not fall under Rome's policy of religious tolerance.
ACTS—NOTE ON 18:15 *your own law*. Gallio properly concludes that the dispute is an internal matter not addressed by Roman law. Christianity is not disruptive of proper authority. Roman officials typically viewed Christians as a sect of Judaism until the Jewish Bar Kokhba revolt (AD 132–35) forced a clear distinction and different policies.
ACTS—NOTE ON 18:17 *they*. Either Greeks showing their anti-Semitism or Jews venting their frustration or perhaps both. *Sosthenes*. The new synagogue ruler (cf v 8).
ACTS—NOTE ON 18:1–17 Paul's stay in Corinth demonstrates two lessons: (1) The Gospel is the power of God for salvation, even in the face of rejection. (2) Opposition to the Gospel—not the Gospel itself—disrupts proper authority. Hostility to the message of Jesus is to be expected. Nevertheless, His Gospel remains the only power for eternal good. • Heavenly Father, thank You for governments that allow us to practice our

faith and to share it with the rest of the world. May Jesus' presence continue to be among His people to bless their labors in His name. Amen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 18:18 *set sail for Syria*. As at the end of his first journey, Paul plans to report back to the believers in Syrian Antioch who sponsored his work. See map, p 1886. *Priscilla and Aquila*. Paul's co-workers travel along with him but are left to work in Ephesus (v 19); see note, v 2. *cut his hair … a vow*. Most likely refers to Paul, not Aquila. Perhaps he had taken a temporary Nazirite vow (Nu 6:1–21) in thanksgiving. See "vow," p 7.

ACTS—NOTE ON 18:19 *synagogue and reasoned*. See notes, vv 4–5; 13:5.

ACTS—NOTE ON 18:20–21 Paul moves on quickly, but according to God's will, he does return for an extended stay in Ephesus (19:1–10). See pp 2014–15.

ACTS—NOTE ON 18:22 *went up and greeted the church*. Brief stop in Jerusalem, perhaps to confer with colleagues there (see note, 15:2). Paul then returns to Antioch in Syria and completes his second missionary journey.

ACTS—NOTE ON 18:23 *strengthening all the disciples*. Third visit to the Galatian believers begins Paul's third journey; this ongoing fellowship builds up their faith.

ACTS—NOTE ON 18:18–23 These travels conclude Paul's second missionary journey and begin his third. Travel plans and visits may not always turn out the way you intend. When you travel, begin with prayer, and serve the Lord with purpose. Place your life in God's hands; He works all things according to His good and gracious will. • Heavenly Father, whenever and wherever I travel in this world, watch over me through Your guardian angels and strengthen me by the presence of my fellow believers. Empower me to live according to Your will. In Jesus' name. Amen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 18:24 *Apollos*. A Jew from Egypt. *an eloquent man, competent in the Scriptures*. Lit, "a man [with] words … being powerful in the [OT] Writings." He likely learned the Scriptures from Jewish teachers in Alexandria and had training in rhetoric.

ACTS—NOTE ON 18:25 *instructed in the way of the Lord*. Likely a reference to the Way (cf 19:9, 23); Apollos trusted in the coming Messiah. See "way," p 1904. *fervent in spirit*. Perhaps the charisma of his teaching, but more likely the Holy Spirit. *knew only the baptism of John*. John's

Baptism was a temporary institution, in preparation for the coming Messiah and the Baptism He would institute (cf Lk 3:3; 5:33–35; 7:26–29; Mt 28:19). Somehow Apollos did not know the distinction of Christian Baptism. Luth: "If [a Christian] is in a place where there are no Christians he needs no other call than to be a Christian, called and anointed by God from within. Here it is his duty to preach and to teach the gospel to erring heathen or non-Christians, because of the duty of brotherly love, even though no man calls him to do so. … In such a case a Christian looks with brotherly love at the need of the poor and perishing souls and does not wait until he is given a command or letter from a prince or bishop" (AE 39:310).

ACTS—NOTE ON 18:26 *synagogue*. Apollos, like Paul, began teaching about Jesus in the synagogue. See note, 13:5. *Priscilla and Aquila*. Christians continued worshiping and witnessing in the synagogue as long as they were allowed. *took him and explained*. They privately instructed the learned teacher Apollos, particularly about Christian Baptism.

ACTS—NOTE ON 18:27 Apollos heads to Achaia, including Corinth, with the written approval of the believers in Ephesus (cf 1Co 3:4–6). *through grace had believed*. Believing is a work of God's grace, by which we are saved. See p 1902.

ACTS—NOTE ON 18:28 *refuted the Jews in public*. The debate begun by Paul at Corinth's synagogue (v 4) had spilled out into the public square. *the Christ was Jesus*. The same message Paul preached; see note, v 5; see also p 2098.

ACTS—NOTE ON 18:24–28 Apollos is a gifted teacher with sincere faith, yet he needs to grow in his knowledge of the faith. While our knowledge in this life will always be incomplete, teachers should strive to learn everything God has revealed and teach it fully and properly to His people. God's Word, including His Word in the Baptism instituted by Jesus Christ, is the power by which we believe. • Heavenly Father, thank You for Your gracious gift of Baptism. Spread Your Word, that it may be received and taught as Your means to wash away our sins and adopt us into Your family. Amen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 19:1 *Apollos*. See note, 18:24. *inland country*. Lit, "upper country"; Paul traveled through the mountainous regions of Galatia and Phrygia on his way to Ephesus. See map, p 1886. *found some disciples*. They appeared to be fellow Christians. Their understanding of the Christian faith is described in vv 2–3.

ACTS—NOTE ON 19:2 *receive the Holy Spirit*. If they were Christians, they would have received the Spirit, because He creates faith in Christ (1Co 12:3; Ti 3:5–6). Paul might therefore be asking if they were baptized in the triune name of God, which refers to the Spirit (Mt 28:19), or if any special signs occurred when they were baptized, as had happened with other Christians in Ac (4:31; 8:17; 10:44–46; 11:15). Chem: "It is impossible to understand this passage in Acts 19:2 to mean that the disciples of John the Baptist had never heard of the person of the Holy Spirit in his sermons" (*LTh* 1:141). Cf Jn 1:32–33.

ACTS—NOTE ON 19:3 Paul seeks to determine what type of baptism these men received. *John's baptism*. See notes, v 4; Mt 3:6.

ACTS—NOTE ON 19:4 *baptism of repentance*. See note, 18:25; cf Mk 1:4–5; Lk 3:3. Luth: "This is the difference between the Baptism of Christ and that of John: John neither gives nor brings forgiveness of sin; he only points people to Him who does bestow it. In John's Baptism forgiveness is promised; in Christ's Baptism it is given. Thus John's Baptism is no longer valid now" (AE 22:177).

ACTS—NOTE ON 19:5 On the basis of further instruction by Paul (v 4), these disciples received Christian Baptism, which removed any doubts about their status as Christians. See note, 2:38.

ACTS—NOTE ON 19:6 *laid his hands on them*. Sign of blessing (cf Gn 48:14; Nu 27:23; Ac 6:6). *Holy Spirit came on them … speaking in tongues and prophesying*. A special outpouring of the Holy Spirit accomplished through God's appointed apostle (cf 2:4; 10:44–46; 11:15). See p 1876.

ACTS—NOTE ON 19:8 *synagogue*. See note, 13:5. *kingdom of God*. See pp 1565–66.

ACTS—NOTE ON 19:9 *the Way*. See note, 9:2. *hall of Tyrannus*. Possibly a lecture hall or school where Paul taught about salvation through Jesus. The disciples may have rented the building (cf Lk 22:11–12).

ACTS—NOTE ON 19:10 *all … heard*. Luke expresses how widespread the Word of the Lord became during Paul's time in Ephesus. Assistants of Paul undoubtedly helped spread the Word in the surrounding area, as many congregations were started (such as those mentioned in Rv 2–3).

ACTS—NOTE ON 19:1–10 Paul arrives at Ephesus and begins a very productive period of his ministry. Apart from Christ, there is no salvation. The Word of God clearly shows that Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of God's promises of eternal salvation for all. Through Holy Baptism, He consecrates

us as His beloved people. • Lord Jesus, help us always to believe in You for eternal life. Help us also to share Your Good News. Amen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 19:11–12 As the Lord had worked through Peter, He now worked powerfully through Paul, even through the agency of clothing that had touched him. The purpose of these miracles was to attest to the truth of Paul's preaching (cf Rm 15:19; see note, 2:22). The Lord may have worked these special miracles because of the Ephesians' interest in exorcisms and magic.

ACTS—NOTE ON 19:13 *itinerant Jewish exorcists*. Among the many practitioners of magic and sorcery in Ephesus were traveling Jewish exorcists. According to Josephus, men like these may have used a technique for casting out demons that was attributed to Solomon (*Ant* 8:45–48). Cf Tob 6:2–8, 14–19; 8:2–3. *the name of the Lord Jesus*. Instead of whatever name they may have used to cast out evil spirits before, they began using Jesus' name because it appeared to be more powerful. Ancient magical papyri are filled with names of deities from all manner of religions.

ACTS—NOTE ON 19:14 *Jewish high priest named Sceva*. Could mean Sceva called himself "high priest," not that he served at the temple in Jerusalem.

ACTS—NOTE ON 19:15–16 Because Jesus is God, He is known to the demons (cf Lk 4:34). Because Paul was one of Jesus' powerful workers, the evil spirits knew him also. Because the sons of Sceva did not believe in Jesus as God, they were simply using Jesus' name as part of a formula; thus they had no power over the evil spirit.

ACTS—NOTE ON 19:17 The residents of Ephesus recognized the great power of Jesus' name: from Paul's lips, Jesus' name worked miracles, but used by the Jewish exorcists, His name brought a demonic attack.

ACTS—NOTE ON 19:18 *confessing and divulging their practices*. Acts of repentance. Ephesus was rife with those who practiced various forms of magic. The practices here refer to magical spells. Those who had become followers of Jesus no longer wanted to take part in a way of life they now recognized as sinful.

ACTS—NOTE ON 19:19 *magic arts*. See note, v 18. *books … burned*. Those who practiced magic owned small papyrus scrolls that contained magical formulas and spells. See note, 8:9. Such books were quite valuable; burning them publicly demonstrated complete rejection of such a lifestyle.

fifty thousand pieces of silver. A piece of silver was the daily wage for a common worker.

ACTS—NOTE ON 19:20 The power of God's Word is recognized by all. See note, 12:24.

ACTS—NOTE ON 19:11–20 God continues to work through mighty miracles and His Word. Magic, the occult, and even using our Lord's name as an expression of good luck are all sins against the Second Commandment. By the power of Jesus' name, you have been forgiven of all sin (2:38) and rescued from the fiercest evil, the devil himself! Jesus gives you life in His name alone. • "Create in me a new heart, Lord, That gladly I obey Your Word. Let what You will be my desire, And with new life my soul inspire." Amen. (*LSB* 704:3)

ACTS—NOTE ON 19:21 *resolved in the Spirit*. Or, "in the spirit" (referring to Paul's determination). Either way, God directs Paul's decisions. See note, 16:6. *Rome*. Cf Rm 1:9–15. The preaching of the Gospel in Rome is the goal toward which Luke's account is moving. See "Christianity and Empire," p 1829; see also note, 1:8.

ACTS—NOTE ON 19:22 *Timothy*. Cf 1Co 4:17; 16:10; see pp 2066–67. *Erastus*. See note, Rm 16:23.

ACTS—NOTE ON 19:23 *the Way*. See note, 9:2.

ACTS—NOTE ON 19:24 *Demetrius*. Common name; difficult to determine exact identity. Apparently he was a leader of the guild of the silversmiths. *silver shrines of Artemis*. Probably sold to worshipers for use as votive gifts in the temple of Artemis, one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. Artemis of the Ephesians was a fertility goddess, worshiped throughout Asia (vv 27–28). *craftsmen*. Refers to Demetrius's fellow silversmiths.

ACTS—NOTE ON 19:25 *workmen*. Refers either to those who made shrines out of some other material or to the less-skilled laborers of the silver shrine trade.

ACTS—NOTE ON 19:26–27 Demetrius presents two primary concerns if Paul is not stopped: the industry of silver Artemis shrines will continue to suffer; and people may begin disregarding Artemis herself, along with her temple.

ACTS—NOTE ON 19:28 *enraged*. Demetrius's speech had the desired effect of working the tradesmen into a fury.

ACTS—NOTE ON 19:29 *theater*. The theater in Ephesus could hold c 25,000 people and was often used for large public gatherings. *Gaius and*

Aristarchus. Otherwise unknown, unless Aristarchus is the man mentioned in 20:4.

ACTS—NOTE ON 19:31 *Asiarchs*. Men of substance and influence; Paul's friends among them did not think it wise for him to enter the fray, even to defend his companions and the Christian faith.

ACTS—NOTE ON 19:32 The confusion inadvertently fulfills the purpose of Demetrius: to save the livelihood of the craftsmen by counteracting Paul's preaching. *assembly*. See note, 20:28.

ACTS—NOTE ON 19:33 *Alexander*. A Jew (v 34) who is not known otherwise but whom Luke's readers must have known. The Jews probably wanted Alexander to defend their reputations so the assembly would not associate them with Paul.

ACTS—NOTE ON 19:35 *town clerk*. Principal municipal officer of Ephesus, whom the Roman government would hold responsible for civic disorder. *temple keeper*. This designation brought great honor to the city. Ephesus was widely known as the special seat of Artemis worship (see note, v 24). *sacred stone*. According to legend, the statue of Artemis had fallen from the sky (it may have been a meteorite) and now resided in the temple dedicated to her.

ACTS—NOTE ON 19:37 *sacrilegious*. Lit, "temple robbers." Worshipers of false gods sometimes levied this charge against the Jews. The town clerk assures the assembly that Paul and his companions are not guilty of this serious charge. *blasphemers of our goddess*. He also makes the claim that Paul and his companions had not spoken harsh words against Artemis simply by preaching about Christ Jesus.

ACTS—NOTE ON 19:38 *courts are open*. Town clerk emphasizes that if a legitimate complaint against Paul is to be made, there is a proper and legal method to follow. *proconsuls*. Roman administrators of senatorial provinces, such as Asia, were given this title. They were also the supreme judges of their territories.

ACTS—NOTE ON 19:40 Roman government took a dim view of rioting, and the town clerk warns the crowd that it is close to crossing the line from assembling into rioting.

ACTS—NOTE ON 19:21–41 Another episode shows that opponents of the Gospel cause the troubles associated with the Christian faith. Believers in Christ may suffer unjustly or, at times, justly because of their sins. In either case, the Lord brings us through suffering to His eternal kingdom,

even while giving us opportunities to serve. Christ, who suffered for us, is always with us. • "Jesus, lead Thou on Till our rest is won. Heav'nly leader, still direct us, Still support, console, protect us, Till we safely stand In our fatherland." Amen. (*LSB* 718:4)

ACTS—NOTE ON 20:1 *disciples*. Paul's fellow Christians in Ephesus. See note, Mt 5:1.

ACTS—NOTE ON 20:2 *encouragement*. He bore witness to Christ and so strengthened them.

ACTS—NOTE ON 20:3 *plot … by the Jews*. Luke does not record any details of this conspiracy against Paul; other plots are mentioned elsewhere (9:23–24; 23:12). See note, v 19.

ACTS—NOTE ON 20:4 Probably representatives of the Gentile churches who were to bring their gifts to the poor saints in Jerusalem. See note, 24:17.

ACTS—NOTE ON 20:5 *us*. Luke likely rejoins Paul and his group after being left in Philippi (cf 16:40; see note, 16:10).

ACTS—NOTE ON 20:6 *days of Unleavened Bread*. Seven days following the Passover. See pp 200–
201. This was also the anniversary of Jesus' resurrection from the dead.

ACTS—NOTE ON 20:1–6 Paul and his companions begin the trip back to Jerusalem, encouraging fellow Christians along the way. Our faith is often not what it should be. However, Jesus encourages us in the faith through His Word. "A bruised reed He will not break, and a faintly burning wick He will not quench" (Is 42:3). • Lord Jesus, in Your mercy You always encourage us to remain in You. Through that same mercy, remind us to encourage our fellow Christians, especially in difficult days. Amen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 20:7 *first day of the week*. Sunday, the day of Christ's resurrection, became the regular day of worship for Christians (cf Lk 24:1; Mt 28:1). This would ultimately distinguish Christians from Jews, who worshiped on Saturday. *break bread*. See note, 2:42. *prolonged his speech*. Because of his few days with this group of fellow believers, Paul felt compelled to make a long address (cf 28:23).

ACTS—NOTE ON 20:9 *Eutychus*. Means "fortunate." *third story*. Refers to the upper room of v 8. Luke adds this detail as part of his eyewitness account.

ACTS—NOTE ON 20:10 *his life is in him*. Paul is not contradicting the fact of Eutychus's death but expressing the assurance that the young man

would be brought back to life (cf 1Ki 17:17–24; 2Ki 4:32–36).
ACTS—NOTE ON 20:11 Paul and possibly some of the others take nourishment during this long night prior to Paul's departure the next morning.
ACTS—NOTE ON 20:13 *Assos*. From Troas, a ship would need to go around a small peninsula. See map, p 1886. *himself to go by land*. The walk would give Paul more time away from sea travel and perhaps further opportunity to speak with disciples from Troas (cf v 7).
ACTS—NOTE ON 20:16 A stop at Ephesus would most likely have delayed his journey. However, Paul meets with Ephesian elders in Miletus (see note, v 17). *Pentecost*. See p 1835.
ACTS—NOTE ON 20:7–16 The end of Paul's time in Troas is noteworthy for the resurrection of Eutychus. At times, we may become alarmed when a fellow Christian dies because we harbor doubts about God's power to make that person alive again. Jesus assures us: "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in Me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in Me shall never die" (Jn 11:25–26). • Dear Jesus, thank You for Your resurrection from the dead, which guarantees our resurrection. Through Your Holy Spirit, grant us faith always to remember that physical death is not the end of true life with You. Amen.
ACTS—NOTE ON 20:17 *Miletus … Ephesus*. See map, p 1886. *elders*. The pastors of the Church at Ephesus, whom Paul had appointed by the authority of the Holy Spirit (cf v 28; see note, 14:23).
ACTS—NOTE ON 20:18–35 The only address recorded in Ac that Paul makes to a Christian audience. Paul recalls the work he did among the Ephesians (vv 18–21) and then speaks of the imprisonment and afflictions awaiting him in the future (vv 22–24). Since the Ephesian Christians will encounter similar trials (vv 29–30), Paul encourages the elders to watch out for the sheep under their care, faithfully exercising their office (v 28), as Paul had been faithful in the exercise of his office (vv 26–27, 31, 33–35). The power and strength to carry out their duties comes only from God and His Word (v 32).
ACTS—NOTE ON 20:19 *humility*. Reflects the true servant attitude with which Paul carried out his apostolic ministry (cf 2Co 10:1; 11:7). *tears*. Due to Paul's love and compassion for the Ephesians. *trials*. Ac records no specific trials of Paul at Ephesus, but the apostle alludes to them in 1Co

15:30–32 (and possibly in 2Co 1:8–10). *plots*. Luke records no specifics, but since such plots had occurred in other places, it is not surprising that they would happen in Ephesus as well. See notes, v 3; 9:23–24.
ACTS—NOTE ON 20:20 Cf 19:8–9.
ACTS—NOTE ON 20:21 *repentance toward God*. "*To repent* means nothing other than to truly acknowledge sins, to be heartily sorry for them, and to stop doing them" (FC SD V 8). *faith in our Lord Jesus Christ*. After turning away from sin, one turns to the Savior, trusting in Him for forgiveness and eternal life (cf 16:31).
ACTS—NOTE ON 20:22 *constrained by the Spirit*. Luke often emphasizes how the Holy Spirit directs Paul (cf 13:2, 4, 9; 16:6–7).
ACTS—NOTE ON 20:24 *finish my course*. Paul uses race terminology to describe his ministry (cf 1Co 9:24–27). *ministry*. Cf 9:6, 15; 26:16–18; see p 1903. *received from the Lord Jesus*. Christ Himself made Paul an apostle (cf 1Co 1:1; Gal 1:12). *gospel of the grace of God*. See p 1902.
ACTS—NOTE ON 20:25 *none … will see my face again*. Paul is offering his own opinion here; he did return to Ephesus later (see note, 1Tm 1:3). *kingdom*. See pp 1565–66.
ACTS—NOTE ON 20:26 *innocent of the blood*. Paul knows that in the future, some of the pastors will fall away from the faith. Cf vv 29–30.
ACTS—NOTE ON 20:27 *whole counsel of God*. Paul proclaimed the entire OT Scriptures, as all pastors, preachers, and teachers of God's Word should.
ACTS—NOTE ON 20:28 *flock*. Common biblical term for God's people (cf Jer 23:1–4; Jn 10:11–16). *overseers*. Same as "elders" (v 17); both are common NT terms for the pastoral office (1Tm 3:1; Ti 1:5, 7). See p 1902. *church of God … His own blood*. The Church consists of those who believe in Jesus as Savior; they were ransomed with the very blood of the Son of God. See "church," pp 1901–02. "God's Son truly suffered for us. However, He did so according to the attributes of the human nature, which He received into the unity of His divine person and made His own. He did this so that He might be able to suffer and be our High Priest for our reconciliation with God" (FC Ep VIII 14). Chem: "*Ekkle¯sia* [is used] of citizens when a citywide gathering is held of those who, bound together by certain laws, are citizens of one commonwealth. … Therefore in order to distinguish the New Testament church from other gatherings, in Scripture the term 'church of God' is used" (*LTh* 2:693).

ACTS—NOTE ON 20:29 *fierce wolves*. Used also by Jesus to describe false teachers and their destructive nature. “Just as the Church has the promise that it will always have the Holy Spirit, so it also has warnings that there will be wicked teachers and wolves [Acts 20:29]. Yet, the Church in the proper sense has the Holy Spirit. Although wolves and wicked teachers run rampant in the Church, they are not properly Christ’s kingdom” (Ap VII and VIII 22).
ACTS—NOTE ON 20:30 Paul graphically contrasts his message of the whole counsel of God (v 27) with what the false teachers will proclaim: malformed messages that will mislead the faithful.
ACTS—NOTE ON 20:31 *three years*. Time Paul spent in Ephesus. *admonish everyone with tears*. See note, v 19.
ACTS—NOTE ON 20:32 *I commend you to God*. Paul entrusts the welfare of the Ephesians to God Himself. *able to build you up*. God’s Word is powerful (Rm 1:16). Through it, He makes Christians strong in their faith. See note, 2Th 1:3. *inheritance*. Final goal for Christians is the gift of eternal life in heaven. See “portion,” p 7. *sanctified*. Paul refers to Christians, those who have been “made holy” through faith in Jesus. See “holy,” p 1902. Chem: “In order that there may always be a church, so also there will always be true teachers, but these promises are not tied to certain persons, to a certain succession, or a certain seat” (*LTh* 2:711).
ACTS—NOTE ON 20:34 See note, 18:3. Paul did not want to be a burden to those he served with the Gospel (1Th 2:3–10; 2Th 3:7–9).
ACTS—NOTE ON 20:35 *help the weak*. People who cannot support themselves because of sickness. All others are to support themselves (1Th 4:10–12; 2Th 3:10–12). *Lord Jesus, how He Himself said*. Though not recorded in any of the four Gospels of the NT, the saying is nevertheless genuine. This demonstrates that Jesus’ sayings, and stories about Jesus, continued to circulate among believers and were regarded as authoritative, useful admonitions. See note, Jn 7:53–8:11. *It is more blessed to give*. The Gospel Paul preached centers on giving: God gives forgiveness and eternal life through His Son, Jesus; God’s heirs give to others based on what God has given them (Mt 25:35–40).
ACTS—NOTE ON 20:36 *knelt … prayed*. Usual posture for prayer was standing. Kneeling to pray was a posture assumed at emotional times (cf 21:5; Lk 22:41). See p 1276.

ACTS—NOTE ON 20:37 The Ephesian elders express the depth of their love for Paul with great emotion (cf Gn 33:4).

ACTS—NOTE ON 20:17–38 Paul's farewell address to the Church leaders of Ephesus emphasizes the significance of the work of the ministry. We are often inclined more toward receiving than giving. Jesus has given—and still gives—temporal and eternal blessings, so we likewise are to give of ourselves to others. Yet, we can never outgive our generous Savior. • "Take my life and let it be Consecrated, Lord, to Thee. … Take myself, and I will be Ever, only, all for Thee." Amen. (*LSB* 783:1, 6)

ACTS—NOTE ON 21:1–4 At first, Paul and his companions sailed on a smaller ship that hugged the coast. At Patara, they boarded a larger vessel that could make the 400-mi trip across open water to Tyre. See map, p 1886.

ACTS—NOTE ON 21:1 *we*. The "we" section resumes from 20:15; see "Relationship to the Gospel according to Luke," p 1829.

ACTS—NOTE ON 21:4 *sought out the disciples*. The Gospel first came to Phoenicia after Stephen's martyrdom (11:19). *through the Spirit*. The Holy Spirit gave some of these fellow Christians a vision or revelation about Paul. Cf 13:2. *not to go on to Jerusalem*. This message was in accord with what Paul had told the Ephesian elders—trouble awaited him in Jerusalem.

ACTS—NOTE ON 21:5 *kneeling down … we prayed*. See note, 20:36.

ACTS—NOTE ON 21:7 *we greeted the brothers*. See p 1901.

ACTS—NOTE ON 21:8 *Philip the evangelist*. Last mentioned in 8:40, after his encounter with the Ethiopian eunuch. He is called "the evangelist" only here, perhaps meaning that he spread the Gospel well. *one of the seven*. Chosen to assist in the distribution of food in the early days of the Church in Jerusalem (6:1–6).

ACTS—NOTE ON 21:9 *unmarried daughters, who prophesied*. Cf Jl 2:28; see p 389.

ACTS—NOTE ON 21:10 *prophet named Agabus*. See notes, 11:27–28.

ACTS—NOTE ON 21:11 Similar to prophets of the OT, Agabus was directed by the Spirit to use this object lesson to foretell Paul's future (cf Is 20:2–3; Ezk 4:1). See p 1220. *Thus says the Holy Spirit*. Formula common to OT prophets (cf Am 3:11; Na 1:12), clearly indicating this message was from God. See pp 1077–83. *bind … deliver*. Wording is similar to descriptions of Jesus' arrest and trial (Lk 18:32; Mt 27:2). As at the trial of

Jesus, Gentile authorities consistently find no fault with Paul (Ac 23:29; 25:25; 26:31).

ACTS—NOTE ON 21:13 *breaking my heart?* Paul gently rebukes the others for trying to dissuade him from his goal of going to Jerusalem. *imprisoned but even to die*. Even though Agabus's prophecy did not predict Paul's death, Paul states his willingness to die for the sake of Christ (cf Lk 9:23–24).

ACTS—NOTE ON 21:14 Those with Paul recognized not only Paul's resolve but also the divine hand behind upcoming events (cf Lk 22:42).

ACTS—NOTE ON 21:15 *up to Jerusalem*. See note, 15:2; see also map, p 971.

ACTS—NOTE ON 21:16 *disciples from Caesarea*. Assisted with the c 55-mi trip to Jerusalem. *Mnason of Cyprus*. An early convert in the Jerusalem Church.

ACTS—NOTE ON 21:1–16 Paul completes his journey to Jerusalem despite warnings about the dangers he will encounter there. Many times, due to fear or a lack of understanding, we fail to do the Lord's will. Contrary to all human logic, God's plan of salvation was carried out through Christ for the forgiveness of all our failures. This shows us that God can make all things—however fearful or illogical they may seem to us—work out for our good. We are always on His heart. • Heavenly Father, grant me a portion of Your wisdom as I strive to carry out Your will in my life. Amen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 21:17 *brothers*. See p 1901. *received us gladly*. The Christians at Jerusalem were happy to see Paul and his companions, allaying any concerns Paul may have had (cf Rm 15:31).

ACTS—NOTE ON 21:18 *James, and all the elders*. See notes, 12:17; 15:2.

ACTS—NOTE ON 21:19 *the things that God had done*. Summary statement of the wondrous works God did through Paul's ministry. Paul made other such reports (cf 15:3–4, 12).

ACTS—NOTE ON 21:20 *they glorified God*. The Church leaders praised God for working so powerfully through Paul, and likely also for the offering Paul had collected and brought (see note, 24:17). *thousands … among the Jews*. Cf 2:41; 4:4; 6:7. Thousands indeed! *zealous for the law*. The Jewish Christians continued to abide by many of the OT ceremonial laws regarding food, circumcision, the Sabbath, etc. See p 1671.

ACTS—NOTE ON 21:21 Most likely, Jewish converts from the areas in which Paul had spread the Gospel had innocently reported that they were no longer compelled to observe all the OT ceremonial laws. *forsake Moses*. The reports of the Jewish converts had been distorted, making it sound as if Paul were advocating a complete break from the Law of Moses (cf 6:13–14). *our customs*. Circumcision as well as any of the other OT ceremonial laws. See note, Col 2:16.

ACTS—NOTE ON 21:23 *under a vow*. For various reasons, the Jews periodically put themselves under a vow (cf Nu 6:1–21). "We are not to swear in support of evil, that is, to support falsehood, or to swear when there is no need or use. But we should swear for the support of good and the advantage of our neighbor. For such swearing is truly a good work, by which God is praised, truth and right are established, falsehood is refuted, peace is made among men, obedience is rendered, and quarrels are settled" (LC I 66). See "vow," p 7.

ACTS—NOTE ON 21:24 *purify yourself … pay their expenses*. Paul is to purge himself of the suspicion that he has become a traitor to the Jewish people and their customs by publicly associating himself with these men and paying the considerable expenses involved in the sacrificial ceremony of purification. *shave their heads*. Done at the fulfillment of a vow (Nu 6:18–19). *live in observance of the law*. Paul's participation would refute the false charges made against him. See notes, 15:21, 28.

ACTS—NOTE ON 21:25 *letter with our judgment*. The principles outlined by the Jerusalem Council agree with the suggestion of James and the elders.

ACTS—NOTE ON 21:26 *went into the temple, giving notice*. Apparently Paul was required to inform the appropriate priests when these offerings would be presented. *offering*. If the men were under the Nazirite vow, the offering required is detailed in Nu 6:14–15, 18.

ACTS—NOTE ON 21:17–26 The Church at Jerusalem rejoices at what God has done through Paul. The leaders ask him to dispel rumors among Jewish Christians about his ministry by taking part in an OT purification ceremony. Today, we are often tempted to judge fellow Christians on the basis of things not specifically directed in God's Word. Jesus, by His life, death, and resurrection, forgives our sins, including those of judging others. He is our peace. • Praise be to You, Jesus, for setting us free from sin and death! Thank You for allowing us to live in freedom. Amen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 21:27 Paul's break with the synagogue at Ephesus and his subsequent missionary success (19:9–10) had made the Jews from Asia esp bitter toward him (cf 20:19). They were present in Jerusalem for Pentecost (cf 20:16).
ACTS—NOTE ON 21:28 They accused Paul of speaking against God's people (the Jews), against the OT (cf v 21), and against the temple. The last charge was most serious (cf Mk 14:57–58). *Greeks … defiled this holy place*. Cf v 29. Gentiles could enter the outer court of the temple. Notices were posted in Gk and Lat at the entrance to the inner courts, barring Gentiles from entering. Doing so was punishable by death. See diagram, p 1838.
ACTS—NOTE ON 21:29 *Trophimus the Ephesian*. One of Paul's companions on this journey to Jerusalem; he would have been known to the Jews from Ephesus.
ACTS—NOTE ON 21:30 *gates were shut*. Temple police closed inner and outer courts so that additional defilement of the temple would not occur. See note, 5:21.
ACTS—NOTE ON 21:31 *tribune*. Claudius Lysias (cf 23:26), the Roman officer in charge of 760 infantrymen and 240 cavalrymen. *cohort*. Stationed at the Roman fortress Antonia, outside the northwest wall of the temple. See note, 10:1.
ACTS—NOTE ON 21:32 *centurions*. See note, 10:1. Since there were at least two centurions called out, up to 200 soldiers may have been summoned. *beating Paul*. Members of the angry mob beat Paul because they misunderstood what was happening.
ACTS—NOTE ON 21:33 The tribune believed Paul to be the wrongdoer because he was the one being attacked. His men take custody of Paul, placing him in chains.
ACTS—NOTE ON 21:34 *barracks*. At the fortress Antonia (*War* 6:23–26); see note, v 31.
ACTS—NOTE ON 21:35 *steps*. Two flights of steps connected the fortress and the outer court of the temple. *carried by the soldiers*. The pressing mob prevented Paul from walking up the steps, so the soldiers lifted him.
ACTS—NOTE ON 21:36 The crowd at Jesus' trial raised the same cry.
ACTS—NOTE ON 21:27–36 Paul's enemies unjustly accuse him of defiling the temple, and the Roman authorities intervene. The mob mentality of Paul's accusers may appall us, yet we may jump to similar

unfounded conclusions. As God's forgiven people, we are motivated and inspired to seek the truth in all matters, especially as we interact with our neighbor. Jesus allowed Himself to be charged unjustly so He could win forgiveness for us. He is our peace. • Dear Jesus, make us slow to speak accusations. Lead us to seek and speak the truth instead of falsehood (Eph 4:25). Amen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 21:37 *Do you know Greek?* The tribune was either surprised Paul spoke Gk, or that he spoke it so well. The crowd was probably shouting in Aramaic (see note, v 40).

ACTS—NOTE ON 21:38 *the Egyptian*. The tribune mistook Paul for the man who had convinced a number of people he was a prophet a few years earlier. He led 4,000 troops against the Romans at Jerusalem, promising that the walls of the city would fall simply because of his presence. The Romans crushed the revolt, but the Egyptian escaped (*War* 2:261). *Assassins*. See "Sicarii," p 1557.

ACTS—NOTE ON 21:39 *Jew … citizen*. Paul makes his status clear to the tribune. See note, 16:37.

ACTS—NOTE ON 21:40 *Hebrew language*. Indicates that Paul now spoke to the crowd in Aramaic, the common language of Judea. See pp 719–20.

ACTS—NOTE ON 22:1 *Brothers and fathers*. Paul expresses his kinship with the angry Jews while giving deference to the Jewish leaders. Stephen's address began the same way (7:2). *defense*. Gk *apologia*. First of five such defenses Paul will make in Ac.

ACTS—NOTE ON 22:2 Luke adds this detail to show the mob's surprise at being addressed in their native language instead of in Gk, the common language of the day.

ACTS—NOTE ON 22:3 *educated at the feet of Gamaliel*. See "Hillel, House of," p 1557. *strict manner of the law*. The Pharisees were known for their strict interpretation and observance of God's Law. *zealous for God*. See note, 21:20. Paul's zeal was shown in his persecution of Christians (cf Gal 1:13–14).

ACTS—NOTE ON 22:4 *I persecuted this Way to the death*. Paul later relates his approval of Stephen's death (v 20) and speaks of his approval of the execution of Christians (26:10). See notes, 9:1–2.

ACTS—NOTE ON 22:5 *high priest*. See note, Jn 11:49. *council of elders*. See "Council, The," p 1556. *letters to the brothers*. In this case, Paul

describes fellow Jews, such as those he is currently addressing. See note, 2:37.
ACTS—NOTE ON 22:6 *about noon a great light*. The natural brightness of the day did not detract from the supernatural brightness.
ACTS—NOTE ON 22:8 *Lord?* See note, 9:5–6. *Jesus of Nazareth*. The only one of the three accounts of Paul's conversion to include this self-description of Jesus (cf 9:1–19; 26:12–18).
ACTS—NOTE ON 22:9 Although Paul's companions heard the voice, they did not understand what Jesus said.
ACTS—NOTE ON 22:12 Paul emphasizes Ananias's noble traits to appeal to his Jewish audience. *devout man*. See note, 2:5.
ACTS—NOTE ON 22:14–16 Paul quotes Ananias at greater length here than Luke records in 9:17, to assure his audience that the true God directed Ananias.
ACTS—NOTE ON 22:14 *see the Righteous One*. Title for the Messiah (Is 53:11). See notes, 3:14; Jer 23:5; see also "righteousness," p 1904.
ACTS—NOTE ON 22:15 *witness*. Like the other apostles, Paul could testify that he had seen the risen Lord (cf 1:22; 26:16; 1Co 9:1).
ACTS—NOTE ON 22:16 *wash away your sins*. Ananias vividly describes what Baptism does. Cf Lk 3:3; Eph 5:26; Ti 3:5. See p 1369. *calling on His name*. Jesus' name encompasses everything revealed about Him in Scripture. See p 842.
ACTS—NOTE ON 22:17–21 Paul describes a vision he had when he went to Jerusalem three years after being converted (9:26–30; Gal 1:18).
ACTS—NOTE ON 22:17 *trance*. See note, 10:10.
ACTS—NOTE ON 22:18 *Him*. From v 19, it is clear Paul refers to Jesus. *they*. Jews in Jerusalem.
ACTS—NOTE ON 22:19 *Lord*. Having been brought to faith, Paul addresses Jesus with the name of God from the OT. See p 2098.
ACTS—NOTE ON 22:20 *Stephen Your witness*. Stephen had also seen the risen Lord (7:55) and thus was His witness. See note, 1:8. *standing … approving … watching*. Cf v 4. Though Paul's physical role in Stephen's death may have been minimal, he emphasizes his guilt in the matter.
ACTS—NOTE ON 22:21 Jesus echoes what He said to Ananias. Paul speaks about his own work in this way (Rm 11:13; Gal 2:7).
ACTS—NOTE ON 21:37–22:21 Paul addresses an angry mob of Jews, vividly describing his life-changing encounter with the risen Jesus on the

road to Damascus as well as another time when Christ appeared to him. Pursuing your own agenda often leads to a dead end. But because Christ washes away your sin, like Paul you can pray, "What shall I do, Lord?" And you can be sure that your Lord will hear and guide you. • I praise You, Father, for Your infinite wisdom in sending Jesus as my Savior, and for bringing me into Your family through Your means of grace. Amen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 22:22 *Up to this word*. When Paul mentioned "the Gentiles" (v 21), the crowd was reminded of why they wanted him dead in the first place: for supposedly bringing Gentiles into the temple and defiling it.

ACTS—NOTE ON 22:23 The crowd was ready to stone Paul on the spot (cf 7:58).

ACTS—NOTE ON 22:24 *tribune*. See note, 21:31. *barracks*. See note, 21:34. *examined by flogging*. Such a method of interrogation was commonly used when slaves and foreigners were involved. See note, Mt 10:17.

ACTS—NOTE ON 22:25 *stretched him out*. A prisoner being flogged was stripped to the waist and forced to bend over a low pillar with his feet and hands secured to the floor. *Roman citizen and uncondemned?* See note, 16:37.

ACTS—NOTE ON 22:28 *bought this citizenship*. The tribune evidently doubted that a man such as he saw before him had the means to purchase a Roman citizenship, as he himself had done. See pp 2029–30.

ACTS—NOTE ON 22:29 The tribune later lies to keep himself from getting in trouble for mistreating Paul. See note, 23:27.

ACTS—NOTE ON 22:22–29 Paul's address does not avert the crowd's hatred. However, as a Roman citizen, he receives help from a Roman tribune. God established the governing authorities to bring a degree of peace and civil righteousness to our troubled world. However, our ultimate hope is in the Lord. Christ's Gospel brings eternal peace and righteousness before the highest court: heaven. • Lord Jesus, thank You for giving me righteousness before God. Teach me to forgive those who falsely accuse me. Help me also not to accuse anyone falsely. Amen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 22:30 *commanded*. "Summoned" might well capture the tone here. The tribune was probably seeking advice from the Jewish leaders concerning Paul's case. *chief priests and all the council*. See p 1556.

ACTS—NOTE ON 23:1 *Brothers*. See notes, 22:1, 5. *all good conscience*. Paul declares his conscience is free from guilt regarding the charges against him.
ACTS—NOTE ON 23:2 *high priest Ananias*. Son of Nedebaeus; served as high priest from c AD 47 to 58. He was cruel and despised and was assassinated by the Sicarii (see p 1557) in AD 66. *strike him*. This violent act probably stemmed from Ananias's violent character. Jesus received similar treatment (Jn 18:22).
ACTS—NOTE ON 23:3 *God is going to strike you*. Whether a curse or a prediction of the future (see note, v 2), Paul's brash statement demonstrates his dismay at being hit unjustly. *whitewashed wall!* Paul paints the high priest as one whose fair exterior conceals from human eyes the corruptness of one doomed to God's judgment. *contrary to the law*. Perhaps a reference to Lv 19:15. Luth: "A Christian may act as a judge and sentence a murderer to death, yet not on his own behalf or for his own ends but on behalf of others and by virtue of his office. Then it is the same as if God had done it, for His ordinance is doing it. In short, it is permissible to curse on account of the Word of God; but it is wrong to curse on your own account for personal vengeance or some other personal end" (AE 14:258).
ACTS—NOTE ON 23:4 *revile*. Paul's words were understood as an insult of Ananias.
ACTS—NOTE ON 23:5 *brothers*. See notes, 22:1, 5. *You shall not speak evil of a ruler of your people*. One of a series of commands God gave His people after the Ten Commandments.
ACTS—NOTE ON 23:6 *a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees*. See p 1557. Paul refers to his training under Gamaliel (see note, 22:3), his way of life, and his Pharisaic ancestry, employing a "divide and conquer" strategy; cf v 8. *the hope and the resurrection*. Or, "the hope of the resurrection." Jesus' resurrection from the dead and the believers' resurrection were key concepts in what the apostles preached (e.g., 2:32; 3:15; 4:10).
ACTS—NOTE ON 23:7 *divided*. Because the Pharisees and Sadducees disagreed about the resurrection.
ACTS—NOTE ON 23:8 *resurrection … angel … spirit*. The Sadducees did not believe in these things, though they could find them in the Books of Moses (e.g., Gn 16; 19; 22; see note, Lk 20:37–38). They seemed to deny much of what could be called spiritual or otherworldly. See p 1557.

ACTS—NOTE ON 23:9 *scribes*. See pp 719–20. They held themselves to be the authority in matters of interpreting Scripture. *What if a spirit or an angel spoke to him?* They had no problem believing Paul might have had such a supernatural experience.
ACTS—NOTE ON 23:10 *dissension became violent*. Luke intensifies a word used in v 7; the Council has become an angry mob. *tribune*. See note, 21:31. *barracks*. See note, 21:34.
ACTS—NOTE ON 23:11 *the Lord stood by him*. Not clear whether this refers to a vision or to another post-resurrection appearance of Jesus. *you must testify also in Rome*. Paul had already expressed the desire to preach the Gospel in Rome, and Jesus now confirms that it is part of His divine plan for Paul. See note, 19:21; see also pp 1905–6.
ACTS—NOTE ON 22:30–23:11 Paul boldly speaks of Christ's resurrection before the Council, and in so doing, he cleverly divides the Council. At times, you may be in situations where you are afraid to share openly your Christian beliefs. The crucified and risen Christ forgives you for any past failures to confess Him before others, yet He also promises to always be at your side and support your testimony (Mt 28:20). • Dear Jesus, You are the resurrection and the life. Make me bold, like Paul, so that I am never ashamed to speak Your truth. Amen.
ACTS—NOTE ON 23:12 *plot*. See note, 20:19. *bound themselves by an oath*. The conspirators vowed they would be cursed by God if they did not fulfill their sinister mission. See "vow," p 7.
ACTS—NOTE ON 23:14 *chief priests and elders*. See p 1556.
ACTS—NOTE ON 23:15 The conspirators must have known that at least some members of the Council were corrupt enough to go along with their plot.
ACTS—NOTE ON 23:16 *son of Paul's sister*. Paul's nephew is mentioned only here in Scripture. It is not known whether he was a Christian. *entered the barracks*. Since Paul was not convicted of a crime, he was allowed to have visitors.
ACTS—NOTE ON 23:17 *young man*. Usually refers to a male between the ages of 20 and 40.
ACTS—NOTE ON 23:19 *took him by the hand*. Context implies that the tribune literally pulled him aside to speak with him. The phrase is also evidence of eyewitness testimony.

ACTS—NOTE ON 23:20–22 The tribune had already witnessed the Jews' anger against Paul (21:30–36; 22:22–24; 23:10). A plot such as Paul's nephew described was certainly feasible. The tribune wanted to do what he could to protect Paul, a Roman citizen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 23:12–22 Forty Jews, in conjunction with their leaders, create a plot to kill Paul. But Paul's nephew intervenes. He is an example to us of how family members may support one another in trying times and call upon legitimate authority in support of God's people. Good government and family are blessings of God's providence that enable the Gospel to spread among us. • Thank You, God, that we can always count on Your unchanging Word and Your goodwill. Grant us confidence in You and Your blessings. Amen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 23:23–24 The tribune wanted to diffuse a volatile situation, so he provided a heavy military escort to take Paul by night to Caesarea, c 55 mi away. This city was the administrative center for the governor of the province of Judea.

ACTS—NOTE ON 23:25 *to this effect*. Luke provides the sense of the letter, perhaps based on an oral report about it. See "Speeches in Acts," p 1829.

ACTS—NOTE ON 23:26 *Claudius Lysias*. First mention of the tribune's name (see note, 21:31). *governor Felix*. Served as governor of Judea from AD 52 to 60. He was known to be cruel; see note, 24:2–4.

ACTS—NOTE ON 23:27 *learned that he was a Roman citizen*. Claudius Lysias presents the events to cover up the fact that he ordered Paul to be flogged before learning he was a Roman citizen (22:24–26); see note, 22:29.

ACTS—NOTE ON 23:29 *charged with nothing deserving death or imprisonment*. During Paul's appearance before the Council, the matter of him bringing a Gentile into the inner courts of the temple had not been raised.

ACTS—NOTE ON 23:30 *disclosed to me … a plot*. Vv 20–22. The tribune explains the action of Paul's nephew without naming names.

ACTS—NOTE ON 23:31 *Antipatris*. C 30 mi S of Caesarea. The escort had traveled about half the distance to the destination.

ACTS—NOTE ON 23:32 They judged that enough distance was now between Paul and the conspirators, and they were also in territory inhabited primarily by Gentiles.

ACTS—NOTE ON 23:34 *what province*. Felix wanted to determine who had jurisdiction in Paul's case (cf Lk 23:6–7).
ACTS—NOTE ON 23:35 *accusers*. Originally, Jews from Asia (21:27); the accusers that come to Paul's hearing are the high priest and some elders from Jerusalem (24:1). *Herod's praetorium*. Herod the Great had built for himself a palace at Caesarea. It became the home of the governor of the province.
ACTS—NOTE ON 23:23–35 Claudius Lysias turns Paul's case over to Felix the governor. All circumstances point to the apostle's innocence of any crimes against the state. Life sometimes brings unjust suffering, especially to Christ's followers. Christ's death on the cross provides for our forgiveness when we have been unjust to others and gives us strength to bear our sufferings in His abiding grace. • Lord, I praise You because You are just and You have justified me through faith in Jesus. Forgive me when I am unjust to others, and give me strength to bear even unjust suffering. Amen.
ACTS—NOTE ON 24:1 *high priest Ananias*. See note, 23:2. *elders*. See p 1556. *spokesman, one Tertullus*. Mentioned only here in the NT; functions almost as a lawyer on behalf of the Jewish delegation.
ACTS—NOTE ON 24:2–4 Typical for the times, Tertullus begins his speech by attempting to capture the goodwill of Felix (see note, 23:26). Most of the praise is undeserved: Felix had caused much conflict, which eventually led to the revolt of the Jews in AD 66.
ACTS—NOTE ON 24:3 *in every way and everywhere*. Typical rhetoric.
ACTS—NOTE ON 24:5 *plague*. "Public enemy"; same word as "scoffers" (Ps 1:1) and "worthless men" (1Sm 2:12) in LXX. Tertullus is accusing Paul of being harmful to the well-being of the Jews. *sect*. Gk *hairesis*, "religious party," source of Eng "heresy"; used negatively. *Nazarenes*. Used only here in the NT to describe Christians; refers to Jesus' hometown. The Jews considered Christians to be another party within Judaism, such as the Pharisees or Sadducees. See "Opposition from the Jews," p 1775. Luth: "We are not impressed when our opponents are offended and shout that no good will come of the preaching of the Gospel. … We who believe see the enormous and innumerable benefits and results of the Gospel, even though outwardly and temporarily we are oppressed by many evils, despised, despoiled, slandered, condemned … put to death, and inwardly crushed by the consciousness of our sin and vexed by demons. For we are alive in

Christ, in whom and through whom we are kings and lords over sin, death, the flesh, the world, hell, and every evil. … Therefore the doctrine of justification must be learned diligently; it alone can strengthen us against those endless offenses and comfort us in all trials and persecutions" (AE 26:452–53).

ACTS—NOTE ON 24:6 *tried to profane the temple*. Apparently the Jews had failed to substantiate this charge.

ACTS—NOTE ON 24:9 *Jews*. Ananias and the elders accompanying him.

ACTS—NOTE ON 24:10 Paul matches Tertullus's rhetorical style (see note, vv 2–4) and attributes to Felix broader experience than simply that of governor, expressing that Felix's knowledge of the Jewish people and their ways is a benefit. Paul appeals to Felix to be a fair judge.

ACTS—NOTE ON 24:11 *not more than twelve days*. Cf 22:30; 23:11, 12, 32.

ACTS—NOTE ON 24:12 *synagogues*. See p 1557.

ACTS—NOTE ON 24:13 *Neither can they prove*. If Paul had truly been a "plague" throughout the entire world (v 5), they should have been able to come up with proof of his guilt.

ACTS—NOTE ON 24:14 *the Way*. See note, 9:2. *a sect*. See note, 24:5. *Law … Prophets*. See note, Lk 24:44. Paul states his adherence to God's Word, esp as it is fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

ACTS—NOTE ON 24:15 *themselves accept … resurrection*. See notes, 23:6–9. The Pharisees believed in the resurrection, as did most of the Jews.

ACTS—NOTE ON 24:16 Paul expresses his commitment to avoid offending either God or other people in his work as an apostle.

ACTS—NOTE ON 24:17 *alms*. Donations Paul had been collecting from churches he had started; these were intended to help fellow Christians in and around Jerusalem. Bringing money into the area while it was experiencing economic troubles would likely endear Paul to the hearers (see note, 11:28). *offerings*. Gifts to God (21:26).

ACTS—NOTE ON 24:19 Roman law required that one's accusers be present to make their case. See note, 23:35.

ACTS—NOTE ON 24:20 *before the council*. Cf 22:30–23:9.

ACTS—NOTE ON 24:1–21 Paul defends himself before the Roman governor, Felix. He claims to follow what is written in the Scriptures, focusing especially on the resurrection of the dead. Paul uses the opportunity to bear witness concerning Jesus, who has given him new life.

Through Jesus' sacrificial death and His resurrection from the dead, God forgives us and builds us up. He empowers us to proclaim His mercy. • Lord, forgive us for wrongful speech, and give us a clear conscience toward You and our fellow man. Help us always to believe Your unchanging Word and to hope in the resurrection. Amen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 24:22 *Felix*. See notes, 23:26; 24:2–4. *accurate knowledge of the Way*. Felix may have had this knowledge because his wife was Jewish (v 24) and because of the large numbers of Christians in Judea. See note, 9:2. *Lysias the tribune*. See note, 21:31.

ACTS—NOTE ON 24:23 The custody into which Felix placed Paul was akin to house arrest. Paul was allowed to have visitors who could provide for his basic needs, such as clothing and food. He was held in Caesarea for two years (v 27). See chronology, p cviii.

ACTS—NOTE ON 24:24 *Drusilla, who was Jewish*. Daughter of Herod Agrippa I, who was ruthless in his treatment of Christians (cf 12:1). Drusilla was only 19 but had already left her first husband (King Azizus of Syria) to marry Felix. *faith in Christ Jesus*. Paul teaches the basics of the Christian faith, stressing certain applicable aspects (v 25).

ACTS—NOTE ON 24:25 *righteousness*. See p 1904. *self-control*. A fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22–23). Restraint of desires (esp sexual) is key to understanding this term. *coming judgment*. God will judge each of us when we die (Heb 9:27); His decision will be made public on Judgment Day (cf Mt 25:31–46). *alarmed*. Clearly Felix and Drusilla needed to hear of these important matters (see note, v 24).

ACTS—NOTE ON 24:26 *money would be given him*. Though illegal, Felix was hoping for a bribe, knowing Paul had come to Judea with considerable money (v 17). *conversed with him*. While Paul undoubtedly kept preaching God's Word to Felix, Felix continued to be interested in obtaining a bribe from Paul.

ACTS—NOTE ON 24:27 Festus became governor of Judea in AD 59 or 60. Felix may have been trying to avoid complaints from the Jews to Emperor Nero (see note, vv 2–4).

ACTS—NOTE ON 24:22–27 Although Felix listens as Paul proclaims God's Word, Felix is most interested in a bribe. So he ignores Paul's message and leaves him in custody. God's Law can hurt our pride; we would rather avoid hearing about our sins and eternal judgment. Though God's Law and judgment are sharp, His Gospel grants full release. Rather

than eternal death, Jesus grants us the riches of eternal life. • We praise You, O God, for giving us many opportunities to listen to Your Word and for giving us fullness of life in Christ. Thank You for making us spiritually rich in this life and in the life to come. Amen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 25:2 *chief priests*. See p 1556. *principal men of the Jews*. Perhaps elders (cf 24:1), or simply other leading members of the Council.

ACTS—NOTE ON 25:6 *tribunal*. Official seat from which a judge made rulings (cf 18:12, 16). The Gk word is also used of God's judgment seat (Rm 14:10; 2Co 5:10).

ACTS—NOTE ON 25:7 Once again, Luke shows that troubles surrounding the preaching of the Gospel are due to groundless provocation by its enemies.

ACTS—NOTE ON 25:10 *Caesar's tribunal*. In a trial, the Roman governor carried the same authority as the emperor himself.

ACTS—NOTE ON 25:11 Since it appeared that Festus might concede to the Jews and have Paul's trial moved to Jerusalem, Paul requests a change of venue. Every Roman citizen had the right to have his case heard in the emperor's court in Rome. The current emperor, Nero, had not yet become a terrible persecutor of the Church, as he had by AD 68, when Paul and Peter were martyred. See chronology, p cix.

ACTS—NOTE ON 25:12 *council*. Group of men who gave advice to the governor, esp regarding legal matters. However, the final decision concerning what to do with Paul rested solely on the governor.

ACTS—NOTE ON 25:1–12 The lack of justice in Paul's trial continues under Festus, moving Paul to appeal to Caesar's court in Rome. Governments exist to punish evil and promote good in this life. Support the proper functions of government. But rejoice that ultimate deliverance from evil comes when God declares us "not guilty" for the sake of Christ. • Lord, before Your judgment seat, I deserve to die because of my sins. Thank You that, because Jesus took my punishment, You count me innocent. Amen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 25:13 *Agrippa the king*. Herod Agrippa II, son of Herod Agrippa I (cf 12:1), ruled a territory that expanded over the years. He had authority over the temple in Jerusalem. *Bernice*. Agrippa's sister; they were involved in an incestuous relationship.

ACTS—NOTE ON 25:15 *chief priests … elders*. See p 1556.

ACTS—NOTE ON 25:16 See note, 24:19.

ACTS—NOTE ON 25:17 *tribunal*. See note, v 6.
ACTS—NOTE ON 25:19 Festus understood the charges against Paul were of a religious nature, nothing that would condemn him before the Roman government. Festus also understood that the controversy revolved around Jesus, specifically whether or not He was alive. See "The Resurrection," p 1829.
ACTS—NOTE ON 25:23 *great pomp*. Probably Agrippa and Bernice, as well as all the other officials present, were dressed in their finest. *audience hall*. Probably in the palace of Herod, where trials were heard. *military tribunes*. See note, 21:31. There were five cohorts in Caesarea. *prominent men*. Most likely Gentiles who were well respected and viewed as leaders.
ACTS—NOTE ON 25:26 *write to my lord*. Whoever presented a case to the emperor had to do so in writing. Festus wanted to appear competent to the emperor, not simply to repeat the religious charges of the Jewish leaders (v 19).
ACTS—NOTE ON 25:27 *charges*. Cf v 26.
ACTS—NOTE ON 25:13–27 Festus brings Paul's case before King Agrippa and Bernice so they may formulate charges to send with Paul to Rome. Festus fails to set Paul free, even though he knows Paul is innocent. We sin in a similar way when we hold a grudge against someone. Repent of all grudges. Jesus, who was innocent of all charges against Him, took the punishment we deserve for all the times we hold grudges. • Christ Jesus, thank You for Your willingness to be charged unjustly and for taking our punishment! Because of You, we no longer have any charges against us in the heavenly Father's court. Amen.
ACTS—NOTE ON 26:2–3 On Paul's rhetoric, see note, 24:10.
ACTS—NOTE ON 26:3 *customs and controversies*. Agrippa's great-grandfather Herod the Great was a convert to Judaism (*Ant* 14:403) but ruled Judea ruthlessly. See note, Mt 2:3. Thus Agrippa would be familiar with the differences between the various religious groups among the Jews. See p 1557.
ACTS—NOTE ON 26:5 *party*. Translated "sect" in 24:5 (see note); used here simply to designate a group of Jews. *Pharisee*. See p 1557. Jesus often condemned their self-righteousness (cf Mt 15:1–11; 23:26; Lk 18:10–14).
ACTS—NOTE ON 26:6 *hope in the promise*. In this context, Paul specifically means God's promise of the resurrection of the dead, grounded in the resurrection of Jesus (cf 23:6). Jesus is also the ultimate fulfillment of

the hope the Jews held and the ultimate fulfillment of the promises of the OT.

ACTS—NOTE ON 26:8 As a whole, the Jews believed in the resurrection of the dead. Hence, it does not follow that Paul should be (unjustly) accused simply for proclaiming that Jesus' resurrection is the basis for the believer's resurrection.

ACTS—NOTE ON 26:10 *saints*. See p 1904. *chief priests*. See p 1556. *put to death*. Paul refers to Christians who were martyred for their faith. Stephen's death at the hands of the Jewish leaders was only the first such death recorded. *I cast my vote against them*. Some argue Paul refers to his membership in the Council, by which he would be allowed to vote in matters of such executions. More likely, Paul acted as an agent for the Council. Even if Paul did not actually cast a vote, his approval to these executions was tantamount to voting.

ACTS—NOTE ON 26:11 *make them blaspheme*. Paul attempted to get them to deny their Christian faith or to profess it in a way that Jewish officials would regard as blasphemous.

ACTS—NOTE ON 26:1–11 Paul makes his defense before King Agrippa. He describes his zealous opposition to Jesus and the Gospel message. Because we are born in sin (Ps 51:5), we all have an ungodly past, even if we have never persecuted Christians the way Paul did. Be assured that Christ forgives and delivers us, just as He did Paul. • Jesus, thank You for bearing my sin. Let me see others with the love You have for them, and empower me to share the Gospel of Your love with them. Amen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 26:12–18 Cf 9:1–19; 22:6–16. Paul adds more details to the account: (1) everyone with Paul fell to the ground; (2) Jesus spoke in Hbr or Aram; (3) Jesus' words, "It is hard for you to kick against the goads" (v 14); and (4) Jesus' explanation of Paul's mission (vv 16–18). Paul also omits several details: that it was Jesus of Nazareth speaking, any mention of his blindness, God restoring his sight through Ananias, and the words Ananias spoke.

ACTS—NOTE ON 26:12 *chief priests*. See p 1556.

ACTS—NOTE ON 26:14 *Hebrew language*. Since Paul is speaking to Romans and Gentiles, he adds details about the language he heard. *kick against the goads*. Gk proverb. A goad was a pointed stick used to guide or drive certain livestock. See note, Jgs 3:31. Jesus may have meant that Paul's

opposition was futile, or that Paul needed to repent of his sin of opposing Jesus and believe in Him instead.

ACTS—NOTE ON 26:16 *servant*. Paul was to assist Jesus in His divine work (cf 13:5, where this word, translated "assist," describes John Mark's work). See p 1904. *witness*. See note, 22:15. *I will appear to you*. Jesus promises additional appearances to Paul (cf 18:9; 22:17–18; 23:11; 2Co 12:1–10).

ACTS—NOTE ON 26:18 *turn from darkness to light*. A picture of the sinner's conversion from unbelief to faith, focusing on inner transformation (cf Is 42:16; Eph 5:8; Col 1:12–13; 1Pt 2:9). See "turn," p 1080. "The Scriptures flatly call natural man in spiritual and divine things *darkness* (Ephesians 5:8; Acts 26:18)" (FC SD II 10). *from the power of Satan to God*. Another way of describing conversion, emphasizing under whose authority one lives. *forgiveness of sins*. Received when someone is brought to faith (cf 2:38; 22:16). *sanctified by faith in Me*. Expression referring to those who have been converted to faith, i.e., Christians, emphasizing that the object of faith is Jesus. See p 1904.

ACTS—NOTE ON 26:20 *repent*. See p 1080. *turn to God*. See p 1080. The essence of what Paul (and the other apostles) preached to unbelievers (cf v 18; 3:19; 20:21). See note, Mt 3:2. *deeds in keeping with their repentance*. When people are brought to faith, their actions demonstrate their new standing before God. John the Baptist preached a similar message.

ACTS—NOTE ON 26:23 *Christ must suffer*. All of Scripture shows that the Christ would have to suffer to save the world (cf 17:3; Is 53). See p 1245. *first to rise*. Paul emphasizes that Jesus' resurrection from the dead ensures the resurrection of believers. *proclaim light*. The light of the Gospel, the message of life and salvation, is what Jesus preached (cf 13:47; Is 49:6; see notes, Ac 26:18; Jn 1:5).

ACTS—NOTE ON 26:24 Festus recognizes Paul is quite well educated, but he cannot comprehend what Paul is saying (cf 1Co 1:18). Most problematic for Festus would be the idea of a Savior who would die for His people and the concept of a resurrection from the dead.

ACTS—NOTE ON 26:26 *done in a corner*. Paul uses another Gk proverb to show that information about Jesus and the proclamation of Him as the Savior were common knowledge.

ACTS—NOTE ON 26:28 *persuade me to be a Christian?* Paul's response (v 29) shows that Agrippa is not yet a believer; he is being sarcastic or

making a joke.

ACTS—NOTE ON 26:29 *become such as I am*. Paul wants all his hearers to become Christians. Luth: "This noble word naturally brings with it a burning hunger and unquenchable thirst that can never be filled. Even though many thousands of people believed in it, we would still desire that no person would want for it. Such thirst is ever active and knows no rest, but impels us to speak. … However, this thirst not only is not slaked by its speaking, it is also made worse with gall and vinegar, as was the thirst which Christ experienced on the cross [John 19:29]. St. Paul felt such a thirst, Acts 26 [:29], when he wished that everyone were as he himself—except for his chains. … You too have been given such a thirst for the salvation of your brethren, which is a reliable sign of a genuine faith" (AE 43:62–63).

ACTS—NOTE ON 26:31 Festus and Agrippa agree that Paul is not guilty of the crimes with which the Jews charged him.

ACTS—NOTE ON 26:32 Agrippa's comment implies that Festus should have declared Paul innocent before his appeal to Caesar.

ACTS—NOTE ON 26:12–32 Paul continues his defense before King Agrippa, recounting how the Lord converted him from an ardent persecutor of the faith to an avid apostle. To refuse to listen to God's clear Word is to remain in—or turn back to—darkness. The Lord turns us from darkness to light when we hear and believe the beautiful message of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. • We give thanks to You, Jesus, for turning us from the darkness of eternal death to Your eternal light. Make us witnesses of what You have done for us and for all people. Amen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 27:1 *we*. Luke is now with Paul; this begins the third "we" section. See "Relationship to the Gospel according to Luke," p 1829. *centurion of the Augustan Cohort*. The military division is known to have been stationed in Syria at this time, but the origin and significance of the term "Augustan" is not clear. See note, 10:1.

ACTS—NOTE ON 27:2 *Aristarchus*. Accompanied Paul when he brought the offering for the poor in Jerusalem (cf 20:4; see note, 24:17). He also was with Paul while Paul was imprisoned in Rome (Col 4:10; Phm 24).

ACTS—NOTE ON 27:3 *Sidon*. The Gospel had been preached in this area earlier (Phoenicia; 11:19). See color map 4. *go to his friends*. Fellow Christians.

ACTS—NOTE ON 27:4 *lee of Cyprus*. The ship sailed on the east and north sides of the island so that it was shielded from strong westerly winds.
ACTS—NOTE ON 27:6 Most likely, the ship hauled grain from Alexandria, Egypt, to Asia Minor and Rome (cf v 38). Switching to another ship was part of the centurion's plan for the transport of the prisoners.
ACTS—NOTE ON 27:7 *lee of Crete*. The ship sailed to the east and south of the island to avoid strong northwest winds. See note, v 4.
ACTS—NOTE ON 27:9 *dangerous*. See p 1892. *Fast*. See ESV note. It was now Oct or later.
ACTS—NOTE ON 27:10 Most likely Paul is offering advice based on his experience as a seasoned traveler; he had already endured three shipwrecks (2Co 11:25). Paul later prophesies concerning the voyage (vv 22–24).
ACTS—NOTE ON 27:11 *pilot*. Probably referring to the person in charge of the day-to-day operations of the ship; might also refer to the captain of the ship.
ACTS—NOTE ON 27:12 Winter months for sea travel were considered Nov 11–Mar 10. See p 1892.
ACTS—NOTE ON 27:14 *northeaster*. From a word combining Gk "east wind" and Lat "northeast wind." This particular northeaster probably blew down from Mount Ida on Crete. See map, p 1886.
ACTS—NOTE ON 27:15 *could not face the wind*. Lit, "could not look the wind in the eye." The sailors were unable to bring the bow of the ship into the wind.
ACTS—NOTE ON 27:16 *Cauda.* Small island 22 mi S of Crete. *secure the ship's boat*. A small boat, used for transporting passengers and as a lifeboat, was usually pulled behind the larger ship. Here the small boat was probably brought aboard.
ACTS—NOTE ON 27:17 *supports to undergird*. Large cables or ropes were secured around the hull of the ship to help it weather fierce storms. *Syrtis*. One of two treacherous sandbars (here the larger one is meant) off the coast of Libya. They were much feared by ancient sailors.
ACTS—NOTE ON 27:20 *no small tempest*. Understatement; the storm prevented them from navigating by the sun or the stars.
ACTS—NOTE ON 27:22–26 Paul focuses on building up the hope of those on the ship through his powerful and reliable God.
ACTS—NOTE ON 27:23 *the God to whom I belong*. Paul powerfully expresses his trust and confidence in the one true God by emphasizing

God's ownership of him. See notes, Ex 6:7; Ac 17:28.
ACTS—NOTE ON 27:24 *stand before Caesar*. This vision gives divine assurance that God's promise to Paul regarding Rome would be fulfilled. Luth: "Because there are some godly men, or only one godly man, in the same ship, the ship must reach port safe and sound, however much it has been tossed about by a heavy storm, even though a thousand devils have been fighting in opposition and causing tumult in the same ship. So also for the sake of Paul alone, a ship is saved and 276 men who were with him in the ship" (AE 6:217).
ACTS—NOTE ON 27:25 Paul bases his encouragement on his faith that God would fulfill His precise promises of deliverance. Perhaps the shipmates listened closely because of their perilous situation.
ACTS—NOTE ON 27:27 For 14 days, the storm drove the ship west from Cauda to Malta. See map, p 1895.
ACTS—NOTE ON 27:30 The sailors tried to make it appear that they were attempting to secure the ship's position, but they were actually seeking to escape under the cover of darkness.
ACTS—NOTE ON 27:31 If all the experienced sailors abandoned the ship, the prospect of safety for the remaining passengers was dim.
ACTS—NOTE ON 27:33–35 Paul encourages the men to eat, leading by example. He was not officiating at the Lord's Supper, as some suppose (consider all the unbelievers present), but simply giving thanks to God for his food.
ACTS—NOTE ON 27:37 *276 persons*. Other ancient accounts of travel by ship show that such a large number of passengers on a grain ship was entirely possible; alternatively, see ESV note.
ACTS—NOTE ON 27:38 *throwing out the wheat*. Some of the cargo had already been thrown off. As a last resort, the remainder of the wheat was thrown overboard.
ACTS—NOTE ON 27:1–38 Grave difficulties beset Paul's journey to Rome, yet the Lord assures Paul that he will reach his journey's goal. When the trials of life weigh us down, it is easy for us to lose hope and stop trusting God. Yet God promises He will never leave us nor forsake us (Dt 31:6, 8; Heb 13:5). Through Jesus' saving work, the Father keeps us with Him forever. • Father, be with us always in this world, especially when we are tossed about by the everyday storms of life. Grant us safe passage until we reach our final destination of heaven. Amen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 27:40 Apparently the throwing overboard of the ship's tackle (v 19) did not include the anchors or the foresail.
ACTS—NOTE ON 27:42 *kill the prisoners*. The guards were subject to punishment if their prisoners escaped. See note, 16:27; cf 12:18–19.
ACTS—NOTE ON 27:44 *all were brought safely to land*. Paul's promise from God is fulfilled. Divine intervention causes everyone to be rescued.
ACTS—NOTE ON 27:39–44 After a harrowing journey, the ship carrying Paul wrecks on an island. However, all the passengers are saved. Have you ever blamed God for the problems in your life? Have you forgotten that even through hardships, God is working for your benefit (Rm 8:28)? Rejoice today that His love and care for you are infinite (Rm 8:38–39)! • Lord, put all the problems in my life to good use. I praise You that nothing compares to the grace and mercy You show me, now and forever. Amen.
ACTS—NOTE ON 28:2 *native people*. Lit, "bearded ones." They were of Phoenician descent and spoke a Phoenician dialect.
ACTS—NOTE ON 28:3 *viper*. A venomous snake.
ACTS—NOTE ON 28:4 *murderer*. The natives concluded that Paul must have been guilty of a serious crime, and that he was now being punished with certain death. *Justice*. Among the Gk gods and goddesses, Justice was the daughter of Zeus who exacted revenge on humans. However, the natives might possibly be speaking of "justice" in the general sense of the word.
ACTS—NOTE ON 28:6 Since Paul overcame a bite from a deadly snake, the people figured he was more than human. Paul had faced a similar misconception in Lystra (14:8–13). Most likely Paul corrected their false notions.
ACTS—NOTE ON 28:7 *chief man … Publius*. Perhaps a prominent citizen or benefactor of the island, or someone operating under the authority of the Roman official of Sicily.
ACTS—NOTE ON 28:8–9 With God's power, Paul healed Publius's father from his sickness. Hearing of this miracle, sick people from all over the island came to Paul and likewise were healed. It is likely Paul preached the Gospel as he healed.
ACTS—NOTE ON 28:1–10 At Malta, Paul amazes the native people by surviving a snakebite, and they believe he is a god. As he heals many sick people, they will learn that his power comes from the one true God, not from Paul himself. By God's miraculous power in Christ, He rescues His

people from sin, death, and ignorance. • Thank You, Holy Spirit, for showing us the true God! Keep our faith in Him, that we may always know His forgiveness and life. Amen.

ACTS—NOTE ON 28:11 *twin gods*. Castor and Pollux, sons of the Gk god Zeus, were believed to be the patrons of sailors. The constellation Gemini was associated with them.

ACTS—NOTE ON 28:13 *made a circuit*. In sailing, this is known as tacking, the changing of direction by bringing the bow into the wind.

ACTS—NOTE ON 28:14 *brothers*. See p 1901.

ACTS—NOTE ON 28:15 *the Forum of Appius and Three Taverns*. C 33 and 43 mi from Rome, respectively. Both were located on the Appian Way. See map, p 1895. *thanked God and took courage*. Luth: "When a plague and other misfortunes assail us, we, too, should say that … Satan is raging and is angry, but that God is merciful and is kindly disposed toward us because we believe in His Son. And in this manner the saintly martyrs overcame death and all dangers; for they were sure that God was kind to them. … Therefore they even rejoiced in their adversities and scoffed at Satan" (AE 3:264).

ACTS—NOTE ON 28:16 Paul was allowed a certain level of freedom, being placed under house arrest with a guard chained to him (cf v 20).

ACTS—NOTE ON 28:17 *Brothers*. Here used to address Jews, specifically the local leaders; see notes, 22:1, 5. Paul's innocence under Roman law is again asserted. *customs*. The oral law. See "Pharisees," p 1557.

ACTS—NOTE ON 28:18 *death penalty*. Paul would have to be found guilty of a crime under Roman law in order to be executed, though he was not guilty.

ACTS—NOTE ON 28:20 *hope of Israel*. The hope of the resurrection (cf 24:15; 26:6–8; see notes, 26:6, 8), fulfilled in Christ Jesus. Paul's use here could also include the fulfilled hope of the Jews, the kingdom of God (v 23).

ACTS—NOTE ON 28:21 *brothers*. Paul's Jewish listeners refer to fellow Jews.

ACTS—NOTE ON 28:22 *this sect … is spoken against*. The Jewish leaders refer to the Christians (see note, 24:5), whom other Jews denounced.

ACTS—NOTE ON 28:23 *kingdom of God*. See pp 1565–66. *convince them about Jesus*. Paul's message centered on Jesus and His saving work as the

fulfillment of the Jews' expectations. *Law of Moses … Prophets*. See note, Lk 24:44.

ACTS—NOTE ON 28:24 Once more Paul learns by experience that "not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel" (Rm 9:6). See notes, Rm 9:6–8.

ACTS—NOTE ON 28:25 *Holy Spirit was right*. The Holy Spirit inspired the Scriptures (2Tm 3:16; 2Pt 1:21); thus what He had spoken through Isaiah was true.

ACTS—NOTE ON 28:26–27 Words taken from God's call of Isaiah (Is 6:1–13). The communication assigned to Isaiah was not a pleasant one. He was to proclaim to an apostate nation that their land would become utterly desolate. Because the people would refuse to heed the call to repentance, only a stump would remain when Israel, the tree of the Lord's planting (cf Jer 11:16–17), was felled by the axe of divine judgment. Paul tells his Jewish audience that this warning of God applies also to them. Chem: "The bondage of the unregenerate man is described. … The statement in Acts 28:26–27 is sad, pointing out that even when God gives His Word, men are not enlightened" (*LTh* 1:240).

ACTS—NOTE ON 28:28–31 Luke concludes his account by emphasizing the progress of the Gospel (see note, 1:8). Paul was later released, may have travelled to Spain (Rm 15:24), and was likely beheaded at Rome in AD 68 under the emperor Nero. See chronology, p cix. Luke may have chosen to break the story here to end on a positive note but more likely he wrote Ac before Paul's death.

ACTS—NOTE ON 28:28 *salvation*. Attained through the work of Christ Jesus (cf Lk 2:30–32). See p 1904. *Gentiles; they will listen*. Third time in Ac that Paul makes such a statement (cf 13:46–47; 18:6). He also hopes that such a strong statement of the Law will produce repentance in the hearts of his Jewish listeners. Note that the Gentiles have never been shut out from God's promises (cf Ps 67:2–3; Is 65:1).

ACTS—NOTE ON 28:30 *at his own expense*. Some argue this phrase should be "in his own rented quarters" or the like. It is more likely that, being under house arrest, Paul still had to provide for his own needs; see note, 24:23.

ACTS—NOTE ON 28:31 Completes the story of Ac, outlined in 1:8 (cf Lk 24:47); with Paul's unhindered preaching and teaching in Rome, the Gospel had gone throughout the earth (see pp 1828–30). *proclaiming the kingdom*

of God. Summary statement of Paul's preaching (cf v 23), which was also what Jesus preached (cf 1:3). See pp 1565–66.

ACTS—NOTE ON 28:11–31 Paul reaches Rome safely and peacefully. Although not all of Paul's fellow Jews believe the Gospel, Paul proclaims it without hindrance to the Gentiles, thus fulfilling Christ's promise that the Gospel would be proclaimed to all nations. Today, pray that the Lord would break up the hardness of your heart. Rejoice in the message of forgiveness and life through Jesus Christ that is for all people, including you. • Lord, through Your eternal Word, soften my heart. Grant me Your salvation so I may be counted among Your faithful people and proclaim Your name. Amen.

ROMANS THROUGH PHILEMON

The Pauline Epistles

> When you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men but as what it really is, the word of God, which is at work in you believers…. You received from us how you ought to walk and to please God…. For you know what instructions we gave you through the Lord Jesus. (1Th 2:13; 4:1, 2)

The earliest collection of New Testament documents was the 13 Epistles, or Letters, of the apostle Paul. The early Christians immediately regarded these Letters as God's Word, like the writings of the Prophets (2Pt 3:15–16).

The Apostle Paul

The apostle Paul grew up as Saul of Tarsus in Cilicia (Ac 9:11; see map, p 1857). His father was a Diaspora Jew and a freedman in Roman society (Ac 16:37–38; 22:25–29). Paul was apprenticed as a tentmaker (Ac 18:3) but also studied the Scriptures as a Pharisee at Jerusalem under Rabbi Gamaliel the Elder (Ac 22:3). Gamaliel was the grandson of Rabbi Hillel, who was known for his progressive attitudes toward proselytes and for founding a key school of Jewish thought, Beth Hillel. See p 1558.

Paul zealously defended his Jewish faith by arresting Christians and supporting their execution, since he regarded them as false teachers (Ac 7:58; 8:1–3; 26:9–11). In AD 36, Jesus confronted Paul while he traveled to Damascus to arrest Christians there (Ac 9:1–9). Jesus turned Paul's heart. Paul was baptized and immediately began to proclaim Jesus as the Messiah (Ac 9:10–22). Retreating from persecution, Paul spent some years east of Damascus in the Arabian Desert before returning to Damascus and to Antioch as a teacher (Ac 11:25–26; Gal 1:17–18). In AD 47, the Holy Spirit directed the congregation at Antioch to send Paul out as a missionary (Ac 13:1–3; see map, p 1886), a calling he fulfilled until AD 68, when the Roman emperor Nero ordered Paul's execution. Paul's Letters were written during his missionary journeys and while he was in prison for proclaiming Christ (see p 2042). He typically had the help of a scribe (see notes, Rm 16:22; Gal 6:11); friends hand-delivered the Letters (see note, Ti 3:13).

The Format of the Epistles

Early Christian scribes began to gather, copy, and circulate the apostle Paul's Letters almost immediately. In this respect, Paul's 13 Epistles shaped the New Testament, earliest Christian teaching (e.g., the Apostles' Creed), and earliest practice. After Jesus Himself, no other leader had greater influence on Christianity's direction. Using the Old Testament, Paul helped the other apostles recognize the full implications of Jesus' teaching, sacrifice, resurrection, and commission to spread the Gospel (Ac 15:1–29). Though the claim of some critics that Paul "created" Christianity is bizarre, one can hardly exaggerate Paul's importance. Luther wrote, "No one stresses the grace we have through Christ so valiantly as St. Paul does" (AE 30:4).

Paul established the format and style for Christian letters until the fourth century. Paul's Letters still greatly influence how Christians relate to one another today. These should be among the first books of Scripture people study. To support the spread of the Gospel and the faith of new believers, the apostle Paul made letter writing an important activity for the earliest Christians.

Ancient Letters

Paul's Letters are not the first to appear in the Bible. In Old Testament times, letters in Hebrew or Aramaic were common means for administration (cf 2Sm 11:15; 1Ki 21:8–10; 2Ki 5:5–6; 10:1–3, 6; 19:10–14; 2Ch 2:11–16; 21:12–15; Ezr 1:1–4; Ne 6:5–7; Jer 29:1–23, 25–28). Archaeologists have also discovered numerous *ostraca* (pot shard) letters for brief, official communications in Israel.

The Apocrypha (see pp 1562–64) shows how the tradition of letter writing continued after the tribe of Judah returned from exile in Babylon. For example, the priestly leadership in Judah sent letters to Jewish communities in Egypt and elsewhere to organize the Jewish feasts (cf 2Macc 1:1–9). Jewish "encyclicals" were delivered by envoys who ensured that the letters' contents were applied among those who received them (cf Ac 9:1–2; 15:22–32; 28:21). Elements of these Jewish letters influenced the way Paul wrote and worked as a spiritual leader.

However, the format and rhetoric of Greek letters also greatly influenced Paul. Archaeologists have discovered "handbooks" for writing Greek letters that illustrate various styles and occasions for writing, much as one may adapt and use form letters today. Paul likely studied such Greek letters.

The Style of Paul's Letters

Paul commonly wrote his Letters in an exhortative or sermonic style, admonishing and encouraging his readers on the basis of biblical doctrines and stories. By applying God's Law and Gospel, Paul called his readers to account when they strayed and announced God's forgiveness for them when they repented.

Paul's Letters are clearly more intimate than administrative letters of the time. They are more like family letters, since he viewed the churches as households. Paul's Letters are also much longer than most Greek letters. Christian Letters were carefully written to convey apostolic instruction, which flowed from Christ, the Head of the Church. Not all apostolic Letters were preserved, since not every Letter would always apply for future congregations (see pp 1979–80). However, as illustrated by the quotes above, the NT apostolic Letters were received as God's Word.

Paul's Letters and You

Below are listed typical elements of Paul's Letters. As you study Paul's Letters, be sure to compare the outline of each with the elements below to discover the character of Paul's work. Many of these features also appear in the General Epistles, written by other apostles and Christian leaders (see pp 2099–2101).

TYPICAL ELEMENTS: I. Opening
NOTES
TYPICAL ELEMENTS: Correspondent and his office
NOTES: Writer declares authority or relationship.
TYPICAL ELEMENTS: Recipients
NOTES: Paul usually addressed individual congregations.
TYPICAL ELEMENTS: Greeting with Christian blessing
NOTES: Paul invoked Christ, making the greeting explicitly Christian.
TYPICAL ELEMENTS: Thanksgiving for the readers
NOTES: Typical in Jewish letters.
TYPICAL ELEMENTS: Prayer for the readers
NOTES: Celebrated the readers' blessings and qualities.
TYPICAL ELEMENTS: II. Body
NOTES
TYPICAL ELEMENTS: Instruction in doctrine
NOTES: Christ called the apostles to teach the Law and the Gospel from Holy Scripture and divine revelation. Cf Lk 24:44–48.
TYPICAL ELEMENTS: Instruction in practice
NOTES: Paul's counsel flowed from doctrinal instruction.
TYPICAL ELEMENTS: Responses to reports or letters
NOTES: Problems were addressed point by point (e.g., 1Co).
TYPICAL ELEMENTS: Call to repentance
NOTES: Used when the readers had strayed from God's teaching.
TYPICAL ELEMENTS: Travel plans
NOTES: Travelers relied on the hospitality of the congregations in order to extend mission work.
TYPICAL ELEMENTS: III. Conclusion
NOTES
TYPICAL ELEMENTS: Blessing

NOTES: A request for God's grace or presence (see p 843).
TYPICAL ELEMENTS: Wish for peace
NOTES: See p 1903.
TYPICAL ELEMENTS: Request for prayer
NOTES: Expressed with travel plans or descriptions of suffering.
TYPICAL ELEMENTS: Greetings extended to others
NOTES: From the writer or his companions. Such greetings broadened and deepened the relationships between congregations and between leaders.
TYPICAL ELEMENTS: Holy kiss greeting
NOTES: This may describe a liturgical action (see note, Rm 16:16).
TYPICAL ELEMENTS: Autographed greeting
NOTES: Paul usually dictated his letters to a scribe, as was typical in ancient times. Sometimes he also signed his own greeting (e.g., Gal 6:11).

Just as the early Christians learned to love Christian doctrine and value the warmth of fellowship in Christ by reading Paul's Letters, draw on these blessings and examples for the life of your family and congregation. Paul's Letters will teach you the meaning and use of the Old Testament and will instill in you an enduring love for the Gospel of Jesus.

Key Terms and Phrases in Paul's Epistles

The apostle Paul wrote about doctrine more thoroughly than any other biblical author. Whereas the evangelists taught through stories, Paul taught by expounding key passages of the Old Testament and key events in Jesus' life. He defined terms, produced commonsense arguments, and applied these teachings to life. The Gospels and Acts focus on *what* happened (see p 1572); Paul emphasizes *why* things happened. As a result, Paul is the most consulted theologian in Christianity.

To gain a deeper understanding of Christian teaching, study the list of terms used by Paul, many of which are rooted in the Old Testament. The list shows how Paul's terms interrelate and center on particular doctrines.

accursed. Gk *anathema*; used in LXX for Hbr *cherem*, one meaning of which is "something devoted to God for destruction" (Lv 27:28–29; Dt 7:26; Jsh 6:17) and thus "cursed" (cf Rm 9:3; 1Co 12:3; 16:22). See "curse," p 6.

adoption. Gk *huiothesia*, "placing as a son." A Greco-Roman legal term signifying the granting of the full rights and privileges of sonship in a family to which one does not belong by birth (Rm 8:15, 23; 9:4; Gal 4:5; Eph 1:5). OT passages describing God's relation to Israel certainly informed Paul's expression (Ex 4:22–23; Hos 11:1). See *heir*.

amen. From Hbr *'aman*, "to be strong" or "trustworthy." Derives from synagogue services. In worship, believers responded "affirmatively" to God's Word for their lives (1Co 14:16; cf Rm 11:36; 15:33; Gal 6:18). See "faithfulness," p 842.

apostle. Gk *apostolos*; comparable to Hbr *shaliach*. Both from verbs meaning "to send." The one sent goes with the full authority of the sender. Paul's words are God's words, as are the words of Moses, Elijah, Elisha, and Ezekiel, each of whom was known as a *shaliach* of God. Paul called himself an apostle in all of his Epistles except Php, 2Th, and Phm. Paul thus firmly established his authority as one appointed directly by the risen Lord, whom he had seen (1Co 4:1; 9:2; 11:23; 15:8). Unlike any others to whom this title is applied (by Paul himself or others), Paul and the Twelve were called and sent directly by Jesus.

apostolic ministry. Gk *apostole*, a technical term for the office and work of an apostle of Christ (Ac 1:25; Rm 1:5; 1Co 9:2). See *apostle*.

baptize. Gk *baptizo*; in common Gk lit, "to wash, purify, or dip." Paul often used the term to mean "wash" or "cleanse" with OT cleansing rituals informing this sense (1Co 6:11; Eph 5:26–27; Ti 3:5–6; cf Ezk 36:25–27). This term occurs more often in the Gospels, but Paul gives a more thorough doctrine of Baptism (Rm 6:1–11). See *clean*.

beloved. Gk *agapetoi*, fellow Christians. See *love*.

bless. Gk *eulogeo*, "praise" or "speak well of." Paul used prayers based on the Israelite *berakah* ("blessed") pattern (Dn 2:20–23; 2Co 1:3–4; 1Pt 1:3–5). See p 842.

Body of Christ. Gk *soma christou*. Paul repeatedly describes the Church as the Body of Jesus, believers united under one head. See *member*, *church*, and *fellowship*.

brothers. Gk *adelphoi*, a general term Paul used for fellow Christians (Rm 8:29; Eph 6:23) and co-workers in Christ's mission (Php 4:21), whether male or female. However, Paul also used the term specifically for men who led congregations (see note, 1Co 12:1). By grace and in Baptism, the Father adopts Christians into the sonship that belongs to Jesus by nature (Gal 3:25–29). This makes people unrelated by blood true siblings to one another. See *adoption*, *in Christ*, *Body of Christ*, and *fellowship*.

by faith. Gk *ek pisteos*. Paul's use is based on Hab 2:4; cf Rm 1:17; Gal 3:11; Heb 10:38. Faith serves as the instrument of key gifts in Paul's teaching: life, justification, righteousness, and blessing.

by no means. Gk *me genoito*, "may it not be."

call. Gk *kaleo*, "to summon," and thereby "to choose." See *chosen*.

chosen. Gk *eklektos*; Eng "elect." Key NT description of Christians (1Th 1:4; 2Th 2:13; 1Pt 1:1–2; Rv 17:14). Although God chose us "before the foundation of the world" (Eph 1:4), His choice was not arbitrary. He chose us to be saved by Christ and in union with Christ, who Himself is God's "Chosen One" (Lk 9:35; 1Pt 2:4–6). God chose us in love, not anger or judgment; Paul speaks only of a choosing for redemption. Cf Rm 8:29–33; 11:5; Jn 15:16. See p 1929.

church. Gk *ekklesia*, "ones called out" for a public gathering. The term would not immediately have sacred association in the minds of Gentile converts; it could simply mean "assembly." It is most often used by Paul for a local congregation, but also for the universal Church (Eph 1:22). The Church is the body of believers created and sustained by God (1Co

12), the new Israel (Gal 6:16), people called together by faith through God's Word and Sacrament. Paul also uses the term to replace "kingdom," found in the Gospels. See "great congregation," p 842.

clean. Gk *katharos*, "pure"; used in opposition to ritual uncleanness as described in the OT. See *baptize*; see also p 6.

coming. Gk *parousia*; commonly described a royal visit. Used 18 times in NT for Christ's reappearing in glory for the Last Day.

condemn. Gk *katakrino*, a legal term embracing both sentence and punishment (cf Rm 8:1). See *judge*, *weigh*.

confess. Gk *homologeo*, lit, "to say the same thing." To bear witness before God, the congregation, and the world. Believers speak the same truths, which they have heard from God, namely the faith they learned in the Word. See p 1975.

conscience. Gk *syneidesis*, an internal ability to make some discernment between right and wrong. The conscience is a gift from God but is fallen and fallible. Greeks equate it with a personal moral code of behavior (1Co 10:25–26). All people have a "conscience" (2Co 4:2), whether Christian (1Co 8:7) or non-Christian (Rm 2:14–16; 1Co 10:29). It is not separate from an individual but is shaped by a person's experience (2Co 5:11).

covenant. Gk *diatheke*, "a formal agreement." See "covenant," p 6.

deacon. Gk *diakonos*, "servant" or "helper." An office in early Christianity, also in Hellenistic culture. The term is applied to women (Rm 16:1) as "deaconesses."

delivered. Gk *paradidomi*, "to hand over" as one passes on a tradition. See *tradition*, *received*.

directed. Gk *diatasso*, "to order or command." See *submit*.

elder. See note, Ti 1:5.

end. Gk *telos*; in NT usage it can mean either "termination" (cessation) or "goal" (outcome). See *perfect*.

faith. Gk *pistis*, "trust." A gift of God's grace (Eph 2:8–9), not a naturally human power that we are to offer to God. Faith is the instrument by which believers receive God's blessings (e.g., "through faith"). See *by faith*.

fellowship. Gk *koinonia*, "sharing," "participation in a common thing." Christian fellowship has both a heavenly and an earthly dimension (1Co 1:9; cf 1Co 10:16; 2Co 8:4; 13:14; Eph 3:6 Php 3:10; Phm 6).

flesh. Gk *sarx* ; lit, refers to a body (e.g., Gal 3:3) or a human being (Gal 1:16), but Paul uses the term often to mean the "sinful nature" as inherited from our parents (Rm 7:5, 18; 8:8; Gal 5:16, 24). The fallen human nature has self-seeking desires that oppose God. Paul does not mean that the physical world is inherently evil, a teaching in Greek culture and in later Gnosticism.

forgive. Gk *aphiemi*, "to let go" or "dismiss" sin or debt. A consequence of justification. See *freedom*.

freedom. Gk *eleutheria*, "liberty," the opposite of slavery. A consequence of justification. See *forgive*.

fruit. Gk *karpos* (singular). Spiritual fruit is the good works of a life produced and guided by God the Holy Spirit—in contrast to deeds (plural) of the self-indulgent life.

gifts. Gk *charismata*, gracious gifts or abilities from God, connected with an office of service in the congregation. See *grace*.

give thanks. Gk *eulogeo*, "to praise," "bless" God in prayer (Eng "eulogy"). See "bless," p 842.

glory. Gk *doxa*, "brightness," "majestic power," or "fame." God's radiant presence awaiting believers in heaven (2Co 4:17). In the OT, God's glory refers to His visible presence among His people. See pp 6–7.

Gospel. Gk *euangelion*, "good news" or "message." Based on *aggelo*, "to bear a message." Summarized by Paul in 1Co 15:1–4; implications described in Rm 1:16. See *preach*. See also pp xxi–xxxii, 1571–74.

grace. Gk *charis*, God's generous mercy toward undeserving people (Rm 5:12–21; Ti 3:3–7). God's free and undeserved favor toward sinful humanity is demonstrated in Christ's work of redemption. It is an unearned and undeserved gift, a weighty teaching for Paul. See *mercy* ; see also "favor," p 6, and "steadfast love," p 843.

heir. Gk *kleronomos*, "one who receives the promise" or "chosen one." Describes the relationship of believers to the heavenly Father, based on grace. See *grace*, *chosen*, *adoption*, and *offspring*; see also "portion," p 7.

holy. Gk *hagios*, "sacred" or "dedicated to God." Set apart to or consecrated to God. Though all Christians are holy before God through Baptism, the apostles and prophets are "set apart" for a unique office (Rm 1:1). See *clean*, *saints*; see also p 7.

hope. Gk *elpis*, confident trust in what is not seen (Heb 11:1). Key to Paul's presentation of the Gospel (Rm 4:18; 5:2, 4–5; 15:4, 13). Grounded in Christ's resurrection, with patient expectation, believers hope in the promise of His return in glory. See *promise*, *resurrection*, and *faith*.

household. Gk *oikos* or *oikonomia*, a core family group, including the slaves and children, sharing a home. Paul described a congregation as a household (Gal 6:10). See *church*.

in Christ. Can mean "by or through Christ," as the agent of our salvation. Christ is also the One in whom we find God's gifts. We are baptized "into Christ" (Gal 3:26–27) and experience what He has (Eph 2:4–6). See *fellowship*; see also p 1920.

inheritance. See *heir*.

joy. Gk *chara*, a mental and emotional appreciation for good things received. A result of God's grace toward believers. See p 2094.

judge. Gk *krino* and related forms that often connect with Paul's teaching about justification. Christians are to consider things in view of God's Word. See *weigh*, *condemn*, and *justify*.

justify. Gk *dikaioo*¯, "to declare righteous or free." The basis for the dominant theological truth in Paul's Letters and the Scriptures. When referring to the sinner's relationship to God, "justify" means a verdict, a legal act whereby a person is declared righteous, i.e., forgiven (Gal 3:8, 11, 24; 5:4). Justification of the sinner (Rm 5:6–9) does not depend on obedience to the Law ("works" of the Law, i.e., what the Law requires). See *righteousness*; see also p 843.

Law. Commonly refers to the Law of Moses, which included moral, civil, and ceremonial commands (as well as instruction about God's mercy). However, see pp 971, 1911.

love. Gk *agape*, self-giving, sacrificial concern for another person. The word was esp adopted by Christians; it characterizes God and is the basis of His actions toward us in Christ. Those loved by God show love toward others. The weight of Paul's teaching about justification has obscured how frequently he emphasizes love (cf 1Co 13); he uses the term more often than even the apostle John (cf 1Jn). See *beloved*, *brothers*, *household*, and *grace*; see also "steadfast love," p 843.

member. Gk *melos*, "limb or part of the body." See *Body of Christ*, *church*.

mercy. Gk *eleos*, "pity," "compassion," moved by the troubles of others. See *grace*.

message. See *preach*.

minister. Gk *doulos*, "slave" or "servant." One who is wholly owned and who owes undivided allegiance and obedience to a master. Many OT believers were called servants of God: Moses (Ps 105:26), Joshua (Jsh 24:29), David (2Sm 7:5), and the prophets (Jer 7:25). Paul uses this term to describe both the pastoral office and his own apostolic office (cf Rm 1:1; 1Co 4:1). See p 101.

mystery. Gk *mysterion*, "secret," previously kept hidden, but now openly revealed to all (1Co 4:1). God's plan of salvation was hidden in OT times in shadows and types. The mystery is revealed in the Word of God —in Christ. See note, 1Co 14:2. Pagan religions also used "mystery" for secret knowledge that was tightly controlled and limited to a few. Paul stresses that the revelation of Christ is for all people (Eph 3:9).

obey. Gk *hypakouo*; emphasizes "listening." Cf Rm 1:5.

offspring. Gk *sperma*, "seed," denoting physical descent or ethnicity. God made promises to Abraham (Gn 12:1–3, 7; 13:14–17; 17:8; 22:16–18; 24:7) about his "offspring" (singular "seed"; Hbr *zera'*), meaning either a single descendant or many descendants (collective sense; Gal 3:29). In rabbinic fashion, Paul uses this grammatical point to prove a pivotal theological point. Through the one Seed (Christ), believers become the seed of Abraham. See *heir*.

overseer. Gk *episkopos*, which is also translated as "bishop." This Early Church pastoral office was made up of Christian men responsible for the well-being of a group or groups in a congregation. See p 2080. See note, Ti 1:5.

participation. See *fellowship*.

partnership. See *fellowship*.

peace. Gk *eirene*; not just absence of war, but wholeness, well-being, unity, and salvation. Christ makes peace and is also the one in whom peace is found (Eph 2:15; cf Lk 2:14; Jn 14:27; 20:19). "Peace" translates Hbr *shalom*, a common Semitic greeting, consisting of oneness with God (Rm 5:1; Col 1:20) and consequently with others (Eph 2:14–17; 4:3). Peace is present also within believers by God's kindness (Rm 15:13; Php 4:6–7).

perfect. Gk *teleios*, "something or someone complete." See *end*.

power. Gk *dynamis*; forms Eng "dynamic" and "dynamite."

preach. Gk *kerysso*, the activity of a herald whose role was to make a public announcement or declaration. Paul often uses the Gospel as its object.

promise. Gk *epangelia*, "an offer to do something" on the basis of a vow. From the same root as "Gospel." See *Gospel*, *covenant*. See "vow," p 7, see also p xxxi–xxxii.

ransom. See *redemption*.

received. Gk *paradidomi*, a technical term for the handing on and receiving of a divinely given tradition (cf 1Co 15:1–3). See *tradition*.

redeem. See *redemption*.

redemption. Gk *apolytrosis* and related terms, "to buy back" a slave or captive, to set someone free. See pp 101, 843.

resurrection. Gk *anastasis*, lit, "raise up" from the dead. Paul emphasizes a bodily resurrection (1Co 15) and that Christ's resurrection prepares the way for a believer's resurrection on the Last Day. See *coming*, *end*.

revelation. Gk *apokalypsis*, a disclosure of something previously hidden. See *mystery*.

righteousness. Gk *dikaiosune*, the same Gk root term as "justify." Christ's righteousness, His holy "status," was conferred and credited to the world's account because of His death and resurrection (Rm 5:20–21; 1Co 1:30). See p 843.

saints. Gk *hagioi*, "the holy ones." Christians are made holy and complete through faith in Christ Jesus (Col 1:26–28). See *holy*; see also "saints," p 843.

salvation. See *save*.

sanctification. See *holy*, *saints*.

save. Gk *sozo*, "to rescue or deliver." See "salvation," p 843.

servant. Often Gk *doulos*, slave. See *minister*. Also Gk *diakonos*, an office of the Church (cf 1Tm 3:8, 12) or general service (cf Rm 13:4). See *service*.

service. Gk *diakonia*; could refer to specific ministry in the Church or to Christian service in general. See *servant*.

share. See *fellowship*, *taking part*.

slave. See *minister*.

spiritual gifts. Gk *pneumatikon*, which can describe spiritual gifts, offices, works, or people, as in Gal 6:1.

submit. Gk *hypotasso* and other forms of *tasso*, describes orderly relationships, not simply judgments of worth or importance. Cf Lk 2:51.

suffer. Gk *pascho*, originally meant "experience" or anything "moving" (as in Eng "passion") but came to describe injustice done by one person to another. Paul frequently suffered persecution for preaching the Gospel.

taking part. Gk *koinonia*, "fellowship," "sharing." Christians share in (1) apostolic doctrine, (2) the Lord's body and blood in Holy Communion, and (3) specific acts of mutual love. See *fellowship*.

teach. Gk *didasko*, commonly used by Paul to describe teaching and preaching. Also Gk *katecheo*, "to instruct" (Rm 2:18; 1Co 14:19; Gal 6:6), as in Eng "catechism" and "catechesis." Such instruction was not yet a highly structured ministry of the Word in the NT. However, see p 1965; see also *preach*.

thanksgiving. Gk *eucharistia*, "gratitude," "a prayer of thanksgiving." Eng "Eucharist." See *bless*.

tradition. Gk *paradosis*, something "handed down" or "handed over." Paul described the teachings of God's Word and the Sacrament with this term in contrast to mere human tradition. See *delivered*, *received*.

type. Gk *typos*; of objects, a "shape" or "model"; of ideas, a "pattern," as in Eng "prototype." Paul saw in OT persons and events examples for teaching Christians (1Co 10:6, 11) and also prophetic prototypes of NT persons and events (Rm 5:14).

walk. Gk *stoicheo*, "be in line with" or "keep in step with" (also translated from other terms). Common in ethical sections of Paul's Letters (Eph 4:1, 17; 5:2; 1Th 4:1). See *way*; see also p 7.

way. Gk *hodos*, "path" or "manner." See *walk*; see also "way," p 844.

weigh. Gk *diakrino*, "to distinguish, to judge." See *judge*, *condemn*.

wisdom. Gk *sophia*. See pp 775–78, 1016.

witness. Gk *martyreo*, "to testify," "bear witness." The Eng "martyr" is one who dies for his or her testimony. See *preach*, *confess*.

works. See *fruit*.

wrath. Gk *orge*, the "anger" of God incited by sin, which offends God's righteousness and holiness. As a result, God judges or condemns sinners. However, Christ bore God's wrath for us on the cross. See *judge*, *righteousness*, and *justify*; see also "day of the Lord," p 1079.

Romans

Romans 1 | Romans 2 | Romans 3 | Romans 4 | Romans 5 | Romans 6 | Romans 7 | Romans 8 | Romans 9 | Romans 10 | Romans 11 | Romans 12 | Romans 13 | Romans 14 | Romans 15 | Romans 16

- Introduction to Romans
  - Overview
  - Reading Romans
  - Luther on Romans
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

Greeting

1 [1]†‡†Paul, a servant[1] of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set
apart for the gospel of God, [2]†which he promised beforehand through his
prophets in the holy Scriptures, [3]‡concerning his Son, who was descended
from David[2] according to the flesh [4]and was declared to be the Son of God
in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the
dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, [5]†through whom we have received grace and
apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name
among all the nations, [6]†including you who are called to belong to Jesus
Christ,

[7]†To all those in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints:
Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Longing to Go to Rome

8 † † First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because
your faith is proclaimed in all the world. 9 † For God is my witness, whom I
serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I mention
you 10 † always in my prayers, asking that somehow by God's will I may now
at last succeed in coming to you. 11 † For I long to see you, that I may impart
to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you— 12 † that is, that we may be
mutually encouraged by each other's faith, both yours and mine. 13 † I want
you to know, brothers,[1] that I have often intended to come to you (but thus
far have been prevented), in order that I may reap some harvest among you
as well as among the rest of the Gentiles. 14 † I am under obligation both to
Greeks and to barbarians,[2] both to the wise and to the foolish. 15 † So I am
eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome.

The Righteous Shall Live by Faith

16 ‡ † For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for
salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.
17 † For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith,[3] as it
is written, “The righteous shall live by faith.”[4]

God’s Wrath on Unrighteousness

18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all
ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness
suppress the truth. 19For what can be known about God is plain to them,
because God has shown it to them. 20For his invisible attributes, namely,
his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since
the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are
without excuse. 21For although they knew God, they did not honor him as
God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and
their foolish hearts were darkened. 22 Claiming to be wise, they became
fools, 23 and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images
resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.

24Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to
the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, 25 because they
exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the
creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.

26For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their
women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature;
27and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were
consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts
with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error.

28And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up
to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done. 29They were filled with
all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of
envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossips, 30slanderers,
haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to
parents, 31foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless. 32Though they know God’s
decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do
them but give approval to those who practice them.

God’s Righteous Judgment

2 [1]†† Therefore you have no excuse, O man, every one of you who
judges. For in passing judgment on another you condemn yourself, because
you, the judge, practice the very same things. [2]† We know that the judgment
of God rightly falls on those who practice such things. [3]Do you suppose, O
man—you who judge those who practice such things and yet do them
yourself—that you will escape the judgment of God? [4]† Or do you presume
on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing
that God’s kindness is meant to lead you to repentance? [5]† But because of
your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the
day of wrath when God’s righteous judgment will be revealed.

[6]† He will render to each one according to his works: [7]† to those who by
patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will
give eternal life; [8]† but for those who are self-seeking[1] and do not obey the
truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury. [9]† There will
be tribulation and distress for every human being who does evil, the Jew
first and also the Greek, [10]† but glory and honor and peace for everyone who
does good, the Jew first and also the Greek. [11]† For God shows no partiality.

God’s Judgment and the Law

12 ‡† For all who have sinned without the law will also perish without the
law, and all who have sinned under the law will be judged by the law. 13 † For
it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers
of the law who will be justified. 14 † For when Gentiles, who do not have the
law, by nature do what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even
though they do not have the law. 15 † They show that the work of the law is
written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their
conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them 16 † on that day when,
according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus.

17 † But if you call yourself a Jew and rely on the law and boast in God
18 † and know his will and approve what is excellent, because you are
instructed from the law; 19 † and if you are sure that you yourself are a guide
to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, 20 † an instructor of the
foolish, a teacher of children, having in the law the embodiment of
knowledge and truth— 21 you then who teach others, do you not teach
yourself? While you preach against stealing, do you steal? 22 † You who say
that one must not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who
abhor idols, do you rob temples? 23 † You who boast in the law dishonor God
by breaking the law. 24 † For, as it is written, “The name of God is
blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you.”

25 † For circumcision indeed is of value if you obey the law, but if you
break the law, your circumcision becomes uncircumcision. 26 † So, if a man
who is uncircumcised keeps the precepts of the law, will not his
uncircumcision be regarded[1] as circumcision? 27 † Then he who is
physically uncircumcised but keeps the law will condemn you who have the
written code[2] and circumcision but break the law. 28 † For no one is a Jew
who is merely one outwardly, nor is circumcision outward and physical.
29 † But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by
the Spirit, not by the letter. His praise is not from man but from God.

God’s Righteousness Upheld

3 [1]‡†Then what advantage has the Jew? Or what is the value of
circumcision? [2]†Much in every way. To begin with, the Jews were entrusted
with the oracles of God. [3]† What if some were unfaithful? Does their
faithlessness nullify the faithfulness of God? [4]†By no means! Let God be
true though every one were a liar, as it is written,

> “That you may be justified in your words,
> and prevail when you are judged.”

[5]†But if our unrighteousness serves to show the righteousness of God, what
shall we say? That God is unrighteous to inflict wrath on us? (I speak in a
human way.) [6]By no means! For then how could God judge the world?
[7]‡But if through my lie God’s truth abounds to his glory, why am I still
being condemned as a sinner? [8]†And why not do evil that good may come?
—as some people slanderously charge us with saying. Their condemnation
is just.

No One Is Righteous

9 What then? Are we Jews[1] any better off?[2] No, not at all. For we have
already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under sin, 10 as it is
written:

"None is righteous, no, not one;
11 no one understands;
no one seeks for God.
12 All have turned aside; together they have
become worthless;
no one does good,
not even one."
13 "Their throat is an open grave;
they use their tongues to deceive."
"The venom of asps is under their lips."
14 "Their mouth is full of curses and
bitterness."
15 "Their feet are swift to shed blood;
16 in their paths are ruin and misery,
17 and the way of peace they have not known."
18 "There is no fear of God before their eyes."

19 Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are
under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world
may be held accountable to God. 20 For by works of the law no human
being[3] will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes
knowledge of sin.

The Righteousness of God Through Faith

21 ††But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the
law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— 22 † the
righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For
there is no distinction: 23 †for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of
God, 24 † and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that
is in Christ Jesus, 25 †whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood,
to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in
his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. 26 †It was to show his
righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of
the one who has faith in Jesus.

27 † Then what becomes of our boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of
law? By a law of works? No, but by the law of faith. 28 †For we hold that
one is justified by faith apart from works of the law. 29 Or is God the God of
Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also,
30 † since God is one—who will justify the circumcised by faith and the
uncircumcised through faith. 31 †Do we then overthrow the law by this faith?
By no means! On the contrary, we uphold the law.

Abraham Justified by Faith

4 1 ††What then shall we say was gained by[1] Abraham, our forefather
according to the flesh? 2 †For if Abraham was justified by works, he has
something to boast about, but not before God. 3 †For what does the Scripture
say? “Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness.”
4 ‡Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his
due. 5 And to the one who does not work but believes in[2] him who justifies
the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness, 6 † just as David also
speaks of the blessing of the one to whom God counts righteousness apart
from works:

7 ‡ “Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are
forgiven,
and whose sins are covered;
8 blessed is the man against whom the Lord will
not count his sin.”

9 † Is this blessing then only for the circumcised, or also for the
uncircumcised? We say that faith was counted to Abraham as righteousness.
10 How then was it counted to him? Was it before or after he had been
circumcised? It was not after, but before he was circumcised. 11 † He
received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had
by faith while he was still uncircumcised. The purpose was to make him the
father of all who believe without being circumcised, so that righteousness
would be counted to them as well, 12 † and to make him the father of the
circumcised who are not merely circumcised but who also walk in the
footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham had before he was
circumcised.

The Promise Realized Through Faith

13 For the promise to Abraham and his offspring that he would be heir
of the world did not come through the law but through the righteousness of
faith. 14 For if it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is
null and the promise is void. 15 For the law brings wrath, but where there is
no law there is no transgression.

16 That is why it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on
grace and be guaranteed to all his offspring—not only to the adherent of the
law but also to the one who shares the faith of Abraham, who is the father
of us all, 17 as it is written, “I have made you the father of many nations”—
in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead
and calls into existence the things that do not exist. 18 In hope he believed
against hope, that he should become the father of many nations, as he had
been told, “So shall your offspring be.” 19 He did not weaken in faith when
he considered his own body, which was as good as dead (since he was about
a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah’s
womb. 20 No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but
he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, 21 fully convinced that
God was able to do what he had promised. 22 That is why his faith was
“counted to him as righteousness.” 23 But the words “it was counted to him”
were not written for his sake alone, 24 but for ours also. It will be counted to
us who believe in him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord, 25 who
was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.

Peace with God Through Faith

5 [1]‡†Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we[1] have peace
with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. [2]† Through him we have also
obtained access by faith[1] into this grace in which we stand, and we[2]
rejoice[3] in hope of the glory of God. [3]‡†More than that, we rejoice in our
sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, [4]and endurance
produces character, and character produces hope, [5]†and hope does not put
us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through
the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

[6]† For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the
ungodly. [7]‡For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps
for a good person one would dare even to die— [8]but God shows his love for
us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. [9]†Since, therefore,
we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by
him from the wrath of God. [10]† For if while we were enemies we were
reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are
reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. [11]†More than that, we also rejoice
in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received
reconciliation.

Death in Adam, Life in Christ

12 Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and
death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned—
13 for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not
counted where there is no law. 14 Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses,
even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who
was a type of the one who was to come.

15 But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one
man's trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the
grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many. 16 And the free gift
is not like the result of that one man's sin. For the judgment following one
trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses
brought justification. 17 For if, because of one man's trespass, death reigned
through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of
grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man
Jesus Christ.

18 Therefore, as one trespass[1] led to condemnation for all men, so one
act of righteousness[2] leads to justification and life for all men. 19 For as by
the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one
man's obedience the many will be made righteous. 20 Now the law came in
to increase the trespass, but where sin increased, grace abounded all the
more, 21 so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through
righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Dead to Sin, Alive to God

6 [1]‡‡What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may
abound? [2]†By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? [3]†Do
you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were
baptized into his death? [4]†We were buried therefore with him by baptism
into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory
of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

[5]†For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall
certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. [6]†We know that our
old self[1] was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be
brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. [7]†For
one who has died has been set free[2] from sin. [8]Now if we have died with
Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. [9]†We know that Christ,
being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has
dominion over him. [10]†For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but
the life he lives he lives to God. [11]†So you also must consider yourselves
dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

[12]†Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its
passions. [13]† Do not present your members to sin as instruments for
unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been
brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for
righteousness. [14]†For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not
under law but under grace.

Slaves to Righteousness

15 ‡ † What then? Are we to sin because we are not under law but under
grace? By no means! 16 † Do you not know that if you present yourselves to
anyone as obedient slaves,[3] you are slaves of the one whom you obey,
either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to
righteousness? 17 † But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of
sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to
which you were committed, 18 † and, having been set free from sin, have
become slaves of righteousness. 19 † I am speaking in human terms, because
of your natural limitations. For just as you once presented your members as
slaves to impurity and to lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now
present your members as slaves to righteousness leading to sanctification.
20 † For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to
righteousness. 21 † But what fruit were you getting at that time from the
things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death.
22 † But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of
God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life. 23 † For
the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ
Jesus our Lord.

Released from the Law

7 [1]†† Or do you not know, brothers[1]—for I am speaking to those who
know the law—that the law is binding on a person only as long as he lives?
[2]†† For a married woman is bound by law to her husband while he lives, but
if her husband dies she is released from the law of marriage.[2] [3]Accordingly,
she will be called an adulteress if she lives with another man while her
husband is alive. But if her husband dies, she is free from that law, and if
she marries another man she is not an adulteress.

[4]† Likewise, my brothers, you also have died to the law through the body
of Christ, so that you may belong to another, to him who has been raised
from the dead, in order that we may bear fruit for God. [5]† For while we were
living in the flesh, our sinful passions, aroused by the law, were at work in
our members to bear fruit for death. [6]† But now we are released from the
law, having died to that which held us captive, so that we serve in the new
way of the Spirit and not in the old way of the written code.[1]

The Law and Sin

7 ‡ † What then shall we say? That the law is sin? By no means! Yet if it had not been for the law, I would not have known sin. For I would not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, “You shall not covet.” 8 † But sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, produced in me all kinds of covetousness. For apart from the law, sin lies dead. 9 † I was once alive apart from the law, but when the commandment came, sin came alive and I died. 10 † The very commandment that promised life proved to be death to me. 11 † For sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me. 12 † So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.

13 † Did that which is good, then, bring death to me? By no means! It was sin, producing death in me through what is good, in order that sin might be shown to be sin, and through the commandment might become sinful beyond measure. 14 † For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am of the flesh, sold under sin. 15 ‡ For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. 16 Now if I do what I do not want, I agree with the law, that it is good. 17 So now it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. 18 For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. 19 For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. 20 Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me.

21 † So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. 22 † For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, 23 † but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. 24 † Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? 25 † Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin.

Life in the Spirit

8 [1]‡†There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in
Christ Jesus.[1] [2]†For the law of the Spirit of life has set you[2] free in Christ
Jesus from the law of sin and death. [3]†For God has done what the law,
weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the
likeness of sinful flesh and for sin,[3] he condemned sin in the flesh, [4]†in
order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who
walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. [5]†For those who
live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but
those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the
Spirit. [6]†For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the
Spirit is life and peace. [7]‡For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to
God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. [8]Those who are
in the flesh cannot please God.

[9]†You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit
of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does
not belong to him. [10]†But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead
because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. [11]†If the Spirit of
him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ
Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his
Spirit who dwells in you.

Heirs with Christ

12 ††So then, brothers,[1] we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according
to the flesh. 13 †For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by
the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. 14 †For all
who are led by the Spirit of God are sons[2] of God. 15 †For you did not
receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the
Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!” 16 † The Spirit
himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 †and if
children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided
we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.

Future Glory

18 ‡ † For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth
comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. 19 † For the creation
waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. 20 † For the
creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who
subjected it, in hope 21 † that the creation itself will be set free from its
bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of
God. 22 † For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in
the pains of childbirth until now. 23 † And not only the creation, but we
ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait
eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. 24 ‡ For in this
hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for
what he sees? 25 But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with
patience.

26 † Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know
what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with
groanings too deep for words. 27 † And he who searches hearts knows what is
the mind of the Spirit, because[1] the Spirit intercedes for the saints
according to the will of God. 28 † And we know that for those who love God
all things work together for good,[2] for those who are called according to
his purpose. 29 † For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be
conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn
among many brothers. 30 † And those whom he predestined he also called,
and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he
also glorified.

God’s Everlasting Love

31 What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be[3]
against us? 32 He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all,
how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? 33 Who shall
bring any charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies. 34 Who is to
condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was
raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.[4]
35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or
distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? 36 As
it is written,

> “ For your sake we are being killed all the day
> long;
> we are regarded as sheep to be
> slaughtered.”

37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who
loved us. 38 For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers,
nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, 39 nor height nor depth,
nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of
God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

God’s Sovereign Choice

9 [1]‡†I am speaking the truth in Christ—I am not lying; my conscience bears me witness in the Holy Spirit— [2]† that I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. [3]† For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers,[1] my kinsmen according to the flesh. [4]† They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises. [5]† To them belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen.

[6]†But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel, [7]† and not all are children of Abraham because they are his offspring, but “Through Isaac shall your offspring be named.” [8]†This means that it is not the children of the flesh who are the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted as offspring. [9]†For this is what the promise said: “About this time next year I will return, and Sarah shall have a son.” [10]†And not only so, but also when Rebekah had conceived children by one man, our forefather Isaac, [11]†though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad—in order that God’s purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of him who calls— [12]† she was told, “The older will serve the younger.” [13]†As it is written, “Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.”

[14]† What shall we say then? Is there injustice on God’s part? By no means! [15]†For he says to Moses, “I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.” [16]†So then it depends not on human will or exertion,[1] but on God, who has mercy. [17]†For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, “For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I might show my power in you, and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth.” [18]†So then he has mercy on whomever he wills, and he hardens whomever he wills.

[19]† You will say to me then, “Why does he still find fault? For who can resist his will?” [20]†But who are you, O man, to answer back to God? Will

what is molded say to its molder, “Why have you made me like this?” 21 † Has the potter no right over the clay, to make out of the same lump one vessel for honorable use and another for dishonorable use? 22 † † What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, 23 † in order to make known the riches of his glory for vessels of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory— 24 † even us whom he has called, not from the Jews only but also from the Gentiles? 25 † As indeed he says in Hosea,

“Those who were not my people I will call
‘my people,’
and her who was not beloved I will call
‘beloved.’”
26 “And in the very place where it was said to
them, ‘You are not my people,’
there they will be called ‘sons of the living
God.’”

27 † And Isaiah cries out concerning Israel: “Though the number of the sons of Israel[1] be as the sand of the sea, only a remnant of them will be saved, 28 for the Lord will carry out his sentence upon the earth fully and without delay.” 29 † And as Isaiah predicted,

“If the Lord of hosts had not left us
offspring,
we would have been like Sodom
and become like Gomorrah.”

Israel's Unbelief

30 What shall we say, then? That Gentiles who did not pursue
righteousness have attained it, that is, a righteousness that is by faith; 31 but
that Israel who pursued a law that would lead to righteousness[2] did not
succeed in reaching that law. 32 Why? Because they did not pursue it by
faith, but as if it were based on works. They have stumbled over the
stumbling stone, 33 as it is written,

> "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone of
> stumbling, and a rock of offense;
> and whoever believes in him will not be
> put to shame."

10 1 Brothers,[3] my heart's desire and prayer to God for them is that
they may be saved. 2 For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God,
but not according to knowledge. 3 For, being ignorant of the righteousness
of God, and seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God's
righteousness. 4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to
everyone who believes.[4]

The Message of Salvation to All

5 ‡†For Moses writes about the righteousness that is based on the law, that
the person who does the commandments shall live by them. 6 ‡ But the
righteousness based on faith says, “Do not say in your heart, ‘Who will
ascend into heaven?’” (that is, to bring Christ down) 7or “‘Who will
descend into the abyss?’” (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). 8†But
what does it say? “The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart”
(that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); 9†because, if you confess with
your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him
from the dead, you will be saved. 10†For with the heart one believes and is
justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. 11 † For the
Scripture says, “Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame.”
12† For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is
Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him. 13†For “everyone
who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

14†How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And
how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard?[1] And how
are they to hear without someone preaching? 15 ‡ † And how are they to
preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of
those who preach the good news!” 16 † But they have not all obeyed the
gospel. For Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed what he has heard from
us?” 17 † So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of
Christ.

18†But I ask, have they not heard? Indeed they have, for

> “Their voice has gone out to all the earth,
> and their words to the ends of the world.”

19‡†But I ask, did Israel not understand? First Moses says,

> “I will make you jealous of those who are not
> a nation;

with a foolish nation I will make you
angry."

[20]† Then Isaiah is so bold as to say,

"I have been found by those who did not
seek me;
I have shown myself to those who did not
ask for me."

[21] † But of Israel he says, "All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and contrary people."

The Remnant of Israel

11 [1]†† I ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no means! For I
myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham,[1] a member of the tribe of
Benjamin. [2]† God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew. Do you
not know what the Scripture says of Elijah, how he appeals to God against
Israel? [3]‡ "Lord, they have killed your prophets, they have demolished your
altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life." [4]But what is God's reply
to him? "I have kept for myself seven thousand men who have not bowed
the knee to Baal." [5]†So too at the present time there is a remnant, chosen by
grace. [6]† But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works;
otherwise grace would no longer be grace.

[7]† What then? Israel failed to obtain what it was seeking. The elect
obtained it, but the rest were hardened, [8]†as it is written,

> "God gave them a spirit of stupor,
> eyes that would not see
> and ears that would not hear,
> down to this very day."

[9]‡And David says,

> "Let their table become a snare and a trap,
> a stumbling block and a retribution for them;
> [10] let their eyes be darkened so that they
> cannot see,
> and bend their backs forever."

Gentiles Grafted In

11 ‡†So I ask, did they stumble in order that they might fall? By no means!
Rather through their trespass salvation has come to the Gentiles, so as to
make Israel jealous. 12 †Now if their trespass means riches for the world, and
if their failure means riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their full
inclusion[2] mean!

13 ‡Now I am speaking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle
to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry 14 in order somehow to make my
fellow Jews jealous, and thus save some of them. 15 †For if their rejection
means the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance mean but
life from the dead? 16 † If the dough offered as firstfruits is holy, so is the
whole lump, and if the root is holy, so are the branches.

17 ‡† But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, although a
wild olive shoot, were grafted in among the others and now share in the
nourishing root[1] of the olive tree, 18 do not be arrogant toward the branches.
If you are, remember it is not you who support the root, but the root that
supports you. 19 † Then you will say, “Branches were broken off so that I
might be grafted in.” 20 †That is true. They were broken off because of their
unbelief, but you stand fast through faith. So do not become proud, but fear.
21 †For if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will he spare you.
22 † Note then the kindness and the severity of God: severity toward those
who have fallen, but God’s kindness to you, provided you continue in his
kindness. Otherwise you too will be cut off. 23 †And even they, if they do not
continue in their unbelief, will be grafted in, for God has the power to graft
them in again. 24 †For if you were cut from what is by nature a wild olive
tree, and grafted, contrary to nature, into a cultivated olive tree, how much
more will these, the natural branches, be grafted back into their own olive
tree.

The Mystery of Israel's Salvation

25 Lest you be wise in your own sight, I want you to understand this
mystery, brothers:[2] a partial hardening has come upon Israel, until the
fullness of the Gentiles has come in. 26 And in this way all Israel will be
saved, as it is written,

> "The Deliverer will come from Zion,
> he will banish ungodliness from Jacob";
> 27 "and this will be my covenant with them
> when I take away their sins."

28 As regards the gospel, they are enemies of God for your sake. But as
regards election, they are beloved for the sake of their forefathers. 29 For
the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. 30 For just as you were at
one time disobedient to God but now have received mercy because of their
disobedience, 31 so they too have now been disobedient in order that by the
mercy shown to you they also may now[1] receive mercy. 32 For God has
consigned all to disobedience, that he may have mercy on all.

33 Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How
unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!

> 34 "For who has known the mind of
> the Lord,
> or who has been his counselor?"
> 35 "Or who has given a gift to him
> that he might be repaid?"

36 For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory
forever. Amen.

A Living Sacrifice

12 [1]‡†I appeal to you therefore, brothers,[2] by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.[3] [2]† Do not be conformed to this world,[4] but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.[1]

Gifts of Grace

3 ‡†For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think
of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober
judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned.
4 †For as in one body we have many members,[2] and the members do not all
have the same function, 5 †so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and
individually members one of another. 6 ‡† Having gifts that differ according
to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our
faith; 7 †if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; 8 †the
one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity;
the one who leads,[3] with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with
cheerfulness.

Marks of the True Christian

9 Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good.
10 Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in
showing honor. 11 Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit,[4] serve the
Lord. 12 Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. 13
Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality.

14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. 15
Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. 16 Live in
harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly.
[5] Never be wise in your own sight. 17 Repay no one evil for evil, but give
thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. 18 If possible, so far as it
depends on you, live peaceably with all. 19 Beloved, never avenge
yourselves, but leave it[6] to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance
is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.” 20 To the contrary, “if your enemy is
hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so
doing you will heap burning coals on his head.” 21 Do not be overcome by
evil, but overcome evil with good.

Submission to the Authorities

13 [1]‡†Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For
there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been
instituted by God. [2]†Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what
God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. [3]†For rulers
are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of the
one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his
approval, [4]†for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be
afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God,
an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer. [5]†Therefore one
must be in subjection, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of
conscience. [6]†For because of this you also pay taxes, for the authorities are
ministers of God, attending to this very thing. [7]† Pay to all what is owed to
them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed,
respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed.

Fulfilling the Law Through Love

8 † † Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who
loves another has fulfilled the law. 9 †For the commandments, “You shall not
commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not
covet,” and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: “You
shall love your neighbor as yourself.” 10 † Love does no wrong to a
neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

11 †Besides this you know the time, that the hour has come for you to
wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first
believed. 12 † The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us cast off
the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. 13 Let us walk properly
as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality
and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy. 14 †But put on the Lord Jesus
Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

Do Not Pass Judgment on One Another

14 [1]‡‡†As for the one who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not to
quarrel over opinions. [2]† One person believes he may eat anything, while
the weak person eats only vegetables. [3]†Let not the one who eats despise
the one who abstains, and let not the one who abstains pass judgment on the
one who eats, for God has welcomed him. [4]† Who are you to pass judgment
on the servant of another? It is before his own master[1] that he stands or
falls. And he will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make him stand.

[5]† One person esteems one day as better than another, while another
esteems all days alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind.
[6]†The one who observes the day, observes it in honor of the Lord. The one
who eats, eats in honor of the Lord, since he gives thanks to God, while the
one who abstains, abstains in honor of the Lord and gives thanks to God.
[7]‡‡For none of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself. [8]†For if
we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. So then,
whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. [9]†For to this end
Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of
the living.

[10]†Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you
despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God;
[11]†for it is written,

> "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow
> to me,
> and every tongue shall confess[1] to God."

[12]†So then each of us will give an account of himself to God.

Do Not Cause Another to Stumble

13 ‡‡‡ Therefore let us not pass judgment on one another any longer, but
rather decide never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of a
brother. 14 † I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus that nothing is
unclean in itself, but it is unclean for anyone who thinks it unclean. 15 †For if
your brother is grieved by what you eat, you are no longer walking in love.
By what you eat, do not destroy the one for whom Christ died. 16 † So do not
let what you regard as good be spoken of as evil. 17 † For the kingdom of
God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace
and joy in the Holy Spirit. 18 †Whoever thus serves Christ is acceptable to
God and approved by men. 19 †So then let us pursue what makes for peace
and for mutual upbuilding.

20 † Do not, for the sake of food, destroy the work of God. Everything is
indeed clean, but it is wrong for anyone to make another stumble by what
he eats. 21 † It is good not to eat meat or drink wine or do anything that
causes your brother to stumble.[2] 22 †The faith that you have, keep between
yourself and God. Blessed is the one who has no reason to pass judgment
on himself for what he approves. 23 †But whoever has doubts is condemned
if he eats, because the eating is not from faith. For whatever does not
proceed from faith is sin.[3]

The Example of Christ

15 [1]‡†We who are strong have an obligation to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves. [2]† Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to build him up. [3]†For Christ did not please himself, but as it is written, “The reproaches of those who reproached you fell on me.” [4]† For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. [5]‡ † May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, [6]†that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. [7]†Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.

Christ the Hope of Jews and Gentiles

8 ‡ ‡For I tell you that Christ became a servant to the circumcised to show
God's truthfulness, in order to confirm the promises given to the patriarchs,
9 ‡and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is
written,

> "Therefore I will praise you among the
> Gentiles,
> and sing to your name."

10 ‡And again it is said,

> "Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people."

11 ‡And again,

> "Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles,
> and let all the peoples extol him."

12 ‡And again Isaiah says,

> "The root of Jesse will come,
> even he who arises to rule the
> Gentiles;
> in him will the Gentiles hope."

13 ‡May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that
by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.

Paul the Minister to the Gentiles

14 ‡† I myself am satisfied about you, my brothers,[1] that you yourselves
are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and able to instruct one
another. 15 †But on some points I have written to you very boldly by way of
reminder, because of the grace given me by God 16 † to be a minister of
Christ Jesus to the Gentiles in the priestly service of the gospel of God, so
that the offering of the Gentiles may be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy
Spirit. 17 † In Christ Jesus, then, I have reason to be proud of my work for
God. 18 †For I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has
accomplished through me to bring the Gentiles to obedience—by word and
deed, 19 † by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of
God—so that from Jerusalem and all the way around to Illyricum I have
fulfilled the ministry of the gospel of Christ; 20 † and thus I make it my
ambition to preach the gospel, not where Christ has already been named,
lest I build on someone else's foundation, 21 †but as it is written,

> "Those who have never been told of him
> will see,
> and those who have never heard will
> understand."

Paul’s Plan to Visit Rome

22 ‡† This is the reason why I have so often been hindered from coming to
you. 23 † But now, since I no longer have any room for work in these regions,
and since I have longed for many years to come to you, 24 † I hope to see you
in passing as I go to Spain, and to be helped on my journey there by you,
once I have enjoyed your company for a while. 25 † At present, however, I am
going to Jerusalem bringing aid to the saints. 26 † For Macedonia and Achaia
have been pleased to make some contribution for the poor among the saints
at Jerusalem. 27 † For they were pleased to do it, and indeed they owe it to
them. For if the Gentiles have come to share in their spiritual blessings, they
ought also to be of service to them in material blessings. 28 † When therefore
I have completed this and have delivered to them what has been collected,[1]
I will leave for Spain by way of you. 29 † I know that when I come to you I
will come in the fullness of the blessing[2] of Christ.

30 † I appeal to you, brothers, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of
the Spirit, to strive together with me in your prayers to God on my behalf,
31 † that I may be delivered from the unbelievers in Judea, and that my
service for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints, 32 † so that by God’s
will I may come to you with joy and be refreshed in your company. 33 † May
the God of peace be with you all. Amen.

Personal Greetings

16 [1]‡‡‡I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a servant[3] of the church at Cenchreae, [2]†that you may welcome her in the Lord in a way worthy of the saints, and help her in whatever she may need from you, for she has been a patron of many and of myself as well.

[3]†Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, [4]†who risked their necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks but all the churches of the Gentiles give thanks as well. [5]†Greet also the church in their house. Greet my beloved Epaenetus, who was the first convert[4] to Christ in Asia. [6]†Greet Mary, who has worked hard for you. [7]†Greet Andronicus and Junia,[5] my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners. They are well known to the apostles,[6] and they were in Christ before me. [8]† Greet Ampliatus, my beloved in the Lord. [9]Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ, and my beloved Stachys. [10]†Greet Apelles, who is approved in Christ. Greet those who belong to the family of Aristobulus. [11]†Greet my kinsman Herodion. Greet those in the Lord who belong to the family of Narcissus. [12]†Greet those workers in the Lord, Tryphaena and Tryphosa. Greet the beloved Persis, who has worked hard in the Lord. [13]†Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord; also his mother, who has been a mother to me as well. [14]† Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the brothers[1] who are with them. [15]†Greet Philologus, Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints who are with them. [16]† Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you.

Final Instructions and Greetings

17 ‡† I appeal to you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions
and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught;
avoid them. 18 † For such persons do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own
appetites,[2] and by smooth talk and flattery they deceive the hearts of the
naive. 19 † For your obedience is known to all, so that I rejoice over you, but I
want you to be wise as to what is good and innocent as to what is evil. 20 †
The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our
Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

21 ‡† Timothy, my fellow worker, greets you; so do Lucius and Jason and
Sosipater, my kinsmen.

22 † I Tertius, who wrote this letter, greet you in the Lord.

23 † Gaius, who is host to me and to the whole church, greets you. Erastus,
the city treasurer, and our brother Quartus, greet you.[3]

Doxology

25 Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel
and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery
that was kept secret for long ages 26 but has now been disclosed and
through the prophetic writings has been made known to all nations,
according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience
of faith— 27 to the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus
Christ! Amen.

Romans

OVERVIEW

Author
Paul the apostle

Date
AD 55

Places
Rome; Cenchreae; Jerusalem; Spain

People
Paul; Jews; Gentiles; true "Israel"; Paul's co-workers (Rm 16)

Purpose
To defend an essential teaching of Christianity and its mission: justification through God's righteousness in Christ

Law Themes
Wrath against sinners; death's reign through sin; believers struggle with sin; hardened hearts; submission to authorities; owe one another love

Gospel Themes
God declares us righteous through faith in Christ; alive through Baptism; the Spirit is life; election; God's gifts; united in Christ

Memory Verses
The Gospel's power (1:16–17); none righteous (3:10b–18); justified through Jesus (3:21–26); peace through Christ (5:1–2); buried by Baptism (6:3–4); struggle with sin (7:21–25); the Spirit is life (8:1–2, 9–11); more than conquerors (8:31–39); living sacrifices (12:1–2); pursue peace (14:17–19)

Introduction to Romans

Reading Romans

The tap of a centurion's staff quietly roused the soldiers. With the day at hand, the men would need to wipe leisure from their eyes and shake sloth from their limbs. Dawn meant armor, attention, and duty. Such discipline by Roman troops enabled the Roman Empire to rise and conquer its enemies.

St Paul's Letter to the Romans alludes to the duty and discipline of troops, comparing their calling to the Christian's calling (13:11–14). However, Paul's encouragement to "put on the Lord Jesus Christ" reminds us also that our attention to duty is not the basis for our salvation. Our conquering champion, Jesus, brought salvation to us through His personal sacrifice and atoning death. His victory has roused us from the darkness of death. Clothed in His righteousness alone, we stand steadfast—more than conquerors through Him who loved us.

Luther on Romans

> This epistle is really the chief part of the New Testament, and is truly the purest gospel. It is worthy not only that every Christian should know it word for word, by heart, but also that he should occupy himself with it every day, as the daily bread of the soul. We can never read it or ponder over it too much; for the more we deal with it, the more precious it becomes and the better it tastes….
>
> In this epistle we thus find most abundantly the things that a Christian ought to know, namely, what is law, gospel, sin, punishment, grace, faith, righteousness, Christ, God, good works, love, hope, and the cross; and also how we are to conduct ourselves toward everyone, be he righteous or sinner, strong or weak, friend or foe—and even toward our own selves. Moreover this is all ably supported with Scripture and proved by St. Paul's own example and that of the prophets, so that one could not wish for anything more. Therefore it appears that he wanted in this one epistle to sum up briefly the whole Christian and evangelical doctrine, and to prepare an introduction to the entire Old Testament. For, without doubt, whoever has this epistle well in his heart, has with him the light and power of the Old Testament. Therefore let every Christian be familiar with it and exercise himself in it continually. To this end may God give his grace. Amen. (AE 35:365, 380)

For more of Luther's insights on this Book, see *Lectures on Romans: Glosses* and *Scholia* (AE 25); on Rm 9–11, see *The Bondage of the Will* (AE 33).

Challenges for Readers

As Luther notes, Romans is St Paul's clearest systematic declaration of the Gospel. For that reason, Romans is one of the most popular NT books to study. However, despite Paul's careful and clear statements, significant debates about Romans have arisen.

Groups in Romans. Names are often used in a variety of ways in Scripture. Here are some definitions and distinctions of groups important to the study of Romans. Also, consult the historical background of various groups and terms on pp 1556–58, 1901–4.

Israelites: Descendants of Israel (Jacob), who typically believed in Yahweh (the LORD), the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. However, see pp 1565–66.

Hebrews: A cultural description of Israelites based on their heritage language, Hebrew.

Jews: Used after the time of the OT, typically for Judeans or people adhering to the Judeans' later religious beliefs: (1) Israelites who resettled the region of Israel during the time of the second temple; (2) adherents of Judaism, a religion based on the beliefs of the Judeans and Israelites who maintained religious affiliation with the Jerusalem temple after the time of the OT. See "Judah," p 1079. Judaism is not the Christ-centered faith of the OT.

Israeli: A citizen of the modern state of Israel (post 1948), which is not the same as Israel in the OT.

Terms for Righteousness. An obstacle for English readers is that Paul frequently uses the Gk *dikaioo¯* to form verbs, nouns, and adjectives; *dikaioo¯* may be translated in English with words such as "right" or "just." To follow Paul's arguments, recognize that he's using the same basic Greek term throughout. See p 1904.

Universal Justification. Paul clearly teaches that Jesus gave His life for the sins of the world. Because Jesus gave His life for all people, God declares all people justified by Christ's sacrifice (4:5; 5:7–8, 10). However, God applies the benefits of His declaration to individuals through the Gospel (this is called "subjective justification"). Paul does not teach "universalism," which holds that God saves all people in order for hell to be empty. Despite God's gracious declaration of justification, not every

individual receives salvation, because some reject the Savior and persist in sin and unbelief. There will be judgment in eternity. See p 1942.

Righteousness and Early Judaism. Some scholars argue that Paul did not correctly understand or represent the teachings of Judaism about righteousness, because early Jewish literature clearly emphasizes themes of election, grace, and faith. Note that, in contrast to Judaism, Paul taught that God saves us by grace through faith *alone*, without our merit or obedience to the Law.

Paul, the Law, and Sin. Scholars also debate about to whom the "I" refers in ch 7. Some hold that, when Paul describes a person struggling against sin, he is talking about someone before conversion and faith. However, in ch 7, Paul is describing himself (note that the verbs are in the present tense), as Christians continue to struggle against sin even after their conversion. The Law still applies to believers because the sinful nature remains with us.

The Israel of God. Based on 11:26, millennialist groups teach that all Jewish people will be saved at the end of the world. However, Paul teaches that the new Israel is all who trust in Christ, be they Jews or Gentiles. These references in Romans actually describe the Church and not an end times conversion of all Jews (cf 9:6; Gal 6:15–16).

Blessings for Readers

The teachings in Romans are foundational to the Christian faith, so make Romans one of the first books you study! Romans explains, step-by-step, why and how God saves us in Jesus. As you read the Letter, reflect on the examples of faith Paul provides from the OT and from his personal struggles. These examples show how God works through the Word in our lives, despite our weaknesses. The final chapters apply these Christian teachings in practical ways for individuals, families, and congregations. This most detailed Letter of Paul truly offers us a wealth of comfort.

OUTLINE

I. Introduction (1:1–15)
II. Theme of the Epistle: The Righteous Shall Live by Faith (1:16–17)
III. Who Is Righteous? The Wrath of God Revealed against All (1:18–3:20)
  A. Wrath against Unrighteousness without the Law (1:18–32)
  B. Wrath against the So-Called Righteousness by the Law (2:1–3:20)
IV. God Is Righteous! The Righteousness of God Revealed for All (3:21–4:25)
  A. Righteousness Revealed in Christ and by Faith (3:21–31)
  B. Example: Abraham Is Declared Righteous by Faith before Circumcision and the Law (ch 4)
V. The Righteous by Faith Truly Live (chs 5–8)
  A. Live at Peace with God: Reconciliation through Christ (ch 5)
  B. Live Dead to Sin and Alive to God: Baptism and Sanctification (ch 6)
  C. Live at War with the Sinful Flesh (ch 7)
  D. Live Victoriously in the Spirit for Eternity (ch 8)
VI. Righteousness by Faith That Leads to Life Is for "All Israel" (chs 9–11)
  A. The Promise Is only to Believers (9:1–29)
  B. Jewish Rejection Is Not God's Fault (9:30–10:21)
  C. Jewish Rejection Is Not Final (ch 11)
VII. The Life Lived by the Righteous by Faith (12:1–15:13)
  A. Live as Living Sacrifices (12:1–2)
  B. Live as the Body of Christ (12:3–8)
  C. Love One Another (12:9–21)

D. Live Subject to Authorities (13:1–7)
E. Love Your Neighbor (13:8–10)
F. Cast Off Evil and Put On the Lord Jesus Christ (13:11–14)
G. Live Sensitive to the Weak in Faith (14:1–15:13)

VIII. Conclusion (15:14–16:27)
A. Paul's Travel Plans (15:14–33)
B. Greetings and Salutation (ch 16)

Articles and Resources Related to Romans

- Boundaries for the Church
- God's Law
- Homosexuality and Biblical Teaching
- Baptized into Christ
- The Life-Giving Spirit in Romans
- God's Unfailing Promise
- Chosen in Christ
- Living Sacrifices … in View of God's Mercy
- Controversies over Romans

Boundaries for the Church

When architects draw up blueprints, they must outline the boundaries of the structure they will build. In a similar way, when the apostle Paul wrote Romans, he taught that Christians should "welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you" (15:7). Later, he added, "Watch out for those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught; avoid them" (16:17). In this way, he draws up the boundaries of the congregations.

Paul does not envision a congregation whose beliefs are so loose that it has no structure. Nor could he imagine a church so strict that it had no doors or windows through which to welcome others. By setting out the boundaries of love and protection, Paul gives a realistic description of a congregation.

Paul warns against the false teachers because "they deceive the hearts of the naive" (16:18). He recognizes that they may prey on some members of a congregation who lack depth of faith. Christians should look out for one another and warn one another against falsehood. When we understand Paul's admonition in this way, we see that Rm 16:17 expresses love rather than a spirit of dissention.

Christ Welcomed You

Paul also encourages unity among the believers at Rome based on the way God has treated them. He writes, "Welcome one another *as Christ has welcomed you*" (15:7, emphasis added). Consider how Christ has welcomed you. Hasn't He called you to repent? Didn't He wash you in Baptism? Truth be told, Christ has not welcomed you just the way you are. He has paid the dearest price of all in order to welcome you: sacrificing His life for you on the cross.

Christ welcomed you through the anguish of His betrayal, trial, and death. He did not welcome you freely but in order to set you free from your sins! When Paul writes, "Welcome one another *as Christ has welcomed you*," this is what he had in view. Christians welcome one another through the costly, forgiving love of Christ.

Serve God's Truth

Take special note that just after Rm 15:7 and again, just after 16:17, Paul writes about service. At the heart of Paul's concern about "church architecture" is what properly serves God's people and the advancement of God's kingdom. Just as architects must consider how something they build will function, Paul considered how the Church would function when people sin and need to repent. Nothing must hinder this chief function or service of the Church: proclaiming God's Word as it calls people to repentance and forgiveness through Jesus Christ.

God's Law

In Romans, the apostle Paul uses the word *law* in a variety of ways. This chart explains his distinctions. Just as members of a construction crew use a plumb line to keep their work aligned, our Creator gave us His Law to keep our lives aligned with His will. Sadly, as sinners, we have fallen into disobedience. Therefore, God's Law has turned into a tool of condemnation. The Law reveals our crooked ways and calls for God's judgment.

But thanks be to God! Christ saves us by His grace. He redeems us through the Gospel. He restores us as God's servants and equips us to work with Him in His kingdom.

Occasionally, Paul uses the Gk term *nomos* (law) to mean the rule or governance of one thing over another. For example, "the law of my mind" (7:23) struggles to rule over "the law of sin and death" (8:2; cf 7:21–23, 25). This refers to a Christian's desire to do good despite sinful thoughts and desires.

Also, "God's law" refers to God's rule or will at work in the heart of the believer over against sin and death (7:22, 25; 8:7). The term *law* does not always mean a written code. It can describe God's loving rule in the lives of His people. See p 971.

Homosexuality and Biblical Teaching

The Bible never provides a detailed psychological answer for homosexuality. However, Romans clearly condemns homosexuality as a corruption of God's created order. The male body is not designed to copulate with another male body. The female body is not designed to copulate with another female body. The fact that people crave such relationships proves that something has gone terribly wrong with creation. Paul argues that homosexual behavior results from idolatry and a corrupt understanding of creation (1:26–28).

An Example of Corruption

Many Roman citizens viewed homosexual behavior with disgust because they knew that it had undermined the Greek civilization. Such Romans prided themselves on their pro-society attitudes and held that homosexual behavior was against nature. But Paul uses the example of homosexuality to make a greater point.

A Roman who read Paul's Letter might think, "Yes, homosexual behavior is bad because it is bad for society. We don't do such things!" However, to Paul's readers who shake their heads in self-righteous disgust, he springs a trap with these words: "Since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done. They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless" (1:28–31).

Each item in the list above undermines society. And no Roman (or reader today) could claim to be free from such sins. Starting with homosexuality, Paul indicts all people for doing things that destroy society. Everyone is born with a depraved mind that leads to every kind of wickedness. Homosexual behavior is no more damning than gossip, greed, or jealousy. Those who commit such sins will face God's judgment unless they repent. The one who practices homosexual behavior will face the same Judge as a gossip, slanderer, or liar. Homosexuality stands first in the list for the apostle Paul because it so clearly demonstrates how people rebel against the Creator's order.

Marriage with God's Blessing

God created sex for the procreation of children and to strengthen the marital bond that supports those children (see note, Gn 1:28). Within the confines of marriage, sex is a wonderful blessing. Outside that relationship, it is idolatry—people rejecting God's order, worshiping what is created rather than the Creator.

Christians should abhor the sin of homosexual behavior as they abhor all sins. But at the same time, Christians should see homosexuals as people for whom Christ shed His precious blood. God wants us to recognize that "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by His grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (3:23–24). A homosexual, like any other sinner, needs to hear God's word of Law and Gospel applied to his or her life with the goal of repentance and faith.

Baptized into Christ

The following chart lists concerns some Christians voice about baptizing infants or children. It also lists passages from Romans and other parts of Scripture that address these concerns.

Children will grow in understanding of what God has done for them in their Baptism, just as they grow to appreciate their physical conception and birth. They will learn what it means to live a new life as a child of God. But Baptism is the beginning of that life in Christ. See p 1369.

The Life-Giving Spirit in Romans

Romans reveals that, along with the heavenly Father and Jesus, the Holy Spirit receives special emphasis in Paul's teaching. In fact, Rm 8 mentions the Holy Spirit more often than any other chapter in the Bible! To understand how the Holy Spirit works in your life and the lives of fellow believers, carefully study the following chart.

God's Unfailing Promise

By the end of the second century, Christian churches had been established in North Africa, the region we know today as Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco. By the end of the fourth century, these dynamic North African churches had produced some of the greatest Christian thinkers: the lay writer Tertullian, Bishop Cyprian of Carthage, and St Augustine of Hippo. The insights and ardor of these Christian leaders still inspire us today. However, when the Muslims invaded North Africa in the seventh century, they quickly subdued and converted the North Africans to their new religion. Though some Christians held out into the eleventh century, the churches of North Africa literally disappeared among the ruins of the Roman Empire.

The failure and disappearance of churches has happened repeatedly across the centuries: the Donatists of North Africa, the Nestorians of Asia, and both Roman Catholics and Protestants in much of Europe today. If you attend a struggling congregation, you may wonder, "Why can't our congregation enjoy peaceful growth? Must our congregation fail?"

Old Testament Examples

Various Christian thinkers have proposed different reasons why congregations and individuals fail or fall away from the Lord. But in Romans 9–10, the apostle Paul wants us to concentrate on the mystery of the Gospel. He wants us to understand how the Christian faith spreads to new regions and remains lively. Through three Old Testament examples, Paul shows that God's Word enlivens His people and sustains their congregations.

Paul's first example comes from the story of Jacob and Esau (Gn 25–33). In His mercy, God determined to send Jesus as the Savior of the world and to do this through the descendants of Jacob (Israelites). As God's plan of salvation, the promise of new life and forgiveness through Christ applied to Esau just as it did to Jacob. But Esau hardened his heart to God's Word. He rebelled against his parents and sought to satisfy himself in the ways of the Canaanites. By despising God's Word and promise, Esau cursed his own descendants.

A similar situation arose when Pharaoh held the children of Israel captive in Egypt (Ex 1–15). God's word of promise—salvation through the coming Savior—was true not only for the Israelites but also for their Egyptian masters. However, the Book of Exodus shows us again and again that Pharaoh rejected God's Word (Ex 7:13, 22; 8:15, 19, 32). He hardened his heart and refused to let God's people go. As a result, Pharaoh became an enduring example of God's wrath.

A third example shows that the Israelites, too, rejected God's promise of mercy. They had God's Word. They knew that He would send the Savior. But instead of rejoicing in this great news, many Israelites turned to other gods (e.g., Jgs 2:10–23). They hardened their hearts toward God's Word and made themselves objects of God's wrath (1Sm 6:6; 2Ch 36:13; Ps 95:8; Pr 28:14; Zec 7:12). Just as God hardened Pharaoh's heart because he rejected the promise of mercy, God also hardened the hearts of the Israelites who rejected the promise of the coming Savior.

God's Life-Giving Word

The three examples that Paul provides from the Old Testament may discourage you. They reveal the hardness of human hearts and God's wrathful response. They show how quickly people turn away from the truth or grow callous toward God's forgiveness.

But thanks be to God! In contrast to Paul's Old Testament examples, the abiding presence of Christian churches in Palestine and Egypt reveals the surprising nature of God's Word of promise. Ironically, the Palestinian descendants of Esau (Edomites) received the promise of Christ in the first century. When Christian ministers proclaimed God's Word to them, many believed! Even today, a remnant of Christians continues to call on Jesus' name in Palestine.

Equally amazing, the descendants of Pharaoh believed the Gospel when Christian missionaries visited them in the earliest days of the Church (cf Is 19:16–25). The Christians of Egypt and Ethiopia have passed God's Word from one generation to the next. Despite economic and political weaknesses, these congregations have survived the threats that destroyed so many other churches.

Also, many physical descendants of Israel (Jews) are now converting to Christ. They are God's children not because of their heritage as physical descendants of Abraham but because of the life-giving Word of the Gospel.

Though a family may fail to share its faith with its children or its neighbors, God's Word does not fail. People harden their hearts and, yes, God responds in judgment. Yet, in His mercy, God also breaks sin-hardened hearts and opens them to the Gospel. Though Esau, Pharaoh, and Israel rejected or ignored the promise of salvation through Christ, the Lord has graciously turned the hearts of many of their descendants through the Gospel.

Focus on God’s Word

If your congregation struggles to survive, do not focus on the glory days of your past. Do not let hardened hearts and attitudes discourage you. Look to Holy Scripture for help. Focus on God’s Word. Let the life of your congregation—everything you do—connect with God’s Word of promise in Jesus Christ.

God’s Word does not fail (Rm 9:6). Though people harden their hearts, God’s Word softens the heart (Rm 10:17). Like Paul, keep your eyes on God’s promises through which He bestows His blessings. Just as the Lord created the faith and life that built your congregation, He will sustain you through His word of promise.

Chosen in Christ

This eternal election of God is to be considered in Christ, and not outside of or without Christ. For "in Christ," the apostle Paul testifies, "He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world," as it is written, "He has blessed us in the Beloved" (Ephesians 1:4, 6). However, this election is revealed from heaven through the preaching of His Word … [Matthew 17:5; 11:28; John 16:14] … So the entire Holy Trinity—God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—directs all people to Christ, as to the Book of Life, in whom they should seek the Father's eternal election…. Christ Himself says, "No one comes to the Father except through Me" (John 14:6). (FC SD XI 65–66)

Living Sacrifices … in View of God's Mercy

When archaeologists unearthed the house-church of Dura Europas in eastern Syria, they learned much about the personal character of early Christian congregations. The rooms would hold no more than 50 people. Humble frescoes decorated the walls, illustrating biblical stories. A wealthy member had either donated the building at Dura Europas or allowed the congregation to gather there. Instead of the "public" character most Christians associate with church today, early Christians would have regarded their gatherings as more personal or private.

In chs 1–11, the apostle Paul describes the personal and fearsome ability of the Law to motivate people. The Law urges us to do good—or else! In contrast, as Paul describes the Christian life for the congregation of Rome (chs 12–16), he seeks to motivate them not with the Law but with the Gospel and with personal care for one another. He asks them to present their bodies as living sacrifices in view of God's mercy.

Motivated by the Gospel

In 12:1, Paul uses the Greek term *oiktirmon* to move the Roman Christians to active care for one another. This term is plural: "God's mercies." In chs 1–11, Paul lists the incredible acts of kindness God had performed for His people and continued to perform: choosing the patriarchs, rescuing Israel from Egypt, preserving a remnant of believers, and saving both Jew and Gentile through Christ. Paul reminds his readers that God continually has mercy on His people.

The Roman Christians would have immediately recognized *oiktirmon* from the Psalms, which they sang when they gathered for worship. The Psalms of the Greek Old Testament (Septuagint) use this word repeatedly to describe the surpassing loving-kindnesses and graces of God.

Most likely, the Roman Christians followed the Jewish prayer custom of requesting God's mercies. When the Romans gathered for prayer and Paul's new Letter was read to them, they would have heard 12:1 in this context. After asking God for His mercies, the apostle's Letter would encourage them—on the basis of those mercies—to sacrifice their lives to the Lord. Rather than intimidating the congregation with the Law, Paul seeks to move his hearers by the mercies of the Gospel.

Transformed by the Gospel

As Paul encourages the Roman Christians with the Gospel of God's mercies, he has both particular goals and general counsel for them. The rest of ch 12 outlines these goals and gives us a picture of what was most needed in the Roman congregation.

Paul begins by urging the Romans to conform no longer to the pattern of this world. The Christian life is one of transformation, leaving behind the former ways and attitudes. Even for the believers who had grown up in the Church, this would be a challenge. The world and its patterns constantly pulled at them, demanding conformity.

As we travel life's road, the patterns of the world work like ruts into which we slip. They pull us down into the ways of self-righteousness, self-interest, and bitterness. Once we fall into such patterns, only God can pull us out. Therefore, Paul urges, "be transformed" (12:2). We trust that the Lord will transform us through the mercies of the Gospel.

Moved to Service

Once the Gospel transforms us, God calls us to greater service. We serve the Lord as He enables us. Each member of the Body of Christ serves with his or her particular gift or gifts.

An unfortunate concern that plagues many churches is that a handful of people usually ends up doing much of the work. Three problems contribute to this situation. First, many people fail to recognize that God wants them to actively serve in the congregation. Second, pride and impatience on the part of some congregation members easily discourages others from serving. People stay at home because they feel that their service is neither needed nor appreciated. Third, most of us keep ourselves too busy. We fill our time with things that do not encourage us or anyone else in the faith. How easily we slip back into the ruts!

Remember the Mercies

As you consider your pattern of life and the pattern in your congregation, remember the mercies of God rather than focusing on the Law. God's Law, though it is holy, righteous, and true, will never properly motivate you or the people around you. God does not want you to conform. He wants to transform you in view of His mercies.

As a Christian, only the mercies of God can properly motivate you to genuine service. When discouraged, certainly remember what God says in His Law. But more important, look for His mercies in your Bible readings, in the services of your congregation, and in your day-to-day life. You are God's precious child. He has given the life of His Son, Jesus, for your salvation. He continues to bless and sustain you each day. Even now, He prepares a place for you in His joyous presence. Therefore, serve willingly —in view of His mercies.

Controversies over Romans

Controversies: Universalism

False Understanding: Rm never mentions hell. Therefore, God will not send anyone to hell or punish anyone eternally. Eventually, all people will be saved. (A variation holds that perhaps some people will be annihilated, but they will not suffer eternally.)

True Understanding: Though Paul never mentions hell by name, he frequently describes God's wrath against sin (e.g., Rm 2:5–10; Gal 1:8–9; 2Th 1:6–10).

Controversies: Individual Justification Alone

False Understanding: No one is declared righteous until believing in Christ.

True Understanding: God declared all sinners righteous in Christ at His crucifixion and resurrection. We appropriate the benefits of this universal declaration when we are individually brought to Christ. See p 1906.

Controversies: Antinomianism

False Understanding: Because God has forgiven Christians, the Law no longer applies to them (Rm 6:14). There is no "third use" of the Law, which guides Christians in doing good works.

True Understanding: Paul teaches that the Law still applies to all who commit sin. Because Christians are justified by grace, they do not live under the Law's condemnation. However, because Christians continue to sin, the Law still speaks to them and calls them to repent (Rm 6:1–2).

Controversies: Law-Based Sanctification

False Understanding: Because Christ has forgiven Christians, they have the ability to progressively grow more holy. Christ saved people so they could fulfill the Law (Rm 13:8–10).

True Understanding: Christians cannot fulfill the Law by their own strength. The Spirit of Christ sanctifies them and fulfills the Law in them (Rm 8:3–4, 9a).

Controversies: Double Predestination

False Understanding: Before the creation, God chose to save some people by grace but damn others to eternal punishment (Rm 9:22–24).

True Understanding: Rm 9:22–24 provides questions, not statements of fact. Paul does not answer these questions by writing that God predestined

people for eternal punishment. He affirms salvation for the Gentiles and the remnant of Israel (9:25–29).

Controversies: Dispensationalism

False Understanding: God divides up history into different dispensations, during which different rules, even different means of salvation, apply. At the end of time, God will grant the Jews an era of grace, during which all Israelites will be saved (Rm 11:26).

True Understanding: "All Israel" includes both Jews and Gentiles (Rm 11:25). In other words, "Israel" in this passage refers to the Church, not a particular nation or ethnic group. Cf Gal 6:15–16. God saves all people through Christ alone and always works through Law and Gospel. See note, Ex 34:6–7.

Controversies: Law Motivation

False Understanding: Preachers should use the Law to make Christians feel guilty, to prod and motivate them so that they do good works. That is what Paul does in Rm 12–15.

True Understanding: Paul bases motivation for good works on God's mercy rather than the Law (Rm 8:3–4; 12:1; 15:7). Rm 1–11 lays out the Gospel motivation for the Christian life. The Gospel is the foundation for both justification and sanctification.

Controversies: Open Fellowship

False Understanding: God loves and accepts everybody, no matter what they do or teach. Therefore, the Church should openly accept and work with all people despite their beliefs or actions (Rm 15:7).

True Understanding: Paul bases acceptance of one another on the means by which Christ accepts us: repentance and faith (Rm 10:1–4). In other words, Christians call one another to repentance. Paul warns against false teachers who undermine this doctrine (Rm 16:17–18).

Controversies: Ordination of Women

False Understanding: Junia/Junias was a female apostle in the Early Church (Rm 16:7), but male clergy covered up her legacy and the legacy of other female ministers. Since Junia/Junias was a female apostle, all churches should ordain women as pastors.

True Understanding: Junia/Junias can be a male or female name. See ESV note, Rm 16:7. In his other letters, Paul clearly distinguishes between the roles of men and women (1Co 14:33–35; Eph 5:22–33; 1Tm 2:11–12).

Historically, female apostles were unknown among early Christians. See pp 1726, 1972.

Footnotes

Footnotes for Romans, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:1 Or *slave*; Greek *bondservant*
- [2] 1:3 Or *who came from the offspring of David*
- [1] 1:13 Or *brothers and sisters*. The plural Greek word *adelphoi* (translated "brothers") refers to siblings in a family. In New Testament usage, depending on the context, *adelphoi* may refer either to men or to both men and women who are siblings (brothers and sisters) in God's family, the church
- [2] 1:14 That is, non-Greeks
- [3] 1:17 Or *beginning and ending in faith*
- [4] 1:17 Or *The one who by faith is righteous shall live*

Footnotes for Romans, Chapter 2

- [1] 2:8 Or *contentious*
- [1] 2:26 Or *counted*
- [2] 2:27 Or *the letter*

Footnotes for Romans, Chapter 3

- [1] 3:9 Greek *Are we*
- [2] 3:9 Or *at any disadvantage?*
- [3] 3:20 Greek *flesh*

Footnotes for Romans, Chapter 4

- [1] 4:1 Some manuscripts *say about*
- [2] 4:5 Or *but trusts*; compare verse 24

Footnotes for Romans, Chapter 5

- [1] 5:1 Some manuscripts *let us*
- [1] 5:2 Some manuscripts omit *by faith*
- [2] 5:2 Or *let us*; also verse 3
- [3] 5:2 Or *boast*; also verses 3, 11
- [1] 5:18 Or *the trespass of one*
- [2] 5:18 Or *the act of righteousness of one*

Footnotes for Romans, Chapter 6

- [1] 6:6 Greek *man*
- [2] 6:7 Greek *has been justified*
- [3] 6:16 Greek *bondservants*. Twice in this verse and verse 19; also once in verses 17, 20

Footnotes for Romans, Chapter 7

- [1] 7:1 Or *brothers and sisters*; also verse 4
- [2] 7:2 Greek *law concerning the husband*
- [1] 7:6 Greek *of the letter*

Footnotes for Romans, Chapter 8

- [1] 8:1 Some manuscripts add *who walk not according to the flesh (but according to the Spirit)*
- [2] 8:2 Some manuscripts *me*
- [3] 8:3 Or *and as a sin offering*
- [1] 8:12 Or *brothers and sisters*; also verse 29
- [2] 8:14 See discussion on "sons" in the preface
- [1] 8:27 Or *that*
- [2] 8:28 Some manuscripts *God works all things together for good*, or *God works in all things for the good*
- [3] 8:31 Or *who is*
- [4] 8:34 Or *Is it Christ Jesus who died … for us?*

Footnotes for Romans, Chapter 9

- [1] 9:3 Or *brothers and sisters*
- [1] 9:16 Greek *not of him who wills or runs*
- [1] 9:27 Or *children of Israel*
- [2] 9:31 Greek *a law of righteousness*

Footnotes for Romans, Chapter 10

- [3] 10:1 Or *Brothers and sisters*
- [4] 10:4 Or *end of the law, that everyone who believes may be justified*
- [1] 10:14 Or *him whom they have never heard*

Footnotes for Romans, Chapter 11

- [1] 11:1 Or *one of the offspring of Abraham*
- [2] 11:12 Greek *their fullness*
- [1] 11:17 Greek *root of richness*; some manuscripts *richness*
- [2] 11:25 Or *brothers and sisters*
- [1] 11:31 Some manuscripts omit *now*

Footnotes for Romans, Chapter 12

- [2] 12:1 Or *brothers and sisters*
- [3] 12:1 Or *your rational service*
- [4] 12:2 Greek *age*
- [1] 12:2 Or *what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God*
- [2] 12:4 Greek *parts*; also verse 5
- [3] 12:8 Or *gives aid*
- [4] 12:11 Or *fervent in the Spirit*
- [5] 12:16 Or *give yourselves to humble tasks*
- [6] 12:19 Greek *give place*

Footnotes for Romans, Chapter 14

- [1] 14:4 Or *lord*
- [1] 14:11 Or *shall give praise*
- [2] 14:21 Some manuscripts add *or be hindered or be weakened*
- [3] 14:23 Some manuscripts insert here 16:25-27

Footnotes for Romans, Chapter 15

- [1] 15:14 Or *brothers and sisters*; also verse 30
- [1] 15:28 Greek *sealed to them this fruit*
- [2] 15:29 Some manuscripts insert *of the gospel*

Footnotes for Romans, Chapter 16

- [3] 16:1 Or *deaconess*
- [4] 16:5 Greek *firstfruit*
- [5] 16:7 Or *Junias*
- [6] 16:7 Or *messengers*
- [1] 16:14 Or *brothers and sisters*; also verse 17
- [2] 16:18 Greek *their own belly*
- [3] 16:23 Some manuscripts insert verse 24: *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.*

Study Notes

ROMANS—NOTE ON **Ch 1** Luth: "It is right for a preacher of the gospel in the first place by revelation of the law and of sin to rebuke and to constitute as sin everything that is not the living fruit of the Spirit and of faith in Christ, in order that men should be led to know themselves and their own wretchedness, and to become humble and ask for help. This is therefore what St. Paul does. He begins in chapter 1 to rebuke the gross sins and unbelief that are plainly evident. These were, and still are, the sins of the heathen who live without God's grace. He says: Through the gospel there shall be revealed the wrath of God from heaven against all men because of their godless lives and their unrighteousness. For even though they know and daily recognize that there is a God, nevertheless nature itself, without grace, is so bad that it neither thanks nor honors God. Instead it blinds itself, and goes steadily from bad to worse until, after idolatry, it blatantly commits the most shameful sins, along with all the vices, and also allows others to commit them unreprimanded" (AE 35:372).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 1:1–7 Formal greeting. Paul identifies himself, his divinely given authority, and his message. He addresses the recipients, describing them as God sees them. Finally, he blesses them with grace and peace. Gk letters typically employed this general structure (see pp 1899–1901), but Paul is careful to focus on the triune God and His grace, setting the Epistle's tone.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 1:1 *servant*. Or slave. Paul belongs to Christ and lives to serve Him. *called*. Paul did not appoint himself; God called him (Ac 9:15–16). *apostle*. One called directly by Christ to proclaim the Gospel everywhere. See p 1901. *set apart*. Consecrated, chosen to proclaim the Gospel. *gospel of God*. The Good News of salvation through faith in Christ. Paul's call is to proclaim Christ's grace. See "Gospel," p 1902.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 1:2 The Gospel is not something new; it is God's eternal will, first proclaimed in the Hbr Scriptures. God always planned to send Christ to save us.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 1:3–4 *from David*. The Messiah came, as prophesied (cf Dt 18:15), from David's line (cf 2Sm 7:12–13). *declared … Son of God*. Lit, "made Son of God" in the sense of an appointment to an office. *Spirit of holiness*. An expression found in early Christian Aram for

the Holy Spirit, given by the resurrected Christ. It shows Jesus' power and testifies to Christ's identity. *resurrection*. Jesus' bodily resurrection affirms His deity and the completion of His saving work. *our Lord*. Confession of faith: they believe in Jesus. These verses have the character of an early Christian creed. See p 1975.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 1:5 *grace and apostleship*. Christ saved Paul (by grace) and called him into service (apostleship). See pp 1902, 1901. *obedience of faith*. Lit, "by the listening of faith," i.e., to trustingly hear and follow what someone says. Not sanctification (obedience that results from faith) but justification (obedience that consists of faith). Faith hears and believes the message, then responds appropriately (cf 10:17; 15:18; Heb 11:1). *all the nations*. Salvation is not for the Jews alone, but for all (cf Mt 28:18–20). God called Paul esp to reach the Gentiles.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 1:6 God calls Christians to faith and incorporates us into His body. We passively receive His grace. See "call," p 1901.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 1:7 *loved … called*. The initiative is God's; He loved, called, and saved us. *saints*. Always plural in Paul's Letters. Those declared holy because of Christ's saving work, i.e., the community of believers God calls and sets apart by faith. See p 1904.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 1:1–7 Paul affirms three callings from God: he is called to be an apostle, the Romans are called to belong to Christ, and they are called to be saints. We sinners are prone to think that we control every aspect of our lives, and we tend to live only for ourselves. Knowing the futility of this, Christ Jesus sacrificed Himself on the cross that we might be redeemed. He calls us out of sin and death and into life. Praise God! We are called to belong to Him and to love and serve others. • Lord Jesus, thank You for making me Your own and for all of Your gifts. Amen.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 1:8 *your faith is proclaimed*. Others are thankful that God brought the Romans to faith. Paul focuses on the fact that they have faith, not on its strength or on their works. *all the world*. Christians everywhere knew of their brothers and sisters in Rome.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 1:9–10 Paul repeatedly prayed for the opportunity to visit the Roman Christians. *my witness*. Paul has been praying for the Romans. God, who hears prayer, is Paul's witness. *serve*. Gk *latreuo*, to serve or worship. Paul used this term of worship to describe his special ministry on behalf of the congregation. Cf 2Co 1:11. *with my spirit*. Paul was not bodily present with them, so he served them in prayer.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 1:10 *by God's will*. Paul could go to Rome only if God wanted him to, so he prays for God's help. *at last … coming*. Paul had long wanted to visit Rome (15:23) but previously had been unable.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 1:11 *I long*. God is in charge, but Paul is eager to visit this Church at Rome that he loves. *impart … spiritual gift*. Paul does not identify specific gifts here (as he will in 12:6–8), but promises that God will bless them. See "gifts," p 1902. Chrys: "He does not say that I may teach you, that I may instruct you … but, 'that I may impart;' showing, that it is not his own things which he is giving them, but that he was imparting to them what he had received" (*NPNF* 1 11:345).
ROMANS—NOTE ON 1:12 *mutually encouraged*. A blessing esp of the Gospel, as forgiveness is shared (see SA III IV). *by each other's faith*. This strengthened faith may be the "spiritual" gift described in v 11. Both Paul and the Church will be blessed as they serve each other.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 1:13 *brothers*. Not exclusive to men; it includes all siblings. An affectionate greeting (used 10 times in Rm) showing Paul's kinship with the believers—men and women—in Rome (see personal greetings in ch 16). See p 1901. As children of one Father, Christians are members of one family. *prevented*. Paul does not specify what hindered him. He used the same verb ("hindered") in 15:22, see note. God had work for Paul to do before he could visit Rome. *reap some harvest*. To see God's work in their lives (cf Mt 9:37–38; 1Co 3:6–9). *rest of the Gentiles*. Paul's primary mission was to evangelize Gentiles. He had seen God's work in other Gentile communities; now he wants to see it in Rome.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 1:14 *obligation*. God called Paul to minister to the Gentiles. Therefore, Paul must do this work (cf v 15). *Greeks … barbarians … wise … foolish*. Hellenistic rhetoric. Those who spoke Gk (including the Romans) considered themselves to be the world's wise, civilized, and cultured people. "Barbarians," who spoke other languages, were considered foolish and contemptible. Such human judgments are irrelevant; Paul intends to proclaim the Gospel to all.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 1:15 *eager to preach the gospel*. The obligation to preach the Gospel is a joyful opportunity. Renewed by the Spirit, Paul is compelled to preach. See "preach," p 1903.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 1:8–15 Paul was sent to the Greeks and barbarians, to the wise and foolish. Today, we may be tempted to keep the Gospel to ourselves or limit it to people who are like us. However, Jesus did

not limit His work. He redeemed the whole world—even barbarians and fools like us. He commissions us to reach out to all people. • Triune God, strengthen me to be Your witness to all people. Amen.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 1:16 *not ashamed of the gospel*. The Gospel appears foolish to the world, which may ridicule or persecute Christians, but we are proud of what Christ has done (1Co 1:18). *power of God for salvation*. The reason for Christian confidence. The Gospel is not simply words; the Spirit works faith and brings us salvation through it. God does this work, not us. "Justification happens only through the Word" of the Gospel (Ap IV 67). *power*. See note, 16:25. *believes*. While the Gospel always has God's power, we receive its power through faith. *Jew … Greek*. See note, v 14. People are saved only by grace through faith.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 1:17 *righteousness of God*. See p 1904. The Gospel is neither human righteousness nor a characteristic of God. It identifies everything that God does to save His people through Christ. Luth: "At first I clearly saw that the free grace of God is absolutely necessary to attain to light and eternal life; and I anxiously and busily worked to understand the word of Paul in Rom. 1:17: The righteousness of God is revealed in the Gospel. I questioned this passage for a long time and labored over it, for the expression 'righteousness of God' barred my way. This phrase was customarily explained to mean that the righteousness of God is a virtue by which He is Himself righteous and condemns sinners. In this way all the teachers of the church except Augustine had interpreted the passage. They had said: The righteousness of God, that is (*id est*), the wrath of God. But as often as I read this passage, I wished that God had never revealed the Gospel; for who could love a God who was angry, who judged and condemned people? This misunderstanding continued until, enlightened by the Holy Spirit, I finally examined more carefully the word of Habakkuk: 'The just shall live by his faith' (2:4). From this passage I concluded that life must be derived from faith…. Then the entire Holy Scripture became clear to me, and heaven itself was opened to me. Now we see this brilliant light very clearly, and we are privileged to enjoy it abundantly" (*WLS* § 2600). *revealed from faith for faith*. Faith is God's gift created by the Gospel, and faith receives the gifts of the Gospel. It is entirely God's work. *righteous … faith*. Or, "the one who is righteous by faith shall live." Hab 2:4, quoted here, shows that this teaching is not new but was proclaimed in the OT. See p 1902. *by faith*. Not a description of how we live but rather

how we are righteous. "The righteousness of faith … is nothing else than the forgiveness of sins and the gracious adoption of the poor sinner for the sake of Christ's obedience and merit alone" (FC SD III 54). Mel: "We shall be just not when we look to the Law, not when we set out virtues and deeds before God, but when we declare that God is propitious to us by faith … that he hears us, wants to save us, and that we expect salvation" (*Romans*, p 71).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 1:16–17 Many of us have, at times, been embarrassed about our faith or have hidden our Christian identity. We have yielded to the world's pressures and may have been ashamed of our Savior, but He is not ashamed of us. He bore our sin, guilt, and shame on the cross and gives us His life and forgiveness. Receiving those gifts by faith, and empowered by the Spirit, we are no longer ashamed of the Gospel. We know it is God's power "for salvation to everyone who believes." • Jesus, thank You for redeeming me and giving me Your righteousness. In faith, I will boldly proclaim Your name. Amen.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 1:18–32 The chief sin Paul addresses here is idolatry, from which other sins emerge.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 1:18 *wrath*. Gk *orge*, "anger," "revenge." The opposite of God's grace; a just and holy response to human rebellion. Sin deserves punishment and destruction. "The New Testament keeps and urges this 'office of the Law'" (SA III III 1). *revealed from heaven*. God expresses His wrath, allowing sinners to experience some of the consequences. The following verses show some of the ways this happens. See notes, v 24; 2:5. *suppress the truth*. By rejecting God and His Word, all people reject the truth. Because the truth does not change, it continues to accuse and convict sinners who have rejected God.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 1:19 Those who do not know the Gospel (v 17) still receive some of God's revelation and should know God exists. *shown*. Knowledge of God through creation is not random; God chose to reveal Himself in this way. See note, v 20.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 1:20 *invisible attributes*. God is not visibly present, but the universe shows His existence and nature. *creation*. Nature testifies to God's existence and character. His "fingerprints" are everywhere. *they*. Paul begins to speak more specifically about the Gentiles, who had not believed the Gospel.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 1:21 *they knew God*. Creation demonstrates that God truly exists (v 19). *honor … give thanks*. God's existence was clear, but the nations did not recognize or respond to Him. *futile*. Their reason and thoughts are fallen. Without God, they are separated from the greatest reality and so fail to understand many things. *hearts were darkened*. In addition to failing minds, their hearts are affected. They did not respond to God mentally or emotionally. Even when the most ingenious and learned people on earth read or hear the Gospel of God's Son and the promise of eternal salvation, "they cannot by their own powers perceive, apprehend, understand, or believe and regard it as true" (FC SD II 9). See note, Pr 28:9.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 1:22 An example of suppressing the truth (v 18). Unbelievers reject the most important things in life, thinking they are wise. In reality, they are foolish.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 1:23 *exchanged*. Gk *allasso*, "change," "alter." Unbelievers naturally substitute false gods for the one true God (cf v 25). "The knowledge of God from the Gospel is far different from that which is taught and learned from the Law. Even the pagans, to a certain extent, had a knowledge of God from the natural law. But they neither knew Him nor glorified Him correctly" (FC SD V 22). *glory of the immortal*. Ps 106:20 uses similar language to describe Israel's idolatry with the golden calf (Ex 32). False gods cannot compare to the glory of the true God. *images*. Idols of any kind.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 1:24 *God gave them up*. Although God does not force the unrighteous to sin, He does not prevent their sinful, degrading acts. Thinking they are free, humans choose the harmful bondage of sin. *impurity*. Idolatry in the ancient world frequently involved sexual immorality (cf 1Co 6:9; Gal 5:19). Any sin makes people impure as they reject the purity that God gives in Christ.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 1:25 *exchanged*. See note, v 23. *worshiped and served the creature*. Essence of idolatry: worshiping something God made and not God Himself. *Creator … Amen*. Paul's theological argument evokes a confession of faith and worship.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 1:26 *God gave them up*. See note, v 24. *dishonorable passions*. Paul is not condemning all passion or sexual desire. Only the misuse of God's gift of sexuality brings dishonor. *exchanged*. See note, v 23. Sin substitutes inferior things for God's good gifts. *contrary to nature*. As God's existence and character are seen in nature (vv 19–21), so

His Law is also evident. Homosexual activity, referred to here, is a departure from the natural order. See p 1911.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 1:27 As in v 26, homosexual activity exchanges a natural desire for the opposite sex for an unnatural lust for one's own sex. *shameless acts*. Homosexual behavior. *due penalty for their error*. Participation in degrading, unnatural acts is, in itself, part of the judgment for sin. Paul's candid discussion of homosexuality may surprise or offend some readers. The Greco-Roman world was generally open to homosexuality, though there were critics, including Jews, Christians, and some philosophers. Homosexuality is an example of how something that seems obvious from nature (the relation of two sexes; the body was not designed for homosexual activities) is exchanged for something unnatural. This is a further effect of exchanging the worship of God for the worship of idols. Luth: "Holy Scripture declares that sin came from the devil, whom, contrary to God's Word, our parents obeyed. They became disobedient to God and thereby brought a terrible punishment upon themselves. For through this sin (of the Fall) not only our bodies have become so weakened that they have changed from immortal into mortal bodies, but the intellect, heart, mind, and will are entirely corrupted and turned evil (*verboset*). For man has lost the right and true knowledge of God. Moreover, his will is so entirely corrupted that he desires and wants nothing but that which is evil" (*WLS* § 4131).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 1:28 *acknowledge God*. Though they saw the evidence, they refused to acknowledge God's authority. *debased mind*. Their thinking (v 21) about these issues was taken to the lowest sinful level.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 1:29–31 These things disrupt the harmonious life and relationships that God would have us enjoy. Though some of these sins seem more significant than others, each one evidences idolatry and rebellion against God. This list shows that all have sinned (3:23).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 1:32 *they know God's decree*. God's Law is on their hearts (2:15). *deserve to die*. Any violation of God's Law merits death (6:23). *they*. Unrighteous people depicted in vv 18–32.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 1:18–32 We love to condemn the sins of others. We might not have committed some of the acts Paul condemns here, but we all have sinned. We have exchanged God's truth for human foolishness. Seeing sin, we ought not respond defensively but in confession. We know God's response to sin: He sent His Son to die for sinners. • Lord have mercy

on me, a sinner. Grant me sincere confession and compassion for other sinners. Amen.

ROMANS—NOTE ON **Ch 2** Luth: "In chapter 2 [Paul] extends his rebuke to include those who seem outwardly to be righteous and who commit their sins in secret…. This is the nature of all hypocrites, to think of themselves as pure, and yet to be full of covetousness, hatred, pride, and all uncleanness, Matthew 23[:25–28]. These are they who despise God's goodness, and in their hardheartedness heap wrath upon themselves. Thus St. Paul, as a true interpreter of the law, leaves no one without sin, but proclaims the wrath of God upon all who would live well simply by nature or of their own volition. He makes them to be no better than the obvious sinners; indeed, he says they are stubborn and unrepentant" (AE 35:372–73).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 2:1 *judges*. Jews or Greeks who condemned the idolatry and immorality presented in 1:18–32.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 2:2 *rightly falls*. God's judgment is just and warranted (cf v 5). *such things*. Sins discussed in 1:18–32.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 2:4 *presume on*. "Think little of" or "despise." *forbearance*. Patiently withholding judgment. *God's kindness … repentance?* God has not immediately punished sin; He wants sinners to repent and be forgiven.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 2:5 *hard and impenitent heart*. A hard heart does not respond to God, but refuses to repent. Cf Ex 4:21. *storing up wrath*. Unforgiven sins will be punished on Judgment Day. See note, Jl 2:30–31. *righteous judgment*. God's judgment will be perfectly fair and appropriate.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 2:6–7 *according to his works*. Deeds described here are only found in Christ. Cf 3:21–30; see note, v 7.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 2:7 Does not mean that we are justified by our works. Chs 1–2 clearly indicate that we all have sinned and are incapable of saving ourselves. People are only good in God's sight when they are justified by Christ. Apart from Christ, vv 7, 10, and 13 might lead self-righteous readers to think that they are capable of perfect obedience, of earning salvation. Paul will confront them with evidence showing that this is impossible (cf Mt 19:16–22). See note, 3:20.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 2:8 *obey the truth*. See note, 1:5. *obey unrighteousness*. Those who base life not on God but on sinful things.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 2:9–10 *tribulation*. Gk *thlipsis*, affliction or troubles from outside oneself. *the Jew first*. Not in value, but in time or sequence. The covenant was first made with the ancestors of the Jews, who were to take the covenant to the Gentiles (cf Is 19:18–25). The Messiah appeared in Israel, but commissioned His Church to make disciples of all nations (Mt 28:18–20). The Gospel first came to the Jews, then the Gentiles (1:16). If either reject the Gospel, they will be judged.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 2:10 See note, v 7.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 2:11 God does not favor one people over another. He judges all by the Law and always saves people by the Gospel.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 2:1–11 When we pass judgment on another, we condemn ourselves (v 1). It is easy to recognize and condemn sin in others while overlooking our own sin. Paul's teachings are clear: all have sinned. Without God's patience and forbearance, we would all be condemned. • O God, thank You that our Savior, Jesus, has redeemed us! Send us forth today to proclaim this Good News. Amen.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 2:12 *without the law*. Gentiles did not have the revealed Law, the Torah. See p 971. *perish … judged*. Synonyms; sin merits death. *under the law*. Having received the Torah, the Israelites were bound to keep it, but failed to do so.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 2:13 See note, v 7. *doers of the law who will be justified*. Hypothetical statement. One who could keep the Law perfectly might be justified, but this is impossible because all people sin. We can be justified only by grace apart from our works (cf 3:28).
ROMANS—NOTE ON 2:14 *by nature*. Because of God's created order, the Gentiles know right and wrong without the assistance of God's revealed Word. However, sin has corrupted their understanding. *a law to themselves*. The conscience shows their sinfulness and need for a Savior. See p 1911.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 2:15 *law is written on their hearts*. Just as God partially reveals Himself in nature (1:19), He gives all people some knowledge of His Law. "The Ten Commandments are written in all people's hearts" (LC II 67). *conscience*. See p 1902. *thoughts accuse or even excuse*. The conscience makes one feel guilty when it is violated, but it also makes one feel that certain actions are right.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 2:16 *according to my gospel*. See "Gospel," p 1902. *God judges … by Christ*. God judges us in view of our relationship to Christ. *secrets of men*. God judges thoughts, motives, and actions.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 2:17 *call yourself a Jew*. Paul's attention turns from Gentiles to Jews, who are proud of their heritage. *boast in God*. This may be done appropriately (2Co 10:17) or in a self-righteous way that belittles others (cf Lk 18:9–14).
ROMANS—NOTE ON 2:18 *know His will*. By knowing the Scriptures. *instructed*. Gk *katecheo*, "catechized." Believers were taught God's Word.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 2:19 Those spiritually enlightened by God's Word could lead others in this dark world.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 2:20 *children*. Those with an immature knowledge due to age or ignorance. *embodiment of knowledge and truth*. Believing themselves to have perfect knowledge and the ability to use it appropriately.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 2:22 *rob temples?* Some Jews stole from pagan temples to show their contempt for idolatry, but this violated the Seventh Commandment. See *Ant* 4:207.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 2:23 *boast in the law*. Pride in being a Jew and having the Law that others lacked.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 2:24 Israel's failures caused the Gentiles to mock and blaspheme God. Here the hypocritical actions of Jews give rise to similar blasphemy.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 2:25 *circumcision*. Outward sign of God's covenant with the Jews (Gn 17:10–14). *your circumcision becomes uncircumcision*. Outward signs without faith are worthless.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 2:26 *precepts of the law*. Things required by the Law. See p 971. *regarded as circumcision?* Circumcision was synonymous with God's OT people, Israel.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 2:27 *the written code*. Revealed Law, the Torah.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 2:28 *a Jew … outwardly*. Following ceremonial laws such as circumcision or kosher regulations. *nor is circumcision outward*. Covenant was not about a physical act but about faith.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 2:29 *matter of the heart*. God called His people to faith. Outward ceremonies were not an end in themselves. See note, Gn 15:6. *by the Spirit, not by the letter*. Many followed the Law in detail, though they lacked genuine faith in God's forgiveness through the Messiah, Jesus. See note, 2Co 3:6. *His praise*. Humans may be impressed by outward acts, but God sees the heart and motives.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 2:12–29 Paul warns against being praised by people but not by God (v 29). Pride desires recognition and praise from the

world, but this may come in ways that are inconsistent with God's will. Our priorities are misplaced when we seek the world's acclaim. We are blessed when we place God first, knowing He loves and forgives us. He approves of us because of Jesus. That's all the praise we will ever need. • Heavenly Father, in faith I do not seek the praise of the world, but I rejoice in Your gifts. Amen.

ROMANS—NOTE ON **Ch 3** Luth: "In chapter 3 [Paul] throws them all together in a heap, and says that one is like the other: they are all sinners before God. Only, the Jews have had the word of God. Though not many have believed that word, this does not mean that the faith and truth of God are exhausted. He quotes incidentally a verse from Psalm 51[:4], that God remains justified in his words. Afterward he comes back to this again and proves also by Scripture that all men are sinners, and that by the works of the law nobody is justified, but that the law was given only that sin might be known.

"Then he begins to teach the right way by which men must be justified and saved. He says: They are all sinners making no boast of God; but they must be justified without merit [of their own] through faith in Christ, who has merited this for us by his blood, and has become for us a mercy-seat by God. God forgives all former sins to demonstrate that we are helped only by his righteousness, which he grants in faith, and which was revealed at that time through the gospel and was witnessed to beforehand by the law and the prophets. Thus the law is upheld by faith, though the works of the law are thereby put down, together with the boasting of them" (AE 35:373).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 3:1 In other words, what was the point of Judaism if it did not earn salvation?

ROMANS—NOTE ON 3:2 *oracles of God*. God's specific revelation in the Scriptures.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 3:3 Although Israel broke the covenant, God kept His promises.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 3:4 *By no means!* See p 1901. God will not break His promises. *That you … judged*. Frank confession of sin. God is right; we are sinners.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 3:5 Explaining v 4. God is righteous. We deserve punishment because we are sinners. *a human way*. Paul is showing the complaints behind the questions and is speaking rhetorically.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 3:7–8 Though Paul is falsely accused of antinomianism (see p 1942), he includes himself as a sinner. God's faithfulness is greater than our sin (vv 3, 5).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 3:8 *some people*. Jews or Jewish Christians who thought that teaching justification by faith would lead to lawlessness. Charge will be refuted in ch 6. *condemnation*. God knows the truth and condemns the false witness of these critics.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 3:1–8 Human sinfulness shows the radical difference between God's holiness and humanity's unrighteousness. God made covenants with His people, but we have broken our promises. How blessed we are that our unfaithfulness cannot nullify His faithfulness. He redeems us because He is gracious. • Loving Father, thank You for Your grace and faithfulness. Empower me by Your Spirit to be faithful to You. Amen.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 3:9 *all … are under sin*. All people are guilty of sin and remain under its power; this is why we keep sinning.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 3:10–18 Six OT quotes demonstrate human sinfulness, summarized by v 10, "None is righteous." "Through Adam's fall is all corrupt, Nature and essence human" (FC Ep I 8). The cause of this unrepentant sin is that no one has faith, the "fear of God" (v 18). See p 1001.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 3:19 *the law says*. God's voice, recorded in the Law. *under the law*. Those subject to the Law; in this case, the Jews. Scripture proved their guilt. *mouth may be stopped*. While some proclaim innocence, the evidence of sinfulness is clear.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 3:20 *by works … in His sight*. Conclusion shows that statements of 2:7, 10, 13 were hypothetical. Works cannot earn salvation. *through the law comes knowledge of sin*. The Law serves as a mirror. When we hear its commands, it clearly shows us that we have sinned and are guilty.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 3:9–20 While we are tempted to think that obedience to the Law can save, Paul shows the Law's diagnosis: we are sinners incapable of saving ourselves (v 20). Only when we see this are we prepared for the Good News of what Christ has done for us. • Lord, I know that I am a sinner. Forgive me. Help me see Jesus and trust in Him alone. Amen.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 3:21 *righteousness of God*. See note, 1:17. Paul revealed our unrighteousness; now he reveals the righteousness of God, which is Christ Jesus. *apart from the law*. Jesus' sacrifice fulfills the OT Law. Paul now defines righteousness and the righteous community, functions formally held by the Torah in Israel. God's righteousness is not earned by our works. *Law and the Prophets*. Entire OT bears witness to Christ (Lk 24:27). See note, Jn 5:39.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 3:22 *through faith in Jesus Christ*. Paul uses forms of this expression often (Gal 2:16; Php 3:9; 1Tm 1:14; 2Tm 1:13; 3:15). Grammatically, the expression may speak of our faith, which trusts in Christ and His work. It may also indicate Christ's faithfulness in completing the work of salvation (see ESV note, Gal 2:16). Both explanations teach true doctrine: Christ earned our salvation by His faithfulness and gives us the benefits of His work through the gift of faith.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 3:23 *all*. Every human, aside from Christ. *fall short*. Some may seem to come closer than others, but no one can live a holy life. "Scripture shouts everywhere that we are far away from the perfection that the Law requires" (Ap XIIB 45).
ROMANS—NOTE ON 3:24 *justified by His grace as a gift*. Grace cannot be earned; it must be given by God. See p 1903. *redemption*. Gk *apolytrosis*, the buying back of a slave or captive, to set the person free. See p 1904. Christ gave His life to set all people free when He died on the cross. "We receive the mercy promised in Him by faith and set it against God's wrath and judgment" (Ap IV 82). *in Christ Jesus*. See note, 8:1.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 3:25 *propitiation*. Gk *hilasterion*, in the LXX, the ark of the covenant's cover, where the high priest sprinkled the blood of the sacrifices. See note, Ex 25:17. As the propitiation covered the ark of the covenant, Christ's righteousness covers the sinner. He is the sacrifice for sin. *by faith*. Faith does not earn anything; it receives God's gift. See p 1901. *show God's righteousness*. Christ's work shows that God both justly punishes sin and graciously forgives sinners. See p 1904. *forbearance*. Patience with sinners. *passed over former sins*. God did not ignore sin. He delayed the punishment until Christ paid it. Some thoughtless modern theologians have likened Paul's teaching on the atonement to child abuse because the Father sent the Son as a sacrifice. This assertion ignores Christ's willingness to make full satisfaction for sins. Christ is true God "reconciling the world to Himself" (2Co 5:19). The Father sent the Son the

way a patriotic father sends his son to war for the good of his nation. A father does not send a son cheerfully, but sincerely, anticipating sacrifice, victory, and reunion. See *LSB* 556:4–9.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 3:26 *present time*. God's righteousness in Christ is still effective.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 3:27 *our boasting?* No one deserves salvation; all receive it by grace. *law*. Or, principle. The Law does not save; it shows our need for God's redemption, which is received through faith. *law of faith*. Chrys: "What is the 'law of faith?' It is, being saved by grace" (*NPNF* 1 11:379). See p 1911.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 3:28 *we*. Paul and fellow Christians. *justified by faith*. See note, v 22. "Upon this article [justification] everything that we teach and practice depends … we must be certain and not doubt this doctrine. Otherwise, all is lost" (SA II I 5). See p 2016.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 3:30 *God is one*. Likely from the "Shema" confession (Dt 6:4) used in the synagogue liturgy and perhaps in early Christian gatherings. The OT and NT reveal the same God, who wants all to be saved. *by faith … through faith*. No distinction is implied by the change from "by" to "through." See note, v 22. The means of God's salvation have always been the same. There are not different ways of salvation for different groups or dispensations. See note, Gn 15:6.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 3:31 *we uphold the law*. The Gospel does not ignore the Law; the Law is upheld because Christ perfectly fulfilled it.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 3:21–31 Vv 23–24 demonstrate human equality —all have sinned and fall short of God's glory. We are alike in our corruption and fallenness. But all humanity has also been redeemed by Christ. Sinners may draw distinctions between people, but God does not. He would save us all through Christ. • Lord Jesus Christ, Redeemer of the world, thank You for Your salvation. Empower me to share Your gift with others. Amen.

ROMANS—NOTE ON **Ch 4** Luth: "After the first three chapters, in which sin is revealed and faith's way to righteousness is taught, St. Paul begins in chapter 4 to meet certain remonstrances and objections. First he takes up the one that all men commonly make when they hear that faith justifies without works. They say, 'Are we, then, to do no good works?' Therefore he himself takes up the case of Abraham, and asks, 'What did Abraham accomplish, then, with his good works? Were they all in vain? Were his works of no

use?' He concludes that Abraham was justified by faith alone, without any works, so much so that the Scriptures in Genesis 15[:6] declare that he was justified by faith alone even before the work of circumcision. But if the work of circumcision contributed nothing to his righteousness, though God had commanded it and it was a good work of obedience, then surely no other good work will contribute anything to righteousness. Rather, as Abraham's circumcision was an external sign by which he showed the righteousness that was already his in faith, so all good works are only external signs which follow out of faith; like good fruit, they demonstrate that a person is already inwardly righteous before God.

"With this powerful illustration from the Scriptures, St. Paul confirms the doctrine of faith which he had set forth in chapter 3. He cites also another witness, David, who says in Psalm 32[:1–2] that a man is justified without works—although he does not remain without works when he has been justified. Then he gives the illustration a broader application, setting it over against all other works of the law. He concludes that the Jews cannot be Abraham's heirs merely because of their blood, still less because of the works of the law; they must inherit Abraham's faith, if they would be true heirs. For before the law—before the law of Moses and the law of circumcision—Abraham was justified by faith and called the father of all believers. Moreover the law brings about wrath rather than grace, because no one keeps the law out of love for it and pleasure in it. What comes by the works of the law is thus disfavor rather than grace. Therefore faith alone must obtain the grace promised to Abraham, for these examples too were written for our sakes [Rom. 15:4], that we too should believe" (AE 35:373–74).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 4:1 See note, 3:1. Having shown that circumcision does not merit salvation, Paul now applies this to Abraham, the first to receive God's covenant of circumcision (Gn 17:10–14).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 4:2 Hypothetical point. Many rabbis assumed that Abraham was justified by keeping the Law perfectly. If this were true, Abraham had reason to boast. But he could not boast before God, who knew that Abraham was not justified by works but by faith.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 4:3 Elderly Abraham believed God's promise that he would be the father of a great nation (Gn 15:1–6). His faith is noted, not his works. *counted … righteousness*. Abraham did not act righteously; God declared him righteous because of his faith. "Faith itself is credited for

righteousness. Faith is the thing God declares to be righteousness. Paul adds that righteousness is credited freely" (Ap IV 89). See "righteousness," p 1904.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 4:4–5 Including works in salvation destroys grace. If we save ourselves, then God is not our Savior! God justifies sinners who cannot deserve His grace.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 4:6 *apart from works*. "For the holy apostle Paul writes, 'Of grace,' 'without merit,' 'without Law,' 'without works,' 'not of works.' All these words together mean that we are justified and saved through faith alone in Christ" (FC Ep III 10).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 4:7–8 Ps 32:1 shows how the OT teaches justification through faith. The confession reveals that David was not relying on his works, but on grace. Although we are sinners, God forgives us and covers us with His righteousness.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 4:9 *blessing*. God's forgiveness. See p 842. *We*. Paul and fellow Christians.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 4:11 *sign of … righteousness*. Not circumcision, but God's declaration—His Word—made Abraham righteous (Gn 15:6). *while … uncircumcised*. Abraham was counted as righteous before God instituted circumcision (Gn 17:10–14). *father of all who believe*. Abraham, the physical ancestor of Israel, is the spiritual ancestor of all who, like him, are justified by faith.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 4:12 *who also walk in the footsteps of the faith*. Israelites who believed what Abraham did.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 4:1–12 Abraham's circumcision did not save him; it was a response to his salvation. We are constantly tempted to give our works a role in salvation, but this detracts from God's work. Christ saves us apart from our works, so anything we do responds to what He has already done for us. • Gracious God, grant us hearts that trust like Abraham, who trusted in You alone. Thank You for declaring us righteous. In Jesus' name. Amen.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 4:13 *promise to Abraham*. God promised to multiply Abraham's descendants (Gn 15:5) and to bless all nations through him. This was a prophecy about Jesus. See note, Gn 12:3. *heir of the world*. As Abraham became the father of many nations, the world would, in a sense, belong to him. See "portion," p 7.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 4:14 *the heirs*. Those receiving the blessings promised to Abraham. See p 1902.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 4:15 Humans inevitably violate God's Law and are condemned by it. "The Law always accuses and terrifies consciences" (Ap IV 38). *no law … no transgression*. The Law stands as a boundary. Without such a boundary, there can be no violation.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 4:16 *it*. Salvation. "If the promise were to depend upon our works, it would not be sure…. When would we know that we had received it?" (Ap XX 87). *all his offspring … us all*. All who share Abraham's faith.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 4:17 *I have made you*. God's promise, spoken before Abraham's son Isaac was born, was so certain that it is in the past tense: I have done this. *presence of the God*. God personally spoke this promise to Abraham. It did not come through another person. *who gives life … do not exist*. God's power is seen in His gift of life and in creation.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 4:18 Abraham's descendants would be as numerous as the stars in the sky.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 4:19 *weaken in faith*. Abraham did not doubt. Faith may vary in strength, but even weak faith justifies because of Christ's work (see note, vv 20–21). *a hundred years old*. Considered too old to father a child. *barrenness of Sarah's womb*. Sarah was 90 (Gn 17:17), past childbearing age.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 4:20–21 These things can only be truly said of Abraham as a forgiven sinner. His actions demonstrate some doubts (cf Gn 16). When sins are forgiven, only the fruit of faith remains.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 4:20 *strong*. Abraham drew strength and confidence from his faith.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 4:24 *It*. Faith. *Him who raised*. The Father, working through the Holy Spirit (cf 8:11). The entire Trinity was involved in the resurrection.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 4:25 The crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus are, essentially, one act. Jesus was crucified to pay the penalty for our sins. His resurrection demonstrates His power, assures us that God approves of His work, and is a promise of our resurrection (1Co 15:17).
ROMANS—NOTE ON 4:13–25 Abraham trusted that God was able to do what He promised. Trials and challenges may tempt us to doubt God's promises. As He did with Abraham, God will strengthen our faith, assure us

of His promises, help us to trust, and fulfill all He said He would do. • Lord, I believe. Assure me when I doubt, and strengthen my faith. Amen.

ROMANS—NOTE ON **Ch 5** Luth: "In chapter 5 [Paul] comes to the fruits and works of faith, such as peace, joy, love to God and to every man, as well as confidence, assurance, boldness, courage, and hope amid tribulation and suffering. For all this follows, if faith be true, because of the superabundant goodness that God shows us in Christ, causing Christ to die for us before we could ask it of him, indeed, while we were still enemies. Thus we have it that faith justifies without any works; and yet it does not follow that men are therefore to do no good works, but rather that the genuine works will not be lacking. Of these the work-righteous saints know nothing. They dream up works of their own in which there is no peace, joy, confidence, love, hope, boldness, or any of the qualities of true Christian work and faith.

"After this he digresses and makes a pleasant excursion, telling whence come sin and righteousness, death and life, and comparing Adam and Christ. He means to say that Christ had to come as a second Adam bequeathing his righteousness to us through a new spiritual birth in faith, just as the first Adam bequeathed sin to us through the old fleshly birth. Thus he declares and proves that no one by his own works can raise himself out of sin into righteousness, any more than he can prevent the birth of his own body. This is proved also by the fact that the divine law—which ought to assist toward righteousness, if anything can—has not only not helped, but has even increased sin. For the more the law forbids, the more our evil nature hates the law, and the more it wants to give reign to its own lust. Thus the law makes Christ all the more necessary, and more grace is needed to help our nature" (AE 35:374–75).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 5:1 *justified by faith*. Not by works; summary of chs 1–4. See p 1903. *peace with God*. Justification does not merely mean escaping punishment; we are now in a positive relationship with God. See p 1903. Luth: "Note how the apostle places this spiritual peace only after righteousness has preceded it. For first he says, 'since we have been justified … by faith,' and then 'we have peace' " (AE 25:285). "Spiritually inexperienced people despise this teaching. However, God-fearing and anxious consciences find by experience that it brings the greatest consolation" (AC XX 15).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 5:2 *grace in which we stand*. Grace is not a one-time gift; we live in it eternally. Chrys: "If then He has brought us near to Himself, when we were far off, much more will He keep us now that we are near" (*NPNF* 1 11:396). *hope of the glory of God*. The promise of eternal life in heaven. See p 1903. "St. Paul … credits the beginning, middle, and end to *faith alone*" (FC SD IV 34).
ROMANS—NOTE ON 5:3–5 Paul is not listing virtues that his readers will achieve by their own will. These are effects of the Holy Spirit's work in Christian lives. As God helps us through suffering, He teaches endurance, He develops character in us, and He gives us hope. Suffering is transformed by our relationship with God.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 5:3 *rejoice in our sufferings*. Suffering cannot steal the peace Christ brings. Christians do not rejoice in suffering per se, but they realize that God can produce good things through suffering. See p 837.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 5:5 *put us to shame*. By being false. *poured into our hearts*. An abundance of love. *Holy Spirit … given to us*. The indwelling Holy Spirit shows that our hope is not misplaced. See p 1920.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 5:6 *still weak*. Gk term describes someone afflicted with illness, one who is completely powerless. *right time*. The perfect timing, known by God.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 5:7–8 Humans are reluctant to sacrifice for others. A few people might die for one who seemed particularly righteous or for one who had done them some good, but these are rare occurrences. Christ died, not for righteous people or for those who had helped Him, but for sinners. This is grace. See "grace," p 1902.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 5:9 *justified by His blood*. Our redemption required Christ's sacrifice. *wrath of God*. We may experience the temporal consequence of sin, but the justified never experience God's wrath in eternity. See note, 1:18.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 5:10 *enemies*. Candid assessment of sin. We were completely opposed to God. *reconciled*. A personal, loving relationship between God and humans has been restored by Christ. See note, 2Co 5:18. *saved by His life*. Christ's resurrection brings salvation. See "save," p 1904.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 5:11 Christians pondering what they have received through Christ's death and resurrection will respond in worship and praise.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 5:1–11 We naturally seek to avoid pain and suffering. Yet, there are times when suffering is unavoidable. Focused on

Christ's suffering, death, and resurrection, we know that suffering is not the whole story. God will use afflictions for our good and to bless others. He will keep His promises, and we will overcome our sufferings by faith. • Lord Christ, You suffered for us. When we must suffer, lead us in faith. Amen.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 5:12 *sin … one man*. There was no sin in God's perfect creation until the fall of Adam (Gn 3:1–7). *death through sin*. Death is a consequence of sin. *spread*. Parents have transmitted mortality to their children since the fall. *all sinned*. Adam's fall brought sin to all humanity. We inherited his guilt and the desire to sin. Here, Paul stops abruptly, confronting us with the reality of original sin and our guilt. "This hereditary sin is such a deep corruption of nature that no reason can understand it. Rather, it must be believed from the revelation of Scripture" (SA III I 3). See p 959.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 5:13 Though the Torah had not yet been revealed, Adam had heard and broken God's Law. See note, v 12.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 5:14 *death reigned*. All humans were mortal and under death's power. *Moses*. The writer of God's Law (Torah). *not like the transgression of Adam*. Adam violated a specific command that he heard from God. Others may not have heard the command as clearly as Adam did, but they still sinned. *type*. See p 1904. *one who was to come*. Adam prefigured and foreshadowed Christ (cf vv 15–17).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 5:15 *free gift*. God's grace in Christ. *trespass*. Adam's sin. Adam, with his sin, is not a perfect parallel to Christ with His grace. *many … one*. Rabbinic form of logic uses contrast to show that one man saved everyone. *many died*. All humans are subject to death. *grace of God … free gift*. The terms complement and reinforce each other. See "grace," p 1902.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 5:16 *result … judgment*. Sin rightly resulted in judgment. *one … many*. See note, v 15.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 5:17 *death reigned through that one man*. Cf vv 12, 14. The death Adam merited spread to all humanity. *grace … free gift of righteousness*. God gives Christ's righteousness to cover our sin. See note, 6:23; see also p 1902. *reign in life … Jesus Christ*. Death no longer reigns over God's people; God has restored our dominion in life. Cf Ps 8:6–7.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 5:18 *one act of righteousness*. Christ's work in death and resurrection. *one … all men*. See note, v 15.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 5:19 *one … many*. See note, v 15. *obedience*. Christ's fulfillment of the Law and substitutionary death. "God's eternal, unchangeable righteousness, revealed in the Law, has been satisfied" (FC SD III 57).
ROMANS—NOTE ON 5:20 *increase the trespass*. The Law reveals sinfulness. This is its "second use," a mirror to show sin. *grace abounded all the more*. God's grace is enough to forgive every sin revealed by the Law. "Mercy is more comprehensive than sin" (Ap V 29).
ROMANS—NOTE ON 5:21 *grace … righteousness*. Grace is concretely expressed in Christ's work, which declares sinners righteous. See p 1902. *leading to eternal life*. Or, "into" eternal life. Christ's righteousness gives eternal life to sinners.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 5:12–21 Adam's sin brought guilt, the desire to sin, and mortality to all humans. We continue to sin and deserve condemnation. Praise God, He did not stop with Adam. He sent a Second Adam to begin a new humanity. Christ fulfilled the Law. He was obedient to the Father, and He paid the penalty for our sin. One man—Christ—has redeemed us and changed humanity forever. • O Lord, Your grace abounds for me so that I may enjoy justification, life, and peace as Adam enjoyed before the fall into sin. Reign over me, gracious Lord, that I may reign over trespasses and death, inheriting all the blessings of the Second Adam—Jesus. Amen.
ROMANS—NOTE ON **Ch 6** Luth: "In chapter 6 [Paul] takes up the special work of faith, the conflict of the spirit with the flesh for the complete slaying of the sin and lust that remain after we are justified. He teaches us that we are not by faith so freed from sin that we can be idle, slack, and careless, as though there were no longer any sin in us. Sin is present; but it is no longer reckoned for our condemnation, because of the faith that is struggling against it. Therefore we have enough to do all our life long in taming the body, slaying its lusts, and compelling its members to obey the spirit and not the lusts. Thus we become like the death and resurrection of Christ, and complete our baptism—which signifies the death of sin and the new life of grace—until we are entirely purified of sin, and even our bodies rise again with Christ and live forever.

"All this we can do, he says, because we are under grace and not under law. He himself explains what this means. To be without the law is not the same thing as to have no laws and to be able to do what one pleases. Rather

we are under the law when, without grace, we occupy ourselves with the works of the law. Then sin certainly rules [us] through the law, for no one loves the law by nature; and that is great sin. Grace, however, makes the law dear to us; then sin is no longer present, and the law is no longer against us but one with us.

"This is the true freedom from sin and from the law. He writes about this down to the end of the chapter, saying that it is a freedom only to do good with pleasure and to live well without the compulsion of the law. Therefore this freedom is a spiritual freedom, which does not overthrow the law but presents what the law demands, namely, pleasure [in the law] and love [for it] whereby the law is quieted and no longer drives men or makes demands of them. It is just as if you owed a debt to your overlord and could not pay it. There are two ways in which you could rid yourself of the debt: either he would take nothing from you and would tear up the account, or some good man would pay it for you and give you the means to satisfy the account. It is in this latter way that Christ has made us free from the law. Our freedom is, therefore, no carefree fleshly freedom which is not obligated to do anything, but a freedom that does many works of all kinds, and is free of the demands and obligations of the law" (AE 35:375–76).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 6:1–2 Paul forcefully rejects the notion that we should ignore God's will and deliberately sin, knowing that He will forgive. That is an abuse of grace. *we*. Paul and fellow Christians.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 6:2 *died to sin*. In Baptism, God applies Christ's death to us so that we receive the benefits of Christ's sacrifice. See SC, Baptism, pp xxxix–xl. Belonging to Him, we reject the illogical question in v 1.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 6:3 *baptized into Christ Jesus*. Baptism connects us with Christ's work, clothing us in His righteousness. *baptized into His death?* Christ paid the penalty of our sin. Christ's work is applied to us in Baptism.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 6:4 *buried … by baptism*. As Jesus was covered by the earth in His burial, we are buried in baptismal water. Early Christian baptismal practices reflected the Jewish *tebilah* rite of purification, which was by immersion. However, there were other ways to wash or baptize. See p 1369. *just as Christ was raised*. We are united to Christ's death and burial so that we will be united to His resurrection and life. *by the glory of the Father*. God's power was gloriously revealed in the resurrection. *walk in*

newness of life. Christ's work gives us a new life, free from the guilt of sin. Luth: "Imagine there was a doctor somewhere who understood the art of saving people from death or, even though they died, could restore them quickly to life so that they would afterward live forever. Oh, how the world would pour in money like snow and rain. No one could find access to him because of the throng of the rich! But here in Baptism there is freely brought to everyone's door such a treasure and medicine that it utterly destroys death and preserves all people alive" (LC IV 43).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 6:5 *united with Him*. Christ identifies Himself with us; His death pays for our sins, and His righteousness is credited to us. *a death like His*. His death was on the cross; ours is in Baptism, which gives the benefits of His work on the cross. *a resurrection like His*. New life has already begun for the child of God; at Christ's return, our bodies will be raised to life again.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 6:6 *old self*. Our sinful nature. *body of sin*. The whole person, controlled by sin. *brought to nothing*. Loses its destructive power. *enslaved to sin*. Completely controlled by the sinful nature. "The Law of the Lord is also necessary so that the old Adam … may not use his own will, but may be subdued against his will" (FC Ep VI 4).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 6:7 Those crucified with Christ in Baptism have been freed from sin's effects.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 6:9 Christ lives eternally. He is not subject to death; He conquered it.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 6:10 *He died to sin*. Chrys: "He was not subject even to [sin], but for our sin, that He might destroy it, and cut away its sinews and all its power, therefore He died" (*NPNF* 1 11:410). *once for all*. Christ's single death paid for all sins. *He lives to God*. Christ's eternal life is devoted to the Father.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 6:11 Because Christ has united Himself to us, we do not use forgiveness as an excuse to sin (v 1); instead, we joyfully live in service to Him. *in Christ Jesus*. See note, 8:1.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 6:12 *reign in your mortal body*. Christians are called to struggle against sin. The impulse to sin remains in us even after we receive God's forgiveness.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 6:13 Having been redeemed, we should not waste our lives pursuing opportunities to sin; we are called to follow and serve Christ. *members*. See p 1903.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 6:14 Sin does not control our lives (cf v 9). "The Holy Spirit does not permit sin to have dominion, to gain the upper hand so it can be carried out, but represses and restrains it from doing what it wants. If sin does what it wants, the Holy Spirit and faith are not present" (SA III III 44). *not under law but under grace*. For true good works, we are motivated by the Gospel, not the Law. God's grace changes our lives. See "grace," p 1902.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 6:1–14 We may be tempted to make grace an invitation to sin. Because God will forgive me, why not do what I want? This immature attitude misses this point: Christ unites Himself to us. In His death and resurrection, we receive forgiveness and life. He calls us to live in His life, not to turn back to a life dominated by sin. He enables us to live in the freedom of His grace. • Risen Savior, You died my death and gave me Your life. Abide with me that I may walk with You. Amen.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 6:15 Paul again asks if forgiveness provides an excuse to sin.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 6:16 Whatever we choose to serve, whether God or sin, will control us and shape our lives.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 6:17 *obedient from the heart*. Not forced obedience, but a willing commitment. *standard of teaching*. The content of faith—the Gospel. *committed*. The Romans did not commit themselves; they were committed, by God's power, in Baptism.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 6:18 *free from sin*. The guilt and dominion of sin have been removed by Christ. *slaves of righteousness*. Every aspect of our lives is used in service to God.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 6:19 *human terms*. Image of slavery illustrates the fact that we will serve something or someone. However, the illustration needs to be understood properly, lest we think it burdensome to serve God. See p 101. *your natural limitations*. The Romans are prone to fall into sin and need to be encouraged to serve God. Cf 12:1. *sanctification*. Gk *hagiasmos*, "holiness." See "saints," p 1904. Lives lived in response to the Gospel seek to serve God and others.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 6:20 One who serves sin has no desire to serve God and pays little attention to His will.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 6:21 *what fruit*. Rotten results of sinful actions. *now ashamed?* Only after conversion did the Romans fully recognize the sinfulness of their past lives. *end … death*. Unforgiven sin results in death.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 6:22 *slaves of God*. See p 101. *fruit … sanctification*. Lives devoted to sin yield sinful results (v 21); lives devoted to God yield holy results. The Holy Spirit sanctifies us. See p 1902. *its end, eternal life*. Sanctification does not earn eternal life. Christ won salvation and eternal life; through faith, the Holy Spirit imparts them to us and sanctifies us.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 6:23 *wages of sin*. Death is the just punishment for sin. "All preparation for condemnation is by the devil and a person, through sin. In no way does it come from God, who does not want any person to be damned" (SD XI 81). *free gift*. Nothing can earn God's grace. He gives it to people who can never deserve it, for Christ's sake (cf 5:17). Chrys: "After speaking of the wages of sin … he does not say, the wages of good deeds, 'but the gift of God;' to show, that it was not of themselves that they were freed, nor was it a due they received, neither yet a return, nor a recompense of labors, but by grace" (*NPNF* 1 11:417). *in Christ Jesus*. See note, 8:1.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 6:15–23 Although many people consider freedom to be the ultimate human right, no one is truly free spiritually. We were slaves to sin and bound to death. Knowing this, Jesus came to serve us by giving His life on the cross and rising for us. Freed from sin, we can now serve God. Only when we are "slaves" to God will we have freedom to be the people He created us to be. • My Savior, thank You for serving me. Lead me to serve You and others. Amen.

ROMANS—NOTE ON **Ch 7** Luth: "In chapter 7 [Paul] supports this [freedom] with an analogy from married life. When a man dies, his wife is also alone, and thus the one is released entirely from the other. Not that the wife cannot or ought not take another husband, but rather that she is now for the first time really free to take another—something which she could not do previously, before she was free from her husband. So our conscience is bound to the law, under the old man of sin; when he is slain by the Spirit, then the conscience is free, and the one is released from the other. Not that the conscience is to do nothing, but rather that it is now for the first time really free to hold fast to Christ, the second husband, and bring forth the fruit of life.

"Then he depicts more fully the nature of sin and of the law, how by means of the law sin now stirs and becomes mighty. The old man comes to hate the law all the more because he cannot pay what the law demands. Sin is his nature and of himself he can do nothing but sin; therefore the law to

him is death and torment. Not that the law is bad, but the old man's evil nature cannot endure the good, and the law demands good of him; just as a sick man cannot stand it when he is required to run and jump and do the works of a well man.

"Therefore St. Paul here concludes that the law, correctly understood and thoroughly grasped, does nothing more than to remind us of our sin, and to slay us by it, making us liable to eternal wrath. All this is fully learned and experienced by our conscience, when it is really struck by the law. Therefore a person must have something other than the law, something more than the law, to make him righteous and save him. But they who do not correctly understand the law are blind. They go ahead in their presumption, thinking to satisfy the law by means of their deeds, not knowing how much the law demands, namely, a willing and happy heart. Therefore they do not see Moses clearly; the veil is put between them and him, and covers him [Exod. 34:29–35; II Cor. 3:12–16].

"Then he shows how spirit and flesh struggle with one another in a man. He uses himself as an example, in order that we may learn how properly to understand the work of slaying sin within us. He calls both the spirit and the flesh 'laws'; for just as it is in the nature of the divine law to drive men and make demands of them, so the flesh drives men and makes demands. It rages against the spirit, and will have its own way. The spirit, in turn, drives men and makes demands contrary to the flesh, and will have its own way. This tension lasts in us as long as we live; though in one person it is greater, in another less, according as the spirit or the flesh is stronger. Nevertheless the whole man is himself both spirit and flesh, and he fights with himself until he becomes wholly spiritual" (AE 35:376–77).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 7:1 *brothers*. Intimate term introduces a section revealing Paul's personal struggles. See note, 1:13. *those who know the law*. Either Jews or Gentiles familiar with the Law would know the laws of marriage (vv 2–3). *binding*. The Law demands obedience. *as long as he lives?* Laws apply only to living people.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 7:2–3 View of marriage reflects teachings of the Torah, but would also have been familiar to most Gentiles.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 7:2 A widowed spouse does not violate wedding vows by remarrying.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 7:4 The Law was fulfilled by Jesus' obedience and sacrificial death. United to Him in Baptism (6:3–5), we are now free

from the Law's condemnation. See note, 8:1. *bear fruit*. See note, 6:22. Our lives are devoted to God's service.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 7:5 *living in the flesh*. Controlled by sin. *flesh*. See p 1902. *passions*. Can be sinful or righteous; Paul describes control by sinful desires. *aroused by the law*. Rebellion against the Law may incline sinners to commit more sins. Mel: "The Law even increased sin. For when it accuses and terrifies, doubt is kindled, and there follows indignation against God and despair" (*Romans*, p 153). *members*. See p 1903. *fruit for death*. Apart from Christ, our lives serve sin, not God. This leads to death.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 7:6 *now … released from the law*. United to Christ, we have been freed from the Law. *new way of the Spirit*. A life of faith, given by the Holy Spirit, who sanctifies. See p 1920. *old … written code*. The Law, epitomized in the Ten Commandments. The Law can command but cannot empower us to keep it.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 7:1–6 As the Law confronts fallen human nature, it accuses and condemns, revealing sinfulness and the unreachable standard of God's holiness. Faithless people may be driven to sin and despair by the Law (v 5). Thanks be to God, in Christ we have died to the Law (v 4). Now we need not live in bondage and fear, but in a new life in the Spirit. • O Holy Spirit, fill me with faith and new life, so that I may bear the fruit of love for You. Amen.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 7:7 More rhetorical questions from Paul (cf 6:1, 15). *we*. Christians who have been "released from the Law" (v 6). *law*. See p 1911. *covet*. The internal sin of evil desires leads to outward sinful acts, yet is not recognized as sinful until we hear God's forbidding command. "Defects and concupiscence are both sin and punishment" (Ap II 47).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 7:8 *sin, seizing*. Personification shows sin's iron grip, which corrupts even our hearing of the Commandments. *covetousness*. God's Ninth and Tenth Commandments may cause fallen humans to rebel and do the exact opposite. *apart from the law, sin lies dead*. Something is only sinful if God forbids it. The Law naturally stirs up rebellion in sinners.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 7:9 *once alive apart from the law*. Paul thought that he was alive and keeping the Law, but he was really dead in sin (Eph 2:1–2). *sin came alive*. He realized sin and guilt had been in him all along.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 7:10 One who kept the Law perfectly was promised life (Lv 18:5), but no sinful human could reach this standard of holiness.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 7:11 *deceived me*. Sin is personified as the fall (Gn 3). Paul fell into sin just as Adam fell.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 7:12 The Law's effect shows a problem in us, not in the Law. God's Law remains good, even though we cannot keep it.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 7:13 *through what is good*. God's Law, intended for our good (v 12). *sinful beyond measure*. Sin is not inconsequential. We are not to excuse our sins; we are completely sinful.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 7:14 *law is spiritual*. Of divine origin. *of the flesh*. Part of the fallen world. See note, v 5. *sold under sin*. See p 101.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 7:15–20 As a Christian, Paul struggles with his sinful nature. He has sinful desires but knows they are wrong. He tries to avoid sin but inevitably fails. Even as a Christian, he cannot overcome sin by his efforts. Luth: "Both expressions are true, that he himself does it and he himself does not do it. He is like a horseman. When his horses do not trot the way he wants them to, it is he himself and yet not he himself who makes the horse run in such and such a way. For the horse is not without him, and he is not without the horse. But because a carnal man certainly consents to the law of his members, he certainly himself does what sin does" (AE 25:331; see SA III III 40).
ROMANS—NOTE ON 7:21 *a law*. A regular occurrence: Whenever Paul attempts good, he still sins. See p 1911.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 7:22 *delight*. Although our fallen nature rebels, the new nature rejoices in God's truth. *law*. See p 1911. *my inner being*. God's redeemed and forgiven child. See "soul," note, Ps 103:1–2.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 7:23 *my members*. See p 1903. *law of my mind*. The inner being (v 22) that delights in God's Word. *law of sin*. The power or control of sin over us. See p 1911.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 7:24 *Wretched*. Paul detests his continued sinfulness. *body of death?* This enslaving sin merits death.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 7:25 *with my mind*. We are fallen sinners who are bound to sin, yet as God's new creation we want to serve and obey Him. Paul neither ignores his sinfulness nor gives up. He relies on Christ alone. Luth: "The old man is infected with all vices and has by nature nothing good in him [Romans 7:18]. Now, when we have come into Christ's kingdom [John 3:5], these things must daily decrease. The longer we live the more we become gentle, patient, meek, and ever turn away from unbelief, greed, hatred, envy, and arrogance" (LC IV 66–67).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 7:7–25 Our struggle with sin is not a past event; it is a present reality. We know God's will and desire to serve Him, but we cannot overcome sin. Even if we try, we fail. We cry out, "Who will deliver me from this body of death?" There is only one answer: "Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!" Jesus rescues us. Though we sin daily, He continues to forgive and restore us. • Lord Jesus, I love You. Lead me in daily repentance. Forgive my sin and strengthen my faith. By Your Spirit, deliver me. Amen.

ROMANS—NOTE ON **Ch 8** Begins with "no condemnation … in Christ" and closes with the victorious affirmation of no separation from God's love in Christ. In between is an unparalleled presentation of the Spirit's work (referred to 19 times in vv 1–27) to sanctify and keep us in the faith. There are no imperatives in the chapter, for we are led by the Spirit, not driven by the Law. Luth: "In chapter 8 [Paul] comforts these fighters, telling them that this flesh does not condemn them. He shows further what the nature of flesh and spirit is, and how the Spirit comes from Christ. Christ has given us his Holy Spirit; he makes us spiritual and subdues the flesh, and assures us that we are still God's children, however hard sin may be raging within us, so long as we follow the spirit and resist sin to slay it. Since, however, nothing else is so good for the mortifying of the flesh as the cross and suffering, he comforts us in suffering with the support of the Spirit of love, and of the whole creation, namely, that the Spirit sighs within us and the creation longs with us that we may be rid of the flesh and of sin. So we see that these three chapters (6–8) drive home the one task of faith, which is to slay the old Adam and subdue the flesh" (AE 35:377–78).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 8:1 *now no condemnation*. God's Law declares that all people are guilty of sin and deserve to die (cf 7:5, 10–11, 13, 24). Paul now concisely summarizes God's reverse declaration for those in Christ: "Not guilty!" See note, v 3. Luth: "We fell under God's wrath and displeasure and were doomed to eternal damnation, just as we had merited and deserved. There was no counsel, help, or comfort until this only and eternal Son of God—in His immeasurable goodness—had compassion upon our misery and wretchedness. He came from heaven to help us [John 1:9]. So those tyrants and jailers are all expelled now. In their place has come Jesus Christ, Lord of life, righteousness, every blessing, and salvation. He has delivered us poor, lost people from hell's jaws, has won us, has made us free [Romans 8:1–2], and has brought us again into the Father's favor and

grace" (LC II 28–30). *in Christ Jesus*. Expression in Rm for union with Christ and His saving work (3:24; 6:11, 23; 8:39; 15:17; 16:3). Those who believe and are baptized into Him (6:3–4) are now and forever free from the Law's cold verdict and terrifying sentence. See p 1903.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 8:2 *law*. "Principle" here (see note, 3:27), something like today's "operating system." See p 1911. *Spirit of life*. The Holy Spirit "daily cleanses and sweeps out the remaining sins and works to make a person truly pure and holy" (SA III III 40). *set you free*. Freedom from a binding relationship of ownership or control and authority. See p 101. *law of sin and death*. System in which sin brings death (6:16, 21, 23) and the Law condemns to death (7:5, 10–11, 13, 24).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 8:3 *law, weakened by the flesh*. The Law is good (7:12), but it is powerless because the sinful nature cannot keep it. *sending His own Son*. Expression implies Christ's preexistence. *likeness of sinful flesh*. Paul guards against two opposing errors: that Jesus was Himself sinful like other human beings, or that He did not become fully human. Jesus is completely like us (fully human), yet without sin (2Co 5:21; Heb 4:15). *condemned*. See p 1902. Cf v 1. Sin personified was sentenced to die and executed when Jesus died—in the very realm where it previously reigned: the flesh.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 8:4 *righteous requirement*. Gk *dikaioma*, see p 1904. Reference to God's will revealed in the Law. *might be fulfilled in us*. God is the one who fulfills the Law for us. Note the passive voice of the verb. Cf Php 2:13. *walk*. See p 7. Used by Jewish rabbis to denote lifestyle of obedience to the Law (cf Eph 5:2). *according to the Spirit*. Under the Spirit's power and direction. See p 1920.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 8:5 *things of the flesh*. Everything that our fallen, self-centered human nature desires and does (cf Gal 5:16–21). *things of the Spirit*. New mind-set and actions that the Spirit produces (cf Gal 5:22–23).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 8:6 *death*. Spiritual death and eternal separation from God. *life and peace*. Total well-being. These eternal blessings are already ours (cf v 1).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 8:7–8 Unregenerate mind, heart, and will are "entirely evil, perverse, and hostile to God" (FC SD II 17). *submit*. To be subject to, and thus obey. *cannot please God*. Those controlled by their sinful nature have no power whatsoever to please God.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 8:9 *You*. Plural in Gk. Paul now addresses his readers, the Christians at Rome. *Spirit of God … Spirit of Christ*. As the Nicene Creed confesses, the Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son. *dwells in you*. Christians as a body (the Church) are the place of God's abiding presence (1Co 3:16–17; 2Co 6:16–18; Eph 2:21–22). The Third Person of the Trinity, not merely some "force," resides in them. *not belong to Him*. Lit, "not His." A person in whom the Spirit does not dwell is not a Christian. See p 1920.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 8:10 Paul describes the forces at work within a believer. *Christ is in you*. Where the Spirit is, there is Christ. *you*. Plural, meaning the congregation. *the body is dead*. From birth, our body travels toward death. It is thus a "body of death" (7:24; cf 6:12; 8:11b). *Spirit is life*. May mean the Holy Spirit, through whom the dead are raised (8:11b), or the believer's renewed spirit. *righteousness*. See note, 1:17.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 8:11 *Him who raised*. God the Father (4:24; Ac 2:32). *will also give life*. According to Paul, the Spirit is a down payment, or guarantee, of our resurrection from the dead (v 23; cf 2Co 1:22; 5:1–5; Eph 1:13–14).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 8:1–11 Because Christ justifies sinners, God's life-giving Spirit dwells in believers. He frees us from the bondage of sin and death. Those who are preoccupied with satisfying their selfish desires often become angry with God and rebel against Him. God promises release from this deadly cycle and brings life and peace. • Father, by Your Spirit, direct our hearts to Christ, where true joys are found. Amen.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 8:12 *brothers*. See note, 1:13. *debtors, not to the flesh*. Our fallen nature no longer has any claim on us (vv 1–11). Therefore, we are no longer obligated to obey its impulses or satisfy its desires (contrary to the flesh's claim "I owe it to myself"; cf Gal 5:16).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 8:13 *live according to the flesh*. A lifestyle marked by personal refusal to repudiate sin or "renounce the Devil and all his works and all his ways" (Rite of Baptism, *LSB*, pp 268–71). *by the Spirit*. Through the power or agency of the Holy Spirit. *put to death*. Gk indicates ongoing action, as in extracting a bad tooth (cf Gal 5:4; Mk 9:43–47). Luther "taught that these remnants of original sin [after Baptism] are not, by nature, adiaphora in people, but that we need Christ's grace so that they are not counted against us as sin. And, to put them to death [mortify them], we need

the Holy Spirit" (Ap II 45). *deeds of the body*. The body and its members are the instruments, so to speak, by which our rebellious will acts.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 8:14 *led by the Spirit*. Led, as by the hand of a beloved and trusted father, not as shackled prisoners or sternly disciplined troops. "Good works are evidences of [the Spirit's] presence and indwelling" (FC Ep IV 15). *sons of God*. Expression broadly means "children of God" (v 16; Gal 3:26; cf 2Co 6:18).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 8:15 *spirit of slavery*. The Holy Spirit does not place us back under the Law's terrifying condemnation. *adoption*. See p 1901. Those baptized into Christ (ch 6) receive full status as God's children. *Abba!* Aram "Father." Conveys childlike intimacy and confidence (Mk 14:36; Gal 4:6). Perhaps an expression from the baptismal liturgy. Jesus gave us the privilege of addressing God as our dear Father ("Abba!") when He gave us the Lord's Prayer (cf Mt 6:9–13).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 8:16 The Spirit causes us to believe in our gracious Father, to whom Christ has given us access (Jn 14:6; Eph 3:11–12; see AE 25:358–60).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 8:17 *heirs*. Our full status as God's children makes us beneficiaries of everything Christ possesses. We are truly His co-heirs (see Luther's "glorious exchange"; AE 51:316). *suffer with Him*. As Christ suffered, Christians will, and even must, suffer because of their allegiance to Him (2Co 1:5; Php 3:10; cf Col 1:24; 2Tm 2:11–12). *glorified with Him*. As Christ entered "into His glory" (Lk 24:26), so shall we—with joy (1Pt 4:13)!

ROMANS—NOTE ON 8:12–17 The Holy Spirit leads us to trust confidently that we are heirs, privileged to call God "our Father" and to receive eternal glory at the end of present suffering. The path to glory, however, is not an easy street, for it entails daily rejection of personal sins. When God's judgment frightens us, the Spirit assures us that God loves us in Christ. • Lord, by Your Spirit, comfort us when we are afraid. Lead us to see You as our dear Father and to see ourselves as Your dear children. Amen.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 8:18 *sufferings*. Forms of distress and danger because of loyalty to Christ, as in v 35. Present anguish also includes pains of human frailty brought on by the fall (cf vv 19–23). See pp 779–82. *glory*. See p 1902. God's radiant presence awaiting believers in heaven (2Co 4:17).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 8:19 *creation*. Personification of all created beings and things. *waits*. Intense expectation. *revealing of the sons of God*. Full disclosure of the new, transformed existence in heaven.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 8:20 *creation was subjected to futility*. Cf Gn 3:17–19 and God's curse on the ground. *him*. Adam. Because of Adam's sin, the creation also came under God's judgment. Nothing in creation has since been able to fulfill its God-given purposes. *in hope*. See note, Gn 3:15; cf Eph 1:10; Php 2:10–11; Col 1:20.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 8:21 When freedom from "the law of sin and death" (v 2) reaches its glorious consummation, creation itself will experience a new beginning (cf Ps 102:25–28; Is 35; 65:17–25). *bondage to corruption*. Creation is now trapped in the endless cycle of deterioration leading to death. *freedom of the glory of the children of God*. Paul focuses on the indescribable glory that awaits believers.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 8:22 Powerful metaphor for creation's yearning to be free from the change and death in its current state. *pains of childbirth*. Gk implies that there will be an end to the anguish.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 8:23 *firstfruits of the Spirit*. As the firstfruits of the harvest (Ex 23:19; Lv 23:10–11; Nu 18:12; Dt 18:4) indicate more is to come, so the Holy Spirit and His work guarantee future blessing (see notes, v 11; 1Co 15:20). *groan inwardly*. See note, v 22. *adoption*. See p 1901. Christians have this status now (v 15), and yet do not have it in its fullness (v 19). *redemption of our bodies*. Transformation of our bodies in the resurrection (Php 3:21).
ROMANS—NOTE ON 8:24–25 *hope*. See p 1903.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 8:26 *Spirit helps us*. He comes to assist us. *weakness*. Frailty of our present condition hinders our prayer life. *what to pray*. Our mental horizons are severely limited compared to what God knows and wills. *the Spirit Himself intercedes*. Christ prays for us in heaven (v 34; Heb 7:25; 1Jn 2:1), but the Spirit intercedes within us. *groanings too deep for words*. Gk *alaletos*, without words to express present longings (cf v 23), but the Spirit brings these longings to God.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 8:27 *He*. God. *mind of the Spirit*. What the Holy Spirit is thinking. *saints*. See note, 1:7. *according to the will of God*. Lit, "according to God," i.e., in tune with His will.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 8:28 *for those who love God*. Emphasized in Gk. Not people in general, but believers, who are loved by God first (5:8; 8:35,

37, 39; 1Jn 4:19). *all things work together for good*. Even the "accidents" of history are God working for our good. *called according to His purpose*. God planned our salvation in advance. *purpose*. Gk *prothesis*, eternal election in Paul's writings (9:11; Eph 1:11; 3:11; 2Tm 1:9). The Spirit, in history, has called us by the Gospel (cf 1:7, 16–17).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 8:29 *foreknew*. Not referring to God's advance knowledge of what will happen to good and evil people alike (which indeed He has), but to His gracious choice of those called, i.e., the elect (cf 1Pt 1:1–2). *predestined*. God in grace alone made a decision beforehand (Eph 1:5, 11). For more on predestination, see chs 9–11. *conformed to the image*. God makes us to be like Jesus, Himself the image of God (2Co 4:4; Col 1:15). *firstborn*. Gk *prototokos*, signifies preeminence of the exalted Lord Jesus (see notes, Col 1:15, 18).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 8:30 Paul summarizes God's action to save, beginning with God's eternal counsel, taking place in history (including our personal history) and climaxing in glory. Paradoxically, God already accomplished this. "The entire teaching about God's purpose, counsel, will, and ordination belongs to our redemption, call, justification, and salvation" (FC SD XI 14).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 8:18–30 The Holy Spirit ministers to God's dear children by giving us hope in our suffering, help in our weakness, and assurance that all things work out to fulfill God's eternal purposes in our lives. When our hope in God dims, we easily succumb to impatience in distress. The Spirit helps us in our frailty, assuring us of God's steadfast love. • Father in heaven, never leave or forsake us. Turn our complaints into prayers and our condemnation into glory. Amen.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 8:31 Rhetorical questions demanding a powerful, even defiant, challenge: "No one!"

ROMANS—NOTE ON 8:32 *did not spare His own Son*. Just as Abraham did not withhold his only son (Gn 22:12, 16), so God gave His only Son (Jn 3:16). *gave Him up*. Gk "handed over." Judas (Jn 18:5), the chief priests and elders (Mt 27:2), the people of Jerusalem (Ac 3:13), and Pilate (Mk 15:15) all handed over, betrayed, and delivered Jesus. But here, God delivers Him over to death (4:25; cf Is 53:6, 12). *for us*. "God for us" is a "three-word summary of redemptive history" (Franzmann, p 157). *how will He not … all things?* Another rhetorical question. Everything belonging to God's Son now also belongs, by grace, to believers, truly co-heirs (see note, v 17).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 8:33 Using legal language, Paul asks what prosecutor can bring any charges against the elect. The answer: none; the case is closed. God has declared the defendant not guilty! *God's elect?* Those whom God has graciously chosen from eternity. *justifies*. "The word *justify* means … 'to absolve, that is, to declare free from sins' " (FC Ep III 7).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 8:34 *Who is to condemn?* See notes, vv 1, 3. *Christ Jesus … hand of God*. Because Christ, our Savior, died for our sins, was raised by God for our justification (4:25), and has been exalted to God's throne on high, we know that there is "now no condemnation" (v 1). *interceding*. From Christ's heavenly office "as the Mediator, Atoning Sacrifice, High Priest, and Intercessor" before God, "He has promised that He will hear our prayer" and that this is "the worship He approves above all other worship, that He be called upon in all afflictions" (AC XXI 2–3; cf 1Jn 2:1).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 8:35 Rhetorical questions with mounting intensity. The same answer follows—"nothing and no one!" *Shall tribulation … sword?* Paul lists seven things that threaten to come between us and Christ's love—all of which Paul himself experienced. Cf 2Co 11:16–33.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 8:36 God's people were troubled, almost to despair, by the suffering they endured—a temptation familiar to all God's people.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 8:37 *more than conquerors*. Heightened form of Gk *nikao*, "to prevail completely." *loved us*. To the point of death on the cross (5:6–8). Christ gained total victory for us.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 8:38–39 Tenfold list is all-embracing inventory of superhuman realities that threaten, in vain, to break the grip of Christ's love. (See FC SD XI 48–49.)

ROMANS—NOTE ON 8:38 *angels … rulers … powers*. Unseen cosmic forces. Though created by God (Col 1:16), they now stand in opposition to God's eternal purpose because of the fall (Eph 3:10; 6:12; Col 1:16). They threaten to separate us from Christ's love, but Christ has triumphed over them (Eph 1:20–23; Col 2:15).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 8:39 *in Christ Jesus*. See note, v 1.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 8:31–39 Christ's death, resurrection, and exaltation at God's right hand guarantees our victory over anything and everything that would separate us from His love. When following Christ

brings distress, we sometimes distance ourselves from Him. But Christ never draws back from us. • Lord Jesus, though You are exalted at the Father's right hand, You still hold us. Keep us in Your love to the end. Amen.

ROMANS—NOTE ON **Chs 9–11** Paul now addresses the question of Jewish rejection of the Gospel. How can it be that the Gospel for "the Jew first" (1:16) has failed in its appeal to Israel? Is it really, therefore, the Gospel "of God" (1:1), and is it consistent with His plan of salvation? See note, 9:6. "Paul first directs people to repentance [Romans 1–2], to knowledge of sins [Romans 3:1–20], to faith in Christ [Romans 3:21–5:21], to divine obedience [Romans 6–8]. Then he speaks of the mystery of God's eternal election [Romans 9–11]. This doctrine is useful and consolatory to the person who proceeds in this way" (FC Ep XI 11).

Luth: "In chapters 9, 10, and 11 [Paul] teaches of God's eternal predestination—out of which originally proceeds who shall believe or not, who can or cannot get rid of sin—in order that our salvation may be taken entirely out of our hands and put in the hand of God alone. And this too is utterly necessary. For we are so weak and uncertain that if it depended on us, not even a single person would be saved; the devil would surely overpower us all. But since God is dependable—his predestination cannot fail, and no one can withstand him—we still have hope in the face of sin.

"Here, now, for once we must put a stop to those wicked and high flying spirits who first apply their own reason to this matter. They begin at the top to search the abyss of divine predestination, and worry in vain about whether they are predestinated. They are bound to plunge to their own destruction, either through despair, or through throwing caution to the winds.

"But you had better follow the order of this epistle. Worry first about Christ and the gospel, that you may recognize your sin and his grace. Then fight your sin, as the first eight chapters here have taught. Then, when you have reached the eighth chapter, and are under the cross and suffering, this will teach you correctly of predestination in chapters 9, 10, and 11, and how comforting it is. For in the absence of suffering and the cross and the perils of death, one cannot deal with predestination without harm and without secret anger against God. The old Adam must first die before he can tolerate this thing and drink the strong wine. Therefore beware that you do not drink wine while you are still a suckling. There is a limit, a time, and an age for every doctrine" (AE 35:378).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 9:1 *not lying*. Rhetoric, not a defense. He is setting up his new topic. *my conscience bears me witness*. Paul's clear conscience provides testimony to his truthfulness; he feels deep compulsion to speak. *in the Holy Spirit*. Paul speaks as God's child having the indwelling Spirit (8:15–16).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 9:2 Paul continually feels deep personal distress because of his sense of solidarity with his own people.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 9:3 If it were possible to ask this of God (which it really is not), Paul would share Moses' desire to be blotted out of the book of life for the sake of his people (Ex 32:32). Luth: "A most excellent and entirely apostolic way of speaking here of love both toward Christ as well as toward the Jews" (AE 25:380). *accursed*. See p 1901. *my brothers*. Only place where Paul uses this term for Jews, his kinsmen by race.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 9:4 *Israelites*. Sacred name that marks the Jews as elect and favored recipients of the revelation, the grace, and the promises of God (cf Eph 2:12). Spanning the OT, Paul gives a compact summary of the magnificent privileges belonging to God's people: *adoption*, Ex 4:22–23; *glory*, Ex 16:7, 10; 24:16; 40:34–35; 1Ki 8:10–11; *covenants*, Gn 15:18; Ex 24; 2Sm 23:5; *giving of the law*, Ex 20; Dt 4:8; *worship*, Lv 1–9; *promises*, esp messianic (2Sm 7:12, 16, 28–29; Is 9:6–7; 53; Jer 23:5; 31:31–40).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 9:5 *patriarchs*. Lit, "fathers"—Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and his 12 sons, the recipients of the promises. *their race*. Lit, "from whom," i.e., the patriarchs. *Christ who is God over all*. Some scholars place a period after "Christ" (the Gk text was originally not punctuated), ascribing this praise to "God." However, "God" is a direct reference to Christ, who is "blessed forever." Calling Jesus God would not be unusual for Paul, given what he says elsewhere (8:32, 34; Php 2:9–11; Col 2:9; see note, Rm 10:13). "Christ Jesus is now in one person at the same time true, eternal God, born of the Father from eternity, and a true man, born of the most blessed Virgin Mary" (FC SD VIII 6). *blessed forever*. *Amen*. Words common in the devotional language of Jews, who daily prayed the "Eighteen Benedictions" or blessings. Always doxological for Paul (cf 1:25; 2Co 1:3). See p 1901.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 9:6 *word of God has failed*. That Paul grieves for Israel (9:1–5) does not mean God's Word has failed to achieve its purpose (a conclusion one might draw). See p 1929. *For not all … Israel*. Key distinction to understanding chs 9–11: Israel according to physical descent and Israel according to faith in the promise (cf vv 7–8). Millennialists ignore this key distinction.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 9:7 *children of Abraham*. Descendants who believe God's promise (4:16). *his offspring*. See p 1903. Luth: "He says that those are not the children of Abraham who are his descendants merely according to the flesh but that those are his children who share his faith (Gal. 3:7). This Moses, too, implies in a hidden manner when he expressly says: 'Blessed be the Lord God of Shem' (Gen. 9:26); for he signifies thereby that the blessing is to be found only where the God of Shem is found. Therefore no Jew will share this promise unless he has the God of Shem, that is, unless he believes" (*WLS* § 2122).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 9:8 Paul's commentary on Gn 21:12 (cited in v 7). In contrast to Jewish belief that the physical descendants of Israel will naturally inherit everlasting life (see Mishnah Sanhedrin 10:1). Paul argues from Gn 21:12 that only descendants born as a result of God's promise are the "seed" (true successors of Abraham). In other words, the offspring receive the promise by faith.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 9:9 Words of promise spoken to Abraham that called Isaac into being.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 9:10 Someone in Paul's audience might argue that God chose Isaac to be the son of promise because he was born of Sarah, Abraham's wife—and not of Hagar, a slave woman. *by one man*. God's elective choice is esp clear in the case of Jacob and Esau, for both were born of the same father and mother.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 9:11 God's elective purpose has not fallen by the wayside (v 6), but remains at work in history. *not because of works … calls*. Part of v 12 in most English versions. "It is false and wrong when it is taught that not only God's mercy and Christ's most holy merit, but also something in us is a cause of God's election, on account of which God has chosen us to eternal life…. Before we were born, yes, even before the foundations of the world were laid, He elected us in Christ" (FC SD XI 88).
ROMANS—NOTE ON 9:12 *The older will serve the younger*. Esau's descendants, the Edomites, would serve Jacob's descendants, the Israelites (cf 2Sm 8:14; 1Ki 22:47). The topic here is God's work in history, not spiritual election or predestination as in 8:28–30.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 9:13 *Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated*. Refers to the nations of Israel and Edom. The "love/hate" language emphasizes preference of one over another, not literal hatred (compare Gn 29:30 to 29:31).
ROMANS—NOTE ON 9:14 Paul anticipates an objection to his argument in ch 9 thus far. *By no means!* See note, 3:4. Emphatic rejection of any implication that God is unjust for choosing one over another in Israel's history.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 9:15 God's reply to Moses' request, "Please show me Your glory," as Moses intercedes for Israel because of the worship of the golden calf. God's answer reveals that not by justice, but only by mercy can anyone (including Moses) stand before God.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 9:16 *it*. God's mercy.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 9:17 *Scripture says to Pharaoh*. Remarkable expression indicating that from Paul's perspective, Scripture is God's Word. God's word of judgment reveals that also in dealing with rebellious Pharaoh, God is free to carry out His purpose in history. See note, Ex 4:21.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 9:18 *whomever He wills*. God acts in freedom to accomplish His purpose. His actions are not fickle or arbitrary. *hardens whomever*. Cf 1:24, 26, 28; see notes, Ex 4:21; 9:12. Again, the subject here is not spiritual election or predestination.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 9:19 Second anticipated objection (cf v 14): If God's sovereign will is always done, how can anyone be held responsible for his or her actions?
ROMANS—NOTE ON 9:20 God's created humans are in no position to put God on trial. The contrast between the potter and the clay (cf Is 29:15–16; 45:10; Jer 18:1–6) shows how arrogant it is for us to act as though we can hold God accountable for His actions. The potter using a foot-powered wheel was a common sight in biblical times.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 9:21 God certainly has the right over the clay (people). The Creator is free to exercise His will and right, but that does not mean He does so without mercy.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 9:22–24 Paul responds further to any suggestion that God has acted unjustly. On the contrary, His forbearance and all-embracing mercy rule out any injustice on God's part.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 9:22 *patience*. Gk *makrothymia*, "bearing up under provocation." *vessels of wrath*. People under God's wrath. *prepared*. Implies readiness for (as in "ripe for") destruction, not irreversibly foreordained destruction.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 9:23 *glory*. See p 1902. *vessels of mercy*. People under God's mercy.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 9:24 Objects of mercy come from both Jews and Gentiles.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 9:25–26 Two quotes from the prophet Hosea. Paul contends that if God could restore the 10 tribes of Israel (Northern Kingdom; see map, p 558), who had abandoned Him, He can also call Gentiles to be the recipients of His mercy (cf 1Pt 2:10).
ROMANS—NOTE ON 9:27–28 Quotes pertain to the Jews. As the prophet Isaiah said of the exiles, "A remnant shall return … to the mighty God" (Is 10:21), so only a remnant of the Jews will be saved as God acts with speed and finality.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 9:29 Just as only a handful at Sodom and Gomorrah were spared by God's mercy, so only a small number of Jews will believe in the promise.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 9:1–29 The unbelief of his fellow Jews, to whom God had given so much, caused Paul great sorrow. Countering likely objections, Paul insists that God's Word has not failed and He is not unjust in His choices. Unbelievers sit under God's judgment, placing themselves

in spiritual peril. Yet God is patient, desiring to show mercy on us all. • Lord, give us a penitent heart and confidence in Your grace. Thank You for choosing us and calling us to faith in Christ. Amen.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 9:30 *What shall we say, then?* Rhetoric. Paul sums up a previous argument (cf 4:1; 6:1; 7:7; 9:14). *did not pursue righteousness*. In fact, Gentiles were aggressively unrighteous and ungodly (1:18–24; cf 2Tm 3:1–5), disqualifying them from attaining righteousness. That Gentiles should obtain what they did not pursue was confusing to the Jews.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 9:31 *pursued a law … righteousness*. The Jews wanted righteousness based on the Torah. *reaching*. The Gk term here means "to attain" or "arrive at" a particular state (cf Php 3:16).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 9:32 *they did not pursue it by faith*. Pursuit of the Law itself is not wrong. But a right standing with God cannot be attained by works of the Law, but only by grace through faith. Faith lays hold of Christ, who was put to death for our sins and raised for our justification (4:25). *stumbling stone*. A comparison drawn directly from Is 28:16 (cf v 33). Christ's death on the cross is offensive and arouses opposition because it undermines self-righteousness and proves that we cannot save ourselves (cf 1Co 1:23; Gal 2:21).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 9:33 *a stone of … offense*. God, in judgment, became an offense to Israel, who trusted in themselves and rejected His deliverance, even though in Is 8 God had predicted the Assyrian invasion of Israel and promised to be the Israelite's place of refuge (Is 8:13–15). *whoever believes … shame*. The Messiah, Jesus Christ, was prophesied as "a stone, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone" in Zion (Is 28:16; cf 1Pt 2:4–6; Lk 20:17–18), laid by God to rescue believers.

ROMANS—NOTE ON **Ch 10** See note, chs 9–11.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 10:1 *Brothers*. See note, 1:13. In chs 9–11, Paul is not writing an abstract treatise, but a letter to the Church communicating a deep concern for the Israelites. *them*. The Jews.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 10:2 *zeal for God*. Before his conversion, Paul was also a zealot for God, known esp for "opposing the name of Jesus of Nazareth" and all who bore that name (Ac 26:9–11; cf Ac 22:3; Gal 1:14). *knowledge*. A personal recognition of God's revelation of Himself and His saving mercy in the person of His Son, Jesus.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 10:3 *righteousness of God*. He is the giver of righteousness, the righteousness imputed to us for Christ's sake. See p 1904. *their own*. Righteousness based on their works. *did not submit*. Failed to admit guilt before God and receive His righteousness as a free gift through faith in Jesus Christ (Php 3:9).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 10:4 Cf 3:21. "To those who believe the Gospel, God forgives all their sins through Christ, adopts them as children for His sake, and out of pure grace—without any merit on their part—justifies and saves them. However, He does not do this in such a way that they may abuse God's grace and may sin hoping for grace [Romans 6:1]. Paul thoroughly and forcefully shows this in the distinction between the Law and the Gospel (2 Corinthians 3:6–9)" (FC SD V 25–26). *end*. Here, a "termination" (cessation). See p 1902. *righteousness*. Paul previously contrasted two opposing and mutually exclusive kinds of righteousness: "righteousness that is by faith" (9:30) and a righteousness "based on works," which one cannot succeed in attaining (9:31–32).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 9:30–10:4 Paul looks backward to God's sovereign choice in Israel's history (9:1–29) and forward to the necessity of faith and the guilt of unbelief (10:5–21). Every effort to get right with God by works of the Law, however sincere, is doomed to failure. God is the giver of righteousness to everyone who believes. • "O my God, in You I trust; let me not be put to shame" (Ps 25:2). Amen.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 10:5 See note, 7:10.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 10:6–7 *righteousness … says*. Paul personifies "righteousness," having it speak in the language of Dt 30:11–14. Righteousness based on Law is unattainable. But Christ is not unreachable or distantly remote. He does not require us to search for Him in inaccessible regions high or low. For He has become one of us, has died, and has risen from the dead for our justification (4:25; 6:4; 8:3).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 10:8 *near you*. Main point of comparison with what is said of the Law in Dt 30. Christ has already accomplished everything for us, and now He is easily accessible (5:1–2). *word of faith*. The Gospel is the source of faith because it both invites and creates faith.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 10:9 *confess … believe*. Two aspects of a single reality. See note, v 10. Following Dt 30:14, Paul says there is an inseparable link between faith as expressed outwardly and possessed inwardly. *heart*. See notes, Pr 2:10; Dt 6:5. *Jesus is Lord*. Early Christian confession and

clear testimony to Christ's deity (the Gk word for "Lord" was used over 6,000 times in the LXX to translate God's name Yahweh, and to identify the risen Christ; cf Php 2:9). It may have been a confession from the baptismal liturgy.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 10:10 *believes … confesses*. Reverse order from v 9 reinforces the oneness of faith and confession in the Christian experience, as well as the blessings received. "We think that the adversaries admit that confession justifies or saves, not by the outward act, but only because of the faith of the heart. Paul says that confession saves in order to show what sort of faith receives eternal life, namely, that which is firm and active. That faith, however, that does not present itself in confession is not firm" (Ap V 263–64).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 10:11 *Everyone*. Paul's wording of Is 28:16, which has already been quoted in 9:33, stresses that Christ's salvation is available to all. *not be put to shame*. Believers in Christ await a forgiving Father, not a stern, condemning Judge.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 10:12 *no distinction*. As all Jews and Gentiles are equally sinners (3:23), so the gates of God's mercy are open to all. *Lord of all*. In Christ, distinctions between Jews and Gentiles are finally irrelevant. *bestowing His riches*. God is inexhaustibly generous with His gifts (Eph 3:8) to all who embrace Him in faith, a theme esp evident in Eph (1:7–8 [grace]; 1:18 [glory]; 2:4 [mercy]; 2:7 [grace, kindness]).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 10:13 God promises deliverance to all who call on Him in faith, in the face of "the great and awesome day" of judgment (Jl 2:31). *Lord*. Paul cites Joel to give the exalted Christ the name "Lord," reaffirming Christ's deity and announcing salvation in His name (v 9).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 10:14 With mounting rhetorical force, Paul's questions are designed to teach that by God's design, faith is created only through the Word proclaimed. *preaching?* See p 1903.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 10:15–16 Paul quotes Is 52:7, where people rejoiced at the heralds who brought good news of release from the Babylonian captivity, saying "Your God reigns!" But then he quotes Is 53:1 to tell how quickly Israel rejected the Good News and to indicate that Israel's reception of God's Suffering Servant (cf Is 53:3; Mk 9:12) was not unexpected.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 10:15 *sent?* See "apostle," p 1901. Preachers proclaim as divinely authorized representatives (cf Lk 10:16). God speaks

through them (cf Rm 1:16). *How beautiful are the feet*. Proclaimers of the Gospel are a beautiful sight to behold!

ROMANS—NOTE ON 10:16 *obeyed the gospel*. See note, 1:5.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 10:17 *hearing*. NT meanings include the act of hearing, the ear, or the message heard. The message is the meaning here. "Although the work is done and the forgiveness of sins is secured by the cross [John 19:30], it cannot come to us in any other way than through the Word" (LC V 31). "It is God's will that His Word should be heard and that a person's ears should not be closed (Psalm 95:8). With this Word the Holy Spirit is present and opens hearts, so that people (like Lydia in Acts 16:14) pay attention to it and are converted only through the Holy Spirit's grace and power, who alone does the work of converting a person" (FC Ep II 5). *word of Christ*. The spoken word of the Gospel—the content being Christ—is a means by which God creates faith. "Repentance consists of two parts. One part is contrition, that is, terrors striking the conscience through the knowledge of sin. The other part is faith, which is born of the Gospel [Romans 10:17] or the Absolution and believes that for Christ's sake, sins are forgiven. It comforts the conscience and delivers it from terror. Then good works are bound to follow, which are the fruit of repentance" (AC XII 3–6).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 10:18 *have they not heard?* With this rhetorical question, Paul replies to an implied objection: the Israelites rejected the Gospel because not all had heard. Paul dismisses this excuse with a quotation from Ps 19:4. *all the earth … world*. As God makes known His presence and power in all creation, so the Gospel has been widely preached in the inhabited world.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 10:19–21 *not understand?* A second objection: Israel does not understand the Word concerning Christ. Paul cites the Law and the Prophets to prove that this excuse will not hold up, for God will provoke Israel to jealousy and anger when He reveals Himself to the Gentiles. If even the Gentiles understand, Israel cannot plead ignorance. His quotes were originally written in the contexts of God's judgment of Israel.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 10:19 *those who are not a nation.* The Gentiles.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 10:20 *those*. The Gentiles.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 10:21 *held out My hands*. Gesture of welcome. Israel's problem is much worse than ignorance. They have responded to

God's tender and gracious invitation with blatant disobedience and obstinacy.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 10:5–21 Like a loving father waiting for his children to come home, God yearns to show mercy on all (cf Lk 15:11–32). Those who refuse to accept God's gracious invitation to share in the riches of His grace are accountable to Him for their unbelief. However, Christ Jesus is always near to us in His Word. He stands ready to forgive and renew us. • We praise You, O Lord, for welcoming us through the words of all those who bring to us the Good News of Your love. Place that faith-creating Word on our lips, that we may speak to those who have not yet heard or believed. Amen.

ROMANS—NOTE ON **Ch 11** See note, chs 9–11.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 11:1 *has God rejected*. Gk grammar requires negative answer. The idea that God should push aside or repudiate His people is unthinkable (Ps 94:14; 1Sm 12:22). *By no means!* See note, 3:4. *Benjamin*. Beloved younger son of Jacob and Rachel; Jacob's only son born in the Promised Land (Gn 35:16–18). The tribe of Benjamin gave Israel her first king (Paul's namesake, Saul; 1Sm 9:1–16) and was regarded highly by Jews. Within its borders stood Jerusalem and the temple (Jgs 1:21). To belong to this tribe was a privilege that Paul stresses (Php 3:5.)

ROMANS—NOTE ON 11:2 *He foreknew*. God chose Israel to be His people through whom He would carry out His saving purpose.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 11:3–4 Two quotations dealing with Elijah. In Elijah's day, God had preserved for Himself a remnant in a nation that had, as a whole, rejected Him. So also in Paul's day, God—faithful to His promises—has kept for Himself a faithful remnant.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 11:5 *remnant*. Gk *leimma*, "small remainder." Used only here in NT; describes those who believed in the Gospel. See p 1080. *chosen by grace*. Remnant exists as a result of God's gracious election and is a sign of hope in the world.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 11:6 Grace and works are mutually exclusive. God's election of the remnant is on the basis of grace alone; works are excluded. See "grace," p 1902.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 11:7 *elect*. Those in Israel who have believed the Gospel. *hardened*. God's judgment against unbelief (see note, 9:18).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 11:8 Support for Paul's previous reference to God's judgment against those who refused to listen to God's word of judgment

and promise (cf Is 6:9–10).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 11:9–10 Psalmist's suffering at the hands of his persecutors prefigures Christ and His Passion (see the use of Ps 69 in Mt 27:34; Jn 2:17; 15:25; Ac 1:20). Paul, in turn, applies the psalm to unbelieving Israel, quoting verses that call on God to vindicate His Suffering Servant and to bring judgment on His enemies.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 11:1–10 Paul, chosen by God's grace revealed in Jesus Christ, is a living example that God has preserved for Himself a remnant in Israel. Those who become hardened and spiritually callous are in danger of God's frightening judgment. However, through the suffering for sin that Christ endured, even the sin of unbelief is forgiven in those who trust in His grace. • O Lord, may the physical descendants of Abraham receive the promised salvation delivered in the Gospel of Jesus. Amen.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 11:11 *So I ask*. The question is inevitable from what precedes. Had Israel stumbled to the point of being forever lost? *By no means!* See note, 3:4. *through their trespass*. As the outcome of their sin (rejection of the Gospel). *to make Israel jealous*. The Gentiles' salvation, in God's divine plan, was intended to lead the Jews to covet (in the good sense) the blessings of salvation for themselves. (Paul is referring to Dt 32:21.)

ROMANS—NOTE ON 11:12 *riches*. Blessings for the world. *full inclusion*. See ESV note. Expression clearly does not mean that all Jews will be saved. It could be translated with the active wording "their fulfilling" (i.e., their fulfilling of God's will). In any case, God intends in history to bring to completion the full number of those who belong to spiritual Israel ("the Israel of God," Gal 6:16). These are the true heirs of the promise through faith in Christ.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 11:13–14 *you Gentiles*. Probably the majority in the congregation. *apostle to the Gentiles*. Paul's special call (cf Ac 22:21; Gal 1:16; 2:7, 9). *my ministry*. Paul's apostolic office as Christ's servant for the Gospel's sake (cf 1Co 3:5; Eph 3:7). *save some of them*. Paul does not envision a mass conversion of the nation of Israel. This is important for the interpretation of "all Israel" in v 26. See note, v 26.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 11:15 Paradoxically, through the Israelites' rejection of the Messiah, God brought reconciliation (cf 5:10–11; 2Co 5:18–20). However, God's rejection of unbelieving Israelites was

temporary, for some would be accepted through faith and receive a new life to be consummated in the resurrection from the dead (cf Ezk 37:1–14).
ROMANS—NOTE ON 11:16 Paul uses metaphors to illustrate God's gracious election of Israel. What happened to the patriarchs (e.g., Abraham, who believed the promise) affected their descendants (v 28). As the firstfruits consecrated the whole (Lv 23:10–11; Nu 15:17–21) and branches grow from the root, so God's gracious choosing of His people leads to inclusion of others who follow later.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 11:17–24 Metaphor reflects ancient practice of invigorating an olive tree by grafting in branches from a wild tree. An olive tree grows slowly, maturing over 30 years. Pruning and grafting enables a tree to produce fruit for centuries or even millennia. See p 236. The cultured olive tree represents Israel, God's people and heirs of the promise. The wild olive tree represents the Gentiles. By faith, individual branches, Jews and Gentiles, are incorporated into God's true people, the new Israel, the Church.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 11:17 *broken off*. Equivalent expressions (e.g., "hardened," v 7; "fall," "trespass," v 11; "rejection," v 15) describe the current failure of some Israelites to believe, with the hope that they will come to faith. *were grafted*. God, by His grace, miraculously brings Gentiles into His Church, the new Israel.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 11:19 A possible protest of overly proud and self-confident Gentiles who feel superior to the Jews.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 11:20 *you stand fast through faith*. A reminder that only through the gift of faith does anyone become a member of God's people. *become proud*. Lit, "think lofty thoughts." *fear*. In the sense of reverence. See p 1001.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 11:21 *you*. Singular in Gk; directs stern warning to the individual "branches" of the tree, Jew and Gentile, who will be held accountable for their unbelief.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 11:22 *kindness … severity*. Christians must live their whole life in holy fear, with full awareness that they depend entirely on God's grace.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 11:23 *if they do not continue*. Paul reaffirms the hope that his unbelieving kinsmen will believe. *power*. God, by His grace, has the power to do what from a human perspective is impossible: graft branches cut off (unbelieving Jews) back into the olive tree.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 11:24 Summary of the preceding argument (vv 17–23), expanding on God's power in the service of His grace.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 11:11–24 Paul warns the Gentile believers against pride and reminds them of their role in God's mission to Jewish unbelievers. To look down on any nonbeliever is sinful rejection of God's gracious purposes. In goodness and kindness, God can restore to faith those who have fallen. • Heavenly Father, be merciful to all those who have drifted away from You, especially family members and friends. Graft them in again by Your Word and grace. Amen.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 11:25 *wise in your own sight*. Lit, "wise in yourselves," i.e., filled with arrogance (over the Jews). Cf Pr 3:7. *mystery*. See p 1903. Cf Eph 3:6. *a partial hardening*. Not all Israelites have stubbornly resisted the Gospel (v 7), for some have believed (the remnant, v 5).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 11:26–27 Prove Paul's lead assertion that "all Israel will be saved." Christ came from Zion (the Jews) to the Gentiles (see note, Jn 4:22; cf Ac 1:8). He will forgive the sins of Jews "if they do not continue in their unbelief" (v 23).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 11:26 *in this way*. Gk *houtos*, the manner in which it is accomplished. Not "then," as understood by some holding millennialist views. *all Israel will be saved*. Refers to "children of the promise" in 9:8 (the spiritual Israel), not "children of the flesh" (the nation of Israel). All the elect, both Jews and Gentiles, will be saved throughout history. Cf 9:6.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 11:28 *enemies of God for your sake*. The Jews are objects of God's hostility as far as the Gospel is concerned because they oppose it. But in God's plan, this was for the Gentiles' benefit. *beloved for the sake of their forefathers*. With respect to His choice of Israel and for the sake of the patriarchs, God loves the Jewish people. They are objects of God's love and of His wrath at the same time.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 11:29 God still has His gifts (9:4–5) and His gracious invitation for His people to receive the salvation offered through His Son. God remains faithful to His promises.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 11:30–31 The experience of Jews and of Gentiles are parallel. Both have received mercy in the face of disobedience. Because of Israel's disobedience(1:18–32), undeserving Gentiles received mercy. Because of mercy to the Gentiles, disobedient Jews will receive mercy (cf v 11).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 11:32 Paul summarizes not only vv 30–31 but also the overriding purpose of God's mercy in chs 9–11. All people—Jews and Gentiles—are imprisoned in their disobedience, with no possibility of escape unless God in His mercy releases them. "We should not reach conclusions about our election to eternal life based on reason or God's Law…. 'The true judgment about predestination' must be learned alone from the Holy Gospel about Christ" (FC Ep XI 9–10).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 11:33–36 Ascription of praise in doxological form as Paul ponders in awe God's inscrutable ways (cf Eph 3:21).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 11:33 *riches … wisdom … knowledge*. The wealth of God's grace and glory (2:4; 9:23; 10:12; cf 2Co 8:9), the wisdom of His purposeful actions in history to save (cf 1Co 1:18–31; Eph 1:8; 3:10; Col 2:2–3), and His intimate knowledge of us (cf 8:29; 11:2; 1Co 8:3) are too deep for human beings to fathom. *judgments*. God's decisions (the ways He thinks). See "rules," p 971. *ways!* God's actions. See p 843.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 11:34 Rhetorical questions highlighting the absurdity of anyone teaching God anything. We have no access to God's thinking except what He chooses to reveal to us.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 11:35 Rules out any thought that the Creator God owes us anything.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 11:36 *from Him and through Him and to Him*. With three prepositions, Paul declares God, Creator and Savior, to be the source, means, and goal of everything. He is Alpha and Omega.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 11:25–36 In ways beyond our understanding, God has acted in mercy to bring salvation to Jews and Gentiles. Human beings cannot exchange roles with God, presuming to sit in judgment of Him. But we in whom His Spirit dwells praise Him for His inexhaustible kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. • To You alone, O triune Lord, belongs all glory forever. Amen.

ROMANS—NOTE ON **Ch 12** Luth: "In chapter 12 [Paul] teaches what true worship is, and makes all Christians priests. They are to offer not money or cattle, as under the law, but their own bodies, with slaying of the lusts. Then he describes the outward conduct of Christians, under the spiritual government, telling how they are to teach, preach, rule, serve, give, suffer, love, live, and act toward friend, foe, and all men. These are the works that a Christian does; for, as has been said, faith takes no holidays" (AE 35:378).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 12:1 *brothers*. See note, 1:13. *by the mercies of God*. Key to understanding the rest of Rm. God's mercies have been fully expressed in Christ and powerfully articulated in chs 1–11 (note esp 11:30–32). The exhortations to follow are the proper response to those mercies; however, obedience does not earn or add to God's favor. See p 1934. *living sacrifice … worship*. In the OT, animals were offered by putting them to death. See pp 170–71. Christ's one sacrifice replaced the need for such sacrifices (6:10). We can dedicate our entire lives to God. The terms "worship" and "sacrifice" are related to all of one's earthly life, not simply to time spent in church. "A true and not a false putting to death [mortification] happens through the cross and troubles, by which God exercises us…. They are the spiritual exercises of fear and faith. In addition to this putting to death, which happens through the cross, there is also a necessary, voluntary exercise" (Ap XV 45–46). *spiritual worship*. "Paul has spoken of reasonable service (*logike latreia*; Romans 12:1), namely, of the worship of the mind, of fear, of faith, of prayer, of thanksgiving, and so on" (Ap XXIV 88).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 12:2 *conformed*. Outwardly molded to fit a pattern. Believers should not be molded by the ways of this world. *transformed*. Same Gk word is used of Jesus' transfiguration (Mk 9:2–3). God has changed us in Baptism (6:2–4); the passive verb form conveys that God does this work. *renewal of your mind*. God has restored our minds to the manner of thinking He created them to have. *testing*. Background of the word involves testing of metals. We are to examine how to live in a manner "acceptable to God" (v 1). The "gold standard" for discerning God's will is His Word.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 12:1–2 Keep Paul's opening words in mind as you study chs 12–16. He urges us to present ourselves as living sacrifices because it is the proper response to "the mercies of God" (v 1). On this side of heaven, we are not fully renewed (7:14–25). As a result, the exhortations of chs 12–16 show us that we still sin and fall short (3:23). But that is not the only purpose for this section; it is a guide for Christian living (see FC Ep and SD VI). God has shown us His undeserved mercies in Christ. God has transformed our lives in Baptism and continues to renew us daily by His Spirit. • Thank You, heavenly Father, for Your mercies in Jesus Christ and for the transforming work You began in my Baptism. Empower me by Your

Spirit to present my body as a living sacrifice of worship acceptable to You in Jesus Christ. Amen.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 12:3 *grace given to me*. Grace is the free, undeserved, and immeasurable gift given to Paul, the chief of sinners, as an example for all of us (1Tm 1:16). See "grace," p 1902. *sober judgment*. We have different gifts and callings, but it is God who calls and gives. Sober judgment recognizes all gifts are from grace. Christ's humble attitude is the pattern for our thinking (cf Php 2:5–8). Luth: "In God's presence all must tuck their tails and be glad that they can gain forgiveness. Let no one think that as long as he lives here he can reach such a position that he will not need such forgiveness [1 John 1:8]. In short, if God does not forgive without stopping, we are lost" (LC III 90–91). *measure of faith that God has assigned*. Faith receives gifts of grace from God's hand (cf v 6). This realization counters the human tendency to be puffed up about one's gifts. The measure corresponds to one's calling, as vv 6–8 show.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 12:4 *members*. See p 1903.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 12:5 *one body in Christ … members one of another*. Cf 1Co 12:13. Members of Christ's body are never alone. We have been joined eternally to Him, as well as to one another (14:7–8). See p 1965.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 12:6–8 Paul lists grace gifts elsewhere (1Co 12:7–11, 28–30; Eph 4:11–12). Each list is different and provides specific examples. No list is exhaustive; there may be other gifts. The key is to receive all gifts humbly in faith and to use them to serve others.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 12:6 *gifts*. See p 1902. *prophecy*. Mentioned first and highly valued by Paul in 1Co 14. Instead of merely predicting the future, prophecy more often takes God's Word and will (v 2) and applies it to people in their situation. See pp 1077–83. *in proportion to our faith*. Cf v 3. The measure is not the gift, but faith, which justifies before God (3:28) and receives all else as gifts from Him.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 12:7 *service*. Gk *diakonia*, could refer to specific ministry in the Church or to Christian service in general.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 12:8 Focus of these gifts is their use within the Christian community.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 12:3–8 God graciously bestows various gifts to be used for the benefit of others. Our abilities can cause us to think of ourselves too highly. Paul urges Christians to avoid that temptation while

exhorting us to use God's gifts to serve others. Paul repeatedly emphasizes the gracious gifts of God that are received in faith. • Thank You, God, for bringing me into the Body of Christ and for the gifts You give to those who have served me in many and various ways. Enlighten me with Your gifts, and empower me to be a living sacrifice, that I may humbly use my gifts to serve others. Amen.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 12:9–21 Illustrations of genuine love (cf 1Co 13:4–8).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 12:9 *genuine*. Lit, "without hypocrisy." This love is not concerned with whether it receives anything in return. *Abhor*. Despise and be repulsed.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 12:10 *brotherly affection*. Those in Christ's family should exhibit familial love toward one another. *Outdo*. Implies to go out ahead first; do not wait to be loved first.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 12:11 *fervent in spirit*. Lit, "boiling over with the Spirit," who fills our lives and flows out from us to others.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 12:12 Cf 5:1–5.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 12:13 *Contribute to the needs*. Share with others in need. *saints*. See p 1904. *hospitality*. Lit, "love of strangers." In the Dispersion, Jews likely had the custom of welcoming fellow Jewish travelers into their homes. Paul would be encouraging the continuation of this custom. See note, Gn 18:4.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 12:14 *Bless*. Speak well of and pray to God on their behalf; follow Jesus' example (Mt 5:44; Lk 23:34). See p 1901.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 12:15 See Jesus' words in the Sermon on the Mount (Mt 5:4). Though Paul was not one of Jesus' original 12 disciples, he was well informed about the content of Jesus' teaching and the historical content of the Gospel writers (see notes, 1:3–4; 9:5; 15:3). Cf 1Co 15:3–8 for Paul's summary of the Gospel.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 12:16 Paul again warns against regarding oneself too highly (v 3; cf Lk 14:11). *harmony*. Have the same attitude toward one another (cf Php 2:2).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 12:17 *honorable in the sight of all*. Preoccupy yourself with doing excellent things before all people that they may also glorify God (Mt 5:16).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 12:18 *live peaceably with all*. Now the focus extends beyond the believing community. Peace may not always be

possible, but believers should never intentionally cause hostility.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 12:19 *never avenge yourselves*. Christians do not take vengeance into their own hands, but leave it to God, the highest authority. See note, 13:1. "Private remedy is prohibited not by advice, but by a command (Matthew 5:39; Romans 12:19). Public remedy, made through the office of the public official, is not condemned, but is commanded and is God's work, according to Paul (Romans 13). Now the different kinds of public remedy are legal decisions, capital punishment, wars, and military service. Clearly, many writers have thought wrongly about these matters. They were in the error that the Gospel is an outward, new, and monastic form of government. Also, they did not see that the Gospel brings eternal righteousness to hearts, while it outwardly approves the public state" (Ap XVI 59–60). *Vengeance is Mine*. Sung by Moses just before Israel conquered the Promised Land. God's wrath will ultimately avenge (2:5, 8). Cf 13:1–5 for one way God carries out His vengeance now.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 12:20–21 In Ps 140:10, this image is a sign of harsh judgment. But Paul's quote from Pr 25:21–22 points toward driving the enemy to repentance (cf v 14).
ROMANS—NOTE ON 12:9–21 Here is what a life of genuine love (v 9) looks like in specific detail. It is a life that follows Christ's example (Php 2:1–11) and models His words from the Sermon on the Mount (Mt 5–7). We all fail to live up to this standard. However, as living sacrifices, we have been transformed to live according to God's loving will (vv 1–2). This serves as a powerful witness to others (cf Mt 5:16; Jn 13:34–35). God in Christ has first loved us in this way and, by His mercies (v 1), our salvation is secure and not dependent on how we love. • Father, thank You for loving me first and forever by sending Your Son and making me a part of His Body. Train my heart in hope and my hand in mercy in harmony with Jesus' words and deeds. Amen.
ROMANS—NOTE ON **Ch 13** Luth: "In chapter 13 [Paul] teaches honor and obedience to worldly government. Although worldly government does not make people righteous before God, nevertheless it is instituted in order to accomplish at least this much, that the good may have outward peace and protection and the bad may not be free to do evil in peace and quietness, and without fear. Therefore the good too are to honor it even though they themselves do not need it. Finally, he comprehends it all in love, and sums

it up in the example of Christ: as he has done for us, we are also to do, following in his footsteps" (AE 35:379).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 13:1 *subject*. Military term meaning to march in the proper order (cf Eph 5:21). *instituted by God*. Paul's words are inclusive because all authority originates from God, the higher authority to whom ultimate obedience is due both from those in authority and under it (cf Ac 5:29). See note, 12:19. Although Jews had occasionally clashed with Roman authorities during the Dispersion, they had long recognized the wisdom in supporting governments under which they lived. Paul encourages similar attitudes among Christians.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 13:2 *resists*. Believers may at times resist governmental authorities on account of God's Word, but they must be ready to suffer the consequences (cf Ac 5:40–41).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 13:3 *good conduct*. A Christian's outward conduct toward those in authority should be peaceful and respectful (cf 12:18; 1Tm 2:1–2). *receive his approval*. A general truth, yet there are also evil rulers. Although they receive their authority from God, He does not dictate how they use it. Governments all too often abuse their authority. See "Application," p 997.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 13:4 *servant*. Gk *diakonos*, as in 12:7, but here the term is applied to those in earthly positions of authority who are to serve God and people. *sword*. God allows governments to use the death penalty. See note, Gn 9:6. *avenger*. See note, 12:19; cf 1Ki 2:31.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 13:5 *for the sake of conscience*. Christians can, in good conscience, come to different conclusions about how to respond to governments that fall short of God's standard in varying degrees. See "conscience," p 1902.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 13:6 *pay taxes*. Jesus also asserts this (Mt 22:15–22). *ministers of God*. Priestly term that elevates both the source of authority and the responsibility of those in power.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 13:7 *respect*. Includes fear. *honor*. Implies a positive attitude.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 13:1–7 While all governments fall short, Paul implies that the first-century Roman government was adequately carrying out its two essential functions: approving those who do good and punishing evildoers. Paul acknowledges that all authority comes from God, to whom ultimate obedience is due. "We must obey God rather than men" (Ac 5:29).

Believers are to honor those in authority, obey the government, and pay their taxes (cf 1Pt 2:13–17). To fail to do so is to suffer the consequences from those in authority and possibly from God as well. God is the ultimate authority; He used His power to save us (1:16). • Thank You for caring for me through those You have placed in authority over me: my parents, teachers, and government officials. Guide them to use their authority according to Your will and help me to obey them. Bless those believers who live under corrupt governments, and guide their consciences to respond in ways pleasing to You. Amen.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 13:8 *Owe no one anything*. Paul does not oppose all loans but urges us to pay whatever we owe. *except to love*. Previously, Paul said to pay taxes as owed (v 7); here he speaks of a higher duty—to love others. *fulfilled the law*. One who loves perfectly would fulfill the requirements of God's Law and be righteous before Him (cf Lk 10:25–28). Earlier, Paul excluded that possibility because of our sinfulness (3:20). Here, we strive to live according to God's Law because we have been declared righteous "by the mercies of God" (12:1; cf 1Jn 4:10–11).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 13:9 "Paul, when encouraging the regenerate to do good works, clearly presents to them the Ten Commandments" (FC SD VI 21). *love your neighbor*. Jesus similarly identifies this as an apt summary of the Law (Mt 22:37–40; cf Gal 5:14).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 13:10 *Love does no wrong*. To love is to place another before self; this is to be a "living sacrifice" (12:1).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 13:11 *sleep*. Spiritual inattentiveness. *salvation is nearer*. Christ's death and resurrection have provided salvation, but He will come again and lead us to experience it fully (cf 5:9–10; Heb 9:28). Each day, His second coming is one day closer.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 13:12 *night … day*. The picture is of an approaching dawn. This present age of darkness is passing away; light is dawning. *works of darkness*. Deeds of the sinful nature (cf Gal 5:19–21). *put on the armor of light*. Reflect the light of Christ and exhibit the fruit of His Spirit (Mt 5:16; Gal 5:22–23; cf Eph 6:10–17).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 13:14 *put on the Lord Jesus Christ*. Baptismal language (Gal 3:27). Refers to living out our Baptism each day (see SC, Baptism, Part 4, p xl). *no provision for the flesh*. Believers still have sinful, fleshly desires that at times lead them astray (7:14–15), but they should not plan to gratify those desires.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 13:8–14 The requirements and essence of God's Law have not changed from the OT. The Law shows us how to love others as we have been loved by God in Christ. "All have sinned and fall short" of God's requirement to love Him and others (3:23). The Gospel calls us to rely on God's mercy in Christ, which then motivates us to love as we have been loved. The context of Rm assures us that God declares us righteous, not because of our ability to love, but solely because of Christ, who "is the end of the law" (10:4). • Father, You have loved me in Christ and declared me to be Your righteous child. Empower me to love and serve others through Christ. Amen.

ROMANS—NOTE ON **Ch 14** Luth: "In chapter 14 [Paul] teaches that consciences weak in faith are to be led gently, spared, so that we do not use our Christian freedom for doing harm, but for the assistance of the weak. For where that is not done, the result is discord and contempt for the gospel; and the gospel is the all-important thing. Thus it is better to yield a little to the weak in faith, until they grow stronger, than to have the teaching of the gospel come to nothing. And this work is a peculiar work of love, for which there is great need even now, when with the eating of meat and other liberties, men are rudely and roughly—and needlessly—shaking weak consciences, before they know the truth" (AE 35:379).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 14:1–15:7 Deals with debates over matters of freedom within the Christian community. The "weak" in faith are unsure of the extent of their freedom.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 14:1 *welcome him*. Receive the "weak" because God and Christ have welcomed both of you (v 3; 15:7). *quarrel over opinions*. First-century Jews and Gentiles in Rome were likely divided over the applicability of OT dietary laws and festivals.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 14:2 *eat anything*. Jesus declared all foods clean (cf Lv 11; 17:10–16; Mk 7:18–19; Ac 10:9–15). Believers are free from the restrictions of OT food laws. NT believers are also free to continue abiding by those laws and so to refuse unclean foods. Eating meat offered to pagan idols may also be involved (as in 1Co 8–10).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 14:3 *God has welcomed him*. Within the Christian community, God has accepted each one of us to Himself in Christ (15:7).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 14:4 The issues here are not of right and wrong, but opinions on matters now debatable (v 1). Our common Lord and Master

Jesus Christ has freed us in regard to these issues; we are not free to judge His servants concerning them.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 14:5 *one day as better*. The Sabbath, Passover, and other OT festivals had been "holier" days (cf Lv 23). But Christ has freed us from the requirement to observe them (see notes, Mt 12:8; Mk 2:28; Lk 6:5; cf 1Co 5:7).
ROMANS—NOTE ON 14:6 One may continue to observe the Sabbath and other OT festivals as a matter of freedom and a way to honor the Lord Jesus. *abstains*. Probably abstaining from unclean foods. One is able to voluntarily do so in honoring the Lord.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 14:7–8 Life and death itself cannot separate us from Christ (8:38–39); therefore a "quarrel over opinions" (v 1) ought not separate us.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 14:7 In Christ's Body, we are joined one to another (12:5); we are never alone and ought not live to ourselves.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 14:8 *we are the Lord's*. Now, at death, and for all eternity, we are with Jesus (1Th 4:14; cf Php 1:23).
ROMANS—NOTE ON 14:9 *Lord both of the dead and of the living*. Jesus is Lord of all (Php 2:11); to God all are alive (Lk 20:38).
ROMANS—NOTE ON 14:10 *pass judgment … despise*. See note, v 4. *judgment seat*. God will hold accountable those who pass judgment on others where He has not done so.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 14:11 In Is 45:22, the Lord refutes the existence of other gods. In Php 2:11, Jesus is declared to be the Lord with the same words.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 14:12 Those entering heaven by grace will still be called to give an account of their earthly lives (cf Mt 25:14–30).
ROMANS—NOTE ON 14:1–12 OT food and festival laws had been significant religious issues, but Christ freed us to observe or not to observe them. Christians may judge the conduct of others only on the basis of God's Word (see FC Ep and SD X). We should not go beyond it and pronounce judgment in matters of Christian freedom. Those who do so wound other believers and will have to account for such behavior before God Himself. In Baptism, we were joined with Christ and one another. Not even death can sever that bond. • In life and in death, O Lord, You promise to abide with me. Thank You for the assurance that I am Yours both now and for eternity.

Teach us to speak according to Your Word, but to remain silent where Your Word grants freedom. Amen.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 14:13–23 Paul now gives counsel on how mature Christians use their freedom.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 14:13 *pass judgment*. See note, Mt 7:1. *stumbling block or hindrance*. The conduct of mature Christians should not cause others to stumble in their faith. "Special care should be taken to exercise patience toward the weak in faith" (FC Ep X 5).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 14:14 *nothing is unclean in itself*. Christ, who is the end of the Law (10:4), "declared all foods clean" (Mk 7:19); Paul here places himself among the strong. *thinks it unclean*. If one believes it is outside of God's will to engage in certain conduct, then it is wrong for that person to do so.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 14:15 *walking in love*. Love places concern for others before self (12:9). *destroy*. Certain actions may be permissible, but if they offend others to the point of ruining their faith in Christ, they must be avoided (cf 1Co 8:13).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 14:16 Behavior in which Christians are free to engage can be blasphemous if by it one (knowingly, it would seem) destroys another for whom Christ has also died (1Co 8:11–12).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 14:17 *kingdom of God*. See pp 1565–66. *righteousness and peace and joy*. Key blessings of the Gospel. See pp 1903–4. "The Gospel should stand out as the most prominent teaching in the Church, in order that Christ's merit may be well known and faith, which believes that sins are forgiven for Christ's sake, be exalted far above works. Therefore, Paul also lays the greatest stress on this article, putting aside the Law and human traditions, in order to show that Christian righteousness is something other than such works" (AC XXVI 4–5). "The bishops have no right to enact traditions in addition to the Gospel, so that people must merit the forgiveness of sins, or that they think are services that God approves as righteousness" (Ap XXVIII 8). *in the Holy Spirit*. Christ's kingdom is not merely something outward but is bestowed on us now and eternally by the Spirit (cf 2:25–29).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 14:18 Those devoted to Christ use their freedom responsibly and with concern for others.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 14:19 Paul calls us to avoid divisive judgmentalism wherever possible; it is the opposite of peace (cf 12:18). Believers strive to

build up others in the faith.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 14:20 *work of God*. The faith He has given a fellow Christian (cf 1Co 8:11). *Everything is indeed clean*. See note, v 14; see also p 300. *stumble*. See note, v 13.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 14:21 *drink wine*. Mature believers willingly give up activities they are free to engage in if doing so would be harmful to the faith of others (e.g., consumption of alcohol; see note, Pr 20:1).
ROMANS—NOTE ON 14:22 *keep*. Do not flaunt your God-given freedom; rather, let your faith influence your public conduct. *judgment on himself*. For harming the faith of others (v 15).
ROMANS—NOTE ON 14:23 Cf v 14; if one's conscience is not clear before God regarding certain behaviors, one dare not engage in them. *not from faith*. Believers are called to live according to their faith and are called not to sin by acting contrary to faith. Paul also teaches that, apart from justifying faith, we are all in bondage to sin (cf 3:9; Gal 3:22). "People truly sin, even when—without the Holy Spirit—they do virtuous works. This is because they act with a wicked heart" (Ap IV 35).
ROMANS—NOTE ON 14:13–23 Paul continues to deal specifically with first-century controversial issues among Jewish and Gentile Christians (foods and holy days). Paul knows all foods are clean, but flaunting his freedoms will give offense in the presence of Jewish Christians who still observe OT food laws. In a similar manner, we should not engage in behaviors that would cause other believers to stumble in their faith. When we commit actions against our own Spirit-informed Christian conscience, we sin. Freedom in Christ is not simply freedom from the Law, but freedom given for a purpose, to serve others in love (Gal 5:13). God's kingdom (14:17) has been given to us through Jesus Christ and by the Holy Spirit. • Father, thank You for the freedom You give me in the kingdom of Your Son, Jesus. May I enjoy my freedom by using it to serve others. Show me when I ought to limit my freedom for the benefit of my brothers and sisters in the faith. Amen.
ROMANS—NOTE ON **Ch 15** Luth: "In chapter 15 [Paul] sets up Christ as an example: we are to tolerate also those other weak ones who fail in other ways, in open sins or in unpleasing habits. We are not to cast them off, but to bear with them until they too grow better. For so Christ has done with us, and still does every day; he bears with our many faults and bad habits, and with all our imperfections, and helps us constantly.

"Then, at the end, he prays for them, praises them, and commends them to God. He speaks of his own office and of his preaching, and asks them kindly for a contribution to the poor at Jerusalem. All that he speaks of or deals with is pure love" (AE 35:379).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 15:1 *strong … weak*. Cf 14:1–6. The strong, like Paul, grasp the extent of their freedom; the weak are still uncertain (14:14). *failings*. Inadequate recognition of freedoms in Christ. *not to please ourselves*. Paul urges us to use and, if necessary, give up our freedoms in order to serve others (14:13–23).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 15:2 *build him up*. See note, 14:19.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 15:3 Ps 69, the third most quoted in the NT, is a significant messianic psalm. Jesus suffered the reproaches we deserve from God because of our sins. On the cross, He also bore the judgmental and harmful actions we impose on fellow believers.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 15:4 *written for our instruction*. OT is still God's teaching for us. *endurance*. Lit, to "remain under" the message of God's mercy given in Scripture. *encouragement … hope*. Scripture grants blessings that never disappoint (5:5). "When this consolation and hope [of salvation] are weakened or entirely removed by Scripture, it is certain that [the Scripture] is understood and explained contrary to the Holy Spirit's will and meaning" (FC SD XI 92).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 15:5–7 Paul's prayer for the Roman Christians summarizes his hope for how they will respond to the entire Letter. Paul makes clear that the specific unity he seeks to reinforce is between Jew and Gentile.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 15:5 *harmony*. Believers differ in many ways (12:4) but are united in Christ. *in accord with Christ Jesus*. Have His attitude; cf Php 2:1–11.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 15:6 *one voice*. Despite any difference and "quarrel over opinions" (14:1) we may have, believers are one Body in Christ (cf 12:4–5) and are called to praise God together.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 15:7 Basic thrust of Christianity. Christ has taken us to Himself despite our sins (cf 14:3). In response, believers display that same attitude of mercy toward one another (cf Eph 4:32). All this brings glory to God. See p 1907.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 15:1–7 Concludes the section begun in 14:1. Paul has dealt with quarrels over opinions and here resolves them. There are

strong and weak among us in the Church. We should follow Christ's example of accepting and striving to please others. Despite your sin and weaknesses, Christ bore the reproaches your sins deserved and welcomed you into God's family (15:7). • Dear Father, lead me into Your Word, where I receive endurance, encouragement, and hope from You. Empower me then to welcome others, especially those weak in faith. Amen.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 15:8 *servant to the circumcised*. Jesus was sent to the lost sheep of Israel (Mt 15:24); Paul also asserts "to the Jew first" (1:16). *to confirm the promises*. The OT promises to Abraham and Israel are fulfilled in Jesus (cf 4:16; see note, Php 1:7). Vv 9–12 confirm the promise to all nations.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 15:9 *Therefore … Your name*. At the end of his life, David prophesied that God's name would also be praised among the Gentile nations (cf Mt 28:19).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 15:10 Just prior to his death, Moses prophesied that Gentiles would praise God along with Israel.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 15:11 The shortest psalm (Ps 117) summons all nations to praise Israel's God for His love and faithfulness.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 15:12 Jesse was King David's father. David's royal house was cut down (see application note, 2Ki 25:27–30), but the Messiah arose like a root from the stump of an olive tree. Is 11 also announced that Gentile nations would hope in Christ and be under His reign.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 15:13 Paul's prayer and wish for those who read this Letter. *hope*. Cf v 4; 5:2–5.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 15:8–13 The OT looked ahead to a day when Jews and Gentiles would worship God together. This day has come in Christ. Gentiles in particular should remember their hopeless existence apart from Christ (cf Eph 2:11–12). According to His prophetic promises, God has raised up Jesus. In Him, Jews and Gentiles are united to "glorify God for His mercy" (v 9). • Thank You, God, for Your Word and for Jesus, who embodies and fulfills it. By Your Holy Spirit, fill me with hope and "joy and peace in believing" (v 13). Amen.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 15:14 *brothers*. See note, 1:13. *able to instruct one another*. All who have received the words of this Letter are competent to instruct (cf 1Co 1:5–7). There may be some hyperbole here.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 15:15 *reminder*. Particularly needed in Rome was the reminder of the equal place of Jews and Gentiles under both Law and

Gospel, as well as within the Church. *grace given me*. See note, 12:3.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 15:16 *minister … Gentiles*. Paul's special calling was to reach out to Gentiles (11:13; Gal 2:9), but this did not exclude his testifying to Jews as well (cf Ac 17:1–3; 26:17, 20). *priestly service … offering*. "The Gentiles may be offerings acceptable to God through faith. In the Law the slaying of victims illustrated both Christ's death and the preaching of the Gospel, by which this old flesh should be put to death and new and eternal life be begun in us" (Ap XXIV 34). Perhaps also a reference to the collection Paul is gathering for Jerusalem (cf 15:25). *sanctified by the Holy Spirit*. The Spirit would make the Gentiles holy before God and also set apart their offerings. See p 1920.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 15:17 *In Christ Jesus*. See note, 8:1. *proud*. Word was previously excluded as boasting before God (3:27), but under Christ, it can be done properly (5:2; 2Co 10:12–18; Php 3:3–14).
ROMANS—NOTE ON 15:18 *accomplished through me*. Cf Gal 2:20. "May the Gospel be received in faith and work and live in us, so that through the Word and the Holy Spirit's power [Romans 15:18–19], Your kingdom may triumph among us" (LC III 54). *obedience*. Lit, to "hear under." They heard the Word (10:17), believed, and responded appropriately in their lives.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 15:19 *signs and wonders*. As with Jesus' ministry, miracles marked Paul's apostolic ministry (Ac 14:8–10; 16:16–18; 2Co 12:12). See note, 2Co 12:12. *power of the Spirit*. The Spirit was at work through the power of the Gospel in all Paul and Jesus did (1:16; Ac 10:38). *Jerusalem*. Early location of Paul's ministry (Ac 26:20; cf Is 2:3). *Illyricum*. Roman province across the Adriatic Sea, northeast of Rome. See map, p 1895. Exactly when Paul was there is uncertain. *fulfilled the ministry*. Carried out the tasks Christ assigned him (Ac 22:21). See note, v 23.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 15:20 *my ambition*. Paul's special gift, skill, and desire. *not … already been named*. Where there were not yet any Christians; Paul was primarily an evangelistic missionary. *someone else's foundation*. Paul's drive was to the lay the foundation of a believing community, i.e., to till new soil for Christ (cf 1Co 3:6–11).
ROMANS—NOTE ON 15:21 This is part of the description of Jesus as the Suffering Servant (Is 52:13–53:12), which also says the Servant will "sprinkle many nations" with His purifying blood. *Those*. The nations.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 15:14–21 Paul lays out the practice and scope of his mission work. Apart from God's intervention through servants such as Paul, we would not have seen, heard, or understood God's grace. Christ's servants are to respond to His calling and use their gifts in dedicated service as Paul did. Anything we do is simply "what Christ has accomplished through" us (v 18). It is all by grace and is sanctified and empowered by the Holy Spirit. • Lord, I praise You that the message of Your grace has reached me and that I have come to believe it by the power of Your Holy Spirit. Use me and the gifts You have given to me as an acceptable offering to You. Amen.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 15:22 Paul may have been hindered by Satan, but, more likely, by the obligations of his previous work in the eastern Mediterranean.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 15:23 *no longer have any room for work*. The foundation of the Christian Church had been laid in that part of the world through Paul's previous missionary journeys. Paul apparently understood that his service was to plant churches in major cities. *many years*. Paul's conversion and call occurred c AD 36. His active mission work began from Syrian Antioch c AD 47 (Ac 13). It was probably AD 55 when he wrote Rm.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 15:24 *Spain*. Paul desires to lay a foundation where Christ has not yet been named. Clement of Rome wrote that Paul reached the limits of the West (Spain or Portugal). *helped*. A technical term implying financial support for Paul's mission work (Ac 15:3; 1Co 16:6, 11). Syrian Antioch had provided this in the East (Ac 13:1–3; 14:26–27; 18:22–23).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 15:25 *aid to the saints*. Paul has overseen a collection of money for believers in Jerusalem and is on his way there (Ac 20:1–5; 2Co 8–9).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 15:26 *the poor*. Church in Jerusalem was apparently quite poor and undergoing a famine (cf 2Co 8:13–15).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 15:27 *owe*. Ongoing obligation to love others (13:8). *share in their spiritual blessings*. By God's work in Christ, Gentiles have become part of the community of God's people, and they share in Israel's blessing (11:17; Eph 2:11–22). *material blessings*. The financial offering Paul is bringing with a delegation (cf vv 25–26). See "blessed," p 842.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 15:28 *collected*. Cf vv 25–26.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 15:29 *fullness of the blessing*. The Gospel gives all the fullness we need; still, Paul's presence in Rome will be an added source of fellowship and encouragement (cf 1:11–12).
ROMANS—NOTE ON 15:30 *brothers*. Fellow Christians in Rome. See note, 1:13. *love of the Spirit*. Not our love of the Spirit, but the love that the Holy Spirit gives as a fruit (Gal 5:22–23). The persons of the Trinity are invoked.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 15:31 *unbelievers in Judea*. Jews who rejected Christ as Messiah and, at times, violently opposed Paul (Ac 23:12). *my service … to the saints*. Paul prays that the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem will receive the offering (cf v 25). Gentile offerings coming to Jerusalem fulfill OT prophecies (Is 60:5–9; 66:20; Hg 2:7).
ROMANS—NOTE ON 15:32 *by God's will*. If God opens the way to come and/or removes the obstacles of Satan. Cf v 22; 1:13. *refreshed*. Cf v 29; 1:11–13.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 15:33 *God of peace*. See "peace," p 1903. *be with you*. Perhaps "is with you." Paul assures them of God's promised presence.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 15:22–33 Paul lays out his current travel plans. Our desires to serve God may be hindered if we are not willing to accept gifts from others. Christ empowered Paul's mission work and gave it the fullness of His blessing (v 29). He will give us joy, refreshment, and peace as well. • Thank You, God, for spiritual blessings of peace and joy, as well as for the encouragement given to me by my brothers and sisters in Christ. I praise You also for the material blessings You have entrusted to me. Guide me to use them wisely and to share with those in need. Amen.
ROMANS—NOTE ON **Ch 16** Luth: "The last chapter is a chapter of greetings. But [Paul] mingles with them a noble warning against the doctrines of men, which break in alongside the teaching of the gospel and cause offense. It is as if he had certainly foreseen … the whole squirming mass of human laws and commandments, which have now drowned the whole world and wiped out this epistle and all the Holy Scriptures…. God save us from them. Amen" (AE 35:379–80).
ROMANS—NOTE ON 16:1–16 By sending specific greetings to 26 named people who know him, Paul seeks to establish his credentials among all Christians in Rome before he arrives. Note the prominent number of Jews (kinsmen) and women.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 16:1 *commend*. Could mean "introduce" (cf v 2). *sister Phoebe*. A fellow Christian who likely delivered the Epistle. *servant*. Gk *diakonos*, a masculine noun that may also describe a woman, as it does here. Could refer to a particular position "of the church" (cf 1Tm 3:8–13); however, the word also denotes general service (see note, 13:4). *Cenchreae*. Corinth's eastern port. See map, p 1886.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 16:2 *help her*. Lit, "receive her to yourselves" as she comes delivering this Letter to Rome. *patron*. She may have given financial support or other assistance to Paul.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 16:3 *Prisca and Aquila*. Worked with Paul as fellow tentmakers in Corinth, but are now back in Rome (cf Ac 18:2–3). *fellow workers*. Labored with Paul in sharing the Gospel and teaching the faith (Ac 18:24–26). *in Christ Jesus*. See note, 8:1.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 16:4 *risked their necks*. In danger because of their support for Paul.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 16:5 *church in their house*. Prior to the fourth century, Christians generally gathered in homes like those of Prisca and Aquila. See "church," pp 1901–2. *my beloved*. Related to Gk *agapetos*; denotes a loved brother in Christ (cf 13:8–9). *first convert*. To Christianity. *Asia*. Roman province of Asia Minor, now western Turkey (cf Ac 16:6).
ROMANS—NOTE ON 16:6 *Mary*. One of six Marys in the NT; probably unknown.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 16:7 *Junia … known to the apostles*. See p 1942. *kinsmen*. See note, v 21. *fellow prisoners*. They had been under arrest with Paul; the apostle was detained numerous times (e.g., Ac 16:24; 2Co 11:23). *in Christ*. Believed in Jesus as the Christ/Messiah prior to Paul's conversion (Ac 9). See p 1903.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 16:8 *Ampliatus*. Common Latin name for a slave.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 16:10 *approved in Christ*. Tested as metals in fire, refined and genuine.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 16:11 *kinsman*. See note, v 21.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 16:12 *worked hard*. Labored to the point of exhaustion.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 16:13 *Rufus*. Mark's Gospel, likely written to Rome, notes that Simon of Cyrene was the father of a Rufus (Mk 15:21). *chosen in the Lord*. May refer to common calling of all the "elect" or to a

special calling given to him. *mother to me*. Cared for and perhaps housed Paul at some time.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 16:14 *brothers*. See note, 1:13.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 16:15 *saints*. See p 1904.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 16:16 *holy kiss*. Common way of sharing the peace of the Lord in that culture; perhaps a liturgical term (cf 1Co 16:20; 2Co 13:12; 1Th 5:26). *churches of Christ*. While there is one true Church, the plural is natural for Paul, who generally uses "church" to refer to a local congregation. See p 1901–2.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 16:1–16 Paul greets 26 people by name. Many of these believers have labored long and hard for Christ with Paul. They serve as examples and role models for us. Christ unites Jew and Gentile, male and female. He breaks through all other human bonds in His Church. He also establishes a committed and dear relationship among believers. • Thank You, Father, for people who bless our relationship with Christ. Amen.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 16:17 *those who cause divisions*. Unnamed people divided the Church from within, probably along Jew/Gentile lines. *contrary to the doctrine*. No false teaching is acceptable for God's Church, whether it contradicts the Law or the Gospel. Ign: "Some are in the habit of carrying about the name [of Jesus Christ] in wicked guile, while yet they practice things unworthy of God, whom you must flee as you would wild beasts" (*ANF* 1:52). Pol: "Let us be zealous in the pursuit of that which is good, keeping ourselves from causes of offence, from false brethren, and from those who in hypocrisy bear the name of the Lord, and draw away vain men into error" (*ANF* 1:34). *avoid them*. As in Galatians, believers are to reject any false teachings and refuse to associate with those who advocate them. Some have applied this to any and every different teaching, but here it refers specifically to issues that strike at the heart of the Gospel. Cf ch 14. See p 1907.
ROMANS—NOTE ON 16:18 *appetites*. Basic, sinful human desires. *smooth talk and flattery*. Unlike Paul, false teachers snare hearers with false praise (1Co 2:1–5; 1Th 2:3–6).
ROMANS—NOTE ON 16:19 *your obedience*. Cf 15:18. *wise … innocent*. Actively engaged in the practice of good; having no personal experience with evil (cf 12:9, 21; Mt 10:16).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 16:20 *God of peace*. See "peace," p 1903. *soon crush Satan*. Alludes to Gn 3:15. *soon*. Can mean "suddenly" or "quickly" (cf Rv 22:20).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 16:21–23 Combined evidence places Paul in Corinth when he wrote Rm. He stayed there for three months toward the end of his third journey and was on his way to Jerusalem (cf 15:25–27; Ac 19:21; 20:1–3). See map, p 1886.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 16:21 *Timothy*. Traveled with Paul on his second journey beginning in Ac 16:1–4; listed as co-author of Php, 1 and 2Th; recipient of 1 and 2Tm. *kinsmen*. Fellow Jews; Timothy's mother was Jewish, though his father was Greek (Ac 16:1).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 16:22 Tertius was an "amanuensis," a scribe to whom Paul dictated the Letter. See pp 1899–1901. His greeting "in the Lord" means he was a Christian.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 16:23 *Gaius … host*. May have been baptized by Paul (1Co 1:14), who is now staying at his home. *whole church*. House church gathers in Gaius's home. See note, v 5. *city treasurer*. An inscription discovered in 1929 near the theater in Corinth mentioned Erastus and identified him with this office (cf 2Tm 4:20).

ROMANS—NOTE ON 16:17–23 Paul warns against those who cause divisions and promises God will overcome them. Those who advocate a false Gospel are to be avoided entirely. As "living sacrifices" to God (12:1), we are to be actively engaged in good and uninvolved with evil. As promised in Gn 3:15, God will bring about the final culmination of our salvation by crushing the power of Satan, sin, death, and hell forever (cf Rv 20:10, 14). • Heavenly Father, guard and protect Your Church from all who would corrupt Your precious Gospel. As we await the final consummation of our salvation, may our obedience to Your will be "known to all" around us. Amen.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 16:25 *Him*. Refers to "the only wise God" of v 27. *able*. Form of word translated "power" in 1:16. *my gospel … preaching of Jesus Christ*. Synonymous terms; the former emphasizes the content, while the latter refers to the active proclamation. *revelation of the mystery*. The OT did not make all things clear. In the NT, the mystery is now revealed. God in Christ has united Jew and Gentile together in one Body (cf Eph 3:4–6). See p 1903.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 16:26 *prophetic writings*. The OT (cf 2Pt 1:20–21). *eternal God*. God is without beginning or end. *obedience of faith*. See note, 1:5.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 16:27 *only wise God*. God is all-knowing, but also all-wise in providing for our salvation. See pp 775–78.

ROMANS—NOTE ON 16:25–27 Paul's closing words encompass the entire good news of God, from the prophetic OT writings to the proclamation of Jesus Christ being made known to all nations. God's eternal being, His wisdom, knowledge, and power, are all far beyond ours. He calls those of faith to respond in obedience to His will. The Gospel of Jesus Christ was entrusted to Paul and faithfully proclaimed among the nations in accordance with God's will. • At the bottom of his music, Johann Sebastian Bach wrote "S.D.G" (Lat *Soli Deo Gloria*), "to God alone the glory." Paul ends his marvelous expression of Law and Gospel in Rm on the same note. He then adds that this is all in and through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory. Amen!

1 Corinthians

1 Corinthians 1 | 1 Corinthians 2 | 1 Corinthians 3 | 1 Corinthians 4 | 1 Corinthians 5 | 1 Corinthians 6 | 1 Corinthians 7 | 1 Corinthians 8 | 1 Corinthians 9 | 1 Corinthians 10 | 1 Corinthians 11 | 1 Corinthians 12 | 1 Corinthians 13 | 1 Corinthians 14 | 1 Corinthians 15 | 1 Corinthians 16

- Introduction to 1 Corinthians
  - Overview
  - Reading 1 Corinthians
  - Luther on 1 Corinthians
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

Greeting

1 [1] † Paul, called by the will of God to be an apostle of Christ Jesus,
and our brother Sosthenes, [2] † To the church of God that is in Corinth, to
those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints together with all those
who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their
Lord and ours:

[3] † Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus
Christ.

Thanksgiving

4 ‡ † I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God
that was given you in Christ Jesus, 5 † that in every way you were enriched in
him in all speech and all knowledge— 6 † even as the testimony about Christ
was confirmed among you— 7 † so that you are not lacking in any spiritual
gift, as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ, 8 † who will
sustain you to the end, guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 † God
is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus
Christ our Lord.

Divisions in the Church

10 ††I appeal to you, brothers,[1] by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that
all of you agree, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be
united in the same mind and the same judgment. 11 †For it has been reported
to me by Chloe's people that there is quarreling among you, my brothers.
12 †What I mean is that each one of you says, "I follow Paul," or "I follow
Apollos," or "I follow Cephas," or "I follow Christ." 13 †† Is Christ divided?
Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? 14 I
thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, 15 †so that
no one may say that you were baptized in my name. 16 †(I did baptize also
the household of Stephanas. Beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized
anyone else.) 17 †For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the
gospel, and not with words of eloquent wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be
emptied of its power.

Christ the Wisdom and Power of God

18 For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us
who are being saved it is the power of God. 19 For it is written,

> "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,
> and the discernment of the discerning I will
> thwart."

20 Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater
of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? 21 For
since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom,
it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who
believe. 22 For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, 23 but we
preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles,
24 but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of
God and the wisdom of God. 25 For the foolishness of God is wiser than
men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

26 For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise
according to worldly standards,[1] not many were powerful, not many were
of noble birth. 27 But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the
wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; 28 God
chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to
bring to nothing things that are, 29 so that no human being[2] might boast in
the presence of God. 30 And because of him[3] you are in Christ Jesus, who
became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and
redemption, 31 so that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the
Lord."

Proclaiming Christ Crucified

2 [1]‡†And I, when I came to you, brothers,[4] did not come proclaiming to you the testimony[5] of God with lofty speech or wisdom. [2]†For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. [3]†And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling, [4]†and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, [5]†that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.

Wisdom from the Spirit

6 †† Yet among the mature we do impart wisdom, although it is not a
wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to pass
away. 7 † But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God
decreed before the ages for our glory. 8 † None of the rulers of this age
understood this, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of
glory. 9 † But, as it is written,

> "What no eye has seen, nor ear heard,
> nor the heart of man imagined,
> what God has prepared for those who love
> him"—

10 † these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit
searches everything, even the depths of God. 11 † For who knows a person's
thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one
comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. 12 † Now we have
received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we
might understand the things freely given us by God. 13 † And we impart this
in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting
spiritual truths to those who are spiritual.[1]

14 † The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for
they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are
spiritually discerned. 15 † The spiritual person judges all things, but is himself
to be judged by no one. 16 † "For who has understood the mind of the Lord
so as to instruct him?" But we have the mind of Christ.

Divisions in the Church

3 [1]†But I, brothers,[2] could not address you as spiritual people, but as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ. [2]† I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for it. And even now you are not yet ready, [3]†for you are still of the flesh. For while there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not of the flesh and behaving only in a human way? [4]†For when one says, “I follow Paul,” and another, “I follow Apollos,” are you not being merely human?

[5]† What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, as the Lord assigned to each. [6]† I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. [7]†So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. [8]†He who plants and he who waters are one, and each will receive his wages according to his labor. [9]†For we are God’s fellow workers. You are God’s field, God’s building.

[10]† According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building upon it. Let each one take care how he builds upon it. [11]†For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. [12]†Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw— [13]† each one’s work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. [14]†If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. [15]†If anyone’s work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.

[16]† Do you not know that you[1] are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in you? [17]†If anyone destroys God’s temple, God will destroy him. For God’s temple is holy, and you are that temple.

[18]† Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you thinks that he is wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise. [19]‡For the wisdom of this world is folly with God. For it is written, “He catches the wise in their craftiness,” [20]and again, “The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are futile.” [21]†So let no one boast in men. For all things are

yours, [22]† whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future—all are yours, [23]† and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's.

The Ministry of Apostles

4 [1] † This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. [2] † Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy. [3] † But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by any human court. In fact, I do not even judge myself. [4] † For I am not aware of anything against myself, but I am not thereby acquitted. It is the Lord who judges me. [5] † Therefore do not pronounce judgment before the time, before the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart. Then each one will receive his commendation from God.

[6] † I have applied all these things to myself and Apollos for your benefit, brothers,[1] that you may learn by us not to go beyond what is written, that none of you may be puffed up in favor of one against another. [7] † For who sees anything different in you? What do you have that you did not receive? If then you received it, why do you boast as if you did not receive it?

[8] † Already you have all you want! Already you have become rich! Without us you have become kings! And would that you did reign, so that we might share the rule with you! [9] † For I think that God has exhibited us apostles as last of all, like men sentenced to death, because we have become a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men. [10] † We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ. We are weak, but you are strong. You are held in honor, but we in disrepute. [11] † To the present hour we hunger and thirst, we are poorly dressed and buffeted and homeless, [12] † and we labor, working with our own hands. When reviled, we bless; when persecuted, we endure; [13] † when slandered, we entreat. We have become, and are still, like the scum of the world, the refuse of all things.

[14] † I do not write these things to make you ashamed, but to admonish you as my beloved children. [15] † For though you have countless guides in Christ, you do not have many fathers. For I became your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel. [16] † I urge you, then, be imitators of me. [17] † That is why I sent[2] you Timothy, my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, to remind you of my ways in Christ,[1] as I teach them everywhere in every church.

[18] †Some are arrogant, as though I were not coming to you. [19] †But I will
come to you soon, if the Lord wills, and I will find out not the talk of these
arrogant people but their power. [20] †For the kingdom of God does not consist
in talk but in power. [21] †What do you wish? Shall I come to you with a rod,
or with love in a spirit of gentleness?

Sexual Immorality Defiles the Church

5 [1]†It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you,
and of a kind that is not tolerated even among pagans, for a man has his
father's wife. [2]†And you are arrogant! Ought you not rather to mourn? Let
him who has done this be removed from among you.

[3]†For though absent in body, I am present in spirit; and as if present, I
have already pronounced judgment on the one who did such a thing.
[4]†When you are assembled in the name of the Lord Jesus and my spirit is
present, with the power of our Lord Jesus, [5]†you are to deliver this man to
Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the
day of the Lord.[2]

[6]† Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens
the whole lump? [7]†Cleanse out the old leaven that you may be a new lump,
as you really are unleavened. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been
sacrificed. [8]†Let us therefore celebrate the festival, not with the old leaven,
the leaven of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity
and truth.

[9]†I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral
people— [10]† not at all meaning the sexually immoral of this world, or the
greedy and swindlers, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of
the world. [11]†But now I am writing to you not to associate with anyone who
bears the name of brother if he is guilty of sexual immorality or greed, or is
an idolater, reviler, drunkard, or swindler—not even to eat with such a one.
[12]†For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Is it not those inside the
church whom you are to judge? [13]†God judges[1] those outside. "Purge the
evil person from among you."

Lawsuits Against Believers

6 [1]When one of you has a grievance against another, does he dare
go to law before the unrighteous instead of the saints? [2]Or do you not
know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world is to be judged
by you, are you incompetent to try trivial cases? [3]Do you not know that we
are to judge angels? How much more, then, matters pertaining to this life!
[4]So if you have such cases, why do you lay them before those who have no
standing in the church? [5] I say this to your shame. Can it be that there is no
one among you wise enough to settle a dispute between the brothers, [6]but
brother goes to law against brother, and that before unbelievers? [7]To have
lawsuits at all with one another is already a defeat for you. Why not rather
suffer wrong? Why not rather be defrauded? [8]But you yourselves wrong
and defraud—even your own brothers![2]

[9]Or do you not know that the unrighteous[3] will not inherit the kingdom
of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters,
nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality,[4] [10]nor thieves, nor the
greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom
of God. [11]And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were
sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by
the Spirit of our God.

Flee Sexual Immorality

12 ‡ ‡ ‡ “All things are lawful for me,” but not all things are helpful. “All
things are lawful for me,” but I will not be enslaved by anything. 13 † “Food
is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food”—and God will destroy
both one and the other. The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for
the Lord, and the Lord for the body. 14 † And God raised the Lord and will
also raise us up by his power. 15 ‡ Do you not know that your bodies are
members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them
members of a prostitute? Never! 16 Or do you not know that he who is
joined[1] to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For, as it is written,
“The two will become one flesh.” 17 But he who is joined to the Lord
becomes one spirit with him. 18 † Flee from sexual immorality. Every other
sin[2] a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person
sins against his own body. 19 † Or do you not know that your body is a temple
of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your
own, 20 † for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.

Principles for Marriage

7 [1]‡†Now concerning the matters about which you wrote: “It is good
for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman.” [2]†But because of the
temptation to sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife and
each woman her own husband. [3]† The husband should give to his wife her
conjugal rights, and likewise the wife to her husband. [4]†For the wife does
not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. Likewise the
husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. [5]†
Do not deprive one another, except perhaps by agreement for a limited time,
that you may devote yourselves to prayer; but then come together again, so
that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

[6]†Now as a concession, not a command, I say this.[3] [7]† I wish that all
were as I myself am. But each has his own gift from God, one of one kind
and one of another.

[8]†To the unmarried and the widows I say that it is good for them to
remain single as I am. [9]†But if they cannot exercise self-control, they
should marry. For it is better to marry than to burn with passion.

[10]‡To the married I give this charge (not I, but the Lord): the wife should
not separate from her husband [11](but if she does, she should remain
unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband), and the husband should not
divorce his wife.

[12]‡To the rest I say (I, not the Lord) that if any brother has a wife who is
an unbeliever, and she consents to live with him, he should not divorce her.
[13]If any woman has a husband who is an unbeliever, and he consents to live
with her, she should not divorce him. [14]†For the unbelieving husband is
made holy because of his wife, and the unbelieving wife is made holy
because of her husband. Otherwise your children would be unclean, but as
it is, they are holy. [15]†But if the unbelieving partner separates, let it be so. In
such cases the brother or sister is not enslaved. God has called you[1] to
peace. [16]†For how do you know, wife, whether you will save your husband?
Or how do you know, husband, whether you will save your wife?

Live as You Are Called

17 ‡† Only let each person lead the life that the Lord has assigned to him,
and to which God has called him. This is my rule in all the churches. 18 † Was
anyone at the time of his call already circumcised? Let him not seek to
remove the marks of circumcision. Was anyone at the time of his call
uncircumcised? Let him not seek circumcision. 19 † For neither circumcision
counts for anything nor uncircumcision, but keeping the commandments of
God. 20 † Each one should remain in the condition in which he was called.
21 † Were you a slave[2] when called? Do not be concerned about it. (But if
you can gain your freedom, avail yourself of the opportunity.) 22 ‡ For he
who was called in the Lord as a slave is a freedman of the Lord. Likewise
he who was free when called is a slave of Christ. 23 You were bought with a
price; do not become slaves of men. 24 † So, brothers,[3] in whatever condition
each was called, there let him remain with God.

The Unmarried and the Widowed

25 ‡ † Now concerning[4] the betrothed,[5] I have no command from the
Lord, but I give my judgment as one who by the Lord's mercy is
trustworthy. 26 †I think that in view of the present[1] distress it is good for a
person to remain as he is. 27 †Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek to be
free. Are you free from a wife? Do not seek a wife. 28 †But if you do marry,
you have not sinned, and if a betrothed woman[2] marries, she has not
sinned. Yet those who marry will have worldly troubles, and I would spare
you that. 29 †This is what I mean, brothers: the appointed time has grown
very short. From now on, let those who have wives live as though they had
none, 30 †and those who mourn as though they were not mourning, and those
who rejoice as though they were not rejoicing, and those who buy as though
they had no goods, 31 †and those who deal with the world as though they had
no dealings with it. For the present form of this world is passing away.

32 †I want you to be free from anxieties. The unmarried man is anxious
about the things of the Lord, how to please the Lord. 33 †But the married
man is anxious about worldly things, how to please his wife, 34 †and his
interests are divided. And the unmarried or betrothed woman is anxious
about the things of the Lord, how to be holy in body and spirit. But the
married woman is anxious about worldly things, how to please her husband.
35 †I say this for your own benefit, not to lay any restraint upon you, but to
promote good order and to secure your undivided devotion to the Lord.

36 †If anyone thinks that he is not behaving properly toward his betrothed,
[3] if his[4] passions are strong, and it has to be, let him do as he wishes: let
them marry—it is no sin. 37 †But whoever is firmly established in his heart,
being under no necessity but having his desire under control, and has
determined this in his heart, to keep her as his betrothed, he will do well.
38 †So then he who marries his betrothed does well, and he who refrains
from marriage will do even better.

39 † A wife is bound to her husband as long as he lives. But if her husband
dies, she is free to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord. 40 †Yet
in my judgment she is happier if she remains as she is. And I think that I too
have the Spirit of God.

Food Offered to Idols

8 [1]†Now concerning[5] food offered to idols: we know that “all of us possess knowledge.” This “knowledge” puffs up, but love builds up. [2]† If anyone imagines that he knows something, he does not yet know as he ought to know. [3]†But if anyone loves God, he is known by God.[1]

[4]†Therefore, as to the eating of food offered to idols, we know that “an idol has no real existence,” and that “there is no God but one.” [5]For although there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth—as indeed there are many “gods” and many “lords”— [6]†yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.

[7]†However, not all possess this knowledge. But some, through former association with idols, eat food as really offered to an idol, and their conscience, being weak, is defiled. [8]† Food will not commend us to God. We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do. [9]†But take care that this right of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. [10]†For if anyone sees you who have knowledge eating[2] in an idol’s temple, will he not be encouraged,[3] if his conscience is weak, to eat food offered to idols? [11]†And so by your knowledge this weak person is destroyed, the brother for whom Christ died. [12]†Thus, sinning against your brothers[4] and wounding their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. [13]†Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble.

Paul Surrenders His Rights

9 [1]†Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are not you my workmanship in the Lord? [2]‡If to others I am not an apostle, at least I am to you, for you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord.

[3]This is my defense to those who would examine me. [4]† Do we not have the right to eat and drink? [5]† Do we not have the right to take along a believing wife,[1] as do the other apostles and the brothers of the Lord and Cephas? [6]†Or is it only Barnabas and I who have no right to refrain from working for a living? [7]‡ Who serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard without eating any of its fruit? Or who tends a flock without getting some of the milk?

[8]Do I say these things on human authority? Does not the Law say the same? [9]For it is written in the Law of Moses, “You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain.” Is it for oxen that God is concerned? [10]Does he not speak entirely for our sake? It was written for our sake, because the plowman should plow in hope and the thresher thresh in hope of sharing in the crop. [11]† If we have sown spiritual things among you, is it too much if we reap material things from you? [12]†If others share this rightful claim on you, do not we even more?

Nevertheless, we have not made use of this right, but we endure anything rather than put an obstacle in the way of the gospel of Christ. [13]†Do you not know that those who are employed in the temple service get their food from the temple, and those who serve at the altar share in the sacrificial offerings? [14]† In the same way, the Lord commanded that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel.

[15]†But I have made no use of any of these rights, nor am I writing these things to secure any such provision. For I would rather die than have anyone deprive me of my ground for boasting. [16]†For if I preach the gospel, that gives me no ground for boasting. For necessity is laid upon me. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel! [17]†For if I do this of my own will, I have a reward, but if not of my own will, I am still entrusted with a stewardship.

18 †What then is my reward? That in my preaching I may present the gospel
free of charge, so as not to make full use of my right in the gospel.

19 ††For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant to all,
that I might win more of them. 20 † To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order
to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though
not being myself under the law) that I might win those under the law. 21 †To
those outside the law I became as one outside the law (not being outside the
law of God but under the law of Christ) that I might win those outside the
law. 22 † To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have
become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some. 23 †I do
it all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share with them in its blessings.

24 †Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one
receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it. 25 †Every athlete exercises
self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we
an imperishable. 26 †So I do not run aimlessly; I do not box as one beating
the air. 27 †But I discipline my body and keep it under control,[1] lest after
preaching to others I myself should be disqualified.

Warning Against Idolatry

10 [1]For I want you to know, brothers,[2] that our fathers were all
under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, [2]and all were baptized into
Moses in the cloud and in the sea, [3]and all ate the same spiritual food,
[4]and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual
Rock that followed them, and the Rock was Christ. [5]Nevertheless, with
most of them God was not pleased, for they were overthrown in the
wilderness.

[6]Now these things took place as examples for us, that we might not
desire evil as they did. [7] Do not be idolaters as some of them were; as it is
written, “The people sat down to eat and drink and rose up to play.” [8] We
must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-
three thousand fell in a single day. [9]We must not put Christ[1] to the test, as
some of them did and were destroyed by serpents, [10]nor grumble, as some
of them did and were destroyed by the Destroyer. [11]Now these things
happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our
instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come. [12]Therefore let anyone
who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall. [13]No temptation has
overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not
let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also
provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.

[14]Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry. [15]I speak as to sensible
people; judge for yourselves what I say. [16] The cup of blessing that we
bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we
break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? [17]Because there is one
bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread.
[18]Consider the people of Israel:[2] are not those who eat the sacrifices
participants in the altar? [19]What do I imply then? That food offered to idols
is anything, or that an idol is anything? [20]No, I imply that what pagans
sacrifice they offer to demons and not to God. I do not want you to be
participants with demons. [21]You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the
cup of demons. You cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of

demons. [22]† Shall we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than he?

Do All to the Glory of God

23 ‡† “All things are lawful,” but not all things are helpful. “All things are
lawful,” but not all things build up. 24 † Let no one seek his own good, but
the good of his neighbor. 25 † Eat whatever is sold in the meat market
without raising any question on the ground of conscience. 26For “the earth is
the Lord’s, and the fullness thereof.” 27 ‡† If one of the unbelievers invites
you to dinner and you are disposed to go, eat whatever is set before you
without raising any question on the ground of conscience. 28 ‡ But if
someone says to you, “This has been offered in sacrifice,” then do not eat it,
for the sake of the one who informed you, and for the sake of conscience—
29I do not mean your conscience, but his. For why should my liberty be
determined by someone else’s conscience? 30If I partake with thankfulness,
why am I denounced because of that for which I give thanks?

31 ‡So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of
God. 32 † Give no offense to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God,
33 †just as I try to please everyone in everything I do, not seeking my own
advantage, but that of many, that they may be saved.

11 1 ‡† Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.

Head Coverings

2 ‡ † Now I commend you because you remember me in everything and
maintain the traditions even as I delivered them to you. 3 † But I want you to
understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of a wife[1] is her
husband, and the head of Christ is God. 4 † Every man who prays or
prophesies with his head covered dishonors his head, 5 ‡ but every wife[2]
who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head, since
it is the same as if her head were shaven. 6 For if a wife will not cover her
head, then she should cut her hair short. But since it is disgraceful for a wife
to cut off her hair or shave her head, let her cover her head. 7 ‡ For a man
ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God, but
woman is the glory of man. 8 For man was not made from woman, but
woman from man. 9 Neither was man created for woman, but woman for
man. 10 † That is why a wife ought to have a symbol of authority on her head,
because of the angels.[3] 11 † Nevertheless, in the Lord woman is not
independent of man nor man of woman; 12 † for as woman was made from
man, so man is now born of woman. And all things are from God. 13 ‡ † Judge
for yourselves: is it proper for a wife to pray to God with her head
uncovered? 14 † Does not nature itself teach you that if a man wears long hair
it is a disgrace for him, 15 † but if a woman has long hair, it is her glory? For
her hair is given to her for a covering. 16 † If anyone is inclined to be
contentious, we have no such practice, nor do the churches of God.

The Lord’s Supper

17 ‡ † But in the following instructions I do not commend you, because
when you come together it is not for the better but for the worse. 18 † For, in
the first place, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are
divisions among you. And I believe it in part,[1] 19 † for there must be factions
among you in order that those who are genuine among you may be
recognized. 20 † When you come together, it is not the Lord’s supper that you
eat. 21 † For in eating, each one goes ahead with his own meal. One goes
hungry, another gets drunk. 22 † What! Do you not have houses to eat and
drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and humiliate those who
have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I commend you in this? No, I
will not.

23 † For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the
Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, 24 ‡ † and when he
had given thanks, he broke it, and said, “This is my body which is for[1] you.
Do this in remembrance of me.”[2] 25 † In the same way also he took the cup,
after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as
often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.”26 † For as often as you eat this
bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.

27 ‡ † Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an
unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord.
28 † Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of
the cup. 29 † For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats
and drinks judgment on himself. 30 † That is why many of you are weak and
ill, and some have died.[3] 31 ‡ But if we judged[4] ourselves truly, we would
not be judged. 32 But when we are judged by the Lord, we are disciplined[5]
so that we may not be condemned along with the world.

33 ‡ † So then, my brothers,[6] when you come together to eat, wait for[7] one
another— 34 ‡ if anyone is hungry, let him eat at home—so that when you
come together it will not be for judgment. About the other things I will give
directions when I come.

Spiritual Gifts

12 [1]‡†Now concerning[1] spiritual gifts,[2] brothers,[3] I do not want
you to be uninformed. [2]†You know that when you were pagans you were
led astray to mute idols, however you were led. [3]†Therefore I want you to
understand that no one speaking in the Spirit of God ever says “Jesus is
accursed!” and no one can say “Jesus is Lord” except in the Holy Spirit.
[4]‡Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; [5]and there are
varieties of service, but the same Lord; [6]and there are varieties of activities,
but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. [7]† To each is
given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. [8]‡†For to one is
given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the
utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, [9]†to another faith by
the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, [10]†to another
the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to
distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another
the interpretation of tongues. [11]†All these are empowered by one and the
same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.

One Body with Many Members

12 For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the
members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. 13For
in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves[1]
or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.

14For the body does not consist of one member but of many. 15If the foot
should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” that
would not make it any less a part of the body. 16And if the ear should say,
“Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” that would not
make it any less a part of the body. 17If the whole body were an eye, where
would be the sense of hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would
be the sense of smell? 18 But as it is, God arranged the members in the
body, each one of them, as he chose. 19If all were a single member, where
would the body be? 20As it is, there are many parts,[2] yet one body.

21The eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you,” nor again the
head to the feet, “I have no need of you.” 22On the contrary, the parts of the
body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, 23and on those parts of the
body that we think less honorable we bestow the greater honor, and our
unpresentable parts are treated with greater modesty, 24 which our more
presentable parts do not require. But God has so composed the body, giving
greater honor to the part that lacked it, 25that there may be no division in
the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. 26If
one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all
rejoice together.

27 Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.
28 And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets,
third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helping, administrating,
and various kinds of tongues. 29Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all
teachers? Do all work miracles? 30Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all
speak with tongues? Do all interpret? 31 But earnestly desire the higher
gifts.

And I will show you a still more excellent way.

The Way of Love

13 [1]†† If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not
love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. [2]† And if I have prophetic
powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all
faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. [3]† If I
give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned,[1] but have
not love, I gain nothing.

[4]† Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant
[5]or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful;[2] [6]it
does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. [7] Love bears all
things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

[8]† Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for
tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away. [9]† For we
know in part and we prophesy in part, [10]† but when the perfect comes, the
partial will pass away. [11]† When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought
like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up
childish ways. [12]† For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face.
Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully
known.

[13]† So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of
these is love.

Prophecy and Tongues

14 [1]‡†Pursue love, and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts, especially
that you may prophesy. [2]†For one who speaks in a tongue speaks not to men
but to God; for no one understands him, but he utters mysteries in the Spirit.
[3]† On the other hand, the one who prophesies speaks to people for their
upbuilding and encouragement and consolation. [4]‡The one who speaks in a
tongue builds up himself, but the one who prophesies builds up the church.
[5]Now I want you all to speak in tongues, but even more to prophesy. The
one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues, unless
someone interprets, so that the church may be built up.

[6]† Now, brothers,[1] if I come to you speaking in tongues, how will I
benefit you unless I bring you some revelation or knowledge or prophecy or
teaching? [7]‡If even lifeless instruments, such as the flute or the harp, do not
give distinct notes, how will anyone know what is played? [8]And if the bugle
gives an indistinct sound, who will get ready for battle? [9]† So with
yourselves, if with your tongue you utter speech that is not intelligible, how
will anyone know what is said? For you will be speaking into the air.
[10]There are doubtless many different languages in the world, and none is
without meaning, [11]†but if I do not know the meaning of the language, I will
be a foreigner to the speaker and the speaker a foreigner to me. [12]†So with
yourselves, since you are eager for manifestations of the Spirit, strive to
excel in building up the church.

[13]† Therefore, one who speaks in a tongue should pray for the power to
interpret. [14]† For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays but my mind is
unfruitful. [15]† What am I to do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will pray
with my mind also; I will sing praise with my spirit, but I will sing with my
mind also. [16]‡ Otherwise, if you give thanks with your spirit, how can
anyone in the position of an outsider[2] say “Amen” to your thanksgiving
when he does not know what you are saying? [17]For you may be giving
thanks well enough, but the other person is not being built up. [18]‡I thank
God that I speak in tongues more than all of you. [19]Nevertheless, in church I

would rather speak five words with my mind in order to instruct others, than ten thousand words in a tongue.

20 †Brothers, do not be children in your thinking. Be infants in evil, but in your thinking be mature. 21 ‡ In the Law it is written, “By people of strange tongues and by the lips of foreigners will I speak to this people, and even then they will not listen to me, says the Lord.” 22 Thus tongues are a sign not for believers but for unbelievers, while prophecy is a sign[1] not for unbelievers but for believers. 23 † If, therefore, the whole church comes together and all speak in tongues, and outsiders or unbelievers enter, will they not say that you are out of your minds? 24 ‡ But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or outsider enters, he is convicted by all, he is called to account by all, 25 the secrets of his heart are disclosed, and so, falling on his face, he will worship God and declare that God is really among you.

Orderly Worship

[26]‡†What then, brothers? When you come together, each one has a hymn,
a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Let all things be done
for building up. [27]‡If any speak in a tongue, let there be only two or at most
three, and each in turn, and let someone interpret. [28]But if there is no one to
interpret, let each of them keep silent in church and speak to himself and to
God. [29]†Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others weigh what is
said. [30]†If a revelation is made to another sitting there, let the first be silent.
[31]†For you can all prophesy one by one, so that all may learn and all be
encouraged, [32]†and the spirits of prophets are subject to prophets. [33]†For
God is not a God of confusion but of peace.

As in all the churches of the saints, [34]‡ the women should keep silent in
the churches. For they are not permitted to speak, but should be in
submission, as the Law also says. [35]If there is anything they desire to learn,
let them ask their husbands at home. For it is shameful for a woman to
speak in church.

[36]‡Or was it from you that the word of God came? Or are you the only
ones it has reached? [37] If anyone thinks that he is a prophet, or spiritual, he
should acknowledge that the things I am writing to you are a command of
the Lord. [38]†If anyone does not recognize this, he is not recognized. [39]‡So,
my brothers, earnestly desire to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in
tongues. [40] But all things should be done decently and in order.

The Resurrection of Christ

15 [1]‡†Now I would remind you, brothers,[1] of the gospel I preached
to you, which you received, in which you stand, [2]†and by which you are
being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you
believed in vain.

[3]†For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that
Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, [4]that he was
buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the
Scriptures, [5]‡and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. [6]Then he
appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are
still alive, though some have fallen asleep. [7]Then he appeared to James,
then to all the apostles. [8]†Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared
also to me. [9]†For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an
apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. [10]†But by the grace of God
I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I
worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God
that is with me. [11]†Whether then it was I or they, so we preach and so you
believed.

The Resurrection of the Dead

12 ‡ ‡ † Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some
of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? 13 But if there is no
resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. 14 And if
Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in
vain. 15 We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified
about God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise if it is true that the
dead are not raised. 16 † For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has
been raised. 17 † And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you
are still in your sins. 18 † Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ
have perished. 19 If in Christ we have hope[1] in this life only, we are of all
people most to be pitied.

20 † But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those
who have fallen asleep. 21 ‡ For as by a man came death, by a man has come
also the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ
shall all be made alive. 23 † But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits,
then at his coming those who belong to Christ. 24 † Then comes the end,
when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule
and every authority and power. 25 ‡ For he must reign until he has put all his
enemies under his feet. 26 The last enemy to be destroyed is death. 27 For
"God[2] has put all things in subjection under his feet." But when it says, "all
things are put in subjection," it is plain that he is excepted who put all
things in subjection under him. 28 † When all things are subjected to him,
then the Son himself will also be subjected to him who put all things in
subjection under him, that God may be all in all.

29 ‡ † Otherwise, what do people mean by being baptized on behalf of the
dead? If the dead are not raised at all, why are people baptized on their
behalf? 30 † Why are we in danger every hour? 31 † I protest, brothers, by my
pride in you, which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die every day!
32 ‡ † What do I gain if, humanly speaking, I fought with beasts at Ephesus?
If the dead are not raised, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die." 33
Do not be deceived: "Bad company ruins good morals."[1] 34 † Wake up from

your drunken stupor, as is right, and do not go on sinning. For some have no knowledge of God. I say this to your shame.

The Resurrection Body

35 But someone will ask, “How are the dead raised? With what kind of
body do they come?” 36 You foolish person! What you sow does not come to
life unless it dies. 37 And what you sow is not the body that is to be, but a
bare kernel, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain. 38 But God gives it a
body as he has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body. 39 For not all
flesh is the same, but there is one kind for humans, another for animals,
another for birds, and another for fish. 40 There are heavenly bodies and
earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is of one kind, and the glory of
the earthly is of another. 41 There is one glory of the sun, and another glory
of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for star differs from star in
glory.

42 So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable;
what is raised is imperishable. 43 It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory.
It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. 44 It is sown a natural body; it
is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual
body. 45 Thus it is written, “The first man Adam became a living being”;[2]
the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. 46 But it is not the spiritual that is
first but the natural, and then the spiritual. 47 The first man was from the
earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. 48 As was the man of
dust, so also are those who are of the dust, and as is the man of heaven, so
also are those who are of heaven. 49 Just as we have borne the image of the
man of dust, we shall[3] also bear the image of the man of heaven.

Mystery and Victory

50 ††I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of
God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. 51 †Behold! I tell you
a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, 52 † in a
moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will
sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.
53 †For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal
body must put on immortality. 54 † When the perishable puts on the
imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass
the saying that is written:

"Death is swallowed up in victory."
55 "O death, where is your victory?
O death, where is your sting?"

56 †The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. 57 †But thanks be
to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.
58 † Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always
abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is
not in vain.

The Collection for the Saints

16 [1]‡‡Now concerning[1] the collection for the saints: as I directed the churches of Galatia, so you also are to do. [2]†On the first day of every week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up, as he may prosper, so that there will be no collecting when I come. [3]‡And when I arrive, I will send those whom you accredit by letter to carry your gift to Jerusalem. [4]If it seems advisable that I should go also, they will accompany me.

Plans for Travel

5 ‡† I will visit you after passing through Macedonia, for I intend to pass
through Macedonia, 6 †and perhaps I will stay with you or even spend the
winter, so that you may help me on my journey, wherever I go. 7For I do not
want to see you now just in passing. I hope to spend some time with you, if
the Lord permits. 8 †But I will stay in Ephesus until Pentecost, 9 †for a wide
door for effective work has opened to me, and there are many adversaries.
10 † When Timothy comes, see that you put him at ease among you, for he
is doing the work of the Lord, as I am. 11 †So let no one despise him. Help
him on his way in peace, that he may return to me, for I am expecting him
with the brothers.

Final Instructions

12 ‡† Now concerning our brother Apollos, I strongly urged him to visit
you with the other brothers, but it was not at all his will[1] to come now. He
will come when he has opportunity.
13 ‡ Be watchful, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong. 14 Let all
that you do be done in love.
15 ‡ Now I urge you, brothers[2]—you know that the household[3] of
Stephanas were the first converts in Achaia, and that they have devoted
themselves to the service of the saints— 16 be subject to such as these, and
to every fellow worker and laborer. 17 † I rejoice at the coming of Stephanas
and Fortunatus and Achaicus, because they have made up for your absence,
18 † for they refreshed my spirit as well as yours. Give recognition to such
men.

Greetings

19 ‡† The churches of Asia send you greetings. Aquila and Prisca, together
with the church in their house, send you hearty greetings in the Lord. 20 † All
the brothers send you greetings. Greet one another with a holy kiss.
21 † I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. 22 ‡ If anyone has no love
for the Lord, let him be accursed. Our Lord, come![4] 23 The grace of the
Lord Jesus be with you. 24 My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen.

1 Corinthians

OVERVIEW

Author
Paul the apostle

Date
AD 55, before Pentecost

Places
Corinth in Achaia; Macedonia; Galatia and Ephesus in Asia [Minor]; Jerusalem

People
Paul; Sosthenes; Chloe; Apollos; Cephas; Crispus; Gaius; Stephanas; Timothy; Barnabas; Fortunatus; Achaicus; Aquila; Prisca

Purpose
To explain that Jesus Christ crucified—who embodies the Gospel—creates the Church's unity, service, and hope

Law Themes
Rebukes against divisions; foolish human wisdom; struggles with sexual immorality, idolatry, and spiritual pride; the Lord's Supper abused; doubting the resurrection

Gospel Themes
Saved by Christ crucified; God's wisdom in Christ; the Spirit's work; Gospel ministry through the apostles; sanctified through Baptism; God's unity; the Lord's Supper; resurrection hope

Memory Verses
God's wisdom (1:26–2:2); the Lord's Supper (11:23–32); love's greatness (13:1–13); the resurrection (15:50–58)

Introduction to 1 Corinthians

Reading 1 Corinthians

A variety of shops line the walls of the marketplace or *macellum*. Along with people bartering in Greek, Latin, and other tongues, hogs grunt, sheep and goats bleat, chickens cluck, doves coo, and cattle low. The animals smell and see the fresh produce and baked goods close to their pens. The smell of blood and cooked meat hangs in the air, wafting from the market area and from the dining halls in the nearby temples. Worshipers gather in the temple to make sacrifices, and businessmen recline at tables to discuss the latest issues, while Asclepius, Serapis, and other gods stand in mute approval. Outside these temples, members of a new piety walk past the temples to the macellum in search of food for a private supper to be hosted by their Lord.

The cosmopolitan markets at Corinth supplied a diverse population of settlers, travelers, and slaves. The interests and differences between these groups influenced the divisions in the house churches at Roman Corinth. Paul's Letter provided detailed instructions about these dividing issues and directed the Corinthians to what he taught them before—Christ crucified unites all who believe.

Luther on 1 Corinthians

In this epistle St. Paul exhorts the Corinthians to be one in faith and love, and to see to it that they learn well the chief thing, namely, that Christ is our salvation, the thing over which all reason and wisdom stumbles….

[St. Paul] had taught his Corinthians Christian faith and freedom from the law. But then the mad saints came along, and the immature know-it-alls. They broke up the unity of the doctrine and caused division among the believers. One claimed to belong to Paul, the other to Apollos; one to Peter, the other to Christ. One wanted circumcision, the other not; one wanted marriage, the other not; one wanted to eat food offered to idols, the other not. Some wanted to be outwardly free [*leiblich frey*]; some of the women wanted to go with uncovered hair, and so on. They went so far that one man abused his liberty and married his father's wife, some did not believe in the resurrection of the dead, and some thought lightly of the sacrament.

In short, things got so wild and disorderly that everyone wanted to be the expert and do the teaching and make what he pleased of the gospel, the sacrament, and faith. Meanwhile they let the main thing drop—namely, that Christ is our salvation, righteousness, and redemption—as if they had long since outgrown it. This truth can never remain intact when people begin to imagine they are wise and know it all….

Therefore St. Paul most severely rebukes and condemns this shameful wisdom, and makes these connoisseur saints out to be fools. He says outright that they know nothing of Christ, or of the Spirit and gifts of God given to us in Christ, and that they had better begin to learn. It takes spiritual folk to understand this. The desire to be wise and the pretense of cleverness in the gospel are the very things that really give offense and hinder the knowledge of Christ and God, and create disturbances and contentions. This clever wisdom and reason can well serve to make for nothing but mad saints and wild Christians. Yet such people can never know our Lord Christ, unless they first become fools again and humbly let themselves be taught and led by

the simple word of God. This is what St. Paul deals with in the first four chapters.

In chapter 5 he rebukes the gross unchastity of the man who had married his father's wife. He would put this man under the ban and give him over to the devil. Thus he points out the right way of using the ban, that it should be laid with the consent of the believing congregation upon obvious transgressions, as Christ also teaches in Matthew 18[:17].

In chapter 6 he rebukes contention and disputing in the courts, especially before heathen and unbelievers. He teaches them that they should settle their cases among themselves, or suffer wrong.

In chapter 7 he gives instruction concerning chastity and married life. He praises chastity and virginity, saying that these are helpful in allowing closer attentiveness to the gospel, as Christ also teaches in Matthew 19[:12] concerning celibates who are chaste for the sake of the gospel or the kingdom of heaven. But Paul wills that it be practiced without force or compulsion, or the risk of greater sin; otherwise, marriage is better than a chastity which is continually aflame with passion.

In chapters 8 to 12 he discusses many different ways in which weak consciences are to be guided and regarded in external matters such as eating, drinking, apparel, and receiving the sacrament. Everywhere he forbids the strong to despise the weak, since he himself, even though he is an apostle, has refrained from many things to which he really had a right. Moreover the strong may well be afraid, because in ancient Israel so many were destroyed, all of whom had been led out of Egypt by miracles. Besides this, he makes several digressions into worthwhile teachings.

In chapters 12 and 13 he discusses the many different gifts of God, among which love is the best. He teaches the people not to exalt themselves but to serve one another in unity of spirit, since there is one God, one Lord, one Spirit, and everything is one, however great the diversity.

In chapter 14 he teaches the preachers, prophets, and singers to use their gifts in an orderly manner; they are to display their preaching, skill, and understanding for edification only, and not in order to gain honor for themselves.

In chapter 15 he takes those to task who had taught and believed wrongly concerning the resurrection of the body.

In the last chapter he exhorts the people to give brotherly assistance to the needy in the form of material aid. (AE 35:380–83)

For more of Luther's insights on this Book, see *Commentary on 1 Corinthians 7* (AE 28:1–56) and *Commentary on 1 Corinthians 15* (AE 28:57–213).

Challenges for Readers

The setting for Paul's Letter and the issues he addresses present many challenges for interpreters. Here are some of the most important issues:

Cultural Diversity in Roman Corinth. The Romans had destroyed Greek Corinth in 146 BC; Julius Caesar then built a Roman colony there in 44 BC. The first settlers were Roman veterans from Caesar's armies. Freed slaves, merchants, and tradesmen also came to Corinth, including a significant number of Jews (cf Ac 18). Roman Corinth had a prosperous harbor and numerous visitors. As in the earlier Greek city, immorality and prostitution were common. People held a wide variety of superstitious, religious, and philosophical beliefs. The varieties of culture, language, and religion seem to have made Roman Corinth an especially difficult place to plant a Christian church. Throughout 1 Corinthians, Paul addresses problems that culture had raised for the congregation.

Eschatology. Paul writes 1 Corinthians in view of Jesus' promised return and the resurrection of the body. His goal is that the congregation will stand "guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1:8). Misunderstandings about Jesus' ministry and return have confused them (ch 15), leading to false doctrines and sinful practices.

Passages and Slogans. Paul frequently quotes statements used by the Corinthians. He is interacting both with a report about the congregation and a letter from the congregation (cf 1:11; 7:1). Failing to recognize that Paul is citing their words can lead to contradictory interpretations of the Epistle. The ESV translators have placed quote marks around likely statements from the Corinthians (e.g., 1:12; 3:4; 6:12–13; 7:1; 8:1; 10:23; cf 15:12).

Rhetoric and Logic. Though Paul plays down his abilities as a speaker (2:4), he demonstrates skillful use of rabbinic and Greek styles of argument. As you read this Letter, remember that Paul uses contrasts, rhetorical questions, logic, hyperbole, and other methods to make his points. Interpreters who fail to recognize Paul's rhetoric conclude that Paul contradicts himself. However, Paul persistently speaks from God's Word—the OT and the Gospel message—as the basis for the congregation's doctrine and practice.

Lord's Supper. Even Christ's Supper, intended for uniting the Lord and His people, has become a point of controversy and division in Corinth. Paul

carefully describes the Supper's meaning and use (chs 10–11), but interpreters remain confused by Paul's statements about Christ's body and blood, fellowship, and worthiness.

Speaking in Tongues. See p 1969.

Blessings for Readers

In 1 Corinthians, Paul describes a divided and struggling congregation, not unlike struggling congregations today. As you read and study, consider how the Lord brought the Corinthians through their struggles, using the sound theology and counsel of the apostle Paul, focusing on salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ. History shows that, despite early struggles, the congregation survived and prospered (e.g., we have Clement of Rome's letter to them from 40 years later). Just as the Corinthians came to view Israel's struggles and God's mercies for them as examples and instruction (10:11), let us receive the things recorded in Paul's Letter as examples and instruction for today. Avoid their excesses and sins. Rejoice in God's promises to the Corinthians, especially the promised unity through the Gospel.

OUTLINE

I. Greeting (1:1–3)
II. Thanksgiving (1:4–9)
III. Conflict over Divisions (1:10–4:21)
  A. Report of the Problem in Corinth (1:10–17)
  B. The Cross as the Power of God (1:18–2:5)
    1. The limits of human wisdom in light of the cross (1:18–25)
    2. The power of the cross shown among the Corinthians (1:26–2:5)
  C. The Transforming Work of the Spirit of God (2:6–3:4)
    1. True wisdom (2:6–9)
    2. The Spirit as revealer (2:10–16)
    3. Spiritual maturity in the Spirit (3:1–4)
  D. The Spirit at Work in the Church and Its Ministers (3:5–4:21)
    1. The work of the Spirit through the ministers of the Church (3:5–17)
      a. Shared work in God's field (3:5–9)
      b. Shared work in the building (3:10–15)
      c. The temple and the indwelling Spirit (3:16–17)
    2. The work of God's ministers cannot be evaluated on the basis of human "wisdom" (3:18–4:5)

3. The power of the Gospel made known in the weakness of the messenger (4:6–21)

IV. Compromise and Conflict in Corinth (chs 5–6)

A. An Incestuous Relationship, with Further Implications (ch 5)

B. Conflict and the Courts (6:1–11)

C. Compromise in Sexual Relationships (6:12–20)

V. Response to Questions Raised by the Corinthians (7:1–11:1)

A. Marriage, Status, Celibacy, and Widows (ch 7)

1. Marriage and marital intimacy (7:1–7)

2. Should a person remain unmarried? (7:8–9)

3. Remaining together in marriage (7:10–16)

4. The call of God and social status (7:17–24)

5. About the unmarried (7:25–38)

6. About widows (7:39–40)

B. Idols and Eating (8:1–11:1)

1. Theological foundations (8:1–6)

a. The principle: love over knowledge (8:1–3)

b. The theology: all belongs to God (8:4–6)

2. Situation 1: eating in temple dining rooms (8:7–13)

3. Two examples: Paul and Israel (9:1–10:13)

a. Love of others shown by Paul (ch 9)

b. Idolatry by Israel and its consequences (10:1–13)

4. Situation 2: sharing the Lord's Supper and avoiding temple worship (10:14–22)

5. Situation 3: idol food from the marketplace (10:23–26)

6. Situation 4: eating in the home of an unbeliever (10:27–30)

7. Conclusion: giving glory to God and living for the salvation of others (10:31–11:1)

VI. Freedom and Love in Worship and the Use of Gifts (11:2–14:40)

A. Gender and Public Worship (11:2–16)

B. The Unity Created by the Lord's Supper and Rebuke of the Status Distinctions in Corinth (11:17–34)

C. The Gifts of the Spirit for Service in Love (12:1–11)

1. The Christocentric unity created by the Spirit (12:1–3)

2. Diversity in unity: different gifts from one Spirit (12:4–7)

3. The gifts of the Spirit (12:8–11)

D. The Unity of the Body of Christ (12:12–31)

E. The “Greatest” Way: Love (ch 13)
1. Love as central to the gifts (13:1–3)
2. Nature and practice of love (13:4–7)
3. The permanence of love (13:8–13)
F. Love for Others and the Use of Gifts (ch 14)
1. Speaking must build up the community (14:1–25)
a. Speaking is not for one’s own benefit (14:1–5)
b. The uselessness of speaking that cannot be understood (14:6–12)
c. Praying and speaking with the mind (14:13–19)
d. Speaking in the presence of outsiders (14:20–25)
2. Speaking and order in worship (14:26–40)
a. Principles and examples (14:26–36)
b. Warning and encouragement (14:37–40)
VII. The Resurrection of the Dead (ch 15)
A. The Resurrection of Christ (15:1–11)
B. The Consequences of Denying the Resurrection (15:12–34)
1. The consequences of denying any resurrection (15:12–19)
2. Christ’s resurrection is the foundation of present and future life (15:20–34)
C. The Bodily Resurrection (15:35–58)
VIII. Final Matters (ch 16)
A. The Collection for Church in Jerusalem (16:1–4)
B. Paul’s Travel Plans (16:5–11)
C. Concluding Exhortations and Greetings (16:12–24)

Articles and Resources Related to 1 Corinthians

- Preparing for the Lord’s Supper
- Baptized into One Body
- Speaking in Tongues
- Men and Women in the Church
- Jesus, the New Testament, and the Creeds

Preparing for the Lord's Supper

To understand Paul's instruction "Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup" (11:28) requires some background. Paul was not encouraging the mistaken idea that faith and religion are strictly private matters. He was calling the members to compare their own beliefs with the doctrine and practice he, as the Lord's apostle, had taught them. Here are other places in 1 Corinthians Paul refers to teaching the congregation:

> "I fed you with milk" (3:2).
> "Do you not know … ?" (3:16; 6:9, 15–16; 9:13).
> "I sent you Timothy … to remind you of my ways in Christ" (4:17).
> "I commend you because you … maintain the traditions even as I delivered them to you" (11:2).
> "What I also delivered to you" (11:23).
> "I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received" (15:1).
> "I delivered to you … what I also received" (15:3).

From these passages, we see that Paul had taught the Corinthians about right and wrong, Jesus' person and work (the Gospel), and the proper understanding and practice of the Lord's Supper. He had likewise administered Baptism and led them in prayer and worship. The term *delivered* implies a formal process of instruction and reception of the truths and practices, known as *catechesis* (see "teach," p 1904; c f 15:1, 3).

When you examine yourself before Communion, refresh yourself with the thorough teaching you received in the Lord's Word. Ask yourself these questions:

> Have I confessed and repented of my sins?
> Do I believe that in the blessed Sacrament I am receiving the actual body and blood of Christ, under the bread and wine, into my mouth, for the forgiveness of my sins?
> Do I share the confession and unity of this congregation?
> Will I, with the Lord's help, amend my sinful life?

The Holy Spirit will assist you and pray for you in this faithful discipline. See SC, Confession and The Sacrament of the Altar, pp xl–xli.

Baptized into One Body

The image of the body was often used by Greco-Roman authors concerned for the unity of the body politic. Here Paul's concern is the unity of the church. The analogy of the body and its members was a favorite of his. The unity of the body of Christ is grounded in its members' Baptism into that body (1 Cor 12:13; Gal 3:27–28) and their constant reception of Christ's body and blood in the Lord's Supper (1 Cor 10:16–17). "The sacramental body 'bodies' together the ecclesiastical 'body' " (J. Gibbs, "An Exegetical Case for Close(d) Communion," *Concordia Journal* 21:151). [See notes, 10:16, 17.]

Just as the human body is a unit, a single entity comprised of many parts, "so also is Christ" (12:12). We would have expected Paul to conclude the sentence, "so also is the church." But he is using metonymy, a shortened way of saying "so also is the church, which is the body of Christ" (cf. the juxtaposition of "body of Christ" and "the church" in 12:27–28).

The basis for the unity of many diverse parts within the body of Christ is their common Baptism "with one Spirit into one body" (12:13). Paul has in mind here the Sacrament of Christian Baptism, whereby a person is incorporated into the body of Christ (Gal 3:27–28).

See Rom 12:4–5; Eph 1:23; 4:4, 12, 16; 5:23, 30; Col 1:18; 2:19; 3:15.

Gregory J. Lockwood, *1 Corinthians*, CC (St. Louis: Concordia, 2000), 444.

Speaking in Tongues

The issue of what "speaking in tongues" was at Corinth is long-standing. Many interpreters are content to offer no clear resolution. Nevertheless, there are three basic approaches to interpreting what Paul's Letter says about "speaking in tongues." They are described below, beginning with the most recent views and concluding with views typically offered by the Church Fathers and the reformers, which guided the study notes.

Charismatic View

This approach is often associated with the rise of Pentecostalism in 1901 but has roots in the teachings of the French Prophets (Camisards; c 1702), Shakers (c 1747), Mormons, and Irvingites (c 1831). In this view, the Holy Spirit fills people and causes them to speak in human or angelic languages for the purposes of prayer or prophecy (see p 1876). Many charismatics view speaking in tongues as a necessary sign of being Spirit-filled, of perfect sanctification, or even of salvation. They regard such speaking in tongues as a normal activity for Christians that was lost in the early years of the Church. Some groups view Christians who do not speak in tongues as spiritually weak, cold, or dead.

Religious Psychology View

This approach stems from the comparative study of religions and from modern psychiatry (the latter arising c 1792). It began with C. G. Bardili (1761–1808), who compared speaking in tongues with records of ecstatic utterances by ancient Greek prophetesses at the oracle of Delphi. The critical scholar J. G. Eichhorn (1752–1827) popularized Bardili's opinion around the time that the experiences of Shakers, Mormons, and Irvingites began to be documented. In this view, speaking in tongues is an ecstatic, psychological state that is common to all radical religions and is evoked by religious fervor. The religious psychology view was important for the rise of the charismatic view because it legitimized religious ecstasy as common and blunted theological evaluation of the activity.

Cultural-Historical View

This approach was taught by the Church Fathers and the reformers, who viewed the gift of tongues as a special miracle for demonstrating God's acceptance of new believers (cf Ac 10:44–48; 11:17) and as a special ability to learn and use languages for the good of the Church. It holds that tongues are genuine human languages, as described in Ac 2:5–11. It points to the use and translation of various languages in the early Christian communities, which were culturally diverse.

The expression "to speak in a tongue" is common in Hebrew and Aramaic, where it means to speak or read another language (cf Dt 28:49; Ne 13:24; Es 1:22; Is 28:11; 33:19; Jer 5:15; Mishnah; Targums). Rabbis regarded Hebrew as the proper language for prayer (Sotah 7:1–2; Megillah 2:1) and the holy or heavenly language (spoken by angels, Babylonian Talmud, Sotah 33a). They wrestled with the issue of which language(s) to use during worship (see *Concordia Journal* 22:295–302). In the first century, Hebrew was still the language of temple liturgy in Jerusalem (see p 1835), but Aramaic or Greek was spoken by most people in Galilee and Judea (Mk 5:41; Jn 19:20; Ac 6:1; 21:37–22:2; 26:14). As Jewish Christians traveled, they naturally took their languages and synagogue practices with them.

The Corinthian congregation began from Paul's preaching at a Jewish synagogue (Ac 18:4–8). Members of the Corinthian congregation knew various languages. Paul's Letters to them are written in Greek but include Hebrew or Aramaic liturgical terms and titles (1Co 1:12; 3:22; 9:5; 14:15; 15:5; 16:22; 2Co 1:20). Roman Jews were also present (Ac 18:2), and inscriptional evidence shows the importance of Latin at Corinth, since the Romans rebuilt Corinth as a colony. It is easy to see how language in worship could become an issue, especially when proud "Hebrews" came to teach at the church (2Co 11:13, 22).

Luther on Tongues

The cultural-historical view was what Luther had in mind as he interpreted 1Co 12–14, and was the setting assumed in the Lutheran Confessions (AC XXIV 3–4; Ap XXIV 2–5). See Luther's comments at notes 12:10; 14:1–5; and throughout chs 12–14. See p 1876.

See also *The Charismatic Movement and Lutheran Theology* (CTCR Report, January 1972); *The Lutheran Church and the Charismatic Movement* (CTCR Report, April 1977); and *Spiritual Gifts* (CTCR Report, September 1994).

Men and Women in the Church

Whenever the Gospel has free course, it has a liberating effect on women (as indeed the Gospel liberates all people, Jn 8:31–36). In the South Pacific nation of Papua New Guinea, for example, where women were traditionally treated as chattels, the advent of Christianity has often brought them a new dignity and respect. Indeed there are countless societies where many women, once regarded merely as garden beds for raising children—to be discarded if they proved unfruitful—have found their Christian husbands treating them with courtesy and affection.

This Christian regard for women is, of course, inspired by "the meekness and gentleness of Christ" (2 Cor 10:1). Jesus himself set the pattern for his church by his own respect for women, beginning with his childhood submission to his mother (Lk 2:51). To women he extended his healing hand; with women he was happy to converse, to the amazement of his disciples (Jn 4:27); to women and men alike he taught the Word of God. Luke records how on one occasion the Lord took time to teach a class consisting of one woman, Mary, who received his praise because she "chose the best part, which will not be taken away from her" (Lk 10:38–42). Paul commands husbands to love their wives "as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her" (Eph 5:25). Peter counsels husbands to "live considerately … with [their] wives, bestowing honor [on the women] as joint heirs of the grace of life" (1 Pet 3:7). Thus biblical Christianity elevates women, honors them as equal members of the Christian community, and encourages them to study the Scriptures. The same is true of the Lutheran church in particular. The Lutheran Confessions sharply criticize misogyny: "Daniel says that it is characteristic of Antichrist's kingdom to despise women" (Ap XXIII 25, citing Daniel 11:37)….

At the opposite extreme from rabbinic Judaism, the Greco-Roman culture of Paul's day frequently allowed women a leading role in religious rites. Whereas the Jewish Torah restricted the priesthood to men, there were no explicit prohibitions of priestesses in other religions. Thus women priests may be found at any time and in any place in the Hellenistic world….

In the light of the contrasts with its religious environment, the apostolic teaching on the role of women in worship is *countercultural*. Whereas the

male chauvinism characteristic of some cultures (in Paul's day and ours) regards women as mere chattels, and rabbinic Judaism tended to treat them as second-class members of the community, the apostles counsel husbands to cherish and honor their wives. On the other hand, in contrast to the permissiveness of pagan religions, which often allowed women to serve as priestesses and instructors in the cult, the biblical revelation does not permit them to serve as priests (Ex 28:1) or pastors (1 Tim 3:2; Titus 1:6). Thus Paul's command that the women be silent in the churches (1 Cor 14:34) must be understood, in part, as countercultural and antisyncretistic. It is a command that distinguishes and separates the Christian church from other religions. Inspired by the Spirit of God, its roots are deep in the biblical revelation, which always runs counter to the spirit and wisdom of this world (2:12)….

Just as not all are apostles, not all are prophets, so not all are pastors and teachers (1 Cor 12:29; Eph 4:11). And not only women are excluded from the pastor office, but also most men. For most men have not been called to the office, nor have they been given sufficient aptitude in teaching. The ministry can be difficult enough, in these turbulent times, even for men who are "apt to teach" (1 Tim 3:2). This catechetical aptitude is the one qualification on Paul's list of qualifications for pastors (1 Tim 3:2–7; Titus 1:6–9) which is not required of every Christian man. Since God has called the church into existence through the Gospel, he has every right to select those whom he chooses to be pastors, and to establish such qualifications as he desires pastors to have. Just as in Israel the eleven other tribes had no right to cry foul because God selected only the Levites to serve at his sanctuary, and only the sons of Aaron to be his priests, so Christians have no right to criticize God for limiting the pastoral office to those who meet his qualifications, including that of gender. It is not inconsistent for the God of the Gospel also to establish such an order in his church: "God is not [a God] of disorder" (1 Cor 14:33)….

The Gospel provides the motivation for men and women joyfully to take their appointed places in God's order, especially in the church. It is possible to resist and reject the Gospel, as Paul himself once did, but such rejection is "to kick against the goads" (Acts 26:14). On the other hand, the person of faith—the new creation in Christ—delights in God's order (cf. Pss 1:2; 112:1; 119:15, 24, 35). See p 1291.

Gregory Lockwood, *1 Corinthians*, CC (St. Louis: Concordia, 2000), 516–18, 524–25, 540. For an overview of biblical teaching on the life and service of a woman in society, the Church, and the home, see notes, Pr 31:10–31; Lk 8:2–3; 24:9; Eph 5:22–6:9; 1Tm 2:8–15; 1Pt 3:7. See also pp 213, 389, 2067.

Jesus, the New Testament, and the Creeds

There is no question that the New Testament writers saw Jesus as utterly unique and of central importance in their lives and in the life of faith. One of the earliest confessions of faith was "Jesus is Lord." Other titles were given to Him in Scripture as well, for example, "Messiah" (or its Greek equivalent, "Christ"), which is found throughout the Bible. Many Jews of Jesus' day desired and expected the coming of God's Anointed One, His Messiah, whom they believed would overthrow the hated Roman rulers. But if Jesus was the Messiah, He was a different kind of Messiah. Instead of defeating the Romans, He was crucified by them. For some of His Jewish followers, this likely meant a loss of faith. But for those who remained loyal to Jesus, His death on the cross was intimately tied up with God's salvation plan, which came to light in His resurrection.

A number of other biblical titles given to Jesus portray a special relationship to His heavenly Father and, at the same time, Jesus' relationship with us, His fellow human beings. For the Gospel of John, Jesus was the Word that was with God before the beginning of the world and through whom all things were made (Jn 1:1). At the same time, John recorded that Jesus was the Word made flesh (Jn 1:14). For the apostle Paul, Jesus was the Son of God according to the power of His resurrection and the son of David according to the flesh (Rm 1:1–5). He is also the "Second Adam," who is from heaven, unlike the first Adam, who is from earth (1Co 15:21–22). This Second Adam came as God's gift of righteousness, withstood all temptation in constant obedience as the form of God in the form of a slave (Php 2:5–11), and died for us, for which He is glorified. He received into Himself God's judgment against Adam and us all and rose also for us as the seal of our own resurrection unto eternal life (Rm 8:19–21; 1Co 15:20, 23). The author of Hebrews tells us that Jesus is the perfect high priest because He is sent by God, but taken from among men (Heb 4:14–16).

Evidently a few of Jesus' early followers embraced Him as a great teacher and even as God's Messiah, but as only a man. This group may have given rise to what was later known as the Ebionites. But these folk were always a tiny minority. In fact, from the earliest times, Christians of all

kinds, despite whatever else they disagreed about, consistently referred to Jesus in terms that were otherwise used to refer only to God.

The Gospel writers saw Jesus as the one who came, taught, comforted, admonished, healed both body and soul, cast out demons, and was finally crucified and killed. However, this was not the end because Jesus rose again on the third day. None of the Gospel writers, of course, was writing a mere biography. Each inspired writer presents Jesus to us as a way of witnessing to some important aspect of His person and His ministry.

The Church, as it struggled with these and other issues that impinged on the question of the canon of Scripture, found an increasing commonness concerning those books considered to be acceptable. Although there was no official council or edict that proclaimed the acceptable writings, by about AD 200 there had developed something approaching a consensus on the matter. The collection of writings the Church had at this time was the same, or nearly the same, as what we today call the New Testament.

The formulation of creeds was also common during this early period of the Church. It seems that each congregation or district had its own confession of faith that was connected with the Baptism ceremony. These creeds were largely in the form of questions—"Do you believe …?"—to which was given the answer, "I believe …" Creeds were almost always threefold, following Jesus' command to baptize in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Mt 28:19).

As the theological battles of the second century were waged, creeds became insistent on affirming what the Gnostics and Marcionites rejected: the God we worship is the Creator; Jesus Christ really was born and really died; it is the body, not just the spirit, that is resurrected. The creed that is the mainstay of Western Christianity, the Apostles' Creed, is modeled on an ancient Roman baptismal formula, known as the Old Roman Symbol, which probably originated during the period of Irenaeus (the second century) or shortly thereafter. See note, 1Co 15:3.

Adapted from Douglas W. Johnson, *The Great Jesus Debates* (St. Louis: Concordia, 2006), 17–19, 74.

Footnotes

Footnotes for 1 Corinthians, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:10 Or *brothers and sisters*. The plural Greek word *adelphoi* (translated "brothers") refers to siblings in a family. In New Testament usage, depending on the context, *adelphoi* may refer either to men or to both men and women who are siblings (brothers and sisters) in God's family, the church; also verses 11, 26
- [1] 1:26 Greek *according to the flesh*
- [2] 1:29 Greek *no flesh*
- [3] 1:30 Greek *And from him*

Footnotes for 1 Corinthians, Chapter 2

- [4] 2:1 Or *brothers and sisters*
- [5] 2:1 Some manuscripts *mystery* (or *secret*)
- [1] 2:13 Or *interpreting spiritual truths in spiritual language*, or *comparing spiritual things with spiritual*

Footnotes for 1 Corinthians, Chapter 3

- [2] 3:1 Or *brothers and sisters*
- [1] 3:16 The Greek for *you* is plural in verses 16 and 17

Footnotes for 1 Corinthians, Chapter 4

- [1] 4:6 Or *brothers and sisters*
- [2] 4:17 Or *am sending*
- [1] 4:17 Some manuscripts add *Jesus*

Footnotes for 1 Corinthians, Chapter 5

- [2] 5:5 Some manuscripts add *Jesus*
- [1] 5:13 Or *will judge*

Footnotes for 1 Corinthians, Chapter 6

- [2] 6:8 Or *brothers and sisters*
- [3] 6:9 Or *wrongdoers*
- [4] 6:9 The two Greek terms translated by this phrase refer to the passive and active partners in consensual homosexual acts
- [1] 6:16 Or *who holds fast* (compare Genesis 2:24 and Deuteronomy 10:20); also verse 17
- [2] 6:18 Or *Every sin*

Footnotes for 1 Corinthians, Chapter 7

- [3] 7:6 Or *I say this:*
- [1] 7:15 Some manuscripts *us*
- [2] 7:21 Greek *bondservant*; also twice in verse 22 and once in verse 23 (plural)

- [3] 7:24 Or *brothers and sisters*; also verse 29
- [4] 7:25 The expression *Now concerning* introduces a reply to a question in the Corinthians' letter; see 7:1
- [5] 7:25 Greek *virgins*
- [1] 7:26 Or *impending*
- [2] 7:28 Greek *virgin*; also verse 34
- [3] 7:36 Greek *virgin*; also verses 37, 38
- [4] 7:36 Or *her*

Footnotes for 1 Corinthians, Chapter 8

- [5] 8:1 The expression *Now concerning* introduces a reply to a question in the Corinthians' letter; see 7:1
- [1] 8:3 Greek *him*
- [2] 8:10 Greek *reclining at table*
- [3] 8:10 Or *fortified*; Greek *built up*
- [4] 8:12 Or *brothers and sisters*

Footnotes for 1 Corinthians, Chapter 9

- [1] 9:5 Greek *a sister as wife*
- [1] 9:27 Greek *I pummel my body and make it a slave*

Footnotes for 1 Corinthians, Chapter 10

- [2] 10:1 Or *brothers and sisters*
- [1] 10:9 Some manuscripts *the Lord*
- [2] 10:18 Greek *Consider Israel according to the flesh*

Footnotes for 1 Corinthians, Chapter 11

- [1] 11:3 Greek *gune¯*. This term may refer to a *woman* or a *wife*, depending on the context

- [2] 11:5 In verses 5-13, the Greek word *gune¯* is translated *wife* in verses that deal with wearing a veil, a sign of being married in first-century culture
- [3] 11:10 Or *messengers*, that is, people sent to observe and report
- [1] 11:18 Or *I believe a certain report*
- [1] 11:24 Some manuscripts *broken for*
- [2] 11:24 Or *as my memorial*; also verse 25
- [3] 11:30 Greek *have fallen asleep* (as in 15:6, 20)
- [4] 11:31 Or *discerned*
- [5] 11:32 Or *when we are judged we are being disciplined by the Lord*
- [6] 11:33 Or *brothers and sisters*
- [7] 11:33 Or *share with*

Footnotes for 1 Corinthians, Chapter 12

- [1] 12:1 The expression *Now concerning* introduces a reply to a question in the Corinthians' letter; see 7:1
- [2] 12:2 Or *spiritual persons*
- [3] 12:3 Or *brothers and sisters*
- [1] 12:13 Or *servants*; Greek *bondservants*
- [2] 12:20 Or *members*; also verse 22

Footnotes for 1 Corinthians, Chapter 13

- [1] 13:3 Some manuscripts *deliver up my body* [to death] *that I may boast*
- [2] 13:5 Greek *irritable and does not count up wrongdoing*

Footnotes for 1 Corinthians, Chapter 14

- [1] 14:6 Or *brothers and sisters*; also verses 20, 26, 39
- [2] 14:16 Or *of him that is without gifts*
- [1] 14:22 Greek lacks *a sign*

Footnotes for 1 Corinthians, Chapter 15

- [1] 15:1 Or *brothers and sisters*; also verses 6, 31, 50, 58
- [1] 15:19 Or *we have hoped*
- [2] 15:27 Greek *he*
- [1] 15:33 Probably from Menander's comedy *Thais*
- [2] 15:45 Greek *a living soul*
- [3] 15:49 Some manuscripts *let us*

Footnotes for 1 Corinthians, Chapter 16

- [1] 16:1 The expression *Now concerning* introduces a reply to a question in the Corinthians' letter; see 7:1; also verse 12
- [1] 16:12 Or *God's will for him*
- [2] 16:15 Or *brothers and sisters*; also verse 20
- [3] 16:15 Greek *house*
- [4] 16:22 Greek *Maranatha* (a transliteration of Aramaic)

Study Notes

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:1 *called by the will of God*. By grace, God calls all Christians. Similarly, God chose and appointed Paul to be an apostle. *apostle*. See p 1901. *brother*. See p 1901. *Sosthenes*. A Corinthian synagogue ruler (Ac 18:17) beaten by the frustrated crowd at Paul's trial.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:2 *church*. God's people in Christ, esp as they congregate in His name. See pp 1901–2. *Corinth*. See pp 1944–46. *sanctified*. Made holy, specifically in Baptism (6:11). This is God's work in the life of the sinner, through Christ, not the holiness of the person's conduct. Such people are called "saints." *call upon the name*. An expression common in the OT (Ps 116:13, 17), indicating the response of one called by the Gospel (Ac 2:21; Rm 10:13). See p 842.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:3 See pp 1899–1901.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:4 *grace*. See p 1902.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:5 *enriched in Him*. Usually Paul speaks of God's riches (cf Php 4:19), but here God causes His people to share in His wealth of "all speech and all knowledge." See note, 14:6.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:6 Preaching gives witness to Christ, and the Corinthians' faithful receiving of it demonstrates the Spirit's confirmation of the message.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:7 *spiritual gift*. See notes, 12:1, 4–6. These blessings originate in the Spirit of God. Our redemption is the chief gift (Rm 5:15) and consequently the means God has given to equip His Church to minister to one another with that gift. *wait for the revealing*. Anticipation for Christ's return in glory.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:8 *sustain you to the end*. The gift of Christ's holiness made the saints holy; therefore, they will be kept "guiltless" in His innocence until His return.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:9 *God is faithful*. Even when we are faithless (2Tm 2:13), God will sustain those who are "called" (see note, v 1). *fellowship*. The support of fellow believers. See p 1902.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:4–9 Paul highlights the strengths of the congregation, strengths God extends to all believers by His grace. We rejoice in our relationship to God: He has called us and sanctified us, and

He will sustain us. • We hear Your call, heavenly Father, in the Gospel of Your Son. Keep us to the end. Amen.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:10 *brothers*. See p 1901. *agree … no divisions … united … same mind … same judgment*. With repetition, Paul emphasizes the main point of his Letter. Christian unity depends on faithfulness to Christ, not chasing one's own agendas or ideas. In Php 2:1–11, Paul gives the ultimate example of sacrificing self-interest, encouraging single-mindedness among the Christians. "Both our churches and our schools should persevere in the pure doctrine of God's Word and in that longed-for and godly oneness of mind" (Preface to the Christian Book of Concord, *Concordia*, 5).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:11 *Chloe's people*. Christian travelers, perhaps pursuing business on Chloe's behalf.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:12 *I follow Paul … Apollos … Cephas*. These leaders did not intend to attract loyalty to themselves, but groups arose with an allegiance to each. Paul was the first missionary, and perhaps his teaching was regarded as most authentic. *Apollos*. His teaching may have been more advanced than Paul's (cf 3:6). *Cephas*. Aram for "Peter"; often associated with the Jewish origins of the faith (see p 1969), Peter may have carried particular authority as a follower of Jesus in His earthly ministry. *I follow Christ*. The nature of the "Christ" party is not certain; the slogan disparaged believers, and so betrayed a partisan spirit.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:13–17 Paul does not suggest that Corinthians were baptized in other people's names. Such baptisms could lead to a cult of celebrity or new sects (cf Ac 19:3, "John's baptism").

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:13 Rhetorical, sarcastic questions. Paul indicates that loyalty to him is misplaced; he is but a messenger and servant.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:15 *baptized in my name*. Baptism is administered in the name of the triune God, thus in Jesus' name (see note, Ac 2:38). It means being buried and raised with Christ. The logical conclusion of the "divided Christ" mentality (cf v 13) would elevate the servants into Christ's place, though they have nothing to offer of themselves.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:16 *household*. Gk *oikos*, "house"; all who lived there, including slaves and children. *I do not know*. Paul

confesses the weakness of his memory. For Paul, it was not important that he might have baptized, but that a person was baptized into Christ.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:17 *not send … to baptize*. Jesus Himself did not baptize but entrusted this to others (Jn 4:1–2). As an apostle (see p 1901), Paul emphasized his calling to preach and to plant congregations. *eloquent wisdom*. Paul downplays his skills as a speaker. *emptied*. The Gospel stands on its own and is not strengthened by rhetoric or logic. However, a speaker may use these skills in service to the Gospel.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:10–17 Divisions in the Church are a denial of the one Baptism into Christ, who was crucified for all. His faithful servants preach the Gospel and are not to become objects of unhealthy devotion. The triune God alone is the object of our faith and hope. • Grant us such faithful ministers, dear Lord, who baptize and preach in Your name and authority. Amen.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:18 Key note for the Letter. "The Gospel … preaches righteousness and gives the Spirit" (FC SD V 22). *perishing … saved*. Those who see only foolishness in the cross deny its power to save them from eternal destruction. *power of God*. The cross is the instrument of God's salvation.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:19 This quote speaks against people who "draw near with their mouth and honor Me with their lips, while their hearts are far from Me" (Is 29:13).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:20 *scribe? … debater*. Jewish scribes and Greek philosophers sought wisdom through debate, but they are "of this age," in contrast to God's timeless wisdom.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:21 Human wisdom cannot lead to God, who reveals Himself in the message of the cross. "The forgiveness of sins … cannot come to us in any other way than through the Word. How would we know about it otherwise?" (LC V 31).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:22 *Jews demand signs*. Judaism sought miraculous confirmation as God's support for messenger and message. See note, Jn 4:48. *Greeks seek wisdom*. The Gk for "philosophy" means "love of wisdom."

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:23 *Christ crucified*. The Jews expected a Messiah (Hbr for "Christ"), but did not expect that He should be crucified. *stumbling block*. Gk *skandalon*, a cause for offense and rejection, as in Eng "scandal."

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:24 *called*. See p 1901.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:25 *foolishness of God*. God's ways appear foolish to those who do not understand them (cf Is 55:8).
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:26 *calling*. Life responsibilities, vocation. *worldly standards*. The mind, limited by earthly considerations, makes inappropriate judgments. *noble birth*. Though some may have acquired wealth and authority, they were not of high rank in society.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:27 *shame the wise*. The foolish, weak, and despised bring down and prohibit the boasting of the wise, strong, and esteemed.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:28 *things that are not*. Worthless things, nobodies.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:29 *presence of God*. God's standards are the genuine basis of judgment.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:30 Our life, spiritual and physical, comes from God. *wisdom … righteousness … sanctification … redemption*. See p 1904. Paul traces from God (1) revelation given in His Word, (2) the acquittal won by His Son, (3) the holiness that follows for us, and (4) full salvation from sin and death. "This happens because of the righteousness of another, namely, of Christ" (Ap V 184).
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:31 *boast*. All gifts in v 30 are from God; therefore, all pride in ourselves is excluded. Though Jesus' death appears shameful and foolish, it is the only basis of our salvation. "We cannot boast of many merits and works, if they are viewed apart from grace and mercy" (SA III XIII 3).
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:18–31 We should avoid pride and boasting about anything we do for God or for others. We bring nothing but sin into our relationship with God but receive all good things from Him. • Heavenly Father, give Your people grace to recognize that all praise belongs to You alone. Amen.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 2:1 *I came to you*. Cf Ac 18:1–17; Paul's second missionary journey. *testimony*. Paul spent 18 months in Corinth testifying that the Christ was Jesus (Ac 18:5, 11). *lofty speech*. See note, 1:17.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 2:2 The heart of the Gospel is Jesus' atoning sacrifice, "the power of God" (1:18). Paul contrasted his simpler,

focused missionary message with the more complex ideas of other teachers (e.g., Apollos, Cephas).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 2:3 *in weakness*. Paul's weakness and that of his hearers emphasized God's power. *in fear … trembling*. There was violent opposition to his message from the Jews in Corinth (Ac 18:12–17). Paul was meek, perhaps also recalling the beating, rioting, and indifference he experienced on the mission trip (Ac 16:16–17:34).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 2:4 *plausible words*. See note, 1:17. *demonstration*. Miracles. The Spirit creates faith through Jesus' miraculous death, resurrection, and His gift.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 2:5 *power*. See note, 1:18.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 2:1–5 The Good News is conveyed not through eloquence, but through humble messengers testifying about the cross. We look there for God's power and rest in His wisdom. • Dear Lord, thank You for revealing Yourself to me by Your cross. Receive this weak sinner and strengthen me for service. Amen.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 2:6 *mature*. Well-grounded in the faith, benefiting from a deeper understanding (cf 14:20).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 2:7 *secret*. Paul's message is hidden only from a sinful and unreceptive world (cf Lk 10:21; see "mystery," p 1903). *before the ages*. Before creation. *glory*. Realized in the world to come. See p 1902.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 2:8 *rulers*. The leaders at Jerusalem or the spiritual rulers and authorities against which we contend (Eph 6:12). *Lord of glory*. Jesus is the embodiment of glory and the source of our glory (cf v 7). "God's Son truly suffered for us. However, He did so according to the attributes of the human nature, which He received into the unity of His divine person and made His own. He did this so that He might be able to suffer and be our High Priest for our reconciliation with God" (FC Ep VIII 14).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 2:9 *What*. Miraculous acts of salvation in the OT, now surpassed by the mystery and miracles of Jesus' works. *prepared*. God has already provided these great things.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 2:10 *revealed*. The Spirit reveals God's mysteries through the Gospel, even through the words Paul writes. *depths of God*. There will always be mystery about God's person and nature, but we are given a glimpse of His ways through the cross.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 2:11 *spirit*. The immaterial aspect of a person: mind, soul, and personality. *comprehends*. By comparison, only God's Spirit can understand God's mind.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 2:12 *spirit of the world*. The fashionable ideology of this fallen world. *things freely given*. Provided by His grace. Only by the Spirit can we begin to understand His grace. "Through the Word He reveals and preaches, He illumines and enkindles hearts, so that they understand, accept, cling to, and persevere in the Word" (LC II 42).
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 2:13 *taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths*. The Spirit revealed truths to the apostle and teaches us the meaning through the apostolic word He has inspired (cf 2Pt 1:21).
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 2:14 *natural person*. One without God's Spirit. *spiritually discerned*. Accessible only through faith. "They still do not know what His mind toward them is and cannot expect any love or blessing from Him. Therefore, they abide in eternal wrath and damnation. For they do not have the Lord Christ, and, besides, are not illumined and favored by any gifts of the Holy Spirit" (LC II 66).
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 2:15 *judges all things*. Refers to the spiritual assessment of every aspect of life, not necessarily condemnation. *judged by no one*. No "natural person" (v 14) can make spiritual judgments about a Christian.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 2:16 *instruct Him?* The Lord did not need human aid when He created the world. *mind of Christ*. Cf Mt 11:27.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 2:6–16 The message of the cross is simple, but the spiritual wisdom that comes with it touches every area of life and faith. In view of this, we see unbelievers with new compassion, as people with no true spiritual comprehension. The Holy Spirit grants such understanding only through the Gospel. • Enlighten us with spiritual insight, Holy Spirit. Strengthen us to share Your Word. Amen.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 3:1 *brothers*. See p 1901. *spiritual … flesh*. The Corinthians behaved like the "natural person" (see note, 2:14), not like believers.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 3:2 *milk*. The simple message of Christ crucified (2:2). *solid food*. The great depth of spiritual insight that builds upon Christ. *not ready*. See note, 2:6; cf Heb 6:1. Spiritual growth, like physical growth, takes time.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 3:3 *still of the flesh*. See p 1902. As they had not reached maturity, the spiritual outlook had not yet permeated the Corinthians' thinking, which helps to explain many of the difficulties experienced in their community. *jealousy and strife*. Markers of immaturity (cf 1:11). *in a human way?* As a natural, fallen person.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 3:4 *I follow Paul*. See note, 1:12.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 3:5 *Servants through whom you believed*. Faith comes through hearing the Word (Rm 10:14, 17). *assigned to each*. Each worker is assigned a different sphere, perhaps geographically or perhaps by type of service. Each service is equally important, a theme taken up in ch 12.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 3:6 *planted*. Sowed the Word. *watered*. Nurtured the faith. See note, 12:13. *God gave the growth*. By the Spirit's power through the Word proclaimed by the apostles.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 3:7 *anything*. Those privileged to share in this ministry may regard themselves as the world regards the Church, as nobodies (cf 1:28). "For without His grace, and if He does not grant the increase, our willing and running, our planting, sowing, and watering (1 Corinthians 3:5–7)—are all nothing" (FC Ep II 6).
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 3:8 *one*. Equal and united. *wages*. The reward for faithful service, not implying that one can earn salvation. God's favor is unmerited (e.g., Eph 2:8). The joy of success in Christ surpasses any payment. "We teach that rewards have been offered and promised for the works of believers. We teach that good works have merit, not for forgiveness of sins, for grace, or for justification (for these we receive only through faith), but for other rewards, bodily and spiritual, in this life and after this life" (Ap V 73).
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 3:9 *God's fellow workers*. As part of God's team, they participate in His work. See note, v 8. *God's field, God's building*. Common NT depictions of the Church (e.g., Mt 13:24–33; 1Pt 2:5). Both projects call for laborers.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 3:10 *grace*. Gk *charis*, generally means "God's favor" (see p 1902), but here Paul refers to God's gift of strength or ability for service. See "gifts," p 1902. *given to me*. Paul begins to describe his own work (cf 15:10). *master builder*. A competent craftsman apprenticed in his trade. *foundation*. The preaching of Christ (2:2; 3:11). *someone else*. Apollos (v 6). Some who "built" at Corinth did so

inappropriately, undoing Paul's foundation (e.g., the "super-apostles," 2Co 11:5).
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 3:11 *Jesus Christ*. See note, 2:2.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 3:12 Some materials are less durable than others, yet each contribution has its part (e.g., straw may be more appropriate than stone for a roof). "The 'foundation' is the true knowledge of Christ and faith. There are also many weak persons, who build upon the foundation stubble that will perish (v 12), holding certain harmful opinions. Nevertheless, because the weak do not overthrow the foundation, they are both forgiven and corrected. The writings of the Holy Fathers declare that sometimes even they built stubble upon the foundation, but that this did not overthrow their faith" (Ap VII and VIII 20–21).
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 3:13 *Day will disclose it*. On Judgment Day, all people will be called to account for their work. *fire will test*. Fire is a means of purification. As in 1Pt 1:7, "fire" will demonstrate faithfulness. Christians understood persecution as a purifying and testing ordeal (cf 1Pt 4:12).
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 3:14 *reward*. The same word is translated "wages" in v 8.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 3:15 *he himself will be saved*. The person will be saved through faith in Christ, not because of work in building His Church.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 3:16 *Do you not know*. Implies that the Corinthians should know. See p 1965. *you*. The congregation. *God's temple*. In the OT, the temple was established as God's place among His people; in the NT, such a building is redundant because "God's Spirit dwells in you" as God has promised. See p 1815.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 3:17 *God will destroy him*. To destroy the "temple" is to destroy God's Church or its individual members who share the Spirit. *holy*. Because God dwells there. See pp 1902, 1705. "In the elect (who are justified by Christ and reconciled with God), God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (who is the eternal and essential righteousness) dwells by faith" (FC SD III 54).
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 3:18 *wise in this age*. By worldly standards (cf 1:20). *become a fool*. By trusting God's way.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 3:19–20 *wisdom … folly*. See p 1016. *catches the wise in their craftiness*. In Jb 5:13, the lowly are exalted (cf 1Co

1:18–25). Cf Ps 94:8–11.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 3:21 *boast in men*. Dividing the congregation by loyalty to a particular leader.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 3:22 *all are yours*. The Corinthians should benefit from all of God's servants, rather than being exclusively devoted to one. Cf Rm 8:32; see "heir," p 1902. "In 1 Corinthians 3, Paul makes ministers equal. He also teaches that the Church is superior to 'or: more than' the ministers. Superiority or lordship over the Church or the rest of the ministers is not attributed to Peter" (Tr 11).
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 3:23 *you are Christ's*. Through Baptism in His name (6:11, 14–15, 19–20). *Christ is God's*. Our life, inheritance, and authority have their source in Jesus, who has His source in the Father from eternity. Cf 15:24–28.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON **Ch 3** There is no ground for pride in human achievement in Christ's Church. Such an attitude undermines the very nature of His gifts of salvation and service. God accomplishes everything, living in us by His Spirit. • "O Holy Spirit, enter in, and in our hearts Your work begin, Your dwelling place now make us." Amen. (*LSB* 913:1)

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 4:1 *regard*. The apostles were not esteemed appropriately, and the situation worsened by the time of 2Co. *servants … stewards*. They minister on behalf of another: God. See "The Gospel and the Sacraments" (Ap XXIV 80). *mysteries of God*. See p 1903.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 4:2 *trustworthy*. Stewards must faithfully administer only that entrusted to them.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 4:3 *judged by you*. Cf 2:15. *human court*. Lit, "human day," as opposed to Judgment Day. *do not even judge myself*. Paul is God's servant, and only his Master's assessment matters.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 4:4 "Christ remains Mediator, and we should always be confident that for His sake we have a reconciled God, even though we are unworthy" (Ap V 42).
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 4:5 *do not pronounce judgment*. See note, Mt 7:1. *before the Lord comes*. The time for judgment is not before the Son of Man comes in His glory (Mt 25:31–32), in the light of which, human judgments lose all significance. *things now hidden*. All the evidence, such as inner motives, will be heard (cf Pr 21:2). *disclose … commendation*. Until the heart is opened, there is no basis for praise. Cf 3:14–15.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 4:6 *benefit*. That which follows in v 6b. *beyond what is written*. The words of OT Scripture or apostolic letters, which became Scripture. *puffed up*. Conceited and cliquish.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 4:7 Rhetorical questions. No people should perceive in themselves any superiority or ground for boasting as though they were self-made and independent.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 4:8 Paul sarcastically mimics their boasts.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 4:9 More sarcasm. *exhibited … last of all*. The last people herded through the streets in a Roman military procession were captives, condemned to death. *a spectacle*. Like gladiators condemned to fight to the death.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 4:10 Still more sarcasm. *fools*. Perhaps a term used by those who disparaged the apostles.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 4:11–13 Using hyperbole, Paul reminds them of his suffering on their behalf.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 4:12 *working with our own hands*. It was Paul's practice to support his ministry with paid work, so as not to burden his hearers (1Th 2:9). *When reviled, we bless; when persecuted, we endure*. Following Jesus' example, they do not render evil for evil (Mt 5:44).
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 4:13 *scum … refuse*. After sweaty exercise, Greeks and Romans would sprinkle themselves with sand, then scrape themselves off with a stick as a means of removing dead skin and filth. "Spiritual fathers must be … like the filth of the world and everyone's refuse and footrag" (LC I 160).
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 4:14 *admonish … beloved children*. Shaming is negative, but Paul's admonition has the constructive aim of setting things right through Law and Gospel. See p 2025.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 4:15 *guides in Christ*. See notes, Gal 3:24; 4:1–2. Paul acknowledges the legitimate role of the other teachers. *fathers*. Fatherhood is a lifelong commitment, a comparison emphasizing Paul's authority, patience, and forgiving attitude toward the Corinthians. They come to faith through his ministry. "The only ones called spiritual Fathers are those who govern and guide us by God's Word" (LC I 158–59).
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 4:16 *imitators*. Children imitate their fathers. As Paul himself seeks to imitate Christ, those who copy him will copy Christ (11:1).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 4:17 *Timothy*. May be the bearer of this Letter (cf Ac 19:22). *faithful child*. Both the Corinthians and Timothy were "beloved" (cf v 14), but the Corinthians were not always faithful. *my ways*. How Paul put into practice his teaching. See p 1904. *I teach them everywhere in every church*. Early Christian catechesis had a uniform theme and content, as every church shared the same needs. Paul takes the Corinthians back to their catechesis repeatedly in 1Co. See p 1965.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 4:18 *Some*. Perhaps the "super-apostles" of 2Co (cf 11:5), who usurp the authority of Paul by disparaging him. *coming to you*. Paul is planning a visit, despite the charges of the arrogant.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 4:19 *if the Lord wills*. As Jesus prayed (Mt 26:39) and James taught (Jas 4:15), Paul qualifies his plans with the acknowledgment that they may be overridden by God's plans. *their power*. See note, 1:18.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 4:20 *kingdom of God*. A phrase rarely used in Paul's letters. See pp 1565–66. *talk … power*. See note, 1:18.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 4:21 Continuing the image of father and children from vv 14–15, Paul clearly favors coming with love, but it depends on the response of the Corinthians.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON **Ch 4** People despise God's messenger because the Spirit's power is concealed in lowly, suffering leaders like Paul. The crowd always yearns for flashy leadership and despises those who teach the basics and lead by example. God sends us spiritual fathers to nurture us, entrusting to them both the Law and the Gospel for our spiritual good. • "Oh, may Thy people faithful be And in Thy pastors honor Thee And with them work and for them pray And gladly Thee in them obey." Amen. (*TLH* 493:3)

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON **Ch 5** "Truly Christian excommunication, is this: Open and hard-hearted sinners are not admitted to the Sacrament and other communion of the Church until they amend their lives and avoid sin" (SA III IX).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 5:1 *reported*. Perhaps from Chloe's people (1:11). The sudden change in tone and topic suggests the report has just been received. *his father's wife*. Probably not incest, because she is not referred to as his mother, but relations with a stepmother, forbidden in Lv 18:8. Greek and Roman culture also rejected the practice, specifically in the Institutes of Gaius 1.63.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 5:2 *arrogant!* The same verb as "puffed up" in 4:6. Conceit was to openly flaunt shameful behavior. *mourn?* As over spiritual death. *be removed*. Excommunicated. The sinner has damaged the Church's fellowship. He must be removed. (Cf Mt 18:8.)
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 5:3 *present in spirit*. Paul still presides at Corinth. His authority and pastoral concern are undiminished. *pronounced judgment*. This is a practical decision about immoral behavior. Only God can condemn the sinner eternally.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 5:4 *assembled*. At worship, where the Lord promises to be present (Mt 18:20). This is a gathering of all members, not just a household congregation, because worship is the activity of the whole Church. *in the name*. Under the authority of the One named. *my spirit is present*. Representatives can carry out his administrative duties; therefore, Paul is with them in spirit.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 5:5 *deliver this man to Satan*. The only "fellowship" outside fellowship with Christ. Excommunication handed the sinner back to the ruler of this age (2:6; cf Col 1:13). This is not simply a ban from the Lord's Supper or from a leadership position. "But those who refuse to learn are to be told that they are denying Christ and do not belong to Him. They are not to be admitted to the Sacrament, accepted as sponsors at Baptism, or allowed to exercise Christian liberty in any way. They should instead be simply directed back … to Satan himself" (SC, Preface, p xxxiv). *spirit may be saved*. The Law and guilt will drive this man to repentance. *day of the Lord*. Judgment Day. See p 1079.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 5:6 *a little leaven*. A small amount of leavened dough was mixed with new dough so the yeast could spread. Cf Mk 8:15; see note, Gal 5:9
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 5:7 *old leaven*. Jesus removed all traces of leaven (sin) at Passover, so the congregation must remove all vestiges of the old carnal world (v 8). *new lump*. New creation in Christ (2Co 5:17). *Christ, our Passover lamb*. See pp 170–71; see also notes, Ex 12:7–13. *sacrificed*. Christ's sacrifice delivered His people from death.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 5:8 *celebrate the festival*. Not the annual Passover, but every Eucharist that proclaims the Lord's death (11:26). *unleavened bread of sincerity and truth*. Morally pure character, brought about by repentance and forgiveness.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 5:9 *my letter*. Earlier, unknown correspondence. *associate*. Gathering in congregational fellowship.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 5:10 Immoral company, esp evident in Corinth, could not be avoided. Members could still carry on business relations.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 5:11 *bears the name of brother*. One who claims to be a fellow Christian (see p 1901). *if he is guilty*. His life outwardly exhibits these sins. *not even to eat*. Table fellowship implied a shared lifestyle or values (cf 2Jn 10). Persistent, unrepentant sinners were excommunicated. "Others, who are not such callous and wicked people, and who desire to be godly, must not absent themselves. This is true even though otherwise they are feeble and full of infirmities. For St. Hilary also has said, 'If anyone has not committed sin for which he can rightly be put out of the congregation and be considered no Christian, he ought not stay away from the Sacrament, lest he should deprive himself of life' " (LC V 59).
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 5:12 *outsiders?* Those not of the household of faith. *those inside the church whom you are to judge?* As in v 3, Paul does not condone petty complaints, cliques, and judgmentalism. He refers to formal congregational discipline based on Law and Gospel.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 5:13 *God judges*. See notes, Rm 1:18, 24. *Purge*. Keep the community pure by driving out evil, as was needed in the nation of Israel. The new Israel, the Church, does this through congregational discipline rather than civil law, as under the old covenant.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON **Ch 5** Sins such as sexual immorality are out of place among the people of God. Christ, our Passover Lamb, has taken our sins upon Himself. Through repentance and absolution, He renews us as His undefiled creation. • Forgive our waywardness and make our hearts pure, dear Maker and Redeemer. Lead us to call one another to repentance so our congregations enjoy true peaceful fellowship at Your Holy Supper. Amen.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 6:1 *grievance*. A legal complaint that requires redress. *go to law*. Roman legal proceedings at Corinth were held at the bema, a raised platform at the city center, surrounded by the forum courtyard and merchant shops. A Roman court proceeding (tribunal) was public, and anyone passing through the markets could have listened in or even participated in the proceedings (cf Ac 18:12–17). The congregation at

Corinth may have included some important city officials, such as Erastus, the city treasurer (Rm 16:23), whose name archaeologists found on an inscription at the Corinthian theater. *before … the saints?* Within the Body of Christ is the option of forgiveness and reconciliation. *unrighteous*. Earlier, Paul contrasted the worldly and spiritual realms (2:14–16; 5:10). Worldly people presided and juried at the secular courts.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 6:2 *saints will judge the world?* Cf 2:15. Jesus promised that He would enthrone us with Him to participate in the judgment. *incompetent to try trivial cases?* This is a minor responsibility but a significant test of fellowship and unity.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 6:3 *judge angels?* Cf Jude 6; 2Pt 2:4. God's faithful people, though inferior in power, will nevertheless judge Satan and the wicked angels.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 6:4 Paul rebukes the embarrassing exposure of the congregation's weakness and inability to manage conflict. *no standing in the church?* In 1:28, God's elect were "despised" in the eyes of the world. Paul uses the same Gk word here to describe the status of unbelievers (v 6) with respect to God's chosen ones.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 6:5 *shame*. Guilt worked by God's Law. *brothers*. See p 1901.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 6:6 *before unbelievers?* Cf v 4.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 6:7 *defeat*. One enters into a lawsuit with a view to winning. There are no winners when the congregation is shamed. *suffer wrong? … defrauded?* Enduring wrong is more victorious than to put a fellow believer under worldly authority.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 6:8 *you yourselves wrong*. Paul acknowledges the Corinthians' lack of moral superiority.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 6:9–10 *unrighteous*. Those perishing (1:18). See "righteous," p 843. *inherit the kingdom*. See note, 4:20. Paul lists habitual sins, which imply a life choice incompatible with the holiness of God's kingdom.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 6:11 *such were some of you*. God, in mercy, called the unrighteous into His kingdom. *washed … sanctified … justified*. Terms of salvation, used interchangeably (see pp 1903–4). Baptism makes us new creatures, holy with Christ's righteousness. "Whenever God's Word is taught, preached, heard, read, or meditated upon, then the person, day, and work are sanctified. This is not because of the

outward work, but because of the Word, which makes saints of us all. Therefore, I constantly say that all our life and work must be guided by God's Word, if it is to be God-pleasing or holy" (LC I 92). *in the name of the Lord Jesus … Spirit … God*. Trinitarian, as is fitting with reference to Baptism.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 6:1–11 When the old sinful nature rises to cause grievances between Christians, it also tempts us to seek satisfaction through secular processes. God calls churches to settle grievances through Law and Gospel before matters get out of hand. He has already judged us "not guilty" in view of Jesus' sacrifice, and He has washed us pure in Holy Baptism. • Spare us, Lord, from the temptation to resort to the ways of the world. Purify us, Holy Spirit, through the daily washing of repentance. Seat us, O God, in Your kingdom as people with true discernment. Amen.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 6:12–13 The quoted words may be slogans to which Paul is responding. See "Passages and Slogans," p 1945.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 6:12 *All … lawful*. An expression of freedom. *not all … helpful*. Freedom, however, includes the ability to make unproductive and destructive choices. *enslaved*. "Freedom of choice" can itself become a master if we follow our will rather than God's.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 6:13 *Food … for the stomach*. Suggests freedom from dietary laws (cf Mk 2:27). *destroy both*. Neither is eternal. This does not mean they are unimportant. *The body … for the Lord, and the Lord for the body*. The body is important to the Lord, who made it. It is a temple dedicated to God (v 19). *not … for sexual immorality*. Sin naturally destroys both body and soul, which even unbelievers could recognize.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 6:14 *God raised the Lord … us*. A crucial fact: the Lord cares enough for the body that He resurrects and glorifies it (cf 15:20). *His power*. Cf Rm 8:11.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 6:15–17 *members*. Gk *melos*, "limb" or "part" of a body. See p 1903. *members of a prostitute?* Sexual intercourse is a union so intimate that the two become one flesh (Gn 2:24). A fornicator or adulterer involves Christ and all the Church in his or her sin. *Never!* See note, Rm 3:4. *joined to the Lord*. Union with God is not crassly physical, like that with the prostitute, but spiritual (cf 3:1). See p 1965.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 6:18 *Flee*. Not a call to monasticism (cf 5:10), but a call to live in the world without accommodating its morality. *outside the body*. Paul is focused on self-indulgent sins (6:9–10) rather than

self-destructive sins such as suicide or murder. Sexual sins uniquely involve sinning against others with the body as an instrument, in contrast with gluttony, drunkenness, etc.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 6:19 *your body*. A word to the congregation; "body" is singular and "you" is plural throughout the passage. This is a bold illustration of congregational unity with one another and with God. See pp 1944–46, 1965. *a temple of the Holy Spirit*. See note, 3:16. *not your own*. In contrast to the Corinthians' slogan (v 12), the believer is God's child, a member of His household.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 6:20 *bought*. See "redemption," p 1904; cf 1Pt 1:18–19. *glorify*. Not simply in personal goodness, but in faith and hope as members of Christ's Body.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 6:12–20 Because Christ has united us with Him and with one another, immorality has no place among us. Freedom to live in Christ excludes living in opposition to Him. When we fall into sin, we can repent of the disunity we have brought. Jesus Christ will restore and renew us as His very own. • Father, be glorified in our freedom, which You grant us in Jesus. Amen.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:1 *Now concerning*. Introduces issues to be addressed (cf v 25; 8:1; 12:1; 16:1). *matters about which you wrote*. At the request of the Corinthians. Cf 5:9; see "Passages and Slogans," p 1945. *not to have sexual relations*. Quotation marks indicate that this may be what they wrote, to which Paul gives qualified agreement.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:2 *temptation*. Immediately, the suggestion of v 1 raises a problem: it is impractical. *own wife … own husband*. Marriage, rather than celibacy, better avoids temptation. "Since our priests wanted to avoid these open scandals, they married wives and taught that it was lawful for them to enter into marriage" (AC XXIII 3).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:3 *conjugal rights*. "Rights," as commonly demanded, are alien to biblical thought. Spouses owe love, fidelity, and physical affection to each other.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:4 *authority*. Freedom is abused if exercised without taking account of one's spouse. In this sense, each spouse looks to the authority of the other. See note, Eph 5:22.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:5 *deprive*. Fidelity carries the responsibility of giving a fulfilled physical relationship. *agreement for a limited time*. In Jewish tradition, abstinence for a time (as in fasting) was

observed to heighten spiritual devotion. This is a matter for each couple to decide. *Satan may not tempt*. Satan uses any opportunity for temptation, which is frustrated by the exercise of "self-control."

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:6 *concession*. Paul allowed the practice of mutually agreed abstinence, but he is not representing it as a divine command. Throughout chs 7–14, Paul offers pragmatic counsel while also presenting ideal practices.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:7 *as I myself am*. Paul is probably not referring to being single, because the grammar implies a wish that can be achieved. He likely presents himself as an example of self-control. *gift*. God sets the order of each person's life by the strength He provides. Each believer is to live according to this.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:8 *remain single as I am*. "Single" does not appear in Gk, but probably captures Paul's intention to advise that those who are unmarried should ideally remain so. Throughout ch 7, the apostle recommends that Christians should stay as they are because of the "present distress" (v 26).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:9 *better to marry*. Paul is not against marriage; he appreciated the benefits of celibacy in the present circumstances. *to burn*. With unfulfilled sexual appetite. "Even though they abstain from the act, their hearts are so full of unchaste thoughts and evil lusts that there is a continual burning and secret suffering, which can be avoided in the married life" (LC I 215).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:10–11 *not I, but the Lord*. God's revealed instruction, based on Scripture. *separate … divorce*. Under Jewish law, only the husband had the right to divorce. Paul's counsel affirms equality in marriage, excluding divorce from the husband as from the wife. Paul's counsel against divorce is like that found in the Dead Sea Scrolls and in some rabbinic literature. *remain unmarried*. Cf v 8.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:12–13 *I, not the Lord*. See note, vv 10–11. *unbeliever*. The non-Christian spouse still belongs to "those who are perishing" (1:18). *should not divorce*. Disagreement in faith does not dissolve marriage. Yet such a marriage does not change the fact that the Christian is a new creature, and the marriage partner might not agree to live with this new person.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:14 *made holy*. One is often led to faith through the example and testimony of a faithful spouse; therefore, they are

made holy in Christ (see "saints," p 1904). *your children … are holy*. Children may be nurtured in faith by the believing parent. An unequal marriage does not automatically corrupt them. Rather, through receiving the Word, they are made saints clothed in Christ's holiness.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:15 *separates*. See note, vv 10–11. *not enslaved*. Marriage is, of course, a lifelong commitment, but in this case, the bond is broken by the unbelieving partner. *called you to peace*. The marriage in which the Christian is not accepted could be a disharmonious one.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:16 *you will save*. By leading another to faith. In this case, the mixed marriage would become a blessing.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:1–16 Marriage brings obligations, but being in Christ forms a new being. Treasure marriage because of the blessings God provides through it. In marriage, Christians can encourage one another, non-Christians may be drawn to belief, and children can be brought up in the faith. • God, I thank You for this most precious vestige of the perfection You gave our first parents. Preserve me faithfully according to Your love and Your gifts. Amen.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:17 *lead the life … assigned*. In terms of work and station in life, God assigns a sacred vocation. *called*. Gk *kaleo*, "call by name," "designate." Eng "vocation" is based on the Vulg translation of this term. See p 1901. The new life in Christ does not cancel one's place in society but transforms the way it is viewed and practiced. *my rule in all the churches*. Paul's teaching is consistent in all of the Christian communities.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:18 *remove the marks of circumcision*. The intertestamental book of 1Macc (1:15) speaks of those who "made themselves uncircumcised," somehow disguising their circumcision as they participated in athletic events unclothed, as was the Gk custom. Paul's expression may imply a wider rejection of Jewish heritage. *not seek circumcision*. See note, Gal 5:2.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:19 *counts*. Outward appearances have no bearing on salvation. *keeping the commandments of God*. Completed by Christ. The covenant of circumcision is no longer binding.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:20 *condition … called*. Married or single, whichever is one's vocation (cf vv 21–24).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:21 *slave*. Also a calling, which could be exercised in a God-pleasing way (cf Eph 6:5–8). See p 101. *Do not be concerned about it*. In Christ, there is neither slave nor free (Gal 3:28), so being a slave does not affect one's position as a free child of God. *gain your freedom*. See p 101.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:22–23 *freedman of the Lord*. Cf Gal 5:1. In Christ, we are delivered from bondage to sin and death. *slave of Christ … bought*. Slave and free equally belong to their Redeemer (6:20). *slaves of men*. In Christ, we are free from bondage to human opinions and esp to their insistence on a law we cannot keep.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:24 *remain with God*. The summary of vv 17–23 and the new life in Christ.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:17–24 The Lord transforms believers from our previous existence and makes us members of His household. We now live out the new life in the station to which God has appointed us. • With Your help, everlasting God, may we live our eternal life already in this passing world. Amen.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:25 *betrothed*. Lit, "the virgins." *no command*. See note, vv 10–11. *my judgment*. Sometimes it is necessary to make judgments where God gives no specific instruction. These matters are known as adiaphora, and the conscience, with Scripture in mind, makes its best attempt to discern what pleases God.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:26 *present distress*. Christians faced special challenges in that hour, which Paul regarded as the last times.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:27 *bound*. In marriage, a man "hold[s] fast to his wife" (Gn 2:24). *Do not seek a wife*. Planning for marriage would be an additional responsibility in difficult times. The instruction has the character of advice (cf v 28) rather than command.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:28 *betrothed woman*. Eligible to marry. *worldly troubles*. Constant companions of Paul in his work (2Co 12:10).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:29 *appointed time*. The end of time (cf Dn 8:19; 11:27, 29, 35).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:30 *as though they were not mourning*. Mourning is a temporary feature of this present world (Rv 21:4). Christians experience the pain of separation, but they understand that release from these things is assured. Therefore, they do not grieve as those who have no hope (1Th 4:13).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:31 *present form*. Everything will be dissolved to make way for the new heavens and new earth (2Pt 3:13). *passing away*. Describing the end of this world (cf 2Pt 3:10).
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:32 *anxieties*. Paul counsels against anxiety in general (Php 4:6), but these are anxieties that accompany family responsibilities. *things of the Lord*. Spiritual matters of individual holiness and service to God. "Neither Christ nor Paul praise virginity because it justifies, but because it is freer and less distracted by domestic occupations in praying, teaching, and serving" (Ap XXIII 40).
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:33 *please his wife*. A healthy marriage thrives on attending the needs and wishes of one's spouse, but Jesus also set down priorities in this regard (Mt 10:37).
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:34 *divided*. One can love God through loving one's spouse, but if these are in conflict, one cannot serve two masters (Mt 6:24). *unmarried or betrothed*. Both terms describe women, the latter having never been married. *holy in body and spirit*. See p 1902. Pleasing God is the priority.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:35 *restraint*. Freedom in Christ is naturally directed by the Holy Spirit and loving concern (cf Rm 8:2). *good order*. Implies respectability. *devotion*. The Gk word is used in Scripture only here and seems to imply constant service.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:36 *not behaving properly*. Falling into disgraceful passions. *passions*. Or, lust. *marry—it is no sin*. Marriage is the safe and appropriate environment for such feelings.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:37 *keep her as his betrothed*. Perhaps marriage without sex, or a pledge of exclusive devotion without marriage and physical relationship.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:38 Singleness is not the lesser of two evils, but the superior of two God-given options under current circumstances at Corinth.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:39 *bound*. See note, v 27. *free*. See p 101. *in the Lord*. A variation on the formula "in Christ," which refers to what a person is or does as part of the new creation. See "in Christ," p 1903.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:40 *happier*. Paul's judgment, which others dispute. *I too have the Spirit*. Paul is careful not to present his own opinion as a divine command, yet his opinion is framed by a mind sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:25–40 Paul outlines two blessed estates, that of marriage and that of celibacy. We are often aware of the blessings of marriage, God's unique gift that survived humanity's fall into sin. Yet there are also responsibilities with marriage, and it is particularly important for the Christian to consider these when sitting down to "count the cost" of discipleship (Lk 14:28). In the Lord and by His grace, each person is fitted to one or to the other. • Lord, help me understand my gifts and calling in accordance with Your Word and mission. O Christ, deliver me from all shame. Amen.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON **Chs 8–10** Questions had arisen over whether Christians should eat food sacrificed to idols. This food was eaten in a temple dining room (8:7–13; see note, 8:10), at sacrifices involving actual idol worship (10:14–22), purchased in the marketplace (10:23–26), or eaten in an unbeliever's home (10:27–30). Some in Corinth argued that idols were not real gods, so the sacrifices did not matter and the food could be eaten. Paul agreed that the idols were not real (8:4–6; 10:26), but the decision of whether to eat the food was to be based on the way that other people interpreted that action (8:10; 10:29). Because some Corinthians had formerly worshiped these idols and eaten the meals as if the god were present, their perspective, shaped by these former associations, had to be taken into account. The Corinthians' behavior had to be both faithful to God's commands and loving toward their fellow believers in Christ. The situation is different from Rm 14, where Paul instructs the Romans to stop passing judgment on one another in the matter of what foods to eat. In that context, eating or not eating was simply a matter of preference in a situation for which there is genuine Gospel freedom.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 8:1 *"knowledge" puffs up*. Only the person who holds it benefits. *love builds up*. Love guides relationships between Christians (cf ch 13), promoting mutual care.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 8:2 *as he ought*. Knowledge that does not result in love is self-delusional and false.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 8:3 *known by God*. Recognized and received by the Lord. Cf 13:12.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 8:4 *we know*. Both the apostle and those who eat idol food in Corinth share a basic knowledge about God and about idolatry. *has no real existence*. There is only one God; all other "so-called gods" (v 5) are mere human creations. Cf Rm 1:22–23. Some Corinthians

took this "knowledge" and decided that they could eat any food that had been sacrificed to the idols because the idols were not real.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 8:6 *one God … one Lord*. This common early Christian expression focused on the Father and the Son (cf Php 2:6–11). *through whom*. The Son was active in the creation of life and in the new creation of faith (2Co 5:17).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 8:7 *this knowledge*. That idols are nothing (v 4). *former association*. Some in the Corinthian Church had worshiped idols before becoming Christians. *conscience*. See p 1902. *being weak*. Because their moral outlook is not yet firmly grounded in a Christian perspective, they have a "weak" perspective on idols; they recall worshiping these very false gods. When they see someone eating idol sacrifices, they think that such people are worshiping the idol to whom it was sacrificed. *defiled*. They were led to sin because they think they are worshiping an idol.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 8:8 *We are no worse off … no better off*. It is not necessarily wrong to eat the food sacrificed to idols, but eating it is not beneficial because it leads away from God and harms the neighbor. "The Gospel does not advise about distinguishing clothing and meats and the giving up of property" (Ap XXVII 26).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 8:9 *right*. The conclusion of the "strong" is correct: there is no other god, so what is sacrificed to an idol is nothing (cf 10:19, 26). *stumbling block*. Eating this food, even though it is morally defensible, may lead others to sin (v 7).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 8:10 *eating in an idol's temple*. A different situation from that in 10:14–22, where idol rituals were involved. Many Greco-Roman temples had what we would consider dining or banqueting facilities. Meals were commonly eaten there, particularly for business or social functions such as birthday or wedding celebrations.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 8:11 Because the new believer is led to worship what had formerly been considered a real god, the person breaks the First Commandment and is in danger of losing faith.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 8:12 *sin against Christ*. By nullifying Christ's saving work in the new believer, the strong destroy the person's faith and sin against Christ.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 8:13 *never eat meat*. What might lead another to sin and unbelief is avoided in that person's presence. Paul took a

different attitude toward those who demanded certain practices as a basis of righteousness (cf Gal 3:10).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON **Ch 8** The rights and the freedom of the Gospel are wrongly promoted in the Corinthian Church, leading the believers to adopt too easily the behaviors and practices of the surrounding culture. No believer has the right or freedom to destroy the faith of others, especially those whom Paul describes as weak in the faith. Faith is not a private matter. Faithful Christians will be zealous to pray for and carry out God's will that all be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth (1Tm 2:3–4). How marvelously our Savior bears with our weaknesses! Most important, He took away our sin and builds us up in love. • From selfishly seeking our own rights at the expense of others, deliver us, O Lord. From unwittingly leading Your chosen saints into sin, deliver us, O Lord. Stir us up to worship and honor You alone, and through Your Spirit use us to turn others to You. Amen.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 9:1 *free?* In Christ, no man-made laws apply (Gal 5:1). *apostle?* See p 1901. It would seem an apostle would have more "rights" than others, but Paul later emphasizes that even an apostle surrenders his rights for the sake of others. *seen Jesus*. Cf Ac 9; 1Co 15:3–11; Gal 1:12. *my workmanship*. The Corinthians know Christ because Paul preached the Gospel to them, thereby giving him authority to rebuke their actions. Cf 4:14–21.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 9:2–3 *others … those*. The people at Corinth who questioned Paul's authority (4:1–5; 2Co 10–12). *seal*. Proof that the Gospel preached by Paul is the true Gospel, hence proving his apostleship. See note, Jer 32:10.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 9:4 *eat and drink?* To receive daily sustenance so Paul could commit fully to service in the congregation.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 9:5 *take along a believing wife*. On missionary trips, wives of apostles would also be supported by the congregations. Some apostles were married (e.g., Simon Peter; cf Mk 1:29–31). *brothers of the Lord*. Mk 6:3 names James, Joses, Judas, and Simon. James was later considered an apostle (Gal 1:19). *Cephas?* Peter. See note, 1:12.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 9:6 *Barnabas*. He and Paul had a disagreement (Ac 15:36–41) prior to reaching Corinth (Ac 18), but Barnabas likely also worked at a trade while he evangelized (Ac 13–14).

refrain from working. Although congregations were scripturally obligated to support the missionaries who worked among them (cf v 9), Paul and Barnabas did not accept money from the Corinthians.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 9:7–10 Paul uses both human examples (v 7) and scriptural authority (vv 8–9) to demonstrate the missionaries' right to be financially supported by the congregations. Shepherds in the field subsisted almost solely on the flock's milk because they could not leave them to search for other resources. *You shall not muzzle an ox*. Paul applies Dt 25:4 ("written for our sake," v 10) to church workers (cf 1Tm 5:8).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 9:11 *sown spiritual things*. Preaching of the Gospel (cf 3:5–7). *reap material things*. Support for the work of preaching the Gospel (vv 7–10).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 9:12 *others*. Perhaps Peter or Apollos (3:5–9, 22). *we have not made use of this right … obstacle*. Paul's unique example of not accepting support shows that "rights" must be put aside when the faith of others may be shaken.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 9:13 *the temple service … altar*. General reference to any religious service, whether Jewish or Greco-Roman.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 9:14 This naturally concludes the argument of vv 8–13, but with additional reference to Jesus' teaching in Lk 10:7. The teaching applies both to the missionaries of the apostolic period and to present-day servants of the Gospel. *living*. The resources necessary to allow servants of the Gospel to dedicate themselves fully to their work.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 9:15 Paul uses himself as a positive example of not using his rights so that no one can accuse him of preaching the Gospel for his own benefit and thereby discrediting the Gospel.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 9:16 *no ground for boasting … necessity*. Paul did not choose to become a preacher of the Gospel; Christ called him directly (Gal 1:15–16; Ac 9:15–16). The glory for Paul's work belongs to Christ alone.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 9:17 *reward*. Pay (cf v 18). *entrusted with a stewardship*. Called by God to preach Christ (Gal 1:11–12).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 9:18 *reward?* That Christ would be preached with no tangible benefit to Paul. No one could reject the Gospel as something Paul had created for his own benefit.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 9:19–23 Highlights Paul's complete focus on the needs of the people to whom he was preaching.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 9:19 *made myself a servant to all*. Paul was willing to give up his own habits, preferences, and rights so that nothing would keep people from responding to his preaching of the Gospel. "The community of God in every place and every time has, according to its circumstances, the good right, power, and authority to change and decrease or increase ceremonies 'that are truly adiaphora'. They should do this thoughtfully and without giving offense, in an orderly and appropriate way, whenever it is considered most profitable, most beneficial, and best for good order, Christian discipline, and the Church's edification. Furthermore, we can yield and give in with a good conscience to the weak in faith in such outward adiaphora" (FC SD X 9). Luth: "A Christian is a perfectly free lord of all, subject to none. A Christian is a perfectly dutiful servant of all, subject to all" (AE 31:344). The Gospel not only frees us from sin but also frees us for service. Every aspect of our lives (v 22) is to be adapted to the needs of others so that they might come to faith in Christ. Paul is not advocating changing the Gospel message to suit the hearers. There is only one name given under heaven by which we must be saved (1:18–31; Ac 4:12). However, the changeless Gospel empowers us to sacrifice our own rights, tastes, interests, and preferences so that others might hear the message of Christ in all its power.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 9:20 *Jews*. Though himself Jewish, Paul refers specifically to religious behaviors through which the Jews defined their relationship to God. Paul had already abandoned such rites as circumcision (7:19), food laws (8:8), and the observance of certain days (Col 2:16). However, to prevent people from dismissing his preaching of the Gospel, Paul did on occasion "practice" some of these (e.g., his circumcision of Timothy "because of the Jews" in Ac 16:3). *under the law*. Repeated for emphasis, showing that observance of "the Law" (as understood by Judaism) was of no value before God. *not being myself under the law*. Paul willingly submitted to the Law so that the Gospel might be heard.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 9:21 *outside the law*. Gentiles, i.e., non-Jews. *under the law of Christ*. A play on words. Paul is not "under the Law" (v 20), but neither is he lawless. Rather, he is "under the law of Christ," transformed for a life of service to God and neighbor (cf Rm 7:25; Gal 6:2, 15–16).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 9:22 *weak*. See note, 8:7. Paul affirms the importance of learning about, respecting, and identifying with one's hearers in order to reach them effectively.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 9:23 *blessings*. Salvation and life in Christ. "Knowledge" of God is not sufficient (8:1); those who lead others to sin, and destroy their faith, sin against Christ (8:12). In so doing, they destroy their own faith.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 9:24 *run that you may obtain it*. Just as Paul put off his rights in order to share in the blessings of the Gospel (v 23), so should the Corinthians. *run*. A Pauline metaphor for living the Christian life (see "walk," p 1904).
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 9:25 *self-control*. Avoiding what hinders success in the race. Here it is the insistence on "rights" that destroy the faith of others. *wreath*. Lit, "crown." Olympic athletes received a wreath of olive leaves; other games used laurels, etc. *imperishable*. The eternal prize of life with God through faith in Christ (cf v 23).
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 9:26 Continuing the metaphor, Paul says that training for no purpose will not produce the desired result, which is life with God (cf v 25).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 9:27 *discipline my body*. To live with a purpose, to intentionally seek the good of others. "He clearly shows that he was keeping his body under control, not to merit forgiveness of sins by that discipline, but to keep his body in subjection and prepared for spiritual things, for carrying out the duties of his calling" (AC XXVI 38). *disqualified*. The result of seeking one's way and destroying the faith of others; summarizes vv 23–24.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON **Ch 9** As founder of the Corinthian Church, and as an apostle, Paul is perceived to have more "rights" than anyone else. Yet he consistently sets an example for the Corinthians, encouraging them to put off their own rights in order to serve one another. This is taught and modeled by Jesus Himself (Mk 10:45). His death and resurrection transform our lives so that we do not seek our own good but the good of others (Php 2:1–11). • Praise God, who Himself became human like us in order to save us! Strengthen us, O Lord, to serve others in all things, so that all people might come to know the power of Your death and resurrection. Amen.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 10:1 *brothers*. See p 1901. *fathers*. Forefathers in the faith, the children of Israel. *cloud*. The pillar of cloud that led the Israelites. *sea*. The crossing of the Red Sea.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 10:2 *baptized into Moses*. A metaphor for the Israelites who passed through the waters of the Red Sea and emerged a new people, saved from slavery.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 10:3–4 *spiritual food … spiritual drink*. Food and drink from God, i.e., manna (Ex 16) and water from the rock (Ex 17:1–7; Nu 20:10–13).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 10:4 *spiritual Rock that followed them*. In Jewish tradition, the wisdom from God continuously supplied water to the Israelites through a single rock, which traveled with them. Paul uses this image of God's faithful provision to heighten the shock at the faithlessness of Israel. *the Rock was Christ*. Paul, who describes Christ as the wisdom from God (1:30), equates Christ with this rock. Therefore, the Israelites had the benefit of being served by Christ, yet even they were not preserved against perishing (10:5). It is a warning to the Corinthians to watch out lest the same happen to them.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 10:5 *most of them*. Contrasted with the "all" of vv 1–4. Not all the Israelites were unfaithful; so, too, not all the

Corinthians are in danger of losing the prize, only those who destroy the faith of others. *overthrown*. God's judgment, which resulted in the death of many Israelites, took place frequently in the journey from Egypt.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 10:6 *took place as examples*. Not that the events were mere "examples," but that the Corinthians should learn a lesson from what happened to Israel. Just as the Israelites were unfaithful to God, so now some Corinthians were unfaithful; just as God judged Israel, so God would judge the Corinthians (cf v 11).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 10:7 A summary of the golden calf incident in Ex 32. Just as the Israelites were guilty of participating in worship of false gods and eating with them, so some Corinthians were doing the same (1Co 8).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 10:8 *sexual immorality*. Condemned in 5:1–11; 6:9–20.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 10:9 *put Christ to the test*. Because the preexistent Christ is active prior to His incarnation (cf 10:4; Jn 1:3), sinning against God is sinning against Christ. The Corinthians also sin against Christ by their behavior (8:12).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 10:10 *grumble*. Complaining about God's actions, here with reference to Nu 14:1–38.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 10:11 *as an example*. The Corinthians are to learn from the negative example of the Israelites (cf v 6). *end of the ages*. Though Israel could only hope for the coming of Christ, the Corinthians had the advantage of living in the last days when God fulfilled His promise of forgiveness and salvation in Christ.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 10:12 *thinks that he stands*. Misplaced confidence in one's own strength. *fall*. Into sin and away from God.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 10:13 *common*. All humans undergo temptation, even those who, like some Corinthians, think that they have special spiritual abilities. *God is faithful*. To His covenant promises; cf Dt 7:9; 34:4. *He will also provide the way of escape*. Because God has promised to remain with His people, we are never left in a losing situation. His grace provides new opportunities for us to be faithful. " 'Lead us not into temptation' … refers to times when God gives us power and strength to resist the temptation [1 Corinthians 10:13]. However, the temptation is not taken away or removed. While we live in the flesh and have the devil around us, no one can escape his temptation and lures. It can only mean that

we must endure trials—indeed, be engulfed in them [2 Timothy 2:3]. But we say this prayer so that we may not fall and be drowned in them. To feel temptation is, therefore, a far different thing from consenting or yielding to it" (LC III 106–7). See SC, Lord's Prayer, pp xxxviii–xxxix.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 10:14 *my beloved*. Direct address to the Corinthians; introduces an application of the argument made in vv 1–13. *flee from idolatry*. Ter: "Reflect on what a thicket [idolatry] is, and how many thorns lie hid in it. Nothing must be given to an idol, and so nothing must be taken from one" (*ANF* 3:99). Cf 6:18.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 10:15 *sensible people; judge for yourselves*. Paul appeals to the commonsense reasoning of the Corinthians in the following argument, rather than the example of Israel (as in vv 1–13).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 10:16 *cup of blessing that we bless … bread that we break*. Describes consecration of the eucharistic elements. Just: "There is then brought to the president of the brethren bread and a cup of wine mixed with water; and he taking them, gives praise and glory to the Father of the universe, through the name of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, and offers thanks at considerable length for our being counted worthy to receive these things at His hands. And when he has concluded the prayers and thanksgivings, all the people present express their assent by saying Amen…. And this food is called among us … [the Eucharist]" (*ANF* 1:185). *participation*. Gk *koinonia*, see p 1903. Difficult to render with a single Eng word, it is fellowship with both a heavenly and earthly dimension. The Sacrament unites the participants both to Christ's eucharistic body and blood as well as to their fellow participants. By receiving Christ in this meal, we receive His body and blood and the benefits of the sacrifice of His body and blood, foremost among them the forgiveness of sins. This forgiveness through Christ unites the participants in the Body of Christ (cf v 17; 12:27). *blood … body*. More is happening than merely an earthly union among believers (the "Body of Christ"). Because Christ's actual body and blood are received, this must also refer to sacramental union with Christ. "Christ's body and blood are received with the bread and wine, not only spiritually through faith, but also orally. Yet not in a 'Capernaitic' way, but in a supernatural, heavenly way, because of the sacramental union. Christ's words clearly show this, when Christ gives direction to take, eat, and drink, as was also done by the apostles. For it is written in Mark 14:23, 'And they all drank of it.' St. Paul likewise says [in 1 Corinthians 10:16], 'The bread

that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ?' That is to say: He who eats this bread eats Christ's body, which also the chief ancient teachers of the Church—Chrysostom, Cyprian, Leo I, Gregory, Ambrose, Augustine—unanimously testify" (FC Ep VII 15).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 10:17 *one bread … one body*. Union with Christ results in union with one another. The symbol of sharing "one bread" corresponds to the reality of the "one body." This unity is emphasized in particular because of the actions of some in Corinth, who were destroying the faith of those "for whom Christ died" (8:11). Cyr Al: "Who has doubted that Christ is in this manner a vine, and we the branches, deriving life for ourselves from this? … We must consider that Christ is in us not only according to the habit, which we call love, but also by natural participation" (Ap X 56). *partake*. Eating the sacramental meal.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 10:18 *people of Israel … eat the sacrifices*. Cf Dt 14:22–27, where the food tithe was eaten following its sacrifice. See pp 170–71. By participating in this meal, the Israelites participated in worship of Yahweh. This parallels what some Corinthians were doing when they participated in the rituals where food was sacrificed to idols, which made them participants in the worship of that idol (v 20).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 10:19 *an idol is anything?* See note, 8:4.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 10:20 *offer to demons*. Sacrifices to false gods. *participants with demons*. Participating in worship of false gods and eating the food from the sacrifices as if they were present makes that false god real by those placing themselves under their influence. Their participation in these meals, regardless of their theological position, indicated their acceptance of what took place at that altar.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 10:21 *cup … table of the Lord*. Because the corporate worship of the Christian community reaches its high point in the celebration of the Lord's Supper, Paul uses the objects associated with the Sacrament to refer to the worship of the true God. *cannot partake*. A command. One who worships the true God cannot also worship a false god. By eating at one altar, participants identify themselves with the worship that takes place there. As one cannot worship both the true God and a false god, neither can one participate in the rites of both.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 10:22 *jealousy?* A common OT reference to God's judgment; cf Ex 20:5; Dt 32:15–21, both in the context of the

worship of false gods. By not answering "no" to this question and changing their behavior, the Corinthians would face God's anger and wrath.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 10:1–22 "Flee from idolatry" (v 14) summarizes this section. Even Israel, who had seen God's mighty works throughout the exodus, acted as if God were not real, as if they could rely on gods of their own creation or even themselves to keep them safe. In our age, there are many gods. Some are worshiped as such (e.g., Islam, Hinduism); others subtly become gods (e.g., money, pride). Luth: "A god means that from which we are to expect all good and in which we are to take refuge in all distress" (LC I 2). Our society has many such gods, be they wealth, status, reputation, even family. But the one true God does not tolerate shared allegiance. If we participated in the worship of false gods or in churches that do not faithfully confess the Gospel in all its purity, this would indicate that we assent to what that worshiping community believes. For this reason, we avoid such false worship. At the Lord's Table, He offers His body and blood for the forgiveness of sins and through them creates a faithful community, one committed to Him and to one another. He comes to His people in His Word and in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, which forgives sins and creates a Church faithful to Him. • From being led astray by the many gods of this world, protect us by Your Spirit, Lord. Thank You for the gift of Your Son, who comes to us in His body and blood, and for the gift of the congregation in which I hear Your Word proclaimed faithfully and where I receive this life-giving Sacrament. Strengthen me to build up my fellow participants in worship of You. Amen.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 10:23 *All things are lawful*. See note, 6:12–13. *helpful*. For the benefit of either oneself or others. *build up*. Returns to a theme expressed in 8:1–3 and developed further in 14:3–5.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 10:24 A summary of the argument of chs 8–10; it parallels Jesus' own statements regarding the "greatest commandment" (e.g., Mk 12:28–34, based on Lv 19:18). From this summary, Paul makes application to two specific situations faced in Corinth: meat from a market and eating at a nonbeliever's home.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 10:25 *meat market*. The macellum in Roman cities (see p 1944) sold all types of produce and meat. Some of this food would come from farmers or butchers, but some may have come from sacrifices in temples, sold to generate income. The macellum in Corinth was located near several temples, thus raising questions about the source of

meat sold there. So long as neither the worship of the idol took place nor its presence was invoked in the act of eating (8:4–6), all food was permitted because it had all been created by God. *without raising any question*. See note, v 27. *conscience*. See p 1902. God's perspective, not one's personal moral code, should determine whether one eats meat from the macellum.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 10:27–30 Even a simple meal with friends and neighbors becomes an opportunity for witness.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 10:27 *disposed*. Simply sharing a meal with unbelievers is not a problem, unless the meal involves food sacrificed to idols. *without raising any question*. God's perspective, not conscience, should not be one's guide. Because all food is clean (Mk 7:19), one should not use personal moral judgments to decide whether or not to eat.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 10:28–29a Someone at the meal makes a connection between idol worship and the food being eaten. *do not eat it*. Because others might connect the idol and the food, Christians must not eat the food, lest the others think that eating food sacrificed to their god is acceptable behavior. The reaction of the host, who may be offended, is not indicated here. However, in giving an explanation as to why they do not eat, Christians would have an opportunity to share the Gospel with the unbelievers so that they, too, "may be saved" (v 33).
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON **10:29b–30** Objections that may have been raised by the Corinthians. Paul responds in 10:31–11:1.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 10:31–11:1 The summary of whether to eat idol food. Unacceptable situations: in the temple dining rooms (8:7–13), in temple rituals (10:14–22), or when an unbeliever makes a connection between the idol and the food (10:27–29). Acceptable situations: food purchased in the marketplace (10:25–26), in a nonbeliever's home, as long as no connection to an idol is made. The determining factor is how the other person views the food. Showing love to others means deferring one's theologically founded right to eat so as not to mislead them into sin (8:10–12) or leave them thinking that eating sacrificial food is acceptable (10:27–29). To "love your neighbor as yourself" (Mt 22:39) brings glory to God.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 10:32 *Give no offense*. Not mere "offensive behavior," but leading fellow members of the Church into sin (8:10–13) or leaving non-Christians in unbelief (10:27–29).
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 10:33 *please everyone*. Not the people pleasing condemned in Gal 1:10, but sacrificially seeking the good of

others. *saved*. See p 1904. The goal that defines Christian behavior toward others—that fellow Christians be built up to salvation and that nonbelievers come to salvation.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:1 *imitators of me*. Christ is always the preeminent example, yet in the day-to-day living of the Christian life, it is also helpful to have someone close at hand as an example and model. Cf Php 3:17.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 10:23–11:1 In Western culture, Christians rarely have to deal with food sacrificed to other gods, though Christians in Asia and Africa must deal with these issues directly. In either case, Paul's instructions show that our actions communicate something about who we are to those around us. While called to be faithful to God, we are also called to build up both our fellow Christians and, ultimately, to lead all whom we meet to Christ. Our actions tell others about who we are in Christ, giving us an opportunity to witness to His love in all aspects of our lives. Christians are not forbidden from interacting with those who do not know Christ—far from it. By our actions and words among them we can testify to the one God and what His Son, Jesus Christ, has done for us. • Forgive my halting and hesitant witness, Lord. Guide me in every situation to "seek to save" others. Amen.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:2–16 The situations described in this section are largely foreign to our modern context. In Roman culture, both men and women conveyed their status, including their marital situation, by their appearance. A head covering, basically a shawl draped over the head, conveyed that a woman was married and intended to remain in that situation. Some Roman women, however, sought to live as "new women" who did not intend to remain faithful to their husbands. Women who uncovered their head immodestly drew attention to themselves by signaling that they were available to other men. In the name of "Gospel freedom" and "rights," this thinking and behavior began to influence Christians in Corinth. Paul's instruction, as in chs 8–10, reminds the Corinthians that their actions always communicate something to others. They are to refrain from behavior that communicates something at odds with the Christian life.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:2 *remember me*. Recall what Paul taught, and live by it. *the traditions*. See p 1904. *delivered*. See p 1902.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:3 *head*. That which is preeminent within a relationship. The "head' is responsible for the actions of the body.

As a metaphor for the Church, Paul notes that the body has many parts with different roles (12:12–26), the "head" of which is Christ. So also here, the "head" is that which is preeminent, though not greater than the other parts, because the head is most prominent, visible, and necessary for the proper function of the rest of the body. The Father is the head of Christ according to Christ's human nature. Christ willingly obeys the Father, as Luther said, "God said to His beloved Son: 'It's time to have compassion. Then go, bright jewel of My crown, And bring to all salvation.' … The Son obeyed His Father's will" (*LSB* 556:5–6; cf Jn 6:35–40). The relationship does not make the Son inferior. A husband and wife live in a relationship with different roles, yet without implication of superiority or inferiority (Eph 5:22–33). Chrys: "Had Paul meant to speak of rule and subjection … he would not have brought forward the instance of a wife, but rather of a slave and a master." (*NPNF* 1 12:150). The roles of husbands and wives became an issue in Corinth, where some women gave the appearance of no longer desiring to stay faithful to their husbands.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:4 *prays or prophesies*. Neither action is specific to the pastoral office but may be done by any Christian (Rm 12:6; 1Co 14:1–5; see p 3851). This is not the NT office of "prophet," which is closely related to the office of pastor (Eph 4:11). See notes, 14:3, 29; 1Th 5:20. *dishonors his head*. In the OT, long hair was a Nazirite sign of commitment to God (Nu 6:5), and few modern cultures hold that long hair shames a man. However, Roman culture viewed long hair on a man as a disgrace. This may allude to the respect and honor that was accorded the aged, whose bald heads were viewed as signs of wisdom, experience, and honor.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:5–6 *head uncovered*. See note, v 3. *dishonors her head*. Signals to all present that she is no longer married or faithful to her husband, much like a harlot. *same as if her head were shaven*. The ultimate disgrace; a shaved head signaled both loss of status as a wife and, in some Roman cities, conviction of prostitution.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:7–9 *image*. Highlights that man is given some of the attributes of God (Gn 1:27), primarily authority over creation. *glory*. Highlights that, in accomplishing his purpose, man brings glory to God (Ps 8:5). *glory of man*. The woman is created "from man" (v 8) in order to be a "helper" for man (v 9; see note, Gn 2:18) in the creation over which God had given the man responsibility (Gn 2:15). By also having this

authority, she is likewise in the image of God (Gn 1:27), but Paul does not mention that here because he is discussing the relationship between man and woman, not woman and God.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:10 *symbol of authority*. In Roman culture, the head covering signified a married woman's status. *because of the angels*. A difficult phrase that likely conveys the idea of "in heaven, so on earth." Just as angels observe proper respect in their worship of the exalted Lord, so on earth His people should do the same.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:11 *in the Lord*. In those transformed by Baptism into Christ (Rm 6:1–4). *not independent*. Different from the attitude of the prevailing culture in which women were seeking independent roles. Paul does not place woman "under" man but points out that in God's order both need the other. The difference is in roles, not in worth before God.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:12 *all things are from God*. God is the head of all creation (cf 8:6; see note, 3:23).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:13–15 Having appealed to creation in vv 9–12, Paul next appeals to their shared experience.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:13 By removing the head covering, the woman signals that she is abandoning the role given her by God. Seeking to turn away from God but then turning to Him in prayer are contradictory.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:14 *nature*. No Scripture passage teaches this, nor is Paul appealing to the created order. Instead, as in v 13, he calls them to consider how things are in their culture.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:15 *covering*. Summarizes vv 9–12 and 14–15, pointing out that the practices of Roman culture regarding head coverings and gender distinction are in harmony with God's will. Women typically braided or knotted their hair and also wore a cloth or veil covering.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:16 *contentious*. Deviating from apostolic teaching and practice passed on by Paul and others, including Sosthenes (1:1). *no such practice*. Removal of gender distinctions by altering the practices of head covering or uncovering. *churches of God*. Paul appeals to the broader church to show that this is not merely his teaching.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:1–16 "Actions speak louder than words" summarizes much of chs 8–11, especially this section. These Roman women think they can go along with cultural trends. However,

removal of their hair covering would be similar to a woman in our culture removing her wedding ring: it symbolizes that she no longer intends to live in a faithful marriage relationship. Paul is concerned about outward conduct but also about the roles God has given to each gender. The removal of the covering would eliminate the gender distinctions God established. The Lord has provided order in the family through faithful husbands and fathers and dedicated wives and mothers. When we seek to live in ways other than how He has called us to live, we move away from Him. Yet we are not abandoned to drift about in this world. God's Son loved us with a perfect love, sacrificing Himself on the cross for us. The forgiveness won for us there cleanses us from all our failures, even where we have failed those closest to us. • Made new in You, O Christ, we love as You loved and serve as You served. Set our hearts to do Your will, O God. Amen.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:17 *I do not commend you*. Contrast with v 2; while the head-covering issue was problematic, improper practices at the Lord's Supper needed sterner rebuke. *come together*. A meal that also included worship (see note, v 21) took place in homes, likely the larger homes of wealthier members of the community. The formal dining area (the *triclinium*) of a home was of limited size. Thus, the Roman host invited his friends and those whom he wished to honor to dine in this room and share the best food. Others were forced to eat elsewhere, likely in the atrium. In this way, social distinctions were wrongly observed in the congregation. This contradicted the purpose of the Lord's Supper: to offer the forgiveness of sins, which creates unity with Christ and unity with one another (see notes, 10:16, 17). The Corinthians were using the meal to create divisions (vv 18–19), rejecting the very forgiveness offered in the Sacrament.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:18 *divisions*. Distinctions within the Church based on human reasons, condemned also in Gal 5:20.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:19 *factions*. Cf Mt 10:34–37. *genuine among you*. The divisions, though sad, made clear who was following apostolic teaching and who was not.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:20 *not the Lord's supper*. By creating divisions, the Corinthians demonstrated that they were not intending to celebrate the Lord's Supper according to Christ's institution, but as a meal for the host and his favored guests (see note, v 17). This did not invalidate the Supper, but it did contradict the Gospel. The result was judgment (vv 29–32).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:21 *one goes ahead … drunk*. The wealthy ate the best food and wine to excess, without leaving any for those in the outer rooms (see note, v 17). *meal*. A community meal was shared by the Corinthians when they celebrated the Lord's Supper.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:22 *houses to eat and drink in?* Or, "houses for this eating and drinking." See note, v 34. *church*. Not a building but those who belong to God by faith. See pp 1901–2. *those who have nothing?* Those of lower status who were excluded from the main meal (see note, v 17).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:23 *I received from the Lord*. Not by direct revelation, but through the passing on of the teachings of Christ through the apostles. *on the night when He was betrayed*. The Lord's Supper looks back to its institution by Jesus Himself, which was based on His sacrifice on the cross the following day. *bread*. Because the Lord's Supper was instituted during a Passover meal (Lk 22:7–13), Jesus would have blessed unleavened bread (Ex 12:14–20).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:24–25 See notes, Lk 22:19–20.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:24 *broke*. The breaking of the bread parallels the sacrificial "breaking" of Christ's body on the cross. " 'When the Word is joined to the element or natural substance, it becomes a Sacrament.' This saying of St. Augustine is so properly and so well put that he has scarcely said anything better. The Word must make a Sacrament out of the element, or else it remains a mere element. Now, it is not the word or ordinance of a prince or emperor. But it is the Word of the grand Majesty, at whose feet all creatures should fall and affirm it is as He says, and accept it with all reverence, fear, and humility" (LC V 10–11). *This is My body*. Though "is" or "was" might be used metaphorically elsewhere (e.g., 10:4), 10:16 and 11:27 make clear that in the receiving of the sacramental bread, one also receives the very body of Christ. Luth: "It is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ under the bread and wine" (SC, Sacrament of the Altar, p xli). *for you*. The benefits of Christ's sacrifice on the cross are delivered to His people in the Sacrament. *remembrance*. Not merely a memorial of what Jesus did on the cross, the Lord's Supper brings the benefits of Christ's work into the present day and transforms lives now. See "remember," p 843.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:25 *cup, after supper*. One of several cups of wine used ceremonially at a Passover meal. "Cup" here stands for

the wine. *new covenant in My blood*. To this cup, Jesus gives new significance. The old covenant, made explicit to Abraham, then Israel, is now made complete and perfect in Christ's sacrificial death because it delivers the forgiveness of sins (Jer 31:31–34; Mt 26:28). Whereas the previous covenant celebrated a Passover meal, the new covenant celebrates the Lord's Supper. "There are two things in a Sacrament: a sign and the Word. In the New Testament, the Word is the promise of grace added. The promise of the New Testament is the promise of the forgiveness of sins" (Ap XXIV 69). *remembrance*. See note, v 24.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:26 *as often*. Jesus left no specific instruction as to the frequency of the celebration. Though the Passover was celebrated yearly, early Christians celebrated the Lord's Supper on the Lord's Day, i.e., Sunday, the day of Christ's resurrection. "For Christ did not say, 'Omit this' or 'Despise this,' but 'This do, as often as you drink it,' etc. He most certainly wants it done and does not want it left undone and despised" (SC, Preface, p xxxiv). *you proclaim*. Not a public setting with guests or visitors, but an act of proclaiming among themselves and to every generation that, in the Sacrament, they also shared in the new covenant. The "you" is plural; again, what should have been a celebration and proclamation of the unity created by Christ had broken down into an opportunity for individual indulgence (see note, v 17). *proclaim the Lord's death until He comes*. The Lord's Supper does not merely look back, but it also looks forward to the feast in the presence of the Lord on the Last Day (Mt 26:29).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:27–32 Paul describes the implications of Jesus' institution for the situation in Corinth.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:27 *unworthy manner*. Includes celebrating the Sacrament in a manner that is inconsistent with Jesus' institution, particularly the creation of divisions (see note, v 17). It also includes not recognizing what is given and received in the "body and blood." Were Paul discussing exclusively the Church as the Body of Christ, there would have been no mention of the blood. However, eating and drinking in an unworthy manner also includes not recognizing the sacramental presence of Christ's body and blood (cf v 29). *guilty*. Abusing the Sacrament by making it an occasion for sin, not for its intended purpose of forgiveness and unity makes one guilty and liable to judgment (vv 29–

32). “Those who go to the Sacrament [Lord’s Supper] unworthily yet still receive the true Sacrament, even though they do not believe” (LC IV 54).
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:28 *examine himself*. To see whether or not the person is receiving the Sacrament according to Christ’s institution, not in an “unworthy manner” (see note, v 27). This does not require a perfect, sinless life before reception of the Sacrament but a desire to receive the blessings of the Sacrament, including forgiveness and being formed with fellow recipients as the Body of Christ. Paul illustrates pastoral oversight in the examination by rebuking their sin and returning them to their catechesis (v 23; see p 1965). “Confession in the churches is not abolished among us. The body of the Lord is not usually given to those who have not been examined [1 Corinthians 11:27–28] and absolved” (AC XXV 1; see also LC V 49–50).
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:29 *without discerning the body*. Short for “body and blood” used throughout this section. Note parallels at vv 27–28. “Discerning” includes recognizing the “true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ under the bread and wine” (SC, Sacrament of the Altar, p xli). It also implies a desire for the “forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation” offered in the Sacrament. Finally, in the context of vv 17–34, it also includes a desire to end the human divisions that destroy the unity of the Body of Christ created through the Sacrament. *eats and drinks judgment on himself*. Not everyone who was participating in the sacramental meal in Corinth was condemned—only those who did not discern the body and so came under God’s judgment (vv 31–32). “The pastors do not force those who are not qualified to use the Sacraments” (Ap XI 62).
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:30 The same food that should have strengthened their faith instead caused physical harm. The effect of benefit to one person and curse to another is similar to the way Paul describes the Gospel itself (2Co 2:14–16). Physical punishment follows spiritual problems, just as it did for Israel (10:1–13).
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:31–32 *judged*. Cf v 28; had proper examination taken place, the sufferings of the Corinthians would not have happened. “ ‘To judge’ should be understood to include all of repentance and required fruit, not works that are not required” (Ap XIIB 66). Even in God’s judgment (v 30), the goal is salvation.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:33–34 Application of the theological argumentation to the situation in Corinth.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:33 Paul reminds them to be considerate of one another (cf vv 21–22), welcoming "one another as Christ has welcomed you" (Rm 15:7). "Paul … has this command … so that there may be a common participation" (AC XXIV 39).
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:34 *eat at home*. The communal celebration of the Lord's Supper was not to focus on meeting the physical needs of the body; God's supply of daily bread was to be enjoyed at home (v 22; 10:25–26). *for judgment*. To continue celebrating the Lord's Supper sinfully would have resulted in God's continuing judgment and, potentially, condemnation (vv 29–30). *other things*. Not explained here; not as crucial as food sacrificed to idols (8:1–11:1), coverings in worship (11:2–16), and the celebration of the Lord's Supper. *directions*. Paul will exercise pastoral care in person rather than through correspondence. *when I come*. Paul's future plans are described in 16:5–8.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:17–34 The Corinthians have turned the Sacrament into a supper of their own making. As a result, the community of believers formed by the Gospel and the Sacrament is being harmed and individuals are falling under God's judgment. Recalling Christ's own institution of the Supper, Paul reminds the Corinthians to recognize what God has offered in the Sacrament: the body and blood of Christ, the forgiveness of sins, and through it the union of the Body of Christ, the Church, gathered around the altar. The Lord's Supper is never just a private matter, something only between God and oneself, but it is a celebration of the whole Body of Christ. • Forgive, O Lord, the dullness that too frequently overcomes us as You draw us to Your Table. Remind us of the blessings of forgiveness and salvation You provide for us there. Send faithful pastors who will admonish our wrongs, remind us of Your love in Christ, and encourage us to receive the forgiveness brought to us in Your Sacrament. Unite us in love and fellowship with those whom You have redeemed who join us at Your Table. Amen.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON **Chs 12–14** Paul primarily instructs congregational leaders, the "spiritual," who have adopted different practices and divided the congregation. See note, 14:1.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 12:1 *spiritual gifts*. See p 1902. See also note, 12:4–6. *brothers*. See p 1901.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 12:2 *mute idols*. In contrast, the living God speaks to His people through servants of the Word such as the prophets. *you*

were led. They were captive to false religion, subject to Satan's deception.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 12:3 *speaking in the Spirit*. The Holy Spirit directs believers' conversation and life. *Jesus is accursed!* Perhaps someone in Corinth who claimed spiritual authority in the congregation voiced this evil confession. *accursed*. See p 1901. *Jesus is Lord*. Christ is not simply "a" lord but is "the" Lord, Yahweh, the Savior. See p 1975. *except in the Holy Spirit*. "Neither you nor I could ever know anything about Christ, or believe on Him, and have Him for our Lord, unless it were offered to us and granted to our hearts by the Holy Spirit through the preaching of the Gospel" (LC II 38).
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 12:4–6 *varieties of gifts … service … activities*. Note the linkage between these terms, which describe the "spiritual" in v 1. The gifts are embodied in works of ministers, the "spiritual" people. *same Spirit … Lord … God*. The Persons of the Trinity in reverse order. The varieties of service are united by the one God, who gives them. Just as the Lord is triune but not divided, so the ministry is various but not divided. *empowers*. Gk *energeo*, "to work." The Lord is the only source of righteous "spirituality."
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 12:7 *each*. Each member of the body ("brother," v 1). *manifestation of the Spirit*. The Spirit's work through the brothers. *common good*. The Spirit ministers to the whole congregation through their service.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 12:8–10 The key point of these passages is that the one Holy Spirit produces all these works through the "spiritual" (v 1) of the congregation. Therefore, these callings and gifts are not to divide God's people.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 12:8 *utterance of wisdom … knowledge*. The blessings of Christ's Gospel are topics most valued by the Corinthians (1:5). Wisdom rightly applies knowledge. See p 1016.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 12:9 *faith*. Not the gift of saving faith but trust in God's mercy and help in the face of great difficulty and need (cf Mt 17:14–21). *gifts of healing*. Lit, "healings." Such blessings accompanied the ministry of Jesus and the apostles (cf Lk 9:1–2; Ac 3:1–10; 5:12–16). Luth: "Many people have been preserved by prayer, as we prayed Philip back to life" (AE 54:453–54).
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 12:10 *working of miracles*. Lit, "workings of powers." Another reference to God doing miracles (cf Mt 11:20–23).

God's power is made perfect in our weaknesses, which illustrate our helpless condition due to sin and His almighty power to save (2Co 12:7–9). *prophecy*. See pp 1077–83. God speaks through His called servants to warn, instruct, forgive, and encourage. *distinguish between spirits*. Cf 1Jn 4:1–3; Dt 18:20–22. *kinds of tongues*. Various languages. *interpretation of tongues*. Translation of languages. Luth: "He refers to 'speaking in tongues,' which is nothing else than reading Scripture orally" (AE 14:36; see also AE 28:329). Regarding Ac 2, early Christian and medieval interpreters, like Luther, viewed tongues as natural human languages, not ecstatic babbling. In multilingual congregations, the readings, liturgy, prayers, and sermon were often given in more than one language. The rabbis described these circumstances in the early synagogues and provided guidelines. See note, 14:14; see also p 1969.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 12:11 *empowered*. See note, vv 4–6; cf Ac 1:8. *apportions … as He wills*. The calling comes from God, not us.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 12:1–11 God, who is one, unified and blessed the Corinthian congregation through His Spirit and gifts. Like the congregation at Corinth, we also suffer from divisions and party spirit, which undermine God's work among us. Yet the Lord still leads us to true confession through Jesus, our Savior, and the Spirit's work among us. • Mute our idolatrous pride and curb our party spirit, O triune Lord. Combine our hearts in works that praise You, even as You unite our voices in the true confession of Your name. Amen.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 12:12 *members*. See p 1903. A living, active bond between Christians. *so … with Christ*. Believers are united to Christ and to one another.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 12:13 *in one Spirit … all baptized*. Holy Baptism, in which the Spirit is poured out (Ac 2:38–39), is the basis of Christian unity. *Jews or Greeks, slaves or free*. These are basic cultural and economic boundaries in the Roman Empire, esp from the perspective of Jewish people, who saw themselves as set apart from other nationalities. See p 101. *drink*. The same verb as in 3:6, "watered." *one Spirit*. Given with the proclamation in Baptism and preaching.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 12:15–17 See notes, 1:10, 12; see also p 1965.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 12:18 *God arranged the members*. Paul attributed the diversity within the congregation to part of God's plan.

People are most comfortable with those like themselves. Paul is asking them to see the benefits of their diversity. *arranged*. Same verb as in v 28, "appointed."
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 12:20 *parts*. See note, v 12.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 12:22 *weaker are indispensable*. See notes, 1:27; 9:22. God's ways are paradoxical, as demonstrated in the OT (cf Gn 48:17–20) and in Jesus' teachings about His kingdom (cf Mt 19:30).
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 12:23 *honorable … unpresentable parts*. Modesty accentuates the importance of the sexual organs, which God located out of view and behind hair to reserve them for special, honorable use. See LC I 287.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 12:24 See notes, vv 18, 22. *composed*. Used to describe the blending of paint colors.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 12:25–26 *same care*. As demonstrated in mutual suffering and rejoicing.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 12:27 *you*. Plural; the congregation. *body of Christ*. See p 1965. To be a Christian is to be in a congregation and in the communion of saints. Aug: "Secretly, and as a friend, [Victorinus said] 'Know that I am a Christian.' To which [Simplicianus] replied, 'I will not believe it, nor will I rank you among the Christians unless I see you in the Church of Christ.' Whereupon he replied derisively, 'Is it then the walls that make Christians?' … For he was fearful of offending his friends…. But after that, from reading and inquiry, he had derived strength … and unexpectedly said to Simplicianus,—as he himself informed me,—'Let us go to the Church; I wish to be made a Christian.' … He not long after gave in his name, that he might be regenerated by baptism,—Rome marvelling, and the Church rejoicing" (*NPNF* 1 1:117–18).
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 12:28 Unlike the list in vv 8–10, Paul here ranks the gifts and offices in the Church, placing preaching and teaching before the offices of service. He emphasizes the Gospel first, which leads to loving acts of service (see order in Ac 6:1–7). See p 1902. However, preachers and teachers must regard themselves as united with the Body and as serving God's servants with their message. God's order is no basis for arrogance. Cf ch 13. *appointed*. See note, v 18.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 12:29–30 The questions demand a "no." Paul clearly distinguishes offices and services within a congregation. He

also refutes the teaching that all must speak in tongues as evidence of the Spirit.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 12:31 *higher gifts*. Paul lists these edifying gifts first; see note, 14:1. *more excellent way*. There is something greater than attaining these gifts: love, as described in ch 13.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 12:12–31 Paul seeks to settle and unite the Corinthian congregation by emphasizing the order God established in creation and the priority of the Gospel. The sin of arrogance plaguing the Corinthians still disrupts congregations today when roles of service are not clearly defined or valued. Yet also today, Christ unites us in Baptism and makes us His very Body. Though wounded and afflicted, His Body can never be destroyed but carries out God's loving purposes. • Grant me refuge, dear Jesus, in Your holy wounds, from which You poured life and blessing for me and for all. Because You value all Your people, teach me to love and serve them humbly according to my calling. Amen.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 13:1–8 Paul uses "all or nothing" rhetoric throughout this section. "He does not say that we have access to God by our love without Christ as the Atoning Sacrifice, that we receive the promised forgiveness of sins by our love. Paul says nothing about this. He does not, therefore, think that love justifies, because we are justified only when we receive Christ as the Atoning Sacrifice and believe that for Christ's sake God is reconciled to us" (Ap V 101).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 13:1 *tongues of men and of angels*. Any language. See p 1969. Because Hbr was the language of the temple prayers, rabbis came to regard it as the language of the angels. *love*. See p 1903. *noisy … clanging*. Not melodious, but annoying. Devotees of Dionysus and Cybele clashed cymbals during frenzied worship. Corinthian brass works likely made such cymbals.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 13:2 *prophetic powers*. Lit, "prophecy," which could describe the office. *all mysteries and all knowledge*. See notes, 1:5; 2:7; cf Dn 2:19–23. *all faith*. See note, 12:9. *I am nothing*. Without love, office and service bring neither good nor honor.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 13:3 *give away*. Like breaking away bits of bread until the entire loaf is gone. *burned*. See ESV note. An early variant refers to giving the body up for "boasting" rather than "burning." In all cases, willing martyrdom is meant. *gain nothing*. Without love, goodness and honor are never gained. "We are to keep the Law when we have been

justified by faith, and so grow in fulfilling the Law more and more 'by the Spirit'" (Ap V 3).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 13:4–7 Poetically balanced between negative and positive statements. Fifteen assertions describe the nature of love in Christ: two positive statements, eight negative statements (the last one adds a positive contrast), then four positive statements. The first assertions are most important ("patient," "kind"; God's attributes, see note, Ex 34:6) and are further defined by the assertions that follow.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 13:8 *Love never ends*. Or, "never fails." Paul introduces another contrast to show love's superiority. *pass away … pass away*. The same verb (*katargeo*) is repeated in different forms. The offices/gifts craved by the Corinthians are bound to the present era and will not be needed in eternity.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 13:9 *in part*. God has not revealed everything we could know or that could be revealed through ongoing prophecy. For life now, God insists that we live by faith.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 13:10 *the perfect*. Gk *teleios*, "something or someone complete." The fullness and completeness that will appear with Christ's return. He is perfect and is the One who makes perfect (Heb 12:2). "At that time there will be no more forgiveness, but only perfectly pure and holy people" (LC II 58).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 13:11 Childhood is "imperfect" and incomplete because the mind and body are designed to strive for maturity.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 13:12 *a mirror*. Made from polished brass. Archaeologists have found such mirrors at Corinth. *dimly*. Lit, "in a riddle." The knowledge is indirect and, therefore, imperfect. *face to face*. In God's immediate presence (cf Ex 33:11; Dt 34:10), where He is not "hidden" by our present limitations. *know fully*. Perfecting our knowledge in God's presence. The believer will not simply know about God but will have direct, personal experience of Him. *fully known*. God is all-knowing and already knows us fully.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 13:13 *faith, hope, and love*. A summary of Christian virtues. *greatest*. "Faith" and "hope" are by nature imperfect, because they mature into "knowledge" when the thing believed in or hoped for is reached. Love does not turn into something else but, when mature, remains love. "Paul, in this passage, properly speaks about love toward one's neighbor and indicates that love is the greatest, because it has the

most fruit. Faith and hope have to do only with God. But love has infinite offices outwardly toward humanity" (Ap V 105). "Faith is never alone, but always has love and hope with it" (FC Ep III 11).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON **Ch 13** By so completely describing and advocating love's divine qualities, Paul reveals the Corinthians' immaturity. He sharply rebukes all noisy, clanging boasts of superiority. Yet, he alludes to the fact that the Father—who knows His children all too well—still loves them, reaches for them by His Word, and will embrace them eternally because of Christ, who delivered Himself up for us all. • O Father, all-knowing, when my brothers and sisters disappoint and annoy me, take my hands and stretch them wide to embrace them with Your all-embracing love; through Jesus, our mutual Savior. Amen.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 14:1 *Pursue love*. Paul returns to the theme introduced in 8:1—love moves people to build one another up. *spiritual gifts*. See notes, 12:1, 4–6. *especially … prophesy*. Prophecy is established as one of the chief gifts (12:28–31). See note, v 3. Luther first applied ch 14 to the whole congregation (AE 40:22–23), but his view changed. He later wrote, "He is not commanding the congregation to preach, but is dealing with those who are preachers in the congregations or assemblies…. The lesson was sung or read by one or two…. Then one of the prophets whose turn it was spoke and interpreted the lesson…. When one was through, another might have something to add in confirmation or clarification" (AE 40:389). Luther's mature view agrees with synagogue practices in the first century, which the early Christians adopted (cf Ac 13:14–16; 15:13–21).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 14:2 *tongue*. See note, 12:10; see also p 1969. *not to men … no one understands*. Hyperbole, because tongues could be interpreted, though this also was the Spirit's work (see notes, vv 3, 4–5). Paul is describing the broader group's experience. The speaker used a language people could not understand, so members of the congregation were confused (cf Ac 2:12). Paul's hyperbole downplays the importance of tongues for the congregation (cf vv 6–11). *mysteries in the Spirit*. Earlier, Paul explained that God's mysteries cannot be known by human means (2:6–13). The Spirit must reveal how Christ fulfilled the ancient mysteries (cf 2:10, 13). Elsewhere, Paul named specific "mysteries" the Spirit taught and revealed (throughout these passages appear terms of speaking, uttering, and proclaiming). The mysteries are the inclusion of the Gentiles in Israel's salvation (Rm 11:25; Eph 3:2–6; Col 1:26–27), the Gospel truths recorded

in the prophetic writings (Rm 16:25–26), salvation through the Lord's crucifixion (2:8), the resurrection promised through Christ (15:51), and the Gospel of Christ generally (Eph 6:19; Col 2:2–3; 4:3–4; 1Tm 3:16). Peter preached most of these themes on Pentecost, when he explained OT prophecies to those confused by speaking in tongues (Ac 2:14–36). According to Acts and Paul, the content of speaking in tongues was "the mighty works of God" (Ac 2:11), "extolling God" (Ac 10:46), "prayer" (1Co 14:14), and "thanksgiving" (1Co 14:16). See note, v 3.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 14:3 *upbuilding … encouragement … consolation*. Prophecy, as preaching, makes the meaning and application of God's teaching clear (vv 24–25). See pp 1077–83. Luth: "St. Paul writes of the office of preaching in the congregation, to which [the congregation] is to listen and to learn from it, when he says: Whoever comes forward, and wants to read, teach, or preach, and yet speaks with tongues, that is, speaks Latin instead of German [as happened in Luther's day], or some unknown language, he is to be silent and preach to himself alone. For no one can hear it or understand it, and no one can get any benefit from it. Or, if he should speak with tongues, he ought, in addition, put what he says into German, or interpret it in one way or another, so that the congregation may understand him" (AE 40:142).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 14:4–5 *builds up himself*. Rhetorically, Paul reduced tongues to a selfish act in order to shame the proud Corinthians. Yet he conceded the use of tongues, as he did other practices of the congregation (cf 7:6). *unless someone interprets*. Tongues became edifying through translation or explanation. Cf Ac 2, where tongues are followed by quotation of Scripture and preaching (see notes, vv 2, 3). Luther understood the practical concerns raised by ritual language because of the medieval custom of using Latin rather than the common language of the people. Luth: "Hence has come the custom in all lands, to read the gospel immediately before the sermon in Latin, which St. Paul calls speaking in tongues in the congregation. However, since the sermon comes soon thereafter and translates and interprets the tongue, St. Paul does not reject or forbid it" (AE 40:142). See note, 12:10.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 14:6 *revelation … knowledge … prophecy … teaching?* Similar activities are mentioned in 12:8–10, 28. These were the content of apostolic preaching. See note, v 3.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 14:7–11 Paul uses rhetoric to build empathy for the "outsiders" (v 23), who could not understand and were alienated by the Corinthians' practices.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 14:9 *not intelligible*. See note, v 2.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 14:11 *foreigner*. Gk *barbaros*, a non-Greek (as in Eng "barbarian").
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 14:12 *eager for manifestations of the Spirit*. Lit, "zealots of the spirits." Some manuscripts have "zealots of the spiritual gifts," which probably gives the sense. However, cf Is 11:2; Rv 1:4.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 14:13 *pray for the power to interpret*. Lit, "pray so that he may interpret." Interpretation was a spiritual activity that should follow speaking in a tongue. See notes, vv 3, 4–5.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 14:14 *my mind is unfruitful*. Ritual language is known for its conservative tendencies. E.g., we still pray "Our Father," quote Bible passages, or sing hymns and liturgy in seventeenth-century English (KJV); immigrant communities typically use their heritage language and their new language alongside each other in worship settings, even when the meaning of their heritage language is being lost (linguists refer to this as "language shift"). Records of ritual conservatism, multiple languages in worship, and the confusion they caused are known from the Jerusalem temple (see p 1835) and from Palestinian Judaism (Sotah 7:1–2; Megillah 2:1). Paul gives evidence of ritually conservative language at Corinth as well (see note, 16:22–24). See notes, 12:10; 14:3–5.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 14:15 *pray with my spirit … with my mind*. Lit, "pray in the spirit … in the mind." Paul displayed his thoughts as an example for the readers to follow. At church, a person might pray personally for spiritual edification or understandably for the edification of others (see note, v 2). Paul resolved to live with both practices. He displayed such resolve in other conflicting situations, using similar expressions about "spirit" and "mind": in Rm 7:25, he described the inner conflict over following God's Word and following the sinful nature; in Rm 8:16, the Holy Spirit bears witness "with our spirit" against the spirit of slavery and fear. With these expressions, Paul describes feeling torn, but persists in what he knows is right and best. He acknowledges the congregation's selfish practice while emphasizing his main point: speak in an understandable way at church. "The adversaries have a long speech

about the use of the Latin language in the Mass. In this speech, they joke about how it benefits an unlearned hearer to hear, in the faith of the Church, a Mass that he does not understand" (Ap XXIV 2).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 14:16–17 *give thanks … thanksgiving*. Different Gk terms: *eulogeo*, "to praise," "bless" God in prayer (as in Eng "eulogy"); *eucharistia*, "gratitude," "a prayer of thanksgiving" (as in Eng "Eucharist"). Paul may have in mind specific liturgical prayers, such as the Eighteen Benedictions that were used in first-century Jewish synagogues. *outsider*. Commonly, a person who was not an expert. Here, a layperson or someone new to the church is likely meant. In v 23 "outsider" is paired with "unbeliever." See note, v 11. *say "Amen."* Proper liturgical response to prayer in synagogue and church. Chrys: "If you shall bless in a barbarian tongue, not knowing what you say, nor able to interpret, the layman cannot respond the Amen. For not hearing the words, 'forever and ever,' which are at the end [of a prayer], he does not say the Amen" (*NPNF* 1 12:211). See "faithfulness," p 842.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 14:18–19 *more than all of you*. Paul boasted rhetorically to show the Corinthians that the activity they valued so highly was common. Chrys: "This he does also in another place intending, namely, to take away the advantages of Judaism and to show that henceforth they are nothing, he begins by declaring that [he] himself had been endowed with them" (*NPNF* 1 12:211). Cf 2Co 11:21–23. *five words with my mind*. More rhetoric, emphasizing the need for meaningful communication. "Not only has Paul commanded that a language understood by the people be used in church (1 Corinthians 14:2, 9), but human law has also commanded it" (AC XXIV 4).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 14:20 Cf 13:11. *Be infants in evil*. A proverbial saying. Paul did not suggest that infants are innocent of sin (Rm 3:23; 5:12). Aug: "In the weakness of the infant's limbs, and not in its will, lies its innocency" (*NPNF* 1 1:48).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 14:21–22 *In the Law*. Paul quoted Isaiah, whose saying stemmed from a prophecy of Moses. *Law*. Could refer to the entire OT (Rm 3:19). *sign … for unbelievers*. Israel failed to believe the Lord and so was conquered by the Assyrians, who spoke a different language. Conquered people are forced to tolerate and finally adopt the language of the conquerors. The foreign language constantly reminds the conquered people of their failure. (Cf Jer 5:15, which applied Moses'

prophecy to the Babylonians.) The Greek Corinthians were conquered by the Latin-speaking Romans, who completely destroyed Corinth in 146 BC and began to rebuild it as a Roman colony in 46 BC. Virtually all Corinthian inscriptions from the first century AD are in Latin, not Greek. Both Jews and Greeks at Corinth understood the relationship between conquest, judgment, and language. *prophecy is a sign*. When God grew tired of Israel's sin, He did not give them prophets. See pp 1077–83. Therefore, clear preaching of God's Word by the prophets was a sign of God's favor.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 14:23 *whole church*. Christians gathered in "house churches" (cf 16:19; Ac 18:7–8). These physical divisions could contribute to the congregational divisions (see note, 1:12), which may have included differences in worship practices or even differences in languages (see p 1969). However, Paul regarded the Corinthians as one congregation (1:2) and here referred to the gathering of all Corinthian believers in a unified worship service. *out of your minds?* Cf Ac 2:5–13.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 14:24–25 When God's Word is clearly preached, the Law and the Gospel go to work on the hearer's heart. The Law convicts the hearer of sin, and the Gospel creates faith and brings forth the good fruit of sincere worship and confession. The Corinthians' zeal for tongues has hindered these essential works of God's Word.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 14:1–25 Some Corinthians were pursuing their own edification to the neglect of those around them. We, too, are naturally tempted to pursue what we think of as our own spiritual needs rather than patiently sharing God's Word with others, especially those we regard as less spiritual. Such attitudes contribute to deeper spiritual divisions among us. God calls us together for mutual edification in His Word, which always richly applies to the mature as well as the immature. Through the Word, God is really among us, giving His Spirit, faith in Christ, and all blessings of salvation. • Dearest Jesus, grant me the maturity to desire the edification of my brothers and sisters and to pursue gifts that build them up in Your love, so that our congregation may confess You with one voice in one Spirit. Amen.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 14:26 *brothers?* Paul addresses congregational leaders. See notes, 12:1; Gal 6:1. *each one … interpretation*. Leaders in the congregation competed to represent their interests in the gathering of all worshipers. See note, v 23. The list represents common

elements of worship at Corinth. *Let all things be done for building up*. Paul again emphasizes his main point.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 14:27–28 Because the divided Corinthians could not agree on how to proceed, Paul provided commonsense guidelines for worship practices. Note well: he excluded use of uninterpreted tongues in church.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 14:29 *weigh*. Gk *diakrino*, "to distinguish," "to judge." God charges congregational leaders with judging whether doctrine and practice are based on His Word. "Other writings by ancient or modern teachers—no matter whose name they bear—must not be regarded as equal to the Holy Scriptures. All of them are subject to the Scriptures" (FC Ep Sum 2).
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 14:30 *let the first be silent*. Paul emphasizes common courtesy. "Paul concludes that … interpreters be heard in order in the church" (AC XXVIII 54).
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 14:31 *all prophesy*. Paul has leaders in mind, not that every person in the congregation would have a chance to speak. See notes, 12:1; 14:1.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 14:32 See note, v 29.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 14:33 *God … of peace*. God would not inspire the divisions and confusion that plagued the congregation. *all the churches*. Luther and other translators did not place a period after "peace" but after "saints." Paul reminded the Corinthians of a universal principle from which they had deviated. *saints*. See p 843.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 14:34–35 *women should keep silent*. Women likely participated as singers during worship, as they had in the OT (Ex 15:20–21; see p 993). They also prophesied privately (11:4–5; Ac 21:9). But they did not serve as public ministers of the Word. Based on the distinction between male and female in God's created order, Paul distinguished between male and female roles. See note, 11:3; see also p 1972. *the Law also says*. Chrys: "Where does the law say this? 'Your desire shall be to your husband, and he shall rule over you' " (*NPNF* 1 12:222; cf Gn 3:16).
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 14:36–37 *thinks that he is a prophet*. Using sarcasm, Paul chastens any congregational leaders who remain contentious. *a command of the Lord*. An outstanding example of pastoral practice: after Paul carefully explains things from Scripture and provides commonsense

guidelines, he appeals to his apostolic authority in these matters. He does not begin with his authority, lest that become the issue. He focuses on Scripture and application first.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 14:38 *not recognized*. Most manuscripts state less forcefully, "let him be ignorant." However, the more forceful wording, which basically removed the obstinate leaders from office, is well attested and also fits the context.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 14:39–40 The conclusion of the matter. For issues of worship and liturgy, Luther often cited v 40. Luth: "Because this life in the body cannot be completely without ceremonies and rituals, since there must be some sort of discipline, the Gospel permits ordinances to be established in the church … especially for the sake of children and uneducated people, so that they can be taught more easily" (AE 26:448). See also AE 41:131, 173; Ap XV 20.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 14:26–40 Just as issues of worship practice have divided the Corinthians, many congregations today are divided over matters of worship. God's Word insists on clear order so that the teaching of Law and Gospel is not hindered. Though Paul tolerates the Corinthians' personal interests, he insists that such interests have no place in congregational gatherings, which should clearly teach God's Word for all. The "God of peace" (Rm 15:33) has established our salvation and life in the cross of His dear Son, our only Savior, who makes us one and strengthens us in the one true faith. • God of peace, tear down our elitist opinions and personal preferences. Build us up and nurture us through Your humble and patient Son, Jesus. Amen.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 15:1 *remind*. Lit, "make known." He is "recalling it into memory" (Chrys, *NPNF* 1 12:226) because they had learned it before. See p 1965. *gospel*. See p 1902. *received*. Paul first preached the Gospel in Corinth c AD 50 (Ac 18:1–18a). *stand*. Just as they are saved by the Gospel, they stand firm and live by the Gospel.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 15:2 *being saved*. Though saved now through faith, the fullness of salvation is still to come in eternity. *the word I preached*. The Gospel. *believed in vain*. The Corinthians stand by the Gospel, though it is also possible to fall away from it.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 15:3 *delivered*. See p 1902. *first importance*. Though Paul had much to teach the Corinthians, nothing was more important than the Gospel. This is always true. The Gospel

predominates in Christian teaching. *received*. Cf Ac 9:4–5, 15–19. *that Christ died … with the Scriptures*. These words form the heart of the Apostles' Creed, which summarized the Gospel for the early Christians. See p 1975. "He suffered, died, and was buried so that He might make satisfaction for me and pay what I owe" (LC II 31).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 15:5–7 *Cephas*. See note, 1:12. *twelve*. Lit, only 11 disciples at the time of the resurrection. However, "twelve" meant "the company of the apostles" for early Christians. *more than five hundred*. Scripture records numerous appearances of Jesus over the 40 days after the resurrection. Paul recounts six examples here. Apostles were not always alone when Jesus visited them (cf Lk 24:33; Ac 1:14–15; 13:31). Paul does not specifically appeal to the women who first saw Jesus after the resurrection. This may be because in Roman culture the testimony of women was not regarded as fully reliable. *fallen asleep*. Physical death. *James … apostles*. James, Jesus' half brother, is singled out because he came to lead the Jerusalem churches.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 15:8 *untimely born*. Medical term for a premature birth, including stillbirth, miscarriage, and abortion. Possibly this insult was used by Paul's opponents to tear down his authority. Earlier, Paul asserted his authority; now he purposely humbles himself to emphasize God's grace (cf v 10).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 15:9 *persecuted*. See note, Ac 8:1.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 15:10 *grace*. See p 1902. *worked harder*. See note, 2Co 11:23–27.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 15:11 *so we preach*. Paul now ranks himself with the other apostles, demonstrating unity with them despite conflicts about his apostleship.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 15:1–11 Because of zeal for more knowledge, the Corinthians have neglected what has first importance: the simple truths and application of the Gospel. How great is the temptation for us to overlook the Gospel today! A multitude of contemporary issues can crowd out the Gospel of life and forgiveness in Jesus until it grows unclear in our minds. Praise God for the wonderful creeds that our forebears have handed down across the centuries, which take up Paul's very words, summarize the Holy Gospel, and etch it into our memories. • Holy Jesus, You died to take away my sins and rose to fulfill all the Father's promises in

Scripture. Send now Your Holy Spirit so that by Your grace I may stand in this faith always. Amen.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 15:12–19 Paul demonstrates thorough skill in classic logic and rhetoric (the art of persuasion) by using careful arguments. His if-then sentences test impossible notions and show the foolish implications of the Corinthians' doubts about the resurrection.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 15:12 *no resurrection*. Greek learning and culture opposed the idea that the body could rise from the dead. Some Greeks believed that the body and physical things were inherently bad but that the spirit was inherently good. Members of the Corinthian congregation continued to hold these opinions, even though they seem to have accepted that Christ rose from the dead.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 15:16 Paul repeats his main premise (v 13).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 15:17 *still in your sins*. Christ's sacrifice on the cross redeemed us from sin and from death. But if Christ had remained in the grave, His victory over sin would be incomplete. The complete act of redemption—called the Gospel—is the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of our sins (cf vv 3–4).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 15:18 *fallen asleep*. See note, v 7. *perished*. Destruction beyond hope of redemption.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 15:20 *firstfruits*. The earliest portion of a harvest, which Israel sacrificed to God in thanks for the full harvest to come. See note, Ex 23:19. *fallen asleep*. See note, v 7.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 15:21–22 Luth: "St. Paul is still speaking only about those who are Christians. These he wants to instruct and console with this article. For although also the non-Christians must all arise, this will not be to their comfort and joy, since they will arise for judgment and not for life…. I will say nothing of that great vulgar throng which seeks its pleasure and consolation only here, which [despises] God's Word and cares not a mite for God and His kingdom. It is not surprising that such people are annoyed to hear of the blessed resurrection; for us, however, it is pure joy, because we hear that our greatest Treasure, over which we rejoice, is already in heaven above, and that only the most insignificant part remains behind; and that He will awaken this, too, and draw it after Him as easily as a person awakens from sleep" (AE 28:114–15).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 15:23 *coming*. Gk *parousia*; commonly described a royal visit. Used 18 times in the NT for Christ's reappearing in

glory. *belong*. The dead in Christ. See note, 1Th 4:16.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 15:24 *delivers the kingdom*. Christ, as a conquering general, now wars against sin, death, and the power of the devil. He will present His conquest to His Father, who has given Him authority to wage this war (v 28). See notes, Col 1:13; 2:15. *rule … authority … power*. Spiritual powers that manifest themselves in sinful institutions and orders on earth.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 15:25–27 *He*. Christ. *last enemy … death*. Contrary to notions of death as friendly and suicide as a solution, the Bible describes death as our enemy. The Lord created us for life, not death. Death is destroyed by the gift of eternal life in Christ. *subjection under His feet*. See notes, Gn 1:26–28; Ps 8:6; Paul applies these verses to Jesus. He is the man by whom God fulfills His purposes for all humankind. "There is and remains in Christ only one divine omnipotence, power, majesty, and glory, which is peculiar to the divine nature alone. But it shines, manifests, and exercises itself fully—yet voluntarily—in, with, and through the received, exalted human nature in Christ. In glowing iron there are not two kinds of power to shine and burn. But the power to shine and to burn is a property of the fire. Since the fire is united with the iron, it manifests and exercises this power to shine and to burn in, with, and through the glowing iron. From this union also the glowing iron has the power to shine and to burn without changing the essence and the natural properties of fire and iron. This guides how we understand the testimonies of Scripture that speak of the majesty to which the human nature in Christ is exalted" (FC SD VIII 66–67).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 15:28 *all in all*. Luth: "Everybody will find all wants that are now satisfied by all things satisfied in God Himself. When He will reveal Himself, we will be satisfied in body and soul and will no longer stand in need of so many things as we now do here on earth" (AE 28:141–42).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 15:29–34 From frustration, Paul resorts to sarcasm and even mockery.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 15:29 *do … on behalf of the dead?* Lit, "What will the ones being baptized do over the dead?" Dozens of interpretations have been offered. Paul points out the irony that some Corinthians did not believe in the resurrection, yet held an opinion or practice based on the resurrection. He only alludes to the opinion or

practice, which could have been (1) conducting Baptisms in graveyards to express hope in the resurrection of those who die in Christ (similar to Easter sunrise services held in church graveyards); (2) requests for Baptisms because of the inspiring examples of those who died; or (3) Baptisms that would somehow benefit those who had already died (though Paul never mentions a specific benefit). Gnostic groups developed practices based on this last interpretation (consider Mormon practices, which also misapply this text). Take note—Paul's ironic questions are no basis for novel practices. Instead, Christians should base their baptismal practices on Christ's clear command in Mt 28:19–20 and rejoice in the hope of the resurrection expressed through Baptism (Rm 6:3–5).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 15:30 Paul asks rhetorically, "Why would I risk my life for things I don't truly believe in?" Cf Ac 18:5–6, 9, 12–13.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 15:31 Cf 3:9. *I die every day!* See notes, Rm 8:36; Php 3:10–11.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 15:32 *fought with beasts*. See note, v 30.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 15:32–33 To his Greek detractors, Paul quotes two Greek opinions: (1) a gross hedonist view that the good in life is only in pleasure, with no hope of an afterlife; (2) a saying by the Greek comic poet Menander that refutes gross hedonism. Even the Greek tradition gave helpful examples and warnings, which the Corinthians ignored.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 15:34 *drunken … no knowledge*. Sarcasm and hyperbole. Such sins were certainly affecting some in the congregation, but Paul shames them all alike.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 15:12–34 The Corinthians take pride in their wisdom, but Paul tears apart their arguments with basic logic and rhetoric. Logic, rhetoric, and even sarcasm have their uses in preaching and teaching the Gospel. Yet all our powers and wisdom must remain subject to the Lord, who is "all in all." The Lord refuted sin, death, Satan, and all our foes—not with reason but with acts: His death and resurrection for our redemption. • Victorious Savior, daily put to death my foolish pride and wisdom, and teach me the way of humility and self-sacrifice. In the daily repentance and renewal of Baptism, may I partake of Your sufferings so that I may partake of Your resurrection. Amen.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 15:35–41 Paul provides three examples from God's created order to illustrate the principle of resurrection. The main point is v 38: we have the body and life that God chooses. Just as our

current existence depends on His choices at creation, our eternal existence depends on His choice in redemption: resurrection unto life.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 15:35–37 Paul presents the question not as an honest inquiry but as a foolish attempt to cast doubt on the resurrection. Just as the "death" of a seed produces something greater and more fruitful, our death and resurrection in Christ will produce still greater fruit.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 15:42–44a *perishable … imperishable*. This wordplay describes how God transforms the body for heavenly existence. Paul mentions the brokenness of our bodies in death, but the whole force of argument compels respect for the body, as one respects and sows a seed anticipating greatness. The groundwork for respectful Christian funerals is laid in this passage. "The body is put to death (mortified) because of present sin that is still left in the flesh. Death itself serves this purpose, namely, to abolish this flesh of sin, that we may rise absolutely new" (Ap XIIB 55–56).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 15:44 *natural ... spiritual body.* Seems contradictory, yet our new life will transform the way we live now and eternally in the body. The believer's body will rise and live because of the new spirit (cf v 45).

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 15:45 *a living being*. The earthly and the heavenly are mingled in human life; God's breath and life distinguished humankind from all other earthly creatures. *last Adam … life-giving spirit*. Cf Gn 2:7. An even greater mingling of the earthly and heavenly appeared with Jesus' incarnation, with a still greater result: the hope of redemption and eternal life.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 15:47 *second man*. Jesus, who begins a new order of human existence.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 15:48–49 *image*. See notes, Gn 1:26, 27.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 15:35–49 The body—corrupted by sin—declines, decays, and dies. Humanly speaking, we can extend our lives only by having children, whom we likewise corrupt with our inherited sin. But thanks be to God! He chose to establish a new order for us through Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. Jesus resisted all corruption and grants us His heavenly life. • Jesus, lead me to respect my body and to regard my funeral like a farmer sowing with resurrection hope. By Your grace, may I and my loved ones reap a harvest of heavenly life. Amen.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 15:50 Flesh and blood by nature inherit sin and death from the First Adam. Of ourselves, we cannot receive the benefits of God's reign held by the Second Adam, Christ. However, when the Lord adopts us in Christ and cleanses us body and soul in Holy Baptism, we inherit our Father's kingdom.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 15:51 *mystery*. See notes, 2:7; 14:2. *sleep*. Die.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 15:52 *last trumpet*. See p 993. *changed*. Gk *allasso*, "to make otherwise," "to alter."
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 15:53 "When our sins and conscience oppress us, we strengthen ourselves and take comfort and say, 'Nevertheless, I am baptized. And if I am baptized, it is promised to me that I shall be saved and have eternal life, both in soul and body.' For that is the reason why these two things are done in Baptism: the body—which can grasp nothing but the water—is sprinkled and, in addition, the Word is spoken for the soul to grasp. Now, since both, the water and the Word, make one Baptism, therefore, body and soul must be saved and live forever" (LC IV 44–46).
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 15:54–55 Paul cites Isaiah's prophecy that God swallows up death, which would consume our bodies. Paul adds questions from Hosea, who wrote a brutal appeal for death and the grave to snap their jaws in judgment on the Northern Kingdom of Israel. Paul transforms this appeal into a mockery of hapless death and the grave, for Christ shall snatch away their meal. *in victory*. See note, Is 25:8. "Christ redeemed human nature as His work, sanctifies it, raises it from the dead, and gloriously adorns it as His work. But original sin He has not created, received, redeemed, or sanctified. He will not raise it, adorn it, or save it in the elect. In the 'blessed' resurrection original sin will be entirely destroyed" (FC Ep I 6).
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 15:56 *sting*. Piercing, mortal wound. Sin is the point of the spear that kills us. See note, Rm 3:23. *power of sin*. The Law, as the guardian of what is right, thrusts against our sinful conscience and damns us.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 15:57 *victory*. See note, vv 54–55.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 15:58 *beloved brothers*. Having rebuked the Corinthians with the Law and having proclaimed to them the Gospel,

Paul appeals to them peaceably, mending their relationship to him. *work of the Lord*. One's call or vocation. See note, 4:1.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 15:50–58 The justification Jesus provided is our only hope against sin, death, and the Law's condemnation. Jesus delivers us from death's jaws. He now equips us to serve in His Church and to live eternally in His kingdom. • Victorious Lord, Your nail-pierced hand drew me safely out of sin; Your pierced foot snapped shut the jaws of death. Teach me to stomp temptation. Swing wide heaven's gates, that I may enter Your joy. Amen.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 16:1 *collection for the saints*. Money for the poverty-stricken Christians in Jerusalem (Rm 15:26). *directed*. Gk *diatasso*, "to order or command," exemplifies Paul's authority as an apostle. "The distribution of alms by the Corinthians … was a holy work, a sacrifice and battle of Christ against the devil, who labors so that nothing may be done to praise God. To demean such works (the confession of doctrine, sufferings, works of love, suppression of the flesh) would be to demean the outward rule of Christ's kingdom among people" (Ap V 71–72). *churches of Galatia*. See note, 14:23; see also pp 2000–2001.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 16:2 *first day*. Lit, "according to one [day] from the Sabbath." Whereas the Jews worshiped on Saturday, Christians began to worship on Sunday. *store it up, as he may prosper*. Based on one's income, a member "treasured up" an offering each week at home. Approved representatives later received and distributed these offerings.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 16:3–4 *when I arrive*. See notes, 4:18, 19. *accredit*. See note, v 2. *by letter*. Paul will give letters of introduction to the Corinthian representatives, which they could present to the leaders in Jerusalem (a common business practice). *I should go*. Paul could join in presenting the gift.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 16:1–4 Compassion leads the early Christian congregations to treasure up and distribute support for fellow Christians and ministries in need. When we learn of brothers and sisters in need, God's Word leads us to demonstrate the bond of fellowship created by the Gospel. Christ treasured us by freely giving His life for us, and He grants us generous hearts. • Generous Lord, as You cause us to prosper spiritually and financially, lead us also to treasure our brothers and sisters with all compassion. Amen.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 16:5 *Macedonia*. See map, p 1886.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 16:6 *spend the winter*. When travel was difficult. See calendar, p 262. *help me*. Paul's mission work received financial support.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 16:8 *Ephesus until Pentecost*. See pp 200–201.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 16:9 Although great opportunities for spreading the Gospel existed, Paul's work offended Jewish people because he welcomed uncircumcised Gentiles into the churches. The Gentiles opposed Paul because his preaching undermined idolatry.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 16:10 *Timothy*. See pp 2066–67. *work of the Lord*. See note, 4:1. Timothy bore Paul's apostolic authority.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 16:11 *despise*. Questions of authority and disagreements persisted in the Church at Corinth. *Help him on his way*. See note, v 6. *brothers*. Cf Ac 19:22.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 16:5–11 Paul clears the way for future work and for the work of his colleague Timothy. Effective ministry today also depends on clear planning and authority so that congregations may support the work of the Lord. That work is vital because faith, life, and salvation come only through the Lord's Word. • Dear Jesus, prosper the work of the Lord among us so that Your life-giving Gospel is not despised through sinful disagreement or stubbornness. Lead us to respect and support those who preach the Gospel faithfully. Amen.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 16:12 *our brother Apollos*. See note, Ac 18:24. *other brothers*. Cf v 11.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 16:13–14 Paul likely addressed the Letter to congregational leaders (see note, 14:1), who were men; they needed to display manly virtues. *in love*. The virtue of strength does not conflict with virtue of love.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 16:15–16 *household of Stephanas*. See notes 1:16; 14:23. *devoted … subject*. The Gk terms have the same root, emphasizing order and authority in service. *fellow worker and laborer*. Paul has in mind a brotherhood in ministry, in which each worker respects the other.
1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 16:17 *your absence*. A delegation of leaders from Corinth was to have traveled to Ephesus to see Paul but did not.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 16:18 *refreshed*. Lit, "to cause to rest." *Give recognition*. Cf vv 15–16.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 16:12–18 Paul urges the leaders at Corinth to recognize the service, calling, and authority of each other and to see themselves at part of a larger team. No matter how or where you serve the Lord, you, too, are part of a larger team. Respect your fellow workers by listening to them and coordinating efforts with them. Our Savior's strong, firm love and leadership preserves the unity of His dear Church, for which He gave His life. • Dear Jesus, grant me patience with my colleagues, and direct us ever by Your pure Word so that we may stand firm together by Your grace alone. Amen.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 16:19 *churches of Asia*. Asia Minor, modern Turkey. Ephesus was the largest city of the province. *Aquila and Prisca*. See note, Ac 18:2. *church in their house*. See note, 14:23.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 16:20 *All the brothers*. Ephesians. See p 1901. *holy kiss*. Not romantic, but in greeting. It was probably a kiss on the cheek, as in many Near Eastern cultures today. See note, Rm 16:16.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 16:21 *with my own hand*. See note, Rm 16:22.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 16:22–24 Paul includes both a curse and a blessing in his closing, perhaps in response to the curses pronounced by some at Corinth. See note, 12:3. *accursed*. Gk *anathema*. (See p 1901.) *Our Lord, come!* Aram *marana tha*; see p 1969. *grace … love be with you*. The blessing; see note, Rm 15:33.

1 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 16:19–24 Paul's bittersweet conclusion illustrates his passion for the Gospel and for the congregation. Likewise, the Lord calls us to passionate service and love. Jesus, too, forcefully denounced those who abused God's Word (Mt 23:1–36); yet He poured out His love for all sinners, so that all might know His grace. • Dear Jesus, fill me with sincere passion for sharing the Gospel with those who have not yet heard of or believed in Your grace. Amen.

2 Corinthians

2 Corinthians 1 | 2 Corinthians 2 | 2 Corinthians 3 | 2 Corinthians 4 | 2 Corinthians 5 | 2 Corinthians 6 | 2 Corinthians 7 | 2 Corinthians 8 | 2 Corinthians 9 | 2 Corinthians 10 | 2 Corinthians 11 | 2 Corinthians 12 | 2 Corinthians 13

- Introduction to 2 Corinthians
  - Overview
  - Reading 2 Corinthians
  - Luther on 2 Corinthians
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

Greeting

1 [1]‡†Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy
our brother,

To the church of God that is at Corinth, with all the saints who are in the
whole of Achaia:

[2]†Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

God of All Comfort

3 ‡† Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of
mercies and God of all comfort, 4 † who comforts us in all our affliction, so
that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the
comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. 5 † For as we share
abundantly in Christ's sufferings, so through Christ we share abundantly in
comfort too.[1] 6 † If we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation; and
if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which you experience when you
patiently endure the same sufferings that we suffer. 7 † Our hope for you is
unshaken, for we know that as you share in our sufferings, you will also
share in our comfort.

8 † For we do not want you to be ignorant, brothers,[2] of the affliction we
experienced in Asia. For we were so utterly burdened beyond our strength
that we despaired of life itself. 9 † Indeed, we felt that we had received the
sentence of death. But that was to make us rely not on ourselves but on God
who raises the dead. 10 † He delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he
will deliver us. On him we have set our hope that he will deliver us again.
11 † You also must help us by prayer, so that many will give thanks on our
behalf for the blessing granted us through the prayers of many.

Paul's Change of Plans

12 † † For our boast is this, the testimony of our conscience, that we
behaved in the world with simplicity[1] and godly sincerity, not by earthly
wisdom but by the grace of God, and supremely so toward you. 13 †For we
are not writing to you anything other than what you read and acknowledge[2]
and I hope you will fully acknowledge— 14 † just as you did partially
acknowledge us—that on the day of our Lord Jesus you will boast of us as
we will boast of you.

15 †Because I was sure of this, I wanted to come to you first, so that you
might have a second experience of grace. 16 †I wanted to visit you on my
way to Macedonia, and to come back to you from Macedonia and have you
send me on my way to Judea. 17 †Was I vacillating when I wanted to do this?
Do I make my plans according to the flesh, ready to say "Yes, yes" and
"No, no" at the same time? 18 As surely as God is faithful, our word to you
has not been Yes and No. 19 †For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, whom we
proclaimed among you, Silvanus and Timothy and I, was not Yes and No,
but in him it is always Yes. 20 †For all the promises of God find their Yes in
him. That is why it is through him that we utter our Amen to God for his
glory. 21 † And it is God who establishes us with you in Christ, and has
anointed us, 22 †and who has also put his seal on us and given us his Spirit in
our hearts as a guarantee.[3]

23 † But I call God to witness against me—it was to spare you that I
refrained from coming again to Corinth. 24 †Not that we lord it over your
faith, but we work with you for your joy, for you stand firm in your faith.

2 1 †For I made up my mind not to make another painful visit to you.
2 †For if I cause you pain, who is there to make me glad but the one whom I
have pained? 3 †And I wrote as I did, so that when I came I might not suffer
pain from those who should have made me rejoice, for I felt sure of all of
you, that my joy would be the joy of you all. 4 †For I wrote to you out of
much affliction and anguish of heart and with many tears, not to cause you
pain but to let you know the abundant love that I have for you.

Forgive the Sinner

5 ‡ ‡Now if anyone has caused pain, he has caused it not to me, but in
some measure—not to put it too severely—to all of you. 6 †For such a one,
this punishment by the majority is enough, 7 †so you should rather turn to
forgive and comfort him, or he may be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow.
8 †So I beg you to reaffirm your love for him. 9 †For this is why I wrote, that
I might test you and know whether you are obedient in everything.
10 †Anyone whom you forgive, I also forgive. Indeed, what I have forgiven,
if I have forgiven anything, has been for your sake in the presence of Christ,
11 †so that we would not be outwitted by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his
designs.

Triumph in Christ

12 When I came to Troas to preach the gospel of Christ, even though a
door was opened for me in the Lord, 13 my spirit was not at rest because I
did not find my brother Titus there. So I took leave of them and went on to
Macedonia.

14 But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal
procession, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him
everywhere. 15 For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are
being saved and among those who are perishing, 16 to one a fragrance from
death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life. Who is sufficient[1]
for these things? 17 For we are not, like so many, peddlers of God's word,
but as men of sincerity, as commissioned by God, in the sight of God we
speak in Christ.

Ministers of the New Covenant

3 [1]†Are we beginning to commend ourselves again? Or do we need,
as some do, letters of recommendation to you, or from you? [2] † You
yourselves are our letter of recommendation, written on our[1] hearts, to be
known and read by all. [3]†And you show that you are a letter from Christ
delivered by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God,
not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.[2]

[4]†Such is the confidence that we have through Christ toward God. [5]†Not
that we are sufficient in ourselves to claim anything as coming from us, but
our sufficiency is from God, [6]†who has made us competent[3] to be ministers
of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit. For the letter kills, but
the Spirit gives life.

[7]†Now if the ministry of death, carved in letters on stone, came with such
glory that the Israelites could not gaze at Moses' face because of its glory,
which was being brought to an end, [8]†will not the ministry of the Spirit
have even more glory? [9] † For if there was glory in the ministry of
condemnation, the ministry of righteousness must far exceed it in glory.
[10]†Indeed, in this case, what once had glory has come to have no glory at
all, because of the glory that surpasses it. [11]For if what was being brought to
an end came with glory, much more will what is permanent have glory.

[12]Since we have such a hope, we are very bold, [13]†not like Moses, who
would put a veil over his face so that the Israelites might not gaze at the
outcome of what was being brought to an end. [14]†But their minds were
hardened. For to this day, when they read the old covenant, that same veil
remains unlifted, because only through Christ is it taken away. [15]†Yes, to
this day whenever Moses is read a veil lies over their hearts. [16]‡But when
one[1] turns to the Lord, the veil is removed. [17]Now the Lord[2] is the Spirit,
and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. [18]†And we all, with
unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord,[3] are being transformed into
the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from
the Lord who is the Spirit.

The Light of the Gospel

4 [1]†† Therefore, having this ministry by the mercy of God,[4] we do not
lose heart. [2]† But we have renounced disgraceful, underhanded ways. We
refuse to practice cunning or to tamper with God's word, but by the open
statement of the truth we would commend ourselves to everyone's
conscience in the sight of God. [3]† And even if our gospel is veiled, it is
veiled only to those who are perishing. [4]† In their case the god of this world
has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light
of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. [5]† For what we
proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your
servants[5] for Jesus' sake. [6]† For God, who said, "Let light shine out of
darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the
glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Treasure in Jars of Clay

7 ‡ †But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing
power belongs to God and not to us. 8 ‡We are afflicted in every way, but
not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; 9persecuted, but not
forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; 10 †always carrying in the body the
death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our
bodies. 11 †For we who live are always being given over to death for Jesus'
sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.
12 †So death is at work in us, but life in you.

13 † Since we have the same spirit of faith according to what has been
written, "I believed, and so I spoke," we also believe, and so we also speak,
14 †knowing that he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus
and bring us with you into his presence. 15 †For it is all for your sake, so that
as grace extends to more and more people it may increase thanksgiving, to
the glory of God.

16 †So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self[1] is wasting away, our
inner self is being renewed day by day. 17 † For this light momentary
affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all
comparison, 18 †as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things
that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that
are unseen are eternal.

Our Heavenly Dwelling

5 [1] † † For we know that if the tent that is our earthly home is
destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands,
eternal in the heavens. [2]For in this tent we groan, longing to put on our
heavenly dwelling, [3] † if indeed by putting it on[2] we may not be found
naked. [4]†For while we are still in this tent, we groan, being burdened—not
that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed, so that
what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. [5]†He who has prepared us for
this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.

[6]†So we are always of good courage. We know that while we are at home
in the body we are away from the Lord, [7]†for we walk by faith, not by sight.
[8]†Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body
and at home with the Lord. [9]†So whether we are at home or away, we make
it our aim to please him. [10]†For we must all appear before the judgment seat
of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in
the body, whether good or evil.

The Ministry of Reconciliation

11 ‡ † Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade others. But
what we are is known to God, and I hope it is known also to your
conscience. 12 † We are not commending ourselves to you again but giving
you cause to boast about us, so that you may be able to answer those who
boast about outward appearance and not about what is in the heart. 13 † For if
we are beside ourselves, it is for God; if we are in our right mind, it is for
you. 14 † For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this:
that one has died for all, therefore all have died; 15 and he died for all, that
those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for
their sake died and was raised.

16 † From now on, therefore, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even
though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh, we regard him thus
no longer. 17 † Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.[1] The
old has passed away; behold, the new has come. 18 † All this is from God,
who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of
reconciliation; 19 † that is, in Christ God was reconciling[1] the world to
himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the
message of reconciliation. 20 † Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ,
God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be
reconciled to God. 21 † For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin,
so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

6 1 † Working together with him, then, we appeal to you not to receive
the grace of God in vain. 2 † For he says,

> “In a favorable time I listened to you,
> and in a day of salvation I have helped
> you.”

Behold, now is the favorable time; behold, now is the day of salvation.
3 † We put no obstacle in anyone’s way, so that no fault may be found with
our ministry, 4 † but as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way:
by great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, 5 † beatings,

imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; [6] † by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, the Holy Spirit, genuine love; [7] †by truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; [8] †through honor and dishonor, through slander and praise. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; [9]as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold, we live; as punished, and yet not killed; [10]as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing everything.

[11] †We have spoken freely to you,[2] Corinthians; our heart is wide open. [12] † You are not restricted by us, but you are restricted in your own affections. [13] †In return (I speak as to children) widen your hearts also.

The Temple of the Living God

14 ✝✝✝Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership
has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with
darkness? 15 ✝What accord has Christ with Belial?[1] Or what portion does a
believer share with an unbeliever? 16What agreement has the temple of God
with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; as God said,

> "I will make my dwelling among them and
> walk among them,
> and I will be their God,
> and they shall be my people.
> 17 Therefore go out from their midst,
> and be separate from them, says the Lord,
> and touch no unclean thing;
> then I will welcome you,
> 18 and I will be a father to you,
> and you shall be sons and daughters to me,
> says the Lord Almighty."

7 1 ✝Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves
from every defilement of body[2] and spirit, bringing holiness to completion
in the fear of God.

Paul's Joy

2 ‡†Make room in your hearts[3] for us. We have wronged no one, we have
corrupted no one, we have taken advantage of no one. 3 †I do not say this to
condemn you, for I said before that you are in our hearts, to die together and
to live together. 4 †I am acting with great boldness toward you; I have great
pride in you; I am filled with comfort. In all our affliction, I am overflowing
with joy.

5 †For even when we came into Macedonia, our bodies had no rest, but we
were afflicted at every turn—fighting without and fear within. 6 †But God,
who comforts the downcast, comforted us by the coming of Titus, 7 †and not
only by his coming but also by the comfort with which he was comforted
by you, as he told us of your longing, your mourning, your zeal for me, so
that I rejoiced still more. 8 †For even if I made you grieve with my letter, I
do not regret it—though I did regret it, for I see that that letter grieved you,
though only for a while. 9 †As it is, I rejoice, not because you were grieved,
but because you were grieved into repenting. For you felt a godly grief, so
that you suffered no loss through us.

10 †For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without
regret, whereas worldly grief produces death. 11 †For see what earnestness
this godly grief has produced in you, but also what eagerness to clear
yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what longing, what zeal, what
punishment! At every point you have proved yourselves innocent in the
matter. 12 †So although I wrote to you, it was not for the sake of the one who
did the wrong, nor for the sake of the one who suffered the wrong, but in
order that your earnestness for us might be revealed to you in the sight of
God. 13 †Therefore we are comforted.

And besides our own comfort, we rejoiced still more at the joy of Titus,
because his spirit has been refreshed by you all. 14 †For whatever boasts I
made to him about you, I was not put to shame. But just as everything we
said to you was true, so also our boasting before Titus has proved true.
15 †And his affection for you is even greater, as he remembers the obedience
of you all, how you received him with fear and trembling. 16 I rejoice,
because I have perfect confidence in you.

Encouragement to Give Generously

8 [1]‡†We want you to know, brothers,[1] about the grace of God that has
been given among the churches of Macedonia, [2]† for in a severe test of
affliction, their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have
overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. [3]For they gave according
to their means, as I can testify, and beyond their means, of their own accord,
[4]†begging us earnestly for the favor[2] of taking part in the relief of the saints
— [5]†and this, not as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord
and then by the will of God to us. [6]†Accordingly, we urged Titus that as he
had started, so he should complete among you this act of grace. [7]†But as
you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all
earnestness, and in our love for you[3]—see that you excel in this act of
grace also.

[8]†I say this not as a command, but to prove by the earnestness of others
that your love also is genuine. [9]†For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus
Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that
you by his poverty might become rich. [10]† And in this matter I give my
judgment: this benefits you, who a year ago started not only to do this work
but also to desire to do it. [11]So now finish doing it as well, so that your
readiness in desiring it may be matched by your completing it out of what
you have. [12]†For if the readiness is there, it is acceptable according to what
a person has, not according to what he does not have. [13]‡For I do not mean
that others should be eased and you burdened, but that as a matter of
fairness [14]your abundance at the present time should supply their need, so
that their abundance may supply your need, that there may be fairness.
[15]† As it is written, “Whoever gathered much had nothing left over, and
whoever gathered little had no lack.”

Commendation of Titus

16 ‡ † But thanks be to God, who put into the heart of Titus the same
earnest care I have for you. 17 For he not only accepted our appeal, but being
himself very earnest he is going[1] to you of his own accord. 18 † With him we
are sending[2] the brother who is famous among all the churches for his
preaching of the gospel. 19 † And not only that, but he has been appointed by
the churches to travel with us as we carry out this act of grace that is being
ministered by us, for the glory of the Lord himself and to show our good
will. 20 † We take this course so that no one should blame us about this
generous gift that is being administered by us, 21 † for we aim at what is
honorable not only in the Lord's sight but also in the sight of man. 22 † And
with them we are sending our brother whom we have often tested and found
earnest in many matters, but who is now more earnest than ever because of
his great confidence in you. 23 † As for Titus, he is my partner and fellow
worker for your benefit. And as for our brothers, they are messengers[3] of
the churches, the glory of Christ. 24 † So give proof before the churches of
your love and of our boasting about you to these men.

The Collection for Christians in Jerusalem

9 [1]‡†Now it is superfluous for me to write to you about the ministry
for the saints, [2]†for I know your readiness, of which I boast about you to the
people of Macedonia, saying that Achaia has been ready since last year.
And your zeal has stirred up most of them. [3]† But I am sending[1] the
brothers so that our boasting about you may not prove empty in this matter,
so that you may be ready, as I said you would be. [4]† Otherwise, if some
Macedonians come with me and find that you are not ready, we would be
humiliated—to say nothing of you—for being so confident. [5]†So I thought
it necessary to urge the brothers to go on ahead to you and arrange in
advance for the gift[2] you have promised, so that it may be ready as a
willing gift, not as an exaction.[3]

The Cheerful Giver

6 ‡†The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and
whoever sows bountifully[4] will also reap bountifully. 7 †Each one must give
as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God
loves a cheerful giver. 8 †And God is able to make all grace abound to you,
so that having all sufficiency[5] in all things at all times, you may abound in
every good work. 9 †As it is written,

> “He has distributed freely, he has given to the
> poor;
> his righteousness endures forever.”

10 †He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and
multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your
righteousness. 11 †You will be enriched in every way to be generous in every
way, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God. 12 † For the
ministry of this service is not only supplying the needs of the saints but is
also overflowing in many thanksgivings to God. 13 †By their approval of this
service, they[1] will glorify God because of your submission flowing from
your confession of the gospel of Christ, and the generosity of your
contribution for them and for all others, 14 †while they long for you and pray
for you, because of the surpassing grace of God upon you. 15 †Thanks be to
God for his inexpressible gift!

Paul Defends His Ministry

10 [1]†I, Paul, myself entreat you, by the meekness and gentleness of Christ—I who am humble when face to face with you, but bold toward you when I am away!— [2]†I beg of you that when I am present I may not have to show boldness with such confidence as I count on showing against some who suspect us of walking according to the flesh. [3]†For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. [4]†For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. [5]†We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ, [6]† being ready to punish every disobedience, when your obedience is complete.

[7]†Look at what is before your eyes. If anyone is confident that he is Christ's, let him remind himself that just as he is Christ's, so also are we. [8]†For even if I boast a little too much of our authority, which the Lord gave for building you up and not for destroying you, I will not be ashamed. [9]†I do not want to appear to be frightening you with my letters. [10]†For they say, "His letters are weighty and strong, but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech of no account." [11]†Let such a person understand that what we say by letter when absent, we do when present. [12]†Not that we dare to classify or compare ourselves with some of those who are commending themselves. But when they measure themselves by one another and compare themselves with one another, they are without understanding.

[13]†But we will not boast beyond limits, but will boast only with regard to the area of influence God assigned to us, to reach even to you. [14]†For we are not overextending ourselves, as though we did not reach you. For we were the first to come all the way to you with the gospel of Christ. [15]†We do not boast beyond limit in the labors of others. But our hope is that as your faith increases, our area of influence among you may be greatly enlarged, [16]†so that we may preach the gospel in lands beyond you, without boasting of work already done in another's area of influence. [17]† "Let the one who

boasts, boast in the Lord.” [18]†For it is not the one who commends himself who is approved, but the one whom the Lord commends.

Paul and the False Apostles

11 [1]‡‡I wish you would bear with me in a little foolishness. Do bear
with me! [2]†For I feel a divine jealousy for you, since I betrothed you to one
husband, to present you as a pure virgin to Christ. [3]†But I am afraid that as
the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your thoughts will be led astray
from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ. [4]†For if someone comes and
proclaims another Jesus than the one we proclaimed, or if you receive a
different spirit from the one you received, or if you accept a different gospel
from the one you accepted, you put up with it readily enough. [5]†Indeed, I
consider that I am not in the least inferior to these super-apostles. [6]†Even if
I am unskilled in speaking, I am not so in knowledge; indeed, in every way
we have made this plain to you in all things.

[7]†Or did I commit a sin in humbling myself so that you might be exalted,
because I preached God's gospel to you free of charge? [8]†I robbed other
churches by accepting support from them in order to serve you. [9]†And when
I was with you and was in need, I did not burden anyone, for the brothers
who came from Macedonia supplied my need. So I refrained and will
refrain from burdening you in any way. [10]†As the truth of Christ is in me,
this boasting of mine will not be silenced in the regions of Achaia. [11]†And
why? Because I do not love you? God knows I do!

[12]†And what I do I will continue to do, in order to undermine the claim of
those who would like to claim that in their boasted mission they work on
the same terms as we do. [13]†For such men are false apostles, deceitful
workmen, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. [14]†And no wonder,
for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. [15]†So it is no surprise
if his servants, also, disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. Their
end will correspond to their deeds.

Paul's Sufferings as an Apostle

16 ‡†I repeat, let no one think me foolish. But even if you do, accept me as
a fool, so that I too may boast a little. 17 †What I am saying with this boastful
confidence, I say not with the Lord's authority but as a fool. 18 †Since many
boast according to the flesh, I too will boast. 19 †For you gladly bear with
fools, being wise yourselves! 20 †For you bear it if someone makes slaves of
you, or devours you, or takes advantage of you, or puts on airs, or strikes
you in the face. 21 †To my shame, I must say, we were too weak for that!

But whatever anyone else dares to boast of—I am speaking as a fool—I
also dare to boast of that. 22 † Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they
Israelites? So am I. Are they offspring of Abraham? So am I. 23 ‡†Are they
servants of Christ? I am a better one—I am talking like a madman—with
far greater labors, far more imprisonments, with countless beatings, and
often near death. 24 †Five times I received at the hands of the Jews the forty
lashes less one. 25 †Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned.
Three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I was adrift at sea; 26 †on
frequent journeys, in danger from rivers, danger from robbers, danger from
my own people, danger from Gentiles, danger in the city, danger in the
wilderness, danger at sea, danger from false brothers; 27 † in toil and
hardship, through many a sleepless night, in hunger and thirst, often without
food,[1] in cold and exposure. 28 †And, apart from other things, there is the
daily pressure on me of my anxiety for all the churches. 29 †Who is weak,
and I am not weak? Who is made to fall, and I am not indignant?

30 †If I must boast, I will boast of the things that show my weakness.
31 †The God and Father of the Lord Jesus, he who is blessed forever, knows
that I am not lying. 32 †At Damascus, the governor under King Aretas was
guarding the city of Damascus in order to seize me, 33 but I was let down in
a basket through a window in the wall and escaped his hands.

Paul’s Visions and His Thorn

12 [1]‡†I must go on boasting. Though there is nothing to be gained by
it, I will go on to visions and revelations of the Lord. [2]† I know a man in
Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven—whether
in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows. [3]† And I know
that this man was caught up into paradise—whether in the body or out of
the body I do not know, God knows— [4]† and he heard things that cannot be
told, which man may not utter. [5]† On behalf of this man I will boast, but on
my own behalf I will not boast, except of my weaknesses. [6]† Though if I
should wish to boast, I would not be a fool, for I would be speaking the
truth. But I refrain from it, so that no one may think more of me than he
sees in me or hears from me. [7]† So to keep me from becoming conceited
because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations,[1] a thorn was given
me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from
becoming conceited. [8]† Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that
it should leave me. [9]† But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for
my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more
gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me.
[10]† For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults,
hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am
strong.

Concern for the Corinthian Church

11 ‡ † I have been a fool! You forced me to it, for I ought to have been
commended by you. For I was not at all inferior to these super-apostles,
even though I am nothing. 12 † The signs of a true apostle were performed
among you with utmost patience, with signs and wonders and mighty
works. 13 † For in what were you less favored than the rest of the churches,
except that I myself did not burden you? Forgive me this wrong!

14 ‡ Here for the third time I am ready to come to you. And I will not be a
burden, for I seek not what is yours but you. For children are not obligated
to save up for their parents, but parents for their children. 15 I will most
gladly spend and be spent for your souls. If I love you more, am I to be
loved less? 16 † But granting that I myself did not burden you, I was crafty,
you say, and got the better of you by deceit. 17 Did I take advantage of you
through any of those whom I sent to you? 18 † I urged Titus to go, and sent
the brother with him. Did Titus take advantage of you? Did we not act in
the same spirit? Did we not take the same steps?

19 † Have you been thinking all along that we have been defending
ourselves to you? It is in the sight of God that we have been speaking in
Christ, and all for your upbuilding, beloved. 20 † For I fear that perhaps when
I come I may find you not as I wish, and that you may find me not as you
wish—that perhaps there may be quarreling, jealousy, anger, hostility,
slander, gossip, conceit, and disorder. 21 † I fear that when I come again my
God may humble me before you, and I may have to mourn over many of
those who sinned earlier and have not repented of the impurity, sexual
immorality, and sensuality that they have practiced.

Final Warnings

13 [1]‡†This is the third time I am coming to you. Every charge must be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. [2]†I warned those who sinned before and all the others, and I warn them now while absent, as I did when present on my second visit, that if I come again I will not spare them— [3]†since you seek proof that Christ is speaking in me. He is not weak in dealing with you, but is powerful among you. [4]†For he was crucified in weakness, but lives by the power of God. For we also are weak in him, but in dealing with you we will live with him by the power of God.

[5] † Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you fail to meet the test! [6]†I hope you will find out that we have not failed the test. [7]‡But we pray to God that you may not do wrong—not that we may appear to have met the test, but that you may do what is right, though we may seem to have failed. [8]For we cannot do anything against the truth, but only for the truth. [9]†For we are glad when we are weak and you are strong. Your restoration is what we pray for. [10]†For this reason I write these things while I am away from you, that when I come I may not have to be severe in my use of the authority that the Lord has given me for building up and not for tearing down.

Final Greetings

11 ††Finally, brothers,[1] rejoice. Aim for restoration, comfort one another, [2] agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you. 12 †Greet one another with a holy kiss. 13 †All the saints greet you.

14 † The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

2 Corinthians

OVERVIEW

Author
Paul the apostle

Date
AD 55, before winter

Places
Corinth in Achaia; Macedonia; Troas in Asia [Minor]; Damascus; Judea

People
Paul; Timothy; Silvanus; Titus; King Aretas; super-apostles

Purpose
Paul guides the Corinthian congregation to evaluate his ministry truly as Christ's work among them

Law Themes
Divisions in congregations; false apostles; human frailty; poverty in sin; generosity; suffering; self-examination

Gospel Themes
Comfort in Christ; restoration through forgiveness; reconciliation; wealth in Christ; God's sufficient grace

Memory Verses
Amen in Christ (1:18–22); the Spirit gives life (3:4–6); eternal glory (4:16–18); the ministry of reconciliation (5:17–21); rich in Christ (8:9); a cheerful giver (9:6–8); God's sufficient grace (12:7–10)

2 Corinthians

Reading 2 Corinthians

See pp 1944–46.

Luther on 2 Corinthians

In the first epistle, St. Paul rebuked the Corinthians severely for many things, pouring sharp wine into their wounds [Luke 10:34] and frightening them. But an apostle should be a preacher of comfort, to raise up terrified and fearful consciences, rather than to frighten them. Therefore in this epistle he praises them once more and pours oil into their wounds [Luke 10:34]. He shows himself wonderfully kind to them and bids them to receive the sinner back with love.

In chapters 1 and 2 he shows his love toward them, how all that he said, did, and suffered was for their profit and benefit, and how they ought to trust him for the best.

After that he praises the office of the gospel, which is the highest and most comforting of all works and is for the profit and benefit of men's consciences. He shows how it is nobler than the office of the law, also how it is persecuted, and yet increases among believers and produces through the cross a hope of eternal glory. But with all this he touches the false apostles, who were inculcating the law over against the gospel, teaching mere outward holiness—that is, hypocrisy—and allowing the inner shame of unbelief to continue. This he does in chapters 3, 4, and 5.

In chapters 6 and 7 he exhorts them to implement this kind of preaching in the things they do and suffer. He concludes by praising them, so that he may encourage them to carry on.

In chapters 8 and 9 he exhorts them to contribute also material aid and help in time of scarcity to the saints in Jerusalem, who from the outset had given over all their possessions, Acts 4[:34–35].

In chapters 10, 11, and 12 he deals with the false apostles.

In chapter 13 he threatens those who had sinned and not reformed. (AE 35:383–84)

Challenges for Readers

The setting for Paul's Letter and the issues he addressed present many challenges for interpreters. Here are some of the most important issues:

Cultural Diversity in Roman Corinth. See pp 1944–46.

Lack of Unity. Paul's composition seems to start and stop often and also displays strong changes in mood. Due to this, some commentators have suggested that 2 Corinthians is actually a collection of as many as five different writings by Paul. There is certainly a significant change of mood at ch 10, but this could have taken place because Paul received new word on the situation at Corinth. Nothing in the present Letter demands that it was a collection written for different occasions.

Letters and Visits. Paul visited Corinth during his second missionary journey (Ac 18:1–17) in c AD 50. He later wrote a letter of instruction to them (1Co 5:9), which has been lost. Paul's next Letter to them was 1 Corinthians, which may be the painful letter mentioned at 2Co 2:4 (though some scholars have assumed this refers to another lost letter written after 1 Corinthians). He also apparently made a "painful visit" to the congregation (2Co 2:1), which made it possible for Titus to follow up and settle the conflicts (2Co 7:6–8). Paul then wrote 2 Corinthians in AD 55. So, Paul may have written a total of four letters, as follows:

(1) A letter of instruction (1Co 5:9)
(2) 1 Corinthians
(3) A painful letter (2Co 2:4)
(4) 2 Corinthians

All this effort paid off. Clement of Rome wrote at the end of the first century that God held together this troubled congregation.

A Personal Letter. In 2 Corinthians, Paul lays bare his heart to the congregation and vigorously defends his apostleship against false apostles who tried to undermine his work. He writes much more about himself and his feelings than he does in his other Letters. Readers need to bear these personal qualities in mind when applying the Letter (e.g., just because Paul boasted rhetorically to the Corinthians does not mean that we must boast before our congregations).

The Reconciled Brother. The congregational member in ch 2 may be the same person who was excommunicated in 1Co 5, though Paul does not

make this absolutely clear. In both cases, the sin involved has caused significant suffering for Paul and for the congregation.

Blessings for Readers

As you study 2 Corinthians, consider the marvelous example Paul gives of a thoughtful Christian leader striving to unite a wounded congregation. Note especially how he emphasizes God's work among them through the Gospel, which comforts and heals the congregation. If you have experienced disappointments and hurt feelings at church, allow 2 Corinthians to assist in your healing.

Paul also describes the generous heart of those who have received God's grace. He contrasts the faithful Macedonian believers, so ready to give to the poor and needy, with the disorganized and begrudging Corinthians, who question Paul's motives for collecting the offering. God grant us wise and generous hearts that think clearly about giving for the needs of others!

OUTLINE

I. Salutation (1:1–2)
II. Blessed Be the God of Comfort (1:3–7)
III. Pastoral Reflection on Interaction with the Corinthians (1:8–5:10)
  A. Explanation of the Change in Travel Plans (1:8–2:2)
  B. Explanation of the Painful Letter (2:3–13)
  C. Theological Reflection on Paul's Apostolic Ministry (2:14–5:10)
    1. God leads His ministers to spread the knowledge of Christ (2:14–16a)
    2. Confidence and competence come from God, who establishes the ministry of the new covenant (2:16b–3:18)
    3. Consequent courage, integrity, and effectiveness of the ministry despite unbelief, personal weakness, and opposition (ch 4)
    4. Faith leads to a heavenly home (5:1–10)
IV. Apostolic Appeal to Be Reconciled to God and to His Ministers (5:11–7:16)
  A. We Live for God in the Service of Christ by Serving Others (5:11–15)
  B. The New Creation Gives a New Perspective on Others (5:16–17)
  C. God's Ministers of Reconciliation Urge Others to Be Reconciled to Him (5:18–21)
  D. The Apostle Appeals for Acceptance of God's Grace (6:1–13)

E. Accepting God's Grace Means Separation from Unbelievers (6:14–7:1)

F. Paul's Good Will toward Corinthians (7:2–16)

V. Logistics and Encouragement to Participate in the Jerusalem Collection (chs 8–9)

A. Encouragement to Whole-Hearted Participation in the Collection (8:1–15)

B. Titus and Two Other Brothers Represent the Church (8:16–24)

C. Instructions for Other Congregations in Achaia (ch 9)

VI. Paul Appeals for Corinthians to Acknowledge His Apostolic Authority (ch 10)

VII. Paul Responds to the Accusations of the "Super-Apostles" (11:1–13:10)

A. The Corinthians Have Too Easily Turned from Pure Devotion to Christ (11:1–6)

B. Paul's Motive in Not Accepting Support from the Corinthians (11:7–15)

C. Though Boasting Is Foolish, the Request for Credentials Requires It (11:16–21a)

D. Paul's Credentials Are His Sufferings in Ministry and for the Churches (11:21b–33)

E. Paul Boasts Not in Revelations but in His Weaknesses (12:1–10)

F. Boasting Is Foolish; Faithful Ministry Should Be Enough (12:11–13)

G. Paul Did Not Take Advantage of the Church (12:14–18)

H. Paul Warns That He Will Arrive with Christ's Power to Discipline (12:19–13:10)

VIII. Closing (13:11–14)

Footnotes

Footnotes for 2 Corinthians, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:5 Or *For as the sufferings of Christ abound for us, so also our comfort abounds through Christ*
- [2] 1:8 Or *brothers and sisters*. The plural Greek word *adelphoi* (translated "brothers") refers to siblings in a family. In New Testament usage, depending on the context, *adelphoi* may refer either to men or to both men and women who are siblings (brothers and sisters) in God's family, the church
- [1] 1:12 Some manuscripts *holiness*
- [2] 1:13 Or *understand*; twice in this verse; also verse 14
- [3] 1:22 Or *down payment*

Footnotes for 2 Corinthians, Chapter 2

- [1] 2:16 Or *competent*

Footnotes for 2 Corinthians, Chapter 3

- [1] 3:2 Some manuscripts *your*
- [2] 3:3 Greek *fleshly hearts*
- [3] 3:6 Or *sufficient*
- [1] 3:16 Greek *he*
- [2] 3:17 Or *this Lord*

- [3] 3:18 Or *reflecting the glory of the Lord*

Footnotes for 2 Corinthians, Chapter 4

- [4] 4:1 Greek *as we have received mercy*
- [5] 4:5 Greek *bondservants*
- [1] 4:16 Greek *man*

Footnotes for 2 Corinthians, Chapter 5

- [2] 5:3 Some manuscripts *putting it off*
- [1] 5:17 Or *creature*
- [1] 5:19 Or *God was in Christ, reconciling*

Footnotes for 2 Corinthians, Chapter 6

- [2] 6:11 Greek *Our mouth is open to you*
- [1] 6:15 Greek *Beliar*

Footnotes for 2 Corinthians, Chapter 7

- [2] 7:1 Greek *flesh*
- [3] 7:2 Greek lacks *in your hearts*

Footnotes for 2 Corinthians, Chapter 8

- [1] 8:1 Or *brothers and sisters*
- [2] 8:4 The Greek word *charis* can mean *favor* or *grace* or *thanks*, depending on the context
- [3] 8:7 Some manuscripts *in your love for us*
- [1] 8:17 Or *he went*
- [2] 8:18 Or *we sent*; also verse 22
- [3] 8:23 Greek *apostles*

Footnotes for 2 Corinthians, Chapter 9

- [1] 9:3 Or *I have sent*
- [2] 9:5 Greek *blessing*; twice in this verse
- [3] 9:5 Or *a gift expecting something in return*; Greek *greed*
- [4] 9:6 Greek *with blessings*; twice in this verse
- [5] 9:8 Or *all contentment*
- [1] 9:13 Or *you*

Footnotes for 2 Corinthians, Chapter 11

- [1] 11:27 Or *often in fasting*

Footnotes for 2 Corinthians, Chapter 12

- [1] 12:7 Or *hears from me, even because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations. So to keep me from becoming conceited*

Footnotes for 2 Corinthians, Chapter 13

- [1] 13:11 Or *brothers and sisters*
- [2] 13:11 Or *listen to my appeal*

Study Notes

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:1 *an apostle*. See p 1901. *by the will of God*. Not by accident or even by Paul's choice. Being in public ministry is a calling, a gracious privilege, not an earned position (cf Ac 9:15). In this sense, all service, pastoral and lay, must be faithful to God's mission, not to our own. *Timothy*. A believer of Jewish-Greek descent whom Paul met on his second missionary journey (Ac 16). A trusted co-worker in ministry. *brother*. See p 1901. *church of God*. See pp 1901–2. *Corinth*. See pp 1944–46. *saints*. See p 1904. *Achaia*. See map, p 1886.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:2 *Grace*. See p 1902.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:1–2 Paul's ministry to the Corinthians has been "painful" (2:1). As Christ's representative, Paul calls them to repentance (cf 1Co 5–6; 10–11) for their willful disobedience of the Gospel of Jesus. Yet, even for this Church there is grace and peace from "God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ," which establishes and sustains them anew as God's saints. Like the Corinthians, we must also admit and repent of our misuse and neglect of the ministry of the Word. Too often, we trust in our own wisdom and strength to the detriment of our walk with God. Yet, Jesus is continually gracious toward us with a forgiveness that is as real as Jesus Himself. Just as He was gracious to undeserving, even arrogant, people at Corinth and restored them as saints, He can reach each one of us right where we are. • Dear Lord, thank You for continually reaching me and renewing me in and through Your Church. Amen.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:3 *Blessed*. See p 1901. Paul bursts forth in worship. The God who brings grace and peace (v 2) is to be worshiped and praised.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:4 *comforts us*. First and foremost, a Christian's comfort comes through the message of reconciliation with God through the work of Jesus Christ (5:17–20). This Letter also shows how believers are agents of God's consolation and comfort for others (cf 7:5–9). *us … we ourselves*. Throughout this section, Paul uses the plural stylistically to speak of himself, making it easy to extend these truths to all Christians.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:5 *we*. Probably refers to Paul himself (the editorial plural), though Timothy, his partner in ministry, might be included.

share abundantly in Christ's sufferings. Lit, "the sufferings of Christ abound for us." Christ's suffering engulfs our suffering, overcomes it, and is a resource of strength for all who are in distress (cf 1Pt 2:24).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:6 Sharing Jesus' gracious forgiveness to others involves bearing the cross (cf Jn 15:20). Paul confesses how bearing the Corinthians' abuses and challenges reflects Jesus' suffering and His comfort, as he strives to deliver the Gospel message to them for the sake of their salvation. *same sufferings*. The Corinthians, who experienced Paul's self-sacrificial love on their behalf, are now made aware of the joy of enduring such things for others (cf Heb 12:1–3).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:7 For the believer, even suffering has a purpose (cf Rm 8:28), due to the sure and certain hope that sin, suffering, and death are only momentary sidetracks from the eternal life given in and through Jesus Christ.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:8 *brothers*. See p 1901. *affliction we experienced*. Paul experienced persecution for sharing the Gospel (cf Ac 19). *utterly burdened*. Lit, burdened "beyond our power" (cf 1Co 1:24; Eph 3:20). *despaired*. Paul understood that his personal power and strength could in no way overcome the sufferings confronting him.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:9 *sentence of death*. Whatever the sufferings or persecutions, they were severe. *rely … on God*. Despairing of oneself often causes one to trust more completely in God. Jesus clearly teaches that His people will face suffering in this world (Jn 16:33) as they strive to share the Gospel (Mt 16:24–25). But this suffering avails much, for it is in and for the name of Jesus (cf Ac 9:16). Suffering was part of Paul's calling to deliver the Gospel (4:10–12; Rm 9:3; Php 3:10–14). Though God does not capriciously hurt His people, there are certain aspects of His love that He can teach us only through suffering. "Although these afflictions are for the most part the punishments of sin, yet in the godly they have a better end, namely, to exercise them, that they may learn amid trials to seek God's aid, to acknowledge the distrust of their own hearts, and so forth" (Ap XIIB 54). *raises the dead*. Paul knew the strength of his God and the confidence that only He brings lasting life (cf 12:9–10; Rm 8:31–39).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:10 *deadly peril*. Lit, "so great of death," "great dangers of death." Graphically describes God's even greater rescue of those who "had received the sentence of death" (v 9).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:11 *help us by prayer*. The prayer of believers avails much. Members of the Body of Christ are concerned for one another and lift one another up in prayer (cf Col 1:3; 2Th 3:1) See note, 10:4. *blessing*. Gk *charisma*. See "grace," p 1902. Denotes God's gracious activity in our lives (cf Rm 5:15; 6:23); in this case, God's gracious rescue of Paul.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:3–11 Paul puts suffering in the context of God's grace. Sharing the Gospel in the midst of a sinful world means that opposition is bound to come (Jn 15:20) and may even overwhelm God's people as they share the Good News with others. Christ Jesus promises that in the midst of carrying crosses, burdens, and even the abuses and persecutions of others, His burden will be light (Mt 11:28–30). He not only will sustain us as His people (Rm 5:1–5) but will refresh us and bring joy in the midst of such struggles (Mt 5:11; 2Co 12:9–10). • Lord Jesus, teach us to be open to the challenging experiences that loving others in Your name brings, so we might trust in You all the more and rejoice exceedingly when others come to faith in You because they have known us as Your people. Amen.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:12 *boast*. Paul challenges his detractors (cf 1Co 4; 2Co 11). His "boast" is not in himself, but in his sincere service to the Corinthians as the apostle of Jesus Christ to them (cf 1Co 1:31; 4:1; 2Co 11–12). To boast in Christ about the Corinthians (v 14) is not only okay but also blesses his hearers. *simplicity*. Straightforward, pure motives. *earthly wisdom*. Lit, "wisdom of the flesh," which claims no need for God. *grace*. See p 1902. Paul was not there to peddle his or anybody else's wisdom, but to proclaim Christ and His grace (cf 1Co 1:20–24; 2:1–5).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:13 *what you read*. Paul's writings. See pp 1979–80.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:14 *day of our Lord Jesus*. When Jesus returns to judge the living and the dead (cf 1Co 5:5; 1Th 5:2; 2Pt 3:10). *boast*. Paul rejoices in shared faith. One of the greatest joys in life is that someone comes to faith in Jesus because they heard the Gospel from you.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:15 *this*. That Christ is at work through Paul's ministry to the Corinthians, producing mutual faith and joy. *second experience of grace*. They needed a second apostolic visit and restoration because of their arrogance (see pp 1979–80).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:16 *Macedonia … Judea*. See map, p 1886.
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:17 Opponents were accusing Paul of being fickle in his care of the Corinthian Church. They falsely claimed that he was afraid to be bold in person (cf 10:10). Paul ultimately defends not himself but the ministry of Jesus that comes in apparent weakness and foolishness (cf 1Co 1:18; 2Co 4; 13:4). *Yes … No*. Paul does not say one thing and mean the other. God is faithful, and Paul's ministry as God's representative is faithful too (1:1).
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:19 *Silvanus and Timothy*. Co-workers with Paul in ministry to the Corinthian Church. See note, 1Th 1:1. *in Him it is always Yes*. The message of Jesus Christ is the reconciliation, the forgiveness for the world (cf Jn 12:47). In Christ alone, God fulfilled all His OT promises of redemption.
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:20 *promises of God*. In the OT covenant and Jesus' earthly ministry. *Amen*. Understanding Jesus' incredible work on behalf of the world calls for the response of faith—"Amen," or "Let it be so for me." See p 1901.
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:21 *anointed us*. See "holy," p 7; see also note, 1Sm 10:1.
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:22 *His seal*. See note, Eph 1:13. *guarantee*. The Holy Spirit received in Baptism is God's "deposit" of His continued faithfulness. God would bring Paul's ministry with the Corinthians to its appointed end (Php 1:6).
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:23 *witness against me*. Paul defends his ministry among the Corinthians, calling God Himself—the one who chose (v 1) and dispatched him to serve them—to vindicate his thoughts and actions. *spare you*. Paul did not fail to come to them out of personal weakness or fickleness but out of love for them (cf 1Co 4:14–21).
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:24 *lord it over your faith*. The Gospel comes in service (cf 11:6–23; Mt 20:28). The Gospel seeks to persuade, to encourage, and to call to faith. "Christ was not sent to bear the sword or possess a worldly kingdom" (Tr 31).
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 2:1 *painful visit*. Paul's second visit was to resolve conflicts. See pp 1979–80.
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 2:2 Only a positive response from the Corinthians could relieve his concerns.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 2:3 *I wrote*. See pp 1979–80.
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 2:4 Paul demonstrates both sincere motives for his work in Corinth and the willingness of the Gospel ministry to serve others for their sake. He contrasts his motives and message with that of the super-apostles (1Co 4:9–16; 2Co 11:13), who were actually false prophets.
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 1:12–2:4 Paul defends his ministry to the Corinthians not according to the standards of the world but according to the gracious character of God's message delivered through self-sacrificing servants. Sharing the Gospel message often exposes us as unworthy servants. In the midst of the hardships that Gospel ministry brings in a sinful world, the confidence of Christ, His encouraging, sustaining, forgiving presence, is a constant blessing for those who trust Him (1:21). • Dear Jesus, even in the midst of the battles of life, Your love and Your grace not only sustain us, but they are also the solid ground from which we can always begin again. We trust in Your everlasting love. Amen.
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 2:5–17 The Corinthian congregation had allowed sexually immoral behavior in their midst that was worse than the pagans' (see note, 1Co 5:1). It is unclear whether Paul is speaking of this person as the one who has grieved the congregation or whether there was another incident requiring a "painful visit" (v 1). One can be sure that the offense was public, serious, and required discipline. See pp 1979–80.
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 2:6 *punishment by the majority*. When sin is public, it reflects on the whole congregation. Some likely wanted the punishment to be even more severe.
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 2:7 *forgive and comfort him*. The discipline had brought about repentance. Forgiveness and reconciliation are always the goal of discipline and punishment. Forgiveness of sins, not perfection, is the chief characteristic of the Church. *excessive sorrow*. Sorrow for sin correctly brings a deep sense of guilt and remorse, but to continue to criticize a remorseful person after repentance defeats discipline's purpose.
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 2:8 *reaffirm*. The Gk *kyroo¯*, used of legal arrangements and covenants, can mean "enforce." Restoration must be publicly confirmed.
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 2:9 *test you*. Lit, "know your proof, your evidence" to see if you are faithful in this matter. *obedient in everything*. The Corinthians had been obedient in the process of discipline. Paul wants

them to be as faithful in forgiveness and restoration (cf Ps 103:12–13; Heb 10:17).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 2:10 *I also forgive*. Discipline was a shared exercise, so forgiveness was shared too. *for your sake*. The exercise of discipline was not only for a person who sinned, but for the sake of the Church itself. They, too, were called to be faithful in discipline and forgiveness as Christ's people.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 2:11 *outwitted by Satan*. To misuse the process of discipline as some legalistic punishment or some method of humiliating a repentant sinner would turn Christ's Church into a cesspool of self-righteousness. Paul warns against this satanic twist. *his designs*. Satan plans and purposes to destroy congregations. "He provokes the world against us, fans and stirs the fire, so that he may hinder and drive us back, cause us to fall, and again bring us under his power" (LC III 63).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 2:5–11 The goal of church discipline is the restoration of the person. Paul calls the Corinthians, who have been diligent in punishment, to be even more diligent in forgiveness. When disciplining another, we often are tempted to do so legalistically, as if the person has to earn our forgiveness. Such an attitude actually destroys grace, both in the repentant believer and in us. To the one who is truly sorry for sin, we are to forgive as Christ forgives us and to remember the sin no more. • Dear Lord, give us wisdom to speak Your words of judgment or grace always for the sake of our fellow believer and not for our own satisfaction or self-righteousness. Amen.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 2:12 *came to Troas*. Paul stopped on his third missionary journey, after leaving Ephesus (Ac 20:1–12), on his way to Macedonia, AD 55. *door was opened*. A positive reception of the Gospel was feasible.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 2:13 *my spirit was not at rest*. Paul was concerned about the Corinthian problems. *Titus*. Paul's companion who shared in the mission work, esp at Corinth (8:16–17). *Macedonia*. See map, p 1886.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 2:14–15 *us … we*. Paul switches from his specific calling to speak broadly about God's work in the lives of believers. *triumphal procession*. See note, Col 2:15. *fragrance … the aroma of Christ*. Temple sacrifices produced smells we would associate with grilling meat or cooking bread. The pleasing aroma of Christ's sacrifice on the cross covers

the stench of our sin. Chrys: "We are then, as it were, a Royal censer, breathing withersoever we go of the heavenly ointment and the spiritual sweet savor" (*NPNF* 1 12:301).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 2:16 *death to death*. To focus on the deadly character of a sacrifice or a triumphal military procession is to fail to see how that sacrifice gives life. *life to life*. Paul's life of sacrifice brings life to unbelievers. *Who is sufficient for these things?* Paul was personally inadequate for the monumental task of apostolic ministry (i.e., being Christ's representative, preaching both judgment and forgiveness in Christ's name). This did not destroy his confidence in Christ and the certainty of his calling in Christ's name. "We should be certain about and agree with the promise that God's Word preached and heard is 'truly' an office and work of the Holy Spirit. He is certainly effective and works in our hearts by them" (FC SD II 56).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 2:17 *peddlers*. Paul contrasts his ministry with those who peddle God's Word for personal profit. He might also be differentiating his gathering of the offerings for the saints (8:4; 9:5) with the actions of the false apostles (cf 11:12–15). *commissioned by God*. Paul was authorized by and accountable to God Himself for what he proclaimed to the Corinthians (see "apostle," p 1901; cf Ac 9:1–15). *speak in Christ*. Accountable to the purpose and assurance of Christ and His message.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 2:12–17 Paul's spirit is restless and overwhelmed in the circumstances of his ministry. Nonetheless, he is confident that Christ will accomplish His work for the Corinthians. As Christians, we often feel the very real weight of representing Christ to others. Our worries, sins, and frailties can overwhelm us. We can take heart that Christ Jesus is always sufficient and that His message of forgiveness for us is also a sweet fragrance to all who trust in Him. • Dear Lord, give us sincere hearts to look honestly at ourselves, so we may never take Your grace for granted, and that we might be a sweet aroma of grace to others in Your name. Amen.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 3:1 *commend ourselves*. Paul has no need to establish his credibility with the Corinthians. His authority comes from Christ's commission (Ac 9:1–15). *letters of recommendation*. Businessmen or officials often sent authorizing letters on behalf of their messengers. The Corinthians knew Paul intimately (cf Ac 18:1–17); he needed no affirmation

of his authority, just as Christ's message needs no human authority (Mt 28:18–20). The super-apostles (chs 11–13) may have used such letters.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 3:2 Rather than debate the issue of his ministry's authorization, Paul declared that the Corinthians are his ministry's proof. As believers in Christ—living in faith—they were the greatest earthly commendation for the integrity and sincerity of Paul's work.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 3:3 *you are a letter from Christ*. The Corinthians mutually encourage one another and witness to the whole of Corinth as a result of Paul's ministry among them (cf Jn 13:35). *written … with the Spirit*. Paul's ministry to them was first and foremost a work of the Holy Spirit. There is confidence and enduring assurance in this Letter written by the eternal Spirit. *living God*. A reference to the Father. See p 1227. *tablets of stone*. Engraved public monuments. *tablets of human hearts*. Living monuments (cf 1Pt 2:5).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 3:4 *confidence*. See note, 3:1

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 3:5 *our sufficiency is from God*. See note, 2:16. The Gospel was not only the proclamation of His ministry but its power as well (cf 4:7; 1Co 1:18; Col 1:10–14). "Since the natural powers of mankind cannot do anything or help toward it (1 Corinthians 2:14; 2 Corinthians 3:5), God, out of His infinite goodness and mercy, comes first to us. He causes His Holy Gospel to be preached. The Holy Spirit desires to work and accomplish this conversion and renewal in us. Through preaching and meditation on His Word God kindles faith and other godly virtues in us. They are the Holy Spirit's gifts and works alone" (FC SD II 71).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 3:6 *ministers*. See p 1903. *new covenant*. The work of Jesus Christ, who is the fulfillment of both the Law and the promises of the OT (cf Gn 17; Ex 19–20; Jer 31:34). *the letter kills*. The "letter of the Law," holy and powerful, puts the sinner to death (cf Rm 3:20; 7; Gal 3:19–24). "The Law … is a ministry that kills through the letter and preaches condemnation" (FC SD V 22). *the Spirit gives life*. God works in our hearts, through the promises of the Gospel of Jesus, to bring life and salvation (1:22; Jn 14:26; 15:26; 16:13–16). See pp xxxi–xxxii.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 3:7 *ministry of death*. The Law of Moses is defined by its function in the lives of sinful people. God's holiness exposes our sinfulness. It damns any notion of self-sufficiency outside of God's grace. "The doctrines of the Law and the Gospel may not be mixed and

confused with each other. What belongs to the one may not be applied to the other. When that happens Christ's merit and benefits are easily hidden and the Gospel is again turned into a doctrine of the Law, as happened in the papacy" (FC SD V 27). *glory*. See p 1902. *Moses' face*. Moses' face literally reflected God's glory, having been in God's presence to receive the Law. *end*. Rabbinic writers held that Moses' face shined brilliantly like the sun or moon. See note, Ex 34:29. The old covenant (as it was understood by Judaism) ultimately exposed sinners as those condemned to death. It gave way to the fulfillment of the Law and the promises of God by the ministry of Jesus Christ in the power of the Spirit.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 3:8 *ministry of the Spirit*. The ministry of death (v 7) was the Spirit's first work but not His ultimate work (cf Ezk 33:11; Gal 3:5–9). "[God] will work through the Word in the people He calls, so that they may be enlightened, converted, and saved. For the Word, by which we are called, is a ministry of the Spirit, which gives the Spirit, or by which the Spirit is given" (FC SD XI 29).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 3:9 *ministry of condemnation*. God serves us by spiritually exposing the futility and destructiveness of human self-righteousness, which brings condemnation. *ministry of righteousness*. Jesus serves us by fulfilling the Law (Mt 5:17), taking upon Himself the curse of the world's sin (5:21; Gal 3:13), and giving His righteousness for the salvation of the world (cf 1Co 1:30).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 3:10 *no glory at all*. The OT's glory is fulfilled in the NT. In this sense, the OT glory has passed away. *surpasses*. The ministry of Jesus in the power of the Spirit abundantly fulfills the expectations of the OT (see note, 9:14).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 3:13 *veil over his face*. Moses saw God's glory (Ex 33:18) and reflected that glory in his face to the Israelites. He veiled his face to prevent the Israelites from sensing the transient nature of that reflection, calling them to continually trust in his leadership before God and before them. The glory of the old covenant was fleeting compared to Jesus.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 3:14 *minds*. Both their minds and their hearts were blinded without faith in Christ (v 15). "They do not learn from the Law to see their sins correctly. They either become bold hypocrites 'who swell with the opinion of their own righteousness' like the Pharisees [Matthew 23], or they despair like Judas [Matthew 27:3–5]" (FC Ep V 8).

hardened. By unfaithfulness and rebellion. See notes, Ex 4:21; 9:12. *old covenant*. Broadly embodying the Law and the promises of God expressed throughout the Books of Moses, the covenant called for Israel to trust in Yahweh as the Lord of salvation and redemption. (See pp 3–5.) *through Christ is it taken away*. Christ, the object of our faith, fulfills the glory of the old covenant (e.g., the veil [curtain] torn in two at Jesus' death, Mt 27:51).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 3:15 *Moses is read*. The Books of Moses were read publicly in the synagogues. *hearts*. See note, v 14.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 3:16–17 Jesus Christ is both the hope of the old covenant and the key to understanding it as the proclamation of what was yet to come (cf 1:19–20). *turns to the Lord*. Believes in Jesus. See "turn," p 1080. *the Lord is the Spirit*. The mystery and unity of the Trinity (Father, Son, Holy Spirit, yet one God!) is at work in salvation (cf Jn 14:17, 26; 15:26; 16:13, 15). The Holy Spirit works life and salvation in the person and work of Jesus. *freedom*. Faith in Jesus removes not only the veil of the old covenant but also the guilt and bondage of sin (cf Rm 8). Such freedom allows the Christian to serve God not out of guilt, but out of joy and thanksgiving. "God's Law is useful (1) because external discipline and decency are maintained by it against wild, disobedient people; (2) likewise, through the Law people are brought to a knowledge of their sins; and also, (3) when people have been born anew by God's Spirit, converted to the Lord, and Moses's veil has been lifted from them [2 Corinthians 3:13–16], they live and walk in the Law [Psalm 119:1]" (FC SD VI 1).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 3:18 *beholding the glory*. The believer's focus is upon Christ alone through His Word. Jesus is the glory of God (Heb 1:3) and the gift of righteousness (1Co 1:30) available to all because of the cross and Baptism (Rm 6:3–11). *transformed into the same image*. By virtue of God's mercy, we become more and more like Him in our daily lives through the work of the Holy Spirit through the Word (cf Rm 12:1–2). *degree of glory*. Describes moving from the glory of those exposed to their deadness in sin, to the glory of being declared righteous in Christ, to the glory of becoming more like Jesus day by day (cf Php 1:5–6).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON **Ch 3** Paul describes the sufficiency, competency, and hope of the new covenant, which is the fulfillment of the old covenant. Our abilities and skills do not make us competent for the ministry of Jesus Christ. Our confidence and competency come from Christ,

whose ministry truly gives life by the power of the Spirit. Therefore, we can be even bolder than Moses, the great prophet of the old covenant, as we proclaim Jesus, the one whom Moses yearned to see. • Dear Lord, help us to see clearly the living hope that You have given us through Your cross and resurrection. Give us also boldness to proclaim the cross to all who would listen. Amen.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 4:1 *this ministry*. Sharing the new covenant in Jesus (cf 2:17; 3:3, 6).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 4:2 *tamper with God's word*. Paul was falsely accused of discrediting the integrity of his ministry with the Corinthians (see notes, 1:17; 2:17). *commend ourselves*. Paul's proclamation of Jesus is bold and public. He is vulnerable to judgment by others. *conscience*. See p 1902.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 4:3 *our gospel is veiled*. Because of unbelief. *perishing*. Those who do not believe in God's provision of grace in Jesus and are judged in their trespasses and sins (1Co 1:18).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 4:4 *god of this world*. Satan, the ruler of this passing age (Rv 12:9–12). Iren: "Satan, who was designated God to those who believe not" (*ANF* 1:575). *the light of the gospel*. Satan's work is to "darken" hearts and minds. However, the Gospel, the forgiveness of sins through Jesus, remains a clear and visible light to the whole world, even though some have closed their eyes to it (cf Jn 3:19; Col 1:13; Eph 4:19). *image of God*. Jesus Christ, who is both God (1Jn 5:20) and man (1Tm 2:5) in the flesh (Heb 2:14), clearly reveals to the world who God is (Jn 14:9). He and the Father are in essence one (Jn 10:30; 17:11, 21). Jesus is also the perfect image of humanity for our sake. In Him is restored the image of man, lost in Gn 3. See note, Col 1:15.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 4:5 *Jesus Christ as Lord*. See notes, Col 1:16–20; Php 2:11. *your servants for Jesus' sake*. Paul, and indeed every apostolic overseer, is a servant to God in his work with God's people, just as Jesus Himself was servant to all (cf Mk 10:45; Jn 13:1–20). Paul contrasts his servanthood with his critics' boasting of themselves. See "servant," p 1904.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 4:6 *Let light shine out of darkness*. Paul alludes to the power of God in creation, when His Word literally brought light into existence. *shone in our hearts*. That miraculous Word of creation is at work through the Gospel, which alone can enlighten hearts

that are dark with sin. *in the face of Jesus Christ*. The righteousness, love, and grace of God (indeed God's very heart) are seen in Jesus (cf Jn 14:6; Rm 5:6–8).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 4:1–6 The essence of Paul's ministry was "mercy" through the Lord Jesus alone. Such mercy compelled him to be straightforward, authentic, and transparent as a servant to God's people. Merciful ministry exposes and binds us to the people we serve. We must never give in to the temptation to think that merciful ministry can be done from afar, as a master and not as a servant. The same Lord who made "light shine out of darkness" will strengthen our hearts to be courageously transparent servants. • Thanks be to God, who is generously merciful to us. May He prepare us and bind us to those who need such mercy. Amen.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 4:7 *this treasure in jars of clay*. Like invaluable gifts wrapped in plain paper, ministers of the Gospel, such as Paul, were frail; they dispensed the Gospel's treasures. *surpassing power*. God's overwhelming, all-encompassing power in His grace toward the world, in contrast to human incapability (cf Rm 1:16; 1Co 2:14).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 4:8–9 Sharing the Gospel with others is challenging in a sinful, rebellious world (Jn 16:33). "Great and grievous, indeed, are these dangers and temptations, which every Christian must bear. We bear them even though each one were alone by himself" (LC III 105). But one can always trust in the Lord and the power of the Gospel to see one through. He never lets His people down (Mt 28:20).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 4:10 Paul, as a minister of the Gospel, not only preached Christ crucified (1Co 1:23), but also was literally wounded for that message. Christians reflect that Christ is love by willing self-sacrifice and service, so that others might come to know Jesus' love.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 4:11 *given over to death*. Paul and his companions were persecuted, beaten, and threatened with death (11:23–33). *manifested in our mortal flesh*. In Paul's frailties and struggles, the Gospel message exhibited its power all the more (cf 12:9; Rm 8:31–39).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 4:12 Believers are not exempt from pain and suffering. When earthen vessels are broken, they even more clearly reveal the treasure of God's power and grace within. See p 837.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 4:13 *same spirit of faith*. Believers from every generation and time possess the same faith in God's Word, which delivers a spirit of perseverance to speak of God's grace no matter the cost.

I believed … I spoke. Just as David boldly trusted in the Lord and proclaimed His grace (cf Ps 145:1–8), so Paul boldly proclaimed the same Lord.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 4:14 *He*. God the Father by the power of the Holy Spirit (cf Rm 8:11; Gal 1:1). *into His presence*. Redeemed to live eternally in God's presence in heaven.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 4:15 *grace extends to more*. The goal of Paul's ministry to the Corinthians was to reach more people.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 4:16 *outer self*. All that belongs to this sinful world, which is passing away. *inner self*. The new person, who will live forever in God's presence (cf 1Co 15:42–55; Php 1:6). *renewed day by day*. God's Word and Sacraments give strength for each day of our lives (cf Mt 28:18–20; 1Co 10:16–17), prompting us to daily repentance (Ps 51:1–12).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 4:17 *eternal weight of glory*. Afflictions and struggles are temporary; therefore, they are light compared to the glory of being God's reconciled and restored people, living in His presence forever (cf 5:17–20). See "glory," p 1902.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 4:18 *things … unseen*. The glory of God, His angels, and heaven.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 4:7–18 Living and sharing the life of Christ with others often has a cost. Paul instructs us to look beyond the momentary affliction to the eternal glory of salvation in Jesus. He tells us to look to the treasure, not to the earthen vessel, for our confidence with God. God's promises of life and salvation are the most real things in our lives. Because that is true, believers can look at afflictions and struggles purposefully as opportunities that make God's power more evident to those around them. Afflictions are temporary nuisances that will surely give way to the glory of life eternal with our Savior. • Lord, show me Your purpose in the struggles and in the victories of my life. Amen.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 5:1 *we*. See notes, 1:4, 5. *tent*. The temporal body. *a building from God*. A permanent dwelling. The resurrected body is redeemed for eternity, restored and transformed by God Himself (cf 1Co 15; 1Jn 3:2).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 5:3 At the point of death, when the tent dwelling literally fades away, the cloak of God's eternal dwelling is sure for all those who trust in Him.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 5:4 *burdened*. Knowing that the eternal is yet to come, this temporal existence feels burdensome. *unclothed … clothed*. See note, v 3. *swallowed up by life*. Paul does not wish to do away with his temporal existence, for God has His purposes for all things. Rather, he earnestly prays that God swallow up his mortality with Christlike immortality in His time (cf 1Jn 3:2; 1Co 15:38, 44–47, 52–54). Iren: "We ought, after our calling, to be also adorned with works of righteousness, so that the Spirit of God may rest upon us; for this is the wedding garment" (*ANF* 1:517).
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 5:5 *guarantee*. A down payment or pledge assures that the whole is certain to come (see note, 1:22).
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 5:6 *away from the Lord*. Christ is always with His people (Mt 18:20; 28:20). Here, Paul means away from the permanent, eternal reality of the new heavens and the new earth with the Lord (2Pt 3:13; Rv 21:1–7, 22–23).
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 5:7 We trust in God's promises, not in what we see with our eyes (see notes, 4:17, 18; cf Heb 11). Aug: "Whoever takes another meaning out of Scripture than the writer intended, goes astray…. Faith will totter if the authority of Scripture begin[s] to shake. And then, if faith totter[s], love itself will grow cold. For if a man has fallen from faith, he must necessarily also fall from love; for he cannot love what he does not believe to exist" (*NPNF* 1 2:533). See "walk," p 1904.
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 5:8 *home with the Lord*. Death divides body from spirit but not from the Lord. See note, v 6.
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 5:9 *please Him*. In view of Jesus' great mercy to us, the goal of this life is to live to honor to Him (cf Rm 12:1) as we serve others in His name.
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 5:10 *judgment seat of Christ*. At the final judgment, Jesus will personally judge the living and the dead (Ac 17:31; 2Tm 4:1). This is the day of the Lord, when all people will stand before His throne (1Co 1:8; 2Co 1:14; 2Pt 3:10). See "day of the LORD," p 1079. *what is due*. Not works-righteousness, for all are dead in sin without Christ and saved by grace alone (Eph 2:8–9; Rm 2:11–16; 3:9–20). Paul means what is due by faith, namely, that we are righteous through Christ alone, for God works through us (Eph 2:10). God's grace is so abundant that even the works He graciously provides, He rewards. Conversely, those who do not believe in Jesus will stand before Christ and be judged by their works. "By

God's help, we will retain this Confession to our last breath, when we shall go forth from this life to the heavenly fatherland, to appear with a joyful, undaunted mind and a pure conscience before the court of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Preface to the Christian Book of Concord, *Concordia*, 16).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 5:1–10 Paul simply instructs the believer to please God. We, even as Christians, often live to please others and to please ourselves, neglecting the one thing that makes life worth living—pleasing Christ. Paul calls us to get our priorities straight. To please Christ is to trust in His word of grace for us. His grace, His forgiveness, His gift of faith by the power of the Holy Spirit assures us that nothing in this world can separate us from God, and that Judgment Day will be a day of celebration for those who put their trust in Him. • Dear Lord, impress upon my heart the greatness of Your grace to me, by the power of Your Holy Spirit, so that I can walk confidently by faith until I see You gloriously face-to-face. Amen.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 5:11 *fear of the Lord*. See p 1001. *known to God*. Judgment Day brings all things to light. But Paul and all believers are already known by God (1Co 8:3; Gal 4:9). *conscience*. See p 1902. Paul is open and transparent not only to the Lord's judgment but also to the Corinthians' judgment of him.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 5:12 *cause to boast*. See note, 3:1. *those who boast*. False teachers boasted of themselves (their outward appearance of spiritual strength), leading the Corinthian congregation away from the Lord as they despised God's ministry through Paul (10:12; 11:1–13).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 5:13 *beside ourselves*. False teachers claimed that Paul was crazy. An apostle must be willing to be a "fool" for Christ (cf 1Co 4:9–13). *for you*. To the Corinthians, Paul spoke clearly and directly (cf 1Co 1:17, 2:4).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 5:14 *love of Christ*. The source and motivation for Paul's ministry to the Corinthians. *all have died*. When Jesus died on the cross, as the sinless Son of God, all who ever lived or would live were connected to His death. As God in the flesh, He took the punishment for all sinners upon Himself (v 21; Rm 5:6–8). Bern: "It was man who owed the debt, it was man who paid it…. The Head, therefore, satisfied for [its] members, Christ for His children" (*SLSB*, p 280).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 5:16 *regard … the flesh*. Paul would not approach people from the world's point of view but from God's. *once*

regarded Christ according to the flesh. Paul had previously thought of Jesus as a mere man. He foolishly rejected Christ and persecuted His Church (Ac 9:5; 26:15–18; 1Co 15:9).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 5:17 *in Christ*. See p 1903. *new creation*. God has redeemed and restored the believer into a new sphere of existence, re-created as a person of faith in Jesus Christ who desires to live in and for Him alone (cf Rm 8:18–23; Eph 2:10). *passed away*. In Christ, the things of the sinful flesh have died (cf v 14). The believer is under the lordship of Christ.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 5:18 *All this is from God*. Chrys: "Nothing of ourselves. For remission of sins and adoption and unspeakable glory are given to us by Him" (*NPNF* 1 12:332). *reconciled*. All people are alienated and cut off from God because of sin and rebellion. Christ's death on the cross bridges that eternal gap by paying sinful humanity's just punishment. Jesus' life, death, and resurrection not only redeemed us but also restored us to fellowship with Him (Col 1:22). "God's precepts, and God's true service, are hidden when people hear that only monks are in a state of perfection. True Christian perfection is to fear God from the heart, to have great faith, and to trust that for Christ's sake we have a God who has been reconciled [2 Corinthians 5:18–19]. It means to ask for and expect from God His help in all things with confident assurance that we are to live according to our calling in life, being diligent in outward good works, serving in our calling. This is where true perfection and true service of God is to be found" (AC XXVII 49–50). *ministry of reconciliation*. The apostolic ministry extends the benefits of Christ's reconciling work (cf Jn 20:21; Mt 28:18–20) to individuals, so that when Paul pleads for them to believe in Jesus, it is God's appeal. As recipients of that grace, God has also called all those who believe to be witnesses of God's gracious restoration to those who do not yet know Him (cf 4:15).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 5:19 *in Christ God was*. The divinity and humanity of Jesus, though united, remain distinct. "The divine essence is not changed into the human nature. But the two natures, unchanged, are personally united" (FC SD VII 36). *reconciling the world*. Through Christ's death, God's eternal justice was appeased and the whole world was reconciled to Him. Faith receives Christ's work personally. Unbelief, though, rejects it. *entrusting to us*. The apostolic ministry is God's gift to

deliver His gracious benefits of forgiveness, life, and salvation through Word and Sacrament (cf Eph 4:11–15; Mt 28:18–20; 1Co 11:23–29).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 5:20 *ambassadors*. Representatives who speak on behalf of the heads of states/countries possess the authority of the one who sends them. The Corinthians then, in challenging Paul's ambassadorship to them, were in reality challenging Jesus (see Paul's warning in 6:1). *be reconciled*. A call to repentance.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 5:21 *to be sin*. Jesus took upon Himself our status and standing before God's righteous court. He was declared guilty of all the sin and evil in this world. *knew no sin*. Mankind's sins were charged to the account of an innocent man (cf Is 53:6). *the righteousness of God*. See p 1904. "Christ alone is our Righteousness, who is true God and man, because in Him the divine and human natures are personally united with each other" (FC Ep III 1).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 6:1 *Working together with Him*. As an apostle and ambassador of Jesus Christ, Paul was in essence God's co-worker (cf 1:1; 5:19). *grace of God*. See p 1902. *in vain*. Gk *kenon*, in an "empty fashion," without purpose, treating it lightly.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 6:2 Paul applies the words of promise in Is 49:8 to the Corinthian Christians. He impresses on the Corinthians the importance and seriousness of God's offer of grace to them through Jesus Christ. God's favor is being offered now to the Corinthians, and Paul pleads with them not to take this offer lightly.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 6:3 *no obstacle*. As a minister of the Gospel, Paul was careful not to get in the way of the message of Jesus. He was the messenger, not the message. *our ministry*. See "servant," p 1904.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 6:4 *commend ourselves*. See note, 3:1. Here, Paul adds that his conduct in suffering and persecution has been worthy of his calling as a minister of God to the Corinthians (cf 4:7–12).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 6:5 Cf Ac 14:19; 18:12 for examples.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 6:6–7 Paul's ministry has been a demonstration of God's power for others. God Himself effects the kind of self-sacrificial character and motivation Paul needs to serve others as God in Christ served him (cf Rm 5:1–5).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 6:7 *weapons of righteousness*. The tools that God graciously provides His people to wage His battle, to execute His

mission and ministry—namely, God's Word and Sacraments (Mt 28:18–20), prayer, sacrificial service (cf 10:3–5; Rm 6:13; 13:12).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 6:8–10 Throughout these verses, one is confronted by the contrasts involved in Paul's ministry, the tensions of people's reaction to him, his own personal struggles, and even the paradox of what it means to be an earthen vessel with the treasures of Christ. But through it all, Paul claims that none of these circumstances affected his faithful sharing of the ministry of God's reconciliation with others (3:3–4).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 6:11 *our heart is wide open*. Paul's work with them was motivated by great love (cf 11:2; Php 1:7; 1Th 2:5–9), unlike the false apostles who cared more for themselves (11:11–14).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 6:12 Paul was unrestrained in his love for the Corinthians. If there was any distance between them, it was due to their hearts being restricted toward him.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 6:13 *as to children*. Paul's appeal to them is as a loving father (1Co 4:15). *widen your hearts*. Paul, in appealing to their hearts, is not simply calling them back to himself. He is calling them back to Christ, who can make His light shine in their hearts (4:6). Restored to Jesus, their hearts could again be wide open to Paul.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 5:11–6:13 Christ's love compels Paul to persevere through all hardships to make God's offer of forgiveness and reconciliation plain to the people at Corinth. Too often we mute the Gospel's power because of our pride, our carelessness, or our lack of concern for others. No greater honor can be given us than to be His ambassadors, His spokespeople. He not only saves us but also works through us. • What an honor to be Your ambassador, dear Lord! Continue to deepen our understanding of Your great reconciliation of the world in Christ so we might heartily revel in it with others. Amen.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 6:14–7:1 Paul refocuses the Corinthian congregation on God's gracious reconciliation in Christ. He entreats them not only to see the greatness of the ministry of forgiveness but also to see the blessing of his apostolic, servant ministry to them in Christ's name. Now is the time for them to stand firm in this alone. To stand in Christ is to reject the false teachers.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 6:14 *unequally yoked*. In a mismatched pair, as when a donkey and an ox are used together for plowing (Dt 22:10), the larger animal walks at a different pace than the smaller one. As a result,

the driving is erratic and dangerous. *righteousness with lawlessness*. These have no partnership or fellowship. Paul warns the Corinthians of the danger of being intimately connected to the false teaching of the counterfeit apostles, which can only destroy their relationship to Jesus and to one another. "Under the title and excuse of outward adiaphora, things are proposed that are in principle contrary to God's Word, although painted another color. These ceremonies are not to be regarded as adiaphora, in which one is free to do as he wants. They must be avoided as things prohibited by God" (FC SD X 5).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 6:15–16a Paul's nuances contrast the things of God with those things outside of Christ. To treat the message of Jesus as merely another hopeful human message is to receive it in vain (v 1). *accord*. Common ground, harmony. *Belial?* Hbr for "wicked" or "worthless"; a title for Satan. *portion*. See p 7.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON **6:16b** *temple*. Gk *naos*, the inner sanctuary of the temple, the Most Holy Place, where God dwelled among His people (cf Lk 1:21–22; Rv 11:19). Jesus became the clearest expression of God's redeeming presence as He made His tabernacle among us (cf Jn 1:14, 18). *the living God*. Alive and life-giving. The idols are dead things; to be connected to them is to be disconnected from the life that only God can give (cf Jn 14:6; Ac 17:28).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON **6:16b–18** Paul applies OT themes to the Corinthians, namely, that God is graciously present among His people for their salvation (cf Ex 19:4–5; 33:13–19) and that His people are to be separated unto Him not only for themselves but as witnesses to those who do not believe (cf Gn 12:1–3; Lv 20:24–26; 1Pt 2:9).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:1 *these promises, beloved*. See notes, 1:20; 6:16b–18. *cleanse ourselves*. Though the Christian is declared clean by Christ's righteous sacrifice (1Co 1:30; Rm 4:24–25; 1Pt 2:24), repentance and forgiveness remain daily activities of the Christian life (Gal 5:24–6:4; 1Jn 2:1). *defilement of body and spirit*. Sins of thought, word, and deed contaminate body and soul (Mt 15:11; 1Co 6:18). *holiness to completion*. Becoming like Christ (cf Eph 5:1–2; Php 1:6). *fear of God*. See p 1001.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 6:14–7:1 Our relationship with Jesus is intimate because we, as believers, are "the temple of the living God" (v 16). Our faith calls us to break from those things that would compromise our life

with Jesus. The good news is that God's promises are sure even when we are unfaithful. God calls us to claim the promises of His gracious presence again and again through repentance and forgiveness. • Lord, give me the confidence to trust in You more boldly and to separate from the things of the world that would jeopardize my faith. May it be even more apparent that I belong to You alone. Amen.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:2 *in your hearts*. See ESV note; see also notes, 6:11, 13.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:3 *to die together and to live together*. The Corinthians and Paul share the deep, common bond of the Christian life, namely, dying in Christ to sin and living a new life together by the Holy Spirit's power (Rm 6:1–4).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:4 Titus's good report (vv 13–14) alleviated Paul's concern for the Church at Corinth, expressed by his sending of Timothy (1Co 4:17; cf 2Co 2:4).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:5 There were outward struggles against people hostile to the Gospel; such response brought inward fear to those who preached Christ (cf Ac 16:19–23; 17:13; 19:23). *no rest*. See note, 2:13.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:6 *comforts the downcast*. At the moment of Paul's greatest concern and deepest fears, God brought him good news concerning the Corinthians' faith (cf 6:1). *Titus*. See pp 2087–88.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:7 *comforted by you*. Titus journeyed to Corinth to deal with the issues confronting the Church sometime in the spring or summer, AD 55. His work there was well received, which was a great comfort to Paul as their spiritual father (1Co 4:15).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:8 *my letter*. See pp 1979–80. *I do not regret*. Though it caused pain, it had to be done, as the results demonstrated.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:9 *grieved into repenting*. The Law changes the heart, making it open to God's mercy. *godly grief*. Guilt over sin is part of repentance (cf Ac 20:21).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:10 *worldly grief produces death*. Destructive guilt abandons a person in despair (e.g., depression), which can result in physical and spiritual death (Rm 6:23). "The preaching of the Gospel must be added so that the repentance may lead to salvation and not to the Law's contrition or terrors" (FC SD V 9). Contrast the examples of Peter and Judas (Mt 26:69–75; 27:3–10).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:11 *eagerness to clear yourselves*. Repentance has "fruits" (Lk 3:8), one of which is to try to clear up what was wrong. *proved yourselves innocent*. Godly repentance and godly forgiveness was now powerfully at work in their lives (cf Ps 103:11–14; Heb 8:11–12).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:12 See note, 2:5–17. *revealed to you in the sight of God*. Paul wanted them to recognize fully the genuineness of his service to them on God's behalf (see notes, 6:11–13).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:13 Titus was relieved, for the congregation's problems were dealt with in repentance and forgiveness. Their desire to mend what was broken also brought Paul deep comfort and peace of mind.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:14 *boasts*. See note, 3:1.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:15 *obedience*. The Corinthians' willingness to follow Paul's admonitions reflected their repentance and faith. *fear and trembling*. Responses associated with God's royal presence (see note, Ps 2:11), showing the Corinthians' respect and reverence for the Word of God Titus declared to them.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 7:2–16 Paul shares the ups and downs of ministry and his great joy in hearing that the Corinthians' faith in Christ was solid again. We Christians are often guilty of hoarding Christ's great love, rather than making room in our hearts for others (cf v 2). God has loved us with an everlasting love through Jesus Christ. To open up our hearts to others, to let them know of Christ's love, is to experience again the joy of that great love of God for all. • Lord, teach us daily how great, how long, how wide, and how deep is Your love for us and for every person in this world. And teach us the joy of seeing others come to faith. Amen.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 8:1 *brothers*. See p 1901. *grace*. Not the typical use of this term (see p 1902), but mutual generosity among Christians as a specific fruit of God's favor, perhaps with the particular sense of thank offering. *churches of Macedonia*. Paul planted Christian congregations in Europe during his second missionary journey, e.g., in Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea (cf Ac 16:12–17:13).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 8:2 *severe test*. After Paul and Silas's rough reception in Macedonia (Ac 16:19–17:15), their converts suffered violent persecution (cf 1Th 1:6; 2:14; 2Th 1:4). *abundance … overflowed*. This noun and verb are different forms of the same Gk word. The

Macedonian Christians were excessive in sacrificial generosity and joyful under duress. *extreme poverty*. Roman rule had earlier inflicted harsh economic repression on Macedonia, and its effects were perhaps still being felt at this time.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 8:4 *begging*. In contrast with the Corinthians' concerns about money, the Macedonians regarded assisting their destitute fellow believers in Judea as a privilege. *taking part*. See p 1904. *relief of the saints*. The widespread famine predicted by Agabus (Ac 11:28) hit esp hard in Judea. Hence the immediate decision to send help (Ac 11:29). The pillar apostles endorsed this plan (Gal 2:9), which Paul promoted as a major social ministry goal of his apostolate (cf Gal 2:10; Rm 15:25–26; 1Co 16:1–2). *relief*. Lit, *diakonia*, usually "ministry" or "service"; here meaning an official churchwide initiative. See p 1904.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 8:5 *first to the Lord*. The core of stewardship is a complete gift of self, in body and soul, to the Lord who bought us; time, talent, and treasure follow in due course. Although Paul has a monetary offering in view, he does not directly mention "money," "silver," or "gold" in chs 8–9.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 8:6 Titus shall resume his supervision of efforts to collect funds for Judean relief, likely begun when he delivered the tearful letter mentioned in 2:4 and broken off when he left the city with encouraging news for Paul (7:6–7). *act of grace*. Lit, "grace," i.e., generous work, gift, thank offering. See note, v 1.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 8:7 Paul offers the Corinthians two motives for generously participating in the relief effort: (1) imitate the Macedonians' good example; (2) employ your resources with thankfulness for God's rich, spiritual endowment of your own church. Cf v 9 for the third motive.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 8:8 *love also is genuine*. An invitation to express love within the worldwide Church.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 8:9 *rich … poor*. Paul teaches that our Lord existed as God before He was conceived as man (cf Rm 8:3; Gal 4:4; Php 2:5–7). Immeasurably rich before His incarnation, Christ became the poorest of the poor as He submitted to the Law and fell victim to its curse, a process that ended in naked destitution on the cross. *by His poverty … rich*. Jesus, the God-man, swapped places with sinners. He underwent the agony, desolation, and deserved punishment of fallen humankind. In return, sinners

receive forgiveness and a share in His Sonship (5:21). Luther wove together these and other texts with sayings of the Church Fathers and a phrase in the medieval liturgy to produce the famous image of the "joyous exchange" (*commercium admirabile*; *der fröhliche Wechsel*); this involves the two-way sharing of goods in the royal marriage of Christ with the Church, His Bride. All Gospel preaching is a variation on this inexhaustible theme. Christ's squandering of His riches on poor sinners is Paul's third and greatest motive for participation in the Judean relief effort (see note, v 7).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 8:10 *a year ago*. Paul is thinking in terms of the Jewish year, beginning in Oct (not the Roman year beginning on Jan 1). See calendar, p 262. May be given in the sense of "back in spring" from the perspective of this fall. *this work*. The intended collection for the Judean churches (see note, v 4).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 8:12 Paul does not demand that the Corinthians give beyond their means but encourages them to practice generosity appropriate to their resources.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 8:13–14 Paul envisions voluntary redistribution of material goods among Christians to redress the imbalance between rich and poor. He presupposes that God endows the wealthy with good things so they can come to the aid of their less fortunate brethren. The tables might be turned in the future if the Judean Christians enjoy material plenty while the Corinthians suffer want.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 8:15 Paul alludes to the gathering of manna in the wilderness to gently remind the Corinthians that their relative prosperity is not their own achievement but a pure gift of God (cf 1Co 4:7). God's action to equalize unequal portions indicates His intent that His children enjoy sufficiency, not luxury.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 8:1–15 The Macedonians forgot themselves as they gave to others as though there were no tomorrow. God also calls us to give generously, because He endows us with earthly things for our neighbors' benefit. God's Son, the wealthiest of princes, became the most abject of slaves and gave His all to enrich poor sinners as His royal Bride. • Praise to You, Lord Jesus, for swapping places with us. Make our hearts like Yours so we may embrace Your call to aid all in need. Amen.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 8:16 *put into the heart of Titus*. By going to complete the Corinthian collection (v 6), Titus gladly shared in Paul's own

pastoral love for this flock. Titus's main concern is for them as sheep, not for the contributions he might fleece from them.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 8:18 *the brother*. Usually identified as Luke, Paul's travel companion (see the "we" passages—Ac 16:10–17; 20:5–15; 21:1–18; 27:1–28:16). However, Acts contains only two passing references to the Judean relief fund (Ac 11:29–30; 24:17), whereas we would expect more detail if Luke himself had been closely involved. *the gospel*. Taken as the third Gospel (Luke) by some commentators. But the expression here does not hint at a written document ("preaching" is supplied for the sake of translation).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 8:19 *appointed by the churches*. Certain churches (perhaps those of Macedonia) formally commissioned the brother of v 18 to accompany Paul as he raised the relief funds. *act of grace*. The relief fund was conceived as a thank offering.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 8:20 *administered*. Paul's overall responsibility for organizing the relief fund forms part of the discharge of his apostleship, a task delegated in Corinth to Titus.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 8:21 *honorable*. Paul and his colleagues must avoid all appearance of impropriety before both the Church and the world (including financial dishonesty); hence the stress that all Church leaders need a good reputation in the eyes of the wider community (cf 1Tm 3:7). The brother of v 18 is to audit the accounts for the collection.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 8:22 *our brother*. An unknown member of Paul's inner circle, but when Titus read 2Co aloud to the assembled church, he would have identified both this brother and the brother mentioned in v 18. *often tested*. Or, "proved his worth." Paul has repeatedly delegated responsibilities and perhaps sensitive tasks to this co-worker.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 8:23 *my partner and fellow worker*. As a member of Paul's pastoral staff, Titus shares his ministry and will appear again in Corinth as his authorized representative. Titus's ministry has a wider scope than that of a presbyter (pastor) in a local church. *our brothers*. The persons mentioned in vv 18 and 22. *messengers*. Lit, "apostles" in a broad sense, meaning "emissaries." The first brother will represent the churches that send them, while Titus will represent the apostle Paul. As officers responsible for stewarding the Church's earthly goods, the two brothers appear in the role of NT deacons but with responsibility going beyond the local congregation. *the glory of Christ*. As Christ Himself is

really present in all Christians (see note, 13:5), so He is really present in the two brothers (and in Titus). This truth motivates hospitality and all forms of mutual love among Christians (cf Mt 25:40).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 8:24 *give proof before the churches*. Because living Christianity involves not just a vertical relationship between the Lord and the individual, but also the horizontal dimension of relationships among Christians, Paul encourages the Corinthians to show the other apostolic churches how their faith is flowering in attitudes and deeds of love.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 8:16–24 As Paul leads a great money-gathering effort, he takes care that clergy and laity work together to ensure that the Church's financial dealings are untainted by scandal. In our churches, we should honor those who undertake such tasks. Thanks be to God for His gift of willing servants, who distribute the life-giving Gospel in all their service in Christ. • Lord, teach us to manage Your Church's earthly resources for Your glory and the advancement of Your mission. Amen.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 9:1 *ministry for the saints*. A reference to the Judean relief fund (cf 8:4). This is not the "Word and Sacrament" ministry conducted by presbyters (pastors) but "social ministry" as determined in Antioch (Ac 11:29), sanctioned by the apostles, and supported by the churches.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 9:2 *Achaia*. See map, p 1886. Paul did not write this Letter for the Corinthians alone (1:1). Other churches in this province will be joining in the relief effort. *ready since last year*. See note, 8:10. The Corinthians had earlier shown such readiness to participate in the relief effort that he had been using their willingness to spur on the Macedonians.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 9:3 *brothers*. Certainly the two brothers mentioned in 8:18, 22 and likely also Titus.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 9:4 *humiliated*. If no generous collection is ready for Paul on his next visit, he will be exposed as a bearer of false witness to any Macedonians who may accompany him.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 9:5 *brothers*. See note, v 3. *the gift you have promised*. Lit, "the blessing you pledged ahead of time." *willing gift, not as an exaction*. Let the Corinthians' gift be like God's own blessing that wells up freely from His heart, not something wrung from them by Paul's vanity to avoid loss of face. *exaction*. Lit, "covetousness."

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 9:1–5 Because good intentions sometimes do not get acted on, Paul sends three representatives to Corinth to offer gentle encouragement to deliver what was promised. The Lord has representatives to encourage us today as well. E.g., we should listen to those who gently remind us to keep our baptismal vows. • We offer thanks to You, Lord, that You did not count the cost when You sent Your Son. For His sake, You watch over Your promises to keep them. Lord, drown my old self in the waters of Baptism day by day, that my new self may truly please You in all things. Amen.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 9:6 Paul quotes and applies folk wisdom to disclose another facet of God's bountiful grace. Not only does He freely pardon our sins and adopt us as sons and daughters, but He also promises rich reward as we keep His commands, however imperfectly, and echo His own generosity, however faintly (with what C. S. Lewis called "gift-love" to God in *The Four Loves*). "Works and troubles do not merit justification, but other payments…. The fulfilling of the Law earns a reward, for a reward properly relates to the Law. Yet we should be mindful of the Gospel, which freely offers justification for Christ's sake. We neither obey the Law, nor can obey it, before we have been reconciled to God, justified, and reborn. Nor would fulfilling the Law please God, unless we were accepted because of faith. People are accepted because of faith" (Ap V 246–47).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 9:7 *God loves a cheerful giver*. Through generosity, God's adopted children give joy to their heavenly Father by displaying His image and likeness. "Truly good works should be done willingly, or from a voluntary spirit, by those whom God's Son has made free" (FC SD IV 18).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 9:8 *all grace abound*. This bounteous God can and will richly bestow on the Corinthians the capacity for generosity in surplus measure. *abound … abound*. In Jesus, it is always more and never less. Even when in reduced circumstances, Christians will always be given opportunity for doing good. *sufficiency*. Gk *autarcheia*, lit, "self rule." As the Gospel comes to Greek culture and starts to transform it, Paul picks up this familiar Stoic word and fills it with new content. Stoics acquired sufficiency from their own inner resources, but Christians receive sufficiency as a pure gift of God.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 9:9 *He has distributed … forever*. Ps 112:9 praises one who fears the Lord, who practices lavish generosity toward

needy neighbors, and who is among those pronounced blessed "for their deeds follow them" (Rv 14:13). This righteous person of the OT is a preview of the giver described in 8:9.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 9:10 *harvest*. God, who enables farmers to sow and reap, will enable His children to do good works and will prosper their efforts. *your righteousness*. Not the basis of your good standing before God, but the consequence of exercising the status you now have in His eyes. See p 1904.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 9:11 *You … enriched in every way*. Cf Ac 20:35; Rv 19:8. *generous … will produce thanksgiving to God*. Relief is given and fellowship between Gentile and Jew is strengthened, leading to the further good of abundant thanksgiving to God at the Lord's Supper and elsewhere.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 9:12 *ministry*. See note, 9:1. *service*. Lit, "liturgy," i.e., public work, done for the common good. "The term *leitourgia* agrees well with the ministry. For it is an old word, ordinarily used in public civil administrations. To the Greeks it meant public burdens, such as tribute, the expense of equipping a fleet, or similar things" (Ap XXIV 81). *saints*. The impoverished believers in Judea. *overflowing*. See note, 8:2. *thanksgivings to God*. Grace circles back to God's throne as our gift to Him.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 9:13 Paul pictures the Jewish Christians in Judea rejoicing over God's action to reconcile Jew and Gentile in Christ. They glorify God for relieving their needs through the generosity of the Corinthians (and other Gentile believers) and for this expression of fellowship in the worldwide Church.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 9:14 *surpassing grace of God*. In 2Co, Paul uses all the nuances of the word "grace": God's favor for Christ's sake, His gifts-in-grace to them, their generosity to others, and the churches' gracious thanks. God's favor returns full circle to the One who first sowed it (cf v 6). See "grace," p 1902.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 9:15 Paul bursts into doxology for the whole range of God's generous provision, including the content of v 14 and esp the fountainhead of it all (8:9).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 9:6–15 Paul urges the Corinthians to go with the flow of God's self-giving in Christ by giving themselves to others, so that the downward and outward movement of grace comes full circle in

an ascending symphony of thanksgiving. Seeing things in an earthly, me-first way is miserly and petty. Instead, we should open our hands to receive from God and extend them to give to our neighbor. We marvel that in Jesus it is always more and never less and rejoice that God's gifts multiply as we receive and share them. • Lord, open and widen our narrow hearts to You, to Your children, and to all. Amen.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON **Chs 10–13** A dark cloud now descends on 2Co. Some bad news from Corinth likely arrived as Paul was dictating the Letter (contradicting Titus's joyful report, 7:6–7). Intruders have exacerbated tensions within the Church. These outsiders called Paul's credentials into question, impugned his motives, and undermined his ministry among his own converts. Paul wants all glory to go to Christ, with every minister (including himself) standing humbly as the Lord's messenger and instrument (cf 1Co 3:5–6). But the intruders blow their own trumpets (and obscure Christ from view in the process) and cast malicious aspersions on Paul's person. Paul must set the record straight by "boasting" about his office (10:8) and what he has been given to achieve through its exercise (10:13–16). Boasting of this kind diminishes the intruders and actually gives all glory to Christ!

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 10:1 *the meekness and gentleness of Christ*. Some Corinthians dismiss Paul's meekness as weakness, not realizing that he is deliberately Christlike when in their midst. Paul seems aware of Jesus' saying recorded in Mt 11:29. *humble … bold*. Paul's antagonists attacked him for his gentleness and his firmness.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 10:2 To the Corinthian dissidents, Paul is a charlatan, a religious huckster. *walking according to the flesh*. Pursuing an ungodly lifestyle welling up from deep-down unbelief. See p 1904.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 10:3 *flesh*. Used in a morally neutral sense here, meaning the body. Like all other mortals, Paul lives in a frail "tent" that will one day collapse (cf 5:1–4). *waging war*. Paul's whole ministry, like that of Christ before him, is an all-out conflict with Satan's realm, aiming to deliver people through the Gospel from the grip of the evil one (Col 1:13–14). Every Christian is a frontline soldier, exposed to attack and never off duty (cf 2Tm 2:3–4).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 10:4 *weapons*. The tools with which Paul does ministry—Word, Sacraments, prayer, merciful kindness, etc.—are not of the flesh, i.e., not means for Paul's sinful self-aggrandizement (cf 4:2).

"The Church's authority and the State's authority must not be confused. The Church's authority has its own commission to teach the Gospel and to administer the Sacraments" (AC XXVIII 12). See note, 1:24. "What has stopped or quelled the counsels, purposes, murder, and riot of our enemies, by which the devil thought he would crush us, together with the Gospel? It was the prayer of a few godly people standing in the middle like an iron wall for our side" (LC III 31). See note, 1:11. *divine power to destroy strongholds*. The Holy Spirit's power is at work through the Word. Here esp, Paul considers the accusations of the Law, which tear down the unbeliever's wall of self-defense. Hardened unbelievers might appear impervious to evangelization, but God's almighty power encourages us to keep hoping, praying, and bearing witness.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 10:5 *every thought captive*. Jesus explains the First Table of the Law as demanding that you love God "with all your mind" (Mt 22:37). So Paul must not simply gather a crowd or win hearts, but he must also win minds (such as those of the scholars on the Areopagus, Ac 17). "Human senses and reason do not comprehend. But, as in all other articles of faith, our reason is brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ" (FC Ep VII 42). "Since in the Holy Scriptures Christ is called a mystery upon which all heretics dash their heads, we admonish all Christians not to arrogantly indulge their reason in crafty investigations about such mysteries. With the beloved apostles, they should simply believe. They should close the eyes of their reason and bring their understanding into captivity to the obedience of Christ [2 Corinthians 10:5], and rejoice without ceasing in the fact that our flesh and blood is placed so high at the right hand of God's majesty and almighty power. In this way we will certainly find constant consolation in every difficulty and remain well guarded against deadly error" (FC SD VIII 96). See application note, 1 Co 15:12–34.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 10:6 *disobedience*. Once Paul is sure of the Corinthians' obedience to Christ, he will go after the third party described in chs 10–12, the troublemakers. See note, chs 10–13.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 10:7 *before your eyes*. The problems and solution seem obvious to Paul. *he is Christ's*. Perhaps a reference to the "Christ party" of 1Co 1:12, whose members did not consider themselves bound to the Gospel as proclaimed by Paul. See "in Christ," p 1903. *we*.

Paul and his ministerial co-workers, whom the intruders are accusing of being fake.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 10:8 *our authority*. The apostles and Paul's co-workers are not just private persons, but ambassadors of Christ. Christ authorized them to exercise pastoral care through the means of grace "in His stead and by His command" (cf Lk 10:16; Ap VII and VIII 47). "The Keys do not have the power to impose penalties or to institute rites of worship, but only the command to forgive sins [John 20:23] to those who are converted and to convict and excommunicate [1 Corinthians 5] those who are unwilling to be converted. For just as to *loose* means to forgive sins, so to *bind* means not to forgive sins. Christ speaks of a spiritual kingdom, and God's command is that ministers of the Gospel should absolve those who are converted" (Ap XIIB 79). *building you up*. In the NT, edification always consolidates the community as a whole; it does not properly focus on the isolated individual. *destroying*. Ministers may not act as regional warlords, developing their own personal spheres of influence. All sheep belong first and foremost to the Good Shepherd.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 10:9–11 The idea that proclaiming the Law to provoke repentance is "frightening" sounds like some modern, misguided views of psychology and shows how contemporary this Letter is.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 10:10 *they*. The intruders, and possibly also the "Christ party" (1Co 1:12) in alliance with them. *bodily … weak*. Physically unimpressive. "Paul" means "short" in Gk. Recurrent ill health also made him physically repulsive at times (cf Gal 4:13–14; 2Co 12:7). *his speech of no account*. The false apostles may have surpassed Paul in oratory skills, which were highly respected in classical culture. The Corinthians seem to have had special interest in oratory rhetoric (cf 1Co 1:18–2:5). In the Letters to the Corinthians, Paul used a full range of rhetorical devices. See "Rhetoric and Logic," p 1945. Paul viewed himself as a "jar of clay" (4:7). His fervent focus on the crucified Christ (1Co 2:2) was guaranteed to alienate the proud.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 10:11 Paul's opponents are deriding his calls for repentance and discipline in 1Co and the tearful letter (2Co 2:4) as empty words. Both by letter and in person, he will see to it that the Law's "alien work" of effecting repentance is done for the sake of God's "proper" work of bestowing mercy through the Gospel (FC Ep V 10). Paul is consistently Christlike as he applies Law and Gospel.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 10:12 *commending themselves*. The intruders no longer stand in "fear and trembling" (7:15) but turn church leadership into a beauty contest judged by worldly standards.
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 10:13 *area of influence God assigned*. The ascended Christ willed Paul to found the churches in the regions of Achaia and Macedonia (Ac 16:9–10). God gave him authority over these congregations (cf Ac 15:7, 36; 1Co 3:5–9; 4:1). Paul does not envision exercising such direct authority over the Roman Church that he did not found (Rm 15:14–29). See note, v 15. *reach even to you*. A forceful reminder that the Corinthians did not become Christians by their own reason or strength, but that the Lord in His mercy reached them precisely through Paul (cf Jn 15:16).
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 10:14 *come all the way*. A reminder that the Gentile believers in Corinth were without God before the Lord graciously sought them out (cf Lk 15:12–24).
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 10:15 *labors of others*. Paul contrasted his manner with the false apostles who claimed credit for his accomplishments. *faith increases*. The number of believers in Achaia increased, and their confession became more widely known. *area of influence*. This is not Paul's personal fiefdom, but it expresses the hope that Christ will extend His Church in geographical terms through the service of Paul and his colleagues.
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 10:16 Cf Rm 15:20.
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 10:17 Jeremiah's counsel, now perfectly realized in Christ (1Co 1:30–31), preaches salvation by grace alone from the heart of the OT, showing the unity of Scripture.
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 10:18 *approved*. As faithful servants "before the judgment seat of Christ" (5:10).
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON **Ch 10** Paul's opponents cut him to ribbons and paint themselves in glowing colors, but he presses forward in spiritual warfare, winning souls for Christ against all odds, rejoicing that the Lord prospers his work and opens doors for his ministry, giving all glory to Christ. Dear Christian, do not judge your ministers by the standards of secular business and entertainment, but go by whether they speak with the Shepherd's voice and give His care. As Christ endured the darts of the evil one to rescue the undeserving from his clutches, so Paul and faithful ministers submit to affliction in order to reach the lost and build up the

flock. • Lord, grant us to die to self and live to You, and to be instruments of Your mission, not obstacles in its way. Amen.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:1 *a little foolishness*. The intruders' self-focus nauseates Paul, who wants "to know nothing among [the Corinthians] except Jesus Christ and Him crucified" (1Co 2:2). He must now respond with boasting to silence them. He thereby connects them with reality according to his desire in 10:7.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:2 *divine jealousy*. Our passionate God is stirred when His people give themselves to idols or divide their allegiance between Him and other gods (syncretism). Paul was likewise passionate that his converts belong wholly to Christ and not revert to Belial (cf 6:15). *betrothed*. Paul revives the image of the "joyous exchange" (see note, 8:9), introducing the subject of the marriage between Christ and the Church, picturing himself as the one who arranged the engagement for the Bride (the Corinthians). The emphasis here is not so much on the Bridegroom's gift as on the faithfulness due from the Bride. *pure virgin*. Not literally true of many Corinthians. Cf 1Co 6:11, which also tells how God's cleansing forgiveness, poured out in Baptism, restored the Corinthians to virginal purity (cf Lk 15:22, the "best robe"). See note, Rv 14:4.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:3 *led astray*. Eve was the naive victim of the evil one, that master of cunning. *devotion*. Despite good intentions on the Corinthians' part, forces are at work to steer their minds away from single-hearted loyalty to Christ.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:4 *someone*. Likely a ringleader of the intruders undermining Paul's ministry in Corinth. *another Jesus*. Already in the apostolic age, Judaizing Christians and Gnostics began to promote views of "Jesus" as not fully God or fully man. Luther marvelously presented the whole biblical Jesus in his explanation of the Second Article of the Apostles' Creed (p xxxvii). Run from any other "Jesus" at top speed (cf 2Jn 7)! *different spirit*. Only the real Jesus joins the Father in sending Christians the true Holy Spirit. Luther could not practice fellowship with those who denied the real presence in Holy Communion because they had "a different spirit." *received … accepted*. Accepting the Gospel seems like a voluntary, conscious act from the human perspective. However, no one comes to faith in the Gospel apart from the gracious work of the Holy Spirit. *different gospel*. The message of the intruders was substantially different from the genuine Gospel (vv 13–15, 20). Paul focused on the issue

of their boasting and claims of apostolic authority. *you put up with it readily enough*. Doctrine can easily slip to last place, but pure doctrine should come first because false doctrine endangers salvation itself. See note, Gal 1:6.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:5 *super-apostles*. This ironic and biting expression cannot refer to the apostle "pillars" (Peter, James, and John) in Jerusalem. Paul emphasized his fellowship with them (Gal 2:2, 9) and understood his labors for the Judean relief fund as an expression of this fellowship. The super-apostles are false apostles (v 13), intruders of pastoral rank (probably prophets, teachers, or presbyters) who may have had strong connections to the Jerusalem Church.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:6 *unskilled in speaking*. Likely hyperbole. Paul admits his rivals can and do outshine him in this skill.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:7 *free of charge?* Paul renounced the right to payment, granted by the earthly Jesus Himself (1Co 9:14), with a noble view in mind; see note, v 8.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:8 *robbed*. Hyperbole. Outsiders helped pay Paul's expenses during his lengthy first stay in Corinth, when he also worked as a tentmaker to support himself (Ac 18:3). It seems he accepted payment from no church while he was actually founding or revisiting it because he did not want to give the impression that he was a hireling they could command. The intruders interpreted Paul's refusal to accept maintenance from Corinth as an admission that he lacked full apostolic status.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:9 *brothers who came from Macedonia*. Not necessarily native Macedonians, but possibly Silas and Timothy (cf Ac 18:5).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:10 *regions of Achaia*. The individual districts of the Roman province that included southern Greece; see map, p 1886.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:11 Paul anticipated the pain his confrontation with the super-apostles would cause. See note, v 8.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:12 *undermine the claim*. Paul will keep on renouncing his rights to show the intruders as lovers of comfort addicted to the perks. *they work on the same terms*. They want to be regarded as Paul's equals at the very least.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:13 *false apostles*. They are envoys indeed, but of a false Gospel (cf v 4). *deceitful workmen*. Their work looks solid but is a fraud. "The false apostles pushed circumcision (Acts 15:1) in order to establish their false doctrine that the works of the Law were necessary for righteousness and salvation" (FC SD X 12).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:14 *Satan disguises himself as an angel of light*. Because sinful people still know the difference between right and wrong, the evil one seduces them into his camp by making wicked deeds appear good. Satan cloaks naked evil in attractive garments.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:15 *his servants*. Not his unwilling slaves, but his eager co-workers. *Their end will correspond to their deeds*. False prophets may flourish here on earth, but their coming penalty will be no laughing matter. Cf 5:10; Rv 19:19–21.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:1–15 Paul went over the top in real ministry to bring the true Christ and the true Church to the Corinthians. He now grieves that they are falling for fake ministers who push a fake Christ. Today, believers must wake up to the fact that pure doctrine, right worship, and genuine pastors cannot be taken for granted. Although Christ knew many would cast aside His mercy, He still bore the cross and He still sends out true shepherds with the genuine Gospel. • O Jesus, whose exalted body bears the wounds You suffered for us, cause us joyfully to suffer for the sake of remaining connected to You in Your true Church through the service of true shepherds. Amen.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:16 *accept me as a fool*. A fool is a pathetic figure treading the way of death (see p 1016). Under normal circumstances, what follows might be as distasteful as a pastor singing "How Great I Am" at a Good Friday service. Paul must perform this risky routine to beat the intruders at their own game.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:17 *not with the Lord's authority*. This is not a denial that the Holy Spirit is inspiring this section of the letter, but an acknowledgment that no genuine servant of Christ speaks this way except under extraordinary conditions.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:18 *according to the flesh*. I.e., boasting about their heritage.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:19 Sarcasm. The Corinthians have let themselves be duped.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:20 Sarcasm characterizing the performances of the super-apostles. It is impossible to interpret these deliberately folksy expressions with precision, but obviously the Corinthians are getting the sharp edge of Paul's tongue. *makes slaves of you*. Strips them of their freedom in Christ (cf Gal 4:21–5:5). *devours you*. Exploits their hospitality. *puts on airs*. Elevates themselves to humble the Corinthians. *strikes you in the face*. As Jewish Christians from the Judean homeland, the intruders got away with treating the Gentile Corinthian converts as second-class Christians.
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:21 *too weak*. Sarcasm. Paul's refusal to exploit the Corinthians showed his spiritual maturity.
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:22 *Hebrews? … Israelites? … offspring of Abraham?* Interchangeable terms multiplied for rhetorical effect. The first term emphasizes ethnicity and the second, national allegiance. Paul used the last expression elsewhere to allude to Christ as the Seed of Abraham (Gal 3:16).
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:23–27 Paul presents a litany of the "downside" of his ministry, which amply fulfilled the risen Lord's words to Ananias (Ac 9:16). Paul's misery in the line of duty contrasts with the soft life of the intruders in Corinth, where the proconsul Gallio shielded the fledgling church from Roman-orchestrated persecution (Ac 18:12–17).
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:23 *servants of Christ?* Ministers, not laypersons. See p 1904.
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:24 Jewish punishment at the hands of synagogue authorities based on Dt 25:1–3.
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:25 *Three … rods*. Roman punishment, from which Paul should have been exempt as a citizen of the empire, but note what happened in Philippi (Ac 16:22). *stoned*. Jewish punishment inflicted at Lystra (Ac 14:19).
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:26 *robbers*. Paul was a prime target for muggers whenever he carried money for the relief fund. *my own people*. The Pharisees regarded Paul as a traitor. *false brothers*. The enemy within is a worse threat than foes without. Paul likely has Gnostics and/or Judaizers in mind. See notes, vv 13–15.
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:27 Church planting was not a 9-to-5 job with benefits, but constant labor to the point of exhaustion.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:28 *daily pressure … anxiety for all the churches*. The trials listed in vv 23–27 are sporadic and temporary, but worry for the welfare of the sheep is constant, esp those in the churches Paul founded (cf Ac 15:36).
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:29 Paul viewed himself as a shepherd for all his siblings in Christ (cf 1Co 12:26).
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:30 *show my weakness*. If Paul must boast, he will highlight instances where he can come across as a laughingstock, as in vv 31–33.
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:31 *not lying*. This oath formula guarantees the truthfulness of the whole unlikely catalog from v 23 through 12:10.
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:32 *King Aretas*. Aretas IV was the Roman client king of Nabatea from 9 BC to c AD 40. Ac 9:23–24 indicates that the governor was in league with the Jews of Damascus.
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 11:16–33 Paul gives sensitive personal information to prove that a genuine servant of Christ carries his Master's cross and drinks His cup. We, too, must suffer with Christ now in order to reign with Him later. The Lord and His angels protect and accompany His servants even when they seem to have forsaken us. • Jesus, I trust in You as "I walk in danger all the way." Amen. (*LSB* 716:1)
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 12:1 *nothing to be gained by it*. Sarcasm or hyperbole. Paul's boasting gained a sharper contrast between himself and the super-apostles. *visions*. Faith is not built on mystical experiences. Paul met Jesus Himself on the Damascus Road (Ac 26:12–18). *revelations of the Lord*. Paul saw the risen Lord and received information from Him (cf Ac 16:7–10).
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 12:2 *man in Christ*. A roundabout way of speaking. Clearly, Paul is speaking of himself. See "in Christ," p 1903. *fourteen years ago*. C AD 40. *caught up*. Paul is absolutely passive; the Lord alone is doing and giving. *third heaven*. The highest heaven. "Heaven" is plural in Hbr, likely because the earthly atmosphere and the realm of God were distinguished. Here, Paul uses terminology typical of intertestamental Judaism, but he shows no interest in its details. *in the body or out of the body*. His spiritual faculties were alert, but Paul's total focus on the Lord and complete forgetfulness of self made him unaware of how his body

related to this experience. He may have had the experience as a vision, or he may have been physically taken to heaven.
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 12:3 *paradise*. Used here as an equivalent to "third heaven," v 2. This Persian term for an aristocrat's private park became a loanword in intertestamental Judaism to describe first the Garden of Eden and then the dwelling place of believing souls after death. Some Jewish interpreters held that God took Eden to heaven.
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 12:4 *things that cannot be told*. It was impossible to put into words and not something people needed to know.
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 12:5 *this man*. See note, v 2. *I will not boast*. God alone enacts this experience, so Paul can claim no credit. *weaknesses*. Or, "illnesses." Paul turns from boasting to confess his faults.
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 12:6 *I refrain*. A wise choice, because Paul remained chief of sinners, living by pardoning grace.
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 12:7 *surpassing greatness of the revelations*. So overwhelming was this anticipation of the world to come that the Lord saw fit to bring Paul back to earth with a thump. *a thorn*. Probably a chronic health problem (see note, v 5), but we are not told. *a messenger of Satan*. Evils of body and soul—permitted by God to work a greater good—occur through demonic agency.
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 12:8 *Three times*. Probably a literal number but also a way of getting across a serious and prolonged prayer concern.
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 12:9 *grace*. See p 1902. *power … weakness*. Christ's almighty power works great things through feeble instruments (cf 4:7). "Troubles are not always punishments for certain past deeds, but they are God's works, intended for our benefit, and that God's power might be made more apparent in our weakness. So Paul says God's strength 'is made perfect in weakness' (2 Corinthians 12:9). Because of God's will, our bodies should be sacrifices, to declare our obedience, and not to pay for eternal death. God has another price for that: the death of His own Son" (Ap XIIB 63–64). *perfect*. See p 1903.
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 12:10 When affliction reduces Paul to total dependence on God, then he is most of all a supple instrument in Christ's hand.
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 12:1–10 Like scarcely any other person before or since, Paul tasted the powers and bliss of heaven, but at the same time suffered bitterly under the curse of sin. "You are dust, and to dust you

shall return" (Gn 3:19), yet believers truly already sit in the heavenly places (cf Eph 1:3). • Lord, help us keep our balance as we walk with one foot in the perishing world and the other in the world to come! Amen.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 12:11 *commended*. As living proof of his genuine apostleship (3:2–3), the Corinthians should have commended Paul to one another and esp to his severe critics. See note, 11:5. *I am nothing*. He is nothing in himself, but in Christ and as an apostle, he has much in every way.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 12:12 *signs of a true apostle*. The chief sign is the Gentiles' deliverance from darkness to light through the Gospel. *signs and wonders and mighty works*. Such miracles proved Paul's equality with the Twelve and confirmed his true apostleship. Paul described the apostolic ministry as esp signaled by miracles, which God provided in that era. God can certainly still work miracles today, yet He chose to distinguish the apostles in this way.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 12:13 *burden*. See notes, 11:7, 8. *Forgive me this wrong!* Half-humorous, half-biting remark.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 12:14–15 *third time*. Paul's first visit (at the founding of the Corinthian Church) was an 18-month stay during his second missionary journey (Ac 18:1–17). His second trip was the "painful visit" referred to in 2:1, a searing experience that led Paul to postpone the visit announced in 1Co 16:5 and change his original travel plans (cf 1:16, 23; see pp 1979–80). *not … yours but you*. Hus: "Rapacious wolves … seek more the money of those subject to them than their salvation" (*The Church*, p 226). Paul sought the people. *children … spent for your souls*. The Fourth Commandment would have adult children provide for aged parents. But Paul is not yet in his dotage, and the Corinthians are far from spiritual maturity. Paul wishes to continue his spiritual fatherhood in Corinth (1Co 4:15).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 12:16 Some Corinthians suspected Paul's refusal to accept maintenance was a smoke screen to cover up pilfering from the Judean relief funds.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 12:18 *Titus … the brother*. Probably refers to the impending visit announced in 8:17. Mention of one companion rather than two occurs perhaps because the brother of 8:22 is Paul's representative and the brother of 8:18 is an emissary of the churches. *Titus take advantage*. Paul's question refers to Titus's behavior on an earlier visit, when he began

the collection (8:6), and possibly a second, to deliver the letter of "many tears" (2:4).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 12:19 *defending ourselves*. Paul is not currying favor for himself and his colleagues. *in the sight of God*. He asserts his faithful stewardship of office before God, whose judgment ultimately is the only thing that counts (cf 1Co 4:2–5). *upbuilding*. The three autobiographical chapters aim at the collective repentance and spiritual growth of the Corinthian Church, which Paul greets as beloved. *beloved*. See p 1901.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 12:20 If this Letter does not bring a genuine change of hearts, the congregation will confront Paul with the fruit of his opponents' intrusion.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 12:21 *God may humble me*. Lack of repentance on the Corinthians' part is the personal failure Paul dreads. *may … mourn*. Paul would lament if some Corinthians continued in a state of spiritual death. *have not repented*. Then, as now, many cheerfully ignore the somber warning of 1Co 6:9–10. "The [justifying] faith of which we speak exists in repentance … neither does it dwell with mortal [grave] sin" (Ap V 21, 23).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 12:11–21 The Corinthians should not have sat on their hands while the intruders tore Paul apart. The apostle wants to return for another visit, his heart and arms open wide with love, but he is also prepared to be firm if necessary. People and pastors today, remember your vows to God concerning one another, and keep them well. The Lord still comes into our troubled lives, with His heart set to do His proper work of mercy. • Jesus, may Your coming to us in grace not be in vain, but for our good. Amen.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 13:1 *third time*. Cf 12:14. *witnesses*. This disciplinary procedure is based on Dt 19:15; Timothy follows this when hearing charges against leaders (1Tm 5:19), and Paul does so when dealing with cases mentioned in 12:21.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 13:2 *I will not spare them*. A strong assertion of Paul's intent to excommunicate the unrepentant (see Tr 60). Cf 1Co 5:4–5.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 13:3 *proof that Christ is speaking in me*. Paul's Corinthian opponents contested this (10:10).

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 13:4 For Paul, living in Christ is no figure of speech. As both weakness and strength, wealth and poverty coexist in Jesus, Paul will be the powerful instrument of the risen Lord.
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 13:5 *Examine yourselves…. Test yourselves*. Paul urges them to subject themselves to what they had put him through by verifying their own genuineness as Christians. See note, 1Co 11:28. *in the faith*. Both subjective faith (by which one believes) and objective faith (the doctrine in which one believes). They are to examine their consciences to determine profession of apostolic doctrine and involvement in continual repentance (see note, 12:21). *Jesus Christ is in you?* Jn 6:56; 14:20; 15:4–5; and Gal 2:20 forbid reducing "in" to "among." The exalted Christ enjoys a miraculous, real presence in each member of His Church. The same is true of the Father (Jn 14:23) and the Holy Spirit (Jn 14:17; see p 1815). *unless indeed you fail to meet the test!* Unless they are fake Christians, as some of them consider Paul a fake apostle. "If you have a heart that can expect of Him nothing but what is good—especially in need and distress—and a heart that also renounces and forsakes everything that is not God, then you have the only true God. If, on the contrary, your heart clings to anything else from which it expects more good and help than from God, and if your heart does not take refuge in Him but flees from Him when in trouble, then you have an idol, another god" (LC I 28).
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 13:6 *we have not failed the test*. Blessed unity in Christ depends on the Corinthians recognizing the genuineness of Paul and his colleagues.
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 13:7–8 Paul is pastorally concerned for the Corinthians; he is not frantic to vindicate himself. He always acts, and wants the whole Church to order its life, in accordance with the true (and only) Gospel, as opposed to the "different Gospel" (11:4). "When they teach or establish anything against the Gospel, then the congregations are forbidden by God's command to obey them" (AC XXVIII 23).
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 13:9 *glad when we are weak*. If the Corinthians are spiritually healthy, Paul will be happy not to assert his authority. *restoration*. Or, "completion," the full fruition of the whole Corinthian Church. See note, 7:1.
2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 13:10 Paul's heart is in being an instrument of God's "proper" work of forgiveness, not His "alien" work of punishment (FC Ep V 10). See note, 10:8.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 13:1–10 If need be, Paul will bind sins and excommunicate the unrepentant on his next visit. Yet, he hopes examination of consciences will show the Corinthians that they hold the Lord's doctrine and that they forsake the way of death to cling to the Lord of life. If Christ dwells in them, then Paul will come in gentleness, for the Gospel will hold sway. • Lord, keep us in Your truth and quicken our repentance, that we may abide in You and You in us. Amen.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 13:11 *brothers*. See p 1901. *Aim for restoration*. See note, v 9. *live in peace*. This will follow from being of one mind, itself a gift of God.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 13:12 *holy kiss*. This outward sign, comparable with today's handshake, expresses the God-given reality of fellowship. See note, Rm 16:16. Because the Letter to the Corinthians would be read during the Service of the Word, Paul may have included the greeting here in anticipation of the following Service of the Sacrament. The Early Church celebrated Holy Communion behind closed doors and began the rite with the kiss of peace. Pagan society would later accuse them of hosting orgies in this context.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 13:13 *All the saints*. See "saints," p 1904.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 13:14 Paul articulates the reality of the blessed Trinity in this liturgical form. The gifts associated with the three divine persons convey a sense of the "mystical union." *The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ*. The Son's active favor toward His Church. *the love of God*. The Father's active love that sent and sends the Son and the Spirit. *the fellowship of the Holy Spirit*. The sharing in doctrine, Sacraments, and love wrought by the Holy Spirit. *be with you all*. The words from Christ's ambassador give what they say. This is still true as the Church's ministers pronounce these words till the end of time.

2 CORINTHIANS—NOTE ON 13:11–14 Confident that God's Word will do its work, Paul utters no more stern demand or harsh rebuke. He moves through gentle appeal to end on a triumphant note. We should take our bearings from God's good purpose and the communion of saints. The blessed Trinity is not dry theory but the God of love in whom we have life now and forever. • Praise to You, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, that You give Your Church Your very life! Amen.

Galatians

Galatians 1 | Galatians 2 | Galatians 3 | Galatians 4 | Galatians 5 | Galatians 6

- Introduction to Galatians
  - Overview
  - Reading Galatians
  - Luther on Galatians
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

Greeting

1 [1]†† Paul, an apostle—not from men nor through man, but through
Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead— [2]† and all
the brothers[1] who are with me,

To the churches of Galatia:

[3]† Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus
Christ, [4]† who gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil
age, according to the will of our God and Father, [5]† to whom be the glory
forever and ever. Amen.

No Other Gospel

6 ‡ † I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you
in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel— 7 † not that
there is another one, but there are some who trouble you and want to distort
the gospel of Christ. 8 † But even if we or an angel from heaven should
preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be
accursed. 9 † As we have said before, so now I say again: If anyone is
preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, let him be
accursed.

10 † For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying
to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a
servant[2] of Christ.

Paul Called by God

11 † † For I would have you know, brothers, that the gospel that was
preached by me is not man's gospel.[3] 12 † For I did not receive it from any
man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus
Christ. 13 † For you have heard of my former life in Judaism, how I
persecuted the church of God violently and tried to destroy it. 14 † And I was
advancing in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, so
extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers. 15 † But when he
who had set me apart before I was born,[1] and who called me by his grace,
16 † was pleased to reveal his Son to[2] me, in order that I might preach him
among the Gentiles, I did not immediately consult with anyone;[3] 17 † nor did
I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I went away
into Arabia, and returned again to Damascus.

18 † Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas and
remained with him fifteen days. 19 † But I saw none of the other apostles
except James the Lord's brother. 20 † (In what I am writing to you, before
God, I do not lie!) 21 † Then I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia.
22 † And I was still unknown in person to the churches of Judea that are in
Christ. 23 † They only were hearing it said, "He who used to persecute us is
now preaching the faith he once tried to destroy." 24 And they glorified God
because of me.

Paul Accepted by the Apostles

2 [1]‡† Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with
Barnabas, taking Titus along with me. [2]† I went up because of a revelation
and set before them (though privately before those who seemed influential)
the gospel that I proclaim among the Gentiles, in order to make sure I was
not running or had not run in vain. [3]† But even Titus, who was with me, was
not forced to be circumcised, though he was a Greek. [4]† Yet because of false
brothers secretly brought in—who slipped in to spy out our freedom that we
have in Christ Jesus, so that they might bring us into slavery— [5]† to them
we did not yield in submission even for a moment, so that the truth of the
gospel might be preserved for you. [6]† And from those who seemed to be
influential (what they were makes no difference to me; God shows no
partiality)—those, I say, who seemed influential added nothing to me. [7]† On
the contrary, when they saw that I had been entrusted with the gospel to the
uncircumcised, just as Peter had been entrusted with the gospel to the
circumcised [8]† (for he who worked through Peter for his apostolic ministry
to the circumcised worked also through me for mine to the Gentiles), [9]† and
when James and Cephas and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the
grace that was given to me, they gave the right hand of fellowship to
Barnabas and me, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the
circumcised. [10]† Only, they asked us to remember the poor, the very thing I
was eager to do.

Paul Opposes Peter

11 ‡ † But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face,
because he stood condemned. 12 † For before certain men came from James,
he was eating with the Gentiles; but when they came he drew back and
separated himself, fearing the circumcision party. 13 † And the rest of the
Jews acted hypocritically along with him, so that even Barnabas was led
astray by their hypocrisy. 14 † But when I saw that their conduct was not in
step with the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas before them all, “If you,
though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you force the
Gentiles to live like Jews?”

Justified by Faith

15 ††We ourselves are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners; 16 †yet we know
that a person is not justified[1] by works of the law but through faith in Jesus
Christ, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by
faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no
one will be justified.

17 †But if, in our endeavor to be justified in Christ, we too were found to
be sinners, is Christ then a servant of sin? Certainly not! 18 †For if I rebuild
what I tore down, I prove myself to be a transgressor. 19 †For through the
law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. 20 †I have been crucified
with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the
life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me
and gave himself for me. 21 † I do not nullify the grace of God, for if
righteousness[2] were through the law, then Christ died for no purpose.

By Faith, or by Works of the Law?

3 [1]‡†O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? It was before your eyes that Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified. [2]†Let me ask you only this: Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by hearing with faith? [3]†Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by[3] the flesh? [4]† Did you suffer[4] so many things in vain—if indeed it was in vain? [5]†Does he who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you do so by works of the law, or by hearing with faith—
[6] † just as Abraham "believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness"?

[7]‡† Know then that it is those of faith who are the sons of Abraham.
[8]† And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify[5] the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "In you shall all the nations be blessed." [9]†So then, those who are of faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith.

The Righteous Shall Live by Faith

10 For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse; for it is
written, “Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the
Book of the Law, and do them.” 11 Now it is evident that no one is justified
before God by the law, for “The righteous shall live by faith.”[1] 12 But the
law is not of faith, rather “The one who does them shall live by them.”
13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us
—for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree”— 14 so
that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so
that we might receive the promised Spirit[2] through faith.

The Law and the Promise

15 ‡ † To give a human example, brothers:[3] even with a man-made
covenant, no one annuls it or adds to it once it has been ratified. 16†Now the
promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, “And
to offsprings,” referring to many, but referring to one, “And to your
offspring,” who is Christ. 17†This is what I mean: the law, which came 430
years afterward, does not annul a covenant previously ratified by God, so as
to make the promise void. 18†For if the inheritance comes by the law, it no
longer comes by promise; but God gave it to Abraham by a promise.

19†Why then the law? It was added because of transgressions, until the
offspring should come to whom the promise had been made, and it was put
in place through angels by an intermediary. 20†Now an intermediary implies
more than one, but God is one.

21†Is the law then contrary to the promises of God? Certainly not! For if a
law had been given that could give life, then righteousness would indeed be
by the law. 22‡But the Scripture imprisoned everything under sin, so that the
promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.

23Now before faith came, we were held captive under the law, imprisoned
until the coming faith would be revealed. 24 † So then, the law was our
guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith.
25†But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian, 26†for in
Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. 27†For as many of you as
were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28† There is neither Jew nor
Greek, there is neither slave[1] nor free, there is no male and female, for you
are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 † And if you are Christ’s, then you are
Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to promise.

Sons and Heirs

4 [1]‡‡I mean that the heir, as long as he is a child, is no different from
a slave,[2] though he is the owner of everything, [2]but he is under guardians
and managers until the date set by his father. [3]†In the same way we also,
when we were children, were enslaved to the elementary principles[3] of the
world. [4]†But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son,
born of woman, born under the law, [5]† to redeem those who were under the
law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. [6]†And because you are sons,
God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!”
[7]†So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through
God.

Paul’s Concern for the Galatians

8 †† Formerly, when you did not know God, you were enslaved to those
that by nature are not gods. 9 † But now that you have come to know God, or
rather to be known by God, how can you turn back again to the weak and
worthless elementary principles of the world, whose slaves you want to be
once more? 10 † You observe days and months and seasons and years! 11 † I
am afraid I may have labored over you in vain.

12 † Brothers,[1] I entreat you, become as I am, for I also have become as
you are. You did me no wrong. 13 † You know it was because of a bodily
ailment that I preached the gospel to you at first, 14 † and though my
condition was a trial to you, you did not scorn or despise me, but received
me as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus. 15 † What then has become of the
blessing you felt? For I testify to you that, if possible, you would have
gouged out your eyes and given them to me. 16 † Have I then become your
enemy by telling you the truth?[2] 17 † They make much of you, but for no
good purpose. They want to shut you out, that you may make much of
them. 18 † It is always good to be made much of for a good purpose, and not
only when I am present with you, 19 † my little children, for whom I am
again in the anguish of childbirth until Christ is formed in you! 20 † I wish I
could be present with you now and change my tone, for I am perplexed
about you.

Example of Hagar and Sarah

21 Tell me, you who desire to be under the law, do you not listen to the
law? 22 For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by a slave woman
and one by a free woman. 23 But the son of the slave was born according to
the flesh, while the son of the free woman was born through promise.
24 Now this may be interpreted allegorically: these women are two
covenants. One is from Mount Sinai, bearing children for slavery; she is
Hagar. 25 Now Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia;[3] she corresponds to the
present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children. 26 But the
Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother. 27 For it is written,

> "Rejoice, O barren one who does not bear;
> break forth and cry aloud, you who are not
> in labor!
> For the children of the desolate one will be
> more
> than those of the one who has a husband."

28 Now you,[1] brothers, like Isaac, are children of promise. 29 But just as at
that time he who was born according to the flesh persecuted him who was
born according to the Spirit, so also it is now. 30 But what does the
Scripture say? "Cast out the slave woman and her son, for the son of the
slave woman shall not inherit with the son of the free woman." 31 So,
brothers, we are not children of the slave but of the free woman.

Christ Has Set Us Free

5 [1]†For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do
not submit again to a yoke of slavery.

[2]†Look: I, Paul, say to you that if you accept circumcision, Christ will be
of no advantage to you. [3]† I testify again to every man who accepts
circumcision that he is obligated to keep the whole law. [4]†You are severed
from Christ, you who would be justified[2] by the law; you have fallen away
from grace. [5]†For through the Spirit, by faith, we ourselves eagerly wait for
the hope of righteousness. [6]†For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor
uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith working through love.

[7]† You were running well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth?
[8]†This persuasion is not from him who calls you. [9]† A little leaven leavens
the whole lump. [10]† I have confidence in the Lord that you will take no
other view than mine, and the one who is troubling you will bear the
penalty, whoever he is. [11]†But if I, brothers,[3] still preach[4] circumcision,
why am I still being persecuted? In that case the offense of the cross has
been removed. [12]† I wish those who unsettle you would emasculate
themselves!

[13]†For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your
freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.
[14]†For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: “You shall love your neighbor
as yourself.” [15]†But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you
are not consumed by one another.

Walk by the Spirit

16 ‡ † But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of
the flesh. 17 † For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the
desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each
other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. 18 † But if you are
led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. 19 † Now the works of the flesh
are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, 20 ‡ idolatry, sorcery,
enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions,
21 † envy,[1] drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I
warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the
kingdom of God. 22 † But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience,
kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 † gentleness, self-control; against such
things there is no law. 24 † And those who belong to Christ Jesus have
crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

25 † If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. 26 † Let us not
become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

Bear One Another's Burdens

6 [1]†† Brothers,[2] if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are
spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on
yourself, lest you too be tempted. [2]† Bear one another's burdens, and so
fulfill the law of Christ. [3]†For if anyone thinks he is something, when he is
nothing, he deceives himself. [4]†But let each one test his own work, and then
his reason to boast will be in himself alone and not in his neighbor. [5]†For
each will have to bear his own load.

[6]† One who is taught the word must share all good things with the one
who teaches. [7]† Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one
sows, that will he also reap. [8]†For the one who sows to his own flesh will
from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from
the Spirit reap eternal life. [9]†And let us not grow weary of doing good, for
in due season we will reap, if we do not give up. [10]†So then, as we have
opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of
the household of faith.

Final Warning and Benediction

11 †† See with what large letters I am writing to you with my own hand. 12 †
It is those who want to make a good showing in the flesh who would force
you to be circumcised, and only in order that they may not be persecuted for
the cross of Christ. 13 † For even those who are circumcised do not
themselves keep the law, but they desire to have you circumcised that they
may boast in your flesh. 14 †But far be it from me to boast except in the cross
of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which[1] the world has been crucified to me,
and I to the world. 15 † For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor
uncircumcision, but a new creation. 16 †And as for all who walk by this rule,
peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God.

17 †From now on let no one cause me trouble, for
I bear on my body the marks of Jesus.

18 † The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers.
Amen.

Galatians

Overview

Author
Paul the apostle

Date
c AD 51–53

Places
Galatia; Jerusalem; Arabia; Damascus; Syria; Cilicia; Antioch

People
Galatians; Paul; Cephas (Peter); James, the Lord's brother; John; Barnabas; Titus; Gentiles; Jews; false brothers

Purpose
To demonstrate that faith in Christ accomplishes both justification and sanctification

Law Themes
The threat of subtle false teaching; hypocrisy; works cannot justify; the Law's curse; works of the flesh; the Law of Christ

Gospel Themes
One saving Gospel; God's gracious call; justified through faith in Christ; the gift of the Spirit; adoption as God's sons; freedom in Christ

Memory Verses
Only one Gospel (1:6–9); justification through faith, not works (2:16); life in Christ (2:19–20); the Law and the Gospel promise (3:23–29); freedom (5:1, 13–14); fruit of the Spirit (5:16–24); three crosses (6:14)

Introduction to Galatians

Reading Galatians

A guardian calls the seven-year-old boy in from play to make an introduction. Pointing to a young man, he explains that tomorrow at dawn this fellow will lead the boy to and from school, making certain the boy has the tools of learning: wooden tablets and a stylus. Though the young man is a slave, the boy must mind him and learn from him until the boy is ready to be self-sufficient.

In the Letter to the Galatians, the apostle Paul refers to such first-century life situations in order to explain our relationship to the Law (moral, civil, and ceremonial commands) and the Gospel (God's promise to us in Christ). A typical schoolboy's guardian (Gk *paidagogos*; 3:24) had temporary authority. Similarly, the Law given by Moses served as a temporary guardian, according to the will of our legal guardian (4:2), the Lord Himself. As Paul explains, the Lord had greater plans to fulfill the Law and His life-changing promise. He adopted us (4:5), making us co-heirs with His true Son, our Savior Jesus. In this way, Paul explains and illustrates the binding and life-changing effects of the Law and the Gospel, the two essential teachings of the Christian faith (see pp xxxi–xxxii).

Luther on Galatians

The Galatians had been brought by St. Paul to the true Christian faith, from the law to the gospel. After his departure, however, false apostles came along. They were disciples of the true apostles, but they so turned the Galatians around that they believed they had to be saved by works of the law and were committing sin if they did not keep the law —as even several dignitaries in Jerusalem maintained, Acts 15.

To refute them, St. Paul magnifies his office; he will not take a back seat to any other apostle. He boasts that his doctrine and office are from God alone, in order that he might silence the boast of the false apostles who helped themselves to the works and reputation of the true apostles. He says it is not true, even if an angel were to preach differently, or he himself, to say nothing of disciples of apostles, or of apostles themselves. This he does in chapters 1 and 2, and concludes that everyone must be justified without merit, without works, without law, through Christ alone.

In chapters 3 and 4 he proves all this with passages of Scripture, examples, and analogies. He shows that the law brings sin and a curse rather than righteousness. Righteousness is promised by God, fulfilled by Christ without the law, given to us—out of grace alone.

In chapters 5 and 6 he teaches the works of love that ought to follow faith. (AE 35:384)

For more of Luther's insights on this Book, see *Galatians*, *Chapters 1–4; 5–6* (AE 26, 27).

Challenges for Readers

Ignoring Sanctification. In the first part of Galatians, Paul focuses strongly on the chief topic of the Christian faith: that Christ justifies us by grace through faith. The dominance of this teaching can lead some readers to ignore Paul's other important message in the Letter: through faith Christ leads us in a new way of life.

The "New" Look on Paul. Some recent interpreters of the Dead Sea Scrolls and other early Jewish literature have argued that Paul did not correctly understand or represent the teachings of Judaism in his day. See "Righteousness and Early Judaism," p 1906.

Genderless Christianity. Feminist interpreters and those influenced by feminism have radically altered the historic interpretation and application of Gal 3:28. They argue that gender and social order should have no influence on roles of service in Christianity. This interpretation has been forcefully used to encourage women's ordination in liberal Protestant church bodies and has even been used to support the ordination of homosexuals.

Galatia. Some scholars contend that the term "Galatia" refers to the northern region of the province, but it most probably refers to the southern area, where Paul and Barnabas established churches on the first missionary journey. Regardless, Galatians was likely intended as a circular Letter to be read in several churches.

Blessings for Readers

The proper distinction of Law and Gospel, described in Galatians, leads one away from the misunderstandings of God's Word mentioned above. Paul certainly affirmed a limited role for the Law in the life of a believer. He explained the life-changing blessings of the Gospel, which make us God's children and give us freedom to do good, not evil. Yet Galatians shows that, though we never outgrow the Law because we are sinners (cf 5:16–26), it is God's promise that assures our place in His family (4:5–7), with all the privileges He bestows by Word and Spirit.

As you study Galatians, pray that the Holy Spirit would teach you rightly to discern and apply God's Law and Gospel. He who generously gives His good Spirit through the promise will surely grant you a discerning heart.

OUTLINE

Paul uses his rhetorical training in a most sophisticated way, as seen in this Letter's structure and its argumentation. In 1:6–12, Paul confronts the chief problem: false teachers have come to Galatia and preached a different gospel, one that requires the reintroduction of Judaic practices (most prominently, circumcision) in order for the Gentile Christians in Galatia to truly be part of the "Israel of God" (6:16). Paul's solution is presented briefly in 2:15–21: faith in Christ accomplishes both justification (2:15–16) and sanctification ("our endeavor to be justified"; 2:17–21). The rest of the Book gives Paul's supporting argumentation for his solution (e.g., 2:15–16 is explained by 3:1–5:1; 2:17–21 is explained by 5:2–6:10).

I. Greetings (1:1–5)
II. The Problem (1:6–12)
  A. Is There Another Gospel? (1:6–10)
  B. The Gospel Preached by Paul Is the Only Gospel (1:11–12)
III. Background to the Problem, Moving toward a Solution (1:13–2:14)
IV. The Solution (2:15–21)
  A. How One Gets Justified (2:15–16)
  B. How One Lives as a Justified Person (2:17–20)
  C. The Gospel Preached by Paul Is the Only Gospel (2:21)
V. The Supporting Arguments for the Solution of 2:15–21 (3:1–6:10)

A. First Argument about Receiving Justification (3:1–18): Foolish Galatians and Faithful Abraham

1. Rebuke (3:1–5)
2. Appeal to Scripture (3:6–14)
3. Illustration of a human covenant (3:15–18)

B. Second Argument about Receiving Justification (3:19–4:7): How One Becomes an Heir

1. Why the Law? (3:19–22)
2. The end of the Law's function as guardian, the coming of the inheritance by faith (3:23–29)
3. Illustration of a human heir (4:1–7)

C. Third Argument about Receiving Justification (4:8–20): Appeal to a Shared Past

1. What the Galatians were before faith (4:8–11)
2. Paul's anguish over a wayward child (4:12–20)

D. Fourth Argument about Receiving Justification (4:21–5:1): Allegory of Sarah and Hagar—Be Free!

E. First Argument about Living as a Justified Person (5:2–15): The Uselessness of Circumcision

1. Paul's direct command (5:2–6)
2. The Law divides the community (5:7–15)

F. Second Argument about Living as a Justified Person (5:16–26): The Fruits of the Flesh and the One Fruit of the Spirit

1. The community living by the flesh is divided (5:16–21)
2. The community living by the Spirit is united (5:22–26)

G. Third Argument about Living as a Justified Person (6:1–10): A Specific Application for the Community United by the Spirit

1. Bearing and restoring one another (6:1–5)
2. Serving one another (6:6–10)

VI. Summarizing Conclusion (6:11–18)

- Legalism Then and Now
- True Christianity versus Three Distortions

Legalism Then and Now

It is important to understand the problem of legalism in the Church—then and now—and to distinguish it from the Gospel and Christian freedom. Outside of biblical Christianity, other religions or philosophies have one thing in common. They teach that we must somehow save ourselves. Such salvation is sometimes viewed as a future paradise. Sometimes it simply means a bettering of this present world. Either way, it is up to us to achieve it.

In Galatians, Paul reminds us that the struggle against the way of the Law is as old as Christianity itself. One commentator notes: "God's grace cannot be compromised. Law and Gospel cannot be mingled."

That is the situation answered by Paul in Galatians. Some sincere Jewish Christians from Judea were troubling the new churches by insisting that the Gentile members submit to circumcision and other aspects of the ceremonial law. In their view, faith in the Gospel was not sufficient—new converts also needed to observe the ceremonial laws of the Old Testament.

Not only did Paul have to deal with these Judaizers, but he also had to oppose the apostle Peter, one of the great pillars of the Early Church! In Gal 2:11–16, Paul tells how he had opposed Peter at Antioch. There, Peter himself had been leading others into legalism by his example. The very truth of the Gospel was at stake.

It is tempting for Christians to fall into the trap of legalism. That is especially true today since we live in an increasingly godless society and we like to see evidences of faith. For example, some might feel that true Christians will vote in a certain way. If we find out that an individual voted for a party or candidate that we disagree with, then that individual's faith is suspect. We might feel strongly that alcoholic drinks are dangerous and should be avoided. But though Scripture condemns drunkenness, it does not label all drinking a sin, and therefore, it is legalistic to say that having a drink is sinful.

In some ways, legalism makes life easier. We do not have to think or make decisions. Yet such a life is really a slavery of the worst kind. No matter how hard people try, they still cannot keep the Law perfectly. In the end, legalism leads either to pride or to despair. If we think we are living a

fairly good life—not like the people we read about in the papers—we become proud and self-satisfied. This was the attitude of the Pharisees in Jesus' day. On the other hand, if we realize the true enormity of our sins—how they daily color our thoughts, words, and actions—we can easily fall into complete despair. In either case, the end is the same—separation from God and the loss of salvation.

Rather than being caught up in legalism, God wants us to hold on to the freedom He gives us: "Stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery" (Gal 5:1). We are free. God does not intend for us to live a life as slaves to a set of rules, as mechanical robots. Rather, our good works flow from a love of God and not from a sense of bondage or slavery.

Jesus alone is the antidote to legalism. He alone offers the free, full, and saving grace of God!

True Christianity versus Three Distortions

Group: Judaized Christianity
Definition of a Christian: Christians are Jews who have recognized Jesus as the promised Savior. Any Gentile desiring to become a Christian must first become a Jew.
Genuine Concern: Having a high regard for the Scriptures and God's choice of Jews as His people, they do not want to see God's commands overlooked or broken.
Danger: Tend to add human traditions to God's Law. Also tend to subtract from God's concern for all nations.
Group: Legalistic Christianity
Definition of a Christian: Christians are those who live by a long list of "don'ts." God's favor is earned by good behavior.
Genuine Concern: Faith in Christ should lead to changes in behavior.
Danger: Tend to make God's love something to earn. Reduce Christianity to a set of impossible rules.
Group: Lawless Christianity
Definition of a Christian: Christians live above the Law. They need no guidelines. God's Word is not as important as one's personal sense of God's guidance. Behavior does not matter.
Genuine Concern: Forgiveness from God cannot be based on living up to His perfect standards. It must be received by grace as a gift made possible by Christ's death on the cross.
Danger: Tend to forget that Christians still have a sinful human nature and fail when trying to live only by what they "feel" God wants. Also tend to forget that God's commandments are still binding.
Group: True Christianity
Definition of a Christian: Christians are those who believe that Jesus' death has allowed a holy God to freely give them forgiveness and eternal life. They have that gift through faith. By the power of God's Spirit through Word and Sacrament, they grow in faith and in holiness of life, thankful for what He has done in and for them.
Genuine Concern: Christianity is both private and public, with heart-belief and mouth-confession. Having received the gift of forgiveness and eternal life, Christians are now daily empowered to live that life with His help,

realizing that the goal is nothing less than eternal life with God as beings who are transformed into His likeness.
Danger: Avoids the above dangers.

Footnotes

Footnotes for Galatians, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:2 Or *brothers and sisters*. The plural Greek word *adelphoi* (translated "brothers") refers to siblings in a family. In New Testament usage, depending on the context, *adelphoi* may refer either to men or to both men and women who are siblings (brothers and sisters) in God's family, the church; also verse 11
- [2] 1:10 Or *slave*; Greek *bondservant*
- [3] 1:11 Greek *not according to man*
- [1] 1:15 Greek *set me apart from my mother's womb*
- [2] 1:16 Greek *in*
- [3] 1:16 Greek *with flesh and blood*

Footnotes for Galatians, Chapter 2

- [1] 2:16 Or *counted righteous* (three times in verse 16); also verse 17
- [2] 2:21 Or *justification*

Footnotes for Galatians, Chapter 3

- [3] 3:3 Or *now ending with*
- [4] 3:4 Or *experience*
- [5] 3:8 Or *count righteous*; also verses 11, 24
- [1] 3:11 Or *The one who by faith is righteous will live*

- [2] 3:14 Greek *receive the promise of the Spirit*
- [3] 3:15 Or *brothers and sisters*
- [1] 3:28 Greek *bondservant*

Footnotes for Galatians, Chapter 4

- [2] 4:1 Greek *bondservant*; also verse 7
- [3] 4:3 Or *elemental spirits*; also verse 9
- [1] 4:12 Or *Brothers and sisters*; also verses 28, 31
- [2] 4:16 Or *by dealing truthfully with you*
- [3] 4:25 Some manuscripts *For Sinai is a mountain in Arabia*
- [1] 4:28 Some manuscripts *we*

Footnotes for Galatians, Chapter 5

- [2] 5:4 Or *counted righteous*
- [3] 5:11 Or *brothers and sisters*; also verse 13
- [4] 5:11 Greek *proclaim*
- [1] 5:21 Some manuscripts add *murder*

Footnotes for Galatians, Chapter 6

- [2] 6:1 Or *Brothers and sisters*; also verse 18
- [1] 6:14 Or *through whom*

Study Notes

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 1:1 *apostle*. Lit, "the sent one." See p 1901. Luth: "[Paul] does not come as a private person but as the emissary of a king" (AE 26:16). *not from men nor through man*. Paul's apostleship was not of human origin ("men"), nor did it come through human agency ("man"; cf Am 7:14–15). *but through Jesus Christ and God the Father*. Mention of the first two persons of the Trinity (governed by one preposition in Gk) emphasizes Paul's divine appointment: God the Father called Paul through His very own Son, whom He raised from the dead (cf Rm 1:1–4, for all three persons of the Godhead).

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 1:2 *brothers*. See p 1901. *churches*. Congregations in the towns that Paul and Barnabas visited on the first missionary journey (Ac 13:4–14:28). *Galatia*. See pp 2000–2001.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 1:3 *Grace to you and peace*. Paul's characteristic greeting was esp pertinent to the Galatia situation, where the message of grace was compromised and peace undermined. See pp 1899–1901. *Grace*. Gk *charis*. See p 1902. *peace*. See p 1903.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 1:4 *present evil age*. Evil powers in this world rule in opposition to God, but Jesus' atoning death has delivered Christians away from the evil one (Col 1:13). Because believers already participate in the age to come (Gal 2:19–20; 5:5), they are in the world but not of it; they are not conformed to it (Jn 17:14–15; Rm 12:2). "[God] has set up this and the other commandments between the good people and the evil" (LC I 183). *the will*. Our deliverance came not by happenstance; it revealed God's saving intention from eternity.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 1:5 Praise for what Christ has done in delivering us from sin is affirmed by a hearty "Amen!" This Letter's opening differs from Paul's other Letters in two noticeable ways: he includes a doxology in the salutation (greeting), and he does not include an opening thanksgiving prayer. See pp 1899–1901. This format conveys a sense of urgency and an impending rebuke. *Amen*. See p 1901.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 1:1–5 Paul's greeting anticipates the Letter's central argument. According to His Father's will, Christ has graciously given Himself for our sins and delivered us from this present evil age;

therefore, works of the Law are not necessary for salvation. Teachings that compromise this core truth rob God of His due glory and rob us of true peace, for God brings true peace to our hearts through the forgiveness of sins. • Heavenly Father, by the power of Your Son's resurrection, set our hearts free and forever at rest. Amen.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 1:6 *deserting*. The Galatians were turning away from the Gospel through which God had called them (cf 2Th 2:14). To desert the Gospel of Jesus Christ that Paul preached is to abandon God Himself. *called*. The saving initiative always belongs to God alone. *different gospel*. A so-called "gospel," i.e., a "revised version" of the Gospel of Christ (cf 1Th 2:2), promoted by some in Galatia. Paul's opponents might have referred to their message as the "full" or "complete" gospel, suggesting that Paul's proclamation was deficient.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 1:7 *not … another*. The opponents' "gospel" did not modify but perverted the Word of truth (Eph 1:13) that the apostles proclaimed and taught. Christ's Gospel stands by itself, without parallel and exclusive of all other messages—however cogent and attractive they may seem. The Good News of salvation comes from and points to Christ. Just as there is one Savior, so there is only one Gospel (Gal 2:5, 14). *some who trouble you*. Unnamed persons who threw the congregation into confusion with their destructive teaching. *distort*. Gk term means to change something, often into its opposite. The Galatian intruders consciously intended to change the Gospel.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 1:8 *accursed*. See p 1901. "God's Word shall establish articles of faith, and no one else" (SA II II 15). "Horrible errors likewise arose. … The holy apostles had to attack these teachings forcefully in their sermons and writings" (FC SD Intro 7).

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 1:9 *said before*. Paul repeats a warning that he and his co-workers had issued on an earlier visit (cf 5:21). "Ungodly teachers are to be deserted because they no longer act in Christ's place, but are antichrists" (Ap VII and VIII 48). *received*. See p 1904. *accursed*. See p 1901.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 1:10 *approval*. Implies that Paul's critics were charging him with merely seeking human favor. But Paul consistently maintained that, in obedience to God, he subordinated his interests to the interests of others (1Co 4:2–5). *please man?* Gk "men." (See note, v 1.)

Paul repeatedly emphasized that being faithful to God must take precedence over being popular.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 1:6–10 This Letter begins not with an expression of thanksgiving but with a stern warning against defection from the one true Gospel. Whoever falsifies the Gospel of Christ comes under God's curse. The Gospel, through which God calls us to be His own, proclaims God's grace in Christ. • May Your precious Word, O Lord, be taught in all truth and purity so that we may receive Your divine blessing. Amen.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 1:11 *brothers*. Though going astray, the Galatians are still brothers and sisters in Christ, members of God's family (3:15; 4:5, 12, 28; 5:11, 13; 6:1, 18). See p 1901. *was preached*. Note the passive verb. Paul served as the instrument of the Gospel's proclamation, not as its source.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 1:12 *I*. Gk *ego*. Added by Paul for emphasis. *a revelation of Jesus Christ*. The Gospel Paul preached came directly from the risen Christ, and He is its content.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 1:13 Paul will tell his story as evidence for his point in vv 11–12 (see the temporal and sequential "then" in 1:18, 21; 2:1). *heard*. Either from Paul himself or from reports being circulated about him (cf vv 22–23). *Judaism*. Or, "Judeaism" (religion of the Judeans). Designates the Jewish faith and way of life that distinguished Jews from Gentiles (including esp circumcision, dietary laws, Sabbath observance, and the system of feasts and sacrifices). See "Jews," p 1906. *persecuted*. The Gk tense shows repeated action. *church of God*. See pp 1901–2. In contrast to his former life in Judaism, Paul now belongs to those who believe in Christ, the new "Israel of God" (see note, 6:16). Paul regards the persecution of the Church as an act hostile to God Himself. *violently*. Lit, "to an extraordinary degree," intensively and extensively.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 1:14 *advancing in Judaism*. See note, v 13. Paul had progressed beyond many others in the teachings and practices of the Jewish religion, shown esp by his ardent zeal for persecuting God's Church. *traditions*. Teachings, commandments, stories, etc., of the rabbis accepted by the Pharisees and passed on particularly in the oral law (Hbr *halakah*, Mk 7:5).

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 1:15 *set me apart … called*. Paul did not decide to "change religions." As God set apart and called the prophets of

old, so also He chose Paul to bring the Gospel to the Gentiles in keeping with His divine purpose. Paul, the former persecutor of the Church, knew from experience that God called him by grace (1Co 15:9).

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 1:16 *consult*. Lit, "take up a matter with." *anyone*. Lit, "with flesh and blood." Paul received no instruction from anyone in Jerusalem immediately after his conversion. This proves that his Gospel did not depend on any human source. See notes, vv 11, 12.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 1:17 *Arabia*. Probably the Nabataean Kingdom located in the area around Damascus in Syria, founded in the second century BC. See map, p 1886. Aretas IV (9 BC–c AD 40) was king when Paul was converted (2Co 11:32). Some commentators believe that Paul went to Arabia to begin mission work among the Gentiles. *Damascus*. See color map 4. One of the cities of the Decapolis under the supervision of Syria's imperial legate, it came under Roman control in 66 BC. At Paul's time, it was a Nabataean city and had a large Jewish population.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 1:18 *Cephas*. Aram *ke¯pha*, the name Jesus gave to Simon Peter (Gk *petros*, "stone"; Jn 1:42; cf Mt 16:18). With one exception (Gal 2:7), Paul customarily used this name for Peter. *remained with him*. Probably to get acquainted with Peter, not to get instruction (though certainly they would have shared information about Jesus).

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 1:19 *James the Lord's brother*. The first of Jesus' four brothers (Mk 6:3). Though not one of the Twelve, he became a prominent apostle in the Jerusalem Church (Ac 12:17; 15:13; 21:18–19). Two other men bore this name in the NT (James the son of Alphaeus and James the son of Zebedee).

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 1:20 By oath, Paul absolutely affirms his integrity, since the truth of the Gospel he proclaims is at issue.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 1:21 *Syria and Cilicia*. Regions combined into one Roman province with its capital at Antioch. See map, p 1886. Paul mentions his post-conversion work here to show again his distance from Jerusalem.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 1:22 *the churches of Judea*. Groups of believers (house churches) were forced to leave Jerusalem in the persecution following Stephen's death. *Judea*. This Roman province included all of Galilee, Samaria, and Judea proper. See color map 4. *in Christ*. The Galatians no longer lived in Judaism but in the Body of Christ (1Co 1:9). See p 1903.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 1:23 *hearing it said*. The churches were continually hearing reports about Paul the persecutor. *the faith*. The content (doctrine) of the Gospel.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 1:11–24 . Selecting key facts from his personal history, Paul proves that his apostleship comes from God, independent of human sources. Today, enemies of God's Church continue to question the divine origin of the Christian message, causing doubts and confusion among many believers in Christ. As God called Paul "by His grace," so He now seeks to change hearts through the Good News of His Son. • Keep us faithful to Your Word, O Lord, when doubts threaten. Amen.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 2:1 *after fourteen years*. Paul could mean 14 years after his conversion (1:15–16); after his first visit to Jerusalem (1:18); or after the time spent in Syria and Cilicia (1:21). In any case, the overall argument remains clear: during this long period, Paul had no direct contact with Jerusalem. *Barnabas … Titus*. Luth: "By presenting himself with both of them he intended to make it clear that he was at liberty to be a Gentile with Titus and a Jew with Barnabas … [to prove] the freedom of the Gospel in each case" (AE 27:200).

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 2:2 *revelation*. Paul went up to Jerusalem for no other reason than that God told him to go there (just as after his conversion, Ac 22:17–21). See p 1904. *influential*. Men of reputation, identified primarily as James, Cephas, and John (v 9). *not run in vain*. For the sake of the Church's unity and God's mission to Jews and Gentiles, Paul desired to get a vote of confidence from the Jerusalem leadership.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 2:3 *not … circumcised … Greek*. Despite opposition from a circumcision group, the Jerusalem leaders had received uncircumcised Gentiles into the Church (cf Ac 11:2–18).

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 2:4 *false brothers*. Some Jewish Christians (commonly labeled Judaizers) within the Jerusalem Church demanded the circumcision of Gentile converts (Ac 15:1, 5). Their claim to be fellow believers was belied by their conduct. They adhered to a gospel that Paul regarded as false (1:6–9). *secretly brought in*. In context, this expression suggests collusion between the interlopers who wormed their way into the churches and those within who facilitated their spying operation. *freedom*. Gk *eleutheria*, a central term occurring also in 5:1 and 5:13, six more times as an adjective (3:28; 4:22, 23, 26, 30, 31), and once in verbal form (5:1).

Our freedom in Christ, based on His atoning work, consists in freedom from bondage to the Law ("slavery").

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 2:5 Luth: "The truth of the Gospel is this, that our righteousness comes by faith alone, without the works of the Law. The falsification or corruption of the Gospel is this, that we are justified by faith but not without the works of the Law" (AE 26:88). "In such a case we have nothing to concede. We should plainly confess and endure what God sends because of that confession, and whatever He allows the enemies of His Word to inflict on us" (FC Ep X 6).

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 2:6 *what they were makes no difference*. Paul respected the Jerusalem leaders but refrained from overstating their importance. *no partiality*. Lit, "God does not take (or receive) the face" (cf 2Ch 19:7). Paul is not overawed by personal credentials. Before God, all are on equal footing. *added nothing*. Neither to Paul's message nor to his divine commission.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 2:7 *entrusted*. Paul regarded himself as a steward of the Gospel (Ti 1:3). "St. Paul clearly affirms that he was neither ordained nor confirmed by Peter. Nor does he acknowledge Peter to be one from whom confirmation should be sought" (Tr 10).

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 2:8 *his apostolic ministry*. Gk *apostole* ("apostolate"), a technical term for the office and work of an apostle of Christ (Ac 1:25; Rm 1:5; 1Co 9:2).

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 2:9 *pillars*. Figurative of leaders who supported and gave stability to the Church (cf 1Tm 3:15). See note, v 6. *right hand of fellowship*. This handshake symbolized a partnership between friends. *fellowship*. See p 1902.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 2:10 *remember the poor*. The Jerusalem pillars recognized the divine legitimacy of Paul's calling and work, but they had one request: that Paul and Barnabas administer financial relief for the saints in Jerusalem, who were caught in persecution and famine. This became a major task to which Paul conscientiously devoted himself (Ac 11:29–30; Rm 15:25–28; 1Co 16:1–4; 2Co 8–9), in part to demonstrate the Church's unity (largely, these were gifts of Gentile churches to Jewish Christians).

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 2:1–10 By divine revelation, Paul goes to Jerusalem with Barnabas and Titus to visit Church leaders who, in spite of some opposition in their midst, approved of his message and mission to the Gentiles. Today, Christians continually face threats to the freedom they

have in Christ, even from their own sinful flesh. The Gospel comes from God and thus cannot be deprived of its power to set us free. • Lord, grant us strength in our partnership in the Gospel. Amen.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 2:11 *Antioch*. See map, p 1886. The third-largest city of the Roman Empire and a commercial hub, it had a significant Jewish population. The first Gentile Church was founded here with the aid of Barnabas and Paul (Ac 11:19–26). *to his face*. Paul took issue with Peter personally. *condemned*. Not merely self-condemned but convicted in God's presence.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 2:12 *eating with*. Table fellowship signified freedom from the Law (specifically Jewish food laws) and Church unity. *fearing*. Emotion, not change of conviction, prompted Peter's duplicitous behavior. *circumcision party*. See note, v 4.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 2:13 *rest of the Jews*. Jewish Christians in Antioch (cf v 15). *even Barnabas*. Paul could hardly believe it! "Even" (Gk *kai*) his trusted friend and colleague for so many years succumbed to behavior inherently dishonest. "Paul yields and gives way to the weak concerning food and 'the observance of' times or days (Romans 14:6). But to the false apostles, who wanted to impose these on the conscience as necessary things, he will not yield even in matters that are adiaphora" (FC SD X 13).

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 2:14 *conduct was not in step*. Measured by the Gospel of freedom in Christ, the deliberate withdrawal from fellowship with Gentiles not only lacked integrity but betrayed God's truth. *the truth of the gospel*. See note, v 5. *you force the Gentiles to live like Jews?* Not raw coercion, but strong group pressure constrained the Gentiles to adopt Jewish customs and practices. *Jews?* See "Groups in Romans," pp 1905–6.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 2:11–14 For the sake of the truth of the Gospel, Paul publicly rebukes Peter for his hypocritical conduct, which communicates that the Gentiles must keep Jewish laws. The Word of God condemns hypocrisy (Mt 23:28; Lk 12:1; 1Pt 2:1; cf Lk 20:20). Yet this history shows that God is true to His promise of mercy toward sinners (1Co 1:9; 1Jn 1:9). • Lord, keep us from hypocrisy in our thoughts, words, and actions. Affirm our freedom won by Christ. Amen.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 2:15 *We ourselves*. For the sake of argument, Paul speaks from a Jewish perspective. *Gentile sinners*. The phrase

represents the attitude of the pious Law-observing Jews toward nations without the Law. See pp 1905–6.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 2:16 *not justified by works of the law*. See p 1903. *through faith in Jesus Christ*. Jesus is the object of our faith. *not by works of the law*. This exclusionary statement means that a person is justified before God by faith alone. "[These works] are only forced out of a person by teaching the punishment and threatening of God's wrath" (FC Ep VI 5).

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 2:17 *is Christ then a servant of sin?* By the legalist's logic, if Jews who keep the Law are reckoned as "sinners" in need of God's justifying grace, then Christ is made an agent of sin. Paul asserts that this is an invalid argument. See Ap V 196.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 2:18 *if I rebuild … transgressor*. The Gospel Paul preached broke down the wall of separation (Law's requirements) between Jew and Gentile (Eph 2:14–18). For Paul (and by implication, Peter), rebuilding this wall would make him a "transgressor."

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 2:19 *I died*. "The Law only accuses and terrifies consciences" (Ap XIIA 34). All who are in Christ (v 17) are no longer under the Law's jurisdiction. It has no claim on them (their relationship to it is severed). They are free from its curse (3:13). See note, 6:14.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 2:20 *It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me*. Luth: "By [faith] you are so cemented to Christ that He and you are as one person" (AE 26:168). *in the flesh*. This earthly life.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 2:21 If obedience to the Law is in any sense regarded as part of God's justification of the sinner, then Christ's death becomes superfluous.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 2:15–21 With the incident with Peter as the backdrop, Paul presents the Epistle's core theological argument: justification is by faith in Christ and not by works of the Law. Those who appeal to the Law in addition to Christ as a means of salvation make His death meaningless—worse still, null and void. God's Son loves us and gave Himself for us to free us from the Law's condemnation. • O God, our earthly life in Christ now has a high purpose, to live for You (2:19). Grant me full confidence in Christ Jesus, who alone can save me. Amen.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 3:1 *bewitched*. A Gk term used only here in NT. It means to exert an evil influence on someone through the eye, such as casting a spell. *publicly portrayed as crucified*. Paul preached Christ's death

so vividly that his audiences could almost see Jesus die with their own eyes (cf 1Co 2:1–2).

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 3:2 *receive the Spirit*. The person and work of the Holy Spirit is a theme throughout Gal (mentioned 16 times). God gives His Spirit through the preaching of Christ (Gospel), whom we receive in faith (1Th 2:13)—and not through the works of the Law. *by hearing*. The Spirit works through the Word (see LC II 52).

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 3:3 *by the flesh*. An allusion to circumcision, which Paul's opponents were pushing as necessary to make the Gospel "complete" (cf Rm 2:23–29)—reasoning that comes from the fallen human nature, not from God's Spirit.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 3:4 *Did you suffer*. Paul makes no specific mention of the Galatians undergoing suffering.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 3:5 *miracles*. Manifestations of the Spirit's power worked through the Gospel proclamation.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 3:6 *just as*. Ties the Gn quotation to what has happened to the Galatians when they received the Spirit. Their experience was the same as Abraham's, whom God declared righteous by faith, as the Scripture clearly proves. "Righteousness is worked in the heart when the Holy Spirit is received through the Word" (AC XVIII 3).

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 3:7–5:26 Paul begins a sustained argument from Scripture to disprove two incorrect rabbinic understandings of Abraham's role: (1) that Abraham was counted righteous because of his faithfulness under testing (which was meritorious); and (2) that Abraham's faith (Gn 15:6) must be tied together with circumcision (Gn 17:4–14), which is also necessary for a right standing before God.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 3:7 *sons of Abraham*. Paul deduced from Gn 15:6 that all men and women who believe are spiritual heirs of Abraham.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 3:8 *Scripture, foreseeing*. Personification. Paul equates Scripture with God speaking in Gn 12:2–3 (cf Jn 1:1). *preached the gospel beforehand*. The Scripture (i.e., God speaking) "pre-preached" the good news to Abraham. The basis of salvation was the same in the OT and the NT: the promise of Christ. *be blessed*. Combining words from Gn 12:3 and 18:18, Paul gives scriptural grounds for his central point that the promise to Abraham embraced also the Gentiles, who, like Abraham, are justified by faith. (Note the passive, following the LXX and indicating God's action.)

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 3:9 *of faith*. Gk *ek pisteos*, appears nine times in Gal (based on Hab 2:4; cf Gal 3:11; Rm 1:17; Heb 10:38). It carries the sense of "the faith people" (those who believe), as distinguished from "the circumcision party" (2:12; lit, "those of the circumcision"). Abraham belonged among the people of faith.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 3:1–9 The Galatians' experience (vv 1–5) and Scripture's witness concerning Abraham (vv 6–9) teach that all believers are heirs of Abraham, to whom faith "was counted … as righteousness" (v 6). Paul warns against being mesmerized by the foolish notion that salvation is completed by works of the Law. Those who see the crucified Christ in faith, however, see their sins completely forgiven. • How blessed we are, Lord, to be the heirs of Your promises! Thank You for granting me faith through Your Word. Amen.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 3:10 *all who … everyone*. Not restricted merely to Jews or Jewish Christians, the Law applies to all humanity. *a curse … Cursed*. All who rely on the works of the Law ("under the Law," v 23; 4:4, 5, 21) to become righteous before God are under divine condemnation. Luth: "In 'keeping' the Law he [the doer of the Law] does not keep it" (AE 26:268; see FC SD VI 4). *all things written in the Book of the Law*. Paul, an authoritative interpreter of the OT, intensifies Dt 27:26 by loosely quoting Dt 28:58 and emphasizing "all things" written in the whole Law (Dt 30:10; cf 28:1, 15).

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 3:11–12 Shows that faith and Law are mutually exclusive principles.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 3:13 *redeemed*. We are liberated from the Law's deadly slavery and curse by the payment of a price (cf Rv 5:9; Ap V 58). See p 1904. *Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree*. Applied to the crucified Christ (cf Ac 10:39; 13:29; 1Pt 2:24). In its original context, it referred to the hanging of a criminal's corpse on a tree or pole after execution. *Cursed*. Same term as in Dt 27:26 (see note, Gal 3:10).

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 3:14 *receive the promised Spirit*. By faith in Jesus Christ, whose atoning work delivered us from the curse of the Law, all believers (Jew and Gentile) receive the gift of the Spirit. See note, v 2.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 3:10–14 Christ redeems us from the Law's curse by becoming a curse for us. One sin, no matter how trivial it may seem to us, makes us a transgressor of the whole Law and accountable to God (Jas 2:10). But Christ's death on the cross releases us from the guilt of

every transgression. • O Holy Spirit, continue to strengthen us in the new life of faith begun in our Baptism. Amen.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 3:15 *no one annuls … ratified*. This human example from legal practice teaches that no one can alter a legally ratified covenant or last will and testament. It is irrevocable.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 3:16 *offspring*. See p 1903. *your offspring, who is Christ*. After God revealed His Son to Paul at conversion (Ac 9:1–16), Paul understood the "promise" in a totally new way. Cf v 19. Christ is the ultimate heir of the inheritance promised to Abraham.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 3:17 *430 years*. Gn 15:13 gives a round number of 400 years for Israel's slavery in Egypt. *make the promise void*. The promise is not invalidated, either in wording or in its character.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 3:18 *inheritance*. Luth: "The forgiveness of sins, righteousness, salvation, and eternal life, which means that we are the sons and heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ (Rom. 8:17)" (AE 26:304). See "portion," p 7.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 3:19 *added because of transgressions*. Opposite the Promise/Gospel, the Law discloses sin for what it really is, a violation of God's revealed will. *offspring*. See note, v 16. *through angels by an intermediary*. Though unidentified, the intermediary (Gk *mesites*), according to most commentators, is probably Moses, who was assisted by angels (cf Dt 33:2; Ps 68:17). God spoke directly to Abraham, but He administered the Law through intermediaries—evidence that the Law is inferior to the Promise/Gospel.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 3:20 The doctrine that God is one (Dt 6:4; 1Co 8:6)—and therefore needed no angelic mediator to convey the Promise/Gospel—reaffirms the superiority of the Promise/Gospel over the Law as well as the unity of the Father and the Son, who served as mediator.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 3:21 Paul emphatically rejected the false conclusion (cf Rm 3:21) that Law and Promise stand in opposition to each other, as if they are rival systems of salvation. The Law has no such function.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 3:22–23 *Scripture imprisoned everything under sin … held captive*. Scripture, which contains God's Law, incarcerated the whole world with no hope for release. Sin's dreadful power subjugated all of human existence. The Law does have a purpose in God's plan, to show the need for deliverance. *under the law*. See note, v 10. *until*. The Law and

the Promise can represent two different eras in salvation history. However, God has always worked with people in these two ways. See note, Ex 34:6–7; see also pp xxxi–xxxii.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 3:24 *guardian*. Gk *paidagogos*, "boy," "child leader." Greco-Roman households often secured a slave whose duty was to supervise and guard (though not to teach) children from about ages 6–16. Guardians had to walk children to and from school. Their temporary role served as the point of comparison. "God wants wild sinners to be restrained by civil discipline. To maintain discipline, He has given laws, letters, doctrine, rulers, and penalties" (Ap IV 22).

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 3:25 The Law played an interim role for Israelites from Moses to Christ, but when faith (i.e., Christ) came, this arrangement ceased. See "Jews," p 1906.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 3:26 *sons of God*. All believers in Christ, including Gentiles, without distinction, bear this honorific title once reserved for Israel (Ex 4:22–23; Dt 14:1; Is 43:6; Hos 1:10).

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 3:27 *put on Christ*. Through Baptism, God incorporates believers into union with Christ (cf Mt 28:19). Thus His righteousness becomes theirs. Luth: "Christ Himself is our garment … the garment of our righteousness and salvation" (AE 26:353; see LC IV 83–84).

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 3:28 Ethnic, social, and sexual identities do not determine one's standing before God. All who are baptized into Christ are one in His Body, even while distinctions present in creation remain. See p 1291.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 3:29 The argument in vv 15–29 comes full circle. Gentiles believing in Christ, who is Abraham's Seed ("Offspring" in the singular; see note, v 16), become Abraham's seed ("offspring" in the collective plural) and thus heirs of the promise given to him.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 3:15–29 Through Christ, God fulfills the promise He gave to Abraham. All united to Christ by Baptism become heirs of the promise and therefore are righteous before God. The Law, as between Moses and Christ, still serves the good purpose of revealing sin and our need for a Savior. However, Christ does what the Law cannot do. He gives forgiveness and life. • Lord, help us to see that in our congregation all are to be welcomed, whatever their background or place in life. Help us also to reach out to all with the message of Jesus' love. Amen.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 4:1–2 *guardians and managers*. These were legally appointed individuals to whom a child's welfare, support, and household affairs were entrusted. Under the Roman legal system, the status of a child still under the care of a guardian was roughly that of a slave (both were unable to enjoy the inheritance). See note, 3:24. The precise legal details of the procedure, however, are not known to us.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 4:3 *were children*. Describes a state of confinement under the Law. *elementary principles*. Cf v 9. Depicts the condition of slavery to which both Jews and Gentiles were subject prior to Christ's coming—the Jews to the Law and the Gentiles to their pagan way of life (cf Col 2:8, 20; Heb 5:12).

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 4:4 *fullness of time*. Pictures a container steadily being filled with the passage of time until full. Corresponds to "date set by his father" in v 2. Thus, at a specific and appropriate time in human history, God acted to fulfill His eternal purpose. *born of woman*. The preexistent Son of God (1Co 8:6; Php 2:6–11; Col 1:15–16) became fully human. Paul nowhere mentioned Mary by name; Jesus was the focus of his theology and devotion. *under the law*. Jesus was born a Jew and under obligation to keep the Law of Moses (see FC SD III 58). Consistent with Paul's imagery, Jesus entered our prison (3:23). See also note, 3:10.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 4:5 *those … under the law*. The Jews. *we*. Both Jewish and Gentile believers (cf 3:14; see note, 3:10). *adoption as sons*. See p 1901.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 4:6 *you are sons*. Through faith (3:26), the Holy Spirit is received (3:2, 14). *Abba!* Aram for "Papa," an address of special intimacy not typically found in Judaism. The "Spirit of His Son" prompts the prayer of God's Son ("Our Father") and so bears witness to the sonship of those who so pray (Mk 14:36; Rm 8:15).

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 4:7 *you*. Singular, personal. By God's grace, each person can regard himself or herself as an heir to all spiritual blessings.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 4:1–7 The Holy Spirit assures us that we are God's children, redeemed by Jesus Christ and made full heirs of the promise to Abraham. The Spirit never derides God's Son or spiritual matters (1Co 12:3). Christ earned for us the right to call God "our Father," a prayer taught only by the Spirit.

• Dear Father, in confidence and boldness I bring my needs before You. Hear me for the sake of Jesus alone. Amen.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 4:8 *you*. Gentile converts. *not gods*. The entities enslaving the Galatians in their pagan past were not by nature gods, yet they were real forces. The present evil age is dominated by demonic principalities and powers hostile to Christ and His Church (cf, e.g., Rm 8:35, 38; 1Co 2:6, 8; Eph 1:21; 2:2; 6:12; Col 2:10, 15).

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 4:9 *know God … known by God*. The initiative always belongs to God. Paradoxically, knowing God is a purely passive experience. *weak and worthless elementary principles*. Seeking salvation through obedience to Jewish laws places a person under the elementary powers of this evil age (cf v 3).

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 4:10 *observe*. The Gk denotes scrupulous observance, suggesting that the Galatians were actually adopting or following the Jewish liturgical calendar being required of them (cf Ex 13:10; 31:16–17; Nu 10:10; Lv 25:1–7; 1Ch 23:31).

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 4:11 *in vain*. A prominent expression in Gal (3:4). Paul could hardly bear the thought that after all his hard labor, the Galatians were in danger of losing the Gospel and the freedom it brings.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 4:12 *as I am*. As a man whom Christ set free from the bondage of the Law, Paul was an example to be emulated (1Co 4:16; 11:1; Php 3:17; 1Th 1:6; 2:14; 3:12; 2Th 3:7–9).

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 4:13 *bodily ailment*. Numerous suggestions have been offered (e.g., malaria, epilepsy, eye ailment; cf 2Co 12:7–10). Since the ailment was the cause of Paul's original visit, perhaps it required rest and recuperation and thus a stay in Galatia.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 4:14 *a trial to you*. Evidently Paul's appearance was repulsive, inviting disdain and disgust. *as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus*. The Church had honored Paul by recognizing his apostolic authority as a messenger and representative of the risen Christ (Lk 10:16; Jn 13:20).

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 4:15 *blessing you felt?* The Galatians had considered themselves extremely fortunate due to the blessings Paul brought. *gouged out your eyes*. In today's idiom, "You would have given your right arm to me."

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 4:16 *truth?* The truth of the Gospel (2:5, 14), spoken forthrightly, contrasts the opponents' deceptive tactics.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 4:17 *They*. False teachers, called "Judaizers," were agitating the Church. *shut you out*. Judaizers sought to bar fellowship with noncircumcised Gentiles. *make much of them*. The agitators hoped that by wooing the Galatians into their sphere of influence, the Galatians would, in turn, become their followers. (Note: The verse begins and ends with the same Gk word, *zeloo¯*, meaning "court someone's favor.")
GALATIANS—NOTE ON 4:18 Had the teachers who endeared themselves to the Galatians been faithful ministers of the one Gospel, Paul would have rejoiced (as in 1Co 3:5–10; Php 1:15–18). But their purpose was less than honorable.
GALATIANS—NOTE ON 4:19 *little children*. A term of endearment (1Co 4:14–15; 1Th 2:11–12). *anguish of childbirth … Christ is formed in you!* Paul is like a mother in travail, but he does not labor to bring forth children in his own likeness—Paul has no use for Paulinists (cf 1Co 1:12–13). The Gospel he speaks is to bring forth Christians, men and women in whom Christ is formed, in whom Christ lives. Cf 2:20; 2Co 4:16; Eph 4:24; Col 3:10.
GALATIANS—NOTE ON 4:20 *my tone*. Lit, "voice."
GALATIANS—NOTE ON 4:8–20 Paul appeals to the Galatians as a pastor with affection and tenderness, genuinely desiring to restore their friendship and especially the freedom in Christ they once so gladly embraced. Tragically, enemies of the Gospel continue to camouflage their dishonorable intentions as they seek to draw people away from Christ. When pastors proclaim the Gospel, Christ Himself is inviting all to return to Him for forgiveness and renewal of faith. • Heavenly Father, I pray for all ministers of the Word and the blessings they bring. Through them, open our eyes to the truth. Amen.
GALATIANS—NOTE ON 4:21 *under the law … listen to the law?* The first usage refers to law as a state of enslavement (3:23; see note, 3:10) under Moses' Commandments, and requiring liberation (4:5; cf 5:18). The second usage designates the Books of Moses or Scripture in general, since what follows is based on the history in Gn 16–21.
GALATIANS—NOTE ON 4:22–23 The false teachers and Paul related the same biblical story but probably with sharply different interpretations. The story: Unable to bear children, Abraham's wife, Sarah, gave Abraham a son, Ishmael, through her Egyptian slave Hagar (Gn 16:1–16; 17:18). Years later and past their childbearing years, Abraham (age 100) and Sarah (90)

received God's promise that Sarah would bear a son, whom they named Isaac. The interpretation: The teachers likely argued that the uncircumcised Gentiles corresponded to Ishmael and were illegitimate sons, not true descendants of Abraham. Paul, conversely, declared that uncircumcised Gentile believers corresponded to Isaac, the son of the promise. Paul contrasts the births of Abraham's two sons according to the status of their mothers. Ishmael's mother was Hagar, the slave woman; Isaac's mother was Sarah, the free woman (Gn 16:15; 21:2–3). The apostle then contrasts the way the sons were born, Ishmael by natural birth and Isaac naturally but through God's promise (Gn 17:19; 18:10).

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 4:24 *allegorically*. An adverb occurring only here in Gk Bible, used of an analogy or likeness that stands for something different (see "corresponds to" in v 25).

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 4:25 *Mount Sinai in Arabia*. See map, p 120.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 4:26 *Jerusalem above*. The spiritual Jerusalem, the Church. See "Zion," p 844. Luth: "The church, believers scattered throughout the world, who have the same Gospel, the same faith in Christ, the same Holy Spirit, and the same sacraments" (AE 26:439). Cf Php 3:20; Heb 12:22–24. See also Ap VII and VIII 10. *our mother*. "[The Christian Church] is the mother that conceives and bears every Christian through God's Word" (LC II 42).

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 4:27 These words of Isaiah recalled the miraculous blessing of once-barren Sarah to comfort Israel exiled in Babylon (a "barren" condition) with the hope of restoration and increase of children (cf Is 49:6; 51:4–5).

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 4:28 *Now you*. Emphatic in Gk. *of promise*. Paul applies the allegory to the Galatians who, like Isaac, are children of promise (cf 3:8, 14).

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 4:29 *persecuted … now*. Jewish tradition interpreted Ishmael's conduct as hostile against Isaac (e.g., that Ishmael shot arrows at Isaac; cf Gn 16:12). *persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit*. Cf 3:4; 4:6. The Judaizers pressured the Galatians to undergo circumcision.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 4:30 *Cast out*. The Galatians must exercise discipline, because a religion of bondage cannot coexist with the Gospel of freedom.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 4:31 Cf 3:29. Summary of vv 22–30.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 4:21–31 Paul reverses the Judaizers' definition of Abraham's true children. The uncircumcised Gentile Christians are Sarah's children (and thus free), not Hagar's (slaves). Legalism (v 21) imagines that a saving relationship with God depends on certain rules and regulations. The Christian religion sets people free, giving birth to heirs of eternal life in Christ. • We rejoice, O Lord, that through faith we are already members of Your heavenly kingdom. Lead us to share our joy by sharing the promise in Jesus. Amen.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON **Ch 5** "By the Word [the Spirit] works and promotes sanctification, causing this congregation daily to grow and to become strong in the faith and its fruit, which He produces" (LC II 53).

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 5:1 *freedom*. Freedom of conscience because of Christ's forgiveness. See note, 2:4. *stand firm*. "Hold your ground." *a yoke*. Figurative of a burden. "Ordinances instituted as though they are necessary, or with the view that they merit grace, are contrary to the Gospel" (AC XXVIII 50; see
FC Ep X 6).

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 5:2 *accept circumcision*. Lit, "have oneself circumcised." Paul, for the first time in the Letter, brings into the open the specific issue confronting the Galatians (cf 2:3; 6:12–13). *Christ will be of no advantage to you*. The principle set forth in 2:21 (see note). Acquiescing to the Judaizers' demands renders Christ useless.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 5:3 *obligated to keep the whole law*. Submission to circumcision and thus in principle to the Law for salvation, necessitates keeping all the Law's precepts (3:10–14). *whole*. See note, v 14.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 5:4 *severed from Christ*. Estranged from Christ. The same Gk term is used in 3:17 ("make … void") and 5:11 ("removed"). *fallen away from grace*. Jettison the "Christ alone" principle and you also throw out "grace alone," the only means by which sinners can stand before God (cf 1:6; Rm 5:2; 1Pt 5:12). "Outside of this Christian Church, where the Gospel is not found, there is no forgiveness, as also there can be no holiness" (LC II 56).

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 5:5 *wait*. Believers await the full realization in heaven of the present gift of justification (Rm 5:1–2; cf 1Co 1:7–8; Php 3:20–21).

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 5:6 Circumcised or not, one's physical condition has no impact on one's relationship to God. It is irrelevant. *working*. Gk *energeo*, in the active sense. Luth: "Faith … is a divine work in us which changes us and makes us to be born anew of God. … O it is a living, busy, active, mighty thing, this faith. It is impossible for it not to be doing good incessantly" (AE 35:370). "Love ought to follow faith" (Ap IV 111).
GALATIANS—NOTE ON 5:7 *running well*. Athletic metaphor of running a race, like a runner striding smoothly forward (cf 1Co 9:24–27; Php 3:14). *Who hindered you*. Lit, "cut in front of," to break a runner's stride and impede progress. The Judaizers in effect tripped the Galatians.
GALATIANS—NOTE ON 5:8 The false teachers' rhetoric urging circumcision, however persuasive, did not originate with God.
GALATIANS—NOTE ON 5:9 This metaphor shows the insidiously corrupting power of a seemingly small error. Cf 1Co 5:6, where this proverbial saying is applied also to moral failure. Luth: "In theology a tiny error overthrows the whole teaching" (AE 27:37).
GALATIANS—NOTE ON 5:10 *the one who is troubling you … whoever he is*. Spoken rhetorically, though Paul likely has a particular Judaizer in mind.
GALATIANS—NOTE ON 5:11 *still preach circumcision*. Opponents may have accused Paul of inconsistency, perhaps because he did circumcise Timothy (Ac 16:3; cf 1Co 9:20). *why … persecuted?* Paul countered that the Jews' continued harassment proved that he did not require circumcision of converts. *offense*. Gk *skandalon*, "what arouses ridicule and opposition" ("stumbling block"). The cross offends human pride, which seeks to be justified by the Law. The cross knocks the props out from under all religious systems advocating salvation by human merit (3:10–13; 6:14).
GALATIANS—NOTE ON 5:12 *those*. Advocates of circumcision. *emasculate*. Some see an allusion to the cult of Cybele, which originated in Pessinus in Galatia. Devotees of the goddess practiced sacred castration. In Php 3:2, Paul called circumcision a mutilation. Paul's blunt language revealed the emotional intensity of his disgust.
GALATIANS—NOTE ON 5:13 *freedom*. See notes, 2:4; 5:1. *opportunity*. Lit, a base of operations, as in military contexts. Freedom in Christ ought not become a basis for pandering to the desires of the fallen human nature.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 5:14 *whole*. Translated as in v 3, but the Gk terms have slightly different focuses. In v 3, "whole" defines Law as a total of individual precepts. Here in v 14, "whole" describes Law as a unit, with emphasis on its spirit or intention. Love for the neighbor encapsulates its very essence.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 5:15 *bite and devour*. A vicious dogfight to the death, animals snapping at one another with bared fangs, portrays the ugliness of bitter partisan strife in the congregation.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 5:1–15 . Paul specifically argues that the acceptance of circumcision in principle violates Christian freedom and endangers a person's relationship to Christ. Congregational strife often arises when issues in the area of Christian freedom are elevated to the level of biblical doctrine. Christ Jesus loved us to the end so that He might lift the burden of guilt that troubles our consciences. • Lord, as we eagerly await Your coming, free us from pettiness and self-indulgence so that we may love one another. Amen.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 5:16 *walk*. See p 1904. *flesh*. See p 1902.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 5:17 *opposed to each other*. From the moment believers receive the Holy Spirit at Baptism, a lifelong struggle with the old Adam begins (see FC SD VI 7).

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 5:18 *led by the Spirit*. Led not by coercion but by a gentle and loving grasp, as when a child puts her hand into the hand of a beloved and trusted father. *under the law*. Instead of controlling the flesh, the Law increases sin (Rm 5; 8). See p 1911.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 5:19 Paul's list of the flesh's deeds begins with three descriptions of sexual sin, signaling their prominence in society. *works*. The same term as in "works of the Law" (2:16; 3:2, 5, 10).

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 5:20–21 *enmity … envy*. Of the 15 sins listed in vv 19–21, eight share a common feature: they are behaviors that disrupt Christian fellowship.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 5:21 *things like these*. Not an exhaustive list. *warned you before*. Paul repeats this teaching from catechesis or an earlier Letter. *not inherit*. Cf 1Co 6:9–10; Eph 5:5. Reveals the purpose of the list in vv 19–21. Persons engaged in such a pattern of behavior reap eternal consequences (exclusion from God's heavenly kingdom). "Those who walk according to the flesh [Galatians 5:19–21] retain neither faith nor righteousness" (Ap V 227).

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 5:22 *fruit*. Gk *karpos*. The harvest of a life produced and guided by the one Holy Spirit is like a cluster (singular) of grapes—in contrast to dissentious deeds (plural) of the self-indulgent life.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 5:23 *there is no law*. Rhetorical understatement; the fruit of the Spirit goes far beyond the Law's requirements. "Faith must be the mother and source of works that are truly good and well pleasing to God, which God will reward in this world and in the world to come" (FC SD IV 9).

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 5:24 *crucified the flesh*. The Galatians participate in Christ's crucifixion when baptized (note past tense of "crucified"). Cf Rm 6:3–4, 10–11. Baptism entails a daily crucifixion (putting to death; cf Col 3:5) of the flesh. Luth: "The Old Adam in us should by daily contrition and repentance be drowned and die with all sins and evil desires" (SC, Baptism, pp xxxix–xl; see also FC SD IV 19).

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 5:25 *live by … walk by*. The Spirit is the source as well as guide of our spiritual life. *walk*. Lit, "be in line with" or "keep in step with" (the leading of the Spirit; cf 3:2; 4:6–7). See p 1904.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 5:26 *conceited*. Perhaps the Galatians had been parading their observance of the Law to show their superiority over others (thus also provoking envy).

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 5:16–26 Christian freedom means walking, conducting oneself, by the Holy Spirit's power and leading. Our sinful flesh, consumed by self-importance, instinctively looks down on others and inevitably causes interpersonal tensions. At Baptism, we were united with Christ, who died to set us free from sin and the way of the Law. • O Holy Spirit, give us daily victories over sin in our personal life and, above all, the power to love one another. Amen.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 6:1 *spiritual*. Gk *pneumatikos*, possibly congregational leaders. See note, 1 Co 12:1. However, all Christians have the Spirit (cf 3:2–5, 14; 4:6), not just a select or elite few. They follow the Spirit's leading by gently and humbly caring for the one who lapses into some sin. *restore*. "To put back into former condition" (e.g., fishing nets, Mt 4:21; Mk 1:19). "Even though we have sins, the 'grace of the' Holy Spirit does not allow them to harm us. For we are in the Christian Church, where there is nothing but 'continuous, uninterrupted' forgiveness of sin" (LC II 55).

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 6:2 *burdens*. Specifically, loads that temptations and sin bring upon fellow Christians (v 1) but, in principle, all burdens. See note, v 5. *law of Christ*. Love (Lv 19:18; cf Jn 15:12), fulfilled through Christ's sacrificial death (1:4; 2:20). Christians "through love serve one another" (5:13) as Christ served them. Significantly, love heads the list of the Spirit's fruit (5:22).
GALATIANS—NOTE ON 6:3 Our opinion of ourselves shapes our conduct toward others (cf Lk 18:9, 11; 2Co 10:12). Those thinking they have fewer faults than others tend not to sympathize with others' shortcomings.
GALATIANS—NOTE ON 6:4 Chrys: "This he says … in the way of concession. … He that is wont to boast with reference to himself only, and not against others, will soon reform this failing [of self boasting] also" (*NPNF* 1 13:44).
GALATIANS—NOTE ON 6:5 Not contradictory to v 2, but complementary. Different Gk terms are used. Those who accept personal accountability for their own actions before God (bearing their own "load," Gk *phortion*) are more willing to bear others' burdens (v 2, "burden," Gk *baros*).
GALATIANS—NOTE ON 6:6 *teaches*. See p 1904.
GALATIANS—NOTE ON 6:7 Humans cannot turn up their noses at God and expect to get by with it. The immutable law built into creation, illustrated by sowing and reaping, is that actions have consequences (cf Pr 22:8).
GALATIANS—NOTE ON 6:8 *corruption*. The sinful nature's work. Cf 5:19–21. *sows to the Spirit*. Living under the Holy Spirit's power and direction (5:5, 18, 25). *reap eternal life*. Cf Rm 8:13.
GALATIANS—NOTE ON 6:9 Christians must not become discouraged when they do not see immediate or observable results from their well-doing (a lesson learned from farmers who must wait patiently). Cf Lk 18:1; 2Co 4:1; Eph 3:13.
GALATIANS—NOTE ON 6:10 Inspired by God's generosity. Chrys: "The rule of life which Grace gives invited both land and sea to the [table] of charity, only it shows greater care for its own household" (*NPNF* 1 13:45). "Help them and promote their interest—in every way and wherever you can—purely out of love for God and to please Him. Do this in the confidence that He will abundantly reward you for everything" (LC I 328).

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 6:1–10 Members of God's family restore the erring, bear one another's burdens, support their teachers, and do good to all —especially to fellow Christians. An attitude of moral superiority closes the heart against the brother or sister in need (cf 1 Jn 3:17). The Son of God "loved me and gave Himself for me" (2:20), that I may be free to serve Him and my neighbor in need. • Teach me to be patient with others, Lord, so I may not grow tired of doing good. Restore me with unfailing mercy. Amen.
GALATIANS—NOTE ON 6:11 *large letters*. Paul wrote the conclusion for two reasons: to authenticate the Letter (cf 2Th 3:17) and to emphasize its main points. *with my own hand*. Paul customarily used scribes when composing his Letters, but added a personal postscript (cf Rm 16:22; Col 4:18). See pp 1899–1901.
GALATIANS—NOTE ON 6:12 *persecuted*. If the Judaizers actually would preach the cross of Christ (i.e., the Gospel) like Paul and drop insistence on circumcision, they would incur the wrath of non-Christian Jews. By compelling circumcision, they deleted "Christ alone" from their message and thus assuaged hard-line Jewish critics.
GALATIANS—NOTE ON 6:13 *boast in your flesh*. To enhance their own standing in Jewish eyes, the circumcision party hypocritically bragged about their success in getting Gentile converts to accept circumcision (cf Ti 1:10–11).
GALATIANS—NOTE ON 6:14 *boast … in the cross*. A sharp paradox to v 13 and, in the first-century context, the height of foolishness and even madness (1Co 1:18). The cross symbolized a cruel, vulgar, shameful, and humiliating death reserved for slaves and criminals. Compressed in "cross" is the powerful message of salvation through Christ's death. *crucified to me*. "Although believers are regenerate and renewed in the spirit of their mind, in the present life this regeneration and renewal is not complete. It is only begun. Believers … struggle constantly against the corrupt nature and character, which cleaves to us until death" (FC Ep VI 4). See note, Rm 7:15–20.
GALATIANS—NOTE ON 6:15 *but a new creation*. This whole new order of existence inaugurated through Jesus' atoning death is a radical contrast to a world in which circumcision had religious significance. Those in Christ are already "a new creation" (2Co 5:17; cf Is 65:17; Rm 8:19–22).
GALATIANS—NOTE ON 6:16 *walk*. See note, 5:25. *this rule*. Standard or principle, i.e., the one just mentioned: the cross and the new creation. *Israel*

of God. All believers in Christ, both Jew and Gentile; the new Israel (cf v 10, "household of faith"). Paul has argued forcefully that Gentiles are children of Abraham, heirs of the promise (3:6–9, 21; 4:28–31).

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 6:17 *marks of Jesus*. Wounds and scars Paul received in the service of Jesus (Ac 14:19; 2Co 11:23–25). As a true apostle, Paul identified himself with the suffering Savior (cf 2Co 4:8–10; Php 3:10).

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 6:18 *with your spirit*. Not the Holy Spirit, but simply an expression meaning "with you." See "be with," p 5. *brothers*. The last word of the Epistle is this kind greeting. *Amen*. See p 1901.

GALATIANS—NOTE ON 6:11–18 In a handwritten postscript, Paul leaves us with an interpretive lens through which to evaluate all Christian teaching and life: the message of the cross. Against all self-righteous pride in spiritual accomplishments, the cross speaks a word of judgment. Yet to those who believe, the cross is God's power to make all things new. • Lord, in Baptism, You put my old nature to death. By Your grace, dear Lord Jesus, continue to renew me. I already am a new creation in You. Amen.

Ephesians

Ephesians 1 | Ephesians 2 | Ephesians 3 | Ephesians 4 | Ephesians 5 | Ephesians 6

- Introduction to Ephesians
  - Overview
  - Reading Ephesians
  - Setting
  - Central Issue
  - Luther on Ephesians
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

Greeting

1 [1] † Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God,

To the saints who are in Ephesus, and are faithful[1] in Christ Jesus:

[2] † Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Spiritual Blessings in Christ

3 ‡ ‡ ‡ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has
blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, 4 †
even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we
should be holy and blameless before him. In love 5 † he predestined us[2] for
adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will,
6 † to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the
Beloved. 7 † In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness
of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, 8 †which he lavished
upon us, in all wisdom and insight 9 † making known[3] to us the mystery of
his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ 10 †as a plan
for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and
things on earth.

11 † In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined
according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the
counsel of his will, 12 †so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might
be to the praise of his glory. 13 †In him you also, when you heard the word of
truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with
the promised Holy Spirit, 14 †who is the guarantee[1] of our inheritance until
we acquire possession of it,[2] to the praise of his glory.

Thanksgiving and Prayer

15 ‡ † For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus
and your love[3] toward all the saints, 16 † I do not cease to give thanks for
you, remembering you in my prayers, 17 † that the God of our Lord Jesus
Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and of
revelation in the knowledge of him, 18 † having the eyes of your hearts
enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called
you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, 19 † and what
is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe,
according to the working of his great might 20 † that he worked in Christ
when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the
heavenly places, 21 † far above all rule and authority and power and
dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also
in the one to come. 22 † And he put all things under his feet and gave him as
head over all things to the church, 23 † which is his body, the fullness of him
who fills all in all.

By Grace Through Faith

2 [1]‡†And you were dead in the trespasses and sins [2]† in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— [3]†among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body[1] and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. [4]‡But[2] God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, [5]†even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— [6]†and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, [7]† so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. [8]‡For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, [9] not a result of works, so that no one may boast. [10]† For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

One in Christ

11 Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh,
called “the uncircumcision” by what is called the circumcision, which is
made in the flesh by hands— 12 remember that you were at that time
separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and
strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in
the world. 13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been
brought near by the blood of Christ. 14 For he himself is our peace, who has
made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of
hostility 15 by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in
ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the
two, so making peace, 16 and might reconcile us both to God in one body
through the cross, thereby killing the hostility. 17 And he came and
preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near.
18 For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. 19 So
then you are no longer strangers and aliens,[1] but you are fellow citizens
with the saints and members of the household of God, 20 built on the
foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the
cornerstone, 21 in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows
into a holy temple in the Lord. 22 In him you also are being built together
into a dwelling place for God by[2] the Spirit.

The Mystery of the Gospel Revealed

3 [1]‡‡†For this reason I, Paul, a prisoner for Christ Jesus on behalf of
you Gentiles— [2]†assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God's
grace that was given to me for you, [3]† how the mystery was made known to
me by revelation, as I have written briefly. [4]† When you read this, you can
perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, [5]† which was not made
known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed
to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. [6]†This mystery is[1] that the
Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the
promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

[7]† Of this gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God's
grace, which was given me by the working of his power. [8]†To me, though I
am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the
Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, [9]† and to bring to light for
everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in[2] God who
created all things, [10]† so that through the church the manifold wisdom of
God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly
places. [11]†This was according to the eternal purpose that he has realized in
Christ Jesus our Lord, [12]† in whom we have boldness and access with
confidence through our faith in him. [13]†So I ask you not to lose heart over
what I am suffering for you, which is your glory.

Prayer for Spiritual Strength

14 For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, 15 from whom every
family[3] in heaven and on earth is named, 16 that according to the riches of
his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit
in your inner being, 17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith
—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 may have strength to
comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height
and depth, 19 and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that
you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

20 Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask
or think, according to the power at work within us, 21 to him be glory in the
church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever.
Amen.

Unity in the Body of Christ

4 [1]I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner
worthy of the calling to which you have been called, [2]with all humility and
gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, [3]eager to
maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. [4]There is one body
and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your
call— [5]one Lord, one faith, one baptism, [6]one God and Father of all,
who is over all and through all and in all. [7]But grace was given to each one
of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. [8]Therefore it says,

> "When he ascended on high he led a host of
> captives,
> and he gave gifts to men."

[9](In saying, "He ascended," what does it mean but that he had also
descended into the lower regions, the earth?[1] [10]He who descended is the
one who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all
things.) [11]And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the
shepherds[2] and teachers,[3] [12]to equip the saints for the work of ministry,
for building up the body of Christ, [13]until we all attain to the unity of the
faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood,[4] to the
measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, [14]so that we may no longer
be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind
of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.
[15]Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into
him who is the head, into Christ, [16]from whom the whole body, joined and
held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is
working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

The New Life

17 ††Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk
as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. 18 †They are darkened in
their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance
that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. 19They have become callous
and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of
impurity. 20 †But that is not the way you learned Christ!— 21assuming that
you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus,
22 †to put off your old self,[1] which belongs to your former manner of life
and is corrupt through deceitful desires, 23and to be renewed in the spirit of
your minds, 24and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in
true righteousness and holiness.

25 †Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the
truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. 26 † Be angry
and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, 27 †and give no
opportunity to the devil. 28 †Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him
labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have
something to share with anyone in need. 29 † Let no corrupting talk come out
of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the
occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. 30 †And do not grieve the
Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. 31 †
Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away
from you, along with all malice. 32 Be kind to one another, tenderhearted,
forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

Walk in Love

5 [1]‡†Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. [2]†And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

[3]‡†But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints. [4]†Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving. [5]†For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. [6]† Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. [7]†Therefore do not become partners with them; [8]†for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light [9]†(for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), [10]†and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. [11]† Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. [12]†For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. [13]‡But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, [14]for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says,

> “Awake, O sleeper,
> and arise from the dead,
> and Christ will shine on you.”

[15]† Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, [16]† making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. [17]†Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. [18]†And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, [19]†addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, [20]† giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, [21]† submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.

Wives and Husbands

22 ‡ ‡ † Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. 23 † For the
husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his
body, and is himself its Savior. 24 † Now as the church submits to Christ, so
also wives should submit in everything to their husbands.

25 † Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave
himself up for her, 26 † that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the
washing of water with the word, 27 † so that he might present the church to
himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she
might be holy and without blemish.[1] 28 † In the same way husbands should
love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.
29 † For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just
as Christ does the church, 30 † because we are members of his body. 31 ‡
“Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife,
and the two shall become one flesh.” 32 This mystery is profound, and I am
saying that it refers to Christ and the church. 33 † However, let each one of
you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her
husband.

Children and Parents

6 [1] ‡ † Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. [2] † “Honor your father and mother” (this is the first commandment with a promise), [3] † “that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land.” [4] † Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

Slaves and Masters

5 † Slaves,[2] obey your earthly masters[3] with fear and trembling, with a
sincere heart, as you would Christ, 6 † not by the way of eye-service, as
people-pleasers, but as servants[1] of Christ, doing the will of God from the
heart, 7 rendering service with a good will as to the Lord and not to man, 8 †
knowing that whatever good anyone does, this he will receive back from the
Lord, whether he is a slave or free. 9 † Masters, do the same to them, and
stop your threatening, knowing that he who is both their Master[2] and yours
is in heaven, and that there is no partiality with him.

The Whole Armor of God

10 ‡ ‡ † Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. 11 †
Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the
schemes of the devil. 12 † For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but
against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over
this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly
places. 13 † Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able
to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. 14 † Stand
therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the
breastplate of righteousness, 15 † and, as shoes for your feet, having put on
the readiness given by the gospel of peace. 16 † In all circumstances take up
the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of
the evil one; 17 † and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit,
which is the word of God, 18 † praying at all times in the Spirit, with all
prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance,
making supplication for all the saints, 19 † and also for me, that words may be
given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the
gospel, 20 † for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it
boldly, as I ought to speak.

Final Greetings

21 †† So that you also may know how I am and what I am doing, Tychicus
the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord will tell you
everything. 22 †I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may
know how we are, and that he may encourage your hearts.

23 † Peace be to the brothers,[1] and love with faith, from God the Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ. 24 †Grace be with all who love our Lord Jesus
Christ with love incorruptible.

Ephesians

Overview

Author
Paul the apostle

Date
c AD 60

Places
Ephesus; Rome (from which Paul wrote)

People
Paul; Tychicus; “saints” and “brothers” at Ephesus

Purpose
Paul demonstrates that Baptism unites all Christians

Law Themes
Rivalry between believers; grieving the Spirit through unfaithfulness; marital unfaithfulness; spiritual warfare

Gospel Themes
Baptism; election by God’s grace; justification by grace alone; the mystery of Christ revealed; unity in Christ’s Body

Memory Verses
Election in Christ (1:3–10); saved by grace (2:8–10); unity through service (4:11–16); Bridegroom and Bride (5:22–33)

Introduction to Ephesians

Reading Ephesians

At an early Christian Baptism, cool water would stream down people's heads and necks when they stepped away from the font. As they shivered through the baptismal prayers, droplets would fall from the tresses of their hair and land in puddles at their feet. The droplets would draw circles on the puddles' surfaces as the water slowly rolled across the floor, uniting with other droplets and puddles. Though the people baptized were different—and even from different ethnicities, ages, and social levels—the water and the Word of Baptism united them to share new life, sealing, enlightening, and washing in Christ.

At their Baptism, the Ephesians became something more than cold and damp. Baptism unites believers into one Body as easily as water meets and merges on a floor. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians shows that Baptism united Jews and Gentiles, leaders and followers, and all believers across all generations.

Setting

Ephesus was well situated as a trade center, with its harbor, access to the Cayster River, and location close to the Maeander Valley. It was a free city, famous for its temple to the Greek goddess Artemis and also for its thriving Jewish population, which enjoyed considerable privilege (see *Ant* 14:223–30). See map, p 1886.

Central Issue

According to Ac 18–20, Paul spent nearly three years with the Ephesian congregation, more time than with any other mission congregation he served. He first visited a group of disciples at Ephesus during his third missionary journey (AD 52–55).

The depth of his relationship with the Ephesians shows through in the theological depth of this Pastoral Letter and its liturgical character. The key problem Paul addresses is division between the congregation's Jewish and Gentile members. His opening prayer, written in the traditional Jewish *Berakah* pattern (see note, 1:3–14), addresses the issue of unity and thanks God for His answer in Christ. Paul returns to the themes of unity, Baptism, and prayer repeatedly in the Letter (see Luther and the outline below).

After Paul wrote Ephesians in c AD 60, he sent Timothy to Ephesus as a leader because false doctrine afflicted the congregation (1Tm 1:3). It eventually became a leading church in Asia Minor (Rv 2:1–7). According to the early Christian historian Eusebius, the apostle John settled in Ephesus for his final years of ministry (*NPNF* 2 1:132).

Luther on Ephesians

In this epistle St. Paul teaches, first, what the gospel is, how it was predestined by God alone in eternity, and earned and sent forth through Christ, so that all who believe on it become righteous, godly, living, saved men, and free from the law, sin, and death. This he does in the first three chapters.

Then he teaches that false teachings and the commandments of men are to be avoided, so that we may remain true to one Head, and become sure and genuine and complete in Christ alone. For in him we have everything, so that we need nothing beside him. This he does in chapter 4.

Then he goes on to teach that we are to practice and prove our faith with good works, avoid sin, and fight with spiritual weapons against the devil, so that through the cross we may be steadfast in hope. (AE 35:385)

Challenges for Readers

Authorship. Though the early Christians uniformly believed that Paul wrote this Letter, critics have assumed that a disciple of Paul wrote it. They see significant differences from Paul's other Letters in the style of the sentences, some unique terms and expressions, and the Letter's general character, though all agree that this Letter bears great similarity to Colossians. They reject any relationship between the Ephesian congregation described in Ac 19–20 and the view of the church in the letter to the Ephesians. However, readers should note that the Ephesians had issues with the doctrine of Baptism (cf Ac 19), and Paul shows great concern for strengthening leadership at Ephesus (cf Ac 20). These are key themes in the Letter, pointing to Paul's authorship.

Address. Some early manuscripts and Church Fathers did not have copies of the Letter addressed specifically to the congregation "in Ephesus" (1:1). Critics have seen this as further evidence that Paul did not write it. However, early Christian letters were often copied to various congregations, which may explain why some copies lack the reference to Ephesus. See pp 1899–1901.

Date of Composition. Critics commonly date this letter to the last generation of the first century rather than the middle of the first century (cf "Authorship" above). However, the Letter was always included in the collection of Pauline Epistles.

Blessings for Readers

Ephesians beautifully describes the important truths of the Christian faith that St Paul so eloquently em-phasizes. The first chapter sees the entire Christian life in view of God's choosing His people in Christ. These words, rightly applied, offer incredible comfort in the midst of suffering and doubt. Likewise, no other place in the NT describes the relationship between grace, faith, and good works (justification and sanctification) quite so clearly as Eph 2. The entire Letter leads us to treasure our Baptism into Christ and into His Church, where a new way of life prevails.

As you study Ephesians, the Lord will equip you for victory over temptation and strife, over sin and Satan, so that you may serve Him and His people in all unity and joy. Read Ephesians as God's plan for your family, your pastor, and your congregation as you serve together according to God's eternal purposes.

OUTLINE

I. Salutation (1:1–2)
II. Prologue on Unity (1:3–23)
  A. Prayer (1:3–14)
  B. Thanksgiving (1:15–23)
III. Proofs for Unity (chs 2–3)
  A. New Creation by Grace Alone (2:1–10)
  B. Gentiles and Israel (2:11–22)
  C. Paul's Apostolic Mandate to the Gentiles (3:1–13)
  D. Prayer and Doxology (3:14–21)
IV. Baptism Unites (4:1–5:20)
  A. Baptism into One Body (4:1–16)
  B. Baptism Clothes the Believer (4:17–32)
  C. Baptism Directs the Believer's Walk (5:1–14)
  D. The Liturgy of the Spirit (5:15–20)
V. Baptism Reorders Relationships (5:21–6:9)
  A. Husband and Wife (5:22–33)
  B. Parents and Children (6:1–4)

C. Masters and Servants (6:5–9)

VI. Baptism Equips with Armor (6:10–17)

VII. Conclusion (6:18–24)

A. Exhortation (6:18–20)

B. Commendation to Letter-Bearer (6:21–22)

C. Final Greeting and Blessing (6:23–24)

- Saving Faith
- The Unity of the Church
- Law and Gospel Parenting

Saving Faith

To understand what faith is and how it works, consider the following chart and the analogy of a person drowning in a vast ocean.

The Unity of the Church

The unity of the church is given by God and not an achievement of human beings. In this sense, it is not wrong to say that the unity of the church is a sacramental unity, created by the Holy Spirit through the washing of God's Word (Eph 5:26, a clear reference to baptism). As the Psalmist writes, "Know that the LORD, he is God! It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture" (Ps 100:3). The church as God's creation is affirmed in 1 Peter: "Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy" (1 Pet 2:10).

This unity is a unity of faith; that is, faith in an object, namely Jesus Christ. The faith one professes is in agreement with the entire Christian church, as urged by the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 1:10; "I appeal to you, brothers … that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment." [Ap VII/VIII 8] …

Christ joins his people, his children (John 11:52), together into one body, even his own body (Eph 1:23; 1 Cor 12:12–31). We are told in no uncertain terms that, as one body "[if] one member suffers, all suffer together" (1 Cor 12:26). To this body is given a multitude of gifts that are to be shared (1 Cor 12:27–31). Among these gifts is the gift of the pastoral office which is given to ensure that the gospel is purely proclaimed among God's people. [AC V 1–2] …

What should first be noted is that since Christian unity is a gift of God, *we recognize* it and do not *create* it. … The basis of the church is faith in Christ, a faith that comes to us as a gift and *recognizes* the voice of the shepherd that comes to us through his word [SA III XII 2].

Walter Obare Omwanza, "Choose Life!" *CTQ* 69:3/4 (July/Oct 2005), 311–12.

Law and Gospel Parenting

The joy of parenting brings with it many fears and questions. Each generation seems to face ever-increasing challenges for raising children in a world distorted by sin. Books on parenting offer a variety of how-tos on the subject. But one almost needs a how-to book to choose the right how-to book, some of which are nearly one thousand pages long! Isn't there something simpler?

At the risk of oversimplifying a complex issue—yes! There is something simpler. The best way for a Christian to parent a child is to remember that he or she is a child: God's child. The Fatherhood of God and His Law-and-Gospel ways with His children will motivate and guide them to be better parents.

Children of God

"See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are" (1Jn 3:1). Parenting begins with parents remembering that they live in God's kingdom ruled by God's lavish love in Christ. The Gospel is the basis for parenting, not some how-to book with a list of rules. God's undeserved love in Christ reminds parents that having a child is not a right but a blessing. Parents do not merely produce children (as an industry produces a product). They are entrusted with a child as a gift from God. All parenting flows from this gift of the heavenly Father.

The Gospel also becomes the goal of parenting. Parents can feel proud of their children's accomplishments in sports or academics. The ultimate goal is to bring their children to Jesus and have the Gospel become the basis of their life. "Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord" (Eph 6:4). Christian parents bring their children to Jesus in the waters of Holy Baptism. They bring their children to Jesus by instructing them in God's Word and modeling the Lord's ways (Law and Gospel) in the home. The ultimate goal of Christian parents is to see their children in heaven, not the "Hall of Fame."

The Law Still Applies

Life begins at conception, and so does sinfulness (Ps 51:5). Parents need to use the Law to point out sin and curb sinful behavior. Boundaries and limits protect children and give them the security that someone is in charge. Love uses the Law to train and discipline. "This is for your own good" may not make sense to a four-year-old, and "You'll thank me when you're older" makes teenage eyes roll, yet such discipline reflects how our Father disciplines us.

My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by Him. For the Lord disciplines the one He loves, and chastises every son whom He receives. … All discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it. (Heb 12:5–6, 11)

Children need clear rules and consistent discipline appropriate to their sin. They need parents who follow through on the consequences. Scripture says, "[God] disciplines us for our good, that we may share His holiness" (Heb 12:10). God's ultimate goal for His children is that they would be with Him in heaven someday. God works in and through our mistakes and the unpleasant results they bring. He does so for our ultimate good. Parents are working for their child's ultimate good when they apply godly discipline.

Applying Law and Gospel as Parents

Law and Gospel help parents discern what to do in a discipline situation. One of the principles of Law and Gospel is that the Law is used with unrepentant sinners and the Gospel is used with repentant sinners. Let's take spilling milk as an example. Most of the time, spilling milk is simply an accident. No violation of rules is involved. There is no need for the accusation of the Law: "Look what you have done!" What may be needed is some loving reassurance: "It's okay. Accidents happen." On the other hand, if Joey spills the milk while attempting to throw a dinner roll at Suzie, an infraction has been committed! Then the Law is needed! Joey must be called to account for his actions. However, when Joey confesses his guilt and expresses genuine sorrow, there is no need for further accusation. There may be consequences to his actions, like apologizing to his sister and helping clean up, but the Gospel of Christ's forgiveness can now be applied.

Godly discipline comes about when Law and Gospel are rightly and faithfully applied. Encourage your children to say "I'm sorry" and "I forgive you" to one another. (Do not settle for expressions like "That's okay," "No big deal," or "Whatever.")

Back to the Basics

How-to books are not enough. Certainly consult them and also seek the counsel of experienced parents. But real help for parenting comes from understanding the Law and Gospel of God's Word. Parenting does not consist of constant screaming and yelling; nor does it avoid all conflict for the sake of peace. Return to the Gospel daily. Remember how God has lavished His love upon you and made you His child. Remember that your child is a gift from Him. Remember how He disciplines you in love. He desires, above all else, that you be with Him in heaven someday. Instruct your children in the ways of the Lord. Discipline them in love, and do not shy away from using the Law when it is needed to set limits and boundaries and to convict of wrongdoing. Be always ready and generous with the Gospel! Teach Christ's forgiveness by forgiving your children. Teach Christ's forgiveness by admitting your mistakes and asking your children to forgive you.

Finally, cling to the Gospel for your own sake. Mistakes you make in parenting, things you should not have done, things you should have done better, a child who has gone astray—none of these separate you from God's love in Christ Jesus. You are a parent, but you are also a child, a child of God. And the heavenly Father never forsakes His children.

Footnotes

Footnotes for Ephesians, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:1 Some manuscripts *saints who are also faithful* (omitting *in Ephesus*)
- [2] 1:5 Or *before him in love, having predestined us*
- [3] 1:9 Or *he lavished upon us in all wisdom and insight, making known . . .*
- [1] 1:14 Or *down payment*
- [2] 1:14 Or *until God redeems his possession*
- [3] 1:15 Some manuscripts omit *your love*

Footnotes for Ephesians, Chapter 2

- [1] 2:3 Greek *flesh*
- [2] 2:4 Or *And*
- [1] 2:19 Or *sojourners*
- [2] 2:22 Or *in*

Footnotes for Ephesians, Chapter 3

- [1] 3:6 The words *This mystery is* are inferred from verse 4
- [2] 3:9 Or *by*
- [3] 3:15 Or *fatherhood*; the Greek word *patria* is closely related to the word for *Father* in verse 14

Footnotes for Ephesians, Chapter 4

- [1] 4:9 Or *the lower parts of the earth?*
- [2] 4:11 Or *pastors*
- [3] 4:11 Or *the shepherd-teachers*
- [4] 4:13 Greek *to a full-grown man*
- [1] 4:22 Greek *man*; also verse 24

Footnotes for Ephesians, Chapter 5

- [1] 5:27 Or *holy and blameless*

Footnotes for Ephesians, Chapter 6

- [2] 6:5 Or *servants*; Greek *bondservants*; similarly verse 8
- [3] 6:5 Or *your masters according to the flesh*
- [1] 6:6 Or *slaves*; Greek *bondservants*
- [2] 6:9 Greek *Lord*
- [1] 6:23 Or *brothers and sisters*

Study Notes

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 1:1 *apostle*. Paul writes with the authority of one sent by Christ (Ac 26:15–18) to speak as His representative (2:19–20; 4:11; 2Co 5:20) and to preach to the Gentiles (Eph 3:7–8). *saints*. Lit, "holy ones," as God made them through Holy Baptism (5:26–27; 1Co 6:11). See p 1904. The term essentially equates with the term "Church" in Paul's greetings. The whole congregation was to hear the Letter read publicly.
EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 1:2 *Grace … and peace*. See p 1902, 1903.
EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 1:3–14 *Blessed be*. A prayer based on the Jewish *Berakah* "Blessed" pattern (Dn 2:20–23). In Hbr, the same word is used for our blessing (praising) God and His blessing us (giving us good gifts). See p 1901. Paul naturally begins this way, since he has spent three years worshiping with the Ephesians as their pastor. This trinitarian prayer invokes the blessings of the Father (Eph 1:3–6), Son (vv 7–12), and Holy Spirit (vv 13–14).
EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 1:3 *the God … of our Lord Jesus*. Jesus is true God. As true man, He addressed the Father as "My God" (Mt 27:46; Jn 20:17). He taught us to pray this way and prays with us. *in Christ*. The key theme of Eph. See p 1903. *spiritual blessing*. God blesses us physically and spiritually. Here Paul likely refers to blessings given through the Holy Spirit. *heavenly places*. Or, "heavenly matters." A common phrase in Eph, which is concerned with the ultimate spiritual battle between God's forces and the devil's.
EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 1:4 *chose us*. As Israel was once God's chosen people (Dt 4:37; 14:2), the Christian Church is now chosen (Rm 9; 1Pt 2:9–10). See p 1901. "God's Word leads us to Christ, who is the Book of Life, in whom all are written and elected who are to be saved in eternity" (FC Ep XI 7). *holy and blameless*. Not a description of our morality as seen by the world, but our status in God's eyes. As Christ is holy and blameless, the perfect sacrifice for our sins (Heb 7:26; 9:14), we, too, are made holy and blameless by forgiveness through His blood (Eph 1:7).
EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 1:5 *predestined us*. See note, v 4. *adoption as sons*. Cf Rm 8:23; 9:4; Gal 4:5. In the Greco-Roman world, only sons could inherit (Gal 4:7). Some men ignored their natural children and declared an adopted son as heir. To be adopted by God is to be reborn into His family,

made heirs of His kingdom (Jn 1:12–13; Rm 8:16–17; 1Jn 3:1–2). This happens in Baptism, when we are all made "sons" (children, heirs) of God through His Son, Jesus (Jn 3:5; Gal 3:26–29). See p 1901.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 1:6 *to the praise of His … grace*. This refrain closes each section of the prayer, confessing that the blessings are due to God's grace, not our merit (2:8). *Beloved*. Describes Jesus at His Baptism (Mk 1:11; Lk 3:22) and transfiguration (Mt 17:5; Mk 9:7). Through our Baptism into Christ, we, too, are beloved of God (Eph 5:1; Col 3:12).

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 1:7 *redemption*. Payment made to free a slave or captive—a common picture for salvation in the NT, evoking the exodus (Ex 15:13; Lk 1:68). See p 1904. *His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses*. OT temple sacrifices are also evoked (Lv 17:11; Heb 9:14–15; 1Pt 1:18–19). See SC, Second Article, p xxxvii. Bern: "Where there is reconciliation there is remission of sins. And what is that but justification? Whether, therefore, we call it reconciliation, or remission of sins, or justification, or, again, redemption, or liberation from the chains of the devil … we have been justified freely by His [Christ's] blood" (*SLSB*, pp 287–88).

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 1:8 *all wisdom*. Many ancient religions and philosophies, such as Gnosticism, promised special knowledge (4:14; Col 2:16–23), but Paul taught that true wisdom is found in Christ (cf Mt 13:54; 1Co 1:24, 30; Col 2:3). See pp 775–78.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 1:9 *mystery*. An astonishing revelation—the Gospel is for the Gentiles as well as the Jews (3:6). "Mystery religions" in the ancient world promised to reveal mysterious truths as adherents progressed to higher levels. For Paul, the emphasis is not on things kept hidden, but that things once hidden in God's plan are now revealed to all (3:9). Paul defines the mystery primarily as Jesus Himself (5:32; Col 1:27; 2:2–3), whom God revealed as the Messiah to the apostles and prophets (Eph 3:3–5), and whom they revealed to the world in their preaching (3:8–9; 6:19; Col 1:25–27). See note, 1Co 14:2.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 1:10 *fullness of time*. The messianic age began with Christ's incarnation, death, and resurrection (Gal 4:4; Lk 2:6; Jn 12:23). *unite*. Lit, "put under one head," i.e., Christ (cf v 22; 4:15; 5:23). Because Jesus is both God and man, humankind and God are reconciled in Him (2:16; 2Co 5:18–20). Because all who are baptized are "in Christ," they are also reconciled to one another, whether Jew or Gentile, male or female, slave or free (Eph 2:14; Gal 3:26–29).

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 1:11 The prayer continues through v 14. *obtained*. Lit, "appointed," "allotted." *an inheritance*. The Israelite tribes received the Promised Land as their allotment from God; Christians receive God's kingdom, eternal life, and heaven (Mt 25:34; Col 1:12; 1Pt 1:4). As we are God's children, this can be called an inheritance (Eph 1:14, 18). See "heir," p 1902. *predestined*. See notes, vv 4–5. "In Him we are to seek the eternal election of the Father, who has determined in His eternal divine counsel [Ephesians 1:11–12] that He would save no one except those who know His Son Christ and truly believe in Him. Other thoughts are to be 'entirely' banished. … We know 'assuredly' that out of pure grace, without any merit of our own, we have been elected in Christ to eternal life" (FC Ep XI 13).

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 1:12 *first to hope*. Paul writes as a Jewish Christian, one who received the Messiah. He insists that the Gentiles, who received Christ through his preaching (v 13), are united with the Jews in Christ (2:11–22) by their common Baptism (4:3–6). *to the praise of His glory*. See note, v 6.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 1:13 *you also*. Gentile Christians at Ephesus. *heard the word*. Faith comes by hearing (Rm 10:14–17), for the Gospel has the power to bring salvation (Rm 1:16). *sealed*. Baptized. A seal marked ownership. The word was used for a wax seal on a scroll (Jn 3:33; Rv 5:1–5; see note, Jer 32:10); also for a brand on an animal or a tattoo on a slave or soldier. In the OT, God sealed Cain to protect him (Gn 4:15), and circumcision sealed the Israelites as God's people (Gn 17:11; Rm 4:11; Col 2:11–12). See note, Ezk 9:4, 6. God's seal marks all those in heaven (Rv 7:2–4; 9:4). A seal leaves its image; through Baptism, the promised Spirit (Lk 24:49; Ac 2:33) makes us His dwelling (2Co 1:21–22). "Baptism and the Lord's Supper—appointed as outward signs—work as seals" (LC III 98).

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 1:14 *guarantee*. Deposit or down payment; a substantial part of a purchase price paid in advance. The Holy Spirit dwells in us now as the firstfruits of God's gifts; the final "payment" is the resurrection and eternal life (Rm 8:23; 2Co 5:4–5). *inheritance*. See notes, vv 5, 11. *to the praise of His glory*. See note, v 6.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 1:3–14 Paul directs the Ephesians away from themselves, teaching them to trust in God's promises in Christ. Pride tempts us to trust in our commitment to God; doubt makes us worry that we are not

committed enough. Jesus blesses us spiritually by leading us to repent of sinful pride by the Law and calming our worried hearts through the Gospel. • Father, forgive my self-centeredness, and teach me to rely on Your loving plan for me; through Jesus Christ. Amen.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 1:15 *heard*. A messenger has apparently brought news to Paul about the congregation he founded. He is relieved to hear that they have kept the faith. *saints*. See note, v 1.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 1:16 Ceaseless prayer is urged by our Lord (Lk 21:36) and elsewhere by Paul (Rm 12:12; Col 4:2; 1Th 5:17). The Spirit prays within us, literally, without ceasing (Rm 8:26–27). But here Paul refers to his regular, daily hours of prayer. *give thanks*. See p 1902.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 1:17 *God of*. See note, v 3. *spirit of wisdom*. See note, v 8. Through the Word, the Spirit (Is 11:2; 1Co 12:8) gives wisdom and reveals the Father and the Son (Jn 16:13; 1Co 2:10–13).

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 1:18 *eyes of your hearts enlightened*. See note, Jb 17:7. In biblical language, the heart is the seat of thought and will (not emotions). The light is God's realm (Col 1:12–13; 1Jn 1:5–7). Apart from Christ, people are "darkened in their understanding" (Eph 4:18), but through Baptism, they are brought into the light (5:8, 14; cf Jn 9:11; Ac 9:18). Early Christians spoke of Baptism as enlightenment. Just: "This washing [Baptism] is called illumination, because those who learn these things are illuminated in their understandings" (*ANF* 1:183). *inheritance*. See notes, vv 5, 11. *saints*. See note, v 1.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 1:19 The synonyms for power add emphasis. Here, God's power is His saving action for those "who believe."

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 1:20 God's power was shown in the extraordinary acts of Christ's resurrection and ascension. In Baptism, God raised us by that same power, and He continues to use it for our benefit (2:6; 1Co 6:14; 2Co 13:4; Col 2:12). *seated … right hand*. Not a place where Christ is confined, but a symbolic picture of His saving power (Ex 15:6; Ps 48:10; Is 41:10). See p 843. "The received human nature in Christ has and retains its natural, essential properties. But over and above these, through the personal union with the Deity, and afterward through glorification, Christ's human nature has been exalted" (FC SD VIII 12).

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 1:21 *rule and authority and power and dominion*. Judaism used the four terms for ranks of angels (cf 2En 20–22). It may also refer to hostile, fallen angels (Eph 6:12). Christians need not

fear their influence, for Christ is Lord over all (3:10; Rm 8:38–39; Col 2:15). *name that is named*. Calling upon a false god offers no help (cf 1Ki 18:24). *this age … one to come*. The time of the Messiah, as described by the rabbis, would be blissful.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 1:22 *all things under His feet*. Christ as the Second Adam and God's victorious Son is given dominion over all creation (Ps 110:1; 1Co 15:27–28; Heb 2:6–9). *church*. Christ's lordship is for the benefit of His Bride—not just one congregation, but all Christians everywhere. Hus: "Christ is the head of the universal church" (*The Church*, p 17). See pp 1901–2.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 1:23 *His body*. A key idea in Eph (2:16; 4:4). Through Baptism, there is a true, organic unity between all believers and Christ (1Co 12:13), which is nurtured by receiving His true body in the Lord's Supper (1Co 10:16–17). See p 1965. "These marks [of the Church] are the pure doctrine of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments in accordance with the Gospel of Christ. This Church alone is called Christ's body, which Christ renews, sanctifies, and governs by His Spirit" (Ap VII and VIII 5). *fullness*. As true God, Christ fills and governs the whole universe (Col 2:9–10). Yet in His plan, God has graciously chosen that the Church should make Him complete, and likewise be filled by Him (Eph 3:19; 4:13).

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 1:15–23 Paul gives thanks for God's power at work in the Ephesians. God's power is not automatically good news. It terrifies sinners, but it comforts us who know His love for us in Christ. • Merciful Lord, powerful to save, grant us Your good Spirit that we may boldly confess Jesus' saving Gospel. Amen.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 2:1 *And you*. See note, 1:13. *dead in … sins*. Prior to their conversion, they were spiritually dead under the Law's condemnation (Rm 5:12–21; 7:9–10), unable to make a single movement toward God (Mt 8:22; Jn 5:24–25; Rm 6:23). "The Scriptures teach that a sinful person is not only weak and sick, but also finished and entirely dead" (FC SD II 10).

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 2:2 *walked*. Biblical imagery for conduct before God (Ps 1; Rm 6:4). Before Christ they were like "dead men walking." See p 1904. *prince of the … air*. The devil, who operates in "heavenly places" (3:10; 4:27; 6:11, 16). "The Church is Christ's kingdom, distinguished from the devil's kingdom" (Ap VII and VIII 16). *sons of disobedience*. A Hbr

expression for one's character (cf v 3). The Gentiles were disobedient unbelievers. By contrast, "sons of God" have His holy character (Lk 20:36; Rm 8:14; Php 2:15).

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 2:3 *we all*. Jewish and Gentile Christians (see notes, 1:13; Rm 3:9, 23). *flesh*. See p 1902. *children of wrath*. See note, v 2. Before Christ, God's condemnation was our only inheritance (Rm 1:18; Col 3:5–6).

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 2:4–10 Paul sharply contrasts God's wrath and mercy.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 2:5 *dead*. "Just as a dead body cannot raise itself to bodily, earthly life, so a person who by sin is spiritually dead cannot raise himself to spiritual life" (FC Ep II 3). *made us alive*. Through Baptism, we were put to death by the judgment of God's Law and raised as forgiven children (Rm 6:1–11). *by grace … saved*. See note, vv 8–9.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 2:6 *raised us up*. Because we are in Christ, we have ascended to heaven with Him (Col 3:1; Rv 3:21). Christ's ascension was a significant part of His victory (Eph 4:8–10).

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 2:7 *coming ages*. Probably from a Hbr expression for "the age to come" (1:21; Mk 10:30). When Christ returns, our bodily resurrection will display the fullness of our salvation (Col 3:3–4).

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 2:8–9 *by grace*. God's generous mercy toward the undeserving (Rm 5:12–21). See p 1902. "So you see plainly that there is no work done here by us, but a treasure, which God gives us and faith grasps [Ephesians 2:8–9]. It is like the benefit of the Lord Jesus Christ upon the cross, which is not a work, but a treasure included in the Word. It is offered to us and received by faith" (LC IV 37). *saved*. Rescued from sin, the devil, and God's wrath. Sometimes in Paul's writings, "salvation" refers to the Last Day (Rm 13:11), and at other places it is an ongoing present reality (1Co 1:18; 2Co 6:2). Here, he insists that we have already received it through Christ (Rm 8:24). See p 1904. *through faith*. God's gift; opposite of both works and sight. Faith is a simple trust in God's gifts, now and to come (Lk 7:50; Rm 1:17; Gal 2:16). "Faith is not a bare knowledge of Christ's history, but it is God's gift" (FC Ep III 6). *not your own doing … not a result of works*. Neither Jews who obey the Torah, nor Gentiles who heed their conscience, may claim a reward from God (Rm 3:19–31). "Christ's

merit is obtained not by our works or pennies, but from grace through faith, without money and merit" (SA II II 24).

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 2:10 *His workmanship*. Paul contrasts our foul works (vv 1–3) with God's holy work (2Co 5:17; Php 1:6). God carries out the plan described in ch 1. *good works*. Our works are not the cause of salvation (vv 5–9), but its result. We cannot even lay claim to these, for God created them for us to do in Christ. "The Holy Spirit is received through faith, hearts are renewed and given new affections, and then they are able to bring forth good works. Ambrose says: 'Faith is the mother of a good will and doing what is right' " (AC XX 29–30). *walk*. See note, v 2.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 2:1–10 Judaizers threatened most early Christian communities, teaching that Gentiles had to obey the OT Law in addition to faith in Christ. But Paul insists that God saves both Jews and Gentiles by grace through faith, apart from any works. Today's self-help culture likewise tempts us to try to do it all ourselves. • Lord, help me to abandon my self-confidence and rejoice in Your grace alone. Amen.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 2:11–22 Directly addresses the unity of Jews and Gentiles in Christ. As in many early Christian churches, there must have been tension between the two groups at Ephesus. See "Central Issue," p 2014. If salvation is by grace, there can be no such divisions.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 2:11 *you Gentiles in the flesh*. The flesh no longer defines Christians as it once did. *the uncircumcision*. A term of derision for Gentiles, used by "the circumcision," i.e., Jews. *made in the flesh*. Circumcision as an external mark is now obsolete (Rm 2:28–29; Gal 6:15), in contrast to Baptism, which changes the heart.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 2:12 *commonwealth of Israel*. Before Christ's coming, God's promises were located in His kingdom, Israel. *covenants of promise*. Israel received the promise of the coming Messiah. Through Christ, the Gentiles are now included (v 19; 3:6). See p 127. *without God*. Though they worshiped many gods, they did not worship the one true God (1Co 8:5–6). See note, Rm 1:21.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 2:13 *brought near*. In the OT, Gentiles are "far off" (1Ki 8:41; Is 5:26), but Israel is near to God (Ps 148:14). *blood of Christ*. See note, 1:7.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 2:14 *peace*. See p 1903. Not just absence of war, but well-being, unity, and salvation. Christ makes peace and is also the place where it is found (v 15; Jn 14:27; 20:19). *made us both one*. Jews and

Gentiles (v 16). Bern: "What place, then, in the kingdom of Christ and of God has he who is an enemy of charity, peace, and unity?" (*SLSB*, p 4). *dividing wall*. In Herod's temple at Jerusalem, a wall separated the (inner) court of the Jews from the (outer) court of the Gentiles. Paul was arrested on the charge of violating this boundary (Ac 21:27–29). Here, it symbolizes the Law (Eph 2:15). In Christ, Jews and Gentiles are no longer divided in their worship of God or reception of His gifts (Jn 4:21–24).

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 2:15 *abolishing the law*. Although the Law itself is not abolished (Mt 5:17; Rm 3:31), the precepts that separated Jews from Gentiles are gone (Col 3:11). Christ also overcame the Law's ability to condemn believers (Rm 7:4–6; 8:1–2). See p 1911. *one new man*. All of humanity is reunited in Christ, the Second Adam (Rm 5:12–21; 1Co 15:21–22).

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 2:16 *reconcile*. More important, Christ removed the hostility between all people and God (2Co 5:17–20). *in one body*. All humanity died with Christ on the cross (Rm 7:4), exhausting God's wrath; the benefits are found in one Body, the Church. See notes, Eph 1:10, 23; 4:4.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 2:17 *He came and preached*. As prophesied by Isaiah, the risen Messiah brought a message of peace that His death and resurrection achieved (cf Jn 20:19, 21). Through the apostles, Christ preached peace throughout the world (Eph 1:2; 3:1–9).

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 2:18 *access*. Templelike walls no longer bar access to the triune God (Mt 27:51; Heb 6:19). See note, v 14.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 2:19 *fellow citizens*. In Caesarea, where Paul was imprisoned (see note, 3:1), there was open hostility between Jews and Gentiles over the right of citizenship. Unlike other early Christian leaders, Paul strove to make the Gentile believers welcome in the largely Jewish churches of the first century. Paul points to their joint membership in the kingdom of heaven. Bede: "The gates of this city are opened to us by fortitude; and faith will afford us a broad entrance" (*FSEP*, p 3). *saints*. See note, 1:1.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 2:20 *built on the foundation*. As Christ's work figuratively destroyed the old temple (Jn 2:19), He erected a new spiritual house of God, the Church (1Pt 2:4–10), built on the preaching of the apostles and NT prophets (Rm 15:20; 1Co 3:10). *cornerstone*. Establishes the direction of two walls and anchors them together (1Pt 2:6–7).

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 2:21 *grows*. The Church as Christ's Body is a living temple (1Pt 2:5). God gives it growth (1Co 3:7; Col 2:19) as He adds new "stones" (people), but also as it matures by learning the truth, rejecting error, and loving one another.
EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 2:22 *dwelling place*. God certainly dwells in individual believers (1Co 6:19), but here Paul emphasizes the corporate nature of the Church, which together is God's temple.
EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 2:11–22 Notions of favoritism divided the earliest Christian churches and still affect our churches today. Paul urges all of us to remember who we were apart from Christ and to rejoice in what Christ has made us to be: His one Body. • Lord, forgive my prejudices and teach me to see Your Son in every Christian. Amen.
EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 3:1–13 The Early Church, surprisingly, did not universally approve of the mission to the Gentiles (cf Ac 15). Paul argues that Christ Himself commissioned him to fulfill God's plan to bring the Gentiles the message of salvation through faith apart from works.
EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 3:1 *prisoner*. Arrested in AD 58 to protect him from a Jewish mob in the temple (Ac 21:27–36), Paul spent a year and a half in prison in Caesarea (Ac 23:23–26:32) and two years under house arrest in Rome (Ac 28:30). Paul rejoiced to be put on trial for the sake of the Gospel, hoping to gain legal freedom to preach it to the Gentiles (2Tm 2:9–10). He referred to his suffering more than once but qualified it as fulfilling the Lord's purposes for his life and others.
EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 3:2 Paul interrupts himself to defend his calling. Paul knows what he taught them, but he uses a rhetorical technique to encourage their memory (1:13; 4:21). *heard*. See note, 1:13. *stewardship*. Referring to a chief servant's authority to administer household goods. Christ committed the Gospel to the apostles (Lk 12:41–48; 1Co 4:1–2; Ti 1:7).
EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 3:3 *mystery*. See note, 1:9. *by revelation*. See note, Ac 9:5–6. Paul received the Gospel from Christ Himself, including the commission to preach it to Gentiles (Gal 1:12, 16). *written*. Probably referring to the first part of this Letter (1:9–10; 2:11–22).
EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 3:4 *When you read*. Public reading in the Divine Service (Col 4:16; 1Th 5:27; 1Tm 4:13). *mystery*. See note, 1:9.
EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 3:5 *revealed*. Though Paul received a special vision of Christ (v 3), the other apostles received no less spiritual revelation

and commission through Christ (Mt 28:19–20; Ac 1:8). *holy apostles and prophets*. Though all Christians are holy before God through Baptism (see note, 1:1), the apostles and prophets are set apart for a unique office (Rm 1:1). Cf Eph 2:20; 4:11. See p 1901.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 3:6 *mystery*. See note, 1:9. *fellow … members … partakers*. Paul strongly emphasizes the togetherness of Jews and Gentiles in Christ. *heirs*. See notes, 1:5, 11. *body*. See note, 1:23. *the gospel*. See note, 1Co 15:3.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 3:7 *a minister*. One entrusted with the office of preaching the Gospel. Paul was called by Christ Himself (see notes, 1:1; 3:3; cf Rm 15:15–16).

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 3:8 *least of all the saints*. Reference not to Paul's abilities but to his persecution of the Church (Ac 8:1–3; Gal 1:13; 1Tm 1:15). *grace was given*. The gift proceeding from God's graciousness. See p 1902.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 3:9 *bring to light*. See note, 1:18. *mystery*. See note, 1:9.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 3:10 *through the church*. The very existence of a Church in which Jews and Gentiles are united stands as a testimony to Christ's victory over the devil's divisive schemes. *rulers … heavenly places*. See note, 1:21.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 3:11 *the eternal purpose*. The great saving plan of God, as praised in 1:3–14. *Christ Jesus our Lord*. See note, Php 2:11.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 3:12 Christians can pray personally to the Father. *access*. See note, 2:18.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 3:13 *suffering … your glory*. Glory and suffering go hand in hand (Rm 8:17–18; 2Co 4:17). Here Paul suffers, Christlike, for the sake of the Gentiles (2Co 4:12; Col 1:24). Paul endured the suffering so that he might continue to minister to the needs of his fellow believers, resulting in their strengthening. See note, v 1.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 3:1–13 Paul defends his call as an apostle by emphasizing its basis in the Gospel. Though our personal credentials are important, our service is based on God's gifts and calling, which stem from the Gospel. • Lord, lead me to serve according to Your gifts and calling, rather than by my reason or strength. Amen.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 3:14–15 Resumes the thought begun in v 1. See note, v 2. *bow my knees*. The normal Jewish and early Christian posture for

prayer was standing (Mt 6:5; Mk 11:25; Lk 18:11). Kneeling for prayer (Dn 6:10; Lk 22:41; Ac 9:40) suggests submission and worship (Php 2:10). See p 1276. *Father … family*. A wordplay (see ESV note). All people ought to call on God as their Father (cf 4:6).

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 3:16 *strengthened*. In the knowledge of Christ's love (vv 18–19). *power*. See notes, 1:19, 20. *inner being*. The renewed nature in the Christian that battles against the sinful nature (4:24; 2Co 4:16).

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 3:17 *dwell*. Since baptized Christians are in Christ (Gal 3:27), Christ dwells by the Spirit in them (Rm 8:10; Gal 2:20). Paul's prayer is that He would continue to dwell in them, and that they would trust in Him. See note, 2:22. *hearts*. See note, 1:18.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 3:18–19 *breadth and … surpasses knowledge*. The immeasurability of God's wisdom and Christ's love (Jb 11:5–9; Rm 11:33). Knowledge of Christ is praised in this Letter, but the human mind cannot fully comprehend Him. More important is to be known by Him (Gal 4:9). *fullness of God*. See note, 1:23. "The whole world with all diligence has struggled to figure out what God is, what He has in mind and does. Yet the world has never been able to grasp 'the knowledge and understanding of' any of these things. But here we have everything in richest measure" (LC II 63).

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 3:20–21 The prayer and the first half of the Letter reach their high point in a doxology. *more abundantly*. God's giving is not limited by our asking. "He is like an eternal, unfailing fountain. The more it pours forth and overflows, the more it continues to give. God desires nothing more seriously from us than that we ask Him for much and great things" (LC III 56). *power*. See notes, 1:19, 20. *glory in the church*. The only NT doxology to include this phrase (cf Rm 16:25–27; Jude 24–25), indicating the importance of the Church in this Letter. The phrase suggests public worship.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 3:14–21 As Paul considers God's wisdom, grace, and love, he breaks out in prayer and praise. Study of God's Word naturally combines with prayer and praise in the Divine Service, where Christ's gifts are given out, and we receive them with thanksgiving. • Lord, let these verses be my prayer for my church today. Amen.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON **Chs 4–5** This portion of Eph is not simply about our conduct (or, the Law). It contains some very profound Gospel teaching

(e.g., 4:4–12; 5:25–30). However, there is a greater focus on the consequences of Law and Gospel for our faith and life.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 4:1 *prisoner*. See note, 3:1. *walk*. See note, 2:2. *the calling*. The Christian faith itself, as brought by the Word of God (1:18; Rm 8:30).

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 4:2 Qualities of Christ Himself (Mt 11:29; 21:5; 2Co 10:1; Php 2:5–8), which He works in the believer for the sake of the Church's unity (Eph 4:13–16; Col 3:12–15).

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 4:3 *maintain the unity*. We are truly one because God's Spirit made the Church one in Christ (1:10; 4:4). True unity is neither created nor destroyed by our actions. Rather, Paul exhorts us to treasure this unity and act accordingly. *bond of peace*. Tying Christians to one another and to God (2:15).

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 4:4–6 Poetic. Possibly a quotation of an early Christian hymn or creed (see other examples in 1Co 12:3–6). The Church's unity is rooted in the Trinity: one Spirit (v 4), one Lord (v 5), one Father (v 6). There are seven "ones," God's number for completeness. See p 217.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 4:4 *one body*. The oneness of the Church, rooted in Christ Himself, into whom we are baptized (Rm 12:5; 1Co 12:13). See notes, 1:10, 23. *one Spirit*. The same indivisible Spirit unites us all.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 4:5 *one Lord*. A confession of Jesus as Yahweh, true God (Rm 10:9; 1Co 12:3). *one faith*. Not the act of believing, but what is believed: true doctrine, as confessed through the Apostles' Creed at Baptism (cf Col 2:6–7). *one baptism*. Although Baptism as new birth cannot be repeated (nor may "Spirit Baptism" be separated from "water Baptism"), that is not the emphasis here. Rather, Paul teaches that there is only one Baptism, into which Christ Himself and all Christians are baptized and thereby joined (see notes, Mt 3:15; 1Co 12:13). See pp 1369, 1920. "For the true unity of the Church it is enough to agree about the doctrine of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments. It is not necessary that human traditions, that is, rites or ceremonies instituted by men, should be the same everywhere" (AC VII 2–3).

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 4:6 *Father*. God claims Fatherhood over all because He created all (3:14–15; Rm 10:12; 11:36; 1Co 8:6). But only through Christ can we acknowledge Him as Father (Gal 4:6).

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 4:7 *the measure of Christ's gift*. Not a little to one and more to another, but the fullness of Christ's giving to all Christians. Unity, not diversity, is the point. See note, 1:10.
EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 4:8 The temple dedication enthroned God in the Jerusalem sanctuary (1Ki 8:1–11; cf 2Sm 6:16–19). He received gifts (offerings) as a victorious king who had led His people through the exodus. Christ, having freed those captive to sin, ascended to heaven to give gifts to people (Lk 24:49–51; Ac 1:8–9; 2:33).
EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 4:9 In interpreting Ps 68:18, Paul sees Christ as its ultimate meaning. The OT is interpreted in view of Christ's saving work. Christ's descent is His incarnation (Jn 3:13).
EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 4:10 *ascended … things*. See notes, 1:20, 23; 2:6.
EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 4:11 *He gave*. The Office of the Ministry and the men who hold it are Christ's gifts to the Church. The Gospels connect its institution with the period between Christ's resurrection and ascension. There is one office, but a diversity of callings within it (cf Rm 12:6–8), and some men held more than one role (cf 1Tm 2:7; 4:13; 5:17). The first two callings listed here (and perhaps the third) belong only to the first generation of the Church, though their message is preserved in Holy Scripture. *apostles*. The foundational calling. See notes, 1:1; 2:20. *prophets*. Probably not of the OT, but those in the apostolic age to whom special revelation was given (Ac 11:27–28; 1Co 14:3–6, 22–32). *evangelists*. Lit, "Gospelers." Either missionaries or those who compiled the four Gospels (Lk 1:1–4). *shepherds*. Those caring for Christ's flock (Jn 10:11–16; Ac 20:28; 1Pt 5:1–4). *teachers*. Either another word for shepherd (1Tm 3:2; 2Tm 2:24) or a distinct calling as theological teacher (Ac 13:1; 2Tm 1:11; Jas 3:1). Aug: "He added teachers [to the list] that pastors might understand that teaching—*doctrina*—belongs to their office" (Hus, *The Church*, p 158).
EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 4:12 Purposes of the pastoral office: *equip the saints*. Like outfitting a soldier for battle (6:10–17). Some editions and translations include a comma after this phase to distinguish it from the following (cf KJV). *the work of [the] ministry*. The commissioned task of proclaiming the Word (3:7–8; Ac 6:4; Rm 11:13), as carried out by the apostles and so on (4:11). *building … body*. See notes, 1:10, 23; see also Tr 67.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 4:13 *unity of the faith*. Paul has appealed to the Office of the Ministry because the ministers' faithful teaching promotes the Church's unity in true doctrine (Ti 1:9; 2:1). See notes, vv 2–6. *mature … measure … of Christ*. Sound teaching leads to maturity (Col 1:28). The only way to know God is through Christ (Mt 11:27; Jn 1:18). "This healing is only begun in this life. It will not be perfect until the life to come" (FC SD I 14).

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 4:14 *children*. Reborn through Baptism, Christians should not remain like infants, for false doctrine always threatens them (1Co 3:1–2; Heb 5:12–14; 1Pt 2:2). *tossed … schemes*. No specific false teaching is mentioned, but Paul is probably referring to pagan Greek philosophies and Judaizing.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 4:15 *speaking the truth in love*. Concern for true doctrine and love for one another are not alternatives, but belong together (1Pt 1:22). *grow*. See note, 2Th 1:3. "If they understand the substance of it [the Creed], they themselves may afterward strive to gain more, refer to these parts whatever they learn in the Scriptures, and may ever grow and increase in richer understanding" (LC II 70). See note, 2:21. *head*. See notes, 1:10, 23.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 4:16 *every joint*. Or, ligament. What binds the members together: the Word, the ministry, the common confession. *body*. See notes, 1:10, 23.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 4:1–16 Paul highlights the gifts of Christ that make us His Body; as one Body, we are protected from the dangers of our times. Modern individualism and consumerism make it easy to treat the Church as "all about me." Thanks be to God, the Church is all about Jesus, who provides for our salvation and edification. • Lord, bind us together by the truth proclaimed by Your faithful ministers. Amen.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 4:17 *walk*. See note, 2:2. *Gentiles … futility*. Probably a reference to idolatry.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 4:18–19 *darkened*. See note, 1:18. *hardness of heart*. See notes, Ex 4:21; 9:12. Unbelievers ("Gentiles") stubbornly resist God's testimony in nature and Word (Rm 1:19–20; 2:5). *callous*. Their hard hearts do not feel the accusations of conscience. "By the fall of our first parents mankind was so corrupted that in divine things having to do with our conversion and the salvation of our souls we are by nature blind" (FC SD II 5).

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 4:20–21 *learned Christ!* Gk *manthano*, "to make a disciple." They were catechized (*taught*, v 21) not only about Christ but also by Him (Lk 10:16). *heard*. See note, 1:13.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 4:22–24 *old self*. In Baptism, the old, sinful nature was drowned (Rm 6:3–11; Col 2:12; 3:9–10). Through daily repentance, the Christian battles against its resurfacing. Aug: "Lest anyone might think that the substance or essence of a person is to be laid aside, he himself explains what it is to lay aside the old man, and to put on the new, when he says in the following words: 'Putting away lying, speak the truth.' Behold, that is to put off the old man and to put on the new" (FC SD II 81). *renewed*. Reborn, re-created (2Co 5:17), which happened in Baptism (Ti 3:5) and continues daily (2Co 4:16). *put on the new self*. In the Early Church, candidates for Baptism stripped and were baptized naked, after which they were clothed in white. This pictured the removal of the sinful nature and the re-clothing with Christ in Baptism (Gal 3:27; Rv 7:13–14). Chrys: "In the heart, contrition; in the mouth, confession; in the work, entire humility" (Ap XIIB 73). *likeness of God*. The idea of re-creation continues with an allusion to Gn. God's likeness, or image, is defined here as "righteousness" and "holiness" (Gn 1:26–27; Lk 1:74–75; Col 3:10).

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 4:25 *having put away falsehood*. Paul appeals to the past fact of Baptism as the foundation for their present action. *neighbor*. Paul quotes LXX of Zec 8:16, where "neighbor" means fellow Israelite. Here he means fellow Christian.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 4:26 Or, "If you are angry, do not sin." Paul combines Ps 4:4 and Dt 24:15.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 4:27 Satan uses anger to lead people to other sins (v 31; 1Pt 5:8).

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 4:28 An example of a sinful life that must be abandoned (1Pt 4:15) and replaced by generosity.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 4:29 A good tree cannot produce rotten fruit (Mt 7:17–18; cf Mt 15:18). *give grace*. God is gracious through our speaking His Word, particularly when we forgive (v 32).

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 4:30 *grieve the Holy Spirit*. God feels the grief of loss when we turn away from Him or deny Him in word or deed. "When the baptized act against their conscience, allowing sin to rule in them, they grieve the Holy Spirit in them and lose Him" (FC SD II 69). *sealed for the day of redemption*. See notes, 1:13–14.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 4:31–32 This summary statement of the Law culminates in the Christlike act of forgiveness. "The origin and establishment of private Confession lies in the fact that Christ Himself placed His Absolution into the hands of His Christian people with the command that they should absolve one another of their sins" (BEC 14).

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 4:17–32 Paul describes the new life that results from the Gospel. Yet, the Law also continues to apply because of our sinful nature. As Luther explains the Ten Commandments in the Catechism, the Law both forbids sinful behavior ("shall not") and urges good works ("shall"). As we inevitably fail to live up to such demands, forgiveness preserves and restores the harmony of the Church. • Father, forgive us our sins, that we may forgive those who sin against us. Amen.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 5:1 *imitators of God*. The traditional chapter division is unfortunate. The chief way to imitate God is to forgive and to love in a sacrificial way (v 2). These actions flow from being re-created in God's image (4:24).

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 5:2 *walk*. See note, 2:2. *as Christ loved us*. Not simply following Christ's example of love, but enabled to love because of what He did for us (1Jn 4:7–19). *offering and sacrifice*. Christ fulfills the temple sacrifices (Ex 29:41; Lv 1), making forgiveness possible (see note, 1:7).

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 5:3–12 Sexual immorality, a particular feature of Gentile life (1Th 4:3–7), is connected to idol worship (v 5).

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 5:3 *covetousness*. "Greedy" (4:19) for the "neighbor's wife" (Tenth Commandment). *not even be named*. Sin begins with words, which lead to deeds (v 12; 4:29; Mt 15:18–19; Jas 3:2–8).

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 5:4 *thanksgiving*. In the context of marriage, sex is a blessed gift from God. Improper talk of sexual desire is displaced by thanksgiving for God's gifts (1:3, 16; 1Tm 4:3).

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 5:5 *sexually immoral … covetous … idolater*. Together, these terms suggest temple prostitution, a common feature of pagan Gentile life. One who trusts God will be satisfied with the spouse He has given. *inheritance*. See notes, 1:5, 11.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 5:6 *empty words*. Claims that such deeds will not be punished. *sons of disobedience*. See note, 2:2.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 5:7 *do not become partners*. I.e., do not share in their sinful deeds (v 11; 1Co 10:20–21; 2Co 6:14–18), which would

contradict our fellowship in Christ.
EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 5:8 *darkness … light*. See note, 1:18. *Walk*. See note, 2:2. *children*. See note, 1:5.
EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 5:9 *fruit*. A common NT image for good words and deeds that flow naturally from one planted in Christ (Jn 15:1–8; Col 1:10).
EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 5:10 *discern*. Lit, "test," by the standard of God's Word (Rm 2:18; 12:2; Php 1:9–10).
EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 5:11 *Take no part*. See note, v 7. *works of darkness*. Sexual immorality. *expose them*. Discern and condemn them with God's Law (v 13; Ps 119:105; Jn 3:20; 16:8).
EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 5:12 See note, v 3.
EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 5:13–14a *visible is light*. Cf v 8. God's Word not only exposes evil but can transform evil persons into good.
EPHESIANS—NOTE ON **5:14b** The source of Paul's quotation is perhaps a baptismal hymn (v 19). *Awake*. Death, even sinners' spiritual death, is like sleep to God (cf Mk 5:39–42; Jn 11:11; 1Th 4:14). Through Baptism, Christ resurrected us (Eph 2:1–6; Rm 6:4). *shine on you*. See note, 1:18; cf Is 9:2; Lk 2:32; 2Co 4:4–6.
EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 5:15 *walk*. See note, 2:2.
EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 5:16 *best use of the time*. Or, "redeeming" it for the good (Gal 6:10). *days are evil*. In these end times, evil forces battle against God's children, who have been rescued from evil (2Co 6:2).
EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 5:17 *foolish*. In these end times, it is foolish to act as if Christ is not returning soon (Mt 25:1–13).
EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 5:18 *drunk*. One waits for Christ in soberness (1Th 5:1–8). Drunkenness, a feature of pagan worship, should certainly not occur in Christian worship (1Co 11:20–22). *debauchery*. Reckless behavior, unrestrained by good sense. *filled … Spirit*. As the Spirit is poured out on us, we are under His influence, as if "drunk" on the Spirit (Ac 2:4, 13–15). See p 1920. The result is threefold: heartfelt worship, thanksgiving, and mutual submission (Eph 5:19–21).
EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 5:19 Foul talk (v 4) is replaced by wholesome words of worship. *psalms … hymns … songs*. There is no clear distinction between these terms. OT psalms are certainly in view. "Hymns" and "songs" likely include OT canticles (Rv 15:3) and Christian compositions (cf Eph 5:14b; Rv 5:9–10). *spiritual*. Probably applies to all three

compositions. Addressed to "one another" as well as "to the Lord," the songs include both teaching and adoration (Col 3:16).

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 5:20 *giving thanks*. A description of public prayer.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 5:21 *submitting*. Taking one's proper role in God's order and laying aside one's selfish interests (Gal 5:13). Described in detail in Eph 5:22–6:9. See p 1291. Based on the Gk, v 21 likely introduces the next section.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 5:1–21 Like the Ephesians, we are confronted every day by a world rebelling against God's way. In our struggle against its temptations, we can rely on Christ's Word and Spirit to lead us. • Lord, strengthen me to speak and act as You desire. Replace all foul talk from my mouth with praise for You and encouragement for my brothers and sisters in Christ. Amen.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 5:22–6:9 Paul modifies a traditional "household code." For the Christian, the Gospel does not overturn the order of life, but gives it new meaning. Each relationship is reinterpreted "in the Lord." Wives, children, and servants look on their husbands, parents, and masters as representatives of the Lord and submit to them. Husbands, parents, and masters likewise view the ones entrusted to them as Christ viewed the Church: with self-sacrificing love.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 5:22 *submit*. See note, v 21. Submission is not mutual, but appropriate to each relationship. Within the marriage relationship, the wife "submits," taking the place God has given her (1Pt 3:1–6). See notes, Gn 1:26–28; 1Tm 2:13; Ti 2:5; see also p 1904. *as to the Lord*. She is to view her husband as an image and representative of Christ. See p 1972.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 5:23 *head*. See note, 1:10. Headship is not tyranny, but pictures one's leader and source (1Co 11:3–12). If we think of the husband as the head of a marriage and the wife as the heart of a marriage (Paul uses "body"), we see that one is not more important than the other—neither can survive alone. Paul demonstrates their vital yet distinct roles. See p 1965.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 5:24 *church submits to Christ*. The Church's primary relationship to Christ is defined not as Law (obedience), but as Gospel (receiving). As the Church does not try to save herself, but graciously receives salvation from Christ, so the wife cherishes her

husband's self-sacrifice for her. Bede: "O truly blessed Mother Church! so illuminated by the honour of Divine condescension. … Endeavour now, beloved, each for yourselves, in each kind of honour, to obtain your own dignity—crowns, snow-white for chastity, or purple for passion [martyrdom]" (*FSEP*, p 2).

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 5:25 *love*. In contrast to the culture of the time, the husband is told not to rule his wife but to love her (cf Col 3:19). *as Christ loved the church*. Paul's word to the husband is far longer than to the wife, for it is an opportunity to rejoice in the Gospel. Christ's marriage to the Church is a major Gospel image in the NT (Mt 9:15; 25:1–13; 2Co 11:2; Rv 21:9). If the husband's love for his wife is Christlike, he is willing to give up his very life for her (Gal 2:20; Ti 2:14; 1Jn 3:16).

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 5:26 *washing of water with the word*. Baptism, by which Christ sanctified (made holy) His Bride, the Church (Jn 3:3–6; 1Co 6:11; 1Pt 3:21). See p 1369. "The Church … should be cleansed in order to be holy. He adds the outward marks, the Word and Sacraments" (Ap VII and VIII 7). Aug: "When the Word is joined to the element or natural substance, it becomes a Sacrament" (SA III V 1). *word*. Christ's mandate, including the name of the Holy Trinity (Mt 28:19).

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 5:27 The white robe of Baptism (see note, 4:22–24) is pictured as a wedding gown. Notably, the Bridegroom Himself prepares the Bride (Ezk 16:8–14; Rv 21:2, 9–11). *holy and without blemish*. See note, 1:4.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 5:28 *as their own bodies*. As Christians are one Body in Christ, so also husbands and wives are one flesh (v 31).

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 5:29 *nourishes*. By Christ's ministry (4:11–16) of Word (1Tm 4:6) and Supper (Jn 6:53–58).

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 5:30 *members*. See notes, 1:10, 23.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 5:31–32 Gn 2:24 describes the institution of marriage, which takes on added meaning when viewed in the light of Christ. This is the mystery, now revealed (see note, 1:9): from the beginning God designed marriage to be a Gospel picture of Christ and the Church.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 5:33 Though the Gospel purpose of marriage is primary, Paul does not neglect the admonition with which he began (vv 21–22, 25). "Everyone should live chaste in thought, word, and deed in his condition—that is, especially in the estate of marriage. But also everyone should love and value the spouse God gave to him" (LC I 219).

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 5:22–33 If we say with Paul that the husband is the "head" in a marriage, then we may say the wife is the "heart." Is one more important? No, both heart and head are necessary for life. We are inclined today to view our marriages selfishly: what can I get out of it? Instead, we should consider what we can offer to our spouse and see behind each action a picture of the Gospel itself. • Father, may our marriages always be living pictures of Christ's love and forgiveness. Amen.
EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 6:1 *obey*. Gk *hypakouo*, emphasizes "listening." *in the Lord*. See note, 5:22–6:9. *right*. Pleasing to the Lord (Col 3:20). Note that Paul addresses children as Christians.
EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 6:2 *promise*. God's Law is not arbitrary, but describes a life in which the blessings of creation are best enjoyed (Ex 20:6; 1Tm 4:8). "He does not mean that obedience to parents justifies us before God. But when obedience happens in those who have been justified, it merits other great rewards" (Ap V 76).
EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 6:3 *live long in the land*. The original promise referred to the land of Israel (Dt 5:16). For Christians, the whole earth is included. However, because of sin, we do not always fully enjoy it.
EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 6:4 Roman fathers had absolute power over their children. Paul urges restraint in imitation of God. *provoke*. Move to anger or despair (Col 3:21; cf Rm 10:19). *discipline and instruction*. The father works with his children through Law and Gospel. The Gospel is the chief teaching of God's Word. See SA II I 1; see also p 2025. "We must hold the commandment before them, and constantly teach it, so that we bring them up not only with punishment, but also in reverence and fear of God" (LC I 61). God uses punishment for our good (Pr 3:11–12; Heb 12:5–11).
EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 6:5 *Slaves*. The same word is translated "servants" in v 6. See p 101. *masters*. Gk *kyrios*, "lord." Paul uses this wordplay to teach them to honor the Lord through their master.
EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 6:6 *eye-service*. Seeking attention or only working hard when the master is looking. *servants of Christ*. Often used by Paul to describe himself as Christ's minister (Rm 1:1; 1Co 4:1), it can also describe any Christian's redemption from slavery to sin into Christ's service (see note, 1:7; cf 1Co 7:22). True freedom is not independence from God, but independence from sin, death, and the devil.
EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 6:8 *receive back*. Both as encouragement and warning, Paul points to God's judgment (Rm 2:6–10; 2Co 5:10; Col 3:24).

whether … slave or free. A hint of Paul's teaching that such earthly institutions have no bearing on one's relationship to God (1Co 12:13).

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 6:9 *do the same to them*. Act likewise as servants of Christ (v 6). *threatening*. Heartfelt obedience (v 5) cannot be achieved by threats of punishment. *no partiality*. God will not lessen His judgment because of the master's social status on earth (Rm 2:9–13; 1Pt 1:17).

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 6:1–9 Paul's description of the Christian life is not exhaustive, but gives common examples of vocations, or callings, in life. Today, God calls us to serve Him and other people selflessly, lovingly, and conscious of our relationship to Christ. We should examine our lives and our callings. The Lord will forgive our shortcomings and strengthen us to be Christlike. • Lord, no matter how I serve in my family or society, I am Your child and servant through Your Holy Child, Jesus. Grant that I fulfill my calling before You. Amen.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 6:10–17 This famous picture sums up the Letter. The armor represents both a promise of divine protection and an exhortation to battle. Like a general encouraging his troops, Paul tells us that the victory is certain because Christ has already won the war, and He has made us well-prepared to stand with Him to face any last-ditch assaults. In ancient legends, the weapons and armor of a hero could give certain victory to anyone who wore them (cf 1Sm 17:38). The armor Paul describes is not simply from God; it is God's own armor, what He Himself wore in battle. Dressed in Christ's armor, we look remarkably like Christ (Is 49:2; 59:17; Rv 1:13–16), for through Baptism we are clothed with Him (Eph 4:24; Rm 13:12–14; Gal 3:27).

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 6:10 *be strong in the Lord*. Do not rely on your own strength (cf 1:19; Jsh 1:9; Ps 28:7; Col 1:11).

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 6:11 *Put on*. Baptismal language (4:24). *whole armor*. The complete outfit of a heavily armed soldier. The image may have occurred to Paul in prison by looking at his Roman guards, though the details are closer to OT models (the typical shin armor and spear of a Roman soldier do not appear in the list). *stand against*. The picture is defensive; Christ defends us against the devil on our behalf. *schemes*. Particularly false doctrine, designed to lead us away from God.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 6:12 *rulers … heavenly places*. See notes, 1:3, 21. Behind the Church's earthly opponents stand demonic forces; therefore,

the Church should not try to fight with worldly tools (2Co 10:3–4). "All our shelter and protection rest in prayer alone" (LC III 30).

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 6:13 *the evil day*. See note, 5:16. *stand firm*. Fully equipped and defended by God, our mandate is to trust what He has given us for the battle (Ex 14:13–14; 1Co 15:1–2; 2Th 2:15).

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 6:14 *belt of truth*. A belt holds loose clothing in preparation for moving quickly (Ex 12:11; cf Heb 12:1). God's truth alone can counter the devil's lies (Eph 4:14–15). *breastplate of righteousness*. The metal piece protecting the chest's vital organs, here representing Christ's righteousness with which God clothes us. See "righteousness," p 1904.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 6:15 *shoes … gospel of peace*. A Roman soldier wore half boots studded with nails to help him stand firm. The preaching of the Gospel of peace has, ironically, prepared us for battle.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 6:16 *shield of faith*. Arrows were dipped in pitch and set alight. In defense, Roman soldiers soaked their full-length, leather-covered wooden shields in water before battle—an allusion to our baptismal refuge. "If you could see how many knives, darts, and arrows are every moment aimed at you [Ephesians 6:16], you would be glad to come to the Sacrament as often as possible" (LC V 82).

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 6:17 *helmet of salvation*. A Roman helmet was made of bronze, with cheek pieces; cf Is 59:17; 1Th 5:8. *sword of the Spirit … word of God*. The term refers to the sharp, short sword for close combat. The Spirit gives the Gospel Word its effectiveness. Luther sang of the devil, "One little Word can fell him."

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 6:18 Prayer is not part of the armor (which is entirely God's work), but a transition to Paul's concluding words. The Letter ends as it began—with prayer. *at all times*. See note, 1:16. *in the Spirit*. In our weakness, the Spirit leads our prayer (Rm 8:15–16, 26–27). *supplication*. Gk *deesis*, from the term for "need"; a specific request.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 6:19 *words may be given*. Christ promised that the Spirit would direct and strengthen the apostles' testimony before kings and councils (Mt 10:17–20; cf Ac 9:15). *mystery of the gospel*. See note, 1:9.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 6:20 *ambassador*. See note, 1:1. *chains*. See note, 3:1.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 6:10–20 Paul exposes the demonic forces that battle against us, and he encourages us with the divine weapons that protect

us. In the modern world, the spiritual dimension of life is often overlooked. We view our problems—and try to solve them—in purely human terms. But the Lord would work in us by His Word and Spirit. • Lord, may I see life as You see it and always stand firm with Christ. Amen.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 6:21 *Tychicus*. Gk for "minister" (cf 3:7). He was from Asia Minor and closely associated with Ephesus. Paul commends him as his representative and letter-bearer. He accompanied Paul on his last journey to Jerusalem (Ac 20:4). He delivered the Letter to the Ephesians and acted as an emissary for Paul to other churches.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 6:22 *we*. Paul in prison and the co-workers who visited and supported him (see names in Col 1:1; 4:9–14).

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 6:23 *brothers*. Natural way to refer to fellow adopted sons of God (1:5), i.e., Christians.

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 6:24 *all who love our Lord*. A common expression for God's people (cf Ex 20:6; 1Co 8:3). *love incorruptible*. God's gifts are incorruptible, particularly eternal life (1Co 15:42–53; 1Pt 1:4).

EPHESIANS—NOTE ON 6:21–24 "Maker of all things, all Thy creatures praise Thee; All for Thy worship were and are created; Now, as we also worship Thee devoutly, Hear Thou our voices. Lord God Almighty, unto Thee be glory, One in three persons, over all exalted! Glory we offer, praise Thee and adore Thee, Now and forever." Amen. (*LSB* 504:3–4)

Philippians

Philippians 1 | Philippians 2 | Philippians 3 | Philippians 4

- Introduction to Philippians
  - Overview
  - Reading Philippians
  - Setting
  - Central Issue
  - Luther on Philippians
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

Greeting

1 [1] ✝✝Paul and Timothy, servants[1] of Christ Jesus, To all the saints in
Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the overseers[2] and deacons:[3]
[2] ✝ Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus
Christ.

Thanksgiving and Prayer

3 ‡† I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, 4 †always in every
prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, 5 † because of your
partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. 6 †And I am sure of
this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the
day of Jesus Christ. 7 †It is right for me to feel this way about you all,
because I hold you in my heart, for you are all partakers with me of grace,[4]
both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel.
8 †For God is my witness, how I yearn for you all with the affection of
Christ Jesus. 9 ‡†And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and
more, with knowledge and all discernment, 10 †so that you may approve
what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ,
11 †filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to
the glory and praise of God.

The Advance of the Gospel

12 ‡ † I want you to know, brothers,[1] that what has happened to me has
really served to advance the gospel, 13 † so that it has become known
throughout the whole imperial guard[2] and to all the rest that my
imprisonment is for Christ. 14 † And most of the brothers, having become
confident in the Lord by my imprisonment, are much more bold to speak
the word[3] without fear.

15 † Some indeed preach Christ from envy and rivalry, but others from
good will. 16 † The latter do it out of love, knowing that I am put here for the
defense of the gospel. 17 † The former proclaim Christ out of rivalry, not
sincerely but thinking to afflict me in my imprisonment. 18 † What then?
Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is
proclaimed, and in that I rejoice.

To Live Is Christ

Yes, and I will rejoice, [19]†for I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ this will turn out for my deliverance, [20]†as it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage now as always Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death. [21]†For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. [22]†If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. [23]† I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. [24]†But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account. [25]† Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith, [26]†so that in me you may have ample cause to glory in Christ Jesus, because of my coming to you again.

[27]†Only let your manner of life be worthy[1] of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel, [28]†and not frightened in anything by your opponents. This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation, and that from God. [29]†For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake, [30]†engaged in the same conflict that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

Christ’s Example of Humility

2 [1] So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from
love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, [2]
complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in
full accord and of one mind. [3] Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in
humility count others more significant than yourselves. [4] Let each of you
look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. [5] Have
this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus,[2] [6] who,
though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing
to be grasped, [7] but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant,[3]
being born in the likeness of men. [8] And being found in human form, he
humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on
a cross. [9] Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the
name that is above every name, [10] so that at the name of Jesus every knee
should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, [11] and every tongue
confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Lights in the World

12 ‡ ‡ † Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not
only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own
salvation with fear and trembling, 13 † for it is God who works in you, both to
will and to work for his good pleasure.
14 † Do all things without grumbling or questioning, 15 † that you may be
blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a
crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the
world, 16 † holding fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may
be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain. 17 † Even if I am to be
poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrificial offering of your faith, I
am glad and rejoice with you all. 18 † Likewise you also should be glad and
rejoice with me.

Timothy and Epaphroditus

19 ‡‡I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, so that I too
may be cheered by news of you. 20For I have no one like him, who will be
genuinely concerned for your welfare. 21 † For they all seek their own
interests, not those of Jesus Christ. 22 †But you know Timothy's[1] proven
worth, how as a son[2] with a father he has served with me in the gospel. 23†I
hope therefore to send him just as soon as I see how it will go with me,
24†and I trust in the Lord that shortly I myself will come also.

25 †I have thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus my brother
and fellow worker and fellow soldier, and your messenger and minister to
my need, 26 ‡for he has been longing for you all and has been distressed
because you heard that he was ill. 27Indeed he was ill, near to death. But
God had mercy on him, and not only on him but on me also, lest I should
have
sorrow upon sorrow. 28I am the more eager to send him, therefore, that you
may rejoice at seeing him again, and that I may be less anxious. 29So receive
him in the Lord with all joy, and honor such men, 30†for he nearly died for
the work of Christ, risking his life to complete what was lacking in your
service to me.

Righteousness Through Faith in Christ

3 [1]‡† Finally, my brothers,[3] rejoice in the Lord. To write the same
things to you is no trouble to me and is safe for you.

[2]† Look out for the dogs, look out for the evildoers, look out for those
who mutilate the flesh. [3]† For we are the circumcision, who worship by the
Spirit of God[4] and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh
— [4]‡† though I myself have reason for confidence in the flesh also. If
anyone else thinks he has reason for confidence in the flesh, I have more: [5]†
circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of
Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; [6]† as to zeal, a
persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law,[5] blameless.
[7]† But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. [8]† Indeed,
I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing
Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and
count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ [9]† and be found in
him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but
that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that
depends on faith— [10]‡† that I may know him and the power of his
resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death,
[11]† that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

Straining Toward the Goal

12 ‡ † Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I
press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own.
13 ‡ † Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I
do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, 14 † I
press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ
Jesus. 15 † Let those of us who are mature think this way, and if in anything
you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you. 16 † Only let us hold
true to what we have attained.

17 † Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk
according to the example you have in us. 18 † For many, of whom I have
often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the
cross of Christ. 19 † Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they
glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things. 20 † But our citizenship
is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 † who
will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power
that enables him even to subject all things to himself.

4 1 † Therefore, my brothers,[1] whom I love and long for, my joy and
crown, stand firm thus in the Lord, my beloved.

Exhortation, Encouragement, and Prayer

2 ‡ † I entreat Euodia and I entreat Syntyche to agree in the Lord. 3 † Yes, I
ask you also, true companion,[1] help these women, who have labored side
by side with me in the gospel together with Clement and the rest of my
fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.

4 † Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. 5 † Let your
reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; 6 † do not be
anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with
thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 † And the peace of
God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your
minds in Christ Jesus.

8 † Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is
just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if
there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about
these things. 9 † What you have learned and received and heard and seen in
me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

God’s Provision

10 ‡ † I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at length you have revived
your concern for me. You were indeed concerned for me, but you had no
opportunity. 11 † Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned
in whatever situation I am to be content. 12 † I know how to be brought low,
and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned
the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. 13 † I can do all
things through him who strengthens me.
14 † Yet it was kind of you to share[2] my trouble. 15 † And you Philippians
yourselves know that in the beginning of the gospel, when I left Macedonia,
no church entered into partnership with me in giving and receiving, except
you only. 16 Even in Thessalonica you sent me help for my needs once and
again. 17 Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that increases to your
credit.[1] 18 † I have received full payment, and more. I am well supplied,
having received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent, a fragrant offering, a
sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God. 19 † And my God will supply every
need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus. 20 † To our
God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen.

Final Greetings

[21]†† Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The brothers who are with me greet you. [22]† All the saints greet you, especially those of Caesar's household.

[23]† The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

Philippians

Overview

Author
Paul the apostle

Date
c AD 60

Places
Philippi (Macedonia); Thessalonica

People
Paul; Timothy; Epaphroditus; Euodia; Syntyche; the imperial guard; "those of Caesar's household"

Purpose
Paul describes a life worthy of the Gospel (1:27)

Law Themes
Suffering, uncertainty, and personal sacrifice; rivalry over the Gospel; growth in humility and right-mindedness

Gospel Themes
Joy in Christ; Jesus' exaltation after the cross; righteousness through faith in Christ; heavenly citizenship

Memory Verses
To live is Christ (1:21–26); Christ's humility and exaltation (2:4–11); righteous through faith (3:7–11); press on (3:12–14); citizenship in heaven (3:20–21)

Introduction to Philippians

Reading Philippians

A foreign-born man received his citizenship document from the hands of an imperial clerk as others might receive and cradle a child. To be born a citizen of Tarsus or some other city might stir a person's pride. But to receive Roman citizenship—that came with privileges, which a father passed to his sons. Roman citizenship elevated a family above the tortured rabble who could only hope to prove themselves worthy and free.

Paul appealed to his Roman citizenship when he first visited Philippi (Ac 16:35–39). As residents of a Roman colony populated by former Roman soldiers, the Philippians well understood and appreciated citizenship. Paul reminded the Philippian congregation that, through Christ, they had received citizenship in heaven. Christ's heroic efforts on their behalf allowed them to enjoy a manner of life worthy of His Gospel.

Setting

After a decisive battle in 42 BC, Emperor Octavian established Philippi as a Roman colony and gave the city a special status, equal to that of cities in Italy and free from direct taxation. Though there are many inscriptions and relief carvings for various deities on the acropolis at Philippi, the favored god was Silvanus, the Roman god of the countryside and agriculture. Paul would have entered Philippi on the Via Egnatia, the great road through Macedonia. He likely met with Lydia (Ac 16:11–15) beside the stream that flowed near the east gate. Churches dedicated to Paul were built on this location. Archaeologists have located the Roman forum at the city center, lined with shops and fountains, where Paul likely stood before the city magistrates after his arrest and public beating (Ac 16:19–23). They have also identified a possible site nearby for the prison (Ac 16:24).

Central Issue

Philippians is a missionary thank-you letter. Scholars have carefully studied Paul's style in the Letter because of its relationship to Greek rhetoric. Paul's opening prayer (1:3–11) anticipates all the major themes of the Book (see Luther's summary below). Paul stated the key theme in 1:27—living in accord with the Gospel of Christ. He illustrated the paradox of human responsibility in view of God's work in us and the paradox of joy during suffering. Paul presented Jesus and himself as examples of living worthy of the Gospel.

Paul also warned the Philippians about (1) people who spread the Gospel from bad motives (1:15–17), (2) the circumcision group (3:2–7; see note, Gal 2:4), and (3) "enemies of the cross" (3:18). These groups were not necessarily part of the congregation at Philippi, but were affecting other congregations and spreading problems.

Luther on Philippians

In this epistle St. Paul praises and admonishes the Philippians that they abide and carry on in the true faith and increase in love. But since injury is always done to faith by false apostles and teachers of works, he warns them against these men and points out
to them many different preachers—some good, some bad—including even himself and his disciples, Timothy and Epaphroditus. This he does in chapters 1 and 2.

In chapter 3 he rejects that human righteousness not based on faith, which is taught and held by the false apostles. He offers himself as an example: he had lived gloriously in this kind of righteousness, and yet now holds it to be nothing, for the sake of the righteousness of Christ. For human righteousness makes the belly its god, and makes men enemies of the cross of Christ.

In chapter 4 he exhorts them to peace and good outward conduct toward each other, and thanks them for the gift they sent him. (AE 35:385)

Challenges for Readers

Place and Date. The Letter does not make absolutely clear when or where Paul wrote it. Traditionally, it is regarded as one of Paul's Prison Epistles written from Rome. See p 2042.

Composition. Paul made a concluding statement at 3:1 and changed his tone thereafter. Also, 4:10–20 could stand as a separate Letter. In view of these points, some critics have described Philippians as a collection of separate letters combined by a later editor. However, these points could simply indicate how Paul worked on this Epistle. Notably, the themes for the entire Letter are introduced in ch 1.

The Humility of Christ. The Christ-hymn in 2:4–11 has challenged interpreters. The Early Church Fathers struggled with the statement that Christ "made Himself nothing" or "emptied Himself" (see note, 2:7). Critics have struggled to reconcile the hymn's advanced Christology with their theories that distinguishing Jesus' divine and human natures was a late development in Christian teachings. Though early Christians did not settle on specific wording right away, these doctrines of the creeds were certainly taught. See p 1975.

Suffering. Paul's intensely personal reflections on suffering and God's will (1:19–26; 3:10–11) illustrate his maturity in the faith as well as his human weaknesses. It is not always clear how his reflections apply to us personally.

Blessings for Readers

Philippians reveals Paul's intense love for and joy in this congregation. The warmth he shows toward them is unique among his Letters, since the congregation seems to need less discipline than others. He describes the Christian life in all its blessings and goodness, which come from the Lord's work in us.

As you study Philippians, the Lord will work in your life, transforming your mind to be like Christ's. Pray that you may receive the fullness of His joy in all circumstances and live worthy of His Gospel. For your righteousness is through faith in Christ alone. Knowing Him has "surpassing worth" (3:8).

OUTLINE

I. Salutation (1:1–2)
II. Thanksgiving and Prayer (1:3–11)
III. News about Paul's Preaching (1:12–26)
  A. Paul's Imprisonment (1:12–18)
  B. Life in Christ (1:19–26)
IV. Exhortations (1:27–2:18)
  A. Behave as Citizens Worthy of the Gospel (1:27–30)
  B. Christ's Example of Humility (2:1–11)
  C. Lights in the World (2:12–18)
V. Travel Plans for Timothy and Epaphroditus (2:19–30)
VI. Further Exhortations (3:1–4:9)
  A. Warning against Mutilators (3:1–11)
  B. Straining toward the Goal by Imitating Paul (3:12–4:1)
  C. Exhortation, Encouragement, and Prayer (4:2–9)
VII. Thanks for God's Provision and the Gifts Received (4:10–20)
VIII. Final Greetings (4:21–23)

- Urban Christianity

Urban Christianity

Paul's Letter to the Philippians was addressed to urban Christians. A review of Philippi's history shows the close connection between early Christianity and the urban setting. It also affirms that the Church of today dare not neglect the city.

The New Testament Greek word for *church (ekklesia)* literally means "called out." It refers to a group of people whom God has called to faith and in so doing has separated from the world. It is significant that the term refers not to a building but to *people*. Rather than thinking of going to church, Christians are to think in terms of *being* the Church! The place, then, is much less important than the people, who are God's temple (1Co 3:16).

An Ancient Roman City

Located at the northern end of the Aegean Sea, the city of Philippi was set on a hill overlooking a fertile plain and surrounded by mountains. This area of Greece is known as Macedonia. The Gangites River flowed about a mile east of the city, and its port city of Neapolis was 10 miles away on the Aegean Sea.

After 359 BC, Philip II, father of Alexander the Great, annexed the city and its surrounding territory. Philip II enlarged and fortified the city and then renamed it Philippi, after himself.

The city had natural springs and a deposit of gold nearby. For many years, great riches were extracted from the gold mines around Philippi. These treasures helped both Philip and Alexander maintain their armies and expand their empire.

By the time the Romans conquered the old Macedonian Empire in 168 BC, about two hundred years after its founding by Philip, the gold mines around Philippi were exhausted and the city was in a state of decline.

In 42 BC, the city witnessed a battle in which Mark Antony and Octavian defeated Brutus and Cassius Longinus—the assassins of Julius Caesar—for control of the Roman Empire. Octavian, who became the "Caesar Augustus" of the Christmas story, granted the city the status of Roman colony and made its people Roman citizens. This gave the people the rights to vote and to have their own senate.

This began the city's period of greatest growth, as Mark Antony settled some of his military veterans there to keep the city secure. Future rulers of the Roman Empire continued the policy of settling retired veterans in Philippi. As a Roman colony, Philippi became a miniature Rome. Its inhabitants were primarily Roman, and the Philippians took great pride in being Roman. No doubt this was the background for Paul's reference to the believer's heavenly citizenship (3:20–21). The people dressed as Romans, used Roman coins, and maintained Latin rather than Greek as the city's official language.

The Philippi Paul Knew

In the apostle Paul's day, Philippi was the leading city of one of the four political regions of the old Macedonian Empire. The Egnatian Way, the main road from Rome to Asia, ran through Philippi. This made the city strategically important to the empire as a commercial center at the crossroads between Europe and Asia. That Philippi was a Roman colony may explain why Paul does not quote from the Old Testament in his Letter to the Philippians.

Paul visited Philippi on his second missionary journey because the Holy Spirit had prevented him from going northward into Asia Minor. He had received a vision to come over to Macedonia and help them (Ac 16:9). Paul and his companions landed at Neapolis and traveled inland to the city of Philippi. After they arrived in Philippi, Paul, Silas, Timothy, and possibly Luke preached on the Sabbath to a group of women from the city at a "place of prayer" located outside the gates by the Gangites River (Ac 16:13). One of their first converts was Lydia, a seller of purple fabric and apparently a prosperous woman.

Paul's ministry in Philippi was anything but easy. He faced persecution during his short stay there. He cast out a demon from a young slave girl. Following this, Paul and Silas were arrested, beaten, and imprisoned. They were set free at night when the prison was shaken by an earthquake that opened the doors and broke the prisoners' chains; the next day they were released and asked to leave the city. Upon his release, Paul continued on toward Thessalonica and Berea.

On a later occasion, Paul and his traveling companions stopped at least briefly at Philippi (Ac 20:6). The Christian congregation that Paul and his co-workers founded there was notable for its generosity (Php 4:15–16).

The Modern City

Since the advent of the modern world, the majority of people around the earth have lived in cities, where industries and employment are. That is also where some of society's biggest problems are. Urban ministry is more important than ever before.

It is tempting for churches to give up on city ministries, where the work can be frustrating and even dangerous. The rewards can seem minimal, especially in terms of financial income from inner-city churches.

We need to remember, with Paul, that the Good News about Jesus is for *everyone*. "God so loved the world …" And Jesus Himself has commissioned us to make disciples of all nations and all people. No one is left out. To close our eyes to any class or group of people is to forget that God, in His mercy, has included *us* as recipients of His love in Christ.

Paul and the early Christians did not avoid the cities. That is where they established most of the earliest congregations. Even Corinth, which had a terrible reputation, became the location of a thriving church. Today's churches need to meet the challenges of city work. With God's help, the obstacles can be overcome. Perhaps as never before, amid the concrete, bricks, and steel of urban life, we are faced with a wide-open field ripe for the harvest!

The great cities of the world—as much as the suburbs, small towns, and rural communities—are crying out for the Gospel. Jesus wept over His beloved Jerusalem (Lk 19:41), and Paul longed to bring the Gospel to the people of Rome: "[I pray that] by God's will I may now at last succeed in coming to you" (Rm 1:10).

Footnotes

Footnotes for Philippians, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:1 Or *slaves*; Greek *bondservants*
- [2] 1:1 Or *bishops*; Greek *episkopoi*
- [3] 1:1 Or *servants*, or *ministers*; Greek *diakonoi*
- [4] 1:7 Or *you all have fellowship with me in grace*
- [1] 1:12 Or *brothers and sisters*. The plural Greek word *adelphoi* (translated "brothers") refers to siblings in a family. In New Testament usage, depending on the context, *adelphoi* may refer either to men or to both men and women who are siblings (brothers and sisters) in God's family, the church; also verse 14
- [2] 1:13 Greek *in the whole praetorium*
- [3] 1:14 Some manuscripts add *of God*
- [1] 1:27 Greek *Only behave as citizens worthy*

Footnotes for Philippians, Chapter 2

- [2] 2:5 Or *which was also in Christ Jesus*
- [3] 2:7 Greek *bondservant*
- [1] 2:22 Greek *his*
- [2] 2:22 Greek *child*

Footnotes for Philippians, Chapter 3

- [3] 3:1 Or *brothers and sisters*; also verses 13, 17
- [4] 3:3 Some manuscripts *God in spirit*
- [5] 3:6 Greek *in the law*

Footnotes for Philippians, Chapter 4

- [1] 4:1 Or *brothers and sisters*; also verses 8, 21
- [1] 4:3 Or *loyal Syzygus*; Greek *true yokefellow*
- [2] 4:14 Or *have fellowship in*
- [1] 4:17 Or *I seek the profit that accrues to your account*

Study Notes

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 1:1 *Timothy*. See pp 2066–67. *servants*. Or, "slaves." Used in the NT in a positive and negative sense. According to our fallen human nature, we are described as "slaves" of sin; i.e., we have denied God in order to join the enemy. As such traitors, we have no rights, nor do we possess the ability to free ourselves (Jn 8:34; Rm 6:20). As regenerate believers with souls inspired by the Holy Spirit, we are servants in the sense of being duty bound to carry out the will of our Master (Mt 10:24–25; 1Pt 2:16). *saints*. See p 1904. *Philippi*. See pp 2029–30. *overseers and deacons*. See pp 1902–3.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 1:2 See pp 1899–1901.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 1:1–2 Paul introduces his Letter to the Christians in Philippi with descriptions of who they are and what that will mean in their lives. As a servant of Christ Jesus, Paul takes great pains to be faithful to the ministry entrusted to him. Paul means to encourage every reader by describing us as saints and by announcing that the words of the Letter to follow, which are inspired by the Holy Spirit, will bring grace and peace to us. • Thank You, God, for making us Your saints and for providing Your Word of grace and peace to sustain us. Amen.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 1:3 The faith and support of the Philippians encourage Paul.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 1:4 *joy*. See p 1903. The Philippians have given him joy by joining together with him in the Gospel. See pp 2029–30.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 1:5 From the very first day (Ac 20:18; see pp 2029–30) that Paul shared the Gospel with the Philippians, they joined together with him by believing the Gospel and seeking to extend that Gospel to others. *partnership*. Gk *koinonia*, see p 1903.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 1:6 *bring it to completion*. When Jesus had completed His work of redemption, He said on the cross, "It is finished." Here Paul uses a related word to assure Christians that God will also complete the work of redemption in our lives. *day of Jesus Christ*. When Christ will return to judge the living and the dead (Mt 26:64). See "day of the LORD," p 1079.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 1:7 *heart*. The place of affection and deep thought. See note, Eph 1:18. Paul has the Philippian Christians continually

in mind with deep affection. *partakers*. Gk *sygkoinonos*, "participants," "sharers." See note, v 5. The Philippians joined Paul in gratefully receiving God's grace through His Word and promises. *imprisonment*. See pp 2029–30. *defense and confirmation of the gospel*. Not a call to arms but a response to those who speak against the Gospel (Ac 9:22). The Gospel does not undermine the OT but fulfills it (Mt 5:17). Jesus is the Christ to whom all the promises and prophets of the OT looked forward. Jesus' life, works, and words demonstrated this clearly. The NT relates that the Gospel is confirmed as it continually fulfills what the prophets predicted (e.g., Ac 2; cf 2Pt 1:19). See p 1245.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 1:8 *witness*. See p 1904. Paul appeals to God as a witness of how strong his affections are toward the Philippians. One's witness to oneself was regarded with suspicion (Jn 8:13). Other witnesses were required to verify the truth. Even Jesus deferred to the witness of the Father regarding the truth of who He was (Jn 8:18). *yearn … affection*. Lit, "desire … with the inward parts"; the location within a person where the deepest feelings reside. Paul cares about the same things in the same way as Christ Jesus.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 1:9–11 "These prayers and passages about our ignorance and inability have been written for us. … We should first thank God from the heart that by His Son He has delivered us from the darkness of ignorance and the captivity of sin and death" (FC SD II 15). Paul prays for the cause of salvation (knowledge, discernment, through Jesus Christ) and the effect of salvation (love abounding, approving what is excellent, blameless at Judgment Day). Every other Christian doctrine can be placed under one of these two headings.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 1:9 Fallen human nature continually produces counterfeit notions of love. Paul prays that our love may abound, not just more and more (quantity) but with knowledge and discernment (quality). Love does not mean indulging our appetites, nor is it empty sentiment. We depend on God's revelation in the Word to know, in fact, what love is.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 1:10 *approve what is excellent*. Knowledge and discernment (v 9) allow us to test and recognize the things that have value because they endure, such as truth and mercy. *pure and blameless*. The Gospel is the most excellent of all things because it declares God's grace in Christ and produces faith in that grace. You will be found pure and

blameless because it is God's own work (1Jn 3:9). *day of Christ*. See note, v 6.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 1:11 *fruit of righteousness*. Thoughts, words, and deeds (in fact, the whole life) that are produced in a person who is righteous. The righteousness that God declares to people produces a regenerate soul that actually thinks, speaks, and does what is right. *through Jesus Christ*. Jesus Christ is the measure of righteousness. By becoming a man, He actually lived out that righteousness—He lived "rightly" or perfectly. His life is provided as a covering for us by grace and the forgiveness of sins. His life is actually lived out through us as His Spirit regenerates and moves us to follow His example.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 1:3–11 Paul continues the introduction of his Letter to the Philippians by expressing his prayer, appreciation, and yearning for these fellow believers. We who claim the Christian faith may see, by contrast, how far our thoughts, passions, and labors miss the focus of the Christian life. Yet, God still welcomes our prayer. Confidence that God will complete the good work He has begun in us is still justified. Christ's righteousness is abundantly available to us in His Word. • Dear Lord Jesus, fill our lives with the fruit of Your righteousness that we might abound in love, approve what is excellent, and be pure and blameless on the day of Your return. Amen.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 1:12 *brothers*. Spiritual responsibility began with the adult men in the churches (Ac 2:5; Eph 6:4). As God's children, they were "brothers." See p 1901. *what has happened*. Paul's imprisonment, either in Caesarea or Rome. *advance the gospel*. Paul's situation brought him into contact with many people who otherwise might not have known anything about him. Paul had opportunities to proclaim the Gospel before civil and religious leaders in the hearing of soldiers and countless others. As a result, people talked about him and the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 1:13 *imperial guard*. A special class of soldier, assigned to specific tasks for the emperor, senators, or other officials of the government. *all the rest*. Anyone else who served the authorities (e.g., slaves). *my imprisonment is for Christ*. Authorities arrested Paul because he bore witness to the truth about Jesus Christ, which liberated people. Roman civil rulers and Jewish religious rulers were afraid they would lose control and advantage over their subjects.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 1:14 *brothers*. Public ministers, not just any member of the Roman churches. *confident … by my imprisonment*. Those who were close to Paul during his imprisonment had several advantages: They could see that Paul's faith was not discouraged, but was bold and lively (e.g., John and Peter in Ac 4:23–31). They could see how God makes things work for good, as Paul goes on to describe. They would have heard more of the Word directly from Paul. *bold to speak the word*. Likely refers to a person of authority and responsibility addressing others in public (preaching).

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 1:15 Both Jews and Gentiles might talk with others about the prisoner Paul and why he was a prisoner. Some would mock Paul (Ac 17:32–34). Others would pass on the Good News that Paul confessed. That is what the Good News inspires a person to do.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 1:16 *defense of the gospel*. See note, v 7.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 1:17 *rivalry*. See note, v 15. *thinking to afflict me*. They either presented the Gospel as nonsense, or they presented the Gospel to gather a following for themselves.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 1:18 *What then?* A rhetorical question introduces Paul's conclusion: God will make the proclamation effective. Cypr: "Paul … was not speaking of heretics. … He was speaking of brethren, whether as walking disorderly and against the discipline of the Church, or as keeping the truth of the Gospel with the fear of God" (*ANF* 5:382).

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 1:12–18 Paul demonstrates that his imprisonment does not defeat the Gospel, as some had feared. God's wisdom and love so far surpass our abilities that He can and does still bring the truth of the Gospel to light despite all opposition, just as Jesus fulfilled all righteousness and conquered death by His resurrection. • Almighty and merciful God, forgive our contrary human nature, and give us grace in every situation to hear and pass on the truth and mercy revealed in Your Word. Amen.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 1:19 *Spirit of Jesus Christ*. The Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Trinity, by whom Jesus was conceived in the Virgin Mary, and who came upon Him visibly in His Baptism. Jesus promised the Spirit to His apostles (Jn 14; 16), breathed the Spirit on them to give them authority (Jn 20:21–23), and sent the Spirit to confirm their faith and mission all through the Book of Acts. *my deliverance*. Paul confessed that

God's will and presence means that he will be saved. He did not yet know if "salvation" (deliverance) would mean release from prison or from life through martyrdom (delivered eternally).

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 1:20 *honored in my body*. If Paul lived, his body would honor Jesus Christ, because the Gospel was proclaimed through him. If Paul died, he bore witness about life eternal that cannot be taken away. "It is God's will and clear command that believers should do good works. The Holy Spirit works this in believers, and God is pleased with good works for Christ's sake" (FC SD IV 38).

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 1:21 If you live as a Christian, you live by Christ's grace, in His image, to serve as Christ the people around you. If you die, you learn the fullness of what you had known in part and your fallen human nature no longer hinders you.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 1:22 *live in the flesh*. Earthly life (cf v 24). *fruitful labor*. Laboring for ourselves bears poor fruit (cf Rm 6:21). But serving others with God's Word evidences a life that endures forever. *choose*. Paul cannot choose, and the choice is not his to make. The Lord who made you and gives you life has numbered your days (Ps 139:16). He also prepares the good content of those days (Eph 2:10).

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 1:23 Paul confesses what we know: to be with Christ in paradise is the absolute fulfillment of every good desire (cf Lk 23:43).

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 1:24 *remain in the flesh*. Paul would continue to serve God as an apostle of Jesus Christ in this world (cf v 22).

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 1:25 *I will remain*. Considering the vision God granted him in Ac 23:11, Paul expects that the Lord will preserve his physical life. *progress and joy*. Paul, as an apostle, serves God as an authoritative spokesman of His truth and grace. God's Word makes progress as it makes our regenerate soul more capable, articulate, and dominant in relation to our contrary human nature. Progressing in faith and life increases our joy as we experience God's will for us (Jn 16:24).

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 1:26 *glory in Christ Jesus*. Christ's life worked blessing for us. Knowing more about His life gives more cause to relate His life (glory) to others. *my coming to you again*. Paul anticipated that Caesar would free him, after which he would revisit congregations, as was his custom.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 1:27 *worthy of the gospel*. Consistent with what the Gospel teaches and inspires in a believer. *in one spirit, with one mind*. Since the Spirit regenerates according to Christ's image, they share the same mind, which Paul calls them to use in 2:5. *striving … for the faith*. Due to Adam's fall, everyone has turned away (Rm 3:10–18). The Gospel produces faith; it is not the product of human thought, imagination, or decision. *faith of the gospel*. Eternal and absolute because it holds the truth and does so by God's grace and power. See note, Eph 2:8–9.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 1:28 *opponents*. Paul and the Gospel he proclaimed met some opposition among Gentiles (Ac 17:32), but most opposition came from Jews (Ac 13:45, 15:1). *their destruction*. Perishing under the condemnation of their sin because they despise God's grace (1Pt 2:7–8).

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 1:29 Believing in Christ is more than just knowing and liking what He did for you. Believing in Christ means devotion to His purpose, which will always include suffering at the hands of those who would oppose Him. God enables such devotion.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 1:30 *same conflict*. The conflict is between truth/mercy and falsehood/condemnation. Ac 16:16–24 records the conflict Paul had in Philippi, being beaten and jailed because he cast a demon out of a young woman who told fortunes for her masters.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 1:19–30 Paul turns his attention from the question of whether he will live or die to a more important issue: what it means to live in this world. If God grants you a day in this world, it is because He would have you serve others by living and speaking in a way that is consistent with (worthy of) the Gospel. Our ability to live this way is a product of the salvation God lavishes on us in the very words we read here and in the Spirit that accompanies those words. • Dear Lord Jesus, grant us grace and presence of mind to live in a way that agrees with Your Gospel and to strive for advancing the faith in the hearts and minds of others. Amen.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 2:1 *participation in the Spirit*. "Fellowship" or joining together of the Holy Spirit with the believer, which comes about through the inspired Word. See p 1903.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 2:2 *one mind*. Christ is the head of His Body, the Church, which He calls to be of one mind and to think the same things. Scripture reveals to us Christ's mind. The Spirit gives us a renewed mind.

Love wills to extend the kingdom of God's grace to everyone. This is the single-mindedness of Jesus, of Paul, and of God's Church.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 2:3 *count others more significant*. View yourself conservatively: other people are greater in need or in wisdom. Such a perspective leads you to help or to be helped.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 2:4 With God's providence as our foundation, we relinquish concerns for ourselves in order to care for others.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 2:5 *Have this mind*. Paul presents the imperative to think with our minds as Christ thought with His. A soul regenerated in Christ's image (Ti 3:4–7) has the revelation of Christ through the Word.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 2:6–11 Written in Gk as a hymn. See note, Col 3:16.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 2:6–8 Paul repeats the Gk term *morphe*, "form," and also uses *schema*, "manner," or "shape." The Son of God took human form, a body like ours except without sin. Note how here and elsewhere Paul's account of Jesus' life fits readily with the historical accounts in the Gospels.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 2:6 *form of God*. As the Son of God, Jesus is God (Col 1:15). *form*. Not simply appearance. *equality with God*. Jesus, as the true Son of God, cannot be less than fully God. He is equal with His Father according to His divine nature. *grasped*. Fully God, He felt no necessity to cling to the honor or privileges that were His as God's Son (Jn 13:3–4). God grants us a similar ability to empty ourselves in the service of others, because we are His children too.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 2:7 *made Himself nothing*. Lit, "emptied Himself." "[The Son of Man] was received into God when He was conceived of the Holy Spirit in His mother's womb, and His human nature was personally united with the Son of the Highest. Christ always had this majesty according to the personal union. Yet He abstained from using it in the state of His humiliation, and because of this He truly increased in all wisdom and favor with God and men. Therefore, He did not always use this majesty, but only when it pleased Him" (FC Ep VIII 15–16). *form of a servant*. Jesus was, in every way, completely a servant to those around Him. See note, v 6. *likeness of men*. Not mere resemblance. He was conceived as a man like any other man, except without sin.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 2:8 *human form*. Jesus shared all the characteristics of a human being. *obedient*. Jesus put all of His thoughts, words, and actions under the direction of His Father's will. *death on a cross*. The most despised and cursed death. According to OT Law, being hung on a tree meant you were cut off from God. You were left there all day as an example to others (cf Dt 21:22–23). The Romans crucified criminals by the main entry roads into a city in order to humiliate them and to warn those who entered not to make the same mistake.
PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 2:9 *above every name*. In ancient times, people were given names to describe them. The name of Jesus describes the essence of who He is: "salvation is of the Lord." There is no other savior or means of salvation. "After His resurrection, He entirely laid aside the form of a servant, but not the human nature, and was established in the full use, manifestation, and declaration of the divine majesty. In this way He entered into His glory" (FC Ep VIII 16).
PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 2:10 *should bow*. To demonstrate submission, honor, and reverence. See p 1276. *under the earth*. A figure of speech that refers to the souls of those who have gone not to heaven, but to damnation in the "lower regions" (1Pt 3:18–20).
PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 2:11 *Jesus Christ is Lord*. An early creed. See p 1975. Jesus (Gk) or Joshua (Hbr) is the name given to the Son conceived by the Holy Spirit (Mt 1:21) in the Virgin Mary. Christ (Gk) or Messiah (Hbr) is the title of the One whom God promised to send to save His people. This Jesus, who is the Christ, demonstrated Himself to be Lord over all by His nature, life, death, and resurrection. No one is Lord over Him, but He is Lord over all. See p 2098. *glory*. See p 1902.
PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 2:1–11 Paul couples the imperatives of a Christian life with a description of Christ, who makes that life possible. We are certainly not lords, nor have we any excuse for refusing to honor Jesus Christ as Lord. Yet the fulfillment of the imperative to live like Christ is supported by all that Christ gives freely: the encouragement, comfort, love, and mind of Christ, along with the participation of the Spirit. • Dear Lord Jesus, place firmly in our minds and hearts both who You are and what You are so that we may proclaim Your grace and image to others. Amen.
PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 2:12–18 *Therefore*. Paul's teaching in vv 12–18 flows from His teaching about the humility of Christ in vv 1–11.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 2:12 *my beloved*. Plural. The congregation—not an individual—is described in this passage. See p 1901. *always obeyed*. Paul highly regarded the Philippians and spoke charitably toward them. *work out your own salvation*. Cf v 13; God's action is the cause of the Philippians' salvation and good works. *with fear and trembling*. The congregation cannot boast about its accomplishments, least of all their salvation. Paul commanded that fear and trembling accompany the lives of believers to keep our rebellious, sinful human nature (Rm 5:6–10) subdued in the service of God and neighbor.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 2:13 *God who works in you*. We live with our fallen human nature. But God works in us by subduing our sinful nature, regenerating our souls, and giving us His Spirit of grace. "The preaching and hearing of God's Word are the Holy Spirit's instruments. By, with, and through these instruments the Spirit desires to work effectively, to convert people to God, and to work in them both to will and to do" (FC SD II 52). *His good pleasure*. God is pleased when His creation lives and thrives, meets all its potential, and has life to the fullest.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 2:14 *grumbling or questioning*. A problem indicative of the sinful human nature, which is selfish and unbelieving.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 2:15 *children of God*. God provides regeneration so that by His Word and Spirit we are a new creation according to the inner person. This nature, generated by God Himself, is inclined to live as His child. *without blemish*. Everything that is wrong with us has been forgiven by the Lord Jesus. According to our new nature, there is nothing wrong (1Jn 3:8–9). *a crooked and twisted generation*. God created us to live in perfect harmony with Him, His creation, and one another at every point of contact, in every way. Since the fall, our human nature contradicts that design at every point; nothing matches or fits right. *you shine as lights*. An important theme for Paul and John. Light may be directed or reflected. We reflect God's light (His truth and grace) by receiving it and directing that light to shine on others.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 2:16 *the word of life*. The Holy Scriptures. God gives life through the Word, as creation and the Gospel show. See p 971. *the day of Christ*. See note, 1:6. *proud*. Paul took pride in the Word of God he preached. *run in vain or labor in vain*. Paul uses the term "walk" to describe the Christian life (see p 1904). Life is active, with a path to follow,

and a goal. Because Paul's life was vigorous, he ran rather than walked. He labored because of his confidence in the Word of God.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 2:17 *drink offering*. Wine or oil was poured out in the OT sanctuary (Nu 28:7). *sacrificial offering of your faith*. Lit, "the sacrifice and service of your faith." Faith produces a sacrificial attitude (cf vv 4–8), which frees us to lay down our temporary physical life in the interest of eternal life (Rm 12:1–3).

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 2:18 *rejoice*. See pp 2029–30.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 2:12–18 Paul's exhortation flows from the previous section revealing the significance of Jesus' life and sacrifice. Like Paul, our labor would be meaningless and of no use to others if we lived crookedly and perversely as the world around us lives. But God is at work in us, moving us to hold fast to His Word of life, by which He extends His image and kingdom to others. • Dear Lord Jesus, please work in us to will and to do Your good pleasure, that we may be blameless in this crooked generation and blameless in the day of Your return. Amen.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 2:19–20 *Timothy*. See pp 2066–67. *genuinely concerned*. Timothy had a truly humble, servant attitude.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 2:21 See notes, 1:15, 28.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 2:22 *as a son with a father*. Paul was instrumental in the conversion of Timothy and thought of him as a son (1Tm 1:18; 2Tm 2:1). Cf Phm 10. *served with me*. Timothy traveled and worked with Paul (Ac 16:1, 3; 17:14–15; 18:5; 19:22; 20:4) and was sent on Paul's behalf to teach.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 2:23 *how it will go*. At Paul's trial.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 2:24 Cf 1:19–26. Paul hoped for release.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 2:25 *Epaphroditus*. A messenger between Paul and the churches, generously described by Paul.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 2:26–27 *ill … near to death*. Epaphroditus was suffering from some physical ailment that posed a real threat to his life. *God had mercy*. God shows deep consideration for the struggles His servants endure and grants relief. He hears our prayers and heals us too. See note, 1Co 12:9. *sorrow upon sorrow*. Paul was already sorrowful over the condition of Epaphroditus. His grief would increase over Epaphroditus's death.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 2:30 *he nearly died for the work of Christ*. Epaphroditus worked and traveled extensively so that he could deliver the

support for Paul that the Philippians had sent with him. This self-denial made him vulnerable to an illness that almost took his life. *what was lacking in your service to me*. The Philippians wanted to support Paul in spreading the Gospel, but Paul had been traveling and now was under arrest. Epaphroditus brought both financial support and moral support from the Philippians.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 2:19–30 Paul takes a moment to inform the Philippians about the significance and well-being of two close associates, Timothy and Epaphroditus. These men provide remarkable examples of devotion to the Lord's mission and to His missionary Paul. God's grace makes a person genuinely concerned for the welfare of others and sustains us in such service. • Dear Lord Jesus, by Your mercy, make us faithful servants, looking after the welfare of Your fellow servants. Amen.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 3:1 *Finally*. Yet he continues for two more chapters! Paul embarks on new topics and emphases, extending his conclusion. *my brothers*. See note, 1:12. *write the same things*. Paul does not need to add new things, but to remind readers of the truth they have already heard, as Jesus told His apostles (Jn 14:26). *safe for you*. Throughout the OT, God continually warned Israel about forgetting His Word and admonished them to remember it. Reminders of the truth provide safety against the constant assault of falsehood.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 3:2 *dogs*. Because dogs bit and devoured the flesh of others, Paul used the term to describe the Jews who insisted on circumcision. Dogs were a fairly despised animal in biblical times because they preyed on the sick, dying, or dead (e.g., dogs devoured Jezebel after she was thrown from her window, 2Ki 9:36). *mutilate the flesh*. The cutting of circumcision, which is mutilation if done as a sacrifice. Some Jews thought that by the cutting of circumcision they would make themselves acceptable to God. See note, Gal 5:12.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 3:3 *we are the circumcision*. Physical circumcision cannot remove the rebellious disposition bound up in that flesh. Paul writes about the spiritual removal of the sinful heart (Ezk 36:26), the putting to death of the deeds of the flesh (Rm 6:11). *worship by the Spirit of God*. The Spirit of God generates a new heart and moves that soul to faith, which is the origin of genuine worship (praise of God and service to neighbor). *glory in Christ*

Jesus. Boast of His saving power. *no confidence in the flesh*. Those

regenerated know that our human nature (flesh) is utterly untrustworthy (Jn 2:24–25).
PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 3:4–6 Paul describes his physical descent, heritage, and actions before knowing Christ.
PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 3:4 Paul is speaking of his physical and cultural heritage as an Israelite.
PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 3:5 *circumcised on the eighth day*. See note, Gn 17:12. *of … Benjamin*. See note, 2Sm 20:1. *Hebrew of Hebrews*. There are only Hebrews in Paul's known ancestry. He was fiercely loyal to his race as a Hebrew. *Pharisee*. A most earnest sect of Judaism.
PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 3:6 *persecutor of the church*. Because Paul had been convinced that Jesus Christ intended to undermine Jewish law, he persecuted the followers of Jesus and the apostles and tried to destroy them (Ac 9:1–2). *blameless*. The Pharisees developed their own system of laws based on the Law of Moses. Paul claimed to keep these laws perfectly (Jesus denounced them; Mt 23:23).
PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 3:7 *loss*. Gk *zemia*, "damage," "disadvantage." Paul realized that confidence
in his heritage and works actually interfered with knowing God. "If anyone wants to drag good works into the article of justification, rest his righteousness or trust for salvation on them, and merit God's grace and be saved by them, St. Paul himself answers, not us. He says and repeats it three times (Philippians 3:7–8)—such a person's works are not only useless and a hindrance, but are also harmful. This is not the fault of the good works themselves, but of the false confidence placed in the works, contrary to God's clear Word" (FC SD IV 37).
PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 3:8 *surpassing worth*. Simply knowing Jesus exceeded all else. *rubbish*. Human waste or dung. *gain Christ*. Clinging only to Christ, one enjoys all the benefits of Christ.
PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 3:9 *comes through faith in Christ*. In contrast to what we gain by our own labor or effort. *righteousness from God*. Same Gk root as "justify." "The word *justify* here means to declare righteous and free from sins and to absolve a person from eternal punishment for the sake of Christ's righteousness, which is credited by God to faith" (FC SD III 17). See p 1903.
PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 3:10–11 Paul is talking about living a real life of faith rooted in the death and resurrection wrought for us in Baptism. See

note, Rm 6:4. Luth: "Everywhere he teaches about the slaying of the old man and the renewing of the inner man" (AE 29:225).

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 3:10 *power of His resurrection*. Christ's resurrection makes our faith and resurrection possible. God has given you an eternal, living soul and will raise your body from the dead. *share His sufferings*. Greatest of all honors: to share in the suffering that is required to accomplish tasks of the most fundamental and eternal importance. *becoming like Him*. A Christian, as the name is meant to indicate, will follow the pattern of Jesus, laying down his or her life for others. See note, v 11.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 3:11 *attain the resurrection*. To be included with those who are raised to life everlasting in a perfected state (1Jn 3:1–3).

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 3:1–11 Paul reflects on his heritage and contrasts its value with the blessing of knowing Jesus, who sets us free to invest our lives in the lives of others. Only the life, suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ has the power to truly set us free to experience life to the fullest. • Dear Lord Jesus, by Your grace You set me free to live in Your righteousness and in Your image. Loosen my grip on earthly advantage, and take my hand in Yours. Amen.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 3:12 *obtained … make it my own … made me His own*. Same Gk term. Christ "obtained" Paul so that Paul might also obtain the life of Christ as his own (v 10). *perfect*. Or, "complete," having realized the purpose for which he was created. *make it my own*. Refers to the life that shares in Christ's suffering and resurrection.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 3:13–14 We strain against our own sinful nature and against the world and the devil, even while our soul is at peace under God's promises and grace.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 3:13 *Brothers*. See note, 1:12.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 3:14 *goal for the prize of the upward call*. Jesus said that those who believed in Him were begotten from above (Jn 1:12–13). Paul commands us to set our minds on things above (Col 3:1). God draws us through His Word toward the way of life that He intends for us, a life with purpose and meaning that endures.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 3:15 *mature*. To have Christ's mind firmly enough in one's own consciousness to see matters as He does (Eph 4:13). *God will reveal that*. Our human nature habitually perverts our thinking. God must, by His Word and through circumstances, teach us the truth.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 3:16 *what we have attained*. The course of life that God has given us in Christ.
PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 3:17 *Brothers*. See note, 1:12. *imitating me … the example*. Think, speak, and live as Paul does in Christ's image, as described in 2:5–8. *walk*. See p 1904.
PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 3:18 *enemies of the cross*. In particular, Jews who refused to admit their guilt under the Law and so refused to accept that Jesus' accursed death (crucifixion) was really for their sakes.
PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 3:19 *destruction*. Their bodies will certainly perish in time. Their souls are even now perishing under their contradiction of God's salvation. If unchanged, they will suffer being cut off eternally from God in the lake of fire. *their god is their belly*. They serve the appetites of their human nature, which are self-destructive. *glory in their shame*. It is shameful to do anything that contradicts God's design for human life, but human arrogance actually prides itself on such behavior and flaunts this attitude as though it were something of which to be proud.
PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 3:20 *our citizenship is in heaven*. Born from above by God's Word and Spirit. We belong to heaven as children of our heavenly Father. We also live with a consciousness of belonging to a different way of life, one full of love, joy, and enduring significance. "The Church's authority has its own commission to teach the Gospel and to administer the Sacraments [Matthew 28:19–20]. Let it not break into the office of another. Let it not transfer the kingdoms of this world to itself. Let it not abolish the laws of civil rulers. Let it not abolish lawful obedience. Let it not interfere with judgments about civil ordinances or contracts. Let it not dictate laws to civil authorities about the form of society" (AC XXVIII 12–13).
PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 3:21 *transform … to be like*. Paul used Gk terms for "form" related to those in 2:6–8. There, Christ was "formed" in humility. Here, we are "formed" like Christ in glory. *subject all things*. Christ has the power to cause all things to comply with His will. See note, 1Co 15:24.
PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 4:1 *brothers*. See note, 1:12. *crown*. Honor for what one has accomplished. Paul did not gather jewels for a crown that perishes. He gathered souls for eternal life. *my beloved*. See note, 2:12.
PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 3:12–4:1 Paul holds out before us our upward calling, his example, and the promise of our transformation in the

resurrection. In contrast, we often focus on earthly comforts, worldly examples of success, and maintaining a youthful appearance for this life. But, while doing this, we starve our souls. Our citizenship is in heaven! Our life is in Christ, who reigns over all things in heaven and earth. • Dear Lord Jesus, turn us from the destructive ways of our human nature and turn us continually toward the heavenly calling and promises You have set before us. Amen.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 4:2 *Euodia … Syntyche*. Christian women at Philippi. *agree in the Lord*. To think the same things in harmony with the mind of Christ, which is given and expressed in the Word. Apparently, these women were in dispute, which was known by the congregation and was affecting the work there.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 4:3 *true companion*. A fellow laborer of Paul, well known to the Philippians. *fellow workers*. People who share the work of extending God's kingdom to the lives of others. *book of life*. God has chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world. No one whose name is written thus will be lost in the Day of Judgment (Ps 87; Rv 21:27). Cf Ex 32:32.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 4:4 Troubled people ought not be alone, for this is why God created the fellowship of the Church. Also, "To be gloomy before God is not pleasing to Him, although He would permit us to be depressed before the world" (AE 54:16).

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 4:5 *reasonableness*. Thoughtfulness, patience, and consideration. *The Lord is at hand*. The Lord is near to give you patience, wisdom, and help. The Lord is near in coming for you. This is life from a resurrection and eternal perspective.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 4:6 *prayer*. The broad category of speaking to God at His invitation. *supplication*. Specific request for help (see note, 1Tm 2:1). *thanksgiving*. Expressing before God all the things He has already done for you. *requests*. Made in the perspective of thanksgiving.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 4:7 When life makes no sense, God's peace sustains and directs us. *peace of God … will guard*. Peace, not readiness or zeal, acts like a guardian angel for our mental health. This peace resides in Jesus, our refuge. See p 1903; see also note, v 9. *surpasses*. Same Gk term as in 3:8.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 4:8 Paul commands that we continually keep these virtues, which are the fundamental ideals of life according to God's

design, in the forefront of our minds, in our very consciousness, so that they inspire and guide all we do. See "meditate," p 842. "[The Word] always awakens new understanding, pleasure, and devoutness and produces a pure heart and pure thoughts" (LC I 101). *brothers*. See note, 1:12.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 4:9 *learned … received … heard … seen in me—practice*. Paul's entire life bears witness and demonstrates how to live for Christ. He is not only a teacher in Word but also a mentor in life. Church workers today have the same calling. *God of peace*. God is the One who grants genuine liberty to know fullness of life by regenerating us, setting wisdom before us, and inspiring us with His Word. During the reign of the Roman emperor Augustus (27 BC–AD 14), great emphasis was placed on Pax, the goddess of peace (Gk Eirene, whose sisters were "Observance of the Law" and "Justice"). God grants us peace through the Gospel. See p 1903. *be with*. See p 5.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 4:2–9 As Paul concludes this Letter, he uses imperative language to urge the reader to adopt practices of living that are in harmony with the Creator's will. The strength and clarity of this exhortation reminds us that we often set our minds on those things that are contrary to God's will. Paul's exhortations are always followed by promises of God's blessing on our behalf. • Blessed be the Lord God, who has not left us to suffer in our own folly, but has called and enlightened us to live according to His mercy in Christ. Amen.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 4:10 *revived your concern*. Shown by the arrival of Epaphroditus bearing their gift (cf v 18).

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 4:11 *content*. Gk *autarkes*, "self-sufficient" and thereby content.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 4:12 *learned the secret*. Paul knows all things work together for good to those who love God (Rm 8:28), our sinful human nature is our own worst enemy (Rm 5:10), and disciplining the body makes it possible to thrive spiritually (1Co 9:27).

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 4:13 God's wisdom in the Word and the work of His Spirit lets us welcome the experiences of life in ways that benefit us and others. Paul's time in the Philippian jail and his current imprisonment are perfect examples.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 4:14 *share my trouble*. The Philippians have joined themselves together with Paul by sympathizing, praying for him, and sending what physical aid they could.

PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 4:15 See note, 1:5. *beginning of the gospel*. As Paul began his first missionary journey.
PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 4:18 *full payment*. Paul received all the things he needed. *Epaphroditus*. See note, 2:25. *fragrant offering, a sacrifice*. See note, 2:17. At the temple, sacrifices were made with sweet-smelling spices to remind the people that God was well pleased, not with the sacrifice itself, but with the people's appeal to His mercy made available. Cf Ex 30.
PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 4:19 *supply every need*. Not guaranteed prosperity. God will provide for every need that arises. Needs are seen in terms of eternity, not just our bodily concerns. *His riches in glory*. All the riches of God become available to us because of what Christ did. Christ established communion with us through His Word and Spirit. In these ways, He made us partakers of all His blessings (Jn 16:14). See notes, 3:8, 12, 13–14.
PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 4:20 *God and Father*. God is our Father because He made us and also because He gave us new life in Christ (Jn 1:12–13; 3:5; 1Jn 3:1).
PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 4:10–20 Paul cannot end this Letter without a vibrant expression of gratitude toward God and the service of the Philippians. Paul's outpouring of appreciation contrasts sharply with feelings of neglect, resentfulness, and even anger that can arise when we lack the privileges and comforts we expect. Paul invites us to see the blessings and fullness of God that are present in every situation. Christ multiplies those blessings by His grace. • Dear Lord Jesus, forgive our ingratitude. Turn our minds to dwell on the fullness of life in Your Holy Word. Amen.
PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 4:21 *saint*. See note, Eph 1:1; see also p 1904. *brothers*. See note, 1:12.
PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 4:22 *saints*. Those fellow believers with and near Paul while he is imprisoned. *Caesar's household*. Servants of the emperor who came to faith, probably not Caesar's family.
PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 4:23 The grace of the Lord Jesus is what joins His Spirit with ours so that we live fully. *be with*. See p 5.
PHILIPPIANS—NOTE ON 4:21–23 Paul's last words in the Letter are greetings and blessings. Contrast Paul's concern for greeting all and extending grace with our unwillingness to greet people in our own church communities. The grace of the Lord Jesus is so abundant that it flows over

from Paul to us through this very Word and has the power to overflow from our lives into the lives of others, so that we genuinely greet and then extend God's grace. • O give thanks to the Lord for His abundant grace! May His grace come continually to us and through us to others. Amen.

Colossians

Colossians 1 | Colossians 2 | Colossians 3 | Colossians 4

- Introduction to Colossians
  - Overview
  - Reading Colossians
  - Luther on Colossians
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

Greeting

1 [1]†† Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy
our brother,
[2]† To the saints and faithful brothers[1] in Christ at Colossae:
Grace to you and peace from God our Father.

Thanksgiving and Prayer

3 ‡† We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we
pray for you, 4 †since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love
that you have for all the saints, 5 †because of the hope laid up for you in
heaven. Of this you have heard before in the word of the truth, the gospel,
6 †which has come to you, as indeed in the whole world it is bearing fruit
and growing—as it also does among you, since the day you heard it and
understood the grace of God in truth, 7 †just as you learned it from Epaphras
our beloved fellow servant.[2] He is a faithful minister of Christ on your[3]
behalf 8 †and has made known to us your love in the Spirit.

9 ‡†And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you,
asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual
wisdom and understanding, 10 †so as to walk in a manner worthy of the
Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing
in the knowledge of God. 11 † May you be strengthened with all power,
according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy, 12 †
giving thanks[4] to the Father, who has qualified you[5] to share in the
inheritance of the saints in light. 13 †He has delivered us from the domain of
darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, 14 † in whom
we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

The Preeminence of Christ

15 ‡ ‡ ‡ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.
16 † For by[1] him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and
invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things
were created through him and for him. 17 † And he is before all things, and in
him all things hold together. 18 † And he is the head of the body, the church.
He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might
be preeminent. 19 † For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell,
20 † and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in
heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

21 † And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil
deeds, 22 † he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to
present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him, 23 † if
indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the
hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all
creation[2] under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister.

Paul’s Ministry to the Church

24 ‡ †Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am
filling up what is lacking in Christ’s afflictions for the sake of his body, that
is, the church, 25 † of which I became a minister according to the
stewardship from God that was given to me for you, to make the word of
God fully known, 26 † the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now
revealed to his saints. 27 † To them God chose to make known how great
among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is
Christ in you, the hope of glory. 28 †Him we proclaim, warning everyone and
teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in
Christ. 29 †For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully
works within me.

2 1 ‡ †For I want you to know how great a struggle I have for you and
for those at Laodicea and for all who have not seen me face to face, 2 †that
their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, to reach all the
riches of full assurance of understanding and the knowledge of God’s
mystery, which is Christ, 3 † in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom
and knowledge. 4 †I say this in order that no one may delude you with
plausible arguments. 5 †For though I am absent in body, yet I am with you in
spirit, rejoicing to see your good order and the firmness of your faith in
Christ.

Alive in Christ

6 ‡† Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, 7 † rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.

8 †See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits[1] of the world, and not according to Christ. 9 †For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, 10 †and you have been filled in him, who is the head of all rule and authority. 11 † In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, 12 † having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead. 13 † And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, 14 †by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. 15 † He disarmed the rulers and authorities[1] and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.[2]

Let No One Disqualify You

16 ‡† Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and
drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath. 17 † These are
a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ. 18 † Let
no one disqualify you, insisting on asceticism and worship of angels, going
on in detail about visions,[3] puffed up without reason by his sensuous mind,
19 † and not holding fast to the Head, from whom the whole body, nourished
and knit together through its joints and ligaments, grows with a growth that
is from God.

20 ‡† If with Christ you died to the elemental spirits of the world, why, as if
you were still alive in the world, do you submit to regulations— 21 † "Do not
handle, Do not taste, Do not touch" 22 † (referring to things that all perish as
they are used)—according to human precepts and teachings? 23 † These have
indeed an appearance of wisdom in promoting self-made religion and
asceticism and severity to the body, but they are of no value in stopping the
indulgence of the flesh.

Put On the New Self

3 [1]†‡‡†If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that
are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. [2]† Set your
minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. [3]†For you
have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. [4]†When Christ who is
your[1] life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.
[5]† Put to death therefore what is earthly in you:[2] sexual immorality,
impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. [6]† On
account of these the wrath of God is coming.[3] [7] In these you too once
walked, when you were living in them. [8]†But now you must put them all
away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth. [9]†
Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self[4] with its
practices [10]†and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in
knowledge after the image of its creator. [11]† Here there is not Greek and
Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave,[5] free; but
Christ is all, and in all.
[12]† Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate
hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, [13]† bearing with one
another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as
the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. [14]†And above all these
put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. [15]†And let
the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in
one body. And be thankful. [16]†Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly,
teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and
hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. [17]†And
whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord
Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Rules for Christian Households

18 ‡ ‡ † Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. 19 †
Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them. 20 †Children,
obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord. 21 †Fathers, do not
provoke your children, lest they become discouraged. 22 †Slaves,[1] obey in
everything those who are your earthly masters,[2] not by way of eye-service,
as people-pleasers, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord. 23 †
Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men,
24 †knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your
reward. You are serving the Lord Christ. 25 †For the wrongdoer will be paid
back for the wrong he has done, and there is no partiality.

4 1 †Masters, treat your slaves[3] justly and fairly, knowing that you
also have a Master in heaven.

Further Instructions

[2]†† Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving.
[3]†At the same time, pray also for us, that God may open to us a door for the word, to declare the mystery of Christ, on account of which I am in prison
— [4]†that I may make it clear, which is how I ought to speak.

[5]† Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time.
[6]†Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.

Final Greetings

7 †Tychicus will tell you all about my activities. He is a beloved brother
and faithful minister and fellow servant[4] in the Lord. 8 †I have sent him to
you for this very purpose, that you may know how we are and that he may
encourage your hearts, 9 †and with him Onesimus, our faithful and beloved
brother, who is one of you. They will tell you of everything that has taken
place here.

10 † Aristarchus my fellow prisoner greets you, and Mark the cousin of
Barnabas (concerning whom you have received instructions—if he comes
to you, welcome him), 11 †and Jesus who is called Justus. These are the only
men of the circumcision among my fellow workers for the kingdom of God,
and they have been a comfort to me. 12 † Epaphras, who is one of you, a
servant of Christ Jesus, greets you, always struggling on your behalf in his
prayers, that you may stand mature and fully assured in all the will of God.
13 †For I bear him witness that he has worked hard for you and for those in
Laodicea and in Hierapolis. 14 † Luke the beloved physician greets you, as
does Demas. 15 †Give my greetings to the brothers[1] at Laodicea, and to
Nympha and the church in her house. 16 †And when this letter has been read
among you, have it also read in the church of the Laodiceans; and see that
you also read the letter from Laodicea. 17 †And say to Archippus, “See that
you fulfill the ministry that you have received in the Lord.”

18 †I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. Remember my chains.
Grace be with you.

Colossians

OVERVIEW

Author
Paul the apostle

Date
c AD 60

Places
Colossae; Laodicea; Hierapolis

People
Paul; Timothy; Colossians; Laodiceans; Tychicus; Onesimus; Aristarchus; Mark; Barnabas; Jesus called Justus; Epaphras; Luke; Demas; Nympha; Archippus

Purpose
To guide the Colossian congregation away from heresy and into the truth about Jesus and His saving work

Law Themes
Threat of false teaching and self-made religion; Satan's domain; struggle to fulfill God's calling; God's coming wrath; the old self; admonish one another; God's order for families and labor

Gospel Themes
Gospel growth; the Son's kingdom and reign; mystery: Christ dwells in you; Baptism, the new circumcision; the new self; the Lord's inheritance

Memory Verses
Transferred to God's kingdom (1:11–14); hymn of Christ (1:15–20); the new circumcision (2:11–14); shadow and substance (2:16–17); glory above (3:1–4)

Introduction to Colossians

Reading Colossians

Wielding hammer and punch, the slave struck each weight of silver into the anvil and die, impressing each side of the metal. The face of the emperor looked back at him each time, perfectly raised and formed above the coin's background. With the rhythmic blows of the hammer and punch, old coins that were defaced by greedy hands in the markets, shaved by unscrupulous businessmen, or misstruck by inexperienced workmen were renewed in their image, made ready for new service.

In Colossians, the apostle Paul warns against greedy, unscrupulous false teachers who would steal the congregation away from their Lord, Jesus the Christ. To renew the congregation's faith and service, Paul repeatedly strikes upon the truths they once knew: Jesus is Lord of creation, the fullness of God dwells in Him, their life is hidden with Christ in God. And so they are renewed in the image of their Creator (3:10).

Luther on Colossians

Just as the Epistle to the Galatians resembles and is modeled on the Epistle to the Romans, comprising in outline the same material that is more fully and richly developed in Romans; so this epistle resembles that to the Ephesians and comprises also in outline the same contents.

First [Paul] praises and wishes for the Colossians, that they continue and increase in faith. He delineates what the gospel and faith are, namely, a wisdom which recognizes Christ as Lord and God, crucified for us, which has been hidden for ages but now brought into the open through his ministry. This is the first chapter.

In chapter 2 he warns them against the doctrines of men, which are always contrary to faith. He depicts these doctrines more clearly than they are depicted anywhere else in Scripture, and criticizes them in a masterly way.

In chapter 3 he exhorts them to be fruitful in the pure faith, doing all sorts of good works for one another, and he describes for some various stations in life the works which are appropriate to them.

In chapter 4 he commends himself to their prayers and gives them greetings and encouragement. (AE 35:386)

Challenges for Readers

Authorship and Date. See "Challenges for Readers," p 2015.

Firstborn. The early heretic Arius (c AD 260–336) and modern groups such as the Jehovah's Witnesses have sadly misunderstood Paul's words in Col 1:15, suggesting that Jesus is a created being and not true, eternal God. But Paul used the expression "firstborn of all creation" not to describe Christ as a creature but to describe His right as a firstborn: He is ruler and heir of all creation, for He existed before creation and all things were created through Him and for Him (1:16–17).

The Colossian Heresy. "Our knowledge of the heresy combated by the letter to the Colossians is limited to those passages in the letter in which the apostle writes against it. Paul's references to Jewish practices (2:11), festivals (2:16), and dietary scruples (2:20) point to a Jewish element to the Colossian heresy. Nevertheless, the false teaching against which this letter was written differed from the simple Judaizing countered by the apostle's letters to the Philippians and especially to the Galatians. In opposing the heresy at Colossae, Paul laid great stress on the correct teaching concerning the person and work of Christ. He gave emphasis to terms and concepts such as fullness … and filling (1:19; 2:9–10), knowledge (2:3), wisdom and understanding (1:6, 9–10, 27, 28; 2:2–3, 23; 3:10), the revelation of mysteries (1:26–27; 2:2), the flesh (1:22, 24; 2:1, 5, 11, 13, 18, 23; 3:22), and perfection (1:28; cf. 3:14; 4:12). He spoke against a religious practice that was exclusive (1:28), had great interest in cosmic beings (1:16; 2:8, 10, 15, 18, 20), and valued its initiations (2:18) and asceticism (2:20–23). From this we see that the Colossian heresy bore a number of similarities to the Gnosticism of the second and third centuries A.D. This suggests that like several other NT documents the letter to the Colossians was written against a point of view which later developed to become (at least an element of) the religious movement known as Gnosticism" (CC Col, 7–8).

Blessings for Readers

Though Colossians is one of Paul's shorter Letters, it is especially rich with descriptions of Christ, His work, and the blessings He extends to us through Holy Baptism. As you study Colossians, pray that the Lord would protect your congregation and all Christians from false teachers, for in Christ alone "we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins" (1:14).

OUTLINE

I. Preaching (chs 1–2)
   A. Salutation (1:1–2)
   B. Overture (1:3–20)
      1. Thanksgiving report (1:3–8)
      2. The source of knowledge: reason for intercession (1:9–14)
      3. The Christ hymn: creation and reconciliation (1:15–20)
   C. Main Exposition and Resolution (1:21–2:23)
      1. Ministry of reconciliation (1:21–29)
      2. True knowledge (2:1–5)
      3. The fullness of Christ (2:6–15)
      4. True freedom (2:16–23)
II. Paul's Instructions (chs 3–4)
   A. The Christian Life (3:1–4:6)
      1. Death and life (3:1–4)
      2. Put off and put on (3:5–17)
      3. Table of duties (3:18–4:1)
      4. Watch and pray (4:2–6)
   B. Concluding Matters (4:7–18)

Articles and Resources Related to Colossians

- The Image of God
- Persecuted for the Faith
- The Meaning of Deliverance

The Image of God

In the beginning, God created man in His own likeness (Genesis 1:26–27). In this consists his dignity, which is not the result of development and behavior, but of God's act. Man is created by God like God, but he himself is not God. However, Exodus 20:4–5 says: "You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them."

Thus, man, created by God in the image and likeness of God, shall not make for himself an image of God out of the things created by God. Rather, the relationship between God and man lies in the word of God and in the speaking to God thus made possible (Deuteronomy 4). The word of God rules out making Him visible in artifacts and experiences. … The fall of man from God through the violation of His commandment entails man putting himself into God's place to "be like God" (Genesis 3:5) and results in separation from God.

It is testified of God, the Son of God made man, that He is "the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation" (Colossians 1:15; 2 Corinthians 4:4); He is "the brightness of his glory and the express image of His person" (Hebrews 1:3). Here the relation between image and formation comes to a full circle when we not only reencounter the origin of creation in the person of Jesus Christ, in His word and work, but when the salvific will of God is carried out through the renewing gift of the Spirit [Romans 8:29]….

Thus, in the image of Christ what is formed anew and shaped in the Christian through the work of Christ becomes visible. This happens in baptism [Romans 6:3–5]…. Our likeness with Christ is accomplished by being "grafted" in him through baptism.

With the image of Christ and the formation of Christians a reality is addressed that cannot be seen when God's word is merely perceived as a text of antiquity; when the sacraments are solely understood as passage rites; and when the communion between God and man is reduced to the purely symbolic…. The true care of souls is not only about the limited realm of inwardness, but about the whole human being in soul and body.

The biblical understanding of salvation always encompasses body and soul, external and internal health concurrently.

Reinhard Slenczka, "Luther's Care of Souls for Our Times," *CTQ* 67:1 (January 2003), 56–58.

See notes, Gn 1:26; Eph 4:22–24; Col 3:10.

Persecuted for the Faith

The Prison Epistles of Paul remind us of the persecution that Paul and many early Christians suffered for the Gospel. In many parts of the modern world, Christians continue to suffer for their faith. This is to be expected, but God furnishes strength and endurance, and we continue to pray for our brothers and sisters in the faith.

During the apostle Paul's missionary journeys, Jews in various places resisted the Gospel message. On occasion, this resistance became violent. (See Paul's list of hardships at 2Co 11:23–33.)

This smoldering Jewish resentment was fanned into flames when Paul returned to Jerusalem after his third missionary journey and appeared in the temple. There, a group of Asian Jews incited a riot by publicly accusing Paul of forsaking the Law of Moses and polluting the temple by bringing a Gentile into the area reserved exclusively for Jews. The charges were false, but even so, they aroused the anti-Christian element in Jerusalem. Paul would doubtless have been stoned to death on the spot had not the Roman garrison commander intervened and brought a detachment of soldiers to stem the fury of the mob (Ac 21:27–36).

When an attempt by the apostle to defend himself before his Jewish accusers resulted in another near riot, the commander detained Paul (Ac 22). Hoping to have the charges against the apostle clarified, he called an informal meeting of the Jewish Council (Sanhedrin), but that meeting also degenerated into a shouting match. Meanwhile, Paul assured humane treatment for himself by informing the commander that he was a Roman citizen. When a plot on Paul's life was discovered, the commander had Paul removed to the seat of the imperial government at Caesarea (Ac 23).

With his arrival at Caesarea, Paul began an almost five-year period of unjust and unwarranted captivity, hearings, and appeals. After several years of imprisonment in Caesarea, Paul was convinced that he would never receive a fair trial in either Jerusalem or Caesarea. So he exercised his right as a Roman citizen to appeal his case directly to the emperor in Rome. Festus, the Roman governor in Palestine at that time, somewhat unwillingly granted Paul his appeal. Ac 27–28 describe Paul's long and perilous journey to Rome.

At Rome, the appeal process dragged on for more than two years. During this time, though constantly chained to a guard, Paul was able to receive friends and continue his ministry.

We do not know why Paul's hearing was delayed so long in Rome. In his Epistle to the Philippians, which is considered the last of the four Prison Epistles—the others being Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon—Paul informed the Philippians that his first hearing had taken place and that it had gone well. Though he did not foolishly ignore the possibility that the emperor might still rule against him, Paul was optimistic that he would be acquitted and set free.

Based on what Paul says in Philippians and the Pastoral Epistles, he was likely set free from this first Roman imprisonment (AD 58–60) and continued to work until he was imprisoned again in the general persecution of Christians that took place under Emperor Nero in AD 67. During this second imprisonment, Paul wrote 2 Timothy, the last testimony of a Christian man facing his earthly end.

The Meaning of Deliverance

Generally in the New Testament, "deliverance" means being set free from the powers of darkness, the coming wrath, evil people, and the persecution of Christians. Salvation and deliverance from the powers of darkness is only one shade in the broad range of meanings…. The nearest meaning is a once-for-all redemption. There is a christological hymn or confession in Colossians (1:12–23), which leads us to the center of baptismal theology (Colossians 2:6–15): "For he has rescued from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins" (Colossians 1:13–14).

Here, then, the synonym of the word "redemption" is "the forgiveness of sins." … [It is] the release from the slavery of sin to a heavenly inheritance. This deed of God is directly linked to baptism, as found in the main section of the Colossian epistle. "Redemption" or "deliverance" is the forgiveness of sins, righteousness, and holiness: "In (Christ Jesus) we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God" (Ephesians 1:7).

"Redemption" in the New Testament also refers to protection from the last temptations, and to the final releasing at the second coming of Christ. Resurrection is the day of redemption for the Christian body [Luke 21:28; Romans 8:23].

Anssi Simojoki, "The Other Gospel of Neo-Pentecostalism in East Africa," *CTQ* 66:3 (July 2002), 280–81.

Footnotes

Footnotes for Colossians, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:2 Or *brothers and sisters*. The plural Greek word *adelphoi* (translated “brothers”) refers to siblings in a family. In New Testament usage, depending on the context, *adelphoi* may refer either to men or to both men and women who are siblings (brothers and sisters) in God’s family, the church
- [2] 1:7 Greek *fellow bondservant*
- [3] 1:7 Some manuscripts *our*
- [4] 1:12 Or *patience, with joy giving thanks*
- [5] 1:12 Some manuscripts *us*
- [1] 1:16 That is, by means of; or *in*
- [2] 1:23 Or *to every creature*

Footnotes for Colossians, Chapter 2

- [1] 2:8 Or *elementary principles*; also verse 20
- [1] 2:15 Probably demonic rulers and authorities
- [2] 2:15 Or *in it* (that is, the cross)
- [3] 2:18 Or *about the things he has seen*

Footnotes for Colossians, Chapter 3

- [1] 3:4 Some manuscripts *our*

- [2] 3:5 Greek *therefore your members that are on the earth*
- [3] 3:6 Some manuscripts add *upon the sons of disobedience*
- [4] 3:9 Greek *man*; also as supplied in verse 10
- [5] 3:11 Greek *bondservant*
- [1] 3:22 Or *Servants*; Greek *Bondservants*
- [2] 3:22 Or *your masters according to the flesh*

Footnotes for Colossians, Chapter 4

- [3] 4:1 Or *servants*; Greek *bondservants*
- [4] 4:7 Greek *fellow bondservant*; also verse 12
- [1] 4:15 Or *brothers and sisters*

Study Notes

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 1:1 *apostle*. See p 1901. *by the will of God*. Paul did not choose to be an apostle but was called by God. *Timothy*. A favorite co-worker of Paul. His father was a Gentile; his mother was Jewish. He often worked alongside Paul or was sent as his representative. *our brother*. Paul was esp close to Timothy. He even referred to him as "my beloved and faithful child in the Lord" (1Co 4:17). Timothy should be considered a co-author of this Letter.

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 1:2 *saints*. See p 1904. *faithful brothers in Christ*. By virtue of their Baptism, all believers are "in Christ," i.e., they are connected to Christ or belong to Him (2:11–13; Rm 6:3, 11; Gal 3:26–27; Eph 1:13; 3:6). See p 1901. *Colossae*. C 100 mi E of Ephesus. Most likely Epaphras brought the Gospel to Colossae, Laodicea, and Hierapolis. See notes, 4:12, 13.

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 1:1–2 Faithful Epaphras established a tiny foothold for the kingdom of God at Colossae and nearby cities. Now this young church is threatened by false belief, which directs people away from Christ and His work to themselves. But God does not give up. He uses Paul, Timothy, and other faithful servants to establish the truth and love of Christ in their hearts. God does not give up on us either, when we or those we love are tempted by false teachings. • O Lord, send from heaven and save me; put to shame him who tramples on me. Send out Your steadfast love and Your faithfulness! Amen. (paraphrase of Ps 57:4)

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 1:3 *the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*. Indicates God's triune nature in the loving relationship between Father and Son. Yet the Son is "Lord" (see p 2098). *when we pray for you*. Fervent prayer is an important part of Christian ministry. Cf 1:9; 4:2–3, 12.

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 1:4 *heard*. Apart from a few individuals, Paul had not met the Colossians face-to-face. Cf 2:1.

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 1:5 *hope laid up*. Most people in the Greco-Roman world lived without hope (cf Eph 2:12). Hope can be thought of as faith directed toward the future. *gospel*. See p 1902. Unlike the false teachers, Paul emphasized the reliability of the saving work and Word of Christ as revealed in the Gospel.

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 1:6 *come to you*. As the founding missionary of the Colossian Church, Epaphras had brought the Gospel (v 7). *in the whole world*. In less than three decades since Pentecost, the Gospel was being proclaimed to the entire Roman world (cf 1Tm 3:16). *growing*. The Gospel (v 5) produces faith and good works. Cf Gal 5:22–23.
COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 1:7 *Epaphras*. Paul was very close to him and called him a "fellow prisoner" in Phm 23. See note, v 6. *our … servant*. Some manuscripts have "your," but many scholars prefer "our" because it shows the connection between Paul, Epaphras, and the Colossians. *minister*. Gk *doulos*, usually means "slave" or "one who is wholly owned and who owes undivided allegiance and obedience to a master." See p 1903. Many OT believers were called slaves (servants) of God: Moses (Ps 105:26), Joshua (Jsh 24:29), David (2Sm 7:5), and Jeremiah (Jer 7:25).
COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 1:8 *love in the Spirit*. Love as well as faith is the work of the Holy Spirit through the Gospel.
COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 1:9–12 Paul prays for our entire Christian life: for faith (v 9), for the living of our faith (v 10), for strength when we meet resistance (v 11), and for the final outcome of faith—eternal life (v 12).
COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 1:9 *pray*. Paul's attention to regular prayer is an integral aspect of his ministry. *knowledge*. False teachers had promoted another kind of knowledge. Paul prays for knowledge that is centered in God's forgiveness in Christ (v 14) and revealed by the Holy Spirit. *wisdom*. Gk *sophia*. Paul uses this word six times in Col (1:9, 28; 2:3, 23; 3:16; 4:5). It is the practical application of faith in Christ. *understanding*. Insight. A clear analysis and application of knowledge guided by the Holy Spirit.
COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 1:10 *worthy*. Gk *axios*, "suitable to." Related to Eng "axiomatic," "taken for granted." We should have high expectations for the new life of faith, since it comes from Christ.
COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 1:11 *power*. Gk *dynamis*. Related to Eng "dynamite." God empowers His people for service. *glorious might*. Great power; used only of God in the NT.
COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 1:12 *qualified you*. Sin disqualifies us. God qualified us through Christ's redemption (v 14). *inheritance*. Recalls the inheritance of the Promised Land that was allotted to the families of Israel according to God's promises and not because of their righteousness (Dt 9:5). See "portion," p 7. *saints in light*. Believers are no longer separated from God, who is light (Jn 8:12).

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 1:13 *delivered … transferred*. The past tense points us back to Baptism, which incorporated us into Christ's saving work (2:6–15). *domain of darkness*. "Human nature has been delivered into slavery and is held captive by the devil" (Ap II 47). The NT often uses light/darkness for the contrast between God/Satan, salvation/sin (Ac 26:18). Biblical usage differs from that of some later Gnostics and Manichaeans, who used this comparison as though God and Satan were equal forces. God's power to save from the darkness of sin applies for all people. *kingdom*. Jesus taught that God's kingdom was the rule of His grace, which began with His ministry (Mt 4:17). The beginning of God's kingdom is the forgiveness of sins (v 14). See pp 1565–66.

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 1:14 *redemption*. See p 1904. *forgiveness*. See p 1902. Paul puts these teachings together. This may have been in contrast to the idea that forgiveness was a preliminary step of salvation, a teaching held by later Gnostics. "No one is baptized in order that he may become a prince, but, as the words say, that he 'be saved.' We know that to be saved is nothing other than to be delivered from sin, death, and the devil" (LC IV 24–25).

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 1:3–14 Paul cares very much for these new Christians, and he knows that God cares for them even more. Unfortunately, false teachings that lead people to look to themselves instead of looking to God compete for the Colossians' attention. We have all been tempted to look to other things instead of Jesus for our salvation. God is the only one who can overcome this evil. In the background, Paul is praying fervently for them. In the foreground, Paul is boldly proclaiming the truth of salvation in Jesus. • Thank You, O God, for Your patience and persistence to save us through Your beloved Son. Amen.

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 1:15–20 Paul introduces his refutation of the Colossian heresy with a hymn, which summarizes early Christian Christology and likely predates Paul's writing to the Colossians. In two parts, the hymn presents Jesus as Creator (vv 15–18a) and Redeemer (vv 18b–20).

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 1:15 *image*. Gk *eikon*, something that resembles the original. Jesus is the visible image of the invisible God. Adam lost the image of God, but in Christ, the Second Adam, God's image is restored (AC II 1–2; LC II 65). *firstborn*. Arius (a fourth-century heretic) misunderstood this to mean "the first of many creatures," as if Jesus were

part of the creation. But elsewhere it means "one who is privileged" (e.g., Ex 4:22). St Athanasius also pointed out that the context clearly shows this "firstborn" is not a part of the creation but the cause of it (v 17; *NPNF* 2 4:383). See notes, v 18; Ps 89:27; Pr 8:22.

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 1:16 *all things*. As Creator of "all things," Jesus is supreme over all (Jn 1:3). *invisible*. The Colossians were particularly interested in angels. However, Paul asserts Jesus' supremacy over the invisible angels. *thrones … dominions … rulers … authorities*. Names common to Judaism and the NT of angelic or demonic powers that were thought to control the universe. The false teachers apparently assigned to them power independent of Christ (2:8) and held them to be objects of worship (2:18). *through Him and for Him*. The goal of creation is the redemption that Christ accomplishes (Rm 8:19–22).

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 1:17 *He is before all things*. "His beloved Son" (v 13) existed before the creation (Jn 1:1–2; 3:16). *in Him all things hold together*. Contradicts the heretical teaching that the creation is inherently evil. Jesus still cares very much about this created world, continues to sustain it, and will renew it.

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 1:18 "The pope is not, according to divine law or God's Word, the head of all Christendom. This name belongs to One only, whose name is Jesus Christ" (SA II IV 1). *body*. Indicates the intimate relationship between the Redeemer and the redeemed, similar to the "in Christ" terminology (v 22). This relationship is created in Baptism (2:11–13) and sustained in the Lord's Supper (1Co 10:16–17). See p 1965. *church*. See pp 1901–2. *firstborn from the dead*. Just as Jesus is the "firstborn of all creation" (v 15) and thus the cause of creation, so Jesus is also the cause of the resurrection.

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 1:19 *fullness of God*. The totality of God with all His divine attributes began to dwell in Christ at the moment of His conception by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary (cf 2:9).

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 1:20 *reconcile*. Sin alienated the creation from the Creator. Christ reconciles all things, i.e., He brings everything back to its proper order. *making peace*. Jesus' death makes peace possible by faith, but it is also His victory over all who continue to oppose Him. Cf Eph 2:14–16.

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 1:21 *you*. Believers who were alienated from God (Eph 4:18), which was manifested externally in evil deeds.

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 1:22 *reconciled*. The past tense indicates that this reconciliation is completed in Christ's work. Reconciliation is not something Christ has started and we need to complete. *in His body*. The false teachers taught that salvation came through knowledge. Paul emphasized that salvation came from God specifically through the incarnation, through Jesus' physical life and death (cf 1Tm 2:5; 1Jn 4:2). *holy*. See p 1902. *above reproach*. Unaccused, free of charges. Paul has in mind the whole picture of life with God: our justification (declared righteousness, forgiveness; Rm 3:23–26), our baptismal life on earth (sanctification; Rm 6–7), and our ultimate glorification (life in heaven; Rm 8).

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 1:23 *continue*. Faith in Christ must continue, just as it began—by hearing the Gospel (Jn 8:31–32; Rm 10:17). *proclaimed in all creation*. Jesus promised that the Gospel would be proclaimed to all the world (Mt 24:14). Earlier, Paul said the Gospel had come to all the world (v 6). These are figures of speech that show the universal scope of the Gospel. This was in contrast to the message of the false teachers, that their secret knowledge was for a select few. *minister*. Paul is completely bound in his service to the Gospel for the sake of the Church (v 25). See p 1903.

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 1:15–23 How can we sinners be sure that Christ's work reconciles us to God? Paul says we have this assurance because of who Christ is: the image of the invisible God, the Creator, the one who is preeminent over all things. What else would you look to for assurance? To an angel? To yourself? No, look to God Himself in Christ. • "Through Jesus' blood and merit I am at peace with God. What, then, can daunt my spirit, However dark my road? My courage shall not fail me, For God is on my side; Though hell itself assail me, Its rage I may deride." Amen. (*LSB* 746:1)

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 1:24 *sufferings … lacking in Christ's afflictions*. Christ's sufferings for our salvation are complete (vv 20, 22; 2:9–15). All Christians suffer with Christ (2Tm 3:12; Rm 8:17) as part of their service to Christ. Baptism connects us to Christ—both to His sufferings and to His salvation (Col 2:12; Rm 6:3–8; Php 3:10). Paul gladly accepted suffering for the sake of the Gospel (Php 2:17) and believed that it brought benefits to the Church (2Co 1:5–7; 4:10–12; Eph 3:13).

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 1:25 *minister*. See note, v 23. *stewardship*. Gk *oikonomia*, "management," "plan," from which Eng "economy" derives. Paul uses this word to describe God's overall plan of salvation as He guides history (Eph 1:10) and also the management plan entrusted to individual ministers of the Word (1Co 9:17). *to make the word of God fully known*. Could refer to the completeness of the Gospel message in contrast to the claim of the false teachers, who taught that it was deficient. Cf Mt 28:19–20.

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 1:26 *mystery*. See p 1903. *saints*. See p 1904.

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 1:27 *Christ in you*. The mystery is not only about Christ coming to this world but also about Christ coming personally to each individual. Through Word and Sacrament, Christ is in us (Rm 8:10). *glory*. See p 1902.

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 1:28 *warning … teaching*. Indicates the Law and Gospel outline of the Christian message. See pp xxxi–xxxii. *mature*. Lit, "perfect, complete." Only by virtue of our Baptism into Christ can we be what God wants us to be.

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 1:29 *His energy*. Lit, "His working that is working in me." Cf 2:12; Php 4:13. The power for faith and salvation, as well as the power to live by faith, comes from God.

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 1:24–29 All people suffer because of the fallen nature of the world. But Christians are called to a special form of suffering for the sake of Christ: rejection, ridicule, and persecution. No one likes suffering. Nevertheless, the tears of Christian suffering reflect the glory of the cross of Christ. Remember how God used Christ's sufferings to save us. He will also use our sufferings to bring Christ's saving work to others who have no hope. • "In suff'ring be Thy love my peace, In weakness be Thy love my pow'r; And when the storms of life shall cease, O Jesus, in that final hour, Be Thou my rod and staff and guide, And draw me safely to Thy side!" Amen. (*LSB* 683:4)

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 2:1 *struggle*. Gk *agona*; Eng "agony." Paul shows great pastoral concern for their spiritual welfare. Theological errors are not to be overlooked or expected to go away on their own. *Laodicea*. C 11 mi from Colossae. See map, p 2197.

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 2:2 *hearts … knit together in love*. Can also mean "instructed in love." Our love and unity are not produced by our own efforts, but they are gifts generated by God's love in Jesus. *assurance*.

Based on the power of God's true Word (1Th 1:5). "He has overwhelmed us with unspeakable, eternal treasures by His Son and the Holy Spirit" (LC II 24).

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 2:3 *hidden*. Paul challenges the false teachers, who claimed special insight into the mysteries of God. All that we can and need to know about God is ultimately revealed to us in Christ.

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 2:4 *no one*. Paul leaves no room for error, because it is a persuasive deception that will lead people away from Christ.

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 2:5 *with you in spirit*. The Holy Spirit ministers to our spirits through the Word. Both Paul and his hearers are united by their mutual attention to God's Word in Christ. *good order … firmness*. Terms with military associations. These are God's gifts to resist incursions of false teachings in the Church.

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 2:1–5 Whatever this false teaching is that has infiltrated the Colossian Church, it is not the teaching of Jesus Christ. We, too, can be drawn away from Christ by all sorts of attractive thoughts and words. Eventually, Christless or Christ-lite teachings will separate us from God and from one another. But the treasures of His wisdom and knowledge overcome all temptation and defeat all deception. His words will always encourage us and strengthen us in faith and love. • Grant, O Lord, that Your Word would be taught in its truth and purity in Christ, and protect us from those who would do otherwise. Amen.

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 2:6 *Christ Jesus the Lord*. Recalls the earliest Christian baptismal confession (Rm 10:9; 1Co 12:3). *walk in Him*. See p 1904.

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 2:7 *rooted and built up*. Both metaphors, one from nature and the other from construction, point to something that is firm and enduring. God's Word makes this way of life in Christ possible.

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 2:8 *philosophy and empty deceit*. Philosophy can help us with many questions but is powerless to explain God adequately. If we think it can, we are deceived. *human tradition*. As opposed to the "tradition" of Christian doctrine (1Co 11:2). See p 1904. *elemental spirits*. False teachings that are constructed from the basic elements of the fallen universe. Cf Gal 4:3, 9. In Col, they are closely related to fallen angels (vv 18–20).

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 2:9 *fullness*. A technical term among the Colossian heretics and later Gnosticism for a number of pseudo-divine

beings that supposedly emanated from God (angels, rulers, authorities, thrones, dominions). Against this, Paul says everything that is of God dwells in Christ. We confess this in the Nicene Creed: "[Christ is] very God of very God, … being of one substance with the Father." "In this personal union the two natures have such a grand, intimate, indescribable communion that even the angels are astonished by it" (FC SD VIII 30). *bodily*. Jesus of Nazareth is God in the flesh. Paul rejects the heretics' principle that the flesh is evil.

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 2:10 *filled*. Completed. Christians have everything they need in Christ. See Ap V 58.

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 2:11 *circumcision*. A sign of God's covenant establishing the people of Israel (Gn 17:9; see p 127). But in Christ the purpose of the covenant with Abraham (to be a blessing to all the families of the earth; Gn 12:3) was fulfilled. The new covenant is established with a different circumcision, Baptism. Infant Baptism is also supported by this verse, since the Israelite circumcision was performed on the eighth day after birth. Lutherans reject the teaching that God regards children as innocent before the application of the Word and Baptism (FC Ep XII 6). See p 1920.

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 2:12 *buried … raised*. The same powerful working of God that raised Jesus from the dead is at work in Baptism. Baptism puts to death the sinful nature (Rm 6:6) and resurrects us in faith to a new life in Christ. Baptism is not just a symbol of what God does through the teaching of God's Word. It is water combined with God's Word that makes it a washing of regeneration (Ti 3:5–7). "When Paul describes conversion or renewal, he almost everywhere designates these two parts, *making dead and making alive*" (Ap XIIA 46). "Faith is powerful through the power of God and overcomes death" (Ap V 129).

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 2:13 *dead*. All people are born spiritually dead. Though they bear God's image, they are separated from Him. *forgiven us*. Trespasses bury those who are spiritually dead. But those who are made alive in faith are delivered from the condemnation of their trespasses.

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 2:14 *record … legal demands*. The debtor kept a handwritten bill of indebtedness; in this case, it is the record of all our violations of God's Law. This record is wiped away by Jesus' death on the cross.

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 2:15 *rulers and authorities*. These are created by God and yet often corrupted by sin. They can be personal (such as angels) or impersonal (such as governments, economic systems, educational institutions). They might also be demons masquerading as idols or false gods. Cf 1:16; 2:9. *triumphing*. Paul had in mind the Roman custom of stripping defeated armies of weapons and armor and parading them in a triumphal procession. Christians should not allow these "rulers" either to tempt or threaten them.

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 2:6–15 Seeking guidance and security from creation rather than from the Creator will end in disaster. We must not forget that all creation has been corrupted by sin. Created things, as good as they may be, are no substitute for God. He gives us the forgiveness of sins in Jesus Christ. In Baptism, we have been raised up as a new creation. • "In Thee all fullness dwelleth, All grace and pow'r divine; The glory that excelleth, O Son of God, is Thine. We worship Thee, we bless Thee, To Thee, O Christ, we sing; We praise Thee and confess Thee, Our glorious Lord and King." Amen. (*LSB* 527:3)

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 2:16 Though it is difficult to understand exactly what the Colossian heretics demanded, we can see that their demands included dietary rules (v 21), ascetic practices (vv 18, 23), and adherence to a cultic calendar (v 16). *Sabbath*. Indicates that there was a Jewish element associated with the Colossian heresy.

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 2:17 *shadow of the things to come*. Paul taught that OT events, practices, and messages have their full meaning and realization in Christ (Rm 15:4; 1Co 10:1–11). An engaged couple who must spend time apart might cherish each other's photo. But after they are married and living together, it would be odd to devote the same attention to the photo. "Scripture itself has abolished the Sabbath Day. It teaches that since the Gospel has been revealed, all the ceremonies of Moses can be omitted" (AC XXVIII 59). *substance*. Lit, "body" (see previous uses of the term at 1:22; 2:9, 11), which refers to Christ's incarnation.

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 2:18 *disqualify*. Or, "cheat." *asceticism*. False humility or abasement. "When people believe that they are pure and righteous because of such hypocrisy, they hinder the knowledge of Christ and the knowledge of God's gifts and commandments" (Ap XXIII 46). *going on in detail*. Paul warns believers not to be deceived by those who

claim special revelation. If it is not truly centered in Christ, it is not of the Holy Spirit; rather, it comes from the sinful nature.

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 2:19 *Head*. Christ is the head of all creation as well as the cause of our salvation (Eph 5:23). *growth*. All who are in Christ are growing, not because of their own self-imposed religious exercises, but because of the Word of Christ (see note, 1:6). They grow according to the growth God gives.

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 2:20–23 "Paul says that traditions do not help with respect to eternal righteousness and eternal life, because food, drink, clothing, and the like are things that perish through use. Eternal life is worked in the heart by eternal things, that is, by God's Word and the Holy Spirit" (Ap XXVIII 10).

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 2:20 *elemental spirits*. See note, v 8. *regulations*. Man-made regulations of false religion have nothing to do with Christ and the forgiveness of sins.

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 2:21 *handle … taste … touch*. Those who seek salvation through their own efforts gravitate toward external exercises that are easily seen and measurable.

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 2:22 *perish as they are used*. A religion constructed from decaying elements of this world is itself perishing. *human precepts*. See note, v 20.

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 2:23 *self-made religion*. Self-imposed, external efforts (v 21) are vital to those whose religion is more about them than it is about God. *no value*. Desires of the flesh cannot be overcome by self-denial. They can only be overcome by God's grace in Christ.

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 2:16–23 The Christian faith will not be replaced by man-made religion. Over the centuries, many have claimed to have found a substitute for Christ and His forgiveness: e.g., rationalism, evolutionism, socialism, and postmodernism. Sometimes these ideas are very impressive, and the lifestyles they conceive become extremely popular. But St Paul wrote, "Let God be true though every one were a liar" (Rm 3:4). These waves of man-made religion always end up breaking apart upon God's truth in Jesus, who "is the same yesterday and today and forever" (Heb 13:8). • Thank You, Lord, for granting me faith and preserving my faith with the wisdom and substance of Christ. Amen.

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 3:1–17 Paul begins the practical section of his Letter, based on the doctrinal section—esp Baptism (chs 1–2).

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 3:1 *raised with Christ*. Paul uses the same language as in 2:12 to show that Baptism is a means to salvation and to the Christian life. *things that are above*. Not spatially but spiritually. Jesus has ascended to His rightful place, from which He governs all things (Jn 8:23). *right hand*. Symbol of power (Ps 110; Mt 22:44; see p 843).
COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 3:2 *on earth*. Paul does not despise the things of the earth (1Tm 4:4). However, he realizes that this fallen world should not be our focus.
COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 3:3 *hidden*. See note, Rm 6:4.
COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 3:4 *you also will appear with Him in glory*. Our eternal life, which we possess now through Baptism, will be fully experienced in heaven. Through Christ, we are participants in God's glory (Jn 1:14; Php 3:21).
COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 3:5 *Put to death*. Paul calls Christians to act on the basis of their gift of faith (Rm 6:11). *covetousness, which is idolatry*. "Whatever you set your heart on and put your trust in is truly your god" (LC I 3; cf Mt 6:24).
COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 3:6 *wrath of God is coming*. God's attitude toward sin (Rm 1:18) and unbelief (Jn 3:36) will be fully revealed in the final judgment.
COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 3:8 *put them all away*. Lit, "put off," as a person might "put off" dirty clothing. For Baptism, people wore special garments. The same imagery is found in Is 52:1; 61:10; Zec 3:1–5.
COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 3:9 *old self*. See ESV note; contrast between the "old man" and "new man" is common in Christian writings. The old self is the sinful corruption of our nature inherited from Adam.
COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 3:10 *new self*. In Baptism, we put on Christ (Gal 3:27) and enter into a saving relationship with Christ. *image of its creator*. Our new relationship of faith restores the image of God that was lost because of sin. The image consists in knowledge of God and holiness. "The image of God is the knowledge of God, righteousness, and truth. Lombard is not afraid to say that original righteousness 'is the very likeness to God which God implanted in man' " (Ap II 20–21).
COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 3:11 In Christ, distinctions are removed, whether national (Greek and Jew), social (barbarian and Scythian), or economic (slave and free). *Scythian*. From present-day southern Russia, they were thought to be the most barbaric of the barbarians.

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 3:12 *Put on*. See note, v 10. Virtues are not ours to accomplish but are gifts provided by God. They are Christ's virtues. *chosen ones*. Israel was so designated (Dt 4:37). Cf 1Pt 2:9.
COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 3:13 *bearing with one another*. As we each struggle with our own temptations, so we understand the struggles of others. *you also must forgive*. Echoes the Fifth Petition of the Lord's Prayer (Mt 6:12); see SC, p xxxviii. Forgiving others shows that we truly believe God has forgiven us.
COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 3:14 *love*. Cf 1Co 13:13. *harmony*. Lit, "the bond of perfection." Like a belt, it holds all things together.
COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 3:15 *rule*. Act as an umpire.
COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 3:16 *Let the word of Christ dwell*. Corresponds perfectly with Paul's goal in 1:28. *singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs*. Includes OT psalms as well as NT hymns (1:15–20; Eph 5:14; Php 2:6–11; 1Tm 3:16). Songs conveyed some of the Bible's greatest teachings. Great expressions of joy and thankfulness naturally flow from the rich doctrine of Christ. "Certainly you will not release a stronger incense or other repellant against the devil than to be engaged by God's commandments and words, and speak, sing, or think them" (LC Longer Preface 10).
COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 3:17 *everything*. There is no division between the sacred and the secular concerning what a Christian says and does. Christ should accompany us in all facets of life. *giving thanks*. Paul has mentioned thankfulness three times in three verses.
COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 3:1–17 What is the good life? Prosperity, popularity, pleasure? No, it is the life we receive from Jesus, including gifts that we cannot make or purchase: forgiveness, love, peace, and thankfulness. Jesus' life fills us with virtues rather than vices and enables us to be a blessing rather than a bane to others. • "Before the dawning day Let sin's dark deeds be gone, The sinful self be put away, The new self now put on." Amen. (*LSB* 331:5)
COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 3:18–4:1 In this section, Paul applies to our specific vocations the general principles of Christ-centered living discussed above.
COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 3:18 *submit*. See p 1904. As a boy, Jesus submitted to His parents (Lk 2:51). Working together in harmony

necessitates that one leads and another follows, much like members of an athletic team do to achieve a united success.
COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 3:19 *love*. Husbands must lead the way in love, just as Jesus leads the way in His love for us (cf Eph 5:25).
COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 3:20 *Children*. This Letter was to be read in public worship. By speaking directly to children, Paul points out that children were considered members of the Church and part of worship. *everything*. Children are to obey unless directed to do something sinful (Ac 5:29).
COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 3:21 *provoke*. Lit, "embitter." Discipline and encouragement, Law and Gospel, are necessary when raising children. See p 2025.
COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 3:22 *Slaves*. Paul does not condone slavery or advocate revolt. Onesimus, a slave, assisted in delivering this Letter (4:9). He and Tychicus also delivered a Letter to Onesimus's master, Philemon, who lived in Colossae. See p 101. *eye-service*. Service rendered merely for those who are looking.
COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 3:23 *heartily*. Lit, "from the soul."
COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 3:24 *inheritance*. See p 1903. Whatever unfairness we may experience on earth is nothing compared to our inheritance in Christ (1:12).
COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 3:25 *no partiality*. That God judges justly and shows no favoritism is a warning to all (Jn 5:30).
COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 4:1 *slaves*. See note, 3:22.
COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 3:18–4:1 People have to work together. But the heart of the old nature is to seek personal advantage, which causes frustration, resentment, and violence. Paul urges us to resist this temptation, no matter what our calling in life may be. Resistance becomes a reality when we live by faith "in the Son of God, who loved [us] and gave Himself for [us]" (Gal 2:20). In Christ, we know that we will not miss out on anything. • Lord, lead us to spend our lives in loving service for You and others, for You have so dearly loved us. Amen.
COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 4:2 *watchful*. The Letter began with Paul's emphasis on prayer (1:3, 9).
COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 4:3 *open to us a door*. God provides opportunities to speak His saving Word and gives us the courage to do so

(1Co 16:9). *mystery*. See note, 1:27. *prison*. In 2Co 11:23, Paul speaks of frequent imprisonments. See p 2042.
COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 4:4 *make it clear*. Also translated "manifest" or "to make known." The Law is already made plain (Rm 1:18–20), but the Gospel needs to be presented in Christ (Rm 3:21–26). We clarify the mystery of the Gospel by simply presenting it in its purity so that all people can understand it.
COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 4:5 *outsiders*. Our life before unbelievers should put a favorable light on the Word we proclaim (Jas 3:13).
COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 4:6 *seasoned with salt*. We should strive for sincerity, tact, and eloquence so that our conversational style is always tasteful. For a good example, see Paul's Letter to Philemon.
COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 4:7 *Tychicus*. See note, Eph 6:21.
COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 4:8 Good ministry begins when we listen first to the people we serve and when we apply the appropriate Word of God to bring comfort.
COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 4:9 *Onesimus*. A runaway slave from Colossae who came to Paul and was converted. Although Onesimus was a faithful Christian, Paul did not describe him as a Gospel worker because his availability for that service was still to be determined by Philemon, his master. See p 2094.
COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 4:10 *my fellow prisoner*. Or, "my fellow prisoner of war." Aristarchus was from Thessalonica, and he accompanied Paul to Ephesus, to Jerusalem, and to Rome. He was probably with Paul while he was under house arrest and attended to his needs. Paul's military language suggests that he viewed his ministry as a battle against evil (cf Php 2:25). *Mark … Barnabas*. Mark's full name was John Mark. That he was a cousin to Barnabas explains why Barnabas supported Mark during the second missionary journey when Paul and Barnabas disputed over Mark's service (Ac 15:37–40). It is encouraging to know that Paul and Mark were later reconciled.
COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 4:11 *Jesus who is called Justus*. This disciple is mentioned only here in the NT. "Jesus" was a common Jewish name. See p 2098. *men of the circumcision*. Jews. Epaphras, Luke, and Demas (vv 12–14) were Gentiles.
COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 4:12 *Epaphras*. Most likely the founding pastor of the Church at Colossae (cf 1:7). *one of you*. A Colossian.

struggling … in his prayers. His intercessory prayers are conspicuous and commendable. Prayer is not always relaxing or meditative, as the Psalms attest. *mature*. The focus of his prayers indicates the overall message to the Colossians—that they would remain steadfast and grow to maturity in Christ.

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 4:13 *Laodicea … Hierapolis*. Paul's concern extended to others in the Lycus Valley. He probably also served as pastor in these churches. (See note, 1:2; see also map, p 2197.)

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 4:14 *Luke*. Only here is Luke described as a physician, but there are indications of his medical background in his writings (e.g., Lk 22:44; Ac 28:8). Early tradition holds that he was a physician from Antioch in Syria (e.g., *NPNF* 2 1:136). *Demas*. He later turned away from the faith.

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 4:15 *Nympha … church in her house*. Some texts read "his house." The name Nympha can be either feminine or masculine. There is no way to be certain of gender, but we can be certain of this person's generosity and support for the Gospel. Cf Ac 2:46.

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 4:16 *read among you*. Read publicly (Lk 4:16; Ac 13:27). Paul places his own Letters and teaching on par with the OT Scriptures. *the letter from Laodicea*. A lost Letter by Paul or the general Letter to the Ephesians. See pp 2014–15.

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 4:17 *Archippus*. Called Paul's "fellow soldier" (Phm 2). Some think he was Philemon's son. *ministry that you have received in the Lord*. We cannot be sure of the nature of this ministry. Paul's encouragement demonstrates that ministry belongs not to us but to Christ, who distributes gifts of service and callings.

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 4:18 *my own hand*. Paul's mark of authenticity (cf Gal 6:11; 2Th 3:17). *my chains*. Although Paul often expressed hope and joy in the face of persecution, he needed always the prayers and encouragement of his fellow believers. *Grace*. Paul concluded all his Letters by directing readers to God's grace.

COLOSSIANS—NOTE ON 4:2–18 Paul presents to the Colossians and to us a beautiful explanation of Christ's person and work. We do not need to turn to ourselves, to angels, or to anything else. Jesus is our true God and Savior. This "grocery list" of concluding instructions shows that the Gospel is not an abstract idea. It is the essential truth that transforms individual lives, such as those mentioned here, and continues to transform one person

after another. • Dear Father, thank You for the individuals You use to proclaim to me the Gospel of forgiveness in Christ. Continue to use me to bring that saving message to my relatives, friends, and acquaintances. Amen.

1 Thessalonians

1 Thessalonians 1 | 1 Thessalonians 2 | 1 Thessalonians 3 | 1 Thessalonians 4 | 1 Thessalonians 5

- Introduction to 1 Thessalonians
  - Overview
  - Reading 1 Thessalonians
  - Luther on 1 Thessalonians
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

Greeting

1 [1]†† Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy,

To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:

Grace to you and peace.

The Thessalonians' Faith and Example

2 ‡† We give thanks to God always for all of you, constantly[1] mentioning
you in our prayers, 3 †remembering before our God and Father your work of
faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.
4 †For we know, brothers[2] loved by God, that he has chosen you, 5 †because
our gospel came to you not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy
Spirit and with full conviction. You know what kind of men we proved to
be among you for your sake. 6 †And you became imitators of us and of the
Lord, for you received the word in much affliction, with the joy of the Holy
Spirit, 7 †so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia
and in Achaia. 8 †For not only has the word of the Lord sounded forth from
you in Macedonia and Achaia, but your faith in God has gone forth
everywhere, so that we need not say anything. 9 †For they themselves report
concerning us the kind of reception we had among you, and how you turned
to God from idols to serve the living and true God, 10 †and to wait for his
Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us
from the wrath to come.

Paul's Ministry to the Thessalonians

2 [1]‡†For you yourselves know, brothers,[1] that our coming to you was
not in vain. [2]† But though we had already suffered and been shamefully
treated at Philippi, as you know, we had boldness in our God to declare to
you the gospel of God in the midst of much conflict. [3]†For our appeal does
not spring from error or impurity or any attempt to deceive, [4]†but just as we
have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak,
not to please man, but to please God who tests our hearts. [5]‡ For we never
came with words of flattery,[2] as you know, nor with a pretext for greed—
God is witness. [6]† Nor did we seek glory from people, whether from you or
from others, though we could have made demands as apostles of Christ.
[7]†But we were gentle[3] among you, like a nursing mother taking care of her
own children. [8]†So, being affectionately desirous of you, we were ready to
share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because
you had become very dear to us.

[9]†For you remember, brothers, our labor and toil: we worked night and
day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, while we proclaimed to
you the gospel of God. [10]†You are witnesses, and God also, how holy and
righteous and blameless was our conduct toward you believers. [11]†For you
know how, like a father with his children, [12]†we exhorted each one of you
and encouraged you and charged you to walk in a manner worthy of God,
who calls you into his own kingdom and glory.

[13]†And we also thank God constantly[4] for this, that when you received
the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word
of men but as what it really is, the word of God, which is at work in you
believers. [14]†For you, brothers, became imitators of the churches of God in
Christ Jesus that are in Judea. For you suffered the same things from your
own countrymen as they did from the Jews, [15] who killed both the Lord
Jesus and the prophets, and drove us out, and displease God and oppose all
mankind [16]† by hindering us from speaking to the Gentiles that they might
be saved—so as always to fill up the measure of their sins. But God's wrath
has come upon them at last![1]

Paul’s Longing to See Them Again

17 ‡†But since we were torn away from you, brothers, for a short time, in
person not in heart, we endeavored the more eagerly and with great desire
to see you face to face, 18 †because we wanted to come to you—I, Paul,
again and again—but Satan hindered us. 19 †For what is our hope or joy or
crown of boasting before our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it not you? 20 †For
you are our glory and joy.

3 1 †Therefore when we could bear it no longer, we were willing to be
left behind at Athens alone, 2 †and we sent Timothy, our brother and God’s
coworker[2] in the gospel of Christ, to establish and exhort you in your faith,
3 †that no one be moved by these afflictions. For you yourselves know that
we are destined for this. 4 †For when we were with you, we kept telling you
beforehand that we were to suffer affliction, just as it has come to pass, and
just as you know. 5 †For this reason, when I could bear it no longer, I sent to
learn about your faith, for fear that somehow the tempter had tempted you
and our labor would be in vain.

Timothy's Encouraging Report

6 ‡ † But now that Timothy has come to us from you, and has brought us
the good news of your faith and love and reported that you always
remember us kindly and long to see us, as we long to see you— 7 † for this
reason, brothers,[3] in all our distress and affliction we have been comforted
about you through your faith. 8 † For now we live, if you are standing fast in
the Lord. 9 † For what thanksgiving can we return to God for you, for all the
joy that we feel for your sake before our God, 10 † as we pray most earnestly
night and day that we may see you face to face and supply what is lacking
in your faith?

11 ‡ † Now may our God and Father himself, and our Lord Jesus, direct our
way to you, 12 † and may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for
one another and for all, as we do for you, 13 † so that he may establish your
hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father, at the coming of
our Lord Jesus with all his saints.

A Life Pleasing to God

4 [1]†† Finally, then, brothers,[1] we ask and urge you in the Lord Jesus,
that as you received from us how you ought to walk and to please God, just
as you are doing, that you do so more and more. [2]† For you know what
instructions we gave you through the Lord Jesus. [3]† For this is the will of
God, your sanctification:[2] that you abstain from sexual immorality; [4]† that
each one of you know how to control his own body[3] in holiness and honor,
[5]† not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God; [6]† that
no one transgress and wrong his brother in this matter, because the Lord is
an avenger in all these things, as we told you beforehand and solemnly
warned you. [7]† For God has not called us for impurity, but in holiness.
[8]† Therefore whoever disregards this, disregards not man but God, who
gives his Holy Spirit to you.

[9]† Now concerning brotherly love you have no need for anyone to write to
you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love one another, [10]† for
that indeed is what you are doing to all the brothers throughout Macedonia.
But we urge you, brothers, to do this more and more, [11]† and to aspire to live
quietly, and to mind your own affairs, and to work with your hands, as we
instructed you, [12]† so that you may walk properly before outsiders and be
dependent on no one.

The Coming of the Lord

13 ††But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who
are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. 14 †For
since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God
will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. 15 †For this we declare to
you by a word from the Lord,[1] that we who are alive, who are left until the
coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. 16 †For
the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the
voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the
dead in Christ will rise first. 17 †Then we who are alive, who are left, will be
caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and
so we will always be with the Lord. 18 †Therefore encourage one another
with these words.

The Day of the Lord

5 [1]‡†Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers,[2] you have
no need to have anything written to you. [2]† For you yourselves are fully
aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. [3]†While
people are saying, “There is peace and security,” then sudden destruction
will come upon them as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and they
will not escape. [4]‡But you are not in darkness, brothers, for that day to
surprise you like a thief. [5]For you are all children[3] of light, children of the
day. We are not of the night or of the darkness. [6]†So then let us not sleep, as
others do, but let us keep awake and be sober. [7]†For those who sleep, sleep
at night, and those who get drunk, are drunk at night. [8]†But since we belong
to the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love,
and for a helmet the hope of salvation. [9]†For God has not destined us for
wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, [10]† who died
for us so that whether we are awake or asleep we might live with him.
[11]†Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you
are doing.

Final Instructions and Benediction

12 ‡ † We ask you, brothers, to respect those who labor among you and are
over you in the Lord and admonish you, 13 † and to esteem them very highly
in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves. 14 † And we
urge you, brothers, admonish the idle,[1] encourage the fainthearted, help the
weak, be patient with them all. 15 † See that no one repays anyone evil for
evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to everyone. 16 ‡ †
Rejoice always, 17 † pray without ceasing, 18 † give thanks in all
circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. 19 † Do not
quench the Spirit. 20 † Do not despise prophecies, 21 † but test everything; hold
fast what is good. 22 † Abstain from every form of evil.

23 † Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may
your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our
Lord Jesus Christ. 24 † He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.

25 † Brothers, pray for us.

26 † Greet all the brothers with a holy kiss.

27 † I put you under oath before the Lord to have this letter read to all the
brothers.

28 † The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

1 Thessalonians

OVERVIEW

Author
Paul the apostle

Date
c AD 51

Places
Thessalonica; Macedonia; Achaia; Philippi; Athens

People
Paul; Silvanus; Timothy; Thessalonian Church; persecutors

Purpose
To restore relations with the Thessalonian Christians after persecution separated Paul and his colleagues from the congregation

Law Themes
Imitation; affliction; parental care; God's Word at work; God's wrath; sanctification; idleness

Gospel Themes
The Gospel message; deliverance; God's Word at work; established blameless; resurrection of the dead; salvation; complete sanctification; God's faithfulness

Memory Verses
The resurrection of the dead (4:16–18); blameless in Christ (5:23–24)

Introduction to 1 Thessalonians

Reading 1 Thessalonians

Just inside the door to the women's quarters, a six-year-old boy stands listening to the instruction and encouragement of his father, who stands just outside. As the boy fidgets, the father urges him to stand straight and walk with honor. His father, as head of the household, has arranged for the boy's education and introduces him to a slave who will escort the boy to school. Peeking back into the house, the boy sees his mother nursing his three-year-old sister, even though the family could afford a wet nurse. His mother smiles and nods affectionately. The boy knows that, after stepping through this doorway, he must live a new life and learn from his father and his teacher.

When St Paul describes his apostolic care for the new congregation at Thessalonica, he uses expressions of parental love (2:7–8, 11–12). Paul feels the strain of separation from his "children" in the Lord as the result of persecution, which has driven him from Thessalonica (Ac 17). As a result, Paul writes an earnest, fatherly letter of instruction that beautifully illustrates Law discipline and Gospel care.

Luther on 1 Thessalonians

St. Paul writes out of especial love and apostolic solicitude. For in the first two chapters he praises them because they received the gospel from him with such earnestness that they remained steadfast in it despite suffering and persecution, and became a beautiful example of faith to all congregations everywhere, and suffered persecution from their own kinsfolk like Christ and his apostles did from the Jews—as St. Paul by way of example had himself also suffered and led a holy life when he was with them. For this he thanks God, that his gospel had borne such fruit among them.

In chapter 3 he shows his care and solicitude that this labor of his and their praiseworthy beginning not be brought to nothing by the devil and his apostles through the doctrines of men. For this reason he sent Timothy to them beforehand to make sure about this. And he thanks God that things were still right among them and hopes that they continue to increase.

In chapter 4 he exhorts them to guard against sin and to do good to one another. He also answers a question which they had presented to him through Timothy concerning the resurrection of the dead, whether all would rise at once, or whether some after others.

In chapter 5 he writes of the Last Day, how it shall come suddenly and quickly. He gives them some good directions for governing other people and tells them what attitude they are to take toward the lives and teachings of others. (AE 35:386–87)

Challenges for Readers

Paul's Authorship. Some critics argue that 1 Thessalonians is composed of fragments from Paul's genuine Letters. In particular, they regard 2:14–16 as a later insertion because it refers to persecution of Christians in Judea. Note that, although the passage does refer to persecution in Judea, it describes the events of Ac 17:5–13. With this in view, there is no reason to regard the passage as an insertion.

Intermediate State. An important description for understanding the state of believers after death and before the resurrection of the body is given in 4:13–15. Here, Paul refers to the state of death as sleep, a common expression for death that does not imply the doctrine of "soul sleep" (unconsciousness). The dead in Christ enjoy the rest, comfort, and bliss of God's presence, though they will experience the fullness of eternal life only after the resurrection of their bodies on the Last Day.

The "Rapture" Doctrine. Some evangelicals regard 4:17 as a description of a secret return of Christ, which will take place before Christ's second coming in judgment (see note, 4:17). The passage actually describes the manner of Christ's return in judgment, when He will raise the dead. The events accord with the Creed's order and summary, "He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in … the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting."

Blessings for Readers

Though Paul does describe the events of the Last Day, in response to confusion on this subject, he does not make the Last Day the overarching emphasis of the Letter. He calls the believers to live in the Gospel and to fulfill their calling in the joy of the Holy Spirit. He leaves us an example to follow: know the truths about Christ's return but do not obsess about them.

As you read 1 Thessalonians, reflect on Paul's pastoral concern for these new believers and also his thoughtful and comforting instruction. He shows great concern for their care and establishment in the Gospel, which is also what we need most today.

OUTLINE

I. The Greeting (1:1)
II. Thanksgiving for the Congregation at Thessalonica (1:2–3:13)
   A. The Conversion of the Thessalonians (1:2–10)
   B. Paul's Ministry in Thessalonica (2:1–12)
   C. The Word under Persecution (2:13–16)
   D. Separations and Reestablishing Contact (2:17–3:10)
   E. Prayer (3:11–13)
III. Exhortations (4:1–5:22)
   A. Introduction (4:1–2)
   B. On Marriage (4:3–8)
   C. On Brotherly Love and Self-Sufficiency (4:9–12)
   D. On Clarifying Concerns about the End Times (4:13–5:11)
      1. Those who have fallen asleep (4:13–18)
      2. The coming of the day of the Lord (5:1–11)
   E. On Life in the Congregation (5:12–22)
      1. Pastoral care among the congregation (5:12–15)
      2. The evaluation of prophecy (5:16–22)
IV. Conclusion (5:23–28)

Footnotes

Footnotes for 1 Thessalonians, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:2 Or *without ceasing*
- [2] 1:4 Or *brothers and sisters*. The plural Greek word *adelphoi* (translated "brothers") refers to siblings in a family. In New Testament usage, depending on the context, *adelphoi* may refer either to men or to both men and women who are siblings (brothers and sisters) in God's family, the church

Footnotes for 1 Thessalonians, Chapter 2

- [1] 2:1 Or *brothers and sisters*; also verses 9, 14, 17
- [2] 2:5 Or *with a flattering speech*
- [3] 2:7 Some manuscripts *infants*
- [4] 2:13 Or *without ceasing*
- [1] 2:16 Or *completely*, or *forever*

Footnotes for 1 Thessalonians, Chapter 3

- [2] 3:2 Some manuscripts *servant*
- [3] 3:7 Or *brothers and sisters*

Footnotes for 1 Thessalonians, Chapter 4

- [1] 4:1 Or *brothers and sisters*; also verses 10, 13

- [2] 4:3 Or *your holiness*
- [3] 4:4 Or *how to take a wife for himself*; Greek *how to possess his own vessel*
- [1] 4:15 Or *by the word of the Lord*

Footnotes for 1 Thessalonians, Chapter 5

- [2] 5:1 Or *brothers and sisters*; also verses 4, 12, 14, 25, 26, 27
- [3] 5:5 Or *sons*; twice in this verse
- [1] 5:14 Or *disorderly*, or *undisciplined*

Study Notes

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 1:1 *Silvanus, and Timothy*. Trusted junior co-workers who accompanied St Paul in the proclamation of the Gospel. Though separated for a while, they were now reunited with Paul in Corinth. They had visited with him in Thessalonica in AD 49 (cf Ac 17:1–14). Both were selected by Paul for his second missionary journey (Ac 15:36–40; 16:1–5). *Silvanus*. Aka Silas; leading member of the Church in Jerusalem; proclaimer of God's Word. After the Jerusalem Council, he accompanied Paul to Antioch to deliver the Council's decision (Ac 15, esp v 22). During their travels together, they met Timothy in Lystra. *Timothy*. Son of a Greek man and a Jewish woman (cf Ac 16:1). His mother had become a Christian a few years earlier when Paul and Barnabas preached in the city. *THESSALONIANS*. In the first century, Thessalonica was the capital city of the province of Macedonia and the largest city on the Greek Peninsula. Today it is called Thessaloniki (or Salonika) and is still located on the Thermaic Gulf in Greece. See map, p 1886. *God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ*. The close association of Jesus with the Father shows the highest place given to Him. *Lord*. Gk *kyrios*, translation of the divine name Yahweh. See p 2098. It was the name given to Jesus Christ to show His divinity. The omission of the Holy Spirit here does not mean that the Church existed without the Holy Spirit. Wherever God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ exist, the Holy Spirit is also there.

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 1:1 As a good shepherd, Paul wants to keep in touch with the flock of God. Labor in God's kingdom is not a one-man job. We must not forget to visit and follow up with those who are in Christ Jesus. We must work in God's kingdom by joining hands with other brothers and sisters. God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ sustain the Church and carry it in the palm of Their hand. • Lord, thank You that the Church is rooted in You and not in feeble human beings. As feeble as we are, help us to join hands, as did Paul, Silas, and Timothy, and labor in Your kingdom. Amen.

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 1:2 *thanks*. For the fruit of faith God produced in the lives of the THESSALONIANS. *constantly mentioning*. Either as often as they prayed or contemplated God.

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 1:3 *faith … love … hope*. Gifts of the Holy Spirit that remain with God's people when all others vanish. The greatest of all is love (1Co 13). Though listed separately, the three are connected.

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 1:4 *brothers*. Refers to God's family, the Church. See p 1901. *chosen*. Their faith and love show that God chose the THESSALONIANS. Paul does not speak of election in the abstract but notes its concrete effects in Christians' daily lives due to the Gospel's impact.

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 1:5 *our gospel*. A shared Gospel. Paul received it from the Lord, but it is the same message preached by the other apostles (1Co 15:3; Gal 2:9). *power*. The good news of our Lord Jesus Christ always has power to change lives (Heb 4:12). The Word's power may be demonstrated in visible, supernatural miracles in areas that have not been reached with the Gospel. *Holy Spirit*. Jesus said the Spirit would testify about Him. The Spirit is always present when the Gospel is preached (cf Jn 15:26). *full conviction*. Not delivered with doubt or uncertainty. Full clarity, understanding, and certainty come from the Holy Spirit, who persuades and convicts on the basis of Christ's accomplished work.

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 1:6 *imitators*. See note, 2:14. The THESSALONIANS followed Christ's and the apostles' examples by suffering persecution gladly for the sake of their faith in the Gospel (1Co 11:1). *affliction*. Trouble or hardship that Christians may have due to their faith and witness. Some of Paul's hosts in Thessalonica were definitely persecuted by their fellow countrymen (Ac 17:1–9).

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 1:7 Rome had divided the Greek Peninsula into two provinces, Macedonia (north) and Achaia (south). See map, p 1886.

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 1:8 This is not flattery (cf 2:5–6). As in the popular saying "Actions speak louder than words," news of the THESSALONIANS' faith, love, and hope rooted in the Gospel spread far wider than their immediate environment. The THESSALONIANS functioned as a missionary church by proclaiming the Gospel they received by word and life.

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 1:9 *from idols*. Before the Gospel came to them, the Gentile THESSALONIANS worshiped idols. Forsaking idol

worship and coming to the true and living God was important evidence of true conversion in the first century.

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 1:10 *to wait for His Son*. The second coming of our Lord was actively expected by the Early Church and thought of as near. *wrath*. Divine judgment to come upon the unbelieving on the Last Day. See note, 2:16.

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 1:2–10 The THESSALONIANS become model Christians in words and deeds due to the impact of the Gospel in their lives and the fruit of the Spirit demonstrated in their faith, love, and hope. Compared to the THESSALONIANS, we are much poorer in our faith, labor of love, and steadfastness of hope. Even without hardship or persecution, we are slow to confess our faith and live it out in love. The Lord knows each one of us and our specific situation. His Spirit has created faith in us and gives us power and full conviction. Despite our weaknesses and failings, His unfailing love and forgiveness will sustain us to be His witnesses. • Thank You, Lord, for the victorious life You gave to the THESSALONIANS. Make us also an exemplary witness for the Gospel, so that Your name may be glorified far beyond our community. Amen.

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 2:1 *coming*. Paul visited the THESSALONIANS during his second missionary journey. See pp 2050–51; cf Ac 17:1.

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 2:2 *conflict*. Paul and Silas narrowly escaped the search made for them in Thessalonica. Instead, their host and some of the Christian brothers were mistreated.

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 2:3 There were many false teachers of religion and philosophy in the Greek world of the time who deceived people and made great claims for personal gains. Paul distances himself from such deceivers.

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 2:4 *approved*. The result after a test. God tested Paul and then entrusted the preaching of the Gospel to him. *tests our hearts*. Paul preached in constant awareness of his accountability before God for his words.

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 2:5–6 Paul's opponents conducted themselves for flattery and praise. Paul, however, as the Lord's true servant, wanted to please God, who searches the heart (unlike people, who see only what is outside).

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 2:6 Though Paul and his fellow workers could request pay, thanks, and greater public recognition, they did not seek these but focused on the service to which God called them. See note, 2Co 11:7.
1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 2:7 *nursing mother*. Paul characterizes the care he has rendered to the THESSALONIANS with a most intimate, human example.
1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 2:8 *also our own selves*. Cf Jn 15:13. Paul was willing to risk his life to preach the Gospel in hostile environments.
1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 2:9 *worked*. See note, Ac 18:3. Paul did not wait for the support of others but did receive offerings when given.
1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 2:10 Not boasting. Paul was not claiming perfection in himself, but that he was made righteous and blameless in Christ, who enabled him to set a good example.
1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 2:11 *father with his children*. See the maternal example in v 7. Here Paul uses a paternal example to describe his warnings and instructions.
1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 2:12 *walk*. Gk *peripateo*, used in the ethical sense to mean "conduct yourself." See p 1904. The THESSALONIANS are admonished to demonstrate a character compatible with God's will, i.e., the revealed Word of God. *kingdom and glory*. Manifestation of the age to come. It will come in its fullness when all people of God will be resurrected and Christ will hand over the kingdom to God (1Co 15:23–28). Cf Rm 8:18. God's kingdom, however, is not limited to the future (Rm 14:17).
1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 2:13 *word of God*. The Gospel Paul preaches is not his own creation. He received it from the Lord to pass on to faithful persons who are able to preserve and teach it (1Co 15:3; Gal 1:11; 2Tm 2:2). See note, 1Co 15:3. *at work*. Gk *energetai*, which could also be translated "working effectively." The Lord's Word will produce visible fruit among those who listen and believe (Is 55:10–11). Such a life-changing effect cannot be produced by mere human words. See notes, 1:3–5.
1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 2:14 *imitators*. Gk *mimetai*, source of Eng "mimic." The THESSALONIANS had passed through an experience of persecution like the churches of Judea (2Tm 3:12). *Judea*. Refers to the

original churches in Jerusalem. See color map 4. The believers were dispersed after the martyrdom of St Stephen and subsequent persecution (Ac 8:1). However, there is no mention of martyrdom at Thessalonica (Ac 17:1–9).

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 2:16 *measure of their sins*. Exhausting God's long-suffering patience. See note, Is 51:17. *wrath has come upon them*. Some scholars have tried to connect this "wrath" with certain historical events that were about to happen, such as the destruction of Jerusalem (AD 70). The verb's past tense stresses certainty of wrath in the future. Therefore, it can be considered as complete. Besides the sure and future judgment, everyone who is not in Christ and opposes His Gospel of grace is under God's wrath (Jn 3:18).

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 2:1–16 Paul's experience, inner being, motives, and love toward the Christians is laid bare. He speaks about how he conducted himself (vv 9–12). He commends the THESSALONIANS for receiving the Gospel preached by him as the Word of God and for enduring persecution for its sake (vv 13–16). The Lord wants us to share His Gospel boldly, even if there is suffering or conflict in our path. We should please God and be faithful to His message rather than speak what is pleasing for people to hear. Let us not make lack of financial resources an excuse. The Lord who commanded His disciples to preach the Gospel to all nations will be with us according to His promise and will enable us to pass through any hardship we may face. The Gospel's truth and power will not change despite our feebleness (2Co 4:7). • Help us, Lord, to confess the Gospel of Christ faithfully. May our life also shine before the world so that the preaching of the Gospel may not be eclipsed by the darkness in our life. Amen.

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 2:17 *torn away*. Paul's separation from the THESSALONIANS and the resultant deprivation. The past tense may point to a sudden separation due to persecution (Ac 17:10). See note, 1:6. *for a short time*. Paul returned to Greece (Ac 20:2).

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 2:18 *Satan hindered us*. Satan uses human agents to bring obstacles before God's people. This may refer to the governing authorities of Thessalonica who sought to imprison Paul and Silas so they would not preach the Word. However, the ultimate authority belongs to the Lord Jesus Christ and not to Satan (Mt 28:18).

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 2:19 *crown of boasting*. Just as an athlete rejoices and boasts in a prize, so Paul will rejoice when he sees the THESSALONIANS before the Lord. See note, 2Tm 2:5.
1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 2:20 *glory*. Gk *doxa*, refers here to someone in whom one can take pride (see imagery in 2:7, 11). See note, 1Co 11:7–9.
1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 3:1 *left behind*. Paul feels the deprivation of being alone very forcibly, as abandonment. *Athens*. In Achaia, the southern province of the Greek Peninsula. Though Corinth was the capital of the province, Athens surpassed it as a cultural center. See map, p 1886.
1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 3:2 *coworker*. God works through His servants (Jn 15:5; Mt 28:20). Paul did not consider himself the sole dispenser of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. He recognized others, such as Timothy. *establish and exhort*. Faith in Christ needs to be "rooted and built up in Him" (Col 2:7) by holding on to the Gospel promises. See notes, Eph 4:15; 2Th 1:3.
1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 3:3 *afflictions*. The THESSALONIANS were literally dragged before their city officials, suffering physically as well as psychologically. *destined*. Suffering for the sake of the Gospel was an intrinsic part of Paul's self-understanding. Neither the apostles nor our Lord Jesus promised that following Him would be easy (cf Jn 16:33).
1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 3:4 *with you*. See note, 2:1. *suffer affliction*. Paul and Silas narrowly escaped the mob that came after them in Thessalonica. When they were not found, the hosts (Jason and brothers) were mistreated (Ac 17:5–9). *just as it has come to pass*. Paul foretold that suffering would come.
1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 3:5 *sent*. Paul, being eager to know about his converts, sent Timothy, his helper. *tempter*. Satan. Cf 2:18. He uses people and other beings to derail disciples from their faith. Cf Gn 3:1–7.
1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 2:17–3:5 Paul is interested in the well-being of the THESSALONIANS, whether they stand firm in the Gospel or yield due to pressure from the opponents. When Paul can no more bear the lack of news, he decides to send Timothy, his co-worker and helper. Pastors and leaders in God's Church need to follow up on their members in the same way. They should take practical steps to know how

they are. The Lord seeks and wants to save and strengthen us through His servants, even in the midst of our problems. We are the apple of His eye. • Lord, give us Your loving heart, so that we may sincerely follow and care for the flock You have put under our care. Lord, help us pass through the various sufferings that will come our way as we follow You. Amen.

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 3:6 *Timothy*. See note, 1:1. *good news*. Not the preaching of the Gospel, but the joyful news that the THESSALONIANS were well grounded in their faith and love to others. Paul had earlier worried about them, not knowing whether they stood firm or fell from their faith in Christ due to the tempter (v 5).

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 3:7 *distress and affliction*. The Gk words, used together for emphasis, describe their anxiety.

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 3:8 *now we live*. Rhetoric. Paul longed for their safety in the Gospel, as though his life depended on it. *standing fast in the Lord*. Keeping true to the message of God's grace for the sake of Christ crucified.

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 3:9 *thanksgiving … return*. A rhetorical question expressing awe and gratitude to God after hearing about the faith of the THESSALONIANS.

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 3:10 *supply what is lacking in your faith?* Their trust in God was not defective (see notes, 1:2–5). Rather, they needed instruction in certain matters.

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 3:11–13 Paul expresses his wishes in a prayer for the THESSALONIANS after he has heard the encouraging report Timothy brought back.

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 3:11 God the Father and Christ are joint subjects of the sentence. The same function is ascribed to God the Father and to Jesus, who has divinity and equality with God the Father as the Second Person of the Trinity.

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 3:12 *the Lord*. Ambr: "Who, then, is the Lord…. He has named the Father and has named the Son; Whom, then, has he joined with the Father and the Son except the Spirit? Who is the Lord Who establishes our hearts in holiness" (*NPNF* 2 10:149). *increase*. Spiritually, not numerically. Cf Eph 3:16.

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 3:13 *establish*. Stability encompassing the whole personality. *blameless in holiness*. Holy in word and action; the result of the Holy Spirit's work in a person's life through Word and

Sacrament. *coming of our Lord Jesus*. Refers not only to the end times but also to the presence of the risen Lord among His people. *with all His saints*. Even though there are references in the NT connecting angels with the Lord's appearing (Mk 8:38; 13:27; Rv 19:14), here it may mean "the revealing of the sons of God" in association with the Lord. On the Last Day, the saints will come in glory, not to continue an earthly life.

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 3:6–13 Paul gives thanks and prays for the THESSALONIANS when he hears the good report from Timothy that they are standing in their faith and have the same kind of love for him as he has for them. Our faith in the Lord and love for one another should be as living and contagious as that of the THESSALONIANS. The Lord, who has promised to be with us until the end of time, will keep us in His faith and kindle His love in our hearts so that we may love Him and one another.
• We praise You, O God, because the gates of hell cannot prevent the sown seed of Your Word from growing. Amen.

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 4:1 *how you ought to walk*. The Law is given as a guide for those who are already saved. Paul gives a guideline to those already saved through faith in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. *more and more*. Abundance of good works results from being grafted in Christ as a branch to the vine (Jn 15:4).

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 4:2 *instructions*. Given to Paul by the Lord Himself, who gives it authority.

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 4:3 *sanctification*. See p 1904. Referring to the ethical or moral implications of the Gospel. A person who has been re-created in Christ must not continue to live in an immoral manner. A Christian's body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who enables the believer to live a holy life (1Co 6:15–20).

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 4:4 *how to control his own body*. Our sexuality is God's gift for use within the parameters of marriage. "Good people will know how to control the use of marriage, especially when they occupy public offices" (Ap XXIII 43).

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 4:5 *like the Gentiles*. Unbelievers outside of the Church who live by gratifying their lustful passions in wanton self-indulgence. *not know God*. Humans have an inherent sense that God exists (Rm 1:19–20), yet they sinfully corrupt that knowledge into idolatry (Rm 1:21–23).

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 4:6 *wrong his brother*. Having an intimate relationship with someone else's wife or husband. *avenger*. "The wages of sin is death" (Rm 6:23). The anger and wrath of the Holy God will be on those who have not repented of their sin and are not covered by the blood of His Son (Eph 5:6; Col 3:5–6). *beforehand*. While teaching in their city (Ac 17:1–9).

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 4:7 *called us*. Just as God sought for Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden and called them when they sinned, so He seeks and calls us by the Gospel into faith in His Son.

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 4:8 *gives His Holy Spirit*. Reception of the Holy Spirit is not our achievement. The Holy Spirit is given when the Word about Christ is heard and the Sacraments are received by faith. The Holy Spirit reveals the meaning of the Word and the Sacraments by testifying for Christ. See note, Lk 11:11–13.

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 4:9 *taught by God*. By the words of Jesus and the Spirit Paul passed on to them.

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 4:10 *Macedonia*. See notes, 1:1; 1:7.

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 4:11 Paul warns against being overzealous for spiritual matters. The Christian life is balanced. "It is not only necessary for our life that our body have food and clothes and other necessaries. It is also necessary that we spend our days in peace and quiet among the people with whom we live and have dealings in daily business and conversation and all sorts of doings" (LC III 73).

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 4:12 *outsiders*. Unbelievers. See note, 1Co 14:16–17. *dependent on no one*. Paul urges them to live on the fruits of their physical labor.

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 4:1–12 Paul gives advice on some practical matters dealing with sanctification so that their witness for the Lord may go forward blamelessly. We Christians must lead a sexually pure life so that we may not grieve the Holy Spirit. Our love to one another should not be superficial but honest and from the heart. We should live by our labor without improperly depending on others for support. The Lord—through His Spirit poured upon us—fights for us against the "flaming darts of the evil one" (Eph 6:16) so that we may live pure and blameless lives. • Thank You, Lord, that we are victorious through You and that Your victory is our victory. Mold us by Your Word so that we may imitate Your apostles and You in our daily walks of life. Amen.

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 4:13 *asleep*. A euphemism for death (cf 1Ki 2:10). See pp 2050–51. *others*. The pagan world, Gentiles who do not know God. *no hope*. Those who live without Jesus have no hope because they do not know of the resurrection.
1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 4:14 *bring with Him*. Jesus becomes a mediator through whom the dead are resurrected.
1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 4:15 *by a word from the Lord*. A teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ (e.g., Mt 22:23–33) or a revelation given to the apostles in His name. *precede*. Those who died in Christ will have no disadvantage when the Lord returns. The second coming will be seen by them as well as the living.
1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 4:16 *cry … voice … sound*. Three ways of expressing the same calling (action) of the Lord. *command*. It is the quickening Word of the Lord. *voice of an archangel*. Mentioned only one other time in the NT (Michael, Jude 9). The Lord uses angels to execute His will. The pseudepigraphical book 1 Enoch mentions seven archangels: Uriel, Raphael, Raguel, Michael, Sarakiel, Gabriel, Remiel (1 Enoch 20:1–7). *dead in Christ*. Those who passed away while believing in the Lord will rise first. Cf v 15.
1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 4:17 Cf 2Th 1:5–10. *who are left*. Believers who remain alive on the earth. *caught up together with them*. Gk *harpazo* carries with it the sense of a sudden and violent action. The point is that we will be gathered together at the resurrection, the dead as well as the living, when Christ returns. (The Vulg used the term *raptus*, from which the modern false doctrine of a "rapture" gets its name. Paul's teaching is about the resurrection and not a secret return of Christ.) Chrys: "When they see the earth agitated, the dust mingling, the bodies rising perchance on every side, no one [causing] this, but the 'shout' being sufficient … when they see so great a tumult upon the earth,—then they shall know…. What fear will possess those that remain upon the earth" (*NPNF* 1 13:356). *meet the Lord in the air*. In the ancient world, dignitaries were welcomed officially by people who escorted them. The focus is the coming together of the Lord and His people. The air is considered to be the abode of evil spirits (Eph 2:2), who will yield the place to Him who has all authority in the heavens and on earth. *always be with the Lord*. In heaven after the resurrection.
1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 4:18 *encourage one another*. Some THESSALONIANS feared that loved ones who had died in Christ might

not be able to see the second coming of the Lord.

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 4:13–18 Paul comforts the THESSALONIANS, saying that the dead in Christ will be the first to taste the resurrection and come with the risen Christ. At the second coming, we will all be together once more. Christians grieve over the death of loved ones but not as those who have no hope. The resurrection of our Lord, and the victory we have over death through Him, gives us a living hope, despite the fact that death separates loved ones and causes great pain. • Thank You, Lord Jesus, for making the way through death a path of hope and joy, due to Your resurrection. Create in our hearts the joy and hope of Your victory over death. Amen.

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 5:1 The classical Gk word for "time" (*chronos*) referred to stretches of time, whereas the word for "seasons" (*kairos*) referred to a point in time, in the sense of the right time. Paul, however, made no such distinction. He was saying that he does not need to write to the THESSALONIANS about the time aspect of the second coming. See note, Ac 1:7.

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 5:2 *day of the Lord*. In the OT, this refers to the Day of Judgment, in which the righteous will be vindicated and Yahweh will make an impartial judgment (see p 1079). In the NT, with the recognition of Jesus as Lord, the function of final judgment is attributed to Him. Therefore, here it refers to the day in which Christ will be revealed in glory to vindicate His people and judge the world in righteousness. *like a thief in the night*. Sudden and unexpected. It is important to be alert, looking forward to the Lord's coming.

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 5:3 *destruction*. Implies utter and hopeless ruin and despair for those who put their hope in this world rather than in Christ. Bern: "Do not, while present prosperity smiles upon you, forget its certain end, lest adversity without end succeed it" (*SLSB*, p 56). *escape*. By human reason and strength, no one can escape God's righteous judgment and scrutiny (Ps 139:7–10). Only those sheltered in Christ will escape God's wrath, which will come upon all those who have broken His righteous Law.

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 5:4–5 *day … night*. Used figuratively. As people walk in the light of the sun, so all those who walk in the light of the Word of God, Jesus Christ, are children of the day.

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 5:6 *sleep*. Not death (see note, 4:13), but a life in sin, which is a life in darkness. Those in Christ, the light of the world, are awake and sober.
1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 5:7 Commonsense basis of Paul's figurative language.
1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 5:8 *breastplate … helmet*. See notes, Eph 6:10–17; 6:11, 14. The military imagery used here is based in both the OT and the NT, and particularly in the Roman army. Paul advises the THESSALONIANS to guard their faith and love in Christ and His promises in the Gospel so that they may withstand all kinds of spiritual assaults. *hope*. Confidence. See "hope," p 1903.
1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 5:9 *destined*. God's purpose is the salvation of all people. He does not want anyone to be lost. The faith active among the THESSALONIANS was the proof that He destined them for salvation. Chrys: "Do not despair of yourself, O man, in going to God, who has not spared even His Son for you. Faint not at present evils…. Neither should we fear, if we were going to a judge who was about to judge us, and who had shown so much love for us, as to have sacrificed his son. Let us hope therefore for kind and great things" (*NPNF* 1 13:363).
1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 5:10 *died for us*. Christ died as our substitute. As the blameless and holy Son of God, He did not deserve to die. But out of love for us, He who was holy died on our behalf so that we may be free from the wrath of God due to our sin (2Co 5:21). After paying the debt of our sin, He rose from death. See "atonement," p 5. *awake or asleep*. Physically dead or alive (see note, 4:13).
1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 5:11 *build one another up*. The THESSALONIANS can help one another grow spiritually by love (cf 1Co 13). See note, 2Th 1:3.
1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 5:1–11 After describing the future glory of those who have died in Christ, Paul now proceeds to tell the THESSALONIANS about the coming Day of Judgment in which the Lord will give His final verdict. Let us walk in holiness and righteousness so that we may not be ashamed when our Lord appears to judge our work. The Lord who has chosen us for salvation and died for us will be on our side on the final Day of Judgment. • Lord, help us to recognize that there is a Day of Judgment for us. May the work and righteousness of our Lord Jesus

Christ be our defense when You come to judge the living and the dead. Amen.

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 5:12 *those*. Leaders. See note, Heb 13:17. *over you in the Lord and admonish*. These leaders protected and cared for the congregation voluntarily out of love for the Lord. Some see an overlap with the function of elders (see note, Ti 1:5). However, the passage does not use an official designation or title.

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 5:13 *their work*. Leaders were to be honored not because of their status but because of their service in the spirit of Christ's teaching (cf Mt 23:11).

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 5:14 *admonish the idle*. Reproving those who neglect their daily duty of work and live on the support of others is not only the responsibility of the leaders but the whole community of believers. *idle … fainthearted … weak*. Congregations consist of different groups of people. *be patient*. Patience is a fruit of the Spirit manifested in love: "Love is patient" (1Co 13:4). A Christian loves not only the strong but also the weak and the fainthearted.

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 5:15 *seek to do good*. We must be helpful to others, even to those with whom we may not agree.

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 5:16–18 Joy, prayer, and thanksgiving form a unity. Even though God has other purposes for us, this triad is certainly His will for us.

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 5:16 Enjoined to the hope in the Lord. Joy is also a fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22–23).

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 5:17 We cannot verbally pray at all times, but it is possible to be in the spirit of prayer and ever ready to pray. "The Lord's Prayer has also been prescribed so that we should see and consider the distress that ought to drive and compel us to pray without ceasing" (LC III 24). "We should ask that through the same Spirit and His grace, by means of the daily exercise of reading and doing God's Word, He would preserve in us faith and His heavenly gifts, strengthen us from day to day, and keep us to the end" (FC SD II 16).

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 5:18 *will of God in Christ*. Paul earlier told the THESSALONIANS that sanctification is God's will for them (4:3). Here, it finds expression in their joy, prayer, and thanksgiving.

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 5:19 Fire symbolized the Holy Spirit (cf Ac 2:3–4). Some connect this phrase with "prophecies" in v 20, as if

Paul is advising the THESSALONIANS not to put out the spiritual gifts working among them. However, the meaning is more general, including any behavior that grieves the Holy Spirit, such as idleness and immorality.

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 5:20 Some THESSALONIANS might have valued the spectacular gifts (e.g., tongues) more than prophecy (see note, 1Co 14:2). Prophets in both the OT and NT exhorted and spoke God's will for their specific situation and for the future.

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 5:21 *test*. Consistency with the Gospel message would be one test. Another test is the prophet's testimony to Christ; does he accept the lordship of Christ (1Co 12:3)? See note, 2Co 13:5. On false prophets, see p 307.

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 5:22 *evil*. Refers to every kind of evil, including false prophetic utterances. See note, 4:3. "The Holy Scriptures alone remain the judge, rule, and norm. According to them—as the only touchstone—all teachings shall and must be discerned and judged" (FC Ep Sum 7).

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 5:23 *sanctify you completely*. Sanctification is the practical result of God's peace-giving work in our life through the Holy Spirit. God's sanctification of us through faith in His Son, Jesus Christ, extends to our whole person—we are sanctified thoroughly. Complete sanctification will be ours in eternity. See "holy," p 1902. *spirit and soul and body*. The entire person, outside and inside, should be sanctified. A description of a human being, however, is not limited to these three categories. Cf Mk 12:30. *blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*. See notes, 3:13; Jb 1:1. The second coming of our Lord will culminate our Christian journey here on earth. Those who are sanctified by faith in the Lord will be like the wise virgins who had their oil lamps ready when the bridegroom came (Mt 25:1–13). Cf 1Th 4:13–18.

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 5:24 God has called us and is calling us through His Word. The initiative is from Him. From God's calling in His Gospel, we can know that He has elected us unto salvation. See note, Jn 6:44. See also p 1901. *will surely do it*. See note, Php 1:6.

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 5:25 Paul reveals humility by requesting the intercession of others on his behalf.

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 5:26 *holy kiss*. See note, Rm 16:16.

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 5:27 *oath*. Not a contradiction of Mt 5:34, but an appeal for the THESSALONIANS to act as responsible persons

to the Lord by executing this request. See p 7. *letter read to all the brothers*. Paul knows that communication, particularly that of the Gospel, is central for people to be saved and be formed in Christ (Rm 10:14). Therefore, he emphasizes that the written word be heard by all. See note, 1Tm 4:13.

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 5:28 Instead of using the customary secular ending for "farewell," Paul closes his Letter with a grace benediction—just as he had started it. See pp 1899–1901.

1 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 5:12–28 Paul gives both his final instruction about leadership and a benediction. Christians should support and encourage one another. We should respect the elders and leaders of our congregations because of their work for the Lord and the whole people of God. The Lord Jesus, by humbling Himself to the point of washing His disciples' feet, showed to us the love He has for all believers. • Lord, give us Your heart and mind so that our life may be blameless, respecting and loving others. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

2 Thessalonians

2 Thessalonians 1 | 2 Thessalonians 2 | 2 Thessalonians 3

- Introduction to 2 Thessalonians
  - Overview
  - Reading 2 Thessalonians
  - Luther on 2 Thessalonians
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

Greeting

1 [1]†† Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy,
To the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:
[2] † Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Thanksgiving

3 ††† We ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers,[1] as is right,
because your faith is growing abundantly, and the love of every one of you
for one another is increasing. 4 †Therefore we ourselves boast about you in
the churches of God for your steadfastness and faith in all your persecutions
and in the afflictions that you are enduring.

The Judgment at Christ's Coming

5 ‡† This is evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be
considered worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are also suffering
— 6 † since indeed God considers it just to repay with affliction those who
afflict you, 7 † and to grant relief to you who are afflicted as well as to us,
when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels 8 †
in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on
those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. 9 † They will suffer the
punishment of eternal destruction, away from[2] the presence of the Lord
and from the glory of his might, 10 † when he comes on that day to be
glorified in his saints, and to be marveled at among all who have believed,
because our testimony to you was believed. 11 † To this end we always pray
for you, that our God may make you worthy of his calling and may fulfill
every resolve for good and every work of faith by his power, 12 † so that the
name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according
to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Man of Lawlessness

2 [1] ‡ † Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our
being gathered together to him, we ask you, brothers,[1] [2] † not to be quickly
shaken in mind or alarmed, either by a spirit or a spoken word, or a letter
seeming to be from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. [3] †
Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless the
rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness[2] is revealed, the son of
destruction,[3] [4] † who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god
or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God,
proclaiming himself to be God. [5] Do you not remember that when I was still
with you I told you these things? [6] † And you know what is restraining him
now so that he may be revealed in his time. [7] † For the mystery of
lawlessness is already at work. Only he who now restrains it will do so until
he is out of the way. [8] † And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the
Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth and bring to nothing by the
appearance of his coming. [9] † The coming of the lawless one is by the
activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders, [10] † and with all
wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love
the truth and so be saved. [11] † Therefore God sends them a strong delusion,
so that they may believe what is false, [12] † in order that all may be
condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in
unrighteousness.

Stand Firm

13 ††But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers beloved
by the Lord, because God chose you as the firstfruits[1] to be saved, through
sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth. 14 †To this he called you
through our gospel, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus
Christ. 15 †So then, brothers, stand firm and hold to the traditions that you
were taught by us, either by our spoken word or by our letter.

16 †Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father, who
loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace,
17 comfort your hearts and establish them in every good work and word.

Pray for Us

3 [1]†† Finally, brothers,[2] pray for us, that the word of the Lord may
speed ahead and be honored,[3] as happened among you, [2]† and that we may
be delivered from wicked and evil men. For not all have faith. [3]† But the
Lord is faithful. He will establish you and guard you against the evil one.[1]
[4]† And we have confidence in the Lord about you, that you are doing and
will do the things that we command. [5]† May the Lord direct your hearts to
the love of God and to the steadfastness of Christ.

Warning Against Idleness

6 ‡ † Now we command you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus
Christ, that you keep away from any brother who is walking in idleness and
not in accord with the tradition that you received from us. 7 † For you
yourselves know how you ought to imitate us, because we were not idle
when we were with you, 8 † nor did we eat anyone's bread without paying for
it, but with toil and labor we worked night and day, that we might not be a
burden to any of you. 9 † It was not because we do not have that right, but to
give you in ourselves an example to imitate. 10 † For even when we were
with you, we would give you this command: If anyone is not willing to
work, let him not eat. 11 † For we hear that some among you walk in idleness,
not busy at work, but busybodies. 12 † Now such persons we command and
encourage in the Lord Jesus Christ to do their work quietly and to earn their
own living.[2]

13 As for you, brothers, do not grow weary in doing good. 14 † If anyone
does not obey what we say in this letter, take note of that person, and have
nothing to do with him, that he may be ashamed. 15 † Do not regard him as
an enemy, but warn him as a brother.

Benediction

16 ‡ † Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times in
every way. The Lord be with you all.
17 † I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. This is the sign of
genuineness in every letter of mine; it is the way I write. 18 † The grace of
our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

2 Thessalonians

OVERVIEW

Author
Paul the apostle

Date
c AD 52

Place
Thessalonica

People
Paul; Silvanus; Timothy; Thessalonian Church; persecutors

Purpose
To correct misunderstandings about Christ's return that had arisen after Paul and his co-workers left Thessalonica

Law Themes
Steadfastness; affliction; eternal destruction; man of lawlessness; idleness

Gospel Themes
The Gospel message; God's righteousness; Jesus gathers us; the Spirit sanctifies us

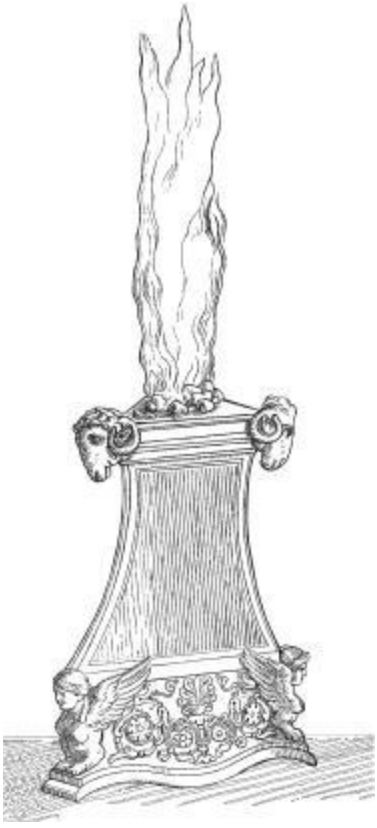
Memory Verses
Grow in faith and increase in love (1:3); stand firm (2:15)

Introduction to 2 Thessalonians

Reading 2 Thessalonians

As the patient groans, the physician uses a knife to split a stiff, 5-ft reed. Attendants place the halves of the reed on either side of the patient's hip and press the ends until they flex and touch one another, so they can be bound as a splint. As the attendants press the reeds, the physician waves a knife over the splint and chants, "Motas uaeta daries dardares …," which no one can understand. "This will heal you," the physician claims, "you must chant each day, 'Haut haut haut istasis tarsis …' "

Magic rites and mock miracles, which deceived many, were part of daily life for ancient Greeks and Romans (cf Ac 19:18–19). In 2 Thessalonians, Paul warns of a far more powerful deception that will come before the end of time. The "lawless one" will use false signs and miracles to delude people into following him. Though Paul warns the Thessalonians about this coming deception, he also focuses them on living each day by the Gospel, the most important truth of all.



Luther on 2 Thessalonians

In the first epistle [5:2], Paul had resolved for the Thessalonians the question of the Last Day, telling them that it would come quickly, as a thief in the night. Now as is likely to happen—that one question always gives rise to another, because of misunderstanding—the Thessalonians understood that the Last Day was already at hand. Thereupon Paul writes this epistle and explains himself.

In chapter 1 he comforts them with the eternal reward of their faith and of their patience amid sufferings of every kind and with the punishment of their persecutors in eternal pain.

In chapter 2 he teaches that before the Last Day, the Roman Empire must first pass away, and Antichrist set himself up as God in Christendom and seduce the unbelieving world with false doctrines and signs—until Christ shall come and destroy him by his glorious coming, first slaying him with spiritual preaching.

In chapter 3 he gives some admonitions, especially that they rebuke the idlers who are not supporting themselves by their own labor. If the idlers will not reform, then the faithful shall avoid them. And this is a stiff rebuke to the clergy of our day. (AE 35:387–88)

Challenges for Readers

Paul's Authorship. Some critics argue that 2 Thessalonians is not a genuine Letter from Paul. Paul mentions issues of forgery (2:2; 3:17), but this hardly suggests that the Letter itself is forged. Critics assert that the Letter's description of the end times differs significantly from 1 Thessalonians. Yet, in 2 Thessalonians, Paul teaches that the day of the Lord has not yet come, which accords well with 1Th 5:2. In the second Letter, Paul seeks to calm the readers about the imminence of Christ's return (2:2), which is simply a difference in emphasis from 1 Thessalonians, not doctrine. Some scholars have questioned the authenticity of this Letter, specifically regarding Paul's authorship, chiefly due to seeming differences between 1 Thessalonians and 2 Thessalonians regarding the return of Christ. However, the two Epistles are simply emphasizing different but complementary aspects of the teaching on the end times: that we cannot know the time of our Lord's return, and yet there will be signs. Bishop Polycarp affirmed the Pauline authorship of 2 Thessalonians and its divinely authoritative status around AD 110. We can in good conscience agree with his conclusion.

Man of Lawlessness. Paul makes special reference to apostasy and the exaltation of the "lawless one" (2:3–10), which must take place before Christ's return in judgment. Though his descriptions of these events are unique, the same themes are taught in other parts of Scripture. According to the Early Church father Irenaeus (*ANF* 1:535–56), the lawless one corresponds to the "spirit of the antichrist" (1Jn 2:18; 4:3) and the beast (and/or the prostitute "Babylon"; Rv 13:1–10; chs 17–18).

The Restrainer. Paul makes a passing reference to some-one or something that restrains the appearance of the "man of lawlessness" (2:7). The Church Fathers commonly referred to God restraining the lawless one through Roman governance, but other suggestions have been offered (e.g., the Gospel, the Holy Spirit—suggestions that do not fit well with Paul's broader theology). In any case, note that the restraint comes from God, no matter what the means may be. Cf Dn 10:13, 21; Rv 12:7; 20:1–3.

Blessings for Readers

As in 1 Thessalonians, Paul exhibits exemplary pastoral care for the Thessalonian congregation. He patiently explains issues of doctrine that have confused them and instructs them consistently in matters of faith and life, according to the traditions that he had taught them (2:15). Though the end times appear fascinating, Paul demonstrates once again that applying Law and Gospel for daily living has the greatest importance. Through Law and Gospel, the Lord prepares us for the persecution at the end and Jesus' blessed return.

OUTLINE

I. The Greeting (1:1–2)
II. The Thanksgiving (1:3–12)
  A. Thanks for Faith and Love (1:3–4)
  B. Encouragement of the Discouraged (1:5–10)
  C. Petition for Worthy Conduct (1:11–12)
III. Exhortation and Encouragement about the End Times (ch 2)
  A. Events Preceding the Coming of the Day of the Lord (2:1–12)
  B. Encouragement and Thanksgiving (2:13–17)
IV. Apostolic Commands (3:1–15)
  A. Request for Prayers (3:1–5)
  B. Discipline of the Disorderly (3:6–12)
  C. Admonition to Do Good (3:13–15)
V. Conclusion (3:16–18)
  A. Prayer for Peace (3:16)
  B. Greeting (3:17)
  C. Benediction (3:18)

Footnotes

Footnotes for 2 Thessalonians, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:3 Or *brothers and sisters*. The plural Greek word *adelphoi* (translated "brothers") refers to siblings in a family. In New Testament usage, depending on the context, *adelphoi* may refer either to men or to both men and women who are siblings (brothers and sisters) in God's family, the church
- [2] 1:9 Or *destruction that comes from*

Footnotes for 2 Thessalonians, Chapter 2

- [1] 2:1 Or *brothers and sisters*; also verses 13, 15
- [2] 2:3 Some manuscripts *sin*
- [3] 2:3 Greek *the son of perdition* (a Hebrew idiom)
- [1] 2:13 Some manuscripts *chose you from the beginning*

Footnotes for 2 Thessalonians, Chapter 3

- [2] 3:1 Or *brothers and sisters*; also verses 6, 13
- [3] 3:1 Or *glorified*
- [1] 3:3 Or *evil*
- [2] 3:12 Greek *eat their own bread*

Study Notes

2 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 1:1 *Silvanus, and Timothy*. See note, 1Th 1:1. *church*. See pp 1901–2. *Thessalonians*. See note, 1Th 1:1. *in God*. The Thessalonian Church has its being, foundation, source, character, and very existence in God. Paul declares plainly the converts now belong to the Father and Christ.

2 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 1:2 See pp 1899–1901. Paul's typical greeting, used within the context of a letter or within worship (liturgically). God's grace is the source of all real blessings, and peace is the result of these blessings. Cf 2:16; 3:16.

2 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 1:1–2 Paul greets the Christians in Thessalonica as fellow members of the Body of Christ (the Church) and blesses them with God's grace and peace. Christian believers are called out of worldliness to lives of holiness. We are connected to the Holy One, to the Lord Himself. As such, we must act differently than the world and not according to its standards of self-centeredness (cf Rm 12:1–2); we must exhibit grace and peace to all others. Like the Thessalonians, our place as Christians "in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" is a gift from God and is assured to us by His grace alone (cf Eph 1:11–14). Jesus' death and resurrection incorporated us into His Body through Baptism and reconciled us with the Father (cf Gal 2:20; Eph 2:13–21). • "Lord Jesus Christ, Your pow'r make known, For You are Lord of lords alone; Defend Your holy Church that we May sing your praise eternally. O Comforter of priceless worth, Send peace and unity on earth." Amen. (*LSB* 655:2–3)

2 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 1:3 *faith is growing … love … is increasing*. Faith is a gift from God (cf Eph 2:8), created through the means of His grace. Through these means, God also grows our faith. He matures and strengthens our confidence and trust in Jesus as our only Savior (cf Mk 9:24). "We must use the Sacraments in such a way that faith, which believes the promises offered and set forth through the Sacraments, is increased" (AC XIII 2). Faith is not completed or made better by love; faith is sufficient in and of itself to connect us with God's salvation. However, faith grows in understanding, becomes steadier in the face of persecution, and naturally produces good works (love) for the neighbor who needs them. Through faith, a person has been made a new creation, a good tree that

produces more and more good fruit. Love increases as faith grows (cf Mt 7:17, 12:33–35; 2Co 5:17; LC II 57–59; III 1–3).

2 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 1:4 *boast*. Not arrogant or self-promoting. Thessalonians are examples to the other churches (cf 2Co 8:1–7). *churches of God*. In Corinth and its surrounding area, from where Paul was writing (cf 2Co 1:1). *persecutions*. Specifics of the Thessalonians' suffering are not revealed, except that it is for "the kingdom of God" (v 5). Christian suffering is in many ways a mystery of the faith. Why should the upright and honest people of Thessalonica have to suffer? Yet, Paul gives thanks! After all, a Christian will and must suffer (2Tm 3:12). And persecution is a sign that a person is on the right way: the powers of evil are disturbed when Christ is active and when His promised coming is near. Suffering mysteriously unifies us with Jesus, the Suffering Servant (cf Is 53); it provides an opportunity for us to give glory to God (cf Jn 9:1–3); it tests and strengthens our faith (cf 1Pt 1:3–9); it teaches us to love God for His own sake, and not for the sake of prosperity; it conforms and shapes us into the image of Christ (cf Rm 8:17); it teaches us to glory in the cross (cf Lk 9:22–24; Ps 34:19–22); it humbles us, reminding us that the servant is not greater than the master and preventing self-righteousness from closing us to His gifts (cf Jn 15:20). Suffering can be thought of as one of God's "strange" gifts (cf Ac 5:40–42; 1Pt 4:12–14).

2 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 1:3–4 Paul gives thanks for God's grace at work among the Thessalonians, by which He has created faith and love in them. Paul points to the persecuted Thessalonians as examples for other Christians of their time and ours. We, too, should "be imitators of God" (Eph 5:1). We must set an example to others in what we believe and in what we say and do for them; i.e., by living in faith and in love. In this way, we will be, as Luther puts it, little Christs, "[helping] our neighbor through our body and its works" (AE 31:367). Christ is indeed our example, but, much greater and higher than that, He is our Savior! Cf 1Pt 2:19–25. He suffered in our place, on account of our sins, for us! • Almighty God, we implore You that You would strengthen us through the Lord's Supper in faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another. Amen.

2 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 1:5 Paul consoles the Thessalonians: their suffering, as well as their faith and conduct in the face of tribulation, is part of God's plan of history as the Last Day draws nearer, and it is a clear sign of His future "righteous judgment." Faith perseveres unto eternal life

(cf 1Pt 1:3–7). *This is evidence*. May refer to "your steadfastness and faith in all your persecutions" (v 4). *worthy of the kingdom of God*. Suffering is at times an aspect of the Father's gracious discipline; it is a way in which He shapes and conforms His children, thus preparing them for the glory of His kingdom. God Himself makes us worthy through Jesus, the Lamb (cf v 11; Gal 3:27; Rv 5:6–14). See pp 1565–66.

2 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 1:6 *repay with affliction*. At the second coming (cf vv 7–10).

2 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 1:7 *mighty angels*. The Lord executes His powerful judgment through them (cf Ps 103:20).

2 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 1:8 *in flaming fire*. Fire accompanies and reveals the Lord as He comes "to judge the living and the dead" (1Pt 4:5) in vengeance (cf Dn 7:9–10). *obey the gospel*. Faith obeys; obedience is faithful. Rejection of the Gospel is disobedience to the divine invitation to faith and life. See note, Rm 1:5.

2 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 1:9 *eternal destruction, away from the presence*. Everlasting fire, chastisement, ruin, punishment, and judgment describe the end of those who reject God's mercy. Not an annihilation but a complete and final separation from God, from beholding the face of Jesus. This is hell (cf Mt 25:31–46). *glory of His might*. The visible glory of God's presence; it shines forth from His strength, His might. Our Lord's presence is held in tension: earthly in this time and place, and also heavenly in eternity. He is inseparably present with the faithful already now in His Body, the Church, through Word and Sacrament (cf Rm 8:30–39); at the same time, paradoxically, believers await the revelation of His presence "when He comes on that day" (v 10). Cf 2Co 4:6; 1Th 2:12.

2 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 1:10 *glorified in His saints*. The Lord ultimately shares His glory with His followers "on that day"; He is the source of glory (cf 2:14; Rm 8:17–18; Php 3:21). *saints*. See p 1904. *testimony*. The Gospel (v 8) preached by the apostles, who were witnesses of what they had seen and heard, esp the utterly convincing fact that Jesus was raised from the dead (1Co 15:5–8). See p 971.

2 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 1:11 *worthy of His calling*. See note, v 5. Only God can proclaim and make the Thessalonians or anyone worthy, and "He will surely do it" (1Th 5:24)! Here the worthiness refers to our present vocations and our holiness therein. God calls Christians in Baptism, and thus He saves them, draws them to Himself, and keeps them in His

hand. *every resolve for good and every work of faith*. Wrought by God's sanctifying power; God's gift of justifying faith produces these good works. Though justification and sanctification are distinct, as are faith and works, they are never separate. We are saved through faith alone, but faith is never alone; it always produces good works. *by His power*. Because of sin, we are powerless to do the good works of faith. Paul's prayer is that God would continue His work and bring it to completion (cf Jn 15:5). See note, v 3.

2 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 1:12 *so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified*. In and through His people, the Lord is glorified and He, in turn, is their glory. "[God] has created us for this very reason, that He might redeem and sanctify us" (LC II 64). Christians glorify the Lord by serving their neighbor (cf Mt 25:40; Lk 10:25–37; Rm 12:1). This has an evangelistic effect (Mt 5:16; cf Php 1:9–11). *grace*. See p 1902. *our God and the Lord*. Paul normally uses "God" to refer to the First Person of the Holy Trinity (the Father) and "Lord" to refer to the Second Person (the Son). Both are divine; Paul is speaking here of the two persons of the Trinity, not two separate gods.

2 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 1:5–12 God's judgment will be carried out by the Lord Jesus at His second coming on the Last Day. This is bad news for those who do not believe, for those who reject God's grace in Christ (v 8), as "they will suffer … away from the presence of the Lord" (v 9). As believers, we live in a state of continual readiness for this day (cf Mt 24:36–51; 2Co 6:2). Jesus will be glorified in us, and we in Him (v 12); by His grace, God will judge believers worthy to inherit heaven; and by His power, He will bring our faith to its heavenly fulfillment (vv 11–12). • Gracious Father, You led Your people, ancient Israel, from bondage in Egypt to the Promised Land. Lead us, the new Israel, from this earthly vale of tears to the promised land of Your heavenly kingdom and eternal life. Amen.

2 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 2:1 *coming*. See note, 1Th 4:15. *our being gathered together in Him*. See note, 1Th 4:17.

2 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 2:2 *by a spirit or a spoken word*. Paul strongly warns the Thessalonians to beware of false prophets (false spirits), and also misunderstandings of inspired prophetic teachings (even from the prophetic Spirit through Paul himself) or any of his oral communication. *a letter seeming to be from us*. May refer to a misinterpretation of 1Th that led to doctrinal error. See pp 2059–60. *the day of the Lord has come*. A

deception. Paul explains the deception in v 3. This is one of his main purposes in writing 2Th.

2 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 2:3 *rebellion*. Gk *apostasia*, root of Eng "apostasy." Abandonment of the faith. Betrayal, falsehood, hatred, and lawlessness by misled Christians will be marks of this intrachurch rebellion against God and His truth (Mt 24:9–12). *man of lawlessness*. He comes as the completion of the rebellion. Elsewhere in Scripture, this incarnation of evil is called "the antichrist" and "the beast." Luth: "[He] not only is a sinner in his own right, but … through false doctrine [he] causes others to sin with him" (AE 41:288). See pp 2059–60. *son of destruction*. He spreads destruction and will ultimately be destroyed himself, i.e., he is headed for destruction. He embodies the great rebellion against God. He is satanic, perhaps even Satan possessing a person. He has not yet come, but the powers that he embodies are already active: the "mystery of lawlessness" (v 7). Judas is a type of the man of lawlessness (Jn 13:27; 17:12).

2 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 2:4 *exalts himself*. The man of lawlessness exalts himself over both true religion (Christianity) and false religion (man-made). Iren: "Antichrist shall be lifted up, not above Him, but above those which are indeed called gods, but are not" (*ANF* 1:420). *temple of God*. Paul could be using the Jerusalem temple as a symbol of God's authority or rule. (The temple itself was destroyed in AD 70 and so would not be standing at the end of the age.) Cf Dn 9–12. Church Fathers believed the Antichrist would be a successor to the Roman Empire. During the medieval period, some Franciscans and other theologians asserted strongly that the pope was the Antichrist. Others saw the coming of the Antichrist in the attacks of the Muslim Turks. The Lutheran Confessions describe papal and Islamic doctrines as "marks of Antichrist" and express that the Antichrist will manifest himself as an authority over the Church at the end of time. "The marks of Antichrist plainly agree with the kingdom of the pope and his followers…. [Paul] is not speaking about heathen kings, but about someone ruling in the Church" (Tr 39). Luth: "God's temple is not the description for a pile of stones, but for the holy Christendom (1 Co 3[:17]), in which [the Antichrist] is to reign" (AE 40:232). *proclaiming himself to be God*. This is the height of what could be called "false Gospel" (Gal 1:6–8).

2 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 2:6 *what is restraining him*. The man of lawlessness is confronted with an obstacle, a restrainer. Paul does not plainly write what this restraint is, though he had explained it to the

Thessalonians (cf Dn 9–11, esp 10; Rv 9:11–21). However, we do know that God—then and now and always—is working things according to His will, His time, and His plan of salvation. See pp 2059–60.

2 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 2:7 *mystery of lawlessness*. See note, v 3. *he*. The restrainer. See note, v 6.

2 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 2:8 *breath*. The Word of Christ, of which the Holy Spirit is the preeminent preacher. Gk *pneuma* means both "breath" and "spirit" (cf Eph 6:17). *appearance of His coming*. After the son of destruction is revealed, Jesus will kill this lawless one by the Word. This occurs with Christ's second coming. However, we are not told any dates or intervals of time regarding these climactic events.

2 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 2:9 *activity of Satan*. The lawless one is an agent of Satan, while at the same time embodying and fully representing the evil that Satan is. Note the unholy anti-Trinity of Rv 13:1–18, which depicts multiple manifestations of the satanic being (see note, v 3). *false signs and wonders*. A parody by the Antichrist of the true Christ, who did true "mighty works and wonders and signs" (Ac 2:22). Jesus prophesied about this work of the devil (Mk 13:22–23). These evil and misleading miracles are intended to draw people into falsehood.

2 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 2:10 *love the truth and so be saved*. Love of true doctrine, love of all that Jesus has commanded to be taught (Mt 28:19–20). Such love is not distinct from faith in Jesus; faith cherishes the truth (cf Jn 8:31–32).

2 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 2:11 God gives the perishing (the wicked, those persistent in unbelief; cf Ps 14:1) over to the evil they themselves have chosen. If they persist in error, He gives them finally to evil's destructive end: condemnation. See notes, Ex 4:21; 9:12. This is a work of His Law (sometimes called God's "alien work"), but it is not what God desires for people. Cf Rm 1:21–28; 11:8; 2Co 4:4; Rv 3:16. See note, v 12.

2 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 2:12 *in order that all may be condemned*. God predestines/elects no one to condemnation; this would be counter to His very character and being as the God of grace and mercy in Christ Jesus (Ezk 33:11; 1Tm 2:3–4; cf Jn 3:17–21; 2Pt 3:9). Luther states that the reason God created us was to redeem us! See LC II 64. Condemnation is truly self-chosen by willful rejection of God's love in Christ. See note, v 11.

2 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 2:1–12 Paul warns the Thessalonians not to be misled regarding the second coming of Christ, that the day of the Lord has already come. He describes those apocalyptic events yet to take place before the return of Jesus, specifically the revelation of the man of lawlessness. We must be on guard against deception. There is much false teaching, especially regarding the end times. Our only protection against falsehood is to cling to the Word of God: read the Bible, pray based on the Word, and continue to hear the Word in the communion of saints. The Lord, the Word made flesh, brings us life under this Word of truth. Paul pastorally comforts the Thessalonians, and us, that Christ will overthrow this Antichrist. We look forward, with great hope and joy, to Christ's return in glory. • "Lord, keep us steadfast in Your Word; Curb those who by deceit or sword Would wrest the kingdom from Your Son And bring to naught all He has done. O Comforter of priceless worth, Send peace and unity on earth; Support us in our final strife And lead us out of death to life." Amen. (*LSB* 655:1, 3)

2 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 2:13 *brothers beloved*. Family of God. As members of the Church, the Body of Christ, they are loved by the Lord Jesus. *chose you*. God has elected His people unto salvation; thus our salvation is sure. Cf Rm 8:29–39; Eph 1:3–14; 2Tm 1:9. *firstfruits to be saved*. God the Father chose us in Christ before He made the world. Cf 1Pt 1:18–20; Rv 13:8. *through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth*. See notes, 1:3, 11.

2 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 2:14 *our gospel*. See "Gospel," p 1902; see also note, 1:8. *obtain the glory*. See note, 1:10.

2 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 2:15 *traditions*. See p 1904. The doctrine that the apostles received from their divine Master. There was already at this time, before any written Gospel had appeared, an established Christian teaching that one was not allowed to alter. Cf Ac 2:42. On early catechesis, see p 1965. *letter*. 1Th.

2 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 2:16 *comfort*. Gk *paraklesis*, an allusion to one of the Holy Spirit's names: the Comforter (KJV) or Helper (Jn 14:26); the blessing is trinitarian. *hope through grace*. Because of God's good favor toward us, His loving and kind disposition, we have sure hope for the day of redemption. See note, 3:16.

2 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 2:13–17 Paul calls on the Thessalonians to stand firm in the faith the Lord has given them. He

reminds them that both their calling and comfort have God as the source. We must not seek the truth in the spirit of the age, in the fads, trends, or ideas of today's marketplace. The God who has elected us unto salvation keeps us steadfast in the faith (cf 1Th 5:23–24). The doctrine of election is a doctrine of the Gospel, by which we know that our salvation is guaranteed (Eph 1:14) because it depends on God alone as He has chosen us before the foundation of the world (see notes, Rm 8:28; 9:11). God assures us of this through the external signs of His Word and Sacrament He handed down to us through the apostles. • "The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and preserve you in body and soul to life everlasting." Amen. (*LSB,* p 164)

2 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 3:1 Paul requests intercessory prayer for missions, for evangelism. *honored*. Received through faith. "We pray that His name may be so praised through God's holy Word and a Christian life that we who have accepted it may abide and daily grow in it, and that it may gain approval and acceptance among other people. We pray that it may go forth with power throughout the world" (LC III 52).

2 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 3:2 *wicked and evil men*. Persecutors (1:6) or false teachers. *not all have faith*. Esp those who, through their whole being and life, experience the faith as a threat and an enemy who must be defeated. Saving faith is not an inherent human ability. See note, 1:3.

2 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 3:3 *faithful*. The Lord has shown Himself to be reliable and trustworthy; He has always kept His promises to His people (e.g., the exodus, the Promised Land, the Messiah) and will continue to keep them. Cf 1:6–7, 11–12; 2:8, 13–14. *guard you*. Paul directs the Thessalonians and us to apostolic teaching ("the things that we command"; v 4) and to "the love of God" and "the steadfastness of Christ" (v 5). These are available to us in the means of grace (see "grace," p 1902). *the evil one*. Satan (see notes, 2:3, 4).

2 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 3:4 *we command*. Apostolic authority on behalf of Christ (Tr 60). Today, such authority is given to those whom Christ calls into the apostolic Office of the Holy Ministry. Christ is the one working in and through the Office, using the man in it as an instrument (1Co 4:1). See note, Heb 13:17.

2 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 3:5 *direct your hearts*. The Lord turns our hearts to Him. *hearts*. The total inner person; indicates our communion

with God through faith (cf 2Pt 1:4). *steadfastness of Christ*. See note, Php 2:8; cf Heb 12:2–3.

2 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 3:1–5 Paul requests prayer for his missionary work and obedience to what he has commanded them. We are called to listen to those whom God has given to teach and preach the pure Word (Heb 13:17; cf Ac 5:27–32). The Lord's faithfulness toward us is steadfast; He is an immovable rock. Through the Church (His Body) and her pastors, He will guard us against the attacks of the evil one, the devil, the Antichrist. • "Protect us from war, bloodshed, plagues, pestilence, and other grievous diseases. Guard us against all evil and distresses of the body. Let Your divine will, the growth of Your kingdom and the glory of Your name be accomplished in all these things. Amen." (Luth, *TLWA,* p 336)

2 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 3:6 *we command*. See note, v 4. *in the name*. Cf Ac 4:12. Paul has apostolic authority, and he reminded his hearers of this at the beginning of most of his Letters (cf Gal 1:1). This is also a reminder that Christ has a baptismal claim on all who have been baptized into His name. See p 843. *keep away*. See note, Rm 16:17; see also p 1907. *brother*. People should still be acknowledged as fellow Christians and not be expelled from the Church if there is yet hope for repentance. See note, 2:13. *walking in idleness*. Neglecting daily responsibilities and common tasks, but also meddling in the affairs of others. Perhaps this was because they anticipated that the end of the world was imminent (2:1–3), or perhaps they were simply lazy and arrogant (cf v 11). *the tradition*. Apostolic teaching and instruction concerning everyday conduct. See note, 2:15.

2 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 3:7 *imitate us*. A theme in Paul's Letters; he calls on his hearers to imitate him because he imitates Jesus (cf 1Co 11:1; Eph 5:1–21). In this case, he reminds the Thessalonians that when Silvanus, Timothy, and he were with them, they were not idle, disorderly, or undisciplined, but they "worked night and day" (v 8). See note, v 6.

2 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 3:8 Cf 2Co 11:7.

2 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 3:9 *have that right*. See note, v 8; cf 1Co 9:14–15a; 1Tm 5:17–18. *an example to imitate*. See note, v 7.

2 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 3:10 *this command*. See note, v 4. *anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat*. Called "the Golden Rule of work." Related to both the general and specific instructions already given orally and in writing, esp the command given in v 6.

2 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 3:11 *we hear*. Paul does not identify from whom or how he has heard this news, though perhaps it was through the person who had delivered 1Th. *busybodies*. See note, v 6. *Did:* "See to it that, as a Christian, he shall not live with you idle. But if he wills not so to do, he is a Christ-monger. Watch that you keep aloof from such" (*ANF* 7:381).
2 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 3:12 *command*. See note, v 4. *quietly*. Without interfering in the work of others and without arrogantly seeking to draw attention (cf vv 6, 11).
2 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 3:14 *have nothing to do with him*. See note, Rm 16:17.
2 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 3:15 It is at times necessary, and indeed truly loving, for one believer to speak the word of the Law to another in order to shame that person into seeing the harmful evil of his or her ways and repenting. See note, v 6.
2 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 3:6–15 Those who are idle are to be avoided and even denied fellowship in order that this might cause them to repent, amend their ways, and return to their fellow believers. Laziness is a serious sin against the God who created us and gave us talents and abilities. It is a sin against the Body of Christ, against our brothers and sisters in the Lord, to whom we have been joined and with whom we are to be co-workers. The good news is that this word of the condemning Law is not the last word. The Law shows us our need for the Savior from sin; the Gospel gives us that Savior. • Heavenly Father, I thank You that in Baptism You have broken into my life, unified me with the life of Christ, and chosen me for citizenship in Your kingdom. I praise You for this inheritance, this home, this family. I bless You for never having forgotten me and never ceasing to yearn for me, to seek me, to call me, to offer me forgiveness anew. Amen.
2 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 3:16 *The Lord be with you all*. A liturgical benediction and confident prayer that the Lord is indeed with them and will continue to be so. Cf Mt 28:20; see notes, 1:2; 2:16; see also "be with," p 5.
2 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 3:17 *own hand*. Paul has, in his usual manner, been dictating while someone else wrote. Now he writes the conclusion, a common practice in ancient letter writing. Paul knew that he had been wrongly cited for support in the spread of false teaching. His

greeting is a guarantee that the Letter really comes from him. Cf Gal 6:11; Col 4:18; Phm 19.

2 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 3:18 See note, v 16.

2 THESSALONIANS—NOTE ON 3:16–18 Paul concludes his Letter with a prayer for peace and, in his own hand, a blessing of grace. We should imitate Paul in his blessing. We should pray for peace for others, even for our enemies. We should bless, and not curse, even those we do not like, even those who do us harm (Rm 12:19; 1Pt 3:9). Our prayer for God's peace and grace in our lives is no mere wish. We do have peace with God and with one another through the blood of Christ; by the grace of our Lord, this is a peace that passes all understanding and remains steadfast regardless of external assaults by the devil (cf Eph 2:11–21; Col 1:19–20; Jn 14:27). • "O God, from whom come all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works, give to us, Your servants, that peace which the world cannot give, that our hearts may be set to obey Your commandments and also that we, being defended from the fear of our enemies, may live in peace and quietness; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever." Amen. (*LSB*, p 233)

1 Timothy

1 Timothy 1 | 1 Timothy 2 | 1 Timothy 3 | 1 Timothy 4 | 1 Timothy 5 | 1 Timothy 6

- Introduction to 1 Timothy
  - Overview
  - Reading 1 Timothy
  - Luther on 1 Timothy
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

Greeting

1 [1]††Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by command of God our Savior
and of Christ Jesus our hope, [2]†To Timothy, my true child in the faith:
Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

Warning Against False Teachers

3 ‡† As I urged you when I was going to Macedonia, remain at Ephesus so
that you may charge certain persons not to teach any different doctrine,
4 † nor to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies, which
promote speculations rather than the stewardship[1] from God that is by
faith. 5 †The aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a
good conscience and a sincere faith. 6 †Certain persons, by swerving from
these, have wandered away into vain discussion, 7 †desiring to be teachers of
the law, without understanding either what they are saying or the things
about which they make confident assertions.
8 † Now we know that the law is good, if one uses it lawfully,
9 ‡†understanding this, that the law is not laid down for the just but for the
lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and
profane, for those who strike their fathers and mothers, for murderers, 10 †the
sexually immoral, men who practice homosexuality, enslavers,[2] liars,
perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound[3] doctrine, 11 † in
accordance with the gospel of the glory of the blessed God with which I
have been entrusted.

Christ Jesus Came to Save Sinners

12 ‡ † I thank him who has given me strength, Christ Jesus our Lord,
because he judged me faithful, appointing me to his service, 13 † though
formerly I was a blasphemer, persecutor, and insolent opponent. But I
received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief, 14 † and the grace
of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ
Jesus. 15 † The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that
Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the
foremost. 16 † But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the
foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to
those who were to believe in him for eternal life. 17 † To the King of ages,
immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever.[1]
Amen.

18 † This charge I entrust to you, Timothy, my child, in accordance with the
prophecies previously made about you, that by them you may wage the
good warfare, 19 † holding faith and a good conscience. By rejecting this,
some have made shipwreck of their faith, 20 † among whom are Hymenaeus
and Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan that they may learn not
to blaspheme.

Pray for All People

2 [1]†First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, [2]† for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. [3]This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, [4]† who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. [5]‡†For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man[1] Christ Jesus, [6]† who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time. [7]† For this I was appointed a preacher and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

[8]†I desire then that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands without anger or quarreling; [9]† likewise also that women should adorn themselves in respectable apparel, with modesty and self-control, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire, [10]† but with what is proper for women who profess godliness—with good works. [11]†Let a woman learn quietly with all submissiveness. [12]† I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet. [13]† For Adam was formed first, then Eve; [14]†and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. [15]†Yet she will be saved through childbearing—if they continue in faith and love and holiness, with self-control.

Qualifications for Overseers

3 [1]‡‡†The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task. [2]†Therefore an overseer[1] must be above reproach, the husband of one wife,[2] sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, [3]† not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. [4]‡He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, [5]for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church? [6]† He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. [7]†Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil.

Qualifications for Deacons

8 ‡ ‡ † Deacons likewise must be dignified, not double-tongued,[1] not
addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain. 9†They must hold the
mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. 10†And let them also be tested
first; then let them serve as deacons if they prove themselves blameless. 11†
Their wives likewise must[2] be dignified, not slanderers, but sober-minded,
faithful in all things. 12Let deacons each be the husband of one wife,
managing their children and their own households well. 13†For those who
serve well as deacons gain a good standing for themselves and also great
confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.

The Mystery of Godliness

14 †† I hope to come to you soon, but I am writing these things to you so
that, 15 † if I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household
of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the
truth. 16 † Great indeed, we confess, is the mystery of godliness:

He[3] was manifested in the flesh,
vindicated[4] by the Spirit,[5]
seen by angels,
proclaimed among the nations,
believed on in the world,
taken up in glory.

Some Will Depart from the Faith

4 [1]†† Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart
from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of
demons, [2]† through the insincerity of liars whose consciences are seared, [3]†
who forbid marriage and require abstinence from foods that God created to
be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth.
[4]† For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it
is received with thanksgiving, [5]for it is made holy by the word of God and
prayer.

A Good Servant of Christ Jesus

6 If you put these things before the brothers,[1] you will be a good
servant of Christ Jesus, being trained in the words of the faith and of the
good doctrine that you have followed. 7 Have nothing to do with irreverent,
silly myths. Rather train yourself for godliness; 8 for while bodily training
is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for
the present life and also for the life to come. 9 The saying is trustworthy
and deserving of full acceptance. 10 For to this end we toil and strive,[2]
because we have our hope set on the living God, who is the Savior of all
people, especially of those who believe.

11 Command and teach these things. 12 Let no one despise you for your
youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in
faith, in purity. 13 Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of
Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching. 14 Do not neglect the gift you have,
which was given you by prophecy when the council of elders laid their
hands on you. 15 Practice these things, immerse yourself in them,[1] so that
all may see your progress. 16 Keep a close watch on yourself and on the
teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and
your hearers.

Instructions for the Church

5 [1]‡‡‡Do not rebuke an older man but encourage him as you would a
father, younger men as brothers, [2]older women as mothers, younger women
as sisters, in all purity.
[3]†Honor widows who are truly widows. [4]†But if a widow has children or
grandchildren, let them first learn to show godliness to their own household
and to make some return to their parents, for this is pleasing in the sight of
God. [5]†She who is truly a widow, left all alone, has set her hope on God and
continues in supplications and prayers night and day, [6]†but she who is self-
indulgent is dead even while she lives. [7] Command these things as well, so
that they may be without reproach. [8]†But if anyone does not provide for his
relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the
faith and is worse than an unbeliever.
[9]‡Let a widow be enrolled if she is not less than sixty years of age,
having been the wife of one husband,[2] [10]and having a reputation for good
works: if she has brought up children, has shown hospitality, has washed
the feet of the saints, has cared for the afflicted, and has devoted herself to
every good work. [11]†But refuse to enroll younger widows, for when their
passions draw them away from Christ, they desire to marry [12]†and so incur
condemnation for having abandoned their former faith. [13]†Besides that, they
learn to be idlers, going about from house to house, and not only idlers, but
also gossips and busybodies, saying what they should not. [14]†So I would
have younger widows marry, bear children, manage their households, and
give the adversary no occasion for slander. [15]† For some have already
strayed after Satan. [16]† If any believing woman has relatives who are
widows, let her care for them. Let the church not be burdened, so that it
may care for those who are truly widows.
[17]†Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor,
especially those who labor in preaching and teaching. [18]†For the Scripture
says, “You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain,” and, “The
laborer deserves his wages.” [19]†Do not admit a charge against an elder
except on the evidence of two or three witnesses. [20]†As for those who

persist in sin, rebuke them in the presence of all, so that the rest may stand
in fear. 21†In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of the elect angels
I charge you to keep these rules without prejudging, doing nothing from
partiality. 22† Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands, nor take part in the
sins of others; keep yourself pure. 23†(No longer drink only water, but use a
little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments.) 24The
sins of some men are conspicuous, going before them to judgment, but the
sins of others appear later. 25So also good works are conspicuous, and even
those that are not cannot remain hidden.

6 1†Let all who are under a yoke as slaves[1] regard their own masters
as worthy of all honor, so that the name of God and the teaching may not be
reviled. 2‡††Those who have believing masters must not be disrespectful on
the ground that they are brothers; rather they must serve all the better since
those who benefit by their good service are believers and beloved.

False Teachers and True Contentment

Teach and urge these things. 3 †If anyone teaches a different doctrine and
does not agree with the sound[1] words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the
teaching that accords with godliness, 4 † he is puffed up with conceit and
understands nothing. He has an unhealthy craving for controversy and for
quarrels about words, which produce envy, dissension, slander, evil
suspicions, 5 †and constant friction among people who are depraved in mind
and deprived of the truth, imagining that godliness is a means of gain.
6 †Now there is great gain in godliness with contentment, 7 †for we brought
nothing into the world, and[2] we cannot take anything out of the world.
8 †But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content. 9 †But
those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many
senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction.
10 †For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this
craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced
themselves with many pangs.

Fight the Good Fight of Faith

11 ‡ † But as for you, O man of God, flee these things. Pursue
righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness. 12† Fight the
good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were
called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of
many witnesses. 13‡† I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to
all things, and of Christ Jesus, who in his testimony before[3] Pontius Pilate
made the good confession, 14†to keep the commandment unstained and free
from reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, 15†which he will
display at the proper time—he who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the
King of kings and Lord of lords, 16† who alone has immortality, who dwells
in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see. To him be
honor and eternal dominion. Amen.

17†As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor
to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly
provides us with everything to enjoy. 18†They are to do good, to be rich in
good works, to be generous and ready to share, 19†thus storing up treasure
for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take
hold of that which is truly life.

20†O Timothy, guard the deposit entrusted to you. Avoid the irreverent
babble and contradictions of what is falsely called “knowledge,” 21†for by
professing it some have swerved from the faith.

Grace be with you.[1]

1 Timothy

OVERVIEW

Author
Paul the apostle

Date
AD 65

Places
Ephesus; Macedonia

People
Paul; Timothy; Hymenaeus; Alexander

Purpose
To encourage and instruct Timothy as he called the Ephesians to be faithful to God's Word

Law Themes
Charged/appointed with service; threat of false teachers; management

Gospel Themes
The glorious Gospel; salvation through Christ, our Mediator; hallowed by God's Word/grace

Memory Verses
Chief of sinners (1:15–16); one Mediator (2:5–6); the mystery of godliness (3:16); contentment (6:6–8)

Introduction to 1 Timothy

Reading 1 Timothy

"My lord," the chief servant explains, "the granary is full, though the harvest is not yet complete." The head of the household excuses himself from his guests, crosses the mosaic floor of the men's quarters (Gk *andron*), and enters the family courtyard. His wife sits in the shade of the women's quarters. She spins thread while watching the progress of the young women. Their children and the slaves' children race clay horse figurines around the beaten-earth courtyard. The lord (Gk *kyrios*) passes into the street, encouraging his chief servant as they walk through town on the way to the fields.

In 1 Timothy, the apostle Paul speaks as Timothy's father (1:18). Paul compares Timothy's service in the Church at Ephesus with the service of a father in a typical Greek household. The overseer must manage his household, commanding and teaching the members (4:11), seeing that care is distributed to all. Each member must fulfill a role and a calling in service to the Lord of all.

Luther on 1 Timothy

> This epistle St. Paul writes in order to provide a model to all bishops of what they are to teach and how they are to rule Christendom in the various stations of life, so that it may not be necessary for them to rule Christians according to their own human opinions.
>
> In chapter 1 he charges that a bishop keep true faith and love and resist the false preachers of the law who, beside Christ and the gospel, would also insist on the works of the law. In a brief summary, he comprehends the entire Christian doctrine concerning the purpose of the law and the nature of the gospel. He offers himself as an example to comfort all sinners and those with troubled conscience.
>
> In chapter 2 he charges that prayer be made for all stations of life. He also commands that women are not to preach or wear costly adornment, but are to be obedient to men. [For Luther's intent, see notes, Eph 5:21–33.]
>
> In chapter 3 he describes the kind of persons that bishops, or priests, and their wives ought to be, and also the deacons and their wives. He praises those who desire to be bishops of this kind.
>
> In chapter 4 he prophesies of false bishops and the spiritual estate which is opposed to that spoken of above, who will not be persons of that kind, but instead will forbid marriage and foods, and with their doctrines of men inculcate the very opposite of the things Paul has described.
>
> In chapter 5 he gives orders as to how widows and young women should be looked after, and which widows are to be supported from the common funds; also how godly bishops or priests are to be held in honor, and blameworthy ones punished.
>
> In chapter 6 he exhorts the bishops to hold fast to the pure gospel and to promulgate it by their preaching and living. They are to avoid senseless and meddlesome controversies which are only raised for gaining worldly reputation and riches. (AE 35:388)

For more of Luther's insights on this Book, see *Lectures on 1 Timothy* (AE 28:215–384).

Challenges for Readers

Paul's Authorship. The word choice in 1 Timothy differs somewhat from that in Paul's earlier Letters. As a result, critics have concluded that Paul did not write this Letter to Timothy. However, authors often adapt their writing style based on the recipient. Paul also typically worked through a scribe, which could affect the Letter's style (see note, Rm 16:22). The Early Church unanimously received 1 Timothy as a Letter from Paul.

Relation to Titus. See pp 2087–88.

Service in the Churches. Paul strongly distinguishes the roles of men and women in the family and in the life of the Church. His distinction is consistent with typical Jewish and Greek cultures in the first century. However, Paul does not appeal to culture as a basis for his instruction. Rather, he appeals to God's orderly creation (2:11–15) and specifically restricts some offices in the Church based on gender (3:2, 12). Modern feminism has sought to either dismiss or reinterpret these passages. For more on this issue, see p 1972.

Blessings for Readers

In 1 Timothy, Paul offers sound teachings for young and old, for men and women. As you read this Letter, look for passages about your particular calling in order to learn more about your service and the service of others. Be encouraged to pray for those who serve in your congregation and nation.

God's Word and prayer hallow our good works offered in thanks to our "blessed and only Sovereign" (6:15). Although He has challenged us to serve well, He has also equipped us with sound teaching (6:3) so we may pursue righteousness, faith, love, steadfastness, and gentleness (6:11).

OUTLINE

I. The Power of the Pure Gospel (ch 1)
- A. Greeting (1:1–2)
- B. The Task at Hand (1:3–11)
- C. The Power of the Gospel (1:12–17)
- D. Some Opponents of the Gospel (1:18–20)

II. The Church's Organization (chs 2–3)
- A. Good Order in the Church (ch 2)
  - 1. Good order in public worship (2:1–7)
  - 2. Good order in the Church's ministry (2:8–15)
- B. Qualifications for Offices (ch 3)
  - 1. The pastoral office (3:1–7)
  - 2. Deacons and deaconesses (3:8–13)
  - 3. The Church: the community of faith (3:14–16)

III. True versus False Teaching (ch 4)
- A. Doctrines of Demons (4:1–5)
- B. True Godliness (4:6–10)
- C. Paul's Charge to His Fellow Pastor Timothy (4:11–16)

IV. Exhortation to Christian Living (chs 5–6)
- A. Positions in the Church (5:1–6:2)
  - 1. The shepherd (pastor) and various classes of sheep (Christians) (5:1–2)
  - 2. The order of widows (5:3–16)
  - 3. Pastor Timothy and other pastors (5:17–25)

4. Slaves and their masters (6:1–2)

B. True Godliness (6:3–21)

1. The importance of sound teaching (6:3–5)
2. Contentment as a way of life (6:6–10)
3. Personal note to Timothy (6:11–16)
4. A word to the wealthy (6:17–19)
5. A heartfelt farewell (6:20–21)

Articles and Resources Related to 1 Timothy

- The “New Woman”
- God’s Desire in Prayer

The "New Woman"

In the Greco-Roman world of the first century there emerged, in turn, a new phenomenon: the "new woman." … This trend of lifestyle opened the doors so that many women were "liberated" not only in those areas referring to appearance and social conduct but also as they began to set foot in areas that up until that time had been the exclusive domain of men. Pressure on the first-century AD woman did not come exclusively from the conservative wing, but also from the promoters of this new lifestyle….

Paul moves our attention toward "women who profess the faith" so as to combat the model of the "new woman." [1Tm 2:9–10] does this from the starting point of dress; [Paul's] six sentences that follow use as their starting point the usurping of male authority. The fact that the model of the "new woman" came out of a current popular cultural trend did not reduce Paul's confrontation to only one line of argument. In this confrontation, the apostle's thought rather moved on an ethical, theological, and missiological plane: to dress as a "new woman" implied identifying oneself as an ethically licentious person. Invading the male domain—particularly in the context of the Church—not only defied social order but also the divine. In their own way, both avenues of conduct undermined the mission potential of the Church by hiding and confusing its witness.

Roberto E. Bustamante, *Primera carta a Timoteo (First Letter to Timothy)*, trans. Douglas Groll (St. Louis: Concordia, 2007), 177–78.

For an overview of biblical teaching on the life and service of a woman in society, the Church, and the home, see notes, Pr 31:10–31; Lk 8:2–3; 24:9; Eph 5:22–6:9; 1Tm 2:8–15; 1Pt 3:7. See also pp 213, 389, 1972.

God's Desire in Prayer

One generation shall commend Your works to another…. They shall speak of the glory of Your kingdom…. Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and Your dominion endures throughout all generations. (Ps 145:4, 11, 13)

Much has been made about the "power" of prayer. For example, in *Power through Prayer*, Edward M. Bounds (1835–1913) suggested that personal holiness was the power behind prayer. Some scientific studies also suggest that patients fare better after surgery, and have shorter hospital stays, if someone is praying for them. Some Christians believe God gives those who pray an ability to assist others or to influence certain events. Because prayer is "powerful," people desire to pray for others and have others pray for them. But what is God's desire behind our prayer?

Paul addresses the subject of prayer in 1 Timothy. He encourages prayer and asks the Church in Ephesus to be engaged in prayer. But in contrast to what some people today expect from prayer, Paul puts the focus on God and what He desires through our prayers. God wants us to pray because He desires the salvation of all people.

Praying Together

We are to "call on the name of the LORD" (Ps 116:13, 17), not only individually but also whenever we come together in Christ's name. Paul describes prayer in the context of public worship. He emphasizes the important place prayer should have when believers come together to hear God's Word and receive His Sacraments. Men in the congregation should take a leadership position in this regard (1Tm 2:8). Calling on our gracious God is a holy privilege of those who have been redeemed by Christ.

> I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. (1Tm 2:1–4)

In these verses, Paul offers a summary of prayer in the life of the worshiping community. Prayer's importance should not be underestimated. Paul strongly encourages Timothy, and through him the Church at Ephesus, to be in prayer. The prayers they offer together run the whole gamut of conversing with God: "supplications," or asking God to meet our needs; "prayers," or respectful devotion; "intercessions," or earnest appeal to our heavenly Father; and "thanksgivings," which arise from a heart transformed by God's love (Ps 107:1).

Prayers should be made "for all people," but here Paul emphasizes especially those who exercise authority over us. Despite our attitudes and feelings toward those who hold power, even if they are dishonest, cruel, or incapable, we are to pray for them, even obey them (Ti 3:1)! Our ability to worship and to evangelize as a body, and our potential for exercising our callings as individuals, are hampered by lawlessness and civil unrest. The purpose for such prayers is so that governments and public officials may provide a peaceful and secure society so the Church can flourish.

With Boldness and Confidence

Our prayers, made in faith, please "God our Savior." He wants us to come to Him, as Luther wrote, "with all boldness and confidence … [and] ask Him as dear children ask their dear father" (SC, Lord's Prayer Introduction, p xxxvii). The whole of our prayers, and the rich variety of forms they take, are like the smell of sweet incense ascending to heaven (Ps 141:2). With thankfulness, we are to offer prayers concerning all kinds of temporal things (1Tm 4:4–5). However, we do not pray to manipulate, coerce, or intimidate God into doing our will. Rather, we pray as our Lord taught: "Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven" (Mt 6:10).

God desires the enlargement of His heavenly kingdom of grace through the work of the Holy Spirit through His Word. Just as we do not discriminate in our prayers but pray for "all people," so, too, does God desire the salvation of all people (Ezk 18:23, 32; Jn 3:16). In fact, Paul argues that God is pleased when we pray for everyone because He wants "all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (1Tm 2:4). Hence the focus of prayer is not on the required amount of holiness or the success rate prayer has for the ill or even the supposed power people have in changing others or altering events. Prayer, whether congregational or individual, is made in faith to a gracious God. He longs for our prayers, even as He longs to bring salvation to the world.

Our Focus in Prayer

Too often we view prayer in a way that focuses on ourselves. We can begin to believe that we are responsible for the outcome of our prayers, that it somehow is related to our "power." Instead of viewing prayer as a humble appeal to an almighty God, we wrongly assume we can control Him by what, how long, or how often we pray. Prayer becomes a tool for getting what we want. With such wicked desires, God may choose not to listen to our prayers at all (Is 1:15). We can hinder our prayers by our misdeeds (1Pt 3:7).

"The saying is trustworthy, for: If we have died with Him, we will also live with Him; if we endure, we will also reign with Him; if we deny Him, He also will deny us; if we are faithless, He remains faithful—for He cannot deny Himself" (2Tm 2:11–13).

Despite our self-centeredness in our prayers, God's grace still stands. On the cross, Jesus prayed, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Lk 23:34). Because of Jesus' sacrifice, we know that we are forgiven and that God invites us to come to Him in prayer (Jn 14:13–14). We can rejoice that He answers our prayers according to His good and gracious will (Ps 34:15, 17).

Footnotes

Footnotes for 1 Timothy, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:4 Or *good order*
- [2] 1:10 That is, those who take someone captive in order to sell him into slavery
- [3] 1:10 Or *healthy*
- [1] 1:17 Greek *to the ages of ages*

Footnotes for 1 Timothy, Chapter 2

- [1] 2:5 *men* and *man* render the same Greek word that is translated *people* in verses 1 and 4

Footnotes for 1 Timothy, Chapter 3

- [1] 3:2 Or *bishop*; Greek *episkopos*; a similar term occurs in verse 1
- [2] 3:2 Or *a man of one woman*; also verse 12
- [1] 3:8 Or *devious in speech*
- [2] 3:11 Or *Wives, likewise, must*, or *Women, likewise, must*
- [3] 3:16 Greek *Who*; some manuscripts *God*; others *Which*
- [4] 3:16 Or *justified*
- [5] 3:16 Or *vindicated in spirit*

Footnotes for 1 Timothy, Chapter 4

- [1] 4:6 Or *brothers and sisters*. The plural Greek word *adelphoi* (translated “brothers”) refers to siblings in a family. In New Testament usage, depending on the context, *adelphoi* may refer either to men or to both men and women who are siblings (brothers and sisters) in God’s family, the church
- [2] 4:10 Some manuscripts *and suffer reproach*
- [1] 4:15 Greek *be in them*

Footnotes for 1 Timothy, Chapter 5

- [2] 5:9 Or *a woman of one man*

Footnotes for 1 Timothy, Chapter 6

- [1] 6:1 Greek *bondservants*
- [1] 6:3 Or *healthy*
- [2] 6:7 Greek *for*; some manuscripts insert [it is] *certain* [that]
- [3] 6:13 Or *in the time of*
- [1] 6:21 The Greek for *you* is plural

Study Notes

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 1:1 *apostle*. See p 1901. *Christ Jesus*. In 1Tm, the Savior's title or office ("Christ") frequently precedes His personal name (Jesus). The difference between this and "Jesus Christ" is slight. *command*. Paul's appointment as an apostle was a direct divine order (Ac 26:15–18). *God our Savior*. See "save," p 1904. *our hope*. Hope objectively embodied in Jesus is not mere wishful thinking but confident expectation. See p 1903.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 1:2 *Timothy*. A native of Lystra in modern Turkey; the son of a Gentile father and Christian mother (Ac 16:1; 2Tm 1:5). He toured with Paul and later served as a pastor in Ephesus. Paul invited him to join his missionary travels on his second visit to Lystra (Ac 16:3). *true child*. An expression used in Jewish and Roman literature. As a spiritual son who confessed with Paul the same faith in Christ Jesus, Timothy would be expected to render loving service to his spiritual father by carrying out the directives in the Epistle. Paul uses this family expression most for those who represent him to others in the churches. Cf 1:18; 2Tm 2:1; see p 555.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 1:1–2 The work of the Gospel ministry carried out by Paul and Timothy flows from God's command. The words they speak are His words, not their own. Their competence for ministry comes from God, who called them to His service. Today, we should not judge the effectiveness of those called to serve as Gospel ministers only according to their personality traits or other outward characteristics. Ministers should instead be regarded according to how faithfully they proclaim the Gospel message entrusted to them. The Lord Jesus has called ministers to be His representatives in our lives. The effectiveness of the Word they proclaim and the Absolution they pronounce rests on the power and authority of the Savior Himself. • Lord Jesus, teach us to regard the servants of Your Church not according to their individual strengths and weaknesses but as Your spokesmen, called to serve sinners with Your gifts of forgiveness and life. Amen.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 1:3 *remain at Ephesus*. Paul likely made this decision during his fourth missionary journey, following his release from prison in Rome (see note, Ti 1:5). 1Tm was written when it became clear that Paul's return to Ephesus might be delayed (3:14–15). *Ephesus*. The site

of Paul's longest missionary tenure (Ac 19–20), it was a large seaport city on the western coast of modern Turkey. See map, p 1886. *charge*. A military term that implies the giving of strict orders in an authoritative manner. *different doctrine*. A Gk term likely coined by Paul, as it appears again only in 6:3. It includes any teaching that was contrary to what Paul taught.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 1:4 *myths*. Fictitious, legendary stories that are of no spiritual value. See note, Ti 1:14. *endless genealogies*. Probably those found in the OT that had become a source for speculation and the invention of allegorical tales, which had all but replaced the Gospel in the minds of some. *stewardship from God*. The work of administering the Gospel was to be carried forward by faithfully teaching sound doctrine.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 1:5 *our charge*. See note, v 3; cf v 18. *from a pure heart … sincere faith*. These fruits of faith in Jesus Christ cannot be produced by false doctrines, myths, or genealogies.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 1:6 *Certain persons*. Probably those first mentioned in v 3. *vain discussion*. Idle chatter or useless talk.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 1:7 *teachers of the law*. This technical term from Judaism is typically used to describe teachers of the Mosaic Law as contained in the Pentateuch. See note, Lv 10:11.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 1:8 *the law is good*. Because it is given by God, the Law is intrinsically good. It must, however, be used "lawfully," i.e., according to God's intent.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 1:9–10 The list of sins shows how God's Law is properly used, namely, to bring sinners to contrition and repentance. Each of the sins listed by Paul closely corresponds to God's Law as found in the Ten Commandments (Ex 20:1–17). On Paul's use of "law," see p 1911.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 1:9 *law … for the lawless*. "Yet this is not to be understood in a simplistic way, as though the justified are to live without Law. God's Law has been written in their heart (Romans 2:15). Also a law was given to the first man immediately after his creation (Genesis 2:15–17): He was to conduct himself according to this law. What St. Paul means is that the curse of the Law cannot burden those who have been reconciled to God through Christ. Nor must the Law confuse the regenerate with its coercion, for they have pleasure in God's Law in the inner man (Romans 7:22)" (FC SD VI 5). Bern: "The law promulgated in fear by a spirit of slavery is one thing, and that given sweetly and gently by the spirit of liberty is another" (*SLSB*, p 200).

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 1:10 *enslavers*. Kidnappers, involved in illegal slave trade. *sound doctrine*. Lit, "healthy teaching." A phrase used by Paul only in the Pastoral Epistles, it implies that the so-called teachers of the law (v 7) in Ephesus were peddling unhealthy and diseased doctrines. See note, Ti 2:1.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 1:11 *gospel*. The Good News that we are saved eternally from the Law's condemnation through faith in Jesus. It is the only means by which sinners can be cleansed and saved. *blessed God*. God is described as "blessed" in the NT only here and in 6:15. He is the source of all blessedness, which He gives to believers through the "sound doctrine" of the gospel. See "bless," p 842. *entrusted*. As one of the apostles, Paul had been esp entrusted with the Gospel.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 1:3–11 This Epistle was written to stop the teaching of false doctrine among the Ephesian churches and to promote the teaching of sound doctrine. Our sinful nature often leads us to be unconcerned about the doctrines God has given us in His Word. When this happens, we are guilty of being poor stewards of the Gospel. Yet, in the good news of Jesus Christ, we are given a pure heart, a good conscience, and a sincere faith—all of which enable us to receive God's gift of sound doctrine with thanksgiving and eagerness. • Dear Lord, apply Your Law to our hearts, that we might recognize our sins and be brought to repentance. Give us a love for the healthy teaching of Your Gospel, that we might be faithful stewards of all You have entrusted to us. Amen.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 1:12 *judged me faithful*. The Lord Jesus considered Paul faithful even before Paul was able to demonstrate his faithfulness as a minister of the Gospel. Cf Ac 9:15–16. *service*. As an apostle.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 1:13 *formerly I was … opponent*. Before his conversion, Paul (then known as Saul) had actively persecuted the followers of Jesus (Ac 7:58–8:3). Yet, in his zeal to ravage the Church, Paul was, in fact, persecuting the Lord Jesus Himself (Ac 9:4–5). *received mercy … ignorantly*. Paul was the passive recipient of mercy from the Lord, whose mercy is always undeserved and unearned—it can be received only as a gift. Paul's admission that he acted ignorantly is not offered as an excuse for his sin. It shows, rather, that he did not willfully reject the Savior because he was ignorant that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 1:14 Paul's heart was changed by God's overflowing grace. *grace*. God's undeserved favor shown to the guilty sinner. See p 1902. *overflowed*. Though he regarded himself as the foremost of sinners, the Lord's grace for Paul was poured out in abundance. See note, Ti 3:5.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 1:15 *The saying*. Perhaps a restatement of what Jesus proclaimed concerning Himself in the Gospels (cf Lk 19:10). *came into the world*. At His incarnation, Christ entered the realm in which human beings live and sin (Php 2:5–8). *save sinners*. See p 1904. *I am the foremost*. Paul led persecution against the Lord and His followers. The present tense of the verb indicates that Paul's self-designation remains valid, even though he has been fully absolved and saved by Christ Jesus. Christians do not cease to sin until the life of the world to come. In this life, we remain saints (people made holy through faith in Jesus) and sinners.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 1:16 *mercy for this reason*. In v 13b, Paul describes God's mercy in terms of what God did for him; in v 16, that same mercy is described in terms of the example it set for others. *display His perfect patience*. When God delays judgment against sin, this patience is an occasion for repentance and salvation (2Pt 3:9, 15). *example*. God would also graciously deal with other sinners who would repent and believe in the future.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 1:17 *King of ages*. The past, present, and future are under His control. *immortal*. Immune to corruption and decay (see notes, Jsh 3:10; Mt 16:16). *invisible*. Jesus says that God is "spirit" (Jn 4:24). He is the Maker "of all things visible and invisible" (Nicene Creed). *only God*. Even as Christians confess the divinity of Jesus as the Son of God, they worship one God, the Holy Trinity (Rm 3:29–30; 1Co 8:4–6; 1Tm 2:5).

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 1:18 *charge*. Given in vv 3–5. See note, v 3. *my child*. See note, v 2. *prophecies*. Occasions when God's Word was spoken to Timothy, perhaps concerning his call to serve as Gospel minister. See pp 1077–83. Chrys: "What is 'by prophecy'? By the Holy Spirit. For prophecy is not only the telling of things future, but also of the present…. To elevate him, and prepare him to be sober and watchful, he reminds him by whom he was chosen and ordained, as if he had said, 'God has chosen you' " (*NPNF* 1 13:423). *by them*. The prophecies from God concerning Timothy would sustain and direct him as he carried out his charge. *good warfare*.

Timothy is charged to silence those in Ephesus teaching different doctrines. Paul's military vocabulary implies that, in the discharge of his duties, Timothy will suffer hardships and be expected to render faithfulness to those in authority over him.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 1:19 *holding faith and a good conscience*. Timothy's work would require faith in God's prophecies, by which he would wage the good warfare. Fully relying on God's Word would naturally result in a good conscience for Timothy. See p 1902. *this*. The prophecies (Word) of God. *a shipwreck of their faith*. A graphic depiction of what happens to the faith of those who thrust aside the prophecies (Word) of God. Before Paul wrote this Epistle, he had been shipwrecked several times (cf 2Co 11:25; Ac 27:39–44).

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 1:20 *handed over to Satan*. Formal expulsion or excommunication from the Christian community. Cf 1Co 5:3–5, 9–13. *learn not to blaspheme*. The goal of excommunication is that the sinner be led to repentance and be restored to the faith previously rejected. Cf 2Co 2:5–11.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 1:12–20 "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (v 15). This truth is the beating heart of all our hope and joy. God's patience and mercy are at work to save all sinners, whether they are blinded by ignorance (like Paul) or have actively rejected the faith (like Hymenaeus and Alexander). Our conscience may sometimes be plagued by doubts and regrets. But if God's desire to save sinners could extend even to Paul, who actively persecuted Jesus' followers, and who is foremost among sinners, then it can certainly extend to us as well. God's mercy and patience for us is demonstrated at the cross, where Jesus died as the substitute for all sinners and won eternal life for all who believe. • "Almighty God, You turned the heart of him who persecuted the Church and by his preaching caused the light of the Gospel to shine throughout the world. Grant us ever to rejoice in the saving light of Your Gospel and, following the example of the apostle Paul, to spread it to the ends of the earth." Amen. (*LSB Altar Book*, p 954)

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON **Ch 2** Paul writes on organization and order for the public services of the churches.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 2:1 *First*. Corporate prayer and worship were not only first among the practical issues raised by Paul in this Epistle, but they are also of first (primary) importance for fulfilling the charge to

Timothy outlined in ch 1. *supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings*. Four synonyms for prayer, each with a different nuance. *supplications*. Offered for specific benefits or needs. *prayers*. A common NT term, denoting a wide array of petitions. *intercessions*. Appeals for others made to God with boldness and childlike trust. *thanksgivings*. Expressions of gratitude for mercies received. These are always appropriate, even when earthly circumstances are difficult, because we are never separated from God's love and mercy in Christ. *all people*. Inclusive; even unbelievers and enemies of the Church are included in the Church's prayers. Cf Mt 5:43–47.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 2:2 *kings*. Paul does not exclude the notorious emperor Nero, ruler of the Roman Empire. All governing authorities are instituted by God, thus deserving of honor and respect (Rm 13:1–7). *high positions*. All prominent public officials should be included in the Church's prayers. *peaceful and quiet life*. A stable civil government allows Christians to carry out their vocations unhindered and without harassment. The uncommon prosperity and peace of the Roman Empire (the so-called *Pax Romana*) opened many doors for Paul to carry out his ministry throughout the Mediterranean world. Paul himself was a citizen of Rome (Ac 22:22–29).

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 2:4 *who desires all people to be saved*. Cf Ezk 33:11, 2Pt 3:9. All people are not saved, however, because many reject the Word and resist the Holy Spirit (e.g., Hymenaeus and Alexander, who shipwrecked their faith; 1:19–20). Cf Mt 23:37; Ac 7:51.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 2:5–6 "The Scriptures do not teach that we are to call on the saints or to ask the saints for help. Scripture sets before us the one Christ as the Mediator, Atoning Sacrifice, High Priest, and Intercessor [1 Timothy 2:5–6]. He is to be prayed to. He has promised that He will hear our prayer [John 14:13]" (AC XXI 2–3).

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 2:5 *one God*. He saves both Jews and Gentiles through faith (Rm 3:29–30). *one mediator*. Jesus alone is the Savior from sin and death. *man*. Jesus is both "true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary" (see SC, Second Article, p xxxvii). As a true man, His work of mediation was carried out on behalf of all human beings.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 2:6 *ransom*. The price that must be paid to free captives. See p 1904. *for all*. Jesus willingly gave His life as the ransom for

all held captive by sin and death (Mk 10:45). *testimony given at the proper time*. Jesus' act of self-giving testifies to the desire of the one God that all people be saved. Paul and the other apostles would also testify to Jesus' mediating work, and their testimony continues through the time of the NT until Christ returns. See p 971.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 2:7 *appointed a preacher and an apostle*. The good news concerning the self-giving, ransom-paying Savior is a message that must be proclaimed and taught. Paul had been appointed to carry out this task. In the first century, a preacher (or herald) was often used to make important public announcements. As a spokesman for kings and other authorities, the herald's most important duty was to accurately announce the message that had been entrusted to him. *apostle*. See p 1901. *I am not lying*. Paul affirms his apostleship, which was challenged in both Galatia and Corinth (Gal 1; 1Co 9). The comment could also emphasize the phrase that follows, namely, that Paul's apostolic appointment was directed esp to the Gentiles (Ac 9:15; 26:17–18). The latter fact is deserving of emphasis esp here because God desires to save "all people" (v 4), the vast majority of whom are, in fact, Gentiles. *teacher of the Gentiles*. Twelve other men had also been appointed as heralds and apostles, but only Paul was sent to preach primarily to the Gentiles.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 2:8 *every place*. Where public worship was conducted; private prayer is not in view here. In older, more established congregations, the overseer (pastor) would be the one to lead the congregation in worship. Overseers were always male (v 12). *men*. Those who led prayers in public worship were to be males. *lifting holy hands*. This posture captures both the outer and inner attitudes that should accompany prayer. It is an ancient prayer posture that shows the need and expectancy of the one who prays. Uplifted hands are also "holy" hands when all anger and quarreling is resolved through repentance and reconciliation before petitions are offered to God. See p 1276.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 2:9 *respectable apparel*. Outward adornment should reflect the inner purity of those who profess faith in Christ. These directives hold true at all times, but esp as the congregation gathers for public worship. *modesty*. Feminine reserve that shuns immoral or dishonorable conduct. *self-control*. Command over bodily passions and desires is here expressed through respectable apparel. *braided hair*. Elaborate hairstyles and ornate jewelry in the first century were expressions

of vanity and sexual promiscuity. *costly attire*. The finest garments could cost up to 7,000 denarii, at a time when the average worker was paid one denarius per day. Pearls, for instance, were considered three times more valuable than gold. Paul is not condemning braided hair, jewelry, or fine clothing per se, but rather the excess and immorality conveyed by these items.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 2:10 *profess godliness*. To lay claim to reverence and piety in an ongoing manner. *good works*. The primary "adornment" for every Christian woman. This adornment should not only be outward but should match inner virtues.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 2:11 *learn quietly with all submissiveness*. See note, 1Co 14:34–35; see also p 1972.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 2:12 *teach*. God calls qualified men to teach and preach the Scriptures in the Church's public services. Women may actively teach the Scriptures to other women (Ti 2:3–5), to children (2Tm 1:5), and in private conversations with other believers and unbelievers (Ac 18:24–26). *exercise authority over a man*. Namely, the authority God gives to publicly preach and teach the Scriptures to the assembled congregation. See note, 1Co 14:34–35; see also p 1972.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 2:13 *For*. What follows is an explanation for the prohibition given in vv 11–12. *Adam was formed first*. God ordained the roles of men and women at creation. Adam was created first (Gn 2:7) and given specific service (Gn 2:15). Eve was then created (Gn 2:21–22) as a worthy, compatible mate (see note, Gn 2:18). This does not mean men are more important than women (Eph 5:22–33) but that God established different callings for them. The relationship between husbands and wives (1Co 11:3; Eph 5:23–24), set in place before the fall into sin, remains unchanged today. Thus the commands and prohibitions concerning men and women in this passage are not simply reflections of first-century Jewish culture or Paul's personal opinions. Paul roots the practices of the Church in God's created order. See p 1291.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 2:14 *Adam was not deceived*. Gn 3 illustrates what happens when the respective roles of men and women, established by God at creation, are ignored. Adam's sin and his role in the fall are not denied here or elsewhere by Paul (cf Rm 5:12–14, 1Co 15:21–22). The distinction is that Adam sinned willfully, while Eve was a victim of deception. Chrys: "He transgressed, not captivated by appetite, but merely

from the persuasion of his wife" (*NPNF* 1 13:436). Adam did not exercise his God-ordained headship. Eve did not exercise her God-ordained role as a helper and ally (see note, Gn 2:18). The results were deadly. *transgressor*. Lit, "one who steps over the boundary."

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 2:15 *she … they*. Paul's argument shifts from the consideration of one woman's (Eve's) sin to the salvation provided for all women by the birth of a child, Jesus, who would defeat Satan on behalf of all women (see note, Gn 3:15). *saved through childbearing*. Women are not saved by giving birth. Through faith in the child Jesus, women are saved as they live out their God-given vocations. Childbearing is an example of a most noble, exclusively feminine vocation. " 'She will be saved through childbearing,' … But what does St. Paul mean? Let the reader observe that faith is added, and that domestic duties without faith are not praised. 'If they continue,' he says, 'in faith.' For he speaks of the whole class of mothers. Therefore, he requires especially faith, through which a woman receives the forgiveness of sins and justification. Then he adds a particular work of the calling, just as in every person a good work of a particular calling should follow faith…. So the duties of the woman please God because of faith, and the believing woman is saved who devoutly serves her calling in such duties" (Ap XXIII 32). *if*. Carries the idea of expectancy. *faith … self-control*. Although these virtues apply to both sexes, Paul applies them specifically to women here. These qualities characterize the life of every Christian woman (vv 9–10).

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON **Ch 2** The Gospel affirms the unique vocations God assigned to men and women at creation. Our sinful nature may sometimes bristle at the roles and responsibilities God has given us, causing us to fail to see that God has given us His divine design for male and female because He loves us and always wants what is best for us. We must always be on guard against this kind of sin, especially as we are gathered for public worship. Jesus faithfully fulfilled the divine role assigned to Him as the one mediator between God and all people. He willingly submitted Himself to death as the sacred substitute for sinners. Through faith in Him, we receive forgiveness of sins, and we rejoice to serve Him in earthly vocations characterized by thanksgiving, modesty, and self-control. • Blessed Savior, as we gather in Your name for worship, give voice to our prayers for all people. Lead us to delight in the roles and

responsibilities You have so lovingly assigned us and to live out our vocations in submissiveness to You and to Your Word. Amen.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 3:1–13 Paul continues his teachings concerning those who may teach and properly exercise authority in a church.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 3:1 *The saying*. Apparently, v 1b was a well-known adage in the Early Church. Many NT passages reflect a lively interest in Church order (i.e., 5:17–22; Ac 6:1–6; 14:21–23; 1Th 5:12–22; Ti 1:5–16; 1Pt 5:1–5). *aspires*. Not an ambitious quest for personal gain, but for honorable and commendable service. Cf 6:10 for the use of the same verb in a different context (translated as "craving"). *office of overseer*. The office of the pastoral ministry. See note, Ti 1:5. *noble task*. Those who are served benefit greatly. The task, or work, requires the full measure of a man's energy and devotion; it is not a mere status to be enjoyed.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 3:2 *above reproach*. Lit, "not able to be taken hold of." One against whom no charge of unfitness can rightly be leveled. *husband of one wife*. Many new converts would have come from a background of polygamy or sexual immorality. The qualification is phrased in terms of sexual fidelity within a monogamous marital relationship. The phrase does not exclude single men from serving as pastors, but clearly shows that the forced celibacy of pastors is an unscriptural requirement. "It is clear that in the Ancient Church priests were married men…. Four hundred years ago in Germany [c 1130], for the first time, priests were violently forced to lead a single life. They offered such resistance that when the Archbishop of Mainz was about to publish the pope's decree about celibacy, he was almost killed in a riot by enraged priests. This matter was handled so harshly that not only was marriage forbidden in the future, but existing marriages were torn apart, contrary to all laws, both divine and human" (AC XXIII 10–13). Paul's phrase also makes the implicit affirmation that only males (husbands) may serve as pastors. *sober-minded*. Clearheaded, showing soundness in judgment; not flighty or unstable. *respectable*. Well-ordered demeanor in every aspect of his character. *hospitable*. Not one who merely likes to entertain but, in the first century, one who would take in Christian strangers who were traveling or fleeing from persecution. See notes, Gn 18:4; Rm 12:13.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 3:3 *not violent*. Lit, "not a striker." the Lord would not approve of a church leader who deals forcefully, using verbal or physical violence toward family or congregational members.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 3:4–5 *children submissive*. Not a requirement that the pastor must have children, but that when he does, they should be obedient. See SC, Fourth Commandment, p xxxv. A pastor must teach and uphold this commandment within his family.
1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 3:6 *recent convert*. The Gk word used to describe newly planted trees. The phrase does not preclude relatively young men, such as Timothy, from serving as pastors but rather those who have not attained a satisfactory level of spiritual maturity since their conversion to Christ. *condemnation*. The devil was condemned for prideful rebellion.
1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 3:7 *outsiders*. Unbelievers, non-Christians. See note, 1Co 14:7–11. *snare of the devil*. A trap to which an unqualified overseer would be more susceptible. See note, Gal 6:3.
1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 3:1–7 Only qualified men may serve as pastors of God's flock. We should honor and uphold the qualifications that God has set forth for those who would serve in the Office of the Public Ministry, always remembering that the pastoral office is a divine institution—a gift from God for His Church. The Lord Jesus has given this office and its qualifications because He loves us and always desires what is best for us. He Himself is our chief Shepherd (1Pt 5:4). He has laid down His life for us (Jn 10:11) and gives us eternal life (Jn 10:28). • "Almighty God, in Your kindness You cause the light of the Gospel to shine among us. By the working of Your Holy Spirit, help us to share the good news of Your salvation that all who hear it may rejoice in the gift of Your unending love." Amen. (*LSB Altar Book*, p 987)
1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 3:8–12 The list of qualifications for deacons is similar to the corresponding list for overseers (vv 1–7), with a few exceptions. Notably, it is not required that deacons be able to teach (v 2), or that they care for God's Church (v 5). These are likely omitted because they were part of the overseer's role.
1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 3:8 *Deacons*. See notes, Ac 6:1–7. They assisted the overseers by handling the distribution of alms, providing for the needs of the sick, and caring for the place of worship.
1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 3:9 *mystery*. See note, v 16. *clear conscience*. Having a pure, clear confession of the faith.
1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 3:10 *tested*. With regard to the qualifications presented in vv 8–12. The tense of the Gk verb indicates that the testing would be ongoing—a careful and thoughtful evaluation.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 3:11 *wives*. Or, "women" as in the ESV footnote. In the Early Church, women likely served as deaconesses, administering physical help and deeds of kindness. Women often did such work alongside men, though they were not to hold the office of overseer (pastor). See note, Rm 16:1.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 3:13 *gain a good standing*. Through the faithful discharge of their particular duties, their beneficial service will receive the approval of both God and people. *confidence*. Boldness.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 3:8–13 Deacons and deaconesses were faithful people, entrusted with special responsibilities for service to their fellow Christians. Christians today are also privileged to serve others through special congregational offices and service organizations. When given chances to express Jesus' love in deeds of service, it is easy to pass on these opportunities. But, in truth, God calls every Christian to follow His example of self-giving service. Jesus came to serve sinners like us with His forgiveness and salvation (Mt 20:28). He still serves us today through His means of grace. • Lord Jesus, as You so wonderfully serve us with the rich treasures of Your redeeming grace, inspire us by that grace joyfully to serve others in Your precious name. Amen.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 3:14 *come to you soon*. Timothy was in Ephesus, on the western coast of modern Turkey. See map, p 1886. The journey from Macedonia would involve hundreds of miles through perilous stretches of land and sea.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 3:15 *household of God*. The place where God dwells with and in His people. The members of this household are brothers and sisters in Christ and children of the heavenly Father. *church of the living God*. God's "household" is also His "Church," of which He is the living Head. *pillar and buttress of the truth*. As pillars and buttresses are needed to support large structures, the Gospel is needed so that not even the gates of hell can prevail against the Church (cf Mt 16:18; Jn 14:6). "We do say that this Church exists: truly believing and righteous people scattered throughout the whole world. We add the marks: the pure teaching of the Gospel and the Sacraments. This Church is properly the pillar of the truth … for it keeps the pure Gospel as Paul says in 1 Corinthians 3:11" (Ap VII and VIII 20).

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 3:16 *confess*. To express the unanimous conviction of all Christians. See note, 1Co 1:10. *mystery of godliness*. The

Gospel of Jesus Christ, esp as set forth in this verse, is neither known nor believed by the world, and therefore must be "proclaimed." For those who believe, however, it is no longer a "mystery." See p 1903. "Christ is and remains to all eternity God and man in one undivided person. Next to the Holy Trinity, this is the highest mystery, upon which our only consolation, life, and salvation depends, as the apostle testifies" (FC Ep VIII 18). *He was manifested … up in glory*. This sixfold statement highlights the central events of our Lord's earthly ministry. Paul is likely quoting an early Christian hymn or creed. See p 1975.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 3:14–16 This concludes the section dedicated to the Church's organization (chs 2–3). We are not free to amend or depart from God's revealed will concerning the outward organization of His Church, because it is the pillar and buttress of the truth—the Church of the living God that confesses the Gospel of Jesus Christ to a fallen world. In love, God has made us members of His Church by the Holy Spirit. By grace, the Savior's truth has been made manifest to us and, through faith, we will follow Him in glory. • "Almighty and gracious Lord, pour out Your Holy Spirit on Your faithful people. Keep us steadfast in Your grace and truth, protect and deliver us in times of temptation, defend us against all enemies, and grant to Your Church Your saving peace." Amen. (*LSB Altar Book*, p 983)

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 4:1 *expressly says*. Perhaps through direct revelation to Paul. Jesus' warnings concerning apostasy are also echoed here. Cf Mt 24:10–11; Mk 13:22. *later times*. Not only the last days before Christ's return, but the entire NT era. See note, Ac 2:17. *depart from the faith*. Those who were once believing members of the Church will turn away from Christ, thereby rejecting the gift of salvation. *devoting*. Giving full attention to something in an active, intentional, ongoing way. *deceitful spirits*. Their wicked work is to deceive and lead astray the faithful; or perhaps this is a reference to the false teachers through whom these spirits speak. *teachings of demons*. Satan is "a liar and the father of lies" (Jn 8:44). False doctrine in all its forms comes from him.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 4:2 The consciences of those peddling demonic doctrines have either been "branded" by Satan to show his ownership of them or "cauterized," leaving them unfeeling and unable to distinguish between right and wrong.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 4:3 *forbid marriage … abstinence*. False teachers demanded that marriage and certain foods be rejected, but in so doing they were rejecting God, who gives the gifts of marriage and food. "We expect that at some point churches will lack pastors if marriage continues to be forbidden…. It is incredibly cruel that the marriage of priests is forbidden. God has commanded that marriage be honored. Marriage is most highly honored in the laws of all well-ordered commonwealths, even among the heathen" (AC XXIII 17–20). *received with thanksgiving*. Believers are to receive all of God's gifts gratefully, including marriage and food.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 4:4–5 All that God has created is inherently good, as we express with every prayer of thanks. See SC, Fourth Petition, p xxxviii. "That is, 'by the Word,' by which consciences become certain that God approves, and 'by prayer,' that is, by faith, which uses it with thanksgiving as God's gift" (Ap XXIII 30).

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 4:1–5 God daily and richly provides us with all that we need. To reject God's good gifts, or to receive them thanklessly, is a sin against His graciousness. But God promises His gift of forgiveness to those who turn to Him in repentance and faith. Because of Jesus' sacrificial death for our sins, God does not reject us but receives us as His own children through faith. • Father in heaven, teach us to recognize Your gifts in every realm of life. Lead us always to receive them with thankful hearts. Amen.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 4:6 *these things*. The teachings in 1:3–4:5. *brothers*. See p 1901. *words of the faith*. The objective content of the faith that all Christians are to believe. *good doctrine*. Or, "good teaching"; the same "words" that are to be believed and taught.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 4:7 *myths*. See note, 1:4. *train yourself for godliness*. Lit, "Continue exercising yourself with respect to godliness." Rather than waste time in long discussions with proponents of "silly myths," Timothy is to continue training himself in the active pursuit of God's purposes.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 4:8 *bodily training is of some value*. Physical exercise and discipline are beneficial in many ways. *value in every way*. In contrast to physical exercise, the benefits of godliness bless other people and reach into eternity. Ambr: "In the holy Scriptures, if we look carefully we shall often find that what is virtuous is called useful" (*NPNF* 2 10:47).

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 4:9 *The saying*. The wisdom in v 8 regarding godliness.
1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 4:10 *this end*. Godliness and its promise for the life to come (v 8). *hope set on the living God*. This is either God's ability to bring the Christian's "hope" to fruition or His ability to give eternal life to "those who believe." Cf Mt 22:32. *Savior of all people*. Jesus is the Savior of all because He "desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (2:4). His sacrificial death as the Lamb of God was for the reconciliation of the world (2Co 5:19), to take away the sin of the world (Jn 1:29). *especially of those who believe*. Believers already enjoy the benefits of everlasting life.
1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 4:11 *these things*. Paul's teachings in vv 6–10. Paul used this phrase frequently in 1Tm (cf v 6; 5:7; 6:2). It usually refers to the teaching that immediately precedes it.
1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 4:12 *youth*. In other contexts, the word refers to people in their 30s; Timothy's age is uncertain. In first-century Jewish culture, people were considered youth up to age 40. *example*. By his exemplary conduct, Timothy would be able to silence those who might be inclined to despise him because of his youth.
1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 4:13 A concise summary of the pastor's service: worship, preaching, and teaching. *public reading*. Paul is not saying that Timothy himself must be the one to read the Scriptures in public worship, but that he should exercise care in which portions of the Scriptures were being publicly read in the Ephesian congregations. *exhortation*. Words of admonishment and encouragement (Law and Gospel), based on publicly read portions of Scripture; preaching.
1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 4:14 *gift*. Gk *charisma*, a special gift of God's grace that enables the recipient to carry out a particular role or task in the congregation. Timothy's gift enabled him faithfully to fulfill the tasks of his ministry in Ephesus, summarized in vv 11 and 13. *given you by prophecy*. See note, 1:18. This denotes the proclamation of the Word when Timothy was publicly placed in his position as pastor, comparable to the ordination and/or installation of pastors today. See pp 1077–83. *council of elders*. God's gift to Timothy was mediated through the Church and her official representatives. *laid their hands on you*. This visible act signaled Timothy's placement in the Office of the Holy Ministry, showing that his gift is to be used publicly on behalf of the congregation. "A most common custom of

the Church also testifies to this. Formerly, the people elected pastors and bishops [Acts 14:23]. Then came a bishop, either of that church or a neighboring one, who confirmed the one elected by the laying on of hands [1 Timothy 4:14]. Ordination was nothing else than such a ratification" (Tr 70).

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 4:15 *these things*. Noted in vv 6–14. *progress*. A reference to Timothy's future advancement in the faith (Php 1:25) or perhaps to the progress he has already made.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 4:16 *close watch*. Cf Gal 6:1. *save both yourself and your hearers*. God alone saves (v 10), but the NT often depicts human beings as instruments in His saving work. Cf 1Co 9:22; Jas 5:20; Jude 23.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 4:6–16 Paul prepares Timothy to contend against the "teachings of demons" (v 1). Pastors are to command and teach true doctrine, while condemning doctrine that is false and deceitful. This runs counter to the spirit of the present age, which downplays the importance of true doctrine and avoids condemning all but the most extreme examples of false doctrine. The doctrines of Scripture are God-given, because He loves us. Each individual doctrine testifies to and supports the most important doctrine of all—that we are saved by grace, for Christ's sake, through faith. • Lord Jesus, bless Your Church with pastors who are wholly devoted to the teaching of Your Word in all its truth and purity, that by Your mighty power, many souls might be saved. Amen.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 5:1–6:2 Paul writes as though reviewing a manual for ministry. Early Christians compiled such "church rules" (e.g., the *Didache*) after the manner of such documents in Judaism (e.g., The Community Rule in the Dead Sea Scrolls). The problems Paul warned against developed in later monasticism. Regarding Paul's method of instruction, Ambrose notes, "The first exercise in training the soul is to turn away sin, the second to implant virtue" (*NPNF* 2 10:393).

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 5:1–2 *rebuke*. A note of harshness and severity is associated with the Gk word. *father … brothers … mothers … sisters*. Timothy is to regard believers, regardless of age or gender, as if they were members of his own family—a practice also taught by Jesus (Mt 12:46–50). *purity*. This is a realistic word of caution on sexual purity for Timothy and other ministers as they deal with younger women.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 5:3 *Honor*. Not only with respect, but also with material support. Paul also uses this word when he quotes the Fourth

Commandment in Eph 6:2.
Jesus taught that honoring parents included provisions of material support (Mt 15:4–6). *truly widows*. Those who qualify to receive support from the congregation who have no other means for support, as vv 4–16 make clear. Cf Ac 6:1–6.
1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 5:4 *show godliness to their own household*. The faith of a widow's children or grandchildren should find expression, first, within the family, ensuring that the widow's needs are met. *some return*. Material and/or financial repayment for all the care the children have received from their parents.
1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 5:5 *supplications and prayers night and day*. A widow's continuing prayers express the hope she has placed in God.
1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 5:6 *dead*. Although physically alive and living luxuriously, the self-indulgent widow is spiritually dead.
1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 5:8 *does not provide*. Material support for the truly needy. *household*. See p 1903. *denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever*. Not caring for one's family was considered highly contemptible. Even unbelievers may instinctively care for their family.
1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 5:9–10 *enrolled*. Qualified widows (vv 9–15) were apparently selected to receive the church's assistance on a permanent basis. *sixty years of age*. Considered very old in the first century. *one husband … reputation*. Widows whose earlier life was characterized by marital faithfulness would not bring shame to the congregation.
1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 5:11 *younger widows*. Young enough to remarry. *passions*. Romantic desire. *marry*. Remarried widows would be supported by their husbands.
1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 5:12 *faith*. The Gk term for "faith" may be understood as an "oath" or "solemn promise" in this context, if they had promised not to remarry or to abide by the Christian faith and teaching.
1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 5:13 *idlers … gossips … busybodies*. Younger widows without a father, husband, children, or job would be prone to social problems, which would burden the supporting congregation.
1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 5:14 *the adversary*. The definite article makes this a likely reference to the devil, esp in view of the reference to "Satan" in v 15. The devil, however, often carries out his adversarial work through human accomplices.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 5:15 *strayed after Satan*. Fallen into temptation, sin, and unrepentance.
1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 5:16 *believing woman*. Perhaps a directive for young widows of means to extend care to additional widows in the family. Or, perhaps the woman is singled out here because the woman of the household would be the most likely to provide care for widows in a domestic, first-century setting. *care … burdened*. Assuming responsibilities that God has primarily assigned to family members.
1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 5:17 *elders*. A term quite similar to "overseer" (3:1–7). See note, Ti 1:5. *rule well*. The Gk term includes active leading, directing, and exercising care and concern for others. *double honor*. Just as widows are deserving of "honor" (v 3), so are elders. "Double" here indicates that the honor due the elders encompasses honor both in the sense of reverence and also in the sense of an honorarium or compensation. "Those who want to be Christians are obliged in God's sight to think them worthy of double honor who minister to their souls…. They are obligated to deal well with them and provide for them…. Those who keep God's will and commandment in sight have this promise: everything they give to temporal and spiritual fathers, and whatever they do to honor them, shall be richly repaid to them" (LC I 161–62, 164). *preaching and teaching*. See note, 4:13.
1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 5:18 Paul quotes both the Mosaic Law and our Lord Himself to show that pastors should be compensated for their work.
1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 5:19 *evidence of two or three witnesses*. A safeguard designed to protect elders against false charges. This practice has ample biblical precedent (cf Mt 18:16; 2Co 13:1).
1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 5:20 *persist in sin*. Some continued to commit sins for which they had been rebuked privately. *rebuke them in the presence of all*. Although some sins would preclude an elder from continuing to serve in that office (cf 3:2–3), Paul prescribes a public rebuke to move them to repentance and help them amend their lives. *all*. Could refer to the other elders or to the entire congregation. *fear*. The public rebuke of a guilty elder is intended for the good of all, namely, to foster a holy fear of sin and its consequences.
1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 5:21 *presence*. As ministers of the Gospel, both Paul and Timothy carried out their work by the command of God and Christ Jesus (cf 1:1). Their invocation here (together with the angels) is a solemn

reminder to Timothy of his great responsibility to keep all that has been entrusted to him. *elect angels*. Not found elsewhere in the Scriptures. Contrasts God's own chosen angels with the fallen angels (2Pt 2:4; Jude 6) *these rules*. Lit, "these things," the requirements set forth in vv 19–20.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 5:22 *hasty in the laying on of hands*. To help prevent situations where elders require discipline and rebuke (v 20), a suitable amount of time should pass before a man is set apart as an elder. (On identification of "elder," see note, v 17.) Additional time allowed church leaders to review the quality of a man's character. *pure*. Timothy could preserve his innocence and integrity by heeding Paul's admonitions (e.g., 4:12; 5:23; cf Ti 1:15).

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 5:23 *use a little wine*. A personal note, not an excuse for drunkenness. Clearly, news of Timothy's ailment had reached Paul. Timothy may have been under a Nazirite vow, abstaining from wine (see notes, Ac 21:26; Nu 6:1–21). Alcohol in wine inhibits illness brought on by bacteria or parasites.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 6:1 *yoke as slaves*. Used for slavery in general. Emphasizes the undesirable condition of many slaves who were driven and treated no better than yoked beasts of burden. See p 101. *masters*. Refers primarily to non-Christians, whose slaves had become believers. Over time, Christian teaching of brotherhood tended to undermine Roman slavery. *worthy of all honor*. Masters are among the "other authorities" for whom the Fourth Commandment demands honor, service, and obedience. *reviled*. Disrespect and disobedience from believing slaves would cause their unbelieving masters to disparage the newfound faith. Honorable service rendered by believing slaves, conversely, would have an evangelistic effect on their masters.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 6:2 *believing masters … brothers*. All Christians, regardless of earthly vocation and status, are viewed and loved equally in God's sight (Gal 3:28). They are, therefore, brothers and sisters. See note, 1Tm 5:1–2. *they must serve … beloved*. If unbelieving masters are to be honored and served (v 1), then believing masters should be honored and served "all the better."

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 5:1–6:2 When Christians interact with one another in ways that are honorable and pure, they beautifully reflect God and the faith they confess. But the Church is burdened and liable to be reviled by unbelievers when honor and purity are lacking. Our dear Lord

Jesus has made every Christian worthy of eternal honor by His sacrificial death and resurrection. Through faith in Him, even dishonorable sinners are regarded as God's pure and beloved children. • Lord Jesus, turn us from our self-indulgent ways, that we may selflessly give honor and care to those whom You have given us to love and cherish. Amen.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 6:2 *Teach and urge*. Variations of this admonition appear throughout the Pastoral Epistles (cf 5:7; 2Tm 2:14; Ti 2:15).

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 6:3 *sound words*. See note, Ti 2:1; cf 1Tm 1:10. *accords with godliness*. An elaboration on both the content and the effect of our Lord's sound words.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 6:4 *controversy*. Worthless matters serve only to distract souls from the sound words and teaching of v 3.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 6:5 *depraved*. Completely corrupted. *means of gain*. Both financial and material reward. Cf Jn 2:13–22.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 6:6 *contentment*. A state of being and attitude that enables the Christian to live with faith in Christ, impervious to the influence of external circumstances.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 6:7 This universal and timeless truth is recognized by those possessing godliness with contentment (v 6), but ignored by those who are ambitious only for earthly gain (v 5). Bern: "Cease to pursue those things which it is misery to attain…. Will it be more prudent to yield them up for love of Christ than to have them taken away by death?" (*SLSB*, pp 207–8).

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 6:8 *food and clothing*. The necessities of life come from God. See Luther's explanation of the First Article of the Apostles' Creed (p xxxvi).

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 6:9 *rich fall into temptation*. The tense of the Gk verb shows that this commonly happens among those who desire riches. *snare*. The temptation for riches acts as a trap. See note, Ps 91:3. *ruin and destruction*. Similar terms that, when used together, could include both physical and spiritual destruction.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 6:10 *the love of money … evils*. Just as shoots sprout from a root, so all kinds of evils sprout and grow from the love of money; money itself is not inherently evil. *wandered*. Their departure from the Christian faith did not happen instantaneously. *pierced themselves*. Much of the temporal suffering endured by lovers of money is self-inflicted.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 6:2–10 Rather than being content with what we have, we by nature covet the things we do not have. Those who covet often see money as a wonderful solution to all of life's problems. But those who love money are in grave danger; they risk losing their faith in Christ. Our Savior has blessed us with the riches of His priceless salvation. Nothing can separate us from His love. As He tenderly cares for us through His Word of promise, we are able to enjoy lives of godliness with contentment. All that we can take with us when we leave this world is the life and immortality that Jesus has given us through faith—and that is more than enough! • Give us grace, dear Lord, rightly to regard the wealth we call our own, that it might not be a curse in our lives but a blessing. Amen.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 6:11 *man of God*. See note, 2Tm 3:17. Paul thoroughly contrasts Timothy with lovers of money who wander from the faith. Timothy was a unique man of God, but the words that follow may apply also to every man and woman of God.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 6:12 *Fight the good fight*. The Christian is engaged in an ongoing contest in which sound doctrine is advanced against the forces of darkness and evil. See note, Col 1:13. *Take hold of the eternal life*. God's gift of eternal life is not a prize that you receive at the conclusion of the contest but a prize that you receive and retain even in this present life of faith. *called*. God's active power alone can appropriate the gift of eternal life to human beings. In the Christian life, this call comes through the Sacrament of Holy Baptism. *good confession*. This is probably the public confession of faith Timothy made at his Baptism.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 6:13–16 Paul appeals through both Father and Son and magnifies their attributes.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 6:13 *charge*. Cf 5:21. *God, who gives life*. Human life did not accidentally evolve over time. It is, rather, a gift and act of God Himself. Paul testified to this truth before the Areopagus in Athens (Ac 17:25). *testimony before Pontius Pilate*. Jesus' testimony concerning His divine identity served as the basis for His execution (cf Mk 15:2; Lk 23:3). Others understand "testimony" in a broader sense, including not only Jesus' words but also His suffering, crucifixion, death, and burial. *good confession*. See note, 3:16.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 6:14 *appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ*. The return of the Lord on the Last Day.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 6:15 *proper time*. God will choose and determine the exact moment. Cf Gal 4:4. *Sovereign*. Absolute, powerful ruler. *King of kings and Lord of lords*. Jesus' reign extends even over those earthly rulers who wield great power and exercise control. Cf Rv 19:16; see pp 1565–66.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 6:16 *immortality*. Lit, "deathlessness." An attribute unique to God that He shares with human beings through the Gospel (2Tm 1:10). Ambr: "How could He not have immortality Who has life in Himself? He has it in His nature" (*NPNF* 2 10:288). *dwells in unapproachable light*. The divine being's glory is different from the light He created. Cf Jn 8:12; 1Jn 1:5. In the Nicene Creed, we confess that Jesus is "God of God, Light of Light." *no one has ever seen or can see*. Sinful humanity cannot see God and live. See notes, Ex 33:19–23; Jn 1:18. *eternal dominion*. Christ both possesses and exercises inexhaustible strength.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 6:17 *rich*. Paul refers to those who are already rich, having acquired their wealth in honest and irreproachable ways, not those who desire to be rich (cf vv 9–10). *present age*. The "rich" have tangible, earthly wealth. Intangible, spiritual riches cannot be accurately assessed within the limits of time. *enjoy*. Riches and all other gifts from God's hand are to be received for our enjoyment with thanksgiving (4:4).

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 6:18 *rich in good works*. Even the poorest Christians can be "rich" in service. Those who enjoy earthly riches should esp endeavor to be "rich" in this noble way, which flows from faith in Christ.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 6:19 *storing up treasure*. Good works that always accompany faith are treasured by the Lord Jesus (Mt 25:34–40). *take hold*. See note, v 12.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 6:20 *guard the deposit*. The Gospel—the Christian faith itself. In the ancient world, such a deposit involved the obligation of scrupulously guarding another's possession, keeping it secure, then returning it in the same condition in which it was received. *irreverent babble and contradictions*. Empty talking and opposing ideas are characteristic of false teachers, about whom Timothy has been warned repeatedly (cf 1:6–7; 6:3–5). *knowledge*. The "facts" on which all false teachers claim to stand, though they understand nothing (cf 1:7; 6:4).

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 6:21 *swerved from the faith*. This final warning concerns the grave effects of false teaching. The same verb occurs in 1:6.

Grace. See p 1902. Paul characteristically uses this word of blessing at the conclusion of his Letters. *you*. Plural (see ESV note), showing that Paul expected this Letter to be read to the believers.

1 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 6:11–21 As a true man of God, Timothy is to flee every corrupting influence and keep God's command, faithfully guarding that which has been deposited with him. False "knowledge" not only contradicts God's revealed truth, but it also places human reason above the deposit of good news God has entrusted to us, ultimately destroying our faith. In His testimony before Pontius Pilate, Jesus confessed that He was the Son of God. Although His enemies used that true testimony to convict Him before Pilate, His crucifixion and resurrection secured the treasures of life and salvation for all who believe. • Lord God, guard and keep us, we pray, so that the devil, the world, and our sinful nature may not deceive us or mislead us into false belief, despair, and other great shame and vice. Although we are attacked by these things, we pray that we may finally overcome them and win the victory. Amen.

2 Timothy

2 Timothy 1 | 2 Timothy 2 | 2 Timothy 3 | 2 Timothy 4

- Introduction to 2 Timothy
  - Overview
  - Reading 2 Timothy
  - Luther on 2 Timothy
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

Greeting

1 [1]†† Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God according to
the promise of the life that is in Christ Jesus,
[2]† To Timothy, my beloved child:
Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

Guard the Deposit Entrusted to You

3 ‡ † I thank God whom I serve, as did my ancestors, with a clear
conscience, as I remember you constantly in my prayers night and day. 4 †
As I remember your tears, I long to see you, that I may be filled with joy.
5 † I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your
grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in
you as well. 6 †For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God,
which is in you through the laying on of my hands, 7 † for God gave us a
spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.

8 † Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of
me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God,
9 † who saved us and called us to[1] a holy calling, not because of our works
but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus
before the ages began,[2] 10 †and which now has been manifested through the
appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life
and immortality to light through the gospel, 11 † for which I was appointed a
preacher and apostle and teacher, 12 † which is why I suffer as I do. But I am
not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that he
is able to guard until that Day what has been entrusted to me.[3] 13 † Follow
the pattern of the sound[4] words that you have heard from me, in the faith
and love that are in Christ Jesus. 14 †By the Holy Spirit who dwells within
us, guard the good deposit entrusted to you.

15 † You are aware that all who are in Asia turned away from me, among
whom are Phygelus and Hermogenes. 16 †May the Lord grant mercy to the
household of Onesiphorus, for he often refreshed me and was not ashamed
of my chains, 17 but when he arrived in Rome he searched for me earnestly
and found me— 18 †may the Lord grant him to find mercy from the Lord on
that Day!—and you well know all the service he rendered at Ephesus.

A Good Soldier of Christ Jesus

2 [1]†† You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ
Jesus, [2] † and what you have heard from me in the presence of many
witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. [3]††
Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. [4] † No soldier gets
entangled in civilian pursuits, since his aim is to please the one who enlisted
him. [5]† An athlete is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules.
[6] † It is the hard-working farmer who ought to have the first share of the
crops. [7]† Think over what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in
everything.

[8]† Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, the offspring of David, as
preached in my gospel, [9]† for which I am suffering, bound with chains as a
criminal. But the word of God is not bound! [10] † Therefore I endure
everything for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation
that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. [11]† The saying is trustworthy, for:

If we have died with him, we will also live
with him;
[12] if we endure, we will also reign with him;
if we deny him, he also will deny us;
[13]† if we are faithless, he remains faithful—

for he cannot deny himself.

A Worker Approved by God

14 ‡ † Remind them of these things, and charge them before God[1] not to
quarrel about words, which does no good, but only ruins the hearers. 15 † Do
your best to present yourself to God as one approved,[2] a worker who has
no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth. 16 But avoid
irreverent babble, for it will lead people into more and more ungodliness,
17 † and their talk will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and
Philetus, 18 † who have swerved from the truth, saying that the resurrection
has already happened. They are upsetting the faith of some. 19 † But God's
firm foundation stands, bearing this seal: "The Lord knows those who are
his," and, "Let everyone who names the name of the Lord depart from
iniquity."

20 † Now in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver but
also of wood and clay, some for honorable use, some for dishonorable.
21 † Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from what is dishonorable,[1] he
will be a vessel for honorable use, set apart as holy, useful to the master of
the house, ready for every good work.

22 † So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and
peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart. 23 † Have
nothing to do with foolish, ignorant controversies; you know that they breed
quarrels. 24 † And the Lord's servant[2] must not be quarrelsome but kind to
everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, 25 † correcting his opponents
with gentleness. God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a
knowledge of the truth, 26 † and they may come to their senses and escape
from the snare of the devil, after being captured by him to do his will.

Godlessness in the Last Days

3 [1]‡†But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. [2]‡For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, [3]† heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, [4]† treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, [5]† having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people. [6]†For among them are those who creep into households and capture weak women, burdened with sins and led astray by various passions, [7]†always learning and never able to arrive at a knowledge of the truth. [8]†Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so these men also oppose the truth, men corrupted in mind and disqualified regarding the faith. [9]But they will not get very far, for their folly will be plain to all, as was that of those two men.

All Scripture Is Breathed Out by God

10 †† You, however, have followed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in
life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, 11 †my persecutions
and sufferings that happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, and at Lystra—
which persecutions I endured; yet from them all the Lord rescued me.
12 † Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be
persecuted, 13 † while evil people and impostors will go on from bad to
worse, deceiving and being deceived. 14 †But as for you, continue in what
you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom[1] you
learned it 15 †and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the
sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith
in Christ Jesus. 16 † All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for
teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,
17 †that the man of God[2] may be competent, equipped for every good work.

Preach the Word

4 [1]†† I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is
to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: [2]†
preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and
exhort, with complete patience and teaching. [3]† For the time is coming
when people will not endure sound[1] teaching, but having itching ears they
will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, [4]† and
will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths. [5]† As
for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an
evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

[6]† For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of
my departure has come. [7]† I have fought the good fight, I have finished the
race, I have kept the faith. [8]† Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of
righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that
Day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing.

Personal Instructions

9 †‡†Do your best to come to me soon. 10 †For Demas, in love with this
present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica. Crescens has
gone to Galatia,[2] Titus to Dalmatia. 11 † Luke alone is with me. Get Mark
and bring him with you, for he is very useful to me for ministry. 12 †
Tychicus I have sent to Ephesus. 13 †When you come, bring the cloak that I
left with Carpus at Troas, also the books, and above all the parchments. 14 ‡
Alexander the coppersmith did me great harm; the Lord will repay him
according to his deeds. 15 †Beware of him yourself, for he strongly opposed
our message. 16 † At my first defense no one came to stand by me, but all
deserted me. May it not be charged against them! 17 †But the Lord stood by
me and strengthened me, so that through me the message might be fully
proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it. So I was rescued from the
lion's mouth. 18 †The Lord will rescue me from every evil deed and bring me
safely into his heavenly kingdom. To him be the glory forever and ever.
Amen.

Final Greetings

19 ‡ † Greet Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus.
20 † Erastus remained at Corinth, and I left Trophimus, who was ill, at
Miletus. 21† Do your best to come before winter. Eubulus sends greetings to
you, as do Pudens and Linus and Claudia and all the brothers.[1]

22†The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you.[2]

2 Timothy

OVERVIEW

Author
Paul the apostle

Date
AD 68

Places
Ephesus; Thessalonica; Galatia; Troas; Corinth; Miletus

People
Paul; Timothy; Lois, Eunice; Hymenaeus, Philetus; Paul's numerous co-workers

Purposes
To build up Timothy for service in the face of persecution and to appeal for him to visit Paul at Rome

Law Themes
Judgment Day; suffering for the Gospel; charges and commands

Gospel Themes
The appearing of our Savior; sound words of the Gospel; the gift of the Spirit; the good deposit; rescue

Memory Verses
God's purpose and grace (1:8–9); the value of Sacred Scripture (3:16–17)

Introduction to 2 Timothy

Reading 2 Timothy

Seawater sprays over the ship's bow as it cuts through the Troas harbor on its way toward Corinth. Wobbly tourists grip their bellies, made sick by the September pitch of the Aegean Sea at the close of the sailing season. Travel-hardy merchants chuckle at the tourists. They slurp wine as a precaution against the illnesses that follow the trade routes. "We shall make Rome in a week," they declare, "if the weather holds."

The most famous traveler of the first century, the apostle Paul, was not on that ship, but lay in a Roman prison. He wrote this Letter to request Timothy's comfort and companionship. Timothy had been guiding the congregation at Ephesus, but Paul sent a replacement (4:12) so Timothy, his son in the faith, could travel to him. This is Paul's last known Letter, written with special emphasis on faithfully teaching the Word in opposition to false teachers and to rising imperial persecution.

Luther on 2 Timothy

This epistle is a farewell letter, in which St. Paul exhorts Timothy to go on propagating the gospel, even as he has begun. This is quite necessary, since there are many who fall away; and false spirits and teachers keep springing up all around. Therefore it is incumbent upon a bishop always to be alert and to work at the gospel.

But he prophesies especially, in chapters 3 and 4, concerning the perilous time at the end of the world. It is then that a false spiritual life will lead all the world astray, with an outward show, under which every sort of wickedness and wrong will have its fling. Sad to say! we now see this prophecy of St. Paul all too amply fulfilled in our clergy. (AE 35:389)

Challenges for Readers

Paul's Authorship. See p 2067.

Blessings for Readers

In 2 Timothy, the Lord is calling you to cling faithfully to His precious Word. Paul praises the value of that Word most highly in 3:14–17, where he encourages teaching of the Word from childhood onward. In the Word, the Lord will grant you strength. No matter how you serve in the Lord's family, consider how God's Word guides your work and service.

OUTLINE

I. Not Ashamed of the Ministry of the Gospel (ch 1)
   A. Greeting (1:1–2)
   B. The Family of Faith (1:3–5)
   C. An Unashamed Ministry (1:6–14)
   D. Ashamed versus Unashamed (1:15–18)
II. Charge to Faithful Ministry in Hard Times (2:1–4:5)
   A. Laboring in the Truth (2:1–7)
   B. The Gospel of the Truth (2:8–13)
   C. Laboring for the Truth against Error (2:14–21)
   D. Laboring with the Truth for Those in Error (2:22–26)
   E. Opposition to the Truth (3:1–9)
   F. "Continue in What You Have Learned" (3:10–17)
   G. Final Charge to Timothy (4:1–5)
III. Paul's Farewell (4:6–22)
   A. Paul's Impending Martyrdom (4:6–8)
   B. Final Greetings and Requests (4:9–22)

Articles and Resources Related to 2 Timothy

- Qualifications for Pastors
- Strength for Spreading the Gospel

Qualifications for Pastors

Early Christians believed that "if anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task" (1Tm 3:1). But not just anyone could be an overseer or elder (Paul uses these terms interchangeably for the office we call "pastor" today; see notes, Ac 20:28; Ti 1:5). In letters to Timothy and Titus, Paul lists a variety of qualities that distinguish a candidate for pastoral ministry.

QUALITIES TO EXHIBIT: Above reproach
1Tm 3:2; Ti 1:6–7

QUALITIES TO EXHIBIT: A man, the husband of one wife
1Tm 3:2; Ti 1:6

QUALITIES TO AVOID: Drunkard
1Tm 3:3; Ti 1:7

QUALITIES TO EXHIBIT: Sober-minded
1Tm 3:2

QUALITIES TO EXHIBIT: Self-controlled, gentle
1Tm 3:2, 3; Ti 1:8

QUALITIES TO AVOID: Violent
1Tm 3:3; Ti 1:7

QUALITIES TO EXHIBIT: Respectable
1Tm 3:2

QUALITIES TO EXHIBIT: Hospitable
1Tm 3:2; Ti 1:8

QUALITIES TO AVOID: Quarrelsome
1Tm 3:3

QUALITIES TO EXHIBIT: Able to teach
1Tm 3:2

QUALITIES TO EXHIBIT: Manages household well, children respectful and obedient
1Tm 3:4–5; Ti 1:6

QUALITIES TO AVOID: Lover of money, greedy for gain
1Tm 3:3; Ti 1:7

QUALITIES TO EXHIBIT: Well thought of by outsiders
1Tm 3:7

QUALITIES TO EXHIBIT: Loves what is good
Ti 1:8
QUALITIES TO AVOID: Recent convert
1Tm 3:6
QUALITIES TO EXHIBIT: Upright
Ti 1:8
QUALITIES TO EXHIBIT: Holy
Ti 1:8
QUALITIES TO AVOID: Arrogant
Ti 1:7
QUALITIES TO EXHIBIT: Disciplined
Ti 1:8
QUALITIES TO EXHIBIT: Holds firmly to the Word as taught, able to instruct and rebuke according to sound doctrine
Ti 1:9
QUALITIES TO AVOID: Quick-tempered
Ti 1:7

Strength for Spreading the Gospel

Barriers between those outside the church and those of the Christian faith are broken down only through love and sacrificial service. The church is more involved than ever before in service to the needy with its language of unselfish love. In this way the church is enabled to reach the elderly, the physically and mentally handicapped, the homeless, prisoners, soldiers, and of course, also the families of these people….

Personal and public evangelism are of the highest priority and must be a permanent part of the program of the church. Work in small groups has far greater success in spreading the Gospel than do large-scale evangelistic meetings….

Work with children offers great hope….

We believe that God's grace in Christ is the instrument of strength for spreading the Gospel in which are revealed the glory and power of God (2 Tim. 2:1–2).

Stanislaus Pietak, "The Gospel in Post-Marxist Societies," *Missio Apostolica* 9, no. 2 (November 2001): 86–87.

Footnotes

Footnotes for 2 Timothy, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:9 Or *with*
- [2] 1:9 Greek *before times eternal*
- [3] 1:12 Or *what I have entrusted to him*; Greek *my deposit*
- [4] 1:13 Or *healthy*

Footnotes for 2 Timothy, Chapter 2

- [1] 2:14 Some manuscripts *the Lord*
- [2] 2:15 That is, one approved after being tested
- [1] 2:21 Greek *from these things*
- [2] 2:24 Greek *bondservant*

Footnotes for 2 Timothy, Chapter 3

- [1] 3:14 The Greek for *whom* is plural
- [2] 3:17 That is, a messenger of God (the phrase echoes a common Old Testament expression)

Footnotes for 2 Timothy, Chapter 4

- [1] 4:3 Or *healthy*
- [2] 4:10 Some manuscripts *Gaul*
- [1] 4:21 Or *brothers and sisters*. The plural Greek word *adelphoi* (translated “brothers”) refers to siblings in a family. In New Testament usage, depending on the context, *adelphoi* may refer either to men or to both men and women who are siblings (brothers and sisters) in God’s family, the church
- [2] 4:22 The Greek for *you* is plural

Study Notes

2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 1:1 *an apostle*. See p 1901. *will of God*. Paul did not choose to become an apostle, but God chose him (Ac 9:1–19). *promise of the life*. God promises eternal life to all who are joined to Christ Jesus. Although we now have eternal life by faith, we cannot see or feel this eternal life within. Instead, we focus on God's promise.

2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 1:2 *Timothy, my beloved child*. Paul is not his physical father but his father in the faith. See note, 1Tm 1:2; see also p 555.

2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 1:1–2 Paul addresses Timothy tenderly, referring to him as his "beloved child" and speaking God's grace, mercy, and peace to him. As you speak to others, especially your fellow Christians, season what you say with God's Word. Remind them of the grace that is theirs in Christ (e.g., "The Lord be with you"; "God's peace to you"). God's Word on our lips and in our hearts provides Gospel comfort to those around us. In addition, we ourselves benefit by the precious promises of the Gospel. • Give me an instructed tongue, O Lord, that I may know the Word that sustains the weary. Amen.

2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 1:3 *my ancestors*. The ancient people of Israel who lived by faith. *clear conscience … prayers night and day*. Because of the forgiveness won by Christ on the cross, even the former persecutor of the Church (Ac 9:1–2) may rejoice in a clear conscience, cleansed by Jesus' blood. This cleansed conscience allows Paul to pray continually (1Th 5:17), rejoicing to speak praise to the God who saves.

2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 1:4 *tears*. Timothy's sadness over his earlier separation from Paul.

2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 1:5 *Lois … Eunice*. Timothy's mother and grandmother, both of them Christian, taught Timothy the Christian faith from infancy (cf 3:14–15). They passed the faith to Timothy by reading and speaking the Word to him. Both names are Greek, not Jewish, indicating three generations of Greek cultural influence in the family.

2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 1:6 *gift of God … laying on of my hands*. See note, 1Tm 4:14.

2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 1:7 *a spirit*. Not the Holy Spirit, but Timothy's pastoral aptitude, which apparently lacked confidence.

2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 1:8 *the testimony*. The Gospel message. See p 971. *his prisoner*. Paul was in a Roman dungeon because of his preaching. *share in suffering for the gospel*. The Word is at work in those who believe (1Th 2:13), strengthening them in the face of persecution, temptation, and every other adversity. Cf Php 3:10. See p 2042.

2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 1:9 *called us to a holy calling*. Though Paul may be speaking primarily about the pastoral office that he and Timothy shared, his reference to "a holy calling" applies to all who live by faith. A Christian's daily work is indeed a holy calling and a priestly work because of God's gift of faith. *not because of our works*. Christian holiness is not rooted in what we do, but in God's work for us and through us in Christ. *purpose and grace … before the ages*. God knew, even before creation, that in "the fullness of time" (Gal 4:4) He would give His Son to die for us. "Before we existed, yes, even before the foundation of the world was laid—when, of course, we could do nothing good—we were chosen by grace in Christ to salvation, according to God's purpose" (FC SD XI 43).

2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 1:10 *appearing*. Jesus' incarnation. *abolished death*. Jesus, by His death and resurrection, destroyed death for us. Although we will die earthly deaths, we will live eternally with Him (Jn 11:26; 1Co 15:54–57).

2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 1:11 *appointed*. Called to be an apostle (cf 1:1). *preacher … apostle … teacher*. Synonyms here; may also be distinguished as separate offices and tasks.

2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 1:12 *why I suffer*. In prison at Rome. *able to guard … entrusted to me*. Although Paul has been entrusted with the preaching of the Gospel, God ultimately sees to it that His Word is proclaimed to the world.

2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 1:13 *pattern of the sound words*. Timothy's pastoral task is not focused on being a creative or exciting preacher. He is to follow the same preaching he previously heard from Paul. This "pattern," in written form, will later comprise the NT and the Apostles' Creed. "In this way, much unnecessary wrangling may be cut off and the Church preserved from many scandals" (FC SD IV 36). Chrys: "Many things he delivered to him without writing…. After the manner of artists, I have impressed on you the image of virtue, fixing in your soul a sort of rule, and model, and outline of all things pleasing to God" (*NPNF* 1 13:484).

2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 1:14 *dwells*. Cf Rm 8:11; 1Co 6:19. *guard the good deposit*. See note, 1Tm 6:20.
2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 1:15 *all*. Paul does not explain how many turned away from him. *Phygelus and Hermogenes*. Nothing further is known concerning these people.
2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 1:16 *household*. Including not only his wife and children but also any household servants or staff. *refreshed*. Possibly with physical nourishment, as prisoners often relied on provisions given by friends and relatives, but also he may have shared the encouragement and comfort of the Word. *chains*. See notes, vv 8, 12.
2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 1:18 *on that Day!* Judgment Day, when the deeds of the faithful will be commended. Cf Mt 25:31–46. *Ephesus*. Timothy was a pastor at Ephesus when Paul wrote this Letter. See note, 1Tm 1:3.
2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 1:3–18 Alone in prison and abandoned by many of his friends, Paul fondly remembers the encouragement he received from Timothy's sincere faith. Exhorting Timothy never to be ashamed of the faith he has been given, Paul exults in the promise of Christ, for whose sake he is imprisoned. Instead of feeling self-conscious about being Christian, we must share in Paul's forthright confession: "I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed" (v 12). Our Lord Jesus Christ shall never let us go. • Thank You, Lord Jesus, that You never leave me or forsake me. Amen.
2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 2:1 *my child*. See note, 1Tm 1:2. *grace*. See p 1902.
2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 2:2 *presence of many witnesses*. Paul taught and publicly affirmed Timothy's calling as a pastor. *faithful men*. Timothy must now teach and affirm other men who are qualified for the pastoral office.
2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 2:3–6 Paul uses three analogies to help Timothy understand his pastoral task: the Christian is like a combat soldier, a competing athlete, and a hardworking farmer.
2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 2:3 *suffering as a good soldier*. Faithful to follow the command, regardless of the suffering involved.
2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 2:4 *civilian pursuits*. Soldiers remain focused on combat duty, undistracted (e.g., Uriah; 2Sm 11:6–13). *one who enlisted him*. God (cf 1:1).

2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 2:5 *crowned*. In ancient times, victorious athletes would receive a laurel crown. See note, Pr 4:9.
2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 2:6 *first share*. In a family or community effort, a hard worker has first claim on the results.
2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 2:7 *give you understanding*. Working through His Word, the Lord opens eyes (Ps 119:18) and minds (cf Lk 24:45) to understand the Scriptures.
2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 2:8 *offspring of David*. See note, Mt 1:17. *my gospel*. See "Gospel," p 1902.
2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 2:9 *bound with chains*. Not merely under house arrest, as in Ac 28:30, but in a dungeon. *not bound!* The living and active Word (Heb 4:12) cannot be imprisoned or chained—it accomplishes God's desires (Is 55:11).
2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 2:10 *the elect*. All Christians. See note, Eph 1:4. *eternal glory*. The fullness and conclusion of Christ's salvation, when the resurrected elect will live eternally with Him.
2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 2:11–13 Likely a familiar hymn.
2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 2:13 *He cannot deny Himself*. God is love (1Jn 4:8), and He loves faithfully because it is part of His nature—even if no one should love Him in return. "He is unchangeable in will and essence" (FC SD XI 75).
2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 2:1–13 Using several comparisons (solider, athlete, and farmer), Paul calls Timothy to find other faithful men who are able to share in the pastoral office. Christians—including pastors—need one another, bearing one another's burdens. Paul describes his love for others with the words "I endure everything for the sake of the elect." These words also describe Christ's love for all people. He bore all things for us, so we would not be crushed beneath our overwhelming load of sin and death. • Thank You, Lord, that You bore all things for me. Give me strength and love to help my neighbors bear their burdens. Amen.
2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 2:14 *them*. The faithful men of v 2. *not to quarrel about words*. Avoid meaningless word games; speak God's Word simply and clearly. *ruins the hearers*. The congregation would grow frustrated with petty fights.
2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 2:15 *present yourself*. Timothy preaches not only in the presence of people but also of God, who sees all things. *approved*. Timothy ought not to preach self-consciously, as if he needs first

to prove himself. He must preach as one already accepted by God through faith in Jesus. Bas: "[They are] keeping plain and inviolate their faith in Father, Son and Holy Ghost" (*NPNF* 2 8:219). *rightly handling the word of truth*. Faithfully preaching and teaching according to the "pattern" of 1:13. "We tell godly minds to consider the promises, and we teach about free forgiveness of sins and about reconciliation, which happens through faith in Christ. Afterward, we add also the teaching of the Law. It is necessary to distinguish these things aright, as Paul says in 2 Timothy 2:15. We must see what Scripture says about the Law and what it says about the promises. For it praises works in such a way that it does not remove the free promise" (Ap V 67). See p 320.

2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 2:17 *spread like gangrene*. Highly pervasive decay or corruption. *Hymenaeus and Philetus*. Two false teachers, perhaps also in Ephesus, who preached contrary to Timothy's preaching.

2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 2:18 *resurrection has already happened*. The false teaching that denies the physical resurrection of the body and claims the resurrection is only a spiritual one, taking place in Baptism (such a teaching arose in later Gnosticism). Paul speaks of Baptism as a connection to Christ's death, in order that we might rise and "walk in newness of life" (Rm 6:4). But this Baptism also looks forward to the resurrection of all flesh on the Last Day. Cf 1Co 15:12–17; 2Th 2:2.

2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 2:19 *seal*. Authoritative inscription. See note, Eph 1:13. *The Lord knows … his*. A quotation from the LXX of Nu 16:5. *Let everyone … iniquity*. Source unknown; perhaps a popular saying.

2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 2:20 *great house*. Having used three comparisons (vv 3–6) to describe the pastoral office, Paul now uses the example of a mansion to describe the difference between "rightly handling the word of truth" (v 15) and "irreverent babble" (v 16). *vessels*. Cups and pots. An unclean vessel might get discarded. "He says clearly about the vessels of mercy that the Lord Himself has prepared them for glory. He does not say this about the damned. They themselves, and not God, have prepared themselves as vessels of damnation" (FC SD XI 82).

2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 2:21 *cleanses himself*. A preacher must separate himself from the "wood and clay" (v 20) of the "irreverent babble" (v 16). *set apart as holy*. Consecrated for God's good purposes. See "holy," p 1902. *master*. God.

2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 2:22 *flee*. Resist by means of the Word. *youthful passions*. Strong emotions and desires are often associated with youth. Timothy is still a fairly young man (see note, 1Tm 4:12). *call on the Lord*. See p 842. *pure heart*. A heart having been cleansed by Christ's forgiveness. Cf Ps 51:10.

2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 2:23 *controversies*. See note, v 14; cf v 16.

2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 2:24 *servant*. Gk *doulos*. See p 1904. Paul uses this term to describe both the pastoral office and his own apostolic office (Rm 1:1).

2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 2:25 *opponents*. See notes, v 17; 1Tm 1:20.

2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 2:26 *escape from the snare*. See note, 1Tm 3:7. *captured by him*. False teachers and heretics, having abandoned the "pattern of the sound words" (1:13) and no longer "rightly handling the word of truth" (2:15), now serve the devil by destroying faith with their lies, which they claim is God's truth. "[The devil] hates to hear God's name and cannot remain long where it is spoken and called upon from the heart. Indeed, many terrible and shocking disasters would fall upon us if God did not preserve us by our calling upon His name. I have tried it myself. I learned by experience that often sudden great suffering was immediately averted and removed by calling on God. To confuse the devil, I say, we should always have this holy name in our mouth, so that the devil may not be able to injure as he wishes" (LC I 71–72).

2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 2:14–26 Paul reminds Timothy that he and his fellow pastors must remain focused on their task of proclaiming God's Word. They must not get bogged down in quarrels or give in to the temptations of the flesh (such as temper), but be generous and kind to all. When we keep a tight rein on our tongues, not allowing ourselves to quarrel or to fall into petty arguments, we also avoid dishonoring Christ's name with our selfish words. When God's Word is front and center in our minds and on our tongues, it acts powerfully to create ongoing repentance and faith. By giving His gift of repentance to us through His Word, our Lord Jesus Christ snatches us from "the snare of the devil." • Guard my tongue, O Lord, that it may be an instrument of Your praise. Amen.

2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 3:1 *last days*. The days immediately before Christ's return. Every day between Christ's ascension and His return is part of the Last Days. See note, Ac 2:17.

2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 3:2–5 Paul describes people who have lived in every era of history, right up to this day. See note, v 1.
2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 3:3 *unappeasable*. Having wrathful anger and demanding punishment rather than showing mercy.
2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 3:4 *lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God*. Turning self-indulgence and entertainment into idols.
2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 3:5 *appearance of godliness*. People who look holy, but inwardly are unbelievers (cf Mt 23:27–28). *Avoid*. Do not allow them to influence your thoughts and behavior. See note, Rm 16:17.
2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 3:6 While the husband was away, religious charlatans would visit homes and try to persuade the women to accept their false teachings. *weak women*. Religious quackery was widely received by women in the Roman Empire during this time.
2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 3:7 When truth is a matter of human opinion rather than divine revelation, people will have their own version. God's Word, by contrast, speaks the eternal truth simply and plainly.
2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 3:8 *Jannes and Jambres*. Not mentioned in the OT. Rabbinic tradition held that these men were magicians in Pharaoh's court when Moses came to ask for Israel's release from Egypt. *these men*. Cf v 6. *disqualified*. Thrown out of the "contest." Paul returns to his earlier comparison of the faithful pastor to an athlete who must compete by the rules (2:5).
2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 3:1–9 Although Paul writes these words specifically about temptations that attack the pastoral office, they clearly apply to all Christians. Men like Jannes and Jambres allowed themselves to be enticed, and in so doing they disqualified themselves regarding the faith. God's baptismal gift of the Holy Spirit creates within us an ongoing desire for repentance and forgiveness. Although we may regularly fall into sin (such falls are easy for all Christians), God calls us to faith again through His Word, reminding us of the forgiveness and cleansing that are ours in Christ Jesus. • Lord, it is exceedingly easy to be deceived and so fall into sin. Guard me against all temptation. Amen.
2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 3:10 *my*. In Gk, "my" appears only once. Paul's motivations have been rooted in the Gospel, not in subverting the Gospel.
2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 3:11 During his missionary journeys, Paul regularly suffered bodily punishment for his preaching. He names these three Galatian provinces in particular, perhaps because Timothy was a

native of Lystra and would have already been familiar with Paul's persecutions in that region.

2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 3:12 *persecuted*. Persecution includes not only physical beatings such as Paul's but also derision and exclusion. See p 2042.

2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 3:13 *from bad to worse*. Just as an addict's habit grows worse, so sin grows worse in the thoughts, actions, or teachings of those who willingly pursue it.

2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 3:14 *from whom you learned it*. Timothy's mother, grandmother (1:5), and Paul (vv 10–11).

2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 3:15 *from childhood*. See note, 1:5. *sacred writings*. OT Scriptures. *wise … salvation*. Knowledge is often used as a synonym for faith in the Scriptures. Cf Ti 1:1.

2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 3:16 *breathed out by God*. An allusion to creation. Words are formed by breath, and breath is synonymous with life (see notes, Gn 2:7; Ps 33:6). See pp 1559–60. Aph: "If the days of a man should be many as all the days of the world from Adam to the end of the ages, and he should sit and meditate upon the Holy Scriptures, he would not comprehend all the force of the depth of the words. And man cannot rise up to the wisdom of God" (*NPNF* 2 13:411). *teaching*. Imparting of knowledge/doctrine. *reproof*. The call to repentance over sin. *correction*. Through the Word. *training in righteousness*. Made righteous by God's grace, we live out righteous behavior. See "righteous," p 843. *training*. Gk *paidea*, childhood discipline and instruction.

2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 3:17 *man of God*. The pastor or other called servant of the Word (see note, 1Sm 2:27). *competent, equipped*. Possessing both the personal aptitude and the proper training needed for the pastoral office. See p 2080. "We believe, teach, and confess that the only rule and norm according to which all teachings, together with 'all' teachers, should be evaluated and judged [2 Timothy 3:15–17] are the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures of the Old and New Testament alone" (FC Ep Sum 1). "Faithful shepherds, as Luther says, should do both things: (1) feed or nourish the lambs and (2) resist the wolves. Then the sheep may flee from strange voices (John 10:5–12) and may separate the precious from the worthless (Jeremiah 15:19)" (FC SD Sum 14).

2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 3:10–17 Paul points to himself as an example for Timothy. He speaks about the great work the Gospel has produced

within him. Our fellow Christians want to learn the faith from us, and they watch us in the same way that Timothy watched Paul. God speaks His Gospel of forgiveness and peace to us, not only through His preached Word, but also through the example and teaching of our fellow Christians. Luther called this the consolation of the brethren. • O Lord, allow me to be an example for those who believe, as was Paul to Timothy. Through Your powerful Word, train me in righteousness, that I may be equipped for every good work. Amen.

2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 4:1 *charge*. Possibly recalling Timothy's ordination vow, Paul now summarizes the duties of Timothy's office by giving him this command. *judge the living and the dead*. Paul has spoken the charge, but Christ will judge Timothy's faithfulness on the Last Day. *appearing*. Christ's return in judgment will fully reveal the kingdom He established by His suffering and death, in which Timothy now works as a pastor. *kingdom*. Not an earthly realm but one ruled by Christ. See pp 1565–66.

2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 4:2 This verse contains the simplest summary of every pastoral duty and responsibility—administering the Sacraments, admonishing the erring, and comforting and visiting those in need—and all flow from the preaching of the Word. *in season and out of season*. At all times. *reprove*. Persuade by showing evidence (in this case, from the Scriptures; cf note, 3:16). *rebuke*. Speak God's condemning Law to the erring. *exhort*. Comfort the penitent sinner with the Gospel. *complete patience and teaching*. Lit, "long-suffering and doctrine." Doctrine (the teachings of the Scriptures) is the pastor's only tool for reproving, rebuking, and exhorting. Yet, doctrine must be taught with long-suffering, knowing that people will not always accept what is taught or that acceptance might take a long time.

2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 4:3 *itching ears*. Desiring to hear something new and entertaining. *teachers to suit their own passions*. Teachers who tell them what they want to hear, rather than what God declares in His Word.

2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 4:4 *myths*. See note, 1Tm 1:4.

2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 4:5 *sober-minded*. Aware and focused on the task at hand. *evangelist*. Lit, "one who proclaims the good news." *fulfill your ministry*. Rather than being swept away along with those mentioned in vv 3–4, Timothy must faithfully pursue his service.

2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 4:6 *poured out as a drink offering*. An allusion to the OT sacrificial system (cf Ex 29:38–41). Paul regards his eventual death (i.e., the pouring out of his blood) as an offering to Christ. *departure*. A reference to Paul's death, which he believes to be near.
2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 4:7 *good fight*. See note, 1Tm 1:18. *race*. Cf 2:5. *kept the faith*. Could refer to remaining personally in the faith that God has given and/or guarding Christian doctrine against false teaching and error.
2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 4:8 *the crown of righteousness*. Eternal life. Cf Rv 2:10. See "righteousness," p 1904. "The justified are due the crown because of the promise. Saints should know this promise, not that they may labor for their own profit, for they ought to labor for God's glory. But saints should know it so they may not despair in troubles. They should know God's will: He desires to aid, to deliver, and to protect them" (Ap V 242–43). *that Day*. Judgment Day described in Mt 25:31–46. *loved*. A reference to those who lived by faith. *His appearing*. Probably a reference to the Christian's longing for the Last Day; might also refer to Christ's incarnation.
2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 4:1–8 Faced with the thought of his imminent death, Paul impresses upon Timothy the importance of carrying on where Paul will leave off, preaching the Word faithfully. We should not judge our pastors' preaching on whether they say the things we personally like to hear. We should judge preaching instead on God's Word. God's Word sometimes cuts like a knife when it exposes our sin. But after the Law comes the Gospel of peace, binding up the wounds inflicted by the Law with the sweet Gospel, which proclaims Christ's forgiveness for all our sins. • Make me an ever-ready hearer of Your Word, O Lord. Do not let me seek preaching that satisfies my sinful desires, but give me preaching that will continually return me to the forgiveness You have given me through Your Son. Amen.
2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 4:9–22 Of all Paul's lists of greetings and notes about fellow workers, only the one in Rm 16:1–23 is longer than this one. From his prison cell, Paul continued to coordinate the mission work.
2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 4:9 *come to me soon*. Paul is now in prison in Rome. See note, 1:8.
2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 4:10 *Demas*. Paul's previous co-worker. *deserted me*. Perhaps Demas left the faith entirely or was overcome by fear of imprisonment. *Crescens*. The only mention of this man in the NT. *Titus*. See p 2087–88.

2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 4:11 *Luke … Mark*. Paul's fellow travelers, who later wrote Gospels. See pp 1700–1703, 1652–54. *useful*. See note, Phm 11.
2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 4:12 *Tychicus*. He previously traveled with Paul and Timothy. Paul probably sent him to Ephesus to take Timothy's responsibilities so Timothy could travel to see Paul.
2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 4:13 Prisoners in ancient times depended upon the provisions given to them by their family and friends, rather than on the generosity of their jailers. *Carpus*. Not otherwise mentioned in the NT. *books*. Lit, "scrolls" made of papyrus. *parchments*. Scrolls made of animal skin.
2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 4:14–15 *Alexander the coppersmith*. Perhaps the same man as in 1Tm 1:20; a teacher who rejected the faith and began working against Paul.
2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 4:15 *message*. Gk *logos*, often translated "word." Used in John's Gospel as a reference to Christ. Cf Jn 1:1, 14.
2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 4:16 *first defense*. The legal proceeding that led to Paul's present imprisonment.
2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 4:17 *Lord stood by me*. Even when all others abandoned him, Paul remained confident in Christ's abiding presence. See note, Ac 23:11. *message*. Gk *kerygma*, "preaching" or proclamation of the word in v 15. *lion's mouth*. Could symbolize deadly peril or describe an accuser at Paul's trial. Because of his Roman citizenship, it is not likely that Paul would have been put to death by lions in the amphitheater. Probably Paul was not declared guilty at his first defense.
2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 4:18 *His heavenly kingdom*. Eternal life beyond earthly death. See pp 1565–66. *glory*. Whether in life or in death, Paul continues to praise God's name.
2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 4:9–18 Paul requests that Timothy visit him at Rome, confident that his fellow Christian will prove faithful. We should not hesitate to ask others for their help, particularly when our need is great. Probably they are more than ready to give us aid and require only to know our need. The self-sacrificing generosity that Christians show toward one another comes from only one place: the self-sacrificing love of Christ Jesus, who gave Himself fully for our salvation. • Thank You, Jesus, that You have given all things for me. Give me Your Holy Spirit, that I may be bold, both to serve others with self-sacrificing love and to ask for such love from others when I am in need. Amen.

2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 4:19 *Prisca and Aquila*. See notes, Ac 18:18, 26. *Prisca*. Perhaps a diminutive form of the name Priscilla.
2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 4:20 *Erastus*. Formerly, the city treasurer of Corinth. See note, Rm 16:23. *Trophimus*. See notes, Ac 20:4; 21:29.
2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 4:21 *come before winter*. Travel becomes impossible during the winter months. Cf Ac 27:9–12. Also, Paul did not have his winter cloak (cf v 13). *Eubulus … Pudens … Linus … Claudia*. Not otherwise mentioned in the NT. *all the brothers*. Christians at Ephesus. See p 1901.
2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 4:22 *with your spirit*. See notes, Gal 6:18; Php 4:23; Phm 25. *be with you*. Though the Letter is a personal note that Timothy is to share with these others (v 19), "you" is plural here and most likely indicates that the Letter was intended for reading in the entire congregation at Ephesus.

2 TIMOTHY—NOTE ON 4:19–22 In closing, Paul asks Timothy to greet the other Christians at Ephesus, whom Paul had earlier grown to love. There is no Christian who lives to himself or herself alone. We are a family, joined together in Christ! Timothy faces a difficult task, but he does not face it alone. Other Christians in the Body of Christ will shoulder the load with him. God has likewise given fellow Christians to us, whom we will find gathered with us in worship. Partaking of the Word and the Sacraments in the communion of saints, our gracious heavenly Father will lighten our loads and lift our burdens. • Thank You, Lord, for my fellow Christians whom I name before You in my prayers. Amen.

Titus

Titus 1 | Titus 2 | Titus 3

- Introduction to Titus
  - Overview
  - Reading Titus
  - Luther on Titus
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

Greeting

1 [1] ‡ † Paul, a servant[1] of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the
sake of the faith of God's elect and their knowledge of the truth, which
accords with godliness, [2] † in hope of eternal life, which God, who never
lies, promised before the ages began[2] [3] † and at the proper time manifested
in his word through the preaching with which I have been entrusted by the
command of God our Savior;

[4] † To Titus, my true child in a common faith:
Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior.

Qualifications for Elders

5 ‡† This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained
into order, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you— 6 ‡† if
anyone is above reproach, the husband of one wife,[3] and his children are
believers and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination.
7 †For an overseer,[4] as God's steward, must be above reproach. He must not
be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain,
8 † but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and
disciplined. 9 †He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that
he may be able to give instruction in sound[1] doctrine and also to rebuke
those who contradict it.

10 † For there are many who are insubordinate, empty talkers and
deceivers, especially those of the circumcision party. 11 † They must be
silenced, since they are upsetting whole families by teaching for shameful
gain what they ought not to teach. 12 † One of the Cretans,[2] a prophet of
their own, said, "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons."[3]
13 †This testimony is true. Therefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be
sound in the faith, 14 † not devoting themselves to Jewish myths and the
commands of people who turn away from the truth. 15 † To the pure, all
things are pure, but to the defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure; but both
their minds and their consciences are defiled. 16 † They profess to know
God, but they deny him by their works. They are detestable, disobedient,
unfit for any good work.

Teach Sound Doctrine

2 [1]†But as for you, teach what accords with sound[4]
doctrine. [2]‡†Older men are to be sober-minded, dignified, self-controlled,
sound in faith, in love, and in steadfastness. [3]† Older women likewise are to
be reverent in behavior, not slanderers or slaves to much wine. They are to
teach what is good, [4]†and so train the young women to love their husbands
and children, [5]† to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and
submissive to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled.
[6]†Likewise, urge the younger men to be self-controlled. [7]‡†Show yourself
in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show
integrity, dignity, [8]†and sound speech that cannot be condemned, so that an
opponent may be put to shame, having nothing evil to say about us. [9]†
Slaves[1] are to be submissive to their own masters in everything; they are to
be well-pleasing, not argumentative, [10]†not pilfering, but showing all good
faith, so that in everything they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior.

[11]†For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people,
[12]† training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live
self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, [13]† waiting for
our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior
Jesus Christ, [14]† who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness
and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous
for good works.

[15]†Declare these things; exhort and rebuke with all authority. Let no one
disregard you.

Be Ready for Every Good Work

3 [1] Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be
obedient, to be ready for every good work, [2] to speak evil of no one, to
avoid quarreling, to be gentle, and to show perfect courtesy toward all
people. [3] For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves
to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy,
hated by others and hating one another. [4] But when the goodness and
loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, [5] he saved us, not because of
works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the
washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, [6] whom he poured
out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, [7] so that being justified by
his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. [8] The
saying is trustworthy, and I want you to insist on these things, so that those
who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good
works. These things are excellent and profitable for people. [9] But avoid
foolish controversies, genealogies, dissensions, and quarrels about the law,
for they are unprofitable and worthless. [10] As for a person who stirs up
division, after warning him once and then twice, have nothing more to do
with him, [11] knowing that such a person is warped and sinful; he is self-
condemned.

Final Instructions and Greetings

12 ‡†When I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, do your best to come to me
at Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there. 13 †Do your best to
speed Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their way; see that they lack
nothing. 14 †And let our people learn to devote themselves to good works, so
as to help cases of urgent need, and not be unfruitful.

15 †All who are with me send greetings to you. Greet those who love us in
the faith.

Grace be with you all.

Titus

OVERVIEW

Author
Paul the apostle

Date
AD 68

Places
Crete; Nicopolis

People
Paul; Titus; Artemas; Tychicus; Zenas; Apollos

Purpose
To guide Titus's teaching and administration for the Christians on Crete

Law Themes
Be above reproach; rebuke; the pure and the defiled; submissiveness; devotion to good works

Gospel Themes
Election; soundness; God's grace; redemption; washing and renewal; justification

Memory Verses
Redeemed and purified (2:14); renewal by the Holy Spirit (3:4–7)

Introduction to Titus

Reading Titus

The rich man grips his belly in pain, pleading for the physician to explain what is wrong. “Too much rich food! Too much wine!” the physician complains. “Excesses will kill you. No wonder your body is not sound.”

Like a sincere physician, the apostle Paul warns Titus about the excesses that afflict the congregation of Cretans, who were proverbial for gluttonous excess (1:12) and who craved new and different doctrines (1:10, 13–14; 3:9). Paul teaches that soundness (1:9, 13; 2:1–2, 8) comes from modest living in accordance with the truth. The wholeness of the Gospel brings salvation and leads to self-controlled living.

Luther on Titus

This is a short epistle, but a model of Christian doctrine, in which is comprehended in a masterful way all that is necessary for a Christian to know and to live.

In chapter 1 he teaches what kind of man a bishop, or pastor, ought to be, namely, one who is pious and learned in preaching the gospel and in refuting the false teachers of works and of man-made laws, those who are always warring against faith and leading consciences away from Christian liberty into the captivity of their own man-made works, [as if these works,] which are actually worthless, [should make them righteous before God.]

In chapter 2 he teaches the various estates—the older, the younger, wives, husbands, masters, and slaves—how they are to act, as those whom Christ, by his death, has won for his own.

In chapter 3 he teaches Christians to honor worldly rulers and to obey them. He cites again the grace that Christ has won for us, so that no one may think that obeying rulers is enough, since all our righteousness is nothing before God. And he forbids association with the obstinate and with heretics. (AE 35:389–90)

For more of Luther's insights on this Book, see *Lectures on Titus* (AE 29:1–90).

Challenges for Readers

Paul's Authorship. Because Paul's other Letters do not mention a mission to Crete, and because word choices in Titus differ somewhat from those in Paul's earlier Letters, some critics have concluded that Paul did not write this Letter to Titus. However, there was time for a mission to Crete after Paul's imprisonment at Rome and before his martyrdom (see the timeline above). Also, authors often adapt their style based on the intended recipient. Paul typically worked through a scribe, which could also affect the Letter's style (see note, Rm 16:22). The Early Church unanimously received Titus as a Letter from Paul.

Relation to 1 Timothy. Many features of the Letter for Titus correspond with those of 1 Timothy. Like administrators today, Paul likely adapted his Letter for one pastor to meet the needs of another pastor (see "Luther on Colossians," p 2040).

Faith and Works. In Titus, Paul places special emphasis on the relationship between faith and works, explaining that our works result from God's saving action. When Paul describes the Christian life (2:1–10; 3:1–2), he also provides the theological basis for the life of faith (both passages are introduced by Gk *gar*, "for") as he emphasizes God's saving action (2:11–14a; 3:3–7). Finally, he provides a summary statement that explicitly states how Christians are to do good works, springing from God's work in Baptism (2:14b; 3:8).

Blessings for Readers

As you read Titus, reflect on the excesses in your life. Our world today offers excesses of every variety. Yet, as Paul demonstrates, the basics in life and in doctrine are God's greatest gifts. The simple purity of the truth is the hope of our salvation.

OUTLINE

I. Opening Salutation (1:1–4)
II. Body (1:5–3:11)
  A. Appointment and Qualifications of Elders (1:5–9)
  B. Elders' Duty to Refute False Teaching in Crete (1:10–16)
  C. Instructions to Various Groups regarding Christian Living (2:1–10)
  D. Theological Basis for This Christian Living (2:11–15)
  E. General Instructions about Living as Christians in Society (3:1–2)
  F. Theological Basis for This Christian Living Grounded in Holy Baptism (3:3–8)
  G. Final Instructions about Dealing with False Teaching and Teachers (3:9–11)
III. Closing (3:12–15)
  A. Personal Instructions (3:12–14)
  B. Greeting (3:15)

Footnotes

Footnotes for Titus, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:1 Or *slave*; Greek *bondservant*
- [2] 1:2 Greek *before times eternal*
- [3] 1:6 Or *a man of one woman*
- [4] 1:7 Or *bishop*; Greek *episkopos*
- [1] 1:9 Or *healthy*; also verse 13
- [2] 1:12 Greek *One of them*
- [3] 1:12 Probably from Epimenides of Crete

Footnotes for Titus, Chapter 2

- [4] 2:1 Or *healthy*; also verses 2, 8
- [1] 2:9 Or *servants*; Greek *bondservants*

Study Notes

TITUS—NOTE ON 1:1 *servant*. God owned Paul's life and directed his efforts. See p 101. *apostle*. Jesus handpicked and commissioned Paul as His spokesman (Ac 9:15) and as a gift to His Church (Eph 4:11–12). See p 1901. *for the sake of the faith*. Establishing and strengthening the faith of God's people were key elements of Paul's ministry. *elect*. See note, Eph 1:4. *accords with godliness*. Faith in Christ and knowledge of God's truth will bear fruit in godly living.

TITUS—NOTE ON 1:2 *God, who never lies*. A favorite verse for Luther. God is the author and final arbiter of truth. He is fully trustworthy. "God's Word cannot err" (LC IV 57). *promised before the ages began*. God's plan for our salvation predates the beginning of history. See note, Eph 1:4.

TITUS—NOTE ON 1:3 *proper time*. God is Lord over all time and history, so He revealed Himself and His promised plan of salvation in Jesus Christ at just the right time (Mk 1:15; Gal 4:4). On a personal level, He also introduces Himself and His promise to each of us at just the right time to meet our need for salvation. *command of God our Savior*. Paul did not preach to pass the time as he toured the Roman Empire; he preached in obedience to God's direction. See note, 1Co 1:17. Paul's work as God's servant received all of his skill, energy, time, and devotion.

TITUS—NOTE ON 1:4 *Titus*. Not mentioned by name in Ac, but Titus was one of Paul's companions and collaborators in the ministry. Paul apparently trusted Titus with important assignments. *my true child*. Paul may have led Titus, a Gentile, to faith in Christ, in effect becoming his spiritual father. See note, 1Tm 1:2. *common faith*. Paul and Titus each held the true Christian faith in Jesus as Lord and Savior. *Christ Jesus our Savior*. The interchange with "God our Savior" (v 3) affirms the deity of Jesus Christ.

TITUS—NOTE ON 1:1–4 Paul opens his Letter to Titus and the churches on Crete with a greeting that asserts his authority, recaps God's plan for salvation, and notes his personal bond with Titus. Most of his greeting revolves around the Gospel, because this is so central to Paul's life that he can hardly speak (or write) without mentioning it. God saves us from sin and condemnation and makes us fit for His kingdom. The only logical response to such love, grace, and generosity is, like Paul, to overflow with His praises and share this joyous news with others. Through

Jesus Christ, the Father rescues us from our shortcomings yesterday, today, and tomorrow. • I praise You, O God, for giving me grace and peace in Christ Jesus, my Savior! Make me a sincere and faithful child in the communion of saints. Amen.

TITUS—NOTE ON 1:5 *I left you in Crete*. Paul and Titus likely visited Crete as missionaries. No fourth missionary journey or church planting on Crete is mentioned in Ac, but Rm 15:24, 28 indicates that Paul had additional mission work in mind. He could have visited Crete after his release from house arrest at the end of Ac. *appoint elders*. Paul uses "elder" (v 5) and "overseer" (v 7) for the same office of church leadership; "elder" suggests qualifications, while "overseer" suggests responsibilities. They served as stewards of their congregation; today we know them as pastors and elders. Titus was to appoint church leaders based on their qualifications rather than popularity. "The Gospel assigns those who preside over Churches the command to teach the Gospel [Matthew 28:19], to forgive sins [John 20:23], to administer the Sacraments, and also to exercise jurisdiction (i.e., the command to excommunicate those whose crimes are known and to absolve those who repent). Everyone confesses, even our adversaries, that this power is common to all who preside over churches by divine right, whether they are called pastors, elders, or bishops" (Tr 60–61). *every town*. Churches planted in each town would need leaders after Paul and then Titus left Crete (cf 3:12).

TITUS—NOTE ON 1:6–9 The lists of qualification in 1Tm and Ti are not identical, but they cover the same central themes. The differences suggest some degree of flexibility to meet the needs of the local church. E.g., 1Tm 3:6 requires that elders not be recent converts, but Ti does not mention this constraint, perhaps because all Cretan Christians were relatively recent converts. These standards in the list reflect God's expectations for those who serve as leaders in His Church. See p 2080.

TITUS—NOTE ON 1:6 *above reproach*. Church leadership is not open to everyone. Candidates for elder must be Christ's authentic disciples, which Paul apparently takes as obvious and does not state. Starting from this foundation, candidates for elder must live an irreproachable, blameless life. *husband of one wife*. NT churches included businesswomen who helped host start-up churches (Ac 16:14–15) and women who taught as part of a husband-wife team (Ac 18:24–26). There are myriad opportunities for men and women to serve or work as part of God's Church (see p 1972), but

Scripture consistently requires elders and overseers to be men, husbands from monogamous, Christian marriages (cf 1Tm 3:2). Note that these are marriages as defined by God and not as defined or practiced by secular culture. Experience in a Christian marriage would prove the ability to maintain successful personal relationships during good times as well as trying times, and it would help the elder begin to understand something of the relationship between Christ and His Bride, the Church. Paul himself was not married. See note, 1Co 7:8. *children are believers*. A Christian father must be spiritual leader of his household before he is fit to lead the church; his witness within his own family is a top priority. *debauchery*. Decadent children might reflect a lack of discipline or spiritual teaching by their father. *insubordination*. Persistent disobedience indicates that children misunderstand or reject their father's authority and, by implication, reject the lordship of Christ. Congregations should anticipate that a pastor's children will fall into sin, just like anyone else's children. They may also expect the pastor to apply Law and Gospel to his children, to restore them in God's love and mercy.

TITUS—NOTE ON 1:7 *overseer*. See note, v 5. *God's steward*. Leaders must serve, manage, and care for the laypeople who make up the local church, as well as for its ministries. In most churches, a pastor serves this role with support from elders whom God raises up from among the laity.

TITUS—NOTE ON 1:8 *self-controlled*. This fruit of the Holy Spirit in Christian life (Gal 5:22–23) comes up several times in Paul's Letter as he urges Titus and his Cretan audience to grow in godly living.

TITUS—NOTE ON 1:9 *as taught*. Consistent sound doctrine at Crete would provide a starting point for their growth in discipleship. See note, 2Th 2:15. "Faith must have something that it believes, that is, of which it takes hold" (LC IV 29). *sound doctrine*. See notes, v 13; 2:1. *rebuke those who contradict it*. As stewards or guardians of the Church, leaders must identify, stop, and correct false teaching.

TITUS—NOTE ON 1:10 *empty talkers*. Those who talk a convincing story, but without any God-given authority or useful message. *circumcision party*. People who taught that Christians must be circumcised and obey all of the Jewish ceremonial rules to receive salvation. See note, Ac 15:1. They added these requirements to the Gospel of God's grace, effectively defining a salvation based partly on an individual's works and placing man-made rules above God's Word, so their teaching was dangerous and wrong. Even today,

many religions and cults add man-made requirements to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

TITUS—NOTE ON 1:11 *silenced*. Titus and the elders he appoints must block and correct the faulty teaching. *whole families*. If one person in a family fell prey to false teaching, it was likely to influence their entire household. *shameful gain*. Church leaders are entitled to support (1Tm 5:18), but this suggests that the false teachers were in the ministry for the sake of money.

TITUS—NOTE ON 1:12 *Cretans, a prophet*. Epimenides, a Cretan philosopher (c 600 BC) whom many pagans viewed as a prophet. *Cretans are … gluttons*. The original treatise from Epimenides was concerning prophetic oracles and those who spoke them (*de oraculis*). So Paul likely cites the passage as a rebuke to the Cretan false teachers and not to Cretans generally. He challenges the Cretan churches to reject the false teachers among them, who apparently claimed prophetic authority. This teaching strategy suggests that Paul wanted Titus to share the Letter publicly with the churches on Crete.

TITUS—NOTE ON 1:13 *testimony is true*. With respect to the false prophets. Apparently the circumcision party here was made up of native Cretans, not Jews from Judea as in other cases (see note, Gal 2:4). *rebuke … sharply*. False teaching is dangerous, requiring a clear, direct response. *them*. The Cretan false teachers. The rebuke is both a judgment on the troublemakers and an opportunity for them to repent and experience God's grace. Titus must meet the false teachers with Law and Gospel. See p 307. *sound*. Faith must be pure and not compromised by false teaching or attempts to invent our own spiritual success. Only Jesus Christ can reconcile us with God. See note, 2:1.

TITUS—NOTE ON 1:14 *Jewish myths*. Writings excluded from the OT, or a speculative aspect of the false teaching. *commands of people*. Rules and interpretations of God's Law that undercut God's grace or distort His plan of salvation (e.g., Mt 23:23).

TITUS—NOTE ON 1:15 *To the pure, all things are pure*. Put another way, God redeems everything for the redeemed (1Tm 4:4), and those who are not redeemed by Christ live in condemnation. "[Everything is pure] to those who believe in Christ and are righteous by faith" (Ap XXIII 34). *minds … consciences are defiled*. Unredeemed reasoning and thoughts, and their

sense of right and wrong, are fatally flawed. The circumcision party sought to bind consciences with legalistic observances. See note, v 10.

TITUS—NOTE ON 1:16 *profess … deny*. The false teachers claim to know God, but their actions or works prove that they are not His people (cf Mt 7:15–20). Doctrine and practice must go hand in hand. *unfit*. Faith in Christ bears fruit in the good works He provides, but those without Christ's salvation are unable to bear this fruit (Mt 7:17). Hus: "He is lacking in faith … unbelieved things are as holes, and thus he has a shield of faith which is full of holes…. He is lacking in faith who lacks in use of this shield" (*The Church*, p 70).

TITUS—NOTE ON 1:5–16 Step by step, Paul outlines the requirements for those who wish to lead as stewards of God's Church. Then he turns his focus to the false teachers, who do not measure up in understanding or teaching the truth, in their corrosive behavior, or in their motives. As living, active members of God's Church, potential leaders should aspire to know and understand His truth and to serve in the roles He provides. They and their families need to live a godly life that avoids empty talk, deceit, and any teaching that turns away from God's truth. Purity is a tall order, though, and we cannot make ourselves pure. Yet God steps into our lives and purifies us by His Gospel. Thank God that through Jesus Christ, He makes us pure and leads us through His trustworthy Word! • Jesus, purify me with Your righteousness so that I may lead in my family and serve faithfully among Your people. Amen.

TITUS—NOTE ON 2:1 *sound*. Gk *hugiaino*, "whole, healthy" (see note, 1:13). In contrast to the impure and fractured doctrines of the circumcision party and other false teachers, Titus must teach Cretans the whole trustworthy Word (cf 1:9) in accord with the teaching of Christ and His apostles. This is not the same as moralism, where we set ourselves up as judges, nor is it moral relativism, which denies the reality of God's unchanging truth.

TITUS—NOTE ON 2:2–10 Here, Paul builds upon a divine foundation to explain special emphases for teaching different groups within the churches. These exhortations are not as complete as the requirements for elder and overseer in ch 1, but both aim to encourage growth in areas of personal behavior that are important to individuals and their role in the Christian community. Paul urges older men and women to be dignified and reverent; these virtues are important as positive models for the younger men and

women. Many of the qualities asked of the younger men and women focus on a godly life. These exhortations have both Law and Gospel applications in that they represent God's expectations and urge behaviors that God will enable, use, and bless through the Gospel.

TITUS—NOTE ON 2:2 *Older men*. By virtue of age and experience, they serve as natural role models for younger men. People who reached age 80 were regarded as remarkable. The median age of death, according to inscriptions left on tombs of the upper classes, was 46½ yrs for men. So, elders were men in their 30s or 40s, though most would not have an exact reckoning of their age. *sound*. Cf v 1. Older men should set a solid example of spiritual vitality and maturity.

TITUS—NOTE ON 2:3 *Older women*. No specific age is given, but since v 4 addresses younger women who have children, perhaps the older women are those past childbearing age. The median age of death for women was 34 years (see note, v 2). *much wine*. People drank wine at meals and parties (Jn 2:9–10) and for medicinal purposes (1Tm 5:23), but drinking too much would violate the spirit of self-control urged throughout Ti. See note, Eph 5:18. *teach what is good*. Older women serve as natural role models for younger women, so they should train them in behavior befitting a godly wife and mother.

TITUS—NOTE ON 2:4 *young women*. Old enough to marry and young enough to have children still at home. The earliest age for marriage in Roman law was 12. *love*. Training someone to love is best done by setting a good example and reinforcing loving behavior.

TITUS—NOTE ON 2:5 *working at home*. Women are not prohibited from working outside their home but should be industrious at home in the family context. Cf Pr 31:10–31 for an example to follow, and 1Tm 5:13–14 for an example to avoid. *submissive*. See notes, Eph 5:21, 22. The same term is used in v 9 and 3:1, showing that the application of this teaching is based on the calling involved. *word of God … reviled*. Paul is concerned not only with encouraging godly behavior, but with avoiding ungodly behavior that might discredit the Gospel message.

TITUS—NOTE ON 2:6 *younger men*. Old enough to have reached adulthood and young enough to need encouragement in self-control. Paul seems to switch the focus to Titus in the next verse, implying that Titus might be part of this age group.

TITUS—NOTE ON 2:7–8 These expectations reflect Titus's role as pastor or head elder as he leads young men into mature Christian discipleship and service.
TITUS—NOTE ON 2:7 Titus needs to set an example for the young men as he teaches the newly appointed elders/pastors and the churches on Crete. See note, Php 3:17.
TITUS—NOTE ON 2:8 Paul is concerned with avoiding behavior that might undercut Titus's credibility or fuel the arguments of opponents, such as the false teachers, who would be at odds with Titus and a sound understanding of the Gospel.
TITUS—NOTE ON 2:9 *Slaves*. Slavery was common across the Roman Empire, but its practice varied widely from one area to another. Christian slaves or bond servants must obey their masters as a compelling witness of Christian submission to God. See p 101. *submissive*. See note, v 5. *masters*. Any Christian or pagan who owned or managed a Christian slave or bond servant. *in everything*. Slaves were often part of an extended household, and all aspects of their life could be seen by other members of the household. Therefore, submission to their master must be consistent.
TITUS—NOTE ON 2:10 *all good faith*. Attitudes and intent matter as much as actions or service. *adorn the doctrine*. Behavior must reflect positively on the Gospel rather than discrediting Christian witness.
TITUS—NOTE ON 2:11 Jesus Christ is the living manifestation of God's grace. God stepped into this world to create the crucial turning point of salvation for all of humanity. *salvation for all*. God's plan of salvation is available for all people, regardless of age, gender, social status, or nationality (Gal 3:28; Col 3:11).
TITUS—NOTE ON 2:12 *renounce*. This strong verb stresses the visible break we need to make with our old, fallen nature. God's grace enables us to renounce sin; we cannot renounce sin and then embrace God by our own strength or initiative. Renouncing the devil became a part of the baptismal liturgy (see *LSB*, p 270). *present age*. From now until the coming of Christ (v 13).
TITUS—NOTE ON 2:13 *the appearing of the glory*. The second coming of Christ that He predicted in Mt 16:27. See "glory," p 1902. "Deliver Your servants by Your glorious return!" (SA Preface 15). *our great God and Savior Jesus Christ*. Clearly states the deity of Jesus Christ.

TITUS—NOTE ON 2:14 *redeem*. See p 1904. *purify*. By saving us from our sin, Jesus purifies us and makes us fit to be part of His family. See note, 1:15. *His own possession*. God already has right of ownership over us because He created us. However, He loves us so much that He wants to adopt each of us as His children. Collectively, the congregation of Christians forms the Church, the Bride of Christ, which reflects just how amazingly special we are to Him. See note, Eph 5:25; see also "portion," p 7.

TITUS—NOTE ON 2:15 *these things*. Includes the admonitions of vv 2–10 as well as the foundational doctrines summarized in vv 11–14. *exhort and rebuke*. Titus is charged to encourage and correct or reprimand his audience with clear, direct teaching of Law and Gospel. This is a responsibility of all pastors, even in the face of apathy or opposition. *all authority*. Titus (and pastors today) must exhort and rebuke from Scripture, reflecting authority assigned by Jesus Christ through His apostles (Mt 28:18–20).

TITUS—NOTE ON **Ch 2** Self-controlled, godly living is beneficial regardless of our age or status in life, and it is important to our family relationships as well as to our witness as a Christian. Our lifestyle, relationships, and behavior must not discredit the Gospel. This sets a very high bar, indeed, and one that we cannot reach without a lot of help. However, God trains us for the present time and gives us hope for the future. He redeems and purifies us to make us His children. • Jesus, adorn my life with works and confession worthy of the Gospel. Amen.

TITUS—NOTE ON 3:1 *submissive*. See note, 2:5; cf Rm 13:1–7. *every good work*. Many of Paul's admonitions point Christians toward good works that stem from a godly life; this passage starts with good citizenship.

TITUS—NOTE ON 3:2 *speak evil of no one*. Do not indulge in slander, insults, or character assassination. *perfect courtesy toward all people*. Gentle, courteous conduct stands in contrast to quarrelsome attitudes and evil speech; it strengthens the Christian's credibility and personal witness.

TITUS—NOTE ON 3:3 *once foolish*. Life without Christ tends to follow the wisdom of this world, which is foolishness in God's view (cf 1Co 1:25). People who can remember their life before they became Christians are often amazed and dismayed at how foolish and distorted it was. This passage provides a succinct description of how badly we need God's grace.

TITUS—NOTE ON 3:4 *when*. God's timing is impeccable: He sent Christ into the world at just the right time for humanity, and He met the Cretans

with Law and Gospel at just the right time to show them His grace. He still reaches us with such excellent timing. *God our Savior*. See note, 1:4.

TITUS—NOTE ON 3:5 *not because of works*. Every aspect of our salvation described in 2:11–14; 3:4–7 depends on God's action; none of it depends on what we do. Even though Paul repeatedly urges Christians to prepare for and perform good works, these are the harvest of God's grace in saving us from our sins and are not prepayments or repayments for His salvation. *according to His own mercy*. God's love and the grace He extends to us are in keeping with His merciful nature. *washing of regeneration and renewal*. Baptism brings new life and spiritual cleansing. God provides this Baptism as a means for us to receive His grace. See note, Eph 5:26. "Baptism may certainly be called a divine, blessed, fruitful, and gracious water. Such power is given to Baptism by the Word that it is a washing of new birth" (LC IV 27). Cypr: "The blessed apostle sets forth and proves that baptism is that wherein the old man dies and the new man is born" (*ANF* 5:388).

TITUS—NOTE ON 3:6 *poured*. See note, Ac 2:17.

TITUS—NOTE ON 3:7 *justified by His grace*. See note, Rm 3:24. "Justification before God is regeneration" (FC SD III 19). *heirs*. Once justified and purified, God adopts us into His family as coheirs with Jesus Christ. See p 1902. *hope*. God promises eternal life, and believers can look forward to spending eternity with Him.

TITUS—NOTE ON 3:8 *The saying*. Vv 4–7 present a unified statement of salvation in Christ, representing the Christian's experience: God's initiative in sending Christ; His merciful rescue of us; Baptism for rebirth and cleansing; the indwelling Spirit, who makes us rich in Christ; justification and acceptance into God's family; and the hope of eternity with our heavenly Father. *devote themselves*. God prepares good works for Christians to do (Eph 2:10), and we need to pay attention and not shirk these opportunities.

TITUS—NOTE ON 3:9 *law*. May be the Law of Moses, but Paul may mean man-made extensions of God's Law (cf 1:10).

TITUS—NOTE ON 3:10–11 Direction for excommunication as a means of Church discipline. The reason for excommunication is not a person's misunderstanding per se, but that the person persistently teaches and imposes that misunderstanding on others, creating division in the Church, the Body of Christ.

TITUS—NOTE ON 3:10 *after warning … have nothing more to do with him*. A template for discipline, to be exercised by spiritual leaders of the Church. Titus needed to discipline the false teachers who afflicted the churches on Crete. He is to warn them once and then a second time, which seems patterned after Mt 18:15–17. Cf Gal 6:1; Rm 16:17. Iren: "Such was the horror which the apostles and their disciples had against holding even verbal communication with any corrupters of the truth" (*ANF* 1:416). "Paul commands that godless teachers should be avoided and condemned as cursed" (Tr 41).

TITUS—NOTE ON 3:11 *warped*. Reflects distorted or possibly perverted doctrines of the false teachers. *self-condemned*. See notes, Ex 4:21; 9:12.

TITUS—NOTE ON 3:1–11 God brings us out of sin and into new life in Christ, beginning with the cleansing and rebirth He provides in Baptism. This is all accomplished by the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, not by anything we can do on our own. Those who stray away from God's truth and stir up division among God's people must be disciplined by the Church. We are committed and fervent in our beliefs, but we also check ourselves, our words, and our behavior against God's trustworthy Scripture. We pay attention to the guidance, counsel, and teaching of our pastor and elders. • O God, Your Word and Sacraments sustain, guide, and nurture me in the one true faith. Guard me against all error. Amen.

TITUS—NOTE ON 3:12 *Artemas or Tychicus*. Co-workers with Paul; only Tychicus is mentioned elsewhere in the NT (Ac 20:4; Eph 6:21; Col 4:7; 2Tm 4:12). *Nicopolis*. A city on the west coast of Greece. *spend the winter*. Ships provided the most expedient way to travel to destinations around the Mediterranean Sea, but storms stopped most marine traffic and impeded other forms of travel during the winter. See note, Ac 27:12.

TITUS—NOTE ON 3:13 *Zenas … Apollos*. More co-workers with Paul; only Apollos is mentioned elsewhere (Ac 18:24–19:1; 1Co 1:12; 3:4–22; 4:6; 16:12). They probably brought Paul's Letter to Titus. The Roman government had a postal system for official purposes; private letters were hand-carried by professional messengers or trusted friends. On Paul's letters, see pp 1899–1901. *lack nothing*. Titus and the churches on Crete should provide whatever these men needed for travel to their next destination; this was part of the hospitality mentioned in 1:8. See note, Rm 12:13.

TITUS—NOTE ON 3:14 *devote themselves*. See note, v 8.

TITUS—NOTE ON 3:15 *All who are with me*. Probably Artemas, Tychicus (v 12), and perhaps others, all of whom were co-workers and missionaries with Paul. See pp 2087–88. *with you all*. Suggests that Paul expected Titus to share the Letter with the churches on Crete.

TITUS—NOTE ON 3:12–15 Paul's closing remarks mention four co-workers who, with him, spread the Gospel and minister to churches in various locations. Paul and the others could not perform such ministries without the help of other Christians, so his closing includes instructions for their support. Whether or not we personally work in outreach ministry, we need to support others as they evangelize, teach, and minister in Christ's name. God, who redeemed us with the precious blood of Jesus and saw to it that we received His dear message, will give us opportunities to serve and support others. What a privilege to serve with our brothers and sisters in Christ in God's kingdom! • Entrust me, dear Lord, with the opportunity to tell another person of Your redeeming love. Amen.

Philemon

Philemon 1

- Introduction to Philemon
  - Overview
  - Reading Philemon
  - Luther on Philemon
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

Greeting

1 [1]Paul, a prisoner for Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother,

To Philemon our beloved fellow worker [2]and Apphia our sister and Archippus our fellow soldier, and the church in your house:

[3] Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Philemon’s Love and Faith

4 I thank my God always when I remember you in my prayers, 5because I
hear of your love and of the faith that you have toward the Lord Jesus and
for all the saints, 6and I pray that the sharing of your faith may become
effective for the full knowledge of every good thing that is in us for the sake
of Christ.[1] 7For I have derived much joy and comfort from your love, my
brother, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you.

Paul's Plea for Onesimus

8 Accordingly, though I am bold enough in Christ to command you to do
what is required, 9 yet for love's sake I prefer to appeal to you—I, Paul, an
old man and now a prisoner also for Christ Jesus— 10 I appeal to you for my
child, Onesimus,[2] whose father I became in my imprisonment. 11 (Formerly
he was useless to you, but now he is indeed useful to you and to me.) 12 I am
sending him back to you, sending my very heart. 13 I would have been glad
to keep him with me, in order that he might serve me on your behalf during
my imprisonment for the gospel, 14 but I preferred to do nothing without
your consent in order that your goodness might not be by compulsion but of
your own accord. 15 For this perhaps is why he was parted from you for a
while, that you might have him back forever, 16 no longer as a slave[1] but
more than a slave, as a beloved brother—especially to me, but how much
more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord.

17 So if you consider me your partner, receive him as you would receive
me. 18 If he has wronged you at all, or owes you anything, charge that to my
account. 19 I, Paul, write this with my own hand: I will repay it—to say
nothing of your owing me even your own self. 20 Yes, brother, I want some
benefit from you in the Lord. Refresh my heart in Christ.

21 Confident of your obedience, I write to you, knowing that you will do
even more than I say. 22 At the same time, prepare a guest room for me, for I
am hoping that through your prayers I will be graciously given to you.

Final Greetings

[23] Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, sends greetings to you,
[24]and so do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke, my fellow workers.
[25] The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

Philemon

OVERVIEW

Author
Paul the apostle

Date
c AD 60

Places
Likely written at Rome

People
Paul; Timothy; Philemon; Apphia; Archippus; a house church; Onesimus; Epaphras; Mark; Aristarchus; Demas; Luke

Purpose
To reconcile Philemon to his runaway slave, Onesimus, who had become a Christian

Law Themes
Usefulness; imprisonment; service; debt; partnership

Gospel Themes
Comfort/refreshment; reconciliation; forgiveness

Memory Verses
Receive your brother (17–18)

Introduction to Philemon

Reading Philemon

With trembling hands, the dying master folds the papyrus and presents it to his chief slave. “Upon my death, this frees you, trusted friend, as well as your family and three others. Yet be diligent in your final duties.” The slave welcomes his master’s kindness but, on the way out of the house, he reaches for a whip. Not all the slaves would be set free and, for them, the master’s will commands punishment.

Roman slavery is confusing for us today because it was different from the types of slavery we know best. As you reflect on the circumstances of Paul’s Letter to Philemon, be sure to read the article on p 101, which gives further information on Roman slavery, and look up key terms on p 1901–4. Be prepared to rethink this important aspect of first-century culture and to consider closely what Bible passages about slavery teach about the Christian life.

Luther on Philemon

This epistle gives us a masterful and tender illustration of Christian love. For here we see how St. Paul takes the part of poor Onesimus and, to the best of his ability, advocates his cause with his master. He acts exactly as if he were himself Onesimus, who had done wrong.

Yet he does this not with force or compulsion, as lay within his rights; but he empties himself of his rights in order to compel Philemon also to waive his rights. What Christ has done for us with God the Father, that St. Paul does also for Onesimus with Philemon. For Christ emptied himself of his rights [Phil. 2:7] and overcame the Father with love and humility, so that the Father had to put away his wrath and rights, and receive us into favor for the sake of Christ, who so earnestly advocates our cause and so heartily takes our part. For we are all his Onesimus's if we believe. (AE 35:390)

For more of Luther's insights on this Book, see *Lectures on Philemon* (AE 29:91–105).

Challenges for Readers

Christianity and Slavery. See p 101.

Blessings for Readers

As you read Philemon, reflect on the roles of Law and Gospel in your relationships with church members and with colleagues. God calls us to extend His mercy toward every repentant heart and to build up one another in His love. The difficult circumstances for Philemon illustrate how God in Christ can transform our service and relationship to one another.

OUTLINE

I. Opening Salutation (vv 1–3)
II. Thanksgiving for Philemon's Faith and Love (vv 4–7)
III. Appeal to Philemon on Behalf of Onesimus (vv 8–20)
IV. Concluding Remarks and Greetings (vv 21–25)

Articles and Resources Related to Philemon

- Slavery
- New Testament Names for God
- The Lord Sustains Creation

Slavery

We shall attempt to set forth a more objective historical view of slavery in Greco-Roman times. We shall adopt this approach not to condone the oppression that has in fact been perpetrated upon disadvantaged segments of human society by "all master classes in all slave regimes," but because the evidence suggests that types of slavery existed in ancient times that were socially constructive as well as types that were destructive. An understanding of the more complex forms of slavery operative in ancient times will enable modern Christians to consider more accurately the kind of slavery that St. Paul himself would have encountered within the Christian assemblies of his day—within Philemon's house congregation, for example….

A slave in Roman times was regarded, in the culture and by secular law, as an animated tool, a piece of property (*res*), and so a being without any personhood whatsoever: "We compare slavery closely with death." That devaluation of human worth contrasts starkly with the biblical affirmations that God created men and women in his own image and demonstrated his enduring valuation of humanity by giving his one and only Son for the salvation of all….

The following twofold generalization [is] a helpful guide in the midst of all the variation and flux that did in fact characterize master-slave relations in antiquity:

1. On one hand, slaves who were lazy, disobedient, disrespectful or who otherwise did not live up to the master's trust (as evidenced in many of the Gospel parables cited above) usually had to endure stormy and unhappy relationships with their respective masters: perpetual humiliations, demotions, beatings and worse.
2. On the other hand, slaves who did their best for the master and his interests and were hardworking, honest, and resourceful, usually found themselves on the master's good side, appreciated his rewards, and could enjoy an astonishing degree of independence and autonomy—even as slaves….

Unlike slavery in the American experience, *race had little or nothing to do with slavery in the first century* A.D. … Instead, Romans harbored what can only be considered an irrational phobia against the *barbari* ("barbarians") of the north, that is, against the ancestors of modern French, German, and British people.

In the main, *the relationship between masters and slaves in the NT and between Christians and persons of greater or lesser station in the world (as Luther articulated this in his doctrine of vocation) is essentially the same*. Let one simple, yet telling, example suffice: substitute "employees" and "bosses" for [Gk *douloi*] ("slaves") and [Gk *kurioi*] ("masters"), respectively, and there remains still today—long after the legal abolishment of slavery in modern democratic societies—essentially the same relationship as obtained long ago in the congregational assemblies of the NT (Eph 6:5–7; cf Col 3:22–25).

John G. Nordling, *Philemon*, CC (St. Louis: Concordia, 2004), 43, 44, 59, 69–70, 138. See also "Slavery in the Bible," p 101.

New Testament Names for God

The New Testament includes a variety of names for the persons of the Holy Trinity. For a better understanding of names in Israelite culture, see pp 843, 1227. On the theology of God's name, see "for Your name's sake" and "call," p 842; see also note, Ps 54:1.

Abba. Aram "father" comparable with Eng "papa" or "dad." Expresses the deep, loving relationship Jesus had with the Father and which believers now share. See *Father*.

Christ. Gk *christos*, "Anointed One," who would deliver and rule God's people. See "Anointed," p 1227.

Christ Jesus. Used c 80 times in the NT, always by the apostle Paul. On its meaning, see *Jesus Christ*.

Father. Although this name for God was known and used in the OT (see "Father," p 1227), Jesus used it with greater frequency and intimacy. He taught His disciples to pray to God most personally by calling Him "Father" (Mt 6:9; Lk 11:2). The early Christians viewed the Church as a family. See p 2170.

firstborn. Gk *prototokos*; not simply the child born first but also a position of preeminence as the inheritor of the family's power and wealth. Signifies the preeminence of the exalted Lord Jesus and His relationship to the heavenly Father (see notes, Col 1:15, 18; see also "Firstborn," p 2040 and "heir," p 1902).

God. Gk *theos*. Used to describe the true God but also pagan deities.

Holy Spirit. See *Spirit*.

Jesus. From Hbr *yehoshu'ah*, "Yahweh is salvation." See note, Jsh 1:1. Eng spelling derives from the shorter Gk spelling of the name. An angel gave the name to Joseph (Mt 1:21) to use with Mary's firstborn Son, called "Jesus of Nazareth" because Jesus was a common name at the time (e.g., Ac 13:6).

Jesus Christ. Used c 140 times in the NT, this name/title functions as a confession: "Jesus is the Christ." For the significance of this confession, see *Christ*.

Jesus is Lord. An early Christian confession; a clear testimony to Jesus' divine nature (see *Lord*). See note, Php 2:9; see also p 1975.

Lord. Gk *kyrios*; used thousands of times in the LXX to translate God's personal name, Yahweh. "Lord" is sometimes used to refer to a master or person of authority (Mt 6:24; see note, Lk 5:5). However, by this title, the NT writers commonly describe Jesus as the one true God (see notes, 1Co 8:6; 12:3; Php 2:11). See also "LORD," p 1227.

Savior. Rooted in the OT. See Luther's comments, p 380; see also p 415.

Son of David. Messianic title, drawn from 2Sm 7:13–14.

Son of God. Used c 40 times in the NT. Emphasizes the fact that Jesus, a true man, is also eternally the true Son of God. See *Father*. See "Jesus as the Son of God," pp 1652–53; see also p 1815.

Son of Man. Favorite self-designation of Jesus, used c 80 times in the Gospels but almost never in the rest of the NT. Its meaning varies somewhat depending on the context. Indicates that though Jesus is fully man, He is much more. As a messianic title, it combines the ideas of a servant who will suffer and die for all people (Is 53; Mt 20:28) and the exalted Son of Man, whose reign is everlasting (Dn 7:13–14; Mt 24:30). See p 1080.

Spirit. Gk *pneuma*. Often means the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Trinity, but is also used for an angelic being or the nonphysical aspect of a human being. On the OT background of the term, see p 1227. On the NT person and work of the Holy Spirit, see pp 1815, 1876, 1920.

The New Testament also includes numerous descriptive titles for persons of the Trinity, such as "Lamb of God," which describes Jesus' sacrifice for the sins of the world. Lists of such titles will vary depending on the translation.

The Lord Sustains Creation

The apostle is teaching from the works of creation, preservation, and governing that one can search out and find God but cannot touch Him with hands. He adds this reason: "For He is not far from each one of us, for in Him we live and move and are." That is, God did not abandon His workmanship after creation in the way an architect leaves after building a house. Rather, He still preserves and governs what He first created and is perpetually present with His worskmanship. If you claim that the substantial nearness of God has been removed from that governing of all things, the logical sequence in the apostle's argument will not stand. Therefore though in the preservation and governing of all things God uses mediating causes, nevertheless those causes, in their being and acting, depend on God. Without His sustaining power, they would neither exist nor act but would fall into nothingness (Heb. 1:3). Therefore as God was immediately present with those things in *creation*, so also He is immediately present with them in their *preservation* because preservation is nothing else but the *continuation of their existence*. In this way God gives us natural life through our parents, spiritual life through ministers of the Word, yet the formation of a human in the womb (Job 10:8) and the regeneration of the same (1 Pet. 1:3) are attributed to Him. In fact, God does not work this through an addition to His essence but through His power, which is His very essence. Therefore He does not work in His creatures being absent, but being truly and essentially present.

Johann Gerhard, *Theological Commonplaces*, Exegesis 2, *On the Nature of God* (St. Louis: Concordia, 2009), § 178.

Footnotes for Philemon, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:6 Or *for Christ's service*
- [2] 1:10 *Onesimus* means *useful* (see verse 11) or *beneficial* (see verse 20)
- [1] 1:16 Greek *bondservant*; twice in this verse

Study Notes

PHILEMON—NOTE ON **1** *prisoner for Christ Jesus*. Paul was under house arrest in Rome when he wrote this Letter. Ac 21–28 describes events that put Paul in prison; clearly, his allegiance to the Gospel led to his arrest. Paul used the time awaiting trial as an opportunity to share the Gospel with people in Rome (Ac 28:30–31). *Timothy our brother*. Several other Christians (e.g., Silas, Barnabas) accompanied Paul at different times in his mission work, but in the latter years of his life Timothy became perhaps his closest colleague. *Philemon*. A Christian who lived in Colossae; he owned the slave Onesimus. *fellow worker*. Philemon supported the Church and its ministries by hosting a local congregation in his home (v 2) and probably in other ways as well. See note, Rm 16:3.

PHILEMON—NOTE ON **2** *Apphia our sister*. A fellow sister in Christ; probably Philemon's wife, since she is addressed separately from the Church. *Archippus our fellow soldier*. Another colleague in the ministry; possibly Philemon's son. *church in your house*. NT churches often met in Christian homes (Ac 12:12; 1Co 16:19; Col 4:15). Christian churches today might meet in homes if they are new and small or located in countries where the Church is oppressed and forced underground.

PHILEMON—NOTE ON **3** *our Father*. Paul is reminding Philemon of their common Savior and Judge.

PHILEMON—NOTE ON **1–3** Paul begins with a short (compared to his other Letters) and yet personal greeting. His greeting begins and ends with Jesus Christ, the focus of Paul's life. Focus on Jesus should be present in our own friendships and greetings, both with other Christians and with those who do not yet know the Lord. We have opportunities to introduce people to our Lord and Savior. The Lord's grace and peace will strengthen our faith and equip us for all good service. • Lord, I thank You for my friends, and I pray for an opportunity to share Christ with those who have yet to meet You. Amen.

PHILEMON—NOTE ON **4** *my prayers*. Paul set a powerful example in praying for his fellow Christians and the churches. His Letters usually open or close with mention of how he is praying for them. He often gives thanks for their faith and ministry and prays for their strength, spiritual growth, and Gospel witness, thereby setting an example for our prayers.

PHILEMON—NOTE ON **5** The focus of faith is Jesus, and the focus of love is the saints; by structuring the sentence this way, Paul emphasizes how these concepts are inextricably linked. *saints*. See p 1904. Fellow Christians in the local church and in the ministry at large.

PHILEMON—NOTE ON **6** *sharing of your faith*. We share our faith by bearing witness, sometimes by words and sometimes by deeds. Paul encourages Philemon to live out or witness to his faith by a special work of mercy. *sharing*. Gk *koinonia*, see p 1904. *every good thing*. Effective, living faith bears fruit in appreciating what is good and in good works. *for the sake of Christ*. God gives us good works to perform so that Christ may be glorified. See "for Your name's sake," p 842.

PHILEMON—NOTE ON **7** Philemon's support for the Church and his fellow Christians must have encouraged them, and Paul was pleased to hear about it. Perhaps when Onesimus became a Christian, he had a new appreciation for Philemon's faith and had told Paul of his activities.

PHILEMON—NOTE ON **4–7** Paul gives thanks for his friend Philemon's love and faith. Apparently, he has heard enough to know that this is real and not for show. We should consider what people see in our lives, and how it might affect them. God can make our life of faith into an effective witness to Christ's glory. Through the Gospel, He already works effectively in us. • O Lord, I pray that You would use me as Your witness so that I might refresh those around me. Amen.

PHILEMON—NOTE ON **8** *command*. Paul is gently persuading Philemon to imitate God's love and grace by freeing the slave Onesimus. Paul had spiritual authority to direct Philemon to do this, but he would like Philemon to learn and live out the lesson rather than merely respond to a command. This may also explain why Paul did not mention his apostolic authority in opening the Letter (cf Ti 1:1).

PHILEMON—NOTE ON **9** *old man*. Paul may not have been all that old, but he was probably older than Philemon in years and certainly older in the faith. *prisoner*. Paul is not asking Philemon for any sacrifice as large as his own imprisonment.

PHILEMON—NOTE ON **10** *my child … father*. Paul led Onesimus to faith in Christ, in effect becoming his spiritual father. *Onesimus*. One of Philemon's slaves, who had apparently run away, made his way to Rome, and fallen in with Paul. Paul did not mention Onesimus or how he might

have wronged Philemon until after starting to build the case for a pardon based on God's grace.

PHILEMON—NOTE ON **11** *useless*. Before Onesimus rebelled and ran away, he may have pilfered the house or been lazy. *useful to you*. A wordplay; Onesimus means "useful." Now that Onesimus is a Christian, Paul expects that he will be able to help with Christian ministry either with Philemon or with Paul.

PHILEMON—NOTE ON **12** *sending him back*. If Philemon does not recognize the opportunity to show grace, Onesimus will go back into service as a slave. Regardless, it was wrong to run away, so returning to face punishment strengthens his credibility and witness as a Christian. *my very heart*. Paul loves Onesimus like a son (cf v 10).

PHILEMON—NOTE ON **13** *on your behalf*. Philemon could not be there to support Paul in Rome, but he could allow Onesimus to stay, which would support the ministry. *imprisonment for the gospel*. The third mention of Paul's imprisonment. Philemon should be horrified that the man who led him to faith (v 19) is under arrest because of the Gospel, and by extension he should realize the horror of keeping Onesimus, his new brother in Christ (v 16), in slavery. Paul does not command the elimination of all slavery, but is focused on a personal level. See p 101.

PHILEMON—NOTE ON **14** *compulsion*. If Paul does not subject Philemon to compulsion, why should Philemon subject Onesimus to compulsion by keeping him in slavery? Again, Paul is guiding Philemon to do the right thing, but by choice rather than under duress. *accord*. Lit, "willingly." See note, Ex 35:29. Philemon needs to decide what to do now that Onesimus has returned, bearing this Letter. "Truly good works should be done willingly, or from a voluntary spirit, by those whom God's Son has made free" (FC SD IV 18).

PHILEMON—NOTE ON **15** Paul sees God's hand in Onesimus's coming to him to hear the Gospel and notes the eternal consequences ("you might have him back forever").

PHILEMON—NOTE ON **16** *in the flesh and in the Lord*. Onesimus was probably not related to Philemon in a human sense, but they are now brothers in Christ both in this life ("in the flesh") and in eternity ("in the Lord").

PHILEMON—NOTE ON **17** *your partner*. Paul puts his personal relationship with Philemon on the line in his plea for Onesimus, much as

Jesus Christ intercedes for us with God the Father. Cf Php 1:5; see "fellowship," p 1902.

PHILEMON—NOTE ON **18** Paul offers to make right anything Onesimus stole or damaged when he ran away. See note, v 11.

PHILEMON—NOTE ON **19** *with my own hand*. Equivalent of signing the promise in v 18. See note, Gal 6:11. *to say nothing of your owing me your own self*. If Philemon is not yet persuaded, this should clinch the argument. He learned of God's grace through Paul's ministry.

PHILEMON—NOTE ON **20** *benefit*. A call for action; Paul expects that Philemon's decision will be good for Onesimus, Philemon, and himself. *Refresh*. Philemon has been gracious to other Christians (v 7); his decision about Onesimus should continue that gracious behavior. If so, it will encourage and please Paul.

PHILEMON—NOTE ON **21** *obedience*. Even though Paul has not commanded Philemon in what to do, he used careful, personal arguments to make clear what God would expect.

PHILEMON—NOTE ON **22** *guest room*. Paul hopes for release from house arrest soon, and would like to stop for a visit. This adds urgency to Philemon's decision. *given to you*. Paul's visit would be a gift from God and a blessing for Philemon and the church that meets in his home.

PHILEMON—NOTE ON **8–22** Paul makes a plea for the freedom of Onesimus and bases his case on grace, love, and friendship. By example, Paul intercedes for Onesimus, just as Jesus Christ intercedes for us. Jesus has called us friend; to whom should we extend friendship in His name? As our friend, His grace and love give us salvation and the hope of eternal life. • Lord, hear me as a dear friend and fellow servant to those in need. Make me a gift to them. Amen.

PHILEMON—NOTE ON **23** *Epaphras*. A Christian from Colossae (Col 4:12), known to Philemon. *fellow prisoner*. Apparently, Epaphras was imprisoned with Paul.

PHILEMON—NOTE ON **24** These Christians all supported or worked with Paul in evangelism, church planting, and teaching. *Luke*. The author of Acts and the Gospel of Luke; he sometimes traveled with Paul. See pp 1700–1703.

PHILEMON—NOTE ON **25** *with your spirit*. Paul wanted Philemon to be completely at peace with what Paul said and taught and also with his decision regarding Onesimus.

PHILEMON—NOTE ON **23–25** Paul mentions five friends who serve with him or support him in the Gospel ministry. This is only part of the network of God's people, which includes Onesimus, Philemon, and now us. We should cherish this network of fellowship and support and not take it for granted. God has called us into His kingdom and made us part of His family, and He will help us and use us to help and encourage one another. • Lord, make me a useful servant. Thank You for my near and extended family in Christ. Amen.

HEBREWS THROUGH JUDE

The General Epistles

TO THE TWELVE TRIBES IN THE DISPERSION. (Jas 1:1)

To those who are elect exiles of the dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. (1Pt 1:1)

To those who have obtained a faith of equal standing with ours by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ. (2Pt 1:1)

To those who are called, beloved in God the Father and kept for Jesus Christ. (Jude 1)

In many ways, the eight General (or "Catholic" from Gk *katholikos*, "general") Epistles are like the thirteen Epistles of Paul in their outline and character (see pp 1899–1901). However, Paul tended to write his Letters for specific congregations. The General Epistles are usually written to broad groups of churches (see above) or do not begin with an address to one congregation or individual (e.g., Hebrews, 1 John, 2 John). They probably represent an adaptation of a Jewish tradition of writing "encyclicals," letters in which officials at Jerusalem instructed synagogues outside of Judea about matters of doctrine or practice (see pp 1899–1901; see also "Address," p 2015.)

The Collection of the General Epistles

The General Epistles have a different history from other books of the New Testament. The Pauline Epistles were brought together as a unit very early in the history of the Church, as Papyrus manuscript 46 shows (c AD 200; the Book of Hebrews was often grouped with the Pauline Epistles, see pp 2102–4). The Gospels, too, were brought together as a "Gospel Book," sometimes with Acts (e.g., Papyrus 45, third century AD). The General Epistles were also brought together—typically with Acts—but this collection formed much later (e.g., Gk ms E, sixth century AD; Papyrus 74, seventh century AD).

The collection of the General Epistles was probably a matter of convenience. Since the Gospels and the Pauline Epistles formed natural collections, the remaining books were also brought together over time. This collection of the General Epistles as a unit probably took longer because they came from a variety of authors. Also, in some regions, church leaders were not convinced about the authenticity of all the Letters.

Disputes over the General Epistles

Before studying the General Epistles, readers should gain some understanding of their history in the life of the Church. In the fourth century AD, when Eusebius wrote his *Church History*, he distinguished between "agreed-upon" writings (Gk *homologoumena*) and "spoken-against" writings (Gk *antilegomena*) in the General Epistles. Eusebius made this distinction based on whether or not a letter was universally received and used in the churches. Never disputed in the Early Church, 1 Peter and 1 John were received in the same way as the Pauline Epistles (see above; see also pp 1899–1901).

> Among the disputed writings, which are nevertheless recognized by many, are extant the so-called epistle of James and that of Jude, also the second epistle of Peter, and those that are called the second and

> third of John, whether they belong to the evangelist or to another person of the same name. (*NPNF* 2 1:156)

Elsewhere, Eusebius pointed out that Hebrews and Revelation were disputed (*NPNF* 2 1:134, 156).

During the Reformation, Luther and others had the difficult task of reviewing all these matters and making decisions about what books would be published in new editions of the Bible. Regarding the General Epistles, Luther noted in his preface to Hebrews:

> Up to this point we have had [to do with] the true and certain chief books of the New Testament. The four which follow [Heb, Jas, Jude, Rv] have from ancient times had a different reputation…. We should not be deterred if wood, straw, or hay are perhaps mixed with [the works of the apostles; cf 1Co 3:12], but accept this fine teaching with all honor; though, to be sure, we cannot put [Hebrews] on the same level with the apostolic epistles. Who wrote [Hebrews] is not known, and will probably not be known for a while; it makes no difference. We should be satisfied with the doctrine that he bases so constantly on the Scriptures. For he discloses a firm grasp of the reading of the Scriptures and of the proper way of dealing with them. (AE 35:394–95)

Luther considered the books based on their history, their qualities as literature, and their use in the life of the Church. First, note that Luther accepted the Epistles of Peter and John without hesitation. Also note that Luther added some distinctions to those made by Eusebius. Luther distinguished between (1) writings that were clearly from apostles and represented apostolic doctrine (German *apostolisch*) and (2) writings that had disputed authorship and focused on the Law rather than on Christ (see pp 2130–32). (3) Finally, Luther emphasized the importance of doctrine based "constantly on the Scriptures" over against issues of authorship or literary style.

Based on his review of the General Epistles, Luther ordered the books differently than what we find in English Bibles. He placed the most disputable books last. Luther's order is still found in modern editions of the German Bible.

Vulgate and English Bibles: Hebrews
Erasmus's NT and Luther Bibles: 1 Peter
Vulgate and English Bibles: James
Erasmus's NT and Luther Bibles: 2 Peter
Vulgate and English Bibles: 1 Peter
Erasmus's NT and Luther Bibles: 1 John
Vulgate and English Bibles: 2 Peter
Erasmus's NT and Luther Bibles: 2 John
Vulgate and English Bibles: 1 John
Erasmus's NT and Luther Bibles: 3 John
Vulgate and English Bibles: 2 John
Erasmus's NT and Luther Bibles: Hebrews
Vulgate and English Bibles: 3 John
Erasmus's NT and Luther Bibles: James
Vulgate and English Bibles: Jude
Erasmus's NT and Luther Bibles: Jude
Vulgate and English Bibles: Revelation
Erasmus's NT and Luther Bibles: Revelation

With characteristic vigor, Luther pointed out what he believed were weaknesses in Hebrews, James, Jude, and Revelation. But with characteristic conservatism, Luther also kept them in the New Testament, cited them as authoritative, and preached from them. He held within himself a freedom to critique books of Scripture as literature, yet to honor them as God's Word. (See p 1646.) The Epistle that caused Luther the most trouble was James. On that history, see pp 2130–32. To learn more about how books were recognized as Holy Scripture, see pp 1559–61.

Studying the General Epistles

The history of the General Epistles should not overwhelm or trouble students of Holy Scripture. Read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest these Letters just as you would any other book of Scripture. The Lutheran Church has received them as books of the New Testament and as God's very Word.

However, learn also from the example of history—these books have confused some students of Scripture in the past. In Luther's day, James was the book that led to the most confusion. In our day, Revelation is hotly disputed and horribly misinterpreted. Disputed books should not be among the first books a Christian studies. Be certain that you have a clear understanding of the Gospels, Acts, the Pauline Epistles, 1 Peter, and 1 John before taking up any disputed books of the General Epistles. The great Lutheran theologian Johann Gerhard put it this way:

> For the sake of instruction, therefore, we can distinguish between canonical books of the New Testament of the first rank and of the second rank [*primi et secundi ordinis*]. Canonical books *of the first rank* are those about whose authors or authority there has never been any doubt in the Church but have always been considered canonical and divine by unanimous agreement. Such are the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John; the Acts of the Apostles; Paul's letter to the Romans, the two to the Corinthians, one to the Galatians, one to the Ephesians, one to the Philippians, one to the Colossians, two to the Thessalonians, two to Timothy, one to Titus, one to Philemon; 1 Peter; and 1 John. Canonical books *of the second rank* are those about whose authorship some in the Church had doubts at some time. Such are the Epistle to the Hebrews, the letters of James and Jude, 2 Peter, 2 and 3 John, and Revelation…. Augustine, *De doctr. Christ.*, bk. 2, c. 8: "The catechumen will maintain this method concerning the canonical writings: that he will prefer those that all the churches accept to those that some do not accept." (Ger 1:228–29)

Hebrews

Hebrews 1 | Hebrews 2 | Hebrews 3 | Hebrews 4 | Hebrews 5 | Hebrews 6 | Hebrews 7 | Hebrews 8 | Hebrews 9 | Hebrews 10 | Hebrews 11 | Hebrews 12 | Hebrews 13

- Introduction to Hebrews
  - Overview
  - Reading Hebrews
  - Luther on Hebrews
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

The Supremacy of God's Son

1 [1]†Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our
fathers by the prophets, [2]†but in these last days he has spoken to us by his
Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he
created the world. [3]†He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact
imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power.
After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the
Majesty on high, [4]†having become as much superior to angels as the name
he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

[5]†For to which of the angels did God ever say,

"You are my Son,
today I have begotten you"?

Or again,

"I will be to him a father,
and he shall be to me a son"?

[6]†And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says,

"Let all God's angels worship him."

[7]†Of the angels he says,

"He makes his angels winds,
and his ministers a flame of fire."

[8]†But of the Son he says,

"Your throne, O God, is forever and ever,
the scepter of uprightness is the scepter of
your kingdom.
[9] You have loved righteousness and hated

wickedness;
therefore God, your God, has anointed you
with the oil of gladness beyond your
companions.”

10 † And,

“You, Lord, laid the foundation of the earth in
the beginning,
and the heavens are the work of your
hands;
11 they will perish, but you remain;
they will all wear out like a garment,
12 like a robe you will roll them up,
like a garment they will be changed.[1]
But you are the same,
and your years will have no end.”

13 And to which of the angels has he ever said,

“Sit at my right hand
until I make your enemies a footstool for
your feet”?

14 † Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?

Warning Against Neglecting Salvation

2 [1]‡†Therefore we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it. [2]† For since the message declared by angels proved to be reliable, and every transgression or disobedience received a just retribution, [3]†how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation? It was declared at first by the Lord, and it was attested to us by those who heard, [4]†while God also bore witness by signs and wonders and various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will.

The Founder of Salvation

5 Now it was not to angels that God subjected the world to come, of
which we are speaking. 6 It has been testified somewhere,

> "What is man, that you are mindful of him,
> or the son of man, that you care for him?
> 7 You made him for a little while lower than the
> angels;
> you have crowned him with glory and honor,[2]
> 8 putting everything in subjection under his
> feet."

Now in putting everything in subjection to him, he left nothing outside his control. At present, we do not yet see everything in subjection to him. 9 But we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

10 For it was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering. 11 For he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one source.[1] That is why he is not ashamed to call them brothers,[2] 12 saying,

> "I will tell of your name to my brothers;
> in the midst of the congregation I will sing
> your praise."

13 And again,

> "I will put my trust in him."

And again,

> "Behold, I and the children God has given me."

[14] † Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, [15] † and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery. [16] † For surely it is not angels that he helps, but he helps the offspring of Abraham. [17] † Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. [18] † For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

Jesus Greater Than Moses

3 [1]†† Therefore, holy brothers,[3] you who share in a heavenly calling,
consider Jesus, the apostle and high priest of our confession, [2]† who was
faithful to him who appointed him, just as Moses also was faithful in all
God's[1] house. [3]† For Jesus has been counted worthy of more glory than
Moses—as much more glory as the builder of a house has more honor than
the house itself. [4]† (For every house is built by someone, but the builder of
all things is God.) [5]† Now Moses was faithful in all God's house as a
servant, to testify to the things that were to be spoken later, [6]† but Christ is
faithful over God's house as a son. And we are his house if indeed we hold
fast our confidence and our boasting in our hope.[2]

A Rest for the People of God

7 †††† Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says,

"Today, if you hear his voice,
8 do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion,
on the day of testing in the wilderness,
9 where your fathers put me to the test
and saw my works for forty years.
10 Therefore I was provoked with that
generation,
and said, 'They always go astray in their heart;
they have not known my ways.'
11 † As I swore in my wrath,
'They shall not enter my rest.'"

12 † Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. 13 † But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called "today," that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. 14 † For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end. 15 † As it is said,

"Today, if you hear his voice,
do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion."

16 † For who were those who heard and yet rebelled? Was it not all those who left Egypt led by Moses? 17 And with whom was he provoked for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness? 18 And to whom did he swear that they would not enter his rest, but to those who were disobedient? 19 † So we see that they were unable to enter because of unbelief.

4 1 † Therefore, while the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us fear lest any of you should seem to have failed to reach it. 2 † For good news came to us just as to them, but the message they heard did not benefit them,

because they were not united by faith with those who listened.[1] 3 †For we who have believed enter that rest, as he has said,

> “As I swore in my wrath,
> ‘They shall not enter my rest,’”

although his works were finished from the foundation of the world. 4 †For he has somewhere spoken of the seventh day in this way: “And God rested on the seventh day from all his works.” 5 †And again in this passage he said,

> “They shall not enter my rest.”

6 †Since therefore it remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly received the good news failed to enter because of disobedience, 7 †again he appoints a certain day, “Today,” saying through David so long afterward, in the words already quoted,

> “Today, if you hear his voice,
> do not harden your hearts.”

8 †For if Joshua had given them rest, God[2] would not have spoken of another day later on. 9 †So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God, 10 †for whoever has entered God’s rest has also rested from his works as God did from his.

11 †Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience. 12 †For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. 13 †And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

Jesus the Great High Priest

14 ‡ † Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the
heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. 15 † For we do
not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses,
but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.
16 † Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we
may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

5 1 † For every high priest chosen from among men is appointed to act
on behalf of men in relation to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins.
2 † He can deal gently with the ignorant and wayward, since he himself is
beset with weakness. 3 † Because of this he is obligated to offer sacrifice for
his own sins just as he does for those of the people. 4 † And no one takes this
honor for himself, but only when called by God, just as Aaron was.
5 † So also Christ did not exalt himself to be made a high priest, but was
appointed by him who said to him,

> "You are my Son,
> today I have begotten you";

6 † as he says also in another place,

> "You are a priest forever,
> after the order of Melchizedek."

7 † In the days of his flesh, Jesus[1] offered up prayers and supplications, with
loud cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death, and he
was heard because of his reverence. 8 † Although he was a son, he learned
obedience through what he suffered. 9 † And being made perfect, he became
the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him, 10 † being designated by
God a high priest after the order of Melchizedek.

Warning Against Apostasy

11 About this we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you
have become dull of hearing. 12 For though by this time you ought to be
teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the
oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food, 13 for everyone who lives on
milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child. 14 But
solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment
trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.

6 1 Therefore let us leave the elementary doctrine of Christ and go on
to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works
and of faith toward God, 2 and of instruction about washings,[1] the laying
on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. 3 And this
we will do if God permits. 4 For it is impossible, in the case of those who
have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, and have
shared in the Holy Spirit, 5 and have tasted the goodness of the word of
God and the powers of the age to come, 6 and then have fallen away, to
restore them again to repentance, since they are crucifying once again the
Son of God to their own harm and holding him up to contempt. 7 For land
that has drunk the rain that often falls on it, and produces a crop useful to
those for whose sake it is cultivated, receives a blessing from God. 8 But if
it bears thorns and thistles, it is worthless and near to being cursed, and its
end is to be burned.

9 Though we speak in this way, yet in your case, beloved, we feel sure of
better things—things that belong to salvation. 10 For God is not unjust so as
to overlook your work and the love that you have shown for his name in
serving the saints, as you still do. 11 And we desire each one of you to show
the same earnestness to have the full assurance of hope until the end, 12 so
that you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and
patience inherit the promises.

The Certainty of God’s Promise

13 ‡ † For when God made a promise to Abraham, since he had no one
greater by whom to swear, he swore by himself, 14 † saying, “Surely I will
bless you and multiply you.” 15 And thus Abraham,[1] having patiently
waited, obtained the promise. 16 † For people swear by something greater
than themselves, and in all their disputes an oath is final for confirmation.
17 † So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the
promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he guaranteed it with an
oath, 18 † so that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for
God to lie, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement
to hold fast to the hope set before us. 19 † We have this as a sure and steadfast
anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain,
20 † where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a
high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

The Priestly Order of Melchizedek

7 [1]‡†For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High
God, met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed
him, [2]†and to him Abraham apportioned a tenth part of everything. He is
first, by translation of his name, king of righteousness, and then he is also
king of Salem, that is, king of peace. [3]†He is without father or mother or
genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but resembling
the Son of God he continues a priest forever.

[4]†See how great this man was to whom Abraham the patriarch gave a
tenth of the spoils! [5]‡And those descendants of Levi who receive the
priestly office have a commandment in the law to take tithes from the
people, that is, from their brothers,[1] though these also are descended from
Abraham. [6]But this man who does not have his descent from them received
tithes from Abraham and blessed him who had the promises. [7]†It is beyond
dispute that the inferior is blessed by the superior. [8]†In the one case tithes
are received by mortal men, but in the other case, by one of whom it is
testified that he lives. [9]†One might even say that Levi himself, who receives
tithes, paid tithes through Abraham, [10]for he was still in the loins of his
ancestor when Melchizedek met him.

Jesus Compared to Melchizedek

11 ‡ † Now if perfection had been attainable through the Levitical
priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need
would there have been for another priest to arise after the order of
Melchizedek, rather than one named after the order of Aaron? 12 †For when
there is a change in the priesthood, there is necessarily a change in the law
as well. 13For the one of whom these things are spoken belonged to another
tribe, from which no one has ever served at the altar. 14 †For it is evident that
our Lord was descended from Judah, and in connection with that tribe
Moses said nothing about priests.

15This becomes even more evident when another priest arises in the
likeness of Melchizedek, 16 †who has become a priest, not on the basis of a
legal requirement concerning bodily descent, but by the power of an
indestructible life. 17 †For it is witnessed of him,

> "You are a priest forever,
> after the order of Melchizedek."

18For on the one hand, a former commandment is set aside because of its
weakness and uselessness 19 †(for the law made nothing perfect); but on the
other hand, a better hope is introduced, through which we draw near to
God.

20 † And it was not without an oath. For those who formerly became
priests were made such without an oath, 21 †but this one was made a priest
with an oath by the one who said to him:

> "The Lord has sworn
> and will not change his mind,
> 'You are a priest forever.'"

22 †This makes Jesus the guarantor of a better covenant.

23The former priests were many in number, because they were prevented
by death from continuing in office, 24 † but he holds his priesthood
permanently, because he continues forever. 25 †Consequently, he is able to

save to the uttermost[1] those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.

[26]‡†For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens. [27]†He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people, since he did this once for all when he offered up himself. [28]†For the law appoints men in their weakness as high priests, but the word of the oath, which came later than the law, appoints a Son who has been made perfect forever.

Jesus, High Priest of a Better Covenant

8 [1]†Now the point in what we are saying is this: we have such a high priest, one who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, [2]†a minister in the holy places, in the true tent[2] that the Lord set up, not man. [3]† For every high priest is appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices; thus it is necessary for this priest also to have something to offer. [4]†Now if he were on earth, he would not be a priest at all, since there are priests who offer gifts according to the law. [5]† They serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things. For when Moses was about to erect the tent, he was instructed by God, saying, "See that you make everything according to the pattern that was shown you on the mountain." [6]†But as it is, Christ[3] has obtained a ministry that is as much more excellent than the old as the covenant he mediates is better, since it is enacted on better promises. [7]†For if that first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no occasion to look for a second.

[8]†For he finds fault with them when he says:[1]

"Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord,
when I will establish a new covenant with
the house of Israel
and with the house of Judah,
[9]† not like the covenant that I made with their
fathers
on the day when I took them by the hand to
bring them out of the land of Egypt.
For they did not continue in my covenant,
and so I showed no concern for them,
declares the Lord.
[10]† For this is the covenant that I will make with
the house of Israel
after those days, declares the Lord:
I will put my laws into their minds,
and write them on their hearts,

and I will be their God,
and they shall be my people.
[11]† And they shall not teach, each one his neighbor
and each one his brother, saying, ‘Know the
Lord,’
for they shall all know me,
from the least of them to the greatest.
[12]† For I will be merciful toward their iniquities,
and I will remember their sins no more.”

[13]†In speaking of a new covenant, he makes the first one obsolete. And what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.

The Earthly Holy Place

9 [1]‡†Now even the first covenant had regulations for worship and an
earthly place of holiness. [2]†For a tent[2] was prepared, the first section, in
which were the lampstand and the table and the bread of the Presence.[3] It is
called the Holy Place. [3]†Behind the second curtain was a second section[4]
called the Most Holy Place, [4]†having the golden altar of incense and the ark
of the covenant covered on all sides with gold, in which was a golden urn
holding the manna, and Aaron's staff that budded, and the tablets of the
covenant. [5]†Above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy
seat. Of these things we cannot now speak in detail.

[6]These preparations having thus been made, the priests go regularly into
the first section, performing their ritual duties, [7]†but into the second only
the high priest goes, and he but once a year, and not without taking blood,
which he offers for himself and for the unintentional sins of the people.
[8]†By this the Holy Spirit indicates that the way into the holy places is not
yet opened as long as the first section is still standing [9]†(which is symbolic
for the present age).[1] According to this arrangement, gifts and sacrifices are
offered that cannot perfect the conscience of the worshiper, [10]†but deal only
with food and drink and various washings, regulations for the body imposed
until the time of reformation.

Redemption Through the Blood of Christ

11 ‡ † But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that
have come,[2] then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with
hands, that is, not of this creation) 12 † he entered once for all into the holy
places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his
own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption. 13 † For if the blood of goats
and bulls, and the sprinkling of defiled persons with the ashes of a heifer,
sanctify[3] for the purification of the flesh, 14 † how much more will the blood
of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to
God, purify our[4] conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

15 † Therefore he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are
called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, since a death has
occurred that redeems them from the transgressions committed under the
first covenant.[5] 16 ‡ † For where a will is involved, the death of the one who
made it must be established. 17 For a will takes effect only at death, since it is
not in force as long as the one who made it is alive. 18 † Therefore not even
the first covenant was inaugurated without blood. 19 For when every
commandment of the law had been declared by Moses to all the people, he
took the blood of calves and goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop,
and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, 20 † saying, “This is the
blood of the covenant that God commanded for you.” 21 † And in the same
way he sprinkled with the blood both the tent and all the vessels used in
worship. 22 † Indeed, under the law almost everything is purified with blood,
and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.

23 † Thus it was necessary for the copies of the heavenly things to be
purified with these rites, but the heavenly things themselves with better
sacrifices than these. 24 † For Christ has entered, not into holy places made
with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now
to appear in the presence of God on our behalf. 25 † Nor was it to offer
himself repeatedly, as the high priest enters the holy places every year with
blood not his own, 26 † for then he would have had to suffer repeatedly since
the foundation of the world. But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the
end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. 27 † And just as it

is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment, [28] † so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.

Christ's Sacrifice Once for All

10 [1]For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to
come instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same
sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who
draw near. [2]Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, since the
worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have any
consciousness of sins? [3]But in these sacrifices there is a reminder of sins
every year. [4]For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take
away sins.

[5]Consequently, when Christ[1] came into the world, he said,

"Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired,
but a body have you prepared for me;
[6] in burnt offerings and sin offerings
you have taken no pleasure.
[7] Then I said, 'Behold, I have come to do your
will, O God,
as it is written of me in the scroll of the book.'"

[8]When he said above, "You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in
sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings" (these are
offered according to the law), [9]then he added, "Behold, I have come to do
your will." He does away with the first in order to establish the second.
[10]And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body
of Jesus Christ once for all.

[11]And every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the
same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. [12]But when Christ[1] had
offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand
of God, [13]waiting from that time until his enemies should be made a
footstool for his feet. [14]For by a single offering he has perfected for all
time those who are being sanctified.

[15]And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us; for after saying,

[16] † “This is the covenant that I will make with them
after those days, declares the Lord:
I will put my laws on their hearts,
and write them on their minds,”

[17] then he adds,

“I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more.”

[18] † Where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin.

The Full Assurance of Faith

19 Therefore, brothers,[2] since we have confidence to enter the holy
places by the blood of Jesus, 20 by the new and living way that he opened
for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, 21 and since we have a
great priest over the house of God, 22 let us draw near with a true heart in
full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil
conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. 23 Let us hold fast the
confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful.
24 And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works,
25 not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging
one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

26 For if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of
the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, 27 but a fearful
expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the
adversaries. 28 Anyone who has set aside the law of Moses dies without
mercy on the evidence of two or three witnesses. 29 How much worse
punishment, do you think, will be deserved by the one who has spurned the
Son of God, and has profaned the blood of the covenant by which he was
sanctified, and has outraged the Spirit of grace? 30 For we know him who
said, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay." And again, "The Lord will judge
his people." 31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

32 But recall the former days when, after you were enlightened, you
endured a hard struggle with sufferings, 33 sometimes being publicly
exposed to reproach and affliction, and sometimes being partners with those
so treated. 34 For you had compassion on those in prison, and you joyfully
accepted the plundering of your property, since you knew that you
yourselves had a better possession and an abiding one. 35 Therefore do not
throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. 36 For you have
need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God you may
receive what is promised. 37 For,

> "Yet a little while,
> and the coming one will come and will not

delay;
[38]† but my righteous one shall live by faith,
and if he shrinks back,
my soul has no pleasure in him.”

[39]But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who have faith and preserve their souls.

By Faith

11 [1]†Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of
things not seen. [2]†For by it the people of old received their commendation.
[3]†By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God,
so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible.

[4]†By faith Abel offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain,
through which he was commended as righteous, God commending him by
accepting his gifts. And through his faith, though he died, he still speaks.
[5]†By faith Enoch was taken up so that he should not see death, and he was
not found, because God had taken him. Now before he was taken he was
commended as having pleased God. [6]†And without faith it is impossible to
please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists
and that he rewards those who seek him. [7]†By faith Noah, being warned by
God concerning events as yet unseen, in reverent fear constructed an ark for
the saving of his household. By this he condemned the world and became
an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.

[8]By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place that he
was to receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he
was going. [9]By faith he went to live in the land of promise, as in a foreign
land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same
promise. [10]†For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations,
whose designer and builder is God. [11]† By faith Sarah herself received
power to conceive, even when she was past the age, since she considered
him faithful who had promised. [12]Therefore from one man, and him as good
as dead, were born descendants as many as the stars of heaven and as many
as the innumerable grains of sand by the seashore.

[13]†These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but
having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged
that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. [14]†For people who speak
thus make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. [15]If they had been
thinking of that land from which they had gone out, they would have had
opportunity to return. [16]But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a

heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city.

17By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was in the act of offering up his only son, 18†of whom it was said, “Through Isaac shall your offspring be named.” 19†He considered that God was able even to raise him from the dead, from which, figuratively speaking, he did receive him back. 20By faith Isaac invoked future blessings on Jacob and Esau. 21By faith Jacob, when dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, bowing in worship over the head of his staff. 22By faith Joseph, at the end of his life, made mention of the exodus of the Israelites and gave directions concerning his bones.

23†By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents, because they saw that the child was beautiful, and they were not afraid of the king’s edict. 24By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, 25choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. 26 † He considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward. 27†By faith he left Egypt, not being afraid of the anger of the king, for he endured as seeing him who is invisible. 28†By faith he kept the Passover and sprinkled the blood, so that the Destroyer of the firstborn might not touch them.

29By faith the people crossed the Red Sea as on dry land, but the Egyptians, when they attempted to do the same, were drowned. 30By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they had been encircled for seven days. 31 † By faith Rahab the prostitute did not perish with those who were disobedient, because she had given a friendly welcome to the spies.

32†And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets— 33who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, 34quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, were made strong out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. 35†Women received back their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, so that they might rise again to a better life. 36Others suffered mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. 37†They were stoned, they were sawn in two,[1] they were

killed with the sword. They went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, mistreated— [38]† of whom the world was not worthy— wandering about in deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.

[39]† And all these, though commended through their faith, did not receive what was promised, [40]since God had provided something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.

Jesus, Founder and Perfecter of Our Faith

12 [1] †† Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of
witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so
closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,
[2] † looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy
that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is
seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

Do Not Grow Weary

3 ‡ † Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against
himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted. 4†In your struggle
against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood.
5‡And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons?

> "My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of
> the Lord,
> nor be weary when reproved by him.
> 6 For the Lord disciplines the one he loves,
> and chastises every son whom he receives."

7†It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons.
For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? 8†If you are left
without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate
children and not sons. 9† Besides this, we have had earthly fathers who
disciplined us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to
the Father of spirits and live? 10†For they disciplined us for a short time as it
seemed best to them, but he disciplines us for our good, that we may share
his holiness. 11† For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than
pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who
have been trained by it.

12Therefore lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees,
13†and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put
out of joint but rather be healed. 14†Strive for peace with everyone, and for
the holiness without which no one will see the Lord. 15†See to it that no one
fails to obtain the grace of God; that no "root of bitterness" springs up and
causes trouble, and by it many become defiled; 16†that no one is sexually
immoral or unholy like Esau, who sold his birthright for a single meal.
17†For you know that afterward, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he
was rejected, for he found no chance to repent, though he sought it with
tears.

A Kingdom That Cannot Be Shaken

18 For you have not come to what may be touched, a blazing fire and
darkness and gloom and a tempest 19 and the sound of a trumpet and a
voice whose words made the hearers beg that no further messages be
spoken to them. 20 For they could not endure the order that was given, “If
even a beast touches the mountain, it shall be stoned.” 21 Indeed, so
terrifying was the sight that Moses said, “I tremble with fear.” 22 But you
have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly
Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, 23 and to the
assembly[1] of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the
judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, 24 and to Jesus,
the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a
better word than the blood of Abel.

25 See that you do not refuse him who is speaking. For if they did not
escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, much less will
we escape if we reject him who warns from heaven. 26 At that time his
voice shook the earth, but now he has promised, “Yet once more I will
shake not only the earth but also the heavens.” 27 This phrase, “Yet once
more,” indicates the removal of things that are shaken—that is, things that
have been made—in order that the things that cannot be shaken may
remain. 28 Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot
be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence
and awe, 29 for our God is a consuming fire.

Sacrifices Pleasing to God

13 [1] †Let brotherly love continue. [2] †Do not neglect to show
hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.
[3] †Remember those who are in prison, as though in prison with them, and
those who are mistreated, since you also are in the body. [4] †Let marriage be
held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will
judge the sexually immoral and adulterous. [5] Keep your life free from love
of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, "I will never
leave you nor forsake you." [6] So we can confidently say,

> "The Lord is my helper;
> I will not fear;
> what can man do to me?"

[7] †Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God.
Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith. [8] †Jesus
Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. [9] †Do not be led away by
diverse and strange teachings, for it is good for the heart to be strengthened
by grace, not by foods, which have not benefited those devoted to them.
[10] †We have an altar from which those who serve the tent have no right to
eat. [11] For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the holy
places by the high priest as a sacrifice for sin are burned outside the camp.
[12] So Jesus also suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people
through his own blood. [13] †Therefore let us go to him outside the camp and
bear the reproach he endured. [14] †For here we have no lasting city, but we
seek the city that is to come. [15] ††Through him then let us continually offer
up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his
name. [16] †Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such
sacrifices are pleasing to God.

[17] †Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch
over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this
with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.

[18]Pray for us, for we are sure that we have a clear conscience, desiring to act honorably in all things. [19]†I urge you the more earnestly to do this in order that I may be restored to you the sooner.

Benediction

20 ✝✝✝Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our
Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal
covenant, 21 ✝equip you with everything good that you may do his will,
working in us[1] that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to
whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

Final Greetings

22 †††I appeal to you, brothers,[1] bear with my word of exhortation, for I
have written to you briefly. 23 †You should know that our brother Timothy
has been released, with whom I shall see you if he comes soon. 24 †Greet all
your leaders and all the saints. Those who come from Italy send you
greetings. 25 †Grace be with all of you.

Hebrews

OVERVIEW

Author
Unknown; see "Anonymous" below

Date
Before AD 70

Places
The temple; Jerusalem (Salem); Italy

People
"Us" (writer and colleagues); brothers; leaders; martyrs; high priests; "those who serve the tent"; travelers from Italy; Timothy; numerous biblical figures

Purpose
To exhort the brothers, washed with pure water and partaking of the altar, that Christ is their High Priest and all-sufficient sacrifice for sin

Law Themes
Retribution for disobedience; slavery to death and the devil; an unbelieving heart; rebellion; obligation to sacrifice; repentance from dead works; crucifying Jesus again; the living God's vengeance; struggle against sin; discipline; obedience to leaders

Gospel Themes
God spoke through Jesus; purification for sins; inheriting salvation; our High Priest and Mediator; sanctification; God's promises; Melchizedek; sprinkled and washed; assurance of faith; the founder and perfecter of our faith; the great Shepherd

Memory Verses

God spoke through His Son (1:1–4); God's living Word (4:12–13); Christ's blood purifies us (9:13–14); faith defined (11:1–3); run with endurance (12:1–2)

Introduction to Hebrews

Reading Hebrews

Frost glistens in the light as it melts from the backs of wooly lambs, gleaming and shimmering and dripping as the animals doze. The lambs rise to stretch. They shiver, steam wafting from their warm legs and bellies. They look up expectantly toward a man standing near their gate. He leans on the edge of the pen and looks the herd over carefully, wondering which lambs to feed and which to choose for the morning sacrifice. It is a great and festive day—most holy. And yet, tomorrow he will have to choose again, and so the next day, and the next.

The writer to the Hebrews describes the glories of the old covenant but also reminds his readers of how it is surpassed by the glories of the new covenant. The annual cycle of sacrifice reached its consummation in one most holy offering—the blood of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of all our sins. Jesus now stands as our High Priest, watching over the sheepfold of all who look to Him, the founder and perfecter of our faith.

Luther on Hebrews

In Luther's preface to Hebrews, cited below, he reflects some of the historic concerns raised about the Book, which was not at first universally received as an apostolic Letter or as a Book of Holy Scripture (see "Anonymous" below). Though Luther notes the Book's "hard knots" and "straw" weaknesses (see notes on 6:4–6; 10:26–27; 12:17), he elsewhere cites Hebrews as authoritative teaching (e.g., AE 2:393; 4:405–9; 35:247; 37:293). He sees the Holy Spirit bearing witness through the Book (AE 2:387; 20:292) and refers to it as "Holy Scripture" (AE 41:19; see also SC, Table of Duties, pp xlii–xliv, and AE 2:294). The Lutheran Confessions cite Hebrews as God's Word alongside other texts of Holy Scripture (e.g., FC Ep I 5). For more about the Book's canonicity, see pp 2099–2101.

> The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews—whoever he is, whether Paul or, as I think, Apollos—quotes [the Old Testament] most learnedly. (AE 8:178)
>
> If you would interpret [the Books of Moses] well and confidently, set Christ before you, for he is the man to whom it all applies, every bit of it. Make the high priest Aaron, then, to be nobody but Christ alone, as does the Epistle to the Hebrews [5:4–5], which is sufficient, all by itself, to interpret all the figures of Moses. Likewise, as the same epistle announces [Hebrews 9–10], it is certain that Christ himself is the sacrifice—indeed even the altar [Heb. 13:10]—who sacrificed himself with his own blood. Now whereas the sacrifice performed by the Levitical high priest took away only the artificial sins, which in their nature were not sins, so our high priest, Christ, by his own sacrifice and blood, has taken away the true sin, that which in its very nature is sin. He has gone in once for all through the curtain to God to make atonement for us [Heb. 9:12]. Thus you should apply to Christ personally, and to no one else, all that is written about the high priest. (AE 35:247–48)
>
> Up to this point we have had [to do with] the true and certain chief books of the New Testament. The four which follow have from ancient times had a different reputation. In the first place, the fact that Hebrews is not an epistle of St. Paul, or of any other apostle, is proved

by what it says in chapter 2[:3], that through those who had themselves heard it from the Lord this doctrine has come to us and remained among us. It is thereby made clear that he is speaking about the apostles, as a disciple to whom this doctrine has come from the apostles, perhaps long after them. For St. Paul, in Galatians 1[:1], testifies powerfully that he has his gospel from no man, neither through men, but from God himself.

Again, there is a hard knot in the fact that in chapters 6[:4–6] and 10[:26–27] it flatly denies and forbids to sinners any repentance after baptism; and in chapter 12[:17] it says that Esau sought repentance and did not find it. This [seems, as it stands, to be] contrary to all the gospels and to St. Paul's epistles; and although one might venture an interpretation of it, the words are so clear that I do not know whether that would be sufficient. My opinion is that this is an epistle put together of many pieces, which does not deal systematically with any one subject.

However that may be, it is still a marvelously fine epistle. It discusses Christ's priesthood masterfully and profoundly on the basis of the Scriptures and extensively interprets the Old Testament in a fine way. Thus it is plain that this is the work of an able and learned man; as a disciple of the apostles he had learned much from them and was greatly experienced in faith and practiced in the Scriptures. And although, as he himself testifies in chapter 6[:1], he does not lay the foundation of faith—that is the work of the apostles—nevertheless he does build well on it with gold, silver, precious stones, as St. Paul says in I Corinthians 3[:12]. Therefore we should not be deterred if wood, straw, or hay are perhaps mixed with them, but accept this fine teaching with all honor; though, to be sure, we cannot put it on the same level with the apostolic epistles.

Who wrote it is not known, and will probably not be known for a while; it makes no difference. We should be satisfied with the doctrine that he bases so constantly on the Scriptures. For he discloses a firm grasp of the reading of the Scriptures and of the proper way of dealing with them. (AE 35:394–95)

For more of Luther's insights on this Book, see *Lectures on Hebrews* (AE 29:107–241).

Challenges for Readers

Anonymous. The Epistle to the Hebrews is actually a sermon ("word of exhortation"; 13:22) with a brief letter attached (13:20–25). The writing describes the temple sacrifices as though they were still in use (cf 9:6–10) and describes a persecution, which may be Emperor Nero's persecution of Christians at Rome (cf ch 12; 13:24). The sermon-writer's name was not provided, nor was his name recorded by early Christian historians. Despite this, churches of the Eastern Roman Empire (Greek- and Syriac-speaking) have always welcomed the Book as part of the NT. However, the anonymity of the sermon and some challenging content (see examples from Luther above) limited its approval for public reading in churches of the Western Roman Empire. Yet, Hebrews was highly regarded (cited by Clement, bishop of Rome, c AD 96), and by the fourth century, it became part of the Western canon of Scripture (see pp 2099–2101). The apostolic content of the sermon is attested in 2:3. Over the centuries, many different authors have been proposed (e.g., Paul, Luke, Barnabas, Apollos), but none of these proposals are fully convincing. The earliest known copy containing much of the Pauline Epistles, Papyrus 46 (c AD 200), includes Hebrews just after Romans, attesting to the value of the Book and bearing witness to the early tradition that Paul might be its author. Modern interest in feminism has encouraged some commentators to propose that the sermon was written by Priscilla/Prisca, a learned woman described in Ac 18; 1Co 16:19; 2Tm 4:19. However, the writer of Hebrews clearly refers to himself as a man (e.g., the participle for "tell" in 11:32 is masculine). The authorship of the Letter remains a mystery.

Rhetoric and Doctrine. The writer of Hebrews, or his scribe, had an excellent education in classical oratory. Recent study of Hebrews has demonstrated that it is written in high Greek style, which distinguishes it from Paul's more common Greek style. The writer's doctrine depends on the apostles (2:3) and has important connections to Paul's use of the OT (cf 10:38; Rm 1:17; Gal 3:11) and John's theology of the Word (cf Jn 1:1–2; 10:30; 14:11; Heb 1:3; 7:3; 13:8). But the writer includes many unique insights and shows an interest in the priesthood that is not found in other apostolic writers.

Use of the Old Testament. See pp xlv–xlvii.

Sabbath Rest. Hebrews wonderfully explains how the OT Sabbath (Saturday) foreshadowed the rest and peace of Christian faith and of heaven. In contrast with modern Adventists, who scare people with warnings that God will judge them for worshiping on Sunday rather than Saturday, Hebrews properly focuses on receiving the benefits of God's Word based on repentance and faith, not on observance of a calendar. See notes, 10:1; Col 2:16–17; see also pp 200–201, 1764.

Christ's Death and Atonement. Hebrews argues forcefully that the crucifixion of Jesus is the one and only sacrifice for sins, which is not repeated or honored by further sacrifices. His death was a necessary payment and ransom for the sins of all people (cf ch 9). Christ is our sympathetic High Priest and one Mediator for salvation.

Melchizedek. Following the example of Ps 110:4, the writer of Hebrews provides an extensive comparison between this ancient priest of Salem (Jerusalem) and Jesus. The Dead Sea Scrolls and other early Jewish literature show a similar interest in the priesthood of Melchizedek, who was viewed as the first to establish priestly services at or near the site where the temple was built (Jos, *War* 6:438). Using Melchizedek as an illustration is one reason why the audience for Hebrews is considered to be a Jewish-Christian congregation. For the history of Melchizedek, cf Gn 14.

Martyrs and Saints. Ch 11 provides an early example of a martyr list, a composition that was popular during the Time between the Testaments (cf Wisd of Sol 10; Ecclus 44–50; 1Macc 2:51–60) and eventually led to the martyr and saint calendars beloved by early Christians. Remembering the martyrs and saints has three blessings for God's people: (1) their stories lead us to praise and thank God; (2) their examples strengthen our faith in God's mercy for us; and (3) with God's help, we may imitate their faith and virtues (Ap XXI 4–7). Believers who have gone to heaven may intercede for God's Church and pray against her enemies (cf Zec 1:12; Rv 6:9–10), as do the angels. However, God never teaches His people to worship or pray to angels or saints, for such devotion belongs to God alone (cf Ac 10:25–26; 14:8–15; Rv 19:10; 22:8–9; see Ap XXI 8–9).

Christian Discipline. Success and prosperity are popular themes for many preachers and writers today. However, their message often contradicts the Holy Scriptures. The writer of Hebrews, like Job, demonstrates that suffering is not necessarily proof of God's wrath; prosperity is not

necessarily proof of His favor (Heb 12; see pp 779–82, 837). God often works through suffering for the good of His people.

Blessings for Readers

In the Letter to the Hebrews, you will learn how to appreciate the OT most deeply and apply it to your life. As you read Hebrews, reflect on the great changes Jesus brought about when He fulfilled the laws and the promises of the old covenant. Take note of how all of Holy Scripture bears witness to this great work (see pp xlv–xlvii), which Jesus accomplished on the cross for your salvation. Because He stands now in heaven, interceding for you, pray for God's help and blessings with all boldness.

OUTLINE

I. Introduction/Theme: Christ Is the True and Final Revelation of God (1:1–3)
II. Jesus' Superiority (1:4–10:18)
  A. Over the Angels (1:4–2:18)
  B. Over Moses (3:1–4:13)
  C. Superiority of Jesus' Priesthood: Jesus, the New Melchizedek (4:14–7:28)
  D. Superiority of Jesus' Sacrifice (8:1–10:18)
III. Exhortation to Faithfulness (10:19–12:29)
  A. Invitation to Faithfulness (10:19–39)
  B. OT Examples of Faith: Following in the Faith of Our Fathers (ch 11)
  C. Jesus as the Ultimate Example of Faithfulness (12:1–13)
  D. Warning against Disobedience, Using OT Examples (12:14–29)
IV. Final Exhortations (13:1–19)
V. Blessings and Greetings (13:20–25)

Articles and Resources Related to Hebrews

- A Blood Covering
- A Pure Conscience
- God Blessed Marriage
- The Faith of Noah

- A Tale of Two Mountains

A Blood Covering

Before the fall into sin, God brought the animals to Adam to see what he would call them. Adam personally named each creature he met (Gn 2:19–20). He was naked and not ashamed. After the fall, God made garments of skin and clothed Adam and Eve (Gn 3:21). These skins were stripped from some poor creatures because Adam and Eve's newfound shame required a covering. These skins harshly reminded the first human beings of the result of sin, namely, death (Gn 2:17). Shortly thereafter, the offering of animals to God appeared when "Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat portions. And the LORD had regard for Abel and his offering" (Gn 4:4).

Later, when God rescued His chosen people from Egypt, He provided them a blood covering for their sin through a complex sacrificial system. The meaning of the sacrifice was not found in the animal's death alone. Instead, the animal's life was offered as an atonement before God through the blood. As the Lord explained to Moses, "The life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it for you on the altar to make atonement for your souls" (Lv 17:11).

In perfect justice, atonement for sin demands a blood covering. The animal's blood was a substitute for the life of the person. The blood was carefully separated from the animal's flesh, collected, and used in accordance with God's command as a blood covering for the people's sins. (See pp 170–71.)

Hebrews shows that the animal sacrifices foreshadowed the sacrifice of the perfect High Priest, Jesus Christ, who would not offer the blood of animals. Instead, Jesus offered His own precious blood and carried it into the heavenly Most Holy Place as a blood covering for all our sin (Heb 9:11–12).

Many Old Testament Sacrifices

During the ordination of the Old Testament priests, the blood of sacrificial animals was sprinkled on them to cover their sin and set them apart for service before the Lord in His tabernacle (Ex 29:21). The priests collected the blood from sacrificial animals and applied it daily to the tabernacle altar. Without this blood rite, nothing could be burned on the altar, no one could eat in God's presence, no priest could enter the Holy Place, and no blessing could be pronounced upon the people. In this daily blood rite, the life of the animal was a substitute for the life of the people.

Also, once a year, on the Day of Atonement, the high priest entered the Most Holy Place and approached the ark of the covenant, where God in His love dwelt with His people (Heb 9:7; see p 495). The high priest had to bathe before entering the Most Holy Place to avoid certain death. He applied some of the sacrificial animal's blood to the mercy seat. Then he retreated from God's presence and brought the remaining blood out of the Most Holy Place and applied the most holy blood to the altar's horns as a blood covering (atonement) for the people's rebellion (Lv 16:1–16).

The One New Testament Sacrifice

All of the Old Testament sacrifices pointed to the one all-sufficient sacrifice of Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God and High Priest. As true God and true man with ordinary human blood and flesh, Jesus lived a perfect life under the Law and then died the death we deserve. Shedding His own blood on the cross, He offered His life in exchange for the life of the world. His blood is the required blood covering for the world's sins. Just as the high priest took the animal's blood into God's presence in the Most Holy Place and brought the most holy blood out to cleanse the altar, so Jesus offered His own blood, rose from the dead, ascended to heaven, and entered into the heavenly sanctuary with His blood and flesh to be with His Father (Heb 9:11–12).

Now, in Holy Baptism, Jesus sprinkles us with His most holy blood, blood that has been taken into the presence of the Father (Ex 24:8; Heb 9:14, 19–22; 10:22). He sprinkles us on the outside to cleanse us and pardon our sin, and to set us apart as His holy people (Ezk 36:25–27) to serve God as a royal priesthood in our callings (vocations) of parent, child, sibling, citizen, teacher, student. But in the Lord's Supper, He sprinkles us (Heb 9:16–22) internally to set us apart to serve in the heavenly sanctuary with angels, archangels, and all the company of heaven, praising God for our Blood Covering—the Lamb who was slain for us.

A Pure Conscience

Through faith [the conscience] is at the same time purified and made calm, so that out of joy over the remission of sins it no longer dreads punishments. Accordingly, to this purity no law, no works, and nothing at all except this blood of Christ alone can contribute; nor indeed can the blood itself do this unless the heart of man believes that this blood has been shed for the remission of sins. For one must believe Him who makes the covenant when He says (Matt. 26:28; Luke 22:20): "This is the blood which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins." Secondly, by "dead works" he undoubtedly means sins; for he surely calls those works dead which pollute the conscience and from which it is cleansed through the blood of Christ. But nothing except sin pollutes the conscience. From this exceedingly weighty statement it evidently follows that even good works done outside grace are sins, so much so that they can also be called dead. For if the conscience is mortally unclean without the blood of Christ, it can do only what it itself is, that is, what is unclean, as the apostle also teaches in Titus 1:15: "To the unclean nothing is clean." (AE 29: 209)

God Blessed Marriage

1. What is marriage?

The institution of marriage, established by God at creation and publicly and voluntarily entered into, is the lifelong union of one man and one woman. Cf Gn 1:27–28; 2:18–25; Mt 19:3–9; Rm 7:2; 1Co 7:9, 39.

2. Who regulates marriage: Church or State?

In the beginning, God created the spiritual order and the temporal order (Church and State). God rules the spiritual and temporal orders, but in different ways. The spiritual order has to do with the proclamation of the Word of God and the administration of the Holy Sacraments (Baptism and the Lord's Supper). The regulation of marriage properly belongs to the temporal order, which is still ruled by God, but through legitimate civil authority. Therefore, society, through custom or legislation, has the ability to pronounce when a marriage is lawfully constituted. The definition of marriage belongs to God, who instituted it. If the society or the government changes the definition of marriage so that it conflicts with God's definition, then the Church, through its called representatives, will need to decline invitations to marry such couples (cf Ac 5:29).

3. What is the purpose of marriage?

Marriage has five God-given purposes:

1. To establish a household of faith. Cf Eph 4:32.
2. To provide a way for a man and a woman to love each other. Cf 1Pt 3:7; Col 3:19; Eph 5:22–33.
3. To provide for the procreation and nurturing of children. Cf Eph 6:1–4.
4. To provide a legitimate and God-pleasing outlet for sexual desire. Cf 1Co 7:1–5.
5. To provide for the mutual care of husband and wife in the commonwealth of goods. In the marriage rite, a man and woman take a solemn vow "to have and to hold from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death do us part" (*LSB*, p 276). This shows that there is more to marriage than feelings of love and sex. Marriage is a commitment, come what may, built upon God's action, command, and promise: What God has joined, let no man break apart!

4. Isn't living together or engagement acting "publicly and voluntarily"? (See point 1.)

No. When we say above that marriage is a public act, we mean that two people make a formal, official, and legally binding public declaration of commitment for life.

Cohabitation is mentioned in the Bible. Remember Jesus' conversation with the woman at the well? She was living with a man "publicly" (not in the legal sense, but in the sense of "openly and for all the world to see"), yet Jesus certainly did *not* recognize that it was a marriage (Jn 4:16–18).

5. But isn't it a good idea to live together for a while to see if we are compatible?

A good idea based on what? Based on God's Word, such an activity is forbidden for Christians. Living together breaks the Sixth Commandment, violates the love we should give to our neighbor, and tells God that we have a greater wisdom about marriage and sexual relations than He does.

It also happens to be a bad idea from a practical standpoint. Studies show that 80 percent of all marriages *begun as cohabitation* fail. Why? Because there is a lack of moral conviction (which may lead to infidelity) along with a lack of commitment. Note some of the following facts:

1. Live-ins are least likely to marry.
2. Live-ins have higher separation and divorce rates.
3. Those who lived together have unhappier marriages: cohabitants without plans to marry were more inclined to argue, hit, shout, and have an unfair division of labor in the home.
4. Live-ins often engage in extramarital affairs.
5. Marriage reduces antisocial behavior.
6. Live-ins do not enjoy the best sex: those who refrain from premarital sex are 29–47 percent more likely to enjoy sex after marriage.
7. Cohabiting men tend to want a woman who will cook and clean for them rather than a lifelong partner.

Difficulties such as a bad first marriage, a desertion, a divorce, or a difficult home life may make us reticent to make a lifelong commitment. The unconditional love of Christ, our Savior, and His forgiveness for our past sins and misdeeds enables us to deal with past hurts and old wrongs. And it is God's unconditional love for us that enables us to forgive those who have hurt and deserted us and to love and trust again in the lifelong commitment called marriage.

We as Christians are not free to do what we want when it is contrary to God's Word and will. We cannot say, "It's my body. I can do with it what I want" (cf 1Co 6:19–20).

Sex within legal marriage is a great blessing from God. It is the only legitimate and God-pleasing outlet for sexual desire recognized in the New Testament. Cf Ac 15:20, 29; 21:25; 1Co 5; 6:9; 10:8; 2Co 12:19–21; Rm 1:18–28; Gal 5:19; Eph 5:3–5; Col 3:5; 1Th 4:1–8; Heb 12:14–16.

6. How should pastors, elders, and congregations respond?

1. Our first priority is the salvation of the soul of our erring brother or sister. We care enough about you, we love you enough, to tell you that your soul is in danger, that you need to flee the sin that has entrapped you. We love you enough to share the love of God's grace and forgiveness with you as the Spirit of God leads you to godly contrition and repentance. Cf Ac 3:19; 1Tm 2:4.
2. Do we have options in dealing with the situation? Yes. We can and should apply Mt 18:15–18; Gal 6:1–2. Our overriding goal is repentance, so that our dear brother or sister recognizes he or she is sinning. Cf Ps 32:1–5.
3. If, after admonition and instruction in what God's Word says, there is no repentance (which would include heartfelt sorrow over the sin committed and a desire to remedy the situation by either marriage or separation), then the minor ban (no Communion) will be applied by the pastor. Further attempts at reconciliation will be made. Eventually, excommunication *may* be necessary in certain cases—*as a last resort*—in order to shock the brother or sister to his or her senses. This is an application of the Law. But it is also an act of *love*, tough love.
4. If the Holy Spirit leads a couple to recognize that their current situation is wrong and if there is true repentance, the fullness of the Gospel is to be shared with the couple. Consider these passages: 1 Co 6:9–11; Rm 8:1–2.
5. What options do the repentant have? (1) Separate with no plans for marriage. (2) Separate until marriage. (3) If at any time during the process they wish to marry, the pastor will do so via a private ceremony (a concession by the congregation and pastor). (4) Get married by a justice of the peace immediately and have a consecration of the marriage in church at a later time.

7. What should be the guiding principle for the pastor and congregation in these matters?

Matters of marriage, sex, and cohabitation are often fraught with difficulty. That is because they involve men and women, and all men and women are sinners (Ps 51:5; Rm 3:10–12).

But God our Father has mercy on poor sinners. He sent His Son, Jesus Christ, into this world to save us from our sins. He did this by His sinless life, His atoning death on the cross, and His glorious resurrection from the dead (Is 53:6; Jn 3:16).

Our guiding principle in all things, therefore, should be the Gospel of Jesus Christ—especially in matters pertaining to marriage, sex, and cohabitation. Yes, we must apply the Law of God in all its severity when people sin, but we must also apply the Gospel in all its sweetness when people repent of their sins (Mt 11:29–30; Eph 4:32).

Adapted from Matthew Harrison, *Second Thoughts about Living Together* (St. Louis: Concordia, 2005).

The Faith of Noah

The words of Holy Scripture should not be treated carelessly. For since they are the words of the Spirit, they are necessarily full of weight and majesty. Therefore since He commends to us the faith of the fathers, we must understand that this faith is completely perfect in every way, that is, has been exercised in all trials, so that it became worthy of being described with such great glory as an example for the whole church. In the first place, therefore, the glory of the faith of Noah was such that he believed and stood firm for 100 years, whereas one finds some do not believe for even a moment….

The second reason is that Noah preached this faith so forcefully and was not listened to. For that he preached is certain from 2 Peter 2:5. Peter calls him "a preacher of righteousness"; and for this reason Noah felt that the more he was tried and tormented, the less he was heard. Moreover, the outcome, namely, that all perished in the Flood, proves that he was not listened to. For if they had believed, they would not have perished. Therefore their greatest sin was unbelief, just as Noah's righteousness was supreme faith. Consequently, the apostle also praises him very highly not so much because he constructed an ark but because he "constructed an ark in faith" by expressly adding faith as the sum and substance of the work. Furthermore, the apostle praises him because he condemned the world through faith, not through any good work, as if he were saying with the greatest clarity that no sin they had committed was as great as their refusal to believe Noah when he preached….

In the third place, now those things are prone to follow that usually follow when there are unbelieving listeners and believing teachers, namely, outcroppings of mocking and slander, of blasphemy, contempt, and disgrace, especially since the delaying of the threatened evil increased the courage of those people but assailed the faith of this man with completely manifest evidence. As often as he was condemned as a fool, as a liar, as a babbler, not only by one person but by all—especially because he, relying only on his own understanding contrary to the understanding of all, constantly busied himself with the construction of the ark—so often he saw, heard, and experienced above all the Word of God alone and constantly and

persistently preferred it. For St. Peter also commends God's patience highly when he says (1 Peter 3:20) that in the days of Noah this patience with believers and unbelievers was waited for. But that the people were like this can be understood from those words in Luke 17:26–27, where Christ says: "As it was in the days of Noah, so will it be in the days of the Son of Man. They ate, they drank, they married, they were given in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, and the Flood came and destroyed them all." With these words He shows that the faith of this one man was vehemently assailed by means of the morals of the whole world. And scarcely any battle is greater than this one, since it is regarded as the height of folly to think that only one man among all, yes, in opposition to all, is wise. Therefore the faith of Noah was not that "quiet quality of the soul" (as we are wont to dream about faith) but the life of the heart, "as a lily among thorns" (Song of Sol. 2:2), like Jerusalem in the midst of the heathen. (AE 29:236–37)

A Tale of Two Mountains

The year 999 was especially fearful in medieval Europe. Many people expected that Christ's return was very near. Some sold all they had, gave the money to the poor, and went on pilgrimages. The New Year's Eve service in Rome was packed. It is said that some died of fright as they thought of the trumpets of heaven sounding at midnight. Yet as the bishop of Rome, Sylvester II, gave the Benediction and the church bells sounded the new millennium, everyone went home rejoicing. Judgment Day did not appear as they had feared.

With similar fear and relief, the people of Israel faced Mount Sinai. They were very frightened when God spoke to them. They begged Moses to speak for God because they were afraid they would die simply on hearing God's voice. In contrast, Mount Zion was a much different place for the people (Heb 12:18–24; cf Gal 4:21–31). Here, God received their sacrifices and forgave their sins. Here, they received with joy the blessings He gave to them. God invites us Christians to come to an even more joyful place, the heavenly Jerusalem, where we will live with Him forevermore.

Mount Sinai

When we think of Mount Sinai, we think of dark clouds filled with lightning wrapped around a sharp, forbidding peak. We may remember scenes from the movie *The Ten Commandments*. We may think of God with a deep, booming voice and His fiery finger etching His Law into stone. However, two other events on this mountain are recorded in the Scripture.

After years of tending sheep for his father-in-law, Moses saw a bush burning on Mount Sinai, but it was not destroyed. Here, God spoke to him from the bush. God called Moses to be His instrument to free the people of Israel from slavery in Egypt. Here, God told Moses His personal name: Yahweh ("I AM WHO I AM" or "I WILL BE WHO I WILL BE"; see p 1227). God's first action on this mountain was to announce good news—He would save His people from slavery in Egypt.

About 700 years after God gave the people His Law at Sinai, the lonely prophet Elijah visited Sinai's caves (1Ki 19). Discouraged and fleeing for his life, the prophet complained to the Lord. With a mighty wind, a great fire, and an earthquake, God demonstrated His power. Then in a calm, soft voice, the Lord told His prophet that 7,000 people remained in Israel who worshiped the Lord alone. Here, God would encourage Elijah to return to Israel and finish his ministry. He told him to appoint Elisha as the next prophet.

Mount Zion

Hundreds of years before King David conquered Jerusalem and Solomon built a temple there, Abraham and his son Isaac came to a mountain then known as Mount Moriah (Gn 22). There, God commanded Abraham to sacrifice his beloved son. As Abraham raised his knife to kill Isaac, the angel of the Lord stopped the sacrifice. In its place, the angel provided the sacrifice of a ram. So in this way, God first provided a substitute to die in the place of one of His children.

On this mountain, Solomon built a temple for the Lord (1Ki 6). Here, the sacrifices for the sins of God's people were offered. Here, God dwelled in His glory. Here, a lost book was found and taken to heart by God's people (2Ki 22). After this temple was destroyed by the Babylonians, it was rebuilt, first by the Jewish exiles (Ezr 3–6) and then again by King Herod.

To Zion's temple came God's own Son, first as an infant (Lk 2:22–38), later as a young man (Lk 2:41–50), and finally as the promised Messiah. In this temple, in the chambers of the Council (Sanhedrin), He was condemned to die in our place. Once and for all, God had provided the Lamb, the final sacrifice (Jn 1:36). For us, the earthly Mount Zion truly is a place of peace.

The Heavenly Mount Zion

Amid our earthly struggles, we respond to God's presence in many different ways. When we think of the Lord in all His glory and power, we might fear Him as the Israelites did at Mount Sinai. We might complain to Him because we seem abandoned as we struggle to witness to Him. We might come to Him in faith, trusting in the sacrifice He provides. Yet a better mountain awaits us (Is 25).

God invites us to think about the heavenly Zion, where we will live one day (see p 844). Here are countless angels, gathered in praise of God. Here lives Christ's Church, finally free of sin, death, and the power of the devil. Here lives Christ Himself. When we keep our eyes on *this* mountain, nothing that faces us here in this life can overwhelm us. The heights of heavenly Zion stand above all the fear, pain, and suffering we face here. Filling us with the hope of heaven, God enables us to fulfill the calling He has given us.

Footnotes

Footnotes for Hebrews, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:12 Some manuscripts omit *like a garment*

Footnotes for Hebrews, Chapter 2

- [2] 2:7 Some manuscripts insert *and set him over the works of your hands*
- [1] 2:11 Greek *all are of one*
- [2] 2:11 Or *brothers and sisters*. The plural Greek word *adelphoi* (translated "brothers") refers to siblings in a family. In New Testament usage, depending on the context, *adelphoi* may refer either to men or to both men and women who are siblings (brothers and sisters) in God's family, the church; also verse 12

Footnotes for Hebrews, Chapter 3

- [3] 3:1 Or *brothers and sisters*; also verse 12
- [1] 3:2 Greek *his*; also verses 5, 6
- [2] 3:6 Some manuscripts insert *firm to the end*

Footnotes for Hebrews, Chapter 4

- [1] 4:2 Some manuscripts *it did not meet with faith in the hearers*
- [2] 4:8 Greek *he*

Footnotes for Hebrews, Chapter 5

- [1] 5:7 Greek *he*

Footnotes for Hebrews, Chapter 6

- [1] 6:2 Or *baptisms* (that is, cleansing rites)
- [1] 6:15 Greek *he*

Footnotes for Hebrews, Chapter 7

- [1] 7:5 Or *brothers and sisters*
- [1] 7:25 That is, completely; or *at all times*

Footnotes for Hebrews, Chapter 8

- [2] 8:2 Or *tabernacle*; also verse 5
- [3] 8:6 Greek *he*
- [1] 8:8 Some manuscripts *For finding fault with it he says to them*

Footnotes for Hebrews, Chapter 9

- [2] 9:2 Or *tabernacle*; also verses 11, 21
- [3] 9:2 Greek *the presentation of the loaves*
- [4] 9:3 Greek *tent*; also verses 6, 8
- [1] 9:9 Or *which is symbolic for the age then present*
- [2] 9:11 Some manuscripts *good things to come*
- [3] 9:13 Or *For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the sprinkling of defiled persons with the ashes of a heifer, sanctifies*
- [4] 9:14 Some manuscripts *your*
- [5] 9:15 The Greek word means both *covenant* and *will*; also verses 16, 17

Footnotes for Hebrews, Chapter 10

- [1] 10:5 Greek *he*
- [1] 10:12 Greek *this one*
- [2] 10:19 Or *brothers and sisters*

Footnotes for Hebrews, Chapter 11

- [1] 11:37 Some manuscripts add *they were tempted*

Footnotes for Hebrews, Chapter 12

- [1] 12:23 Or *church*

Footnotes for Hebrews, Chapter 13

- [1] 13:21 Some manuscripts *you*
- [1] 13:22 Or *brothers and sisters*

Study Notes

HEBREWS—NOTE ON **Ch 1** Describes the climactic character of God's revelation in Christ.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 1:1 *in many ways*. God's prophetic Word was delivered to His people through the prophets' oral proclamation, written words, and prophetic actions. See pp 1081–83, 1220. *God spoke … by the prophets*. God spoke His Word to His people by means of the prophets; the words and deeds of the prophets were full of God's power and brought about God's will. See note, 2Pt 1:21; see also pp xxvi–xxx. *to our fathers*. Those who lived by faith in the Savior God had promised. See p 1245.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 1:2 *last days*. The time of the definitive revelation of God's will in Christ (cf Ac 2:14–21). See "on that day," p 1079. The distinction between the words of the prophets and of Jesus anticipates the establishment of the Bible as OT and NT. See pp xlv–xlvii. *appointed the heir*. An heir inherits all that belongs to the parents. Jesus, as God's only begotten Son, shares with His brothers and sisters the Father's mercy, forgiveness, and new life. See "portion," p 7. *through whom also He created*. The Son was not created by the Father, but always existed with Him and the Holy Spirit (Jn 1:1). God the Father, with the Holy Spirit, created all that exists, seen and unseen, by His Son, the Word of the Father. See note, Jn 1:3; see also p 1012.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 1:3 *the radiance of the glory of God*. God the Father, invisible and dwelling in "unapproachable light" (1Tm 6:16), has revealed the light of His glory in Christ Jesus. See "glory," p 1902. *the exact imprint of His nature*. As a wax mold reveals every detail of a metal seal, Jesus is the exact expression of the Father's nature, being eternally begotten of the Father. He possesses and reveals all that is divine. To see Jesus is to see the Father (Jn 14:9). See note, Col 1:15. Luth: "These two words [imprint, nature] lead us to understand that the Father and the Son are of two kinds and distinct according to the Person, but one and undivided according to the substance. The word 'image' indicates that the Son is not the Father, but the image of the Father and a different Person. The phrase 'of his substance' indicates that he is not separate from the Father according to nature, but is together with him in one Godhead and of equal substance, and is thus an image of the Father's substance, not made or having a

beginning at a previous time, but having become and been from eternity, just as the divine substance was neither made nor had a beginning but has been from eternity…. For the divine substance is eternal, whereas whatever has a beginning is temporal" (AE 34:222). *the word of His power*. Jesus, the Word who called creation into being (Gn 1), continues to uphold all creation. See note, Gn 1:3. *purification for sins*. The blood of sacrificed animals cleansed both the OT temple's altar and God's people from the defilement caused by sin (Lv 16:19, 30). Jesus alone makes the final, complete purification of our conscience (cf Heb 9:14). See pp 136, 2117. Luth: "We should despair of our penitence, of our purification from sins; for before we repent, our sins have already been forgiven. Indeed, first His very purification, on the contrary, also produces penitence in us, just as His righteousness produces our righteousness" (AE 29:112). *at the right hand*. The right hand of God represents the fullness of God's authority and glory (cf Ps 110:1). See p 843; see also note, Eph 1:20.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 1:4 *superior to angels*. Angels, although holy and great, were created by God. Jesus, through His suffering and humility, resurrection and exaltation, showed all creation that He was truly the eternal Son of the Father, and that He was and is far above any creature (cf Php 2:1–11). Hus: "Christ alone is the head of the universal church" (*The Church*, p 27). *the name He has inherited*. The title "Son" expresses the wonder that Jesus, the Son of Mary, is also the Son of God from eternity. See notes, Is 7:14; Mt 1:23.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 1:5–13 Seven passages from the OT (five from Ps) are used to proclaim Jesus as the Son; as such, He is superior to the angels. See note, Ps 2:7.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 1:6 *the firstborn*. See p 6. A king's firstborn son would usually succeed to the throne. Because Jesus is the "firstborn" of the Father, the glory, honor, and power of the Father also belong to Jesus. See note, Col 1:15.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 1:7 See note, Ps 104:3–4. Quote emphasizes that the angels, although sharing in God's glory and majesty, are God's creatures. This contrasts with Jesus' status as firstborn Son, sharing in the nature of His Father.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 1:8–9 Ps 45 is a royal psalm in which the king receives the promises made by God (cf 2Sm 7:13). Jesus fulfills God's

promise to David. He establishes an eternal throne that brings God's own righteousness and joy. See notes, Ps 45 intro; 2Sm 7:11–14.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 1:10–12 Ps 102 is the prayer of one suffering from physical distress and derision from enemies. The psalmist contrasts his own vulnerable, transitory life with God's everlasting kingdom. This quote concerning God's unchanging and authoritative power over creation is applied to Jesus, through whom all things were made (v 2).

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 1:14 *ministering spirits … serve*. Jesus' status as true and everlasting King is contrasted with the status of angels who, though members of the royal court, are servants who obey the word of their Master. See notes, Jb 1:6; Ps 103:21; 104:3–4. *inherit salvation?* As children inherit from their parents, so Christians inherit with Christ all that the Father has to give. Jesus, our elder brother, includes us by grace in His family with its riches. See "heir," p 1902; see also "portion," p 7.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON **Ch 1** Jesus, through whom the Father created all things, and by whose Word all things are sustained, clearly reveals the gracious will of the Father to us. Although Jesus is heavenly like the angels, He is no mere creature. He is the firstborn Son of the Father, who shares with us all that the Father has. He frees us to receive God's ministry, including the ministry given through the angels. • Lord Jesus, thank You for creating and sustaining me. By Your Word, keep me in true faith, that I may inherit salvation. Amen.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 2:1 *closer attention*. If God's people were to listen to the law delivered by angels (cf v 2), then Christians are bound to give their whole attention to the Word delivered by Jesus, God's eternal Son. *what we have heard*. The message of Jesus, the Son of God, whose sacrifice cleanses us from sin. See note, 1Jn 1:1.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 2:2 *the message declared by angels*. Angels were responsible for handing on God's Law to Moses (cf Ac 7:38, 53). *just retribution*. God's Law is authoritative. Any breaking of the Law leads to the appropriate punishment. See p 1911.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 2:3 *a great salvation?* Jesus' sacrifice frees people from the curse of the Law (cf Gal 3:13). If they neglect this gift God has given, they will not escape the just punishment for sin. See "save," p 1904. *attested to us by those who heard*. Suggests that the writer of Hebrews was not St Paul or one of the Twelve, because they were directly called by Jesus and received the Word from Him. See p 2102–4.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 2:4 *God also bore witness*. The Father and the Holy Spirit attested to the message of salvation, first spoken in its fullness by Jesus (v 3). See notes, 10:5–18; 1Jn 5:7–8. *gifts of the Holy Spirit*. Cf Rm 12:6–8; 1Co 12–14; Gal 5:22–23; Eph 4:11–12. God chooses to bless His people with what they need to live by faith. See p 1876.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 2:1–4 Christians need God's Word, spoken by Jesus and attested by those who heard Him. The Father and the Holy Spirit also bear witness. Ignoring God's revelation of how to be saved is frightening. Jesus gives the Church pastors, teachers, and other leaders to spread the Word. He likewise gives us brothers and sisters to encourage us in our life of faith. He will always provide all that is needed to receive the gift of life. • Lord Jesus, thank You for speaking the Word of the Father to me. By Your Holy Spirit, keep me anchored to the hope of salvation that You freely give. Amen.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 2:5 Angels oversee the nations of this world (cf Dn 10:13). But the Son has authority over the whole of creation and time, including the angels.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 2:6–8 Ps 8 reflects on the apparent insignificance of human beings in contrast to their great significance to God. See notes, Ps 8:4–5.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 2:6 *testified somewhere*. Writer perhaps cites from memory or from notes (finding lines in a scroll was considerable trouble). Though he often quotes Scripture, he does not provide specific references. His free style is an example of the human side of Scripture. See note, 1Co 1:16; see also p 1646.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 2:8 *subjection to him*. Ps 8:6 speaks of human beings, who have dominion over the earth and its creatures (Gn 1:28). As man, Jesus also has this dominion over creation. As God, He has still greater dominion. *we do not yet see everything in subjection*. By faith alone (cf Heb 11:1), we confess Jesus' authority over our own lives and His authority over all things, even though life may seem out of control. See note, Php 3:21.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 2:9 *made lower than the angels*. Before His resurrection and ascension, Jesus did not always choose to demonstrate His divine power and so appeared lower than the angels. By taking the form of a servant, He appeared to be less authoritative than those glorious beings who are upheld by His Word (1:3). *crowned with glory and honor*. Through

Jesus' death and resurrection, His true status as God's Son was revealed to the sinful world, and God the Father exalted Him (cf Php 2:9–11). *by the grace of God*. God has freely provided His Son as the sacrifice for the sin of the world (Jn 19). See "grace," p 1902. *taste death for everyone*. Jesus' death has drained the cup of sin and death that poisoned every person (cf Rm 5:12–17).

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 2:10 *He … by whom all things exist*. God the Father, who created all. *for whom*. Aug: "You have formed us for Yourself, and our hearts are restless until they find rest in You" (*NPNF* 1 1:45). *bringing … to glory*. Jesus' glory will be shared with all whom God leads in faith. See "glory," p 1902. *the founder*. Jesus (cf 12:2). *perfect through suffering*. As God's eternal Son, Jesus demonstrated complete obedience to the Father through His suffering. Just as a test may show that a student has perfect or complete knowledge of a topic, the cross showed that Jesus completely obeyed the Father's will. Jesus' Passion led to His exaltation and glory following the resurrection. See "perfect," p 1903.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 2:11 *sanctifies*. See "holy," p 1902. *one source*. Because the Father adopts us through Jesus, Jesus and Christians have God as their Father (Rm 8:15). See "adoption," p 1901. Also Jesus, as a true human being, shares descent with us from the one human father, Adam. *not ashamed to call them brothers*. Jesus is ready to confess before the Father and all creation that believers in Him are truly His family (Mt 12:48–50).

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 2:12–13 OT quotes emphasize Jesus' solidarity with mankind.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 2:12 In Ps 22, David prays to God because he is suffering from persecution and distress. He ends with a confident confession of the Lord's righteousness (Ps 22:22). Jesus, David's descendant and heir, prayed a portion of this psalm on the cross (Mt 27:46; Mk 15:34).

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 2:13 Speaks of the trust that the prophet Isaiah and his family had in the face of coming judgment. Also describes Jesus, who while suffering judgment for sin, placed His trust in His Father. Jesus is bound to those who place their trust in Him.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 2:14 *children share in flesh and blood*. Children and their parents share genetic unity. *partook of the same*. Jesus became, and still is, a real human being and truly our Brother. Through the incarnation, Jesus shares our human nature (yet without sin). Christians and

their Lord also share the unique fellowship of the Lord's flesh and blood through the Lord's Supper (1Co 10:16–17). "He did not receive a foreign nature, but our own flesh in the unity of His person. In this way He has become our true Brother…. Christ redeemed human nature as His work, sanctifies it, raises it from the dead, and gloriously adorns it as His work" (FC Ep I 5–6). *through death … destroy*. Jesus' death absorbed God's judgment against sin. On the cross, Jesus bore all sin and the condemnation of death. *the power of death*. Death has a claim on those who sin (Rm 6:23). *the devil*. He uses God's Law to bring accusations against those who have sinned. See note, Jb 1:6. Luth: "The devil's work is to crush us under his feet and, because of our sin, to dispatch us from life into death…. [Christ's] works are truly divine works such as: to justify, to restore to life, to save" (AE 13:135).

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 2:15 *lifelong slavery*. All who sin fear death as a consequence of sin and are bound in this fear unless God speaks His word of mercy in Christ (cf Rm 7:14–25).

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 2:16 *the offspring of Abraham*. Those who also have faith in the Savior. Cf Gal 3:6–9, 26–29.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 2:17 *in every respect*. Jesus was, and is, a real human being who has shared in every aspect of human life, including the temptation to sin. *a merciful and faithful high priest*. Jesus brings our needs to the Father because He knows the reality of human weakness. *the service of God*. Jesus' sacrifice is given to God the Father and is not compelled by Satan or any other power. See notes, Mt 26:39; Lk 23:46. Jesus went to the cross willingly, thwarting Satan's purposes (1Co 2:8; 1Jn 3:8). *propitiation*. Jesus removes the stain of sin, bringing human beings into a right relationship with the Father. See note, Rm 3:25; see also "atonement," p 5.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 2:18 Jesus' prayers are those of one who has suffered and been tempted as a real human being. We are assured that His prayers are effective and heartfelt (cf 5:7; Rm 8:34).

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 2:5–18 Jesus, as true man, willingly humbled Himself to taste death. As resurrected Lord, and as our firstborn Brother (v 11), He serves as our High Priest to intercede for us before the Father. Without a Savior, we would live in slavery to the fear of death. But Jesus has taken the consequence of our sin and removes our fear. Knowing our weaknesses, He will always help us when we are tempted. • Lord Jesus,

You know my weakness. Help me always to turn away from sin and to put all my trust in You. Amen.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 3:1 *holy brothers … calling*. All people God the Father has adopted through faith in His Word (Jn 1:12–13). No one can, by his own power, make himself holy. But God calls people to share in His gift of holiness (cf 1Pt 1:15). See "call," p 1901. *the apostle and high priest of our confession*. Priests in the OT offered sacrifices, but they also revealed God's will through their teaching. In the NT, God sent apostles to speak on His behalf. Jesus is the High Priest and Apostle who fully reveals God's will and fulfills both testaments.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 3:2 *appointed*. The Father's will is that His Son should reveal the fullness of His grace (cf Ac 3:20). *just as Moses*. Greatest OT example of a faithful leader. But Jesus surpasses Moses as the faithful leader in worship and in life. *God's house*. People of Israel, the household of faith in Moses' time.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 3:3 *the builder … has more honor*. The creator has more honor than what is created, because what is created depends on the creator for existence. Jesus is the creator of Moses and Israel and is worthy of more honor. Luth: "Whatever Moses ordered at God's command he did only in view of the Christ who was to come. Thus the people were to be prepared for the personal rule of Christ, who was to dwell among them as in His own house…. Moses and the priesthood count for nothing, compared with Christ. They are under obligation; and since He is the true Lord, they must hand over the keys to Him and serve Him" (AE 13:305).

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 3:4 *the builder of all things is God*. All creation owes its being and daily life to God.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 3:5 *a servant, to testify*. A servant does the will of the master without necessarily knowing what the master has in mind. But God the Father makes the fullness of His will known through Jesus the Son (cf Jn 15:15).

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 3:6 *over God's house as a son*. Jesus knows the will of the Father and speaks with His full authority. *we are His house*. We share in all the blessings that God wills to give us. With Jesus the Son, we are heirs of the Father (cf Rm 8:17). See note, Gal 3:26.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 3:1–6 Though Moses was a faithful servant in God's household, Jesus is the faithful Son. Since Jesus calls you to your heavenly home, you can be confident that you will share in God's glory.

However, beware not to boast of your own faithfulness. Only God is holy and righteous. In Christ, you freely share in God's holiness. He is calling you to glory. • Lord Jesus, Son of the Father, fill me with Your Spirit of faithfulness. Amen.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 3:7–4:13 Exhortation based on OT examples of the Sabbath (see pp 200–201, 1764) and inheritance of the Promised Land (see "portion," p 7).

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 3:7–11 Cites Ps 95 and alludes to the rebellion of God's people in the wilderness—esp Nu 14, where the people refused to enter the Promised Land after spies brought back a disheartening report.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 3:7 *the Holy Spirit says*. The Scriptures, written by men, were inspired by the Holy Spirit and are His words (cf 2Tm 3:16). See pp xxvi–xxx.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 3:11 Luth: "We wretched men have lost that bliss of our physical life through sin, and while we live we are in the midst of death. And yet, because the Sabbath command remains for the church, it denotes that spiritual life is to be restored to us through Christ" (AE 1:80).

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 3:12 *an evil, unbelieving heart*. Refusal to trust in God's promises. Alludes to Nu 14, where the people refused to trust that God would give them the Promised Land. *the living God*. God actively sees into the hearts of all people and makes a just judgment (Heb 10:30b–31). See note, Mt 16:16.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 3:13 *exhort … every day*. Christians addressed here may have gathered daily in their homes for prayer. *today*. Cf v 7; 4:7. *hardened*. See note, Ex 4:21. *the deceitfulness of sin*. Refusal to trust God is coupled with a refusal to accept what is true. An unbelieving heart will willingly accept deception.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 3:14 *share in Christ*. We are fellow believers and partners with Christ. See note, 1:14. *our original confidence*. That God, in Christ Jesus, forgives sin. This phrase may be the call to holiness and the hope of future glory given in Baptism. See note, 1Pt 3:21.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 3:15 See note, vv 7–11. Luth: "Since we have begun happily, just as they had—let us fear, lest by defecting we abandon 'the beginning of the substance,' as they abandoned it and deserted" (AE 29:158).

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 3:16–18 God's people formerly missed out on what He had promised through their acts of unbelief. The writer highlights

the fact that those who have experienced God's goodness should persevere in faith. God will punish those who sin and they will lose their rest and inheritance. See note, 1:14.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 3:19 *unable … because of unbelief*. God was willing to give His people rest, but His people were unwilling to receive it. The people's unbelief—their lack of confidence in the promises of God—rendered them incapable of experiencing the blessings that flow from trust.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 4:1 *promise of entering His rest*. God's promise of forgiveness and peace remains true and can be lost only if we refuse it. *let us fear*. We should carefully watch that our trust is in the promise of God rather than in human understanding. See p 1001.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 4:2 *good news*. The promise of rest, to the people of Israel through the gift of the land, and to the Church with the gift of new life in Christ. See "Gospel," p 1902. *united by faith*. By faith, we receive the promises of God and become members of His household (3:2). Trusting in God's promise, we receive the gifts that God gives. Luth: "These three—faith, the Word, and the heart—become one. Faith is the glue or the bond. The Word is on one side; the heart is on the other side. But through faith they become one spirit, just as man and wife become 'one flesh' (Gen. 2:24). Therefore it is true that the heart is combined with the Word through faith and that the Word is combined with the heart through the same faith" (AE 29:160).
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 4:3 *enter that rest*. Prefigured by the promise of a new life for God's people in the Promised Land. This promise is fulfilled in Christ Jesus, who gives us an eternal home and rest. *His works were finished*. Focuses on God's seventh day of creation. As God's rest has existed from the foundation of the world, so His people throughout time have been free to enter this rest and peace. See note, v 9.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 4:4 See note, Gn 2:2.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 4:5 Cites Ps 95:11, which speaks of God's judgment because of His people's refusal to enter the Promised Land. Cf Nu 16.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 4:6 He now applies the argument by admonishing the Hebrews. *formerly received the good news*. See note, v 2.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 4:7 See note, 3:7–11.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 4:8 *if Joshua had given them rest*. Eventually, God's people possessed the Promised Land under the leadership of Joshua,

but the ultimate rest was with the second Joshua, Jesus, who saves His people from their sin. See note, Jsh 1:1.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 4:9 *there remains a Sabbath rest*. God has fully completed the six days of His work in creation; thus, His Sabbath rest extends throughout time. In Christ, God's people enter into God's day of rest and experience the peace He gives. See notes, Ex 20:8; Rm 5:1.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 4:10 *entered God's rest*. Enjoying the result of God's completed work. See note, Jn 19:30. The benefits of Christ's completed work, received by faith, are distributed in the proclamation of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 4:11 *strive to enter that rest*. We do this in two ways: (1) by daily returning to our Baptism, renouncing the devil and all evil; (2) by trusting God's mercy in Christ, who has prepared our eternal rest in heaven (Jn 14:2).

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 4:12 *the word of God*. The Word remains forever and always accomplishes the work that it is sent to do (see note, Is 55:11). The person striving (v 11) will be helped by the Word. *living*. First descriptor for the sake of emphasis. God's Word gives life. See note, Ps 119:25. *active*. Or, effective. *sharper than any two-edged sword*. Even the sharpest sword can cut only through flesh and bone; God's Word cuts through any spiritual barriers that stand between human beings and God. *division of soul and of spirit*. God's Word cuts to the innermost part of a human being. *discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart*. God's Word exposes the true state of a person's heart before God. The comparison to a sword emphasizes God's work in our lives through the Law, in keeping with the exhortation in 3:13. See application note, 3:7–4:13. Luth: "Christ's Word breaks through and wounds. It takes away every ground of trust and ascribes redemption solely to the blood of Christ; it pricks and wounds the soul. This is a health-bestowing wound, for these weapons kill in order to make alive…. It is, however, a fall that is happy and full of consolation, demonstrating the power and success of the Word" (AE 12:225). See note, Dt 32:39.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 4:13 *naked and exposed … Him*. Image is of a sacrificial animal prepared for slaughter. Before the power of God's Word we have no defense. Unless God has mercy, we will die. *we must give account*. In all our thoughts, words, and deeds, we are accountable to God, the eternal Judge who sees all (cf Rm 14:10–12).

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 3:7–4:13 God's people missed rest in the Promised Land through their unbelief. This is a warning to us. God calls us to trust Him and to enter into the rest that He has enjoyed since the completion of creation. In Christ Jesus, we have rest from the accusation of the Law. The Holy Spirit leads us to trust in Christ, granting us everlasting peace. • Lord Jesus, You are my rest. May I always look to You when I am weary and afraid. Amen.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 4:14 *a great high priest*. The only One who can truly represent us to the Father, and who can truly represent the Father to us. *passed through the heavens*. Bridged the otherwise infinite gap between God and humanity. *Son of God*. See p 2098. *hold fast*. Cling to Christ in faith since He has already demonstrated His power. *our confession*. See notes, Rm 10:9; 1Co 1:10; 1Tm 6:12. "The apostle tells us to come to God, not with confidence in our own merits, but with confidence in Christ as the High Priest. The apostle requires faith…. [Also,} Peter says we receive forgiveness of sins through Christ's name, that is, for His sake. It is not for the sake of our merits, not for the sake of our contrition, attrition, love, worship, or works. He adds: *When we believe in Him*. Peter requires faith. For we cannot receive Christ's name except by faith" (Ap IV 82–83).

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 4:15 *sympathize with our weaknesses*. See note, 2:17. *tempted as we are*. Cf Mt 4:1–11; Mk 1:12–13; Lk 4:1–13 for accounts of Jesus' temptation. *yet without sin*. Jesus did not succumb to the temptation He experienced but remained wholly faithful to His Father.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 4:16 *the throne of grace*. Where sacrifice was offered on the Day of Atonement (Lv 16:2–3). On the cross, Christ offered the final sacrifice. Those who place their trust in Christ, rather than fleeing from God, can come to Him expecting mercy, healing, and life. (See SC, Lord's Prayer, pp xxxvii–xxxix.) "Those who cling to God alone should be sure that He will show them mercy. In other words, He will show them pure goodness and blessing, not only for themselves, but also to their children and their children's children, even to the thousandth generation and beyond that. This ought certainly to move and impel us to risk our hearts in all confidence with God [Hebrews 4:16; 10:19–23], if we wish all temporal and eternal good. For the supreme Majesty makes such outstanding offers and presents such heartfelt encouragements and such rich promises" (LC I 39–40). "God desires nothing more seriously from us than that we ask Him for much and great things. In fact, He is angry if we do not ask and pray

confidently" (LC III 56–57). *receive mercy and find grace*. Those who trust in Christ receive God's forgiveness and strength to lead a holy life. See "mercy," p 1903. Luth: "Jesus Christ is our mediator, our throne of grace, and our bishop before God in heaven, who daily intercedes for us and reconciles all who believe in him alone, and who call upon him; that he is not a judge, nor cruel, except for those who do not believe in him, or who reject his comfort and grace; [and] that he is not the man who accuses and threatens us, but rather the man who reconciles us [with God], and intercedes for us with his own death and blood shed for us so that we should not fear him, but approach him with all assurance and call him dear Savior, sweet Comforter, faithful bishop of our souls, etc." (AE 50:20–21).

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 5:1 *chosen … appointed*. An OT priest could not decide on his own initiative to be high priest. God chose the sons of Aaron and on the basis of this election they fulfilled their office (cf Ex 28:1; Nu 3:10). *offer gifts and sacrifices for sins*. Emphasizes the way the high priest offered something other than himself to atone for sin.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 5:2 The high priest, too, was weighed down by weakness in the face of temptation.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 5:3 *sacrifice for his own sins*. The high priest, being a sinner, had to make atonement for his own sins as well as for the sins of the people. See note, Lv 10:17.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 5:4 *called by God*. See note, v 1.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 5:5 *appointed*. The Father appointed Jesus to serve as the true High Priest. The quote from Ps 2:7 was addressed to the earthly king of God's people. Yet it prophesied Christ's enthronement in glory after His ascension. See "right hand," p 843; see also note, Eph 1:20.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 5:6 Melchizedek was a priest and king who blessed Abraham and received offerings from him (cf Gn 14:18–20). Like Melchizedek, Jesus is a true priest, even though He was not from Aaron's lineage (cf v 10). See "Melchizedek," p 2104. On disputes over the priesthood, see "Zadokites," pp 1557–58.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 5:7 *the days of His flesh*. Jesus' years of ministry on earth; yet even after His ascension, Jesus remains true man and has flesh and blood (see note, Lk 24:40). *offered*. Same word is used for offering sacrifice. This emphasizes the priestly nature of Jesus' suffering. Luth: "That is the true sacrifice…. It deserves to be praised to the utmost and to have every honor given to it, especially over against those other false, lying

sacrifices of our own works, which were invented to deny and blaspheme this sacrifice. He is also the Priest who ought to be called a priest above all others. What man can praise and exalt Him enough? … No matter how great or burdensome sin, wrath, hell, and damnation may be, this holy sacrifice is far greater and higher!" (AE 13:319–20). *able to save Him from death*. Jesus trusted that His Father would bring Him through death to resurrection and new life. *heard because of His reverence*. Jesus lived with pure devotion to the Father. His prayers conformed fully to the Father's will and were heard. See note, Mt 26:39; cf Jn 17. Luth: "In the same manner He also fulfilled the third part of the priestly office: intercessory prayer. Along with, and beyond, His sacrifice Christ also prayed to God the Father in our behalf. Isaiah 53:12 speaks of this function of His priestly office: 'He bore the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.' … By means of such prayer He won for us and communicated to us the power and merit of His sacrifice, that is, forgiveness of sins, righteousness, and eternal life. Prayer like that is valid forever and works its power in all Christendom. In short, He continues to exercise this office as our Mediator and Advocate before God" (AE 13:320).

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 5:8 *He learned obedience*. Jesus experienced and demonstrated, as true man, what it is to obey the will of the heavenly Father. See also note, Lk 2:51.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 5:9 *made perfect*. See note, 2:10. *source of eternal salvation*. See note, Ac 4:12. *salvation*. See p 1904. *obey*. See note, Rm 1:5.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 5:10 *designated*. Solemnly acclaimed by the Father. See notes, 1:2; 3:2; 5:1. *the order of Melchizedek*. See note, v 6.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 4:14–5:10 Jesus Christ, our true High Priest, shares our humanity and knows the weaknesses that we experience. Being one with the Father, He is the source of God's full forgiveness. If we approach God confident in our own goodness, we will be condemned according to the strictness of the Law. But Christ Jesus is gentle and understanding. He forgives us, gives us confidence before the Father, and helps us in all our needs. • Lord Jesus, our true High Priest, help us, in our weakness, to call to our Father for all that we need. Amen.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 5:11–6:20 The heart of the Letter, where the author rebukes his readers and draws them back from spiritual collapse.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 5:11 *hard … dull of hearing*. The teaching is not too complicated, but hearers are slow to listen and understand.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 5:12 *by this time*. Likely the readers had been Christians for some time. *teachers*. See note, Eph 4:11. *basic principles of the oracles of God*. Key points of apostolic teaching, such as the examples listed in Heb 6:1–2. See note, 1Co 4:17; cf 1Co 15:1–4. *milk*. Gathered from cows, sheep, or goats and stored in jars immersed in spring water. Milk was food for children but also given to the sick. See note, 1Co 3:2. *solid food*. With maturity, a student of Scripture is better prepared to understand the more challenging passages and apply them correctly to life's more difficult issues. An immature student may fall into doubt or fear, or perhaps most dangerously, pride.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 5:13 *unskilled in the word*. People could not keep the truths of Scripture straight and so fell into error.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 5:14 *powers of discernment trained by constant practice*. Adults by experience have developed palates that can discern subtle differences in food and drink. Only spiritually mature people can properly discern and receive the "solid food" of advanced teaching. See note, v 12. *distinguish good from evil*. The spiritually mature are able to distinguish true teaching from false teaching, good behavior from wickedness.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 6:1 *the elementary doctrine of Christ*. Foundational teachings of the Christian faith. See note, 5:12. *maturity*. Cf 5:14. *foundation*. One's doctrinal foundation, basic beliefs. *repentance*. Rejecting those actions that do not flow from faith in Christ. *dead works*. Without faith and without God's approval, all our works are useless and indeed lay a foundation of false confidence before God. See note, Is 64:6. *faith toward God*. Trust in the promises of God, esp the promise of forgiveness in Christ Jesus.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 6:2 *washings*. Gk plural of *baptismos*. See notes, Mk 7:3–4; Eph 5:26. John's Baptism and Christian Baptism stemmed from OT commands about ritual washings. Rabbis likely also washed converts to Judaism. These beliefs and practices would need to be distinguished. See p 1369. *the laying on of hands*. Liturgical action that likely accompanied baptismal prayers. See note, Mk 5:23. *resurrection of the dead*. The raising, in the body, of all those who have died (cf 1Co 15), a basic doctrine that was much discussed (see "The Resurrection," p 1829).

eternal judgment. The final judgment after the resurrection of all. Cf Mt 25:31–46.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 6:3 *if God permits*. Acknowledging God's direction and timing.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 6:4–6 A challenging text. "Remember that God punishes sin with sins. This means that because of their self-confidence, lack of repentance, and willful sins, He later punishes with hardheartedness and blindness those who had been converted…. This punishment should not be interpreted to mean that it never had been God's good pleasure that such persons should come to the knowledge of the truth and be saved" (FC SD XI 83). *impossible … to restore them again to repentance*. Luth: "If anyone has fallen away from Christ, who is the true sacrifice for sins, and seeks another way or mode to be saved and go to heaven, he will never go there, he will not succeed" (StL 7:959). No person can bring back those who, having received faith, fall away from it and seek a way of salvation other than Christ. With God all things are possible (Mt 19:26). If you have loved ones who have fallen away, continually pray for them, that God may restore them.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 6:4 *impossible*. The author is sternly warning those who are being tempted. *once … enlightened*. Refers to Baptism and its new, light-filled life. See note, Eph 1:18. *tasted the heavenly gift*. Repentance (cf Ac 11:17–18) and faith (Eph 2:8). *shared in the Holy Spirit*. Those baptized into Christ have called out to God the Father through the Spirit (cf Rm 8:15). See note, Mt 12:31.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 6:5 *tasted the goodness of the word of God*. They received God's word of mercy and grace in the Gospel and Baptism. *powers of the age to come*. God's miraculous intervention in their lives now anticipates the greatness of the blessings of heaven. It is as if heaven has invaded (cf Col 1:13).

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 6:6 *fallen away*. Rejected God's gift of repentance and faith. *crucifying once again*. Like the crowds calling for Jesus' crucifixion, those who fall away viciously reject Christ's mercy and forgiveness. *holding Him up to contempt*. Opposite of confessing Christ; speaking and acting as if the sacrifice of Christ has no power. On the spiritual dangers involved, see note, Mt 12:31. Luth: "I have already been preaching Christ and fighting against the devil in his false teachers for a number of years; but I have experienced how much difficulty this business

has caused me. For I cannot repel Satan as I would like. Nor can I finally grasp Christ as Scripture propounds Him to me, but the devil often suggests a false Christ to me. Thanks be to God, however, for preserving us in the Word, in faith, and in prayer! We know that one should walk in humility and fear in the sight of God and not presume upon our own wisdom, righteousness, doctrine, and courage. One should rely on the power of Christ. When we are weak, He is strong; and through us weaklings He always conquers and triumphs. To Him be glory forever. Amen" (AE 26:196).

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 6:7–8 Imagery of fruitful and unfruitful land is used frequently in Scripture (e.g., Is 5:1–7).

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 6:7 *receives a blessing from God*. Just as the land, blessed to be fruitful (Gn 1:11), produces a crop after rain, so the waters of Baptism bless God's people with righteousness. *blessing*. See p 842.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 6:8 *cursed*. Those who receive God's gifts through faith, but then fall away, will fail to bear the fruit of God's Spirit. They become like weeds, sapping resources while producing nothing. See p 6. *burned*. Just as thorns and thistles, being unproductive, are burned off, so those who fail to trust God's Word will face His judgment. See notes, Mt 3:12; Jn 15:6.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 6:9 *sure of better things*. Spiritual blessings that flow from a life of trust in Christ Jesus.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 6:10 God has begun His work of salvation among them and will remember His own demonstration of love and service through them. Surely He will also show His righteousness in bringing their salvation to completion (cf Eph 1:13–14).

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 6:11 *full assurance*. Complete confidence in the promises of God.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 6:12 *imitators of those who … inherit the promises*. Follow the good example of those who lived by faith in God. This theme is developed in ch 11.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 5:11–6:12 Christians grow in maturity by building on the basic teachings of the faith and connecting God's promises with the new way of life that He gives. Those who reject God's promises should fear the just judgment of God. If we fail to be fruitful in love, mercy, and generosity, we become like thorns and thistles, fit only for His fire. However, we can be confident that God, who has given us the gift of

salvation, will grow the fruit of the Spirit in our lives. • Come, Holy Spirit. Renew my trust in Jesus, and grow Your fruit in my life. Amen.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 6:13 *God … swore by Himself*. Cf Gn 22:16–18, where God gave His absolute guarantee in promising His blessing to Abraham. See note, 2Tm 2:13; see also "for Your name's sake," p 842.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 6:14 *bless … multiply*. See notes, Gn 1:28; 12:2.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 6:16 *swear by something greater*. Something upon which they rely for blessing or security in life. On oaths, see p 7. *an oath is final for confirmation*. The oath verifies the claims of the one taking it (cf Mt 5:33–37 for Jesus' warning regarding oaths).

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 6:17 *the heirs of the promise*. All those who place their faith in Christ are heirs of Abraham, and therefore heirs of the promise made to him (cf Gal 3:29). See "heir," p 1902. *unchangeable character of His purpose*. Unlike human beings, God's purpose does not change due to time or circumstance.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 6:18 *two unchangeable things*. God's purpose and oath (promise). Cf v 17. *it is impossible for God to lie*. God's promise and oath are unbreakable. We can be absolutely certain that God will remain true to His Word. See note, Nu 23:19. *fled for refuge*. God freely gives His protection from evil to all those who call out to Him (cf Ps 34:8; 46:1; 91:2). See "rock," p 843. *the hope set before us*. Hope of sharing with Jesus, by the Holy Spirit's power, the eternal blessings of life with the Father. See p 1903.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 6:19 *anchor of the soul*. As an anchor holds in a storm, so the hope of eternal life gives us stability in the sufferings and temptations of life. *the inner place behind the curtain*. Cf Lv 16:2, which refers to the Most Holy Place in the tabernacle (and later the temple), where the high priest would enter annually on the Day of Atonement. In Christ, we have access to the gracious and sanctifying presence of God. See diagram, p 139.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 6:20 *a forerunner*. Jesus, as both true man and true God, has prepared the path to the Father for us. *the order of Melchizedek*. See note, 5:6.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 6:13–20 God's promise and oath to Abraham is certain. As heirs of Abraham, those who trust in Christ Jesus share in the blessing of life promised to Abraham. They experience unending stability and security through the Son's gracious access to the Father. If we doubt

God's Word, we act as if God is a liar and miss the blessings that flow from a trusting relationship with Him. As we trust God's promises, we see that God tells the truth, and we share in the blessings of eternal life. • Lord God, in Christ You speak true mercy and forgiveness. Therefore, I will trust Your Word and receive what You graciously give. Amen.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 7:1 *king … priest*. Melchizedek, a priest and a king at the same time, foreshadowed the unity of true kingship and priesthood that is fulfilled in Christ. See notes, Gn 14:18; Ps 110:4. *Salem*. Early name for the city of Jebus. See map, p 493. *Most High God*. The one true God, the God of Abraham. See p 1227. *slaughter of the kings*. Cf Gn 14:13–16. *blessed him*. Priestly action of Melchizedek to Abraham. See p 842.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 7:2 *apportioned a tenth part*. Abraham recognized Melchizedek's priestly status by offering him a tithe. See p 1092. *king of righteousness … king of peace*. In Hbr, Melchizedek means "King of Righteousness," and King of Salem means "King of Peace."

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 7:3 The validity of priestly descent had to be established before a priest could take office. The chief OT reference to Melchizedek, Gn 14:18–20, says nothing of his lineage. Melchizedek, whom God appointed as a priest and a king, foreshadows the divine, eternal priesthood and kingship of Christ. On disputes over priestly offices, see "Zadokites," pp 1557–58.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 7:4 *the patriarch*. Founding father of the Hebrews/Israelites and all who are justified by faith. See note, Rm 4:11.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 7:5–6 Levitical priests received the tithe from their fellow Israelites as a matter of law. Melchizedek, who was not an heir of Abraham and had no legal claim to Abraham's possessions, still received the patriarch's tithe, showing his God-given authority as priest and king.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 7:7 *the inferior is blessed by the superior*. The fact that Melchizedek blessed the patriarch Abraham and received his tithe suggests that Melchizedek is in some sense even greater than Abraham.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 7:8 *he lives*. Melchizedek's priestly office is without end (Ps 110:4). This promise is fulfilled in Christ.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 7:9 *Levi*. The father of all Israelite priests paid a tithe to Melchizedek, the greater priest, through his ancestor Abraham.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 7:1–10 Melchizedek, both priest and king, showed the true nature of his authority by receiving tithes from the

patriarch Abraham and blessing him. As both king of righteousness and king of peace, Melchizedek foreshadowed Christ's work of justification. As Abraham gave offerings and respect to Melchizedek, greater respect is due to our High Priest, Christ. He serves without end to lead us into His kingdom. • Lord Jesus, You are my Priest and King. Rule over my life, and grant me righteousness and peace from the Father. Amen.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 7:11 *perfection*. OT sacrifices and the Levitical priesthood foreshadowed what was completed in Christ. The fullness and reality of salvation comes through Christ, the true substance of salvation (Col 2:17). See p 1903.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 7:12 *change in the law*. The law stipulates the rituals and ceremonies of worship, and its fulfillment depended on the Levitical priesthood. Changing the priesthood means changing the nature of worship.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 7:14 *descended from Judah*. Jesus, although a descendant of Abraham and David, was not a descendant of the priestly tribe of Levi.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 7:16 Because Jesus is the eternal Son of God, He needs no priestly descent to serve as the true High Priest of all people.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 7:17 Ps 110:4 prophetically speaks of Christ glorified at the right hand of the Father. See note, Heb 1:3.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 7:19 *the law made nothing perfect*. The law could not bring the fullness of redemption that could only come through the priestly suffering and glory of Jesus. See "perfect," p 1903. *a better hope*. Jesus Christ, the perfect Priest, gives us access to the Father, who declares us innocent. The new covenant fulfills the old covenant and offers a lasting solution to the weaknesses of the Levitical priesthood. *we draw near to God*. We cry, "Lord, have mercy," confident that He will graciously help us in our weakness.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 7:20 *an oath*. Cf 6:13–20.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 7:21 Ps 110:4 again, emphasizing God's promise concerning the unending priesthood of Jesus.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 7:22 *guarantor of a better covenant*. Jesus is our living guarantee that in Him we have the fullness of God's mercy and new life. See note, v 19.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 7:24 *He continues forever*. Since our High Priest, Christ, has passed through death to life, His priesthood and promises will

never end.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 7:25 *draw near to God through Him*. Through trust in Christ, we have access to all the Father's gifts, including the Holy Spirit (Lk 11:11–13). *lives to make intercession*. Jesus presents our needs to the Father, praying on our behalf that we may receive the gift of life to the full (cf Jn 10:10b). Luth: "If here by faith we do not take hold of Christ, who is sitting at the right hand of God, who is our life and our righteousness, and who makes intercession for us miserable sinners before the Father (Heb. 7:25), then we are under the Law and not under grace, and Christ is no longer a Savior. Then He is a lawgiver. Then there can be no salvation left, but sure despair and eternal death will follow…. [But] I am baptized; and through the Gospel I have been called to a fellowship of righteousness and eternal life, to the kingdom of Christ, in which my conscience is at peace, where there is no Law but only the forgiveness of sins, peace, quiet, happiness, salvation, and eternal life" (AE 26:11).

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 7:26–27 Luth: "The cross was the altar on which He, consumed by the fire of the boundless love which burned in His heart, presented the living and holy sacrifice of His body and blood to the Father with fervent intercession, loud cries, and hot, anxious tears (Heb. 5:7)" (AE 13:319).

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 7:26 *holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens*. Jesus is holy because He is sinless, innocent because He never had personal guilt, and unstained because He was a spotless victim for His pure sacrifice for sins. A true human being, He is also truly the Son of God from eternity and so is forever without sin. See "holy," p 7.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 7:27 *once for all*. The sacrifice of Christ is eternally unique, valid, and effective. See "Christ's Death and Atonement," pp 2103–4.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 7:28 God's own promise concerning the unending priestly office of Jesus remains eternally in effect (cf 5:5–10; 7:17, 20–21). Hus: "The apostles did not call themselves most holy popes, heads of the universal church, or universal pontiffs; but, having with them the High Priest even unto the consummation of the age, they called themselves servants of Christ, his companions in tribulation and ministers of the church" (*The Church*, p 122). *made perfect forever*. Jesus' high priestly perfection comes through His once-for-all sacrifice. See note, 2:10.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 7:11–28 Though the Levitical priesthood could not bring the fullness of God's salvation, Jesus, the sinless and perfect Priest, serves eternally as the one who brings our needs to the Father. In Him we have access to God's blessings. His perfect work reminds us that death will always cut short even the best effort that anyone makes to serve God. However, Jesus freely brings us God's eternal blessings through His sacrificial death. • Father, thank You for providing us with a true High Priest, who serves us with purity and perfection. Amen.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON **Ch 8** "We teach that the sacrifice of Christ dying on the cross has been enough for the sins of the whole world. There is no need for other sacrifices, as though Christ's sacrifice were not enough for our sins. So people are justified not because of any other sacrifices, but because of this one sacrifice of Christ, if they believe that they have been redeemed by this sacrifice. So they are called priests, not in order to make any sacrifices for the people as in the Law, that by these they may merit forgiveness of sins for the people. Rather, they are called to teach the Gospel and administer the Sacraments to the people. Nor do we have another priesthood like the Levitical, as the Epistle to the Hebrews teaches well enough" (Ap XIII 8–10).

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 8:1 *seated at the right hand*. Christ ascended to reign and exercises full divine power according to His human nature. *throne*. See note, Ezk 1:28; see also pp 1565–66. *the Majesty*. God the Father. *heaven*. The dwelling of God; not the sky or a merely physical location (cf Eph 4:10).

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 8:2 *minister*. Gk *leitourgos*, an official assistant or minister. Here, one who performs a priestly ministry. *in the holy places*. Or, "of the holy things." *the true tent*. Heaven, which Christ entered after He rose from the dead.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 8:3 Cf Lv 9:6–7, 22. Just as the OT high priests offered animal sacrifices to God, Christ fulfilled His priestly ministry by offering His body on the cross. He then distributes the benefits of His sacrifice and intercedes for us. See pp 170–71.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 8:4 *He would not be a priest*. Because He was not from the priestly tribe of Levi.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 8:5 *a copy and shadow*. OT tabernacle foreshadowed Christ's person and work. See notes, 10:1; Col 2:17. *heavenly things*. Chrys: "What are the heavenly things he speaks of here? The

spiritual things. For although they are done on earth, yet nevertheless they are worthy of the Heavens. For when our Lord Jesus Christ lies slain [as a sacrifice (cf 10:12)], when the Spirit is with us, when He who sits on the right hand of the Father is here, when sons are made by the Washing … how can all these be other than 'heavenly things'?" (*NPNF* 1 14:434).

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 8:6 *more excellent … the covenant He mediates is better*. See note, 7:22; cf 9:15. *covenant*. See p 127. *better promises*. Forgiveness of sins and eternal life for all who repent and believe in Christ (cf vv 8–12).

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 8:7 The old covenant's limitations anticipated perfection in Christ's work.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 8:8 *finds fault*. See notes, vv 7, 13. *establish a new covenant*. The promise of the Gospel had been with humanity since Gn 3. At the cross, it would be put into effect. See notes, Heb 8:6, 9–13.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 8:9 The old covenant, despite being given in the miraculous time of the exodus, was not kept by Israel.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 8:10 *laws into their minds … hearts*. Renewal or sanctification. Luth: "To be in the mind means to be understood; to be in the heart means to be loved" (AE 29:198). *I will be their God*. The adoption of sinful humans to be God's people. Luth: "This light of understanding in the mind, I say, and this flame in the heart is the law of faith, the new law, the law of Christ, the law of the Spirit, the law of grace. It justifies, fulfills everything, and crucifies the lusts of the flesh. Thus St. Augustine says beautifully on this passage: 'In a sense the man who with a love of righteousness lives righteously lives the Law itself' " (AE 27:234).

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 8:11 *they shall all know Me*. The saving knowledge of God and the Spirit's gifts will become much clearer. Many more nations will know God. On the Last Day, all people will see the Lord, some with joy, but others with weeping (1Co 13:12; Mt 13:41–42).

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 8:12 *For I will be merciful*. People will grow in knowledge of God to receive His mercy for Christ's sake. See "mercy," p 1903.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 8:13 *makes the first one obsolete*. The first covenant is a shadow of the second and fades in the brightness of Christ's new work. See note, v 5.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON **Ch 8** The old covenant, because it could not permanently address the problem of sin, would "vanish away." As Priest,

Christ came to establish an everlasting covenant and atonement for our sins. • O merciful God, forgive us our sins for the sake of Jesus' sacrifice. Amen.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 9:1 *regulations for worship*. The Levitical, ceremonial law (cf Lv 1–7). On the character of worship in the NT, consider the background provided from the Psalms (pp 959, 993), synagogue practices (see notes, Lk 4:16–21), apostolic adaptation of synagogue practices (see notes, 1Co 14:1, 16–17, 23), and descriptions of Christian gatherings (e.g., see note, Ac 20:7). *earthly place of holiness*. The tabernacle and, later, the temple. See diagram, p 139.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 9:2 *the Holy Place*. First section of the tabernacle, where the priests carried out the daily liturgy. Chrys: "The holy place then is a symbol of the former [OT] period (for there all things are done by means of sacrifices); but the Holy of Holies [is a symbol] of this [NT period] that is now present. And by the Holy of Holies he means Heaven" (*NPNF* 1 14:438). See note, v 9.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 9:3 *the Most Holy Place*. Or, "the Holy of Holies." Inner section of the tabernacle into which no one but the high priest could enter. Cf Lv 16:2–3.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 9:4 *golden altar of incense*. Located near the Most Holy Place (Ex 40:26–27).
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 9:5 *cherubim*. See note, Ezk 10:1. *of glory*. God spoke from this majesty, which appeared between the two cherubim (Nu 7:89). *mercy seat*. Gk *hilasterion*, "place of atonement," the golden lid on the ark of the covenant. It was the focus of the ritual for the OT Day of Atonement (Lv 16). See diagram, p 203.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 9:7 *unintentional sins*. Though the Day of Atonement was for all sins (cf Lv 16:16, 30), the sinful ignorance of priests and people is stressed here (cf Rm 10:3). See pp 170–71.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 9:8 *the Holy Spirit indicates*. The Holy Spirit spoke through Moses and gave all the OT rituals a divinely intended meaning. *not yet opened*. The way to heaven, symbolized by the temple's Most Holy Place, was not fully revealed until Christ appeared. See notes, Mk 15:38; Lk 23:45; Rm 3:21, 25.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 9:9 *symbolic for the present age*. The first section of the temple represented the OT sacrificial system and earth. *cannot perfect the conscience*. The sacrifices could not provide lasting atonement

for the people, but were effective only as they pointed to Christ's sacrifice. See "perfect," p 1903.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 9:10 *time of reformation*. Institution of Christ's new covenant; change from OT ceremonies to NT sacramental life.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 9:1–10 The Holy Place of the tabernacle was a picture of the old covenant and the old sacrificial system. But the Most Holy Place was a picture of heaven and of Christ's new covenant. OT services, therefore, pointed ahead to Christ, while NT services celebrate His work, distribute His benefits, and anticipate His return. Christ is the true Priest who sacrificed Himself to reconcile us to the Father. • O Lord, send us Your Holy Spirit and increase reverence in us toward Your Word and service. Amen.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 9:11 *the good things that have come*. These good things (redemption, salvation, forgiveness) have come to believers in the Word and Sacraments and will be fully bestowed in the future resurrection (cf 2Co 1:10). *more perfect tent*. Heaven and the new covenant that Christ brings (cf 10:20).

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 9:12 *entered once … by means of His own blood*. Christ entered heaven to present His sacrificed blood to the Father. *eternal redemption*. With His sacrifice, He freed us from our imprisonment. Because His sacrifice is eternal, it needs no repetition like the OT sacrifices. Luth: "With His own blood, to be sure, He redeemed and sanctified all men just once. But because we are not yet perfectly pure but remnants of sin still cling to our flesh and the flesh wars against the spirit, therefore He comes spiritually every day; day by day He completes the time set by the Father more and more, abrogating and abolishing the Law" (AE 26:360).

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 9:13 *sprinkling of defiled persons … ashes*. These sacrifices showed that cleansing was necessary in God's sight (cf Nu 19).

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 9:14 *how much more*. Infinitely more, because Christ is not only man, but is also the infinite God. *blood … purify*. Christ's human blood does a divine work, purifying us from sin; this results in a joyful conscience. *through the eternal Spirit offered Himself*. Sacrificed Himself in the power of the Holy Spirit (Jn 3:34; Ac 10:38). *without blemish*. Without sin. See note, Lv 1:3. *dead works*. See note, 6:1.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 9:15 *mediator*. Chrys: "The Son became Mediator between the Father and us. The Father willed not to leave us this inheritance, but was enraged against us … ; [the Son] accordingly became

Mediator between us and Him, and prevailed with Him" (*NPNF* 1 14:443). See note, 1Tm 2:5. *called*. Summoned to salvation by the preaching of the Gospel. See p 1901; see also SC, Third Article, p xxxvii. *a death … redeems them*. Christ's death was the just punishment for our sins, which He took upon Himself to buy back the whole human race from God's wrath. See "redemption," p 1904.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 9:16–17 Christ's death put His last will and testament into effect.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 9:16 *will*. Gk *diatheke*, translated elsewhere as "covenant." See p 127. A will, or testament, is a specific kind of covenant, which promises an inheritance to others upon the writer's death.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 9:18 *not … without blood*. The new covenant would require Christ's death. See p 136.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 9:20 With these words, God through Moses confirmed the old covenant through blood. Christ used similar words to give us His blood of the new covenant in the Holy Supper (1Co 11:25).

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 9:21 *used in worship*. Gk *leitourgias*, "of the liturgy or service." The holy vestments (Ex 29:21), etc. All the vessels of the OT tabernacle assisted with blood sacrifice and received their holiness from God through that sacrifice.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 9:22 *almost everything is purified with blood*. Even where blood was not applied to the objects being purified, sacrifice often was part of the purification (cf Nu 19:4). *without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins*. Cf Heb 9:7, 18. Christ's bloodshed and death were the actual work of reconciliation. Christ "was crucified, died, and was buried. He did this to reconcile the Father to us" (AC III 2–3).

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 9:23 *copies of the heavenly things*. The tabernacle seen by Moses was the original; the tabernacle made by the Israelites was a copy. *heavenly things*. Moses saw these (Ex 25:40); Christ opens these heavenly realms to us.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 9:24 *copies*. Gk *antitypa*, "antitypes, counterparts," things patterned off an original (Gk *typos*). See "type," p 1904. *into heaven*. Christ ascended, but neither God nor Christ according to His humanity is limited to "heaven." Cf Eph 4:10; see FC SD VIII 27–28. *in the presence of God*. God sees believers through Christ. See "presence," p 843.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 9:25 Christ did not enter heaven to sacrifice for us daily but to pray for us.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 9:26 *once for all*. Christ's sacrifice is perfect and finished. See note, Jn 19:30. It is repeated neither in the Holy Supper nor in the suffering of believers. Instead, in the Lord's Supper we eat and drink His body and blood, already sacrificed once, and we receive the benefits of His sacrifice (forgiveness, life, and salvation). Therefore, the Spirit conforms our lives to His life so that we offer to Him sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving. See note, Heb 13:15. Luth: "That, I say, is our gospel, that Christ has made us righteous and holy through that sacrifice and has redeemed us from sin, death, and the devil and has brought us into his heavenly kingdom. We have to grasp this and hold it fast through faith alone…. All our own works undertaken to expiate sin and escape from death are necessarily blasphemous. They deny God and insult the sacrifice that Christ has made and disgrace his blood, because they try thereby to do what only Christ's blood can do" (AE 36:313). *end of the ages*. Christ's sacrifice was the fulfillment of all past ages, and it ushered in the last age of the world in which we now live. See note, 1:2; see also p 2199.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 9:27 *die once*. See p 1750. *after that comes judgment*. Because all humans die once, Christ's sacrifice cannot be repeated. Also, one cannot hope for a second life by which he might appease God through his own actions.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 9:28 *Christ … will appear a second time*. For the last judgment. See notes, 2Tm 4:1; Ti 2:13. *not to deal with sin*. He comes without our sins (Is 53:6), which He bore as a heavy load (Jn 1:29) when the Father made Him to be sin for us (2Co 5:21). Also, He comes not in the likeness of sinful flesh (Rm 8:3), but in the majesty of His transfigured body (Mt 24:30; Php 3:21).

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 9:11–28 Christ will come from His heavenly sanctuary and take us to Himself with joy. Our greatest joy should be Jesus and His priestly ministry, for He delighted in us, making us the heirs of His last will and testament. • Lord Jesus, by Your blood there is forgiveness of sins. Continue to purify me that I might honor You. Amen.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 10:1–18 "There are two kinds of sacrifice and no more. One is the *atoning sacrifice*, that is, a work that makes satisfaction for guilt and punishment. It reconciles God, or reconciles His wrath and merits the forgiveness of sins for others. The other kind is the *eucharistic*

[thankful] *sacrifice*, which does not merit the forgiveness of sins or reconciliation. It is practiced by those who have been reconciled, so that we may give thanks or return gratitude for the forgiveness of sins" (Ap XXIV 19, emphasis added).

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 10:1 *shadow … true form*. Sacrifices foreshadowed Christ's person and work. See notes, 8:5; Col 2:17. *make perfect*. Purify from sins and sanctify. See note, Heb 2:10.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 10:2 Gk grammar implies a yes answer to the question. The sacrifices would have ceased.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 10:3 The annual Day of Atonement reminded Israel that they needed cleansing from sin.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 10:4 Cf Lv 17:11. "In fact there has been only one atoning sacrifice in the world, namely, Christ's death" (Ap XXIV 22). Through the OT sacrifices, God forgave sins on the basis of Christ's sacrifice.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 10:5–18 Using the OT, the writer displays the testimony of the Son (v 5) and the Spirit (v 15) about the institution of the new covenant prepared by the heavenly Father ("You," vv 5–6). Note that in vv 15–17, the Holy Spirit is equated with "the Lord" (Hbr *Yahweh*; see p 1227).

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 10:5–7 Quotation from LXX version of Ps 40:6–8.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 10:5–6 *He said*. The Spirit of Christ inspired the psalmist. If Jesus also spoke these words during His earthly ministry, the Gospels have not recorded it. Cf Jn 20:30–31; 21:25. *not desired … taken no pleasure*. Only through faith in Christ were these sacrifices pleasing to God. *body have You prepared*. Wording from the LXX, which seeks to clarify the difficult Hbr expression "ears You have dug out [prepared] for me," which emphasizes that God helps a person hear His Word. It is possible that the LXX manuscripts with "body" were taking "ears" to represent the whole person (a synecdoche). In that case, a person would commit himself to obeying God after hearing His Word. However, the similarity of the Gk letters for "ears" and "body" when tightly written may also have caused the variant.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 10:7 *to do Your will*. To fulfill the Law, to satisfy God's justice, and to accomplish the redemption of the human race. See note, Mt 26:39.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 10:9 *He does away with the first*. The Lord, speaking through the psalmist, fulfills and ends the old sacrifices that He Himself set up. This shows they were temporary and that, with His own sacrifice, Christ would set up the new covenant.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 10:10 *will*. Gk *thelema*, "intention." Not to be confused with "testament, covenant" as described in 9:16 (see note there). God's gracious will is expressed in the new testament as a "will," or covenant. *sanctified*. Sins have been taken away. See p 1904. "Christ's passion was an offering and satisfaction, not only for original guilt, but also for all other sins" (AC XXV 25).
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 10:12 *He sat down at the right hand of God*. Christ sits, showing that His atoning sacrifice is finished. However, He continues to pray for us as our own High Priest. See note, 8:1.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 10:13 *footstool*. See note, Ps 110:1.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 10:14 *perfected … sanctified*. See "holy," p 7. Luth: "Everything is forgiven through grace, but not everything is yet healed through the gift. The gift is poured in, the leaven is added, and it works to remove the sin which has already been forgiven to the person, and to drive out the evil guest, whom it has permission to drive out. Meanwhile, as this is happening, it is called sin and in its nature truly is sin, but now it is sin without wrath" (StL 18:1165). Luth: "Of this sacrifice and offering he has instituted a perpetual remembrance in that he intends to have it proclaimed in the sacrament of the altar and thereby have faith in it strengthened" (AE 40:14).
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 10:15 See notes, 2:4; 2Pt 1:21.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 10:16 See note, 8:10.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 10:18 No other offering is needed because Christ's perfect sacrifice brings perfect forgiveness.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 10:1–18 Christ offered up only one sacrifice for the sins of the world—Himself. He "perfects" or completes us by applying the benefits of His sacrifice to us in Holy Baptism and in His Holy Supper. Whenever you study the Word or hear it at church, expect the Lord to change your life and strengthen your faith, for He desires to change your heart and mind by grace. • Merciful God, for Jesus' sake forgive my sins. Grant me the Holy Spirit, that I may fulfill Your will. Amen.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 10:19–12:29 Urgent exhortation warning against apostasy.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 10:19 *brothers*. See p 1901. *confidence*. Gk *parresia*, "boldness to say all things." *enter the holy places*. Into heaven to God, our heavenly Father (cf 9:12). See note, 6:19.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 10:20 *new and living way*. See note, 9:8. *the curtain, that is, through His flesh*. As the high priest passed through the curtain to enter the Most Holy Place, we "enter" heaven only through Christ's flesh. Christ's body and soul were divided in death as the curtain of the temple was torn (Mt 27:51). Just as the curtain was torn open, our way into heaven through Christ is now open. Luth: "He first sets forth the example of Christ, our Leader, who fights in the forefront. Although under no compulsion, yet for the purpose of buoying up our confidence He crossed over first of all, and He smooths the exceedingly rough road. Then the apostle points out that Christ not only gave an example by crossing over, but that He also holds out His hand to those who follow" (AE 29:226).
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 10:21 *the house of God*. The Church (cf 3:6).
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 10:22–24 Due to Christ's sacrifice, God gives us faith (v 22), hope (v 23), and love (v 24). Cf 1Co 13:13.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 10:22 *a true heart*. An honest, believing heart. Cf 4:16. *full assurance*. Cf Mk 9:24. *sprinkled clean from an evil conscience*. Proclamation of Christ's cleansing sacrifice relieves and strengthens our conscience so that we see ourselves and the certainty of God's mercy clearly. Cf 1Pt 1:18–19; see notes, Ezk 36:22–38; 36:25. "Where the heart is not in a right relationship with God, or cannot take such confidence, it will not dare to pray anymore. Such a confident and joyful heart can spring from nothing else than the certain knowledge of the forgiveness of sin" (LC III 92). *our bodies washed with pure water*. By Baptism (Eph 5:26; Ti 3:5). See p 1369. Luth: "This old man consists of error, concupiscence, wrath, fear, apprehension, despair, evil conscience, horror of death, etc. Those are characteristics of the old, carnal man. They diminish, however, in the new man, but they are not extinguished until he himself is extinguished by death…. Rather the process of removal has begun, and as a person increases in spiritual health these evils are removed. This spiritual health is nothing more than faith in or love in Christ" (AE 31:124).
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 10:23 *the confession of our hope*. Cf 3:1, 14. Encouraging his hearers to stand firmly, confessing Christ.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 10:24–25 "It is not enough to teach and instruct alone. There is also need for daily encouragement…. So here also there is need for us to continue to preach so that people may not become weary and disgusted. For we know and feel how the devil always opposes this and every Christian exercise. He drives and deters people from them as much as he can" (LC V 44).

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 10:25 *neglecting to meet together*. God requires Christians to gather to hear His Word preached, receive the Sacraments, pray, sing, and give thanks (cf Rm 10:14; Lk 22:19–20; Ac 2:38; Rm 15:30; Ps 30:4). Those who despise the Church easily fall from the faith. *the Day drawing near*. When Christ will return for judgment. Cf Heb 10:37; Mt 25:31–32.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 10:26–27 Describes the sin against the Holy Spirit, a challenging issue of interpretation. See notes, 6:4–6; 12:17; Mk 3:29–30; cf Mt 12:31–32. Also refer to the examples of Saul and David, both of whom fell into manifest sin and would face God's rebuke and wrath. Saul did not repent but turned away from the Lord (1Sm 15:10–11). David repented when confronted with his sin (2Sm 12:13).

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 10:26 *sinning deliberately*. Persistently doing what we know is wrong. *no longer remains a sacrifice for sins*. See notes, 6:4–6. Chrys: "He did not say, no more is there repentance, or no more is there remission, but 'no more' is there a 'sacrifice,' that is, there is no more a second Cross" (*NPNF* 1 14:457). There is no salvation apart from Christ's sacrifice.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 10:28 *has set aside the law*. Treated the Law as invalid or spurned it. *dies without mercy*. Without hope for pardon. *two or three witnesses*. See notes, Dt 17:6; Mt 18:16.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 10:29 *profaned the blood of the covenant*. Considering Christ's blood to be common and so despising Christ's sacrifice. Cf Mt 26:28. *outraged the Spirit of grace?* "God will receive into grace all who repent and believe in Christ." But "He also will punish those who willfully … despise God's Spirit…. They will be hardened, blinded, and eternally condemned if they persist in such things" (FC SD XI 83).

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 10:32 *enlightened*. Given the Holy Spirit, esp through conversion and Baptism. See note, 6:4; see also FC Ep II 13.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 10:33 *publicly exposed*. Cf Ac 4; 8:1–3; 12:1–5; 14:19; 16:16–24; 19:21–41; 21:27–28:31. *reproach*. Verbal abuse.

affliction. Probably physical abuse.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 10:34 *a better possession*. Kingdom of heaven. Cf 12:28; see "portion," p 7.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 10:35 *confidence*. See note, v 19. *great reward*. Luth: "They already have the kingdom of heaven, and yet … they will have it even more gloriously when it is revealed" (AE 21:292).
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 10:36 *done the will of God*. Confessing the Gospel through a godly life and a steadfast faith.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 10:37–38 Combines and interprets the LXX versions of Is 26:20 and Hab 2:3.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 10:38 *live by faith*. See notes, Hab 2:4; Rm 1:17.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 10:19–39 All Christians need patience through many sorrows. God calls us to do His will, bearing our crosses patiently, and He equips us with His Word and Spirit. He has promised eternal salvation to all who steadfastly confess Christ. • Lord Jesus, strengthen me to confess You without wavering. When I fall, grant me a repentant heart. Amen.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 11:1 *faith*. "Faith is not only knowledge in the intellect, but also confidence in the will" (Ap V 183). *assurance*. Or, "confidence." Gk term describes something substantive. Bern: "The substance, he says, of things hoped for, not a fantasy of empty conjectures. You hear, that is a substance; and therefore it is not allowed you in our faith, to suppose or oppose at your pleasure, nor to wander hither and thither amongst empty opinions, through devious errors. Under the name of substance something certain and fixed is put before you. You are enclosed in known bounds, shut in within fixed limits. For faith is not an opinion but a certitude" (*SLSB*, pp 272–73). *hoped for*. See p 1903. "If anyone wants a distinction between faith and hope, we say that the object of hope is properly a future event, but that faith is concerned with future and present things. Faith receives the forgiveness of sins offered in the promise in the present" (Ap V 191). Luth: "One of the noblest and most precious virtues of faith is to close one's eyes to this, ingenuously to desist from exploring the why and the wherefore, and cheerfully to leave everything to God. Faith does not insist on knowing the reason for God's actions, but it still regards God as the greatest goodness and mercy. Faith holds to that against and beyond all reason, sense, and experience, when everything appears to be wrath and injustice" (AE 43:52).

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 11:2 Scripture testifies that the OT saints are righteous and pleasing to God.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 11:3 *created by the Word of God*. Emphasizes that God spoke creation into existence. See note, Gn 1:3; cf Jn 1:1–4. *what is seen was not made out of things that are visible*. Just as God's Word created real, visible things from nothing, so our faith is certain, although it does not yet see the realities it confesses. See note, Gn 1:1.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 11:4 *more acceptable sacrifice*. See note, v 6. "In this life the good works of believers are imperfect and impure because of sin in the flesh, nevertheless they are acceptable and well pleasing to God. However, the Law does not teach how and why the good works of believers are acceptable. It demands a completely perfect, pure obedience if it is to please God. But the Gospel teaches that our spiritual offerings are acceptable to God through faith for Christ's sake" (FC SD VII 22). *commended as righteous*. God accepts both the sacrifice and the sacrificer. See "righteous," p 843. *he still speaks*. Abel's example, recorded in Scripture, still speaks to us. See note, 12:1.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 11:5 *pleased God*. See note, v 6.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 11:6 *without faith it is impossible to please Him*. "Only justified people, who are led by the Spirit of Christ, can do good works. Without faith and Christ as Mediator, good works do not please" (Ap V 251). *He exists … He rewards*. Saving faith trusts both in God's existence and in His mercy for Christ's sake. Luth: "It is evident that in theology the work does not amount to anything without faith, but that faith must precede before you can do works…. The sacrifice of Abel was better because he believed. But because Cain was an ungodly man and a hypocrite, he performed a work that was moral, or rather one that was reasonable, by which he sought to please God. Therefore the work of Cain was hypocritical and faithless; in it there was no faith in grace but only a presumption about his own righteousness" (AE 26:264). See note, Gn 4:6. *rewards*. See note, Mt 5:12.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 11:7 *in reverent fear*. More afraid of disobeying God than of losing other people's favor. See p 1001. *condemned the world*. Through the ark, he showed that God's threat of destruction was real. See note, 1Pt 3:20.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 11:10 *the city*. The heavenly Jerusalem (cf Gal 4:26). See "Zion," p 844.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 11:11 *she considered Him faithful*. Chrys: "While her laughter indeed was from unbelief, her fear [was] from Faith…. When unbelief had been cleared out, Faith came in its place" (*NPNF* 1 14:471).
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 11:13 *not having received the things promised*. See note, vv 39–40.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 11:14 *homeland*. Lit, "fatherland," the country of our heavenly Father.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 11:18 God promised descendants through Isaac.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 11:19 *he did receive him back*. Chrys: "By means of the ram [Abraham] received him again, having slain it in his stead. But these things were types: for here it is the Son of God who is slain" (*NPNF* 1 14:478).
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 11:23 *not afraid of the king's edict*. They feared God more than the evil king. Cf Ex 1:17, 21.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 11:26 *reproach of Christ*. The Israelites suffered in Egypt because they hoped in the Messiah.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 11:27 *not being afraid*. Though at first afraid (Ex 2:14), Moses fled in faith from Egypt, intending to return when the time was right.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 11:28 *Passover*. Gk *pascha*. Cf 1Co 5:7; see pp 200–201. *sprinkled*. Or, "poured." *Destroyer of the firstborn*. See note, Ex 12:23.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 11:31 *Rahab the prostitute*. God will judge the sexually immoral (13:4), yet God changed Rahab through repentance, faith, and action (see note, Jsh 2:9; cf Mk 1:15).
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 11:32 *say?* Indicates that Hebrews was likely preached as a sermon. See "Anonymous," p 2103. *time would fail me*. The many others who could be mentioned show that those already listed are esp important.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 11:35 *Some were tortured*. May refer to 2Macc 6:18–7:42, where Eleazar, his six brothers, and his mother refuse to partake in pagan sacrifices. *release*. From prison and torture, if they would deny the faith. *rise again*. They retained their faith and eternal life despite torture.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 11:37 *sawn in two*. Some ancient writers say Isaiah suffered this. See *ANF* 1:259; 3:716.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 11:38 *the world was not worthy*. The world despised God's saints, even though they were truly worthy of praise. Only

God counts them worthy through faith to receive His promises. *dens and caves*. Cf 1Macc 2:29–41.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 11:39–40 *did not receive what was promised*. They did not see and hear the promised Messiah. *made perfect*. The full resurrection, which will come for the OT saints and for us on the Last Day.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON **Ch 11** Faith trusts even without sight what God has set forth in His Word. True faith is active in love and is steadfast under persecution. By His resurrection, Christ conquered death and now provides His Holy Spirit to strengthen us. • "Lord, be our light when worldly darkness veils us; Lord, be our shield when earthly armor fails us; And in the day when hell itself assails us, Grant us Your peace, Lord." Amen. (*LSB* 659:3)

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 12:1 *cloud of witnesses*. The many saints (ch 11) show that we are not alone in the struggle to confess Christ. Like a cloud, the saints' examples are visible, though we cannot touch those who went before us. Cf Mt 17:1–5. *witnesses*. Gk *martys*, from which "martyr" comes. God commended those who bore witness to their faith, and they are examples of right faith and good works. *lay aside every weight*. Believers here still have sin clinging closely. Though justified, we are also sinners until we reach heaven. *let us run*. The Christian life, as a long-distance race, demands staying on the path and finishing. Cf 2Tm 4:7. Luth: "Therefore sin remains in the spiritual man for the exercise of grace, for the humbling of pride, for the repression of presumptuousness…. Only to those who manfully struggle and fight against their faults, invoking the grace of God, does God not impute sin. Therefore he who comes to confession should not think that he is laying down his burden so that he may lead a quiet life, but he should know that by putting down his burden he fights as a soldier of God and thus takes on another burden for God in opposition to the devil and to his own personal faults" (AE 25:339).

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 12:2 *Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith*. Jesus opened the way to salvation, and His new covenant will never be superseded. He creates our faith through the Gospel and Sacraments, and His Spirit brings us to the consummation of our salvation. See notes, 2:10; Eph 2:8–9. *for the joy*. The joy of bringing others to heavenly glory by way of the cross. *despising the shame*. Christ was not afraid to redeem us, despite the humiliation He experienced.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 12:1–2 The Christian life is an endurance race, run with remembrance of the saints who have already finished. But most of all, we look to Jesus and His cross. In Him, our race is already won. • Lord Jesus, save me from my sin, which clings so closely, and give me endurance to do Your will. Amen.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 12:3 *sinners*. Leaders and crowds in Jerusalem who opposed Jesus.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 12:4 *not … shedding your blood*. Though they had suffered (10:33), they had not yet died for confessing Christ. This may refer to persecution under Emperor Nero. See "Anonymous," p 2103.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 12:5–6 See notes, Pr 3:11–12. Luth: "If so many judgments, pains, deaths, martyrdoms, crosses, swords, fires, and beasts, with which the saints are chastised, are fatherly rods and loving chastisements, what will be the wrath of the Judge over the ungodly? … And if His judgment begins at the house of God, what will be the end of those who do not believe the Gospel?" (AE 11:467–68).
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 12:7 Suffering actually proves their discipleship. See note, 2:10.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 12:8 *illegitimate children*. Born out of wedlock or to a slave. Cf Gal 4:21–31.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 12:9 *Father of spirits*. God is a Father to the souls of those who are baptized (Rm 8:15; 1Co 12:13). See note, Jn 3:5; cf Nu 27:16; Jn 3:6; Rv 22:6.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 12:10 *He disciplines us for our good*. Luth: "It seems to us as though we were forsaken by God on the cross, but precisely then we are loved and cared for most" (AE 12:296). Cf Rm 8:28. *share His holiness*. Through hardship, the Holy Spirit quenches lust and kills the flesh, to prepare us for eternal life (Rm 8:18–27). Cf Heb 12:14; 1Pt 4:1–2; see SC, Baptism, Part 4, p xl.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 12:11 *the peaceful fruit of righteousness*. A peaceful conscience and righteous heart.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 12:13 *not be put out of joint*. Just as a sprained ankle must be protected, discouraged Christians must be cared for and protected by their fellow believers.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 12:14 *Strive for peace*. Do not wait for peace. Actively seek it, without compromising confession of the truth (cf Zec 8:16–19). *holiness*. Through Christ's sacrifice, Christians are already

considered "holy" in God's sight (Heb 3:1). Just as Christians will actually be holy in heaven, they should strive to become holy on earth. See "holy," p 1902. *see the Lord*. Seeing God face-to-face and enjoying His gracious presence (1Co 13:12; 1Jn 3:2–3; cf 1Co 6:9–11).

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 12:15 *fails to obtain the grace of God*. By delaying repentance. Cf Mt 25:1–13. *root of bitterness*. Someone who brings forth the evil fruit of false doctrine or of godless living.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 12:16 *sexually immoral*. Or, "a fornicator." See notes, Gn 26:35; 27:46; 1Co 6:9–10. *like Esau, who sold his birthright*. He was "unholy" or profane, cut off from divine things.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 12:17 *blessing*. See p 842. *no chance to repent*. Luth: "It is clear how the passage in Heb. 12:16–17 is to be understood…. God, who does not deceive or lie, has offered His mercy to all men who truly repent; and repentance for sin always finds room before God…. But there is another repentance that is … false … namely, when I repent in such a way that I am not ashamed of having offended God but am ashamed because I have done harm to myself" (AE 5:151–52).

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 12:3–17 God sees you as holy through Christ's sacrifice and disciplines you to struggle against sin. The unpleasant discipline shows that the Lord loves you as a true child. Put your faith into practice by encouraging others and by doing works of service. The Lord is ever serving you, granting repentance, taking away your sins, and equipping you for a godly life. • Heavenly Father, share with me Your holiness, and let me see You face-to-face eternally. Amen.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 12:18–21 Describes the institution of old covenant services on Mount Sinai. This is contrasted with the institution of new covenant worship on Mount Zion (vv 22–24). Cf Lk 22:20.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 12:18 *what may be touched*. The earthly Mount Sinai.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 12:19 *voice*. God proclaiming His Law. Cf Ex 19:5. *no further messages*. Unable to bear God's messages directly, they wanted Moses to be their mediator.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 12:20 The penalty for profaning God's holiness was death, the penalty coming to them if they disobeyed God's Law. See note, Rm 6:23.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 12:21 *I tremble with fear*. Not a direct quote from the Books of Moses, but the thought can be deduced from Ex 19:19; Dt

9:19.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 12:22–24 Describes unseen riches in Christ viewed by faith.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 12:22 *Zion*. The Church, where God is graciously present in Gospel and Sacraments. Cf Gal 4:21–31; Ps 48; see p 844. *heavenly Jerusalem*. Both the Church Militant on earth and the Church Triumphant in heaven. *festal gathering*. Term used occasionally for Israel's festivals.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 12:23 *assembly*. Or, "congregation" (the Church). See "great congregation," p 842. *firstborn*. Because they are adopted into Christ (Col 1:18; cf Heb 11:28) and receive a special inheritance. *spirits of the righteous made perfect*. See note, 10:14. Souls of departed Christians are with Christ in heaven. Although believers here do not communicate with the blessed dead (cf Is 63:16), the Church Militant on earth is bound together with the Church Triumphant in heaven as one Body of Christ (Rm 12:5).
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 12:24 *Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant*. Jesus is present for us esp through His body and blood (cf Lk 22:20). *the sprinkled blood*. The two other NT passages that speak of blood and the new covenant refer clearly to the Lord's Supper (Lk 22:20; 1Co 11:25). Cf Heb 10:25; 12:28; 13:9–16. *a better word than the blood of Abel*. "Abel's blood for vengeance Pleaded to the skies; But the blood of Jesus For our pardon cries" (*LSB* 433:4).
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 12:25 *Him who is speaking*. Christ, who speaks through the Gospel and through the preaching of His servants. *Him who warned them on earth*. The Son of God, who revealed the Law on Mount Sinai and spoke to Israel through Moses. *Him who warns from heaven*. Christ, the Word, who revealed the Gospel on Mount Zion and still speaks through the apostles and prophets (Lk 10:16).
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 12:26 *At that time*. When the Law was first given. *shook the earth*. Earthquake.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 12:27 *things that have been made*. The created world, set to pass away. *things that cannot be shaken may remain*. God Himself, His gifts, and the people He has joined to Himself by grace.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 12:28 *a kingdom that cannot be shaken*. The kingdom of heaven. See pp 1565–66. *offer to God acceptable worship*. Possible only through grace in Christ, directed only to the triune God, and

conducted with respectful wonder. On NT worship practices, see note, 9:1. *with reverence and awe*. Not frivolous, nonchalant, or trivial. God's presence calls for serious hearing, genuine repentance, and extraordinary joy. Cf Ps 2:12.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 12:29 *our God is a consuming fire*. God destroys whatever is useless and contrary to Himself. Cf 10:27.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 12:18–29 The Son of God's speaking and presence are the center of worship. When God the Son spoke the Law, His people were terrified. But His sprinkled blood speaks better things to us: forgiveness, life, and salvation. • Lord Jesus Christ, sprinkle us with Your blood and fill us with Your Spirit, that through You we may offer acceptable worship to the Father. Amen.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 13:2 On importance of hospitality, see notes, Gn 18:4; Rm 12:13.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 13:3 *those who are in prison*. Not criminals but believers suffering persecution, possibly under Emperor Nero. See "Anonymous," p 2103. *mistreated*. Torture or martyrdom (cf 11:35–38).

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 13:4 *let the marriage bed be undefiled*. Not contaminated by sexual immorality. Cf Lv 18. See also pp 2120–21. *God will judge*. He will punish with bodily afflictions, heartbreak, and if they do not repent, eternal condemnation. *sexually immoral*. See note, 12:16.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 13:7 *leaders*. Office distinct from "the saints" (v 24). Its duty was to speak God's Word (v 7) and refute error (cf v 9). See note, v 17. Perhaps former elders or pastors, including some already put to death for their Christian confession. *the outcome*. Confessing Christ to the end, they died trusting in Him. *imitate*. See note, Php 4:9; cf 1Th 1:6.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 13:8 *the same*. According to His eternal divinity, He is unchangeable (Mal 3:6). His covenant of grace also does not change. Cf Jn 1:1.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 13:9 *strange teachings*. New teachings, not supported by Scripture. *not by foods*. Either dietary rules (see note, Col 2:16) or sacrificial meals (see notes, 1Co 10:25–29a). OT sacrificial meals strengthened faith in the coming Messiah. But with Christ's coming, these meals are no longer needed.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 13:10 *altar*. Table of the Lord (1Co 10:21), from which the faithful receive the Lord's body and blood. See note, 9:26. *serve the tent*. Those who still seek cleansing and forgiveness through the

OT rituals performed at the temple. "Tent" is used to describe the impermanent nature of their devotion. The OT could not last. *no right to eat*. Distinguishes those who may commune from those who may not. The distinction depends on the faith they confess in their speech and actions. "The priest stands daily at the altar, inviting some to the Communion and keeping back others" (AC XXIV 36). See note, 1Co 11:28; see also p 1965.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 13:13 *go to Him outside*. Join Him in being rejected by unbelievers. *outside the camp*. Phrase used in Lv, Ex, and Nu to describe where unholy things such as refuse should be discarded. Here used ironically to describe abuse and rejection of Jesus by the Jerusalem authorities.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 13:14 *the city that is to come*. The new Jerusalem, the kingdom of heaven. Cf Gal 4:26; Rv 21:2. Luth: "God permits him [a Christian] to remain alive in the flesh and lets his body walk the earth in order that he may help others and bring them to heaven too. Therefore we must use everything on earth in no other way than as a guest who travels across country…. Thus we must also deal with temporal goods as if they did not belong to us. We must limit our enjoyment of them to what is necessary for the preservation of the body. With the rest we must help our neighbor" (AE 30:35).

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 13:15–16 "In these last times it is certainly no less needful to encourage people to Christian discipline 'to the way of right and godly living' and to do good works. We need to remind them of how necessary it is that they exercise themselves in good works as a declaration of their faith [Matthew 5:16] and gratitude to God" (FC Ep IV 18).

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 13:15 *a sacrifice of praise to God*. "These sacrifices are not satisfactions…. He asks us to offer praises, that is, prayer, thanksgiving, confession, and the like. These benefit not by the outward act, but because of faith" (Ap XXIV 25–26). *the fruit of lips*. God's forgiveness leads us to confess Him and praise Him. See SC, Second Commandment, p xxxv. Luth: "We learn that we do not offer Christ as a sacrifice, but that Christ offers us…. That is, we lay ourselves on Christ by a firm faith in his testament and do not otherwise appear before God with our prayer, praise, and sacrifice except through Christ and his mediation. Nor do we doubt that Christ is our priest or minister in heaven before God. Such faith, truly, brings it to pass that Christ takes up our cause, presents us and our prayer and praise, and also offers himself for us in heaven" (AE 35:99).

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 13:16 *do good*. Another fruit of forgiveness. *sacrifices are pleasing to God*. "Our spiritual offerings are acceptable to God through faith for Christ's sake" (FC SD VI 22).
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 13:17 *Obey … submit*. "This passage requires obedience to the Gospel. It does not establish a dominion for the bishops apart from the Gospel" (Ap XXVIII 20). See SC, Table of Duties, pp xlii–xliv. *leaders*. Same word as in v 7, but here speaks of leaders currently serving. *watch over your souls … give an account*. See note, Jas 3:1. Luth: "I have the commission and charge, as a preacher and a doctor, to see to it that no one is misled, so that I may give account of it at the Last Judgment" (AE 21:44). *joy*. A true pastor has joy when his hearers believe God's Word and lead godly lives.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 13:19 *I may be restored*. On the writer, see "Anonymous," p 2103.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 13:1–19 Instead of sacrificing bulls and goats, we should offer up true speech about God to praise Him and do good works to serve our neighbor. These sacrifices please God when they come from hearts trusting in Christ. To obtain pure hearts, Christ sacrificed Himself on the cross. • O Lord, open the mouths of Your humble servants to speak Your praise, so that leaving behind all error, we may rejoice in the confession of Your name. Amen.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 13:20–21 Final blessing recalls Christ's roles as shepherd and lamb, His perfect leadership and holy sacrifice.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 13:20 *God of peace*. Expression favored by Paul (Rm 16:20; Php 4:9; 1Th 5:23). *brought again from the dead*. All three persons of the Trinity were involved in Christ's resurrection (cf Jn 10:18; Rm 8:11). *blood of the eternal covenant*. With His blood, Christ empowered the new covenant of grace, a final covenant with eternal blessings.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 13:21 *do His will*. God's will is faith in Christ, revealed in the Gospel. This renews us to serve Him as His Law directs us. *working in us*. By the gift of the Holy Spirit through the Word and Sacraments. See note, Php 2:13.
HEBREWS—NOTE ON 13:20–21 We should pray for ourselves and others that God would equip us for all good works to do His will. By His blood, shed on the cross, Jesus our Shepherd redeemed us and made us well-pleasing to His Father. • O God, through the blood of Christ's covenant make us complete in Your sight, and cause us to do Your will. Amen.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 13:22–25 On Letter conclusions, see pp 1899–1901.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 13:22 *brothers*. See p 1901. *word of exhortation*. Likely refers to the Book of Hebrews as a sermon but could describe this closing "letter." See "Anonymous," p 2103.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 13:23 *our brother Timothy*. Cf Php 1:1; Col 1:1; Phm 1; see pp 2066–67.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 13:24 *Greet*. Sign of fellowship. See note, Rm 16. *all your leaders … saints*. See notes, Heb 13:7, 17; 1Th 5:12. *Those who come from Italy*. Either those who are with the author in Italy or those who have come from Italy to the author. See "Anonymous," p 2103. It is possible that the recipients of the Letter could be in Rome or near Jerusalem. The Letter hints at no other possible locations.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 13:25 *Grace*. See pp 1899–1901, 1902.

HEBREWS—NOTE ON 13:22–25 Hebrews sets forth God's grace in Christ, earned on the cross, ratified in the new covenant, and distributed in Word and Sacrament. By holding fast to the teaching of this sermon and by receiving God's grace through faith, we have fellowship with the writer of Hebrews and all the saints and look forward to our inheritance with them in heaven. • Grant us grace, O Lord, to bear all the crosses of this life. Bring us, with all the saints, into the heavenly city. Amen.

James

James 1 | James 2 | James 3 | James 4 | James 5

- Introduction to James
  - Overview
  - Reading James
  - Luther on James
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

Greeting

1 [1] ✝✝James, a servant[1] of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ,
To the twelve tribes in the Dispersion:
Greetings.

Testing of Your Faith

2 †Count it all joy, my brothers,[2] when you meet trials of various kinds,
3 †for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. 4 †And
let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete,
lacking in nothing.

5 †If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to
all without reproach, and it will be given him. 6 †But let him ask in faith,
with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is
driven and tossed by the wind. 7 †For that person must not suppose that he
will receive anything from the Lord; 8 †he is a double-minded man, unstable
in all his ways.

9 ‡ †Let the lowly brother boast in his exaltation, 10 and the rich in his
humiliation, because like a flower of the grass[3] he will pass away. 11 †For
the sun rises with its scorching heat and withers the grass; its flower falls,
and its beauty perishes. So also will the rich man fade away in the midst of
his pursuits.

12 †Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has
stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to
those who love him. 13 ‡ †Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being
tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself
tempts no one. 14 But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by
his own desire. 15 †Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and
sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.

16 †Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers. 17 †Every good gift and
every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights
with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.[4] 18 †Of his own
will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of
firstfruits of his creatures.

Hearing and Doing the Word

[19] ‡ † Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear,
slow to speak, slow to anger; [20] † for the anger of man does not produce the
righteousness of God. [21] † Therefore put away all filthiness and rampant
wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to
save your souls.

[22] ‡ † But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.
[23] ‡ For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who
looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. [24] For he looks at himself and
goes away and at once forgets what he was like. [25] † But the one who looks
into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who
forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing.

[26] † If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but
deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless. [27] † Religion that is
pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and
widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.

The Sin of Partiality

2 [1] ‡ † My brothers,[1] show no partiality as you hold the faith in our
Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory. [2] ‡ † For if a man wearing a gold ring
and fine clothing comes into your assembly, and a poor man in shabby
clothing also comes in, [3] † and if you pay attention to the one who wears the
fine clothing and say, “You sit here in a good place,” while you say to the
poor man, “You stand over there,” or, “Sit down at my feet,” [4] † have you not
then made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil
thoughts? [5] † Listen, my beloved brothers, has not God chosen those who are
poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom, which he has
promised to those who love him? [6] † But you have dishonored the poor man.
Are not the rich the ones who oppress you, and the ones who drag you into
court? [7] † Are they not the ones who blaspheme the honorable name by
which you were called?

[8] † If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, “You shall
love your neighbor as yourself,” you are doing well. [9] † But if you show
partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as
transgressors. [10] † For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has
become accountable for all of it. [11] † For he who said, “Do not commit
adultery,” also said, “Do not murder.” If you do not commit adultery but do
murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. [12] † So speak and so act
as those who are to be judged under the law of liberty. [13] † For judgment is
without mercy to one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over
judgment.

Faith Without Works Is Dead

14 What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does
not have works? Can that faith save him? 15 If a brother or sister is poorly
clothed and lacking in daily food, 16 and one of you says to them, “Go in
peace, be warmed and filled,” without giving them the things needed for the
body, what good[1] is that? 17 So also faith by itself, if it does not have
works, is dead.

18 But someone will say, “You have faith and I have works.” Show me
your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my
works. 19 You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons
believe—and shudder! 20 Do you want to be shown, you foolish person,
that faith apart from works is useless? 21 Was not Abraham our father
justified by works when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar? 22 You see
that faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by his
works; 23 and the Scripture was fulfilled that says, “Abraham believed God,
and it was counted to him as righteousness”—and he was called a friend of
God. 24 You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone.
25 And in the same way was not also Rahab the prostitute justified by works
when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way?
26 For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from
works is dead.

Taming the Tongue

3 [1]†Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you
know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness. [2]†For we all
stumble in many ways. And if anyone does not stumble in what he says, he
is a perfect man, able also to bridle his whole body. [3]‡If we put bits into the
mouths of horses so that they obey us, we guide their whole bodies as well.
[4]Look at the ships also: though they are so large and are driven by strong
winds, they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot
directs. [5]So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great things.

How great a forest is set ablaze by such a small fire! [6]†And the tongue is
a fire, a world of unrighteousness. The tongue is set among our members,
staining the whole body, setting on fire the entire course of life,[1] and set on
fire by hell.[2] [7]‡For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature,
can be tamed and has been tamed by mankind, [8]†but no human being can
tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. [9]†With it we
bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people who are made in the
likeness of God. [10]†From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My
brothers,[1] these things ought not to be so. [11]‡Does a spring pour forth from
the same opening both fresh and salt water? [12]Can a fig tree, my brothers,
bear olives, or a grapevine produce figs? Neither can a salt pond yield fresh
water.

Wisdom from Above

13 † Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good conduct let
him show his works in the meekness of wisdom. 14 † But if you have bitter
jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the
truth. 15 † This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly,
unspiritual, demonic. 16 † For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there
will be disorder and every vile practice. 17 † But the wisdom from above is
first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good
fruits, impartial and sincere. 18 † And a harvest of righteousness is sown in
peace by those who make peace.

Warning Against Worldliness

4 [1] What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it
not this, that your passions[2] are at war within you?[3] [2] You desire and do
not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and
quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask. [3] You ask and do not
receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions. [4] You
adulterous people![4] Do you not know that friendship with the world is
enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world
makes himself an enemy of God. [5] Or do you suppose it is to no purpose
that the Scripture says, "He yearns jealously over the spirit that he has made
to dwell in us"? [6] But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, "God opposes
the proud, but gives grace to the humble." [7] Submit yourselves therefore to
God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. [8] Draw near to God, and
he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your
hearts, you double-minded. [9] Be wretched and mourn and weep. Let your
laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. [10] Humble
yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.

[11] Do not speak evil against one another, brothers.[1] The one who speaks
against a brother or judges his brother, speaks evil against the law and
judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a
judge. [12] There is only one lawgiver and judge, he who is able to save and
to destroy. But who are you to judge your neighbor?

Boasting About Tomorrow

13 ‡ † Come now, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go into such
and such a town and spend a year there and trade and make a profit”—
14 † yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For
you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes. 15 † Instead you
ought to say, “If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that.” 16 † As it is,
you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil. 17 † So whoever knows
the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin.

Warning to the Rich

5 [1]†††Come now, you rich, weep and howl for the miseries that are
coming upon you. [2]†Your riches have rotted and your garments are moth-
eaten. [3]Your gold and silver have corroded, and their corrosion will be
evidence against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You have laid up
treasure in the last days. [4]†Behold, the wages of the laborers who mowed
your fields, which you kept back by fraud, are crying out against you, and
the cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts. [5]†You
have lived on the earth in luxury and in self-indulgence. You have fattened
your hearts in a day of slaughter. [6]†You have condemned and murdered the
righteous person. He does not resist you.

Patience in Suffering

7 ‡ † Be patient, therefore, brothers,[1] until the coming of the Lord. See
how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about
it, until it receives the early and the late rains. 8 † You also, be patient.
Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. 9 † Do not
grumble against one another, brothers, so that you may not be judged;
behold, the Judge is standing at the door. 10 † As an example of suffering and
patience, brothers, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.
11 † Behold, we consider those blessed who remained steadfast. You have
heard of the steadfastness of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the
Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful.

12 ‡ † But above all, my brothers, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth
or by any other oath, but let your "yes" be yes and your "no" be no, so that
you may not fall under condemnation.

The Prayer of Faith

13 †Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let
him sing praise. 14 †Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of
the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name
of the Lord. 15 †And the prayer of faith will save the one who is sick, and the
Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.
16 †Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that
you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is
working.[1] 17 † Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed
fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not
rain on the earth. 18 Then he prayed again, and heaven gave rain, and the
earth bore its fruit.

19 † † My brothers, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and
someone brings him back, 20 † let him know that whoever brings back a
sinner from his wandering will save his soul from death and will cover a
multitude of sins.

James

OVERVIEW

Author
James, brother of the Lord

Date
c AD 50

Places
The “Dispersion”

People
James; “the twelve tribes in the Dispersion”; rich and poor church visitors and believers; sick Christians; elders of the Church

Purpose
To impart the Lord’s wisdom to the congregations dispersed among the Gentile nations

Law Themes
Must keep the whole Law; death; works required for salvation; sinners judged by Law as transgressors; faith apart from works is dead

Gospel Themes
Good and perfect gifts from the Father of lights; brought forth by the Word of truth; heirs of the Kingdom; counted righteous; the coming of the Lord, compassionate and merciful; forgiveness; because of Christ’s death and resurrection, sinners are judged under the “law of liberty”

Memory Verses
The crown of life (1:12); the Father of lights (1:16–17); the tongue (3:1–12); fervent prayer (5:13–18)

Introduction to James

Reading James

They stood with arms crossed, silent, facing away from each another. “I shouldn’t have said it that way,” the first woman said. “I had not considered how it would make the other people feel to ask them to move and let others take their place.”

“I’m sorry I snapped at you … and in front of everyone,” said the second woman. “I want to be more patient, more humble, but I just can’t seem to get it right. My heart means well, but my tongue always seems to steer me wrong.”

James addresses practical issues and enduring problems faced by many mature believers: impatience, failure to do what you know is right, favoritism, apathy, and selfishness. He presents wise arguments and God-pleasing solutions, culminating in the confession of sins (5:16) and prayer for help from God, “the Father of lights” who gives “every good gift and every perfect gift” (1:17).

Luther on James

In 1522, Luther made harsh statements about the Epistle of James. These statements have become notorious among scholars who have sometimes taken them out of context. The statements derive from Luther's frustration with opponents who used Jas 2 to attack what Luther had learned about justification and sanctification while carefully studying the Epistles of Paul. The chief problem is raised by the way James and Paul use the same terms (faith; law) and the same OT history (examples from Abraham's life) to illustrate very different points about the Christian life.

Critics have been delighted that Luther described James as an "epistle of straw" in 1522 and have used this statement as justification for launching attacks on other NT documents and doctrines. However, a patient consideration of Luther's statements yields the following important points:

1. Luther's description of the Book changes. In some cases, Luther describes James as the work of an apostle (e.g., his postil of 1536; WA DB 41:578–90), but in other cases, he argues that it was not written by an apostle.
2. When Luther describes James as "straw," he is referring to its mundane, moral topics and not to its truthfulness. In medieval Wittenberg, straw was appreciated for its usefulness (e.g., Luther's mattress was stuffed with straw), but it was also characterized as having low value (cf 1Co 3:12). So in his 1522 Preface to the New Testament, Luther is making a contrast between James and other NT Epistles and is not dismissing James outright.
3. In Luther's preface to James, he describes the Epistle as "a good book, because it sets up no doctrines of men but vigorously promulgates the law of God" (AE 35:395). But Luther also notes that the Book lacks teaching on Christ, whom the apostles were to preach.
4. Despite his strong opinion and suggestion that the Lord's brother James may not have written the Book, Luther retains it as a NT Epistle. He even cites it as authoritative teaching from God (see LC IV 122–24).

As the points above show, Luther was inconsistent in his opinions about James.

Luther wrote most harshly about James early in his career, while struggling against Rome and Andreas Carlstadt. Following the Antinomian Controversy, Luther showed new interest in the Epistle. In 1533, he urged Christians in Leipzig to hold to the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, in which Philip Melanchthon provided a careful explanation of James's arguments about faith and works (Ap V 123–32), the issue in James that Luther found so troubling. During the 10 years after Luther wrote his prefaces to the NT, we have no sermons on James from him. But in 1536, Luther wrote a postil commentary on Jas 1:17–21. He preached on Jas 1 in 1535, 1536, 1537, and twice in 1539. Although Luther never fully reconciled himself to the challenges presented by Jas 2, it appears that he became more comfortable with the Book in his mature years.

Below is a quote from Luther's 1522 preface. It is followed by a quote from his 1546 preface. These quotes are presented for historical purposes only.

> In a word St. John's Gospel and his first epistle, St. Paul's epistles, especially Romans, Galatians, and Ephesians, and St. Peter's first epistle are the books that show you Christ and teach you all that is necessary and salvatory for you to know, even if you were never to see or hear any other book or doctrine. Therefore St. James' epistle is really an epistle of straw, compared to these others, for it has nothing of the nature of the gospel about it. (AE 35:362)
>
> Though this epistle of St. James was rejected by the ancients, I praise it and consider it a good book, because it sets up no doctrines of men but vigorously promulgates [*treibet*] the law of God.[1] However, to state my own opinion about it, though without prejudice to anyone, I do not regard it as the writing of an apostle; and my reasons follow.
>
> In the first place it is flatly against St. Paul and all the rest of Scripture in ascribing justification to works [2:24]. It says that Abraham was justified by his works when he offered his son Isaac [2:21]; though in Romans 4[:2–22] St. Paul teaches to the contrary that Abraham was justified apart from works, by his faith alone, before he had offered his son, and proves it by Moses in Genesis 15[:6]. Now although this epistle might be helped and an interpretation devised for

this justification by works,[2] it cannot be defended in its application to works [Jas. 2:23] of Moses' statement in Genesis 15[:6]. For Moses is speaking here only of Abraham's faith, and not of his works, as St. Paul demonstrates in Romans 4. This fault,[3] therefore, proves that this epistle is not the work of any apostle.

In the second place its purpose is to teach Christians, but in all this long teaching it does not once mention the Passion, the resurrection, or the Spirit of Christ. He names Christ several times; however he teaches nothing about him, but only speaks of general faith in God. Now it is the office of a true apostle to preach of the Passion and resurrection and office of Christ, and to lay the foundation for faith in him, as Christ himself says in John 15[:27], "You shall bear witness to me." All the genuine sacred books agree in this, that all of them preach and inculcate [*treiben*] Christ. And that is the true test by which to judge all books, when we see whether or not they inculcate [*treiben*] Christ. For all the Scriptures show us Christ, Romans 3[:21]; and St. Paul will know nothing but Christ,
I Corinthians 2[:2]. Whatever does not teach Christ is not yet[4] apostolic, even though St. Peter or St. Paul does the teaching. Again, whatever preaches Christ would be apostolic, even if Judas, Annas, Pilate, and Herod were doing it.

But this James does nothing more than drive [*treibet*] to the law and to its works. Besides, he throws things together so chaotically that it seems to me he must have been some good, pious man, who took a few sayings from the disciples of the apostles and thus tossed them off on paper. Or it may perhaps have been written by someone on the basis of his preaching. He calls the law a "law of liberty" [1:25], though Paul calls it a law of slavery, of wrath, of death, and of sin.

Moreover he cites the sayings of St. Peter [in 5:20]: "Love covers a multitude of sins" [I Pet. 4:8], and again [in 4:10], "Humble yourselves under the hand of God" [I Pet. 5:6]; also the saying of St. Paul in Galatians 5[:17], "The Spirit lusteth against envy." And yet, in point of time, St. James was put to death by Herod [Acts 12:2] in Jerusalem, before St. Peter. So it seems that [this author] came long after St. Peter and St. Paul.

In a word, he wanted to guard against those who relied on faith without works, but was unequal to the task.[5] He tries to accomplish by

> harping [*treiben*] on the law what the apostles accomplish by stimulating people to love. Therefore I cannot include him among the chief books, though I would not thereby prevent anyone from including or extolling him as he pleases, for there are otherwise many good sayings in him.[6] (AE 35:395–97; see also AE 4:133–34; 54:424–25)

Despite Luther's early, harsh opinions and influence as an interpreter, the Lutheran Church has held that James is rightly part of the NT, citing its authority in the Book of Concord. See pp 2099–2101.

Challenges for Readers

Authorship and Context. Early tradition attributed the Epistle of James to the Lord's brother James, who became an important leader in the Jerusalem Church (cf Mk 6:3; Ac 15:1–21; 21:18; 1Co 15:7; Gal 1:19). However, Eusebius notes that this authorship was disputed (*NPNF* 2 1:128). "James" (Hebrew/Aramaic "Jacob") was a very common name among first-century Jews and Christians. Despite various proposals by modern scholars, the Lord's brother remains the most likely author. The character of the Letter fits well into the mid first century as a general letter from a Jerusalem leader to congregations in the "Diaspora" (lands outside of Israel). The simplicity of the Letter, its emphasis on wisdom and OT ethics, and its reference to a Christian gathering as an "assembly" (Gk *synagoge*; 2:2) point to an early date.

Relationship of Faith and Works. See Luther's concerns above, the notes on Jas 2:14–26, and Melanchthon's careful study in the Apology of the Augsburg Confession (V 123–32). There is no evidence in the Letter that James was written to dispute Paul's teaching about justification and faith, as some scholars still maintain.

Parallels with Other NT Teachers. The Book of James shows numerous similarities to the teachings of Jesus, especially as recorded in Matthew (cf Jas 1:27 with Mt 25:36; Jas 2:10 with Mt 5:19; Jas 2:15–16 with Mt 25:35–36; Jas 3:11–12 with Mt 7:15–19; Jas 3:18 with Mt 5:9; Jas 4:10 with Mt 23:12; Jas 5:2–3 with Mt 6:19; Jas 5:10 with Mt 5:12; 23:34; Jas 5:12 with Mt 5:34; Jas 5:19–20 with Mt 18:15). Luther and other scholars have noted similarities with points of doctrine from Peter and Paul (see Luther's comments above). Luther viewed these as evidence that the writer depended on the works of Peter and Paul. However, the argument easily runs the other way, with James being written earlier, or they simply shared common expressions.

Legalism and Antinomianism. Two false views that have surrounded the Book of James come from overreactions to the Book's focus on "the law of liberty" (2:12) and other NT passages about the use of God's Law. On the one hand, some interpreters have taught that the Gospel is a new Law and that salvation is not by grace alone. Others have overreacted by asserting that the Law has no place in the Christian life and that good works done in

view of the Law might be harmful to a Christian's faith (*antinomian* means "opposed to the law"). When read carefully, Jas 2:14–26 helpfully addresses these misunderstandings about faith, the Law, and good works.

Blessings for Readers

As you study the Epistle of James, pray for wisdom and the will to do what you know is right. Look for practical solutions to the issues that challenge your congregation. Yet realize that God's people are still sinners and will make mistakes. They will hurt one another, and they will need to confess their faults and forgive one another. When such troubles arise, abide in the love and patience of your heavenly Father, and rejoice in His good gifts and salvation, which can never be taken away.

OUTLINE

I. Greeting (1:1)
II. Perfection through the Implanted Word (1:2–21)
  A. Trials Result in Blessing (1:2–12)
    1. Trials and testing (1:2–4)
    2. Endurance comes only from God (1:5–8)
    3. The crown of life (1:9–12)
  B. Being Saved from Death (1:13–21)
    1. The source of temptation (1:13–16)
    2. Birth by the implanted Word (1:17–21)
III. Works Done by Those in Whom the Word Has Been Planted (1:22–2:26)
  A. Consistency of Word and Deed (1:22–2:13)
    1. The cause of inconsistency (1:22–25)
    2. Examples of inconsistency (1:26–2:7)
    3. Inconsistency results in condemnation (2:8–13)
  B. Living Faith (2:14–26)
    1. Faith leads to action (2:14–19)
    2. Examples of faith (2:20–26)
IV. Humbling Oneself in Light of the Coming Judgment (3:1–5:6)
  A. Call to Humility for the Sake of the Community (3:1–18)
    1. Proper and improper speaking (3:1–12)
    2. God's wisdom produces right speaking (3:13–18)
  B. The Basis of God's Judgment (4:1–12)
    1. Selfish behavior destroys the individual and community (4:1–4)

2. Prophetic call to repentance (4:5–10)
3. God alone is the Judge (4:11–12)

C. Judgment on the Proud Person of Wealth (4:13–5:6)
1. Becoming proud in self-sufficiency condemned (4:13–17)
2. Becoming rich at the expense of others condemned (5:1–6)

V. Proper Speaking While Waiting for the Lord (5:7–20)
A. Patience in View of the Lord's Return (5:7–12)
B. Faithful Prayer in the Community (5:13–20)

Articles and Resources Related to James

- Brothers in Ministry
- Living the Wholly Christian Life
- Faith and Works
- Effectual, Fervent Prayer

[1] The translator does not consistently handle Luther's use of German *treiben*, but renders it negatively when Luther uses the verb regarding teaching the Law. Readers should note that Luther did not oppose strongly teaching the Law (e.g., nearly half of Luther's Large Catechism expounds the Ten Commandments).

[2] Melanchthon provided a very helpful explanation of the text in Ap V 123–32, which became standard among Lutherans.

[3] German *Mangel* often describes a lack of something, a weakness.

[4] Luther's earlier version of the preface (1522) lacks this qualification. He at first dismissed James as not apostolic. In 1546, he characterizes the Book as not on equal standing with apostolic teaching.

[5] In 1522, Luther had continued, "in spirit, thought, and words. He mangles the Scriptures and thereby opposes Paul and all Scripture." These comments placed James outside of Scripture. Luther deleted these words for the 1530 edition.

[6] In 1522, Luther had continued, “One man is no man in worldly things; how, then, should this single man alone avail against Paul and all the rest of Scripture?” Luther deleted these words for the 1530 edition.

Brothers in Ministry

This chart chronicles what the Bible teaches us about James and Jude, the brothers of Jesus. As you read about these brothers and their service in the Church, consider the state of your family and your working relationships. Pray for joyful and peaceful service.

Living the Wholly Christian Life

Too many of us are "partial Christians." Our Christian convictions apply only to a small part of our life—and that portion is shrinking. It will continue to shrink unless we regain a comprehensive vision of life that helps us reunite what modern life breaks apart.

Voices I hear in my personal and professional life reveal that the modern world is tearing us apart. Listen.

- "My Sunday life has nothing to do with my life in the rough and tumble of law," said the young lawyer, scrambling to establish her practice.
- "My work as a scientist is separate from my life as a Christian," asserted a professor at a college at which I was lecturing.
- "The therapist told me to go ahead and have an affair to get the attention of my husband," a Christian friend shakily told me.
- "I make my investments totally with regard to the profit-making capacity of the firm, not with regard to what it makes or how it acts," offered another Christian friend.
- "I judge television programs strictly according to their entertainment value," said a member of a nearby congregation.
- "Religion and politics have to be kept separate," remarked an older acquaintance.
- "Religious convictions should have nothing to do with our hiring policies as a college," asserted one of my colleagues.
- "Our Lutheran social agency cannot allow religious convictions to directly enter into our treatment of the disturbed young people we are dealing with," declared an executive acquaintance of mine.
- "We need to market this senior-citizen facility as a comfortable and attractive nonsectarian enterprise," argued a consultant hired by a Lutheran facility.

Divided Lives and Souls

As the above quotes from personal and institutional life suggest, our modern world breaks us apart. And it does so in two ways. First, it separates our lives into independent sectors that are governed by the principles developed in and by those sectors. Education is education, politics is politics, economic life is economic life, and each is understood and governed by independent ways of knowing and acting. Even private life is often understood according to the principles of psychology and sociology.

Western history has been the long story of each sector of life declaring its independence from the control and presence of religion. Admittedly there is much good that has occurred because of this secularization process. Knowledge and efficiency has definitely increased in each of these sectors. But this process also has had its costs: Our lives are no longer whole. We are often forced to become partial Christians.

But our modern world breaks us apart in a second way. It separates us from the heights and depths of our lives. Because it has had such enormous success manipulating natural forces, science is expected to understand and provide guidance for each area of life. Thus our lives are reduced to a series of causes and effects that science can describe and predict. This seems to leave little room for human freedom, let alone for the mystery of God's presence and action.

Thus our lives in business, education, and politics become increasingly this-worldy, flattened into one dimension. Even our personal lives are understood in purely one-dimensional terms. Sex is understood as physical functioning. Relationships become little more than need fulfillment as described by psychology and sociology. Even dying and grief are reduced to five stages, wringing the mysterious depth out of the experience.

Partial Christians

These two processes dividing life into independent spheres and draining our experience of transcendence can never be totally successful. Humans seek wholeness even as they seek the mysterious "something more" their spirits demand. So religion continues to prosper.

In the modern world, much religion is highly individualistic. People concoct their own brands. Our church traditions continue to survive, however. People want the church and its perspective when births, marriages, and deaths occur and when they want their children to have strong moral values.

But often people do not live wholly Christian lives. Their Christian convictions only apply to small areas of their lives. Their god is a "god of the gaps." God fills in the meanings for those parts of life that are not accounted for by economics, psychology, and sociology—or Ann Landers. Indeed, our churches are inhabited by many of these folks. They are partial Christians not because they are unmotivated but because their Christianity applies only to small parts of their lives. They are succumbing to the compartmentalized, secular world.

The most impressive churches I know recognize how people have been affected, and they are busily constructing a counterattack. They know that Christians have to be whole people, living out a comprehensive vision of life that gives meaning and guidance to all they do. These churches also know that Christians need depth and transcendence in their lives. They need to be in touch with God—the Ground, the Origin, and Aim of our lives.

To Transform Our Lives

Only the Holy Spirit can enable us to live wholly and in God's presence. But we can work to make things open for the workings of the Spirit in our individual and churchly lives.

Practically, alert congregations concentrate on Christian education, especially for adults. Partial Christians need a holistic Christian vision of life to live wholly. One way to do this is to anchor people in the biblical vision of life. The Bible reveals God as living and moving through all of life and history. This God who is active in all areas of human life also demands and elicits human response in all those areas.

Another way to impart a whole view of life is disciplined theological study. Theologians have thought through the faith comprehensively. They have sketched out how God relates to our complete lives. To study a popular theological writer such as C. S. Lewis or a more technical theologian such as Reinhold Niebuhr will make clear to serious seekers that the Christian meaning system applies to all of life, not to a few gaps left over after the world has done its job. Serious churches must be in the business of helping members develop a comprehensive vision of life.

Many Christians need help to relate the biblical or theological vision of life to the "independent" sectors in which they spend most of their waking time. Thus churches who truly understand their task have courses that help laypeople make the connections between Sunday and Monday. After all, these connections do not come automatically.

Finally, churches must help Christians plumb the heights and depths of their lives in a world increasingly flattened into one dimension. It is essential that churches offer worship services that are a "foretaste of the feast to come." They must do all they can to provide a worship life that includes the transcendent. Fine music, liturgical excellence, robust singing, and beautiful sights, sounds, and even smells are essential to such worship.

Worshipful and frequent celebration of the Eucharist provides connection with the living Christ, a connection that adds depth and richness to the spiritual lives of participants. As eucharistic practice becomes central to the lives of individual Christians and of whole congregations, they begin to perceive all of life as sacramental. God is discerned more and more in the ordinary.

Personal devotional practices are also crucial. Laypeople often need help and direction in establishing disciplined Bible reading, prayer, contemplation, Sabbath observation, devotions, discussion. These activities enable laypeople to recover the spiritual heights and depths of their lives. These dimensions are already touched in the moments of birth, marriage, Baptism, and death, but Christian lives are not whole until sacramentality is extended to common life too. This does not mean that Christians live in spiritual ecstasy all the time, but it does mean that lives are touched by the Spirit more plentifully than merely in the gaps, as important as those might be.

Christians need to live their lives wholly. May the Spirit bring that wholeness into our individual and churchly lives.

Robert Benne, *Reasonable Ethics* (St. Louis: Concordia, 2005), 125–29.

Faith and Works

James did not believe that we earn the forgiveness of sins and grace by good works. After all, he is talking about the works of those who have been justified, who have already been reconciled and accepted, and who have received forgiveness of sins. Therefore, the adversaries err when they conclude that James teaches that we merit forgiveness of sins and grace by good works and that we have access to God by our works, apart from Christ as Reconciler….

James said a little earlier that regeneration happens through the Gospel. For he says in James 1:18, "Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures." When James says that we have been reborn by the Gospel, he teaches that we have been born again and justified through faith. For the promise about Christ is grasped only through faith when we set it against the terrors of sin and of death. James does not, therefore, think that we are born again through our works.

From these things it is clear that James does not contradict us. He criticized lazy and secure minds that imagine they have faith, although they do not have it. He made a distinction between dead and living faith. He says that faith that does not bring forth good works is dead. He also says that a living faith brings forth good works. Furthermore, we have shown already several times what we mean by faith. For we do not mean passive knowledge, such as devils have. Instead, we mean faith that resists the terrors of conscience and encourages and comforts terrified hearts. Such faith is not an easy matter, as the adversaries dream. Neither is it a human power, but it is a divine power. Through faith we are reborn and overcome the devil and death. Paul says to the Colossians that faith is powerful through the power of God and overcomes death, "In which you were also raised with Him through faith in the powerful working of God" (2:12). Since this faith is a new life, it necessarily produces new movements and works. So James is right in denying that we are justified by such a faith that is without works. But when he says that we are justified by faith and works, he certainly does not say that we are born again by works. Neither does he say that Christ is our Reconciler only partly, and our works are our atoning

sacrifice in part. Nor does he describe the way of justification, but only the nature of the just, after they have already been justified and regenerated. Here "to be justified" does not mean that a righteous person is made from a wicked person. It means to be pronounced righteous in a judicial sense, as in Romans 2:13, "For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law who will be justified." These words "doers of the law who will be justified" contain nothing contrary to our doctrine. We, too, believe about James's words, "A person is justified by works and not by faith alone" (2:24) because people are certainly pronounced righteous having faith and good works. As we have said, the saints' good works are righteous and please God because of faith. For James praises only works produced by faith, as he testifies when he says of Abraham, "Faith was completed by his works" (2:22).
(Ap V 125–31)

Effectual, Fervent Prayer

The *Mayo Clinic Proceedings* once published a report on prayer. The report was based on a study of patients with heart disease. Five people prayed for half of the study's 799 participants at least once a day. After six months, researchers found no significant differences between those who were prayed for and those who were not. According to the leaders of the study, prayer is not effective at all.

However, more factors are involved in prayer than the study considered. The study provided no information about the spiritual disposition of the patients or about those who prayed for them. The study also assumed that the only way to measure the effectiveness of prayer is if you obtain exactly what you are asking for within the material world. This article will take a closer look at what God's Word teaches about truly effective prayer.

God's Invitation

The Bible records many invitations to pray. For example, God invited King Ahaz to ask for a sign (Is 7:10–11). Jesus said, "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you" (Mt 7:7). Paul commanded the Thessalonian Christians to "pray without ceasing" (1Th 5:17).

God's invitation for us to pray also comes with evidence of His genuine intent to respond. For example, Abraham's servant prayed for help in identifying the woman who would become Isaac's wife. Before the servant had finished his prayer, the Lord answered it (Gn 24:14–15). Paul was excited to write to the Ephesian Christians that God does even more than we think to ask for (Eph 3:20). James also urges us on to prayer in three different sections of his Epistle (1:5–6; 4:2–3; 5:13–18). Now that we are sure of God's desire for us to pray, what else do we need to know?

Prayer of Faith

James is specific about how we should pray and about the kind of person who may expect prayer to be answered. James says that a person lacking wisdom should ask for it, but that person must ask in faith (1:5–6). Later in the Epistle, James refers again to the "prayer of faith" (5:15) and to the "prayer of a righteous person" (5:16). The connection between these features is fundamental.

Jesus once told of two men who went up to the temple to pray (Lk 18:9–14). One man was a Pharisee who was righteous in his own eyes. He thanked God that he was not wicked like other people. The other man was a tax collector. He prayed that God would be merciful. Jesus tells us that the man who prayed for mercy went home justified (righteous before God) rather than the other. The answer to prayer was linked to God's righteousness and mercy.

Faith, worked in us by God's Word and Spirit, covers us with the righteousness of Christ. This faith also gives us conviction that God's will and ways are right, leading us to obedience. The prayer of a person made righteous by faith is motivated by that faith and seeks God's will. This is why such prayer is effective.

Prayer with Wisdom

At the very beginning of his Letter, James urges us to pray for wisdom. Wisdom from God provides insight and perspective. Wisdom allows us to understand how God is working and how to benefit from what He is doing. Most people have heard that God makes all things work together for good to those who love Him (Rm 8:28). Few people actually recognize why or how these things are working together. If we have wisdom to know how God is working, then we can also know what to pray for in accordance with His will. We can avoid coveting and asking with the wrong motives (Jas 4:2–3), since wisdom from God allows us to distinguish between what we need and what we do not need.

What we need most is the forgiveness of sins. Therefore, James's final words about prayer focus on forgiveness (5:13–18).

Suffering has a way of stirring one's conscience. Many a sick person wonders what wrong he or she has done to deserve this suffering. Many conclude it is punishment from God. Sometimes a person knows very well that the situation is in fact a specific result from sin in his or her life. Sometimes, though, suffering has nothing to do with a person's own sin. In either case, God wants to provide restoration. Regarding someone who is sick, James urges that the elders be called, that confession be made, and that prayers be offered up to God, who will grant forgiveness. God may provide temporal healing. He will certainly provide eternal healing for those who pray in faith and thank Him for His mercy.

Request Granted!

The Mayo Clinic study that showed no evidence for the effectiveness of prayer should not surprise you. You may have had a similar experience or know someone who also thinks that prayer does not work. But James explains what kind of prayer is ineffective and why: "You do not have, because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions" (4:2–3). God has no interest in answering requests that would only lead you further away from Him.

Before you conclude that God is not listening to you or answering your prayers, ask yourself, "Why am I asking for this?" or "Why would God grant my request?" Fallen human nature thinks of itself and its comfort. So people often ask for the desires of their human nature. But material things hold the potential of taking over our lives. Human nature will always be disappointed in a God who refuses to grant requests that do not promote their idea of real life.

What a blessing it is to know that God wants us to pray and will surely answer. God answers the prayer of faith, offered up by a person made righteous by faith. Faith and righteousness teach us what is needful and what is contrary to our life as a Christian. The prayer of faith is in agreement with the Word, which inspired that faith.

Faith teaches you to recognize what is needful. Faith teaches you how to understand experiences of suffering in a world broken by sin. Your inability provides a reason to turn your attention to God's great ability. He has not failed and will not fail you. In the life, death, and resurrection of His Son, He has provided you with a life that endures all things. Recognizing this truth allows you to thank God in times of difficulty and to seek His wisdom and grace to thrive as His child.

Footnotes

Footnotes for James, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:1 Or *slave*; Greek *bondservant*
- [2] 1:2 Or *brothers and sisters*. The plural Greek word *adelphoi* (translated "brothers") refers to siblings in a family. In New Testament usage, depending on the context, *adelphoi* may refer either to men or to both men and women who are siblings (brothers and sisters) in God's family, the church; also verses 16, 19
- [3] 1:10 Or *a wild flower*
- [4] 1:17 Some manuscripts *variation due to a shadow of turning*

Footnotes for James, Chapter 2

- [1] 2:1 Or *brothers and sisters*; also verses 5, 14
- [1] 2:16 Or *benefit*

Footnotes for James, Chapter 3

- [1] 3:6 Or *wheel of birth*
- [2] 3:6 Greek *Gehenna*
- [1] 3:10 Or *brothers and sisters*; also verse 12

Footnotes for James, Chapter 4

- [2] 4:1 Greek *pleasures*; also verse 3
- [3] 4:1 Greek *in your members*
- [4] 4:4 Greek *You adulteresses!*
- [1] 4:11 Or *brothers and sisters*

Footnotes for James, Chapter 5

- [1] 5:7 Or *brothers and sisters*; also verses 9, 10, 12, 19
- [1] 5:16 Or *The effective prayer of a righteous person has great power*

Study Notes

JAMES—NOTE ON 1:1 *James*. See pp 2130–32. *servant of God*. Humble title applying to Christians in general (Ac 2:18; 4:29) or, as here, to leaders (Ti 1:1). *twelve tribes in the Dispersion*. Jews scattered throughout the Mediterranean world. See p 1556.

JAMES—NOTE ON 1:2 *all joy*. Confidence based on the assurance of hope in Christ (cf 1Pt 1:8–9). *brothers*. In the Book, "brother" always refers to a Christian who is living faithfully (cf 1:9). See p 1901. *trials*. Gk *peirasmos*. Any challenging circumstances that befall Christians. Does not refer to being tempted, as in vv 13–14.

JAMES—NOTE ON 1:3 *testing*. Same as "trials" in v 2 (cf Lk 8:13; 22:28). *steadfastness*. Translated "patience" in Lk 8:15. Cf Jas 1:12.

JAMES—NOTE ON 1:4 *perfect and complete*. Not sinless but mature, reaching the goal of faith: eternal life (cf v 12). See p 1903. *lacking in nothing*. Not referring to material blessings but to a strong faith. Contrast with the person lacking wisdom in vv 5–8.

JAMES—NOTE ON 1:5 *any of you*. In Jas, "anyone" refers to struggling Christians who are being called back to faithfulness (cf v 23; 2:18). *wisdom*. Ability to reach and implement proper decisions when facing challenges. See pp 775–78. *without reproach*. God gives generously to all who ask in faith, whatever their past.

JAMES—NOTE ON 1:6 Without trust in God's faithfulness, a person has no solid foundation.

JAMES—NOTE ON 1:7 Only in faith, which trusts in God's provision, does one receive His blessings (cf Lk 11:9–13).

JAMES—NOTE ON 1:8 *double-minded*. Having two allegiances: God and the world (cf Lk 16:13). Such a person cannot persevere.

JAMES—NOTE ON 1:9–10 The humble brother is contrasted with the rich person. Wealth brings certain privileges and is often seen as a sign of self-accomplishment. Yet Scripture frequently warns about the temptations associated with wealth, and those who trust in wealth apart from Christ are condemned (Mt 19:23–26). The Magnificat makes a similar contrast (Lk 1:46–55).

JAMES—NOTE ON 1:9 *exaltation*. Or, "exalted condition," given by God (4:10).

JAMES—NOTE ON 1:11 *pursuits*. General behavior, or specifically the pursuit of wealth.
JAMES—NOTE ON 1:12 Serves more appropriately as a conclusion to vv 2–12, not the start of a new paragraph. *trial*. James does not identify the trials faced by these early Christians, but in this context, it seems that the lure of wealth was an issue (cf 4:13–5:6). *crown of life*. Symbol of eternal life with God. Parallels "perfect and complete" (v 4).
JAMES—NOTE ON 1:13–14 *tempted*. The testings of vv 2–12 refer to external circumstances; the temptings of vv 13–15 refer to internal struggles against sin. See note, v 2.
JAMES—NOTE ON 1:13 Luth: "[God] does not test in order that we may fear and hate Him like a tyrant but to the end that He may exercise and stir up faith and love in us. Satan, however, tempts for evil, in order to draw you away from God and to make you distrust and blaspheme God" (AE 4:132).
JAMES—NOTE ON 1:15 *desire … gives birth to sin*. See note, Gn 3:6. *fully grown*. As a mature faith results in a crown of life (v 12), so the ultimate result of unforgiven sin is death. See note, Gn 3:19. *death*. Sin consumes and destroys.
JAMES—NOTE ON 1:16 *Do not be deceived*. Deception comes from the world, which has rejected God. This is best understood as the conclusion of vv 13–15, not the beginning of a new paragraph.
JAMES—NOTE ON 1:17 *Every good gift and every perfect gift*. God provides everything we need, including wisdom (v 5), exaltation (v 9), and new life (v 18). *Father of lights*. Refers to God's creative work (Gn 1:3–5, 14–19). *no variation or shadow due to change*. Though the heavenly bodies change and move, God and His Word remain constant and sure. We can trust His promises. See note, Mal 3:6; see also "relent," pp 1079–80.
JAMES—NOTE ON 1:18 *brought us forth*. Reference to new life in Christ through Baptism. Cassiodorus Senator (sixth century) notes: "By holy Baptism he declared us to be begotten, freely, not by meriting, so that by a new restoration we might be born into his family" (*Complexiones in epistulis Apostolorum*
Jac 3, *MPL* 70, p 1377). *firstfruits*. Best of the harvest, offered to God in sacrifice (Ex 22:29; 23:19). In the NT, Christians are the "harvest" of the preaching of the Gospel (see ESV note, Rm 16:5; cf 1Co 16:15). *creatures*.

Or, “creation.” All creation is restored in Christ, beginning with humanity (1Co 15:20–28).

JAMES—NOTE ON 1:1–18 James writes to struggling Christians who are facing many trials and temptations. Those who face such challenges may be tossed about (vv 5–8) and eventually destroyed by sin (v 15). Those who seek God’s wisdom endure trials (vv 2–4) and become stronger. In Baptism, God gives His struggling children the crown of life not because of their strength but because of His grace. In that grace, we can follow Him and live confidently in this world of struggles and uncertainty. • O Lord, deliver me from my struggles, and grant me the gifts that come from You alone. Thank You for Your Son, Jesus, who has given me new life. Lead me in Your wisdom until I am raised to receive the crown of life. Amen.

JAMES—NOTE ON 1:19 *slow to speak*. Improper speech is discussed again in v 26 and 3:1–12.

JAMES—NOTE ON 1:20 Believers are credited with Christ’s obedience for their justification (see “justify,” p 1903); God then calls and empowers them to live in His righteousness instead of the world’s pattern (Rm 6:1–5, 12–14; Ap IV 72; see FC Ep III 7–8). Though the latter sense is typical in Paul’s Letters, Jas and the Gospels typically use the first meaning (cf Mt 13:17; Lk 1:6, 75; 2:25; 23:50). *righteousness of God*. New condition in which Christians live as the result of faith. See note, 2:21; see also p 843.

JAMES—NOTE ON 1:21 *meekness*. Instead of self-reliance, the willingness to receive God’s gift. *implanted*. As a seed is planted into soil, so the Word of God comes from outside of us and produces a harvest of righteousness in our lives. See notes, Mt 13:19–23. *word*. Pertains to both Law and Gospel; God’s Word makes us righteous and enables us to lead righteous lives.

JAMES—NOTE ON 1:22–23 Hearing God’s Word should lead to application of the Word (cf 2:14–26). A remarkably similar statement is made in Rm 2:13. *the word*. Here refers to just the Law (see notes, vv 21, 25).

JAMES—NOTE ON 1:22 *the word*. OT Scriptures, since the NT was still being written.

JAMES—NOTE ON 1:23–24 The mirror of the Word shows us our sin, but even more, it reveals the righteousness we already have in Christ. However, someone who leaves that perfect image by not living a righteous life as taught in the Word turns away from righteousness. “It is necessary to do

good works. This does not mean that we merit grace by doing good works, but because it is God's will" (AC XX 27).

JAMES—NOTE ON 1:25 *perfect law … of liberty*. This Word is perfect because it is from God and makes us perfect and complete (v 4; cf Ps 119:92–94). See "perfect," p 1903; see also p 206. *law*. Here it means "Word" (cf vv 21, 22; see p 971).

JAMES—NOTE ON 1:26 *religious … religion*. In Jas, religion is not a set of beliefs or a movement, but the deeds that a person does because of his beliefs. Such actions may be in accord with God's will (as in v 27) or, as here, sinful. *tongue*. Cf v 19; 3:1–12. *deceives his heart*. Deceives himself. The person who does not act righteously by controlling his tongue may consider himself righteous, but he is delusional; such behavior does not reflect the righteousness God has given.

JAMES—NOTE ON 1:27 *Religion*. See note, v 26. *orphans and widows in their affliction*. Genuine righteousness seeks to serve others. Orphans and widows deeply need such help, and they were particularly singled out for God's care (e.g., Dt 10:18; Hos 14:3; Lk 7:11–17) and the service of His people (Dt 14:29; 16:11; 24:19). See SC, Fifth Commandment, p xxxv. *unstained from the world*. In Jas, the world encourages values and behaviors that are opposed to God and His righteousness (3:6; 4:4). Thoughts and actions that come from God are "pure and undefiled"; those that do not come from God destroy the perfect righteousness He gives.

JAMES—NOTE ON 1:19–27 James encourages Christians to return to the Word, take comfort in the Gospel, and live righteous lives focused on service toward others. We also know the kind of lives God calls us to lead. Yet too easily we turn away from that calling. God, who implanted His Word in us and justified us in Christ, now calls us to bless others. He honors us by using us to bring His love to all people, especially those whom the world ignores. • Thank You, Lord, for Your Word. Hold it continually before me, and bring me to hear it preached and taught. May it be rooted deep inside me, that it may transform me into Your righteous servant. Amen.

JAMES—NOTE ON 2:1 *partiality*. Unfair act of judgment based on worldly criteria (cf 1:27). God never shows partiality (Rm 2:9–11), and His people are commanded to act similarly. *Lord of glory*. Glory is a result of Christ's victorious resurrection and exaltation (cf Lk 24:26). See p 1902.

JAMES—NOTE ON 2:2–4 Example of partiality. Such distinctions are evil because they do not reflect the way God views people. James frequently singles out the rich for condemnation and describes the humble and poor as exalted by the Lord (cf 1:9–10; 4:6, 10; 5:1–6). Partiality either to the poor or the wealthy is condemned in Lv 19:15.
JAMES—NOTE ON 2:2 A person's appearance communicates his status.
JAMES—NOTE ON 2:3 *at my feet*. Lowest position.
JAMES—NOTE ON 2:4 *judges with evil thoughts?* Wealth-based distinctions between people do not reflect God's vision and are therefore evil.
JAMES—NOTE ON 2:5 A person's worth comes not from possessions but from his relationship to God. See "heir," p 1902. *heirs of the kingdom*. As the Father's adopted children, we will inherit His kingdom (Gal 4:1–7), where we will live with Him and receive the crown of life (Jas 1:12). See pp 1565–66.
JAMES—NOTE ON 2:6 Exalting the lofty person dishonors the humble, whom God has exalted (1:9; 4:10). *oppress you … drag you into court?* Not persecution for being Christian, but lawsuits for economic reasons, as in Ac 16:19–24; cf 1Co 6:1–8.
JAMES—NOTE ON 2:7 *blaspheme the honorable name*. Christ's name (v 1). Rejecting the poor man, who was chosen by Christ, is rejecting Christ Himself. *by which you were called?* Or, "invoked over you," referring to Baptism (1:18).
JAMES—NOTE ON 2:8 *royal law*. "Royal" is the same Gk word as "kingdom" (v 5), indicating this is the "Law of the Kingdom"; that same Law is interpreted and fulfilled in Christ. Jesus quotes and applies Lv 19:18 frequently; cf Lk 10:25–37. See "Law," p 971.
JAMES—NOTE ON 2:9 *partiality*. Cf vv 1–7. *convicted by the law*. Since partiality breaks the specific command of Lv 19:15, the general law to "love your neighbor as yourself" (Lv 19:18) is also broken.
JAMES—NOTE ON 2:10 Because all Commandments come from God, all must be obeyed perfectly. This was made clear in the giving of the covenant to Israel (Dt 27:26; 28:15), as well as by Jesus. Even one violation falls short of the righteousness God requires (Jas 1:20). When we break God's Law, we disrespect Him, for He established that Law.
JAMES—NOTE ON 2:11 These specific commandments illustrate the principle of v 10—breaking one law makes a person completely guilty

before God.
JAMES—NOTE ON 2:12 James exhorts his readers to remember that they were counted righteous for Christ's sake. How can they then judge others by a different standard? God's grace is available to all.
JAMES—NOTE ON 2:13 *judgment*. God's judgment on the sinner, here the "one who has shown no mercy" (see example in vv 1–7). *Mercy triumphs over judgment*. Summarizes the first part of ch 2: God's people are to show mercy, not judgment or partiality. God has shown this same mercy to us.
JAMES—NOTE ON 2:1–13 James rebukes an act that is inconsistent with the righteous life: judging others based on their appearance, wealth, or status. The desire for wealth leads us to lift up the wealthy and look down on the poor. This is not God's way. He shows no partiality but calls all people to faith in Christ and grants the same gift of salvation to all in the waters of Baptism. James calls us to look at one another as those for whom Christ died because the name of Christ has been given to us in Baptism (v 7). He gives all His people a new identity that the world cannot give. We live together in Him, serving and building up one another until His return. • Forgive me, Lord, for looking at the face and not the heart. May Your name, spoken over me in my Baptism, be glorified in my life as I serve Your people. Amen.
JAMES—NOTE ON 2:14–26 During the Reformation, this passage became controversial because some interpreters viewed it as teaching justification through faith and works (synergism). Critical interpreters have viewed the passage as evidence that the apostles James and Paul taught conflicting doctrines. The notes here carefully consider the text, revealing that James is addressing a misunderstanding about faith (v 14) and for that purpose uses some terms differently than the apostle Paul, though not in conflict with Paul's teaching. See pp 2130–32.
JAMES—NOTE ON 2:14 *someone says he has faith*. To this point, faith has been viewed positively (1:3, 6; 2:1, 5). In 2:14–26, James uses "someone" else's definition of faith, which separates faith or belief in God from faithful living (v 18). Even demons have this kind of "faith" (v 19). Jesus likewise condemns those who "say" but do not "do" (Mt 23:1–6). *faith*. Gk *pistis*. Usually used to mean trust, but here James means mere knowledge of a subject (see note, Jas 2:19). *works?* Actions done in response to justification, e.g., care of the needy (vv 15–16). *Can that faith*

save him? Mere intellectual assent is not saving faith, nor does it produce fruit in response to God's gifts.

JAMES—NOTE ON 2:15–16 *poorly clothed*. Lit, "naked." Parallels Jesus' teaching about the sheep and the goats (Mt 25:35–36). The needs of the neighbor are immediate and obvious. Mere lip service or empty, pious blessings accomplish nothing for those in need, nor do they reflect faith.

JAMES—NOTE ON 2:17 *faith*. The kind of knowledge described in vv 14, 19. *by itself*. The issue here is wrongly separating faith from its natural fruit: good works (cf vv 18, 26).

JAMES—NOTE ON 2:18 *someone will say*. Argument of those whom James is rebuking in this section. *You have faith and I have works*. Reverse of v 17. One cannot have right faith without the response of right works, nor can one do good works without faith. The problem is not that faith must have works to be real, but that some have separated faith from works (and works from faith). Faith cannot be separated from the response of works because the works naturally flow from the faith God plants. Cf 1:22–27.

JAMES—NOTE ON 2:19 *God is one*. James is addressing an early Christian congregation that strongly retains its OT identity and so quotes the OT's basic confession of faith. Jesus cites this as the "most important" commandment (Mk 12:29), and Paul cites it to a Gentile audience as a foundational confession (1Co 8:6; Eph 4:6). *Even the demons believe*. "Faith" and "believe" are based on Gk verb *pisteuo* (noun, *pistis*; see note, v 14). See Paul's use of "faith," p 1902. Demons "believe" with the kind of "faith" James condemns in vv 14–26. Mere intellectual assent, which even the demons can (and must) have, is not a living faith and does not save. Luth: "It will profit you nothing to believe that Christ was delivered for the sins of other saints and to doubt that He was delivered for your sins. For both the ungodly and the demons believe this (James 2:19). No, you must take for granted in steadfast confidence that He was delivered for your sins too, and that you are one of those for whose sins He was delivered. This faith justifies you; it will cause Christ to dwell, live, and reign in you" (AE 27:172). Luth: "O it is a living, busy, active, mighty thing, this [true] faith. It is impossible for it not to be doing good works incessantly. It does not ask whether good works are to be done, but before the question is asked, it has already done them, and is constantly doing them. Whoever does not do such works, however, is an unbeliever. He gropes and looks around for faith and good works, but knows neither what faith is nor what good works are. Yet

he talks and talks, with many words, about faith and good works" (AE 35:370).

JAMES—NOTE ON 2:20 *faith apart from works*. James is not discussing the relative value of works over and against faith, but the problem of separating faith and works. His argument is not that works are better than faith but that simple assent to certain beliefs is not truly faith. See notes, vv 14, 19.

JAMES—NOTE ON 2:21 *justified*. "Justify" and "righteousness" are based on the same Gk word (see Paul's usage, p 1903). This may mean "counted righteous" (as in ESV note, Gal 2:16), but it can also mean "shown to be righteous," "recognized as righteous," or "to live as a righteous person." See note, 1:20. Jesus uses it in this way in Mt 11:19; 12:33–37. James is saying, in effect, "Was not Abraham our father shown to be a righteous person when he … ?" Abraham had already believed God and been declared righteous in Gn 15:6, long before the episode in Gn 22 (cf Jas 2:23).

JAMES—NOTE ON 2:22 *completed*. Translated "perfect" in 1:4. The point here is the same: when facing trial, Abraham's faith did not waver, and so his faith was shown to be mature and strong. Luther also describes these two kinds of righteousness: "When I have this [declared] righteousness within me, I descend from heaven like the rain that makes the earth fertile. That is, I come forth into another kingdom, and I perform good works whenever the opportunity arises" (AE 26:11).

JAMES—NOTE ON 2:23 *Scripture was fulfilled*. Abraham was righteous already (Gn 15:6), but later demonstrated, or "completed," his righteousness (Gn 22). After this, God said, "Now I know that you fear God [i.e., have faith], seeing you have not withheld your son" (Gn 22:12). Certainly God knew that Abraham had faith, but now his faith had been demonstrated by his faithful work. See note on the "perfecting" of Jesus, Heb 2:10. *friend of God*. In OT, only Moses is spoken of as a friend of God (Ex 33:11), but noncanonical Jewish literature also refers to Abraham this way. "Friend of God" is the opposite of "friend of the world" (Jas 4:4).

JAMES—NOTE ON 2:24 *justified*. Shown to be righteous (see note, v 21). *faith alone*. Faith that is mere assent (see notes, vv 14, 18, 19).

JAMES—NOTE ON 2:25 *Rahab the prostitute*. Ancestor of Jesus (Mt 1:5) and model of faith (Heb 11:31). 1 Clem: "On account of her faith and hospitality, Rahab the harlot was saved" (*ANF* 1:8). Like Abraham, Rahab

had faith (Jsh 2:9) before her actions in helping the messengers demonstrated her righteousness.

JAMES—NOTE ON 2:26 *spirit*. Breath of life, not the Holy Spirit. See note, Gn 2:7. *dead*. The body cannot live without the breath of life, and life cannot exist apart from the body. Neither can faith and works be separated. Chrys: "As faith without works is dead, so are works without faith dead" (*MPG* 53, p 31). Luth: "The works of faith … are those which are done out of the spirit of liberty and solely for the love of God" (AE 25:234).

JAMES—NOTE ON 2:14–26 James discusses a false understanding of faith: mere knowledge that has no application or effect on the one who has it. This faulty understanding is just as wrong as the opposite error: focusing on actions alone apart from faith in Christ. True faith and its response of true good works cannot be separated. Works naturally follow faith. God has given us a great gift—through Christ Jesus, He has forgiven us and declared us righteous and holy. He now blesses us by calling us to serve Him in the lives of those around us. A living faith leads us to gladly share with others what we have freely received in Christ. • By Your Spirit, grant me true faith, Lord, that Your name might be glorified through me. Amen.

JAMES—NOTE ON 3:1 *teachers*. Office in the Early Church. Its work, along with that of apostles and prophets, was eventually carried out by pastors (cf Ac 13:1; 1Co 12:28–29; Eph 4:11). Nevertheless, these warnings apply to all who claim to teach (cf Lk 11:45–46, 52). *judged*. Because false teaching can destroy the faith of those being taught (cf Gal 1:8–9). *strictness*. Both a stricter standard of judgment and a harsher punishment.

JAMES—NOTE ON 3:2 *we all stumble*. None can avoid sin. *what he says*. Reintroduces the issue of speech (1:19, 26). Because teachers speak often and authoritatively, they have greater opportunity and temptation to speak wrongly for their own benefit. *perfect*. See note, 1:4. Luth: "Those who are truly righteous not only sigh and plead for the grace of God because they see that they have an evil inclination and thus are sinful before God, but also because they see that they can never understand fully how deep is the evil of their will and how far it extends, they believe that they are always sinners, as if the depth of their evil will were infinite" (AE 25:221).

JAMES—NOTE ON 3:3–5 As a bit directs a horse or a rudder steers a ship, so the tongue can affect the entire person and others as well.

JAMES—NOTE ON 3:6 *world of unrighteousness*. The "world" in Jas is always opposed to God (1:27; 2:5). Words can reflect the fallen nature (cf

Mk 7:14–23), which struggles against God. *set on fire by hell*. We are tempted by our sinful nature, by the devil, and by this sinful world.
JAMES—NOTE ON 3:7–8 Though all of creation can be controlled (Gn 1:26–28), no one is able to control the tongue (cf Jas 3:9).
JAMES—NOTE ON 3:8 *full of deadly poison*. Profoundly capable of harming others (cf vv 5–6).
JAMES—NOTE ON 3:9 *likeness of God*. All people deserve respect because they are made in the image of God.
JAMES—NOTE ON 3:10 James calls for consistency. The righteous have received the implanted Word (cf 1:20–21) and should live lives that reflect what God has made them to be. On blessing, see p 842. On cursing, see p 6.
JAMES—NOTE ON 3:11–12 Creation itself cannot be two different things at once; neither can a person who is re-created by God serve Him and curse others at the same time (cf Mt 7:15–19).
JAMES—NOTE ON 3:13 *wise and understanding*. Refers to the teachers of v 1, who claimed to be faithful but were acting otherwise. Cf Dt 1:13–15. *works*. Cf 2:14–26. *meekness of wisdom*. Both are attributes of a righteous person (cf 1:5; Mt 5:5).
JAMES—NOTE ON 3:14 *jealousy and selfish ambition*. Sins frequently singled out in the NT, for they destroy the community created by God (e.g., 1Co 3:3). *boast*. Cf 4:16. *false to the truth*. Denying one's sinfulness also denies God's Word.
JAMES—NOTE ON 3:15 *wisdom that comes down from above*. Gift from God that makes us alive in faith and guides us to live by His Word (cf Pr 2:1–9). See pp 775–78. *earthly, unspiritual, demonic*. Sin is not from God but from the world, which is controlled by evil. (See a similar contrast in 1:13–15.)
JAMES—NOTE ON 3:16 Just as the small tongue can start a great fire (v 5), so desire leads to sin that can destroy the self (cf Mk 7:20–23) and others.
JAMES—NOTE ON 3:17 *wisdom from above*. See note, v 15. *first pure*. Our hearts are purified by Christ (4:8) and therefore unstained by the world (1:27). *then*. Good works flow from a heart that has been purified by Christ. The traits listed enable us to build others up. All contrast with cursing and boasting (vv 9–10, 14). *open to reason*. Or, "humane." *mercy*. Cf 2:13. *impartial*. Theme of 2:1–13. Luth: "It is certain that no man who is busy with commandments or righteousness performs this true service [true

religion]. They cannot even comprehend it intellectually. For it is a teaching revealed from heaven which does not arise from the human heart or mind. The Holy Spirit must be the Teacher and Guide. Since He reaches men only through faith in Christ, whereas the work-righteous reject faith and retain the Law, it is impossible for them to perform this service. Therefore the Christian religion is easy, as I said, if you regard only the outward acts. But if you consider this spiritual service, it is most difficult, for you cannot perform this unless your heart is changed" (AE 12:87).

JAMES—NOTE ON 3:18 *harvest of righteousness*. Bounty of righteous actions. The list in v 17 is only representative; there is no limit to the benefits others receive from our righteous actions. *peace*. Repeated for emphasis. Contrasts with the cursing, poisonous tongue (vv 6–10) and echoes Mt 5:9.

JAMES—NOTE ON **Ch 3** There are only two ways to live: by the "wisdom" of the world or by God's wisdom. James condemns the worldly pattern of selfishness, deception, hurtful words, and other evil behaviors. Christians, too, struggle with such sins and are even tempted to present themselves as holier than others. How different is the wisdom of God! He has purified us in Christ and freed us from the stain of the world. We now walk in the works He has prepared for us to do. • O Lord, purify me so that my words may uplift, strengthen, bring peace where there is strife, and bring sincerity where there is falsehood. Use my lips to speak Your glory, to tell of Your wonderful deeds, and to proclaim Your salvation. Amen.

JAMES—NOTE ON 4:1 *quarrels… fights*. Struggles with others. James shows the sinful source. *passions*. Desires, such as jealousy and ambition (3:14), that give sinful pleasure. *at war*. This sinful nature fights against the new person in Christ.

JAMES—NOTE ON 4:2 *murder*. Desires lead to sinful attitudes that Scripture equates with murder (1Jn 3:15); they can also lead to spiritual death (Jas 1:14–15). Murder may not have literally taken place in Christian congregations, but the sin of envy, left unchecked, could lead to such abominable behavior. Jealousy led to violence in Gn 4:1–16; 37; Mk 15:10; Ac 5:17–18. 1 Clem: "Envy and jealousy led to the murder of a brother [Abel]" (*ANF* 1:6). *you do not ask*. Asking for the things that God has promised to give is key, as in Jas 1:5–8, where asking God for wisdom is encouraged (cf v 3).

JAMES—NOTE ON 4:3 *you ask wrongly*. Not that the wrong words are used but that the motive is selfish, seeking only worldly treasures. Instead of selfish prayer, intercessory prayer for others is encouraged (5:14–15). James is not developing a complete theology of prayer but demonstrating that people without wisdom from God cannot pray properly.
JAMES—NOTE ON 4:4 *adulterous*. Echoes Yahweh's condemnation of Israel's covenant unfaithfulness (see notes, Is 57:3; Hos 3:1). God made us His Bride through faith in Christ; rejecting Him for the world's ways is adultery. *friendship with the world*. Not mere acquaintance but a sharing in all things. A life devoted to wealth and selfish ambition has no room for God. See note, 2:23.
JAMES—NOTE ON 4:5 May be translated "Do you suppose that the Scripture speaks uselessly? Does the spirit that He causes to dwell in us crave jealously?" *spirit*. Not the Holy Spirit (who is not mentioned in Jas), but the person's spirit that God has enlivened.
JAMES—NOTE ON 4:6 *He gives more grace*. Or, "He gives a greater gift," referring to God as the giver of gifts, specifically wisdom (1:5, 17). Luth: "Those who say: Ah, but I have done as much as I possibly can; I have done enough, and I hope that God will give me grace—they set up an iron wall between themselves and the grace of God. But if you feel within yourself the urge to call upon God and pray and plead and knock, then grace is already there; then call upon it and thank God" (AE 51:43).
JAMES—NOTE ON 4:7 *Submit yourselves*. To place oneself under God's authority, which is shown most powerfully when He forgives. Parallels "Humble yourselves" in v 10. How submission and humbling takes place is described in vv 7–10. The language of these verses strongly echoes OT calls to repentance. Cf Is 57:14–16. *Resist the devil*. Parallels "Draw near to God" in v 8 and refers back to the evil wisdom of 3:15. Resisting the devil is, therefore, the same as turning to God in repentant prayer (cf 1Pt 5:8–9).
JAMES—NOTE ON 4:8 *Draw near to God*. In a prayer of repentance (cf Ps 119:169–70; Hos 12:6). *draw near to you*. God will answer prayer (Dt 4:7), here by forgiving sins. *Cleanse your hands … purify your hearts*. Based on Ps 24:3–4. "Heart" refers to intention; "hands" refers to action. Both attitudes and actions are purified by repentance and forgiveness.
JAMES—NOTE ON 4:9 *wretched … mourn … weep*. Actions described by the prophets as signifying or calling for repentance (cf Mi 2:4; Jl 1:5).

laughter be turned to mourning … joy to gloom. More signs of repentance (cf Mi 1:8–9; Jl 1:12).

JAMES—NOTE ON 4:10 *Humble yourselves*. Result of being laid low before God because of sin (cf v 7; Ps 51:17). Cf Jas 1:9. *exalt you*. After repentance comes God's forgiveness, new life, and ultimately the crown of life (1:12). Jesus teaches that those who humble themselves before God will be exalted (Lk 18:14).

JAMES—NOTE ON 4:11 *speak evil*. Slander. *against the law*. The Law forbids slander (Lv 19:16; cf Ps 50:19–20; 101:5). A slanderer rejects the "royal law" (Jas 2:8) and tries to judge God's Law. *if you judge the law*. All of God's laws are to be obeyed. The person who rejects them judges the Law and God Himself. *doer of the law*. Cf 2:14–26.

JAMES—NOTE ON 4:12 *judge your neighbor?* Not simply deciding something, but condemning unjustly (cf v 11). Also does not refer to the need to restore the sinning brother, as described in 5:19–20; Gal 6:1–2.

JAMES—NOTE ON 4:1–12 Using the language of the Prophets, James teaches that rejecting God's ways is spiritual adultery. It is seeking something other than the faithful God who loves us. God's people of every generation have been unfaithful to Him. James does not call us to turn to ourselves and do more works to be forgiven but instead calls us to return to the Lord in repentance. Even when we are unfaithful, God remains faithful. He has already purchased us by the blood of Christ. His love does not depend on our faithfulness or works but on His faithfulness and His work in Christ. • "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from Your presence, and take not Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit" (Ps 51:10–12). Amen.

JAMES—NOTE ON 4:13 James addresses those who think their lives are in their own hands, to be used as they desire. They think they know all about their future, such as when ("today or tomorrow"), where ("such and such a town"), how long ("a year"), and what will happen ("make a profit"). Planning is not being condemned, but rather the assumption that we are completely in control. Condemnation for making money for its own—or our own—sake is made more explicit in 5:1–6. *trade and make a profit*. Addresses merchants. Cf 5:4.

JAMES—NOTE ON 4:14 We do not control time or history; God does. We should not act as if our lives are most important.

JAMES—NOTE ON 4:15 *If the Lord wills*. Not a formula but an attitude of humility that recognizes God gives us time and resources to use for His purposes (cf Mt 6:10). Expressed in the Christian notation "DV" (*Deo volente*, "by the will of God").
JAMES—NOTE ON 4:16 *you boast in your arrogance*. As if they were God. *evil*. Because such boasting is not from God (cf 3:14).
JAMES—NOTE ON 4:17 *knows the right thing to do*. Refers to submitting to God's will (v 15). To not do this (sin of omission) makes one guilty of breaking all the Law (2:10).
JAMES—NOTE ON 4:13–17 Like James's first readers, we strive to be self-sufficient and to develop detailed plans for our lives. Planning can be good stewardship, but not if our plans crowd out the things God would have us do. James reminds us to seek what "the Lord wills." This simple statement is a confession of faith and shows confidence in the Lord's care for us. Time and again, He has shown His fatherly, divine goodness and mercy toward us. He has given us life by His Son, Jesus Christ. Now, freed from seeking our own needs, we serve others. • Thank You, Lord, for the gift of each day. Help me to see each one as guided by Your care and lived for Your glory. Through me, bless my family, my co-workers and neighbors, and all the world. Amen.
JAMES—NOTE ON 5:1–6 As in 4:13–17 and 2:2–7, this section warns against self-reliance that does not submit to God's will but turns from God toward "friendship with the world" (4:4).
JAMES—NOTE ON 5:1 *weep and howl*. Frequently used to describe the suffering of God's people because of His judgment on their unfaithfulness (Jl 1:5; Mal 2:13).
JAMES—NOTE ON 5:2–3 *rotted … moth-eaten … corroded*. Possessions are transitory (Lk 12:33). *last days*. Their riches are not simply providing a long and comfortable life to their last days but rather testify to their greed. But in these last days (Heb 1:2; 1Pt 1:20) comes the Last Day, the day of God's judgment (Am 8:9–10).
JAMES—NOTE ON 5:4 *your fields*. James addresses landowners who were unjust to their workers (cf 4:13). *Lord of hosts*. Title used for Yahweh, in particular when He comes in power to judge (Is 5:9; Zec 13:2). See p 1291.
JAMES—NOTE ON 5:5 Compares the wealthy to fattened cows that are slaughtered for a feast; they have fattened themselves, but they will be

destroyed.
JAMES—NOTE ON 5:6 *murdered*. Selfish desires lead to murder. See note, 4:2. *righteous person*. Not a reference to Jesus; cf 1Ki 21, Naboth, instead. *He does not resist you*. Or, "Does not He (God) oppose you?" This translation fits with 4:6, where the same verb is used ("God opposes the proud").
JAMES—NOTE ON 5:1–6 James condemns the wealthy for living as if this life is all there is to live for and as if Christ will not return. God's Word repeatedly warns against this attitude. It is easy to think that such words do not apply to us because there is always someone wealthier, someone greedier. But Scripture teaches, "You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that you by His poverty might become rich" (2Co 8:9). In Christ, we have the riches that come from God alone—above all, the gift of faith. He will give us the crown of life. • "Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! … For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be glory forever. Amen" (Rm 11:33, 36).
JAMES—NOTE ON 5:7 *patient*. Based on trust in God's promises. *brothers*. Following a stern rebuke of the wealthy (4:13–5:6), James now speaks words of comfort, addressing his readers with a more personal term (cf vv 9, 10). See note, 1:2. *the coming of the Lord*. Jesus' return in glory (2Th 2:1). *farmer waits*. Confident that the harvest will come, a farmer patiently waits for the crop to ripen. Similarly, confidence in Christ's return leads to patience. *early and the late rains*. See calendar, p 262.
JAMES—NOTE ON 5:8 *Establish your hearts*. Or, "strengthen your hearts"; confidence that comes from trust in the Lord (Ps 10:17).
JAMES—NOTE ON 5:9 *the Judge is standing at the door*. Jesus' return is at hand and can occur at any time (Mk 13:32–37). The Lord may judge here and now, but certainly also on the Last Day.
JAMES—NOTE ON 5:10 *prophets*. They waited for God's judgment rather than trying to enact it themselves. The condemnations they spoke were not their own words but God's (cf 2Ch 36:16).
JAMES—NOTE ON 5:11 *those blessed*. Any Christian who receives strength and patience from the Lord, including the prophets (v 10), Job (v 11), and James's readers. See p 842. *steadfast*. Synonymous with "patient" in vv 7–8, 10. *purpose of the Lord*. Goals and plans God has for His people; ultimately, eternal life (1:12). This purpose remains even when He permits

suffering (v 10). *compassionate and merciful*. Characteristics ascribed to Yahweh at the giving of the Ten Commandments. See "mercy," pp 842–843.

JAMES—NOTE ON 5:7–11 The return of Jesus in glory shapes the Christian life. Confidence in His return (vv 7–8) gives us a perspective on how we relate to one another (v 9) and our sufferings (v 10). God promises to remain with us and restore us to Himself (v 11). In our shortsighted, self-focused lives, we dwell on our own problems and try to deal with them ourselves. The quicker we get out of a mess, the better. But this is not God's perspective. He looks at the true goal: eternal life with Him. Consequently, our sufferings can be borne with patience. He gives faith to sustain us through suffering and confidence to endure all things until He comes again. • Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly! Yet grant me patience as I wait on You. Amen.

JAMES—NOTE ON 5:12 *swear*. Taking an oath. Oaths are unnecessary when one always speaks the truth. Cf Lv 19:12; Mt 23:16–22. See p 7.

JAMES—NOTE ON 5:13–14 *suffering? … cheerful? … sick?* In all circumstances, good or bad, Christians call upon God and trust in His provision, acknowledging that all things happen by His will (cf 4:13–17).

JAMES—NOTE ON 5:14 *elders*. Leaders among God's people, in both OT (Ex 19:7; 24:1) and NT (Ac 11:30; Ti 1:5); sometimes refers to pastors. See p 228. *pray over him, anointing him with oil*. Anointing is a physical sign accompanying the prayer, much like incense in Levitical worship (Ex 30). In the ancient world, oil was used for medicinal purposes (cf Lk 10:34). Here it is placed on the person while praying, marking that person as one set apart for God's care. A similar practice is described in Mk 6:13. The anointing oil in Ex 30:22–31 had a similar function, marking certain items as holy, dedicated to God. *in the name of the Lord*. Indicating that it is the Lord who heals, according to His will.

JAMES—NOTE ON 5:15 *prayer of faith*. Prayer spoken from faith (cf 1:6). *save*. See p 1904. Gk word can mean "heal," which is more appropriate here, though salvation is also in view in v 16. *raise him up*. Make him better physically (Mk 2:9; Lk 7:14), but also with a view toward the ultimate goal of the resurrection of the dead in Christ. So in Ac 3:1–4:22, Peter raised up the lame man and announced that by the name of Jesus "whom God raised from the dead" (3:15; 4:10) the man was healed. *committed sins, he will be forgiven*. Illness is sometimes a consequence of specific sins (Dt 28:58–62;

1Co 11:29–30), but not always (Jn 9:1–3). Still, sickness and death are consequences of our general fallen condition. In Christ, God is able to heal our bodies, which He will raise up on the Last Day.

JAMES—NOTE ON 5:16 *confess your sins to one another*. "Here the reference is not to confession made to priests, but is the reconciliation of brothers to each other. Confession should be mutual" (Ap XIIB 12). God directs us to confess our sins to others as to Him, and to forgive sins in His name. The confession of sins to one another is implied in Mt 18:15–16. Cf Mk 1:5; 1Jn 1:9. Luth: "Conduct yourselves in such a way that each humbles himself before the other and confesses his guilt, if he has offended someone" (AE 36:356). *righteous person*. One who is righteous by faith; same as one who prays "in faith" (Jas 1:6; cf 5:15). See p 843. *power*. God's response to prayer, which accomplishes what human will and strength cannot. Luth: " 'The prayer of a righteous man has great power in its effects' if it is serious and persistent…. God intends to test you to see whether you can hold on tight, and to teach you that your prayer is not displeasing to Him or unheard, simply because His answer is delayed and you are permitted to go on seeking and knocking" (AE 21:234–35).

JAMES—NOTE ON 5:17–18 *nature like ours*. Human and a sinner. *did not rain … gave rain*. God's power was seen in His answer to sinful Elijah's prayer.

JAMES—NOTE ON 5:19–20 Summarizes the entire Letter.

JAMES—NOTE ON 5:19 *wanders from the truth*. Strays from right teaching ("word of truth"; 1:18) and right living ("false to the truth"; 3:14). *brings him back*. Implies seeking out one who has wandered, in order to restore him through confession and forgiveness.

JAMES—NOTE ON 5:20 *his soul*. Of the sinner who is brought back. *from death*. The person left in sin will die in sin (1:15; cf 5:15). *cover a multitude of sins*. More than we can number; God forgives all our sins.

JAMES—NOTE ON 5:12–20 James has been calling sinners to repentance, and here he exhorts the entire congregation to do the same. No aspect of our lives is private, only between "me and God." We hide behind facades of perfection, but sin and its consequences pervade every aspect of our lives. Left on our own, we would perish. But our Lord has given us a community of fellow saints to hear our confession, pray for our needs, and restore us when we err. We hear His Gospel from them. God continuously sends into our lives those who pray for us, sing praise with us, and speak

God's words of forgiveness to us. As His people, healed in body and soul, we may approach His throne of grace with confidence. • I place my life into Your hands, Lord. Save me, heal me, and use my voice to praise You, to pray for my brothers and sisters, and to speak Your forgiving Word. Amen.

1 Peter

1 Peter 1 | 1 Peter 2 | 1 Peter 3 | 1 Peter 4 | 1 Peter 5

- Introduction to 1 Peter
  - Overview
  - Reading 1 Peter
  - Luther on 1 Peter
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

Greeting

1 [1]†† Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who are elect exiles of
the dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,
[2]† according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of
the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood:
May grace and peace be multiplied to you.

Born Again to a Living Hope

3 ‡† Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to
his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through
the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 † to an inheritance that is
imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, 5 † who by
God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be
revealed in the last time. 6 † In this you rejoice, though now for a little while,
if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, 7 † so that the tested
genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it
is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at
the revelation of Jesus Christ. 8 † Though you have not seen him, you love
him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with
joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, 9 † obtaining the outcome of
your faith, the salvation of your souls.

10 † Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the
grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully, 11 † inquiring
what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he
predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories. 12 † It was
revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you, in the
things that have now been announced to you through those who preached
the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into
which angels long to look.

Called to Be Holy

13 ‡ † Therefore, preparing your minds for action,[1] and being sober-
minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the
revelation of Jesus Christ. 14 † As obedient children, do not be conformed to
the passions of your former ignorance, 15 † but as he who called you is holy,
you also be holy in all your conduct, 16 † since it is written, “You shall be
holy, for I am holy.” 17 † And if you call on him as Father who judges
impartially according to each one’s deeds, conduct yourselves with fear
throughout the time of your exile, 18 † knowing that you were ransomed from
the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things
such as silver or gold, 19 † but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a
lamb without blemish or spot. 20 † He was foreknown before the foundation
of the world but was made manifest in the last times for the sake of you
21 † who through him are believers in God, who raised him from the dead and
gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.

22 † Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere
brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart, 23 ‡ † since you
have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through
the living and abiding word of God; 24 ‡ † for

> “All flesh is like grass
> and all its glory like the flower of grass.
> The grass withers,
> and the flower falls,
> 25 but the word of the Lord remains forever.”

And this word is the good news that was preached to you.

A Living Stone and a Holy People

2 [1]So put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and
all slander. [2]Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by
it you may grow up into salvation— [3]if indeed you have tasted that the
Lord is good.

[4]As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of
God chosen and precious, [5]you yourselves like living stones are being built
up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices
acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. [6]For it stands in Scripture:

> "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone,
> a cornerstone chosen and precious,
> and whoever believes in him will not be put
> to shame."

[7]So the honor is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe,

> "The stone that the builders rejected
> has become the cornerstone,"[1]

[8]and

> "A stone of stumbling,
> and a rock of offense."

They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.

[9]But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people
for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who
called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. [10]Once you were not a
people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy,
but now you have received mercy.

[11]Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the
passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. [12]Keep your
conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you

as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.

Submission to Authority

13 ††Be subject for the Lord’s sake to every human institution,[1] whether it
be to the emperor[2] as supreme, 14 †or to governors as sent by him to punish
those who do evil and to praise those who do good. 15 †For this is the will of
God, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish
people. 16 †Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-
up for evil, but living as servants[3] of God. 17 †Honor everyone. Love the
brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor.

18 †Servants, be subject to your masters with all respect, not only to the
good and gentle but also to the unjust. 19 †For this is a gracious thing, when,
mindful of God, one endures sorrows while suffering unjustly. 20 †For what
credit is it if, when you sin and are beaten for it, you endure? But if when
you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight
of God. 21 †For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for
you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. 22 †He
committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. 23 †When he was
reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten,
but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. 24 †He himself
bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to
righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. 25 † For you were
straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of
your souls.

Wives and Husbands

3 [1]‡†Likewise, wives, be subject to your own husbands, so that even
if some do not obey the word, they may be won without a word by the
conduct of their wives, [2]†when they see your respectful and pure conduct.
[3]†Do not let your adorning be external—the braiding of hair and the putting
on of gold jewelry, or the clothing you wear— [4]†but let your adorning be
the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and
quiet spirit, which in God's sight is very precious. [5]†For this is how the holy
women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves, by submitting to their
own husbands, [6]†as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord. And you are
her children, if you do good and do not fear anything that is frightening.

[7]†Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way,
showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with
you[1] of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.

Suffering for Righteousness' Sake

8 ‡ † Finally, all of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a
tender heart, and a humble mind. 9 † Do not repay evil for evil or reviling for
reviling, but on the contrary, bless, for to this you were called, that you may
obtain a blessing. 10 ‡ For

> "Whoever desires to love life
> and see good days,
> let him keep his tongue from evil
> and his lips from speaking deceit;
> 11 let him turn away from evil and do good;
> let him seek peace and pursue it.
> 12 For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous,
> and his ears are open to their prayer.
> But the face of the Lord is against those who
> do evil."

13 Now who is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is good?
14 † But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be
blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, 15 † but in your hearts honor
Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone
who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with
gentleness and respect, 16 † having a good conscience, so that, when you are
slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to
shame. 17 † For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God's
will, than for doing evil.

18 † For Christ also suffered[1] once for sins, the righteous for the
unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh
but made alive in the spirit, 19 † in which[2] he went and proclaimed[3] to the
spirits in prison, 20 † because[4] they formerly did not obey, when God's
patience waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in
which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through water.
21 † Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of

dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, [22]† who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him.

Stewards of God’s Grace

4 [1]‡†Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh,[1] arm yourselves
with the same way of thinking, for whoever has suffered in the flesh has
ceased from sin, [2]†so as to live for the rest of the time in the flesh no longer
for human passions but for the will of God. [3]†For the time that is past
suffices for doing what the Gentiles want to do, living in sensuality,
passions, drunkenness, orgies, drinking parties, and lawless idolatry. [4]†With
respect to this they are surprised when you do not join them in the same
flood of debauchery, and they malign you; [5]†but they will give account to
him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. [6]†For this is why the
gospel was preached even to those who are dead, that though judged in the
flesh the way people are, they might live in the spirit the way God does.

[7]†The end of all things is at hand; therefore be self-controlled and sober-
minded for the sake of your prayers. [8]†Above all, keep loving one another
earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins. [9]†Show hospitality to one
another without grumbling. [10]‡†As each has received a gift, use it to serve
one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace: [11]†whoever speaks, as
one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the
strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be
glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever
and ever. Amen.

Suffering as a Christian

12 ††Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you
to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. 13 †But
rejoice insofar as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice
and be glad when his glory is revealed. 14 †If you are insulted for the name
of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory[1] and of God rests
upon you. 15 †But let none of you suffer as a murderer or a thief or an
evildoer or as a meddler. 16 †Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not
be ashamed, but let him glorify God in that name. 17 †For it is time for
judgment to begin at the household of God; and if it begins with us, what
will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God? 18 †And

> "If the righteous is scarcely saved,
> what will become of the ungodly and the
> sinner?"[2]

19 †Therefore let those who suffer according to God's will entrust their souls
to a faithful Creator while doing good.

Shepherd the Flock of God

5 [1] ‡ ‡ † So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a
witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is
going to be revealed: [2] † shepherd the flock of God that is among you,
exercising oversight,[3] not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would
have you;[4] not for shameful gain, but eagerly; [3] † not domineering over
those in your charge, but being examples to the flock. [4] † And when the chief
Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.
[5] † Likewise, you who are younger, be subject to the elders. Clothe
yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for "God opposes
the proud but gives grace to the humble."

[6] † Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at
the proper time he may exalt you, [7] † casting all your anxieties on him,
because he cares for you. [8] † Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary
the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.
[9] † Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering
are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world. [10] † And
after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called
you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen,
and establish you. [11] † To him be the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Final Greetings

12 ††By Silvanus, a faithful brother as I regard him, I have written briefly
to you, exhorting and declaring that this is the true grace of God. Stand firm
in it. 13 † She who is at Babylon, who is likewise chosen, sends you
greetings, and so does Mark, my son. 14 †Greet one another with the kiss of
love.

Peace to all of you who are in Christ.

1 Peter

OVERVIEW

Author
Simon Peter the apostle

Date
Before AD 67

Places
Pontus; Galatia; Cappadocia; Asia; Bithynia

People
Peter; exiles of the Dispersion; unbelievers; Gentiles; governmental leaders; servants; wives and husbands; elders of the Church; younger believers; Silvanus; “she who is at Babylon”; Mark

Purpose
To instruct and encourage the Lord’s people as they endure suffering for the sake of righteousness

Law Themes
Sin; ignorance of foolish people; perishable; disobeying God’s Word; darkness; judgment; fiery trials

Gospel Themes
Christ bore our sins in His body; He suffered for us; He ransomed sinners; He is imperishable; Christ’s death involved a righteous man dying for unrighteous people (the great exchange); marvelous light; stand firm in God’s grace; God’s Word is the living and abiding Word; good news; royal priesthood; holy nation; chosen race

Memory Verses

Ransomed by Christ's blood (1:17–19); the chosen people (2:9–10); healed by Christ (2:24–25); Baptism now saves you (3:18–22)

Introduction to 1 Peter

Reading 1 Peter

"When will the new flock return from the high pasture?" a young shepherd complained. "We should have the gate closed and all things settled for the night."

"Patience," said the chief shepherd. "We have comfort enough. Our brother has a treacherous climb down the hill. New lambs and nursing ewes will slow everything down. But rightly so. Little ones must eat, and shepherds must keep watch and wait and lead them safely home."

In his first Letter, Peter encourages elders in Asia Minor to watch over their congregations with patient care (5:1–11) and nurture them in the new life God gives. These new Gentile congregations were enduring significant suffering due to persecution and alienation from the corrupt culture in which they lived. Peter describes them as God's people—chosen, holy, and supremely precious to the chief Shepherd, the Lord Jesus.

Luther on 1 Peter

This epistle St. Peter wrote to the converted heathen; he exhorts them to be steadfast in faith and to increase through all kinds of suffering and good works.

In chapter 1 he strengthens their faith through the divine promise and power of the salvation to come. He shows that this salvation has not been merited by us but was first proclaimed by the prophets. Therefore they ought now to live new and holy lives, and forget the old life, as those who have been born anew through the living and eternal Word of God.

In chapter 2 he teaches them to know Christ as the Head and the Cornerstone, and like true priests to sacrifice themselves to God as Christ sacrificed himself. And he sets about giving instructions to the various estates. First he teaches in general subjection to temporal rulership; afterward he teaches in particular that servants are to be

subordinate to their masters and [even] to suffer wrong from them, for the sake of Christ who also suffered wrong for us.

In chapter 3 he teaches wives to be obedient, even to unbelieving husbands, and to adorn themselves with holiness. Likewise, husbands are to be patient with their wives and bear with them. And finally, all in general are to be humble and patient and kind to one another, as Christ was because of our sins.

In chapter 4 he teaches us to subdue the flesh with sobriety, watchfulness, temperance, prayer, and to find comfort and strength through the sufferings of Christ. He instructs the spiritual rulers to inculcate the words and works of God alone, and each to serve the other with his gifts; and not to be surprised but to rejoice, if we have to suffer for the name of Christ.

In chapter 5 he exhorts the bishops and priests as to how they are to live and to tend the people. He warns us against the devil, who without ceasing pursues us everywhere. (AE 35:390–91)

For more of Luther's insights on this Book, see *Sermons on the First Epistle of St. Peter* (AE 30:1–145).

Challenges for Readers

Authorship. The excellent Greek style of this Letter and the use of the LXX has led some modern scholars to doubt whether Peter, known as a simple fisherman (Ac 4:13), could have written it. However, early Christian testimony unanimously attributes the work to Peter. The author acknowledges that he had help (1Pt 5:12). Silvanus, who was also a colleague of the apostle Paul (cf Ac 15–17; 18:5; 2Co 1:19; 1Th 1:1; 2Th 1:1), likely acted as Peter's scribe and assistant.

Baptism. Though Baptism is mentioned directly only once (3:18–22), references to Baptism appear throughout the Letter (e.g., 1:3, 23; 2:2, 9–10). Some scholars have concluded that 1 Peter is actually based on an Eastertide liturgy or was originally presented as a sermon to newly baptized members of a congregation. However, it is not possible to prove these suggested occasions for the work.

Suffering. Peter writes about Jesus' suffering for our redemption (1:18–21; 2:21–25; 5:4) as a way of helping the congregation understand the deeper spiritual significance of the suffering they were experiencing. His focus on suffering is not meant to teach Christians that they must suffer or seek out suffering and persecution but to help them see they will never escape some suffering so long as they are living in a sinful world.

Use of the OT. Though the congregations of Asia Minor likely had more Gentile members than Jewish ones, Peter makes extensive use of OT imagery to describe them. For example, he calls them "elect exiles of the dispersion" (1:1), "a holy priesthood" (2:5), "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation" (2:9). He calls the congregation children of Abraham and Sarah (3:6), writing as though they were naturally born Israelites. Peter illustrates that the OT truly functioned as the Holy Bible and fount of early Christian teaching. (See pp xlv–xlvii.) Also, he shows how God was uniting Jews and Gentiles in the Christian congregations.

Household Code. Peter begins ch 3 with a "household code," a guideline for conduct. The apostle Paul also writes in this way, showing the importance of helping early Christians find their way in a society with very different beliefs and practices. See note, Eph 5:22–6:9.

Blessings for Readers

As you read 1 Peter, pray for your brothers and sisters who face suffering. Count it all joy that your Lord Jesus Christ suffered all pain and shame in order to redeem you (3:18) and all who call upon Him. As He gives you strength, rejoice in your sufferings, knowing that you share in the sufferings of Christ (4:13). As with Jesus, the sufferings you face must give way to the subsequent glories God will reveal in you (1:11; 5:10).

OUTLINE

I. Apostolic Salutation (1:1–2)
II. Introductory Thanksgiving (1:3–12)
A. God to Be Praised for New Life in Christ (1:3–5)
B. Christians Are Strengthened and Sustained in Their Suffering by Joy and Hope (1:6–9)
C. Salvation Was Foretold by the Prophets (1:10–12)
III. Christians Are to Lead Holy Lives (1:13–2:10)
A. Newfound Status Demands That Christians Be Holy, as God Is (1:13–16)
B. Believers Are Mindful of the Price of Their Redemption (1:17–21)
C. Christians Turn Away from Malice as They Mature in Faith and Love (1:22–2:3)
D. As Living Stones in God's Temple, His Royal Priesthood and Chosen People, Christians Proclaim His Excellencies (2:4–10)
IV. Specific Instruction and Encouragement for Holy Living (2:11–4:11)
A. The Purpose of Holiness (2:11–12)
B. Christians Submit to Civil Authorities (2:13–17)
C. Household Slaves Submit to the Authority of Their Masters (2:18–25)
D. A Wife Yields to Her Husband's Authority as Head of the Household (3:1–6)
E. A Husband Demonstrates Godliness by Respecting His Wife (3:7)
F. Humility, Unity, a Tender Heart, and Brotherly Love Characterize Christian Brotherhood (3:8–12)
G. Christian Virtue Sends a Powerful Message to Outsiders and Gives Opportunity for Witnessing (3:13–17)

H. Jesus Was Treated Unjustly and Then Gloriously Vindicated (3:18–22)
I. Jesus' Example Inspires His People to Overcome Surrounding Evil (4:1–6)
J. Nearness of the End Stimulates Christians to Faithfulness (4:7–11)
V. Joy Amid Suffering and Further Clarifications about What Is Expected of the Community (4:12–5:11)
A. Suffering for the Sake of Christ Is a Sharing in Him (4:12–19)
B. Elders Have Special Responsibilities and Promises (5:1–4)
C. Younger Men Are to Submit Humbly to the Community's Elders (5:5)
D. Concluding Exhortation to Humility and Trust (5:6–11)
VI. Final Greetings (5:12–14)
A. Silvanus's Help (5:12)
B. Other Brothers from the Church in "Babylon" (Rome) Send Greetings (5:13)
C. The Holy Kiss and the Peace of Christ (5:14)

Articles and Resources Related to 1 Peter

- Peter's Life and Ministry
- The Church as God's Crew

Peter's Life and Ministry

The following chart shows all the places where Peter (also called Simon and Cephas) is mentioned in the Bible. Look up the Bible references to learn more about this fascinating servant of our Lord.

Peter worked as a fisherman in Bethsaida and Capernaum when Jesus called him as a disciple, along with his brother Andrew. Peter left his business, wife, and family in order to follow Jesus. The Gospels describe him asking many questions of Jesus, boldly confessing his faith that Jesus is the Christ, and even arguing with Jesus. Peter was one of Jesus' closest disciples, along with James and John.

Peter helped prepare the Passover meal, disagreed with Jesus' display of servanthood, and boasted that he would never abandon Jesus. Though Peter fled when Jesus was arrested, he risked his own arrest by following Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest. That night, he denied that he knew Jesus. Peter later repented and became the first apostle to witness the empty tomb. Jesus purposely restored Peter as a leader among the apostles.

The fish that Peter and the other disciples caught suggested the earliest known symbol for the Christian faith. A clever disciple took the letters of the Greek word for fish—*ichthus*—and created an acronym meaning "Jesus Christ, God's Son, Savior."

Peter guided the earliest meetings of the apostles, preached to crowds in Jerusalem, and healed the sick. Though Peter valued his Jewish heritage, God used him to affirm the faith of the Samaritans and proclaim the Gospel among the Gentiles. He endured imprisonment and, according to tradition, was crucified upside down in Rome. His life and Letters show his rich faith in Jesus as the Savior of all humanity. They show what incredible things God can do through the life of a humble fisherman.

The Church as God's Crew

Around AD 200, the early Christian writer Tertullian compared the Church to a ship, navigating amid the treacherous reefs and inlets of this sinful world. Soon the early Christians adopted this description for their church buildings, calling the main part of the building a "nave" (from the Lat *navis*, from which we get the Eng word *navy*). They viewed the congregation as the crew of a ship, following their captain (the pastor) over wave and shoal.

The idea of the Church as a ship did not start with Tertullian. The apostle Peter—a fishing captain by trade—began this tradition when he compared the Church to Noah's ark (1Pt 3:18–22). In this comparison, Peter wanted to emphasize the unity and safety that God provides through His Church. God calls His people together to support one another as they journey toward their eternal goal.

Together in Christ

When we invite people to go to church with us, we sometimes hear them say, “I don’t need to go to church to be a Christian.” We might point out that the author of Hebrews encourages his readers to continue assembling together (Heb 10:25). But apart from that verse, we do not find any passage in the New Testament that tells us we *must* go to church.

Maybe God does not tell us we *must* go to church because He wants our worship attendance to flow from a love for Him and not from a rule or regulation, though the Third Commandment certainly still applies for our worship today. In the worship service, God comes to us through Word and Sacrament. If that does not draw Christians together, what will?

When we assemble together as the Church, we remember an important part of our faith. On the one hand, faith in Jesus is very personal. No one can believe for me. On the other hand, our faith includes others. For example, when Jesus teaches us to pray, He tells us to say, “*Our* Father” (Mt 6:9, emphasis added). We belong together, united in faith as God works through Word and Sacrament in us as individuals and as the Church. If we ask, “Who am I?” we should answer, “I am a member of God’s Church.”

Heaven on Earth

In the Old Testament, God established a heavenly place on earth. He directed Moses to build the tabernacle (Ex 25–26) and later told Solomon to build the temple (1Ki 6). Each structure was divided into (1) the Most Holy Place, where the ark of the covenant sat; (2) the Holy Place, which housed the bread of the Presence, the gold lampstands, and the altar of incense; and (3) the outer courtyard, where the priests offered the sacrifice for the worshipers. Like an earthly embassy, the tabernacle and temple compounds were considered part of the homeland they represented. In other words, both the tabernacle and the temple were earthly copies of heaven (cf Heb 9 for a superb treatment of this subject). If someone wanted to seek God, he or she went to the temple.

This created a problem. Sinful people cannot approach a righteous and holy God. Like a moth drawn to the flame, we are drawn to God's "unapproachable light" (1Tm 6:16). But also like a moth who comes too close to the flame, we sinners die when we come face-to-face with God. No one can see God and live (Ex 33:20). In His mercy, God established the tabernacle and the temple as places where sinners, through a priestly representative, could approach Him and live. As the author of Hebrews points out, this approach was subject to many restrictions and much sacrifice. Finally, the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ, our great High Priest, opened the way for sinners to come to God personally.

A Spiritual House

When Peter tells us that we are a "spiritual house" and a "holy priesthood" (1Pt 2:5), he challenges us to consider that our faith is bigger than "God and me." Our faith in Christ necessarily involves our congregations. We are perhaps all familiar with Paul's statement that our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit (1Co 3:16–17; 6:19). English readers miss Paul's point, at least in part. When he writes "you" or "your," he uses the plural form. The picture he has in mind is that all the Christians in Corinth *together* form the Body of Christ, in which the Holy Spirit dwells. Individual Christians, by virtue of their Baptism into Christ, do receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Nevertheless, Paul's point (and Peter's challenge) is that we are united in faith. We belong to Christ and to one another, bound together by the Holy Spirit (cf Gal 3:26–29).

When we are baptized into God's holy name, God does more than save us from our sins. He brings us into the community of faith, the holy family of believers (see pp xxvi–xxx). Because we are baptized into Christ Jesus (the living temple of God), we become part of God's temple on earth (1Pt 2:4–5).

Peter calls us a "holy priesthood" (1Pt 2:5) and a "royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for His own possession" (1Pt 2:9). An Old Testament priest made sacrifices to God. By means of their sacrificial work, people had access to God. Peter uses this image to describe the work God has given us to do: to offer "spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ" (1Pt 2:5). By offering these spiritual sacrifices, we "proclaim the excellencies of Him who called [us] out of darkness into His marvelous light" (1Pt 2:9).

Life as Priests

God makes His glory known through the Church, both to the visible and to the invisible creation (Eph 3:10–11). When we put our faith into practice, living the love that God gives us in Christ Jesus, we fulfill our purpose as God's Church. We tell people about Jesus, but we do not stop there. We practice a genuine concern for others by helping to feed, house, and clothe those in need. We think of their welfare and not just our own. The world tells us to "look out for number one" and teaches us how to live in a "dog-eat-dog" environment. Christ shows us a better way, sacrificing Himself for us and calling us to follow His example.

At our Baptism, God gave us a new birth into His holy family. He made us part of His Church, a living temple that He spreads across the globe. Through this "temple without walls," He reaches out to save all people, rescuing them from sin and damnation by His marvelous grace. Who are you? You are part of that community of faith. You belong together with other Christians. You belong to God's chosen people.

Footnotes

Footnotes for 1 Peter, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:13 Greek *girding up the loins of your mind*

Footnotes for 1 Peter, Chapter 2

- [1] 2:7 Greek *the head of the corner*
- [1] 2:13 Or *every institution ordained for people*
- [2] 2:13 Or *king*; also verse 17
- [3] 2:16 Greek *bondservants*

Footnotes for 1 Peter, Chapter 3

- [1] 3:7 Some manuscripts *since you are joint heirs*
- [1] 3:18 Some manuscripts *died*
- [2] 3:19 Or *the Spirit, in whom*
- [3] 3:19 Or *preached*
- [4] 3:20 Or *when*

Footnotes for 1 Peter, Chapter 4

- [1] 4:1 Some manuscripts add *for us*; some *for you*

- [1] 4:14 Some manuscripts insert *and of power*
- [2] 4:18 Greek *where will the ungodly and sinner appear?*

Footnotes for 1 Peter, Chapter 5

- [3] 5:2 Some manuscripts omit *exercising oversight*
- [4] 5:2 Some manuscripts omit *as God would have you*

Study Notes

1 PETER—NOTE ON 1:1 *apostle*. One sent by Jesus Christ to proclaim His Word. As an eyewitness to Jesus, Peter was an important witness to the truth of the Gospel (cf Mt 16:17–19; Lk 24:44–49; Jn 20:21). See p 1901. *elect*. Chosen by God's grace to belong to Him (Eph 1:4; Col 3:12; 2Th 2:13). See "chosen," p 1901. *exiles*. Those living away from their true home: heaven. *dispersion*. Gk *diaspora*. Refers to Jews scattered beyond the land of Israel. Peter addresses both Jewish and Gentile Christians throughout Asia Minor. People from the areas listed were in Jerusalem on Pentecost (Ac 2:9–11). See p 1556.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 1:2 Greeting includes works by the persons of the Trinity. *foreknowledge*. God not only knew us before we had any knowledge of Him, but He also chose us by His grace before the foundation of the world (Eph 1:4; 1Tm 2:4; 2Tm 1:9). See note, Rm 8:29. *sanctification of the Spirit*. He calls us from sin to faith, holiness, and good works. *obedience*. Paired in Gk with sprinkling, which likely indicates Jesus does the activities (the "foreknowledge" and "sanctification" are also works of God). Jesus obeyed the Father and sprinkles us with His blood shed on the cross. *sprinkling*. Not Baptism only. By the preaching of the Gospel, believers are sprinkled with the blood of Christ the Lamb (Ex 24:4–8; Is 52:15; Heb 9:11–14, 18–22). Luth: "It would be the greatest slander and blasphemy of the name of Christ if we refused to honor Christ's blood for washing away our sin or refused to believe that this blood makes us holy. Hence you must believe and confess that you are holy, but by this blood and not by reason of your own piety" (AE 30:7).

1 PETER—NOTE ON 1:1–2 Peter writes to Christians who struggle because they live in this world but are really citizens of heaven. He reminds them of their election in Christ and His gifts of forgiveness, life, and salvation. Apart from God's grace in Christ, this sinful world has no hope in the midst of trials, persecution, and eternal death. God, through His Son, brings reconciliation and forgiveness of sin for all who believe by grace through faith that Christ is Savior. In Him we have grace and peace. • Lord Jesus Christ, thank You for redeeming me and making me a citizen of heaven. Amen.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 1:3 *Blessed*. Or, "praised." God is praised for saving us. See p 842. *living hope*. Not a pious wish but a solid promise of God. This hope gives life. Luth: "Peter … exhorts them to be steadfast in faith and to increase through all kinds of suffering and good works…. He strengthens their faith through the divine promise and power of the salvation to come" (AE 35:390). *resurrection*. Our redemption and eternal life are guaranteed by the resurrection of Jesus, the firstborn from the dead (Col 1:18).

1 PETER—NOTE ON 1:4 *inheritance*. Through Christ, God has promised us the riches of heaven. See "heir," p 1902. *kept in heaven*. Our true home (see note, v 1). Nothing in this world can take our inheritance from us. Luth: "This blessing is ours forever and ever, even though we do not see it now…. On earth no pleasure is so great that it does not become unpleasant as time goes on. We see that one becomes weary of everything. But this blessing is different. All this is ours in Christ, by God's mercy, if we believe" (AE 30:13).

1 PETER—NOTE ON 1:5 *guarded through faith*. God keeps us in the faith He created and by which we are saved. "The knowledge of this faith is necessary to Christians, brings the most abundant comfort in all troubles, and shows us Christ's office" (Ap V 266). *salvation*. Deliverance from sin and death to live with God forever. *last time*. God's promised salvation will be fully revealed on Judgment Day.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 1:6 *various trials*. Situations that test one's faith. See note, Jas 1:2. Though believers should not seek out trials, they should be ready to face them in faith, with God's power.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 1:7 *tested genuineness*. As the true character of gold is seen in a refiner's fire, so faith's true character is revealed when tested. *perishes*. All earthly treasures will eventually be destroyed, but through faith, we will live with our Savior forever. Luth: "All Scripture compares temptation to fire. Thus here St. Peter also likens the gold that is tested by fire to the testing of faith by temptation and suffering. Fire does not impair the quality of gold, but it purifies it, so that all alloy is removed. Thus God has imposed the cross on all Christians to cleanse and to purge them well, in order that faith may remain pure, just as the Word is, so that one adheres to the Word alone and relies on nothing else. For we really need such purging and affliction every day because of the coarse old Adam" (AE 30:17).

1 PETER—NOTE ON 1:8 *not seen Him*. Unlike Peter, we are not eyewitnesses of Jesus, but through faith, we believe in Him and love Him. Our eyes will see Him on the Last Day, but even now we encounter Christ through His Word and Sacraments as He gives us saving faith, forgiveness, salvation, and eternal life. *glory*. As Peter saw Jesus' glory in the transfiguration, so by faith we are filled with His glorious presence.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 1:9 *outcome*. Or, "goal." True faith in Christ brings eternal salvation. "It is clear from God's Word that faith is the proper and only means through which righteousness and salvation are not only received, but also preserved by God" (FC SD IV 35).

1 PETER—NOTE ON 1:10 *prophesied … grace*. Grace in Christ summarizes the prophetic proclamation of God's Word. *searched and inquired*. The prophets sought knowledge of the coming Messiah. What they longed to know has been revealed to us in Jesus Christ. See p 1245.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 1:11 *Spirit of Christ*. The Trinity began to be revealed in the OT. See note, Nu 6:22–27. The prophets learned of Christ through the Holy Spirit. "The Spirit is and remains Christ's [1 Peter 1:11] and the Father's own Spirit to all eternity, not separated from God's Son…. The entire fullness of the Spirit has been communicated by the personal union to Christ according to the flesh, which is personally united with God's Son" (FC SD VIII 73). *in them*. Like us, they had the gift of the Holy Spirit, who created faith in them. The Spirit also revealed God's Word to them. *predicted the sufferings of Christ*. Though sometimes forgotten by God's people, the prophets clearly foretold the suffering, death, and triumph of the Messiah. See p 1245. *subsequent glories*. The prophets also foretold Jesus' resurrection and triumph, gifts that are shared with us.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 1:12 Angels had heard of the coming salvation for mankind but had not understood it, even though at times they announced the prophecies. *serving … you*. Prophets, apostles, and pastors serve God's people by proclaiming the Gospel. *preached … by the Holy Spirit*. Though spoken by human beings, God's Word came by the Holy Spirit; it is not of merely human origin (2Pt 1:21). See pp xxvi–xxx. *angels long to look*. The greatest, holiest mystery of all time—the incarnation and work of Christ—was revealed among humans. Though we may neglect this great treasure, all heaven worships the God of our salvation.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 1:3–12 We are born in sin and continue to commit sins in this fallen world. By ourselves, we have no hope of

salvation or blessings. But God foretold His gracious plans through the prophets. In the fullness of time, He sent His Son to be our Redeemer. He has given us the gift of His Holy Spirit, that we might be brought to faith and persevere in the faith. Through Jesus Christ, we now have a living hope and know the promise of God that we will live in Him forever. We can face any trial or challenge, knowing that we are safe in His care. • Lord God, heavenly Father, give grace to preachers who proclaim Christ and Your Word. Grant that those who hear Your Word may learn of His all-availing sacrifice on the cross. Strengthen us in our faith in the midst of suffering, that we may gaze upon the glory of our Savior. Amen.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 1:13 Salvation is fully revealed in Christ's return. *preparing*. Spiritual and mental preparation, chiefly through trust in Christ's salvation, for the challenges before them. *grace that will be brought*. Confidence comes from knowing that Christ's work guarantees the goal of our salvation.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 1:14 *former ignorance*. Before conversion, they did not know God's will and sinned without realizing it. This is no longer the pattern of their lives. Luth: "Here you see how St. Peter traces all misfortune to ignorance. For where faith and the knowledge of Christ are lacking, nothing but error and blindness remain, so that one does not know what is right and what is wrong. Then people fall into vices of all kinds" (AE 30:31).

1 PETER—NOTE ON 1:15 *called*. God calls us by the Gospel to saving faith and a living hope. *be holy*. Set apart from the world, following God's perfect standards. See p 1902.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 1:16 *You shall be holy, for I am holy*. Though we remain sinners, we are simultaneously saints, justified by Christ. God now empowers us to strive against the world and the devil.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 1:17 *call on Him*. Cf Rm 10:13; see p 842. *judges impartially*. God judges based on His perfect holiness and the righteousness of Christ. He alone is perfectly just. *fear*. Not terror but reverence (Pr 1:7; 16:6); humble awareness of our place before God. See p 1001. *exile*. Time away from our true, heavenly home (1:1). See p 1079.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 1:18 *ransomed*. Christ bought our freedom from sin, death, and the devil. The payment was His own perfect blood. See SC, Second Article, p xxxvii; cf Mt 20:28; Eph 1:7; Rv 5:9; see also p 1904. *futile ways*. Various ways of living apart from God's will, such as pursuing

evil desires, following other religions, or relying on ritualism or laws to save. There is no redemption apart from Christ's work. See note on "dead works," Heb 6:1.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 1:19 In the OT, a sacrifice had to be perfect. This foreshadowed Christ the perfect sacrifice, free from all sin and worthy of saving all people. See note, Lv 1:3. Luth: "Just one drop of this innocent blood would have been more than enough for the sin of the whole world. Yet the Father wanted to pour out His grace on us so abundantly and to spend so much that He let His Son Christ shed all His blood and gave us the entire treasure. Therefore He does not want us to make light of and think little of such great grace; but He wants us to be moved to conduct ourselves with fear, lest this treasure be taken away from us" (AE 30:36).

1 PETER—NOTE ON 1:20 Even before creation, God determined the plan of salvation and chose to send His Son to be our Redeemer. *before the foundation*. Cf Rv 13:8. *last times*. Began with Christ's incarnation and will culminate in His glorious return. See note, Ac 2:17.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 1:21 *through Him*. Christ is the only way to the Father. *God, who raised Him*. The resurrection is attributed to the Holy Trinity. Cf Rm 8:11. *glory*. As God, Jesus naturally had this glory. The resurrection manifested His glory to others. See p 1902.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 1:22 *obedience*. Peter calls forgiven Christians to do what God's Word teaches. This flows from the life we have in Christ's resurrection (v 21). *brotherly love, love one another*. Peter uses two different words for love. Obedience results in sincere love (Gk *philadelphia*) of fellow Christians. Having been forgiven, they now have pure hearts and are called to love with complete self-sacrificing love (Gk *agape*). *pure heart*. See note, Ps 51:10.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 1:23–25 *word*. The Holy Spirit works faith through the proclamation of the Gospel—in the OT, in the preaching of the apostles, in the emerging NT documents, and above all, in Christ, the Word made flesh (Jn 1:14).

1 PETER—NOTE ON 1:23 *born again*. As a redeemed child of God. See note, Jn 3:5. *imperishable*. Bringing forth eternal life. *living and abiding word of God*. God's Word brings life and salvation by the eternal Spirit's power (cf Mt 24:35).

1 PETER—NOTE ON 1:24–25 God's changeless will and Word are constant in this changing life. The Law condemns sinners; the Gospel works

faith and hope through Christ. This passage is the motto of the Book of Concord (see *Concordia*, Preface, p 2).

1 PETER—NOTE ON 1:24 *flesh*. Our unredeemed existence. Bodily life quickly passes, but God's promises are trustworthy and eternal.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 1:13–25 Even before creation, God knew that mankind would fall into sin, reject His ways, live only for themselves, and lead lives that result in death and alienation from Him. In His love, before the world was made, He determined to send His Son, the unblemished Lamb, to be our sacrifice. Now through His Word, He calls us to life and sets us apart to His glory and for the service of our neighbor. God shows us our value: He was willing to send His Son for us. Now He calls us to share the Savior with others. • Heavenly Father, thank You for the gift of Your Gospel, that through Your Son we are born again, forgiven, and given life everlasting. May we rightly praise You for Your infinite mercy. Amen.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 2:1 *put away*. By daily contrition and repentance. The Christian lives in a constant state of grace.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 2:2 As an infant craves its mother's milk, so Christians crave God's nourishing Word. *grow up into salvation*. New converts may have a minimal knowledge of Christian teachings, but all Christians should strive to mature in their faith, which leads to the full blessings of salvation. See notes, 1Co 3:2; Heb 5:12, 14. Luth: "The milk is nothing but the Gospel, which is also the very seed by which we were conceived and born, as we heard above. This is also the food that nourishes us when we grow up; it is the armor which we put on and with which we equip ourselves. Yes, it is everything put together. But the admixture is the human doctrines with which the Word of God is adulterated" (AE 30:48–49).

1 PETER—NOTE ON 2:3 *tasted that the Lord is good*. Infants are satisfied by their mother's milk. Christians likewise find that God's Word satisfies their deepest needs. See note, Ps 34:8.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 2:4 *living stone*. Cf vv 6–8. The people of God are the temple in which He dwells; Christ is the cornerstone. *chosen and precious*. The Father chose His own dear Son to be our Savior. This is God's eternal plan. See notes, v 9; 1:1.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 2:5 *spiritual house*. The Church is the temple of the Holy Spirit, where He dwells. See note, 1Co 3:16. *holy priesthood*. All Christians are priests, having direct access to God through Christ. *offer*

spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God. Priests offer sacrifices; thus Christians offer the sacrifices of prayer, praise, and thanksgiving. These are acceptable to God because of the greatest sacrifice, Jesus Christ (cf Heb 9–10). Luth: "Since Christ is the Groom and we are the bride, the bride has everything that the Groom has, even His own body. When He gives Himself to the bride, He gives Himself entirely as what He is; and the bride, in turn, also gives herself to Him" (AE 30:53).

1 PETER—NOTE ON 2:6 Is 28:16 prophesies that though Jerusalem would be destroyed, God would build a new Jerusalem that could not be destroyed. This prophecy was fulfilled in the creation of the Church. See "Zion," p 844.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 2:7 *honor*. Citizenship in the new Jerusalem is not something earned; it is a gift of God that honors us.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 2:8 Is 8:14 explains that although Christ was to be a sanctuary for Judah and Israel, those who rejected Him would fall in unbelief and be crushed. *destined*. Unless they repent and come to faith, sin will destroy them (e.g., Judas).

1 PETER—NOTE ON 2:9 *chosen race*. As the Israelites were once the chosen people of God, now Christians are the new Israel, chosen by God. *royal priesthood*. The priests belong to the King, God Himself. Luth: "Each and all are … equally spiritual priests before God…. Faith alone is the true priestly office…. Therefore all Christian men are priests, all women priestesses, be they young or old, master or servant, mistress or maid, learned or unlearned" (AE 35:101). *holy nation*. God's people, individually and collectively, are set apart to do His will (Ex 19:5–6). *a people for His own possession*. Repeats the truth that God's people belong to Him. See "portion," p 7. *called you out of darkness*. Sin and alienation from God. *marvelous light*. Only in Jesus, the light of the world, can we truly see things as they are. Cf Jn 1:4–13; 3:19–21. Luth: "We must recognize in our hearts and believe that we receive everything from Him and that He is our God. Then out with it, and freely and openly confess this before the world—preach, praise, glorify, and give thanks! This is the real and only worship of God, the true office of the priest, and the finest, most acceptable offering" (AE 14:32).

1 PETER—NOTE ON 2:10 *not a people … God's people*. Apart from God, humans are isolated and not in relationship with Him or others. Having

received God's blessings, He places us in His Body, the Church. Now we belong; we are part of God's people. See note, Hos 1:9.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 2:11 *Beloved*. Peter is also part of God's people; he addresses other Christians as family members. *sojourners and exiles*. Citizens of heaven who are not yet living in their true home (cf 1:1). *passions of the flesh*. Sinful desires. See "flesh," p 1902. *wage war*. Our sinful flesh is constantly tempting us to sin.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 2:12 *Gentiles*. Lit, "nations." Unbelievers pay attention to the actions of Christians. *see your good deeds*. Good works, esp unexpected things, often make a strong impact on unbelievers (Mt 5:16). Deeds that demonstrate belief are a powerful witness. *day of visitation*. Time when God reveals Himself. Previous good experiences with Christians may make unbelievers more likely to consider what Christians teach.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 2:1–12 Like all people, we were born in sin and lived in the darkness of the world. But Christ, the light of the world, has called us out of darkness into His light. He makes us His own, gives us a place as citizens of His kingdom, and empowers us to live as His royal priesthood. We are not alone but are part of His people, a holy nation. Now that same Savior calls us to tell others of His love. Through our words and actions, we proclaim the life and salvation that is ours in Jesus. • Lord Jesus, as the cornerstone, You make us living stones in Your house and servants of Your Gospel. Bless us with a heart for the lost, that they may come to saving faith in You. Amen.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 2:13 *every human institution*. God established the Church to bless His people. But He has also established secular government for good order and a harmonious life. Christians are subjects of both kingdoms.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 2:14 *punish … praise*. Evildoers invite the full justice of the civil law; the obedient are given wide latitude to use their freedom (see notes, Rm 13:1–2).

1 PETER—NOTE ON 2:15 When Christians live out their faith, they prove that the world's slanderous accusations are false.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 2:16 Christians are free from forced obedience to the Law; nonetheless, they voluntarily use their freedom in service to others. *cover-up for evil*. Freedom from the Law's demands does not excuse sinful behavior. We strive to follow God's will but never rely on our efforts

for salvation. *living as servants of God*. Our actions are not motivated by the Law but by love of God.
1 PETER—NOTE ON 2:17 *Honor everyone*. Everyone rightfully in authority, whether in the Church or the state, is to receive their due honor. *brotherhood*. The Church. *Fear God*. God must be honored and obeyed above all. See p 1001. *Honor the emperor*. Even corrupt human authorities should be honored and obeyed as long as they do not command that Christians violate God's will.
1 PETER—NOTE ON 2:18 *Servants*. Specifically addresses household servants. See p 101. *be subject … to the unjust*. Even those who mistreat others are our neighbors. Christians are to serve even unjust authorities, who may see their example and come to faith (cf 3:1).
1 PETER—NOTE ON 2:19 Righteous living in the face of injustice demonstrates reliance on God's grace. Christians who suffer for the sake of the Gospel find favor with God, and they witness to His power.
1 PETER—NOTE ON 2:20 *do good and suffer for it*. Bearing a cross for the sake of the Gospel may be difficult, but it is a holy, precious, noble, and blessed calling. Christians face such sufferings with God's strength.
1 PETER—NOTE ON 2:21 *called*. God calls Christians to live out their faith in the midst of suffering. See p 837. *Christ also suffered for you*. Our sufferings pale in comparison to what Christ suffered for us. *example*. We first receive Christ as our Savior and deliverer. Only then is He an example for us to follow. *follow in His steps*. We are to bear the cross, if God wills, just as His Son did for us (Mt 10:38–39).
1 PETER—NOTE ON 2:22 Jesus never sinned, not even in the face of completely undeserved suffering. See note, Heb 4:15.
1 PETER—NOTE ON 2:23 *reviled*. Though mocked by His lying accusers, Jesus never responded in kind. *entrusting Himself*. He relied on His Father, who will justly punish the wicked and reward the righteous (cf 4:19; Mt 10:28).
1 PETER—NOTE ON 2:24 *bore our sins*. Death is the consequence of sin (Rm 6:23). Christ's death was for our sin and not His own. *die to sin and live to righteousness*. Because of Christ's crucifixion, believers are dead to sin, so they may live new lives and present themselves to God as instruments of righteousness. See note, Gal 6:14. *By His wounds you have been healed*. We find life and forgiveness because of Christ's suffering. See note, Mt 4:23. Luth: "We crucified Him with our sins. We are still far from

suffering what He suffered. Therefore if you are a pious Christian, you should tread in the footsteps of the Lord and have compassion on those who harm you. You should also pray for them and ask God not to punish them. For they do far more harm to their souls than they do to your body. If you take this to heart, you will surely forget about your own sorrow and suffer gladly. Here we should be mindful of the fact that formerly we, too, led the kind of unchristian life that they lead, but that we have now been converted through Christ" (AE 30:86).

1 PETER—NOTE ON 2:25 *straying*. Wandering from God's ways into sin. *Shepherd and Overseer of your souls*. The chief Shepherd calls His sheep back into His fold through His Gospel. With His Word, He feeds and cares for those who were perishing.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 2:13–25 Scripture never teaches that those who follow Jesus will be immune to suffering. Just as Jesus, our sinless Savior, faced unjust suffering and death, so we may be called to take up our own cross to follow Him. But if God gives us a cross to carry, He also promises to give us the strength to bear it by faith. Christ our Shepherd calls us by name, brings us into His fold through the Gospel, and cares for us in the midst of suffering. We are honored to follow Him. • Gracious God, we praise You for Your mercy through Your Son, who bore our sins in His body on the tree. Give us grace to reach out to our enemies with the power of Your Gospel, which works faith and saves eternally. Amen.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 3:1 *Likewise*. As believers submit to civil authorities (2:13–17) and servants submit to masters (2:18–25). *wives, be subject to your own husbands*. God's order of creation (see note, 1Tm 2:13; see also p 1291) should be a delight, not an affliction. Though sin has corrupted that order, in Christ there is sanctity and forgiveness in marriage. Here submission aids Christian witness. See note, Eph 5:22–6:9. *obey the word*. Believe its message. See note, Rm 1:5. *won without a word*. Behavior of Christian wives demonstrates their faith through sanctified living; they gently proclaim Christ in all they do.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 3:2 *pure conduct*. Irreproachable behavior motivated by faith.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 3:3 True beauty is not found in lavish adornment but in faith and service to Christ.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 3:4 Wealth and outward beauty are passing, but in Christ personal character motivated by a transformed life endures. *precious*.

God values things that are often overlooked by humans.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 3:5 *holy women who hoped in God*. Chief virtue of these spiritual ancestors was their faith.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 3:6 *obeyed*. Gk *hupakouo*, "listen, respond to." *calling him lord*. Or, "master"; title of respect. *her children*. As Abraham is the father of believers, Sarah is our matriarch and a special example to Christian women. *do not fear*. Believers follow God's will, even if they have pagan spouses.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 3:7 *understanding way*. Understanding God's will for marriage. *honor*. Since a wife is a gift from God and of one flesh with her husband (Gn 2:24), she deserves honor. *weaker vessel*. Some feminist interpreters have taken offense at this expression. However, the apostle actually chooses his wording to express care, not disrespect, for women. Physically, women are typically smaller in size and weaker in strength, which could make them vulnerable to abuse. Peter admonishes husbands not to exploit their size and strength in unkind ways. Husband and wife complement each other in God's design. *heirs with you*. All are saved in the same way: by grace. See "heir," p 1902. *grace of life*. Christ's work gives life to all who belong to Him. *your prayers may not be hindered*. Disrespect and mistreatment would prevent husband and wife from praying together. Such sins would also cause God to refuse their requests. Luth: "A husband must bear in mind that his wife is a Christian too and is God's work or vessel. Both should conduct themselves in such a way that the wife holds her husband in honor and that the husband, in turn, gives his wife the honor that is her due. If this were observed, peace and love would reign. Otherwise, where this understanding is lacking, there is nothing but aversion in marriage. For this reason it happens that if a man and a woman take each other solely for the purpose of sensual pleasure and are intent on having happy days and sensual pleasure, they find nothing but heartache. But if you have regard for God's work and will, you can lead a Christian life in matrimony. Then you will not live as the heathen live" (AE 30:92).

1 PETER—NOTE ON 3:1–7 God's divine order calls men to love their wives sacrificially and to care for them. Wives are called to love their husbands and be subject to them. Sadly, sin affects marriage and families. We sometimes view God's gift as a burden or hardship. When a believing wife speaks the Gospel gently to her unbelieving husband and demonstrates her faith in action, the power of the Gospel may lead him to salvation.

When a husband truly loves his wife and treats her with honor, the family is strengthened, and all are blessed. When our families fall short of this calling, our gentle heavenly Father calls us to follow Him and is ever prepared to forgive us. • Gracious Father, sin has corrupted Your gift of marital and familial relationships. Grant that we do not fall into the ways of a corrupt culture, but by Your Word, stay true to spouse and family. Amen.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 3:8 *unity of mind*. From a common faith in Christ. *tender heart*. Compassion for others. *humble mind*. Not exalting oneself in pride but considering others as Christ did (cf Php 2:6–8). Luth: "Here you see what true brothers are. They cling together much more closely than any friends do. We Christians should also do this, for we are all brothers through Baptism. After Baptism even my father and my mother are my brother and my sister, for through faith I have the very same blessing and inheritance from Christ that they have" (AE 30:96).

1 PETER—NOTE ON 3:9 *bless*. Opposite of retribution. Do not retaliate for wrongs, but respond with the Gospel. Christ did this perfectly. *called, that you may obtain a blessing*. We bless others as God has loved, called, and blessed us. See "bless," p 1901.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 3:10–12 David wrote these words while fleeing for his life from Saul. Even then he remembered God's call to act uprightly.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 3:14 Whatever trials or sufferings Christians face, they know that Christ grants strength, forgiveness, and life everlasting.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 3:15 *in your hearts honor Christ the Lord*. Christian witness begins with a person's own faith. We must know what we believe, teach, and confess according to God's Word. *prepared to make a defense*. Gk *apologia*. Positive testimony and witness to the truth of the Gospel. Christianity stands up to scrutiny and investigation because it is true. Christians are to be prepared to tell others about this truth whenever they have the opportunity. *hope*. Others notice the Christian's faithful response to adversity, which may cause them to seek the reason and thus hear the Gospel. See p 1903. *gentleness and respect*. Defending the Gospel should not be done with arrogance or militance; God calls for a gentle witness to the truth.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 3:16 *good conscience*. Given to us in our Baptism (v 21).

1 PETER—NOTE ON 3:17 God may put us in difficult situations to chastise, strengthen, draw us back into His fold, or to benefit others. He will

never give us more than we can bear. See notes, 1Co 10:13; Heb 12:7. Luth: "Here St. Peter again presents the Lord Christ to us as an example and always refers to the suffering of Christ…. Christ was righteous. For doing right He also suffered for us, who were unrighteous. But He did not seek the cross. No, He waited until it was God's will that He should drink the cup. He should be the model for us to imitate" (AE 30:110).

1 PETER—NOTE ON 3:18 God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit worked together in the cause of our redemption. *suffered once for sins*. Our sufferings do not atone for our sin; Christ made atonement for us by His cross. His resurrection gives absolute certainty that His sacrifice was effective. See note, Heb 7:27. *alive in the spirit*. Christ's human spirit and body, separated in death, were reunited in His resurrection. Luth: "We are one sacrifice with Him. As He dies, so we, too, die according to the flesh; as He lives in the spirit, so we, too, live in the spirit" (AE 30:111).

1 PETER—NOTE ON 3:19 Christ descended into hell to declare His victory over death and all evil forces. His power surpasses all others. Scripture does not teach that He offered these spirits a second chance for salvation. "It is enough if we know that Christ descended into hell, destroyed hell for all believers, and delivered them from the power of death and of the devil, from eternal condemnation and the jaws of hell. We will save our questions 'and not curiously investigate' about how this happened until the other world. Then not only this 'mystery', but others also will be revealed that we simply believe here and cannot grasp with our blind reason" (FC Ep IX 4).

1 PETER—NOTE ON 3:20 Noah preached to these spirits (unbelievers), who failed to hear and believe God's Word. Thus they perished and remain in hell until the final judgment.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 3:21 *Baptism … now saves you*. The flood is a figure of Baptism. In each case, water saves. The world was cleansed when Noah and his family were lifted up by the flood. Baptism cleanses and raises us to new life. By grace, Baptism is a means of salvation through which the Holy Spirit produces faith (cf Eph 5:25–27). Luth: "Now baptism is by far a greater flood than was that of Noah…. Baptism drowns all sorts of men throughout the world, from the birth of Christ even till the day of judgment…. [Noah's flood] was a flood of wrath, this is a flood of grace" (AE 35:32). See p 1369. *an appeal to God for a good conscience*. We are forgiven and holy because of Christ. That forgiveness is applied to us in

Baptism. See note, Heb 10:22. *through the resurrection*. The life we are given in Baptism was earned by Christ. See note, Rm 6:4.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 3:22 *right hand of God*. Not a physical place but a description of supreme authority. "Now He has ascended to heaven, not merely as any other saint, but as the apostle testifies [Ephesians 4:10], above all heavens. He also truly fills all things, being present everywhere, not only as God, but also as man. He rules from sea to sea and to the ends of the earth, as the prophets predict [Psalm 8:1, 6; 93:1–4; Zechariah 9:10] and the apostles testify [Mark 16:20]. He did this everywhere with them and confirmed their word with signs. This did not happen in an earthly way. As Dr. Luther explains, this happened according to the way things are done at God's right hand…. 'God's right hand' is no set place in heaven, as the Sacramentarians assert without any ground in the Holy Scriptures. It is nothing other than God's almighty power, which fills heaven and earth" (FC SD VIII 27–28). *angels, authorities, and powers*. Christ is Lord over all things and all creatures. See note, Eph 1:21.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 3:8–22 In the midst of trials, we may be tempted to feel self-pity and despair. But God calls us to something greater. Jesus Christ is our Savior. He suffered and died for us. He rose to give us life. His power and authority is above all others. Our powerful Lord forgives us in our Baptism and gives us His life. He places us in the Church, where we may support and bless one another. And He blesses us by allowing us to tell others about the life we have in Him so that they, too, may share in His blessings. • "Almighty eternal God, according to Your righteous judgment You condemned the unbelieving world through the flood. In Your great mercy You preserved believing Noah and his family. You drowned hard-hearted Pharaoh with all his host in the Red Sea and led Your people Israel through the same on dry ground. By these events You prefigured this bath of Your Baptism. And through the baptism of Your dear Child, our Lord Jesus Christ, You consecrated and set apart the Jordan and all water as a salutary flood and rich and full washing away of sins. We pray through Christ for Your boundless mercy that You will graciously behold us and bless us with true faith in the Spirit. Then, by means of this saving flood, all that has been born in us from Adam and which we ourselves have added thereto may be drowned in us and engulfed. May we be separated from the number of the unbelieving, preserved dry and secure in the holy ark of Christendom, and serve Your name at all times fervent in spirit and joyful in

hope. With all believers may we be made worthy to attain eternal life according to Your promise; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen" (*TLWA*, p 364).

1 PETER—NOTE ON 4:1 *Christ suffered in the flesh*. Truly man (Jn 1:14), Christ suffered just as other humans do. Luth: "He [became] a man like us, so that it could be called God's dying, God's martyrdom, God's blood, and God's death. For God in his own nature cannot die; but now that God and man are united in one person, it is called God's death when the man dies who is one substance or one person with God" (AE 41:104). *same way of thinking*. Be compassionate as Christ was, not repaying evil with evil (3:9). *ceased from sin*. One who is committed to the point of suffering, like Christ, has a new focus and is not occupied with personal pleasure. Though we continue to be sinners, we are also declared righteous and saints before God. When we are in Christ Jesus, we know we are forgiven and so can live with a new attitude. Luth: "We never become perfectly pure while we are living on earth, and everyone still finds evil lust in his body. To be sure, faith begins to slay sin and to bestow heaven; but it has not yet become perfect and really strong" (AE 30:118). Cf Rm 7.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 4:2 Our lives now belong to God and to His service.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 4:3 *time that is past suffices*. Even if we never sinned again, we have committed more than enough sins. Forgiven in Christ, we should not seek new opportunities to follow the pattern of this world. *lawless idolatry*. All sin is rebellion against God's Law and ultimately idolatrous (see LC I 319–29).

1 PETER—NOTE ON 4:4 *flood of debauchery*. Sin that overwhelms a person's life (cf v 3).

1 PETER—NOTE ON 4:5 *give account*. Answer to God for their sins. *judge the living and the dead*. Final judgment of all humanity. See SC, Second Article, p xxxvii.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 4:6 *gospel was preached even to those who are dead*. Before the Gospel enlivened us with a saving faith in Christ, we were spiritually dead in our sins.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 4:7 *end … at hand*. Christians live in expectation of the return of Christ, which could be at any time. Whether by His return or by our death, we should always be prepared to meet Him. See note, 3:15. *self-controlled and sober-minded*. Synonyms indicating personal control of

one's actions. We should avoid willful sin. *for the sake of your prayers*. Sin hinders prayer by turning our attention from God to ourselves. Cf v 3.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 4:8 *love covers a multitude of sins*. In Christ, we love others and freely forgive them. Of itself, our love has no power to forgive. "No apostle would have imagined (a) our love overcomes sin and death, (b) love satisfies God's wrath and reconciles us to God, while excluding Christ as Mediator, and (c) love in and of itself is righteousness before God without Christ as Mediator" (Ap V 117). "Let everyone use his tongue and make it serve for the best of everyone else, to cover up his neighbor's sins and infirmities [1 Peter 4:8], excuse them, conceal and garnish them with his own reputation" (LC I 285).

1 PETER—NOTE ON 4:9 *hospitality*. Lit, "love of a stranger." Welcome all people, not just fellow believers. See note, Gn 18:4.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 4:10–11 The Spirit gives different gifts to Christians to be used in service to others. *grace*. Refers to all of these gifts. See note, Rm 12:6.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 4:10 *stewards*. God's gifts are not personal possessions but are meant to be used according to His will.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 4:11 *oracles of God*. Or, "words of God"; uplifting speech governed by Scripture. *To Him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen*. Words and deeds glorify God. Peter is not simply talking about glorifying God; he is actually worshiping Him. See note, Dn 7:14. On "dominion," see pp 1565–66.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 4:1–11 Christ suffered in the flesh and became sin (2Co 5:21) in our stead. He now calls us to live the new life He has given us as stewards of His gifts. Everything we have, even our lives, are used to benefit the Church and our neighbor. Through our words and actions, we bring Christ to a world that is dead in sin so that some may come alive in Christ, even as we have been made alive. • Lord Jesus, as You have had compassion on us by Your Word, instill in us compassion for the lost and those in the peril of unbelief. Amen.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 4:12 *fiery trial … to test you*. Cf 1:6–7; 2:20–21. Great suffering afflicts some Christians, who may bear such crosses as God strengthens them through affliction. See pp 2102–4. Luth: "God lays a cross on all believers in order that they may taste and prove the power of God—the power which they have taken hold of through faith" (AE 30:127).

1 PETER—NOTE ON 4:13 *share Christ's sufferings*. Suffering for the sake of the Gospel, while unpleasant, is an honor for Christians, who know that their Savior suffered to save them. See note, Php 3:10. *His glory is revealed*. When the Gospel's effects are seen in your life and witness.
1 PETER—NOTE ON 4:14 *insulted … blessed*. Christ transforms the world's taunts into His blessing (cf Ac 5:41). *Spirit of glory and of God*. We do not face insults and persecution alone; God is with us to empower and to bless us.
1 PETER—NOTE ON 4:15 Suffering the effects of our own sin is not bearing the cross. *meddler*. One who wants to supervise the affairs of others.
1 PETER—NOTE ON 4:16 *glorify God*. By confessing Christ, even if it means death or adversity. *that name*. Christian.
1 PETER—NOTE ON 4:17 *judgment*. Some will see the effects of their own sin (v 15). God allows us to face such consequences that we might repent. *do not obey the gospel*. Or refuse to believe. Without faith in Christ, there is no hope. See note, Rm 1:5. Luth: "The time of judgment, foretold by the prophets, is at hand [Jer 25:29; Ezk 9:6]. When the Gospel is preached, God begins to punish sin, in order that He may kill and make alive" (AE 30:130).
1 PETER—NOTE ON 4:18 This proverb teaches that believers may suffer the effect of their sins. Unlike unbelievers, they face such suffering in faith, trusting in God's deliverance.
1 PETER—NOTE ON 4:19 *suffer according to God's will*. Not for their sins but for the sake of the Gospel. Luth: "[Peter] teaches us to subdue the flesh with sobriety, watchfulness, temperance, prayer, and to find comfort and strength through the sufferings of Christ" (AE 35:391). *entrust their souls*. Trusting that God will preserve them. *faithful Creator*. Our Maker will continue to care for us graciously.
1 PETER—NOTE ON 4:12–19 God permits suffering in our lives for a variety of reasons. Sometimes it comes as a direct result of our own sin in order to discipline us. Other times it is an effect of being God's child in a world that wants to crush His Church. Although we do not know God's hidden will, we trust He has only the best in mind for us. He will strengthen, uphold, and bless us in the midst of persecution. He will use any afflictions we face for our good or for blessing others. With our eyes on the cross, we can endure. Our God will preserve us, and He has prepared an

eternal home for us in heaven for the sake of Christ. • Lord God, in the midst of trials and persecution, keep our hearts and minds stayed on You, our only refuge. Amen.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 5:1–2 *elders … shepherd … oversight*. Words used in the NT to describe the pastoral office. See note, Ti 1:5; cf Ac 20:17; Php 1:1; 1Tm 3:2; 5:17; Ti 1:7; see also p 228. "All who preside over churches are both bishops and elders" (Tr 62).

1 PETER—NOTE ON 5:1 *witness*. Peter was with Jesus from the beginning of His earthly ministry; he was a witness of all of its phases, including the climactic events of His suffering and resurrection. *partaker in the glory*. Peter witnessed the transfiguration and saw the resurrected Christ. See "glory," p 1902.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 5:2 *shepherd the flock of God*. As Christ fed and shepherded His followers, pastors care for their churches. See notes, 2:25; Heb 13:20–21. *oversight*. See note, 1Pt 5:1–2. *not under compulsion*. Pastors should serve gladly and willingly. "Truly good works should be done willingly, or from a voluntary spirit, by those whom God's Son has made free" (FC SD IV 18). Luth: "A pastor must not only lead to pasture by teaching the sheep how to be true Christians: but, in addition to this, he must also repel the wolves, lest they attack the sheep and lead them astray with false doctrine and error. For the devil does not rest. Now today one finds many people who can let the Gospel be preached, provided that one does not cry out against the wolves and preach against the prelates. But even if I preach in the right way and tend and teach the sheep, this protecting and guarding does not suffice to keep the wolves from coming and leading the sheep astray. For what is built if I lay stones and watch someone else knock them down?" (AE 30:135).

1 PETER—NOTE ON 5:3 *not domineering*. Pastors are servants of the Church, not taskmasters (Mk 10:42–45; cf Php 2:6–11). *examples*. Modeling the faith as well as teaching it.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 5:4 *chief Shepherd*. Christ is the head of the Church (Eph 5:23; see p 228). All pastors serve under His authority and ministry. *unfading crown of glory*. Symbol of salvation.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 5:5 *subject to the elders*. The young in faith are esp in need of the pastor's spiritual care. This is a blessing, not a burden. See note, Heb 13:17. *Clothe yourselves … with humility*. Do not boast; consider

yourself a servant of others. *gives grace*. True honor comes from the Lord; He knows what we need and provides it.
1 PETER—NOTE ON 5:6 *Humble yourselves*. See note, Jas 4:10. *proper time*. When it fits God's purpose and benefits others or ourselves.
1 PETER—NOTE ON 5:7 Pray knowing that God provides for your needs. "The person who knows that he has a Father who is gracious to him through Christ truly knows God" (AC XX 24).
1 PETER—NOTE ON 5:8 *Be sober-minded … watchful*. Pray for Christ's return (cf 1Th 5:6, 8). *devil prowls around like a roaring lion*. Satan seeks to harm Christians in any way possible. Under Nero, some Christians literally faced death by lions in the Roman arena. The devil "tries every trick and does not stop until he finally wears us out, so that we either renounce our faith or throw up our hands and put up our feet, becoming indifferent or impatient" (LC V 26).
1 PETER—NOTE ON 5:9 *Resist him*. By God's Word, which gives us strength and guidance to face temptations (Eph 6:11–18). *suffering … brotherhood throughout the world*. Christians in other times and places also faced persecution and have demonstrated the strength of God's care for His people. Luth: "You must be sober and vigilant, but in order that the body may be ready. But this does not yet vanquish the devil. It is done only in order that you may give the body less reason to sin. The true sword is your strong and firm faith. If you take hold of God's Word in your heart and cling to it with faith, the devil cannot win but must flee" (AE 30:142).
1 PETER—NOTE ON 5:10 God will care for all our needs, even in persecution. "God has kindled in their hearts this beginning of true godliness. He will further strengthen and help them in their great weakness to persevere in true faith unto the end" (FC SD II 14). "Through the Word, by which He calls us, the Holy Spirit bestows grace, power, and ability for this purpose" (FC SD XI 33).
1 PETER—NOTE ON 5:11 Words of praise are a fitting response to God's blessings. See note, 4:11.
1 PETER—NOTE ON 5:1–11 The chief Shepherd calls undershepherds to teach, preach, administer the Sacraments, and guard His sheep, always keeping in mind that sin and the devil seek to entrap them. The devil and false teachers, even though they are damned, would lead us astray through sin and temptation, and take us to hell. By the Gospel, we have fervent love for one another because we share the same faith, Baptism, and Spirit. We

will endure by God's power. • Almighty God, keep us strong in faith through Your Word, that we constantly behold Your Son, who saves us from sin and eternal death. Amen.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 5:12 *Silvanus*. Also known as Silas; scribe who wrote what Peter dictated, helped him compose the Letter, or delivered it. See "Authorship," p 2147. *true grace … Stand firm*. The Gospel of God's grace strengthens Christians who are experiencing persecution.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 5:13 *She*. The Church at Rome. *Babylon*. Symbolizes Rome's persecution of believers. *Mark, my son*. In the faith (cf 1Tm 1:18).

1 PETER—NOTE ON 5:14 *kiss*. Common greeting of friends and family. See notes, Rm 16:16; 1Co 16:20. *Peace to all … in Christ*. True peace is ours because of Christ's work. See "peace," p 1903.

1 PETER—NOTE ON 5:12–14 Peter encourages these persecuted Christians to stand firm in the one thing that is truly trustworthy: God's grace in Christ. Jesus suffered for us at the hands of evil men. Yet He trusted in His Father with unswerving faith. Whatever trials or difficulties we may face, we can likewise rely on the true grace of God and on the bond of love in our Christian family. Through Jesus, we truly have peace. • Lord Jesus, may we always rely on Your Word and Your strength, that we may confidently believe in You and always follow Your ways. Amen.

2 Peter

2 Peter 1 | 2 Peter 2 | 2 Peter 3

- Introduction to 2 Peter
  - Overview
  - Reading 2 Peter
  - Luther on 2 Peter
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

Greeting

1 [1]†† Simeon[1] Peter, a servant[2] and apostle of Jesus Christ,

To those who have obtained a faith of equal standing with ours by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ:

[2]† May grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.

Make Your Calling and Election Sure

3 ‡ ‡ † His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and
godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to[3] his own glory
and excellence,[4] 4 † by which he has granted to us his precious and very
great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the
divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world
because of sinful desire. 5 ‡ † For this very reason, make every effort to
supplement your faith with virtue,[5] and virtue with knowledge, 6 † and
knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and
steadfastness with godliness, 7 † and godliness with brotherly affection, and
brotherly affection with love. 8 † For if these qualities[6] are yours and are
increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the
knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 † For whoever lacks these qualities is
so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from
his former sins. 10 † Therefore, brothers,[1] be all the more diligent to make
your calling and election sure, for if you practice these qualities you will
never fall. 11 † For in this way there will be richly provided for you an
entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

12 ‡ † Therefore I intend always to remind you of these qualities, though
you know them and are established in the truth that you have. 13 † I think it
right, as long as I am in this body,[2] to stir you up by way of reminder,
14 † since I know that the putting off of my body will be soon, as our Lord
Jesus Christ made clear to me. 15 † And I will make every effort so that after
my departure you may be able at any time to recall these things.

Christ’s Glory and the Prophetic Word

16 ††For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known
to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were
eyewitnesses of his majesty. 17 †For when he received honor and glory from
God the Father, and the voice was borne to him by the Majestic Glory,
“This is my beloved Son,[3] with whom I am well pleased,” 18 †we ourselves
heard this very voice borne from heaven, for we were with him on the holy
mountain. 19 † And we have something more sure, the prophetic word, to
which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place,
until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, 20 †knowing
this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone’s own
interpretation. 21 †For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man,
but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

False Prophets and Teachers

2 [1]‡†But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will
be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies,
even denying the Master who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift
destruction. [2]†And many will follow their sensuality, and because of them
the way of truth will be blasphemed. [3]†And in their greed they will exploit
you with false words. Their condemnation from long ago is not idle, and
their destruction is not asleep.

[4]‡†For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into
hell[1] and committed them to chains[2] of gloomy darkness to be kept until
the judgment; [5]†if he did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a
herald of righteousness, with seven others, when he brought a flood upon
the world of the ungodly; [6]†if by turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah
to ashes he condemned them to extinction, making them an example of
what is going to happen to the ungodly;[3] [7]†and if he rescued righteous Lot,
greatly distressed by the sensual conduct of the wicked [8]† (for as that
righteous man lived among them day after day, he was tormenting his
righteous soul over their lawless deeds that he saw and heard); [9]†then the
Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials,[4] and to keep the
unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgment, [10]†and especially
those who indulge in the lust of defiling passion and despise authority.

Bold and willful, they do not tremble as they blaspheme the glorious
ones, [11]† whereas angels, though greater in might and power, do not
pronounce a blasphemous judgment against them before the Lord. [12]†But
these, like irrational animals, creatures of instinct, born to be caught and
destroyed, blaspheming about matters of which they are ignorant, will also
be destroyed in their destruction, [13]†suffering wrong as the wage for their
wrongdoing. They count it pleasure to revel in the daytime. They are blots
and blemishes, reveling in their deceptions,[1] while they feast with you.
[14]†They have eyes full of adultery, insatiable for sin. They entice unsteady
souls. They have hearts trained in greed. Accursed children! [15]†Forsaking
the right way, they have gone astray. They have followed the way of

Balaam, the son of Beor, who loved gain from wrongdoing, [16]† but was rebuked for his own transgression; a speechless donkey spoke with human voice and restrained the prophet's madness.

[17]†These are waterless springs and mists driven by a storm. For them the gloom of utter darkness has been reserved. [18]†For, speaking loud boasts of folly, they entice by sensual passions of the flesh those who are barely escaping from those who live in error. [19]†They promise them freedom, but they themselves are slaves[2] of corruption. For whatever overcomes a person, to that he is enslaved. [20]‡† For if, after they have escaped the defilements of the world through the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the last state has become worse for them than the first. [21]†For it would have been better for them never to have known the way of righteousness than after knowing it to turn back from the holy commandment delivered to them. [22]†What the true proverb says has happened to them: "The dog returns to its own vomit, and the sow, after washing herself, returns to wallow in the mire."

The Day of the Lord Will Come

3 1 ‡ † This is now the second letter that I am writing to you, beloved.
In both of them I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder,
2 † that you should remember the predictions of the holy prophets and the
commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles, 3 † knowing
this first of all, that scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing,
following their own sinful desires. 4 † They will say, “Where is the promise
of his coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things are
continuing as they were from the beginning of creation.” 5 † For they
deliberately overlook this fact, that the heavens existed long ago, and the
earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God, 6 † and
that by means of these the world that then existed was deluged with water
and perished. 7 † But by the same word the heavens and earth that now exist
are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction
of the ungodly.

8 † But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day
is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. 9 † The Lord is not
slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward
you,[1] not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach
repentance. 10 † But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the
heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies[2] will be
burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it
will be exposed.[3]

11 ‡ † Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people
ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, 12 † waiting for and
hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will
be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn!
13 † But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new
earth in which righteousness dwells.

Final Words

14 ‡† Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these, be diligent to be
found by him without spot or blemish, and at peace. 15 † And count the
patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul also
wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, 16 † as he does in all his
letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in
them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to
their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures. 17 † You therefore,
beloved, knowing this beforehand, take care that you are not carried away
with the error of lawless people and lose your own stability. 18 † But grow in
the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the
glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.

2 Peter

OVERVIEW

Author
Simon [Simeon] Peter the apostle

Date
c AD 68

Places
Mount of Transfiguration; Sodom and Gomorrah

People
Simeon Peter; Jesus; false prophets/teachers; the unrighteous; the apostles; Paul

Purpose
To warn against false teachers who promoted sinful lifestyles and questioned whether Jesus would return in judgment

Law Themes
Exhortations to virtue; warnings against false prophets; ignorance; nearsightedness; forgetfulness; fiery judgment; destruction of the ungodly

Gospel Themes
God's sure Word; the Spirit's work; Christ cleansed us from our former sins; eternal kingdom; God promises new heavens and a new earth; God does not wish any to perish

Memory Verses
A sure prophetic word (1:19–21); new heavens and a new earth (3:13)

Introduction to 2 Peter

Reading 2 Peter

He pushed the end of the stick through the pile of ashes as he held his hand above them. He could see no smoke and could feel no heat. The fire, it seemed, had burned itself out completely and would not return. He began to think about what he might eat that did not need to be cooked. And as he thought, he saw it—the wink of a bright red coal stirred to life when the ashes were pushed away. There would be fire. The glimmering coal promised a crackling, roaring hearth.

Persecution and the mockery of false teachers had dampened the hopes of the early Christians. Scoffers insisted that the fires of judgment were out and that Christ would not return as the apostles had preached (3:1–7). Peter wrote this Letter not long before his death (1:12–15) to remind his readers of the Lord's patience, the certainty of fiery punishment for the wicked (3:8–13), and the sure promise of eternal life for all who believe (3:14–18).

Luther on 2 Peter

This epistle is written against those who think that Christian faith can be without works. Therefore he exhorts them to test themselves by good works and become sure of their faith, just as one knows trees by their fruits [Matt. 7:20].

He begins accordingly by praising the gospel over against the doctrines of men. He says that people ought to hear the gospel alone and not the doctrines of men. For, as he says, “No prophecy ever came by the impulse of men” [II Pet. 1:21].

For this reason he warns in chapter 2 against the false teachers who are to come. They are preoccupied with works and thereby deny Christ. He threatens these men severely with three terrible illustrations and depicts them so clearly with their avarice, pride, wickedness, fornication, and hypocrisy that one must plainly see he means the

clergy of today. For these have swallowed the whole world in their greed and are wickedly leading an irresponsible, fleshly, worldly life.

In chapter 3 he shows that the Last Day will come soon; and though in the sight of [*fur*] men it may seem a thousand years, yet in the sight of [*fur*] God it is as one day. He describes what will happen at the Last Day, how everything shall be consumed by fire. However, he also prophesies that at that time people will be scornful and, like the Epicureans, will think nothing of faith.

In summary, chapter 1 shows what Christendom was to be like at the time of the pure gospel. Chapter 2 shows how it was to be in the time of the pope and the doctrines of men. Chapter 3 shows how, after this, people will despise both the gospel and all doctrine, and will believe nothing—and this is now in full swing—until Christ comes. (AE 35:391–92)

For more of Luther's insights on this Book, see *Sermons on the Second Epistle of St. Peter* (AE 30:147–99).

Challenges for Readers

Authorship. Many modern scholars have concluded that Peter could not have written this Letter for the following reasons: (1) the style differs from 1 Peter and is not that of a Galilean fisherman; (2) the writer's opponents could be Gnostics, who appeared after Peter's time; (3) the Letter likely depends on Jude, so the work is not original; and (4) after Peter's death, his students may have written the work to address issues of their own time. In contrast, other scholars have noted the following: (1) the style of the Letter is different from 1 Peter and demonstrates training in Greek rhetoric; however, Peter is reputed to have written through a scribe (1Pt 5:12; see "Authorship," p 2147) and may have done the same for this Letter; (2) the false teachers are not described as Gnostics but behave like Epicurean Greeks, who were contemporary with Peter (see below); (3) Jude's Letter may depend on 2 Peter (see below); (4) the modern notion of "schools" aligned with different apostles is not readily described in early Christian literature, which typically emphasizes the unity of the apostles (cf 2Pt 3:15); and (5) during the first and second centuries, early Jewish and Christian texts written under pseudonyms did not commonly include letters. Although Peter's authorship of the Letter was questioned by some early Christians (see pp 2099–2101), the Letter was still commonly attributed to Peter and not to other authors. Peter, working with a scribe, remains the most likely author.

Relationship to Jude. 2Pt 2 and the Book of Jude demonstrate a strong literary relationship (note the many cross-references to Jude in the center column for 2Pt 2; the entries largely follow the same order as the passages in Jude). However, it cannot be determined whether Peter borrowed from Jude, Jude borrowed from Peter, or they both borrowed from a common work. Research on Greek letters has demonstrated that form letters were common. Early Jewish writers also adapted letters and copied them to different Jewish communities (see pp 1899–1901). That one writer should borrow from the good content of another should not be a surprise. In fact, Jude may state that he has done just that when he cites "the predictions of the apostles" (Jude 17), which could refer to 2 Peter.

Identifying the False Teachers. A century ago, scholars commonly read early Christian references to "knowledge" as responses to Gnostic heretics

(from Greek *ginosko*, "to know"), who claimed special knowledge and revelation and taught a complex system of heavenly mediators between God and the physical world. After the discovery of the Gnostic Nag Hammadi Manuscripts in 1945, the understanding of Gnostics changed significantly. Scholars realized that, although Gnostic ideas were developing in the first century AD, the Gnostics did not develop into a strong movement until the second century, when they began to infiltrate Christian congregations and Neoplatonic groups. False teachers, such as those described in 2 Peter, could have shared some ideas with later Gnostics but could not truly be called Gnostics (sometimes scholars speak of "proto-gnostics"). There are many uses of Greek terms for knowledge in 2 Peter (cf 1:2–3, 5–6, 16, 20; 2:20–21; 3:3, 17–18), but these should not be viewed as evidence of debate with Gnostics. As noted above, it is more likely that the false teachers described in 2 Peter were influenced by common Greek teachings such as those of the Epicureans.

Testament Style. Some scholars see 2Pt 1:12–15 adapting the Jewish "testament" style, which first became popular in the second century BC. This style of literature follows the example of Gn 49, where a patriarch gathers his family for instruction before he dies. Such Jewish testaments were attributed to the patriarchs and were therefore pseudonymous. In contrast, 2 Peter is plainly in the form of a letter. The writer clearly anticipates his death, but this hardly makes it an example of testament literature. The setting of a teacher wishing to provide instructions for his flock before he dies is completely natural (cf Ac 20:17–38).

Blessings for Readers

Peter addresses four key areas of Christian teaching: (1) knowledge of the Lord and the problem of forgetfulness; (2) true godliness and piety; (3) God's gifts (faith, promises, Holy Scripture); and (4) the end times. He guides readers to resist the appeals of false teachers, since everyone will face the Lord as judge when He returns.

As you read 2 Peter, consider the state of your faith and the character of your life. Commit your ways to the Lord by practicing daily repentance and praying for Christ's return. Through this sure prophetic Word, you will grow in the grace and knowledge of your Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

OUTLINE

I. The Apostolic Salutation (1:1–2)
II. Exhortation to Godliness (1:3–21)
A. Content of This Exhortation (1:3–11)
B. Necessity of This Reminder (1:12–15)
C. Certain Basis of the Exhortation in the Revelation of Christ and Scripture (1:16–21)
III. Warning against False Teachers (ch 2)
A. Anticipation of False Teachers (2:1–3)
B. God Delivers the Righteous and Punishes the Ungodly (2:4–10a)
C. Denunciation of the Motives, Character, and Message of the False Teachers (2:10b–22)
IV. Answers to Skepticism regarding the End of This World (3:1–10)
V. Final Exhortation on the Basis of Christian Expectation and Hope (3:11–18)

Articles and Resources Related to 2 Peter

- Old Testament Examples in 1 and 2 Peter
- Pastor and Priesthood of Believers
- Be Holy, for I Am Holy

- God and Time

Old Testament Examples in 1 and 2 Peter

Story: Prophets
References: 1Pt 1:10–11
Application: You are blessed to know what the prophets could only dream about and hope to understand. Although the Bible may not answer every question that enters your heart, it answers the most important question: How will God save me? Through Christ!
Story: Lamb
References: 1Pt 1:19
Application: Jesus fulfilled the requirements of the Law. He became the perfect sacrifice for your sins and brought an end to the sacrifices required in the OT.
Story: Priesthood
References: 1Pt 2:5
Application: In the OT, only a select group of people served as priests: the descendants of Aaron (of the tribe of Levi). Christ has made every believer a priest of God. You may approach the heavenly Father with confidence, offering sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving.
Story: Sarah and Abraham
References: 1Pt 3:5–7
Application: The mutual care and respect shared by Abraham and Sarah give us an example of Christian marriage. Let nothing hinder your prayers toward your Lord. Make your marriage beautiful by focusing on Him.
Story: Noah
References: 1Pt 3:20; 2Pt 2:5; 3:6
Application: The flood of God's judgment washed the wicked away but bore Noah up in safety. Today, the "flood" of Baptism washes your sins away. By the power of Christ's death and resurrection, it bears you safely into God's kingdom (Jn 3:5–8; Col 1:13–14).
Story: Sodom and Gomorrah
References: 2Pt 2:6
Application: The fiery destruction of these ancient cities shows what hell and eternal punishment will be like.
Story: Lot
References: 2Pt 2:7–11

Application: This shocking passage attributes righteousness to Lot, a man with numerous destructive weaknesses. God has mercy also on those who stumble and fall in the most grievous ways.
Story: Balaam
References: 2Pt 2:15–16
Application: False prophets and pleasure seekers, who have left the true way, shall receive the Lord's rebuke.
Story: Creation
References: 2Pt 3:5, 13
Application: The Word, which caused the world to spring forth in the beginning, still speaks. It presently holds back God's judgment but will finally create a new heaven and a new earth.

Pastor and Priesthood of Believers

The problem of Church and Ministry, or the relationship between the laity and the clergy, is not peculiar to the United States. It is present also in Africa, and for that matter throughout the whole world. Where the Word of God is taught and preached in its truth and purity, there Satan always tries hard to stage a *coup d'état*….

The blades of a scissors face opposite directions and yet they work together to achieve one purpose. They are used to cut materials for sewing, and in hospitals, homes, schools, and offices to cut paper. The two halves of a scissors are always together, performing their duties or functions together. In the same way, the Holy Ministry and the Priesthood of Believers are interdependent, yet dependent—depending on each other to proclaim the Gospel. What holds them together at the center is Christ. Without Christ, they will fall apart. Christ unites them and makes them move.

Paul Kofi Fynn, in *Church and Ministry*, ed. Jerald C. Joersz and Paul T. McCain (St. Louis: The Office of the President, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 1998), 241–42.

Be Holy, for I Am Holy

Sometimes the Bible uses words or ideas that have no modern equivalent. We read the word, but we do not really know or fully understand it. This is the problem when we come across the word *holy*. We often think it means "sinless," but that is only part of the idea.

In biblical contexts, the word *holy* usually means "set apart for God" (see p 7). The opposite of *holy* is *common*, referring to things that may be used by anyone. *Holy* can be used in a variety of ways, including the ceremonial use ("Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy;" Ex 20:8) and the moral application (referring to human conduct; 1Pt 1:15; 2Pt 3:11). Our modern, secular culture does not really have a category like *holy*. Yet Bible writers used the word and the concept extensively.

Holy Ones

By virtue of Baptism, all Christians are "holy ones," saints set apart for God through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Because God has declared us "holy ones" (saints; see p 843), we can approach God without the intercession of the Old Testament priesthood. In fact, Peter points out, we are ourselves a "holy priesthood" (1Pt 2:5). As "holy ones," Peter argues, we should not pattern our lives according to the world's priorities and values. We have been called to faith by a holy God. As Peter puts it, we have been called "out of darkness into [God's] marvelous light" (1Pt 2:9). Because we live in the light, we need to change the conduct of our lives from the world's ways to God's ways.

Peter approaches this change from the perspective of identity and function. According to Peter, we are "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for His own possession" (1Pt 2:9; cf Ex 19:6; Is 43:20–21). In Christ crucified, God has declared us righteous. We have a right standing with Him through faith in Jesus. Since Jesus is holy, God declares us holy through faith in Him. That is what makes us saints (literally, "holy ones").

Our function in this world flows from this identity as God's holy people. Peter describes our function in 1Pt 2:9: "that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who called you." He uses an unusual Greek word for "excellencies" (or "praises"). The author has in mind God's divine power, manifested in the incarnation and crucifixion of Jesus. God accomplished the impossible by saving sinners from just condemnation without violating His own righteousness and integrity (Rm 3:21–26). He did this by becoming man, in the person of His Son, and then taking upon Himself the sins of the world on the cross. Salvation comes directly from God; it is 100 percent a gift from Him to us by faith in Jesus. He therefore deserves all the credit for our rescue from sin, death, and eternal damnation. To us, His holy people, He gives the job of declaring this miraculous Gospel to the whole world.

Proclaim the Holy One

We proclaim the Gospel to the world of unbelievers. Jesus commissioned His Church with this task in Mt 28:18–20. Christians spend their energy and resources to serve the Savior by publishing His name far and wide. But Peter has a second function in mind as well. We praise God to the congregation of believers in our worship services. (Cf Is 42:12 for the combination of giving glory to God and proclaiming His praise to the "coastlands," that is, the nations.) The word Peter uses to describe our function appears in the Psalms, where it is used in the sense of declaring the praises or works of God, often in a worship context (cf Ps 107:22).

As we gather around Word and Sacrament, we tell and retell the story of the cross. God comes to us through these means of grace, and we respond by giving Him the glory for the salvation He has bought at such a terrible price. In Christ crucified and risen, we are God's holy people, and because of our identity as His holy priesthood, we have this twofold purpose of evangelism and worship. God, the Holy One of Israel, sent His Holy One to redeem us by His death and resurrection. United with Christ in our Baptism, we become the holy ones (saints) of God, made alive by His Holy Spirit. Peter reminds us that what we do with our lives flows directly out of this new relationship with God (1Pt 2:12).

God and Time

There are two ways of looking at things: God's way and the way of the world. Thus this life and the life to come are of two kinds. This life cannot be the same as the life to come, since no one can enter the life to come except through death, that is, through the cessation of this life. Now this life amounts to eating, drinking, sleeping, digesting, begetting children, etc. Here everything goes by number: hours, days, and years in succession. Now when you want to look at the life to come, you must erase the course of this life from your mind. You dare not think that you can measure it as this life is measured. There everything will be one day, one hour, one moment.

Now since before God there is no reckoning of time, before Him a thousand years must be as one day. Therefore Adam, the first man, is just as close to Him as the man who will be born last before the Last Day. For God does not see time longitudinally [looking from one end to the far end]; He sees it transversely, as if you were looking transversely at a tall tree lying before you [on the ground]. Then you can see both ends at the same time. This you cannot do if you look at it longitudinally. With our reason we cannot look at time in any other way than longitudinally. Beginning with Adam, we must count one year after the other until the Last Day. But in God's sight everything is in one heap. What is long for us is short for Him and vice versa. Here there is neither measure nor number. Thus man dies. His body is interred and decays. It lies in the ground and knows nothing. But when the first man arises on the Last Day, he will think that he has been lying there barely an hour. Then he will look about and discover that many people were born before him and came after him. About this he knew nothing. (AE 30:196)

Footnotes

Footnotes for 2 Peter, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:1 Some manuscripts *Simon*
- [2] 1:1 Or *slave*; Greek *bondservant*
- [3] 1:3 Or *by*
- [4] 1:3 Or *virtue*
- [5] 1:5 Or *excellence*; twice in this verse
- [6] 1:8 Greek *these things*; also verses 9, 10, 12
- [1] 1:10 Or *brothers and sisters*. The plural Greek word *adelphoi* (translated "brothers") refers to siblings in a family. In New Testament usage, depending on the context, *adelphoi* may refer either to men or to both men and women who are siblings (brothers and sisters) in God's family, the church
- [2] 1:13 Greek *tent*; also verse 14
- [3] 1:17 Or *my Son, my* (or *the*) *Beloved*

Footnotes for 2 Peter, Chapter 2

- [1] 2:4 Greek *Tartarus*
- [2] 2:4 Some manuscripts *pits*
- [3] 2:6 Some manuscripts *an example to those who were to be ungodly*
- [4] 2:9 Or *temptations*
- [1] 2:13 Some manuscripts *love feasts*
- [2] 2:19 Greek *bondservants*

Footnotes for 2 Peter, Chapter 3

- [1] 3:9 Some manuscripts *on your account*
- [2] 3:10 Or *elements*; also verse 12
- [3] 3:10 Greek *found*; some manuscripts *will be burned up*

Study Notes

2 PETER—NOTE ON 1:1 *Simeon*. Unlike his first Letter (1Pt 1:1), Peter's second Letter introduces him with the Hbr form of Simon (see ESV note). *servant*. Or, "slave." Emphasizes his belonging to Jesus, who had purchased him (1Pt 1:18–19). *apostle*. See p 1901. *a faith of equal standing with ours*. Faith based on the apostolic Word is as valid as the faith of the ear- and eyewitnesses, for their faith rests in Christ's righteousness alone. Cf Jn 20:29. *righteousness*. Basis of "a faith of equal standing" to all who confess Christ. *our God and Savior Jesus Christ*. Peter does not distinguish between God and Jesus; rather, he calls Jesus both God and Savior.

2 PETER—NOTE ON 1:2 Common Gk greeting ("grace") and common Hbr greeting ("peace") are united in Christ and are given new meaning in the NT. *knowledge*. Used repeatedly for our relationship to the Lord. More than intellectual apprehension, it is a godly knowing that involves fearing, loving, and trusting in God above all things for the gift of eternal life in Christ. Such knowledge comes to us through God's Word alone. This saving knowledge prepares us for a godly life on earth and for an eternity in heaven to come. See "Identifying the False Teachers," p 2160.

2 PETER—NOTE ON 1:1–2 Peter greets his readers with a salutation that affirms their standing in Christ. All who confess Christ possess "a faith of equal standing." However, our hold on faith in Christ can weaken as we are tempted into "false belief, despair, and other great shame and vice" (see SC, Sixth Petition, pp xxxviii–xxxix). Thanks be to God that our Lord's grace and peace toward us is even greater than our sins, and that He is ever at work through His Word and Sacraments to strengthen our hold on faith. • O Lord Jesus, thank You for giving me a faith of equal standing—even compared to the faith of the apostles. Enable me through Your Word to overcome all that seeks to weaken my faith. Amen.

2 PETER—NOTE ON 1:3–4 Long, complicated sentence illustrates the writer's strong rhetorical style. See "Authorship," p 2160.

2 PETER—NOTE ON 1:3 *divine power*. God the Holy Spirit works through the Word to call us to faith, giving us the knowledge that results in eternal life and that fosters our life and conduct in Christ. *all things*. Not everything we want but everything we need for "life and godliness." Luth:

"St. Peter does not want this divine power in us to be understood in such a way that we also have the ability to create heaven and earth and should work miracles, as God does…. No, we have divine power with us to the degree that it is useful and necessary for us…. That is, we have the kind of divine power with which we are abundantly blessed to do good and to live eternally" (AE 30:153). *knowledge*. Knowing Christ through faith, which results in eternal life. *called us*. Salvation is not a human decision but a divine call that comes to us through God's Word (cf Rm 10:17). *glory*. See p 1902. *excellence*. Or, "virtue."

2 PETER—NOTE ON 1:4 *very great promises*. Those by which God enables us to participate in the divine nature and to escape from the corruption that is in the world. In particular, the fulfilled promise of Christ's first coming (v 16) and the yet-to-be-fulfilled promises of Christ's second coming (3:4, 9) and the creation of "new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells" (3:13). *partakers of the divine nature*. Not that we become part of the Godhead, but that God indwells us through His Holy Spirit. Expression may be borrowed from popular Stoic philosophers, who emphasized the goodness of a new life. See Paul's emphasis in Rm 6. *corruption … sinful desire*. Christ has set us free from corruption (moral depravity) brought about by our sinful nature and our sinful desires (cf 1Jn 2:16). "We also, in whom Christ dwells only by grace, on account of that great mystery, are 'partakers of the divine nature' in Christ" (FC SD VIII 34). Luth: "We shall also have all that God has, and in Him we shall have all that is necessary for us: wisdom, righteousness, strength, and life. All this we now believe. We grasp it only with our ears and have it in the Word of God. But then the Word will cease. Then our soul will open and behold and feel that all this is actually there" (AE 30:164).

2 PETER—NOTE ON 1:5–8 Virtues presented here are the fruit that should be borne in a healthy Christian life. The qualities selected for emphasis are all in contrast to the characteristics of the false teachers, who pervert the way of truth (ch 2) and deny the heart of the Christian hope (3:3–4).

2 PETER—NOTE ON 1:5 *make every effort*. God's free and all-sufficient giving motivates and makes possible the wholehearted response of the believer. Cf Php 2:12–13. *faith*. Placed first because it alone produces true good works (Heb 11:6). Without faith, all works are empty.

2 PETER—NOTE ON 1:6 *knowledge*. A knowing of God as revealed in Christ (see note, v 2). *self-control*. Controlling one's emotions, impulses,

and desires and submitting to the authority of the indwelling Christ. *steadfastness*. Patience or perseverance in the midst of difficult circumstances. *godliness*. The reverence, respect, and devotion owed to God and His Word, which is to be apparent in our conduct toward others. Luth: "This means that in our whole outward life, in what we do or suffer, we should conduct ourselves in such a way that we serve God and do not seek our own glory and advantage. It means that God alone must be praised by what we do and that we must act in such a way that one can see that we do everything for God's sake" (AE 30:156–57).

2 PETER—NOTE ON 1:7 *brotherly affection*. Kindness that is to characterize how Christians relate to one another. See "brothers," p 1901. *love*. Selfless, sacrificial giving of self for the sake of the one loved, even as God in Christ has loved us. See p 1903.

2 PETER—NOTE ON 1:8 These qualities are to be ever increasing, lest we become like a branch that does not bear fruit (cf Jn 15:2) or like seed that is choked out by thorns (cf Mt 13:22).

2 PETER—NOTE ON 1:9 *nearsighted … blind*. Lit, "to shut the eye." Those who close their eyes to Christ and who willfully look away from practicing the qualities in vv 5–7 eventually become spiritually blind. *cleansed from his former sins*. Such a person has forgotten that God cleansed him from sin in Baptism and gave him new life and new purpose. See p 1369.

2 PETER—NOTE ON 1:10 *brothers*. See p 1901. *make your calling and election sure*. Before the world's creation, God chose us to be His own. As believers continue diligently in the virtues described in vv 5–7, they avoid the sins and complications of life that cause idle people to stumble. See Luther's comments in note, Heb 6:6. *you will never fall*. Not that those who cultivate these virtues will never sin, but that they will not fall away from the path that leads to Christ's kingdom (see note, Lk 12:32). "Peter speaks of works following the forgiveness of sins and teaches why they should be done…. Do good works in order that you may persevere in your calling, in order that you do not lose the gifts of your calling. They were given to you before, and not because of works that follow, and which now are kept through faith" (Ap XX 90).

2 PETER—NOTE ON 1:11 The one whose living shows that his faith is accompanied by good works, and thus becomes strong, will have an entrance richly provided for him. *the eternal kingdom*. The reign of our

Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is eternal both in the sense that it is never ending and in that its Ruler is the Eternal One. See pp 1565–66.

2 PETER—NOTE ON 1:12–21 Peter emphasizes the reliability of God's Word in contrast to the deceptions preached by false teachers (ch 2). God's Word is the basis of faith and fellowship for the community of believers.

2 PETER—NOTE ON 1:12 *remind*. Peter's Letter also serves as perpetual encouragement to remain and grow in the Word of Christ, that the work of Christ may be manifested in the believer's life. *established in the truth that you have*. Catechesis prepared them for the Christian life, in which God calls them to abide. See SC, Sixth Petition, p xxxviii–xxxix.

2 PETER—NOTE ON 1:13 *in this body*. Lit, "in this tent." A vivid reminder of the fact that life in this world is temporary.

2 PETER—NOTE ON 1:14 Peter knows that his death is close at hand. See "Testament Style," p 2160.

2 PETER—NOTE ON 1:15 *after my departure*. See "Testament Style," p 2160.

2 PETER—NOTE ON 1:3–15 Peter affirms the greatness of the Christian hope, and he encourages his readers to make their calling and election sure by giving evidence of their faith with good works. We are saved by faith alone, but faith is never alone. And yet, through sin, we often neglect and become blind to the virtues we are to practice as evidence of our faith. In spite of our many failures to bear God-pleasing fruit, our Lord strengthens us daily through Holy Baptism. • O Lord, thank You for granting us all things that pertain to life and godliness, that by Your grace there will be richly provided for us an entrance into Your eternal kingdom. Amen.

2 PETER—NOTE ON 1:16 *cleverly devised myths*. Peter defends himself against the false teachers' charge that he and the other apostles invented stories about Jesus' coming and the final judgment. *the power and coming*. Refers to the Lord's glorious return when, with great power, He will subdue all His enemies and consummate His kingdom. *eyewitnesses*. Peter, along with the other apostles, was an eyewitness to Jesus, the Son of God, who came in the flesh. *His majesty*. Jesus' divine glory was revealed at His transfiguration, which anticipated His second coming.

2 PETER—NOTE ON 1:17 *received honor and glory*. The Son received both the honor of being publicly declared the Father's Son and the glory of revealing His divine majesty on the Mount of Transfiguration. *the voice*.

That of God the Father. *the Majestic Glory*. Hbr manner of referring to God the Father indirectly; a tradition among the Jews, who tended to speak indirectly of Him. See "LORD," p 1227.

2 PETER—NOTE ON 1:18 *the holy mountain*. Mount of Transfiguration. Cf Lk 9:28–32.

2 PETER—NOTE ON 1:19 *the prophetic word*. OT Scriptures, which confirm the entire apostolic witness of Christ. Thus, Peter's personal eyewitness account of the transfiguration is trustworthy because it rests on this authority. *a lamp*. Until the Lord returns, the prophetic Word guides and directs God's people like a light shining in the darkness. *the day dawns*. Day of Christ's return. *morning star*. Cf Rv 22:16. Luth: "We must have the light [of the Word] and cling to it until the Last Day. Then we shall no longer need the Word, just as artificial light is extinguished when the day dawns" (AE 30:166). Luth: "He bids us fix our eyes and keenness of mind on the Word alone, on Baptism, on the Lord's Supper, and on absolution, and to regard everything else as darkness. I do not understand, or care about, what is done in this world by the sons of this age; for they crucify me. I cannot escape or draw away that horrible mask which hides the face of God, but I must stay in darkness and in exceedingly dark mist until a new light shines forth" (AE 8:33).

2 PETER—NOTE ON 1:20 *someone's own interpretation*. Biblical authors wrote not what they thought or interpreted of the times but what God inspired them to write for their time and all of time.

2 PETER—NOTE ON 1:21 *the will of man*. In contrast to false teachings (cf 2:1), genuine prophecy is never of human design, desire, or origin. See notes, Dt 18:18, 22. *men spoke … by the Holy Spirit*. The Scriptures are of divine origin as the Holy Spirit personally inspired each of the authors, in accord with their own style, to write only the words that God had given them. See pp xxvi–xxx, 1646. "They were holy, says he, since the Holy Spirit spoke through them" (SA III VIII 13). Luth: "We do not let ourselves be troubled by the blasphemies which the devil, through the mouths of his lying servants, speaks against Christ the Lord—now against His divinity, now against His humanity—and by the attacks which he then makes against Christ's office and work. But we cling to the Scriptures of the prophets and apostles, who spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:21). Their testimony about Christ is clear. He is our Brother; we are members of His body, flesh and bone of His flesh and bone" (AE 22:23).

2 PETER—NOTE ON 1:16–21 Peter had seen a glimpse of our Lord's glory on the holy Mount of Transfiguration. We have the prophetic Word of God, on which the faith and hope of our Lord's triumphant return in glory depends. By God's grace in Christ, we are now "a holy nation, a people for His own possession" (1Pt 2:9). • O Lord, thank You for calling us out of darkness into Your marvelous light. Help us to proclaim Your excellencies through word and deed. Amen.

2 PETER—NOTE ON **Ch 2** Extended warning against false teachers; resembles concerns and even wording of the Book of Jude. See "Relationship to Jude," p 2160.

2 PETER—NOTE ON 2:1–3 "When they have heard God's Word, they make light of it again and ignore it. But their wickedness is responsible for this 'that they perish', not God or His election" (FC Ep XI 12).

2 PETER—NOTE ON 2:1 *false prophets*. God told Moses to distinguish between true and false prophets (cf Dt 18:21–22). See Jeremiah's contest with Hananiah in Jer 28:1–17. *false teachers*. Those who take the inspired Scriptures and twist or isolate selected passages out of the context of salvation by grace alone through faith in Christ, purely for their own personal gain and glory. *heresies*. False teachings that often promote personal rights and immorality that will always destroy faith in Christ alone. *the Master who bought them*. False teachers deny the reality of Christ's redemption through faith alone as the means of salvation. They may call Him "Lord, Lord," but their lives are a contradiction of His will and Word (cf Lk 6:46). *swift destruction*. Though not seemingly so, those who bring in destructive heresies will eventually be destroyed themselves. Luth: "Just as all prophecy has emanated from the Holy Spirit since the beginning of the world, so this must be true until the end of the world, in order that nothing but God's Word may be preached. Yet it has always happened that there have been false teachers alongside the true prophets and God's Word. And so it will remain. Therefore since you now have God's Word, you must expect to have false teachers too…. They will retain the terms 'God,' 'Christ,' 'faith,' 'church,' 'Baptism,' 'Sacrament' and let them remain. Under these terms, however, they will proceed to establish something different" (AE 30:168, 170).

2 PETER—NOTE ON 2:2 *blasphemed*. In the strict sense, blasphemy refers to the misuse of the divine name and the divine works (cf Lv 24:10–

23). Here the word is used in the more general sense of "defame, revile, slander."
2 PETER—NOTE ON 2:3 During all the time the false teachers are active, their condemnation is also active. It only appears as though they will escape destruction.
2 PETER—NOTE ON 2:4–10a Three OT examples illustrate how God rescues His people.
2 PETER—NOTE ON 2:4 *angels … sinned*. Fallen angels. Though the Bible gives no single extended account of this fall, it contains scattered allusions. See note, Jude 6. *chains of gloomy darkness*. The stern judgment and damnation to which God sentenced the evil angels, in which they are held captive and bound. Luth: "God cast them [the angels who sinned] into hell. There they don't suffer punishment as yet, although they are condemned. For if they were already punished, the devils wouldn't engage in so much knavery" (AE 54:447).
2 PETER—NOTE ON 2:5 *Noah, a herald of righteousness*. Noah's righteousness was proclaimed by his walking with God (Gn 6:9) and being obedient to His will and Word (Gn 6:22) in the midst of a generation whose every thought "was only evil continually" (Gn 6:5). During the 120 years when Noah was building the ark, he warned the people to repent. See note, 1Pt 3:20.
2 PETER—NOTE ON 2:6 God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah (Gn 19) to serve as a reminder to later generations that unrighteousness, false teaching, immorality, and evil (be they in Lot's day, Peter's day, or today) will eventually result in the carrying out of God's judgment.
2 PETER—NOTE ON 2:7 *righteous Lot*. Though he had many faults, Lot did have faith in the Lord, and he trusted God's Word. E.g., he left Sodom and Gomorrah when warned; he relied on God's promises of deliverance.
2 PETER—NOTE ON 2:8 Living among the sensual, lawless Sodomites caused Lot great distress. This serves as a warning for believers today. Cf Gn 19:1–22.
2 PETER—NOTE ON 2:9 *rescue … from trials*. See SC, Seventh Petition, p xxxix. *under punishment*. Cf v 4.
2 PETER—NOTE ON 2:10 *lust of defiling passion*. Possible reference to homosexuality, the sin of the Sodomites (cf Gn 19:5). See p 1911. Luth: " 'To indulge in the lust of defiling passion' is to live like an irrational beast according to one's own notion and all lust" (AE 30:180). *despise authority*.

Rejecting people God charged with faithfully attending to His Word and His work, be it His Son, His angels, His prophets, His pastors, or His teachers. Cf Jude 8–10; see note, Heb 13:17. *they blaspheme the glorious ones*. To speak against God's angels or anything of God is to speak against God.

2 PETER—NOTE ON 2:11 Though greater in might and in power than fallen angels, God's angels do not assume the place of God by condemning the fallen. Such a task should be left to God. False teachers will always assume a place that is not theirs and proceed to sit in judgment of all things and all people.

2 PETER—NOTE ON 2:12 *born to be caught and destroyed*. Destruction of false teachers begins with the self-destruction brought about by their defiling passions and culminates with their eternal destruction in hell. *destroyed in their destruction*. Unless they repent, doom will completely envelop all the unrepentant.

2 PETER—NOTE ON 2:13 *suffering wrong as the wage*. Although false teachers expect to profit from evil deeds, God will defraud them of any gain they hope to realize. They will be paid back with harm for the harm they have done. *revel in the daytime*. Demonstration of their shameful and shameless arrogance. *they feast with you*. The false teachers have worked their way into the Christian community to the point that they even attend the Lord's Supper, at which they carouse in shameful ways. See p 2230. "Peter predicted that there would be godless bishops who would abuse the alms of the Church for luxury and neglect the ministry…. Therefore, let those who defraud the Church know that they will pay God the penalty for this crime" (Tr 82).

2 PETER—NOTE ON 2:14 *unsteady souls*. Those seduced by false teachers, because they are not grounded in the whole testimony of the Scriptures. *Accursed children!* Hebraic way of saying that they are damned people under the curse of God. See "curse," p 6.

2 PETER—NOTE ON 2:15 *Balaam*. A diviner who, when God would not let him curse the people of Israel (cf Nu 22–24), proceeded to corrupt the people by promoting immorality and idolatry (cf Nu 25; 31:16).

2 PETER—NOTE ON 2:16 In mentioning Balaam's donkey, Peter brings the "bold and willful" (v 10) down to earth. Balaam was hired to pronounce a curse against God's people. By having him rebuked by a donkey, God showed what He thought of proud Balaam (Nu 22:21–41). God's rebuke may be delivered through natural means, supernatural means (as with

Balaam), or historical events (see pp 335–37). But it is always delivered clearly through faithful preaching of the Scriptures and brotherly counsel based on the Scriptures.

2 PETER—NOTE ON 2:17 *waterless springs*. False teachers possess no ability to give life and satisfy spiritual thirst. *mists*. They lack substance and are transitory. *gloom of utter darkness*. Luth: "To be sure, they [false teachers] live well now and fare as they themselves desire; but an eternal darkness will come upon them, even though they do not believe or feel this" (AE 30:188).

2 PETER—NOTE ON 2:18 *those who are barely escaping*. False teachers enticed new converts as they were turning away from the pagan lifestyle, which still held strong attraction. Is it possible to fall from the faith? Yes. The final condition of such a person, Jesus says, "is worse than the first" (cf Lk 11:24–26). See note, Heb 6:6.

2 PETER—NOTE ON 2:19 *promise them freedom*. False teachers lure people away from the faith by perverting the freedom of the Gospel into an excuse for indulgence. They hide behind the masks of convenience, ease, practicality, etc. *enslaved*. Unrestrained by God's Word and Commandments, such freedom leads only to slavery. Real freedom is found not in sin, but in Christ (Jn 8:31–32). See p 101.

2 PETER—NOTE ON 2:20–21 *worse … better*. The sin against the light—apostasy in the face of known and acknowledged truth—has unforeseeable consequences. The heart made alive in Christ becomes hardened against the saving power of God's Word and grace, making it more difficult, if not impossible, for one to be turned back to Christ.

2 PETER—NOTE ON 2:20 *knowledge of our Lord*. Knowing who Christ is, namely, our Savior, who forgives us our sin out of pure grace (see note, 1:2). *again entangled … and overcome*. Like a fish caught by a fisherman, the false teachers (who at one time had been faithful Christians) and their disciples have been caught by the lust of their own defiling passions (v 10).

2 PETER—NOTE ON 2:21 *the holy commandment*. The whole of the Christian proclamation, with the emphasis on the ethical dimensions of that proclamation and on the fact that it claims man for Christ (cf 3:2; Mt 28:20; 1Tm 6:14). *delivered*. Taught. See "tradition," p 1904.

2 PETER—NOTE ON 2:22 Peter closes his warnings with two proverbs (the first from Pr 26:11; the second from an unknown secular source) to indicate the abiding reality of the sinful nature in every person—believer

and unbeliever. In this context, dogs and sows, both unclean animals, are likened to people who reject God's Word. Luth: "Through Baptism these people threw out unbelief, had their unclean way of life washed away, and entered into a pure life of faith and love. Now they fall away into unbelief and their own works, and they soil themselves again in filth…. But if you want to become pious, you must ask God to give you a genuine faith, and you must begin to desist from unbelief. When you receive faith, then good works will come automatically, and you will lead a pure and chaste life. Otherwise you will preserve yourself by no other means. And even if you are able to conceal the knave in your heart for a while, yet he will finally emerge" (AE 30:190–91).

2 PETER—NOTE ON **Ch 2** Our Lord says, "In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world" (Jn 16:33; cf 2Pt 2:9). The devil, the world, and our own sinful nature are ever seeking to overcome us through our tribulations (see SC, Sixth Petition, pp xxxviii–xxxix). The way of escape is through His Holy Word and Sacraments, for this is how He strengthens and keeps us firm in His Word and faith (see SC, Third Petition, p xxxviii). • O Lord, having overcome the world, come to me and give me the strength to endure patiently the trials that afflict me and finally to overcome them and win the victory. Amen.

2 PETER—NOTE ON 3:1 *beloved*. Shows Peter's close relationship with his readers and also his concern. It is a love born of Christ's love for His people. *reminder*. Cf 1:12–15. Peter's purpose is to arouse the people and to urge them not to neglect their faith but to remain in their understanding of what a true Christian life is.

2 PETER—NOTE ON 3:2 *the predictions*. Cf 1:19. OT Scriptures, which confirm the entire apostolic witness of Christ. See p 1245. *the commandment*. See note, 2:21. *through your apostles*. Peter is placing the apostolic teaching on the same level as the OT. Both are the inspired Word of God. "A brief and succinct Confession was prepared from God's Word—the most holy writings of the prophets and apostles" (*Concordia*, Preface 2).

2 PETER—NOTE ON 3:3 The behavior of cynical unbelief goes hand in hand with self-indulgence and mockery of God's work in the creation of the world.

2 PETER—NOTE ON 3:4 *promise of His coming?* The Lord's promised return for the final judgment. *the fathers fell asleep*. The first Christian generation, some of whom (e.g., Stephen, James the son of Zebedee, James

the Just) had already suffered martyrdom by the time this Letter was written. *continuing … from the beginning of creation*. The assertion of scoffers that God's promise is not reliable and that the regularity and continuity of the created order has not and cannot be interrupted by divine events such as Christ's second coming.

2 PETER—NOTE ON 3:5 Scoffers overlook the fact that by the Word of God the heavens came into existence long ago out of nothing. *out of water and through water*. Refers to the creation account in Gn 1. *by the word of God*. The heavens and earth came into being, exist now, and are preserved only because God has so commanded and ordered all things. The heavens and earth are preserved through the Word of God alone. See notes, Gn 1:3–3; Jn 1:3; Heb 1:2.

2 PETER—NOTE ON 3:6 *deluged*. God's sending of the great flood proves that God will intervene in time.

2 PETER—NOTE ON 3:7 *by the same word*. God's Word created and preserves creation. That same Word will be the means by which He will bring about creation's destruction. *stored up for fire*. Fire is frequently used in the OT as a symbol of God's punitive and destructive wrath, sometimes in connection with His final judgment (e.g., Zep 1:18; 3:8; Mal 4:1). *destruction of the ungodly*. As with the flood, when God judged and destroyed the wicked but saved Noah and his family, so the end of the world will be a time of judgment on the ungodly and a time of deliverance for the faithful. See note, 1Pt 3:21. Luth: "When the Last Day breaks all of a sudden, in one moment there will be nothing but fire. Everything in heaven and on earth will be reduced to powder and ashes. Everything must be changed by fire, just as the water changed everything at the time of the Flood. Because God let what took place at that time be a sign, therefore the fire shall be the sign that He will not lie" (AE 30:195).

2 PETER—NOTE ON 3:8 *one day is as a thousand years*. Peter refers to Ps 90:4, an ancient prayer of Moses. It is important to recognize that Peter is not saying a thousand years and a day are the same. Nor is he providing a numerical formula for predicting the day of Christ's return, as some have suggested. He says that to the Lord one is "like" the other. Since God is eternal, what seems to us to be a long time is not very long at all to Him. See note, Ps 90:4; see also p 217.

2 PETER—NOTE ON 3:9 Repentance leading to faith and salvation is the issue for the Lord, not times or timing. He is patient, wanting all to come to

salvation. Repentance consists of contrition (godly sorrow over one's sins) and faith (trusting in the divine promise of forgiveness through faith in Christ). "God, who has called us, is faithful. So when He has begun the good work in us, He will also preserve it to the end and perfect it, if we ourselves do not turn from Him, but firmly hold on to the work begun to the end. He has promised His grace for this very purpose" (FC SD XI 32).

2 PETER—NOTE ON 3:10 *the day of the Lord*. The Last Day, when the Lord returns to judge the ungodly and to redeem the faithful. See p 1079. *like a thief*. Emphasizes the surprise people will experience at His coming (cf Mk 13:36; Lk 21:34). Jesus cuts off all attempts at calculating the time of His return (cf Mt 24:36; 1Th 5:2; Rv 3:3; 16:15). *a roar*. The heavens will pass away with great force and speed. *heavenly bodies*. Sun, moon, stars, etc. *burned up and dissolved*. The heavens—i.e., the sky and heavenly bodies—will be destroyed (cf Rm 8:21). *works … exposed*. To the fire of God's judgment. God will refine and purify them as the "new heavens and a new earth" (2Pt 3:13). Luth: "This life amounts to eating, drinking, sleeping, digesting, begetting children, etc. Here everything goes by number: hours, days, and years in succession. Now when you want to look at the life to come, you must erase the course of this life from your mind. You dare not think that you can measure it as this life is measured. There everything will be one day, one hour, one moment" (AE 30:196).

2 PETER—NOTE ON 3:11–18 The Lord's delay in returning is actually a matter of urgency for the Church, which He has called to spread the Gospel of repentance and salvation.

2 PETER—NOTE ON 3:11 Luth: "Since you know that everything must pass away, both heaven and earth, consider how completely you must be prepared with a saintly and godly life and conduct to meet this Day" (AE 30:197).

2 PETER—NOTE ON 3:12 *hastening the coming*. God has determined the day of our Lord's return (Ac 17:31), but from a human perspective, we hasten the Lord's coming as we pray, "Your kingdom come" and "Come, Lord Jesus!" (Mt 6:10; Rv 22:20).

2 PETER—NOTE ON 3:13 *new heavens and a new earth*. Ushered in when Christ returns. Paradise will be regained as all the ruin and frustration with which man's sin has disfigured God's good world will have passed away. Cf Rm 8:19–22. Luth: "That will be a broad and beautiful heaven and a joyful earth, much more beautiful and joyful than Paradise was. There were no

stinging nettles or prickly thorns and thistles or noxious creatures, worms, or vermin in Paradise, but lovely and noble roses and aromatic creatures. All the trees in the garden were lovely to behold and good to eat…. Then no sin or unrighteousness will dwell on earth, no homicide or murder, no hate or envy, but perfect righteousness, love, and friendship. Now unrighteousness and infidelity dwell on earth; from this we should realize what we have lost through Adam's fall and our sin and learn to long and yearn for the restoration and renewal of the creation and for the liberty of the children of God" (AE 12:121).

2 PETER—NOTE ON 3:1–13 Knowing that this world will not last, we are to "seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness" (Mt 6:33). Sadly, we are often distracted by "the cares of the world" (Mt 13:22). Despite our many failures, the Lord graciously works through Word and Sacrament to forgive our sins and to renew us in the faith. He will preserve us unto the end. • O Lord, keep me with Jesus Christ in the one true faith, that I may wait for the coming of the day of the Lord, when You will raise me and all the dead and give eternal life to me and all believers in Christ. Amen.

2 PETER—NOTE ON 3:14 *without spot or blemish*. Cf 1Pt 1:19; see note, Lv 1:3. Christians are to make every effort to conform to the character of Christ. These efforts do not gain salvation (Jesus has already accomplished that), but they do bear witness to His amazing grace toward all people. *at peace*. See note, Rm 5:1; see also p 1903.

2 PETER—NOTE ON 3:15 *patience … as salvation*. God is forbearing; He delays and does not judge at once. If God were not patient, all would be destroyed. Think of how patiently the Lord works with each believer, forgiving him and picking him up each time he falls. *beloved brother Paul*. Indication that both Peter and his readers hold Paul in high regard and consider him a true friend in Christ. Peter makes a point of affirming that both he and Paul are united in doctrine and in their opposition to the false teachers.

2 PETER—NOTE ON 3:16 *things … hard to understand*. Paul's Epistles, which may indeed be challenging even for the faithful to understand. The unscrupulous twist them to mean that those justified may continue to live in sin, since sinning results in further opportunities for God's grace to be demonstrated (cf Rm 3:5–8; 6:1). *the ignorant and unstable twist*. Paul himself complains that some have maliciously

misinterpreted his bold language on the free grace of God (cf Rm 3:8; 6:1), and it is probable that the false teachers of 2Pt 2 are alluded to here for doing the same thing (cf 2:12, 17). *the other Scriptures*. Explicitly linked by Peter to Paul's inspired Letters. The Early Christian Church recognized that the inspired writings of the apostles were on a par with the OT. E.g., Paul quotes Jesus' words recorded in Lk 10:7 and equates them with the authority of the OT (1Tm 5:18).

2 PETER—NOTE ON 3:17 Peter charges his "beloved" friends to be aware of the truth and be on guard, lest they fall away from faith because of false doctrine. The only sure way to remain on guard in the stability of salvation is to remain in all of God's Word. In a sense, the entire Letter has been focused on this subject.

2 PETER—NOTE ON 3:18 *grow in the grace and knowledge*. Accomplished as believers keep themselves fortified in and by God's Word, so that they will not fall away. Peter has come full circle; he began the Letter by speaking of grace and knowledge. See note, 1:2; see also "Identifying the False Teachers," p 2160. *our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ*. See note, Php 2:11. *glory both now and to the day of eternity*. That which belongs to the Lord and Savior alone, not to any prophet or apostle. These believers were, like all believers, servants of our great God and Savior. Jesus is glorified and honored whenever believers witness to His grace with their words and actions. Luth: "This teaching is not learned all at once, nor can it be understood speculatively. It must be learned by daily use and exercise amid the temptations of the world, the devil, and the flesh, amid despair, distrust, and innumerable other horrible things. And without these exercises it cannot be kept. Foolish people, therefore, are taken in. After reading one or more pages of Holy Scriptures and hearing maybe one sermon, they think they have already learned this teaching [of Christianity] completely. They can see that in other, lesser arts we do not immediately become masters. Much less can it happen in this greatest teaching of all, that we immediately trust in God from the heart and despise all the perils of the world, death, and the devil. These things cannot be learned in one day, but practice and immense exercise and a singular gift of God are required" (AE 12:248).

2 PETER—NOTE ON 3:14–18 Our Lord's patience is essential to our salvation in the sense that He is giving us time to repent. Do we use the time allotted to us to take sin and salvation seriously, or do we neglect our

worship and prayers and our Lord's gracious call to repent? Make daily repentance part of your life. The patient Lord is ever working through Word and Sacrament to restore fallen sinners and to strengthen them in the stability of their salvation. • O Lord, come to me, and strengthen me through Your Word, that I may grow in Your grace and knowledge and proclaim Your glory forever. Amen.

1 John

1 John 1 | 1 John 2 | 1 John 3 | 1 John 4 | 1 John 5

- Introduction to 1, 2, and 3 John
  - Overview
  - Reading 1, 2, and 3 John
  - Luther on 1, 2, and 3 John
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

The Word of Life

1 [1] That which was from the beginning, which we have heard,
which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched
with our hands, concerning the word of life— [2] the life was made manifest,
and we have seen it, and testify to it and proclaim to you the eternal life,
which was with the Father and was made manifest to us— [3] that which we
have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have
fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with
his Son Jesus Christ. [4] And we are writing these things so that our[1] joy
may be complete.

Walking in the Light

5 ‡ ‡ † This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you,
that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. 6 † If we say we have
fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice
the truth. 7 † But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have
fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us
from all sin. 8 † If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth
is not in us. 9 † If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our
sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 10 † If we say we have not
sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

Christ Our Advocate

2 [1]‡†My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. [2]†He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world. [3]†And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments. [4]‡Whoever says “I know him” but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, [5]†but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in him: [6]†whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.

The New Commandment

7 ‡ † Beloved, I am writing you no new commandment, but an old
commandment that you had from the beginning. The old commandment is
the word that you have heard. 8† At the same time, it is a new commandment
that I am writing to you, which is true in him and in you, because[1] the
darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining. 9‡ † Whoever
says he is in the light and hates his brother is still in darkness. 10† Whoever
loves his brother abides in the light, and in him[1] there is no cause for
stumbling. 11† But whoever hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in
the darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness
has blinded his eyes.

12† I am writing to you, little children,
because your sins are forgiven for his
name's sake.
13† I am writing to you, fathers,
because you know him who is from the
beginning.
I am writing to you, young men,
because you have overcome the evil one.
I write to you, children,
because you know the Father.
14 I write to you, fathers,
because you know him who is from the
beginning.
I write to you, young men,
because you are strong,
and the word of God abides in you,
and you have overcome the evil one.

Do Not Love the World

15 ‡† Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the
world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 † For all that is in the world—
the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride in possessions
—is not from the Father but is from the world. 17 † And the world is passing
away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides
forever.

Warning Concerning Antichrists

18 ‡ † Children, it is the last hour, and as you have heard that antichrist is
coming, so now many antichrists have come. Therefore we know that it is
the last hour. 19 † They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they
had been of us, they would have continued with us. But they went out, that
it might become plain that they all are not of us. 20 ‡ † But you have been
anointed by the Holy One, and you all have knowledge.[1] 21 † I write to you,
not because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and
because no lie is of the truth. 22 † Who is the liar but he who denies that Jesus
is the Christ? This is the antichrist, he who denies the Father and the Son.
23 † No one who denies the Son has the Father. Whoever confesses the Son
has the Father also. 24 † Let what you heard from the beginning abide in you.
If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, then you too will abide
in the Son and in the Father. 25 † And this is the promise that he made to us[2]
—eternal life.

26 † I write these things to you about those who are trying to deceive you.
27 † But the anointing that you received from him abides in you, and you
have no need that anyone should teach you. But as his anointing teaches
you about everything, and is true, and is no lie—just as it has taught you,
abide in him.

Children of God

28 ‡‡‡And now, little children, abide in him, so that when he appears we
may have confidence and not shrink from him in shame at his coming. 29 †If
you know that he is righteous, you may be sure that everyone who practices
righteousness has been born of him.

3 1 †See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should
be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does
not know us is that it did not know him. 2 †Beloved, we are God's children
now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he
appears[1] we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. 3 †And
everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.

4 †Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness;
sin is lawlessness. 5 †You know that he appeared to take away sins, and in
him there is no sin. 6 †No one who abides in him keeps on sinning; no one
who keeps on sinning has either seen him or known him. 7 †Little children,
let no one deceive you. Whoever practices righteousness is righteous, as he
is righteous. 8 †Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the
devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God
appeared was to destroy the works of the devil. 9 †No one born of God
makes a practice of sinning, for God's[2] seed abides in him, and he cannot
keep on sinning because he has been born of God. 10 †By this it is evident
who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever
does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not
love his brother.

Love One Another

11 ‡†For this is the message that you have heard from the beginning, that
we should love one another. 12 †We should not be like Cain, who was of the
evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because
his own deeds were evil and his brother's righteous. 13 †Do not be surprised,
brothers,[1] that the world hates you. 14 †We know that we have passed out of
death into life, because we love the brothers. Whoever does not love abides
in death. 15 †Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know
that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.

16 †By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought
to lay down our lives for the brothers. 17 †But if anyone has the world's
goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how
does God's love abide in him? 18 †Little children, let us not love in word or
talk but in deed and in truth.

19 †By this we shall know that we are of the truth and reassure our heart
before him; 20 †for whenever our heart condemns us, God is greater than our
heart, and he knows everything. 21 †Beloved, if our heart does not condemn
us, we have confidence before God; 22 †and whatever we ask we receive
from him, because we keep his commandments and do what pleases him.
23 †And this is his commandment, that we believe in the name of his Son
Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us.
24 †Whoever keeps his commandments abides in God,[2] and God[3] in him.
And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit whom he has given
us.

Test the Spirits

4 [1]†† Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see
whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the
world. [2]† By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that
Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, [3]† and every spirit that does
not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which
you heard was coming and now is in the world already. [4]† Little children,
you are from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is greater
than he who is in the world. [5]† They are from the world; therefore they
speak from the world, and the world listens to them. [6]† We are from God.
Whoever knows God listens to us; whoever is not from God does not listen
to us. By this we know the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

God Is Love

7 †‡†Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever
loves has been born of God and knows God. 8 †Anyone who does not love
does not know God, because God is love. 9 †In this the love of God was
made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that
we might live through him. 10 †In this is love, not that we have loved God
but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.
11 †Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. 12 †No
one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his
love is perfected in us.
13 ‡†By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has
given us of his Spirit. 14 †And we have seen and testify that the Father has
sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. 15 †Whoever confesses that Jesus
is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. 16 †So we have come
to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and
whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. 17 †By this is
love perfected with us, so that we may have confidence for the day of
judgment, because as he is so also are we in this world. 18 †There is no fear
in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment,
and whoever fears has not been perfected in love. 19 †We love because he
first loved us. 20 †If anyone says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a
liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot[1] love
God whom he has not seen. 21 †And this commandment we have from him:
whoever loves God must also love his brother.

Overcoming the World

5 [1]†† Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of
God, and everyone who loves the Father loves whoever has been born of
him. [2]By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God
and obey his commandments. [3]† For this is the love of God, that we keep his
commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome. [4] † For
everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the
victory that has overcome the world—our faith. [5]† Who is it that overcomes
the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

Testimony Concerning the Son of God

6 ‡ † This is he who came by water and blood—Jesus Christ; not by the
water only but by the water and the blood. And the Spirit is the one who
testifies, because the Spirit is the truth. 7 ‡ For there are three that testify:
8 † the Spirit and the water and the blood; and these three agree. 9 † If we
receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater, for this is the
testimony of God that he has borne concerning his Son. 10 † Whoever
believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself. Whoever does not
believe God has made him a liar, because he has not believed in the
testimony that God has borne concerning his Son. 11 † And this is the
testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.
12 † Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God
does not have life.

That You May Know

13 ‡‡‡I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of
God that you may know that you have eternal life. 14 †And this is the
confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to
his will he hears us. 15†And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask,
we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him.

16 †If anyone sees his brother committing a sin not leading to death, he
shall ask, and God[1] will give him life—to those who commit sins that do
not lead to death. There is sin that leads to death; I do not say that one
should pray for that. 17†All wrongdoing is sin, but there is sin that does not
lead to death.

18 †We know that everyone who has been born of God does not keep on
sinning, but he who was born of God protects him, and the evil one does not
touch him.

19†We know that we are from God, and the whole world lies in the power
of the evil one.

20 † And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us
understanding, so that we may know him who is true; and we are in him
who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.
21†Little children, keep yourselves from idols.

1, 2, and 3 John

OVERVIEW

Author
John, apostle and evangelist, called "the elder"

Date
AD 85–95

Places
Various churches, perhaps in Asia Minor

People
John the elder; the brethren (children, fathers, and young men); antichrists; false teachers; various "spirits"; the elect lady, her children, and her elect sister; deceivers; Gaius; brothers who are strangers; Gentiles; Diotrephes; Demetrius; friends

Purpose
To establish and encourage the faith of John's contemporaries in the wake of rising controversy because some had left Christian congregations or had troubled them

Law Themes
Sin; walking in darkness or light; God's commands; hatred; death; deceit; antichrist(s); love one another; lawlessness; deceivers; wicked works; imitate God, not evil

Gospel Themes
Christ, the atoning sacrifice; our advocate; eternal life; God perfects His love in us (sanctification); light; born of God; children of God; truth; fellowship; reward; abiding in Christ's teachings; Christ has come in the flesh

Memory Verses

Confession of sins (1Jn 1:7–9); Jesus, our advocate (2:1–2); the Son destroys the devil's work (3:8); God is love (4:7–12); true God and eternal life (5:20); beware of false teachers (2Jn 9–11)

Introduction to 1, 2, and 3 John

Reading 1, 2, and 3 John

Up on her toes, then back on her heels. When she feels herself about to fall, she buckles her knees and goes down on her seat. “Ooph!”

Nearby, Mother smiles as she folds the laundry. The little girl’s aunt laughs as she folds a shirt.

“I remember when you would stumble that way,” the mother says. “Before long, you were walking straight, then running.”

“My running days are done,” the aunt sighs, rubbing her rounded belly. “Baby’s kicking again. I think there’s another runner on the way.”

Love and the Church as a family are the dominating themes of John’s Letters. He warns against those who would divide the Christian family from fellowship with the heavenly Father and His beloved Son. John presents himself as an “elder,” a parent or older brother to the community of faith. Like someone leading a toddler by the hand, John guides the Church away from dangerous false doctrines so that she may walk in the light.

Luther on 1, 2, and 3 John

> The first epistle of John is a genuine apostolic epistle and ought to follow right after his gospel. For as in the gospel he promulgates faith, so here he opposes those who boast of faith without works. He teaches in many different ways that works are not absent where faith is; and if they are absent, then faith is not genuine but is lies and darkness. He does this, however, not by harping on the law, as the epistle of James does [see footnote 1, p 2131], but by stimulating us to love even as God has loved us.
>
> He also writes vigorously here against the Cerinthians, against the spirit of Antichrist, which was beginning even then to deny that Christ has come in the flesh, and which is today for the first time really in full sway. For although people do not now publicly deny with their lips that Christ has come in the flesh, they do deny it with their hearts, by their teaching and life. For he who would be righteous and saved by his own works and deeds is as much as denying Christ, since Christ has come in the flesh for the very purpose of making us righteous and saving us without our works, by his blood alone.
>
> Thus the epistle fights against both parties: against those who would live in faith without any works, and against those who would become righteous by their works. It keeps us in the true middle way, that we become righteous and free from sin through faith; and then, when we are righteous, that we practice good works and love for God's sake, freely and without seeking anything else.
>
> The other two epistles are not doctrinal epistles but examples of love and of faith. They too have a true apostolic spirit. (AE 35:393)

For more of Luther's insights on 1 John, see *Lectures on the First Epistle of St. John* (AE 30:217–327).

Challenges for Readers

Authorship. John the apostle and evangelist, who calls himself "the elder" (2Jn 1; 3Jn 1), most likely wrote these three books of Scripture. Early Christian writers describe John serving at Ephesus in Asia Minor for c 30 years, which provides the likely setting for these books. In some passages, John refers to other eyewitnesses ("we," 1Jn 1:1, 3; 4:14) with whom he addresses his readers. Not written in the form of a letter, 1Jn reads more like a sermon, which could be sent with correspondence.

The Church as Family. Some expressions in John's Letters have confused interpreters. For example, when John refers to his readers as "children" (1Jn 2:1, 12–13, 18, 28; 3:1–2, 7, 10, 18; 4:4; 5:2, 21; 2Jn 1, 4, 13; 3Jn 4), some have read this as an indication that he wrote the Letters when he was old. This is to miss John's point about his relationship with the members of the congregations. It is not primarily an issue of age. John speaks to his readers as members of his family, the household of faith, for which he is a leader ("elder" or "parent"). The same emphasis on relationships is shown in descriptions of the churches as "the elect lady and her children" and "children of your elect sister" (2Jn 1, 13). Using family relationships to describe congregational relationships is characteristic of the Semitic culture from which the churches first sprang (see examples from Paul in Rm 8:16–17, 21; 9:8; 1Co 4:14, 17; 2Co 6:13; Gal 4:19; Eph 5:1; Php 2:15; 1Th 2:11; 1Tm 1:2, 18; 2Tm 1:2; 2:1; Ti 1:4; Phm 10). See also "brothers," p 1901.

Antichrists and Opponents. John describes his opponents as "antichrist(s)" (1Jn 2:18, 22; 4:3; 2Jn 7), "children of the devil" (1Jn 3:10), "false prophets" (1Jn 4:1), "liar(s)" and "deceivers" (1Jn 2:22; 4:20; 2Jn 7). Based on Church history, Luther associates these opponents with the followers of Cerinthus, who was described as one of the earliest Gnostic leaders to affect the Church at the end of the first century AD (see "proto-gnostics," p 2160). This would indicate a late date for the Letters: in the 90s. However, Cerinthus reportedly taught that Jesus was not true and eternal God and that God did not create the world. Cerinthus believed there was a low-ranking divine being, the Demiurge, who created the physical world and later descended to teach through the man Jesus. This dispute about the person of Christ fits some of the theological problems John attributes to his opponents (1Jn 2:18–25; 4:1–6; 2Jn 7–11) but does not fit

his descriptions absolutely. In John's Letters, the opponents seem focused on denying Jesus' human nature, which may describe an earlier or different heresy from the teachings of Cerinthus. In 3 John, he raises a second issue regarding "Diotrephes, who … does not acknowledge our authority" (v 9). John does not describe this leader as a false teacher but perhaps refers to a congregational dispute.

Blessings for Readers

As you study the Letters of John, pray for the peace and blessing of your congregation and fellowship. Greet your fellow Christians as beloved brothers and sisters, for whom Christ gave His life. Although John provides strong warnings against false teachers and their doctrines, he will also help you understand the true character of Christian love, faith, and good works.

OUTLINE

1 John

I. Prologue (1:1–4)
II. In the World, Not of It (1:5–3:12)
  A. Because His Blood Cleanses Us from All Sin (1:5–2:2)
  B. Because the True Light Is Already Shining (2:3–11)
  C. Because the World Is Passing Away (2:12–17)
  D. Because It Is the Last Hour (2:18–29)
  E. Because Even Now We Are His Children (3:1–12)
III. In Him Who First Loved Us (3:13–5:21)
  A. So We Love and Do Not Hate (3:13–24)
  B. For Ours Is the Spirit of Truth (4:1–6)
  C. Ours Is a God Who First Loved Us (4:7–10)
  D. So Our Love Is His Love (4:11–21)
  E. For His Is the Testimony of the Spirit, the Water, and the Blood (ch 5)

2 John

I. Greeting (1–3)
II. Walking in Truth and Love (4–11)
III. Final Greetings (12–13)

3 John

I. Greeting (1–4)

II. Support and Opposition (5–12)
III. Final Greetings (13–15)

Articles and Resources Related to 1, 2, and 3 John

- John's Reasoning
- Sin That Leads to Death

John's Reasoning

Most magazine articles and newspaper columns proceed from point A to point B to point C to conclusion D. Our way of thinking, of reasoning from premises to conclusions, has come down to us from the ancient Greeks. It is typically Western in approach.

As we read the Holy Scriptures, most of us tend to assume the writer will take this approach. And some biblical writers indeed do. Although the apostle Paul was Jewish, his writings shine as brilliant examples of Western-style thought. Take, for instance, the Book of Romans. This masterpiece, inspired by God, is written as tightly as any legal brief that will land on any judge's desk. Paul wastes no words as he argues the sinfulness of all people and as he explains God's provision to remove our sins in Jesus Christ. Then, from ch 12 on, Paul details the implications of our salvation for daily living. It is a masterful example of Western reasoning.

Even so, most of the holy writers came out of an Eastern, specifically Jewish, culture. Their reasoning was often different than what we are used to. In 1 John, the apostle weaves doctrine and practice together throughout to produce an awe-inspiring tapestry. As a result, we see the intricate connections between "believing right" and "doing right." John's themes spiral outward and upward. Each time he returns to a key concept, he expands on it, adding more muscle to the skeleton.

None of this takes anything away from the inerrant, divinely inspired nature of any biblical book. But it does stand as a reminder to us readers today. To get the most out of each passage of Scripture, we need to take into account the fact that the Holy Spirit used the background, experiences, and literary style of each holy writer to produce manuscripts that were unique to each.

St John—the Pastor

You cannot read 1 John and miss the pastor's heart that so influenced its contents. John loved the people to whom he wrote. After all, these were God's people, God's dear children. And the aged apostle thought of them as his own children too. Again and again, John addresses his readers as "little children" or "my little children." These terms of endearment reveal the tender compassion of the apostle for those whom he had nurtured in the faith.

It is likely that the Holy Spirit used John to bring these people into the family of the heavenly Father or, if not, that John began to shepherd them early on in their new lives in Christ. Several times, he reminds them of what they have heard and known "from the beginning." Despite what the false teachers have tried to cram down their throats, John is not creating new doctrine. Everything he writes to them in this Letter is, or should be, familiar. It is the same truth they have always heard from him. The truth has not changed, nor have the implications of that truth for their daily lives.

St John—the Polemic

While John urges his dear children to love one another, he clearly expresses what love is not. Specifically, love is not tolerance of doctrinal error within the family of faith. John's opponents had attacked the person of Christ Himself! They denied His deity. In doing so, they gutted the meaning of the cross.

That is the nature of heresy. Today, as in the first century, there are those who would set themselves up as judges over God's revelation. They disrupt the unity of the faith the Holy Spirit wants to create in His Church. Sooner or later, Satan convinces them in some way, shape, or form to throw redemption overboard. Immorality then trails close behind. That is why John calls his people back to "the beginning" with such urgent pleas. These are matters of life and death—spiritual life and death.

Satan seldom tells new lies. The old ones still work quite well. Still today, critics debate the identity of Christ Jesus. Creative theologians still trot out the old horse Gnosticism (see pp 1559–61). They may disguise their pet theories under a new blanket of terms as they twist the Scriptures to support their lies, but at heart, the error remains the same.

Who is Jesus Christ? That is the question John addressed from the beginning. His answer has not changed. God's answer has not changed. Look for it as you study 1 John.

Sin That Leads to Death

The "unpardonable sin," as this sin has been called, is also commonly known as "the sin against the Holy Spirit." To describe a sin as "unpardonable" seems to contradict our Christian hope and certainty. After all, the essence of the Christian faith is the declaration that God would have all people to be saved, that is, to come home to Him, forgiven (1Tm 2:4).

In that light, how can there be an unpardonable sin?

Twice in the Gospels, the inspired writers remember our Lord's reference to the unpardonable sin (Mt 12:31–32; Mk 3:29–30). Another key text is Heb 6:4–6. A final reference to the unpardonable sin is in 1 John, where the apostle describes that sin in a dreadful phrase, "sin that leads to death" (5:16). To understand what the unpardonable sin is, we need to understand the context of each of the passages noted above and how they relate to one another. We need to follow the interpretation principle "Let Scripture interpret Scripture."

The Sin of the Scribes and Pharisees

Note the context of Mt 12:31–32; Mk 3:29–30. The scribes and Pharisees were accusing Jesus, saying He was empowered by Satan to do His miraculous works. To the Jew of Jesus' day, the Holy Spirit had two great functions: He revealed God's truth to humanity, and He enabled human beings to recognize that truth when they saw and heard it. (Both of these are, of course, truly the work of the Spirit.)

Now here was a situation in which the Son of God Himself clearly and visibly was overthrowing Satan and his kingdom, healing people who were demon-possessed. As people saw this demonstration of God's love in action, God the Holy Spirit was at work in their hearts, leading them to acknowledge Christ as Savior and Lord (Mt 12:23).

But note the Pharisees' deliberate and stubborn resistance to the Holy Spirit's testimony (Mt 12:24).

The sin against the Holy Spirit, then, is the consistent and stubborn refusal to believe in Christ—deliberately opposing the Holy Spirit as He seeks to bring a person to faith through the message of Christ. The Pharisees' opposition to the Spirit was so extreme that they attributed Christ's work to the devil. By definition, this sin of the Pharisees could not be forgiven because by their unbelief they refused to receive the forgiveness God in Christ so winsomely offered to them.

Trampling the Blood of Christ Underfoot

Most crucial to the fullest understanding of the sin against the Holy Spirit is Heb 6:4–6, a passage that describes the horrible possibility of apostasy. We Christians have been enlightened, brought to faith in Christ, who is the light of the world (Jn 1:9; 9:5). We have tasted the heavenly gift and seen "that the Lord is good" (Ps 34:8). This is a gift that fills all of life as we are drawn to Christ on the cross. Christ does for us what we could never do for ourselves. His ransom of us from our sins takes on meaning for us today, as we see ourselves held hostage to the terrors of sin, death, and the flesh, unable to help ourselves until Jesus Christ helps us.

But since we have tasted the heavenly gift, we

- now see that our birth is not a biological accident but is God's doing, as He calls us by name in our mother's womb (Jer 1:5);
- now live in our baptismal grace, dying daily to sin and rising to the new life that is ours through Jesus' death and resurrection (1Pt 1:3; Rm 6:3–4);
- now understand that Jesus Christ surrounds us with His good gifts and spirit, so that in the sun or in the shadow, in the rough or on the smooth, uphill or down, from life's beginning to life eternal, we know His presence in the green valleys and in the valley of the shadow of death (Ps 23);
- now realize that it is our privilege to share in the Holy Spirit, to taste "the goodness of the word of God," and to experience in the here and now the "powers of the age to come" (Heb 6:5).

But at the end of this catalog of Christian blessedness comes a word about apostasy, about falling away, about that dreadful, terrible sin against the Holy Spirit. This passage was written in an age of Christian persecution, an age when, understandably, Christians came to consider apostasy the supreme sin.

But is any person beyond the mercy and forgiveness of God if, truly repentant, forgiveness is asked for? Is any person so strong and so alive in

Christ that he or she can avoid all denial of Christ? Did not Peter himself deny Jesus? Did not Jesus Himself reinstate Peter (Jn 21:15–19)?

The cross has been described as a window to God's heart. Through one historical event—Christ's crucifixion—it has become possible for human beings in all times and places to look into God's being, to see for certain that God's suffering, enduring, patient, steadfast love is always available for sinners who want forgiveness and who repent.

“Have I Committed the Unpardonable Sin?”

The scriptural reference 1Jn 5:16–17 places on us the responsibility to pray for one another so that the sin whose end is death is not ours. In the original context, the “sin that leads to death” was probably the false teachers’ adamant and persistent denial of the truth and their shameless immorality. We, too, live in a time of false teaching, in the sense that people

- “know it all,” denying the truth of God’s Word in their lives;
- think that Jesus Christ was a good teacher or fine example but deny Him as Savior and Lord;
- live by their own rules, often shamelessly and without consideration for others.

If we are willing to pray for one another when we are ill and in need, should we not also pray for one another as we stray from God? But there is more to this concern than the praying. Our duty is not yet done until we see our prayers as reminders that God would use us as bearers of His grace.

So pray we must, and the will of God will be done. God wants no one lost eternally, and we want no one to live so persistently in sin that the end is eternal death. The sin against the Holy Spirit, the unpardonable sin, is that sin of impenitence that hardens into stubborn and persistent unbelief. No one who worries that he or she has committed this sin is guilty of it, for the hallmark of the sin is that one defiantly and without worry rejects any thought of need for repentance or faith. So we look to Christ as we pray for ourselves and for others: “[Lord,] I believe; help my unbelief!” (Mk 9:24).

Footnotes

Footnotes for 1, 2, and 3 John, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:4 Some manuscripts *your*

Footnotes for 1, 2, and 3 John, Chapter 2

- [1] 2:8 Or *that*
- [1] 2:10 Or *it*
- [1] 2:20 Some manuscripts *you know everything*
- [2] 2:25 Some manuscripts *you*

Footnotes for 1, 2, and 3 John, Chapter 3

- [1] 3:2 Or *when it appears*
- [2] 3:9 Greek *his*
- [1] 3:13 Or *brothers and sisters*. The plural Greek word *adelphoi* (translated "brothers") refers to siblings in a family. In New Testament usage, depending on the context, *adelphoi* may refer either to men or to both men and women who are siblings (brothers and sisters) in God's family, the church; also verses 14, 16
- [2] 3:24 Greek *him*
- [3] 3:24 Greek *he*

Footnotes for 1, 2, and 3 John, Chapter 4

- [1] 4:20 Some manuscripts *how can he*

Footnotes for 1, 2, and 3 John, Chapter 5

- [1] 5:16 Greek *he*

Study Notes

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 1:1–4 1Jn is traditionally known as a letter, but it lacks the typical introductory greetings of early Christian letters. See "Authorship," p 2170. Compare the teaching of these verses with Jn 1:1–18.
1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 1:1 The whole substance and blessing of the Gospel is found in the unique person who is both God and man—Jesus Christ. *the beginning*. Of creation. See note, v 2. *heard … seen … looked … touched*. Absolute affirmation of Christ's physical, human nature. Luth: "By the grace of God I have learned not to turn my eyes away from that Person who was born to Mary, and not to seek or acknowledge another god. One's eyes must be fixed on that Person who was born of the Virgin Mary. Where the Son of God is, there Christ is; where Christ is, there the Father is" (AE 30:223).
1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 1:2 *life was made manifest*. Eternal life is found in God the Son, who was conceived in human flesh in the womb of His mother, Mary, and born in Bethlehem. See notes, Jn 1:4, 14. *with the Father*. Jesus, the Eternal Word, has always been with the Father. He was with Him at creation.
1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 1:3 *you*. All Christians who read this Letter. *fellowship*. More than friendship; a common share in something (or in this case, someone). Christians have a common share in God the Father through the human nature of Jesus. Since we are all members of one Body of Christ, we share in fellowship with all other Christians through Jesus. See p 1902. *us*. John and the other apostles who saw, heard, and touched Jesus, even after He was crucified and raised from the dead.
1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 1:4 *we*. Apostles writing the NT. *our joy may be complete*. Cf 3Jn 4.
1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 1:1–4 John begins this Book much like his Gospel account, with the Eternal Word, who was always with the Father and was working with the Father at creation. But here John's point is that this same Word who is "eternal life" is the crucified and risen Lord Jesus Christ, whom all the apostles had physically seen, heard, and touched. We owe the Eternal Word our perfect obedience. Despite our disobedience—our lack of recognition and faithfulness of our Creator—the Eternal Word did not come to condemn us but to save us. • Heavenly Father, by the

writings of the apostles, grant that we may ever share in Christ and His kingdom, that our joy may be complete. Amen.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 1:5–2:27 Because false teachers have troubled congregations, John invites his "little children" (2:1) to examine their faith and practice in view of God's standards.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 1:5 *Him*. Jesus. *God is light … no darkness*. There is no evil or deception in Jesus, only truth.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 1:6 *fellowship*. See note, v 3. *walk in darkness*. To live and practice what is not truth, i.e., sin. The "walk" reveals the truthfulness of one's claims and confession. See notes, Gal 5:19–21.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 1:7 *walk in the light*. To live openly and honestly, without covering up our behavior, since we confess our sins to God daily. Although we are sinners and still have sinful and selfish thoughts, words, and deeds, we do not dwell on such thoughts. We do not cultivate such words or perpetuate such deeds. See "walk," p 7. *as He is in the light*. Jesus lives and does all things according to the truth (the Word of God). *fellowship with one another*. See note, v 3. Believers have a common share in Christ (His life, death, resurrection, and ascension), which brings forgiveness and grace equally and blessedly to each. *the blood of Jesus … cleanses us from all sin*. Only Christ's blood could atone and has atoned for the sin of the world. He alone is righteous (2:1). See note, Heb 1:3. "The Scriptures speak not merely in general of the Son of Man, but also indicate clearly His received human nature…. This is true not only according to the merit 'of Christ's blood' that was once attained on the cross. But in this place John means that in the work or act of justification, not only the divine nature in Christ but also His blood actually cleanses us from all sins" (FC SD VIII 59).

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 1:8 Sin is not only what we do against God's commands in thought, word, and deed, but is also what we do naturally from the moment of our conception (cf Ps 51:5). Jesus taught that man's corrupted nature is incapable of doing any good (cf Jn 6:63; 15:5). Luth: "Although we have become a new creature, nevertheless the remnants of sin always remain in us. We still have sin, and the poison is still in us; and that sin incites us to the fruits of sin, as in the case of David, to whom inherent, encompassing, and indwelling sin said: 'Slay Uriah' (cf. 2 Sam. 11:15). David consented and sinned…. Although we are Christians sprinkled with the blood of Christ, yet we often err. Therefore the true

knowledge of Christ causes a person to feel that he has sin. Furthermore, it causes us to lament this…. Finally we should hold most firmly to this, that no one is or becomes righteous before God except through the blood of Jesus Christ. For God alone is righteous, truthful, and wise. Whatever we do out of faith, we should always say: 'It is sin' and 'We are unworthy servants,' Luke 17:10. But we gain salvation solely because of the righteousness of God, and it is because of this righteousness that we are saved" (AE 30:229).

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 1:9 *He*. God. *just*. God always does what is just and righteous. God is faithful to His promises and always keeps His Word. See "righteousness," p 1904. *cleanse us*. See note, v 7. *all unrighteousness*. Sins we willfully commit (sins of commission), good deeds we fail to do (sins of omission), and the sinful nature of every person.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 1:10 *make Him a liar*. God has declared what fallen mankind cannot see: that all have sinned and fallen short of His glory. To deny this is to sit in judgment of God and declare Him to be untrue. Cf Jb 40:8. *not in us*. Jesus Christ is the living Word who abides in those who abide in Him through faith. But He will not abide with lies, for He is the truth. Luth: "In the end God will prevail and gain the victory, either here by His goodness or hereafter by His severity. It will do no good to be justified before men or in our own eyes, for we must ignore this and wait with fear to learn what God thinks about it" (AE 14:168).

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 1:5–10 John writes about faithfulness in our walk with God. Our sinful pride rejects God's Word and seeks to deceive us so that we might not know ourselves as we are or know God as He has revealed Himself. God sees our true nature, and in Christ He reveals His nature, which is both just and gracious to us. For those who confess their sins, God is always faithful to His promise to forgive. This is just and right because of His Son, who has paid the price for our sins. • Heavenly Father, give us hearts to believe and to know ourselves as we are. Then we may truthfully confess our sins, trusting in Your forgiveness and mercy. Amen.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 2:1 *My little children*. A reference given by the one who proclaimed the Word of life to them, by which they were brought to the faith and given new birth. John later refers to them as "children of God" because all Christians are "born of God" (3:9). *may not sin*. Christians are both sinners and saints at the same time. John is writing

to enlighten, strengthen, and build up the saints so they may say no to sin. *advocate*. Jesus is the mediator between God and man. As such, Jesus is our defender, our intercessor, who constantly presents evidence in God's court of justice in favor of our pardon. See notes, Jb 9:33; 16:19–21. "This is the worship that He approves above all other worship, that He be called upon in all afflictions" (AC XXI 3). Luth: "He is righteous and unstained. He is without sin. Whatever righteousness I have, this my Comforter has, He who cries out for me to the Father: 'Spare him, and he has been spared! Forgive him! Help him!' The righteousness of Jesus Christ is standing on our side. For the righteousness of God in Him is ours" (AE 30:236). Luth: "This text should be written with golden letters and should be painted in the heart. Therefore you should get understanding and say: 'Christ, I know Thee alone as the Advocate, the Comforter, and the Mediator; and I do not doubt that Thou art such a Person for me but cling firmly to this with my heart and believe' " (AE 30:236).

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 2:2 *propitiation*. Satisfaction for the demands of God's Law. Jesus satisfied God's demands for perfect obedience and perfect payment for sins. Through His life and death on the cross, Jesus became the means of forgiveness, the way of reconciling man to God. See note, Rm 3:25. *for the sins of the whole world*. Jesus made complete satisfaction for the sins of all mankind from the beginning of the world to the Last Day (objective justification). Jesus came that "He might taste death for everyone" (Heb 2:9)—even for those who reject Him, "denying the Master who bought them" (2Pt 2:1). These verses repudiate the false teaching of a "limited atonement" (that Christ did not atone for all mankind, but only for the elect). Luth: "He does not sit at the right hand of the Father to terrify us, but He is the expiation…. Christ, who does not spurn a contrite and humble heart, wants to be the Lord and Author of life, not of sin" (AE 30:236–37).

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 2:3 Only those who know Jesus through faith keep His Commandments. His Commandments are not burdensome because Christ's teaching (Jn 13:34) is based on the Gospel, not on condemnation. The Law never provided the power to fulfill the commands, but Christ gives His Commandments in view of God's mercy. He builds on forgiveness, which motivates us.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 2:4–5 When one's living does not flow from love, it disproves all claims of knowing Jesus, who is God's very expression

of love and truth.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 2:5 The love of God reaches its goal in us only when we love others as Christ has loved us. This means that we forgive them when they sin against us and pray for them when they sin, so they may be forgiven. *perfected*. See p 1903.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 2:6 *abides*. We are brought into Christ by God's work of faith in us when we are "born of God" by water and the Word of Christ. We remain in Christ also by God's grace as we trust His Word daily. See note, Jn 6:56. *in the same way in which He walked*. Walking and living in Christ's way means always speaking and living the truth in love and forgiving everyone. See note, 1:7.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 2:1–6 Only true children who know Jesus as their Savior can truly walk as Jesus walked and love one another as Jesus has loved them. If anyone claims to know Jesus and does not love as Jesus loves, he is a liar. When we are guilty of not loving as Jesus loved us, we have One who defends us before God's throne and petitions our pardon for the sake of His own blood—Jesus the Righteous One. Through His endless love and forgiveness, we have salvation and have come to know Him. In Him, we love our fellow Christians. • Father, strengthen me in my own salvation, that I might be empowered to keep Your commands and love everyone as Christ has loved me. Amen.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 2:7 *no new commandment*. This is the same command they have known since they were born of God, the same commandment God's people have always had through the enduring Word of God "from the beginning"—to love one another. See note, Jn 13:34.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 2:8 *a new commandment*. Our Lord's love for us has made the old commandment to "love your neighbor" (Lv 19:18) new and powerful. *true in Him and in you*. This new commandment is true in Jesus and in those who believe in Him. The beloved child, born of God, loves his brother because the love of Christ is at work in him. *the darkness … the true light*. Since Christ's death and resurrection, the old age of this corrupted world is running out. As the darkness passes, it does so in the light of His Gospel, which shines through His Word and Sacrament to a world lost in the darkness of this old age.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 2:9–11 "Hate" and "love" are a common word pair in human language. They are difficult emotions for sinners to handle. God calls us to love good and hate evil (cf Ps 45:7; Heb 1:9).

Popular sayings such as "Hate the sin, but love the sinner" try to express this thought, though the Scripture surprisingly warns, "You [God] hate all evildoers" (Ps 5:4–6). God is somehow able to hate the evildoer while also longing for his salvation (Jn 3:16; 2Pt 3:9). Among Christian brethren, hatred cannot prevail, because they share genuine love for the same heavenly Father.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 2:9 *brother*. Fellow believer. See p 1901.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 2:10 *abides*. See note, v 6. *stumbling*. In unbelief.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 2:11 To hate a brother is to walk in darkness and become unable to see the truth.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 2:12 *little children*. Refers to the state of all believers who enter the kingdom of God (cf Mt 18:4; Mk 10:15; Lk 18:17). See "The Church as Family," p 2170. *for His name's sake*. Through Christ's name come all His benefits. See p 842.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 2:13 *fathers*. The more mature, the teachers and leaders among them. *you know Him*. They were the first to know Christ. *young men*. The less mature who have no less overcome Satan through faith in Christ because they have been given spiritual victory and strength in Him. *children*. All who are born of God are given to know God as their Father, Jesus as their Savior, and the Spirit as their Comforter.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON **2:13b–14** Essentially the same as vv 12–13a. Poetic and repetitious for emphasis.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 2:7–14 Jesus has shown us the love of God on the cross. This is the love the Law commanded but we could never fulfill. But more than that, it is the love that the Gospel imparts to those who love their brother and abide in the light so that there is in them nothing that would cause them to fall away from faith in Christ. The old commandment, "love your neighbor as yourself" (Lv 19:18), condemns us all, since we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. The new commandment, "love one another as I have loved you" (Jn 15:12), is rooted in Jesus' work, which frees us from guilt. His atonement for our sins empowers us to love as He loves. • Grant, Lord, that we trust in You and Your love, that we may always love our neighbor. Amen.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 2:15 *love the world*. Affection for and the choosing of the sinful things of this world and this earthly life. See notes, Jn 1:10; 3:16. *love of the Father is not in him*. Those in whom God dwells love

not the world that is passing away but the kingdom that is coming and the things of God.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 2:16 *desires of the flesh … desires of the eyes … pride in possessions*. The sinful human nature always seeks selfish things and is tempted to covet, abuse, and control all things. It finds false security in wealth and is proud of accumulated possessions that show off that wealth (cf Gn 3:6). *not from the Father*. God is not the source of sin, sinful desires, or the works of sin. Luth: "First, the lust of the flesh must be overcome, and this is done more easily. Second, and this is more difficult, the lust of the eyes, for it cannot be deserted all at once, like the first, but it fails gradually. Finally, the most difficult is the pride of life. It, too, is born of victory over vices. Therefore this is not overcome, though it be left desolate or fail, unless it perish altogether because of its iniquity. It is the most harmful kind of vice which unjustly divides between God's glory and self-confusion" (AE 10:429).

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 2:17 *passing away*. Cf v 8. *will of God*. Cf Jn 6:40. *abides forever*. Lives forever with God in spirit now and on the Last Day by the resurrection of the body.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 2:15–17 Do not cling to this world and its desires; it will soon be over. Cling to Christ and live forever! Our sinful flesh and the world entice and tempt us with their glittering promises of wealth, power, popularity, and pleasure. But all that glitters is not gold, and none of it provides for forgiveness, peace, and contentment. Christ alone provides and offers forgiveness, peace, and contentment. • Father in heaven, do not let the desires of our sinful, selfish flesh reign over us. Fix our eyes on Your Son, our Savior, that we may ever believe in Him. Amen.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 2:18 *last hour*. The time prior to Christ's second coming (cf Ac 2:17), which has been and will be filled with the appearance of many false teachers who speak their falsehoods by the spirit of the antichrist (1Jn 4:3). The appearance of these false teachers, whom John calls "many antichrists," sets the stage for the coming of "the Antichrist," who will arise from within Christendom (2Th 2:1–11). Once he rises, then all will be fulfilled that Christ prophesied must take place before He appears on the Last Day. See note, 2Th 2:3; cf Rv 13. *have heard*. Jesus warned us about false shepherds, false prophets, and the one from whom all falsehood originates—the father of lies, the devil. *antichrist … many antichrists*. Lit, "instead of Christ" or "in place of Christ." There are as

many different antichrists as there are different ways of opposing Christ. John is refuting one of these false versions of Christ in this Letter. See notes, 4:1–3.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 2:19 *They*. The antichrists, the false teachers John mentions also in v 26. *went out from us*. The false teachers could not abide in the apostles' teaching, the doctrine of Christ, so they left the Christian Church (cf 2Jn 7–11). *they all are not of us*. Not everyone who claims to be a Christian really is a Christian. When disagreements over doctrine arise and there is a division, those who cling to Christ's Word and teaching prove themselves to be genuine believers. Those who dispute Christ's teaching and attempt to alter it prove themselves to be false followers of the Lord. The apostle would rebuke them and put them out of the Christian fellowship, if they had not left of their own accord. The fact that they were willing to leave rather than confess the true teaching of Christ shows that they were not true Christians.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 2:20–25 There is one God who is Father, Son, and Spirit. Because there is "one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all" (Eph 4:5–6), it is necessary for salvation to believe what God's Word teaches concerning the Father, the Son, and the Spirit. One cannot have the Father without holding to the Son and also to the Spirit.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 2:20 *anointed*. As Son of God, Jesus was born of God from all eternity. He is God's Chosen One and was anointed with the Holy Spirit at His Baptism. See notes, 1Sm 10:1; Mk 1:10; cf Ac 10:38; Jn 1:32–33. So, each believer is anointed with the Holy Spirit at Baptism and is born of God. See note, Jn 3:5. *Holy One*. God's Holy One is God's Messiah, Jesus (cf 1Jn 4:14). *knowledge*. Fullness of the Gospel found in Jesus (cf 1:1–4).

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 2:21 Because believers know the truth, they will be able to recognize the lies of the false teachers.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 2:22 *Who is the liar*. Cf Jn 8:44. These teachers spoke by the spirit of the Antichrist; ultimately, the voice of the devil. *he who denies that Jesus is the Christ?* Anyone who denies that Jesus Christ was born, lived, died, bodily rose, and physically ascended to the right hand of God the Father as the Son of Man and the Son of God. *the antichrist*. See note, v 18; cf 4:1–6.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 2:23 *No one who denies the Son has the Father*. One cannot have the Father except through the Son and by the Spirit. See note, vv 20–25. *confesses the Son*. Those who believe in Jesus and confess Him before the world display that they are born of God and of the one true faith. They have fellowship with God and with one another through the Son. See note, 1:3.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 2:24 Every Christian should abide in the Word of God. We must never advance beyond, but continue to grow in, the foundational truths of Christ crucified for the sins of the world and raised for our salvation.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 2:25 *us*. All who believe in Jesus Christ.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 2:26 *those who are trying to deceive you*. False teachers who are seeking to gather followers of their own.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 2:27 *anointing*. The Holy Spirit remains in believers. See note, v 20. *no need*. Those baptized into Christ have received the Holy Spirit through God's Word. They have no need for false teachers, who deny God the Father by denying His Son. The Spirit who accompanied Jesus is the same Spirit who remains in us. He always reminds us of our Lord's words to us. *abide in Him*. See note, v 28.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 2:18–27 True Christians abide in Christ through faith in Him and all His teachings. There are many antichrists, false teachers who infiltrate the Church and attempt to draw Christians away from the true Christ. There is great danger for us if we do not know the Scriptures well and are unable to recognize false teachers. In God's Word and by His Spirit, we have everything we need to tell the difference between the truth and a lie. We already have all that we need to be certain of our eternal life. • Heavenly Father, keep us steadfast in Your Word, and ever guard us from the deceptions of the many antichrists who seek to lead us away from Your Son, who is forever true God and true man. Amen.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 2:28–4:6 A second appeal for the congregations to examine their faith and practice. See note, 1:5–2:27.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 2:28 *abide in Him*. Remaining in Jesus through faith in Him and His Word.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 2:29 If a person believes that Jesus is without sin and that He fulfilled the whole Law and God's will for him, that believer will want to behave toward God and neighbor the way Jesus behaved. See "righteousness," p 1904. *born of Him*. We cannot begin to

truly fear, love, and trust God or love our neighbor the way Jesus loved us unless we are first born of God (cf Jn 3:3–5).
1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 3:1 *what kind of love*. Quantity and quality of God's love. Despite all our iniquity, our selfishness and sinfulness, He has called us His own children through the waters of Baptism. This love God has lavished on us is unique because it is not what our corrupted, sinful nature deserves; it is not what our thoughts, words, and deeds have earned. *and so we are*. Believers are not just "named" children of God, but are actually reborn as His children, are actually "fathered" by God. This is no metaphor, for a new being is created (2Co 5:17). God promises that He has made us His children. Despite the lies, deceptions, and partial truths of the world, God has never lied to us, and He has never failed to do what He has promised. You can count on Him. *does not know us … did not know Him*. Believers, the children of God, possess eternal life now in time. Yet the corruption of our sin hides the glory that is already present in us. This glory is seen by faith. Although the world cannot see the glory of God in His children, the world does encounter the different lifestyles of believers. Often, the world hates believers. This hatred arises from the fact that a good life, when encountered, will always draw a comparison or judgment, confronting the world with how far it has fallen short.
1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 3:2 You were a dying sinner before God called you His child in Baptism. When Christ comes in glory, He will reveal the glory that He has given to you now. Luth: "God is infinite, but we are finite creatures. Moreover, the creature will never be the Creator. Yet we shall be like Him. God is life. Therefore we, too, shall live. God is righteous. Therefore we, too, shall be filled with righteousness. God is immortal and blessed. Therefore we, too, shall enjoy everlasting bliss, not as it is in God but the bliss that is suitable for us" (AE 30:268).
1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 3:3 *hopes in Him*. Our hope in Jesus is that we are no longer slaves to sin. *purifies*. Having been purified and made holy, and given the sure hope of eternal life, we seek that which is holy and right. Born of God, we are now free to serve our Savior.
1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 3:4 *practice of sinning*. Only thing one can do prior to being born of God through faith in Christ. *lawlessness*. The sinner's natural orientation and inclination to hate God and violate His Law.
1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 3:5 *appeared*. God the Son appeared in human flesh, lived a perfect and righteous life without sin, gave up His

lifeblood in sacrifice to God to remove the guilt of our sins, and was raised from the dead so that we might know that the Father accepted Him as "the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (Jn 1:29). *in Him there is no sin*. Cf Heb 4:15. For those who are in Christ by faith, God no longer counts their sin against them (Rm 8:1).

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 3:6 *keeps on sinning*. A person who practices sin habitually is only a sinner and not a child of God. Such a person cannot know the love of God in Jesus. "If sin does what it wants, the Holy Spirit and faith are not present" (SA III III 44). *seen Him or known Him*. "See" and "know" are used to speak of believing in Christ. No sinner can see God directly (Jn 1:18). God can be "seen" and "known" only by faith in Jesus. In Jesus, we see and know God (Jn 14:6–10).

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 3:7 *let no one deceive you*. There is no true Christian life without a complete break with the old life of sin. Those born of God deplore and reject their own sinfulness and daily repent of their sins. Christians are born with the desire to grow in the righteousness of Christ, which God has credited to them through faith in Jesus.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 3:8 *of the devil … sinning from the beginning*. Sin has its origin in the corruption of God's good creation of mankind by the work of the devil in deceiving Eve and tempting Adam to distrust God. Therefore, everyone who sins serves the devil and continues his evil work (cf Jn 8:34–47; Eph 2:1–3). "God is not a creator, author, or cause of sin. By the instigation of the devil through one man, sin (which is the devil's work) has entered the world" (FC SD I 7). *Son of God appeared … to destroy the works of the devil*. God the Son became flesh to take away sins and to purify us from the corruption of sin brought into the world through Adam by the devil. Ultimately, in the resurrection, He will rid of all sinfulness those who trust in Him. On the Last Day, He will bring all the devil's hateful work to nothing. Luth: "Here you have the fulfillment of the first sermon of the Gospel. The Seed of the woman had to be born to destroy the works of the devil (Gen. 3:15). Now He has appeared in the flesh and has destroyed them" (AE 30:272). "Just as the devil cannot be conquered except by Christ's help, so we cannot free ourselves from this slavery by our own strength. World history shows how great and powerful the devil's kingdom is. The world is full of blasphemies against God and wicked opinions. The devil keeps all tied up many hypocrites who appear holy and who are wise and righteous in the world's eyes. Even greater vices

are seen in other people. Since Christ was given to us to remove both these sins and these punishments and to destroy the devil's kingdom, sin, and death [1 John 3:8], we will never be able to recognize Christ's benefits unless we understand our evils" (Ap II 48–50).

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 3:9 *God's seed*. Jesus speaks of Himself as the seed that bears much fruit if it falls into the earth and dies (Jn 12:24). He also describes His Word as seed (Mt 13:19; Mk 4:14). Jesus is also the "seed" and the "living and abiding word" of 1Pt 1:23. The Gospel proclaims and delivers Jesus Himself, who remains in those who trust His promises. *been born of God*. See notes, 1Jn 2:29; 4:7; Jn 3:5. Bern: "Even tho they are seen to have sinned in time, their offenses do not appear in eternity, because the charity of their Father covers the multitude of sins" (*WDC*, p 174).

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 3:10 *evident*. Jesus taught that people would recognize His followers by their love for one another (Jn 13:34–35). Despite any claim to Christ a person may make, the refusal to love other Christians marks him as a child of the devil. While this love is manifested most clearly in forgiving one another as Christ has forgiven us, it also insists on the true teaching (2:18–27; 4:1–6) because love "does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth" (1Co 13:6). Any who do not hold to the true teaching of Christ do not love their brothers. See p 1907.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 2:28–3:10 False teachers and false believers had excuses and rationalizations for not showing true Christian love for the whole family of God. But Jesus taught, "You will recognize them by their fruits" (cf Mt 7:15–23). We are often tempted to rationalize and excuse our sin. But no one born of God wants to give in to sinning. Those who give themselves over to sin will not be exonerated by the excuses they put forward. Through daily repentance and the practice of righteousness, we show ourselves to be true children of God and will not be ashamed when our Lord Jesus appears on the Last Day. Then we will be like Him and see Him as He is in all His glory. • Heavenly Father, forgive my sinful excuses so I may remain in Christ through Your Word and love everyone as He has loved me. Amen.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 3:11 *message*. The teaching they received when they were taught of Christ, His salvation, and living in Christ. See notes, 2:7–8.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 3:12 *like Cain*. Cf Gn 4:1–12; see note, Heb 11:4. *of the evil one*. Cain showed that he was of the evil one because he hated his brother simply because Abel did what was good and right. See note, Gn 4:7. *his own deeds were evil*. Cain's sacrifice was not acceptable to God because it was made without faith. Jude 11 hints that Cain's offering was stingy because of greed. But since Cain was of the evil one, we also know that his works did not proceed from faith (cf Rm 14:23).
1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 3:13 If we trust our Lord's teaching, we are not surprised that the world hates us. Our Lord Jesus told us ahead of time that the world would hate us because we do not belong to this world any more than He did. The world hated Jesus because His whole life testified that their deeds were evil (Jn 3:19–20; 7:7).
1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 3:14 *passed out of death into life*. When we receive the gift of faith. Cf Eph 2:1, 5. *because we love the brothers*. Only those who have been born of God and therefore have true faith are able to love the brothers, for love is from God. *abides in death*. Those who have no genuine love are spiritually dead; i.e., they are unbelievers. "Love is a fruit that surely and necessarily also follows true faith. The fact that a person does not love is a sure sign that he is not justified. He is still in death or has lost the righteousness of faith again, as John says" (FC SD III 27).
1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 3:15 According to Jesus, to hate a brother is to be guilty of the sin of murder and to be worthy of the fire of hell. Eternal life cannot remain in any who refuse to admit that they are murderers and repent of their hatred for their brothers.
1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 3:16 Jesus showed God's love when He laid down His life for all people. So, as Jesus laid down His life for our salvation, Jesus wants us to use our lives—to lay down our lives—that our brothers and sisters might be blessed and saved. See note, Jn 15:13.
1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 3:17 *world's goods*. Earthly goods that can be used to help a neighbor in need. *closes his heart*. He feels no compassion, but turns away from a brother in need even when he has the means to help him. Luth: "God is merciful. Yet He is not idle. He does not let sinners go unpunished. To the humble, who fear Him, He is merciful…. There are several degrees of love: an enemy must not be offended, a brother must be helped, a member of one's household must be supported. You know Christ's commandment concerning love for one's enemies. But you owe more to a brother who loves you in return" (AE 30:278).

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 3:18 Love is prompted and proceeds from the truth and is carried out in actual deeds done for the benefit and blessing of another. Whatever tends to our brother's salvation is done "in truth." Luth: "To love a brother who is kind and pleasant in return—this is a trivial matter. This is the way the world also loves. 'The crowd judges friendships by their usefulness.' Accordingly, John does not say: 'Let us love those who are saintly, agreeable, and rich.' No, he says: 'Let us love the brethren,' in such a way that then nothing but the brotherhood is loved and regarded; for a brother is loved out of a sense of duty, not because of usefulness and not because of praise. All the gifts we have should serve those who do not have them. For example, he who is learned should serve him who is not learned; he who is rich should serve him who is poor; he who is sensible should serve him who is foolish, etc." (AE 30:278–79).

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 3:19 *reassure our heart*. To love one another as Jesus loved us flows from genuine, saving faith. Believers are reassured as the Lord keeps His promises to bless them through His means of grace.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 3:20 The condemnation of the Law burdens a believer's conscience. God, who knows everything, gets the last word by affirming that on the cross Christ Jesus removed the guilt and condemnation of all.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 3:21 The Law always accuses, and the Gospel always pardons and comforts. After God has forgiven us all our sin because of Jesus and we have reassured ourselves with the promise that "God is greater than our heart" (v 20), then we have confidence before God to ask for anything.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 3:22 *whatever we ask*. According to His will and His Word. See note, Jas 4:3. *pleases Him*. Those who have been born of God can walk in the light through faith. Through this God-given faith, all one does is pleasing and perfect in Christ.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 3:23 *believe in the name*. To believe in God —Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—and all that He has done and still does to this day for salvation. See note, Php 2:11.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 3:24 *abides in God, and God in him*. There is a reciprocal indwelling between Jesus and all believers. See note, Rm 8:9. *He has given us*. All true believers receive Christ's Spirit at the time of their conversion. The Holy Spirit Himself grants us to know His Word and abiding presence.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 3:11–3:24 Our heart condemns us when we look at our brother, see his needs, and yet excuse ourselves from acting in love. However, in Christ we know that we have passed out of death into life; that is, we have true saving faith, because we love our fellow Christians. Jesus laid down His life for us. His love for us has covered all our sins. God is greater than our heart, and His sure and certain promises of salvation give us confidence to come before Him. • Heavenly Father, forgive my lack of real love for my brothers and sisters, and enable me to love everyone as Jesus has loved me. Amen.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 4:1 *do not believe every spirit*. Cf 1Tm 4:1. A spirit is a creature without flesh and bones. There are faithful spirits (angels) that serve God and His elect, and there are rebellious spirits (demons) that Satan has disguised in his attempt to nullify the works of the Son of God in the lives of every person. Satan tried to stop Jesus but could not; now he is after those to whom Jesus would give eternal life. There is no neutral ground, and no mortal human being is independent—one either believes in and belongs to the Spirit of God or one believes in and belongs to Satan and speaks and lives accordingly. *test the spirits*. Examination of words and actions in light of the whole testimony of Scripture. Cf v 2; see notes, Dt 18:18; 1Co 14:29. Luth: "The emphasis is on the words 'test the spirits,' for with these words he touches their boasting as with a needle. It is as if he were saying: 'Those who boast of the Spirit will come to you. But test the spirits' " (AE 30:284). *false prophets*. Those who speak by the spirit of the Antichrist are doing the work of the jealous devil, who always tries to deceive man by counterfeiting the wonderful works of God.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 4:2 *know the Spirit of God*. No one can sincerely confess, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit. The triune God Himself provides the confession that this man, Jesus, is God Almighty (Mt 16:16–17; Jn 6:44). *Jesus Christ has come in the flesh*. To confess the man Jesus Christ as Lord and God in the flesh is the confession of all the apostolic eyewitnesses. The apostles saw, heard, and touched the resurrected Christ. See note, 1:1; cf Lk 24:39.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 4:3 Satan would draw us away from our true Savior, who suffered, bled, and died and still has the scars to prove it. All false christs have this in common: none of them come as God in the flesh of Jesus Christ (cf 2Jn 7–11). Hus: "Here the spirit is subtle and heretical, denying Jesus to be very God and very man" (*The Church*, p 91).

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 4:4 *overcome them*. Through faith in Jesus (cf 5:4–5). *He who is in you*. Christ, who dwells within every believer. *greater than he who is in the world*. Satan usurped the dominion over the earth that God had entrusted to Adam in the beginning. But Christ's crucifixion and resurrection decisively overturned the dominion Satan usurped. He is very angry because he knows that his time is short (Rv 12:12). But Satan cannot harm those who have Christ dwelling in them through faith in Him (1Jn 5:18). Luth: " 'Christ is stronger; He has overcome, is overcoming, and will overcome that strong man in us (Luke 11:21–22).' Still the devil does sometimes overcome us in the flesh, in order that even in this way we may experience the power of the Stronger against that strong man and say with Paul (2 Cor. 12:10): 'When I am weak, then I am strong' " (AE 26:193).

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 4:5 Unbelievers speak and do only what comes from unbelief (cf Jn 3:6).

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 4:6 *listens to us*. All who are in fellowship with God recognize and listen to the true teaching of Christ when they hear it. *spirit of error*. Behind every false teaching and empty idol is a very real demon (cf 1Co 10:20).

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 4:1–6 Whenever a teacher speaks of a "Christ" or a "Jesus" or a "God" who comes to us without human flesh, know this: it is a demon speaking through a man, a demon who is seeking to destroy both your faith and your soul everlastingly. "Whoever greets him takes part in his wicked works" (2Jn 11). Faith in the heart cannot be seen; it can only be shown through acts of love. The greatest testimony is the true flesh-and-blood testimony of God's love manifest in Jesus. • Lord, enable me to test all spirits for what they are and remain forever faithful in Him, the only God-man and Savior of the world. Amen.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 4:7–5:12 Final appeal for the congregations to examine their faith and practice. See note, 1:5–2:27.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 4:7 *love is from God*. Cf vv 8, 16. What the world considers love is actually selfish and self-centered, but all true love is from God. See p 1903. "Love" of sinful pleasures is misplaced affection, which corrupts what is good. E.g., it is natural to want to have a spouse and a family. But to steal someone else's spouse or family would be a perversion of a God-given desire. *born of God*. Only God can make Christians (cf Jn 1:12–13). One way this happens is through Baptism (see

note, Jn 3:5). Another way is through the preaching of the Word of Christ. *knows God*. A sinner can know God only through faith in Jesus Christ.
1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 4:8 God's nature is turned toward and bound up in seeking, working, and being for the welfare and benefit of others—namely mankind. Love fittingly describes the nature of God; His love is revealed in the flesh and blood of Jesus Christ.
1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 4:9 *live through Him*. Believers live through Jesus Christ, who died, rose, and ascended into heaven so that He might fill all heaven and earth (Eph 4:10). He is present with all believers through His chosen means of grace: His Word, Holy Baptism, and the Lord's Supper. The Word made flesh is our source of life, our mediator; we live only because of Him, as Jesus Himself taught (Jn 6:57).
1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 4:10 We are saved not by our love for God but by the love of God for us in sending Christ to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Luth: "Provide yourselves with armor from Scripture concerning justification, which takes place through faith. Collect, I say, a number of Scripture passages that ascribe righteousness to God. Then, if you put your reliance on these passages, you will be able to stand even after a fall, as, for example, after acts of fornication, murder, and other sins" (AE 30:295). *propitiation*. See note, 2:2.
1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 4:11 *if God so loved us*. Cf 3:1.
1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 4:12 *No one has ever seen God*. No mortal sinner has ever seen God directly and fully. A sinner may see God only through faith in Jesus Christ. Just as we cannot see God except through faith in Jesus, so also we have no way of serving God except by loving our neighbor through faith in Jesus. *abides in us*. See note, Jn 6:56. *perfected*. God's love for us has achieved its purpose in us when it causes us to love others. As we love others, we know that God's love is remaining in us. See p 1903.
1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 4:13–16 Highlights the works of the Holy Trinity for our salvation.
1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 4:13 *given us of His Spirit*. No one can have genuine faith in Jesus as the Savior of the world unless God's Spirit creates and sustains that faith. It is never a mere physiological brain activity or an act of our own will. Genuine saving faith in Jesus cannot exist without the testimony of God's Spirit. The apostles preached and recorded the Gospel

by the power of Christ's Spirit, and we have received and believed the Gospel by the power of that same Spirit. See p 1815.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 4:14 *we have seen and testify*. See note, 1:1; cf Ac 1:8. *Savior of the world*. See note, 2:2; cf 1Tm 2:3–6.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 4:15 *confesses*. Confession of Jesus as God the Son is a fruit of true saving faith; not that we are saved by our confessing but that saving faith always desires to confess Jesus as the Son of God. No one with true faith wants to deny Jesus as God's only-begotten Son. Cf Mt 10:32–33; Lk 12:8–9; Rv 2:13. *Son of God*. Jesus is God's Son by nature, the Second Person of the Trinity (cf Jn 1:1).

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 4:16 *God is love*. See note, v 7. *abides*. See note, 2:6. Luth: "These are simple words, but they are words that require faith in the highest degree—faith against which everything that is not of the Spirit of God fights. Conscience, the devil, hell, the judgment of God, and everything resist, in order that we may not believe that God is love but may believe that God is an Executioner and a Judge. By 'the world' I also understand the adversaries of the Word and the sects. Here, therefore, it is taught in brief that one must cling to faith against these assaults. Consequently, he who has a true knowledge of God abides in Christ, and God abides in him" (AE 30:301).

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 4:17 *love perfected*. See note, 2:5. God's love for us in Christ has a purpose and a goal it wants to achieve in us. The goal of God's love is that we believe this so strongly that we have no fear of eternal punishment at all because God poured out His entire wrath against sin upon His Son, Jesus. God emptied all His wrath upon Jesus so that there is none left for us. *day of judgment*. The Last Day, when Jesus appears to judge the world. *as He is so also are we*. We are God's children by adoption, through faith in Jesus, who became our Brother so that we might be children of God. Every believer is, by God's grace, a perfect and righteous child of God and in this there is no fear of judgment.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 4:18 *no fear in love*. Love is the work and will of God and the fruit of faith in God for the salvation of every human. In this, there is no fear. *perfect love casts out fear*. Jesus is God's perfect love that has come to seek and to save, not to condemn. In Christ, God's love reaches its goal, i.e., love is perfected in us when we believe in Jesus and no longer fear that God might still be angry with us because of our sin. *fear has to do with punishment*. One experiences dread with the expectation of

real consequences for what one has done wrong. In this life, believers are not free from sensations of guilt. They may hear that their sins are forgiven, yet still have the sensation of guilt, for each believer has a sinner alongside the saint within him. *whoever fears has not been perfected in love*. As long as a person gives himself up to fear of God's punishment, he is not relying on His Son completely for his salvation. Cf Lk 12:7, 32; Jn 12:15; Rv 1:17–18.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 4:19 All love comes from God, who is love for us and to us. We are able to love one another only because we have received love from Jesus, who loved us first. "Our love for God, even though it is small, cannot possibly be separated from faith. For we come to the Father through Christ. When forgiveness of sins has been received, then we are truly certain that we have a God [Exodus 20:3], that is, that God cares for us. We call upon Him, we give Him thanks, we fear Him, we love Him as 1 John 4:19 teaches…. We love Him because He gave His Son for us and forgave us our sins. In this way John shows that faith comes first and love follows" (Ap V 20).

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 4:20 No one can see God (v 12). The real, tangible way to show love for God is by loving one's brother.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 4:21 Cf Jn 13:34.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 4:7–21 As long as we remain in fellowship with the Father through faith, we love one another and have no fear of Judgment Day. Whenever we do not treat our brother with love as Jesus has loved us, we fear God's punishment. Because He sent His Son to take away our sins, we gain confidence to stand before God without fear. • Heavenly Father, I have not always loved my fellow Christians as I should. Forgive me and work Your love in me to cast out my fear of punishment. Amen.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 5:1 *believes*. Only those born of God are able to believe in Jesus as their Savior, true God and true man. See note, 4:7; cf Jn 3:3, 5. *Jesus is the Christ*. See note, Php 2:11. *loves whoever has been born of Him*. Since all believers are born of God, they are all one family of God. All who have fellowship with God by faith in Jesus also share in fellowship with one another.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 5:3 *this is the love of God*. The love of God is so powerful that it inspires and enables one to keep His Commandments. But only those who keep His Commandments by loving their brother truly

walk in God's love. *not burdensome*. In contrast to the demands of the old covenant. With the Gospel, believers cannot help but love one another; it is what children of God naturally do.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 5:4 Believers may not feel like conquerors of the world, but, thankfully, overcoming the world depends not on our feelings or experiences but on our faith. Luth: "This must happen through faith in Christ, which is the victory. For what could this fragile vessel accomplish against Satan, the god of the world (2 Cor. 4:4)? But God is greater. He always triumphs in us through Christ (cf. 2 Cor. 2:14). Therefore all glory of victory must be ascribed to God Himself, not by any means to us. We are far too insignificant for this. Here, however, the Word of God is required—the Word which promises and extends grace to the believers, so that when they have been hurled into so many great trials and are weighed down under such great and crafty spirits, they nevertheless fight their way out and triumph. But to be born of God is to believe in Jesus Christ. He who believes in Christ is now a warrior…. For we are still engaged in the battle itself and are about to be victorious…. God has placed us in the midst of wolves, in the kingdom of the devil. As weapons He has given us His Word and Spirit, and He tells us to do battle and to conduct ourselves as bold warriors under Him Himself as our Prince while He Himself looks on and is also victorious" (AE 30:311).

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 5:5 Victory belongs only to those who believe that Jesus is the divine Son of God. Hus: "Peter confessed Christ to be very God and very man [Mt 16:16]. And among all the articles of faith, this one appertains most to the edification of the Church" (*The Church*, p 84).

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 5:1–5 The children of God bear the family traits of their Brother, Jesus. He has faith, love, and victory over the world. The world tempts us to think of our Lord's Commandments as a burden, too hard and too heavy for us to bear. The world seems too much for us to overcome. But our Lord Jesus has overcome the world for us. He has fulfilled all of God's Commandments for us. He made Himself our human Brother, that through Him we might become the children of His Father and share in His great family of love. • Father, let me live in Your love through believing that Jesus is the Christ, the divine Son of God. Amen.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 5:6 *by water and blood*. Refers to the testimony of Jesus' Baptism and crucifixion, which revealed the love of God and accomplished His will for the salvation of the world. *the Spirit is the truth*. Just as Jesus is the truth, so also His Holy Spirit is the truth. The Spirit testified at the Baptism of Jesus, marking Him as the Christ who was to come and the Son of God (Jn 1:29–34). The Holy Spirit reminds every believer of all that Jesus has said (Jn 14:26). The Holy Spirit always testifies to Jesus and glorifies Jesus and guides us into all truth (Jn 16:13–14). Luth: "The water of Baptism is sanctified through the blood of Christ. Therefore it is not plain water; it is water stained with blood because of this blood of Christ which is given to us through the Word, which brings with it the blood of Christ. And here we are said to be baptized through the blood of Christ, and thus we are cleansed from sins" (AE 30:314).

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 5:7–8 The Holy Spirit, the water of Christ's Baptism, and the blood of His death on the cross all bear witness that this man, Jesus of Nazareth, is the Christ of Israel and the divine Son of God. See notes, Dt 17:6; Mt 18:16.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 5:8 Luth: "The water cannot be proclaimed without the blood. Nor is the blood of Christ given without the water of Baptism. Besides, the blood and the water do not come to us except at the instance of the Holy Spirit, who is in the Word. Therefore those three cannot be separated, but the three do one thing…. For these three constantly accompany one another, and through the Word a daily immersion and a perpetual Baptism takes place, a perpetual shedding of the blood of Christ and of the Holy Spirit, a continual cleansing from sins" (AE 30:315).

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 5:9 God Himself testified to this man, Jesus of Nazareth (Mt 17:5; 2Pt 1:17).

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 5:10 *testimony in himself*. God testifies within every believer to the truth of His Word concerning His Son. *Whoever does not believe God has made Him a liar*. Any and all who teach that Jesus is not always, and in all places, both God and man in one person are making God out to be a liar. See notes, 2:21–23; 4:1–6. "Absolution is the promise of the forgiveness of sins. Therefore, it necessarily requires faith…. If the heart doubts, it regards those things that God promises as uncertain and of no account" (Ap XIIA 61–62).

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 5:11 *the testimony*. The message that God gives us eternal life in His Son, Jesus. *life is in His Son*. Only those who are

in His Son through faith have eternal life. Cf Jn 3:18; 5:26; 6:53; 20:31. There is no life outside of this God-man, Jesus Christ.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 5:12 *Whoever has the Son has life*. We have the Son by believing all that God has testified concerning Him. This faith is not of ourselves; it is the gift of God (Eph 2:8–9). We possess the gift of eternal life now by believing in Jesus.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 5:6–12 The testimony of the apostles, the life of Jesus, and the work of the Spirit testify that God has given us life in His Son. This testimony is in stark contradiction to all who teach that God's Son did not suffer in the flesh or that He comes to us apart from the flesh of His humanity. • Heavenly Father, let us abide forever in Christ and never doubt the testimony You have given about Your beloved Son. Amen.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 5:13–21 Like the Gospel of John, this Letter closes with a statement of purpose (Jn 21:24–25).

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 5:13 *believe in the name*. See note, 3:23. *that you may know*. Knowing this gives us confidence before God and boldness before men.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 5:14 *according to His will*. God knows how to give good gifts to His children (Lk 11:13). We do not always know what to ask, but His will is always for our salvation and for the salvation of all.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 5:15 God will give whatever we ask if it is good for our salvation and the salvation of our brother. This is esp true whenever we pray for others.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 5:16 *sin not leading to death*. Any unrepented sin can lead to death (cf v 17). But if a believer is open to repentance and to God's forgiveness, his sin will not lead to death. See note, 1:8. *give him life*. God will grant forgiveness of sins and life to the brother for whom we pray. Cf Jas 5:20. *There is sin that leads to death*. The idolatry of the false teachers (see notes, 2:19, 26). Misunderstanding of this passage led to a false teaching that there are seven deadly, or "mortal," sins (pride, covetousness, lust, envy, gluttony, anger, sloth) in contrast to "venial," or forgivable, sins. All sin is damnable. See notes, Mk 3:29–30; Rm 6:23. God forgives all who repent. See p 1907. *I do not say that one should pray for that*. If one refuses to repent and confess Jesus as the Christ and the Son of God, there is no point in asking God to forgive that person who stands condemned by his own stubborn unbelief and refusal of God's love (Jn 3:18, 36). See note, Jer 7:16; see also p 2181.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 5:17 *All wrongdoing is sin*. Any sin could lead to death if not for the Gospel, which is our victory over sin, death, and the world. The children of God repent of all sin. They hate their sin and the weakness of their flesh. But when believers fall into sin, they know that they have One who prays for them and offers forgiveness to them (2:1–2). Cf v 16.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 5:18 *does not keep on sinning*. See notes, 3:6, 9. *he who was born of God protects him*. If we abide in His Word, Jesus remains in us and guards us from the evil one, so that the devil cannot touch us. Jesus cast out demons simply by the power of His Word. Luth: "This is a strange thought. The same man sins, and at the same time he does not sin. It is here that those two statements of the apostle John are brought into harmony. The first is found in 1 John 1:8: 'If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves'; the second occurs in 1 John 3:9 and 5:18: 'No one born of God commits sin.' All the saints, therefore, have sin and are sinners; yet no one of them sins. They are righteous in accordance with the fact that grace has worked healing in them; they are sinners in accordance with the fact that they still must be healed" (AE 27:372).

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 5:19 *whole world lies*. All unbelievers are under the dominion and control of Satan (Eph 2:1–3). But God has rescued us (Col 1:13; Ac 26:18).

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 5:20 *given us understanding*. Jesus gives understanding of the Scriptures. Jesus gives understanding to know God because He reveals God to us (Jn 1:18). *Him who is true*. Lit, "the genuine one"; i.e., Jesus, who is the true and genuine Christ and Savior (in contrast to the false christs taught by the spirit of the Antichrist). *He is the true God*. A clear statement that Jesus is divine and that eternal life is given through Him.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 5:21 *keep yourselves from idols*. The whole point of John's Letter. We have the genuine Christ and Savior by believing that Jesus is God the Son in the flesh. He is the true God and eternal life. Any teaching that presents Jesus as one who is not both true God and true man in one person actually presents an idol. Likewise, any teaching that denies that Jesus is the Savior of all mankind, purely by God's grace alone, also presents an idol. Cf Ac 15:20, 29; 21:25; Gal 5:19–20; 1Co 5:10; 6:9; Eph 5:5; Col 3:5.

1, 2, and 3 JOHN—NOTE ON 5:13–21 Knowing that we have eternal life in Jesus gives us confidence to ask for anything, and we can be certain that we shall receive what we ask according to God's will, especially when we pray for our brother for Jesus' sake. All wrongdoing is sin, and any sin could lead to death if not for the Righteous One, Jesus Christ, who cleanses us from all sin by His blood. Not only can we be confident of our own forgiveness in Him who is the genuine Savior and the true God, but we can also pray even for our brother who sins and be certain that God desires his repentance and life because of Jesus. • Son of God, protect us from the evil one, and keep us from every idol. Amen.

2 John

2 John 1

- Footnotes
- Study Notes

Greeting

1 [1]The elder to the elect lady and her children, whom I love in truth,
and not only I, but also all who know the truth, [2]because of the truth that
abides in us and will be with us forever:

[3]Grace, mercy, and peace will be with us, from God the Father and from
Jesus Christ the Father's Son, in truth and love.

Walking in Truth and Love

4 I rejoiced greatly to find some of your children walking in the truth, just
as we were commanded by the Father. 5 And now I ask you, dear lady—not
as though I were writing you a new commandment, but the one we have had
from the beginning—that we love one another. 6 And this is love, that we
walk according to his commandments; this is the commandment, just as you
have heard from the beginning, so that you should walk in it. 7 For many
deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not confess the
coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh. Such a one is the deceiver and the
antichrist. 8 Watch yourselves, so that you may not lose what we[1] have
worked for, but may win a full reward. 9 Everyone who goes on ahead and
does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God. Whoever
abides in the teaching has both the Father and the Son. 10 If anyone comes to
you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house or
give him any greeting, 11 for whoever greets him takes part in his wicked
works.

Final Greetings

[12]Though I have much to write to you, I would rather not use paper and ink. Instead I hope to come to you and talk face to face, so that our joy may be complete.

[13]The children of your elect sister greet you.

2 John

For an introduction to 1, 2, and 3 John, see p 2169.

Footnotes

Footnotes for 2 John, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:8 Some manuscripts *you*

Study Notes

2 JOHN—NOTE ON **1–3** On apostolic greetings, see pp 1899–1901.
2 JOHN—NOTE ON **1** *elder*. Common title for the spiritual leaders of Christian congregations; used interchangeably with "overseer." See pp 228, 2170; see also note, Ti 1:5. John wrote as a pastor to his own congregation, even though, as an apostle, he was the highest authority for all the churches during his later years. Luth: " 'Elder' is 'presbyter' in Greek and is equivalent to 'priest.' So also Peter and John called themselves elders in their letters" (AE 10:19). See Tr 62. *elect lady and her children*. The Church is described as the chosen Bride of Christ (Eph 5:22–33; Rv 19:7; cf Gal 4:26). Here, a specific local congregation is intended (see note, 2Jn 13). *elect*. See "chosen," p 1901. *know the truth*. What John wrote was true because Jesus, who is "the truth," abides in it (v 2). Cf Jn 14:6.
2 JOHN—NOTE ON **3** *will be with us*. As long as Jesus abided with them. *the Father's Son*. Jesus is God the Father's Son. There were false teachers at this time who taught that Jesus was only the son of Joseph and Mary and not the Son of God. See pp 2169–70.
2 JOHN—NOTE ON **1–3** The apostle John and all who truly know Christ as the Father's Son in human flesh love one another in truth. False disciples refused to confess that Jesus was God in human flesh (1Jn 2:18–25; 4:1–6). They neither knew the truth nor loved the Christians to whom John wrote. Those who know Jesus know the truth and, along with Jesus, they have grace, mercy, and peace. • Heavenly Father, by Your own true Son, You have revealed the truth to us in love. Protect us from all who would take this truth and love from us by the deception of wise-sounding error. Keep us in Christ, who is the "way, and the truth, and the life" (Jn 14:6). Amen.
2 JOHN—NOTE ON **4** John received a good report about some of the congregation. He rejoiced that his recipients supported those who taught about Christ in truth. *walking in the truth*. Treating fellow Christians with brotherly love and supporting the preaching of the Gospel. See p 7.
2 JOHN—NOTE ON **6** *this is love*. Cf 1Jn 4:19; love known only through Christ's love for us. *the beginning*. From the time the recipients were first given the gift of faith in Jesus.

2 JOHN—NOTE ON **7** *deceivers*. See notes, 1Jn 4:1–6. *not confess the coming*. Not only do the deceivers deny the incarnation of the eternal Son of the Virgin Mary, but they also deny that Jesus Christ comes to us now through the Word and the Sacraments (means of grace) that Christ instituted. *in the flesh*. Ign: "They abstain from the Eucharist and from prayer, because they confess not the Eucharist to be the flesh of our Saviour Jesus Christ, which suffered for our sins, and which the Father, of His goodness, raised up again. Those, therefore, who speak against this gift of God, incur death in the midst of their disputes" (*ANF* 1:89). Luth: "I have also noticed that all error, heresy, idolatry, offense, misuse, and evil in the church originally came from despising or losing sight of this article of faith in Jesus Christ. And if one looks at it correctly and clearly, all heresies do contend against this dear article of Jesus Christ, as Simeon says of him, that he is 'set for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is spoken against' [Lk 2:34]…. For whatsoever stumbles, certainly stumbles on this stone, which lies in everyone's way and is rejected by the builders…. St. John also gives no other or more certain sign for recognizing false and anti-Christian spirits than their denial of Jesus Christ [II John 7]. They have all wanted to reap honor at his expense and have instead garnered shame from it" (AE 34:207–8).

2 JOHN—NOTE ON **8** *what we have worked for*. John and the other true Christian teachers spent their lives teaching the truth in Christ so that those who believe might remain faithful unto death and finally receive the crown of life eternal. John did not want his life's work undone by deceivers who would cause Christians to lose their reward. *reward*. See note, Mt 5:12.

2 JOHN—NOTE ON **9** *goes on ahead*. As Paul taught Christians "not to go beyond what is written" (1Co 4:6), John also taught that Christians were to remain in the apostolic teaching and not to invent or allow any new teachings. *abide in the teaching of Christ*. To remain faithful to His teaching was to remain in Christ Himself. See note, Jn 6:56. *both the Father and the Son*. The only way to God the Father was through Jesus Christ, God the Son. No one could have one without the other. See note, Jn 14:6.

2 JOHN—NOTE ON **10** *this teaching*. That Jesus Christ was God incarnate, true God and true man in one person. *house*. Early Christians often held worship services in their homes. See note, 1Co 14:23. *any greeting*. Christians were to avoid giving welcome or aid to anyone who taught contrary to Christ's teaching. A Christian was commanded to rebuke

a false teacher and to warn others against their deceptions. Eus: "John, the disciple of the Lord, going to bathe in Ephesus and seeing Cerinthus within, ran out of the bath-house without bathing, crying, 'Let us flee, lest even the bath fall, because Cerinthus, the enemy of the truth, is within' " (*NPNF* 2 1:187). Luth: "We learn from all these sayings how the ban [from communion or congregation] should be used. First, we should seek neither vengeance nor our own gain—as is now the shameful custom everywhere—but rather the improvement of our neighbor. Second, punishment should stop short of his ruin or death, for St. Paul limits the goal of the ban to improvement, that he be put to shame because no one associates with him; and he adds in II Thessalonians 3[:15], 'Do not look on him as an enemy, but punish him as a brother.' At the present time, the ruthless tyrants deal with people as if they wished to cast them into hell, and do not seek their improvement at all" (AE 39:9).

2 JOHN—NOTE ON **11** Normal Christian hospitality could not be extended to false teachers without giving the impression that there was agreement with their false teachings, which could cause others to be deceived and to fall from their faith in Jesus. The doctrines that people were taught and believed were the difference between everlasting life and everlasting death.

2 JOHN—NOTE ON **4–11** We walk in love and truth only by remaining faithful to Christ's teaching that He is God in human flesh who came to save us. Those who depart from Christ's teaching do not have God the Son or the Father or eternal life. Those who support them share in their wicked work and will share in their punishment as well. Cling to the truth that Jesus still comes to us in human flesh so that you may walk in love and in truth. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are ever with you to care for you. • Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, You come to us as true God and true man through Your means of grace: the Gospel, Baptism, Your body and blood given for us Christians to eat and drink in Your Supper. Grant us faith to remain in this teaching and never depart from it or go beyond it by holding any other teaching or supporting those who do. Amen.

2 JOHN—NOTE ON **12** Communication would be better when face-to-face. Questions could be answered and clarifications given. *our joy may be complete*. When John would visit them, they would gain more understanding. Both John and his hearers would have certainty and joy that the truth had overcome the threat of deception. See note, Jn 15:11.

2 JOHN—NOTE ON **13** *children*. The members of the sister congregation in Ephesus from which John was writing. See pp 2169–70. *elect*. See "chosen," p 1901; cf v 1.

2 JOHN—NOTE ON **12–13** The apostle is planning to come and set straight all outstanding issues. Until then, the congregation has his warning and admonition to stand firm in the faith. You, too, have the apostle's testimony and all of Holy Scripture. Abide in God's revelation and beware of strange teachings that diminish the person and work of Jesus, who is your salvation and joy. • Lord, grant us to remain faithful to Your teaching. Protect us from deception, and grant us fellowship with all faithful sister congregations so that at Your coming our joy may be complete. Amen.

3 John

3 John 1

- Footnotes
- Study Notes

Greeting

1 [1]The elder to the beloved Gaius, whom I love in truth.

[2]Beloved, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be in good health, as it goes well with your soul. [3]For I rejoiced greatly when the brothers[1] came and testified to your truth, as indeed you are walking in the truth. [4]I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth.

Support and Opposition

[5]Beloved, it is a faithful thing you do in all your efforts for these brothers, strangers as they are, [6]who testified to your love before the church. You will do well to send them on their journey in a manner worthy of God. [7]For they have gone out for the sake of the name, accepting nothing from the Gentiles. [8]Therefore we ought to support people like these, that we may be fellow workers for the truth.

[9]I have written something to the church, but Diotrephes, who likes to put himself first, does not acknowledge our authority. [10]So if I come, I will bring up what he is doing, talking wicked nonsense against us. And not content with that, he refuses to welcome the brothers, and also stops those who want to and puts them out of the church.

[11]Beloved, do not imitate evil but imitate good. Whoever does good is from God; whoever does evil has not seen God. [12]Demetrius has received a good testimony from everyone, and from the truth itself. We also add our testimony, and you know that our testimony is true.

Final Greetings

[13]I had much to write to you, but I would rather not write with pen and ink. [14]I hope to see you soon, and we will talk face to face.

[15]Peace be to you. The friends greet you. Greet the friends, every one of them.

3 John

For an introduction to 1, 2, and 3 John, see p 2169.

Footnotes

Footnotes for 3 John, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:3 Or *brothers and sisters*. The plural Greek word *adelphoi* (translated “brothers”) refers to siblings in a family. In New Testament usage, depending on the context, *adelphoi* may refer either to men or to both men and women who are siblings (brothers and sisters) in God’s family, the church; also verses 5, 10

Study Notes

3 JOHN—NOTE ON **1–4** On apostolic greetings, see pp 1899–1901.
3 JOHN—NOTE ON **1** *elder*. See note, 2Jn 1. *Gaius*. Possibly a leader in John's congregation or a faithful layman who gave hospitality to teachers who shared Christ's truth.
3 JOHN—NOTE ON **2** Christianity is not merely spiritual but is inclusive in its care for a person as a whole. John prayed that Gaius's physical health would be as strong as his spiritual health, which was very strong as witnessed by Gaius's walking in the truth.
3 JOHN—NOTE ON **3** *brothers*. Fellow Christians who brought this news to John. See p 1901. *walking*. The way Gaius conducted himself as a Christian; esp the love with which he treated all and the hospitality and support he showed for those who teach Christ purely. See p 7.
3 JOHN—NOTE ON **4** *my children*. Christians were John's children because, as an apostle of Jesus, he cared for them spiritually and was responsible for the safety of their faith, just as a father would look after his children. See pp 2169–70.
3 JOHN—NOTE ON **1–4** The apostle prays that Gaius might be physically as healthy as he is spiritually healthy. Our heavenly Father is on our side at all times, no matter what suffering we face. He sent Jesus as our great physician to heal us from sin and the afflictions we experience in a sin-broken world. He grants faith that is active in love for our brethren and for the truth. • Heavenly Father, grant that we may walk by faith in Jesus and in the truth of Your Word. Grant us great faith and bodily strength to serve our brothers and sisters in Christ. Amen.
3 JOHN—NOTE ON **5** Gaius had never met these brothers personally before they came to him the first time. But he recognized them as brothers in Christ because of the true teaching they brought. He treated them as brothers by supporting their work among all the churches.
3 JOHN—NOTE ON **6** *the church*. Likely in Ephesus, where the teachers could give a report of Gaius's love and support for their work. See pp 2169–70. *their journey*. Their travel to all the churches in Asia Minor and then back to Ephesus. *a manner worthy of God*. John expected Gaius to supply these teachers with food, money, or whatever they needed for their work and journey because they came not for their own benefit but to bring the

Word of God to Gaius and his fellow Christians. Because these teachers are ambassadors of Christ, John is confident that Gaius will treat them with the honor that is due their Master, the Lord Jesus.

3 JOHN—NOTE ON **7** *the name*. Jesus' name, in whose name these teachers came and whose Word they preached and taught. *the Gentiles*. Here refers to unconverted people, non-Christians, from whom the teachers would accept no donations, lest any might think that money was their motivation for preaching. Their motivation is "for the sake of the name," the love of Christ for all.

3 JOHN—NOTE ON **8** Since Christian teachers could not accept any monetary help from pagans, they had to receive all of their support from fellow Christians. When they supported those who taught the truth, Christians were working for the truth of the Gospel. See note, Php 1:5.

3 JOHN—NOTE ON **9** *church*. The congregation where Diotrephes wanted to put himself first as supreme leader. *Diotrephes*. An egotistical leader. It is unknown whether he was a layman or a pastor. He had enough influence in the congregation to control their gatherings and to expel those who refused to do as he said. Cf v 10. *put himself first*. It was a matter of control and power for Diotrephes, who wanted to be absolute leader. *our authority*. Diotrephes did not accept the apostolic authority of John or the ambassadorial authority of those teachers who were sent to preach the truth in Christ's name. See pp 2169–70.

3 JOHN—NOTE ON **10** *if I come*. John intended to visit, but he always left the future in God's hands, even when making definite plans. *wicked nonsense against us*. We do not know what excuses Diotrephes used for resisting John's God-given authority or what he may have told his congregation as a reason to refuse to receive John's emissaries; his charges were false and empty. *refuses to welcome*. Apparently, Diotrephes did not want any of the brothers sent from John to teach in his congregation. Whether it was a disagreement over a specific point of doctrine or simply an issue of control, Diotrephes's dictatorial actions were not God-pleasing and caused harm in the congregation. *brothers*. The teachers sent from John. See note, v 5. *puts them out*. See note, v 9. Luth: "[A bishop] should listen and answer gently. He should advise prudently, he should not insist on his own way. He should use good common sense so that it will be a pleasure to behold it. He is not noisy. He is not rash. Everything is done with good common sense. *philoxenos*, hospitable. He is a cheerful host to

brothers who come from everywhere—from churches in other places. He gives them food and drink; he washes their feet. Indeed, the bishop's home should be open to foreign brethren, but not to just any vagrant. At the time of the Roman Empire this was not so, and the political community of the Jews in a very fine way wrote letters of recommendation for their brethren. We read about this in John's last epistle" (AE 28:285).

3 JOHN—NOTE ON **11** *do not imitate evil*. Christians were not to use their influence or position to gain personal power in the congregation. The Church already has a supreme head, Christ. Believers serve Him and follow Him (cf Lk 22:24–27). *good is from God*. Cf Mk 10:18; Lk 18:19. *not seen God*. See note, 1Jn 3:6.

3 JOHN—NOTE ON **12** *Demetrius*. One of the teachers sent by John, probably the man entrusted to deliver this letter to Gaius. *everyone*. All the Christians with John, likely at Ephesus. *the truth itself*. Demetrius's teaching and actions were in accord with the Word of God, so the truth itself testified that Demetrius was genuine and could be trusted. *We also add our testimony*. There must be two or three witnesses for a testimony to stand (Dt 19:15; Mt 18:16; 2Co 13:1). The witnesses were (1) the church with John, (2) the truth of God's Word, and (3) the apostle John and his fellow elders.

3 JOHN—NOTE ON **5–12** Whatever flattery or intimidation people may use to get their way, there always comes a day when their works are brought into the open—when they will be shamed before God and His faithful. We need not fear the threats and plots of power mongers who conspire against us and would try to harm our reputations and have us cast out because we show love and support for God's ambassadors. God will bring their threats and accusations into the light. Trust the Lord to protect you when you support the truth. He will deliver you by His Son, who is "the way, and the truth, and the life" (Jn 14:6). • Heavenly Father, fill us with such love for Your ambassadors that we welcome and support all who testify to the truth. Give us courage to stand up against the plots of those who would harm our congregation. We have only one head, and He is Your Son, Christ Jesus, in whose name we pray. Amen.

3 JOHN—NOTE ON **13–14** Almost identical to 2Jn 12. This letter to Gaius and 2Jn may have been written together or about the same time.

3 JOHN—NOTE ON **14** *I hope to see you soon*. See note, v 10; cf Jas 4:13–16.

3 JOHN—NOTE ON **15** *Peace*. See pp 2099–2101. *friends*. Friends of Gaius in Ephesus. *Greet the friends, every one of them*. Lit, "Greet the friends by name." For early Christians, their baptismal name bore a special remembrance of God's grace. Such personal greetings would remind them that they were brothers and children of God by Baptism into Christ.

3 JOHN—NOTE ON **13–15** John gives Christ's blessing of peace and extends the greetings of all of Gaius's friends in Ephesus. John withholds all that he might say about Diotrephes until he meets with Gaius face-to-face. Today, when called upon to tell the truth in any controversial situation, you should exercise similar care and discretion. The peace with which the apostle John blesses Gaius is a peace that none can take away; it is peace not as the world gives, but only as Christ gives. • Heavenly Father, You called each one of us by name through Baptism into Your Son. Grant us the peace that passes all understanding, which is beyond the reach of men who put themselves first. Keep us in Christ's peace until the day when we have no more need for the Word of God on paper and in ink—for then we shall see Christ the Word face-to-face. Amen.

Jude

Jude 1

- Introduction to Jude
  - Overview
  - Reading Jude
  - Luther on Jude
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

Greeting

1 [1]Jude, a servant[1] of Jesus Christ and brother of James,

To those who are called, beloved in God the Father and kept for[2] Jesus Christ:

[2]May mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you.

Judgment on False Teachers

3 Beloved, although I was very eager to write to you about our common
salvation, I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the
faith that was once for all delivered to the saints. 4 For certain people have
crept in unnoticed who long ago were designated for this condemnation,
ungodly people, who pervert the grace of our God into sensuality and deny
our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

5 Now I want to remind you, although you once fully knew it, that Jesus,
who saved[3] a people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those
who did not believe. 6 And the angels who did not stay within their own
position of authority, but left their proper dwelling, he has kept in eternal
chains under gloomy darkness until the judgment of the great day— 7 just as
Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities, which likewise indulged
in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural desire,[1] serve as an example by
undergoing a punishment of eternal fire.

8 Yet in like manner these people also, relying on their dreams, defile the
flesh, reject authority, and blaspheme the glorious ones. 9 But when the
archangel Michael, contending with the devil, was disputing about the body
of Moses, he did not presume to pronounce a blasphemous judgment, but
said, “The Lord rebuke you.” 10 But these people blaspheme all that they do
not understand, and they are destroyed by all that they, like unreasoning
animals, understand instinctively. 11 Woe to them! For they walked in the
way of Cain and abandoned themselves for the sake of gain to Balaam’s
error and perished in Korah’s rebellion. 12 These are hidden reefs[2] at your
love feasts, as they feast with you without fear, shepherds feeding
themselves; waterless clouds, swept along by winds; fruitless trees in late
autumn, twice dead, uprooted; 13 wild waves of the sea, casting up the foam
of their own shame; wandering stars, for whom the gloom of utter darkness
has been reserved forever.

14 It was also about these that Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied,
saying, “Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of his holy ones, 15 to
execute judgment on all and to convict all the ungodly of all their deeds of
ungodliness that they have committed in such an ungodly way, and of all

the harsh things that ungodly sinners have spoken against him." [16]These are grumblers, malcontents, following their own sinful desires; they are loud-mouthed boasters, showing favoritism to gain advantage.

A Call to Persevere

17 But you must remember, beloved, the predictions of the apostles of our
Lord Jesus Christ. 18 They[1] said to you, “In the last time there will be
scoffers, following their own ungodly passions.” 19 It is these who cause
divisions, worldly people, devoid of the Spirit. 20 But you, beloved, building
yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit, 21 keep
yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus
Christ that leads to eternal life. 22 And have mercy on those who doubt;
23 save others by snatching them out of the fire; to others show mercy with
fear, hating even the garment[2] stained by the flesh.

Doxology

[24]Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, [25]to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.

Jude

OVERVIEW

Author
Jude

Date
c AD 68

Places
Egypt; Sodom and Gomorrah

People
Jude; James; false brothers and teachers; the apostles; doubters

Purpose
To warn fellow Christians about the dangers posed by the ungodly false teachers

Law Themes
The ungodly pervert God's grace; contend for the faith; God destroys unbelievers; blaspheming; eternal chains; gloomy darkness; stained by the flesh; judgment; eternal fire; way of Cain condemned

Gospel Themes
Called and beloved by God; peace; salvation; mercy of our Lord; present you blameless; God, our Savior

Memory Verse
Built up in the faith (vv 20–23)

Introduction to Jude

Reading Jude

The bull gored the earth with his horns and pawed the dust. The rider's presence infuriated him, but he could not drive the rider away. Though weary of the chase, the bull continued to snort and bellow, blowing froth from the corners of his mouth. He could not understand that the herdsman was simply there to check on the cattle and learn how the calves were doing.

Jude warns his fellow Christians that false teachers behave "like unreasoning animals" (v 10). They are instinctively driven to what is wrong and destructive. Jude uses numerous examples from the OT, Jewish literature, and the prophecies of the apostles to illustrate his warning. He admonishes his readers to rescue those entrapped by the ungodly (vv 22–23).

Luther on Jude

Reflecting on various statements from the Early Fathers, Luther concluded that St Jude did not write this letter. Many modern scholars would agree. However, one should note that Luther assumed the writer of Jude had copied 2 Peter. This is not necessarily the case (see “Relationship to Jude,” p 2160).

> Concerning the epistle of St. Jude, no one can deny that it is an extract or copy of St. Peter’s second epistle, so very like it are all the words. He also speaks of the apostles like a disciple who comes long after them [Jude 17] and cites sayings and incidents that are found nowhere else in the Scriptures [Jude 9, 14]. This moved the ancient fathers to exclude this epistle from the main body of the Scriptures. Moreover the Apostle Jude did not go to Greek-speaking lands, but to Persia, as it is said, so that he did not write Greek. Therefore, although I value this book, it is an epistle that need not be counted among the chief books which are supposed to lay the foundations of faith. (AE 35:397–98)

There is good reason to suppose that St Jude would have known Greek, which was commonly spoken in Judea and was also used in Persia.

For more of Luther's insights on this Book, see *Sermons on the Epistle of St. Jude* (AE 30:201–15).

Challenges for Readers

Authorship. The writer identifies himself as "a servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James" (v 1). The names "James" and "Jude" (Gk *Judas*) were common among first-century Jews. The writer of Jude is not an apostle, but an associate with them (v 17). Some early Christian writers associated the writer with the son of Mary and Joseph (cf Mt 13:55; Mk 6:3; 1Co 9:5), making him a half brother of Jesus. See pp 2130–32. This tradition has persisted despite ancient and modern skepticism, in part because no other good alternative suggestion exists.

Relationship to 2 Peter. As Luther points out, there is a definite relationship between Jude and 2Pt 2. However, it is not clear that Jude depended on 2 Peter. See "Relationship to Jude," p 2160. This relationship to 2 Peter suggests a similar date of composition.

Citation of Jewish Legends/Writings. See notes, vv 5–11; 8–9; 14–15.

Blessings for Readers

This short Letter is easy to overlook. Yet it contains important instruction that has always applied to Christians: false teachers are a constant threat. Jude will help you distinguish between false teachers, who are doomed to destruction, and wounded believers who are struggling with doubt and need fellow Christians to encourage them (vv 22–23).

OUTLINE

I. Greeting (vv 1–2)
II. Judgment on False Teachers (vv 3–16)
III. A Call to Persevere (vv 17–23)
IV. Closing Doxology (vv 24–25)

Articles and Resources Related to Jude

- Beware of False Teachers

Beware of False Teachers

"You're only in trouble if you get caught" is a popular saying heard in many different contexts. Teenagers often have this idea firmly in mind as they "try" something forbidden. News reports may leave us with the definite impression that some political figures or business tycoons live according to this principle. The idea of doing wrong without fear of punishment has always been popular among wrongdoers and despised by advocates of real justice. Jude responds to both groups with clear expressions of God's judgment against all wrongdoing. Though false teachers and lying prophets wrap themselves in the mantle of faithfulness and innocence, no one escapes the justice of God.

In so short a Letter, with only 25 verses, Jude cites nine different examples of God's judgment from the Old Testament! Read the chart below to learn how this teaching applies to your life.

The judgment of God against ungodliness is inescapable, but that is not His only judgment. God executed judgment against His own Son in our stead. The fact that God's judgment fell upon Christ as our substitute means that He can provide yet another judgment for those who are in Christ. God's Word connects us with Christ and judges us "not guilty." His Word generates a whole new being within us. This new being has a heart and mind like Christ.

Three times in his short Letter, Jude anticipates the glorious return of his brother Jesus (vv 14, 21, 24). Because of the new heart and life you have received, you, too, can joyfully anticipate Jesus' return. United with Christ in your Baptism, you have already passed through judgment and are living an eternal life. The ungodliness of your human nature is forgiven. The godliness that your Creator intended for you is present in your life by the work of the Holy Spirit through the Word. By the grace of God, everyone will get what they have coming. Those who are in Christ will receive the fulfillment of all the promises of God for life in this world and forever after.

Footnotes

Footnotes for Jude, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:1 Or *slave*; Greek *bondservant*
- [2] 1:1 Or *by*
- [3] 1:5 Some manuscripts *although you fully knew it, that the Lord who once saved*
- [1] 1:7 Greek *other flesh*
- [2] 1:12 Or *are blemishes*
- [1] 1:18 Or *Christ, because they*
- [2] 1:23 Greek *chiton*, a long garment worn under the cloak next to the skin

Study Notes

JUDE—NOTE ON **1–2** On greetings, see pp 1899–1901.
JUDE—NOTE ON **1** *servant*. Title among early Christians, esp leaders (see title for Jesus, v 4; see also p 1904). Many Romans regarded slavery as "living death." But slavery included a rescue from death, because it often began when a military commander did not kill persons captured in war but put them into service. Thus, "slave" also pointed to God's rescuing mercy. See p 101. *brother of James*. Early historians recorded that James and Jude were sons of Mary and Joseph, and half brothers of Jesus. See p 2134. *called*. The elect, called by God to faith and service. See p 1901. *kept*. For the day when Jesus returns to judge mankind and to gather His own people.
JUDE—NOTE ON **1–2** Despite the stumbling faith of Jude's readers, he begins with comfort and encouragement. He greets the whole congregation as God's chosen people, even though false teachers exist among them. Today, view and address your congregation as godly and beloved, even if troubled by divisions or false teachers. For the Lord has called them by the Gospel. • Lord, grant our congregations abundant mercy and peace; strengthen their service. Amen.
JUDE—NOTE ON **3** *common salvation*. Shared by all believers. *necessary … to contend*. Though Jude did not hunger for controversy, he was forced into it by his concern. *the faith*. Catechetical summaries of apostolic teaching (1Co 15:3–11) as well as the OT (cf Jude 9–11, 14). *once for all delivered*. Nothing will supersede this faith. To offer other doctrines is to offer falsehoods. Pol: "Forsaking the vanity of many, and their false doctrines, let us return to the word which has been handed down to us from the beginning" (*ANF* 1:34). *saints*. See p 1904. True saints of God expect no further revelation from God than what He has already delivered by His Son through the Holy Scriptures (Heb 1:1–2). Luth: "Wicked men will come, and they will not persevere. They always have this fault of teaching something different and new. A wicked spirit, not rooted in solid doctrine, causes this. It always looks for something new and a better doctrine" (AE 28:221). Luth: "We should labor over this faith and contend for it to the end. The flesh becomes sluggish; it sees to it that we forget the Word and grow tired of it. The bishop should not worry that he is often teaching the same thing…. [Paul] opposes diseases of doctrine; that is, doctrine should

be right, stable, and constant…. Those who do not have a doctrine that is sure and constant do not teach" (AE 29:32).

JUDE—NOTE ON **4** *certain people*. Jude repeatedly describes this group as "ungodly." He implies that the readers recognize them. They profess to follow God but actually deny Him by their words and deeds. *crept in unnoticed*. Jude did not condemn the congregation(s) where the ungodly had hidden. *designated for this condemnation*. Long ago, the OT prophets warned of people who, perverting the truth, would suffer God's rejection. *pervert … into sensuality*. Not just sexual sins, but all corrupt desires, such as pride. *Master*. See note, v 1. Luth: " 'Now you have obtained freedom through Christ. That is, you are far above all laws, both in your own conscience and in the sight of God; you are blessed and saved; Christ is your life. Therefore even though the Law, sin, and death may frighten you, they can neither harm you nor cause you to despair. This is your brilliant and inestimable freedom. Now it is up to you to be diligently on your guard not to use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh.' This evil is very widespread, and it is the worst of all the evils that Satan arouses against the teaching of faith: that in many people he soon transforms the freedom for which Christ has set us free into an opportunity for the flesh…. The flesh simply does not understand the teaching of grace, namely, that we are not justified by works but by faith alone, and that the Law has no jurisdiction over us. Therefore when it hears this teaching, it transforms it into licentiousness and immediately draws the inference: 'If we are without the Law, then let us live as we please. Let us not do good, let us not give to the needy; much less do we have to endure anything evil. For there is no Law to compel or bind us.' Thus there is a danger on both sides, although the one is more tolerable than the other. If grace or faith is not preached, no one is saved; for faith alone justifies and saves. On the other hand, if faith is preached, as it must be preached, the majority of men understand the teaching about faith in a fleshly way and transform the freedom of the spirit into the freedom of the flesh. This can be discerned today in all classes of society, both high and low. They all boast of being evangelicals and boast of Christian freedom. Meanwhile, however, they give in to their desires and turn to greed, sexual desire, pride, envy, etc." (AE 27:48).

JUDE—NOTE ON **3–4** Jude flatly condemns the activities of the ungodly, while gently rebuking the godly for tolerating them. He candidly points out that the Gospel itself is at risk for corruption. The Lord certainly

calls us to work patiently with those who err. But we can never compromise the Gospel, which is the basis of our salvation. • Master and Lord, save us by Your pure grace alone, and make us diligent for the truth. Amen.

JUDE—NOTE ON **5–11** Series of OT examples bears strong resemblance to the list of examples in 2Pt 2. See "Relationship to Jude," p 2160.

JUDE—NOTE ON **5** *you once fully knew*. Influenced by false teachers, his readers forgot the basics. See note, 1Co 4:17. *Jesus, who saved*. Jude confesses Jesus' existence before the exodus and His role in that deliverance. *destroyed*. The unfaithful Israelites died in the wilderness and did not reach the Promised Land. Likewise, Christ's judgment would prevent the ungodly from reaching heaven.

JUDE—NOTE ON **6** *angels … position of authority*. Cf Eph 6:12; Rv 12:7–9. The fallen angels abused their offices. The tempting of Adam and Eve is a clear example. *gloomy darkness*. Hell is a prison where the light of Christ does not go (1Pt 3:19; Rv 20:7). God restrains the demons. See note, 2Pt 2:4. *the great day*. When Christ returns. See "day of the LORD," p 1079.

JUDE—NOTE ON **7** *surrounding cities*. God also destroyed Admah and Zeboim; He spared Zoar (Gn 19:22). *unnatural desire*. Background for the English term "sodomy"; cf Gn 19:4–11. See p 1911. *eternal fire*. The cities burned, but the people also went to everlasting punishment.

JUDE—NOTE ON **5–7** Jude refers the people back to their catechesis in the OT history of God's wrath and grace. Jesus Himself condemned the Israelites for their sins and also acted as their Savior. You never outgrow the catechism basics of Bible stories and Law and Gospel, by which the Lord grants constant blessings. • Jesus, You saved Israel from Egypt; save me from unbelief, and refresh me in the examples and blessings of Your Word. Amen.

JUDE—NOTE ON **8–16** Jude uses a series of comparisons to illustrate the corruption of the ungodly (v 4), who are dreamers (v 8). He cites two examples of popular Jewish legend against them (vv 9, 14–15), perhaps drawing on their own literature to condemn them. Jude's use of this literature does not mean he regarded it as equal to Holy Scriptures.

JUDE—NOTE ON **8–9** Jude relates a popular Jewish description of an angel contending with the devil over Moses' body. Such an account is recorded in the Assumption of Moses, which was perhaps written down in the early first century AD. Jude refers to this Jewish legend as well as accounts of Enoch (vv 14–15), which were probably sources of speculation

and contention that disturbed the churches (1Tm 1:4; 4:7; 2Tm 4:4; Ti 1:14; 2Pt 1:16). Like the apostle Paul, Jude used examples from popular culture to illustrate his points (e.g., Ac 17:28). See note, v 8.

JUDE—NOTE ON **8** *these people*. Ungodly false teachers. *reject authority … blaspheme*. See note, 2Pt 2:10. *glorious ones*. Angels, messengers, and servants of God.

JUDE—NOTE ON **9** *archangel*. See note, 1Th 4:16. *Michael*. Hbr "who is like God?" He watched over Israel (Dn 10:21). *body of Moses*. The Lord was responsible for Moses' burial. Jude indicates that the agent for this work of God was Michael. *blasphemous judgment*. Jude's opponents may have used curses, such as ancient magical rites. See notes, Ac 19:13, 18; see also "curse," p 6. *The Lord rebuke you*. Even a powerful messenger like Michael appealed to the Lord.

JUDE—NOTE ON **10** *blaspheme*. See note, 2Pt 2:10. Sinful desires naturally led to self-destruction. The ungodly were in danger of being destroyed because they refused to admit their sins and repent.

JUDE—NOTE ON **11** *way of Cain*. Cain attacked and murdered his own brother out of jealousy. "As long as a person is not regenerate and guides himself according to the Law, he does the works because they are commanded. So from fear of punishment or desire for reward, he is still under the Law…. These are 'saints' after the order of Cain" (FC SD VI 16). *Balaam's error*. Balaam sought to gain financially by cursing Israel. *Korah's rebellion*. Korah refused to accept God's leadership through Moses and Aaron. Each OT example illustrates the behaviors of ungodly opponents who were apparently dividing the congregations to which Jude wrote.

JUDE—NOTE ON **12** *These*. The ungodly. *love feasts*. The Lord's Supper and attendant meal. See p 2230. *shepherds feeding themselves*. These ungodly shepherds did not accept the authority of God's shepherds, who faithfully taught His Word. *late autumn, twice dead*. Unfruitful and uprooted. They had passed the opportunity to produce righteousness or come to repentance (Heb 6:4–6).

JUDE—NOTE ON **13** *wandering stars*. A navigator gazing into the night sky in Jude's day would have known that some of the lights in the sky (the planets) were unreliable for navigation because these "stars" were constantly shifting their positions from day to day. See note, Jb 3:9. These

false teachers were unreliable guides, constantly changing their teachings. *gloom of utter darkness*. See note, v 6.

JUDE—NOTE ON **14–15** Jude takes an example from Jewish tradition about the mysterious OT figure Enoch (see note, Gn 5:24). His quotation is from the book of 1 Enoch, an account of Enoch's teachings and activities. Like many of the Jewish pseudepigrapha, this book attempts to fill in details about an interesting biblical character. Portions of 1 Enoch were written in Aram as early as the second century BC, though they may have been written originally in Hbr and could be much older. Jude quotes 1 Enoch, a popularly known work, as an exemplary description of false teachers and the judgment they must face, much as preachers today cite popular writings for sermon illustrations.

JUDE—NOTE ON **14** *Enoch, the seventh from Adam*. Enoch's generation was the seventh recorded as coming from Adam, who counted as the first of the seven. *the Lord comes*. Enoch foresaw the Lord's coming to judge all.

JUDE—NOTE ON **15** *judgment*. When the Lord will give back to everyone according to their deeds. Faith's works show some have trusted in the Lord; unbelief's works show that others have not trusted the Lord. *sinners have spoken*. Jude emphasizes the imprudent words of his opponents (vv 9–10, 16). They blasphemed, grumbled, and boasted.

JUDE—NOTE ON **16** *favoritism*. They flattered people in order to gain their trust and support.

JUDE—NOTE ON **8–16** Jude mercilessly describes the sins of the ungodly without explicitly naming them or their group. He knows that the congregation will read his letter publicly, in the hearing of these false brothers. Jude apparently trusts that the congregation will take all necessary action to correct the problems. By not naming names, he leaves the congregation to work with individuals at its discretion. This will grant opportunity for confession and absolution. • Lord, You bear with my weaknesses patiently. Grant that I might also bear with my brethren, and may patient teaching lead to repentance those who call themselves brothers but act contrary to the Gospel. Amen.

JUDE—NOTE ON **17–18** *predictions of the apostles*. Esp in 2Pt. All the apostles warned of false teachers who would twist the Scriptures for their own agenda.

JUDE—NOTE ON **19** *devoid of the Spirit*. True Christians did not cause these divisions; false brothers did—unbelievers who were not guided by

God's Holy Spirit.
JUDE—NOTE ON **20** *most holy faith*. The Christian faith is set apart from the world's unbelief. Such faith is not common to the world; it is holy. *praying in the Holy Spirit*. Praying according to God's Word, which the Spirit inspired. See note, Eph 6:18.
JUDE—NOTE ON **21** *keep yourselves*. Guard against false teaching that leads away from the love of God in our Savior.
JUDE—NOTE ON **22** *those who doubt*. All Christians might have questions (e.g., David asked questions in the Ps). They should be treated with patience so that faith might overcome their doubts.
JUDE—NOTE ON **23** *out of the fire*. All who commit sin are urged to repent so that they might receive forgiveness, lest they remain in the fire and lose their faith. *garment stained by the flesh*. Correcting one another must be done with fear, because all Christians are sinners, attracted to sin. Sin is not to be toyed with or dallied in. Unrepented sin is like a stain on our robe of righteousness, which we have from Christ. Only His blood can make it white again with His forgiveness. See notes, Gal 3:27; Rv 7:14.
JUDE—NOTE ON **17–23** Christians, who have the full salvation already delivered to them in Scripture, need not fall into deceptions. We have been warned about false teaching and the deception of sin that leads to death. Likewise, the Lord has taught us the path of righteousness by which His Spirit leads us in the Gospel of grace and peace. • Lord God, keep us in Your love and mercy in Christ until He comes to deliver us from all evil and bring us to everlasting life with You and Your Holy Spirit. Amen.
JUDE—NOTE ON **24** *keep you from stumbling*. Only God could keep them in the one true faith by the power of His Word. *blameless*. See note, Jb 1:1.
JUDE—NOTE ON **25** *our Savior*. The heavenly Father, who saved us through Christ. *be glory*. Praise for all that He has to save. See "glory," p 1902. *dominion*. The all-encompassing sphere of God's rule over all that exists. See p 1565–66.
JUDE—NOTE ON **24–25** Jude emphasizes that salvation is not based on our own reason or strength but is wholly the Father's work in Christ. As the Lord grants you opportunity, share the message of salvation with boldness, for it truly comes from the Lord and He truly works through that testimony, leading those who repent to great joy. • Lord, grant me present joy in my

service and everlasting joy in the glories of heaven You prepared for me through Christ Jesus. Amen.

THE APOCALYPSE OF ST JOHN

The Book of Revelation

> When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying, "Fear not, I am the first and the last, and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades. Write therefore the things that you have seen, those that are and those that are to take place after this." (1:17–19)

The Book of Revelation is unique within the New Testament. Although features of Revelation are comparable to other New Testament Epistles (cf 1:4; 2–3; 22:21), on the whole the Book has a markedly different style, which requires special reflection and explanation.

A Startling Portrait

In 1890, artist Vincent van Gogh wrote his sister Wilhelmina that he would like to "paint portraits that become a revelation." The images he created startled and even repulsed those who first viewed them. For years, Van Gogh's work collected dust. During his life, he sold only one painting! He was regarded as an utter failure. Yet today his works sell for millions of dollars because no one painted like Van Gogh. Through intensely personal qualities, his works revealed this long-hidden artist.

The last Book of the Bible also startled and repulsed people who first read it. Whereas congregations immediately and universally accepted the Gospels as genuine portraits of Jesus, Christians needed time to see the value of Revelation. Some congregations in the Early Church would not include Revelation in their list of books to read during worship, even though John wrote Revelation for that specific purpose (cf 1:3; on authorship, see p 2196). Yet in time, Christians embraced this intense and dramatic portrait—a personal revelation—of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Apocalyptic Style

Perhaps the greatest reason people questioned the value and authenticity of Revelation came from its style, summarized by the Greek word *apokalypsis*, "to uncover or reveal." Authors like Ezekiel, Daniel, and Zechariah wrote in this way, rapidly recording what God revealed to them through heavenly visions. (See pp 1393–95.) But Revelation speaks with a new intensity. It contrasts with the apostle John's other reflective works in the New Testament. Like an excited artist capturing his subject through bold strokes and daubs, John moves the reader from vision to vision, describing heaven's brilliant colors and the devil's dark deeds. Revelation describes life not as we see it with physical eyes but as God sees it and shows it to His trembling disciple.

As you study Revelation, do not let the drama or colorful descriptions distract you from the artist's real subject: Jesus. John knew Jesus of Nazareth in weakness, when He walked the dusty roads of Galilee and suffered betrayal and crucifixion. That is what John describes in his Gospel. In Revelation, John shows how Jesus now reigns in eternal splendor. He shows that even though Jesus now enjoys the full restoration of His glory, His thoughts and plans focus here on earth with you.

Articles and Resources Related to the book of Relevation

- Revelation's Colorful Character

Revelation

Revelation 1 | Revelation 2 | Revelation 3 | Revelation 4 | Revelation 5 | Revelation 6 | Revelation 7 | Revelation 8 | Revelation 9 | Revelation 10 | Revelation 11 | Revelation 12 | Revelation 13 | Revelation 14 | Revelation 15 | Revelation 16 | Revelation 17 | Revelation 18 | Revelation 19 | Revelation 20 | Revelation 21 | Revelation 22

- Introduction to Revelation
  - Overview
  - Reading Revelation
  - Luther on Revelation
  - Challenges for Readers
  - Blessings for Readers
  - Outline
- Footnotes
- Study Notes

Prologue

1 [1]†† The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to
his servants[1] the things that must soon take place. He made it known by
sending his angel to his servant[2] John, [2]† who bore witness to the word of
God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw. [3]† Blessed
is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those
who hear, and who keep what is written in it, for the time is near.

Greeting to the Seven Churches

4 †††John to the seven churches that are in Asia:

Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne, 5 † and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth.

To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood 6 † and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. 7 † Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail[3] on account of him. Even so. Amen.

8 † "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."

Vision of the Son of Man

9 †‡†I, John, your brother and partner in the tribulation and the kingdom
and the patient endurance that are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos
on account of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. 10 †I was in the
Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet
11 †saying, "Write what you see in a book and send it to the seven churches,
to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis
and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea."
12 †Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me, and on turning
I saw seven golden lampstands, 13 ‡and in the midst of the lampstands one
like a son of man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash around
his chest. 14 The hairs of his head were white, like white wool, like snow. His
eyes were like a flame of fire, 15 his feet were like burnished bronze, refined
in a furnace, and his voice was like the roar of many waters. 16 †In his right
hand he held seven stars, from his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword,
and his face was like the sun shining in full strength.
17 †When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But he laid his right
hand on me, saying, "Fear not, I am the first and the last, 18 †and the living
one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of
Death and Hades. 19 †Write therefore the things that you have seen, those
that are and those that are to take place after this. 20 †As for the mystery of
the seven stars that you saw in my right hand, and the seven golden
lampstands, the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the
seven lampstands are the seven churches.

To the Church in Ephesus

2 [1]†† “To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: ‘The words of him
who holds the seven stars in his right hand, who walks among the seven
golden lampstands.
[2]† “‘I know your works, your toil and your patient endurance, and how
you cannot bear with those who are evil, but have tested those who call
themselves apostles and are not, and found them to be false. [3]†I know you
are enduring patiently and bearing up for my name’s sake, and you have not
grown weary. [4]†But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the
love you had at first. [5]†Remember therefore from where you have fallen;
repent, and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and
remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent. [6]†Yet this you
have: you hate the works of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. [7]†He who
has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who
conquers I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of
God.’

To the Church in Smyrna

8 ✝✝“And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write: ‘The words of the
first and the last, who died and came to life.
9 ✝“‘I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich) and the
slander[1] of those who say that they are Jews and are not, but are a
synagogue of Satan. 10 ✝Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the
devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and
for ten days you will have tribulation. Be faithful unto death, and I will give
you the crown of life. 11 ✝He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit
says to the churches. The one who conquers will not be hurt by the second
death.’

To the Church in Pergamum

12 ‡ † “And to the angel of the church in Pergamum write: ‘The words of
him who has the sharp two-edged sword.
13 † “‘I know where you dwell, where Satan’s throne is. Yet you hold fast
my name, and you did not deny my faith[2] even in the days of Antipas my
faithful witness, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells. 14 † But I
have a few things against you: you have some there who hold the teaching
of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of
Israel, so that they might eat food sacrificed to idols and practice sexual
immorality. 15 † So also you have some who hold the teaching of the
Nicolaitans. 16 † Therefore repent. If not, I will come to you soon and war
against them with the sword of my mouth. 17 † He who has an ear, let him
hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who conquers I will
give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, with a
new name written on the stone that no one knows except the one who
receives it.’

To the Church in Thyatira

18 ‡† “And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: ‘The words of the
Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and whose feet are like
burnished bronze.
19 † “‘I know your works, your love and faith and service and patient
endurance, and that your latter works exceed the first. 20 †But I have this
against you, that you tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a
prophetess and is teaching and seducing my servants[1] to practice sexual
immorality and to eat food sacrificed to idols. 21 †I gave her time to repent,
but she refuses to repent of her sexual immorality. 22 †Behold, I will throw
her onto a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her I will throw
into great tribulation, unless they repent of her works, 23 †and I will strike
her children dead. And all the churches will know that I am he who searches
mind and heart, and I will give to each of you according to your works.
24 †But to the rest of you in Thyatira, who do not hold this teaching, who
have not learned what some call the deep things of Satan, to you I say, I do
not lay on you any other burden. 25 ‡Only hold fast what you have until I
come. 26 The one who conquers and who keeps my works until the end, to
him I will give authority over the nations, 27 †and he will rule them with a
rod of iron, as when earthen pots are broken in pieces, even as I myself
have received authority from my Father. 28 †And I will give him the morning
star. 29 † He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the
churches.’

To the Church in Sardis

3 [1]‡†“And to the angel of the church in Sardis write: ‘The words of
him who has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars.

“‘I know your works. You have the reputation of being alive, but you are
dead. [2]†Wake up, and strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I
have not found your works complete in the sight of my God. [3]†Remember,
then, what you received and heard. Keep it, and repent. If you will not wake
up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come
against you. [4]†Yet you have still a few names in Sardis, people who have
not soiled their garments, and they will walk with me in white, for they are
worthy. [5]†The one who conquers will be clothed thus in white garments,
and I will never blot his name out of the book of life. I will confess his
name before my Father and before his angels. [6]†He who has an ear, let him
hear what the Spirit says to the churches.’

To the Church in Philadelphia

7 ††"And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: 'The words of
the holy one, the true one, who has the key of David, who opens and no one
will shut, who shuts and no one opens.
8 †" 'I know your works. Behold, I have set before you an open door,
which no one is able to shut. I know that you have but little power, and yet
you have kept my word and have not denied my name. 9 †Behold, I will
make those of the synagogue of Satan who say that they are Jews and are
not, but lie—behold, I will make them come and bow down before your feet
and they will learn that I have loved you. 10 †Because you have kept my
word about patient endurance, I will keep you from the hour of trial that is
coming on the whole world, to try those who dwell on the earth. 11 †I am
coming soon. Hold fast what you have, so that no one may seize your
crown. 12 †The one who conquers, I will make him a pillar in the temple of
my God. Never shall he go out of it, and I will write on him the name of my
God, and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which comes
down from my God out of heaven, and my own new name. 13 †He who has
an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'

To the Church in Laodicea

14 ††“And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write: ‘The words of the
Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of God’s creation.
15 †“‘I know your works: you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you
were either cold or hot! 16 †So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot
nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth. 17 †For you say, I am rich, I have
prospered, and I need nothing, not realizing that you are wretched, pitiable,
poor, blind, and naked. 18 †I counsel you to buy from me gold refined by
fire, so that you may be rich, and white garments so that you may clothe
yourself and the shame of your nakedness may not be seen, and salve to
anoint your eyes, so that you may see. 19 †Those whom I love, I reprove and
discipline, so be zealous and repent. 20 †Behold, I stand at the door and
knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him
and eat with him, and he with me. 21 †The one who conquers, I will grant
him to sit with me on my throne, as I also conquered and sat down with my
Father on his throne. 22 †He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says
to the churches.’”

The Throne in Heaven

4 [1]†After this I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven! And the first voice, which I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet, said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this." [2]†At once I was in the Spirit, and behold, a throne stood in heaven, with one seated on the throne. [3]†And he who sat there had the appearance of jasper and carnelian, and around the throne was a rainbow that had the appearance of an emerald. [4]†Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and seated on the thrones were twenty-four elders, clothed in white garments, with golden crowns on their heads. [5]†From the throne came flashes of lightning, and rumblings[1] and peals of thunder, and before the throne were burning seven torches of fire, which are the seven spirits of God, [6]†and before the throne there was as it were a sea of glass, like crystal.

And around the throne, on each side of the throne, are four living creatures, full of eyes in front and behind: [7]the first living creature like a lion, the second living creature like an ox, the third living creature with the face of a man, and the fourth living creature like an eagle in flight. [8]†And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and within, and day and night they never cease to say,

"Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God
Almighty,
who was and is and is to come!"

[9]†And whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to him who is seated on the throne, who lives forever and ever, [10]†the twenty-four elders fall down before him who is seated on the throne and worship him who lives forever and ever. They cast their crowns before the throne, saying,

[11]† "Worthy are you, our Lord and God,
to receive glory and honor and power,
for you created all things,

and by your will they existed and were
created.”

The Scroll and the Lamb

5 [1]†Then I saw in the right hand of him who was seated on the throne
a scroll written within and on the back, sealed with seven seals. [2]†And I saw
a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the
scroll and break its seals?" [3]And no one in heaven or on earth or under the
earth was able to open the scroll or to look into it, [4]and I began to weep
loudly because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or to look into
it. [5]†And one of the elders said to me, "Weep no more; behold, the Lion of
the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open
the scroll and its seven seals."

[6]†And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the
elders I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, with seven horns
and with seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the
earth. [7]†And he went and took the scroll from the right hand of him who
was seated on the throne. [8]†And when he had taken the scroll, the four
living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each
holding a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of
the saints. [9]†And they sang a new song, saying,

> "Worthy are you to take the scroll
> and to open its seals,
> for you were slain, and by your blood you
> ransomed people for God
> from every tribe and language and people
> and nation,
> [10]† and you have made them a kingdom and
> priests to our God,
> and they shall reign on the earth."

[11]†Then I looked, and I heard around the throne and the living creatures and
the elders the voice of many angels, numbering myriads of myriads and
thousands of thousands, [12]†saying with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb
who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and

honor and glory and blessing!” [13]†And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, saying, “To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!” [14]†And the four living creatures said, “Amen!” and the elders fell down and worshiped.

The Seven Seals

6 [1]‡†Now I watched when the Lamb opened one of the seven seals,
and I heard one of the four living creatures say with a voice like thunder,
“Come!” [2]†And I looked, and behold, a white horse! And its rider had a
bow, and a crown was given to him, and he came out conquering, and to
conquer.

[3]†When he opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say,
“Come!” [4]†And out came another horse, bright red. Its rider was permitted
to take peace from the earth, so that people should slay one another, and he
was given a great sword.

[5]†When he opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say,
“Come!” And I looked, and behold, a black horse! And its rider had a pair
of scales in his hand. [6]†And I heard what seemed to be a voice in the midst
of the four living creatures, saying, “A quart[1] of wheat for a denarius,[2] and
three quarts of barley for a denarius, and do not harm the oil and wine!”

[7]When he opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living
creature say, “Come!” [8]†And I looked, and behold, a pale horse! And its
rider’s name was Death, and Hades followed him. And they were given
authority over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword and with famine and
with pestilence and by wild beasts of the earth.

[9]†When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those
who had been slain for the word of God and for the witness they had borne.
[10]†They cried out with a loud voice, “O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how
long before you will judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the
earth?” [11]†Then they were each given a white robe and told to rest a little
longer, until the number of their fellow servants[1] and their brothers[2]
should be complete, who were to be killed as they themselves had been.

[12]†When he opened the sixth seal, I looked, and behold, there was a great
earthquake, and the sun became black as sackcloth, the full moon became
like blood, [13]†and the stars of the sky fell to the earth as the fig tree sheds its
winter fruit when shaken by a gale. [14]†The sky vanished like a scroll that is
being rolled up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place.

15 † Then the kings of the earth and the great ones and the generals and the
rich and the powerful, and everyone, slave[3] and free, hid themselves in the
caves and among the rocks of the mountains, 16 † calling to the mountains
and rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who is seated on the
throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, 17 † for the great day of their wrath
has come, and who can stand?”

The 144,000 of Israel Sealed

7 [1] After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the
earth, holding back the four winds of the earth, that no wind might blow on
earth or sea or against any tree. [2] Then I saw another angel ascending from
the rising of the sun, with the seal of the living God, and he called with a
loud voice to the four angels who had been given power to harm earth and
sea, [3] saying, "Do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees, until we have
sealed the servants[4] of our God on their foreheads." [4] And I heard the
number of the sealed, 144,000, sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel:

[5] 12,000 from the tribe of Judah were sealed,
12,000 from the tribe of Reuben,
12,000 from the tribe of Gad,
[6] 12,000 from the tribe of Asher,
12,000 from the tribe of Naphtali,
12,000 from the tribe of Manasseh,
[7] 12,000 from the tribe of Simeon,
12,000 from the tribe of Levi,
12,000 from the tribe of Issachar,
[8] 12,000 from the tribe of Zebulun,
12,000 from the tribe of Joseph,
12,000 from the tribe of Benjamin were
sealed.

A Great Multitude from Every Nation

9 After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could
number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages,
standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes,
with palm branches in their hands, 10 and crying out with a loud voice,
"Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!"
11 And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders
and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne
and worshiped God, 12 saying, "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and
thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and
ever! Amen."

13 Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, "Who are these, clothed
in white robes, and from where have they come?" 14 I said to him, "Sir, you
know." And he said to me, "These are the ones coming out of the great
tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood
of the Lamb.

15 "Therefore they are before the throne of God,
and serve him day and night in his temple;
and he who sits on the throne will shelter
them with his presence.
16 They shall hunger no more, neither thirst
anymore;
the sun shall not strike them,
nor any scorching heat.
17 For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will
be their shepherd,
and he will guide them to springs of living
water,
and God will wipe away every tear from their
eyes."

The Seventh Seal and the Golden Censer

8 [1] †† When the Lamb opened the seventh seal, there was silence in
heaven for about half an hour. [2] † Then I saw the seven angels who stand
before God, and seven trumpets were given to them. [3] † And another angel
came and stood at the altar with a golden censer, and he was given much
incense to offer with the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar before
the throne, [4] and the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints,
rose before God from the hand of the angel. [5] † Then the angel took the
censer and filled it with fire from the altar and threw it on the earth, and
there were peals of thunder, rumblings,[1] flashes of lightning, and an
earthquake.

The Seven Trumpets

6 ‡‡†Now the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared to blow
them.
7 †The first angel blew his trumpet, and there followed hail and fire,
mixed with blood, and these were thrown upon the earth. And a third of the
earth was burned up, and a third of the trees were burned up, and all green
grass was burned up.
8 ‡The second angel blew his trumpet, and something like a great
mountain, burning with fire, was thrown into the sea, and a third of the sea
became blood. 9A third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of
the ships were destroyed.
10 †The third angel blew his trumpet, and a great star fell from heaven,
blazing like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of
water. 11 †The name of the star is Wormwood.[2] A third of the waters became
wormwood, and many people died from the water, because it had been
made bitter.
12 †The fourth angel blew his trumpet, and a third of the sun was struck,
and a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of their light
might be darkened, and a third of the day might be kept from shining, and
likewise a third of the night.
13 †Then I looked, and I heard an eagle crying with a loud voice as it flew
directly overhead, “Woe, woe, woe to those who dwell on the earth, at the
blasts of the other trumpets that the three angels are about to blow!”

9 1 †And the fifth angel blew his trumpet, and I saw a star fallen from
heaven to earth, and he was given the key to the shaft of the bottomless pit.
[3] 2 †He opened the shaft of the bottomless pit, and from the shaft rose
smoke like the smoke of a great furnace, and the sun and the air were
darkened with the smoke from the shaft. 3 †Then from the smoke came
locusts on the earth, and they were given power like the power of scorpions
of the earth. 4 †They were told not to harm the grass of the earth or any
green plant or any tree, but only those people who do not have the seal of
God on their foreheads. 5 †They were allowed to torment them for five
months, but not to kill them, and their torment was like the torment of a

scorpion when it stings someone. 6 †And in those days people will seek
death and will not find it. They will long to die, but death will flee from
them.
7 †In appearance the locusts were like horses prepared for battle: on their
heads were what looked like crowns of gold; their faces were like human
faces, 8 their hair like women's hair, and their teeth like lions' teeth; 9 they
had breastplates like breastplates of iron, and the noise of their wings was
like the noise of many chariots with horses rushing into battle. 10 †They have
tails and stings like scorpions, and their power to hurt people for five
months is in their tails. 11 †They have as king over them the angel of the
bottomless pit. His name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in Greek he is called
Apollyon.[1]
12 The first woe has passed; behold, two woes are still to come.
13 †Then the sixth angel blew his trumpet, and I heard a voice from the
four horns of the golden altar before God, 14 †saying to the sixth angel who
had the trumpet, "Release the four angels who are bound at the great river
Euphrates." 15 †So the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour, the
day, the month, and the year, were released to kill a third of mankind.
16 †The number of mounted troops was twice ten thousand times ten
thousand; I heard their number. 17 †And this is how I saw the horses in my
vision and those who rode them: they wore breastplates the color of fire and
of sapphire[2] and of sulfur, and the heads of the horses were like lions'
heads, and fire and smoke and sulfur came out of their mouths. 18 †By these
three plagues a third of mankind was killed, by the fire and smoke and
sulfur coming out of their mouths. 19 †For the power of the horses is in their
mouths and in their tails, for their tails are like serpents with heads, and by
means of them they wound.
20 †The rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not
repent of the works of their hands nor give up worshiping demons and idols
of gold and silver and bronze and stone and wood, which cannot see or hear
or walk, 21 †nor did they repent of their murders or their sorceries or their
sexual immorality or their thefts.

The Angel and the Little Scroll

10 [1]†Then I saw another mighty angel coming down from heaven,
wrapped in a cloud, with a rainbow over his head, and his face was like the
sun, and his legs like pillars of fire. [2]†He had a little scroll open in his hand.
And he set his right foot on the sea, and his left foot on the land, [3]†and
called out with a loud voice, like a lion roaring. When he called out, the
seven thunders sounded. [4]† And when the seven thunders had sounded, I
was about to write, but I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Seal up what
the seven thunders have said, and do not write it down." [5]‡And the angel
whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land raised his right hand to
heaven [6]†and swore by him who lives forever and ever, who created heaven
and what is in it, the earth and what is in it, and the sea and what is in it,
that there would be no more delay, [7]†but that in the days of the trumpet call
to be sounded by the seventh angel, the mystery of God would be fulfilled,
just as he announced to his servants[1] the prophets.

[8]†Then the voice that I had heard from heaven spoke to me again, saying,
"Go, take the scroll that is open in the hand of the angel who is standing on
the sea and on the land." [9]‡So I went to the angel and told him to give me
the little scroll. And he said to me, "Take and eat it; it will make your
stomach bitter, but in your mouth it will be sweet as honey." [10]And I took
the little scroll from the hand of the angel and ate it. It was sweet as honey
in my mouth, but when I had eaten it my stomach was made bitter. [11]†And I
was told, "You must again prophesy about many peoples and nations and
languages and kings."

The Two Witnesses

11 [1]‡†Then I was given a measuring rod like a staff, and I was told,
“Rise and measure the temple of God and the altar and those who worship
there, [2]†but do not measure the court outside the temple; leave that out, for
it is given over to the nations, and they will trample the holy city for forty-
two months. [3]†And I will grant authority to my two witnesses, and they will
prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth.”

[4]†These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before
the Lord of the earth. [5]†And if anyone would harm them, fire pours from
their mouth and consumes their foes. If anyone would harm them, this is
how he is doomed to be killed. [6]†They have the power to shut the sky, that
no rain may fall during the days of their prophesying, and they have power
over the waters to turn them into blood and to strike the earth with every
kind of plague, as often as they desire. [7]†And when they have finished their
testimony, the beast that rises from the bottomless pit[1] will make war on
them and conquer them and kill them, [8]†and their dead bodies will lie in the
street of the great city that symbolically[2] is called Sodom and Egypt, where
their Lord was crucified. [9]†For three and a half days some from the peoples
and tribes and languages and nations will gaze at their dead bodies and
refuse to let them be placed in a tomb, [10]†and those who dwell on the earth
will rejoice over them and make merry and exchange presents, because
these two prophets had been a torment to those who dwell on the earth.
[11]† But after the three and a half days a breath of life from God entered
them, and they stood up on their feet, and great fear fell on those who saw
them. [12]†Then they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, “Come
up here!” And they went up to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies watched
them. [13]†And at that hour there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the
city fell. Seven thousand people were killed in the earthquake, and the rest
were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven.

[14]†The second woe has passed; behold, the third woe is soon to come.

The Seventh Trumpet

15 ‡ ‡Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices
in heaven, saying, “The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of
our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever.” 16 ‡And the
twenty-four elders who sit on their thrones before God fell on their faces
and worshiped God, 17 ‡saying,

“We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty,
who is and who was,
for you have taken your great power
and begun to reign.
18 ‡ The nations raged,
but your wrath came,
and the time for the dead to be judged,
and for rewarding your servants,[1] the prophets
and saints,
and those who fear your name,
both small and great,
and for destroying the destroyers of the
earth.”

19 ‡Then God’s temple in heaven was opened, and the ark of his covenant
was seen within his temple. There were flashes of lightning, rumblings,[2]
peals of thunder, an earthquake, and heavy hail.

The Woman and the Dragon

12 [1]‡†And a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with
the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve
stars. [2]†She was pregnant and was crying out in birth pains and the agony of
giving birth. [3]†And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great red
dragon, with seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads seven diadems.
[4]†His tail swept down a third of the stars of heaven and cast them to the
earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth,
so that when she bore her child he might devour it. [5]†She gave birth to a
male child, one who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron, but her child
was caught up to God and to his throne, [6]†and the woman fled into the
wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, in which she is to be
nourished for 1,260 days.

Satan Thrown Down to Earth

7 ‡†Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the
dragon. And the dragon and his angels fought back, 8 but he was defeated,
and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. 9 †And the great
dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and
Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth,
and his angels were thrown down with him. 10 †And I heard a loud voice in
heaven, saying, “Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our
God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our
brothers[1] has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before
our God. 11 †And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by
the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death.
12 †Therefore, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them! But woe to
you, O earth and sea, for the devil has come down to you in great wrath,
because he knows that his time is short!”
13 †And when the dragon saw that he had been thrown down to the earth,
he pursued the woman who had given birth to the male child. 14 †But the
woman was given the two wings of the great eagle so that she might fly
from the serpent into the wilderness, to the place where she is to be
nourished for a time, and times, and half a time. 15 ‡The serpent poured
water like a river out of his mouth after the woman, to sweep her away with
a flood. 16 But the earth came to the help of the woman, and the earth opened
its mouth and swallowed the river that the dragon had poured from his
mouth. 17 †Then the dragon became furious with the woman and went off to
make war on the rest of her offspring, on those who keep the
commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus. And he stood[2]
on the sand of the sea.

The First Beast

13 [1]And I saw a beast rising out of the sea, with ten horns and seven heads, with ten diadems on its horns and blasphemous names on its heads. [2]And the beast that I saw was like a leopard; its feet were like a bear's, and its mouth was like a lion's mouth. And to it the dragon gave his power and his throne and great authority. [3]One of its heads seemed to have a mortal wound, but its mortal wound was healed, and the whole earth marveled as they followed the beast. [4]And they worshiped the dragon, for he had given his authority to the beast, and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast, and who can fight against it?"

[5]And the beast was given a mouth uttering haughty and blasphemous words, and it was allowed to exercise authority for forty-two months. [6]It opened its mouth to utter blasphemies against God, blaspheming his name and his dwelling,[1] that is, those who dwell in heaven. [7]Also it was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them.[2] And authority was given it over every tribe and people and language and nation, [8]and all who dwell on earth will worship it, everyone whose name has not been written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who was slain. [9]If anyone has an ear, let him hear:

[10] If anyone is to be taken captive,
to captivity he goes;
if anyone is to be slain with the sword,
with the sword must he be slain.

Here is a call for the endurance and faith of the saints.

The Second Beast

11 Then I saw another beast rising out of the earth. It had two horns like
a lamb and it spoke like a dragon. 12 It exercises all the authority of the first
beast in its presence,[3] and makes the earth and its inhabitants worship the
first beast, whose mortal wound was healed. 13 It performs great signs, even
making fire come down from heaven to earth in front of people, 14 and by
the signs that it is allowed to work in the presence of[4] the beast it deceives
those who dwell on earth, telling them to make an image for the beast that
was wounded by the sword and yet lived. 15 And it was allowed to give
breath to the image of the beast, so that the image of the beast might even
speak and might cause those who would not worship the image of the beast
to be slain. 16 Also it causes all, both small and great, both rich and poor,
both free and slave,[5] to be marked on the right hand or the forehead, 17 so
that no one can buy or sell unless he has the mark, that is, the name of the
beast or the number of its name. 18 This calls for wisdom: let the one who
has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of
a man, and his number is 666.[1]

The Lamb and the 144,000

14 [1]‡† Then I looked, and behold, on Mount Zion stood the Lamb,
and with him 144,000 who had his name and his Father's name written on
their foreheads. [2]† And I heard a voice from heaven like the roar of many
waters and like the sound of loud thunder. The voice I heard was like the
sound of harpists playing on their harps, [3]† and they were singing a new
song before the throne and before the four living creatures and before the
elders. No one could learn that song except the 144,000 who had been
redeemed from the earth. [4]† It is these who have not defiled themselves with
women, for they are virgins. It is these who follow the Lamb wherever he
goes. These have been redeemed from mankind as firstfruits for God and
the Lamb, [5]† and in their mouth no lie was found, for they are blameless.

The Messages of the Three Angels

6 † † Then I saw another angel flying directly overhead, with an eternal
gospel to proclaim to those who dwell on earth, to every nation and tribe
and language and people. 7 † And he said with a loud voice, “Fear God and
give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come, and worship
him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the springs of water.”
8 † Another angel, a second, followed, saying, “Fallen, fallen is Babylon
the great, she who made all nations drink the wine of the passion[2] of her
sexual immorality.”
9 † And another angel, a third, followed them, saying with a loud voice, “If
anyone worships the beast and its image and receives a mark on his
forehead or on his hand, 10 † he also will drink the wine of God’s wrath,
poured full strength into the cup of his anger, and he will be tormented with
fire and sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the
Lamb. 11 † And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever, and they
have no rest, day or night, these worshipers of the beast and its image, and
whoever receives the mark of its name.”
12 † Here is a call for the endurance of the saints, those who keep the
commandments of God and their faith in Jesus.[1]
13 † And I heard a voice from heaven saying, “Write this: Blessed are the
dead who die in the Lord from now on.” “Blessed indeed,” says the Spirit,
“that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow them!”

The Harvest of the Earth

14 Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and seated on the cloud
one like a son of man, with a golden crown on his head, and a sharp sickle
in his hand. 15 And another angel came out of the temple, calling with a
loud voice to him who sat on the cloud, “Put in your sickle, and reap, for
the hour to reap has come, for the harvest of the earth is fully ripe.” 16 So he
who sat on the cloud swung his sickle across the earth, and the earth was
reaped.

17 Then another angel came out of the temple in heaven, and he too had a
sharp sickle. 18 And another angel came out from the altar, the angel who has
authority over the fire, and he called with a loud voice to the one who had
the sharp sickle, “Put in your sickle and gather the clusters from the vine of
the earth, for its grapes are ripe.” 19 So the angel swung his sickle across the
earth and gathered the grape harvest of the earth and threw it into the great
winepress of the wrath of God. 20 And the winepress was trodden outside
the city, and blood flowed from the winepress, as high as a horse’s bridle,
for 1,600 stadia.[2]

The Seven Angels with Seven Plagues

15 [1]†Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and amazing, seven angels with seven plagues, which are the last, for with them the wrath of God is finished.

[2]†And I saw what appeared to be a sea of glass mingled with fire—and also those who had conquered the beast and its image and the number of its name, standing beside the sea of glass with harps of God in their hands. [3]†And they sing the song of Moses, the servant[1] of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying,

"Great and amazing are your deeds,
O Lord God the Almighty!
Just and true are your ways,
O King of the nations![2]
[4] Who will not fear, O Lord,
and glorify your name?
For you alone are holy.
All nations will come
and worship you,
for your righteous acts have been revealed."

[5]†After this I looked, and the sanctuary of the tent[3] of witness in heaven was opened, [6]†and out of the sanctuary came the seven angels with the seven plagues, clothed in pure, bright linen, with golden sashes around their chests. [7]And one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God who lives forever and ever, [8]†and the sanctuary was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from his power, and no one could enter the sanctuary until the seven plagues of the seven angels were finished.

The Seven Bowls of God's Wrath

16 [1] Then I heard a loud voice from the temple telling the seven
angels, "Go and pour out on the earth the seven bowls of the wrath of God."
[2] So the first angel went and poured out his bowl on the earth, and
harmful and painful sores came upon the people who bore the mark of the
beast and worshiped its image.
[3] The second angel poured out his bowl into the sea, and it became like
the blood of a corpse, and every living thing died that was in the sea.
[4] The third angel poured out his bowl into the rivers and the springs of
water, and they became blood. [5] And I heard the angel in charge of the
waters[4] say,

"Just are you, O Holy One, who is and who
was,
for you brought these judgments.
[6] For they have shed the blood of saints and
prophets,
and you have given them blood to drink.
It is what they deserve!"

[7] And I heard the altar saying,

"Yes, Lord God the Almighty,
true and just are your judgments!"

[8] The fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and it was allowed to
scorch people with fire. [9] They were scorched by the fierce heat, and they
cursed[5] the name of God who had power over these plagues. They did not
repent and give him glory.
[10] The fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and its
kingdom was plunged into darkness. People gnawed their tongues in
anguish [11] and cursed the God of heaven for their pain and sores. They did
not repent of their deeds.

[12]†The sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up, to prepare the way for the kings from the east. [13]†And I saw, coming out of the mouth of the dragon and out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits like frogs. [14]For they are demonic spirits, performing signs, who go abroad to the kings of the whole world, to assemble them for battle on the great day of God the Almighty. [15]†(“Behold, I am coming like a thief! Blessed is the one who stays awake, keeping his garments on, that he may not go about naked and be seen exposed!”) [16]†And they assembled them at the place that in Hebrew is called Armageddon.

The Seventh Bowl

17 The seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and a loud voice
came out of the temple, from the throne, saying, “It is done!” 18 And there
were flashes of lightning, rumblings,[1] peals of thunder, and a great
earthquake such as there had never been since man was on the earth, so
great was that earthquake. 19 The great city was split into three parts, and
the cities of the nations fell, and God remembered Babylon the great, to
make her drain the cup of the wine of the fury of his wrath. 20 And every
island fled away, and no mountains were to be found. 21 And great
hailstones, about one hundred pounds[2] each, fell from heaven on people;
and they cursed God for the plague of the hail, because the plague was so
severe.

The Great Prostitute and the Beast

17 [1]†Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and said to me, “Come, I will show you the judgment of the great prostitute who is seated on many waters, [2]†with whom the kings of the earth have committed sexual immorality, and with the wine of whose sexual immorality the dwellers on earth have become drunk.” [3]†And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness, and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast that was full of blasphemous names, and it had seven heads and ten horns. [4]†The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and jewels and pearls, holding in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the impurities of her sexual immorality. [5]†And on her forehead was written a name of mystery: “Babylon the great, mother of prostitutes and of earth’s abominations.” [6]†And I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints, the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.[1]

When I saw her, I marveled greatly. [7]†But the angel said to me, “Why do you marvel? I will tell you the mystery of the woman, and of the beast with seven heads and ten horns that carries her. [8]†The beast that you saw was, and is not, and is about to rise from the bottomless pit[2] and go to destruction. And the dwellers on earth whose names have not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world will marvel to see the beast, because it was and is not and is to come. [9]†This calls for a mind with wisdom: the seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman is seated; [10]†they are also seven kings, five of whom have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come, and when he does come he must remain only a little while. [11]†As for the beast that was and is not, it is an eighth but it belongs to the seven, and it goes to destruction. [12]†And the ten horns that you saw are ten kings who have not yet received royal power, but they are to receive authority as kings for one hour, together with the beast. [13]†These are of one mind, and they hand over their power and authority to the beast. [14]†They will make war on the Lamb, and the Lamb will conquer them, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those with him are called and chosen and faithful.”

15 † And the angel[3] said to me, “The waters that you saw, where the
prostitute is seated, are peoples and multitudes and nations and languages.
16 † And the ten horns that you saw, they and the beast will hate the
prostitute. They will make her desolate and naked, and devour her flesh and
burn her up with fire, 17 †for God has put it into their hearts to carry out his
purpose by being of one mind and handing over their royal power to the
beast, until the words of God are fulfilled. 18 †And the woman that you saw
is the great city that has dominion over the kings of the earth.”

The Fall of Babylon

18 [1] † After this I saw another angel coming down from heaven,
having great authority, and the earth was made bright with his glory. [2] †And
he called out with a mighty voice,

"Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great!
She has become a dwelling place for
demons,
a haunt for every unclean spirit,
a haunt for every unclean bird,
a haunt for every unclean and detestable
beast.
[3] † For all nations have drunk[1]
the wine of the passion of her sexual
immorality,
and the kings of the earth have committed
immorality with her,
and the merchants of the earth have grown
rich from the power of her luxurious
living."

[4] †Then I heard another voice from heaven saying,

"Come out of her, my people,
lest you take part in her sins,
lest you share in her plagues;
[5] † for her sins are heaped high as heaven,
and God has remembered her iniquities.
[6] † Pay her back as she herself has paid back others,
and repay her double for her deeds;
mix a double portion for her in the cup she
mixed.
[7] † As she glorified herself and lived in luxury,
so give her a like measure of torment and

mourning,
since in her heart she says,
'I sit as a queen,
I am no widow,
and mourning I shall never see.'
8 † For this reason her plagues will come in a
single day,
death and mourning and famine,
and she will be burned up with fire;
for mighty is the Lord God who has judged
her."

9 †And the kings of the earth, who committed sexual immorality and lived in luxury with her, will weep and wail over her when they see the smoke of her burning. 10 †They will stand far off, in fear of her torment, and say,

"Alas! Alas! You great city,
you mighty city, Babylon!
For in a single hour your judgment has
come."

11 †And the merchants of the earth weep and mourn for her, since no one buys their cargo anymore, 12 cargo of gold, silver, jewels, pearls, fine linen, purple cloth, silk, scarlet cloth, all kinds of scented wood, all kinds of articles of ivory, all kinds of articles of costly wood, bronze, iron and marble, 13 cinnamon, spice, incense, myrrh, frankincense, wine, oil, fine flour, wheat, cattle and sheep, horses and chariots, and slaves, that is, human souls.[1]

14 † "The fruit for which your soul longed
has gone from you,
and all your delicacies and your
splendors
are lost to you,
never to be found again!"

15 †The merchants of these wares, who gained wealth from her, will stand far
off, in fear of her torment, weeping and mourning aloud,

16 † “Alas, alas, for the great city
that was clothed in fine linen,
in purple and scarlet,
adorned with gold,
with jewels, and with pearls!
17 For in a single hour all this wealth has been
laid waste.”

And all shipmasters and seafaring men, sailors and all whose trade is on
the sea, stood far off 18 †and cried out as they saw the smoke of her burning,

“What city was like the great city?”

19 †And they threw dust on their heads as they wept and mourned, crying
out,

“Alas, alas, for the great city
where all who had ships at sea
grew rich by her wealth!
For in a single hour she has been laid waste.
20 † Rejoice over her, O heaven,
and you saints and apostles and prophets,
for God has given judgment for you against
her!”

21 †Then a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it
into the sea, saying,

“So will Babylon the great city be thrown
down with violence,
and will be found no more;
22 † and the sound of harpists and musicians,
of flute players and trumpeters,
will be heard in you no more,

and a craftsman of any craft
will be found in you no more,
and the sound of the mill
will be heard in you no more,
23 and the light of a lamp
will shine in you no more,
and the voice of bridegroom and bride
will be heard in you no more,
for your merchants were the great ones ofzthe earth,
and all nations were deceived by your
sorcery.
24† And in her was found the blood of prophets
and of saints,
and of all who have been slain on earth.”

Rejoicing in Heaven

19 [1]†† After this I heard what seemed to be the loud voice of a great
multitude in heaven, crying out,

"Hallelujah!
Salvation and glory and power belong to our
God,
[2]† for his judgments are true and just;
for he has judged the great prostitute
who corrupted the earth with her
immorality,
and has avenged on her the blood of his
servants."[1]

[3]† Once more they cried out,

"Hallelujah!
The smoke from her goes up forever and
ever."

[4]† And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and
worshiped God who was seated on the throne, saying, "Amen. Hallelujah!"
[5]† And from the throne came a voice saying,

"Praise our God,
all you his servants,
you who fear him,
small and great."

The Marriage Supper of the Lamb

6 Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude, like the
roar of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, crying
out,

"Hallelujah!
For the Lord our God
the Almighty reigns.
7 Let us rejoice and exult
and give him the glory,
for the marriage of the Lamb has come,
and his Bride has made herself ready;
8 it was granted her to clothe herself
with fine linen, bright and pure"—

for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints.

9 And the angel said[2] to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who are
invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb." And he said to me, "These are
the true words of God." 10 Then I fell down at his feet to worship him, but
he said to me, "You must not do that! I am a fellow servant[1] with you and
your brothers who hold to the testimony of Jesus. Worship God." For the
testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

The Rider on a White Horse

11 †† Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting
on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes
war. 12 † His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems,
and he has a name written that no one knows but himself. 13 † He is clothed
in a robe dipped in[2] blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word
of God. 14 † And the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen, white and pure,
were following him on white horses. 15 † From his mouth comes a sharp
sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a
rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the
Almighty. 16 † On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, King of
kings and Lord of lords.

17 † Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and with a loud voice he
called to all the birds that fly directly overhead, "Come, gather for the great
supper of God, 18 † to eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of
mighty men, the flesh of horses and their riders, and the flesh of all men,
both free and slave,[3] both small and great." 19 † And I saw the beast and the
kings of the earth with their armies gathered to make war against him who
was sitting on the horse and against his army. 20 † And the beast was
captured, and with it the false prophet who in its presence[4] had done the
signs by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast
and those who worshiped its image. These two were thrown alive into the
lake of fire that burns with sulfur. 21 † And the rest were slain by the sword
that came from the mouth of him who was sitting on the horse, and all the
birds were gorged with their flesh.

The Thousand Years

20 [1]‡‡†Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the bottomless pit[1] and a great chain. [2]†And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, [3]†and threw him into the pit, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he might not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were ended. After that he must be released for a little while.

[4]† Then I saw thrones, and seated on them were those to whom the authority to judge was committed. Also I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. [5]†The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended. This is the first resurrection. [6]†Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him for a thousand years.

The Defeat of Satan

7 ‡‡And when the thousand years are ended, Satan will be released from
his prison 8and will come out to deceive the nations that are at the four
corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them for battle; their
number is like the sand of the sea. 9And they marched up over the broad
plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved
city, but fire came down from heaven[2] and consumed them, 10 † and the
devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur
where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day
and night forever and ever.

Judgment Before the Great White Throne

11 ‡‡‡Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From
his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them.
12 † And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and
books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of
life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according
to what they had done. 13 † And the sea gave up the dead who were in it,
Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were
judged, each one of them, according to what they had done. 14 † Then Death
and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the
lake of fire. 15 † And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of
life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

The New Heaven and the New Earth

21 [1]‡†Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven
and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. [2]†And I saw
the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,
prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. [3]†And I heard a loud voice
from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling place[1] of God is with man.
He will dwell with them, and they will be his people,[2] and God himself
will be with them as their God.[3] [4]†He will wipe away every tear from their
eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor
crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.”

[5]†And he who was seated on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all
things new.” Also he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy
and true.” [6]†And he said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega,
the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the
water of life without payment. [7]†The one who conquers will have this
heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son. [8]†But as for the
cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually
immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake
that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death.”

The New Jerusalem

9 ‡ ‡ ‡ Then came one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of
the seven last plagues and spoke to me, saying, “Come, I will show you the
Bride, the wife of the Lamb.” 10 † And he carried me away in the Spirit to a
great, high mountain, and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down
out of heaven from God, 11 † having the glory of God, its radiance like a most
rare jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal. 12 ‡ It had a great, high wall, with
twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and on the gates the names of
the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel were inscribed— 13 on the east three
gates, on the north three gates, on the south three gates, and on the west
three gates. 14 And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them
were the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

15 ‡ And the one who spoke with me had a measuring rod of gold to
measure the city and its gates and walls. 16 † The city lies foursquare, its
length the same as its width. And he measured the city with his rod, 12,000
stadia.[1] Its length and width and height are equal. 17 † He also measured its
wall, 144 cubits[2] by human measurement, which is also an angel’s
measurement. 18 ‡ The wall was built of jasper, while the city was pure gold,
clear as glass. 19 The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with
every kind of jewel. The first was jasper, the second sapphire, the third
agate, the fourth emerald, 20 the fifth onyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh
chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the
eleventh jacinth, the twelfth amethyst. 21 And the twelve gates were twelve
pearls, each of the gates made of a single pearl, and the street of the city
was pure gold, transparent as glass.

22 † And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the
Almighty and the Lamb. 23 † And the city has no need of sun or moon to
shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb.
24 † By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring
their glory into it, 25 ‡ and its gates will never be shut by day—and there will
be no night there. 26 They will bring into it the glory and the honor of the
nations. 27 † But nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does

what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life.

The River of Life

22 [1]‡‡†Then the angel[1] showed me the river of the water of life,
bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb [2]†through
the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree
of life[2] with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The
leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. [3]‡†No longer will
there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be
in it, and his servants[3] will worship him. [4]†They will see his face, and his
name will be on their foreheads. [5]†And night will be no more. They will
need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they
will reign forever and ever.

Jesus Is Coming

6 And he said to me, “These words are trustworthy and true. And the
Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, has sent his angel to show his
servants what must soon take place.”
7 “And behold, I am coming soon. Blessed is the one who keeps the
words of the prophecy of this book.”
8 I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I heard
and saw them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed
them to me, 9 but he said to me, “You must not do that! I am a fellow
servant[1] with you and your brothers the prophets, and with those who keep
the words of this book. Worship God.”
10 And he said to me, “Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this
book, for the time is near. 11 Let the evildoer still do evil, and the filthy still
be filthy, and the righteous still do right, and the holy still be holy.”
12 “Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense with me, to
repay everyone for what he has done. 13 I am the Alpha and the Omega, the
first and the last, the beginning and the end.”
14 Blessed are those who wash their robes,[2] so that they may have the
right to the tree of life and that they may enter the city by the gates.
15 Outside are the dogs and sorcerers and the sexually immoral and
murderers and idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.
16 “I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you about these things for
the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning
star.”
17 The Spirit and the Bride say, “Come.” And let the one who hears say,
“Come.” And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who desires take
the water of life without price.
18 I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if
anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this
book, 19 and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this
prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy
city, which are described in this book.

20 † He who testifies to these things says, “Surely I am coming soon.”
Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!
21 † The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all.[3] Amen.

Revelation

OVERVIEW

Author
John the apostle

Date
AD 95

Places
Patmos; Ephesus; Smyrna; Pergamum; Thyatira; Sardis; Philadelphia; Laodicea; the Euphrates; Jerusalem; Mount Zion; Armageddon

People
John; seven congregations in Asia; false teachers (Nicolaitans; the "synagogue of Satan"; Jezebel)

Purpose
To comfort suffering Christians and encourage their faithful witness with prophetic portraits of the victory that is already ours in the risen and living Lamb of God, Jesus Christ

Law Themes
Deception of false prophets; call to repentance; beasts; dragon (Satan); God's wrath; plagues; torment; woe; bottomless pit; tribulation; Babylon the great; second death; judgment; call to patient endurance

Gospel Themes
Word of God; made a kingdom, priests; Jesus' love; Lamb of God and numerous titles for the Savior; Spirit and authority of God; truth; Christ who conquers; Lord God Almighty; tree of life; Bride of the Lamb (Church); God is faithful and true; water of life

Memory Verses

Be faithful (2:10); Jesus at the door (3:19–20); the song and new song (4:11; 5:9–10); heaven's bliss (7:15–17); conquering Satan (12:10–11); marriage of the Lamb (19:6–9); Christ coming with recompense (22:12–15)

Introduction to Revelation

Reading Revelation

A blinding flash pierced the dark shroud of storm clouds, followed by a deafening thunderclap. Contrary winds blasted salty spray over the side of the ship and into the navigator's face. The pitching waves lofted the ship and clawed at its hull as though they would pull it under. "All may be lost," the navigator whispered to himself.

But then, for a moment, a beam of moonlight fell through the storm clouds to reveal an island and sheltered bay off the port side—a haven of hope amid the storm.

The challenging Book of Revelation presents not merely the stormy future of suffering that will afflict the earth but also a message of hope—a haven for the beleaguered soul. In Revelation, we see that Christ is enthroned on high, mediating on our behalf and planning for our salvation. He will return in glory to deliver the Church from evil. On the island of Patmos, He gave these stormy visions to John for our comfort.

Luther on Revelation

There are many different kinds of prophecy in Christendom. One is prophecy which interprets the writings of the prophets. Paul speaks of this in I Corinthians 12 and 14, and in other places as well. This is the most necessary kind and we must have it every day, because it teaches the Word of God, lays the foundation of Christendom, and defends the faith. In a word, it rules, preserves, establishes, and performs the preaching ministry.

Another kind foretells things to come which are not previously contained in Scripture, and this prophecy is of three types. The first expresses itself simply in words, without images and figures—as Moses, David, and others of the prophets prophesy about Christ, and as Christ and the apostles prophesy about Antichrist, false teachers, etc. The second type does this with images, but alongside them it supplies their interpretation in specific words—as Joseph interprets dreams, and Daniel both dreams and images. The third type does it without either words or interpretations, exclusively with images and figures, like this book of Revelation and like the dreams, visions, and images that many holy people have had from the Holy Spirit—as Peter in Acts 2[:17] preaches from Joel [2:28], "Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams." So long as this kind of prophecy remains without explanation and gets no sure interpretation, it is a concealed and mute prophecy and has not yet come to the profit and fruit which it is to give to Christendom.

This is the way it has been with this book heretofore. Many have tried their hands at it, but until this very day they have attained no certainty. Some have even brewed it into many stupid things out of their own heads. Because its interpretation is uncertain and its meaning hidden, we have also let it alone until now, especially because some of the ancient fathers held that it was not the work of St. John, the Apostle—as is stated in *The Ecclesiastical History*, Book III, chapter 25. For our part, we still share this doubt. By that, however, no one should be prevented from regarding this as the work of St. John the Apostle, or of whomever else he chooses….

We can profit by this book and make good use of it. First, for our comfort! We can rest assured that neither force nor lies, neither wisdom nor holiness, neither tribulation nor suffering shall suppress Christendom, but it will gain the victory and conquer at last.

Second, for our warning! [We can be on guard] against the great, perilous, and manifold offense that inflicts itself upon Christendom. Because these mighty and imposing powers are to fight against Christendom, and it is to be deprived of outward shape and concealed under so many tribulations and heresies and other faults, is impossible for the natural reason to recognize Christendom. On the contrary, natural reason falls away and takes offense. It calls that "the Christian Church" which is really the worst enemy of the Christian Church. Similarly, it calls those persons damned heretics who are really the true Christian Church. This has happened before, under the papacy, under Mohammed, indeed with all the heretics. Thus they lose this article [of the Creed], "I believe in the holy Christian Church." …

This is why natural reason cannot recognize it, even if it puts on all its glasses. The devil can cover it over with offenses and divisions, so that you have to take offense at it. God too can conceal it behind faults and shortcomings of all kinds, so that you necessarily become a fool and pass false judgment on it. Christendom will not be known by sight, but by faith. And faith has to do with things not seen, Hebrews 11[:1]. Christendom joins with her Lord in the song, "Blessed is he who takes no offense at me" [Matt. 11:6]. A Christian is even hidden from himself; he does not see his holiness and virtue, but sees in himself nothing but unholiness and vice. And you, stupid know-it-all, would behold Christendom with your blind reason and unclean eyes!

In a word, our holiness is in heaven, where Christ is; and not in the world, before men's eyes, like goods in the market place. Therefore let there be offenses, divisions, heresies, and faults; let them do what they can! If only the word of the gospel remains pure among us, and we love and cherish it, we shall not doubt that Christ is with us, even when things are at their worst. As we see here in this book, that through and beyond all plagues, beasts, and evil angels Christ is nonetheless with his saints, and wins the final victory. (AE 35:399–411)

Challenges for Readers

Study Other Books First. Many interpreters become horribly confused about the Book of Revelation because they fail to understand the character of biblical prophecy. They typically read Revelation as depicting a series of end-times events that simply happen one after the other. Such an approach usually generates a long, confusing wall chart and bizarre investigation of current events (e.g., dispensationalism, premillennialism, and postmillennialism), searching for things that might connect with the symbols in Revelation. Anyone wishing to understand the complex symbolism and visions of Revelation must first acquire (1) a broad understanding of OT prophecy generally and (2) a specific, clear understanding of Ezekiel, Daniel, and Zechariah. If you have not carefully studied OT prophecy, do not begin a study of Revelation. Do your homework; study the OT first. See pp 1425–26, 2099. On the complex structure of Revelation, see the following outline and notes.

Symbolism. In Revelation, Jesus is described as "one like a son of man" (1:13), a lion (5:5), and a lamb with seven horns and seven eyes (5:6). Clearly, the Book is very symbolic. Those who try to read the visions literally end up interpreting and applying the Book in hopelessly confused ways. To understand the symbolism in Revelation, study OT prophecy first.

Authorship and Date. Early tradition from Irenaeus attributed Revelation to the apostle John, "who beheld the apocalyptic vision … towards the end of Domitian's reign" (AD 81–96; *ANF* 1:559–60). Information in the overview of this Bible is based on this traditional understanding. However, readers should also know that some scholars propose an earlier date for Revelation, c AD 68, during the persecution that took place under Emperor Nero (AD 54–68). Both explanations are defensible and the interpretation and application of the Book is not adversely affected in either case.

Book of Woe or Book of Comfort? God's throne is the central thematic element of OT apocalyptic literature (Ezk 1; Dn 7). Rv 4–5 builds on this theme by depicting the enthronement of Christ after His ascension. All other scenes in the Book must be understood in light of this central vision, which depicts Jesus as the worthy Savior of His people and judge of Satan and his followers. This central theme shows that Revelation is not chiefly a book of woe but a book of comfort for God's people. Luther explained, "In

chapters 4 and 5 there is prefigured the whole of Christendom that is to suffer these coming tribulations and plagues. There are twenty-four elders before God (that is, all the bishops and teachers in unity); they are crowned with faith, and praise Christ, the Lamb of God, with harps (that is, they preach); and they worship him with censers (that is, they exercise themselves in prayer). All this is for the comfort of Christians, that they may know that Christendom is to endure in spite of the plagues that are going to come" (AE 35:401). Across the centuries, the heavenly anthems (4:8, 11; 5:9–10) and John's vision of heavenly worship have greatly influenced the Church's liturgy (e.g., focus on the Holy Trinity, celebration of redemption, and worship in courtly style). On OT liturgical practices, see p 959.

Structure of Revelation. Do not fall into the trap of reading Revelation as one long timeline about the end of the world—note well its repetitions. Rv 6:1–21:8 is arranged as a series of visionary scenes that repeatedly depict the end of the world in different ways. Each scene emphasizes different themes and aspects of the one judgment that will come at the end of time. Recognizing this is crucial to understanding the Book. Carefully review the following outline. The study notes also alert readers to this important structure.

The "Rapture" Theory. Some evangelical interpreters take a variety of passages in the Bible, including Rv 4–5, as predicting an event named the "rapture" (see p 2051; see also note, 1Th 4:17). According to this view, Christ will return to take all Christians out of the world before a seven-year period of distress begins. This ensuing "tribulation" (which they see in Rv 6–19) is believed to end as a "millennium" begins (see note, Rv 20:2; see also p 2199). They claim that Christ will return yet again to administer the final judgment (this makes a third return, nowhere mentioned in Scripture). In contrast to such a rapture theory, Scripture repeatedly states that Christ will return again only once: His second coming (as stated in the Apostles' Creed). At that time, Christ will raise both believers and unbelievers from the dead for the last judgment (Mt 25:31–46; Jn 5:28–29; Ac 24:15; 1Th 4:13–15; Rv 1:7; 20:11–15).

The Millennium. See p 2199.

Blessings for Readers

As you study Revelation, take to heart Jesus' admonition and encouragement for the churches in John's day (chs 2–3). Apply His words for your life and the life of your congregation. Pray for ears to hear what the Spirit says through the Word.

Most important, ask the Lord to maintain your focus on the heavenly vision of chs 4–5, which describe the reign of your Savior. No matter what the devil may throw at you, Christ your King is with you. He has overcome the evil one. He will strengthen you in the face of all persecution and distress. Pray for those who live in fear of worldly troubles or of the last judgment, that through the forgiveness of sins, the Lord would extend His perfect peace to them; the Church may face the future with all boldness and confidence in Christ.

OUTLINE

Revelation is a series of visions. The first two visions describe Jesus appearing to John and messages that Jesus asks John to share with seven churches. Chs 4 and 5 are the heart of the book, revealing the worthiness of Jesus, who will save His people and judge the world.

Chs 6–21 are scenes of the end-times judgment. Three of Revelation's end-times scenes are clearly structured in seven parts (6:1–8:5; 8:6–11:19; 15:1–16:21). The other visions lack this sevenfold structure. The vision of 12:1–14:20 is clearly delimited by the sevenfold visions that come before and after it. Interpreters divide up 17:1–20:8 in different ways.

I. The Prologue: The Revelation of Jesus Christ (1:1–8)

II. The Visions Given to John (1:9–22:5)

A. The Glorified Son of Man and the Seven Letters (1:9–3:22)

1. The appearance of Christ to John on Patmos to commission John to record the vision (1:9–20)
2. The letter to the Church in Ephesus (2:1–7)
3. The letter to the Church in Smyrna (2:8–11)
4. The letter to the Church in Pergamum (2:12–17)
5. The letter to the Church in Thyatira (2:18–29)
6. The letter to the Church in Sardis (3:1–6)

7. The letter to the Church in Philadelphia (3:7–13)
8. The letter to the Church in Laodicea (3:14–22)

B. The Heavenly Sanctuary and Divine Throne (chs 4–5)

1. God (the Father) enthroned and worshiped as Creator (ch 4)
2. The Lamb (the Son) enthroned and worshiped as the Passover/Atonement sacrifice (ch 5)

C. The First Scene of the End Times: Christ Opening the Seven Seals (6:1–8:5)

1. The opening of the first four seals (6:1–8)
2. The opening of the fifth and sixth seals (6:9–17)
3. The sealing of the 144,000 faithful on earth (7:1–8)
4. The myriads of the faithful in heavenly bliss (7:9–17)
5. The opening of the seventh seal (8:1–5)

D. The Second Scene of the End Times: The Blowing of the Seven Trumpets (8:6–11:19)

1. The blowing of the first four trumpets (8:6–13)
2. The blowing of the fifth and sixth trumpets (ch 9)
3. The recommissioning of John (ch 10)
4. The measuring and witness of the Church (11:1–14)
5. The blowing of the seventh trumpet (11:15–19)

E. The Third Scene of the End Times: The Battle between the Triune God and the Anti-Trinity (12:1–14:20)

1. The woman in travail and the dragon (12:1–6)
2. The war in heaven and defeat of Satan (12:7–17)
3. The two beasts: a false christ and a false spirit (ch 13)
4. The Lamb and true Church (14:1–5)
5. The angels and the harvest of the earth (14:6–20)

F. The Fourth Scene of the End Times: The Pouring Out of the Seven Bowls of Wrath (chs 15–16)

G. The Fifth Scene of the End Times: Babylon the Prostitute Overthrown (chs 17–19)

H. The Sixth Scene of the End Times: The Final Judgment (20:1–21:8)

I. The Final Scene: The New Jerusalem as the Bride (21:9–22:5)

III. The Epilogue: Come, Lord Jesus! (22:6–21)

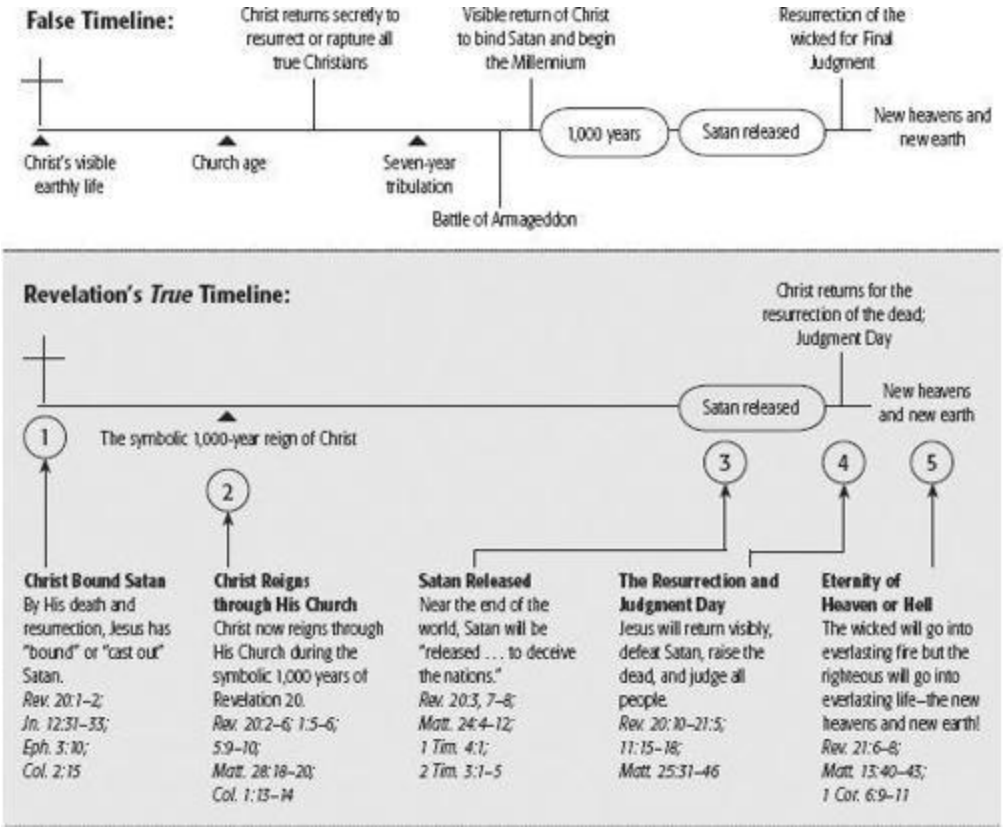
Articles and Resources Related to Revelation

- Revelation's Colorful Character
- The End Times in Revelation
- The Letters to the Churches
- I Know Your Works
- Grace and Merits
- The Kingdom, the Church, and Israel
- The Mystery of the Church
- God's Mission and Revelation
- The Movement of the Gospel
- The Lord's Supper
- The Marriage Feast of the Lamb
- The Sacrament and the Church
- Christ in Revelation
- Jesus' Human Nature
- An Outline of Church History

The End Times in Revelation

Though Revelation can be difficult to understand because it uses so many symbols, it actually provides a very simple description of the End Times as the early Christians noticed. For example, after reading Revelation and the rest of Scripture, the early Christians summarized the End Times as follows: "[Jesus now] sits at the right hand of God,
the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead … We believe in … the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting" (The Apostles' Creed). For centuries this simple summary of the End Times—rooted in Revelation—guided Christian teaching.

Today, however, false teachers have created many confusing and complex interpretations of Revelation. They have added false doctrines like the *Rapture* and the *Millennium* to Revelation's summary of the End Times. As a result, many Christians are confused about what will happen in the future. For a simple, clear understanding of how Revelation differs from modern, false opinions, study the timelines below. Be sure to look up the Bible references and see how Revelation agrees with the rest of God's Word.



Revelation's simple timeline clearly shows that no Rapture or Millennium must take place before Jesus returns. He could reappear for Judgment Day at any time! Therefore, "blessed is he who heeds the words of the prophecy of this book" (Rev. 22:7). Study Revelation and joyously look forward to the return of your Savior.

Good News 12 (1999):11. Used by permission.

The Letters to the Churches

To: **All seven churches**
1:4, 11
Image of Christ: 1:5, 12–18
To: **Ephesus**
2:1–7
Local Detail: False apostles and Nicolaitans are there
Image of Christ: Holds the seven stars in his right hand; walks among the seven golden lampstands
What Christ Sees Good: Have endurance; cannot bear evil people; are not weary; hate the works of the Nicolaitans
What Christ Sees Bad: Have left your first love
Call to Repent: Repent, do first works, or else I will remove your lampstand
Promise to the One Who Conquers: I will grant to eat of the tree of life in the paradise of God
To: **Smyrna**
2:8–11
Local Detail: Synagogue of Satan is there
Image of Christ: The First and the Last, who was dead and came back to life
What Christ Sees Good: I know your suffering and poverty
What Christ Sees Bad: Are afraid of suffering
Call to Repent: Stop being afraid of coming suffering, poverty; be faithful to death and I will give you the crown of life
Promise to the One Who Conquers: Will not be hurt by the second death
To: **Pergamum** 2:12–17
Local Detail: Satan's throne is there; Satan lives there; Antipas was martyred there; the teachings of the Nicolaitans are there
Image of Christ: Has the sharp two-edged sword
What Christ Sees Good: Hold on to my name; did not deny the faith even when Antipas was martyred
What Christ Sees Bad: Some hold to the teachings of Balaam (idolatry, immorality) and of the Nicolaitans
Call to Repent: Repent, else I will war with the sword of my mouth

Promise to the One Who Conquers: I will give of the hidden manna and a white stone and a secret name

To: **Thyatira**

2:18–29

Local Detail: The so-called prophetess Jezebel is there; some there have known the depths of Satan

Image of Christ: The Son of God, who has eyes like fire and feet like brass; searches thoughts and hearts

What Christ Sees Good: Have love, faith, service, endurance; your last works are more than your first works

What Christ Sees Bad: Tolerate the so-called prophetess Jezebel, who teaches people to commit sexual immorality and eat idolatrous food

Call to Repent: Repent of adultery with Jezebel; her children will be killed; the faithful must hold fast to what they have

Promise to the One Who Conquers: I will give authority to rule the nations with an iron scepter and will give the morning star

To: **Sardis**

3:1–6

Local Detail: Have a reputation of being alive but are dead

Image of Christ: Has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars

What Christ Sees Good: A few have not polluted their garments, are worthy to be dressed in white

What Christ Sees Bad: I know your works; have a reputation of being alive but are dead

Call to Repent: Repent; keep what you received; watch, lest I return as a thief

Promise to the One Who Conquers: Will be dressed in white; I will not remove his name from the book of life; I will confess his name before my Father and his angels

To: **Philadelphia** 3:7–13

Local Detail: Have an open door for evangelism; Jews from the synagogue of Satan will acknowledge that I have loved you

Image of Christ: The holy and true One, who has the key of David and who opens and closes

What Christ Sees Good: I have placed before you an open door; have kept my Word and not denied my name

What Christ Sees Bad: Have but a little power to take advantage of open doors, opportunities to serve
Call to Repent: Hold on to what you have; I will protect you during the testing of all the earth; I am coming quickly
Promise to the One Who Conquers: I will place him as a pillar in God's temple; I will write on him God's name, the name of God's city, and my new name
To: **Laodicea** 3:14–22
Local Detail: Are worldly wealthy, but spiritually poor, naked, blind
Image of Christ: The Amen, the faithful and true witness, the source of the creation of God
What Christ Sees Bad: Lukewarm; do not know own wretchedness
Call to Repent: I am about to spit you out; repent and receive purification and healing from me; I knock at the door; if anyone opens, I will enter and eat with him
Promise to the One Who Conquers: I will grant to sit with me on my throne
Louis A. Brighton, *Revelation*, CC (St. Louis: Concordia, 1999), 58–59.

I Know Your Works

Christ's focus on works in Revelation may make you wonder whether the Lord will save or condemn you based on your works. Many who study Revelation ask this question in view of passages such as 2:23, "I will give to each of you according to your works." Also, "The dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done…. Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done" (20:12b–13).

The Book of Life

Before you quit your job so you can do more volunteer work at church or elsewhere, take note of how the Lord actually decides who enters heaven: "If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire" (20:15). No matter what is written in the books about your works, your works will not decide your eternal destiny. All who have their names "written in the Lamb's book of life" will enjoy the bliss of heaven (21:27). Christ, "the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" (Jn 1:29)—even your sin—writes your name in His Book of Life by His grace, not by your works.

Christ judges and urges people to do good works because such works serve His kingdom. Through your works, God blesses and builds His Church (1Co 3:9–15). Through works of love and the Word, Christ establishes His Church in the midst of suffering, sorrow, and despair. The seven churches in Revelation lived amid such danger (Rv 2:13). They considered compromising their teaching and giving up their service because persecutors dogged them (cf Heb 10:23–25; 12:28–29). Repeatedly, Christ told them to hold on to what He had already given them (Rv 2:3, 10b, 13b, 25; 3:3, 11), His Word and faith through which He saved them and sustained them. From such faith would flow genuine repentance and generous works for the encouragement of all.

Christ's Work for You

Christ's letters follow a set form, but they are not mere form letters (see p 2204). He did not sign His name, but the letters are anything but anonymous. In fact, they reveal the Lord and His work for these congregations and all believers. As you read these letters, take their teachings personally. Hear the voice of your Lord calling you to repentance and greater service.

But also take note of all that Jesus does for you. He holds the guardians of the Church in His hand and walks among the congregations (2:1). He gave His life and rose again (v 8) to apply those blessings for your salvation. He wields the sword of His Word to fend off error for your sake (v 16). Christ burns with divine holiness (v 18) and gives you the same Holy Spirit (3:1, 6). He holds open heaven's door for you (v 7). From the beginning of creation until today, Christ remains faithful for your sake (v 14). What a glorious work and revelation!

Grace and Merits

If the insistence on grace alone without any merit is preserved, then we have no objection to giving the name "merits" to the fruit that follows. Only such statements should not be distorted and applied in an anti-Scriptural way to our meriting grace but should be interpreted correctly, the way they were intended, as a consolation to Christians—especially when they have to suffer opposition, when they get the feeling and the impression that our life, suffering, and activity are pointless and useless. This is the consolation that Scripture uses everywhere in urging perseverance in good works. So in Jer. 31:16 we read: Your works shall be rewarded, and St. Paul says in 1 Cor. 15:58: In the Lord your labor is not in vain. If we did not have this consolation, we could not stand the misery, persecution, and trouble we get in exchange for doing so much good, nor let our teaching and preaching be rewarded with nothing but ingratitude and abuse. Finally we would have to stop working and suffering, though it is our obvious duty to do so.

God wants us to wake up and to strengthen us with this beautiful promise. Then we will not pay attention to the ingratitude, hate, envy, and contempt of the world; we will pay attention to Him who says: I am your God. If the world refuses to thank you and deprives you of your reputation and property, even of your body and life, just cling to Me, and find your consolation in the fact that I still have a heaven with so much in it that I can easily recompense you and give you ten times as much as they can take away from you now.

Martin Luther, *What Luther Says* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1959), § 4919.

The Kingdom, the Church, and Israel

In studying the Scriptures, readers have noticed that the Old Testament, Matthew, Mark, and Luke frequently discuss "the kingdom" of God (called "Israel" in the Old Testament). By contrast, John's Gospel, Acts, and the New Testament Letters (Romans through Jude) refer to God's kingdom only occasionally. These books repeatedly mention "the church" and "churches."

This change in language has led to some confusion among interpreters, who wonder whether "the church" is God's kingdom or whether Israel is God's kingdom as it was in the Old Testament (e.g., see notes, Rm 11:25–36). Revelation helps clear up this issue. In Revelation, references to God's kingdom and Israel are references to God's Church.

God's People

In John's greetings to the seven churches in Asia, he states that Christ "made us a kingdom, priests to His God and Father" (Rv 1:6). Also, John introduces himself as "your brother and partner in … the kingdom" (v 9). John tells the congregations that they are part of a larger kingdom—God's kingdom. This is true even though they suffer persecution and dwell more than 400 miles from the borders of ancient Israel, which had been God's kingdom under the old covenant.

Later, when Jesus stands by the Father's throne in heaven, the four living creatures and 24 elders sing to Him, "You ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, and You have made them a kingdom and priests to our God" (5:9–10; cf 12:10). Clearly, the kingdom of God is not limited to a political nation of Israel or to people of Jewish descent. God's kingdom—the Church—includes people of all nations.

John mentions Israel three times in Revelation. The first is simply a historical reference to Israel's temptation and disobedience in the wilderness (2:14). In 7:4–8, the "sons of Israel" number 144,000 according to their tribes. This group is mentioned again in 14:1–5. In 21:12, the names of the sons of Israel are inscribed on the gates of the New Jerusalem. These gates are mentioned along with the foundations of the city, which have the names of the 12 apostles on them. Louis Brighton notes,

> In Rev[elation] 7:4–8 the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel serve to symbolize the church of Jesus Christ. The use of the number 144,000, twelve thousand from each tribe, points to the church militant, ready for mission, in her marching order. The specific names in the redefined list show she is cleansed from idolatry and apostasy. And she is sealed, protected in her faith, as she stands as a witness in the time of tribulation. (CC Rv, pp 192–93)

Just as the 24 elders represent all God's people of the Old and New Testaments, so the 144,000 sons of Israel represent all God's people as well. (Note the multiples of 12 in symbols of the Church; see how Paul uses "Israel" to describe all believers, both Jews and Gentiles, in Rm 9:6–8. See also p 217.)

John's vision of God's people and the blessings of salvation do not divide God's kingdom, the churches, or the sons of Israel from one another. Rather, these are all ways John describes the one people of God ransomed from every nation (Rv 5:9). Interpreters who separate Israel from the churches or the Church from a millennial kingdom of God miss John's most important point about God's people: Christ reigns through them *now*. They are already "a kingdom, priests to His God and Father" (1:6).

Close Ranks

When you were baptized into Christ, He made you a member of His kingdom, the Church (Jn 3:5). He consecrated you as a holy priest to serve Him and all His people, whether Jews or Gentiles (1Pt 2:9). You reign with Christ now while awaiting the full revelation of God's people in eternity.

If you are like most Christians, you probably do not feel like a king, a royal priest, or anything greater than a peasant. The obstacles of life, personal failures, and the devil's discouragement all conspire to overthrow you. But praise God for that holy alliance, His Church! Though you feel alone, you actually stand among the "thousands" of Israel (see p 217). Close ranks with your brothers and sisters in Christ. Bellow in the devil's face, "A mighty fortress is our God … The Kingdom ours remaineth" (*LSB* 656:1, 4). Remember that the Lamb who was slain is also titled "the Lion of the tribe of Judah" (Rv 5:5). He has conquered hell, ascended on high, and commands the hosts of heaven. He will overcome all things for your sake.

The Mystery of the Church

The existence of the church is the most profound riddle of history. No one can explain it. No one can say how the church finally continues to exist. Statesmen have been convinced, as the elector of Saxony once expressed it over against Luther with the most friendly intentions, that the protection of the state is what finally makes the existence of the church possible. But the church first experienced its great flowering in the centuries in which it was not acknowledged. And the great canon law of the first centuries, on which entire churches still depend today, came to exist in a church which as far as public law was concerned did not even exist. To this day how the church outlived the demise of the ancient world in the centuries of the great migrations is an inexplicable mystery of history. No one could have known that the sixteenth century would not result in the complete dissolution of the church. Nor could anyone have known that the apparent self-destruction of the church in that struggle, in which Luther expected and longed for the Last Day, was not the end of the church, but its Reformation.

Hermann Sasse, *The Lonely Way* (St. Louis: Concordia, 2001), 1:462.

God's Mission and Revelation

The Revelation of St. John may well be the most evangelistic book of the entire Bible. Certainly it is unique in the way it proclaims the Gospel and empowers the church for her mission.

There is a twofold purpose of Revelation. As the prophetic message of the book unfolds its view of events on earth from Christ's first advent up to the present world's end at his return, it presents to us (1) a Christology of the exalted reign of Christ and (2) a theology of the church and her mission.

These two purposes are related. Christ reigns so as to enable the church to carry out and complete her mission. Among all the tribulations and sufferings on earth, the Lord Christ unveils his exalted glory for the comfort of the church and for the empowerment of her mission. From the time of Christ's victory and ascension up to the End, all history is controlled by the Lord Christ for the sake of his church and her mission of witness. And when that mission is completed, the curtain will fall on this world's existence and the Lord will come to claim his bride.

How important is the mission of the church in her role of witnessing to Jesus Christ as the Savior of the world? Two visions in particular give an answer: the mighty angel of Revelation 10 and the woman with Child in Revelation 12. The mighty angel astride the entire earth (10:1–2) exhibits the importance of the church and her mission, for all people everywhere and throughout history must hear the message of God that the church proclaims. John, on behalf of the church, is told that he must prophesy to "many peoples and nations and tongues and kings" (10:11), for the eternal destiny of each member of the human race depends upon hearing and believing the message of Christ crucified and risen.

The woman with Child in Revelation 12 who is hunted by the dragon portrays the suffering of the church during her mission, but she also reveals the glory and honor with which God, for the sake of the Child, adorns his church. The church is pictured like the Virgin Mary, as the one who births Christ, the Savior, into this world (12:5). No other entity in human history is so honored. The church and her mission are the most important aspects of human experience and world history, for she bears the cross of Christ and

the love of God, the cross and love that extend to the spatial and temporal ends of the earth.

The entire book of Revelation can be interpreted in view of the mission of the church, for that mission is carried out and completed under the exalted glory and reign of her Lord Christ.

Louis A. Brighton, *Revelation*, CC (St. Louis: Concordia, 1999), 312.

The Movement of the Gospel

Before Judgment Day comes, the rule of the church and of the Christian faith must move over the whole world, just as the Lord Christ also said before in an earlier chapter that there will not be a city in which the Gospel should still be preached and that the Gospel shall move through the whole world in order that they all have a witness over their conscience, whether or not they believe.

The Gospel was in Egypt, then it was gone; furthermore, it has been in Greece, in Italy, in France, and in other lands. Now it is in the land of Germany; for who knows how long? The movement of the Gospel is now among us, but our ungratefulness and scorning of the divine Word, pettiness, and decadence make it so that it will not remain for long. There shall then follow after it a large rabble, and great wars will come later. In Africa, the Gospel was very powerfully present, but the liars corrupted it, and after it the Vandals and the wars came. It went likewise also in Egypt: first lying and then murder. It will also go exactly the same way in the German land. The pious preachers will first be taken away, and false prophets, enthusiasts, and demagogues will step into my place and that of other preachers and divide the church and tear it apart. Then there will also be added to it wars, so that princes will make war among themselves. Even the Turks will teach them manners before the movement in the world is finished. Then Judgment Day will come. St. Paul (Romans 11:25) also says that the Gospel must be preached through the whole world in order that all the Gentiles may experience it, so that the fullness of the Gentiles may also enter into heaven.

Christ is like the thresher. First, he beats out the ears with the flail. After that he also throws the chaff in a pile and gives it to the sows to eat. John the Baptist, the apostles, and all Christian preachers have done likewise. They are all threshers, for the Gospel gathers many to the kingdom of God, into the barn of the heavenly kingdom. When they have done this, then there is nothing left over, except chaff. Thereafter, marauding bands and sects will come and devour the chaff—the ungrateful and godless people. Do not doubt, God will have gathered his kernels already long before this.

Martin Luther in Volker Stolle, *The Church Comes from All Nations*, trans. Klaus Detlev Schulz and Daniel Thies (St. Louis: Concordia, 2003), 82–83.

The Lord's Supper

Across the ages, people have believed, repeated, and celebrated the remarkable words Jesus spoke on the night He was betrayed. Few texts of Sacred Scripture have prompted more devout meditation or more controversy. Jesus' words are known as "the words of institution" because by them Jesus changed the Old Testament Passover into a new meal and celebration—He *instituted*, or began, a new covenant confirmed with His own life's blood. In these few words, He fulfilled Old Testament promises, announced present blessings, and prophesied our future in His kingdom.

Because of the surpassing importance of Jesus' words at that moment in His ministry, the Early Church gathered the different accounts and created a harmony of Jesus' sayings so that not one promise would be lost to our ears as we gather around His Table.

> Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me." In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." (*LSB*, p 162; cf Mt 26:26–28; Mk 14:22–24; Lk 22:19–20; 1Co 11:23–25)

The Church has also remembered with bittersweet anticipation Jesus' promise: "I tell you I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom" (Mt 26:29).

The Essence of the Lord's Supper

The great Lutheran theologian Martin Chemnitz wrote extensively on the importance and blessing of Jesus' words of institution. Below is a summary of his reflections from "The Lord's Supper."

> There are two points in the words of institution which should be dealt with one at a time and distinctly. The first has to do with the essence or substance of the Lord's Supper, namely: What is present in the Lord's Supper, distributed and received orally by the communicants? This subject is dealt with in the words of institution: "He took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to His disciples, saying, 'Take, eat; this is My body which is given for you.' … Likewise He also took the cup, and when He had given thanks, gave it to them saying, 'This is My blood.' …" (1 Cor. 11:23 ff.)
>
> The second point is this: For what purpose and use did Christ in His Supper distribute these elements to be received by the communicants and what is the salutary use or what is the spiritual benefit of those things we receive in the Supper from Christ, who distributes them? This point is treated in these words of the institution: "This do in remembrance of Me," that is, remember that My body which you are receiving was given for you, and the blood which you are drinking was shed for you for the remission of sins; and also in these words: "This cup is the New Testament in My blood." These words do not speak of some historical, cold, or idle memory, but of true faith, which lays hold of and applies to itself Christ with all His merits and benefits for reconciliation, salvation, and eternal life.

Martin Chemnitz, *The Lord's Supper*, trans. J. A. O. Preus, vol. 5:2 of *Chemnitz's Works* (St. Louis: Concordia, 2007), 38. Information in the following chart is drawn from pp 187–93.

The Marriage Feast of the Lamb

The promises [to the church at Pergamum] are phrased in language that recalls Baptism (the "new name" … Rev 2:17) and the Lord's Supper ("the manna which has been hidden"). In the Lord's Supper, Christians receive "a foretaste of the feast to come." That "feast to come" is the wedding supper of the Lamb (19:6–9). The Lord's Supper is *hidden* manna (2:17) because the future banquet is now hidden … not visible, but nevertheless real and as certain as Christ's own promise: "This is my body…. This is my blood" (Mt 26:26, 28)….

In Rev 19:9 [a] blessing is addressed to and realized only in those who are actually brought in and who then sit as guests at the feast. They are now the guests of honor at the marriage feast of the Lamb, for they are the bride of the Lord Christ. So while all who heard the gracious invitation of God were blessed in that they were recipients of the invitation, only the guests now ushered into the banquet hear the blessing and receive the contents of it: to sit in the presence of God as the bride of his Christ (cf. 3:21).

As the guests come forward to take their place by grace as the bride of Christ, the announced beatitude of God's blessing envelopes them and thrills their hearts. Perhaps the prophetic pronouncement of Isaiah momentarily came to the mind of John [Is 25:6–8; cf also Mt 8:11; Lk 13:28–30; Mt 22:1–14]…. Possibly also there would have come to mind the words that Jesus spoke at the Last Supper, "I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I will drink it anew with you in the kingdom of my Father" (Mt 26:29).

Louis A. Brighton, *Revelation*, CC (St. Louis: Concordia, 1999), 79, 499–500.

The Sacrament and the Church

If we desire to understand Luther's concern and the concern of the old Evangelical [Lutheran] Church to maintain the Sacrament of the Altar and keep it pure, then we must realize a fact which the majority of people in our church generally no longer understand: the fact, namely, that there would be no church at all without the Holy Supper. Where the church is, there the Supper is also celebrated; where the Supper is celebrated, there is the church. Where it is no longer celebrated, there the church dies. Our fathers knew this when in the great confessions of the Reformation they placed the Lord's Supper together with Holy Baptism immediately alongside the Gospel as an essential mark of the church which could not be surrendered.

Many people, also many Evangelical [Lutheran] Christians, no longer understand this at all today. But it must indeed give [one] much cause to consider that the experiences of the history of the church simply prove the Reformers correct. Can we conceive of the church at the time of the apostles without the breaking of the bread of the early congregation of Jerusalem, without the Lord's Supper of the Pauline congregations? Anyone who is familiar with the NT must answer no! A Sunday without the Supper, a Lord's Day without the Lord's Supper is inconceivable in the church of the NT. For the celebration of the Supper was the heartbeat of this church. In ancient times it was held behind closed doors, and this was not merely for fear of persecution. For all the rest of the Divine Service was public, accessible even to Jews and pagans, and this is the basic principle of the church even down to today. The preaching of the Gospel, according to the will of Jesus himself, should be public: "What I say to you in the dark, speak in the light; and what is whispered in your ear, preach from the roof tops!" [Matt 10:27]. "Go forth into all the world and preach the Gospel to all creatures!" [Mark 16:15]. The church has always allowed people to come to its Divine Service on the basis of these basic principles, upon which is based the right to the free, public proclamation of the Gospel, acknowledged by all peoples of Christianity. Even the civilized pagan states do not contest this.

But the Supper was never for all those present, rather for the baptized and later for the confirmed. Only one who believes in Christ can understand the

Supper. For everyone else it is necessarily inconceivable, senseless, and offensive. “Take, eat; this is my body…. Take and drink all of it: this cup is the new testament in my blood” [Matt 26:26–28]. What should the world say to such words? “He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day” [John 6:54]. “This is a hard saying. Who can hear it?” [John 6:60]. If many of the disciples spoke thus and left him forever, what shall the world say to these words? Are not the most foolish rumors which circulated in the ancient world understandable? According to these rumors the Christians in their secret Divine Services practiced cannibalism. In a similar way Frederick the Great, one of the least Christian great men of our people, ridiculed the Supper because there a man “should eat his God”! The church of all ages, misunderstood by the world, has always celebrated its Supper as it were “behind closed doors.” But it knew that at every celebration of the Supper what is written in the Revelation of St. John again became true: “Behold! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come dwell with him and sup with him and he with me” [Rev 3:20].

Hermann Sasse, *The Lonely Way* (St. Louis: Concordia, 2001), 1:480–81.

Christ in Revelation

In contrast to the Christology of the four gospels, that of Revelation presents Christ in glory. The gospels describe the life of Jesus on earth from his birth to his resurrection and ascension and thus present Christ in lowliness and humiliation, though their stories end with his entrance into his exalted glory. Where the gospels end, Revelation begins—at his ascension. It presents Christ in his state of exaltation (1:5, 13–20; 5:6–14) as Lord of lords and King of kings, from the time of his ascension until he comes again to judge the earth at the present world's end and to usher in the new creation.

The Christology of Revelation can be seen in the various roles Jesus Christ carries out in this prophetic message. He first appears to John in chapter 1 as the Son of Man (1:13). As such he is the mighty, exalted Lord of God's creation who will bring all history to an end when he comes in judgment of the human race (14:14; 19:11–21). As the Son of Man, Christ will be the Lord of the new creation, the new heaven and earth (3:14) under the authority of the Father and together with the heavenly Father (21:5–6; 22:13) and the Holy Spirit (22:17). And because Jesus Christ is the Son of Man, all creation will bow before him (1:5–7, 17; 19:11–16; cf. Phil 2:9–11).

In Revelation 5 Jesus Christ appears as the Lamb of God. Because of his victory by way of his death and resurrection, God's people have been redeemed and made into a kingdom for the heavenly Father (1:5–6; 5:10). It is by the blood of the Lamb that God's people are made righteous and holy in his sight and are thus presented to him for eternal life (7:14–17; 22:14). Because the Lamb of God won the victory for God's people over death and hell and over Satan, the dragon (12:5–12), Christ is honored and exalted as the Son of Man to rule all things in judgment and in life on behalf of the Father (5:6–14; 14:1–5, 14–20).

Another role that the exalted Christ plays in Revelation is that of the angel of Yahweh, the spokesman and Word [Gk *logos*] of God, for he is the mediator and witness of the message of Revelation. While he himself does not appear in the guise of an angel (as did Yahweh in the OT, e.g., Ex 3:1–6; Judg 13:3–22), he fulfills such a role by the use of an angel who is arrayed

in Christ's own heavenly glory and who acts on Christ's behalf, as vividly portrayed by the angel in Revelation 10. In such a role the Lord Christ presents himself to be "the angel of the covenant" ([Gk *ho angelos tes diathekes*], LXX Mal 3:1), who is the angel of Yahweh, the angel whom God promised to send to his people as prophesied in Mal 3:1.

The high Christology of Revelation is brought to a climax and is comprehensively summarized in Rev 22:13, where the three divine titles describing the eternal magnitude of the infinite God are applied to Jesus Christ. He is "the First and the Last," the Lord of the church; "the Beginning and the End" of all creation, and now also of the new creation; and "the Alpha and the Omega" of all eternity. Together with the Father, Jesus of Nazareth, born of a woman, is glorified and honored as God incarnate, through whom alone God deals with the human race in creation and in redemption, in judgment and in mercy. To him who reigns together with the Father and the Spirit be the glory, both now and forever, amen!

Louis A. Brighton, *Revelation*, CC (St. Louis: Concordia, 1999), 659–60.

Jesus' Human Nature

The Son of God is made a partaker of flesh and blood (Heb. 2:14), that He might also be called a man and might be a man (Acts 2:22); a human being (1 Tim. 2:5); the Son of Man, as He is called in several places in the gospels; the Son of David (Matt. 22:43 ff.); the Seed of Abraham (Gal. 3:16); the Seed of the woman (Gen. 3:15); a Rod and Shoot coming from and arising out of Jesse (Is. 11:1); the fruit of the body and loins of David (Ps. 132:11 and Acts 2:30); the Offspring of David (Rev. 22:16); and the Firstborn among many brothers (Rom. 8:29 and John 20:17). For He did not assume the seed of angels but of men. (Heb. 2:16)…. The Scripture teaches that Christ after the union possessed and retained a true human nature and that He rose in this same substance of the human nature which was conceived by the Holy Ghost and assumed from Mary before He experienced the resurrection. For He says in Luke 24:39: "It is I with My hands, My feet, My side, My flesh and bones…." And He ascended into heaven in this body and will return to judgment just as He was seen to ascend (Acts 1:11). Then they will see the body which they pierced at the Passion (John 19:37 and Rev. 1:7). After the judgment we shall always be with the Lord, who will come on clouds to judge (1 Thess. 4:17). And in the new Jerusalem (Rev. 21:23), in life eternal, the Lamb will be the light in whose brilliance they who have been saved will walk. There He is distinctly called the omnipotent God and the Lamb.

Martin Chemnitz, *Chemnitz's Works,* vol. 6, *The Two Natures in Christ*, trans. J. A. O. Preus (St. Louis: Concordia, 1971), 56, 64.

An Outline of Church History

Jesus Christ is the central figure in all history. The time before His birth was one of preparation for His coming; the time after it is one of planting and growth in His kingdom of grace. Christian history is the record of this planting and growth, which may be divided into three periods: ancient (1–590), medieval (590–1517), and modern (1517–present).[1] The names of Church Fathers cited in *TLSB* are arranged according to the dates of their deaths.

I. Ancient Church History (1–590)

1. Apostolic Era (1–c 100)
    - Jesus
    - The Apostles
2. Post-Apostolic Era (c 100–c 170)
    - Clement of Rome
    - Ignatius of Antioch
    - Polycarp
    - Justin Martyr
3. Ante-Nicene Era (c 170–325)
    - Melito of Sardis
    - Irenaeus of Lyons
    - Tertullian
    - Hippolytus
    - Cyprian
    - Novatian
    - Aphrahat
4. Post-Nicene Era (325–590)
    - Eusebius of Caesarea
    - Hilary of Poitiers
    - Athanasius
    - Ephraim Syrus
    - Basil the Great
    - Cyril of Jerusalem
    - Gregory of Nazianzus
    - Gregory of Nyssa
    - Ambrose
    - Tyconius
    - John Chrysostom
    - Sulpitius Severus
    - Jerome
    - Augustine
    - Cyril of Alexandria
    - Leo the Great

II. Medieval Church History (590–1517)

1. Early Medieval Era of Mission Expansion (590–c 1050)
    - Gregory the Great
    - Bede, the Venerable
    - John of Damascus
2. Crusading Era (c 1050–1294)
    - St Bernard of Clairvaux
    - St Francis of Assisi
3. Late Medieval Era of Popes and Councils (1294–1517)
    - Nicholas of Lyra
    - John Wycliffe
    - John Hus
    - Thomas à Kempis
    - Savonarola

III. Modern Church History (1517–present)

1. Reformation and Counter Reformation (1517–1600)
    - Martin Luther
    - Philip Melanchthon
    - Martin Chemnitz
2. Orthodox Era (17th century)
    - Johann Gerhard
    - Abraham Calov
3. Era of Pietism and Rationalism (18th century)
    - Johann Sebastian Bach
4. Era of Modernism and Confessionalism (19th century)
    - E. W. Hengstenberg
    - C. F. W. Walther
    - J. F. K. Keil
5. Ecumenical Era (20th century to present)
    - Hermann Sasse
    - Concordia Commentary authors

[1] The outline above was adapted from the *Lutheran Cyclopedia* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1954, 1975), pp 161–63.

Footnotes

Footnotes for Revelation, Chapter 1

- [1] 1:1 Greek *bondservants*
- [2] 1:1 Greek *bondservant*
- [3] 1:4 Or *mourn*

Footnotes for Revelation, Chapter 2

- [1] 2:9 Greek *blasphemy*
- [2] 2:13 Or *your faith in me*
- [1] 2:20 Greek *bondservants*

Footnotes for Revelation, Chapter 4

- [1] 4:5 Or *voices*, or *sounds*

Footnotes for Revelation, Chapter 6

- [1] 6:6 Greek *choinix*, a dry measure equal to about a quart
- [2] 6:6 A *denarius* was a day's wage for a laborer
- [1] 6:11 Greek *fellow bondservants*

- [2] 6:11 Or *brothers and sisters*. The plural Greek word *adelphoi* (translated "brothers") refers to siblings in a family. In New Testament usage, depending on the context, *adelphoi* may refer either to men or to both men and women who are siblings (brothers and sisters) in God's family, the church
- [3] 6:15 Or *servant*; Greek *bondservant*

Footnotes for Revelation, Chapter 7

- [4] 7:3 Greek *bondservants*

Footnotes for Revelation, Chapter 8

- [1] 8:5 Or *voices*, or *sounds*
- [2] 8:11 *Wormwood* is the name of a plant and of the bitter-tasting extract derived from it

Footnotes for Revelation, Chapter 9

- [3] 9:1 Greek *the abyss*; also verses 2, 11
- [1] 9:11 *Abaddon* means *destruction*; *Apollyon* means *destroyer*
- [2] 9:17 Greek *hyacinth*

Footnotes for Revelation, Chapter 10

- [1] 10:7 Greek *bondservants*

Footnotes for Revelation, Chapter 11

- [1] 11:7 Or *the abyss*
- [2] 11:8 Greek *spiritually*
- [1] 11:18 Greek *bondservants*
- [2] 11:19 Or *voices*, or *sounds*

Footnotes for Revelation, Chapter 12

- [1] 12:10 Or *brothers and sisters*
- [2] 12:17 Some manuscripts *And I stood*, connecting the sentence with 13:1

Footnotes for Revelation, Chapter 13

- [1] 13:6 Or *tabernacle*
- [2] 13:7 Some manuscripts omit this sentence
- [3] 13:12 Or *on its behalf*
- [4] 13:14 Or *on behalf of*
- [5] 13:16 Greek *bondservant*
- [1] 13:18 Some manuscripts *616*

Footnotes for Revelation, Chapter 14

- [2] 14:8 Or *wrath*

- [1] 14:12 Greek *and the faith of Jesus*
- [2] 14:20 About 184 miles; a *stadion* was about 607 feet or 185 meters

Footnotes for Revelation, Chapter 15

- [1] 15:3 Greek *bondservant*
- [2] 15:3 Some manuscripts *the ages*
- [3] 15:5 Or *tabernacle*

Footnotes for Revelation, Chapter 16

- [4] 16:5 Greek *angel of the waters*
- [5] 16:9 Greek *blasphemed*; also verses 11, 21
- [1] 16:18 Or *voices*, or *sounds*
- [2] 16:21 Greek *a talent in weight*

Footnotes for Revelation, Chapter 17

- [1] 17:6 Greek *the witnesses to Jesus*
- [2] 17:8 Greek *the abyss*
- [3] 17:15 Greek *he*

Footnotes for Revelation, Chapter 18

- [1] 18:3 Some manuscripts *fallen by*
- [1] 18:13 Or *and slaves, and human lives*

Footnotes for Revelation, Chapter 19

- [1] 19:2 Greek *bondservants*; also verse 5
- [2] 19:9 Greek *he said*
- [1] 19:10 Greek *fellow bondservant*
- [2] 19:13 Some manuscripts *sprinkled with*
- [3] 19:18 Greek *bondservant*
- [4] 19:20 Or *on its behalf*

Footnotes for Revelation, Chapter 20

- [1] 20:1 Greek *the abyss*; also verse 3
- [2] 20:9 Some manuscripts *from God, out of heaven*, or *out of heaven from God*

Footnotes for Revelation, Chapter 21

- [1] 21:3 Or *tabernacle*
- [2] 21:3 Some manuscripts *peoples*
- [3] 21:3 Some manuscripts omit *as their God*
- [1] 21:16 About 1,380 miles; a *stadion* was about 607 feet or 185 meters
- [2] 21:17 A *cubit* was about 18 inches or 45 centimeters

Footnotes for Revelation, Chapter 22

- [1] 22:1 Greek *he*

- [2] 22:2 Or *the Lamb. In the midst of the street of the city, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life*
- [3] 22:3 Greek *bondservants*; also verse 6
- [1] 22:9 Greek *fellow bondservant*
- [2] 22:14 Some manuscripts *do his commandments*
- [3] 22:21 Some manuscripts *all the saints*

Study Notes

REVELATION—NOTE ON 1:1 *revelation*. Gk *apokalypsis*; Eng "apocalypse." See "Apocalyptic," p 1395. In fact, another title for Rv is "the Apocalypse of John." The noun is singular, describing the entire Book as a unified revelation from and about Jesus. However, John also describes distinct experiences of what he "saw" (see notes, Ezk 1:1, 3, regarding the OT expression "vision"; cf Rv 9:17), which divides the Book into scenes. Understanding the relationship between these scenes is essential to understanding the Book. See outline, p 2198. *Jesus Christ*. See note, Php 2:11. *soon*. See note, Rv 1:3. *sending His angel*. See note, 22:6. *John*. Traditionally taken as the son of Zebedee (Mk 1:19–20). On authorship, see p 2196.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 1:2 *witness … testimony*. Both from Gk *martyria*. John testified in written form about the visions he beheld so his readers might benefit from the messages they communicate.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 1:3 *Blessed*. Gk *makarios*, "happy." First of seven beatitudes in Rv (cf 14:13; 16:15; 19:9; 20:6; 22:7, 14). Significantly, the number of beatitudes in this writing corresponds to the number of churches addressed in 2:1–3:22. See p 1901. The blessing attached to hearing this Book suggests that John wrote Rv to stand along with the rest of the Scriptures. See pp 2099–2101. *aloud*. In the ancient world, people typically read aloud, even when no audience was present (cf Ac 8:30). However, this verse's twin reference to "the one who reads" and to "those who hear" shows that Rv was meant to be read within the context of a worship service (cf Col 4:16; 1Th 5:27). *the time is near*. The Scriptures focus all of history on Christ. Through His death, resurrection, ascension, and sending of the Holy Spirit, God is completing His plan of salvation and the last days have begun (cf Ac 2:17). Thus, the end is always near, regardless of our reckoning of times and dates.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 1:1–3 As John begins relaying the prophetic word that God gives through him, he pronounces a blessing upon all who will listen and take to heart this revelation. Despite this promised blessing, however, people are resistant to hearing unsettling prophecies, let alone acting upon them by making changes in their lives. But take heart! Jesus Christ stands at the center of this and every other Scripture. His first

coming resulted in forgiveness and life for you, and His second coming will perfect the new creation. • Lord Jesus, lead me to read, hear, and keep the message You revealed through John, for it tells about my final hope, even life eternal in Your presence. Amen.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 1:4–5 John's greeting explicitly mentions the persons of the Holy Trinity. See notes, vv 4, 5; 4:8.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 1:4 *seven*. Throughout Scripture, the number seven symbolizes completeness (cf Gn 2:1–3; 7:2; Lv 4:6, 17; Rv 2:1; 6:1; 8:2; 15:7; see p 217). Accordingly, these seven churches may represent the whole Christian Church on earth and the challenges churches face. However, this does not mean these churches represent epochs of Church history. See note, chs 2–3. *churches that are in Asia*. John wrote a letter to each of these communities (2:1–3:22). *Him who is and who was and who is to come*. God the Father. This characterization stresses that God is eternal, without beginning or end. *seven spirits*. An unusual way of referring to the Holy Spirit (see note, Is 11:2).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 1:5 *the faithful witness*. Jesus, who fearlessly testified during His ministry and trial (cf Jn 5:36; see note, Rv 1:2). *firstborn of the dead*. See notes, 1Co 15:20–27; Col 1:18. *ruler of kings on earth*. Christ is the risen and ascended One, to whom all authority in heaven and on earth has been given (cf Mt 28:19; Eph 1:20–23). Jesus' heavenly coronation is depicted in Rv 5:1–14. See pp 1565–66.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 1:6 *a kingdom, priests*. Cf Ex 19:6. The Christian Church stands in continuity with God's OT people. See note, Rv 4:4. The Church exercises its priestly function by offering intercessory prayers and by proclaiming "the excellencies of Him who called [them] out of darkness into His marvelous light" (1Pt 2:9). Rv repeatedly depicts the saints sharing in Christ's rule (Rv 2:27; 3:21). See note, 5:10. Luth: "We have nothing from God except the pure Word, namely, that the Lord Jesus sits at the right hand of the Father and is the Judge of the living and the dead, and that through Him we are kings and priests (Rev. 1:6)…. Meanwhile we should believe and hope. For if one could see it now before one's eyes, there would be no need of faith" (AE 4:357). Hus: "That person, Christ, is everywhere present, since he is very God whose right it is to be everywhere without limitation. He is the bishop, who baptizes and takes away the sins of the world, John 1:29. He is the one who joins in marriage so that no man may put asunder … [Matt. 19:6]. He is the one who makes

us priests … [Rev. 1:6]. He performs the sacrament of the eucharist … [Luke 22:19]. This is he who confirms his faithful ones … [Luke 21:15]" (*The Church*, p 120).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 1:7 *every eye will see Him*. Refers to Christ's second coming on the Last Day. Note that Jesus' suffering, death, resurrection, ascension, sitting at God's right hand, and returning to judge are all mentioned in vv 5–7. *pierced Him*. See note, Zec 12:10.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 1:8 *Alpha and the Omega*. First and last letters of Gk alphabet. As such, this title underlines God's eternal nature. It should be noted that both here and at 21:6, this title is applied to God the Father, while at 22:13 it is applied to Jesus. This demonstrates Jesus' eternal divinity. See note, Jn 1:1. *the Almighty*. Because Rv reserves this title for the Father (4:8; 11:17; 15:3; 16:7, 14; 19:6, 15; 21:22), it stands in contrast with "the Alpha and the Omega" designation, which is applied to both Father and Son. See p 1227. Luth: "We are not the ones who can preserve the church, nor were our forefathers able to do so. Nor will our successors have this power. No, it was, is, and will be he who says, 'I am with you always, to the close of the age.' As it says in Hebrews 13 [:8], 'Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today, and forever,' and in Revelation 1 [:8], 'He who is and who was and who is to come' " (AE 47:118).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 1:4–8 John praises the one true God—the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—while simultaneously clarifying the identity of God's people: they are the "kingdom" and "priests" for whom He will soon come. Given our continual failure to live up to such a high calling, we need to hear again and again the truth of our identity in Christ. When the Gospel of God's grace is preached, the Church may speak a hearty "Amen" in its conviction that Jesus will return and then perfect our redemption. • Lord, You promise to return soon and transform us perfectly into Your image. Amen! Come, Lord Jesus!

REVELATION—NOTE ON 1:9–3:22 The first scene of John's vision is the Son of Man and the letters He dictates to the seven churches. See outline, p 2198.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 1:9 *the tribulation … in Jesus*. John was suffering persecution when he wrote this Book, as were many other Christians at that time. In fact, John wrote Rv while exiled. See "Authorship and Date," p 2196. *Patmos*. An island in the Aegean Sea, off the coast of the ancient province of Asia (modern Turkey). See map, p 2197. It is not far

from the seven cities of v 11. The imperial authority had exiled John to this island.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 1:10 *in the Spirit*. Because of the Spirit's role in his visions, John's message was as inspired and authoritative as those of the OT prophets. See note, v 3. *the Lord's day*. Sunday. Already by the late first century, Christians were worshiping on the first day of the week, in honor of Christ's resurrection from the dead. It is possible that John received his heavenly visions during a worship service. That would be most fitting, since heaven and earth are united in a unique way during Christian worship (see notes, v 3; 5:9). "Because it was necessary to appoint a certain day for the people to know when they ought to come together, it appears that the Church designated the Lord's Day [Revelation 1:10] for this purpose" (AC XXVIII 60).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 1:11 *seven churches*. See note, v 4.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 1:12 *see the voice*. A curious expression, since one cannot really "see" a voice. John stresses the mystery and majesty of the One appearing to him. *lampstands*. These represent the seven churches. Such symbolism accords well with Mt 5:14–16.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 1:13–15 *a son of man*. Favorite self-designation of Jesus during His earthly ministry. See p 2098. *hairs … white … fire … many waters*. Cf Dn 7:9–14, which describes the "ancient of days"; here the "Son of Man" is so depicted. Note that this is another way that John portrays the exalted Christ as co-equal with the Father (see notes, Rv 1:8; 22:13).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 1:16 *stars*. The angels assigned to guard the seven churches. The fact that Jesus held these seven stars in His hand means that He plays an active part in protecting and caring for His people. *sword*. Represents the Word of Christ, who rules in His Church by means of His Word.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 1:17 *fell at His feet*. An act of worship and response to Jesus' awesome appearance. Jesus is fully divine and worship is rightly directed toward Him (cf 19:10; 22:8–9). *the first and the last*. More or less synonymous with "the Alpha and the Omega" title of v 8; 21:6; 22:13.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 1:18 *the living one*. Refers not merely to Jesus' resurrection, but also to His capacity to impart eternal life to others (cf Jn 11:25–26).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 1:19 John's visions were divinely given and must be relayed to the Church. See notes, vv 3, 10.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 1:20 *stars are the angels*. See note, v 16.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 1:9–20 John describes his awesome vision of the risen and exalted Christ. Jesus is such an imposing figure that John instinctively falls down before Him, trembling with fear. We would surely react the same way in His presence. But Jesus is not merely about overwhelming power and glory. He was made like us in every way except without sin. Having overcome death and the grave, He now promises to share His eternal life and glory with us. • "Oh come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker! For He is our God, and we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand" (Ps 95:6–7). Amen.
REVELATION—NOTE ON **Chs 2–3** Seven letters, each one addressed to the churches listed in 1:11. Every letter conforms to a similar pattern: (1) Jesus addresses the congregation; (2) Jesus introduces Himself as the speaker and is identified with significant titles; (3) Jesus affirms what is good and right with that church; (4) Jesus rebukes the congregants for what they lack; (5) Jesus issues a call to repentance; (6) Jesus promises blessing to "the one who conquers"; (7) Jesus gives an exhortation to "hear what the Spirit says." The letters present Jesus as guardian and protector of His people. Jesus similarly identifies Himself with titles from the opening chapter in each of these seven letters. On the format of early Christian letters, see pp 1899–1901.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 2:1 *angel of the church*. Since Gk *angelos* lit means "messenger," this likely describes the pastor of the congregation. *Ephesus*. See map, p 2197. *seven stars*. See note, 1:16. *seven golden lampstands*. See note, 1:12. That Jesus walks among them signifies His abiding presence among His people on earth.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 2:2 *apostles … false*. Pseudo-apostles offered counterfeit versions of the Christian faith (cf 2Co 11:4–5, 12–15; Gal 1:6–9). The Epistles of John warn against "docetic" teachings, i.e., the denial that the Son of God truly assumed human flesh (2Jn 7–8).
REVELATION—NOTE ON 2:3 *enduring*. Or, "persevering."
REVELATION—NOTE ON 2:4 *the love*. John's Letters show a similar concern for Jesus' command to love one another as He has loved us (Jn

13:34–35; cf 1Jn 4:7–12; 2Jn 4–6). The Lord warned against brotherly love growing cold in the chaos of the end times (Mt 24:12).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 2:5 *works you did at first*. The NT contains many exhortations for the faithful to remain zealous for good works until the day of Christ's appearing (cf Ti 2:11–14).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 2:6 *hate*. A strong but appropriate word, given the destructive nature of the false teaching involved. See notes, Ps 5:5; 1Jn 2:9–11. *Nicolaitans*. Comparison with Rv 2:14–15, as well as reports from Early Church fathers, suggests that the Nicolaitans indulged in meat offered to pagan gods and engaged in sexual immorality. Similar problems plagued the Corinthian Church (cf 1Co 6:12–20; 8:1–13; 10:6–30). If, as the Church fathers Irenaeus and Clement claimed, this sect was named for the Nicolaus mentioned in Ac 6:5, then one encounters here a striking fall from grace.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 2:7 *He who has an ear*. Exhortation found in many prophetic passages, including Jesus' own teaching (cf Mt 13:9). A modern equivalent might be "a word to the wise." See note, Mt 11:15. *paradise of God*. Cf Gn 1–2. Had Adam and Eve avoided sin, they would have forever lived in holiness and continually eaten from the tree of life. John's final vision depicts the Lord bringing a renewed heaven and earth and restoring access to the tree of life (Rv 21:1–4; 22:1–5).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 2:1–7 Jesus encourages the Ephesian believers to avoid false teachers, return to their first love, and be zealous for good works. Such admonitions continue to apply today, even as moral relativism and watered-down doctrine abound. Yet Jesus helps us overcome all these things. Not even death and hell could defeat Him! • "Praise, Lord, for Your apostles … May we with zeal as earnest The faith of Christ maintain, Be bound in love together, And life eternal gain." Amen. (*LSB* 518:28)

REVELATION—NOTE ON 2:8 *angel*. See note, v 1. *Smyrna*. See map, p 2197.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 2:9 *slander*. The first Christians repeatedly suffered hardship when unbelieving Jews slandered them and turned public opinion against them (cf Ac 13:42–50; 14:1–7, 19). Believers frequently had to defend themselves before government officials (cf Ac 17:1–9; 18:5–17). *synagogue of Satan*. Such hostile unbelief is ultimately inspired by Satan. On synagogues, see p 1557.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 2:10 *tested*. Gk *peirazo*, "test" and "tempt." On the one hand, Satan tempts us to become faithless. On the other hand, the Lord also allows us to be tested (cf Jb 1–2; see note, Gn 22:1). But God never tempts anyone to sin (Jas 1:13). *ten days*. Probably symbolizes a short time, like the 10-day period of testing in Dn 1:12, 14.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 2:11 *second death*. Eternal separation from God, which is to be distinguished from physical death (see notes, 20:6; 2Th 1:9). See also note, Jn 5:24.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 2:8–11 Jesus promises the Church at Smyrna the crown of eternal life if it would faithfully endure the persecution it was suffering. In many parts of the world, the Church is still undergoing persecutions today. And then there are Christians who complain about being inconvenienced for their faith! In either case, what matters is the surpassing greatness of the crown that Jesus will bestow on those who remain true. • " 'Come unto Me, ye weary, And I will give you rest.' O blessed voice of Jesus, Which comes to hearts oppressed! It tells of benediction, Of pardon, grace, and peace, Of joy that hath no ending, Of love that cannot cease." Amen. (*LSB* 684:1)
REVELATION—NOTE ON 2:12 *angel*. See note, v 1. *Pergamum*. See map, p 2197. *sword*. See note, 1:16.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 2:13 *Satan's throne*. Likely refers to Pergamum's reputation as home to numerous pagan shrines. Additionally, worship of the emperor flourished there. This detail is important, since the Christians' refusal to offer Caesar divine honors was the root cause of so much persecution. Hus: "[Christ's] seat in which he reposes, dwells and resides by grace is all the saints, just as, on the other hand, the seats of Satan in which Satan reposes, dwells and resides are all the wicked" (*The Church*, p 198). *Antipas*. Mentioned only here in the Bible, Antipas had apparently been martyred. Remarkably, for all of the emphasis on persecution in Rv, Antipas is the only named martyr.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 2:14 Alludes to the shameful incident related in Nu 25:1–9. Henceforth, the name of Balaam was synonymous with the most depraved forms of idolatrous worship (i.e., those involving sexual immorality). See note, 2Pt 2:15.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 2:15 *Nicolaitans*. See note, v 6.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 2:16 *war against them with the sword*. Warns that if Christians turn away from Christ, His righteous anger and unsparing

judgment will fall upon them on the Last Day. See note, Heb 6:6.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 2:17 *hidden manna*. Jewish tradition held that manna would again be given to the faithful at the Messiah's appearance during the final days. Christian interpreters naturally associate this reference with Holy Communion. Cf Jn 6. *white stone*. In the ancient world, special pebbles were sometimes used as admission tickets to banquets. *new name*. Likely the saving name of Jesus (Ac 4:12).
REVELATION—NOTE ON 2:12–17 Jesus urges the congregation in Pergamum to repent of the pagan practices into which they were slipping and to follow the example of one who stood fast, even to the point of death. Sadly, compromising the Gospel and committing sexual sins remain problems today. Yet, Jesus offers us repentance and forgiveness also. He even prepares for us a seat at the messianic banquet that never ends. • Lord, I thank You for the godly example of those that surrendered their lives rather than deny Your name. Give me a similar unwavering faith, that I may ever hold fast Your name. Amen.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 2:18 *angel*. See note, v 1. *Thyatira*. See map, p 2197.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 2:19 *latter works exceed the first*. In contrast to the Ephesians, whose faith and good works were beginning to wane (v 4), the congregation at Thyatira was increasing in works and faithfulness.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 2:20 *Jezebel*. Just as Jezebel led Israel into the worship of false deities (1Ki 18:4; 2Ki 9:22), so this new false prophetess was leading the community in Thyatira into heresy and vice. *prophetess*. See p 389.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 2:21 This Jezebel has been warned but refuses to repent.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 2:22 Jezebel's bed—for the moment a place of pleasure—will become a place of suffering when both she and her partners are overcome with tribulations.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 2:23 *strike her children dead*. Jezebel and her consorts will be punished severely for their idolatry and immorality, and all the more because they ignored repeated calls to repentance. *works*. See note, 22:12.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 2:24 *deep things of Satan*. Jezebel and her followers doubtless acted like the wayward people in Corinth. They ate

meat sacrificed to idols and committed sexual immorality, while claiming to be more deeply spiritual than ordinary believers (cf 1Co 8–10).
REVELATION—NOTE ON 2:25–26 Only those remaining faithful unto the end will see heavenly glory (cf Mt 25:1–13).
REVELATION—NOTE ON 2:27 *rod of iron*. Imagery from Ps 2:8–9, a messianic passage. There, however, the Messiah is depicted crushing the disobedient nations. Here, it is His people that do so. Thus, this passage emphasizes that Christians will share in Christ's heavenly reign (cf 2Tm 2:12; Rv 5:10; 20:4, 6).
REVELATION—NOTE ON 2:28 In Jewish tradition, the Messiah was associated with the appearance of a star (cf Mt 2:1–12). See note, Nu 24:17. Rv 22:16 explicitly identifies Jesus as the morning star.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 2:29 See note, v 7.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 2:18–29 Just as Jesus warned the Ephesians, so He also admonished the Thyatirans. They must avoid idolatrous worship and sexual immorality. We, too, must remain vigilant against such failures and repent of the times we have fallen short. By God's grace, we remain faithful to the Word of Christ and so share with Him in ruling His eternal kingdom. • Deliver us, dear Savior, from the deceptive doctrines and practices of this present age and prepare us for the age to come. Amen.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 3:1 *angel*. See note, 2:1. *Sardis*. See map, p 2197. *seven stars*. See note, 1:16. *you are dead*. Although this church had a good reputation, its people actually had little or no true faith. Accordingly, this congregation needed the Holy Spirit, here symbolized by the seven spirits (see note, 1:4), in order to revive it.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 3:2 *is about to die*. Unless the Christians in Sardis heeded Jesus' exhortations and woke up, the little bit of spiritual life they still had left would expire. *not found your works complete*. The congregation failed to follow through on the faith and service it professed.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 3:3 Jesus' parables (Mt 25:1–12; Mk 13:32–37) and Paul's Letters (1Th 5:4–8) contain similar commands to wakefulness and vigilance.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 3:4 *walk with Me in white*. In Rv, white garments often serve as a symbol for Christian righteousness, which is bestowed through Christ and Baptism into His name (cf 7:13–14). Paul

similarly describes Baptism as having "put off" the old man and "put on" Christ (cf Gal 3:27; Col 3:9–10).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 3:5 *book of life*. Symbol for eternal life that appears throughout Rv. In 21:27, those written in the book enter the holy city (21:2), which comes down from the new heaven to the new earth.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 3:6 See note, 2:7.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 3:1–6 Jesus exhorts the congregation at Sardis to wakefulness and renewed vigor. All Christians need to remain similarly watchful, for we, too, easily lapse into spiritual lethargy and even death—even while having the reputation of being strong. Sustained by the Word and Sacrament, however, we can remain healthy even unto life everlasting. • Alleluia! "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life." Alleluia! (Jn 6:68; *LSB*, p 173)

REVELATION—NOTE ON 3:7 *angel*. See note, 2:1. *Philadelphia*. See map, p 2197. *holy one … true*. Adjectives emphasizing Christ's trustworthiness and ability to deliver on all the promises made in this Book. *holy*. See p 1902. *who has the key of David*. Stresses that Jesus is of the messianic line (cf 2Sm 7:8–16; Lk 2:4). The key symbolizes Jesus' authority to allow people into heaven or exclude them (see note, Is 22:22). He has entrusted this authority to His Church on earth (Mt 18:18; Jn 20:22–23).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 3:8 *open door*. Symbolizes the Gospel invitation. Those who believe in Jesus enter into eternal life through their faith in Him (cf v 20).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 3:9 *are Jews and are not, but lie*. See notes, 2:9; Rm 9:6. *bow down*. The Lord promises to vindicate the Philadelphians' faithfulness by forcing their oppressors to bow down before their feet. This may imply that some will come to saving faith. Be that as it may, all will be compelled at the Last Day to acknowledge that Christians are the true people of God (cf Php 2:10–11).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 3:10 *trial that is coming*. Refers to the "messianic woes" leading up to the end, as predicted in Mt 24:3–28.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 3:11 *crown*. Symbol of eternal life.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 3:12 *a pillar in the temple*. Symbol of a secure place in God's presence. Ancient Philadelphia suffered recurring earthquakes. As such, this "unshakeable pillar" imagery would have had

special meaning to the original readers. *new Jerusalem*. Symbolizes God's final restoration of all creation (see notes, 21:1–2).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 3:13 See note, 2:7.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 3:7–13 Jesus assures the struggling Church in Philadelphia that their faithfulness to Him will be fully vindicated and rewarded. Outside the Church, and sadly sometimes even within it, there is a tendency to look down on those with little power. But the Lord sees things differently. He looks for faithfulness rather than power, and He gives unsurpassed strength—even over death itself—to those who trust in Him. • "Lord, keep us steadfast in Your Word … Though life be wrenched away, They cannot win the day. The Kingdom's ours forever!" Amen. (*LSB* 655:1; 657:4).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 3:14 *angel*. See note, 2:1. *Laodicea*. See map, p 2197. *the beginning of God's creation*. Synonymous with "the source of God's creation." Emphasizes that "all things were made through [Jesus]" (Jn 1:2–3). See p 1012.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 3:15 *neither cold nor hot*. Though the Church at Laodicea may have looked good enough outwardly, it had grown self-satisfied and thus indifferent to growing in faith and spreading the Word.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 3:16 *I will spit you out*. Given this church's severe stagnation, it needed to be shaken up.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 3:17 *I am rich*. A Laodicean's material abundance made it easy for him to imagine that he had little need for spiritual things. Luth: "He is wretched because he does not have mercy himself, and miserable because he cannot have mercy on others either, but is only miserable. But the Lord is neither wretched nor miserable, indeed, pitying the wretched and making the miserable one able to have mercy on others, so that He is not only rich toward His own, but also abounding, causing them also to make others rich" (AE 11:379). *naked*. Image contrasts with the clean white garments mentioned in vv 4–5, 18.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 3:18 True spiritual riches come from an active faith, one that is purified by the fires of trial and persecution (1Pt 1:6–7). *clothe yourself*. See notes, vv 4, 17; 7:14.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 3:19 The Scriptures repeatedly invite Christians to view hardships as means by which the Lord disciplines and brings them to greater maturity. See note, Heb 12:7.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 3:20 *the door*. See note, v 8. In this particular case, the image of Christ standing and knocking at the door may be related to the parable about the servants whose master is at a wedding feast (Lk 12:35–40). They are expected to be ready and waiting for him when he appears, with the promise that those servants whom he finds ready will be blessed. *I will come … eat with him*. Best understood as referring to both the Church's weekly celebrations of the Eucharist and the eternal, messianic banquet in heaven (Is 25:6–9). Luth: "The righteous always act (in fear) as if the Lord saw them. But the ungodly walk along smugly, as if God had His eyelids closed and did not see them, even though He examines them, too, and knocks, warning their conscience, as Rev. 3:20 says" (AE 10:99). "Hasten as a bride to meet Him, And with loving rev'rence greet Him. For with words of life immortal He is knocking at your portal. Open wide the gates before Him, Saying, as you there adore Him: Grant, Lord, that I now receive You, That I nevermore will leave You. He who craves a precious treasure Neither cost nor pain will measure; But the priceless gifts of heaven God to us has freely given. Though the wealth of earth were proffered, None could buy the gifts here offered: Christ's true body, for you riven, And His blood, for you once given." Amen. (*LSB* 636:2–3)

REVELATION—NOTE ON 3:21 Jesus pictures Himself sharing a throne with His Father. In this connection, it is worth noting that double thrones did indeed exist in the ancient world. Jesus' promise that His people will sit down beside Him and His Father is another way of saying that they will share in His reign (cf 2:27, 20:6).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 3:22 See note, 2:7.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 3:14–22 Jesus rebukes the Laodicean Church for growing self-satisfied and indifferent to the faith. Becoming complacent and self-satisfied about our Christian walk can be as destructive as outright hostility and persecution. Despite this common failing, Christ still comes to us in His Word and Sacrament, granting repentance and forgiveness. He calls us to follow Him into life everlasting. • "O mighty Rock, O Source of life, Let Your dear Word, in doubt and strife, In us be strongly burning That we be faithful unto death And live in love and holy faith, From You true wisdom learning." Amen. (*LSB* 913:3)

REVELATION—NOTE ON **Chs 4–5** The second scene of John's vision gives a glimpse into the heavenly realities. This scene includes the ascension/coronation of Christ at the right hand of the heavenly Father. It

shows that the overall purpose of Rv is to comfort the Church as it faces persecution and awaits Christ's return. It is the heart of the revelation.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 4:1 *door standing open*. Symbolizes John's being granted access into God's heavenly throne room. Along with the expression "in the Spirit" (v 2), this makes clear that John is experiencing a divinely given vision. On the false interpretation that this refers to a "rapture," see pp 2197–98. *open in heaven!* Transitions between scenes and visions often, though not necessarily, refer to sights or openings in heaven, from which the visions appear (cf 8:1–2; 12:1; 15:1; 19:11; 20:1; see note, Mt 3:16). *first voice*. The exalted Christ, first heard in Rv 1:10, speaks again.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 4:2 *in the Spirit*. The Holy Spirit's work is to reveal God's Word (cf Jn 14:26; 16:12–13; 2Pt 1:21; see note, Rv 1:10).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 4:3 Precious gems highlight the splendor of the divine presence. Just as the breastpiece of the OT high priest was similarly adorned (Ex 28:17–20; 39:10–14), so this description also depicts holiness.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 4:4 *twenty-four thrones … elders*. Representatives of the 12 tribes of Israel plus the 12 apostles of Jesus. Together, they represent all God's people from both OT and NT times. See "elder," p 228.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 4:5 *seven torches … seven spirits of God*. See note, 1:4.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 4:6–7 *sea*. Normally, the sea is a symbol of chaos and evil (cf 13:1; see note, 21:1). Here, however, the sea is portrayed as tame and beautiful, thus non-threatening. *four living creatures*. These angelic creatures with both human and animal features are probably cherubim, since Ezekiel similarly describes such living creatures (cf Ezk 1:4–28; 10:1–8; see note, Ezk 10:1; see also p 1323).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 4:8 *eyes*. Symbolizes the unending vigilance of the "watchers." See note, Ezk 1:18–21. *they never cease*. In heaven, God's praise never ends. Even now it is ongoing. *Holy, holy, holy*. Echoes the worship Isaiah beheld in the heavenly temple. This threefold acclamation points to the three persons in the Holy Trinity (see note, Rv 1:4–5). This vision of heavenly worship is the basis for the Sanctus of the Communion liturgy.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 4:9 *whenever*. Implies ongoing, rather than sporadic, activity.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 4:10 *fall down*. Lying prostrate before someone was a common posture for worship in the ancient world (cf 19:10; 22:8–9; see p 1276).
REVELATION—NOTE ON 4:11 *Worthy*. Here, the One on the throne is praised for creating all things. Later, the triune God will be praised in similar terms for Christ's redemptive work (5:9–13). Creation is one of "the chief articles of our Christian faith" (FC SD I 34).
REVELATION—NOTE ON **Ch 4** John describes the heavenly worship he saw in the Lord's throne room, where all the saints and angels adore the Lord. Regular worship is a serious matter, required by one of the Ten Commandments and described as the activity of heaven. Sadly, many people do not even feel a twinge of conscience while skipping divine services. Even while present, they may fail to focus on the promised blessing in such services. Yet, Jesus continues to call us back to His presence. In fact, His forgiveness and promise of eternal life is the first order of business in the Divine Service. • Lord, move us to love the habitation of Your house and the place where Your glory dwells, for therein we receive Your gifts of life and salvation. Amen.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 5:1 *scroll*. Symbolizes God's plan of salvation. *written within and on the back*. Implies that God's plan is comprehensive and complete.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 5:2–4 *strong angel*. Though John does not explicitly say so, it is likely that this angel is of a different rank from the living creatures described in 4:6–7. Different angels fulfill a variety of functions in Rv (cf 1:20; 4:6–7; 7:1; 9:15; 20:1). *worthy*. Gk *axios*, "deserving, fit." See note, 4:11. *no one was found worthy*. Emphasizes Christ's uniqueness, since He alone is worthy (v 5). Because of His sacrificial death and glorious resurrection, He alone is fit to reveal and bring to fulfillment God's great plan of redemption and renewal.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 5:5 *the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David*. Messianic titles (cf Gn 49:8–12).
REVELATION—NOTE ON 5:6 *between the throne and the four living creatures*. Jesus previously said that He shares a throne with His Father (see note, 3:21). Here, however, He is described as standing before God's throne. Accordingly, many interpreters understand this scene as involving a

coronation or investiture of authority. One may see here a glimpse of what occurred in heaven at Christ's ascension. See note, Eph 1:20. *Lamb … slain*. Recalls not only that Jesus is "the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" (Jn 1:29) but also His resurrection. *seven spirits of God*. See note, Rv 1:4.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 5:7 *took the scroll*. Investing Him as the glorified Son of Man (see note, v 6).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 5:8 *fell down*. By its reaction, the heavenly court affirms that the glorified Lord Jesus is worthy to be installed into His new capacity (see notes, 4:10, 11). *incense … prayers of the saints*. See notes, Ex 30:1, 7–8; Ps 141:2.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 5:9 *sang*. Christians throughout the ages have joined in the celestial singing described here (see note, 4:8). In our generation, numerous Lutheran hymnals have a musical setting that includes the very words of this canticle (e.g., "This Is the Feast," *LSB*, 155). *Worthy*. See notes, 4:11; 5:2–4.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 5:10 *kingdom and priests … shall reign*. See notes, 1:6; 2:27; 3:21. Luth: "All Christians are priests in equal degree" (AE 40:21).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 5:11 *myriads*. A myriad is ten thousand. Thus, the angels number in the millions. See note, Dn 7:10.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 5:12 *Worthy is the Lamb … to receive*. Christ deserves the wealth of all honor, embodied here in seven aspects symbolizing fullness (see note, 1:4). Because John records the very words of the angelic worship, the earthly Church is able to join in "with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven" (*LSB Altar Book*, p 161).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 5:13 Depicts the fulfillment of the prophecy that "at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth" (Php 2:10).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 5:14 Except for the One on the throne (the Father; v 1) and the sevenfold Spirit (v 6), everyone in heaven and earth is worshiping Jesus.

REVELATION—NOTE ON **Ch 5** The character of heavenly worship powerfully underscores the glory of Christ's redeeming work. Apart from Him, our fallen world has no hope. However, because Jesus was slain and then conquered death, His people are ransomed and have the hope of glory.

• "Worthy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us free to be

people of God…. Blessing, honor, glory and might be to God and the Lamb forever." Amen. (*LSB*, p 155)

REVELATION—NOTE ON 6:1–8:5 The first scene of the end times: Christ opening the seven seals. See outline, p 2198. As each seal is broken, a calamity of the sort Jesus had predicted is unleashed (Mt 24:3–28). On the use of seals, see note, Jer 32:10.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 6:1 *seven seals*. Introduced at 5:1.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 6:2 *a white horse!* Though many are tempted to take the figure on this horse as Christ, this is unlikely. Granted, there is another figure on a white horse named "The Word of God" appearing in 19:11–13. Within ch 6, there are four horsemen described, and every one wreaks havoc. Moreover, Jesus already appears in this scene as the one breaking open the seals. Accordingly, the rider on this white horse should be taken as a symbol of mankind's insatiable hunger for power and its penchant for aggression.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 6:3 *He opened*. The Lamb (Christ) is opening the seals (v 1).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 6:4 *another horse, bright red*. This horse is the same color as a bloodthirsty dragon that later appears (12:3). This rider represents the toll of violence, esp that which is undertaken in the name of conquest (see note, v 2).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 6:5 *black horse!* The rider of this horse will bring famine upon the earth. *scales in his hand*. Ezekiel had warned that the Babylonians would destroy Jerusalem's food supply and then the Israelites would "eat bread by weight and with anxiety, and … drink water by measure and in dismay" (Ezk 4:16).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 6:6 *wheat for a denarius … barley*. The cost given here for grain is quite high, since a denarius represented a full day's wage. *do not harm the oil and wine!* The prices of these commodities are comparatively less affected by the famine. This at first seems strange, since wine and olive oil are typically more valuable than grain. Yet this depiction makes sense if one considers that wine and oil were produced throughout most of the Greco-Roman world (including Asia Minor, where John wrote), while vast areas of the empire were dependent upon imported grain.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 6:8 *pale horse!* The fourth rider personifies Death. Hades follows, since the latter is the abode of the dead. *they were given authority*. God not only knows about this scourge beforehand, but

indeed allows it. Although some may judge this as out of character for a gracious God, Christians nonetheless believe that the Lord has reasons for allowing tragedies to afflict the world. See p 837; see also Luth at note, 9:11. *over a fourth of the earth*. Extensive, but still only the beginning. By 8:9–12 and 9:15, the end-times calamities have intensified to the point of destroying a third of the earth. By 16:1–4, calamities cover the globe. *kill with … wild beasts*. A violent death particularly associated with the early Christians and among the torments inflicted by Nero.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 6:9 *the altar*. Place of sacrifice throughout the OT. Note the rich symbolism—the martyrs are those who offer their very selves in sacrifice to the Lord. *those who had been slain*. Best taken as referring to the martyrs of all ages. By the time this prophecy was written in the first century, relatively few Christians had been martyred in comparison with the carnage that was to come during regional and imperial persecutions.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 6:10 These souls cry out to God just like the blood of Abel, the prototypical innocent sufferer (Gn 4:10). Not even a privileged position within the heavenly temple keeps the martyrs from fervently seeking retribution. See p 879. "The angels in heaven pray for us, as does Christ Himself (Romans 8:34). So do the saints on earth and perhaps also in heaven (Revelation 6:9–10). It does not follow, though, that we should invoke and adore the angels and saints (Revelation 22:8–9)" (SA II II 26). Luth: "We must look, as He does, upon the total number [of martyrs], which is not yet complete, but is daily in the process of being completed, until we have all been brought together. Meanwhile we must comfort ourselves that we have this King seated as our Lord, who has already subdued many of these enemies under His feet and continues to overthrow one after another. Ultimately He will destroy them all at once. And though we die, oppressed and trampled by them, as it appears, we have the comfort that He will not forget us but fetch us when His time comes, and seat us above, so that they must forever lie under our feet" (AE 13:260).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 6:11 *white robe*. The white robe mentioned in 3:4 is more closely associated with the Christian righteousness bestowed through Baptism. Here, it seems to represent eternal life. That said, Baptism into Christ Jesus results in "newness of life" through the power of His resurrection (Rm 6:4). *the number … complete*. God in effect asks the

martyrs to continue waiting patiently while He gathers all the elect. We are in a similar situation, awaiting His return.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 6:12 *earthquake … sun … moon*. Terrestrial upheavals and celestial disturbances fulfill Jesus' prophecies about the end times. *sackcloth*. Symbol of mourning and repentance, often worn by those covering themselves with ashes (cf Mt 11:21; see note, Jb 16:15).
REVELATION—NOTE ON 6:13 *winter fruit*. On the seasons for figs, see note, Mk 11:13. *shaken by a gale*. Emphasizes how insignificant even the majestic heavenly bodies are when compared to the power of God's judgment.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 6:14 *sky … rolled up*. Cf Is 34:4. Depicts the firmament itself disappearing. *every mountain and island was removed*. The earth likewise will dissolve on this fearsome day.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 6:15 *hid themselves in the caves*. Cf Is 2:10. Plainly, this day will bring dread to all who witness it.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 6:16 *Fall on us*. Evokes the reaction of Israel, as that nation was experiencing divine judgment. On that day, the people will prefer to be caught in an avalanche rather than come face-to-face with divine judgment. Cf Nu 16.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 6:17 *who can stand?* Rhetorical question that expects the answer "No one!" (cf Ps 130:3).

REVELATION—NOTE ON **Ch 6** John describes in symbolic language the calamities God will unleash upon the earth in the end times. The ferocity and totality of these predicted calamities move reflective people to shudder and repent. When people sincerely turn to God, the Lamb who has taken away the sins of the world stands ready to forgive them and restore them. His second coming is for the final deliverance of His people, not their destruction. • Give us strength to endure the end-times upheavals, gracious Father, so that by faith we persevere and then enter into eternal life with Christ, our Redeemer. Amen.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 7:1 This vision continues the previous one, though the focus now shifts from cosmic upheaval and judgment to the salvation of God's elect. *angels … holding back*. See note, 5:2–4. The reason that these four angels hold back the destructive winds is given in v 3. *four corners … winds*. See p 217.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 7:2 *seal*. Signifies ownership, as becomes clearer below (see notes, Jer 32:10; Eph 1:13). *given power to harm*. This

curious reference to angels doing harm is likely related to one of Jesus' parables. Cf Mt 13:41–42.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 7:3 *sealed . . foreheads*. Cf Ezk 9:4–5, where the Lord commands men to pass through Jerusalem and put a mark on foreheads. Subsequently, those not bearing this mark were struck without mercy, while those who had it were spared. Already by the first centuries, making the sign of the cross upon the forehead reminded the baptized person that Christ redeemed him. Paul also refers to Baptism as a "seal" in his writings (cf 2Co 1:22; Eph 1:13, 4:30)

REVELATION—NOTE ON 7:4–8 *144,000*. Some incorrectly interpret this number literally as though a tiny fraction of humankind—only 144,000—will receive the deliverance described here. Instead, this number ought to be taken symbolically like others in Rv (i.e., as signifying the full number of believers from every time and place. See p 217). *Israel*. Refers to the true Israel, as defined in Rm 9:8. All true believers from both before and after Christ are members of the 144,000. *12,000 from the tribe*. Differs from all OT lists of Israelite tribes, perhaps signaling its symbolic character. E.g., it begins with Judah, the tribe of the Messiah. Joseph and his son Manasseh are included separately. However, Joseph's other son Ephraim is missing, though the tribe was famous for leading Israel. Levi, the priestly tribe, is included, though they did not inherit land in Israel. But Dan is excluded, a tribe that foundered early in Israel's history (Jgs 18).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 7:1–8 John's vision depicts God placing a protective seal on His people and thus marking them as those who will be delivered from the great final conflagration. Given the signs that daily surround us, God could release the devastating winds of His judgment at any moment. Yet God holds back now because He is "patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance" (2Pt 3:9). • Lord, help us to order our days in wisdom so that we are found faithful when You call us to appear before You. For Christ's sake, forgive our sins and move us to perseverance in good works. Amen.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 7:9 *multitude*. Likely the 144,000 described in vv 4–8. Later, they are identified as believers who have survived "the great tribulation" (v 14). *white robes*. See note, 6:11. *palm branches*. Symbol of victory. They were displayed when victorious kings were welcomed, most famously when Jesus entered Jerusalem.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 7:10 *Salvation*. The "Hosanna!" cried on Palm Sunday means "Now save us" (see note, v 9). In this vision, salvation is acclaimed as an accomplished fact.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 7:11 *fell on their faces*. See notes, 1:17; 4:10.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 7:12 *Blessing and glory*. The company of heaven repeats their refrain (cf 4:11).
REVELATION—NOTE ON 7:13 *elders*. Cf 4:4; see p 228.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 7:14 *ones coming out of the great tribulation*. Because John's vision includes the faithful from every nation and every time, it is appropriate to see those who yet live faithfully here on earth as part of that gathering. In fact, when Christians gather for worship in this world, they may be understood as participating by faith in the ongoing heavenly praise. See notes, 5:12, 14. *white in the blood*. A paradox. White is the color of purity, and Christ's people are purified by His blood shed for them. See note, 3:4.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 7:15 *serve*. Gk *latreuo*, a verb associated with worship and religious service.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 7:16 *hunger … thirst*. Images recall Israel's wilderness wanderings and the hardships of the Church's earthly pilgrimage. s*un shall not strike*. Anticipates a peaceful existence without the hardships of this fallen world. See note, Ps 121:6.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 7:17 *in the midst of the throne*. See note, 3:21. *springs of living water*. Jesus spoke of this gift during His earthly ministry (cf Jn 7:37–38). Note that whereas v 16 describes heaven as being devoid of anguish, this verse describes heaven in positive terms. Luth: "While worms and rottenness are before our eyes, we cannot be unmindful of them, nevertheless there will be a time when God will wipe away every tear, as is stated in Rev. 7:17. Therefore faith should begin to forget tears and dishonor which it does not see. Although the eyes see the rottenness, the ears hear the complaints and sobs, and the noses smell the stench of the corpses, nevertheless it is the part of faith to say: 'I do not know this. I see nothing. Indeed, I see a multiplication and a brightness surpassing the sun itself and the stars.' Therefore, such examples are set before us in order that we may learn that God is the Creator of all things, restores the dead to life and glorifies worms and the foulest rottenness. And He wants this to be acknowledged and celebrated by us in this life in faith. Later, however, in the future life, we shall experience it in actual fact" (AE 7:210–11).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 7:9–17 John gives a glimpse of the glory that is Christ's. How incredible to be part of that blessedness! Drawn onward and upward by the magnificence of this hope in Christ, God's people join in the heavenly chorus even now. • By Your grace, Lord, keep me among the faithful, so that I may forever sing Your praises in the glory of heaven. Amen.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 8:1 *silence*. This silence might seem anti-climactic. However, Jews at this time expected just such a silence in the heavens before God ushered in the new creation (cf pseudepigraphal 4 Ezra 6:39; 7:30). This glorious revelation of the new heavens and earth must wait, however, as John transitions to another scene about the end times: the seven trumpets (Rv 8:6).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 8:2 *seven angels who stand before God*. Intertestamental Jewish literature names up to seven chief angels in heaven (see, e.g., 1 Enoch 20:1–8). On the variety of angels, see note, Rv 5:2–4.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 8:3–4 *altar*. Cf 6:9. The Jerusalem temple had a similar altar, on which incense was offered (cf 1Ch 28:18). *prayers of all the saints*. At Rv 6:9–10, the sainted martyrs are depicted as praying for vindication. Here, however, John identifies the intercessors as God's people both in heaven and on earth.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 8:5 *threw it on the earth*. Signals the seven angels to begin blowing their trumpets.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 8:1–5 After finishing his vision of the seven seals being broken, John transitions to another vision, which depicts the end times with successive trumpet blasts. The visions are frightful, since we all know in our hearts that we cannot stand before God in the judgment. Fortunately, we have one who stands beside us as our advocate—Jesus Christ—celebrated in chs 4–5. His blood cleanses us from all unrighteousness. • "Bold shall I stand in that great day, Cleansed and redeemed, no debt to pay; Fully absolved through these I am From sin and fear, from guilt and shame." Amen. (*LSB* 563:2)

REVELATION—NOTE ON 8:6–11:19 The second scene of the end times: the blowing of the seven trumpets. See outline, p 2198.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 8:6 Builds dramatic tension by underlining the gravity of what follows.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 8:7 *blew his trumpet*. As was true with the breaking of each of the seven seals (cf 6:1, 3, 5), so also here successive

calamities are unleashed by trumpet blasts. *hail and fire*. Recalls two of the plagues visited upon Egypt. They were similarly a clarion call to repentance, yet went unheeded by Pharaoh.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 8:8–9 *sea became blood*. Cf Ex 7:20. *A third of the living creatures in the sea died*. Further evokes the Nile plague, since when that river turned to blood, the creatures living within it died (Ex 7:21). Amazingly, the people surviving this plague do not repent (see note, Rv 16:8–9).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 8:10 *great star*. Some scholars see a parallel with Jesus' seeing Satan falling from heaven like lightning (Lk 10:18; cf Rv 9:1–2; 12:9). Others argue that this simply refers to the kind of celestial disturbances that will accompany the final days (cf 6:13; Mk 13:25).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 8:11 *Wormwood*. A very bitter herb, thus a symbol associated with judgment throughout the OT (cf Lm 3:15, 19).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 8:12 *a third*. As in v 9, this calamity affects one third of creation (see note, 6:8). *light … darkened*. Another plague visited upon Egypt is evoked (see note, v 7).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 8:13 *eagle crying*. Transition from the first four trumpet blasts to the last three. The cry of a bird of prey also emphasizes the horror of what is being unleashed. *Woe*. Repeatedly introduces oracles of judgment in OT and NT prophecy (cf Mt 11:21; 18:7; 23:13). See p 1080.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 9:1 *a star fallen*. Satan. Stars often represent angelic beings (see note, 1:16), and Satan is a fallen angel. *bottomless pit*. A realm forsaken by God—the realm of the demons, previously referred to as Hades (6:8). Later, a demonic beast will emerge from this hellish pit.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 9:2 *opened the shaft*. Unleashing demonic forces. *rose smoke*. Evokes memories of the smoldering remains of Sodom and Gomorrah and thus symbolizes God's wrath against evil.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 9:3 *locusts*. Evokes another plague visited upon Egypt (see notes, Ex 10:4; Rv 8:7–9). Such locust infestations left vegetation stripped bare and the people famished. See pp 1447–48. *scorpions of the earth*. Emblematic of satanic power (cf Lk 10:18–19).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 9:4 *told*. Though the agent of this verb is not given, it is understood to be the Lord. This is an example of the "divine passive," a literary device employed at many points in Scripture (cf v 3). On hesitancy to use God's name directly, see "LORD," p 1227. *not to harm*.

Creation is spared, but the godless are effectively targeted. *seal of God on their foreheads*. Preserves the godly from the plague (see note, 7:3).
REVELATION—NOTE ON 9:5 Though most numbers in Rv have an obvious symbolic value, this case is different. Perhaps five months corresponds to the length of a devastating locust infestation.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 9:6 *seek death*. Jb similarly speaks about one longing for death in the midst of physical torment, yet not finding it. Great is the desperation of those without Christian hope!
REVELATION—NOTE ON 9:7–9 *like horses … lions' teeth … the noise of many chariots*. These unnatural characterizations emphasize that this is no ordinary disaster, but rather punishment from God's hand. *crowns*. Since others surrendered their crowns in 4:10, these crowned beasts probably represent an unwillingness to submit to God's rule.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 9:10 *stings like scorpions*. See note, v 3. The sting these beasts inflict is ultimately a spiritual pang (1Co 15:56). *five months*. See note, v 5.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 9:11 *king over them*. Pr 30:27 observes, "The locusts have no king, yet all of them march in rank." In contrast, this spiritual pestilence obeys the command of Satan and is therefore more dreadful. *angel of the bottomless pit*. Satan later reemerges from this pit (11:7). *Abaddon … Apollyon*. Both names mean "destroyer." Cf Jn 8:44. Luth: "The Lord 'exalted His holy One' (Ps. 4:3) and is 'wonderful among all His saints' (Ps. 68:35) that He destroyed the devil, not by a work of God but by a work of the devil himself [the cross]. For this is the most glorious kind of victory, namely, to pierce the adversary with his own weapon and to slay him with his own sword, as we sing: 'He fell prostrate on his own darts.' For in this way God promotes and completes His work by means of an alien deed, and by His wonderful wisdom He compels the devil to work through death nothing else than life, so that in this way, while he acts most of all against the work of God, he acts for the work of God and against his own work with his own deed. For thus he worked death in Christ, but Christ completely swallowed up death in Himself through the immortality of His divinity and rose again in glory" (AE 29:135).
REVELATION—NOTE ON 9:13 *four horns*. Projections at each corner of the OT altar, mentioned only here in the NT. See note, Ex 27:2; see also diagram, p 1838.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 9:14 *Euphrates*. See color map 3. From OT times, it represented an eastern boundary, beyond which lay hostile powers and renowned horsemen (cf v 16).
REVELATION—NOTE ON 9:15 *four angels*. Possibly the same angels mentioned at 7:1. *a third of mankind*. See note, 6:8.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 9:16 *mounted troops*. See note, v 14. *their number*. Symbolic. It is 10 doubled and then multiplied to the eighth power. Multiples of 10 signify exponential intensification. See p 217.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 9:17 *breastplates … color*. Their colors roughly correspond to the destructive forces mentioned later: red represents fire, blue is smoke, and yellow stands for sulphur. *fire … sulphur*. These elements anticipate the lake of fire, into which Satan and his hosts will be cast in the end (20:10).
REVELATION—NOTE ON 9:18 *three plagues*. Smoke, fire, and sulphur.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 9:19 *power … in their mouths*. Satan's host will lie and deceive. As the pen is mightier than the sword, so also the most destructive spiritual forces are those that speak convincingly against the truth of God's Word. *serpents with heads*. Through the serpent's forked tongue, temptation entered the world.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 9:20 *rest of mankind*. Apart from those sealed (7:3), people are not moved to repentance by the destruction they witness. *works of their hands*. Idols.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 9:21 *murders … thefts*. These sins, which are prohibited by the Second Table of the Law, naturally follow disregard for the First Table of God's Law (v 20). See note, Ex 20:12–17.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 8:6–9:21 In this vision, John describes catastrophes that will accompany the end times. With good reason, then, the apostle Paul commands us to "take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one" (Eph 6:16). Precisely because our sworn enemy is so cunning and powerful, it is comforting to hear that Christ has already overcome him and will defeat him once and for all on the Last Day. • "O Thou, whose coming is with dread To judge the living and the dead, Preserve us from the ancient foe While still we dwell on earth below." Amen. (*LSB* 351:5)
REVELATION—NOTE ON 10:1 *another mighty angel*. Because this angel is described in terms reminiscent of God's presence among His people during the exodus (Ex 13:21), some take this figure to represent Christ. Gk

angelos can simply mean "messenger." However, at many places in the OT, "angel of the LORD" does refer to the preincarnate Christ. See p 1227; see also notes, Rv 20:1, 3.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 10:2 *little scroll open*. In contrast to the sealed scroll introduced at 5:1, this one is open. However, the content of this scroll is never clearly revealed. Even when John is commanded to eat this scroll and prophesy its message in vv 9–11, its actual content remains a mystery (see note, v 11). *right foot on the sea, and his left foot on the land*. Suggests that this angel's prophecy is of universal significance (see note, v 1).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 10:3 *seven thunders*. As one of the most powerful sounds in nature, thunder is repeatedly associated with God's voice (cf Jn 12:28–29). *seven*. See note, 1:4.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 10:4 The prophecy voiced by the seven thunders will apply later, though when is not made clear. See note, Dn 8:26.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 10:5–6 *raised his right hand*. Cf Dn 12:7, esp due to the fact that the angel swears by "Him who lives forever and ever." The solemnity of this oath adds gravity to what follows.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 10:6 *no more delay*. Previous chs have hinted that God's final intervention in history might lie in the distant future (cf 6:10). At this point, however, no such delay is in view.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 10:7 *mystery of God*. God never reveals all His plans (cf v 4), only what we need to know most. *He announced to His servants the prophets*. When God reveals His plan for the future, He does so by means of His prophets. Not all OT prophecies have been fulfilled. See pp 1077–83.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 10:8 John has passively witnessed and recorded events since 7:14. As the mediator of God's revelation, however, he is now called to action. See note, v 11.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 10:9–10 *bitter … sweet as honey*. Prophetic messages invariably contain Law and Gospel, threat and promise, judgment and grace. Thus, as John internalizes this Word of God, it is both bitter and sweet.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 10:11 *You must again prophesy*. Despite this command to speak, John is not immediately depicted as revealing the content of this little scroll. Instead, he sees additional visions. He will prophesy at God's appointed time. See note, 2Pt 1:21.

REVELATION—NOTE ON **Ch 10** John describes his prophetic commissioning. On the one hand, the content of John's prophecy is bitter, for it reveals God's wrath against a hostile world. On the other hand, the Word he brings from God is the sweetest possible message, for it delivers Jesus' salvation to many peoples. • Holy Lord God, I recognize that Your bitter anger over my sins is justified and that I fully deserve Your punishment. Nevertheless, Christ assures me in the sweet Gospel that He has paid for my sins and removed all judgment from me. Strengthen me in this faith. Amen.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 11:1 *measure the temple*. Measuring the temple may help preserve it from desecration (cf v 2) and from being lost. *temple*. Represents God's people. The apostles speak of the Church in this way (cf 1Pt 2:4–5).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 11:2 *outside the temple*. The realm of unbelievers. *trample the holy city*. The fate Jerusalem suffered in AD 70. In the future, the world will run roughshod over the Church. *forty-two months*. Symbolic period, which appears in varying forms in chs 11–13 (1,260 days [11:3; 12:6]; "a time, and times, and a half a time" [12:14]; even as "three and a half days" [11:11]). This symbol is likely based on the length of time that Antiochus IV Epiphanes terrorized Jerusalem in 167–164 BC. It signifies a period of persecution and testing for God's people (see notes, Dn 7:25; 12:7).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 11:3 *two witnesses*. Prophets who preach repentance. The Law of Moses required two witnesses so that each could corroborate the other's testimony (cf Dt 17:6; Mt 18:16). *1,260 days*. See note, Rv 11:2. *sackcloth*. See note, 6:12.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 11:4 *two olive trees and the two lampstands*. Cf Zec 4:2–3, which describes God's chosen (anointed) leaders.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 11:5 *harm*. Jesus predicted hardship and persecution for His followers but also assured them that the wicked could not hurt them in an ultimate sense (cf Mt 10:28; Lk 10:19). *fire pours from their mouth*. God's prophets speak in the power of God's Spirit, who was symbolized by seven flames (Rv 4:5; cf Ac 2:3–4).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 11:6 *shut the sky*. In the days of Elijah, a famine lasting 3½ years was intended to move King Ahab to repentance. *waters … blood*. Additional evocations of the plagues against Egypt (cf

8:6–13). God's purpose in all these plagues is to relieve His people's suffering while bringing the oppressors to repentance and justice.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 11:7 *when they have finished*. The witnesses must complete their testimony before they succumb to the beast's destructive power. *the beast*. See note, 9:11.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 11:8 *great city … Sodom and Egypt*. These places symbolize unbridled moral perversion (Gn 18:20) and exile for God's people (Gn 15:13–14). Accordingly, this description of the two witnesses lying dead in the streets signifies that the morally perverse will kill Jesus' witnesses and that God's people will live as exiles and sojourners in this wicked world. *where … crucified*. Jerusalem.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 11:9 *three and a half*. See note, v 2. *gaze at their dead bodies*. Presumably in misguided triumph.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 11:10 *rejoice*. Just as the world rejoiced at the death of Jesus, so also it rejoices here at the demise of His witnesses.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 11:11 *breath of life from God*. Recalls both the creation account and the vision recorded by Ezekiel where the breath of God restores life to dry bones. Though the witnesses suffer temporal death, resurrection and vindication awaits (cf v 5). *great fear*. Not just the dread of consequences, but also a sense of awe.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 11:12 *Come up here!* A summons out of the great tribulation (cf 7:14) and into the eternal blessedness in God's presence. See notes, 1Th 4:13–18.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 11:13 *great earthquake*. Like the earthquakes coinciding with the death and resurrection of Jesus, this quake also heralds God's triumph. *Seven thousand*. This number is likely symbolic, but it is not clear exactly what it signifies. *gave glory to the God of heaven*. This worship is motivated by fear rather than sincere faith. God has no pleasure in the death of the wicked (Ezk 33:11).
REVELATION—NOTE ON 11:14 *second woe has passed*. One or more elements of the conflict in 9:13–11:13. *third woe*. The dramatic climax of the trumpet vision is soon to follow. It should end with Judgment Day, but as at 8:1, the vision ends just short of that event.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 11:1–14 Using the figure of twin witnesses, John describes the response of a hostile world to the preaching of God's Word. Though ample opportunity is given for people to receive the blessings of repentance and the Gospel, most choose to reject the Church

and persecute it. However, the apparent triumph of the Gospel's enemies is never the last word. Jesus' promise stands true: those remaining faithful unto death will be given the crown of life (2:10). • "Lord, be our light when worldly darkness veils us; Lord, be our shield when earthly armor fails us; And in the day when hell itself assails us, Grant us Your peace, Lord." Amen. (*LSB* 659:3)

REVELATION—NOTE ON 11:15 *seventh … trumpet*. Introduces the climactic scene of this cycle of visions. *voices in heaven*. The scene switches from earth to heaven when the saints arise (v 12). *kingdom*. See pp 1565–66. *has become*. For a time, creation has suffered the usurpation of the devil, "the ruler of this world" (Jn 12:31). He offered dominion to Christ in exchange for His worship, on the basis that all the world's authority and glory had been delivered to him (Lk 4:5–7). Rather than comply, however, Jesus established His rightful and eternal reign through His cross, which inflicted a mortal wound on His enemy.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 11:16 *twenty-four elders*. See note, 4:4.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 11:17 *begun to reign*. Cf v 15. At present, Christ's reign can be resisted; His subjects must willingly submit to His rule. At Judgment Day, however, things will be very different. Then, Christ will no longer tolerate any opposition. He will once and for all forcibly subjugate His enemies. See notes, 1Co 15:25–27; Php 2:10.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 11:18 *dead to be judged*. Judgment Day is again announced (cf v 12). The reward of the faithful and the destruction of the impious is at hand.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 11:19 *God's temple … was opened*. The temple is God's habitation (heaven). As such, this opening indicates that the Lord is accessible to His people. *ark of His covenant was seen*. Previously, this was absolutely inaccessible. Those who approached it were punished with death. John foresees that the face-to-face communion with God draws ever nearer. *lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, an earthquake, and heavy hail*. These events regularly accompany OT theophanies (cf Ex 19:16–19; Ps 18:11–15). These signs indicate that God is about to appear. However, the vision is cut short (cf 8:1).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 11:15–19 John describes the transition from Satan's temporary rule of the world to the consummation of God's reign. For now, people can refuse to obey God. But such resistance will someday be met with an irresistible outpouring of wrath and judgment.

Christ's people need not fear that day. Instead, they may long for the day when God will be all in all, and perfect harmony will again prevail. • "And when the fight is fierce, the warfare long, Steals on the ear the distant triumph song, And hearts are brave again, and arms are strong. Alleluia! Alleluia!" Amen. (*LSB* 677:5)

REVELATION—NOTE ON **Chs 12–14** The third scene of the end times: the battle between the triune God and the anti-Trinity. See outline, p 2198.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 12:1 *woman*. Represents God's people (Israel and the Church), the saints of all times. *clothed with the sun … moon under her feet*. Consistent with John's description that he sees this woman "in heaven." These details emphasize the dignity of God's people and the fact that their true home is with God. *crown of twelve stars*. The number 12 represents the people of God. See p 217.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 12:2 *pregnant … birth pains*. This birth represents the coming of the Savior in the flesh (cf Mi 5:3). The woman is not only the mother of all believers (Gal 4:26); she also helped bear and nurture the Christ, her Savior and Lord (Mt 1:23).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 12:3 *a great red dragon*. Satan (cf v 9). *seven heads … seven diadems*. Several descriptive details here resemble the depiction of the Lamb in 5:6. This is one of numerous places where the usurper Satan attempts to pass himself off as divine. See notes, 13:13; 17:8.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 12:4 *His tail swept down*. Luther colorfully described the abuses and false understandings of the medieval Mass as a "dragon's tail" because it swept so many people into idolatry (SA II II 11). *stars … cast them to the earth*. Stars often represent angelic figures (1:16, 20; 9:1). On that understanding, this depiction is likely Satan's (and his host's) original fall from heaven, when they first rebelled against God. *devour it*. Satan saw an opportunity when Jesus assumed flesh and came into this world. So Satan took every opportunity to thwart God's plan of salvation. Herod's slaying of the innocents (Mt 2:16–18) is part of what lies behind this scene.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 12:5 *male child*. Jesus, God come in the flesh. *one who is to rule … with a rod of iron*. Jesus describes Himself in these terms in His letter to Thyatira (2:27). *caught up to God*. Jesus' ascension. It is striking that no reference to His death or resurrection appears here. The emphasis is on His triumph.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 12:6 *wilderness*. As Israel wandered in the wilderness, waiting to enter their true home, so also members of the Church live as pilgrims here on earth until they reach their promised land and true home, the new heavens and the new earth. During this time on earth, God takes care of them. See note, 2:1. *1,260 days*. See note, 11:2.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 12:1–6 John portrays God's people as a struggling woman who is stalked by the devil and forced to flee into the desert. God's people have to contend with demonic onslaughts. At times, we may despair in this struggle, wondering whether God even remembers us. Yet He unfailingly preserves us in our wilderness sojourn, richly and daily providing everything we need through His Spirit, Word, and Sacraments. • Lord God, preserve us during our earthly exile. Give us a hunger for Your Word and Sacraments so that we never weaken in our faith. We thank You for sending Your Son to be born of a woman, under the Law, so that He might redeem us and bring us to our true home in heaven. Amen.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 12:7 *Now*. Indicates a new aspect of the vision: what happened after the "child was caught up to God and to His throne" (v 5). *Michael and his angels fighting*. Michael is similarly depicted

as fighting for God's people in Dn 10:13. *the dragon and his angels*. Satan and his demonic cohorts (see notes, Rv 12:4; Mt 25:41).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 12:9 *that ancient serpent … the devil*. Reminds the reader that Satan first deceived Eve while disguised as a serpent (cf 2Co 11:3). "He led them away from God's outward Word to spiritualizing and self-pride [Genesis 3:2–5]" (SA III VIII 5). Because of that primeval deception, he is rightly called "the deceiver of the whole world." *deceiver*. "If you try to help yourself by your own thoughts and counsel, you will only make the matter worse and give the devil more space. For he has a serpent's head [Revelation 12:9]. If it finds an opening into which it can slip, the whole body will follow without stopping. But prayer can prevent him and drive him back" (LC III 111). *he was thrown*. Though Michael and the angels help God's cause by waging war against Satan, the real cause of this enemy's defeat is "the blood of the Lamb," as v 11 makes clear. The decisive victory of Christ over Satan was won at the cross (Jn 12:3–33).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 12:10 *the accuser*. Jb 1–2 provides the crucial background here. There, Satan is depicted as a prosecuting attorney in the heavenly court (cf Jb 1:6–11; 2:1–8). "Satan" means "adversary" in Hbr (as in a courtroom accuser). Similarly, the Gk term "devil" comes from a verb meaning "bring charges with hostile intent." *thrown down*. Now that Jesus has secured mankind's acquittal through His death and resurrection (Col 2:14), Satan is no longer allowed to bring charges against us. Luth: "When, I say, [Satan] comes to you and accuses you not only of failing to do anything good but of transgressing against the Law of God, then you must say: 'You are troubling me with the memory of past sins; in addition, you are telling me that I have not done anything good. This does not concern me. For if I either trusted in my performance of good works or lost my trust because I failed to perform them, in either case Christ would be of no avail to me. Therefore whether you base your objections to me on my sins or on my good works, I do not care; for I put both of them out of sight and depend only on the freedom for which Christ has set me free' " (AE 27:11).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 12:11 *blood of the Lamb*. The Church's victory over Satan was achieved through the blood shed by Jesus on the cross (1Jn 1:7). *and by the word of their testimony*. Though Jesus' death is the effective cause of salvation, the Gospel testimony is the means by which this deliverance is received and spread.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 12:12 *But woe to you … his time is short!* Until his final banishment in hell (20:10), the devil will spare no effort in attacking the faithful (cf 12:17). As he nears the end of his run, the devil's attacks will become increasingly furious (cf 20:7–10).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 12:13 Because Satan can no longer engage the resurrected and ascended Christ directly (vv 5, 9), he makes the Church (v 1) the object of his assaults.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 12:14 *the woman was given the two wings*. The woman's escape (v 6) is finally described. *wings of the great eagle*. Recalls the protection God provided for Israel during the desert wandering. *a time, and times, and half a time*. See note, 11:2.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 12:15–16 Another allusion to the exodus and period of desert wandering, specifically the account of Korah's rebellion (Nu 16:31–34).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 12:17 Satan continually makes war against all who believe and live according to the Law ("the commandments") and the Gospel ("the testimony of Jesus"). *sea*. Sets the stage for the following vision, where a demonic beast arises (13:1).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 12:7–17 John depicts the cosmic struggle between the forces of good and of evil, and the damage it continually threatens to inflict upon the Church. This depiction makes clear that although Satan cannot overcome the Church, he nonetheless tries his hardest to drag down with him as many as possible. It is most comforting to know, therefore, that Jesus has already defeated Satan and forgiven our sins, so that we can never be lost. • We thank You, Lord God, for giving us the victory over the devil through Your Son, Jesus. We draw strength from the protection You grant to us and all Christians during our spiritual warfare. Amen.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 13:1 *a beast*. First of two beasts appearing in this vision (cf v 11). This terrifying creature seems to be something of a composite of the four beasts described in Dn 7:2–7. Because the four beasts in Daniel's vision represented four world powers, this first beast is best taken as an embodiment of broad political authority, particularly the Roman caesar. *sea*. See notes, 4:6–7; 21:1. *blasphemous names*. When John recorded Rv, the caesar was demanding divine titles and honors, arrogating names for himself in blasphemous ways (e.g., "divine," "lord," "god").

REVELATION—NOTE ON 13:2 *the dragon gave*. Because Satan is intent on using this beast for his purposes, he endows him with his own power and authority. This empowerment is only possible because God allows it, however, since all authority ultimately comes from Him.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 13:3 *its mortal wound was healed*. Possibly a cryptic allusion to the Roman emperors Caligula or Nero. Sulp: "According to that which was written regarding [Nero];—'And his mortal wound was healed,'—to be sent forth again near the end of the world, in order that he may practice the mystery of iniquity" (*NPNF* 2 11:111).
REVELATION—NOTE ON 13:4 *they worshiped the dragon*. Satan shares his demonic power with the beast so that this monstrosity will induce his subjects to worship the age-old impostor. Cf v 11, when another beast joins in this coalition. Then, the devil and this pair of beasts form a counterfeit "anti-Trinity" (see notes, vv 11–18).
REVELATION—NOTE ON 13:5 *forty-two months*. See note, 11:2.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 13:6–7 *those who dwell in heaven*. The beast not only blasphemes God but also slanders heaven and the Church. If he could, this fiend would bedevil the elect beyond the grave! *war on the saints*. Because of the authority Satan has lent the beast (see note, v 2), he has great strength to inflict misery upon God's people.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 13:8 *all … will worship*. In Roman times, people throughout the empire were required to offer incense to images of Caesar. *before the foundation of the world*. Paul likewise teaches that God chose the elect for eternal salvation even before the world began (Eph 1:4; Rm 8:28–30). This election was based on His grace, not on anything the recipient had done (Rm 11:5; 2Tm 1:9). See p 1929. *book of life*. Symbol of God choosing His people and their membership in His kingdom. See note, Rv 3:5.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 13:9 See note, 2:7.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 13:10 *if anyone … slain*. This oracle is intended to instill confidence in the persecuted Christians. God is still in control, regardless of what they might be suffering. *Here is a call for … the saints*. The beleaguered Church is encouraged to believe that, come what may, their eternal election is sure (cf Rm 8:31–39).
REVELATION—NOTE ON 13:1–10 In order to bolster his attacks against God and His people, the devil enlists the aid of a hideous beast, which represents worldly power and political authority run amok. This

scenario invites us to consider some important questions: Have we ever allowed an authority besides God to determine what is right or wrong for us? Have we ever obeyed man rather than God? If so, seek God's forgiveness in Christ. He invites us to believe that He chose us and wrote our name in His Book of Life before the world began. • Father, I thank You for making me Your own child through Christ Jesus. Grant me strength always to endure even difficult days, especially in these last times before the end. Amen.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 13:11–12 *earth*. In contrast to the first beast, which arose from the sea, this one arises from the earth. Thus, the two beasts stem from and hold influence over all the world. *two horns like a lamb*. This beast does not appear as fearful as the first one (vv 1–3). Jesus' warning about the wolves in sheep's clothing still applies (Mt 7:15). *makes the earth … worship the first beast*. This second beast destroys the Church from the inside, by introducing false doctrines and errant practices (cf 1Jn 4:1–3). Cf Rv 19:20, where this second beast is explicitly called "the false prophet."

REVELATION—NOTE ON 13:13 This beast seems to wield divine power, but in fact only deceives. His are not true miracles because they are not done in conjunction with sound doctrine. Ironically, this beast imitates the miracle Elijah performed while proving that Yahweh is the only true God (1Ki 18:24–40).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 13:14 *image*. Since Adam's fall, people tend to worship images of animals and personified natural forces (Rm 1:23, 25).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 13:16–17 *marked*. Identifying marks sometimes served to signify ownership (cf Dt 15:17). These marks thus function as the demonic counterpart to the protective seal God places upon His people (cf 9:4). *no one can buy or sell unless he has the mark*. Economic activity is restricted to those bearing the mark of the beast.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 13:18 *calculate*. Gk *psephizo*, "figure out." Considerable time and effort has been spent trying to decipher this enigmatic number, but no single solution has won general acceptance. *his number is 666*. The threefold six may indicate a threefold falling short of seven, the number of perfection (see p 217). That would be a fitting number for the anti-Trinity (see notes, vv 4, 11–12). Hbr and Gk characters served both as letters and numbers. "Nero Caesar" transliterated into Hbr does total 666, and numerous other names have also been proposed.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 13:11–18 In order to make his attacks against God's people even more devastating, Satan enlists the assistance of another beast, this one representing deceit and corruption from within the Church. Unfortunately, this kind of attack remains deadly and still succeeds in deceiving many believers today. Were it not for God's Spirit and the unshakeable foundation of Christ's Word, even the elect would be led astray. Kept safely in Jesus' hand, however, they remain secure. • Father, grant me steadfastness in all times of temptation, especially during these last days. You will never allow anyone or anything to wrench me from the security of Your grasp; therefore, You alone are worthy of my trust and praise. Amen.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 14:1 *on Mount Zion stood the Lamb*. Given the similarities to the scene occurring in 7:1–17, this scene is best understood as set in heaven.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 14:2 *voice*. Gk *phone*, "sound." John clarifies that this sound is actually a multitude of harpists playing and singing.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 14:3 *No one could learn that song*. This "new song" is beyond the comprehension of earthbound souls, esp unbelievers. They neither hear it nor participate in it. See "new song," p 843. *from the earth*. In contrast to 7:4, the 144,000 described here represent the saints who have been delivered from their earthly sojourn and received into heaven. Their new glorified existence includes the learning and singing of the new song.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 14:4 *have not defiled themselves with women*. A curious expression, since the Bible does not consider sexual relationships within the bonds of marriage to be defiling. Therefore, a figurative meaning must be intended. Taking into account the surrounding context, one suspects that these 144,000 are those that were slain for refusing to worship the beast (13:15) and receive his mark (13:16–17). *virgins*. When Paul describes the Church as Christ's Bride, "holy and without blemish" (Eph 5:25–27), he means that she maintains purity by staying faithful to God and keeping His commandments. Hus: "Christ is the bridegroom of virginity, who, as he lives forever, can not allow the bride to desert him and fornicate spiritually. Thus it is said of the multitude of the heavenly denizens that they are virgins and follow the Lamb wheresoever he goes" (*The Church*, p 13). *firstfruits*. See p 6.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 14:5 *in their mouth no lie was found*. They refused to join in the worship of the beast (13:15). They resisted the lie that this beast was divine (13:13) and worthy of devotion. *blameless*. The 144,000 are described as having "washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb" (7:14). See note, Jb 1:1.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 14:1–5 John relates a vision in which those who have been delivered by the Lamb stand gathered around God's throne, singing a heavenly song of praise. This group, which is described as blameless, differs from the earthly people of God, who still slip into sin by defiling themselves in countless ways. Yet God remains faithful. He forgives when we fail to remain true to Him, and that gives us every reason to rejoin the saints in praising Him. • Heavenly Father, remind me that You have chosen me to be Your own child through the death and resurrection of the unblemished Lamb. Grant my heart joy as I join in singing a new song before Your throne. Amen.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 14:6 *an eternal gospel*. Not a new Gospel, since there is only one (Gal 1:6–8). See "Gospel," p 1902. The messenger proclaims the enduring message of deliverance from evil, just as the new song (v 3) proclaims redemption anew (see "new song," p 843).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 14:7 *Fear God*. See p 1001. *give Him glory … judgment has come*. At first blush, this announcement does not sound much like the Gospel. However, it is indeed good news for the faithful, since the saints are repeatedly depicted as suffering at the hand of evildoers in Rv.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 14:8 *Babylon*. First mention of a figure that subsequently plays a large role. Not the ancient Mesopotamian city, but rather the imperial capital of John's time, Rome (see note, 1Pt 5:13). Because her caesars demand the kind of divine honors that the Christians will not render, she retaliates by oppressing the faithful (see notes, 13:1, 3, 8). Note how clearly "Babylon" is shown to be working with the two beasts (cf 17:3–17).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 14:9 *worships … receives a mark*. Cf 13:11–17. At this point, the actual fate of those worshiping the beast is revealed.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 14:10 *the cup of His anger*. See note, Is 51:17. *presence of the holy angels … Lamb*. Underscores that the final judgment will be public, for all to see (cf Mt 25:31–46).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 14:11 Just as God provides eternal joy and security for His saints (Ps 23:6), so also eternal shame and torment await

those who reject Him (Mt 25:41). Luth: "*Smoke went up*, that is, their anger and disdain with which they fight and speak even against God; and the wrathful pride of those who hate Christ always goes up and increases more and more" (AE 10:118).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 14:12 See note, 13:10.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 14:13 Second of seven beatitudes. See note, 1:3. *Blessed are the dead*. The blessing comes at a decisive moment, as the final judgment is about to be revealed. Bern: "Not those alone who die for the Lord, like the martyrs, but without doubt those also who die in the Lord as confessors are blessed. There are two things, as it seems to me, which make death precious, the life which precedes it and the cause for which it is endured…. By the mercy of God, you are beginning to live again, not to sin, but to righteousness, not to the world, but to Christ, knowing that to live to the world is death, and even to die in Christ is life" (*SLSB*, pp 176–77, 224–25). Luth: "Christ is nothing other than sheer life, as his saints are likewise. The more profoundly you impress that image upon your heart and gaze upon it, the more the image of death will pale and vanish of itself without struggle or battle. Thus your heart will be at peace and you will be able to die calmly in Christ and with Christ, as we read in Revelation [14:13], 'Blessed are they who die in the Lord Christ' " (AE 42:104). *deeds follow them!* Because their deeds give evidence of faith in Jesus, those who persevere in serving Jesus—even in the midst of intense persecution—receive eternal rest, the ultimate blessing from God. See notes, 1Co 3:8–14.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 14:6–13 John relates a vision of three angels warning the world against the disaster that will come upon those worshiping the beast. Despite a multitude of such admonitions, people, including those who know better, still chase after false gods. Those who remain faithful to God and His Word will be blessed, however, entering into eternal rest when they pass out of this world. • God, I praise You for keeping me united to Your Son. Continue giving me strength to withstand all enticements to abandon the faith. Keep me patient while I await my eternal rest in You. Amen.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 14:14 *one like a son of man*. Another depiction of the glorified Jesus (cf 1:13–15). This time, however, the Lord is described as holding a sharp sickle. *son of man*. See p 2098.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 14:15–16 *temple*. Cf 3:12; 7:15. *Put in Your sickle, and reap … harvest*. Imagery depicts the final judgment; first used

by the OT prophets (cf Is 27:12). Significantly, Jesus Himself speaks similarly (Mt 13:30). The "grim reaper" figure has its origins in this imagery.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 14:17–18 Continues the reaping metaphor begun in vv 15–16. One senses a mixed metaphor, however, since sickles are not typically used to harvest grapes.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 14:19 *winepress of the wrath of God*. Harvested grapes were put into vats and crushed in order to extract the juice. In the ancient world (and in many places today), this extraction was accomplished by trampling the fruit underfoot. Thus, John gives a vivid illustration of how God's wrath will come down upon the wicked on Judgment Day (cf Jl 3:13). See note, Is 63:2.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 14:20 *city*. Jerusalem, symbol for God's people. *blood … as high as a horse's bridle*. The juice flowing out of the winepress is identified with the blood of those undergoing the judgment. *1,600 stadia*. Another symbol. A multiple of four, which typically represents the earth. See p 217. John forcefully underlines the overwhelming nature of God's judgment.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 14:14–20 John describes the final judgment in terms of a harvest and treading of a winepress. Those in Christ need not worry over God's wrath, for instead of your blood flowing from God's winepress, Jesus' blood was poured out from the cross for you. His sacrifice for your sin removes the penalty of eternal death from you. • Lord Jesus, I thank You for suffering the wrath that I deserved. Though You were innocent and I was guilty, You shed Your blood for me, thus washing all my sins away. Amen.

REVELATION—NOTE ON **Chs 15–16** The fourth scene of the end times: the pouring out of the seven bowls of wrath. See outline, p 2198.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 15:1 *Then I saw*. Indicates a new vision is about to be revealed; this one involves seven angels and seven plagues. *the last … finished*. A cycle of seven plagues serves as this Book's last sevenfold vision. See outline, p 2198. Luth: "We are not fighting to win land and people, wealth and glory. Nor are we aiming to establish idolatry or extend it. Rather are we fighting to establish God's word and his church. Especially do we fight for our children, for the coming generations…. That is the real reason and serious purpose for which we now fight, die, or live" (AE 43:238).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 15:2–3 *sea … fire*. Symbols rooted in the account of the Lord punishing His people's enemies in the Red Sea (cf Ex 13:21–22; 14:19–31). *song of Moses*. Cf Ex 15:1–21.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 15:3–4 *Great and amazing*. Just as Moses led the people in praising God in song after the deliverance at the Red Sea (Ex 15:1–21), so also here the redeemed praise the Lord for working an even more splendid act of salvation. *All nations*. In contrast to the celebration on the shore of the Red Sea, this one includes people of every nation, for the Gospel goes forth to all people.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 15:5 *sanctuary of the tent*. Additional themes from the exodus are seen, since the Lord dwelt among His people by means of the "tent of testimony" during their wilderness wanderings (Nu 17:7–8).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 15:6–7 After a sublime description of how the redeemed rejoice in heaven, the vision takes on a somber tone—seven angels are sent from the heavenly sanctuary with orders to pour out God's wrath.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 15:8 *seven plagues*. The outpourings of these calamities are recorded in the visions that follow (ch 16).

REVELATION—NOTE ON **Ch 15** This present vision begins with a scene of joyous celebration but then continues with a description of the angels bearing the seven last plagues of God's wrath being sent out. Unfortunately, that is how things typically are during the Church's earthly sojourn: the most sublime moments of rejoicing are followed by dreadful calamities, and hope is ever threatened by evil and judgment. Given this sad state of affairs, the Church needs to hear over and over again that there is "now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" (Rm 8:1). • Heavenly Father, we sing Your praises every day, come what may, for You have done great and amazing things. We thank You especially for making us Your people and so removing from us any fear of the impending wrath. Amen.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 16:2 Christians are spared from this first plague, since it only falls upon those bearing the mark of the beast (cf 13:16–17). *painful sores*. Yet another allusion to the exodus (see notes, 8:7–12; 15:2–5), since this is similar to the sixth plague suffered by the Egyptians, which involved boils.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 16:3–4 *sea … blood*. The plagues poured out of the second and third bowls evoke memories of the first plague to strike

Egypt (cf Ex 7:14–25), since in these cases aquatic creatures die and water is turned to blood.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 16:5 *Holy One, who is and who was*. See note, 1:4.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 16:6 *what they deserve!* A grisly example of the punishment fitting the crime. For shedding the innocent blood of the righteous, the wicked are forced to drink the blood of the plague-infected rivers and springs.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 16:7 *the altar*. Personified altar speaks on behalf of the martyrs. See notes, 6:9–11.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 16:8–9 *sun … scorched*. Previously, the sun was darkened (cf 8:12). Here, its strength is intensified. *did not repent and give Him glory*. Another example of recalcitrant people refusing to repent, even when severely afflicted (cf 9:20). This repeatedly happened during the exodus as well. See note, Ex 4:8.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 16:10–11 *plunged into darkness*. This fifth bowl produces plagues similar to the ones described in Ex 10:21–29 and Rv 8:12. *They did not repent of their deeds*. Cf v 9; 9:20–21.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 16:12 *kings from the east*. Some of the most formidable enemies of God's people during the OT times came from the east: (1) The Assyrians destroyed and exiled the 10 northern tribes in 722 BC (2Ki 17:24–41). (2) The Babylonians overthrew Jerusalem and took captive its citizens in 587 BC (2Ki 25:1–26). (3) The Medo-Persians ruled over Judah from 539 to 333 BC. (4) The Seleucids conquered and controlled Judea from 198 to 164 BC. In John's day, there was a widely held fear that Nero would arise from the dead, come from the east, and again wreak havoc on the empire (see notes, Rv 13:18; 17:11).
REVELATION—NOTE ON 16:13–14 *the false prophet*. Reappearance of the second beast (13:11–17, esp vv 13–14). *three unclean spirits*. Each member of the evil anti-Trinity goes forth, intent on mustering additional allies against God and His people. *like frogs*. Another parallel to the exodus account of the plagues (Ex 8:1–15).
REVELATION—NOTE ON 16:15 An aside within the unfolding drama. Here, Jesus interrupts the vision with an oracle about His second coming and a promise of blessing for those remaining faithful to the end. *Blessed … exposed!* Third of seven beatitudes. See note, 1:3. *garments*. See notes, 3:4; 6:11.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 16:16 *Armageddon*. Hbr *har megiddo*, "the mountain of Megiddo." Though an important city named Megiddo actually existed (see color map 1; Solomon had his stables there; see note, 1Ki 9:15), this is a symbolical rather than geographical reference. Because Megiddo was an important battlefield, it came to be associated with the final great battle between God and the forces of evil (see note, Ezk 38–39).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 16:1–16 As the bowls of God's wrath are poured out, all those worshiping false gods and refusing to repent of their sins are afflicted with terrible plagues. Tragically, there are even some within the Church who persist in this or that vice, stubbornly refusing to repent, and so put their very salvation in peril. Through Baptism, however, the Lord clothes His people with the perfect righteousness of His Son. The Holy Spirit leads God's children away from the plagues of judgment and keeps them on the winning side in the final battle. • Heavenly Father, I thank You for adopting me as Your own through Baptism into Christ. By Your Word and Holy Supper, keep me in Your salvation so that I will remain with You forever. Grant me strength during these last days to be faithful to You always. Amen.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 16:17–18 Cf 15:1, where the end of God's judgment and outpouring of wrath is predicted at the beginning of this cycle of bowl visions. *It is done!* A similar pronouncement recurs within the dramatic climax of this book (see note, 21:6). *lightning, rumblings … thunder … earthquake*. See note, 11:19.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 16:19 *The great city*. Babylon; see note, 14:8. *drain the cup*. See note, Is 51:17. In Rv 17–18, Babylon's many offenses are listed. They clarify why the Lord is so righteously indignant.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 16:20–21 The created order itself now begins to come undone. *great hailstones*. The unnaturally large size of this phenomenon reinforces that this is the final outpouring of God's anger. *cursed God*. See notes, vv 8–9; 9:20.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 16:17–21 As the Lord pronounces the end of the outpouring of His judgment, the created order itself begins to come unhinged. After describing this same event, Peter poses a question we all need to consider daily: what sort of people ought we to be (2Pt 3:11)? The only basis for confidence on that dreaded day is that our Lord Jesus paid the full price of our punishment while dying on the cross (Jn 19:30), then rose from the dead and returned to the Father, where even now He is preparing a

place for us. • Lord, receive our heartfelt thanks for having Jesus bear Your judgment for us. Because You promise to spare Your people from the terrible plagues that will accompany the final judgment, we ask You to keep us in the true faith. Amen.

REVELATION—NOTE ON **Chs 17–19** The fifth scene of the end times: Babylon the prostitute overthrown. See outline, p 2198.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 17:1 *great prostitute*. Later identified with Babylon (v 5), this likely personifies Rome (see note, 14:8). The original audience would have easily associated this great prostitute with the goddess Roma, whose image could be seen throughout the empire. The prostitute works hand in hand with the twin beasts of 13:1–8, 11–18. Note how this iniquitous woman is the counterpart to the righteous woman described in 12:1–6, 13–17. *on many waters*. Literally describes ancient Babylon, which had many canals and the world-famous floating gardens. Later on, however, John identifies these "many waters" with peoples, multitudes, nations, and languages.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 17:2 *kings*. Not just royalty, but rulers and important people of every kind. *sexual immorality*. Refers not only to inappropriate sexual behavior but also to idolatry and hostility to God. The OT prophets frequently compare pagan cities to harlots (Ezk 16:15–16; Na 3:4) and identify apostasy with sexual misconduct. See note, Ezk 16. *drunk*. Intoxicated with political power, violence, economic clout, pagan religiosity, etc (see note, Rv 17:6).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 17:3 *in the Spirit*. See note, 1:10. *wilderness*. Here, symbolizes the haunts of the demons. This imagery is the evil counterpart to the "great, high mountain, and … holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God" (21:10). *beast … seven heads and ten horns*. The beast from the sea reappears (cf 13:1–10).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 17:4 *purple and scarlet … gold and jewels*. Picture of arrogance, opulence, and self-satisfaction. Rome's affluence is thus trenchantly criticized, esp in 18:11–19. *golden cup full of abominations*. Reinforces the characterization of this woman as drunk on wealth, power, violence, and vice (v 2).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 17:5 The great harlot does not merely oblige her subjects to get a mark on their foreheads; she herself bears one. *forehead*. See note, 13:16–17. *Babylon the great*. Cf v 1; see note, 14:8.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 17:6 *drunk with the blood of the saints*. A measure of Babylon's perversity is her bloodthirsty zeal for persecuting God's people (see notes, vv 2, 4).
REVELATION—NOTE ON 17:7 *mystery*. Term Paul uses to denote God's eternal plan for saving the world, once hidden but now manifest through Christ and the Gospel. Here, however, a demonic counterfeit is in view. See p 1903.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 17:8 *was, and is not, and is about to rise*. This characterization of the beast, which appears twice within this context, is a perversion upon the title applied to God the Father (see note, 1:4). The beast is an impostor who passes himself off as the one true God (cf 13:16–17). *go to destruction*. Another reference to the lake of fire, the final destination of the demonic host and enemies of God (19:20–20:10).
REVELATION—NOTE ON 17:9 *seven mountains*. Reinforces the identification of this great prostitute with Rome, since the city famously sits on seven hills.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 17:10 *seven kings, five of whom*. Likely refers to a series of first-century Roman emperors, though we cannot ascertain their identities with precision.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 17:11 *an eighth*. A caesar whose policies were particularly hostile to the Church. Many scholars see here a reference to the *Nero redivivus* myth, mentioned in Sibylline Oracle 4. This was a popular belief that the reviled and dreaded Emperor Nero would rise from the dead and lead a horde of foreign troops from the east in an attack on Rome. John may adapt this imagery much as the psalmists at times adapt the imagery of Canaanite myths (see note, Ps 68) without regarding them as true. The imagery of John's visions should not be imposed over contemporary nations and events as though the *Nero redivivus* myth would be literally fulfilled or describe a modern Babylonian ruler.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 17:12 *ten kings*. Likely vassal kings, who could aid and abet a usurper (like *Nero redivivus*) in an attempt to seize power. Note in this regard that during the first century, numerous caesars ascended to the throne by intrigue and usurpation.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 17:13 *one mind*. Such conspirators would really only be united temporarily, while their intrigues and bloody plots played out.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 17:14 *make war*. All-out opposition against God and His people (cf 16:12–16). *Lord of lords and King of kings*. Superlatives proper of the one true God. Remarkably, these epithets are here applied to the Lamb, which makes for a powerful affirmation of Christ's full divinity. Luth: "Thy kingdom will extend as far as the world, and yet this kingdom will be an eternal, heavenly kingdom. Thou art a King in heaven and yet Thou wilt have Thy kingdom on earth, yes, even under the earth in hell. For there will be nothing so high or deep, neither in heaven nor on earth nor under the earth, that Thou canst not have power over it and help it. Hence those on earth who preach Thy name in Thy kingdom, pray, praise, and thank Thee, will be in heaven, even though they live on earth, scattered through all the lands" (AE 12:104).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 17:15 *waters … are peoples*. See note, v 1.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 17:16 *ten horns*. See note, v 12.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 17:17 *God has put it into their hearts*. Evokes passages where the Lord is described as hardening Pharaoh's heart (Ex 9:12; 10:20, 27; 11:10; 14:4). Such mysterious expressions should not be taken as implying that God is the source of evil (Jas 1:13–14). Rather, they show that God can use even the evil behavior of the impious in order to further His good and gracious purposes. *the words of God are fulfilled*. The evil plans of the ten horns cannot succeed finally, since God has a greater plan. In due time, the saving promises He has revealed through His servants will come to fulfillment (cf Am 3:7; Zec 1:6; see note, Rv 10:7).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 17:18 Further confirmation that this monstrous woman represents Rome (see note, v 1).

REVELATION—NOTE ON **Ch 17** John describes the great end-times battle between the dominant world power and God. This vision reminds us that earthly power structures, when built upon idolatrous worldviews and characterized by ungodly ambitions, are not morally neutral but rather stand in opposition to God and His Church. In the end, however, the King of kings and Lord of lords will get the victory and share it with the faithful, so that they reign with Him eternally. • Lord, cleanse our hearts, eyes, and ears. Give us sound judgment in all things, so that we may reject Babylon's ungodly lure, remain faithful, and enter with You into glory! Amen.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 18:1 *another angel*. Likely different from the angels that poured out the seven bowls of God's wrath (chs 16–17).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 18:2 *Fallen*. Echoes what was previously announced at 14:8 and described in 16:19; 17:16. Although this event still lies in the future, John speaks of it in the past tense. The prophetically inspired word stands that certain. *unclean*. Use of OT holiness language not only emphasizes how much "Babylon's" abominations have corrupted the people of the empire but also how fitting is her punishment. See "clean," p 6.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 18:3 *sexual immorality*. Refers to a wide variety of moral failures. *merchants … rich*. Further underscores the notion that the "sexual immorality" for which the empire is being judged includes a variety of ethical failures, including wanton greed and exploitation.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 18:4 *Come out of her, My people*. Not primarily a geographical, but moral-spiritual imperative. Note how it echoes the exhortation appearing in 2Co 6:14–18. Hus: "Let us ask the Lord that He may vouchsafe to preserve us in His communion and guard us against unlawful communion" (*The Church*, p 274). *lest you share*. When Babylon falls, it will be too late to separate oneself from the outpouring of God's wrath. Luth: "We must be on our guard against those who are thus given over to a wicked disposition, lest we share in their sin and perish together with them. Therefore in Revelation (18:4) the church is commanded to come out of Babylon; that is, we are commanded to leave the ungodly" (AE 3:285).
REVELATION—NOTE ON 18:5 *sins are heaped high*. Reinforces the idea expressed elsewhere in this Book that God's patience has a limit and His plan for the end of all things has already been determined (cf 6:10–11; 15:8; 17:17).
REVELATION—NOTE ON 18:6 *repay her double for her deeds*. God will repay the wicked in kind for their evil deeds, only twice as severely. Note that this sentence echoes the judgment pronounced in Jer 16:18, but ironically contrasts with the gracious promise spoken in Is 40:2.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 18:7 *give her a like measure*. Reiterates the idea expressed in v 6 about the punishment fitting the crime. *mourning I shall never see*. Babylon's refusal to repent will remain unshakable to the end.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 18:8 The bowl judgments (chs 15–16) were not simultaneous but a series of calamities. This verse stresses the sudden

nature of the impending judgment and the final, total downfall of Babylon. Cf 1Th 5:3.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 18:9 *weep and wail*. Those who partnered with Babylon in committing adultery and living in luxury do not have true repentance, but rather are disappointed that their opportunities for exploiting others have been cut short. On the distinction between God-pleasing repentance and "gallows" repentance, cf 2Co 7:10.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 18:10 *stand far off*. See note, v 15. *single hour*. See note, v 8.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 18:11–13 Reinforces the sentiment first expressed in v 9 that Babylon's trading partners do not regret the excesses they have committed, but rather are sad that their racket has been broken up. *slaves, that is, human souls*. Lit, "bodies, even souls of people." God's original intent for mankind is horribly perverted whenever people are reduced to commodities. *slaves*. Culmination of the merchandise list. The slave trade so flourished in first-century Rome that there was at least one slave for every three free men. See p 101.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 18:14 *soul longed*. Given that "soul" was used to describe slaves in v 13, its use here for the merchants is most ironic. The slave trade looked very different to people on opposite sides of it!

REVELATION—NOTE ON 18:15 *stand far off*. Former associates distance themselves from Babylon in her most desperate hour. That is what happens when one's relationships are based merely upon a shared vice.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 18:16–17 The merchants' lament echoes the kings' lament in v 10. *fine linen, in purple and scarlet*. Clothes of royalty and great wealth. *single hour*. See note, v 8. *shipmasters … stood far off*. See note, v 15.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 18:18 Rhetorical question emphasizing the grandeur that once was the capital of the empire.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 18:19 *sea*. Another occasion in which the sea represents a place of evil (cf 4:6; 13:1; 21:1). *single hour*. See note, v 8.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 18:20 *Rejoice … prophets*. Doxological words better suited to God and the angels (vv 1, 4) than to unbelieving shippers. Functions as an ironic answer to the plea spoken by the martyrs at 6:9. *for you against her!* When judgment is unleashed against the oppressor—even a harsh one—it is simultaneously vindication and liberation for the righteous. Similar examples of this appear with the OT prophets.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 18:21 *mighty angel*. Apparently a different angel from the one mentioned earlier (see note, v 1). *great millstone*. Cf Mk 9:42. Both passages describe the particularly harsh punishment reserved for those who do harm to others.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 18:22–23 There will be no more business as usual after the revelation of the judgment here predicted. The normal pleasures of life will have ceased.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 18:24 *blood … saints*. The martyrs' prayer is finally answered, as God avenges their blood (see notes, 6:9–11). *all … slain*. God not only punishes the mistreatment of His saints and prophets, but indeed anyone who has shed innocent blood, since the willful taking of life is one of the sins so grievous that it cries to heaven for vengeance. (Other abominations that cry to heaven for vengeance are sodomy [Gn 18:20], oppression [Ex 3:7–10; 22:21–23], and defrauding wage-earners [Jas 5:4].)
REVELATION—NOTE ON **Ch 18** John describes the collapse and judgment of Babylon, the great oppressor of the innocent and exploiter of the weak. As modern, Western Christians hear the charges against Babylon, they note that some strike very close to home, especially greed and an addiction to luxury. The Church must remember where its true treasures are to be found. Whoever has Jesus can look forward to enjoying eternal splendor and joy in heaven. • Lord Jesus, turn our hearts away from Babylon and her foul wares so that we remain holy children of Mother Church, Your eternal Bride. Help us to be responsible stewards of the wealth and gifts that You entrust to us, for Jesus' sake. Amen.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 19:1 *multitude*. Likely the same assembly described in 7:9–17—the Church Triumphant, the saints who have passed into glory. *Salvation … belong to our God*. Echoes 7:10, yet it adds the words "glory" and "power."
REVELATION—NOTE ON 19:2 *true and just*. Important affirmation, esp in light of all the evil described in this Book. One of the main themes of Rv is that, despite all the chaotic and oppressive conditions Christians must face, God remains firmly in control of all history. *avenged on her the blood*. See note, 18:24.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 19:3 *smoke … goes up*. A most ironic counterpart to the incense smoke previously described as rising during the heavenly worship (8:3; 15:8; see notes, Ex 30:1, 7–8; Ps 141:2). *forever and*

ever. Phrase that often appears at the conclusion of Christian doxologies (cf Eph 3:21; 1Tm 1:17). In this setting, it contrasts ironically with the term "eternity" (Lat *aeternitas*), which was inscribed on first-century Roman coins.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 19:4 *twenty-four elders … four living creatures*. Mention of these figures recalls the scenes of the heavenly worship described in 4:1–5:14; 7:9–17. *Hallelujah!* Hbr for "praise God" (Ps 146:1, 10; 147:1, 20). See "Praise the Lord," p 843.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 19:5 The voice from the throne calls upon all of God's servants—including those living upon the earth—to join in the heavenly chorus. *fear*. Filial fear of God, which combines awe, devotion, and tenderness. See p 1001.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 19:1–5 The heavenly chorus praises God for the collapse and destruction of the great prostitute Babylon. Some may be reluctant to join in this praise, still feeling sympathetic to Babylon and thus exhibiting a shameful self-centeredness. But Christ frees us from tyranny's grip and promises to share the spoils of His victory with us. Thus, we can heartily join in this praise now and forever. • Holy Spirit, move my heart and voice to join in this great hallelujah chorus, both here on earth and then forever in heaven. Amen.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 19:6 *the Almighty reigns*. Echoes the core proclamation of the earthly Jesus, who over and over taught about "the kingdom [reign] of God." For the characters in this scene, the coming of God's kingdom/reign is no longer a matter of faith but of sight and direct experience. See pp 1565–66.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 19:7–8 *marriage*. Although coming to faith and being baptized function as our betrothal to Christ (2Co 11:2), the solemnization and consummation of the Church's marriage to Him nonetheless remain a future event. This scene portrays how that future consummation will be. *made herself ready*. The bride's preparations for the marriage are the result of God's grace and Spirit, not simply her own efforts. *granted her … pure*. Emphasizes that the saints' righteous deeds, which are here identified with spiritual adornment, are a gift granted by God, not a human achievement.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 19:9 *Blessed … Lamb*. Fourth of seven beatitudes. See note, 1:3. *supper*. Same word as used in 1Co 11:20, where it refers to Holy Communion. This beatitude promises blessing not only to

those who participate in heaven but also to those receiving the Lord's Supper here and now.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 19:10 *You must not do that!* The Bible consistently forbids the worship of anyone other than the one true God—the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. *the testimony of Jesus … prophecy*. The divine prophetic word is here equated with the message from and about Christ. See note, Jn 5:39.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 19:6–10 God follows up His victory over Babylon by solemnizing the marriage of His Son to His Bride, the Church. Though the Father earnestly invites all to come and be a part of this greatest imaginable marriage feast (Mt 22:1–14), some still resist the call of His Gospel. The Lord never gives up on them. Until the end of time, He continues to extend His gracious invitation to believe on His name and receive eternal life. • Lamb of God, because You have shed Your blood for me, keep me faithful to You so I may commune with You forever. Amen.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 19:11 *white horse!* A fitting mount for the royal commander in chief (see note, 6:2). *Faithful and True*. Jesus is similarly called the "faithful and true witness" in the letter to the Church in Laodicea.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 19:12 *many diadems*. Authentic royal crowns. These stand in contrast to the counterfeit diadems of the dragon and first beast (13:1). *name … Himself*. Probably refers to the sacred name by which God revealed Himself to Moses (Ex 3:14). See "LORD," p 1227.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 19:13 *clothed … blood*. The blood Jesus once shed for sinners (cf 7:14). *The Word of God*. Important Christological title in John's Gospel (Jn 1:1–3, 14). As such, this verse forms an important thematic link between John's Gospel and Rv.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 19:14 Although the heavenly host is elsewhere solely angelic (Dt 33:2; Ps 68:17), it is possible that the army being described here includes the saints, since both this assembly and the aforementioned "Bride" of the Lamb (Rv 19:7) are attired in fine white linen. See p 1291.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 19:15 *sharp sword*. See note, 1:16. *rod of iron*. See notes, 2:27; 12:5. *winepress of the fury*. Imagery borrowed from Is 63:2–3 and probably related to the cup of wrath metaphor appearing in Rv 14:8, 10; 16:19. Significantly, all the imagery in this verse involves judgment. Luth: "The tyrants, heretics, and whatever opposes the Word are

a potter's vessel. So when it comes to a contest between them, it is impossible for the earthen vessel to prevail over the iron. The iron will break it in small pieces and pound away the potsherds. But with us who believe, true righteousness, wisdom, salvation, and life will remain, whether the world and Satan like it or not. For the Word of God will remain into eternity. Christ, our High Priest and King, will remain. We also who believe in Him shall remain. But the enemies of the Word will all fall and perish. Amen" (AE 12:66).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 19:16 *King of kings and Lord of lords*. See note, 17:14.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 19:17–18 A ghastly counterpart to the Lamb's wedding banquet, this "feast" emphasizes the great difference between the end of God's people and those who oppose Him. See notes, Ezk 39:17–20.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 19:18 The fate of those who refuse to serve and fear the one true God. Plainly, the faithful are not among those being judged.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 19:19 The basis of the proverbial saying "all hell breaks loose" (16:12–16; 17:12–14). The final cosmic battle ends with evil's defeat and Christ's ultimate victory, as is described in the concluding chs.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 19:20 *the beast was captured, and with it the false prophet*. Here, two members of the anti-Trinity (see notes, 13:4, 11–18) are captured and taken out of commission. However, their leader, Satan, will continue causing more trouble (20:3, 7). *lake of fire that burns with sulfur*. A description of eternal punishment (cf Mt 25:41; 2Th 1:9).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 19:21 *sword … from the mouth*. Luth: "Christ's kingdom is not to be administered with physical power, with the sword or the rod. It is the province of the parents to wield the rod, and that of government and executioner to use the sword. No, His are an oral rod and an oral sword…. The words of reprimand and rebuke are the rod" (AE 22:222). *birds were gorged with their flesh*. Cf Ezk 39:17–20. Note Jesus' enigmatic saying: "Wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will gather" (Mt 24:28; Lk 17:37).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 19:11–21 In the great final battle between good and evil, Christ returns and begins to destroy the remaining enemies of His rule once and for all. The end of those who oppose God and His Messiah is fearful, as birds of prey will devour their flesh. But the faithful

know that Jesus will come to right wrong and redress evil, and that He freely pardons all who embrace His mercy. • Lord, grant to all people true repentance and sincere faith, so that we may all escape Your vengeance and enter with You into eternal bliss. Amen.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 20:1–21:8 The sixth scene of the end times: the final judgment, which includes the binding, loosing, and final condemnation of Satan and his host. See outline, p 2198.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 20:1 *Then I saw*. A new vision. *angel*. Because of what this angel does within this vision—He binds Satan and confines him in the abyss—some believe this may represent Jesus. At the very least, an angel acts on the Lord's behalf. *the bottomless pit*. Apparently the same place is mentioned in 9:1. In contrast to the lake of fire, which is the final place to which the evil are banished (cf vv 10, 14–15; 21:8), this abyss is more like a temporary holding cell. *great chain*. Shackles restrain feared criminals.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 20:2 *dragon, that ancient serpent … devil and Satan*. All of these names refer to the original usurper and archenemy of God and His people, he who first rebelled against God and so was cast out of heaven (cf Is 14:12–15; Ezk 28:12–19; Lk 10:18; Rv 12:7–9 for other possible allusions). Recall that Satan is the first member of the Book's anti-Trinity (see notes, 13:4, 11–12; 19:20). *thousand*. Symbolic number representing the completion of a most perfect era. It is derived by cubing the number 10, the number of perfection and completion (see note, 9:16). See p 217. Traditionally, this period is equated with the time of the NT Church. See p 2199.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 20:3 *threw him … shut … sealed*. Satan is overcome by Jesus, the "stronger man" who comes and binds the "strong man" (Mt 12:29). Note that Christ has authorized His Church to share in this binding and overthrowing of Satan's power, through the administration of the Word and Sacraments (Mt 16:16–19; 18:18; Jn 20:22–23). *any longer*. During his protracted confinement, while awaiting execution, Satan cannot withstand the triumphs of the Gospel (e.g., the worldwide growth of the Church after Jesus' resurrection). *released for a little while*. For reasons hidden in God, the Church must pass through tribulation and testing at the end times.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 20:4 *thrones*. This scene is enacted in heaven, not on earth. It is simultaneous with Satan's binding. *authority to judge*.

This picture of the saints sharing in God's kingly rule is first presented in Dn 7:13–14, 26–27. The NT presents this picture repeatedly (cf Mt 19:28; 1Co 6:2). *souls*. Refers to the martyrs already in heaven. *came to life*. Does not refer to the final, bodily resurrection, but rather to the regeneration the saints enjoy on earth and in God's presence after death, before Christ's second coming. See notes, Jn 5:21, 24.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 20:5 *thousand years*. See note, v 2. *the first resurrection*. Refers to regeneration, the divine work by which sinners are raised from spiritual death to spiritual life by the means of grace. This is received through faith in this life and then consummated in paradise. As such, it is to be distinguished from the bodily resurrection that occurs at Christ's second coming. See note, Jn 5:24.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 20:6 *Blessed*. Fifth of seven beatitudes. See note, 1:3. It underlines the blessedness of having faith in Jesus. *second death*. Defined in v 14 as punishment in the lake of fire. It follows the bodily resurrection, which occurs on the Last Day, and is the eternal consequence of refusing to repent and believe in Christ. See note, v 4; 2:11. *priests … will reign*. See note, 1:6.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 20:1–6 Because Jesus has bound Satan and severely limited his power to harm the people of God, the faithful actually share in Jesus' rule throughout the entire NT age. However, in the last little bit before the end, all hell will break loose as Satan will be released and will thus wreak destruction. Happily, those remaining in the Lord will not be overcome. The second death has no power over those whom God's Spirit has regenerated and kept in the true faith. • Lord, may we treasure above all things the "first resurrection" given us through the Word and Sacraments, for nothing will ever separate us from Your great love and compassion. Amen.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 20:7–9 *deceive … earth*. A spiritual deception, so that people believe anything but the Gospel truth. *Gog and Magog*. Symbols for the enemies of God's people. Cf Ezk 38–39. *for battle*. Cf 16:12–16. *the beloved city*. Not the earthly Jerusalem, but a symbol of the whole Christian Church on earth.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 20:10 Satan and his demonic host are finally cast into the place where they will suffer eternal punishment. This was the punishment they earned by their continual opposition to God's plan of redemption and restoration.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 20:7–10 Even as John affirms that there will be a "little while" of suffering before the end of all things and the judgment, he assures the faithful that this will result in the ultimate destruction and removal of Satan and his lies. Consider how near we may be to the end of the age. Yet also consider what good news this is for believers! Christ comes to save and deliver us once and for all from every sin and evil. • Lord Jesus, help us to see and understand the great struggle between good and evil. Keep our hearts true to You, and grant us always to look to You for deliverance from the powers of hell. Amen.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 20:11–15 Luth: "I believe that Christ will return from heaven on the Last Day to judge those who are alive at that time and those who have died before that day [I Thess. 4:16–17], that all mankind, angels, and devils will have to appear before his judgment [Matt. 18:35; Rom. 14:10; I Pet. 1:17] throne to see him visually. Then he will redeem me and all who believe in him from bodily death and every infirmity and will eternally punish his enemies and adversaries and deliver us from their power forever [Rev. 20:11–14]" (AE 43:27).
REVELATION—NOTE ON 20:11 *Him … His*. The Father (cf 4:2).
REVELATION—NOTE ON 20:12 *dead, great and small*. This presupposes a bodily resurrection of all people, including those who rejected Christ. See notes, 1Th 4:13–18. *books*. Records of human conduct. *the book of life*. The book that lists all who have received Christ and God's gracious gifts of salvation. See note, Rv 3:5. *according to what they had done*. The righteous do not earn salvation by their works, but their good works were recorded so that they might now be rewarded by the One who was at work in the saints (Php 1:6; 1Th 2:13), causing them to produce good fruit. See notes, 1Co 3:14; Gal 5:22.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 20:13 *the sea gave up the dead who were in it*. Those whose bodies were lost at sea or burned are not excluded from the final resurrection and glorification of the body, since God will miraculously call forth these people as well. *Death and Hades*. Further emphasizes the universal scope of the resurrection. See notes, 6:8; 9:1.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 20:14 *Death … thrown into the lake of fire*. This is the final destruction of the last enemy, even death itself (1Co 15:51–55). *second death*. See note, v 6.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 20:15 *lake of fire*. As a result of our fallen nature, we are all destined for this final separation from God and His

goodness until delivered by grace (cf Eph 2:1–5). Only Christ's forgiveness can deliver people from this dreadful end.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 20:11–15 Finally, John describes the judgment and overthrow of death. Since our first parents fled from the Lord in the garden (Gn 3:24), all their sinful descendants have been shutting their eyes and ears to the somber truth about the last judgment (cf Heb 10:31). However, Christ has covered us in the mantle of His righteousness. Consequently, our bodily resurrection will be unto glory and eternal bliss in God's presence. • "Be still, my soul; the hour is hast'ning on When we shall be forever with the Lord, When disappointment, grief, and fear are gone, Sorrow forgot, love's purest joys restored. Be still, my soul; when change and tears are past, All safe and blessed we shall meet at last." Amen. (*LSB* 752:4)

REVELATION—NOTE ON 21:1 *new heaven … earth*. Finally, the revelation of a perfectly restored creation is described. See note, Is 65:17–25. *first heaven … passed away*. This fulfills the prediction Jesus makes in Mt 24:35. Also, Rm 8:19–21 suggests that there is continuity between the new creation and that which it replaces. However, certain things truly disappear: sin, death, and corruption. That which has been redeemed is transformed. *sea was no more*. Symbolically conveys that everything threatening and evil is removed. See note, Rv 4:6–7.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 21:2 *the holy city, new Jerusalem*. Because this city is explicitly identified with the "bride," it is best taken as representing the collective people of God (see note, 19:7–8). See "Zion," p 844. Luth: "God's house is found where God dwells with us, where we are the household, yes, the sons and daughters, and He Himself is our Father, who speaks and deals with us and brings it about in the most intimate way that the church is also the gate of heaven. For He dwells with us in order that we may enter into the kingdom of heaven. And, what is most delightful, He comes first and appears to us on the ladder. He descends and lives with us. He speaks and works in us" (AE 5:250).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 21:3 Scripture repeatedly underscores that one of the greatest blessings of the new heavens and new earth is that restored mankind will again behold God face-to-face and live in His immediate presence (cf 22:3–5; 1Co 13:12).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 21:4 Note that John describes heaven by way of negation, (i.e., in terms of what will not be there: tears, death, crying, or

pain). Such a description is fitting, given that we have no experience of anything as fantastic as the new heavens and new earth (cf 1Co 2:9).
REVELATION—NOTE ON 21:5 The new creation has already begun to appear through the preaching of the Gospel and the work of the Spirit. However, it will not be completed until the day of Christ's return.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 21:6 *It is done!* Echoes Jn 19:30. In that context, Jesus is pronouncing that redemption has been won. Here, God announces that the final restoration has been completed. *the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end*. See notes, Rv 1:8; 22:13. *spring of the water*. Probably another example of baptismal imagery. Cf 3:4; 6:11; 7:3, 14. *without payment*. Stresses the graciousness of salvation.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 21:7 Recalls the promises appearing in each of the seven letters to the churches (2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21).
REVELATION—NOTE ON 21:8 *the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable*. Part of a "vice list," of which there are many in the NT (cf Rm 1:29–32; Col 3:5). *sorcerers*. Gk *pharmakos*, refers to a person who mixed magical potions and poisons. *their portion*. Those unswervingly persisting in evil will share the fate of Satan and his demonic host (cf 20:10, 14–15).
REVELATION—NOTE ON 21:1–8 The climax of this Book and indeed all of history at last comes clear: the restored heaven and earth is presented to God's resurrected people. Such a magnificent future and hope call us to rise above the ugliness and sin of this fallen world, because impenitence and a lack of vigilance can still lead to the shipwreck of our souls. At the same time, God is faithful and so will unfailingly fulfill the purposes for which His Son became man; He will remove the curse that so sorely afflicts us. • Jesus, You suffered to make all things new. Therefore, renew our hearts and minds, and hasten the day when You shall present the holy city as Your beloved Bride, the Church. Amen.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 21:9–22:9 The final scene: the new Jerusalem as the Bride. See outline, p 2198.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 21:9 *one of the seven angels*. See notes, 1:16; 4:6–7; 5:2–4; 7:1; 8:2. *seven bowls*. Note how the revelation doubles back to the earlier scene regarding the pouring out of God's wrath (16:17). *Bride, the wife of the Lamb*. Cf 12:6, 13–14; 19:7–8. This feminine imagery acts as a foil to the great prostitute of chs 17–19.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 21:10 *in the Spirit*. See note, 1:10. *great, high mountain*. Much like the wilderness of 17:3, this is an otherwise

inaccessible vantage point, allowing a glimpse into divine mysteries. *holy city Jerusalem*. Though this symbol sometimes represents heaven itself (22:2), it also stands for God's people (21:2). Here, it seems to represent the latter.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 21:11 *having the glory of God*. When Christ appears, the saints will be glorified and given resurrected bodies like Christ's own (Php 3:20–21). Thus, both heaven and its citizens will reflect the divine majesty. *jasper*. Precious stone, previously mentioned in connection with God's radiance.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 21:12–14 *twelve*. Symbolic of the people of God (cf 4:4; 7:4; 12:1). See p 217. *twelve foundations … apostles of the Lamb*. This detail emphasizes the foundational role played by the apostles (cf Eph 2:19–21).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 21:15–21 *measure the city*. This picture of the angel taking a measurement underscores the perfection, splendor, and grand scale of the heavenly city.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 21:16 *foursquare*. The square (and cube) were considered "perfect" shapes. *12,000 stadia*. C 1,200 mi. This city is thus larger than many nations. See note, 7:4–8. *equal*. A perfect cube, just like the Most Holy Place in Solomon's temple (1Ki 6:20).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 21:17 *also an angel's measurement*. Implies that humans and angels are about the same size. This might also convey that people will be like angels in the resurrection (Mt 22:30), though they do not become angels.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 21:18–20 *jasper … sapphire … agate*. See note, 4:3.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 21:22 God gave the tabernacle and temples in order to mediate His presence on earth. In heaven, however, His people will see Him face-to-face and experience Him directly. Thus, a temple will be unnecessary.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 21:23 Because God Himself is "light" (Ps 36:9; 1Jn 1:5), there is no need for any other source of illumination in heaven. There, people bask in the unmediated glory of His aura.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 21:24 *kings … bring their glory*. Cf Is 60:1–6. Emphasizes the complete fulfillment of God's plan to save all people (cf Rv 7:9). This suggests the transformation rather than the annihilation of the old orders (see note, v 1).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 21:25–26 *never be shut*. With evil once and for all vanquished, there is no need for security measures. *no night*. See note, v 23. *glory … honor of the nations*. See note, v 24.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 21:27 *nothing unclean*. Another reminder that future citizenship in heaven is secured through repentance and holiness. See "clean," p 6. *book of life*. See notes, 3:5; 20:12. "Only the elect, whose names are written in the book of life [Revelation 21:27], are saved. Therefore, how can we know, or why and how can we perceive who the elect are and who can and should receive this teaching for comfort? In this matter we should not judge according to our reason, or according to the Law or from any outward appearance…. If we want to think about our eternal election to salvation helpfully, we must in every way hold strongly and firmly to this truth: just as the preaching of repentance is universal, so also the promise of the Gospel is universal, that is, it belongs to all people" (FC SD XI 25–26, 28). Luth: "To be sure, all sins have been remitted and covered, but they have not yet been completely cleansed away. Not only do the dregs of lust, pride, hatred, wrath, and other desires cling to us, but also inner evils and hidden stains, doubts about God, unbelief, impatience, and murmuring, which do not come out into the open until the conscience is troubled by the Law and by the terrors of sin. Although we pay no attention to these things and do not sob because of such a disgraceful fall, yet God sees them. Therefore He tries to purge our impure nature. This is what He thinks: 'You have been enlightened and baptized; but you still stink, and your flesh is full of many great vices. Therefore I must cleanse it, for that which is unclean and polluted shall not enter the kingdom of heaven' (cf. Rev. 21:27)" (AE 7:229).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 21:9–27 John continues his description of the glorified Church by focusing upon the splendor of the city in which God's people will dwell eternally. On the one hand, the incredible beauty of the heavenly Jerusalem stretches our imaginations beyond what they can comprehend; on the other hand, the stern warnings about the impure, false, and detestable seem all too familiar. Yet God will overcome all evil, including that in our lives, for He who has written our names in the Book of Life will Himself see us home. • Christ Jesus, Bridegroom of the Church, help us to watch for the end of days and prepare for our reception into the new heaven and earth, where the great wedding feast never ends. Come soon, Lord Jesus. Amen.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 22:1–2 The two dominant images here—the river and the tree—also figure prominently in the creation (Gn 2:9–17; 3:1–7). Their reappearance here helps show that the end will be like the beginning, only better.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 22:1 *water of life*. Throughout John's writings, water serves as a symbol of eternal life (cf Jn 3:5; 4:14). Those living in God's holy city will have unimpeded and perpetual access to this life-giving water. In this world, Baptism serves this function. *throne of God and of the Lamb*. See note, 3:21.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 22:2 *through the middle*. The river and tree are no longer set in a garden, but a city. *tree of life*. Because of what Christ accomplished on another tree—the cross of Calvary—God's people will again have free access to this tree; its fruit bestows immortality. For the present, the Holy Supper serves this function. *fruit each month*. This fruit is perpetually available, further underscoring the abundance of life in heaven. Luth: "Heaven and earth will pass away, but His words will not pass away (Matt. 24:35). He is therefore the 'tree of life' (Rev. 22:2), firmly 'planted in the house of the Lord' (cf. Ps. 92:13), producing His fruit in its season, the firstfruits of all the trees that imitate Him in these. Adam and Eve sewed fig leaves together (Gen. 3:7), that is, they fabricated words of excuse for their sins in order to cover and excuse their shame. Therefore their leaves fell off" (AE 10:22).
REVELATION—NOTE ON 22:3–5 *No longer … anything accursed*. As in 21:4, John describes heaven by means of negation (i.e., by stating what things there will not be). The Lord will undo the ancient curse caused by Adam and Eve's sin. Bede: "What can be happier than that life, where there is no fear of poverty—no weakness of disease; where none can be hurt, none can be angry; where none can envy, none can be impure; where none can be tormented with the desire of honour, or the ambition of power? No fear there of the Devil; no snares there of evil spirits; no terror there of hell; no death there, either of soul or body, but a life blessed in the gift of immortality. No discord there for ever, but all things in harmony—all things in agreement: because there will be one concord of all saints—one peace, and one joy. Tranquil are all things there, and quiet. Perpetual is the splendour there: not such as the sunlight which now is, but both more glorious and more happy" (*FSEP*, pp 3–4).

REVELATION—NOTE ON 22:3 *worship*. The final goal of redeemed humanity, which underscores why keeping the Sabbath is so vital in biblical teaching. See notes, Ex 20:8, 11; Col 2:17.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 22:4 *They will see His face*. The climactic statement in this vision of heaven, since beholding God face-to-face, living in His presence, and enjoying unmediated communion with Him is the greatest blessing of heaven. Cf 21:3.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 22:5 *Lord God will be their light*. See note, 21:23. There is no night or any other darkness in God's presence.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 22:1–5 John describes our life in heaven as having no hunger, darkness, loneliness, or pain but rather eternal joy in the presence of the one true God. How, then, can so many people fail to see the blessedness Jesus has laid out for us along the straight and narrow way that shortly leads to unceasing bliss? In many cases, the answer is simply that people do not appreciate the greatness of God's grace and the magnificence of the glory that awaits the faithful. Inspired by God's Word and preserved by His Spirit, however, we may already rejoice with those who have gone before us. • "Apostles, martyrs, prophets, there Around my Savior stand; And soon my friends in Christ below Will join the glorious band. O Christ, do Thou my soul prepare For that bright home of love That I may see Thee and adore With all Thy saints above." Amen. (*LSB* 673:5–6)
REVELATION—NOTE ON 22:6–21 John's epilogue. See outline, p 2198. As John concludes his work, he wraps up by reiterating key themes, esp those of the Book's opening verses.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 22:6 *trustworthy and true*. John originally meant for these words to apply to this particular Book. Within a canonical context, however, they may profitably be applied to the whole of Scripture (cf 2Tm 3:16). *sent His angel to show*. Once more emphasizes the role that angels play in serving God by revealing the prophetic word to John. *soon take place*. The imminence of Christ's second coming is more obvious from the divine than from the human perspective. However, Jesus does not leave the Church as an orphan in the meantime (Jn 14:18). He is present in Word and Sacrament (Mt 18:20, 28:20), most intimately in the Eucharist.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 22:7 Without announcement, the speaker switches from the angel to Christ Himself. *Blessed*. Sixth of seven beatitudes in Rv. See note, 1:3. One keeps these words not by calculating future events but by living faithfully and believing them.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 22:8 *I, John*. Author solemnly affirms that he is a firsthand witness to what he has written. John writes similarly about eyewitness testimony in his Gospel (Jn 19:35) and Epistle (1Jn 1:1–3). *I fell down to worship*. See note, 19:10.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 22:9 This warning may well reflect John's desire that the churches of Asia Minor resist the temptation to worship angels. This problem plagued nearby Colossae (Col 2:18).
REVELATION—NOTE ON 22:10 *Do not seal*. Exact opposite of command given to Daniel. Because God had already begun to fulfill the events described in this Book, John's prophecy was for immediate release.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 22:11 *still do evil*. Cf Rm 1:26–31, where Paul speaks about God giving people up to their dishonorable passions and debased minds. A stronger pronouncement of judgment can hardly be spoken. Luth: "He who progresses in the unremitting exercise of his faith concludes: 'I am not in the host that is against Christ; I am for Christ. I do not deny the Word, and I do not persecute the church. Hence I have been called to the kingdom of God and have been elected. But if I fall because of weakness, I rise again; I grieve over my sin and pray for forgiveness. Thus through the very works of repentance and love I realize that I am one of those who have been snatched from the conflagration of Babel or from the dregs of the world.' Thus even though this obedience does not justify, it nevertheless gives evidence of faith and makes it manifest, as it were, so that it can be seen. Therefore Revelation (22:11) states: 'He that is righteous, let him be righteous still.' Just as those who occupy themselves with works of unbelief continually become more and more unbelieving, and through that continual effort sin gains strength, as it were, so, vice versa, faith increases in those who practice godliness. As a result, they conclude with certainty that they belong to the church" (AE 3:169–70).
REVELATION—NOTE ON 22:12 Though numerous other NT passages similarly speak about the faithful being rewarded, they never do so apart from grace and the work of the Holy Spirit. The unrighteous, on the other hand, will have no one to blame but themselves when they are condemned for their iniquity.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 22:13 *the Alpha and the Omega*. Heretofore, this title has been applied to the Father. The application here of this title to Christ makes for a strong affirmation of Jesus' true Godhead. See note, 1:8.

REVELATION—NOTE ON 22:14 *Blessed*. Final of seven beatitudes in Rv. See note, 1:3. *robes*. See notes, 3:4; 7:14. *tree of life*. See notes, vv 1, 2; 2:7.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 22:15 Another vice list; see note, 21:8.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 22:16 *the root and the descendant of David*. Stresses Jesus' messianic status by evoking several prophecies He fulfills (cf 2Sm 7:16; Is 11:1). Luth: "Christ according to the flesh has His root in David and the patriarchs, from whom He has arisen, but according to the Spirit He Himself is the root from which has arisen the universal church. In the first sense He is the flower, but in the second sense they are His flower" (AE 25:516). *the bright morning star*. See note, Rv 2:28.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 22:17 *Come*. A simple prayer for the hastening of Christ's appearing. This is repeated in the very final words of this Book (v 20). See note, 1Co 16:22–24. *without price*. Emphasizes the gracious nature of the Gospel call.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 22:18–19 *if anyone adds*. Echoes the warning Moses gave. See note, v 6.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 22:20 *Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!* These words may function as a liturgical response to the reading of this prophetic word (cf 1Co 16:22; *Did* 10:6). On that understanding, what followed the reading of this revealed word would be the Communion liturgy.
REVELATION—NOTE ON 22:21 A concluding benediction, similar to the ones appearing at the conclusion of NT Epistles (cf Php 4:23; 1Th 5:28).
REVELATION—NOTE ON 22:6–21 Because John's message is about the ultimate triumph of good over evil, it is always relevant and all the more as the world slides further into chaos and corruption. On one level, Rv powerfully confirms what we already fear, i.e., our world and everyone in it is doomed. More profoundly, however, this Book is about transcendent hope. It shows how infinitely greater God is than evil. By offering a vision of the new creation soon to be revealed, Rv draws us on toward our blessed hope in Christ. To Him be power and glory throughout the ages! • Blessed Redeemer, help us to keep these holy words and thereby conquer sin, death, and the devil. May we, along with Your whole Church on earth and heaven, continue praying with full confidence and a joyful expectation, "Come, Lord Jesus! Come quickly!" Amen.

Revelation's Colorful Character

Long before Vincent van Gogh amazed us with his bold use of colors, John recorded brilliant colors in the visions of Revelation. Learn more about these colors and their meanings:
Agate (chalcedony) 21:19
Amethyst 21:20
Beryl 21:20
Black 6:5, 12
Bronze 1:15; 2:18; 9:20; 18:12
Carnelian (sardius) 4:3; 21:20
Chrysolite 21:20
Chrysoprase 21:20
Crystal 4:6; 21:11; 22:1
Emerald 4:3; 21:19
Fire 1:14; 2:18; 9:17; 16:8; 19:12
Gold 1:12–13; 3:18; 4:4; 9:7, 13, 20; 15:6; 17:4; 18:12, 16; 21:18, 21
Green 9:4
Ivory 18:12
Jacinth 21:20
Jasper 4:3; 21:11, 18–19
Onyx (sardonyx) 21:20
Pale 6:8
Pearl 17:4; 18:12, 16; 21:21
Purple 17:4; 18:12, 16
Red 6:4, 12; 12:3; 16:4; 19:13
Sapphire (hyacinth) 9:17; 21:19
Scarlet 17:3–4; 18:12, 16
Silver 9:20; 18:12
Sulfur 9:17
Topaz 21:20
White 1:14; 2:17; 3:4–5, 18; 4:4; 6:2, 11; 7:9, 13–14; 14:14; 15:6; 19:8, 11, 14; 20:11

A quick look at this list shows the dominance of white and gold, colors associated with purity, holiness, and glory. Note that many colors have both

a positive and a negative use. For example, white comes in a variety of shades: snow, wool, fine linen, and pale as a corpse. Gold appears on the garments and vessels of heaven, yet it also glimmers on the idols of Babylon. Remarkably, the color blue, which we often associate with heaven because of the blueness of the sky, never gets mentioned directly (though some translations use “blue” to translate Gk *hyakinthos*, Eng hyacinth in 9:17).

Throughout, we behold the red blood of Christ, shed for our salvation. Contrary to all earthly experience, that red blood turns the robes of the saints pure white (7:14). “Blessed are those who wash their robes” in the blood of the Lamb (22:14)!

Additional Prayers

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Brief Service of the Word

Invocation
In the name of the Father and of the ✣ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Psalmody
One or more psalms are spoken or sung.

Reading from Holy Scripture
One or more readings from Holy Scripture are read. Each is introduced as follows:
A reading from _____, chapter _____.
Each reading may conclude:
This is the Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Sermon or Meditation
The Apostles' Creed *may be confessed.*

Hymn

Prayers
Collect of the Day

Intercessions and Thanksgivings

Lord's Prayer

Blessing
The grace of our Lord ✣ Jesus Christ and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
Amen.
(*LSB Agenda*, pp 56–57)

The Great Psalm of the Word

Let my cry come before You, O Lord; give me understanding according to Your word! Let my plea come before You; deliver me according to Your word. My lips will pour forth praise, for You teach me Your statutes. My tongue will sing of Your word, for all Your commandments are right. Let Your hand be ready to help me, for I have chosen Your precepts. I long for Your salvation, O Lord, and Your law is my delight. Let my soul live and praise You, and let Your rules help me. I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek Your servant, for I do not forget Your commandments. Amen. (Ps 119:169–76)

The Prayer to See God's Ways

Speak, Lord, for Your servant hears. Please show me now Your ways, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the Law, but that which comes through faith in Christ. Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. Give me life, O Lord, according to Your Word, and I will declare Your greatness. Amen.

The Collect of the Word

Blessed Lord, You have caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning. Grant that we may so hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them that, by patience and comfort of Your holy Word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen. (*LSB*, p 308; prayer 148)

Luther's Prayer for Growth

Help us to grow in the knowledge of Your dear Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and to remain firm in the confession of His blessed Word. Give us the love to be of one mind and to serve one another in Christ. Then we will not be afraid of that which is disagreeable, nor of the rage of the arsonist (Satan) whose torch is almost extinguished. Dear Father, guard us so that his craftiness may not take the place of our pure faith. Grant that our cross and sufferings may lead to a blessed and sure hope of the coming of our Savior Jesus Christ, for whom we wait daily. Amen. (*TLWA*, p 35)

Luther's Prayer to Receive the Word

Eternal God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, grant us Your Holy Spirit who writes the preached word into our hearts so that we may receive and believe it, and be gladdened and comforted by it in eternity. Glorify Your Word in our hearts. Make it so bright and warm that we may find pleasure in it, and through Your inspiration think what is right. By Your power fulfill the Word, for the sake of Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord. Amen. (*TLWA*, p 38)

Bless Our Hearts and Minds

Heavenly Father, almighty and everlasting God, we come before You in humble awe. You are the one true God, and there is none other like You. Come, we pray, and bless our hearts and minds as we study Your Word. Send Your Holy Spirit into our lives so that we may grow in love and grace, and that we may go forth into all the world, proclaiming Your Gospel so that others may learn of Your saving grace. Amen. (Linda Flechsig)

Lead Us to Your Word

O almighty Father, lead us to Your Word, that we may find healing of heart, soul, and mind in the Gospel of Jesus. Be near us as we read for ourselves that Jesus has indeed died and has risen again for us. Keep us steadfast in Your grace and mercy, that we may spread Your love to those who haven't

heard the Good News and to those who have heard but have forgotten it. Let us do all we can to win souls for You, that they may go out and do the same. In Jesus' most holy name, we pray. Amen. (Linda Flechsig)

Lord Jesus Christ, with Us Abide

Lord Jesus Christ, with us abide, For round us falls the eventide. O let Your Word, that saving light, Shine forth undimmed into the night. In these last days of great distress Grant us, dear Lord, true steadfastness That we keep pure till life is spent Your holy Word and Sacrament. Amen. (Melanchthon and Selnecker, *LSB* 585:1–2)

Habermann's Prayer for God's Kingdom

Gracious and Blessed God, You have taught and commanded us above all things first to seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness. Grant us grace, that Your holy Word may be preached in all the world in all its truth and purity. May we submit our reason to the obedience of faith and live holy lives, as is proper for the children of God, to Your pleasing. Then Your kingdom may come to us, and increase, and many people, who do not yet believe in the Word, may be won through Christian conduct. Help us, dear God, who are delivered from the power of darkness and are translated into the kingdom of Your dear Son, Jesus Christ. In Him we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sin. May we remain in His kingdom, faithfully continue in the wholesome doctrine, and live worthily as children of light in all piety and godliness. Amen. (*TLWA*, p 315)

Walther's Prayer for Faith in the Word

O Lord, our God, how blessed are we! Not only have You given us Your Word, which offers and imparts to us all the fruits of the redemption of Your dear Son Jesus Christ, but You have also opened our eyes, so that we may know Your grace and in firm confidence receive it. Though the world, the Law, our heart, and our conscience condemn us, what do we care? Your Word declares us free of all guilt. O keep us in such faith unto our end and grant that all the members of our congregation may appreciate the great

treasure which they possess. Help them and us to triumph over all attacks of the devil, the world, and our flesh and finally to depart this life in peace and to be received into Your eternal kingdom. Hear us for the sake of our risen and victorious Champion, Jesus Christ. Amen. (*TLWA*, p 317)

Prayer for Blessing on the Word

Lord Jesus Christ, giver and perfecter of our faith, we thank and praise You for continuing among us the preaching of Your Gospel for our instruction and edification. Send Your blessing upon the Word, which has been spoken to us, and by Your Holy Spirit increase our saving knowledge of You, that day by day we may be strengthened in the divine truth and remain steadfast in Your grace. Give us strength to fight the good fight and by faith to overcome all the temptations of Satan, the flesh, and the world so that we may finally receive the salvation of our souls; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen. (*LSB*, p 308; prayer 149)

Prayer for Obedience to the Word

O holy and most merciful God, You have taught us the way of Your commandments. We implore You to pour out Your grace into our hearts. Cause it to bear fruit in us that, being ever mindful of Your mercies and Your laws, we may always be directed to Your will and daily increase in love toward You and one another. Enable us to resist all evil and to live a godly life. Help us to follow the example of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, and to walk in His steps until we shall possess the kingdom that has been prepared for us in heaven; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen. (*LSB*, p 308; prayer 152)

God's Word Is Our Great Heritage

God's Word is our great heritage And shall be ours forever; To spread its light from age to age Shall be our chief endeavor. Through life it guides our way, In death it is our stay. Lord, grant, while worlds endure, We keep its teachings pure Throughout all generations. Amen. (Grundtvig, *LSB* 582)

Speak, O Lord, Your Servant Listens

Speak, O Lord, Your servant listens, Let Your Word to me come near; Newborn life and spirit give me, Let each promise still my fear. Death's dread pow'r, its inward strife, Wars against Your Word of life; Fill me, Lord, with love's strong fervor That I cling to You forever! Amen. (Hessen-Darmstadt, *LSB* 589:1)

Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word

Lord, keep us steadfast in Your Word; Curb those who by deceit or sword Would wrest the kingdom from Your Son And bring to naught all He has done. Amen. (Luther, *LSB* 655:1)

Open to Me Your Word

Jesus, Key of David, I have tried to open the gates of heaven by clever reason. I have pounded them by my own strength. My efforts always end with a frustrated mind and a battered conscience. Open to me Your Word. Take away my burdens of body and soul and bear me feather-light over the threshold of heaven. Amen. (*TLWA*, p 37)

Prayer to Abide by God's Revealed Will

Merciful Father, Your Word was written for our instruction so that by steadfastness and by encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. Grant us sound interpretation of all the Scriptures that we may receive all their comfort and hope according to Your Holy Spirit's will and intent. Grant that we abide in this simple, direct, and useful exposition that is permanently and well grounded in Your revealed will. Teach us to flee all abstruse and specious questions and disputations so that we reject and condemn all things contrary to Your true, simple, and useful teachings; through Christ Jesus, our Savior. Amen.

The Holy Bible

Articles and Resources

The Books of the Prophets

- All the Prophets

Table of Contents

Articles and Resources
Contributors
Acknowledgments
Foreword
The Engravings
Preface to the English Standard Version
The Lutheran Study Bible - Kindle Edition
Reading, Understanding, and Applying the Bible
    How to Read and Study the Holy Bible
    Law and Gospel: Identifying God's Ways with Mankind
    Luther's Small Catechism
    The Unity of Scripture
    The Lectionaries
    A Two-Year Reading Plan
Reference Guide
    Abbreviations
    Transliteration Guidelines
    Articles and Charts
    Maps
    Place-Names of the Bible and Ancient Empires
    Biblical Topics
    Biblical Chronology and World History
    Weights and Measures
The Old Testament
Introduction to the Books of Moses
    Genesis
    Exodus
    Leviticus
    Numbers
    Deuteronomy
Introduction to the Books of History
    Joshua
    Judges

- Ruth
- 1 Samuel
- 2 Samuel
- 1 Kings
- 2 Kings
- 1 Chronicles
- 2 Chronicles
- Ezra
- Nehemiah
- Esther

Introduction to the Books of Wisdom and Poetry

- Job
- Psalms
- Proverbs
- Ecclesiastes
- Song of Solomon

Introduction to the Books of the Prophets

- Isaiah
- Jeremiah
- Lamentations
- Ezekiel
- Daniel
- Hosea
- Joel
- Amos
- Obadiah
- Jonah
- Micah
- Nahum
- Habakkuk
- Zephaniah
- Haggai
- Zecharaiah
- Malachi

The Time between the Testaments and the Apocrypha

The New Testament

Introduction to the Gospels

- Matthew
- Mark
- Luke
- John
- Acts

Introduction to the Pauline Epistles

- Romans
- 1 Corinthians
- 2 Corinthians
- Galatians
- Ephesians
- Philippians
- Colossians
- 1 Thessalonians
- 2 Thessalonians
- 1 Timothy
- 2 Timothy
- Titus
- Philemon

Introduction to the General Epistles

- Hebrews
- James
- 1 Peter
- 2 Peter
- 1 John
- 2 John
- 3 John
- Jude
- Revelation

Mission and Challenges for Early Christianity

The Spread of Lutheran Mission Work

Additional Prayers